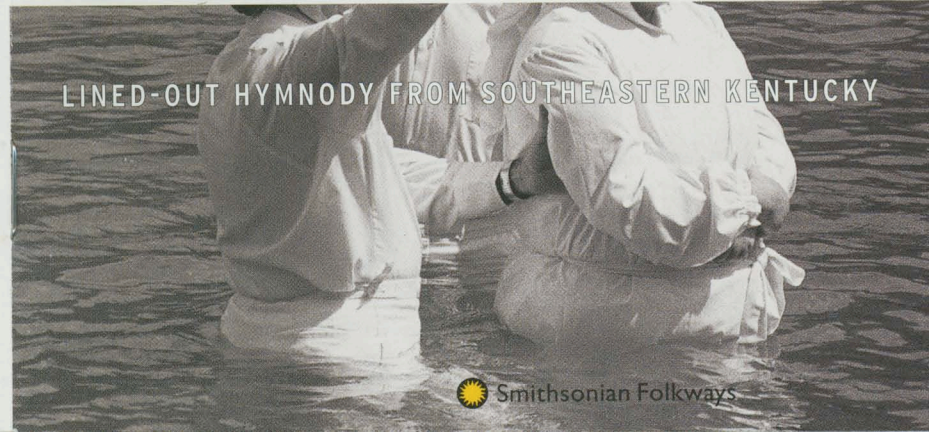


SONGS OF THE

OLD REGULAR BAPTISTS

LINED-OUT HYMNODY FROM SOUTHEASTERN KENTUCKY



Smithsonian
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LINED-OUT HYMNODY FROM SOUTHEASTERN KENTUCKY

The oldest English-language religious music in oral tradition in North America, the lined-out, congregational hymnody of the Old Regular Baptists, is heard in the heart of the coal-mining country of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. This music of worship once was the common way of singing sacred song in the American Colonies. In this rare and beautiful music lies the roots of the high, lonesome mountain sound of elaborate melodic turns and graces. A descriptive booklet provides perspectives on the people, their beliefs and practices, their history and theology, and their music.

1. Brethren we have met again 4:13
2. On Jordan's stormy banks 4:19
3. [O] How happy are they 4:16
4. The day is past and gone 4:33
5. Guide me o thou great Jehovah 4:35
6. Jesus thou art the sinner's friend 4:23
7. Jesus left his home in glory 5:05
8. Salvation o the name I love 4:54
9. I'm not ashamed to own my Lord 3:57
10. I am a poor pilgrim of sorrow 5:23
11. Farewell vain world 4:23
12. I am going to a city 3:16
13. The meaning of singing [spoken by several] 12:21

Sung by members of the Indian Bottom Association, Old Regular Baptists,
at Defeated Creek Church, Linefork, Kentucky, August 20, 1992, and June 10, 1993.



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Sung by members of the Indian Bottom Association, Old Regular Baptists, at Defeated Creek Church, Linefork, Kentucky, August 20, 1992, and June 10, 1993

In the heart of the coal-mining country in central Appalachia lies one of the oldest and deepest veins of the English/Scots/Irish-American melodic tradition: the area's religious music, particularly the lined-out singing of Old Regular Baptists. This hymnody is not well known outside its chief geographical locations in southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia. It has not entered into any folk music revivals, and until now very little of it has been available on recordings. Yet Old Regular Baptist singing is a regional and national treasure that deserves to be honored, celebrated, encouraged within its community, and made available to the world outside.

This recording of Old Regular Baptist singing is the result of a friendship and collaboration between Old Regular Baptists in southeastern Kentucky and two visitors, professors from Berea College and Brown University, who have long felt the drawing power of this culture and its music. The following notes have circulated among the participants and met with their approval. Elwood Cornett, Moderator (head) of the Indian Bottom Association of Old Regular Baptists, writes first about his people and their music. Next John Wallhausser writes about their history and theology. Finally Jeff Titon writes about the music on this album.

OLD REGULAR BAPTISTS

BY ELWOOD CORNETT, MODERATOR

Indian Bottom Association, Old Regular Baptists

The thing about being an Old Regular Baptist is the unspeakable joy of everyday life! In a world where both spiritual and secular commentators are predicting doom and gloom, our conversation concerns the precious promises of the Lord Jesus Christ. To quote one of our members, "So many people complain and gripe about getting up and getting started every morning, but I can't wait to get up and get out to see what the Lord has in store for me each day."

We Old Regular Baptists are a peculiar people. We sing differently. Some say our worship has a sad and mournful sound. But I've never heard a more beautiful melody, and the sound of the worship causes my heart to feel complete.

Worship. On a typical Sunday morning we Old Regular Baptist worshipers are at church by 9:30. The churches, which are adorned in simplicity, are clean and neat. They are usually full well before church services begin.

Old Regular Baptists shake hands a lot. Most church members will shake hands with everyone else. Up one aisle and down the next we go to enjoy a precious handshake and a warm embrace as we experience the love of God flowing from breast to breast.

A custom that marks Old Regular Baptists is

the once-a-month meetings. Some churches meet on the first weekend, some on the second, some on the third, and some on the fourth weekend of every month. This enables members from each church to visit other churches. If my home church meets only on the first weekend, then I can visit one of several nearby churches that meets on the second weekend, another on the third, and so on. A unique set of relationships has evolved. It is a special blessing to have members of other churches visit our church.

At about 9:30 most of the congregation is in place. A brother selects an appropriate song and starts singing. Others join in as the leader lines the words of the song. The songs on this album are some of those we would sing at an Old Regular Baptist meeting. Some members continue to shake hands and greet everyone as we sing. There is an atmosphere of orderliness, and yet individual freedom of expression is accepted and often encouraged. Humbleness is expected and reverence is demanded.

Several songs are sung in succession without a formal list or prepared order. Individuals select them by picking up a book and starting one as they feel moved. Silence endures only long enough for someone to find and start another song. At about 10 a.m. the moderator steps to the pulpit and welcomes everyone, often referring to those in need of prayer and emphasizing mankind's duty to honor God.

The moderator selects a brother that has been

called to the ministry to "open" or "introduce" the church service. A good introduction or opening sets the atmosphere, provokes thought, and promotes spirituality. It is relatively short and not meant to be an articulated sermon.

After a few minutes the opening minister asks that a song be started. Everyone stands and sings, and again there is a lot of handshaking and spiritual embracing. After the song the minister leads in prayer. During prayer, many individuals will kneel on the floor. Whether individuals remain seated or get on their knees depends entirely on how they feel at the time.

The prayer is a powerful, extemporaneous plea to the Lord. It may be rather loud and last several minutes. A good prayer is a genuine, sincere desire of the heart expressed aloud without shame or embarrassment.

After the prayer, perhaps three or four other brothers will each deliver an extemporaneous sermon. Each sermon has its own message and may or may not be related to the other sermons. A good sermon may last twenty to thirty minutes. It is powerful, bound in love and well ordered. It is not read or taken from notes, but it is delivered by the minister as God moves upon him in demonstration of the Spirit and Its power. During a powerful and spiritual meeting, there will be shouting and tears of joy.

A few minutes before noon the church service comes to an end. When the last minister has finished with his sermon, he will extend an invita-

tion for membership in the church by means of experience and baptism. (A man or woman desiring to belong to the church will step forward and tell how conviction and repentance led to their being born again.) As the invitation is given, an appropriate song is lined and sung. The service is closed by prayer.

Baptisms. In August, 1973, I surrendered my being unto the will of God. At that time I made peace with the Almighty God by understanding my condemnation for a sinful life. In belief and with a repentant heart I pleaded for the Lord's mercy. In a moment, I felt, I experienced the Lord's spiritual rebirth. Memories of that unspeakable joy still bring glad tears to my eyes.

In early January, 1974, I joined the nearest Old Regular Baptist church. During the closing of a service, when the invitation was given, I stepped forward and related my experience of condemnation, repentance, and spiritual rebirth with Christ Jesus the Lord. After a move and second to receive me into the full fellowship after baptism, I was given a glorious welcome.

In the middle of winter in mid-January I was immersed in the Kentucky River near my home by two ministers that I had chosen. The two ministers and I were wearing white pants and white shirts. Immediately before the baptism one of the deacons of the church tied a large cloth napkin around my head. I do not have words to explain the warmth, joy, and peace I experienced

as the brothers baptized me in obedience to the heavenly Father's command and in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

As a minister I have baptized adult believers in rivers, lakes, creeks, and ponds. I have baptized when the water was warm and when I had to cut through the ice with an ax. Summer or winter, rain or snow, day or night, we stand ready to baptize true believers that have been born again and want to be a member of an Old Regular Baptist church.

Communion/Sacrament. The church to which I belong has designated the first Sunday in August as the annual communion or sacrament service.

On the first Sunday in August, 1974, I arrived at church with the intention of taking communion for the first time. I had read in the Bible that to partake of the sacrament unworthily brings damnation. I took this very seriously. I had been advised as had all of the church members to examine my own relationship with God. The other members' relationship with God was not my concern but theirs. I approached the situation much in fear and humbleness. The regular church service was warm and spiritual that day. It was over by noon.

At the end of the service the moderator invited members of other Old Regular Baptist churches to participate with our church in the communion service. He also announced that the deacons would make preparations after the con-

gregation stepped outside; and when a song started we were to re-enter the church. Considering the seriousness of the impending event, I found myself quite nervous. However, I was warmly reassured by older members. I prayed constantly.

After several minutes I heard singing from inside. We re-entered the church house to find that some seats had been moved apart and that a table now stood where the pulpit had been. It obviously had several items on it and was covered with a beautiful white tablecloth. Beneath the table was a large container of water, a stack of old-fashioned porcelain wash pans, and a box of white towels.

I took a seat against the wall opposite the entrance. The brothers of the church sat on one side. The sisters, most dressed in white, sat on the other.

When all were seated, the song stopped and the moderator, with help from another brother, removed the cloth that covered the table. I could see bottles of grape juice—fruit of the vine. I could see a small plate holding unleavened bread, which had been prepared by deacons' wives from plain flour and water, baked and perforated or scored for the occasion.

At the request of the moderator, one of the ordained elders spoke of the meaning of the unleavened bread in terms of the Passover and the body of Christ. Taking the bread in his hands, he knelt down on the floor and diligently prayed the Lord's blessing on the bread and on us.

I still remember how the deacon made his way up the row in which I sat. Finally he came to me, shook my right hand, offered me a morsel of the bread to eat, and gave me a warm embrace. I ate the bread representing the body of Christ.

The moderator asked another one of the ordained elders to speak of the meaning of the fruit of the vine in terms of the Passover and the blood of Christ. Holding the fruit of the vine, he knelt and asked God to bless it and the brothers and sisters.

The deacon started serving the row on which I sat. He shook my hand and invited me to take one of the glasses. As I closed my eyes, I could almost see the blood flowing from the wounds of my Savior. I drank the contents of my glass—all of it. I still remember how I felt the Holy Spirit all around me.

The moderator read from John 13:1-17. Then he picked up a towel and tied it around his waist using strings attached at one end. He poured water into a wash pan and knelt at the feet of one of the brothers nearby and began to wash them.

The deacons soon delivered a towel and a pan of water to the end of each pew. A brother next to me humbly and reverently girded himself with the towel and placed the pan of water at my feet. I removed my shoes and socks as he knelt. He gave me a warm and holy embrace, and tenderly washed my feet, and dried them with the towel. Then it was my glorious privilege to kneel at his feet and wash and dry them in the name of Jesus.

All around me were brothers washing each other's feet and sisters washing each other's feet. Throughout the church there was singing, shouting, tears of joy and heavenly peace. I had never experienced anything so moving. I felt my acceptance with the Lord in a way that I still remember.

Old Regular Baptists—Who We Are.

Old Regular Baptists come from many walks of life. Some are highly educated—some are not. Some are well off financially—some are not. Some are old—some are young. We come together as equal children of God.

We do not say we are better than anyone else. We are totally unconcerned about the opinions of modern theologians. Each person has an individual relationship with God, and that spiritual relationship overshadows everything else.

We hold family and place in high regard. Children are taught by the light of Christian life much more than by written or oral words. Sincerity, humbleness, and reverence are marks of God's people.

Old Regular Baptists may travel far and wide, but they are anxious to return to the place where they grew up. They want to hear those special sounds and see familiar scenes. Those that move away return often and are likely to return for retirement.

It is my desire not to sound self-righteous, but I humbly proclaim that I have found home. It has been decades since I searched for a people to fel-

lowship with. I have found just what I was looking for. These are my people. This is my home!

OLD REGULAR BAPTIST TRADITIONS

BY JOHN WALLHAUSSER

Professor of Philosophy and Religion, Berea College

The doctrines of Old Regular Baptist faith are still embedded in the life, preaching, and singing of Appalachian communities today. They are easily discerned in their chanted sermons and distinctive song. One also finds the outlines of their transformed Calvinist theology in the "Articles of Faith," published every year in the minutes of each of the region's 16 Old Regular Baptist associations. Such doctrinal, creedal statements signal something distinctive about Appalachia. There is treasure in the Appalachian mountains, rich and complex historical treasure of Reformation and post-Reformation theologies set within America's early frontier.

Old Regular Baptist language is shaped by their old hymns, biblical stories, and doctrinal convictions. In the traditional language of preaching and singing one can hear and understand distinctive historical and theological nuances. These form a rather peculiar balance, but one that is "bred in the bones." Perhaps that is what Old Regular Baptists mean when they proudly refer to themselves with the biblical phrase—"a peculiar people."

The central Appalachian mountains contain 16 associations of Old Regular Baptists (Dorgan 1989, 8ff.; MacCauley 1995). These have planted new churches outside the Appalachian region in Ohio and Indiana and as far away as Michigan, Florida, and Arizona. But mountain counties, particularly in the Virginias and eastern Kentucky remain the home for many traditional churches. Because the mountains have bestowed on the Old Regular Baptists a degree of anonymity, they have been able to preserve the substance of their traditional faith and practice.

The traditions of "old time" Baptist churches are found in layers, like seams of Appalachian coal. The earliest layers are composed of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Reformation beliefs and creeds, particularly for English Baptists who followed the theology of John Calvin, the First (1644) and Second (1689) London Confessions. The next layer consists of eighteenth-century pietism and the revival movements in New England and the American frontier. Finally, one finds the theological controversies of the nineteenth century which led Old Regular Baptist churches to consolidate and preserve their "old-fashioned way." Twentieth-century efforts by Appalachian churches to hold on to their past have kept much of that past intact. Consequently, we can still discern today their distinctive way of being "in the world but not of the world."

The doctrines of Old Regular Baptists emerge from the larger Baptist history in the Colonies,

reaching back to tensions in eighteenth-century New England. Disputes arose in the aftermath of "The Great Awakening," the revival movement that broke out in New England in 1739–1740 in response to George Whitefield's preaching. Whitefield continued the Calvinist emphasis on the sole sovereignty of God, having previously broken with John and Charles Wesley, whom he found too Arminian—that is, attributing too much to the role of human freedom in salvation. This Calvinist-Arminian controversy would eventually take root also in the Appalachian mountains.

The name "Regular" appears to be a response to that eighteenth-century revival. "The Great Awakening," supported by Jonathan Edwards, sundered churches into two camps. Presbyterians split into the Old Sides and the New Sides, and New England Congregationalists split into the Old Lights and the New Lights. Those "New" went with Whitefield, supported the revival, and became the "Separates." Traditional groups (the "Old"), who resisted the revival, were called the "Regulars."

By 1742 the controversy had penetrated the Baptist churches of New England, resulting in a division between Separate Baptist Churches and Regular Baptist Churches. The Regular Baptist churches gave their allegiance to the more traditional Calvinist Philadelphia Association. The Baptist faith that moved south in the 1750s and then west into the Appalachian mountains in the 1770s carried with it these layers of theological history.

Churches in Virginia formed the first associa-

tion of Regular Baptists in 1765—the Ketockten Association. During the 1770s, Baptist preachers came into Kentucky with early settlers by way of Virginia and North Carolina. By 1785 two associations of Regular Baptist Churches were formed in Kentucky, the Elkhorn and Salem Associations. Theological disputes between Separate and Regular theologies continued in Kentucky. Late eighteenth-century efforts to overcome these differences led eventually to a reunion of churches as United Baptists in 1801.

Sixty years after the Great Awakening in New England, revivalism came to the American frontier with a robustness that matched its setting. The Great Western Revival—a "Second Great Awakening"—erupted at Cane Ridge in north-central Kentucky in 1801. In the decades that followed, the religious life of frontier America was reconfigured.

The number of Baptists in Kentucky doubled during the opening years of the nineteenth century. The Cane Ridge revival added emotional rawness to the doctrinal faith; subjective experiences of grace joined with the "objective standard of orthodoxy" (creeds) in a marriage of experiential fire and doctrinal deliberation. The Great Revival of Kentucky, however, was anti-Calvinistic, and tensions between Calvinist and Arminian beliefs broke out anew. New denominations arose as a result of the Revival (e.g., the Disciples of Christ, Free Will, and Missionary Baptists), as did other new movements, new religious/social

agencies, and new conflicts.

In the midst of this ferment and challenge, old time Baptist churches in Appalachia turned toward preservation. They sought to hold on to their modified Calvinistic doctrine, their local identities, in short, their "old-fashioned ways."

Turn-of-the-century churches previously called "United" Baptists began reclaiming earlier identities. "Primitive" (in the sense of early or original, apostolic) Baptists split away in the 1830s to form the Kehkee Association in North Carolina; they adhered to the stricter form of Calvinism. In 1854, The New Salem Association began calling itself "Regular Baptist," and later (1870) "Old Regular Baptist." The Old Regulars moved away from strict Calvinism by rejecting double predestination and the doctrine of limited atonement, which held that Christ died only for the elect. The dispute over predestination heated up again in the 1890s and out of this struggle arose new associations. The Indian Bottom Association, whose members are heard on this album, developed in 1896 as a result of a dispute within the Sandlick Association over atonement. The new Association held a belief in universal atonement (Christ died for all) and the accompanying doctrine of human responsibility within the structure of divine grace and providence. It opposed what it saw as "hard-shell" Calvinist predestinarian doctrines (Indian Bottom Association n.d.; Melton 1978). There are 35 churches in the Indian Bottom Association and

more than 1600 members at present.

In the nineteenth century, Old Regular Baptist churches combined with other "old time" Baptists to resist popular modernizing movements. They resisted the transfer of many local church responsibilities to specialized agencies or "societies," which proliferated in the early decades of the century—e.g., foreign mission societies, societies to disseminate tracts and bibles, and agencies to promote Sunday Schools and distribute Sunday School literature.

"Old time" mountain Baptists resisted the development of these autonomous bureaucracies on theological grounds: the witness and mission of the church could not be transferred from the congregations themselves to ad hoc professional agencies. Thus, although Old Regular Baptists are often charged with being "anti-mission," their position is that no specialized group should assume the responsibilities of local churches.

Moreover, Old Regular Baptists did not adopt the practice of Sunday Schools that was introduced into American congregations in the nineteenth century. The Sunday School movement was originally sponsored by independent societies and advocated through their periodicals. In the early stages of this ecumenical movement, Sunday School and Church were distinct entities to some degree. Also at issue was the Sunday School movement's embrace of the nineteenth-century belief in progress as an upward organic growth. This was reflected in a kind of "Chris-

tian gradualism" that implied Christianity is attained through a guided, evolving growth into maturity rather than through the struggle of an adult decision. The former model does not accord with the Old Regular Baptist theology of regeneration through a powerful experience of grace—the personal upheaval of being "born again."

Even today Old Regular Baptists do not have Sunday Schools. Young children are not set aside into their own rooms and programs. They are part of the worship service. Because the service lasts from two to two and a half hours, they are given remarkable freedom to move about, to sit with Mamaw and Papaw, even to go outside for a time, or to the water cooler, usually located at the side or in front of the pulpit.

Old Regular Baptists retain the tradition of worker-preachers. There is no group of specially trained professionals. Each is a "tent-maker"—has a job, a source of income independent of the congregation. Preaching is the responsibility of the community and its leaders. Older ministers in the congregation ordain preachers by the laying on of hands. I was told, "No one can say I won't preach unless I get paid. I wasn't hired, so I can't be fired. The Lord called me and I'll preach til He calls me home."

Old Regular Baptists worship in stark and unadorned buildings. They shake hands before, during, and after worship. Handshaking is almost a sacramental act of touching. Foot-washing is celebrated together with communion as a sacrament.

They appeal to John 13:1-20, wherein Christ instructs his disciples to wash each other's feet. This simple, profound, intimate act explodes into powerful expressions of reconciliation within the faithful community. "Community" is an event; it erupts during the worship service.

After their Sunday services, Old Regulars open their homes in the tradition of mountain hospitality. They not only talk about and remember "the old-fashioned way;" they enact it and celebrate it in the generous meals they place on their tables and invite others to share.

The distinctive principles of Old Regular Baptist faith will continue to guide believers into the twenty-first century: simplicity, untrained and unpaid ministers, solely vocal music in worship, the sacrament of foot washing, and opposition to mission societies, Bible societies, tract societies, Sunday school, seminaries and any centralized bureaucracy that diminishes the independence of local churches. Their doctrine is rooted in sixteenth-century Reformation confessions of faith transposed into the Appalachian mountains. As careful conservators of an older authentic Christian tradition, the Old Regular Baptists have something important to say about what it means to be a Christian "in the world but not of the world."

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OLD REGULAR BAPTIST SONGS

BY JEFF TODD TITON

Professor of Music, Brown University

I met Elder Elwood Cornett and a group from the Mt. Olivet Old Regular Baptist church in Blackey, Kentucky, at Berea College in 1979, where they demonstrated their lined-out hymnody. When I returned to Berea as Goode Visiting Professor of Appalachian Studies in 1990 I knew I wanted to hear more of their music. Through the kindness of John Wallhausser, who had been visiting with them for many years, I was reintroduced. On most Sundays I drove two hours east into Letcher, Knott, and Perry counties, and went to church among them. I realized I had been looking for these melodies and this way of singing for a long time, and when I found it I stayed with it the best I could. As one of the elders remarks on this recording, the sound has

“a drawing power.”

Old Regular Baptists think of this music mainly in terms of worship. Their commentaries in track 13 “The meaning of singing” tell us that the songs have a special purpose and sound. When sung in the Spirit of God, these songs bring people closer to God and to each other. This experience is most truly felt by a Christian saved by grace, and yet many speak of how the sound of the singing drew them powerfully even when they were children and did not understand its full meaning. Worship, not history, or style, or structure is the most important aspect of the music. Yet many are curious about the music and its past, and Elwood Cornett more than once asked me to speak about it.

Before the first recording session he asked me to say something to the assembled group of about seventy Old Regular Baptists about the music’s history. As I spoke, my professor’s identity clinging to me like a wet shirt, I mentioned that lining-out dates from the early 1600s. “Would you say again about how long this tradition has been going on?” Elwood asked when I got done. “More than 350 years,” I replied. “It would not be wise,” Elwood said, addressing the group, “if we were known as the generation that lost this way of singing.” Everyone agreed.

“This way of singing” has a lot in common with other Protestant hymnody. The whole congregation is invited to sing. Their aim is to praise the Lord. The songs are sung in church, at

memorial meetings, baptisms, and in homes. They are sung by men, women, and children alike. But Old Regular Baptist singing also has its own particulars. It is very slow and has no regular beat: you can’t tap your foot to it. The melodies are very elaborate, and they come from the Anglo-American folk music tradition, not from classical music or from popular songs written to make money. The group sings in unison, not in parts (harmony). A song leader gives out the words line by line.

Form. Like almost all Christian hymns, Old Regular Baptist congregational songs consist of rhymed, metrical verse in a series of stanzas to which a repeating tune is set. The metrical verse patterns include common meter—alternating lines of 8 and 6 syllables (that is, 8,6,8,6)—indicated in their songbooks by “C.M.”; an example from this recording is “On Jordan’s stormy banks.” Long meter is represented by “L.M.” (8,8,8,8); an example is “Salvation o the name I love.” Short meter or “S.M.” (6,6,8,6) is found in “The day is past and gone.” There are various others also. The leader sings the very first line and the congregation joins in when they recognize the song. After that the song proceeds line by line: the leader briefly chants a line alone, and then the group repeats the words but to a tune that is much longer and more elaborate than the leader’s chant or lining tune. Music historians call this procedure “lining out.”

Words. Song books are kept at the pulpit and passed around to the song leaders. The books have words but no musical notation. The oldest lyrics are the eighteenth-century hymns, written chiefly by familiar English or American devotional poets and hymn-writers such as Isaac Watts. These fill their two favorite song collections, *Sweet Songster* (hereafter *SS*; see References for full bibliographic information) and the *Thomas Hymnal* (*TH*). The newer song books, including *Some of Our Favorite Songs* (*SFS*), *The New Baptist Song Book* (*NBSB*), and the *Old Regular Baptist Song Book* (*ORBSB*, now the *Baptist Hymn Book* [*BHB*]) are contemporary collections published nearby. They contain a mix of the older hymns, nineteenth-century camp-meeting songs and spirituals, gospel hymns from the later nineteenth century onwards, and finally a number of contemporary gospel songs—some written by Old Regulars known to have this gift, others popular on the radio and recordings. The congregation catches the words from the song leader as he lines out the song. They do not have song books at their seats.

Rhythm and Tempo. The rhythmic framework is governed not by metronome time, but by breath-time. The singers’ sense of overall line length is remarkable. For example, each line in “On Jordan’s stormy banks” lasts for either 16 or 20 seconds, depending on whether it is a 6- or an 8-syllable line. “We believe in being tuned up with the grace of God and his Holy Spirit; and when that

begins, it makes a melody, makes a joyful noise,” said Elder I. D. Back. When they are “tuned up” in this way they are together musically as well as spiritually. This contemplative state of being, as the meaning of the words registers, accounts for the slow tempo and helps to guide the rhythm to an extraordinary degree of accuracy.

Tunes. Tunes are passed along from one singer, one generation, to the next. Singers learn by following and imitating others, not by reading notes. Melodies are highly elaborated: many syllables have three or more tones, and a great many have at least two. The closest parallel to their melodic elaboration is in the Gaelic singing traditions in Scotland and Ireland, including lined-out, Gaelic psalm-singing on the Isle of Lewis. Each Old Regular Baptist singer is free to “curve” the tune a little differently, and those who are able to make it more elaborate are admired. Outsiders are mistaken if they think the intent is singing with unified precision and that the result falls short; on the contrary, the heterophonic singing is in step but deliberately just a bit out of phase—and this, I think, is one of its most powerful musical aspects.

The structure of the tunes reveals that most of them come from the Anglo-American folksong tradition (Horn 1970). Some of these, such as the one used for both “Guide me o thou great Jehovah” and “Every moment brings me nearer” are quite old, while others are more recent compositions in the same folksong style. Some tunes, such

as those for "Salvation o the name I love" and "The day is past and gone," are clearly related to tunes that were printed in nineteenth-century shape-note hymnals. (I mention these tune relationships below, in the headnotes before each song.) But this does not mean that the Old Regulars' songs came from those printed versions, for the tunes in the books were written down from melodies in oral tradition. More likely, the Old Regulars were already singing the tunes before the editors of nineteenth-century shape-note hymnals wrote them down. Newer tunes are either adaptations of gospel hymns ("Precious Memories," for example, done in a lined-out format) or compositions by local and regional song writers that draw on all available melodic traditions.

History. The Old Regular Baptist way of singing derives from the music of the sixteenth-century English parish church (Temperley 1981). In 1644 the Westminster Assembly of Divines recommended the practice of lining out, and it was adopted in Massachusetts a few years later. By the end of the seventeenth century it had become the "common way" of singing among Anglicans and in other Protestant denominations (except Lutherans) throughout Britain and her Colonies (Chase 1987: 19-30). African Americans learned it and carry a parallel tradition today, particularly among Baptists in the rural South.

As settlers moved during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries into the frontier South,

to the Shenandoah Valley and later across the Cumberland Gap, they carried the "common way" (now called "the old way") of singing with them. Most Appalachian settlers from the English/Scottish borderlands were familiar with this music, for it had lingered there well into the eighteenth century even after it had declined in southern England and the urban parts of the American Colonies. New texts called for new tunes, and so the Old Baptists used well-known secular tunes and composed other, similar-sounding tunes to carry the sacred texts. Nineteenth-century camp meetings gave rise to spiritual songs—usually easily sung, rapid choruses with refrains; but the more conservative Old Baptist ancestors of the Old Regulars clung to the old musical ways, also resisting musical notation in shaped notes, a reform designed to drive out the "old way" of singing. Shaped notes (diamonds, triangles, squares, circles that helped people to sing at sight) spread via singing schools from New England to Appalachia and the South in the nineteenth century and were featured in such prominent southern hymn collections as the *Southern Harmony* (*SoH*) and the *Sacred Harp* (*SacH*) and in various gospel hymn collections from the late nineteenth century onwards.

The shape-note collections printed music in parts (harmony) and discouraged lining-out. They influenced some of the Old Regulars' Appalachian neighbors, such as the Primitive Baptists, who have probably lost lining-out beyond

recovery. But the greatest challenge to the "old way" of singing among the Old Regulars today comes from the gospel songs heard on radio and recordings. Some churches have succumbed to part-singing, and many include a far higher proportion of gospel hymnody; but in the Indian Bottom Association most remain steadfast in keeping the older hymns, lined out, as recorded here.

Sammie Ann Wicks has pointed out that the melodic elaborations of the "old way" predominate in the styles of several contemporary country music singers—George Jones, Merle Haggard, Randy Travis, Emmylou Harris, Dolly Parton, and Linda Ronstadt, to name some of the more prominent—whose melodic turns and graces link their music with its cultural past and make it attractive to knowing listeners (Wicks 1989). Old Regular Baptist music is what it is today because they continue to believe strongly "In the Good, Old-Fashioned Way," as the title of one of their songs has it. They have been able to preserve the old songs to a remarkable degree. These powerfully affecting, richly complex songs deserve to be honored and celebrated. In my view they are a national treasure.

Citations:

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NOTES ON THE RECORDINGS

BY JEFF TODD TITON

In an Old Regular Baptist worship service the songs are chosen by leaders at the moment just before their performance. The leader first pitches the tune within a comfortable range, perhaps humming a bit to himself. Each song has its characteristic lining tune, and individual leaders sing the lining tune more or less elaborately. Often but not always each line ends on the same note with which the congregation begins. For this recording the leaders chose to sing only three or four of the verses of each song. In a worship service they might do the same, or they might sing every verse.

Because the Indian Bottom Association churches do not permit tape recorders, cameras, microphones, wires, and the like to interfere with their worship services, Elwood invited all who could and would to two special meetings in order to make the recordings for this album. I recorded them using a digital audio tape recorder, three microphones, and a mixer, on August 20, 1992, and June 10, 1993. Songs number 1, 9, and 12

were recorded in 1993; all others come from the 1992 meeting. The statements following the songs were recorded at both meetings. John Wallhausser was present and helped out in many ways; Elwood made it possible in the first place and gently directed the proceedings throughout.

The following program notes give the song title, verse meter (e.g., 7's = lines of 7 syllables; C.M. = common meter), abbreviation of the name of a song book used by the Old Regulars that contains the song (along with its number or page in that book), name of the author of the words and his dates (if known), date of first publication of the words (if known), name of the song leader on the recording, and references to related tunes and to other printed and recorded versions. Abbreviated references will be found in full at the end of this booklet.

1. Brethren we have met again.

7's. *TH*, #480. Words by John Leland (1754-1841). Led by Elder Elwood Cornett. This song is often the first one sung at a gathering of Old Regular Baptists.

*Brethren, we have met again,
Let us join to pray and sing.
Jesus as the savior reigns,
Praise him in the highest strain.*

*Brethren, tell us how you do,
Does your love continue true?
Are you waiting for your king?*

When he shall return again?

*Jesus is my glorious king,
May our hearts be tuned to sing;
Praise him, love him evermore
He's the God whom we adore.*

2. On Jordan's stormy banks.

C.M. *SS*, #177. Words by Samuel Stennett (1727-1795); first published 1787. Led by Elder Elwood Cornett. Transcription of a similar version: *LHT*, pp. 85-86. The tune is a variant of "Sweet Prospect," found in several nineteenth-century shape-note hymnals (e.g., *SoH*, p. 137, where William Walker is credited as composer).

*On Jordan's stormy banks I stand
And cast a wishful eye
To Canaan's fair and happy land
Where my possessions lie.*

*There generous fruits, that never fail,
On trees immortal grow—
There rock and hill, and brook and vale,
With milk and honey flow.*

*All o'er those wide extended plains,
Shines one eternal day—
There God, the son, forever reigns,
And scatters night away.*

3. [O] How happy are they.

11's, 9's. *SS*, #99. Words by Charles Wesley (1707-1788); first published 1749. Led by Brother John

Reedy. The tune is a variant of "Happy Christian," found in *SacH*, p. 399.

*How happy are they who their savior obey
And whose treasures are laid up above—
Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love!*

*That comfort was mine when the favor divine
I first found in the blood of the lamb—
When my heart it believed o! what joy I received—
What a heaven in Jesus's name!*

*'Twas a heaven below my redeemer to know
And the angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet and the story repeat
And the lover of sinners adore.*

4. The day is past and gone.

S.M. *TH*, #219. Words by John Leland (1754-1841); first published 1804. Led by Elder Charles Shepherd. *SS* credits the words to "Dupuy" and gives "Beneath the pinions of thy love" for verse 3, line 3. Transcription of similar versions: *LHT*, pp. 135-136; *FSA*, p. 52. The tune is "Idumea," found in several nineteenth-century shape-note hymnals (e.g., *SoH*, p. 31, where "Davison" [Annianias Davisson, compiler of the *KH*] is credited as composer). Recorded version of the tune with different words: "And am I born to die," *WFT*.

*The day is past and gone,
The evening shades appear;
O may we all remember well,*

The night of death is near.

*We lay our garments by,
Upon our beds we rest;
So death will soon disrobe us all,
Of what we here possess.*

*Lord, keep us safe this night,
Secure from all our fears;
May angels guard us while we sleep
Till morning light appears.*

5. Guide me o thou great Jehovah.

8's, 7's. *TH*, #464. Words by William Williams (1717-1791); first published 1773. Led by Elder I. D. Back. The earliest tune source is "Adew Dundee" in the early Skene manuscript (ca. 1620?), from Scotland (in *ASM*, no. 24, p. 225); see also "Bonny Dundee" in *BBB*. Transcriptions of similar versions: *LHT*, pp. 89-91, *LM*, pp. 51-55, *FSA*, p. 54, *SOD*, p. 154. Another recorded version is on *GS*, recorded in 1959 by Alan Lomax at the Old Regular Baptist church in Blackey, Ky., and led by Ike Caudill.

*Guide me, o thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven
Feed me till I want no more.*

*Open thou the crystal fountains,
Whence the healing streams do flow;*

*Let the fiery, cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.*

6. Jesus thou art the sinner's friend.

C.M. SS, #133. Words by Richard Burnham (1749-1810); first published 1783. Led by Brother William Lusk, Jr. Transcription of a similar version: *LHT*, pp. 113-114; of same words with a different tune: *WPA KY* as "Tis Sweet to Rest in Lively Hope."

*Jesus thou art the sinner's friend—
As such I look to thee,
Now in the bowels of thy love
O! Lord, remember me.*

*Remember thy pure word of grace,
Remember Calvary—
Remember all thy dying groans,
And then remember me.*

*I own I'm guilty—own I'm vile,
Yet thy salvation's free—
Then in thy all-abounding grace,
O! Lord, remember me.*

7. Jesus left his home in glory.

8's & 7's. *SFS*, 1993-94, pp. 34-35. Led by Elder Jim Fields. The printed version is a gospel song with a chorus; the sung version here turns the chorus into verse 4 and is an example of how Old Regular Baptists adapt newer songs to their way,

of singing. Transcription of a similar version: *LHT*, pp. 94-95.

*Jesus left his home in glory,
Came and died for you and me.
No one knows how Jesus suffered
On the cross of Calvary.*

*I will sing of my redeemer
Till the day he calls for me
To be with him up in heaven
In the bright eternity.*

*Praise his name, his name forever.
Lift your voices in his songs,
Spend your time in serving Jesus,
Sing his praises all day long.*

*Go on brethren, go rejoicing,
Some glad day we'll all arise
In his likeness we'll be shining
Then we'll all be satisfied.*

8. Salvation o the name I love.

L.M. *BHB*, pp. 70-71. Led by Elder I. D. Back. The tune is a variant of "Bourbon," found in several nineteenth-century shape-note hymnals (e.g., *NHS*, p. 60). Other versions of this popular tune are variously called "Meditation," "Conflict," and "Dismission." The tune was sung to a native American ballad, "Samuel Hall," in Burnsville, N.C., in 1918 (*EFS*, vol. 2, p. 271); the words mention the town of London, Kentucky, and the year 1848. Recorded versions: "Sermon and Lin-

ing Hymn," *WS*, recorded by Alan Lomax and Shirley Collins at the Blackey church in 1959, in which the tune is slightly different, employing the leading tone at the final cadence. The song title is not given on the recording. Primitive Baptist recordings of the same tune, with the texts "Awake my soul" and "When I survey the wondrous cross" are on *OH*.

*Salvation oh the name I love
Which came by Christ the Lord above
Surprising wisdom, matchless grace
Which reached my low and helpless case.*

*When I was sinking in despair,
Filled with an awful gloomy fear;
My savior came to my relief,
He eased my pain and bore my grief.*

*I immediately was made whole,
I felt the witness in my soul;
My burdens went I knew not where,
And gone was all my guilt and fear.*

9. I'm not ashamed to own my Lord.

C.M. SS, # 114. Words by Isaac Watts (1674-1748); first published 1709. Led by Brother Bonnell Watts. The tune is a variant of New Britain, the familiar melody of "Amazing Grace," found in several nineteenth-century shape-note hymnals (e.g., *SoH*, p. 8).

*I'm not ashamed to own my Lord
Or to defend his cause—*

*Maintain the honor of his word—
The glory of his cross.*

*Jesus, my God, I know his name—
His name is all my trust—
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my soul be lost!*

*Then will he own my worthless name,
Before his father's face—
And in the New Jerusalem,
Appoint my soul a place.*

10. I am a poor pilgrim of sorrow.

10's & 8's. *ORBSB*, 1988-89 edition, p. 69. Led by Brother Gillis Reedy. Printed as a gospel song with a chorus; as with no. 7 the Old Regulars make it into one of their lined songs and in this case omit the chorus. Transcriptions of same words with different tunes: *WPA KY* as "Tis Sweet to Rest in Lively Hope," no page number; *DES*, pp. 70-71. Many secular tune variants, including "East Virginia." A recorded version is on *GS*, recorded in 1959 by Alan Lomax at the Old Regular Baptist church in Blackey, Ky.

*I am a poor pilgrim of sorrow,
Cast out in this wide world to roam;
I have no promise of tomorrow,
I've started to make heaven my home.*

*I know I'm weak and unworthy,
My heart is so prone to sin;
But Jesus the savior almighty,*

Has promised to take me in.

*My mother has reached the bright glory,
My father's still wandering in sin;
My brothers and sisters won't own me,
Because I am trying to get in.*

*When friends and relations forsake me,
And troubles roll round me so high,
I think of the kind words of Jesus,
"Poor pilgrim, I'm always nigh."*

11. Farewell vain world.

L.M. *TH*, #560. Led by Elder H. B. Reedy, Jr. The tune is a variant of "Devotion," found in several nineteenth-century shape-note hymnals (e.g., *SoH*, p. 13).

*Farewell, vain world, I'm going home;
My savior smiles and bids me come;
Sweet angels beckon me away
To sing God's praise in endless day.*

*I'm glad that I was born to die;
From grief and woe my soul shall fly;
Bright angels shall convey me home,
Away to New Jerusalem.*

*I'll praise my master while I've breath,
I hope to praise him after death;
I hope to praise him when I die,
And shout salvation as I fly.*

12. I am going to a city.

8's & 7's. *BHB*, p. 42. Led by Brother Mike Hal-

comb. The tune is a variant of the first part of the familiar "Wayfaring Stranger," found in *SaCH*, p. 457.

*I am going to a city
Where the streets with gold are laid,
Where the tree of life is blooming
And the roses never fade.*

*Here they bloom but for a season,
Soon their beauty is decayed.
I am going to a city
Where the roses never fade.*

*In this world we have our troubles.
Satan's snares we must evade.
We'll be free from all temptation
Where the roses never fade.*

13. The meaning of singing [spoken].

After each session Elwood Cornett invited the singers to tell what the songs meant to them. Excerpts appear on this recording. The order of the speakers is: Agnan Back, I. D. Back, Keith Smith, Robert Creech, Mike Halcomb, I. D. Back, Glen Hampton, Charles Shepherd, Ila Adams, Emery Caudill, James Caudill, Charles Shepherd, Bonnell Watts, Charles Shepherd, Marie Reedy, Jim Fields, I. D. Back, and Elwood Cornett.

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- B&B* = *The British Broadside Ballad and Its Music*, by Claude M. Simpson. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1966.
- BHB* = *The Baptist Hymn Book*, edited by Dorothy Osborne. Ashland, KY: Dorothy Osborne, 1991.
- DES* = *Down-East Spirituals and Others*, collected and edited by George Pullen Jackson. Locust Valley, NY: J.J. Augustin, 1942.
- EFS* = *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, collected by Cecil J. Sharp, edited by Maud Karpeles. London: Oxford University Press, 1960.
- FSA* = *Folksongs of the Southern Appalachians as*

Sung by Jean Ritchie, edited by Ethel Raim. NY: Oak Publications, 1965.

GS = *The Gospel Ship: Baptist Hymns & White Spirituals from the Southern Mountains*, recorded and edited by Alan Lomax. 12" LP recording. NY: New World Records NW294, 1977. [One side recorded at the Mt. Olivet Old Regular Baptist Church in Blackey, KY.]

KH = *Kentucky Harmony*, by Annanias Davisson. Harrisonburg, VA, 1817.

LHT = "The Lined Hymn Tradition in Selected Black Churches of Eastern Kentucky." Ph.D. diss. by Carl Henry Smith. University of Pittsburgh, 1987.

LM = "Life and Meaning: Singing, Praying, and The Word Among The Old Regular Baptists of Eastern Kentucky." Ph. D. diss. by Sammie Ann Wicks. University of Texas, 1983.

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NHS = *The New Harmonia Sacra*, by Joseph Funk & Sons (1822). Reprint. 1972, Broadway, VA: Trissels Mennonite Church, 1972.

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ORBSB = *Old Regular Baptist Song Book*, edited by Elders Roy B. Akers and Baxter Osborne. Ashland, KY: Baxter Osborne, 1980.

SacH = *The Sacred Harp*. [1844]. Revised edition, edited by Hugh McGraw et al. Bremen, GA: Sacred Harp Publishing Co., 1991.

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WFT = *The Watson Family Tradition*. 12" LP recording. Somerville, MA: Rounder Records 0129, n.d. [recorded 1964].

WPA KY = "Kentucky Folk Songs." Collected through the Federal Music Project (Works Progress Administration), n.d. (ca. 1939). Unpublished hand-notated manuscript in the Folklife

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CREDITS

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