

Recorded in Southwestern Virginia by ERIC H. DAVIDSON

VOLUME 4

STEREO

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 3829

CULLEN GALYEAN, BOBBY HARRISON AND THE VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN BOYS

CULLEN GALYEAN, banjo / BOBBY HARRISON, guitar / DAVID LAMBETH, guitar / JOHN JACKSON, fiddle / JERRY STEINBERG, bass



COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 3829

**CULLEN GALYEAN, BOBBY HARRISON AND
THE VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN BOYS**

VOLUME 4

SIDE 1

1. More Pretty Girls Than One
2. East Virginia
3. What Would You Give
4. New River Train
5. Conversation with Cullen Galyean
and Bobby Harrison
6. Wayfaring Stranger

SIDE 2

1. Fair and Tender Ladies
2. Shackles and Chains
3. Dream of a Miner's Son
4. Sand Mountain Blues
5. Little Willie
6. Maple on the Hill
7. Wild Bill Jones

MUSICIANS:	CULLEN GALYEAN	banjo
	BOBBY HARRISON	guitar
	DAVID LAMBETH	guitar
	JOHN JACKSON	fiddle
	JERRY STEINBERG	bass

Recorded in Southwestern Virginia by
Eric H. Davidson

DEDICATION: This record is dedicated to the
memory of IVOR MELTON, mandolin
player and singer.

RETURN TO ARCHIVE
CENTER FOR FOLKLIFE PROGRAMS
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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VOLUME 4

CULLEN GALYEAN, banjo / BOBBY HARRISON, guitar / DAVID LAMBETH, guitar / JOHN JACKSON, fiddle / JERRY STEINBERG, bass

Old Time Bluegrass Music from the Southern Appalachians.

Recorded by Eric H. Davidson in Woodlawn, Virginia, July 16th and 17th, 1982.

Notes by Paul Newman and Eric Davidson.

Acknowledgements

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the assistance of the John Edwards Memorial Foundation, Folklore and Mythology Center, UCLA, in preparing the discography for these notes. The field tapes were skillfully assembled and edited for this record by Mr. Pitt Kinsolving, of Audio Engineering Associates (Pasadena, California). The recordings were made with a Nagra 4 recorder using a conventional and a pressure zone microphone. We are most grateful to Jim Moore, Doris Finch and Jane Rigg for their assistance in preparing these notes, and to Karen Verstuyft for typing the notes.

Dedication

This album is dedicated, with affection, to the memory of IVOR MELTON, whose singing and mandolin picking contributed so much for so many years to the music of the Virginia Mountain Boys.

Introduction

The music of the Virginia Mountain Boys is an old time, non-commercial brand of bluegrass, that is deeply rooted in the older traditions of the Southwest Virginia hills. This is the fourth album of their music to be released by Folkways Records.¹ It was recorded at the home of Bobby Harrison, the lead guitar picker of the band, in Woodlawn, Virginia, in the summer of 1982.

With the recent death of Ivor Melton, the long time mandolin picker of the band, a period of change has begun. The present recordings feature a local fiddle player, also from Woodlawn, Virginia, John Jackson, a guitar player and singer now living in Salem, Virginia, David Lambeth, and a bass player also from Salem, Jerry Steinberg. The musical core of the band remain Cullen Galyean, banjo picker and ballad singer, and his old friend and partner, Bobby Harrison. As they themselves describe in the brief conversation included in the record, the roots of these men, both in a musical and in an historical and geneological sense, lie in the hills of Southwestern Virginia and the adjacent areas of North Carolina. Both Bobby and Cullen derive from families long resident in this region, and the indigenous traditional music was played and sung in both their families.

The musicians you will hear on this record are all technically superb, individually accomplished performers, skilled in the local traditions of string band performance. Their style of band music probably represents the final stage in the long history of old time music in their region. Their lives have bridged the great distance between the slow changing rural and small town society of past decades and the modern values of today's "new South". Now, like most of us, they live in the presence of cassettes, televisions, recorders and stereos. Nonetheless, in style and repertoire, their music remains little affected by latter day intrusions. The antecedents of most of the songs featured on this record are to be found in the music played by earlier generations of mountain people in the same region. The harmonics, phrasing, instrumentation and singing have been molded to some extent to fit the general early bluegrass idiom. Yet the music of the Virginia Mountain Boys descends directly from the earlier traditions of the area, where until recently an exceedingly rich indigenous musical folklore flourished. Though the old time string bands and the great traditional musicians for which the region was once famous are long gone, there remains an appreciation and respect for fine musicianship, for old time music, and for the dwindling number of people who remember it. The yarns spun in the ballads and the instrumental and vocal harmonies to be heard in the collection on this record are not so different from what was being played when the Virginia Mountain Boys

were themselves growing up, when the dominant influence was provided by the music of the great regional string bands of the 1920's, 30's and 40's.

The Music

The songs on this record fall into two classes. Over half are versions of very old indigenous ballads that are solidly a part of the early, orally transmitted musical traditions of the region. Songs belonging in this category are "Wild Bill Jones", "Little Willie", "Fair and Tender Ladies", "Wayfaring Stranger", "New River Train", "East Virginia Blues", and "There's More Pretty Girls". Other songs included in the present collection were written by known composers, mostly in the late 19th century or early 20th century, e.g., "What Would You Give in Exchange for Your Soul", "Dream of a Miner's Child", and "Maple on the Hill". "Shackles and Chains", and "Sand Mountain Blues" were written somewhat later. Irrespective of their various origins, the songs played by the Virginia Mountain Boys have been molded to the style of the band. The origins of the individual pieces provide less of a key to the sound of their music than the origins of their overall style. Both Bobby Harrison and Cullen Galyean were raised in families where the old time claw hammer banjo and fiddle music were played, and where ballads transmitted by oral tradition were common.

The claw hammer banjo-fiddle combination had been the heart of the rural instrumental music of the mountains back into the 19th century, if not earlier. Though neither the claw hammer style banjo nor the traditional rural style of fiddling are utilized by the Virginia Mountain Boys string band, the banjo (now played three-finger style) and to a lesser extent the fiddle remain central instruments. In contrast, in much modern bluegrass, the fiddle has totally disappeared or has become a "specialty" instrument, like the dobro, used mainly for breaks and featured only in special songs. Local string bands including guitar did not exist in this region before the turn of the century, when the guitar appeared in the southwest Virginia mountains, followed by the mandolin.² The rhythmic and harmonic limitations of the archaic claw hammer style of banjo picking then current restricted the variety of the songs that can be played, relative to the repertoire comfortable for mandolin, guitar and fiddle. With the advent of the relatively new instruments (and their new repertoire), mountain musicians began to experiment with various other methods of finger-picking the banjo. A great many primitive variants of three-finger picking could still be observed until recently. In the 1920's and 1930's many string bands appeared which included guitars, fiddle and banjo, and in which finger-picked and claw hammer banjo sometimes alternated. In the Grayson-Carroll Counties area, the best known of these bands included the Bogtrotters, the North Carolina Ramblers, the Skillet Lickers, and Grayson and Whitter's Band. The influence of part singing as applied to secular songs by groups such as the Carter Family added another major force for musical change, as radios and records penetrated the area. One of the great local innovators of the period was Uncle Charlie Poole of the North Carolina Ramblers who hailed from a nearby region of North Carolina. Poole finger-picked the banjo and played with many local guitar and fiddle players, as did Grayson and Whitter. He also made up many memorable songs and revised others in ways which remain popular to this day. During the late 1930's and 1940's the precursors of the later bluegrass bands, such as the Monroe Brothers bands, began to rely more and more on part singing. In the late 1940's the smooth, fast, three-finger styles of banjo picking in use today began to supplant all other styles in the local string bands, except for those in which older men persisted in the claw hammer banjo-fiddle music of their youth. The most important later musical influence for bluegrass bands such as the Virginia Mountain Boys surely was the great Stanley Brothers Band. The Stanley Brothers, themselves steeped in the musical traditions of these same mountains, were great innovators of vocal and instrumental arrangements. Cullen Galyean, at one point, played with their band, and in many subtle ways the music of the Virginia Mountain Boys often displays the influence of Stanley Brothers in musical arrangements, in banjo runs, vocal harmonies, and the verse-chorus organization of some of their songs.

The changes in the local string band music over the last 60 or 70 years were, of course, gradual and stepwise. The main population center became the towns, and as time went on bluegrass music relied less on the tastes of a traditional rural audience. As each new style element entered the scene, it was incorporated, in part, in the string band music then current, rather than replacing the whole complex with a new and foreign complex. Many elements characteristic of commercial bluegrass music are absent from the Virginia Mountain Boys style. These include use of the dobro, of modern or "progressive" bluegrass style fiddling, or of frequent blues harmonies. Earlier style elements still prominent in their music are the rhythmic role played by the fiddle in some songs, and the basic, essentially simple banjo picking of Cullen Galyean, who rarely uses fancy chording or runs played high on the neck. Also of old time quality are the excellent single note runs of Bobby Harrison's guitar picking, and the hard-driving rhythm of the band, which has always been a characteristic of Grayson-Carroll Counties string bands ever since the long gone days of claw hammer banjo-fiddle dance music.

The interested reader is referred for a more detailed discussion of the evolution of string band styles to some of our earlier projects, particularly "String Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties" (FS 3832), and "Ballads and Songs of the Blue Ridge Mountains" (AH 3831). Our previous collections in Grayson and Carroll Counties also include, "Traditional Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties" (FS 3811), "Uncle Wade, A Memorial To An Old Time Virginia Banjo Picker" (FA 2380), and the three previous Virginia Mountain Boys albums mentioned earlier.¹

The Musicians

Cullen Galyean

Cullen Galyean (banjo) was raised in Lowgap, North Carolina near the Virginia state line. Cullen is a real master of three-finger picking banjo styles. Although less flashy than some contemporary banjo players, his banjo music is outstanding and provides a steady driving force in the band. In the early 1970's he played guitar with Ralph Stanley's band after Carter Stanley's death. Cullen recalls meeting the Stanley Brothers in nearby Hillsville, Virginia some years before, and leaving his name as a musician with them. One day, with no warning or preliminary discussion, Ralph Stanley contacted Cullen and asked him to join the band - the next day, to go on tour. Cullen did not miss the opportunity. This story is interesting, not only as an important incident in Cullen's career, but also because it illuminates the basic character of stylistic musical traditions. Everyone participating understands exactly the sound that is to be constructed by the band, and there was no need to question whether a musician known to be accomplished would fit in properly.

It was always this way among traditional musicians in the Grayson-Carroll Counties area. Cullen and Bobby Harrison have played together for 25 years with various groups in the Galax, Virginia area. Cullen has often appeared on both television and radio out of Winston Salem, N.C., and some years ago played on the Grand Old Opry. Cullen learned the banjo as a boy, as do most country musicians. His parents had an old style band; both played the five-string banjo in the original clawhammer style. His father also played the fiddle. Cullen relates that his mother taught him many old-time songs, which he sings in the classical high-pitched style of these mountains. Cullen now lives in the country near Lowgap in a valley long populated by relatives and ancestors.

Bobby Harrison

Bobby Harrison (guitar) is a skilled musician and singer. His steady rhythm and effortless runs are a key factor in the smoothness of the band's music. Bobby is a foreman in a factory in Galax, Virginia, and now lives in Woodlawn, Virginia. He was about 40 years of age when this recording was made. He grew up in the Galax area, and was introduced to music at a very early age, as he describes in his own words on the record. He has played music with Cullen Galyean for most of his adult life. They appear together as the Foothill Boys on County Records, as well as on the previous Virginia Mountain Boys recordings cited above.

Jerry Steinberg

Jerry Steinberg hails from Salem, Virginia where he is employed in a General Electric concern as a customer service representative. He is himself a collector of bluegrass records and an enthusiastic bluegrass bass player. He plays an unusual old Epiphone bass in these recordings.

John W. Jackson

John Jackson, the smooth and skillful fiddler in these recordings, is also from the

Galax area. He is now about 50 years old. He spent his boyhood in Tennessee, then lived in Galax for some years before moving to Delaware and Pennsylvania. There he played in bands called the New River Boys and the Southern Mountain Boys with Ted Lundy, a well-known banjo picker also originally from the Galax region. Some of their music is available on the "New River" label. He learned his music from his brothers and sisters, and can play many instruments, among them guitars and mandolin, as well as fiddle. His unusual ability to construct fiddle accompaniments to vocals is evident in many of these recordings featured on this record.

David Lambeth

David Lambeth is an accomplished singer and guitar picker who is the lead vocalist on a number of these recordings. He comes originally from Asheboro, N.C. He was 38 years old when these recordings were made. He moved to Virginia in 1971, and now lives near Salem, Virginia. He is employed as a utility man by the Roanoke County school system. David learned to play guitar from his mother. For many years he specialized in gospel songs before getting back into bluegrass and traditional music.

The Songs

Side 1.

Band 1. "There's More Pretty Girls Than One"

This popular traditional tune is also used for "Who's Gonna Shoe Your Pretty Little Foot" and other songs. It was recorded at an early period by Fiddlin' Arthur Smith (Bluebird B-7437) and Riley Puckett and Red Jones (Decca 5438) and subsequently by artists such as Doc Watson (Poppy PYS-5703), Larry Richardson & the Blue Ridge Boys (Country 702), and Joe Smith and the Carolina Buddies (Great Bluegrass Country Records 4045).

Sung by Cullen Galyean, with Bobby Harrison and the band.

- 1) My momma told me last night,
She gave me good advice.
Said son you better quit your rambling around,
And marry you a loving wife.

Chorus

There's more pretty girls than one,
There's more pretty girls than one.
Every town I ramble around,
There's more pretty girls than one.

- 2) Look down that lonesome road,
Hang down your little head and cry.
For thinking about those pretty little girls,
And a'hoping I'll never die.

(Chorus)

- 3) Look down that lonesome road,
Before you travel on.
I'm a'leaving you this lonesome old song,
To sing when I am gone.

(Chorus)

(Chorus)

Band 2. "East Virginia Blues"

This traditional tune, which goes back to 17th century England, is a favorite in the Southern Appalachians. It was recorded by Clarence Ashley under the title "Dark Holler Blues" in 1929 (Columbia 15489) playing a five-string banjo in a modal key. Ashley later recorded the same song to the accompaniment of guitar and mouth harp (Vocalion 02576). A popular rendition of the song by the Carter family was issued in 1934 (Bluebird B-5650). In more recent times, it has been recorded by the Stanley Brothers and numerous other bluegrass groups.

Sung by David Lambeth, with Bobby Harrison and the band.

- 1) I was born in East Virginia,
North Carolina I did go.
There I spied a pretty young maiden,
And her age I did not know.

Chorus

I don't want your green back dollar,
I don't want your watch and chain.
All I want is your heart darling,
Say you'll take me back again.

- 2) Oh her hair was dark and curly,
And her cheek was rosy red.
On her breast she wore white lilies,
Where I longed to lay my head.

(Chorus)

- 3) Oh the ocean's deep and I can't wade it,
And I have no wings to fly.
I'll just get me a blue eyed,
For to row me over the tide.

(Chorus)

- 4) I'd rather be in some dark hollow,
Where the sun refuse to shine.
Than for you to be another man's darling,
And to know you'll never be mine.

(Chorus)

- 5) I'll go back to East Virginia,
North Carolina ain't my home.
I'll go back to East Virginia,
Leave old North Carolinas alone.

(Chorus)

Band 3. "What Would You Give in Exchange For Your Soul?"

Although written and copyrighted in 1912 by J. H. Carr and F. J. Berry, this song is generally treated as a "traditional" hymn and is often included in Song and Hymn books as such. It does not seem to have been recorded before 1936, the year it was done both by Wade Mainer and Zeke Morris (Bluebird B-8073) and Bill and Charles Monroe (Bluebird B-6309).

Sung by Cullen Galyean, with Bobby Harrison.

- 1) Brother how far from the savior today?
Risking your soul from the things that decay.
Oh if God should call you away,
What would you give, What would you give in exchange for your soul?

Chorus

What would you give in exchange for your soul?
What would you give in exchange for your soul?
What would you give in exchange for your soul?
Oh if today God should call you away,

- 2) Mercy is calling you, won't you give heed,
But the dear saviour still tenderly pleads.
Risk not your soul it's too precious indeed,
Oh What would you give, What would you give in exchange for your soul?

(Chorus)

- 3) More than the silver and gold of this earth,
More than all jewels our spirit is worth.
God the creator has given this earth,
Oh what would you give, what would you give in exchange for your soul?

Band 4. "New River Train"

This song, which dates to the 1880's, is a true product of Southwestern Virginia. It was recorded in 1923 by Henry Whitter of Fries, Virginia on one of the very first commercial recordings of country music (Okeh 40143). In 1925 it was recorded by Kelly Harrell (Victor 19596, acoustical; Victor 20171, electric) in a version that was quickly copied and popularized by others, e.g. Vernon Dalhart (Columbia 15032-D). In 1936 it was recorded by the Monroe Brothers (Bluebird B-6645) thereby paving its way for entry into the bluegrass repertoire. The song, nevertheless, remained a favorite among more traditional musicians, as seen, for example, in the version included in The Music of Roscoe Holcomb and Wade Ward, Folkways FA 2363.

Sung by Cullen Galyean, with John Jackson and Bobby Harrison, and the band. On this number Ronnie Harrison, Bobby's son, plays the mandolin as well.

- 1) Darling you can't love one,
Oh darling you can't love one.
You can't love one and have any fun,
Oh darling you can't love one.

Chorus

Riding on that New River train,
Riding on that New River train.
Same old train that brought me here,
Gonna carry me away again.

- 2) Oh darling you can't love two,
Darling you can't love two.
You can't love two and your little heart be true,
Oh darling you can't love two.

(Chorus)

- 3) Darling you can't love three,
Oh darling you can't love three.
You can't love three and still love me,
Darling you can't love three.

(Chorus)

- 4) Darling you can't love four,
Oh darling you can't love four.
You can't love four and love me anymore,
Oh darling you can't love four.

(Chorus)

(Chorus)

Band 5. Conversation of Bobby Harrison and Cullen Galyean (in that order).

Band 6. "Wayfaring Stranger"

This white spiritual song is now associated closely with the folksinger Burl Ives, who has performed and recorded it on innumerable occasions. Before Ives, however, the song was widely known, being included in standard printed song and hymn books. Library of Congress recordings done in 1936-1937 include versions of the song collected from Florida all the way to Wisconsin. The song has been recorded in a traditional style by Roscoe Holcomb (Folkways FA 2317) and in a bluegrass style by Bill Monroe, et al (Decca DL 8769).

Sung by Cullen Galyean, with Bobby Harrison.

- 1) I am a poor wayfaring stranger,
While traveling through this world below.
There is no sickness, toil, nor danger,
In that bright world to which I go.

Chorus

I'm going there to meet my father,
I'm going there for to roam.
I'm just going over Jordan,
I am just going over home.

- 2) I'll soon be free from every travail,
His form will reign beneath the sun.
I'll drop the cross of self denial,
And enter in the home of God.

(Chorus)

- 3) I'm going there to meet my Savior,
Who shed for me his precious blood.
I'm just going over Jordan,
I am just going over home.

(Chorus)

Side 2

Band 7. "Fair and Tender Ladies"

"Come all ye fair and tender ladies" is one of the lovely traditional English songs that were collected in the southern Appalachians by Cecil Sharp (# 118). Recordings include those by Jean Ritchie (in The Best of Jean Ritchie, Prestige/International 13003), Edna Richie (Folk-Legacy Records fSA-3), and the authentic unaccompanied vocal rendition of Sarah Hawkes of Baywood, Virginia (in Ballads and Songs of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Asch AH 3831). The song has also been recorded by the Carter Sisters and

Mother Maybelle (Columbia CO-47680, 1952).

Sung by John Jackson, Cullen Galyean and Bobby Harrison, and the band.

- 1) Come all you fair and tender ladies,
Take warning how you court young men.
They're like a star on a summer morning,
They first appear and then they're gone.
- 2) They'll tell to you some loving story,
And they make you think they love you well.
Then away they'll go and court some other,
And leave you there in grief to brood.
- 3) I wish I was on some tall mountain,
Where the ivy'd rocks are black with dew.
I'd write a letter to my own true lover,
Who's cheeks are like the morning dew.
- 4) O love is handsome, love is charming,
And love is ready while it's new.
But love grows cold and love grows old,
And fades away like morning dew.
And fades away like morning dew.

Band 8. "Shackles and Chains"

This song was written around 1937 by Jimmie Davis, history teacher, song writer, country music singer, and twice governor of Louisiana (1945-1948; 1961-1964). In addition to Davis's own recording (Decca 5492), the song has been recorded by Charles Lee Guy

(Capital T 1920), Chubby Wise (Stoneway STY 108), Arlo Guthrie (Reprise MS 2060), and other performers such as Mac Wiseman, and the Stanley Brothers.

Sung by David Lambeth, with Bobby Harrison and the band.

- 1) On a long lonesome journey I'm going,
Oh darling please don't you cry.
In these shackles and chains they will take me,
To a prison to stay till I die.

Chorus

And at night through these bars I will gaze at the stars,
And dream of your kisses in vain.
A piece of stone I will use for my pillow,
While I'm sleeping in shackles and chains.

- 2) Put your arms through these bars once my darling,
Let me kiss those sweet lips I love best.
For in heartache you're my consolation,
In sorrow my haven of rest.

(Chorus)

(Chorus)

Band 9. "Dream of a Miner's Child"

This song goes back to an old English music-hall song "Don't Go Down in the Mine, Dad", composed by Robert Donnelly and Will Geddes in 1910. It was presumably inspired by the great 1907 mining disaster at St. Genede in South Wales. It became popular in England as sheet music and on cylinder and disc recordings. It was "recomposed" in America by the Reverend Andrew Jenkins, the "author" of other "folk-ballads", such as "The Death of Floyd Collins". It was recorded in 1925 (Okeh 40498, Victor 19821) by the immensely popular operatic tenor turned country singer Vernon Dalhart (pseudonym for Marion Try Slaughter, 1883-1948). It has also been recorded by Doc Watson, (in album Doc Watson and Son, Vanguard VRS 9170), and by Ralph and Carter Stanley (in The Legendary Stanley Brothers, Rebel SLP 1487).

Sung by Cullen Galyean, with Bobby Harrison, and the band.

- 1) A miner was leaving his home for his work,
He heard his little child scream.
He went to the side of his little one's bed,
Oh Daddy, I've had such a dream.

Chorus

Oh Daddy don't go to the mines today,
My dreams have so often come true.
Oh Daddy, dear Daddy please don't go away,
I never could live without you.

- 2) Go down to the village and tell all your friends,
As sure as the bright sun does shine.
There's something a'going to happen there today,
Dear Daddy, don't go to that mine.

(Chorus)

- 3) I dreamed that the mine was all blazing with fire,
The miners all fought for their lives.
And then the scene changed at the mouth of the mine,
It was covered with sweethearts and wives.

(Chorus)

Band 10. "Sand Mountain Blues"

The Delmore Brothers (Alton, 1908 - , and Rabon, 1916-1952) wrote and recorded many songs about railroads, hobos, and similar topics. "Sand Mountain Blues", which refers to a mountain in their native Alabama, is one such song. The Delmore Brothers recorded it (King 849) as have the Louvin Brothers (Capital T 1449), and Charlie Moore.

Sung by David Lambeth, and the band.

- 1) Standing by the railroad, waiting for a train,
I'm going to catch that midnight special.
And never come back again,
It's a lonesome feeling, Sand Mountain Blues.
- 2) I went to the gypsy, to hear what she would say,
She said that girl don't love you.
And you better be on your way,
You're going to be sorry, you broke my heart.
- 3) I don't know where to go, any old place will do,
I'm leaving old Sand Mountain.
Just getting away from you,
It's a lonesome feeling, Sand Mountain Blues.
- 4) There's other girls around here, and I can love them too,
But everytime I saw you,
It would make me sad and blue.
You're going to be sorry, you broke my heart.
- 5) When it makes you lonesome, to hear that freight train blow,
Then you will know that I'll be riding,
But I didn't want to go.
It's a lonesome feeling, Sand Mountain Blues.
- 6) When it's raining on Sand Mountain, and raining kinda slow,
Then maybe you'll remember,
That day you made me go.
You're going to be sorry you broke my heart.
- 7) I am just a poor boy, and work's my middle name,
I guess that's why you said goodbye,
But I love you just the same.
You're going to be sorry you broke my heart.
- 8) If you ever need me, then maybe I'll come back,
I hear that train a'coming,
It's a'coming down the track.
It's a lonesome feeling, Sand Mountain Blues.

Band 11. "Little Willie"

This tune, which is usually known as "Little Willie" or "Sweet Willie", is a variant of the old English ballad, "The Two Brothers" collected in the mountains by Sharp (#12). It has been recorded in a traditional manner on Folkways by Bob Baker (FA 2318) and Jean Ritchie (FA 2427), and in a bluegrass style by the Stanley Brothers (King 772).

Sung by Cullen Galyean.

- 1) When I was in my sixteenth year,
Little Willie courted me,
He said if I run away from home,
His dear wife I would be.

- 2) I was so far away from home,
Little Willie said to me.
Go home go home my dear little girl,
My wife you'll never be.
- 3) My momma was so kind to me,
And I know she loved me true.
You brought me far away from home,
And how can you leave me here.
- 4) Nature, nature, my dear little girl,
Oh its nature for to be.
My mind is to ramble around,
And I bid this wide world adieu.

Band 12. "Maple on the Hill"

Written by the black composer Gussie Davis in the 1890's, this song was recorded early and often by country music artists. Noteworthy recordings include those by Vernon Dalhart (Victor 20109), Darby and Tarlton (Columbia 15591), J. E. Mainer's Mountaineers (Bluebird B-6065), Carter Sisters and Mother Maybelle (Liberty LRP 3230), and the Stanley Brothers (Diplomat 2601). Mainer's 1935 version, sung by Mainer and Zeke Morris, is the one that is most often imitated. Although essentially traditional, Mainer's band anticipated Bluegrass in its instrumental use of the banjo, fiddle, mandolin, and guitar.

Sung by David Lambeth, with Bobby Harrison, and the band.

- 1) Near a quiet country village,
Stood a maple on the hill,
Where I set with my Geneva long ago.
As the stars were shining brightly,
We could hear the whipporwill,
As we set beneath that maple on the hill.
- 2) We would sing love songs together,
While the birds had gone to rest,
We would listen to the murmur ore the rills.
Will you love me little darling,
As you did that starry night,
As we set beneath that maple on the hill.
- 3) Don't forget me little darling,
When they lay me down to die,
Just one little wish darling, that I pray,
As you linger there in sadness,
Thinking, darling, of the past,
Let your tear drops kiss the flowers on my grave.
- 4) I will soon be with the angels,
On that bright and peaceful shore,
Even now I hear them coming ore the rills.
So, goodbye, my little darling,
It's time for us to part,
I must leave you and that maple on the hill.

Band 13. "Wild Bill Jones"

This outlaw ballad somehow made its way into Sharp's collection (# 99) even though it is clearly American in origin. It was recorded in 1924 by Samantha Bumgarner (on 5-string banjo) and Eva Davis (fiddle), both from Sylva, North Carolina (Columbia 15129-D, also available in Banjo Songs of the Southern Mountains, Riverside RLP 610). This may be the first appearance of a 5-string banjo on record. The song was subsequently recorded by Kelly Harrell (Okeh 40486), Wade Mainer and his Little Smilin' Rangers (Bluebird 7249), George Reneau (Vocalion 14998), and later by the Stanley Brothers (King 772).

Sung by Cullen Galyean, with the band.

- 1) As I went out one evening for a walk,
I walked upon old Wild Bill Jones.
He was walking and talking about my true lover's eyes,
I bid him for to leave her alone.
- 2) He said my age is twenty-one,
Too old to be controlled.
I pulled my pistol from my side,
I killed that poor boy cold.
- 3) Pass around that long neck bottle,
And we'll all get on with the spree.
For today's the last of Wild Bill Jones,
Tomorrow'll be the last of me.
- 4) I've been in this prison for twenty long years,
Oh how I long to be free.
Oh Wild Bill Jones and that long neck bottle,
Gonna be the death of me.

Repeat 3rd verse.

Footnotes:

1. Previous albums appeared in 1974 ("Glen Neaves and the Virginia Mountain Boys", FA 3830), 1977 ("The Virginia Mountain Boys, Vol. 2, A Bluegrass String Band", FA 3833), and 1980 ("Virginia Mountain Boys, Vol. 3, FS 3839).

2. See Notes, "String Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties", (FS 3832).

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