



Masters of
Old-time Country
AUTOHARP

Ernest Stoneman

Kilby Snow

**Kenneth & Neriah
Benfield**



Smithsonian Folkways



Masters of Old-time Country AUTOHARP



- 1. Stoney's Waltz** Ernest Stoneman 1:56
(Ernest Stoneman / Alpha Music Inc., BMI)
- 2. Sweet Marie** Neriah & Kenneth Benfield 2:00
(Cy Warman-Rayman Moore)
- 3. John Henry** Kilby Snow* 2:07
- 4. May I Sleep in Your Barn Tonight, Mister?**
Kilby Snow 1:37
- 5. She'll Be Coming Around the Mountain**
Kilby Snow with Wade Ward 1:11
- 6. Sweet Sunny South** Ernest Stoneman* 2:30
- 7. Bile 'em Cabbage Down** Ernest Stoneman 2:02
- 8. Marching Through Georgia** Ernest Stoneman* 1:20
(Henry Clay Work)
- 9. Wreck of Number Nine** Ernest Stoneman 2:49
(Carson J. Robison / Universal MCA Music Pub., ASCAP)
- 10. Ella's Grave** Neriah Benfield 1:45
- 11. Waltz** Neriah Benfield 1:21 (Neriah Benfield)
- 12. Old Joe Clark** Kenneth Benfield 1:25
- 13. Shortening Bread** Kenneth Benfield 1:14
- 14. Cindy** Kilby Snow* 1:10
- 15. Budded Roses** Kilby Snow* 1:53
- 16. Flop-eared Mule** Kilby Snow* 1:50
- 17. Home Sweet Home** Kilby Snow* 2:31
(John Howard Payne-Sir Henry Bishop)
- 18. Springtime Again Little Annie** Ernest Stoneman* 2:11 (Stephen Foster)
- 19. Great Reaping Day** Ernest Stoneman 2:04
(R.E. Winsett)
- 20. Weeping Willow Tree**
Kenneth & Neriah Benfield 1:56
- 21. I'm Alone, All Alone**
Ernest Stoneman with Mike Seeger 2:48
- 22. All I Got's Gone** Ernest Stoneman 2:37
(Uncle Dave Macon)
- 23. Benfield Hoedown (Idaho Girl)**
Neriah Benfield 1:07 (Neriah Benfield)
- 24. Bonaparte's Retreat** Kenneth Benfield* 1:47
(Pee Wee King / Sony-ATV Songs LLC, BMI)
- 25. Chinese Breakdown**
Neriah & Kenneth Benfield* 2:13
- 26. Wildwood Flower** Kilby Snow with Mike Seeger 1:22 (Maud Irving-Joseph Webster)
- 27. Tragic Romance** Kilby Snow with Hazel Dickens & Mike Seeger 1:25 (Grandpa Jones / Fort Knox-Trio Music Co., Inc., BMI)
- 28. Close By** Kilby Snow* 2:03 (Little Robert Van Winkle / Universal Cedarwood Publishing)
- 29. Way Down in the Country** Kenneth Benfield 1:07
(Grandpa Jones-Alton Delmore)
- 30. Golden Slippers** Kenneth Benfield* 2:11
(James A. Bland)
- 31. Lights in the Valley**
Neriah & Kenneth Benfield* 1:25
- 32. Chicken Reel** Kilby Snow* 0:47 (Joseph M. Daly)
- 33. Precious Jewel** Kilby Snow 3:33
(Roy Acuff / Acuff-Rose Music Corp., BMI)
- 34. Muleskinner Blues** Kilby Snow 2:18 (Jimmie Rodgers-George Vaughn / Peer International Corp.)
- 35. Red River Valley** Kilby & Jim Snow 2:11
- 36. Hallelujah Side** Ernest Stoneman 2:17
(Rev. Johnson Oatman-J. Howard Entwistle)
- 37. Jacob's Ladder** Kenneth Benfield 1:09
- 38. Ain't Going to Work Tomorrow** Kilby Snow 1:52
(A. P. Carter / Peer International Corp.)

Recorded and annotated by Mike Seeger

Track notes by Charles Wolfe

SFW CD 40115 © 2006 Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

*PREVIOUSLY UNISSUED

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE INSTRUMENT

The autoharp was most likely invented in Germany in the 1870s and first produced in this country by Charles F. Zimmerman, a German musical instrument dealer, repairman, and innovator who had come to the United States in 1865. Its design was based on the zither, a well-known German instrument. Zimmerman was hoping to use the autoharp as a vehicle to establish his own system of musical notation. He patented it in 1881 and first produced it in Philadelphia in 1885. During the first three years of production 50,000 autoharps were sold, their main attraction in that invention-happy era being that they were an easy, novel way to make music at home.

In 1892, the C. F. Zimmerman Company was bought by piano-maker Alfred Dolge and moved to Dolgeville, New York. Dolge launched an advertising campaign and the autoharp soon became popular amongst parlor music-makers. Autoharp clubs sprang up, a minor composer wrote a minuet for it, and “the world’s greatest autoharp performer,” Aldis Gery, who also worked for Dolge designing autoharps, toured with Victor Herbert’s band from 1895 to 1897. By 1897 Dolge had produced nearly 300,000 autoharps in models ranging from the most basic three-chord-bar model to the concert grand model with 49 strings, six sliding bars, and ten shifters, capable of 60 chords.

By about 1900 the demand for autoharps had decreased, probably due to a variety of factors: the slackening of a fad, the advent of the talking machine, unwise management on the part of manufacturers, and, certainly, the inherent limitations of the instrument, including consumer discovery of the need for frequent, skilled tuning. In 1910 the production of autoharps was taken over by the Phonoharp Company of Boston, which produced a much more limited number of models. Around the turn of the century the instrument was introduced to rural Southerners through mail order houses and by door-to-door salesmen/teachers. It also came into use for music training in elementary schools and for music therapy in hospitals. In 1926 Phonoharp merged with Oscar Schmidt International, the present makers. The instrument was also manufactured over a long period of time in Germany.



Autoharp manufacture remained essentially the same until the late 1960s, when the instrument was totally redesigned to make it easier to produce with automated machinery and to hopefully make it more stable, requiring less frequent tuning.

At the time of this writing Oscar Schmidt International produces a variety of autoharp models at factories in the Far East. Another manufacturer that markets its instruments under the name “Chromaharp” also uses production facilities in Asia. There are also a few makers that hand-build the high-quality instruments that are used by most contemporary performers.

AUTOHARP PLAYING IN THE SOUTH

Both Neriah Benfield and Pop Stoneman recall autoharp being played in their communities during their childhood, around the turn of the 20th century. The styles that Stoneman and Benfield’s generation first heard surely varied as their elders began adapting their repertoire and current musical sounds to the new instrument. Early techniques included simple rhythmic or non-rhythmic strumming of chords; the picking of simple melodies on single strings, alternating with chords, that Pop Stoneman demonstrated for me as being his grandmother Bowers’s style; and some very early rhythmic melody-picking that would precede the styles heard on this recording. These techniques basically follow the suggestions of early 1890s autoharp self-teaching manuals: accompaniment with thumb and first finger, and simple melody-picking with the first finger with occasional chord strums with thumb and first finger.

Based on my conversations with older musicians, I believe that most of the first generation of country autoharpists took a few tips either from a door-to-door salesman or, less often for most play-by-ear rural musicians, from written instructions. Then they adapted those tips to their own way of playing, sometimes influenced by playing styles of instruments already in traditional use. There was certainly a fair amount of improvisation and experimentation, especially amongst those who had no models or instructions to follow. I believe that country musicians, especially in the South, brought a stronger rhythmic feel to the instrument than had existed in parlor playing practice, probably due to the influence of fiddle, banjo, and dance traditions. In my estimation, Stoneman and Benfield, Sr., are exemplary of the second generation of Southern autoharp players. Kilby Snow's innovations were certainly a later development.

Around the turn of the 20th century the songs played on or accompanied with autoharp included almost every type to be found in the Southern mountain areas: old hymns, recently composed religious songs, waltzes, sentimental songs, folk songs, instrumental tunes—the repertoire to be found on this recording. The autoharp also was used to play some of the current urban popular songs of the day. Blues were not generally suited to either accompaniment or melody-picking on the autoharp, which was a detriment to the popularity of the instrument in the blues-happy 1920s and beyond. The limitations of the instrument, its quietness, need for frequent tuning, lack of expression due to fixed strings, and the usual seated position while playing kept the instrument in the home with a small repertoire, and it didn't venture forth very much with the louder, brasher banjo, expressive fiddle, and more versatile guitar. The primary attractions of the autoharp were its novelty, initial ease for playing, and its playing of chords, then a new idea to musicians familiar mostly with the melody of the voice or fiddle or the melody-and-drone of the five-string banjo or the lap dulcimer. In some ways it paralleled and sometimes took over the role of the lap dulcimer, also a quiet instrument with Northern European roots. The dulcimer played only melody and drone and lent its spare sound to the older songs and tunes, especially the “modal” ones, but the harmonically rich sound of the autoharp could accompany the newer popular songs and mix with the equally new sounds of the guitar. Contrary to its brief life as a fad up North, it took hold in the South and established a modest, home-based place for itself in early 20th-century old-time music tradition.

As far as I can tell, there were a fair number of men and women playing the autoharp until homemade music traditions started winding down in the late 1930s, due to the influence of radio and records. I have met or heard of about a dozen players other than those on this recording. One man of about 70, living in western North Carolina, played a dozen tunes for me, mostly waltzes, on his amplified autoharp in the early 1960s. He had a clean, clear style and told me of a couple of other players nearby. Another man of about the same age whom I met in the early 1960s in Chicago played tunes such as “Red Wing” and “Little Brown Jug.” When he was a teenager in Ohio, an autoharp teacher/salesman had sold him and his sister autoharps, taught them how to play, hired a local school auditorium for them to perform in, and then took orders for more autoharps at their performance. Mrs. Elizabeth White, of Greenville, South Carolina (mother of Josh White, the blues singer), sang me several religious songs to the accompaniment of the autoharp, which she strummed with a clothespin. Her grandson, aged about 18, sang some of Josh White's more modern songs accompanied with autoharp. A Mr. Peaslee and Mrs. Waterman, both of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, played autoharp duets, one picking, the other chording, from about 1895 until Mr. Peaslee's death in 1963. Their repertoire consisted primarily of hymns and popular songs current in the Northeast around 1900, and they played at home and in churches and hospitals. Tex Isley, who played and recorded with early country singers Tom Ashley and Charlie Monroe, was a good autoharp player.

Home craftsmen also made a variety of their own versions of the instrument, some of them quite elaborate, similar to hammer dulcimers. I visited one such man in Goshen, Indiana, and heard of another in southwestern North Carolina.

Until the 1950s, the autoharp's role on phonograph recordings was almost always as accompaniment. The first recording of autoharp was by Ernest V. Stoneman in 1924. On that recording he used the autoharp for accompaniment, as he does much of the time here, while he sings or plays the melody on the harmonica. He soon laid the autoharp aside for the more versatile and tunable guitar. (He once told me, “People were lost when they [autoharps] went out of tune. I bet there are thousands of them up in garrets for that reason.”) A few groups that performed old-time music on early 78 rpm records used autoharp for accompaniment as well, most notably the Carter Family

of southwestern Virginia. Collectors of recorded folk music were rarely interested in the instrument. Exceptions were recordings of the Bogtrotters Band of Galax, Virginia, which used it only as accompaniment, and some exceptional autoharp melody-picking by J. B. Easter, recorded by E. C. Kirkland in 1937. One song of Mr. Easter's is on The Kirkland Recordings released by the Tennessee Folklore Society on LP # TFS-106 in 1984.

The first appearances on record of anything approaching melody-picking on the autoharp were by several different old-time music groups about 1930. The Yellow Jackets (also known as the Shady Grove Wood Choppers) recorded an autoharp instrumental medley for the Gennett labels. About halfway through the recording a mouth harp joins in playing the melody, and towards the end of the disc a slide whistle appears, also playing melody. This could best be described as a rural novelty recording. The Thrasher Family and the Blue Ridge Mountain Singers were vocal groups that used guitar and autoharp for accompaniment and occasional melodic lead. The autoharp playing on their recordings was simple and complemented the rather stiff singing. These were groups with which Frank Walker, A & R man for Columbia Records, might have been trying to compete with the Victor Company's Carter Family. A couple of recordings by the Lee Brothers for the Brunswick label were much looser and more driving. It is possible that these last three groups, all from the same area in northern Georgia, used the same autoharp player. Charles Wolfe writes that Archer Lee Chumbler definitely recorded with the Chumbler Family (another old-time singing group similar to the Thrashers) and the Lee Brothers Trio. Wolfe says Chumbler was from around Gainesville, Georgia, that he learned from his mother, and that his family believes he recorded with the Thrasher Family.

Except for some of the Carter Family discs, use of the autoharp in recordings diminished in the 1930s and 1940s.

The most important popularizer of autoharp melody-picking in the 1950s was Maybelle Carter, the guitar picker and harmony singer of the original Carter Family. She took a few clearly melodic autoharp breaks on at least two early 1950s recordings with her daughters, the Carter Sisters, *Fair and Tender Ladies* and *I Never Will Marry* (Columbia 4-20920 & 4-20974). The autoharp remained relatively obscure until a 1956 recording by the Wilburn Brothers, *Go 'Way*

With Me (Decca 9-30087), featuring Maybelle Carter's autoharp playing. This recording did very well on the country music charts and brought considerable attention to the autoharp as a melody instrument. Maybelle Carter's influence was felt amongst her fellow country music professionals of Nashville, Tennessee; one of the Wilburn Brothers learned to play autoharp, and another performer, Cecil Null, played and built a few. And away from Nashville, Maybelle Carter's autoharp playing influenced many to take up the instrument who had never heard it before, as well as some like myself, who had just strummed it and had never thought of playing melody. Maybelle had played the instrument as a child and had usually tuned the instrument used by Sara in Carter Family programs and recordings, but didn't start playing melody until the late 1930s. I asked her how and why she took up playing melody on the instrument, and she said something like, "I just started." One of the first tunes she played was "San Antonio Rose," which remained a favorite of hers on her Grand Ole Opry performances.

Maybelle Carter is also the person who evolved the style of holding the autoharp vertically against her chest so that she could stand and work a microphone just like other instrumentalists and vocalists. Until this time autoharp players had played seated, with the instrument in a horizontal position, usually on their lap, as do three of the four players here. Kilby Snow played seated but usually with the instrument held nearly vertical. In the 1950s many performing autoharp players, including Ernest Stoneman, were experimenting with contact pickups and amplifiers for their instruments in an effort to stay seated with the instrument on their lap in the usual way, yet still be heard on public address systems that at the time usually used only one microphone. Maybelle Carter's innovation changed all that. Now her style of holding the instrument is used by nearly everyone, and instruments are designed accordingly, with the chord bars positioned for playing in the middle of the strings.

The original issue of this collection was in 1962, and it was the first recording devoted to autoharp playing by traditional Southern musicians. In the 1960s all of these musicians played at least one folk festival, and their music reached out through this recording; many more musicians started playing the autoharp, usually influenced by the styles of Maybelle Carter, Ernest Stoneman, or those influenced by them, like myself. A few makers experimented with building

better instruments, with mixed success.

In the 1970s and 1980s, however, playing of the autoharp increased exponentially due to a new style evolved by Bryan Bowers in the early 1970s. His is a virtuoso style, built less on the driving 2/4 rhythms heard on this recording and more on slower phrase patterns or rapidly picked melody notes on an instrument tuned to one diatonically tuned key. Repertoire amongst the new players has broadened to include classical, jazz, and show tunes with all their harmonic complexities. At present most performance players' styles are based in this general area, and many evolve their own tunings to get the effects they desire. The number of autoharp makers has also increased, though not in proportion to the number of players. There are autoharp mini-festivals around the country, an autoharp magazine, autoharp classes at a variety of levels, and a great number of recordings by the dozens of top players. If you wish to know more about the autoharp world, see "miscellaneous" at the end of this text for periodicals and other publications.



Ernest Stoneman, 1961

THE MUSICIANS ON THIS RECORDING

Ernest V. Stoneman

Ernest V. Stoneman was born in 1893 near Galax, Virginia. He started playing autoharp at about age 8 and remembered his first tune as being "Molly Hare." He learned to tune the autoharp from a nearby schoolteacher. Several members of his family played or sang old-time songs, and he remembered his grandmother Bowers picking tunes on the autoharp in a very different fashion from his own style. When Mr. Stoneman demonstrated his grandmother's style, he picked a melody note and then strummed a chord after it without a regular rhythm. A couple of other autoharp players, one from southern Ohio and another from western North Carolina, also played in a similar manner, especially on religious songs.

Up to about the age of 31, Mr. Stoneman worked mostly in the carpentry trade, and played occasionally for dances and other gatherings, sometimes just playing mouth harp and autoharp by himself. In 1923 he heard the first recording of a country (then called hillbilly) singer and guitar player, Henry Whitter and, like many others, believed he could do better. He contacted the Okeh Company and went to New York City to record the first two country songs to be recorded with the autoharp, "The Titanic" and "The Face That Never Returned," on September 6, 1924. The Okeh recording director, Ralph Peer, was especially interested in the novelty of the autoharp but later favored the guitar as he said it was not so limited.

For about five years, Mr. Stoneman continued to record a great variety of old-time music for nearly every phonograph company of that period, both solo and with other Galax-area musicians. He was accompanied on some of those discs by his wife, Hattie, who sang and played fiddle, banjo, and parlor organ and who was still playing music with him occasionally in the 1960s. In the early 1930s the Stonemans moved to the Washington-area, and they lived there until they moved to Nashville in the 1960s. They had 13 children, all of whom played music and most of whom joined their father at one time or another at Washington, D.C., area music contests, dances, theater shows (including Constitution Hall!), and occasional nightclubs during the 1940s and 1950s. In 1957 I recorded a number of songs by "Pop" (as he came to be called) and his family, which were

included on Folkways 2315, his first LP. In the 1960s he had a second career in music when the Stonemans had their own syndicated TV show, toured out of Nashville, Tennessee, and made LP recordings. They appeared on the Grand Ole Opry, at country music shows, a number of folk festivals, concerts, and coffeehouses, some as far away as California, always presenting a lively mix of acoustic music combining Pop's old-time style with the bluegrass/country style of his children.

Ernest Stoneman was the first person to record with an autoharp, the first to record an autoharp instrumental, and the only country music artist whose career included making recordings on acoustic disc and cylinder recordings, electric discs (including LPs), and videotape. Many of his early recordings are highly valued and remain in print for both their musical and historical value.

Ernest "Pop" Stoneman passed away in June 1968.

Stoneman's Music

Mr. Stoneman's style of melody playing consisted primarily of picking the melody string with the index finger (in a motion towards the bass strings), usually in the top two octaves; and occasionally at the same time picking one or two bass strings with the thumb (in a motion towards treble strings). This is a kind of "pinching motion" with thumb and first finger moving towards one another. Often, between "pinch motion" melody notes, the back (nail side) of his first finger and finger pick strummed a light "backlick" in the opposite direction, or upwards towards the higher-pitched strings. This reverse motion with the index finger was possible because of the special pick that Mr. Stoneman fashioned from a coil steel spring; it had an oval loop which fit very tightly on the flesh side of his finger and which protruded only a slight distance, like a fingernail. Most of the sound you hear during his melody-picking comes from the forward (towards bass) movement of his index finger followed quickly by a quieter "backlick" movement of his first finger (towards treble). Occasional rhythmic fills are played with his thumb and finger.

Mr. Stoneman's accompaniment in a four-beat measure usually takes the following form: on the first beat, a sweep upwards (towards treble strings) with the thumb in the bass or middle strings; and on the third and fourth beats, using the index finger in the upper octaves, a sweep downwards towards the bass strings and then quickly upwards.

Like all traditional "lap" players, Mr. Stoneman picked between the bars and string anchors, on the opposite end of the harp from the tuning pegs. When playing, he put the autoharp on top of a wooden case that he had built for it, which gave it additional resonance. The case was made of solid, good-sounding wood, not plywood. Since he sat down to play and couldn't move to a microphone, at shows he sometimes also used an electric contact pickup mounted on top of his autoharp.

Mr. Stoneman's autoharp was a late 1950s Oscar Schmidt model with several of the seventh chords changed to straight major chords, enabling him to play in more keys. He also moved the chord bars to the left (towards the tuning pegs) to get more room to pick and to allow him to pick closer to the middle of the strings, where the sound is more mellow. He also put some sound-deadening felt under the bar retainers to quiet bar action.

He tuned his instrument to his harmonicas.

Neriah and Kenneth Benfield

Neriah McCubbins Benfield, affectionately called "Mr. Cub" by his family, was born in 1893 in Catawba County, North Carolina. When he married, he moved to Rowan County, North Carolina, where he lived at the time of this recording. He was a veteran of World War I and farmed much of his life. He passed away in February 1983. His son, Kenneth, wrote in 1961:

... I was talking to dad the other day about the autoharp and he said the first one he remembered was when he was five years old. His 77-year-old brother who is living had it. Back then it didn't have a cover over the [right end of the] strings and you were always tearing up your fingers when you played it. When he was around 20 years old he said he could play pretty well. By that he meant pick like we did only without missing notes. He has always played by note [by ear] and always played lead. He knew people who played but mostly by chords. Forty-five years ago they had a real string band. Hubert Mayes, his brother-in-law, picked the five-string banjo. Dad's 77-year-old brother Robert "Bob" picked the five-string also. Dad played the autoharp. Hubert said Dad's playing then beat any-



Neriah and Kenneth Benfield, Newport, Rhode Island, 1964

thing he ever heard and I think he is about right. I can remember how he played 30 years ago and I thought the same. He would sit with his back to a wall [with his autoharp] flat on the floor and play under his right leg. That is the way Hubert said it sounded so good. Can't you just picture that in your mind 45 years ago?

As for the music they played then it is pieces like he still plays today. "Coming Around the Mountain," "Nelly Grey," "Wildwood Flower," "Katy Cline," "Weeping Willow," "Ella's Grave," "Idaho Girl" and tunes like we played when you were here...

Kenneth Lee Benfield was born in 1923 and has been playing the autoharp since he was about 13 years old. He adds that he couldn't tune one until he was 26. He first learned from his dad, from whom he learned most of his older tunes. He learned a great number of songs after about 1950 from radio and records and at the time of this recording was still learning new songs. He and his dad rarely sang with the autoharp, reserving it for instrumental music. In fact they shared one autoharp and one guitar, and the latter, in a reversal of roles, was used primarily for accompaniment of autoharp pieces.

My second visit to the Benfields was two days after the Snows had recorded with double autoharps, which was the first time I had heard two traditional autoharpists play together. The Benfields tried it on my suggestion and played autoharp duets a good part of that night. When my Ampex recorder broke down, we probably heard "Weeping Willow Tree" for half an hour while I was trying to fix the machine. Each time they picked it better and in a more lively style, each of them alternately picking in the upper and lower ranges, and none of us could tire of it.

Kenneth Benfield and his wife and daughter made their home near Mt. Ulla in central North Carolina. He has worked in nearby mills, raised cattle, and is now retired. He hasn't played the autoharp since the late 1980s, and plays banjo for enjoyment.

Both Kenneth and Neriah Benfield played mostly around home for family and friends. In 1964, they appeared at the Newport Folk Festival, their only performance away from their home community.

The Benfields' Music

Both Neriah and Kenneth Benfield held the autoharp on their lap and picked in a similar manner, with a thumb pick and usually no pick on the first finger. Recently Neriah Benfield had started using a pick on the back or nail side of his first finger. They played most melody notes with the back of the first fingernail in a motion upwards towards the treble strings, similar to the way one frails a banjo. They picked additional notes with the front or flesh side of the first fingernail in a "back and forward" motion similar to flatpicking, and strummed occasional chords with the thumb. They used a standard Oscar Schmidt instrument. They tuned their instrument approximately standard or a little low. I don't know what they used for a reference tone.

Kilby Snow

John Kilby Snow was born May 28, 1906, in hilly Grayson County in southwestern Virginia. By about the age of 4 he had started playing autoharp (his first tune, like Pop Stoneman's, was "Molly Hare"), and at the age of 5 he beat his brother-in-law (from whom he had first learned) in a Winston-Salem, North Carolina, contest. Although he played other instruments, the autoharp was his first love.

For a few years in the 1920s he traveled around playing wherever he could. He told me of spending a couple of days with the Carter Family and playing some music with them around Bristol, Virginia, probably in the late 1920s. I've often wondered whether, if Kilby was sometimes holding his instrument nearly upright (as he did for these recordings) and playing "drag notes" back then, that possibly influenced Maybelle Carter. About ten years later she started playing the autoharp upright rather than in her lap and sometimes even approximated the "drag-note" effect. She held the instrument in her arms and unlike Kilby could play the instrument while standing. Nevertheless, she certainly could have managed these innovations on her own.

Kilby worked mostly as a builder and carpenter and later for the highway department until his retirement. He raised four children, two of whom learned to play the autoharp and other instruments. His youngest son Jim (born 1942) plays autoharp with him here on "Red River Valley." Jim had been playing about a year at the time of this recording.

Kilby Snow's Instrument & Music

Kilby Snow's autoharp, a 1940s or 1950s Oscar Schmidt model, had ten considerably modified bars, and, as the photograph shows, he was left-handed. He fashioned his thumb and finger picks out of brass sheet metal, usually from the headlamp reflectors of a Ford model T. He wore the finger pick approximately parallel to his fingernail, on the front, flesh side of his index finger. He slanted the last one-quarter of an inch of the tip slightly so that it struck exactly perpendicular to the strings, despite the fact that the motion of his finger was not at an angle of 90 degrees to the strings.



Kilby Snow, 1961

Most of Mr. Snow's melody and chord fills came from an upward (in pitch) movement of his first finger. In watching and listening to him I could never quite figure out how or how much he was using his thumb. It is possible that he picked both up and down with his finger, as I heard and saw some evidence of this; he said several times that he only pulled upward (in pitch) with his finger, down with his thumb. He usually sat while playing and, like Stoneman, occasionally attached an electric pickup to his harp in the 1950s. Like all of the players on this recording, he picked at the wide end of the harp, between the chord bars and string anchors.

The distinctive sound of Mr. Snow's style is due largely to his innovation of what he called "drag notes," which roughly approximate the slur of sliding from fret to fret or "hammering on" on a banjo or guitar string. The most usually slurred note is the third note of the scale. In the key of D, for instance, that slur would be E-F-F#. He would effect this slide by "dragging" his finger pick upwards (towards the higher-pitched strings) on the E, F, and F# strings. While playing the E and F strings he left the chord bar up, and then, when his pick reached the F# string, he pressed down on the D chord bar.

The "drag note" effect is easiest and most natural when the autoharp is played left-handed and the picking hand can be rested on the string anchor cover. Furthermore, to get this sound one must be very accurate, have a strong hand, and play on the wide end of the harp, between the bars and the string anchors. Mr. Snow did most of his playing with his index finger, even for the occasional chord strums between melody notes, and did not usually play plain chords behind his singing. As demonstrated on "Precious Jewel," he played the melody while singing, just as many solo old-time banjo pickers and guitar players did.

Jim Snow plays right-handed in the more conventional manner. When they played together, they faced one another with their autoharps facing the same direction, and sometimes they took turns picking and/or chording one another's autoharp, both instruments playing constantly.

These recordings were made on several occasions, the first two on visits with Kilby Snow at Wade Ward's house near Independence, Virginia, August 1957. The third session was in 1961 at a vacant house next door to his home near Nottingham, in southeastern Pennsylvania. During the 1957 visits, Mr. Snow played mostly in the key of D, and to my ears it seems that he had the F strings tuned a little off standard, which gave the drag notes a more fluid and bluesy sound. Tuning seemed closer to standard on later sessions. The early sound was also partly determined by an older autoharp, worn tape recorder heads, and the nice acoustics of Wade's homey frame house. Also, on the earlier records he had not yet started playing melodies with a flatted seventh note. By 1961 he had added "Muleskinner Blues" and "Ain't Going to Work Tomorrow" to his repertoire, both of which use a flatted seventh. His style moved more towards bluegrass, and of the four players here, he was certainly the one most influenced by bluegrass and country music in his

choice of material, rhythmic drive, strong touch, and melodic sense. His use of drag notes certainly has been at the center of his adapting blues and modern country songs to his autoharp repertoire. He first drew his repertoire from family and community and later from commercial recordings by early country artists such as Blind Alfred Reed and the Carter Family. In the late 1950s and 1960s he picked up songs from Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, and country singers such as Carl Smith and Merle Haggard. He also composed several country-style songs of his own.

After the release of this record, Kilby began performing at concerts, folk festivals, and in coffeehouses, helped a good deal by the efforts of Mike and Ellen Hudak. He was great fun to play music with, and accompaniment seemed to spur him on. I especially remember a time in the early 1960s at Sunset Park near Oxford, Pennsylvania, where Bill Monroe was putting on a show. Kilby played autoharp while I backed him on guitar in one of the parking meadows, and a crowd gathered around to hear old favorites like "Budded Roses" as well as some of the more recent Bill Monroe songs such as "Close By" or the Monroe classic, "Muleskinner Blues." It was exciting to feel the spark that came from his music at those times. Later in the decade I helped him record a solo Folkways recording, and I arranged a concert tour for us on the West Coast where we recorded a few of his songs on videotape, now released commercially. Up to the late 1970s he played a few contests and festivals, most notably the Brandywine Mountain Music Convention, where he was a regular. At the time of his passing in March 1980, he was rarely playing any programs.

In the mid-1990s Jim Snow started working on his autoharp playing, encouraged by the new autoharp community and especially by Joe Riggs and Mary Lou Orthey. His sound is remarkably close to Kilby's yet possesses its own identity.

Regarding Kilby's tuning of the autoharp, Jim told me recently that he didn't know exactly what his dad used for a standard pitch, but he tended to tune high, above standard pitch.

ABOUT THIS RECORDING

My mother, Ruth Crawford Seeger, used the autoharp in her music education work and encouraged me to play it, which I did in the simplest strumming fashion from about age 10. I had pretty much laid it aside when I started playing fretted and bowed instruments in the early 1950s. I first saw “Pop” Stoneman play autoharp in a bluegrass/old-time band with his children at a spirited Gambrills, Maryland, music contest. He sat, playing amplified autoharp on its case, while some of his children exuberantly played music around him and others were out in the audience cheering. I was recording the event and asked him if I could come and visit him, as I had heard some of his early recordings. At this time, in the early days of rock ‘n’ roll, few people remembered or cared for the old-time music recordings, and “Pop” (as he was known around the Washington, D.C., area) was receptive. This began a series of many visits to his self-built home in the Washington suburbs with my recording machine, a heavy, primitive Magnecord, and one omnidirectional microphone. I proposed a Folkways release, which we recorded in late 1956 and early 1957, Folkways 2315. This was his first LP, and it included the first recording of an autoharp instrumental, “Stoney’s Waltz,” the one re-issued here. We recorded in the main room of his house, with his wife and some of his 13 children circulating around. It was difficult to get things done. Pop joked later that he hadn’t thought that I’d really put the record out; otherwise he would have taken more care with it. He had made all of his previous recordings in studios under professional conditions, and I can now understand his mystification at the Folkways recording method.

We played music together and talked of the old times and of the autoharp. And he told me of Kilby Snow, something like: “If you really want to hear someone play the autoharp, you should find Kilby Snow. . . . He lives down near Fries [pronounced “freeze”], Virginia—freeze or fries, depending on the time of year.” So in the summer of 1957, Hazel Dickens and I took off on a trip that included a visit to Wade Ward, an outstanding Galax-area banjo and fiddle player, and attempted to find Kilby Snow.

Kilby wasn’t in Fries but “over near Galax” somewhere. After going to the post office and power company office and asking quite a few people, I found his house, and he was away at a construction job, over near Wade Ward’s home. I asked Wade if it would be OK for Kilby to

visit. They were acquainted, and it was. I eventually found Kilby way out in the country where he was putting up a block out-building, and during our first conversation I especially remember his bemused wonderment at having to build from a drawing. It wasn’t difficult to talk him into visiting awhile. We began to talk about autoharps, and pretty soon he had his worn old autoharp out of the back of his Henry J (an early 1950s economy car) with his knee propped up on the bumper playing a few tunes. After a few tunes more, he had to get back to work and agreed to come over to Wade’s for a little while later in the day. Wade’s house was full of music and appreciation for it. Wade’s mother-in-law, Granny Porter, especially loved Kilby’s music, and he had a good time playing to his audience. Most of Kilby’s playing on this collection dates from that visit.

There was no thought of LP production, and I set the recordings aside for a while.

In 1961 I was recording the music at the Union Grove Fiddler’s Convention for a Folkways LP, and Annie Bird, a singer and old-time music enthusiast, mentioned that she had spent some time listening to a really good autoharp player on the steps outside. That was Kenneth Benfield. After hearing him, I realized there was a lot of good music here that no one was aware of, and I knew there was growing interest in the autoharp. So between music gigs and taking care of my family, I again tracked down Kilby, who was now living along Rt. 1 in southeastern Pennsylvania, to record a few more pieces by him and the rest of the music heard here.

Ernest Stoneman’s and Neriah Benfield’s styles were developed by the early 20th century and were amongst the earliest Southern rural melody-playing styles on an instrument that had been invented just a few decades before. Kilby Snow’s style was certainly a later development, as he was still evolving it in the early 1960s.

This is the only recording which presents this brief “tradition,” one which was initiated and largely disappeared during the lifetime of two of these performers.

I hope that you enjoy the early Southern autoharp playing recorded here and that it will continue to encourage and inspire new players.

*Mike Seeger
Rockbridge County, Virginia
August 2005*

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Most of these recordings were issued on LP in 1962 on Folkways FA 2365, *Mountain Music Played on Autoharp*. In re-editing this recording for CD, I have substituted a few takes for those on the original issue. "Bile 'em Cabbage Down" and "Stoney's Waltz" are from Stoneman's 1957 recording, Folkways 2315. This earliest version of the "Waltz" is less regular than the one originally in this collection. Kilby Snow's "John Henry" and "Flop-eared Mule" are from the 1957 sessions rather than the 1961 versions originally in this collection. I've included here as many as possible of Snow's early recordings, with the hope that more of the later ones will be released on a solo CD. "Hallelujah Side" is also from FA 2315.

MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES

History of the autoharp based mostly on research by A. Doyle Moore, "The Autoharp: Its Origin and Development from A Popular to a Folk Instrument," *New York Folklore Quarterly*, Vol. 19, #4, Dec/63. Also from *The Autoharp Book* by Becky Blackley and some recent research by Ivan Stiles, "The True History of the Autoharp," *Autoharp Quarterly*, Vol. 3, #3, Apr/91.

Autoharp Quarterly, PO Box 336, New Manchester, WV 26056; www.autoharpquarterly.com
Articles, reviews, instruction, source for information on parts, supplies, and makers.

Elderly Instruments, 1100 N. Washington, Lansing, MI 48901 www.elderly.com
Source for instruments and autoharp supplies

How to Play the Autoharp – CD recording, Mike Seeger, Homespun Tapes, PO Box 694, Woodstock, NY 12498 www.homespuntales.com

Beginning Autoharp Instructional DVD, Advanced Autoharp Instructional DVD, Evo Bluestein, 10691 Madsen, Clovis, CA 93611-9704 www.evobluestein.com

Kilby Snow is included on several excellent DVD compilations of Southern traditional music on the Vestapol and Yazoo labels.

NOTES ON THE SONGS & TUNES by Charles Wolfe

1 Stoney's Waltz (*Ernest Stoneman*)

Composed for the autoharp about 1930 by Pop Stoneman, this is the first of two versions released on Folkways LPs and dates from 1957, when it appeared on Folkways album FA 2315. This makes it the first autoharp instrumental to be issued on a commercial record.

2 Sweet Marie (*Neriah & Kenneth Benfield*)

Recorded at the home of Kenneth Benfield on July 21, 1961, this was the first tune they played with two autoharps. The song itself dates from 1893, with copyright credits to Cy Warman (words) and Rayman Moore (music). It became one of the very first recorded hits in 1894 when it was done on several cylinder versions by George Gaskin, "The Silver-voiced Irish Tenor," who also recorded songs like "The Fatal Wedding" and "Mid the Green Fields of Virginia." It seems to have been very popular with Southern folk musicians; DeFord Bailey, the black harmonica player of the Grand Ole Opry, recalled his father, an old-time fiddler, playing it, and it was once recorded by the Bull Mountain Moonshiners, a Virginia string band.

3 John Henry (*Kilby Snow*)

This was the first song Kilby recorded, dating from August 1957, and appears on this set for the first time. Instrumental versions of this well-known Southern ballad are not as common as vocal ones, and Snow's melody line is quite similar to that used by harmonica virtuoso Deford Bailey in his 1928 Victor recording of the piece.

4 May I Sleep in Your Barn Tonight, Mister?

(*Kilby Snow*)

This was recorded at the home of banjoist Wade Ward, near Independence, Virginia, August 1957. Widely recorded during the golden age of old-time music in the 1920s, it was a huge hit for the North Carolina singer Charlie Poole in 1925, and Poole's music is still influential in southwest Virginia today. The song itself was in print before Poole recorded it, but its ultimate origins are obscure.

5 She'll Be Coming Around the Mountain

(*Kilby Snow, autoharp, with Wade Ward, banjo*)

Recorded August 1957 and well known throughout the South, the song seems to be a

parody of “Old Ship of Zion,” and is discussed in Brown 3: 534.

6 Sweet Sunny South (*Ernest Stoneman, vocal & autoharp*)

Recorded December 6, 1956, this is an old pop song that was well known around the Galax area. “Sweet Sunny South” (or “Take Me Back to the Sweet Sunny South”) was recorded in the late 1920s by both Charlie Poole and the Galax-based DaCosta Woltz’s Southern Broadcasters (featuring fiddler Ben Jarrell and banjoist Frank Jenkins)—as well as by later bands such as the Piedmont Log Rollers and by Wade Mainer. Pop Stoneman’s lyrics heard here are almost identical to those of Charlie Poole. The Kenneth Goldstein Collection at the Center for Popular Music contains five 19th-century broadsides with the song, including one bearing a copyright to a John C. Schreiner and Sons. Other early published versions mention a composer named simply “Raymond,” and some sheet music versions may go as far back as the 1840s. See also Brown (3: 475).

7 Bile’em Cabbage Down (*Ernest Stoneman, autoharp, harmonica, and vocal*)

Clayton McMichen, famed fiddler of the Skillet Lickers, always claimed he composed

this familiar fiddle tune, though other old-time stars like Uncle Dave Macon and Fiddlin’ John Carson had recorded it some years before McMichen. Ralph Rinzler found the tune in a 1765 English collection *Two Hundred Country Dances*, where it appears as “Smiling Polly.” A related tune, “Weel May the Keel Row,” dates from a similar book in 1793. The last three verses heard here were composed by Pop Stoneman. Recorded December 10, 1961.

8 Marching Through Georgia (*Ernest Stoneman*)

Henry Clay Work’s Civil War song remained popular in both North and South after the war, and was so well known that it was used in wind-up music boxes. Recorded early 1957.

9 Wreck of Number Nine (*Ernest Stoneman, autoharp, vocal, harmonica*)

This song dates from 1927, when it was written by the great event song composer Carson J. Robison and recorded by Vernon Dalhart. It became one of the best-selling “hillbilly” records of the 1920s. Recorded December 10, 1961.

10 Ella’s Grave (*Neria Benfield, autoharp; Kenneth Benfield, guitar*)

According to the Benfields, the tune here is taken from an old ballad about a girl who drowned on her horse. Recorded July 21, 1961.

11 Waltz (*Neria Benfield*)

Recorded July 21, 1961.

12 Old Joe Clark (*Kenneth Benfield*)

Recorded July 21, 1961, this is an unusual choice for the autoharp because of the flatted seventh note, the tune is usually played as a fiddle or banjo solo. The song itself dates as far back as 1842, when it appears in James O. Halliwell-Phillipp’s *Nursery Rhymes of England*, and seems to have been known as a play-party song. Versions were reported from North Carolina as early as 1893, and numerous old-time bands recorded it in the 1920s, including the Skillet Lickers and bands led by Ernest Stoneman, Fiddlin’ John Carson, DaCosta Woltz, and Fiddlin’ Powers.

13 Shortening Bread (*Kenneth Benfield*)

Back in 1928, at the height of the old-time music age on records, a Tin Pan Alley songwriter named Jacques Wolfe published a sheet music arrangement of this song that became

quite popular and got the song in the repertoires of numerous African-American “art” singers. Most Southern musicians, black and white, had known it long before then, however. The redoubtable black folk song collector Thomas Talley collected an African-American version of it as early as 1922, under the title “Salt Rising Bread” (Talley: 71), and Perrow (1915) published a version collected from white singers in east Tennessee as early as 1915. More notes are found in Brown (3: 535) and Randolph (2: 238). Recorded April 28, 1961.

14 Cindy (*Kilby Snow*)

Bascom Lamar Lunsford, the mountain folk song collector who was born in 1882, recalls hearing a version of “Cindy” at play-parties when he was a child. Certainly it is older than that, but there is no direct evidence to link it to the old minstrel-show style it seems to resemble. Kilby Snow recorded it in August 1957.

15 Budded Roses (*Kilby Snow*)

Recorded in August 1957, it was popularized by Charlie Poole, who recorded it in 1926. The song has remained popular in the upper South; it has earmarks of a late 19th century Tin Pan Alley song, though no specific composer has been discovered.

16 Flop-eared Mule (Kilby Snow)

Recorded August 1957, it is a favorite fiddle band piece in southwest Virginia.

17 Home Sweet Home (Kilby Snow)

Though widely associated with the Civil War, “Home Sweet Home” actually dates from 1823, when it appeared in the premier of the opera *Clari*. The words had been written by an American, John Howard Payne, the melody by a well-known English composer, Sir Henry Bishop. Kilby Snow recorded the song in August 1957.

18 Springtime Again Little Annie

(Ernest Stoneman)

Recorded December 6, 1956, the song was popularized in early country music by the Carter Family’s 1930 recording (as “When the Springtime Comes Again”). It was almost certainly derived from Stephen Foster’s 1856 piece called “Gentle Annie,” widely circulated in 19th-century broadsides and songsters. Sara Carter recalled learning the song from such a broadside given to them by a neighbor.

19 Great Reaping Day (Ernest Stoneman)

Recorded early 1957, this popular gospel num-

ber is generally credited to the Tennessee song book publisher W. E. Winsett, but he often bought, rearranged, and attached his name to songs of others, so the actual authorship is still unclear. Pop had recorded the song—singing directly from a Winsett book—in a session he did for Victor in 1927.

20 Weeping Willow Tree

(Kenneth & Neria Benfield)

“Weeping Willow Tree” was made famous by the Carter Family, who had recorded it on their very first recording session in 1927. Both Sara and Maybelle Carter had known the song since childhood. Recorded July 21, 1961.

21 I’m Alone, All Alone (Ernest Stoneman, autoharp and vocal, with Mike Seeger, banjo)

Pop Stoneman learned this song from a childhood friend from the Galax area, Burl Hancock, who also played the autoharp. It’s a rare song, somewhat different from the piece by the same title collected by Brown (3:60) and Randolph (2:424). Recorded December 10, 1961.

22 All I Got’s Gone (Ernest Stoneman, autoharp, harmonica, vocal)

Composed by Uncle Dave Macon, this song

became one of his first real hits in 1924, and Pop, probably at the request of the Okeh company, did a “cover” version of it as one of his very earliest recordings. This recording was made December 10, 1961.

23 Benfield Hoedown (Idaho Girl)

(Neria Benfield)

An original composition by Mr. Benfield, it was recorded July 21, 1961.

24 Bonaparte’s Retreat (Kenneth Benfield)

This is not exactly the well-worn Southern fiddle tune of the same name, but a 1949 popular song crafted by bandleader Pee Wee King and made into a 1950 pop hit by Kay Starr. Recorded April 28, 1961.

25 Chinese Breakdown (Neria Benfield, autoharp, Kenneth Benfield, guitar)

“Chinese Breakdown” is a familiar string band standard, popularized originally by Georgia’s Scottsville String Band in 1927. Though the guitar is recorded a little too “hot” here, the cut is included because of Neria’s remarkable near-chromatic run in the middle of the second, or high, part. Recorded July 21, 1961.

26 Wildwood Flower (Kilby Snow, autoharp; Mike Seeger, guitar)

“Wildwood Flower” is, of course, the standard guitar piece for Southern pickers, derived from the Carter Family’s influential 1928 Victor recording. Though the Carters had learned the song through their family, ultimate sources include an 1859 parlor song by stage star Maud Irving and writer Joseph Webster, “I’ll Twine Midst the Ringlets,” and a late 19th-century piece called “The Pale Amaryllis.” Recorded August 1957.

27 Tragic Romance (Kilby Snow, autoharp, with Mike Seeger, banjo, and Hazel Dickens, guitar)

The last tune Kilby played at the 1957 session, the song was popularized in the late 1940s by both the Morris Brothers (Wiley and Zeke) and by Grandpa Jones—both acts claiming authorship. This performance ends abruptly when a string on Mr. Snow’s autoharp pops on the last chorus.

28 Close By (Kilby Snow)

Bill Monroe recorded “Close By” as a single in 1954, only three years before this recording was done. (The Stanley Brothers had also recorded a version in 1954.) The song had

been written by a friend of Jimmy Martin's named Little Robert Van Winkle, and Martin had brought the song to Monroe. Recorded August 1957.

29 Way Down in the Country

(Kenneth Benfield)

This song derives from a 1947 King recording by Grandpa Jones; original composer credits were given to Jones and Alton Delmore. Recorded April 28, 1961.

30 Golden Slippers (Kenneth Benfield)

Derived from the 1879 "walkaround" for the Georgia Minstrels penned by James A. Bland, this was recorded July 21, 1961.

31 Lights in the Valley

(Kenneth & Neriah Benfield)

This old mountain gospel song was popularized in the 1930s by J.E. Mainer's Mountaineers; their 1935 Bluebird recording was widely circulated in the region. Recorded July 21, 1961.

32 Chicken Reel (Kilby Snow)

This is a reading of the comic fiddle tune featured in Southern fiddle contests since the turn of the 20th century. Recorded August 1957.

33 Precious Jewel

(Kilby Snow, autoharp and vocal)

Coming from the repertoire of the late Grand Ole Opry patriarch Roy Acuff, this was first recorded in 1940 for the Okeh label. Acuff borrowed the melody from an old murder ballad called "The Hills of Roane County" and crafted this set of lyrics in 45 minutes en route to a show date. Recorded July 19, 1961.

34 Muleskinner Blues (Kilby Snow)

Popularized first by Blue Yodeller Jimmie Rodgers in the 1920s, this song became a favorite of Bill Monroe around 1940. In 1960, shortly before this recording was made, the country radio stations were playing an instrumental hit of it by a group called the Fendermen. This (as well as "Ain't Going to Work Tomorrow," track 39) reflects a new direction in Kilby Snow's autoharp sound—one bluesier and more bluegrass influenced, with the use of flatted seventh notes. Recorded July 19, 1961.

35 Red River Valley (Kilby & Jim Snow)

This familiar cowboy song, uses a melody derived from an old variety stage song called "Bright Mohawk Valley" composed by James J. Kerrigan. Recorded July 19, 1961.

36 Hallelujah Side (Ernest Stoneman)

Pop Stoneman and his family first recorded this, a favorite in their repertoire, in 1928, then again in 1934, and featured it on the Stoneman Family TV show in the 1960s. It was the product of the Rev. Johnson Oatman and J. Howard Entwistle; Oatman had written "When the Redeemed Are Gathering In," another Southern gospel favorite that the Stonemans recorded. Oatman himself was a New Jersey native who is credited with writing some 7,000 song lyrics before his death in 1922. Recorded early 1957.

37 Jacob's Ladder (Kenneth Benfield)

This well-known spiritual that seems to have both white and black antecedents. It was considered for inclusion in the first collection of black spirituals, the 1867 *Slave Songs of the United States*, but was rejected because one of the compilers recalled seeing it in an old Methodist hymn book. Folk variations are discussed in Brown (3:504). Recorded July 21, 1961.

38 Ain't Going to Work Tomorrow

(Kilby Snow)

Popularized by the Carter Family in 1928 and Flatt and Scruggs in the early 1960s, Kilby Snow recorded it July 19, 1961.

TRACK NOTES CITATIONS

Brown, Frank C. 1952. *The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore: Vol. 2 Folk Ballads and Vol. 3 Folk Songs*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Perrow, E.C. "Songs and Rhymes from the South," *Journal of American Folklore* 28 (Apr.–June 1915), 129–90.
Randolph, Vance. 1980. *Ozark Folksongs*. 4 vols. Columbia: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946–50; rpt. Columbia: University of Missouri Press.

Talley, Thomas W. 1991. *Negro Folk Rhymes: A New, Expanded Edition with Music*. Edited by Charles K. Wolfe. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press.

The Kenneth Goldstein Broadside Collection is located at The Center for Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University.

CREDITS

Recorded, edited, produced, and annotated (except song notes) by Mike Seeger

Track notes by Charles Wolfe

Photographs by Mike Seeger

Photos printed by Ellen M. Martin

Sound supervision and mastering by Pete Reiniger

Production supervised by Daniel Sheehy and D. A. Sonneborn

Production managed by Mary Monseur

Editorial assistance by Carla Borden

Design and layout by Sonya Cohen Cramer

Additional Smithsonian Folkways staff: Richard Burgess, director of marketing and sales; Lee Michael Dempsey, fulfillment; Betty Derbyshire, financial operations manager; Toby Dodds, technology manager; Mark Gustafson, marketing; Helen Lindsay, customer service; Keisha Martin, financial assistant; Margot Nassau, licensing and royalties; John Passmore, fulfillment; Jeff Place, archivist; Amy Schriefer, program assistant; Ronnie Simpkins, audio specialist; John Smith, sales; Stephanie Smith, archivist; Norman van der Sluys, fulfillment.

Special thanks to Alexia Smith for help in editing these notes. Thanks also to Jon Pankake, Charles Wolfe, and Joe Bussard.

ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is the nonprofit record label of the Smithsonian Institution, the national museum of the United States. Our mission is the legacy of Moses Asch, who founded Folkways Records in 1948 to document “people’s music,” spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. The Smithsonian acquired Folkways from the Asch estate in 1987, and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings has continued the Folkways tradition by supporting the work of traditional artists and expressing a commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

Smithsonian Folkways recordings are available at record stores. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Folkways, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, Fast Folk, Monitor, and Paredon recordings are all available through:

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings Mail Order
750 9th Street, NW, Suite 4100
Washington, DC 20560-0953
Phone: (800) 410-9815 or 888-FOLKWAYS
(orders only); 202-275-1143
Fax: (800) 853-9511 (orders only)

To purchase online, or for further information about Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, go to: www.folkways.si.edu. Please send comments, questions, and catalogue requests to mailorder@si.edu





Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

CENTER FOR FOLKLIFE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
750 9th Street, NW * Suite 4100 * Smithsonian Institution
Washington DC 20560-0953 * www.folkways.si.edu
SFW CD 40115 © ©2006 Smithsonian Folkways Recordings