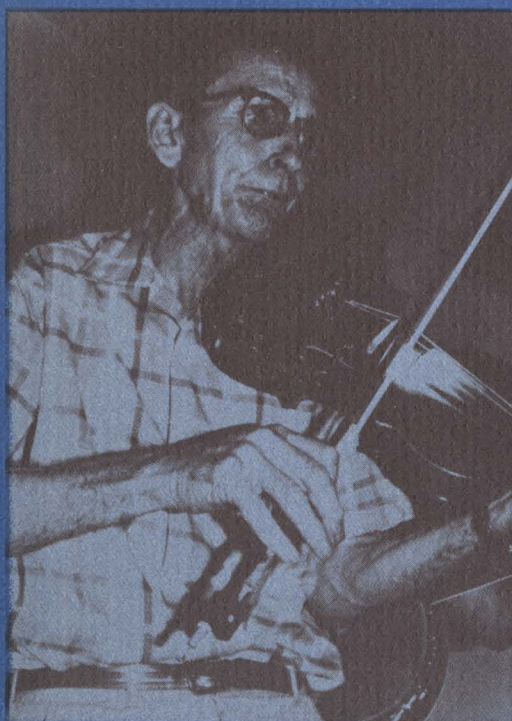


FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 3833 STEREO

The Virginia Mountain Boys 2 Blue Grass String Band

CULLEN GALYEAN, GLEN NEAVES, BOBBY HARRISON, IVOR MELTON,
HERMAN DALTON, MARVIN COCKRAM and Others

Recorded by Eric Davidson,
with Lyn Davidson, Paul Newman, Caleb Finch and Jane Rigg, 1961-1974



FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 3833 STEREO

SIDE 1

Band 1 Lonesome Road Blues
Band 2 Knoxville Girl
Band 3 Nobody's Darling
Band 4 Lost Train Blues
Band 5 Love Me, Darling
Band 6 I'm Glad My Wife's in Europe
Band 7 Red Rocking Chair
Band 8 Train 45
Band 9 In the Pines

SIDE 2

Band 1 Whitehouse Blues
Band 2 Clinch Mountain
Band 3 Red and Green Signal Lights
Band 4 Poor Rambler
Band 5 Sunny Side of the Mountain
Band 6 John Hardy
Band 7 Little Frankie Baker
Band 8 Little Birdie

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 3833 STEREO

THE VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN BOYS, VOL. 2

Names of Musicians:

Glen Neaves, Cullen Galyean, Ivor Melton, Bobby Harrison, Herman Dalton, Marvin Cockram, Mike Bedwell

String band music recorded in Virginia between 1961 and 1974 by Eric Davidson with Lyn Davidson, Paul Newman, Caleb Finch, and Jane Rigg.

Notes assembled by Eric Davidson, Jane Rigg and Brooke Moyer.

The master tape was assembled by Phil A. Yeend, Norwich Enterprises, with great skill from field recordings.

Acknowledgments

We are pleased to acknowledge the assistance of the John Edwards Memorial Foundation, Folklore and Mythology Center, University of California at Los Angeles, in preparing the discography for these Notes.

Introduction

This is the second album of the Virginia Mountain Boys music which Folkways has issued. The first, entitled "Glen Neaves and the Virginia Mountain Boys" (FA 3830) appeared in 1974, and a third album is soon to follow. The Virginia Mountain Boys are a local bluegrass band from the Grayson and Carroll Counties area of Southwest Virginia whose music is distinguished by its many ties to the earlier oral traditions of this region. In this they differ markedly from most of the contemporary bluegrass bands which can now be found in this area of the country. There are two major components to the repertoire of the Virginia Mountain Boys. A portion of their repertoire derives from a group of very old indigenous songs and tunes. In addition, their repertoire includes a large class of songs which appeared more or less in their present form between 1910 and 1940, and can often be found on early recordings made during the 1920's and 1930's (see discography below). The latter

group of songs provided the main source for many well known bands such as the Carter Family, and is itself of diverse origin. Some of these songs are distantly related to older music drawn from the pre-existing oral traditions; some appeared as popular ballads to commemorate notable latter day events; some were apparently composed and written elsewhere in the country and then filtered into the Blue Ridge area; others were made up by well-known performing musicians of the Appalachian region about the time the first recordings began to circulate.

Irrespective of their various origins, the songs played by the Virginia Mountain Boys have been molded to fit the characteristic style of this string band. Thus the origins of the individual pieces provide less of a key to their music than does the origin of their overall style. As noted below, two of the most important members of the group, Glen Neaves and Cullen Galyean, were raised on farms, in families where the original rural instrumental traditions of the Blue Ridge area were familiar. Both Cullen's father and Glen's father picked the five-string banjo clawhammer style. The clawhammer banjo-fiddle combination was the heart of the indigenous rural music. Clawhammer banjo plays no part in the Virginia Mountain Boys music today, nor does the traditional rural style of fiddling. Both have essentially disappeared as part of a genuine, orally transmitted folk culture, along with most of the other cultural characteristics of Southern Appalachian log cabin farm life. In most places the old music has been abruptly supplanted with musical styles that are mainly nonlocal, imported via record and radio. The music of the Virginia Mountain Boys, on the other hand, seems identifiably local. These musicians learned to play from other local musicians of the region in the period between 1920 and 1950, and were decisively influenced by them.

The development of the Virginia Mountain Boys style of string band music can be traced at least in outline due to the fact that string bands representing all phases of this musical evolution were recorded in the area during the 1950's and 1960's. 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). In brief, the history of the "old time bluegrass" style of the Virginia Mountain Boys can be summarized as follows. The most important instruments of the original instrumental music complex were banjo and fiddle, and these instruments still provide the backbone of the music played by bands which have retained some of the original local traditions. In contrast, in much of the more modern bluegrass, the fiddle has become more and more of a

"specialty" instrument, like the dobro used mainly for breaks and featured only in certain songs. Around the turn of the century the guitar appeared in the S.W. Virginia Mountains, followed by the mandolin. The rhythmic and harmonic limitations of the archaic clawhammer style of banjo picking restricts the variety of the songs which can be played, relative to the repertoire comfortable for mandolin, guitar and fiddle. Thus, with the advent of the new instruments and their repertoire, mountain musicians quickly 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 clawhammer banjo sometimes alternated. In the Grayson-Carroll Counties area the best known of these bands was probably the Bogtrotters. 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. So did one of the great local innovators of the period, Uncle Charlie Poole, who hailed from a nearby region of North Carolina. Poole finger-picked the banjo and played with local guitar and fiddle players. 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 began to rely more and more on part singing, and the mandolin came to play an important role. 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 clawhammer-banjo music of their youth. The main population centers were now the towns, and bluegrass music relied less on the tastes of a traditional rural audience for its audience. All the musicians in the Virginia Mountain Boys work in town, and the band usually plays before town audiences.

This brief summary stresses the causes and sources of change in local string band music over the last 60 or 70 years. The changes were gradual and stepwise. Thus 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 bluegrass style fiddling, of prominent bass fiddle runs, or of frequent blues harmonies. Earlier style elements still prominent in their music are the rhythmic role played by the fiddle, 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 origin are the excellent singlenote 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 clawhammer banjo-fiddle dance music.

For those interested in comparisons between the music of the Virginia Mountain Boys and its earlier antecedents in the same area a number of annotated Folkways recordings are available. Our previous collections in Grayson and Carroll Counties include: "Traditional Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties" (FS 3811); the string band (FS 3832) and ballad (AH 3831) records referred to above; and "Uncle Wade, a Memorial to an Old Time Virginia Banjo Picker" (FA 2380).

The Band and the Musicians

We first recorded Glen Neaves with a string band in 1959, and again in 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1969, 1972, and 1974. From about 1963 on, the core of the band has remained the same, with Glen Neaves on fiddle and guitar, Cullen Galyean the banjo picker, Bobby Harrison on guitar, and Ivor Melton on mandolin. They have been joined on occasion by Jesse Neaves, a fine singer in her own right, and Roger Dalton on bass fiddle. In our recent encounters with the band, Herman Dalton has played the fiddle. Many of the same musicians have also played under the names of the Blue Ridge Buddies, the Pipers Gap String Band, and the Foothill Boys.

The Virginia Mountain Boys are well known in Southwest Virginia and nearby counties in North Carolina from local radio broadcasts (e.g., the Carroll-Grayson County Hoedown, a program on WBOB in Galax, Virginia), appearances at the Galax Fiddlers' Convention, and many performances at local dances and other social gatherings. The band is, however, little known outside of the Central Appalachians and has not traveled widely. Recordings made by members of the band are included in previous field collections: "Traditional Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties" (FS 3811) and "Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties" (FS 3832).

Glen Neaves

Glen Neaves (fiddle, guitar, vocal) is an outstanding performer who has maintained an organized band for at least fifteen years. Born in Ashe County, North Carolina in 1910, Glen began to play the fiddle at the age of nine. Glen relates that his father played the banjo in the old clawhammer style, but that he never learned to. Glen was very

much influenced by the great G.B. Grayson, a famous traditional mountain fiddler who lived nearby. (Grayson is referred to in the Ballad of Tom Dooley: "If it hadn't been for Grayson, I'd have been in Tennessee," recorded by the Neaves Band (FS 3811)). Most of the traditional songs, ballads, and breakdowns are familiar by ear to Glen and some are included in the Virginia Mountain Boys repertoire. The older breakdowns which Glen does play are in a style markedly different from those of the traditional fiddlers of previous generations. Glen's individualistic style of fiddling, while in some ways close to contemporary bluegrass fiddling, has remained uninfluenced by recent musical developments such as folk rock. The way he plays tunes presented on this record has remained unchanged during the 18 years of our acquaintance.

Glen is also well known for his excellent singing. His style is considerably more emotional than that of many of the traditional male singers of this region. Glen frequently accompanies himself on the guitar, which he plays with a flatpick.

Glen and his wife, Mary, make their home in Fries, Virginia, a milltown on the New River. He has been employed in factories and mills all his life and never undertook to make his living by farming, as did most of the older traditional musicians of the area. Although Glen is less than twenty-five years younger than the last generation of completely traditional regional musicians, it is fair to say that his life-style represents a marked departure from that of the older mountaineers. In a way Glen is typical of the first generation to break away from the archaic rural ways of the Appalachians. Glen's style of fiddle playing can be said to reflect this transition.

Cullen Galyean

Cullen Galyean (banjo) was raised in Low Gap, 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. For a short time, he played with the Stanley Brothers, a well-known bluegrass band. Cullen and Bobby Harrison have played together for 25 years with various groups. Cullen has often appeared on both T.V. and radio out of Winston Salem, N.C., and three years ago played with 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 Low Gap and works in a knitting mill in Galax.

Ivor Melton

Ivor Melton (mandolin) is of the same generation as Glen. A superb musician, he is known throughout Carroll and Grayson Counties. He is also a mill worker and lives in Galax.

Bobby Harrison

Bobby Harrison (guitar) is a highly experienced and skilled musician and singer. His steady rhythm and effortless runs are a key factor in the smoothness of the band's music. Bobby works in a factory and lives near Piper's Gap. As noted above he has played music with Cullen Galyean for most of his adult life. They appear together with the Foothill Boys on County Records.

Herman Dalton

Herman Dalton plays a rather traditionally styled fiddle with the Virginia Mountain Boys when Glen is not playing this instrument. Herman was also a member of the Foothill Boys. He was born in Stewart, Va. and has been playing music since he was a lad. His father too was an old time clawhammer banjo picker, and his mother was a musician as well. He is about 50 years old and now does maintenance work for the Carroll County School Board.

Mike Bedwell

Mike Bedwell is featured on a breakdown on this record (Clinch Mountain) playing the mandolin. He is a grandson of Glen Neaves and was about 14 years old when the recording was made.

Marvin Cockram

Marvin Cockram plays the bass fiddle, and had been accompanying Ivor Melton, Cullen Galyean, and Bobby Harrison for about a year in 1974. He has been part of various other local bands including the Snowy Mountain Boys and The Dixie Gentlemen. He comes from Meadows of Dam, Va., and derives from a family familiar with old time music; his father was an excellent clawhammer banjo picker. He has lived in the area all of his life and makes his living operating construction machinery.

SIDE I

Band 1: Lonesome Road Blues

(recorded Nov. 1974; Galyean, Harrison, and Melton-vocals; banjo-Galyean; guitars-Harrison, Bedwell; mandolin-Melton; fiddles-Neaves and Dalton; bass-Cockram)

A song known to all string bands from the Grayson-Carroll County area.

CHORUS

1. I'm a-goin down this long lonesome road
I'm a-goin down this long lonesome road
I'm a-goin down this long lonesome road, Lord, Lord
And I ain't goin' to be treated this a-way.
2. I ain't got but one old rusty dime
I ain't got but one old rusty dime
I ain't got but one old rusty dime, Lord, Lord
And I ain't goin to be treated this a-way.

CHORUS

3. It's a-way down in jail on my knees
It's a-way down in jail on my knees
It's a-way down in jail on my knees, Lord, Lord
And I ain't goin to be treated this a-way.

CHORUS

4. It's a-way down in Florida all night long
It's a-way down in Florida all night long
It's a-way down in Florida all night long, Lord, Lord
And I ain't goin to be treated this a-way.

CHORUS

CHORUS.

Band 2. Knoxville Girl

(recorded Nov. 1974; Galyean, Harrison and Cockram -vocals; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison; mandolin-Melton; fiddle-Neaves; bass-Cockram)

(In a couple of places a slight interference is evident in this recording due to an electrical appliance that was turned on during the song).

This song is derived from an 18th Century British broadside ballad, usually known as "The Wexford Girl". It represents an element of the old rural musical tradition included in the Virginia Mountain Boys repertoire. The song is often localized to various other cities such as Oxford, Lexington, etc. Included in G. Malcolm Laws' American Balladry From British Broad sides, p. 35. The song appears in many American folksong collections in widely variant form. Some other recordings:

Carter Family, "Never Let the Devil Get the Upper Hand of You", recorded June 17, 1937, in New York, releases, Decca 5479, Montgomery Ward M-8027, Melotone 45250 and other reissues.

Blue Sky Boys, "The Story of the Knoxville Girl, recorded August 2, 1937, Charlotte, No. Carolina, releases, Bluebird B-7755, Montgomery Ward M-7327 and other reissues.

1. I met a little girl in Knoxville
A town you all know well
And every Sunday evening
There in her home I'd dwell.
2. We went to take an evening walk
About a mile from town
I picked a stick up off the ground
And I knocked that fair girl down.
3. She fell down on her bending knees
For mercy she did cry
Oh Willie dear, don't kill me here
I'm unprepared to die.
4. She never spoke another word
I only beat her more
Until the ground around me
Within her blood did flow.
5. I started back to Knoxville
Got there about midnight
My mother she was worried
And woke up in a fright.
6. Sayin', son, oh, son
What have you done
To bloody your clothes so.
I told my anxious mother
I've been bleeding at the nose.

7. They carried me down to Knoxville
They put me in a cell
My friends they tried to get me out
But none could go my bail.
8. I'm here to waste my life away
Down in this dirty old cell
Because I murdered that Knoxville girl
The girl I loved so well.

Band 3: Nobody's Darlin

(Recorded Nov., 1974; Neaves-vocal;
banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison;
mandolin-Melton; fiddle-Neaves;
bass-Cockram)

This song is said to have been written by Jimmie Davis, copyright 1935. Recordings by Davis and Gene Autry were among the top country records of 1935. Some early recordings were: Jimmie Davis, Decca 5090; Gene Autry, Okeh 03070; Prairie Ramblers, Conqueror 8573; and Wade Mainer/Zeke Morris, Bluebird B-6423.

1. Out in the cold world alone
Wanderin' about on the street
Askin' a penny for liquor
And begging for something to eat

CHORUS

I'm nobody's darling on earth
Heaven have mercy on me
For I'm nobody's darling
Nobody cares for me

2. When I was just a young lad
My mother was taken from home
Now I have no one to love me
No one to call me their own

CHORUS

3. While others are sleeping so sound
Dreaming of silver and gold
I am out in this wide world
Just wandering about in the cold

CHORUS

4. Now if I could be fortunate enough
To get to that heavenly home
Then I'd have someone to love me
Someone to call me their own

CHORUS

Band 4: Lost Train Blues

(Recorded Nov., 1974; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison and Bedwell; mandolin-Melton; bass-Cockram)

A tune called "New Lost Train Blues" was recorded February 14, 1936, by Ollie Bunn and Clarence Todd with J.E. Mainer's Mountaineers. This was issued as Bluebird B-6424 and Montgomery Ward M-7003.

Band 5: Love Me Darlin' Just Tonight

(Recorded Aug., 1971; Galyean, Harrison, and Melton, vocals; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison; mandolin-Melton; fiddle-Neaves; bass-Dalton)

We were unable to determine the origin of this song. It is obviously not of traditional origin.

CHORUS

1. Love me darlin' just tonight
Take your arms and hold me tight
Tomorrow you may hold another
Love me darling just tonight
2. They say tomorrow you are leaving
I hope you know the way is right
I pray to God you won't leave me
Love me darlin' just tonight

CHORUS

3. Try to keep true love in your heart
Tomorrow we may not have to part
But if you feel you must leave me
Love me darlin' just tonight

CHORUS.

Band 6: I'm Glad My Wife's In Europe

(Recorded, May, 1963; Neaves-vocal and guitar)

This song could have been written by Fiddlin' John Carson. It was recorded by him on:

August 27, 1924, Atlanta, Georgia, for General Phonograph Co., releases: Okeh 40196 and Rounder 1003, The Old Hen Cackled and the Rooster's Gonna Crow.

March 17, 1927, Atlanta, Georgia, for the Okeh Phonograph Corp. (unissued).

February 27, 1934, Camden, New Jersey, for RCA Victor, releases: Bluebird B-6247 and Montgomery Ward M-4852.

A version of the song was printed in 'The Kentucky Wonder Bean', Walter Peterson - Sensational Collection of Mountain Ballads and Old Time Songs. M.M. Cole Publishing Co., Chicago (no date given). Song on pp. 42-43, credited to John Carson. The first verse, missing from Glen Neaves' version, is:

Come all of you young poets and listen to what I say,
The day that I got married, I threw my life away,
My wife she takes a notion, that she wants to cross the sea,
And the war broke out in Europe and she can't come back to me.

* * *

CHORUS

1. Well, I'm glad my wife's in Europe
And she can't get back to me
Now if she gets a-back a-from Europe
She's a'goin' to have to swim the sea.
I'm glad my wife's in Europe
And she can't get back to me.

2. Now while my wife's in Europe
She's a-listenin' to the fuss
Now I was down in Georgia
Ridin' in a jitny bus.

CHORUS

3. Now if she get-a back a from Europe
She's a going to have to swim the sea

CHORUS

4. Now while my wife's in Europe
Listenin' to the shells
I was down in Georgia
Drunk and a raisin'...

CHORUS

5. Now if she gets back from Europe
She a-goin' to have to swim the sea.

CHORUS.

Band 7: Red Rocking Chair

(Recorded Aug., 1963; Harrison-vocal; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison; mandolin-Melton; bass-Lambert)

Probably the most influential version of this was the one recorded by Charlie Monroe. However, this song definitely pre-dates his recording, and is to be classed as belonging to the original rural tradition. Other recordings:

Doc Boggs, "Sugar Baby", recorded March 10, 1927. Released, Brunswick 1188; reissued, Anthology of American Folk Music, vol. 3, Folkways (FA 2953).

Charlie Monroe and the Kentucky Pardners, "Red Rocking Chair", recorded C.1945, released, Victor 21-0145.

1. Got no use for your red rocking chair
Ain't got no honey baby now, Lord, Lord,
Ain't got no honey baby now.
2. Who'll rock the cradle, who'll sing the song
Who'll rock the cradle when I'm gone, Lord, Lord,
Who'll rock the cradle when I'm gone.
3. I'll rock the cradle, I'll sing the song
I'll rock the cradle when you're gone, Lord, Lord,
I'll rock the cradle when you're gone.
4. Done all I'm doin
Said all I can say
I can't go on this a-way, Lord, Lord,
I can't go on this a-way.
5. Done all I can do
Said all I can say
Send you to your mama next payday, Lord, Lord,
Send you to your mama next payday.

Band 8: Train 45

(Recorded Aug., 1971; Neaves-vocal; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison; mandolin-Melton; fiddle-Neaves)

This is part of a large complex of songs related either through lyrical content or melody, or both. Included in this group are "Reuben's Train", "900 Miles", Cousin Emmy's "Ruby, Are You Mad At Your Man", etc. Often played as an instrumental. The origin is unknown except that this song complex originated as a 19th Century railroad song. It includes fragments of earlier songs such as "Jack of Diamonds". Some early recordings are:

Wade Mainer, Zeke Morris and Steve Ledford - "Riding On That Train 45". Recorded August 2, 1937, Charlotte, North Carolina. Released, Bluebird B-7298, Victor 27493; RCA Victor LPV-507, Smoky Mountain Ballads.

Henry Whitter and G.B. Grayson, "Train 45" recorded October 10, 1927 in New York City. Released, Gennett 6320, Champion 15447, Challenge 397.

Green Bailey, "If I Die A Railroad Man" (recording date unknown). Released, Gennett 6732, Champion 15652 (as by Aaron Boyd), Supertone 9320 (as by Harvey Farr).

1. Well you ought have been in town
Seen the train come down
Heard the whistle blow a hundred miles.
2. Going up the track
Bring my little woman back
Tired of living this a-way.
3. Train run right
See my woman Saturday night
I'm 900 miles away from home.

Band 9: In the Pines

(Recorded Nov., 1974; Galyean, Harrison, and Melton-vocals; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison and Neaves; mandolin-Melton; fiddle-Dalton; bass-Cockram)

This is part of a large complex of songs which are loosely connected via various lyric elements: "in the pines, where the sun never shines"; "the longest train I ever saw", etc. This group was the subject of a doctoral dissertation by Judith McCulloh, titled "'In The Pines': The Melodic-Textual Identity of An American Lyric Folksong Cluster" (Indiana University, 1970).

Some early recordings are:

Doc Walsh, "In the Pines", recorded April 17, 1926 in Atlanta, Georgia. Released, Columbia 15094-D; reissued on Columbia, titled Ballads and Breakdowns of the Golden Era.

The Tennesse Ramblers, "The Longest Train I Ever Saw", recorded August 4, 1927, in Bristol, Tennessee. Released, Victor 20861.

J. E. Mainer's Mountaineers, "The Longest Train", recorded August 6, 1935 in Atlanta. Released, Bluebird B-6222; reissued, RCA Victor LPV-532, The Railroad in Folksong.

1. In the pines, in the pines
Where the sun never shines
And they shiver when the cold winds blow
2. Little girl, little girl
What have I done
I've begged you to treat me so
3. You caused me to weep
You caused me to mourn
You caused me to leave my home
4. Two long steel rails
And a short crosstie
I'm on my way back home.

Repeat 1

SIDE II.

Band 10. White House Blues

(Recorded Aug., 1963; Neaves-vocal; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison; mandolin-Melton; fiddle-Neaves; bass-Lambert)

This song refers to the assassination of President William McKinley, in Buffalo, New York, in 1901 by anarchist Leon Czolgosz. Various forms of the song exist and have been studied in "'Whitehouse Blues' - 'McKinley' - 'Cannonball Blues': A Biblio-discography", by Neil V. Rosenberg, JEMF Newsletter, vol. 4, part 2, number 10, June 1968, pp.45-58. Rosenberg concluded that two fairly distinct forms were introduced to commercial recordings from oral tradition, and a third related lyric folksong ("Cannonball Blues" as recorded by the Carter Family) was also introduced on commercial recordings and intermingled with the McKinley songs.

The first recordings of the two forms are:

Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers: "White House Blues" recorded in New York City on September 20, 1926. Releases: Columbia 15099-D; reissued, Folkways FA 2951 (formerly FP 251), Anthology of American Folk Music, vol. 1, County 505, Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers.

Riley Puckett, "McKinley" recorded in Atlanta, Georgia, April 11, 1929. Released, Columbia 15448-D.

Of these two recordings, the Poole one has been the most influential, as it was probably from this record (or another record which was based on Poole's performance) that Bill Monroe learned the song. Monroe's version has subsequently been picked up by most bluegrass bands.

The Carter Family's "Cannon Ball Blues" was recorded twice by them (the first time it was simply called "The Cannonball"):

May 24, 1930 in Memphis. Released, Victor V-40317, Bluebird B-6020, Montgomery Ward M-4742.

May 10, 1935 for the American Record Corporation, releases, Banner, Melotone, Perfect, Oriole, Romeo 7-05-55 (all labels had the same release number).

Recordings of "The Cannonball" were made prior to the Carter Family, but theirs was the most influential version. Rosenberg thought that this form was ultimately of Black origin.

1. Jumped on my horse
Pulled down his mane
Said to my horse
You've got to outrun the train
From Buffalo to Washington.
2. McKinley hollered, McKinley squalled
They shot McKinley and they can't find the ball
He is gone, a long, long time.
3. Come here little children
and see what they've done
They've shot your daddy
And I've got the gun
He is gone, a long, long time.
4. There is just one thing
That grieves my mind
All these poor children
And the poor wife behind
He is gone, a long time.

5. Jumped on my horse
Pulled down his mane
Said to my horse
You've got to outrun the train
From Buffalo to Washington.

Band 11: Clinch Mountain Breakdown

(Recorded Nov., 1974; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison; mandolin-Bedwell; fiddle-Dalton; bass-Cockram). This piece features young Mike Bedwell on the mandolin.

A traditional fiddle piece adapted to the mandolin and played bluegrass style. It is often used as a show-piece by mandolin players.

Band 12: Red and Green Signal Lights

(Recorded Nov. 1974; Galyean, Harrison, and Melton-vocals; banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison and Bedwell; mandolin-Melton; fiddle-Neaves; bass-Cockram).

The origin of this song is uncertain. The words were supposedly printed in railroad magazines. The lyrics suggest a turn of the century origin at least for this version. Recordings:

Vernon Dalhart, "The Engineer's Child", recorded in New York City on March 2, 1926. Released, Victor 19983, Zonophone (English label) 2748. Also released, Banner 1741, Regal 8051, Domino 3712, Conqueror 7069, Silvertone 2706 and Apex 8472.

G.B. Grayson and Henry Whitter, "The Red and Green Signal Lights", recorded in New York City on July 31, 1928. Released, Victor V-40063; reissued RCA Victor LPV-532, The Railroad in Folksong.

Carson Robison and His Pioneers, "The Engineer's Child", released, Regal-Zonophone G21448 (this was an Australian label that leased material from several different U.S. companies. There must have been a domestic release of this also, but we don't know what it would have been. It was probably recorded in the late 1920's).

1. A little child on a sick bed lay
And death seemed very near
Was the parents' life and the only child
Of a railroad engineer.

CHORUS

Just set a light as I pass tonight
Set it where it may be seen
If my darling's dead, then show the red
If she's better, than show the green

2. In the cottage home by the railroad side
Was a mother's watchful eye
She dreamed of hope as the people smiled
As the train went rushing by

CHORUS

3. Just one short glance was his only chance
But the signal light was seen
On the midnight air there arose a prayer
Thank God the light was green

CHORUS.

Band 13: Poor Rambler

(Recorded Nov., 1974; Galyean-vocal and
banjo)

This song is part of a large complex of songs which share certain stanzas or lyric elements. Poor Rambler belongs to the same group of songs as does Darlin' Corey and The Moonshiner's Song. Versions of this complex are very ancient and are found in the original rural tradition of the Southern Appalachians.

1. Come gather round me good people
My life I must reveal
Tomorrow might have been different
Now you know how your darlin' ought to feel.
2. When I had plenty of money
My friends were all standing around
But when my pocketbook was empty
Not a friend on earth could be found.
3. Go dig me a hole in the meadow
Go dig me a hole in the ground
Go dig me a hole in the meadow
And watch this poor rambler go down.
4. Give me cornbread when I'm hungry
Corn whiskey when I'm dry
Pretty women may swarm around me
Sweet heaven when I die.

5. I'm layin' around this old jailhouse
Forty dollars would pay my fine
Whiskey has done and got my body
Pretty women are troublin' my mind.
6. My papa taught me a-plenty
My mama taught me more
Said son, you'd better quit your rambling around
There'll be trouble a-knockin' at your door.
7. Go dig me a hole in the meadow
Go dig me a hole in the ground
Go dig me a hole in the meadow
And watch this poor rambler go down.

Band 14: Sunny Side of the Mountain

(Recorded May, 1962; Neaves-vocal and guitar)

Written by Harry C. McAuliffe ("Big Slim, the Lone Cowboy") and Bobby Gregory. Copyright 1946, American Music Publishing Co. The song soon made its way into the So. Appalachian repertoire. Thus, it was recorded by Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper on July 13, 1951, released, Columbia 20861; Harmony 7378, Sunny Side of the Mountain.

1. Now don't forget me little darling
While I'm growing old and grey
Just a little thought before I'm going far away.
2. Now I'll be waiting on the hillside
Where the wild red roses grow
On the sunny side of the mountain
Where the ripplin' waters flow.
3. Now don't forget about those days
We courted many years ago
And don't forget the promises
You gave me and so
4. It's been so long since I've seen you
But the love still lingers on
Don't forget me little darlin'
Though our love affair seems gone
5. Tell me darling in your letters
Do you ever think of me
I wonder little darling
Wonder where you can be.

6. Now I'll be waiting on the hillside
When the day that you will call
On the sunny side of the mountain
Where the ripplin' waters fall.

Band 15: John Hardy

(Recorded Nov., 1974; Harrison, Galyean,
Melton, Cockram-vocals; banjo-Galyean;
guitar-Harrison; mandolin-Melton; fiddle-
Neaves; bass-Cockram)

The song refers to a Black outlaw, John Hardy, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to be hanged January 19, 1894, in McDowell County, West Virginia. Included in numerous folksong collections: Laws' Native American Ballads, (I2). For a detailed account of the incident described by the ballad and several versions, see John Harrington Cox, Folk Songs of the South, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1925. The song was widely known in the Grayson-Carroll County area and was played by all traditional clawhammer banjo pickers. The tune is probably older than the ballad. Some early recordings are:

Eva Davis, "John Hardy", recorded circa 1924, released Columbia 167-D.

Ernest Stoneman, "John Hardy", recorded August 27, 1925, released, Okeh 7011.

Clarence Ashley, "Old John Hardy", released on April 15, 1931, Columbia 15654.

Carter Family, "John Hardy Was a Desperate Little Man" recorded May 10, 1928, Camden, N.J., released Victor V-40190, Bluebird B-6033, Montgomery Ward M-4741, plus numerous LP reissues.

1. John Hardy, he was a desperate little man
He wore two guns every day
He killed a man on the West Virginia line
Ought to see John Hardy get away, Lord, Lord,
Ought to see John Hardy get away.
2. John Hardy went down to the Keystone gate
He thought that he would be free
When up stepped a man and took him by the arm
Johnny, come and go with me, Lord, Lord,
Johnny, come and go with me.

3. John Hardy, he had a loving little wife
The dress she wore was blue
Now she came tippin' through the old jailhouse
Saying Johnny, I'll be true to you, Lord, Lord,
Saying Johnny, I'll be true to you.
4. John Hardy, he was a desperate little man
He wore two guns every day
He killed a man on the West Virginia line
Ought to see John Hardy get away, Lord, Lord,
Ought to see John Hardy get away.

Band 16: Little Frankie Baker

(Recorded May, 1962; Neaves-vocal and guitar)

There are several quite different songs about the Frankie and Albert or Frankie and Johnny story. Henry M. Belden in Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society (University of Missouri Studies, 1940, reprinted 1955), pp. 330-333, prints one text with a lengthy note under the title "Frankie and Albert". He says, "John Huston, who made the story into a play (Frankie and Johnny, New York, 1930) believed it to have sprung from the killing of Allen Britt by Frankie Baker, figures in the Negro underworld of St. Louis, in 1899, and declares that 'the song has not been traced to any Frankie before her.'" See also, The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Vol. 2, Folk Ballads, edited by Henry M. Belden and Arthur Palmer Hudson. They print several versions, also under the general title "Frankie and Albert", and one of the individual versions is titled "Frankie Baker". The Frankie and Albert versions and the one Frankie Baker version mentioned above start out:

Frankie was a good girl, everybody knows
Paid one hundred dollars, for Albert's suit of clothes.

There are innumerable recorded versions as well, and these two are similar to the type mentioned above:

Dykes' Magic City Trio, "Frankie", Brunswick 127
(about 1929).

Tom Darby and Jimmie Tarleton, "Frankie Dean", released in 1931, Columbia 15701-D.

1. Now Frankie and Albert were lovers
Lord, how they did love
Swore to be true to each other
Just as true as the stars above.
He was her man
But he done her wrong.

2. Now Frankie went down to the barroom
She called for a glass of beer
She hollered out to the barroom tender
Have you seen little Albert here.
He's your man
He's a-doin' you wrong.
3. Now I don't want to cause you no trouble
Little girl I don't want to lie
I saw your lover about an hour ago
With a girl named Nelly Blye.
He's your man
But he's doin' you wrong.
4. Now Frankie drew back her kimono
She drew out her little .44
Now rootie-toot-toot about three times
Right through that hardwood door.
Killed her man
Was a-doin' her wrong.
5. Now bring out the rubber tired buggy
Bring out the rubber tired hack
Taking my man to the graveyard
And I ain't a-goin' to bring him back.
He was my man
But he done me wrong.

Band 17. Little Birdie

(Recorded Nov. 1974; Galyean-vocal;
banjo-Galyean; guitar-Harrison; mandolin-
Melton; bass-Cockram)

An old song common in the Southern Mountains. Numerous bluegrass groups have recorded this song in recent years, including the Greenbriar Boys (on Vanguard: VRS-9233/VSD-79233, Better Late Than Never), and Vern and Ray (on Old Homestead West, 10001-VR, Sounds From the Ozarks). Recorded by Al Craver (pseudonym for Vernon Dalhart, which was actually the most commonly used pseudonym of Marion Try Slaughter). Released in October, 1925, Columbia 15044-D. Coon Creek Girls, "Little Birdie", recorded May 30, 1938, Okeh 04413.

1. Little birdie, little birdie,
Won't you sing me your song
You have caused me lots of trouble
You've caused me to do wrong.
2. Little birdie, little birdie,
What makes you fly so high
When you know that your true lover
Is waitin' in the sky.
3. Rather be in some dark hollow
Where the sun don't never shine
Than for you to be another man's darling
And to know that you'll never be mine.
4. Little birdie, little birdie,
Come sing me your song
You have caused me lots of trouble
You've caused me to do wrong.

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