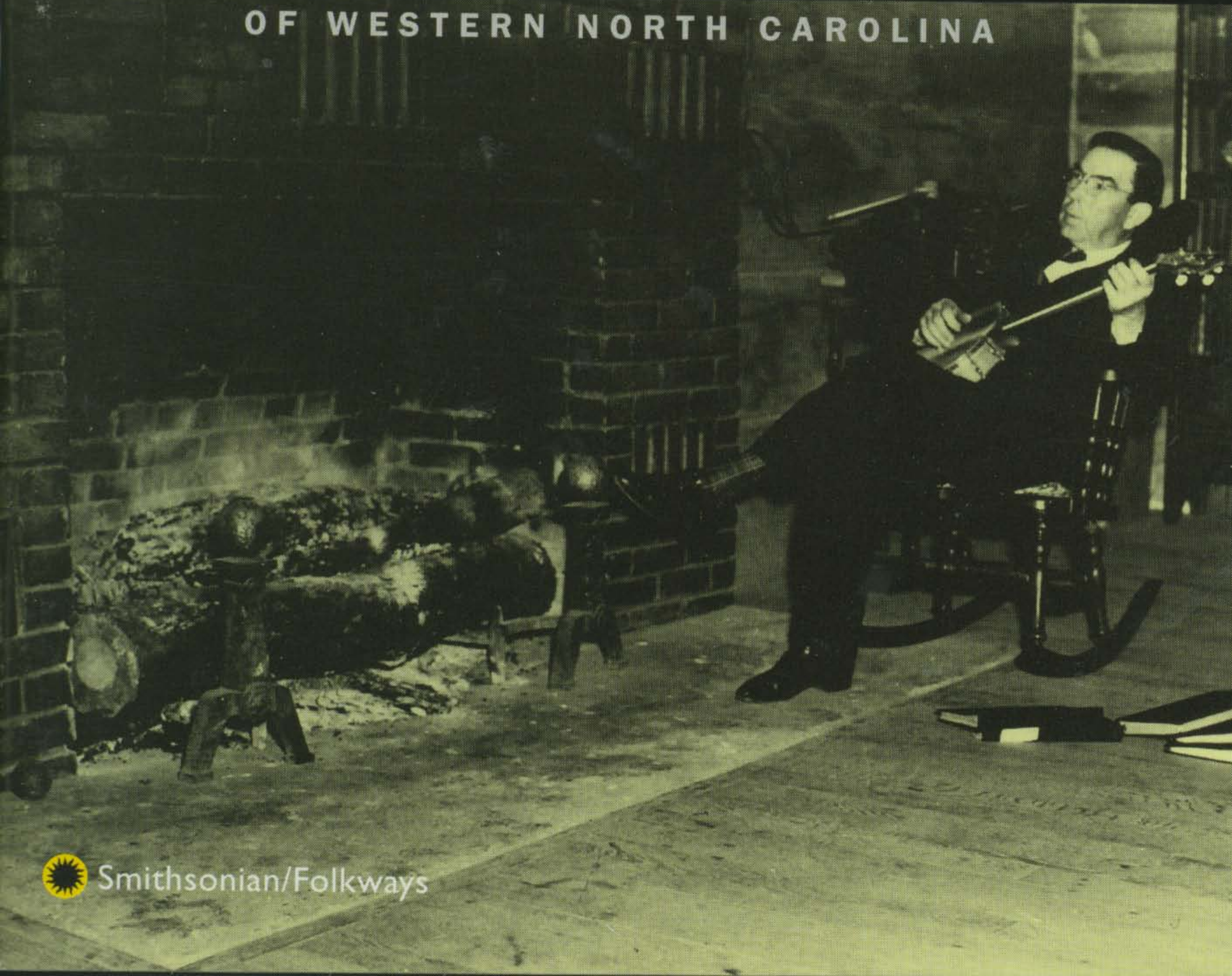


BASCOM LAMAR LUNSFORD

BALLADS, BANJO TUNES, AND SACRED SONGS
OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA



Smithsonian/Folkways

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Bascom Lunsford, known in his lifetime as the "Minstrel of the Appalachians," performed hundreds of traditional songs and tunes that he learned from family members, neighbors, and other residents of western North Carolina. The breadth of Lunsford's huge repertory is represented, including ballads, folk-songs, spirituals, popular songs from the 19th century, and banjo and fiddle tunes recorded for Brunswick Records in the 1920s and the Library of Congress in 1949. "Old Mountain Dew," an original composition which eventually found its way into both oral tradition and popular culture, is also featured.

1. SWANNANOVA TUNNEL 3:37 2. THE MERMAID SONG 3:16
3. TEN STEPS 1:46 4. LITTLE TURTLE DOVE 2:51
5. IN THE SHADOW OF THE PINES 4:52 6. SWING LOW 2:47
7. BONNY GEORGE CAMPBELL 2:05 8. I WISH I WAS A
MOLE IN THE GROUND 3:19 9. ON A BRIGHT AND
SUMMER'S MORNING 2:35 10. TO THE PINES, TO THE
PINES 2:19 11. DRY BONES 2:58 12. THE LAST GOLD
DOLLAR 2:02 13. RYE STRAW 1:36 14. OLD MOUNTAIN
DEW 3:03 15. ITALY 3:23 16. DEATH OF QUEEN JANE 1:35
17. OLD STEPSTONE 2:53 18. DRINKING OF THE WINE 3:17
19. DEDICATION 5:13

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Posing outside of his home on South Turkey Creek, circa 1930. Photo courtesy of Jo Lunsford Herron.

BASCOM LAMAR LUNSFORD

Much has been written about Bascom Lamar Lunsford as a performer, amateur folklorist and collector, festival organizer, and recording artist. However, his performing, except for the fact that he contributed more material from his "memory collection" to the Archive of Folk Song than any other American, has received less attention than his activities in promoting the folk arts through festivals, mainly the 67-year-old Mountain Dance and Folk Festival in Asheville. But Bascom performed all of his life from the time he was a boy, and his collecting was first of all to build his personal repertory. He played the fiddle and the banjo, and he sang the songs that people sang in his day: British, American, and local ballads; lyric folksongs; banjo shouting songs, and parlor songs that came into the mountains on sheet music. He also loved to dance and knew a number of breakdowns and square dance tunes.

People he grew up among sang, not just to show off their artistry, but to share music that had deep meaning for them. Lunsford performed as a part of this tradition, playing for himself, and, if others were around, for them also. When he was quite young, he and his brother Blackwell entertained at school functions and other community gatherings. When Lunsford had the chance to do a concert, to record commercially or for private collectors or public institutions, he did it with

alacrity and with a verve and joy that make his performances important. They reflect his musical aesthetic, and, to a large extent, the aesthetic of the people from whom he learned.

Bascom Lamar Lunsford was a ball of energy all his life. To use a mountain expression, he would cross hell on a rotten rail to get to a folk singer or a square dance. He was born in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains at Mars Hill, Madison County, North Carolina, in 1882. He was of the largely unexamined southern Appalachian middleclass, his father a teacher, his siblings teachers, nurses, social workers, and he himself a man of many parts—fruit-tree salesman, honey-bee promoter, teacher, publisher, lawyer, federal worker, and reading clerk of the North Carolina House of Representatives. But mountain people are uncomfortable with the idea of class. They are levellers and associate fairly easily with each other regardless of accumulated wealth or status. The Lunsford family was just a step away from farming as a livelihood and remained close to the soil, living on working farms while they pursued education and plied their other vocations. They participated in the community activities of their time, including the local school declamation programs at which students would recite oration and poems, play instruments, and sing songs. Theirs was a rich folk culture, and Bascom kept a foot in both the traditional and the emerging culture, helping him to be a bridge between the old and the new,

between the rural folk of the North Carolina mountains and the emerging mercantile class of Asheville and other towns, who were devising plans to lure tourists to the "Land of the Sky." Bascom could talk with anybody in the most humble home in the Blue Ridge or in the elegant hotels of Asheville or even in the Library of Congress.

He was born in a time that gave him a grasp of nineteenth-century history and culture, and he grew to understand the great changes that were coming in the new century. His father, James Bassett Lunsford, was a native of East Tennessee whose family had taken him to Texas as a boy. When the Civil War came, he enlisted in a battery of artillery of the Confederate 4th Texas Brigade, and he was in many major and minor battles over four years, from Richmond, Kentucky, to Chickamauga to Atlanta. After the war he came to Madison County, North Carolina, to care for his mother and sisters who had returned from Texas. There he courted and married Luarta Leah Buckner from a family of Unionists. Mainly through his own program of study, the elder Lunsford had made himself a teacher, and he was teaching a subscription school in Mars Hill when Bascom was born. Bascom was later to call Madison County "the center of folk music" in the country, and "the last stand of the natural people." Indeed there are numerous intermarried families there—the Gentrys, Wallinses, Rays, Chandlers, Adamses, and others—who have continued to sing and play the

traditional music of their ancestors at home, at festivals, and for a procession of collectors. As an example, see *Doug and Jack Wallin: Family Songs and Stories from the North Carolina Mountains* (Smithsonian Folkways CD 40013, 1995).

Bascom became interested in folk music at an early age. His father bought a fiddle for him and his brother Blackwell from a neighbor, who threw in a few lessons as well. His mother was a singer, and he recalled, "She had a big deep voice and sang many of the old ballads. She was reared on Ivy Creek between Buncombe and Madison Counties, and her people sang and played the old-time music, and she held many of them in memory." His father was not a musician but was a good judge of fiddlers. Bascom told of his taking him on a horse at the age of seven to visit his mother's uncle, Osborne Deaver:

Uncle Osborne was a great fiddler of the old school. I had often heard my mother... sing and hum many of the songs..., some of which were Uncle's fiddle tunes.... So one can imagine my deep interest when at journey's end I was able to see my aged uncle take his precious violin from the black wooden case..., draw the bow across catgut and glide sweetly into some of the old favorites I could recognize.

When Bascom was a teenager, his brother Blackwell bought a banjo, and Bascom promptly appropriated it as his basic instrument. He later said:

The banjo brings out the balladry in my system, so at an early age I was a full-fledged ballad singer of the southern Appalachian type. Whereupon, I began the erection of a musical layer-cake, with work and school as a filling, and with such social ingredients as bean stringin's, butter stirrin's, apple peelin's, tobacco curin's, candy breakin's, corn shuckin's, log rollin's, quiltin's, house raisin's, serenades, square dances, shoe-arounds, shindigs, frolics, weddings and school entertainments.... These contacts brought about the exchange of song ballets between young people with whom I mingled.... The mountain counties of Buncombe, Madison, Haywood and Henderson in North Carolina embrace the extent of my range in that early period.

Bascom was educated at local one-room schools and at Camp Academy in Leicester, NC. When the founder of the academy went to Rutherford College to teach, Bascom went with him and enrolled in college. After a year of study he took a teaching job in Madison County. The next year he became a fruit tree salesman and later went into the honey business with a partner, promoting beekeeping and gathering honey for the market. These jobs gave him an opportunity to visit many homes over a wide area and to spend the nights with customers, many of whom turned out to be musicians and singers. His method was to entertain his hosts with his own songs and then to ask them to sing or

play for him. Bascom added many tunes and songs to his repertory during these years. He described his journeys as a nurseryman:

These trips of mine were made on horseback, sometimes with horse and buggy. It would be hard to conceive now how one could ride mountain trails such as the old route from Andrews to Aquone in the valley of the matchless Nantahala—"Sun straight up"—and across the Wayah Bald down Cartoogachaye without being moved by patriotic pride at the beauty of the highlands.

A singing at Sam Higdon's on Ellijay, near the home of Jim Corbin, the noted banjo player, or a square dance at Bascom Picklesimer's on Tesantee, and like events tended to keep me satisfied in the field as a nursery salesman.

I recall one occasion in Rabun County, Georgia, I spent the night at the home of Ed Lovell. A fellow sojourner by the name of Brown entertained us during the evening by singing "Lord Lovell." Probably the name of our host brought the old song to mind.

In 1906 Bascom married Nellie Triplett, a childhood sweetheart, from near Leicester. Shortly thereafter, the young couple joined Bascom's family at Connelly Springs, where the elder Lunsford had moved so that his daughters might attend nearby Rutherford College. Bascom re-enrolled at the college, graduating in 1909. He then became a teacher

at schools in McDowell County, but in 1910 he became supervisor for boys at the state school for the deaf in Morganton. He began studying law at this time and after a while enrolled in the law program at Trinity College, which later became Duke University. He passed the bar exam and was licensed in 1913.

He became solicitor for Burke County, and he was shortly invited to teach English and history at Rutherford College. There, he gave his first formal concert, a handbill announcing that "Bascom Lamar Lunsford gives his noted lecture on North Carolina Folklore, Poetry and Songs." To cap it off, he also appeared with banjo in white tie and tails, imitating classical performers of the day.

After two years of college teaching, Bascom tried auctioneering, became publisher of the *Old Fort Sentinel*, sold war bonds, and then during World War I became a special agent with the U.S. Justice Department, spending most of his time chasing draft evaders. After the war he started a newspaper, *The McDowell Sentinel*, helped local Democratic politicians, and became field secretary for the Epworth League, a Methodist youth organization. He also was sought out by Polk Brockman of Atlanta, who worked for the General Phonograph Company. Bascom cut two sides in 1924, "Jesse James" and "I Wish I was a Mole in the Ground." In 1925, he cut two more, "Fate of Santa Barbara," which he apparently wrote about the recent earthquake there, and "Sherman Valley."

In 1925, Nellie inherited part of her family's farm on South Turkey Creek near Leicester, and there they moved the family, now including six daughters and a son: Sara Kern, Blackwell Lamar, Ellen Chapman, Lynn Huntington, Nellie Triplett, Merton, and Josefa Belle. They built a modest house and set up a farming operation run mostly by Nellie. Bascom established a law office in Asheville, but his letterhead emphasized that he was a "lecturer, musician, radio artist, folklorist, writer, record artist." The law was to get short shrift.

Lunsford sometimes talked about the idea of a "calling" from his father's Baptist tradition, where theological education took a back seat to the call from God to preach. He likened his work with folk material to such a calling. He had all the enthusiasm and energy of a fired-up evangelist. As a collector, he respected the mountain people and their folklore:

Here in the Appalachian region the people are sturdy and they are fine, and they have held on to their traditions. Knowing the proper approach has helped me a whole lot, knowing how the other man thinks and what to depend on. A man's house is his castle. When you go to see a man about playing, you take your hat off.... You go in and ask where the man of the house is. Then you tell him, "I'll tell you why I come. I hear that you make music and sing ballads, and I wonder if you'd sing for me." You go in there and treat them like ladies and gentlemen.



With Lovingood Stringband, circa 1935. Courtesy of Lunsford Collection Photographic Archives, Mars Hill College

Lunsford was profoundly grateful for all of the songs, tunes, stories, and square dance figures that people gave him, and he remembered his sources all of his life. At first he collected just because he loved the lore and in order to build his own performing repertory, but after a while, with encouragement from folklorists such as Frank C. Brown of Duke University and Robert Winslow Gordon, a writer and collector who would later found the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress, Lunsford came to see himself more as a scholar and preserver of traditional materials that he feared would be lost. He built a "memory collection" of over 300 ballads, songs, fiddle and banjo tunes, dance calls, and the like, but he also began meticulously collecting variants of songs and keeping files of materials that eventually included some 3,000 items. He developed several

new methods for collecting, such as visiting schools and having children write out their family songs and holding community singings with a prize for the best ballad. He also visited black schools and churches to collect songs and hymns, and his repertory included several in this category.

In about 1927, Lunsford was approached by officials of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, who were organizing a Rhododendron Festival to lure tourists to Asheville. They wanted him to involve local musicians, singers, and dancers in the festival. Bascom readily agreed, and thus the Mountain Dance and Folk Festival was born in 1928. The Rhododendron Festival lasted for only a few years, but Lunsford's festival continues to this day, the first full weekend in August. Lunsford's purpose was to present what he considered to be the finest of the Appalachian ballad singers, fiddlers, banjoists, and string bands. He also offered prizes for the best exhibition square dance teams, that were sponsored by surrounding communities, causing a growth of interest in square dancing, especially clogging. Lunsford's festival apparently was the first to be called a folk festival. He later was asked to organize similar festivals, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the State Fair in Raleigh, the Cherokee Indian Fair in Cherokee, and also in Kentucky, Virginia, and South Carolina. He also helped Sarah Gertrude Knott, founder of the National Folk Festival, to organize the first festival which took place in St. Louis in 1934; he

served on its national board and continued for many years to take performers from western North Carolina to the National Folk Festival.

In 1929, Lunsford collaborated with classical musician Lamar Stringfield to publish *30 and 1 Folk Songs from the Southern Mountains* (New York: Carl Fischer). From 1924 to 1935, 22 of Lunsford's songs, tunes, and other material were released commercially on Okeh, Brunswick, Coral (Japanese), Vocalion, Columbia, and the Archive of Folk song label. In 1953, Folkways released an LP, *Smokey Mountain Ballads Sung by Bascom Lamar Lunsford with Banjo* (FA 2040). In 1956, Paul Clayton recorded Lunsford in Asheville, resulting in an LP on Riverside (RLP 12-645) that included 13 numbers. (On these recordings, Lunsford was joined by his second wife, Freda English Lunsford.) In 1956, Kenneth Goldstein recorded Lunsford, George Pegram, and Walter "Red" Parham, and the material was eventually issued as *Music from South Turkey Creek: Bascom Lamar Lunsford, George Pegram and Red Parham* (Rounder 0065).

Lunsford also composed songs. From his experience in court as a lawyer, he composed in 1920 the country music standard, "Mountain Dew," which he recorded on Brunswick in 1928. He sold this song to Scott Wiseman at the 1937 National Folk Festival in Chicago for \$25 to buy a bus ticket home. Wiseman revised the lyrics but kept Lunsford's name on the copyright. Lunsford composed other songs, such as "The Fate of Santa Bar-

bara," "Bryan's Last Battle" (after the death of William Jennings Bryan), and "Nol Pros Nellie," another song resulting from his lawyering, and he probably composed "Dogget's Gap," (a parody on "Cumberland Gap,") "Bill Ormand," "I'm Going Away," and the song, "Booth Killed Lincoln," based on a fiddle tune his father knew.

Lunsford's non-commercial recordings were extensive. Frank C. Brown was the first to record him, with 32 items on wax cylinders, in 1922. In 1925, Robert W. Gordon recorded him and others on some 39 cylinders. In 1935, at the suggestion of Dorothy Scarborough, George W. Hibbitt and other members of the English Department invited Lunsford to Columbia University to record 315 items from his "memory collection." This time he did about 317 items on 16 inch disks. Fourteen years later, Lunsford's repertory, as recorded for the Library of Congress in 1949, contained about 350 items, said by Duncan Emrich to be the largest ever recorded for the Archive by any American. Other recordings of Lunsford were deposited in the Archive of Folk Culture by Sidney Robertson Cowell, Alan Lomax, Jerome Wiesner, Joseph Liss, Ralph auf der Hyde, Artus Moser, James Scancerelli, and Benjamin A. Botkin.

When Lunsford recorded for Columbia University in 1935 and the Library of Congress in 1949, he attempted to categorize his "memory collection." His categories and the approximate number in each follow: group A—Variants of English

and Scottish Ballads in the Child collection, 19; Group B—Other Ballads (British broadsides, American, and local), 63; Group C—Folk Songs, 86; Group D—Popular Songs in the Oral Tradition, 45; Group E—Religious Songs, 38; Group F—Play-party Games, 7; Group G—Fiddle Tunes, 37; and Group H—Stories, Tales, Verse, etc., 23, for a total of 318 items. He commented on each number, remembering for the most part when he had learned each and from whom, complete with their full names, places of residence, and often some reminiscence about them.

Lunsford was wooed away from his beloved music and dance occasionally by the Democratic Party. In addition to helping in local elections, from 1920 to 24, he managed the successful campaigns of U.S. Congressman Zebulan Weaver for the 10th District of North Carolina. Lunsford later performed and recorded the humorous "A Stump Speech in the Tenth District," perhaps a strong comment on the politics of the day. In 1924, he managed the unsuccessful campaign for governor of Josiah W. Bailey, who lost to a Republican. From 1931 to 1934, he served as reading clerk of the North Carolina House of Representatives. After observing Lunsford's Mountain Dance and Folk Festival, musicologist Charles Seeger, director of the music program of the New Deal Resettlement Administration, hired Lunsford for a time in the mid-thirties. He promoted music and dance at the Administration's Skyline Farms in Alabama

but also worked at other resettlement communities. He took dancers and singers from Skyline Farms to the National Folk Festival.

Lunsford continued to perform all of his life, in North Carolina and elsewhere, including the National Folk Festival and at the White House in 1939 for the king and queen of England. In 1949, he was appointed by Duncan Emrich of the Archive of Folk Song to represent the United States at the International Folk Festival in Venice. After his first wife Nellie died in 1960, Lunsford married Freda English, a guitarist and singer who had played at his festivals, and they performed together on many occasions. He organized, managed, and performed at his Mountain Dance and Folk Festival until he suffered a stroke in 1965.

He continued to attend the festival for eight years longer, and even though he could no longer play his beloved instruments, he could still sing the words to his favorite songs. Lunsford died on September 4, 1973, in Asheville. He was 91

LOYAL JONES

Loyal Jones grew up on a farm in Cherokee County, North Carolina, and attended Berea College and the University of North Carolina. He founded the Berea College Appalachian Center and served as its director for twenty-three years. Loyal is the author of several books about Appalachian culture, including Minstrel of the Appalachians: The Story of Bascom Lamar Lunsford, published by The Appalachian Consortium Press.

Working with this project has provided me a great opportunity to review and remember the joys of growing up in the southern Appalachians. Traditional mountain music was always a part of life in the Lunsford household. Bascom Lamar Lunsford, our father, felt that it was very important for mountain people to recognize the worth and dignity of their heritage. He organized the Mountain Dance and Folk Festival, held annually in Asheville, as a way for people to perform, enjoy, participate in, and preserve their folk heritage.

At home, we had the pleasure of hearing him play the banjo and sing ballads and folk songs as he increased his memory list. His appreciation of the songs and his happiness with the music were always present in his voice. He loved to repeat songs to make sure he had them committed to memory. He had a lot of respect for the people who remembered and sang the old ballads, and he always credited his sources, when possible. He often spoke of hearing his mother sing songs she had heard in her family, as they had come down from her ancestors.

Although our mother was not a performer, she had a great appreciation for traditional music and dances. She had what it took to provide the love, support, encouragement, appreciation, sense of humor, and understanding to allow Daddy to pursue his dream of preserving our heritage. It was very fitting that he began his dedication of the 1949 recordings for the Library of Congress as follows:

I dedicate this personal memory collection of ballad and folk-songs to Nellie Triplett Lunsford, who was my playmate in childhood, my classmate in grammar school and high school, and who has been a loyal, devoted and affectionate wife since our marriage on Saturday, June 2, 1906, and who is the mother of my seven children...."

The family is pleased to be a part of making this music available and I want to express appreciation to Wayne Martin of the Folklife Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, whose ongoing support and assistance made it all possible.

JO LUNSFORD HERRON

August 1995

Jo Lunsford Herron is the youngest daughter of Bascom and Nellie Lunsford. A retired administrator, she and husband Lew live in a home on the Lunsford family farm in South Turkey Creek near Leicester, North Carolina. She is a past member of the Folk Heritage Committee, which assists with the production of the Mountain Dance and Folk Festival, and teaches a course in southern Appalachian music at the College for Seniors at UNC-Asheville.



Lunsford in 1949, the year he recorded his Memory Collection for the Archive of Folksong.
Courtesy of Jo Lunsford Herron.



On stage of the Mountain Dance and Folk Festival with Marcus Martin, Samantha Bumgarner, and Bill McElreath.
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THE SONGS

The performances included on this recording are evidence of Bascom Lunsford's artistry as a traditional singer and instrumentalist. The breadth of Lunsford's huge repertoire is represented here, including ballads, folksongs, spirituals, popular songs from the nineteenth century, and fiddle tunes. "Old Mountain Dew," an original composition which eventually found its way into both oral tradition and popular culture, is also featured.

In addition to holding large numbers of lyrics and tunes in his memory, Lunsford remembered in detail the circumstances under which he acquired songs for his repertoire. He often introduced his own performances with stories about the people he learned from, or about the contexts in which songs were sung. Several of his introductions, along with his "Dedication," have been included on this recording. Hopefully, listeners will agree that his narratives enhance the performances. They also give us insight into Lunsford's personality and his motives for preserving western North Carolina's folk music traditions.

The headnotes to the songs included on this recording are transcriptions of comments made by Lunsford during the recording of his "memory collection" for the Archive of American Folk Song in March 1949. All performances come from these sessions, with the exception of selections 4, 8, 11, 14, and 17. These were recorded in February 1928

for the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company and issued commercially on the Brunswick and Vocalion labels.

Lunsford was adept at two styles of banjo playing. He favored a rhythmic up-picking technique, played by many old-time musicians of his generation in western North Carolina, on "banjo songs" like "Swannanoa Tunnel," "Little Turtle Dove," "Last Gold Dollar," "Italy," and "I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground." Although he picks and brushes the strings using upstrokes, the sound is similar to that heard in clawhammer banjo playing, which emphasizes downstrokes. On slower pieces such as "In the Shadow of the Pines" and "Old Stepstone," he accompanies his singing by finger-picking the banjo.

During his recording sessions for the Archive of Folk Song, Lunsford occasionally played a mandoline, a hybrid instrument which combined a wooden, mandolin-shaped body with a five-string banjo neck. The distinctive sound of the mandoline can be heard on "The Mermaid Song," "In the Shadow of the Pines," "Swing Low," "Death of Queen Jane," and "Drinking of the Wine."

1. SWANNANOA TUNNEL

(To refer to other versions see bibliography for Brown 270 I, p. 627, vol. II; Sharp 91)

"The title of this song is 'Swannanoa Tunnel.' The air was brought to our mountain country at the time of the digging of the great Swannanoa Tun-

nel through the Blue Ridge east of Asheville, North Carolina. It's been mentioned in some of the books that it is a variant of an old English song, but it's definitely a work song. And the word 'Swannanoa Tunnel' in the song sounded like 'Swannanoa Town-o,' so that accounted for the person making the entry that it was an English variant."

I'm going back to that Swannanoa Tunnel/That's my home, baby, that's my home.

Asheville Junction, Swannanoa Tunnel/All caved in, baby, all caved in.

Last December I remember/The wind blowed cold, baby, the wind blowed cold.

When you hear my watchdog howling/Somebody around, baby, somebody around.

When you hear that hoot owl squalling/Somebody dying, baby, somebody dying.

Hammer falling from my shoulder/All day long, baby, all day long.

Ain't no hammer in this mountain/Out rings mine, baby, out rings mine.

This old hammer, it killed John Henry/It didn't kill me, baby, couldn't kill me.

Riley Gardner, he killed my partner/He couldn't kill me, baby, he couldn't kill me.

Riley Rambler, he killed Jack Ambler/He didn't kill me, baby, he didn't kill me.

This old hammer rings like silver/It shines like gold, baby, shines like gold.

Take this hammer, throw it in the river/It rings right

on, baby, it shines right on.

Some of these days I'll see that woman/Well that's no dream, baby, that's no dream.

2. THE MERMAID SONG

(Child 289; Brown 48, p. 195 vol. II; Sharp 42)

"This is 'The Mermaid Song' as I heard it when a boy about 15 years old."

One stormy night when we set sail/We was not far from the land/When our captain spied the pretty merry maid/With the comb and a glass in her hand.

Chorus

Oh, the ocean waves may roll/And the stormy winds may blow/While we poor sailors go skipping to the top/And the landlubbers lie down below, below, below/And the landlubbers lie down below.

Then up spoke the/Captain of our gallant ship/ A well-spoken man was he/ "I've married me a wife in Salem town/Tonight she a widow will be."

Chorus

Then up spoke the mate of our gallant ship/A well-spoken man was he/ "I have married me a wife in Salem town/Tonight she a widow will be."

Chorus

Then up spoke the cook of our gallant ship/A well-spoken man was he/ "I care much more for my kettles and my pots/Than I do for the depths of a sea."

Chorus

Then three times round went our gallant ship/And three times around went she/

Three times around went our gallant ship/And she sank to the depths of the sea.

Chorus

3. TEN STEPS

"When a boy of ten, I used to ride behind my father over to Little Ivy in Madison County, North Carolina, to hear my great uncle Os Deaver play the fiddle. He was a good old-time fiddler. He played a tune called 'Ten Steps'; I have never heard it played since I was a boy."

"That was about sixty years ago; I've not heard it since played by any other person. Marcus Martin, who is the owner of this fiddle I'm playing on today let me have this fiddle just a few days ago as I came by his home in Buncombe County, North Carolina. He knows numbers of traditional fiddle tunes and unwritten tunes similar to 'Ten Steps,' but he does not play 'Ten Steps.' Just where that name came from, I do not know."

4. LITTLE TURTLE DOVE

(Brown 249, p. 157, vol. V)

"This song is entitled 'Little Turtle Dove.' I learned it from Letcher Reynolds, who was reared on the Sandy Mush Creek, or river, in western Carolina. I learned it in 1901. But I've played it since and it's a fine type of hilarious mountain banjo picking. So picture the mountain swain going high up the creek, maybe in the coves, where he visited some of the younger people gath-

ered around the great open fireplace, boys and girls singing and playing, singing numbers of unrelated stanzas to banjo tunes."

Poor little turtle dove/Sitting in the pine/Mourning for its own true love/Why not me for mine, oh mine/Why not me for mine?

Not gonna marry in the fall of the year/I'll marry in the spring/ I'm gonna marry a pretty little girl/Who wears a silver ring, a ring/Who wears a silver ring.

I'm not gonna marry in the spring of the year/I'll marry in the fall/I'm gonna marry a pretty little girl/ Who wears a dollar shawl, a shawl/Who wears that dollar shawl.

I went up on that mountain/To give my horn a blow/Way down in the valley/I heard that rooster crow/ I heard that rooster crow.

My daddy had an old grey mare/He rode her off to town/Sold her for a new ten cents/And got a nickel down, down/Got a nickel down.

I went up on the mountain/To get a turn of corn/The raccoon curled his tail around/The possum broke his horn, horn/The possum broke his horn.

And there's hogs in the pen/And the corn to feed him on/ All I want is a pretty little girl/To feed them when I'm gone, gone/To feed them when I'm gone.

5. IN THE SHADOW OF THE PINES

(Brown 694, p. 431 vol. V)

"The title of this old love song is 'In the Shadow of the Pines.' And I record it here in honor of Mrs. Nettie Burleson, who was a native of Mitchell County, North Carolina, and the mother of the Burleson girls: Miss Maude and Ruth, who used to play and sing the old ballads so much. Mrs. Burleson now lives at 414 Rash Avenue, Akron, Ohio, and occasionally through the years we get together when I'm in that region to sing some of the old songs. Maude still plays the fiddle, and Ruth is wonderful on the guitar. But this is a favorite of Mrs. Burleson's, so I want to give her credit for keeping alive the fine old traditions of the southern highlands."

We wandered through the shadow of the pines my love and I/As the wind was blowing freshly from the sea/When the sudden fateful darkness stole across the summer sky/And the shadow came between my love and me./Some hasty words were spoken and almost unawares/Hasty answers to unthinking anger led/And our heartfelt bitter longings and our weepings and our prayers/Ne'er can make those false and cruel words unsaid.

Chorus

Come back to me, sweetheart, and love me as before/Back, back to me, sweetheart and leave me nevermore/In life's dark pathway the sun no longer shines/Come, love, and meet me in the shadow of the pines.

You took the ring I gave you, nor you cast one glance at me/As you held the jeweled trinket in your hand/And then you turned and tossed it in the waters on the sea/Where the waves were splashing idly on the sand./You went your way unheeding, the tears I could not hide/You went your way and not a word was said/And this stubborn heart was breaking underneath this mask of pride/And the pine trees sobbed in pity overhead.

Chorus

I awake from bitter dreaming but to call out your name/I sleep again to dream of you once more/My stubborn pride has left me, I'll admit I was to blame/Forgive me, dear, and love me as before./For in the future years are shadowed with the darkness of despair/In the joy of life love's sun no longer shines/And I'll give this old world gladly once again to meet you there/Re-united in the shadow of the pines.

Chorus

6. SWING LOW

"The title of this old spiritual is 'Swing Low.' I think it possibly is the foundation of the beautiful spiritual, 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.' I learned this from a student of mine way back in years gone by. Then I took Dr. R.W. Gordon to his home in 1925 at York, South Carolina, and Dr. Gordon recorded it on a cylinder record. A beautiful song sung by Willard Randall, then a man of the family, about middle age, at York, South Carolina."

Star in the east, swing low/Star in the west, swing low/Stars shining in my breast/Swing low, chariot, swing low.

Chorus

Swing low in the east, swing low/Swing low in the west, swing low/Swing all around you, swing low/Swing low, chariot, swing low.

My father's gone, swing low/He's gone to glory, swing low/Angels took him, swing low/Swing low, chariot, swing low.

Chorus

My mother's gone, swing low/She's gone to glory, swing low/Angels took her, swing low/Swing low, chariot, swing low.

Chorus

I got a letter, swing low/It was sent from heaven, swing low/Angels sealed it, swing low/Swing low, chariot, swing low.

Chorus

7. BONNY GEORGE CAMPBELL (Child 210)

"This is a text of 'Bonny George Campbell' as sung in the southern Appalachian region. Very seldom you hear it except in terms of a fiddle tune called 'Cumberland Gap.' The slower tune 'Bonny George Campbell'..."

High upon highlands, low upon Tay/Bonny George Campbell rode out on one day.

All saddled, all bridled, and booted rode he/And home came the saddle but never came he.

My barn is to build, my baby's unborn/My Bonny George Campbell will never return.

Well, high upon highlands, low upon Tay/Bonny George Campbell rode out on one day.

All saddled, all bridled and booted rode he/But home came the saddle and never came he.

Home came the saddle all bloody to see/And home came the good horse, but never came he.

"Now, of course, the mountain boys speed it up, play it on a higher pitch, and use it for a country dance tune 'Cumberland Gap.'"

8. I WISH I WAS A MOLE IN THE GROUND

(Brown 173, pp. 124-126, vol. V)

"The title of this mountain banjo song is 'I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground.' I've known it since 1901 when I heard Fred Moody, then a high school boy, sing it down in Burke County. Fred lives in Haywood County, North Carolina, and the footnote to the song is that the 'bend' referred to is the bend of the Pigeon River in Haywood County, North Carolina. I played it as a request of my mother back in 1902. It was the last request she ever made of me. I was teaching that time at Doggett's Gap at public school in Madison County, and returned to my school on Sunday evening. She was interested in my picking the banjo, and she asked me to get the five-string banjo down and play 'I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground.' I went away, and she grew sick and passed away and that was the last request she ever made of me."

I wish I was a mole in the ground/Yes, I wish I was a mole in the ground/If I's a mole in the ground, I'd root that mountain down/And I wish I was a mole in the ground.

Well, Tempe wants a nine-dollar shawl/Yes, Tempe want a nine-dollar shawl/When I come o'er the hill with a forty-dollar bill/Tis, baby, where you been so long?

I've been in the bend so long/Yes, I've been in the bend so long/I've been in the bend with the rough and rowdy men/Tis, baby, where you been so long?

Oh, I don't like a railroad man/No, I don't like a railroad man/If I's a railroad man, they'll kill you when he can/And drink up your blood like wine.

Oh, I wish I was a lizard in the spring/Yes, I wish I was a lizard in the spring/If I's a lizard in the spring I'd could hear my darling sing/And I wish I was a lizard in the spring.

Won't Tempe let your hair roll down/Tempe, let your hair roll down/Let your hair roll down and your bangs curl around/Oh, Tempe let your hair roll down.

I wish I was a mole in the ground/Yes, I wish I was a mole in the ground/If I's a mole in the ground, I'd root that mountain down/And I wish I was a mole in the ground.

9. ON A BRIGHT AND SUMMER'S MORNING

(Sharp 159)

"The title of this song is 'On a Bright and Summer's Morning.' I learned it from Eugene Sutton, who lives on Little Cataloochee Creek, or Cataloochee Creek, in the Great Smoky Mountain Park area. Now to enjoy this song, imagine one or two hunters and Eugene, with a few of the mountaineers, sitting around possibly at the home of Steve Woody near the mouth of Sugar Creek, or Ugly Fork, or Indian Creek, up there in the Great Smoky Mountain area."

On a bright and a summer's morning/The ground all covered with snow/I put my shoulder to my gun/And a hunting I did go/And a hunting I did go.

I went up on the mountain/Beyond that peak so high/The moon come around with a lightning speed/'I'll take a ride," says I/'I'll take a ride," says I.

Some boys and girls were skating/On a bright and summer's day/The ice broke through, they all fell in/The rest they run a—/The rest they run away.

I went up on the mountain/Beyond yon high hill/And fifteen or twenty/Ten thousand I did—/Ten thousand I did kill.

The money that I got for/The venison and skin/I hauled up to my daddy's barn/It wouldn't half go—/It wouldn't half go in.

I went up on the mountain/Beyond that peak so high/The moon came around with lightnin' speed/

"I'll take a ride," says—/'I'll take a ride," says I

The moon come around the mountain/It took a sudden whirl/When my foot slipped and I fell out/And landed in this—and landed in this world.

The man that made this song and tune/His name was Benny Young/If you can tell a bigger lie/I'll swear you ought be—/I'll swear you ought be hung.

10. TO THE PINES, TO THE PINES

(Sharp 203, p. 278, vol. II)

"This is a text of a rather elusive folk song sung in the mountains. I learned this from Ina Templeton, a girl in North Iredell County in North Carolina and the outlying spurs of the Brushy Mountains, called 'To the Pines, To the Pines,' and I think it's the older tune of what we now know as 'Look Down That Lonesome Road.'"

To the pines, to the pines where the sun never shines/Gonna shiver where the cold winds blow.

Look down, look down that lonesome road/Where you and I must go.

Little boy, little boy, where have you been?/Where did you stay last night?

I stayed in the pines where the sun never shines/And I shivered where the cold winds blow.

Look down, look down that lonesome road/Where you and I must go.

The best of friends must part sometimes/And why not you and I?

The longest train I ever did see/Was in John Brown's

coal mine.

The engine passed at half past four/The cab didn't pass till nine.

To the pines, to the pines where the sun never shines/Gonna shiver where the cold winds blow.

The prettiest girl I ever did see/Was killed one mile from here.

Her head is in the driving wheel/Her body never was found.

To the pines, to the pines where the sun never shines/Gonna shiver where the cold winds blow.

11. DRY BONES (Brown 757, p. 483-484, vol. V)

"The title of this spiritual is 'Dry Bones.' It was known in our section after the visiting of a great Negro preacher who came to that section, was a powerful pulpit orator and a devoted man, and his name was Romney. And he preached a sermon on the 'dry bones of the valley.' I first heard this sung by Fletcher Rhymer in the community near Alexander in Buncombe County, North Carolina."

Oh, Enoch he lived to be three hundred and sixty-five/When the Lord came and took him back to heaven alive.

Chorus

I saw, I saw the light from heaven shining all around/ I saw the light come shining, I saw the light come down.

When Paul prayed in prison, them prison walls fell down/The prison-keeper shouted, "Redeeming love I've found."

Chorus

*When Moses saw that burning bush he walked it
round and around/Then the Lord said to Moses, "You's
treading Holy ground."*

Chorus

*Dry bones in that valley got up and took a little walk/
The deaf could hear and the dumb could talk.*

Chorus

*Adam and Eve in the garden under that sycamore
tree/Eve said to Adam "Satan am tempted me."*

Chorus

12. THE LAST GOLD DOLLAR

"This banjo song is called 'The Last Gold Dollar,' rather an elusive banjo tune. I tune the banjo a little different. I learned this from Andy McGee, but Samantha Bumgarner, a woman of the Little Savannah section of Jackson County, plays it and sings it. She plays the fiddle, the banjo, and the guitar. She plays our Asheville annual Mountain Dance and Folk Festival. I took Miss Samantha with some other entertainers to Dallas, Texas, in 1936. She played 'The Last Gold Dollar' there for them."

Last gold dollar is gone/Last gold dollar is gone.

Last gold dollar is gone/Last gold dollar is gone.

*It's honey babe, you fooled me and you caused me to
fall/You took all my money, babe/Last gold dollar is
gone/Last gold dollar is gone.*

Last gold dollar is gone/Last gold dollar's gone.

13. RYE STRAW

"The name of this fiddle tune is 'Rye Straw.' I heard a man by the name of Bob Rogers, who lived in the community of Juno in North Carolina play it many years ago. It used to be a very popular fiddle tune."

"There are a lot of unprintable and unsingable stanzas to the old song. However, that is not confused with what we boys used to do in the old days, gather around after a corn shucking or around some gathering, and possibly some of the boys would repeat maybe some questionable stanzas and follow it with 'Rye Straw, rye straw, rye straw.'"

14. OLD MOUNTAIN DEW

"This song is entitled 'Old Mountain Dew.' Possibly a footnote would be well here. About 1920 I composed the words and the tune to this song, and I put it on a Brunswick record about 1928. Of course, it was somewhat stilted, but it did very well as a record. But following that, the eminent singer 'Scotty,' Scott Wiseman of Lulu Belle and Scotty fame, added some more modernized stanzas, sang it, put it on a record, and it was re-popularized. Now we hear it on every hand by the folk singers and entertainers there with their own words, and the tune has stayed very much the same way. But it's well to know the growth of the thing. So I will give just as I composed it in 1920."

On my first day in court I wish to report/Then

*witness a story so true/When the State closed its case a
young man raised his face/And began all the facts to
review/Oh, they call it that old mountain dew/ And
those who refuse it are few/While I know I've done
wrong the temptation is strong/When they call for
that mountain dew.*

*Oh, the deacon drove by in his auto so shy/Said his
family was down with the flu/And he thought that I
ought to just get him a quart/Of good old mountain
dew/ Yes, he called it that old mountain dew/Said
those who refuse it are few/So I thought that I ought
to just get him a quart/Of good old mountain dew.*

*The doctor who phoned just to see me alone/One
night about half a'past two/Said he'd close up his mug
if I'd fill up his jug/With good old mountain dew/
Yes, he called it that old mountain dew/Said those
who refuse it are few/So I closed up his mug when I
filled up his jug/With good old mountain dew.*

*The conductor said with a nod of his head/"My wife
she never knew/That I take my fun when I'm out on
my run/So bring me a quart or two"/Of good old
mountain dew/For those who refuse it are few/But his
wife said to me, "You can bring me three/By the time
his train is due."*

*My attorney began to turn the lid on the can/I knew
then my case was lost/Said My Honor to me, "I will
set you free"/If you will pay the cost"/For they call it
that old mountain dew/And those who refuse it are
few/"But you acted the man when you took that
stand/To swear what is so true."*

15. ITALY (Brown III E, p. 80, vol. V)

"This tune is a mountain banjo song that's called 'Italy,' and it is well to note here that in the mountain region we often have communities named for foreign countries like Italy, and Canada, and places, even names like Egypt and so on. It could be possibly some mountain cove. Italy; it's hard to tell what kind of a community size of territory it covered, possibly just one mountain creek valley."

*Yonder comes a pretty little girl/I'll tell you how I
know/Her head is full of pretty little curls/Hanging
down so low.*

Chorus

*Going to Italy before long/I'm going to Italy before
long/Going to Italy before long/To see that gal of
mine.*

*Apple like a cherry/A cherry like a rose/How I love my
pretty little girl/God in heavens knows.*

Chorus

*I asked that gal to marry me/What do you reckon she
said?/Said she wouldn't marry me/If all the rest was
dead.*

Chorus

*Finger ring, finger ring/Shine like glittering gold/
Going down to see my true love/Before she gets too old.*

Chorus

*Ever I'm out late at night/And late coming in/Please
cover up them bed of coals/And pull that latch-string
in.*

Chorus

16. DEATH OF QUEEN JANE (Child 170)

"This is the 'Death of Queen Jane.' I sang this for Dr. Dorothy Scarborough when I made my recordings for the Columbia University Library in 1935.

She has it in her book *The Song Catcher of the Southern Mountains*. I appreciate very much her attitude toward the fine people she visited when we went on our trips together throughout the western Carolina, north Georgia, east Tennessee section."

Well Jane was in labor for three days or more/She grieved and she grieved and she grieved her heart sore/She sent for her mother, her mother came o'er/Said "The red rose of England shall flourish no more."

Well Jane was in labor for three days or four/She grieved and she grieved and she grieved her heart sore/She sent for her father, her father came o'er/Said "The red rose of England shall flourish no more."

Well Jane was in labor for four days or more/She grieved and she grieved and she grieved her heart sore/She sent for Prince Henry, Prince Henry came o'er/Said "The red rose of England shall flourish no more."

17. OLD STEPSTONE (Brown 713, p. 448, vol. V)

"'Old Stepstone' is the title of this song, which I learned in 1904 from Miss Lela Ammons of Robinsville, North Carolina. She sang, played the song on the old-time organ, and would sing this beautiful text of 'Old Stepstone.'"

Oh, 'tis sad to be parted from those that we love!

Strange faces we see every day/Each heart string of mine is broken in time/When I think of those dear ones at home.

Chorus

Goodbye dear old stepstone, goodbye to my home/ God bless those I leave with a sigh/I'll cherish fond memories when I'm far away/To roam o'er this wide world alone.

I stood on my doorstep at evening and morn/The wind whispered by with a moan/The fields may be whitening, but I will be gone/To roam o'er this wide world alone.

Chorus

I stood on my doorstep when school time was o'er/ And I wish for the time to go by/Now it has passed, and I stand here tonight/To bid this old stepstone goodbye.

Chorus

18. DRINKING OF THE WINE

"This is entitled 'Drinking of the Wine,' a beautiful spiritual which I learned in about 1900 in Wilkes County, North Carolina. I heard some people at a Negro children's day singing it. A very well-prepared Negro minister led this, and it was a beautiful spiritual. I had the honor of recording it for the late Dr. Dorothy Scarborough, who traveled with me some in western Carolina. We went to the community of Beaverdam, Barnardsville, and Newfound Creeks, and various places around in the mountains in the search of ballads. And she liked this type of spiritual."

Chorus

Drinking of the wine, wine, wine/Drinking of the wine, holy wine/You ought to been there four thousand years/Drinking of the wine.

Drink it, member, drink it free/It flows from the root of a tender tree/You ought to been there four thousand years/Drinking of the wine.

Chorus

Drink it sister, drink it free/And meet me at Galilee/ You ought to been there four thousand years/Drinking of the wine.

Chorus

If my mother called for me/Tell her that death has silenced me/She ought to been there four thousand years/Drinking of the wine.

Chorus

19. DEDICATION

"I suppose this record should be entitled 'In Re: Dedication,' and following the legal course I should possibly say 'Washington City, District of Columbia, March 25, 1949. I, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, of South Turkey Creek, Leicester North Carolina'; I possibly should leave out the word 'being of sound mind,' because I've been recording some 325 of my personal memory collection of folksongs.

The material in the foregoing records I've endeavored to put on, rather hurriedly, has come to me over a lifetime of sixty-seven years. And as I stated to some of the gentlemen representing the

press today, that they tell me I began to repeat little jingles even before I can remember. But I remember early in life I learned to repeat such things as "Ride a jack horse to Banbury Cross to see an old woman ride on a white horse." Later on I learned to saw on a old homemade fiddle made from a cigar box, and later I got a tackhead banjo and began to sing the songs in the community.

I lived, when a boy, at Hanlon Mountain in the Rabbit Ham section, and South Turkey Creek section, of Buncombe County, North Carolina. I was born at Mars Hill College, March 21, 1882. My father was a teacher. My mother was a great singer of the old ballads, both religious and secular. Early in life I acquired a repertoire of those things before I realized that there was some cultural value in it. Later on I got enough education to surprise the natives, and myself, too, by getting a second-grade certificate, and I taught school at Cross Rock in Madison County, North Carolina, and went to the country parties: bean stringings, butter stirrings, and shoe-arounds, and candy breakings, and apple peelings, and corn shuckings. And, of course, we attended the square dances and sang the ballads and so on. I attended the rural Sunday school and church and learned their songs. I liked it. The people are fine and treated me very hospitably everywhere I've been in the search of the ballads. But when I got to be a teacher, I began to realize the cultural value in some of these things so I've acquired, made an effort to acquire, more of the

ballads. Later on I got to be a traveling nursery salesman, that is, selling fruit trees and ornamental trees to farmers and people throughout the countryside in western North Carolina, east Tennessee, eastern Kentucky, north Georgia, piedmont North Carolina, northern part of South Carolina, and of course I would always try to find out where they were playing or able to sing the old ballads and have a few parties. And I learned the songs, and, as the song says, I tried to "make myself welcome wherever I go."

Later on I was connected with Rutherford College and began to think that I might do a little good in talking before groups, so I did that a while. I was admitted to the bar in 1913. That brought me in contact with a different type of people, in a way. But still, I always liked to feel that I had the common touch.

Now I want just in closing to say that it's been a very busy two weeks here but a most pleasant one, so I thank one and all, and I trust that through the years the rising generation will avail themselves of what beauty may be found in these recordings. I give them somewhat in the spirit of the poet:

"I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth I know not where;
But long years after still unbroke
I found that arrow in the heart of an oak.

I breathed a song into the air,
It came to earth I know not where;

But long years after from beginning to end,
I found that song in the heart of a friend."

This is Bascom Lamar Lunsford, sometimes called the "Minstrel of the Appalachians," finishing his last recording here March 25, 1949, in the studio at the Library of Congress.

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CREDITS

This recording was supported by a grant from the North Carolina Arts Council.

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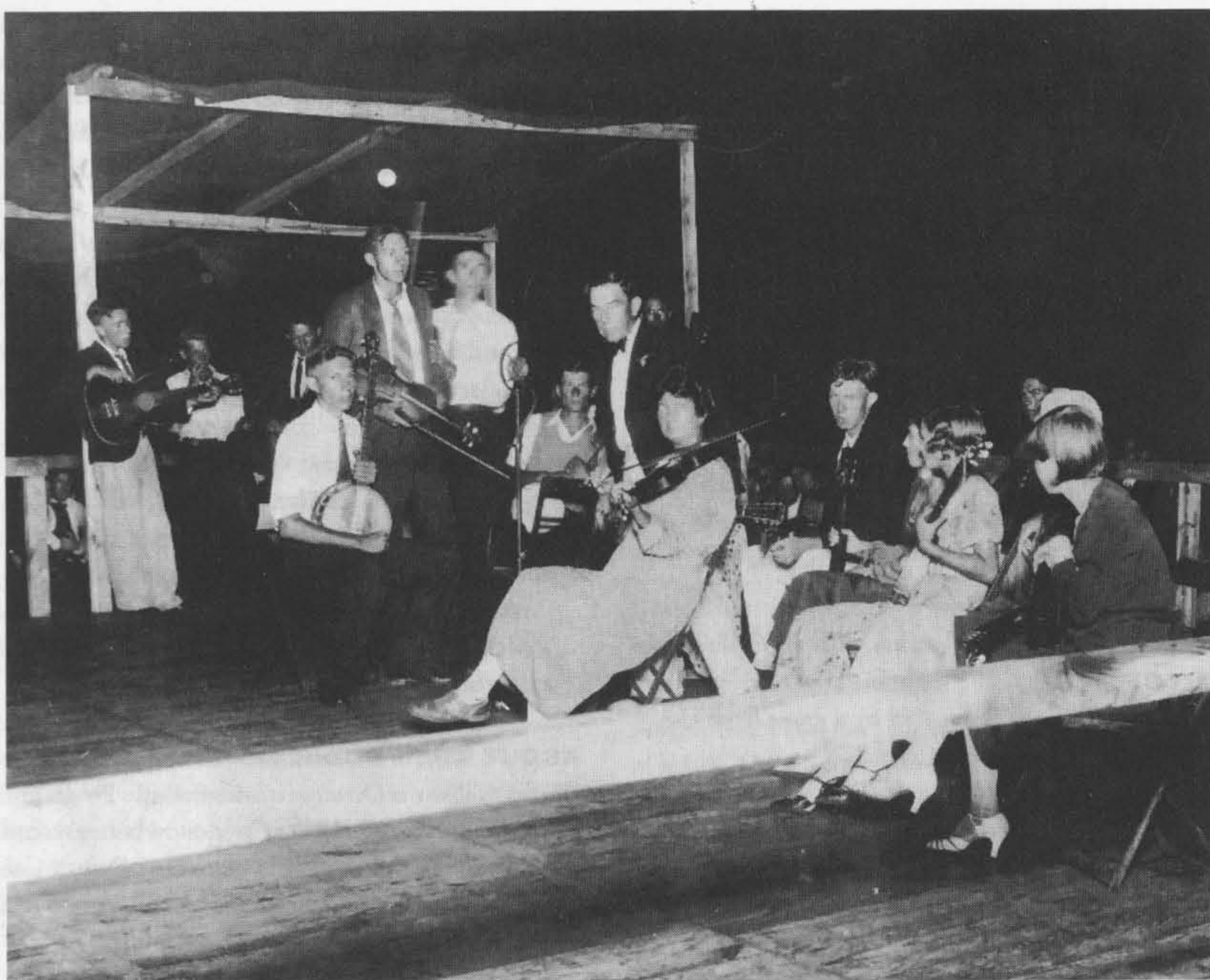
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ABOUT THE PRODUCER

Wayne Martin is Director of the Folklife Program of the North Carolina Arts Council. He has recorded numerous traditional musicians from North Carolina and Virginia and produced several commercial recordings including *Doug and Jack Wallin: Family Songs and Stories From the North Carolina Mountains* (Smithsonian Folkways 40013), *Etta Baker: One-Dime Blues* (Rounder 2112), and *Round the Heart of Old Galax* (County 533-535).



With performers at the Mountain Dance and Folk Festival.
Courtesy of Lunsford Collection, Photographic Archives, Mars Hill College.

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