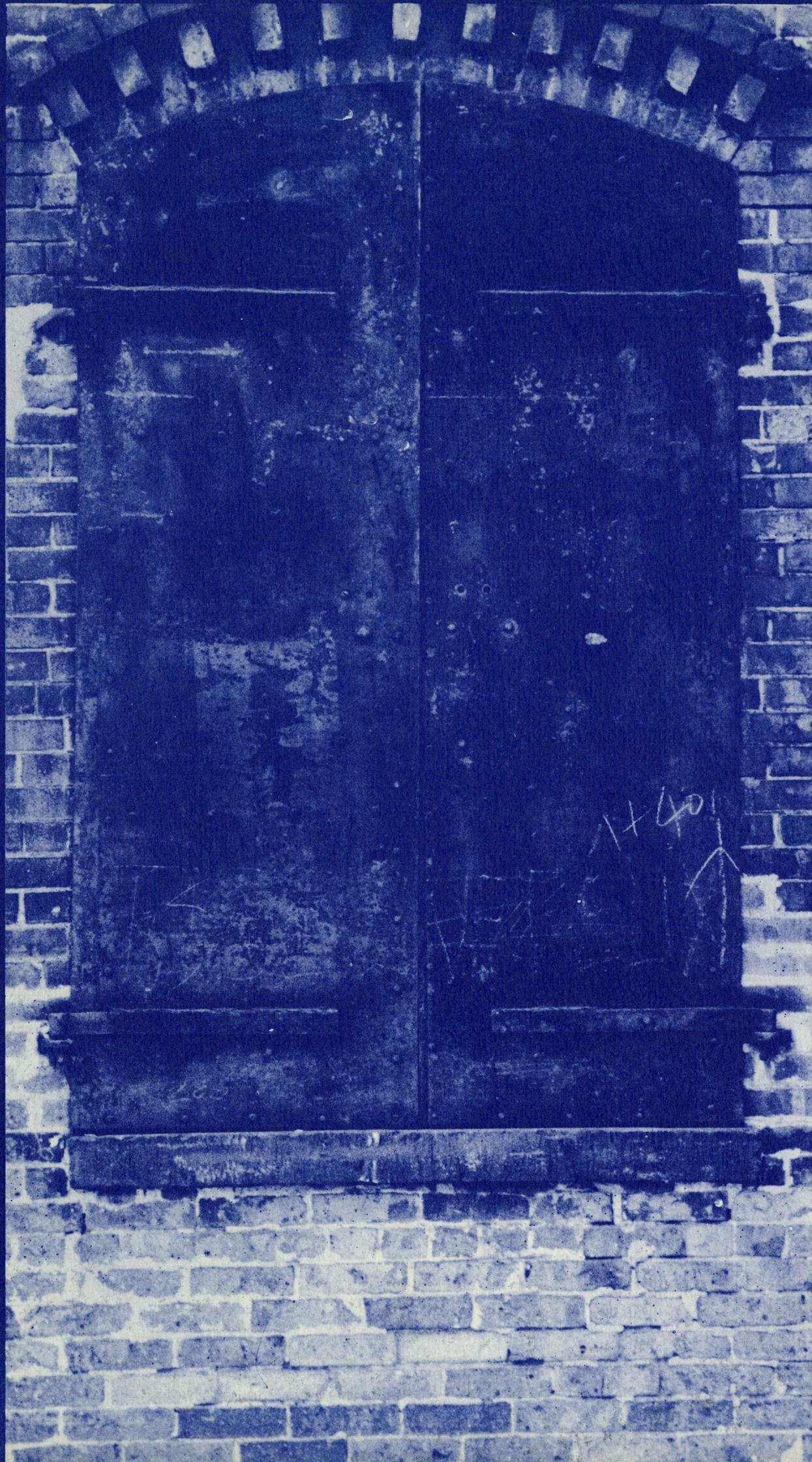


NEGRO PRISON CAMP WORKSONGS



COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

ETHNIC FOLKWAYS LIBRARY

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4475

Archival Property
Smithsonian Institution
Office of the Assistant Secretary
for Public Service

FE4475

LET YOUR HAMMER RING
HERE. RATTLER, HERE
CHOPPING IN THE NEW GROUND
MIGHTY BRIGHT LIGHT
GO DOWN OLD HANNAN
GRIZZLY BEAR
LOST JOHN
YOU GOT TO HURRY
I NEED MORE POWER
WE NEED ANOTHER WITNESS

Recorded in February, 1951, by Toshi and Peter Seeger, John Lomax Jr., Chester Bower and Fred Hellerman, at Ramsey and Retreive State Farms, Texas. The original tapes were deposited in the Folkllore Archives of the Library of Congress.
DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

Library of Congress Catalogue Card No. RA 57-30
© 1957 FOLKWAYS RECORDS AND SERVICE CORP.
43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., U.S.A.

WARNING: UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION OF THIS
RECORDING IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW AND SUBJECT TO
CRIMINAL PROSECUTION.

NEGRO PRISON CAMP WORKSONGS

FE4475

NEGRO PRISON CAMP WORK SONGS

Recorded in February, 1951, by Toshi and Peter Seeger, John Lomax Jr., Chester Bower and Fred Hellerman, at Ramsey and Retrieve State Farms, Texas. The original tapes were deposited in the Folklore Archives of the Library of Congress.

INTRODUCTION By PETER SEEGER

Worksongs are basically a participative art form, rather than a performance form, such as narrative ballads. In earlier centuries, people on every continent knew worksongs as a normal accompaniment of living. Domestic tasks such as spinning, milking, or rocking the cradle, had their own songs. Herdsmen had their lonesome cries, and there were the group songs of diggers, choppers, haulers, pushers, lifters, and hammerers.

Today, in mechanized North America one can only rarely hear such music. Certain scattered ethnic groups, such as the Gaelic-speaking Cape Breton Islander of eastern Canada, still preserve some worksongs. But among the Negro people of southern United States there is still a relatively strong tradition of worksong. Songs accompany road building and railroad building, fishing and other occupations that require coordinated muscular effort of a gang of men. In the Negro prisons of the south, where older prisoners pass on songs to younger men, some of the oldest and most traditional are still sung.

The songs on this record were recorded in the winter of 1951 at two Texas prison farms, both about fifth miles south of Houston. The singers ranged in age from eighteen to fifty years. Their performance was completely unrehearsed sung indoors, the songs were the same ones which the prisoners would sing during the day when they hoed or chopped in gangs of ten to thirty. All the singers on these recordings were Negro. (White prisoners in Texas were segregated into separate prisons, where worksongs are rarely, if ever, sung.)

Where do the songs come from?

While prison inmates often compose songs, the origins of most of these particular chants are

old. One melody, that of "Long John" has been attributed a West African origin. Another well-known Negro worksong, "Stewball", has been traced to an 18th Century British ballad about a racehorse, but the words are greatly changed, and the tune is a world away from the earlier narrative ballad. Another worksong, "Gray Goose" refers often in the lyrics to "Master" and "Missus" and "White House", indicating that the song was probably a product of slavery days. Another well-known worksong, "Take This Hammer" uses the same basic melodic and harmonic structure of such widely known tunes as "Goodnight Irene" and the spiritual, "I'm On My Way To Canaan Land". It should be pointed out that while some of these prison worksongs have specific prison references and perhaps local origins, many of the songs would be known to Negro laborers and singers of folksongs elsewhere in the south, though in as much as new verses and variant melodies are continually being created, it would be unusual to hear any song sung twice exactly the same way.

Musically, there are several points worth noting. Like most Negro worksongs (and most spirituals, too) these employ much antiphony, that is, one voice answering another -- solo balanced against chorus, for example. Antiphony is used by many worksongs the world over, but it is almost a basic principle of African music tradition. Harmony, while it was occasionally sung, does not figure as importantly in this music as it does, for example, in spirituals. The lack of harmonic accompaniment did not bother the singers, of course; they had probably never heard the songs sung except in the fields, "a cappella". Harmonically, most of the songs rarely leave the tonic chord. Only a few have an occasional dominant or subdominant feeling. However, any singer able to, would readily sing a high tenor part, or bass.

Note that the melody will often change as the song progresses. The first few verses will

Generally be sung "straight" - as a jazz musician might "set" the conventional melody before enlarging upon it. Later verses, whether sung by the original soloist or another stepping in to relieve him, will tend to embody melodic variations.

Rhythmically, any worksong must, of course, be appropriate to the work. Even slow songs, such as "Go Down, Old Hannah" would fit when each man was hoeing around plants with short, irregular strokes. Only with such a long "surge-like" song could a group of men find common rhythm. The more rhythmically regular songs, such as "Hammer, Ring" would be more likely to accompany such work as axe-chopping. If all strokes came in unison, they would occur normally on the third beat of each four-beat measure. If two groups alternated strokes, the sound would come on the first beat as well (the handclaps on the record do not represent axe strokes).

The singers making this recording showed a tendency to increase the tempo of each song. Probably outdoors in the fields this tendency would not be so pronounced.

This brings us to a much disputed point. What was the real purpose and function of work-song? Was it mainly distraction and entertainment, such as music over a P.A. system gives a line of workers on a monotonous belt-line? One could not categorically state that worksongs were essential, since so often labor was accomplished without their assistance. The writer once asked Alan Villiers, who wrote of the last clipper ships sailing around Cape Horn, if the sailors ever sang chanteys. "No!" he replied decisively. "We were too busy working." I asked one of the singers on this record why they sang them. "Oh, it makes the work go easier."

It would seem probable that worksongs, like many other art forms, have succeeded in fulfilling several different functions. A people that traditionally loved to sing would logically fit the rhythm of a song to the rhythm of work being done at the time, as hikers sing songs in march tempo. Occasionally the song could notify all the gang to bring concerted muscular effort at a certain point. The poetry of a song might lift a worker's mind out of the rut of a monotonous job, or at least relate it to the larger necessities and drama of life. The writer feels sure that one function of worksongs has been actually to help secure a steady, even pace of work. This pace might be faster than some would like, slower than others could achieve if necessary, but it would be a workable average. One songleader told me that he purposely held out the last note of the third line of every stanza of a certain song so that men could rest their hammers of their shoulders for a moment, before coming down on the next stroke.

The lyrics of these chants have a strong and

agile imagery. One word might mean several things at the same time. What does the hammer in "Hammer, Ring" represent? At least several things, before the last verse is sung. Who is the Grizzly Bear? Examine the words. Even the song titles themselves are eloquent: "I Need Another Witness," "Everlasting Power," "You Got To Hurry," "Lost John," and "Go Down Old Hannah." "Old Hannah" was the prisoner's nickname for the sun; in this song a man wants that sun to go down and never rise again in the morning, unless it brings Judgement Day.

Many questions about worksongs must remain unanswered until more research has been done in the field. This research will have to be done within the next few years, or it will be too late. Preferably it should be done not only with a tape recorder, but with motion picture camera, so that the relationship of the work to the song will be apparent.

SIDE I, Band 1: LET YOUR HAMMER RING

Oh, don't you hear my hammer ringing
Oh let your hammer ring
(response continues
throughout song)

Oh, don't you hear my hammer ringing
I says, I'm ringing in the bottom
I says, I'm ringing in the bottom
I says, I'm ringing for the captain
I says, I'm ringing for the sergeant
I says, I'm ringing for the steerer (?)
Well, and I'm ringing for the corner (?)
I believe we ring for everybody
I believe we ring for everybody
I'm gon' tell you 'bout my hammer
I'm gonna telllyou 'bout a hammer
Well, 'bout a-killing me, hammer
Well, 'bout a-killing me, hammer
I says, the captain's gone to Houston
I says, the captain's goin' to Houston
He's coming back by Ramsey
He's coming back by the Ramsey
He's gon' bring my partner
He gonna bring my partner
He's gonna give us both a hammer
And we're going in the bottom
We're gonna walk to the live oak
Don't turn and walk away, sir
We're gonna walk to the gopherwood
We're gonna walk to the gopherwood
Now, these words he say, sir
He says, ring old hammer
He says, ring old hammer
Well, says, ring in the bottom
Well, don't you ring in the bottom
I says, God told Noreh
About a rainbow sign
Well, there'll be no more water
Oh, there'll be no more water
I b'lieve fore your next time, sir
Oh, before next time, sir.
Says he destroy this world, sir
Say he destroy this world, sir

Well, Norah, Norah,
 Oh, don't you remember what I told you
 About a rainbow sign, sir
 I'm gonna run and get some water
 Oh, before your next time sir
 Well, old Norah got his hammer
 Well, went marching in the bottom
 And you can hear Norah's hammer
 Well, you can hear Norah's hammer
 Well, you can hear many ringing
 Well, all over the land sir
 He's in the country, too, sir
 And then the weaker generation
 Well, he asked old Norah
 Yes, he asked old Norah
 Well, what in the world you gonna do sir
 He's gonna build this-a ark-a
 Oh tell me where you gonna build it
 Oh, just a mile from the river
 I'm gonna build this old building
 So it'll float on the water
 And on land, and, too sir
 That's what I'm gonna do, sir
 Says you can hear Norah hollering
 Won't you ring, old hammer
 Now won't you ring old hammer
 Why don't you ring in the timber
 Why don't you ring like you use to
 You used to ring like a bell, sir
 There ain't nobody's hammer
 There ain't nobody's hammer
 Nobody's hammer in the bottom
 That ring like-a mine, sir
 I say, that's all about the hammer
 'Bout a -killing me, hammer
 We're gonna ring this hammer
 I'm gonna ring it in the bottom
 I said, God got the key
 And you can't come in, sir
 Why don't you ring old hammer
 Why don't you ring till your number
 Why don't you ring old hammer
 Old hammer won't you ring.....

SIDE I, Band 2: HERE RATTLER HERE

This song is one of a number about the escape of a prisoner named Old Riley. The singers of this song believed Old Riley's escape was from Clements State Farm "a long time ago."

Why don't you here, rattler, here
 Here, Rattler, here
 (response continues
 throughout the song)
 Oh, don't you here, Rattler, here
 This old Rattler was a walker dog
 Says, he'll trail you cross a live oak log
 Says, old Rattler hit the man's trail
 Says, he run and bit him on the heel
 And you oughta heard that man squeal
 You holler, here, here, Rattler
 Hollerin' here, here, Rattler
 Says, old Rattler was a walking dog
 He could trail you cross a live oak log
 Says, the captain come a-riding
 Asking, where is that sergeant

Says, I believe there's a man gone
 Says, the sergeant come riding
 Popping his whip upon the ground
 And Old Rattler turning 'round and 'round
 He said, here old Rattler
 Crying, here old Rattler
 Says, old Rattler, here's a marrow bone
 You can eat it, you can leave it alone
 I don't want no marrow bone
 I just want the man that's long gone
 Says, old Rattler went skipping through the
 morning dew
 And old Rattler went to skipping through the
 morning dew
 And the sergeant pop the whip upon the ground
 And old Rattler begin to turn round and round
 He cried, here old Rattler
 Crying, here old Rattler
 Says, old Riley got worried
 He come running with a letter
 Says, you ought to heard that letter read
 Says, old Riley says that Irene's dead
 Say, come home, pretty papa
 Yes, come home, pretty papa
 Says, old Riley he got worried
 Says to the captain that you was a-running
 You just tell him I was flying
 If he asks you was I laughing
 You can tell him I was crying
 And it's here, old Rattler
 And it's here, old Rattler
 And old Rattler got to the Brazos
 Well, he left him standing there a-howling
 Old Rattler hollered, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh,
 He hollered, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh,
 And I heard the sergeant blowing his horn
 Oughta heard that sergeant blowing his horn
 Blowed it, doo, doo, doo, doo,
 Blowed it, oo, oo, oo, oo,
 Says, I believe he crossed the river
 Believe he crossed Big Brazos
 He gonna give up old Riley
 Take another day back on the way
 I'm going to call old Rattler
 Hollering, here, Rattler, here here
 Won't you here, Rattler, here, here
 Won't you here, old Rattler.....

SIDE I, Band 3: CHOPPING IN THE NEW GROUND

Oh, Captain Charlie
 Good God A'mighty
 Oh, captain Charlie
 Oh, my Lord
 (responsive lines alternate
 throughout, as indicated)
 I'm chopping in the new ground
 I'm chopping in the new ground
 I'm chopping my way back
 I'm chopping my way back
 My way back home sir
 My way back home sir
 Oh, Captain Charlie
 Oh you remember what I told you
 If you didn't row, sir (?)
 Oh, you would not make it
 Make it back to Rosie

To Rosie and the baby
 Oh, Captain Charlie
 We're chopping in the new ground
 We're chopping all day long
 Chopping all day long, sir
 Oh, Captain Charlie
 Oh, do you remember
 Remember how she looked sir
 We're chopping in the live oak
 Way down on the Brazos
 Etc.

SIDE I, Band 4: MIGHTY BRIGHT LIGHT

In this song the last words of each line, "shining down" or "that was shining down" are picked up by the group. In addition, the group sings every fourth line -- variations of "Oh a mighty bright light that was shining down."

It was a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 It was a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 It was a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 Oh, a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 Oh, tell me, who was the light that was shin-
 ing down
 Oh, tell me, who was the light that was shin-
 ing down
 Oh, tell me, who was the light that was shin-
 ing down
 Oh, a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 Oh, King Jesus was the light that was shining
 down
 Oh, King Jesus was the light that was shining
 down
 King Jesus was the light that was shining
 down
 Oh, a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 My mother saw the light that was shining down
 My mother saw the light that was shining down
 My mother saw the light that was shining down
 It was a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 King Jesus was the light that was shining
 down
 Well, King Jesus was the light that was shin-
 ing down
 King Jesus was the light that was shining
 down
 Oh, a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 Oh, everybody saw the light shining down
 Oh, everybody saw the light that was shining
 down
 Oh, everybody saw the light that was shining
 down
 Oh, a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 Oh, do you want to see the light that was
 shining down
 Oh, do you want to see the light that was
 shining down

Oh if you want to see the light that was
 shining down
 Oh, a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 Oh, my brother saw the light that was shin-
 ing down
 Oh, my brother saw the light that was shin-
 ing down
 Well, my brother saw the light that was shin-
 ing down
 Oh, a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 It was a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 It was a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 It was a mighty bright light that was shining
 down
 Oh, a mighty bright light that was shining
 down

SIDE I, Band 5: GO DOWN OLD HANNAH

Old Hannah is the nickname the prisoners give the sun. Working in the heat of the day, they ask Old Hannah to go down and "rise no more."

<u>Solo</u>	<u>Group</u>
Why don't you go down, old Don't you rise	Hannah! No more
Oh, go down old Hannah Don't you rise no more Why don't you go down, old Don't you rise	Well, well, well Don't you rise no more Hannah no more
If you rise in the morning Bring judgement, sure If you go up, come up in the Bring judge -	Well, well, well Bring judgement sure morning ment sure
Well, I looked at old Hannah She was turning red Well, I looked at old It was turn -	Well, well, well She was turning red Hannah ning red
Well, I looked at my partner He was almost dead Well I looked at my He was	Well, well, well He was almost dead partner almost dead
Well, wake up, old dead man Help me carry my row Why 'nch' you wake up 'old Help me	Well, well, well Help me carry my row Dead man Carry my row
Well, my partner looked around This is what he said Well, my partner looked a- This is	Well, well, well This is what he said round what he said
Well, I'm sorry man They done drove me down Well, I'm They done	Well, well, well They done drove me down sorry man drove me down
Well, if you get lucky And make it back home If you get	Well, well, well And make it back home lucky

And make it	back home
Well, go down by Julie's	Well, well, well
Tell her I won't be home	Tell her I won't be home
Go down by	Julie's
Tell her I won't	be home
Well, I was a good man	Well, well, well
But they drove me down	But they drove me down
I was a good	nan
But they	drove me down
Well, look-a-here partner	Well, well, well
What I done done	What I done done
Lookahere	partner
What I	done done
Well, I drove so hard	Well, well, well
Couldn't see a whole turn row	Couldn't see a whole turn row
Well I drove so	hard
Couldn't see a	whole turn row
Well, I shook my head	Well, well, well
I began to moan	I began to moan
Well I shook my	head
And	began to moan
Well, it looks like everything	Well, well, well
Everything I do	Everything I do
Well it looks like	everything
I do	is wrong
Well, I made up my mind	Well, well, well
I'm gon' head home	I'm gon' head home
Well I made up my	mind
I'm gon'	head home

Well-a, I'm gonna kill that
 Well, the grizzely, grizzely
 Oh, that grizzely, grizzely
 Well, I looked in Louisiana for the
 Well, I looked in Louisiana for the
 Well, the grizzely, grizzely
 Well, that grizzely, grizzely
 (New soloist) I'm gonna tell you a story 'bout
 the
 Jack o'Diamonds wasn't nothing but
 He come a-huffing and a-blowing like
 He had great long tushes like
 He come a-wobbling and a-squabbling like
 And Jack o'Diamonds was the great big
 He was a great big grizzely
 He was the great big grizzely
 Everybody was scared of that
 Everybody was scared of that
 Oh, the grizzely, grizzely
 Oh, the grizzely, the grizzely
 Jack o'Diamonds was the great big
 He come a-wobbling and a-squabbling like
 He come a-huffing and a-blowing like
 He come a-walking and a-talking like
 He had great long tushes like
 He had big blue eyes like
 He had great long hair like
 Oh, the grizzely, grizzely
 Oh, the grizzely, grizzely
 I'm gonna tell you people 'bout
 I'm gonna warn you and gonna tell you 'bout
 You better watch that grizzely
 You better watch that grizzely
 Well, the bear's gonna get you now
 Oh, the grizzely, grizzely
 Oh, the great big grizzely
 Well, Jack o'Diamonds wasn't nothing but

SIDE II, Band 1: GRIZZLY BEAR

Oh, that grizzely, grizzely, grizzely bear
 Oh, that grizzely, grizzely, grizzely bear
 (this response "grizzely bear" follows
 every line by the soloist)
 Tell me, who was that grizzely
 Tell me, who was that grizzely
 Oh, Jack o'Diamonds was that grizzely
 Oh, Jack o'Diamonds was the grizzely
 He had great long tushes like a
 He had great long tushes like a
 He made a track in the bottom like a
 He made a track in the bottom like a
 Well, that grizzely, grizzely
 Oh, that grizzely, grizzely
 Tell me, who was the grizzely
 Tell, a-who was the grizzely
 Jack o'Diamonds was the grizzely
 Jack o'Diamonds was the grizzely
 He made a noise in the bottom like a
 He made a noise in the bottom like a
 Well, my mama was scared of that
 Well, my mama was scared of that
 Well, my papa went a-hunting for the
 Well, my papa went a-hunting for the
 Well, my brother wasn't scared of that
 Well, my brother wasn't scared of that
 Oh, the grizzely, grizzely
 Oh, the grizzely, grizzely
 Well-a, I'm gonna kill that

SIDE II, Band 2: LOST JOHN

In this song the soloist's words are repeated
 line by line by the group in responsive fashion.

One day, one day
 I were walking along
 And I heard a little boy
 Didn't see no one
 It was old Lost John
 He said he was long gone
 Like a turkey through the corn
 With his long clothes on
 Had a heel in front
 And a heel behind
 Well you couldn't hardly tell
 Well you couldn't hardly tell
 Whichaway he was goin'
 Whichaway he was goin'
 One day one day
 Well, I heard him say
 Be on my way
 Be on my way
 Fore the break of day
 By the break of day
 Got a heel in front
 Got a heel behind
 Well, you can't hardly tell
 Well, you can't hardly tell
 Whichaway I'm goin'

Oughta come on the river
 Long time ago
 You could find a dead man
 Right on your row
 Well, the dog man killed him
 Well, the dog man killed him
 'Cause the boy couldn't go
 'Cause the boy couldn't go
 Wake up dead man
 Help me carry my row
 'Cause the row's so heavy
 Can't hardly make it
 To the lower turn row
 To the lower turn row
 Oughta come on the river
 Nineteen and ten
 Well, the women was rolling
 Just like the men
 One day, one day
 I were walking along
 Well, I heard a little boy
 Couldn't see no one
 It was old Lost John
 Said that he were long gone
 Like a turkey through the corn
 Like a turkey through the corn
 With his long clothes on
 With his long clothes on
 Had a heel in front
 Had a heel behind
 Well, you couldn't hardly tell
 Whichaway he was goin'
 Whichaway he was goin'
 Well, he was long gone
 Like a turkey through the corn
 Oughta come on the river
 Long time ago
 I don't know, partner
 Say, you oughta know
 You'd catch plenty trouble
 Everywhere you go
 Everywhere you go
 One day, one day
 Heard the captain say
 If you boys work
 Gonna treat you mighty well
 If you don't go to work
 Says, we may give you hell
 One day, one day
 I'll be on my way
 And you may not never
 Ever hear me say
 One day, one day
 I'll be on my way

SIDE II, Band 3: YOU GOT TO HURRY.

This and the two songs following are religious in character -- what are referred to as "Christian" songs.

Group:

You got to hurry, hurry, hurry,
 To keep in touch with the son of God
 You got to hurry, hurry, hurry,
 Well, the time is drawing near.

Solo:

Let me tell you something, my Christian friends
 What makes the time-a go hard
 Well you spend more time in pleasin'
 Well, than you do in search of God

Group:

You got to hurry, etc.

Solo:

On the twenty-fifth day of December
 That's the date that our Christ was born
 Well, a band of Angels from heaven
 Oh, left there, singing a song

Group:

You got to hurry, etc.

Solo:

Well, go down, sun, and come moon of blood
 Blow out the moon and turn the moon into blood
 Come back, angels, and bolt the door
 Well, the time have been and won't be no more

Group:

You got to hurry, etc.

SIDE II, Band 4: I NEED MORE POWER

Well I need more power
 Power, Lord
 (group response continues throughout song)

I says, I need more power
 I mean the everlasting power
 I mean the everlasting power
 I mean the power that'll save me
 I mean the power that'll save me
 We done talking 'bout power
 We done talking 'bout the power
 Well, 'bout the everlasting power
 Well, 'bout the everlasting power
 Oh, don't you need that power
 Oh, don't you need that power
 I said my brother had the power
 Yes, my brother had the power
 Yes, he.....in the power
 Yes, he.....in the power
 Yes, he can sing with the power
 And I'm talking 'bout the power
 Well, everybody needs power
 Well, everybody needs power
 He needs the true-born power
 He needs the true-born power
 Well now, captain's got the power
 Yes even the captain's got the power
 We got the everlasting power
 We got everlasting power
 We got the power that'll save you
 Well, the power that'll save you
 You done talking 'bout power
 Yes, I'm talking 'bout the power
 I'm gonna moan with the power
 We're gonna moan with the power

With the true-born power
Well, the true-born power
Ain't no harm to have power
Ain't no harm to have power
Well, that everlasting power
Well, that everlasting power
Well, he preaches with the power
Yes, he preaches with the power
He's along with the power
He's alone with the power
Yes, I'm talking 'bout power
Yes, I'm talking 'bout power
'Bout everlasting power
Well, the everlasting power
Well, the true-born power
Well, the true-born power
We're gon' pray with power
We're gonna pray with the power
With the everlasting power
Yes, I'm talking 'bout power

Tell everybody for to not to judge, yeah
Read a little further and you'll find it here,
yeah
Judge a tree by the fruit it bear, yeah

Well, Peter was a witness
For my Lord
(response continues
through stanza)

Well, now, Peter was a witness
Well, I need another witness
Well, I need another witness

Sister Sally got to shouting at church one
night, yeah

Sister Jane hold her and she didn't hold
right, yeah

I am a person that talk very plain, yeah
Had to tell Sally, don't you call my name,
yeah

Don't you tell Sally in God I trust, yeah
Scared to tell Sally 'cause I'm scared it may
go bust

SIDE II, Band 5: WE NEED ANOTHER WITNESS

Oh, well, we need another witness
For my Lord
(group response continues)

Why don't you come and be a witness
Oh, be a sanctified witness
And be a Holy Ghost witness
And be a number one witness
And be a witness in the wilderness
Oh, Jack o'Diamonds was a witness
He was a number one witness
He was a sanctified witness
He was a Holy Ghost witness
He was a true, true witness
He was a number one witness
Jack o'Diamonds was a witness
And Tommy Weather was a witness
And Rocky Mountain was a witness
Well, old Jonah was a witness
And Sister Mary was a witness
And Sister Marthy was a witness

(New soloist)
Well there's peace for (Peedle?) and it (...)

Oh, the valley was a witness
For my Lord
(throughout stanza)

Well, the valley was a witness
Well, I need another witness
Well, I need another witness

Well, the angel come from the cloud
Spoke Ezekiel and his voice sound loud, yeah
Angel in the vigil (?) spoke Ezekiel, yeah
In his hand there was a golden chip, yeah
Got my shekel and (.....)
Moses ground up the golden calf (calf?)
Cash in the water turned bitter as gall

Oh, Moses was a witness
For my Lord
(throughout stanza)

Oh, Moses was a witness
Come on and be a witness
Come on and be a witness
Well, my soul is a witness
Well, my soul is a witness

HAROLD COURLANDER, GENERAL EDITOR

MOSES ASCH, PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

For Additional Information About
FOLKWAYS RELEASES

of Interest

write to



**Folkways Records
and Service Corp.**

701 SEVENTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036

