

Asch Recordings AH 3903

# DOCK BOGGS

Recorded and edited by Mike Seeger    Volume 3





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Davenport  
Dying Ranger  
Little Ommie Wise  
Sugar Blues  
Loving Nancy  
Cuba  
John Hardy  
Peggy Walker  
I Hope I Live A Few More Days  
Turkey In The Straw  
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Prayer Of A Miner's Child (Boggs-Hill)  
Coke Oven March (Boggs)  
Ruben's Train  
Cumberland Gap  
Careless Love

Descriptive notes are inside pocket

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COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

**RETURN TO ARCHIVE**  
CENTER FOR FOLKLORE PROGRAMS  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES  
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

PHOTO BY FRED BALDWIN

# DOCK BOGGS

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# DOCK BOGGS - Vol. 3

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All recordings were made on Nagra recorders with either Electrvoice 654, AKG D 24 or Sennheiser MKH 404 microphones. Recorders kindly made available through Pete Seeger, Newport Folk Foundation, or Friends of Old Time Music.

Roosevelt, NJ. recordings were made in school gym through kindness of the school board. They were made immediately after Dock's 1966 appearance at Newport Folk Festival.

Ann Arbor recordings were made at Canterbury House, a coffeehouse where we (Boggs and Seeger) were playing a weekend.

Asheville, NC. recordings were made at Civic Auditorium where Dock played his first folk festival, the American Folk Festival. Courtesy, Jim Morris, director.

Norton, Va. recordings were made at the home of Dock's sister, Laura (Mrs. Lee) Hunsucker on Guest River near Norton. Her help is much appreciated.

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Cover photo by Fred Baldwin

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Guitar accompaniment by Mike Seeger

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Dock Boggs usually tunes his banjo about one whole tone low. Tunings listed are as if it was tuned standard.

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Xeroxed song texts and clippings courtesy Dock Boggs. Text transcriptions have been made with his assistance.

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With a couple of minor exceptions, song introductions have been taken from an interview 28/July, 1966.

## SIDE I - Band 1

Davenport- "I learnt that from my oldest brother, John Boggs... I couldn't play it to amount to nothing but I heard him play it a lot from, I'll say, from nineteen and six on up 'til I could tune a banjo. You see I wasn't but eight years old in nineteen six. Of course I tried to learn but I didn't learn much about playing or haven't yet..."

## INSTRUMENTAL

## SIDE I - Band 2

Dying Ranger- "Well, I can tell you exactly the person that I learned that from, Gus Underwood. I don't know whether he's a-living yet or not. And he had about as nice a voice, he very near equalled Mac Wiseman in singing.

MS: "Where was he from?"

DB: "I really don't know. He told me, but I don't know what state he was from. Last time I seen him he had North Dakota tags on his car. He come by and eat supper with me.

MS: "About when was this that you learned the song from him?"

DB: "... about '29..."

MS: "Was he a professional musician, or did he have a band?"

DB: "No. And he couldn't play guitar very well. But Lord, the voice he had. He could sing so good."

MS: "What kind of an occasion was it that you happened to learn the song from him?"

DB: "Well, we put on three or four programs at them country schools. A teacher would write me and would want me to come. And after my bunch (band) decided to leave me... me and Gus Underwood went to three or four- but they wasn't all schools. We went to Neon one weekend into, supposed to be, a restaurant. It wasn't supposed to be like that, but you could buy drinks and they'd hand them right through the window to you. He must've had the town on his side, I don't know. And we played in there a little while. According to the times and everything like that they (were) very friendly, very good. I had one fellow to put in a five dollar bill in a offering and just took up a offering, you know. He's a awful fine fellow. That there song about Jerry Damron, it was his brother in law that got killed. And he was hauling me and Gus around... (Underwood and Dock Boggs worked together in Hayman mines and played together on some occasions-ed.)

"Gus Underwood and me went to a little place they call Blair's Branch, a little school down in, I think it's the lower end of Letcher County (Ky.)... the teacher wanted us to come there and play. It wouldn't hold very many but we had the house full and standing plumb across the back of the house... And so we played at this here little school and they wouldn't charge us no percentage at all. Admission would be 25 or 50 cents for them to come in. We played that song, the 'Dying Ranger' and there was



six, seven or eight in the back end of the house, some of them had on bib overalls. They had been in the war and got back home. And they hollered at the top of their voice-there was a lot of women and children in there, too-and some of them was cursing. There was about seven or eight come running right towards the stage and cursing saying, "Give us that again! Give us that piece again. We want to hear that again." And pulled out one dollar bills, I don't whether they got them off a roll or what, but anyway they pitched six or eight one dollar bills up on the stage. I called them down, I said 'Boys,' I said, 'be quiet. I said, 'Don't talk vulgar language,' I said, 'We have little children here,' and I said, 'Women and Children'. I said "We'll play the piece for you again, we'd be pleased to." And I said 'We'd thank you very much for you wanting it that bad and willing to give us extra money for it.' And so we went ahead and played it. We was wanted at a lot of other schools we didn't even go to..."

MS: "(Underwood) was about your age, was he?"

DB: "No... he must have been five years older than me."

### DYING RANGER

The sun was sinking in the West and fell with a lingering ray,  
Through the branches of a forest where a wounded ranger lay;  
A group had gathered around him, his comrades in the fight;  
A tear rolled down each manly cheek as they bid his last goodnight.

One tried and true companion was kneeling by his side,  
To stop the life blood flowing, but alas, in vain he tried;  
To stop the life blood flowing, he found 'twas all in vain;  
The tears rolled down each manly cheek like light showers of rain.

"Draw closer to me comrades and listen to what I say;  
I'm a-going to tell a story while my spirit hastens away;  
Away back in Northwest Texas that good old lone star state,  
There's one that's for my coming with a worried heart will wait.

It's a fair young girl, my sister, my only joy, my pride;  
She was my friend from boyhood, had no one left beside;  
I loved her as a brother, and with a fathers care  
I strove from grief and sorrow her gentle heart to spare.

But our country was invaded, she called for volunteers;  
She threw her arms around me then bursted into tears,  
Saying, 'go my darling brother, drive those traitors from our shore!

My heart may need your presence, but our country needs you more.'

'Tis true I love my country, for her I gave my all;  
If it had not been for my sister boys, I'd be content to fall;  
I'm dying comrade, dying, she'll never see me more,  
But in vain she'll wait my coming by our little cabin door."

SIDE I - Band 3

Little Ommie Wise- "Well, I learnt that from my sisters, Laura, Annie, and sister Jane."

MS: "They all knew that same tune?"

DB: "Yeah."

MS: "Do you have any idea where they learned it?"

DB: "I don't know where they learned it. They used

to sing it when they was just young girls..."

MS: "Do you remember when you made your banjo arrangement?"

DB: "It's been a awful long time ago... I've played it the way I play it for fifty years, anyway, maybe more."

### Little Ommie Wise

1. John Leever said People I'll Tell you No Lie,  
Off the way I murdered Little Ommie Wise,  
He Told her to meet him at Adams spring;  
And he would bring her some money and other fine things

2. Foolishly she met him at Adams spring  
And he brought her no money and other fine things  
I'll tell you some history, I think it's not to late,  
Little ommie was murdered the year of 1808.

3. John Leever John Leever I'm afraid of your way  
Your mind is to ramble and lead me astray  
Little Ommie Little Ommie I'll tell you my intention  
My mind is to drown you and leave you be kind

4. Hop up be kind me and away we will go  
Down to the river where the deep water flows  
She hoped up be kind him and away they did go  
Down to the river where the deep water flows

5. He beat her and he banged her untill she hardly could speak  
And threw her in the river where the water was 20ft deep  
Little Ommie was missing and the people did not know  
And they gathered to gather and hunting they did go.

6. They rambled and rambled the whole world around  
And poor Little Ommie has never been found  
But two little boys a jeshing on one Wednesday Morn  
They seen Little Ommie body come down in a storm

7. They Threw their net around her  
Pulled her to the bank  
Her cloths war wet and muddy  
And they layed her on a plank.

8. They sent for John Leever to come and see the sight  
He had murdered his own true lover and he did not deny it  
They hand Cuffed John Leever  
And taken him off to jail  
So rounded Little Ommie body and taken her to her grave

9. My name is John Leever  
A name I'll never deny  
I murdered my own true lover  
And now I'm ready to die

SIDE I - Band 4

Sugar Blues- "Well that was accompanied by piano, I think sung by Sara Martin... some colored lady in New York it must have been 45-48 years ago..."

"I knew the words for several years but really, to get it worked out to where I could sing it and play it on banjo, it's just been the last couple of years."



## SUGAR BLUES

Have you heard these blues,  
Baby I'm a-going to sing for you;  
When you hear them  
They will play you through and through.  
They're the sweetest blues you ever heard,  
And listen and don't say a word.

Got the sugar blues,  
Everybody's singing  
The sugar blues, the  
Whole town is ringing,  
I love my coffee,  
I love my tea,  
But the doggone sugar blues  
They got 'em for me.

I fell so bad  
You could lay me down and die;  
Say what you choose  
'Bout the old-time blues;  
Got the sweet, sweet sugar,  
Gor the sweet, sweet sugar blues.

### SIDE I - Band 5

Loving Nancy- "Well a neighbor of mine gave me that song. Woman by the name of Holbrook... I used to live on their property, lived under them, there at Mayking, I lived there awhile. They was good neighbors. She wanted me to play that song, 'Loving Nancy'. She said, 'I believe that would make a nice song for you, Dock.' Said, 'I just want to give it to you'. It's on old yellow paper at home somewhere. Of course I had it printed (typed)... along about '29, I guess."

MS: "Why did these people give you these songs?"

DB: "Well, I don't want to try to flatter myself, or say anything like that, but I was pretty well thought of by my neighbors and people I got acquainted with and it seemed like that nearly all of them, they wanted to help me all they could along in my career if I wanted to play and make phonograph records or anything like that. And they liked my first records that I put out. Nearly all of them had the first ones. And they wanted me to go on, that's what they wanted you know. And that's one reason that a lot of them would give them to me. Some of them just volunteer, people hand me songs..."

MS: "They're often old songs that they give you."

DB: "Yeah, well that's the kind of songs that I generally ask for. I ask people if they know them, or anything. Well, I was told just before I started down here (to Newport RI and Roosevelt, NJ)... someone told me that they had a uncle or/a aunt, or somebody that had a lot of old songs, and said they'd be glad if I come up to their place and they'd go with me. I believe it was a guy by the name of Steele, I won't say for sure. I know he come and bought on of each of my albums from me and he's a awful nice seeming fellow. He works away from home and lives back towards Clintwood below Coeburn."

(Ed. note: Until about 1965 Dock sang this with a major-sounding tune of his composition. At about that time he changed the tune to the present one: "The tune I thought up myself to start with and this other one, it came to me a little more natural.")

The original text of this song was written on lined tablet paper headed 'Ballet of Loving Nancy Aug. 22, 1904 Leslie (or Lester) Ky.' Dock adds that he thinks Mistress Holbrooks' grandmother (born 1878) sang this song.)

# Appalachian Mountain FESTIVAL

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### Loving Nancy

1. Good morning loving Nancy  
We have met in due time  
I will ask you a question  
I hope it's no crime.
2. Come and sit yourself by me  
What time you do stay  
So fair you well Nancy  
I am going away.
3. Go put up your horses and feed  
And fetch some hay  
So fair you well Nancy  
I'll drive on my way.
4. Your wagon to grease  
And your bills is to pay  
So come sit down by my side  
So long as you stay.
5. My wagon is well greased  
My whip is in my hand  
So fair you well Nancy  
I'm leaving this land.
6. So where was I next morning  
So soon as I arise  
A crossing deep waters  
With tears in my eyes.
7. To think I must leave her  
To see her no more  
I left her grieving  
On the new river shore.
8. Some says I am rude  
Some says I am rough  
Some says I am guilty  
Of many bad crimes.
9. I can prove them all liars  
By the power above  
I am guilty of nothing  
But I innocently love.
10. My papa don't like me  
And this I well know  
He says I'm not worthy  
To step in his door.



SIDE I - Band 6

Cuba- "Well, I learnt that from my brothers, mostly from brother Roscoe that died in nineteen and eighteen. He could pick the banjo some, some old pieces. He just played with one forefinger and a thumb, he didn't hit the clawhammer style or anything like that.

MS: "Did you ever hear much about what that song was about?"

DB: "Well the way I've had it kind of explained - I don't know whether it's true or not - that Cuban war we had back in, was it eighteen and ninety-eight... you know whenever the Rough-Riders or Teddy Roosevelt, he was right over there in the middle of it. And my oldest brother in law went into the army under an assumed name, you see, not his right name because he had a wife and two children back here, you see. He got shot and killed at Esserville Virginia, and my sister would have been due for years a widow's pension from him, but the government couldn't find nobody by that name. There happened to be some old-timers a-living that served over there with him and seen him in Cuba... and there's about two or three that went and made sworn affidavits that they went and served with John D. Rogers over there during that war with Spain."

MS: "Did you consider this as a song that was really about that war or more as a banjo tune?"

DB: "No, I figured it was made concerning that war. And I figured there ought to be more verses of it. Maybe about that San Juan Hill... and bring Teddy Rossevelt in there, and the Rough Riders and so forth and so on. That would be nice, you see..."

CUBA

Take me over to Cuba, I'll cross the waters o'er;  
Take me away to Cuba, you'll never see me no more.

If I go to Cuba, I'll cross the waters wide;  
If I go to Cuba, I'll marry me another bride.

The railroad is finished, the car's on the track;  
Take me away to Cuba, they'll never bring me back.

Engineer blows the whistle, the fireman rings the bell,  
Brakeman takes up tickets, conductor drunk as ....

Ed. Note: The following are two verses which Dock composed in the early 1960's and sometimes sings with this song. The version on this LP is the original at the request of the editor.

Castro's in Cuba, he's a-ruling like a little God  
Anyone says anything about Castro, is put before the firing squad.

Many Cubans in this country, they's feeling mighty alone  
Had their way about it, they'd all go back home.

SIDE I - Band 7

John Hardy- "Well, I learned that from my brother and sister. My oldest brother, John, and sister Jane, married Taz Whompler. They picked 'John Hardy' in the 'knock down' - 'clawhammer' - style... I learnt that 'John Hardy' and 'Poor Ellen Smith' from them..."

MS: "Did they play it pretty much the way you do?"

DB: "Well, pretty much. Only you see, they weren't picking it, just kind of the knock-down, you know... They didn't sing too much... Brother John, I never did hear him try to sing any at all; Sister Jane, she had a good

voice for singing. But Brother John, he played fiddle or banjo, either one, but he just didn't try to sing. He was always kind of an odd ball, different-turned to every one of my brothers and sisters. From a little child I've heard Mother say that he was stubborn and he had a disposition and turn of his own, and wanted to do as he pleased about certain things. You just couldn't beat it into him, hardly. He learnt to chew tobacco - he was the only one in the family out of nine children that lived to be grown to use tobacco. And he's the one that defied my Dad, and he chewed tobacco anyway. He was the oldest boy, though. Brother John, if he was a-living he'd be around close to a hundred years old now..."

JOHN HARDY

Oh little John Hardy was a bad little man,  
He carried two guns every day;  
He shot him a man in Chinatown;  
Ought to saw John Hardy make his getaway,  
To saw John Hardy make his getaway.

He run 'til he got to the East bound bridge,  
Oh the East bound train was late;  
Up walked an old policeman and caught him by the arm,  
Said, "John Hardy come and go with me Lord, Lord,  
John Hardy come and go with me".

I've been to the East and I've been to the West,  
I've been this whole world around;  
I've been to the river and I've been baptized,  
And now I'm a-going to my hanging ground,  
Oh now I'm going to my hanging ground.

SIDE I - Band 8

Peggy Walker- "You know, I would love to know where I got that song from, but it's absolutely... slipped my mind who it was. And when they gave it to me they gave it to me in printed form just like I've got it... type-written.

MS: "About how long ago was that"?

DB: "... I wouldn't know how many years to say, probably forty years..."

MS: "Did you start playing it on the banjo then..."?

DB: "I started to play it on the banjo right from the first. Whoever gave me the song, why they gave me enough of the tune... and that's the way I sing it."

PEGGY WALKER

(1)

There was a jolly old farmer  
Who lived a neighbor nigh,  
He had one only daughter,  
Upon her I cast my eye

*likewise*  
(O he had one only daughter,  
Upon her I cast my eye.)

(2)

I asked her if she would be willing,  
For me to cross the Plain,  
And if she would be true to me,  
'Till I returned again,

(3)

She said she would be true to me,  
Till death came on decline,  
So I shook hands and parted,  
From the girl I left behind,



(4)  
I steered my boat for Portland,  
Strange Countries for to see,  
I met Miss Peggy Walker,  
And she fell in love with me,

(5)  
I knew if I should marry her,  
That I would be to blame,  
That the girl I left behind me,  
Would laugh at me for shame,

(6)  
I quit my work one evening,  
And walking up George Street,  
The stage was just returning,  
And the Posy Boy I did Meet,

(7)  
He handed me a letter that,  
That I might understand,  
That the girl I left behind me,  
Had married an other man,

(8)  
As I stood there lamenting,  
Says he "poor boy don't cry",  
For I have money a plenty,  
To serve both you and I.

(9)  
My pocket - book has grown quite empty,  
And I think it is full time,  
To stop and think no longer,  
Of the girl I left behind,  
But to marry Miss Peggy Walker,  
And have a jolly old time.

(Repeat the last two lines for chorus.)

SIDE I - Band 9

I Hope I Live a Few More Days- "There was some woman someplace in the country gave me that song, but I can't remember who it was.

MS: "Was that around the time that you had a band?"

DB: "Yes. It was along about, I guess '29 or '30."

MS: "Did you ever play it with the band that you remember?"

DB: "...Don't think I did. I think I got it about the time we broke up."

(Dock adds that he learned the song from the Phillipps family, relatives of his.)

1=  
I hope I'll live a few more days,  
And God will give me grace,  
I'll buy me a bottle of etheral drops,  
To wash your deceitful face.

2=  
I will come in but I won't sit down,  
For I haven't hardly time,  
I truly understand you love a nother one,  
Sweet heart no longer mine.

3= you know what you promised me,  
When you gave me your right hand,  
Said if ever you did marry in this wide world  
That I would be the one.

4= Now you are a married man  
Living at your ease,  
While my poor heart is broken in tangle,  
No pleasure do I see.

5= Many of a girl they dress so fine, and off to church they go,  
While me a poor girl hapt to stay at home,  
And rock the cradle and sew.

6= Many girls they drive fine cars  
And off to the store and buy,  
While me a poor girl hapt  
To stay at home and rock the cradle and cry.

SIDE I - Band 10

Turkey In the Straw- "Well, now I picked that up a little bit at a time, just here and there. I heard colored people playing it, that 'Turkey in the Straw', some and it put the idea in my head to learn it. The first time I heard them playing it. And then I've heard white fellows play it but I never did hear them play it the way I heard these colored fellows play. They played it different. I learned it as much like the colored people played it as I could, the way it stuck in my head as I first heard it..."

"That sliding part, I coined that myself, I think. I don't remember seeing nobody else doing that..."

INSTRUMENTAL

SIDE II - Band 1

Calvary- "...it was in an old Holiness song book that my brother in law used to have, Lee Hunsucker. But I learned the song, well I got the words, even, from Lee Hunsucker."

CALVARY

There's a hill lone and gray, in a land far away  
In a country beyond the blue sea; where beneath that fair sky,  
Lest a man forth to die, for the world and for you and for me.

CHORUS

Oh! it bows down my heart, and the tear-drops will start,  
When in memory that gray hill I see; for 'twas there on it's side  
Jesus suffered and died, to redeem a poor sinner like me.

Behold! faint on the road, 'neath the world's heavy load,  
Comes a thorn-crowned Man on the way; with a cross He is bowed,  
But still on through the crown; He's ascending that hill lone and gray.

Hark! I hear the dull blow of the hammer swung low,  
They are nailing my Lord to the tree; and the cross they upraise  
While the multitude gaze on the blest Lamb of dark Calvary.

Now they mocked Him in death to his last laboring breath,  
While His friends sadly weep e'er the way; but tho' lonely and faint,  
Still no word of complaint fell from Him on that hillock of gray.



Then the darkness came down, and the rocks went around,  
And a cry pierced the sad laden air; 'Twas the voice of our King,  
Who received death's dark sting, all to save us from endless despair.

Let the sun hide its face, let the earth reel apace,  
Over men who their Savior have slain; but, behold, from the sod  
Comes the blessed Lamb of God, who was slain, but is risen again.

## SIDE II - Band 3

Leave it There- "I learnt that song from Lee, too.  
But it's out of a song book . . ."

### Leave it There

21/

If the world from you withhold its silver and its gold,  
And you left to get a long with manger poor, just remember, in this  
word, how he feeds the little birds; Take your burden  
to the Lord and leave it there.

22/ <sup>1</sup>Chorus  
Leave it there, leave it there, Take your burden to the Lord  
And leave it there; If you trust and never doubt, He will  
Surely bring you out; Take your burden to the Lord  
And leave it there.

23/ If your body gives you pain and your heart you can't regain, And your  
Soul is almost sinking in despair, Jesus knows the pain you feel, He can  
Solve and he can heal; Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.

24/ When your sin-a-mine as a sail and your heart begins to fail,  
Don't forget that God in heaven is ever prayer; He will make a way  
for you and he will lead you safely thro; Take your burden to the  
Lord and leave it there.

25/ When your youth-ful days are gone and old age is stealing on,  
And your body bends beneath the weight of care, He will never  
leave you thus; He'll go with you to the end; Take your burden  
to the Lord and leave it there.

## SIDE II - Band 2

Roses While I'm Living- "Well if I remember right,  
there was one of my neighbors in Hayman, Ky. about 35  
or forty years ago, she wrote most all them words. She  
didn't put no tune to it or anything. But she wrote that...  
She gave me that song, them words. It was Bertha Holland  
...(Her husband) he was that Indian left-handed fiddler I  
was telling you about that used to play with me."

Copyright, 1929

BY MORAN L. BOGGS

### Roses While I'm Living

What care I for the purest white rose,  
Placed in my cold stiff hand;  
What care I for the words of praise,  
When I can't understand.

I care not for the flowers,  
Heaped in wreaths upon my mound;  
I can not scent their fragrance sweet,  
When I'm beneath the ground;  
When I'm beneath the ground, oh love,  
When I'm beneath the ground;  
I can not scent their fragrance sweet,  
When I'm beneath the ground.

What good will deeds of honor do,  
Above my lifeless form;  
When I am anchored in the vale,  
Safe sheltered from the storm;  
Oh give to me my roses now,  
Kind words of love I crave;  
Wait not till death has touched my brow,  
And I am in the grave;  
And I am in the grave, oh love,  
And I am in the grave;  
Wait not till death has touched my brow,  
And I am in the grave.

Beyond the lonely silent tomb,  
I hope to find sweet rest;  
Speak now the words of comfort brought,  
And calm my troubled breast;  
Wait not till death has taken me,  
Alas, it will be too late;  
For I will not need your songs of praise,  
When I'm once beyond the grave;  
When I'm beyond the grave, oh love,  
When I'm beyond the grave;  
I will not need your songs of praise,  
When I'm beyond the grave.

### CHORUS :

When I can't understand, oh love,  
When I can't understand;  
I care not for the words of praise,  
When I can't understand.

THE COALFIELD PROGRESS, N. (See SUN page 6)

## Retired Norton Coal Miner Is Now Pickin' A Banjo Instead Of Just Twiddlin' Thumbs

by Ralph Rasnick

Country music and folk songs are coming of age. Once confined mostly to our mountain areas, they are now shaking the sound waves from Maine to California.

Even the so-called rock 'n' roll set is taking old songs and ballads and swinging them to the rafters. Most of the top string music groups worth their salt now contain a five-string banjo, the old monarch of mountain music.

Out of this comes an interesting story from here in Norton. The man in the story is M. L. "Dock" Boggs, of 825 Kentucky Avenue.

Have you ever heard any of the old Dock Boggs' records? About 36 years ago he made a few in New York City. Thumbing his banjo, Dock made such records as "Pretty Polly," "Danville Girl," "Country Blues," "Down South Blues" and others.

Dock said he got a couple of contracts to make records but didn't sign them because his wife objected to the life many musicians had to live. So to "keep down trouble" he went back to the mines.

He went to work in the mines when he was but a small boy, working as a "trapper" at seven cents an hour for 10 hours a day. That was in 1916 and his first job was with the Colonial Coal and Coke Co. with John A. Esser as manager.

Dock recalls that he began playing around with a banjo when he was 14 years old. He ordered his first banjo from Sears Roebuck.

In 1927 he played his banjo and sang for representative of a New York recording company who was listening to local talent at Hotel Norton. Dock said there were about 150 persons trying out. He was the only banjo player chosen, and there were a couple of guitar players and two or three fiddle players selected.

That's how he came to go to New York and make the records. When he came back, however, he loaned his banjo to a friend in Kentucky and went back to work in the coal mine.

Not much happened for the next 25 years. Dock worked at various places and retired after 41 years in the mines on his UMW pension and social security. He went back to see his friend in Kentucky and brought



"Dock" Boggs

his banjo home.

There was some banjo picking and singing in the Boggs' home, but as Dock recalls now, he was mostly twiddling his thumbs... until a few weeks ago.

With folk music now riding the popularity crest, it seems someone heard some of Dock's old recordings of "Pretty Polly" and others and began wondering what ever happened to him. A search was launched and he was found here in Norton.

Visits and phone calls and letters followed. Folkway Records of New York City sent a contract which Dock is considering and a personal appearance tour has been set up beginning next Tuesday deep in the heart of Yankee land.

Dock and Mrs. Boggs are leaving next Saturday, July 20, on the beginning of the six-day tour. They will go by train to New York City and on to Boston.

Mass.

At Boston they will be met by folks who will take them to Amherst for an appearance at the University of Massachusetts on July 23. Two more appearances will follow at Cambridge, Mass., on July 24 and 25.

Then on July 26, 27, and 28 Dock and his five-string banjo will appear at the Newport Folk Festival at Newport, R. I. It will be the first time for Mrs. Boggs to visit the big cities of the East, and she still isn't exactly sold on the idea.

According to letters from the man who is handling the details of the trip, the Boggs' will receive travel expenses, lodging, meals, and some cash for the appearances.

Who knows what lies ahead for Dock Boggs and his five-string banjo? Maybe there is gold at the end of the rainbow.



Prayer of a Miner's Child- Text by teenager Shirley Hill of Dragerton, Utah printed in UMW of A Journal from which Dock Boggs copied it. He asked for and received her permission to use the text and composed the tune about 1965.

# Prayer of A Miner's Child.

By Shirley Hill  
Dragerton, Utah  
Out of the Miners  
Journal. UMW of A.  
I Am A member.  
Retired Coal Miner.  
"Doc" Boggs.

1-  
He's Just An old Coal-miner, Lord,  
That's all he's ever been  
He's Worked his life away in mines  
With all the other Men.

2-  
So Keep him Safe and be with him  
When he goes in that <sup>mine.</sup> mine.  
And also help him stay away  
From the Unemployment line.

3-  
Stay by his side in all he does,  
He's getting tired, you know.  
His hair is changing Color fast,  
His age has begun to show.

4-  
I Know Some day he'll leave this earth  
And I will stay behind.

But when he leaves, I hope it's not  
Caused by that old Coal-Mine.

5-  
I want the very best for him,  
I don't want him to be sad.

Because Dear Lord, I think you know  
This Coal-miner is my Dad.

## Prayer Of A Miner's Child

He's just an old coal-miner, Lord,  
That's all he's ever been.  
He's worked his life away in mines  
With all the other men.

So keep him safe and be with him  
When he goes in that mine.  
And also help him stay away  
From the unemployment line.

Stay by his side in all he does,  
He's getting tired, you know.  
His hair is changing color fast,  
His age has begun to show.

I know some day he'll leave this earth  
And I will stay behind.  
But when he leaves, I hope it's not  
Caused by that old coal-mine.

I want the very best for him,  
I don't want him to be sad.  
Because, Dear Lord, I think you know  
This coal-miner is my DAD.

—Shirley Hill, Dragerton, Utah.

## SIDE II - Band 5

Coke Oven March- "There was somebody had a little music box that you wind up and it would make music. Part of that there piece that I play is just exactly the tune that this little box played. Of course I added a little extra to it you know... I think it's been forty-five, forty-six or eight years ago..."

## INSTRUMENTAL

## SIDE II - Band 6

Ruben's Train- "Well, I learnt that from my brother Roscoe..."

## RUBEN'S TRAIN

Oh you ought to been in town  
As old Ruben's train rolled down;  
You could hear the whistle blow a hundred miles.

Oh my train's off the track  
And I can't get it back,  
And I can't get a letter from my home.

Oh if you say so  
I will railroad no more;  
I will sidetrack my train and go home.

## SIDE II - Band 7

Cumberland Gap- "I learned that from my brothers. They played it about the way I play it, only brother John, he picked it with the double-noting, with the thumb, you know..."

## Cumberland Gap.

Lay down boys and take a nap  
We will all wake up in Cumberland Gap  
Cumberland gap is an awful place  
Can't get enough water to wash your face



Lay down boys and take a little rest  
We will wake up in the Whipper wills nest  
I guess of you hearing me sing this song  
many think that I am wrong  
But I know about me and my old pap  
Spent many of days in Cumberland gap

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