Folkways Records FI 8360

THE FLAT-PICKER'S GUITAR GUIDE

An Advanced Instruction Record by Jerry Silverman

MT 588 S5874 1966

MUSIC LP

Hammering-On I Am A Man Of Constant

Sorrow (4)
Brown Eyes (1)
The Church Lick With The Blues

Wrinkle Crawdad

A Typical Bluegrass Run My Home's Across The Smoky Mountains

Barre Chords: The Muffle Roll In My Sweet Baby's Arms

Barre Chords: The Shuffle Bill Bailey

Carter Family Wildwood Flower

Bright Shines The Moon In The Pines Single String

Everyday Dirt (Doc Watson) Mountain Dew (George Shuffler) Red Rocking Chair (Charley Waller) Cindy (Jerry Silverman)

Cross Picking Jesse James Syncopation In The Caribbean Que Bonita Bandera

Love Alone Fancy Stepper - The Unorthodox Church Lick

Na Kone Voronom (On a Raven-Black Horse) Rhythmic And Melodic Patterns in

7 Time Samyotisa

COVER PHOTOGRAPH H

FI 8360

FLAT-PICKERS GUITAR GUIDE

By Jerry Silverman

SIDE ONE, Band 1

THE PICK, AND HOW TO HOLD IT

Playing the guitar with a pick offers a wide range of rhythmic and tonal possibilities. It is especially useful in bluegrass, square dance and certain types of American ballads as well as in a variety of foreign rhythms and styles.

To hold the pick properly, extend the index finger and lay the pick on the side of the finger with the point of the pick extending about one quarter of an inch beyond the fingernail. Then bring the thumb down across the pick at a right angle to the index finger. Turn the wrist toward the guitar so that the index finger and pick are pointing directly at the strings.



With the pick grasped firmly but flexibly between the thumb and the index finger try a few "bass-chord" strums on some familiar chords. Try alternating basses. You may run into some difficulty hitting the string you want until you get used to the feel of the pick. That shouldn't take too long.

Before we go any further let's tune up...

The following section on Tablature is not on the record but is taken from the book, The Flat-Picker's Guitar Guide, by Jerry Silverman. It is presented here for reference purposes.

The complete lyrics for all the songs on this record may be found in the same book,

TABLATURE

Tablature is a system of musical notation which shows the player of a particular musical instrument where to find the notes on his instrument rather than what the notes actually are. As it pertains to the guitar, then, tablature indicates the proper fret and the proper string.

Just as we use a six-lined chord diagram (which is also a form of tablature) to learn chords so do we use a six-lined tablature "staff" upon which to indicate where the notes are to be found. In the following diagram the horizontal lines represent the strings - the lowest line being the sixth and the highest line, the first.



Numbers on each line indicate the proper fret. Thus if you played a scale starting on the sixth string (an E-major scale)



Tablature would show it in this manner:



REMEMBER: LINES = STRINGS

NUMBERS - FRETS

MELTAB and GITAB

MELTAB is the tablature which indicates where the actual notes of the melody of the piece being sung may be played. It will be written directly below the melody line. By the use of MELTAB it will be possible to play the tunes of unfamiliar songs - thereby learning them.

GITAB is the tablature for the guitar part. GITAB and the guitar part itself will be written out only when there is a specific need to illustrate some technical point. Experience has shown that it is unnecessary and confusing to write out measure after measure of a repetitive strum when merely describing it once would suffice.





SIDE ONE, Band 2

THE CHURCH LICK

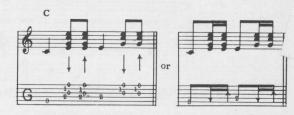
You will find that a nice rhythmic effect is gotten by striking the chord in an upward as well as a downward direction. Woody Guthrie called this strum the "Church Lick".

Finger a C chord.

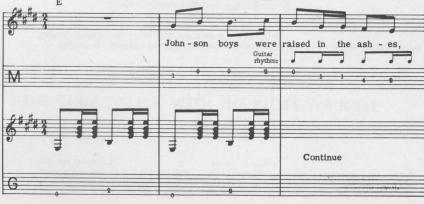
Pick the fifth string - then follow with a rapid strum downward over the first four strings - then brush back up over the first three or four strings.

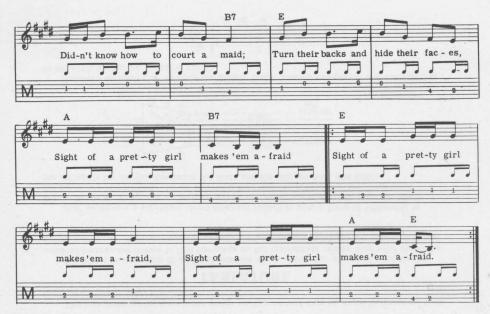
Alternate basses from the fifth to the fourth string.





The Johnson Boys





Johnson boys they went a-huntin', Took two dogs and went astray; Tore their clothes and scratched their faces, Didn't come home till break of day.

Johnson boys they went a-courtin', Coon Creek girls so pretty and sweet, They couldn't make no conversation, They didn't know where to put their feet. Johnson boys, they went to the city Ridin' in a Chevrolet, They come back broke and hungry, They had no money for to pay their way.

Johnson boys'll never get married, They'll stay single all their life; They're too scared to pop the question, Ain't no woman that'll be their wife.

THREE-QUARTER TIME

By a simple extension of the church lick a very effective three-quarter time strum is obtained. Take the basic "one-two-three":



Now substitute "down-up" strokes on beats two and three in place of the original down strokes:



You may alternate between the simple "one-two-three" strum and this " $_4^3$ Church Lick". (See The Oak Book, The Folksinger's Guitar Guide for words and music for \underline{I} Never Will Marry.)

SIDE ONE, Band 3

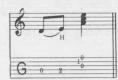
HAMMERING-ON

It is possible, and in many cases desirable, to get a note to sound by striking a string sharply with a finger of the left hand after that string has been played by the right hand (with or without a pick). This technique is called "hammering-on". It is extremely useful in playing many different types of folk songs and ballads.

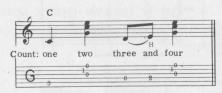
Finger a C chord but leave the second finger temporarily off the fourth string. Now play the open fourth string and while it is still sounding bring the second finger down hard on it at the second fret. You should hear two distinct notes - the open \underline{d} and the fretted e.



Repeat the process but this time after hammering down on the second fret of the fourth string strum down over the rest of the ${\tt C}$ chord.



Alternate a regular bass-chord strum (striking the fifth string first) with this hammering-on strum.



Make sure that the open string part of the hammered strum comes directly on the third beat. The beginner's tendency is to hammer down too soon or to anticipate the beat by playing the open string too soon in the sequence. Perhaps it would help to play just a simple four-beat bass-chord strum first (without hammering-on) and then follow with the hammering-on strum. In that way you will 'feel' where the third beat should be.



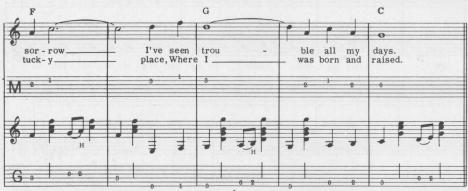
A similar hammering-on can be played in F:



And G7:







For six long years I've been in trouble, No pleasure here on earth I found, For in this world I'm bound to ramble, I have no friends to help me now. It's fare you well, my own true lover, I never expect to see you again; For I'm bound to ride that northern railroad, Perhaps I'll die upon this train.

THREE-QUARTER TIME

In three-quarter time the hammer-on usually occurs on the first beat of every other measure.



Brown Eyes





Last night I passed her on the street I bowed my head 'cause I could not speak Another man was at her side Soon, I thought, she'd be his bride.

(Cho.)

SIDE ONE, Band 4

THE CHURCH LICK WITH THE BLUES WRINKLE

Finger an E chord and play the following pattern:



Make sure that the "and" after "three" is an upstroke.

After you get this pattern moving smoothly lift the first finger of the left hand off the G string on "four" and put it back on "and".



On the A chord you'll have to revise your fingering a bit to get this blues wrinkle to sound.



Keep your first finger on the first fret of the B string and lift the pinky off on "four" and replace it on "and".



Wake up, old man, you slept too late, honey. Wake up, old man, you slept too late, babe. Wake up old man you slept too late, The crawdad wagon done passed your gate, Honey, sugar baby, mine.

SIDE ONE, Band 5

A TYPICAL BLUEGRASS RUN

Unlike the typical bass run which serves as a transitional passage between two different chords the run (or break) under consideration here has a different function: It fills up space occupied by only one chord. It usually is played at the end of a phrase or a verse and it begins precisely at the point where the final chord would have entered. In C it looks like this:



Often the d-d#-e passage is gotten by hammering-on. The D string is picked and then the d# and e are hammered-on by the first and second fingers, respectively.



Also, the g-a-g passage may be played with a combination of hammering-on and pulling-off. Hammer down on the second fret (a) with the second finger of the left hand and while the note is still sounding pull the second finger off so that it actually plucks the string. You should hear the open g string sound clearly if you do it properly.

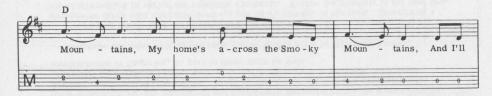


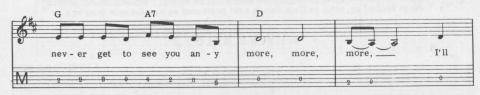
On a D chord this passage is as follows:

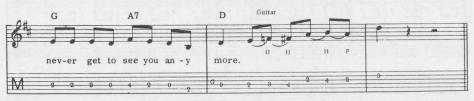


My Home's Across The Smoky Mountains









Rock my honey feed her candy...(3)

And I'll never ...

Goodbye, honey, sugar darling, Goodbye, honey, sugar darling, Goodbye, honey, sugar darling, And I'll never get to see you any more, more,

more, I'll never get to see you any more.

SIDE ONE, Band 6

BARRE CHORDS

Often when a guitarist has to play a clipped, precise rhythmic beat he will choose to play barre chords rather than the "customary" open string chords. It is the position of the guitar as the "rhythm section" of a bluegrass ensemble, jazz combo or jug band that necessitates this alteration of chord sound. The reasons for these changes will become apparent after a few barre chords are mastered.

I suggest you refer to the book upon which this record is based, $\underline{\mbox{The Flat-Picker's}}$ Guitar Guide, for the diagrams and tables of chord patterns before going on to the next song.

THE MUFFLE

Finger, say, a G chord (F pattern, third fret). Strum down over all six strings. If you are pressing down properly all the strings should sound clearly. While the chord is sounding release the pressure of the barre (first finger) slightly.

What happens?

The chord is muffled.

Play a series of hard downstrokes and muffle every other beat in this manner.



Try the key of F

SIDE ONE, Band 7

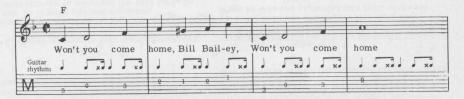
THE SHUFFLE

In playing songs with a more jazzy or "ricky-tick" feeling a small, but significant, variation on this four-downstroke muffle-strum is commonly heard.

The second and fourth downstroke of each measure now become "down-ups". The muffling occurs between the "down" and the "up" sections of the beat and produces the familiar "doo wak-a doo wak-a" shuffle rhythm of ukulele fame.



Bill Bailey









SIDE TWO, Band 1

CARTER FAMILY

The first solo style to be presented here is that derived from the playing of the famous Carter Family. This is an integrated melody-chord technique using combinations of hammering-on, pulling-off and single-note passages within the general framework of a church-lick type strum. Songs played in this manner are generally most gracefully accomplished in the keys of C and G although it is possible, with some modifications of fingering, to play in other keys as well.

Perhaps the most well-known song played in this style is Wildwood Flower.

In playing single-note melodies speed and accuracy can be increased by playing successive notes with alternate down (\(\)) and up (\(\)) strokes of the pick. Sometimes a strict alternation is varied for rhythmic emphasis. Follow the symbols in the next few songs.







Oh he promised to love me, he promised to love, And to cherish me always all others above. I woke from my dream and my idol was clay. My passion for loving had vanished away.

I'll dance and I'll sing and my life shall be gay,
I'll charm every heart in the crowd I survey;
Though my heart now is breaking, he shall never
know
How his name makes me tremble, my pale cheeks
plow.

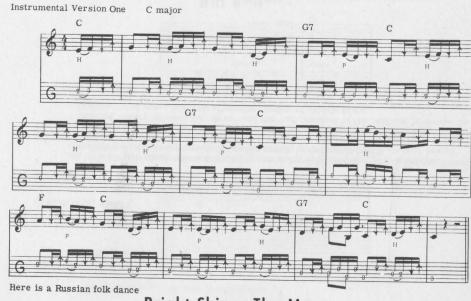
glow.

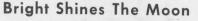
Oh, he taught me to love him, he called me his flower,

A blossom to cheer him through life's weary hour.
But now he is gone and left me alone, The wild flowers to weep and the wild birds to mourn.

I'll dance and I'll sing and my heart will be gay, I'll banish this weeping, drive troubles away.

I'll live yet to see him regret this dark hour, When he won and neglected this frail wildwood flower.











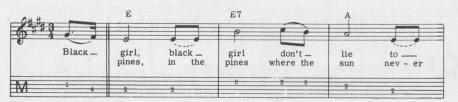


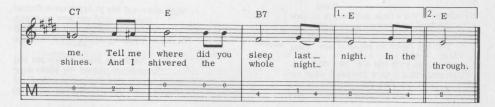




In 3 time some modifications are necessary.

In The Pines





Tell me, where did you get them pretty little shoes
And the dress you wear so fine?

I got my shoes from a railroad man, Got my dress from a driver in the mine. I wish to the Lord I'd a-never been born,

Or died when I was young.
I never would have kissed your sweet, sweet lips,
Nor heard your rattling tongue.

The longest train I ever did ride Was a hundred coaches long. The only woman I ever did love, She's on that train and gone. Longest old train in this whole wide world Comes around Joe Brown's coal mine. Headlight comes 'round when the sun comes up, The caboose when the sun goes down.

My husband was a railroad man, Was the best in this high lonesome world. The only thing that he did that was wrong Was to miss just a-one little curve.

My husband was a railroad man -Killed a mile and a half from town. I found his head in an engine wheel, But his body could never be found.

Black girl, black girl, tell me where will you go?

I'm gonna go where the cold winds blow.

I'm gonna weep, gonna cry, gonna moan, gonna sigh,

Gonna dance in my good-time clothes.

Repeat verse one.

Here is an extended solo of In The Pines in three octaves.





SIDE TWO, Band 2

SINGLE-STRING

This next style (sometimes called "fiddle style") is not identified with any one specific artist. It covers the somewhat overlapping techniques of a number of men, such as Doc Watson, Charley Waller and George Shuffler - to name just a few.

It is a flashy, virtuoso technique which demands a fluent mastery of the finger-board of the guitar in all positions. Fast single-note (and chord) passages played in this style must, out of necessity, be executed by rapid up and down strokes of the pick. Chords are added wherever the spirt moves the performer.

In Everyday Dirt, Doc Watson demonstrates his virtuosity as well as a musical sense of humor.

Everyday Dirt





She held the door 'til old man Henley Jumping and jerking went up the chimbly, John came in, looked all around, But not a soul could be found.

John sat down by the fireside, weeping, Up the chimbly he got to peeping. There he saw the poor old soul Sitting a-straddle of the pot-rack pole. John built on a roaring fire, Just to suit his own desire. His wife cried out with a free good will, "Don't do that, for the man you'll kill."

Wife, she crawled up under the bed.
He pulled her out by the hair of the head.
"When I'm gone remember this,"
And he kicked her where the kicking's the
best.

The law came down and John went up, He didn't have the chance of a yellow pup. They sent him down to the old chain gang For beating his wife, the dear little thing. John didn't worry and John didn't cry, When he got back home he socked her in the

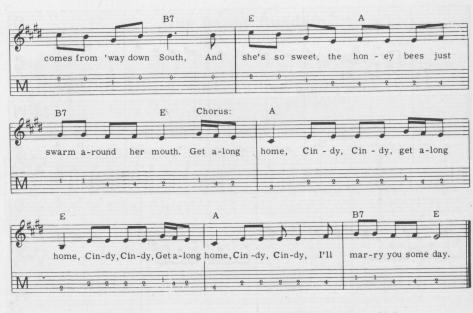
They took him right back to the old town jail, But his wife got lonesome and she paid the

Here is the way George Shuffler, playing with the Stanley Brothers, does Mountain Dew. (See The Oak book, The Flat-Picker's Guitar Guide for the music.)

Charley Waller (of the Country Gentlemen) plays $\underline{\text{Red Rocking Chair}}$. (See The Oak book, The Flat-Picker's Guitar Guide for the music.)

This is my own version of Cindy.





I wish I was an apple, A-hangin' on a tree; And every time my Cindy passed She'd take a bite of me. The first time I saw Cindy, She was standin' in the door, Her shoes and stockings in her hand, Her feet all over the floor.

(Cho.)

SIDE TWO, Band 3

(Cho.)

CROSS PICKING

Cross picking is the flat-pick guitarist's answer to Scruggs' banjo style. It is a syncopated stream of eighth notes involving three strings. The syncopation comes from the playing of a repeated group of $\underline{\text{three}}$ with the accent, however, falling on every fourth note.

Follow the down-stroke $(\)$ and up-stroke $(\)$ symbols.



Try similar patterns with other chords: G, D, F... Remember the first note of each group of four notes gets a heavier accent than the others.

Cross picking may be used at certain points in the accompaniment of a song as a change in pace or in complicated solo passages.





It was Robert Ford that dirty little coward, I wonder how he does feel For he ate of Jesse's bread and he slept in Jesse's bed, And he laid poor Jesse in his grave.

(Cho.)

How the people held their breath when they heard of Jesse's death
And wondered how he ever came to die.
It was one of the gang called Little Robert
Ford
That shot poor Jesse on the sly.

(Cho.)

Jesse was a man a friend to the poor, He never would see a man suffer pain. And with his brother Frank he robbed the Chicago bank. And stopped the Glendale train.

(Cho.)

It was on a Wednesday night the moon was shining bright,
They stopped the Glendale train.
And the people they did say for many miles away,
It was robbed by Frank and Jesse James.
(Cho.)

SIDE TWO, Band 4

SYNCOPATION IN THE CARIBBEAN

The pick is particularly well suited for the playing of the delightfully syncopated songs of Puerto Rico and the calypsos of the English-speaking islands.

Finger an E minor chord.

Now play a series of eight down-up (eighth-note) strokes.



Try speeding up ...

Try the same thing with a barre E minor on the seventh fret, (This is the B-flat minor position illustrated on page 32 of The Flat-Picker's Guitar Guide.)

As you play this series release the pressure of the barre slightly (this is the 'muffle") between the third (down) and fourth (up) strokes and also between the seventh (down) and eighth (up) strokes.



Play the same thing with ${\bf B_{7^{\bullet}}}$ (Barre on the seventh fret - ${\bf F_7}$ pattern.) And with A minor (fifth fret - F minor pattern.)

Strumming in this manner - muffling the barre chords - introduces some of the rhythmic percussive quality associated with music of the Caribbean.

In Que Bonita Bandera there are a few places where the chords change on the fourth beat of the measure - that is, the seventh eighth-note.



Don't let that throw you. Keep on playing as if nothing unusual is happening. (In fact, nothing unusual $i\underline{s}$ happening.) The right hand doesn't \underline{always} have to know what the left hand is doing.

Que Bonita Bandera









Bonita, señores; Que bonita es ella. Bonita, señores, Es la bandera puertoriqueña.

(Cho.)

Bonita, señores; Es bueno que la defienda. Bonita, señores, Es la bandera puertoriqueña.

(Cho.)

So far the syncopation has largely been in the juxtaposition of song and strum. The strum itself has been serving as a relatively steady base for a highly syncopated melody. We may introduce syncopation to the strum in a variety of ways.

If we tie together the fourth and fifth eighth notes - that is, don't play the fifth eighth note but "hold" the fourth for the combined time of the two and then continue on for six, seven, eight, we have a really swinging strum.



Try this on a variety of chords - barre and open string - with and without the muffle. (See the Oak book, The Flat-Picker's Guitar Guide for the rest of the music on this band.)

FANCY STEPPES - THE UNORTHODOX CHURCH LICK

Woody Guthrie's old reliable church lick - as described in the very first lesson of this book - may be extremely effectively transplanted to exotic climes and faraway places. As already illustrated with Bright Shines The Moon, this rhythmic, bouncy strum can really add zip to the appropriate Russian folk song. Let's investigate the possibilities of this musical marriage with yet another Russian song.

The songs of Vladimir Zakharov are to Russian music in many ways what Woody's songs are to American music. They each sing of the broad expanse and the great riches of their respective composer's native land. They each deal with the struggles of the people to realize a better life in the face of what sometimes seems like insurmountable odds.

Both men draw upon the boundless heritage of the folk music of their own countries to create a musical idiom that is at once original and at the same time traditional in feeling, singable and enduring,

Don't let the following changes in meter $(\frac{3}{4}-\frac{2}{4})$ disturb you in the slightest. The "Unorthodox Russian" Church Lick doesn't care if there are three beats in the measure



or two (or four beats) in the measure.



It just keeps rolling along.

I have my capo on the 4th fret, playing A minor - it comes out C# minor.

On A Raven-Black Horse



Here is an instrumental version of On A Raven Black Horse:

