Old Time River Man

John Hartford's Breaks from the Down On the River LP

John Hartford

Open E tuning In E
(eBEG#B)
88 bpm +-
Where does an old time river man go, after he's passed away
Does his soul still keep a watch on the deep, for the rest of the river days
Does he then come back as a channel cat, or the wasps that ride on the wheel
Or the birds that fly through summer sky, or the fish swimmin' under the keel

Where does an old time pilot go, after he stood his last watch
Does he fall by the ear of the man who steers, sayin' "Hold her on that notch"
There's a gentle sneeze in the river breeze, it's sayin' "Son I'm goin' to bed"
And the light their pipes and go off in the night, or was it fireflies instead

Break

Where does an old time engineer go, after he's cooled her down
Gone up the hill to never come back, on the quiet side of town
Does his soul live on in the engine's song, while the striker checks the gears
Is he still afloat on an old steam boat, after he's gone from here