Far in the Mountains
Volume 5 - Echoes from the Mountains

Since their publication, back in 2002, the 4-CD set Far in the Mountains have been MT’s best-selling production and they are a wonderful source of splendid songs, tunes and stories. So it is with great pleasure that I announce the publication of Far in the Mountains, volume 5. Mike Yates writes:

Once these [four CDs] were issued, I set the original recordings aside and got on with a number of other projects. Over the years my interests began to change and I found myself devoting more time to art … But the Appalachians were still there, in the back of my mind. Recently I found time to re-listen to some of the recordings that had not made their way onto the four CDs, and I was rather surprised to discover just how much good material had been left off the albums, and so I set about putting together Far in the Mountains - Volume 5.

I am sure that many of the 425 people who bought the original 4-CD Set will want to add Volume 5 to their record collections … in the current economic climate, I really hope so! And maybe a few others will remember that they had always wanted to buy them - but never got round to it.

William Marshall & Howard Hall:
1. Train on the Island 1:15
2. Polly Put the Kettle On 1:11
3. Fortune 1:13

Dan Tate:
4. Groundhog 1:06
5. Poor Ellen Smith 1:33

Ted Boyd:
6. Pig in the Pen 1:50

Pug Allen:
7. Soldier’s Joy 1:24

Sam Connor:
8. Ten Little Indians 1:28

Stella & Taylor Kimble:
10. Troubles 1:17

Dan Tate:
11. Waggoner’s Boy 1:03
12. Sally Ann 0:29

Robert L Tate:
13. SallyAnn / Old Molly Hare / Baby-O 2:37
14. Down by the Stillhouse 1:00

Pug Allen:
15. Turkey in the Straw 1:53
16. Sally Gooden 1:25

Morris Norton:
17. Dicky Said to Johnny / Mirandy 3:24

Tommy Jarrell:
18. Sail Away Ladies 1:15
19. Say Darling Say 2:16

Doug Wallin:
20. The Little Mohee 2:24
21. Pretty Fair Miss All in Her Garden 2:33

Charlie Woods:
22. Cindy 1:29
23. Eighth of January / Green Mountain Polka 2:14
24. Walking in the Parlour 1:29

Eunice Yeatts MacAlexander:
25. The Preacher and the Bear 2:07

Pug Allen:
26. Old Joe Clark 2:43
27. Bull Durham 2:13
28. Fisher’s Hornpipe 2:21

Inez Chandler:
29. The Leaves are Green 1:29
30. Daddy Had a Billy Goat 1:12

Benton Flippen:
31. Cripple Creek 1:43
32. Lonesome Road Blues 1:37

Robert L Tate:
33. The Lawson Family Murder 2:07

Mitchel Hopson:
34. Shout Little Lula 0:47

Doug Wallin:
35. Let her Go, Let her Go 1:32
36. Darling Cora 1:47

Walt Davis & J C McCool:
37. Under the Double Eagle 1:22
38. Whistling Rufus 1:15
39. Wildwood Flower 1:04
40. Silver Bells 1:10
41. Bully of the Town 1:18

Evelyn & Douston Ramsey:
42. Beautiful Star of Bethlehem 3:09

Benton Flippen & Friends:
43. Breaking up Christmas 3:37

Total: 76:59
Far in the Mountains, Vol 5

Echoes from the Mountains

There is a well-known American fiddle tune called Fire in the Mountains. In 1929 the Red Headed Fiddlers recorded a version of the tune which, somehow, became mistitled as Far in the Mountain when it was issued on a gramophone record. As I flew repeatedly across the Atlantic to make these recordings the title came into my mind, and I began to think about how far I was travelling to be in these mountains.

Introduction:
The recordings on this CD were made during three collecting trips that I made to the Appalachian Mountains of North America in 1979, 1980 and 1983. In 2002 Musical Traditions issued four CDs, in two double CD sets, under the title Far in the Mountains, which contained my recordings (Far in the Mountains - volumes 1 & 2 MTCD501-2 and Far in the Mountains - volumes 3 & 4 MTCD503-4). Once these albums were issued I set the original recordings aside and got on with a number of other projects.

The recordings by these players.

The recordings that had not made their way onto the four CDs, and this CD, Far in the Mountains - volume 5, is the result.

As full details about my Appalachian recording trips can be found in the booklet notes that accompany the earlier CDs I will not repeat the story here, nor will I repeat what I said about the performers. Suffice it to say that singers, such as Dan Tate, Doug Wallin and Eunice Yeatts MacAlexander were living in parts of four states. If the song collector Cecil Sharp dug into the recordings of 1916 - 18. Sharp was, of course, looking for songs, though he was not averse to listening to tunes played on the fiddle and banjo, and many of the instrumental players that I met were also living in the regions that Sharp visited.

On the earlier CD sets I did showcase many of the folksongs and ballads that were the sort of things that Cecil Sharp had been seeking. Like Sharp, I was delighted to find singers giving me versions of ballads such as Wild Hog in the Woods, The Cruel Sister, Lord Randal, The Housecarpenter, Little Margaret, Lord Daniel and Lord Thomas, Fair Ellender and folksongs such as Black is the Colour, The Silkmerchant’s Daughter, The Carlisle Lady, The Little Soldier and The Derby Ram. I also recorded a number of old-world tunes, such as Rickett’s Hornpipe and Paddy on the Tumple. But, many of the tunes, and some of the song collectors, were no longer being collected. There were songs like The Murder of Colonel Sharp and Tom Dooley, which continued the old-world tradition of writing songs about local events and there were many new-world tunes, such as Cotton-Eyed Joe, Let Me Fall, Brown’s Dream, Massa Run Away, Western Country, Cumberland Gap and Pretty Little Girl.

Many of the singers were retired when I met them. Others, such as Doug Wallin, Evelyn and Donut Ramsey and Charlie Woods were running small farms, and, in their spare time, hearing a radio broadcast, or playing a phonograph, they would remember a large gander that Doug Wallin had on his farm. Every time we began to record Doug’s songs the gander would start honking and we would have to shoo it away to the other side of the field. Much of what Cecil Sharp had said about the singers still applied.

The country is, I think, the most magnificent I have ever seen. The mountains are everywhere, and we live in the valleys and walk through the pastures from one farm to another. Tommy Jarrell waseg

Interestingly, Tommy Jarrell continued to play the type of tunes that his father, fiddler Ben Jarrell, had recorded in 1927. Ben had recorded as part of Da Costa Wolfe’s Southern Broadcasters and Tommy continued to play tunes such as Yellow Rose of Texas, John Brown’s Dream, Old Joe Clark and Jack of Diamonds which his father had played in the Richmond, IN, recording studio.

(Ben Jarrell’s recordings can be heard on the CD DOCD-8023.) Walt Davis, who had himself recorded in 1930, vividly remembered meeting Tommy, with other musicians, including Tom Ashley, Clarence Greene and Gwen Foster, and had recorded Crooked Creek Blues accompanied by Foster, and Pentitentary Bound, Over at Tom’s House, The Fiddler’s Contest, and Big Short Life of the Troubadour. Tommy had told me that whilst in New York he had done some busking on the street with one of the other musicians. They had worn dark glasses and had pretended to be blind, thus expecting to make more money, but their ruse had been discovered when one of them used his foot to stop a dollar note which had started to blow away on the pavement! They had to run for their lives and were still out of breath when they later arrived at the recording studio.

Cecil Sharp really thought that he was witnessing the end of an old tradition. But if I called on Tommy Jarrell at a weekend I would find numerous visitors, often young musicians and singers who had travelled to be with Tommy and his friends so that they could learn whatever he could teach them. On one occasion a fiddler arrived who had driven almost non-stop from Alaska. On some nights there could be over fifty musicians jamming along with Tommy. How so many people managed to cram into Tommy’s small house was a mystery!

In the early 1980s Doug Wallin and Evelyn & Donut Ramsey seemed to be the last of the Madison County singers. But today there has been a revival of interest in the old love songs and Madison County singers such as Joe Penland, Sheila Kay Adams, Donna Ray Norton and Denise Norton O’Sullivan are performing to delight audiences in the American South.

I hope that, in a small way, the recordings that I made thirty odd years ago will help to keep these traditions alive, and that is why I am so happy to see that volume 5 of Far in the Mountains is now available. I cannot thank the performers enough for what they did in letting me record their songs and do no such thing. You’ll stay with us.” And I lost count of just how many meals I was offered - and enjoyed!

Finanically speaking, many of these people were relatively poor. Speaking in 1918, Cecil Sharp had this to say about some singers called Mitchell, (They) are a wonderful clan, living in a small narrow creek about a mile from the hotel. They are considered a very low-down lot by the richer people here who wonder why we go there and go there so often.’ Interestingly, I found much the same thing when I was staying in Asheville and making trips to Sodom Laurel. “Why,” my hosts asked, “was I interested in spending so much time with hillbillies?” I was always inclined to reply with the comment once made by a bank robber who had been asked why he robbed banks, replied robbing banks is where the money is.” It was, after all, the “hillbillies” who knew the songs, ballads, tunes and tales that so interested me and, to be honest, they were the people whose company I preferred.

But, in a way, some other things had changed. When Cecil Sharp left the mountains for the last time in 1918, he had little idea that within a few years record companies would be touring the American South - including Appalachia - collecting songs, ballads, and instrumental music that would be issued as gramophone records. When Sharp visited the mountains he was listening to people who had most probably learnt their songs and ballads from family and close friends. Each community had its own, discreet traditions. Suddenly, however, singers and musicians were all too happy to listen to recordings of people from all over the States and not just from their own region. Fiddlers from Virginia were able to hear their counterparts from, say, Texas or Mississippi, while singers could pick up new songs from the recordings of people such as Jimmie Herrod. As I was there, however, I found murmurings of ‘property’ (For more on this, see the article MT255 When Cecil Left the Mountains on the Musical Traditions website.)

Instrumental music had also changed. Whilst I found early fiddle and banjo tunes such as Shout Lula, Polly put the Kettle On, Sally Ann, Old Molly Hare and Fisher’s Hornpipe still being played and enjoyed, I was also hearing late 19th and early 20th century tunes such as Turkey in the Straw, Walking in the Shadows, The Virginia Reel, Under the Double Eagle and the Charleston. Tommy Jarrell was staying. “I’ll find a motel”, I would say. To which they would reply, “You’ll never do such a thing. You’ll stay with us.” And I lost count of just how many meals I was offered - and enjoyed!
music. Some, I think, felt that by doing so they would, perhaps, be preserving their traditions for future generations. And I think that they were right.

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During the past few years a number of important CDs and DVDs of Appalachian music have been issued. These include:

Art of Field Recording - volumes 1 & 2 Dust-to-Digital DTD-08 & DTD-12. Two four-CD sets of recordings made by Art Rosenbaum over the last fifty years. It covers other areas as well as Appalachia and is essential listening.

The Field Recorders’ Collective have issued a number of albums of important Appalachian field recordings, including CDs by The Kimble Family (FRC 106) and Dan Tate (FRC 506). Full details of all their recordings can be found at www.fieldrecorder.com

Meeting’s a Pleasure - Folk-songs of the Upper South - Musical Traditions MTCDS05-6 & MTCDS07-8. Four CDs, in two double albums, of Kentucky field recordings.


In the Pines - Tar Heel Folk Songs & Fiddle Tunes of North Carolina 1926 - 1936. Old Hat Records CD-1006. Another essential album from Old Hat.

Gastonia Gallop. Cotton Mill Songs & Hillbilly Blues 1927 - 1931. Old Hat CD-1007. This album shows how the 'old traditions' were beginning to change as industrialisation began to enter the mountains.

Hobart Smith. In Sacred Trust - Smithsonian Folkways SFW CD 40141. A double album of recordings made by Fleming Brown of one of the greatest of Appalachian singers and musicians.

Jean Ritchie - ballads from her appalachian family tradition - Smithsonian Folkways SFW CD 40145. If you want one album that explains just why Cecil Sharp went to the mountains, this is it! Superb.

Dark Holler - Old Love Songs and Ballads - Smithsonian Folkways SFW CD 40159. John Cohen's collection of recordings made from Sodom Laurel in Madison County, NC, an area where Cecil Sharp collected some of his most important songs and ballads. Also come with a DVD of Cohen's remarkable film The End of an Old Song, a portrait of the singer Dillard Chandler.

Kentucky Mountain Music - classic recordings of the 1920s and 1930s - Yazoo 2200. A seven CD set comprising commercial recordings as well as recordings made in 1937 in Kentucky by Alan Lomax, then working on behalf of the Library of Congress.

The Legacy of Roscoe Holcomb - Shanachie DVD SH 621. Includes John Cohen’s pioneering film The High Lonesome Sound.

Bluegrass Roots - mra DVD D0566. Not a great title, but this 1965 television programme does contain footage of several fine singers and musicians from western North Carolina, such as Obray Ramsey and Bascom Lamar Lunsford. Sadly, the latter's habit of trying to steal each scene can become rather trying at times. Harold & Margaret Winter's version of the ballad Young Hunting would have delighted Cecil Sharp, though.

Finally, mention must be made of Rob Amberg's excellent Sodom Laurel Album, a book packed full of superb photographs, including picture of some of the people that I met in Madison County, NC. Sodom Laurel Album University of North Carolina Press, 2002.

The Recordings:

Roud Numbers quoted are from the databases, The Folk Song Index and The Broadside Index, continually updated, compiled by Steve Roud. Currently containing more than 338,500 records between them, they are described by him as "extensive, but not yet exhaustive". Copies are held at: The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, London; Taisce Ceoil Duchaíse Eireann, Dublin; and the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh. They can also be purchased direct from Steve at Southwood, Maresfield Court, High Street, Maresfield, East Sussex, TN22 2EH, UK. Recording dates are shown in the sequence day/month/year.

In the following Song Notes, all Musical Traditions Records' CDs are referred to only by their Catalogue Numbers (i.e. MTCDxxx), as are all Records' CDs (i.e. DOCD-xxx) and Field Recorders’ Collective CDs (i.e. FRC xxx). The names of all other CD publishers are given in full.

The Songs, Tunes and Stories

1. Train on the Island (Roud 17376)
(Played on the fiddle by William Marshall and the banjo by Howard Hall, at William's home near Hillsville, Carroll County, VA. 4.8.79)

This fiddle and banjo tune has been popular in the Hillsville VA/Galax VA/Mt Airy NC area for some considerable time, possibly because it was recorded in 1927 by local musicians James Preston Nester and Norman Edmonds. This recording is now available on the Smithsonian Folkways Anthology of American Folk Music (SWF CD 40090) and the YazooCD Times Ain't Like They Used to Be volume 1 (Yazoo 2028). Also in 1927 another Galax musician, Crockett Ward, recorded the tune for the Okeh record company, but this recording remains unissued. A version that I recorded from Tommy Jarrell had the following verses:

Train on the island, hear the whistle blow,
Run, go tell my truelove, sick and I can't go.

Train on the island, heading for the sun,
Run, go tell my truelove,
Sick and I can't come.

Train on the island, heading for the west,
Me and my girl we done split up,
Maybe its for the best.

Other recordings: Tommy Jarrell (NC) - MTCDS053-4.

2. Polly Put the Kettle On (Roud 7899)
(Played on the fiddle by William Marshall and the banjo by Howard Hall, at William's home near Hillsville, Carroll County, VA. 4.8.79)

This locally well-known piece is named after the nursery rhyme Molly/Polly Put the Kettle On and Appalachian players often sing this verse to the tune:

Molly put the kettle on,
Jenny blow the dinner horn.
Molly put the kettle on
We'll all take tea.

although on the album Close to Home (Smithsonian Folkways SF CD 40097) Wade Ward of Independence, VA, sings/says the following words at the end of his performance:

Head like a coffee pot,
Nose like a spout.
Handle on the other side,
To pour the coffee out.

The Skillet-Lickers recorded a boisterous version in 1931 (reissued on both County CD-3509 and DOCD-8080) that deserves to be heard.

Other recordings: The Leake County Revelers (NC) - DOCD-8028; Marcus Martin (NC) - FRC 502; Sanford Kelly (KY) - FRC 503; Mike Rogers (NC) - FRC 505; Heywood Blevins (VA) - FRC 508.

3. Fortune (Roud 4625)
(Played on the fiddle by William Marshall and the banjo by Howard Hall, at William's home near Hillsville, Carroll County, VA. 4.8.79)

I have seen suggestions that this tune was popular in the 1890's, although I am unable to confirm this date. It is still popular around Galax, although at least one version of the song has been found as far away as the Ozark Mountains (Vance Randolph, Ozark Folk Songs volume 2, pp.413-414). The following two verses are often sung to the tune:

Once I had a fortune
Locked it in a trunk
Lost it all a gamblin'
One night when I got drunk

Fortune I lost
Fortune I lost
One night when I got drunk

Fortune I lost
Fortune I lost
One night when I got drunk

Tommy Jarrell once said, "I can recollect hearing my daddy play it as far back as I can recollect. I don't know where that started...it was more just an old, well, a flat foot dance tune I'd say."

Other recordings: Ernest V Stoneman (VA) - 5 String 001; Fred Cockerham (NC) - Rounder CD 0028; The Camp Creek Boys (NC) - County CD-2719 & - Field Recorders’ Collective FRC 102; Uncle Charlie Higgins, Wade Ward & Dale Poe (VA) - FRC 501; Sidna & Fulton Myers (VA) - FRC 503.

4. Groundhog (Roud 3125)
(Sung by Dan Tate at his home in Fancy Gap, Carroll County, VA. 15.8.79.)
Hunt up your guns and call up your dogs
Hunt up your guns and call up your dogs
Going to the mountain catch a big groundhog…
Groundhog

Turn it over and skin one side
We turned it over and skinned one side
Hell-fire, girls, ain’t a groundhog wide…
Groundhog

Meat in the cupboard and hide in the churn
Meat in the cupboard and hide in the churn
If that ain’t a groundhog I’ll be burned…
Groundhog

Yonder comes granny with a snigger and a grin
Yonder comes granny with a snigger and a grin
Groundhog gravy all over her chin…
Groundhog

Yonder comes granny with her two canes
Yonder comes granny with her two canes
She swore she’d eat them groundhog brains…
Groundhog

Groundhogs are large burrowing mammals that can often be seen warming themselves in the early morning sunshine at the side of country roads in Appalachia. Many people call them ‘whistle-pigs’, because of the sound that they make, while in the northern American woods they are known as woodchucks. Cecil Sharp noted a version of the song in Burnsville, NC, in 1918, and subsequent sets have turned up all over the place.

Other recordings: Doc Watson (NC) - Smithsonian Folkways CD SF 40012; Stanley Hicks (NC) - MTCD500-1; Wash Nelson (KY) - MTCD505-6; Frank Proffitt Jr (NC) Applesseed APR CD 103; Jack Reedy and His Walker Mountain String Band - Yazoo CD 2052 & Old Hat CD-101; Lee Sexton (KY) - FRD 105.

5. Poor Ellen Smith (Roud 448)
(Sung by Dan Tate at his home in Fancy Gap, Carroll County, VA. 15.8.79.)

Oh, poor Ellen Smith,
How was she found?
She was shot through the heart,
Lying cold on the ground.
They grabbed their Winchesters,
They went to hunt me down;
But I was miles away,
In old Mount Airy town.

I stayed away a year
And prayed all the time,
That the man might be found
Who committed the crime.

For Ellen lay there,
With her hands crossed on her breast.
The bloodhounds and officers
They gave me no rest.

So, they carried me back to Winston,
My trial to stand;
Saying, “Let him live or die,
As the laws they demand.”

So, they put me in jail
And Lord wasn’t it hard,
To look through the bars
On sweet Ellen’s grave-yard.

Yes, I’ve killed this fair maiden
And I’ve taken her life,
And I always intended
To have made her my wife.

The towns of Mount Airy and Winston (actually Winston-Salem) were not too far from Dan’s home in Fancy Gap and he was able to tell me that the events described in the song had actually happened in 1892. Peter DeGraff - a ‘drunkard’ according to Dan - had got Ellen Smith pregnant. The child died shortly after being born. DeGraff then arranged to meet Ellen Smith in the remote part of the country and shot her through the breast, killing her. He was later hanged in Winston-Salem. The song, no doubt a local composition, has all the hallmarks of the broadside trade.

Other recordings: Estil C Ball (VA) - Rounder CD 1702; Green Bailey (KY) & Theophilus Hoskins (KY) - Yazoo 2200; Clyde Davenport (KY) - FRD 103.

6. Pig in the Pen (Roud 13144)
(Played on the banjo by Ted Boyd at his home in Endicott, Franklin County, VA. 5.8.79)

This tune gets its name from verses such as:
Wish I had a pig in a pen,
Corn to feed him on.
Pretty little girl to stay at home,
Feed him when I’m gone.

Fiddling Arthur Smith claimed that Pig in the Pen was one of his tunes - he often played it on the radio - and it is now difficult to trace the exact origins of the piece, although some of the verses seem to predate Smith. Dan Tate uses the Pig in the Pen verse in his song Wagoner’s Boy (track 11) which suggests that this verse, at least, was around before Arthur Smith ‘composed’ the tune.

Other recordings: Sam Connor and Dent Wimmer (VA) - MTDC501-2.

7. Soldier’s Joy
(Played on the fiddle by L G ‘Pug’ Allen at his home in Stuarts Draft, Augusta County, VA. 17.8.80)

Soldier’s Joy dates from the 18th century, when it was well-known in England, Scotland and Ireland. Robert Burns knew the tune. Equally popular in North America, the phrase “soldier’s joy” became a euphemism for whisky among Civil War soldiers. I recorded Pug playing this as a solo on a number of occasions because I was fascinated by his unique way of playing.

Other recordings: Just about everyone has recorded this! Some of the more interesting versions include those by: Stephen Baldwin (Gloucestershire) - MTD334; Fred ‘Pip’ Whiting (Suffolk) - MTD350; Fiddlin’ John Carson (GA) - DOCD-8016; The Skillet Lickers (GA) - DOCD-8059.

8. Ten Little Indians
(Played on the fiddle by Sam Connor at his home in Copper Hill, Floyd County, VA. 7.8.79)

Ten Little Indians is a version of a tune that is usually called Fire in the Mountains and is one of a broad family of early nineteenth century (or earlier) tunes that shade into one another and are as old as Hey Betty Martin, Tip Toe. Sam Connor had the following verse to the tune:

My little Indians don’t drink liquor
My little Indians don’t get drunk

which is similar to the lines sung by Fiddlin’ John Carson in his 1926 recording of the tune (Okeh 45068, reissued on DOCD-8017).

It has been suggested that the tune originated from eastern European migrants, some of whom made commercial recordings in New York in the early part of the 20th century. There is also a Norwegian tune, printed in Southern Folklore Quarterly vol.vi, number 1 (March, 1942) p.9, that shows some similarity. A L ‘Red’ Steeley and J W ‘Red’ Graham - known as the Red Headed Fiddlers - made a spirited fiddle/banjo recording in 1929 (reissued on DOCD-8038) that is well-worth hearing. For some reason, the engineers titled this recording Far in the Mountain. (Chances are they were Yankees from the North, unaccustomed to Steeley & Graham’s accents). The Camp Creek Boys, from the area around Galax, VA, play a good version on County CD 2719, as did Theron Hale (County CD 3522).

Other recordings: Ed Haley (KY) - Rounder 1134; Pug Allen - MTD501-2; Clyde Davenport (KY) - FRD 103; The Kinoble Family (VA) - FRC 106; Gailture Carlson (NC) - FRC 118; John Hannah (WVA) - FRC 405; Uncle Charlie Higgins, Wade Ward & Dale Poe (VA) - FRC 501; Marcus Martin (NC) - FRC 502.

9. Granny Will Your Dog Bite?
(Played on the fiddle by Sam Connor at his home in Copper Hill, Floyd County, VA. 7.8.79)

Granny Will Your Dog Bite? is a version of the fiddle tune Eighth of January, which celebrates the American victory over the British at the Battle of New Orleans. The battle, part of the so-called War of 1812, took place on January 8th 1815 when Andrew Jackson’s troops defeated a British Army then trying to seize the city of New Orleans.

It always amused me to see American musicians trying to work out whether or not I understood the significance of the date when they played the tune to me.

Other recordings: The Arkansas Barefoot Boys - County CD-3507; Henry Hudson & Jiggs Hibler - JSP 77110.Nathan Frazier & Frank Patterson (TN) - Rounder 0238, John Ashby (VA) - FRC 108; Corbett Stamper (VA) - FRC 306; Bookmiller Shannon (ARK) - Rounder CD 1707.
Dan Tate’s short set of words to this fiddle tune are similar to a set collected in 1918 by Cecil Sharp from Mrs Delie Hughes, of Crane River, Burnsville, Yancey County, NC. See: Dear Companion. Appalachian Traditional Songs and Singers from the Cecil Sharp Collection EFDSS, London.2004. The tune is well known throughout the American south and no-doubt predates 1918.

Other recordings: George Stoneman (VA) - Rounder CD 1702; Blue Ridge Highballers (VA) , as Darneo, - Yazoo 2046; Benton Flippen (NC) - Rounder CD 0326; Eck Robertson (TX), as Great Big Taters, - County CD-3515; The Hill Billies (VA) - DOCD-8039 & DOCD-8040 & Old Hat CD-101; Fiddlin’ Doc Roberts (KY) - DOCD-8044; Fiddlin’ Sam Long (OK), as Sandy Land - County CD-3568; W Guy Bruce & Guy Bruce Jr (GA) - Dust-to-Digital DTO-08; Stan Jackson (ARK) - Rounder 0435; Camp Creek Boys (NC) & Smokey Valley Boys (NC) - Field Recorders’ Collective FRC 101; Gaither Carlton (NC) - FRC 118; The Roan Mountain Hilltoppers (TEN) - FRC201; Norman Edmonds (VA) - FRC 301; Uncle Charlie Higgins, Wade Ward & Dale Poe (VA) - FRC 501; Sidna & Fulton Myers (VA) - FRC 503.

13. SallyAnn / Old Molly Hare / Baby-O (Round 3652 - 7781 - 826) (Played on the banjo by Rob Tate at his home between Fancy Gap and Pipers Gap, Carroll County, VA. 11.8.79)

i. See notes to track 12.

ii. Old Molly Hare is an American version of the British Fairy Dance. It has a number of verses, such as:

“Old Molly Hare, what’re you doing there?”
“Running through the briar patch, as fast as I can tear.”

Jump up, jump up, daddy shot a bear.
Shot him through the eye and never touched a hair.

The Fairy Dance is credited to the Scottish fiddler Neil Gow, born 1727 in the Perthshire village of Strathbraan. Gow had a prodigious talent for music and is believed to have played for Charles Stewart - ‘The Young Pretender’ - in 1745. Other Gow tunes include the reels Farewell to Whiskey and Mrs McLeod’s. Gow died in 1807 and the following inscription was placed on his tombstone: Time and Gow are even now; Gow beat time, now time’s beat Gow.

Other recordings: Fidlin’ Powers and Family (VA) - Yazoo 2046; Art Galbraith - MTCDS509; Riley Puckett - JSP 77138; The Kimble Family (VA) - FRC 106; Jont Blevins (VA) - FRC 117; Gaither Carlton (NC) - FRC 118; Norman Edmonds (VA) - FRC 301; Uncle Charlie Higgins, Wade Ward & Dale Poe (VA) - FRC 501; Sidna & Fulton Myers (VA) - FRC 503.

12. Sally Ann (Sung by Dan Tate at his home in Fancy Gap, Carroll County, VA. 15.8.79.

Oh, sitt your meal and save the bran
Sift your meal and save the bran
Sift your meal and save the bran
I’m going to the wedding, Sally Ann

Pat your little foot, Sally Ann
Oh, pat your little foot Sally Ann
Oh, you can go home with whoever you can
But I’m-a going home with Sally Ann
iii. Baby-O Cecil Sharp noted a version of this, as a song, in Kentucky in 1917 and Jean Ritchie, also of Kentucky, sings another good version. The verses usually go something like this:

Baby laugh, the baby cry,  
Poke my finger in the baby's eye.  
What's that gonna do with the baby?  
What's that gonna do with the baby-o?

Wrap him up in calico,  
Post him to his mammy-o.  
That's what I'll do with the baby.  
That's what I'll do with the baby-o.

Wrap him up in a table cloth,  
Throw him up in the old barn loft.  
That's what I'll do with the baby.  
That's what I'll do with the baby-o.

Other recordings: Baby-O Dent Wimmer (VA) - MTCD501-2; G B Grayson & Henry Whitter (TENN) - DOCD-8055.

14. Down by the Stillhouse
(Played on the banjo by Rob Tate at his home between Fancy Gap and Pipers Gap, Carroll County, VA. 11.8.79)

"Going down to the still house to get a drop of cider" are the opening words to a tune that remains popular in the Galax/Mt Airy region of the Blue Ridge. Needless to say that still houses produce something stronger than cider ...

Other recordings: The Camp Creek Boys - County CD-2719.

15. Turkey in the Straw (Roud 4247)
(Played on the fiddle by L G 'Pug' Allen and the banjo by Paul Brown at Pug's home in Stuarts Draft, Augusta County, VA. 16.8.80)

Another tune from the early 19th century minstrel stage. It is related to the song Zip Coon. According to Art Rosenbaum, the tune Turkey in the Straw may be 'a distant cousin of the Irish tune The Red Haired Boy in America called There was an Old Soldier and he had a Wooden Leg. (Booklet notes to Dust-to-Digital DTD-08.) The words to Turkey in the Straw are often quite zany, as this verse taken from the singing of Fiddlin' John Carson shows:

There was a little duck and she had a web-foot,  
And she made her nest in a mulberry root.  
She drew the grass round her just to keep herself warm,  
And another little drink will he'p me along.

Other recordings: The Kessinger Brothers (WVA) - DOCD-8012; Fiddlin' John Carson - DOCD-8015; Charlie Everidge & Neil Morris (ARK) - Rounder CD 1701; Eck Robertson (TX) - Country CD-3515; Bert Garvin & J; P; Fraley (KY) - Rounder CD 0394; Dr D; Hollis (AL) - DOCD-8032; George Childers (GA) - Dust-to-Digital DTD-08; Smokey McKinnis & Bob Black (MI) - Dust-to-Digital DTD-12; Gaither Carlton (NC) - FRC 118; Buddy Thomas (KY) - FRC 303; Cecil Plum (OHIO) - FRC 404.

16. Sally Gooden (Roud 739)
(Played on the fiddle by L G 'Pug' Allen, the guitar by George Allen and the banjo by Paul Brown at Pug's home in Stuarts Draft, Augusta County, VA. 16.8.80)

According to North Carolina fiddler Bruce Green, Sally Gooden was originally called Boatin' Up Sandy (referring to the Big Sandy River in eastern Kentucky) and was renamed by Civil War Confederate soldiers in Morgan's Raiders while they were camped on the Big Sandy in Pike County, Kentucky. Sally Goodin ran a boarding house there and allowed the soldiers to camp and play music. To show their appreciation of her kindness, Morgan's men renamed the tune in her honour.

It should, perhaps, be pointed out that there are several other tunes which are today also titled Boatin' Up Sandy. There is also another Kentucky tune, played with the fiddle tuned ADAD, called Red Top Boots, Pocket Full of Money which is similar to Sally Gooden.

There are a number of verses associated with the tune. This seems to be the most common:

Strawberry pie and huckleberry pudding  
Give them all away to see Sally Gooden

Other recordings: The Kessinger Brothers (WVA) - DOCD-8011; Eck Robertson (TX) - County CD-3515; Ernest V Storeman & Family (NC) - DOCD-1102; Fiddlin' Doc Roberts (KY) - DOCD-8043; Fiddlin' John Carson (GA) - DOCD-8014; Lee Sexton (KY) - FRC 105; Gaither Carlton (NC) - FRC 118; Norman Edmonds (VA) - FRC 301; Corbett Stamper (VA) - FRC 306; Ward Jarvis (OHIO) - FRC 402; Uncle Charlie Higgins, Wade Ward & Dale Poe (VA) - FRC 561; Sanford Kelly (KY) - FRC 503.

17. Dicky Said to Johnny (Roud 17) / Mirandy
(Sung by Morris Norton at his home in Sodom Laurel, Madison County, NC, 31.8.80. Accompanying himself on banjo and mouthbow.)  
Dicky said to Johnny,  
One cold December day.  
"Let's ride around this mountain  
To pass the time away".

They rode to the top of the mountain  
To the mountain top so high  
And Dicky said to Johnny,  
"I heard a woman cry".  
Dicky said to Johnny,  
"I heard a woman cry".  
He looked off to the right side  
And then off to the left  
He saw a purty woman  
All chained down by herself.

Dicky a-being good hearted  
Good hearted we find  
He wrapped his greatcoat around her  
And take her on behind.  
He rode to the top of the mountain  
To a certain fork in the road  
Up stepped the seven (robbers)!

With the weapons in their hands
And Dicky said to Johnny  
"Before I'll fight, I'll die  
And Dicky said to Johnny  
"Before I'll fly, I'll die."

M.N (laughs) I cain't keep nothin in my mind….see I believe I'm getting older every day.

M.Y. You're not very old…

There was a little girl in sweet Arkansas  
And her name it was Mirandy  
And every time I go to see that gal  
Till I love and feed her candy  
Till I love and feed her candy

O me, O my, she's the apple of my eye  
She thinks she's a real Jim Dandy  
Take my advice and (?) all nice/night  
Till I love and feed 'em candy  
Till I love and feed 'em candy

Dicky said to Johnny is an opening fragment of the old English ballad The Three Worthy Butchers of the North, which was first published on a blackletter broadside sometime between 1672 and 1679. According to the broadside the song was written by one Paul Burges. In the full text three butchers are lured into a trap by a naked woman (with her hair pinned to the ground) so that a team of robbers can attack them and rob them of their money. The song was later published on a number of 19th century broadsides and was highly popular with traditional singers. Harry Cox and Walter Pardon, both from Norfolk had especially fine versions - Topic TSCD512 and Topic TSCD514.

I am unable to trace the song Mirandy, which sound like it might have been popular at the beginning of the 20th century. Morris accompanies himself on the mouth bow - or 'pickin' bow' - an instrument with African origins. There are very few recordings available of this instrument, but the ones that are available include Cindy in the Summertime played by Vaughn Eller of Georgia (Dust-to-Digital DTD-12, a four CD set) and Wave the Ocean played by Charles Everidge of Arkansas (Atlantic 7 82496 - 2, another 4 CD set).

Other versions of Dicky said to Johnny: Mary Drain (ARK) - Rounder CD 1108; Nimrod Workman (KY) - MTCD505-6; Biggun Smith - MTCD307.

18. Sail Away Ladies (Roud 17635)
(Played on the fiddle by Tommy Jarrell at Paul Brown's home near Mount Airy, Surry County, NC. 15.5.83)

Probably a 19th century tune. Uncle Dave Macon recorded the following words in 1927:

Ain't no use to sit and cry  
Sail away, ladies, sail away.  
You'll be an angel by an' by,  
Sail away, ladies, sail away.

chorus:  
Don't you rock 'im die-dy-0,  
Don't you rock 'im die-dy-0,
Don't you rock 'im die-dy-0,
Don't you rock 'im die-dy-0.

I've got a home in Tennessee,
That's the place I wanna be,
If ever I get my new house done,
I'll give the old one to my son.

Come along, boys, and go with me,
We'll go down to Tennessee,

Ever I get my new house done,
Love you, pretty girls, one by one.

Hush, little baby, don't you cry,
You'll be an angel by and by.

Macon's tune was slightly different from that played by Tommy Jarrell. In fact, there seems to be quite a range of tunes linked to these words, some of which are quite similar to the tune Sally Ann (Tracks 11 & 12).

Other recordings: Uncle Dave Macon (TEN) - Yazoo 2029; Henry L Bandy (KY) - Yazoo 2200; Stan Gilliam (GA) - Dust-to-Digital DTD-12; Uncle Bunt Stephens (TEN) - Smithsonian Folkways SFW 40090.

19. Say Darling Say (Roud 470)
(Played on the fiddle by Tommy Jarrell, the banjo by Paul Brown and the guitar by Ernest Creed at Paul's home in Toast, Surry County, NC. 15.5.83)
The words to Say Darling Say usually begin with:

Hush little baby don’t say a word
Poppa’s gonna buy you a mocking bird ...
Say darling say

which is similar to the last verse sung by Uncle Dave Macon in his version of Sail Away Ladies (track 19).

Other recordings: Ernest V Stoneman (VA) - 5 String 001; Annie Brewer (ALA) - Rounder CD1829.

20. The Little Mohee (Roud 275)
(Sung by Doug Wallin at his home at Crane Branch, Madison County, NC. 23.5.83).

While I was out strolling for pleasure one day,
In sweet recreation, to while time away.
As I sat a-musing myself on the grass,
Whom should I spy there, but a young Indian lass.

She sat down beside me and, taking my hand,
Said, “You are a stranger and you’re in a strange land.

“But if you will follow, you’re welcome to come,
And dwell in the cottage that I call my home.”

“Oh no, little maiden, that never could be,
For I have a true-love, far o’er the blue sea.

“And I won’t forsake her, for I know she loves me,
Yes, her heart is as true as the little Mohee.”

But when I had landed, on my own native shore,
With friends and relations gathered round me once more.

I looked all around me but none could I see,
Whom I could compare with, my little Mohee.

The girl I had trusted proved untrue to me,
So, I’ll turn my course backward far o’er the blue sea.

Yes, I’ll set my course backward, far o’er the blue sea,
And wind up my days with my little Mohee.

This well-known song has turned up all over America and, on the face of it, appears to be an American song. However some writers have linked it to the English broadside song The Indian Lass (Roud 2326), others to the song I'm a Stranger in this Country (Roud 3388). Doug uses a tune that is, perhaps, best known for the song On Top of Old Smokey. At least one version of The Little Mohee (as The Lass of Mohee) has turned up in Ireland (Sam Henry collection H836).

Other recordings: Hobert Stallard (KY) - MTCD505-8; Buell Kazee (KY) - JSP 77100; Bradley Kincaid (KY) - JSP 77158.

21. Pretty Fair Miss All in the Garden (Roud 264)
(Sung by Doug Wallin at his home at Crane Branch, Madison County, NC.

A pretty fair miss down in her garden,
When a brave young soldier came riding by.
Then he stepped up and thus he addressed her
Said, “Pretty fair miss, won’t you marry me?”

“Oh no, kind sir”, replied the maiden,
“Though a man of honour you may be.
How can you impose on a fair young maiden,
Who never intends your bride to be?”

“For I have a true love o’er the ocean,
Yes, seven years across the sea,
And if he stays for seven years longer,
No man on earth can marry me.”

“Perhaps he’s drowned in the ocean.
Or he may be on some battlefield slain.
Or he may be to some pretty girl married
And you may never see him again.”

“But if you will follow, you’re welcome to come,
And dwell in the cottage that I call my home.”

“Now if he’s drowned, I hope he’s resting,
Or he may be on some battle field slain.
Or if he’s to some pretty girl married
I’ll love the one that married him.”

Then he ran his hand down in his pocket
His fingers being long and slim,
And then drew forth a ring she’s given
A ring that she had given to him.

She threw her lily white arms around him,
And straight before him she did fall.
While the coon climbed out on a limb
The bear sat down upon the ground,
That he climbed up a 'simmon tree
The coon got so excited,
And he watched the coon, you see
The bear sat down in the middle of the road
He made a great big Grizzly Bear
And on his way returning home,
And one small measly hare
But he took his gun along
'Twas against his religion,
'Twas on one Sunday morn
Well, the Preacher went out a-hunting,
Patrick County, VA.  7.8.79)
(Sung by Eunice Yeatts MacAlexander at her home in Meadows of Dan, Patrick County, VA.  7.8.79)
(Sung by Eunice Yeatts MacAlexander at her home in Meadows of Dan, Franklin County, VA.  7.8.79)

Pretty Fair Miss All in her Garden is an Old World broadside ballad that was popular with English 19th century printers like Catnach and Such. There were also several American broadsides. It’s a popular piece, said by some to be descended from the classic ballad of Hind Horn. Often, the ring has been broken before the lover’s separation and the soldier/sailor is able to match his half of the ring with that kept by the maiden, a motif that also occurs in Homer’s Odyssey.

Other recordings: Mabs Hall (Sussex) - Veteran VT115CD; Daisy Chapman (Aberdeenshire) - MTCD308; Mary Cash (an Irish Traveller, then living in London) - MTCD325-8; Cas Wallin (NC) - MTCD503-4; Nova Baker & Elvis Vanover (KY) - MTCD505-6; Corbett Grigsby & Martin Young (KY) - Smithsonian Folkways SFCD 40077; Tom Ashley (TEN) - Smithsonian Folkways SFCD 40097; Roscoe Holcomb (KY) - Smithsonian Folkways SFW CD40144; Dellie Norton (NC) - Smithsonian Folkways SFW CD 40159.

22. Cindy (Roud 836)
(Played on the banjo by Charlie Woods at his home in Ferrum, Franklin County, VA.  7.8.79)

A well-known and highly popular piece. Charlie knew the following verse:

Cindy in the summer time
Cindy in the fall
If I can’t get my Cindy gal
I won’t have none at all

Other recordings: Bradley Kincaid (KY) JSP 77158; Riley Puckett - JSP 77138. The Hill Billies (VA) - DOCD-8039; Lawrence Eller & Vaughn Eller (GA) - Dust-to-Digital DTD-12; Hobert Smith (VA) - Rounder CD 1799; Kilby Snow (NC) - FRC 205; Corbett Stamper (VA) - FRC 306.

23. Eighth of January / Green Mountain Polka
(Played on the fiddle by Charlie Woods at his home in Ferrum, Franklin County, VA.  7.8.79)

i. Eighth of January please see notes to track 9.

Other recordings: Ted Gossett’s Band (KY) - Yazoo 2200.
ii. Green Mountain Polka is perhaps best known from the 1926 recording made by the Virginian fiddler Charlie La Prade (re-issued on JSP 7743).

Other recordings: Dixie Ramblers (VA/NC) - DOCD-8062; Ed Haley (KY) - Rounder 1132.

24. Walking in the Parlour
(Played on the banjo by Charlie Woods at his home in Ferrum, Franklin County, VA.  7.8.79)

Walking in the Parlour, also known as History of the World, is a minstrel song that probably dates to the early part of the 19th century.

Other recordings: The Hill Billies (VA) - DOCD-8039; Dr D D Hollis (ALA) - DOCD-8032; The Roan Mountain Hilltoppers (TEN) - FRC 201; Norman Edmonds (VA) - FRC 301; Sid Hemphill & Lucius Smith (MISS) - Rounder CD 1701.

25. The Preacher and the Bear (Roud 4967)
(Sung by Eunice Yeatts MacAlexander at her home in Meadows of Dan, Patrick County, VA.  7.8.79)

Well, the Preacher went out a-hunting,
'Twas on one Sunday morn
'Twas against his religion,
But he took his gun along
He shot himself some very fine quail
And one small measly hare
And on his way returning home,
He made a great big Grizzly Bear
The bear sat down in the middle of the road
And he watched the coon, you see
The coon got so excited,
That he climbed up a 'simmon tree
The bear sat down upon the ground,
While the coon climbed out on a limb
He cast his eyes to the Lord in the skies,
This is what he said to Him
“Oh Lordy, didn’t you deliver
Daniel from the lion’s den
Also, deliver Jonah,
From the belly of the whale and then
The Hebrew children from the fiery furnace
So the Good Book a-do declare
Now Lord Oh Lord, if you can’t a help me,
For goodness sake don’t-cha help-a that bear.”

When I first met Eunice she told me that she had once taught in a one-room mountain school. I asked her if there was any singing there and she said that the children loved to hear her sing The Preacher and the Bear, although, she added, it was not the kind of song that one sang today. Nevertheless, she agreed to let me record the song, “if only to show what was once popular”.

Sheet music printed in Philadelphia in 1904 by Jos. Morris indicates that the song was written by one Joe Arzonia. However, it seems more likely that it
was actually composed by a George Fairman (1881 - 1962) of Front Royal, Virginia, who, being short of cash, sold the song for $250 to Arizona, then the owner of a café where Fairman used to play piano. Arizona, in turn, sold the song to the publisher Longbrake, who frequented another café sometime around 1902 - 3, and the song was first published by Longbrake’s firm, the Eclipse Music Company, Arizona being then shown as the composer.

A number of early country singers recorded the song. These include Arthur Collins, whose 1905 Victor recording was very popular, as was a Sousa's Band version from 1906. Other singers were John McGhee (1927), Honeyboy and Sassafrass (1930) and the Prairie Ramblers (1938). The tune, or variants of the tune, was also used for songs such as 'Three Men Went a-Hunting' (Byrd Moore & His Hot Shots - 1929. Re-issued on County CD 3520), 'Traveling Coon' (Luke Jordan - 1927. Re-issued on DOCD-5045) and Wish I Had Stayed in the Wagon Yard (Lowe Stokes - 1929. Re-issued on DOCD-8045.)

Other recordings: Riley Puckett - JSP 77138.

26. Old Joe Clark (Roud 3594)

(Played on the fiddle by L G ‘Pug’ Allen, the guitar by George Allen and the banjo by Paul Brown at Pug's home in Staunton, Augusta County, VA. 16.8.80)

Old Joe Clark is a popular and well-known square-dance tune in the mountains. Is it, however, based on the life of a real person? Over the years various suggestions have been put forward, the most popular being a Joseph Clark who was born in Clay County, Kentucky, on 18th September, 1839. In 1857 he married a young girl, before enlisting to fight in the Civil War. In 1864 Elizabeth left and Clark reputedly fathered a whole clan of children by various women. Clark, originally a farmer, then opened a small store. He supplemented his income by running a licensed moonshine still selling whisky and brandy from the store. Joe Clark died in 1886, shot by an irate neighbour.

Other recordings: Da Costa Woltz's Southern Broadcasters (NC) - DOCD-8023; Bradley Kincaid (KY) JSP 77158; The Camp Creek Boys (NC) - County CD-2719; The Hill Billies (VA) - DOCD-8039; Fiddlin’ John Carson (GA) - Document-DOCD8014; Helen McDuffie & friends (GA) - Dust-to-Digital DTD-12.

27. Bull Durham

(Played on the fiddle by L G ‘Pug’ Allen, the guitar by George Allen and the banjo by Paul Brown at Pug's home in Staunton, Augusta County, VA. 16.8.80)

Also known as Durham's Bull or Durham's Real. Presumably the tune is named after the town of Durham, NC, the home of the Bull Durham Tobacco Factory. Veterans from the American Civil War began to miss their North Carolina tobacco once the war was over and the John Ruffin Green tobacco company began selling Durham tobacco by mail order. When W T Blackwell became a partner with Green he renamed the company the ‘Bull Durham Tobacco Company’. It seems that Blackwell took the image of the bull from a Coleman’s mustard tin, mistakenly believing that the mustard was made in America, though that was in the 18th century.) Interestingly, the tune does not appear to have been recorded by any early old-time musician, which suggests that it is not a particularly old tune.

Other recordings: Benton Flinnen and the Smokey Valley Boys - Rounder CD 0326; Smokey Valley Boys (NC) - FRD 102.

28. Fisher’s Hornpipe

(Played on the fiddle by L G ‘Pug’ Allen, the guitar by George Allen and the banjo by Paul Brown at Pug's home in Staunton, Augusta County, VA. 16.8.80)

Fisher's Hornpipe dates from the 18th century and various attempts have been made to identify just who Fisher was. One suggestion is that he was Johann Christian Fischer (1733 - 1800), a friend of Mozart, and the ‘J Fisher’ who was given as the composer when the tune was published in England in 1780. Another, more likely, suggestion was James A Fisher, a dancing master who worked in Covent Garden during the 1770s. The tune, as Hornpipe # 1 is included in J Fisher's (presumably James A Fisher's) Sixteen Cotillions, Sixteen Minuets, Twelve Hornpipes and Twelve Hornpipes published by John Rutherford in London in 1778. One other possible contender could be an English 18th century fiddle player called J W Fisher. Over the years the tune has been printed under a number of different titles and in McClanahan's Collection of Scots Measures (c.1780) we are told that it was ‘Danc'd by Aldridge’. Robert Aldridge was a well-known and popular performer in London during the 1760s and 1770s.

Other recordings: Doc Watson (NC) - Sugar Hill CD-3829; Benton Flinnen (NC) - Rounder CD 0326; The Hill Billies (VA) - DOCD-8039; Art Galbraith (MI) - Rounder 0436; Esker Hutchins (NC) - FRC 107; Galther Carlton (NC) - FRC 118; Ira Mullins (WVA) - FRC 202; Simon St; Pierre (MAINE) - FRC 205; Ward Jarvis (OHIO) - FRC 402; John Hannah (WVA) - FRC 405; Marcus Martin (NC) - FRC 502; Heywood Blevins (VA) - FRC 508; Fred ‘Pip’ Whiting (Suffolk) - MTCDS350.

29. The Leaves are Green (Roud 3103)

(Recently sung by Doc Watson at his home in Marshall, Madison County, NC, 28.8.80)

My pretty little pink, so fare you well
You’ve slighted me but I wish you well
But if on earth we no more see
I couldn’t do you like you did me

Dark brown is the colour of my true-love’s hair
Her face was like a rosy fair

The winter’s broke, the leaves are green
The time has come that we have seen
But if on earth we no more see
I couldn’t do you like you have me

My pretty little pink, so fare you well
You’ve slighted me but I wish you well
And if on earth we no more see
I couldn’t do you like you did me

Oh my pretty little miss sixteen years old
Her hair just as yeller as the shining gold
The prettiest face and the sweetest hands
Bless the ground on where she stands.

Cecil Sharp noted a single set from Mrs Lizzie Roberts of nearby Hot Springs, NC, in 1916 (see English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians (1932) vol.2 p.31). The reference to the river Clyde, in Dellie Norton's version, suggests that it may be based on an older Scottish song. There is a lovely photograph of Inez on page 34 of Rob Amberger's book Sodom Laurel Album.

Other recordings: Dellie Norton (NC) - MTCDS350-4.

30. Daddy had a Billy Goat (Roud 4574)

(Played by L G ‘Pug’ Allen, the guitar by George Allen and the banjo by Paul Brown at Pug's home in Staunton, Augusta County, VA. 16.8.80)

Daddy had a big billy goat.
And Mommy washed every day.
When she hung her clothes out on the line,
The old goat would come that way

He jerked down the old flannel shirt.
You oughta heard them buttons crack.
But I'll get even with that son of a bitch,
I'll tie him to the railroad track.

I tied him to the railroad track,
And the train came up in a powerful rate.
He bounced up that old red shirt,
Flagged down that durned old train.

Well I went to the depot, I bought me a ticket,
And I went right in and I sat down.
The conductor come along, said "Gimme your ticket"
Or I'll leave you a-standing on the ground.

Well I acted the fool and I married me a widow.
And the train came up in a powerful rate.
He jerked down the old flannel shirt.
But if on earth we no more see

Oh I acted the fool and I married me a widow.
And the train came up in a powerful rate.
He jerked down the old flannel shirt.
But if on earth we no more see

It seems that Daddy Had a Bill Goat began life as The Tale of a Shirt, a song composed by W W Brackett and Lottie L Meda, which was 'sung with
30.  The Piggly Wiggly Blues
(Played on the banjo by Rob Tate at his home between Fancy Gap and Pipers Gap, Carroll County, VA.  11.8.79)

It was on last Christmas evening;
The snow was on the ground.
At home in North Carolina
The murderer was found.

His name was Charlie Lawson,
And he had a loving wife,
But he did not heed their call,
He killed them all.

"And now farewell, kind friends and home;
I'll see you all no more."
Into my breast I'll fire one shot;
Then my troubles will be o'er."

They did not carry him to jail;
They paid no lawyer's fee.
He'll have his trial in another world
On the final judgment day.

They are all buried at a crowded grave
While the angels watched above.
"Come home, come home, my little ones.
To the land of peace and love."

The Lawson family murder occurred on Christmas Day, 1929, in Stokes County, North Carolina. Charlie Lawson, a farmer, killed his wife and seven of his eight children, before shooting himself to death. He was later found to have been suffering from a brain tumour. The song was composed shortly after the event by Walter Smith, who recorded the song for Columbia Records under the name group name of 'The Carolina Buddies'. Smith's tune was previously used for another murder ballad, that of Pearl Bryant (Roud 2213), a version of which, by the North Carolina Rambler, has been reissued on JSP 7734.

Other recordings: The Carolina Buddies - DOCD-8062; The Red Fox Chasers - Tompkins Square double CD TSQ 2219; Spencer Moore & Everett Blevins (VA) - Rounder CD 1705; The Morris Brothers (NC) - JSP 77118.

31.  Cripple Creek
(Roud 3434)
(Played on the banjo by Benton Flippen and the guitar by Larry Flippen at Benton's home in Toast, Surry County, NC.  7.5.83)

Although some writers place Cripple Creek in Colorado - a spot made famous during a 19th century Gold rush - many Appalachian musicians believe that it relates to a location in Wythe County, VA. An influential 1925 recording by the Hill Billies (OK 40336) has been reissued on DOCD-8039. Kentucky banjo-player Roscoe Holcomb has a set on Smithsonian Folkways SF CD 40077, Horace Smith from Virginia can be heard playing a version on Smithsonian Folkways SFW CD 40141, while Galax banjo-player Wade Ward plays it on Rounder CD 1701.

I suspect that one reason for the tune's popularity is the fact that there are a set of bawdy verses often attached to it!

Other recordings: Fiddlin' John Carson - DOCD-8014 (1924 recording) & DOCD-8020 (1934 recording); Uncle Dave Macon - JSP 7769; Corbett Stamper (VA) - FRC 306.

32.  Lonesome Road Blues
(Roud 4958)
(Played on the banjo by Benton Flippen and the guitar by Larry Flippen at Benton's home in Toast, Surry County, NC.  7.5.83)

This tune probably gets its name from lines such as:

Other recordings: Fiddlin' John Carson - DOCD-8017; Fiddlin' Doc Roberts (KY) - DOCD-8042; Jont Blevins (VA) - FRC 117; Banjo Bill Cornett (KY) - FRC 304; Corbett Stamper (VA) - FRC 306; Marcus Martin (NC) - FRC 502.
Shout, Little Lula, shout, shout
Tell me what you're shoutin' about

Other recordings: Grayson & Whitter - DOCD-8054; Three field recordings made by Art Rosenbaum, of Uncle John Patterson, Jake Staggers and W.; Guy Bruce, are included on the 4 CD set Art of Field Recording - volume 1 (Dust-to-Digital DTD-08); Aunt Jenny Wilson (WVA) - FRC 408; Addie Leffew & Clause Wolfenbarger (TEN) - FRC 509.

35. Let her Go, Let her Go (Roud 6527)
(Sung by Doug Wallin at his home at Crane Branch, Madison County, NC. 23.5.83)

I'm going down to the river
And there I expect to drown
For the dearest girl in all this world
Has gone and left this town

Let her go, let her go, God bless her
She's nothing no more to me
For God in Heaven knows, love
It'll be alright some day

Some say that love is a pleasure
But love's no pleasure to me
For drinking wine, good liquor, love
Is all the pleasure I see

Take a paper and a pencil
And write her a few short lines
In every line including
Saying, 'Darling will you be mine?'

Cecil Sharp noted one of the earliest versions from Mrs Clercy Deeton of Mine Fork, Burnsville, Yancey Count, NC, in 1918. Mrs Deeton called it The Gambling Man and her text goes as follows:

My pocketbook full of money,
My friends all a-standing around;
My pocketbook are empty,
And I ain't got a friend to be mine.

Last night as I lay on my pillow,
Last night as I lay on my bed,
Last night as I lay on my pillow,
I dreamed little Bessy was dead.

Go dig me a hole in the meadow,
Go dig me a hole in the ground,
Go dig me a hole in the meadow
When I lie this poor gambler down.

The first time I saw darling Corie,
She had a dram glass,
Drinking away her trouble
And a-going with a gambling man.

The next time I saw darling Corie,
She had a sweet smile on her face;
Drinking away her troubles
And a-going in another girl's place.

North Carolina fiddler Tommy Jarrell remembered that the tune first appeared in the Round Peak area of NC sometime around 1915 - 16.

Other recordings: B F Shelton (KY) - Yazoo 2013; Buell Kazee (KY) - JSP 77100; Dick Justice (WVA) - as Little Lulie - DOCD-8004; Grayson & Whitter (TEN) - DOCD-8055; Shorty Ralph Reynolds (KY) - Dust-to-Digital DTD-08; Roscoe Holcomb (KY) - Smithsonian Folkways SF CD 40104; Fred Cockerham (NC) - Field Recorders' Collective FRC 101; Kilby Snow (NC) - FRC 205.

36. Darling Cora (Roud 5723)
(Sung by Doug Wallin at his home at Crane Branch, Madison County, NC. 23.5.83)

Wake up, wake up, darling Cora
What makes you sleep so sound?
For the highway robbers are raging
They will tear your play-house down

Go dig me a hole in the meadow
Go dig me a hole in the ground
Go dig me a hole in the meadow
To lay my poor body down

When I'm dead and in my coffin
My face turned to the sun
You can come and look upon me
And see what you have done

Go dig me a hole in the meadow
Go dig me a hole in the ground
Go dig me a hole in the meadow
To lay my poor body down

Come here, come here, darling Cora
And bring me my knife and gun
I'm no man for trouble
But I'll die before I run

What my dear old mother told me
Has surely come to pass
For she said that drinking and gambling
Would be my ruin at last

This song turns up under a number of different names, including Little Lulie, Dig a Hole in the Meadow and Corey, Corey. It is also related to other songs, such as Little Maggie and Country Blues.

The march Under the Double Eagle was composed by J F Wagner and published in Philadelphia by the Eclipse Publishing Company in 1902.
41. **Bully of the Town** (Roud 4182)
(Played on the banjo by Walt Davis and guitar by Jay C McCool, at Walt's home in Black Mountain, Buncombe County, NC. 2.9.80)

In his book *Fiddlin' Georgia Crazy. Fiddlin' John Carson, His Real World, and the World of His Songs* University of Illinois, 1987, Gene Wiggins ascribes this tune to the 19th century minstrel stage. Riley Puckett sang the following words on his 1926 recording with the Skillet Lickers:

Lookin' for that bully, bully of the town
Lookin' for that bully, that bully can't be found
I'm lookin' for that bully of the town.
When I walk this levee round and round
Ev'ry day I may be found.
When I walk this levee round
I'm lookin' for that bully of the town

**Other recordings:** Fiddlin' John Carson (GA) - DOCD-8016; Gid Tanner and his Skillet-Lickers with Riley Puckett (GA) - DOCD-8056.

42. **Beautiful Star of Bethlehem** (Roud 15755)
(Sung by Evelyn and Douston Ramsey at their home in Sodom Laurel, Madison County, NC. 29.8.80)

Evelyn and Douston told me that this gospel song was always sung at Christmas time in Madison County. It seems that the song was written by R. Fisher Boyce (1887 - 1966), a deacon at the Mt Carmel Baptist Church in Rutherford County, Tennessee, in the early 1930s. Boyce, according to the story, woke up one Sunday morning with the tune on his mind. As he started to write it down one of his children came into the room singing another hymn, so Boyce moved into the nearby empty milking barn, where he completed the tune and words. However, others claim that it was composed by Adger McDavid Pace (1882 - 1959), also from Tennessee, who composed quite a number of gospel songs. In fact, Pace may have simply arranged the tune, although when the hymn was printed in 1940 both Boyce and Pace were shown as the joint composers. No doubt the song was inspired by this line from Mathew 2:10, 'When (the Wise Men) saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy'.

Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem
Shining afar through shadows dimmed
Giving the light for those who long have gone (have gone)
And guiding the wise men on their way
Unto the place where Jesus lay.
Beautiful star of Bethlehem shine on (shine on)
Oh beautiful star (beautiful, beautiful star)

Of Bethlehem (star of Bethlehem)
Shine upon us until the glory dawns (glory dawns)
Give us a light to light the way
Unto/into the land of perfect day
Beautiful star of Bethlehem shine on (shine on)
Oh beautiful star the hope, the light
Guiding the pilgrim through the night
Over the mountains till the break of dawn (of dawn)
Into? the light of perfect day
It will give out a lovely ray
Beautiful star of Bethlehem shine on (shine on)
Oh beautiful star (beautiful, beautiful star) of Bethlehem (star of Bethlehem)
Shine upon us until the glory dawns (glory dawns)
Oh beautiful star the hope of rest
For the redeem the good and blessed
Yonder in glory where the crown is won (is won)
For Jesus is now the star divine
Brighter and brighter he will shine
Beautiful star of Bethlehem shine on (shine on)

**Other recordings:** The Stanley Brothers - County CD-2722.

43. **Breaking up Christmas** (Roud 20153)
(Played on fiddle by Benton Flippin, on mandolin by Verlen Clifton, on banjo by Paul Brown, and on guitars by Larry Flippin & Paul Nutphin at Benton's home in Toast, Surry County, NC. 7.5.83)

Breaking Up Christmas, to quote Paul Brown, "is the name for both a joyous dance tune and a tradition of holiday parties in the Blue Ridge mountains". If you want to know more about this tradition then I suggest that you listen to a whole CD's worth of music that comes from such parties - *Blue Ridge Mountain Holiday - The Breaking Up Christmas Story on County CD-2722*. It's a gem!
Tommy Jarrell had the following words:

Hooray Jake and hooray John,
Breaking up Christmas all night long.

Way back yonder, a long time ago,
The old folks danced the doesey-doe.

Santa Claus come, done and gone,
Breaking up Christmas right along.

Other recordings: Norman Edmonds (VA) - Rounder CD 1702 & Field Recorders’ Collective FRC 302; The Camp Creek Boys (NC) - County CD-2719; Benton Flippen (NC) - Rounder CD 0326; Fred Cockerham (NC) - Field Recorders’ Collective FRC 101; Sidna & Fulton Myers (VA) - FRC 503.

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Any errors or mistakes in the notes are, of course, my responsibility.

Mike Yates - April 2013