

GRAND  
OLE  
OPRY  
PRESENTS IN PERSON  
**BILL  
MONROE**  
THE BLUE GRASS BOYS  
BLACK COUNTRY - SCENARIOS VALLEY TRIO  
NEW RIVER RANCH  
RISING SUN - MARYLAND  
SUN. MAY 13

ON STAGE • IN PERSON  
**STANLEY  
BROTHERS**  
CARTER and RALPH  
CLINCH MOUNTAIN BOYS



hazel dickens  
& alice gerrard  
*pioneering women of bluegrass*




Smithsonian  
Folkways

Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600  
Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC 20560 © 1996 Smithsonian/Folkways Records



Smithsonian/Folkways



hazel dickens & alice gerrard  
*pioneering women of bluegrass*

When Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard recorded these songs in the mid-1960s, bluegrass music was dominated by male performers. They selected their favorite songs and arranged for a stellar group of sidemen—bluegrass legends: Lamar Grier, Chubby Wise, David Grisman, and Billy Baker. Their widely admired performances made them role models for future generations of women in bluegrass. The 26 tracks have been remastered, resequenced, and newly annotated by the performers themselves.

1. **TB Blues** 3:27
2. **The One I Love Is Gone** 3:08
3. **Who's That Knocking?** 2:58
4. **Walkin' in My Sleep** 2:08
5. **Won't You Come and Sing for Me?** 2:45
6. **Can't You Hear Me Calling** 3:13
7. **Darling Nellie** 2:20
8. **Coal Miner's Blues** 2:42
9. **Sugar Tree Stomp** 2:06
10. **Train on the Island** 1:41
11. **Cowboy Jim** 2:03
12. **Lee Highway Blues** 1:39
13. **Memories of Mother and Dad** 2:36
14. **Long Black Veil** 3:19
15. **Gonna Lay Down My Old Guitar** 2:55
16. **Difficult Run** 1:32
17. **Mommy Please Stay Home with Me** 3:11
18. **Gabriel's Call** 2:13
19. **Just Another Broken Heart** 2:43
20. **A Distant Land to Roam** 2:59
21. **John Henry** 1:47
22. **I Just Got Wise** 2:27
23. **Lover's Return** 3:06
24. **A Tiny Broken Heart** 3:02
25. **Take Me Back to Tulsa** 2:13
26. **I Hear a Sweet Voice Calling** 3:06 *(Total running time 68:36)*

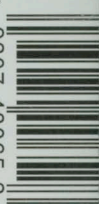
150  
1846-2016  
Smithsonian



Smithsonian  
Folkways

Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies | 955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600 | Smithsonian  
Institution | Washington, DC 20560 | SF CD 40065 © © 1996 Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings

0 9307-40065-2 8





hazel dickens & alice gerrard *pioneering women of bluegrass*

Recordings previously released on 31055 and 31034, issued in 1965 and 1973.

- 1 **TB Blues** (or They're at Rest Together) 3:27  
(Walter Callahan)
- 2 **The One I Love Is Gone** 3:08  
(Bill Monroe, Kentucky Music, BMI)
- 3 **Who's That Knocking?** 2:58 (Traditional)
- 4 **Walkin' In My Sleep** 2:08 (Traditional)
- 5 **Won't You Come and Sing For Me?** 2:45  
(Hazel Dickens/Happy Valley Music, BMI)
- 6 **Can't You Hear Me Calling** 3:13  
(B. Monroe/Kentucky Music, BMI)
- 7 **Darling Nellie Across the Sea** 2:20  
(A.P. Carter/Peer International, BMI)
- 8 **Coal Miner's Blues** 2:42  
(A.P. Carter/Peer International, BMI)
- 9 **Sugar Tree Stomp** 2:06  
(Arthur Smith/Tree Publishing, BMI)
- 10 **Train on the Island** 1:41
- 11 **Cowboy Jim** 2:03  
(Hazel Dickens/Happy Valley Music, BMI)
- 12 **Lee Highway Blues** 1:39
- 13 **Memories of Mother and Dad** 2:36  
(B. Monroe/Kentucky Music, BMI)
- 14 **Long Black Veil** 3:19 (Wilkin/Dill, BMI)
- 15 **Gonna Lay Down My Old Guitar** 2:55  
(Delmore Brothers/American Music, BMI)
- 16 **Difficult Run** 1:32  
(Lamar Grier/Wynwood Music, BMI)
- 17 **Mommy Please Stay Home With Me** 3:11  
(Arnold, Hall, Fowler/Unichappel Music, BMI)
- 18 **Gabriel's Call** 2:13 (H. Dickens, A & J. Foster  
& M. Marash/Wynwood Music, BMI)
- 19 **Just Another Broken Heart** 2:43  
(A.P. Carter/Peer International, BMI)
- 20 **A Distant Land to Roam** 2:59  
(A.P. Carter/Peer International, BMI)
- 21 **John Henry** 1:47
- 22 **I Just Got Wise** 2:27 (Carter Stanley/Trio  
Music, BMI/Fort Knox Music, BMI)
- 23 **Lover's Return** 3:06  
(A.P. Carter/Peer International, BMI)
- 24 **A Tiny Broken Heart** 3:02 (Charlie and Ira  
Louvin with Ed Hill/Acuff Rose, BMI)
- 25 **Take Me Back to Tulsa** 2:13  
(Wills/Duncan/Peer International, BMI)
- 26 **I Hear A Sweet Voice Calling** 3:06  
(B. Monroe/Kentucky Music, BMI)



**HAZEL AND ALICE—  
A RETROSPECTIVE**  
By Neil Rosenberg

It has been 23 years since I completed the notes for Hazel and Alice's second album on Folkways—notes originally drafted in 1967. What strikes me today is how much more can be said about women in bluegrass. In the 1990s the most successful performer in bluegrass is Alison Krauss, the fiddler and singer who, when she joined the Grand Ole Opry cast in 1993 at the age of 21, became its youngest member and the first bluegrass act added since 1964. As this is written, Krauss's most recent album has gone double platinum and has been near the top of both the country and the pop best-seller lists in Billboard. Her list of awards—Grammies, Country Music Association, International Bluegrass Music Association—is too long to include here. Krauss is not unique. Other women like Laurie Lewis, Claire Lynch, Lynn Morris, Cathy Kallick, and Rhonda Vincent are fronting their own bluegrass bands. Meanwhile, younger women are working their way up through the ranks—outstanding band members like banjoist Kristen Scott and fiddler Gail Rudisill fill roles that even a decade ago would only have been held by men. Today

women are still involved in bluegrass off-stage, as they have been since it began. But now they are no longer quite so behind-the-scenes as they once were. More and more frequently they both own and run the business—like booking agent Cash Edwards, recording studio owner Dede Vogt, or mail-order instrument teaching system entrepreneur Murphy Henry.

All follow the path blazed by Hazel and Alice, and many of them specifically credit performances and albums by Hazel and Alice as inspirations and role models. But the influence of this pioneering duo is not limited to bluegrass music. Their musical contributions have been recognized by performers from across the spectrum of folk and country music. Kate Brislin, Cathy Fink, Naomi Judd, Bob Dylan, and Molly and Tim O'Brian are among the many who credit Hazel and Alice's music as an influence and source for their repertoire. And newer groups like Freakwater and 5 Chinese Brothers likewise acknowledge them.

Hazel and Alice have not performed together regularly for several decades. But both remain active in the music business. As founder and editor of the quarterly *Old-Time Herald*, now in its ninth year (PO Box 51812, Durham, NC 27717), Alice is at the fore-

front of the contemporary revitalization of southern old-time music. Between 1981 and 1989, when she lived in Galax, Virginia, she documented many of the traditional older musicians of the area, and performed and recorded with Tommy Jarrell, Matokie Slaughter, Enoch Rutherford, and Otis Burris. In 1994 she found time to record an album, her first solo effort, for Copper Creek. Hazel's solo performances have been heard on several Rounder albums. Her songs graced the sound track of *Harlan County, U.S.A.*, an Academy Award winning documentary film, and she appeared and sang in *Matewan*, John Sayles' 1987 film about labor strife in a West Virginia coal-mining community. Dedicated to social action on behalf of coal miners, labor unions, welfare rights groups, and women's organizations, she has performed extensively—from the White House to the Grand Ole Opry.

**An Update On the Musicians**

A few words about the other musicians on these recordings. As of this writing Lamar Grier and Billy Baker are not, as far as I know, actively performing. Both have left a legacy of recording and performance, however, that make their names well known to bluegrass aficionados. Grier's banjo work

during his years as a *Blue Grass Boy* with Bill Monroe inspired many of today's best known banjoists. And Baker's work with the Del McCoury band in the 1980s solidified his reputation as one of the most soulful fiddlers in bluegrass. Chubby Wise, who had a hand in inventing bluegrass fiddle during the mid-forties when he worked with Bill Monroe, had a distinguished solo career that ended only with his death on January 6, 1996, at the age of 80. Mandolinist David Grisman, already a veteran when these recordings were made, subsequently forged a career as a master musician. I must apologize here to David for an error in my original note on him—he did not change his name as I stated, although the pseudonym did appear as a producer credit on a Rowan Brothers record. What he did do, following his 1973 work with Jerry Garcia, Peter Rowan, and Vassar Clements in the bluegrass band *Old and In The Way*, was to develop his own brand of instrumental music called "dawg" (a nickname Garcia had given him). For the past twenty years his Quintet has been playing a distinctive blend of jazz, ethnic, bluegrass, and other vernacular musics. In addition he owns and operates his own recording company, Acoustic Disc Records.

### The Songs

The songs on these two albums have certainly stood the test of time. It's great to have all of these fine performances together on CD. Today, many are bluegrass standards. In particular, Hazel's "Won't You Come and Sing For Me?" [track 5] title song for the second Folkways album, has been covered in recent years by leading contemporary bluegrass bands like Hot Rize. While I've stressed Hazel and Alice's importance as role models, that wouldn't have happened if they hadn't been such great performers. I hope contemporary listeners will enjoy these classic performances as much as those of us who first heard them in the 1960s.

### Sources on Bluegrass Music

At the end of my 1973 notes, I included a paragraph under this heading that alluded to a proliferation of books, journals, and magazines on bluegrass and country music. Today a very substantial body of literature, representing over three decades of research and reportage, makes the task of listing resources even more difficult. But for anyone who wishes to know about women in bluegrass, there is now a quarterly newsletter, *Women in Bluegrass*, published by Murphy Henry (PO Box 2498, Winchester, VA

22604). With interviews, biographies, and a flourishing letters section, this publication is helping to bring bluegrass women together by airing common issues and sharing experiences. *Bluegrass Unlimited* (Box 111, Broad Run, VA 22014) remains the most widely read monthly, joined a few years ago by a good bi-monthly, *Bluegrass Now* (PO Box 2020, Rolia, MO 65401). During the past decade the International Bluegrass Music Association, a trade association, has been established in Owensboro, KY. Its annual convention each September, with trade show, seminars, showcases, Hall of Honor Awards, and public festival is perhaps the most important single event in bluegrass these days. Also located in Owensboro is the International Bluegrass Music Museum, which houses the IBMA's Hall of Honor and has, as well, good exhibitions on bluegrass history and the beginnings of a good research collection. Both can be found at 207 East Second Street, Owensboro, KY 42303. And of course there's an e-mail list for bluegrass followers: BGRASSL@UKCC.UKY.EDU. A number of books about bluegrass music are in print, including my *Bluegrass: A History* (Urbana; University of Illinois Press, 1985). For those interested in the broader field of country music, a start-

ing point is the second edition of Bill C. Malone's *Country Music, U.S.A.* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985). Perhaps the best way to keep up is through the Country Music Foundation's *Journal of Country Music* (4 Music Square East, Nashville, TN 37203), which appears three times a year and includes good book reviews and occasional features on bluegrass and old-time music. Other important resources for learning about old-time, bluegrass, and country music are The Center for Popular Music, Box 41, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN 37132; and the Southern Folklife Collection, The Curriculum in Folklore, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

Neil V. Rosenberg

St. John's, Newfoundland, March 3, 1996



Hazel Dickens, Jeremy Foster, and Alice Foster Gerrard during an impromptu performance at a coffee house. Photo courtesy of Hazel Dickens.

## REMEMBERING THESE RECORDINGS

By Alice Gerrard, 1996

“It is interesting to note that two people of supposedly incompatible and surely very different city-country backgrounds, became close friends and eventually got together to produce the ‘bluegrass sound.’—Bill Vernon in the notes to *Who’s That Knocking?*”

“It is curious, and I think significant, that this music should appeal to people of such divergent backgrounds in our culture...” Neil Rosenberg, in his updated notes to our second Folkways album *Won’t You Come & Sing For Me*

Back in the 1950s and ’60s in Baltimore and Washington, Hazel Dickens and I had few, if any, women models for the particular sound of bluegrass that we were trying to get. There were Molly O’Day and Wilma Lee Cooper, and we admired them and loved their music, but we were trying for more of a Stanley Brothers, Bill Monroe duet sound. Furthermore, it was inconceivable to many that women should be so passionate about bluegrass music. Generally, women were the girlfriends or wives of the musicians, or

threats to those same. If they played they were the bass player in an otherwise male band; they might sing one country song per set, and were often treated badly.

But it was different at the music parties we went to where so many different points of view converged, and an atmosphere of acceptance and encouragement prevailed. This is important, because I feel that all that woodshed experience helped us define what we wanted to do when it came time to record. We chose the material, we arranged it, and we made sure that we sang it the way we wanted to sing it—because we felt so strongly about the music, and were so close to it. I also feel that my husband Jeremy Foster was a positive force in all of this. As our friend Marge Marash put it: “Jeremy created a space in which certain things could happen.” And his belief that we could do it affirmed what was already inside us.

It was quite a time, 1953–1957. I was either at Antioch College or on my “career related” co-operative job in Washington, D.C. I was in a relationship with another student, Jeremy Foster, who was from northern Virginia and who had introduced me to Mike Seeger, a friend of his from high school. My natural interest in folk songs was to some extent guided and deepened by

Jeremy's enthusiasm for Clarence Ashley, Texas Gladden (a 78 of her unaccompanied ballad "One Morning in May" was available in the Antioch College Library), Bill Monroe, Flatt & Scruggs, the Stanley Brothers, and other "real" forms of folk music to which he was introducing me. Actually, "folk music" was becoming a dirty word with its connotations of "sanitized," pop, or classically oriented style. Those of us who "knew better" soaked up Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music* on Folkways Records, and avidly bought the new bluegrass 78s as they came out. We reveled in the hard edged sound, the-close-to-the-bone feelings, and the way old-time and bluegrass music put us in touch with a missing piece of our lives.

I went with Jeremy to Washington, D. C. where he introduced me to Hazel, probably around 1955 or 1956. I was singing a little, teaching myself guitar and banjo. Hazel was in a bluegrass band with Mike Seeger, Bob Shanklin, Bob Baker, and Dick Rittler. They used to practice at Bob Baker's home in Dundalk, Maryland, a suburb of Baltimore. According to Mike, that is where I first met Hazel. He recalls wanting us to get together and feeling that we might hit it off musically. "You did some singing at that point," he said. "I felt like [the meeting with Hazel]

was an event. Enough of an event for me to remember it."

Hazel remembers it differently—she remembers meeting me at one of the Baltimore parties at Alyse and Willie Foshag's home on Eager Street. But I don't remember our first meeting at all. What does stay in my mind is how Jeremy described Hazel to me before he took me to meet her: "There is this little girl with an incredible big voice that you've got to meet."

Hazel was born and raised in the coal mining regions of West Virginia, one of 12 brothers and sisters. Her family had many struggles, not the least of which was poverty. After World War II she moved to Baltimore, following most of her brothers and sisters. There were factories there and people could find work.

Hazel had been raised with old-time and country music. Her father sang the old Primitive Baptist unaccompanied hymns, and he played old-time banjo. They listened to the radio—WSM, and WWVA. Hazel learned just about every Kitty Wells song that came out.

Music was part of her life and remained so after she moved to Baltimore—but things took a bit of a turn. Mike Seeger was working as a conscientious objector in a TB

sanitarium, and met Hazel's brother, who was a patient there. The two men discovered their mutual love for music, Mike was introduced to the rest of the family including Hazel, and they started playing a little together. Through Mike, Hazel met a social worker, Alyse, and Alyse's husband, Willie Foshag, who held music parties at their Baltimore home on Eager Street. The folk music scene and the burgeoning old-time and bluegrass scene converged at these parties, where middle-class, college-educated folks from all over, and working-class country people straight up from southwestern Virginia or Carolina met and got to know one another and played music. "We'd decide to have music," Hazel recalled, "and I'd get on the phone and start calling people. They were always big parties. Sometimes we used all three floors; old-time on one floor, bluegrass on another, and folk music on another. I remember fixing it up and putting candles and cushions on the floor..."

Sometimes we used to say, "Let's go break up the music," and we'd pack up the instruments and head for a local folk music gathering, usually at Lisa Chiera's place—we all knew each other. *They'd* all be sitting around singing folk songs and we would blast in with our banjos, guitars, and

voices and take over. I do remember it all being more or less friendly.

"I remember those days," Lamar Grier recalled. "We'd play all night long. At Eager Street we'd play on the second floor...[but] we had to break when the Osborne Brothers came on WWVA. The parties were the treasures. We did it just about every weekend, and I looked forward to that weekend—getting together to play music with you all."

I grew up on the West Coast—Washington, California—in a middle-class family. My parents were spare-time classical musicians. My father was a singer and choir director (as well as having a day job). My mother played the piano and sang and had a great ear (her job was raising a family while dealing with the ravages of rheumatoid arthritis). Music was all around. People who came over were as often as not musical friends, and there would be home-made music. I can remember sitting on the stairs after I was supposed to be in bed, listening to them singing and playing and having fun with their music. My father died when my brother and I were fairly young. My mother remarried, and we moved to Oakland and then Berkeley. I resisted my mother's efforts to get me to learn the piano, but somewhere inside of me there was a yen for

music. When I went to Antioch as a teenager, I met people who sat cross-legged in circles, playing guitars, and singing songs. Boy, this was great! I, who had felt sort of “different” at Oakland Technical High School, felt right at home at Antioch—I felt like I’d come home.

Hazel was doing factory work, and I was working at my Antioch co-op job in DC. Hazel’s job was probably something she thought she’d do forever or until she got married. I also came of age at a time when women were taught to believe they’d get married, have kids, and have a husband who would take care of them forever.

The music was our passion—it was all we wanted to do. We hardly went to movies, and had no TV. We were learning all the time, sometimes traveling for hundreds of miles to see our favorite bluegrass entertainers. And if we weren’t doing that, we were making music ourselves at parties. Even now, it often seems strange to me to go to a party where you don’t play music. What’s the point? What is there to do? What’s the fun?

“We spent money on records,” Hazel said. “We rarely went to movies. I can remember working in the factory and taking off to go see the Stanley Brothers. . . losing

a night’s pay. One time we even drove all the way to New York to see a show. [Or we went] to Wheeling West Virginia to see the Stanley Brothers—wherever they were.”

Every Sunday, just about, we went to a bluegrass show. Alyse and Hazel would make huge batches of fried chicken and potato salad, and we’d pile in cars and head up Route 1 north of Baltimore to Sunset Park or New River Ranch (sometimes both on the same day). We’d share our picnic with Ralph and Carter Stanley or Bill Monroe during the dinner breaks. In those days two bands started playing about 1 p.m. and alternated shows until maybe 9 o’clock. You could take your time listening, and the musicians could take their time. There was none of this “do your top six numbers and split—20 bands for 15 minutes each.” A few people were taping the shows—Jeremy, Mike, Ralph Rinzler...so that we could listen over and over again and work on our songs and instrumental breaks.

We were particularly wild about the Stanley Brothers—their harmonies, the old feel of their music, the soul—and of course, Bill Monroe. I think, for both Hazel and me, those were the most important sounds. But that was not all we listened to. I was listening to recordings of old-time music as well,

and we heard the same lonesomeness, soul, hair-raising chill bumps, or whatever you want to call it, in Clarence Ashley’s “Coo Coo Bird” and Richard “Rabbit” Brown’s “James Alley Blues,” or Dock Boggs’s “Country Blues.” And the Carter Family, Kitty Wells, Loretta Lynn—they were all connected.

That was 30 years ago, and a lot of memories have grown hazy, but I can remember the morning that the radio alarm, which had been set for work, suddenly jolted Jeremy and me awake: “Ruby, Ruby, honey are you mad at your man...” followed by a bluesy, greased-lightning banjo break. It was Bobby and Sonny Osborne and it was this new, *fantastic* sound. What a wake up!

Jeremy and I were married in late 1956 and we had our first child, Cory, in 1957. We announced the birth to our friends by sending a letter to the Osborne Brothers at WWVA in Wheeling, West Virginia, for them to read on their show. It was a request for Cory Foster. We knew that Mike and Hazel were down there at the station. And that’s how they heard we’d had our baby.

Jeremy was drafted after he (and I) dropped out of college. We moved around some, but we always returned to the Baltimore/Washington area for weekends of

music, park shows, parties, and get-togethers with our friends in this relatively small world of diverse people brought together by music.

Jeremy finished college at Antioch in 1961. Our household had become a center for music, and our second child, Jenny, was born there. We met folks from nearby Oberlin College—Neil Rosenberg and some others who had a bluegrass band, and we would get together and play. Jeremy helped convince Antioch to sponsor concerts of both the Osborne Brothers and the Stanley Brothers. As far as I know, they were the first bluegrass concerts at a college.

We moved back to DC in 1962, and our last two children, Jesse and Joel, were born. The music parties continued—often at our house on Kennedy Street, and often at Jim Steele’s home in Alexandria. Mike was living in Roosevelt, New Jersey, with his wife (and our close friend) Marge and their three boys. But they would often come to visit—Mike was usually on his way to a gig with the *New Lost City Ramblers*, and dropped Marge and the kids off at our Kennedy Street house.

Seven young babies...and still the music went on, and the parties—kids, coffee, cigarettes, music, all kind of mixed up together. Hazel and I were now doing more



singing together, and these parties were a supportive environment for us. Lamar Grier was always there playing banjo, and Tom Gray was often on bass. People drifted in and out.

I asked Jim Steele why he thought the Baltimore/Washington area was such a hotbed of interest in bluegrass music. He said, "It was all those people from Southwest Virginia moving up for jobs, and they brought their music with them. Everybody from Southwest Virginia could play, sing, dance, or do something. There were so many people with talent who had just done it from kids. We were all used to sitting around listening to the radio. A friend of mine, Sonny Presley, originally from Grundy, Virginia, introduced me to the Stanley Brothers [via] 78s in 1953—"A Voice From On High." He told me, "This is bluegrass, a different kind of music."

Pete Kuykendall noted that there was "very much a mixing of cultures" and that "the whole hillbilly image was breaking down big time. There were the migrants from the South like Pop Stoneman, Carl Nelson, Lucky Sailor, Smiley Hobbs. . . . There was a lot of suburban housing development after World War II up through the '50s, and many of them worked construc-

tion." Then there were the local suburban high-school students like John Duffy, Dick Spottswood, Bill Harrell, Roy Self, and others. As Pete put it, "suburban hillbillies who were getting turned on to bluegrass music." Also according to Pete, local DJs—Don Owens on WARL, WEAM, and WGAY, and in Baltimore Ray Davis over WBMD—"exposed the music to a very diverse audience...and it caught our ears."

I was trying to remember the chronology and events surrounding Hazel and my first recording, *Who's That Knocking?*, so I gave Peter Siegel a call. Peter lives in New York City with his wife and daughter, and has his own production company, Henry Street Folklore, producing records of mainly ethnic traditional music for Rounder, Shanachie, and other labels. He recorded *Who's That Knocking?* when he was about 18 or 19 years old.

"David Grisman, Fred Weisz and I went to D.C.," said Peter, "to some big bluegrass festival...and it was rained out. I ended up at someone's house at a party and heard you guys sing in the kitchen. I thought you were great singers, and I was totally knocked out. I don't believe we talked about recording at that time. David and I were starting this record label, Silver Belle. We eventually did

put out some singles, and I think we had the idea of asking you to record on that, but the label didn't last very long."

Hazel remembers it this way: "David and Peter came—they had heard it was a bluegrass party. I remember us sitting on the floor and singing. David and Peter got real interested, and so afterwards they started talking to us and asked if we'd ever thought of recording. We hadn't really been taking them that seriously, but when we knew they were serious we got defensive and said we wouldn't [compromise] our music. We wanted to do the songs the way we wanted to do them. We were fiercely protective. David spoke up and said we'd need to get a tape together and he would speak for Moe Asch. We made the tape in Pete Kuykendall's basement."

I called Pete to ask him about the demo tape. By 1963 he had managed to assemble enough equipment for a recording studio in his home and had agreed to do the demo for us. We recorded seven songs with Billy Baker on fiddle, Lamar on banjo, Hazel on bass and tenor vocals, me on guitar and lead vocals, and Pete Kuykendall on mandolin. Hazel tells me that Marge Marash and I "shopped it in New York. You went to Vanguard, and Folkways and Prestige—they all

turned it down except Moe Asch of Folkways." (Neither Marge nor I remember doing this.)

Anyway, planning began for the record. We chose songs and practicing began. "The first record was songs that we had been doing at the parties, like 'Coal Miner Blues' and those," remembers Hazel. "The others...I think a lot of them came from old tapes, just old stuff that had been around that we liked. We just started making a list of songs we liked and it grew and grew and then we had to start narrowing it down. Some might have been from tapes of Jeremy's and Mike's." We had asked Lamar to play banjo, and David to play mandolin. I would play guitar and Hazel would play bass, and all we needed was a fiddler. Hazel thinks that getting Chubby Wise was Jeremy's idea. "I can just see Jeremy—that twinkle in his eye, thinking wouldn't that be a coup if we could get Chubby Wise. He liked that kind of thing." Tom Morgan, who had met Chubby at a festival, actually made the phone call. "I had already seen him at one of those arenas where Bill Monroe was playing, and I talked to him and got his phone number," said Tom. He even tried to sell me a fiddle that night. I picked up the phone and called him in DC [where he was

living at the time]. “I have some friends who are trying to cut an album, would you be kind enough to help them out?” I like to have dropped my teeth when he said, “Yeah, I’ll do it.” He was congenial and supportive of what you were trying to do.”

Pierce Hall in the First Unitarian Church at the corner of 15th and Harvard Streets in Washington, D.C., was well known by many music people as a hall with good acoustics for our kind of music. Charlie Byrd had recorded there and the Ramblers had done a concert there in 1960. So we decided to record there and made the arrangements. Hazel remembers it costing us \$50.

“Moe gave me \$75 to make the record,” said Peter. He gave me \$37.50 before I went down to record, and I bought the tape and a bus ticket, and David bought a bus ticket, and then when I got back he gave me another \$37.50. I thought it was big time. It bought 12 reels of tape and a bus ticket.

Everybody’s memories are blurry around this time, probably because in September 1964, during the planning of the recording, Jeremy was killed in an automobile accident. Peter recalls wondering whether we would actually go through with the recording. But we did. Hazel thinks it was recorded at the end of 1964 and released in early

1965. Somehow I and our four young children got through a really bad time with a lot of support from all Jeremy’s and my friends. We went ahead with the recording, although I can’t remember exactly when. From what we can piece together, it was probably in early 1965. I had just moved into a house in Northwest DC. Hazel remembers that I didn’t have curtains or anything up on the walls yet.

Peter recorded the two-day session on a 1 AKG-D24 E microphone and a Nagra III P. “I recorded it with earphones on, and I know that Tom Morgan lent us some speakers so we could play it back so everyone could hear it after the take.”

“Neither of us had recorded before,” Hazel added. “I thought everything was a take. By the afternoon I was so hoarse I could hardly talk. On most of those last songs I sang tenor till I was as hoarse as could be.”

I remember feeling unsure about my singing. I was so much more a beginner than Hazel—still looking for my voice, but everyone was supportive.

“I brought the tapes back up to New York,” said Peter. “David was there when I was editing it, and I made it into an album.”

The chronology of the second Folkways

LP, *Won’t You Come and Sing For Me*, is somewhat muddy, because though we recorded it not long after the first one, it sat in the can for 8 years before it was issued. Between the recording sessions for the first and second albums, Hazel and I continued practicing and occasionally performing. I made a lot of practice tapes in my living room—kids yelling, running around, wanting attention in the background—and Hazel and me just plugging on. I think I was pretty good at blocking out what I didn’t want to hear. During these months Bill Monroe often came to our house if he was in the area. He would park his bus and he and the band would spend the night: Peter Rowan, Richard Greene or Gene Lowinger, James Monroe, and Lamar (who was playing with Bill for a while). My children remember him as being “grandfatherly” with them; he would always “bring us bags of candy.” Hazel and I both remember when he gave us “The One I Love Is Gone.”

We were jamming in your living room and Bill said, “I have this song,” and he started playing it. And he said, “You all can have it if you want—I haven’t finished it...” And he just gave it to us, and he taught it to us right there. I remember his saying, we were talking about the different keys and

stuff, and he said, “You find the key that is best for you and you stick to it. You get your key and you stick with it. If [the musicians] can’t play in the key that you need, get rid of those musicians.” We were very accommodating back then. If [a musician] said they couldn’t play in a certain key] we’d just change the key.”

Peter Siegel recalled the second recording session at Mastertone Studios on 130 W 42nd St in New York City, probably in the summer or fall of 1965 “just before I went to work for Elektra. We [recorded it] in stereo—I’d been hanging around at Elektra Records, and I was very excited about stereo. But I personally have come around to the belief that its better to sing into one mike. I wanted to be like a big record producer...but it was the wrong thing to do—you should have sung into one mike. I was over my head with that technology...and I think the record suffered from it.”

Again, David Grisman played mandolin, and Lamar played banjo. The differences were Billy Baker on fiddle and the addition of Fred Weisz and Mike Seeger on one cut.

“We practiced at your house,” said Hazel, “and then when we got to New York I remember staying up til 4 in the morning trying to learn that modal part to ‘The One I Love Is

Gone.' I had never sang that kind of tenor. David was trying to show me how it went.

"It was the first time that either of us had used headphones. They wanted to separate us and put us on opposite sides of the room, which we had never done. It really threw us off...and the headphones really threw us off."

That album was finally released in 1973 at about the time Hazel and I were getting ready to release our first Rounder album. By this time, we were starting to write more songs, developing more as a duo, and we were beginning to tour with Anne Romaine's Southern Grassroots Revival Project, which changed our lives yet again. But that is another story.

—Alice Foster Gerrard, 1996

## REMEMBERING THESE RECORDINGS

By Hazel Dickens, 1996

Before we made this album, Alice and I had only played at the Galax Fiddler's Convention in 1962, and played around at parties. We were passionate and possessive about the songs and the music. When we decided to make these recordings we wanted to make them our way. Generally when you see 'produced by so-and-so' the producers bring a lot of songs to the session. But we laid down the law pretty strict. We brought everything.

I think this is one of the all-time historic records. To my knowledge, it was the first time that two women sat down and picked out a bunch of songs and had guts enough to stand behind what they picked out and say, "We're not changing anything; you have to do it or else."

Everyone assured us that Moses Asch would let us do that. When we sent him the tape he didn't say "no" to anything, except "Don't spend a lot of my money." he didn't give us a lot to spend. After we cut the record, Ralph Rinzler and Mike Seeger got us to Newport [the Newport Folk Festival]. Moe [Moses] Asch sat in the front row,

came to see his newest artists before the release. The record came out in 1965. I expected to be rich. We had already planned to buy cars for Alice's husband and my boyfriend. I thought that we would be able to travel or get a house, but it just was not true. People really don't realize how little payback there is in a recording.

We have had women come up to us all down through the years and talk about the first records we made and what an impact it had on their lives. I just think it was an eye-opener for a lot of people to hear two women singing together, doing what the men did in bluegrass. We sang all the parts of bluegrass—one woman (Alice) singing the lower part and the other woman (Hazel) singing the high tenor. Generally when a woman sang, a man would sing under her—or they sang with their husband or brothers. So in that way, this recording was a real ground-breaker. We also didn't try to spice it up, or pretty it up with one of those Nashville songs or a Kitty Wells song. We did it straight up bluegrass.

Another significant thing about our two Folkways records, *Who's That Knocking* and *Won't You Come and Sing For Me*, is that they got around to places like Japan. One time I was in Nashville, and we went to the Station

Inn. They had a night where a whole lot of Nashville people who were involved in the bluegrass community would come down and jam. If you were a guest from out of town, they would invite you up [to play]. So when they saw me come in, the host asked me, "would you like to get up and do a song?" I got up there and started singing. All of a sudden a whole table full of people jumped up and started screaming. It was a group of Japanese. So I got some of the women up to do a song with me. They knew all the words of the songs from these two Folkways Records.

—Hazel Dickens, Feb. 1996



Alice Gerrard and Hazel Dickens with Bill Monroe, 1970.  
Photo by Carl Fleischauer, courtesy of Hazel Dickens.



*Photo courtesy of Hazel Dickens*

## THE SONGS

Notes by Hazel Dickens (HD) and Neil Rosenberg (NR)

### 1. TB Blues

I probably learned this song from an old Callahan Brothers record. I remember liking their singing as I was growing up. I used to sing it with one of my brothers. Alice and I worked it out to suit our style and changed the yodel somewhat. (HD)

**2. The One I Love Is Gone** was written by Bill Monroe in 1955; he has never performed or published it. In the 1960s, while visiting with Hazel and Alice, he sang it for them. They liked the song, so Bill gave it to them; they published it under Bill's name. They added a tenor part to the piece, and the result is the epitome of the bluegrass sound—a combination of blues and mountain vocal styles which has come to be known as “the high, lonesome sound.” Certainly this performance will take its place among the classics of bluegrass music. (NR)

**3. Who's That Knocking?** came from an old Carter Family recording. We liked it because of the drama in the story. Here are two young people trying to have a relationship with all the odds against them. I could relate to that—my parents were old-fashioned and I never had any freedom until I left home to go to work. (HD)

### 4. Walking In My Sleep

I've always loved singing this old song. I've known it so long I can't remember where I got it. Most old-time bands play it but don't sing the lyrics. I never got a lot out of a song without lyrics. My relationship was always with the words and the story. (HD)

**5. Won't You Come and Sing For Me?** was composed by Hazel and is sung here by a quartet consisting of Hazel, tenor; Alice, lead; Dave Grisman, baritone; and Fred Weisz, bass. The instrumental backup follows traditional bluegrass form for religious quartets—no banjo, fiddle used only in the background, and all the breaks taken by Dave Grisman's mandolin, played here in a style similar to that of Jesse McReynolds. (NR)



#### 6. **Can't You Hear Me Calling**

We couldn't have done this album without doing a Bill Monroe song. We both loved his music and especially his song writing. My brothers and I always had to sing my father's favorite Monroe songs whenever we got together at home. (HD)

#### 7. **Darling Nellie**

I believe we got this song from the Carter Family. We made it a faster, bluegrass style which made it a real challenge to sing because it has so many words. (HD)

8. **Coal Miner's Blues** is a Carter Family song and one of the first songs we worked on as a duet. We always played it at parties. It was a song that we had always loved and knew we had to record. (HD)

9. **Sugar Tree Stomp**, written and recorded by the late Arthur Smith during the 1930s, is fiddled here by Billy Baker. Smith had tremendous influence on contemporary bluegrass fiddling; Billy preserves all the features of Smith's performance and adds a few new twists of his own. (NR)

10. **Train on the Island** is a popular fiddle and banjo tune from the Galax region of Virginia. Hazel and Alice learned it from an old hillbilly recording by J.P. Nestor (banjo) which featured the fiddling of Norman Edmonds of Hillsville, Virginia. Released circa 1928 (Victor 21070A), the recording can be heard on that fountain of folksong revival repertoire, *The Anthology of American Folk Music Volume 3: Songs*, Folkways FA 2953 (reissue in progress). A more recent performance of the song, from the same area, by Glen Smith (fiddle), Fields Ward (guitar), and Wade Ward (banjo) can be heard on *Bluegrass From the Blue Ridge*, Folkways FS 3832. Alice and Hazel's performance combines old-time and bluegrass banjo—Alice's frailed banjo contrasting neatly with Lamar Grier's bluegrass style banjo. Guitar is provided on this song by Fred Weisz, an alumnus of the famous New York Ramblers. Hazel is the singer. (NR)

11. **Cowboy Jim** may have come from an idea of my father's or it could have been an old song that he sang in earlier years. Occasionally when I visited, he would get his hymn book out and we'd sing a few songs. One day he surprised me by singing a few

lines to an old cowboy song. Unfortunately he could not remember enough to get a feel for what it was supposed to sound like. He handed me the few lines he'd written down and said, "Here you take it and make a song out of it and give it a real lonesome sound." After it was recorded, I gave him the record and he seemed pleased that I'd not only written the song, but recorded it too. (HD)

#### 12. **Lee Highway Blues**

This song has been around for a long time. When Chubby was asked to pick out a fiddle tune to do on *Who's That Knocking?* this was his choice. (HD)

#### 13. **Memories of Mother and Dad**

Every country songwriter worth his salt has written a song about mother; Bill Monroe characteristically transcended the genre with this "true" song, the chorus of which quotes from his parents' headstones. His recording of the song, made in 1952, was issued on Decca records (45-28878 and DL 4780). (NR)

#### 14. **Long Black Veil**

I learned this song from a country radio station in Baltimore, Md. I liked it right away and began singing it in bars and coffee houses around town. By the time we recorded it, I felt comfortable enough to make the song mine and to project some of the emotion and feeling into the singing that I felt the song deserved. (HD)

15. **Gonna Lay Down My Old Guitar** is a Delmore Brothers song. We always loved singing this old song. It was bluesy and lonesome and had a good feel to it. I love singing the harmony to bluesy songs. (HD)

#### 16. **Difficult Run**

This is an original banjo tune written and performed here by Lamar Grier. There were not many banjo tunes written during this period so we were pleased and surprised when Lamar came up with such a great tune as his contribution to the album. (HD)

17. **Mommy Please Stay Home With Me** was the first recording made by Eddy Arnold ("The Tennessee Plowboy") under his own name, and was the first of many hits which made him the best-selling coun-

try singer of the late forties and early fifties. It was recorded in December 1944 (Victor 20-1871; Bluebird 33-0502). Record release data credit the song, which is firmly in the homiletic tradition of older country music, to Arnold, Graydon Hall, and the well-known gospel singer and songwriter Wallace Fowler. Alice learned this song from Hazel, and has never heard the Arnold record—a good example of the way in which phonograph recordings function like the old printed broadsides, placing popular poetry into oral circulation. (NR)

### 18. Gabriel's Call

When we were gathering material for *Who's That Knocking?* album, Alice mentioned that she and her husband Jeremy and their friend Marge had written a chorus to a hymn but they didn't have any verses. They sang it for me and I was really impressed. They asked me to write some verses. Since it wasn't my original idea, I didn't know what to write. When you need water go to the well—so I turned to the fire and brimstone preaching I'd heard growing up. I added a few verses but for me the chorus has always been the center piece of the song. (HD)

### 19. Just Another Broken Heart

This is a Carter Family song. We were always big fans of their music. Some people have said that Alice sounds a little like Sarah Carter. Alice chose this as her solo performance for this album. (HD)

**20. A Distant Land to Roam** was recorded by the original Carter Family in 1929 (Victor V 40255); it is sung here in a duet by Hazel and Alice, with Mike Seeger playing the Maybelle Carter-style lead guitar. Dave Grisman and Billy Baker echo the antiphonal chorus of the song with a mandolin-fiddle duet break. (NR)

**21. John Henry** is one of the most recorded of all American folksongs, and a complete discography would no doubt fill several pages, in small print. Of the many bluegrass recordings of this song, the most significant are those by Bill Monroe (1953: Decca 45-31540, Vocalion VL 3702), the Lilly Brothers (1956: Event 45-E-4272, County 729), the Osborne Brothers (1962: MGM E-4090), and Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs (ca. 1961: Columbia CL 1564). For references to the extensive folklore scholarship on this song, see G. Malcolm Laws' *Native American Balladry* (American Folklore Society Biblio-

graphical and Special Series, Vol 1, revised 1964, p. 246). This lively performance features Lamar Grier's banjo. (NR)

**22. I Just Got Wise** was written by the late Carter Stanley and recorded by the Stanley Brothers (Carter and Ralph) in 1955 (Mercury 45-70453). Alice sings the lead voice, and I joined in on the chorus. (HD)

**23. Lover's Return** is another beautiful Carter Family song and has always been one of my favorites. We changed the melody a bit and added a chorus. (HD)

**24. A Tiny Broken Heart** was written by Charlie and Ira Louvin with E. Hill, and recorded by the Louvin brothers (Capitol T-769). Like a number of other songs on the album, this is narrated in a style which combines frankness of detail with a sentimental viewpoint—an approach influenced by nineteenth century broadside balladry and the urban popular music of the late nineteenth century. This is still a popular mode of expression in country music today. (NR)

### 25. Take Me Back to Tulsa

This is an old western swing tune that we put a bluegrass spin on. It was fun to sing. My version comes from the legendary Bob Wills. (HD)

### 26. I Hear A Sweet Voice Calling

We got this song from Bill Monroe. We've always felt that it's one of his most sensitive and beautiful songs. This style and subject matter depict a side he rarely shows to the public. As we visited that hallowed place throughout this song, we were ever aware and we walked softly. We were very fortunate to have had the great fiddler Chubby Wise, who played on the original cuts. (HD)

## CREDITS

Original recording produced and edited by Peter Siegel  
Original notes by Bill Vernon (Folkways 31055) and Neil Rosenberg (Folkways 31034)  
Remastered by David Glasser at Airshow in Springfield, VA  
Audio and technical coordination by Pete Reiniger  
New introduction by Neil Rosenberg, Alice Gerrard and Hazel Dickens  
Reissue supervised by Anthony Seeger and Amy Horowitz  
Production coordinated by Mary Monseur and Michael Maloney  
Design by Visual Dialogue  
Photos on cover, back cover, and page 1 by John Cohen  
Photos on rear card and cd label by Barry Glickman  
Editorial assistance by Peter Seitel and Carla Borden  
Special thanks to Dudley Connell and Tom Adams for their assistance with this recording.

I would like to thank Hazel, Pete Kuykendall, Peter Siegel, Mike Seeger, Tom Morgan, Lamar Grier, Jim Steele, and Neil Rosenberg for talking with me about those times and helping put the pieces together a little bit more. I would also like to thank my children: Cory, Joel, Jesse, and Jenny Foster for their support.

—**Alice Foster Gerrard, 1996**

I would like to acknowledge my family as the source of my musical heritage. I am very proud to be a part of this rich tradition. I wish to thank all the musicians: Lamar Grier, Billy Baker, Fred Weisz, David Grisman, Mike Seeger, and the great Chubby Wise. My special thanks go out to Peter Siegel. His unselfish dedication and creativity brought much to these early recordings. This recording is dedicated to the many pioneering women who courageously blazed the musical trail that we now travel. I hope that our efforts will continue to inspire and encourage women who pursue musical careers.

—**Hazel Dickens, 1996**

## ABOUT SMITHSONIAN/FOLKWAYS

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

The Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways from the Asch estate in 1987 to ensure that the sounds and genius of the artists would be preserved for future generations. All Folkways recordings are now available on high-quality audio cassettes, each packed in a special box along with the original LP liner notes.

Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings was formed to continue the Folkways tradition of releasing significant recordings with high-quality documentation. It produces new titles, reissues of historic recordings from Folkways and other record labels, and in collaboration with other companies also produces instructional videotapes, recordings to accompany published books, and a variety of other educational projects.

The Smithsonian/Folkways, Folkways, Cook, and Paredon record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies. They are one of the means through which the Center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

You can find Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings at your local record store. Smithsonian/Folkways, Folkways, Cook, and Paredon recordings are all available through:

Smithsonian/Folkways Mail Order  
414 Hungerford Drive, Suite 444  
Rockville, MD 20850  
phone (301) 443-2314  
fax (301) 443-1819  
orders only 1-800-410-9815  
*(Discover, MasterCard, and Visa accepted)*

For a free catalogue, write:

The Whole Folkways Catalogue  
Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings  
955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, DC 20560  
phone (202) 287-3262  
fax (202) 287-3699  
<http://www.si.edu/folkways>