

WALLIN

FAMILY SONGS AND STORIES FROM
THE NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAINS



Smithsonian
Folkways

DOUG AND JACK WALLIN

FAMILY SONGS AND STORIES FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAINS

Described as "quite simply the finest living singer of unaccompanied British ballads in southern Appalachia," Doug Wallin of Madison County, N.C., holds the prestigious National Folk Heritage Fellowship. Accompanied on this album by his gifted brother Jack, Doug Wallin performs his family's songs in his elegant and classic style. *Produced by the Folklife Section of the North Carolina Arts Council in collaboration with Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.*

- 1** Jackaro 3:31 **2** The Golden Vanity 3:19 **3** Story about William Riley Shelton 1:39 **4** Omie Wise 3:03
5 Darling Cora 3:34 **6** The Nightingale 1:37 **7** Pretty Little Girl with the Blue Dress On 1:04 **8** Young Emily 2:57 **9** Pretty Polly 4:17 **10** Foggy Dew 1:09
11 Pretty Fair Miss in a Garden 2:50 **12** Roving Gambler 3:07 **13** Bold Lieutenant 4:06 **14** My Home's Across the Blue Ridge Mountains 2:09
15 House Carpenter 5:35 **16** Two Ghost Stories 2:10
17 Come over into Canaan's Land 2:14 **18** Rolling With the Tide 1:15 **19** Pretty Saro 2:30



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 Inc., BMI)
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- 18 Rolling With the Tide** 1:15 (A. B. Sebren)
- 19 Pretty Saro** 2:30 (Trad. arr. and adapt. D. Wallin/
 Smithsonian Folkways Pub., BMI)



Doug, Berzilla Chandler (Doug and Jack's mother), and Jack in the living room of Berzilla's home in Revere, North Carolina 1978

DOUG AND JACK WALLIN: FAMILY SONGS AND STORIES FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAINS

In 1990 Douglas Wallin traveled from his home in Madison County, N.C., to Washington, DC, to receive a Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. This is the nation's most prestigious award for traditional artists. The presentation tribute pointed out that this "quiet and modest" man is widely regarded as "quite simply the finest living singer of unaccompanied British ballads in southern Appalachia." Only the year before, the Arts Council of his home state had honored him with a North Carolina Folk Heritage Award for his "natural artistry," and his "reverence for the meaning and heritage of the old songs." For the last decade he has performed widely with his brother Jack Wallin. Most recently, they appeared in the 1994 Folk Masters Concert Series at Wolf Trap.

Doug and Jack Wallin come from a highly talented family in a community and region long recognized for music making. When Cecil Sharp came from England and collected folksongs in the Appalachians, he found himself "for the first time in [his] life, in a community in which singing was as common...a practice as speaking." He spent 46 weeks in these mountains in the summers of 1916-18, notating 1,612 variants of about 500 songs from 281 different singers. The northern communities of Madison County, N.C. such as Allanstand, Allegheny, White Rock, Big Laurel, and Sodom (also called Revere) were full of singers with exten-

sive repertoires. Hot Springs was the home of Jane Gentry, one of his most knowledgeable sources. In his travels throughout this area, he passed the home in which Lee and Berzilla Wallin raised Doug and Jack and their other eight children. Doug says his mother often saw Sharp and Maud Karpeles pass by, but never sang for them. "To tell you the truth, people at first thought they were spies or something—that was during World War I." Doug's grandfather, Tom Wallin, "told his folks that if any of them performed" for Sharp, "he wouldn't fool with them no more." Despite this, Sharp printed four songs he got from Tom's brother Mitchell and twenty-two from their sister Mrs. Mary Wallin Sands.

Doug was born in 1919 and Jack in 1932, so they did not encounter Cecil Sharp. They remember their Great-aunt Mary Sands' visits to their home and knew her as a songwriter as well as a singer of hymns and ballads. They also tell many stories about Great-uncle "Mitch," who loved to fiddle and sing. "Granny" Banks and Viney Norton, two other singers visited by Sharp, were more distant relatives.

Wallin family tradition tells of others in the early generations who were strong singers and instrumentalists. Many family members have won attention for their music making in the years since Sharp visited the community. Byard Ray, a third cousin to Doug and Jack, became well known in the 1950s through festival appearances and commercial recordings. Byard's daughter Lena Jean is a good ballad singer, and so is younger family member, Sheila Adams. Several close Wallin family members

were featured in a documentary film made by John Cohen in 1963 titled *The End of an Old Song*. Second cousin Dillard Chandler appears along with their mother Berzilla Chandler Wallin, and her sister Dellie Norton. Four LP albums edited by Cohen between 1963 and 1978 highlight these same three singers, their father Lee Wallin and their uncles Cas Wallin and Lloyd Chandler. Doug appears briefly in the film and sings one ballad, "Young Emily," in the Folkways album Dillard Chandler. English folksong collector Mike Yates includes eleven songs by Doug in his two-cassette set *Crazy about a Song*, recorded in 1979-83. Only two of these songs—"The House Carpenter" and "The Bold Lieutenant" appear in the present collection. Jack Wallin does not appear in the film or any of these albums. The only prior recording devoted to Doug and Jack Wallin was a preliminary form of the present album which circulated locally as a cassette with the title Doug Wallin and the Crane Branch Dewdrops. Some cuts from it are included here, re-mastered, with a number of additions. A tribute to the artistry of these two members of a family of distinguished traditional instrumentalists and singers is long overdue.

Although they share a family heritage, Doug and Jack are not carbon copies of each other as musicians. Jack likes instrumental music. He plays banjo, guitar, and fiddle, has even made fiddles, and in fact always accompanies himself with an instrument when he sings. Changes taking place in their community from the late 1930s into the '50s, exposed Jack to a wide range of music from the

outside in his formative years. The family got its first radio about 1938, a battery-powered instrument as big as a television set. It received five or six stations rather clearly, including broadcasts from Asheville, Knoxville, and Nashville. (The Grand Old Opry was a favorite program.) The Wallins got their first pick-up truck in the 1940s, when roads were improving, and first heard a wind-up phonograph about the same time. Jack began performing in public when he was twelve or thirteen in a local shape-note gospel quartet with his uncle Cas Wallin and J. D. and Junior Buckner. In about 1945, he made a stage appearance at Lunsford's festival in Asheville, "backing up an old fiddler." Jack left home in 1951 to serve in the Navy on the battleship Wisconsin during the Korean War and while in the service played in clubs and bars. When he returned in 1955, the family had just had the house wired for electricity. During his lifetime, Jack has witnessed dramatic musical changes. He enjoys many newer styles of music, especially country songs.

His older brother Doug's musical preferences were greatly influenced by the music their parents made in the 1920s. They sang and loved the kind of songs that Sharp collected, but their repertory was actually much broader. The rugged mountains and poor roads had not isolated the community from outside influences. The French Broad River cuts through Madison County and served as a transportation route. A railroad following along the bed of the French Broad had entered the county in 1881. By the mid 1880's, Hot Springs—a town about ten miles west of their home, had a flourishing resort

hotel and a Presbyterian school for girls. Outside timber interests had begun operating in the county as early as 1890, and lumbering would thrive there until the 1930s. Marshall, the county seat, a town ten miles south of Sodom, got a textile mill in 1903. By 1890 the county had a population of 17,805, including 710 African Americans. Within a twenty-mile radius of their home in Sodom, Doug and Jack estimate, they had contact with some 40 to 50 families. By the time Doug was a child, good public schools had also sprouted across the county.

These social changes had an impact upon people like the Wallins. Grandfather Tom Wallin had done "public work" as a lumberjack; his son Lee worked both in logging and on the railroad. Doug worked on the farm growing tobacco and raising cattle. He also made gun stocks and worked as a logger. A severe logging injury prevented his service in World War II. Schools and public work exposed the Wallins to new kinds of music. Doug's father, Lee Wallin, learned to do steel-driving to worksongs like "Swannanoa Tunnel," and then sang them at home with banjo accompaniment.

When Doug began to sing at the age of five or six, the music he knew was family and local music. "My mother and daddy both," he says, "usually at their work did a lot of singing." In the mornings, his father Lee Wallin would often fiddle and sing while mother Berzilla made breakfast. The whole family made music and told tales by the fireside at night. They also enjoyed dancing to fiddle music at community work gatherings. Although they sang some popular songs they had learned from outside,

much of their music was still from old family and community traditions. It is not surprising Doug prefers to play old-time dance tunes on the fiddle and still plays and sings the older love songs and ballads.

In this earlier time, most singing was performed solo and without instrumental accompaniment, a tradition brought by early settlers from the British Isles. Although Doug and Jack are uncertain where the Wallins originated, they say their Shelton ancestors "came over from England" and the Chandlers from Ireland. This performance style opposes that of popular music on stage and television, which relies heavily on the effects of lighting, sets, costume, dance, and instrumental back-up. For performers like Doug and Jack Wallin, the song itself is the central focus. They sing in home settings, for themselves and friends, making no effort to dramatize or artificially embellish the performance. Tempo or volume is not altered to be "expressive." The melodies are short, memorable, and moving; the words simple and poetic. Stanzas are easily understood because the grammatical units match the musical phrase. Ballad stories revolve on themes common to life, love and death. The plots are pared to the essentials, each stanza generally contains a crucial speech or action. Songs reach this form in two ways; either by being created within the oral model or by gradually being worn down to a smooth and classic form as they are passed along in oral tradition. Singers simply delete or change troublesome elements.

In this style the voice has nothing to hide

behind. John Cohen and Peter Gott commented in notes for their Folkways album *Old Love Songs and Ballads* from the Big Laurel, North Carolina that the community seemed to feel a "good singer was one who could sing with full force." However their notes cautioned that "full force and power are not to be mistaken with loudness of sound, for much of the singing is done with great restraint and a certain quietness." Cohen and Gott were struck by the fact that in the Sodom community individual singing styles varied and were appreciated. They pointed out the contrast between Cas Wallin's "exaggerated and vigorous singing" and Lisha Shelton's "more even approach." Dillard Chandler had a third manner, with high pitch, vocal intensity, "flourishes" and "grace notes," and a tendency to make subtle melodic variations from stanza to stanza and performance to performance. Doug Wallin is also keenly aware of the personal styles of singers in his tradition and loves to imitate them, singing snatches of melody in the characteristic style of his Uncle Cas, his Cousin Dillard, or his Great-aunt Mary Sands.

Doug's own style is also distinctive, marked by unusual clarity of diction, great elegance of phrasing, and subtle ornamentation. He loves to perform songs as his father did, playing the tune on the fiddle before singing it and sometimes again between stanzas. When he plays ballads, Doug renders through his fiddle, many of the subtle embellishments and ornamentations he uses in his singing. In addition, when playing a tune like "Omie Wise" or "The House Carpenter," he occasionally adds a

touch of spare harmony—an open fifth. The effect for many listeners is an "archaic" sound. Family members and neighbors simply describe his style as "older" than that of most fiddlers in the region now.

In field recordings made at Doug's home on Crane Branch in 1992 and 1993, Doug and Jack performed sixty-one pieces. The recording project began with a focus on Doug Wallin's old love songs. It expanded to better represent the range of his music and to include his brother, Jack. This is by no means their full repertory, but rather a sampling which suggests its general profile. Some of Doug's songs come from American popular music sources like the old minstrel show piece "Golden Slippers", and the 19th-century parlor songs like "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," "After the Ball," "Kitty Wells," and "Adieu, False Heart," which he heard Molly O'Day sing on the radio. Most of his religious songs, like "Rest over Jordan" and "Rolling with the Tide" (track 18), probably circulated in gospel songbooks. Many others are "old-time" fiddle tunes that he and Jack like to play together with Doug fiddling and Jack playing banjo or guitar. These include "Cacklin' Hen," "Cumberland Gap," "Johnson Boys," "Lost Indian," "Sourwood Mountains," or in this album Doug's solo performance of "Pretty Little Girl with the Blue Dress On" (track 7). A few songs like Jack's version of "Tempe" probably came from the singing of railroad work crews. A number of the songs Doug recorded are American or British traditional love lyrics like "Black is the Color" and "Pretty Saro" (track 19). Many are also British or American ballads dating from the

17th to the early 20th centuries and almost always in versions that greatly improve upon any known original. Though Jack Wallin often defers to his brother Doug's ballad singing, they enjoy making music together. Jack also has his own distinctive and interesting versions of songs that both he and Doug sing.

These recordings suggest the diverse repertory and broad range of music the Wallin family enjoyed. They also reflect Doug's own interests and choices. He has an excellent memory and says: "Some songs, I know I've learned just by hearing somebody sing them one time." His secret to learning a song was his attraction to it. For example, he heard his parents sing "Pretty Fair Miss in a Garden" (track 11) and he said: "I had to learn it. The others just didn't seem to learn to love them like I did." From the time he was a small child, he liked to hear the stories the songs told. Not surprisingly, half the songs he wanted to record for us were ballads. Nine of those appeared in the Child collection (a late 19th-century work of scholarship that set the older British ballads on the literary map. Eighteen appeared in G. Malcolm Laws's checklists of 18th and 19th-century British and American ballads (typically, popular verse that circulated on broadsides and in songsters but was eventually absorbed into oral tradition). Others such as "Tom Dooley," "Rain and Snow," "Darling Cora" (Jack's version is on track 5), "Handsome Molly," and "The Roving Gambler" (track 12) are also ballad-like. They contain characters in conflict and fully developed story lines.

Doug Wallin's inclination towards ballads indicates his own musical aesthetic which contrasts the musical tastes of other family members. Jack prefers country songs and his son enjoys bluegrass. In his later years (when he had become a devout Baptist) Doug and Jack's grandfather Tom Wallin preferred hymns and no longer approved of instrumental music. Lee Wallin, Doug's father, was a jolly man and liked comic songs, even the "pretty rough" ones that he could not sing around his children. He played both fiddle and banjo. Doug's mother and her first cousin Dillard Chandler favored love songs. But John Cohen and Peter Gott noted that even these two had different tastes in love ballads. "Berzilla Wallin," they wrote, "sings songs connected with the feminine aspects of love while Dillard Chandler seems preoccupied with the amorous side though personal sorrow is revealed in all his songs."

The ballads that Doug Wallin sang for us varied, but most tell love stories. Of these only three—"The Nightingale" (track 6), "The Trooper and the Maid," and "The Foggy Dew" (track 10), are stories of dalliance, and all take a delicate, poetic, even instructive approach. "Jackaro" (track 1), "Pretty Fair Miss in the Garden" (track 11) and "The Bold Lieutenant" (track 13), are five stories of faithful lovers. Eleven others are stories of love made tragic by a love triangle ("The House Carpenter" on track 15) or parental opposition ("Young Emily" on track 8), or betrayal ("Omie Wise" on track 4 and "Pretty Polly"—Jack's version is on track 9). Only one is comic, "The Old Maid and the Burglar." Doug relishes telling tales about the drinking and rowdy

escapades of William Riley Shelton (track 3) or his great-uncle Mitch or his grandfather, admiringly speaking of each as "somewhat of a man!" But these stories do not reflect his own temperament. He says that he "never did taste beer" and took only a few drinks of whiskey as a young fellow "just enough to see it was not for me." Doug impresses a visitor as having a serious, reflective, even tender personality, sympathetic to people and their dilemmas. This temperament is revealed in his choice of songs—and certainly in the ones he is willing to share in mixed company.

Doug has a keen sensitivity to the beauty of words and tunes. He does not claim to change the words of songs he learns, but virtually every one of his texts has many beautiful phrases, poetic lines or stanzas not often heard in other singers' versions of the same song. His favorite melodies have a minor cast or are in old five-tone scales. He accentuates the emotional power of this music. While playing and singing "The House Carpenter," he paused after the last tone of the third phrase to exclaim; "Now there's a lonesome note!" He creates artistry even in a repetitive two-phrase tune through subtle irregularities and embellishments.

Doug's sensitivity to the beauty of the tunes, wording, and stories of old ballads led him to learn many of the best ones. Still, there is a more profound reason for his love of these songs. His house on Crane Branch is located where a cousin saw the ghost of his mother. Nearby are the remains of a dugout where young men, union sympathizers, hid from Confederates during the Civil War. Doug can

take a visitor to where his grandfather saw his father Hugh Wallin shot. "The Confederates killed him over here past where we live at Sodom, because he was recruiting soldiers for the Union army. When the Confederates found out that he was at home—had come in to see his folks—they surrounded the house. He made a break to try to get away, and they shot him down." Family history is a powerful force in this community. Family memories are cherished and play an integral role in people's lives and identities. For these folks, music is not just entertainment. Like the landscape, it is full of stories and carries rich memories. Hence, as Doug Wallin says, it has to "come from the heart."



Berzilla Wallin holding photograph of family stringband.
1977

THE SONGS

1 Jackaro (LAWS N 7)

Doug Wallin, vocal

This song originated as a British broadside, probably in the 18th century, when many ballads dealt with class difference as an impediment to true love. Ballads in which a woman broke social class constraints to win her sweetheart gained great popularity. Doug often introduces the story before singing the song: "Here's one, folks, about a girl that followed her lover into battle, and he got wounded. They had a rough time for a while, but things finally wound up right for 'em."

*There was a wealthy merchant, in London he did dwell,
He had a lovely daughter, to you the truth I'll tell,
Oh, to you the truth I'll tell.*

*She had sweethearts a-plenty, and men of high degree,
But none but Jackie Frazier could e'er her sweetheart be.*

*I'll lock you in my dungeon, your body I'll confine,
If none but Jackie Frazier can ever suit your mind.*

*You may lock me in your dungeon, my heart you can't confine
For none but Jackie Frazier can ever suit my mind.*

*Then Jackie went a-sailing with trouble on his mind
To leave his native country and darling girl behind.*

*She went into a tailor shop and dressed in men's array,
Then stepped on board a vessel to convey herself away.*

*Before you step on board sir, your name I'd like to know
She smiled all in her countenance, just call me Jackaro.*

*Your waist is much too slender, your fingers neat and small,
Your cheeks are much too rosy to face the canon ball.*

*I know my waist is slender, my fingers neat and small,
But it wouldn't make me tremble to see ten thousand fall.*

*The war soon being over, she started looking round
Among the dead and dying till her darling boy she found.*

*She gathered him up in her arms and took him to the town
And found a London doctor who quickly healed his wounds.*

*This couple they got married, so well they did agree,
This couple they got married, so why not you and me?*

2 The Golden Vanity (CHILD 286)

Doug Wallin, vocal and fiddle

As early as the 1690s this ballad was printed on broadsides for sale in city streets and villages. Singers kept a number of songs alive which told the story of a treacherous king or captain.

*There was a little ship a-sailing on the sea,
And she went by the name of the Golden Vanity,
As she sailed upon the lowland, lowland sea,
(refrain) As she sailed upon the lowland sea.*

*There was another ship a-sailing on the sea,
She went by the name of the Turkish Robberee,
As she sailed upon the lowland, lowland sea. (refrain)
"Oh captain, captain, what will you give to me
If I'll sink this ship called the Turkish Robberee
If I'll sink her in the lowland, lowland low?" (refrain)
"I'll give you horses, I'll give you land,
And my oldest daughter at your own command,
If you'll sink her in the lowland, lowland sea." (refrain)*

*And then overboard and away swam he,
Till he came to the ship called the Turkish Robberee,
As she sailed upon the lowland, lowland sea. (refrain)*

*He had a little instrument made for the use,
Cut ninety-nine gasches in the Turkish Robberee,
And he sunk her in the lowland, lowland sea. (refrain)*

*And then back to the Golden Vanity
Says, "Captain, won't you be good as your word,
Won't you take me back on board,
For I've sunk her in the lowland, lowland sea?" (refrain)*

*"No, I won't be as good as my word,
I won't take you back on board,
Go drown in the sea, in the lowland sea. (refrain)*

*"Oh captain, captain, if it weren't for your men,
I'd do unto to you as I did unto them,
I'd sink you in the lowland, lowland sea." (refrain)*

3 Story about William Riley Shelton told by Doug Wallin.

Doug described William Riley Shelton, who sang for Cecil Sharp, as "the brag ballad singer," the man regarded as the best. When asked who else might deserve this title, he named his cousins Frank Bullman and Dillard Chandler and said his own father was "no slouch" and that his mother was "probably one of the best ones." When asked what made a brag ballad singer like William Riley Shelton better than other singers, Doug answered: "Probably just had a better voice for ballad singing." He added jokingly; "...and he might have got a little more of that booze. I can just barely remember him. He had a big white beard, and

these young fellows would get him to sing, get him to drinking. He'd sing maybe a half a day for them." His knowledge of a large song repertory undoubtedly added to his stature as a singer. However, William Riley Shelton is a larger-than-life figure in comic stories told by Doug and Jack:

And another old guy that was the brag ballad singer back then, a William Riley Shelton. They said he was good at that a-cappella singing. They told lots of funny tales on him. He had a, you know, like a lot of people does, they'll have a certain word, you know, they say if they're surprised or something, maybe. His word was, "Gosh, little man," he'd say. He'd talk to people. If it was a man he'd say, "Gosh, little man!" Or "Gosh, little woman!"

One time he was a-going to see another old woman. His wife kind of suspicioned. She followed him. They saw her coming. All that William Riley could do—was a big—. Them old women kept, they had back then, they had great big barrels. And they kept their feathers in them to make them feather beds and pillows. And William Riley decided he'd hide in that barrel. When he jumped in that barrel, there wasn't room for all of him, and his head was kind of sticking out. Said his wife came in, happened to see him in that barrel of feathers. She said, "William Riley Shelton," said, "what are you doing in that barrel of feathers?" He said, "Gosh, little woman, I've got to be somewhere in the world." Yea, Lordy, they told some good ones on old William Riley. He'd sing that "Lit-

tle Omie Wise" song. That was one of his favorites. He'd motion and show how John Lewis threw her in the water.

4 Omie Wise (LAWS F 4)

Doug Wallin, vocal and fiddle

This ballad keeps the memory of Naomi Wise alive. She was murdered in Randolph County, N.C., in 1808, by Jonathan Lewis. Lewis fled west, was recaptured and brought to trial years later. He was acquitted for lack of witnesses. See Brown Collection, II, 690-698.

*I'll tell you a story of little Omie Wise,
How she became deluded by John Lewis's lies.*

*He told her to meet him down by Adams' spring,
Some money he would bring and some other fine things.*

*Then fool-like she met him at Adams' spring,
No money he brought her nor other fine things.*

*No money, no money to flatter the case.
We'll go and get married, there'll be no disgrace.*

*John Lewis, John Lewis, please tell me your mind,
Do you intend to marry me or leave me behind?*

*Little Omie, little Omie, I'll tell you my mind,
My mind is to drown you and leave you behind.*

*Please pity our baby and spare me my life,
I'll go home a beggar and won't be your wife.*

*He bugged her, he kissed her, he turned her around,
He threw her in deep water where he knew she would drown.*

*He jumped on his pony and away he did ride,
The screams of little Omie went down by his side.*

*It was on last Wednesday morning, the rain was pouring down,
The people searched for Omie, but she could not be found.*

*Two boys went a-fishing on a fine summer day,
They saw little Omie go floating away.*

*They threw their net around her and pulled her to the shore,
The body of little Omie was searched for no more.*

*They sent for John Lewis, John Lewis came by,
When confronted with her body, he broke down and cried.*

*You can shoot me, you can hang me, for I am the man,
I drowned little Omie in yonder's old mill dam.*

*My name is John Lewis, my name I'll never deny,
I drowned little Omie, I'll never reach the sky.*

5 Darling Cora

Jack Wallin, vocal and banjo; Doug Wallin, fiddle
An American song, "Darling Cora" was recorded commercially as early as 1927 and widely popular in the "folk music revival" of the 1960s. Jack pointed out that he and Doug each sing different versions. Their mother and father sang yet another version of "Darling Cora." When asked for an explanation of the song, Doug replied; "I don't think it's real. Just like a lot of these old songs, somebody was probably lonesome about his girl friend."

Jack: "I'm going to do you one here, a real old one. I learned this one from most of the old folks around here...my mom. And this is one that they say

Viney Norton done for Cecil Sharp in Hot Springs, North Carolina, when she was a small girl. One entitled 'Darling Cora.' Here we go."

*Wake up, wake up, darling Cora
O how can you sleep so sound,
When the highway robbers are raging,
Gonna tear your playhouse down.
Wake up, wake up darling Cora
And bring me my knife and gun
Lord, I'm no man for trouble
But I'd die before now I'd run.*

*(Cho.) Gonna dig me a hole in the meadow,
Gonna dig me a hole in the ground,
Gonna dig me a hole in the meadow,
To lay darling Cora down.*

*What my dear old mother she told me
Has surely come to pass
Drinking and gambling, wild women,
They'll be my ruin now at last. (Cho.)*

*Come all you hustlers and gamblers,
While I've got money to spend
Tomorrow my pocket'll be empty,
I won't have neither sweetheart or friend. (Cho.)*

6 The Nightingale (LAWS P 14)

Doug Wallin, vocal
Doug Wallin has a strong musical memory. In two different takes of the same song, recorded a year apart, he sang at exactly the same pitch and tempo. He sings "The Nightingale" lower in his range than most of his other songs. His choice of pitch gives his version a distinctive mood.

*One morning, one morning, one morning in May,
I spied a fair couple upon the highway.*

*Now one was a lady, so bright and so fair,
The other one a soldier, a brave volunteer.*

*They walked on a little further, till he came to a spring,
And from his knapsack, he drew a violin.*

*He played her a tune that he called "In the Spring,"
Where the waters are a-gliding, and the nightingale sings.*

*"And now," said the lady, "Just play one tune more,
For I'd rather hear your fiddle, just the touch of one string,
Than see the waters a-gliding, hear the nightingale sing."*

*"And now," said the lady, "Won't you marry me?"
"Ob, no," said the soldier, "That never can be.
"I've a wife in old London, and children twice three.
Two wives in the army, are too many for me."*

7 Pretty Little Girl with the Blue Dress On

Doug Wallin, fiddle and vocal

Doug learned this dance tune from his father. He said: "I like to play them about girls, some reason or other." Related tunes circulate under other names.

*[fiddle]
Play that fiddle and play it slow,
I'll take a walk with Calico. [3x]*

*Pretty little girl with the blue dress on,
Stole my heart and away she's gone. [3x]
[fiddle]*

8 Young Emily (LAWS M 34)

Doug Wallin, vocal

The original version of this song was a melodramatic British broadside that ended with grieving friends carried off "raving distracted" to Bedlam, the insane asylum (Leach, pp. 703-705). Doug's Appalachian version is simpler, poignant, and poetic. He commented: "The way I sing it, I sing some gold to get." That was what he was getting some gold for—was for paying in gold to drive the stagecoach. "Them coats that hang on the mountains"...I would say you're looking at fog and snow that freezes on the trees. It looks, you know, blue looking."

*Young Emily was a pretty fair miss,
She loved the driver boy,
Who drove the stage some gold to get,
Down in the lowland low.*

*"My father owns a boarding house,
Along yon riverside,
Go there, go there and enter in,
This night with me abide.*

*"Be sure you tell them nothing,
Nor let my parents know,
That your name is young Edmund,
Who drove the lowland low."*

*Young Edmund fell to drinking,
Until he went to bed,
He did not know that a sword that night
Would part his neck and head.
Young Emily in her chamber,
She had an awful dream,
She dreamed she saw young Edmund's blood,*

Go flowing like a stream.

*Young Emily rose in the morning,
Putting on her clothes,
She's going to find her driver boy,
Who drove the lowland low.*

*"Ob father, where's that stranger,
Came here last night to dwell?"
"His body's in the ocean,
And you no tale must tell."*

*"Ob father, ob dear father,
You'll die a public show,
For the murdering of my driver boy,
Who drove the lowland low."*

*Away then to some counselor,
To let the deed be known,
Of the murdering of her driver boy,
Who drove the lowlands low.*

*Them fish that swim in the ocean,
Swim o'er my true love's breast,
His body's in a gentle motion,
And I hope his soul's at rest.*

*Them coats that hang on the mountains,
They look so blue and true,
They remind me of my driver boy,
Who drove in the lowland low.*

9 Pretty Polly (LAWS P 36 B)

Jack Wallin, vocal, guitar; Jerry Adams, banjo
For Jack and Doug, this song brought up memories of music parties held in the late 1930s not far from the Wallin's home at an outdoor gathering place in

Andy Gap. Relatives Mitch Wallin, Frank Bullman, and Dillard Chandler would meet there to make music and tell stories. Jack was too young to participate, but he knew the site and remembered hearing about it. "They had this old fiddler, Asbury McDewitt," he says, "and they cut him out a seat in a log there. And they got to have big gatherings, you know. And they'd call it the Pretty Polly Gap. And he'd play his fiddle and sing them 'Pretty Polly.'"

*"Pretty Polly, pretty Polly, come take a walk with me, [2x]
And when we get married some pleasure we'll see."*

*Well now, he led her over the mountains and valleys so deep,
[2x]
Pretty Polly mistrusted, she started to weep.*

*Well, "Willie, little Willie, I'm afraid of your ways, [2x]
The way you've been rambling will lead me astray."*

*Well, "Polly, pretty Polly, you guessed it about right, [2x]
I was digging on your grave the best part of last night."*

*They went on a little further, now what did they spy? [2x]
A newly made grave and a spade lying by.*

*Well now, she fell down before him, pleading for her life, [2x]
"Let me go home single, if I can't be your wife."*

*Well now, "Polly, pretty Polly, that never can be, [2x]
Your false reputation is troublesome to me."*

*Well, he drew forth a dagger all in his right hand. [2x]
He stabbed pretty Polly, her life's blood did flow,
Then he jumped on his pony, and away he did go.*

*Well, he spied a ship a-sailing down by the seaside. [2x]
He boarded the ship, and away he did ride.*

*Well now, there's one debt to the devil now Willie's gonna
pay, [2x]
He murdered pretty Polly—running away.*

10 The Foggy Dew (LAWS O 3)

Doug Wallin, vocal

In the 1950s, folk-revival singer Burl Ives popularized a version of this song in concerts and recordings. Doug has a very different traditional version, one with more poetic words and a haunting tune to match.

*Wake up, wake up, my old true love,
What makes you sleep so sound,
For the sun is on the mountain top,
And the foggy dew is gone.*

*One winter night she came to my bed,
And wept so bitterly,
"Come into bed, you pretty little maid,
Come out of the foggy dew."*

*Toward the first part of the year,
She turned pale in the face,
Toward the middle of the year,
She got bigger around the waist.*

*Toward the last part of the year,
She brought me a son,
Now you can see as well as I,
What the foggy dew has done.*

11 Pretty Fair Miss in a Garden (LAWS N 42)

Doug Wallin, vocal

In 1916 Doug and Jack's great-aunt Mary Sands sang a very similar variant of this song to Cecil Sharp. He printed it under the title "The Broken Token" (Sharp, II, 70). Doug, after singing the last stanza, exclaimed; "I can see that just as plain—he reached up and put that arm around her. I believe she knew that was him. She was, I think, trying him out, like he was her."

*A pretty fair miss down in a garden,
When a brave young soldier came riding by,
Then he stepped up and as he addressed her,
Said, "Pretty fair miss, won't you marry me?"*

*"O no, kind sir," replied the maiden,
"Though a man of honor you may be,
How can you impose on a fair young maiden,
Who never intends your bride to be?"*

*"For I've a true love o'er the ocean,
Yes seven years across the sea,
And if he stays for seven years longer
No man on earth can marry me."*

*"Perhaps he's drowned in the ocean,
Or he may be on some battlefield slain,
Or he may be to some pretty girl married,
And you may never see him again."*

*"Now if he's drowned, I hope he's resting,
Or if he's on some battlefield slain,
Or if he's to some pretty girl married,
I'll love the one that married him."
Then he ran his hand down in his pocket,*

*His fingers being long and slim,
Then he drew forth a ring she'd given,
A ring that she had given him.*

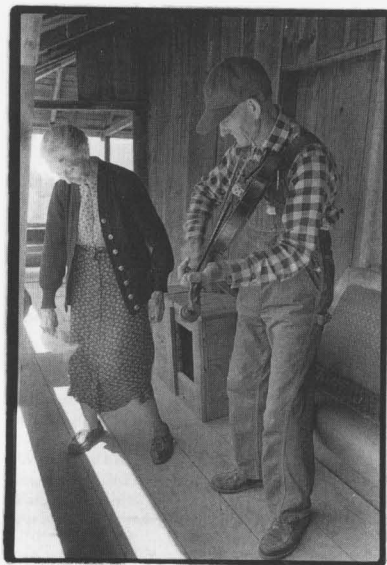
*Then she threw her lily white arms around him,
And straight before him she did fall,
Said, "You're the very man that used to court me,
Before you went away to war."*

*Then they walked down the path together
His arm around her waist so trim,
And he told to her a beautiful story,
And then she gave her heart to him.*

12 The Roving Gambler (LAWS H 4)

Doug Wallin, introduction, vocal, and fiddle

"When my grandfather was a young fellow, he was a little bit wild, I guess. Like a lot of young fellows, he did a little drinking. And he was born and grew up during and after that Civil War, which was a rough era. And he was a young fellow, and he went to see his girl friend. Well, this smart aleck fellow was there, evidently a-drinking. He was trying to take grandpa's girl friend. And grandpa grabbed up a board and broke it over his head. That fellow grabbed up a stick of wood to throw at grandpa. Grandpa got his pistol into action about that time and shot at that guy. Well, the bullet hit the stick of wood in mid air, glanced off of it and hit this girl's brother in the shoulder. Grandpa shot at that guy again and hit him. It didn't kill him, but they caught grandpa and put him in jail. I guess he was a-drinking. Some of them heard



Berzilla dancing to the fiddling of Ernest Franklin, a neighbor.

him coming down the road a-singing this song,
"Roving Gambler."

*I am a roving gambler,
I gambled all around,
Wherever I meet with a deck of cards
I lay my money down. [3x]*

*I gambled down in Washington
Many more weeks than three,
Till I fell in love with a pretty little girl,
And she fell in love with me.*

*She took me in her parlor,
She cooled me with her fan,
She whispered low in her mother's ear,
"I love that gambling man." [3x]*

*"Oh daughter, oh dear daughter,
How can you treat me so,
To leave your kind old mother,
And with a gambler go?" [3x]*

*"Oh mother, oh dear mother,
I know I love you well,
But the love I have for this gambling man
No human tongue can tell." [3x]*

13 The Bold Lieutenant (LAWS O 25)

Doug Wallin, vocal

This song derives from a broadside with a story a bit more aristocratic than most, but American singers seem to like its lesson, that a "faint heart ne'er won fair lady." After singing the song, Doug's reaction to the prudence of the ship's captain was, "I believe I'd a went off and hid too!"

*Down in Carlisle lived a lady,
She was so beautiful and gay,
And she determined to live a lady,
And no young man could her betray.*

*But soon she met two loving brothers,
They came to her from afar,
And there upon these loving brothers,
This lady cast her heart's desire.*

*One of them was a bold lieutenant,
A bold lieutenant, a man of war,
The other was a bossy captain,
Belonged to a ship called Colonel Carr.*

*Up spoke this handsome lady,
Saying, "I cannot be but one man's bride,
But meet me here tomorrow morning,
On this case we will decide."*

*She called for her horses and her coaches,
And they were ready at her command,
And then together these three did wander,
Until they came to a lion's den.*

*And there they stopped and there they halted
With these two brothers musing 'round,
'Twas for the space of half an hour,
That she lay speechless on the ground.*

*But at length she did recover,
And threw her fan in the lion's den,
Saying, "Which of you to gain a lady,
Will return to me my fan?"*

*Up spoke this bold sea captain,
He raised his voice so loud above,
Saying, "Madam, I'm a man of honor,*

But I will not lose my life for love."

*And then up spoke this bold lieutenant,
He raised his voice so loud and high,
Saying, "Madam, I'm a man of honor,
I will return your fan or die."*

*Down in the lion's den he ventured,
Where the lions looked so grim,
He whooped and raged all among them,
Until at last he did return.*

*And when she saw her lover coming,
And unto him no harm was done,
She threw herself upon his bosom,
Saying, "Here young man is the prize you've won."
And then up spoke that bold sea captain
Like a man all troubled with a wandering mind,
Saying, "Through these lonely woods I'll ramble,
Where no man can ever me find."*

14 My Home's Across the Blue Ridge Mountains

Jack Wallin, vocal and banjo; Doug Wallin, fiddle

This song has been recorded by Bascom Lamar Lunsford, the Carter family, the Delmore Brothers, Clarence Ashley, and others. The earliest citation of it dates to 1909 (Journal of American Folklore, XXII, 245).

*Oh, how can I keep from crying. [3x]
I never expect to see you anymore.*

*(Cho.) My home's across the Blue Ridge mountains, [3x]
I never expect to see you anymore.*

*Goodbye, my little Sylvia darling, [3x]
I never expect to see you anymore. (Cho.)*

*Oh, rock and feed the baby candy, [3x]
I never expect to see you anymore. (Cho.)*

15 The House Carpenter (CHILD 243)

Doug Wallin, vocal and fiddle

The title F. J. Child gave this ballad, "James Harris, or the Daemon Lover," reflects the supernatural character of the 17th-century British broadside original, where the seducer has a cloven hoof. Doug and other American singers are less interested in the sensational than in the moral issue and the fate and feelings of the characters.

*"We met once more, my old true love,
We met once more," said he.
"I've just returned from the salt, salt sea,
And it's all for the sake of thee."*

*"Now I could have married a king's daughter dear,
And I'm sure she'd have married me,
But I've forsaken all her gold,
For the love I have for thee."*

*"If you could have married a king's daughter dear,
You had better have married she,
For I've lately married a house carpenter,
And a nice young man is he."*

*"If you'll forsake your house carpenter,
And come along with me,
I'll take you where the grass grows green
On the banks of Sicily."*

"If I'll forsake my house carpenter,
And come along with thee,
What have you got to maintain me upon,
And keep me from slavery?"

"I have three ships upon the sea,
All making for dry land,
I have three hundred jolly sailor boys
You can have them at your own command."

Then she dressed up in a yellow robe,
Most glorious to behold,
She walked the street all around and about,
And shined like glittering gold.

Then she picked up her tender little babe,
And kisses gave it one, two, three,
"Stay at home, stay at home, you tender little babe,
And keep your papa company."

They hadn't been sailing on the sea two weeks,
I'm sure it was not three,
Till she began to weep and she began to mourn.
She wept so bitterly.

"Are you weeping for your house?
Are you weeping for your store?
Are you weeping for your house carpenter,
Whose face you'll see no more?"

"No I'm not weeping for my house,
Neither for my store,
I'm weeping for my tender little babe,
Whom I left a-sitting on the floor."

They hadn't been sailing on the sea three weeks,
I'm sure it was not four,
Till the ship sprang a leak, to the bottom she goes,

She goes to rise no more.

"Take me out, oh take me out,
Take me out," cried she,
"For I'm too rich and costly,
To rot in the salt-water sea."

"What banks, what banks before me now,
As white as any snow?"
"Those are the banks of heaven, you know,
Where all good people go."

"What banks, what banks before me now,
As black as any crow?"
"Those are the banks of hell, my love,
Where you and I must go."

16 Two Ghost Stories

told by Doug Wallin

This is one of the most haunted places, according to the stories, that I guess, of any place in the country...and it kind of puzzles me. My Uncle Cas was a baby...you know him, and he had a brother about two, probably a couple of years older. And when their mother died, Cas was just a little fellow. I guess just about big enough to walk...and he and my other uncle, Jeter, had been down here, I guess. They lived up yonder and started back up that way. And Jeter was a-fighting Cas and treating him mean. Jeter swore till the day he died, when he talked about it, that he saw his mother a-standing there in one of them dark hollows up yonder where I showed you above that Civil War hide-out. And he swore till the day he died...when

he talked about...that he saw his mother standing there with a little switch motioning it at him. He was a-fighting Cas, and he thought it was my mother and told her not to be a-trying to scare him. It was nothing except that he just saw that. I kind of got to believe that he did, 'cause he never would change his story. She's, I guess, a-stopping him from whupping that little boy, or fighting him.

One thing, I was up in there over from the graveyard where I took you fellows. It was just before my...just a few days before Grandpa Wallin died...and I heard something come around that hill just like a horse a-running...and I didn't know what to think. And when I looked up to see, it was nothing. There was nothing. It was so plain and close. But there was nothing there. And I had to...I just had to think maybe that was a warning about him gonna die. And two or three days after that, he died.

17 Come Over into Canaan's Land

Doug Wallin, vocal

Doug comment on this song was he had "learned that from my mother...No....The first time I heard that, an old preacher was conducting graveside rites for a man got killed in a logging accident. He started to sing that song. Happened when I was a kid, about 10 or 12 year old."

(Cho.) Come over into Canaan's land,
Where the figs and grapes so plenteous grow,
Where milk and honey freely flow,
Come over into Canaan's land.

*I saw the death I had to die,
A death in which my soul did cry,
The frightening waves, my heart did chill,
But I must yield, 'tis heaven's will.*

*Oh second grace, I find thee sweet,
God's holy will is now complete,
The Father, Son, and Spirit reign,
All earthly foes are surely slain.*

*Oh second grace, I find thee sweet,
God's holy will is now complete,
But still I long for deeper grace,
Toward Canaan's blessed resting place.*

*My many sins were all forgiven,
My soul shone clear as the light from heaven,
The Father, Son, and Spirit reign,
All inward foes are surely slain. (Cho.)*

18 Rocking With the Tide (A. B. SEBREN)

Doug Wallin, vocal and fiddle

Doug learned this piece by listening to it sung locally by The Gunter Quartet and a gospel quartet led by his uncle Cas Wallin. The song appears under the title "Rocking On The Waves" in *Living Words*, a paperback shape-note book. Cas Wallin taught shape-note singing schools. Neither Doug nor Jack reads shape-notes, but Jack performed with Cas's quartet when he was about 12 or 13.

*I am on the restless sea of life,
Where no calmness comes to still the tide,
For it's full of deadly sin and strife.
Rest and peace are on the other side.*

*What a glorious thought to feel this way
When the raging tempest rolls so high,
Knowing he will hear me when I pray,
Sweetly save me in the bye and bye.*

*Soon my ship will anchor over there
By the help of Christ, the crucified,
For he's helping with his unseen hand,
In his arms I'm rocking with the tide.*

19 Pretty Saro (SHARP, NO. 76)

Doug Wallin, vocal

This is another song that Doug's Great-aunt Mary Sands sang for Cecil Sharp (Sharp II, 10). It remains one of Doug Wallin's favorites, and rightly so. The melody is one of his best, and few lines match the lovely closing ones of this song.

*I came to this country in 1849,
Saw many a true lover but I never saw mine,
Then I viewed all around me and found myself alone,
And me a poor stranger, and a long ways from home.*

*My true love won't have me, this I understand,
She wants a freeholder, but I have no land,
Though I could maintain her on silver and gold,
And all the other fine things that her heart might behold.*

*It's not this long journey I'm dreading to go,
Nor the country I'm leaving, nor the debts that I owe,
But nothing so grieves me, nor troubles my mind,
Like leaving my darling, pretty Saro behind.*

*If I was a poet and could write a fine band,
I would write my love a letter that she might understand,
And send it by the water when the islands o'erflow,
And think of pretty Saro wherever she'd go.*

*If I was a little dove, had wings and could fly,
To my true lover's dwelling this night I'd draw nigh,
In her lily white arms all night I would stay,
And watch them little windows for the dawning of day.*



Berzilla with her sister Zipporah, who sang for Cecil Sharp.

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FILM:

The End of an Old Song. 16 mm and 1/2-inch VHS formats, black and white, 28 min. Produced by John Cohen. New York: Cinema Guild, 1970.

CREDITS

This album is a project of the Folklife Section of the North Carolina Arts Council. Since 1977, the Folklife Section has actively documented and presented North Carolina's traditional artists in sound recordings, films, festivals, and other special projects.

These performances were mastered from field recordings made at Doug Wallin's home in the Sodom community, Madison County, N. C., in 1992 and 1993, using a Nagra tape recorder. The originals are on deposit in the Southern Folklife Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Production Supervised by Anthony Seeger and Matt Walters

Executive Producer: Wayne Martin

Compiled by Wayne Martin and Beverly Patterson

Annotated by Beverly and Daniel Patterson

Recorded by Wayne Martin, George Holt, Stefan Keydal, and Beverly Patterson

Photographs by Rob Amberg

Mastered by Wes Lachot at Overdub Lane, Chapel Hill, N. C.

Design by Visual Dialogue

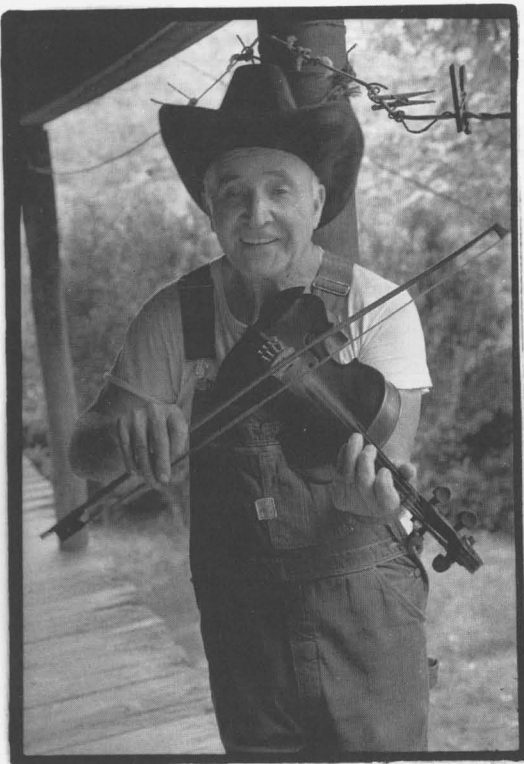
Editorial Assistance by Mary Monseur
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ABOUT THE PRODUCERS

Wayne Martin is Director of the Folklife Section of the North Carolina Arts Council. A fiddler and documentarian, he has recorded numerous traditional musicians from North Carolina and Virginia. He has produced several commercial recordings including *Etta Baker: One-Dime Blues* (Rounder 2112), *Joe and Odell Thompson: Music from the North Carolina Piedmont* (Global Village 217), and *Round the Heart of Old Galax* (County 533-35).

Beverly Bush Patterson is a Folklife Specialist in the North Carolina Arts Council, Raleigh, N. C. A former Film and Videotape Review Editor of the *Journal of American Folklore*, she is a contributor to *Diversities of Gifts: Field Studies in Southern Religion* (University of Illinois Press, 1989), and the author of *The Sound of the Dove: Singing in Appalachian Primitive Baptist Churches* (University of Illinois Press, 1995).

Daniel W. Patterson is Kenan Professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and former Chair of its Curriculum in Folklore. He is the author of *The Shaker Spiritual* (Princeton University Press, 1979) and has written other books and articles and participated in film and recording projects on American folklore.



Doug Wallin.

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