

**The Berea Tune Lists:
An Archival Resource for the Study of Social Music in
Eastern Kentucky and East Tennessee in 1915**

Steve Green



John F. Smith / Berea College

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*In 1915, students in an English class at Berea College were asked to write down the names of banjo and fiddle songs and tunes known to them in their home districts of Eastern Kentucky and Tennessee. Today, these lists are found among the papers of Professor John F. Smith in the Southern Appalachian Archives at Berea College's Hutchins Library. Taken as a whole, the lists offer valuable insights concerning the repertory of traditional musicians in a mixed physiographic region on the western edge of Appalachia prior to the radio era of the 1920s when regional styles and local tunes began to give way to ever more popular pieces picked up from broadcasts, phonograph records, and traveling professionals.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The nature of 19th century home-style fiddle and banjo music in the Kentucky mountains remains largely speculative. Our attempts to get at the roots of the music and to understand its development are much hindered by our lack of knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> Many people use the designation "Eastern Kentucky" to refer specifically to those counties making up the eastern coalfields region, a mostly mountainous area readily identifiable as part of Appalachia. However, in this article, the term "eastern" is used in a general sense to mean the overall eastern end of the state, since the counties represented fall both in and out of the coalfields, thus defying neat categorization as "Appalachian." Dividing the state into simple north, south, east, and west quadrants results in four sections that have little or nothing to do with the various physiographic regions that are more often used as regional labels (i.e. Eastern Coalfields, Cumberland Plateau, Inner and Outer Bluegrass, Knobs, Pennyroyal, Western Coalfields, and Purchase). The Kentucky counties under discussion in this article fall into at least three physiographic regions. Knox, Clay, Leslie, Owsley, Breathitt, Floyd, Magoffin, Wolfe, and Estill counties are generally considered part of the Eastern Coalfields whose terrain is rugged if not mountainous, while Madison, Garrard, and Lincoln counties lie in the outer Bluegrass region (mostly rolling pasture land), and Casey and Pulaski counties are in the Pennyroyal section, which is hilly but not mountainous. Thus, the 1915 Berea tune lists do not reflect a single, unified cultural or geographic area such as most people envision when they speak of "Appalachia." I am indebted to Steve Rice of the Kentucky Division of Environmental Analysis at Frankfort for suggesting that I clarify this issue.

concerning the regional repertory before the 1920s when both the phonograph and the introduction of radio began to seriously change (and displace) locally performed music. The characteristics of earlier musical styles and the spectrum of pieces played must be patiently pieced together from scattered sources, both written and recorded. Recent discographical studies and field recordings made of older generation musicians since 1940 have in some ways shed more light on the region's instrumental music traditions than the combined accounts of travelers and others who wrote of the southern mountains in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>2</sup> Most writers at that time had little of substance to say about such music—only that it was "quaint," "lonesome," or something equally colorful and just as vague.

Folksong collecting in the Kentucky mountains began in earnest at the turn of the century (not, as many people suppose, when the Englishman, Cecil Sharp, visited the region in 1916), and from the earliest days Berea College was a center for such activity.<sup>3</sup> The folksong collectors had their own agenda, however, and while some may have taken brief notice of the vibrant fiddle and banjo tradition that flourished throughout the mountains and adjacent regions, none put their whole hearts into documenting it as they did with the ballads. In large part, this was due to the fact that the early collectors tended to be trained in the language arts, and it was often the poetic imagery of ballads that appealed to them. Furthermore, the puncheon floor hoedown (unlike the mountain ballad) had not yet achieved "legitimacy" by way of academic interest outside the region.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, it was a

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<sup>2</sup> For an example of one scholar's attempt to better understand "archaic" fiddling based on the evidence of sound recordings, see Charles Wolfe's "The Oldest Recorded Fiddle Styles" in *Devil's Box 17: 1* (Spring, 1983) pp. 22-26. Tom Carter also focuses on the nature of 19th century fiddle and banjo music in the southern mountains in his article "I Never Could Play Alone: The Emergence of the New River Valley String Band, 1875-1915" in Patterson and Zug, eds. *Arts in Earnest: North Carolina Folklife*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990, pp. 47-74; 283-286.

<sup>3</sup> In an unpublished paper entitled "Berea's Ballad Collectors" (1980), Sidney Saylor Farr noted that as early as 1893-94, Berea College President William G. Frost encouraged faculty members to note down folksongs from their students. In 1899, Rexford Raymond wrote of collecting "Barbara Allen" from a woman in the mountains. James Watt Raine, Katherine Jackson French, John F. Smith, and Gladys Jameson are four other individuals affiliated with Berea College who devoted considerable time to collecting folk music in Kentucky before 1920. Cecil Sharp made a point of visiting Berea during his Kentucky sojourn in 1917, and a local doctor, Alson Baker, organized fiddle contests at the college tabernacle beginning in 1919.

<sup>4</sup> During early stages of ballad collecting in America, many individuals turned to Harvard professor, George Lyman Kittredge, for guidance and, indirectly, for validation of their work in the scholarly community. As a pupil at Harvard under Francis James Child, Kittredge inherited the latter man's position of authority regarding English and Scottish popular ballads, and it was Kittredge's enthusiasm and knowledge of his subject that inspired many collectors around the country in their quests for ballad literature in America. As early as 1907, Kittredge had published on the topic of Kentucky mountain folk music (see "Ballads and Rhymes from Kentucky" in

professor of English and rural sociology—not a music scholar—who seems to have been the first of the early collectors of Kentucky folk music to recognize the vitality and lasting value of traditional fiddle and banjo music and to attempt to find out more about it.

### THE EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

In March of 1915, Professor John F. Smith was teaching English at the Normal School, one of five schools making up Berea College in Berea (Madison County), Kentucky.<sup>5</sup> Since the college's primary purpose was then (as it is now) to serve the mountain communities and to benefit the people of the Appalachian region as a whole, it followed that the student body was drawn largely from this area. Berea maintained a high profile in the region and frequently described its programs in the newspapers in a continuing campaign to attract new students. A Normal School education was intended primarily to prepare graduates for rural teaching work, and a contemporary description of the Normal School in the *Berea Citizen* indicated that entering students usually had eight grades behind them.<sup>6</sup> However, since it was then common for people to begin (or continue) their education at any age, the students in Professor Smith's 1915 class were not necessarily young people. Charles Farmer, one of Smith's students from Pulaski County, wrote of the items on his list as "tunes played in my boyhood day" and added "all of these I liked to hear when I was a lad." Another student, Mary Hoskins of Leslie County, was born in 1882 which would have made her thirty three years old at the time she prepared her tune list for Professor Smith.

The official title for Smith's English N4 class was "Composition and Rhetoric," and the course description read in part: "This course consists of numerous reports on stories and books, current topics, biographies of famous people, great orations,

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*Journal of American Folklore* XX:LXXIX (Oct., 1907). In 1914, James Watt Raine was teaching a course at Berea College on English and Scottish Popular Ballads, using Kittredge's edition of Child's earlier compilation as a text book.

<sup>5</sup>Professor Smith had a variety of teaching responsibilities ranging from sociology courses to Bible classes. The college catalog for 1915-16 lists him as Acting Professor of Latin and Rural Economics in the Normal School. Smith's own education was extensive and included training as well as teaching positions at Transylvania University, West Tennessee College, Harvard University, West Kentucky College, Kentucky Classical and Business College, and Oneida Baptist Institute (*Bulletin of Berea College*, No. 29 (May, 1915) p. 7). In one source, Smith's portrait was reproduced with a caption that described him as a man "who perhaps knows more about the habits and customs of the Mountain People than any other man in the country." [Bradley Kincaid. *Favorite Mountain Ballads and Old Time Songs*. Chicago: WLS, 1928. Cited in *JEMF Quarterly* XIII:45 (Summer, 1977)].

<sup>6</sup>*Berea Citizen* (Sept. 6, 1917): 2

great events of history, etc."<sup>7</sup> Just how fiddle and banjo music fit into this curriculum is not clear but Smith was known to be a champion of Appalachian culture and no doubt he found ways to offset the so called "great events of history" with more colorful topics close to home.

For this assignment, the students were asked to write down the names of fiddle and banjo tunes and songs known to them or that they could recall having heard in their home districts.<sup>8</sup> From a modern folkloristic perspective, such a project would seem to hold great interest, but it's hard to know how enthusiastically Professor Smith's pupils responded to the task. Apparently, not all the students took the assignment with the solemnity of purpose we would wish today. Some blatant examples of copying are in evidence, so blatant in fact, it is hard to imagine how anyone thought it might go unnoticed by the teacher. But then, we do not know the precise instructions given by Professor Smith to his class, and perhaps he encouraged the students to collaborate in coming up with their lists. It wouldn't matter really, except that seventy-five years later, the seemingly harmless copying undermines our hopes of using the lists as an index of local repertory. Nevertheless, many other valuable things can be gleaned from them, and the lists should be of great interest to anyone curious about oldtime music in the region.<sup>9</sup>

### **THE LISTS**

There are twenty-two lists in all, handwritten on standard notebook size sheets. They contain upwards of 350 different titles of songs and instrumental pieces contributed by students from fourteen counties in southeastern Kentucky, and three students from east Tennessee. The Kentucky counties include Garrard, Lincoln, Casey, Pulaski, Madison, Estill, Wolfe, Owsley, Breathitt, Magoffin, Floyd, Clay, Leslie, and Knox. The Tennessee counties are: Sevier, Marshall, and one unidentified county. In addition to song titles, many of the lists give the names of musical instruments, and seven of them include short essays about community based musical activities such as singing schools and house dances. Fourteen of the lists were compiled by male students, seven were by female students, and one list bears no name. For all but the anonymously compiled list, it has been possible to identify the students' home locations by finding each student's name in a college

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<sup>7</sup>Berea College Catalog 1915-1916 (second edition) p. 62

<sup>8</sup>Loyal Jones has told me that John F. Smith's awareness of home musical traditions was such that he did not waste time asking his students if their families knew any old ballads; instead, he entreated them to "bring me the songs your family sings." In this way, he induced them to submit material they might otherwise have assumed was of no interest.

<sup>9</sup>Limitations of space prohibit a full-scale discussion of the copying problem, but since the complete lists accompany this article, readers may examine them and draw their own conclusions. On the basis of internal evidence (for instance when a reference to a specific title can be linked by other sources to a particular county) some lists appear to be more "authentic" than others.

directory for 1915. The directory entry, however, cites the student's home community *at the time of enrollment* and family moves prior to that time are not indicated. Thus, even without the copying problem mentioned earlier, the lists might not give a reliable reflection of musical repertory in the assigned locality. Nevertheless, when taken as a whole, the lists add considerably to our knowledge of social music in eastern Kentucky and Tennessee shortly after the turn of this century.

### THE TUNES

While it is tempting to draw conclusions about repertory based on the presence or absence of titles on checklists such as the 1915 Berea lists, the organic nature of fiddle tunes and lyric folksongs is such that a single title can and frequently does attach itself to more than one piece, and vice versa. Furthermore, the general attitude among rural musicians and their audiences toward song and tune titles earlier in the century was possibly more cavalier than ours today (we seem to need to give everything a name) and probably much of this music existed and was passed between players without need for formal labeling. Thus, the lists should be used in conjunction with other available resources in order to avoid jumping to conclusions that might otherwise be turn out to be inaccurate.

A glance through the lists is illuminating. Most of the grand old saws of southern hoedown music are cited: "Arkansas Traveler," "Sourwood Mountain," "Cripple Creek," "Cindy," "Cumberland Gap," "Ida Red," "Black Eyed Susie," "Jennie Put the Kettle On," "Leather Breeches," "Soldier's Joy," "Little Brown Jug," "Liza Jane," "Old Joe Clark," "Sally Ann," "Sally Goodin'," "Shortening Bread," and "Turkey in the Straw." These widely known tunes are synonymous with oldtime fiddling in the region and have been presumed to go back at least to the last century.<sup>10</sup> If there was ever any doubt, the Berea lists confirm the popularity of these pieces in Kentucky three quarters of a century ago.

In addition, the lists mention many tunes which apparently flourished at one time in the eastern Kentucky fiddle and banjo repertory but which have now largely been dropped by younger generation players.<sup>11</sup> Some examples are "Bonaparte's

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<sup>10</sup>For a discussion about the age of pieces such as "Sally Ann," "Ida Red," etc. see Tom Carter's article "I Never Could Play Alone: The Emergence of the New River Valley String Band, 1875-1915" (in Patterson and Zug, eds. *Arts in Earnest: North Carolina Folklife*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990) pp. 47-74; 283-286.

<sup>11</sup>To say that these tunes have been dropped by younger generation players implies a continuum of fiddling at the grassroots level, but in reality, no such movement would seem to exist. While a few scattered young people have embraced the oldtime music, they are far outnumbered by those who have turned to bluegrass, gospel, country, and other genres where the fiddle and banjo occupy mostly accompaniment roles. The influence of fiddle contests nationwide on the style and repertory of today's younger generation fiddlers outweighs the influence of earlier traditional players.

Retreat," "Buck Creek Girls," "Calahan," "Cluck Old Hen," "Drunkard's Hiccups," "Forked Deer," "Fox Chase," "Girl I Left Behind," "Give the Fiddler a Dram," "Going Down to Town," "Groundhog, Hell Broke Loose in Georgia," "Hook and Line," "Indian Ate the Woodhen," "Lost Indian," "Nigger Inch Along," "Old Hen Cackled," "Pretty Polly," "Rocky Island," "Rye Straw," "Shady Grove," "What'll We Do With the Baby-o," and "Waynesburg."

I do not mean to imply that the foregoing tunes and songs are extinct or even that they should be considered "rare" (which is, of course, a relative term). Some like "Bonaparte's Retreat," "Pretty Polly," "Shady Grove," and possibly "Forked Deer" are still frequently heard at bluegrass and oldtime music festivals, fiddlers' contests and on commercial recordings. But with each passing year, it becomes harder to find indigenous players who have learned such pieces informally and locally, and who have retained distinctly local versions. Some of the fiddle numbers like "Calahan," "Drunkard's Hiccups," "Lost Indian," "Nigger Inch Along," "Bonaparte's Retreat" (and many others) traditionally involved "cross-tuning" (or "chording") the fiddle (AEAE, AEAC#, GDAD, DDAD, etc.), but that practice, too, has almost completely disappeared in favor of standard violin tuning (GDAE).

Many titles on the lists appear to have been of purely local origin, or at least were not perpetuated over a wide area for very long. A series of fiddle contests held in Berea between 1919 and 1928 attracted players from more or less the same region as that represented by Professor Smith's students, but while tunes like "Calahan," "Waynesburg," "Nigger Inch Along," "Billy in the Low Ground," "Wagoner," and "Forked Deer" were played repeatedly by fiddlers in the contests, none of the following titles found on the 1915 lists were played at these events: "Blue Goose," "Bunker Hill," "Buttermilk and Brandy," "Buzzard's Nest," "Everybody's Favorite," "Casey Creek Samuel," "Cold Winds from the West," "Court House Road," "Cowbell Hollow," "Follow Me and My Love[?] to Next Cotton Picking" [sic], "Frady Cat," "Going Down to Alice's House," "Goose Creek," "Greasy Breeches," "Green River," "Hell's Up Again," "Hobo John," "Johnnie Has Gone to Cuba," "Let Him Sink or Swim," "Little Speckel Hen" [sic], "Lula Gal," "Muddy Creek," "My Old Belled Ewe," "Nigger Stole a Pumpkin," "Old Billy Pitman and Georgeo" [sic], "Old Blue Hen," "Old Buck's Horn," "Old Corn Whiskey," "Old Rusty Bottle," "Over the Road to Maysville," "Pinnie Ridge" [sic], "Piny Mountains" [sic], "Poor Little Kitty Puss," "Pumpkin Vine," "Railroad Picnic," "Rattle Down the Acorns," "Red Lick," "Rocky Mountains," "Roxie Ann," "Sal Said She Wanted to Marry," "Sheridan's March," "Shoe String Cracking the Floor" [sic], "Smoky Road," "Somerset Conductor," "Sweet Milk and Peaches," "Tater Bug," "White Rooster," "Wild Cat," and "Yellow Hen."

Even though the titles cited above did not necessarily figure in the fiddle contests, some of them have maintained currency in localized settings—which is to say that they have been collected in Kentucky within the past decade or so from a

few older generation players.<sup>12</sup> Given nothing but titles, we can only speculate on the connections they may have to tunes played by today's fiddlers. A few of the pieces that have been preserved via sound recordings are "Black Jack Grove," "Blue Goose," "Everybody's Favorite," "Frankie," "Kitty Puss," "Lula Comb Down Your Bangs," "Muddy Creek," "Old Corn Whiskey," "Piney Ridge," "Pumpkin Vine," "Rattlin' Down the Acorns," "Red Lick," "Shoe Strings Crackin' on the Floor," and "Smoky Road."<sup>13</sup>

"Over the Road to Maysville" cited in 1915 by G. R. McMahon (from Sevierville, Tennessee) is possibly the same as "Going Down to Maysville" played today by the fine Pike County (Kentucky) fiddler, Owen "Snake" Chapman, and probably refers to the old Lexington-Maysville turnpike that served as a major thoroughfare for travel and commerce through Kentucky in the nineteenth century. "My Old Belled Ewe" on Harvey L. Smith's (Pulaski Co.) 1915 list is probably the same as "The Old Belled Ewe and the Little Speckled Wether" recorded in 1975 by Bruce Greene from C. W. Strong who was originally from Lee County, Kentucky. Mr. Strong sang a little ditty that went :

The old belled ewe and the little speckled wether  
Devil of a gang when they all get together.

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<sup>12</sup>Fortunately, tunes associated with many of the preceding titles have been recovered for posterity in Kentucky, notably by the Lomax-Library of Congress teams in the 1930s, and since the late 1950s by independent fieldworkers including Ray Alden, the Appalshop media collective, Bob Butler, Bob Carlin, Robie Cogswell, John Cohen, Doug Dorschug, Barbara Edwards, Burt Feintuch, Bob Fulcher, Bob Gates, Steve Green, Bruce Greene, John Harrod, Peter Hoover, Loyal Jones, Sarah McNulty, Guthrie Meade, Lynwood Montell, Jim Nelson, Mike Seeger, Steve Rice, Leonard Roberts, Art Rosenbaum, David Sizemore, Jeff Titon, Ed Ward, D. K. Wilgus, Mark Wilson, Charles Wolfe, Marynell Young, and others.

<sup>13</sup>"Black Jack Grove" obtained from Walter McNew (Rockcastle Co.) and Vernon Payne (Madison Co.). "Blue Goose" obtained from Buddy Thomas (Lewis Co.) and Bob Prater (Lewis Co.). "Everybody's Favorite" obtained from Travis Wells (Estill Co.), Darley Fulks (Wolfe Co.), George Hawkins (Bath Co.), Lella Todd (Clark Co.), Blanche Hurt Coldiron (Grant Co.), and others. "Frankie" obtained from Buddy Thomas (Lewis Co.). "Kitty Puss" obtained from Buddy Thomas (Lewis Co.), Owen "Snake" Chapman (Pike Co.), Clyde Davenport (Wayne Co.), Estill Bingham (Bell Co.), Everett Kays (Anderson Co.), and others. "Lula Comb Down Your Bangs" obtained from Grover Salyer (Magoffin Co.). "Muddy Creek" obtained from John Masters (Madison Co.) and Doug Stipe (Jessamine Co.). "Old Corn Whiskey" obtained from Sammy Walker (Metcalf Co.). "Piney Ridge" obtained from W. M. Stepp (Magoffin Co.) [1937 recording]. "Pumpkin Vine" obtained from Morris Allen (Greenup Co.), Alfred Bailey (Bath Co.), Buddy Thomas (Lewis Co.), Henry York (Bath Co.), and others. "Rattlin' Down the Acorns" obtained from Clyde Davenport (Wayne Co.) and Delbert Hughes ([McCreary Co.]). "Red Lick" obtained from Lella Todd (Clark Co.) and Travis Wells (Estill Co.). "Shoe Strings Crackin' on the Floor" obtained from Darley Fulks (Wolfe Co.) ["Shoe Heels Crackin' on the Floor"]. "Smoky Road" obtained from Columbus Williams (Estill Co.), Everett Kays (Anderson Co.), and Jim Woodward (Jessamine Co.).



Some of the 1915 titles have been mentioned in print but seem not to have been collected on disc, wire, or tape. One example is “Nigger Stold a Pumpkin.”<sup>14</sup> "Nigger Stole a Pumpkin" was cited by Vance Randolph from Missouri sources<sup>15</sup> while "Rufus Stoled a Pumpkin," was mentioned by Carl Carmer in his writings about Alabama.<sup>16</sup> B. A. Botkin printed the following couplet sung to the fiddle tune in the midwest:

Rabbit stole a punkin / It started down to town  
Heard the hounds a comin' / It throwed the punkin down.<sup>17</sup>

“Roxie Ann” was mentioned by Shearin and Combs in their 1911 *Syllabus of Kentucky Folk-Songs* and later was given by Vance Randolph with a text from Missouri in the *Journal of American Folklore*.<sup>18</sup> Randolph also referred to a 1929 *JAF* article by Carl Van Doren who stated that "Roxie Ann" "was sung by settlers from Kentucky."<sup>19</sup>

Other entries on the 1915 lists require interpretation by association, that is, they reflect text phrases that can be linked to more widely established titles. For instance, “I Don't Care Where in the World I Go” (listed by Mary Hoskinton from Leslie Co.) bears a connection to the well-known piece called "Sugar in the Coffee-o." The link becomes apparent in the following couplet associated with the latter title:

I don't care where in the world I go

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<sup>14</sup>At a late stage in the preparation of this article, I discovered that Tom Carter recorded “Rabbit Stole a Pumpkin” from an elderly accordion player, Emit Valentine, near Centerville, Franklin Co., North Carolina in 1971. Mr. Valentine sang a verse that was only slightly different from the B. A. Botkin example cited. [Source: unpublished paper by Tom Carter entitled “Traditional Fiddling in the North Carolina Piedmont: A Study in Repertory” (pp.9-10). Southern Folklife Collection, University of North Carolina.]

<sup>15</sup>Randolph, Vance. "Ozark Fiddle Tunes," *Midwest Folklore* 4 (1954) pp. 81-86. Researchers are advised to note that Randolph, in compiling his list, almost certainly "borrowed" titles from non-Ozark sources including collections from Kentucky and Mississippi.

<sup>16</sup>Carmer, Carl. *Stars Fell on Alabama*. New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1934, p. 47. "Rufus stoled a pumpkin, he took it down to town. / Policeman said, "Hey, Rufus, just lay that punkin down."

<sup>17</sup>Botkin, B. A. *The American Play Party Song*. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1937, p. 184.

<sup>18</sup>Shearin, Hubert and Josiah Combs. *A Syllabus of Kentucky Folk-Songs*. Lexington, KY: Transylvania Printing Co., 1911, p. 38. Facsimile reprint by Folcroft Library Editions, 1976.

<sup>19</sup>Van Doren, Carl. “The Ozark Play Party.” *Journal of American Folklore* 42 (1929): 225.

So as I get sugar in my coffee-o.<sup>20</sup>

Similarly, “Four in the Middle” (reported by Ward Allen, Floyd Co.) is probably an alternate name for the play game and song “Jump Josie” (“Jim Along Josey”) which has sometimes been recovered with the words:

Four in the middle and you can't jump, Josie. <sup>21</sup>

It goes without saying that phonetic transformations are easily and inevitably wrought by oral transmission. What may have initially been heard in the context of conversation later finds its way into written sources. Some of these titles are imaginative—“Puncheon Floor” appears on the Berea Tune Lists as “The Old Pumpkin Floor.” On the other hand, some titles are not as easy to pin down. At first glance, “Sandy Lane” suggests a transformation of “Sandy Land,” but actually, that title is more of an Ozark and western title than a Kentucky one. The reference is more likely to be to a tune collected by John Harrod from Wolfe County musician, Darley Fulks, that Fulks called “Shady Lane.”

One of the 1915 list entries, “Black Nance” (reported from Clay and Knox Counties)<sup>22</sup> is interesting since it turns up elsewhere in connection with a fiddle contest held in Berea in 1919. “Black Nance,” given on the lists as if it was the name of a fiddle tune, was also the nickname given to a black fiddle belonging to one of the contestants, Millard Ramsey from Manchester in Clay County. The newspaper account of the contest (penned in flowery English by John F. Smith) made a point of mentioning Ramsey's "Black Nancy" fiddle:

By this time feet had begun to slow down a little, but were all set a-wiggle in high glee by Millard Ramsey with the crack dance tune "Adeline" on his famous Black Nancy. ...Millard is a bit reckless with Black Nancy, but the old instrument is a

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<sup>20</sup> As sung by Clyde Davenport at Monticello, Kentucky (March, 1990 field recording by Jeff Titon) released on Berea College Appalachian Center audiocassette AC-002 *Puncheon Camps*.

<sup>21</sup> A version from the Ritchie Family of Viper, KY is found in *Come Let Us Sing* (Berea, KY: Berea College Press, 1974) 12-13.

<sup>22</sup> A close examination of W. M. Trosper's Knox County list and Ben Mills' Clay County list reveals that one student was copying from the other. Since Millard Ramsey, the owner of the "famous" Black Nancy fiddle was from Clay County, one suspects that Mills' list was the more authentic of the two.

queen among fiddles, and when she speaks corns cease to ache  
and a merry thrill creeps into every toe.<sup>23</sup>

### OMISSIONS

So far, we have looked at the lists in terms of what they confirm about fiddle and banjo music in eastern Kentucky. It is also instructive to examine them in light of titles we would expect to find but which are noticeably absent or else mentioned but once or twice. “Fire on the Mountain,” for instance, does not appear on any of the lists, nor does “Chicken Reel,” “Liberty,” “Flop Eared Mule,” “Ragtime Annie,” or “Mississippi Sawyer” (or the latter tune's older alter-ego “The Downfall of Paris”). These omissions seem odd considering how popular those tunes have been with fiddlers and their audiences for the past fifty years or more. Another surprise is “Grey Eagle” which does not appear on any of the lists although its “companion” piece, “Wagoner,” is mentioned by several of the students. In terms of Kentucky fiddling, it is worth noting that “Martha Campbell” is missing as well, a void that is puzzling when considering that today “Martha Campbell” is so well known throughout the Commonwealth that it could almost be regarded as the Kentucky fiddlers' national anthem.<sup>24</sup> Finally, one of the greatest and most enduring of American fiddle tunes is “Billy in the Low Ground.” It has been recovered often in Kentucky and was played by six fiddlers in four contests at Berea between 1919 and 1924. However, only one of Professor Smith's students—Harvey L. Smith from Pulaski County—reported having heard it. Why such pieces were not listed by Smith's students remains a mystery, for it is almost certain that these tunes were being played in the region in 1915.

In some cases, regional variation in titles probably accounts for certain omissions. The fact that “Cotton Eyed Joe” is cited only once in spite of its general circulation nationwide is explainable since in eastern Kentucky most older musicians who play the tune call it (or used to call it) “Nigger Inch Along.” It is hard to explain, though, why even that title was cited only once since the tune has been recovered with the “inch along” name from many fiddlers in the region. Likewise, the tune “Stoney Point” (sometimes called “Wild Horse”) is not on the lists though it is well known and widely played throughout the upland South. The 1915 Berea lists give the tune's more common Kentucky title, “Buck Creek Girls,” and an even more localized title variant, “Rocklick Girl.”

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<sup>23</sup>*Berea Citizen*, August 21, 1919. Smith also printed in the same newspaper a poem, “The Fiddlers' Meeting / Berea, Kentucky, August 15, 1919,” in which he mentioned Ramsey's “Black Nancy” fiddle.

<sup>24</sup>Steve Rice has pointed out to me that collected versions of “Martha Campbell” reflect a distribution in the northeastern counties and the inner and outer bluegrass region, and that it does not seem to be as popular among fiddlers in the counties represented in the 1915 lists which lie somewhat to the south.

Numerous other tunes associated with eastern Kentucky during the first half of this century are also missing from the lists: "Ways of the World," "Glory in the Meeting House," "Lost Girl," "Boatin' Up Sandy," "Brushy Fork of John's Creek," "Birdie," "Blackberry Blossom," "Shelvin' Rock," "Betty Baker," "Big Footed Nigger," "Lonesome John," "Old Christmas," "Flannery's Dream," "Chinkapin Hunting," "Going to Boston," "Big Eyed Rabbit Soup," and "Walk Along John." Many of these pieces seem to have been of the old modal type, and if recent recoveries are any indication, many of them were "crooked," that is, with extra measures thrown in or beats dropped, making the tunes difficult for accompanists to "second" and perhaps unsuitable for dancing.<sup>25</sup>

### **BALLADS AND SONGS**

In addition to lyric type fiddle and banjo pieces, the 1915 Berea tune lists contain some early references to ballad and song material as well. It is interesting that while much has been made of the old English ballads collected in the region, "Barbara Allen" is the only obvious title of this type to show up on the 1915 lists. The absence of other classic ballads like "Lord Thomas and Fair Ellender," "The Salt, Salt Sea" ["The House Carpenter"], and "Hangman, Slack Your Rope" ["Maid Freed from the Gallows"] suggests that some distinction might have been made between "common" ballads (those that were appropriate for instrumental accompaniment) and more formal pieces which would have been sung unaccompanied.

Some of the song and ballad titles are of local historical significance and will also be of interest to students of native American balladry. "The Rowan County Crew" factually describes a series of slayings connected to the Tolliver-Martin feud during the Rowan County "war" of the 1880s. Authorship of the ballad is generally credited to an itinerant blind fiddler, J. W. Day, and by 1915, the song had circulated enough in the region to be mentioned by three of the Berea students (from Wolfe, Floyd, and Lincoln Counties). "The Rowan County Crew" has since been collected nationwide.

Another title, "Coal Creek," is given by three students from Knox, Clay, and an unidentified county. Possibly the title refers to another of J. W. Day's topical ballads, "Coal Creek Troubles" (which chronicled an 1891 miners' rebellion near Jellico, Tennessee) but it seems more likely to have been a fiddle tune called "Coal Creek"<sup>26</sup> or possibly another song, "Shut Up in the Mines at Coal Creek." A

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<sup>25</sup>It is possible that what appears to us today as irregular musical structure may have at one time been functional, and even logical, in the context of songs, dancing and music making. Lacking a clear understanding of the social context of so-called "crooked" tunes, it is risky to judge the music as somehow aberrant when it might be that we simply fail to fully understand how it functioned.

<sup>26</sup>John Harrod and Bruce Greene both collected "Coal Creek" played on the fiddle by Manon Campbell of Hallie, Kentucky (Knott Co.) in the late 1970s.

notable cycle of musical pieces associated with the Coal Creek locus has had a strong presence in eastern Kentucky and Tennessee and has been discussed in detail by Archie Green in his classic study of American coal mining songs.<sup>27</sup> The title "Cold Creek March" found on Ward Allen's 1915 list (Floyd Co.) undoubtedly refers to "Coal Creek March," an unusual showpiece that has been collected primarily as a banjo instrumental. Unraveling the history of this particular piece has challenged folk music scholars since the late 1960s, and the title's appearance on the Berea lists may turn out to be the earliest reference to "Coal Creek March" yet uncovered.<sup>28</sup>

Other titles on the Berea lists also refer to local historical events and persons of note. "Ed Calahan"<sup>29</sup> was a real-life sheriff who figured centrally in the plot to assassinate Judge J. B. Marcum in Jackson, Breathitt County, Kentucky in 1903.<sup>30</sup> Calahan was himself shot to death in 1912 but if a song commemorated the event, it has not survived in tradition to the present day.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, the memory of J. B. Marcum and the events surrounding his death live on in a ballad that has been recovered widely and published in numerous collections. The song "J. B. Marcum" (an adaptation of an earlier ballad about Jesse James) was probably composed by either J. W. Day or Charlie Oaks, another blind Kentucky balladeer.<sup>32</sup> Strange to say, the only student citing this ballad on the 1915 Berea lists was G. R. McMahon from Sevier County, Tennessee, some distance removed from the action described in the ballad.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Archie Green, *Only a Miner* (University of Illinois Press, 1972, pp. 155-193).

<sup>28</sup> For more information on "Coal Creek March" see Charles Wolfe's book, *Kentucky Country* [Lexington]: University Press of Kentucky, 1982, p. 28. See also Wolfe's article "New Light on the Coal Creek March" in *JEMF Quarterly* XII:41 (Spring, 1976) pp. 1-8. See also Archie Green, *Only a Mine*, University of Illinois Press, 1972: 155-193).

<sup>29</sup> Spelled "Edd" by Frank Smithers on his 1915 list from Estill County.

<sup>30</sup> See Donald Lee Nelson's article "The Death of J. B. Marcum" in *JEMF Quarterly* XI:37 (Spring, 1975) p. 16.

<sup>31</sup> In all likelihood, the title "Calahan" on the 1915 Garrard and Pulaski Co. lists refers to the legendary "fiddler's farewell" piece often called "The Last of Calahan" played by fiddlers throughout the region. The tune generally carries with it a story concerning a fiddler who plays the piece as he stands on the scaffold awaiting execution. For a detailed study of this legend, see D. K. Wilgus "Fiddler's Farewell: The Legend of the Hanged Fiddler" in *Studia Musicologica*, Vol. VII, Budapest: International Folk Music Council, 1965: 196-209.

<sup>32</sup> See Charles Wolfe's letter concerning authorship of "The Death of J. B. Marcum" in *JEMF Quarterly* XI:4 (Pt. 4) (Winter, 1975) p. 165.

<sup>33</sup> Possibly, the events described in the ballad generated such intense feelings closer to home in Breathitt and neighboring counties that the song was not sung or discussed locally. As late as 1925, folksong scholar, Josiah Combs, wrote of meeting a mountaineer who "looked about the

A piece entitled “Bill Goebel” (reported on lists from Knox and Clay Counties) undoubtedly refers to a ballad about the famous assassination of William Goebel, Kentucky's newly elected Democratic Governor in 1900. J. W. Day (mentioned above) composed a ballad about the assassination (employing the tune of "Barbara Allen"), but other songs were said to have been made about the event as well, so there is no telling if the list entry actually refers to Day's piece.<sup>34</sup> Goebel's assassination was a major event in Kentucky history and the ensuing trial of Caleb Powers was widely followed in the press. An additional title on the Berea lists, “Governor Brown,” (reported by the same Knox and Clay Co. students) ties in with the Goebel case in that James Young Brown ran against Goebel for the democratic nomination and lost. After Goebel was killed, Brown acted as a defense lawyer for the accused assassin, Caleb Powers. If there was a song composed about Brown, as indicated by the Knox and Clay County lists, it was not widely circulated and has not come down to us today.

Many songs that have since become America's best-known native folksongs are found on the Berea lists, including “The Dying Cowboy,” “The Texas Rangers,” “The Titanic,” “The Roving Gambler,” “Casey Jones,” “Jesse James,” and “Wild Bill Jones.” The 1915 Berea lists also cite “Wild and Wreckless Hobo” (from Pulaski County) and a variant title, “Wild and Western Hobo” (from Knox and Clay Counties). Both the latter titles have been discussed at length by Norm Cohen in his monumental study of railroading songs.<sup>35</sup> In attempting to unravel the threads of "Wild and Reckless Hobo" within a larger song complex, Cohen points out that the earliest known text of "The Reckless Hobo" stems from a Kentucky source—Blind Dick Burnett's pocket songbook printed probably in 1913 or 1914, only a year or two before Professor Smith's students drew up their lists. Since the Berea titles are so close in time and place to Burnett's songbook (Pulaski County is adjacent to Burnett's native Wayne County) they raise interesting questions about the song's currency in the region. It is frustrating that only the titles, without texts, are available to us since in the case of "Wild Reckless Hobo" (which Burnett sang as "rambling reckless hobo") the titles on the 1915 Berea tune lists represent some of the earliest references known for this song.

Several other titles on the Berea lists deserve careful consideration for their potential contributions to scholarship concerning individual songs. Space allows

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room and said cautiously, 'A feller might get shot around here for singing that song.'" (*Folk-Songs des Etats-Unis*. Paris: 1925. Reprinted as *Folk-Songs of the Southern United States*, Austin: University of Texas Press for the American Folklore Society, 1967, p 50.)

<sup>34</sup>For Day's ballad "The Assassination of Governor William Goebel," see Jean Thomas' book, *Ballad Makin' in the Mountains of Kentucky*. New York: Henry Holt Co., 1939. Reprinted by Oak Publications (New York) in 1964, pp. 192-194.

<sup>35</sup>Cohen, Norm. *Long Steel Rail* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981, pp. 355-366.)

only brief mention here of three such items. "John Brown's Coal Mine" (cited on lists from Knox, Wolfe, and Clay Counties) is a variant title of a classic composite (lyric) folksong best known as "In the Pines." In 1970, Judith McCulloh based her Ph.D. dissertation entirely on her study of variants in this song family, and some years earlier, Zonwise Stein devoted an article to "John Brown's Coal Mine" in *Kentucky Folklore Record*.<sup>36</sup> Norm Cohen also discusses the song in *Long Steel Rail*.<sup>37</sup> Again, while we have only the title, it is nevertheless one of the earliest collected references to this lyric folksong cluster. "Blue River Train" is undoubtedly a localization of "New River Train," (another substantial song complex) while "Reckless Conductor" is almost certainly a reference to the song Cohen treats under the title "The True and Trembling Brakeman."<sup>38</sup> Other titles for this latter piece include "The Dying Brakeman" and "The Reckless Motorman." Cohen mentions two people who each claimed to know the circumstances behind the events in this song. One man from West Virginia claimed to have composed the piece after witnessing an accident in 1915, while a Kentucky man reported that his sister-in-law had composed it after her husband was killed at a Harlan County mine in 1938. The title's appearance on the March, 1915 Berea tune lists (from a Tennessee source) suggests that yet another explanation is needed.

A substantial number of the list entries presumably reflect African-American presence, especially songs like "All Night Long Baby," "John Henry" and "John Hardy" ("John Hearty" in Wolfe, Clay, Floyd, and Breathitt Counties). Again, however, we are forced to extrapolate from lyrics of other known songs. For instance, "Last Monday Morning" (reported from Magoffin Co.) and "Old Gray Goose" (Pulaski Co.) may both refer to the same song (generally attributed to African-American tradition) which contains the words "Last Monday morning, Lord, Lord, Lord...."<sup>39</sup> The song goes on to describe a preacher's hunting encounter with a larger-than-life gray goose. That hypothetical connection is tempered, however, by the text of a play rhyme called "Old Gray Goose" printed in 1928 in the *Kentucky Folk-Lore and Poetry Magazine*. The text given there runs:

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<sup>36</sup>Judith McCulloh. *In the Pines: The Melodic-Textual Identity of an American Lyric Folksong Cluster*. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1970. Zonwise Stein: "John Brown's Coal Mine" in *Kentucky Folklore Record* 7 (1961): 147-158.

<sup>37</sup>Norm Cohen *Long Steel Rail* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981: 491-502. According to McCulloh and Cohen, the earliest combined version of tune and text for "In the Pines" was collected by Cecil Sharp and Maud Karpeles in Clay Co., Kentucky in 1917.

<sup>38</sup>For "New River Train" see Cohen, *Long Steel Rail*, pp. 466-471; for "Reckless Conductor" see pp. 257-260.

<sup>39</sup>See "The Gray Goose" in John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax, *American Ballads and Folk Songs*, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1934, pp. 242-243.

Old gray goose come flying home,  
Flying home, flying home;  
Old gray goose come flying home,  
Swing them around and around.

Chrous: Around and around, all the way around,  
The old gray goose come flying home.<sup>40</sup>

Of course, the title “Old Gray Goose” could refer to any number of other songs or fiddle tunes as well. Hans Nathan has noted a mid-nineteenth century “Ethiopian” minstrelsy number with a refrain running:

Oh! looky har, Oh! looky whar  
Look right ober yander  
Don't you see de Ole Grey Goose  
Smiling at de Gander<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps this song eventually came down as the piece Shearin and Combs, in 1911, mentioned as “Gray Goose” in a list of Kentucky ditties they characterized as being “always rhythmical, and usually rimed, varying in length from a couplet to an endless improvisation.”<sup>42</sup> Other speculations are possible as well.

Finally, there are the popular “tin pan alley” songs promulgated both in and out of the region by means of the vaudeville stage, the minstrel show, sheet music, and phono records. These include such items as: “After the Ball,” “Bill Bailey,” “Dat Is the Way to Spell Chicken,” “Don't Stay After Ten,” “Googoo Eyes,” “Trail of the Lonesome Pine,” “When I Got Mine Boys,” and so forth. Although the mountains have repeatedly been described as having been cut off from “the modern world” until well into the 1930s, the Berea lists suggest that the influence of phonograph records may have been felt well before that time. That recorded music was fast becoming an integral part of people's lives in the mountains in 1915 is evidenced by

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<sup>40</sup>“Old Gray Goose” in Pullen, Carl. “Some Singing Games” in *The Kentucky Folk-Lore and Poetry Magazine*, Bowling Green, KY: The Kentucky Folk-Lore Society (January, 1928), p. 22.

<sup>41</sup>“Ole Grey Goose” in Hans Nathan, *Dan Emmett and the Rise of Negro Minstrelsy*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962, pp. 461-463.

<sup>42</sup>“Gray Goose” mentioned in Hubert Shearin and Josiah Combs, *A Syllabus of Kentucky Folk-Songs*, Lexington, KY: Transylvania Printing Company, 1911, p.38.



the frequent inclusion of the graphophone on the students' lists of musical instruments.<sup>43</sup>

Further evidence of a phonographic presence in the region comes from one of the "titles" on a Floyd County list submitted by student, Ward Allen. His entry, "Chas Dow Mane," is actually a reference to a person, Charles D'Almaine, a violinist who recorded a number of popular fiddle tune medleys on cylinders and discs at the turn of the century. These were not breakdowns in southern style, but were more genteel treatments of hornpipes, jigs, and reels in the English, Scottish, and Irish "book" tradition. The fact that trained "fiddlers" like D'Almaine were being heard in the heart of "remote Appalachia" in 1915 is certainly a revelation, but there is little to suggest that his recordings had much impact on local music traditions.<sup>44</sup>

All in all, the Berea tune lists are quite revealing about the spectrum of music in the mountains and hills of Kentucky and East Tennessee just prior to the era of radio and commercial "country music" records. The references in some of the student essays to the "old fashioned" fiddlers' tunes of bygone days and to community dances as "a thing of the past" in 1915 suggests that the notion of "oldtime music" was in place (even in rural settings) long before the Henry Ford

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<sup>43</sup>A merchant's advertisement in the *Hazel Green Herald* (Wolfe Co.) for August 28, 1907 offered a free graphophone cylinder machine to any household whose purchases amounted to \$30.00. Records were also offered free with cash purchases of \$5.00.

<sup>44</sup>There are, however, many fiddlers in the northern counties of Kentucky whose documented repertoires include hornpipes and other "book tunes" that might have come from violinist-fiddlers like D'Almaine. In a 1976 interview, a Lee County journalist, Neville Shackleford, told Loyal Jones: "There was an old-timer in our neighborhood named Andrew Cable, and he was a sawmiller, and he ran a gristmill. Everything new that would come out, he'd buy it. ...And they'd bought this Edison phonograph, and that was the first time I'd ever heard—I guess that was about 1915 or '16 or somewhere along about that time. What I remember about this Edison phonograph was it played cylinder records. And the only record I remember was "Fisher's Hornpipe." Interestingly, "Fisher's Hornpipe" was one of Charles D'Almaine's most popular pieces, and it seems highly likely that the cylinder referred to by Mr. Shackleford was a D'Almaine recording.

fiddling craze of the 1920s and the folk music revivals of the 1930s and the 1960s. The songs on the lists range from traditional English ballads like “Barbara Allen” and minstrel songs like “Old Jim Crow” to tin pan alley pieces like “Bill Bailey” and sentimental parlor songs like “The Letter Edged in Black.” But by far the greatest representation is given to the fiddle and banjo tunes and songs. Taken in conjunction with the programs of the fiddler's contests of the 1920s and the tunes collected from older generation players since the 1930s, the Berea tune lists help us better understand and appreciate the breadth and vibrancy of musical traditions in the southern mountains.



**1. JAMES M. RAINES ♂**  
**Naillon, TN**

"Musical Instruments: Jews Harp, French Harp, Auto Harp, Flute, Fife, Bagpipe, Cornet, Trumbone [sic], Clarinet, Bass Violin, Violin, Banjo, Guitar, Mandolin, Accordion, Drum, Organ, Piano, Little Joe [?], Bass Horn"

"Violin Tunes"

Sourwood Mountain

Sheridan's March

Dixie

Yankee Doodle

Cumberland Gap

Casey Jones

Possum's Nest

Buzzard's Nest

Shoot that Turkey Buzzard

Sugar in the Coffee Oh

What are you going to [do] with the  
baby oh

Soldier's Joy

Sindy

Rattle down the acorns

Rocky Mountains

Frankie

Old Miss Mashmer[?]

John Henry

Little Brown Jug

Blackeyed Susie

Turkey in the Straw

The old hen cackled

"A Musical Occasion"

One evening there were about twenty five boys and girls gathered at the home of one of the neighbors of our community for a musical occasion and good time. In the crowd were five boys that might be called experts with such musical instruments as the Violin, Guitar, and banjo. The sitting room was prepared for the occasion by removing the furniture to make room for a dance. The musicians gathered in one corner of the room and began the music by playing such tunes as Cumberland Gap, Sourwood Mountain and etc. At the sound of the music the boys and girls were on the floor ready for the dance. The square dance and the four handed reel, Weavley Wheat, and Buffalo were the principal dances of the evening. At ten o'clock refreshments were served after which the crowd returned home having had a good time.

**2. FRANK SMITHERS ♂**  
**Millers Creek, Estill Co., KY**

"Old time fiddle tunes"

Sour Wood Mts.  
Ark[ansas] traveler  
Turkey in the straw  
Hook and line  
Buck Creek girls  
Nigger inch along  
Where did you get your whiskey  
Drunkards Dream  
Give the fiddler a dram  
Git along down town  
Edd Calahan  
Leather Breeches  
Salley Gooden  
Cripple Creek  
Jennie put your kettle on  
Liza Jane  
Whistling Ruphus  
Ground Hog  
Bonaparts Retreat  
Sweet sixteen  
Railroad picnic  
Cumberland Gap  
Fishers Hornpipe  
Shorten Bread  
Pinnie Ridge  
Old Jim Crow  
Everybodies Favorite

**3. QUILLIE SHACKELFORD ♂  
Flat, Wolfe Co. KY**

"Some Old Fiddle and Banjo Tunes"

Turkey in the Straw  
Sourwood Mountains  
Marching thru Georgia  
Cripple Creek  
Hook and Line  
Buck Creek Girls  
Hell's broke loose in Georgia  
The Texas Ranger  
Its Hell Among Yearlings  
Wild Bill Jones  
The Fox Chase  
Leather Breeches  
The Rowan County Crew  
Shortning Bread  
Casey Jones  
The Girl I Left Behind  
Yellow Hen  
Bonaparte's March  
My Old Kentucky Home  
Coming thru the Rye  
I Went down to Alice's house  
The Girl I left in sunny Tennessee

Johnny get Around  
Going down to Town  
Blue Goose  
Ida Red  
Shady Grove  
Nellie Gray  
Dixie  
John Hardee  
Shoo Fly  
Cumberland Gap  
Every body is doing it  
A Dying Cowboy  
The little brown jug  
Chewing Gum  
Yankee Doodle  
The roving Gambler  
Little Cora  
Barbara Allen  
Sugar babe

"The Names of Musical Instruments:  
Violin, Banjo, Guitar, Mandolin, Flute,  
Drum, Cornett, Trombone, Fife, Piano,  
Organ, Victrola, Phonograph,  
Accordian, French harp, Jews Harp,  
Melodion, Bugle, Music box, Whistle,  
Clarinet.

#### 4. [UNKNOWN STUDENT]

"Old Fiddle Tunes"

Black Eyed Susan  
Lizy Jane  
Dolly Put the Kettle on  
Take my Tobacco down  
Develish Mary  
Sour Wood Mts.  
Shu Fly  
Wild Bill Jones  
Railroad Man  
Johny gone to Cuba  
The Girl I left behind me  
Any Little Girl [My Little Girl?]  
Old Dan Tucker  
Little Speckel Hen  
Buck Creek Girls  
You have caused me to weep  
Coal Creek  
Happy was a miller boy  
Sugar babe  
Shorten bread  
Old Buck's horn  
Fishers Hornpipe  
Hog eyed Man  
Walking in the Parlor  
Getting up Stairs  
Cumberland Gap  
Arkansas Traveler  
Stand Around  
Cold Winds from the West  
Hichough oh Lordy  
I love Somebody  
Grasshopper setting on Sweet potato  
    vin[e]  
Sally Ann  
Ida Red  
Sal Said She wanted to Mar[ry]  
Shady Grove  
The Wagoner  
Ragged Joe  
Lula Gal  
Piny Mountains

## 5. ERNEST B. HILL ♂

**Gunter, TN [Marshall Co.]**

[*Note: Compare with No. 1*]

"Musical Instruments: Jews Harp, French Harp, Auto Harp, Flute, Fife, Bagpipe, Cornet, Trambone, Clarinet, Bass Violin, Violin, Banjo, Guitar, Mandolin, Accordion, Drum, Organ, Piana, Little Joe [?], Bass Horn, Bugle, Accordion"

"Violin Tunes"

Sourwood Mountain

Sheridan's March

Dixie

Yankee Doodle

Cumberland Gap

Casey Jones

Opossum's Nest

Buzzard Nest

Shoot that turkey buzzard

Sugar in the coffe oh!

What are you going to d[o] with the  
baby o

Soldier's Joy

Sindy

Rattle down the acorns

Rocky Mountains

Frankie

Old Miss Mashmer[?]

John Henry

Little Brown Jug

Blackeyed Susie

Turkey in the stray

Coley night

Marching thru Georgia

Trail of the Lonesome Pine



**6. LAUDA WHITT ♀**  
**Lykins, Magoffin Co., KY**

"A List of old time songs and fiddle tunes"

Cumberland Gap  
Gettin down the river  
Tippie have a hair cut  
Googoo Eyes  
Sourwood mountains  
John Harty  
Last Monday morning  
The fellow that looked like me  
Pretty Polly  
Lulu comb down them bangs  
[The Girl] Who wore the waterfall  
Cassey Jones  
Skip to my loo  
Jessie James  
Chewing Gum  
Joe Clark  
Two little nigger boys  
Tater (potato) Vine  
Man's life is Vapor  
I'm bound to leave this place  
Going down to town

**7. W.B. TROSPER ♂**  
**Gray, Knox Co., KY**

"A List of violin tunes"

Rock little Lula rock  
The girl I left behind me  
Nigger went a fishing  
Black eyed Susie  
Sour wood mountains  
Hook and line  
Going down to town  
Cripple Creek  
Buck Creek  
Casey Jones  
John Henry  
Frankie  
Wagoner  
Old blue hen  
Cluck old hen  
Nigger stole a pumpkin  
Skip to my lou  
Arkansas traveler  
Bill Baily  
Wild Bill Jones  
Old hen cackled  
John Brown  
Court house road  
Little Cora  
Turkey in the straw  
Nellie Gray  
Shorten bread  
The raccoon  
Red wing  
My little rosy girl  
All night long baby  
The rail roader

The dying cow boy  
Little Liza Jane  
Steam boat bill  
Old ship of Zion  
Cumberland Gap  
Hell broke lose in Ga. oh  
Marching thru Georgia  
Ground hog stewed & ground [hog]  
fried...  
Jessie James  
Old Black Joe  
The Fox Chase  
Preacher & the Bear  
Some people say a nigger wont steal  
Ground hog grease  
Sally Ann  
Big Stone Gap  
The Drunkard's hell  
Little brown jug  
Ox driver  
Nigger went a fishing  
Rock little Lula rock  
You caused me to weep & moan  
Whoa Mule  
Frankfort town  
Coal creek  
The Drunkard's dream  
The last old dollar done gone  
Ida Red  
Governor Brown  
Shady grow  
Going down to Alice's house  
Black Nance  
Bill Goebel  
Wild and Western hobo  
Rocky Island  
John Brown's Coal Mine

**8. MARY HOSKINS ♀**  
**Hoskinton, Leslie Co., KY**

"Tunes"

Sweet Milk and Peaches  
Red bird scratch  
Leather breeches  
Brickyard Joe  
Greasy breeches  
Sandy land  
Rocklick Girl  
I don't care where in the world I go  
The wagoner's dream  
Buttermilk and Brandy  
Casey Creek Samuel  
The white rooster

**9. PETER PAYNE ♂**  
**Whisman, Wolfe Co., KY**  
[Note: Compare with No. 7]

"A List of violin tunes"

Black eyed susie  
Turkey and the straw  
Sour wood mountains  
Hook and line  
Bonaparte  
Going down in town  
Rye Straw  
Cripple Creek  
Buck Creek  
Wagoner  
Casey Jones  
John Henry  
John Hearty  
The drunkard's hiccups  
Old blue hen  
Cluck old hen  
Nigger stold a pumpkin  
Skip to My Lou  
Arkansas Traveler  
Court house road  
Little Korea [i.e. Little Cory]  
Johnson Brown  
Bill Baily  
Wild Bill Jones  
Old hen cac[k]led  
Preacher and the Bear  
Ground hog grease  
Sally Ann  
Kitty Puss

Some folks say a nigger wont steal  
Old Joe Clark  
the Fox Chase  
Jessie James  
Ground Hog  
Old Black Joe  
Marching thru Georgia  
Hell broke loose from Ga.  
Cumberland Gap  
Steam boat Bill  
The Drunkard's Hell  
Old Ship of Zion  
Little Liza Jane  
The dying cow boy  
The rail roader  
All night long baby  
Red wing  
The raccoon  
Shortnen bread  
My little Rosy Girl  
Nellie Gray  
Frankfort town  
Frankie day  
Ox driver  
Little brown jug  
The girl I left behind  
Nigger went a fishing  
Rock Little Lula Rock  
Going to My New Jail  
Johns brown's coal mine  
Hell among the yearling  
Ida Red  
I love somebody  
On the trail of the lonesome pine

**10. LOU V. ELLIOTT ♀**  
**Liberty, Casey Co. KY**

"List of all the violin and Banjo tunes that I have heard"

Way Down upon the Swanee River  
My Old Ky. Home  
Yankee Doodle  
Old Black Joe  
Turkey in the Straw  
Good Old Summer time  
Shorten Bread  
Little Brown Jug  
Titantic  
Casey Jones  
Preacher & Bear  
Rainbow

"The musical entertainments in our community consist of singing schools and lots of musical entertainments are in the homes where we have piano, and organ music also singing with the music. There is a piano or organ in nearly every home of the community. I never heard many of the old fiddle or banjo tunes."

**11. LENA ISAACS ♀**  
**Ocala, Pulaski Co., KY**

"List of all Violin and Banjo tunes that I have heard"

Old Kentucky Home  
Way Down upon the Swanee River  
Turkey in the Straw  
Old Black Joe  
Yankee Doodle Dandy dee  
Good old Summer Time  
Titantic  
Shorten Bread  
Little Brown Jug

"Other musical entertainments in our community consists of singing school, organ and piano music. In the singing school, we have a teacher who usually meets with his class twice a week, Saturday nights and Sundays."

**12. RUTH TUTT ♀**  
**Gosneyville, Wolfe Co., KY**

"List of old tunes"

Drunken Hiccough  
Sally Ann  
Black Eyed Susan  
I want to go a courtin  
Ida Red  
Eliza Jane  
Don't stay after ten  
Cumberland Gap  
Sour Wood Mountain  
Jenny Put the kettle on  
Meet me in the moonlight  
Cripple Creek  
Shoo fly  
Nelly Gray  
Dixie Land  
Shady Grove  
John Hardy  
Nigger & [?]  
Kate & Sal  
Ground hog  
Ducks in the Mill pond  
John Brown

"Musical instruments: Fiddle, Banjo, bugle, French harp, Jews harp, Drum, Accordion, Organ, Piano."

### 13. BEN MILLS ♂

#### Bright Shade, Clay Co., KY

"A list of violin tunes"

[*Note: Compare with Nos. 7 and 9*]

Hook and Line  
Sour Wood Mountain  
Turkey in the Straw  
Black eyed Susie  
Going down in Town  
Bonaparte  
Cripple Creek  
Buck Creek  
Wagener  
Casey Jones  
John Henry  
The Drunkard's hiccups  
Old Blue Hen  
John Hearty  
Cluck Old Hen  
Nigger stold a Pumpkin  
Skip to my lou  
Arkansas Traveler  
Court House Road  
Little Cora  
Johnson Brown  
Bill Baily  
Wild Bill Jones  
Old Hen Cackled  
Preacher and the Bear  
Ground hog grease  
Sally Ann  
Kitty Puss  
Some Folks say a nigger wont steal  
The Fox Chase  
Old Joe Clark  
Jessie James  
Ground hog  
Old Black Joe  
Marching thru Georgia  
Hell broke loose in Georgia  
Cumberland Gap

Big Stone Gap  
Steam boat Bill  
Old ship of Zion  
The Drunkard's Hell  
Liza Jane  
The dying cowboy  
The rail roader  
All night long baby  
Red Wing  
Shortening bread  
The raccoon  
My Litle Rosy Girl  
Nellie Gray  
Frankfort Town  
Little Frankie  
Little Brown Jug  
Ox driver  
Nigger went a fishing  
The girl I left behind  
Rock Little Lula Rock  
Going to my new jail  
Coal Creek  
The Drunkard's Dream  
Good thing  
John Brown's Coal Mine  
You caused me to weep and you  
caused  
    me to morn  
Governor Brown  
Ida Red  
Shady grow  
Going down to Alice's house  
Whoa Mule  
Black Nance  
Bill Goebel  
Wild and Western Hobo  
Rocky Island

"List of Musical Instruments: Violin,  
Banjo, French harp, Organ, Piano,  
Flute, Drum, Accordion, Fife,  
Phonograph, Tambourine, Jews Harp,  
Guitar, Roll or Crank Organ, Trumpet,  
Bugle"



**14. HARVEY SMITH ♂**  
**Ansel, Pulaski Co., KY**

"Fiddle tunes which I have heard played"

Black Eyed Susie  
Sourwood mountain  
Red Wing  
Fishers Hornpipe  
Nellie Gray  
Turkey in the straw  
Buck Creek Girls  
Callahan  
Billy in the low ground  
Pretty Polly  
Casey Jones  
Joe Doan [?]  
Wild Bill Jones  
Cumberland Gap  
Bonaparte's retreat  
Cripple Creek  
Forked Buck  
Arkansas Traveler  
Shortening bread  
After the ball  
Somerset conductor  
Frankie  
Sugar in the gourd  
Pumpkin Vine  
Jenny get around  
Sweet sunny south  
Chewing gum  
Wild and wreckless hobo  
Hell broke loose in Georgia  
Western cowboy  
Old gray mare  
Old gray goose  
The runaway train  
What will we do with the baby o  
Old Billy Pitman and Georgeo[?]  
Preacher and the Bear

My old belled Ewe  
Little brown jug  
Billy boy  
Dixie land  
Suwanee river  
Old Kentucky Home [crossed out]  
lively lad  
Cluck old hen  
Old rusty kettle  
Sherman marching through Georgia

"The different kinds of musical instruments which I have seen are as follows: pumpkin vine bugle, sour wood bark bugle, corn stalk fiddle, banjo, guitar, fiddle, French harp, Jews harp, organ, piano, phonograph, mandolin, hand organ. I have never had the opportunity of going to an old fashioned country dance, as the people in the community where I live regard dancing as a very serious thing therefore we seldom have any dancing. I have heard a great deal of violin and banjo music. Several times I have gone to hear some of the old fiddlers and banjo players play sometimes playing until two o'clock in the morning without thinking of getting sleepy. Altho the old fashioned music is not so classy as the up to date music yet I enjoy the old fiddle and banjo tunes which I have heard in the country so much and which I have learned to like. All these other musical instruments which I have named I also like very much and have played on some of them but I am not much of a musician and my principal musical instruments were the sour wood bark whistle or horn, the chestnut whistle and pumpkin vine bugle."

**15. CHARLES FARMER ♂**  
**Poplarville, Pulaski Co., KY**

"Fiddler tunes"

"We have watch[ed] the old fiddlers amuse themselves by playing their old songs which they learned when a boy. Nothing seems to delight them more than to spend an afternoon playing over the old songs. But this is not practiced as much now as it was during the days of our fathers youth. Dancing has become a thing of the past it is not practiced now because people have gotten new ideas of how they could amuse themselves rather than spending hours at dances. Among some of the tunes played in my boyhood day are as follows:"

Buck Creek Girls  
Cripple Creek  
Old Joe Clark  
Ida Red  
I love some body  
Skip a ma Lew  
Sour Wood Mountains  
The old hen cackled  
Leather Breeches  
Granny will your hen peck  
Sandy Lane  
Fisher Hornpipe  
Turkey in the straw  
Arkansas Traveler  
Jennie Put the kettle on  
Casey Jones  
Dat is the way to spell chicken  
Black eyed Susia

"All these I liked to hear when I was a lad. And when we hear an old time fiddler play we hear the old tunes or songs that have been played for years."

**16. EDGAR THOMPSON ♂**  
**Crab Orchard, Lincoln Co., KY**

"Quaint old fiddle and Banjo tunes"

Turkey in the straw  
Sour wood mt.  
Marching through Ga.  
Cripple Creek  
Hook and Line  
Buck Creek gals  
Hell's broke loose in Ga.  
The Texas Ranger  
It's Hell among the yearlings  
Wild Bill Jones  
The fox chase  
Leather Breeches  
Rowan Co. crew  
Shorten bread  
Casey Jones  
Every body is do'in it  
The girl I left behind me  
Yellow hen

Bonaparte's March  
My old Ky. home  
Coming thru the rye  
The girl I left in Tenn.  
Jonny get around  
Going down to town  
Blue Goose  
Ida Red  
Shady Grove  
Nelly Gray  
Dixie  
John Hardy  
Little Brown Jug  
Chewing Gum  
Old Daniel Tucker  
Cumberland Gap  
The dying cow boy  
The fox chase  
Yankee Doodle  
Susan Gal  
Bachelor's Hall  
Barbara Ellen

**17. ADDIE WILLIAMS ♀**

**Berea, Madison Co., KY**

"Fiddle Music"

"H[ere] are some of the pieces that are played on the fiddle and some are dancing pieces which is used in the old fashion dances. The pieces of music as following:"

Sallie Ann

Eliza Jane

Sourwood mts.

Getting along down in town

Buck Creek

Johnie has gone to Cuba

Dixie Land

Old Dan Tucker

Hook and Line

Marching through Georgia

Roxie Ann

Shoe string cracking the floor

Steam Boat Bill

Wayne Berge [Waynesburg]

Turkey in the straw

Little Brown Jug

..."are some of the pieces of music that are played on the fiddle and there are many other[s] that are played."

**18. WARD ALLEN ♂**  
**Bosco, Floyd Co., KY**

"Some old time fiddle and Banjo songs"

When I got mine boys  
Skip to my Lou  
Four in the middle  
Rouser  
The old hen cackle  
The fox chase  
Turkey in the straw  
Sour wood mountain  
Hell has broke loose in Ga.  
Leather breeches  
Shorten bread  
Susan gal  
John Hearty  
Blue river train  
Cold Creek March  
That F. F. V.  
Frankie  
Blue Goose  
Give me the hook and line  
Cripple Creek  
Old corn whisky

Buck Creek Girls  
Going to join the Army  
Texas ranger  
Hell among the yearlings  
Wild Bill Jones  
That lazy linger loue [Ginger Blue?]  
The Rowan County Crew  
Pretty Maumme  
Red Wing  
Steam boat Bill  
Marching thru Ga.  
Bonaparte March  
Casey Jones  
The girl I left behind  
Let him sink or swim  
Black eyed Susie  
Yellow hen  
I'm looking for a nice young fellow  
Chas Dow Mane [Charles D'Almaine]  
Meet me in the moon light  
Frady Cat  
Johnie look around  
I went down to Alice house  
Old Uncle Ned  
When I was a single man

**19. ANNA HAWLEY ♀**  
**Bryantsville, Garrard Co., KY**

"Old fashioned fiddle and banjo tunes and musical instruments"

"Some of the old fiddle and banjo tunes I have heard are:"

Arkansas Traveler  
Wild Cat  
Don't stay after ten  
Casey Jones  
Shortning Bread  
Going to Cipper Creek  
Turkey in the straw  
Ida Red  
Barbara Allen  
Wild Bill Jones  
Uncle Ned  
Steam Boat Bill  
Red Wing  
The Old Pumpkin Floor  
Red Lick  
Old Joe Clark  
Sour Wood Mountain  
The "Devils" Dream  
Everybody's favor [Everybody's  
Favorite]  
Fisher's horn pipe  
Rickets' horn pipe  
Sally Gooden  
Eliza Jane  
Calahan  
The Lost Indian

"Musical instruments: Piano, Organ, Violin, Guitar, Banjo, French Harp, Jews [Harp],  
Accordion, Fife, Flute, Graphophone [sic], Drum, Chestnut bark whistle, Willow bark  
whistle, Gourd Fiddle, Corn stalk fiddle."

**20. WM. S. ROBBINS ♂  
Oakdale, Breathitt Co., KY**

"Fiddle tunes"

Black eyed Susie  
Turkey in the straw  
Sour wood mountain  
Hook and line  
Bonaparte  
Going downtown  
Rye straw  
Cripple creek  
Buck creek  
Wagoner  
Casey Jones  
John Henry  
John Hearty  
The drunkard's hiccups  
Blue hen  
Cluck old hen  
Nigger stole a pumpkin  
Skip to me Lou  
Arkansaw traveler  
Court house road  
Little Kora  
Johnson brown  
Old Bill Baily  
Wild bill Jones  
Old hen cackled

Preacher and bear  
Ground hog grease  
Sally Ann  
Kitty puss  
Some folks say that a nigger won't steal  
Old Joe Clark  
Fox chase  
Jessie James  
Ground hog  
Marching through Georgia  
Hell broke loose from Ga.  
Steamboat Bill  
Drunkards Hell  
Old Ship of Zion  
Lizzy Jane  
Dying cowboy  
Red wing  
Raccoon  
Shortening bread  
Railroad  
All night long  
Roses  
Darling Nelly Gray  
Show me the way to go home  
Going down to Frankfort  
Franky Gray  
Ox driver  
Charming Betsy  
Susie Ann

**21. CHESTER A. GABBARD ♂**  
**Traveler's Rest, Owsley Co., KY**

"Some Fiddle and Banjo tunes"

I love somebody  
Black eyed Susie  
The wagoner  
The Fox Chase  
Cluck old hen  
The old hen cackled  
Sally Ann  
Rheuben [Reuben]  
Ida Red  
Nellie Gray  
Bonaparte's retreat  
Hiccough, oh Lordy  
Sugar babe  
Black Jack Grove  
Muddy Creek  
Jennie put the kettle on  
Shorten bread  
Going down to town  
Shu Fly  
Liza Jane  
Bunker hill  
Arkansas Traveler  
Old buck's horn  
Hay oh boys, give the fiddler a dram  
Prettiest girl in the county oh!  
Grass hopper setting on [a] sweet tater  
vine  
Follow me and my [love?] to [the] next  
cotton picking  
Black my boots all the wk. trying to  
make them shine  
Buck Creek Girls  
Shady Grove  
Cumberland Gap  
Sour Wood Mountain  
Sall said she wanted to marry  
Cold winds from the west  
Fishers horn pipe

Goose Creek  
Stand around  
Getting up stairs  
Hog eyed man  
Walking in the parlor  
Good old summer time  
a. Nigger inch long  
b. Dixie Land  
Ragged Joe  
Piny Mountains  
Pick a Boo  
Cow bell hollow  
Casey Jones  
Hobo John  
Red Wing  
Cotton eyed Joe  
Old Joe Clark  
Lula Gal  
Bill Bailey  
Tater bug  
The lost engine [The Lost Indian]  
The ship that never returned  
Old Dan Tucker  
Coal Creek  
Happy Miller boy  
Jonny's gone to Cuba  
Wild Bill Jones  
Devlish Mary  
The Girl I left behind

"Some Musical Instruments: Piano,  
Organ, Violin, Guitars, Mandoline,  
Banjo, Accordions, Dulcimer, Harps  
(many kind), Bunglephone [sic], Fluta  
[sic], Auto harps, Guitar zithers, Lyre  
zither, Drum, Tambourines, Jew's  
harps, Hand organs, Cornet,  
Trombones, Horns, Clarinets, Flutes,  
Piccolos, Bugles, Fife's [sic], Bag pipe,  
Sourwood bugle, Sourwood [whistle],  
Chestnut whistle, Cane [whistle] and  
trumpet."



## "Singing School"

"About two years ago, an old man came to the school house near home to conduct a singing school. he was a very old man and didn't know as much about singing as he thought he did. This school was to meet every night. There were a very large crowd attended and seemed to get very much enjoyment out of it. He tried to teach round notes and introduced a new book which contained many new and good songs. The leader being poor was not very well equip[p]ed with charts etc for use to teach his students so we all learned best we could. One night we had a visitor who was a young singing master so he was called on to give instruction that night which he did, and you know he "stared" [starred?] and in the conclusion he sang "Old Black Joe" which seemed to hurt the old singing Master's feelings very much. Then the crowd were dismissed to come back next night."

**22. RAY MCMAHON ♂**  
**Sevierville, TN**

"Some old time fiddle tunes"

Sallie Goodin  
Old Christmas  
Lost Child  
Cripple Creek  
Forked Buck  
Buck Creek Girl  
Leather Breeches  
Hell tore loose in Georgia O  
What will you do with the Baby O?  
Hell's up again  
Spoon licked the laddle [Spoon  
    Licked the Ladle]  
Up the steep and down the level  
Cows ar comin  
The old time tune  
Fox Chase  
Over the lea  
Farewell my blue eyed girl  
Sour wood Mountains  
Christopher Columbus  
Smoky road  
Shake them simmons down  
Shake them acorns down  
Forked deer  
Cumberland Gap  
Wagoner  
Indian eat the wood heap[?]  
Bonapartes retreat  
Over the road to Maysville

Southern hornpipe  
Fishers [hornpipe]  
Turkey in the straw  
Shorten bread  
Walkin in my sleep  
J. B. Marcum  
Black eyed Susie  
Steamboat bill  
Arkansas traveller  
Turkey buzzard  
John Hardy  
Wing bird [Waynesburg?]  
Green river  
Down the road  
Cindy  
Ho that rabbit Ho  
Ground hog  
I'm as free a little bird as I can be  
Good by little bonnie  
The Drunkard's dream  
[The Drunkard's?] Hiccoughs  
Little black mustach  
Letter edged in black  
Shout old Luller [Shout Old Lula]  
Grass hopper setten on a sweet tater  
    vine  
Way down yonder in the cornfield  
Poor little Kitty Puss  
Jessie James  
Frankie Baker  
When I went to New Orleans  
Barbara Allen  
The Reckless Conductor