

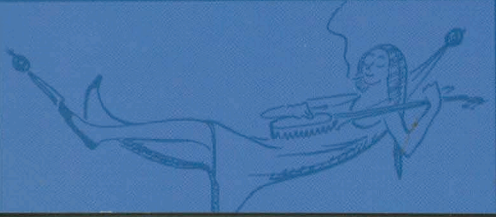
Smithsonian  
Folkways

Pete  
**Seeger**

**Darling  
Corey and  
Goofing-**



**Off  
Suite**

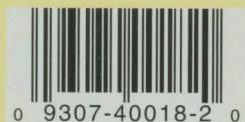


**PETE SEEGER** Darling Corey and  
Goofing-Off Suite

New introduction by Anthony Seeger; 1950 notes by Alan Lomax;  
1955 notes by Pete Seeger

*Darling Corey* was originally issued in 1950 as Folkways FP3 (later FA 2003).

*Goofing-Off Suite* was originally issued in 1955 as Folkways FA 2045.

**DARLING COREY**

1. **John Riley** 2:24
2. **Risselty-Rosselty** 1:10
3. **Devilish Mary** 1:16
4. **Come All Fair Maids** 2:29
5. **East Virginia Blues** 2:06
6. **I Had a Wife** 0:35
7. **Skillet Good and Greasy** 0:54
8. **Darling Corey** 2:40
9. **Four Banjo Pieces** 2:35
10. **Jam on Jerry's Rocks** 1:36
11. **Penny's Farm** 1:46
12. **Danville Girl** 1:29
13. **Get Along Little Dogies** 1:28

**GOOFING-OFF SUITE**

14. **Opening Theme** 1:09
15. **Cindy** 0:54
16. **Blue Skies** 2:23

17. **The Girl I Left Behind Me** 1:13
18. **Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring** 0:59
19. **Duet from Beethoven's Symphony no. 7** 2:04
20. **Chorale from Beethoven's Symphony no. 9** 1:24
21. **Russian Folk Themes and Yodel** 2:10
22. **Anitra's Dance/Brandy Leave Me Alone** 1:47
23. **Opening Theme (Reprise)** 1:15
24. **Mexican Blues** 1:57
25. **Time's A-getting Hard** 2:20
26. **Empty Pocket Blues** 1:29
27. **Sally My Dear** 3:30
28. **Oh! Liza, Poor Gal** 1:44
29. **Sally Ann** 1:25
30. **Woody's Rag** 1:26

*Darling Corey* (1950) and *Goofing-Off Suite* (1955) are truly legendary Pete Seeger recordings. Apart from their undeniable musicality and influence over generations of musicians, these two titles reveal an already mature artist of great imagination and passion. Notes by Pete Seeger and Alan Lomax.

Pete Seeger recorded over fifty albums on Folkways Records. All are available on cassette; among the reissues on Smithsonian/Folkways are:

SF 40024 *Traditional Christmas Carols*

SF 40027/28 *Singalong: Live at Sanders Theater*

SF 40058 *American Industrial Ballads*



Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings  
Center for Folklife Programs and  
Cultural Studies  
955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington DC 20560

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(Cisco Houston/Stormking Music, BMI)

**GOOFING-OFF SUITE**

14. **Opening Theme** 1:09  
(Pete Seeger/Sanga Music, Co., BMI)
15. **Cindy** 0:54
16. **Blue Skies** 2:23  
(Irving Berlin/Irving Berlin Music, BMI)

17. **The Girl I Left Behind Me** 1:13
18. **Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring** 0:59  
(Johann Sebastian Bach)
19. **Duet from Beethoven's Symphony no. 7** 2:04  
(Ludwig van Beethoven)
20. **Chorale from Beethoven's Symphony no. 9** 1:24  
(Ludwig van Beethoven)
21. **Russian Folk Themes and Yodel** 2:10  
(Themes from *Pétrouchka* by Igor Stravinsky)
22. **Anitra's Dance/Brandy Leave Me Alone**  
(*Anitra's Dance* from Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite*; *Brandy* by Joseph Morais)
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(Woody Guthrie/Sanga Music Co. BMI)

*Pete Seeger learned Yodel from the Sons of Pioneers, Sally My Dear from May Kennedy McCord, and Oh! Liza, Poor Gal from Peggy Seeger.*

**The Roots and Shoots** Introduction  
**of Pete Seeger** to the 1993 Edition  
by Anthony Seeger

*Darling Corey* and *Goofing-Off Suite* are relatively early Pete Seeger recordings, admired by enthusiasts for decades but for a long time difficult to find. Originally issued separately, the recordings represent two important facets of Pete Seeger's career as a musician—his debt to traditional performers and his development of new styles. In *Darling Corey* Pete demonstrates the influence of traditional southern mountain musicians on his style, and pays homage to the "roots" of the music he has continued to play ever since he worked for Alan Lomax in 1939, listening to recordings at the Library of Congress. These are the "roots" of the musical traditions that he has so influenced. In *Goofing-Off Suite* Pete shows how far he can take the traditional five-string banjo and other instruments into new domains using instrumental techniques that have since become part of the standard repertory. *Goofing-Off Suite* is an example of the growing tip (or "shoots") of Pete Seeger's music. He has always been an innovator and composer as well as an interpreter of older traditions. By bringing the two recordings together in a single release, we demon-

strate how much the innovator has been influenced by his teachers, and how much he has creatively worked with the instruments and traditions to expand them into new musical styles.

As a child, Pete Seeger sang with his parents, brothers and school friends, and he learned to play the tenor banjo in high school. Intending to become a journalist, he first heard the five-string banjo around 1936. His father, musicologist Charles Seeger, and Alan Lomax encouraged him to devote himself to music. Ralph Rinzler and I interviewed Pete in January 1992 for this reissue. Here is how Pete recalled the processes that led to these recordings (the wording has been slightly altered for the printed page):

"The first time I heard a five-string banjo was at the National (a folk music festival) in 1935 or 1936. Until that time I thought the banjo had four strings and was tuned like a viola, which is a tenor banjo. The music at the National was a brand new thing. But when I went to Ashville I wasn't intending to become a musician. The idea of spending my life making music never occurred to me. It was a good three years before I buckled down and learned how to play the five-string banjo, because the notes all went by so fast. Then I tried slowing down the

records in the Library of Congress. But it wasn't until 1940 when I was hitch-hiking around that I learned something about the different ways to pick the banjo.

"What really got me started was Alan Lomax's enthusiasm. He urged me to dig into this music a little more deeply, and threw a whole lot of records at me to listen to. Around 1939 he gave me this job of listening to hundreds of recordings at the Library of Congress. He paid me \$15.00 per week, which was big pay in those days. I lived in this little boarding house within walking distance of the Library of Congress—\$3.00/week I paid for one room. And then I'd bicycle out to Silver Spring to my father's once every few nights. I spent my days listening to records, one after the other.

"My father and Alan Lomax were doing something very important in the 1930s. They wanted America to appreciate its own music. They said 'Why do we have to be at the mercy of whatever Tin Pan Alley has to give us? Why do we have to be at the mercy of what the Europeans do?' Alan and Charlie, with their populist sentiments, made an important decision. They said 'Let's encourage Americans to listen to authentic traditional music on such records as we have in the Library of Congress. Let's not bother

with written notes or whether people change the music a little here and there to make it their own.'

"I think Alan Lomax should be given more credit than he is generally given. He is credited with collecting great songs, but Alan also pointed me and others in a direction and said 'learn this; learn it well. This is great. This is the greatest music of the world. Don't be satisfied until you've got it just right.'

"After a while I gave up looking for a job on a newspaper, and really didn't know how I would make a living. It wasn't until I got back from hitchhiking out west in 1940 that I made this (for me) great discovery: as long as I knew how to play a banjo I'd never starve.

"I made some of the recordings on *Darling Corey* in Los Angeles in 1947. A friend tried to sell them to Decca, unsuccessfully, and knocked on a couple of other doors and finally sold them to Moses Asch in 1948. That's when Alan took on the job of writing the notes.

"It's probably impossible to say in words why one person likes one instrument and another person likes another. I can remember as a thirteen-year old being tremendously attracted to the sound of the banjo....I remember deciding I would not play a piano. I felt that all those temptations to play all sorts of fancy notes with eighty-eight keys in front of

me would just lead me astray.... I purposely restricted myself to the five strings of the banjo to see what I could do with them.

"As I got more confidence I'd try a little of this and that—including blues. I saw Josh White choking a string, and I found I could do that on a banjo. I just tried to adapt what I had seen guitar pickers do—Brownie McGhee, Josh White, and others. After all, I had the experience of playing in the school jazz band and plunk-plunking on pop songs as a kid.

"I don't know when the idea of playing classical music came to me. I think it was during World War II....I remember hearing *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* played on a piano when I was in the Army. I asked the person who played it 'What is that?' I think I sent away by mail and got copy of it from a music store in New York and set down to learn it on the banjo...not with any thought I was going to record or perform it. It was just beautiful music.

"I've often thought I was in the right place at the right time. If I'd been wandering in a different part of the world I might have ended up being a painter, or a journalist, or a forester. But I happened to be close to this guy Lomax, and living in a city called New York, where there were a lot of people saying 'We've got to make a decent

world, get rid of fascism and get rid of racism.' Suddenly I began plunging into activities with people I might otherwise never have worked with—Jews, African-Americans, and others. So music wasn't just a personal thing, it was something I was getting out and doing with other people...."

And the rest is history (see the bibliography). Given the important role Alan Lomax played in getting Pete Seeger started on the banjo, and for its value as a historical document, we present his complete 1950 notes to *Darling Corey* intact, as well as the brief notes supplied with *Goofing-Off Suite*. After you have listened to these recordings, you may find yourself taking out your own instrument and honoring your own "roots" while creating your own "shoots."

Anthony Seeger  
Curator, The Folkways Collection  
Smithsonian Institution

**Anthony Seeger** is the son of Pete Seeger's brother John, and like many others learned to play the banjo from Pete's book and recording, *How to Play the Five-string Banjo*. He is an anthropologist and ethnomusicologist, and has curated the Folkways Collection since 1988.

## The Original Notes to Darling Corey:

Peter Seeger  
Picking the Five-string  
Banjo and Singing

Introduction and notes on the recordings  
by Alan Lomax, 1950

Probably the one most important trait of United States folk music, as compared to the folk music of the British Isles, is the hard-driving, accelerating rhythm of the folk music of the United States.

In action Peter Seeger—the pendulum swing of the GI-shoed feet whomping the platform, the whole body stiffening and rearing back to drive a chorus home, but, above all, the banjo rippling and stinging in perfect time, beginning to gallop, rolling into a tearing run on the home-stretches of a song and then thundering into a finale of Spanish *rasgados* just as if a herd of wild horses had suddenly milled, bunched and stopped, trembling.

What happened across three hundred years to Anglo-Scots melodies—tropically stimulated by contact with African music in the new land of America—has happened to Yankee Peter Seeger across fifteen years of contact with southern singing and banjo playing. Son of a musicologist father

(Charles Seeger) and a longhair violinist mother (Constance Seeger), Peter (born May 3, 1919, New York City) naturally shunned any formal musical instruction in prep school and at Harvard. He reluctantly admits that he learned some harmony playing the tenor banjo in his school jazz band and by very casual questions addressed to his parents. Then one summer at the North Carolina Festival in Asheville he heard ballads with banjo.

In school he had decided to become a reporter. In the mountain balladeer, he saw a career combining reporting and banjo playing. Peter spent some months with me in the Archive of American Folk Song in Washington, listening to the records from across the country, and deciding upon the five-string banjo for his instrument. Hours and hours he tinkered with his instruments trying to figure out by ear what those southern banjo aces were playing. He was New England shy but New England determined and he sang everywhere he had a chance, and, when he didn't have a chance, he organized one, like the 1939 summer tour of a puppet-theater to help out the dairy farmers' union during a milk strike.

In 1940 he had learned all he could from the records and the books and set out to explore America on his own. He and the

Okie balladeer started together and went as far as Texas. Pete doubled back and hitched along down through the Shenandoah Valley, across Tennessee into Arkansas and Missouri, playing for eats, learning songs and people and ending up in a camp of evicted sharecroppers in Missouri. "The music in the little church they had made was just beautiful," says Pete, who always finds beauty and wonder where others can find only barren poverty, "and I began there to really work on my banjo."

Jumping off a freight train on the way to Montana, Pete broke his banjo, hocked his camera for a guitar and got along with it for the rest of the summer, playing the taverns and the back porches. When he needed a haircut, he would swap a ballad for one. Chicago and then south into Alabama, living with friends, walking and hitching into the countryside to find musicians and swap songs. By the time he hit New York late that fall he was ready to play on my CBS programs.

With Lee Hayes, Millard Lampell, Woody Guthrie and others he organized the Almanacs, and as the whole country swung into the war, the Almanacs began turning out stirring ballads like *Round and Round Hitler's Grave* (which opened and closed the war on CBS), *Reuben James*, *The*

*Martins and the Coys* and *Deliver the Goods*. Writers and broadcasters found these songs invaluable for broadcasts to Great Britain about wartime America.

World War II dissolved the Almanacs and Pete spent almost four years in the army—a year and a half singing and entertaining in the Pacific theater. By now that right hand on the banjo had become a steel stallion that could gallop out any kind of rhythm (with all the counterpoint and pedal point anyone could wish) in flamenco, blues, jazz, hillbilly, minstrel, dulcimer or guitar style. By now there was no better singer or song-leader in the country, none more honest, none more capable of setting a crowd on fire than Peter Seeger who had puzzled and practiced his way to perfection by listening to what the people had learned to do in their folk music.

Peter might have traveled the usual success route, but he did not choose to. Instead, deciding that the people of America needed a big circulation of folk songs and new topical ballads about the American problems like jobs, peace, Jim Crow and the like, he organized People's Songs. In a year and a half there were two thousand-odd junior Peter Seegers around the country picking the guitar, composing topical songs, ready to sing folk songs anywhere. A lot of hard-

working youngsters ran themselves ragged to keep People's Songs and its (collector's item) bulletin going, but it was Pete—who managed to tour and write and organize and father a couple of kids and make every singer feel important—that kept the organization going. When the record book on this half century is closed, Pete's organizing, composing and performance, climaxed by his cross-country tour with Henry Wallace, will go down alongside the performances of Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, Aaron Copeland, Jimmy Rogers and the other standout originals.

By now Pete has sung over all the networks, played in *Dark of the Moon*, made the best of all our folk music shorts (*To Hear My Banjo Play*), set Town Hall, Carnegie Hall, Madison Square Garden and all sorts of other auditoria on fire on occasions too numerous to mention, appeared on shows like *This Is War*, *We the People*, *Cavalcade of America*, *Theater Guild* and *National Barn Dance*, and started a new national crush for the five-string banjo—about which he has written a most original musicological book, deceptively called *How to Play the Five-string Banjo*, actually a brilliant analysis (and the first one) of our most significant instrumental style. This forty-three page mimeographed

volume with diagrams and illustrations by the author is available for \$8.95 from Music Sales, Inc. (In addition, a videotape co-produced by Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings and Homespun Tapes is available by mail order, along with the book and an audio instruction recording.)

Peter Seeger is possessed of that rarest of human qualities—the inquiring mind. This gentle and at the same time fiery and unbeatable spirit pervades his music, his friendships, his beanpole body and his thought. His performances are true to our folk musicians faithfully and sensitively. The reason he is now our best all-around folk performer is obvious in this quotation from his book:

"The people I learned banjo from were mostly old farmers, miners or working people who had played the instrument during their courting days and later kept it hanging on the wall to pass away the time of an evening. Often they knew only a few tunes apiece and maybe only one method of strumming, which they had picked up from their father or a neighbor. Yet what they knew, they knew well and their banjo had more art in it than many a hectic performance by a professional virtuoso..."

## 1. John Riley

"John Riley, that's my favorite song," many an old-time balladeer has told me. Although the ballad originated in England, American singers have connected it with whatever was the latest war and with the separations and reunions this war had caused. American singers have carried John Riley with them to all the states, for the theme of the true-lover wandering far but returning to his faithful sweetheart is a romance our footloose folks could not hear too often. Pete sings this sentimental eighteenth-century come-all-ye with the delicate restraint of the old-time ballad-rememberer, a reserve which permits the listener to step into the garden and hear the lovers' conversation among the ancient roses.

*As I went walking one Sunday morning,/To breathe the sweet and pleasant air,/Who should I spy but a fair young maiden,/Whose cheek was like a lily fair.*

*I stepped up to her, so quickly saying,/Would you like to be a sailor's wife?/Oh, no, kind sir, I'd rather tarry/And to live single all of my life.*

*What makes you differ from another's wishes,/I'm sure you're useful and handsome too./Set sail with me to Pennsylvania/Adieu to England for evermore.*

*The truth, kind sir, I'll plainly tell you,/I could have been married three years ago,/To one John Riley who left this country,/He is the cause of all my woe.*

*I'll not go with you to Pennsylvania,/Neither with you to that distant shore,/For my heart is with Riley, I can't forget him/Although I may never see him no more.*

*Now when he saw she loved him truly,/He gave her kisses one, two, three,/Saying I am Riley your long lost lover,/Who's been the cause of your misery.*

*If you be he and your name is Riley,/I will go with you to a distant shore,/We will set sail to Pennsylvania,/Adieu young friends for evermore.*

## 2. Risselty-Rosselty

*Risselty-Rosselty* is one of the many American cousins of the Scots ballad that Burl Ives has made known again—"There was a wee cooper wha' lived in fife,/Nickety-nackety-noo-noo-noo..."

This comic ballad of marriage is to Maggie and Jiggs what John Riley is to Helen Trent; it was the sort of pill to purge sentimentality which our ancestors liked to swallow hastily after anything ultra-romantic.

*I married a wife in the month of June,/Risselty-rosselty noo-noo-noo./I carried her off by the light of the moon,/Risselty-rosselty hay bombossity/Nickety nackety rustico quality/Willoby walloby noo-noo-noo.*

*She combed her hair but once a year,/Risselty-rosselty noo-noo-noo./With every rake she gave a tear,/Risselty-rosselty hay bombossity/Nickety nackety rustico quality/Willoby walloby noo-noo-noo.*

*She swept the floor but once a year,/Risselty-rosselty noo-noo-noo./She swore her broom was much too dear./Risselty-rosselty hay bombossity...*

*She churned the butter in dad's old boot,/Risselty-rosselty noo-noo-noo./And for a dash she used her foot./Risselty-rosselty hay bombossity...*

*The butter came out a grisly gray,/Risselty-rosselty noo-noo-noo./The cheese took legs and ran away,/Risselty-rosselty hay bombossity...*

## 3. Devilish Mary

Again in *Devilish Mary* Seeger returns to that favorite folk antidote for melancholy—the folk jest which maintains that woman is the only thing in this world meaner than the devil. [*Devilish Mary* is from Lomax's *Our Singing Country*.]

*I once dressed up and went to town/To court a fair young lady/I inquired about her name/Her name was devilish Mary.*

Chorus: *Come a fa-ling come a-ling come a-ling/Come a fa-ling come a-dairy.*

*We had not been married for about two weeks/Before we ought to been parted/I hadn't said but a single word/She kicked up her heels and started. Chorus.*

*She washed my clothes in old soap suds/She filled my bath with switches/She let me know right at the start/She was going to wear my britches. Chorus.*

*Now if I ever marry again/It'll be for love not riches/Marry a little girl 'bout two feet high/So she can't wear my britches. Chorus.*

## 4. Come All Fair Maids

*Come All Fair Maids*, like so many love songs of the western world, warns against love; the love songs of the American backwoods have always run in a melancholy stream where weeping willows festooned the banks. This stream began to flow in the days of chivalry and in the hillbilly songs of 1950 one can still discern a faint reflection of the ritualized despair of the knightly lover. A nearer and much more understandable source for the persistent melancholy of these songs lies in the sternly puritan view of sex on the frontier. Was it possible to feel anything but sad and fearful about an emotion that led pure maidens to venture along the primrose path to hell?

*Come all you fair and tender ladies,/Take warning how you court young men./They are like the stars of a summer's morning/They will first appear and then they are gone.*

*If I had known before I courted,/I never would have courted none,/I'd have locked my heart in a box of golden/And fastened it up in a silver pin.*

*I wish I were a little swallow,/And I had wings and I could fly./I would fly away to my false true lover/And when he would speak I would deny.*

*But I am not a little swallow,/I have no wings neither can I fly./So I'll sit down here to weep in sorrow/And try to pass my troubles by.*

*Come all you fair and tender ladies,/Take warning how you court young men./They are like the stars of a summer's morning/They will first appear and then they are gone.*

## 5. East Virginia Blues

In *East Virginia Blues* we come to material that is rooted in Anglo-Scots folk songs but clearly American in origin. The people weave and reweave the old patterns, inserting materials of their new experiences until at last the old songs take on the character of the new land to which they have removed. *East Virginia Blues* is a fine example of an American lyric song, in which the American scene and American lingo have fully replaced the older images. Mounted upon the needle-noted banjo accompaniment now traditional for this southern Appalachian song, it is close to being the finest of all American lyric songs. Pete learned this version from a recording I made of a Salyersville, Kentucky mountain banjo virtuoso named Walter Williams.

*I was born and raised in East Virginia,/North Carolina I did go./There I met the fairest maiden/Her name and age I do not know.*

*I'd rather be in some dark holler,/Where the sun refused to shine,/Then to see you with another/And to know you would never be mine.*

*Her hair it was of a light brown color,/Cheeks that were of ruby red./On her breast she wore white lilies,/Where I longed to lay my head.*

*I was born and raised in East Virginia,/North Carolina I did go./There I met the fairest maiden/Her name and age I do not know.*

## 6. I Had A Wife

A bloody bit of Irish Balladry.

*Well, I had a wife and got no good of her/Here is how I easy got rid of her,/Took her out and chopped the head of her/Early in the morning.*

*Seeing as how there was no evidence/For the sheriff or his reverence,/They had to call it an act of Providence/Early in the morning.*

*So if you've a wife and get no good of her/Here is how you easy get rid of her;/Take her out and chop the head of her/Early in the morning.*

## 7. Skillet Good and Greasy

There follows an Alabama-Mississippi sharecropper tune, the kind of thing the African-Americans [of the region] call derisively a "peckerwood song," but enjoy singing nonetheless; every sharecropper knows what it is to run out of meat at home, to slip out in the dark of the moon and try to kill one of their neighbor's shoats. *Skillet Good and Greasy* is a typical banjo tune, the slur in the chorus made to match the tone of a pulled string on the banjo; its defiant, half-drunk leering quality is an admirable complement to the frankly bloody bit of Irish balladry in *I Had a Wife*.

*I'm going down to town,/Going to get me a sack of flour,/Going to cook it every hour,/Keep my skillet good and greasy/All the time, time, time/Keep my skillet good and greasy all the time.*

*Well if you say so/I'll never work no more,/I'll lay around your shanty/All the time, time, time/I'll lay around your shanty all the time.*

*Well, I'm going down to town/Going to get me a jug of brandy;/Going to give it all to Nancy/Keep her good and drunk and goosy/All the time, time, time/Keep her good and drunk and goosy all the time.*

## 8. Darling Corey

One of the longest civil wars in history has been going on in America during the last two hundred years. On one side has stood the federal and state authorities with a normal and understandable desire to collect taxes on all liquor distilled within the United States. On the other side have been generations of sharpshooting backwoodsmen who found it much more profitable to market their small crops of corn in the form of whiskey rather than hog meat. Immediately following the revolutionary war, the farmers of certain mountain counties in Pennsylvania resisted the federals so effectively that George Washington, himself, had to negotiate the peace. The moonshine war has continued ever since and it has developed its war cries, its code of honor and its songs—among them *Rye Whiskey*,



*Moonshiner, Good Old Mountain Dew* and, best of all, *Darling Corey*. Pete Seeger here somewhat improves on the performance of a real mountaineer singer named Shelton who waxed this one for Victor back in the twenties on a rare twelve-inch record.

*Wake up, wake up, darling Corey, /What makes you sleep so sound. /Them highway robbers are coming, /Going to tear your still house down.*

*Wake up, wake up, my darling, /Quit hanging round my bed, /Bad liquor has ruined my body, /Pretty women have killed me almost dead.*

*Wake up, wake up, my darling, /Go do the best you can. /I have got me another woman, /You can hunt you another man.*

*Oh, yes, oh, yes, my darling, /I will do the best I can. /But I'll never give my pleasure, /To another gambling man.*

*Well, the last time I seen darling Corey, /She was sitting by the banks of the sea. /A '45 strapped around her waist, /And a banjo on her knee.*

## 9. Four Banjo Pieces

*Fly Around My Blue-Eyed Girl*, which Pete makes into a blue-sky-mountain-top-mockingbird-breaking-its-heart-stomp-down good-un, is one of the many lovely tunes my father recorded from the Crockett Ward tribe of Galax, Virginia.

The banjo pickers from whom Pete got his learning prided themselves not so much on their song accompaniments as the way they "could just flat pick a breakdown." These square-dance hoe-down melodies required all the sense of rhythm, all the speed and all the endurance that a player had, for he had to play loud and fast and keep it up till morning at the frontier frolics. Some of the tunes are Scots-Irish-English by origin, others are American derivatives and all have been strongly influenced by African qualities, for African-Americans very early took a prominent position as dance musicians. Whatever their origin, *Cripple Creek*, *Ida Red* and other hoedown tunes made the most joyful sound of anything in pioneer life and helped to arm the folks against hard work and hard times. The salty tide of the American people against the wilderness runs swift and strong in them and here Seeger emerges as a really fabulous virtuoso.

## 10. Jam on Jerry's Rocks

Folklorists have been looking to locate Jerry's rocks for fifty years—all the way from Nova Scotia, down through Maine, across New England, in New York state, across the Keystone, into the thumb of Michigan, where the badger prowls and back of Duluth; pensive old timers have sworn this and known a feller who said that; yet nothing has so far been proved; and those rocks where the young lumberjack met his death in the jam are still lost a little river somewhere in the cutover timber. Meanwhile this ballad of a wood's tragedy traveled everywhere the lumberjack brought daylight into the woods, from coast to coast, even turning up in the Scottish woods. It may yet be sung in the bunkhouses to be raised in the mossy swamp forests of the planet Venus.

*Come all you true born shanty boys /Wherever you may be; /Come sit here on the deacon's seat /And listen unto me.*

*'Tis of the jam on Jerry's rocks /And a hero you should know; /The bravest of the shanty boys /Our foreman young Monroe.*

*'Twas on a Sunday morning /Ere daylight did appear; /Our logs were piled up mountain high /We could not keep them clear.*

*Till six of our brave shanty boys /They did agree to go /And break the jam on Jerry's rocks /With foreman young Monroe.*

*We had not picked up many a log /Till Monroe he did say; /This jam will soon give way, boys /I'll send you far away.*

*I will send you off the drive, boys, /For the jam it soon will go; /Then he picked the key log out of the drive /And off went young Monroe.*

*When the rest of all the shanty boys /The sad news came to hear; /They gathered at the river /And downward they did stare.*

*And there they found to their surprise /And sorrow, grief and woe, /All cut and mangled on the beach, /Lay the form of young Monroe.*

## 11. Penny's Farm

*Penny's Farm* tells of another kind of dying in America—death by poverty, which takes longer, but often takes in whole families. I found this song—not at some secret meeting of a sharecroppers' union in Arkansas, but at 1776 Broadway in the files of unreleased masters at the Columbia Phonograph Corporation. The label did not indicate who the singers were, but their voices, holding an even balance between a sob and a chuckle, gave them away as southerners. The melody cheerfully carries a sad story, and Pete Seeger gives it faithfully and in the spirit.

*Come all you ladies and you gentlemen/And listen to my song;/I'll sing it to you right/But you may think it's wrong./May make you mad, but I mean no harm;/It's about the renters on Penny's farm.*

Chorus: *It's hard times in the country/Down on Penny's farm.*

*Now you move out on Penny's farm,/Plant a little crop of 'baccy/And a little crop of corn./Come around and see you gonna*

*plid and plod/Till you got yourself a mortgage/On everything you got. Chorus.*

*Yes, you go in the fields/And you will work all day/Way after night/But you get no pay./Promise you meat or a little lard./It's hard to be a renter on Penny's farm. Chorus.*

*Now here's George Penny/Come into town/With a wagon load of peaches/And not one of them sound./He's got to have his money or somebody's check;/You pay him for a bushel and you don't get a peck. Chorus.*

*George Penny's renters/They will come to town/With their hands in their pockets/And their heads hanging down./Go in the store and the merchant would say:/Your mortgage is due and I'm waiting for my pay. Chorus.*

*Down in the pocket/With a trembling hand./Can't pay you all/But I'll pay you what I can./Then to the telephone the merchant made a call./They will put you on the chain gang if you don't pay it all. Chorus.*

## 12. Danville Girl

There are stanzas in this one from so many different hobo songs, sung in so many different ways, that one might call this the master hobo song. Actually I had some hand in mixing the verses together in *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (Macmillan, 1934), from which this version comes. However, I have never heard anyone, hobo or hillbilly, who so well translated the wistfulness of the song, the nostalgia of great distances, and the bitter-sweet loneliness of the man alone with the railroad as Peter Seeger in this record.

*My pocket book was empty/My heart was full of pain./Ten thousand miles away from home/Bumming the railroad trains.*

*I was standing on the platform/Smoking a cheap cigar./Listening for that next freight train/To carry an empty car.*

*When I got off at Danville/Got stuck on a Danville girl./You can bet your life she was out of sight./She wore those Danville curls.*

*She took me in her kitchen/She treated me nice and kind./She got me in the notion/Of bumming all the time.*

*She wore her hat on the back of her head/Like high-tone people all do./But the very next train come down the line,/I bid that girl adieu.*

*I pulled my cap down over my eyes./Walked down to the railroad tracks;/Then I caught a railroad car/Never did look back.*

## 13. Get Along Little Dogies

*It's early one morning I was riding for pleasure/I spied a cowpuncher a-riding along/His hat was throwed back and his spurs was a jinglin'/And as he was riding he was singing this song.*

Chorus: *Whoopie-ti-yi-yo, get along little dogies/It's your misfortune 't ain't none of my own/Get along get along get along little dogies/You know that Wyoming will be your new home.*

*It's early in the spring we round up the dogies/Mark 'em and brand 'em and bob off their tails/Round up our horses, load up the chuck wagon/Then throw the dogies up on the trail. Chorus.*

# Goofing-Off Suite: J. S. Bach, I. Berlin, L. Beethoven and Many Others

Arranged  
by Peter  
Seeger with banjo,  
mandolin and chali

## How I Composed (Swiped) the Goofing-Off Suite by Peter Seeger, 1955

In Lenox, Massachusetts, home of the Berkshire Music Festival, I chanced to hear a chamber music program last summer. It's great stuff (at least some of it), and folk musicians should hear more of it. In between each movement of a suite there is absolute silence because music is holy, or should be.

I figured, folk musicians should try to write some suites, and here is my first attempt. When it came to choosing a name for my Suite I was stuck. Finally, I decided on *Goofing-Off Suite*.

Here's the reason. If you want to learn a folk instrument, such as guitar, you'll never get around to it if you say, "I'll practice for an hour every Thursday at 5:30." You never get around to it. Unless you know how to goof off. I was teaching a housewife how to play guitar, near my home in the Hudson

Valley, and she wasn't making any progress at all. I told her, "Forget the dishes, forget the beds and the sweeping for a while." And you know next week she really had made some progress...

I'll admit I'm in a favored position. In my home everybody can be working to beat the band, and I'm lying on the bed, plunking away at the banjo. The kids say, "papa's practicing."

So this is my *Goofing-Off Suite*.

You'll notice it has a number of changes of mood in it. After all, barriers are being broken down all over the world—between races, nations and peoples. We might as well break down a few musical barriers, and show that there is nothing heretical in liking several different kinds of music at the same time.

I am in favor of folk musicians swiping tunes from symphonies, just as I am all in favor of symphony composers continuing to swipe folk tunes. In time we may no longer think of different classes of music such as—folk music on one plane, popular music on another plane, and somewhere on another level, classical music. Rather, we are likely to have music for different purposes: lullabies, game songs, marches, music for dancing, love, work, storytelling, for participation, and for listening. Composers,

arrangers and performers, whether amateur or professional, will have a vast heritage to draw upon in the folk and fine arts music traditions of every continent.

Frankly, I hope that those who like to fool around with music, picking up tunes by ear, will take hold of some of these fragments and work them into something really worthwhile. [I hope] you are the kind who keeps a banjo or guitar hung on the wall where it's handy. Then if a musical friend drops in for a while, it's no trouble to reach over, and make some sociable noise. Stop goofing off and really create music!

## Folkways' Footnote, 1954

Peter Seeger once said, "Since harpsichords are difficult to come by these days, why can't we play Bach *et al.* on our own modern instruments, or as a matter of fact use our own voices." In other words we quote from Charles Edward Smith:

"Folk singers do not think of making up a tune in quite the way most of us are prone to envision the process, as something rare and original, pulled out of the blue and put together with mysterious ingenuity. The folk method...is more like that of the basket weaver who has use for a new basket and wants to

make one of a certain utility (to carry its burden) with sure craftsmanship and beyond all this with the feeling of art that has existed since the beginning of the human family. His material is at hand and he weaves with the dexterity of his craft, thoughtfully creating his design with the inner eye of the artist.

"In an art in which creation begins with one note, both the freedom and discipline of art begin there as well. Nonetheless or perhaps partly because of it, this is a malleable style in which brief songs and snatches are molded freshly each time they are recreated by a gifted singer...You might, if you wished to put definition to...the singer's art, say that originality is the re-arrangement of materials. But in clarifying the method, there is the danger of putting too much stress on improvisation for its own sake. The aim...might turn out to be not at all the uniqueness of his song (though he is proud of that, too) but the rightness of it...an unwritten poetry...a living poetry to be molded to the singer, the voice, the instrument to be fused with them in the fire of singing so that words and music, are, for that moment of creation, inseparable."

## Selected books by Pete Seeger

*Abiyoyo*. Boston: National Braille Press, 1986.

*Abiyoyo: Based on a South African Lullaby and Folk Story*. Illustrated by Michael Hays. New York: Scholastic, 1989.

*The Foolish Frog*. Illustrated by Miloslav Jagr. Macmillan, 1973.

*Henscratches and Flyspecks: How to Read Melodies from Songbooks in Twelve Confusing Lessons*. New York: Berkeley, 1973.

*The Incomplete Folksinger*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972.

Seeger, Pete and Bob Reiser, comps. *Carry It On! The Story of American's Working People in Song and Picture*. Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Sing Out Corp., 1991.

Seeger, Pete, and Bob Reiser. *Everybody Says Freedom*. Includes songs collected by Guy and Candy Carawan. New York: W. W. Norton, 1990.

*How to Play the Five-string Banjo* is available from Homespun Tapes, Box 694, Woodstock, NY 12498.

## Books with contributions by Pete Seeger

*Folk Visions and Voices: Traditional Music and Song in North Georgia*. Field collecting, text, drawings and paintings by Art Rosenbaum. Photographs by Margo Newmark Rosenbaum. Musical transcriptions by Bela Foltin, Jr. Foreward by Pete Seeger.

Guthrie, Woody. *Roll On Columbia: The Columbia River Collection*. Collected and edited by Bill Murlin. Forward by Pete Seeger. Introduction by Alan Lomax. Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Sing Out Publications, 1991.

Vishner, Mayer, ed. *When the Mode of the Music Changes: An Anthology of Rock 'n' Roll Lyrics*. Foreward by Pete Seeger. New York: War Resisters League, 1970.

## Pete Seeger on Folkways

Pete Seeger recorded over 50 albums on Folkways Records, the company founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1949 and acquired by the Smithsonian Institution in 1987. Running the gamut from children's songs to spoken word to musical instruction to studio recordings to live concerts, Pete Seeger's Folkways recordings provide the best indication of the depth and breadth of this performer's talents. To receive a list of Pete Seeger's recordings, or a free Folkways catalogue, write Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings, Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies, 955 L'Enfant Plaza Suite 2600, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. 20560, or fax 202/287-3699, or telephone 202/287-3262.

Some of the Folkways recordings have been reissued on the Smithsonian/Folkways label. Look for them in your local record store, or order them directly from the Smithsonian.

*Traditional Christmas Carols* SF40024

*Singalong: Live at Sanders Theatre, 1980* SF40027/8

*American Industrial Ballads* SF40058

Smithsonian/Folkways has also reissued many of Pete Seeger's recordings for children, including *Abiyoyo* (SF45001), *American Folk Songs for Children* (SF45020), *Birds, Beasts, Bugs and Little Fishes* (SF45021), and *Birds, Beasts, Bugs and Bigger Fishes* (SF45022).

Smithsonian/Folkways and Homespun Tapes have issued a video, *How to Play the Five-string Banjo*, featuring Pete Seeger. To order write to Homespun Tapes, Box 694, Woodstock, NY 12498.

Pete Seeger has also recorded for Sony Music (formerly Columbia and CBS Recordings).

## About Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1947 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

The Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways from the Asch estate in 1987 to ensure that the sounds and genius of the artists would be preserved for future generations. All Folkways recordings are now available on high-quality audio cassettes, each packed in a special box along with the original LP liner notes.

Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings was formed to continue the Folkways tradition of releasing significant recordings with high-quality documentation. It produces new titles, reissues of historic recordings from Folkways and other record labels, and in collaboration with other companies also produces instructional videotapes, recordings to accompany published books, and a

variety of other educational projects.

The Smithsonian/Folkways, Folkways, Cook, and Paredon record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies. They are one of the means through which the Center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

You can find Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings at your local record store. Smithsonian/Folkways, Folkways, Cook, and Paredon recordings are all available through Smithsonian/Folkways Mail Order, 416 Hungerford Drive Suite 320, Rockville, MD 20850. Phone 301/443-2314; fax 301/443-1819 (Visa and MasterCard accepted).

For a free catalogue, write: The Whole Folkways Catalogue, Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings, 955 L'Enfant Plaza Suite 2600, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. 20560, phone 202/287-3262, or fax 202/287-3699.

## Technical Note

The *Darling Corey* recording comes from two distinct sources. Some of the tracks were recorded in 1947 onto acetate discs, which were the standard mastering medium before audio tape was introduced. We have taken considerable care to master from these to provide the best possible sound. Other tracks were recorded later, on audio tape, as were all of the tracks on *Goofing-Off Suite*.

## Credits

Original recording:  
Moses Asch, Production director  
Reissue production supervised by  
Anthony Seeger and Matt Walters,  
assisted by Leslie Spitz-Edson, Jeff Place,  
and Lori Elaine Taylor  
Notes by Alan Lomax, Anthony Seeger,  
Pete Seeger  
Cover drawings by Carlis and Pete Seeger  
Cover Design by Carol Hardy  
Mastered by Malcolm Addey