

Recorded by Eric Davidson
at Pipers Gap, VA, August 1983

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 3910

LET ME FALL

Old Time Bluegrass from the Virginia-North Carolina Border

CULLEN GALYEAN, banjo BOBBY HARRISON, guitar



COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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Virginia-North Carolina Border

SIDE ONE

Your Horses Ain't Hungry 3:58
Life of Sorrow 2:24
Soldier's Joy 2:29
Nobody's Darling 2:32
Roll on Buddy Roll on 3:18
White Dove 3:10

SIDE TWO

Groundhog 2:23
Sally Ann 1:55
Let Me Fall 2:28
Lonesome Day 3:27
May I Sleep in your Barn 3:42
Old Reuben 4:18

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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Recorded by Eric H. Davidson in Woodlawn, Va.,
August, 1983

Notes by Paul Newman, Paul Tyler and Eric Davidson

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Introduction to this Record.

Cullen Galyean (banjo) and Bobby Harrison (guitar) have been featured on several previous Folkways albums. In most of these recordings their music is heard in the context of a full bluegrass band, the Virginia Mountain Boys, which has usually included a fiddle and bass, and often a mandolin and a second guitar. Here, these two old time musicians perform with no additional accompaniment, and the listener can appreciate in pure form the skillful interplay between their voices, and their own two instruments. The traditional material that Cullen and Bobby interpret for us on this record ranges from ballads and laments, to rhythmically captivating renditions of old dance tunes and back country songs. This record illustrates the rich variety of the musical lore that is stored in the minds of fine traditional performers such as these.

Bobby Harrison, singer and flat-pick guitar player, and Cullen Galyean, singer and 5-string banjo picker, are old friends, and for over 25 years they have been musical partners. The heritage of these men, both in a musical sense and in terms of their personal history, lies in the hills of southwestern Virginia and the adjacent regions of North Carolina. Both Bobby and Cullen derive from people long resident in this area, and traditional music was played and sung in both their immediate families. Cullen was raised in a section known as Low Gap, N.C., just below the Virginia border, and there he still lives. In the early 1970's he played guitar with Ralph Stanley's band, after Carter Stanley died. He has performed with many different people in the Galax, Va. area. He has often played on both television and radio in Winston-Salem, N.C., and some years ago appeared on the Grand Old Opry. Cullen learned the banjo as a boy, and for years has been one of the finest 3-finger banjo pickers in his country. His parents played in an old style string band, and both his father and mother picked the 5-string banjo in the original clawhammer style. His father also played the fiddle. From his mother, Cullen learned many old time songs, which he sings in the classic style of these mountains. Bobby Harrison is also a skilled singer, and a superb flat-pick guitar player notable for his effortless single note runs. Bobby now works as a foreman in a factory in Galax, Va., and he lives nearby in Woodlawn, Va. He grew up in the Galax area, and was introduced to music as a young boy, when his father bought him an old Martin guitar. He has played with Cullen for most of his adult life. He and Cullen appear together with the Foothill Boys on County Records, as well as on the several Virginia Mountain Boys recordings cited above.

The Songs.

The songs on this record fall into three classes. "Nobody's Darling", "Life of Sorrow", and "White Dove" were written by country musicians prominent in the 1930's and 1940's, though in idea, phrase, and harmonics, they are obviously related to older material. "May I Sleep in Your Barn Tonight Mister", and "Roll on Buddy" were both recorded by and are attributed to, well known bands of the 1920's, but these pieces are clearly derived, at least in part, from specific 19th Century songs. The remaining songs on this record are of archaic traditional origin. Among these are the Southern Virginia classics "Sally Ann" and "Soldier's Joy", which are old banjo-fiddle dance tunes; a version of the famous ballad "Wagoner's Lad", here titled "My Horses Ain't Hungry"; the lament "Lonesome Day"; and the amusing hunting song "Groundhog". This blending of varied sources is one of the

most interesting and musically appealing aspects of the string band music of this area of the Appalachians, both the traditional string bands,^{2/} and the old time bluegrass bands that largely supplanted these thirty to forty years ago.

Except where noted, in all of the selections on this record, Cullen Galyean is heard playing the banjo, and Bobby Harrison the guitar.

SIDE 1

1. "My Horses Ain't Hungry". Voc: Bobby Harrison. Though this song goes by a number of titles -- such as "Farewell, Sweet Mary," "Loving Nancy," and "Texas Cowboy" -- it is most often known as "The Wagoners Lad." In the most common stanza, the young woman tells the lad:

Go put up your horses and feed them some hay,
And sit you beside me I know you can stay.*

To this request he usually responds in the manner of stanzas one and five below. This theme is also frequently found in the song complex known as "Old Smoky." And as in the latter, the wagoners lad usually leaves Nancy for Georgia where, he says, "My mind is to marry and leave you behind." Galyean and Harrison's version of "The Wagoners Lad," however, is one of the very few in which the young woman bids her parents goodbye in order to drive off with the lad. A similar story is told in one text printed in the Brown collection (#250 C);** and another was recorded for Gennett in 1931 by A.P. Thompson and Bob Cranford of the Red Fox Chasers of Surry County, North Carolina under the title "Pretty Polly" (reissued on County 570). Other recordings of "The Wagoners Lad" include Bascom Lamar Lunsford's 1935 version for the Archive of American Folk Song (1786-BL), Kelly Harrell's 1925 Victor disc (Victor 20103, reissued on Bear Family 15509), and Buell Kazee's 1928 rendition for Brunswick (064, reissued on Folkways FA2951).

- 1) I met this fair maiden while traveling one day,
Her name was Polly, or so she did say.
My horses ain't hungry, they won't eat your hay;
So fare you well, Polly, I'm going on my way.
- 2) Your parents don't like me they say I'm too poor.
They say I'm not worthy to enter your door.
I know they don't like you, but what do you care?
I know I'm your Polly, you know I'm your dear.
- 3) I know you're my Polly, but what can I say?
So come, go with me, we'll speed on our way.
Yes, I'll go with you, you're poor I am told.
It's your love that I'm wanting, not silver or gold.
- 4) We'll load our belongings, we'll drive till we
come,
To some little cabin, we'll call it our home.
I hate to leave mama, she treats me so kind,
But I do as I promised that Johnny of mine.
- 5) So goodbye dear mama, I'm leaving today.
We'll journey to father and speed on our way.
My horses ain't hungry, they won't eat your hay,
I'll drive on to Georgia and be on my way.

*Lunsford and Stringfield, pp.20-21.

**Brown Collection, III, p.278; see also the headnotes for #250 (p.275) for a list of other printed references.

2. "Life of Sorrow". Voc: Bobby Harrison and Cullen Galyean. Written jointly by Ralph and Carter Stanley, this song was first recorded by the Stanley Brothers and the Clinch Mountain Boys for Columbia in 1949 or 1950, but unissued for over thirty years until Rounder reissued all 22 sides the brothers did for Columbia (Rounder SS09 and SS10). Probably the first issue of "Life of Sorrow" by the Stanley Brothers was the version recorded for Mercury in the mid-1950's (Mercury 71258). The only other recording to be reported is by

Larry Sparks and the Lonesome Ramblers (King Bluegrass 527 and Rebel 1609). The song is very closely related to the better known lament "Man of Constant Sorrow" with which it shares some words and also the melody and harmonics illustrated in this performance. Sparks was the first singer to be chosen by Ralph to fill Carter's shoes after the latter's death in 1966.

1) After traveling through this world of sorrow,
No one on earth to call my friend;
I'm on my way back to old Kentucky,
Where I met and loved, but couldn't win.

2) I have always loved you little darling,
My heart will always feel the same.
I could never do one thing to hurt you,
I'd rather die than bring you shame.

3) When the cold dark shroud is wrapped around me
They lay my weary head to rest;
Will you stand around and gaze upon me?
For I'm the boy who loved you best.

4) When your golden hair has turned to silver,
The Master calls your soul to him;
There we can be free from all our troubles,
I'll meet you there at journey's end.

3. "Soldier's Joy". Instrumental. This tune is also known as "Love Somebody" and "King's Head." According to one legend, the tune was fiddled by a condemned man about to be beheaded on order of the King of France, who was so pleased by the performance that he ordered the man spared. It is one of the most widely known in the North American tradition as demonstrated in the notes accompanying the Library of Congress LP, American Fiddle Tunes (AFS L62). There Alan Jabbour lists two manuscripts and 33 printed sources for the tune, including three sources from the eighteenth century, as well as 90 recordings on deposit at the Archive of American Folk Song (now the Archive of Folk Culture) at the Library. These 80 recordings represent musicians from California to New York and from Texas to Wisconsin. Six of the Archive's recordings come from Virginia, including four from the Galax area: Emmett Lundy (4944B3), Wade Ward (3764B2), E.C. Ball and his String Band (1348B1) and an unidentified string band (5234B2). One recording is of a North Carolina musician: Bascom Lamar Lunsford of Buncombe County (9480B3). A marvelous rendition in the old time banjo-fiddle style of the area from which Cullen and Bobby Harrison derive is included in our earlier collection "Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties (Folkways FS3811), played by Glen Smith and Uncle Wade Ward. Early commercial recordings of "Soldier's Joy" were made by Uncle Dave Macon and Sid Harkrader in 1924 (Vocalion 5047) and by Gid Tanner and his Skillet Lickers in 1929 (Columbia 15538-D), reissued on County 506). Bill Monroe recorded the tune twice: once with his Blue Grass Boys in Nashville in 1966 (Decca 4896), and once with a number of fiddlers jamming at his festival in Bean Blossom, Indiana in 1973 (MCA 2-8002). A recent recording from Cullen Galyean's home area of Low Gap, North Carolina is Tommy Jarrell's solo fiddle record on County (756).

4. "Nobody's Darling". Voc: Bobby Harrison, with Cullen Galyean. Not to be confused with the older "Nobody's Darling on Earth", this song is a version of "Nobody's Darling But Mine" written and copyrighted by Jimmie Davis in 1935. Davis claims that after he recorded it for Decca (reissued on Decca DL78896), the song was "immediately recorded by most of the country artists at that time and also by some of the top pop singers like Bing Crosby".* Recordings were made by both "hillbilly" artists from the southeast, such as Wade Mainer and Zeke Morris (Bluebird B6423), and by "western" artists, such as the Light Crust Doughboys (Vocalion 03065 and Columbia 20203). A recent bluegrass performance of the song can be heard on Frank Wakefield's Rounder LP with Country Cookin' (Rounder 0007). Like many country hit songs, "Nobody's Darling" spawned a number of sequels, e.g., Patsy Montana's "Woman's Answer to Nobody's Darling" (Conqueror 3655), the Prairie Ramblers' "By the Grave of Nobody's Darling" (Conqueror 8975), and Jimmie Davis' own "That's Why I'm Nobody's Darling" for Decca in the 1930s.

1) Come sit down beside me little darling,
And lay your cool hand on my brow.
And promise me that you will never,
Be nobody's darling but mine.

(Chorus)

Be nobody's darling but mine, love,
Be honest, be faithful, be kind.
And promise me that you will never,
Be nobody's darling but mine.

2) You're sweet as the flowers in springtime,
You're as pure as the dew from the rose.
I'd rather be somebody's darling,
Than a poor boy that nobody knows.

(Chorus)

3) My mother has gone up to heaven,
My father has gone there I know;
My sister has gone to meet mother,
And where I go nobody knows.

(Chorus)

*Horstman, p.78.

5. "Roll On, Buddy". Voc: Cullen Galyean, with Bobby Harrison. The melody and chorus of Galyean and Harrison's "Roll On, Buddy" is derived from Bill Monroe and his Blue Grass Boys' 1964 recording of the song for Decca (DL4896), and the earlier version the Monroe Brothers waxed for Bluebird (B-6960, reissued on AXM2-5510). Archie Green has traced the history of this song back to a 1928 recording by Charles Bowman and his Brothers (Columbia 15357-D) of a song they put together and set to a melody modelled after the breakdown piece "Rock About My Saro Jane". The phrases "roll on, buddy" and "roll so slow" are also found in the chorus of "Nine Pound Hammer", which is today associated with Merle Travis (Capitol 48000,AD-50). The latter song can also be credited to Charlie Bowman, who recorded it in 1927 with Al Hopkins and his Buckle Busters (Brunswick 177). The phrase "roll on, buddy", and others related to it, can be found in a wide variety of work songs, from "Roll On, Johnny", sung by a Texas teamster in 1891, to a fragment of a railroad song from Georgia published in 1924, to "Roll On, John," as remembered by Buell Kazee from his childhood in Kentucky in the early 20th century and recorded by him in 1927 (Brunswick 144).* Like Kazee's song, Galyean and Harrison's is not associated with any specific job or occupation. Indeed, the latter have filled out their version with lyrics taken from or modelled after "I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground", as recorded by Bascom Lamar Lunsford in 1936 (Library of Congress AFS 1778-Bi) and 1928 (Brunswick 132, Okeh 40155, reissued on Folkways FA2953). Other versions of "Roll On, Buddy" were recorded by Sam and Kirk McGee and Arthur Smith (Folkways FA 2379), and Doc Watson (Vanguard VSD 9/10).

(Chorus)

Roll On, Buddy, Roll On,
Roll On, Buddy, Roll On;
You wouldn't roll so slow if you knew what I know,
Roll On, Buddy, Roll On.

1) I wish I was a mole in the ground,
I wish I was a mole in the ground;
A mole in the ground, I'd tear the mountain down,
And I'd roll on, buddy, roll on.

(Chorus)

2) I wish I was a little honey bee,
Wish I was a little honey bee;
A little honey bee just as cute as I can be,
Wish I was a little honey bee.

(Chorus)

3) I wish I was a little humming bird,
I wish I was a little humming bird;
A little hummingbird, I'd fly around this world,
And I'd roll on, buddy, roll on.

(Chorus: twice)

*Green, pp.334-352)

6. "White Dove". Voc. and fiddle: Cullen Galyean, with Bobby Harrison. Another Stanley Brothers' composition, this time from the pen of Carter, "White Dove" was the second song recorded by the brothers and the Clinch Mountain Boys for Columbia in 1949 (Columbia 20577, reissued on Rounder SS09). The song was immediately picked up by other country artists: witness the Bailes Brothers' performance of it on their radio show in 1949 on KWKH in Shreveport (transcription reissued by Old Homestead, CS-103). The Stanley Brothers later recorded the song again for King (615), and Ralph Stanley can be heard singing it with Jimmy Martin on the LP, Live at McClure, Virginia (Rebel 1554/55). It has also been recorded by the Dixie Gospel-Aires (Gloryland GSP-1164).

1) In the deep rolling hills of old Virginia,
There's a place I love so well;
Where I spent many days of my childhood
In the cabin where we loved to dwell.

(Chorus)

White dove will mourn in sorrow,
The willows will hang their head.
I'll live my life in sorrow,
Since mother and daddy are dead.

- 2) We were all so happy there together,
In our peaceful little mountain home.
But the Savior needs angels in heaven,
Now they sing around that great white throne.

(Chorus)

- 3) As the years roll by I often wonder,
Will we all be together some day?
And each night as I wander through the graveyard,
Darkness finds me where I kneel to pray.

(Chorus).

SIDE 2

1. "Ground Hog". Voc: Cullen Galyean. Of the 13 versions of "Ground Hog" -- plus one titled "Whistle-pig", another name for the creature, that might be the same song -- held by the Archive of American Folk Song in 1940, most came from North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee, though a few hailed from Texas and one was from California. The song was not often recorded, if at all, in the early days of commercial country music; but the early recording artist Bradley Kincaid included it in the second of his very popular song folios that he advertised on his broadcasts over WLS-Chicago and other radio stations.* Recordings of the song by North Carolina musicians include that by Bascom Lamar Lunsford made in 1935 for the Library of Congress (1801B3), Doc Watson's version performed with other family members for Folkways (FA2366), and Tommy Jarrell's text backed up by his fiddling, with accompanying banjo by Fred Cockerham or Oscar Jenkins, for County (713). A most interesting traditional rendition from nearby Grayson County is by the Virginia musician Vester Jones (Folkways FS3811).

- 1) Run here, Sal, with a great long pole,
Run here, Sal, with a great long pole,
Twist that ground hog out of his hole,
Ground hog.

(Chorus)

Ground hog, ground hog,
Ground hog, ground hog.

- 2) Hunt up the gun and whistle up the dogs,
Hunt up the gun and whistle up the dogs,
Going to the new ground to catch a ground hog,
Ground hog.

(Chorus)

- 3) Yonder comes Sal with a snigger and a grin,
Yonder comes Sal with a snigger and a grin,
Ground hog grease all over ner chin,
Ground hog.

(Chorus)

- 4) Hunt up the gun and whistle up the dogs,
Hunt up the gun and whistle up the dogs,
Going to the new ground to catch a ground hog,
Ground hog.

(Chorus: twice)

*Kincaid, Book 2, p. 31.

2. "Sally Ann". Instrumental, banjo solo. The fiddle and banjo tune that perhaps best characterizes the area of the Blue Ridge Mountains from Low Gap, North Carolina up to Galax, Virginia and beyond is "Sally Ann". Nearly every recorded version of the tune was made by, or is derived from, a musician who comes from this area of the southern Appalachians. For example, of the five recordings on deposit at the Archive of American Folk Song in 1940, three were by musicians from this area of Virginia (two from Galax) and another was by western North Carolina musician Bascom Lamar Lunsford, whose repertoire included at least six of the songs heard on this album. A list of contemporary recordings of "Sally Ann" reads like a "Who's Who" of Blue Ridge instrumentalists: fiddlers Tommy Jarrell first with Kyle Creed (Mountain 302), and then Oscar Jenkins on banjo (County 723), Ernest East with the Pine Ridge Boys (County 718), Benton Flippen and the Smoky Valley Boys (Rounder 0029), Glen Smith (Folkways FA3832), and Norman Edmonds with the Old Timers (Folkways FA 2434); as well as banjoists Clell Caudill (Rounder 0058), Sidna Myers with his brother Fulton on fiddle (County 717), and Wade Ward (Folkways FA2380). A bluegrass version of the tune can be heard on the Folkways recordings of the 1961 Union Grove Fiddlers' Convention (FA 2434) performed by the Mountain Ramblers, a group to which Cullen Galyean once belonged.

3. "Let Me Fall". Voc: Cullen Galyean. This is another song with deep roots in the Galax-Low Gap area of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Some musicians think of it as Fred Cockerham's piece (Heritage VI). Other area musicians who have recently recorded the song include Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham and Oscar Jenkins (County 723), the Camp Creek Boys (County 709) and Kyle Creed (Heritage XXVIII). Larry Richardson and Happy Smith, who worked on radio station WPAQ in Mt. Airy, North Carolina in the 1950's, recorded "Let Me Fall" with a combination of bluegrass and clawhammer banjos for Rich-R-Tone in 1958 (first issued on County 749). Richardson also recorded the tune with the Blue Ridge Boys in a bluegrass version (County 702). The third and fourth verses, as sung by Galyean and Harrison, probably derive from a 1927 recording of "If I Lose, I Don't Care" by Charlie Poole and his North Carolina Ramblers from nearby Spray, North Carolina (Columbia 15215-D, reissued on County 509). Another related version might be the "If I Lose, Let Me Lose" recorded by J. E. Mainer's Mountaineers in 1938 (Bluebird B7471, Montgomery Ward M-7456).

- 1) Let me fall, let me fall,
Let me fall, little girl, let me fall.

(Chorus)

Oh me, oh my,
Let me fall, little girl, let me fall.

- 2) Look at me, get in jail,
Honey won't you come and go my bail.

(Chorus)

- 3) If I lose, let me lose,
I don't care little girl how much I lose.

(Chorus)

- 4) If I lose a hundred dollars while I'm trying to
win a dime,
My Baby, she's got money all the time.

(Chorus: twice)

4. "Lonesome Day". Voc: Bobby Harrison; Cullen Galyean, fiddle. A.P. Carter is credited as the composer of "Sad and Lonesome Day" which the Carter Family recorded in New York in 1935 for ARC (Conqueror 8644, Harmony HL-7344); but he more than likely obtained the song, at least in part, from traditional sources.* Early in the 1940s, Woody Guthrie, Cisco Houston and Sonny Terry recorded "Lonesome Day" for Moe Asch (reissued on Tradition 2058). A traditional version of this song was recorded by Ruby Vass (Folkways/Asch AH3831).²⁷ Bluegrass versions have been recorded by Red Allen for Rebel (reissued on County 749), the Country Gentlemen (Mercury MG20858), and Larry Sparks and the Lonesome Ramblers (Pine Tree SLP-500). Galyean and Harrison's version forsakes the funerary stanzas of A.P. Carter's song -- "They carried my girl to the burying ground" and "Go dig my grave with a silver spade" -- in favor of other floating stanzas, such as the "lonesome dove" stanza found also in the Monroe Brothers "All the Good Times Are Passed and Gone" (reissued on Bluebird AXM2-5510, and recorded by Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys, MCA-116).

(Chorus)

Today has been a lonesome day,
Today has been a long, lonesome day,
Today has been a long, lonesome day,
And tomorrow's gonna be the same old way.

- 1) Have you ever heard a church bell chime?
Have you ever heard a church bell chime?
Have you ever heard a church bell chime?
It makes me think of days gone by.

- 2) Oh, can't you see that lonesome dove?
Oh, can't you see that lonesome dove?
Oh, can't you see that lonesome dove?
He's mourning for his own true love.

(Chorus)

- 3) You can pass my window, you can pass my gate,
You can pass my window, you can pass my gate,
You can pass my window, you can pass my gate,
Gut you cannot pass my thirty-eight.

(Chorus)

*Atkins, pp. 97-99.

5. "May I Sleep In Your Barn?" Voc: Cullen Galyean, with Bobby Harrison. According to Dorothy Horstman, this song, one of Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers' most popular pieces, was written in the late 1800s.* Poole recorded it at his first session in New York in 1925 as "Can I Sleep in Your Barn Tonight,

Mister?" (Columbia 15028-D, reissued on County 509). Bascom Lamar Lunsford of Buncombe County, North Carolina recorded it for the Library of Congress in 1935 under the same title. Ernest V. Stoneman of Galax, however, recorded it in 1926 as "May I Sleep..." (Gennett 3368, Challenge 153, Herwin 75530). Other early country artists who put the song on wax include Wilf Carter (Montana Slim) for Victor (reissued on RCA Camden CASX 2490), Chumbler's Breakdown Band for QRS (9016-1, PM3200), and Kid Williams and Bill Morgan -- the former was Walter Smith of Carroll County, Virginia -- for ARC (9714, Perfect 160). More recent recordings are found on LPs by MacWiseman (CMH 9001) and the McPeak Brothers (RCA APLI-0587). The song has remained strong in oral tradition as evidenced by the five texts collected in Virginia in the late 1930s by WPA workers,** and the recent field recordings of Grandma Davis from Roaring River, North Carolina (Folkways FA 2434) and reformed Tennessee moonshiner Hamper McBee (Rounder 0061).

(Chorus)

May I sleep in your barn tonight, mister?
For it's cold lying out on the ground;
For the cold north wind it is blowing,
And I have no place to lie down.

- 1) It was three years ago this last summer,
I shall never forget that sad day;
When a stranger came out from the city,
He was tall, so handsome and gay.

(Chorus)

- 2) The stranger was both tall and handsome,
He looked like a man who had wealth.
He wanted to stop in the country,
He wanted to stop for his health.

(Chorus)

- 3) I have no pipe nor tobacco,
And I have no matches to burn.
I assure you no harm sir, kind mister,
If you only let me sleep in your barn.

(Chorus: twice)

*Horstman, p.352.

**Rosenberg.

6. "Reuben". Voc: Cullen Galyean, with Bobby Harrison. Any discussion of "Reuben" must also take into account the pieces known as "Train 45" and "900 Miles".* "Train 45" is mostly performed as an instrumental, but the title "Reuben" is also given to instrumental versions by some banjo pickers: e.g., Ola Belle Reed (Heritage VI), a twin banjo version by the Blue Grass Mountain Boys (Folkways FA2434), and Uncle Wade Ward (Folkways FA2380). According to a bluegrass legend, "Reuben" is the tune the young Earl Scruggs was playing around with when he stumbled onto his unique style of three-finger picking. "Reuben's Train" and "Nine Hundred Miles" commonly refer to settings of a number of floating stanzas. In his discussion of these lyric couplets, Cohen has posed the question whether they represent separate songs that have lately merged, or if they are in fact independent songs that evolved from a single source. Galyean and Harrison's version contains stanzas that are associated with both titles. Following Cohen's lead, stanza one and the chorus should be associated with the "Reuben" complex, stanzas two to four and six and the melody with "900 Miles", while stanza five should be regarded as a recent addition. Appended to Cohen's discussion is a list of more than three hundred references--both printed and recorded--for the three titles, including a section on "Ruby, Are You Mad at Your Man?" A few relevant selections from this list include "Train No. 45" by Grayson and Whitter (Victor 21189, Bluebird B-5498, reissued on Old-Timey X-100); "900 Miles from Home" by Riley Puckett (Columbia 15563-D); "Railroad Whistle" by Woody Guthrie, Sonny Terry and Cisco Houston (Stinson 627 and SLP9); "Reuben" by Bascom Lamar Lunsford (Library of Congress AFS 1788A2); "Reuben" by Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs and the Foggy Mountain Boys (Columbia CS8364 and LE10043); "Old Ruby" by Vester Jones (Folkways FS3811).

- 1) Reuben had a train and he put it on the track,
He run it till the Lord knows where.

(Chorus)

Reuben, Reuben;
Honey, are you mad at your man.

- 2) I will pawn you my watch I will pawn you my chain,
I will pawn you my gold wedding ring.

(Chorus)

- 3) If my woman says so, Lord, I ain't a-gonna work
no more,
Gonna sidetrack my train and go home.

(Chorus)

- 4) If this train runs right, I'll be home tomorrow
night;
I'm nine hundred miles away from home.

(Chorus)

- 5) Oh, this train ran off the track and I cannot
get it back,
I cannot get my letter to my home.

(Chorus)

- 6) Oh this train that I ride is fifteen coaches long
You can hear the whistle blow a hundred miles.

(Chorus: twice)

*Cohen, pp.503-517

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FOOTNOTES

1/ Recordings of the Virginia Mountain Boys available from Folkways are "Glen Neaves and the Virginia Mountain Boys", FA 3830 (1974); "The Virginia Mountain Boys, Vol.2", FA 3833 (1977); "The Virginia Mountain Boys, Vol. 3", FA 3839 (1980); "Cullen Galyean, Bobby Harrison and the Virginia Mountain Boys, Vol. 4", FS 3829 (1983).

2/ The traditional string band music of the Grayson-Carroll Counties area of South Virginia, within which can be found most of the antecedents of the music on this record, is presented in a series of Folkways records including "String Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties, Va.", FS 3811; "String Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties" FS 3832; "Ballads and Songs of the Blue Ridge Mountains", AH 3831. The reader is referred to the Notes of those records for a brief history and description.

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