

CONTENT ADVISORY***FW 3839 - Virginia Mountain Boys: Old Time Bluegrass
from Grayson and Carroll Counties, Virginia: Vol. 3***

Track 204 on this album contains derogatory language. While it is offensive to us, we have chosen for the song titles to remain as published and interpreted in the time period in which they were written. We believe that to do otherwise would be to change a historical document. The “n word” was commonplace for a time in history, especially during the era of Jim Crow. Its circulation and popularization through blackface minstrelsy became associated with the identity of Black people in a white supremacist society.

Further Context:

This song first appeared as an African American folk tune in the antebellum South, sometime after Nat Turner’s Rebellion (1831) but before the American Civil War (1861-65). The lyrics describe an enslaved person who emancipates himself by running to freedom. The song also warns of “pattyroller” slave patrols that existed at the time, which would catch and punish runaways. As an African American folk song, the lyrics were often interpreted as empowering enslaved peoples to exercise their agency by fleeing their confines and spread knowledge about the dangers that may lie ahead if they try to escape slavery.

In the late 1800s, the song began to appear on the American minstrelsy circuit, where it was re-interpreted by Euro-American performers. New lyrics occasionally cast the African American protagonist as criminal and incorporated the perspective of plantation owners. With the advent of recording technology, these versions soon reached mass audiences through radio play. Despite these developments, the original versions were simultaneously maintained among African American folk performers.



Throughout the twentieth century, musicians performed multiple versions of this song. As time progressed, pressure mounted to change the title and lyrics so that the N-word was eliminated. At Smithsonian Folkways, we have many examples of these versions in our collection, including “Run, Johnny, Run” (Bruce Hutton), “Run...Run / Mama Your Son Done Gone” (Elizabeth Cotten), “Run, Jimmy, Run” (Clarence Ashley), and “Run, Boy, Run” (Jim Smoak & The Louisiana Honeydrippers).

The version featured here, performed by the Virginia Mountain Boys, is the only version in our collection that retains the N-word in the title and lyrics. While we have no knowledge of the views or intentions of the musicians on this recording, we feel that the word—even considering this historical context—continues to contribute to discrimination and violence against black communities in the United States. Thus, while we leave it on our website so as not to erase this history, we have made it impossible to listen to it out of context by buying the track or streaming it alone.

VOLUME 3

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 3839

Virginia Mountain Boys

Old Time Bluegrass from Grayson & Carroll Counties, Va.

CULLEN GALYEAN / GLEN NEAVES / IVOR MELTON / BOBBY HARRISON / HERMAN DALTON / MARVIN COCKRAM / and others

Recorded in the field by Eric Davidson, Lyn Davidson, Jane Rigg

Annotated by Eric Davidson, Jane Rigg, Brooke Moyer



MARVIN COCKRAM, BOBBY HARRISON, HERMAN DALTON, IVOR MELTON

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 3839

SIDE 1

Band 1 Charming Betsy
Band 2 Philadelphia Lawyer
Band 3 Conversation with Neaves
Band 4 Fire on the Mountain
Band 5 Prisoner's Song
Band 6 Where are you going, Alice
Band 7 Wednesday Night Waltz
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SIDE 2

Band 1 John Henry
Band 2 Tragic Romance
Band 3 Bill Cheatum
Band 4 Run, Nigger, Run
Band 5 Lily Shaw
Band 6 I'm Goin' to walk with my Lord
Band 7 Let that Circle be Unbroken

Recorded in the field by: Eric Davidson, Lyn Davidson, Jane Rigg; with Cullen Galyean, Glen Neaves, Ivor Melton, Bobby Harrison, Herman Dalton, Marvin Cockram and others.

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Virginia
Mountain Boys
Old Time Bluegrass from
Grayson & Carroll Counties, Va.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 3839

VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN BOYS

Old Time Bluegrass From Grayson and Carroll Counties, VA

Vol. 3

Notes by: Eric Davidson
Jane Rigg
Brooke Moyer

Recorded in the field by Eric Davidson, Lyn Davidson
and Jane Rigg, 1963-1974.

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

The Virginia Mountain Boys play an old time, non-commercial brand of bluegrass which is deeply rooted in the older musical traditions of the Southwest Virginia hills. This is the third album of their music to be released by Folkways Records.^{1/}

The collection of songs, ballads and tunes on this record has been assembled from field tapes which were made over a long period, beginning in the early 1960's. Our last recording session with the Virginia Mountain Boys occurred at Glen Neaves' home in Fries, Va. in November, 1974. During these years the Virginia Mountain Boys, under this and a variety of other names, were locally well known in the Grayson-Carroll Counties region. They are all superb musicians, individually accomplished and 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. The lives of most of the musicians you will hear on this record 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". As the brief sketches below recount, these men all first learned to play music from the only source available, nearby older relatives. 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

^{1/}Previous albums appeared in 1974 ("Glen Neaves and the Virginia Mountain Boys", FA 3830) and 1977 ("The Virginia Mountain Boys, Vol.2, A Bluegrass String Band", FA 3833).

Boys descends very 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 and 1930's.

Origins of the Virginia Mountain Boys String Band Music

Almost all of the songs on this record derive from indigenous tunes and ballads, as indicated below. In one version or another most of these songs are significantly older than the musicians on this record and were already a part of the orally transmitted musical tradition at the time they first began to play. Some of the pieces featured here are

very old, such as the fiddle tunes "Bill Cheatham" and "Fire on the Mountain", and "Where are you going, Alice" and "Run Nigger Run". Some songs, such as "John Henry", "Let That Circle Be Unbroken" and "Lilly Shaw" originated in the period between the Civil War and World War I, while others, like "Philadelphia Lawyer" date from the 1920's or early 1930's (see below). 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 their music than the origin of their overall style. In regard to this it is interesting that Glen Neaves and Cullen Galyean, two of the most important members of the group, were raised in families where the original instrumental traditions of the Blue Ridge area were familiar. Both Cullen's father and Glen's father picked the five-string banjo in the old clawhammer style. The clawhammer 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 clawhammer 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 of the more 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. The rhythmic and harmonic limitations of the archaic clawhammer style of banjo picking then current restrict the variety of the songs which can be played, relative to the repertoire comfortable for mandolin, guitar and fiddle. With the advent of the 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 clawhammer 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 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-fiddle 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. The changes in the local string band music over the last 60 or 70 years were, of course, gradual and stepwise. 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 Calyeon, who rarely uses fancy chording or runs played high on the neck. Also of old time origin 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 clawhammer 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 two earlier Virginia Mountain Boys albums mentioned earlier.

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 remained the same, with Glen Neaves on fiddle and guitar, and Ivor Melton on mandolin. They were joined on occasion by Jesse Neaves, a fine singer in her own right, and Roger Dalton on bass fiddle. In recent encounters with the band, Herman Dalton has often played the fiddle. Many of the same musicians have also played under the names of the Blue Ridge Buddies, the Piper's Gap String Band, and the Foothill Boys.

The Virginia Mountain Boys are known in Southwest Virginia and nearby counties in North Carolina from 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 the previous field collections: "Traditional Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties" (FS3811) and "Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties" (FS3832), as well as the two previously mentioned Folkways albums, devoted solely to this band (FA3830 and FA3833).

Glen Neaves

Glen Neaves (fiddle, guitar) is an outstanding performer who has played with organized string bands for most of his life. 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

(FS3811)). 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. The way he plays the 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 other traditional male singers of this region. Glen frequently accompanies himself on the guitar, which he plays with a flatpick.

Glen and his wife, Jesse, 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 band responsible for much of the classic style of "old time" bluegrass. Cullen and Bobby Harrison have played together for 25 years with various groups. 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 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 and a fine singer, 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 traditionally styled fiddle with the Virginia Mountain Boys. 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.

Mike Bedwell

Mike Bedwell is featured on a breakdown on this record ("Bill Cheatham") 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 his life and makes his living operating construction machinery.

SIDE 1

Band 1: Charmin Betsy

Ivor Melton (mandolin, vocal), Bobby Harrison (guitar, vocal), Glen Neaves (fiddle), Cullen Galyean (banjo, vocal), Claudine Lambert (bass); recorded August 31, 1963, Pipers Gap, Va. A humorous latter day version of the old traditional song "She'll be comin round the mountain Charmin' Betsy." The reference to the T-model Ford and the Cadillac more or less dates the verses.

Chorus: She'll be comin round the mountain,
Charmin Betsy
She'll be comin round the mountain,
Cora Lee, poor thing
And if I never see you again
Good girl remember me

1. My gal she rides in a big Cadillac
My gal done the same
My gal she rides in a T model Ford
But she gets there just the same

Chorus

2. My gal she lives in a big brick house
My gal done the same
My gal she lives in a Tennessee jail
It's a brick house just the same

Chorus

3. My girl she wears such high priced perfume
My gal done the same
My gal don't wear no perfume at all
But you smell her just the same

Chorus.

Band 2: Philadelphia Lawyer

Glen Neaves (guitar, vocal), Ivor Melton (mandolin), Cullen Galyean (fiddle), Jules Bartlet (banjo), Bobby Harrison (guitar), Claudine Lambert (bass); recorded August 31, 1963, Pipers Gap, Va. This song was also known as "Reno Blues". According to Rose Maddox, who at one time sang it, it was written by Woodie Guthrie. However, this could not be verified. Though the origin of the song is unknown, it is doubtful that it is much older than about 1930.

1. Way out in Reno, Nevada
Where romance blooms and fades
There was a great Philadelphia lawyer
Making love to a Hollywood maid.

2. Come down here and we will wander
Down where the light shines bright
We can get your divorce from your husband
And we can get married tonight.
3. Wild Bill was a gun-toting cowboy
Ten notches was carved on his gun
And all the boys around Reno
Left Wild Bill Whittom alone.
4. One night when Bill was returning
From work in the range in the cold
He was dreaming of his Hollywood sweetheart
Whose love more precious than gold.
5. As he drew near the window
Two shadows he spied on the screen
It was the great Philadelphia lawyer
Making love to his Hollywood queen.
6. The night was still as a desert
And the moon shone high overhead
Bill listened to the words of the lawyer
He could hear every word that he said.
7. Your hand so pretty and lovely
Your form so rare and divine
Come back with me to the city
And leave this wild cowboy behind.
8. Tonight back in old Pennsylvania
Among those beautiful pines
There's one less Philadelphia lawyer
In old Philadelphia tonight.

Band 3: Glen Neaves: Reminiscence

Band 4: Fire on the Mountain

Recorded August 31, 1963, Pipers Gap, Va. Cullen Galyean (banjo), Jules Bartlet (guitar), Claudine Lambert (bass), Ivor Melton (mandolin). This is one of the famous fiddle tunes of the Southern Appalachians, here adapted to the full string band.

Band 5: Old Prisoner's Song

Recorded August 20, 1971, Fries, Va. Cullen Galyean (banjo), Bobby Harrison (guitar, vocal), Ivor Melton (mandolin), Herman Dalton (fiddle). The version here is a fragmentary one, but the song clearly belongs to a family of prison songs widely known in Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina and Virginia. Riley Puckett recorded a song called "All Bowed Down in Prison," which is closely related, and a version of this song was recorded on the Victor label (19427) by Vernon Dalhart in 1924. Other relatives of this song are, "I have a ship on the ocean" and "Meet me in the Moonlight," recorded by the Carter Family on May 2, 1928 (Victor 23731).

Chorus: Now meet me tonight, oh meet me
Meet me out in the moonlight alone
Well I have a sad story to tell you
It should be told by the moonlight alone.

1. Well, if I had a ship on the ocean
All mounted with silver and gold
Before I saw my darling suffer
Oh that ship would be anchored and sold.

Chorus

2. If I had the wings of an angel
Over these prison walls I would fly
I would sail to the arms of my lover
Oh there I'd be willing to die.

Band 6: Where Are You Going, Alice

Recorded November 2, 1974, Fries, Va. Glen Neaves (fiddle, vocal), Michael Bedwell (guitar). This song is a three verse fragment of an almost forgotten old ballad related to "The Broken Token" (Sharp No. 98). The story is that of a maid accosted by a passing soldier, who proposes to her. She declines, saying she awaits the return of her true love now gone seven years. The soldier seeks to discourage her, telling her that her true love has been drowned or slain in battle or has married another, and that she will never see him again. But she persists in refusing the soldier, indicating that she will remain faithful forever to her true love. At this the soldier reveals himself to be her own true love from long ago and she falls into his arms.

1. Where are you going Alice,
My old heart's delight
Where are you going Alice
This dark and rainy night.
Out in yonder city
My purpose to remain
Looking for a young man
Sweet William is his name.
2. Never mind young William, he will not meet you there
Never mind young William, he will not meet you there
Never mind young William, he will not meet you there
Just stay with me in Greenland, no danger need you
fear.
3. When she heard the bad news, she fell into despair
Ringing her hands and tangling her hair
If Willie he is drowned, no other will I see
Through lonesome roads and valleys, I'll
wander far to see.
4. When he heard the bad news, he could no longer stand
He took her in his arms, Little Alice, I'm the man
Little Alice, I'm the young man, who caused you
so much pain
So now we'll meet in Greenland, no more to part
again.

Band 7: Wednesday Night Waltz

Recorded November 3, 1974, Fries, Va. Glen Neaves (fiddle), Cullen Galyean (banjo), Bobby Harrison (guitar), Ivor Melton (mandolin), Marvin Cockram (bass). A favorite very old waltz often used for dancing. It was played by all the old time string bands and is well known in this region. It was recorded in 1926 by the Leake County Revelers (Columbia 15189D).

Band 8: Pig in a Pen

Recorded August 20, 1971, Fries, Va. Cullen Galyean (banjo, lead vocal), Bobby Harrison (guitar, vocal), Ivor Melton (mandolin, vocal), Herman Dalton (fiddle), Roger Dalton (bass). This song was a part of the original rural tradition of the Grayson-Carroll Counties area. It was played by the clawhammer banjo pickers and fiddlers of earlier times. An old-fashioned recording featuring the archaic style fiddler Glen Smith and Spud Gravely, a vocalist from Hillsville, Va. is to be found on our "Ballads and Songs of the Blue Ridge Mountains" (Folkways AH3831).

Chorus: I've got a pig, home in the pen
Corn to feed him on
All I need is a pretty little girl
To feed him when I'm gone
Feed him when I'm gone boys
Feed him when I'm gone
All I need's a pretty little girl
To feed him when I'm gone.

1. When she sees me coming
She wrings her hands and cries
Yonder comes the sweetest man
Who ever lived or died.

Chorus

2. When she sees me leaving
She wrings her hands and cries
Yonder goes the meanest man
Who ever lived or died.

Chorus

3. Bake them biscuits, baby
Bake them good and brown
And when I get my breakfast
I'm Alabamy bound.

Chorus

4. Go up on the mountain
Sow a little cane
Bake around the sorghum
Sweet little Eliza Jane.

Chorus.

SIDE 2

Band 9: John Henry

Recorded August 20, 1971, Fries, Va. Cullen Galyean (banjo, vocal), Bobby Harrison (guitar, lead vocal), Glen Neaves (fiddle), Ivor Melton (mandolin, vocal), Roger Dalton (bass). "John Henry" is too well known to require any introduction here. For a background study, the interested reader is referred to "John Henry: Tracking Down a Negro Legend", University of North Carolina Press 1929.

This is perhaps the South's most famous song about work, deriving originally from the story of a legendary 19th Century black steel driver. Every generation of musicians in the Grayson-Carroll Counties area has developed their own arrangement of "John Henry." The tune was part of the clawhammer banjo-fiddle repertoire of local musicians many years ago and thus was almost certainly familiar to musicians such as Cullen Galyean and Glen Neaves from childhood.

1. John Henry was a little bitty boy
Sitting on his daddy's knee
Oh he picked up a hammer and a little piece of steel
That will be the death of me, Lord, Lord
That will be the death of me.
2. John Henry went up on the mountain
And he looked down at his hand so small
Oh the mountain up so tall
John Henry was so small
Laid down his hammer and cried, Lord, Lord
Laid down his hammer and cried.
3. John Henry drove steel on the mountain
Til his hammer caught on fire
And the last words I hear poor John Henry say
Give me a cool drink of water before I die, Lord, Lord
Give me a cool drink of water before I die.
4. John Henry said to his shaker
Shaker you better pray
For if I should miss this little piece of steel
Tomorrow will be your burying day, Lord, Lord
Tomorrow will be your burying day.
5. John Henry had a little woman
And her name was Polly Ann
Poor Johnny got sick and he had to go to bed
Polly drove that steel like a man
Polly drove that steel like a man.
6. They buried John Henry on the mountain
And they buried him in the hill
And every time a freight train come
Yonder lies a steel driving man, Lord, Lord
Yonder lies a steel driving man.

Band 10: Tragic Romance

Recorded November 3, 1974, Fries, Va. Glen Neaves (guitar, vocal), Bobby Harrison (guitar), Cullen Galyean (banjo), Herman Dalton (fiddle), Ivor Melton (mandolin), Marvin Cockram (bass). This song, to the tune of the traditional "Omie Wise", was recorded in Asheville, N.C., in about 1940 (VI 58-0027). The song may be much older. For another rendition, see the Morris Brothers, Bluebird Canadian label (58-0027).

A tragic tale of mistaken identity, the moral is the dreadful cost of the singer's impetuosity.

1. Nestled in the heart of the Tennessee hills
Midst these old pines, midst the rock and the
rills
There stands my old homestead of long, long ago
And it brings back fond memories of the one I
loved so.
2. I courted a maiden so sweet and so fair
Heavenly eyes and chestnut brown hair
She told me she loved me and said she'd be mine
But I went away, leaving her there behind.
3. I'll tell you the reason why I left her there
To roam this old world with its sorrow and care
I saw her one night in the arms of a man
Hugging and kissing as true lovers can.
4. I went to my home with a heart full of woe
Packed my belongings determined to go
For many years this old world I did roam
With thoughts of my sweetheart, my darling, my own.
5. While dining one day in a little country town
A stranger walked in and he chanced to set down
While talking of loved ones I happened to find
That his sister was that old sweetheart of mine.
6. When he heard my story to me he then said
The one you left there has a long time been dead
She waited so long for the day you'd return
But why you had left her, she never did learn.
7. I am the man you saw that fatal night
Wrapped in the arms of my sister so tight
She loved you so dearly, but you broke her heart
So stranger from her forever more you must part.

Band 11: Bill Cheatum

Recorded November 3, 1974, Fries, Va. Herman Dalton (fiddle), Cullen Galyean (banjo), Bobby Harrison (guitar), Glen Neaves (guitar), Mike Bedwell (mandolin), Marvin Cockram (bass). This is another traditional fiddle tune, here adapted for the full string band. It was recorded by Fiddlin' Arthur Smith, and is very widely known among Southern Appalachian fiddlers.

Band 12: Run Nigger Run

Recorded November 3, 1974, Fries, Va. Cullen Galyean (banjo, lead vocal), Bobby Harrison (guitar, vocal), Herman Dalton (fiddle, vocal), Ivor Melton (mandolin, vocal), Marvin Cockram (bass). This song is a fragment of a widely known tune descended from slavery days. Said to date from the slave rebellions of the 1830's, the song refers to the white vigilante patrols (paterollers) organized to apprehend slaves moving about off their plantations after curfew. Gid Tanner and the Skillet Lickers recorded "Run Nigger Run" March 28, 1927 (Columbia 15158D). There are a number of interesting aspects to the words of the song, e.g., in the verse (missing from the present version) "One had a bushel, one had a peck, One had a wooden man hung around his neck."

1. Run nigger run, the pateroller will get you
Run nigger run, you better get away.

Chorus: Run nigger run, the pateroller will get you
Run nigger run, it's almost day
(repeat both lines)

2. Adam and Eve down in the Garden
Hoing a lot of 'taters
Adam went around the huckleberry bush
Hit him in the eye with a 'mater.

Chorus

3. Spiro Bill in the hayro tree
Spiro Bill in the garden
Old goose lays on the side of the fence
And sets on the other side of Jordan.

Chorus

Chorus.

Band 13: Lily Shaw

Recorded November 3, 1974, Fries, Va. Ivor Melton (mandolin, vocal), Cullen Galyean (banjo), Bobby Harrison (guitar), Glen Neaves (guitar), Herman Dalton (fiddle), Marvin Cockram (bass). We are unaware of the historical origins of this song, except that it belongs to the large family of sometimes lugubrious and often religious mountain songs which are supposed to be made up by convicted murderers who have killed women and are awaiting execution or sentence. Examples of very different songs on the same theme are "Poor Ellen Smith" and "Little Sadie."

1. A great crowd has now gathered
Around this jail today
To see my execution
To hear what I do say.
2. I must hang for the murder
Of Lily Shaw, you've learned
Whom I so cruelly murdered
And her body shamefully burned.

3. The fire where I burned her
Again was in my sight
And her lovely form consumed
In the fire that burned so bright.

4. Then I knelt down to Jesus
In pain and grief
And asked that He might save me
As He did the dying thief.

5. Then my soul heard a whisper
It said in gentle tones
The grace is sufficient
To save the wildest one.

6. I must hang now this morning
The hour is drawing near
But I have a hope in heaven
And my death I do not fear.

7. God help my poor old parents
Who now my fate does know
Likewise my wife and baby
Whom I may never see again.

8. I pray that they will keep me
From all my danger and sin
There's never to see them never
Never to see them again.

9. I must hang now this morning
The hour is drawing near
But I have a hope in heaven
And my death I do not fear.

10. Dear wife, don't weep for me
For I'm not afraid to die
I have a hope in heaven
And a home beyond the sky.

11. The hour has now arrived
I can no longer stay
I hope that I will meet you
In glory some bright day.

Band 14: I'm Going to Walk With My Lord

Recorded August 31, 1963, Pipers Gap, Va.
Jesse Neaves (vocal), Claudine Lambert (bass), Cullen Galyean (banjo), Glen Neaves (guitar), Bobby Harrison (guitar), Ivor Melton (mandolin). A version of this song was collected in the 1930's in North Carolina. It was one of Jesse Neaves' favorites--she and Glen at one time sang religious songs in church.

Chorus: I'm going to walk, walk and talk with
my Lord
I'm going to walk, walk and talk with
my Lord
For He drove away my burden
But in my heart and soul
I'm going to walk, walk and talk with
my Lord.

1. Oh I heard a voice from heaven
Saying come unto me
And I will make you happy
If you will abide with me.

Chorus

2. And we need the tribulation
And the burden with distress
And when my calling here is over
I know you'll give me peace and rest.

Chorus

Band 15: Let That Circle Be Unbroken

Recorded November 3, 1974, Fries, Va. Cullen Galyean (banjo, lead vocal), Herman Dalton (fiddle, vocal), Bobby Harrison (guitar, vocal), Glen Neaves (guitar), Ivor Melton (mandolin, vocal), Marvin Cockram (bass).

The Carter Family recorded this song in 1935 (Columbia 20268, 37669) and another version was cut by Frank and James McCrary in 1927. The Monroe Brothers recorded it in 1936 (RCA 5678). The song was allegedly copyrighted by Ada Hahershon and Charles H. Gabrel in 1907.

1. I was standing by my window
On one cold and cloudy day
When I saw that hearst come rolling
For to carry my mother away.

Chorus: Will that circle be unbroken
By and by, Lord, by and by
There's a better home awaiting
In the sky, Lord, in the sky.

2. Undertaker, undertaker
Oh, please won't you drive slow
For this body you are hauling
Lord I hate to see her go.

Chorus

3. As I walked along behind them
I tried to hold up and be brave
But I could not hide my sorrow
When they lowered her in the grave.

Chorus (twice).

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