

SPIRITUALS

WITH DOCK REED AND VERA HALL WARD



Folkways Records & Service Corp. N. Y.

FA 2038

recorded in Alabama by Harold Courlander

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I'm Going Home on the Morning Train
My God Ain't No Lying Man
Where The Sun Will Never Go Down
Troubled Lord I'm Troubled
Look How They Done My Lord
Job Job
What Month Was Jesus Born In
Somebody's Talking About Jesus
Death Is Awful
I'm Climbing Up the Hill of Mt. Zion
Low Down the Chariot & Let Me Ride

RETURN TO ARCHIVE
CENTER FOR FOLK LIFE PROGRAMS
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 2038

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These two singers, Dock Reed and Vera Hall Ward (or simply Vera Hall as she is best known), sing the traditional spirituals together in pure and untainted fashion. There is no question of interpretation or performance. Their singing is direct, faithful, and invocative.

Dock Reed works a small farm near Livingston, Alabama. He is in his fifties, deeply religious, and never sings secular or "sinful" songs. Singing is one of his great pleasures, and he is frequently called upon to sing in the small neighborhood churches, or to lead the praying. Once every so often he preaches a sermon. After hearing his rich natural voice it is easy to understand why singing is so much a part of his life.

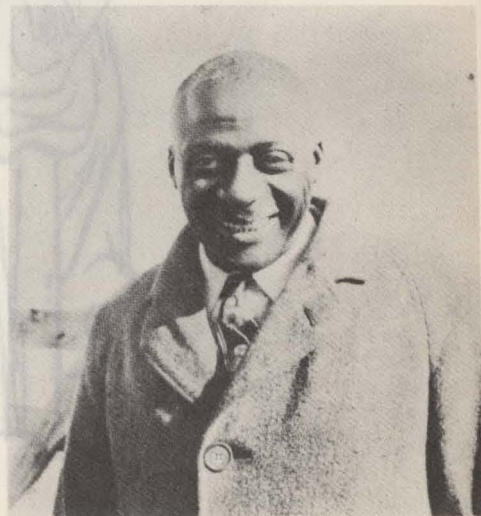
Vera Hall is Dock Reed's cousin. At last report she was living in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. She too was born on a small farm near Livingston. Unlike Dock Reed, she sings "sinful" as well as religious songs. But like Dock Reed, she is a non-professional.

Dock Reed and Vera Hall have both recorded many pieces for the Library of Congress. In 1948 Vera Hall was invited to New York to sing at a folk festival at Columbia University.

These two singers were "discovered" by Ruby Pickens Tartt of Livingston. It was Mrs. Tartt who led John Lomax to them when he was recording folk music in Alabama for the Library of Congress.



Vera Hall Ward, photo by Harold Courlander



Dock Reed, photo by Harold Courlander

SIDE I

Band 1. I'M GOING HOME ON THE MORNING TRAIN.
Sung by Dock Reed.

I'm going home on the morning train,
I'm going home on the morning train,
Ah I'm going home on the morning train,
If you don't see me you will hear me sing,
All of my sins been taken away, taken away.

Just about the time I thought oh Lord,
Ah just about the time I thought oh Lord,
Ah just about the time I thought oh Lord,
Don't you want.
All of my sins been taken away, taken away.

Sister Mary wore three lengths of chain,
Sister Mary wore three lengths of chain,
Sister Mary wore three lengths of chain,
And every link was my Jesus' name,
All of my sins been taken away, taken away.

Band 2. MY GOD AINT NO LYING MAN. Sung by
Dock Reed and Vera Hall.

My God aint no lying man,
Oh my God aint no lying man,
Oh Jesus, Lord have mercy,
My God do just what he say.

My God promised me a home,
Oh my God promised me a home,
Oh Jesus, Lord have mercy,
My God promised me a home.

I got a home where the gambler can't go,
I got a home where the gambler can't go,
Oh Jesus, Lord have mercy,
I got a home where the gambler can't go.

My God do just what he say,
Oh my God do just what he say,
Oh Jesus, Lord have mercy,
My God do just what he say.

You lie sick and raise the dead,
Ah you lie sick and raise the dead,
Oh Jesus, Lord have mercy,
You lie sick and raise the dead.

Band 3. WHERE THE SUN WILL NEVER GO
DOWN. Sung by Dock Reed.

Oh the sun will never go down, go down,
Oh the sun will never go down, go down.
The flowers that (are) blooming forever-
more,
Then the sun will never go down, go down.
Don't you feel like shouting sometimes,
sometimes,
Don't you feel like shouting sometimes,
sometimes,
The flowers that (are) blooming forever-
more,
Then the sun will never go down.

Don't you miss your mother sometimes,
sometimes,
Don't you miss your mother sometimes,
sometimes.
The flowers that (are) blooming forever-
more,
Then the sun will never go down.

Band 4. TROUBLED LORD I'M TROUBLED.
Sung by Dock Reed and Vera Hall.

Troubled, Lord, I'm troubled,
I'm troubled all about my soul,
No sooner than my feet strike Zion
I won't be troubled no more.

I'm wondering, Lord, I'm wondering,
I'm wondering about my soul,
Oh Lord
No sooner than my feet strike Zion
I won't be wondering any more.

I wonder where my mother,
I wonder where she's gone,
She's somewhere sitting in the kingdom
And she won't be troubled no more.

I'm grieving, Lord, I'm grieving,
I'm grieving about my soul,
No sooner than my feet strike Zion
I won't be grieving any more.

Band 5. LOOK HOW THEY DONE MY LORD.
Sung by Vera Hall and Dock Reed.

Oh look how they done my Lord,
Look how they done my Lord, Oh Lord
Look how they done my Lord.
Good Lord I can't hold out no longer.

Well they whipped him up to Calvary,
Whipped him up to Calvary,
Oh Lord they whipped him up to Calvary.
Good Lord I can't hold out no longer.

Oh he never said a mumbling word,
He never said a mumbling word,
Oh Lord he never said a mumbling word,
Oh he never said a mumbling word.
Good Lord I can't hold out no longer.

Well they planted him a thorny crown,
They planted him a thorny crown,
Oh Lord they planted him a thorny crown,
Oh they planted him a thorny crown.
Good Lord I can't hold out no longer.

Well they squashed it on his head,
They squashed it on his head,
Oh Lord they squashed it on his head,
Oh squashed it on his head.
Good Lord I can't hold out no longer.

Well the blood come streaming down,
The blood come streaming down,
Oh Lord the blood come streaming down,
Oh the blood come streaming down.
Good Lord I can't hold out no longer.

Band 6. JOB JOB. Sung by Dock Reed and
Vera Hall.

Ah Job Job, uh-hunh,
Ah what you reckon, uh-hunh,
Ah your oxen dead, uh-hunh,
Ah Job Job, uh-hunh,
Ah what you reckon, uh-hunh,
Ah your daughter dead, uh-hunh,
Just listen that Job, uh-hunh,
What Job said, uh-hunh,
Ah blessed be, uh-hunh,
In the name of the Lord, uh-hunh,
The Lord he gave it, uh-hunh,
And the Lord take away, uh-hunh,
Then blessed be, uh-hunh,
The name of the Lord, uh-hunh.
Ah rock Mt. Zion,
Rock Mt. Zion,
Rock Mt. Zion in the morning.

Oh swing low chariot,
Swing low chariot,
Ah swing low chariot in the morning.
Oh the son of man, uh-hunh,
Oh the son of man, uh-hunh,
Oh he prayed to God, uh-hunh,
To stop the sun, uh-hunh,
Oh the sun stopped steady, uh-hunh,
Right on the line, uh-hunh,
And the battle was firing, uh-hunh,
And seven times, uh-hunh,
Oh want to go to heaven,
Oh want to go to heaven,
Oh want to go to heaven in the morning.
Oh mourn on Mary,
Mourn on Mary,
Oh mourn on Mary in the morning
Oh weep on mighty,
Weep on mighty,
Oh weep on mighty in the morning.

SIDE II

Band 1. WHAT MONTH WAS JESUS BORN IN.
Sung by Vera Hall.

What month was Jesus born in?
Last month in the year.
What month was Jesus born in?
Last month in the year.
Oh Lord, you got January, February,
March, oh Lord,
You got April, May and June Lord,
You got the July, August, September,
October and November,
You got twenty-fifth day of December,
It's the last month in the year.

He was born in an ox-stall manger,
Last month in the year.
He was born in an ox-stall manger,
Last month in the year.
Oh Lord you got January, February,
March, oh Lord,
You got April, May and June Lord,
You got the July, August, September,
October and November,
You got twenty-fifth day of December,
It's the last month in the year.

I'm talking about Mary's baby,
Last month in the year.
I'm talking about Mary's baby,
Last month in the year.

Oh Lord you got January, February,
March, oh Lord,
You got April, May and June Lord,
You got July, August, September,
October and November,
You got twenty-fifth day of December,
It's the last month in the year.

Band 2. SOMEBODY'S TALKING ABOUT JESUS.
Sung by Dock Reed and Vera Hall.

Everywhere I go my Lord,
Everywhere I go,
Somebody's talking about Jesus.
I went down the hill,
Then all the day,
Somebody talking about Jesus.
Well sing it then,
Everywhere I go,
Everywhere I go my Lord,
Everywhere I go,
Somebody's talking about Jesus.
Well my knees been acquainted with the
hillside clay,
Somebody's talking about Jesus.
And my head's been wet with the midnight
dew,
Somebody's talking about Jesus.
Ah sing it then,
Everywhere I go,
Everywhere I go my Lord,
Everywhere I go,
Somebody's talking about Jesus.

Band 3. DEATH IS AWFUL. Sung by Dock
Reed and Vera Hall.

Oh death is awful,
Oh death is awful,
Oh death is awful,
Spare me over another year

If I was a flower in my bloom,
Make that cut me down so soon,
Oh death is awful,
Mmm death is awful,
Mmm death is awful,
Spare me over another year.

Oh what is this that I can't see,
Well call that the angel over me,
Oh death is awful,
Ahh death is awful,
Oh death is awful,
Spare me over another year.

This is the way that death begins,
You stretch your limbs and close your
eyes,
Oh death is awful,
Mmm death is awful,
Mmm death, just spare me over another
year.

**Band 4. I'M CLIMBING UP THE HILLS OF MT.
ZION.** Sung by Dock Reed and Vera Hall.

Praying at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Mourning at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Weeping at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Singing at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Good Lord I'm climbing up them hills of
Mt. Zion
Oh Lord with the glory in my soul.

Preaching at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Crying at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Tolling at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Good Lord I'm climbing up them hills of
Mt. Zion
Oh Lord with the glory in my soul.

Shouting at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Groaning at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Climbing at the hills of Mt. Zion,
Oh Lord I'm climbing up them hills of
Mt. Zion
With the glory in my soul.

Band 5. LOW DOWN THE CHARIOT AND LET
ME RIDE. Sung by Dock Reed and Vera Hall.

Let me ride, let me ride,
Oh let me ride, let me ride,
Oh let me ride, let me ride,
Oh low down the chariot and let me ride.

I'm humble to ride, oh let me ride,
I'm humble to ride, oh let me ride,
I'm humble to ride, let me ride,
Oh low down the chariot and let me ride.

Got a right to ride, oh let me ride,
Got a right to ride, let me ride,
Got a right to ride, let me ride,
Oh low down the chariot and let me ride.

Got a ticket to ride, oh let me ride,
Got a ticket to ride, oh let me ride,
Got a ticket to ride, let me ride,
Oh low down the chariot and let me ride.

My mother done rid, oh let me ride,
My mother done rid, oh let me ride,
My mother done rid, let me ride,
Oh low down the chariot and let me ride.

Train coming, oh let me ride,
Train coming, let me ride,
Train coming, let me ride,
Oh low down the chariot and let me ride.

I'm a soldier, oh let me ride,
I'm a soldier, oh let me ride,
I'm a soldier, oh let me ride,
Oh low down the chariot and let me ride.

My father done rid, oh let me ride,
My father done rid, oh let me ride,
My father done rid, oh let me ride,
Oh low down the chariot and let me ride.

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FOLKWAYS Records
AND SERVICE CORP., 701 SEVENTH AVE., N.Y.C.
Long Playing Non-Breakable Micro Groove 33 1/3 RPM

SPIRITUALS

With DOCK REED and VERA HALL

Recorded in ALABAMA by HAROLD COURLANDER

Assisted by RUBY PICKENS TARTT & EMMA COURLANDER

FA 2038 A

SIDE 1

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Band 3. WHERE THE SUN WILL NEVER GO DOWN

Band 4. TROUBLED LORD I'M TROUBLED

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FA 2038 B

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