

BERNICE REAGON
Folk Songs: The South
FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 2457



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COTTON NEED A PICKIN'
HALLELU
AUNT RHODY
COME AN' GO WITH ME TO THAT LAN'
OL' PO' SINNER
THE SUN WILL NEVER GO DOWN
AMAZIN' GRACE
AIN'T IT A SHAME
DRINKIN ' OF THE WINE
GREY GOOSE
COME BY HERE
BEEN IN THE STORM
CANE ON THE BRAZOS
SOON MY WORK

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

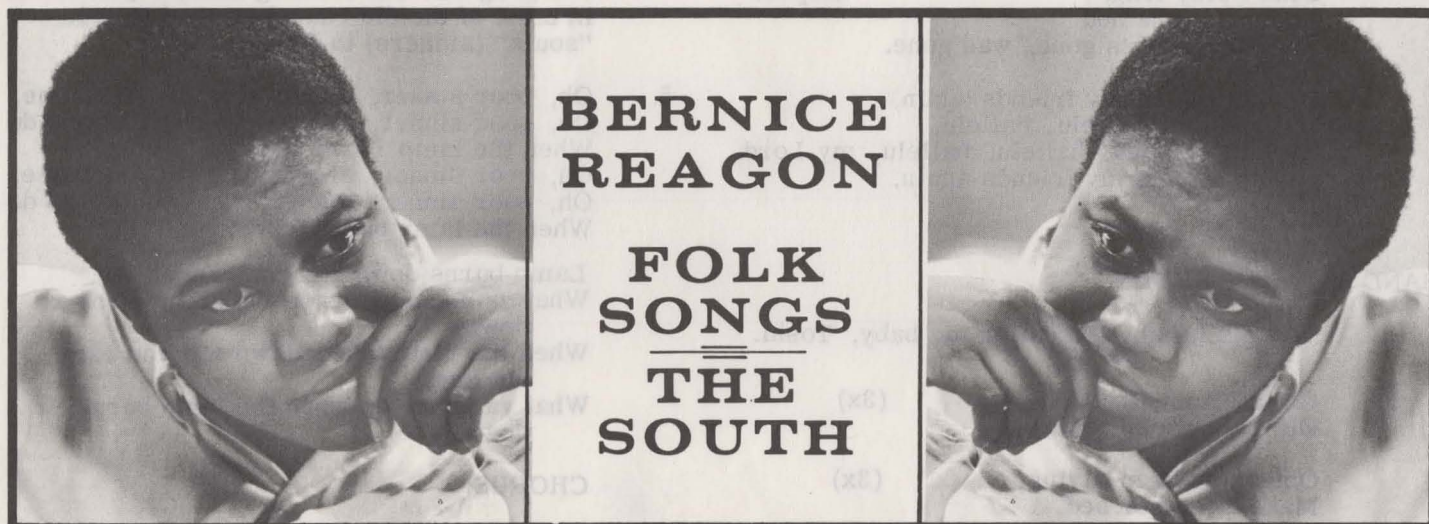
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I was born in Dougherty County, Georgia, October 4, 1942, seven miles outside of Albany. My father was and is a Baptist minister. I was brought up in the Baptist Church. I was baptized when I was eleven years old.

The strongest thing I remember about home was the emphasis put on getting ahead which meant going to school, getting a degree and becoming a teacher or some similar occupation which was considered respectable for a college graduate. I didn't really get a real love of the church music from home, it seemed that church singing was for the older members and the young people had little part in the church. We were encouraged to sing gospel music or sing in the school choirs. There was very little attempt to instill in us the beauty, or love, or pride for the music that expressed and preserved the history of the Negro.

I finished high school and entered college

(Albany State College) on a scholarship. Against the caution lights of my parents, I became involved in the Albany Movement in 1961, this caused my suspension. It also brought about my first real decision for myself and I found that I had the capacity to think for myself. I began to wonder who I was, what I was doing here, what really was behind the fear and atrocities suffered by the Negro. I found the answers only after I attended Spelman College in Atlanta and found that the answer lay in the music I had left at home in the Baptist Church.

My history was wrapped carefully for me by my fore-parents in the songs of the church, the work fields and the blues. Ever since this discovery I've been trying to find myself, using the first music I've ever known as a basic foundation for my search for truth.

BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON

SIDE ONE

BAND 1. COTTON NEED A PICKIN' -

Learned this very good, some of the verses came from Alan Lomax' American Ballads and Folk Songs. Work song for picking cotton.

1. You know that plenty of cotton am on there,
Well-a, hundred by the tree,
You know, the Yankees signed them papers
And they set them darkies free.

CHORUS: You know,
Cotton pickin' so bad,
Cotton pickin' so bad,
Cotton pickin' so bad,
I'm gonna pick all over this world.

You know, workin' on the cotton track,
Well-a, ever since that day,
And I just found out this year
Why I never drawn no pay.

CHORUS

You know, the boss done sole my cotton,
And I asked him for my half,
He said, Willie, you done chalked (?) out,
You're half way to debt.

CHORUS

You know, the boss told Uncle Billie,
He said, you done done right well,
You done paid your debts with the cotton
you picked
So I'll give you the seeds to sell.

CHORUS

BAND 2. HALLELU -

A song used in the old Baptist Churches for funerals.

2. Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu,
Hallelu, hallelu my Lord.

I'm gonna see my friends again,
Hallelu, oh, hallelu, hallelu,
Hallelu, hallelu my Lord.

Repeat

I'm gonna see my friends again,
Hallelu.
Oh, -- came to my house,
Didn't stay long,
Looked on the bed
And somebody's gone, was gone.

Repeat

I'm gonna see my friends again,
Hallelu, oh, hallelu, hallelu,
Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu, my Lord.
I'm gonna see my friends again,
Hallelu.

BAND 3. AUNT RHODY -

An old lullaby I used for my baby, Toshi.

3. Go tell Aunt Rhody, (3x)
Old grey goose is dead.

One she's been saving, (3x)
Make a feather bed.

Old gander's weepin', (3x)
Cause his wife is dead.

Goslin's all cryin', (3x)
Cause their mammy's dead.

Died in the mill pond, (3x)
Standin' on her head.

Go tell Aunt Rhody, (3x)
The old grey goose is dead.

BAND 4. COME AN' GO WITH ME TO THAT LAND -

One of the most common of all songs from
the Baptist Negro Church.

4. Come an' go with me to that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound, where I'm bound.
Oh, come an' go with me to that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound.

Well, we'll all be together in that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound, where I'm bound.
We'll all be together in that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound.

Come an' go with me to that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound, where I'm bound.
Oh, come an' go with me to that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound.

Oh, nothin' but peace in that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound, where I'm bound.
Notin' but peace in that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound.

Well, we'll all be free in that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound, where I'm bound.
Well, we'll all be free in that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound.

Why don't you come and go to that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound, where I'm bound.
Oh, come and go to that lan', (3x)
Where I'm bound.

BAND 5. OL' PO' SINNER -

Song I learned from my father, he used
it during Revival Meeting time, a period
in most of the old churches used to gain
"souls" (sinners) to Christ.

5. Oh, poor sinner, sinner now, is your time,
Oh, poor sinner, sinner, what you gonna do
When the lamp burns down?
Oh, poor sinner, sinner now, is your time,
Oh, poor sinner, sinner, what you gonna do
When the lamp burns down?

Lamp burns down and you cannot see,
What ya gonna do when the lamp burns
down,
When the lamp burns down and you can-
not see,
What ya gonna do when the lamp burns
down?

CHORUS:

Oh, poor sinner, sinner now, is your
time,
Oh, poor sinner, sinner, what you gonna
do
When the lamp burns down?

Lamp burns down and it's too late to
pray,
Whatya gonna do when the lamp burns
down,
When the lamp burns down and it's too late
to pray,
Whatya gonna do when the lamp burns
down?

CHORUS

BAND 6. SUN WILL NEVER GO DOWN -

I first heard this song from my mother,
when she would rock my brothers and
sisters to sleep. I remember it faintly
being used before in church but it is al-
most never heard anymore. Sundown is
usually referred to as a change of period,
the "end of life", and of "working sea-
son" and so forth, and at times it did
seem a long time coming.

6. The sun will never go down, go down,
The sun will never go down,
The flowers are bloomin' forever,
The sun will never go down.

I feel like cryin' some time, some time,
I feel like cryin' some time,
The flowers are bloomin' forever,
The sun will never go down.

Don't ya feel like moanin' some time,
some time,
Don't ya feel like moanin' some time,
The flowers are bloomin' forever,
The sun will never go down.

The sun will never go down, go down,
The sun will never go down,
The flowers are bloomin' forever,
The sun will never go down.

BAND 7. AMAZING GRACE -

Common meter hymns are used in only the oldest of churches now. Most of them are regular hymns taught to a lead singer by missionaries, during slavery. To get the congregation singing, the leader would line out the words, in following him, the congregation used their own improvisations in the words, while waiting for the next line.

7. Amazin' grace, how sweet the Son, } Repeat
That save a wretch like me.

I once was lost, but now I'm }
found. } Repeat
Blind, but now I see.

SIDE TWO

BAND 1. AIN'T IT A SHAME -

A song that ridicules the rules and regulations of church members. Some of the rules still exist, one: No ironing, plowing, washing, etc. on Sundays.

1. Ain't it a shame to backbite on Sunday, } 2x
Ain't it a shame.
Ain't it a shame to backbite on Sunday
When you got Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday, Saturday,
Ain't it a shame.

Ain't it a shame to tell a lie on Sunday, } 2x
Ain't it a shame.
Ain't it a shame to tell a lie on Sunday
When you got Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday, Saturday,
Ain't it a shame.

Ain't it a shame to beat your wife on }
Sunday, } 2x
Ain't it a shame.
Ain't it a shame to beat your wife on
Sunday

When you got Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday, Saturday,
Ain't it a shame.

Ain't it a shame to kiss your girl on }
Sunday, } 2x
Ain't it a shame.
Ain't it a shame to kiss your girl on
Sunday

When you got Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday, Saturday,
Ain't it a shame. No, that ain't no shame!

BAND 2. DRINKING OF THE WINE -

This song is used in the old church for communion services.

2. Didn't my pastor ask for me,
Didn't they done side with me,
Oughta been there ten thousand years
Drinkin' of the wine.

CHORUS: Drinkin' of the wine, wine,
wine,
Drinkin' of the wine, wine, my
Lord,
Oughta been there ten thousand
years
Drinkin' of the wine.

Didn't my sister ask for me,
Didn't they done side with me,
Oughta been there ten thousand years
Drinkin' of the wine.

CHORUS

Didn't my mother ask for me,
Didn't they done side with me,
Oughta been there ten thousand years
Drinkin' of the wine.

CHORUS

Eatin' of the bread, bread, bread,
Eatin' of the bread, my Lord,
Oughta been there ten thousand years
Eatin' of the bread.

CHORUS

BAND 3. GREY GOOSE -

Huddie Ledbetter.

3. Last Sunday mornin',
Lord, Lord, Lord,
The preacher went ahuntin',
Lord, Lord, Lord.
Well he took along his shotgun,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
And he went to the people,
Lord, Lord, Lord.
Along came a grey goose,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
Put his shotgun to his shoulder,
Lord, Lord, Lord.
Well, he ram back the hammer,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
And he pulled at the trigger,
Lord, Lord, Lord.
A grey goose starts afallin',
Lord, Lord, Lord,
He was six feet to fallin',
Lord, Lord, Lord.
Well, he put him on the wagon,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
And he took him to the big house,
Lord, Lord, Lord.
Well, your wife and my wife,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
They had a feather pickin',
Lord, Lord, Lord,
Well, they put him on to pot boil,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
He was six weeks a-pot boil,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
He was six weeks a-pot boil,
Lord, Lord, Lord.
Then they laid him on the table,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
They laid him on the table,
Lord, Lord, Lord.
But the knife couldn't cut him,

Lord, Lord, Lord,
And the fork wouldn't stick him,
Lord, Lord, Lord.
Then they took him to the saw mill
Lord, Lord, Lord,
And they broke the saw's teeth out,
Lord, Lord, Lord.
The last time I seen her,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
Well, the last time I seen her,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
She was flyin' cross the ocean,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
With a whole string of goslin',
Lord, Lord, Lord.
And they all went ahonk, honk,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
And they all went ahonk, honk,
Lord, Lord, Lord.

BAND 4. COME BY HYAR -

There are many rhythms by which to
sing this song, this is the first one I
remember.

4. Come right here, my Lord, come right
here.)3x
Oh Lord, come right here.

Down here singing, Lord, come right)
here,)3x
Oh Lord, come right here.

We need you, Lord, come right here,)3x
Oh Lord, come right here.

Come back here, my Lord, come right)
here,)3x
Oh Lord, come right here.

Down here prayin', Lord, come right)
here,)3x
Oh Lord, come back here.

Come back here, my Lord, come right)
here,)3x
Oh Lord, come right here.

Wanna be free, Lord, come right here,)3x
Oh Lord, come right here.

Come right here, Lord, come right)
here)3x
Oh Lord, come right here.

BAND 5. BEEN IN THE STORM -

Johnson: American Book of Negro
Spirituals.

5. CHORUS: I've been in the storm so long,
I've been in the storm so long,
children,
I've been in the storm so long
Oh, give me a little time to
pray.

Oh, let me tell you, mother,
Just how I call my Lord,
Oh, give me a little time to pray,
With hung down head
And an aching heart,
Oh, give me a little time to pray.

CHORUS

Oh, let me tell you, elders,
Just how I call my Lord,
Oh, give me a little time to pray,
With a hung down head
And an aching heart,
Oh, give me a little time to pray.

CHORUS

BAND 6. CANE ON THE BRAZOS -

I learned this from a man named Arthur
from Columbus, Georgia. Changing
the pace and accent pattern.

6. No more cane on the Brazos,)
Lord, Lord, Lord,) Repeat
Done ground it all to molasses,)
Lord, Lord, Lord.)

Captin, don't you beat me like you beat
old Shine,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
You beat that man till he went stone
blind,
Lord, Lord, Lord.

Oughta been on the river in 1910,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
They were drivin' the women like they do
the men,
Lord, Lord, Lord.

Go down, don't you rise no more,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
Rise in the morning, bring Judgment
sure,
Lord, Lord, Lord.

No more cane on the Brazos,
Lord, Lord, Lord,
Done grind it all to molasses,
Lord, Lord, Lord.

BAND 7. SOON MY WORK -

Garcy Davis, my own arrangement.

7. Soon my work will all be done, (3x)
Goin' home to live with my Lord.

Chariot's waitin' to carry me home, (3x)
To rest with my Lord.

Angel at the gate is waitin' for me, (3x)
To rest with my Lord.

Bye and bye I'll see the King, (3x)
Who bled and died for me.

I got a mother waitin' up there, (3x)
On Canaan's happy shore.

Soon my work will all be done, (3x)
Goin' home to live with God.