

# LEARN TO FIDDLE

## COUNTRY STYLE



WITH  
TRACY SCHWARZ

MT  
279  
S412  
L438  
1965



# LEARN TO FIDDLE COUNTRY STYLE WITH TRACY SCHWARZ

FOLKWAYS FI 8359

Tuning  
The Bow  
Noting Hand In The Key Of A  
The Scale In A  
Base And Unison Notes  
The Saw Stroke  
Learning Cripple Creek With The Saw Stroke  
Cripple Creek With More Notes  
Double String Runs  
Saw Stroke Version of Cripple Creek  
The Nashville Shuffle Stroke  
Nashville Shuffle Version of Cripple Creek  
The Combined Nashville Shuffle And Saw Strokes  
Cripple Creek Using Combined Nashville Shuffle  
And Saw Strokes

The Long Bow Stroke  
Cripple Creek Using Only The Long Bow Stroke  
Combining The Long Bow And Saw Strokes  
Combination of Long Bow And Nashville Shuffle  
Strokes In Old Joe Clark  
Combination of Long Bow Saw And Nashville  
Shuffle Strokes In Cripple Creek  
Base, Unison, and Octave, Notes in G  
Leather Britches In G  
The Key of D  
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The Key Of C  
The Texas Waggoner In C  
Double Stops In G  
Double Stops In D

Double Stops In A  
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Bonapart's Retreat D Tuning (D Tuning #1)  
Bonapart's Retreat  
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Bluegrass Fiddle Lead In 3/4 Time  
Bluegrass Fiddle Lead In 4/4 Time  
Fiddle Tune Type Lead In 4/4 Time  
Bluegrass Vibrato  
The Double Shuffle  
Banjo-Fiddle Music  
Guitar-Fiddle Music  
Guitar-Banjo-Fiddle-Band

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FI 8359

Library of Congress Catalogue Card No. R 68-557

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43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., U.S.A. 10023

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MUSIC LP

# LEARN TO FIDDLE

## COUNTRY STYLE



WITH  
**TRACY SCHWARZ**

### INTRODUCTION

#### LEARN TO FIDDLE COUNTRY STYLE WITH TRACY SCHWARZ

It would be well to start off by explaining how I got interested in this music. When I was quite young my family had a place in Vermont, and I liked the country then, and ever since. At eight years of age, in New Jersey, listening to the radio for cowboy songs exposed me to Country and Western Music, and I guess it really stuck with me, because at thirteen years of age I took the basic guitar ability I'd been taught and applied it to this music, and that started off a long period of music making that I hope never ends. As for the fiddle, I first tried to play one of my Grandfather's when I was fifteen, but had no success, not knowing where to start. Then, later, when I was about twenty-one, after learning a few other stringed instruments, I concentrated on the fiddle again, playing it while in the Army. We had a little band over in Germany where I was stationed, and in that eighteen months my fiddle playing smoothed out greatly. When I got out of the Army I joined the New Lost City Ramblers, and I've had plenty of time to fiddle ever since. While on tour with the

Ramblers I noticed that in every city or college two or three of the hard core enthusiasts were learning to fiddle, and finally, I'm afraid almost too late, it occurred to me to make a fiddle instruction record, and try to show all the things I'd learned from experience, and save a lot of people a lot of trouble so they can get over that beginning hump, and enjoy playing as I have. So here it is, and my apologies to those who've struggled without some kind of instruction record like this, and I hope there's something in this record to help them.

Now, the brochure notes for this record are set up so there's some comments important to the student that are not said on the record itself. These are important, and in some cases, prerequisites to learning. The examples themselves, for the most part, are done first slowly, so you can pick them up easier, and then at regular speed, so you can hear what it's supposed to sound like. The examples are separated into bands on the record, so it's easier to find your place when you go back. You'll have to do a certain amount of going back and repeating, so don't feel bad if you don't get a certain run or note on the first try. Remember that some fiddle tunes are so complicated and difficult that it may take a year to learn them completely.

In the record, you'll find several different kinds of bow strokes. Each one can be a separate style, and if you don't feel like learning any other, that's o.k., because you're the fiddler. I've started with the classical tuning because it is the most popular and versatile tuning, while open tunings would hinder you at the start. This instruction record will help you to learn how to learn a tune. The way you'll learn Cripple Creek shows how you get a basic idea of the tune, and then build around it. When you learn tunes, you have several different sources you can use, and records is one of the most important. Of course, for every one tune there's many different versions by many different fiddlers, but they all usually have that basic melody. Slowing the record down is one way of learning the notes. If it's impossible to slow down your phonograph, and you have a tape recorder, you can record the tune on tape at 7 1/2 inches per second, and slow the recorder down to 3 3/4 inches per second.

There are some things worth mentioning about your instrument itself. If you must buy one, then there are some pointers to remember. A one-piece, carved back usually indicates a good fiddle, while the cheap toneless varieties are bound to have the back joined at the middle. You must play the fiddle, or even just bow the strings, to know if you like the tone. Fiddles with narrow sides have a sharp tone, while those with wider sides will have a deeper, fuller tone. If you like the tone of one fiddle, above all the others you've tried, then buy it for what you think it's worth. Then, make sure to have certain things just right, and half the battle is won. The action of the fiddle is important. The closer the strings are to the fingerboard, the easier the fingering, although there is a point beyond which you shouldn't go, which could be called the squeak point. The bridge should be positioned by a repairman or violin maker at first, using a flatter curve than is used for classical violins, so you can bow two strings at once easily. As for strings, I use a brand called Super Sensitive, but they're not always perfect, so after a bit of experimentation you'll find the kind you like. Gut strings are so hard to play that I advise avoiding them. Your bow is another important item. It should be fairly straight, and should have all its hair. Take the bow by the frog, and touch the tip end to the floor. Exert pressure downwards on the bow. If the wood bends beyond the tightened hair, it's too flexible. It should resist your pressure, and barely touch the hair. It should also be light, so you can see why good bows cost a lot of money. Tuning the fiddle to the standard 440 A is a good idea. Many old timers tuned theirs down or up to get a certain kind of tone, but unless you play by yourself, you'll find it difficult to play with others if you're not in an approximate standard pitch.

Fiddling is not dead yet by any means, and there are many fiddlers' Conventions each year. Around where I live in Pennsylvania there's at least three in August, and there's the famous conventions at Union Grove, North Carolina, and Galax, Virginia. Make it a point to attend some. You'll learn a lot at these events.

After you've learned all you can off this record, you'll be wanting to learn more and more tunes. Sources are records, tapes, and live performances. Here's a list of some of the fiddlers who have made records, going from the old to the modern. Any of these are good sources:

Eck Robertson  
Fiddling John Carson  
Charlie Bowman

Chubby Wise  
Tommy Jackson  
Kenny Baker

Jilson Setters  
Uncle Alec Dunford  
G. B. Grayson  
Frank Blevins  
Carter Brothers and Son  
Gid Tanner  
Clayton McMichen  
Earl Johnson  
Lowe Stokes  
Red Headed Fiddler  
J. E. Mainer  
Fred Price  
Howdy Forrester

Fiddling Arthur Smith  
Fiddling Red Herron  
Fiddling Doc Roberts  
Steve Ledford  
Curley Fox  
Georgia Slim  
Benny Martin  
Tex Logan  
Chubby Anthony  
Scotty Stoneman  
Mac Magaha  
Sonny Miller  
Paul Warren

And Many Others

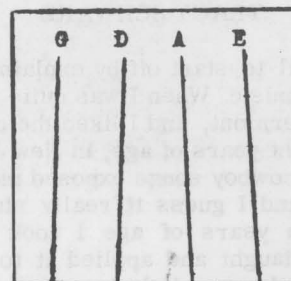
I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those who've made this record possible; namely, Lamar Grier, who was my recording engineer, my wife Eloise, who is my engineer, Mike Seeger and John Cohen for exposing me to so much good rare old time material, Gus Mead for the expression Nashville Shuffle, and Moe Asch, for releasing the record.

As for the tunes themselves, I learned Cripple Creek from many different sources, and Old Joe Clark came to me the same way. Leather Britches came mostly from Eck Robertson, that grand old master fiddler of Amarillo, Texas. Ragtime Annie's source is another mystery. The Texas Waggoner is another one I picked up from Eck Robertson. I can't remember the exact source for the other tunes, except for the Jolly Blacksmiths, learned from a record by Theron Hale and Daughters; Sally Johnson, from Eck Robertson and a record by Solomon and Hughes; and the Sugartree Stomp, which is a Fiddling Arthur Smith tune. On the accompanied numbers, Lamar Grier played banjo, and my wife Eloise played guitar and sang tenor to me.

BAND I SIDE I

TUNING

The fiddle will be tuned in the regular classical tuning for now, which is, according to the diagram in the brochure notes, E-A-D-G EXAMPLE.



CLASSICAL TUNING

I'll play the strings again so you can get an idea of where the pitch is-EXAMPLE. A mandolin-violin pitch pipe will be a very useful and inexpensive pitch source for you. Until we go into different old time tunings this will be how the fiddle will be tuned for every example. If you want to play with a band this tuning has the advantage of versatility, and it's the most common tuning used.



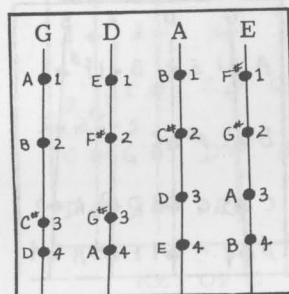
## THE BOW

Tighten your bow at the frog, which is that black square piece at one end, by turning the round nut to the right until the hair stretches tight enough so that it doesn't touch the wood of the bow. You can test this by putting the hair to the strings of the fiddle as if you were going to play. If the wood of the bow touches the string, tighten the hair some more. However, don't tighten it too much or the bow will bounce when you're playing. Take the bow in your bowing hand, in between the thumb and fingers. There are several different places to hold it, the first being the old time choke up; i. e., almost half the length of the bow from the frog. Some people crook their thumb around the hair and get a better grip that way. Another place to hold the bow is down at the frog, in any manner that is comfortable and relaxed. If you wish, have a violinist or student-violinist show you the classical manner.

## NOTING HAND IN THE KEY OF A

Pick up the fiddle in your noting hand and tuck it under your chin, or hold it with the end resting on your chest, the old time way. Under the chin gives you more controlled and cleaner fingering, while on the chest is more relaxed, tho harder to control.

Now we'll learn a little about the function of the noting hand, in the key of A. In these brochure notes you'll find a diagram of the fingerboard. The dots are where you press the strings for the desired notes, and the numbers indicate which finger to use, #1 being the index finger, as the thumb will not be used at all.



KEY OF A

## BAND 2 SIDE I THE SCALE IN A

I'll run up and down the scale once with you to help you find your way around in this key, because you have to pick up the notes from my examples by ear. Now, play right along with me, starting with A on the G string-A-B-C#-D. Now the D string-D-E-F#-G#-A. The A string-A-B-C#-D-E. And the E string-E-F#-G#-A-B. Back down again-E string-A-G#-F#-E. And the A string-E-D-C#-B-A. The D string-A0G#-F#-E-E. And the G string-D-C#-B-A. Now, put the needle of the phonograph back to the beginning of this example and do it with me again, then several times by yourself.

## BAND 3 SIDE I BASE AND UNISON NOTES

In every key there is a starting, or base note, from which almost every diffle tune in that key starts. In A, that note is the A string open-EXAMPLE, sometimes

simultaneously with the E string open-EXAMPLE, or A played on the D string by finger #4 and C# on the A string by finger #2-EXAMPLE. The double or unison notes in this key are A on the D string with the open A string-EXAMPLE, and E on the A string simultaneously with the E string open-EXAMPLE. Other unison notes occur, but in the related chords, so we'll cover them later. There is a two note harmony done with one finger. Use your finger #1 for both A on the G string and E on the D string-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 4 SIDE I THE SAW STROKE

Now to start playing a tune. The saw stroke will be what you're going to do with your bowing hand; i. e., one stroke per note. For the first note you'll pull the bow once-EXAMPLE, for the second stroke you'll push it-EXAMPLE, just like sawing-EXAMPLE ON ONE NOTE. Now, try to start off with a push stroke as the first one, instead of a pull. Awkward at first, but valuable. Try to keep your wrist loose, and bow the strings with the portion of the hair that is about three to five inches from the tip. Let's do some note progressions, remembering that as you pick up speed you must be careful to keep the bowing in synchronization with your fingering hand-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 5 SIDE I LEARING CRIPPLE CREEK WITH THE SAW STROKE

Here are the simple basic notes for Cripple Creek in the key of A-EXAMPLE SLOW-REGULAR SPEED. Learn to do this before you go on. It's only an outline of the tune but it's necessary.

## BAND 6 SIDE I CRIPPLE CREEK WITH MORE NOTES

Here's the same thing with a few more notes-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 7 SIDE I DOUBLE STRING RUNS

Up to this point all the notes have been on one string at a time. Let's try including a drone string now, in this case, the open E or the open A, so you'll have what I call double string runs. They give you a full harmonious sound-EXAMPLE.

Now here's the resulting combination. This is Cripple Creek done with a certain choice of notes and combinations of strings. It is one of the many possible ways of playing this tune, using only the saw stroke, and it is not necessarily the way the tune has to be played. The preceding examples show how a fiddle tune can be built from its foundation. Every fiddler is a kind of tune constructor, and as your technical ability increases, so will your tune construction, the end result being just exactly what you want it to be.

## BAND 8 SIDE I SAW STROKE VERSION OF CRIPPLE CREEK

Now let's go thru this version of Cripple Creek slowly, and then at regular speed-EXAMPLE.

# BAND 9 SIDE I THE NASHVILLE SHUFFLE STROKE

The next bow stroke that we'll take up is what can be called the Nashville Shuffle, because Nashville Tennessee is the Country Music Capital of the United States, and this stroke is used quite often in modern Country Music. It consists of one long stroke, and then two short ones-EXAMPLE. Notice that each long stroke is alternately a pull, and then a push, or if you start the series with a push, it's push-pull-push pull-push-pull, etc. The next step is to work in some runs-EXAMPLE. You can also play two notes with your noting hand on the long stroke like this-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 10 SIDE I NASHVILLE SHUFFLE VERSION OF CRIPPLE CREEK

Using this, we can take Cripple Creek, with the fingering as before, and play it with the Nashville Shuffle only, this way-EXAMPLE.

You'll notice that some notes sound different with this stroke, so therefore, much of the difference between two fiddlers will be in their bowing techniques.

## BAND 11 SIDE I THE COMBINED NASHVILLE SHUFFLE AND SAW STROKES

The two preceeding strokes can be combined, like this-EXAMPLE. You can throw in as many saw strokes as you like, where you like. They vary the otherwise monotonous sound of the Shuffle, and help you to make the difficult transition of the bow from one string to another. Here are some runs-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 12 SIDE I CRIPPLE CREEK USING COMBINED NASHVILLE SHUFFLE AND SAW STROKES

Now here is Cripple Creek again, played with the combined Nashville Shuffle and the saw stroke-EXAMPLE.

Next is the long bow stroke; i. e., playing two notes per stroke, as opposed to the one to one ratio of the saw stroke. You have already done this on the practice runs for the Nashville Shuffle strokes, but in this case we add more notes.

## BAND 13 SIDE I THE LONG BOW STROKE

Now, just pull, or push the bow, first of all, for the duration of two notes-EXAMPLE. Now three notes-EXAMPLE. Now four and more notes-EXAMPLE. When you play this many notes you use as much of the length of the bow as you can. This is often the bow stroke that is used with drone effects, again using the open E string in this key-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 14 SIDE I CRIPPLE CREEK USING ONLY THE LONG BOW STROKE

Now, let's do Cripple Creek using only the long bow stroke. This is difficult and awkward, and is rarely used for the entire tune-EXAMPLE.

# BAND 15 SIDE I COMBINING THE LONG BOW AND SAW STROKES

Here is where we really get into a complicated bowing hand style. First of all, let's combine the longbow stroke with the saw stroke, where the first three notes are done by the long bow stroke, and then the following notes will be done by the saw stroke-EXAMPLE. Then you have a regular reoccurring series of long bow strokes, each stroke lasting the duration of two, or three, or four notes followed by any number of saw strokes-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 16 SIDE I COMBINATION OF LONG BOW AND NASHVILLE SHUFFLE STROKES IN OLD JOE CLARK

Next is the combination of long bow strokes and Nashville Shuffle strokes, using the tune called Old Joe Clark as an example in the key of A-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 17 SIDE I COMBINATION OF LONG BOW SAW AND NASHVILLE SHUFFLE STROKES IN CRIPPLE CREEK

Now comes the final result, where we use long bow, saw, and Nashville Shuffle strokes on Cripple Creek-EXAMPLE.

Now we'll concentrate on some more noting hand positions in different keys. The first will be G. In these brochure notes you'll find another fingerboard diagram, and you should be able to learn the fingering positions from it. Don't forget that some notes that were sharps in the key of A will not be in this key.



KEY OF G

## BAND 18 SIDE I BASE, UNISON, AND OCTAVE NOTES IN G

In G, your base note is usually the G on the D string, often done with B on the A string in harmony-EXAMPLE. The unison notes belong to related chords, so you'll get them later. There is an octave combination used quite often: G on the D string with the open G string-EXAMPLE.

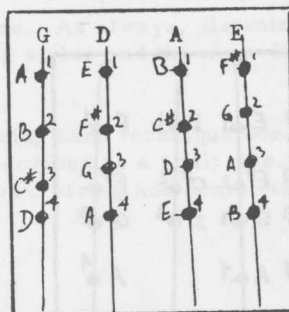
## BAND 19 SIDE I LEATHER BRITCHES IN G

Here is a tune in G called LEATHER BRITCHES-EXAMPLE.

## BAND 20 SIDE I THE KEY OF D

The next key we'll take up is D. Once again, consult the diagram for finger placement.





KEY OF D

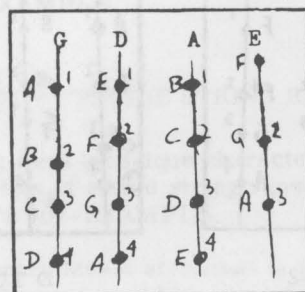
Unison notes will be D on the G string with the open D string. This is quite often the base note-EXAMPLE. Other base notes are D on the A string alone-EXAMPLE, or with F# either on the D string-EXAMPLE, or on the E string-EXAMPLE. Octave combinations are D on the A string with the open D string-EXAMPLE, and A on the E string with the open A string, a combination which fits the D chord as well as the A chord, to which it actually belongs-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 21 SIDE 1 RAGTIME ANNIE IN D

Here's an old time tune in D called Ragtime Annie-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 1 SIDE 2 THE KEY OF C

The final key we'll take up is C.



KEY OF C

Your base notes are C on the G string with E on the D string in harmony-EXAMPLE, or C on the A string with E on the D string-EXAMPLE, or with E open-EXAMPLE. You have a unison note by playing E on the A string with the open E string, which appears also in the key of A-EXAMPLE. There is also, a two note one finger combination, using C on the A string with G on the E string, done with either the first or second finger-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 2 SIDE 2 THE TEXAS WAGGONER IN C

Now let's do a number in C called the Texas Waggoner-EXAMPLE.

The keys of Bb, F, and E are very rarely used for fiddle tunes. When they are used, the tunes are advanced and difficult. If at a later date you would like to learn these keys you'll be able to figure out the finger positions very easily. In Bb, Eck Robertson plays a tune called Done Gone, and some old timers do Fisher's Hornpipe in F. I know of no fiddle tune yet in E, but this key is

used quite often in modern Country and Bluegrass Music.

In each key there are double stops; i.e., two strings bowed together in harmony, and stopped, fretted, or pressed, with any comfortable combination of two fingers. There are two kinds of double stops: stationary, and sliding, where you slide your fingers up or down the fingerboard and arrive at another double stop position.

#### BAND 3 SIDE 2 DOUBLE STOPS IN G

In G, the first double stop is G on the D string with G on the D string-EXAMPLE. The next is G on the D string with B on the A string, one you already know as the base for the key of G-EXAMPLE. This can be slid up to B on the D string with D on the A string-EXAMPLE. Next is B on the A string with the G on the E string-EXAMPLE. Then there's D on the A string with G on the E string-EXAMPLE. In modern music this can be slid up to G on the A string with B on the E string-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 4 SIDE 2 DOUBLE STOPS IN D

In D we have first of all, D on the G string with F# on the D string-EXAMPLE. Then there's A on the D string with D on the A string-EXAMPLE. Then there's D on the A string with F# on the E string, another one you already know-EXAMPLE. This can be slid up to F# on the A string with A on the E string-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 5 SIDE 2 DOUBLE STOPS IN A

In A, we have to start with, C# on the G string with E on the D string-EXAMPLE. Next is A on the D string with C# on the A string-EXAMPLE. Then there's E on the A string with A on the E string-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 6 SIDE 2 DOUBLE STOPS IN C

In C, we have C on the G string with E on the D string-EXAMPLE. This is sometimes slid up to E on the G string with G on the D string-EXAMPLE. Then there's G on the D string with C on the A string-EXAMPLE. Next is E on the A string with G on the E string-EXAMPLE.

After you've learned these, you'll be able to master the double stops in the remaining keys in a very short time.

Another special technique is vibrato, the use of which seems to be the choice of each fiddler. However, in general it appears much more often in modern Country Music and Bluegrass Music than in old time music. By listening to records you can learn how it's applied.

#### BAND 7 SIDE 2 COUNTRY VIBRATO

Country vibrato tends to be fast; i.e., the finger vibrates fast, like this-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 8 SIDE 2 SLIDING INTO NOTES

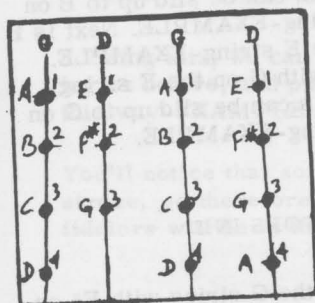
A technique that has great importance in style differentiation is sliding into notes, as opposed to coming

straight down onto the string with the finger. Here are a few notes and runs using this technique-EXAMPLE.

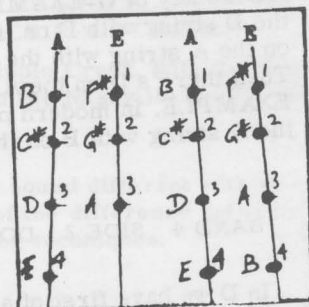
Some fiddle tunes are traditionally played in open tunings; i.e., the fiddle is tuned so that it will play one chord in open strings. It is also called crosstuning.

#### BAND 9 SIDE 2 THE OPEN G AND A TUNINGS

First, there's the open G tuning; i.e., D-G-D-G. This also exists as an A tuning; i.e., E-A-E-A. As before, in the brochure notes you'll find fingerboard diagrams.



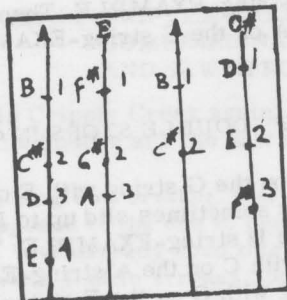
G TUNING



A TUNING

#### BAND 10 SIDE 2 THE BLACK MT. BLUES A TUNING

Next is the Black Mt. Blues tuning, called this because the tune by that name is played in this tuning-EXAMPLE.



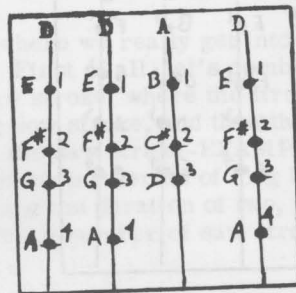
BLACK MT. BLUES TUNING

#### BAND 11 SIDE 2 THE TUNE BLACK MT. BLUES

Here's a little bit of that tune to show you how it is done to advantage in this tuning. There is one place in this tune where the tuned down E string is plucked with a finger of the noting hand, -EXAMPLE, like that-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 12 SIDE 2 BONAPART'S RETREAT D TUNING (D TUNING #1)

Next is the D tuning used primarily for Bonapart's retreat. Let's call it D tuning #1 for more clarity-EXAMPLE. The G string is tuned down to D, exactly one octave below the open D string, and makes a drone sound.



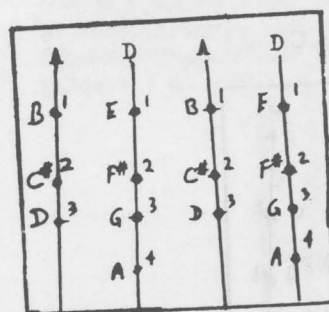
D TUNING #1

#### BAND 13 SIDE 2 BONAPART'S RETREAT

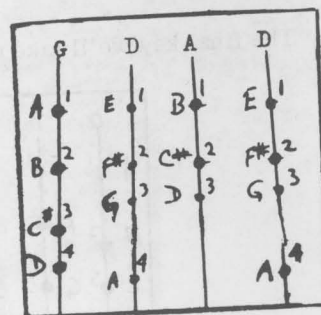
Here's a little bit of Bonapart's Retreat to show you how that drone string works-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 14 SIDE 2 D TUNINGS #2 AND #3

D tunings #2 and #3 are slightly different. You don't have that drone-EXAMPLE. Now D tuning #3 is slightly different in that you drop your G string down to G as it is in the classical tuning. So you have-EXAMPLE.



D TUNING #2



D TUNING #3

All of the preceeding examples show a general style of playing. If you want to concentrate on a good old time creaky type of playing you won't need all the bow strokes outlined; for instance, a good old time stroke is the saw. The bowing hand is more jerky in old time music, and there's quite a bit of rocking the bow on two or three or all the strings.

#### BAND 15 SIDE 2 ROCKING THE BOW

Rocking the bow is a technique where you actually rock from one string to another, making a rhythmic sound like this-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 16 SIDE 2 THE JOLLY BLACKSMITH IN A

Here's a tune in A called 'The Jolly Blacksmiths, done with a jerky style similar to Irish jig type-EXAMPLE.

If you want you can hold the fiddle on your chest, as this is a looser style of playing. Open tunings can be used



to advantage here. As always, listening will be your guide to learning style, and the more listening you can do, the better.

There is a noting hand technique done in old time music which can be described as a trill; i. e., alternately pressing down on a string and completely withdrawing the finger.

#### BAND 17 SIDE 2 TRILLS

Trills sound like this-EXAMPLE. Two or three times is usually the duration of the complete trill-EXAMPLE.

Irish fiddling has this to quite a degree, as well as Canadian fiddling, but in the United States this has almost disappeared.

The opening measures of an old time fiddle tune are much less formal than you hear nowadays. Old time fiddlers are extremely individualistic, so there are many different ways it can be done. One way is to just draw the bow across the strings of the key. However, the actual spot in the tune where the fiddler begins is apt to vary.

#### BAND 18 SIDE 2 SOLDIER'S JOY IN D WITH AN OLD TIME START

Let's do a little bit of Soldier's Joy in D, starting where an old timer would be likely to begin-EXAMPLE. A modern fiddler would probably begin here, again in Soldier's Joy-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 19 SIDE 2 SINGLE STRING RUNS

Another noting hand technique characteristic of old time fiddling is lots of single string runs, like this, again in Soldier's Joy-EXAMPLE.

A modern Country Music style that is very close to old time playing is Bluegrass, which has blue notes, and modal, or non-major-minor notes, combined with regular notes. It is difficult to do, but is a very complete style which includes slow and fast tunes equally as well. Of course, listening to the music itself, especially that of its originator, Bill Monroe, will show all the different sides of this style, but a few examples follow of the fiddler's role in Bluegrass music to help you out. When, in a Bluegrass band, the fiddler steps to the front and plays some of the melody, it's called taking a fiddle break, or taking a lead. These are done in either 4/4 time or 3/4 (waltz) time, and at various tempos.

#### BAND 20 SIDE 2 BLUEGRASS FIDDLE LEAD IN 3/4 TIME

Here's how a lead in 3/4 time might be done-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 21 SIDE 2 BLUEGRASS FIDDLE LEAD IN 4/4 TIME

In 4/4 time, leads can be done using double stops, involving slow movement of the left hand-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 22 SIDE 2 FIDDLE TUNE TYPE LEAD IN 4/4 TIME

Also, in 4/4 time you can use lots of notes, like a fiddle tune, employing all the bow strokes outlined earlier-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 23 SIDE 2 BLUEGRASS VIBRATO

Vibrato figures into Bluegrass fairly often, according to the individual style of each musician, but when it does appear it's usually a fast intense vibrato, done mostly where the notes are sustained for a long time, like this-EXAMPLE.

A complicated bow stroke is used in Bluegrass as well as modern Country Music that we haven't taken up yet, and that is the double shuffle, or the Georgia Lick; i. e., a 1-2-3-4-5-6-1-2-3-4-5-6-1-3 series of saw strokes done on two or three strings.

#### BAND 24 SIDE 2 THE DOUBLE SHUFFLE

Broken down, the double shuffle is this in the key of A: the 1-2 strokes on one string are this-EXAMPLE(PULL-PUSH), or on a two string harmony-EXAMPLE (PULL-PUSH). Then the 3 strokes is played-EXAMPLE (PULL). Followed by the 4-5 strokes-EXAMPLE (PUSH-PULL); then the 6 stroke-EXAMPLE(PUSH); which ends the first part of the series. This series is repeated again-EXAMPLE; and is rounded off by the 1-3 strokes-EXAMPLE. Now, the notes occurring on the 3 and 6 strokes don't have to be the same as in the previous examples. You can make them different, so that it sounds like this-EXAMPLE. And altogether, at regular speed, double shuffle sounds like this-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 25 SIDE 2 BANJO-FIDDLE MUSIC

In the old days in the mountains guitars were rare, so the banjo was used to accompany the fiddle. This music is a real good sounding and rhythmic combination, and it will help you in your learning process to play with a banjo picker. Here's a little bit of Sally Johnson with Scruggs style five string banjo accompaniment-EXAMPLE.

#### BAND 26 SIDE 2 GUITAR-FIDDLE MUSIC

You can get a guitar player to back you up too, and do tunes like I Danced All Night With A Bottle In My Hand-EXAMPLE.

If at all possible, get together with a group, because it will smooth you playing out very quickly.

#### BAND 27 SIDE 2 GUITAR-BANJO-FIDDLE-BAND

Here's a tune called The Sugartree Stomp with banjo and guitar-EXAMPLE.

Well, there it is. Everything I know I've shown you, and now it's up to you to practice until you get your fiddling the way you want it. If you have any questions, write me at RD#2, D lta, Pa., and I'll try to answer them as well as possible.



# COUNTRY MUSIC ON FOLKWAYS RECORDS

OLD TIME & BLUEGRASS

by John Cohen

This is to serve as an introduction to one segment of the Folkways catalog which represents something of the seeds and sources for a dynamic aspect of American folk music which has found a voice in the cities and colleges in recent years. For the most part, this is mountain music derived from the rural south.

There is now an excitement about this music throughout the colleges and cities, amongst young people who are finding a voice in this music, and who are making it their own voice.

There are a great range of approaches to this music, and a great many styles involved; yet inherent in this movement is a desire to remain close to the traditional ways of playing the music.

The movement, diverse as it is, has taken on a structure which has its heroes, artistic leaders, legendary characters, a sort of language of its own, and several senseless confusions and stereotypes applied to it.

Much of the clamor about this music has come from banjo pickers & guitar singers who have brought the music to everyone's attention by their very enthusiasm. It is their excitement about the music which has communicated first. But there is much more to be heard and understood.

These spirited musicians are often 'put down' for being merely 'ethnic imitators' by the very same people who recognize that traditional folk music is the only aesthetically complete folk music to be heard.

Although it is relatively new in its present situation, this music is part of one of the oldest American traditions. It has its roots in the music of the early settlers, and has received fresh vigor over the years from developments within American culture which have introduced new sounds and new instruments to this tradition, as well as new rhythms and harmonies to accompany the changing social functions the music has performed.

It is part of an active and progressive tradition, yet it has always maintained a terrific sense of respect and preservation for its own past. In this way elements from years ago are still considered as significant to the present day music by those who perform and live with this music.

Within old time string band music, bluegrass and just home performances, are found trances of the old ballad styles of singing, of bagpipe and fiddle sounds from the British Isles, as well as sounds of the sentimental songs from the 19th century, minstrel stage songs, early Negro blues, rhythms from jazz as well as those now found in rock-and-roll.

One significant and important aspect of the current city trend towards this music is that it has presented a way to enjoy and understand the popular music, without sentimentality and without losing the perspective of culture as a whole. It is only in the nature of this perspective that the urban interest differs from the country tradition. This can neither be praised nor lamented, nor can it be overlooked. It must be recognized, for it is the basis upon which an intelligent approach can develop to the many ideas which are being encountered in the current investigation of folk music.

The importance of academic scholarship can not be denied: neither can an excited emotional involvement. It is only when folk music becomes just a form of entertainment, in the more commercial sense of that word, that it is being abused.

That the investigation has become more like an involvement of love or art, is to the credit of the investigators. If city people have found that country music is meaningful to them, then this is a genuine enrichment of their lives.

The more one gets involved in this music, the more one realizes the character of an old tradition at work, and the astonishing directness and simplicity in the approach of the traditional artist. An understanding of the music opens up the possibilities for us all to get the most pleasure and reward from these old songs, and from the people who sing them.

In various college campuses and cities now, folk music societies and festivals are emerging which incorporate active research with song collecting, concert producing, and music playing. At one school, on the event of a New Lost City Rambler concert, the folk music society increased its membership by 100, a panel discussion was held with university faculty and visiting musicians participating, a student string-band was formed, and a local Bluegrass band of country kids was 'discovered' and incorporated into the general university folk song scene. In addition to this, a regular publication was started. At another place, serious discographical research is being done and a record of rare re-issues of early hill music was released. Concerts are being produced employing traditional artists; this is no longer a unique situation. The University of Chicago Folk Festival, the Berkeley Festival, the Friends of Old Time Music, and the Ash Grove in Los Angeles, are all pointing the way towards an intelligent enjoyment of traditional folk music.

Within the Folkways catalog is a group of recordings which present the scope and nature of the various facets of this music. Folkways has been consistent in its presentation of this music as it is traditionally and authentically performed.

FA2951 (Vol. 1) - Ballads: 27 traditional ballads performed by The Carter Family, Clarence Ashley, Buell Kazee, Carolina Tar Heels, Furry Lewis, Charlie Poole with the North Carolina Ramblers, G. B. Grayson, The Masked Marvel, "Chubby" Parker, many others.

2 12-inch 33-1/3 rpm longplay records

FA2952 (Vol. 2) Social Music: 29 selections performed by Bascom Lunsford, Blind Willie Johnson, Carter Family, Sacred Harp Singers, Bunt Stephens, A Hunt's Ramblers, The Pep-Steppers, Cincinnati Jug Band, others.

2 12-inch 33-1/3 rpm longplay records

FA2953 (Vol. 3) Songs: 28 selections incl. East Virginia, One Morning In May, Sugar Baby, Mountaineer's Courtship, 99 Year Blues, K.C. Moan, Fishing Blues, etc., performed by Uncle Dave Macon, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Clarence Ashley, Cannons Jug Stompers, Carter Family, John Hurt, "Dock" Boggs, Stoneman Family, many more.

2 12-inch 33-1/3 rpm longplay records

The Anthology of American Folk Music FA 2951, FA 2952, FA 2953  
This collection is a most comprehensive one, and gives an incisive look into the folk music current from 1927 to 1932 as recorded by the commercial recording companies of that time. Good representation of rural music, with many important artists represented, ed. and annotated by Harry Smith.

Vol. 1 Ballads:

Some Child Ballads, and many other old songs in the ballad tradition, sung as current and popular songs in 1927, etc.

Vol. 2 Social Music:

Dance music and religious music. Both white and Negro traditions. Many instrumental pieces.

Vol. 3 Songs:

Excellent collection of country songs and many blues. Important artists in this collection.

Clarence Ashley  
Buell Kazee  
Dick Justice  
Uncle Eck Danford  
Burnette & Rutherford  
Conner & Young  
Carolina Tar Heels

Miss. John Hurt  
Furry Lewis  
Jilson Setters  
Eck Robertson  
Uncle David Macon  
Blind Lemon Jefferson  
Dock Boggs

Grayson & Whitter  
The Carter Family  
Kelly Harrell  
Frank Hutchison  
Charlie Poole  
Bascom Lunsford  
Jim Jackson  
Ernest Phipps  
E.V. Stoneman  
Blind Willie Johnson