

THE VILLAGE OUT WEST

The Lost Tapes of Alan Oakes

Field Recordings of the 1960s California Folk Music Scene





Front cover: Berkeley Folk Festival 1964. Identifiable performers from this collection include:
L to R: (seated) Jerry Houck, Gene Bluestein, Kathy Larisch, and Carol McComb (foreground,
seated), Faith Petric (seated), Larry Hanks (seated, center), Mark Spoelstra (background).

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J. E. Mainer's Mountaineers perform at Berkeley Folk Festival.
Photo by Gerald Wainwright.

SFW CD 40245

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Produced by Deborah Robins, Jeff Place, and Henry H. Sapoznik

CD 1

1. Beaumont Rag—Hank Bradley and Rick Shubb (3:14)

2. Oh, Had I A Golden Thread—Larry Hanks and Roger Perkins (3:58)
(Pete Seeger/Figs. D Music, Inc. o/b/o Stormking Music, BMI)

3. Westphalia Waltz—Ron Hughey, Frank Hicks, and Pete Everwine (2:52)
(Cotton Collins/EMI Blackwood Music, Inc. o/b/o Century Songs, BMI)

4. Raggedy Pat—LaWanda Ultan (1:38)

5. 8th of January—The Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall (2:21)

6. Leaning on the Everlasting Arms—Merritt Herring (2:34)
(Anthony J. Showalter-Elisha Hoffman)

7. The Billboard Song—Doc Watson (2:13)
(Charles Grean-Cy Coben/MPL Music

Publishing, Inc. o/b/o Frank Music Corp., ASCAP-BMG Bumblebee o/b/o Delmore Music, ASCAP)

8. Write Me a Few of Yo' Lines—Mississippi Fred McDowell (4:22)
(Fred McDowell/BMG Bumblebee o/b/o Tradition Music Co., BMI)

9. Milwaukee Blues—Dr. Humbead's New Tranquility String Band (2:50)
(Charlie Poole-Roy Harvey/Bluewater Music Services Corp. o/b/o Charlie Poole Publishing, BMI-Bluewater Music Services Corp. o/b/o Original Rambler Music, BMI)

10. Swallow Song—Kathy & Carol (1:34)
(Richard Fariña/Warner Brothers Music, ASCAP)

11. Charlie's Neat and Charlie's Sweet/ Weevilly Wheat—Jerry Houck, Larry Hanks, and Tom Ninkovich (2:05)

12. Girl I Left in Sunny Tennessee—Jim Ringer, Ron Tinkler, and the Sweets Mill Mountain Boys (2:08)
(Harry Braisted-Stanley Carter)

13. Gimme That Old Time Religion—Rev. Gary Davis (4:10)

14. Talking Union—Gene Bluestein (2:42)
(Millard Lampell-Lee Hays-Pete Seeger/Figs. D Music, Inc. o/b/o Stormking Music, Inc., BMI)

15. All My Friends Gonna Be Strangers—Kilby Snow (1:55)
(Liz Anderson/Sony/ATV Acuff Rose Music, BMI)

16. Texas Quickstep—The Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall (1:15)
(Gustave Blessner)

17. Long Time a-Growing—Caroline Paton (4:00)

18. Mardi Gras Dance—Jerry Houck (3:30)

19. Lady of Carlisle—Don Rollins (aka Abel Fortune) (3:59)

20. White Winged Dove—Mark Spoelstra (4:28)
(Mark Spoelstra/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI)

21. Sardines and Pork and Beans—Sandy and Caroline Paton (1:22)

22. Hoop-e-Kack—Dad Crockett and Frank Hicks (2:29)
(Thomas Allen)

23. Down, Down, Derry Down—Merritt Herring (2:56)

24. Walking Down that Railroad Line—Larry Hanks and Mark Spoelstra (4:16)
(Woody Guthrie/BMG Bumblebee o/b/o Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI)

25. Duna—Ed Trickett (2:11)
(Marjorie Pickthall-Josephine McGill)

26. Orange Blossom Special—Hank Bradley, Rick Shubb, and Doc Watson (4:19)
(Ervin Rouse/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP)

CD 2

1. Fire on the Mountain—The Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall (1:29)
(Arr. by Ron Hughey/American Heritage Music Corp., BMI)

2. When the Curfew Blows—Sandy and Jeanie Darling (1:48)
(Woody Guthrie/Ludlow Music, Inc. o/b/o Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI)

3. Ragtime Annie—Hank Bradley and Rick Shubb, feat. Doc Watson (2:56)
(Alexander Robertson-arr. by Arthel Lane Watson/Downtown DLJ Songs LLC o/b/o Budde Music Inc., BMI)

4. The Hounds are Out (The Innocent Hare)—Allan MacLeod (3:15)

5. Bachelor Blues—The New Lost City Ramblers (1:13)
(Steve Ledford/Berwick Music Corp., BMI)

6. Jimmy Whelan—Roger Renwick (3:41)

7. Paddy, Won't You Drink Some Cider?—The Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall (1:17)

8. Good Night Waltz—Ron Hughey and Frank Hicks (2:08)

9. Searchin'—Kathy & Carol with Will Scarlett (2:30)
(Jerry Leiber-Mike Stoller/Sony/ATV Tunes, LLC, BMI-Raleigh Music Publishing-H & R Music, LLC)

10. The Clouds Gwine Roll Away—Doc Watson (2:42)
(Carson Robison)

11. Northfield—Larry Hanks, Roger Perkins, Kathy Larisch, and Carol McComb (2:02)
(Jeremiah Ingalls-Isaac Watts)

12. Baby, Let Me Lay It on You—Rev. Gary Davis (2:57)
(Gary Davis/Downtown DLJ Songs LLC o/b/o Chandos Music Co., ASCAP)

13. Talking Fishing Blues—Larry Hanks
(5:01)

(Woody Guthrie/BMG Bumblebee o/b/o
Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI)

14. Sweet Sunny South—Jerry Houck (2:28)
(W.L. Bloomfield)

15. Play Run Run—Mark Spoelstra (2:29)
(Mark Spoelstra/Warner-Tamerlane Pub
Corp., BMI)

16. Cherokee Shuffle—Hank Bradley and
Sandy Rothman, feat. Doc Watson (3:22)

17. Bringing Mary Home—Kilby Snow (2:34)
(John Duffey-Joe Kingston-Chaw Mank/Fort
Knox Music, BMI-Trio Music, BMI)

18. The Lost Trapper—The Sweet's Mill
Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall (1:39)
(John Harvey Crockett, BMI)

**19. Don't Mistreat Nobody (Cause You Got
a Few Dimes)**—Mississippi Fred McDowell
(4:19)
(Fred McDowell)

20. Billy in the Lowground—Hank Bradley
and Rick Shubb, feat. Doc Watson (3:32)

21. The Curlew's Song—Merritt Herring
(3:55)
(Thomas Makem/Unichappell Music, Inc.,
BMI)

22. Jamie Raeburn's Farewell—Will Spires
(4:02)

23. Hesitation Blues—Rev. Gary Davis (4:07)
(Arr. by Gary Davis/Downtown DLJ Songs
LLC o/b/o Chandos Music Co., ASCAP)

24. I'm a Rover and Seldom Sober—Sandy
and Caroline Paton (2:54)

25. O, Them Golden Slippers—Hank Bradley
and Rick Shubb (2:07)
(James Bland)





REEL-TO-REEL RAMBLER THE LOST TAPES OF ALAN OAKES

Deborah Robins

Like the fictional constructs of Camelot and Brigadoon, the Berkeley Folk Music Festival now appears solely in the mists of deep memory, only to reappear and resurface in our collective minds' eyes, as needed and conjured. That the festival actually did exist and meant so much to so many is just beginning to become evident. The Berkeley Folk Music Festival, which ran from 1958 to 1970, a brief 12 years in the continuum of traditional music, served as a magnet for a parade of exceptional perform-

ers and musicologists. The brainchild of Barry Olivier, a one-man repository of good taste and willingness to expand his own and the musical horizons of others, the festival drew emerging artists whose careers had yet to give them justification to travel westward. Bessie Jones, Frank Warner, Mississippi John Hurt, the Reverend Gary Davis, Doc Watson, J.E. Mainer, Elizabeth Cotten, Jimmy Driftwood, Marais & Miranda, and Seamus Ennis were just a few of the extensive cadre arriving in Berkeley not just to perform their music, but to speak, share, and mingle with students and experts alike. Concerts grand and small; workshops and panel discussions with experts like Charles Seeger, Alan Dundes, Ralph Rinzler, and Alan Lomax; and open-mic events and freestyle hoots, all combined in a wonder of musical worlds colliding, as multigenerations mingled and wove a tapestry of traditions old and new. One such person who was drawn to the Berkeley Folk Music Festival was a youthful Alan Oakes. Not a musician, but a savvy amateur audio engineer, Oakes saw value in the live and unvarnished magic that sprang from mixing the bucolic setting of the University of California campus with the goodwill of hundreds of presenters of American traditional music and its descendants. Oakes, also an



Barry Olivier at Berkeley Little Theatre New Year's Eve event, 1964 or 1965. Photo by Kelly Hart.

adventurer who once hopped a freight train with Utah Phillips and Jim Ringer, and who interviewed old performers in his spare time, found meaning in preserving those fleeting moments of alchemy that harnessed an undefinable time and place and froze them as a time capsule. Dutifully lugging his “pro-am” reel-to-reel stereo tape recorder from concerts to music camps, from informal house parties to festivals, Oakes believed that these everyday people, singing and playing songs and tunes borne of personal experiences and memories of “mother’s knee” music, had value—and a future. As Oakes followed these musicians from Berkeley, Fresno, and San Diego, we are drawn into a road trip of musical migration reflecting the diverse origins of each song and tune. *The Lost Tapes of Alan Oakes* reflects a place and time that will and can never come again: within it, we hear the raw talent of young and eager songsters like Larry Hanks, Mark Spoelstra, Ed Trickett, and Kathy & Carol, sitting at the feet of old masters. The collection transports us to a time with budding instrumentalists Kenny Hall, Hank Bradley, and Rick Shubb, who thanks to Oakes are heard side by side with elders Ron Hughey, Frank Hicks, and Dad Crockett, and who absorbed times and places they could never have otherwise experienced.

L to R: Doc Watson, John Cohen, and Mississippi John Hurt at the Berkeley Folk Music Festival, photo by Barry Olivier.



COLOR COMMENTARY

Hank Bradley

How does a farm-raised Californian end up in the West Coast music scene? From violin in junior high school, recreational muskets and fowling pieces and the village softball team, via surfboards to Martins and Mastertones, that's how. First, it was a banjo baptism into the ragtime beer-and-pizza music on Cannery Row. There, one Peter Stampfel appeared out of New York, marched up to the Mastertone and made obeisances, then showed how an extra string on his banjo, plus a thumb, made for more irresistible and even more primitive music. The San Mateo County Draft Board then took charge, and a two-year military novitiate in North Carolina and Virginia, I returned a shaggy creature with a head full of old songs, fiddle tunes, some early County records,

a fifth string on the Mastertone, and antennae wiggling toward anyone else adept in such amusements.

In 1965, the West Coast music scene had a lively nucleus in Berkeley, with New York City's Oak Publications and Folkways Records widely available, the Blind Lemon and Cabale on San Pablo Avenue, the Jabberwock on Telegraph, and a growing number of adepts at all the diverse styles of folkery. Berkeley had a summer Folk Festival, invented and run by Barry Olivier, which always presented a wide spectrum of interesting artists running from traditional to full-bore political. Independently a smaller scene grew in far-off Fresno, where this observer studied engineering. Its local Folklore Society held a concert series including such local characters as Ron Hughey, Frank Hicks, and Kenny Hall, all accomplished string players grounded in the country music of 30 years previous. Kenny was not sighted, but owned a mighty

Flyer for August 1963 shows at the Cabale in Berkeley.

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TUE **CAROL LEIGH** / 1920 **BLUES**
KEN ELLIS

WED - **PERRY LEDERMAN** ·
Instrumentals

THURSDAY **LARRY HANKS** / **FOLK**
ROGER PERKINS

AUG. 15 * CANYON CINEMA
STARTING AT 7:30 FILMS OF STAN
"BRANKAGE" and "5:10 To Yuma"
AUG. 29 - THE FILMS of Larry Gordon

FRIDAY - **JESSE FULLER / BLUES**
* except AUG. 16 / Mayne, Neil, and Scott Hamby

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and SATURDAY NIGHT at **THE CABALE**
LIVE ON **KPF** FEATURING CABALE PERFORMERS
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QUICKSILVER MESSENGER SERVICE • SAM HINTON • DAVID & TINA MELTZER
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CHARLES SEEGER • ALICE STUART THOMAS • VERA JOHNSON • ED KAHN
JOHN FAHEY • DR. HUMBEAD'S NEW TRANQUILITY STRING BAND • MAYNE SMITH
SONG OF EARTH CHORALE • CONGRESS OF WONDERS • DAVE FREDRICKSON
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repertoire of music learned by ear through decades of hearing records and radio, neatly played it on mandolin, and would happily lead jam sessions of old tunes nonstop for eight or ten hours at a time. Frank was a railroad engineer equally happy to drive old-time tunes or swing music on guitar. And Ron was a strong cheerful Missouri fiddler who had been in California since the 1930s, had a small welding shop in the town of Fowler, was well known and well liked at all the California old-time fiddle contests, and frequently won them.

Ron Hughey emigrated from Missouri to Fresno during the Depression, worked as a welder, and also played in dance bands. He'd let the fiddle slide up and down his chest and would rotate it to minimize changes in bow angle, and could be judged happy when his cigar approached burning his nose. His big hands were banged up from metalworking, and he would park his first finger in the pegbox and play with the remaining three unless the tune called for higher adventures, which he took effortlessly, swing tunes and all. His young repertoire had some rare old modal tunes, but he played what folks liked and did it well. He'd gotten acquainted with Dad Crockett of Crockett's Mountaineers, who were very popular in California in the 30s and who also settled in Fresno and learned some of Crockett's repertoire. He had strong opinions and could get mad, but in general was genial and generous with his time and tunes.

Poster advertising Berkeley Folk Music Festival, 1968.

Frank Hicks played on a grand old Gibson Super-400 and had enough time off his railroad engineer job to play in several bands well-known in California, some of them pretty sizeable western swing or jazz bands. He was happy enough to play with old-time fiddle tunes and had done so early in life until popular taste preferred more elaborate pop music. He was happy to hang out at Sweet's Mill whenever folks were there looking to play music, and frequently had cheerful little jobs in Fresno where they would play Dixieland and allow sit-ins who knew the repertoire.

Otis Pierce was another Missourian who enjoyed and played music, and who ran a bar outside Fresno called Pierce's Park. It attracted some rough customers, but he was rough enough himself to keep order. A story circulated about some Hells Angels' misbehavior displeasing him, and Otis single-handedly evicting them two at a time by their

collars. Frank Hicks said he'd done time in Missouri for manslaughter, but the judge was local and told Otis, "I've known you since we were boys, and you wouldn't do that but for alcohol. If you'll promise never to drink again, I'll give you a suspended sentence." So, Otis went dry and stayed that way. But he would sing old ballads and play guitar and banjo, and welcomed us when we musicians visited



Otis Pierce and Larry Hanks at Sweet's Mill, 1974.
Photo By E. Z. Smith (used by permission).

with and played old songs and tunes, and saw to our wellbeing among the more challenging customers. His heartfelt compliment to Jody Stecher at the Mariposa Folk Festival in Canada was, “That bald-headed son of a bitch can sure sing!”

Larry Hanks was a warm guy with a glorious deep voice and a natural way with a guitar that never demanded your attention but was profoundly inspiring in powering the innumerable diverse songs he would sing. You’d find him in Lundberg’s with customers who couldn’t quite describe the setup they liked, pointing out the sign saying “Make it as Low as Possible without Buzzing” and getting instant agreement. Or with his arm in the sound hole of a new Martin, the plane in his hand reshaping the factory braces so that even a 1968 model D-18 would wake up and boom for joy. Or when riding the elevator at the Berkeley Folk Music Festival, he would introduce you to Pete Seeger, or at the 17th Annual Berkeley Fiddlers Convention (its second year) be singing “The Rambler” with Kenny Hall and Hank Bradley using The Finger of Scorn as a band name. Rumor has it that he hasn’t changed much.

The Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys (SMMB) were just the type of oddly assorted musicians you’d be glad to find in a hometown band and still be curious at how their magic worked. Of course, the tall cigar-smoking fiddler Ron Hughey was just born for the part of playing down-home tunes from Missouri and every other fiddle state, but how did that fit with the closed-chord swing guitarist Frank Hicks who drove railroad engines for a living? And why was Pete Everwine, a college professor of English and poetry, playing three-finger banjo? Well, we learned later at the San Diego Folk Festival he’d come by it honestly at some Midwest university, where he heard a bluegrass band whose banjo player wore lightning-bolt loafers. He took the lesson that if he would learn the banjo, he too could wear lightning-bolt loafers. By the formation of the SMMB, they had worn out,



Frank Hicks, Ron Hughey, Pete Everwine, 1965. Photo by E. Z. Smith (used by permission).

but he had learned the banjo. From time to time, they included mandolinist Kenny Hall, who would also sing some old songs. But their repertoire was mostly fiddle tunes—audiences in 1965 really liked fiddle tunes—and they were quite popular in Fresno, and even in Berkeley where they played at the Jabberwock.

OF VILLAGES EAST AND WEST

THE SONIC WORLD OF ALAN OAKES

Henry H. Sapoznik

It was the happy confluence of two unrelated trends that led to the vital cache of recordings from which this ear-opening collection is drawn.

The first was the unexpected and highly improbable rise of “folk music” as a national mass movement. Far from its birth as an organizing technique of the Communist Party’s “Popular Front,” by the eve of WWII the music had moved from picket lines and union halls to the coast-to-coast 50,000 watts of the CBS network. That is where Alan Lomax—the folk song equivalent of wild animal impresario Frank Buck—shared numerous examples of his southern collecting trips made with a hernia-inducing Presto 6D

Insta Cut recording machine bolted into the trunk of his Buick Roadmaster. It was also in this fertile postwar moment that Folkways records—whose founder Moe Asch was already a battle-scarred veteran of previous label iterations—came into its own.

Asch, son of the controversial Yiddish writer Sholem Asch, served an autodidactic apprenticeship in New York's long gone "Radio Row" en route to becoming the chief engineer at station WEVD (named for five-time failed Socialist Presidential candidate, Eugene Victor Debs). The ever-practical Asch would, in the station's earliest days, sneak musicians up into the West 46th Street WEVD studios and record them when the station was off the air giving those discs a lush and consistent acoustic background.

The popularity of the recordings and of learning the music on them was folk music's nervy elbowing onto the postwar national music charts, which was a welcome palliative from the mawkish mewlings of 1950s pop singers. But the proper environment for the clarion call to young folk music enthusiasts—they the "Citizen Recording Engineers"—came only with the postwar adoption of magnetic tape and even then had to wait until the mid-1950s for the introduction of portable tape recorders.

Cost was a big issue: an old-fashioned disc acetate machine cost \$400 retail (over \$7,000 today), not to mention the pricey—and squirrely—aluminum acetate recordings discs. For not that much more, one could get a modern portable tape recorder—Ampex 601 or a Tandberg 3B—which, at a mere 26 pounds, liberated people from the Sisyphean shlepping of a disc recorder, or the inaccessibility of luxe studios like Asch's WEVD.

In New York, for example, Peter K. Siegel, armed with a Tandberg, documented key moments radiating from the local deeply rooted folk music scene (the recent Smithsonian Folkways issue of his 1962 in situ recording of Doc Watson and Gaither Carlton reveals the early maturity of these amateur engineers.) And now, more evidence

of the contemporary quality of pioneering folkie recordists is here in the works of long forgotten West Coast engineer Alan Oakes.

As Hank Bradley notes, Oakes appointed himself keeper of the local traditional music soundscape, even though not a professional recording engineer, by bringing his own machine for his own amusement wherever banjos, fiddles, and guitars congregated.

One highlight of the Oakes tapes is their startlingly present quality. Oakes instinctively knew to place microphones close enough to capture the acoustics of the moment, but not so “in-your-face” to spook musicians whose varying patience (or literacy) about mic placement made getting a strong, clear sound a crapshoot. Oakes consistently found that sweet spot, as is repeatedly evidenced here.

The Oakes collection allows us to eavesdrop on both the development of his own recording skills and the nascent eggshell chirpings of the northern California traditional music scene for which he was its sonic Boswell. Oakes’s tapes take us on an audio Cook’s tour of festivals, concerts, workshops, intimate club settings and “field recordings” in Oakes’s own living room where he channels Alan Lomax, coaxing and cajoling his subjects in an effort to more deeply mine their repertoire.

Berkeley Folk Music Festival. L to R: Tom Paxton (seated), Sam Hinton (standing), Jean Ritchie, Gene Bluestein, (seated), Alan Oakes, (standing on the right with glasses). Photo by Barry Olivier, courtesy of Evo Bluestein.



The miles of Oakes's tapes reveal the maturation of the emerging traditional music circuit and its boldface names (Doc Watson, Gary Davis, Mike Seeger, Fred McDowell, etc.) who would as "folk music royalty" counterbalance the enthusiastic creative experimentation and newfound ownership with which young seekers (Hank Bradley, Larry Hanks, Rick Shubb, etc.) approached their music. The dizzying diversity of repertoire found in Oakes's tapes, reveals the relentless curiosity and catholicity of the emerging "old-time" song book—a mélange of hand-hewn fiddle tunes from the "Sweet Sunny South" to sepia-hued pop songs from New York's Tin Pan Alley.



Promotional poster for Mississippi Fred McDowell, from Arhoolie Records.

Unlike Peter K. Siegel, who went on to produce numerous records for Folkways and Nonesuch, Oakes never became a commercial producer. After he recorded and cataloged the tapes, he stored his miles of recording tape haphazardly in his home, where they lay forgotten—and decaying—for decades.

Thanks to her proactive and visionary dream, co-producer Deborah Robins not only located the collection, but also willed into existence both the donation of the entire collection to the long-term gentle archival ministrations of the Smithsonian and the creation of the thrilling and inspiring sampler you now hold. Another of her great calls was reaching out to preservation and digitization engineer Mark “Wally” McClellan, who noted that the collection would “break if you just threaten to look at them.” His great digital restoration work helps us marvel at Oakes’s great analog recording work.

Although places like Greenwich Village’s Washington Square Park (the “Wailing Wall of Folk Music”) are instantly recognizable touchstones in the collective literacy of American traditional music, the Alan Oakes recordings attest to the equally enthusiastic playing and documenting of traditional music in Northern and Central California: the Village Out West.

Olive Bridge, N.Y.
January 2021



Snapshot of Alan and Marnie Oakes.
Courtesy of Marnie Oakes.

ARTISTS



Gene Bluestein (1922–2002)

Folklorist, musician, and recording artist Gene Bluestein was a long-time teacher at Cal State, Fresno. He was involved in the Fresno Folklore Society and local folk scene for many years. For more than 20 years, he performed with his children as the Bluestein Family.



Hank Bradley (b. 1940)

Born in Oakland, California, Hank Bradley played violin as a child, but learned the guitar and banjo in college. While in the Army at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, he discovered the music of Appalachian Mountain masters. After attending the 1964 Galax Fiddlers' Convention, he began to learn from mountain players like Otis Burris, Buddy Pendleton, and others. He plays a variety of old-time music and world music, including the bouzouki and tamburitza.

Top: Gene Bluestein. Photo by Barry Olivier.

Bottom: Hank Bradley. Photo courtesy of Hank Bradley.



Dad Crockett (1877–1972)

The patriarch of Crockett's Kentucky Mountaineers, Dad Crockett and family moved to California in 1916 and became among the first professional performers of string-band music on the West Coast. Crockett's Kentucky Mountaineers recorded in the 1920s and 30s for the Brunswick and Crown labels, and regularly performed on radio, becoming a headline act on the vaudeville circuit. The group's broad repertoire includes popular songs, novelty tunes, cowboy songs, songs from minstrel shows, and old-time songs that the boys learned from their grandfather, George A. Crockett. Dad Crockett is especially known for his tune, "The Lost Trapper." The University of Kentucky Special Research Center holds the Crockett Family Papers.



Sandy and Jeanie Darlington

Sandy (1934–1989), whose proper name was Frank Joseph Darlington III, was from Washington state.

Jeanie McLerie Darlington (b. 1942) was from New Jersey. They lived in England in the mid-1960s, before moving to Berkeley in 1967. Other musicians had moved to Preston Ranch, a musical community in Northern California, where Jeanie joined in playing Cajun music. In 1974, she ended up with the group at Sweet's Mill where she met other musicians with whom she played in her groups, the Delta Sisters and the Magnolia Sisters. She currently lives in New Mexico and plays with her husband, Ken Keppeler, and their group, Bayou Seco.



Reverend Gary Davis (1896–1972)

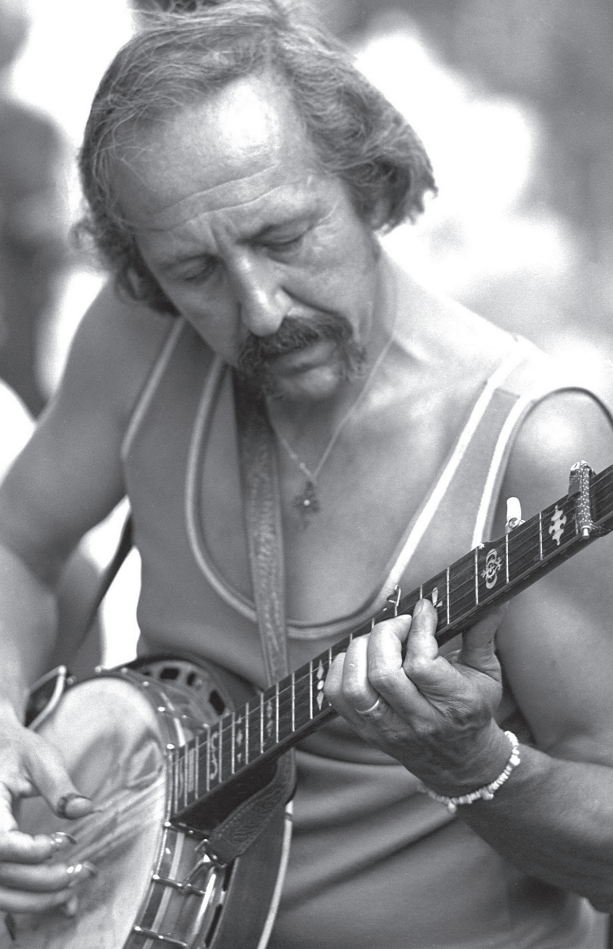
Reverend Gary Davis was one of the most popular blues revivalists. He played banjo and harmonica but was best known for his guitar style, which he taught to some of the best musicians of the 1950s and 1960s, including Rory Block, Dave Van Ronk, Bob Weir of the Grateful Dead, and notably Jorma Kaukonen, whose band Hot Tuna almost started as a Gary Davis jukebox.

Born in South Carolina, Davis settled in Durham, North Carolina, in the 20s, playing with many of the local stars in the Piedmont blues scene, and first recorded in 1935 as Blind Gary. He moved in the 1940s to New York, where he performed gospel as a street evangelist. He was one the great rediscoveries of the folksong revival, playing Newport and many other big festivals. His songs were covered by countless artists including Peter, Paul and Mary with his “Samson and Delilah.” He traveled around the country frequently appearing in the Bay area.



Top: Rev. Gary Davis at the 1967 Berkeley Folk Music Festival.

Bottom: Rev. Gary Davis, January 18, 1964. Photo by Robert R. Krones.



Pete Everwine (1930–2018)

Impressed early on by the banjo style of Roscoe Holcomb, Everwine, then a student in Pennsylvania, learned to play by using books by Pete Seeger and Earl Scruggs. After meeting Ron Hughey and Frank Hicks at Sweet's Mill, he traveled to Fresno and visited Pierce's Park (Otis Pierce's bar and club in Centerville). The trio performed as the Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys at the Ash Grove in Los Angeles and the Jabberwock in Berkeley. Everwine continued his studies as a poet on a fellowship at Stanford and eventually settled in Fresno. He published seven books of his poetry.

Pete Everwine, 1965. Photo by E. Z. Smith
(used by permission)



Kenny Hall (1923–2013)

Born blind in San Jose, Kenny Hall spent much of his youth at the California School for the Deaf and Blind in Berkeley, where he and classmates made brooms and sold them door to door. His distinctive self-taught method of playing the mandolin, along with an enormous repertoire of traditional and popular songs and tunes (many learned from hours listening to jukeboxes), made Hall an engaging performer and jam-leader for more than 50 years. Performing as part of the Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys or in other groups, Hall continued playing into his late 80s.

Kenny Hall, 1965. Photo by E. Z. Smith
(used by permission)

**Larry Hanks (b. 1939)**

Raised in Berkeley, Larry Hanks is known as a “National Treasure” for his mellifluous baritone voice, tasteful guitar accompaniments, and large repertoire of songs from the American West. Also known for his fine Jew’s harp playing, he traveled to Siberia with Mike Seeger to perform and film local *khomus* players. Early in his career, he performed as a duo in San Francisco with Roger Perkins. A protégé of Sam Hinton, Hanks toured with the Portable Folk Festival, Malvina Reynolds, and Elizabeth Cotten. Currently in his 80s, he still tours and records with musical partner and wife, Deborah Robins. Hanks’s “Apple Picker’s Reel” is a beloved work song in the traditional style.



Merritt Herring (1933–2004)

After serving in the U.S. Air Force until 1957, Herring became a popular performer and teacher of traditional songs in Berkeley. Although he held a 35-year career at Container Corp., he avidly maintained his musical life, holding a song circle two weeks prior to his death. Herring released a self-produced album of his singing and playing, titled *Precious Memories*. His recordings are in the Bob Nelson Collection of Folk Music at the University of Washington.



Frank Hicks (1922–1995)

A railroad engineer by trade who played both Western swing and old-time string-band music, Hicks often partnered with fiddler Ron Hughey and banjoist Pete Everwine as the Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys. Fiddler Virgil Evans was an early duo partner as well. Hicks continued to perform in and around Fresno into the 1980s.

Top: Merritt Herring.

Bottom: Frank Hicks. Photo by E. Z. Smith (used by permission).



Jerry Houck (b. 1943)

A San Diego native, Houck worked from 1959 to 1962 at the Sign of the Sun Folk Music Center, where he met Larry Hanks and Roger Perkins, then performing as a duo. He was deeply influenced by them and other musicians who performed there: Mississippi John Hurt, Hedy West, Bessie Jones, Skip James, New Lost City Ramblers, and Rev. Gary Davis, among others. In the early 1960s, Houck met Tom Ninkovich, then in the Navy stationed in San Diego. Through the San Diego State College Folk Music Club, Sam Hinton and Stu Jamieson inspired his banjo playing and singing.



Ron Hughey (1914–1974)

Around 1927, Hughey migrated from Missouri to Fowler, California, bringing with him tunes like “Yellow Gals,” “Pig Ankle Rag,” and “Dubuque.” Dubbed “the first real fiddler I knew” by Ron Tinkler, Hughey won the “Trick fiddling” and “Best-liked fiddler” awards at the 1970 California State Championship. As one of the old guard at Sweet’s Mill in the Sierras, Hughey often played with Frank Hicks, Dad Crockett, and Otis Pierce, all of whom lived around Fowler in the 1950s and 60s. His album *Country Fiddlin’, Ozark Style* is still highly prized.



Dr. Humbead’s New Tranquility String Band (Jim Bamford, Mac Benford, Sue Draheim)

In 1968, Jim Bamford, Mac Benford, Sue Draheim, and Will Spires formed the group, named to honor their manager and sound man Earl Crabb (aka the Great Humbead), but later dropped the “Humbead.” Mike Seeger recorded the group for his Folkways *Berkeley Farms* collection.

Top: Ron Hughey. Photo by E. Z. Smith (used by permission)

Bottom: Dr. Humbead’s New Tranquility String Band (Jim Bamford, Mack Benford, Sue Draheim). Photo by Barry Olivier.

Jim Bamford (1939–1973)

As singer and guitar player for Dr. Humbead's New Tranquility String Band (with Draheim and Benford), Jim Bamford favored old-time songs. He met Sue Draheim at a communal house in North Oakland's Colby Street in 1967. Bamford died of necrosis at age 34.

Mac Benford (1940–2020)

Known as a leading figure in the preservation of Appalachian string-band music for more than 60 years, Mac Benford played banjo in Dr. Humbead's New Tranquility String Band and, more notably, the accomplished Highwoods Stringband (with Walt Koken, Bob Potts, Doug Dorshug, and Jenny Cleland). Friends recall that Benford's singing "sounded like an old man when he was 20." By the time Benford was in his 70s, he finally grew into his voice. He appears in the documentary film, *Dance All Night* (2019), about the Highwoods, who were string-band revivalists.

Sue Draheim (1949–2013)

From a classical violin background, Sue Draheim turned her instrument into a "fiddle" as early as 1967, learning old tunes from Jim Bamford in Oakland. She played in the "Diesel Duck Review" (with Mac Benford, Hank Bradley, Rick Shubb, and Sue Rosenberg). Mike Seeger recorded Draheim in 1970 with "The New Tranquility String Band" (aka Dr. Humbead's, with Benford, Bamford, and Will Spires. She recorded Sam Chatmon in the 1970s; those tapes reside at UCLA's Ethnomusicology Archive. By the mid-1970s following her move to England, she was known as the "crème de la crème of the English folk-rock scene." She continued to perform until her death at age 63, in Berea, Kentucky.



Kathy & Carol

Both originally from Vista, California, Kathleen Larisch (b. 1945) and Carol McComb (b. 1945) performed folk songs in the 1960s as Kathy & Carol. After seeing them at the Berkeley Folk Music Festival, Mark Spoelstra brought them to Elektra Records, which recorded their debut album in 1965—the same year they performed at the Newport Folk Festival. Kathy became a fine arts teacher and Carol continued to play music with other ensembles over the years.

Musicians Carol McComb (guitar) and Kathy Larisch (autoharp).



Mississippi Fred McDowell (1906–1972)

One of the great country blues performers of the 1960s blues revival, Mississippi Fred McDowell was one of the most popular blues performers at that time on stage and on recordings. Born in Tennessee, he lived around Como, Mississippi, where folklorist Alan Lomax recorded him in 1959. McDowell recorded with others, notably Chris Strachwitz, who ran his Arhoolie label in Berkeley, California. A master of slide guitar, McDowell began to perform frequently in the Bay Area with Strachwitz's promotion. McDowell always proudly said, "I don't play no rock and roll," although the Rolling Stones recorded his song "You Got to Move," which provided considerable royalties (with Strachwitz's assistance).

Fred McDowell at the Greek Theatre during the Berkeley Folk Music Festival Jubilee Concert.



Allan MacLeod (b. 1942)

Originally from Armadale, West Lothian, Scotland, Allan MacLeod was part of the British folk song revival and sang under the critical eye of Ewan MacColl and Bert Lloyd in London. In California, he founded the popular Singers' Circle in Berkeley. He has performed solo and with British transplant Dick Holdstock. Holdstock & MacLeod are maritime festival favorites and have recorded several albums together.

Allan MacLeod singing and playing guitar in Sproul Plaza during the 1968 Berkeley Folk Music Festival.



The New Lost City Ramblers

The New Lost City Ramblers came together in mid-1958 dedicated to preserving and performing important old-time American music that all three members had grown to love. Mike Seeger (1934–2009), John Cohen (1932–2019), and banjo player Tom Paley (1928–2017) formed the group during the beginnings of the great folk music boom of the late 1950s, a time when many young musicians were turning to American folk music. Influenced by Harry Smith's *The Anthology of American Folk Music* (Folkways, 1952), the Ramblers sought out older recordings, taking part in the exchange of reels of tape through a network of collectors that held dubs of vintage 78-rpm recordings. Fiddler Tracy Schwarz (b. 1938) joined the group in 1962 when Tom Paley left.

Having recorded musicians in Berkeley in the 1960s and 1970s, Mike Seeger produced a classic LP, *Berkeley Farms: Oldtime and Country Style Music of Berkeley* (Folkways, 1972), which includes many of the musicians on this album.

The New Lost City Ramblers: Top: Mike Seeger, John Cohen, and Tracy Schwarz
Bottom: Tracy Schwarz, Mike Seeger, and John Cohen.

Tom Ninkovich (b. 1943)

Raised outside Sanger in California's Central Valley, Tom Ninkovich befriended Alan Oakes, Pete Everwine, and Mark Spoelstra—who introduced him to the folk music scene. He met Larry Hanks and Roger Perkins after moving to Berkeley for school in 1964. While working at the Berkeley Folk Music Festival, he heard Sam Hinton on the Jew's harp, which inspired him to play the instrument, though never as a performer.

Sandy and Caroline Paton

Sandy Paton (1929–2009) was a folk singer and song collector. His wife Caroline (1932–2019) was living in Berkeley when they met at one of his shows. In an era when many folk groups were commercial in nature, they shared a passion for older traditional sounds, which they collected while traveling throughout the United States and British Isles. They started Folk-Legacy Records—first in Vermont, then Connecticut—initially to release field recordings of older singers. Later, they documented the singers and local folk scenes in North America, where their records were especially popular among musicians, clubs, and festivals. Altogether they released more than 120 albums, including some by the people on this set. With Caroline's passing in 2019, Smithsonian Folkways acquired Folk-Legacy and its recordings.

Sandy Paton (guitar) and Caroline Paton singing by a river.







Roger Perkins (1941–2009)

From Claremont, California, Roger Perkins was a talented child and teen musician with great facility in singing and arranging guitar accompaniment for traditional song. He joined with Larry Hanks in 1962 to perform as a duo in San Francisco clubs (also, briefly with Janis Joplin as a trio) and later served on the Sweet's Mill staff. Jorma Kaukonen credits Perkins as the source of the song "Blood-Stained Bandits." Perkins also wrote "Bears," recorded by Quicksilver Messenger Service.



Roger Renwick (b. 1941)

Born in Trinidad and raised in Grenada, Roger Renwick has degrees from McGill University, UCLA, and University of Pennsylvania. He became enamored with traditional folksong during a lengthy stay in England in 1962 and then sang professionally in Toronto and surrounding-area coffee houses from 1963 to 1969, but eventually decided to pursue an academic career instead of a performative one. He began teaching folklore in 1974 at the University of Texas at Austin and is now professor emeritus there. Nearly all his scholarly publications are on British and Anglo-North American folksong.

Top: Roger Perkins and Larry Hanks. Photo courtesy of Larry Hanks, private collection.

Bottom: Sara Grey, Roger Renwick, and Larry Hanks performing at the Ark in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Photo courtesy of Dave Siglin.

Jim Ringer (1936–1992)

From a large singing family in Arkansas, Jim Ringer moved as a child to Clovis, California. As part of the Portable Folk Festival in 1971, he traveled east to perform in several festivals, where he met Sandy and Caroline Paton, and recorded *Waitin' for the Hard Times to Go* (1972) for Folk-Legacy Records.

Don Rollins [aka Abel Fortune] (1929–2020)

Introduced on these tapes as the wild man recluse from Oakhurst, Don Rollins had a brief career as a street-and folk musician performer, but a longer one after 1980 with his name change to Abel Fortune. As artist-in-residence for the Renton, Washington, schools, Fortune taught kids to make hammer dulcimers and limberjacks. Don was the son of a lumber worker who was also a fiddler in a millworkers' band. In "Lady of Carlisle," he takes a novel approach to accompanying his vocals on solo mandolin.

Sandy Rothman (b. 1946)

Growing up in Oakland, California, in the mid-1950s when the Folk Revival was in full swing nationwide, Sandy's influences were many. As an eight-to-ten-year-old, he encountered summer camp counselors who played guitar and banjo. With that background, he eventually discovered KPFA-FM radio's live folk music show *The Midnight Special* and the Berkeley folk scene with its roster of pickers and singers including Dave Fredrickson, Toni Brown, Pete Berg, Steve Talbott, Miriam Stafford, Larry Hanks, Tim Small, and others. He would often see the Southern songster Jesse Fuller at local folk clubs, as well as Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee. Berkeley's first bluegrass group the Redwood Canyon Ramblers was influential. By 1961, he and banjoist (and future capo inventor) Rick Shubb had met and formed their teenage bluegrass band, the Pine Ridge

Ramblers. In 1964, he joined banjoist Jerry Garcia's Black Mountain Boys, then toured with Bill Monroe that summer and came to know Doc Watson in that context. It goes on from there...

Will Scarlett (b. 1948)

Will Scarlett's career as a versatile harmonica player began in Berkeley with the Cleanliness and Godliness Skiffle Band (established in 1966). He recorded with Hot Tuna, David Bromberg, and Rosalie Sorrels, and cites Steve Mann as his primary musical influence and collaborator. He toured with Brownie McGhee and continues to play and teach, and has been involved with the Society for the Preservation and Advancement of Harmonica.

Rick Shubb (b. 1945)

As early as 1959, Shubb was deeply influenced by Earl Scruggs and the bluegrass sounds he heard from a group of Berkeley High School students (Scott Hambly, Neil Rosenberg, and Mayne Smith), who, as the Redwood Canyon Ramblers, brought bluegrass to the Bay Area. Born into a musical family in Oakland, Shubb mastered guitar and banjo, and performed and toured for decades. He studied fine art and design at the California College of Arts and Crafts and in 1969 designed and actualized the concept he and Earl Crabb (aka Dr. Humbead) later copyrighted as the poster, "Humbead's Revised Map of the World (with list of Population)." He is possibly best known as the inventor of the popular Shubb Capo.

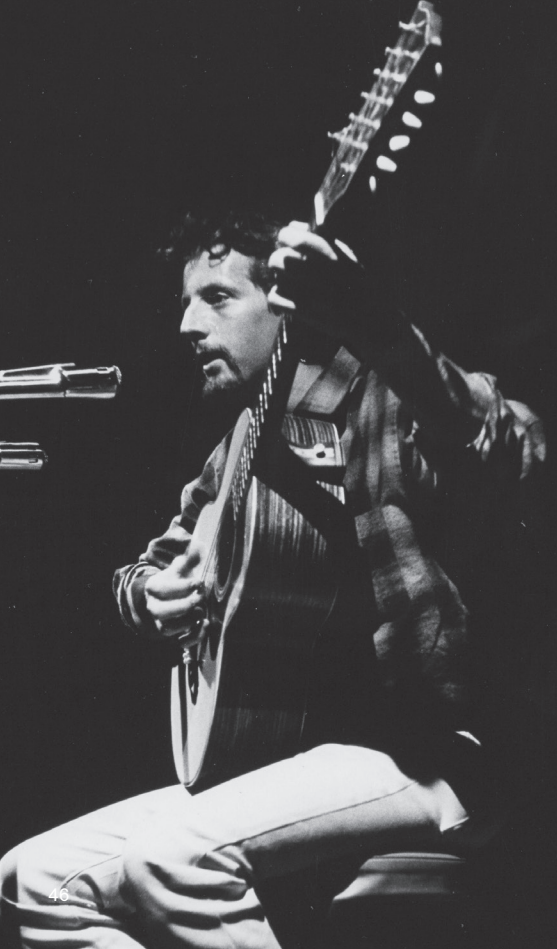


Kilby Snow (1905–1980)

Born in Grayson County, Virginia, John Kilby Snow learned to play autoharp as a child and soon began to enter local fiddlers' contests. Mike Seeger, who was seeking and recording Appalachian music, found Snow and brought him to various festivals and concerts during the folk revival, such as the 1964 Philadelphia Folk Festival, 1966 Newport Folk Festival, and California Autoharp Gathering. Snow spent his life entertaining at parties, schoolhouses, and churches throughout the Appalachian region.

Will Spires (b. 1943)

Will Spires grew up in a musical family and as a young teen was learning American, British, and French folk music on guitar. Hearing Mike Seeger at the 1964 Berkeley Folk Music Festival inspired him to learn fiddle. Spires continues to play music and teaches history in Santa Rosa, California.



Mark Spoelstra (1940–2007)

Mark Spoelstra was a major figure in the folk music scenes of Greenwich Village and Cambridge, Massachusetts, during the 1960s, including a live recording at Cambridge's Club 47 in 1963. Born in Kansas City, Spoelstra was raised in California and moved to New York, where he started out playing for tips in coffee houses. He subsequently played at various clubs as a duo with Bob Dylan. Among his well-known compositions are "White Winged Dove" and "5 and 20 Questions." In the late 1960s, Spoelstra moved back to California and joined the band Frontier Constabulary with Mitch Greenhill. In the early 1970s, he moved to Palo Alto and began to study the Bible and used his music as part of a music ministry from 1974 to 1979.

Mark Spoelstra. Photo by Steven Marcus.

The Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys

Sweet's Mill was a former logging camp east of Fresno. It held a festival and folk music camp, where musicians from the West Coast Folk Scene gathered and learned from each other. There was a strong vocal tradition with shape-note singing and ballads, as well as folk songs and string-band music. The musicians at Sweet's Mill broke some cultural barriers, coming to Berkeley during the folk scare of the 60s, without a single complaint about "The Man" or those horrible mine owners. They simply showed up in Berkeley at the Jabberwock and played nothing but bare-naked fiddle tunes all evening. They packed the place, but they played in good time and in tune. With Ron Hughey in front with his formidable Missouri playing, they showed the world for once and all why the devil's music was still irresistible without all the extra decibels adopted by performance practices of the 1960s. Frank Hicks, whose musical preferences also encompassed rock guitar in jazz bands, played his Gibson Super 400 guitar so vigorously that he furnished the band with the energy he usually deployed from the locomotives he drove for a living.

Jan Threlkeld (b. 1944)

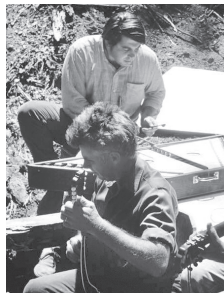
Born in Southern California, Jan Threlkeld became interested in American folk music in the early 1960s. Learning from Pete Seeger's *How to Play the 5-String Banjo* book, Threlkeld taught himself to transcribe banjo tunes into tablature. After moving to Fresno, he worked as a banjo instructor in Cletus Clark's music store and played on his weekly local television show, which led to contact with other local pickers, a friendship with guitarist Frank Hicks, and a chance to play with the Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys. Threlkeld still plays banjo, has contributed to *Banjo Newsletter*, and was technical editor for Bill Evans's *Banjo for Dummies*.

Ron Tinkler (b. 1941)

Growing up in Clovis, California, as a banjo player and “musical buddy” of Jim Ringer, Ron Tinkler became a member of the Portable Folk Festival, along with his wife, Ellen. A lover of country and western music, Ron learned to play pedal-steel guitar and performed occasionally with Kenny Hall and the Sweet’s Mill String Band (with Harry Liedstrand, Cary Lung, and Jim Ringer) who recorded an album for Bay Records.

Ed Trickett (b. 1941)

An “interpreter” of songs and a psychology professor by trade, Ed Trickett began his recording career as part of *Golden Ring: A Gathering of Friends for Making Music* (Folk-Legacy, 1964) and subsequent Folk-Legacy recordings. He attributes the genesis of his interest in folk music to a 1954 summer camp in New Mexico, where Howie Mitchell was a counselor. Trickett collected songs in 1960 during visits to Frank Proffitt in North Carolina and Larry Older in upstate New York. Known for his gentle singing and guitar style, Trickett made several albums as a trio with Ann Mayo Muir and Gordon Bok.



Ed Trickett and Kenny Hall.
Photo by Barry Olivier.

LaWanda Ultan (b. 1932)

Now known as a painter and ceramicist, LaWanda Ultan was raised in Oklahoma, where she learned many songs from her grandmother. In the 1960s, she performed regularly as a singer with banjo and guitar accompaniment at San Francisco Folk Club sing arounds and also as a duo with Allan MacLeod. She published an autobiography, *Over That Mountain*, in 2020.



Doc Watson (1928–2012)

Doc Watson was born in Stoney Fork Township, North Carolina (later known as Deep Gap). In 1960, Ralph Rinzler traveled to Virginia to record Clarence Ashley and encountered Watson for the first time. Thrilled by his discovery, he then managed Watson and introduced him to concert and nightclub audiences around the country. Rinzler produced Watson's first albums for Folkways starting with the *Old Time Music at Clarence Ashley* project (Smithsonian Folkways 40029) in 1961. Afterwards, in order to support his family, Watson started touring nationally (with Clarence Ashley and solo), including to the West Coast. Manny Greenhill assumed his management.

Doc Watson at the UCLA Folk Music Festival in Los Angeles, California, March 25–29, 1964. Photo by Kelly Hart.

THE SONGS

CD 1

1. Beaumont Rag — Hank Bradley and Rick Shubb

Hank Bradley, fiddler; Rick Shubb, banjo, Doc Watson, guitar
From Oakes tape 49

Beaumont Rag is an old Texas fiddle tune first recorded by Smith's Garage Fiddle Band in 1928. It is also a favorite by Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys. The title refers to the town of Beaumont, Texas.

2. Oh, Had I A Golden Thread — Larry Hanks and Roger Perkins

Larry Hanks and Roger Perkins, vocals and guitars
From Oakes tape 16

This is a song written and frequently performed by Pete Seeger.

3. Westphalia Waltz — Ron Hughey, Frank Hicks, and Pete Everwine

Ron Hughey, fiddle; Frank Hicks, guitar; Pete Everwine, banjo
From Oakes tape 33

Immigrants brought this Polish folk song to the United States. Texas fiddler Cotton Collins with the Lone Star Playboys turned it into a Texas waltz named after a local town. Country musicians Hank Thompson and Floyd Tillman made popular recordings.

4. Raggedy Pat — LaWanda Ultan

LaWanda Ultan, unaccompanied vocal
From Oakes tape 61

LaWanda learned this song from her grandmother Tula in Oklahoma at age 12. While performing at the Old Freight in the early 1970s, LaWanda met Jean Ritchie who was also appearing there that night. Jean told her that this song was a 16th-century street vendors' song from England.

5. 8th of January — Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall

Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys: Jan Threlkeld, banjo; Frank Hicks, guitar; Ron Hughey, fiddle; with Kenny Hall, mandolin
From Oakes tape 31

Many important military battles over the years have been celebrated with a fiddle tune—think “Napoleon Crossing the Alps,” “Billy in the Lowground,” and others. This fiddle tune comes from Andrew Jackson’s victory in the Battle of New Orleans, which took place on January 8, 1815. For years, the victory was celebrated on its anniversary. Arkansas teacher and folk singer Jimmy Driftwood hoped to make history more interesting to his students by writing lyrics, which he set to the melody of “The Eighth of January.” The result was a major country-music hit, “The Battle of New Orleans,” for Johnny Horton.

6. Leaning on the Everlasting Arms — Merritt Herring

Merritt Herring, vocal and guitar; Will Spires, fiddle; and assembled singers
From Oakes tape 61

In 1887, Anthony J. Showalter, with the help of Elisha Hoffman, composed this hymn—based on a line in Deuteronomy—after learning of the deaths in the families of two friends. Showalter was a singing school teacher who traveled and taught hymns.

7. The Billboard Song — Doc Watson

Doc Watson, vocal and guitar
From Oakes tape 49

Cy Coben was a 20th-century American songwriter who composed “Nobody’s Child” and “A Good Woman’s Love,” among others. The country comedy duo, Homer and Jethro, recorded and performed this humorous ditty by Coben.

8. Write Me a Few of Yo’ Lines — Mississippi Fred McDowell

Mississippi Fred McDowell, vocal and guitar
From Oakes tape 15

“Write Me a Few of Yo’ Lines” is one of the best-known Fred McDowell songs, possibly due to Bonnie Raitt’s recording of it on her *Takin’ My Time* album and making it a staple of her live act for years. Alan Lomax first recorded McDowell singing it in Como, Mississippi, in 1959. It appears on many of McDowell’s collections.

9. Milwaukee Blues — Dr. Humbead's New Tranquility String Band

Jim Bamford, vocal and guitar; Sue Draheim, fiddle; Mac Benford, banjo
From Oakes tape 51

Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers recorded “Milwaukee Blues” in 1930, one of Poole’s last recordings.

10. Swallow Song — Kathy & Carol

Kathy Larisch and Carol McComb, unaccompanied vocals
From Oakes tape 43

Larisch and McComb performed this song at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival after being given the lyrics by its author, Richard Fariña. It appeared on an album of the 1965 festival.

11. Charlie's Neat and Charlie's Sweet/Weevilly Wheat — Jerry Houck, Larry Hanks, and Tom Ninkovich

Jerry Houck, fretless banjo; Larry Hanks, chalil; Tom Ninkovich, Jew's harp
From Oakes tape 39

This is an instrumental version of an old Scottish song better known as “Over the River to Charlie.” It appears in Captain Simon Fraser’s collection of Scottish songs from 1715 to 1745.

12. Girl I Left in Sunny Tennessee — Jim Ringer, Ron Tinkler and Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys

Jim Ringer, vocal and guitar; Kenny Hall, mandolin; Pete Everwine, banjo; Ron Tinkler, harmony vocals

From Oakes tape 51

Harry Braisted and Stanley Carter wrote and published “The Girl I Loved in Sunny Tennessee” in 1899. That same year, Byron Harlan recorded the song on an Edison wax cylinder. However, it was not until the 1925 Columbia recording by Charlie Poole that it became well-known, selling 65,000 copies. It has been recorded many times since then.

13. Gimme That Old Time Religion — Rev. Gary Davis

Rev. Gary Davis, vocal and guitar

From Oakes tape 19 B

This old gospel song dates to the 19th century, and possibly earlier; it appeared in a book of songs in 1873. Many artists have performed it, but here Davis gives it his distinctive stamp.

14. Talking Union — Gene Bluestein

Gene Bluestein, vocal and banjo

From Oakes tape 18

“Talking Union” comes from the Almanac Singers, who lived in a communal house in

New York City and who churned up a large number of political folk songs. They traveled around the country, playing for union meetings and rallies. At various times, the group included Pete Seeger, Millard Lampell, Bess Lomax, Sis Cunningham, Woody Guthrie, and Arthur Stern. Seeger and Hays later formed the Weavers. Guthrie had been a fan of Robert Lunn, a country music performer who in humorous songs used a particular talking style, which he had learned from Chris Bouchillon before him. The style lent itself perfectly to social commentary, which others—including Bob Dylan—later adopted.

15. All My Friends Gonna Be Strangers – Kilby Snow

Kilby Snow, vocal and autoharp

From Oakes tape 64

Country songwriter Liz Anderson composed “All My Friends Gonna Be Strangers,” which became Merle Haggard’s first top-ten country hit.

16. Texas Quickstep – The Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall

Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys: Ron Hughey, fiddle; Pete Everwine, banjo; Frank Hicks, guitar; Kenny Hall, mandolin

From Oakes tape 28

Originally published in 1842, “Texas Quickstep” is a fiddle tune attributed to Gustave Blessner. The Red Headed Fiddlers recorded it for Brunswick in 1928.



17. Long Time a-Growing — Caroline Paton

Caroline Paton, unaccompanied vocal
From Oakes tape 60

This song, often called “The Trees They Grow So High,” comes from England, where wealthy aristocratic families might arrange marriages to combine family fortunes. Folklorist Kenneth Goldstein believes that the song originated with an historical event in 1631, when a young Lord Craigston died three years after an arranged marriage to Elizabeth Innes, his elder by a few years. In 1958, Sandy and Caroline Paton accompanied noted Scottish folklorist Hamish Henderson from the Scottish School of Scottish Studies to record Jeannie Robertson. There they recorded her daughter Lizzie Higgins singing this song and added it to their own repertoire.

Caroline Paton from a flyer about purchasing Appalachian dulcimers from Sandy and Caroline Paton.

18. Mardi Gras Dance — Jerry Houck

Jerry Houck, fretless banjo

From Oakes tape 39

Jerry Houck learned this song from Harry Oster's field recording of Austin Pitre performing "Le Danse de Mardi Gras," which appeared on the album *Cajun Folk Music* on Prestige Records.

19. Lady of Carlisle — Don Rollins (aka Abel Fortune)

Don Rollins, vocal and mandolin

From Oakes tape 28

This 17th-century ballad is possibly of French origin, but also widespread in the United States and Canada. Cecil Sharp found it in an old book and believed that the story actually happened in the court of François I.

20. White Winged Dove — Mark Spoelstra

Mark Spoelstra, vocal and guitar

From Oakes tape 18

This anti-war ballad appeared in Mark Spoelstra's *5 and Twenty Questions* album (Elektra Records, 1965). Spoelstra was raised a Quaker and became a conscientious objector during the Vietnam War, doing community service and writing many anti-war songs.

21. Sardines and Pork and Beans — Sandy and Caroline Paton

Sandy and Caroline Paton, unaccompanied vocals

From Oakes tape 60

“Sardines and Pork and Beans” is a summer camp song that has also served as a cheer.

22. Hoop-e-Kack — Dad Crockett and Frank Hicks

Dad Crockett, fiddle; Frank Hicks, guitar

From Oakes tape 33

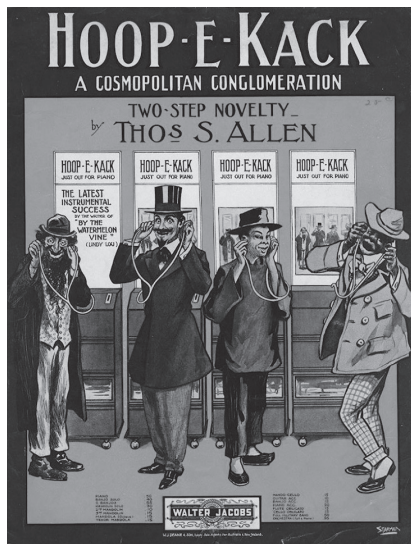
Thomas Allen composed this novelty piece, published in 1908.

23. Down, Down Derry Down — Merritt Herring

Merritt Herring, unaccompanied vocal and live chorus

From Oakes tape 60

This old British folk song has many variants, such as “The Yorkshire Farmer” and the “Yorkshire Bite.”



Hoop-E-Kack sheet music. Courtesy of Deborah Robins collection.

24. Walking Down that Railroad Line — Larry Hanks and Mark Spoelstra

Larry Hanks and Mark Spoelstra, vocals and guitars

From Oakes tape 21

Alan Lomax met Woody Guthrie at a concert in New York in 1940 and invited him to Washington, D.C., where Guthrie recorded this lesser-known song in his 1940 sessions at the Library of Congress.

25. Duna — Ed Trickett

Ed Trickett, vocal and guitar

From Oakes tape 61.

Canadian poet Marjorie Pickthall (1883–1922) wrote “Duna” in 1913. Composer and folklorist Josephine McGill (1877–1919) put the poem to music.

26. Orange Blossom Special — Doc Watson, Hank Bradley, and Rick Shubb

Doc Watson, guitar; Hank Bradley, fiddle; Rick Shubb, banjo

From Oakes tape 50

At many bluegrass festivals and fiddle contests, “Orange Blossom Special” is the grand showpiece. Many fiddlers want to put their own spin on it. Ervin T. Rouse, a fiddler from Florida, wrote the tune, which Chubby Wise made part of his show for years on the Grand Old Opry.

CD 2

1. Fire on the Mountain – The Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall

The Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall, mandolin; Jan Threlkeld, banjo; Ron Hughey, fiddle; Frank Hicks, guitar
From Oakes tape 31 A

Ron Hughey puts his own take on this up-tempo, old fiddle tune with many variants. Fiddler Lowe Stokes remembers his father playing it and recorded a version in the 1920s.

2. When the Curfew Blows – Sandy and Jeanie Darlington

Sandy Darlington, vocals and banjo; Jeanie Darlington, vocals and guitar
From Oakes tape 10

Woody Guthrie wrote “When the Curfew Blows” as one of his songs related to migrant camps in California and recorded the song in Moses Asch’s studio in New York around 1947. In some areas of California, there were curfews against migrant workers being on the streets after posted hours, just as many Southern cities imposed curfews for African Americans.

3. Ragtime Annie — Hank Bradley and Hank Shubb, feat. Doc Watson

Hank Bradley, fiddle; Doc Watson, guitar; Rick Shubb, banjo

From Oakes tape 50

“Ragtime Annie” is a widely known dance tune that may be 100 years old. Texas fiddler Alexander “Eck” Robertson recorded the first version in 1923. Al Hopkins and the Kessinger Brothers also recorded the tune in 1926 and 1930, respectively.

4. The Hounds are Out (The Innocent Hare) — Allan MacLeod

Allan MacLeod, unaccompanied vocal, and assembled singers

From Oakes tape 60

“Tally Ho, the Hounds, Sir” comes from the *Universal Songster or Museum of Mirth*, a songbook published in London in 1826. The English groups, the Copper Family and the Young Tradition, recorded it. Variants include “Sportsmen Arise” and “The Innocent Hare.”

5. Bachelor Blues — The New Lost City Ramblers

Mike Seeger, mandolin; John Cohen, guitar; Tracy Schwarz, fiddle and vocal

From Oakes tape 13

The group learned this song from Steve Ledford and the Mountaineers who recorded it for Bluebird in 1938. Ledford was a member of the J.E. and Wade Mainer Mountaineers.

6. Jimmy Whelan — Roger Renwick

Roger Renwick, vocal and concertina

From Oakes tape 61

“Jimmy Whelan” is a Canadian tune about a worker dying on a river drive. The death of James Phalen on a tributary of the Ottawa River in 1878 may have inspired the song.

7. Paddy, Won’t You Drink Some Cider? — The Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall

Kenny Hall, vocal and mandolin, and the Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys; Pete Everwine, banjo; Ron Hughey, fiddle; Frank Hicks, guitar

From Oakes tape 31

G.B. Grayson and Henry Whitter recorded this Southern breakdown in 1927. Additional recordings are by Riley Puckett and Clayton McMichen (1929), the Jimmy Johnson String Band (1932), and others.

8. Good Night Waltz — Ron Hughey and Frank Hicks

Ron Hughey, fiddle; Frank Hicks, guitar

From Oakes tape 33

The Leake County Revelers first recorded this fiddle tune in 1927.

9. Searchin' — Kathy & Carol with Will Scarlett

Kathy & Carol, vocals and guitars; Will Scarlett, harmonica
From Oakes tape 45

Kathy and Carol usually sang traditional ballads, but also occasionally branched out into popular music of the day. This song “Searchin’,” was a hit composition by the successful rock songwriters Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, who are responsible for such songs as “Hound Dog,” “On Broadway,” “Stand by Me,” “Jailhouse Rock,” and host of hits for the Coasters (including this one).

10. The Clouds Gwine Roll Away — Doc Watson

Doc Watson, vocal, guitar, and harmonica
From Oakes tape 49

Doc Watson learned this from Bill Cox’s 1929 recording of the song, which Vernon Dalhart and Henry Whitter also recorded. Writing credit goes to the prolific Carson Robison, who penned “Carry Me Back to the Lone Prairie” and who frequently collaborated with Dalhart, such as on the legendary performances of “The Prisoner’s Song” and “Wreck of the Old 97.”

11. Northfield — Larry Hanks, Roger Perkins, Kathy Larisch and Carol McComb

Larry Hanks, vocals; Roger Perkins, vocals; Kathy Larisch, vocals; Carol McComb, vocals
From Oakes tape 16

Those who gathered at Sweet's Mill often sang shape-note hymns, which derive from a system developed in the 18th century to help parishioners who did not formally read music to sing hymns. Geometric shapes represented the notes in the hymnals. "Northfield" is an early shape note (or sacred harp) hymn and one of the most popular. The important hymn composer Isaac Watts (1674–1748) wrote the words in 1701. Jeremiah Ingalls (1764–1838) composed the tune ca. 1800, not long before his book *Christian Harmony* (1805).

12. Baby, Let Me Lay It on You — Rev. Gary Davis

Rev. Gary Davis, vocal and guitar

From Oakes tape 19B

Many variants of this song have appeared over the years. The State Street Boys recorded it as "Don't Tear My Clothes" and Blind Boy Fuller as "Mama Let Me Lay it on You" in 1938. Folk singer Eric von Schmidt adapted it as "Baby Let Me Follow You Down," which Bob Dylan recorded.

13. Talking Fishing Blues — Larry Hanks

Larry Hanks, vocal and guitar

From Oakes tape 22

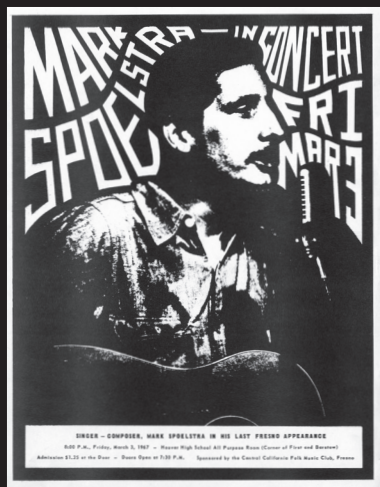
Many Woody Guthrie songs appear on Alan Oakes's tapes, especially by Larry Hanks, who was a Guthrie fan. "Talking Fishing Blues"—one of Woody's many talking blues songs—comes from Guthrie's marathon 1944 recording sessions in Moses Asch's New York studio.

14. Sweet Sunny South — Jerry Houck

Jerry Houck, fretless banjo

From Oakes tape 39

Country musicians in the 20th century widely performed “Sweet Sunny South,” possibly a 19th-century minstrel song, as perhaps their longing for an “idyllic” South. In *Country Music Sources*, scholar Guthrie T. Meade cites W.L. Bloomfield as its author and mentions that it appears in *Buckley’s Song Book for the Parlor: A Collection of New and Popular Songs, as Sung by Buckleys’ New Orleans Serenaders* (1855). Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers performed it, as did Jerry Garcia and David Grisman in more recent years.



15. Play Run Run — Mark Spoelstra

Mark Spoelstra, vocal and guitar

From Oakes tape 18

Mark Spoelstra recorded this song for his *State of Mind* album (Elektra Records, 1966). On this recording, he proudly announces this as his very first performance of the song, “I just finished it today!”

Mark Spoelstra flyer.

16. Cherokee Shuffle — Hank Bradley and Sandy Rothman, feat. Doc Watson

Hank Bradley, fiddle; Rick Shubb, banjo; Doc Watson, guitar; Sandy Rothman, guitar
From Oakes tape 50

“Cherokee Shuffle” is one variant of the fiddle breakdown “Lonesome Indian.” Tommy Jackson made the changes from Tommy Magness’s 1930 “Lost Indian” to his own variant “Cherokee Shuffle.” It is one of the songs Doc Watson performed at his shows during the 1960s.

17. Bringing Mary Home — Kilby Snow

Kilby Snow, vocal and autoharp
From Oakes tape 64

While recording an album for Starday Records, bluegrass musician Bill Clifton received some lyrics, which derive from a ghostly folkloric theme called the vanishing hitchhiker. After John Duffey, who was on the session with Clifton, put the lyrics to music, “Bringing Mary Home” became the most popular song by Duffey’s Country Gentlemen. Others recorded it as well, and in one twist that made the driver the ghost, Red Sovine used it for his truck driver song, “Phantom 309.”

18. The Lost Trapper — The Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys with Kenny Hall

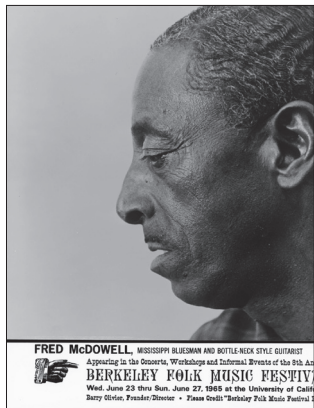
The Sweet’s Mill Mountain Boys: Ron Hughey, fiddle; Pete Everwine, banjo; Frank Hicks, guitar; Kenny Hall, mandolin
From Oakes tape 28

“The Lost Trapper” is an original fiddle tune by West Virginia fiddler John Harvey “Dad” Crockett, who relocated to California in the 1920s and became part of the music scene around Fresno where he played with his family band.

19. Don't Mistreat Nobody (Cause You got a Few Dimes) – Mississippi Fred McDowell

Mississippi Fred McDowell, vocal and guitar

From Oakes tape 15



Publicity photo of Fred McDowell with information about his appearance at the 8th Annual Berkeley Folk Music Festival.

“Don’t Mistreat Nobody” is a Fred McDowell song that has appeared only once before: on a 1971 album *Live at the Gaslight*.

20. Billy in the Lowground – Hank Bradley and Rick Shubb, feat. Doc Watson

Doc Watson, guitar; Hank Bradley, fiddle; Rick Shubb, banjo

From Oakes tape 48B

Still a frequently played fiddle tune, “Billy in the Lowground” first appeared in Irish and Scottish fiddle collections in the 18th century and moved to the United States with immigrants. String bands in the 1920s and 1930s

by Eck Robertson (1922), Fiddlin' John Carson (1923), the Kessinger Brothers (1929), and Lowe Stokes (1930). It also became a favorite for fiddle contests and bluegrass festivals. The tune harkens back to Billy William of Orange's victory over the Irish in the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. The battle took place alongside the River Boyne.

21. The Curlew's Song — Merritt Herring

Merritt Herring, vocal and guitar; unidentified fiddler

From Oakes tape 61

Balladeer Tommy Makem, from a well-known Northern Irish singing family, wrote "The Curlew's Song" and performed it solo during the years he was part of the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem. The curlew is a seabird.

22. Jamie Raeburn's Farewell — Will Spires

Will Spires, vocal and concertina

From Oakes tape 60

Penal transportation was a method of punishment during the British Colonial era by which convicted criminals went to Australia or the Americas rather than imprisonment in Great Britain. Jamie Raeburn was a Glasgow baker convicted of theft and transported. The song appeared as a mid-19th-century broadsheet. The Scottish folk group, the Tannahill Weavers, has performed it many times.

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23. Hesitation Blues —

Rev. Gary Davis

Rev. Gary Davis, vocal and guitar

From Oakes tape 19A

Rev. Gary Davis put his stamp on "Hesitation Blues," an old song published by Smythe, Gilham and Middleton and by W.C. Handy, both in 1915. The first recording was in 1916, but numerous other versions across many genres have appeared in the last hundred years.

Poster for a performance by Reverend Gary Davis at the Berkeley Little Theatre on Friday, February 25, 1966.

24. I'm a Rover and Seldom Sober — Sandy and Caroline Paton

Sandy and Caroline Paton, vocals; with others

From Oakes tape 60.

This 19th-century broadside ballad, popular in the British Isles, is still sung frequently at pubs.

25. O, Them Golden Slippers — Hank Bradley and Rick Shubb

Hank Bradley, fiddle; Rick Shubb, banjo; and Doc Watson, guitar

From Oakes tape 48A

African American songwriter James Bland composed “Golden Slippers” in the late 19th century. Bland wrote more 700 songs, including “Hand Me Down My Walking Cane” and “Carry Me Back to Old Virginny.” The Fisk Jubilee Singers originally performed the song as a spiritual. Its instrumental version has become a standard in American country and bluegrass music, though sometimes performed with Bland’s lyrics. Hank Bradley learned it from a performance of Buddy Pendleton on the radio, but has made a point of varying it each time he plays it.

THE ALAN OAKES COLLECTION (tape number)

10 Sandy and Jeanie Darlington

12 The New Lost City Ramblers (Seeger, Cohen, and Schwarz) home session

16 Larry Hanks and Roger Perkins

18 Mark Spoelstra, Ronnie Gilbert, Pete Seeger, Gene Bluestein at SNCC Benefit, Fresno State

19 The Reverend Gary Davis at Oakes's home and Calderwood home, Fresno, California

21 Larry Hanks and Mark Spoelstra

22 Larry Hanks, concert at Old Gallery, Fresno, California

25 Larry Hanks concert at Beverly Hall, Fresno, California, 1966.

28 Don Rollins [Alan Oakes's Binder says "SMMB 1st Concert Fresno Gallery, 1965"
Ron Hughey, Frank Hicks, Pete Everwine, John White, guitar]

31 Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys rehearsal with Jan Threlkeld and Kenny Hall; Kenny Hall and Jan Threlkeld, banjo

33 Frank Hicks, Ron Hughey, Pete Everwine and Dad Crockett and his son recorded at Pat McGee's House

34 Sweet's Mill Mountain Boys with Otis Pierce, bass and vocal; Jan Threlkeld, banjo; Ron Hughey, fiddle; Frank Hicks, guitar; Pete Everwine, banjo; and Larry Hanks, vocal; Fresno, California concert

36 Kathy & Carol at the Jabberwock, Berkeley, California

- 37** Kathy & Carol and Curt Bouterse at the Jabberwock, Berkeley, California
- 38** Kathy & Carol and Curt Bouterse, and Hank Bradley concert at the Jabberwock, Berkeley, California
- 39** Larry Hanks, Tom Ninkovich, Jerry Houck, 7/28/1966.
- 43** Kathy & Carol with Curt Bouterse at the Jabberwock, Berkeley, California
- 47** Jimmy Tarlton interview with Alan Oakes (Performed with Skillet Lickers then duo with Gid Tanner and Riley Puckett)
- 48** Doc Watson, Hank Bradley, Rick Shubb last concert at the Jabberwock, 1971
- 49** Doc Watson, Hank Bradley, Rick Shubb last concert at the Jabberwock, 1971
- 50** Doc Watson, Hank Bradley, Rick Shubb, Sandy Rothman at Flo and Alan Oakes's home, 12/3/1967
- 51** Jim Ringer, Ron Tinkler, Kenny Hall, Larry Hanks, Frank Hicks, Ron Hughey, Fresno, California, 11/09/1965; Dr. Humbead's New Tranquility String Band (Jim Bamford, Sue Draheim, Mac Benford, Will Spires) 2nd set, mostly Charlie Poole songs.
- 57** Larry Hanks and Roger Perkins Singers Circle, July 1969
- 60** Friends at Singers Circle, 7/15/1969: Allan MacLeod, Sandy and Caroline Paton, Ed Trickett, Sonny & Katy, Merritt Herring, LaWanda Ultan, Will Spires, Roger Renwick
- 61** Friends at at Singers Circle, 7/15/1969: Merritt Herring, Will Spires, Ed Trickett, LaWanda Ultan, David Jones, Dick Holdstock
- 64** Kilby Snow

Credits

Produced by Deborah Robins, Jeff Place, and Henry H. Sapoznik

Annotated by Deborah Robins, Jeff Place, Hank Bradley, and Henry H. Sapoznik

Recorded by Alan Oakes

Original audio restoration and digitization by Mark “Wally” McClellan (The Wally Sound)

Audio assistance by Ronnie Simpkins

Mastered by Jordan Cunningham, Sage Arts

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Executive producers: Huib Schippers, Daniel E. Sheehy, and John Smith

Production manager: Mary Monseur

Production assistant: Kate Harrington

Editorial assistance by James Deutsch

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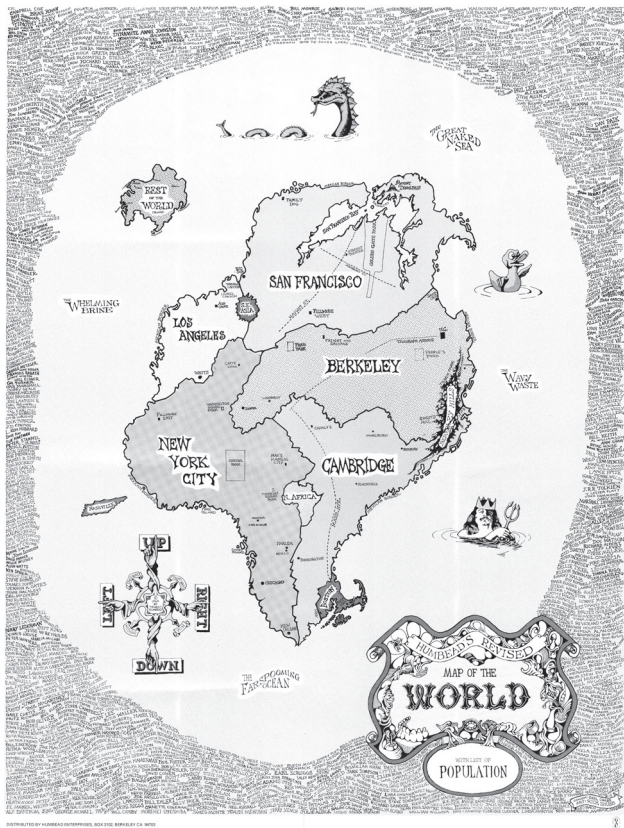
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Opposite: Humbead's Revised Map of the World. Rendering by Rick Shubb, concept by Earl Crabb, used by permission.

Back cover: Crowd sitting on grassy area, listening to a performance at the Berkeley Folk Music Festival. Photo by Cliff Soubier.



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