WOODY'S STORY
As told by WILL GEER & sung by Dick Wingfield
Woody Guthrie — his early life, his travels, his illness. Twenty-four songs.

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It Takes a Worried Man
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Do Re Mi

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Photo by Sid Grossman

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 2930 STEREO
WOODY'S STORY

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BALLADS FROM THE DUST BOWL is the Fourteenth album I've done by myself and with others. I made up my first loose songs when I was a kid, a few about other kids and teachers in school. I left my home state, Oklahoma, and moved over the line up onto the high flat wheat and grazing lands just at the time the first oil derricks were jumping up in front of the cowmen's eyes. I traveled all around over the Texas Panhandle with cowboy fiddle bands, played at farm houses, ranch dances, Chamber of Commerce banquets, centenniels, holidays and the likes. I made up my first written down songs in these days. I hit the highways west with the families that blew out with the big dust storms, played all up and down the southwest, the west coast, played and sang on a Los Angeles radio station for a half an hour a day for two years.

I played around at the cotton pickers strikes and on all kinds of picket lines with Will Geer, and several other actors and entertainers, kept on making up songs and learning new ones from all of the union battlers I would meet. I followed the crops in season, the schools of running fish, the flights of bees and birds, chased rodeos, carnivals, fairs, and celebrations where I tossed my hat on the floor and sung for my tips. I sang for all kinds of picket lines. I went up and down roads. I hit New York in a big blizzard in 1940, and read the papers, made up songs, played in all kinds of halls, homes, apartments, outdoor rallies and meetings that fought for things I liked. I got jobs in every radio station, almost, and hit all of the coast to coast networks. I traveled the country with the Almanac Singers, and we made several albums of records of a militant union flavor. I joined up with the Merchant Marines during the war and made Three Invasions, got torpedoed twice.

And then I was drafted into the Army when Hitler surrendered, I walked into the inducting office on VE day. I took my music box with me on every ship and sung in the PX's and barracks of all the Army Air Fields I stayed at. I kept making up songs. I made a hundred or more records with Moe Asch in his studios between trips of ships and trains, some with Cisco Houston, an NMU Seaman.

I met most of the old Almanacs a day or so after I got my Honorable Discharge, and they had organized a trainload of new Almanacs, and progressive song writers and singers into a group called "Peoples Songs", formed to get the idea you need to you on the day that you need it, the song, the ballad, the chant, or the material that you need for your militant trade union program. I commenced going around singing with them again, and with Peter Seeger, the elected president of "Peoples Songs." I made a new album for Moe Asch for his new DISC COMPANY, "Ballads From The Dust Bowl", songs of the Migratory Worker. A couple of the songs were already made up out in the
Pacific Northwest about the King Columbia River and the Bonneville and Grand Coulee Dams, by the Department of the Interior, Bonneville Power Administration, in Portland, Oregon.

I am now working on several book ideas, books of ballads, songs, stories, tall tales, and some straight facts about things I've seen singing songs for the labor movement. I have had to jack up my fee on account of high prices, and am not able to sing at small gatherings as I once did, trying to reach only the larger crowds, and to devote more time to the books crawling around in my head. I am still open for bookings, but the affair must be large.

WOODY GUTHRIE

SIDE I

I was what you call an Oklahoma boy, Okemah, Oklahoma. And I carved my initials on anything that stands still out there: W.W. Guthrie. My poor ma got all worked up about good and bad things in politics and named me Woodrow Wilson Guthrie, W.W. Guthrie. I remember trying to follow my big sister Clara off to school, my mama come out, she dragged me back to the front porch, and there on that front porch, when I was five years old, I remember making up my first song. The grass and the pickets out there in the front was my first audience.

Listen to the music, music, music
Listen to the music, music, music man.

In those days our folks getting along pretty good. We lived in a great big seven-room yellow house, and folks would ride by in their buggies and surreys and they'd say "Ah, that's Nora and Charlie Guthrie's place."

My mama taught me all kinds of songs. Taught me the songs people sang, songs she knew, we called them songs, we didn't hear about ballads or folk songs; they're just songs. She taught me about how people lived, good and bad, and about how to look at the other person's point of view. Folks down the road, over the tracks.

Swing low (swing low) sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home
(Swing low) swing low sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home.

Well, I looked over Jordan and what did I see
Coming for to carry me home
A whole band of angels coming after me
Coming for to carry me home.

Papa taught us never to be a-scared of anybody or let anyone bully us or scare us. He was a brave man. And our great big seven-room yellow house burned down.

It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long.

Well, I went across the river, I lay me down to sleep
Yes I went across the river, I lay me down to sleep
When I awoke, had shackles on my feet.

And it takes a worried man to sing a worried song
Oh yes it takes a worried man to sing a worried song
I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long.

Twenty-one links of chain around my legs
Twenty-one links of chain around my legs
And on each link is an initial of my name.

Oh, it takes a worried man to sing a worried song
It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long.

That train I ride is twenty-one coaches long
The train I ride is twenty-one coaches long
I'm on that train and I'm bound to be gone.

'Cause it takes a worried man to sing a worried song
O yes it takes a worried man to sing a worried song
I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long.

If anybody asks you who made up this song
If anybody asks you who made up this song
Tell him we did, and we'll sing it all night long.

O yes it takes a worried man to sing a worried song
O yes it takes a worried man to sing a worried song
I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long.

I can remember mama coming in the bedroom and saying:
"Come on you young sprout, cover up; you're my newest curly-headed youngest hardest-headed one."
"What's a hard-head, mama?"
"Means you go and do what you want to. "It's my head and my mammy" "Yes, you bet it is."
"Mama, do you know, do you know what I, who I'd marry if I was grown up?" "No, haven't the least inkling. Who?" "You. ""Me?"
"Ah, can't I marry you too?" "Certainly not.
"Why?" "You can't marry your old mammy, you'll have to look around for another girl-mamman."
"Mama do you know what that mean little kid across the alley said?" "No."
He asked me how come our pretty big seven-room yellow house burned down and he wanted to know if you set a match and set fire to it.

It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long.

"Woody, have you got that box of matches again?"
"Hmmm, just playing with it. What are you playing?"
"War."
"You're too big to play war, games like that, you're twelve years old now, Woody."
"You don't get too old to play war, mama."
"Well, you just have a war with something else. You see that, firebug? See that?" "Don't be scared, mama."
"Ah, mean old Woody, mean to his mama, mean, cause I just can't understand how I get all worked up when I see something like that. Your little eyes haven't seen, maybe you don't even halfway guess the misery that goes through my mind when I hold a match and I'm afraid, though, Woody, there's nothing on the face of this earth that scares me, Woody, Woody..."

That train pulled out, twenty-one coaches long
That train pulled out, twenty-one coaches long
I'm on that train, and I'm bound to be gone.

Mama kept on having spells like that. My papa went off to the hospital, the neighbors come in and they fetched her off and they took her on the Westbound passenger train to the Asylum. "Bye Woody, 'Bye Woody. Woody."
This train is a-leaving town, well, it's a hitting the road
And a-heading on down
Well this train is bound for glory, this train.

This train don't carry no gamblers, this train
This train don't carry no gamblers, this train
This train don't carry no gamblers, llars, thieves or big-shot ramblers
This train is bound for glory, this train.

An uncle of mine taught me to play the guitar, I went around to all of the square dances all over the Texas plains, right out you can say what you think in a song. And, on the old Dust Bowl, with the oil boom over and the wheat rolled over and hard-working people just stumbling around bothered with mortgages, debts and bills, and worries of every known kind, I'd seen that there was plenty to make up songs about.

I been doing some hard traveling, I thought you knew
I been doing some hard traveling, way down the road
I been doing some hard traveling, hard rambling, hard gambling
I been doing some hard traveling on.

I been riding them fast rattlers, I thought you knew
I been riding them flat wheelers way down the road
I been riding them blind passengers, dead enders picking up cinders
I been having some hard traveling, Lord.

Some people like me, hated me, booted me, jeered me; before long I was kicked out of every old place in the county. I never did make up any songs about cow trails, the moon skipping around through lovers trails; I made up plenty songs of what was wrong, how maybe you could make 'em better. Good or bad.

I'm going down this road feeling bad O Lord,
Yes I'm going down this road feeling bad
I'm going down this road feeling bad, O Lord God
And I ain't gonna be treated this-a-way.

Well now your two-dollar shoe hurts my feet, Lord
Yes your two-dollar shoe hurts my feet, Lord
O your two-dollar shoe hurts my feet, Lord God
And I ain't gonna be treated this-a-way.

Takes a ten-dollar shoe to fit my feet, Lord
Takes a ten-dollar shoe to fit my feet, Lord
Takes a ten-dollar shoe to fit my feet, Lord
And I ain't gonna be treated this-a-way.

Then I got a little braver. I made up songs about what I thought was wrong and how to make it right. Songs of what everybody was thinkin' about, you know, and that.

I ain't afraid of no God-damned deputy sheriff
No and I ain't afraid of no God-damned deputy sheriff
No and I ain't afraid of no God-damned deputy sheriff
And I ain't gonna be treated this-a-way.

I'll get me a deputy sherriff if they get me
Yes, I'll get me a deputy sherriff if they get me
O I'll get me a deputy sherriff if they get me
And I ain't gonna be treated this-a-way.

Hey now you bastards you better leave me alone
Hey now you bastards you better leave me alone
Hey now you bastards you better leave me alone
And I ain't gonna be treated this-a-way.

Now I stayed in Pampa after my mother and father died, I was about fifteen years old, over in the Panhandle of Texas. I got on a little old radio station over there, it had about six or seven watts... and the dust started to begin blowing out there, thirty-three, blew and blew everything away...dust kept getting blacker and blacker, and drought more and more, and rain less and less, and then I thought I'd get on out so I said:

I've sung this song but I'll sing it again
The place that I live in the wild windy plain
Was the month of April, the county of Gray
And all of the people were heard to say

So long, it's been good to know you,
So long, it's been good to know you,
So long, it's been good to know you
This dusty old dust is a-getting my home
And I've got to be drifting along.

Well, the dust storm hits and it hits like thunder
It dusted us over and it dusted us under
It blocked out the traffic, it blocked out the sun,
And straight for home all the people did run, singing

So long, it's been good to know you
So long, it's been good to know you
So long, it's been good to know you
This dusty old dust is a-getting my home
And I've got to be drifting along.

Well the sweethearts sat in the park and they spark
They hugged and they kissed in the dusty old dark
They sighed and they cried and they hugged and they Kissed
Instead of marriage they talked like this

Well so long, it's been good to know you
So long, this text good to know you
So long, it's been good to know you
This dusty old dust is a-getting my home
And I've got to be drifting along.

Well, the telephone rang, it jumped off the wall
And that was the preacher a-making his call
He said "Hi folks, this may be the end
So I gather the price of Salvation from Sin

And it's so long, it's been good to know you
So long, it's been good to know you
So long, it's been good to know you
This dusty old dust is a-getting our home
And I've got to be drifting along.

Well, the churches was jammed and the churches was packed
The dirty old dust was a-blowing so black
That the preacher could not read a word of his text
So he folded his specs and he took up collection, said
So long...so long, long about with two hundred twenty-thousand oakies, that's what they called us. We set out across the Texas Panhandle to Arizona. We got out alone, over in the edge of Arizona, heading straight for the old Peach bowl, California.

Leaving home every day
Lots of folks back home they say
"You're number fourteen thousand for today.
To a paradise to live in or see
If you ain't got the do-re-me Boys
A paradise to live in or see
If you ain't got the do-re-me.
You want to buy a home or farm, well,
That won't do nobody harm,
Take your vacation by the mountains or sea,
Don't trade your cow for a Ford machine and guitars really flew
Pretty whiskey bottles, naked women, and such

Well, John Steinbeck said in his book, Tom Joad, "We buried Grandpa on the Arizona side, and Grandma on the California side. But we made it."

Well, back in nineteen twenty-seven
I had me a farm, I called that heaven.
The prices up and the rains come down
I haul my crops all into town
I got money, bought some groceries and some clothes
Fed the kids and raised a big old family
Then the rains quit and the winds got high
The dirty old dust storm filled the sky
Traded my farm for a Ford machine and
Poured full of this gasoline
It started a-rolling and a-rolling
Deserts and mountains, right on out to the old Peach Bowl.

Well, way up yonder on a mountain road
Had a hot engine and a heavy load
Going pretty fast, we wasn't even stopping
Just bounded up and down like popcorn a-popping
Had a break-down, got a nervous bus there, of sorts.
A mechanic up there told me I had engine trouble

"That's what you got, boy, engine trouble."
Well way up yonder on a mountain road
Way up yonder in the piney wood
Give that rolling Ford a shove,
I was gonna coast just as far as I could
Then it started rolling, picking up speed
Then a hairpin turn, and well, I didn't quite make it.

Man alive, I'm telling, you them fiddles
And guitars really flew
Oh, yes, that Ford took off like a flying squirrel
Plew halfway around the world
Scattered my kids, and my wife, and me all over the side of the mountain
Well, we got to California so dad-gum broke
So dad-gum hungry I thought I'd croak
But I bummed up a 'tater or two
And my wife fixed up some 'tater stew
With the kids full of it and bedded down
Lord, man, I'm telling you
That surely was thin 'tater stew
So damn thin I mean, I could read a magazine through it
And look at the pretty pictures too.
Pretty whiskey bottles, naked women, and such

Well, I've always thought, always figured, always contended that if that stew was just a little bit thinner, just a little bit thinner, some of our politicians could have seen right through it.

I heard that on station KFVD, Tiajuana, Los Angeles. Went right down to meet that feller, that's the first time I heard Woody sing a song, nineteen thirty-six. And we got together, went off into the Imperial Valley, for the lettuce-pickers strike, and sang for the migratory workers, most of the Okies from his home state, went up North into so called Steinbeck country in Salinas, up around into Indio, the date country, and we, uh, there we were picking the apples and the peaches and the cherries, and we all picked apricots...and Woody made up a song there that is pretty popular, too. Pastures of Plenty.

It's a mighty hard row that my poor handshave hoed
Out of your dustbowl and Westward we roll
And your deserts was hot and your mountains was cold.

I've worked in your orchards of peaches and prunes
Slept on the ground in the light of your moon
On the edge of your city you'll see us and then
We come with the dust and we go with the wind.

California, Arizona, I've made all your crops
Then it's north up to Oregon to gather your hops
Pick the beets from the ground, cut the grapes from the vine
To set upon your table that light sparkling wine.
Green pastures of plenty from dry desert
From the Green Coulee Dam where the waters
run down
Every state in the Union is a migrant has been
We'll work in this fight and we'll fight till
we win.

It's always we ramble, that river and I
All along your green valley I'll work till
I die
My lands I will defend with my life need it
be
For my pastures of plenty must always be
free.

Woody and I got a job in Holly in a picture called "Fight For Life" U.S. Film Service. We both got our job because our wives were pregnant, pregnant, as Woody called it then. The picture needed eight months wide long gone to be taking the picture at a certain time. Well, we were up in this part of the country, we done the first shooting, I was a doctor in this picture, "The Fight for Life", we got word up in San Jose and John Steinbeck told us we had to get back, he was supervisor on the picture, so we hurried up in Woody's old Ford, we got along pretty good, we came picking people up along the way...we came down through past Bakersfield, we got on a grapevine curve there, and I looked ahead and there was a wheel off the car running up front of us. I said "Woody, looka here, the wheel, the wheel's off the car!" Woody said, "Well, let's catch up with it."

Well, we got to the hospital all right, and Woody's wife was havin' her baby; the bab" was named Will, after me, William...Funny thing you know, how life the tricks life plays. That boy William when he was twenty-one years old, he was killed on that same highway.

It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long.

The train I ride is twenty-one coaches
The train I ride is twenty-one coaches long
I'm on that train.

My daughter Kate was born in that picture. Right after that I took off, I got a job in New York playing Peter Lester in Tobacco Road; I told Woody I'd be seeing him, to keep on singing songs, making up songs; he made up a new song every day. And I went back East, and about a week or two after Woody packed Kate and my wife on the train that's my favorite wife; got to Kansas City, she got off to mail a letter, left her guitar and Katie on the train. Train went off to Chicago without her. Next day she caught up. Mother that got lost got caught up. Such a hullaballoo about it in all the newspapers, front page stories and everything. Woody heard about it (even though he didn't read the papers). And, they put the family in "Who's Who In America"...don't pay any attention to publicity and all that, "Who's Who In America's just a plot to get you to buy a copy.

Well, Woody set off to follow us come back and get into the big time himself. He really hit the big time, he better come back and get some shoes on those kids. He had two or three by that time, back in Oklahoma. So he set back to visit them for awhile, came right back through Arizona, the Panhandle of Texas, and back through Oklahoma leaves enough to say hello to his wife and pick up some underwear, sewed himself into it for the winter. He came across the country, through Kansas, he got there to New York in the blizzard of 1940, in February. Well, on the way he certainly made up some the things, in this song, that's world-famous today.
It was a good thought for Hedda Geer and Katie; Katie is a seven months old, red-headed; husky, pretty like a picture. Hedda's older than that; she's the mama, and pretty like another picture, and I dedicate this song to the Geer family and the bum situation up and down the Bowery and the Skid Rows all over the country. This bum situation is a pretty big situation. Since I wrote up this song, another third Geer has been added; her name is Ella Geer, and this song is just as much Ellie's as it is any of the other Geers; and this makes a song with four Geers forward and none backward. The Bum Situation.

Well, I'm just a lonesome traveler, the greatest historical bum
Highly educated, out of history I have come well, I built the Rock of Ages, that was in the year of One
And that was about the biggest thing that man has ever done.

I'll work in the garden of Eden, well that was in the year of Two
I joined the apple picker's union and I always paid my dues
Well, it was me who signed the contract to raise the rising sun
And that was about the biggest thing that man has ever done.

I defeated Pharaoh's army, I defeated the mighty Turks
And I brought down Nero's army in about ten minutes work
Oh, I fought the greatest leaders and I whooped 'em every one

I was in the revolution when we set the country free
I was at Bull Run, and in Civil War, all three of 'em
Well, we won the battle of Hastings, we won at Bull Run
And that was about the biggest thing that man has ever done.

Now, there's a feller 'cross the ocean, I guess you know his well
His name was Adolph Hitler, God damn his soul to hell
Oh, we kicked him in his panzers, then we put him on the run
And that was about the biggest thing that man has ever done.

SIDE III

The weavers sang all over then, got on the show called Cavalcade of America. I was playing Tobacco Road, and somebody, announcer, there called him a hill-billy, so he quit the show and went right back to Oklahoma and came back next week. You never knew where Woody was going to be; he might go down, and say "I'm going down to the corner and get myself cigarettes", and he'd end up in Oklahoma, and tell you he's coming back again.

He kept coming back a couple, three times, he wrote a lot of his songs in our bathtub. Woody loved to write songs while he was sitting on the pot in the morning, we used to ease him off a little bit, and he'd keep right on playing and singing. He wrote a lot of his songs, famous ones like Jesus Christ there; and of course, comin' across the country from Oklahoma in those days, he believed 'cause his mother had told him it was very dangerous not to get unzipped from your underwear and when he came across in the blizzard, between my daughter Katie's diapers and Woody's underwear, the place was getting pretty raunchy.

So I had to, said something's gotta be done. So I went in the bathroom and eased him over a bit and I stripped off and I poured a great big bottle of pine oil all into the tub and I said "Woody, I tell you just like the piney woods of Texas. Why don't you climb in?" He says "Oh no, hell no." Says "It's very damp weather, I'll catch pneumonia." So we sitting, he singin' away, I said "Oman Woody." "Nope no pneumonia, pneumonia weather." So I yanked at his britches and pulled them off and pulled him in the tub with the pine oil and scrubbed him down good, there was a great commotion there, we wrestled around awhile, and finally came out feeling pretty good and smelling pretty sweet and I gave him a bottle of gin; and the next morning I come in there, he was right in the bathtub with the pine oil and singing a hymn. From then on, well, every day I had to give him a bottle of pine oil and a bottle of gin, but got pretty expensive. He got to smelling so sweet that he went out and got himself a new wife. Was a Martha Graham dancer, Marjory Maza, and he caught hold of her, he got to smelling so sweet that he got his new wife, got married, and the moral of this story is, to all you young children when you're scrubbin' and they don't want to take a bath, Woody is now flat on his back and this same Marjory Maza, Martha Graham dancer is taking care of him hand and foot. That's the moral of the virtues and rewards of taking a bath.

Ah, Woody went on to do a lot of interesting things. We had a first hootenanny in 1940, right on stage at the Forest Theatre, where we were doin' Tobacco Road. It was with the share croppers that time Tallulah Bankhead was having orgasms about the play, and she wanted to have benefits for them, but instead we had a benefit for the share croppers. And we had a wangle-doodle, the first hootenanny, in the country, I think; certainly the first one uptown in York, and, uh, in it was Burl Ives, and Alan Lomax was the master of ceremonies, and Aunt Molly Jackson, she came out from her cowpatch down in Illinois, and, uh, we had, best of all, Woody Guthrie's first appearance in New York, I think, and really, and, uh, Burl Ives first appearance, and old Leadbelly came out to do his broom dance, and sing his song. And we even allowed Pete Seeger to hang around the edges and sing a few of the songs. "when the Saints Go Marching In".

Well when the saints (when the saints) Go marchin' in
O when the saints go marchin' in (O Lord) O Lord I want to be in that number When the saints go marchin' in
O when the new world is revealed O when the new world is revealed O Lord I want to be in that number When the new world is revealed

When the Sun Refuse to shine O when the sun refuse to shine O Lord I want to be in that number When the saints go marchin' in

Hallelujah, Woody was in the big time. He set off with Alan Lomax, the MC of that show to do the recording of the Library of Congress, same recordings you can now hear, big albums along with Huddie Ledbetter, Huddie Leadbelly, and, in passing through Philadelphia he sang a song that he'd written about a Philadelphia lawyer, a very popular song at that time period, which has been dramatized, made a pretty good play. Philadelphia lawyer.

Way out in Reno Nevada Where the romances bloom and fade There was a great Philadelphia lawyer In love with a Hollywood maid

Come love, and we will wander Out where the lights are so bright I'll win you a divorce from your husband And we could get married tonight

But Bill was a gun-totin' cowboy Six notches was carved on his gun And all of the boys around Reno Left Bill's Hollywood maiden alone
One night when Bill was returning
From riding the range in the cold
He thought of his Hollywood maiden
Her love was as lasting as gold

Bill drew near to the window
The shadows he saw on the shade
Was the great Philadelphia lawyer
Making love to Bill's Hollywood maid

And the night was as still as the desert
The moon hung high overhead
As Bill waited there at the window
He could hear every word that they said

Your face is so fair and so lovely
Your form is so rare and divine
Come go back with me to Philadelphia
And leave this vile cowboy behind

Now tonight back in old Pennsylvania
Beneath those beautiful pines
There is one less Philadelphia lawyer
In old Pennsylvania tonight.

That's a typical Woody song, the understatement of this period. Someone that Will Rogers used to do too 'course, who came from, found his home town in Oklahoma.

Down Washington we found out Huddie Leadbelly and Alan Lomax and Woody and I, we couldn't stay in the same quarters, the same house anywhere with Huddie Leadbelly. Who was a great folk singer of the time that Alan Lomax's father found down in prison. And as Woody said about Huddie Leadbelly, "He was the greatest fool singer of all time. He had a loud powerful voice; his arms were like iron stove-pipes, and his face was so awful marred and ugly it was just beautiful. And we used to sing there, he wrote up a song in Washington, D.C. because they couldn't all stay together. Washington, D.C. is a bourgeois town. I'm gonna spread that news all around. And other songs that became pretty familiar later on, when the Weavers came, after the Almanacs, on the record that made Leadbelly's widow a very good sizable profit and after Woody had gone, after Leadbelly had gone, with also Woody's song, "So Long" and the song that Huddie made famous that time was "Good Night Irene" -- it's a little tribute to Woody's great friend. (we'll just run a little bit of that maybe)

Good night Irene, good night Irene
Good night Irene, good night Irene
I'll see you in my dreams.

Last Saturday night I got married
Me and my wife settled down
Now me and my wife are parted
I'll take another stroll around town

Irene good night Irene, good night Irene
Good night Irene, good night Irene
I'll see you in my dreams.

I love Irene God knows I do
I love her till the day I die
And if Irene turns her back on me
I'll take morphone and die

Irene good night, Irene good night Irene
Good night Irene, good night Irene
I'll see you in my dreams.

Woody made up a lot of records and sung over two hundred songs for Moe Asch, later became the Folkways records; and uh, the Almanacs, the Weavers; he sang for unions and churches, and causes, and said "I don't sing any song that makes fun of your color or yer race. I hate a song that makes you think you aren't any good and I hate a song that makes you think you're born to lose. I am out to prove to you that this is your world, and that it's hit you pretty hard and knocked you for a dozen loops, that you can get up singin'. Now that's religion.

Jesus Christ was a man who traveled through the land
A carpenter true and brave
He said to the rich "give your goods to the poor"
And they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

Jesus Christ was a man, a carpenter by hand
A carpenter true and brave
And a dirty little coward named Judas Iscariot
Laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

Now he went to the humble and he went to the poor
And he went to the sick and the lame
He said that the poor would one day win the world
And they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

This song was written in New York City
With the preachers and the rich men and slaves
If Jesus was to preach like He preached in Galilee
They would lay Jesus Christ in his grave.

We used to do a lot of booking together for various causes, anti-fascist causes, and all those premature anti-fascists later got called up before the McCarthy committee; we played a lot of benefits around for maybe five dollars a booking a night to buy shoes for our kids and uh, some of the big organizations of course, we'd sing in the early days of the organizing of C.I.O., first big organizational drive for trade unions in this country. And we sang a lot of union songs, "There Once Was A Union Maid", er, yeah, "A Better World A-Comin'".

There's a better world a-comin'
I'll tell you why why why
There's a better world a-comin'
Don't you know know know
There's a better world a-comin'
Don't you know.

We will beat them in the air, in the ground
On the sea, in the sky, everywhere
There's a better world a-comin'
Don't you know.

I'm a union man, it's a union war
It's a union world I'm fightin' for
There's a better world a-comin'
Don't you know.

Out of marchin' out of battlin'
You can hear the chains a-rattlin'
There's a better world a-comin'
Don't you know.

And back East they loved the songs about the outlaws, songs like Jesse James, for instance, went to the same tune as "Jesus Christ". Then we also sung a song about Pretty Boy Floyd; that we always loved; I think it's a great song. Pretty Boy Floyd.

'Gather round children, a story I will tell
'bout Pretty Boy Floyd, the outlaw
Oklahoma knew him well.

'Twas on a Saturday afternoon
In the town of Shawnee
His wife beside him on the wagon
As into town they rolled.
Woody said "I can't invent news today, nobody can, but I can do my little job, which is fix the days news up so that you can sing it up." This about that ship that was sunk by a Nazi torpedo before we declared war on Hitler and Mussolini.

Have you heard of a ship called The Good Ruben James

Manned by hard-fighting men both of honor and fame
She flew the stars and stripes of this land of the free
But tonight she's in her grave at the bottom of the sea.

Tell me what were their names, tell me what were their names
Did you have a friend on the good Ruben James?
Tell me what were their names, tell me what were their names
Did you have a friend on that good Ruben James?

Well, eight hundred men went down in that dark and watery grave
When that good ship went down only forty-four were saved
'Twas the last day of October when they saved the forty-four
From the cold Iceland waters of that cold Iceland shore.

Tell me what were their names, tell me what were their names
Did you have a friend on the good Ruben James?
Tell me what were their names, tell me what were their names
Did you have a friend on the good Ruben James?

Tonight there are lights in our country so bright
In the farms and the cities they are telling of this fight.
And how the mighty battleships steam the bounding main 
And remember the name of the good Ruben James.

Tell me what were their names, tell me what were their names
Did you have a friend on the good Ruben James
Tell me what were their names, tell me what were their names
Did you have a friend on the good Ruben James?

Yes, Woody had a friend on that ship. His name was Slim Houston. He has a brother Cisco Houston, two brothers, hitchhiked across from Eagle Rock to join us. Slim was killed in the engine room of that ship. Woody and Cisco went out shopping together, and they made two or three trips together, they were torpedoed twice. Off Palermo, and Woody came back, and we went campaigning around, to elect Franklin D. Roosevelt for the last time, in 1936. We toured all over the country. Hit all the big C.I.O. towns, campaigned.

When he was down in Akron, as he was goin' across from the train when the show finally closed, Cisco and he and I had been in all these towns together. We sat on the train comin' back from Akron, goin' back into New York City, and he wrote something like this. It developed into a very interesting song later. This is where it started. 'Cause this is the development what got him the final accolade from the Department of 'cause he wasn' t us.

Hit all the big towns, campaigned.

"Last night I got to Akron. A right good rubber town, the army got a hold of him, 'cause he wasn't shipping out just then, he'd been torpedoed several times...and he went down to the army camp...about the Roosevelt button, they got in and out four army camps, back in the same country he came from, around then, to Oklahoma and Texas. He used to write me post-cards, mostly filled with four-letter words he heard in the army. And when he began he the onslight of what Woody had, I suppose some of you have heard of Huntington's Chorea. That time it happens to you, it's hereditary, and begins to come to you when you're in your forties. And his mother got that. And he used to jerk like this, jerk like that, lots of times people said "What the hell you bringing Woody around here to this big mass meeting for; he's drunk; he dare you bring him" was the onslaught of this nervous disease. And then the army cap, he begun to write other letters, too. Quite interesting; there's a great mass of this sort of thing that Woody Guthrie, that same time, will be published. Part of it is in a new book called "Born To Win". And I like, I think, Jake, we ought to have some little tribute to this sort of things, it is a part of the onslaught of what Woody had, I suppose some of you know them well. But now the greatest wonder is in Uncle Sam's fair land. It's the King Columbia River and the big Grand Coulee Dam.

She heads up the Canadian Rockies where the tippling waters glide 
Then she tumbles down the canyon till she meets the salty tide
Of that wide Pacific Ocean where the sun sets 
In that big Grand Coulee country in the land I love the best.

Uncle Sam took up the challenge in the year of thirty-three
For the farmer and the factory and all of you and me
He said "Holl along, Columbia, you can ramble to the sea
But river, when you're rambling, you can do some work for me."

Now in Washington, in Oregon, you hear the guns of the deputy sherrifs, been on top of fast freights in thunderstorms, cyclones, and floods,

"Last night I got to Akron. A right good rubber town
And danced by the light of the moon.
Her heels kept a-rockin' and her knees kept a-knockin' 
Danced with a gal with a Roosevelt button
And danced by the light of the moon.

The Columbia River takes 'em all to the ocean blue,
Snake, Hood, Willamet, and
He wrote plenty songs about the Grand Coulee Dam, he just got a job in the Department of the Interior. His department is the same as the one that just gave him the medal. And some of the songs, twenty, you know some of them, perhaps; "Roll On, Columbia", or "Grand Coulee Dam"..

Through this world of seven wonders, the travelers tell it well. The towers and the gardens, I guess you know them well. But now the greatest wonder is in Uncle Sam's fair land. It's the King Columbia River and the big Grand Coulee Dam.
droughts and dust storms, through the mills of marriage
three times, bankrupted a thousand times, torpedoed
three times and laid out in the army. Say my beau­
tiful brown-eyed baby back home."

So my woman came to me, so strong and plain, while I
was at sea and in the camps, that I vowed and I swore
I would eat you up from your head down to your toes,
if you would freely allow me to do so. And I made you
such a thing of glory in my mind that I wanted to lick
you down like a big pile of dark brown sugar. If
there's a prettier sight on earth than those patched
hairs between your legs, I've never seen or heard
about it. If there's a prettier sight than this long
and viney root that stands up here between my legs,
I've never seen it. My pecker hard, my pecker soft
and limber. My root, my rod; this climbing, long and
jumping pole, this thing that is my gate of life, this
door of mine to which we flow; this that I pass my
creation through; I pass you out and down. This
planting tool, this hose, this dong, dick, this stick
and rod, this staff of birth; these visions come to
me

At some later age I might feel that this exercise is
not needed any more, my glands, my testicles, my:
breast and thigh bones might operate to mix up differ­
ent feelings in me at some other age. I am singing
this here for us thirty-eight year yearlings, and
younger, but when I am sixty-four, I am sure I'll
not ask all of you thirty-four year youngsters to act
like us thirty-fours act. I give unto each year of you
the right to move your moves and to sing your songs
that fit; so I ask you and I tell you to kick your
legs 'round in the air for me; spread your legs apart,
I will be so light and easy that your good feelings
will make you forget all about me, my name, my color,
makes on, politics, my religion; of any of these
same things of your own. And let me be man enough
to stay here in you, till your old spirit is satis­
fied; I will rub it against every move you make. I
will rub your hips, your legs with it; your knees and
stomach with it, your back and breasts and your ears
and lips with it; and you shall beg and bite me and
nibble and kiss me and let me come in as slow as you
want me. I am this kind of man, and I love you with
this kind of way. A way that makes me want to see
you dance naked all around me, and to push your belly
up against my nose so that I can kiss and lick your
hairs down slick with our foams and honeys' and this
over and over and over and on and on. My secret:
nothing on this earth, in life, is vulgar to me.
Nothing around the planet's crust is lowdown to me.
I see nothing obscene around me no matter where my
ten senses scratch around. Love is the only medicine.

And for you, the death dope drug, you, the crazy
needle, the pill, the reefer fag, the hot needle,
the hot spoon, the opie pipe, the dead mattress, gone
and done, the gone life, the heavy headache, the
crackling temples, the wall-eyed eyeballs, the spitty
lips, the gun, the gat, the stick-up, the fight, the
cops, the big chase for more dope, your own fears and
hates can be cured by only one kind. Love-tonic.
That's all my new Bible-book is. The command that
nature, in her control over all the forces of Maw and
Paw, Nature.

And I got Chorea. And it did me in. Huntington's
Chorea. It means that there's no hope nowhere in
the science of medicine for me. And all of you
Choreenites like me, 'cause all of my good nurses
and all of my good medicine-men and all of my good
attendants all look at me and say "by your words,
by your looks, or maybe by your whiskers, there's
just not no hope, no and all treatments known, to
cure me of my dizzy. Maybe Jesus Christ can think
up a cure of some kind. I could see my mother in
Okemah, just plain now, gettin' worser and worser
every passing minute. And all my passing years, even before I saw her getting bad enough really bad enough for any of my next door neighbors to get wind of what she'd done, or even for my own Daddy to get wise at all, and I learned how, if not why it is that my people spend about a good ninety-nine and nine-tenths per cent of their lives and hours just trying to hide the little simple facts of truth and life from one another.

"Good-bye, Woody. Woody, don't be scared, Woody. Don't be scared Woody."

This train is bound for glory, this train
This train is bound for glory, this train
This train is leavin' town, it's hittin' the road and headin' on down
This train is bound for glory, this train.

This train, it don't carry no gamblers, this train
This train, it don't carry no gamblers, this train
This train, it don't carry no gamblers, lears, thieves or big shot ramblers
This train, it's bound for glory, this train.

This train, it don't carry no liars, well, this train
This train, it don't carry no liars, well, this train
This train, it don't carry no liars, well, she's streamlined and a midnight flyer, well
This train is bound for glory, well, this train.

Well, this train is bound for glory, well this train.

Just saying so long, in honor of Woody Guthrie, but like he said, "I ain't dead yet!"

So long, it's been good to know you
So long, It's been good to know you
So long, it's been good to know you
This dusty old dust is a-gettin' my home
And I got to be driftin' along.

So long, it's been good to know you
So long, it's been good to know you.
Illustrations from the collection of Moses Asch