

WOODY GUTHRIE

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

THE ASCH RECORDINGS VOL. 1



Smithsonian
Folkways

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies
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COMPILED BY JEFF PLACE AND GUY LOGSDON ANNOTATED BY GUY LOGSDON AND JEFF PLACE

- THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND** 2:16
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- CAR SONG** 1:49
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Folkways Music, Inc., BMI)
- RAMBLIN' ROUND** 2:13
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- TALKING FISHING BLUES** 3:03
(W. Guthrie/Sanga Music Inc., BMI)
- PHILADELPHIA LAWYER** 2:28
(W. Guthrie/Woody Publications Inc., BMI)
- LINDBERGH** 3:10
(W. Guthrie/Woody Guthrie Publications Inc., BMI)
- HOBO'S LULLABY** 2:22
(Goebel Reeves/Fall River Music, Inc., BMI)
- PASTURES OF PLENTY** 2:24
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- GRAND COULEE DAM** 2:09
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- END OF THE LINE** 2:49
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- NEW YORK TOWN** 2:35
(arr. by W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- GYPSY DAVY** 2:48
(arr. by W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- JESUS CHRIST** 2:36
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND** 2:43
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- DO-RE-MI** 2:30
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- JARAMA VALLEY** 2:51
(P. Seeger, W. Guthrie, L. Hays/Stormking Music, Inc.)
- BIGGEST THING MAN HAS EVER DONE** 2:17
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- PICTURE FROM LIFE'S OTHER SIDE** 3:05
(Charles E. Baer)
- JESSE JAMES** 2:57
(Huddie Ledbetter & W. Guthrie/TRO-Folkways Music, Inc., BMI)
- TALKING HARD WORK** 3:22
(W. Guthrie/Sanga Music Inc., BMI)
- WHEN THAT GREAT SHIP WENT DOWN** 3:17
- HARD, AIN'T IT HARD** 2:41
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- GOING DOWN THE ROAD FEELING BAD** 2:55
(W. Guthrie & Lee Hays/TRO-Hollis Music, BMI)
- I AIN'T GOT NOBODY** 2:31
(arr. by W. Guthrie/Woody Guthrie Publications Inc., BMI)
- SINKING OF THE REUBEN JAMES** 2:58
(W. Guthrie & Almanac Singers/W. Guthrie Pub. Inc., BMI)
- WHY, OH WHY?** 3:27
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)
- THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND** 0:52
(W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI)

INTRODUCTION

by Guy Logsdon

There was once a time when I thought I had listened to as many Woody Guthrie recordings as anyone. But no longer do I believe it, for I now know that Jeff Place sets new records every time he cues up a track of Woody's voice. As Archivist for the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, which includes the archives and master recordings of Moses Asch and Folkways Records, Jeff has listened to each of the many Woody Guthrie recordings in the Asch/Folkways Archives. And as he listened to the recordings while transferring them from fragile master discs to digital tape and compact disc, he envisioned the songs Woody recorded for Moses Asch edited and compiled into a single collection: *Woody Guthrie: The Asch Recordings*.

There will be four volumes in the collection, but not all of the Asch/Guthrie recordings will be included, for some no longer exist, some are beyond transferring and restoration, and some seem unworthy. But there are enough songs, some previously issued and some unissued by Moses Asch, to showcase Woody's creativity and talent as well as to demonstrate his vast knowledge and mental storehouse of country/western/folk music.

MOSES ASCH AND FOLKWAYS RECORDS

Moses "Moe" Asch was a man obsessed with sounds—musical sounds, cultural sounds, political sounds, and nature's sounds—an obsession that led him to become a pioneer in audio recording. Born in Warsaw, Poland, he was a son of the novelist Sholem Asch; his father's work carried them to Berlin and then to Paris, and when Moe was eight years old the family moved to Brooklyn, New York. He grew up learning the songs of French children, his mother's Yiddish songs, the songs of English-speaking children, and later popular and jazz songs. As a teenager he developed an interest in radio and recording. At sixteen he traveled to Europe to study electronics and became acquainted with the folk songs of fellow students from Brazil, Holland, Austria, and Russia; he later wrote: "I learned the meaning of folk song as it expresses a HOME feeling of belonging and association." Later, while vacationing in Paris, he found a copy of John A. Lomax's *Cowboy Songs* (1910 edition) and "became filled with the meaning of the cowboy and the West."

In Brooklyn he worked as an engineer for a radio firm until the Great Depression, when he went into business for himself. He built broadcast equipment for radio stations and installed sound recorders for air use, and his interest in folk music continued to grow. He started manufacturing and producing records in 1939, spe-

cializing in international ethnic music and using Asch Records as his company name. His first commercial recording venture that featured American folk expression was the 1941 release, *Play Parties in Song and Dance as Sung by Lead Belly*. Other singers of folk songs such as Burl Ives and Josh White turned to him as an outlet for their talents; Asch became the primary producer of folk recordings with marginal commercial demand, recognizing the talents of Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, and hundreds of other singers and musicians. (See: Moses Asch, "Folk Music—A Personal Statement," *Sing Out!* 11 [February-March 1961] 1: 26-27.)

His success in the 1940s was made possible, in part, through his affiliation with Herbert Harris, who owned a record store in Manhattan and produced Stinson Records, and who had access to shellac, a scarce resource during World War II. Asch had no shellac, which was necessary for manufacturing records, but he had a studio, engineering skills, and access to musicians eager to record their music. Asch and Harris combined their resources, and issued records under the Asch-Stinson label. This relationship and its ultimate termination created discographic confusion, for some albums issued during those years require three different descriptions even though the album number, notes, cover illustration, disc number, and matrix numbers are

often the same. An example is Burl Ives's *The Wayfaring Stranger*, originally issued as Asch 345 with a cover illustration by David Stone Martin and with Asch disc labels; later it was issued with a photo of Ives on the cover. Subsequent copies were issued on Asch albums with Stinson disc labels, followed by Stinson albums with Stinson disc labels. The Asch/Harris split that created this discographic confusion came after the war ended.

Harris claimed that recordings made and issued during their partnership were also his and could be issued under the Stinson label. While Asch had most of the master recordings, a few were at the plate maker's plant in New Jersey, and Asch had no second copies. Every approved recording went to the plate maker, where the metal plate and a test pressing were made. Asch went bankrupt in 1947, and since he owed the plate maker money, the plates were seized by the maker, who sold them at auction. Some of the plates were purchased by Pickwick Records in California, and Harris obtained some plates for Stinson. When Harris had no master or plate, he copied the record that had been issued; thus, some recordings issued by Stinson are extremely poor in sound quality. Additionally, for many years other companies claimed to have a license to reproduce Stinson discs, perpetuating the poor sound; in some cases the reproductions are pirated. Many recordings issued

by Asch prior to his bankruptcy were also issued under the Stinson Records label along with some recordings that Asch lost and had never issued copies of. Asch always considered them to be his recordings, for they were made in his studio and he owned the contracts. But after bitter litigation, Asch knew that he could not prevent Harris from using them.

During his career, Asch produced records under several different labels: Asch Records, Asch-Stinson Records, Disc Recordings, Disc Company of America, Folkways Records, and others. He produced approximately 2,200 titles during his forty years of Folkways Records' ownership. He issued recordings of Woody Guthrie on each label that he produced.

The relationship between Woody and Moses Asch was that of record producer and artist, friends and adversaries—a relationship that made money for Asch and gave Woody a source of money when he needed it. Woody also reviewed recordings for Asch, which gave Asch a different perspective about his product and gave Woody a broader knowledge of the world of music.

In the Moses Asch/Folkways Records Archives at the Smithsonian are many of Woody's unpublished songs and poems as well as his commercially issued recordings and unissued master recordings. The unissued masters are takes rejected by Woody and/or Asch for various reasons, e.g., the topic of the

song did not fit the album being issued or a line was forgotten or skipped by Woody.

When Woody started recording in 1940, the commercially viable format was the 78 rpm disc. Once the needle was set on the master disc, there was no stopping. Mistakes could not be edited. If Woody lost the tune or sang the wrong words, he had to start over on a new master disc, so there are cuts in the Asch/Folkways Collection that Woody never heard or approved, for he made mistakes on them. The physical composition of the discs also varied: they were shellac, acetate on glass, and acetate on aluminum. Unfortunately, glass discs break easily and acetate on aluminum flakes off, so some songs in this collection can no longer be transferred from their master discs. A few recordings were lost merely by touching the master disc. Some of the songs in this collection are from those master recordings Moses Asch decided not to use for other projects, while others are previously issued songs chosen as representative of his best works.

WOODY GUTHRIE

More of Woody's story as told by fellow Oklahoman Guy Logsdon will appear in each volume of this collection.

Woody Guthrie played a major role in developing the foundation for the song and social movement now referred to as the urban folk

song revival during the 1940s and '50s. He remains an inspirational figure for folk songwriters, social protest and topical songwriters, and rock and folk rock songwriters. His friendship with Lead Belly, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, Sonny Terry, and other legendary folk artists is well documented, and he unselfishly shared his musical and cultural experiences and ideas with them. His influence on Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, John Mellencamp, and other contemporary musicians and songwriters is also well documented. His children's songs have helped parents and teachers rear, teach, entertain, and challenge young people for decades. And songs and poetry about the Dust Bowl, the Great Depression, and labor history still provide an important dimension to our understanding of life during those years. Woody's creative contributions to our culture are legion in the form of printed books as well as handwritten and/or typed manuscripts, paintings and drawings, and recorded songs.

He was Woodrow Wilson Guthrie, born the third of five children to Charley Edward Guthrie and Nora Sherman Guthrie on 14 July 1912. Charley Guthrie came to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) in 1897 from south Texas, and worked as a cowboy for H.B. Spaulding and other ranchers east of Okmulgee in the Creek Nation. After three years of cowboying, he turned to teaching penmanship,

and in 1902 went to work as a bookkeeper and clerk for a merchant in Welty, near Okemah. Nora Sherman Guthrie, Woody's mother, came to the Creek Nation with her parents from Kansas around 1900 (the exact year is not known). Her father was a farmer and her mother a school teacher in the Creek Nation schools. Charley and Nora were married 14 February 1904.

Woody's family heritage was culturally diverse—a microcosm of Oklahoma culture: his father was a Southerner, his mother a Northerner, and his uncles (his father's half-brothers) of Native American descent.

The Huntington's disease that eventually felled Woody was a tragic aspect of his family heritage, coming through his mother and maternal grandfather, who drowned in a flooded creek near Castle, Oklahoma. In *Bound for Glory* Woody writes about his Tanner uncles (his mother's half-brothers) and about his childhood in Okemah, which provided him a social conscience, an educational foundation, and many stories to tell; he grew up in a community that had an uncommon history.

Built on land leased from Creek Indians, Okemah was planned as the junction point of two train lines. Only one was actually even laid, the Fort Smith and Western Woody often used for his railroad stories. On 22 April 1902 an estimated 3,000 persons gathered to purchase townsite lots at an auction. The first

permanent business was a bank; its tent flaps opened immediately after the auction. Residential tents soon followed. On 16 May 1902 the post office was established—Okemah was a town. Agriculture was primary, dominated by cotton, pecans, peanuts, corn, and cattle. It was not always a quiet agricultural community, for many of the farmers who moved into the area were or became socialists.

Woody's father Charley Guthrie was a staunch Democrat, as were many other Okemah citizens, and as the socialist movement became powerful throughout rural Oklahoma, Charley fought them with pen and paper and sometimes fists. Charley and Nora had set up house in nearby Castle, but in 1907 as statehood neared and elections were being held for political offices, Charley filed for and won the office of District Court Clerk. The Guthries then moved to Okemah, where Charley became a leader. As the Socialist Party grew to become a third major party, its candidates came close to winning key statewide elections. Charley battled them in a series of newspaper articles and on the streets. On 14 July 1912, when his third child was born, Charley's political enthusiasm for the Democratic presidential candidate inspired him to name his son Woodrow Wilson Guthrie.

As U.S. involvement in World War I approached, Socialists lost members and influence, for they opposed the war and encouraged

draft resistance. Many Socialist tenant farmers in counties adjacent to Okfuskee County organized the Working Class Union. During August 1917, their protests grew into overt, often comic action. They burned a few bridges and out-buildings some thirty-five miles southwest of Okemah and stole green corn from the fields for food. For this reason, their insurrection became known as the Green Corn Rebellion; they planned to march on Washington, gaining size as sympathizers joined them, and to overthrow the government. But their movement died in the corn fields. Their actions deepened resistance to socialism in Oklahoma.

Okemah had been a multicultural environment for years before Woody was born. The town was on Creek Indian land, and there was a significant African-American presence in the area. One year after Okemah was founded, 13 miles west of it, another railroad town—Boley, an all African-American community—was established. In the days leading to statehood in 1907, Boley and Okemah battled to become the county seat of Okfuskee County. Okemah won.

Coal mining and glass manufacturing were major industries in Henryetta and brought European immigrants to the area. And while very little oil was discovered in the immediate vicinity of Okemah, major fields were discovered in the surrounding area. In 1923 the Cromwell field was brought in, just thirteen miles southwest of Okemah. As a railroad town

Okemah boomed as much as Cromwell; the population jumped from 2,000 to 10,000 almost overnight. Within a few years it fell as quickly as it grew. This particular boom time was the inspiration for some of Woody's best stories in *Bound for Glory*.

Bound for Glory represents the Okemah Woody knew, the cultural diversity he witnessed or heard about, and the hometown he loved. But in *Bound for Glory* Woody focuses on other childhood experiences: his heart-rending description of his sister Clara's death, a gang fight chapter as humorous as any childhood episode written by Mark Twain, and the gradual disintegration of his family through calamitous fires and his mother's deteriorating mental and physical condition. The reader of *Bound for Glory* should keep in mind that *it is an autobiographical novel*, not an autobiography. Woody always referred to it as his "novel."

Woody was a master storyteller who did not let fact stand in the way of a good story. He did not mention his younger brother, George, and his younger sister, Mary Jo. In the chapters about his Texas experiences, he did not mention his wife and children. A factual autobiography would at least have mentioned them and have given a semblance of accurate dates. Instead, *Bound for Glory* is Woody's powerful, well-written autobiographical novel in which tragedy and humor beautifully intertwine.

Woody remembered rumors about his older

sister Clara's death by fire—that she committed suicide or that her mother murdered her. Taunts from other children about his "crazy" mother stayed with him. In June of 1927, when his father was severely burned, it was told around town that Nora had thrown burning kerosene on Charley in a fit of anger. Because of this, the local Masonic Lodge took the responsibility of committing Nora to Central State Hospital for the Insane in Norman, Oklahoma. Nora was not insane, but little was known about Huntington's disease at that time. The erratic behavior, depression, and involuntary flailing of the arms symptomatic of the disease can make its victims appear insane.

In the Spring 1942 issue of *Common Ground* (p. 35) Woody wrote: "At 14, I first hit the road and followed it down to the Gulf Coast. The country was booming with real-estate deals, and a family of my friends had moved in down there to get started on a truck farm." It was the Mosier family, and Bud and Pete Mosier were his childhood friends (Woody called them the Mosely family). Woody was a few weeks away from being fifteen when his mother was committed and the family broke apart, and he joined the Mosiers. He worked his way down to Texas often playing his harmonica for food or money. In a manuscript Woody gave to the Library of Congress Archive of Folk Culture, he wrote:

But my family hit a little hard luck and I



ASCH

had to hit the road in 1927 when I was about 15 years old. I rambled around for a good long time, down to east Texas, and along the Gulf of Mexico, and then across Texas again—up to the panhandle plains, the big wheat country, the big oil country, the big cattle country. But ever so often, I'd find myself a driftin' back down the draw toward Oklahoma, and when I'd get back there I couldn't make a livin', so I'd haf to take off again—just anywhere.

Woody did travel during the summers, but he always returned to Okemah and high school. In 1929 during his junior year he was “Joke Editor” for the school newspaper, and in the school annual he was listed as being a member of the Publication Club and a member of the Boys’ Glee Club. Woody seems to have shown a quick wit, good sense of humor, and a talent for entertaining. This is not the image that writers often develop about Woody, and it is not necessarily the image that Woody wanted people to have after he became a social protest songwriter. Nevertheless, he was well liked and gregarious, small in stature, creative, and energetic as a bantam rooster. At the end of his junior year, he left Okemah and went to Pampa to join his father and the rest of the family.

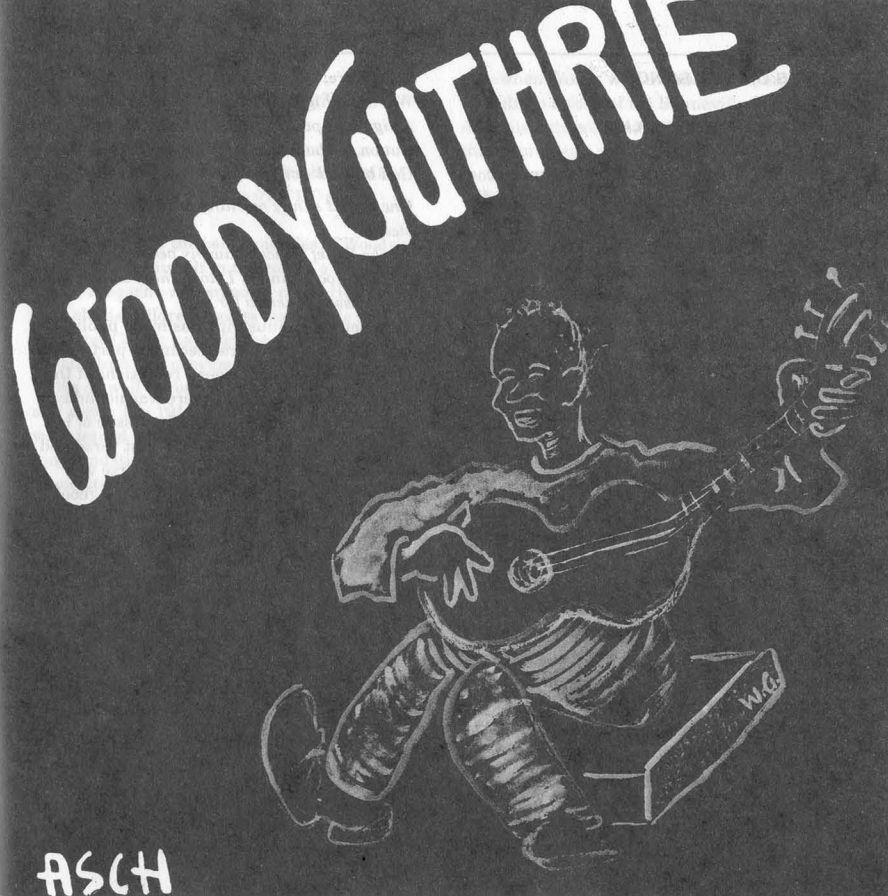
(To be continued on Volume 2)

WOODY GUTHRIE AND MOSES ASCH

Woody Guthrie’s first studio recording session was on 21 March 1940, when Alan Lomax interviewed him for the Library of Congress, and his last session was on 7 January 1952, when he recorded two songs for Decca Records. During these twelve years, he also recorded for RCA Victor, the Bonneville Power Administration, Keynote Recordings, General Records, and many radio shows, but the bulk of studio recordings made by him were engineered and mastered by Moses Asch. The exact number of recordings made by Woody for Asch is unknown, for Asch did not keep accurate documentation of his sessions.

The documentation that exists in Asch’s log ledger is often difficult to understand. Information is not listed chronologically, and first names or initials are used instead of complete names. For some entries, no name is listed. Jeff Place has compared the surviving master discs with the log book and has compiled the most accurate listing of Woody’s recordings for the Archives; the list is being integrated into Guy Logsdon’s “Biblio-Discography of the Songs of Woody Guthrie” and is the source for much of the discographic information in this collection.

Cover of Asch 347



NOTES ON THE SONGS

1. **THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND**

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar

(Recording date unknown, from the master for Folkways 2481; also on Smithsonian Folkways 40001)

Written 23 February 1940, "This Land" is Woody's best-known song and one of the most widely sung songs in the United States; it has even been championed as a new national anthem. Its social significance lies in its inclusive statements, and its popularity is derived from a simple melody that can be sung by all. Woody's stated reason for writing it is possibly open to criticism—he said he was tired of hearing Kate Smith, one of the nation's most popular singers during the 1930s, sing "God Bless America." So he voiced a different perspective on the United States, ending each verse with "God blessed America for me." Later he changed the last line to "This land was made for you and me."

The melody is similar to the gospel song "When the World's on Fire"; this was a popular melody also adapted for the tune of "Little Darling, Pal of Mine."

Woody wrote six verses, of which two were about Great Depression experiences and were not heard when the song was first issued in 1951 on the 10" lp *This Land Is My Land* (Folkways FP 27, reissued FC 7027, 1961).

They were:

*Was a big high wall there that tried to stop me
A sign was painted said: Private Property.
But on the back side it didn't say nothing—
God blessed America for me.*

*One bright sunny morning in the shadow of the
steeple*

*By the Relief Office I saw my people—
As they stood hungry, I stood there wondering if
God blessed America for me.*

When the manuscript was made public, the "Private Property" verse became a part of Arlo Guthrie's and Pete Seeger's renditions of the song. In the manuscript there was no indication of a chorus, but on that first issue of his recording, Woody repeated his first verse and it became the chorus. A seventh verse was added when he mimeographed his songbook, *Ten of Woody Guthrie's Songs: Book One* (3 April 1945), and sold them for twenty-five cents; the verse is:

*Nobody living can ever stop me
As I go walking my freedom highway
Nobody living can make me turn back
This land was made for you and me.*

It was believed that Woody did not record any of the missing verses, but as Jeff Place systematically transferred each master in the Folkways Archives to a compact disc, he discovered Woody's singing of the "Private Property" verse. It is number 14 in this collection.

2. **CAR SONG**

(alternate titles: "Riding in My Car"
& "Take Me Riding in My Car")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(No recording date or matrix number available, Smithsonian Acetate 073, 10" glass acetate)

This is one of the best examples of Woody's ability to put himself in the role of a child and create songs; he was an adult child. He said that all his children's songs were made by his daughter Cathy; however, he wrote songs for his children in a previous marriage in the late 1930s as well as for Cathy and her brothers and sister. His 1946 and 1947 children's songs were issued under the DISC label and earned commendations from the Parent-Teachers Association and the National Education Association, but this song was released later under the Folkways label. It was on *Songs to Grow On, Nursery Days, Vol. 1* (F 5, FOL 105, F 105, FC 7005, FC 7705, and FC 7675).

3. **RAMBLIN' ROUND**

(original title: "Ramblin' Blues")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica
(Words by Woody Guthrie, melody adapted from "Goodnight Irene"; probably recorded in late April 1947, matrix D 201, Smithsonian Acetate 159, from master tape for Folkways 31001)

A dated manuscript does not exist to indi-

cate when Woody wrote these lyrics, but it is thought to be one of his Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)/Columbia River songs that expresses a migrant worker's nostalgic thoughts.

In April 1947, Asch received a telegram from the BPA requesting Woody to sing for a Rural Electric Cooperative meeting in Spokane, Washington, telling the people that dams and electricity were good for them and their agriculture. When Woody returned, Asch suggested that he record a few Columbia River songs; Woody agreed, providing he could include some Dust Bowl songs. The collection was issued that year as *Bal-lads from the Dust Bowl* (Disc 610, three 78 rpm discs). "Ramblin' Blues" was side 5011 A. It is the recording that has been used as "Ramblin' Round" on subsequent issues such as *This Land Is Your Land* (Folkways FTS 31001) and *Woody Guthrie: Columbia River Collection* (Rounder 1036). Since the migrant theme is common to both topics, a few songs such as this one can be used as Columbia River songs or Dust Bowl ballads. For additional information, see: *Sing Out!* 14 (April, May) 2:18 and number 8 in this collection.

4. **TALKING FISHING BLUES**

Woody Guthrie, vocals/guitar
(From *Bound for Glory* [Folkways FP 78/1, reissued as FW 2481], recorded 25 April 1944,

matrix MA 75, Smithsonian Acetate 189, from master tape for Folkways 2481; also on *A Fish That's a Song* [Smithsonian Folkways SF 45037]

Pete Seeger wrote that when he and the Almanac Singers met Woody they were "mightily impressed with his 'Talking Blues' form: two lines that rhyme, two more that rhyme, then two or three irregular, free form lines following as a comment, before the next stanza" (*Talkin' Union* 6 [April 1983]: 4). Although many believe Woody to be the creator, the "talking blues" is a form of country music novelty song dating back to the 1920s. The form is credited to a South Carolinian, Chris Bouchillon, who in April 1926 recorded the original "Talking Blues" (see: Charles Wolfe's notes on *Chris Bouchillon "The Original Talking Blues Man"* [Old Homestead OHCS 181]). However, "Talking Blues" with the often-copied opening line of many talking blues, "If you want to get to heaven, let me tell you how to do it...", is also reported from a "Negro minstrel show" heard in 1915 in Louisburg, North Carolina (Newman I. White, *American Negro Folk-Songs* [reprint Hatboro, PA: Folklore Associates, 1968], p.135).

Bouchillon's recording sold over 90,000 copies, and numerous folk, country, and blues entertainers such as Woody Guthrie and Robert Lunn embraced the style and often adapted the lyrics (see: "We Shall Be Free,"

Lead Belly Sings Folk Songs [Smithsonian Folkways SF 40010], with Woody Guthrie, Cisco Houston, and Sonny Terry). Woody used the "talking blues" as a musical vehicle to express his thoughts about many, many topics (see number 20 in this collection). For additional information about the "talkin' blues," see: John Greenway, *The Talking Blues*, notes by Kenneth S. Goldstein (Folkways FH 5232, 1958).

5. PHILADELPHIA LAWYER

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/guitar; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal
(From *Folkways: The Original Vision* [Smithsonian Folkways SF 40001], recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 36, Smithsonian Acetate 025)

In the summer of 1937, Woody Guthrie and his cousin Jack Guthrie landed jobs on a radio show over KFVD, Hollywood, California. Jack left the show, and a mutual friend, "Lefty Lou" Crissman, became Woody's singing partner on the "Woody and Lefty Lou Show." One day she showed Woody a newspaper article about a jealous cowboy shooting a "Philadelphia lawyer" in Reno, Nevada (during Woody's time, the term meant a shyster or an ambulance chaser). Woody thought it was funny—a cowboy shooting a lawyer. Originally calling it "Reno Blues," he apparently set his words to the traditional American ballad, "Jealous Lover (Florella)" (Laws F 1). He included it in

the song book *Woody and Lefty Lou's Favorite Collection Old Time Hill Country Songs* (Gardena, CA: Spanish American Institute Press, circa 1937, p. 8).

Woody and Jack Guthrie sang it in bars up and down the California coast; as a young singer listening outside bars, Rose Maddox learned it from their singing. She and her brothers entertained and recorded as "The Maddox Brothers and Rose," and "Philadelphia Lawyer" became a popular song when they recorded it with Rose doing the vocal (Four Star 1289, 1949).

6. LINDBERGH

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(From *Hard Travelin'* [Disc Records LP 110, 1964])

Charles A. Lindbergh became a world-renowned aviation figure in May 1927, when he made the first nonstop solo flight across the Atlantic. He was born in Detroit, Michigan, in 1902, but his childhood was spent in Minnesota and Washington, D.C. His father, Charles Augusta Lindbergh, was a five-term progressive U. S. Representative from Minnesota, and received much criticism for denouncing war propaganda prior to the U.S. entry into World War I.

Lindbergh married Anne Morrow, and in 1932, their son was kidnaped and murdered, which was the most notorious crime of the

1930s; the publicity drove the family to Europe. In 1936, he warned about Germany's growing air power; however, in 1938, he received a decoration from the German government (Woody's reference to his "German cross"), and upon returning to the United States in 1940 gave speeches along with conservative politicians encouraging American neutrality in the expanding European war. President Roosevelt was critical of his speeches and position; Woody's position is expressed in this song. Woody also is critical of individuals who remained neutral, and he mentions Father Charles E. Coughlin, a Roman Catholic priest who developed a massive radio audience and espoused hatred of Roosevelt, communism, and European intervention.

The melody is similar to "White House Blues," a song about the assassination of President McKinley.

7. HOBO'S LULLABY

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Goebel Reeves; from *Folkways: The Original Vision* Smithsonian Folkways SF 40001, recorded 25 April 1944, matrix MA 109, Smithsonian Acetate 055, from master for Smithsonian Folkways 40001)

This has been reported to be Woody's favorite song; it was recorded by its composer, Goebel Reeves, 13 August 1934, in San Fran-

cisco, but apparently not issued. Later that month, 31 August, he recorded it in Chicago (Champion 45181); when or where Woody learned it is not known, but he included it in his unpublished manuscript "Woody & Lefty Lou's One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs," dated April 1938. Woody wrote:

A hobo's life moves swiftly, broadly, talking and moving in terms of states, countries, seasons; instead of the narrow, suffocating, life of City Living so hemmed in on every side... Friendless, and alone he dwells among us, drifting like a tumbleweed across the earth... seeking a freedom that you have only dimly felt at times.

Reeves's life was similar to Woody's, but he did not write social protest songs. He was born 9 October 1899 in Sherman, Texas; his mother was a musician, and his father was a salesman who later was elected to the Texas House of Representatives. After serving in the army during World War I, he started performing with his guitar and traveling across the country, eventually performing over small radio stations. When he tired of that life, he would ship out as a merchant seaman. He became known as "The Texas Drifter" and also sang and recorded under other names. In the 1930s, he appeared on nationwide radio shows often using his songs and poems about hobo life, but he became disillusioned with

the entertainment world and left it. Reeves died 26 January 1959 in Long Beach, California (see: *Goebel Reeves: Hobo's Lullaby* [Bear Family BCD 15680], notes by Fred Hoepfner).

8. PASTURES OF PLENTY

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica (Probably recorded in late April 1947, from Smithsonian reel-to-reel tape #31-take 2, matrix D-199, Smithsonian Acetate 0033)

The Bonneville Power Administration sells and distributes the electricity generated by the hydroelectric dams along the Columbia River system. When Congress created it in 1937, the BPA, as did other rural electric administrations in the nation, faced public relations problems. Many citizens were skeptical of the value to be gained by providing subsidized electricity to most homes in the nation. Large power companies waged an advertising war against rural electrification the same way that insurance companies fought Social Security; the BPA therefore decided to use the movies to sell the value of the dams and electricity, and they hired Woody to write songs for a movie eventually titled *The Columbia* (see: Woody Guthrie, *Roll On Columbia: The Columbia River Collection*, Bill Murlin, ed. [Sing Out Corp., 1991]).

Woody said that he wrote twenty-six songs in twenty-six days. Even though this may be somewhat exaggerated, the fact is that he did

write twenty-six songs about the project and the conditions that drove families to the Northwest in the 1930s. Not known to be a hard worker at manual labor himself, he did listen to migrants and other laborers and transformed their stories, problems, aspirations, tragedies, loves, and work experiences into first-person narratives that still evoke emotional responses from those who read and listen. "Pastures of Plenty" is one of those lasting, powerful products of Woody's short time with the BPA that he included in *Ballads from the Dust Bowl* (Disc 610, side 5010 A; also on: *Folkways: The Original Vision* [Smithsonian Folkways SF 40001]). He wrote at least ten verses; however, the most popular variant has five quatrain verses. For additional information about his BPA days see number 3 in this collection.

9. GRAND COULEE DAM

(alternate titles: "Big Grand Coulee Dam" and "Ballad of the Great Grand Coulee")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar (Probably recorded in 1944, matrix MA-17; Smithsonian Acetate 118, 10" shellac disc, issued as Asch 78 347-1B)

This song was one of the songs that Asch included in his first Woody Guthrie collection (Asch 347). Woody included it in his mimeographed songbook, *Ten of Woody Guthrie's Songs: Book One* (3 April 1945); he

wrote: "...The rich ones hired airplanes full of entertainers and stars to come up to Oregon, Washington, Montana, and Wyoming and tell the people that they didn't need no Coolee (sic) Dam at all; that is, not for the next couple of centuries.... The world didn't need no more houses with electricity in them.... Then I sung another little song to sort of put these airplane loads of fonies back in their place."

Manuscripts indicate he originally composed at least eight verses to this song (see: *Woody Guthrie, Roll On Columbia: The Columbia River Collection*, Bill Murlin, ed., [Sing Out Corp., 1991]), but later cut it to six verses. He wrote that he recorded it for the BPA and for the United States Office of War Information as well as for the Asch Record Company. For more information about the BPA, see numbers 3 and 8 in this collection.

10. END OF THE LINE

(alternate title: "Mile an' a Half from th' End of th' Line")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica (Probably recorded in late April 1947, from master for Folkways 31001)

Another of his lesser-known Columbia River (BPA) songs, this is a fast-tempo statement that carries the listener through the decade of the '30s—one year per line. The first half could be a Dust Bowl song; they

move out of the drought area “fifteen mile from th’ Bonneville Dam,” but they are still “a mile from th’ end of th’ line” without the benefit of electricity. A typescript copy in the Folkways Archives has a penciled statement, “Talk it.” It is not Woody’s handwriting—apparently Asch believed the song might flow better as a talking blues.

It was not issued until Woody received his Distinguished Conservation Service Award from the United States Department of the Interior in April 1966, in recognition of his musical contributions to making “our people aware of their heritage and the land.” A BPA substation on the Columbia River was also named “The Woody Guthrie Substation.” To complement the award, Asch issued *Woody Guthrie: Bonneville Dam & Other Columbia River Songs* (Verve Folkways FV 9036, 1966; reissued as *This Land Is Your Land* [Folkways FTS 31001, 1967]; see: Woody Guthrie, *Roll On Columbia: The Columbia River Collection*, Bill Murlin, ed. [Sing Out Corp., 1991]).

11. NEW YORK TOWN

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/guitar; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal
(Recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 21, from Asch 347-3B)

This is an example of Woody adopting an African-American musical style. “New York Town” is similar to “One Dime Blues” recorded

by Blind Lemon Jefferson. In fact, Woody recorded “One Dime Blues” for the Library of Congress on 4 January 1941. He also used this structure and melody for his BPA song “Ramblin’ Blues (Portland Town)” (see: “Ramblin’ Blues,” *Woody Guthrie: Columbia River Collection* [Rounder Records 1036, 1987]).

The first Woody Guthrie album issued by Moses Asch was titled *Woody Guthrie* (Asch Records 347, three 78 rpm discs, released in the fall of 1944); “New York Town” was side 347-3B. Woody and Cisco Houston had recorded it during that initial marathon one-day recording session, 19 April 1944, in which they recorded over fifty-five songs.

12. GYPSY DAVY

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Recorded late April 1944, matrix MA 139, Smithsonian Acetate 90, from Asch 78 347-2B)

This British traditional ballad (Child Ballad 200) is known by numerous titles: “Gypsy Laddie,” “Black Jack Davie (Davy),” “Amos Furr,” and many more. Texts are known to exist dating to the mid-18th century, but, no doubt, it is much older. As the song traveled through various traditions it became regionalized by the singers; Woody’s version is a combination of Texas and Oklahoma texts (see: Alan Lomax, *The Penguin Book of American Folk Songs* [Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964, p. 112]). He recorded it for the Library of

Congress on 4 January 1941, and it was included in the first collection of folk songs issued by the Library of Congress, *Folk Music of the United States: Anglo-American Ballads AAFS 1* (1942).

It is possible this is a song that as a child Woody heard his mother or father sing, for in an unpublished manuscript he wrote:

Wimmens hearts is like guitars—and here is the song and tale of a woman who decided to leave her husband and wealth and go with a Gypsy Davy, and she loved all the songs played on the strings of her heart—except one string. She couldn’t bear the thoughts of leaving her purty little Blue-Eyed Baby. I dont reckon they is anybody knows how old this song is. I’ve heared it all my life.

—(“Woody & Lefty Lou’s One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs,” dated April 1938)

He recorded it for Asch in late April 1944, and it was included in *Woody Guthrie* (Asch Records 347, three 78 rpm discs), released in the fall of 1944, side 347-2B. An interesting occupational adaptation of Woody’s version is cowboy singer Don Edwards’ “Gypsy Davey” on *West of Yesterday* (Warner Western 46187).



13. JESUS CHRIST

(alternate title: “They Laid Jesus Christ in His Grave”)

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Recording date unknown, Smithsonian Acetate 161-1, 16” glass acetate)

Woody was a religious man, but not in the conventional sense. He was well-read in biblical scriptures as well as in Oriental religions and philosophies. There are three manuscripts of this song in the Folkways Archives, and on an early dated version he wrote:

I wrote this song looking out of a rooming house window in New York City in the winter of 1940. I saw how the poor folks lived, and

then I saw how the rich folks lived, and the poor folks down and out and cold and hungry, and the rich ones out drinking good whiskey and celebrating and wasting handfuls of money at gambling and women, and I got to thinking about what Jesus said, and what if He was to walk into New York City and preach like he use to. They'd lock Him back in Jail as sure as you're reading this. "Even as you've done it unto the least of these little ones, you have done it unto me."

On 5 February 1947 he added four additional verses; he made his first recording of it on 22 March 1940 for Alan Lomax and the Library of Congress (see: *Woody Guthrie: Library of Congress Recordings* [Rounder Records 1041/2/3]), and recorded it for Asch in late April 1944, and it was included in *Woody Guthrie* (Asch Records 347, three 78 rpm discs) released in the fall of 1944, side 347-2B.

14. THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND (alternate take)
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Recorded late April 1944, matrix MA-114, Smithsonian Acetate 164, 10" shellac disc)
(See number 1 in this collection.)

15. DO-RE-MI
(alternate title: "If You Ain't Got the Do Re Mi")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Recording date unknown, from *Folkways*:

The Original Vision [Smithsonian Folkways SF 40001])

Written in 1937, this is one of Woody's early songs about Dust Bowl migrants; it is the first song in his *Woody and Lefty Lou's Favorite Collection Old Time Hill Country Songs* (Gardena, CA: Spanish American Institute Press, circa 1937). He wrote:

For years people have been pickin' up and leavin' out of the drought country and dust bowl parts...a-comin' to California.... I ain't a-discouragin' nobody...but to those who are just a-comin' to be comin'...I present the above song.... It ain't so much on poetry, but it tells a LOT of truth.

In 1941, with the guidance of Alan Lomax, one of Woody's many fake books was copied (typed) by staff members at the Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress; this song was dated as an original song by Woody in that collection. He recorded it for the Library of Congress during his first session with Alan Lomax, 21 March 1940, and one month later recorded it for Victor Records as a selection in his *Dust Bowl Ballads, Vol. I*, side 26620-A. He probably recorded it for Asch in late April 1947, but it was not issued by Folkways until it appeared in 1956 on *Bound for Glory* (Folkways FP 78/1, reissued as FW 2481). It remains one of Woody's most popular Dust Bowl migrant songs.

16. JARAMA VALLEY

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Recording date unknown, from master for Folkways 5437)

The Abraham Lincoln Battalion was composed of approximately 3,200 Americans who fought for Republican Spain, the legally elected government, in a civil war against insurgent forces led by General Franco, who supported Hitler, Mussolini, and fascism. More than 1,500 of the battalion were killed, and scores were wounded. Jarama Valley was where they fired their first shots in the war in February 1937. During World War II, many of the survivors served in the United States military. With Pete Seeger's encouragement, Asch recorded this song and five others with Seeger, Tom Glazer, Baldwin "Butch" Hawes, and Bess Lomax Hawes to honor the men and women in *Songs of the Lincoln Battalion* (Asch 330). There is no evidence that Woody wrote "Jarama Valley," nor is there information about when and where he learned it or when he recorded it. He may have learned it by listening to the recording by Seeger and the others. Asch used Woody's version in *Songs of the Spanish Civil War, Vol. II* (Folkways FH 5437, 1962).

17. BIGGEST THING MAN HAS EVER DONE

(alternate title: "The Great Historical Bum")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 15, from Asch disc 432-3B)

Nineteenth-century American frontier life encouraged the tall tale and the braggart, and it inspired an irreverence toward the Bible and, to some extent, toward the classroom. "I Am a Highly Educated Man" was written by H.C. Verner and Harry C. Clyde in 1894. This late nineteenth-century popular song combines these prevailing themes into biblical and historical comedy. The writers composed a song that is easily adaptable, which is what Woody Guthrie did when he wrote "The Biggest Thing That Man Has Ever Done." The first documented title change from the original, "I Am a Highly Educated Man," was when Fiddlin' John Carson recorded it as "When Abraham and Isaac Rushed the Can," circa March 1924, Atlanta, Georgia (Okeh 40181). The following year Kelly Harrell recorded it, using the title "I Was Born About 10,000 Years Ago," circa August 1925, Asheville, North Carolina (Okeh 40486). Both Vernon Dalhart and Uncle Dave Macon recorded "I'm the Man That Rode the Mule Around the World," and that is the title that Woody included in his 1938 unpublished manuscript, "Woody & Lefty Lou's One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One

Hundred and One Songs." He used the theme for a BPA song, and it was easily adapted into this World War II variant, which was first issued as a 78 rpm disc in *Folksay* (Asch Records 432).

18. PICTURE FROM LIFE'S OTHER SIDE

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, vocal harmony/guitar; Bess Hawes, harmony
(Words and music by Charles E. Baer, 1896; recorded 25 April 1944, matrix MA82, from *Woody Guthrie Sings Folksongs with Cisco Houston and Sonny Terry* [Folkways FA2484], Smithsonian Acetate 190, 10" shellac disc)

Woody used this song in his radio show over KFVD, Hollywood, and included it in the song book, *Woody and Lefty Lou's Favorite Collection of Old Time Hill Country Songs* (Gardena, CA: Spanish American Institute Press, circa 1937, p. 9). It was a late nineteenth-century sentimental song that appealed to folk and country singers. Vernon Dalhart popularized it, but it was first recorded by Smith's Sacred Singers, 22 April 1926, Atlanta, Georgia (Columbia 15090-D). The composer, Charles E. Baer from Pennsylvania, worked for the Baldwin Locomotive Works, but his passion was writing sentimental parlor songs. One of his lesser-known songs was "Let the Love Light Linger Longer Lady Lou."

19. JESSE JAMES (LEAD BELLY'S VERSION)

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words by Woody Guthrie, music adapted from "Out on the Western Plains" by Huddie Ledbetter; possibly recorded 25 April 1944; from *Cowboy Songs on Folkways* [SF 40043])

Robbing from the rich and giving to the poor as well as seeking revenge against powerful and impersonal organizations and individuals have been popular folk themes. Betrayal and death by a trusted friend add to the outlaw mystique. Jesse James was the epitome of each theme, and with the help of dime novelists, and eventually the motion pictures, he became the Robin Hood of the West. He also captured the imagination of song makers. However, he was not a cowboy; he was a farmer. But since outlaw songs are usually included in the larger body of cowboy songs, "Jesse James" is considered to be a cowboy song.

In 1951 Moses Asch planned to issue an anthology of cowboy songs, and even though he made a mock-up of the album and advertised it, he never released it. Woody Guthrie's singing of this song is on the mock-up, and the typed label reads, "Jesse James (Lead Belly's Version)." Yet there is no evidence that Lead Belly wrote it. Two verses and the refrain are from "When I Was a Cowboy," but it is sung to a different melody. It is probable that Woody wrote the other verses and set it

to the different tune. It is a significant Jesse James song, for it does not romanticize him. Woody knew the traditional Jesse James song, and he also wrote another entirely different, but unrecorded, song about the outlaw.

20. TALKING HARD WORK

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(From *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* [Folkways 2484], also on *Folkways: The Original Vision* ("Woody's Rag") [Smithsonian Folkways 40001], recording date unknown, from master for Folkways 2484)

One of many talking blues songs that Woody composed, this one was not released until 1964 on *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* (Folkways 2484); for more information about the talking blues form, see number 4 in this collection.

21. WHEN THAT GREAT SHIP WENT DOWN

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
(Recorded 25 April 1944, matrix MA 91-1, Smithsonian Acetate 85-1, 12" glass acetate)

Disasters have always inspired songwriters, who often view them as signs of God's wrath. Almost immediately after news flooded the nation that the *Titanic* had sunk (15 April 1912), songwriters started cranking out versions of the event. Within the year over 125

songs about the disaster were copyrighted, and public fascination with the *Titanic* and its 1500-plus victims seems destined to extend into the 21st century. The songwriters often used popular public domain songs for their lyric structure and tune.

22. HARD, AIN'T IT HARD

(alternate title: "There Is a House in This Old Town")
Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar
(Recorded 16 April 1944, matrix LM 1, Smithsonian Acetate 089, from *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* [Folkways 2484], from master for Folkways 2484)

Moses Asch's log book indicates that this was the first song Woody and Cisco recorded for him—16 April 1944; but Woody had already recorded it on 4 January 1941 for the Library of Congress (4491-B4, unissued) and on 7 July 1941 as an Almanac Singer for General Records, issued on *Sod Buster Ballads* [General Album G-21 (5019-B)] with Pete Seeger (banjo/harmony) and John "Peter" Hawes (guitar/harmony). A variant of the song is in his unpublished manuscript "Woody & Lefty Lou's One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs," dated April 1938.

Alan Lomax documented it as an "original treatment" of the once-popular college drink-

ing song "There Is a Tavern in the Town" and "stemming from the 'Butcher Boy' tradition" (Lomax, *The Folk Songs of North America* [Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1960, p. 439]). The "Butcher Boy" is Laws P 24, a British broadside that has become traditional in America. Eldon Baker & His Brown County Revelers, the Delmore Brothers, and others recorded the variants "It's Hard" or "Ain't It Hard to Love" in mid-1938 and later.

23. GOING DOWN THE ROAD FEELING BAD

(original title: "Lonesome Road Blues"; numerous alternate titles)
Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
(Recorded 24 April 1944, matrix MA 711, Smithsonian Acetate 451, 10" shellac disc)

Variants of this song have traveled across this nation for over one hundred years; the identity of its writer has been lost in the passage of time, and Woody is just one of many who adapted it as his own. In his writings and recordings there are at least three variants, and he used the tune for other compositions and for a radio theme song. It is in his unpublished manuscript "Woody & Lefty Lou's One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs," dated April 1938, as "Lonesome Road Blues." Its blues form suggests its origin in Southern

African-American culture, and its verses intermingle with those of other blues.

When and where Woody learned it is not known, but it is probable that he heard recordings of it. By 1938, nearly forty singers or bands had recorded variants under a wide variety of titles. Asch first used Woody's version on *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* (Folkways 2484, 1964).

No less than six variants were collected by the W. P. A. California Folk Music Project during the late 1930s; one manuscript states that "since 1933 it has become the song of migrant families who were tracted out of Texas, dusted out of Oklahoma, and flooded out of Arkansas." Woody wrote that, when they were shooting Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* (circa late 1939), he was invited to the studios and asked to sing a song that most "Okies" would know: "This was the first song that popped to my mind, so without thinking, I sung it." He also said they used it in the book (*Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People* [New York: Oak Publications, 1967, p. 215]). In the Folkways Archives there are many manuscripts, including some of Woody's typescripts of the song. One indicates that he, Pete Seeger, and Lee Hays wrote verses to support a national minimum wage law. Woody also wrote his "original version" in January 1939 while singing over KFVD Radio in Hollywood, "Blowin' Down This Road."

24. I AIN'T GOT NOBODY

(alternate title: "I Don't Love Nobody")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/lead guitar; Cisco Houston, rhythm guitar
(Recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 6, Smithsonian Acetate 007, 10" shellac disc)

This was the eighth song Woody and Cisco recorded for Asch, but it was not released until Asch issued *Hard Travelin'* under the Disc label in 1964 (Disc 110). Apparently not many copies were pressed, for it is one of the most difficult Woody Guthrie long-play records to find. The melody is similar to the old-time fiddle tune, "I Don't Love Nobody," which is easily adapted to other instruments such as the guitar and banjo. "Don't Love Me" was popular with early jazz bands. Elizabeth Cotton plays it as a blues on *Freight Train and Other North Carolina Folk Songs and Tunes* (Folkways 3526, 1958; reissued as Smithsonian Folkways 40009); it was recorded as a bluegrass vocal on *Red Allen & the Kentuckians* (Folkways FTS 31065, 1979) and as a banjo piece by J. C. Sutphin on *American Banjo Three Finger and Scruggs Style* (Folkways 2314, 1957; reissued by Smithsonian Folkways 40037). Both Elizabeth Cotton and Red Allen sing lyrics, but they differ from the two short verses Woody sings—ones that he probably wrote.

25. SINKING OF THE REUBEN JAMES

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(From Woody Guthrie, *Bound for Glory* [Folkways FP 78/1, 1956 (FA 2481, 1961)], reissued on *That's Why We're Marching* [Smithsonian Folkways 40021], recorded 25 April 1944, matrix MA 80, Smithsonian Acetate 081, 10" glass acetate)

On 31 October 1941, the U.S. Navy reported that a Nazi U-boat torpedoed the destroyer *Reuben James*; under the command of Lieutenant Commander H. L. Edwards, the ship sank west of the Iceland coast with only forty-four of the one hundred and twenty crewmen rescued.

Woody Guthrie was living in the Almanac House when he wrote his tribute to the lost sailors. He had trouble with a chorus, for he wanted to list all of the lost seamen's names. One of the Almanacs suggested using "What were their names," instead of listing the names. Millard Lampell wrote the last verse; so credits usually read "by Woody Guthrie and the Almanac Singers." Even though Woody adapted "Wildwood Flower" ("I'll Twine 'Mid the Ringlets") for the verse melody, the tune for the chorus (according to Pete Seeger) was composed by Woody.

It has long been stated that guitar players east of the Mississippi River start their picking career playing "Wildwood Flower." The song was popularized by the Carter Family,

who recorded it on 10 May 1928 in Camden, New Jersey. It was released as Victor V40000, with Sarah Carter singing the lyrics. However, it was a popular 19th-century parlor song written in 1860 under the title "I'll Twine 'Mid the Ringlets"; the music was composed by Joseph Philbrick Webster, who also composed the tunes to "Lorena" and the hymn "That Sweet By and By," and the lyrics were by Maud Irving. Through the traditional transmission process, the lyrics were modified, sometimes into phrases with no clear meaning.

26. **WHY, OH WHY?**

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica (No recording date available, from *Why, Oh Why?* [Folkways FC 7016, 1985]; reissued on *Songs to Grow On for Mother and Child* [Smithsonian Folkways 45035], from master for Smithsonian Folkways 45035)

Most of Woody's children's songs are written in language a child can sing, but this one is written for a parent, grandparent, or adult to sing to and with the child. It has a sophisticated form of questions and answers. Moses Asch encouraged Woody to write a series of children's songs; on the manuscript in the Folkways Archives dated 3 February 1947, Woody wrote twelve verses with the statement: "Add your own verses from here on in." The recording session was held later in 1947,

but Asch did not use this song until 1985 when Sam Charters compiled and edited *Why, Oh Why?: and other nonsense and activity songs for very early childhood with Woody Guthrie* (Folkways FC 7016).

27. **THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND** (reprise) Woody Guthrie, vocal and guitar; Cisco Houston (No recording date or matrix number available, Smithsonian Acetate 388, 16" glass acetate)

Woody and Cisco recorded different versions of a musical train ride across the nation narrating the towns visited and the problems confronted when "riding the rails." They used a variety of tunes for the lengthy musical trip from the West Coast to the East Coast and later to points south; this "reprise" is an opening statement on one of those musical trips. In this variant Woody changes the lyrics to "Redwood Forest" and "Canadian Mountains" and retrospectively states "East Coast here I come!"

During early 1944, on break from the Merchant Marine, Woody Guthrie and Cisco Houston visited Moses Asch's New York studio for a series of recording sessions. The following sessions produced hundreds of sides representing the bulk of the recorded legacy of both artists. They were joined frequently by Sonny Terry and on occasion by Pete Seeger. Unless we discovered differently by listening to the original acetate, the titles come from Moses Asch's original recording log book.

April 16, 1944

Hard Ain't it Hard LM-1
More Pretty Gals Than One LM-2

April 19, 1944

Golden Vanity (Lonesome Sea) MA1
When the Yanks Go Marching In MA2
So Long It's Been Good to Know You MA3
Dollar Down and a Dollar a Week MA4
Hen Cackle MA5
I Ain't Got Nobody MA6
Ida Red MA7
Columbus Stockade MA8
Whistle Blowing MA9
John Henry MA10
Hammer Ring (Union Hammer) MA11
Muleskinner Blues MA12
What Are We Waiting On MA13
Ship in the Sky MA14
The Biggest Thing Man Has Ever Done MA15
Stewball MA16

Grand Coulee Dam MA17
Talking Sailor (Talking Merchant Marine)

MA18-20, MA 22
New York Town MA 21
Reckless Talk MA23-24
Last Nickel Blues MA25
Guitar Rag MA26
Who's Gonna Shoe Your Pretty Little Feet? MA27
Brown Eyes MA28
Chisholm Trail MA29
Sowing on the Mountain MA30-31
Right Now MA32
Train Harmonica MA33
Sally Don't You Grieve MA34
Take a Whiff on Me MA35
Philadelphia Lawyer MA36
Kissin' On (Gave Her Kisses) MA37
Little Darling MA38
Baltimore to Washington (Troubles Too) MA39
Poor Boy MA40-41
Ain't Nobody's Business MA42
Take Me Back MA43
Going Down This Road Feeling Bad MA44
Bed on the Floor MA45
One Big Union (Join It Yourself) MA46
Worried Man Blues MA47
What Did the Deep Sea Say? MA48
Foggy Mountain Top MA49
99 Years MA50
Gambling Man MA51
Cindy MA52

Into Season MA53
Strawberry Roan MA54
Red River Valley MA55
Dead or Alive (Poor Lazarus) MA56
Pretty Boy Floyd MA57
John Hardy MA58
Bad Lee Brown MA59
Whistle Blowing MA66
Billy the Kid MA67
Stagger Lee (Stackerlee) MA68
Take a Whiff on Me MA69
April 20, 1944
Down Yonder MA674
Guitar Blues MA675
Pretty Baby MA680
Give Me That Old Time Religion MA687
Glory MA688
Hard Time Blues MA689
Rubber Dolly MA690
Bus Blues MA691
Devilish Mary MA692
Cripple Creek MA693
Sandy Land MA694
April 24, 1944
Old Dan Tucker MA695
Bile Them Cabbage Down MA696
Old Joe Clark MA697
Buffalo Gals (Bottle in My Hand) MA698
Rain Crow Bill MA699
Skip to My Lou MA700
Lonesome Train MA701-2

Blues MA703
Harmonica Breakdown MA704
Harmonica Rag MA705
Harmonica Rag #2 MA706
Crawdad Hole MA707
Bury Me Beneath the Willow MA708
*Ride Around Little Dogies (I Ride an Old
 Paint)* MA709
Blue Eyes MA710
*Going Down This Road Feeling Bad
 (Lonesome Road Blues)* MA711
Old Dog a Bone MA712
Having Fun MA713
Blues MA714

April 25, 1944

Talking Fishing (Fishing Blues) MA75
Talking Sailor (Talking Merchant Marine)
 MA76
Union Burying Ground MA77
Jesse James MA78
Ranger's Command MA79
Sinking of the Reuben James MA80
Put My Little Shoes Away MA81
Picture from Life's Other Side MA82
Will You Miss Me MA83
Bed on the Floor MA84
900 Miles MA85
Sourwood Mountain MA86
Hoecake Baking MA87
Ezekiel Saw the Wheel MA88
Little Darling MA89

Lonesome Day MA90
Cumberland Gap MA91
Fiddling Piece MA92
Carry Me Back to Old Virginy MA93
Stepstone MA94
House of the Rising Sun MA96
Brown's Ferry Blues MA98
*What Would You Give in Exchange for Your
 Soul?* MA99
When That Great Ship Went Down MA91-1
Guitar Rag MA101,1230
Going Down the Road Feeling Bad MA103
Dust Bowl MA100
I Ain't Got Nobody MA102
Polly Wolly Doodle MA104
Blowing Down This Old Dusty Road MA1231
April 1944 (shortly after the 25th)
Hey Lolly Lolly MA105
Budded Roses MA106
House of the Rising Sun MA107
I Don't Feel at Home in the Bowery MA108
Hobo's Lullaby MA109
*Frog Went A-Courtin' (Mouse Went A-
 Courtin')* MA110
Bad Reputation MA111
Snow Deer MA112
Ladies Auxillary MA113
This Land Is My Land MA114
Hang Knot (Slip Knot) MA115
Breakdown MA116
Go Tell Aunt Rhody MA117
Union Going to Roll MA118
Who Broke Down the Hen House Door? MA119
What Did the Deep Sea Say? MA120
When the Yanks Go Marching In MA122
Bed on the Floor MA123
We Shall Be Free MA124
Right Now MA125
Jackhammer John MA126
Woody MA127
Woody MA128
Keep Your Skillet Good and Greasy MA129-1
Lost You MA131
Slip Knot (Hang Knot) MA134
Jesus Christ MA135
Little Black Train MA137
Cannon Ball MA138
Gypsy Davy MA139
Bile Them Cabbage Down MA140
March 1, 1945
Git Along Little Dogies MA860
Waltz MA861-2
Union Breakdown MA863
Cackling Hen MA864
Chisholm Trail MA865

ARCHIVIST'S REMARKS

During the decade of the 1940s, Woody Guthrie recorded more songs for Moses Asch than any other artist. In April of 1944, Woody, his frequent sidekick Cisco Houston, and others recorded 160 songs for Asch. Asch considered Woody to be another Walt Whitman and tried to record everything he could get from him. Woody often spent time in Asch's office composing topical songs about the day's current events. Hundreds of typewritten pages of these songs can be found in the Asch Collection at the Smithsonian.

During the last ten years music buyers have seen the replacement of the vinyl LP by the compact disc as the medium of choice for home listening of audio recordings. This replacement of one format by another is not the first time that there has been competition between media in the audio world. Wax cylinders were replaced by 78 rpm discs, which were in turn replaced by LPs ("Long Playing records" as they were called). The same evolutionary processes also occurred in the recording studio masters for these formats.

Magnetic audiotape technology did not exist before World War II. It first came into use for audio recording in the late 1940s. Before then, most mastering had been done directly on to discs. There were several sorts of disc technology; some machines recorded

directly onto aluminum discs, others recorded onto acetate or shellac discs. The recordings here fall into the latter two categories.

Most master discs were recorded at about 78 rpm and consequently could not hold more than three minutes of music. Selections that ran longer often had to be broken up into two parts. Later on, but still before he moved to magnetic tape, Asch used 33 1/3 rpm masters to record longer pieces on disc.

Acetate discs of the type used for recording these tracks consisted of an aluminum or glass base covered with a layer of lacquer. During the war, when many of these discs were recorded, the glass base was used because metal was dedicated to military uses. With the passage of time, the lacquer may begin to peel off the base like old paint, so it is important that these acetate discs be transferred to a more stable medium as soon as possible. Shellac discs are more stable than acetate and are more like the vinyl discs we are familiar with. They are, however, quite brittle. Here at the Smithsonian we have undertaken the slow and laborious task of transferring all 5,000 acetates in the collection.

During the 1940s, Moses Asch's studio was an open house to many of the recording artists in the New York area. Many of the acetates in this collection were recorded during this time. Asch's recording log is a fascinating list of many of the top jazz and folk music perform-

ers of the day. Visitors included Woody and Cisco, Burl Ives, Josh White, Sonny and Brownie, Langston Hughes, James P. Johnson, Mary Lou Williams, Coleman Hawkins, and Pete Seeger, among others. Woody Guthrie would drop by Asch's office whenever the spirit moved him. Woody would often get up in the morning, read the newspaper, and then sit down at his typewriter and reel off a number of topical ballads. Many of these typewritten pages are now stored in the archive here at the Smithsonian, and many of the songs were recorded for Asch.

During World War II, when these recordings were made, discs of this type were in short supply. Moses Asch had the studio and the musicians ready to record, but he had nothing to record them on. Herbert Harris of the Stinson Trading Company had blank discs. Asch and Harris went into a short partnership as Asch-Stinson Records. Both men continued to put out much of the same material after their partnership ended, leading to much discographical confusion. Because of the shortage of discs, Asch could not afford second or third takes. For this reason, many of the songs he recorded have small mistakes in them. Some of these masters were released on Moses Asch's Asch and Disc labels.

During the summer of 1990, Lori Taylor, Leslie Spitz-Edson, Alex Swęda, Suzanne Crow, and I went through the approximately

5,000 master recording discs which had been in the possession of Moses Asch. We gently set down the needle on each disc for a brief moment and tried to discover the contents (acetates do not bear repeated playings). Most of the recordings on this disc were rediscovered during this process. We have now made preservation and reference copies of all of the Guthrie material in the Smithsonian archive. We will be releasing the best of these performances in a multi-volume series over the coming years. This process has aided in the creation of these compact discs and hopefully there are more to come in the future as we work on preserving the rest of the Asch Collection.

Jeff Place, *Archivist, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, Smithsonian Institution (1996)*

ABOUT THE COMPILERS

Jeff Place has been the archivist for the Folkways Collection since soon after its arrival at the Smithsonian in 1987 and has overseen the cataloging of the Moses Asch Collection. He has a Masters in Library Science from the University of Maryland and specializes in sound archives. He has been involved in the compilation of a number of compact discs for Smithsonian Folkways including Woody Guthrie's *Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters*, which won him the 1994 Brenda McCallum Prize from the American Folklore Society, and *That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement*. He has been a collector of traditional music for over twenty-five years. He lives in Mayo, Maryland, with his wife Barrie, daughter Andrea Rose, and son Lee.

Born and reared in Ada, Oklahoma, Dr. Guy Logsdon is a Smithsonian Institution Research Associate, and in 1990–91 was a Smithsonian Institution Senior Post-Doctoral Fellow compiling a biblio-discography of the songs of Woody Guthrie. He received a two-year grant, 1993-95, from the National Endowment for the Humanities to complete the Woody Guthrie project. Logsdon has written numerous articles about Woody Guthrie, cowboy songs and poetry, and authored the highly acclaimed, award-winning book, *"The Whorehouse Bells Were Ringing" and Other Songs Cowboys Sing*. He compiled and annotated *Cowboy Songs on Folkways* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40043) and *Cisco Houston: The Folkways Years 1944-1961* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40059). Former Director of Libraries and Professor of Education and American Folklife, University of Tulsa, Logsdon works as a writer and entertainer. Logsdon and Place have collaborated on other Smithsonian Folkways collections: *Woody Guthrie: Long Ways to Travel, The Unreleased Folkways Masters 1944–1949* 40046 and *That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement* 40021.

For additional information about Woody Guthrie (1912–1967), read his autobiographical novel *Bound for Glory* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1943); also see: Joe Klein, *Woody Guthrie: A Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980); Woody Guthrie, *Pastures of Plenty: A Self Portrait*, edited by Dave Marsh and Harold Leventhal (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1990); and Pete Seeger, *Where Have All the Flowers Gone* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out, 1993). For information about Moses Asch (1905-1986), see: Tony Scherman, "The Remarkable Recordings of Moses Asch," *Smithsonian* 18 (August 1987) 5, pp. 110-21; Gary Kenton, "Moses Asch of Folkways," *Audio* 74 (July 1990) 7, pp. 38-46; and Israel Young, "Moses Asch: Twentieth Century Man," *Sing Out!* 26 (May/June 1977) 1, pp. 2-6, and 26 (July/August 1977) 2, pp. 25-29.

Lyrics are available in many songbooks, including: *Woody Guthrie Songs*, edited by Judy Bell and Nora Guthrie (New York: TRO-Ludlow Music, 1992).

Other selected Woody Guthrie recordings: *Bound for Glory*, Folkways 2481; *Columbia River Collection*, Rounder 1036; *Dust Bowl Ballads*, Rounder 1040; *Library of Congress Recordings*, Rounder 1041; *Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters*, Smithsonian Folkways 40046; *Nursery Days*,

Smithsonian Folkways 45036; *Poor Boy*, Folkways 31010; *Songs to Grow On for Mother and Child*, Smithsonian Folkways 45035; *Struggle*, Smithsonian Folkways 40025; *This Land Is Your Land*, Folkways 31001; *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs*, Smithsonian Folkways 40007; *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs*, Vol. 2, Folkways 2484.

Other relevant recordings: *Cowboy Songs on Folkways*, Smithsonian Folkways 40043; *Folk Song America: A Twentieth Century Revival*, Smithsonian Collection of Recordings RD 046; *Folkways: A Vision Shared* (Woody and Lead Belly's songs performed by modern popular musicians), Columbia 44034; *Folkways: The Original Vision*, Smithsonian Folkways 40001 (Woody Guthrie and Lead Belly); *Songs for Political Action*, Bear Family 15720 (anthology of 1930s–1950s topical American folk song); *Songs of the Spanish Civil War*, Folkways 5437; *That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement*, Smithsonian Folkways 40021; *Songs to Grow On*, Vol. 3, Folkways 7027.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For discographical information, we are indebted to Guthrie T. Meade's unpublished "Discography of Traditional Songs and Tunes On Hillbilly Records," in the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, Archive of Folk Culture, Washington, D.C. For their encouragement and assistance, we express sincere appreciation to Dr. Anthony Seeger and Dr. Amy Horowitz, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies Archive and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., and to Joseph C. Hickerson and the Reference Staff in the Library of Congress, Archive of Folk Culture. Additional thanks to Harold Leventhal, Nora Guthrie, Rachel Crane, George Arevalo, Jesse Weinraub, Steve Laronga, and Ryan Brown.

CREDITS

Compiled by Jeff Place and Guy Logsdon
Annotated by Guy Logsdon and Jeff Place
Project supervised by Amy Horowitz and Anthony Seeger
Original recordings by Moses Asch, 1944–1947, New York City
Acetate transfers by Jeff Place and Pete Reiniger, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, Smithsonian Institution.
Mastered by David Glasser, LeAnn Sonenstein, and Charlie Pilser at Airshow, Springfield, VA
Technical support by Pete Reiniger
Cover photograph courtesy of Nora Guthrie and the Woody Guthrie Archives
Cover design by Visual Dialogue, Boston, MA
Photo on rear card and page 7 courtesy of Seema Weatherwax. Photo by Seema Weatherwax.

Production coordinated by Mary Monseur and Michael Maloney
Editing by Peter Seitel and Carla Borden

For additional information about this recording visit our Web site
<http://www.si.edu/folkways>

ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

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

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

The Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, and Paredon record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies. They are one of the means

through which the Center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

You can find Smithsonian Folkways Recordings at your local record store. Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, and Paredon recordings are all available through:

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fax (301) 443-1819

orders only 1-800-410-9815

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For further information about all the labels distributed through the Center, please consult our internet site (<http://www.si.edu/folkways>), which includes information about recent releases and a database of the approximately 35,000 tracks from the more than 2,300 available recordings (click on Data Base Search).

Or request a printed catalogue by writing to Catalogue, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Suite 2600, Smithsonian Institution MRC 914, Washington, DC 20560, USA. Or use our catalogue request phone: (202) 287-3262, or e-mail folkways@aol.com

WOODY GUTHRIE THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND THE ASCH RECORDINGS VOL.1

COMPILED BY JEFF PLACE AND GUY LOGSDON ANNOTATED BY GUY LOGSDON AND JEFF PLACE

This recording presents many of Woody Guthrie's best-known songs taken from the original masters. Included here is the original version of Woody's anthem "This Land Is Your Land," which contains never-before issued lyrics. A major force in the urban folk song revival, Guthrie created an intimate portrait of America—its land and people. He has influenced many contemporary artists, among them Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Billy Bragg, and Bruce Springsteen. During the 1930s and 1940s, Woody Guthrie wrote more than a thousand songs, recording hundreds of them for Folkways founder Moses Asch. The surviving masters now reside in the Folkways Archive at the Smithsonian Institution.

Running time: 72 minutes; 36-page booklet includes historical and biographical notes on Woody Guthrie.

1. **THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND** 2:16
2. **CAR SONG** 1:49
3. **RAMBLIN' ROUND** 2:13
4. **TALKING FISHING BLUES** 3:03
5. **PHILADELPHIA LAWYER** 2:28
6. **LINDBERGH** 3:10
7. **HOBO'S LULLABY** 2:22
8. **PASTURES OF PLENTY** 2:24
9. **GRAND COULEE DAM** 2:09
10. **END OF THE LINE** 2:49
11. **NEW YORK TOWN** 2:35
12. **GYPSY DAVY** 2:48
13. **JESUS CHRIST** 2:36
14. **THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND** 2:43
15. **DO-RE-MI** 2:30
16. **JARAMA VALLEY** 2:51
17. **THE BIGGEST THING MAN HAS EVER DONE** 2:17
18. **PICTURE FROM LIFE'S OTHER SIDE** 3:05
19. **JESSE JAMES** 2:57
20. **TALKING HARD WORK** 3:22
21. **WHEN THAT GREAT SHIP WENT DOWN** 3:17
22. **HARD, AIN'T IT HARD** 2:41
23. **GOING DOWN THE ROAD FEELING BAD** 2:55
24. **I AIN'T GOT NOBODY** 2:31
25. **SINKING OF THE REUBEN JAMES** 2:58
26. **WHY, OH WHY?** 3:27
27. **THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND** 0:52



Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

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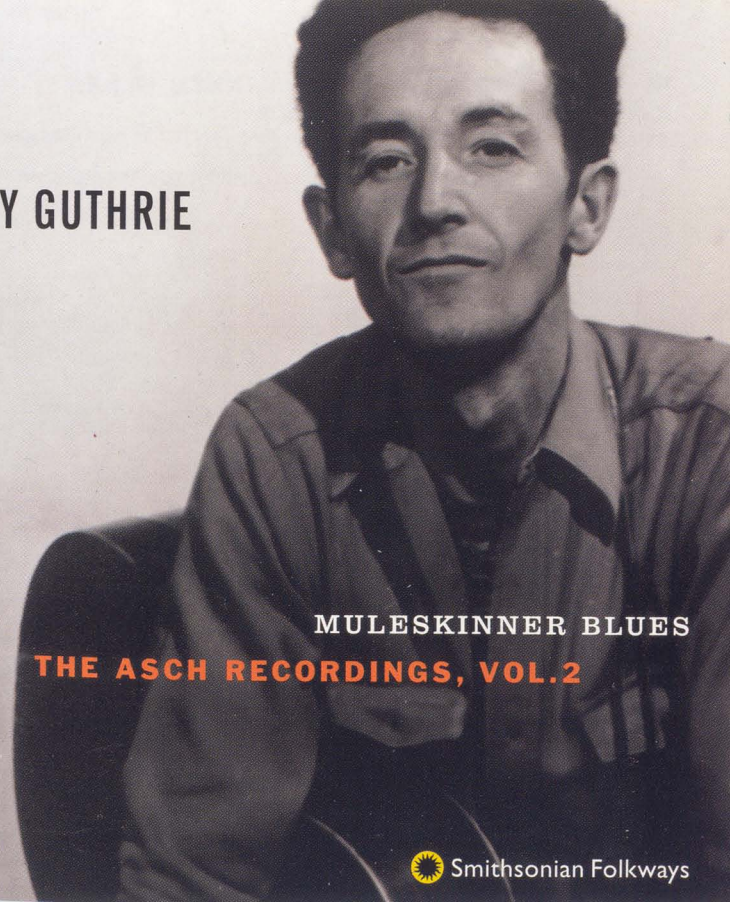
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WOODY GUTHRIE



MULESKINNER BLUES

THE ASCH RECORDINGS, VOL. 2



Smithsonian Folkways

WOODY GUTHRIE MULESKINNER BLUES

THE ASCH RECORDINGS, VOL. 2

COMPILED BY JEFF PLACE AND GUY LOGSDON ANNOTATED BY GUY LOGSDON AND JEFF PLACE

1. **MULESKINNER BLUES** 2:49
(Jimmie Rodgers-George Vaughn, APRS, BMI)
2. **WRECK OF THE OLD 97** 2:11
(Whitter-Noell-Lewey; Spairo Bernstein & Co., ASCAP)
(words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie)
3. **SALLY GOODIN'** 2:26
4. **LITTLE BLACK TRAIN** 2:29
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
5. **WHO'S GONNA SHOE YOUR PRETTY LITTLE FEET** 2:28
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
6. **BALTIMORE TO WASHINGTON** 2:53
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
7. **RUBBER DOLLY** 2:11
8. **21 YEARS** 3:13
(Bob Miller, MCA Inc., ASCAP)
9. **SOWING ON THE MOUNTAIN** 2:23
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
10. **BED ON THE FLOOR** 2:21
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
11. **TAKE A WHIFF ON ME** 2:41
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
12. **STEPSTONE** 2:53
(J.O. Webster)
13. **PUT MY LITTLE SHOES AWAY** 2:44
(Mitchell-Pratt)
14. **HEN CACKLE** 2:16
15. **POOR BOY** 2:26
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
16. **STACKOLEE** 2:57
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
17. **JOHNNY HART** 2:27
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
18. **WORRIED MAN BLUES** 2:57
(A.P. Carter, APRS, BMI)
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
19. **DANVILLE GIRL** 2:58
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
20. **GAMBLING MAN** 2:19
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
21. **RYE STRAW** 2:46
22. **CRAWDAD SONG** 2:52
23. **IDA RED** 2:59
24. **KEEP MY SKILLET GOOD AND GREASY** 2:43
(adapted by Woody Guthrie)
25. **TRAIN 45** 2:39

INTRODUCTION

by Guy Logsdon

Woody Guthrie (1912–1967) played a major role in developing the foundation for the song and social movement now referred to as the urban folk song revival during the 1940s and 1950s. He also became and remains an inspirational figure for folk songwriters, social protest and topical songwriters, and rock and folk-rock songwriters. His friendship with Lead Belly, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, Sonny Terry, and other legendary folk artists is well documented, and he unselfishly shared his musical and cultural experiences and ideas with them. His influence on Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Billy Bragg, and other contemporary musicians and songwriters also is well documented. His children's songs have helped parents and teachers rear, teach, entertain, and challenge young people for decades. And his documentation in songs and poetry of historical events such as the Dust Bowl and Great Depression still provides an important dimension to the interpretation of life during those years. Woody's creative contributions to our culture are legion, in the form of printed books as well as handwritten and/or typed manuscripts, paintings and drawings, and recorded songs.

Most of Woody Guthrie's recordings are at the Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, which houses

the archives and master recordings of Moses Asch and Folkways Records. Jeff Place is the Sound Archivist for the Center's entire sound collection. This means that he has listened to more Woody Guthrie recordings than anyone as he transfers sound from fragile master discs to tape and compact disc. While listening to the vast numbers of Woody Guthrie recordings, he decided that the songs Woody recorded for Moses Asch should be compiled into a collection: *Woody Guthrie: The Asch Recordings*.

There will be four volumes in the collection; however, not all of the Asch/Guthrie recordings will be in it, for some no longer exist, some are beyond transferring and restoration, and some are unworthy of reproduction. But there are enough songs, some previously issued and some unissued by Moses Asch, to showcase Woody's creativity and talent as well as to emphasize his vast knowledge and mental storehouse of country/western/folk music.

This second collection in the series *The Asch Recordings* consists of Woody Guthrie's interpretations of early traditional folk songs, early country music recordings, and nineteenth-century sentimental songs, songs Woody learned in Oklahoma, Texas, and California. Much of the material comes from two Folkways LP releases, *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* (FW 2484) and *Poor Boy* (FW 31010). Volumes 1 and 3 in this series feature Woody's own compositions, and volumes 2 and 4 include traditional material.

MOSES ASCH, FOLKWAYS RECORDS, AND WOODY GUTHRIE

Moses “Moe” Asch was a man obsessed with sounds—musical sounds, cultural sounds, political sounds, and nature’s sounds. Born in Warsaw, Poland, he was a son of the novelist Sholem Asch; his father’s work carried the family to Berlin and then to Paris, and when Moses was eight years old they moved to Brooklyn, New York. He grew up learning the songs of French children, his mother’s Yiddish songs, the songs of English-speaking children, and later popular and jazz songs. As a teenager he developed an interest in the electronics of radio and recording. At the age of sixteen he traveled to Europe to study electronics and became acquainted with the folk songs of fellow students from Brazil, Holland, Austria, and Russia; he later wrote: “I learned the meaning of folk song as it expresses a HOME feeling of belonging and association.” Later, while vacationing in Paris, he found a copy of John A. Lomax’s *Cowboy Songs* (1910 edition) and “became filled with the meaning of the cowboy and the West.”

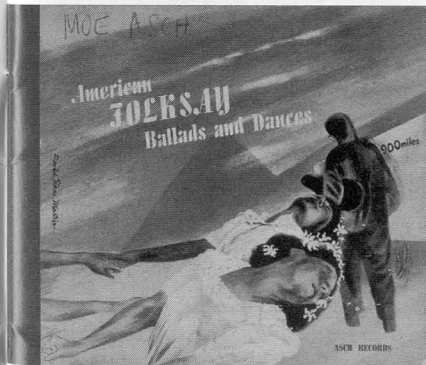
He started manufacturing and producing records in 1939, specializing in international ethnic music and using Asch Records as his company name. His first commercial recording venture featuring American folk expression was the 1941 *Play Parties in Song and Dance as Sung by Lead Belly*. Other singers of folk

songs such as Burl Ives and Josh White turned to him as an outlet for their talents; Asch became the primary producer of folk recordings with limited commercial demand. During the 1940s, Moses Asch’s studio was an open house to many of the recording artists in the New York area. Asch’s recording log is a fascinating list of many of the top jazz and folk music performers of the day, including Woody, Cisco Houston, Burl Ives, Josh White, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGee, James P. Johnson, Mary Lou Williams, Coleman Hawkins, and Pete Seeger, among others. (See: Moses Asch, “Folk Music—A Personal Statement,” *Sing Out!* 11 [February–March 1961] 1: 26-27.)

During his career, Asch produced records under different labels: Asch Records, Asch-Stinson Records, Disc Company of America, Folkways Records, Disc Recordings, and others. Asch issued Woody Guthrie recordings on each label that he produced. Woody would drop by Asch’s office whenever the spirit moved him. Woody would often get up in the morning, read the newspaper, and then sit down at his typewriter and reel off a number of topical ballads. Many of these typewritten pages are now stored in the archive at the Smithsonian, and many of the songs were recorded for Asch.

The relationship between Woody and Asch was that of record producer and artist, of friends and adversaries—a relationship that made money for Asch and gave Woody a source

for money when he needed it. Woody also reviewed recordings for Asch, which gave Asch a different perspective about his product and gave Woody a broader knowledge of the world of music.



WOODY GUTHRIE IN TEXAS AND CALIFORNIA (1929–1939)

For the early years of Woody's story as told by fellow Oklahoman, Guy Logsdon, see: This Land Is Your Land, The Asch Recordings, Vol. 1 (Smithsonian Folkways 40100). Woody's story will be continued in each volume.

Woodrow Wilson Guthrie was born in Okemah, Oklahoma, to Charley and Nora Guthrie on 14 July 1912. His childhood and adolescence in the town of Okemah provided him a social conscience, an educational foundation, and many stories to tell. Before his fifteenth birthday, though, his family seemed to be disintegrating. His sister Clara had died in a fire; his mother, whose deteriorating mental and physical condition was actually due to Huntington’s disease but who was generally considered insane, was committed to an institution; his father’s optimistic, creative, and aggressive personality changed as he worried about keeping his family together. It has been reported that Charley drank heavily, but according to those who knew him well and were with him in Pampa, Texas, and later in Oklahoma City, he rarely took a drink of alcohol. To a great extent, it was Woody who wrote exaggerated accounts of Charley’s actions, for Woody considered his father to be a hero who under the aforementioned pressures lost part of his spirit for life. Through all of this turmoil and tragedy, Woody maintained a sense of humor—he probably survived because he

could laugh. Many years later he wrote:

...I took part in Okemah's plays almost every year. I jig danced and cracked jokes between the acts. I never took part in a play, but always worked in front of the curtain. I seldom knew what I was going to do or say till the curtain rolled down behind me, and then I'd commence messing around and talking and the people would get tickled at that [and] clap for more. I won second place in [a] glee club singing contest in my 8th or 9th year. I was cartoonist and editor of poetry on our high school paper, the "Panther." ...I played the harmonica, rattled the bones, danced, sang songs, and told jokes.... After my father and mother were hurt in a fire, I took a gunny sack and picked up all kinds of junk up and down alleys, which I sold at our city junk yard. I made enough to eat on. I slept in our ganghouse which is described in my book, Bound for Glory. I got a job washing and polishing spittoons to pay rent on a shoe shine chair in a pool hall and barber shop and averaged from \$7 to \$13 a week, which sum was big money back in those days.

(This quotation and the following quotations about Oklahoma and Texas are from an unpublished and undated manuscript, circa 1951, in the TRO Richmond Music archives titled "Woody Guthrie, by Me." The misspelled words are Woody's style; to put *sic* after each would be distracting.)

For two years, he lived with the Sam White family—thirteen people in a two-room house—and at the end of his junior year of high school, in May 1929, Woody left Okemah for Pampa, Texas. He wrote:

I left Okemah after working at a hotel nights and going to school days, working at a tailor shop, a drug store, selling papers, and a few odd jobs entertaining.... My dad wanted me to come out to the high cow country (where the oil fields were just newly moving).... [He] wrote me several letters begging me to come out to west Texas and get a job and go to school.... I hitch hiked from Okemah to Pampa, Tex.... I got a job in a domino hall, washing off tables between games, selling root beer, and selling Jamaica Ginger, (a so called patented medicine 99.99% pure alcohol) which is described more fully in my book Bound for Glory. I got drunk on the Jamaica Ginger and lost my root beer job.

The exact date that Charley took a job managing a row of "old rotten wooden firetrap buildings" isn't known, but it became Woody's responsibility to:

....see to it that you found the right bed at night and the right door out the next morning, and to clean up rooms, collect room rents, kill rats, and argue with roaches, bedbugs, flies, and ants, bugs, termites of all kinds which had a habit of living in our

rooms, cafes, stores, somehow without registering on the books or paying rent. This was the hardest and the dirtiest and the best job that I had got ahold of so far.

Woody enrolled in the Pampa high school; he did not graduate. To his credit his intellectual curiosity was not limited to the standard high school curriculum, for with Charley's support Woody studied many correspondence or "mail order" courses. According to Woody he studied *...law, medicine, religion, literature, gambling, magnetic healing, mind reading, metaphysics, telepathy, hypnotism, psychology, animal breeding, soil recovery and conservation, zoology, botany, general science, osis's and isms, ology's of all sorts and kinds. I looked through the microscope of an old Doctor there at half of the slimey waters and oozes, spittles, juices, salivas, and bloods, to see the germs, plasms, amebas, protozoas, protoplasms, politicians, and gangsters, and people at work. I prepared myself for the priesthood and applied at the Catholic Church there, but canceled my date and went off with a fiddling uncle of mine, Jeff Guthrie....*

While it is probable that many of his Pampa friendships came from his high school involvement, he also developed a broad kinship of friends by just being himself and through the hard times and broadening difficulties of the Great Depression that others shared. And his

relationship with his Uncle Jeff was more than genetic—he, too, loved music and taught Woody additional musical skills. But it was his friendship with Matt Jennings, another Oklahoman who had moved to Pampa with his parents, and with Cluster Baker that had the greatest influence on him. They were the Corn-cob Trio: Matt played the fiddle, Cluster was a good guitarist, and Woody played the harmonica, the mandolin, and other instruments. They played for house dances and other small events, and by 1936 with the addition of three more members and uniforms (chaps, cowboy hats, and shirts) became the Junior Chamber of Commerce band in Pampa. But even before the band grew, Woody fell in love with Matt Jennings's sister, Mary.

In October 1933, when Woody was twenty-one and Mary Jennings considerably younger, they were married and soon were traveling with his Uncle Jeff and Aunt Allene and a tent show from a west Texas ranch to entertain a few small gatherings; with Matt and the Corn-cob Trio they played additional shows:

I got married to an Irish farm girl by the name of Mary Jennings.... Her brother, Matt, played the fiddle, and we traveled around together and worked all the fairs, centennials, picnics, rodeos, carnivals, and pie suppers, ranch dances, banquets, etc., etc., in that whole part of the country. We played all over the oil fields at the shack

towns of the oil workers, and in the Company camps, in saloons, road houses, (throwing our hats down on the floor and playing and singing for our tips).



In 1935, he also wrote and completed his first collection of songs, *Alonzo M. Zilch's Own Collection Of Original Songs And Ballads* (a copy that contains both typed and handwritten songs is in the Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress). One of the songs is a parody of the 1934 popular song "Ole Faithful"; Woody's lyrics reflect his humor and indicate his awareness and concern about the plight of farmers during the drought/Depression years:

Old Rachel!

*We'll starve to death together.
Old Rachel!
My wheat won't stand this weather.
When the harvest days are over—
We'll turn the property over
To the bank. Old Rachel, pal o' mine.
His "Parody to Home on the Range" is*

another example:

*O, leave me alone
Said his darling, his own,
I'm not in the humor to play;
He was amazed when he heard
Her discouraging words—
He decided he'd better not stay.
Strange, strange, it is strange
She was getting more stubborn each day;
All that he heard was discouraging words,
And her love, it was fading each day.*

Not all of his early efforts were parodies—"Cowboy's Philosophy," dated April 1935, was a very good poem—but most of the entries are humorous. The last page is a theme song, which indicates that the trio did sing some of the songs on a radio show (there was a small, unlicensed "garage" radio station in Pampa in 1935); and this collection may have been used by the Corn-cob Trio as their lyrics book.

Hard times were everywhere in the Texas Panhandle. The Great Depression was taking its toll on the people. Cotton, which had been a staple agricultural crop for a century, had lost its value in competition with foreign cotton—

cotton was no longer king anywhere in this nation. Wheat had become the major cash crop after World War I, but crops were dying in the fields due to the lack of rain. Tractors and other forms of mechanization were making migratory farm labor and tenant/sharecropper farmers unnecessary. Suitcase farmers, men who lived in town with regular paying jobs and ran their tractors over the fields on weekends, were displacing the professional or "lifetime dedicated" farmers. Roosevelt's farm policy helped the land owners but ignored the tenant/sharecroppers. (Tenant farmers usually owned livestock and farm implements, and received a larger share of the year's profits—and in some cases paid rent for the land and got all of the profits; sharecroppers owned nothing and provided only labor in exchange for housing and a small percentage of the annual profits.) By 1935, these combined problems had an even greater impact on Woody's Oklahoma friends and farmers than they did in Texas. Displaced Anglo cotton farmers, basically tenant and sharecropper farmers, migrated west looking for work and became known as "Okies"—a derogatory term in many western states even today. African Americans from southern states migrated to northern cities and became factory laborers. Woody eventually became a voice for both groups of workers.

The dust storms eventually became the focal point for all victims. They did not recognize or

understand the economic, technological, or sociological events taking place, but they could see the dust storms; thus, drought became the visible enemy and was blamed for all problems. Woody was no different from his neighbors and friends; he believed what he could see, hear, and comprehend:

I got to where I could look at the dust hanging up in the sky and tell you just what state it was blowing in from. It got so dark at times that you couldn't see a meal on your table nor find a dollar in your pocket.... Even the old settlers thought it was the end of the world because the men had insulted the soil of the earth and the winds of the sky with their low down hateful, mean, and stealing ways.

The worst dust storm in the known history of the Great Plains region was Sunday, 14 April 1935. It started as a bright, clear day with almost record-high temperatures throughout the southern high plains as the faithful gathered in their churches once again to pray for rain. By late afternoon the skies were darkened, not by rain clouds but by the "black blizzard" traveling in a southerly direction. Death, destruction, damage, and injury were inflicted as total darkness that lasted over forty minutes traveled with the blizzard. Temperatures fell over 30 degrees within a few minutes' time; the relative humidity decreased to less than 10 percent. Topsoil from the Dakotas, Nebraska, and Kansas was driven at a velocity of 40 to 70 miles an hour; the billow-

ing cloud was rolling like “a great wall of muddy water.” Estimates were that the “black blizzard” was nearly 500 miles wide. This is the dust storm that Woody describes in his interview with Alan Lomax on his Library of Congress recordings, but Woody was not overly disturbed by the event and times. He had already experienced hard times during “good times,” and considering all that happened in 1935, it was a fairly good year for him.

Woody's family obligations were growing, for in November 1935 their first daughter, Gwendolyn, was born. During those Pampa years, Woody not only made money with his music, but also painted signs and did other art work. However, not much money made its way to the support of his family; Mary's parents carried that basic responsibility. Woody spent freely what little he earned, or he might give his money to someone he thought needed it more than he did. He also would leave town hobnobbing his way around the region, so he became known as a likeable, irresponsible husband/father figure. His wanderlust was understood neither by family or friends nor by Woody himself, but it often drew him away from home and responsibilities.

By 1937, Woody had developed a strong desire to become a country music performer. He and his friends were listening to recordings of Jimmie Rodgers and other “hillbilly” performers, but for Woody the most influential group

was the Carter Family. He listened to their recordings, and their Mexican “border radio” station broadcasts could be heard in Pampa at night. Woody patterned his guitar style after the Carter Family style and eventually used many of their tunes, which were often traditional tunes, as the basis for his melodies. And during those years, he also learned an amazing number of traditional songs to complement the country songs. This collection reflects the influence of this material learned in the 1930s, some of it in California.

In the early summer of 1937, Woody suddenly said that he was going to California; he had already made one westward trip, and with Mary expecting delivery of their second child within a few weeks, he decided that his future was in California. Matt Jennings drove him to the edge of Pampa and let him out of the car on Highway 60 (now designated in Texas as the Woody Guthrie Memorial Highway) that took him to Amarillo and Highway 66. He thumbed his way to Los Angeles, where he had relatives with whom he could stay. When their second child, Sue, arrived in July, Woody was already in California.

Not long after arriving in Los Angeles, he teamed up with his cousin Jack Guthrie. Jack was younger than Woody, born 13 November 1915, in Olive, Oklahoma; his family had moved often before settling in California. His birth name was Leon Jerry Guthrie, but he did

not like either name and became “Jack” and “Oklahoma.” He, too, worked at a wide variety of jobs—for a few years he was a rodeo cowboy, until a back injury took him out of the arena—but he was a songwriter and had the great desire to be a western entertainer. Jack was taller than Woody; both were slim and good-looking, and each had a distinctively different musical style. Jack played the guitar, fiddle, and bass fiddle, and developed his style upon that of Jimmie Rodgers, including yodeling. As previously stated, Woody was influenced by the Carter Family. The differences posed no problems, for each respected the other, and they did not attempt to sing duets; each merely backed the other while he was performing. They presented an excellent, entertaining musical show, and were featured with the popular Beverly Hill Billies on a few shows. Jack wrangled a radio show for them over KFVD, Hollywood, and on 19 July 1937, they played their first show—“The Oklahoma and Woody Show.” It was a well-received fifteen-minute show that Woody later said gave them “enough prestige around the saloons to ask for a Two Dollar guarantee” instead of the “lousy” one dollar most singers received.

He played and sang in every door that had a neon sign above it from Tia Juana, Mexico, up to Chico, California. Leon Jack Guthrie (a cowboy yodeler and truck driver, roof shingler, house painter, yard fixer, tree

pruner, gravel shoveler, mechanic, horse borrower, joint hopper, etc., etc.) and me played on a radio station for fifteen minutes a day for several months....

Jack was married and had a young son to support; unlike Woody, he genuinely was dedicated to supporting his family, and worked a daytime construction job. He decided that the schedule they were keeping was too much for him; therefore, he left the show. Woody asked Maxine “Lefty Lou” Crissman to join him. She was a daughter of a friend of Jack's who worked on the construction site with him; Jack had introduced Woody to the family, and they were often together in the evening making music. Maxine harmonized well with Woody, so Woody choose her to be his singing partner. The show became “The Woody and Lefty Lou Show.” Jack occasionally would join them on a show.

Woody and Lefty Lou became an immediate hit. The fan letters poured into the station, and soon their air time was expanded to thirty minutes. By then Woody had sent for Mary and their children to join him; it looked as if he might have a future as a country radio singer. In fact, Woody's future looked so promising that Uncle Jeff, Aunt Allene, and other family members who wanted to be radio singers moved to California wanting Woody to use them on the show—which he did.

One afternoon while waiting as Lefty Lou prepared for the radio show, Woody was on the

back porch tuning an instrument. A little neighbor came in and asked, "Where did you come from, Mister?" Woody replied, "I come from the Oklahoma hills." He then went in the house and asked for pencil and paper, and within fifteen minutes had written one of his best-known songs, "Oklahoma Hills." Woody never did record it, but Jack did. Woody and Lefty Lou often sang the song during their show, and Jack would join them when he could. Jack learned it during those shows, but the lyrics of the chorus were slightly different from those in the popular version. Apparently, over a period of years Jack smoothed it into a better song. Lefty Lou's sister Ruth and Jack were close friends; Ruth put up the money for Jack to record the song in 1944 for Capitol Records. When released in 1945, it quickly moved to the top of the charts and became a number one hit, and Jack became a potential star. Unfortunately, in early 1948, Jack died from tuberculosis. The copyright states that both Woody and Jack wrote the song, for, indeed, Jack made important changes and popularized it—but Woody wrote it.

With Mary and their children with him and with a popular radio show, it looked as if Woody had found his calling in life. "The Woody and Lefty Lou Show" was considered to be the most popular KFVD show, and it was the time in radio history when song folios were sold over the air waves. Woody decided to compile a song book, so he typed a thirty-page collection of his

original songs and a few "old" songs and had it mimeographed. Then he and Mary with their daughter's help assembled and stapled the copies. It was titled *Woody and Lefty Lou's Favorite Collection: Old Time Hill Billy Songs*.

The legendary Cliffe Stone had a disc jockey show, "Wake Up Ranch," five mornings each week over KFVD and recalled, "The station owner, J. Frank Burke, came in and said, 'We have this fellow who works for nothing, just sells his book—give him a plug.' Woody always came in early with his guitar and little harmonica. We all sat around and laughed at him, but it turned out to be a great live show. Her voice was a natural, true voice, and she sang harmony to him. He had a great mail pull, used to sell 50, 60, 70 books a morning." The demand was so great for the song book that Burke had it printed under a modified title with the KFVD logo on the cover.

Their popularity continued to increase, so the station increased the show to thirty minutes and paid them twenty dollars a week. The important thing was that they were letting Woody sing and say anything he wanted, but popularity and success created other demands:

We quit KFVD, L.A., and moved down to XELO, Tia Juana, Mexico, where we signed a contract with the United Drugs Trades Products Corporation...where I got \$45 a week, and Lefty Lou got \$30. We moved our families and relatives, four carloads of us,



down to San Diego, and drove to work every day across the border to Tia Juana. I refused to pay the chief of police, mayor, sheriff, and a few judges and lawyers a cut out of my \$45 a week, and they called me a 'communist,' and ran me out of the country after one week. We applied for a Passport Permit to work.... They held up the issuance of these, and we were about to get jailed. My uncle Jeff Guthrie, his wife and family, my cousin Leon, Lefty Lou and her sister, mother and father, and myself, my wife and children were all caught over the border one night and threatened with arrest.... [T]hey let everybody else go back home excepting me. They held me for a few hours asking me questions, then they told me that I was a

'communist' again, and to get out of the country. I told them, "Well, boys, I don't even know what a communist is. I never did see one to know him. I don't even know what that means, but I'll tell you one thing, now! I'm going back up to Los Angeles and get my job back on KFVD and work 30 minutes a day up there, and me and Lefty Lou is both going to tell the whole world about this crooked bunch of robbers that steal the people's money.... And as far as the 'communist' goes, I'm going to go and look till I find out what they are, and I'm going to join up with them and be one of them for the rest of my life!" (I said this back over my shoulder from the American side of the gate.)

...Lefty Lou and me went back to KFVD and they put us back on the air for an HOUR a day, 30 minutes early in the morning, and 30 minutes at midnight. We got more than twenty thousand letters from farmers, town workers, movie workers, ships at sea, gold prospectors, desert rats, dude ranches, mountain lodges, slums, skid rows, tenements, churches, school houses, and people of all colors and kinds.

As their popularity increased, it seems that Woody started reacting against it, as he had done when he received support and encouragement from his father. With a successful radio show as his platform, he decided that he should speak out more against the evils in life; accord-

ing to Mary in later years, Woody was always working for those who had very little means. Woody was becoming an expresser of political beliefs, for he was listening to Mike Quinn and other voices heard on KFVD. But then the Crissmans decided to leave the Los Angeles area.

Lefty Lou finally went up north to Chico where her dad and mama got a little rent farm. I bummed around with them for a while and then I saw so much crooked work and starvation going on all around me that I drifted back down to Los Angeles after a while and got back on KFVD once again. This time by myself. Just me, my harmonica, and my old guitar.

Will Geer and Cisco Houston had met while working in a little theater group; they had similar political beliefs and became friends. They heard Woody during one of his radio shows and decided to go meet him. Woody and Cisco created a singing duo that lasted for nearly twelve years. Born in Delaware, Gilbert "Cisco" Houston was a well-known singer in his own right (see Smithsonian Folkways 40059). Cisco's steady guitar and vocals frequently helped Woody keep a regular rhythm and a fixed pitch. Will Geer, who would later be better known as playing Grandpa Walton on television during the 1970s, wanted to get a group of entertainers to travel around performing free shows for migratory workers in their camps as well as in the government camps.

So we drove all over the mountains and deserts in my \$45 1931 Chevrolet until it finally shook completely to pieces. It heaved its last quiver up on top of that high mountain pass that runs from Los Angeles, 150 miles over to Bakersfield. We saw lots of the Vigilante (Deputy Thug) Patrolmen at work with their brass knucks, billies, hoses, lead pipes, axe and pick handles, and sawed off shotguns, as well as gas bombs, and sub machine guns turned against the working people in order to try to make them work cheaper. After several months of this traveling and keeping the radio program going too, Will went back to New York to go to work as Jeeter Lester in the play, Tobacco Road....

Woody was becoming more outspoken about what he perceived to be the evils and ills in society, but he and the KFVD owner had a falling out—probably over Woody's unreliability. In late 1939, Woody, Mary, and now three children returned to Pampa, but Woody had already decided to try New York City.
(To be continued on Volume 3)

For more information about Woody Guthrie's work with Moses Asch, please consult Volume 1 in this series as well as *Woody Guthrie, Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters, 1944–1949* (Smithsonian Folkways 40046).

NOTES ON THE SONGS

1. MULESKINNER BLUES

(Blue Yodel #8)

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/guitar; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal; Pete Seeger, banjo (Words and music by Jimmie Rodgers and George Vaughn; words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; Asch Records A432, 78rpm, 432-1A, recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 12; mastered from 78)

First recorded by Jimmie Rodgers on 11 July 1930 in Hollywood, California, and released as Victor V 23503 (now available on Rounder Records 1060), this Rodgers song is generally considered to be the highlight of his Blue Yodel series; it became a standard bluegrass and country music number with singers as diverse as Woody Guthrie, Bill Monroe, and Dolly Parton recording it. Rodgers, known as "The Singing Brakeman," "The Father of Country Music," and "The Blue Yodeler," was the son of a railroad man and grew up around rail yards learning the language, lore, and songs of that work force. As Rodgers worked frequently with Black railroad workers, it is possible that this song had its origin in African-American traditional song; at least some of the lyrics appear in modified form in traditional songs. Since Rodgers's recordings were popular among Blacks as well as Whites, it is also probable that some of his lyrics entered African-American tra-

dition (see: Nolan Porterfield, *Jimmie Rodgers* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979], Norm Cohen, *Long Steel Rail* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981], and Dorothy Horstman, *Sing Your Heart Out*, Country Boy, 3rd ed. [Nashville: Country Music Foundation Press, 1996, p. 317]).

The basic differences between Jimmie Rodgers's and Woody's versions are that Woody rarely yodeled, which was a trademark of Rodgers; also, when Woody's version is printed as couplets, the first line is repeated, making it a three-line verse. Rodgers also sings two additional verses. This is a rare, but not unique, example of Woody using a Rodgers's song. It is also one of only a few songs recorded with Pete Seeger. For lyrics see: Woody Guthrie, *Woody Guthrie Folk Songs* (New York: Ludlow Music, 1963, p. 209) and *The Collected Reprints from Sing Out! Volumes 1–6* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out Corporation, 1990, p. 34).

2. WRECK OF THE OLD 97

Woody Guthrie, vocal; Cisco Houston, guitar (Words and music by Henry Whitter, Charles Noell, and Fred Lewey; words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* [Folkways Records FA 2484]; recording date and matrix unknown; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 087, 10" aluminum-based disc)

In the early days of the recording industry,

the record company, the composer of the song, and the publisher made most of the money; the performer, as a general rule, made the advance he or she got, and usually not much more. With many public domain songs that are given a new life and generate large amounts of revenue, individuals emerge from all walks of life claiming to be the composer. Such is the case of "The Wreck of Old 97." In December 1923, hill-billy music pioneer Henry Whitter recorded his version of "The Wreck on the Southern Old 97." His recording was soon followed by the North Carolina blind singer, Ernest Thompson, recording a slightly different version for Columbia, and in May 1924, Vernon Dalhart recorded Whitter's version for Edison. (Vernon Dalhart was the stage/recording name for Marion Try Slaughter, a Texan who became a popular and light opera singer in New York City and who eventually recorded under at least 110 names.) The Edison recording sold well enough for Dalhart to persuade Victor to record it as the flip side of the immensely popular "Prisoner's Song;" the recording was thus the first hill-billy/country music recording to sell over one million copies. Dalhart also recorded it for over ten different labels, so the claims for composing or owning the rights to "The Wreck of Old 97" multiplied. Sheet music claiming Henry Whitter, Charles W. Noell, and Fred J. Lewey as composers was published, but litigation eventually ended in court with RCA Victor pit-

ted against David Graves George's claim as the composer. In January 1940, the U.S. Supreme Court denied a rehearing of the case that had been denied in favor of Victor. For the complete story, see: Norm Cohen, *Long Steel Rail* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981, pp. 197-226); Cohen starts his study by stating the song is a parody of Henry Clay Work's popular 1865 song, "The Ship That Never Return'd."

Although the tragedy was obscured by the song and litigation, indeed Number 97, a mail train that ran between Washington and Atlanta on the Southern Railway in the early 1900s, was wrecked. When the engineer, Joseph A. "Steve" Broady, took the controls on Sunday, 27 September 1903, in Monroe, Virginia, they were one hour behind schedule. In his attempt to make up the time, combined with a lack of knowledge about the track, Broady literally flew the train off the tracks near Danville, Virginia, killing himself and eight others—perfect material for a tragic ballad.

Woody does not sing the usual place names associated with the event, and there is no documentation about when and where he learned it. He did use the melody and general structure for the "Wreck of the 1939" in his unpublished manuscript, "Songs of Woody Guthrie," Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress, 1941, p. 38.

3. SALLY GOODIN'

(also spelled: "Sally Gooden" and "Sally Goodwin")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/fiddle; Cisco Houston, guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
(From *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* [Folkways Records FA 2484]; recorded 24 April 1944, matrix MA 713; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 449, 10" shellac disc)

The fiddle is usually associated with dancing—a wide variety of dancing; thus, it is known as the "devil's box" and by other sobriquets. The fiddle was *the* musical instrument that helped open each frontier as our nation expanded westward; if the government ever declared an official national folk instrument, it would have to be the fiddle, for it knows no ethnic boundaries or age barriers and requires no formal education to play and/or appreciate. The traditional tunes and/or variants of well-known tunes that are considered fiddle tunes are limitless, for each fiddler is an individualist and does to the tune what he wants to do. Woody's Uncle Jeff, his best friend Matt Jennings, and his cousin Jack all played the fiddle. It was only natural that Woody would gain some knowledge and skill at playing it. However, to say that he was a good fiddler would be exaggerating, for he was only fair at fiddling.

Woody had the style and tone of an old-time fiddler, and the expression "sawin' on the fiddle" was an appropriate description. The use of

the bow has much, much to do with the tone of the music; old-time fiddlers generally use about one-third of the upper end of the bow, while western swing fiddlers use the "long bow" technique—the entire length of the bow. Woody had limited bowing skill and used a stiff, sawing technique.

A breakdown is a fast tempo tune to which a single dancer can clog or jig; "Sally Goodin'" is usually considered to be a Southern fiddle breakdown tune. Woody's lyrics follow the traditional ones. This recording is enhanced considerably by Sonny Terry's harmonica. "Sally Goodin'" recorded as a solo fiddle tune by a Texan, A.C. "Eck" Robertson, on 1 July 1922 in New York City by Victor Records (Vi 18596), was the first commercial recording of what is now considered to be "country music." For more information about the fiddle, see: Alan Jabour, "Fiddle Music," in *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jan Harold Brunvand (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996, pp. 253-256).

4. LITTLE BLACK TRAIN

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from *Bed On the Floor* [Verve Folkways FV/FVS 9007], reissued as *Poor Boy* [Folkways Records FT 1010 and 31010]; recorded April 1944, matrix MA 137; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 3789, 10" shellac disc)

The song is attributed to the Carter Family,

yet little is known about its origin. It is generally considered to be an African-American gospel song; it has the often-used “black train to carry you away” imagery. This is the language of the hell-fire-damnation frontier preacher or, in the twentieth century, the holy-roller preacher. In fact, the few citations listing the song are all from after the turn of the century, but Norm Cohen in *Long Steel Rail* states that he believes it was composed in the late 1800s. Nevertheless, it was and is equally popular among Black and White singers.

The first recording of it was “Death’s Black Train Is Coming” in 1926 by The Reverend J. M. Gates, an African-American minister from Atlanta who recorded “sermons with singing.” Two years later the first hillbilly recording was made by Emry and Henry Arthur for the Brunswick Company, but the Carter Family did not record it until 1935 for American Record Corporation—not issued until 1937 as ARC 7-07-62. Most of Woody’s lyrics are near enough to the Carters’ to indicate a definite influence, but he had to have written some—they do not appear in the known variants. They even differ from the lyrics he typed in the unpublished manuscript “Songs of Woody Guthrie,” Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress, 1941, p. 132.

*Your million dollar fortune, your mansion
glittering white,*

You can’t take it with you when the train

rolls in tonight.

Get ready for your Savior, and fix your business right.

You’ve got to ride that Little Black Train and make that final ride.

At places in the recording, it sounds as if Sonny Terry plays a subtle harmonica melody line, but it probably is Woody’s guitar harmonics. For additional information, see: Norm Cohen, *Long Steel Rail* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981, pp. 625-628) and Newman I. White, *American Negro Folk-Songs* (Hatboro, PA: Folklore Associates, reprint 1965, pp. 65-66).

5. WHO’S GONNA SHOE YOUR PRETTY LITTLE FEET

(alternate titles: “Green Valley Waltz,” “Green Valley Waltz Blues,” and many others) Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/guitar; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal (Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; Asch Records A432, 78rpm, 432-4 B, reissued on *Bed On the Floor* [Verve Folkways FV/FVS 9007], reissued as *Poor Boy* [Folkways Records FT 1010 and 31010]; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 27; mastered from 78)

Generally considered to be a Southern folk song with roots in the “ancient” Scots ballad, “The Lass of Roch Royal” (Child 76), the regionalized version has lost the narrative and drama of the original ballad that was documented as early as 1790. It is the story of Lady Margaret

taking her illegitimate son to see his father, Lord Gregory. While Lord Gregory is sleeping, his mother tells Margaret that he is gone. Margaret with her son gets in a small boat intending to find Gregory; when a storm capsizes the boat, they both drown. Gregory awakens and sees them drown; the tragedy also kills him. The line “Who will shoe my bonny feet?” became a commonly used song motif. Thus, hundreds of traditional songs can claim kinship to this old Scots ballad.

Woody knew the lyrics as “Them Green Valley Blues” at least by 1938, and included the song in his unpublished manuscript “Woody & Lefty Lou’s One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs,” dated April 1938. The lyrics he sang at that time are slightly different; the addition of “...on the train and gone” almost makes it a train song. The earliest recordings of this variant type were titled “Green Valley Waltz,” with the first to be issued by the McCart Brothers & Patterson (Columbia 15454-D), 1928. By 1936, twelve additional groups playing and singing it were recorded, including one under the title “Hyter’s Favorite Waltz.” The first recording to use the title “Who’s Gonna Shoe Your Pretty Little Feet” was by the Renfro Valley Boys (Paramount 3321), March 1932. For additional information and lyrics, see: Alan Lomax, *The Folk Songs of North America* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1960, pp. 200-

201, 216), MacEdward Leach, *The Ballad Book* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955, pp. 253-256), and *The Collected Reprints from Sing Out! Vols. 1-6* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out Corp., 1990, p. 101).

6. BALTIMORE TO WASHINGTON

Woody Guthrie, vocal/harmony/guitar; Cisco Houston, vocal/harmony/guitar (Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from *Bed On the Floor* [Verve Folkways FV/FVS 9007], reissued as *Poor Boy* [Folkways Records FT 1010 and 31010]; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 39; mastered from analog master for FT 31010)

This variant of “Cannonball Blues” and “White House Blues” appears to be a combination of Woody’s lyrics blended with more traditional phrases. It is probable that Woody learned the melody from listening to the Carter Family, for “The Cannonball” was issued in 1930 with A.P. Carter singing it as a solo (Victor V40317), and they were singing it through the 1930s on their radio shows. The Carter Family song is a variant of “White House Blues” as first recorded by Charlie Poole and His North Carolina Ramblers, issued in 1926 (Columbia 15099-D) (see Smithsonian Folkways 40090). Poole’s version stems from African-American blues that were composed about the assassination of President McKinley on 6 September 1901 at the Pan American

Exposition in Buffalo, New York—thus, the line used by the Carters and others, “From Buffalo to Washington.” But Woody changed his version to “Baltimore to Washington,” and he sings a more lyrical song than is usually found in the blues. Woody also used the melody for songs such as “Lindbergh” and “My Dirty Overhauls.”

For more information about “Cannonball/White House Blues,” see: Norm Cohen, *Long Steel Rail* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981, pp. 413-425) and Neil V. Rosenberg, “The ‘White House Blues’—‘McKinley’—‘Cannonball Blues’ Complex: A Biblio-Discography,” *John Edwards Memorial Foundation Newsletter 4* (June 1968) 10, pp. 45-58. Woody included it as “Cannon Ball Blues” in his unpublished manuscript “Woody & Lefty Lou’s One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs,” dated April 1938, and in that version the Carter Family influence is definite.

7. RUBBER DOLLY

(alternate titles: “Back Up and Push,” “Rubber Doll Rag,” and others)

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
(Unreleased alternate version; recording date unknown; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 075, 10" aluminum-based disc)

In the 1930s and early 1940s in Oklahoma,

if a group of small boys decided that a young girl liked or was “sweet on” a boy, they would sing this song to her to make her life miserable. The age of this traditional song has not been determined, and it has traveled through tradition as both a song and an instrumental tune. As an instrumental *tune* it is considered to be a Southern fiddle breakdown that is also known by the title “Back Up and Push.” As an instrumental song it can be sung up-tempo, but is usually slowed a little as Woody and Cisco did in their version. Also, Cisco plays a lead guitar break, which was not common in their recording sessions.

The first recording using the “Rubber Dolly” title was by Uncle Bud Landress and the Georgia Yellow Hammers, playing and singing “The Rubber Doll Rag” (Victor V40252), recorded in late 1929 and issued in September 1930.

8. 21 YEARS

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Bob Miller; previously unissued; from Smithsonian reel-to-reel tape 93; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 50; mastered from analog tape 093)

This was a popular early 1930s country music recording that was soon collected by a few folk song scholars; it was assumed to be traditional, and G. Malcolm Laws, Jr., even classified it as a Native American Ballad (a

ballad which is native to America), “About Criminals and Outlaws.” However, it was a song written and recorded by Bob Miller in 1930. Miller was a composer, author, singer, and publisher, who was born in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1895. He was a musical child prodigy, becoming a professional pianist at the age of ten, and later moved to New York City, where he wrote and recorded most of his songs. He wrote under many pseudonyms, and his songs include “Leven Cent Cotton, Forty Cent Meat,” “Chime Bells,” “There’s a Star Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere,” “Seven Years with the Wrong Woman,” and hundreds more.

He wrote and published two or three versions of this song in which a prisoner is serving “21 Years” for a murder he did not commit in order to protect the woman he loves; he is asking her to go to the governor and get him a “pardon” or even a parole. He realizes she does not love him and tells all young men, “Don’t bet on the wrong kind of woman, you’re beat if you do,” for “twenty-one years, boys, is a mighty long time.” One version has the young woman telling the story. Miller also wrote “Twenty-One Years—Part 2,” “New Twenty-One Years,” “Answer to Twenty-One Years,” “Ninety-Nine Years,” and “Answer to Ninety-Nine Years.”

Miller and Barney Burnett recorded the first song on 21 March 1930 (Gennett 7220), and within a few months many other popular country singers had recorded it: Lester McFar-

land and Robert Gardner (Mac & Bob), Riley Puckett, Carson Robison, Frank Luther, Edward L. Crain, Asher Sizemore, and later Marc Williams. When and where Woody learned it are not known, but his verses are fairly true to Miller’s. However, he changes their sequence. At one point, Woody inserts a line taken from Lead Belly’s song “I’m Going Home to Mary” featuring the lyric, “If I had that governor where the governor got me, by Tuesday morning that governor’d be free.” “I’m Going Home to Mary” is the song that Lead Belly supposedly sang to Governor Pat Neff to gain his release from a Texas prison, although later research indicates he was released for good behavior. In his unpublished manuscript, “Woody & Lefty Lou’s One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs,” dated April 1938, Woody wrote: “Another Ringer! Another Hit of Hits! Twenty One Years! Will live Twenty one Hundred years! Jest naturally got what it takes to make its way into yore heart and find a permanent home.” Woody liked the song.

Although the selection begins abruptly, this is the only remaining recording of Woody and Cisco singing this song; the acetate master no longer exists.

9. SOWING ON THE MOUNTAIN

(alternate title: "Sow'em on the Mountain")
 Woody Guthrie, harmony vocal (bass line);
 Cisco Houston, lead vocal/guitar
 (Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie;
 from *Lonesome Valley* [Folkways FA2010];
 recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 30; mas-
 tered from Smithsonian Acetate 112, 10" glass
 acetate disc)

This recording marks one of the rare times
 when Woody sings harmony to Cisco; he sings
 the bass line harmony, while Cisco plays the
 guitar and sings the lead line. The label for this
 song on *Lonesome Valley* states "Cisco Houston
 and Woody Guthrie," and they sing a strong
 church-influenced harmony. This Southern
 White gospel song was first recorded by the
 Carter Family on 25 November 1930 (Victor
 23585), and was not recorded again until 1938
 by the Coon Creek Girls. It apparently was not
 widely known. For the lyrics, see: *The Collected
 Reprints from Sing Out! Vols. 1-6* (Bethlehem,
 PA: Sing Out Corp., 1990, pp. 308-309).

10. BED ON THE FLOOR

(alternate titles: "Bed on Your Floor," "Make Me
 a Pallet on Your Floor," and other variations)
 Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco
 Houston, harmony vocal/guitar
 (Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie;
 from *Bed On the Floor* [Verve Folkways FV/FVS
 9007], reissued as *Poor Boy* [Folkways Records

FT 1010 and 31010]; recorded 19 April 1944,
 matrix MA 45, Smithsonian Acetate 092; mas-
 tered from analog master FT 31010)

This is one of those songs that seems famil-
 iar, and yet rarely is it mentioned in folk song
 books. It appears on many blues and jazz
 albums, though—in fact, W.C. Handy used it in
 some of his works. After Woody and Cisco
 recorded it and sang it around the urban folk
 scene, it seemed to spread among folk singers.

Its roots are in Southern African-American
 music traditions, particularly among the blues-
 men. One narrative in Alan Lomax's *The Land
 Where the Blues Began* (New York: Pantheon
 Books, 1993, p. 415) states that when the man
 is away from the house, the woman and her
 younger lover always put a blanket on the floor
 so as not to mess up the bed:

*Make me down a pallet on yo flo', (3 times)
 Now make it so yo man won't never know.*

And other informants in his book mention the
 song; also, see: Howard W. Odum and Guy B.
 Johnson, *The Negro and His Songs* (Chapel
 Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1925).

Woody first heard this played on a phono-
 graph in the Crystal Theater in Okemah, Okla-
 homa, when he was a boy; he and Cisco gave
 an unusual twist to the introduction and end-
 ing, for they do a relatively poor-quality imita-
 tion of Jimmie Rodgers's yodeling. It does show
 that Cisco was a better yodeler than Woody.
 Country musicians were recording it in the late

1920s and 1930s—the first being the Leake
 County Revelers in 1928 (Columbia 15264-D).
 Woody included it with his own lyrics in his
 mimeographed songbook, *Ten of Woody
 Guthrie's Songs: Book One* (3 April 1945, pp. 3
 & 12). For lyrics as sung by Cisco (basically the
 same as this version), see: *The Collected
 Reprints from Sing Out! Vols. 1-6* (Bethlehem,
 PA: Sing Out Corp., 1990, pp. 331).

11. TAKE A WHIFF ON ME

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/guitar; Cisco
 Houston, harmony vocal/guitar
 (Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie;
 from *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2*
 [Folkways Records FA 2484]; recorded 19 April
 1944, matrix MA 69; mastered from Smithsoni-
 an Acetate 1425, 10" shellac disc)

John A. and Alan Lomax in *Folk Song
 U.S.A.* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce,
 1947, pp. 290-291) state that they collected
 verses to this song in Texas, Louisiana, and
 New York, indicating that it was widespread
 among cocaine users. To them, it was a song
 straight from the cities, from "the red light dis-
 trict," "skidrows," "gambling hells," and "dens
 of vice." "...It followed the cocaine habit out
 into the levee camps and the country barrel-
 houses of the Deep South." They point out that
 there was a time when opium and cocaine
 could be purchased at the drug store, and
 songs about cocaine, like "Rye Whiskey" about

alcohol, were known nationally. The hopheads
 (drug addicts) and snowbirds (cocaine users)
 produced most of these songs, and while this
 particular song had its origin in African-Amer-
 ican song and imagery, it and cocaine had no
 ethnic boundaries. However, when Charlie
 Poole and The North Carolina Ramblers
 recorded it in 1927, they changed it to "Take a
 Drink on Me" (Columbia 15193-D).

12. STEPSTONE

(alternate titles: "Old Stepstone," "Dear Old
 Stepstone," and "Goodbye to My Stepstone")
 Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco
 Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry,
 harmonica; Bess Lomax Hawes, harmony vocal
 (Words and music by J.O. Webster, from *Bed
 On the Floor* [Verve Folkways FV/FVS 9007],
 reissued as *Poor Boy* [Folkways Records FT
 1010 and 31010]; recorded 25 April 1944,
 matrix MA 94, Smithsonian Acetate 111; mas-
 tered from analog master FT 31010)

This nineteenth-century sentimental parlor
 song, written in 1880 by J.O. Webster, may
 have appealed to Woody's often hidden senti-
 mental side, for there is a sadness in his voice
 as he sings. He included it in his unpublished
 manuscript, "Woody & Lefty Lou's One Thou-
 sand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One
 Hundred and One Songs," dated April 1938;
 this may have been one of the songs his mother
 played on the piano, but, if so, he makes no

mention of the fact. It was first recorded by Bascom Lamar Lunsford in 1928 (Brunswick 231), followed with recordings by Peg Leg Moreland, Ernest Stoneman & the Dixie Mountaineers, and the Floyd County Ramblers.

13. PUT MY LITTLE SHOES AWAY

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
(Words by Samuel N. Mitchell and music by Charles E. Pratt; words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* [Folkways Records FA 2484]; recorded 25 April 1944, matrix MA 81; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 186, 10" shellac disc)

Published in 1873, this sentimental parlor song retained its popularity well into the twentieth century, particularly among some bluegrass groups. It appeared in numerous song books prior to the turn of the century, at which time it had already entered oral tradition. The words have remained fairly close to Samuel Mitchell's originals; Woody sings a few word variations, moves lines within the verses, and he sings a slightly different chorus—and on the recording he leaves out a verse. The major difference is his melody. It is probable that this was a requested song on his KFVD radio show, for it is in his unpublished manuscript, "Woody & Lefty Lou's One Thousand and One Laffs and

Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs," dated April 1938. He wrote: "I've went off to sleep a many a time to the sound of my Mother's voice a singing this good old song...."

The first recording was by Riley Puckett in 1927 (Columbia 15125-D), and was followed by Henry Whitter, Vernon Dalhart, Lester McFarland and Robert Gardner (Mac & Bob), Girls of the Golden West, Wilf Carter, the Chuck Wagon Gang, and others. Between 1927 and 1937, it was recorded at least sixteen times.

14. HEN CACKLE

(alternate titles: "Cacklin' Hen," "Old Hen Cackled," and others)
Woody Guthrie, fiddle; Cisco Houston, vocal/guitar
(Unreleased alternate version; recording date unknown, mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 561, 10" glass acetate disc)

This is a different version of "Hen Cackle" than the one Moses Asch released on *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* (FW 2484); it is an instrumental. Woody attempts to make his fiddle sound like a cackling hen. This is another Southern fiddle breakdown that is widespread in popularity. Fiddlin' John Carson recorded it in 1923 (Okeh 4890), followed by Gid Tanner and Riley Puckett and at least ten others by 1928.

15. POOR BOY

(alternate titles: "Coon Can Game," "Gambling Man," "My Mother Called Me to Her Deathbed Side," "Boston Burglar," and "Ninety-Nine Years")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2* [Folkways Records FA 2484]; even though the cover and liner notes text list the song as "Gambling Man," it is actually "Poor Boy"; also issued on *Bed On the Floor* [Verve Folkways FV/FVS 9007], reissued as *Poor Boy* [Folkways Records FT 1010 and 31010]; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 50; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 064, 10" shellac disc)

Woody may have learned this from B.F. Shelton's recording, "Cold Penitentiary Blues," recorded in 1927 (Victor V40107), for the opening is the same—the narrator was called to his mother's deathbed for a warning. The warning is ignored; he kills the man who ran away with his gal and who later left her. D.K. Wilgus in his liner notes for *Native American Ballads* (RCA Victor LPV-548, 1967) stated that this body of songs had "distinctive regional distribution," and that this variant was from Texas convicts, even though Shelton was not from Texas but from Kentucky. Therefore, it is also possible that Woody learned it from someone in the Pampa area; Woody's melody is the same as the traditional melody, only his lyrics vary.

The general theme is that of a jailhouse or penitentiary ballad; he tells his story of either killing his unfaithful girlfriend or the one with whom she ran away. In the "Coon-Can" variants, he sits down in a gambling game and sometimes kills a gambler. Coon-can (derived from the Mexican word and game *conquian*) is a card game (thus, "the gambling game") of rummy played by two or more people with two decks of cards using two jokers.

In 1926, Carl T. Sprague, a Texan, recorded his version under the title "Boston Burglar" (Victor 20534); other titles of variants followed including Shelton's: "I've Still Got Ninety-Nine," "Gamblin' Jim," "Poor Boy," etc.

16. STACKOLEE

(alternate titles: "Stagolee," "Stagger Lee," "Stack Lee," and others)
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from *Bound For Glory* [Folkways Records 2481 78/1]; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 68; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 1423, 10" shellac disc)

This "Native American Ballad" (ballad native to America) grew out of the lore of Southern African Americans. Stackolee became a legend because he was big, tough, and mean—in fact, in one version of the song, the Devil does not even want him in hell. Memphis is where he loaded cotton and killed Billy de

Lyons over a Stetson hat; again, there are questions about what started the argument, but all Stackolee wanted was an excuse to kill.

Sung by blues singers for decades, there are numerous variants. Woody's story is the traditional story, but his lyrics vary from many available printed texts as well as the text in his unpublished manuscript, "Songs of Woody Guthrie," Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress, p. 127. For additional information, see: John A. and Alan Lomax, *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1934, pp. 93-99).

17. JOHNNY HART

(alternate titles: "John Hardy," "John Hardy Was a Desperate Little Man," and "Johnny Hart")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar

(Additional words and adaptation of words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 58; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 1422, 10" shellac disc)

John Hardy killed another man, Tom Bruce, over a small amount of money in a gambling game, either dice or cards. John A. and Alan Lomax, in *Folk Song U.S.A.* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1947, p. 288), state that John Hardy went to a gambling table, "...slapped down his forty-five and said [to his gun], 'Now I want you to lay here and the first man who steals my money, I mean to kill him.'"

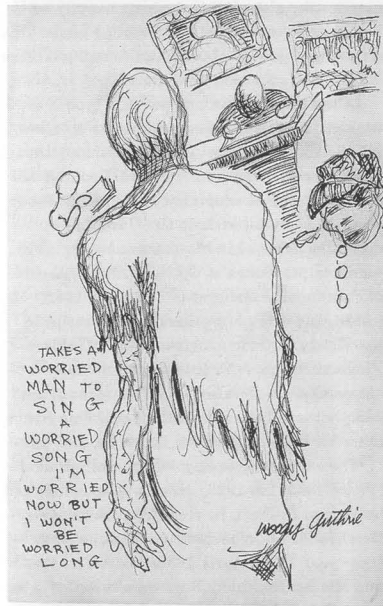
He was drinking heavily and started losing; he accused Bruce of stealing, so Bruce returned his money. Hardy picked up his pistol and shot him, saying, "Man, don't you know I wouldn't lie to my gun?" Hardy was tried for murder, found guilty, and hanged in Welch, McDowell County, West Virginia, on Friday, 19 January 1894.

It did not take long for a song to appear, for the story contains all the ingredients for a traditional ballad. Who wrote it is not known, but by 1924 it was being recorded, first by Eva Davis (Columbia 167-D). The following year Ernest V. Stoneman recorded it, followed by Buell Kazee, and in 1928 the Carter Family (see Smithsonian Folkways 40090) recorded it, which was probably Woody's source. In 1940, Woody used the melody for his powerful ballad, "Tom Joad." For lyrics, see: *The Collected Reprints from Sing Out! Vols. 7-12* (Bethlehem, PA: 1992, p. 130-131).

18. WORRIED MAN BLUES

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/guitar; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar (A.P. Carter; words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 47; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 3791, 10" shellac disc)

As well known as this song is, it was not recorded until 24 May 1930 in Memphis, Tennessee, by the Carter Family (Victor V40317), and only two other groups recorded it in the



1930s. Woody learned it listening to the Carter Family, and its popularity seems to have come from his own influence on the urban folk music scene. The lyrics he sang for this take are almost identical to those he wrote in his unpublished manuscript, "Woody & Lefty Lou's

One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs," dated April 1938; he also wrote:

What are the Links in the Chain of Trouble that shackles your legs so you caint follow the call of your ambition? Fear is a Link. Greed is a Link. Laziness is a Link. Ignorance is a Link. Hatred is a Link. Impatience is a Link. There are lots more of them. And they is an Axe that'll cut those Links—any of them, all of them, in one strong, determined, stroke. Friendship. Faith. Love. Call it whatever you want.

Woody could have been an amazingly successful evangelistic preacher.

Who composed this song and when are pure speculation. On 5 June 1930, a man named Joe McCoy registered a copyright for the words and music. On 30 October 1930, A.P. Carter, leader of the group, registered himself and Southern Music as the composer/publisher; and on 3 January 1933, a Walter Davis registered a copyright. As with other public domain songs, a little success brings many claims.

19. DANVILLE GIRL

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/guitar; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar (Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 40; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 448, 10" shellac disc)

The lyrics are from the "Poor Boy" family

and sung to the traditional "Cannonball Blues" melody. Pete Seeger in his *Bells of Rhymney* (New York: Oak Publications, 1964, p. 32) included his version of "Danville Girl" with some verses similar to those in Woody's version. Seeger stated: "This song is my own composition of half-a-dozen similar songs—among them some of the all-time favorite verses sung by hobos during the early years of this century." It is probable that Woody did the same thing in compiling his version.

For the lyrics, see: *The Collected Reprints from Sing Out! Vols. 7–12* (Bethlehem, PA: 1992, p. 105).

20. GAMBLING MAN

(alternate title: "The Roving Gambler")
Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar
(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 51; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 086, 10" shellac disc)

In this variant there are two song types: "The Roving Journeyman" and "I would not marry..." The "roving" songs have traveled around the world, and in the United States the rover became a gambler. They tell of a traveling man arriving in town and meeting and courting a girl or girls; and the girl tells her mother she loves him and runs away with him even though her mother objects. The "roving gambler" either

marries the girl, ending the song happily, or leaves her, gets in another gambling game, kills a man, and goes to prison. And the song is often localized to a specific community.

When the "I would not marry..." type is used within the song, it offers mild humor by allowing the singer to insert any occupation, although usually these verses provide no action and add nothing to the development of the story. Woody knew one version without the "I would not marry..." as typed in his unpublished manuscript, "Songs of Woody Guthrie," Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress, 1942, p. 180, and there is a different manuscript in the Woody Guthrie Archives, Woody Guthrie Publications, New York City. He probably obtained some of these lyrics from John A. and Alan Lomax, *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1934, pp. 150–151).

The earliest recording was by Kelly Harrell (Victor 19596) in 1925, which was soon followed by Vernon Dalhart; he recorded it at least six times for as many recording companies the same year. In the early 1950s Hank Thompson and His Brazos Valley Boys even recorded it as a western swing dance tune.

21. RYE STRAW

Woody Guthrie, fiddle; Cisco Houston, guitar; Bess Lomax Hawes, mandolin
(Recording date and matrix undetermined, but possibly the "Fiddle Piece" 25 April 1944, matrix

MA 92; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 079, take 1, 10" glass acetate disc)

This is another example of Woody's fiddling style, and while it shows the same technique as "Sally Goodin," Woody seems to be a little more relaxed with this tune. On the original acetate it is listed as "Fiddle Tune," but Woody introduces it as "Rye Straw" during an unreleased recording session for Asch with Rambling Jack Elliott in 1952. Typical of fiddle tunes, "Rye Straw" does not always get played note for note from fiddler to fiddler, but it is an old breakdown known in the Ozarks and Oklahoma. These tunes are also played by five-string banjo pickers. The first recording of "Rye Straw" was by Uncle Am Stuart in 1924 (Vocalion 14843) with the fiddle and banjo as the instruments. Uncle Dave Macon also played it unaccompanied on the banjo. Woody probably learned it from his Uncle Jeff or Matt Jennings.

22. CRAWDAD SONG

(alternate title: "Crawdad Hole" and "Sweet Thing")
Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica

(Recorded 24 April 1944, matrix 707; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 1635, 10" shellac disc)

Crawdads are known to some people as crayfish and crawfish; they are eaten by both humans and fish, and among Cajuns they are a

delicacy. Crawdads are essential to some people's livelihoods and possibly survival as their basic food source; this song has been popular even where crawdads are scarce. It was a play-party song (a dance where the closest a man gets to a woman is holding hands or locking arms at the elbow), and among African Americans it was a blues. "Sweet Thing" was the blues from which the song came; fiddlers and banjo pickers adapted to their tempo and the lyrics became more satirical about poverty. There was a time when most young men in Texas and Oklahoma knew the song.

The first known recording to be issued was by Honeyboy and Sassafras (Brunswick 417), cut in Dallas, Texas, in 1929, followed by Girls of the Golden West, Lone Star Cowboys, The Tune Wranglers, and a few others. In his unpublished manuscript, "Woody & Lefty Lou's One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs," dated April 1938, Woody typed fourteen lines for individual verses; for lyrics for the best-known version, see: *The Collected Reprints from Sing Out! Vols. 1–6* (Bethlehem, PA: 1992, p. 190).

23. IDA RED

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica; Bess Lomax Hawes, harmony vocal
(From *Hard Travelin'* [Disc Records LP 110, 1964]; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA 7;

mastered from analog master for Disc 110)

At the top of his "Ida Red" manuscript in the Smithsonian Folkways Archives, Woody typed, "My Version of an Old Square Dance Break-down," and, indeed, the way they play and sing it makes it an excellent square dance number—even though there is no fiddle. Woody and Cisco sing a verse or two and the chorus with a square-dance-caller's cadence, then Woody starts a few traditional square dance calls.

"Ida Red" is also listed by John A. Lomax as a "Negro Bad Man" song; the singer laments a jail term that keeps him from Ida Red. G. Malcolm Laws, Jr., considered the Lomax version to be a "Native Ballad of Doubtful Currency in Tradition" (Laws dI 23). The Lomax verses and refrain have the same meter or cadence as the breakdown; see John A. and Alan Lomax, *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1934, pp. 110-111).

This can be considered an instrumental song, for the first recording was by Fiddlin' Powers and Family with the vocals by Carson J. Robison (Victor 19434) in 1924. Its popularity is indicated by nineteen different known recordings of it by 1941. Woody included it in his unpublished manuscripts "Songs of Woody Guthrie," Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress, 1941, p. 102, and "Woody & Lefty Lou's One Thousand and One Laffs and Your Free Gift of One Hundred and One Songs," dated April 1938.

24. KEEP MY SKILLET GOOD AND GREASY

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica

(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Vol. 2*, [Folkways Records FA 2484]; recorded April 1944, matrix MA 129-1; mastered from Smithsonian Acetate 187, 10" shellac disc)

Woody's and Cisco's introduction of "woowoo" almost makes this into a semi-nonsense song, but when they sing the lyrics, they bring it back to the traditional, lyrical song. It is an interesting interpretation, for Woody rarely changes musical key in the entire song. This gives a strange sound that falls short of the fifth-string repetition on the five-string banjo.

Pete Seeger on his *Darling Corey* album, reissued on *Pete Seeger: Darling Corey and Goofing-Off Suite* (Smithsonian Folkways 40018), refers to the song as one that African Americans derisively called a "peckerwood song" ("peckerwood" being a term used by Blacks to describe bigoted Whites). Even though its origins are in Black music, it was mostly performed by White musicians. It usually is a banjo tune with a driving tempo; Uncle Dave Macon was the first to record it as a banjo tune with a vocal in July 1924 (Vocalion 13330-1), and it is a song frequently associated with him.

25. TRAIN 45

(alternate titles: "900 Miles," "Reuben's Train," and "Reuben")

Woody Guthrie, vocal; Bess Lomax Hawes, mandolin; Butch Hawes, guitar

(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; recording date and matrix unknown, Smithsonian Acetate 160 [a variant was recorded 25 April 1944, matrix 85], 16" aluminum based disc)

According to John A. and Alan Lomax in *Folk Song U.S.A.* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1947, p. 245), this was one of the songs Woody learned from an African-American shoeshine boy in his hometown, Okemah, Oklahoma. It is one of the most beautiful melodies in folk music, and appears in many regional variations. Considered to be a Black blues that became a hillbilly blues, it has a variety of titles. G.B. Grayson and Henry Whitter recorded it in 1927 as "Train 45" (Gennett 6320), and Wade Mainer, Zeke Morris, and Steve Ledford recorded it ten years later under the title "Riding on That Train Forty-Five" (reissued on *Smokey Mountain Ballads* RCA Victor LPV 507).

Woody's recordings made the "900 Miles" title and version the best known through the urban folk revival, but it has also been popular among bluegrass musicians as an instrumental number.

It was an instrumental with Woody playing the fiddle when released on *Folksay: American Ballads and Dances* (Asch Records A432) in 1944; Cisco Houston, Bess Lomax Hawes, and

Butch Hawes accompanied him. This version has Bess Hawes and Butch Hawes playing the instruments, and it seems to be pitched a little high for Woody's voice. For additional information, see: Norm Cohen, *Long Steel Rail* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981, pp. 503-517); for the lyrics, see: *The Collected Reprints from Sing Out! Vols. 1-6* (Bethlehem, PA: 1992, p. 225).

On shore leave from the Merchant Marine during the Second World War, Woody Guthrie and Cisco Houston took part in a series of marathon recording sessions for Moses Asch in April 1944. These sessions, listed here, represent the bulk of the songs that Guthrie recorded during his entire career, and most of the songs in this collection come from them. Guthrie recorded many more times for Asch until 1952.

April 16, 1944

Hard Ain't it Hard LM-1

More Pretty Gals Than One LM-2

April 19, 1944

Golden Vanity (Lonesome Sea) MA1

When the Yanks Go Marching In MA2

So Long It's Been Good to Know You MA3

Dollar Down and a Dollar a Week MA4

Hen Cackle MA5

I Ain't Got Nobody MA6

Ida Red MA7

Columbus Stockade MA8
Whistle Blowing MA9
John Henry MA10
Hammer Ring (Union Hammer) MA11
Muleskinner Blues MA12
What Are We Waiting On MA13
Ship in the Sky MA14
The Biggest Thing Man Has Ever Done MA15
Stewball MA16
Grand Coulee Dam MA17
Talking Sailor (Talking Merchant Marine)
 MA18-20, MA22
New York Town MA21
Reckless Talk MA23-24
Last Nickel Blues MA25
Guitar Rag MA26
Who's Gonna Shoe Your Pretty Little Feet
 MA27
Brown Eyes MA28
Chisholm Trail MA29
Sowing on the Mountain MA30-31
Right Now MA32
Train Harmonica MA33
Sally Don't You Grieve MA34
Take a Whiff on Me MA35
Philadelphia Lawyer MA36
Kissin' On (Gave Her Kisses) MA37
Little Darling MA38
Baltimore to Washington (Troubles Too) MA39
Danville Girl MA40-41
Ain't Nobody's Business MA42

Take Me Back MA43
Going Down This Road Feeling Bad MA44
Bed on the Floor MA45
One Big Union (Join It Yourself) MA46
Worried Man Blues MA47
What Did the Deep Sea Say? MA48
Foggy Mountain Top MA49
99 Years MA50
Gambling Man MA51
Into Season MA53
Strawberry Roan MA54
Red River Valley MA55
Dead or Alive (Poor Lazarus) MA56
Pretty Boy Floyd MA57
John Hardy MA58
Bad Lee Brown MA59
Whistle Blowing MA66
Billy the Kid MA67
Stackolee (Stackerlee) MA68
Take a Whiff on Me MA69

April 20, 1944

Down Yonder MA674
Guitar Blues MA675
Harmonica Breakdown MA676
Lost John MA679
Pretty Baby MA680
Old Dog a Bone MA681
Give Me That Old Time Religion MA687
Glory MA688
Hard Time Blues MA689
Rubber Dolly MA690

Bus Blues MA691
Devilish Mary MA692
Cripple Creek MA693
April 24, 1944
Old Dan Tucker MA695
Bile Them Cabbage Down MA696
Old Joe Clark MA697
Buffalo Gals (Bottle in My Hand) MA698
Rain Crow Bill MA699
Skip to My Lou MA700
Lonesome Train MA701-2
Blues MA703
Harmonica Breakdown MA704
Harmonica Rag MA705
Harmonica Rag #2 MA706
Crawdad Hole MA707
Bury Me Beneath the Willow MA708
Ride Around Little Dogies (I Ride an Old
Paint) MA709
Blue Eyes MA710
Going Down This Road Feeling Bad
(Lonesome Road Blues) MA711
Old Dog a Bone MA712
Having Fun MA713

April 25, 1944

Talking Fishing (Fishing Blues) MA75
Talking Sailor (Talking Merchant Marine)
 MA76
Union Burying Ground MA77
Jesse James MA78
Ranger's Command MA79

Sinking of the Reuben James MA80
Put My Little Shoes Away MA81
Picture from Life's Other Side MA82
Will You Miss Me MA83
Bed on the Floor MA84
900 Miles MA85
Sourwood Mountain MA86
Hoecake Baking MA87
Ezekiel Saw the Wheel MA88
Little Darling MA89
Lonesome Day MA90
Cumberland Gap MA91
Fiddling Piece MA92
Carry Me Back to Old Virginy MA93
Stepstone MA94
House of the Rising Sun MA95
Brown's Ferry Blues MA98
What Would You Give in Exchange for Your
Soul? MA99
When That Great Ship Went Down MA91-1
Guitar Rag MA101,1230
Going Down the Road Feeling Bad MA103
Dust Bowl MA100
I Ain't Got Nobody MA102
Blowing Down This Old Dusty Road MA1231
April 1944 (shortly after the 25th)
Hey Lolly Lolly MA105
Budded Roses MA106
House of the Rising Sun MA107
I Don't Feel at Home in the Bowery MA108
Hobo's Lullaby MA109

Frog Went A-Courtin' (Mouse Went A-Courtin') MA110
Bad Reputation MA111
Snow Deer MA112
Ladies Auxillary MA113
This Land Is My Land MA114
Hang Knot (Slip Knot) MA115
Breakdown MA116
Go Tell Aunt Rhody MA117
Union Going to Roll MA118
Who Broke Down the Hen House Door? MA119
What Did the Deep Sea Say? MA120
When the Yanks Go Marching In MA122
Bed on the Floor MA123
We Shall Be Free MA124
Right Now MA125
Jackhammer John MA126
Woody MA127
Woody MA128
Keep Your Skillet Good and Greasy MA129-1
Lost You MA131
Slip Knot (Hang Knot) MA134
Jesus Christ MA135
Little Black Train MA137
Cannon Ball MA138
Gypsy Davy MA139
Bile Them Cabbage Down MA140

ARCHIVIST'S REMARKS

During the last fifteen years music buyers have seen the replacement of the vinyl LP by the compact disc as the medium of choice for home listening of audio recordings. The replacement of one format by another has a history in the audio world. Wax cylinders were replaced by 78 rpm discs, which were in turn replaced by LPs ("Long Playing records," as they were called). The same evolutionary processes also occurred in recording studio masters for these formats.

Magnetic audiotape technology did not exist before World War II; it first came into use for audio recording in the late 1940s. Before then, most mastering had been done directly on to discs. Most master discs were recorded at about 78 rpm and consequently could not hold more than three minutes of music. Selections that ran longer often had to be broken up into two parts. Later on, but still before he moved to magnetic tape, Asch used 33 1/3 rpm masters to record longer pieces on disc.

With the exception of the narratives, all the music on this project was made by Moses Asch during the 1940s on various types of disc. There were several sorts of disc technology; some machines recorded directly on to aluminum discs, others recorded on to acetate or shellac discs. The recordings here fall into the latter two categories.

Acetate discs of the type used for recording

these tracks consisted of an aluminum or glass base covered with a layer of lacquer. During World War II the glass base was used because metal was dedicated to military uses. With the passage of time, the lacquer may begin to peel off the base like old paint, so it is important that acetate discs be transferred to a more stable medium as soon as possible. Shellac discs are more stable than acetate and are more like the vinyl discs we are familiar with. They are, however, quite brittle. Here at the Smithsonian we have undertaken the slow and laborious task of transferring all 5,000 acetates in the collection.

During World War II, when these recordings were made, discs of this type were in short supply. Moses Asch had a studio and musicians ready to record but nothing to record them on. Herbert Harris of the Stinson Trading Company had blank discs. Asch and Harris went into a short partnership as Asch-Stinson Records. Both men continued to put out much of the same material after their partnership ended, leading to much discographical confusion. Because of the shortage of discs Asch could not afford second or third takes. For this reason, many of the songs he recorded have small mistakes in them. Some of these masters were released on Moses Asch's Asch and Disc labels.

While working on this series, Pete Reiniger and I have tried to clean up the often scratchy sound by using No-Noise digital editing software. Some of the acetates are in better condi-

tion than others, and some either no longer exist or are in too bad condition to use. In these cases we have substituted the recordings from the analog LP production master. It is our philosophy to try to clean up the noise without sacrificing the sound. Certain types of noise can be easily cleaned up this way; others cannot be without eliminating the high-frequency sound. Many historical reissues sound muffled for this reason. We would rather have the crisp sound of the original with some noise. We hope you agree.

During the summer of 1990, Lori Taylor, Leslie Spitz-Edson, Alex Sweda, Suzanne Crow, and I went through the approximately 5,000 master recording discs which had been in the possession of Moses Asch. We gently set down the needle on each disc for a brief moment and tried to discover the contents (acetates do not bear repeated playings). Most of the recordings on this disc were rediscovered during this process. We have now made preservation and reference copies of all of the Guthrie material in the Smithsonian archive. We will be releasing the best of these performances in this multi-volume series over the next two years. This process has aided in the creation of these compact discs and hopefully will lead to more in the future as we work on preserving the rest of the Asch Collection.

Jeff Place, *Archivist, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, Smithsonian Institution (1997)*

For additional information about Woody Guthrie (1912–1967), read his autobiographical novel *Bound for Glory* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1943); also see: Joe Klein, *Woody Guthrie: A Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980); Woody Guthrie, *Pastures of Plenty: A Self Portrait*, edited by Dave Marsh and Harold Leventhal (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1990); and Pete Seeger, *Where Have All the Flowers Gone* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out!, 1993). Another important resource is the Woody Guthrie Archives (250 W. 57th Street, Suite 1218, New York, NY 10107; 212/541-6230).

For information about Moses Asch (1905–1986), see: Tony Scherman, “The Remarkable Recordings of Moses Asch,” *Smithsonian* 18 (August 1987) 5, pp. 110–21; Gary Kenton, “Moses Asch of Folkways,” *Audio* 74 (July 1990) 7, pp. 38–46; and Israel Young, “Moses Asch: Twentieth Century Man,” *Sing Out!* 26 (May/June 1977) 1, pp. 2–6, and 26 (July/August 1977) 2, pp. 25–29. For information about Jack Guthrie, see: Guy Logsdon, “Jack Guthrie: A Star That Almost Was,” *Journal of Country Music* Vol.15, No. 2, pp. 32–38, and Jack Guthrie: *Oklahoma Hills* (Bear Family Records, BCD 15580), notes by Guy Logsdon.

Lyrics are available in many songbooks, including: *Woody Guthrie Songs*, edited by Judy Bell and Nora Guthrie (New York: TRO Ludlow Music, 1992).

Other selected Woody Guthrie recordings: *Bound for Glory*, Folkways 2481; *Columbia River Collection*, Rounder 1036; *Dust Bowl Ballads*, Rounder 1040; *Library of Congress Recordings*, Rounder 1041; *Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters*, Smithsonian Folkways 40046; *Nursery Days*, Smithsonian Folkways 45036; *Poor Boy*, Folkways 31010; *Songs to Grow On for Mother and Child*, Smithsonian Folkways 45035; *Struggle*, Smithsonian Folkways 40025; *This Land Is Your Land: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 1*, Smithsonian Folkways 40100; *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs*, Smithsonian Folkways 40007.

Other relevant recordings: *Cowboy Songs on Folkways*, Smithsonian Folkways 40043; *Folk Song America: A Twentieth Century Revival*, Smithsonian Collection of Recordings RD 046; *Folkways: A Vision Shared* (Woody and Lead Belly’s song performed by contemporary popular musicians), Columbia 44034; *Folkways: The Original Vision*, Smithsonian Folkways 40001 (Woody Guthrie and Lead Belly); *The Anthology of American Folk Music*, Smithsonian Folkways 40090; *Songs of the Spanish Civil War*, Folkways 5437; *That’s Why We’re Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement*, Smithsonian Folkways 40021; *Work Songs to Grow On, Vol. 3*, Folkways 7027.

ABOUT THE COMPILERS

Jeff Place has been the archivist for the Folkways Collection since soon after its arrival at the Smithsonian in 1987 and has overseen the cataloging of the Moses Asch Collection. He has a Masters in Library Science from the University of Maryland and specializes in sound archives. He has been involved in the compilation of a number of compact discs for Smithsonian Folkways including Woody Guthrie’s *Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters*, which won him the 1994 Brenda McCallum Prize from the American Folklore Society, and *That’s Why We’re Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement*. He has been a collector of traditional music for over twenty-five years. He lives in Mayo, Maryland, with his wife Barrie, daughter Andrea Rose, and son Lee.

Born and reared in Ada, Oklahoma, Dr. Guy Logsdon is a Smithsonian Institution Research Associate, and in 1990–91 was a Smithsonian Institution Senior Post-Doctoral Fellow compiling a biblio-discography of the songs of Woody Guthrie. He received a two-year grant, 1993–95, from the National Endowment for the Humanities to complete the Woody Guthrie project. Logsdon has written numerous articles about Woody Guthrie, cowboy songs and poetry, and authored the highly acclaimed, award-

winning book, *The Whorehouse Bells Were Ringing* and *Other Songs Cowboys Sing*. He compiled and annotated *Cowboy Songs on Folkways* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40043) and *Cisco Houston: The Folkways Years 1944–1961* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40059). Former Director of Libraries and Professor of Education and American Folklife, University of Tulsa, Logsdon works as a writer and entertainer. Logsdon and Place have collaborated on other Smithsonian Folkways collections: *Woody Guthrie, Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters 1944–1949* 40046, *That’s Why We’re Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement* 40021, and *Woody Guthrie, This Land Is Your Land: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 1* 40100.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

For discographical information, we are indebted to Guthrie T. Meade's unpublished "Discography of Traditional Songs and Tunes On Hillbilly Records," in the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, Archive of Folk Culture, Washington, D.C. For their encouragement and assistance, we express sincere appreciation to Dr. Anthony Seeger and Dr. Amy Horowitz, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies Archive and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., and to Joseph C. Hickerson and the Reference Staff in the Library of Congress, Archive of Folk Culture. Additional thanks to Harold Leventhal, Nora Guthrie, Dick Spottswood, Stephanie Smith, Dudley Connell, Tom Adams, Heather MacBride, Elaine Harrington, Micah Ryder, David Arkush, Dan Gilbert, Josh Wiese, and Derek Taylor.

CREDITS:

Compiled by Jeff Place and Guy Logsdon
Annotated by Guy Logsdon and Jeff Place
Project supervised by Anthony Seeger and Amy Horowitz
Original recordings by Moses Asch, 1944–1947, New York City; from the Moses and Frances Asch Collection at the Smithsonian Institution
Analog reel-to-reel and acetate transfers by Jack Towers, Tom Adams, David Glasser, Jeff Place, and Pete Reiniger
Mastered by David Glasser and Charlie Pilzer, AirShow, Springfield, Virginia
Technical coordination by Pete Reiniger
Editing by Carla Borden
Production coordination by Mary Monseur and Michael Maloney
Production assistance by Kori Schlachter
Marketing by Brenda Dunlap
Cover photograph and photos on pages 6 and 11 courtesy of Nora Guthrie and the Woody Guthrie Archives
Cover design by Visual Dialogue, Boston, MA
Back cover photograph of the London House, Okemah, Oklahoma. The house in which the Guthrie family lived (circa 1917–18 as mentioned by Woody Guthrie in his autobiographical novel *Bound for Glory*). Photograph taken at the time the Guthries lived there. Photograph courtesy of Guy Logsdon.

ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

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

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

The Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Paredon, and Dyer-Bennet record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Stud-

ies. They are one of the means through which the Center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

You can find Smithsonian Folkways Recordings at your local record store. Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Paredon, and Dyer-Bennet recordings are all available through:

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414 Hungerford Drive, Suite 444
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phone (301) 443-2314
fax (301) 443-1819
orders only 1 (800) 410-9815

(Discover, MasterCard, and Visa accepted)

For further information about all the labels distributed through the Center, please consult our internet site (<http://www.si.edu/folkways>), which includes information about recent releases, our catalogue, and a database of the approximately 35,000 tracks from the more than 2,300 available recordings (click on Database Search).

Or request a printed catalogue by writing to: Catalogue, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Suite 2600, Smithsonian Institution MRC 914, Washington, DC 20560, USA. Or use our catalogue request phone: (202) 287-3262, or e-mail folkways@aol.com

WOODY GUTHRIE MULESKINNER BLUES

THE ASCH RECORDINGS, VOL. 2

COMPILED BY JEFF PLACE AND GUY LOGSDON ANNOTATED BY GUY LOGSDON AND JEFF PLACE

The songs on this recording represent a selection from the vast storehouse of American folk and country songs that Woody Guthrie learned and incorporated into his early radio career and the song books he sold on the air. In the early 1940s, upon coming to New York, Guthrie and frequent partner Cisco Houston recorded hundreds of songs for Folkways Records founder Moses Asch (160 alone in 1944). This series represents the best of these historic recordings. *Muleskinner Blues* highlights the non-original material that Guthrie recorded for Asch and includes American folk song standards, many of which became part of the American folk song canon due to Guthrie's influence. *Running time: 67 minutes; 40-page booklet includes historical and biographical notes on Woody Guthrie.*

1. **MULESKINNER BLUES** 2:49
2. **WRECK OF THE OLD 97** 2:11
3. **SALLY GOODIN'** 2:26
4. **LITTLE BLACK TRAIN** 2:29
5. **WHO'S GONNA SHOE YOUR PRETTY LITTLE FEET** 2:28
6. **BALTIMORE TO WASHINGTON** 2:53
7. **RUBBER DOLLY** 2:11
8. **21 YEARS** 3:13
9. **SOWING ON THE MOUNTAIN** 2:23
10. **BED ON THE FLOOR** 2:21
11. **TAKE A WHIFF ON ME** 2:41
12. **STEPSTONE** 2:58
13. **PUT MY LITTLE SHOES AWAY** 2:44
14. **HEN CACKLE** 2:16
15. **POOR BOY** 2:26
16. **STACKOLEE** 2:57
17. **JOHNNY HART** 2:27
18. **WORRIED MAN BLUES** 2:57
19. **DANVILLE GIRL** 2:58
20. **GAMBLING MAN** 2:19
21. **RYE STRAW** 2:46
22. **CRAWDAD SONG** 2:52
23. **IDA RED** 2:59
24. **KEEP MY SKILLET GOOD AND GREASY** 2:43
25. **TRAIN 45** 2:39

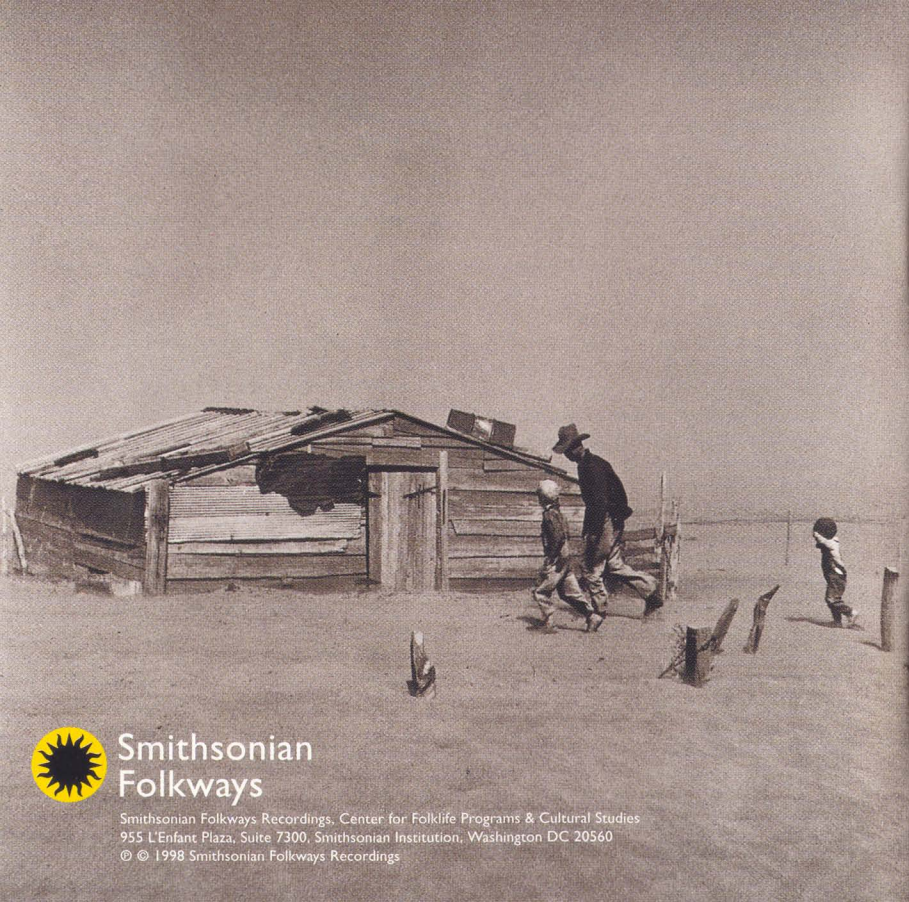


Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

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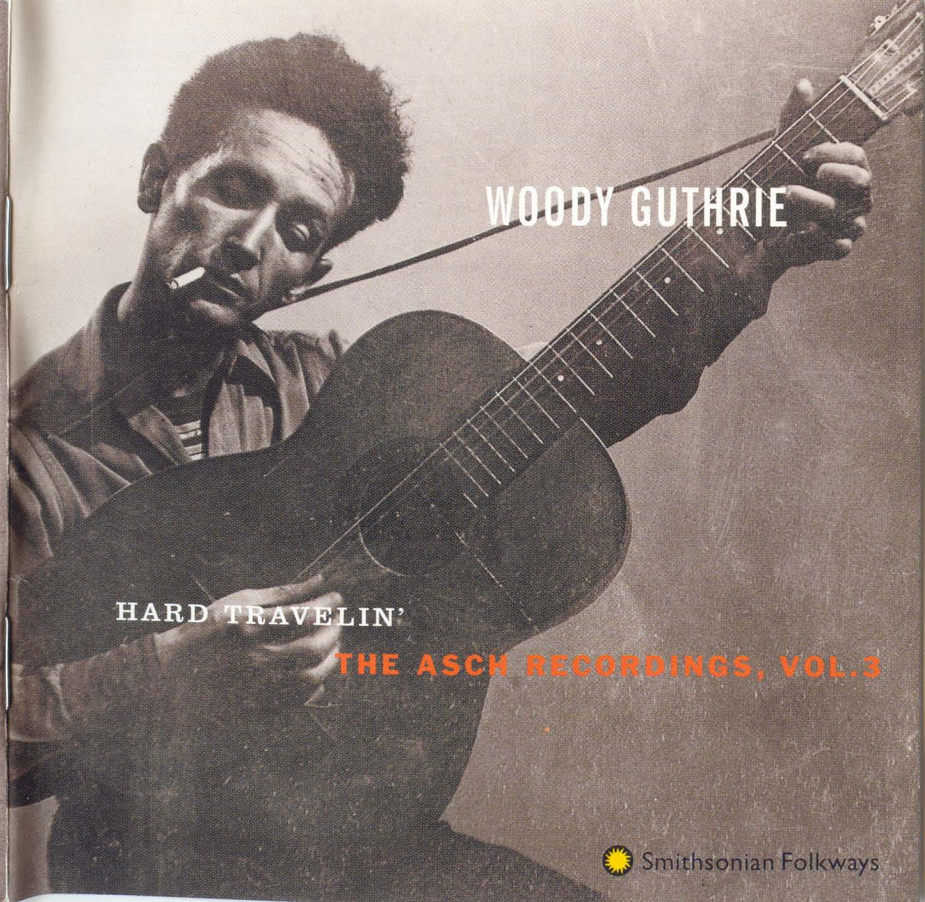


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WOODY GUTHRIE

HARD TRAVELIN'

THE ASCH RECORDINGS, VOL. 3



Smithsonian Folkways

WOODY GUTHRIE HARD TRAVELIN'

THE ASCH RECORDINGS VOL. 3

COMPILED BY JEFF PLACE AND GUY LOGSDON ANNOTATED BY GUY LOGSDON AND JEFF PLACE

1. **HARD TRAVELIN'** 2:31*
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
2. **FARMER-LABOR TRAIN** 2:48
(Woody Guthrie Publications Inc./BMI)
3. **HOWDJADOO** 1:39
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
4. **SHIP IN THE SKY** 2:32
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
5. **I AIN'T GOT NO HOME IN THIS WORLD ANYMORE** 2:43
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
6. **MEAN TALKING BLUES** 3:45*
(Stormking Music, Inc./BMI)
7. **BETTER WORLD A-COMIN'** 3:04
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
8. **MISS PAVLICHENKO** 2:28
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
9. **SO LONG, IT'S BEEN GOOD TO KNOW YOU (WWII VERSION)** 2:44
(TRO-Folkways Music, Inc./BMI)
10. **NEW FOUND LAND** 2:05
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
11. **OREGON TRAIL** 2:44
(Stormking Music, Inc./BMI)
12. **VIGILANTE MAN** 3:22
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
13. **1913 MASSACRE** 3:35
(Sanga Music, Inc./BMI)
14. **TALKING COLUMBIA** 2:28
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
15. **TWO GOOD MEN** 3:45
(Stormking Music, Inc./BMI)
16. **SALLY, DON'T YOU GRIEVE** 2:22
(TRO-Folkways Music Publishers/BMI)
17. **TALKING SAILOR** 3:01
(Sanga Music, Inc./BMI)
18. **WHAT ARE WE WAITING ON?** 2:06
(Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc./BMI)
19. **RAILROAD BLUES** 3:13
20. **LUDLOW MASSACRE** 3:27
(Sanga Music, Inc./BMI)
21. **LADIES AUXILIARY** 2:09*
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
22. **MINER'S SONG** 2:09
(Stormking Music, Inc./BMI)
23. **WHEN THE YANKS GO MARCHING IN** 2:45
(Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc./BMI)
24. **UNION MAID (EXCERPT)** 0:42*
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
25. **RUBAIYAT (EXCERPT)** 3:40*
26. **THE MANY AND THE FEW** 5:33*
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)
27. **HANUKKAH DANCE** 1:24*
(TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc./BMI)

All selections written by Woody Guthrie

* = unreleased or alternative take

INTRODUCTION

by Guy Logsdon

The Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies houses the archives and master recordings of Moses Asch and Folkways Records, as well as a few other small independent record labels. Most of Woody Guthrie's recordings are in the Asch/ Folkways Collection in the Center, and Jeff Place is the archivist for the entire sound collection. This means that he has listened to more Woody Guthrie recordings than anyone as he transfers sound from fragile master discs to tape and compact disc. While listening to the vast numbers of Woody Guthrie recordings, he decided that the songs Woody recorded for Moses Asch should be compiled into a collection: *Woody Guthrie: The Asch Recordings*.

There will be four volumes in the collection; however, not all of the Asch/Guthrie recordings will be in it, for some no longer exist, some are beyond transferring and restoration, and some are unworthy of reproduction. But there are enough songs, some previously issued and some unissued by Moses Asch, to showcase Woody's creativity and talent as well as to emphasize his vast knowledge and mental storehouse of country/western/folk music.

WOODY GUTHRIE

Woody Guthrie played a major role in developing the foundation for the song and social movement during the 1940s and 1950s, now referred to as the urban folk song revival. He also became and remains an inspirational figure for folk song writers, social protest and topical song writers, and rock and folk-rock song writers. His friendship with Lead Belly, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, Sonny Terry, and other legendary folk artists is well documented, and he unselfishly shared his musical and cultural experiences and ideas with them. His influence on Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, John Mellencamp, and other contemporary musicians and songwriters also is well documented. His children's songs have helped parents and teachers rear, teach, entertain, and challenge young people for decades. And his documentation in songs and poetry of historical events such as the "Dust Bowl" and Great Depression decade still provides an important dimension to the interpretation of life during those years. Woody's creative contributions to our culture are legion, in the form of printed books as well as handwritten and/or typed manuscripts, paintings and drawings, and recorded songs.

Volume 1 in this series reveals the diverse subjects to which Woody Guthrie directed his creative energies—children, war, peace,

migrants, the West. *Volume 2* reflects the massive number of traditional, gospel, and country songs that Woody carried in his memory—songs learned in Oklahoma, Texas, California, and along his well-traveled early road of life that he carried to New York City and introduced to the urban folk song movement. *Volume 3* exhibits his creative imagination in adapting songs in his memory to labor, social, and political issues that he believed to be important. He loved musical expression and was a poet by nature. Therefore, Woody did not hesitate to use his imagination to adapt songs to his own style of performance and philosophies, and he readily modified tunes to fit his own creations. He truly was a folk or traditional composer, for he took what was available from his memory and creatively produced out of it an amazing body of new poems and songs.

MOSES ASCH AND FOLKWAYS RECORDS

Moses “Moe” Asch was a man obsessed with sounds: musical sounds, cultural sounds, political sounds, and nature’s sounds; this obsession led him into becoming a pioneer in recording sounds. Born in Warsaw, Poland, he was a son of the novelist Sholem Asch; his father’s work carried to them to Berlin and then to Paris, and when Moe was eight years old the family moved to Brooklyn, New York. He grew up learning the songs of French chil-

dren, his mother’s Yiddish songs, the songs of English-speaking children, and later popular and jazz songs, and as a teenager he developed an interest in the electronics of radio and recording. He later wrote: “I learned the meaning of folk song as it expresses a HOME feeling of belonging and association.” While vacationing in Paris, he found a copy of John A. Lomax’s *Cowboy Songs* (1910 edition) and “became filled with the meaning of the cowboy and the west.”

He started his manufacturing and production of records in 1939, specializing in international ethnic music, with Asch Records as his company name. His first commercial recording venture using American folk expression was in 1941, with *Play Parties in Song and Dance as Sung by Lead Belly*. Other singers of folk songs such as Burl Ives and Josh White turned to him as an outlet for their talents; Asch became the primary producer of folk recordings with limited commercial demand, recognizing the talents of Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, and hundreds of other singers and musicians. (See: Moses Asch, “Folk Music—A Personal Statement,” *Sing Out!* 11 [February-March 1961] 1: 26-27.)

During his career, Asch produced records under different labels: Asch Records, Asch-Stinson Records, Disc Company of America, Folkways Records, Disc Recordings, and oth-

ers. The Folkways label was created after Asch declared bankruptcy in 1947; he produced approximately 2,200 titles during his 40 years of Folkways Records ownership. For the most part, these were of artists and music that the large recording companies did not consider to be commercially viable. Asch issued Woody Guthrie recordings on each label that he produced.

Since 1987, the Moses Asch/Folkways Records archives have been a part of the Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies archives. In the Woody Guthrie portion of this collection there are unpublished songs and poems as well as commercially issued recordings and unissued master recordings. The unissued masters are takes rejected by Woody and/or Asch for various reasons, e.g., the topic of the song did not fit in an album being issued or a line in the song was forgotten or skipped by Woody. Some of the songs in this collection are from those master recordings Moses Asch decided not to use for other projects, while others are previously issued songs chosen as representative of his best works.

When Woody started his recording career in 1940, the commercially viable format for recording and reproduction was the 78 rpm disc. When the needle was set on the master disc, there was no stopping to correct mistakes; they could not be edited. If Woody lost

the tune or sang the wrong words, he had to start over on a new master disc; so there are cuts in the Asch/Folkways Collection that Woody never heard or approved, for they contained mistakes. The composition of the discs also varied; they were shellac, acetate on glass, acetate on aluminum, and vinyl. Unfortunately, the glass discs break easily, and the acetate on aluminum flakes off; therefore, there are songs in this collection that can no longer be transferred from the master disc, for the master was lost during the transfer process. And there are a few recordings lost from merely touching the disc.

Instead of listing the complete title of each Smithsonian Folkways recording mentioned in the following notes, the issue number only will be listed. The collections are as follows in their numeric order: *Folkways: The Original Vision* SF 40001; *Sings Folk Songs with Lead Belly, Cisco Houston, Sonny Terry, Bess Hawes* SF 40007; *That’s Why We’re Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement* SF 40021; *Struggle* SF 40025; *Long Ways to Travel 1944–1949: The Unreleased Folkways Masters* SF 40046; *Cisco Houston: The Folkways Years 1944–1961* SF 40059; *Ballads of Sacco & Vanzetti* SF 40060; *Nursery Days* SF 45036.

For more detailed information about Woody Guthrie's work with Moses Asch, please consult *Volume 1* in this series as well as SF 40046, and Goldsmith (1998). For lyrics of some of the songs in this collection, see: *Woody Guthrie Songs* (New York: TRO Ludlow Music, 1994); *The Collected Reprints from Sing Out!, Vol. 1-6, 1959-1964* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out! Corp., 1990); *Woody Guthrie: Roll on Columbia, The Columbia River Collection* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out! Publications, 1991); *California to the New York Island*, edited by Millard Lampell (New York: Oak Publications, 1958); and *Woody Guthrie Folk Songs* (New York: Ludlow Music, 1963).

WOODY GUTHRIE IN NEW YORK CITY AND WORLD WAR II

For the early years of Woody's story as told by fellow Oklahoman, Guy Logsdon, see: This Land Is Your Land, The Asch Recordings, Vol. 1 (Smithsonian Folkways 40100) and Muleskinner Blues, The Asch Recordings, Vol. 2 (Smithsonian Folkways 40101). Woody's story will be continued in each volume.

Woodrow Wilson "Woody" Guthrie was the third of five children born to Charley and Nora Guthrie of Okemah, Oklahoma. Named for the Democratic presidential candidate and president for two terms, Woody obviously was the son of a staunch Democrat, and he was

proud that his birth date, 14 July 1912, was Bastille Day (14 July is celebrated in France somewhat like the 4th of July in the United States, to symbolize the revolution against royal tyranny in 1789). Woody was destined to become a revolutionary against what he perceived to be economic tyranny.

His father was a successful small-town politician and businessman, and his mother was the dutiful housewife/mother of that era. They were a handsome and popular couple in Okemah. However, by the time Woody was six years old, tragedy in many different forms started striking the family: their new house burned; his sister Clara died from burns; his mother started showing symptoms of the genetic illness Huntington's disease; and his father's land holdings started shrinking. Years later Woody stated that his father lost a farm a day for a month, implying that it occurred during the Great Depression, but Charley's losses were the result of Nora's illness and his concern and love for her long before the Depression years. It was the medical diagnosis that she was going insane; Woody suffered the taunts from other kids that he had a "crazy" mother.

Woody was a few weeks away from the age of 15 when Charley was severely burned. It was generally believed that somehow Nora was responsible; she was committed to Oklahoma's institution for the insane, for the doc-

tors knew little to nothing about Huntington's disease. Charley and his two younger children were taken to Pampa, Texas, to be cared for by relatives. Woody decided to stay in his hometown and fare for himself selling newspapers, shining shoes, picking up scrap iron in alleys, and doing anything else he could to survive. The foundation for Woody's attitudes, philosophies, beliefs, and desire to champion those who are down and out was formulated during his those years—the years when tragedy tore his middle-class family apart. But through it all, he never lost his sense of humor—he probably survived because he could laugh, a personality trait that too many fans and scholars seem to forget.

During the summers he wandered across Oklahoma and Texas, always returning to Okemah in time for school, but at the end of his junior year in high school Woody went to Pampa to live with his father. A few years later he married Mary Jennings, the sister of his good friend, Matt Jennings. He learned to play a variety of instruments while there, and entertained at ranch dances and for a wide variety of audiences with his uncle and aunt Jeff and Allene Guthrie. It was there where he experienced the fury of the dust storms. In mid-1937 he left Pampa and his family to make his way to southern California to become a radio personality.

First he teamed with his cousin Jack

Guthrie on a radio show over KFVD, Hollywood. Jack left the show to work a construction job to support his family; Woody invited their mutual friend Maxine "Lefty Lou" Crissman to sing with him, and the show became "The Woody and Lefty Lou Show." They soon became the most popular performers the station broadcast.

As Woody became more concerned about the poverty of migrant agricultural workers and other inequities in the capitalistic economy, he slowly developed the belief that socialism would spread the nation's wealth among the working people in a more equitable way. He met members of the Communist Party and other left-wing organizations and attended their meetings, some held in the homes of prominent Hollywood personalities. He became more outspoken about what he perceived to be the evils and ills in society, for his years of picking up junk in Okemah alleys as well as other menial tasks for survival were not forgotten.

He and the KFVD owner had a falling out—probably over Woody's unreliability—so in late 1939, Woody, Mary, and, by then, three children returned to Pampa. But Woody had already decided to join his friend, Will Geer, in New York City. In January 1940, Woody left his family once again and thumbed his way to New York City; there he found temporary lodging with Will Geer.

I got out in another big white blizzard and walked out of town (Pittsburgh) on the #22 highway. I remember a road sign that advertized an undertaker's house:

"Grimm's Undertakers. If Death overtakes you, just Grimm and Bear it."

I'm still a ramblin' round old New York trying to find me a job of work. I been here for about three weeks a walkin' around these old cold streets. Sometimes up and sometimes down, sometimes lost in a hole in the ground.

Seems like two or three times a day I get lost down in the old subway. Electric train comes down the line. I catch out wrong most every time.

One runs east, two go west, and I wonder how to catch on best. Six go south, and nine run north, and you dang sure get your nickels worth.

You put a nickel in the slot and grab you a train that's good and hot, sail out down in a hole in the ground and ride that train across this town.

People push and people jam, the jammedest jam I mean what am. You walk, you nudge and squirm and fall, and get up against that cement wall, and ooze and duck and spar and strain and they shove you into the wrong damn train.

(This quotation is from an unpublished

manuscript, circa 1944, in the TRO Richmond Music archives titled "Woody Guthrie, by Me.")

His "temporary" stay slowly began to be an imposition on the Geers, but on 3 March 1940, he performed for Geer during Geer's "Grapes of Wrath Evening." Geer had organized the show to raise money for the John Steinbeck Committee for Agriculture Workers, and Woody's successful contributions to the show justified his lengthy stay with Will and Herta Geer. Woody was reviewed as "a real dust bowl refugee" and a genuine Dust Bowl balladeer. Equally as important for Woody, he met Alan Lomax, Lead Belly, Aunt Molly Jackson, Pete Seeger, and many more destined to influence and to be leaders in the urban folk revival.

Lomax, who was working at the Folk Song Archives in the Library of Congress, invited Woody to Washington to record some of his songs for the Library of Congress—the sessions were in late March 1940; Mary and the kids had rejoined him, and were there during the sessions, but soon returned to Pampa. Then Lomax obtained a contract for Woody with RCA Victor to record his Dust Bowl songs; the session was 26 April 1940, with two additional songs recorded 3 May. Two 78 rpm albums titled *Dust Bowl Ballads* were issued, with Woody being promoted as Oklahoma's

Dust Bowl Balladeer—even though Woody's Dust Bowl experiences were in Pampa, Texas. In fact, of the five states with acreage in the "Dust Bowl," Oklahoma had the least, but due to media coverage and a few other factors, the state became known as the Dust Bowl State.

The albums were not financially successful for RCA or Woody, but they created a small following for Woody's talents and became a major influence in the folk music genre. The day after his RCA session, which was in New York City, Woody wrote:

Howdy Everybody, just finished makin' 12 Victor records, of the conditions in the Dustbowl.... It didn't sound like me when we got done.... I was a standing there a listening to the playback, and the feller said, well, how do you like it, and I said, fine, whose that guy a singin' it?

I think the Ballad of the Joads, or the story of Tom Joad, is the best thing I ever done so far, and is a subject with which I'm very dusty.... Columbia made us a verbal offer on the album, but Victor didn't say much, so I dealt with them. I tried to get a Lincoln Zephyr every week and \$1.25 cash, for gas and oil to go around the block, but the question of who was goin' to do the laundry come up, and the two Co's dickered for a

week—not about the washing, but about what soap to use.... What I'm glad to see is the Workin' Folks songs getting so popular, as I know they have always lead to the field, and it was John Steinbeck's picture, "The Grapes of Wrath," that showed these big companies that the workin' folks will stand back of the company that shows our side of the story.

(compiler's note: I copied this quotation from a manuscript in the Smithsonian Folkways archives some years ago and misplaced the source.)

Mary and the children were in Pampa, so Woody decided to take a trip to see them. Pete Seeger went with him, and they stopped in Oklahoma City to visit and sing for Bob and Ina Wood, the local communist leaders. There Woody was inspired to write "Union Maid." Later, Wood, who ran a book shop in Oklahoma City, was arrested; his book stock, including Bibles, the works of Washington and Jefferson as well as communist material, was taken to the Fair Grounds and burned, and Wood remained in jail for many months. Woody and Pete were not there for that episode of censorship; their trip is well documented in Joe Klein's *Woody Guthrie: A Life*.

After leaving Pampa in 1937, Woody never pretended to have ambitions other than to be a poet/writer/singer, but he had received very

little encouragement to make a career out of them. However, his experiences with Alan Lomax, the Library of Congress, New York City, and RCA reinforced his determination; he found not only encouragement, but also financial success. Nightclub appearances and radio shows were abundant and paid him well. In November 1940, he had Mary and the children join him in New York City, but financial success demanded that he compromise his principles. He could not dress, speak, and sing the way he wanted to, and it started to bother him. Probably the most successful show was Model Tobacco's "Pipe Smoking Time," but there were others: "American School of the Air," "Back Where I Come From," and "Cavalcade of America." Woody could not stand success, and in January 1941 loaded Mary and the children in their new car and headed west. He believed that he was rebelling against the corruption of wealth in the capitalist system.

Back in California, Woody learned that he had been thorough in severing ties with former employers, for the KFVD management did not want him back and neither did the New York City shows—he believed that he was too "honest" for the wealthy and powerful, but he was actually too undependable. Nevertheless, the West Coast communist newspaper *People's World* did want him. They did not hesitate to use his writing skills, and he used

them as an outlet for his beliefs. Even though he was well read and highly intelligent, Woody was naive about economics and politics and held simplistic answers to worldwide problems. To him communism was "communism": everything should be owned in common. He wrote in an April 1941 manuscript, "The Final Call," in the Library of Congress:

I aint in favor of a bloody revolution. You aint either. But I'm high in favor of a Change in things that'll give you and me and all of our folks plenty of what they need to get along on, plenty of work, plenty of pay, plenty of rest, plenty of schooling, plenty of the pleasures of this life. I really hope to God that the Rich folks will give you these things as fast as you step up and throw out your chest and ask for them. You build everything they got. You plant and raise every thing they got. You make every thing they got.... I hope to God that you dont have to hurt nobody in getting your fair and honest share.... But, in case anybody tries to step in and stop you from changing things into a better world—use your strength.

He was too undisciplined in his daily life to be a member of any organized party, and he maintained his sense of humor, which made him an unlikely communist. He also

retained his spirituality based in the religions of his childhood, even though he filled out questionnaires that asked "religion" with the answer "All." Woody became the ultimate individualist in a world that demanded, and still demands, an element of social conformity. He also wanted to be a good husband, a good father, and a good son; he just could not adapt his creative juices to the requirements for fulfilling the roles.

He and his family were stranded in California with limited income when he received a letter from the Bonneville Power Authority in Oregon.

*We got a registered letter that told us to come up to the Columbia River to the Bonneville and the Grand Coulee dam.... Well, I talked to people, I got my job, it was to...walk around up and down the rivers, and to see what I could find to make up songs about. I made up twenty-six (Woody Guthrie, *American Folksong* [New York: Moe Asch, 1947], p. 5).*

Woody and his family arrived in Portland, Oregon, in May 1941. They were the best days that his wife, Mary, had experienced since leaving Pampa, for even though he had made good money in New York City, she did not like living there. Once again, Woody actually made some money. Of his 26 songs—sup-

posedly a song a day—some have become well known: "Roll on Columbia," "Pastures of Plenty," "Hard Traveling," and a few others. But the job only lasted one month; Woody and the family returned to Pampa. Then his friends in New York City invited him to join them on a summer cross-country tour.

I got a letter from the Almanac Singers back in New York. Come back to us and let's make a cross country tour singing in union halls. I kissed Mary and the kids another Goodbye and hit the northern highways and freight, truck lines, and car routes. Nine days later I stepped into the apartment of the Almanacs with the Third Avenue Elevated railroad just about six inches out of the window there. (This quotation and two following quotes are from an unedited manuscript, "Woody Guthrie by Woody Guthrie," pp. 16-17, in the Asch/Folkways Collection, Smithsonian Folkways Archives.)

His friends Pete Seeger, Millard Lampell, and Lee Hays had named themselves The Almanac Singers and were living in a flat in New York City trying to write labor songs. They needed Woody's writing skills. The Almanacs and friends were either pacifists or left-wing believers who were opposed to intervention in the "European War," for Hitler and

Stalin had signed their non-aggression pact in 1939—thus, the left wing aligned with Stalin. Also, after World War I, there had been strong pacifist recruitment on college campuses around the nation. There were many who were not “left wing”; they were “pacifists” against any war. A few months before Woody returned to New York City, the Almanacs had recorded the album *Songs for John Doe*—it contained critical songs about President Roosevelt and the war in Europe (see: SF 40021).

On 22 June 1941, about the time Woody joined them, Hitler commanded his army to invade Russia; the left wing and the Almanacs changed attitudes and started writing and singing war songs against Hitler and fascism. They had compiled a fair number of labor songs to sing in union halls and had collaborated on (with Woody doing most of the writing) the classic song, “The Sinking of the Reuben James.” After recording enough songs for two albums for General Records in early July, they started out on their tour.

We made two albums of records for the General Record Co.... They loaded me and my guitar into an old Thirty-One Buick.... We rolled the gasoline hose down into our tank and left it there to suck and blow till we hit our first union hall stopoff. We made up songs.... We went into union halls and sang before, during, and after the speakers

had spoke, and took up a collection to buy gas, oil, and to grease the breezes. We sang Union Maid, Talking Union, and others... and made up dozens and dozens as we rolled along.... Rolled on out to Denver, then on to Frisco and sang for five thousand longshoremen...for the Ladies Auxiliary...for the farm and factory workers around lower California.

But it was difficult for such diverse personalities to be together on the road for long:

Lampell and Hays returned to New York. Pete and me drove on down into Mexico and sung...[then] drifted back into New York. We made up war songs against Hitlerism and fascism homemade and imported. We sang songs about our Allies and made up songs to pay honor and tribute to the story of the trade union workers around the world. We got jobs singing on overseas broadcasts for the Office of War Information for direct beaming to front line fighters.

Once again back in New York City, the Almanacs continued to write and sing and make very little money. Woody showed little concern about the financial status of his family in Pampa, for Mary’s parents were helping them. He was writing, singing, and drinking—the life he wanted. But in early 1942, he

met a dancer in the Martha Graham dance troupe, Marjorie Greenblatt Mazia. Marjorie was the daughter of Russian Jewish immigrants; her mother was Aliza Waitzman Greenblatt, a popular Yiddish poet, and socialism was a way of life for them. Woody and Marjorie fell in love and started living together. He also had been writing his autobiographical novel, *Bound for Glory*—a project that occupied much of his time; Marjorie helped trim it down to a size acceptable to publishers. It hit the markets in 1943, and received many favorable reviews, some declaring Woody to be the 20th-century Walt Whitman.

Both were married to other mates, which worried Marjorie but not Woody. Pregnant with his child, she returned to her family in Philadelphia; Woody continued to live, sing, and write where friends would tolerate him. Often these were individuals who wanted to claim Woody as a communist, but, as previously stated, he was too undisciplined, too poor, too much an individualist, and had too much of a sense of humor to be a member of any organized group. He was Woody Guthrie—a highly creative individual with an almost messianic drive to help create a better world for working people. And Hitler was the obvious enemy:

*I hate Hitler and I can tell you why,
He's caused lots of good people to suffer*

*and die;
And he's got a habit of pushing folks
around,
I figure it's about time we slapped him
down;
Give him a dose of his own medicine...
lead poisoning.
(Lyrics, “Talking Hitler’s Head Off”)*

Marjorie and their daughter Cathy Ann, who was born in February 1943, rejoined Woody in New York City, but he was not destined to stay home long. Woody was small in stature and was a family man; thus during the early war years the military did not want him. However, by 1943 the military was becoming less selective in whom they drafted into service, and the Almanacs were no more. Pete had been drafted; Lee Hays was not well, and other part-time members had dropped out. So Woody and two friends decided to become merchant marines.

*I had met up with Cisco Houston at the same time I had met up with Will Geer. Cisco was one of the men that went with us all over the migratory labor camps and shack towns.... He joined the National Maritime Union and shipped out for a year or two. I met him again in New York
(Unpublished manuscript “Woody Guthrie, by Me,” circa 1944 [mistakenly dated circa*

1951 in Vol. 2], in the TRO Richmond Music archives).

The third man was Jimmy Longhi, who was acquainted with Cisco and met Woody through him. The three became a merchant marine trio and shipped out together on three ships: in June 1943, on the *William B. Travis*; in January 1944, on the *William Floyd*; in May 1944, on the *Sea Porpoise*.

I shipped out with my guitar, and two seaman buddies, both good NMU men, Cisco Houston, a guitar player and high tenor singer, and Jimmy Longhi, an Italian boy with as good an anti-fascist head on him as I have ever seen. We played our guitars, and I took along a fiddle and a mandolin. Our first boat was torpedoed off the coast of Sicily, pulled into Lake Bizerte, but we got to visit the old bombed town of four hundred thousand souls, Palermo, Sicily, where Jimmy took us to a little peasant village. We caught an empty Liberty ship back to the States.

We made a run to North Africa next. Jimmy, Cisco, and myself had sort of a Union Trio. Sort of a singing Torpedoed Seamen's group. We sang union songs and got the troops to sing them, too.

We also were in the Cherbourg Invasion a while after D Day. We lost another good troopship here when we ran into some kind of floating mine or something. Lucky, our troops had already gone ashore in their invasion barges, and nobody in the crew was killed (Unpublished manuscript "Woody Guthrie, by Me," circa 1944, in the TRO Richmond Music archives).

In his book *Woody, Cisco, and Me: Seamen Three in the Merchant Marine* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997, p. 38) Longhi described Woody's first appearance as a merchant marine:

Woody was a little late, but it was no wonder, considering what he was carrying. We could barely see him under the load: a seabag over his shoulder, a guitar strapped to his back, a violin case, a mandolin case, a stack of at least ten books, and a portable typewriter, all tied together by a length of clothesline and somehow wrapped around him.

A revealing conversation took place later on board ship, when Woody talked about his mother's illness and his fear that he, too, might have it:

"And the fact is that I'm beginning to sus-

pect that I have it too." I couldn't see Woody's face, but I could see that the light of the match trembled slightly. "The doctors don't know much about it—maybe only Jesus can help me." Woody fell silent. After I recovered from my surprise, I said, "Woody, I didn't know you were religious." Cisco said nothing.

Quietly, Woody said, "Hell yes, I'm a religious man, but I don't have a favorite. I sorta like'em all."

"You mentioned Jesus."

"Yes—the ones I admire most in the world are Jesus and Will Rogers." He blew out the light (pp. 62-63).

In April 1944, between merchant marine trips, Woody went to the office and recording studios of Moses Asch:

Back in the States, Cisco Houston, Blind Sonny Terry, and myself went up to the Asch studios. Moe Asch, son of Sholem Asch, took us in, cranked up his machinery and told us to fire away with everything we had. We yelled and whooped and beat and pounded till Asch had taken down one-hundred and twenty some odd master sides. We wound up, tuned, and ground

up, fired up, warmed up, and then flew off and out and down with some more of the same only with all the heavens and siderollings of the ocean thrown in to keep things from blowing away in a foggy spray. We bought two big new Gibson guitars and a new Gibson mandolin and several new harps for Blind Sonny.

Sonny Terry blew and whipped, beat, fanned and petted his harmonica, cooed to it like a weed hill turtle dove, cried to it like some worried woman come to ease his worried mind.... He put the tobacco sheds of North and South Carolina in it and all of the blistered and hurt and hardened hands cheated and left empty, hurt and left crying, robbed and left hungry, pilfered and left starving, beaten and left dreaming. He rolled down the trains that the colored hand cannot drive only clean and wash down. He blew into the wood holes and the brassy reeds the tale and the wails of Lost John running away from the dogs of the chain gang guards.... He is blind and that he still knows that his people can see a world where we all vote, eat, work, talk, plan and think together and with all of our smokes and wheels rolling all of our selves well dressed and well housed and well fed. These are the things that the artist in Blind Sonny Terry knows and sees

in his blindness.... These are the freedoms (Unedited manuscript, "Woody Guthrie by Woody Guthrie," p. 19, in the Asch/Folkways Collection.)

In a July 1974 interview with Guy Logsdon, Asch stated:

Woody wasn't anxious to meet recording people; he was anxious to meet people he could communicate with. He was very uncommunicative; he was very anti-social. He didn't want to be bothered by society or people. I guess his mind was constantly working like a poet—on his work and what he had to say and how to translate that into a mass communication. He was not interested in writing for the sake of publishing.

One day, Woody comes in and squats himself on the floor. He squats himself before the office door and just sits there—very wild hair, clean shaven, and clothing one would associate with a Western person rather than with an Eastern person. He started to talk—a person of broad English, and then you wonder if that was a put-on. When he lets himself go, his English becomes more common English, with Western or Oklahoman accents. And that's when I know he's not putting on or making

fun. If you listen to those Library of Congress recordings, you can hear all the put-on he wanted to give Alan Lomax. This is the actor acting out the role of the folk singer from Oklahoma.

With me, he wasn't at all that way. He spoke without any put-on; he spoke straight. I began to realize after talking to him a while that this was a very serious person, and a very articulate person. The simplicity of his speech was so deep that you start to remind yourself of Walt Whitman. The words were clear, simple, but the meanings were deep and very well thought out and philosophized. So we became friends. He said, "I have a lot of songs I want to record. I want one favor from you, and that's the only way I will do this. Don't put out anything I wouldn't want you to put out. I want to hear all the cuts before you issue them. That's the only thing I want from you."

He believed very strongly that the American tradition of the ballad dealing with an event is something that was contemporary. It didn't stay in the 1880s, because something was happening in the 1900s; and in the 1940s, things were happening—and that's what he wanted to convey.

He did two things for me. He wrote the most important critiques of my records that I every had. He would spend a whole page or two pages of typed observations of the contents, whether it was Greek or Indonesian or African or American folk; he would sit down and study the recordings that I issued and write me a critique. The other area was that we would sit together and plan projects. Like authors, he would be interested in ideas from others. He planned at least forty different albums, and he would even put thirty titles for each of the forty albums. He would say, "These have to be done, and these are the titles."

He composed and recorded material from the Bible about the Maccabees and other historical biblical figures in the Jewish testament, the Old Testament dealing with the Jewish resistance. It was very interesting to him, and he would go very deep into it and study the Bible very thoroughly. You know, when people say, "Communist, and this and that," they don't realize how much the Bible influenced Woody—Pete Seeger is the same.

I think Woody Guthrie was one of the great American poets. And I think as time goes on people will start to realize that he was a poet; he was a great American creative person.

That April meeting with Asch and the subsequent recordings made a lasting impact on music in America. But the war was on, and the seamen three had one more voyage to make. In May, they shipped out for the voyage Woody called the "Cherbourg Invasion after D-Day." It was a troop ship, and while they were under attack Woody decided to keep the troops entertained. Jimmy Longhi's story about Woody and his heroics can be heard on SF 40021.

Back in the States in the fall of 1944, Woody joined forces in reelecting Roosevelt as president, and Asch had issued his first Guthrie album—three 78 rpm discs titled *Woody Guthrie*. As the war in Europe was nearing an end, the military became even less selective; Woody was inducted the day Germany surrendered—7 May 1945. He was stationed at Fort Dix, New Jersey, later at Fort Scott, Illinois, Sheppard Field, Wichita Falls, Texas, and Las Vegas, Nevada. His descriptions of military experiences varied depending on to whom he was writing. Military service placed him in a disciplined routine he had not known since childhood, and it also provided him with comic relief opportunities because of the structured discipline.

While at Scott Field sitting in the PX, Woody heard his cousin Jack Guthrie's recording of "Oklahoma Hills"; he also learned that Jack was credited with writing it. He contacted Capitol Records claiming to be the compos-

er; Jack supported his own claim with the added factor that he had recorded it and had made a few changes. Woody agreed, and subsequent issues of the recording carried both names, and sheet music was reissued crediting both men. Woody had written the song in late 1937 while singing at KFVD, and had sung it over the air for about two years. However, Jack did make the refrain better, and it earned substantial money for Woody.

When the Japanese surrendered 14 August 1945, it made no change in Woody's military career. He was not immediately discharged as he had hoped. In early November, he was given a two-week furlough and returned home to New York City. By then both he and Marjorie were divorced from their former mates, so the two went to City Hall and were married. Back at the Las Vegas base on 20 December, he was discharged; he also was experiencing the early symptoms of Huntington's disease. (To be continued in *Volume 4* of this series.)



(l-r) Woody Guthrie, Fred Hellerman, Jean Ritchie, and Pete Seeger. Photo courtesy of Woody Guthrie Archives.

NOTES ON THE SONGS

1. **HARD TRAVELIN'**

Woody Guthrie, vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica (Words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded 1947; Smithsonian Acetate 2767; 10" shellac disc)

The first printing of this song appeared in a typed and mimeographed collection, *Ten of Woody Guthrie's Songs*, New York City, dated 3 April 1945; he sold it for twenty-five cents, or less. He wrote: *This is a song about the hard traveling of the working people, not the moonstruck mystic traveling of the professional vacationist. Song about a man that has rode the flat wheelers, kicked up cinders, dumped the red hot slag, hit the hard rock tunneling, hard harvesting, the hard rock jail, looking for a woman that's hard to find.* He referred to it as a Dust Bowl song, but wrote it while working on his Columbia River project in 1941. It remains one of his best-known songs.

2. **FARMER-LABOR TRAIN**

Woody Guthrie, vocal/harmonica; Cisco Houston, vocal harmony/guitar (Words by Woody Guthrie, melody from "Wabash Cannonball"; from SF 40046; recording date and matrix unknown; Smithsonian Acetate 047; 12" aluminum-based acetate disc)

Upon returning from World War II many

veterans and left-wing sympathizers felt disillusioned that there were no great changes in politics and economic policies, but they did see a growing fear of and hostility toward the Soviet Union and communism. When Henry A. Wallace (1888–1965) declared his independent candidacy for President during the 1948 election year, the left-wing movement was elated.

Wallace was born into an Iowa family of agricultural leaders and journalists. In the 1920s the agricultural economy collapsed, and Wallace abandoned his family's Republican tradition in support of Al Smith's, followed by Franklin D. Roosevelt's, agricultural and economic policies. In 1932 he was appointed Secretary of Agriculture by Roosevelt, and in 1940 was Roosevelt's choice for Vice President. But Wallace became more and more controversial as he expressed his views about economic policies and world peace that should follow the war. He was dropped from the Democratic ticket in 1944, and his post-war advocacy for friendship with Russia and other unpopular progressive views signaled his political death even among liberals. However, in 1948 the left wing rallied to his support, believing he could win the election.

Woody wrote a series of songs to be sung at Wallace rallies, including "Baking for Wallace," "Bet on Wallace," "Henry Wallace Man," "Wallace Meeting Grounds," and "The Farmer-Labor Train." He was certain that if farmers

and laborers joined together they could elect Wallace; they didn't. In June 1948, a collection of songs including "The Farmer-Labor Train" was published as *Songs for Wallace* (*People's Songs*, vol. 4, no. 1). In 1920, a small political party in the Midwest was organized as the Farmer-Labor Party; it, too, faded into obscurity, and by 1924 its leaders joined forces with the Progressive Party.

3. HOWDJADOO

(also spelled "How Joo Doo" and "How Di Do") Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar (Words and music by Woody Guthrie; unreleased alternate take; recording date unknown; no matrix; Smithsonian Acetate 100; 10" acetate on aluminum disc).

It is generally believed that Woody's children's songs were written for Cathy Ann in the mid-1940s, but he wrote songs for all of his children, dating back to his California days. However, the children's songs that were issued by Asch in 1946 and 1947 were written for Cathy, or, as Woody fondly called her, Miss Stackabones. Indeed, these became his well-known classic children's songs. The first collection, *Songs to Grow On: Nursery Days* Disc 605 (three 78 rpm discs) in 1946, was prepared with the assistance of Beatrice Landeck, noted children's music specialist and educator. It sold well and received numerous rave reviews. In late September 1946, he,

Marjorie, and Cathy were in the Pocono Mountains near East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, with Alan Lomax and his family and other friends; during the stay he wrote most of the songs issued on *Songs to Grow On: Work Songs for Nursery Days* Disc 602 (three 78 rpm discs), in 1947. The illustrated manuscript for that album is in the Asch/Folkways Collection, but "Howdjadoo" is not among the manuscripts for either album. When and where Woody wrote this song are not documented; yet it remains one of his best-known children's songs.

4. SHIP IN THE SKY

(alternate titles: "My Daddy Flies a Ship in the Sky," "My Daddy," and "That Ship in the Sky") Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar (Words and music by Woody Guthrie; issued on Folkways 2481; recorded 19 April 1944; matrix MA14; Smithsonian Acetate 762; 10" shellac disc)

This is Woody's excellent statement about the interdependency we have with one another, no matter how menial our work may be or high-powered our position in life. It is a song for all ages and all people. When and where he wrote it are not known, but he included it in his typed and mimeographed collection, *Ten of Woody Guthrie's Songs*, New York City, dated 3 April 1945. Cisco Houston's interpretation is on SF 40059.

5. I AIN'T GOT NO HOME IN THIS WORLD ANYMORE

(alternate titles: "Can't Feel at Home," "I Can't Feel at Home," and "This World Is Not My Home")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica (Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from SF 40001; recording date and matrix not found)

This Southern gospel song was recorded as "Can't Feel at Home" by the Carter Family on 25 May 1931, in Charlotte, North Carolina, for Victor (matrix 69351-2; Victor 23569), and was included in their song book, *The Carter Family Album of Smokey Mountain Ballads* (New York: Southern Music Pub. Co., 1935, p. 44). The Monroe Brothers recorded it in 1936 with the title "This World Is Not My Home," and western swing artist Hank Thompson recorded it with the same title in the early 1950s. Woody sang his adapted words and melody while broadcasting over KFVD, Hollywood. He changed it into a "Dust Bowl" migrant song, and included it in his manuscript collection "Songs of Woody Guthrie," pp. 2 and 87, in the Library of Congress, Archive of Folk Song. There are four different manuscript copies in the Asch/Folkways Collection, and on one he wrote:

This old song to start out with was a religious piece called, I Can't Feel At Home In

This World Any More. But I seen there was another side to the picture. Reason why you cant feel at home in this world any more is mostly because you aint got no home to feel at.

6. MEAN TALKING BLUES

(alternate title: "Talking Meanness")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar (Words and music by Woody Guthrie; unreleased alternate take; recording date and matrix not known; Smithsonian Acetate 554; 16" acetate on aluminum disc)

On his typescript in the Asch/Folkways Collection, Woody gave this song the title "Talking Meanness." He used the American frontier braggart traditions of folk heroes such as Daniel Boone to criticize those who oppose and fight labor unions and those who thrive on the misfortunes of others. It is a poem composed with much ironic humor.

"Talking blues" songs were one of Woody's musical specializations; he used the talking blues as a vehicle to express his thoughts about many, many topics (see tracks 14 and 17 in this collection). For many years, it was believed within the urban folk song movement that Woody created the genre or that he copied the style from a Tennessee entertainer named Robert Lunn. In fact, Pete Seeger wrote that when he and the Almanac Singers met Woody they were "mightily impressed

with his 'Talking Blues' form: two lines that rhyme, two more that rhyme, then two or three irregular, free form lines following as a comment, before the next stanza" (*Talkin' Union 6* [April 1983]: 4). Also, it has been generally believed that this form of musical expression came from African-American tradition; however, the "talkin' blues" form is credited to an Anglo South Carolinian—Chris Bouchillon, who in April 1926 recorded the original "Talking Blues" (see: Charles Wolfe's notes on *Chris Bouchillon "The Original Talking Blues Man"* Old Homestead OHCS 181). The recording director thought that Bouchillon had a good voice with limited singing ability, so he asked him to try talking while playing the guitar. The result was the talking blues with the often-copied opening line:

"If you want to get to heaven, let me tell you how to do it..."

However, this line is also reported to be from a "Negro minstrel show" heard in 1915 in Louisburg, North Carolina (Newman I. White, *American Negro Folk-Songs* [reprint Hatboro, PA: Folklore Associates, 1968], p. 135).

Bouchillon's recording sold over 90,000 copies, and numerous folk, country, and blues entertainers such as Woody Guthrie and Robert Lunn copied the style and often adapted the lyrics (see: "We Shall Be Free" in *Lead Belly Sings Folk Songs* Smithsonian Folkways SF 40010, with Woody Guthrie, Cisco Hous-

ton, and Sonny Terry). For additional information about the "Talkin' Blues," see: John Greenway, *The Talking Blues*, notes by Kenneth S. Goldstein (Folkways FH 5232, 1958).

7. BETTER WORLD A-COMIN'

(alternate title: "There's a Better World A-Comin'" and "Better World")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar; Cisco Houston, vocal harmony/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; from SF 40059; recording date and matrix unknown; from analog reel FW-032)

A different variant was issued on *Bound for Glory*, Folkways FP 78/1, 1956, and FA 2481, 1961, as well as on *Original Recordings Made by Woody Guthrie: 1940–1946*, Warner Brothers Records BS 2999, 1977. No information in the Asch/Folkways Collection indicates when it was written or when it was recorded; however, manuscripts indicate that it was a World War II song expressing hope that a "better world" would come from the killing, bombing, pain, misery, and crying. Even though it contains a strong endorsement of unions, Woody's theme supports the belief that the war would build a worldwide union of working people. Manuscripts in the Asch/Folkways Collection have similar lines to this recorded version, but are not identical. The printed variant in *Woody Guthrie Folk Songs* (New York: Ludlow Music, 1963, p.

193), is anti-fascist and anti-racist, but it, too, varies from the recordings and manuscripts.

8. MISS PAVLICHENKO

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar; Pete Seeger, banjo
(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie, from "Roll on the Ground"; from SF 40021; recorded 9 May 1946; no matrix; Smithsonian Acetate 194; 12" acetate on glass disc)

The siege of Leningrad during World War II was a heroic moment in the war, and one that kept the American public's attention on the war in the Soviet Union for months. The heightened emotions and admiration for the courage of the Soviet citizens and soldiers are present not only in Woody's song but also in the event it describes.

Liudmila Pavlichenko (as spelled in the *New York Times*; another spelling is "Lyudmila") was a lieutenant in the Soviet Army and in May 1942 was cited by the Southern Red Army Council for killing 257 German soldiers. She was invited to appear before the International Student Assembly being held in late August in Washington, D.C., where she received a hero's welcome. A shooting match between her and Sergeant Alvin York, the United States' World War I hero, was discussed as a benefit for the Army and Navy relief societies. Later she attended a CIO meeting and made appearances and speeches

in New York City. When she left for her trip back to Russia, she was presented with a Colt automatic pistol, a hero's gift.

The manuscripts in the Asch/Folkways Collection do not have a date or any comments by Woody; it is assumed that he wrote the song in late 1942, but no recording was made until Moses Asch recorded what was probably the first People's Songs "Union Hootenanny" in Town Hall, New York City, Thursday evening, 9 May 1946. This cut is a selection from Woody's performance that evening and shows his performance charisma.

9. SO LONG, IT'S BEEN GOOD TO KNOW YOU (WWII VERSION)

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar; Cisco Houston, vocal harmony
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie, music adaptation of "Billy the Kid"; from SF 40021; recorded [probably] 19 April 1944; matrix [probably] MA 3; Smithsonian Acetate 98, 12" shellac disc)

Woody Guthrie wrote his well-known Dust Bowl version under the title "Dusty Old Dust" on 1 April 1940 during one of his early trips to New York City, and his first recording of the song a few weeks later for RCA Victor carried the same title. As the song became better known, Woody changed the title to "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You," and through the 1940s he wrote at least four different ver-

sions, two of which are war songs.

He also typed many different manuscripts of the song, of which six are in the Asch/Folkways Collection. On the manuscript for this version he typed: *November 10th 1942 was the historic and momentous occasion of the setting down and making up this here song.* His second war version was written on 15 January 1943, using the theme of "sacrifice" for victory:

*Well, fighting a war is a serious thing,
But still we've got time to laugh and to sing;
A lot of luxuries I must sacrifice,
But if Uncle Sam says it, I'll sacrifice twice.*

Woody composed the tune for the chorus, but for the verses adapted the melody of "Billy the Kid," a song that he and many others believed to be a traditional folk song; however, it was written by Rev. Andrew Jenkins on 20 January 1927 and recorded for two different labels by Vernon Dalhart (Marion Try Slaughter) a few weeks later. Dalhart's popularity quickly disseminated the song across the country. Through the song transmission process it has indeed become a traditional song. Woody had no problem in adapting that or any other melody.

10. NEW FOUND LAND

(alternate title: "My New Found Land")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica

(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie from "The Mulberry Bush"; issued on Disc 610 [78 rpm], reissued on Folkways 31001; recorded 1947; matrix D204; 16" shellac disc)

This is another of Woody's songs and recordings for which there is no documentation for session date or composition date, other than that it was written during his stint with the Bonneville Power Administration. It is one of his Columbia River songs, even though Moe Asch first released it as a Dust Bowl ballad; when Woody was writing in Oregon, he had not separated himself from the Great Depression migrants, whom he knew as Dust Bowl migrants. Other songs written that month such as "Pastures of Plenty" became identified as migrant songs, not Columbia River songs. It also is an example of Woody's ability to take a well-known, simple traditional melody and adapt it to a statement of his philosophy and economic theory.

11. OREGON TRAIL

(alternate titles: "Oregon Line" and "That Oregon Trail")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica
(Words and adapted music by Woody Guthrie; from SF 40007; recorded 1947; matrix not known)

Woody wrote that he composed this song on 14 May 1941 out on "the high banks of the Columbia River." However, it was not record-

ed for Moe Asch until probably late 1947. Asch recalled that in 1947 Woody received a telegram from the Bonneville Power Authority requesting that Woody return to Oregon to sing his Columbia River songs where they should be heard; Woody turned to Asch for travel and expense monies with the promise to record the songs when he returned. It was a promise that Woody kept, but Asch did not release this song until 1962; he reissued it in 1966 when the U.S. Department of the Interior presented to Woody their Conservation Service Award and named a substation after him.

He took the concept of the historic Oregon Trail and applied it to the Dust Bowl migrant; the end of the "trail" promised rain, excellent crops, no dust or sand, prosperity, and a good life. His lyrics contain the same dusty, biting humor often heard in his songs and poems.

12. VIGILANTE MAN

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica
(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; from SF 40001; recording date and matrix unknown)

The movie version of *Grapes of Wrath* had a tremendous influence on Woody; he sat through it a few times, went back to his room, and wrote most of his "Dust Bowl Ballads," including "Vigilante Man." Later he wrote:

For a long time I heard about the Vigilante

*man, but didn't never know for sure what he was. One night in Tracy, Cal., up close to Frisco, I found out. About 150 of us found out. It was cold and rainy that night. It was in the month of March. A car load of them rounded us up and herded us out into a cow pasture. Some of the boys stayed out there in the rain and some of us went back to town. They caught us a second time. This time I pulled a joke on the cops and it made them mad. They took me off alone and made me get out in front of the car in the head lights, and walked me down the road about 2 miles. They left me out in the rain by a big bridge. I crawled down under the bridge and got in a big wool bed roll with a canadian lumber jack. I aint advertising the canadian army, but them lumber jacks is about as warm a feller as you can sleep with (Manuscript in the Asch/Folkways Collection; also printed in *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard Hit People*, compiled by Alan Lomax [New York: Oak Publications, 1967], p. 234).*

The "vigilantes" in the labor movement were groups of men paid by company officials to intimidate workers who were attempting to organize, and in the westward migration during the Great Depression, they kept migrants "moving on" away from their towns. For his melody, he adapted "Sad and Lone-

some Day” as sung by the Carter Family.

13. 1913 MASSACRE

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar

(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; from Asch Records 360-2B; reissued on Smithsonian Folkways 40025; recorded 24 May 1945; matrix 901)

With the growing popularity and demand for cheap electricity in the late 19th century, the dynamo became a major industrial machine and required large quantities of copper; thus, copper mining became commercially rewarding for mine owners. At that time, Michigan was a major producing state for “pure” copper, and the rank and file laborers were confronted with joining the ever-growing union movements. Most of the copper miners joined the Western Federation of Miners that was, for a short time, affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World. Believing that the IWW was too political, the WFM withdrew to maintain its own membership. They struck the Michigan mines in 1913, seeking safer working conditions.

On Christmas Eve, 1913, in Calumet, Michigan, the miners held a Christmas party at the “Italian Hall.” Company strike breakers barred the doors and yelled “fire.” In the ensuing panic 73 children were smothered or trampled to death; some reports place the number as high as 89. This tragic example of

anti-union violence has been ignored in most histories of the United States, but Woody has immortalized it in this ballad.

14. TALKING COLUMBIA

(alternate titles: “Talking Columbia Blues,” “Columbia Talkin’ Blues,” and “Columbia River”)

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica

(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; issued on Disc 610 [78 rpm], reissued on Folkways 31001; recorded circa 1947; from analog reel FW-031)

For the background to Woody’s use of the talking blues, see track 6, “Mean Talking Blues,” in this collection. Probably his best-known talking blues is “Talking Dust Bowl,” with “Talking Columbia” not far behind. It was written during his stint with the Bonnevill Power Administration and is one of his Columbia River songs, but Moe Asch released it, along with other Columbia River songs, as a Dust Bowl song.

15. TWO GOOD MEN

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar

(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie; melody is the adaptation of the traditional song “Poor Howard’s Dead and Gone”; from SF 40060; recorded 1947; matrix not known; Smithsonian Acetate 45; 12” acetate on glass disc)

Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were Italian emigrants to the United States in 1908; they did not meet until 1917. Both were anarchists and were arrested, charged, tried, and convicted of robbing and killing a paymaster and guard at a shoe factory in South Braintree, Massachusetts. They were tried during the first great Red Scare, and the trial still raises questions and emotions about the fairness of the trial as well as speculation about their guilt or innocence. They were executed on 23 August 1927.

Following World War II and Woody’s marathon recording sessions with Asch, Woody was searching for projects. Asch sent him and Cisco to Boston, and later recalled:

At that time he became interested in going back, like Belle Starr and others, to depict some of the characters that made the American image that no one has written about and no one has documented. Then as you know in the middle of all this he sort of lost perspective, and that’s when I sent him and Cisco to Boston to do the Sacco-Vanzetti series. They spent down there a couple of months, I think, and went through the background and all that. And you know the album Sacco and Vanzetti came out of that.

Just to get him into a perspective again. It was a terrible time. While the war was

going on, they had a purpose and a viewpoint, many of the artists did, that they were doing something positive.... Came the end of the war and they saw the peace treaties and all that were becoming involved the same as before the war. They all lost hope. There was no sense to go on. So at that time I commissioned this thing to give him some kind of perspective again. A way of life. He did a terrific job, Woody.

For the lyrics and more information about the men and the trial as well as bibliographical information, see the booklet in SF 40060.

16. SALLY, DON'T YOU GRIEVE

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/guitar; Cisco

Houston, harmony vocal/guitar

(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; from SF 40021; recorded 19 April 1944; matrix 34; Smithsonian Acetate 123; 12” shellac disc)

Woody claimed this as his song, but on a manuscript dated 1942 in the Asch/Folkways Collection, Woody typed “and the Almanac Singers.” However, that was the time when the Almanacs often claimed “communal” composition; subsequent manuscripts (one with the “Library of People’s Songs” stamped on it) list Woody as the only author, and according to Pete Seeger it was, indeed, entirely Woody’s composition. On a manuscript dated 10 April 1938 and with different verses (the

chorus is basically the same) in a private collection, Woody wrote "Original Song."

On another manuscript typed after his 1944 recording session, Woody wrote: *We bought two big guitars for which we are still in debit. This was one of the first songs we knocked off on the new guitars. Cisco sung sort of a rooftop tenor and knocked off a deep bass on his guitar while I led off on the tune and jumped around on my high strings.*

While the phrase "Don't you grieve after me" has the tone of an African-American gospel song, its roots could lie in white gospel music, for in the now legendary July 1927, Bristol, Tennessee, recording sessions Ernest Phipps and "His Holiness Quartet" recorded a song by that title. There is no doubt that Woody's tune came through the folk/gospel song process, but where and when he learned it are not known. For the lyrics and melody, see: *Sing Out!* 12 (December-January 1962) 5: 42.

There is an unissued recording in the Smithsonian collection of Lead Belly singing "Molly, Don't You Grieve" with lyrics similar to Woody's, but since Woody knew the song before he met Lead Belly, it is probable that Lead Belly modified Woody's version to fit his opinions and style.

17. TALKING SAILOR (TALKING MERCHANT MARINE)

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; from SF 40021; recorded 19 April 1944; matrix MA 20)

For the background to Woody's use of the talking blues, see track 6, "Mean Talking Blues," in this collection. He recorded this song under the title "Talking Sailor," but since his theme was fighting the war in the Merchant Marines and being a member of the National Maritime Union, it became "Talking Merchant Marine." He wrote, but did not record, other talking blues around the war such as "Talking Hitler to Death" and "Talking Hitler's Head Off."

18. WHAT ARE WE WAITING ON?

(alternate titles: "Great and Bloody Fight," "Good People, What Are We Waiting On," and "Western Front")

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words by Woody Guthrie, music adapted from "John Henry"; from SF 40021; recorded 19 April 1944; matrix MA 13; Smithsonian Acetate 096; 12" acetate on glass)

There are four manuscripts of this song in the Asch/Folkways Collection with four possible titles, but Woody eventually used "What Are We Waiting On." He wrote it in 1942 while living with and appearing as one of the Almanac Singers. The earliest manuscript

was typed on Almanac stationery with a Detroit, Michigan, address; Bess Lomax, Butch Hawes, Charley Polachek, and Arthur Stern had moved to Detroit to use their voices and union songs among the auto workers. They did not stay long, and it was in New York City where Woody used the letterhead. The Almanac slogan was printed at the bottom of the page: "A Singing Army Is A Winning Army." Woody wrote the lyrics emphasizing that labor unions would defeat fascism and Hitler.

19. RAILROAD BLUES

Woody Guthrie, guitar; Cisco Houston, guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
(Music adapted by Woody Guthrie from traditional tune "Cripple Creek"; issued on Verve/Folkways FVS 9007; reissued as Folkways 31010; recording date and matrix not known)

This is one of the few instrumentals that Woody recorded. Most of them feature Woody as a fiddle, mandolin, or harmonica player. In all probability he wanted to feature Sonny Terry, who carries most of the instrumental lead responsibility in this recording. The tune is basically the traditional fiddle tune "Cripple Creek."

20. LUDLOW MASSACRE

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; issued on Asch Records 360 [78 rpm, #360-2B], reissued on Folkways 2485 and SF 40025; recorded 24 May 1945; matrix 902)

On 20 April 1914, at Ludlow, Colorado, 11 children and 10 adults were killed as the result of seven months of labor strife. The 9,000 employees of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company were for the most part immigrants representing 21 different countries, and their average daily wage was \$1.60. The coal miners were treated like serfs and were denied almost all rights as human beings, much less rights guaranteed by the State of Colorado and the U.S. Constitution. When they struck in September 1913, they basically wanted what was already "supposedly" guaranteed by law, but the owners, John D. Rockefeller and family, called on Colorado governor Ammons to call out the Colorado National Guard to quell any violence. But the Guard created violence.

Ousted from their company-owned homes, the miners set up a tent city. The Guard was supplied with machine guns and periodically sprayed the area with bullets. The miners dug pits beneath the tents to provide protection for the women and children; however, children were killed and women were brutalized long before the "massacre." Due to the

negative response around the nation, the Guard was pulled out in April and was replaced by two volunteer militia units—mostly employees of the company. While the miners were celebrating the Greek Easter on 20 April 1914, the militia surrounded the tent city and demanded that an unidentified person be surrendered to them. Nothing was resolved; then two bombs exploded on a hillside above the tents and bullets were sprayed into them. The miners came out fighting with guns they had acquired. By late evening, the militia occupied the tent city, doused the tents with kerosene, and set them on fire. Eleven children and two women who were hiding in one of the pits were suffocated. Woody's account is not totally accurate, but it immortalizes a dark time in coal mining history. For additional information, see: John Greenway's "Songs of the Ludlow Massacre," *Sing Out!* 8 (Winter 1959) 3: 17-22.

21. LADIES AUXILIARY

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
Words and music by Woody Guthrie, music adaptation of traditional tune "Butcher's Boy"; previously unissued; recorded 19 May 1944; matrix MA 113; Smithsonian Acetate 3786; 10" shellac disc)

Pete Seeger and others tell that in 1941, the Ladies Auxiliary of the C.I.O. approached Woody and the Almanac Singers requesting a

theme song. When Woody pointed out to them that they had written "Union Maid" for them, the ladies replied that it was not "dignified enough" and did not have the words "ladies auxiliary." Their reply triggered Woody's creative humor, and he penned the four-line opening in this version; for Pete Seeger's recording, see: *Pete Seeger and Sonny Terry at Carnegie Hall*, Folkways FA 2412, 1958, and for the opening lyrics, see: *Sing Out!* 11 (February-March 1961) 1: 44.

The rest of the lyrics in this version were written later as a poem titled "Wimmen's Hats." A typescript copy is in the Asch/Folkways Collection, but Woody put no information on the page other than the poem. When recording the original version of the song, he apparently decided to add a little more humor with "Wimmen's Hats." At the time he wrote the poem, a woman without a hat was not considered to be properly dressed, and, indeed, his description of some of their hats was accurate.

22. MINER'S SONG

(alternate title: "Dig My Life Away")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; from FW 31010; recording date and matrix unknown)

This was originally on *Poor Boy* Folkways 31010. The printed lyrics are basically the

same as the recorded lyrics, but in the printed collection the title is "Dig My Life Away." The melody is similar to that used for some of his children's songs, and even though the content is not necessarily for children, Woody's presentation of this song gives a "first impression" of being a children's song.

23. WHEN THE YANKS GO MARCHING IN

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
(Words by Woody Guthrie, music adapted from "When the Saints Go Marching In"; from SF 40021; recorded 25 April 1944; matrix 122; Smithsonian Acetate 758; 10" shellac disc)

The first album of Woody Guthrie's songs and singing produced by Moses Asch was issued in late 1944 as *Woody Guthrie*, Asch Records 347. Asch intended to issue this song and at least one other war song in the collection; however, for unknown reasons he pulled the two songs and used other recordings. There is reason to believe, with no hard evidence, that Asch planned to issue an album of Woody's war songs; perhaps the war ended before he finished the project.

On a manuscript of this song in the Asch/Folkways Collection, Woody typed "New words to an old holy roller song, by Woody Guthrie." "Holy roller" was and is a term

used for members of religious sects who, upon feeling the presence of the "Holy Spirit," jump, shout, dance, roll on the floor or ground, and faint from seizures; Woody was well versed in this method of religious expression. The gospel song, "When the Saints Go Marching In," has been equally popular as a Dixieland Jazz tune.

24. UNION MAID (FRAGMENT)

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar; with Lee Hays, Pete Seeger, and others
(Words and music adapted by Woody Guthrie, melody adapted from "Red Wing"; previously unissued; recorded 9 May 1946; Smithsonian Acetate 194; 12" acetate on glass disc)

This was written when Woody and Pete Seeger made their drive through the South and West in 1940. Many years later, Pete wrote:

I'm proud to say I was present when "Union Maid" was written in June, 1940, in the plain little office of the Oklahoma City Communist Party. Bob Wood, local organizer, had asked Woody Guthrie and me to sing there the night before for a small group of striking oil workers. Early next morning, Woody got to the typewriter and hammered out the first two verses of "Union Maid..." (Sing Out! 28 [January-February 1980] 1:8).

This "fragment" of "Union Maid" was

recorded by Moses Asch on what was probably the first People's Songs "Union Hootenanny" in Town Hall, New York City, Thursday evening, 9 May 1946. This cut is a selection from Woody's performance that evening, and it is the only recording of Woody singing his well-known song.

The last three songs represent song writing and recording projects that Woody started; until evidence is found to prove differently, we have to assume that the projects were never completed.

25. THE RUBAIYAT (EXCERPT)

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar/harmonica;
Cisco Houston, vocal harmony
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; previously unissued; recording date and matrix not known; Smithsonian Acetate 3678, take 1; 16" acetate on glass disc)

Woody was an avid reader; he consumed books, and wrote his response to the text in the margins. In the late 1930s, he read the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, the quatrains written by the 11th-century Persian poet; when translated by Edward Fitzgerald and published in 1859, this collection had a lasting influence on English poetry. Woody's copy of a later edition with his notes in the margins of each page is now owned by a private collector, and reflects how Woody thought

and philosophized about each word he read. According to Moe Asch, when Woody and Cisco spent time studying the Sacco and Vanzetti episode, Woody came up with "the idea to do the *Rubaiyat* in the terms of the 1940s."

This cut is one of many different ones in the Folkways collection, but until a copy of his script is found, Woody's *Rubaiyat* will remain fragmented.

26. THE MANY AND THE FEW

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; previously unissued; recorded 29 December 1949; no matrix; Smithsonian Acetate 184; 16" acetate on aluminum disc)

When Woody and Marjorie Greenblatt Mazia fell in love, they did not compare their religious backgrounds—Woody was steeped in the Southern Baptist and Church of Christ faiths and Marjorie was Jewish, at that time an unlikely union in marriage. Woody often said that he was "all" religions. He decided to study Jewish religion and history. Also, his mother-in-law, Aliza Waitzman Greenblatt, was a respected and eventually revered Yiddish poet; according to Moe Asch, she had a great influence on Woody at that time. He studied the books of the Maccabees, books that deal with faith, loyalty, and heroes who overcame oppression and saved their people—themes dear to Woody. He also learned that

Judas Maccabeus cleansed the Temple of pagan worship in approximately 135 B.C., and that Hanukkah, the Feast of the Rededicated, has been celebrated through the centuries. He decided to write a series of Hanukkah songs, and in this one he names the Jewish heroes. Woody was greatly influenced by both the Old and New Testaments—he knew the Bible well.

27. HANUKKAH DANCE

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded possibly 1949; no matrix; Smithsonian Acetate 161, take 1; 16" acetate on aluminum disc)

Woody was well aware that his children with Marjorie would be reared in Jewish traditions. It is probable that this song was written for their first child, Cathy, for it is a child's Hanukkah song.

ARCHIVIST'S REMARKS

This third collection in the series *The Asch Recordings* includes many of Woody's topical recordings written during the 1930s and 1940s. Woody set his pen to work commenting on labor martyrs, the war, the Dust Bowl, and the Bonneville Dam. This group includes many of his well-known ballads as well as some of the more obscure unfinished projects he was involved in. The last segment of the disc has examples from his remaking of the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam and his series of songs for Hanukkah. Volumes 1 and 3 in this series feature Woody's own compositions, and Volumes 2 and 4 include traditional material.

During the last 15 years music buyers have seen the replacement of the vinyl LP by the compact disc as the medium of choice for home listening of audio recordings. The replacement of one format by another is not the first time that there has been competition between media in the audio world. Wax cylinders were replaced by 78 rpm discs, which were in turn replaced by LPs ("Long Playing records," as they were called). The same evolutionary processes also occurred in recording studio masters for these formats.

Magnetic audiotape technology did not exist before World War II. It first came into use for audio recording in the late 1940s. Before then, most mastering had been done

directly on to discs. With the exception of the narratives, all the music on this project was made by Moses Asch during the 1940s on various types of disc. There were several sorts of disc technology; some machines recorded directly onto aluminum discs, others recorded onto acetate or shellac discs. The recordings here fall into the later two categories.

Most master discs were recorded at about 78 rpm and consequently could not hold more than three minutes of music. Selections that ran longer often had to be broken up into two parts. Later on, but still before he moved to magnetic tape, Asch used 33 1/3 rpm masters to record longer pieces on disc.

Acetate discs of the type used for recording these tracks consisted of an aluminum or glass base covered with a layer of lacquer. During the war, when many of these discs were recorded, the glass base was used because metal was dedicated to military uses. With the passage of time, the lacquer may begin to peel off the base like old paint, so it is important that acetate discs be transferred to a more stable medium as soon as possible. Shellac discs are more stable than acetate and are more like the vinyl discs we are familiar with. They are, however, quite brittle. Here at the Smithsonian we have undertaken the slow and laborious task of transferring all 5,000 acetates in the collection.

During the 1940s, Moses Asch's studio was

an open house to many of the recording artists in the New York area. Many of the acetates in this collection were recorded during this time. Asch's recording log is a fascinating list of many of the top jazz and folk music performers of the day. Visitors included Woody and Cisco, Burl Ives, Josh White, Sonny and Brownie, Langston Hughes, James P. Johnson, Mary Lou Williams, Coleman Hawkins, and Pete Seeger, among others. Woody Guthrie would drop by Asch's office whenever the spirit moved him. Woody would often get up in the morning, read the newspaper, and then sit down at his typewriter and reel off a number of topical ballads. Many of these typewritten pages are now stored in the archive here at the Smithsonian, and many of the songs were recorded for Asch.

During World War II, when these recordings were made, discs were in short supply. Moses Asch had a studio and musicians ready to record but nothing to record them on. Herbert Harris of the Stinson Trading Company had blank discs. Asch and Harris went into a short partnership as Asch-Stinson Records. Both men continued to put out much of the same material after their partnership ended, leading to much discographical confusion. Because of the shortage of discs Asch could not afford second or third takes. For this reason, many of the songs he recorded have small mistakes in them. Some of these masters were

released on Moses Asch's Asch and Disc labels.

While working on this series, Pete Reiniger and I have tried to clean up the often scratchy sound by using No-Noise digital editing software. Some of the acetates are in better condition than others, and some either no longer exist or are in too bad shape to use. In these cases we have substituted the recordings from the analog LP production master. It is our philosophy to try to clean up the noise without sacrificing the sound. Certain types of noise can be easily cleaned up this way, others cannot be without eliminating the high frequency sound. Many historical reissues sound muffled for this reason. We would rather have the crisp sound of the original with some noise. We hope you agree.

During the summer of 1990, Lori Taylor, Leslie Spitz-Edson, Alex Sweda, Suzanne Crow, and I went through the approximately 5,000 master recording discs which had been in the possession of Moses Asch. We gently set down the needle on each disc for a brief moment and tried to discover the contents (acetates do not bear repeated playings). Most of the recordings on this disc were rediscovered during this process. We have now made preservation and reference copies of all of the Guthrie material in the Smithsonian archive. The series will be completed by the end of 1998. This process has aided in the creation of these compact discs and will hopefully do

more in the future as we work on preserving the rest of the Asch Collection.

Jeff Place, Archivist

Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, Smithsonian Institution (1998)

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

For additional information about Woody Guthrie (1912-1967), read his autobiographical novel *Bound for Glory* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1943); also see: Joe Klein, *Woody Guthrie: A Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980); Woody Guthrie, *Pastures of Plenty: A Self Portrait*, edited by Dave Marsh and Harold Leventhal (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 1990); and Pete Seeger, *Where Have All the Flowers Gone* (Bethlehem, PA: *Sing Out!*, 1993). Another important resource is the Woody Guthrie Archives (250 W. 57th Street, Suite 1218, New York, NY 10107; 212/541-6230).

For information about Moses Asch (1905-1986), see: Peter D. Goldsmith, *Making People's Music: Moe Asch and Folkways Records* (Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998); Tony Scherman, "The Remarkable Recordings of Moses Asch," *Smithsonian* 18 (August 1987) 5: 110-21; Gary Kenton, "Moses Asch of Folkways," *Audio* 74 (July 1990) 7: 38-46; and Israel Young, "Moses Asch: Twentieth Century Man," *Sing Out!* 26 (May/June 1977) 1: 2-6, and 26 (July/August

1977) 2: 25-29. For information about Jack Guthrie, see: Guy Logsdon, "Jack Guthrie: A Star That Almost Was," *Journal of Country Music* 15 (2): 32-38, and *Jack Guthrie: Oklahoma Hills* Bear Family Records BCD 15580, notes by Guy Logsdon.

Lyrics are available in many song books, including: *Woody Guthrie Songs*, edited by Judy Bell and Nora Guthrie (New York: TRO Ludlow Music, 1992).

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Other selected Woody Guthrie recordings:

Bound for Glory, Folkways 2481; *Columbia River Collection*, Rounder 1036; *Dust Bowl Ballads*, Rounder 1040; *Library of Congress Recordings*, Rounder 1041; *Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters*, Smithsonian Folkways 40046; *Muleskinner Blues: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 2* Smithsonian Folkways 40101; *Nursery Days*, Smithsonian Folkways 45036; *Poor Boy*, Folkways 31010; *Songs to Grow On for Mother and Child*, Smithsonian Folkways 45035; *Struggle*, Smithsonian Folkways 40025; *This Land Is Your Land: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 1*, Smithsonian Folkways 40100; *Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs*, Smithsonian Folkways 40007.

Other relevant recordings:

Cowboy Songs on Folkways, Smithsonian Folkways 40043; *Folk Song America: A Twentieth Century Revival*, Smithsonian Collection of Recordings RD 046; *Folkways: A Vision Shared* (Woody and Lead Belly's songs performed by modern popular musicians), Columbia 44034; *Folkways: The Original Vision*, Smithsonian Folkways 40001 (Woody Guthrie and Lead Belly); *Anthology of American Folk Music*, Smithsonian Folkways 40090; *Songs for Political Action: Folk Music, Topical Songs and the American Left, 1926-1953*, Bear Family 15720; *Songs of the Spanish Civil War*, Folkways 5437; *That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement*, Smithsonian Folkways 40021; *Work Songs to Grow On, Vol. 3*, Folkways 7027.

ABOUT THE COMPILERS

Jeff Place has been the head archivist for the Folkways Collection since soon after its arrival at the Smithsonian in 1987 and has overseen the cataloguing of the Moses Asch collection. He has a Masters in Library Science from University of Maryland and specializes in sound archives. He has been involved in the compilation of a number of compact discs for Smithsonian Folkways including Woody Guthrie's *Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters*, which won him the 1994 Brenda McCallum Prize from the American Folklore Society, and *That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement*. Place also won two 1998 Grammy Awards for best historical release and best liner notes for his work on *The Anthology of American Folk Music* (1997 Edition). He has been a collector of traditional music for over 25 years. He lives in Mayo, Maryland, with his wife Barrie, daughter Andrea Rose, and son Lee.

Born and reared in Ada, Oklahoma, Dr. Guy Logsdon is a Smithsonian Institution Research Associate, and in 1990-91 was a Smithsonian Institution Senior Post-Doctoral Fellow compiling a biblio-discography of the songs of Woody Guthrie. He received a two-year grant, 1993-95, from the National

Endowment for the Humanities to complete the Woody Guthrie project. Logsdon has written numerous articles about Woody Guthrie and cowboy songs and poetry and authored the highly acclaimed, award-winning book, *"The Whorehouse Bells Were Ringing" and Other Songs Cowboys Sing*, and compiled and annotated *Cowboy Songs on Folkways* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40043) and *Cisco Houston: The Folkways Years 1944-1961* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40059). Former Director of Libraries and Professor of Education and American Folklife, University of Tulsa, Logsdon works as a writer and entertainer.

Logsdon and Place have collaborated on other Smithsonian Folkways collections: *Woody Guthrie: Long Ways to Travel, The Unreleased Folkways Masters 1944-1949* (40046), *That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement* (40021), *Woody Guthrie: This Land Is Your Land, The Asch Recordings, Vol. 1* (40100); and *Woody Guthrie: Muleskinner Blues, The Asch Recordings, Vol. 2* (40101).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For discographical information, we are indebted to Guthrie T. Meade's unpublished "Discography of Traditional Songs and Tunes On Hillbilly Records," in the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, Archive of Folk Culture, Washington, D.C. For their encouragement and assistance, we express sincere appreciation to Anthony Seeger and Amy Horowitz, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies Archive and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., and to Joseph C. Hickerson and the Reference Staff in the Library of Congress, Archive of Folk Culture. Additional thanks to Harold Leventhal, Nora Guthrie, Harris Wray, Lori Taylor, Leslie Spitz-Edson, Chris Aplin, David Arkush, Doug Bell, David Dennie, Ian Eagleson, Dan Gilbert, Danny Meltzer, Sarah Weisman, and Marni Hoyt.

Compiled by Jeff Place and Guy Logsdon
Annotated by Guy Logsdon and Jeff Place
Original recordings by Moses Asch, 1944-1949, New York City; from the Moses and Frances Asch Collection at the Smithsonian Institution
Analog reel to reel and acetate transfers by Jack Towers, David Glasser, Jeff Place, and Pete Reiniger

Mastered by David Glasser at AirShow, Springfield, Virginia
NoNoise by Eric Conn at AirShow, Boulder, Colorado
Project supervised by Anthony Seeger and Amy Horowitz
Technical coordination by Pete Reiniger
Editorial assistance by Carla Borden
Production coordination by Mary Monseur and Michael Maloney
Marketing by Brenda Dunlap
Cover photograph courtesy of Nora Guthrie and the Woody Guthrie Archives
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Back cover photograph "Dust Storm," Cimarron County, OK, 1936, by Arthur Rothstein, Farm Security Administration
Additional assistance by Smithsonian Folkways Staff: Tom Adams, engineer; Dudley Connell, fulfillment manager; Lee Michael Dempsey, fulfillment; Kevin Doran, licensing and royalties; Brenda Dunlap, marketing; Judy Gilmore, fulfillment; Matt Levine, fulfillment; Heather MacBride, financial assistant; Peter Seitel, editing; Ronnie Simpkins, fulfillment; Stephanie Smith, assistant archivist; Chris Weston, marketing assistant.



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ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

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

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

The Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Paredon, and Dyer-Bennet record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs &

Cultural Studies. They are one of the means through which the Center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

You can find Smithsonian Folkways Recordings at your local record store. Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Paredon, and Dyer-Bennet recordings are all available through:

Smithsonian Folkways Mail Order
955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 7300, MRC 953
Washington, DC 20560
phone (202) 287-7298
fax (202) 287-7299
orders only 1 (800) 410-9815
(Discover, MasterCard, and Visa accepted)

For further information about all the labels distributed through the Center, please consult our internet site (<http://www.si.edu/folkways>), which includes information about recent releases, our catalogue, and a database of the approximately 35,000 tracks from the more than 2,300 available recordings (*click on Database Search*).

Or request a printed catalogue by writing to: Catalogue, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Suite 2600, Smithsonian Institution MRC 914, Washington, DC 20560, USA. Or use our catalogue request phone: (202) 287-3262, or e-mail folkways@aol.com

WOODY GUTHRIE HARD TRAVELIN'

THE ASCH RECORDINGS, VOL. 3

COMPILED BY JEFF PLACE AND GUY LOGSDON ANNOTATED BY GUY LOGSDON AND JEFF PLACE

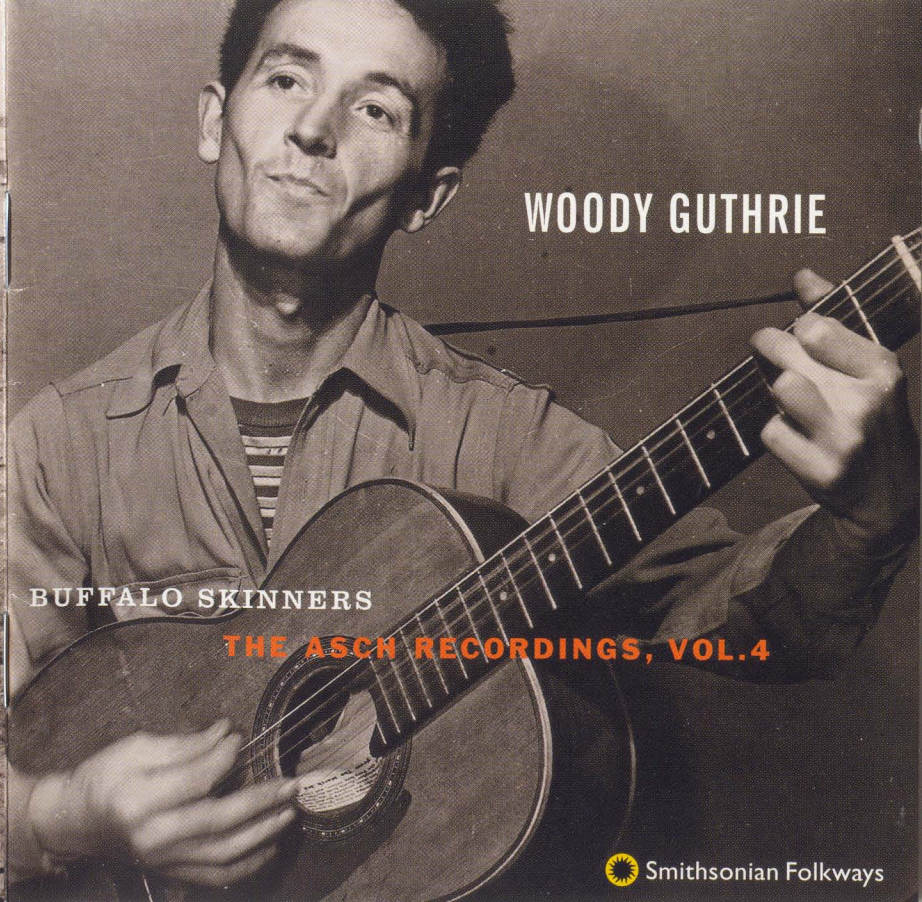
The songs on this recording are from the enormous collection of topical material that Woody Guthrie composed in the 1930s and 1940s. Most of his recordings were done for one man, Moses Asch, the founder of Folkways Records. Asch and Guthrie often organized song collections around a single topic; only some of those recordings were released during Guthrie's lifetime. *The Asch Recordings* series uncovers many previously unreleased tracks, and presents the best of nearly 300 songs Guthrie recorded for Asch between 1944 and 1949. *Running time 75 minutes. 36-page booklet includes historical and biographical notes by Woody Guthrie scholar Guy Logsdon.*

1. **HARD TRAVELIN'** 2:31
2. **FARMER-LABOR TRAIN** 2:48
3. **HOWDJADOO** 1:39
4. **SHIP IN THE SKY** 2:32
5. **I AIN'T GOT NO HOME IN THIS WORLD ANYMORE** 2:43
6. **MEAN TALKING BLUES** 3:45
7. **BETTER WORLD A-COMIN'** 3:04
8. **MISS PAVLICHENKO** 2:28
9. **SO LONG, IT'S BEEN GOOD TO KNOW YOU** 2:44
10. **NEW FOUND LAND** 2:06
11. **OREGON TRAIL** 2:44
12. **VIGILANTE MAN** 3:22
13. **1913 MASSACRE** 3:35
14. **TALKING COLUMBIA** 2:28
15. **TWO GOOD MEN** 3:45
16. **SALLY, DON'T YOU GRIEVE** 2:22
17. **TALKING SAILOR** 3:01
18. **WHAT ARE WE WAITING ON?** 2:06
19. **RAILROAD BLUES** 3:13
20. **LUDLOW MASSACRE** 3:27
21. **LADIES AUXILIARY** 2:09
22. **MINER'S SONG** 2:09
23. **WHEN THE YANKS GO MARCHING IN** 2:45
24. **UNION MAID (EXCERPT)** 0:42
25. **RUBAIYAT (EXCERPT)** 3:40
26. **THE MANY AND THE FEW** 5:33
27. **HANUKKAH DANCE** 1:24



Smithsonian
Folkways

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WOODY GUTHRIE

BUFFALO SKINNERS

THE ASCN RECORDINGS, VOL.4



Smithsonian Folkways

WOODY GUTHRIE BUFFALO SKINNERS

THE ASCH RECORDINGS VOL. 4

COMPILED BY JEFF PLACE AND GUY LOGSDON ANNOTATED BY GUY LOGSDON AND JEFF PLACE

- RANGER'S COMMAND** 2:48
(*W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI*)
- BUFFALO SKINNERS** 3:15
(*arr. W. Guthrie/Fall River Music, Inc., BMI*)
- BILLY THE KID** 2:00
(*Andrew Jenkins*)
- COWBOY WALTZ** 2:03
- PRETTY BOY FLOYD** 2:58
(*W. Guthrie/Fall River Publications, Inc.*)
- ALONG IN THE SUN AND THE RAIN** 2:27
(*W. Guthrie/Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc. BMI*)
- WHOOPIE TI YI YO, GET ALONG
LITTLE DOGIES** 2:48
- FROGGIE WENT A-COURTIN'** 3:26
- BUFFALO GALS** 2:32
(*arr. W. Guthrie/Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI*)
- I RIDE AN OLD PAINT** 2:56
- DEAD OR ALIVE (POOR LAZARUS)** 2:53
(*W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI*)
- SLIPKNOT (HANGKNOT, SLIPKNOT)** 2:30
(*W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI*)
- COCAINE BLUES (BAD LEE BROWN)** 2:13
(*arr. W. Guthrie and C. Houston/Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI*)
- GO TELL AUNT RHODY** 2:49
- CHISHOLM TRAIL** 2:24
- STEWBALL** 3:26
(*arr. W. Guthrie/W. Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI*)
- WILD CYCLONE** 3:57
(*W. Guthrie/W. Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI*)
- TRAIN BLUES** 3:31
(*W. Guthrie/Stormking Music, Inc., BMI*)
- RED RIVER VALLEY** 2:52
- FASTEST OF PONIES** 4:15
(*W. Guthrie/Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI*)
- STEWBALL (with Lead Belly and Cisco Houston)** 2:27
(*arr. H. Ledbetter/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI*)
- SNOW DEER** 2:31
(*Jack Mahoney-Percy Wenrich*)
- WHEN THE CURFEW BLOWS
(CURFEW BLOW)** 1:42
(*W. Guthrie/TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc., BMI*)
- LITTLE DARLING (AT MY WINDOW SAD
AND LONELY)** 2:12
(*W. Guthrie/Stormking Music, Inc., BMI*)
- BLOWING DOWN THAT OLD DUSTY ROAD
(GOING DOWN THE ROAD FEELIN' BAD)** 3:02
(*W. Guthrie/TRO-Hollis Music, Inc., BMI*)
- THE RETURN OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SLIM
AND DESERT RAT SHORTY** 2:34
(*W. Guthrie and C. Houston/Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI*)

INTRODUCTION

by *Guy Logsdon*

The Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage houses the archives and master recordings of Moses Asch and Folkways Records, as well as other small independent record labels. Most of Woody Guthrie's recordings are in the Asch/Folkways Archives in the Center, and Jeff Place is the archivist for the entire sound collection. Jeff has listened to more Woody Guthrie recordings than anyone as he transfers sound from fragile master discs to tape and compact disc. While listening to the vast numbers of Woody Guthrie recordings, he decided that the songs Woody recorded for Moses Asch should be compiled into a collection: *Woody Guthrie: The Asch Recordings*.

This is the fourth and final volume in the collection; however, not all of the Asch/Guthrie recordings are in these four compact discs, for some no longer exist, some are beyond transferring and restoration, and some are unworthy of reproduction. But there are enough songs, some previously issued and some previously unissued by Moses Asch, to showcase Woody's creativity and talent as well as to emphasize his vast knowledge and mental storehouse of country/western/folk music. This fourth volume emphasizes Woody's roots in the West with his well-known recordings of "Buffalo Skinners" and "Ranger's Command" as the lead songs, and there are traditional cowboy songs as well as previously unissued western songs written by him.

In 1996 at the Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada, Bess Lomax Hawes was the keynote speaker. Her speech, titled "Cowboy Poetry and Song: Collecting and Recollecting," was centered around her father, the legendary song collector John A. Lomax, and his contributions to cowboy/western music and folk culture; she stated, "Father always said that Woody was the best cowboy singer of the modern times...." Woody sang the way cowboys used to sing, Father said, without guile or seductiveness—flat out, tense, masculine, serious, often strained." She continued that Woody wanted the listener to hear the rhyme and rhythm of a poem or song "...in all its human inevitability. He wanted you to hear and understand the shared humanity of the story it was bringing you." Indeed, this is Woody Guthrie and the West that he loved.

WOODY GUTHRIE

Woody Guthrie played a major role in developing the foundation for the song and social movement of the 1940s and 1950s, now referred to as the urban folk song revival. He also became and remains an inspirational figure for folk song writers, social protest and topical song writers, and rock and folk rock song writers. His friendship with Lead Belly, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, Sonny Terry, and other legendary folk artists is well documented, and he unselfishly shared his musical and cultural experiences and ideas with them. His influence on Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, John Mellencamp, Billy Bragg, and other contemporary musicians and

songwriters also is well documented. His children's songs have helped parents and teachers rear, teach, entertain, and challenge young people for decades. And his documentation in songs and poetry of historical events such as the "Dust Bowl" and Great Depression decade still provides an important dimension to the interpretation of life during those years. Woody's creative contributions to our culture are legion, in the form of printed books as well as handwritten and/or typed manuscripts, paintings and drawings, and recorded songs.

Volume 1 in this series reveals the diverse subjects to which Woody Guthrie directed his creative energies—children, war, peace, migrants, the West. *Volume 2* reflects the massive number of traditional, gospel, and country songs that Woody carried in his memory—songs learned in Oklahoma, Texas, California, and along his well-traveled early road of life—songs that he carried to New York City and introduced to the urban folk song movement. *Volume 3* exhibits his creative imagination in adapting songs in his memory to labor, social, and political issues that he believed to be important. He loved musical expression and was a poet by nature. Therefore, Woody did not hesitate to use his imagination to adapt songs to his own style of performance and philosophies, and he readily modified tunes to fit his own creations. He truly was a folk or traditional composer, for he took what was available from his memory and creatively produced out of it an amazing body of new poems and songs.

MOSES ASCH AND FOLKWAYS RECORDS

Moses "Moe" Asch was a man obsessed with sounds: sounds made by others, musical sounds, cultural sounds, political sounds, and nature's sounds; this obsession led him to become a pioneer in recording sounds. Born in Warsaw, Poland, he was a son of the novelist Sholem Asch; his father's work carried to them to Berlin and then to Paris, and when Moe was eight years old the family moved to Brooklyn, New York. He grew up learning the songs of French children, his mother's Yiddish songs, the songs of English-speaking children, and later popular and jazz songs, and as a teenager he developed an interest in the electronics of radio and recording. He later wrote: "I learned the meaning of folk song as it expresses a HOME feeling of belonging and association." While vacationing in Paris, he found a copy of John A. Lomax's *Cowboy Songs* (1910 edition) and "became filled with the meaning of the cowboy and the west."

He started his manufacturing and production of records in 1939, specializing in international ethnic music, with Asch Records as his company name. His first commercial recording venture using American folk expression was in 1941, with *Play Parties in Song and Dance as Sung by Lead Belly*. Other singers of folk songs such as Burl Ives and Josh White turned to him as an outlet for their talents; Asch became the primary producer of folk recordings with limited commercial demand, recognizing the talents of Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, and hundreds of other singers and musicians. (See:

Moses Asch, "Folk Music—A Personal Statement," *Sing Out!* 11 [February-March 1961] 1: 26-27 and Goldsmith 1998.)

During his career, Asch produced records under different labels: Asch Records, Asch-Stinson Records, Disc Company of America, Folkways Records, Disc Recordings, and others. The Folkways label was created after Asch declared bankruptcy in 1947; he produced approximately twenty-two hundred titles during his forty years of Folkways Records ownership. For the most part, these were artists and music that the large recording companies did not consider to be commercially viable. Asch issued Woody Guthrie recordings on each label he produced.

Since 1987, the Moses Asch/Folkways Records archives have been a part of the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage archives at the Smithsonian. In the Woody Guthrie portion of this collection there are unpublished songs and poems as well as commercially issued recordings and unissued master recordings. The unissued masters are taken rejected by Woody and/or Asch for various reasons, e.g., the topic in the song did not fit in an album being issued, or a line in the song was forgotten or skipped by Woody. Some of the songs in this collection are from those master recordings Moses Asch decided not to use for other projects, while others are previously issued songs chosen as representative of Woody's best works.

When Woody started his recording career in 1940, the commercially viable format for recording and reproduction was the 78 rpm disc. When

the needle was set on the master disc, there was no stopping to correct mistakes; they could not be edited. If Woody lost the tune or sang the wrong words, he had to start over on a new master disc; so there are cuts in the Asch/Folkways Collection that Woody never heard or approved, for they contained mistakes. The composition of the discs also varied; they were shellac, acetate on glass, acetate on aluminum, and vinyl. Unfortunately, the glass discs break easily, and the acetate on aluminum flakes off; therefore, there are songs in this collection that can no longer be transferred from the master disc, for the master was lost during the transfer process. And there are a few recordings lost from merely touching the disc.

Instead of listing the complete title of each Smithsonian Folkways Recordings release in the following notes, only the issue number will be listed. The complete titles appear in the back of the booklet.

WOODY GUTHRIE: HIS LATER YEARS

For the early years of Woody's story as told by fellow Oklahoman, Guy Logsdon, see: This Land Is Your Land: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 1 (Smithsonian Folkways 40100), Muleskinner Blues: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 2 (Smithsonian Folkways 40101), and Hard Travelin': The Asch Recordings, Vol. 3 (Smithsonian Folkways 40102). This fourth volume concludes Woody's story.

Woodrow Wilson "Woody" Guthrie was the third of five children born to Charley and Nora

Guthrie of Okemah, Oklahoma. Named for the Democratic presidential candidate and president for two terms, Woody was the son of a staunch Democrat. He was proud that his birth date, 14 July (1912), was Bastille Day (14 July is celebrated in France somewhat like the 4th of July in the United States, to symbolize the revolution against royal tyranny in 1789). Woody was destined to become a revolutionary against what he perceived to be economic tyranny.

His father was a successful small-town politician and businessman, and his mother was the dutiful housewife/mother of that era. They were a handsome and popular couple in Okemah. However, by the time Woody was six years old, tragedy in many different forms had started striking the family: their new house burned; his sister Clara died from burns; his mother started showing symptoms of the genetic illness Huntington's Disease; and his father's land holdings started shrinking. Years later Woody stated that his father lost a farm a day for a month, implying that it occurred during the Great Depression, but Charley's losses were the result of Nora's illness and his concern and love for her and occurred long before the Depression years. It was the medical diagnosis that she was going insane; Woody suffered the taunts from other kids that he had a "crazy" mother.

Woody was a few weeks away from the age of fifteen when Charley was severely burned. It was generally believed that somehow Nora was responsible; she was committed to Oklahoma's institution for the insane, for the doctors knew

little to nothing about Huntington's Disease. Charley and his two younger children were taken to Pampa, Texas, to be cared for by relatives. Woody decided to stay in his hometown and fare for himself selling newspapers, shining shoes, picking up scrap iron in alleys, and doing anything else he could to survive. The foundation for Woody's attitudes, philosophies, beliefs, and desire to champion those who are down and out was formulated during his those years—the years when tragedy tore his middle-class family apart. But through it all, he never lost his sense of humor—he probably survived because he could laugh, a personality trait that too many fans and scholars seem to forget.

During the summers he wandered across Oklahoma and Texas, always returning to Okemah in time for school, but at the end of his junior year in high school, Woody went to Pampa to live with his father. A few years later he married Mary Jennings, the sister of his good friend, Matt Jennings. He learned to play a variety of instruments while there, and entertained at ranch dances and for a wide variety of audiences with his uncle and aunt Jeff and Allene Guthrie. It was also there where he experienced the fury of the dust storms. In mid-1937 he left Pampa and his family to make his way to southern California to become a radio personality.

First he teamed with his cousin Jack Guthrie on a radio show over KFVD Hollywood. Jack left the show to work a construction job to support his family; Woody invited their mutual friend Maxine "Lefty Lou" Crissman to sing with him,

and the show became "The Woody and Lefty Lou Show." They soon became the most popular performers the station broadcast.

As Woody became more concerned about the poverty of migrant agricultural workers and other inequities in the capitalistic economy, he slowly developed the belief that socialism would spread the nation's wealth among the working people in a more equitable way. He met members of the Communist Party and other left-wing organizations and attended their meetings, some held in the homes of prominent Hollywood personalities. He became more outspoken about what he perceived to be the evils and ills in society, for his years of picking up junk in Okemah alleys as well as other menial tasks for survival were not forgotten. Woody loved his hometown, his native state, and his nation, but he believed that the economic system was failing.

He and the KFVD owner had a falling out, probably over Woody's unreliability, so in late 1939 Woody, Mary, and, by then, three children returned to Pampa. But Woody had already decided to join his friend Will Geer in New York City. In January 1940, Woody thumbed his way to New York City and found temporary lodging with Geer. Within a couple of months he had a following of folk artists and fans who considered him to be a genuine "dust bowl refugee." Alan Lomax recorded him for the Library of Congress (the sessions included cowboy songs), and RCA Victor issued the two-volume collection of his *Dust Bowl Ballads*. Radio and nightclub engagements added more financial success and name

recognition, but he rebelled against being told what to sing and say as well as how to dress for his shows. In January 1941 he and his family, who had joined him in New York City, left for the West; in May they were in Portland, Oregon, where he worked for nearly a month writing songs about the Columbia River for the Bonneville Power Authority. Some of them have become well-known and much-loved Woody Guthrie classics.

In New York City his friends Pete Seeger, Lee Hays, and Millard Lampell were singing as the Almanac Singers and were writing labor songs. They needed Woody's writing skills to assist them with their projects, so they encouraged him to return to New York City. Before Woody made his way back, they recorded a controversial album, *Songs for John Doe* (described in SF 40021), opposed to intervention in the European war. After he rejoined them, they recorded two albums for General Records, *Deep Sea Chanties and Whaling Ballads* and *Sod Buster Ballads*. They also traveled across the country singing labor songs. During this time, when his marriage to Mary was fading, Woody met Marjorie Mazia, a highly talented dancer, and they fell in love.

World War II changed the nation and the world—Woody included. He and his friends became dedicated anti-Hitler and anti-fascist advocates. They wrote and sang songs encouraging the fight against Hitler and a few anti-Japanese songs and extolled the virtues of labor unions and working people in the fight. Woody's

autobiographical novel *Bound for Glory* was published and established him as a major twentieth-century author; critics declared him to be a new Walt Whitman. The original manuscript was over one thousand pages, but with Marjorie's help, it was edited to a publishable length. Earlier that year their daughter Cathy Ann was born, but they were still married to different spouses.

As the war grew in intensity, death, and destruction, Woody, Cisco Houston (who was legally blind), and their friend Vincent "Jimmy" Longhi joined the Merchant Marine and shipped out in June 1943. In 1944, they shipped out on two other voyages—their first boat was torpedoed, and later another ship hit a mine. Their experiences are narrated in entertaining detail in Longhi's book, *Woody, Cisco, and Me: Seamen Three in the Merchant Marine* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

It was between two sea voyages in March/April 1944 that Woody went to Moe Asch's studio and participated in a series of marathon recording sessions. In a somewhat limited recording ledger kept by Asch are listed sixty-one sides cut by Woody and Cisco on 19 April 1944; no doubt some takes were not completed, but most of them were. During a few days following that session, over sixty more sides were recorded. Many of the selections in this four-volume collection come from those sessions.

As the war in Europe drew to a close, the military services were being less selective in their draftees. The day Germany surrendered

Woody was inducted into the army; he was discharged 20 December 1945. By this time, Woody was experiencing early symptoms of Huntington's Disease.

Back in New York City in order to allow Woody the freedom of writing and now married to him, Marjorie worked as a dancer, while he spent much time with their daughter Cathy as well as writing. He often stated that many of his children's songs were written by her, and, indeed, she did inspire most of the children's songs he wrote in 1945 and later. However, Woody also had written songs for his children from his first marriage. He had an imagination and fantasy that made him almost childlike in many of his actions, and he could put himself into a child's shoes. His younger sister recalled that when she was little, Woody, when speaking to her, would always get down where he could look her in the eye—she did not have to look up at him as with all other adults. With this belief in the simplicity and innocence of childhood Woody became a contemporary Rousseau; the child is a free spirit of nature. Moe Asch recognized this, and in 1946 called Woody into the studio for recording sessions of children's songs. The album *Songs to Grow On: Nursery Days* (Disc 605) was issued that year, followed the next year by *Songs to Grow On: Work Songs for Nursery Days* (Disc 602). Both collections were prepared under the supervision of the child specialist, Beatrice Landeck, and won accolades and awards from numerous parent/teacher organizations. Since Marjorie

was Jewish, Woody also wrote a collection of Hanukkah songs for Cathy (see Volume 3 of this series). Woody's following and influence were expanding.

Perhaps Woody's most understated poem about his affinity with children is:

*Creation's ores float through my veins like
little flowers, specks and flakes,
I feel creation cry in me to build, to create,
and to make.*

*I hit a sandbar soon in my life,
Got picked by buzzards and by hand,
But little children hauled me home and
showed me how to build again.*

In 1945, while he was in the service, Woody heard a recording of his song "Oklahoma Hills" on a jukebox; singing it was his cousin, Jack Guthrie. The recording became a major country/western hit that year and ultimately a favorite western swing song. Woody had written the song in late 1937, and with Lefty Lou's assistance set it down on paper in April 1938. They often sang it on their radio show, and Jack performed it with them on different occasions. In those days Woody would write that the songs did not cost anything, so anyone could have them. Jack told Capitol Records that it was his own song, but when Woody called and claimed it, Jack agreed (for Jack Guthrie's story, see: Guy Logsdon's "Jack Guthrie: A Star That Almost Was," *The Journal of Country Music* 15[2]:32-38). Subsequent recordings and published versions carry both

names on the copyright—indeed, Jack made it a better song. Years later Marjorie recalled that after getting his first royalty check, Woody had it converted to one-dollar bills and brought it home in a shoe box yelling "We're rich!" and throwing bills all over the room. For days afterwards she found one-dollar bills in strange places. This momentary success inspired Woody to continue writing "western" songs, hoping to make some money.

He did enjoy another country/western hit when in December 1949, the Maddox Brothers and Rose recorded "Philadelphia Lawyer" for 4 Star Records in California. Woody wrote the song in late 1937 after Lefty Lou Crissman showed him an article about a cowboy shooting an attorney in Reno, Nevada, over a girl. A "Philadelphia lawyer" is a shyster ambulance-chasing lawyer. Woody thought the article was humorous and wrote a song titled "Reno Blues." Rose Maddox as a young girl learned it by listening to Woody and Jack singing in West Coast bars—being underage, she stood outside and listened. She also may have heard him sing it on the KFVD radio shows. The recording featuring Rose attained moderate success, but the Maddox family and Woody received not one cent for the recording; it merely gave additional attention and pride to Woody, and inspired him to write a few more western songs.

When he heard the Maddox Brothers and Rose recording, Woody was so impressed that he wrote one of his lengthy letters telling how he liked them, the record, and their other

recordings. It was published in Jonny Whiteside, *Ramblin' Rose: The Life and Career of Rose Maddox* (Nashville: Country Music Foundation Press, 1997). He also wrote:

I've been listening to records all of my natural life, and have cocked my ear to the horn and speaker to listen unto several tens of thousands of songs on records. I went to the Library of Congress several trips and sat and played through their piles of commercial and non-commercial recordings, the famous Lomax shelves, and heard a dozen songs about everything from a wild cyclone to a gambling hall shooting craps, good and bad men, good and bad women, fast and slow horses, shipwrecks, boat races, train wrecks, floods and the shouts of the saints and the sinners. My life has been glued to a song on a record for as long as I can recollect. (pp. xi-xii)

He almost wrote his own eulogy and did state his belief in the power of music when he continued with:

Just always remember that you are handling a power in your music and in your singing that is older and stronger than any known or unknown form of atomic energy. Your songs can rest and comfort the living heart and soul of the human race. You can make a person feel like trying to build up a whole new world but here, all by himself, single handed. You can cause workers to work, and the sick to feel better, the heart to laugh, and

the lovers to multiply the earth. You can sing and teach living history, past, present, and future, in ways that a thousand sour lectures and sermons can never do. Your work can sing on the wings of the clouds from this end of the world unto the other end...[A]s long as there are voices to sing and hearts to listen, your work, your songs, and your labors will spread to bless and fertilize the land. (p. xiv)

To help keep Woody's creative juices flowing, Moe Asch had him write reviews of the records Asch produced, no matter what language they were in or what their country of origin was, and Woody would write "the most important critiques of my records that I ever had.... He was always interested in any and all productions I issued, outside of jazz. It didn't have content to him" (interview with Guy Logsdon, 1974). In 1945, Woody mimeographed a few songs to sell under the title *Ten of Woody Guthrie's Songs, Book One*, so Asch had him put together a song book with commentary and published it as *American Folksong* (New York: Moe Asch, 1947). Woody and other artists who had fought against the Nazis and fascism were becoming disillusioned—the war had not changed national and international politics significantly. To help them regain perspective Asch sent Woody and Cisco to Boston to study and write about the Sacco-Vanzetti trial and executions. The trip resulted in a series of songs and recordings not released until 1960 under the title *Ballads of Sacco & Vanzetti*

(Folkways 5485, Smithsonian Folkways 40060). But other problems were distracting Woody, most of which at that time no one understood.

With Marjorie's support and Asch's encouragement, Woody continued to write during the late 1940s. He wrote about outlaws and western figures he thought had been ignored in American balladry, such as Belle Starr, Calamity Jane, and the petty Oklahoma outlaw/escape artist Matt Kimes. He wrote about all topics, including religion, for he was a man who read the Bible and considered religious beliefs to be important—he could not divorce himself from his Oklahoma/Texas background in the Baptist and Church of Christ churches. When completing questionnaires that asked "religion," he always answered "all." And when he read in the newspapers about an incident that he thought to be unfair to working people, he would write a series of songs about it, i.e., the Centralia, Illinois, mining disaster.

In 1950, he gained recognition with "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You." The Weavers—Pete Seeger, Lee Hays, Ronnie Gilbert, and Fred Hellerman—were recording hit songs, and "So Long" became a hit for them and Woody, followed by "Hard, Ain't It Hard" in 1952. However, the actions of the House Un-American Activities Committee cut their career short and haunted Woody's life for years.

Woody was a voracious reader and wrote in the margins of the books he owned, and he continually wrote long, personal letters to friends. But he was beginning slowly to show

the symptoms of his undiagnosed illness, which eventually eroded both his writing and his marriage. Moe Asch and other friends believed that Woody's use of alcohol, his escapades with women, and his adaptation to middle-class life were eating away at his creativity. Marjorie kept the money coming in and gave birth to three more children—Arlo, Joady, and Nora—but Woody was becoming moody and occasionally violent with Marjorie. Again, alcohol was suspected, but Woody had indicated that he was afraid he had his mother's illness:

Woody paused to pull out a cigarette. "But I'm sure that she was not insane. I'm sure she had a physical illness of some kind. The talk in our family is that she inherited it." He struck a match. "And the fact is that I'm beginning to suspect that I have it too." I couldn't see Woody's face, but I could see that the light of the match trembled slightly. "The doctors don't know much about it—maybe only Jesus can help me." Woody fell silent. (Jim Longhi, Woody, Cisco, & Me [1997], pp. 62-63)

Woody and Moe Asch had a falling out in the late 1940s over copyright issues and Moe's attitude about him and alcohol. In March 1951, when Woody was first hospitalized, he had developed a business relationship with Howard Richmond, who had become his publisher and was the owner of Ludlow Music, The Richmond Organization (TRO), and other music publishing firms. Richmond took a reel-to-reel tape

recorder to him and encouraged him to record as many songs as he could. Woody recorded over two hundred songs. None of those recordings have been issued. (Copies are in the Woody Guthrie Archives in New York.) A few weeks later at a concert in Maryland, he could not remember the words or the chords to his songs, and again, most thought him to be drinking heavily.

Because of the unpredictable and sometimes violent nature of the disease, Marjorie was advised by doctors to get a divorce for her safety and the children's. Woody wrote to Charley:

Last week in July 1953

Dear Poppa,

Got a divorce from Marjorie headed for the hills of California about a year ago and bought myself a ten acre patch of canyon cliff about twenty miles north of where George, Emily and Chris live [his brother, sister-in-law, and nephew]. Went down to Florida with wife number three to type my book up about how we left Pampa and went down to the Chisos Mountains to look for Paw Jerry's mine which I am now calling by the name of Seeds of Man. I got about half of it retyped and spilled a can of white gasoline on my arm and tried to burn the dang thing off and had to come back to Cal. To finish the book... I left several hundred songs on rolls of tape for my agent in N.Y.C., and...every time he makes a cold million he sends it to me....When you get down to your last few million and your last few strings of Packards

and Cadillacs like I am now, it teaches you the most valuable lesson in life, that it is better to tittle now than to tittle later and better to smoke here than hereafter...and its fun to be a nun but more to be a whore and other common proverbs that travel from lip to mouth amongst the working masses.... Chris is also proving his true Guthrie blood by sticking his head out the car window and biting all the girls that go past him.... Goodbye. Love Woody
Later he wrote:

....[T]hey tell me I've got the first early signs & symptoms of a dizzy disease called Huntington's Chorea, same disease that mamma had, which lets me stay dizzy in my head everyday without paying my barman one penny....

He slowly lost his battle with Huntington's and by 1955 was permanently hospitalized, taking occasional visits outside when friends or family cared for him. Tragedy seemed to stalk him all of his life, particularly fire and Huntington's. His families were not spared either, for of the eight children Woody had, only three, Arlo, Joady, and Nora from his marriage to Marjorie, survive. Indeed, Woody was surrounded by tragedy, but he never lost his sense of humor, his faith in music, his love for his country, or his optimism.

After he was hospitalized and as the "urban folk revival" developed momentum, it was Marjorie Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Harold Leventhal, and a few other friends who continued to introduce the public to his works and to protect his

creativity through copyright filing. Soon hundreds of thousands began singing his songs, many not knowing they were written by Woody. However, his importance also lies in bringing attention to Huntington's Chorea; Marjorie organized the Committee to Combat Huntington's Disease using Woody as the example of its effects, and stimulated medical research that has discovered much about the disease and its treatment. Thus, Woody's legacy transcends art, entertainment, and social problems.

After years of hospitalization, Woody died on 3 October 1967. The United States Department of the Interior had given him their Conservation Service Award on 6 April 1966, and named a substation on the Columbia River for him. He was installed posthumously in the Nashville Songwriters' Hall of Fame, 9 October 1977, and in 1988 in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland, Ohio.

His life and philosophy may best be described by his lines in "Pastures of Plenty":

*It's always we rambled, that river and I,
All along your green valley I will work
till I die;
My land I'll defend with my life if need be,
'Cause my pastures of plenty must always
be free.*

About Woody, John Steinbeck wrote:
Woody is just Woody. Thousands of people do not know he has any other name. He is just a voice and a guitar. He sings the songs of a people. And I suspect that he is, in a way,

that people. Harsh voiced and nasal, his guitar hanging like a tire iron on a rusty rim. There is nothing sweet about Woody, and there is nothing sweet about the songs he sings. But there is something more important for those who will listen. There is the will of a people to endure and to fight against oppression. I think we call this the American Spirit. (Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People, p. 9)

When *Bound for Glory* was published in 1943, Clifton Fadiman reviewed it for the *New Yorker* and wrote:

Someday people are going to wake up to the fact that Woody Guthrie and the ten thousand songs that leap and tumble off the strings of his music box are a national possession, like Yellowstone and Yosemite, and a part of the best stuff this country has to show the world.

No exact inventory of Woody's works is possible, for each year new items are uncovered, but he did write well over one thousand songs and poems, recorded hundreds of songs, wrote hundreds of personal letters to family and friends, numerous diaries, two autobiographical novels and one proletarian novel, drew hundreds of illustrations, painted oil paintings, and wrote essays and reviews—all of this accomplished in approximately eighteen years from 1935 to 1953. No one can predict what new treasures will be found in future years.



Pen and ink drawing by Woody Guthrie, April 23, 1946.
Courtesy of Folkways Archives.

NOTES ON THE SONGS

1. RANGER'S COMMAND

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and melody adapted by Woody Guthrie;
recorded 25 April 1944, matrix MA79, first
issued on Asch Records 347)

Jack Elliott often sings this song with the prefatory statement that Woody wrote it to encourage women to be active in the war against Hitler and fascism; indeed, the cowgirl is the one who "arose from her bed...with a gun in each hand," and led the cowboys into battle against rustlers. It is in the "come all ye" ballad tradition with a structure similar to "Texas Rangers" (Laws A 8); in this song many rangers are killed fighting Indians. The melody is the same Woody used for "Stewball." This is a great example of Woody's singing style in which he holds a note for a measure or two. Lyrics are in *Sing Out!* 10 (April/ May 1960) 1:8; for a discussion of "Texas Rangers" see: Alan Lomax (1960), p. 325.

2. BUFFALO SKINNERS

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and melody adapted by Woody Guthrie
from "Buffalo Skinners;" recorded 24 March
1945, matrix 903, first issued on Asch 360; reissued on Folkways 2485/Smithsonian Folkways 40025)

Unlike those in many other occupations, cowboys sang very few protest songs. Mild complaints about working in adverse weather conditions, bad horses, or wild cattle occasionally

were expressed, but usually through humor. Since cowboying was an occupation of choice, the men knew, as they know today, that not much money could be earned and that bad weather, cropped off fingers, broken bones, a few bad horses, crazy cattle, and possibly death were just part of the job. They did and do expect decent food and respect from their boss.

Woody Guthrie took these lyrics from a song called "Boggy Creek" in John A. and Alan Lomax's *Cowboy Songs* (1938) and set them to music. It is a cowboy version of "Buffalo Skinners"; yet, in the Lomax version no mention is made of buffalo skinners. Woody's version tells about an unemployed cowboy who agrees to work on a cattle drive into New Mexico, and after successfully combating the drive problems and delivering the herd, he and the rest of the cowboys kill the drover when he tries to cheat them out of their pay. Woody left out one verse and changed "out in New Mexico" to "on the trail of the buffalo." It is a genuine cowboy protest song.

Lomax & Lomax (1938) used the title "Boggy Creek," and Alan Lomax (1960) titled it "On the Trail to Mexico." Jim Bob Tinsley (1981) called it "The Hills of Mexico" and didn't include the verse about killing the drover.

A melody in a minor key and no guitar chord changes, combined with Woody's singing style of holding a syllable for emphasis, make this one of Woody's most forceful recordings. The guitar style sounds more like Cisco Houston's than Woody's.

For texts and additional information see: *Sing Out!* 6 (Summer 1956) 3:12-13; Alan Lomax (1960), pp. 359-60; Lomax & Lomax (1938, 1986), pp. 41-42; Tinsley (1981), pp. 32-35.

3. BILLY THE KID

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Adaptation of "Billy the Kid" by Rev. Andrew Jenkins; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA67, outtake from Folkways AA3; from analog reel FW-5950)

Woody believed this song to be a folk song, and as early as 1940 used an adaptation of the melody for "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You." However, it was written by Rev. Andrew Jenkins on 20 January 1927 and recorded for two different labels by Vernon Dalhart (Marion Try Slaughter) a few weeks later. Dalhart's popularity quickly disseminated the song across the country. Professional singers including Marty Robbins and the Sons of the Pioneers and folklorists such as John A. Lomax also assumed the ballad to be traditional, and through the song transmission process, indeed it has become a traditional song. When Woody learned it is not known; but it is assumed that he heard one of the recordings. He recorded a fragment of the song during the Library of Congress sessions.

William H. Bonney, known as Billy the Kid, became a popular outlaw figure in western lore. The murders he committed occurred primarily in the Lincoln County War area of New Mexico during the late 1870s; he was killed by Sheriff Pat Garrett on 14 July 1881. Hollywood and

television writers have produced numerous shows about him and the New Mexico problems, of which most, if not all, are totally romanticized. For the lyrics, see: Lomax & Lomax (1938, 1986), pp. 141-42.

4. COWBOY WALTZ

Woody Guthrie, fiddle; Bess Lomax Hawes, mandolin; unidentified, bass fiddle (possibly Alex Stewart)
(Traditional waltz adapted by Woody Guthrie; recorded January 1945, matrix unknown, issued on Folkways 2010 and AA3; from Smithsonian Acetate 517; 12" acetate on aluminum disc)

Variants of this tune have circulated in the West for decades; it has an opening phrase that Tex Owens used for his popular song, "Cattle Call." Woody was not a great fiddle player, but his fiddling does have the same honesty and rough edges that make his singing so unique. There were two fiddlers in Pampa, Texas, who influenced him and were close friends—his uncle Jeff Guthrie and his former brother-in-law and best friend Matt Jennings. From whom he learned this song is not known.

5. PRETTY BOY FLOYD

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA57, first issued on Asch 360; reissued on Folkways 2485/Smithsonian Folkways 40025)

This is one of Woody's best-known ballads; he made an American Robin Hood out of an

Oklahoma murderer. Of course, the reason Floyd, Robin Hood, and other thieves did not steal from the poor is that the poor had nothing to steal, but Pretty Boy Floyd did have many friends who helped him elude the law for a few years. Charles Arthur Floyd was born on 3 February 1904 in Georgia to parents who were basically hard-working, honest, illiterate rural laborers. Not long after his birth the family moved to eastern Oklahoma near the small town of Akins in the Cookson Hills, where numerous outlaws had hidden during the late nineteenth century. At the age of eighteen he married, but did not want to farm as a living to support his wife and son. In 1925 he joined migrant harvesters working northward, and along the way robbed a \$12,000 payroll in St. Louis, Missouri. He was arrested and sentenced to five years in the Missouri penitentiary, and was paroled in 1929.

The name "Pretty Boy" was given to him by a gangster madame in Kansas City, and his robberies and killings ranged from Oklahoma to Ohio. Indeed, he did share some of his loot with relatives and friends and Cookson Hills farmers who during those early Depression days hated banks and bankers, but his killings negated any generosity. By 1934, Floyd was listed as "Public Enemy #1," and on 22 October 1934 near East Liverpool, Ohio, he was killed by FBI agents led by Melvin Purvis. It continues to be believed that twenty thousand people attended his funeral. Not all Oklahomans considered Floyd to be a Robin Hood.

Woody's story as related in his song is mostly incorrect, but it follows the typical plot of a Robin Hood-type folk hero. Possibly Woody had heard an uncle of his tell of being wounded by gunfire late one night while returning to Seminole, Oklahoma, where he was an oil field worker; an automobile stopped, and a man helped him into the car and took him to the Seminole hospital. Since there were a submachine gun and other weapons in the car, his uncle always believed that it was Pretty Boy Floyd who had helped save his life. When Woody wrote the song is not known, but he did record it during his 1940 Library of Congress sessions.

For lyrics, see: *Woody Guthrie Songs* (New York: TRO Ludlow Music, 1994), p. 30, and for additional comments by Woody, see: *Sing Out!* 20 (July/August 1971) 6:20-21 and *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People* (New York: Oak Publications, 1967), pp. 114-15.

6. ALONG IN THE SUN AND THE RAIN

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; no date or matrix number, issued on Smithsonian Folkways 40046; Smithsonian Acetate 554; 12" acetate on aluminum base, 33 1/3 rpm, side A)

This song is Woody's life. He says that he has come a long way, seen a lot of things, kissed a lot of lips, seen a lot of towns, had a lot of fights, and shaken a lot of hands; the sun and the rain are analogous to his good times and hard times. The tone of the lyrics combined with movement back and forth from the minor

chord to the major chord and back to the minor is as symbolic of his life as are the sun and the rain. Woody never complained about the hard times he experienced; he enjoyed life too much to complain. He was an optimist, and the last line of this haunting, repetitive personal statement is his epilogue—"I'm gonna get my job done," and he did. It is a tragedy that he was unable to work longer.

7. WHOOPIE TI YI YO, GET ALONG LITTLE DOGIES

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar
(Recorded 1 March 1945, matrix 860, issued on Folkways 2484; reissued on Folkways 2485/Smithsonian Folkways 40025, also on Smithsonian Folkways 40043; from analog master FW 2484)

The opening line, "As I walked out one morning..." is the introduction to many English-Scottish-Irish ballads, and this cowboy song that dates back to the early trail drive days is a variant of the Irish ballad, "The Old Man Rocking the Cradle." The earliest notation of this song is found in the 1893 journal of Owen Wister, author of the classic western novel *The Virginian*. Since Wyoming was the cowboys' destination, the song is presumed to have been composed after 1870-71, when Texans first herded cattle northward into Wyoming Territory.

Woody Guthrie and Cisco Houston recorded this for the *Documentary #1 Struggle* album issued by Asch Records in 1946. It was not

included in the original album, but was added to the long-play album issued in 1976. The album is a documentary portraying the struggles of the working people in this country. In contrast to the original song that emphasized the struggles confronting the dogies, Woody rewrote portions of the song to reflect the struggles of cowboys on the trail drives.

The first commercial recording of the standard version was made by Harry "Mac" McClintock, 1 March 1928 (Victor V40016).

For a thorough discussion of the history of this song, see: White (1975), pp. 16-26; for additional texts, see A. Lomax (1960), pp. 356-58, 372-74; Lomax & Lomax (1934), pp. 385-89 and (1938, 1986), pp. 4-7; Tinsley (1981), pp. 40-45.

8. FROGGIE WENT A-COURTIN'

(alternate titles: "Frog Went A-Courtin'," "The Frog's Courtship," "Here's to Cheshire," and "Mouse Went A-Courting")

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica (Recorded late April 1944, matrix MA110, previously unissued; from analog reel 558)

This song has many, many variants and titles; it is usually classified as a children's song. However, its history indicates that it was a 16th-century English satirist's barb nursery. Queen Elizabeth I often gave different animal nicknames to those around her. She had her frog, her lap dog, her ape, and many more; the "frog" in her court was reported to be a man

intent on marrying her. It seems that the satirical songwriters had a field day with her characters, and "Froggie Went A-Courtin'" emerged as a favorite in English-speaking countries. Its original satirical intent has long been lost, while it remains a popular children's song. This song is an example of some of the loose sessions that took place in Moses Asch's studio when any number of musicians would stop by. When Woody learned it is not known, but the first recording in this country was by Buell Kazee on 21 April 1927.

9. BUFFALO GALS

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston/harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, vocal/harmonica

(Words and melody adapted by Woody Guthrie; recorded 24 April 1944, matrix 698, issued on Folkways 2484; Smithsonian Acetate 452; 10" shellac disc)

Like so many old-time dance tunes, this song had numerous titles, and the "gal" was from wherever the song was sung—"Alabama Gal," "Louisiana Gal," "New York Gal," "Buffalo Gal," "Bowery Gal," and many more. The song was popular nationwide. It also is known as "Dance by the Light of the Moon," "Round Town Girls," "Ain'-Ya Comin' Out Tonight," and, during World War II, was sung as "Dance with a Dolly with a Hole in Her Stocking" by the Andrew Sisters. Its origin dates back to the 1840s in this country, but it probably was a traditional play party song before then.

Woody's words seem to be his own interpretation of a good dance—they emphasize dancing and drinking. The first recording on 3 August 1924 seems to have been "Alabama Girl" by Gid Tanner and Riley Puckett; by 1940 over thirty-five others had recorded it under different titles. Woody probably grew up hearing it, and surely performed it at the ranch dances he and his uncle Jeff played in the mid-1930s.

10. I RIDE AN OLD PAINT

(alternate title: "Ride Around Little Dogie")

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar (Traditional with additional lyrics by Woody Guthrie; recorded 24 April 1944, matrix MA709, first issued on Verve/Folkways 9007; reissued as Folkways 1010/31010; Smithsonian Acetate 137; 10" shellac disc)

Woody Guthrie recorded one version of this with Pete Seeger, 7 July 1941, for General Recordings (released on *Sod Buster Ballads*, General Album G-21); Woody is credited with writing the verse that starts, "I've worked in your town, I've worked on your farm." He wanted it to sound more like a worker's song than a lyrical cowboy song. He learned it from Alan Lomax, who learned it from Margaret Larkin. Larkin was a writer/poet who grew up on a New Mexico ranch; she was singing folk songs in New York City in the 1920s, including those she had collected from the North Carolina textile worker, Ella Mae Wiggins, and she provided cowboy songs for the Broadway play

Green Grow the Lilacs and authored one of the best cowboy song books, *Singing Cowboy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931). The song has been a popular cowboy song since the early 1930s; for additional information, see: Jim Bob Tinsley (1981), pp. 126-129. It was first recorded as "Riding Old Paint, Leading Old Bald" by Stuart Hamblin, 3 March 1934, Los Angeles, California (Decca 5145), and on a Woody Guthrie manuscript in the Smithsonian Folkways archives he typed "My Version of an old Folk Song" with additional verses including:

*You fair skin women ought to come to the sun
Cause my dark skin woman is prettiest of
you all
Her breast is sweetest that I ever did press
And her skin is the warmest that I ever felt.*

11. DEAD OR ALIVE (POOR LAZARUS)

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar (Words and music adapted from the traditional song "Poor Lazarus"; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA56, issued on Asch 432; from Asch 78 432-2B)

"Poor Lazarus" (Laws I 12) is a work song about a southern African American who was a fugitive thief and was shot by a posse. Woody's adaptation is a strong statement about incarceration versus death, as with Lazarus, death being the choice over "a hard rock hotel." When Woody wrote this is not documented, but some event triggered his creativity.

12. SLIPKNOT

(alternate title: "Hangknot, Slipknot")
 Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
 (Words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded late April 1944, matrix MA115, first issued on Verve/Folkways 9007; reissued as Folkways Records 1010/31010, also issued as "Hang Knot" on Folkways 2485/Smithsonian Folkways 40025; Smithsonian Acetate 3787; 10" shellac disc)

Woody wrote, "Dedicated to the many negro mothers, fathers, and sons alike, that was lynched and hanged under the bridge of the Canadian River, seven miles south of Okemah, Okla., and to the day when such will be no more" (*Pastures of Plenty: A Self-Portrait* [1990], p. 37). In 1910, a deputy sheriff was shot in the leg by a thirteen-year-old African American from Boley, an all-black town thirteen miles west of Okemah; the deputy bled to death. A "committee," fearing that punishment would be inadequate, took the young man and his mother to the bridge and lynched them. Soon it was rumored in Okemah that Boley citizens were going to invade the town and kill all they could, and in Boley it was rumored that the white citizens were on their way. Each community armed itself as much as possible and posted men to guard the town; after a few days with no invasions and no gunfire, the communities slowly returned to routine daily life.

Woody grew up in an all-white town, where African Americans could only work and trade during the day. They had to leave town by sundown; the same was true for white people in

Boley. So it was natural for Woody to use terminology that was racist. In California during a radio broadcast he used the word "nigger" or "colored"; after the show a man called and told Woody how offensive it was. He never made that mistake again, and by the time he wrote this song, dated 2 February 1940, he was a changed man. The power of this song indicates how far he had come in his ideas about race relations and how deeply he felt about the evil of lynching.

13. COCAINE BLUES

(alternate titles: "Bad Lee Brown" and "East Texas Bill")
 Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
 (Recorded 19 April 1944 as "Bad Lee Brown," matrix MA59, previously unissued take; Smithsonian Acetate 3767; 10" shellac disc)

This song is difficult to trace. It was recorded by Luke Jordan on 16 August 1927 in Charlotte, North Carolina, for Victor Records; it is doubtful that anyone recorded it earlier. Jordan was a black blues singer from western Virginia who apparently learned this from traveling bluesmen. Where and from whom Woody learned it is not known, but it is in the same tradition as Woody's "Take a Whiff on Me" (Vol. 2, No. 11). About that song John A. and Alan Lomax in *Folk Song U.S.A.* (1947, pp. 290-291) stated that to them it was a song straight from the cities, from the "redlight district," "skidrows," "gambling hells," and "dens of vice...." It followed the cocaine habit out into

the levee camps and the country barrelhouses of the Deep South. They point out that there was a time when opium and cocaine could be purchased at the drug store, and songs about cocaine were known nationally. The hopheads and snowbirds (cocaine users) produced most of these songs, and while this particular song had its origin in African-American song and imagery, it and cocaine had and have no ethnic boundaries.

When "cocaine" songs entered the country music genre is not known, but shortly after Jordan's recording was released, hillbilly blues singers were using the song along with "Take a Whiff on Me." The melody might be traced to origins in the centuries-old "Butcher's Boy." In more contemporary times, Johnny Cash recorded it for his album *Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison* (Columbia 9639), and Jack Elliott learned his version from the preacher/street singer Reverend Gary Davis.

14. GO TELL AUNT RHODY

(alternate titles: "Go Tell Aunt Nancy," "The Old Grey Goose," and "The Old Grey Goose Is Dead")
 Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
 (Traditional; recorded late April 1944, matrix MA117, issued on *Sonny Terry and Other Great Artists Get Together* [Verve/Folkways 9010]; from analog reel 473)

Generally considered to be a children's song, it has a rather morbid theme—death—and little

is known about its origin. It was recorded by the Carolina Tar Heels in 1929 and the Pickard Family the following year. Asch released it as a Sonny Terry issue, and as recorded, it has the high spirit of a dance song, not for children.

15. CHISHOLM TRAIL

(alternate title: "The Old Chisholm Trail")
 Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar
 (Probably recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA29; matrix 865, issued on Disc D-110; from analog master DSC110)

This is the granddaddy of cowboy songs, deriving its title from the original post-Civil War cattle trail, the Chisholm Trail. Jesse Chisholm was a mixed-blood Cherokee Indian who ranched in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) and blazed a wagon trail from his ranch to a trading post on the North Fork of the Canadian River, then on to the Washita River. The trail that started below San Antonio, Texas, and terminated in Abilene, Kansas, took the name of the man who had developed the wagon road. Other trails were soon opened, but none surpassed the Chisholm Trail in legend and song.

"The Old Chisholm Trail" possibly has more verses (two-line couplets), many of which are bawdy, than any other song in the English language. John A. Lomax collected many verses that he could not include in his *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (1910), so he rewrote and placed them in a sequence he thought to be logical. His book became the most popular song

book ever to circulate among working cowboys, and they memorized the verses in his sequence—at least those who sang clean verses did. Nearly all cowboy singers since then have sung the Lomax variants, and Woody was no exception. He obviously learned them from Lomax, or else from someone who had. The melody may have come from Stephen F. Foster's "Old Uncle Ned," or from an early folk song. This song probably has appeared in more school music texts and song books than any other cowboy song.

16. STEWBALL

(alternate titles: "Skew Ball" and "Stewbally")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Traditional with words adapted by Woody Guthrie; recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA16, previously unissued; Smithsonian Acetate 1424; 10" shellac disc)

Woody wrote his own version of the traditional "Stewball" song (see: "Stewball" [version 2] track 21 in this collection), and he set it to the same melody used for "Ranger's Command" (track 1 in this collection). In this version he does not sing it as a work song; it is more of a ballad form, and is more concise. For more details on the history of this song see the annotation for the track 11.

WILD CYCLONE
By WOODY GUTHRIE

*Teenagers
And
Youngsters
W.R.*

THE LAST BIG BUFFALO RUN IS DONE
AND THE HIDES ARE STRIPPED AND GONE,
I'M STANDIN' HERE IN DEAD GHOST CITY
ON A FIELD OF BATTLE'S BONES,
THREE PRONG PETE RINS DOWN MY STREET
HE'S YELLIN' OUT HIS LUNGS,
THERE'S A WILD SPANGLED CORN! DOWN THRU TOWN
AN' IT'S LED BY TH' WILDE CYCLONE!

I DROGGED IN BACKA SOME BALES OF HAY
AS THE WILD HEAD JOBSTLED PAST,
I COULD NOT SPOT THEM LEADER HOGS
'CAUSE THEY ALL WENT PAST SO FAST!
A WINDBURST GIRL RODE IN THAT HEED
AND I SEEN HER TOSSE HER LOOP,
HER HOSS HE FELL AN' TH' GIRL DID YELL,
'I'VE KISSED THAT WILD CYCLONE!'

I LIFTED HER UP FROM THAT DUSTY STREET
ON TOPPA MY SALES OF HAY,
SHE PULLED MEN HAIR AND CRIED AND SAID,
'THAT CYCLONE'S GOT AWAY!
SHE SAID, 'I THRAILED HIM SIX LONG YEARS
SINCE HE WAS JUST A COLT!
I SQUEEZED HER HAND AND BAYS, 'I'LL HELP YOU
SMAG THAT WILD CYCLONE!'

WE BOUGHT FOR HER A SADDLING DUNN
WITH AN LEXTON BRIDLE, TOO,
WE SPOGGED OUR PACK ON A SWATRACK BAY
AND THRAILED FOR A WEEK OR TWO,
IN ONE GRASS VALLEY WE FITTERED CAMP
WHERE COLDWATER SPRINGS DID RUN
WE LAID EVERY TRAP IN THE SMOCKTAIL BOOK,
BUT WE MISSED THAT WILD CYCLONE!

ONE DAY JUST WHEN THE SUN JUMPS UP
AT LAXYAL FRIEND RIDES IN,
SHE THINKS A NOSELOOP ON A MARE
AND SHE TOLD ME WITH A GRIN
'WE'LL BUILD A FEM 'ROUND THIS FRESH MARE
AND THE CYCLONE'S BOUND TO COME,
BEFORE TOO MANY MOONS ROLL BY,
WE'LL HAVE THAT WILD CYCLONE!

A SMALL HALL FENCE WE BUILT AROUND
THIS PAIR YOUNG NICKERY MARE,
THAT SAME OLD NIGHT AS THE MOON GOT BRIGHT
OLD WILD CYCLONE WAS THERE,
HE PUNED THE GATE OF THE HALL CORALL
AND HE RUBBED HIS LADY'S NOSE,
WE LATCHED OUR GATES WITH LEATHERY STRAPS
AND WE TRAPPED THAT WILD CYCLONE.

MY WINDBURST GIRL DID FEEL SO GAY
SHE KISSED MY LEATHERY GRIZZ,
THEN BOTH RODE BACK TO DINGHORN TOWN
TO THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE,
WE BRED THIS PAIR AND PRETTIFUL MARE
TO THE SPORKY WILD CYCLONE,
AND IT'S NOW OUR KIDS RIDE PAST US
ON THE FASTEST HOSSSES GROWN.

30

Woody Guthrie

WORDS & MUSIC BY
WOODY GUTHRIE
3520 Mersmaid Avenue,
Brooklyn, 34, New York.
JULY 14th, 1949,
Bastille Day.....
My 38th BIRTHDAY.....

30

17. WILD CYCLONE

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded probably in 1949, no matrix, previously unissued; Smithsonian Acetate 427; 16" acetate on aluminum disc)

Another of Woody's truly western songs. He dated the manuscript "JULY 14, 1949, Bastille Day....My 38th BIRTHDAY," but no other statement was written. It is a long ballad with few mnemonic devices; thus, it is not as easily memorized as some of his other songs are. The practice described in the song of using a mare in heat to attract a stallion is part of the breeding process for horses. Woody's terminology throughout the ballad indicates a knowledge of western lore. He also wrote other unpublished western songs such as "Cowboy Ranch" (a children's song), "Red Runner," and "Sunbaked Ranch House."

18. TRAIN BLUES

Woody Guthrie, guitar; Sonny Terry, harmonica
(Recording date unknown, matrix unknown, issued on Folkways AA4; from analog master FWAA4)

Woody knew a variety of train songs that he played on the harmonica in which the main musical goal is to simulate the sounds of a steam-driven train; he played them a little slower and with less flourish than Sonny Terry. He sounded much better when he played a hand-held harmonica instead of using a rack, but even then he was not as accomplished as Sonny. This duet is a tribute to their friendship.

19. RED RIVER VALLEY

(alternate title: "Cowboy's Love Song")
Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar
(Recorded 19 April 1944, matrix MA55, previously unissued; Smithsonian Acetate 82; 10" shellac disc)

This is one of the most popular and widely recorded cowboy songs as well as one of the most popular folk songs in this nation, and the theme of parted lovers is rare in the cowboy song genre. It was known as "The Bright Mohawk Valley" in New York and "Sherman Valley" or "Bright Sherman Valley" in some southern mountain regions; it was printed in 1896 as "The Bright Mohawk Valley" with words and music credited to James J. Kerrigan. However, it is believed to have been sung as early as 1869 in Canada, for it does not refer to the Red River that separates Texas and Oklahoma, but to the Red River in Manitoba, Canada. Cowboys were quick to locate the song in the region with which they were familiar.

The Montana cowboy poet, D. J. O'Malley, wrote a poem in the 1880s that was sung to "Red River Valley," and there were reports that it was known in Iowa long before its publication in 1896 in New York. It is apparent that it made its way southward into Texas. For a more detailed study of this song, see: Jim Bob Tinsley's *He Was Singin' This Song* (1981), pp. 210-11.

The first recording issued of it was "Sherman Valley" by Bascom and Blackwell Lunsford in

1925; that same year the Texas cowboy singer Carl T. Sprague recorded it as "The Cowboy's Love Song." The first to record it under the "Red River Valley" title was the hillbilly duo, Hugh Cross and Riley Puckett, in 1927. In between the first recording and 1936, over thirty-five recordings were issued with most, but not all, carrying the "Red River Valley" title. This is a song that Woody must have heard many, many times by a wide variety of singers.

20. FASTEST OF PONIES

Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded circa 1949, matrix unknown, previously unissued; Smithsonian Acetate 153; 16" acetate on aluminum disc)

This is another of Woody's songs for which no documentation has been found. It may have been written about the time he wrote "Wild Cyclone." He plays a D minor chord and sings the melody all around it; in many songs he holds notes for unusual lengths, but in this he holds the guitar chord. His theme—the fastest horse—is the title of the song; however, it is a song that is not limited to the west in its possible setting.

21. STEWBALL (VERSION 2) (LAWS Q 22)

(alternate title: "Skew Ball," "Stewbally")
Lead Belly, vocal/guitar; Woody Guthrie, vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, vocal/guitar
(Arr. by Huddie Ledbetter, recorded October 1946, matrix D672, first issued on Midnight Special Disc 726; reissued on *Lead Belly Sings Folk*

Songs [Folkways 2488/ Smithsonian Folkways 40010], and as *Lead Belly: Keep Your Hands Off Her* [Verve/Folkways 9021]; from SF40010)

A skewball horse in the West is a horse with patterns of white on any basic color other than black; however, there are those who believe the skewball to be a horse with patterns of brown on the basic white color. Therefore, the title of this song infers that it is about a horse, and the text reveals that it is a race horse.

John A. and Alan Lomax in *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (1934) wrote:

Skew Ball was an Irish race horse of broadside fame. The song came over to America and was turned into a work song by the slaves... And now Skew Ball has become "Stewball" and his race is sung in the prisons.... It is the most widely known of the chain-gang songs in the states we visited, and by far the most constant as to tune and words.... (pp. 68-71)

In a race near Kildare, Ireland, over two hundred years ago, legend tells that Sku-Ball, a skewball horse, was matched against Miss Portly, a grey thoroughbred mare, and won. According to G. Malcolm Laws in *American Balladry from British BroadSides* (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1957), "...Half way around the course, Skewball speaks to his rider and promises to win much money for his master" (p. 283). The upset win of a common horse owned by commoners over a thoroughbred owned by nobility pleased most of the Irish, and a broadside soon appeared. In 1829 it was print-

ed in this country, and when the slaves absorbed it changes occurred—the locale became this country and a variety of states, the horse became Stewball and in some variants changed to Molly. The popular bluegrass song "Molly and Tenbrooks" may have been influenced by this song. For a text and additional information, see: *Sing Out!* 11 (Summer 1961) 3:3.

22. SNOW DEER

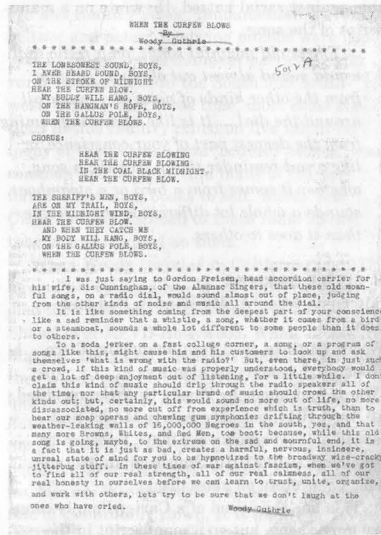
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar
(Words by Jack Mahoney, music by Percy Wenrich; recorded late April 1944, matrix MA112, previously unissued; Smithsonian Acetate 108; 10" shellac disc)

Following the success of the popular song "Red Wing," published in 1907, a series of romanticized songs about Indian maidens hit the pop market, of which "Snow Deer," released in 1913, was one. A "cowboy lover" steals an Indian maiden away from her people, and they race away with bullets flying to safety at the ranch house. It became a favorite among fiddle players as an instrumental, and can still be heard among old-time fiddlers. Woody's version is unusual in that he sings it; he knew it as early as 1937, for it is in *Woody and Lefty Lou's Favorite Collection Old Time Hill Country Songs*, under the title "My Pretty Snow-Deer," but when he learned it is not known. The song was first recorded in 1924 by Ernest Thompson, a blind street singer; it is possible that Woody was influenced by him, for Thompson recorded as a vocalist with guitar and harmonica—possibly the first

to record using a harmonica rack. The following year Jimmie Wilson and His Catfish String Band recorded it as an instrumental. Ernest Stoneman and Buell Kazee also recorded it with vocals in the late 1920s.

23. WHEN THE CURFEW BLOWS

(alternate title: "Curfew Blow")
Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar and harmonica
(Words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded



circa 1947, matrix D203, issued on Disc 610 [5011]; Smithsonian Acetate 3691; 10" shellac disc [broken]

Written as a Dust Bowl song, Woody put this together while performing as an Almanac Singer. In some areas of California there were curfews against migrant workers being on the streets after posted hours, and in many southern cities there were curfews for African Americans. Woody could easily have written this against racial hatred. He wrote on a manuscript of the song:

...[T]hese old moanful songs, on a radio dial, would sound almost out of place, judging from the other kinds of noise and music all around the dial.... It is like something coming from the deepest part of your conscience, or like a sad reminder that a whistle, a song, whether it comes from a bird or a steamboat, sounds a whole lot different to some people than it does to others.

24. LITTLE DARLING

(alternate title: "At My Window Sad and Lonely")

Woody Guthrie, lead vocal/mandolin; Cisco Houston, harmony vocal/guitar (Words and music by Woody Guthrie; recorded 19 April 1944, possibly matrix MA38, first issued on Verve/Folkways 9007, reissued as Folkways 1010/31010; Smithsonian Acetate 113; 12" acetate on glass disc)

This has the sound of a Carter Family country music song, but on a manuscript in the

Smithsonian/Asch Archives of a song titled "At My Window" with slight modifications and fewer verses, Woody typed *Made up on the Tenth Day of March in Los Angeles California United States of America This Country*. The year is not given, but the tone of the song and statement indicate that it was probably in the late 1930s.

25. BLOWING DOWN THAT OLD DUSTY ROAD

(alternate titles: "Blowin' Down This Road" and "Ain't Gonna Be Treated This Way") Woody Guthrie, vocal/guitar and harmonica (Music traditional, words by Woody Guthrie; recorded 25 April 1944, matrix 1231, issued on Asch 78 550-3B; Smithsonian Acetate 73; 12" acetate on glass disc)

On his typescript of this song in "Songs of Woody Guthrie" (1941, p. 203) in the Library of Congress, Archive of Folk Culture, Woody typed: *This is an original version of an old folk song written by W. W. Guthrie, January 1939 KFVD Los Angeles, California*. Woody first learned it under the original title, "Lonesome Road Blues," and later gave the song a Dust Bowl theme.

Variants of "Lonesome Road Blues" (see Vol. 1 in this series) have traveled across this nation for over one hundred years; the identity of the writer has been lost in the passage of time, and Woody is just one of many who adapted it as his own. In his writings as well as his recordings there are at least three variants, and he used the tune for other songs as well as for a radio theme song in California. It is a blues, and probably had its origin in southern African-

American culture with verses that intermingle with other blues.

Henry Whitter with his harmonica and guitar recorded it 10 December 1923 as "Lonesome Road Blues" (Okeh 40015); Whitter's recording career started that year, resulting in a few of his recorded songs becoming standards among country singers; he was one of the first country music recording figures to use a harmonica rack, which became a fixture with Woody and folk singers influenced by Woody. By 1938, nearly forty singers or bands had recorded variants under a wide variety of titles. In printed form it was published in 1919 by the Pace & Handy Music Company with words and music by William Nash, but it was around long before then.

Woody wrote that, when they were shooting Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* (circa late 1939), he was invited to the studios and asked to sing a song that most "Okies" would know: "This ('Going Down the Road Feeling Bad' not 'Blowin' Down This Road') was the first song that popped to my mind, so without thinking, I sung it." He also stated that they used it in the movie (unverified; from *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People* [1967], p. 215).

Woody used "Blowin' Down This Road" on his 1940 Victor *Dust Bowl Ballads*, and in *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People* he wrote: *I put this song on a Victor record.... The three verses marked with * ain't on the record. I just sing them by heart.*

26. THE RETURN OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SLIM AND DESERT RAT SHORTY

Woody Guthrie, narration/guitar; Cisco Houston, narration/guitar (Words and music by Woody Guthrie and Cisco Houston; recording date unknown, previously unissued, Smithsonian Acetate 285; 10" home recording (broken))

From the 1920s through the 1950s, border or Mexican radio stations that broadcast western and country music, fundamentalist evangelists, and patent medicine pitches were popular nighttime entertainment particularly in rural communities in the South and Southwest. During that same time, most radio stations in this country relied on live talent for many of their shows, and "country humor" was common and popular. And many of the performers had song books to sell. Woody and Cisco not only listened to these radio shows, they also performed on them.

When Woody traveled to California in 1937, he and his cousin Leon "Jack" Guthrie wrangled their own show, "The Oke and Woody Show," over KFVD Hollywood. When Jack left, Maxine "Lefty Lou" Dempsey joined Woody on the "Woody and Lefty Lou Show." They soon had a song book to sell, *Woody and Lefty Lou's Favorite Collection of Old Time Hill Country Songs*. They also enjoyed a short tenure as performers on the border station XELO, Tijuana, Mexico. Woody dressed as and acted the role of the hillbilly clown. It is highly probable that the humor in this selection is the same

that he used in his early radio days, only it is directed at making fun of border radio shows. Woody and Cisco recorded this on a home recording machine. Two different skits were recorded on the disc. One was released on SF 40046, and this one appears for the first time. Since this recording was copied, the original no longer exists.

For an excellent account of border radio, see: Gene Fowler and Bill Crawford, *Border Radio* (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1987).

Additional information about some songs in this collection can be found in: Guy Logsdon, *"The Whorehouse Bells Were Ringing" and Other Songs Cowboys Sing* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Alan Lomax, *The Folk Songs of North America* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1960); John A. and Alan Lomax, *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1934); Bess, Lomax, John A., and Alan Lomax, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1938, reprinted 1986); Jim Bob Tinsley, *He Was Singin' This Song* (Orlando: University Presses of Florida, 1981); John I. White, *Git Along, Little Dogies* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975).

ARCHIVIST'S REMARKS

This fourth and final collection in the series *The Asch Recordings* consists primarily of Woody Guthrie's performances of western, cowboy, and outlaw ballads mixed with more of the traditional material Woody knew. It completes the re-release of all of the Guthrie material that was released on Folkways Records (1948-1987) as well as a number of unreleased performances.

During the last twenty years music buyers have seen the replacement of the vinyl LP by the compact disc as the medium of choice for home listening of audio recordings. The replacement of one format by another is not the first time that there has been competition between media in the audio world. Wax cylinders were replaced by 78 rpm discs, which were in turn replaced by LPs ("Long Playing records," as they were called). The same evolutionary processes also occurred in recording studio masters for these formats.

Magnetic audiotape technology did not exist before World War II. It first came into use for audio recording in the late 1940s. Before then, most mastering had been done directly on to discs. All of the music on this project was made by Moses Asch during the 1940s on various types of disc. There were several sorts of disc technology; some machines recorded directly onto aluminum discs, others recorded onto acetate or shellac discs. The recordings here fall into the latter two categories.

Most master discs were recorded at about 78

rpm and consequently could not hold more than three minutes of music. Selections that ran longer often had to be broken up into two parts. Later on, but still before he moved to magnetic tape, Asch used 33 1/3 rpm masters to record longer pieces on disc.

Acetate discs of the type used for recording these tracks consisted of an aluminum or glass base covered with a layer of lacquer. During the war, when many of these discs were recorded, the glass base was used because metal was dedicated to military uses. With the passage of time, the lacquer may begin to peel off the base like old paint, so it is important that acetate discs be transferred to a more stable medium as soon as possible. Shellac discs are more stable than acetate and are more like the vinyl discs we are familiar with. They are, however, quite brittle. Here at the Smithsonian we have undertaken the slow and laborious task of transferring all 5,000 acetates in the collection.

During the 1940s, Moses Asch's studio was an open house to many of the recording artists in the New York area. Many of the acetates in this collection were recorded during this time. Asch's recording log is a fascinating list of many of the top jazz and folk music performers of the day. Visitors included Woody and Cisco, Burl Ives, Josh White, Sonny and Brownie, Langston Hughes, James P. Johnson, Mary Lou Williams, Coleman Hawkins, and Pete Seeger, among others. Woody Guthrie would drop by Asch's office whenever the spirit moved him. Woody would often get up in the morning, read

the newspaper, and then sit down at his typewriter and reel off a number of topical ballads. Many of these typewritten pages are now stored in the archive here at the Smithsonian, and many of the songs were recorded for Asch.

During World War II, when these recordings were made, discs were in short supply. Moses Asch had a studio and musicians ready to record but nothing to record them on. Herbert Harris of the Stinson Trading Company had blank discs. Asch and Harris went into a short partnership as Asch-Stinson Records. Both men continued to put out much of the same material after their partnership ended, leading to much of the discographical confusion. Because of the shortage of discs Asch could not afford second or third takes. For this reason, many of the songs he recorded have small mistakes in them. Some of these masters were released on Moses Asch's Asch and Disc labels.

While working on this series, Pete Reiniger and I have tried to clean up the often scratchy sound by using No-Noise digital editing software. Some of the acetates are in better condition than others, and some either no longer exist or are in too bad shape to use. In these cases we have substituted the recordings from the analog LP production master. It is our philosophy to try to clean up the noise without sacrificing the sound. Certain types of noise can be easily cleaned up this way, others cannot be without eliminating the high-frequency sound. Many historical reissues sound muffled for this reason. We would rather have the crisp

sound of the original with some noise. We hope you agree.

In 1990, Lori Taylor, Leslie Spitz-Edson, Alex Sweda, Suzanne Crow, and I went through the approximately 5,000 master recording discs which had been in the possession of Moses Asch. We gently set down the needle on each disc for a brief moment and tried to discover the contents (acetates do not bear repeated playings). Most of the recordings on this disc were rediscovered during this process. We have now made preservation and reference copies of all of the Guthrie material in the Smithsonian archive (see list). This process has aided in the creation of these compact discs and hopefully will do more in the future as we work on preserving the rest of the Asch Collection.

Jeff Place, Archivist,
Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage,
Smithsonian Institution (1999)

APPENDIX

Surviving recordings in the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archive and Collections, Smithsonian Institution, made by Woody Guthrie for Moses Asch, 1944–1952:

1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 45035
1913 Massacre 40025, 40102
21 Years 40101
900 Miles 40007
Alabama Bound (with Lead Belly) 40045
All Work Together
Along in the Sun and the Rain 40046, 40103
Another Man Done Gone
Baltimore to Washington 40101
Bed on the Floor (Make Me a Pallet on Your Floor) 40101
Better World A-Comin' 40059, 40102
Biggest Thing Man Has Ever Done (Great Historical Bum) 40100
Bile Them Cabbage Down
Billy the Kid 40103
Bling Blang 45035
Blow Ye Winds
Blow the Man Down
Blowing Down This Dusty Road 40103
Boll Weevil 40007
Bound for Glory (with Jack Elliott)
Brown Eyes 40007
Bubble Gum 45036
Budded Roses 40046
Buffalo Gals 40103
Buffalo Skinners 40025, 40103
Build My House 45037
Candy Tree
Car Song 40100, 45036
Chisholm Trail 40103
Choo Choo
Clean-O 45036
Cocaine Blues (Bad Lee Brown) 40103
Columbus Stockade
Come See 45036

Cowboy Ranch
Cowboy Song
Cowboy Waltz 40103
Crawdadd Song 40101
Cumberland Gap
Dance Around 45036
Danville Girl 40101
Dead or Alive (Poor Lazarus) 40103
Dirty Overhalls 40007
Do-Re-Mi 40001, 40100
Dollar Down, Dollar a Week 40025
Don't You Push Me Down 45036
Dust Storm Disaster
Dying Miner 40025
End of the Line 40100
Ezekial Saw the Wheel
Farmer-Labor Train 40046, 40102
Fastest of Ponies 40103
Female Doctor (with Alonzo Scales)
Fiddle Tune
Fiddler's Dram (with Lead Belly) 40010
The Flood and the Storm 40060
Foggy Mountain Top
Freight Train Blues
Froggie Went A-Courtin' (with Sonny Terry and Cisco Houston) 40103
Gambling Man 40101
Get Along Mr. Hitler
The Girl I Left Behind Me 40046
Give Me That Old Time Religion
Going Down the Road Feeling Bad 40100
The Golden Vanity
Goodnight Little Arlo 45035
Goodnight Little Darling
Good Morning Blues (with Sonny Terry and Cisco Houston)
Go Tell Aunt Rhody (with Sonny Terry and Cisco Houston) 40103
Grand Coulee Dam 40100
Grassy Grass Grass (Grow, Grow, Grow) 45035
Green Corn
Green Corn (with Lead Belly) 40105

Greenback Dollar
Grey Goose (with Lead Belly) 40105
Guitar Blues 40007
Guitar Rag
Gypsy Davy 40100
Ham and Eggs (with Lead Belly) 40105
Hang Knot 40025
Hangin' Around (with Lee Hays, Pete Seeger, Brownie McGhee, and Sonny Terry)
Hanukkah Dance 40102
Happy Hanukkah
Hard, Ain't It Hard 40100
Hard Travelin' 40001, 40046, 40102
Harmonica Solo
Harriet Tubman 40046
Helping Hand
Hen Cackle 40101
Hobo's Lullaby 40001, 40100
House of the Rising Sun 40007
How Many Biscuits Can You Eat?
Howdjadoo 40102
How Long, How Long (with Jack Elliott)
I Ain't Got No Home in This World Anymore 40001, 40102
I Ain't Got Nobody 40100
I Just Want to Sing Your Name 40060
I Ride an Old Paint 40103
I See Mama
I Want Milk (I Want It Now) 45035
I'll Eat You, I'll Drink You 45035
I'll Write and I'll Draw 45035
Ida Red 40101
If I Lose My Money, Let Me Lose (with Cisco Houston and Sonny Terry)
Irene (with Sonny Terry)
It's Hanukkah
Jackhammer John 40007
Jarama Valley 40100
Jesse James 40043, 40100
Jesus Christ 40001, 40100
Jig Along Home
Jiggy Jiggy Bum 45036

Johnny Hart 40101
John Henry 40007
Keep My Skillet Good and Greasy 40101
Kissin' On 40046
Ladies Auxiliary 40102
Lay Down Little Dogies
Lindbergh 40100
Little Black Train 40101
Little Darling (At My Window Sad and Lonely) 40102
Little Sack of Sugar 45035
Lonesome Day
Long John
Long Ways to Travel 40046
Lost John 40025
Ludlow Massacre 40025, 40102
Make a Bubble 45035
The Many and the Few 40102
Mean Talking Blues 40102
Merry Go Round 45036
Midnight Special (with Lead Belly) 40105
A Million Miles
Miner's Song 40102
Miss Pavlichenko 40021, 40102
More Pretty Girls Than One
Move Across the River (with Sonny Terry)
Muleskinner Blues 40101
My Dolly 45036
My Little Seed
My Yellow Crayon 45036
Needle Sing 45035
New Found Land 40102
New Morning Train
New River Train
New York City 40046
New York Town 40100
Nine Pound Hammer (with Jack Elliott)
Old Joe Clark
Old Judge Thayer 40060
On Top of Old Smoky
One Day Old 45035
Oregon Trail 40007, 40102

Pancho Villa
Pastures of Plenty 40100
Philadelphia Lawyer 40001, 40100
Pick It Up 45035
A Picture from Life's Other Side 40100
Poor Boy 40101
Pretty Boy Floyd 40001, 40103
Pretty and Shiny-O 45035
Prison Cell Dream
Prisoner's Wife
Put My Little Shoes Away 40101
Put Your Finger in the Air 45036
Put on My Traveling Shoes (with Sonny Terry)
Race You Down the Mountain 45036
Railroad Bill (with Jack Elliott)
Railroad Blues 40102
Rain Crow Bill 40046
Ramblin' Round 40100
Ranger's Command 40103
Rattle My Rattle 45035
Reckless Talk
Red River 40103
Red Runner
Red Wine 40060
The Return of Rocky Mountain Slim and Desert Rat Shorty 40103
Riding Down the Rocky Canyon
Rocky Mountain Slim and Desert Rat Shorty 40046
Roll On 45036
Roll the Union On
Root Hog and Die 40060
Rubaiyat (excerpt on) 40102
Rubber Dolly 40101
Rye Straw 40101
Sally Don't You Grieve 40021, 40102
Sally Goodin' 40101
Seattle to Chicago 40046
Ship in the Sky 40102
Sinking of the Normandie
Sinking of the Reuben James 40021, 40100
Sitting on Top of the World

Skip to My Lou
Sleepy Eye 45036
Slip Knot 40103
Snow Deer 40103
So Long, It's Been Good to Know You (War version) 40021, 40102
Sowing on the Mountain 40101
Springfield Mountain 40007
Stagger Lee (Stackolee) 40101
Stepstone 40101
Stewball 40103
Stewball (with Lead Belly) 40103, 40010
Streets of Glory
Struggle Blues 40025
Suasson Lane 40060
Sugar in the Gourd
Swimmy Swim Swim 45035
Take My Penny
Take a Whiff on Me 40101
Take This Hammer (with Sonny Terry and Jack Elliott)
Talking Centralia (Talking Miner) 40046
Talking Columbia 40102
Talking Dust Bowl
Talking Fishing Blues 40100, 45037
Talking Hard Work 40001, 40100
Talking Hitler
Talking Sailor (Talking Merchant Marine) 40021, 40102
This Land Is Your Land 40001, 40100
Tippy Tappy Toe
Train 45 40101
Train Blues 40103
Train Harmonica
Train Medley 40046
Train Narration 40046
Train Song
Trouble on the Waters
True Believer
Two Good Men 40060, 40062
Union Burying Ground 40025
Union Hammer
Union Maid 40102

Vanzetti's Letter 40060
Vanzetti's Rock 40060
Vigilante Man 40001, 40102
Wabash Cannonball
Waiting at the Gate 40025
Wake Up 45036
Waltz By Ki-Ki
Want to See Me Grow
Warden in the Sky 40046
Washy Wash Wash 45035
Weaver's Life
We Shall Be Free (with Lead Belly) 40001, 40007
We Welcome to Heaven 40060
What Are We Waiting On? 40021, 40102
What Did the Deep Sea Say? 40007
What Would You Give in Exchange for Your Soul?
When That Great Ship Went Down 40100
When the Curfew Blows 40103
When the Saints Go Marching In
When the Yanks Go Marching In 40021, 40102
Which Side Are You On?
Who Broke Down the Hen House Door?
Who's Gonna Shoe Your Pretty Little Feet? 40101
Who's My Pretty Baby? 45035
Whoopee Ti Yi Yo, Get Along Little Dogies 40043, 40103
Why, Oh Why? 40100, 45035
Wiggledy, Giggledy 40046
Wild Cyclone 40103
Will You Miss Me? 40007
Worried Man Blues 40101
Wreck of the #9
Wreck of the Old 97 40101
Yellow Gal (with Lead Belly) 40044, 40105
Yellow Gal (solo)
You Souls of Boston 40060

Recordings of Woody Guthrie made and/or released by Moses Asch on Asch, Disc, Folkways, and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 1944–1998:

Woody Guthrie, Asch 347 (78 rpm), 1944; *Struggle: Asch American Documentary, Vol. 1*, Asch 360 (78 rpm), 1946; *Songs to Grow On: Nursery Days*, Disc 605 (78 rpm), 1946, Folkways 5/105 (78 rpm), 1951; *Ballads from the Dust Bowl*, Disc 610 (78 rpm), 1947; *Songs to Grow On: Work Songs for Nursery Days*, Disc 602 (78 rpm), 1947; *Talking Dust Bowl*, Folkways 11/2011 (LP), 1950; *Songs to Grow On, Vol. 1: Nursery Days*, Folkways 7005 (LP), 1950; *Songs to Grow on for Mother and Child*, Folkways 7015 (LP), 1950; *Lonesome Valley*, Folkways 2010 (LP), 1950 (with others); *Bound for Glory*, Folkways 78-1/2481 (LP), 1956 (with Will Geer); *Ballads of Sacco & Vanzetti*, Folkways 5485 (LP), 1960, Smithsonian Folkways 40060, 1995; *Sings Folk Songs with Lead Belly, Cisco Houston, Sonny Terry, Bess Hawes*, Folkways 2483 (LP), 1962, Smithsonian Folkways 40007, 1989; *Dust Bowl Ballads Sung by Woody Guthrie*, Folkways 5212 (LP), 1964; *Hard Travelin'*, Disc 110 (LP), 1964; *Woody Guthrie Sings Folks Songs, Vol. 2*, Folkways 2484 (LP), 1964; *Bed on the Floor*, Verve/Folkways 9007 (LP), n.d.; *Bonneville Dam and Other Columbia River Songs*, Verve/Folkways 9036, 1967; *This Land Is Your Land*, Folkways 1001/31001 (LP), 1967; *Poor Boy*, Folkways 1010/31010 (LP), 1968; *Struggle*, Folkways

2485 (LP), 1976, Smithsonian Folkways 40025, 1990; *Why, Oh Why?*, Folkways 7016 (LP), 1985; *Folkways: The Original Vision*, Smithsonian Folkways 40001, 1988 (with Lead Belly); *Songs to Grow on for Mother and Child*, Smithsonian Folkways 45035, 1991; *Nursery Days*, Smithsonian Folkways 45036, 1992; *Long Ways to Travel 1944–1949: The Unreleased Folkways Masters*, Smithsonian Folkways 40046, 1994; *That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement*, Smithsonian Folkways 40021, 1995 (with others); *This Land Is Your Land: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 1*, Smithsonian Folkways 40100, 1997; *Muleskinner Blues: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 2*, Smithsonian Folkways 40101, 1997; *Hard Travelin': The Asch Recordings, Vol. 3*, Smithsonian Folkways 40102, 1998; and *Buffalo Skinners: The Asch Recordings, Vol. 4*, Smithsonian Folkways 40103, 1999. There are also early 78 recordings released on the Cub and Folk Tunes labels. For a complete discography of Woody Guthrie write Guy Logsdon, 4645 S. Columbia Ave., Tulsa, OK 74105.

Other relevant recordings:

Cowboy Songs on Folkways, Smithsonian Folkways 40043; *Folk Song America: A Twentieth Century Revival*, Smithsonian Collection of Recordings RD 046; *Folkways: A Vision Shared* (Woody and Lead Belly's songs performed by contemporary popular musicians), Columbia 44034; *The Anthology of American Folk Music*,

Smithsonian Folkways 40090; *The Lead Belly Legacy Series*, Smithsonian Folkways 40044, 40045, 40105; *Songs of the Spanish Civil War*, Folkways 5437; and *Work Songs to Grow On, Vol. 3*, Folkways 7027.

For additional information about Woody Guthrie (1912–1967), read his autobiographical novel *Bound for Glory* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1943); also see: Joe Klein, *Woody Guthrie: A Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980); *Woody Guthrie, Pastures of Plenty: A Self-Portrait*, edited by Dave Marsh and Harold Leventhal (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1990); and Pete Seeger, *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out!, 1993). For information about Moses Asch (1905–1986), see: Peter D. Goldsmith, *Making People's Music: Moe Asch and Folkways Records* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998); Tony Scherman, "The Remarkable Recordings of Moses Asch," *Smithsonian* 18 (August 1987) 5:110–21; Gary Kenton, "Moses Asch of Folkways," *Audio* 74 (July 1990) 7:38–46; and Israel Young, "Moses Asch: Twentieth Century Man," *Sing Out!* 26 (May/June 1977) 1:2–6, and 26 (July/August 1977) 2:25–29. For information about Jack Guthrie, see: Guy Logsdon, "Jack Guthrie: A Star That Almost Was," *Journal of Country Music* 15(2):32–38, and *Jack Guthrie: Oklahoma Hills*, Bear Family Records BCD 15580, notes by Guy Logsdon.

For more detailed information about Woody Guthrie's work with Moses Asch, please consult *Volume 1* in this series as well as SF 40046, and for lyrics of some of the songs in this collection, see: *Woody Guthrie Songs*, edited by Judy Bell and Nora Guthrie (New York: TRO Ludlow Music, 1992); *The Collected Reprints from Sing Out!*, Vol. 1–6 1959–1964 (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out Corp., 1990); *Woody Guthrie: Roll on Columbia, The Columbia River Collection* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out Publications, 1991); *California to the New York Island*, edited by Millard Lampell (New York: Oak Publications, 1958); *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People*, by Alan Lomax, Woody Guthrie, and Pete Seeger (New York: Oak Publications, 1967). Another important resource is the Woody Guthrie Archives (250 W. 57th Street, Suite 1218, New York, NY 10107; 212/541-6230).

ABOUT THE COMPILERS

Jeff Place has been the head archivist for the Folkways Collection since soon after its arrival at the Smithsonian in 1987 and has overseen the cataloging of the Moses Asch Collection. He has a Masters in Library Science from the University of Maryland and specializes in sound archives. He is currently on the Preservation and Technology Committee for the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. He has been involved in the compilation of a number of compact discs for Smithsonian Folkways including Woody Guthrie's *Long Ways to Travel: The Unreleased Folkways Masters*, which won him the 1994 Brenda McCallum Prize from the American Folklore Society, the *Asch Recordings* of Woody Guthrie, and the *Lead Belly Legacy Series*. Place also won two 1998 Grammy Awards for best historical release and best liner notes for his work on *The Anthology of American Folk Music* (1997 edition). He has been a collector of traditional music for over twenty-five years. A native of Palo Alto, California, he lives in Mayo, Maryland, with his wife Barrie, daughter Andrea Rose, and son Lee.

Born and reared in Ada, Oklahoma, Dr. Guy Logsdon is a Smithsonian Institution Research Associate, and in 1990–91 was a Smithsonian Institution Senior Post-Doctoral Fellow compiling a biblio-discography of the songs of Woody Guthrie. He received a two-year grant, 1993–95, from the National Endowment for the Humanities to complete the Woody Guthrie project. Logsdon has written numerous articles about Woody Guthrie and cowboy songs and poetry; authored the highly acclaimed, award-winning book, *The Whorehouse Bells Were Ringing* and *Other Songs Cowboys Sing*; and compiled and annotated *Cowboy Songs on Folkways* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40043) and *Cisco Houston: The Folkways Years 1944–1961* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40059). Former Director of Libraries and Professor of Education and American Folklife, University of Tulsa, Logsdon works as a writer and entertainer.

Logsdon and Place have collaborated on other Smithsonian Folkways collections: *Woody Guthrie: Long Ways to Travel, The Unreleased Folkways Masters 1944–1949* (40046), *That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement* (40021), and *Woody Guthrie: The Asch Recordings, Vols. 1-4* (40100-40103).

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CREDITS

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FOLKWAYS AT 50

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ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

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

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Smithsonian Folkways Recordings



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WOODY GUTHRIE BUFFALO SKINNERS

THE ASCH RECORDINGS, VOL.4

COMPILED BY JEFF PLACE AND GUY LOGSDON ANNOTATED BY GUY LOGSDON AND JEFF PLACE

Drawn from Woody Guthrie's remarkable 1940s sessions for Folkways founder, Moses Asch, these songs about cowboys, outlaws, and other western themes were carefully remastered from the best available sources. Cisco Houston accompanies Guthrie on 10 tracks. The 74-minute CD contains 6 previously unreleased tracks.

Annotated by Guthrie scholars Guy Logsdon and Jeff Place.

1. **RANGER'S COMMAND** 2:48
2. **BUFFALO SKINNERS** 3:15
3. **BILLY THE KID** 2:00
4. **COWBOY WALTZ** 2:03
5. **PRETTY BOY FLOYD** 2:58
6. **ALONG IN THE SUN AND THE RAIN** 2:27
7. **WHOOPIE TI YI YO, GET ALONG LITTLE DOGIES** 2:48
8. **FROGGIE WENT A-COURTIN'** 3:26
9. **BUFFALO GALS** 2:32
10. **I RIDE AN OLD PAINT** 2:56
11. **DEAD OR ALIVE** 2:53
12. **SLIPKNOT** 2:30
13. **COCAINE BLUES** 2:13
14. **GO TELL AUNT RHODY** 2:49
15. **CHISHOLM TRAIL** 2:24
16. **STEWBALL** 3:26
17. **WILD CYCLONE** 3:57
18. **TRAIN BLUES** 3:31
19. **RED RIVER VALLEY** 2:52
20. **FASTEST OF PONIES** 4:15
21. **STEWBALL** 2:27
22. **SNOW DEER** 2:31
23. **WHEN THE CURFEW BLOWS** 1:42
24. **LITTLE DARLING** 2:12
25. **BLOWING DOWN THAT OLD DUSTY ROAD** 3:02
26. **THE RETURN OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SLIM AND DESERT RAT SHORTY** 2:34



CO AND DELAWARE RANG TO DE