

HOBART SMITH * ALMEDA RIDDLE * ROSCOE HOLCOMB

DOCK BOGGS * JESSE FULLER

FOMM

Friends of Old Time Music

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MISS. JOHN HURT * WATSON FAMILY * STANLEY BROS.

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Descriptive notes are inside pocket

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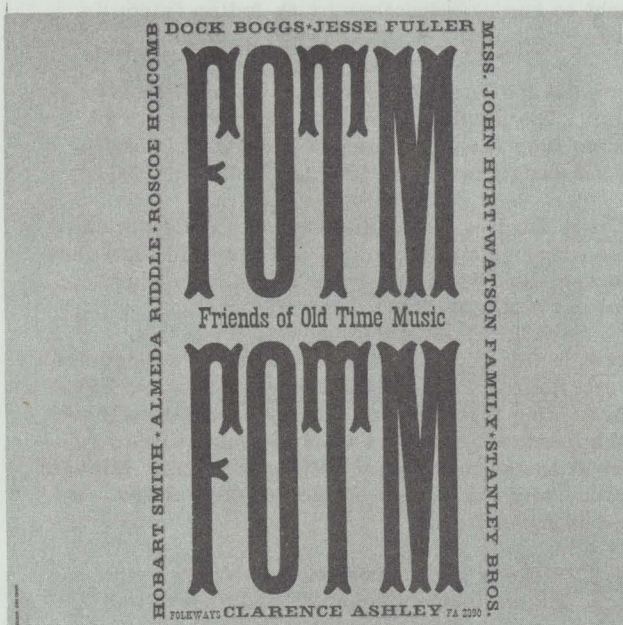
Double File (Doc Watson & Gaither Carlton)
Hick's Farewell (Doc Watson & Gaither Carlton)
Soldier's Joy (Hobart Smith)
Claude Allen (Hobart Smith)
Monday Morning Blues (Mississippi John Hurt)
Pallet on the Floor (Mississippi John Hurt)
Chick-a-l-a-lee-o (Almeda Riddle)
Come All Ye Tender Hearted (Stanley Bros.)

Little Birdie (Stanley Bros.)
Rabbit in the Log (Stanley Bros.)
Dark Holler Blues (Clarence Ashley & Doc Watson)
What Did I Do To Be So Black & Blue (Jesse Fuller)
Mistreated Mama Blues (Dock Boggs)
Hook and Line (Roscoe Holcomb)
Pretty Fair Miss All in a Garden (Roscoe Holcomb)
He's Coming in Glory Some Day (Howard, Price, Watson)

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THE FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME MUSIC

by Richard Rinzler

Amidst the opulence of the urban boom in old-time music, it is difficult to realize how recently the whole movement was little more than a handful of records and an idea. The original Library of Congress recordings were (and still are) known to only a few, and, with the exception of John and Alan Lomax, scholarship was directed toward the Anglo-Irish tradition rather than the American.

While the tenacity and perception of the Lomaxes maintained a constant interest in American traditional music, the turning point -- the beginning of the geometric rise in popularity of old-time music -- was the issuance of Folkways' ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC (Folkways FA 2951, 2952, 2953). The release of this wealth of material in the early 1950s finally gave the public an opportunity to hear what old-time music sounded like, and a chance to appreciate it for its American country flavor.

The influence of the ANTHOLOGY, although not immediate, was profound. The trend toward old-time music had begun, but it took the success of commercial folk music throughout the '50 to pave the way for its widespread acceptance. This acceptance did not occur spontaneously, but was due in a great degree to the efforts of the New Lost City Ramblers, the University of Chicago Folk Festival, the Friends of Old-Time Music, and Moses Asch's Folkways Records.

Undoubtedly, the most unique, although probably the least-known of these influences, is the Friends of Old-Time Music. This body was founded in December, 1960, by Margot Mayo, Jean Ritchie, John Cohen, Ralph Rinzler, and Israel G. Young; and later chartered as a non-profit organization under the name, the Society for Traditional Music, Inc. Its purpose was to reach deep into the grass roots and bring traditional folk music, performed by traditional artists, to the New York City area. At a time when no commercial producers were interested, the Friends decided to show people the "real article" in the right way: in a series of concerts that would satisfy both the capacity of the performer and the appetite of the audience.

In February, 1961, the Friends of Old-Time Music held their first concert, presenting Roscoe Holcomb for the first time in New York. This was followed in the spring by another concert which introduced Clarence Ashley and Doc Watson to Northern audiences. Six subsequent concerts over the next two years presented the Stanley Brothers, Jesse Fuller, Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys, Gus Cannon, Memphis Willie B., Furry Lewis, Almeda Riddle, Hobart Smith, Mississippi John Hurt, and Doc Boggs.

For many of these performers, the Friends of Old-Time Music concerts were their first public performances in New York, and, for some, their first in the North. This established new means to widen the perspective of urban audiences and enlarge the opportunities for old-time musicians and singers. The Society's early activity in the field of traditional music attracted much publicity, and, with the help of clubs and organizations in other cities, the Friends of Old-Time Music were usually able to arrange short tours for their performers. In this manner, the Friends spurred the entire old-time music movement and greatly enhanced its popularity.

This fall, with the help of the Friends of Old-Time Music, Simon and Schuster published the YOUNG FOLK SONG BOOK, a book of the favorite songs of several popular performers. Through the generosity of the contributing artists, the Society will receive the royalties from this book, and thus be able to greatly expand its activities in all fields of traditional music.

Chief among these activities is the Friends of Old-Time Music's role as a co-ordinating body and general clearing house. In its unique position, the Society will offer its services, free of charge, to any organization planning concerts, club dates, or festivals. By co-ordinating the schedules of traditional performers, costs can be cut to a minimum, while convenience to promoters and artists can be greatly improved.

Another exciting part of the new program is collecting trips. Several tape recorders will be purchased, and any interested and qualified individual will be able to borrow these for collecting trips into undocumented areas of American folk music. Serious collectors will eventually be supplied with both funds and equipment.

Concerts, of course, will continue with increasing frequency. In the near future, the Society is planning appearances by such artists as Maybelle Carter, the McGhee Brothers, Bessie Jones, Elizabeth Cotten, Fred McDowell, and the Morris Brothers. Concerts of New York City and New England folklore are also being organized, and several newly-discovered artists will soon be introduced.

Despite the Friends of Old-Time Music's new financial stability, the success of its new program depends entirely on public participation. A co-ordinating agency needs people to co-ordinate, and a concert can't be held without an audience. For its own satisfaction, and for the public's pleasure, the Society invites inquiries, requests, and comments on any phase of its activities.

Address all correspondence to: The Friends of Old-Time Music, Folklore Center, 110 MacDougal Street, NYC.

Notes On The Performances

Double File is a square-dance tune remembered by Doc Watson from his youth. Gaither Carlton's fiddling on this song is traditional and even archaic in parts, but Doc's originality comes through as he plays the melody along with Gaither in his own modern flat-picking guitar style.

Hicks' Farewell was composed by a Reverend Hicks of South Carolina. Doc introduces the song with the following short history:

Just before the Civil War there was a missionary Baptist preacher named Reverend Hicks who lived in central South Carolina. He decided to go into East Tennessee to do some missionary work, and while he was there he became very sick with a fever, and thinking he would die, he wrote this song, the words and the music, and sent them back to his wife so they might be published.

Soldier's Joy is a well-known fiddle tune played here on the banjo. Hobart Smith plays in "knock-down" style using a metal finger-pick to add to the percussive sound of the performance. Earl Scruggs has recorded the tune as The Old Folks and the song has been collected in Indiana as King's Head.

In Claude Allen, Hobart plays in a blues-derived guitar style which has probably been influenced by the work of Blind Lemon Jefferson, whom Hobart claims to have seen. For a detailed history of this song see the notes to Old Time Music at Clarence Ashley's Volume One (Folkways FA 2355). For more of Hobart's blues-playing, see his performances of See That My Grave Is Kept Clean, Railroad Bill, and Graveyard Blues (Prestige International 25011, 25009, 25004). Monday Morning Blues is one of the more blues-oriented songs in the repertoire of Mississippi John Hurt which also includes many ballads and folksongs.

Pallet On The Floor was recorded in 1928 by John as Ain't No Tellin' (Okeh 8759). We are indebted to Piedmont Records for their kind permission to use the John Hurt tracks presented here.

Chick-a-la-lee-o is a children's song sung by Almeda Riddle. Almeda believes that this song is of American Indian origin, and that it was taught to her grandmother by an Indian friend in Tennessee.

Come All Ye Tender-Hearted is an old Baptist hymn. The Stanley Brothers were reminded of it when they saw it printed in Roscoe Holcomb's Baptist songbook at the Chicago Folk Festival.

In Little Birdie, Ralph Stanley puts aside his usual three-finger banjo technique and plays in the "claw-hammer" or "Frailing" style which he learned from his mother.

Rabbit In the Log is based on the Monroe Brothers' record Have A Feast Here Tonight (Bluebird 7508). In producing this LP, we debated whether to leave in the mandolin error by Curly Lambert or to remove it by the process of editing the tape. Michael Seeger, who edited this portion of the record, decided to leave it in.

Jesse Fuller is a one-man band, playing guitar, kazoo, mouth harp washboard, and bass all at the same time. The song What Did I Do To Be So Black and Blue? is his own composition.

Dock Boggs learned Mistreated Mama Blues from Sara Martin, an early Negro blues artist who recorded the song in 1923 (Okeh 8086). The banjo arrangement originated with Dock.

Hook And Line is reputed to be the first song learned by any beginning banjo player in East Kentucky. Roscoe Holcomb's rendition is done in the "knock-down" style of banjo playing.

Pretty Fair Miss All In A Garden is a variant of John Riley. It is sung by Roscoe in a high-pitched Kentucky singing style using a banjo-derived guitar technique.

Dark Holler Blues was first recorded by Clarence Ashley in 1929 as the flip side of the Coo Coo Bird (Columbia 15489-D). It is played in Clarence's famous "saw-mill" tuning and is accompanied in a minor key by Doc Watson.

He's Coming In Glory Some Day is a sacred song sung by Clint Howard, Fred Price, and Doc Watson.

The Friends Of Old Time Music

Edited by Peter Siegel and John Cohen

Cover by John Cohen

Notes by Peter Siegel

Recorded by Peter Siegel, Ralph Rinzler, Michael Seeger, Jerry Goodwin, John Cohen, Ed Kahn.

The Friends of Old Time Music
present



• CLARENCE ASHLEY •

Country recording star of the 1920s & '30s

GAITHER CARLTON.....fiddle
FRED PRICEfiddle
CLINT HOWARDguitar
DOC WATSONbanjo

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The Friends of Old Time Music



PHOTO: DAVE GAHR

DOCK BOGGS



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the
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RAMBLERS

FEB. 11, 1964

P.S. 41