

PETE SEEGER



Instrumental Pieces for 5-STRING BANJO

and GUITAR and MANDOLIN

Arranged by Peter Seeger Transcribed by Billy Faier

H 606

\$1.50



Introduction

In 1955 I found a number of odds and ends of music lying around the house in dusty corners of memory. Not knowing exactly what to do with them, I gathered them up and put them in a Folkways LP called "The Goofing Off Suite." About two thirds of the selections in this folio are from that record. If any person has the perseverance to decipher the music notation and tablature that Billy Faier has so excellently put down, I hope that he or she will also use inspiration and initiative to change and improve upon the music as the years go by. For we are in the process of building up a new musical tradition out of the many old ones, and the creative musicianship of many people is needed. Here's wishing you luck.

PETER SEEGER

There is not space in this folio to fully explain the meanings of the various terms, techniques, and symbols used in the notation and tablature. 'Hammering On' means to sound a string by bringing a finger of the left hand sharply down on the fingerboard. 'Pulling Off' means to sound a string by plucking it with the left hand (violinists call this 'Left Hand Pizzicato'). 'Frailing' is the type of banjo picking when all the strings (except the thumb string) are sounded by the back of the first or second finger of the right hand. For more details, see manual 'How To Play The Five String Banjo' (72 pp. \$2.00, available from the author, P. Seeger, Beacon, N. Y. or Hargail Music.)

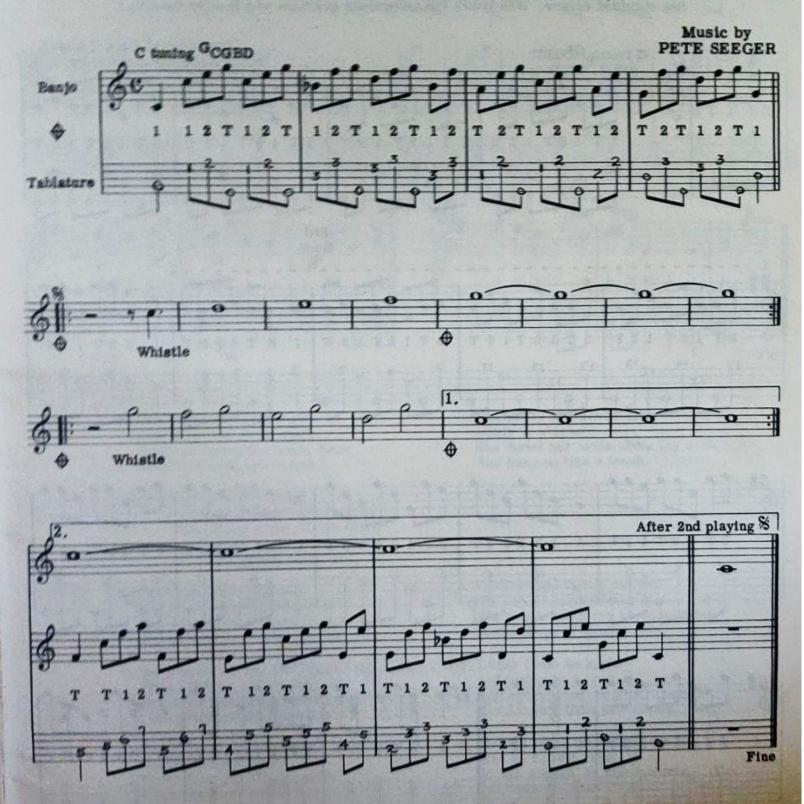
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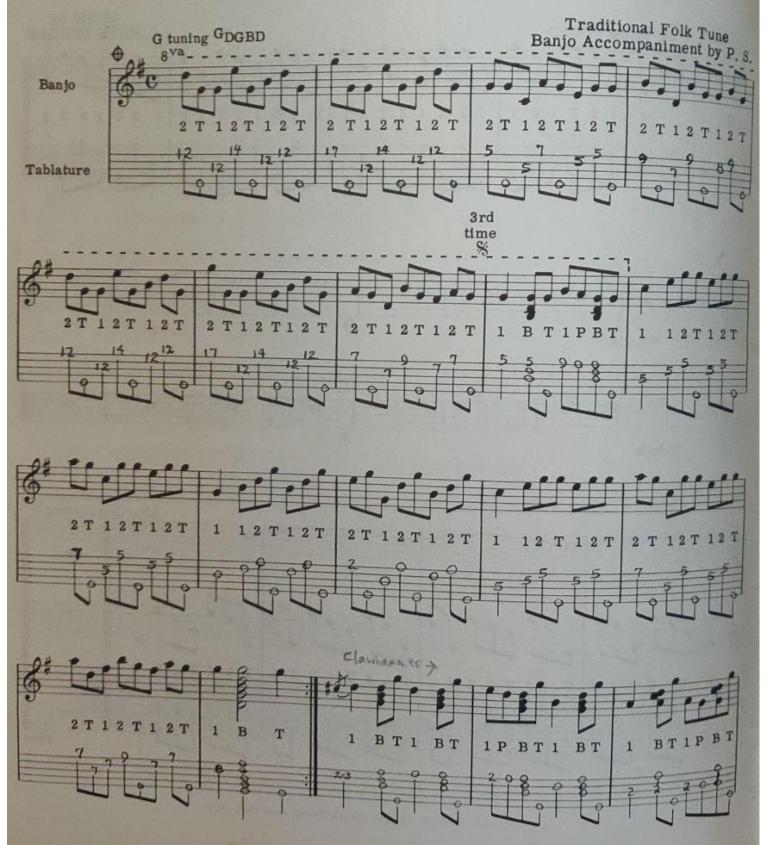
1. Opening Theme

This melody and it's Scruggs-like accompaniment are so absurdly simple that it seems presumptuous to call it a song. Yet it lingers in the memory, (and if anyone gets a good idea for words to go with it, please let me know).



2. Cindy

Naturally, everyone has his own favorite selection of verses for this famous song. Fred Hellerman and I once sang it for half an hour without repeating a verse. At the rate of four verses and choruses per minute. Here are a few standard verses. Who knows the anonymous geniuses who thought them up?





1. Oh, Cindy is a pretty girl
She lives way down south
She's so sweet the honey bees
Swarm around her mouth.

Chorus: (after each verse)

Get along home, Cindy Cindy
Get along home, Cindy Cindy
Get along home, Cindy Cindy
Fill marry you some day.

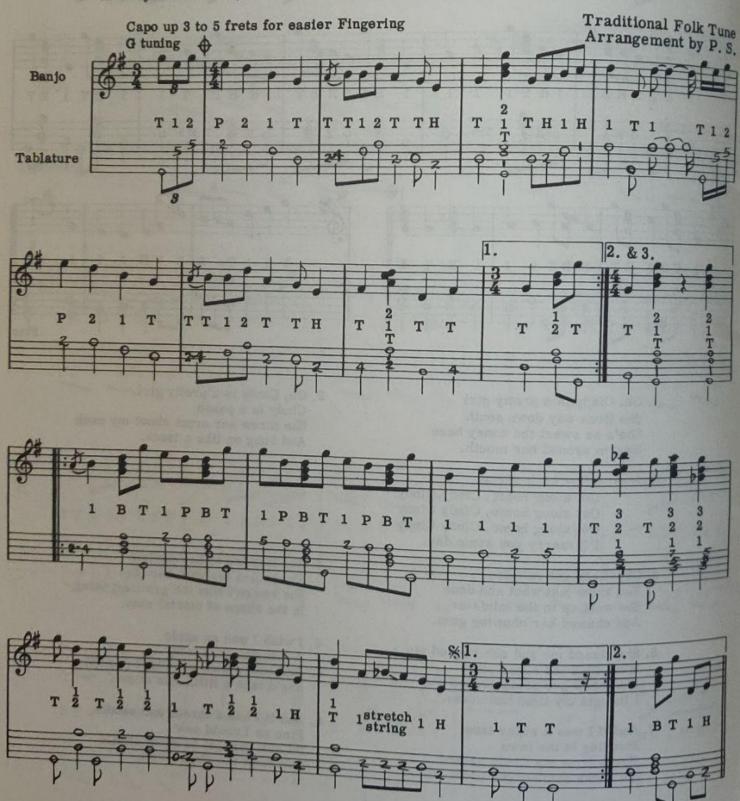
- Oh, Cindy got religion
 You know just what she done
 She went up to the minister
 And chawed her chewing gum.
- 5. She kissed me and she hugged me She called me sugar plum She threw her arms around me I thought my time had come.
- And if I was a sugar tree Standing in the town Every time my Cindy passed I'd shake some sugar down.

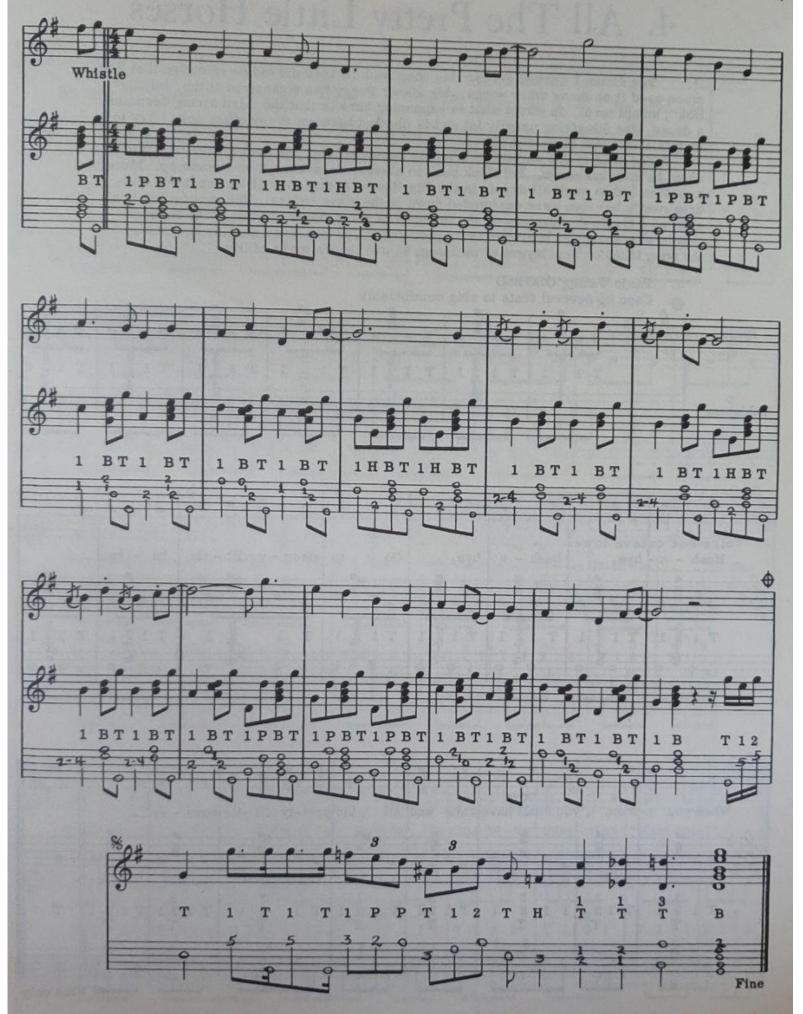
 Oh, Cindy is a pretty girl Cindy is a peach She threw her arms about my neck And hung on like a leech.

- 4. She took me to her parlour
 She cooled me with her fan
 She swore I was the prettiest thing
 In the shape of mortal man.
- 6. I wish I was an apple
 A-hanging on a tree
 And every time my Cindy passed
 She'd take a little bite of me.
- And if I had a thread and needle Fine as I could sew
 I'd sew that gal to my coattails And down the road I'd go.

3. The Girl I Left Behind Me

This arrangement uses three fingers of the right hand, but is not a Scruggs-style. A good jazz musician would go a lot further in improvising new variations. Perhaps the test of a really good melody is its ability to withstand man-handling in many different ways.



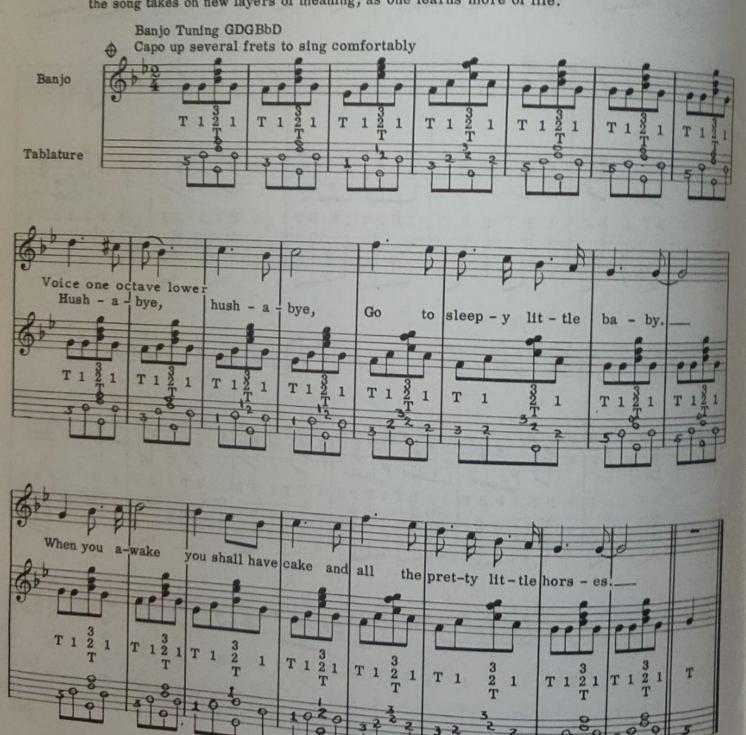


4. All The Pretty Little Horses

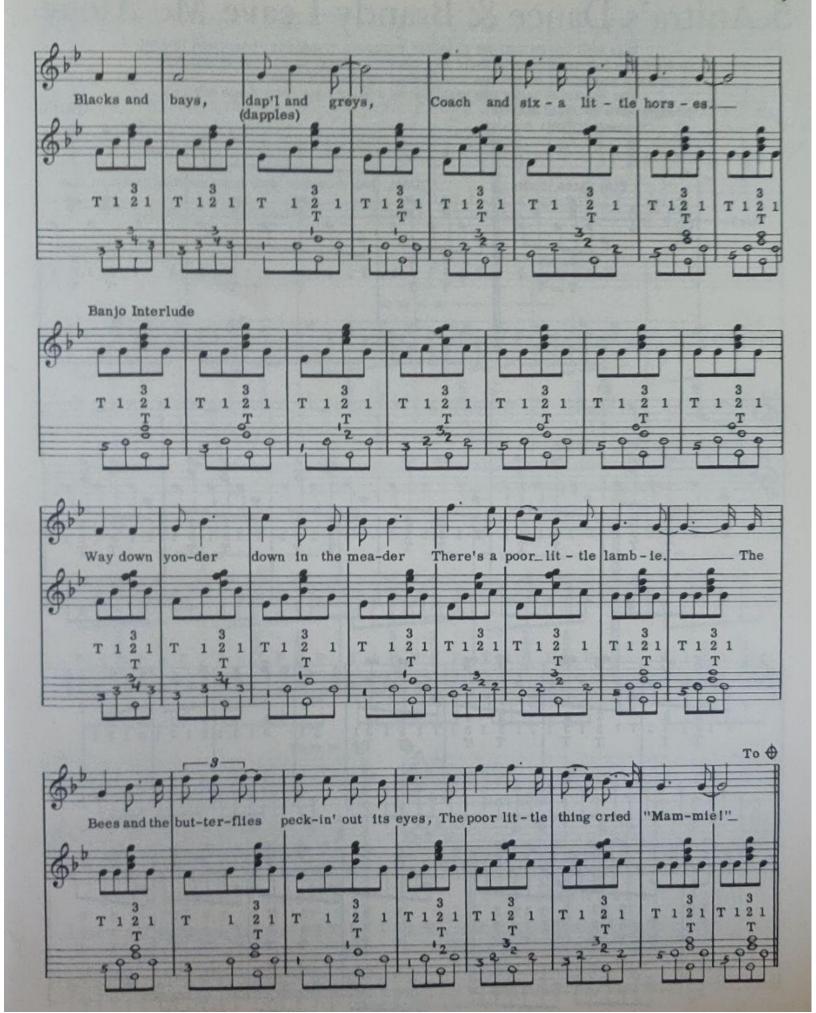
The strum I worked out for this song back in 1946 proved so effective that I've since used it on many other songs. My sister Peggy has nicknamed it the "lullaby since used it on many other study lick", an apt term. In effect what is happening here is that the third string becomes lick", an apt term. In check that is plucked between every other note. Try to

maintain an even, sustained effect.

The song is one variant of a widely known lullaby. At first glance the words seem to make no sense. But think back to slavery days when it was made up. Many a mother had to work all day up in the Big House, taking care of the master's children, while her own were unattended down in the slave cabins. The verses now are seen as a tragic comparison on the fortunes of two different babies. The imagination is stimulated, as it always is by good poetry, to see many similar contrasts: the song takes on new layers of meaning, as one learns more of life.



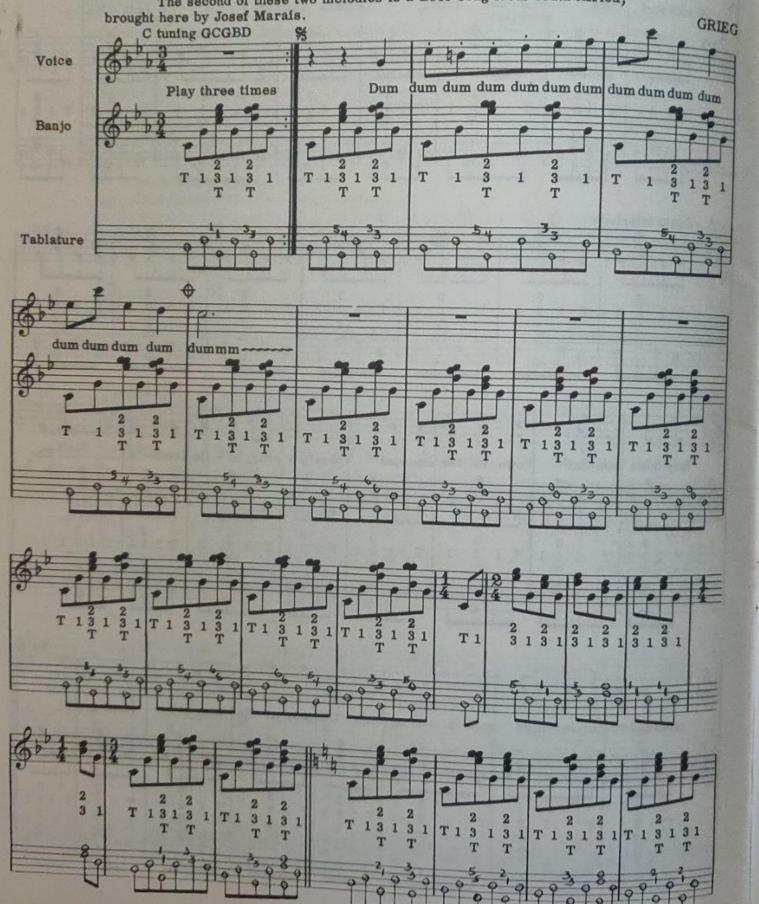




5. Anitra's Dance & Brandy Leave Me Alone

It is well known that the greatest European composers borrowed liberally from the folk traditions of their own country. There is no reason that folk musicians should not return the compliment and borrow back.

The second of these two melodies is a Boer song from South Africa,



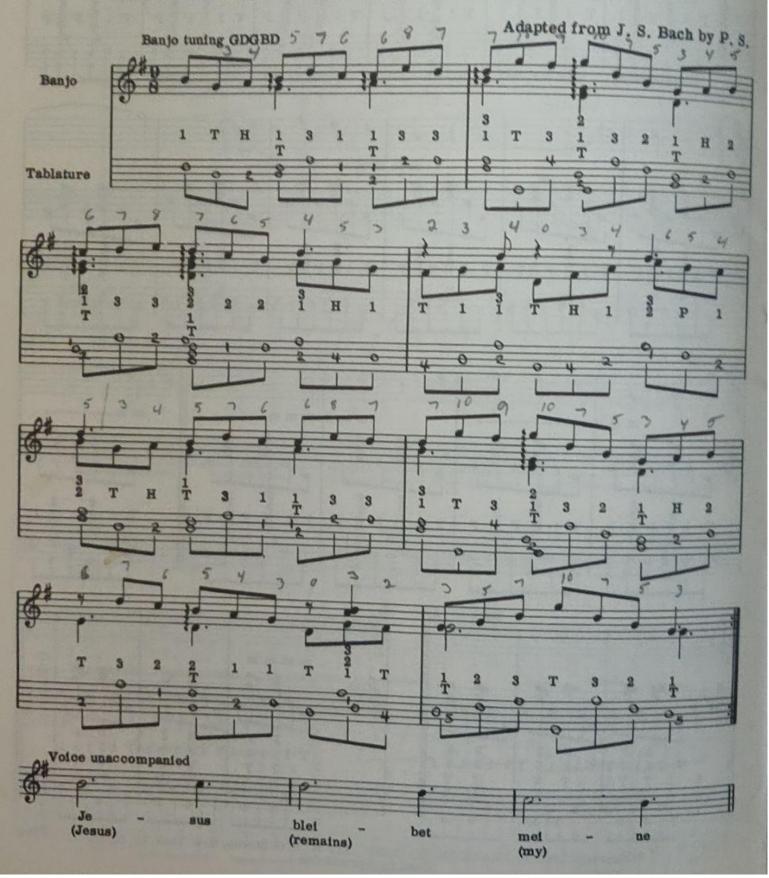


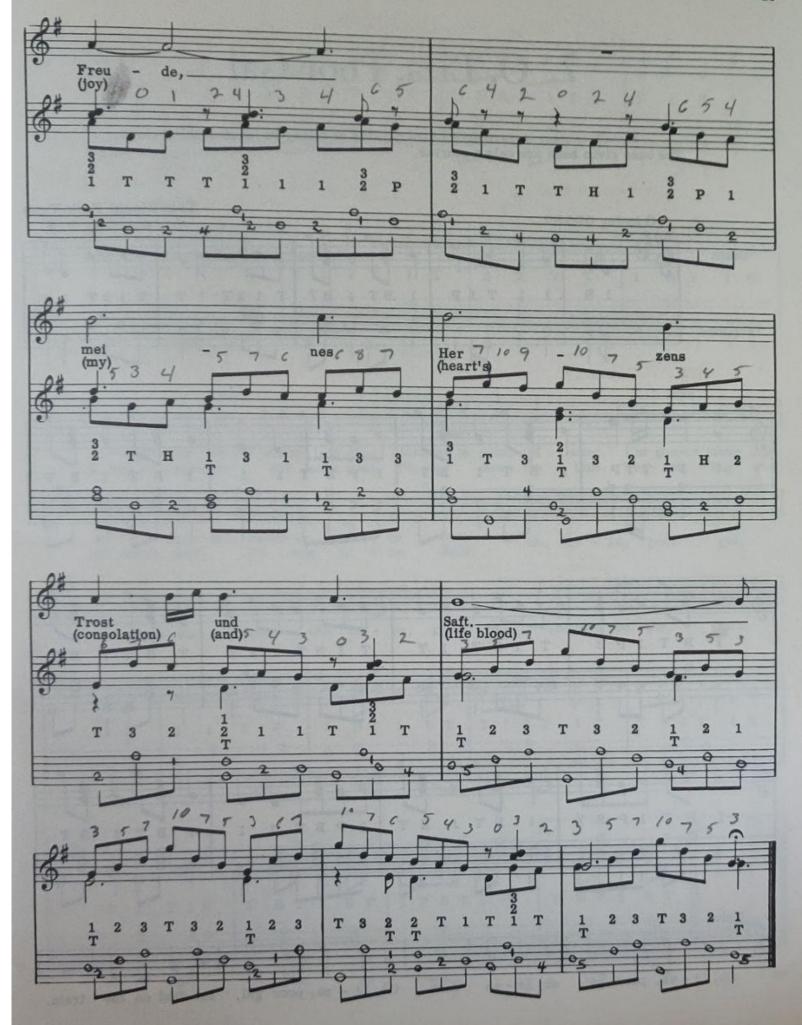


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6. Jesu, Joy Of Man's Desiring

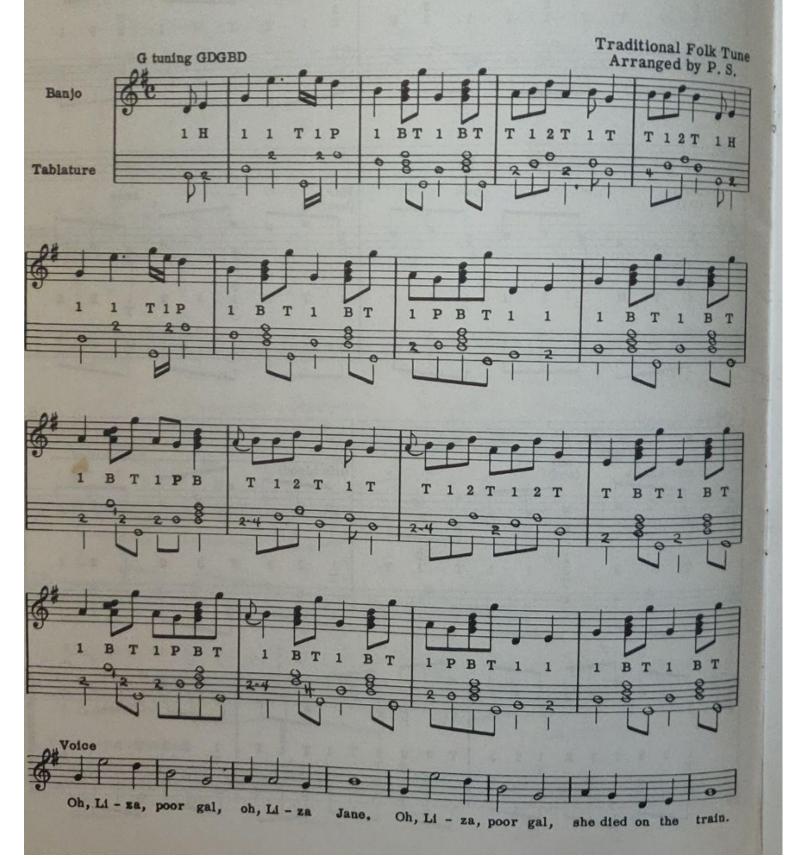
I believe that Bach would have delighted in the banjo, because of its precise, needle-like tones. This particular arrangement (of the organ obligate to one of his chorales) sounds best when played rather softly, and not too fast.

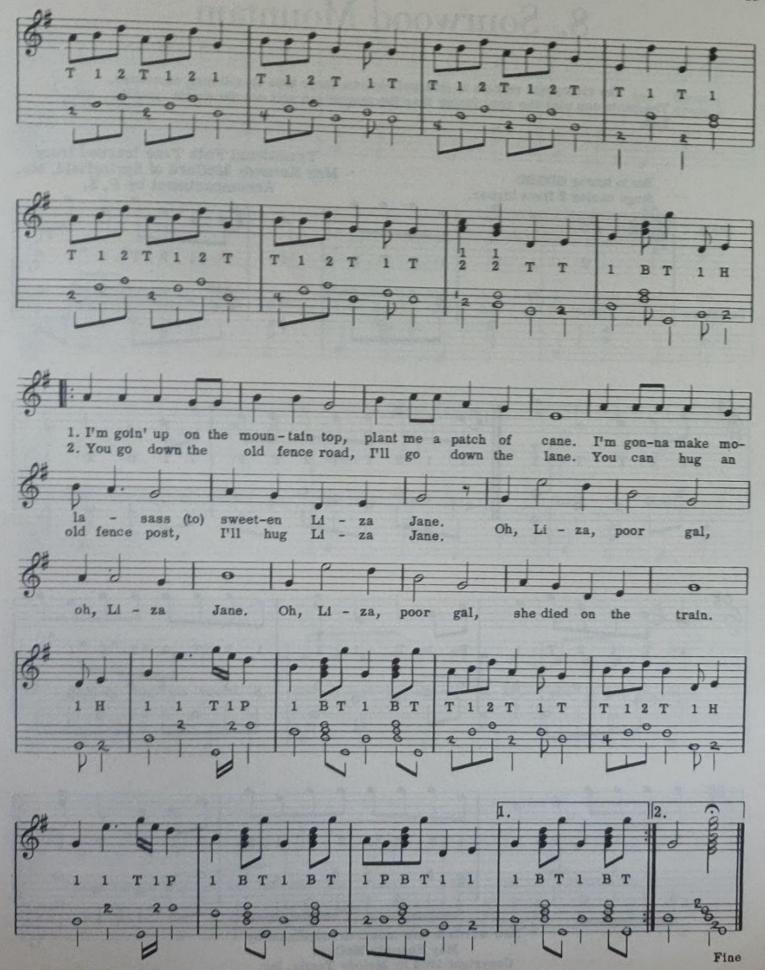




7. O, Liza, Poor Gal

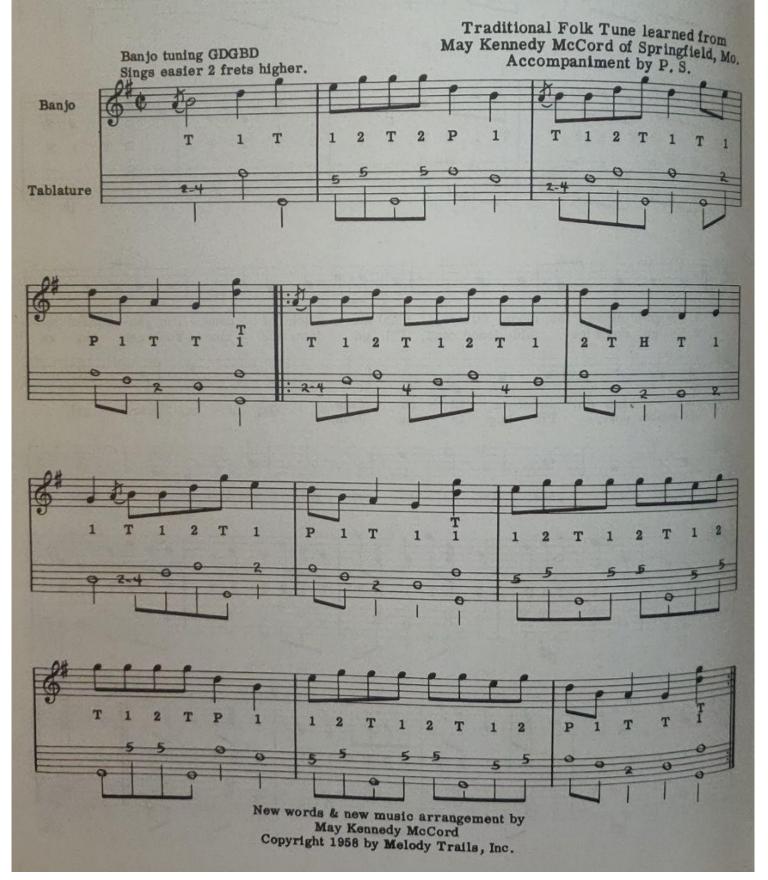
Here's another square dance tune capable of taking on innumerable verses. The ones given here are only a starter.

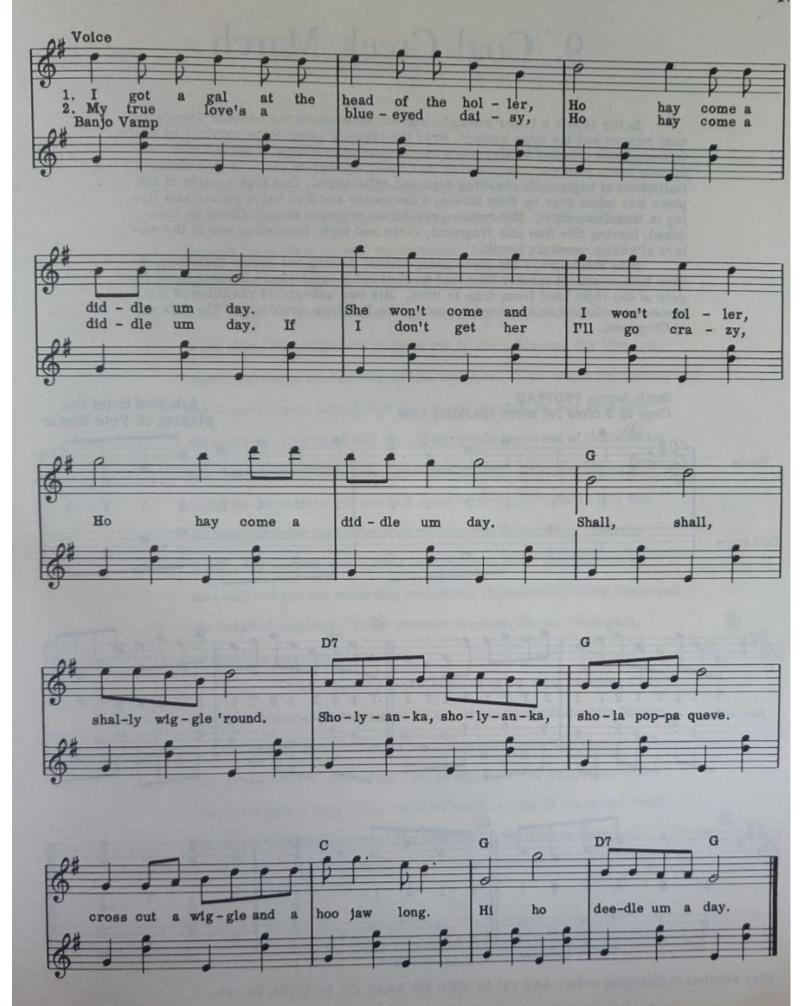




8. Sourwood Mountain

The ridiculous refrain to this well-known banjo tune is optional, of course. The banjo can play the song faster than the tongue can spit out the words, you'll find.



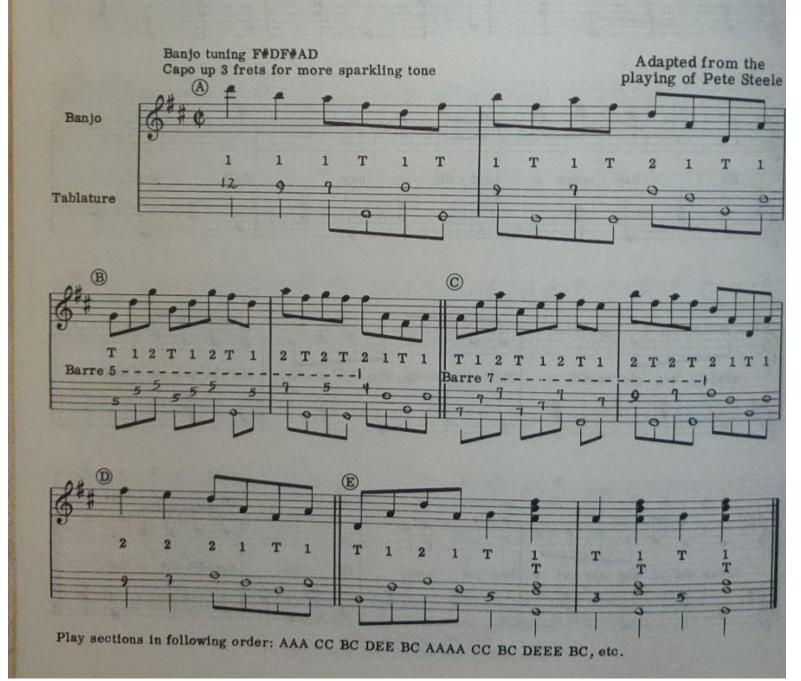


9. Coal Creek March

In the 1890's a bitter struggle was waged between the eastern Tennessee coal miners and the mine owners, over the issue of using state convicts as scabs in the mines. Pitched battles were fought involving several thousand men. A famous banjo solo was composed at that time, a program piece, which included imitations of bugle calls, barking dogs and rifle shots. One high section of the piece was taken over by Pete Steele, a carpenter and fine banjo picker now living in Hamilton, Ohio. The rather pretentious virtuoso sound effects he abandoned, leaving this fine folk fragment, clean and high, reminding one of the waters of an icy mountain brook.

Pete Steele plays the piece using almost nothing but double thumbing. I have been unable to master this, and worked out a variation of it using three fingers of the right hand from time to time. His own unbeatable rendition of the piece can be heard on a record issued by the Folklore Archives of The Library

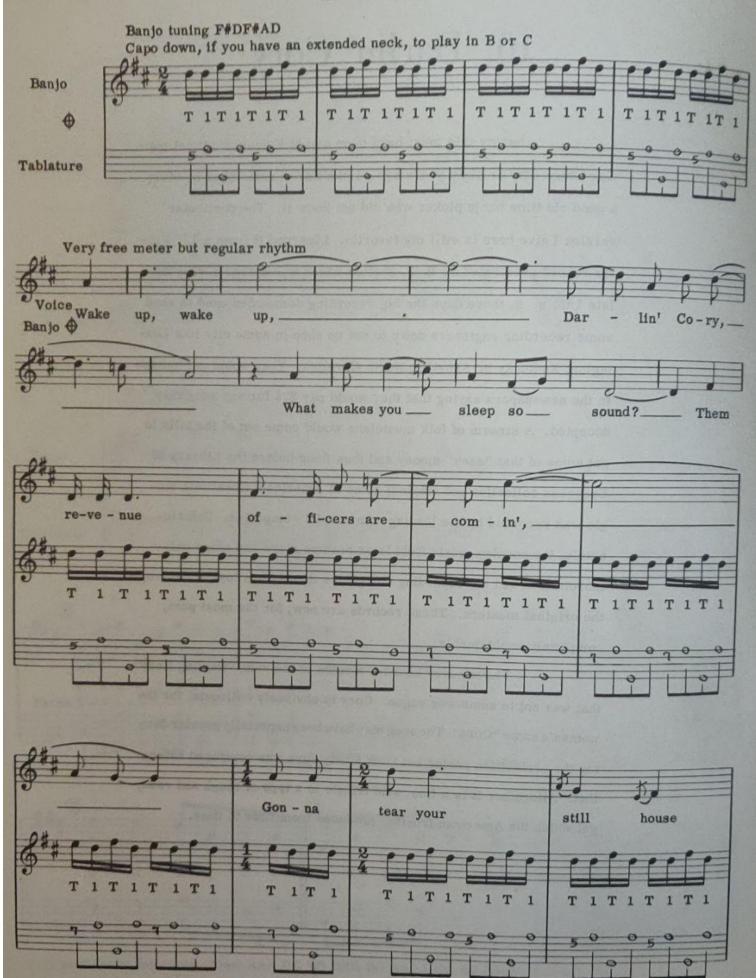
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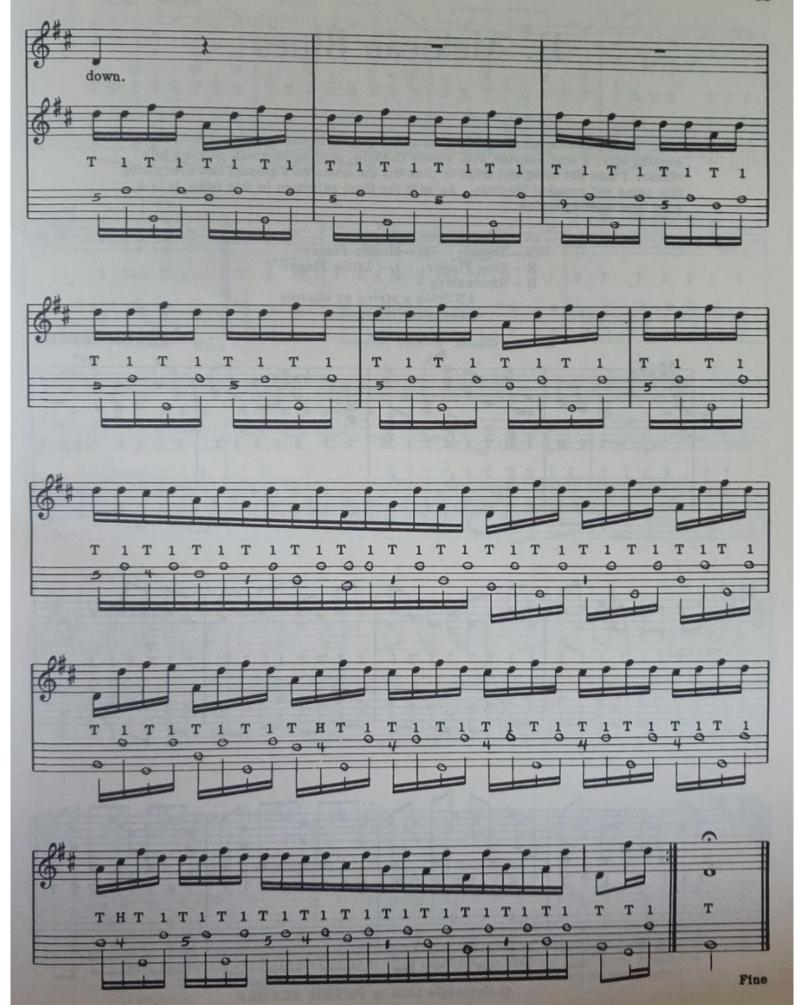


10. Darlin' Cory

Surely this must have been one of Kentucky's most popular songs fifty or sixty years ago. I can't ever remember meeting a good old time banjo picker who did not know it. The particular version I give here is still my favorite. I learned it from a 12" Victor record performed by B. F. Shelton which was issued during the late 1920's. In those days the big recording companies used to send some recording engineers down to set up shop in some city like Lexington, Kentucky or Ashville, North Carolina. They would put notices in the newspapers saying that they would pay \$25 for any song they accepted. A stream of folk musicians would come out of the hills to get some of that "easy" money and thus (long before the Library of Congress collection got started) some of America's finest folk music was recorded by the leading commercial companies. Unfortunately, the country music field later became more and more commercialized and the recording companies themselves lost or destroyed the original masters. These records are now, for the most part, completely unobtainable.

I have never heard a version of the song "Darling Cory" that was not in some way vague. Cory is obviously colloquial for the woman's name "Cora". The song may have been especially popular during the prohibition period but I am pretty sure was composed before that. Altogether it is a fine, wild tribute to a type of rough and ready gal which the American frontier produced from time to time.





11. Mexican Blues

This piece is not truly Mexican nor a blues. It was composed in 1942, one evening after a long session with Woody Guthrie, playing Mexican popular folk music. I then sat down and tried to pick out the blues on a guitar, and everything that came out sounded Mexican. As with the first selection in this folio, it is a good tune wanting lyrics.

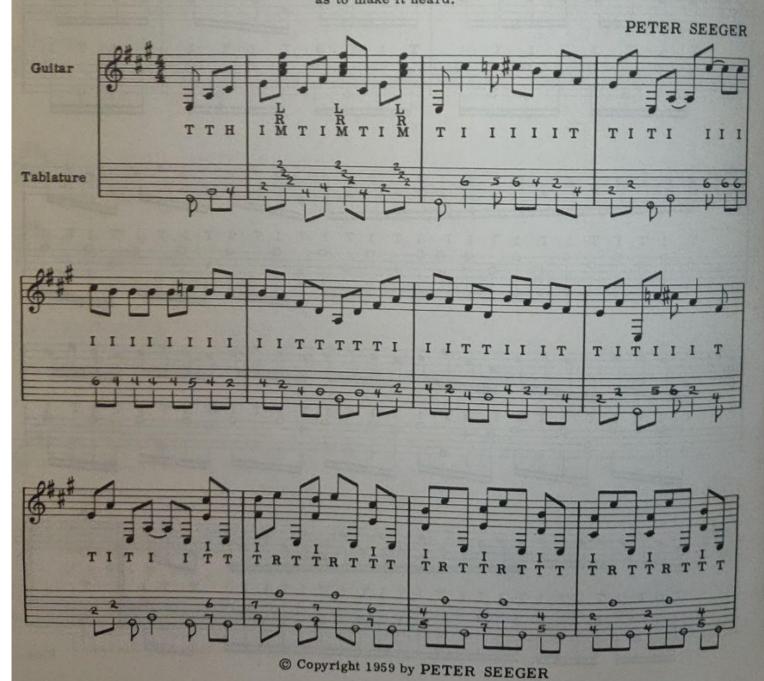
I - Index Finger

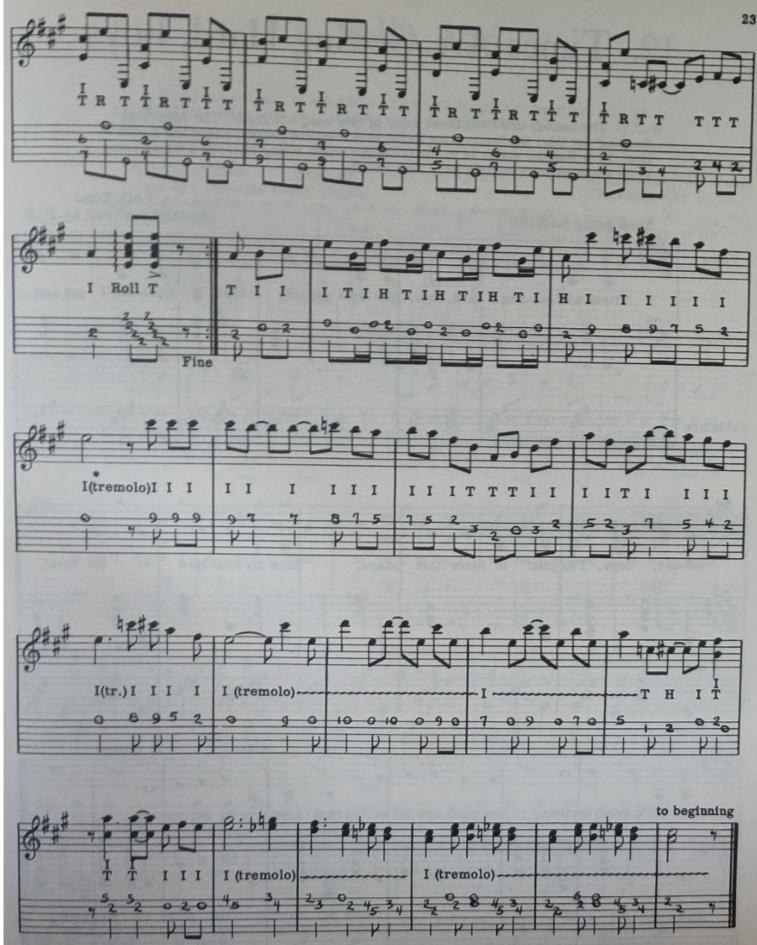
T - Thumb; M - Middle Finger

R - Ring Finger; L - Little Finger

H - Hammering -

LH frets a string so sharply as to make it heard.

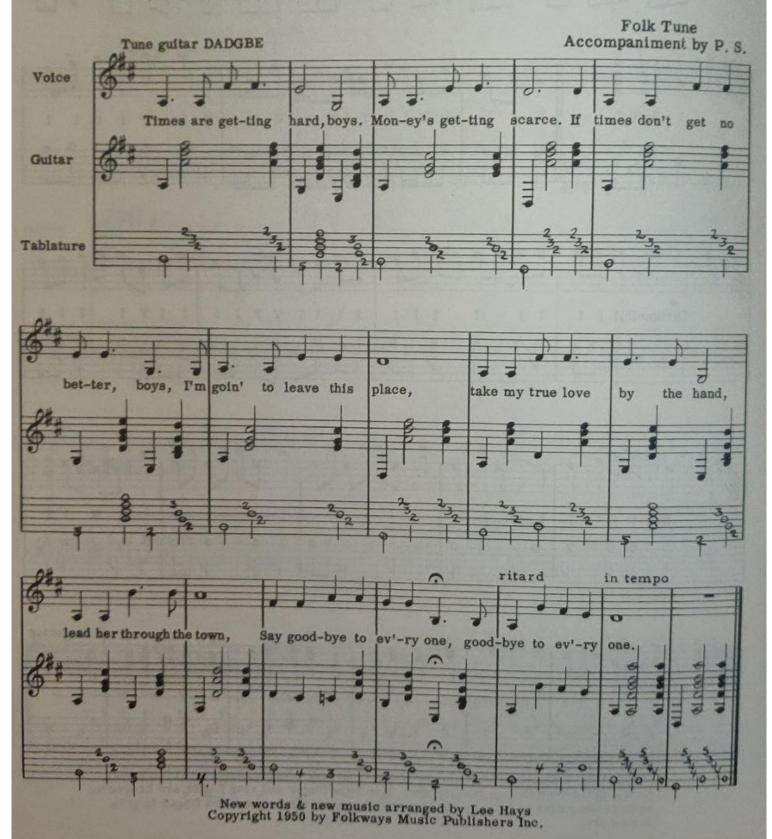




*The tremolo here is played by the right index finger, bringing it back and forth lightly over the top two strings. The little finger and ring finger are braced against the guitar and the thumb is pressed against the active index finger to give it support.

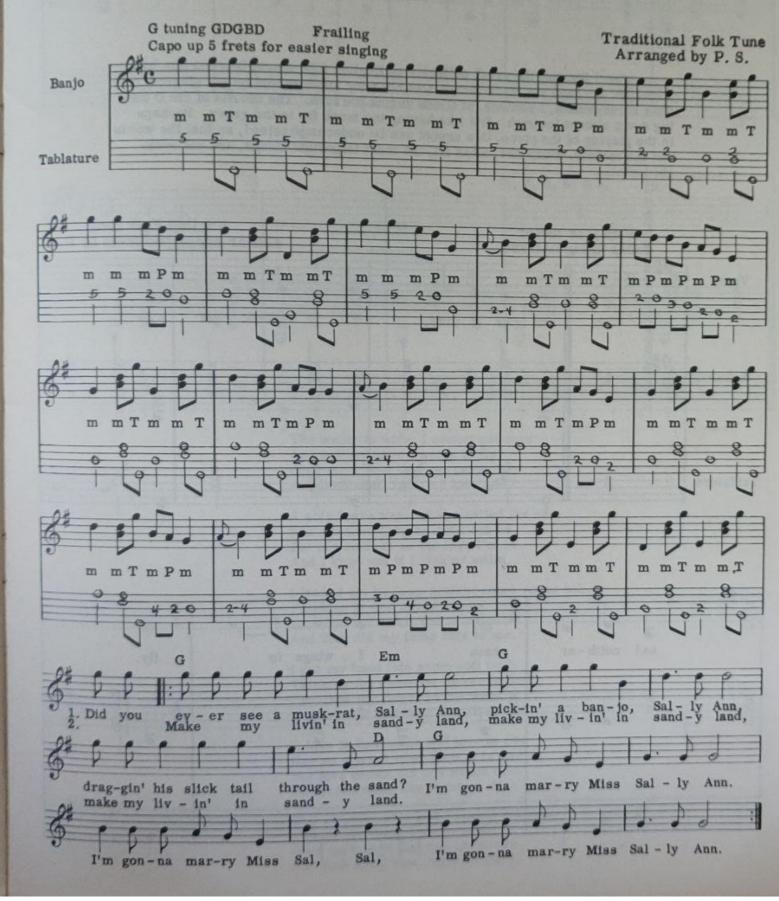
12. Times Are Getting Hard, Boys

The melody and first three lines of this song are from "The American Songbag" by Carl Sandburg. Lee Hays, with succinct poetry, added the fourth line. Note that the guitar is in the D Tuning (sixth string lowered a whole tone, to D) which permits certain very rich chords.



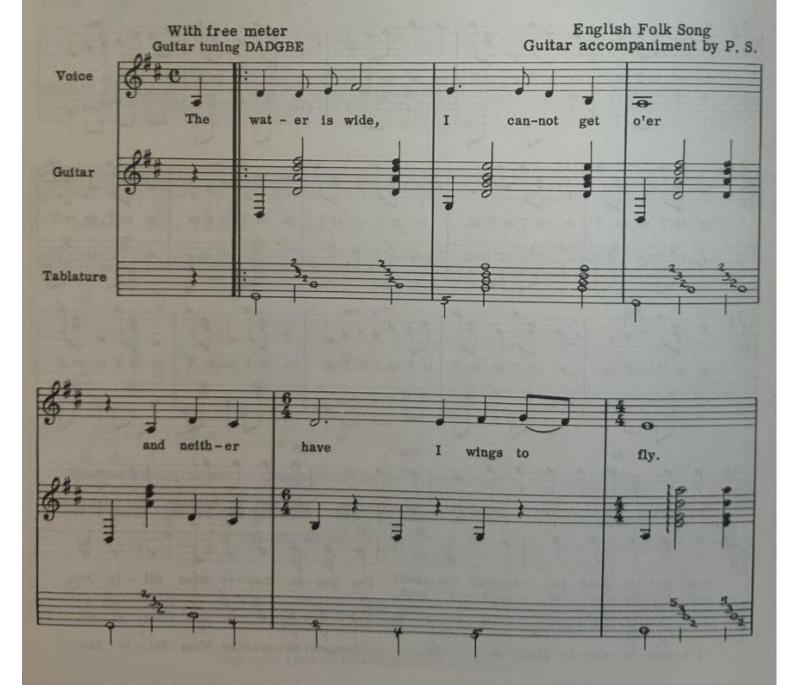
13. Sally Ann

If you can get hold of a fiddler, or a mandolin player, have him play the melody of this along with you. It gives out a fine high whine. The piercing first half is balanced by the jocular second half.

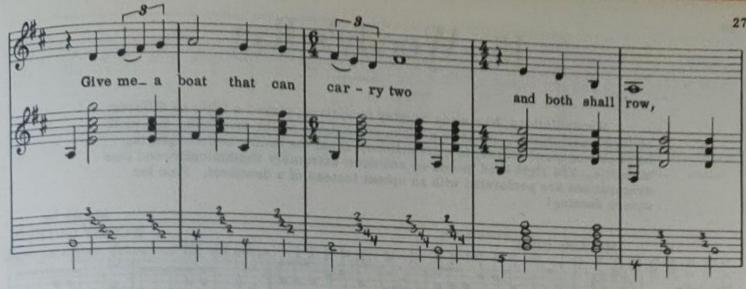


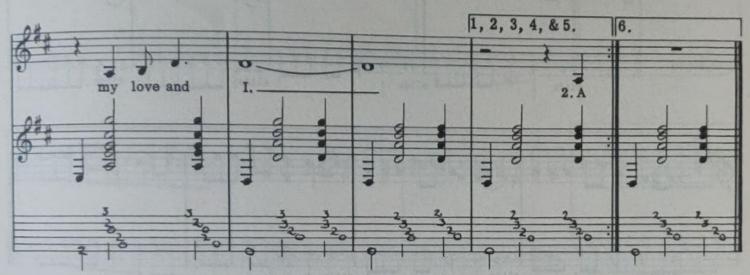
14. The Water Is Wide

Cecil Sharpe, the great collector of English folk songs, learned this half a century ago, and yet since then it was not sung much except by art singers. This arrangement, I confess, at times seems too lush. The chords of the D tuning seem almost too rich. It's like having too much fat in the gravy. Perhaps in the playing of the piece, this aspect can be underemphasized, so that the words and the melody, which are, after all, the most important things, are not overshadowed.









The water is wide; I cannot get over And neither have I wings to fly Give me a boat that can carry two And both shall row, my love and I.

A ship there was and she sailed the sea She's loaded deep as deep can be But not so deep as the love I'm in And I know not if I sink or swim.

I leaned my back up against some young oak Thinking it was a trusty tree But first it bended and it broke And thus did my false love to me.

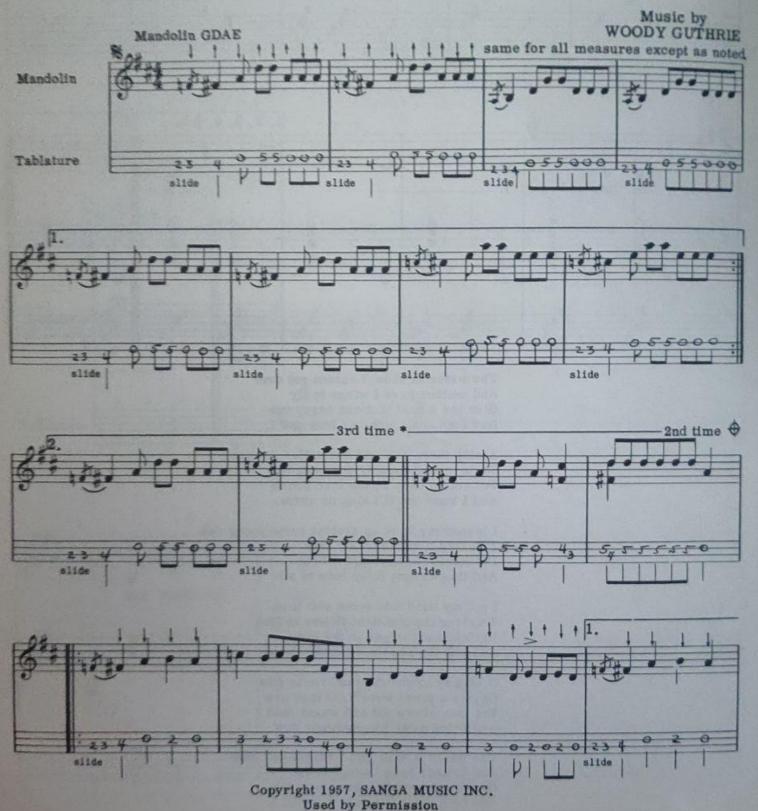
I put my hand into some soft bush Thinking the sweetest flower to find I pricked my finger to the bone And left the sweetest flower alone.

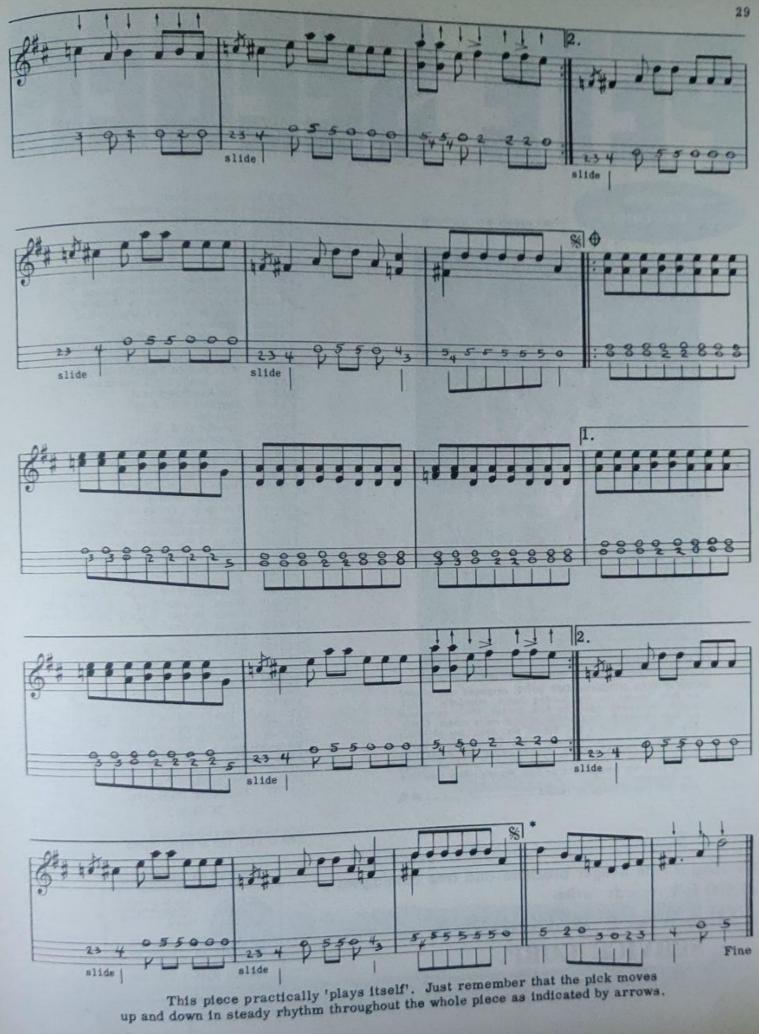
O love is handsome and love is fine Gay as a jewel when first it is new But love grows old and waxes cold And fades away like summer dew.

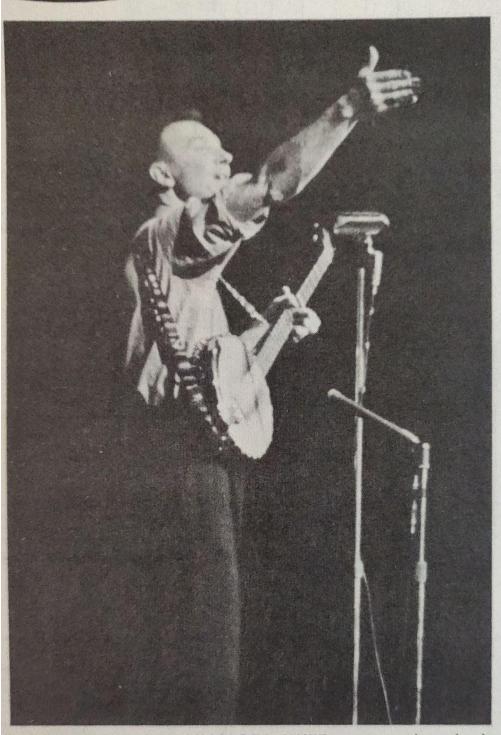
The water is wide and I cannot get over And neither have I wings to fly Give me a boat that can carry two And both shall row, my love and I.

15. Woody's Rag

Woody Guthrie, like many country musicians, played a little on different stringed instruments. He knew a dozen or so tunes on the mandolin. His method of playing it, of course, is quite different from the Italian style of playing mandolin. The right hand moves up and down extremely rhythmically, and thus syncopations are performed with an upbeat instead of a downbeat. Fine for square dancing!







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