

Swarthmore College

ALUMNI SONGBOOK



2025 Edition
Honoring Willa Freeman Grunes '47 at age 100

Swarthmore College

ALUMNI SONGBOOK

Being a nostalgic collection of songs
designed to elicit joyful group singing
whenever two or three are gathered together
on the lawns or in the halls of Alma Mater.



NOTA BENE

Our Folk Festival Group, the folk who keep the computer lines hot with their never-ending conversation on the folkfestival listserv, the ones who have staged Folk Things the last two Alumni Weekends, decided that this year we'd like to have some song books to facilitate and energize singing.

The selection here is based on song sheets which Willa Freeman Grunes created for the War Years Reunion in 1992 with additional selections from the other participants in the listserv.

There are quite a few songs here, but many more could have been included.

We wish to say up front, that this book is intended for the use of Swarthmore College Alumni on their Alumni Weekend and is neither for sale nor available to the general public. We have not sought permission for the use of copyrighted material.

May, 2001:

A new edition with corrections of errors of spelling and/or words has been prepared for the June 2001 Alumni Weekend.

May, 2010:

The above notes were written by the original compiler and editor, Anne Matthews Rawson '50. The Swarthmore Folk logo was created by John Loven '70.

This expanded edition, with 76 songs, was compiled and edited by Fred Stollnitz '59, with technical assistance from Janet Stollnitz and Audree Penner. The Office of Alumni Relations facilitated publication of this edition.

May, 2011:

Another year, another expansion! In response to a request for suggestions, 44 alumni suggested more than 135 songs that were not included in the 2010 edition. This revision incorporates 45 of the suggested songs (including 11 Rounds), but time constraints precluded adding more. The Classes of 1956, 1966, 1976, and an anonymous donor made financial contributions for Swarthmore Folk activities at Alumni Weekend 2011 that helped to defray the cost of printing and binding. Excellent technical assistance was provided by the same folks as last year, and the Office of Alumni Relations once again facilitated publication.

May, 2012:

In observance of the centennial of Woody Guthrie's birth, the 2012 revision includes 18 of his songs, 13 more than last year, and a note about his songs was added to that section of the book. Eight other songs also were added, including one written by an alumna, bringing the total to 142. As in previous years, Janet Stollnitz provided technical assistance, and Astrid Devaney of the Office of Alumni Relations facilitated publication.

May, 2014:

The 2014 edition celebrates the College's sesquicentennial with a total of 148 songs and honors the life and legacy of Pete Seeger with 21 of Pete's songs, plus notes about his musical legacy.

Thanks to all the alumni who made suggestions, to Janet Stollnitz for technical assistance, and to the Office of Alumni Relations for facilitating production.

May, 2015:

In 2015, we're observing several anniversaries. In honor of the 125th anniversary of the birth of Lead Belly and the 50th anniversary of the Selma-to-Montgomery march and its most important consequence, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Lead Belly's "Bourgeois Blues" has been added, as well as a new section of 11 Civil Rights songs. Thanks to Willa Freeman Grunes '47, Lucy Mallan '54, and Vaneese Thomas '74 for suggesting those songs, to Ken Giles '71 for inspiring a Civil Rights Sing-Along at Alumni Weekend, and to Vaneese for leading it.

Thanks also to Willa for helping us celebrate the 70th anniversary of the first Swarthmore College Intercollegiate Folk Festival (and the 90th anniversary of her birth!) by telling us about the origins of the Festivals and about her role in booking the first two featured folk singers, Richard Dyer-Bennet and Lead Belly, in 1945 and 1946, respectively.

Also, 19 More Songs have been added, making 74 in that section and a total of 178 in the book. Thanks to Ron Hale '65, Peter Meyer '65, and Steve Nathanson '65 for providing those songs, and for pointing out that "The Hamburg Show Song" does not belong in the section of Songs by Swarthmore Authors. However, "Stewball" does. (See those songs for more information!)

Many thanks to Janet Stollnitz for continued technical assistance with desktop publishing, including graphics, layout, and proofreading, and to Wendy Waltman of the Office of Alumni Relations for facilitating production.

May, 2016:

For 2016, a new song has been added to the section of Civil Rights Songs: "One in Six Have Disappeared," which is being introduced to the Swarthmore community by Ken Giles '71 at the second year of an Alumni Weekend sing-along session of civil rights songs, an event that he inspired and Vaneese Thomas '74 led in 2015.

Many thanks to Caitlin Halloran Edwards of the Office of Alumni Relations for facilitating production of this edition.

May, 2018:

In memory of Roger Abrahams '55, a section with four of his songs was added, as well as an appendix with a *Wikipedia* biography and an excerpt from a manuscript describing his recollections of Ralph Rinzler '56 and Pete, Mike, and Peggy Seeger.

The 183 songs in this book probably are a small fraction of those sung by Swarthmoreans over the years, but Swarthmore Folk hope that they bring back happy memories.

Many thanks again to Janet Stollnitz for continued technical assistance with desktop publishing, and to Caitlin Halloran Edwards of the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement for facilitating production of this and the previous edition.

May, 2024:

New editions of the *Swarthmore College Alumni Songbook* have been produced in 2019 and this year. The 2019 edition comprises 197 songs and a two-page Supplement with 6 additional songs.

The book includes several songs that Paul Booth '64 and Robert Gentile '64 compiled in *A Pretty Song Book Fred* in 1964. Booth died on January 17, 2018. His widow, Heather Booth, and his son, Daniel, sent lists of songs that Paul loved to sing, some of which are in the 2019 *Alumni Songbook*.

Paul Booth founded the Swarthmore chapter

of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and after graduation became the SDS national secretary, the start of a distinguished career as an antiwar activist and union organizer. An appendix in memory of Paul contains a *Wikipedia* biography, a *New York Times* obituary, and a laudatory statement by the Executive Director of the National Employment Law Project.

As in 2016 and 2018, Janet Stollnitz provided technical assistance and Caitlin Halloran Edwards of the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement facilitated production in 2019.

Changes in the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement resulted in the 2019 *Songbook* not being reprinted for Alumni Weekend 2022. However, Swarthmore Folk printed a 2022 revision of the *Crum Creek Hymnal*.

The original *Crum Creek Hymnal* was compiled and printed in the week between written and oral Honors exams in 1965. Its preface did not name its compilers and contributors, explaining that the contents had been folk-processed and had become the common property of the Swarthmore community.

The 2022 revision includes 6 songs from the 1965 *Hymnal* and 21 additional songs. It was compiled by Fred Stollnitz '59, with major contributions from Ron Hale '65, Peter Meyer '65, and Mike Meeropol '64. Additional songs were suggested by Ann Ferguson '59, Judy Fletcher '72, and Robby George '77.

In 2024, Melissa Hendrixson, of the Office of Alumni and Family Programs, who works with Garnet Sages (alumni past their 50th Reunion), has been very helpful, and with strong support from Dierdre Konar, Executive Director of Advancement Strategy and Planning, has arranged to have the 2024 edition of the *Alumni Songbook* printed by the College.

The 2024 edition contains 248 songs. That total includes almost all the songs in the 2022 revision of the *Crum Creek Hymnal* and new songs suggested by Nicole Singer '10, Mike Meeropol '64, and Fred Stollnitz '59. A new appendix honors the memory of Peter Schickele '57, H'80, who died on January 16, 2024.

May, 2025:

Willa Freeman Grunes '47, one of the founders

of the Swarthmore College Folk Festivals in 1945 and of Swarthmore Folk in 1998, celebrated her 100th birthday on May 17. She started singing folk songs in her youth, and is still singing them! In her honor, this edition includes a new Appendix G, with a talk she gave at Alumni Weekend 2015, which was based on a talk that she gave at the first Folk Festival Reunion at Alumni Weekend 1998.

A 2011 video recording of Willa's recollections of Lead Belly's participation in the 1946 Folk Festival is at [youtube.com/watch?v=U9m3M5QKfVk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9m3M5QKfVk).

Another new appendix honors the memory of Ralph Lee Smith '51, another founding member of Swarthmore Folk, who died on December 30, 2020, at the age of 93. Appendix S has a copy of his brief history of the Swarthmore College Folk Festivals, published in March 1997 in the *Swarthmore College Bulletin*. That publication was the occasion for the Alumni Office to start a Folk Festivals listserv, on which the discussions gave rise to the first Folk Festival Reunion in 1998.

Appendix S also has a photo of Ralph and articles about him as a writer and as a player and historian of the Appalachian Mountain dulcimer.

Except for corrections of errors, the other contents of this edition are unchanged from the 2024 edition, with the same songs on the same pages, so that both editions can be used in the same singing sessions.

With great gratitude for help from Janet Stollnitz through many years, the *Alumni Songbook* has been produced for the enjoyment of all alumni, in the hope that Swarthmore's strong folk-music traditions will be carried on to future generations.

—Fred Stollnitz '59

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SONGS BY SWARTHMORE AUTHORS

Swarthmore College Alma Mater

(Words: E. J. Taylor '02, perhaps written in 1900 or 1901.
Tune: "Annie Lisle," H. S. Thompson, 1857, arranged by H. L. Brown '16)

Staunch and grey thou stand'st before us,
On the campus fair,
Thy high spirit guarding o'er us,
Who thy blessings share.
Thee we praise with songs of gladness,
Name thy glories o'er,
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater!
Hail, all hail Swarthmore!



Ev'ry stone of Alma Mater
Holds a mem'ry dear;
Ev'ry ripple of Crum's water
Is a greeting clear.
Thee we praise with songs of gladness,
Name thy glories o'er,
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater!
Hail, all hail Swarthmore!

Though we leave thee and though sorrow
Still our laughter gay,
We will tender mem'ries borrow
From the past so gray.
Then you'll hear the old "grads" singing,
As they sang of yore,
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater!
Hail, all hail Swarthmore!

(New verses by Ken Hechler '35, Commencement Speech, 4 June 2001)

I
As we leave old Swarthmore College
and this campus fair,
Join the fight for racial justice,
show the world you care!

You will be remembered one day,
not for wealth or power,
But your work for all the people—
that's your finest hour.

II
There's a need for more crusaders;
give your heart and soul;
Fight against the special interests;
that should be your goal.

We must get along together,
with all peoples too;
Differences should be respected,
and their points of view.

III
Mother Earth needs conservation—
can't you hear her cry?
We must work for preservation,
or the earth will die.

Peace and freedom for all nations;
feed and house the poor.
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater,
Hail, All Hail, Swarthmore!

Yea, Morals Matter

(Original version 1936, lyrics by F. Dudley Perkins '37; one verse from the '40s, and then several more selected from the many written for the War Years Reunion in 1992 by Paul Zall '48 and friends. Tune: "Yes, Jesus Loves Me.")

Swarthmore girls abhor all sin
Drink no whiskey, beer or gin
But a few with morals loose
Slyly sip tomato juice

Chorus:

Yea, morals matter (3x)
No sin at old Swarthmore.

Swarthmore boys are good as gold
Never think of making bold
If the girls are slightly bored
They can go to Haverford

Chorus:

Crum Woods is the co-ed's doom
Whisp'ring shadows fill the gloom
Suddenly there falls a hush
Dean's inspecting underbrush

Chorus:

The Press Box is a sinful den
Not discussed by Swarthmore men
But those nasty boys from Penn
Call it Annex number ten.

Chorus:

1940s:

Mr. Gresley's got the key
But he won't give it up to me.
Now all I can do is hope
Mr. G. won't see this rope.

Chorus:

1992:

Homer Gresley kept the key
To Worth women's chastity
Making sure that they would be
Safe from sex and puberty.

Chorus:

Amy at the switchboard knew
What, where, when, and who with who;
Today they would hire her
At the National Enquirer.

Chorus:

Dragon of the dining room
Mrs. Selmes could spell our doom
On the days that we were late,
Those were days we never ate.

Chorus:

I've Been Sexin' on the Campus

(Tune: "I've Been Working on the Railroad." Words by ?)

I've been sexin' on the campus, all the live-long day.
I've been sexin' on the campus, just to pass the time away—I doubt it.
Can't you hear old Biehle* calling, "Dinah, you come home"?
Can't you hear the captain** shoutin', "Leave my boys alone!"
Dinah, won't you (*silence*) ... (3x) with me, with me?
Dinah, won't you (*silence*) ... (3x) with me?
Someone's in the cloisters with Dinah.
Someone's in the cloisters, I know.
Someone's in the cloisters with Dinah — (*long whistle*)
Fee, fie, fiddle i-o (3x)
(*Whistle the last line.*)

*Miss Biehle was Assistant Dean of Women.

**a reference to the ruler of the Navy V12 unit on campus during World War II

Bland Brand Blanshard

(Words, Burnham Terrell '45. Tune, "Battle Hymn of the Republic")

Bland Brand Blanshard lies amouldring in his grave (3x)
And the Ideal Will goes on.

Chorus:

Green and Bosanquet* forever! (3x)
The Ideal Will goes on!

Blanshard went to Heaven, met the ghost of William James.
The ghost he says to Blanshard, "You're a goddamn dirty name."
Blanshard says, "I'm pleased to meet you, hope you are the same."
And the Ideal Will goes on.

Chorus:

Relations are, said Blanshard, an impossibility.
On that point, with Bradley, I confess I must agree.
Then how, if so, can I agree with him or he with me?
And the Ideal Will goes on.

Chorus:

Blanshard drank a drop or two beyond his proper share.
He saw a purple walrus sitting in his favorite chair.
"Oh dear," he cried, "a horrid beast! I'm glad it isn't there!"
And the Ideal Will goes on.

Chorus:

Verses by later philosophy students—circa 1948:

Bland Brand Blanshard had — Hegel in his head; (3x)
And so they rubbed it in with camphorated oil.

Chorus:

Mrs. Blanshard found him down in Crum, one dark and stormy night.
He said, "My love, I cannot move, 'cause logic true and tight
Has shown to me that Zeno must have been completely right."
And the Ideal Will goes on.

Chorus::

Teddy** said to Brand, "I sadly must report to you:
Your wife was necking madly with a kid from Ethics II."
Said Brand, "I cannot picture it; therefore it is not true."
And the Ideal Will goes on.

Chorus:

* *Thomas Hill Green (1836–1882) and Bernard Bosanquet (1848–1923) were prominent British Idealists.*

** *Teddy Selmes*

Private Enterprise Forever

(Words, Burnham Terrell '45. Tune, "Battle Hymn of the Republic")

We built this mighty nation with our enterprise and cash,
And we've all become accustomed to a periodic crash;
So you really shouldn't grumble if it seems to go to smash,
For profit will prevail!

Chorus: Private enterprise forever (3x)
For profit must prevail!

Toward anarchistic, communistic, socialistic blah,
Revolution, insurrection, strikes, etcetera,
Our attitude will always be a loud and lusty HUAH!
For profit will prevail!

Chorus:

Our workers organize and strike and call us dirty names;
If their wives and kids are starving, we'll admit it is a shame,
But we wish they'd learn to understand
that we are not to blame,

For profit must prevail!
Chorus:

We've organized the N.A.M., the Junior C. of C.;
Our lobbyists are hard at work in Washington, D.C.,
To preserve Congressional confidence in a free economy,
Where profit will prevail!

Chorus:

New lyrics—1990:

The money-lenders loaded up the money-grubber's greed
When the deadbeats couldn't pay the bill,
they all began to bleed
Now the people have to bail them out
because they're guaranteed
Milkin' moolah from you and me.

Chorus: Mike and Ivan get the monee! (3x)
Milkin' moolah from you and me!

Housing, education, jobs, and rain that's acid-free—
It's too bad we can't afford them. Oh we're sad as sad can be,
But on our leader's eloquent lips, this is what we see:
Free of taxes we shall be!

Chorus: Read our lips—No, no new taxes! (3x)
Free from taxes we shall be!

South of the border, the arrangements are insane;
The peons make a living keeping Yankees in cocaine;
The padrones shoot the padres and the medics in the brain,
So the world will remain the same!

Chorus: Siempre power it is ours! (3x)
And the world must remain the same.

More lyrics (upbeat!)—1990:

Hungarians, Rumanians,
and Bulgars, Czechs, and Poles
And the Germans all lit candles
for to liberate their souls;
With a million tiny hammers
they have chipped away the walls;
Now the people must prevail.

Chorus:

Mir i svoboda forever!
Paz y Libertad forever!
Peace and freedom live forever.
Now the people must prevail!

Stalinism's gone to hell and
perestroika's here;
Vodka's out and Gorbys drinks
American root beer;
The guns and bombs are put away;
good will replaces fear;
And a better world is near!

Chorus:

Peace and amity forever! (3x)
A better world is near!

Compromise Song

(Tune: "Tararara Boomdeay")

Let us not antagonize
We must learn to compromise
And to hell with principle
It is not invincible

Don't Send My Boy to Haverford

"Don't send my boy to Haverford,"
the dying mother said.
"Don't send my boy to Haverford,
I'd rather see him dead.
Oh, send my boy to Swarthmore,
to Harvard or Cornell,
But don't send my boy to Haverford;
I'd see him first in Hell!"

Stars of Evening

Everybody takes their hats off to us
Stars of evening shining
Bet your money on the Swarthmore team
'Cause that is the time you'll win. Da, da, da ...
(Repeat verse, end at "win.")

Hard Travelling

(Words: Peter Bergman, David Tucker '58, Jonathan Eberhart, Paul Booth '64,
and Robert Gentile '64. Tune: "Hard Travelin'" by Woody Guthrie)

My name is Orval Faubus, I thought you knowed,
I live in that restricted district, way down the road.
If you act good and you behave, I'm going to make you an honorary slave.
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

I've been doing some hard travelling, I thought you knowed,
I've been doing some hard travelling, way down the road.
Hard travelling, hard rambling, hard drinking and hard gambling,
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.

My name is Chiang Kai-Shek, I thought you knowed,
I live in Imperial Palace, way down the road.
Chinese Reds they get my praise when they only shell us on even days.
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.

My name is Jacqueline Kennedy, I thought you knew,
I live in that great white mansion, way down the rue.
I never thought that I would see so many women looking just like me.
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.

My name is Caroline Kennedy, I thought you knowed,
I live in that big white house, way down the road.
After a while it sure gets hard to play dolls with my security guard.
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.

My name is William Buckley, I thought you knowed,
I live in that Paisley bomb shelter, way down the road.
Against dropping bombs I'll not agitate, as long as the bombs discriminate.
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.

My name is Teddy Kennedy, I thought you knowed,
I'm going to live there in the White House, way down the road.
It sure is sad, you will agree, that the Divine Rights of Kings will end with me.
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.

My name is Nikita Krushchev, I thought you knowed,
I live in Lenin's Tomb, way down the road.
I'd give up Berlin without a fight if I could have Jacqueline for just one night.
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.

My name is David Ben-Gurion, I thought you knowed,
I live at the Wailing Wall, way down the road.
President Smith is really me; we've never denied it publicly.
I've been doing some hard travelling, Lord.



*Paul Booth '64, before
announcing the first
national march against
the war in Vietnam,
April 1965*

Waltzing St. Anselm

Lyrics by St. Anselm and Charles S. Harris '59 (1961)

To be sung (with some ingenuity) to the tune of "Waltzing Matilda"

(Underscore indicates accented syllable.)

If that than which nothing greater can be conceived
Can be conceiv-ed not to exist,
Then 'tis not that than which nothing greater can be conceived;
This is unquestionable, I insist.

Chorus:

Thus spake St. Anselm, thus spake St. Anselm—
Never forgotten, though centuries dead.
And we're awed as we read his proof so ontological;
How can we question a word that he said?

For in that case a being greater can be conceived,
Whose major traits we can easily list:
Namely, that than which nothing greater can be conceived,
And which can NOT be conceived not to exist.

Chorus:

Thus spake St. Anselm, thus spake St. Anselm—
Never forgotten, though centuries dead.
And we're awed as we read his proof so ontological;
How can we question a word that he said?

If that than which nothing greater can be conceived
Has no existence outside of Man's mind,
Then 'tis not that than which nothing greater can be conceived,
Due to the way that the words are defined.

For in that case a being greater can be conceived—
This is, of course, analytically true—
Namely, that than which nothing greater can be conceived,
And which exists in Reality, too.

Final chorus:

Thus spake St. Anselm, thus spake St. Anselm,
Thus spake St. Anselm, with weighty intent.
And we're awed as we read his proof so ontological;
Would that we could understand what he meant.

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Stewball

(Ralph Rinzler '56, Bob Yellin and John Herald wrote this version of an American song about a 1790 Irish horse race much heralded in 19th-century British broadside ballads.)

Oh, Stewball was a racehorse, and I wish he were mine.
He never drank water, he always drank wine.

His bridle was silver, his mane it was gold,
And the worth of his saddle has never been told.

Oh, the fairgrounds were crowded, and Stewball was there
But the betting was heavy on the bay and the mare.

And a-way up yonder, ahead of them all,
Came a-prancin' and a-dancin' my noble Stewball.

I bet on the grey mare, I bet on the bay.
If I'd have bet on ol' Stewball, I'd be a free man today.

Oh, the hoot owl, she hollers, and the turtle dove moans.
I'm a poor boy in trouble, I'm a long way from home.

Oh, Stewball was a racehorse, and I wish he were mine.
He never drank water, he always drank wine.

Hi Ho, Anybody Home

(Words by Claire Faust Stephens McMurray '61.

Tune: "Hey, Ho, Nobody Home"

*Parody based on Douglas Adams' book,
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy)*

Hi Ho, Earth is really gone,
Cleared for a hyperspatial bypass by Vogon
Still we will not pa...nic

Hi Ho, drifting quite alone
Food nor air nor money have we none
For we scorned the Vogon captain's poems

Hi Ho, travel new and old
Hitched a ride aboard the Heart of Gold
Knew the crew, Improbably, in England

Hi Ho, missiles in a shoal
Change to a whale and petunias in a bowl
Crying "Why," and "Oh, no, not aga...in"

Hi Ho, answer 42
Ask the mice—they outrank me and you!
Maybe they could have Earth reconstructed...

Hi Ho, anybody home?
Hi Ho, anybody home?

Theory Boys

(Elizabeth Fein [formerly Elizabeth Nickrenz] '99, ca. 1998)

A E
Comes on the scene in a sharp wool coat

G D
Bright eyes, hair a little too long and big teeth
Wanna strip away the phrases he recites by rote
Wanna find out what's underneath

Don't want to talk about anything I think I know
It won't take long to see I'm hopelessly outclassed
And when you finally get him home
Has he got what it takes to last you?

A D E
One of these days I'm gonna have to get away from theory boys
One of these days I'm gonna have to get away from theory boys

D E
When they read Foucault for fun

A D
That's when you know it's time to run! If they're so much

D E
Smarter than me, why do they act so dumb?

Drinks enough coffee to choke a cow
Smokes so much the Fire Department thought his room was burning
At least he can speak his own language—no-one else knows how
Well that's a skill that's well worth learning—I guess

So we should live and we should love while we can
'Cause man is mortal, life is pointless, God is dead and stuff
Are you a textbook or are you a man?
There's a point after which I've had enough

One of these days I'm gonna have to get away from theory boys
One of these days I'm gonna have to get away from theory boys
When they've always got Nietzsche near
That's the time to run in fear
When did nihilism become endearing?

One of these days I'm gonna have to get away from theory boys
One of these days I'm gonna have to get away from theory boys
When they read Foucault for fun
That's when you know it's time to run
If they're so much smarter than me, why do they act so dumb?

COLLEGE SONGS

Apologies for the sexist lyrics to many of these old songs. The women of their day were nevertheless an independent and intellectual bunch, romantic, amused, no way put down.

A Man Without a Woman (Silver Dollar)

(Alfred Williams, ca. 1907)

A man without a woman is like a ship without a sail,
Is like a boat without a rudder, a kite without a tail.
A man without a woman is like a wreck upon the sand,
And if there's one thing worse, in this universe,
It's a woman, I said, a woman, it's a woman without a man!

Now you can roll a silver dollar 'cross the bar-room floor,
And it'll roll, 'cause it's round.
A woman never knows what a good man she's got,
Until she puts him down!

So listen, my honey, listen to me,
I want you to understand,
Just like a silver dollar goes from hand to hand,
A woman goes from man to man (without a doubt).
A woman goes from man to man.

Pull Your Shades Down, Marianne

(Apparently a pre-1919 parody of "Hold Your Hand Out, Naughty Boy," a British music-hall song recorded in 1913)

Pull your shades down, Marianne (2x)
Late last night, in the pale moonlight, I saw you, I saw you.
You were combing your golden hair; it was laid out on a chair.
If you want to keep your secrets from your future man,
Pull your shades down, Marianne.

Pull your shades down, Marianne (2x)
Late last night, in the pale moonlight, I saw you, I saw you.
You were rolling your eyes of blue; one fell out and broke in two.
If you want to keep your secrets from your future man,
Pull your shades down, Marianne.

Pull your shades down, Marianne (2x)
Late last night, in the pale moonlight, I saw you, I saw you.
You were brushing your teeth of pearl; they were there in a glass of 'earl.
If you want to keep your secrets from your future man,
Pull your shades down, Marianne.

Pull your shades down, Marianne (2x)
Late last night, in the pale moonlight, I saw you, I saw you.
You were touching your pretty leg; then you hung it upon a peg.
If you want to keep your secrets from your future man,
Pull your shades down, Marianne.

An Old Beer Bottle

(James Leisy & Charles Grean, 1954)

An old beer bottle came floating on the foam;
An old beer bottle a thousand miles from home.
And in it was a paper with these words written on:
Whoever finds this bottle will find the beer all gone.

Just like the empty bottle, I drift from beer to beer,
They're not as sweet as your sweet kiss,
But a damn sight more sincere.

(Repeat first verse)

By Phi Delt Doors

By Phi Delt doors we stand alone tonight
Singing songs of fellowship so bright
Brothers all stand fast and true, serenading just for you
So we pledge our love and then we'll keep
Phi Delt's friendship ever deep. We leave you now, so go to sleep.
We will sing again.

Sacred Seal of Phi Kappa Phi

Just put her in a corner, and hold her tight like thiss
Put your arms around her waist, and on her lips a kiss (if she'll let you)
And if she starts to murmur, or if she starts to cry
Just tell her it's the sacred seal of old Phi Kappa Phi

Show Me the Way to Go Home

(Reg. Connelly and Jimmy Campbell, 1925)

Show me the way to go home. I'm tired and I want to go to bed.
I had a little drink about an hour ago, and it went right to my head.
Wherever I may roam, o'er land or sea or foam,
You can always hear me singing this song:
Show me the way to go home ... oh—show me,
Show me the way to go home.

Tell Me Why

Tell me why the stars do shine
Tell me why the ivy twines
Tell me why the sky's so blue
And I will tell you just why I love you.

Because God made the stars to shine
Because God made the ivy twine
Because God made the sky so blue
Because God made you, that's why I love you.

I really think that God above
Created you for me to love.
He picked you out from all the rest
Because he knew, dear, I'd love you the best.

Fraternity Verses:

Tell me why she wears his pin
Tell me why she's strong for him.
Tell me why she is so true.
She told me why and I'll tell you.

Because he is a Phi Delt bold
Because he is a knight of old
Because he wears the sword and shield
That is the reason she had to yield.

Featured Performers at Swarthmore College Folk Festivals and in Swarthmore Folk Programs at Alumni Weekend

Folk Festivals:

1945 Richard Dyer-Bennet
 1946 Lead Belly
 1947 (no Festival)
 1948 Susan Reed, Jerry Reed
 1949 Woody Guthrie, John Jacob Niles
 1950 Jerry Reed
 1951 Oscar Brand, Keith Chalmers
 1952 Richard Dyer-Bennet
 1953 Pete Seeger
 1954 Susan Reed
 1955 Jean Ritchie, Josh White
 1956 (no Festival)
 1957 John Jacob Niles
 1958 Odetta
 1959 Roger Abrahams '55, Ralph Rinzler '56,
 Robin Christenson '57
 1960 The New Lost City Ramblers
 1961 (no Festival; Jean Ritchie and others
 appeared in concerts)
 1962 Pete Seeger, Rev. Gary Davis,
 Ellen Stekert
 1963 Lightnin' Hopkins, Doc Watson,
 Bonnie Dobson, Ramblin' Jack Elliott
 1964 Jesse Fuller, The New Lost City Ramblers,
 Billy Vanaver, Phil Ochs
 1965 Doc Watson, Bill Monroe, Pat Sky,
 Junior Wells' Chicago Blues group
 1966 Son House, Tom Rush
 1967 Skip James, Richie Havens

Alumni Weekends:

1998 Susan Reed
 1999 Saul Broudy singing Lead Belly songs
 2000 Jean Ritchie
 2001 Mike Seeger
 2002 John Wright '62 & Ellen Faber Wright '64
 2003 Joe Hickerson
 2004 Arnold Gessel '54, Ralph Lee Smith '51,
 Marcy Gordon '78, Svitanje¹
 2005 Chester Children's Chorus,
 Richard & Jesse Lenatsky
 2006 Merry Lyin' and Friends²
 2007 Peter Schickele '57
 2008 Three from Virginia: Ralph Lee Smith '51,
 Madeline MacNeil, Lea Coryell
 2009 Peggy Seeger
 2010 Merry Lyin' and Friends²
 2011 Doc Watson and David Holt
 2012 Robby George ('77) and Friends³
 2013 The Tungsten Trio⁴
 2014 John Wright '62 & Ellen Wright '64;
 Alan Hollister '69, Tom O'Donnell '69, &
 John Loven '70; J.J. Johnson '79,
 Emily Aubrey '89 & Melissa Running '94
 2015 Robby George ('77) and Friends⁵
 2016 Freebo (Daniel Friedberg '66) and His
 Fabulous Friends, Roger North '66 and
 Chad Watson
 2017 Robby George ('77) and Friends⁶
 2018 Marcy Gordon '78, John Loven '70 and
 Chuck Kupferschmidt

¹ *Svitanje is an Eastern European women's vocal ensemble.*

² *Merry Lyin' is a folk trio formed in 1966 by Michael Greenwald '70, Laura Hassler '70, and Tony Barrant (Keele University Exchange Scholar 1966-'67). Performing with Merry Lyin' in 2006 and 2010 were the English folk duo John Roberts & Tony Barrant and Lé Lé Mam (women's chorus led by Laura Hassler).*

³ *Daniel Miner '77, Glenn Rosen '77, Robin Ringgold Cockey '77, and Douglas Greason '77*

⁴ *John Loven '70, Neal Collier, and Chuck Kupferschmidt*

⁵ *Daniel Miner '77, Charlie McGovern '80, and Glenn Rosen '77*

⁶ *Robin Ringgold Cockey '77, Daniel Miner '77, Charlie McGovern '80, and Glenn Rosen '77*

SONGS FROM FESTIVAL PERFORMERS



Richard Dyer-Bennet

Quaker Lover

(Richard Dyer-Bennet came to the 1945 Festival and sang us this version, and we adopted it.)

Once there was a Quaker lover, O dear, O dear me,
Courtied a Pres-by-terian's daughter, O dear, O dear me.

Here's a ring cost many a shilling, O dear, O dear me,
Take it and wear it if thou art willing, O dear, O dear me.

What do I care for you and your money, tee-i-dinktum, tee-i-dee
Want a man to call me "Honey," tee-i-dinktum, tee-i-dee.

Madam, I have house and land, O dear, O dear me,
Both shall be at thy command, O dear, O dear me.

What do I care for your house and land, tee-i-dinktum, tee-i-dee,
All I want's a handsome man, tee-i-dinktum, tee-i-dee.

Madam, I have come a courtin', O dear, O dear me,
'Tis not for pleasure nor for sportin', O dear, O dear me.

What do I care for your desire? tee-i-dinktum, tee-i-dee,
If you come you'll court the fire, tee-i-dinktum, tee-i-dee.

I'll go home and tell my mother, O dear, O dear me,
She'll go straight and find me another, O dear, O dear me.

What do I care for you and your mother? tee-i-dinktum, tee-i-dee,
She's an old Quaker and you're another! tee-i-dinktum, tee-i-dee.

Venezuela

(Jerry Reed sang a shorter version at the 1948 Festival.)

I met her in Venezuela
With a basket on her head.
If she loved others she did not say,
But I knew she'd do to pass away,
To pass away the time in Venezuela (2x)

I gave her a beautiful sash of blue,
A beautiful sash of blue,
Because I knew that she would do
With all the tricks I knew she knew
To pass away the time in Venezuela (2x)

And when the wind was out to sea,
The wind was out to sea,
And she was taking leave of me,
I said, "Cheer up, there'll always be
Sailors ashore on leave in Venezuela" (2x)

Her lingo was strange, but the thought of her smile,
The thought of her beautiful smile,
Will haunt me and taunt me for many a mile,
For she was my girl and she did the while
To pass away the time in Venezuela (2x)

The Auld Orange Flute

(Sung by Jerry Reed at the 1948 Festival)

In the County Tyrone, near the town of Dungannon
Where many a ruction meself had a hand in,
Bob Williamson lived, a weaver by trade,
And we all of us thought him a stout Orange blade.

On the 12th of July as it yearly did come,
Bob played on the flute to the sound of the drum,
You may talk of piano or fiddle or lute,
But there's nothin' could sound like the Old Orange Flute.

Now this cunning old Keogh boy surely took us all in,
He married a Papist named Bridget McGinn
Turned Papist himself and forsook the old cause
That gave us our freedom, religion and laws.

Now the boys in the town made much comment upon it
And Bob had to flee to the province of Connaught
He fled with his wife and his fixin's to boot,
And along with the rest took the Old Orange Flute.

To the chapel of a Sunday by the priest's own desire
Bob took the old flute for to play in the choir
He took the old flute for to play at the Mass,
But the instrument shivered and sighed, "Och, alas!"

Bob jumped up and started and got in a flutter,
And dipped the old flute in the bless'd holy water
But blow as he might, it would make not a sound
But "The Protestant Boys" or "Down, Fenians, Lie Down."

At a council of priests there was great disquisition;
They sentenced the flute to severe inquisition,
But the tortures of thumbscrew, of rack and of boot
Could not make a Papist of the Old Orange Flute.

The Old Orange Flute, oh, its fate was pathetic
'Twas branded and burned at the stake as heretic.
With the flames all around it there was heard a strange noise,
'Twas the old flute still playing "The Protestant Boys"!

Turtle Dove

(Also sung by Jerry Reed in 1948)

Tender little turtle dove
Settin' in the pine
Mournin' for his own true love
As I will do for mine, for mine
Why not me for mine?

Up on the mountain the other day
Pretty little flowers grew
Never did I know 'til the other day
What love, oh love could do, could do
What love, oh love could do.

Now she's gone and left me
Standin' in the rain
Cryin' for my own true love
Who's never gonna come again, again
Never gonna come again.

If I had a scolding wife
Tell you as sure as you're born
I'd take her down to New Orleans
Swap her off for corn, for corn
Swap her off for corn.

I am a poor country boy
Money I got none
But there's silver in the stars
And gold in the mornin' sun, sun
Gold in the mornin' sun.



Jerry Reed

Lead Belly Songs

Boll Weevil

(Lead Belly's version of traditional "Boll Weevil Holler")

You can talk about the latest,
The latest of your home,
These boll weevils,
They gonna rob you of a home,
They're a-lookin' for a home. (2x)

The firs' time I seen the boll weevil,
He was sitting on a square.
Next time I seen the boll weevil,
He had his whole family there,
He's a-lookin' for a home. (2x)

The farmer takes the boll weevil,
An' he put 'im on the sand,
The boll weevil he says to the farmer,
"You are treatin' me just like a man.
I'll have a home, I'll have a home.
Then I'll have a home,
then I'll have a home."

Then the farmer, he said to the merchant,
"I never made but one bale,
Before I let you have that last one,
I'll suffer and die in jail.
And I'll have a home, and I'll have a home."

An' the old lady says to her old man,
"I been tryin' that ol' level best,
Keep one o' these ol' boll weevils
Out o' my brand-new cotton dress.
And it's full of holes, and it's full of holes.
Yes, it's full of holes, yes, it's full of holes.
It is a-full o' holes, it is a-full o' holes."

Then the farmer take the boll weevil,
An' he put him in the ice,
The boll weevil said to the farmer,
"You is treatin' me mighty nice.
And I'll have a home, and I'll have a home."

If anybody should come ' long and ask you people,
Who composed this song,
Tell 'em it's Huddie Ledbetter,
He's done been here and gone,
He's a-looking for a home. (6x)

Bring Me Little Water, Sylvie

Bring me little water, Sylvie	Sylvie come a-running
Bring me little water now	Bucket in her hand
Bring me little water, Sylvie	I will bring you water
Ev'ry little once in a while	Fast as I can

Can't you hear me calling you?	Can't you see me coming?
Can't you hurry now?	Can't you see me now?
I need a little bit o' water	I will bring you water
Ev'ry little once in a while	Ev'ry little once in a while

Bring it in a bucket, Sylvie	<i>(Repeat first verse)</i>
Bring it in a bucket now	
Bring it in a bucket, Sylvie	
Ev'ry little once in a while	



*Huddie Ledbetter
(Lead Belly)*

Bourgeois Blues

(Huddie Ledbetter [Lead Belly], 1938)

Listen heah, people, listen to me,
Don't try to buy no home down in Washin' D.C.
'Cause it's a bourgeois town, (hoo) it's a bourgeois town
I got the bourgeois blues, I'm gonna spread the news all aroun'

Me, my sweet wife an' Miss Barnacle run all over that town
Everywhere we go, the people they would turn us down
(Lawd) In a bourgeois town, (hoo) it's a bourgeois town
I got the bourgeois blues, I'm gonna spread the news all aroun'

Some white folks in Wash'i'ton, they know just how
Call a colored man a nigger just to see him bow
(Lawd) In a bourgeois tow', (hoo) it's a bourgeois tow'
I got the bourgeois blues, I'm gonna spread the news all aroun'

Me an' my sweet wife Marthy w' standing upstairs
Heard a white man shoutin', "Want no negroes up there"
He was a bourgeois man (hoo) livin' in a bourgeois town
I got the bourgeois blues, I'm gonna spread the news all aroun'

This is the home of the brave, land of the free
I don't wanta be mistreated by no bourgeoisie
(Lawd) In a bourgeois town, (hoo) it's a bourgeois town
I got the bourgeois blues, I'm gonna spread the news all aroun'

(Notes by Woody Guthrie from *Hard-Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People*, published in 1967)

Don't run off, folks. That just means "bushwa." Bushwa means moneyed folks with a lot of high falooting notions. Think they're just a shade better than you and me, or that they got a perfect right to twist us loose from our money any old way they can, or that Negroes are "niggers" and are to be looked down on, or that colored people are all right so long as they "stay in their own place."

Bushwa folks are just a little tangled up in the head, that's all, you know, just sorta uppity or sissy or think they're smart. Leadbelly is a Negro Blues singer and "King of the Twelve String Guitar," and you can't fool him.

Here's a song he wrote after some business men and landlords in Washington, D.C. had insulted him, his wife, and a carload of friends, some white, some Negro. They refused to let him eat at the same cafe or stay in the same house. They tried several and was turned down. Leadbelly said, "What kind of town is this, anyhow?" and his friends said, "this is a bushwa town." So in a few minutes, Leadbelly exploded with this song and fired it into the faces of the stuck-up Bushwas at several of their very most elegant parties.

I've lived with Leadbelly and his wife Martha many weeks and they're 2 of as good a friends as I ever had. Lots of books have already been written about his prison life and his story and full page pictures has appeared in magazines. Leadbelly, to my notion, and his wife are Real Folks.

Goodnight, Irene

(Huddie Ledbetter and John A. Lomax, 1936)

Chorus (after each verse):

Irene goodnight, Irene goodnight,
Goodnight Irene, goodnight 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'm gonna take another stroll downtown.

Sometimes I live in the country, sometimes I live in town,
Sometimes I have a great notion to jump in the river and drown.

Quit ramblin' and quit gamblin', quit staying out late at night,
Stay home with your wife and family; sit down by the fireside bright.

I asked your mother for you, she told me you was too young.
I wished to God I'd never seen your face, I's sorry you ever was born.

I love Irene, God knows I do, I'll love her 'til the seas run dry,
And if Irene turns her back on me, I'd take morphine and die.

You cause me to weep, you cause me to mourn, you cause me to leave my home,
But the very last words I heard her say was "Please sing me one more song."

Grey Goose

Well, las' Monday mornin',
Lawd, Lawd, Lawd,
Well, las' Monday mornin',
Lawd, Lawd, Lawd.

Similarly:

My daddy went a-huntin'.
Well, he carried along his zulu.
Well, along come a grey goose.
Well, he throwed it to his shoulder,
An' he ram his hammer way back.
Well, he pulled on de trigger.
Well, down he come a-windin'.
He was six weeks a-fallin'.
He was six weeks a-findin'.
An' he put him on de wagon,
An' he taken him to de white house.

Lordy, your wife an' my wife,
Oh, dey give a feather pickin'.
He was six weeks a-pickin'.
An' dey put him on to parboil.
He was six months a-parboil',
An' dey put him on de table,
Now, de fork couldn't stick him,
An' de knife couldn't cut him.
An' dey throwed him in de hog-pen,
An' he broke de ol' sow's jaw-bone.
An' dey taken him to de saw-mill,
An' he broke de saw's teeth out.
An' de las' time I seed him,
Well, he's flyin' across de ocean,
Wid a long string o' goslins,
An' dey all goin': Quink-Quank.

Midnight Special

(Huddie Ledbetter)

Well you wake up in the morning,
Hear the ding dong ring,
You go a-marching to the table,
See the same damn thing;
Well, it's on-a one table,
Knife, a fork and a pan,
And if you say anything about it,
You're in trouble with the man.

Chorus:

Let the Midnight Special
Shine her light on me;
Let the Midnight Special
Shine her ever-loving light on me.

If you ever go to Houston,
You better walk right;
You better not stagger,
You better not fight;
Sheriff Benson will arrest you,
He'll carry you down,
And if the jury finds you guilty,
Penitentiary bound.

Chorus:

Yonder come little Rosie,
How in the world do you know?
I can tell her by her apron,
And the dress she wore.
Umbrella on her shoulder,
Piece of paper in her hand,
She goes a-marching to the captain,
Says, "I want my man."

Chorus:

I don't believe that Rosie loves me.
"Well, tell me why."
She ain't been to see me
Since las' July.
She brought me little coffee
She brought me little tea
Brought me damn near ever'thing
But the jail house key.

Chorus:

Yonder comes Doctor Adams.
"How in the world do you know?"
Well he gave me a tablet
The day befo'.
There ain't no doctor
In all the lan'
Can cure the fever
Of a convict man.

Chorus:

Cotton Fields

When I was a little-bitty baby
My mama would rock me in the cradle
In them old cotton fields back home
Oh, [repeat the 3 lines]

Chorus:

Oh, when them cotton bolls get rotten
You can't pick very much cotton
In them old cotton fields back home

It was down in Lou'siana
Just a mile from Texarkana
In them old cotton fields back home.
Oh, [repeat the 3 lines]

Chorus:

I was over in Arkansas (Arkansaw)
People ask me what you come here for
In them old cotton fields at home
Oh, [repeat the 3 lines]

Chorus:

It may sound a little funny
But you didn't make very much money
In them old cotton fields at home
Oh, [repeat the 3 lines]

Chorus:

Pick a Bale of Cotton

(Repeat each verse before the chorus, also repeated)

Gotta jump down, turn around
to pick a bale of cotton

Jump down, turn around to pick a bale a day.

Chorus: Oh, Lord, I can pick a bale of cotton,
Oh, Lord, I can pick a bale a day.

Me and my gal can pick a bale of cotton

Me and my gal can pick a bale a day.

Chorus:

Me and my wife can pick a bale of cotton

Me and my wife can pick a bale a day.

Chorus:

Me and my buddy can pick a bale of cotton

Me and my buddy can pick a bale a day.

Chorus:

Me and my poppa can pick a bale of cotton

Me and my poppa can pick a bale a day.

Chorus:

Takes a might big man to pick a bale of cotton

Takes a might big man to pick a bale a day.

Chorus:

(Repeat first verse)

Rock Island Line

Chorus: Oh, the Rock Island Line is a mighty good road.

Oh, the Rock Island Line is the road to ride.

Oh, the Rock Island Line is a mighty good road.

If you want to ride, you gotta ride it like you find it.

Get your ticket at the station on the Rock Island Line.

A-B-C double X-Y-Z

Cat's in the cupboard and she cain't see me.

Chorus:

Jesus died to save our sins.

Glory to God, we're gonna need Him again.

Chorus:

I may be right and I may be wrong,
Lawd, you gonna miss me when I'm gone.

Chorus:

Moses stood on the Red Sea shore,
Smitin' the water with a two-by-four.

Chorus:

Take This Hammer

Take dis hammer (huh!), carry it to the captain (huh!). (3x)

You tell him I'm gone (huh!), tell him I'm gone (huh!).

If he asks you (huh!), was I runnin' (huh!), (3x)

You tell him I was flyin' (huh!), tell him I was flyin' (huh!).

If he asks you (huh!), was I laughin' (huh!), (3x)

You tell him I was cryin' (huh!), tell him I was cryin' (huh!).

I don't want no (huh!), cornbread and molasses (huh!). (3x)

They hurt my pride (huh!), they hurt my pride (huh!).

Take dis hammer (huh!), carry it to the captain (huh!). (3x)

You tell him I'm gone (huh!), tell him I'm gone (huh!).

Woody Guthrie Songs



Woody Guthrie Publications, headed by Woody's daughter, Nora Guthrie, maintains "The Official Woody Guthrie Website" at <www.woodyguthrie.org>. The site includes an "alphabetical listing of published and recorded lyrics. In most cases Woody's stylized spelling, punctuation, and grammar have been retained. Like the nasal twang in his singing voice, he meant it that way."

On the Woody Guthrie Website, the page of lyrics for each song gives copyright dates and information about recordings, but not the date when the song was written. In most cases, it also gives no indication of Woody's sources. Many of his lyrics were original, but some were adaptations of other songs. Some of his tunes may have been original, but many were from other songs, with little or no change. In this Alumni Songbook, information about dates and sources is given when available from Wikipedia, from the Mudcat Café <www.mudcat.org>, or from documentation of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

Deportee

(Words, Woody Guthrie, 1948

Often sung to tune by Martin Hoffman)

The crops are all in and the peaches are rotting
The oranges are piled in their creosote dumps
You're flying them back to the Mexican border
To pay all their money to wade back again

Chorus:

Goodbye to my Juan, goodbye Rosalita
Adios mis amigos, Jesus y Maria
You won't have a name

when you ride the big airplane
And all they will call you will be deportee.

My father's own father, he waded that river
They took all the money he made in his life
My brothers and sisters come working the fruit trees,
And they rode the truck till they took down and died.

Chorus:

Some of us are illegal, and some are not wanted,
Our work contract's out and we have to move on;
Six hundred miles to the Mexican border
They chase us like outlaws, like rustlers, like thieves.

Chorus:

We died in your hills, we died in your deserts,
We died in your valleys and died on your plains,
We died 'neath your trees and we died in your bushes,
Both sides of the river, we died just the same.

Chorus:

The sky plane caught fire over Los Gatos Canyon
A fireball of lightning which shook all our hills
Who are these friends, all scattered like dry leaves?
The radio says they are just deportees.

Chorus:

Is this the best way we can grow our big orchards?
Is this the best way we can grow our good fruit?
To fall like dry leaves and rot on my topsoil
And be called by no name except deportees?

Do Re Mi

(Woody Guthrie, 1937)

Lots of folks back East, they say
Is leavin' home every day,
Beatin' the hot old dusty way to the California line.
'Cross the desert sands they roll
Gettin' out of that old dust bowl,
They think they're goin' to a sugar bowl
But here's what they find
Now, the police at the port of entry say,
"You're number fourteen thousand for today."

Oh, if you ain't got the do re mi, folks,
You ain't got the do re mi,
Why, you better go back to beautiful Texas,
Oklahoma, Kansas, Georgia, Tennessee.
California is a garden of Eden,
A paradise to live in or see;
But believe it or not, you won't find it so hot
If you ain't got the do re mi.

You want to buy you a home or a farm
That can't deal nobody harm,
Or take your vacation by the mountains or sea.
Don't swap your old cow for a car,
You better stay right where you are,
You better take this little tip from me.
'Cause I look through the want ads every day
But the headlines on the papers always say:

If you ain't got the do re mi, boys,
You ain't got the do re mi,
Why, you better go back to beautiful Texas,
Oklahoma, Kansas, Georgia, Tennessee.
California is a garden of Eden,
A paradise to live in or see;
But believe it or not, you won't find it so hot
If you ain't got the do re mi.

Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad

(Woody's 1939 version of a song
from the late 1800s or earlier)

I'm blowin' down this old dusty road,
I'm a-blowin' down this old dusty road,
I'm a-blowin' down this old dusty road, Lord, Lord,
An' I ain't a-gonna be treated this a-way.

I'm a-goin' where the water taste like wine,
I'm a-goin' where the water taste like wine,
I'm a-goin' where the water taste like wine, Lord,
An' I ain't a-gonna be treated this way.

I'm a-goin' where the dust storms never blow,
I'm a-goin' where them dust storms never blow,
I'm a-goin' where them dust storms never blow,
blow, blow,
An' I ain't a-gonna be treated this way.

They say I'm a dust bowl refugee,
Yes, they say I'm a dust bowl refugee,
They say I'm a dust bowl refugee, Lord, Lord,
An' I ain't a-gonna be treated this way.

I'm a-lookin' for a job at honest pay,
I'm a-lookin' for a job at honest pay,
I'm a-lookin' for a job at honest pay, Lord, Lord,
An' I ain't a-gonna be treated this way.

My children need three square meals a day,
Now, my children need three square meals a day,
My children need three square meals a day, Lord,
An' I ain't a-gonna be treated this way.

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

Your a-two-dollar shoe hurts my feet,
Your two-dollar shoe hurts my feet,
Yes, your two-dollar shoe hurts my feet,
Lord, Lord,
An' I ain't a-gonna be treated this way.

I'm a-goin' down this old dusty road,
I'm blowin' down this old dusty road,
I'm a-blowin' down this old dusty road, Lord, Lord,
An' I ain't a-gonna be treated this way.

Grand Coulee Dam

(Woody Guthrie, 1941. Tune, "Wabash Cannonball")

Well, the world has seven wonders that the trav'lers always tell,
Some gardens and some towers, I guess you know them well,
But now the greatest wonder is in Uncle Sam's fair land,
It's the big Columbia River and the big Grand Coulee Dam.

She heads up the Canadian Rockies where the rippling waters glide,
Comes a-roaring down the canyon to meet the salty tide,
Of the wide Pacific Ocean where the sun sets in the West
And the big Grand Coulee country in the land I love the best.

In the misty crystal glitter of that wild and windward spray,
Men have fought the pounding waters and met a watery grave,
Well, she tore their boats to splinters but she gave men dreams to dream
Of the day the Coulee Dam would cross that wild and wasted stream.

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, "Roll along, Columbia, you can ramble to the sea,
But river, while you're rambling, you can do some work for me."

Now in Washington and Oregon you can hear the factories hum,
Making chrome and making manganese and light aluminum,
And there roars the flying fortress now to fight for Uncle Sam,
Spawned upon the King Columbia by the big Grand Coulee Dam.

Hard, Ain't It Hard

(Woody's adaptation, around 1938, of "There Is a Tavern in the Town")

There is a house in this old town,
And that's where my true love lays around.
And he takes other women right down on his knee
And he tells them a little tale he won't tell me.

Chorus: It's a-hard and it's hard, ain't it hard
To love one that never did love you?
It's a-hard, and it's hard, ain't it hard, great God,
To love one that never will be true?

First time I seen my true love
He was walkin' by my door.
The next time I saw his false-hearted smile
He was layin' dead and cold on the floor.

Chorus:

Well, who's goin' to kiss your ruby lips,
And who's goin' to hold you to his breast?
And who will talk your future over
While I'm out ramblin' in the West?

Chorus:

Don't go to drinkin' or to gamblin',
Don't go there your sorrows to drown.
That hard-liquor place is a low-down disgrace,
It's the meanest old place in this town.

Chorus:

Hard Travelin'

(Woody Guthrie, 1941)

I've been havin' some hard travelin', I thought you knowed
I've been havin' some hard travelin', way down the road
I've been havin' some hard travelin',
 hard ramblin', hard gamblin'
I've been havin' some hard travelin', lord

I've been ridin' them fast rattlers, I thought you knowed
I've been ridin' them flat wheelers, way down the road
I've been ridin' them blind passengers,
 dead-enders, kickin' up cinders
I've been havin' some hard travelin', lord

I've been hittin' some hard-rock minin',
 I thought you knowed
I've been leanin' on a pressure drill, way down the road
Hammer flyin', air-hose suckin',
 six foot of mud and I shore been a muckin'
And I've been hittin' some hard travelin', lord

I've been hittin' some hard harvestin',
 I thought you knowed
North Dakota to Kansas City, way down the road
Cuttin' that wheat, stackin' that hay,
 and I'm tryin' to make about a dollar a day
And I've been havin' some hard travelin', lord

I've been working that Pittsburgh steel,
 I thought you knowed
I've been a dumpin' that red-hot slag, way down the road
I've been a blasting, I've been a firin',
 I've been a pourin' red-hot iron
I've been hittin' some hard travelin', lord

I've been layin' in a hard-rock jail, I thought you knowed
I've been a laying out 90 days, way down the road
Damned old judge, he said to me,
 "It's 90 days for vagrancy."
And I've been hittin' some hard travelin', lord

I've been walking that Lincoln highway,
 I thought you knowed,
I've been hittin' that 66, way down the road
Heavy load and a worried mind,
 lookin' for a woman that's hard to find,
I've been hittin' some hard travelin', lord

Hobo's Lullaby

(Goebel Reeves, 1934.

*Tune is a harmony of "Just Before the
Battle, Mother," by George F. Root)*

Go to sleep you weary hobo
Let the towns drift slowly by
Can't you hear the steel rails hummin'
That's the hobo's lullaby

I know your clothes are torn and ragged
And your hair is turning gray
Lift your head and smile at trouble
You'll find peace and rest someday

Now don't you worry 'bout tomorrow
Let tomorrow come and go
Tonight you're in a nice warm boxcar
Safe from all that wind and snow

I know the police cause you trouble
They cause trouble everywhere
But when you die and go to Heaven
You'll find no policemen there

So go to sleep you weary hobo
Let the towns drift slowly by
Listen to the steel rails hummin'
That's a hobo's lullaby

The Ladies' Auxiliary

(Woody Guthrie)

Well, the Ladies' Auxiliary
It's a good auxiliary.
'Bout the best auxiliary
That you ever did see.
If you need an auxiliary,
See the Ladies' Auxiliary.
It's the Ladies' Auxiliary.

I Ain't Got No Home

(Woody Guthrie, ca. 1938. Tune adapted from "This World Is Not My Home," an old Southern gospel song.)

I ain't got no home, I'm just a-roamin' 'round,
Just a wandrin' worker, I go from town to town.
And the police make it hard wherever I may go
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore.

My brothers and my sisters
are stranded on this road,
A hot and dusty road that a million feet have trod;
Rich man took my home
and drove me from my door
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore.

Was a-farmin' on the shares,
and always I was poor;
My crops I lay into the banker's store.
My wife took down and died upon the cabin floor,
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore.

I mined in your mines and I gathered in your corn
I been working, mister, since the day I was born
Now I worry all the time like I never did before
'Cause I ain't got no home in this world anymore

Now as I look around, it's mighty plain to see
This world is such a great and a funny place to be;
Oh, the gamblin' man is rich
an' the workin' man is poor,
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore.

Pastures of Plenty

(Woody Guthrie, 1941. Tune, "Pretty Polly")

It's a mighty hard row
that my poor hands have hoed
My poor feet have traveled a hot dusty road
Out of your Dust Bowl and Westward we rolled
And your deserts were hot
and your mountains were cold

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

California, Arizona, I harvest your crops
Well it's North up to Oregon to gather your hops
Dig the beets from your ground,
cut the grapes from your vine
To set on your table your light sparkling wine

Green pastures of plenty from dry desert ground
From the Grand Coulee Dam
where the waters run down
Every state in the Union us migrants have been
We'll work in this fight and we'll fight till we win

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

Philadelphia Lawyer

(Woody Guthrie, 1937. Tune, "The Jealous Lover [Florella]")

Way out in Reno, Nevada, Where the romances bloom and fade, A great Philadelphia lawyer Was in love with a Hollywood maid.	As he drew near to her window, Two shadows he saw on her shade; 'Twas the great Philadelphia lawyer Makin' love to Bill's Hollywood maid.
"Come, love, and we'll go rambling Down where the lights are so bright. I'll win you a divorce from your husband, And we can get married tonight."	The night was as still as the desert, The moon hangin' high overhead. Bill listened awhile through the window, He could hear ev'ry word that they said:
Wild Bill was a gun-totin' cowhand, Ten notches was carved in his gun. And all of the boys around Reno Left Wild Bill's sweetheart alone.	"Your hands are so pretty and lovely, Your form is so rare and divine. Come go back with me to Philadelphia And leave this wild cowboy behind."
One night when Bill was returnin' From ridin' the range in the cold, He thought of his Hollywood sweetheart, Her love was as lasting as gold.	Now tonight back in old Pennsylvania, Among those beautiful pines, There's one less Philadelphia lawyer In old Philadelphia tonight.

Roll On, Columbia

(Words, Woody Guthrie, 1941. Tune based on "Goodnight, Irene")

Chorus:

Roll on, Columbia, roll on
Roll on, Columbia, roll on
Your power is turning our darkness to dawn
So roll on, Columbia, roll on

Green Douglas firs where the waters cut through
Down her wild mountains and canyons she flew
Canadian Northwest to the ocean so blue
Roll on Columbia, roll on

Chorus:

Other great rivers add power to you
Yakima, Snake, and the Klickitat, too
Sandy, Willamette and Hood River too
So roll on, Columbia, roll on

Chorus:

Tom Jefferson's vision would not let him rest
An empire he saw in the Pacific Northwest
Sent Lewis and Clark and they did the rest
So roll on, Columbia, roll on

Chorus:

It's there on your banks
 that we fought many a fight
Sheridan's boys in the blockhouse that night
They saw us in death but never in flight
So roll on Columbia, roll on

Chorus:

Remember the trial when the battle was won?
The wild Indian warriors to the tall timber run
We hung every Indian with smoke in his gun
So roll on, Columbia, roll on

Chorus:

Year after year we had tedious trials
Fighting the rapids and cascades and downs
Indians rest peaceful on Mamelou sound
So roll on, Columbia, roll on

Chorus:

At Bonneville now there are ships in the locks
The waters have risen and cleared all the rocks
Shiploads of plenty will steam past the docks
So roll on, Columbia, roll on

Chorus:

And on up the river is Grand Coulee Dam
The mightiest thing ever built by a man
To run the great factories and water the land
So roll on, Columbia, roll on

Chorus:

These mighty men labored by day and by night
Matching their strength
 'gainst the river's wild flight
Through rapids and falls, they won the hard fight
So roll on, Columbia, roll on

Chorus:



So Long, It's Been Good to Know Yuh

(Woody Guthrie, 1940)

I've sung this song, but I'll sing it again,
Of the place that I lived on the wild windy plains,
In the month called April, county called Gray,
And here's what all of the people there say:

Chorus:

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

A dust storm hit, an' it hit like thunder;
It dusted us over, an' it covered us under;
Blocked out the traffic an' blocked out the sun,
Straight for home all the people did run, singin':

Chorus:

We talked of the end of the world, and then
We'd sing a song an' then sing it again.
We'd sit for an hour an' not say a word,
And then these words would be heard:

Chorus:

The sweethearts they sat
in the dark and they sparked.
They hugged and they kissed in that dusty old dark.
They sighed and they cried
and they hugged and they kissed,
But instead of marriage they talked like this: Honey,

Chorus:

Now, the telephone rang, an' it jumped off the wall,
That was the preacher, a-makin' his call.
He said, "Kind friends, this may be the end;
An' you got your last chance of salvation from sin!"

Well, the churches was jammed,
and the churches was packed,
But that dusty old dust storm blowed so black
That the preacher could not read a word of his text,
So he folded his specs, took up a collection, said:

Chorus:

Stepstone

(Woody's adaptation of "Old Step Stone"
by J. O. Webster, 1880)

I stood on the stepstone when school days was o'er
And longed for the time to go by,
Now that it's gone I stand here tonight
To bid this old stepstone goodbye.

Chorus:

Goodbye to my stepstone, goodbye to my home,
God bless the ones that I leave with a sigh;
Fields will be whitening
And I will be gone to ramble this wide world alone.

I stand on my stepstone at eventide now,
The wind whistles by with a moan;
How did it start and I stand here tonight,
Goodbye to my stepstone and home.

Chorus:

It's hard to be parted from those that we love,
When reverses in fortune have come;
The world's strongest heart strings
have broken in twain,
By the absence of loved ones and home.

Chorus:

This Land Is Your Land

(Woody Guthrie, 1940 to 1944. Tune adapted from the African-American gospel song, "When the World's on Fire")

Chorus:

This land is your land, this land is my land,
From California to the New York Island,
From the redwood forest to the Gulf Stream waters,
This land was made for you and me.

As I was walking that ribbon of highway,
I saw above me that endless skyway,
I saw below me that golden valley.
This land was made for you and me.

Chorus:

I've roamed and rambled, and I followed my footsteps
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts,
While all around me a voice was sounding:
This land was made for you and me.

Chorus:

When the sun came shining, and I was strolling,
And the wheatfields waving, and the dust clouds rolling,
As the fog was lifting, a voice was chanting:
This land was made for you and me.

Chorus:

As I went walking, I saw a sign there,
And on the sign it said "No Trespassing."
But on the other side, it didn't say nothing,
That side was made for you and me.

Chorus:

In the squares of the city, in the shadow of a steeple,
By the relief office, I saw my people;
As they stood there hungry, I stood there asking
Is this land made for you and me?

Chorus:

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

Chorus:

This Train Is Bound For Glory

(Woody's adaptation of a traditional gospel song)

This train is bound for glory, this train.
This train is bound for glory, this train.
This train is bound for glory,
Don't carry nothing but the righteous
and the holy.
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,
Liars, thieves, nor big-shot ramblers,
This train is bound for glory, this train.

This train don't carry no liars, this train;
This train don't carry no liars, this train;
This train don't carry no liars,
She's streamlined and a midnight flyer,
This train don't carry no liars, this train.

This train don't carry no smokers, this train;
This train don't carry no smokers, this train;
This train don't carry no smokers,
Two-bit liars, small-time jokers,
This train don't carry no smokers, this train.

This train don't carry no con men, this train;
This train don't carry no con men, this train;
This train don't carry no con men,
No wheeler-dealers, here-and-gone men,
This train don't carry no con men, this train.

This train don't carry no rustlers, this train;
This train don't carry no rustlers, this train;
This train don't carry no rustlers,
Sidestreet walkers, two-bit hustlers,
This train is bound for glory, this train.

Union Maid

(Woody Guthrie, 1940. Tune, "Red Wing")

There once was a union maid
Who never was afraid
Of goons and ginks and company finks
And deputy sheriffs who made the raids.
She went to the union hall
When a meeting it was called,
And when the Legion boys came 'round,
She always stood her ground.

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Oh, you can't scare me,
I'm sticking to the union,
I'm sticking to the union,
I'm sticking to the union.
Oh, you can't scare me,
I'm sticking to the union.
I'm sticking to the union, till the day I die.

This union maid was wise
To the tricks of company spies.
She couldn't be fooled by a company stool;
She'd always organize the guys.
She always got her way
When she struck for better pay.
She'd show her card to the National Guard,
And this is what she'd say:

You gals who want to be free,
Just take a little tip from me:
Get you a man who's a union man,
And join the Ladies' Auxiliary.
Married life ain't hard
When you got a union card,
And a union man has a happy life
When he's got a union wife.

Walt Whitman's Niece

(Words: Woody Guthrie, 1946; Music: Stephen William Bragg, 1998)

Last night or the night before that,
I won't say which night,
A seaman friend of mine,
I'll not say which seaman,
Walked up to a big old building,
I won't say which building,
And would not have walked up the stairs,
not to say which stairs,
If there had not been two girls,
leaving out the names of those two girls.

I recall a door, a big long room,
I'll not tell which room,
I remember a big blue rug,
but I can't say which rug,
A girl took down a book of poems,
not to say which book of poems,
And as she read I laid my head,
and I can't tell which head,
Down in her lap, and I can mention which lap.

My seaman buddy and girl moved off
after a couple of pages, and there I was,
All night long, laying and listening
and forgetting the poems.
And as well as I could recall,
or my seaman could recollect,
My girl had told us that she was a niece
of Walt Whitman, but not which niece,
And it takes a night and a girl
and a book of this kind
A long, long time to find its way back.

Pete Seeger Songs



Pete Seeger
May 3, 1919 – January 27, 2014

The centennial of Pete Seeger's birth is being celebrated in numerous events around the world in 2019. Many of them are listed on the Smithsonian Institution's website at <spiritofseeger.com>.

Pete Seeger's life, music, and legacy encapsulated nearly a century of American history and culture. He has immersed himself in folk music and used it, like Johnny Appleseed, to "plant the seeds of a better tomorrow in the homes across our land."
—Smithsonian Folkways

Pete's repertoire was huge, and encompassed many of the songs in this book. This section has a few that he wrote, adapted, or popularized.

The Bells of Rhymney

(Words, Idris Davies, 1938.

Music, Pete Seeger, recorded 1958)

Oh,, what will you give me?
Say the sad bells of Rhymney.
Is there hope for the future?
Cry the brown bells of Merthyr.
Who made the mineowner?
Say the black bells of Rhondda.
And who robbed the miner?
Cry the grim bells of Blaina.

They will plunder willy-nilly,
Say the bells of Caerphilly.
They have fangs, they have teeth!
Shout the loud bells of Neath.
Even God is uneasy,
Say the moist bells of Swansea.
And what will you give me?
Say the sad bells of Rhymney.

Throw the vandals in court!
Say the bells of Newport.
All would be well if, if, if,
Cry the green bells of Cardiff.
Why so worried, sisters, why?
Sing the silver bells of Wye.
And what will you give me?
Say the sad bells of Rhymney.

Delia's Gone

(A Bahaman version of an American honky-tonk ballad. Recorded by Pete Seeger, 1954.)

Tony shot his Delia
On a Christmas night;
First time he shot her,
She bowed her head and died.

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Delia's gone, one more round,
Delia's gone, one more round,
Delia's gone, one more round,
Delia's gone, one more round.

Sent for the doctor,
Doctor came too late.
Sent for the minister
To lay out Delia straight.

Delia, oh Delia,
Where you been so long?
Everybody's talkin' about
Poor Delia's dead and gone.

Die Gedanken Sind Frei

(An old German folksong, perhaps of Swiss origin. A popular version was published early in the 19th Century. The song became popular again in the period before World War II, and was banned by the Nazis. This English version was popularized by Pete Seeger and was sung as a leftist protest song during the McCarthy era.)

Die Gedanken sind frei, my thoughts freely flower,
Die Gedanken sind frei, my thoughts give me power.
No scholar can map them, no hunter can trap them,
No man can deny: Die Gedanken sind frei! (2x)

I think as I please, and this gives me pleasure,
My conscience decrees, this right I must treasure;
My thoughts will not cater to duke or dictator;
No man can deny: Die Gedanken sind frei! (2x)

And should tyrants take me and throw me in prison,
My thoughts will burst free like blossoms in season.
Foundations will crumble and structures will tumble,
And free men will cry: Die Gedanken sind frei! (2x)

If I Had a Hammer

(Words, Lee Hays. Music, Pete Seeger. 1949)

If I had a hammer,
I'd hammer in the mornin',
I'd hammer in the evenin',
All over this land.
I'd hammer out danger,
I'd hammer out a warning,
I'd hammer out love between
My brothers and my sisters,
All over this land.

If I had a bell,
I'd ring it in the mornin'
I'd ring it in the evenin',
All over this land.
I'd ring out danger,
I'd ring out a warning,
I'd ring out love between
My brothers and my sisters,
All over this land.

If I had a song,
I'd sing it in the mornin'
I'd sing it in the evenin',
All over this land.
I'd sing out danger,
I'd sing out a warning,
I'd sing out love between
My brothers and my sisters
All over this land.

Well, I got a hammer,
And I got a bell
And I got a song—to—sing
All over this land,
It's the hammer of justice,
It's the bell of freedom,
It's the song about love between
My brothers and my sisters
All over this land.

Get Up and Go

(Anonymous poem, arranged and set to music by Pete Seeger, 1960)

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

How do I know my youth is all spent?
My get up and go has got up and went,
But in spite of it all, I'm able to grin,
And think of the places my get up has been.

Old age is golden, so I've heard said,
But sometimes I wonder as I crawl into bed,
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,
My eyes on the table until I wake up.
As sleep dims my vision, I say to myself:
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?
But though nations are warring and business is vexed,
I'll still stick around to see what happens next.

When I was young, my slippers were red
I could kick up my heels right over my head.
When I was older, my slippers were blue,
But still I could dance the whole night through.
Now I am older, my slippers are black,
I huff to the store and I puff my way back.
But never you laugh; I don't mind at all,
I'd rather be huffing than not puff at all.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits,
Open the paper and read the obits.
If I'm not there, I know I'm not dead,
So I eat a good breakfast and go back to bed.

Guantánamera

(Chorus: José Fernández Díaz, 1929. Verses: José Martí, adapted by Julián Orbon, 1949.
Music by José Fernández Díaz, 1929, adapted by Julián Orbon, 1949, and Pete Seeger, 1961.)

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Guantánamera! Guajira! Guantánamera!
Guantánamera, Guajira, Guantánamera

Peasant girl from Guantánamo!
Peasant girl from Guantánamo

Yo soy un hombre sincero
De donde crece la palma,
Y antes de morirme quiero
Echar mis versos del alma.

I am an truthful man,
From the land of the palm.
Before dying, I want
To share these poems of my soul.

Mi verso es de un verde claro
Y de un carmín encendido:
Mi verso es de un ciervo herido
Que busca en el monte amparo.

My verses are light green,
But they are also flaming red.
My verses are like a wounded fawn
Seeking refuge in the mountain.

Cultivo una rosa blanca,
En julio como en enero,
Para el amigo sincero
Que me da su mano franca.

I cultivate a white rose
In July as in January
For the sincere friend
Who gives me his hand.

Y para el cruel que me arranca
El corazón con que vivo
Cardo ni ortiga cultivo:
Cultivo la rosa blanca.

And for the cruel one who would tear out
The heart with which I live,
I cultivate neither thistles nor nettles,
I cultivate a white rose.

Con los pobres de la tierra
Quiero yo mi suerte echar:
El arroyo de la sierra
Me complace más que el mar.

With the poor people of the earth
I want to share my lot.
The mountain stream
Pleases me more than the sea.

John Riley

(Traditional ballad, as sung by Pete Seeger)

As I went walking one Sunday morning,
To breathe the sweet and pleasant air,
Who should I spy but a fair young maiden;
Whose cheek was like the lily fair.

I stepped up to her so quickly saying,
"Would you like to be a sailor's wife?"
"Oh no kind sir," she quickly answered,
"I choose to lead a sweet single life."

"What makes you different from other women?
What makes you different from other kind?
For you are young, sweet, beautiful and handsome,
And for to marry you, I might incline."

"It's now kind sir that I must tell you.
I might have been married three years ago
To one John Riley who left this country.
He's been the cause of my overthrow."

"He courted me both late and early.
He courted me both night and day.
And when he had once my affections gained,
He left me here and he went away."

"Oh, never mind for this Johnny Riley,
Oh, come with me to the distant shore.
Why, we'll sail o'er to Pennsylvania,
And bid adieu to Riley forever more."

"I shan't go with you to Pennsylvania,
Or go with you to the distant shore.
My heart is with Riley, my long-lost lover
Although I'll never see him no more."

Oh, when he saw that her love was loyal,
He gave her kisses one, two, and three,
Saying, "I'm the man you once called Johnny Riley,"
Saying, "I'm the cause of your misery."

"I've sailed the ocean, gained great promotion,
I've laid my money on the English shore,
And now we'll marry, no longer tarry,
And I shall never deceive you any more."

Kisses Sweeter Than Wine

(Words, Lee Hays & Pete Seeger, 1950; music, Huddie Ledbetter, 1940s.)

When I was a young man and never been kissed
I got to thinkin' over what I had missed.
I got me a girl, I kissed her and then
Oh Lord, I kissed her again.

Chorus:

Oh . . . oh, kisses sweeter than wine,
Oh . . . oh, kisses sweeter than wine.

I asked her to marry and be my sweet wife,
And we would be so happy the rest of our life.
I begged and I pleaded like a natural man, and then
Oh Lord, she gave me her hand.

Chorus:

I worked mighty hard and so did my wife,
Workin' hand in hand to make a good life.
Corn in the fields and wheat in the bins, I was
Oh Lord, the father of twins.

Chorus:

Our children numbered just about four,
And they all had sweethearts knockin' at the door.
They all got married and didn't hesitate; I was
Oh Lord, the grandfather of eight.

Chorus:

Now we are old, and ready to go,
We get to thinkin' what happened a long time ago.
Had a lot of kids, trouble and pain, but,
Oh Lord, we'd do it again.

Chorus:

Die Moorsoldaten

(Words: Johann Esser und Wolfgang Langhoff
Music: Rudi Goguel. 1933)

Wohin auch das Auge blicket,
Moor und Heide nur ringsherum.
Vogelsang uns nicht erquicket,
Eichen stehen kahl und krumm.

Chorus:

Wir sind die Moorsoldaten,
Und ziehen mit dem Spaten ins Moor.

Hier in dieser oden Heide
Ist das Lager aufgebaut,
Wo wir fern von jeder Freude
Hinter Stacheldraht verstaubt.

Chorus:

Morgens ziehen die Kolonnen
In das Moor zur Arbeit hin.
Graben bei dem Brand der Sonne,
Doch zur Heimat steht der Sinn.

Chorus:

Heimwärts, heimwärts! Jeder sehnet,
Zu den Eltern, Weib und Kind.
Manche Brust ein Seufzer dehnet,
Weil wir hier gefangen sind.

Chorus:

Auf und nieder geh'n die Posten,
Keiner, keiner kann hindurch.
Flucht wird nur das Leben kosten!
Vierfach ist umzäunt die Burg.

Chorus:

Doch für uns gibt es kein Klagen,
Ewig kann's nicht Winter sein.
Einmal werden froh wir sagen:
"Heimat, du bist wieder mein!"

Dann zieh'n die Moorsoldaten
Nicht mehr mit dem Spaten ins Moor!

Dann ziehn die Moorsoldaten
Nicht mehr mit dem Spaten ins Moor!

Peat Bog Soldiers

The first, fifth, and sixth verses of Die Moorsoldaten make a shorter version usually sung in performance. Those are the verses translated here.

Far and wide as the eye can wander,
Heath and bog are everywhere.
Not a bird sings out to cheer us.
Oaks are standing gaunt and bare.

Chorus:

We are the peat bog soldiers,
Marching with our spades to the bog.

Up and down the guards are pacing,
No one, no one can get through.
Flight would mean a sure death facing,
Guns and barbed wire block our view.

Chorus:

But for us there's no complaining,
Winter will in time be past.
One day we shall cry, rejoicing.
"Homeland, dear, you're mine at last."

Then no more the peat bog soldiers
Will march with our spades to the bog!

Then no more the peat bog soldiers
Will march with our spades to the bog!

This song was written by prisoners in a Nazi moorland labor camp in Lower Saxony, Germany. Political opponents of the Third Reich, the prisoners were banned from singing existing political songs, so they wrote their own.

The song has a slow, simple melody, reflecting a soldier's march, and is deliberately repetitive, echoing and telling of the daily grind of hard labor in harsh conditions. It was popular with German refugees in London in the Thirties and was used as a marching song by the German volunteers of the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War. It was soon picked up by other nationalities, and it appears in almost all the collected anthologies of Spanish Civil War songs.

The French Foreign Legion also use the French version of the song, "Le Chant des Marais," as one of its marching songs.

Pretty Saro

Down in some lone valley, in some lonesome place
Where the wild birds do whistle and their notes do increase
Farewell pretty Saro, I'll bid you adieu
And I'll dream of pretty Saro wherever I go

My love, she won't have me, so I understand
She wants a freeholder and I have no land
I cannot maintain her with silver and gold
Nor buy all the fine things that a big house can hold

If I were a merchant and could write a fine hand
I'd write my love a letter so she'd understand
But I'll wander by the river where the waters o'erflow
And I'll dream of pretty Saro wherever I go

Si Me Quieres Escribir

*(One of the most popular songs from the Spanish Civil War.
Recorded by Pete Seeger in the 1940s.)*

Si me quieres escribir, ya sabes mi paradero,
Si me quieres escribir, ya sabes mi paradero,
En el frente de Gandesa primera linea de fuego.
En el frente de Gandesa primera linea de fuego.

Si tu quieres comer bien, barato y de buena forma. (2x)
En el frente de Gandesa, alli tienen una fonda. (2x)

En la entrada de la fonda, hay un moro Mojama (2x)
Que te dice, "Pasa, pasa que quieres para comer." (2x)

El primer plato que dan, son grenadas rompedoras (2x)
El segundo de matralla para recordar memorias. (2x)

If You Want To Write Me

If you want to write me a letter, you already know my whereabouts.
I'm on the Gandesa Front, in the first line of the fighting.

If you want to eat your fill, good food and not too many pesos,
On that bloody battlefield stands an inn where you are welcome.

At the entrance of this inn there waits a moor by name Mohammed,
Who warmly greets you, "Hurry, hurry, rare and spicy food awaits you."

The first dish which they serve is hot grenades in quick succession,
Followed by a burst of shrapnel, makes a meal you'll all remember.

Solidarity Forever

(Words, Ralph Chaplin, 1915. Tune: "Battle Hymn of the Republic")

When the union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run,
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun,
Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one,
But the Union makes us strong.

Chorus:

Solidarity forever! Solidarity forever! Solidarity forever!
For the Union makes us strong.

Is there aught we hold in common with the greedy parasite,
Who would lash us into serfdom and would crush us with his might?
Is there anything left to us but to organize and fight?
For the Union makes us strong.

Chorus:

It is we who ploughed the prairies, built the cities where they trade,
Dug the mines and built the workshops, endless miles of railroad laid;
Now we stand outcast and starving, 'mid the wonders we have made,
But the Union makes us strong.

Chorus:

All the world that's owned by idle drones is ours and ours alone,
We have laid the wide foundations, built it skyward, stone by stone.
It is ours not to slave in, but to master and to own
While the Union makes us strong.

Chorus:

They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn,
But without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn;
We can break their haughty power, gain our freedom when we learn
That the Union makes us strong.

Chorus:

In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold,
Greater than the might of armies magnified a thousand-fold;
We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old,
For the Union makes us strong.

Chorus:

Swinging on a Scab

(Tune: "Swinging On A Star.")

*Sung by Pete Seeger and The Berries,
for the Motion Picture Workers strike of 1948.)*

Chorus:

Are you gonna stick on the line
Till we force the bosses to sign?
This is your fight, brother, and mine,
Or would you rather be a scab?

A scab is an animal that walks on his knees.
He sniffs every time the bosses sneeze.
His back is brawny but his brain is weak;
He's just plain stupid with a rotten streak,
But if you don't care whose back it is you stab,
Go right ahead and be a scab.

Chorus:

... Or would you rather be a fink?

A fink is an animal that smells like a skunk.
He's two brackets lower than a punk.
He makes his living on breaking strikes,
'Cause busting unions is a job he likes,
But if you get so you kinda like to stink,
Go right ahead and be a fink.

Chorus:

... Or would you rather be a stool?

A stool is an animal with long hairy ears.
He runs back with everything he hears.
He ain't no bargain though he can be bought.
Though he's slippery he still gets caught,
But if you're cut out to be a dirty tool,
Go right ahead and be a stool.

Chorus:

... Or would you rather be a goon?

A goon is an animal that's terribly shy.
He can't stand to look you in the eye.
He rides to work on the cops' coattails,
And wears brass knuckles to protect his nails.
But if your head's like a hole in a spittoon,
Go right ahead and be a goon.

Last Chorus:

You don't have to lead with your chin;
You can pick your side and pitch in,
'Cause the union's going to win.
Until the day the bosses sign,
We're gonna stick right on the line.

Turn, Turn, Turn

Words from the Bible (Ecclesiastes 3, verses 1-8)

Music and additional words by Pete Seeger (1959)

To everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time for every purpose under heaven.

A time to be born, a time to die
A time to plant, a time to reap
A time to kill, a time to heal
A time to laugh, a time to weep.

To everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time for every purpose under heaven.

A time to build up, a time to break down
A time to dance, a time to mourn
A time to cast away stones
A time to gather stones together.

To everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time for every purpose under heaven.

A time of war, a time of peace
A time of love, a time of hate
A time you may embrace
A time to refrain . . . from embracing.

To everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time for every purpose under heaven.

A time to gain, a time to lose
A time to rend, a time to sew
A time of love, a time of hate
A time of peace . . . I swear it's not too late.

To everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time for every purpose under heaven.

Waist Deep in the Big Muddy

(Pete Seeger, 1967)

It was back in nineteen forty-two,
I was a member of a good platoon.
We were on maneuvers in-a Loozianna,
One night by the light of the moon.
The captain told us to ford a river,
That's how it all begun.
We were—knee deep in the Big Muddy,
But the big fool said to push on.

The sergeant said, "Sir, are you sure,
This is the best way back to the base?"
"Sergeant, go on! I forded this river
'Bout a mile above this place.
It'll be a little soggy but just keep slogging.
We'll soon be on dry ground."
We were—waist deep in the Big Muddy
And the big fool said to push on.

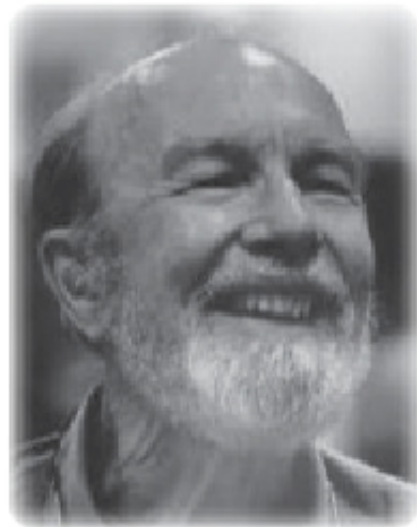
The sergeant said, "Sir, with all this equipment
No man will be able to swim."
"Sergeant, don't be a Nervous Nellie,"
The captain said to him.
"All we need is a little determination;
Men, follow me, I'll lead on."
We were—neck deep in the Big Muddy
And the big fool said to push on.

All at once, the moon clouded over,
We heard a gurgling cry.
A few seconds later, the captain's helmet
Was all that floated by.
The sergeant said, "Turn around men!
I'm in charge from now on."
And we just made it out of the Big Muddy
With the captain dead and gone.

We stripped and dived and found his body
Stuck in the old quicksand.
I guess he didn't know that the water was deeper
Than the place he'd once before been.
Another stream had joined the Big Muddy
'Bout a half mile from where we'd gone.
We were lucky to escape from the Big Muddy
When the big fool said to push on.

Well, I'm not going to point any moral;
I'll leave that for yourself
Maybe you're still walking, you're still talking
You'd like to keep your health.
But every time I read the papers
That old feeling comes on;
We're—waist deep in the Big Muddy
And the big fool says to push on.

Waist deep in the Big Muddy
And the big fool says to push on.
Waist deep in the Big Muddy
And the big fool says to push on.
Waist deep! Neck deep! Soon even a
Tall man'll be over his head, we're
Waist deep in the Big Muddy!
And the big fool says to push on!



Pete Seeger

Viva la Quince Brigada

(Spanish Civil War song, derived from an old Spanish folk song)

Viva la quince brigada,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
Viva la quince brigada,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
Que se ha cubierto de gloria,
¡Ay, Manuela! ¡Ay, Manuela!
Que se ha cubierto de gloria,
¡Ay, Manuela! ¡Ay, Manuela!

Luchamos contra los moros,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
Luchamos contra los moros,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
Mercenarios y fascistas,
¡Ay, Manuela! ¡Ay, Manuela!
Mercenarios y fascistas,
¡Ay, Manuela! ¡Ay, Manuela!

Solo es nuestro deseo,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
Solo es nuestro deseo,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
Acabar con el fascismo,
¡Ay, Manuela! ¡Ay, Manuela!
Acabar con el fascismo,
¡Ay, Manuela! ¡Ay, Manuela!

En los frentes de Jarama,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
En los frentes de Jarama,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
No tenemos ni aviones,
Ni tanques, ni cañones, ¡Ay, Manuela!
No tenemos ni aviones,
Ni tanques, ni cañones, ¡Ay, Manuela!

Ya salimos de España,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
Ya salimos de España,
Rùmbala, Rùmbala, Rùmbala
Para luchar en otros frentes,
¡Ay, Manuela! ¡Ay, Manuela!
Para luchar en otros frentes,
¡Ay, Manuela! ¡Ay, Manuela!

Long Live the Fifteenth Brigade!

Long live our Fifteenth Brigade, boys,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
Long live our Fifteenth Brigade, boys,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
For her name is grand and glorious,
Ay, Manuela! Ay, Manuela!
For her name is grand and glorious,
Ay, Manuela! Ay, Manuela!

We are fighting against the Moors,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
We are fighting against the Moors,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
Death to the hirelings of the Fascists,
Ay, Manuela! Ay, Manuela!
Death to the hirelings of the Fascists,
Ay, Manuela! Ay, Manuela!

We have only one desire,
Rumba la, rumba la, rumba la,
We have only one desire,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
Forever end the Fascist terror,
Ay, Manuela! Ay, Manuela!
Forever end the Fascist terror,
Ay, Manuela! Ay, Manuela!

At Jararna we are standing,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
At Jararna we are standing,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
And we have no planes above us,
Not a tank, nor any cannons, Ay Manuela!
And we have no planes above us,
Not a tank, nor any cannons, Ay Manuela!

We have left the Spanish trenches,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
We have left the Spanish trenches,,
Rumbala, rumbala, rumbala
To fight the Fascists where we find them,
Ay, Manuela! Ay, Manuela!
To fight the Fascists where we find them,
Ay, Manuela! Ay, Manuela!

Wasn't That a Time

(Lee Hays & Walter Lowenfels. First three verses, first and last choruses written for Henry Wallace's Progressive Party presidential campaign, 1948)

Our fathers bled... at Valley Forge...
The snow was red with blood,
Their faith was warm... at Valley Forge,
Their faith... was brotherhood!

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Wasn't that a time! Wasn't that a time!
A time to try... the soul of man.
Wasn't that a terrible time!

Brave men who fought... at Gettysburg...
Now lie in soldiers' graves,
But there they stemmed... the rebel tide,
And there... the faith was saved.

The fascists came... with chains and war...
To prison us in hate.
And many a good... man fought and died,
To save... the stricken faith.

(Lee Hays & Walter Lowenfels, 1957)

Informers took their Judas pay
To tell their sorry tale,
The gangs in Congress had their way
And free souls went to jail.

How many times we've gone to kill
In freedom's holy name
And children died to save the pride
Of rulers without shame.

(Peter, Paul & Mary)

The wars are long, the peace is frail,
The madmen come again.
There is no freedom in a land
Where fear and hate prevail.

(Lee Hays & Walter Lowenfels)

New chorus:

Isn't this a time! Isn't this a time!
A time to try... the soul of man.
Isn't this a terrible time!

Our faith cries out, we have no fear,
We dare to reach our hand
To other neighbors far and near,
To friends in every land.

Last chorus:

Isn't this a time! Isn't this a time!
A time to free... the soul of man.
Isn't this a wonderful time!
ISN'T THIS A WONDERFUL TIME!

We Shall Overcome

(Adapted by Lucille Simmons, Zilphia Horton, Pete Seeger, Guy Carawan and Frank Hamilton, from words of the African-American gospel song "I'll Be Alright" and Charles Tindley's 1903 gospel song "I'll Overcome Some Day," and from melody of the 19th-century pre-Civil War spiritual "No More Auction Block for Me.")

We shall overcome, we shall overcome,
We shall overcome someday
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe
That we shall overcome someday

We'll walk hand in hand, we'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand someday
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe
That we shall overcome someday

We shall live in peace, we shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace someday
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe
That we shall overcome someday

We shall brothers be, we shall brothers be,
We shall brothers be someday
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe
That we shall overcome someday

The truth shall make us free, truth shall make us free,
The truth shall make us free someday
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe
That we shall overcome someday

We are not afraid, we are not afraid,
We are not afraid today
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe
That we shall overcome someday

Where Have All the Flowers Gone

(Pete Seeger, 1955; last two verses by Joe Hickerson, 1960)

Where have all the flowers gone? Long time passing.
Where have all the flowers gone? Long time ago.
Where have all the flowers gone?
Girls have picked them ev'ry one.
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

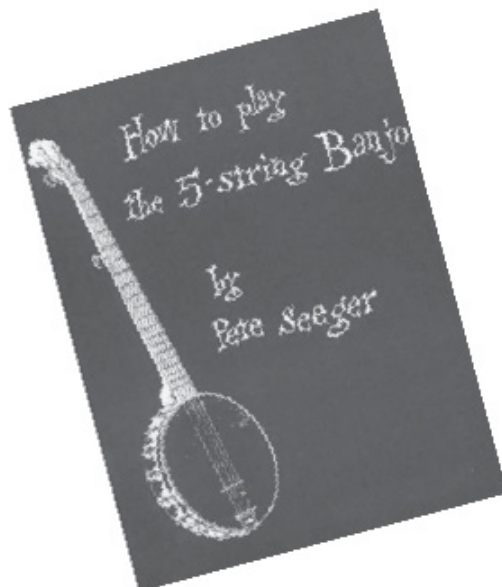
Where have all the young girls gone? Long time passing.
Where have all the young girls gone? Long time ago.
Where have all the young girls gone?
They've taken husbands ev'ry one.
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

Where have all the young men gone? Long time passing.
Where have all the young men gone? Long time ago.
Where have all the young men gone?
Gone for soldiers ev'ry one.
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

Where have all the soldiers gone? Long time passing.
Where have all the soldiers gone? Long time ago.
Where have all the soldiers gone?
Gone to graveyards ev'ry one.
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

Where have all the graveyards gone? Long time passing.
Where have all the graveyards gone? Long time ago.
Where have all the graveyards gone?
Covered with flowers ev'ry one.
When will **we** ever learn? When will **we** ever learn?

(Repeat first verse)



Which Side Are You On?

(Words: Florence Reece, 1931. Tune: Traditional.
As sung by Pete Seeger & Almanac Singers, 1941.)

Come all of you good workers,
Good news to you I'll tell
Of how the good old union
Has come in here to dwell.

Chorus:

Which side are you on?
Which side are you on?

My daddy was a miner
And I'm a miner's son,
And I'll stick with the union
'Til every battle's won.

Chorus:

They say in Harlan County
There are no neutrals there;
You'll either be a union man,
Or a thug for J. H. Blair.

Chorus:

Oh, workers can you stand it?
Oh, tell me how you can.
Will you be a lousy scab
Or will you be a man?

Chorus:

Don't scab for the bosses,
Don't listen to their lies.
Us poor folks haven't got a chance
Unless we organize.

Chorus (2 times)

Phil Ochs Songs

Draft-Dodger Rag

(Phil Ochs, 1964)

I'm just a typical American boy
From a typical American town.
I believe in God and Senator Dodd
And keeping old Castro down,
'n' when it came my time to serve,
I knew "better dead than red,
But when I got to my old draft board,
Buddy, this is what I said:

Sarge, I'm only eighteen, I got a ruptured spleen,
And I always carry a purse.
I got eyes like a bat and my feet are flat,
And my asthma's getting worse.
O, think of my career, my sweetheart dear,
And my poor old invalid aunt.
Besides, I ain't no fool, I'm a-goin' to school,
And I'm working in a defense plant.

I've got a dislocated disc and a racked-up back,
I'm allergic to flowers and bugs,
And when bombshells hit, I get epileptic fits,
And I'm addicted to a thousand drugs.
I got the weakness woes and I can't touch my toes,
I can hardly reach my knees,
And if the enemy came close to me,
I'd probably start to sneeze.

I hate Chou En-Lai, and I hope he dies,
But one thing you gotta see,
That someone's gotta go over there,
But that someone isn't me.
So I wish you well, Sarge, give 'em Hell,
Yeah, kill me a thousand or so,
And if you ever get a war without blood and gore,
Well, I'll be the first to go.

I Ain't Marchin' Anymore

(Phil Ochs, 1964)

Oh, I marched to the battle of New Orleans
At the end of the early British war.
The young land started growin',
The young blood started flowin',
But I ain't marchin' anymore.

For I've killed my share of Indians
In a thousand different fights.
I was there at the Little Big Horn.
I heard many men a-lyin',
I saw many more a-dyin',
But I ain't marchin' anymore.

Chorus:

'Cause it's always the old to lead us to the war.
It's always the young to fall.
Now look at all we've won
with the sabre and the gun.
Tell me, is it worth it all?

For I stole California from the Mexican land,
Fought in the bloody Civil War.
Yes, I even killed my brothers
And so many others,
But I ain't a-marchin' anymore

And I marched to the battles of
the German trench
In a war that was bound to end all wars.
Oh, I must have killed a million men,
And now they want me back again,
But I ain't marchin' anymore.

Chorus:

For I flew the final mission in the Japanese sky,
Set off the mighty mushroom roar.
When I saw the cities burnin',
I knew that I was learnin'
That I ain't marchin' anymore

Now the labor leader's screamin' when they
close the missile plants,
United Fruit screams at the Cuban shore.
Call it "Peace" or call it "Treason,"
Call it "Love" or call it "Reason,"
But I ain't a-marchin' any more.

No, I ain't a-marchin' any more.

Links on the Chain

(Phil Ochs, 1965)

Intro: D A C D A (2x)

A C D A
Come you ranks of labor, come you union core,
C D A
And see if you remember the struggles of before,
F#m D E
When you were standing helpless on the outside of the door,
Bm E A Bm D E
And you started building links on the chain, on the chain, you started building links on the chain.

When the police on the horses were waitin' on demand,
Ridin' through the strike with the pistols in their hands,
Swingin' at the skulls of many a union man,
As you built one more link on the chain, on the chain, as you built one more link on the chain.

Then the army of the fascists tried to put you on the run,
But the army of the union, they did what could be done.
Oh, the power of the factory was greater than the gun,
As you built one more link on the chain, on the chain, as you built one more link on the chain.

And then in 1954, decisions finally made,
The black man was a-risin' fast and racin' from the shade,
And your union took no stand and your union was betrayed,
As you lost yourself a link on the chain, on the chain, as you lost yourself a link on the chain.

And then there came the boycotts and then the freedom rides,
And forgetting what you stood for, you tried to block the tide.
Oh, the automation bosses were laughin' on the side,
As they watched you lose your link on the chain, on the chain,
as they watched you lose your link on the chain.

You know, when they block your trucks boys, by layin' on the road,
All that they are doin' is all that you have showed:
That you gotta strike, you gotta fight to get what you are owed,
When you're building all your links on the chain, on the chain
when you're building all your links on the chain.

And the man who tries to tell you that they'll take your job away,
He's the same man who was scabbin' hard just the other day,
And your union's not a union till he's thrown out of the way,
And he's chokin' on your links of the chain, of the chain, and he's chokin' on your links of the chain.

For now the times are tellin' you the times are rollin' on,
And you're fighting for the same thing, the jobs that will be gone.
Now it's only fair to ask you boys, which side are you on?
As you're buildin' all your links on the chain, on the chain, as you're buildin' all your links on the chain.

Outside of a Small Circle of Friends

(Phil Ochs, 1967)

C D C D
Look outside the window, there's a woman being grabbed.
C Em F G
They've dragged her to the bushes and now she's being stabbed.
E Am
Maybe we should call the cops and try to stop the pain,
F Am Dm G
But Monopoly is so much fun, I'd hate to blow the game,
C Am Eb
And I'm sure it wouldn't interest anybody
Cm F
Outside of a small circle of friends.

Riding down the highway, yes, my back is getting stiff.
Thirteen cars are piled up, they're hanging on a cliff.
Maybe we should pull them back with our towing chain,
But we gotta move and we might get sued and it looks like it's gonna rain,,
And I'm sure it wouldn't interest anybody
Outside of a small circle of friends.

Sweating in the ghetto with the colored and the poor.
The rats have joined the babies who are sleeping on the floor.
Now wouldn't it be a riot if they really blew their tops?
But they got too much already and besides we got the cops
And I'm sure it wouldn't interest anybody
Outside of a small circle of friends.

Oh, there's a dirty paper using sex to make a sale.
The Supreme Court was so upset, they sent him off to jail.
Maybe we should help the fiend and take away his fine,
But we're busy reading Playboy and the Sunday New York Times,
And I'm sure it wouldn't interest anybody
Outside of a small circle of friends.

Smoking marihuana is more fun than drinking beer,
But a friend of ours was captured and they gave him thirty years.
Maybe we should raise our voices, ask somebody why,
But demonstrations are a drag, besides we're much too high,
And I'm sure it wouldn't interest anybody
Outside of a small circle of friends.

Oh, look outside the window, there's a woman being grabbed.
They've dragged her to the bushes and now she's being stabbed.
Maybe we should call the cops and try to stop the pain,
But Monopoly is so much fun, I'd hate to blow the game,
And I'm sure it wouldn't interest anybody
Outside of a small circle of friends.

Ochs was inspired to write "Outside of a Small Circle of Friends" by the case of Kitty Genovese, who was stabbed to death in 1964 outside her home in Queens, New York, while dozens of her neighbors reportedly ignored her cries for help.

The Ringing of Revolution

(Phil Ochs, 1963)

In a building of gold, with riches untold,
Lived the families on which
 the country was founded.
And the merchants of style,
 with their red velvet smiles,
Were there, for they also were hounded.
And the soft middle class
 crowded in to the last,
For the building was fully surrounded.
And the noise outside was
 the ringing of revolution.

Sadly they stared and sank in their chairs
And searched for a comforting notion.
And the rich silver walls looked ready to fall
As they shook in doubtful devotion.
The ice cubes would clink as they
 freshened their drinks,
Wet their minds in bitter emotion.
And they talked about
 the ringing of revolution.

We were hardly aware of
 the hardships they beared,
For our time was taken with treasure.
Oh, life was a game, and work was a shame,
And pain was prevented by pleasure.
The world, cold and grey, was so far away
In the distance only money could measure.
But their thoughts were broken by
 the ringing of revolution.

The clouds filled the room
 in darkening doom
As the crooked smoke rings were rising.
How long will it take, how can we escape
Someone asks, but no one's advising.
And the quivering floor
 responds to the roar,
In a shake no longer surprising.
As closer and closer comes
 the ringing of revolution.

Softly they moan, please leave us alone
As back and forth they are pacing.
And they cover their ears and try not to hear
With pillows of silk they're embracing.
And the crackling crowd is laughing out loud,
Peeking in at the target they're chasing.
Now trembling inside the ringing of revolution.

With compromise sway we give in half way
When we saw that rebellion was growing.
Now everything's lost as they kneel by the cross
Where the blood of Christ is still flowing.
Too late for their sorrow they've reached their tomorrow
And reaped the seed they were sowing.
Now harvested by the ringing of revolution.

In tattered tuxedos they faced the new heroes
And crawled about in confusion.
And they sheepishly grinned for their memories were dim
Of the decades of dark execution.
Hollow hands were raised; they stood there amazed
In the shattering of their illusions.
As the windows were smashed
 by the ringing of revolution.

Down on our knees we're begging you please,
We're sorry for the way you were driven.
There's no need to taunt just take what you want,
And we'll make amends, if we're living.
But away from the grounds the flames told the town
That only the dead are forgiven.
As they crumbled inside the ringing of revolution.

Roger Abrahams Songs

Roger D. Abrahams

June 12, 1933 – June 20, 2017

Roger Abrahams '55, Swarthmore's most famous academic folklorist, was also a performer of traditional songs during and after his student years. He returned to Swarthmore for the Folk Festivals, where WSRN staff members recorded him and other outstanding performers, outdoors in 1958 and in concert with Robin Christenson '57 and Ralph Rinzler '56 in 1959. The songs in this section are a small sample from those recordings, which are available on CDs in the Folk Festival archives in the Friends Historical Library.

(For more about and by Roger, see Appendix A in this *Songbook*.)

Kentucky Moonshiner

*(As arranged and sung by Roger Abrahams '55
at the 1958 Folk Festival)*

I've been a moonshiner for many long years.
I spend all my money on whiskey and beers.
In a wild lonesome holler I'll build me a still.
And I'll sell you a gallon for a five-dollar bill.

If the ocean was whiskey and I was some duck,
I could dive to the bottom and drink my way up,
But the ocean ain't whiskey and I ain't a duck,
So I'll play Jack of Diamonds and trust to my luck .

Jack o' Diamonds, Jack of Diamonds, I've knowed you of old,
For you robbed my poor pockets of silver and gold.
Well, I play cards in England and I play cards in Spain,
But I'll bet you ten dollars I can beat you next game.

I've been a moonshiner for many long years.
I spend all my money on whiskey and beers.
In a wild lonesome holler I'll build me a home,
And them that don't like me, they can leave me alone



I'm a Rambler, I'm a Gambler

(As sung by Roger Abrahams '55 at the 1959 Folk Festival)

I'm a rambler, I'm a gambler, I'm a long way from home,
And if you don't like me, just leave me alone.
I'll eat when I'm hungry, I'll drink when I'm dry,
And if the whiskey don't kill me, I'll live till I die.

I had me a pretty little sweetheart; her age it was 19.
She's the flower of Denton, Lord, the rose of Saline.
But her parents were against me and now she is the same.
If I'm on your books, Lord, won't you blot out my name.

ROUNDS

Alfred (The Alligator Song)

(Nick Thorkelson)

Have you ever been down the water spout,
To the very bottom of the water system?
There you'll find a little alligator
Who goes by the name of Alfred, if you do,
He's mine, I lost him.
I threw him down the water spout and now
I'm feeling lonely 'cause he's gone.
I miss him.

(I wrote this. I was a kid walking down a street in New York with my family, and my younger brother Chris said "Did you ever step in a sewer pipe pipe," and I took it from there. My older brother Peter, known professionally as Peter Tork, introduced it to the world as part of his cabaret repertoire, but he changed "sewer pipe" to "water pipe." Eventually it became widely known, especially in summer camps, with some later singers changing Alvin to Alfred. I never realized until much later that it worked as a round. You can find my version in the Rise Again fakebook.

— Nick Thorkelson

<<https://thebirdsings.com/alfred/>>

Chairs to Mend

(From "Three Oxford Cries" 1786;

made into a round by W. Hayes)

Chairs to mend, old chairs to mend!
Mackerel, fresh mackerel!
Any old rags? Any old rags?

①
Chairs to mend, old chairs to mend!

②
Mack - er - el, fresh mack - er - el! An - y

③
old rags, an - y old rags!

Dona Nobis Pacem

Dona nobis pacem, pacem
Dona nobis pacem

1
Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem,

2
Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

3
Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

Come Follow

John Hilton (17th Century)

Part I:

Come, follow, follow, follow,
Follow, follow, follow me.

Part II:

Whither shall I follow, follow, follow,
Whither shall I follow, follow thee.

Part III:

To the greenwood, to the greenwood,
To the greenwood, greenwood tree.

Machine Gun Round

(Jonathan Eberhart)

There's a submachine gun in my violin case
And a pistol in my shoe;
There's a Bank of America on my block,
I'll meet you there at two!

*(One of many rounds compiled by Jim Moskowicz '88 for
SWIL (Swarthmore Warders of Imaginative Literature)*

<https://www.swil.org/roundlist.html>

Hey, Ho, Nobody Home

(Traditional England)

Hey, ho, nobody home.
Meat nor drink nor money have I none,
Yet will I be merry.

Hineh Ma Tov

(M. Yacovson)

*From Psalm 133: "How good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell together in unity."*

Hineh ma tov u'ma na'im
Shevet ach-im gam ya-chad.

Hineh ma tov u'ma na'im
Shevet ach-im gam ya-chad.

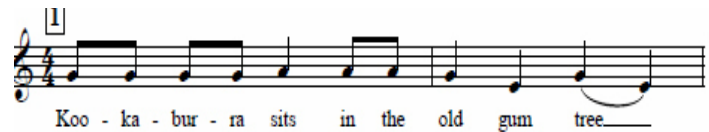
Lai, lai lai lai, lai lai lai lai
lai lai lai, lai lai lai lai.

Lai, lai lai, lai, lai lai lai lai lai
lai lai lai, lai lai lai lai.

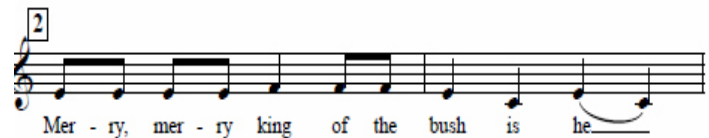
Kookaburra

(Australian Children's Song, Marion Sinclair, 1936)

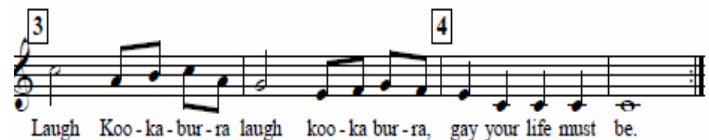
Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Merry, merry king of the bush is he
Laugh, Kookaburra! Laugh, Kookaburra!
Gay your life must be.



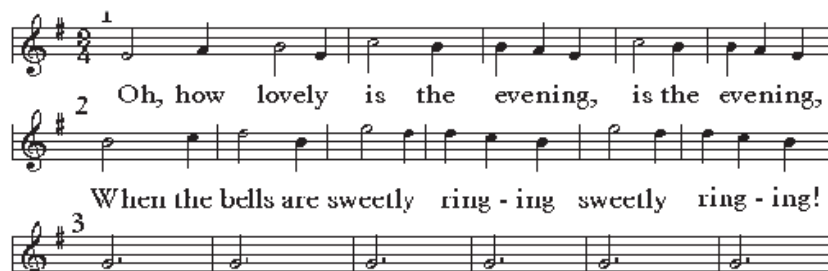
Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Eating all the gum drops he can see
Stop, Kookaburra! Stop, Kookaburra!
Leave some there for me!



Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Counting all the monkeys he can see
Stop, Kookaburra! Stop, Kookaburra!
That's not a monkey, that's me!



Oh, How Lovely



Rose, Rose, Rose



Rose, rose, rose, rose, shall I e- ver see the wed?



Aye, mar- ry, that thou wilt If thou but stay.

The melody for the first six notes (through "shall I") can be sung parallel to the melody shown, but a third higher—so, in solfège, the first line would be: do, ti, do, sol, do-do ti-ti do-re ti.

Different singers could sing either one in the same performance.

Rose, rose, rose, rose,
Shall I ever see the wed?
Aye, marry, that thou wilt
If thou but stay.

Another version:

Rose, rose, rose, rose
Shall I ever see thee red
Aye, marry, that thou wilt
When thou art dead.*

* i.e., when I bloom on your grave

Scotland's Burning

Scotland's burning, Scotland's burning,
Look out! Look out!
Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire!
Pour on water. Pour on water.

Scot - land's burn - ing, Scot - land's burn - ing,
Look out! Look out!
Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire!
Pour on wa - ter. Pour on wa - ter!

Shalom Chaverim

Scotland's Burning

Traditional Record

Scot - land's burn - ing, Scot - land's burn - ing.

White Coral Bells

White coral bells upon a slender stalk,
Lilies of the Valley deck my garden walk.
Oh, don't you wish that you could hear them ring?
That will happen only when the fairies sing.

G (C) G D7 G
① White cor - al bells Up - on a slen - der stalk,
② Oh, don't you wish That you could hear them ring?

D7 G D7 G
② Lil - ies of the val - ley deck my gar - den walk.
That will hap - pen on - ly when the an - gels sing.

CIVIL RIGHTS SONGS

Many of these songs are “zipper songs,” into which verses (traditional or new) can be “zipped” as the occasion warrants. Verses here are examples, not definitive texts.

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around

(This song, an activist hymn from the civil rights and labor movements, apparently was adapted from “I Ain't Gonna Let Ol' Satan Turn Me 'Round,” recorded in 1936 by Jimmie Davis. In view of the later adaptation, it's ironic that his second successful run for Louisiana governor was on a racist platform, pledging resistance to integration. Davis presumably based his song on the African-American spiritual “Don't You Let Nobody Turn You 'Round.”)

Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around,
Turn me around, turn me around.

Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around,
(I'm gonna) Keep on a-walkin', keep on a-talkin',
Marchin' up to Freedom Land.

Similarly:

Ain't gonna let no jailhouse turn me around . . .
Ain't gonna let no police dogs turn me around . . .
Ain't gonna let no fire hose turn me around . . .

Ain't gonna let red-baitin' turn me around . . .
Ain't gonna let no injunction turn me around . . .
Ain't gonna let oppression turn me around . . .
Ain't gonna let segregation turn me around . . .
Ain't gonna let injustice turn me around . . .
Ain't gonna let little Jim Clark turn me around . . .
Ain't gonna let Mississippi turn me around . . .

(Repeat first verse)

America the Beautiful/Black Lives Matter

*(Words: First verse, Katherine Lee Bates, 1893; new verses
© 2020 Susan McNelis. Music: Samuel A. Ward, 1882)*

Oh, beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain,
America, America, God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.

Oh, beautiful the justice road, in places big and small.
We march, we ride, we sing, we strive—Equality for all!
American democracy is not just for the few.
The rest of us will fight for just-ice. Black Lives Matter, too!

Oh, beautiful diversity, protesting in the street.
Every color, gender, age is crying, “I can't breathe!”
Created equal, each of us, our nation's founding truth.
All blood is red, too much is shed. Black Lives Matter, too!

Oh, beautiful the right to vote. Let it not be suppressed!
The common good of common folk no longer be oppressed.
If there's no justice, there's no peace, but both we can pursue.
Arise awake, and cast your vote like—Black Lives Matter, too!

Black, Brown and White

(Big Bill Broonzy, 1940s)

This little song that I'm singin' about,
People, you know that it's true,
If you're black and gotta work for a livin',
Now, this is what they would say to you,
They says: "If you was white, you're alright,
If you was brown, stick around,
But as you's black, oh, brother,
Get back, get back, get back."

I was in a place one night,
They was all havin' fun,
They was all buyin' beer and wine,
But they would not sell me none.
They said: "If you was white, you're alright,
If you was brown, stick around,
But as you's black, oh, brother,
Get back, get back, get back."

I went to an employment office,
Got a number 'n' I got in line,
They called everybody's number,
But they never did call mine.
They said: "If you was white, you're alright,
If you was brown, stick around,
But as you's black, oh, brother,
Get back, get back, get back."

Me and a man was workin' side by side,
This is what it meant:
They was payin' him a dollar an hour,
And they was payin' me fifty cents.
They said: "If you was white, be alright,
If you was brown, stick around,
But as you's black, oh, brother,
Get back, get back, get back."

I helped build the country,
And I fought for it, too,
Now, I guess that you can see
What a black man have to do.
They says, "If you was white, you's alright,
If you was brown, stick around,
But as you's black, oh, brother,
Get back, get back, get back."

I helped win sweet victory,
With my little plow and hoe,
Now, I want you to tell me, brother,
What you gonna do 'bout the old Jim Crow?
Now, if you is white, you's alright,
If you's brown, stick around,
But if you's black, oh, brother,
Get back, get back, get back.

Ella's Song

(Ella Baker's words set to music by Bernice Johnson Reagon)

Refrain (after each verse):

We who believe in freedom cannot rest
We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes

Until the killing of Black men, Black mothers' sons
Is as important as the killing of White men, White mothers' sons

That which touches me most is that I had a chance to work with people
Passing on to others that which was passed on to me

To me young people come first; they have the courage where we fail
And if I can but shed some light as they carry us through the gale

The older I get, the better I know that the secret of my going on
Is when the reins are in the hands of the young who dare to run against the storm

Struggling myself don't mean a whole lot, I've come to realize
That teaching others to stand and fight is the only way my struggle survives

I'm a woman who speaks in a voice, and I must be heard
At times I can be quite difficult; I'll bow to no man's word

Refrain (2x)

I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free

(Billy Taylor and Richard Carroll Lamb ["Dick Dallas"], 1954)

In G:

G B7 Em G7 C D9 G
I wish I knew how it would feel to be free;
C G D A D
I wish I could break all the chains holding me.
G B7 Em G7 C D9 G
I wish I could say all the things that I should say
C#dim G B7 Em
Say 'em loud, say 'em clear
C#dim G D9sus4 G
for the whole round world to hear.

I wish I could share all the love that's in my heart
Remove all the bars that keep us apart
I wish you could know what it means to be me
Then you'd see and agree
that everyone should be free
I wish I could give all I'm longing to give
I wish I could live like I'm longing to live
I wish I could do all the things that I can do
Though I'm way overdue, I'd be starting anew
Well, I wish I could be like a bird in the sky
How sweet it would be if I found I could fly
I'd soar to the sun and look down at the sea
Then I'd sing 'cause I'd know
how it feels to be free

If You Miss Me at the Back of the Bus

(Carver Neblett)

If you miss me at the back of the bus, and you can't find me nowhere
Come on up to the front of the bus, I'll be ridin' up there
I'll be ridin' up there, I'll be ridin' up there
Come on up to the front of the bus, I'll be ridin' up there

If you miss me on the picket line, and you can't find me nowhere
Come on over to the city jail, I'll be roomin' over there
I'll be roomin' over there, I'll be roomin' over there
Come on over to the city jail, I'll be roomin' over there

If you miss me in the Mississippi River, and you can't find me nowhere
Come on over to the swimmin' pool, I'll be swimmin' right there
I'll be swimmin' right there, I'll be swimmin' right there
Come on over to the swimmin' pool, I'll be swimmin' right there

If you miss me at Jackson State, and you can't find me nowhere
Come on over to Ole Miss, I'll be studyin' over there
I'll be studyin' over there, I'll be studyin' over there
Come on over to Ole Miss, I'll be studyin' over there

If you miss me in the cotton field, and you can't find me nowhere
Come on down to the courthouse, I'll be votin' right there
I'll be votin' right there, I'll be votin' right there
Come on down to the courthouse, I'll be votin' right there

If you miss me at the back of the bus, and you can't find me nowhere
Come on up to the front of the bus, I'll be ridin' up there
I'll be ridin' up there, I'll be ridin' right there
You got to come on up to the front of the bus, I'll be ridin' up there

Lift Every Voice and Sing

(Words, James Weldon Johnson, 1899; music, John Rosamond Johnson, 1901?)

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and Heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies;
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered.
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way,
Thou who hast, by Thy might, led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee,
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God, true to our native land.

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and Heaven ring.
Let us march on till victoreeeee i-i-is won! (victory is won!)

Oh, Freedom

(Words adapted from chorus of abolitionist song, "Oh, Freedom." Tune: "No More Auction Block for Me")

Oh, freedom, oh, freedom
Oh, freedom over me
And before I'd be a slave
I'll be buried in my grave
And go home to my Lord and be free
No more weeping, no more weeping
No more weeping over me
And before I'd be a slave . . .

Similarly:
No more moaning . . .
No more beatings . . .
No more Jim Crow . . .
There'll be singing . . .
There'll be shouting . . .
There'll be glory . . .
No segregation . . .
No racism . . .
Oh, freedom . . .

One in Six Have Disappeared

(Lyrics © 2015 Charlie King/Pied Asp Music
Music: Rick Burkhardt with Charlie King)

Played with capo on 3rd fret

C F G Am F Em F C
By the latest estimation, black men in the prime of life
C F G Am F Em F C
Due to mass incarceration, taser, chokehold, gun and knife
G F C F Am G
Notwithstanding loud entreaties falling on disdainful ears
C F G Am Em F C
Now are an endangered species: one in six have disappeared

C F G Am Em F C
Father, brother, son or lover, one in six have disappeared
C F G Am Em F C
Stolen lives we can't recover one in six have disappeared
G F C F Am G
Every home bereft or broken, every bond that we hold dear
C F G Am Em F C
All the love that's left unspoken: one in six have disappeared

C F G Am Em F C
Elder, mentor, willing student, one in six have disappeared
C F G Am Em F C
Damned by forces juris prudent, one in six have disappeared
G F C F Am G
Master, journeyman, apprentice, pacifist or bombardier
C F G Am Em F C
Teacher, lawyer, doctor, dentist, one in six have disappeared

Em B7 Em Am F Am
Out in Ferguson Missouri, two in five have disappeared
Em B7 Em Am F Am
Numbers tell a harder story: two in five have disappeared
Dm C Bb Am G
Genders equal at beginnin', if they live past teenage years
Em B7 Em Am F
Sixty men, one hundred women: two in five have disappeared

C F G Am Em F C
Ends the song that's sung in sorrow: one in six have disappeared
C F G Am Em F C
Even if we change tomorrow, one in six have disappeared
G F C F Am G
Reparations and repentance, justice rendered, life revered
C F G Am Em F C
Still we hear the heavy sentence: one in six have disappeared

We Shall Not Be Moved

(Adapted from African-American
spiritual, "I Shall Not Be Moved")

We shall not,
we shall not be moved
We shall not,
we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's planted
by the water
We shall not be moved.
We're fighting for our freedom
We shall not be moved
We're fighting for our freedom
We shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's planted
by the water
We shall not be moved.

Similarly:

We're fighting for our children ...
We're Black and White together ...
We're young and old together ...
(Repeat first verse)

For Union version, see Page 120.

This Little Light of Mine

(Civil Rights anthem adapted by Zilphia Horton, Fannie Lou Hamer, and many others from a gospel song with words by Avis Burgeson Christiansen and tune by Harry Dixon Loes, ca. 1920)

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel? No! I'm going to let it shine (3x)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

NOW SOME SAY: You got to run and hide
BUT WE SAY: There's no place to hide
NOW SOME SAY: Let others decide
BUT WE SAY: Let the people decide
NOW SOME SAY: That the time's not right
BUT WE SAY: That the time's just right
Where there's a dark corner in this land,
Gonna let my little light shine.

On a Monday, gave me the gift of love,
On Tuesday, peace came from above,
On a Wednesday, told me to have more faith,
On Thursday, gave me a little more grace,
On a Friday, told me to watch and pray,
On Saturday, told me just what to say,
On Sunday, gave me the power divine
To let my little light shine.

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Keep Your Eyes on the Prize

(Adapted ca. 1956 by Alice Wine and the community on Johns Island, South Carolina, from the traditional African-American gospel song, "Keep Your Hand on the Plow")

Paul and Silas, bound in jail,
Had no money for to go their bail

Refrain (after every verse):
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on
Hold on (hold on), hold on (hold on)
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on

Paul and Silas began to shout
The jail door opened and they walked on out

Freedom's name is mighty sweet
Soon one day we're gonna meet

The only chain that a man can stand
Is the chain of hand in hand

The only thing we did wrong
Stayed in the wilderness a day too long

But the one thing we did right
Was to organize and fight

We're gonna board that big Greyhound
Carryin' love from town to town

We're gonna ride for civil rights
We're gonna ride, both black and white

We've met jail and violence too
But God's love has seen us through

Woke Up This Morning

Woke up this morning with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Woke up this morning with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Woke up this morning with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah.

I'm walking and talking with my mind
Stayed on freedom
I'm walking and talking with my mind
Stayed on freedom
I'm walking and talking with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah.

Ain't nothing wrong with keeping my mind
Stayed on freedom
Oh, there ain't nothing wrong with keeping my mind
Stayed on freedom
There ain't nothing wrong with keeping your mind
Stayed on freedom
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah.

I'm singing and praying with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Yeah, I'm singing and praying with my mind
Stayed on freedom
I'm singing and praying with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah.

War Story

(Woody Guthrie served in the Merchant Marine during World War II.
Bob Clayton wrote this ballad 75 years later, in 2013, with choruses
based on Woody's "This Train is Bound for Glory.")

Troopship on the water, Atlantic conflict-bound.
Destroyers in our convoy say there's U-boats all around.
Nothing much to keep us poor soldiers' spirits high,
'Cept this merchant-sailor guitar-picking guy.

He used to sing and play for us, songs we all might know—
Songs of war, songs of peace, songs of long ago.
Some we'd never heard before, but they was quick to learn—
Just the thing to make our fighting spirit burn.

Chorus 1:

This train is bound for glory, this train! (2x)
This train is bound for glory,
Don't carry nothing but the righteous and the holy.
This train is bound for glory, this train!

I was bunking by the bulkhead, near the hatchway to the hold,
When I heard some glorious singing coming up from down below.
Then it stopped, and I heard footsteps, and our guitar guy was there,
With these colored soldiers on the stair.

The colonel said, "You can play for us, like you've done every night;
Your guitar and songs are helping us get ready for the fight.
But you can't bring those troops in here. There's some as black as coal;
We don't race-mix — we've gotta keep control!"

The little fella says to him, "Here's what I think is right.
You and me and all these troops are in the same big fight.
So are these Negro soldiers, and so it seems to me:
If they're not welcome, there's no songs from me.

Chorus 2:

This train don't carry no gamblers, this train. (2x)
This train don't carry no gamblers,
No crap-shooters or midnight rambles.
This train is bound for glory, this train.

The colonel flew in anger, and raised his voice in shout.
"You can stay, but all those Negro soldiers must get out!"
I spoke up and said to him, "Sir, it's fine with us!
They can stay; no need to make a fuss."

So we all sang together, and damn, those boys was good!
And the Gospel songs they brought us really did our spirits good.
That's how I chanced to be there, on the spot, and everything,
On the night that Woody wouldn't sing.

Chorus 3:

This train carries black and white now, this train. (2x)
This train carries black and white — all together in the same old fight.
This train is bound for glory, this train.

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MORE SONGS

Across the Great Divide

(Kate Wolf, 1981)

I've been walkin' in my sleep
Countin' troubles 'stead of countin' sheep
Where the years went I can't say
I just turned around and they've gone away

I've been siftin' through the layers
Of dusty books and faded papers
They tell a story I used to know
And it was one that happened so long ago

Chorus:

It's gone away in yesterday
Now I find myself on the mountainside
Where the rivers change direction
Across the Great Divide

Now, I heard the owl a-callin'
Softly as the night was fallin'
With a question and I replied
But he's gone across the borderline

Chorus

The finest hour that I have seen
Is the one that comes between
The edge of night and the break of day
It's when the darkness rolls away

And it's gone away in yesterday
Now I find myself on the mountainside
Where the rivers change direction
Across the Great Divide

And it's gone away in yesterday
Now I find myself on the mountainside
It's where the rivers change direction
Across the Great Divide

À la claire fontaine

(Chanson enfantine)

À la claire fontaine, m'en allant promener,
J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle que je m'y suis baigné

Refrain:

Il y a longtemps que je t'aime
Jamais je ne t'oublierai

Sous les feuilles d'un chêne,
Je me suis fait sécher.
Sur la plus haute branche, Un rossignol chantait.

Refrain:

Chante, rossignol, chante, toi qui as le cœur gai
Tu as le cœur à rire,
Moi je l'ai à pleurer

Refrain:

J'ai perdu mon ami, sans l'avoir mérité
Pour un bouquet de roses que je lui refusais

Refrain:

Je voudrais que la rose fût encore au rosier,
Et que mon doux ami fût encore à m'aimer

(autre version:

Et que le rosier même
À la mer fût jeté.)

Refrain:

At the Clear Fountain

(Children's song)

At the clear fountain, while I was strolling by,
I found the water so nice that I went in to bathe.

Refrain:

I've been loving you so long,
I will never forget you.

Under the leaves of an oak,
I dried myself.
On the highest branch, a nightingale was singing.

Refrain:

Sing, nightingale, sing, your heart is so happy.
Your heart feels like laughing,
Mine feels like weeping.

Refrain:

I lost my beloved, without deserving it,
For a bunch of roses that I denied him.

Refrain:

I wish that the rose was still on the bush,
And my sweet beloved Still loved me.

(other version:

And even the rosebush
Was thrown in the sea.)

Refrain:

Abdul Abulbul Amir

(Written in 1877 by William Percy French, an Irish music-hall entertainer)

The sons of the prophet are brave men and bold,
And quite unaccustomed to fear,
But the bravest by far in the ranks of the Shah
Was Abdul Abulbul Amir.

This son of the desert, in battle aroused,
Could spit twenty men on his spear.
A terrible creature, both sober and soused
Was Abdul Abulbul Amir.

If you wanted a man to encourage the van,
Or harass the foe from the rear,
Storm fort or redoubt, you had only to shout
For Abdul Abulbul Amir.

Now the heroes were plenty
and well known to fame
In the troops that were led by the Czar,
And the bravest of these was a man by the name
Of Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.

He could imitate Irving, play Euchre and pool
And perform on the Spanish Guitar.
In fact, quite the cream of the Muscovite team
Was Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.

The ladies all loved him, his rivals were few;
He could drink them all under the bar.
As gallant or tank, there was no one to rank
With Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.

One day this bold Russian, he shouldered his gun
And donned his most truculent sneer;
Downtown he did go, where he trod on the toe
Of Abdul Abulbul Amir.

“Young man” quoth Bulbul, “has life grown so dull,
That you’re anxious to end your career?
Vile infidel! Know, you have trod on the toe
Of Abdul Abulbul Amir.”

“So take your last look at the sunshine and brook
And send your regrets to the Czar;
By this I imply you are going to die,
Mr. Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.”

Quoth Ivan, “My friend, your remarks, in the end,
Will avail you but little, I fear,
For you ne’er will survive to repeat them alive,
Mr. Abdul Abulbul Amir.”

Then this bold mameluke
drew his trusty chibouque
With a cry of “Allah Akbar!”
And with murderous intent, he ferociously went
For Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.

Then they parried and thrust
and they side-stepped and cussed
’Till their blood would have filled a great pot.
The philologist blokes, who seldom crack jokes,
Say that hash was first made on that spot.

They fought all that night,
’neath the pale yellow moon;
The din, it was heard from afar;
And great multitudes came, so great was the fame
of Abdul and Ivan Skavar.

As Abdul’s long knife was extracting the life—
In fact, he was shouting “Huzzah!” —
He felt himself struck by that wily Kalmuck,
Count Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.

The sultan drove by in his red-crested fly,
Expecting the victor to cheer,
But he only drew nigh to hear the last sigh
Of Abdul Abulbul Amir.

Czar Petrovich, too, in his spectacles blue
Rode up in his new crested car.
He arrived just in time to exchange a last line
With Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.

A loud-sounding splash
from the Danube was heard
Resounding o’er meadows afar;
It came from the sack fitting close to the back
Of Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.

There’s a tomb rises up
where the blue Danube flows;
Engraved there in characters clear:
“Ah, stranger, when passing, please pray for the soul
Of Abdul Abulbul Amir.”

A Muscovite maiden her lone vigil keeps,
’Neath the light of the pale polar star;
And the name that she murmurs
so oft as she weeps
Is Ivan Skavinsky Skavar.

Ain't Gonna Grieve My Lord No More

Oh, the Deacon went down (2x)
To the cellar to pray, (2x)
He found a jug (2x)
And he stayed all day (2x)
Oh, the Deacon went down to the cellar to pray
He found a jug and he stayed all day
Ain't gonna grieve my Lord no more

Chorus:

I ain't a-gonna grieve my Lord no more
I ain't a-gonna grieve my Lord no more
Ain't gonna grieve my Lord no more

Similarly:

Oh, you can't get to Heaven on roller skates
You'll roll right by them pearly gates

You can't get to Heaven on a rocking chair
'Cause the Lord don't want no lazybones there

You can't get to Heaven in a limousine
'Cause the Lord don't sell no gasoline

If you get to Heaven before I do
Just drill a hole and pull me through

If I get to Heaven before you do
I'll plug that hole with shavings and glue

You can't get to Heaven with powder and paint
It makes you look like what you ain't

You can't chew tobacco on that golden shore
'Cause the Lord don't have no cuspidor

"That's all there is, there ain't no more"
Saint Peter said as he closed the door

There's one thing more I forgot to tell
If you don't go to Heaven, you'll go to Hell

I'll put my grief up on the shelf
If you want some more, make 'em up yourself

All Through the Night

(English translation of traditional Welsh lullaby)

Sleep, my child, and peace attend thee
All through the night
Guardian angels God will send thee
All through the night
Soft the drowsy hours are creeping
Hill and dale in slumber sleeping
I my loving vigil keeping
All through the night

While the moon her watch is keeping
All through the night
While the weary world is sleeping
All through the night
O'er thy spirit gently stealing
Visions of delight revealing
Breathes a pure and holy feeling
All through the night

Amelia Earhart's Last Flight

(Red River Dave McEnery, 1939)

A ship out o'er the ocean, just a speck against the sky,
Amelia Earhart flying that sad day;
With her partner, Captain Noonan, on the second of July
Her plane fell in the ocean far away.

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

There's a beautiful, beautiful field
Far away in a land that is fair.
Happy landing to you, Amelia Earhart
Farewell, first lady of the air.

She radioed position and said that all was well,
Although the fuel within the tanks was low.
But they'd land on Howland Island to refuel her monoplane,
Then on their trip around the world they'd go.

A half an hour later an SOS was heard,
The signal weak, but still her voice was brave.
In shark-infested waters, her plane went down that night
In the blue Pacific to a watery grave.

Now you have heard my story of that awful tragedy,
We pray that she might fly home safe again.
In years to come, though others blaze a trail across the sea,
We'll ne'er forget Amelia and her plane.

America the Beautiful Revisited

(Original words, Katherine Lee Bates, 1893; new words, Paul McKenna, March 2021)

Oh, beautiful for spacious skies,
 for amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
 above the fruited plain,
America, America, God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
 from sea to shining sea.

Oh, horrible for slavery, your dark primeval sin.
The beauty of your land belies the ugliness within.
America, America, its legacy endures.
Its residue still lives in you, down to your very core.

Oh, horrible for thievery of native people's lands,
Atrocities and massacres performed
 at your command.
America, America, you've left a Trail of Tears
Of tragedy and treachery that echoes
 through the years.

Oh, beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,
Who, more than self, their country loved,
 and mercy more than life.
America, America, may God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness and every gain divine.

Oh, horrible for racism and white supremacy,
For xenophobic policies born out of bigotry.
America, America, you say "in many, one,"
But all your words seem quite absurd in light of
 what you've done.

Oh, horrible for atom bombs of
 overwhelming power.
You dropped them on Hiroshima
 in your most shameful hour.
America, America, that day lives in disgrace.
Its infamy and savagery can never be erased.

Oh, beautiful for pilgrim feet,
 whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare of freedom beat
 across the wilderness.
America, America, God mend thine every flaw.
Confirm thy soul in self-control and liberty in law,

Oh, horrible for capital's relentless search for wealth
That poisons and pollutes the earth,
 with no regard for health.
America, America, the planet reels in pain
From all you do as you pursue
 your boundless lust for gain.

Oh, beautiful for patriot dream
 that sees beyond the years.
Thine alabaster cities gleam,
 undimmed by human tears.
America, America, God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
 from sea to shining sea.

Oh, horrible for foreign wars supporting
 corporate greed.
Imposing its hegemony, you cause
 the world to bleed.
America, America, it's time to right these wrongs,
To face at last your tarnished past and
 write a whole new song.
America, America, it's time to right these wrongs,
To face at last your tainted past and
 write a brand new song.
To face at last your tainted past and
 write a brand new song,

American Pie

(Don McLean, 1971-72)

A long, long time ago, I can still remember, how that music used to make me smile,
And I knew, if I had my chance, that I could make those people dance,
And maybe they'd be happy for a while.

But February made me shiver. With every paper I'd deliver
Bad news on the doorstep. I couldn't take one more step.
I can't remember if I cried, when I read about his widowed bride.
But something touched me deep inside, the day the music died.

So, bye-bye, Miss American Pie.
Drove my Chevy to the levee, but the levee was dry,
Them good ol' boys were drinkin' whiskey 'n' rye,
Singin', "This'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die."

Did you write the Book of Love? And do you have faith in God above, if the Bible tells you so?
Now, do you believe in rock 'n' roll? Can music save your mortal soul?

And can you teach me how to dance real slow?
Well, I know that you're in love with him, 'cause I saw you dancin' in the gym.
You both kicked off your shoes. Man, I dig those rhythm and blues!
I was a lonely teenage bronckin' buck, with a pink carnation and a pickup truck,
But I knew I was out of luck, the day the music died.

I started singin', bye-bye, Miss American Pie.
Drove my Chevy to the levee, but the levee was dry.
Them good ol' boys were drinkin' whiskey 'n' rye,
And singin', "This'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die."

Now, for ten years we've been on our own, and moss grows fat on a rollin' stone,
But that's not how it used to be, when the jester sang for the King and Queen
In a coat he borrowed from James Dean, and a voice that came from you and me.
Oh, and while the King was looking down, the jester stole his thorny crown.
The courtroom was adjourned. No verdict was returned.

And while Lennon read a book on Marx, the Quartet practiced in the park,
And we sang dirges in the dark, the day the music died.

We were singin', bye-bye, Miss American Pie.
Drove my Chevy to the levee, but the levee was dry.
Them good ol' boys were drinkin' whiskey 'n' rye,
And singin', "This'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die."

Helter-skelter in a summer swelter, the birds flew off with a fallout shelter.
Eight miles high and fallin' fast, it landed foul out on the grass.
The players tried for a forward pass, with the jester on the sidelines in a cast.
Now, the half-time air was sweet perfume. While sergeants played a marchin' tune,
We all got up to dance. Oh, but we never got the chance,
'Cause the players tried to take the field. The marching band refused to yield.
Do you recall what was revealed, the day the music died?

We started singin', bye-bye, Miss American Pie.
Drove my Chevy to the levee, but the levee was dry.
Them good ol' boys were drinkin' whiskey 'n' rye,
Singin', "This'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die."

(Continued on next page)

(American Pie, continued)

Oh, and there we were all in one place, a generation lost in space,
With no time left to start again. So, come on, Jack be nimble, Jack be quick,
Jack Flash sat on a candlestick, 'cause fire is the Devil's only friend.
Oh, and as I watched him on the stage, my hands were clenched in fists of rage.
No angel born in Hell could break that Satan's spell.
And as the flames climbed high into the night, to light the sacrificial rite,
I saw Satan laughing with delight, the day the music died.
 He was singin', bye-bye, Miss American Pie.
 Drove my Chevy to the levee, but the levee was dry.
 Them good ol' boys were drinkin' whiskey 'n' rye,
 Singin', "This'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die."

(Last verse slow)

I met a girl who sang the blues, and I asked her for some happy news,
But she just smiled and turned away. I went down to the sacred store,
Where I'd heard the music years before, but the man there said the music wouldn't play,
And in the streets, the children screamed, the lovers cried, and the poets dreamed,
But not a word was spoken. The church bells all were broken.
And the three men I admire most, the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost,
They caught the last train for the coast, the day the music died.
 And they were singin', bye-bye, Miss American Pie.
 Drove my Chevy to the levee, but the levee was dry.
 Them good ol' boys were drinkin' whiskey 'n' rye,
 Singin', "This'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die."

They were singin', bye-bye, Miss American Pie.
Drove my Chevy to the levee, but the levee was dry.
Them good ol' boys were drinkin' whiskey 'n' rye,
Singin', "This'll be the day that I die."

Amazing Grace

(Words: John Newton, 1770. Tune: "New Britain")

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace that fear relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds
And drives away his fear.

Must Jesus bear the cross alone
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone
And there's a cross for me.

When we've been here ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

Anne Boleyn

(R. P. Weston & Bert Lee, 1934; later football names from Kingston Trio)

In the Tower of London, large as life,
The ghost of Anne Boleyn walks, they declare.
Poor Anne Boleyn was once King Henry's wife,
Until he had the headsman bob her hair.
Ah, yes, he did her wrong long years ago,
And she comes up at night to tell him so.

Chorus:

With her head tucked underneath her arm,
She walks the bloody Tower,
With her head tucked underneath her arm,
At the midnight hour.

She comes to haunt King Henry, she means giving him what-for
Gadzooks, she's going to tell him off for having spilled her gore.
And just in case the headsman wants to give her an encore,
She has her head tucked underneath her arm.

Chorus:

Along the drafty corridors for miles and miles she goes,
She often catches cold, poor thing, it's cold there when it blows,
And it's awfully awkward for the Queen to have to blow her nose
With her head tucked underneath her arm.

Chorus:

Sometimes gay King Henry gives a spread,
For all his gals and pals, a ghostly crew.
The headsman carves the joint and cuts the bread,
Then in comes Anne Boleyn to queer the "do."
She holds her head up with a wild "Wahoop!"
And Henry cries, "Don't drop it in the soup!"

Chorus:

The sentries think that it's a football that she carries in,
And when they've had a few they shout, "Is Army going to win?"
They think that it's Red Grange instead of poor old Anne Boleyn
With her head tucked underneath her arm.

Chorus:

One night she caught King Henry, he was in the castle bar,
Said he, "Are you Jane Seymour, Anne Boleyn or Cath'rine Parr?
For how the sweet san fairy ann* do I know who you are
With your head tucked underneath your arm?"

Chorus:

* British rendition of "ça ne fait rien," or "it doesn't matter"

Arkansas Traveler

Oh, once upon a time in Arkansas
An old man sat in his little cabin door,
And fiddled at a tune that he liked to hear,
A jolly old tune that he played by ear.
It was raining hard but the fiddler didn't care
He sawed away at the popular air,
Though his roof tree leaked like a water fall
That didn't seem to bother that man at all

A traveler was riding by that day,
And stopped to hear him a-practicing away
The cabin was afloat and his feet were wet,
But still the old man didn't seem to fret.
So the stranger said:

 "Now the way it seems to me,
You'd better mend your roof," said he.
But the old man said, as he played away:
"I couldn't mend it now, it's a rainy day."

The traveler replied: "That's all quite true,
But this, I think, is the thing for you to do;
Get busy on a day that is fair and bright,
Then patch the old roof till it's good and tight."
But the old man kept on a-playing at his reel,
And tapped the ground with his leathery heel:
"Get along," said he, "for you give me a pain;
My cabin never leaks when it doesn't rain."

Ashokan Farewell

*(Words: Grian McGregor; tune: Jay Ungar;
one of two lyrics that Mr. Ungar has authorized.)*

The sun is sinking low in the sky above Ashokan,
The pines and the willows know soon we will part.
There's a whisper in the wind of promises unspoken,
And a love that will always remain in my heart.

My thoughts will return to the sound of your laughter,
The magic of moving as one.
And a time we'll remember long ever after
The moonlight and music and dancing are done.

Will we climb the hills once more?
Will we walk the woods together?
Will I feel you holding me close once again?
Will every song we've sung stay with us forever?
Will you dance in my dreams or my arms until then?

Under the moon the mountains lie sleeping,
Over the lake the stars shine.
They wonder if you and I will be keeping,
The magic and music, or leave them behind.

Aunt Rhody

Go tell Aunt Rhody, go tell Aunt Rhody
Go tell Aunt Rhody that the old gray goose is dead.

The one that she's been saving, the one that she's been saving
The one that she's been saving to make a feather bed.

The old gander's mourning, the old gander's mourning
The old gander's mourning, because his wife is dead.

The goslings are weeping, the goslings are weeping
The goslings are weeping because their mother's dead.

She died in the mill pond, she died in the mill pond
She died in the mill pond, standing on her head.

(Repeat first verse in minor key)

Aura Lea

(Words: W. W. Fosdick. Music: George R. Poulton. 1861)

When the blackbird in the spring,
On the willow tree,
Sat and rock'd, I heard him sing,
Singing Aura Lea.
Aura Lea, Aura Lea,
Maid with golden hair;
Sunshine came along with thee,
And swallows in the air.

Chorus (2 times):

Aura Lea, Aura Lea,
Maid with golden hair;
Sunshine came along with thee,
And swallows in the air.

In thy blush the rose was born,
Music, when you spake,
Through thine azure eye the morn,
Sparkling seemed to break.
Aura Lea, Aura Lea,
Birds of crimson wing,
Never song have sung to me,
As in that sweet spring.

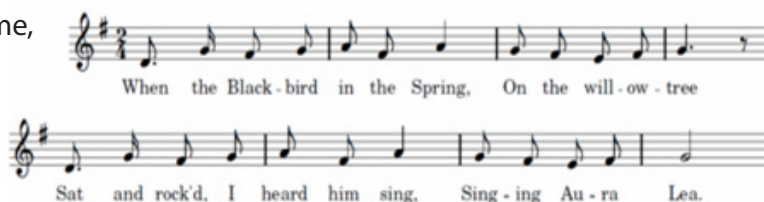
Chorus (2 times)

Aura Lea! the bird may flee,
The willow's golden hair
Swing through winter fitfully,
On the stormy air.
Yet if thy blue eyes I see,
Gloom will soon depart;
For to me, sweet Aura Lea
Is sunshine through the heart.

Chorus (2 times)

When the mistletoe was green,
Midst the winter's snows,
Sunshine in thy face was seen,
Kissing lips of rose.
Aura Lea, Aura Lea,
Take my golden ring;
Love and light return with thee,
And swallows with the spring.

Chorus (2 times)



Banks of the Ohio

(One of many versions of a 19th century ballad, authors unknown)

I asked my love to take a walk
Just to walk a little way
And as we walk, oh, may we talk
All about our wedding day

Chorus:

Only say that you'll be mine
In our home we'll happy be
Down beside where the waters flow
On the banks of the Ohio

I held a knife against her breast
As into my arms she pressed
She cried, "Oh, Willie, don't you murder me
I'm unprepared for eternity"

Chorus:

I took her by her lily-white hand
And dragged her down that bank of sand
There I threw her in to drown
And watched her as she floated down

Chorus:

Was walking home 'tween twelve and one,
Thinkin' of what I had done
I killed the girl I love, you see
Because she would not marry me

Chorus:

The very next morn about half past four
The Sheriff came knockin' at my door
He said, "Young man, come now and go
Down to the banks of the Ohio."

Chorus:

The Ballad of Nasty POTUS

(Lyrics: Rick Pollay, 2020; tune: "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious")
POTUS: Secret Service acronym for the transient tenant of The White House
Title concept: bumper sticker seen in Palm Springs, CA

Last time you went out to the polls, as you may now despair,
some voted for a Twitter troll with orange face and hair.
He moved his family to the swamp but never built his wall,
and then the COVID crisis struck and hastened his downfall.

He has no use for scientists or anyone with facts.
The media or experts, too. That's just how he reacts.
He said it was under control and gave it his own spin
by recommending using bleach and hydro-chloroquine.

Chorus:

Super callous fragile racist sexist Nasty POTUS.
There's never been a President quite so braggadocious.
He thinks that he is super smart but merely is atrocious.
Super callous fragile racist sexist Nasty POTUS.

To go by him, the mainstream press is only more fake news,
And we should only read and heed the Twitter tweets he spews.
His tribe of Twits might have regret ingesting all his swill,
and taking few precautions to stop from getting ill.

He never keeps safe distance or wears his own face mask.
He doesn't have a master plan or take on any task.
Even when the death toll grew, he kept on being smug,
and said to all: "It's not my fault. It's a Chinese bug."

Chorus:

He thinks his genes and big fat head make him extra smart,
But it operates like a never-used and rusty old spare part.
Tests, he says, just make it *seem* that many folks are sick.
We need to open up the bars and school rooms double-quick.

He knows no shame and says the blame is on the Democrats.
That's why it really hurts the poor, the sick, the old, the blacks.
He doesn't really give a damn, just as we suspected,
as long as he himself can golf and never get infected.

Chorus:

Millions now are unemployed and struggle without work.
That doesn't seem to bother him or touch his little smirk.
The market still looks good to him. Recession can't be looming,
'Cause profits from the prisons, guns and HMOs are booming.

So when the cat has got your tongue there's no need for dismay.
Just recall this catchy phrase; you'll have a lot to say.
Super callous fragile racist sexist Nasty POTUS.
Get out the vote to replace him before he gets ferocious.

Get out and vote
to spare us from this plight.
Get out and vote.
Reject this parasite.
Get out and vote.
We need some fresh daylight.
Get out and vote.
Get out and vote,
while you still have the right! (x2)

— — —

Dumb diddle dumb.
Dumb diddle dumb,
that no one can deny.
Dumb diddle dumb,
Dumb diddle dumb,
but oh boy could he lie!

*Verses can be sung to various tunes: e.g.
"Enjoy Yourself" Carl Sigman (1949),
"Maid of Amsterdam" (trad),
"Ballad of the Flying Cloud" (trad), etc.*

*Altered chorus after
... and then he got infected!*

Super callous fragile racist
sexist Nasty POTUS
He thought that he would be
Immune until this diagnosis.
Now he's taking fancy drugs and
some in mega-doses.
Super callous fragile racist
sexist Nasty POTUS.

Banks of Marble

(Les Rice, 1950)

I've traveled 'round this country.
From shore to shining shore;
It really made me wonder
The things I heard and saw.
C G C - / F - C - / G - C - / /
I saw the weary farmer,
Plowing sod and loam;
I saw the auction hammer
Just a-knocking down his home.

Chorus:

But the banks are made of marble,
With a guard at every door,
And the vaults are stuffed with silver
That the farmer (seaman, etc.*) sweated for.
C - - - / G - C - / - - FC C / G - C -

I saw the seaman standing
Idly by the shore,
I heard the bosses saying,
"Got no work for you no more."

Chorus:

I saw the weary miner
Scrubbing coal dust from his back,
And I heard his children crying,
"Got no coal to heat the shack."

Chorus:

**

I've seen my brothers [good people] working
Throughout this mighty land,
I prayed we'd get together
And together make a stand.

Final Chorus:

Then we'd own those banks of marble
With no guard at any door
And we'd share those vaults of silver
That the workers sweated for!

* *Change to fit verse*

** *Additional verse by John Braxton:*

I've seen my sisters working
On the job they're underpaid
While at home they work for nothing
Half the night and all the day.

The New Banks of Marble

(Music: Banks of Marble by Les Rice ©1950

New words: Stephen L. Suffet ©2003)

I've traveled 'round this country,
Just to see it once again,
While some things they might look different,
One big fact remains the same.

The coins once made of silver,
Are now silver-colored brass,
Like the lies the bosses tell us,
Just to trick the working class.

Chorus:

And the banks are made of marble,
With a camera above each door,
To keep us from the wealth and power,
That we all have sweated for.

I recall the friendly bank guard,
I believe his name was Bob,
'Til they got a TV camera,
And they took away his job.

Chorus:

I have seen the office worker,
Sitting upright in her chair,
And I've heard the bosses tell her,
"We don't allow no union here."

Chorus:

I have seen the immigrant worker,
Early morning on the street,
Shaping up to do day labor,
Just to make enough to eat.

Chorus:

I have seen the civil servants,
Who thought their jobs secure,
And I heard the mayor tell them,
"We don't need you anymore."

Chorus:

I have dreamed that things were different,
I've kept my eyes upon the prize,
But it will be a dream forever,
Unless we organize!

Final chorus:

Then we'll own those banks of marble,
With a person at every door,
And we'll share the wealth and power,
That we all have sweated for.

Banks of Marble

(Les Rice, 1950)

Lyrics on facing page.



I've tra- veled a- round this coun- try, From shore to shi- ning shore, It real-
ly made me won- der, The things I heard and saw. I saw the wea- ry
far- mer - Plow- ing sod and loam, I saw the auc- tion ham- mer a- knoc-
king down his home. But the banks are made of mar- ble, With a guard at ev- 'ry
door, And the vaults are stuffed with sil- ver That the far- mer swea- ted for.

Barbara Allen

In Scarlet Town where I was born
There was a fair maid dwellin'
Made every youth cry well-a-day
And her name was Barbara Allen.

'Twas in the merry month of May
When green buds they were swellin'
Sweet William on his death-bed lay
For the love of Barbara Allen.

He sent his servant to the town,
To the place where she was a-dwellin',
"My master bids you come to him,
If your name be Barbara Allen."

Then slowly, slowly she got up,
And slowly she drew nigh him,
And all she said when there she came
Was, "Young man, I think you're dyin'."

"Oh, yes, I'm sick, I'm very sick,
Oh, yes, I think I'm dyin',
And all because I love you so
Hard-hearted Barbara Allen."

"Oh, ken ye not in yonder town
In the place where you were a-dwellin',
You gave a toast to the ladies all
But you slighted Barbara Allen."

"Oh yes, I ken, I ken it well,
In the place where I was a-dwellin';
I gave a toast to the ladies all,
But my heart to Barbara Allen."

As she went walking over the hill
She heard the death bell knellin'.
And every stroke did seem to say,
"Hard-hearted Barbara Allen."

"Oh, Mother, Mother, make my bed,
And make it long and narrow,
Sweet William died for me today,
I'll die for him tomorrow."

"Oh, Father, Father, dig my grave,
Go dig it deep and narrow.
Sweet William died for me today;
I'll die for him tomorrow."

They buried them both in the old churchyard,
In death he was beside her,
Out of his grave grew a red, red rose,
And out of hers a brier.

They grew and they grew o'er the old church wall,
Till they couldn't grow no higher,
Until they tied a true lover's knot,
The red rose and the brier.

The Battle Hymn of Women

(Meredith Tax, 1970)

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the flame of women's rage,
Kept smoldering for centuries, now burning in this age.
We no longer will be prisoners in that same old gilded cage.
That's why we're marching on.

Chorus:

Move on over or we'll move on over you.
Move on over or we'll move on over you.
Move on over or we'll move on over you,
For women's time has come!

You have told us to speak softly, to be gentle and to smile,
Expected us to change ourselves with every passing style,
Said the only work for women was to clean and sweep and file.
That's why we're marching on.

Chorus:

It is we who've done your cooking, done your cleaning, kept your rules.
We gave birth to your children and we taught them in your schools.
We've kept the system running but we're laying down our tools.
That's why we're marching on

Chorus:

You think that you can buy us off with crummy wedding rings.
You never give us half the profit that our labor brings.
Our anger eats into us, we'll no longer bend to kings.
That's why we're marching on

Chorus:

We have broken through our shackles; now we sing a battle song.
We march for liberation and we're many thousands strong.
We'll build a new society; we've waited much too long.
That's why we're marching on.

Chorus:

Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair

Black is the color of my true love's hair
Her lips are like some rosy fair
The purest eyes and the neatest hands
I love the ground whereon she stands

I go to the Clyde for to mourn and weep
But satisfied I never can sleep
I'll write to you in a few short lines
I'll suffer death ten thousand times

I know my love and well she knows
I love the grass whereon she goes
If she on earth no more I see
My life will quickly fade away

A winter's past and the leaves are green
The time has passed that we have seen
But still I hope the time will come
When you and I will be as one

Black is the color of my true love's hair
Her lips are like some rosy fair
The purest eyes and the neatest hands
I love the ground whereon she stands

Blow the Candles Out

When I was apprenticed in London, I went to see my dear
The candles all were burning, the moon shone bright and clear
I knocked upon her window to ease her of her pain
She rose up to let me in, then barred the door again.

I like well your behavior and this I often say
I cannot rest contented when I am far away
The roads they are so muddy, we cannot walk about
So roll me in your arms, Love, and blow the candles out.

Your father and your mother in yonder room do lie
A-hugging one another, so why not you and I?
A-hugging one another, without a fear or doubt
So roll me in your arms, Love, and blow the candles out.

I pray thee speak more softly of what we have to do
Lest that our noise of talking should make our pleasure rue.
The streets they are so nigh, Love, the people walk about
They may peep in and spy, Love, so blow the candles out.

And if we prove successful, Love, please name it after me
Treat it neat and kiss it sweet and daff it on your knee
When my three years are over, my time it will be out
And I will pay my debt to you by blowing the candles out.

Blowin' in the Wind

(Bob Dylan. Tune adapted from the 19th-century pre-Civil War spiritual "No More Auction Block for Me")

How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
Yes, 'n' how many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannonballs fly
Before they're forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind
The answer is blowin' in the wind

How many years must a mountain exist
Before it's washed to the sea?
Yes, 'n' how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head
And pretend that he just don't see?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind
The answer is blowin' in the wind

How many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take till he knows
That too many people have died?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind
The answer is blowin' in the wind

Billionaires in Space

(David Sands, 2021)

Spoken Intro:

We have to admit it was startling, as you streaked through the sky o'er our town.
You may think we were finally looking up at you, but the truth is we're still looking down.

Chorus (repeat after each verse):

If they can send one billionaire up in space, why can't they send them all?
If we think of a reason that we need you back here, we'll be sure to give you a call!
Take your time, take your friends, I hope that you're having a ball!
If they can send one billionaire up in space, why can't they send them all?

Well, it used to be the plutocracy never needed their own personal star.
Just give 'em supermodels and superyachts and crackers full of caviar.
But now it seems that a rich man's dreams involve surfing through the stratosphere.
Well, if that's the case, I say enjoy outer space! We'll be happy to stay home and cheer!

Please be so kind as to leave behind the password to your banking accounts!
Betcha never knew what obscene wealth can do
when you split it up and share it out in smaller amounts.
Book that ego trip on your rocket ship, and you won't lack for company.
You'll be a perfect match, there in your cosmic patch,
floating around with the other debris!

Now, it just may be you miss society as you're sailing the celestial beyond.
We're sure you'll find your role—Hey! Be your own black hole!—
and how're we gonna miss you if you don't stay gone?
It's a little late for a re-entry date, as you're orbiting from pole to pole.
Should've thought ahead, 'cause you're now in Code Red,
since you laid off everybody back at Mission Control!

Final chorus:

If they can send one billionaire up in space, why can't they send them all?
If we think of a reason that we need you back here, we'll be sure to give you a call!
Take your time, take your friends, I hope that you're having a ball!
If they can send one billionaire up in space, why can't they send them all?
If they can send one billionaire up in space, why can't they send them all?

Blue-Tail Fly

When I was young I used to wait
On master and give him his plate
And pass the bottle when he got dry
And brush away the blue-tail fly.

Chorus, repeated after each verse:
Jimmy crack corn and I don't care
Jimmy crack corn and I don't care
Jimmy crack corn and I don't care
My master's gone away

And when he'd ride in the afternoon
I'd follow after with a hickory broom
His pony being rather shy
When bitten by a blue-tail fly.

One day he rode around the farm
The flies so numerous they did swarm
One chanced to bite him on the thigh
The devil take the blue-tail fly.

The pony run, he jump, he pitch
He throw'd my master in the ditch
He died and the jury wondered why
The verdict was the blue-tail fly.

They laid him neath a 'simmon tree
His epitaph is there to see
"Beneath this stone I'm forced to lie
The victim of a blue-tail fly."

Blow Ye Winds in the Morning

'Tis advertised in Boston, New York, and Buffalo:
Five hundred brave Americans a-whalin' for to go.

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Singing, Blow ye winds in the morning,
Blow ye winds, heigh-ho!
Clear away your runnin' gear,
And blow, boys, blow!

They send you to New Bedford,
that famous whaling port,
And give you to some land sharks
to board and fit you out.

They send you to a boardin' house,
there for a time to dwell;
The thieves there they are thicker
than the other side of Hell.

They tell you of the clipper ships
a-runnin' in and out,
And say you'll take five hundred sperm
before you're six months out.

And now we're out to sea, my boys,
the wind comes on to blow;
One-half the watch is sick on deck,
the other half below.

The skipper's on the quarterdeck
a-squintin' at the sails,
When up aloft the lookout spots
a mighty school of whales.

Then lower down the boats, my boys,
and after him we'll travel,
But if you get too near his tail,
he'll kick you to the Devil.

When we've caught a whale, my boys,
we'll bring 'im alongside,
Then over with our blubber-hooks
and rob him of his hide.

And now that our old ship is full,
our catch so great and grand
We'll bend on all our stu'nails
and sail for Yankee Land.

When we get home, our ship made fast,
and we get through our sailin',
A brimming glass around we'll pass,
and damn this blubber whalin'.

Bread and Roses

(Poem by James Oppenheim, 1911; music by Mimi Fariña, 1974? 1976?)

As we go marching, marching, in the beauty of the day,
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand mill lofts gray,
Are touched with all the radiance that a sudden sun discloses,
For the people hear us singing: "Bread and roses! Bread and roses!"

As we go marching, marching, we battle too for men,
For they are women's children, and we mother them again.
Our lives shall not be sweated from birth until life closes,
Hearts starve as well as bodies, give us bread, but give us roses.

As we go marching, marching, unnumbered women dead
Go crying through our singing their ancient call for bread,
Small art and love and beauty their drudging spirits knew—
Yes, it is bread we fight for, but we fight for roses too.

As we go marching, marching, we bring the greater days.
The rising of the women means the rising of the race.
No more the drudge and idler, ten that toil where one reposes,
But a sharing of life's glories: Bread and roses, bread and roses!

A Capital Ship

(Verses, Charles Edward Carryl, 1885; chorus, a parody of "Ten Thousand Miles Away")

A capital ship for an ocean trip
Was the "Walloping Window Blind"
No wind that blew dismayed her crew
Or troubled the captain's mind
The man at the wheel was made to feel
Contempt for the wildest blow-ow-ow
Tho' it oft appeared when the gale had cleared
That he'd been in his bunk below

Chorus:

So, blow ye winds, heigh-ho
A-roving I will go
I'll stay no more on England's shore
So let the music play-ay-ay
I'm off for the morning train
To cross the raging main
I'm off to my love with a boxing glove
Ten thousand miles away

The bo'sun's mate was very sedate
Yet fond of amusement too
He played hop-scotch with the starboard watch
While the captain tickled the crew
The gunner he was apparently mad
For he sat on the after rai-ai-ail
And fired salutes with the captain's boots
In the teeth of a booming gale

Chorus:

The captain sat on the commodore's hat
And dined in a royal way
Off pickles and figs and little roast pigs
And gunners bread each day
The cook was Dutch and behaved as such
For the diet he served the crew-ew-ew
Was a couple of tons of hot-cross buns
Served up with sugar and glue

Chorus:

Then we all fell ill as mariners will
On a diet that's rough and crude
And we shivered and shook as we dipped the cook
In a tub of his gruesome food
All nautical pride we cast aside
And we ran the vessel asho-o-ore
On the Gulliby Isles where the poohpoo smiles
And the rubbily uddugs roar

Chorus:

Composed of sand was that favored land
And trimmed with cinnamon straws
And pink and blue was the pleasing hue
Of the tickle-toe-teaser's claws
We sat on the edge of a sandy ledge
And shot at the whistling bee-ee-ee
While the rugabug bats wore waterproof hats
As they dipped in the shining sea

Chorus:

On rugabug bark from dawn till dark
We dined till we all had grown
Uncommonly shrunk when a Chinese junk
Came up from the Terrible Zone
She was stubby and square, but we didn't much care
So we cherrily put to sea-ea-ea
And we left all the crew of the junk to chew
On the bark of the rugabug tree

Chorus:

Careless Love

Love, oh love, oh careless love
Love, oh love, oh careless love
Oh it's love, oh love, oh careless love
You see what careless love has done

Similarly:

Once I wore my apron low (3x)
You'd follow me through rain and snow

Now I wear my apron high (3x)
You'll see my door and pass it by

How I wish my train would come (3x)
Take me back where I come from

I cried last night and the night before (3x)
I'll cry tonight and cry no more

(Repeat first verse)

Cigareets and Whiskey and Wild Wild Women

(Tim Spencer, 1947)

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Cigareets and whiskey and wild wild women
They'll drive you crazy, they'll drive you insane
Cigareets, whiskey and wild wild women
They'll drive you crazy, they'll drive you insane

Once I was happy and had a good wife
I had enough money to last me for life
Then I met with a gal and we went on a spree
She taught me smokin' and drinkin' whiskey

Cigareets are a blight on the whole human race
A man is a monkey with one in his face;
Take warning dear friend, take warning dear brother
A fire's on one end, a fool's on the t'other.

And now good people, I'm broken with age
The lines on my face make a well-written page
I'm weavin' this story—how sadly but true
On women and whiskey and what they can do

Write on the cross at the head of my grave
"For women and whiskey here lies a poor slave."
Take warnin' poor stranger, take warnin' dear friend
In wide clear letters this tale of my end.

Cindy

You ought to see my Cindy
She lives away down South
She's so sweet the honey bees
Swarm around her mouth

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Get along home, Cindy, Cindy,
Get along home
Get along home, Cindy, Cindy,
I'll marry you someday

Cindy, she's my pretty gal
Cindy, she's my peach
She throw'd her arms around my neck
And hung on like a leech

First time I seen my Cindy
She was standing in the door
Shoes and stockings in her hand
And her feet all over the floor

If Cindy was an apple
I'd put her on the shelf
And every time she smiled at me
I'd get up there myself

She climbed up the sugar tree
I climbed up the gum
Never saw that Cindy gal
But what I loved her some

Cindy went to the preachin'
They had one day in town
She got so full of glory
She knocked the preacher down

Peaches in the summer time
Apples in the fall
If I don't get the gal I love
I won't have none at all

Now, Cindy is a pretty girl
Cindy's five-foot tall
She sleeps in the kitchen
With her feet out in the hall

Cindy went to meetin'
She shouted and she squealed
She got so much religion
She broke her stocking heel

Cindy's got religion
She had it once before
When she heered my old banjo
She's the first one on the floor

When Cindy got religion
I'll tell you what she done
She walked up to the preacher
And she chawed her chewin' gum

Circle Game

(Joni Mitchell, 1966)

G C G
Yesterday a child came out to wonder
C D7
Caught a dragonfly inside a jar
G C Bm
Fearful when the sky was full of thunder
C G Am7 G
And tearful at the falling of a star.

Chorus:

And the seasons, they go 'round and 'round
And the painted ponies go up and down
We're captive on the carousel of time.
We can't return, we can only look
Behind from where we came
And go 'round and 'round and 'round
in the circle game

Then the child grew ten times 'round the seasons
Skated over ten clear, frozen streams
Words like "when you're older" must appease him.
And promises of someday make his dreams.

Chorus:

Sixteen Springs and sixteen Summers gone now
Cartwheels turn to car wheels through the town
And they tell him, "Take your time,

it won't be long now

Till you drag you feet to slow the circles down."

Chorus:

So the years spin by and now the boy is twenty
Though his dreams have lost

some grandeur coming true.

There'll be new dreams, maybe

better dreams and plenty

Before the last revolving year is through.

Chorus:

City of New Orleans

(Steve Goodman, 1970)

Ridin' on the City of New Orleans
Illinois Central, Monday mornin' rail
Fifteen cars and fifteen restless riders
Three conductors, twenty-five sacks of mail

All along the southbound odyssey
the train pulls out of Kankakee
Rolls along past houses, farms and fields
Passin' towns that have no name,
freight yards full of old gray men
And the graveyards of rusted automobiles

Chorus:

Good mornin', America, how are you?
Don't you know me? I'm your native son!
I'm the train they call the City of New Orleans
I'll be gone 500 miles when the day is done

Dealin' cards with the old men in the club car
Penny a point, ain't no one keepin' score
Pass the paper bag that holds the bottle
And feel the wheels rumblin' 'neath the floor

And the sons of Pullman porters
and the sons of engineers
Ride their fathers' magic carpet made of steel
Mothers with their babes asleep,
rockin' to the gentle beat
And the rhythm of the rails is all they feel

Chorus:

Night time on the City of New Orleans
Changin' cars in Memphis, Tennessee
Halfway home and we'll be there by mornin'
Thru the Mississippi darkness
rollin' down to the sea

But all the towns and people seem
to fade into a bad dream
And the steel rail still ain't heard the news
The conductor sings his song again
"The passengers will please refrain . . ."
This train's got the disappearin' railroad blues

Final chorus:

Goodnight, America, how are you? . . .

Crawdad

You get a line and I'll get a pole, honey,
You get a line and I'll get a pole, babe,
You get a line and I'll get a pole,
And we'll go down to the crawdad hole,
Honey, sugar baby, mine,

Along come a man with a sack on his back, honey,
Along come a man with a sack on his back, babe,
Along come a man with a sack on his back,
Packin' all the crawdads he can pack,
Honey, sugar baby, mine.

Get up old man, you slept too late, honey,
Get up old man, you slept too late, babe,
Get up old man, you slept too late,
Last piece of crawdad's on your plate,
Honey, sugar baby, mine.

Get up old woman, you slept too late, honey,
Get up old woman, you slept too late, babe,
Get up old woman, you slept too late,
Crawdad man done passed your gate,
Honey, sugar baby, mine.

Look at that crawdad struttin' around, honey,
Look at that crawdad struttin' around, babe,
Look at that crawdad struttin' around,
He thinks he's the mayor of Crawdad Town,
Honey, sugar baby, mine.

What you gonna do when the lake goes dry, honey?
What you gonna do when the lake goes dry, babe?
What you gonna do when the lake goes dry?
Sit on the bank and watch the crawdads die,
Honey, sugar baby, mine.

What you gonna do when the crawdads die, honey?
What you gonna do when the crawdads die, babe?
What you gonna do when the crawdads die?
Sit on the bank until I cry,
Honey, sugar baby, mine.

I heard the duck say to the drake, honey,
I heard the duck say to the drake, babe,
I heard the duck say to the drake,
"There ain't no crawdads in this lake,"
Honey, sugar baby, mine.

Cryin' Holy Unto the Lord

*(Irene Amburgey's version of a
traditional African-American spiritual)*

Chorus, repeated after each verse:
Crying holy unto the Lord
Crying holy unto the Lord
Oh, if I could I surely would
Stand on the rock where Moses stood

Sinners, run and hide your face
Sinners, run and hide your face
Go and run into the rocks and hide your face
The rocks got no hiding place

Lord, I ain't no sinner now
Lord, I ain't no sinner now
I've been to the river and I've been baptized
And I ain't no sinner now

Lord, I ain't no stranger here
Lord, I ain't no stranger here
I've been introduced to the Father and the Son
And I ain't no stranger here

Down by the Riverside

Gonna lay down my sword and shield
Down by the riverside (3x)
Gonna lay down my sword and shield
Down by the riverside
Gonna study war no more

Chorus:
I ain't gonna study war no more
Ain't gonna study war no more
Study war no more
(repeat 3 lines)

Gonna join hands with ev'ryone
Down by the riverside (3x)
Gonna join hands with ev'ryone
Down by the riverside
Gonna study war no more

Chorus:

Similarly:
Gonna put on my long white robe . . .
Gonna put on my starry crown . . .
Gonna put on my golden shoes . . .
Gonna walk with the Prince of Peace . . .

Dark as a Dungeon

(Merle Travis, 1947)

Come all you young fellers, so young and so fine,
And seek not your fortune in the dark, dreary mine.
It will form as a habit and seep in your soul,
'Till the blood of your veins runs as black as the coal.

Chorus:

Where it's dark as a dungeon and damp as the dew,
Where the dangers are double and the pleasures are few,
Where the rain never falls and the sun never shines.
It's dark as a dungeon way down in the mines.

It's many a man I have seen in my day
Who lived just to labor his whole life away.
Like a fiend with his dope or a drunkard his wine,
A man must have lust for the lure of the mine.

Chorus:

I hope when I'm gone and the ages shall roll,
My body will blacken and turn into coal.
Then I'll look from the door of my heavenly home,
And pity the miner a-digging my bones.

Chorus:

The midnight, the morning, the middle of day,
Are the same to the miner who labors away.
Where the demons of death often come by surprise,
One slip of the slate and you're buried alive.

Chorus:

Don't You Weep After Me

(Bahamian gospel song, ca. 1890)

When I'm dead and buried,
Don't you weep after me.
When I'm dead and buried,
Don't you weep after me.
When I'm dead and buried,
Don't you weep after me.
I don't want you to weep after me.

Sailin' on the ocean,
Don't you weep after me.
Sailin' on the ocean,
Don't you weep after me.
Sailin' on the ocean,
Don't you weep after me.
I don't want you to weep after me.

Similarly:

In the good old ship of Zion...

King Peter is the captain...

The angels are the sailors...

(She's) Lookin' over Jordan...

When I'm dead and buried...

Don't Let Your Deal Go Down

(Flatt & Scruggs' 1957 version of an old-time song)

Well, I've been all around this whole wide
world,
Been down to sunny Alabam'.
My mama always told me, "Son,
Never let your deal go down."

Chorus:

Don't let your deal go down.
Don't let your deal go down.
Don't let your deal go down,
Till your last gold dollar is gone.

Well, the last time I seen that gal of mine,
She was standing in the door.
She said, 'Honey, I'll be a long time gone.
You'll never see your gal no more."

Chorus:

Well, I'm going down the railroad track,
Gonna take my rocking chair.
If these doggone blues don't leave my mind,
I'm gonna rock away from here.

Chorus:

Desperado

He was a desperado from the wild and woolly west.
He came into Chicago just to give the west a rest.
He wore a big sombrero and a gun beneath his vest,
And everywhere he went he gave his war whoop!

Chorus:

He was a brave, bold man and a—desperado,
From Cripple Creek, way down in—Colorado,
And he walked around like a—big tornado,
And everywhere he went he gave his war whoop!

He went to Coney Island just to take in all the sights.
He saw the hootchie-cootchie and the girls dressed up in tights.
He got so darned excited that he shot out all the lights,
And everywhere he went he gave his war whoop!

Chorus:

A great big fat policemen was a-walking down his beat.
He saw this desperado come a-walking down the street.
He grabbed him by the whiskers, and he grabbed him by the seat,
And threw him where he wouldn't give his war whoop!

Chorus:

Eddystone Light

My father was the keeper of the Eddystone light,
And he slept with a mermaid one fine night.
From this union there came three:
A porpoise and a porgy and the other was me!

Chorus:

Yo ho ho, the wind blows free,
Oh for the life on the rolling sea!

One night, as I was a-trimmin' of the glim
A-singin' a verse from the evening hymn
A voice from the starboard shouted "Ahoy!"
And there was my mother, a-sitting on a buoy.

Chorus:

"Oh, what has become of my children three?"
My mother then she asked of me.
"One was exhibited as a talking fish
The other was served from a chafing dish."

Chorus:

Then the phosphorus flashed in her seaweed hair.
I looked again, and my mother wasn't there.
But her voice came echoing back from the night:
"To Hell with the keeper of the Eddystone Light!"

Chorus:

Five Hundred Miles

(Hedy West, 1961)

If you miss the train I'm on,
you will know that I am gone.
You can hear the whistle blow a hundred miles.
A hundred miles, (4x)
You can hear the whistle blow a hundred miles.

Lord I'm one, Lord I'm two, Lord I'm three,
Lord I'm four,
Lord I'm 500 miles away from home,
Away from home, (4x)
Lord I'm 500 miles away from home.

Not a shirt on my back, not a penny to my name,
Lord, I can't go a-home this a-way.
This a-way, (4x)
Lord, I can't go a-home this a-way.

If you miss the train I'm on,
you will know that I am gone,
You can hear the whistle blow a hundred miles.

The Erie Canal

(Thomas S. Allen, 1905)

I've got an old mule and her name is Sal
Fifteen years on the Erie Canal
She's a good old worker and a good old pal
Fifteen years on the Erie Canal
We've hauled some barges in our day
Filled with lumber, coal, and hay
And we know every inch of the way
From Albany to Buffalo

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Low bridge, everybody down
Low bridge for we're coming to a town
And you'll always know your neighbor
And you'll always know your pal
If you've ever navigated on
The Erie Canal

We'd better look around for a job, old gal
Fifteen years on the Erie Canal
You bet your life I wouldn't part with Sal
Fifteen years on the Erie Canal
Giddap there gal, we've passed that lock
We'll make Rome 'bout six o'clock
One more trip and then we'll go
Right back home to Buffalo

Oh, where would I be if I lost my pal?
Fifteen years on the Erie Canal
Oh, I'd like to see a mule as good as Sal
Fifteen years on the Erie Canal
A friend of mine once made her sore
Now he's got a broken jaw
'Cause she let fly with her iron toe
And kicked him into Buffalo

Freight Train

(Elizabeth "Libba" Cotten [1895–1987], ca. 1907)

Freight train, freight train, run so fast,
Freight train, freight train, run so fast;
Please don't tell what train I'm on,
They won't know what route I'm gone.

When I am dead and in my grave,
No more good times here I crave.
Place the stones at my head and feet,
Tell them all that I've gone to sleep.

When I die, Lord, bury me deep,
Way down on old Chestnut Street,
So I can hear old Number 9,
As she comes rolling by.

When I die, Lord, bury me deep,
Way down on old Chestnut Street,
Place a stone at my head and feet,
Tell them all that I'm gone to sleep.

(These lyrics from recording of Libba Cotten made by Mike Seeger early in 1958.)

Freight train, freight train, run so fast; freight train, freight train,
run so fast. Please don't tell what train I'm on, they won't
know what route I'm going.

Finnegan's Wake

(Irish-American comic ballad, first published in 1864. Author unknown; music, a traditional Irish jig.)

Tim Finnegan lived in Walkin' Street, a gentle Irishman, mighty odd.
He'd a beautiful brogue, so rich and sweet, and to rise in the world he carried the hod.
Tim had a sort of a tipping way: With a love of the liquor he was born.
To help him on with his work each day, he'd a drop of the craythur every morn'.

Chorus (repeated after each verse):

Whack fol-de-dah-doh. Dance to your partner. Welt the floor, your trotters shake.
Wasn't it the truth I told ye? Lots of fun at Finnegan's wake!

One mornin', Tim felt rather full. His head felt heavy, which made him shake.
He fell from a ladder and he broke his skull, so they carried him home, his corpse to wake.
They rolled him up in a nice clean sheet. They laid him out upon the bed,
With a bucket of whiskey at his feet, and a barrel of porter at his head.

His friends assembled at the wake, and Mrs. Finnegan called for lunch.
First they brought in tay and cake, then pipes, tobacco, and whiskey punch.
Biddy O'Brien began to cry, "Such a nice clean corpse did you ever see?
Tim, mavourneen, why did ye die?" "Will you hold your gob!" said Paddy Magee.

Then Maggie O'Connor took up the job. "Oh, Biddy," says she, "Ye're wrong, I'm sure."
Biddy gave her a belt in the gob, and left her sprawlin' on the floor.
Then the fight did soon engage. It was woman to woman and man to man.
Shillee-law was all the rage, and a row and a ruction soon began.

Mickey Maloney raised his head as a noggin of whiskey flew at him.
It missed and landed on the bed. The liquor splattered over Tim.
Tim revives! See how he rises! Timothy risin' from the bed,
Says, "Whirlin' the liquor 'round like blazes! Damn your souls! Do ye think I'm dead?"

Hard Times Come Again No More

(Stephen Foster, 1852)

Let us pause in life's pleasures
and count its many tears,
While we all sup sorrow with the poor;
There's a song that will linger
forever in our ears;
Oh! Hard times come again no more.

Chorus:

'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary,
Many days you have lingered
around my cabin door;
Oh! Hard times come again no more.

While we seek mirth and beauty and music light and gay,
There are frail forms fainting at the door;
Though their voices are silent, their pleading looks will say
Oh! Hard times come again no more.

Chorus:

There's a pale drooping maiden who toils her life away,
With a worn heart whose better days are o'er;
Though her voice would be merry, 'tis sighing all the day,
Oh! Hard times come again no more.

Chorus:

'Tis a sigh that is wafted across the troubled wave,
'Tis a wail that is heard upon the shore
'Tis a dirge that is murmured around the lowly grave
Oh! Hard times come again no more.

Chorus:

Get Your Ass with the Class

(Words: Red Shadow; tune: "Put Your Hand in the Hand")

Get your ass with the class that's a wage away from hunger.
Get your ass with the class that is destined by history.
Get it into your head that if you wanna be red you gotta halt the Bourgeoisie,
So get your ass with the class that will struggle to set you free.

Every time I look in the three-volume book, I understand it.
They make shit that you don't need and then they teach you to demand it,
And I learned how the masses are formed into classes that struggle throughout history,
So get your ass with the class that is naught but one day ALL will be.

Get your load with the mode that will eliminate all classes.
Get your load with the mode that will end private property.
The division of labor makes you and your neighbor an underpriced commodity,
So get your load with the mode that will end all this absurdity.

(Repeat first verse)

Red Shadow— The Economics Rock & Roll Band! Three PhD economists formed a band in the 1970s to explain to the world that which they could not in the classroom. Although they have gone on to careers more or less within the economics profession, their radical legacy lives on.

—youtube.com/watch?v=IJeqp3rnYYw

The Harder They Come

(Jimmy Cliff, 1972)

Well, they tell me of a pie up in the sky,
Waiting for me when I die,
But between the day you're born and when you die,
They never seem to hear even your cry.

And I keep on fighting for the things I want,
Though I know that when you're dead you can't,
But I'd rather be a free man in my grave
Than living as a puppet or a slave.

So as sure as the sun will shine,
I'm gonna get my share now, what's mine,
And then the harder they come,
The harder they fall, one and all.
Ooh, the harder they come,
The harder they fall, one and all.

So as sure as the sun will shine,
I'm gonna get my share now, what's mine,
And then the harder they come,
The harder they fall, one and all.
Ooh, the harder they come,
The harder they fall, one and all.
Hey, the harder they come,
The harder they fall, one and all.
Saying, the harder they come,
The harder they fall, one and all..

Well, the oppressors they are trying
to keep me down.
Trying to drive me underground,
And they think that they have got the battle won.
I say forgive them, Lord,
they know not what they've done.

'Cause as sure as the sun will shine,
I'm gonna get my share now, what's mine,
And then the harder they come,
The harder they fall, one and all.
Ooh, the harder they come,
The harder they fall, one and all.

How Can I Keep from Singing?

(Words often attributed to Anne Warner, 1864, but actual authorship unknown.

Third verse by Doris Plenn, 1950s. Music, Rev. Robert Lowry, 1867.)

My life flows on in endless song
Above earth's lamentation.
I hear the sweet though far-off hymn
That hails a new creation.
Above the tumult and the strife,
I hear the music ringing;
It sounds an echo in my soul.
How can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble, sick with fear,
And hear their death-knell ringing,
When friends rejoice both far and near,
How can I keep from singing?
In prison cell and dungeon vile,
Our thoughts to them go winging.
When friends by shame are undefiled,
How can I keep from singing?

What though the tempest loudly roars?
I hear the truth, it liveth.
What though the darkness round me close?
Songs in the night it giveth.
No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that rock I'm clinging.
Since love is lord of heav'n and earth,
How can I keep from singing?

(G) CF / CG / CFC / CGC /
C - / C - / CFC / CGC

(This is a secularized version of a hymn first published in 1867 with music by Robert Wadsworth Lowry. Pete Seeger helped to make this song well-known in the folk revival. He learned it from Doris Troutman Plenn, who had it from her North Carolina family and wrote the third verse when friends were imprisoned during the McCarthy era.)

My life flows on, an end-less song a - bove earth's la - men - ta - tion, I hear the
real though far - off hymn That hails the new cre - a - tion. A - bove the tu - mult and the
strife I hear the mu - sic rin - ging. It sounds an e - cho in my soul, How can I
keep from sin - ging?

How Can I Keep from Eating?

(Words by Russell Aminzade & Sandy Pliskin;
Tune, "How Can I Keep from Singing?")

My life goes on in endless flow
Of breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
I eat them all with gusto, though
They will not make me thinner.
For eating brings me so much joy,
And joy in life is fleeting,
So while there's food still on my plate,
How can I keep from eating?

Some chicken soup with matzoh balls
Will bring me peace and pleasure.
An éclair or some chocolate cake
Brings joy no tongue can measure.
Some broccoli with hollandaise
Would set my heart to beating—
It sounds a rumbling deep within.
How can I keep from eating?

I'm getting rather plump these days;
I think I'll take up running.
To lose a meager pound or two
Takes self-control and cunning.
I've tried a million kinds of diets.
They're all so self-defeating!
I open up the pantry door—
How can I keep from eating?

I Will Keep Singing

(Joe Jencks, © 2024)

Chorus:

I will keep singing while the world turns.
I will keep singing as the human heart yearns.
May there be dancing, every step of the way.
I will keep singing till the end of my days.

How can I stand here singing when the world is at war?
When people are starving, we wonder what for?
But I will keep raising my voice to the sky.
I'll sing out my questions, never stop asking why.

Chorus

Like people before us, all the world 'round,
Have raised up their voices in glorious sound,
Singing the journey, the sorrow and pain,
We will keep singing this joyous refrain.

Chorus

It's not a solution to the struggles we face,
But it gives us the courage to keep up the pace.
When hope seems to vanish, don't know what to do,
But if we keep singing, it will carry us through.

Chorus

There's hope for the future, right here in this room.
Inside of each person, potential that blooms.
When gathered together, we become a bouquet.
Our beauty will shine on and brighten the way.

Chorus

Imagine

(John Lennon © 1971 Lenono Music)

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us, only sky
Imagine all the people
Livin' for today
Ah-aah

Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion, too
Imagine all the people
Livin' life in peace
You-ou

Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world
You-ou

Chorus:

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Chorus:

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Gonna Be an Engineer

(Peggy Seeger, 1971)

When I was a little girl, I wished I was a boy,
I tagged along behind the gang and wore my corduroys.
Everybody said I only did it to annoy,
But I was gonna be an engineer.

Momma told me, "Can't you be a lady?
Your duty is to make me the mother of a pearl.
Wait until you're older, dear, and maybe
You'll be glad that you're a girl!"

Dainty as a Dresden statue, gentle as a Jersey cow.
Smooth as silk, gives creamy milk.
Learn to coo, learn to moo.
That's what you do to be a lady now.

When I went to school, I learned to write and how to read,
Some history, geography, and home economy,
And typing is a skill that every girl is sure to need,
To while away the extra time until the time to breed,
Then they had the nerve to say, "What would you like to be?"
I says, "I'm gonna be an engineer!"

No, you only need to learn to be a lady.
The duty isn't yours for to try and run the world.
An engineer could never have a baby.
Remember, dear, that you're a girl!

She's smart (for a woman).
I wonder how she got that way?
You get no choice, you get no voice.
Just stay mum, pretend you're dumb.
And that's how you come to be a lady today.

Well, I started as a typist, but I studied on the sly,
Workin' out the days and nights so I could qualify.
Every time the boss comes in, he pinched me on the thigh,
And said, "I never had an engineer!"

You owe it to the job to be a lady.
The duty of the staff is to give the boss a whirl.
The wages that you make are crummy, maybe,
But it's all you get 'cause you're a girl!

Then Jimmy come along and we set up a conjugation.
We were busy every night with loving recreation.
I spent my days at work so he could get his education,
And now he's an engineer!

He said, I know you'll always be a lady.
The duty of my darling is to love me all her life.
Could an engineer look after or obey me?
Remember, dear, that you're my wife!

(Continued on next page)

(Gonna Be an Engineer, continued)

As soon as Jimmy got a job, I began again,
Then happy at my turret-lathe a year or so, and then:
The morning that the twins were born, Jimmy says to them,
"Kids, your mother was an engineer!"

You owe it to the kids to be a lady,
Dainty as a dishrag, faithful as a chow.
Stay at home, you got to mind the babies.
Remember, you're a mother now!

Well every time I turn around, there's something else to do:
Cook a meal, mend a sock, sweep a floor or two.
Holding up the potty when the baby wants to poo,
I was gonna be an engineer!

Y'know, I really wish that I could be a lady.
I could do the lovely things that a lady's s'posed to do.
I wouldn't even mind if only they would pay me,
And I could be a person too!

What price for a woman? You buy her for a ring of gold.
To love and obey, without any pay.
You get your cook and your nurse, for better or worse.
You don't need your purse when the lady is sold.

Ah, but now that times are harder and my Jimmy's got the sack,
I went down to Vickers, they were glad to have me back,
But I'm a third-class citizen (my wages tell me that),
And I'm a first-class engineer.

The boss he says, "We pay you as a lady,
You know you only got the job 'cause I can't afford a man.
With you I keep the profits high as may be,
You're just a cheaper pair of hands."

You got one fault: You're a woman.
You're not worth the equal pay.
A bitch or a tart, you're nothing but heart.
Shallow and vain, you got no brain.
You even go down the drain like a lady today.

Well, I listened to my mother and I joined a typing pool;
I listened to my lover and I put him through his school,
But if I listen to the boss, I'm just a bloody fool,
And an underpaid engineer!

I been a sucker ever since I was a baby,
As a daughter, as a wife, as a mother and a "dear,"
But I'll fight them as a woman, not a lady,
Fight them as an engineer!

I've Been Working on the Railroad

(First appeared in print in
Carmina Princetoniai, 1894)

I've been working on the railroad,
all the live-long day;
I've been working on the railroad,
just to pass the time away.
Can't you hear the whistle blowing,
rise up so early in the morn;
Can't you hear the captain shouting,
"Dinah, blow your horn!"
Dinah, won't you blow,
Dinah, won't you blow,
Dinah, won't you blow your horn?
Dinah, won't you blow,
Dinah, won't you blow,
Dinah, won't you blow your horn?
Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah,
someone's in the kitchen I know,
Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah,
strummin' on the old banjo!
Singin' fee, fie, fiddly-i-o,
fee, fie, fiddly-i-o-o-o-o
Fee, fie, fiddly-i-o,
strummin' on the old banjo.

I'll Fly Away

(Albert E. Brumley, 1932)

Some bright morning, when this life is o'er,
I'll fly away,
To a home on God's celestial shore,
I'll fly away.

Chorus: (repeated after each verse)
I'll fly away (oh, glory),
I'll fly away (in the morning),
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by,
I'll fly away (fly away).

When the shadows of this life have gone,
I'll fly away,
Like a bird from prison bars has flown,
I'll fly away.

Just a few more weary days and then,
I'll fly away,
To a land where joys will never end,
I'll fly away.

Jesse James

(One of many versions of a ballad written in 1882 under the
pseudonym "Billy Gashade" soon after Jesse James was killed)

Jesse James was a lad who killed many a man,
He robbed the Glendale train
He stole from the rich and he gave to the poor
He'd a hand and a heart and a brain.

Chorus, repeated after each verse:
Jesse had a wife to mourn for his life,
Three children, they were brave,
But that dirty little coward that shot Mr. Howard
Has laid poor Jesse in his grave.

Well, it was Robert Ford, that dirty little coward,
I wonder how he feels,
For he ate of Jesse's bread and he slept in Jesse's bed,
Then he laid poor Jesse in his grave.

It was on a Saturday night, when Jesse was at home,
Talkin' to his family brave,
Robert Ford came along, like a thief in the night,
And laid poor Jesse in his grave.

Jesse was a man, a friend to the poor,
He'd never see a man suffer pain,
And with his brother Frank he robbed the Gallatin bank,
And stopped the Glendale train.

It was on a Wednesday night, the moon was shining bright,
They robbed the Glendale train,
And people they did say, for many miles away,
It was those outlaws, they're Frank and Jesse James

Now the people held their breath
when they heard of Jesse's death,
And wondered how he ever came to fall
Robert Ford, it was a fact, he shot Jesse in the back
While Jesse hung a picture on the wall

This song was made by Billy Gashade
As soon as the news did arrive;
He said there was no man with the law in his hand
Who could take Jesse James when alive.

Joe Hill

(Alfred Hayes & Earl Robinson, 1936)

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night,
Alive as you and me
Says I, "But Joe, you're ten years dead."
"I never died," says he, "I never died," says he.

"In Salt Lake, Joe, by God," says I,
Him standing by my bed,
"They framed you on a murder charge."
Says Joe, "But I ain't dead,"
Says Joe, "But I ain't dead."

"The copper bosses shot you, Joe,
They killed you, Joe," says I.
"Takes more than guns to kill a man,"
Says Joe, "I didn't die," says Joe, "I didn't die."

And standing there as big as life
And smiling with his eyes
Joe says, "What they forgot to kill
Went on to organize, went on to organize."

"Joe Hill ain't dead," he says to me,
"Joe Hill ain't never died.
Where workingmen are out on strike
Joe Hill is at their side, Joe Hill is at their side."

"From San Diego up to Maine
In every mine and mill
Where workers strike and organize,"
Says he, "You'll find Joe Hill,"
Says he, "You'll find Joe Hill."

(Repeat first verse)

Joe Hill's Last Will

(Words, Joe Hill, 1915. Pete Seeger spoke it on
one of his records. Ethel Raim later set it to music.)

My Will is easy to decide,
For there is nothing to divide
My kin don't need to fuss and moan
"Moss does not cling to a rolling stone"

My body?—Oh.—If I could choose,
I would to ashes it reduce
And let the merry breezes blow
My dust to where some flowers grow
Perhaps some fading flower then
Would come to life and bloom again.

This is my last and Final Will
Good Luck to All of you,
Joe Hill

Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier

(From an English folk song, popular throughout
the American Revolutionary War)

There she sits on Buttermilk Hill
Oh, who could blame her cryin' her fill
Every tear would turn a mill
Johnny has gone for a soldier

Me-oh-my she loved him so
It broke her heart just to see him go
Only time will heal her woe
Johnny has gone for a soldier

She sold her clock and she sold her reel
She sold her only spinning wheel
To buy her love a sword of steel
Johnny has gone for a soldier

She'll dye her dress, she'll dye it red
And in the streets go begging for bread
The one she loves from her has fled
Johnny has gone for a soldier

Johnny has gone for a soldier...

Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye

(Words probably by Joseph B. Geoghegan, 1867. Music probably by Patrick S. Gilmore, 1863, for "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again." See notes.)

While goin' the road to sweet Athy, hurroo, hurroo
While goin' the road to sweet Athy, hurroo, hurroo
While goin' the road to sweet Athy, a stick in me hand and a tear in me eye
A doleful damsel I heard cry, Oh, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

With your guns and drums and drums and guns, hurroo, hurroo
With your guns and drums and drums and guns, hurroo, hurroo
With your guns and drums and drums and guns, the enemy nearly slew ye
My darling dear, ye look so queer, Oh, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

Where are the eyes that looked so mild, hurroo, hurroo
Where are the eyes that looked so mild, hurroo, hurroo
Where are the eyes that looked so mild, when my poor heart you first beguiled?
Why did ye run from me and the child? Oh, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

Where are your legs that used to run, hurroo, hurroo
Where are your legs that used to run, hurroo, hurroo
Where are your legs that used to run, when first you went to carry a gun?
Indeed your dancing days are done! Oh, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

I'm happy for to see ye home, hurroo, hurroo
I'm happy for to see ye home, hurroo, hurroo
I'm happy for to see ye home, all from the island of Sulloon
So low in the flesh, so high in the bone! Oh, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

Ye haven't an arm, ye haven't a leg, hurroo, hurroo
Ye haven't an arm, ye haven't a leg, hurroo, hurroo
Ye haven't an arm, ye haven't a leg, ye're an eyeless, boneless, chickenless egg
Ye'll have to be put with a bowl out to beg! Oh, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

They're rolling out the guns again, hurroo, hurroo
They're rolling out the guns again, hurroo, hurroo
They're rolling out the guns again, but they never will take my sons again!
No, they never will take my sons again! Yes, Johnny, I'm swearing to ye.

General opinion at folk-song website [The Mudcat Café](http://TheMudcatCafe.com) <mudcat.org> is that British music-hall performer Joseph B. Geoghegan wrote this song around 1867 to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." That song was published in 1863 by Irish-American composer and bandmaster Patrick S. Gilmore, under the pen name "Louis Lambert," who wrote it while serving in the Union Army.

However, an unnamed author of Wikipedia articles uses the geographic references in "Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye" to support the claim that this is an Irish anti-war, anti-recruiting song from the early 1800s, when soldiers from Athy, County Kildare, fought for Britain in "Sulloon" (Ceylon, now Sri Lanka) in the Kandyan Wars. The Wikipedia articles also claim that Gilmore ironically used the traditional tune of "Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye" when he wrote "When Johnny Comes Marching Home."

Those claims are challenged with expert opinion that the tune is not of Irish origin and with the lack of documentary evidence that the song existed before 1867, when British troops had been deployed from their base in Ceylon to fight elsewhere.

Julian of Norwich

(Sydney Carter)

Loud are the bells of Norwich and the people come and go
Here by the tower of Julian I tell them what I know
Ring out bells of Norwich and let the winter come and go
All shall be well again I know

Love like the yellow daffodils is coming through the snow
Love like the yellow daffodils is lord of all I know
Ring out bells of Norwich and let the winter come and go
All shall be well again I know

Ring for the yellow daffodils, the flower in the snow
Ring for the yellow daffodils and tell them what I know
Ring out bells of Norwich and let the winter come and go
All shall be well again, I know

All shall be well I'm telling you, let the winter come and go
All shall be well again, I know

The Last Thing on My Mind

(Tom Paxton, 1964)

It's a lesson too late for the learnin',
Made of sand, made of sand.
In the wink of an eye my soul is turnin',
In your hand, in your hand.

Chorus (repeated after each verse):
Are you going away with no word of farewell?
Will there be not a trace left behind?
Well, I could have loved you better,
Didn't mean to be unkind.
You know that was the last thing on my mind.

As we walk on, my thoughts keep tumblin',
Round and round, round and round.
Underneath our feet the subway's rumblin',
Underground, underground.

As I lie in my bed in the mornin',
Without you, without you.
Every song in my breast lies a bornin',
Without you, without you.

You've got reasons a-plenty for goin',
This I know, this I know.
For the weeds have been steadily growin'.
Please don't go, please don't go.

Little Darling, Pal of Mine

(A. P. Carter; 1920s; tune adapted from
the African-American gospel song,
"When the World's on Fire")

Chorus (after each verse):
My little darling, oh, how I love you!
How I love you none can tell.
In your heart you love another.
Little darling, pal of mine.

Many a night, while you lay sleeping,
Dreaming of your rambler's life,
Was a poor boy, brokenhearted,
Listening to the winds that sigh.

Many a day with you I've rambled.
Countless hours with you I've spent.
Thought I had your heart forever,
But I find it's only lent.

There is just three things I wish for:
That's my casket, shroud, and grave.
When I'm dead, don't weep for me.
Just kiss those lips that you betrayed.

Kum Ba Yah

(Gullah-dialect version of traditional African-American
spiritual, "Come By Here." The song has gone around the
world, and is widely sung in Africa. It is sometimes
mistakenly said to have African origins.)

Kum ba yah, my lord, kum ba yah! (3x)
Oh, Lord, kum ba yah

Someone's crying, Lord, kum ba yah! (3x)
Oh, Lord, kum ba yah

Similarly:
Someone's singing . . .

Someone's praying . . .

Sleeping, dreaming, crying, laughing, etc.

Come by here, my lord, come by here! (3x)
Oh, Lord, come by here

The L & N Don't Stop Here Anymore

(Jean Ritchie, 1963)

Oh, when I was a curly-headed baby
My daddy set me down upon his knee
Said, "Son, you go to school and learn your letters
Don't be no dusty miner like me"

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

For I was born and raised at the mouth of the Hazard Holler
The coal cars roared and rumbled past my door
But now they stand in a rusty row and empty
And the L & N don't stop here any more

I used to think my daddy was a black man
With scrip enough to buy the company store
But now he goes downtown with empty pockets
And his face as white as a February snow

Last night I dreamt I went down to the office
To get my payday like I done before
Them old cudsy* vines had covered up the doorway
And there was trees and grass growin' right up through the floor

I never thought I'd live to love the coal dust
Never thought I'd pray to hear the tiple roar
But, Lord, how I wish that grass could change to money
And them greenbacks fill my pockets once more

* kudzu

Long Black Veil

(Danny Dill and Marijon Wilkin, 1959)

Ten years ago, on a cold dark night,
Someone was killed 'neath the town hall light.
There were few at the scene, but they all agree
That the slayer who ran looked a lot like me.

The judge said, "Son, what is your alibi?
If you were somewhere else,
then you won't have to die."
I spoke not a word, though it meant my life,
For I had been in the arms
of my best friend's wife.

She walks these hills in a long black veil.
She visits my grave
when the night winds wail.
Nobody knows, nobody sees,
Nobody knows but me.

The scaffold was high and eternity near
She stood in the crowd and shed not a tear
But sometimes at night, when the cold wind moans,
In a long black veil, she cries o'er my bones.

She walks these hills in a long black veil.
She visits my grave
when the night winds wail.
Nobody knows, nobody sees,
Nobody knows but me.

Like a Rolling Stone

(Bob Dylan, 1965)

Once upon a time you dressed so fine, threw the bums a dime in your prime, didn't you?
People'd call; they'd say "Beware! You're bound to fall."
You thought they were all kidding you.
You used to laugh about everybody that was hanging out. Now you don't talk so loud.
Now you don't seem so proud about having to be scrounging your next meal.

Chorus

How does it feel? How does it feel to be without a home,
With no direction home, a complete unknown, like a rolling stone?

Ahh, you've gone to the finest schools, alright, Miss Lonely, but you know
you only used to get juiced in it.
Nobody's ever taught you how to live out on the street, and now you're gonna have to get used to it.
You say you never compromised with the mystery tramp, but now you realize,
he's not selling any alibis,
As you stare into the vacuum of his eyes, and say do you want to make a deal?

Chorus

Ah, you never turned around to see the frowns on the jugglers and the clowns
when they all did tricks for you.
You never understood that it ain't no good. You shouldn't let other people get your kicks for you.
You used to ride on a chrome horse with your diplomat, who carried on his shoulder a Siamese cat.
Ain't it hard when you discovered that he really wasn't where it's at,
after he took from you everything he could steal?

Chorus

Ahh, princess on a steeple, and all the pretty people, they're all drinking,
thinking that they've got it made,
Exchanging all precious gifts, but you better take your diamond ring.
You better pawn it, babe.
You used to be so amused at Napoleon in rags and the language that he used. Go to him!
He calls you; you can't refuse
When you ain't got nothing, you got nothing to lose. You're invisible now.
You've got no secrets to conceal.

Chorus

Lonesome Traveler

(Lee Hays, © 1950)

I am a lonely and a lonesome traveler, (3x)
And I'm a-travelin' on.

Gonna keep on a-travelin' on the road to
freedom

Similarly:
I traveled cold and then I traveled hungry

One of these days I'm gonna stop all my
travelin',
Stop all this travelin' on.

I traveled with the rich man and traveled with
the poor man

M.T.A.

(Words, Jacqueline Steiner, and Bess Lomax-Hawes, 1949; tune, "The Ship that Never Returned," 1895)

Let me tell you the story of a man named Charlie
On a tragic and fateful day.
He put ten cents in his pocket, kissed his wife
and family,
Went to ride on the M.T.A.

Chorus: (repeated after each verse)

Did he ever return? No he never returned,
And his fate is still unlearn'd,
He may ride forever 'neath the streets of
Boston.
He's the man who never returned.

Charlie handed in his dime
at the Kendall Square Station,
And he changed for Jamaica Plain.
When he got there the conductor told him,
"One more nickel."
Charlie could not get off that train.

Now, all night long, Charlie rides
through the tunnels,
Saying "What will become of me?
How can I afford to see my sister in Chelsea
Or my cousin in Roxbury?"

Charlie's wife goes down to the
Scollay Square station
Every day at quarter past two,
And through the open window she hands
Charlie a sandwich
As the train comes rumblin' through.

As his train rolled on underneath
Greater Boston,
Charlie looked around and sighed:
"Well, I'm sore and disgusted,
and I'm absolutely busted;
I guess this is my last long ride."

Now you citizens of Boston,
don't you think it's a scandal
That the people have to pay and pay?
Vote for Walter A. O'Brien and
fight the fare increase.
Get poor Charlie off the MTA.

Final Chorus:

Or else he'll never return, no he'll never
return,
And his fate will be unlearned.
He may ride forever 'neath the streets of
Boston
He's the man who never returned.

Marching Inland

(Tom Lewis)

Lord Nelson had a sure-fired way
of curing *mal-de-mer*
And if you pay attention,
his secret I will share
To any seasick sailor he'd give
this advice for free:
If you're feeling seasick,
sit underneath a tree!

Chorus (repeated after each verse):

I'm marching inland from the shore
Over me shoulder I'm carrying an oar
When someone asks me "what's that funny
thing you've got?"
I know I'll never go to sea no more, no more
I know I'll never go to sea no more

Columbus he set sail to find out if the world was round
He kept up sailing to the West until he ran aground
He thought he found the Injuns but he found the USA
I know some navigators who can still do that today

Drake is in his hammock and a thousand miles away
Grenville's Revenge is at the bottom of the bay
Many famous sailors never came home from the sea
Just take my advice, Jack, and come and follow me

So sailors take a warning from these men
of high renown
When you leave the ocean and it's time to settle down
Never cast your anchor less than
ninety miles from shore
There'll always be temptation to be off
to sea once more

The Mary Ellen Carter

(Tom Lewis)

She went down last October in a pouring driving rain.
The skipper, he'd been drinking and the mate, he felt no pain.
Too close to Three Mile Rock, and she was dealt her mortal blow,
And the Mary Ellen Carter settled low.
There were five of us aboard her when she finally was awash.
We'd worked like hell to save her, all heedless of the cost.
And the groan she gave as she went down, it caused us to proclaim
That the Mary Ellen Carter would rise again.

Well, the owners wrote her off; not a nickel would they spend.
She gave twenty years of service, boys, then met her sorry end.
But insurance paid the loss to them; they let her rest below.
Then they laughed at us and said we had to go.
But we talked of her all winter, some days around the clock,
For she's worth a quarter million, afloat and at the dock.
And with every jar that hit the bar, we swore we would remain
And make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again.

Chorus:

Rise again, rise again, that her name not be lost
To the knowledge of men.
Those who loved her best and were with her till the end
Will make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again.

All spring, now, we've been with her on a barge lent by a friend.
Three dives a day in hard hat suit and twice I've had the bends.
Thank God it's only sixty feet and the currents here are slow
Or I'd never have the strength to go below.
But we've patched her rents, stopped her vents, dogged hatch and porthole down.
Put cables to her, 'fore and aft and girded her around.
Tomorrow, noon, we hit the air and then take up the strain.
And watch the Mary Ellen Carter Rise Again.

Chorus:

For we couldn't leave her there, you see, to crumble into scale.
She'd saved our lives so many times, living through the gale
And the laughing, drunken rats who left her to a sorry grave
They won't be laughing in another day.
And you, to whom adversity has dealt the final blow
With smiling bastards lying to you everywhere you go
Turn to, and put out all your strength of arm and heart and brain
And like the Mary Ellen Carter, rise again.

Final chorus:

Rise again, rise again
Though your heart it be broken and life about to end
No matter what you've lost, be it a home, a love, a friend.
Like the Mary Ellen Carter, rise again.

The Mill Was Made of Marble

(Joe Glazer, 1947)

I dreamed that I had died,
And gone to my reward:
A job in heaven's textile plant,
On a golden boulevard.

Where the mill was made of marble,
The machines were made out of gold,
And nobody ever got tired,
And nobody ever grew old.

This mill was built in a garden.
No dust or lint could be found.
The air was so fresh and so fragrant,
With flowers and trees all around.

And the mill was made of marble,
The machines were made out of gold,
And nobody ever got tired,
And nobody ever grew old.

It was quiet and peaceful in heaven.
There was no clatter or boom.
You could hear the most beautiful music
As you worked at the spindle and loom.

And the mill was made of marble,
The machines were made out of gold,
And nobody ever got tired,
And nobody ever grew old.

There was no unemployment in heaven.
We worked steady all through the year.
We always had food for our children.
We never were haunted by fear.

And the mill was made of marble,
The machines were made out of gold,
And nobody ever got tired,
And nobody ever grew old.

When I awoke from my dream about heaven,
I wondered if someday there'd be
A mill like that one down here on earth,
For workers like you and like me.

Where the mill was made of marble,
The machines were made out of gold,
And nobody ever got tired,
And nobody ever grew old.

The Mingulay Boat Song

(Scott Robinson)

What care we how wild the minch is
What care we for windy weather
Hail ya ho boys, every inch is
Sailing closer to Mingulay

Chorus (repeated after each verse):

Hail ya ho boys, let her go boys
Bring her head 'round into the weather
Hail ya ho boys, let her go boys
Sailing homeward to Mingulay

Wives and sweethearts on the hillside
Looking seaward through the heather
Let her go boys, and we'll anchor
'Ere the sun sets on Mingulay

When the wind is wild with shouting
And the waves mount ever higher
Anxious eyes turn ever seaward
To see us home, boys, to Mingulay

Sye or Lewis, Mull or Uhist
Tyree, Kull or Vattersea
None can call us like our island
Our own dear isle of Mingulay

Longer, longer shall I tarry
Where our hearts are both blithe and merry
Turn her round, boys, and she'll carry
Heart to hearth, home and Mingulay

My Husband's Got No Courage in Him

As I went out one May morning
To view the fields and leaves a-springing
I saw two maidens standing by
And one of them her hands was wringing

Chorus (repeated after each verse):
Oh dear-o ! oh dear-o !
My husband's got no courage in him.
Oh dear-o !

Me husband's admired wherever he goes
And everyone looks well upon him
With his handsome features and well-shaped leg
But still he's got no courage in him

Me husband can dance and caper and sing
And do anything that's fitting for him
But he cannot do the thing I want
Because he's got no courage in him

All sorts of vittles I did provide
A sorts of meats that's fitting for him
With oyster pie and rhubarb too
But still he's got no courage in him

Every night when I goes to bed
I lie and throw me leg right o'er him
And me hand I clamp between his thighs
But I can't put any courage in him

Seven long years I've made his bed
And every night I've lain beside him
But this morning I rose with me maidenhead
For still he's got no courage in him

I wish me husband he was dead
And in his grave I'd quickly lay him
And then I'd find another one
That had a little courage in him

So all ye maids come listen to me
Don't marry a man before you've tried him
Or else you'll sing this song like me
Me husband's got no courage in him

Northwest Passage

(Stan Rogers, 1981)

Chorus (repeat after every verse):
Ah, for just one time I would take
the Northwest Passage
To find the hand of Franklin reaching
for the Beaufort Sea;
Tracing one warm line through a land
so wild and savage
And make a Northwest Passage to the sea.

Westward from the Davis Strait 'tis there
'twas said to lie
The sea route to the Orient for which
so many died;
Seeking gold and glory, leaving weathered,
broken bones
And a long-forgotten lonely cairn of stones.

Three centuries thereafter, I take
passage overland
In the footsteps of brave Kelso, where his
"sea of flowers" began
Watching cities rise before me,
then behind me sink again
This tardiest explorer, driving hard
across the plain.

Chorus

And through the night, behind the wheel,
the mileage clicking west
I think upon Mackenzie, David Thompson
and the rest
Who cracked the mountain ramparts
and did show a path for me
To race the roaring Fraser to the sea.

How then am I so different from the
first men through this way?
Like them, I left a settled life, I threw it all away.
To seek a Northwest Passage at the call
of many men
To find there but the road back home again.

Michael, Row the Boat Ashore

*(African-American spiritual, collected approx. 1863.
Adapted by Tony Saletan, 1954)*

Chorus, repeated after every verse:

Michael, row the boat ashore, Hallelujah,
Michael, row the boat ashore, Hallelujah.

My brothers and sisters are all on board, Hallelujah,
My brothers and sisters are all on board, Hallelujah.

Sister help to trim the sail, Hallelujah,
Sister help to trim the sail, Hallelujah.

The river is deep and the river is wide, Hallelujah,
Milk and honey on the other side, Hallelujah.

Jordan's river is chilly and cold, Hallelujah,
Chills the body but not the soul, Hallelujah.

On Top of Old Smoky

(Traditional American folk song)

On top of old Smoky, all covered with snow
I lost my true lover from courting too slow

Though courting's a pleasure and parting is grief
A false-hearted lover is worse than a thief

For a thief will just rob you and take what you have
But a false-hearted lover will lead you to the grave

The grave will decay you and turn you to dust
Not one boy in a thousand a poor girl can trust

He'll hug you and kiss you and tell you more lies
Than cross-ties on a railroad or stars in the skies

(Repeat first verse)

Old Friend

(Peggy Seeger, 1994)

Old friend, comrade of mine,
Once again you're on my mind.
There's always a place, there's always a time
To think of days gone by.

We spent too long apart,
And there's so much in my heart
I want to say before we say goodbye.

Your life and mine entwined
With the music and the songs.
Our future was set from the moment that we met;
We were old, long friends.

The work that quit our play
Carried us away, then brought us home,
Brought us home again.

Love's a game, you never made a claim
Or tried to play that game with me.
That set you apart with your own place in my heart,
Where you will always be.

As a woman among men,
It was hard to find a friend.
Then you were there, and, with you, I was free.

We traveled far, by scooter, then by car,
From Paris down to Rome.
In Germany we clowned, in Switzerland broke down,
We were so young then.

We parted and we aged,
But our rainbow didn't fade;
We remained, we remained old friends.

Old friend, comrade of mine,
Once again you're on my mind.
There's always a place, there's always a time
To think of days gone by.

We spent too long apart,
And there's so much in my heart
I want to say before we say goodbye.

Now you are gone, and like the music
And the song, you've come into my mind.
If the good we have done ensures that we live on,
You will never die.

Your friends hold you dear
We'll keep you with us here
So never say, never say goodbye.

Song for Ralph Rinzler '56, written after his death in 1994.

Oh, Mary, Don't You Weep

(Traditional African-American spiritual)

Well, if I could I surely would
Stand on the rock where Moses stood
Pharaoh's army got drowned
Oh, Mary, don't you weep

Refrain, repeated after each verse:

Oh, Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
Oh, Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
Pharaoh's army got drowned
Oh, Mary, don't you weep

Similarly:

Well, Mary wore three links of chain
On every link was Jesus' name

Well, one of these nights 'bout 12 o'clock
This old world's gonna reel and rock

Well, Moses stood on the Red Sea shore
Smotin' the water with a two-by-four

Well, old Mr. Satan, he got mad
Missed that soul that he thought he had

Brothers and sisters, don't you cry
There'll be good times by and by

God gave Noah the rainbow sign
"No more water but fire next time"

Passing Through

(Words: Dick Blakeslee, 1948, Music: Traditional)

I saw Adam leave the garden with an apple in his hand,
I said, "Now you're out what are you gonna do?"
"Plant my crops and pray for rain. Maybe raise a little Cain,
I'm an orphan now and I'm just passing through."

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Passing through, passing through,
Sometimes happy, sometimes blue,
Glad that I ran into you,
Tell the people that you saw me passing through.

I saw Jesus on the cross on that hill called Calvary.
"Do you hate mankind for what they've done to you?"
He said, "Talk of love, not hate. Things to do, it's getting late,
I've so little time and I'm just passing through."

I shivered with George Washington one night at Valley Forge.
I asked, "Why do men freeze here like they do?"
He said, "Men will suffer, fight, even die, for what is right,
Even though they know they're only passing through."

I rode with old Abe Lincoln on that train to Gettysburg
And I asked him what he thought to be most true
He said every man must be unconditionally free
We're all brothers and we're only passing through.

I was at Franklin Roosevelt's side just a while before he died.
He said, "One world must come out of World War II.
Yankee, Russian, Black or tan, still a man is just a man,
We're all brothers and we're only passing through."

Pity the Downtrodden Landlord

(From a London folk opera in the early 1940s, written by Englishman Barnet Woolf, Workers Music Association.)

Tune: Arnold Clayton, after "She is More to be Pitied than Censured")

F Bb F
Please open your hearts and your purses
F7 Bb Bbm F

To a man who is misunderstood

A A7 Dm
He gets all the kicks and the curses

G G7 C7
Though he wishes you nothing but good

F Bb F
He wistfully begs you to show him

F7 Bb Bbm F
You think he's a friend, not a louse;

F#dim C
So remember the debt that you owe him

C#dim Dm7 G7 C7
The landlord who lends you his house

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

F Bb F
So pity the downtrodden landlord
F7 Bb Bbm F
And his back that is burdened and bent
F#dim Gm C7 F
Respect his gray hairs, don't ask for repairs
Gm C7 F
And don't be behind with the rent.

[You are able to work for a living
And rejoice in your strength and your skill;
So try to be kind and forgiving
To a man who a day's work would kill.
You are able to talk with your neighbor
You can look the whole world in its face,
But a landlord that ventured to labor
Would never survive the disgrace.] *

When thunder clouds gather and darken
You can sleep undisturbed in your bed;
But the landlord must sit up and hearken
And shiver, and wonder, and dread;
If you're killed, then you die in a hurry
And you never will know your bad luck,
But the landlord is shaking with worry—
"Has one of my houses been struck?"

When a landlord resorts to eviction
Don't think that he does it for spite;
He's acting from deepest conviction,
And what's right, after all, is what's right.
But I see that your hearts are all hardened
And I fear I'm appealing in vain;
Yet I hope my last plea will be pardoned
If I beg on my knees once again:

* verse added by Jerry Silverman? or Fred Hellerman?

Ramblin' Boy

(Tom Paxton © 1963)

He was a pal and a friend always
We rambled round in the hard ol' days
He never cared if I had no dough
We rambled round in the rain and snow

Chorus, repeated after each verse):
So here's to you my ramblin' boy
May all your rambles bring you joy
So here's to you my ramblin' boy
May all your rambles bring you joy

In Tulsa town we chanced to stray
We thought we'd try to work one day
The boss says he had room for one
Says my old pal, "We'd rather bum"

Late one night in a jungle camp
The weather was cold and it was damp
He got the chills, and he got them bad
They took the only friend I ever had

He left me here to ramble on
My ramblin' pal is dead and gone
If when we die we go somewhere
I'll bet you a dollar he's ramblin' there

Respect

(Aretha Franklin, 1967, based on "Respect" by Otis Redding, 1965)

(oo)

What you want (oo), Baby, I got it (oo).

What you need (oo), do you know I got it? (oo)

All I'm askin' (oo) is for a little respect when you come home (just a little bit).

Hey, Baby (just a little bit), when you get home (just a little bit),

Mister (just a little bit).

I ain't gon' do you wrong, while you're gone

Ain't gon' do you wrong (oo), 'cause I don't wanna (oo).

All I'm askin' (oo) is for a little respect when you come home (just a little bit),

Baby (just a little bit), when you get home (just a little bit). Yeah! (just a little bit)

I'm about to give you . . . all my money, and all I'm askin' . . . in return, honey,

Is to give me . . . my profits . . . when you get home.

(Yes sir, yes sir, yes sir, yes sir, yes sir, yes sir, yes sir, yes sir)

Yeah, baby, when you get home (just a little bit). Yeah! (just a little bit)

Ooh, your kisses (oo), sweeter than honey (oo),

And, guess what (oo), so is my money (oo).

All I want you to do for me (oo, oo) is give it to me when you get home.

(Re, re, re, re) Yeah, baby! (re, re, re, re)

Whip it to me . . . when you get home. Now! (just a little bit)

R-E-S-P-E-C-T, find out what it means to me! R-E-S-P-E-C-T, take care of TCB!

Ooh! (sock it to me, sock it to me, sock it to me, sock it to me)

A little respect! (sock it to me, sock it to me, sock it to me, sock it to me)

Whoa, babe! A little respect! (just a little bit)

I get tired (just a little bit), keep on tryin' (just a little bit),

You're runnin' out of foolin' (just a little bit), and I ain't lyin' (just a little bit).

(Re, re, re, re) 'spect when you come home (re, re, re, re)

Or you'll be walkin' far out alone (just a little bit). . . .

Pretty Little Baby

(Traditional African-American spiritual; one of many versions)

Virgin Mary had a little baby,

Oooo-oooh, pretty little baby,

Oooh-oooh, glory hallelujah!

Glory be to the new-born King!

Mary, what you gonna name that pretty little baby?

Oooo-oooh, pretty little baby, (etc.)

Some call him one thing, think I'll name him David,

Oooh-oooh, he's the son of David. (etc.)

Mary, what you gonna name that pretty little baby?

Oooo-oooh, pretty little baby, (etc.)

Some call him one thing, think I'll name him 'Manuel

Oooh-oooh, think I'll call him 'Manuel. (etc.)

Mary, what you gonna name that pretty little baby?

Oooo-oooh, pretty little baby, (etc.)

Some call him one thing, think I'll name him Jesus,

Oooh-oooh, think I'll call him Savior. (etc.)

The Virgin Mary had a little baby,

Oooo-oooh, pretty little baby, (etc.)

Red River Valley

From this valley they say you are going.
We will miss your bright eyes and sweet smile,
For they say you are taking the sunshine
That has brightened our path for a while.

Chorus (repeated after each verse):
Come and sit by my side if you love me.
Do not hasten to bid me adieu,
But remember the Red River Valley
And the cowboy who loved you so true.

Won't you think of the valley you're leaving?
Oh, how lonely, how sad it will be?
Oh, think of the fond heart you're breaking
And the grief you are causing to me.

As you go to your home by the ocean,
May you never forget those sweet hours
That we spent in the Red River Valley,
And the love we exchanged mid the flowers.

A popular song that evolved into a folksong. James Kerrigan wrote a sentimental piece "In the Bright Mohawk Valley" in 1896. Pioneers heading west picked up the song, simplified it, and changed the locale to the Texas panhandle. —Rise Up Singing

Roll the Old Chariot Along

Oh, a drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us
any harm (3x)
And we'll all hang on behind.

Chorus:
So we'll roll the old chariot along
An' we'll roll the golden chariot along.
So we'll roll the old chariot along
An' we'll all hang on behind!

Similarly:
Oh, a plate of Irish stew wouldn't do us any harm

Oh, a nice fat cook wouldn't do us any harm

Oh, a roll in the clover wouldn't do us any harm

Oh, a long spell in gaol wouldn't do us any harm

Oh, a nice watch below wouldn't do us any harm

Oh, a night with the gals wouldn't do us any harm

The Rose

(Amanda McBroom, © 1977)

Some say love, it is a river that drowns the
tender reed.
Some say love, it is razor that leaves your soul
to bleed.
Some say love, it is a hunger, an endless aching
need.
I say love, it is a flower, and you its only seed.

It's the heart afraid of breaking that never
learns to dance.
Its the dream afraid of waking that never takes
the chance.
It's the one who won't be taken, who cannot
seem to give,
And the soul afraid of dying that never learns
to live.

When the night has been too lonely and the
road has been too long,
And you think that love is only for the lucky
and the strong,
Just remember, in the winter, far beneath the
bitter snows,
Lies the seed that with the sun's love in the
spring becomes the rose.

The Riddle Song (I Gave My Love a Cherry)

(Traditional. This version is from the Kentucky mountains. An earlier version was discovered in a 15th-Century manuscript.)

I gave my love a cherry that has no stone,
I gave my love a chicken that has no bone,
I gave my love a ring that has no end,
I gave my love a baby with no cryin'.

A cherry, when it's blooming, it has no stone,
A chicken when it's pipping, it has no bone,
A ring when it's rolling, it has no end,
A baby when it's sleeping, has no cryin'.

How can there be a cherry that has no stone?
How can there be a chicken that has no bone?
How can there be a ring that has no end?
How can there be a baby with no cryin'?



I gave my love a cher-ry that has no stone. I gave my love a chick-en that



has no bone. I gave my love a stor-y that has no end. I gave my love a ba-by with no cry-ing.

St. James Infirmary

(One of many versions of this American blues song, which, like "The Streets of Laredo," evolved from the 1790s Irish song, "The Unfortunate Rake.")

I went down to St. James Infirmary;
Saw my baby there.
She was stretched out on a long white table,
So cold, so sweet, so sweet, so fair.

Let her go, let her go, God bless her,
Wherever she may be.
She can search this whole wide world over;
She won't ever find another man like me.

When I die, bury me in straight-laced shoes,
A box-backed suit and a Stetson hat;
Put a 20-dollar gold piece on my watch chain
So the boys will know I died standin' pat

Folks, now that you have heard my story,
Say, boy, hand me another shot of that booze;
If anyone should ask you,
Tell 'em I've got those St. James Infirmary blues.

Shenandoah

Oh, Shenandoah, I long to see you,
Away, you rolling river.
Shenandoah, I long to see you
Away, we're bound away 'cross the wide Missouri.

Oh, Shenandoah, I love your daughter
Away, you rolling river.
Oh Shenandoah, I love your daughter
Away, we're bound away 'cross the wide Missouri

Oh, Shenandoah, I'm bound to leave you,
Away, you rolling river.
Oh Shenandoah, I'm bound to leave you
Away, we're bound away 'cross the wide Missouri

Oh, Shenandoah, I'll not deceive you
Away, you rolling river.
Oh Shenandoah, I'll not deceive you
Away, we're bound away 'cross the wide Missouri

For seven years, I've been a rover
Away, you rolling river.
For seven years, I've been a rover
Away, we're bound away 'cross the wide Missouri

But I'll return to be your lover
Away, you rolling river.
But I'll return to be your lover
Away, we're bound away 'cross the wide Missouri

She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain

(Secular song based on the old-time African American spiritual "When the Chariot Comes" according to Carl Sandburg's The American Songbag [1927] or on the folk hymn "Old Ship of Zion" according to Alan Lomax's The Folk Songs of North America [1960]. The song was sung by railroad work gangs in the midwest in the 1890s. It's now usually sung as a children's song, often in call-and-response style, with responses that add on to the previous verse.)

She'll be comin' 'round the mountain when she comes (toot toot!).
She'll be comin' 'round the mountain when she comes (toot toot!).
She'll be comin' 'round the mountain, she'll be comin' 'round the mountain,
She'll be comin' 'round the mountain when she comes (toot toot!).

Similarly:

She'll be drivin' six white horses when she comes (whoa back!) . . .
She'll be drivin' six white horses when she comes (whoa back! toot toot!).

Oh, we'll all go out to meet her when she comes ("Hi, babe!") . . .
We'll all go out to meet her when she comes ("Hi, babe!" whoa back! toot toot!).

We will kill the old red rooster when she comes (hack hack), . . .
And we'll all have chicken and dumplings when she comes
(yum yum! hack hack, "Hi babe!" whoa back! toot toot!).

She'll be wearing red pajamas when she comes (scratch scratch) . . .
She'll be wearing red pajamas when she comes
(scratch scratch, yum yum! hack hack, "Hi babe!" whoa back! toot toot!).

She will have to sleep with Grandpa when she comes (snore snore) . . .
She will have to sleep with Grandpa when she comes (snore snore,
scratch scratch, yum yum! hack hack, "Hi babe!" whoa back! toot toot!).

Sitting by the River on the Levee

Chorus:

Sitting by the river on the levee,
Waiting 'til the steamboat come down,
Them cotton bales are rolling mighty heavy,
For miles and miles around.
I thought I heard the steamboat when she landed,
Landed on the levee below,
I'm sitting by the river on the levee,
Waiting 'til the steamboat come down.

Noah, Noah, what a foolish man,
Built the ark on the sandy land.

Refrain:

I said, who built the ark?
Brother Noah, Noah,
Who built the ark?
Brother Noah, Noah,
Brother Noah built the ark.

Chorus:

Matthew stood by the Red Sea shore,
Smotin' at the water with a two-by-four.

Refrain and Chorus

Matthew, Martha, Luke and John,
All them sinners is a-dead and gone.

Refrain and Chorus:

Matthew, Martha sitting in the shade,
Thinking 'bout the money that I ain't made.

Refrain and Chorus:

The Ship Titanic

*(One of many songs about the 1912 disaster.
Tune, "Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane)*

Oh, they built the ship Titanic to sail the ocean blue
And they thought they had a ship that the water would never go through
But the Lord's almighty hand said that ship would never land
It was sad when that great ship went down

Chorus:

Oh, it was sad, Lord, sad; it was sad, Lord, sad
It was sad when the great ship went down, to the bottom of the ...
Husbands and wives, little children lost their lives
It was sad when that great ship went down.

Oh, they sailed from Engl-and, and not very far from shore
When the rich refused to associate with the poor
So they sent them down below, where they'd be the first to go
It was sad when that great ship went down

Chorus:

The boat was about to sink, and the sides about to burst,
When the captain shouted, "Women and children first!"
Oh, the captain tried to wire, but the lines were all on fire
It was sad when that great ship went down

Chorus:

Oh, they swung the lifeboats out o'er the deep and raging sea
When the band struck up with "Nearer My God to Thee"
Little children wept and cried as the waves swept o'er the side
It was sad when that great ship went down

Chorus:

Sloop John B

(The Beach Boys' 1965 arrangement of a traditional Bahamian folk song, "The John B. Sails," which was transcribed in 1916 by Richard Le Gallienne; a version is in Carl Sandburg's 1927 collection of folk songs, The American Songbag.)

We come on the sloop John B
My grandfather and me
Around Nassau town we did roam
Drinking all night, got into a fight
Well, I feel so broke up, I wanna go home

Chorus:

So hoist up the John B's sail
See how the mainsail sets
Call for the Captain ashore and let me go home
Let me go home. I wanna go home
Well, I feel so broke up, I wanna go home

The first mate he got drunk
He broke in the Captain's trunk
The constable had to come and take him away
Sheriff Johnstone, why don't you leave me alone?
Well, I feel so broke up, I wanna go home

Chorus:

The poor cook he caught the fits
And threw away all my grits
And then he took and he ate up all of my corn
Let me go home. Why don't they let me go home?
This is the worst trip I've ever been on

Chorus:

Sixteen Tons

(Merle Travis, © 1947)

Some people say a man is made out of mud,
But a poor man's made out of muscle and blood...
Muscle and blood and skin and bone,
A mind that's weak and a back that's strong.

Chorus (repeated after each verse):

You load sixteen tons and what do you get?
Another day older and deeper in debt.
Saint Peter, don't you call me 'cause I can't go.
I owe my soul to the company store.

I was born one morning when the sun didn't shine.
I picked up my shovel and I walked to the mine.
I loaded sixteen tons of number nine coal,
And the strawboss hollered, "Well, bless my soul!"

I was born one morning in the drizzling rain.
Fighting and trouble is my middle name.
I was raised in the canebreak by an ol' mama hound;
Ain't no high-tone woman gonna push me around.

If you see me coming, you better step aside.
A lot of men didn't and a lot of men died.
I got a fist of iron and a fist of steel.
If the right one doesn't get you then the left one will.

Sinner Man

(One of many variations of an old song.)

Oh, sinner man, where you gonna run to? (3x)
All on that day?

Similarly:

Run to the rock. The rock was a-melting.

Run to the sea. The sea was a-boiling.

Run to the moon. The moon was a-bleeding.

Run to the Lord, "Lord won't you hide me?"

Oh, sinner man, you oughta been a-praying.

The Sound of Silence

(Paul Simon, 1964)

Hello darkness, my old friend.
I've come to talk with you again.
Because a vision softly creeping
Left its seeds while I was sleeping,
And the vision that was planted in my brain
Still remains, within the sound of silence.

In restless dreams, I walked alone
Narrow streets of cobblestone.
'Neath the halo of a street lamp,
I turned my collar to the cold and damp,
When my eyes were stabbed by the flash
of a neon light
That split the night, and touched
the sound of silence.

And in the naked light I saw
Ten thousand people, maybe more.
People talking without speaking,
People hearing without listening,
People writing songs that voices
never shared,
And no one dared disturb
the sound of silence.

"Fools," said I, "You do not know
Silence like a cancer grows.
Hear my words that I may teach you.
Take my arms that I may reach you."
But my word, like silent raindrops, fell
And echoed in the wells of silence.

And the people bowed and prayed
To the neon god they made,
And the sign flashed out its warning
In the words that it was forming.
And the sign said, "The words of the
prophets are written on the
subway walls and
tenement halls,
And whispered in the sound of silence."

Streets of Laredo (Cowboy's Lament)

As I walked out on the streets of Laredo,
As I walked out in Laredo one day,
I spied a young cowboy all wrapped in white linen,
Wrapped in white linen as cold as the clay.

"I see by your outfit that you are a cowboy"
These words he did say as I boldly stepped by,
"Come sit down beside me and hear my sad story,
I was shot in the breast and I know I must die."

"It was once in the saddle I used to go dashing
Once in the saddle I used to go gay,
First down to the dram-house
and then to the card house
Got shot in the breast, I am dying today."

"Oh, beat the drum slowly and play the fife lowly,
Play the Dead March as you carry me along,
Take me to the graveyard and lay the sod o'er me
For I'm a young cowboy
and I know I've done wrong."

"Let sixteen gamblers come handle my coffin,
Let sixteen cowboys come sing me a song,
Take me to the graveyard and lay the sod o'er me
For I'm a poor cowboy and I know I've done wrong."

"Get six jolly cowboys to carry my coffin,
Get six pretty maidens to carry my pall,
Put bunches of roses all over my coffin,
Put roses to deaden the clods as they fall."

"Go bring me a cup, a cup of cold water
To cool my parched lips," the cowboy said;
Before I returned, the spirit had left him
And gone to its Maker—the cowboy was dead.

We beat the drum slowly and played the fife lowly,
And bitterly wept as we bore him along,
For we all loved our comrade,
so brave, young and handsome,
We all loved our comrade
although he'd done wrong.

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

(African-American spiritual by Wallace Willis, 1840s)

Chorus (after each verse):
Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home
Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home.

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

Similarly:

If you get there before I do . . .
Tell all my friends I'm coming too . . .

I'm sometimes up and I'm sometimes down . . .
But still my soul feels heavenly bound . . .

Today

(Randy Sparks, 1964)

Chorus:
Today while the blossoms
still cling to the vine
I'll taste your strawberries,
I'll drink your sweet wine.
A million tomorrows shall all pass away
Ere I forget all the joy that is mine today.

I'll be a dandy, and I'll be a rover.
You'll know who I am
by the song that I sing.
I'll feast at your table, I'll sleep in your clover.
Who cares what tomorrow shall bring.

Chorus

I can't be contented with yesterday's glory.
I can't live on promises, winter to spring.
Today is my moment, and now is my story.
I'll laugh and I'll cry and I'll sing.

Chorus

The Times They Are a-Changin'

(Bob Dylan, 1963)

Come gather 'round people
Wherever you roam
And admit that the waters
Around you have grown
And accept it that soon
You'll be drenched to the bone
If your time to you is worth savin'
Then you better start swimmin'
 or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'

Come mothers and fathers
Throughout the land
And don't criticize
What you can't understand
Your sons and your daughters
Are beyond your command
Your old road is rapidly agin'
Please get out of the new one
 if you can't lend your hand
For the times they are a-changin'

Come writers and critics
Who prophesize with your pen
And keep your eyes wide
The chance won't come again
And don't speak too soon
For the wheel's still in spin
And there's no tellin' who that it's namin'
For the loser now will be later to win
For the times they are a-changin'

The line it is drawn
The curse it is cast
The slow one now
Will later be fast
As the present now
Will later be past
The order is rapidly fadin'
And the first one now will later be last
For the times they are a-changin'

Come senators, congressmen
Please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway
Don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt
Will be he who has stalled
There's a battle outside and it's ragin'
It'll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls
For the times they are a-changin'

The Times They Are a-Changing

(Peter Jones, 2020; parody of "The Times they Are a-Changin,'" Bob Dylan, 1963)

Don't gather 'round people, please stay at home.
Admit that the virus around us has grown.
Don't visit your mother, just call on the phone
If lives to you are worth saving.
Sit on the sofa, re-watch "Game of Thrones,"
For the times they are a-changing.

Come mothers and fathers throughout the land—
How is it going with those lesson plans?
Are your sons and your daughters
beyond your command?
We can tell that you're rapidly aging.
Keep on reminding them to wash their hands,
For the times they are a-changing.

The wine it is gone, the food may not last.
The slow one now may just have to fast.
As the president now will later be past,
The order is rapidly fading.
Take needle and thread and make your own mask,
For the times they are a-changing.

Twelve Gates to the City

(African-American spiritual, adapted from Revelation 21.

This version is one of many.)

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Oh, what a beautiful city!

Oh, what a beautiful city!

Oh, what a beautiful city!

There's twelve gates to the city, Hallelujah!

Three gates in the East, three gates in the West,
Three gates in the North, three gates in the South.
That makes twelve gates to the city, Hallelujah!

Walk right in, you're welcome to the city.
Step right up, welcome to the city.
Walk right through those gates to the city.
There are twelve gates to the city, Hallelujah!

Who are those children all dressed in red?
There are twelve gates to the city, Hallelujah!
Must be the children that Moses led.
There are twelve gates to the city, Hallelujah!

Rich and the poor, welcome to the city.
Young and the old, welcome to the city.
Weak and the strong, welcome to the city.
There are twelve gates to the city, Hallelujah!

(Chorus 2x)

Senators, Congressmen, please heed the call:
Don't sell off your stock and do not drop the ball.
The country gets hurt each time that you stall.
The pandemic's outside and it's raging.
This might be the time to pass health care for all,
For the times they are a-changing.

Come writers and critics who once used a pen.
If we're all lucky this won't come again.
Please don't repeat all the hype and the spin,
The excuses, the lies and the blaming.
We stand six feet apart but together we'll win,
For the times they are a-changing.

Don't gather 'round people, please stay at home.
Admit that the virus around us has grown.
Don't visit your mother, just call on the phone
If lives to you are worth saving.
Sit on the sofa, re-watch "Game of Thrones,"
For the times they are a-changing.

When I First Came to This Land

(Words translated by Oscar Brand in 1948
from an old Pennsylvania Dutch song)

When I first came to this land, I was not a wealthy man,
So I got myself a shack. I did what I could.
And I called my shack, "Break my back."
But the land was sweet and good. I did what I could.

When I first came to this land, I was not a wealthy man,
So I got myself a farm. I did what I could.
And I called my farm, "Muscle in my arm."
And I called my shack, "Break my back."
But the land was sweet and good. I did what I could.

Similarly:

cow, "No milk now"

horse, "Lame of course"

duck, "Out of luck"

dog, "What a hog"

wife, "Run for your life"

son, "My work's done"

Thaïs

(Lyrics by Newman Levy in Opera Guyed, 1923, Alfred A. Knopf. Music, anon.)

One time in Alexandria,
in wicked Alexandria,
Where nights were wild
with revelry,
and life was but a game.
There lived, so the report is, an
adventuress and courtesan,
The pride of Alexandria,
and Thaïs was her name.

Nearby in peace and piety,
avoiding all society,
There dwelt a band of holy men
who'd build a refuge there,
And in the desert solitude
they spurned all earthly folly to
Devote their lives to holy works,
to fasting and to prayer.

Now one monk whom I
solely mention
of this group of holy men
Was known as Athanael,
he was famous near and far.
At fasting bouts
or prayer with him,
no other could
compare with him;
At grand and lofty praying
he could do the course in par.

One day while sleeping heavily
(from wrestling with the devil, he
Had gone to bed exhausted
while the sun was shining still);
He had a vision Freudian,
and though he was
annoyed, he analyzed it in the well-known style
of doctors Jung and Brill.

He dreamed of Alexandria,
of wicked Alexandria,
A crowd of men were cheering
in a manner rather rude,
As Thaïs who was dancing there,
and Athanael glancing there,
Observed her do the shimmy
in what artists call the nude.

Said he, "This dream fantastical
disturbs my thoughts monastical.
Some unsuppressed desire, I fear,
has found my monkish cell;
I blushed up to the hat o' me
to view that girl's anatomy.
I'll go to Alexandria
and save her soul from Hell."

So, pausing not to wonder where
he'd put his summer underwear,
He quickly packed
his evening clothes,
his toothbrush, and a vest.
To guard against exposure, he
threw in some woollen hosiery,
And bidding all the
boys good-bye,
he started on his quest.

The monk, though warned
and fortified,
was deeply shocked
and mortified,
To find on his arrival
wild debauchery in sway.
While some lay in a stupor sent
by booze of more than
two per cent,
The others were behaving
in a most immoral way.

Said he to Thaïs, "Pardon me,
although this job is hard on me,
I got to put you wise to what
I came down here to tell.
What's all this sousin'
getting you?
Cut out this pie-eyed retinue.
Let's hit the road together, kid,
and save your soul from Hell."

Although this bold
admonishment
caused Thaïs some astonishment,
She coyly answered, "Say,
you said a heaping mouthful, Bo.
This burg's a frost, I'm telling you,
the brand of hooch they're
selling you
Ain't like the stuff we used to get,
so let's pack up and go."

So forth from Alexandria,
from wicked Alexandria,
Across the desert sands they go,
beneath the blazing sun,
Till Thaïs, parched and sweltering,
finds refuge in the sheltering
Seclusion of a convent
in the habit of a nun.

But now the monk is terrified
to find his fears are verified;
His holy vows of chastity
have cracked beneath the strain.
Like one who has a jag on, he
cries out in grief and agony,
"I'd sell my soul to see her
do the shimmy once again."

Alas, his pleadings clamorous,
though passionate and amorous,
Have come too late—
the courtesan
has danced her final dance.
Says he, "Now that's a joke on me
for that there dame to
croak on me,
I hadn't oughter passed her up
the time I had the chance."

Wabash Cannonball

(J. A. Roff, 1882; new words by William Kindt, 1904)

From the great Atlantic Ocean to the wide Pacific shore,
From the green ol' Smoky Mountains to the southlands by the shore,
She's mighty tall and handsome and she's known quite well by all.
She's the regular combination on the Wabash Cannonball.

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

Listen to the jingle, the rumble and the roar,
As she glides along the woodland, through the hills and by the shore.
Hear the mighty rush of the engine, hear the lonesome hobo call.
You're traveling through the jungles on the Wabash Cannonball.

Our eastern states are dandy, so the people always say,
From New York to St. Louis with Chicago by the way,
From the hills of Minnesota where the rippling waters fall.
No changes can be taken on the Wabash Cannonball.

Now here's to Daddy Claxton, may his name forever stand,
And always be remembered through the courts throughout the land.
His earthly race is over, now the curtains 'round him fall.
We'll carry him home to victory on the Wabash Cannonball.

Waltzing Matilda

(Words, Banjo Patterson, 1887. Tune, Christina Macpherson)

Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong
Under the shade of a coolabah tree,
And he sang as he watched and
waited 'til his billy boiled
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me"
And he sang as he watched and
waited 'til his billy boiled,
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."

Down came a jumbuck
to drink at that billabong,
Up jumped the swagman
and grabbed him with glee,
And he sang as he shoved that
jumbuck in his tucker bag,
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me"
And he sang as he shoved that
jumbuck in his tucker bag,
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."

Up rode the squatter,
mounted on his thoroughbred,
Down came the troopers, one, two, three,
"Where's that jolly jumbuck
you've got in your tucker bag?"
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me"
"Where's that jolly jumbuck
you've got in your tucker bag?"
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."

Up jumped the swagman
and sprang into the billabong,
"You'll never take me alive," said he,
And his ghost may be heard as
you pass by that billabong,
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me"
And his ghost may be heard as
you pass by that billabong,
"You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."
Oh, you'll come a-waltzing, Matilda, with me."

Wagon Wheel

(Bob Dylan recorded the chorus in 1973; Ketch Secor added verses in 1998)

Headed down south to the land of the pines,
I'm thumbin' my way to North Caroline,
Starin' up the road,
And pray to God I see headlights.
I made it down the coast in seventeen hours,
Pickin' me a bouquet of dogwood flowers,
And I'm a-hopin' for Raleigh.
I can see my baby tonight.

Runnin' from the cold up in New England,
I was born to be a fiddler in an old-time string band.
My baby plays the guitar.
I pick a banjo now.
Ah, the north -country winters keep a-gettin' me,
And I lost my money playin' poker so I had to up and leave,
But I ain't a-turnin' back
To livin' that old life no more.

Chorus (repeated after each verse):

So, rock me mama like a wagon wheel.
Rock me mama any way you feel.
Hey, mama rock me.
Rock me mama like the wind and the rain.
Rock me mama like a south-bound train.
Hey, mama rock me.

Walkin' due south out of Roanoke,
I caught a trucker out of Philly. Had a nice long toke,
But he's a-headed west from the Cumberland Gap
To Johnson City, Tennessee,
And I gotta get a move on before the sun.
I hear my baby callin' my name,
And I know that she's the only one,
And if I die in Raleigh, at least I will die free.

Wagoner's Lad

(Traditional, dating back to the 18th Century)

Oh, hard is the fortune of all womankind.
They're always controlled, they're always confined.
Controlled by their parents until they are wives,
Then slaves to their husbands the rest of their lives.

Oh, I am a poor girl; my fortune is sad.
I've always been courted by the wagoner's lad.
He courted me daily, by night and by day,
Now his wagon is loaded and he's going away.

Your parents don't like me because I am poor.
They say I'm not worthy of entering your door.
I work for my living, my money's my own,
And if they don't like me they can leave me alone.

Your horses are hungry, go feed them some hay.
Come sit down beside me as long as you stay.
My horses ain't hungry, they won't eat your hay.
So fare thee well, darling, I'll feed on the way.

Your wagon needs greasing, your whip is to mend.
Come sit down here by me as long as you can.
My wagon is greasy; my whip's in my hand.
So fare you well, darling, no longer to stand.

The Water is Wide

The water is wide, I cannot get o'er.
Neither have I wings to fly.
Give me a boat that can carry two,
And both shall row, my love and I.

A ship there is, and she sails the sea.
She's loaded deep as deep can be,
But not so deep as the love I'm in.
I know not if I sink or swim.

I leaned my back against an oak,
Thinking it was a trusty tree,
But first it bent and then it broke.
So did my love prove false to me.

I reached my hand into some soft bush,
Thinking the fairest flower to find.
I pricked my finger to the bone,
And left the fairest flower behind.

Oh, love be handsome and love be kind,
Gay as a jewel when first it's new,
But love grows old and waxes cold,
And fades away like the morning dew.

When cockle shells turn silver bells,
Then will my love come back to me.
When roses bloom in winter's gloom,
Then will my love return to me.

(Repeat first verse)

We Were There

(Bev Grant, © 1997)

(Key of A)

We have plowed, we have planted, we have gathered into barns,
Done the same work as the men with babies in our arms,
But you won't find our stories in most history books you read.
We were there, we're still here, fighting for the things we need.

Chorus:

We were there in the factories, we were there in the mills,
We were there in the mines, and came home to fix the meals.
We were there on the picket lines, we raised our voices loud.
It makes me proud, just knowing we were there.

From the textile mills of Lawrence to the sweatshops in New York,
From the fields in California where our children had to work,
We fought to make a living. "Bread and roses" was our cry.
Though they jailed and beat our bodies, our spirit never died.

Chorus:

We were Polish, we were Irish, we were African and Jew,
Italian and Latina, Chinese and Russian, too.
They tried to use our differences to split us all apart,
But the pain we felt together touched the bottom of our hearts.

Chorus:

We are teachers, we are doctors, we are cooks and engineers,
Letter carriers, truck drivers, conductors and cashiers.
We operate machinery, we fly the big airplanes,
And we help to build our unions. We got struggle in our veins!

Chorus:

It makes me proud, just knowing we were there.

We Shall Not Be Moved

*(Adapted from old gospel hymn "I Shall Not Be Moved"
by African-American textile workers in North Carolina during the 1920s.
This version was first sung in 1931 by members of the West Virginia Miner's Union.)*

Chorus, repeated after each verse:

We shall not, we shall not be moved
We shall not, we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's standing by the water
We shall not be moved.

The union is behind us, we shall not be moved
The union is behind us, we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's standing by the water
We shall not be moved.

For Civil Rights version, see Page 59.

Similarly:

We're black and white together,
we shall not be moved . . .

We'll stand and fight together . . .

We're fighting for our freedom . . .

We'll build a mighty union . . .

We're young and old together . . .

We're fighting for our children . . .

(Other opening lines can be added)

The Hamburg Show Song

Oh, we're going to the Hamburg Show,
See the lion and the wild kangaroo,
And we'll all stick together
In fair or stormy weather
'Cause we're going to see the whole thing through!

Thought by many to be a song written about the annual Hamburg Show at Swarthmore, the song printed above is a version of one that appears in the novel One Man's Initiation — 1917 by John dos Passos (New York: Doran, 1922), on Page 16.

Oh we're going to the Hamburg show
To see the elephant and the wild kangaroo,
And we'll all stick together
In fair or foul weather,
For we're going to see the damn show through!

On Page 12 of the novel, it appears with "bound for" instead of "going to" in the first line. That version was copied in the Crum Creek Hymnal, which was compiled and printed in the week between written and oral Honors exams in 1965.

Another version of the song, "The Wild West Show," is widely sung by British rugby clubs as part of a bawdy comedy routine, which can be found on YouTube.

Is this athletic connection related to the fact that the annual Hamburg Show at Swarthmore was sponsored by KWINK, the Society of Men's Athletic Team Managers?

We are off to see the Wild West show
With the elephants and the kangaroos
No matter what the weather
As long as we're together
We're off to see the Wild West show.

When the Saints Go Marching In

(Traditional African-American spiritual, with new intro and bridge by *The Weavers*, 1951;
last four verses by Peter Blood, 1976.)

Introduction:

We are trav'ling in the footsteps
Of those who've gone before
But we'll all be reunited (But if we stand reunited)
On a new and sunlit shore (Then a new world is in store)

Oh, when the saints go marching in
When the saints go marching in
Oh, Lord, I want to be in that number
When the saints go marching in

Similarly:

And when the sun refuse (begins) to shine . . .

When the moon turns red with blood . . .

On that hallelujah day . . .

Oh, when the trumpet sounds the call . . .

Bridge:

Some say this world of trouble
Is the only one we need
But I'm waiting for that morning
When the new world is revealed

Oh, when the new world is revealed . . .

When the revelation (revolution) comes . . .

When the rich go out and work . . .

When the air is pure and clean . . .

When we all have food to eat . . .

When our leaders learn to cry . . .

The Wraggle Taggle Gypsies

There were three gypsies a-come to my door
And downstairs ran this lady-o
One sang high and another sang low
And the other sang bonny bonny Biscay-o

Then she pulled off her silk finished gown
And put on hose of leather-o
The ragged ragged rags about our door
And she's gone with the wraggle taggle gypsies-o

It was late last night when my lord came home
Inquiring for his lady-o
The servants said on every hand
"She's gone with the wraggle taggle gypsies-o!"

"Oh, saddle to me my milk-white steed
And go and fetch my pony-o
That I may ride and seek my bride
Who is gone with the wraggle taggle gypsies-o"

Oh, he rode high and he rode low
He rode through wood and copses too
Until he came to a wide open field
And there he espied his a-lady-o

"What makes you leave your house and land
What makes you leave your money-o
What makes you leave your new-wedded lord
To follow the wraggle taggle gypsies-o?"

"What care I for my house and land
What care I for my money-o
What care I for my new-wedded lord
I'm off with the wraggle taggle gypsies-o!"

"Last night you slept on a goosefeather bed
With sheet turned down so bravely-o
Tonight you'll sleep in a cold open field
Along with the wraggle taggle gypsies-o"

"What care I for my goosefeather bed
With the sheet turned down so bravely-o
For tonight I shall sleep in a cold open field
Along with the wraggle taggle gypsies-o!"

When I'm Sixty-Four

(John Lennon and Paul McCartney, 1967)

When I get older, losing my hair,
Many years from now,
Will you still be sending me a Valentine?
Birthday greetings, bottle of wine?
If I'd been out till quarter to three,
Would you lock the door?
Will you still need me, will you still feed me,
When I'm sixty-four?

You'll be older too
And if you say the word
I could stay with you.

I could be handy, mending a fuse
When your lights have gone.
You can knit a sweater by the fireside.
Sunday mornings, go for a ride.
Doing the garden, digging the weeds,
Who could ask for more?
Will you still need me, will you still feed me,
When I'm sixty-four?

Every summer we can rent a cottage
In the Isle of Wight, if it's not too dear.
We shall scrimp and save.
Grandchildren on your knee,
Vera, Chuck, and Dave.

Send me a postcard, drop me a line,
Stating point of view.
Indicate precisely what you mean to say.
Yours sincerely, wasting away.
Give me your answer, fill in a form.
Mine forevermore.
Will you still need me, will you still feed me,
When I'm sixty-four?

When the Ship Comes in

(Bob Dylan, 1963)

Oh, the time will come up when the winds will stop
And the breeze will cease to be breathin'
Like the stillness in the wind
before the hurricane begins
The hour that the ship comes in.

Oh, the seas will split, and the ship will hit,
And the sands on the shoreline will be shakin'.
Then the tide will sound, and the waves will pound,
And the morning will be a-breakin'.

Oh, the fishes will laugh as they swim out of the path,
And the seagulls they'll be a-smilin',
And the rocks on the sand will proudly stand,
The hour that the ship comes in.

And the words that are used
for to get the ship confused
Will not be understood as they're spoken,
For the chains of the sea will have busted in the night
And be buried on the bottom of the ocean.

A song will lift as the mainsail shifts
And the boat drifts onto the shoreline,
And the sun will respect every face on the deck,
The hour that the ship comes in.

Then the sands will roll out a carpet of gold
For your weary toes to be a-touchin',
And the ship's wise men will remind you once again
That the whole wide world is watchin'.

Oh, the foes will rise with the sleep still in their eyes,
And they'll jerk from their beds
and think they're dreamin',
But they'll pinch themselves and squeal and
they'll know that it's for real,
The hour that the ship comes in.

Then they'll raise their hands, sayin'
"We'll meet all your demands"
But we'll shout from the bow
"Your days are numbered!"
And like Pharaoh's tribe,
they'll be drowned in the tide,
And like Goliath, they'll be conquered.

Who's Gonna Build Your Wall?

(Tom Russell, 2006)

I've got 800 miles of open border, right outside my door.
There's minutemen in little pickup trucks who've declared their own damn war.
Now the government wants to build a barrier, like old Berlin, 8 feet tall,
But if Uncle Sam sends the illegals home, who's gonna build the wall?

Chorus (repeated after each verse):

Who's gonna build your wall, boys? Who's gonna mow your lawn?
Who's gonna cook your Mexican food when your Mexican maid is gone?
Who's gonna wax the floors tonight, down at the local mall?
Who's gonna wash your baby's face? Who's gonna build your wall?

Now, I ain't got no politics, so don't lay that rap on me.
Left wing, right wing, up wing, down wing, I see strip malls from sea to shining sea.
It's the fat-cat white developer who's created this whole damn squall.
It's a pyramid scheme of dirty jobs, and who's gonna build your wall?

We've got fundamentalist Muslims; we've got fundamentalist Jews;
We've got fundamentalist Christians. They'll blow the whole thing up for you!
But as I travel around this big old world, there's one thing that I most fear—
It's a white man in a golf shirt, with a cell phone in his ear.

Who's Gonna Build Your Wall?

(Mike Meeropol '64 rewrite [2018] of 2006 song by Tom Russell)

I've got 800 miles of open border, right outside my door.
There's armed vigilantes in their pick-up trucks who've declared their own damn war,
And Trump wants to construct a barrier, like in Berlin, thirty feet tall,
But if he catches and sends the illegals home, who's gonna build that wall?

Chorus (repeated after each verse):

Who's gonna build your wall, boys? Who's gonna mow your lawn?
Who's gonna cook your Mexican food when your Mexican maid is gone?
Who's gonna wax the floors tonight, down at the local mall?
Who's gonna wash your baby's face? Who's gonna build your wall?

Now, I ain't got no politics, so don't lay that rap on me.
The planet is burning, the economy's churning, Trump blinds us to what we see:
The one percent living high on the hog, while the rest are in free fall.
We can blame the immigrants all we want, but who's gonna build that wall?

Yes, there are Muslim terrorists, and terrorist Christians, too.
As far as I can tell, the lot of them, they all are missing a screw,
But as I look around this beautiful world, the thing that I most fear
Is the orange-haired fascist in the White House, with the nuclear button near.

APPENDIX A

In memory of Roger Abrahams '55

Roger D. Abrahams

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Roger David Abrahams (June 12, 1933 – June 20, 2017) was an American [folklorist](#) whose work focused on the expressive cultures and cultural histories of the Americas, with a specific emphasis on [African American](#) peoples and traditions. He was the Hum Rosen Professor of Humanities Emeritus at the [University of Pennsylvania](#), where he taught in the Department of Folklore and Folklife. He was the author of a large number of books, among which *Everyday Life: A Poetics of Vernacular Practices* is a recent title, and was the founding Director of Penn's Center for Folklore and Ethnography, a research and public outreach unit associated with the Department of Folklore and Folklife.

Education and career

Abrahams was one of three children born to Robert D. Abrahams and Florence Kohn Abrahams, in [Philadelphia, Pennsylvania](#). His education included [Swarthmore College](#) in [Swarthmore, Pennsylvania](#), where he obtained a B.A. with Honors in English in 1955; [Columbia University](#) in [New York](#), where he obtained a M.A. with Honors in Literature and Folklore in 1959; and the University of Pennsylvania, where he obtained a Ph.D. in Literature and Folklore in 1961.

Abrahams' career began almost immediately after he obtained his Ph.D., first at the [University of Texas](#) as instructor (1960–63), assistant professor (1963–66), and then associate professor (1966–69) in the Department of English. He became a full professor in 1969 in the departments of English and Anthropology and remained there for ten years. While a professor, he also served for two years beginning in 1968 as the Associate Director for the Center for Intercultural Studies in Folklore and Oral History and for five years beginning in 1974 as department chairman. From Texas he moved to [Scripps College](#) and [Pitzer College](#) in [Claremont, California](#), where he was Alexander H. Kenan Professor of Humanities and Anthropology for six years. In 1986 he returned to the University of Pennsylvania, where he taught Folklore and Folklife and was named the Hum Rosen Professor of Folklore and Folklife, and founded the Center for Folklore and Ethnography. Upon his retirement in 2002, he was named professor emeritus.

Research and publications

Abrahams published 21 books and monographs, 60 book chapters and introductions, 64 scholarly articles, and 10 review articles. He was also published in eight magazine articles, six encyclopedia and handbook entries, 25 "notes" sections, and as many as 55 reviews of his work were published by other authors. His books include: *Everyday Life: A Poetics of Vernacular Practices* (2005), *The Man-of-Words in the West Indies: Performance and Emergence of Creole Culture* (1983), *Blues for New Orleans: Mardi Gras and America's Creole Soul*, coauthored with [Nick Spitzer](#), [John Szwed](#), and Bob Thomson (2006); and *And Other Neighborly Names: Social Process and Cultural Image in Texas Folklore*, coauthored with [Richard Bauman](#) (2011). Most of Abrahams' texts were dedicated to his study of African-American and Caribbean culture. Most notable were *African Folktales* (1983), *African-American Folktales: Stories from Black Traditions in the New World* (1999), *After Africa and Singing the Master: The Emergence of African-American Culture in the Plantation South* (1992). His research interests included folksongs and ballads from various cultures, numerous forms of African-American folklore, [West Indian](#) folklore, riddle study, proverbs, children's folklore, and festival and ritual.

Honors

Abrahams was a Fellow of the [American Folklore Society](#) and served as its president in 1979. He was awarded the society's [Kenneth Goldstein Award](#) for Lifetime Academic Leadership in 2005. In 1965, he received a [Guggenheim Fellowship](#).

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Recollections of Ralph Rinzler '56, Pete Seeger, Mike Seeger, Peggy Seeger, and the Swarthmore College Folk Festivals, by Roger Abrahams '55

How many people can date the exact moment in which their lives were changed? Ralph and I were to muse about such a moment many times over the next decades. As students at Swarthmore College in the early fifties, and as music junkies, we were involved in as many different kinds of music as were on offer on campus. In the spring every year, Swarthmore had a Folk Festival, a weekend affair that centered on a concert and a square dance. The second year I was there, Pete Seeger was the man. Already the McCarthy era was in full sway, and the word of the blacklist was out, and Pete was on it. The Weavers had been forced out of the nightclub business, and Pete was back doing concerts. He was a hero who lived up to his advance billing.

As so many have noticed, he is his banjo, stretched-neck, legs apart, head lifted to the skies, demanding nothing but total involvement in life and the experience of the moment. He asked of everyone whether they would not sing together and bear the consequences of such a brotherly act. He demanded that everyone think about what we were singing, and act upon what we had to think about the issues to which the songs responded.

I was sitting there with Ralph, and we turned to each other at the intermission and decided that we would go looking for our banjos the next day. Not that Pete was preaching that everyone should play and sing for themselves or even each other: this was music with meaning, telling of the sorrows and problems of lives lived on the edge of poverty and social indifference.

Singing these songs involved a commitment to the people who had made them or kept them alive through lives of struggle. I think I could dredge up every song he sang that night and in what order, and what he had to say about them. I know he began with "Sourwood Mountain" moving it into "Ida Red," showing us that the banjo was more than just an instrument to strum behind songs. I remember "John Hardy"

the long-lost lover, and "John Henry" who beat the steamdrill down, "Wimoweh" and "Sixteen Tons" and the stories about hard times in Harlan County, and Merle Travis and Aunt Molly Jackson and her brother Jim Garland who took those experiences and made hard-time songs out of them. He brought songs and the act of singing together to high pitch, but he also made everyone want to meet these singers to hear them up close, talking and testifying in their songs and stories.

If Pete was leading the singing-dancing throng for student audiences all over the country, Pete's half-siblings Mike and Peggy showed up at the Festival, undoubtedly on Ralph's urging. The action spilled out of the auditorium onto the lawn in front of Parrish Hall. The number of those coming for the Festival had mushroomed, and the spirit a lot more focused on everyone getting a chance to play and sing with each other. A great many of the new folkies were veterans of the Sunday melee in Washington Square. Like Peggy and Mike, they were our age; they told us and showed us that this was not star stuff we were dealing with but down-to-earth music that everyone could aspire to play. "Kitchen Music," Mike was to call it later.

For the generation that spread throughout the country searching out more of these songs, it came to be associated not so much with the kitchen but with the greater comfort of the parlor where we were invited to sit by the woodstove, song-swapping with the great tradition-bearers of the hills, mountains and the plains. Today, when those folkies get together, it is not only to reaffirm the usefulness of this enterprise, but to talk about what it was that had us charging in that direction.

When I went to Swarthmore in 1951, having already graduated from a ukulele to a four-stringed guitar, I didn't find much of an audience for the songs I knew because everybody else

(Roger Abrahams, continued)

knew them too, and from the same sources. Everyone wanted to hear unusual and trenchant folksongs, something from the working stiff or the man on the road, low-down, lonesome, longway from home. And no four-stringed outfit was going to cut it for me to be taken seriously. It had to be a real guitar, a six-string affair, so getting hold of one of them turned into the first order of business. I had the Burl Ives recordings and book, even saw him in "Sing Out, Sweet Land" in high school, so I knew those songs, but this gang was way ahead of me, and those songs were already thought of as worn-out, ones everyone knew.

So I borrowed or bought whatever could be gotten in the line of folksong and tried to learn some new ones. I then waited my turn at the sing-arounds, hoping that no one would sing the one I had just worked up. I had one thing going for me in those days—a big voice. Never one for subtlety (that was for the girls singing love ballads), I could sing louder than anyone else.

Thrilled with my little successes, the summer between my freshman and sophomore years I went back to Paris to shout wherever audiences might find me. Mostly, it turned out to be on the streets, though that turned a little difficult when a group of us drew a crowd of evening strollers and the flics thought a night in jail might just calm us. A blues singer, Inez Cavanaugh, who had a nightclub in the student quarter, took pity on me and gave me an audience if I would agree not to shout too loud while I was inside.

Coming back from that summer campaign, I had a lot of war stories to tell, and quite a few new songs that had come my way. Ralph and I met that fall—he was in the class behind me—and we shared a lot of musical interests, Gilbert and Sullivan, opera, whatever.

When Pete Seeger sang that day at Swarthmore, Ralph and I sat next to each other. Pete made us aware that there was a whole world of singers and their songs out there to be discovered.

"Get yourself a banjo and take to the road and experience the playing and the singing of these great American forms of expression." Failing that, get some old records of country singers like Uncle Dave Macon and learn about other good-time music from them.

As a native Philadelphian, I knew where the best pawn shops were, so the next day I took the Media, Wawa and West Chester local into town, went to South Street, and picked up a few instruments and bore them in state to the campus. Ralph was not happy with the huge fretless, over-decorated jobby that I had picked.

We soon discovered some of the records that would lead us to the heart of this mysterious universe. Between us, we already had copies of those Library of Congress recordings that were first issued on 78s, and we found that they had been reissued on long-playing discs, then coming into sway.

Visiting New York and hooking up with a friend from my Paris summers, Dick Singer, I always caught up with the latest folk recordings. Dick worked at Sam Goody's, so he had first look at the new recordings being issued. This trip he was wearing a shit-eating grin when we connected, and so I asked what the occasion was. He said that he had kept aside a new issue from Folkways. He handed me a six-LP, three-volume set which had been pulled together by Harry Smith with a book within that defied description. It looked as if it were mimeographed, but there were images pasted in and a dippy, Zen overview of the material. Harry Smith had been one of those strange characters who hung around the Village with the Beatnik crowd, but who showed up every once in a while at folksong events.

After college, Ralph and I kept in touch, seeing each other at the Festival in '57, and various concerts and meetings on the East Coast. One weekend, we decided to drive up to Boston and look in on Peggy at the house called Old Joe

(Roger Abrahams, continued)

Clark's. On the way back, we were exhausted, sharing the driving, and Ralph, to his immense chagrin, drove into the back of a car at a toll booth.

Both of us were involved in singing, collecting, and studying old-time performances.

In the middle 1950s, Greenwich Village was the center of operations for folkniks, and from there we made forays both to sing on college campuses and in coffee houses around the country, and to search for old singers to learn about their music from them. When I moved there in 1957 I found myself in the middle of a folksinging throng, all the singers who found their way to the circle in Washington Square every Sunday and then to the house at 190 Spring Street where I was bunking, in what is now SoHo, for the song-swap that had turned into a weekly event. Many of those I first met at the Swarthmore Festival came there to trade songs and to catch up with old friends.



Many other of the songs widely sung by folkniks made their way onto popular folksong records between 1955 and 1964, as one group after another followed the success of The Weavers. One of these songs, "Freight Train," had special meaning for the singers of the Revival, as it had been taught to Peggy and Mike Seeger by Libba Cotton, a woman who had worked for their parents as they were growing up. Libba Cotton was a singer of great presence, who played the guitar left-handed in the finger-picking style widely found in the area of Carrboro, North

Carolina, where she grew up. Thus, it was not only the song that had such an impact, but the style in which she played it, for the figured alternation of base and treble notes in syncopation became one of the most important ways in which folksingers developed their musical abilities.

In fact, for many of us of my generation, that was how we learned to fingerpick. We heard Peggy or Mike sing it someplace, listened closely, fumbled, bumbled, finally got the alternation and pulse, if not the affecting musicality. Ralph Rinzler, of course, had learned it already, and he was able to tell when we were going down the road too long.

For those sweet singers of my generation, Peggy and Mike were more important than anyone else. For sheer musicality, and passion about the uses to which music might be put, well . . .

And taking up for the overlooked and the underserved, ditto. Mike's espousal of all the forgotten musics out there called our attention to the kind of commitment needed to really be an active member of the Folksong Revival—though as Mike is given to saying, "What folksong revival? They've been here all the time. We just have to learn to play and sing them right."



Excerpted from a longer manuscript, May 2009.

Ralph Rinzler died on July 2, 1994.

Mike Seeger died on August 7, 2009.

Pete Seeger died on January 27, 2014.

Peggy Seeger turned 88 on June 17, 2023.

Roger Abrahams died on June 20, 2017.



APPENDIX B

In memory of Paul Booth '64

Paul R. Booth

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Paul Booth (June 7, 1943 – January 17, 2018) was an activist, anti-war protester, and lifelong labor organizer.

Called “one of the labor movement’s key strategists” by Harold Meyerson and “an organizer’s organizer” by American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) President Lee Saunders, he began his work in labor movement in 1966 as research director for the United Packinghouse Workers of America. He became an organizing director for AFSCME where he worked for four decades. Prior to that, he was a student organizer in the class of 1964, forming a chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) at Swarthmore and was one of the drafters of the SDS Port Huron Statement. He became the SDS national secretary for a year, moving to Chicago in 1965. He was one of the chief organizers of the April 1965 March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam as part of SDS’s Peace Research and Education Project which he co-led with Todd Gitlin.

He spoke at the first day of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia in 2016 after Hillary Clinton appointed him to serve on the Democratic Party’s platform drafting committee. He retired from his position of executive assistant to AFSCME’s President Saunders in 2017 and continued to write about political strategy for the 2018 election. On his retirement early in 2017, Representative Jan Schakowsky inserted into the Congressional Record an appreciation of Paul Booth’s “contributions to the progressive movement as an activist, organizer, mentor and leader,” praising the “rich legacy and a lasting record of achievement” that he would leave behind.

Personal life

Booth grew up in Washington, D.C. His parents were both Socialist Party members: his mother was a psychiatric social worker and his father was an economist with the Department of Labor who helped craft Social Security during the Roosevelt administration. He graduated from Swarthmore College in 1964. He was married to Heather Booth (née Tobis) in July 1967 and was interviewed in a documentary about her life. They had two children, Gene and Dan.

He died January 17, 2018, from complications of chronic lymphocytic leukemia.

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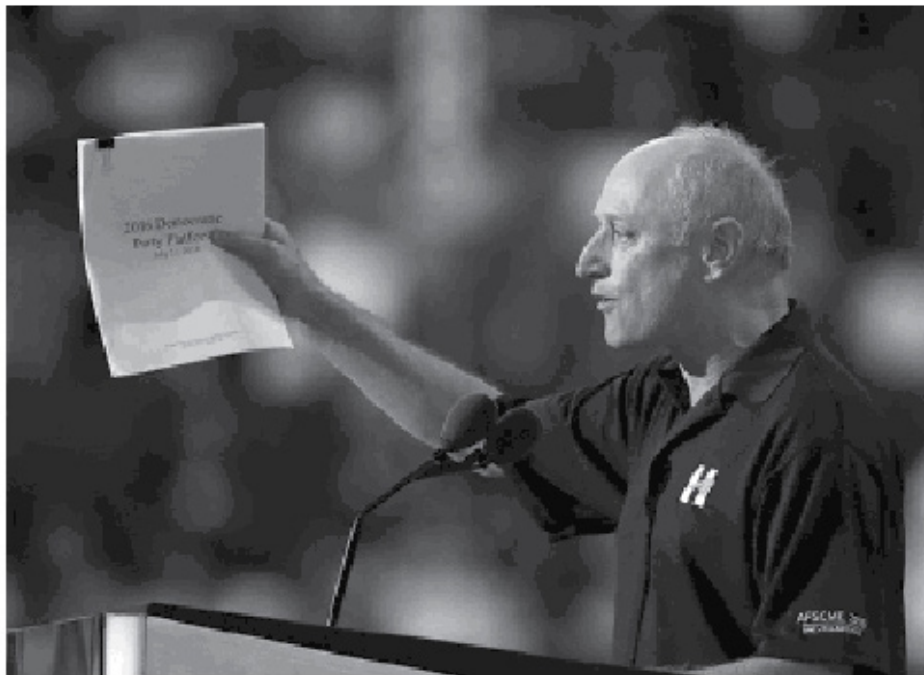
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From The New York Times:

Paul Booth, Antiwar Organizer and Union Stalwart, Dies at 74

Paul Booth speaking on the first day of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia in 2016.



Credit: Paul Sancya/Associated Press

By Sam Roberts

- Jan. 18, 2018

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Paul Booth, a leading architect of the first major march on Washington against the Vietnam War in 1965 and later an influential union organizer and a vigorous opponent of anti-labor legislation, died on Wednesday in Washington. He was 74.

His death, apparently of sudden complications of chronic lymphocytic leukemia, was confirmed by his wife, Heather, also a prominent advocate for liberal social causes. He died the same day Ms. Booth was arrested at a sit-in on Capitol Hill to support the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, known as DACA.

In the mid-1960s, Mr. Booth was a national spokesman for the fractious antiwar group Students for a Democratic Society.

He also became a leader of the radical Chicago community organizer Saul Alinsky's movement to help poor residents of metropolitan neighborhoods and, later, the chief assistant to Gerald W. McEntee, the president until 2012 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the nation's largest public employee union.

He retired last year as executive assistant to Mr. McEntee's successor, Lee Saunders.

"Paul was an organizer's organizer, a man of great generosity and integrity, a friend and mentor to so many people in AFSCME, the labor movement and the progressive community," Mr. Saunders said in an email on Thursday.

Mr. Booth lobbied against President George W. Bush's proposal to privatize Social Security. He also, with mixed success, resisted efforts by Gov. Scott Walker of Wisconsin to cripple public sector unions. Mr. Booth told *The New York Times* last year that service workers were crucial to the survival of the union movement and to the Democratic Party, which trade unions have provided with money and manpower.

"The effort to strangle this opportunity has been the top strategic priority of the G.O.P.," he said. While union membership has stagnated, Mr. Booth said that millions of health care, personal service, education and government workers had enrolled in recent decades.

While union membership has stagnated, Mr. Booth said that millions of health care, personal service, education and government workers had enrolled in recent decades.

"For decades, Paul had been one of the labor movement's key strategists," the democratic socialist columnist Harold Meyerson wrote on Thursday on the website of the liberal magazine *The American Prospect*. "Paul devised the nation's very first living-wage campaign, helped mastermind the 1995 insurgency that ousted the old-line Cold Warriors from the leadership of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., and mentored scores — perhaps hundreds — of union leaders and organizers, movement activists and elected officials."

Paul Robert Booth was born on June 7, 1943, in Washington. His father, Philip Booth, worked for the Labor Department and drafted Social Security legislation and programs for migrant workers. His mother was the former Mary Markowitz.

He majored in political science at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania and graduated in 1964.

In addition to his wife, the former Heather Tobis (whom he had met at a sit-in against the draft at the University of Chicago), he is survived by two sons, Eugene Victor Booth (named after Eugene V. Debs, the socialist labor leader) and Daniel Garrison Booth (named for Daniel De Leon, the socialist editor); a brother, Michael; and five grandchildren.

Despite his early opposition to the Vietnam War, his campaign to register draft resisters as conscientious objectors and his protests against American banks as "partners in apartheid," because of their ties to the South African government, Mr. Booth was considered a moderate by S.D.S. standards. As the national secretary of S.D.S., he popularized the slogan "Build, Not Burn" to promote civilian public service work as an alternative to the military draft.

Unlike some of his more militant colleagues, he also believed that by seeking political office and supporting candidates and campaigns, he and his fellow leftists could further the organization's broader political agenda.

Mr. Booth was a chief organizer of the April 1965 Washington march, during which more than 15,000 protesters paraded from the Washington Monument to the Capitol and picketed the White House. The march was also supported by Women Strike for Peace and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, among other groups.

"We're really not just a peace group," Mr. Booth, just 21 at the time, told *The Times* in 1965. "We are working on domestic problems — civil rights, poverty, university reform. We feel passionately and angrily about things in America, and we feel that a war in Asia will destroy what we're trying to do here."

In his book *"SDS: The Rise and Development of the Students for a Democratic Society"* (1973), Kirkpatrick Sale wrote that Mr. Booth's politics, "which had always been in the careful center of S.D.S., hardly made him open or responsive to the new, often bizarre, usually romantic, always militant ideas coming up from under."

Moreover, Mr. Sale wrote, Mr. Booth's style, "with a flint-sharp mind, a skillful tongue and years of in

fighting experience in political groups, was abrasive to the younger and less sophisticated people around the office.”

“The Booth regime, which lasted the entire school year, was the old guard’s last fling,” Mr. Sale concluded.

Another leader of the group, Todd Gitlin, now a journalism and sociology professor at Columbia University, recalled in “The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage” (1989) that in 1964 Mr. Booth cautioned that “we must tread delicately on the Vietnam question because lots of S.D.S. people are far from being for withdrawal.”

Professor Gitlin recalled in an email on Thursday that Mr. Booth had also been one of the authors of a manifesto that argued for moving into mainstream politics.

“Unfortunately,” Professor Gitlin said, “S.D.S. was moving in different directions.”

Mr. Booth joined the labor movement in 1966 as research director for the United Packinghouse Workers of America. He became organizing director for the public employees union and then executive assistant to Mr. McEntee.

“Some labor leaders are bombastic,” Mr. Meyerson wrote in *The American Prospect*. “Paul was quiet, ironic, self-effacing, witty, warm, scholarly, and diligent — just the kind of guy who’d crunch the numbers to make a point about Latino realignment, whose commitment to a decent future for his nation was such that he’d research and rewrite from his hospital bed on what the Democrats needed to do to win in 2018, who could dismiss his own illness as a trifle indisposition.”

A version of this article appears in print on Jan. 20, 2018, on Page D6 of the New York edition with the headline: Paul Booth, Antiwar Figure in 1960s And Key Union Organizer, Dies at 74.



On January 18, 2018, the Executive Director of the National Employment Law Project posted to her blog:

NELP Mourns the Passing of Paul Booth

by Christine L. Owens

The National Employment Law Project deeply mourns the sudden death last night of Paul Booth, a tireless advocate and great AFSCME leader who, over a long and visionary career, never stopped fighting for working people.

Paul and the love of his life, Heather, gave tirelessly of themselves to the unfinished business of building a fairer, more inclusive and progressive nation that will one day deliver on its promise of equality and justice for all. Their boundless energy and incomparable talents inspired generations of activists, sustained us in dark periods, enriched all the great movements of their lifetimes, and propelled us all to act. To top it off, Paul’s effervescence, wicked good humor, and zest for life were infectious, bringing us laughter and joy even in the most trying moments.

This is one of those moments, and we need him now. Paul Booth was a mensch. We will always love him, always revere him, and always draw inspiration from his example in our own fight for all working people. Shortly before his death, Paul reminded friends that although, as Dr. King taught, the moral arc of the universe bends toward justice, “It’s up to us to do the bending.”

Paul—and Heather—inspired and empowered armies of arc-benders, including many of us at NELP. Like the two of them—and especially now, in Paul’s memory and honor—we will never stop bending that arc.

APPENDIX G

The Swarthmore College Folk Scene in the 1940s

by Willa Freeman Grunes '47

Talk given at Alumni Weekend, June 5, 2015

We gather here to celebrate the Swarthmore College intercollegiate folk festivals. They began in 1945 and continued, with some notable omissions, until 1968, when we understand that they became indistinguishable from rock festivals. Even before that, they had grown too large and probably too uninhibited for the administration and the Village to cope with. People were coming from far and wide to attend, in numbers that overwhelmed the dorm space and the local facilities. Many of the out-of-towners camped in the bushes and on the sidewalks, and some of them undoubtedly smoked pot and made love. The College responded by trying to limit, restrict, and even to forbid. Some alumni with whom the planning committee has been in touch about this reunion (in 1998) are still bitter; they never forgave the College for the eventual suppression of the festivals. But no one foresaw all that in the early forties. When I arrived at Swarthmore as a freshman in February 1943, I was toting the lone folk guitar on campus. (See Photo 1.)

That seemed pretty strange to me, because where I came from, my family and friends sang a lot, and they often accompanied themselves on folk instruments. And that wasn't any farther away than nearby Arden, Delaware, and Philadelphia. Arden is a small village where my family spent the summers, and we often had community campfires where we

sang and told folk tales. It was there that I first heard Burl Ives when I was 12, and he wasn't very old himself. But back then, he was one of only a few professional folk singers trying to make a living from what people have been doing to amuse, inspire, and teach each other from time



Photo 1: Willa Freeman '47
Graduation Day 1946

immemorial. In 1943 there were some collections of folk songs available in books; I brought with me to college Carl Sandburg's big fat *American Songbag*. I knew lots of places where one could go folk dancing, including square dancing and the so called play-party games, as they preferred to call them some places in the South, and I had been doing that sort of thing since early childhood.

It was only a few years later that the sight of students arriving on college campuses all over the U.S. with guitars slung on their backs became commonplace. But I was an oddity here in '43. There was, however, plenty of unaccompanied student singing and a weekly folk dance. When a female student accepted a fraternity pin from her male friend, that evening a group of his more-or-less sober fraternity brothers would sing under her dorm window. There was informal group singing in the dorms. And then there was the back room at Plushies—a famous bar across the township line where we students used to sneak on foot at night. In that friendly back room, where we were forbidden by the College to go, there was a big table for pitchers of beer and student singing. Everett Hunt, the Dean of Men, who was a singer all his life and lived to sing at his own 90th birthday party, gave a great Christmas party that I remember attending in Bond. Some purists would not call everything we sang "folk songs," but I prefer not to split hairs.

Just off campus, in the Vil, there was a woman named Dorothy Simons, who operated a sort of boarding house for upperclassmen who had permission to live off campus. Most of her tenants were liberals, since she was a Socialist Party member. She had a fine collection of 78-rpm phonograph recordings of protest songs, union songs, and other sorts of folk songs. Her living room was a gathering place for students to discuss politics and sing such songs.

The College folk-dance club ran weekly folk dances, which were great for relieving the tensions of academic pressure. The music we had for those dances was on 78-rpm records that could hold only about 3 minutes on a side, as I recall. Someone had to lift the needle and reset it several times to finish

one dance. Alice Gates, from the Women's Physical Education Department, was the club adviser, and in about 1948 she was succeeded by Irene Moll, who started keeping the scrapbooks (that we displayed in 1998).

In the '40s, physical education was required for the first 2 years, and you had to pass a swimming Test to graduate. To meet the requirements, I soon learned that classes in folk dancing, taught by Alice Gates, were less strenuous and more fun than most of the other choices. For one thing, there were men in them.

Some of us are old enough to recall the Open Houses that happened once a semester in the women's dorms. The rest of the time, usually only your father was allowed to visit. And if you admitted a man, you had to yell, "Man on the hall!" so that anyone who was not fully clothed could hide. But on Open House Day, we female students cleaned up and decorated our dorm rooms, sent out invitations, served refreshments, and competed with each other to attract male guests. During my second and third semesters, I was lucky enough to have two upperclass roommates (both in the class of '45): Harriet Bender and Lyn Granat. We were able to get ourselves a very desirable big triple in L Section of Worth. It used to be a parlor, and it had a fireplace flanked by built-in bookcases. We decided to organize a big event in it for Open House: a folk sing. One of those to whom we sent invitations was the Dean of Men, Everett Hunt; he came early and stayed late. We also included some male folk singers and instrumentalists from off campus. We built a nice fire in the fireplace, and made music all afternoon. It was quite successful; we made more noise than anybody else in the building, attracted many passersby, and the room was jammed.

Another high point for me was Alice Gates's little class in folk leadership in the spring of 1945. It was an official physical education class, but there were only four or five of us—including one man—who were invited to join it. The picture (see Photo 2) that is being projected shows Alice Gates herself in the foreground and a few of us students behind her. The primary object was to learn to teach folk dancing. Alice provided materials: instructions and hand-copied music for dances, lists of available recordings of folkdance music, sources for international dance costumes and patterns,

etc. When I later got a summer job teaching folk dancing at a children's camp, Alice even gave me some of her own old costumes to use. I used the



Photo 2: Willa Freeman '47, Jane Torrey '47, Alice Gates

materials for years, and lent some of them for the exhibit (in 1998).

One of the most fun things we did in that folk leadership class was to attend, at College expense, a weekend workshop in Wheeling, West Virginia. I remember that we danced all day and most of the night, too, hardly taking time even to eat the delicious ethnic meals that were served and to do some group singing of international folk songs. I remember that Alice Gates was probably the best hambo dancer there. She eventually trained us all to do that wonderful graceful Swedish dance, and in 1998 could still do it, if I didn't run out of breath. I later got to teach it to my son, Lee Grunes, class of '76, when I visited him here during his freshman year.

The whole folk leadership course was a delight, but the best part came when Alice suggested, as a final project, that we organize an intercollegiate folk festival. We all agreed, and divided up the duties. And we invited the Outing Club and the Folk Dance Club to share the work. My special assignment was to apply to the Cooper Foundation for funds to hire a featured folk singer, and then to choose and hire one. The Cooper Foundation had to struggle to find some cultural event to sponsor every year, and they were not hard to persuade. For one thing, folk singers came cheap in those days, before they hit the big time. We housed and fed them on campus, paid their train fare, and gave them about \$50 to perform two concerts, and they were happy to come. I had a number of possible singers in mind.

One weekend, I took the train to New York City, with a couple of friends, to do some scouting. I had heard that some folk singers were performing nightly in Greenwich Village. Richard Dyer-Bennet had already done a couple of concerts at Carnegie Hall, and he was featured at the Village Vanguard at the time. Photo 3 shows what he looked like. I went to hear him and was charmed, and I was delighted when he agreed to sing at our festival. Quite unexpectedly, late in the evening at the Vanguard, Lead Belly dropped in, with his guitar. The two men were friends, and Dyer-Bennet invited him to do some duets. The small audience was in for a rare treat.



Photo 3:
Richard Dyer-Bennet, 1945

Two more unlikely singing partners it would have been hard to imagine. Dyer-Bennet was fair and slight. He had a delicate singing voice, a delicate gut-stringed guitar, and a delicate style to match it. Lead Belly, as you can see in Photo 4, was a husky, stocky, powerfully built man. He had very black skin to contrast with his startlingly white hair. And he had a very powerful, massive, twelve-steel-string guitar, with a style that matched it. He could definitely make more noise. Dyer-Bennet also played a lute, and he called himself a troubadour or minstrel in the English tradition, rather than a folk musician; Lead Belly was a genuine folk musician from the deep South. Most of his ancestry was African, but there was also some Native American blood. Dyer-



Photo 4: Lead Belly

Bennet spoke and sang in the King's English to which he was heir; Lead Belly's slurred accent was sometimes almost unintelligible to Northern ears. They certainly looked odd as a team, but, wonder of wonders, they sounded great

together. I especially remember them doing "Green Corn, Come Along Charlie" from Lead Belly's repertoire. It was fun to be there singing along. I knew that, if I got the chance to invite him, Lead Belly would be my choice for a second festival at Swarthmore. And I did get that chance the following year.

I wasn't around to help with the third festival, which did not happen until 1948. By then I had graduated, but I did come back that year with a contingent from the Boston area, to hear Susan Reed and her older Brother Jerry. That festival was chaired by Robert Norman, class of '49. The committee had first contracted with Lead Belly to return, but by then he was too ill to keep the date. Susan and Jerry brought beautiful red hair, lyrical voices, and an Irish air to the campus, and they charmed many of us. Of the first four featured singers, only Susan survived in 1998, and we were especially pleased that she could come to the reunion that year.

In 1949, I hear tell that the fourth festival featured an odd couple: John Jacob Niles and Woody Guthrie. Niles used a dulcimer and sang many religious hymns; Woody Guthrie often made up union songs and felt out of place in Clothier because to him it looked like a church.

But back to festival #1: Besides Richard Dyer-Bennet, we were entertained also by Reginald and Gladys Laubin, friends of Alice Gates. They specialized in performing Native American songs and dances, and had been adopted into his tribe by Sitting Bull himself. They gave a most interesting show in Clothier. But it was with Dyer-Bennet that I personally spent the most time. One of the tales he told was about how he had gotten started playing the guitar and singing. It seems that his mother, who was a student of psychology, took her little son to Germany with her, when she went there to study under Wolfgang Köhler. Köhler was the very same famous Gestalt psychologist with whom I was studying at Swarthmore. In Germany, many of the boys on the streets were playing guitars and singing. Little Richard soon began to imitate them.

When Dyer-Bennet came to our festival, he brought with him his colorful agent, Sol Hurok. They used the opportunity also to go to Philadelphia and make arrangements for Dyer-Bennet's first concert at the Academy of Music later that spring. The prospect of the Swarthmore

engagement helped to persuade a Philadelphia concert producer that an Academy concert might be a good idea. Unfortunately, it turned out to be a risky venture; the hall was half-empty, but Dyer-Bennet sang beautifully and those of us who went had a great time. One of the songs he had sung for us at Swarthmore was "Quaker Lover," a humorous ditty about a self-conscious pompous suitor, who courted a "Pres-bye-terian's daughter." Dyer-Bennet said he was afraid to sing it at the Academy of Music, for fear of offending the staid Philadelphia Quakers he expected might be in the audience. Right before his concert there, however, with a little coaxing, he promised to sing it if Dean Hunt, our singing Dean of Men, would call out a request for it. Well, the dean was in the audience, and I tried to get a message to him, but I failed to locate him in time. When Dyer-Bennet asked for requests, a friend of mine in the balcony called out "Quaker Lover," in his booming deep voice. Dyer-Bennet thought it must be the dean, and he sang the song. It was a big hit.

One night, during the first festival, a group of us took Dyer-Bennet and Saul Hurok on our customary forbidden trek through the woods to Plushies, for a folk sing in the back room, and we also took them to a private singing party at Dorothy Simons' boarding house. I took along my own steel-stringed Gibson guitar. The whole time Dyer-Bennet was litching to try playing it, but he was worried that it would injure his delicate fingertips. Eventually he could not resist, and he did try it a bit at Dorothy's house. He talked at least two people who were there into going to New York City to buy handmade gut-stringed guitars, like his own, at Tatay's shop. The two new customers were Burnham Terrell, class of '45, and my younger brother, Ned Freeman, still in high school at the time but later of the class of '51. Burnham was the author of a couple of popular student songs: "Bland Brand Blanshard" (concerning a favorite Swarthmore philosophy professor) and "Private Enterprise Forever," which eventually spread to college campuses across the country. Both of them were sung to the tune of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

At the early festivals, it felt as though practically everybody on campus both sang and danced, at the concerts and dances, as well as in informal groups. As the festivals later evolved in the direction of amplified sound and rock, students

seem to have stopped participating in the same way. In the sixties, when I offered my collection of songs to the college and suggested the publication of a Swarthmore songbook, I was told that the students did not sing anymore and that there would not be much interest. Alas!

Folk dancing played an important role at the early festivals. There were formal performances, demonstrations, and there were big dancing parties. At the second festival, in 1946, Alice Gates worked with a group of her modern dance students and the Modern Dance Club to produce a show in Clothier. Photo 2 is a scene from that show. Alice Gates is the dancer in the foreground. Among the students behind her is my friend Jane Torrey and myself, both of us from the class of 1947. Miss Gates adapted a Southern folk tale called "The Big Music" for the purpose, and we all choreographed a dance version. I recall that I played the small part of a single dewdrop, which sparkled in the sunlight, in the morning dew-drenched grass in the mountains, and later rose to begin dancing in the sun with the mountain folk. Miss Gates herself did a humorous solo.

Before the second festival, when we announced that Lead Belly would be the featured singer, I got a message that I was summoned to the office of Dean Hunt. He had earlier been among the group of prominent citizens who were instrumental in obtaining Lead Belly's release from prison, and had been present at a celebratory banquet, where Lead Belly performed. Dean Hunt wanted me to be aware that, on that occasion, Lead Belly had seemed rather shy and reserved until he had imbibed a few drinks, after which he sang just fine. Well, Swarthmore was a dry campus in a dry township. We students weren't supposed to be drinking anything stronger than tomato juice. So I asked Dean Hunt in amazement whether he meant that I should ply Lead Belly with alcohol before his concerts. He just smiled and told me that he would advise me, according to an old Quaker saying, to "Proceed as the way opens." I did subsequently arrange for two male students to accompany Lead Belly to his first concert, and to offer him liquor, but I later heard that he had turned them down, and he performed just fine, as far I know cold sober.

When Lead Belly arrived by train, I got to meet him at the station, and we walked up the

hill to go have lunch at Parrish. He had with him his big guitar, and I tried to help him carry it. He soon saw that it was too much for me, and took over. I now realize that he may have been having trouble walking that hill; he must already have been suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease, which was to claim his life within a few years. On our way, he looked around and remarked about the lack of colored faces on the campus. He was certainly right. Although there had very recently been a change of policy, and Swarthmore had finally admitted a few Negroes (as we called them then), there were only three, to be exact, and, unfortunately, all three were away that weekend.

As Lead Belly and I walked into the College dining room, the students began to "tinkle," by hitting their drinking glasses with their silverware, in the traditional welcome. The sound was as loud and prolonged as I ever heard it. Over the din, I tried to explain to Lead Belly that the students were trying to indicate to him how glad they were to have him there. But I believe that, because of the overwhelmingly white student body and the all-white faculty, Lead Belly felt like a fish-out-of-water all weekend. (Dyer-Bennet later mentioned Lead Belly's reaction to me, and I suspect there had been some discussion between them about it.) His performances on the campus were, nonetheless, absolutely marvelous. At the time of the Swarthmore War Years Reunion in 1992, a number of alumni from that period spontaneously mentioned, in answering their questionnaires, that Lead Belly's visit to the campus was one of their most outstanding special College memories.

At the second festival, besides the big barn dance in the field house, we had informal folk dancing in the Commons on Saturday afternoon.



Photo 5: Lead Belly in Commons

On the same occasion, Lead Belly sang, we all sang, and there was a display of authentic ethnic costumes, which Libby Pope Compton '47 was active in putting together. Many of us left that afternoon session humming

Lead Belly's signature song "Good Night, Irene," which was destined, but only after he died, to be a popular hit, sung by millions, and recorded by the Weavers, but also by major star singers, including Frank Sinatra. I am betting that many of you know that song. Two of my children are going to help me sing it now. I hope that you will join us—at least on the chorus.

Among those who attended Lead Belly's Swarthmore concerts were a number of faculty children. He responded to them with enthusiasm, and sang some songs especially for them, including the one about the Grey Goose. For that one, he used his guitar, while he played it, to imitate a gun with which Pappy went a-huntin' for that indestructible goose. The goose in the song survives one attempt after another to kill it off and cook it and eat it. But, as you may remember:

The last time I seed her,
 Lord, Lord, Lord,
 She was flying 'cross the ocean,
 Lord, Lord, Lord,
 With a long string o' goslin's,
 Lord Lord, Lord,
 Goin' quink-quank quink-quank,
 Lord, Lord, Lord.

That goose could be seen as a symbol both for Lead Belly himself and for the Swarthmore folk festivals. Both have appeared to be goners, but to say "Good Night, Irene" seems to have been somewhat premature. Clearly, they still live here and now. Many folk still sing the old songs and dance the old jigs. You can now buy the old music on the tapes and CDs that Lead Belly did not live to hear or profit from.

Some of those who took part in our revels, and some who helped organize them, went on to publish the books and to head up the national archives which continue to preserve and make available what many now recognize as a wonderful precious part of our country's heritage. Notably, the late Ralph Rinzler '56 went on to a distinguished career in folklore at the Smithsonian. (His widow honored us by her presence in 1998.)

And perhaps we shall yet attend another festival right here, with a long string o' goslin's, Lord, Lord, Lord. Please join my kids and me while we end by singing the Grey Goose song.

APPENDIX S

In memory of Ralph Lee Smith '51

From the *Reston Connection*:

July 16, 2019, by Mercia Hobson:

Reston's Dulcimer Player to Perform in Local Concert

Long-time Reston resident Ralph Lee Smith, 91, is one of the nation's foremost players of the mountain dulcimer. He will perform in a free concert at City of Fairfax Regional Library with Madeline MacNeil on Saturday, July 27, 3-4:30 p.m.

"Through his performances and writings, Ralph helped save the dulcimer and its music from extinction," said Elizabeth Milner, City of Fairfax Regional Library.

Smith said his affinity for the dulcimer runs deep. "I think the true cause of my interest in the dulcimer and music is that my parents were Pennsylvania antique dealers. I love old things and songs, and this instrument came out of the mist of the mountain pass," he said.

Smith and MacNeil will present a program of songs and stories from the Blue Ridge Mountains, along with sing-alongs. "Everybody can sing," Smith said. "We will also display three to four old mountain dulcimers along with a few semi-modern ones, too," he said.

Smith is one of the "foremost writers and authorities on the history of the instrument," according to Laura Wickstead, City of Fairfax Regional Library. Wickstead noted that Smith gave performances and demonstrations at the White House, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, Mountain Heritage Center and multiple other venues.

As for Madeline MacNeil, Wickstead described her as "a master of both the hammered and Appalachian dulcimer and renowned storyteller."

Profile of the Week, November 25, 2002

Name: Ralph Lee Smith

Born: Philadelphia, Pa.

Birth date: Nov. 6, 1927

Education: Graduated from Swarthmore in 1951 with a degree in English Literature. Received his M.Ed. from the University of Virginia in 1987.

Family: Married his wife, Shizuko, Nov. 7, 1977. They have one daughter, Koyuki ("Little Snowflake"), 24.

Besides being one of the foremost dulcimer players, Ralph Lee Smith is widely considered a leading authority on the history of the Appalachian dulcimer. His book, *The Story of the Dulcimer*, is considered the standard history of the instrument. Smith's other publications include *Appalachian Dulcimer Traditions* and *Songs and Tunes of the Wilderness Road: Arrangements for Appalachian Dulcimer*.

Smith has taught dulcimer classes at Appalachian State University, the University of Virginia and Davis and Elkins College. His interest in folk music grew while he was an undergraduate at Swarthmore College. Smith and his folk-friendly friends convinced early folk legends, Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger, to play at their small Pennsylvania campus "for cheap." After graduating in 1951, and serving in the Air Force, Smith found himself in the middle of the folk revival in the heart of New York's Greenwich Village in the late 1950s and 1960s. While in the Village, Smith was introduced to the acoustic sounds of Appalachian music. It was there that he acquired his first dulcimer. Quickly, Smith became a fixture in Lower Manhattan's bustling folk music scene. In 1978, Smith brought his progressive outlook and his new bride, Shizuko, to the young and equally progressive community of Reston; 24 years later they are still here.





PHOTO BY GARY BISHOP & WICKI BROWN FOR THE COLLEGE



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COURTESY ELIZABETH POPE

Swarthmore's folk festivals grew out of barn dances in the early 1940s and rapidly embraced such legendary performers as Leadbelly (upper right, 1946) and Woody Guthrie (above, 1949). In 1945 Elizabeth Pope '47 (right) danced on Parrish Lawn to the guitar of Richard Dyer-Bennett.

If I Had a Song...

Like a single note on a lone guitar, the Swarthmore Folk Festival began, simply enough, with a weekly folk dance class for phys ed credit. The music soon became a chord, and then a song, helping to change not only the College's tune but the country's.

From 1945 to 1967, the festivals provided many students with some of their happiest college memories—and many administrators with some of their biggest headaches. More than once the latter thought it necessary to literally stop the music, and thereby hang some interesting tales.

Swarthmore's Folk Festival had its origins in February 1940, when Alice Gates of the Women's Physical Education Department, who was an excellent square and folk dancer, organized a "barn dance" at the College. Then in the fall of 1943, things took a step forward when Willa Freeman (now Grunes) '47 arrived as a freshman. She had been singing folk songs with her family since childhood, and brought with her the only folk guitar on campus. By then, folk dancing had become a weekly activity, and Freeman joined in.

Alice Gates invited several students, including Freeman, to satisfy their physical education requirement by participating in a weekly class to learn how to lead and teach square and folk dances. Gates then proposed that, as a class project, the group should create and run an intercollegiate folk festival.

Happy and excited, the class members divided up the work. Freeman got funding from the Cooper Foundation and went to New York to listen to folk singers. At the Village Vanguard, she heard Richard Dyer-Bennett, then a little-known young performer. She invited him to be the featured performer at the proposed folk festival, and he accepted. Other members of the class contacted Richard and Gladys Laubin, Native American per-

With performers like Odetta, Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, and Pete Seeger, the Swarthmore Folk Festivals led the 1950s folk revival—and gave the administration fits.

formers, who agreed to present folk songs and dances.

The festival was held in May 1945 and was a tremendous campus hit. It is hard to know whether Dyer-Bennett or the students enjoyed it more. At one point Dyer-Bennett sat on Parrish lawn and played the guitar while Elizabeth Pope '47 performed a Spanish dance.

Leadbelly, Guthrie, Seeger

A second festival was planned for 1946, and Dyer-Bennett suggested Leadbelly, with whom he was on friendly terms, as the featured performer. Dean Everett Hunt, who loved to sing and who had been involved in activities on Leadbelly's behalf, secured the great bluesman's services. However, Dean Hunt was worried about something, and called in Freeman to discuss it with her. He had been reliably told that Leadbelly did not perform well in "dry" environments, which Swarthmore was. Freeman asked what she should do. Dean Hunt's eyes twinkled as he said, "Proceed as the way opens!"

Two male students who were put in charge of taking care of Leadbelly's

needs while he was on campus tactfully broached the matter to him. To their surprise he refused all strong waters. Willa Freeman Grunes says that Leadbelly was still very shy performing in college environments and guesses that he did not want to express his real wishes to his hosts. Whether or not that is true, what is true beyond dispute is that Leadbelly gave two of the greatest musical performances ever heard at Swarthmore, one in Commons and one in Bond, on nothing stronger than orange juice.

Freeman also found Leadbelly impressive in other ways. In informal conversation he expressed his surprise at the lack of black faces on campus and wondered why.

There was no festival in 1947, but in 1948, Irene Moll, assistant professor of physical education, became faculty adviser for the festivals. She remained in that position until the early 1960s. Under Moll's energetic guidance, things got rolling again. The 1948 festival starred Susan Reed, her brother Jerry, and Margot Mayo's American Square Dance Group, and the 1949 festival featured John Jacob Niles and Woody Guthrie. *and Pete Seeger.*

Carol Wilcox '52, chairperson of the 1949 festival, says that Niles was a great self-dramatizer. He played an instrument that he called a dulcimer, which he had fashioned from half of an old cello, and he sang in a high falsetto. When a plane flew over while he was performing, he stopped in the middle of a song, explaining that his ear was too elegantly tuned to deal with such intrusions.

When Woody Guthrie's turn came, he stepped out onto the Clothier stage, looked around and up at the ceiling, and murmured, "I ain't never played in a church before!"

In 1953 the featured performer was Pete Seeger. Barbara Keay Jansch '53, chairperson of the 1953 festival, remembers sitting backstage with Seeger just before his performance in Clothier. "I was supposed to take care of his needs," she says, "But he didn't seem to need anything, not even a glass of water. All he wanted was a



HEISE BECAME A PROFESSOR OF ENGINEERING AT USG.

Above: Swing your partner, mid-1950s



WHILE THOMAS WENT ON TO A CAREER WITH HOKUM.

Left: John Jacob Niles, 1949



stool to put his foot on while he strummed. He was quiet and seemed like a very private person offstage." Once he went onstage, however, everything changed. Soon Clothier's rafters were shaking with the choruses of "Wimoweh."

In those times fine folksinging talent was a musical bargain. For their services at the festivals, John Jacob Niles was paid \$155, Woody Guthrie \$42.50, Pete Seeger \$125 plus \$3.75 expenses.

In 1948 and 1949, a pattern of activities and events for the festival was developed that continued for a number of years. The festivals were held in April or early May, and folksinging and folk dancing were equally featured.

On Friday and Saturday nights of a festival weekend, square dances were held in the field house. Irene Moll and callers from the Philadelphia area called the Friday dance, and a well-known professional was brought in to do the calling on Saturday. Swarthmore student bands provided the music. Saturday mornings were devoted to folk dance instruction in Hall Gym. Featured professional folksingers performed in Clothier on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

On Sunday morning a grand jam session was held in Bond. Swarthmore students and visiting firemen who wished to perform sat in a semicircle of chairs and took turns playing and singing, while listeners squeezed into the rest of the available space.

This jam session was supplemented throughout Saturday and Sunday by numerous impromptu mini-gatherings of players and listeners, who swapped songs, shared secrets of technique, and entertained each other all around the campus and in the Crum.

High Tide: The 1955 Festival

Alice Gates originally envisioned the festival as an intercollegiate event, but neither she nor anyone else had any way of knowing what was about to happen to folk music in America. Still less did she envision that her festival would be partly responsible for it.

Pursuant to Gates' approach, the Folk Festival Committee sent out invitations each year to colleges on the Eastern Seaboard and in the Midwest. From the beginning the response was strong. As early as the 1948 festival, visitors came from Harvard, Yale, MIT, NYU, Hunter, Rutgers, Penn, and Haverford. The numbers of outsiders built swiftly. More than 600 came to the 1953 festival. Harvard, Smith, and Antioch were among the colleges that sent substantial contingents to the 1954 festival, which featured Susan Reed and folk duo Sonny Terry and Brownie McGee.

The year 1955, when Josh White and Jean Ritchie performed, was

Swarthmore's Woodstock. The official tabulation was 2,725 outside attendees, outnumbering the student body by nearly three to one. There were probably more—an accurate count of people on campus was impossible.

Just where the cars got parked and everybody stayed is hard to say. The circle between Parrish and Wharton was jammed tight with parked cars. The floors of dormitory rooms were pressed into service.

Peter Jensch '55 says, and others agree, that the event was impressively self-policed and well-behaved. There were no incidents. The only problem, Jensch says, was not being able to hear all the things that you wanted to hear.

The Festivals Falter

The administration reacted with strong concern to the problems posed by the large outside attendance at the 1955 festival. Their concerns were in two areas: Swarthmore did not have the facilities to accommodate an event of such size, and the festival had reached the point of doing more for outsiders than for Swarthmore students.

With President Courtney Smith's concurrence, Irene Moll and Virginia Rath, her associate in the Athletic Department, ruled that no festival would be held in 1956, providing time for the problems to be studied by everyone concerned. When it was pointed out by the Student Council



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Odetta headlined the 1958 festival. Students in the 1940s studied—and imitated the dress of—folk cultures from around the world.

that the decision was made without student input, the administration invited the student body to name representatives to a joint student-faculty committee to review the problem.

In February 1956 an overflow crowd of 200 students supporting the festival met in Commons, discussed the problems, and appointed Sylvester Whitaker '56, who had been chairman of the 1955 festival, Ralph Rinzler '56, Joe Finesinger '58, and Carol Gayle '58 as student representatives to the committee. At the committee's meeting, the student representatives proposed registration of all off-campus visitors to the festival, with only a limited number of registrants being accepted. The administration representatives said no. There was no festival in 1956.

Today, Syl Whitaker remains critical of the College's approach. "If the administration had been more willing to plan for the festival as a major event, the problems could probably have been met," he says.

Whitaker believes that the administration's relationship to the folk festivals was complicated by the coming of the counterculture. When the folk festivals had been created a decade before, such a movement did not exist. But by 1955 the attitudes that were soon to coalesce into the counterculture were taking shape. Folk music was a central interest and form of expression of the people who shared the new ethos, and as a group,

the outside visitors to the folk festivals exhibited many of the attitudes and styles of the emerging movement.

Members of the College's administration found themselves forced to face something that they did not like or trust. Dress styles of the outsiders at the 1955 festival were tame compared to what was soon to come, but

*The huge 1955
festival was
Swarthmore's
Woodstock.
When it was over,
President Smith
decreed that there
would be no such
event in 1956.*

there was enough sartorial variety and informality among the visitors to arouse some negative reactions. Most notably, many of the young visitors, both male and female, wore blue jeans. Among those who viewed the movement with strong negative feeling, Whitaker believes, was President Smith.

"Courtney saw the style as disrep-

utable, distasteful, and menacing," Whitaker says. "He did not think that men should wear jeans, to say nothing of women wearing them! I used to wear jeans on the campus, and one day I went in and talked with him about it. I explained that wearing jeans meant a reduction in my cleaning bills, and so forth, but it didn't change his views."

Another important unacknowledged issue was the increasingly relaxed attitude of the incipient counterculture toward relations between the sexes, which many of the visitors saw no reason to conceal. The issue was pinpointed by a student in a letter to *The Phoenix* in 1956: "Having witnessed last year's folk festival, I can fully realize that the numbers issue is merely a discreet cloak for the real problem of a somewhat more delicate nature. For not only are the invading 'folk' generally dirty and rude, but some of them are whispered to be immoral!"

The Festival Resumes

"Many people protested the closing down of the folk festival," says Ruth Ellenbogen Flaxman '57, co-chair with Carol Gayle of the 1957 festival. The administration agreed to hold a festival in 1957 with the understanding that problems relating to outsiders would be addressed. The committee worked prodigiously to comply. The festival flyer said, "Registration must be in advance—our capacity is limit-

ed." A registration committee registered all guests, and a housing committee arranged sleeping accommodations. John Jacob Niles, the ultimate nonhippie, was invited back as the featured performer.

The 1957 festival illustrates the role of the '50s collegiate festivals as a crossroads of the burgeoning folk revival and the festivals' longer-range impact. Joe Hickerson, now head of the Archive of Folk Culture of the Library of Congress, was a student and folk enthusiast at Oberlin College in 1957. He and some friends organized a two-car caravan of Oberlin students to the Swarthmore festival. When Hickerson arrived at Mary Lyon, where he was staying, he encountered the rising banjo star Tom Paley sitting on the steps, playing a complicated adaptation of "When You and I Were Young, Maggie." All around the campus during that weekend, he and his Oberlin friends met young performers from New York and elsewhere who were involved in the new national folk scene.

High Tide for the Revival— Low Tide at Swarthmore

Historians generally bracket the period 1958–64 as the high tide of the urban folk revival. In 1958 the Kingston Trio's "Tom Dooley" reached the top of the charts, proving that there was a commercial audience for folk music. Then in 1964 Bob Dylan lugged an amplifier onto the stage at the Newport Folk Festival, literally causing Pete Seeger to weep, and pointing accurately to the rise of rock music that was soon to engulf the folk scene.

Odetta (who has returned to Swarthmore to teach this spring—see inside front cover) performed at the 1958 festival. Harriet Schorr '60, co-chair in 1958 with Genie Beth Beam '59, remembers an incident that seemed to reflect larger problems. She had breakfast with Odetta, the late J. Roland Pennock '27, chairman of Swarthmore's Political Science Department, and Mrs. Pennock, at the Pennocks' home. The Pennocks were immensely kind and cordial, but communication was a strain. "To communicate," Schorr says, "Odetta and the Pennocks had to reach across a big gulf."

Odetta was a big name, and more than 600 off-campus visitors registered. Others came who didn't register. It was now evident that you couldn't hold a folk festival, sign up nationally known talent, and expect people to stay away in droves.

The administration made two decisions: that the festival could only continue in abbreviated form and that outsiders would simply be excluded. The 1959 and 1960 festivals were reduced to one day and were announced to be only "for the enjoy-

*By 1964 change
was in the air.
From Newport—
where Bob Dylan
went electric—to
Swarthmore,
interest was
shifting from
folk to rock.*

ment of Swarthmore students and their personal guests."

Big-name performers were avoided. The 1959 concert was given by three Swarthmoreans, Robin Christensen '57, Ralph Rinzler '56, and Roger Abrahams '55. The 1960 concert featured the New Lost City Ramblers, players of old-time music who were no threat to anybody's position on the charts.

In 1961 there was no festival; instead, the committee sponsored the appearance of several folk performers, including Jean Ritchie, in individual concerts. An April 1961 pictures-only editorial in *The Phoenix* showed groups of players and listeners around the campus in the years 1957–60—and an empty Parrish lawn in 1961.

In 1962 the folk festival committee pressured the administration to revive a full-scale festival. "We were ticked," says Mike Meeropol '64, a committee member and outstanding banjo player. In the face of the pressure, Virginia Rath, who had succeed-

ed Irene Moll, resigned as the committee's faculty adviser, and her place was taken by Justus Rosenberg, assistant professor of German and Russian. He was assisted by Anne Matthews Rawson '50, wife of Ken Rawson, then assistant professor of biology. After substantial negotiation, Dave Burack '62 and Charlie Springer '62, as co-chairs, received a green light from the administration under the following conditions:

- The event was not to be given external publicity;
- It could not be called a festival, with its implications of a participatory party, but must be treated as a cultural event;
- Tickets to all concerts would be distributed in advance to students and their guests, with no sales being made at the door.

The agreement provided that about 175 tickets were to be made available for the accommodation of over-night guests, with guests being housed with their hosts or with other students who made their rooms available. The agreement called for providing guests with identification, checking the campus, and requiring noninvitees to leave.

"This is unfortunate in some respects," Burack told *The Phoenix*, "but it's better than nothing—which is all that we've had for a long time, you know."

In accordance with the agreement, the name of the event was changed from Folk Festival to Folk Fest. Pete Seeger, the Rev. Gary Davis, and Ellen Stekert were signed up. Persons wondering how to relate to the new scene received "easy instructions" from *The Phoenix*:

- Direct all oddly clad, oddly encumbered outsiders you happen to spot this afternoon to the registration at Somerville, where they will be recognized;
- If you wake up tomorrow morning with three strangers sleeping on your floor, get out of bed and give them a pillow;
- Learn all the verses of "Springfield Mine Disaster" so that somebody will know them;
- Don't let anyone walk on the pachysandra.

Please turn to page 62

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE BULLETIN

Informal jam sessions sprang up all across campus. Both the folk artists of the South and the new urban folk blues of the North were represented in the 1960s festivals. Phil Ochs (below) was a sensation in 1964.

AND WOODY THOMAS NOW MARKS AND REWRITS THEIR FILMS.



AP WIDE WORLD

PHOTO: HISTORICAL LIBRARY



Josh White (above) performed in 1955. By the mid-'60s old-time music blended easily with blues, jazz, and later rock. An informal jug band (left) got together in Bond, ca. 1964.



PHOTO: HISTORICAL LIBRARY

IF I HAD A SONG

Continued from page 21

The 1960s Festivals

The performances by Seeger, Davis, and Stekert at the 1962 festival were everything that could be desired. "Song Fest Delights All." *The Phoenix* headline read. Swarthmore had a high-quality folk festival again. By the following year, the name Folk Festival was restored. Once re-established, the festivals were held annually until 1967.

The '60s festivals reflected the expansion and transformation of the national folk scene. The sudden commercial viability of folk music spawned scores of urban folk singers. At the same time, interest in the roots of the music had resulted in the discovery of many contemporary traditional musicians, and the rediscovery of many older ones who had recorded "hillbilly" records or "race" records decades before. All were available to perform on campuses, making it possible for the folk festival committees to present diversified programs.

A festival format developed in which both old-time music and urban singer-songwriters were represented. In 1963 traditional music was represented by Lightnin' Hopkins and Doc Watson and the urban scene by Bonnie Dobson and Ramblin' Jack Elliott. In 1964 old-time music was represented by Jesse Fuller and the New Lost City Ramblers; the urban folksinging scene was represented by Billy Vanaver and Phil Ochs. In 1965 traditional performers were Doc Watson and bluegrass legend Bill Monroe. Pat Sky represented the modern urban tradition, and Junior Wells—well, we'll talk about him shortly.

Mike Meeropol says that informal jamming enjoyed vigorous life when the festivals were re-established. The rise of urban folksingers who composed some of their material also stimulated composing on campus, including various kinds of "talking blues" based on Swarthmore themes. Paul Booth '54 brought some of these songs together in a small book titled *A Pretty Songbook, Fred*.

A Saturday afternoon "New Faces" concert was initiated, featuring young professional and semiprofessional urban folk musicians who were willing

to perform in exchange for car fare. *The Phoenix* described the 1964 New Faces concert, hosted by Meeropol, as "the most exciting folk event of the weekend.... The atmosphere of spontaneity, which is so often lacking in a concert situation, was sustained by the performers, who were unaffectedly enjoying themselves, the unselfconscious response of the audience, and Mike Meeropol's unclad knees."

Dan Menaker '63, coordinator of the 1963 festival, believes that folk music at Swarthmore reached its



Above: Susan Reed in 1948. Author Ralph Lee Smith recalls her performance in Commons: "I sat on the floor, struggling to reconcile my desperate wish to be as near to the music as possible, with my equally desperate desire to be inconspicuous. Susan saw my plight. She tossed her beautiful red hair, smiled, and said gently, 'Come up a little closer!' I never recovered."

apogee that year. "The administration had let up a little bit by 1963," Menaker says. "Things were more open and the music was more widely enjoyed. There was still no amplified music. On the national scene, folk music had passed from the counterculture to other people. Also, it was just before the intense politicizing of the campus and just before marijuana. Swarthmore was not yet a protest campus, although you could feel that something was coming. It was like the last days of innocence."

By the time that Ken Turan '67 and Roger Shatzkin '67, who were co-chairpersons of the 1966 and 1967 festivals,

reached campus in 1964, change was in the air. The priority of interest was shifting from folk to rock.

"It was an interesting time of transition," says Shatzkin. "In my freshman year, I played with a bluegrass group, and in my freshman and part of my sophomore years I played with a jug band. By the end of my sophomore year, I was playing rock—the Beatles and the Rolling Stones."

Performers at the 1965 folk festival included a Chicago blues group led by Junior Wells, consisting of an electric guitar, an electric bass, and an electrically amplified harmonica. It was the first amplified group ever to perform at a Swarthmore folk festival. "They were basically rock," says Mike Meeropol, who came back to campus for the event.

The 1966 festival presented the traditional blues singer Son House and the urban singer-songwriter Tom Rush, and the 1967 festival presented traditional bluesman Skip James and urban singer Richie Havens. The festivals were fully successful as concert performances, but informal jamming on the campus had faded away.

In February 1966 Swarthmore freshman Paul Williams launched *Crawdaddy*, the first magazine devoted to rock music. In March Swarthmore held its first rock festival, which, like the folk festival in its time, was one of the first held anywhere. It met with the same excited campus response that had greeted the folk festival in the 1940s and 1950s.

"In my senior year," says Shatzkin, "I met a freshman who had never heard bluegrass music. He had simply been listening to different things than we had listened to. I played some bluegrass for him and he said, 'I like it!' It made me feel old at 21."

In 1968 the folk festival was folded into the rock festival. Meanwhile on the Swarthmore campus, everyone, male and female, was wearing jeans. A new time had come. ■

Ralph Lee Smith '51 is a dulcimer player, recording artist, and author of numerous books. His latest, American Dulcimer Traditions, will be published in the fall by Scarecrow Press.

★ Readers are invited to join an Internet discussion of this topic. For subscription information, send e-mail to llstmom@scb.swarthmore.edu.

APPENDIX P.D.Q.

In memory of Peter Schickele '57, H '80

From *The New York Times*

Peter Schickele, Composer and Gleeful Sire of P.D.Q. Bach, Dies at 88

He wrote more than 100 symphonic, choral, solo instrumental and chamber works. But he was better known, and celebrated, as a musical parodist. Who can forget the “Concerto for Horn and Hardart”?



For more than half a century, in works like the “Unbegun” Symphony and “Pervertimento for Bagpipes, Bicycle and Balloons,” Peter Schickele’s creation, the fictional composer P.D.Q. Bach, remained enduringly, fiendishly alive. Peter Schaaf



By [Margalit Fox](#)

Published Jan. 17, 2024 Updated Jan. 19, 2024

Peter Schickele, an American composer whose career as a writer of serious concert music was often eclipsed by that of his antic alter ego, the thoroughly debauched, terrifyingly prolific and mercifully fictional P.D.Q. Bach, died on Tuesday at his home in Bearsville, a hamlet outside Woodstock, N.Y. He was 88.

His death was confirmed by his daughter, Karla Schickele, who said his health had declined after a series of infections last fall.

Under his own name, Mr. Schickele (pronounced SHICK-uh-lee) composed more than 100 symphonic, choral, solo instrumental and chamber works, first heard on concert stages in the 1950s and later commissioned by some of the world's leading orchestras, soloists and chamber ensembles. He also wrote film scores and musical numbers for Broadway.

His music was performed by the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Lark Quartet, the Minnesota Opera and other notable ensembles, as well as by the folk singers Joan Baez and Buffy Sainte-Marie, for whom he wrote arrangements.

But to his resigned chagrin, it was as a musical parodist in the tradition of Victor Borge, Anna Russell and Spike Jones — Mr. Schickele's particular idol — that he remained best known.

For more than a half century, through live performances seemingly born of the marriage of Mozart, the Marx Brothers and Rube Goldberg; prizewinning recordings; and even a book-length biography, P.D.Q. Bach ("the only dead composer from whom one can commission," Mr. Schickele liked to say) remained enduringly, fiendishly alive.

Leaping from Mr. Schickele's pen in P.D.Q.'s name were compositions like the "No-No Nonette," the cantata "Iphigenia in Brooklyn," the "Unbegun" Symphony and "Pervertimento for Bagpipes, Bicycle and Balloons."

With these and myriad other works, Mr. Schickele, who billed himself as P.D.Q.'s "discoverer," gleefully punctured the reverent pomposity that can attend classical-music culture.

It was P.D.Q., after all, whose work won four Grammy Awards to Mr. Schickele's one. It was P.D.Q. who packed some of New York's foremost concert halls for decades of annual Christmastime concerts. And it was P.D.Q. who, unbidden, could rear his head insidiously at performances of Mr. Schickele's serious music, with audience members who had come expecting belly laughs sometimes walking out in bewilderment.

"There are a lot of people who are not only surprised I write serious music, but also disappointed, like 'Here's another clown who wants to play Hamlet,'" Mr. Schickele told The Los Angeles Times ruefully in 1991.

As Mr. Schickele could scarcely have envisioned on an April night in 1965, when, with borrowed money, he rented Town Hall in Manhattan and loosed the full-blown P.D.Q. on an unsuspecting public, he had created a genial genie who refused to go back into the bottle. “I certainly would like my other stuff to be better known,” he said in a 1988 interview with the music journalist Bruce Duffie. He added, of his doppelgänger, “I guess I would have to say I’m jealous.”

The trouble, critics concurred, was that Mr. Schickele was a victim of his own prodigious ability as a pasticheur. It was a skill that found outlet in his serious music — tonal works, often jocular in their own way, with audible influences including folk music, jazz, blues and rock ‘n’ roll.

“At his frequent best, Mr. Schickele can lay claim to a leading role in the ever-more-prominent school of composers who un-self-consciously blend all levels of American music,” John Rockwell wrote in *The New York Times* in 1987. “William Bolcom has attracted deserved attention for his works of this deliberately eclectic sort, and Mr. Schickele deserves some of that same attention.

Even more conspicuously, however, Mr. Schickele’s skill as a musical magpie found memorable outlet in the phantom 18th-century composer P.D.Q. Bach.



Mr. Schickele posed in a Horn & Hardart Automat in Manhattan in 1966. His alter ego, P.D.Q. Bach, composed the masterwork “Concerto for Horn and Hardart.

Keystone Features/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Tavern ‘Treasures’

The supremely unmusical spawn of Johann Sebastian Bach — “the last and by far the least” of his 20-odd children, Mr. Schickele called him, “and certainly the oddest” — P.D.Q. was dreamed up by Mr. Schickele and friends at midcentury.

In the years that followed, Mr. Schickele made successive “discoveries” of P.D.Q. Bach manuscripts — on one occasion in a Bavarian castle, on another in the East River, on at least one more in a trash can, but most often in the beer-soaked basements of the taverns that were P.D.Q.’s perennial haunts.

Among them were such epochal works as [“The Stoned Guest,”](#) a half-act opera; “The Abduction of Figaro,” a full-length opera; “Hansel and Gretel and Ted and Alice,” an opera “in one unnatural act”; and the Concerto for Two Pianos vs. Orchestra.

In creating P.D.Q.’s oeuvre and putting it onstage, Mr. Schickele cannily deconstructed the classical music of Mozart’s time and just as cannily reassembled it in precisely the wrong configuration.

The perversions began with the titles. Then came the instruments for which P.D.Q. wrote. Oh, there were violins and pianos, all right, but there were also such organological oddities — all playable — as the left-handed sewer flute (made of plumbing pipes); the double-reed slide music stand; the tromboon (the bastard spawn of a trombone and a bassoon); and, most deliciously for New Yorkers of a certain vintage, the Hardart (see below), a small edifice comprising literal bells and whistles, plus a series of glass doors with sandwiches behind them.

There were also the curious human voices for which P.D.Q. wrote, among them the bargain-counter tenor and the off-coloratura soprano.

Crucially, there was the music, which betrayed a deeply cerebral silliness that was no less silly for being cerebral. Mr. Schickele was such a keen compositional impersonator that the mock-Mozartean music he wrote in P.D.Q.’s name sounded exactly like Mozart — or like what Mozart would have sounded like if Salieri had slipped him a tab or two of LSD.

Designed to be appreciated by novices and cognoscenti alike, P.D.Q.’s music is rife with inside jokes and broken taboos: unmoored melodies that range painfully through a panoply of keys; unstable harmonies begging for resolutions that never come; variations that have nothing whatever to do with their themes. It is the aural equivalent of the elaborate staircases in M.C. Escher engravings that don’t actually lead anywhere.

Last, but far from least, were the performances themselves. Year after year, expectant audiences would be greeted by William Walters, Mr. Schickele’s longtime stage manager and straight man, who would announce dolefully that Mr. Schickele had been detained. A chorus of happy boos from the audience ensued.

Then, in a slapstick flash, Mr. Schickele appeared. In his early, supple years, he often slid down a rope suspended from the first balcony; on at least one occasion he ran down the aisle, vast suitcase in hand, as if delayed at the airport; on another he entered, pursued by a gorilla.

Once onstage, Mr. Schickele embarked on a pun-filled monologue that introduced P.D.Q.'s latest musical transgression, be it "The Civilian Barber," "Chaconne à son Goût" or the haunting carol "O Little Town of Hackensack." ("O little town of Hackensack,/How yet we see thee lie;/St. Nick hath gone, by now he's on/His way to Tenafly.")

It was an index of Mr. Schickele's perennial devotion to unorthodox entrances that in later years, when infirmities genuinely required him to roll onstage in a wheelchair, audience members laughed heartily, assuming it was all part of the shtick.

Some critics found P.D.Q. intolerably sophomoric. But for decades, audiences ate him up, and many reviewers lauded Mr. Schickele's joyous verbal, physical and musical wit.

"The mad Bachian professor, though consummately gifted as a mimic, is also much more," James R. Oestreich wrote of Mr. Schickele in *The Times* in 1992, adding, "Even his zaniest creations show independent personality and compositional integrity (of a highly perverse sort, it is true)."

All this from a comic character that Mr. Schickele expected would endure no more than a few years.



Mr. Schickele in 1966 after "discovering" more sheet music composed by P.D.Q. Bach. These pages were found in a trash can; others turned up in the East River and in taverns.

Paul Hoeffler/CTS IMAGES



INFORMATION ABOUT SWARTHMORE FOLK

Swarthmore College Folk Festivals blossomed almost every spring from 1945 through 1967. By disseminating folk music and dancing among members of the College community and a large number of attendees from far and wide, the Festivals were important in helping to spark the urban folk revival.

In the spirit of the Swarthmore Folk Festivals, a group of alumni interested in the preservation and presentation of folk culture has been presenting folk music and dance and related events at Alumni Weekend each year since 1998, with generous support and patient help from the Office of Alumni Relations (now the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement).

The group, under the banner of "Swarthmore Folk," welcomes participation of the entire Swarthmore College community, both in the Alumni Weekend activities and in communications via the Swarthmore Folk on-line discussion group provided by the Alumni Office.

Some of those communications, but certainly not all, relate to planning future Alumni Weekend activities. In addition, noteworthy folk events, publications, recordings, and persons have been frequent topics of discussion-group messages. **Information about subscribing is on Page 153 of this Songbook.**

Publication of a brief history of the Swarthmore College Folk Festivals by Ralph Lee Smith '51 in the March 1997 issue of the *Swarthmore College Bulletin* was the occasion for starting the Folk Festivals listserv (the predecessor to the on-line discussion group) and the Alumni Weekend folk activities. That article, "If I Had a Song ...," is a valuable historical reference and source of anecdotes. It is reprinted in Appendix S of this Songbook.

After publication of the article, early subscribers to the listserv got together to jam at Alumni Weekend 1997. They quickly started planning for the following year, with encouragement from Barbara Haddad Ryan '59, then Associate Vice President for External Affairs and head of the Alumni Office.

The result was a Folk Festival Reunion at Alumni Weekend 1998, including an exhibit of Folk Festival memorabilia and a talk by Willa Freeman Grunes '47 on "The Swarthmore Folk Scene in the '40s," in addition to the kinds of events that have characterized Swarthmore Folk programs in subsequent years. The efforts of Arnold Gessel '54, the long-time chair of Swarthmore Folk, who died in 2013, were crucial to the success of those programs.

At various times, Swarthmore Folk programs at Alumni Weekend have included informal singing and playing, an open mike, a Friday Folk Power lunch and a Sunday breakfast jam, as well as a concert and a talk or workshop featuring one or more performers with ties to the Swarthmore Folk Festivals. (See Page 13 of this Songbook for a list of featured performers at the Folk Festivals and in Swarthmore Folk programs at Alumni Weekend.)

The Friends Historical Library houses the archives of the Swarthmore Folk Festival as part of its Swarthmore College archives. At Alumni Weekend 2004, Swarthmore Folk presented to the Friends Historical Library a set of nine compact discs containing historic recordings of folk music performed at Swarthmore in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s. A tenth compact disc was added during Alumni Weekend 2005. These recordings came to light as a direct result of alumni becoming aware of the active interest of Swarthmore Folk through our Alumni Weekend activities.

We hope to see you at future Alumni Weekends and in the on-line discussion group.

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THE SWARTHMORE FOLK ON-LINE DISCUSSION GROUP

The Office of Alumni and Family Programs maintains electronic discussion groups for various class years, geographic areas, and affinity groups. The Swarthmore Folk discussion group is one of those affinity groups, for alumni interested in folk music and dance and related activities.

To join, write to <alumni@swarthmore.edu>. When you've been added to the group, you may send messages to the group by addressing them to <SwarthmoreFolk@swarthmore.edu>.

Please join us on line! We encourage new members of the Swarthmore Folk discussion group to introduce themselves on line, with a description of their background and interests related to folk music or dance.

Before March 1, 2016, a Folk Festivals discussion group facilitated communication among members of Swarthmore Folk. All alumni discussion groups were shut down on March 1, when the vendor of the "Online Community" system went out of business. The new Swarthmore Folk discussion group was activated on May 9, 2016.

