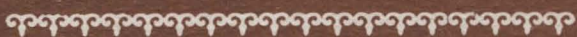


Ca. 1927



DOCK BOGGS

LEGENDARY SINGER
& BANJO PLAYER



Recorded & edited by
MIKE SEEGER

POCKET BOOKS

SIDE A

1. Down South Blues (arr. Dock Boggs)
2. Country Blues (arr. Dock Boggs)
3. Pretty Polly
4. Coal Creek March
5. My Old Horse Died (Dock Boggs)
6. Wild Bill Jones
7. Rowan County Crew
8. New Prisoner's Song

SIDE B

1. Oh Death
2. Prodigal Son
3. Mother's Advice
4. Drunkard's Lone Child
5. Bright Sunny South
6. Mistreated Mama Blues (arr. Dock Boggs)
7. Harvey Logan

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

Archival Property
Smithsonian Institution
Office of the Assistant Secretary
for Public Service

Cover design by A. Doyle Moore

FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album No. FA 2351

© 1964 Folkways Records & Service Corp., 43 W. 61st St., NYC, USA

PART I OF 2 PARTS

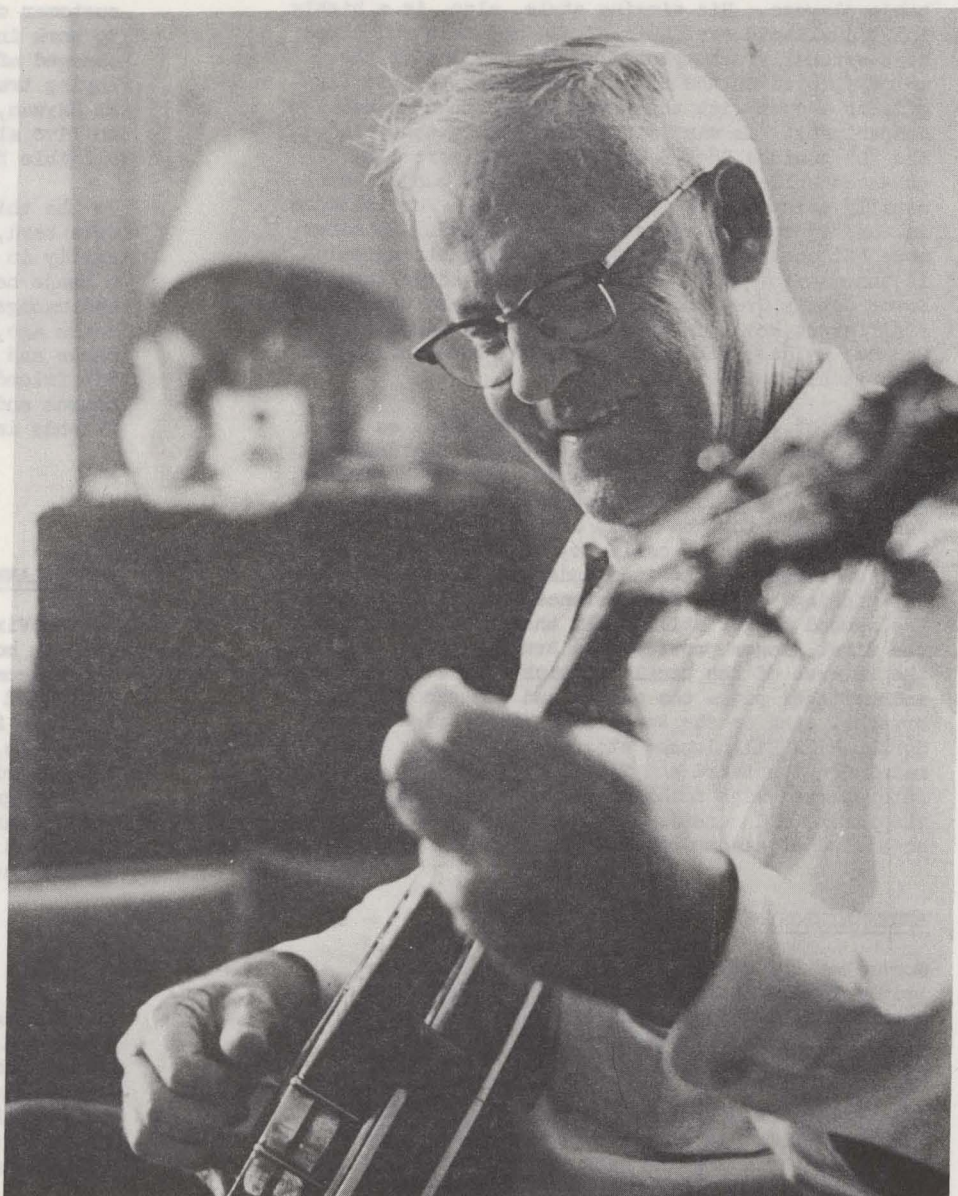
DOCK BOGGS

Recorded and Edited by Mike Seeger

Notes by Mike Seeger

Musical Analysis by

Ralph Rinzler



Dock Boggs, July 1963

Photo by Dan Seeger

INTRODUCTION

NOTE:

The majority of the information on Dock Boggs is being issued on a Folkways LP FH 5458 which contains excerpts from interviews with him.

Therefore, this "introduction" is more in the category of - "miscellaneous", filling in some areas not covered in the interviews, and regarding dates and background.

STYLE

Dock Boggs has been a legendary figure in recorded American folk music since the early 1930's when such people as folklorist Alan Lomax, musicologist Charles Seeger, and artist Tom Benton first heard his old 1927 Brunswick record of Pretty Polly.

It is his absolutely unique style which has brought him so much attention especially just recently from banjo players. His singing style, also, is a highly individualistic synthesis of old mountain and blues styles usually accompanied by the outline of the melody played on the banjo which often practically effects a duet with the voice rather than an accompaniment. In many songs, especially those in the "D" tunings Dock Boggs introduces more dissonances while playing the tune on the banjo, than usually exist due to the drone string. For instance in the "D" tunings he is basically playing in minor mode but occasionally thumbs the fifth string which is tuned major (F#). Also on several songs such as Rowan County Crew and Wild Bill Jones, he plays in a different key than that to which the banjo is tuned. He does not use a capo, but tunes his banjo to suit his voice.

Dock Boggs' picking style is as unorthodox as his use of vocal and instrumental melody. Basically he uses thumb for the third, fourth, and fifth strings, the first finger for the second string and the second finger for the first string. He does not play frail, or as he calls it, "knock-down" style. When he breaks into what sounds like frailing or "up-picking" style, for instance on Coal Creek March, the second finger still picks the first string while the first finger provides the brush stroke. This is the reverse of the usual "up-pick" style where the index finger picks the melody and the second finger brushes. And on the songs in D (also Bright Sunny South, Wild Bill Jones, etc,) the melody is picked mainly on the third and fourth strings by the thumb interspersed with notes on the off beat picked on the first (and sometimes along with second) string, as a kind of accompaniment.

BRIEF HISTORY

Moran Lee (or as he prefers,) "Dock" Boggs was born February 7, 1898 in West Norton Virginia, the youngest of ten children. His father (born 1849) and mother and their parents were born in the same area of Irish-German parentage.

His father was a gunsmith, carpenter, blacksmith, and wagon-maker in other words, he had a trade rather than working the land as most of the people in the area did, until the railroad came in and the mines opened about 1900. He had had a farm in

Kentucky but had sold cheap to coal operators. Shortly after the L & N RR came in to Norton he was offered a job with the railroad in the north but preferred to stay in the hills. He also was an almost entirely self educated man but could read music and was a good singer.

Dock Boggs started "trapping" in the mines at about age 12 at 7¢ an hour for a 10 hour shift. Trapping consisted of being "traffic director", that is keeping drivers, mules, and cars from getting in each others way at intersections of rail branches within the mine.

After awhile he began driving mules, running electric pumps, and when he got big enough, graduated to coal-loading. Since then he has done most of the different jobs to be done in the mines from working with cutting and loading machines to timber man or shop foreman. He joined the union in the early twenties but did not survive until the UMW organized in the early 1930's. He has worked in mines through eastern Kentucky, Southwestern Virginia, and for a short period up in southern West Virginia.

In 1944 doctors recommended that he leave the mines and he drove a laundry truck for awhile. But the customer contact was aggravating so he went back to work in a company store from which he was discharged after signing up with the union. He was laying track and timbering in 1954 when the mines at Hayman, Ky. worked out and he returned to Norton to live almost without income until he would be eligible for UMW and Social Security pensions.

In the thirties he joined the church and, as times were hard, he gave his banjo to a friend for security in a loan. During the time he was without a banjo he occasionally played friends' instruments and managed to keep in playing shape. About three years ago, when he had retired, he had time on his hands and wanted to play and got the banjo back from his friend. He still plays occasionally at his church and on their radio program, as well as for his friends in the area.

MISCELLANEOUS

Norton Virginia is a coal mining and coke producing town in mountainous southwestern Virginia, about 1/2 hour from Kentucky. The train yards and old fashioned stone coke ovens (pouring forth smoke and fire 24 hours a day) are located right in town. The ovens, mines and railroads transformed this into a primarily industrial town in about 1890. A large Negro settlement lived in nearby Dorchester in the early 1900's employed in the mines and at the ovens there. The mines in Dorchester having worked out, it is literally a ghost town now.

Lee Hunsucker from whom Dock Boggs learned many songs did not play instruments but was highly thought of as a good singer. He was continually learning new songs and when he'd be out with friends they would get him singing. He was considerably older than Dock Boggs, and was his brother in law.

The years of contact with banjopicker and singer Homer Crawford were from about 1914-1918. Dock Boggs most formative years style-wise then, were probably from the time he started playing (about 1910) to about 1920. Shortly thereafter (about 1923) recorded blues probably influenced him also.

For his first banjo he swapped a watch for a pistol which he gave for the banjo. About 1920 he ordered a good Sears Roebuck Supertone banjo (\$18) which is pictured on the cover of this album and is the one with which he recorded the old Brunswick records. Shortly after he recorded in 1927 he bought a Gibson Mastertone, the same one he uses today.

Dock Boggs saw Blind Lemon Jefferson and Nick Lucas (quite a pair) in the Brunswick offices in New York City.

Byrd Moore, who recorded with Tom Ashley, Earl Johnson, and by himself played guitar and roomed with Dock Boggs on and off from 1921 to about 1931. He died at the Wise County (Virginia) poor Farm in the 1950's.

Steve Ledford Bakersville, North Carolina fiddler and singer, knew Dock Boggs from his days in Kentucky.

Clintwood (Dogwood, Hotfoot) Johnson guitar player, singer and dancer and source for Harvey Logan, was collected from by Paul Clayton in the 1950's.

Dock Boggs played a program at a high school near Gate City Virginia with (John) Dyke's Magic City Trio in 1927, after they had both been to New York to record. Gate City is about ten miles from A P Carter's home in Maces Springs. As far as we know, they never met.

The Stanley Brothers made their radio debut on WNVA, Norton in 1946 and their bass player, Jack Cook (who also played for awhile with the Greenbriar Boys) knew Dock Boggs.

Shortly after the Brunswick recording trip, P.C. Brockman (pioneer Okeh A & R man, responsible for Fiddling John Carson's starting to record) visited Dock Boggs home in Virginia, but didn't meet him until Dock Boggs made a trip to Atlanta Georgia. Dock Boggs played on WSB and also saw Jimmie Rodgers while there in Atlanta. He had been in contact with several companies to make more records (Okeh, Gennett, and Brunswick) but for one reason or another did not record for them.

W E Myers, a part-time songwriter, ran a music store in Richlands Virginia and handled Brunswick

A. L. GARRISON

400 OLD STREET
NORTON, VIRGINIA

TELEPHONE

Nov 2, 1926

Mr. Dock Boggs
Richmond, Va.
Dear Sir:

There will be an old time fiddlers convention at West Horton School about the middle of this month. A ten dollar prize will be offered to a prize will you come? Please let me know at once.
Yours truly,
H. J. Garrison

Letter to Dock Boggs from the principal of the West Norton School.

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIANS PLAY FOR PHONOGRAPH RECORDS IN NEW YORK

'Fiddlin' John Dykes on the Violin, Doc Boggs on the Banjo, and Preacher Johnson Play for Brunswick Company

BIG STONE GAP, Va., March 23.—Southwest Virginia will again be in the limelight and the name of Wise County will again be brought to the lips of the public when the six records made in New York this week for the Brunswick Blake Collender Company of the folk songs of the mountains in this section, played on stringed instruments such as the violin, guitar, banjo and autoharp by the mountain folk, and recorded by mountain people of Southwest Virginia, are released within a few weeks.

These records were made by John Dykes known throughout this section as 'Fiddlin' Dykes where he has worked at the mines in Dory, Chester, Josephine and other places for a number of years and is considered one of the best old time musicians anywhere. He fiddles to perfection all the old tunes used for the dances at the mountain homes which are so vividly portrayed in the novels of John Fox Jr., when his characters go to the big "shin-digs" from which time is usually dated such as corn huskings, annual bean stringings and molasses stir-offs.

Doc Boggs of Pardee, Va., who had never seen a street car nor been in a city until he went to New York to make these records of mountain tunes, played the banjo which recorded perfectly and he made a great "hit" with the officials of the company.

Mr. Dykes, Mr. Boggs and Preacher Johnson of Wise, Va., were chosen at a try out at the Norton Hotel in Norton, Va., at which time 20 of the best old time musicians of Wise County played on string instruments in order that the two officials of the

Company might select the best for recording the Music of the Mountains. Mr. Dykes was assisted in New York by Miss Myrtle Vermillion of Gate City and G. H. Mahaffey of Kingsport who with Mr. Dykes composes the famous "Magic City Trio."

ROANOKE POSTMASTER DIES SUDDENLY

ROANOKE, Va., March 23. (AP)—Floyd E. Ellis, 63, postmaster here since March 1, 1922, died suddenly here shortly after 9 o'clock this evening. Mr. Ellis was en route home from the postoffice and slumped to the sidewalk. A passing physician found him and rushed him to a hospital but Mr. Ellis had expired when he reached the hospital.

Mr. Ellis had been in poor health for some time and several weeks ago was taken ill, but had recovered and resumed his duties. Associates said that when he left the postoffice late today, he seemed a good health and made no complaints.

IMPROVES APPETITE ... QUICKLY

Carter's Little Liver Pills move the bowels free from pain and unpleasant after effects. They relieve the system of constipation poisons which dull the desire for food. Remember they are a doctor's prescription and can be given to every member of the family. 25c and 75c red packages.



From unknown paper -- 1927.

records. He contacted, among others, Dock Boggs, Emory Arthur, and Mississippi John Hurt all of whose music he apparently liked and who he wanted to sing the songs that he had written. He suggested familiar tunes for his songs, suggestions that were rarely taken. He formed a record company (one of the first of its kind) around 1929 and called it The Lonesome Ace. Below this title was written "without a yodel". This was just after Jimmie Rodgers (#1) had begun his recording career and Myers, who despised yodelling, wrote a "no yodel" clause into the recording contract. He issued only three records and judging by label, recorded sound and (lack of) quality in pressing they were processed by Paramount.

Dock Boggs travelled to Chicago in 1929 to record for Myers and practised for several days with Emory Arthur who was to accompany him and record the only other Lonesome Ace record. Arthur was working in a Port Washington Wisconsin chair factory at the time. When the records were released Dock Boggs himself sold about 100 records to his friends in Eastern Kentucky. But Myers failed, due to the depression and to lack of distribution.

On his two Lonesome Ace records Dock Boggs sounds more as he does today than on the records of two years before, smoother, with less drive and more emphasis on vocal style.

Brian Rust's "Jazz Records 1897-1931" lists the following two records which are possibly the ones that Dock Boggs learned from:

MISTREATED MAMA-Sara Martin, vocal; acc. by Clarence Williams, piano. Okeh 8086 (71701 B). Recorded July 27(?), 1923.

DOWN SOUTH BLUES-Alberta Hunter, acc. by Joe Smith, cornet. Paramount 12036 (1426-1,4). Recorded May, 1923.

OR (from Archie Green)

DOWN SOUTH BLUES- Solo by Rosa Henderson, piano accompaniment by Fletcher Henderson. Vocalion 14635 (11689) Recorded Aug. 7, 1923, probably in New York City.

Although Dock Boggs has lived in an area which has been well covered by many folk song collectors no one had any idea of his whereabouts or of how to go about locating him. Before 1963 the only person that we knew of who had seen him was Roscoe Holcomb who had seen him around 1930 and had no idea of his more recent whereabouts. All attempts by collectors at locating him by asking other oldtime country musicians such as Tom Ashley, E.V. Stoneman, Dock Walsh and others met with no success.

After a concert by the New Lost City Ramblers at Antioch College in February 1963 we were talking with Guthrie Meade, a folklorist especially interested in folk songs that appeared on old time commercial records. He had met a relative of Dock Boggs who placed his whereabouts around the Mayking Kentucky area. Unfortunately this person vanished shortly afterwards and any further tracing by Guthrie Meade had been unsuccessful. We all considered the faint possibilities that the information was correct or that Dock Boggs was still living.

On our way back from California on June 12, 1963, with our three young children, my wife Marj and I decided to try to find Dock Boggs around Mayking and we set off over into Kentucky from Kingsport Tennessee on a numbered highway which soon became a rutted mountain dirt road. Just over the mountain was Eolia Kentucky, a beautiful green country town where we stopped at the post office and asked about Dock Boggs. We were mildly shocked to be told at the first place we stopped that he was to be found around

COMING!

ONE NIGHT ONLY DOCK BOGGS

AND HIS CUMBERLAND MOUNTAIN ENTERTAINERS THE BURNSWICK ARTIST

Recorders of Down South Blues, Country Blues, And Many Others Will Be At

MOUNTAIN STRING BAND MUSIC FOR THE OLD AND YOUNG, FUNNY JOKES

7:30 P.M

YOU HAVE HEARD THEIR RECORDS, NOW SEE AND
HEAR THEM IN PERSON

Cash Prize to Best Dancer Under Fifteen
Years of Age

COME PLENTY OF COME ENTERTAINMENT ADMISSION

STRING BAND CONTEST

Saturday Night,

At 7:00 P. M.

November 3, 1928

Court-house At Hazard

The selections will be rendered by several string bands from various points from Southeastern Kentucky. The string bands that will be present include the Kentucky Ridge Runners, the Dock Boggs Virginia String Band, Kenmont String Band, The Hazard String Band. Bands from other points will be on hand to assist with the musical festivity. All String Bands of 3 pieces and over are invited.

First Prize—For best String Band.....\$25 in Gold

Second Prize.....\$10

Best Charleston Dancer.....\$10

Best Hoedown Dancer.....\$5

All entrants must be signed up before contest starts.

ADMISSION 50c

All Children Under 12 years 25c

For information see or write

C. C. DIX or G. W. McDANIEL, Mgrs.

Hazard, Ky.

THIS MUSIC AND CONTEST IS THE LATEST OUT



Dock Boggs at American Folk Festival, Asheville, North Carolina, 6/25/63

Photo by Dan Seeger

Hemphill. (Eolia was near his wife's original home). On our way to Hemphill (we didn't stop in Mayking) we stopped in Neon and asked directions from some men standing at the main intersection. They all knew Dock Boggs (or knew of him) and we discussed his style of music about which they were very complimentary. (They liked his playing the tune rather than seconding (chording) or playing breakdown style as most people do). They gave us directions which took us to Pound, Virginia and eventually on to Norton where we easily found his name in the phone book. After a call, we went up to visit him and his wife at their home, a small meticulously clean and bright four room house over-looking Norton. Our meeting was one of mutual disbelief: we couldn't believe that this was the Dock Boggs and he, though he was pleased that someone remembered his records was not certain what I was up to. We talked awhile and he warmed quickly to the kids and later that evening after getting the family settled in a motel I returned. That evening he recorded about eight songs, largely unrecorded by him heretofore and an interview in which he related a good deal of his history, talked about his early years, learning to play, his first recording and so on. He also expressed the desire to play and record again.

Two weeks later he was on the American Folk Festival in Asheville, N.C. where some of the songs on this album were recorded. Since that time he has appeared on the Newport Folk Festival, at the University of Massachusetts, Club 47 in Cambridge, for the Friends of Oldtime Music in New York City, in Princeton New Jersey, in Philadelphia, on the folk music series by Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, at the University of Chicago Folk Festival, and at Shimer College.

A couple of quotes:

"Lonesome songs always appealed to me"

When discussing with members of his band what songs they might play and Dock Boggs suggested a song such as 'Oh Death' one of the musicians replied:

"Aw get out of the graveyard, Dock."

A couple of personal notes

The place of the musical artist, from Dock Boggs through Roscoe Holcomb, to Bill Monroe, is poorly defined and can be, most of all, confusing to the artist himself. In fact the problems of status and recognition are ones for individualistic artists in almost every society.

It had been Dock's ambition to play again after having given it up for twenty five years. He feels that his life would have been incomplete without recording and playing his songs once again and realizing the appreciation that so many people have for him and his music. He is pleased to be able to pass on to the younger generation his own style of music which he feels is so much a part of him.

Although my original interest in Dock Boggs was musical, Sparked by his old Brunswick recordings, the time spent with him since has been a special pleasure for me (and I know for others who have met him). His warmth and articulateness coupled with his intelligence and insight, make him a very unusual person.

"DOWN SOUTH BLUES"

Down South Blues - learned from an old Negro blues record from which Dock Boggs made this arrangement on banjo and added some words.

Tuning: GDGBD
Recorded Sept. 24, 1963

I'm going to the station,
Going to catch the fastest train that goes;
I'm a-going back South
Where the weather suits my clothes.

I'm going back South
If I wear out 99 pair of shoes;
'Cause I'm broken hearted,
I've got those down South blues.

I was reared in the country
Where the snow it never fell;
I'm a-going back South,
If I don't do so well.

Oh my mama told me,
And my daddy told me too,
Don't you go off, honey,
Let those men make a fool out of you.

"COUNTRY BLUES"

Country Blues - learned as Hustling Gamblers from Homer Crawford traveling photographer, fiddler, banjo picker and singer. Dock Boggs added several verses to the original and has added several more since his old Brunswick recording.

Tuning: F# CGAD
Recorded June 26, 1963

Come all you good time people,
While I have money to spend,
Tomorrow might be Monday
And I neither have a dollar nor a friend.

When I had plenty of good money, good people,
My friends were all standing around,
Just as soon as my pocket book was empty
Not a friend on earth to be found.

I've gambled all over Kentucky, good people,
I've gambled part of the way through Spain
Going back to old Virginia
For to gamble my last card game

Last time I seen my little woman, good people,
She had a wine glass in her hand,
She's a drinking down her trouble
With a low down sorry man.

I wrote my woman a letter, good people,
I told her I was in jail;
She wrote me back an answer
Saying honey, I'm a coming to go your bail.

All around this old jail house is haunted good people,
Forty dollars won't pay my fine;
Corn whiskey has surrounded my body, poor boy,
Pretty women is a troubling my mind.

Boys, if you don't quit your drinking
Some time you'll be just like me,
A working out your living
In the penitentiary.

On my daddy taught me a-plenty, good people,
My mama she told me more;
If I didn't quit my rowdy ways
I'd have trouble at my door.

In the bottom of the whiskey glass
The lurking devil dwells,
It burns your breast to drink it, boys,
It'll send your soul to Hell.

Go dig a hole in the meadow, good people,
Go dig a hole in the ground.
Come around all you good people
And see this poor rounder go down.

When I am dead and buried
And my pale face turned to the sun,
You can come around and mourn, little woman,
And think the way you have done.

"PRETTY POLLY"

Pretty Polly - learned when Dock Boggs first started playing the banjo 45-50 years ago. Occasionally he sings the last line:

"He threw her in the river where the water's
twenty foot deep"

Tuning: F# DGAD
Recorded Sept. 24, 1963

Oh, I used to be a rambler, I stayed around in
town, (repeat)
I courted pretty Polly, such a beauty's never
been found.

Pretty Polly, pretty Polly, oh yonder she stands,
(repeat)
With rings on her fingers and lily white hands.

Pretty Polly, pretty Polly, come take a walk with
me, (repeat)
Oh when we get married some pleasure to see.

He led her over hills and valleys so deep,
(repeat)
At length Pretty Polly she began to weep.

Oh Willy, oh Willy, I'm afraid of your ways,
(repeat)
You're mind is to ramble and lead me astray.

Pretty Polly, pretty Polly, you're guessing
about right (repeat)
I dug on your grave, two thirds of last night

She went on a piece farther and what did she spy,
(repeat)
A new dug grave and a spade lying by.

She threw her arms around him, began for to weep,
(repeat)
At length Pretty Polly soon fell asleep.

"COAL CREEK MARCH" -- Instrumental

Coal Creek March - learned forty or fifty years ago from unknown sources.

Tuning: G DGBD
Recorded: Sept. 23, 1963

"MY OLD HORSE DIED"

My Old Horse Died - from an advertisement by Banker's life to which Dock Boggs added words and then put to the tune of "Chicken Reel".

Tuning: G DGBD

Recorded Sept. 23, 1963

Want to live right, don't want to live wrong,
That's why I believe in the Bible so strong
Want you all to understand what I say
I once had a fortune but I threw it away.

Old Horse died, mule went lame,
Lost my cow in a poker game;
Cyclone come one summer day
Blew my house and barn away.

Earthquake followed for to make it good,
Swallowed the place where my house stood;
The mortgage man he came around
Heartily claimed the hole in the ground.

Shock was so great, he up and died
Wife and children wept and cried;
Something was left for the kids and wife
For he had insurance with the Bankers' Life.

"WILD BILL JONES"

Wild Bill Jones - learned as a song from his oldest brother before he had started playing banjo.

Tuning: G DGBD

Recorded December 14, 1963

I was out a walking around one night
And I met with old Wild Bill Jones,
He was walking, he was talking with the girl I
love,
And I bid him for to leave her alone.

He said, Young man, I'm 22,
Too old for to be controlled.

I drew a revolver from my side
And I destroyed one poor boy's soul
He rambled and he scrambled all on the ground,
And he gave one deathly moan.
He looked in the face of his darling true love,
Says, oh darling you are left alone.

My money's in my pockets, and my pistol's in
my hand,
Looking for the man that made old Wild Bill stand.

"ROWAN COUNTY CREW"

Rowan County Crew - learned from Hunsucker about forty years ago. Dock Boggs sang it for years before he figured out this way of playing it on the banjo. The entire tune is played as if there were a capo on the seventh fret. Instead of a capo he uses his first finger.

Tuning: G CGBD

Recorded Sept. 23, 1963

Come all you fathers and mothers,
And brothers, sisters too,
I'll relate to you the history
Of the Rowan County Crew;
Concerning bloody Rowan
And many (n)eedless deeds

Now friends please give attention,
Remember how it reads.

It was in the month of August,
All on election day,
John Morton he was wounded,
They say by Johnny Day.
Old Morton couldn't believe it,
He could not think it so.
His thought was Floyd Tolliver
Who struck the fatal blow.

Oh Morton he recovered
Some months had come and passed
All in the town of Morehead
These men they met at last
Old Morton had a friend or two,
About the street did walk,
He seemed to be uneasy
No one he wished to talk.

He walked in Judge Carriage's grocery
And stepped up to the bar,
But little did he think
He'd met his fatal hour,
The sting of death was near him
As Morton rushed in the door,
And a few words passed
Concerning the row before.

The people being frightened
Rushed out of the room,
And the ball from Morton's pistol
Laid Tolliver in the tomb,
His friends they gathered around him
A wife to weep and wail,
And Morton was soon arrested,
And confined in jail.

He was put in jail of Rowan
And there to remain a while,
In the hands of law and justice
To bravely stand a trial
The people talked of lynching him
But presently they did fail,
Some of his friends removed him
To the Winchester jail.

Some persons forged an order
Their names I do not know,
And the plan was soon agreed upon
And for Morton they did go,
They slipped the handcuffs on him
His heart was in distress
They hurried to the station,
Stepped on the night express.

All along the line she lumbered
All at her usual speed,
There was only two in number
To commit this awful deed;
Old Morton in the smoking car
Accompanied by his wife
They did not want her present
When they took her husband's life.

When they arrived at Farmer's
They had no time to lose,
And a band approached the engineer
And forbid him not to move,
They stepped up to the prisoner
With pistols in their hand,
In death he soon was sinking
He died an Ireland band
(died in iron bands (handcuffs)).

His wife heard the sound,
She was in another car,
She cried oh Lord, they've killed him
When she heard the pistol fire
The death of these two men
Cause trouble in the land
Caused men to leave their families
And take the parting hand.

Our relations are still at war,
May never, never cease,
Oh if I could see our loved ones
Once more in peace;
They shot and killed a deputy sheriff,
Bumgardner was his name,
They shot him from the bushes,
After taking deliberate aim.

The death of him was dreadful
May never be forgot,
His body was pierced and torn
By thirty three buckshot.
They shot and killed Sol Bradley,
A sober and innocent man,
They left his wife and children
To do the best they can.

They wounded young Ed Sizemore
Although his life did save,
He seemed to dodge the grog shops
That stood so near his grave.

"NEW PRISONER'S SONG"

New Prisoner's Song - possibly learned from
his sister.

Tuning: G CGED
Recorded Sept. 24, 1963

For seven long years I've been in prison,
For seven long more I have to stay,
Just for knocking a man down in the alley
And taking his gold watch away.

CHORUS:
Sitting alone, sad all alone,
Sitting in my cell all alone;
A-thinking of those good times gone by me,
A-knowing that I once had a home.

Oh once I had a sister and a brother,
I wonder if they ever think of me,
Oh once I had a father and a mother,
Who lived in a cottage near the sea.

SIDE B

"OH DEATH"

Oh Death - learned from Lee Hunsucker about
25-30 years ago.

Tuning: F# CGAD
Recorded June 26, 1963

What is this that I can see,
Taking hold on me with icy hands
I am death and none can excel
I'll open the doors to heaven or hell.

CHORUS:

Oh death, oh death, can't you spare me over
till another year?
Oh death, oh death, please spare me over till
another year.

Oh death, someone would pray,
Couldn't you call some other day,
God's children's prayed, the preacher's preached,
The time of mercy your reach.

I'll fix your feet so you can't walk,
I'll lock your jaws so you can't talk.
Close your eyes so you can't see
This very hour come go with me.

Death, I come to take the soul
Leave the body and leave it cold,
To drop the flesh off of the frame
The earth and worms both have a claim.

(CHORUS)

My mother come to my bed,
Place a cold towel upon my head;
My head is warm, my feet is cold,
Death is moving upon my soul.

Oh death, how you treating me
Close my eyes so I can't see;
You hurt my body, you make me cold,
You're ruling the life right out of my soul.

(CHORUS)

Oh death please consider my age,
Please don't take me at this stage,
My wealth is all at your command
If you will move your icy hand.

Old the young the rich or poor,
All alike with me, you know;
No wealth no land, no silver no gold,
Nothing satisfies me but your soul.

(CHORUS)

"PRODIGAL SON"

Prodigal Son - learned from Lee Hunsucker about
25-30 years ago.

Tuning: F# CGAD
Recorded Dec. 14, 1963

When I left my father's house,
I was well supplied
I made a mistake and I did wrong
And I'm dis-satisfied.

CHORUS:

I believe I'll go back home (three times)
And acknowledge I've done wrong.

I'll go back to my father's house,
I'll fall down on my face,
Say that I'm unworthy,
I'll seek a servant's place.

I'll go back to my father's house,
The place I love so dear,
For there they have plenty to eat
And I'm a-starving here.

(CHORUS)

Father seen him coming,
He met him with a smile,
Threw his arms around him
Says this is my wandering child.

Father said to his servants,
Go kill a fatted calf,
Invite both friends and relatives
My son's come home at last.

(CHORUS)

Banquet's in procession
All sorrow had passed
Father's heart was filled with joy,
His son come home at last.

The elder son was jealous,
I believe I heard him say,
Gave my brother his portion,
I never went away.

(CHORUS)

Father said to his elder son,
You've been both good and kind,
Not a calf I'll give unto thee
But all I have is thine.

(CHORUS)

"MOTHER'S ADVICE"

Mother's Advice - learned from Lee Hunsucker about
25-30 years ago.

Tuning: G DGED
Recorded Dec. 14, 1963

Sit down by the side of your mother, my boy,
You have only a moment, I know
If you wait till I give you my parting advice
It is all that I have to bestow.

CHORUS:

Hold fast to the right, hold fast to the right,
Wheresoever your footsteps may roam;
Don't forsake not the way of salvation, my boy,
You have learned from your mother at home.

I gave you to God in your cradle, my boy,
I have taught you the best that I knew;
And as long as His mercy permits me to live
I shall never cease praying for you.

(CHORUS)

You will find in this bundle a Bible, my boy,
It's a book of all others best
It will teach you to live and prepare you to die,
And will lead to the gates of the blessed.

(CHORUS)

You leave us to seek for employment, my boy,
You have yet of the world to be tried
But in all of the struggles and temptations you
meet
May you and your Saviour confide.

(CHORUS)

"DRUNKARD'S LONE CHILD"

Drunkard's Lone Child - learned from Lee Hunsucker
about 25-30 years ago.

Tuning: F# CGAD

I'm alone, all alone, my friends have all fled,
My father, he's a drunkard, my mother she is
dead;
I'm a poor little child and I wander and weep
For the voice of my mother to sing me to sleep.

CHORUS:

I'm alone, all alone in this cold world so wild,
God look down and pity a drunkard's child;
In pity look down and hasten to me
And take me to dwell with mother and thee.

She sleeps on a hill in a bed of cold clay,
How sad it did seem to lay mother away;
She is gone with the angels and none do I see
So dear is the face of my mother to me.

(CHORUS)

It is springtime on earth and the birds are so
glad,
I listen and I wonder, my heart is so sad;
Sweet flowers around, and strangers pass by,
But the form of my mother no longer is high.

"BRIGHT SUNNY SOUTH"

Bright Sunny South - learned from Lee Hunsucker.
Although Dock Boggs has known this song for a
long time he did not begin playing it this way,
on banjo, until sometime during the last six
months.

Tuning: G DGCD
Recorded Dec. 14, 1963

In the bright sunny south in peace and content,
The days of my boyhood I scarcely have spent,
From the deep flowing springs to the broad
flowing stream
Ever dear to my memory, and sweet is my dream.

I leave my confinement and comfort of life
The dangers of bloodshed provision and strife
I come to conclude and reply with my word
As I shoulder my musket and billet my sword.

My father looked sad as he begged me to part,
And my mother embraced me with anguish of heart;
And my beautiful sister looked pale in her woe
As she grabbed me and blessed me and told me to
go.

Dear father, dear father, for me do not weep,
For on some high mountain I mean for to sleep,
And the danger of war I intend for to share
And for sickness and death I intend to prepare.

Dear mother, dear mother, for me do not weep,
For a mother's kind voice I ever will keep,
You have taught me to be brave from a boy to a man,
And I'm going in defense of our own native land.

Dear sister, dear sister, I cannot tell the woe,
Your tears and your sorrow they trouble me so;
I must be agoing for here I can not stand,
I'm going in defense to our own native land.

"MISTREATED MAMA BLUES"

Mistreated Mama Blues - learned from an old blues
recording by Sara Martin. He substituted banjo for
piano accompaniment and changed some words.

Tuning: G CGED
Recorded Sept. 23, 1963

Sad and lonely cause my only
Love my daddy night and day,
One day sadness, next day gladness,
He done me wrong, and go away.

I'm a mistreated mama,
He's got me down in sin
Over mean, triflin' daddy, daddy,
Blame it all on him.

First he took my peaches from off my tree,
Now he's only handing back the seeds to me.
I'm a mistreated mama, mama
With the mistreated blues.

Once he said my kisses was all so good,
Now he's gone to pranking round my neighborhood.
I'm a mistreated mama, mama,
With the mistreated blues.

"HARVEY LOGAN"

Harvey Logan - learned from Clintwood Johnson
who played it on guitar. Johnson was last known
to be living in the Pikeville, Ky. area with his
son.

Tuning: G CGED
Recorded Sept. 24, 1963

People don't know said I'm going to tell you so,
Down on the bowery where the rounders they all
go
Oh my babe, my woman babe.

Gambling for money, the money wouldn't come
right,
They fooled around, got into a fight,
Oh my babe, my woman babe.

About that time, the cops were passing alone,
They stopped and they gazed, knew something
going on wrong,
Oh my babe, my woman babe.

They went in, intention to make arrest,
Knew Harvey was a outlaw from way out West,
Oh my babe, my woman babe.

Over his head billies they did break
Harvey gave them the contents of a smokeless 38
Oh my babe my woman babe

Arrested Harvey Logan, they put him in Knoxville
jail,
Just because he was a stranger, no one would go
his bail
Oh my babe, my woman babe.

Harvey was in jail, the guard wasn't very far
Threw a lasso over the jailer and pulled him to
the bar,
Oh my babe, my woman babe.

Harvey said to the jailer, you know you done me
wrong,
Hush up your crying and put that saddle on
Oh my babe, my woman babe.

Cross the bridge at midnite the clock was
striking twelve,
There stood his old Captain a-fixing to give
him awful
Oh my babe, my woman babe.

DISCOGRAPHY Brunswick records

Down South Blues/Sugar Baby - 118

Country Blues/Sammie Where You Been So Long? -
131

Pretty Polly/Danville Girl - 132

Hard Luck Blues/New Prisoner's Song - 133

The above eight sides were recorded in the
Brunswick studios in New York City, March
1927. Guitar accompaniment was by Hub Mahaffey.

Pretty Polly was re-released on Listen to Our
Story Brunswick album #1024. It consisted of
oldtime records and was edited by Alan Lomax
in the late 1940s.

Sugar Baby and Country Blues were re-released on
Anthology of American Folk Music Folkways FA
2953. This six record anthology of oldtime music
was edited by Harry Smith in 1952.

* * * * *

THE LONESOME ACE

"without a yodel"

Old Rub Alcohol Blues/False Hearted Lover's
Blues - 1 (21404/21403)

Lost Love Blues/Will Sweethearts Know Each
Other There - 2 (21405/21406)

On the above four sides, composer credits read:

"Ballad copyrighted 1929 by William E. Myer"

Artist Information reads:

"Dock Boggs-Banjo and Singing; acc. by Emory
Arthur, guitar"

- CREDITS -

June recording dates were at Asheville, N.C.
Civic Auditorium courtesy American Folk
Festival.

July and September recording dates were at
Dock Boggs' sister's house near Norton on
Gessee River.

December Recording date was at Mike Seeger's
Roosevelt, N.J. supervised by John Hurt and
Marj Seeger.

Recordings in June and July were made along with
Dan Seeger. A Nagra tape machine was used thanks
to the generosity of Peter Seeger. On later re-
cordings an Ampex or Tandberg was used.

Discographical information was with assistance of
Richard Spottswood, Harry Smith, Robert Travis,
and Bernard Klatzkow.

Guitar accompaniment by Mike Seeger.

COUNTRY MUSIC ON FOLKWAYS RECORDS

OLD TIME & BLUEGRASS

by John Cohen

This is to serve as an introduction to one segment of the Folkways catalog which represents something of the seeds and sources for a dynamic aspect of American folk music which has found a voice in the cities and colleges in recent years. For the most part, this is mountain music derived from the rural south.

There is now an excitement about this music throughout the colleges and cities, amongst young people who are finding a voice in this music, and who are making it their own voice.

There are a great range of approaches to this music, and a great many styles involved; yet inherent in this movement is a desire to remain close to the traditional ways of playing the music.

The movement, diverse as it is, has taken on a structure which has its heroes, artistic leaders, legendary characters, a sort of language of its own, and several senseless confusions and stereotypes applied to it.

Much of the clamor about this music has come from banjo pickers & guitar singers who have brought the music to everyone's attention by their very enthusiasm. It is their excitement about the music which has communicated first. But there is much more to be heard and understood.

These spirited musicians are often 'put down' for being merely 'ethnic imitators' by the very same people who recognize that traditional folk music is the only aesthetically complete folk music to be heard.

Although it is relatively new in its present situation, this music is part of one of the oldest American traditions. It has its roots in the music of the early settlers, and has received fresh vigor over the years from developments within American culture which have introduced new sounds and new instruments to this tradition, as well as new rhythms and harmonies to accompany the changing social functions the music has performed.

It is part of an active and progressive tradition, yet it has always maintained a terrific sense of respect and preservation for its own past. In this way elements from years ago are still considered as significant to the present day music by those who perform and live with this music.

Within old time string band music, bluegrass and just home performances, are found trances of the old ballad styles of singing, of bagpipe and fiddle sounds from the British Isles, as well as sounds of the sentimental songs from the 19th century, minstrel stage songs, early Negro blues, rhythms from jazz as well as those now found in rock-and-roll.

One significant and important aspect of the current city trend towards this music is that it has presented a way to enjoy and understand the popular music, without sentimentality and without losing the perspective of culture as a whole. It is only in the nature of this perspective that the urban interest differs from the country tradition. This can neither be praised nor lamented, nor can it be overlooked. It must be recognized, for it is the basis upon which an intelligent approach can develop to the many ideas which are being encountered in the current investigation of folk music.

The importance of academic scholarship can not be denied: neither can an excited emotional involvement. It is only when folk music becomes just a form of entertainment, in the more commercial sense of that word, that it is being abused.

That the investigation has become more like an involvement of love or art, is to the credit of the investigators. If city people have found that country music is meaningful to them, then this is a genuine enrichment of their lives.

The more one gets involved in this music, the more one realizes the character of an old tradition at work, and the astonishing directness and simplicity in the approach of the traditional artist. An understanding of the music opens up the possibilities for us all to get the most pleasure and reward from these old songs, and from the people who sing them.

In various college campuses and cities now, folk music societies and festivals are emerging which incorporate active research with song collecting, concert producing, and music playing. At one school, on the event of a New Lost City Rambler concert, the folk music society increased its membership by 100, a panel discussion was held with university faculty and visiting musicians participating, a student string-band was formed, and a local Bluegrass band of country kids was 'discovered' and incorporated into the general university folk song scene. In addition to this, a regular publication was started. At another place, serious discographical research is being done and a record of rare re-issues of early hill music was released. Concerts are being produced employing traditional artists; this is no longer a unique situation. The University of Chicago Folk Festival, the Berkeley Festival, the Friends of Old Time Music, and the Ash Grove in Los Angeles, are all pointing the way towards an intelligent enjoyment of traditional folk music.

Within the Folkways catalog is a group of recording which present the scope and nature of the various facets of this music. Folkways has been consistent in its presentation of this music as it is traditionally and authentically performed.

FA2951 (Vol. 1) - Ballads: 27 traditional ballads performed by The Carter Family, Clarence Ashley, Buell Kazee, Carolina Tar Heels, Furry Lewis, Charlie Poole with the North Carolina Ramblers, G. B. Grayson, The Masked Marvel, "Chubby" Parker, many others.

2 12-inch 33-1/3 rpm longplay records

FA2952 (Vol. 2) Social Music: 29 selections performed by Bascom Lunsford, Blind Willie Johnson, Carter Family, Sacred Harp Singers, Bunt Stephens, A Hunt's Ramblers, The Pep-Steppers, Cincinnati Jug Band, others.

2 12-inch 33-1/3 rpm longplay records

FA2953 (Vol. 3) Songs: 28 selections incl. East Virginia, One Morning In May, Sugar Baby, Mountaineer's Courtship, 99 Year Blues, K.C. Moan, Fishing Blues, etc., performed by Uncle Dave Macon, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Clarence Ashley, Cannons Jug Stompers, Carter Family, John Hurt, "Dock" Boggs, Stoneman Family, many more.

2 12-inch 33-1/3 rpm longplay records

The Anthology of American Folk Music FA 2951, FA 2952, FA 2953
This collection is a most comprehensive one, and gives an incisive look into the folk music current from 1927 to 1932 as recorded by the commercial recording companies of that time. Good representation of rural music, with many important artists represented, ed. and annotated by Harry Smith.

Vol. 1 Ballads:

Some Child Ballads, and many other old songs in the ballad tradition, sung as current and popular songs in 1927, etc.

Vol. 2 Social Music:

Dance music and religious music. Both white and Negro traditions. Many instrumental pieces.

Vol. 3 Songs:

Excellent collection of country songs and many blues. Important artists in this collection.

Clarence Ashley
Buell Kazee
Dick Justice
Uncle Eck Dunford
Burnette & Rutherford
Carter & Young
Carolina Tar Heels

Miss. John Hurt
Furry Lewis
Jilson Setters
Eck Robertson
Uncle David Macon
Blind Lemon Jefferson
Dock Boggs

Grayson & Whitter
The Carter Family
Kelly Harrell
Frank Hutchison
Charlie Poole
Bascom Lunsford
Jim Jackson
Ernest Phipps
E.V. Stoneman
Blind Willie Johnson