

Lord, that
 61 Highway,
 it's the longest road I know,

She run from New York City,
 run right by my baby's door.

When these recordings were made in 1938, the African-American music of several generations could still be heard in Mississippi. Fife and drum bands still played country picnics in some areas, black fiddle and banjo players were synthesizing old country reels, prisoners still sang work songs to make their chores lighter, and a cappella spirituals were sung in many churches.

For Alan Lomax, this was "The land where the blues began," an extraordinary wellspring of song, music and poetry he has remained close to all of his life. He had made numerous field recordings of many styles of black music in Mississippi throughout the 1930's and 40's. By 1959, some of the oldest styles, like the work song, were waning, and it seemed like a good time to make the best possible recordings of them that he could.

The Yazoo River, Lomax wrote, runs west from the hills of northeastern Mississippi, then makes a dog-leg curve south to join the Mississippi. The red, gravelly land along its westward curve is known as "the hills," a region which was settled early, farmed hard by Southern planters and eroded terribly through a century of careless handling. Along its southern course, west to the Mississippi, is the Yazoo Delta proper — fat, black cotton land rescued from river floods by the levees and now divided into enormous, modern, factory-like plantations. William Faulkner gives us an epic image of

this country in his novel.

Clarksdale, Mississippi, capital of the Delta, shares with Memphis the honor of being the home of the blues. Jelly Roll Morton and W.C. Handy both played there. Bessie Smith sang there and died there. Big Bill Broonzy, Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, the Mississippi Sheiks and hundreds of other known and unknown blues singers tried out their songs in its juke.

The river, then the railroad, then the state highways, and finally radio and television brought new musical currents to the Delta so that a fresh style of music developed every ten or fifteen years. Each style more less obliterated the one before it, and this is typical of the ever-changing, self-renewing flow of the African-American tradition.

The hill country to the north, however has been a backwater in which various types of older music lived on. More and more the land was turned over to small Negro farmers, such as the performers in this disc. Thus in deep country neighborhoods between Coates and Topola, folk musicians until recently played the reels of the slave at country picnics.

Here, in the summer of 1942, Lomax found Sid Hemphill, an extraordinary blind musician, a maker of fiddles and drums, and a composer of

scores of ballads. Hemphill was the leader of a band of ante-bellum vintage, including fiddle, drum, five-string banjo and parapsips tuned to a non-European, four-note scale. Before the Civil War, parapsips were common to a wide area in the deep South, and it is likely that Hemphill's music was an echo from ante-bellum days and ultimately from original African sources. In the summer of 1955, when this record was made, Hemphill was disabled over with age and his band had been broken up, but no country picnic could be held without his piping.

A tradition contemporary with Hemphill's, but somewhat more recent and more vital at that time, is represented in the file-and-drum band of the Young Brothers. Ed Young, the fife, blows leazy-like passages that bear a remarkable resemblance to West African flute playing. His brother Lennie whacks out off-beat rhythms on his drum that closely resemble patterns popular in the West Indies. This is a dance tradition that seems directly out of the march music of the file-and-drum corps of the American Revolution.

The next oldest level of dance music can be heard in the Pratcher Brothers' percussive use of fiddle and guitar. Their style of riggy singing was popular in the area before the blues appeared and demonstrates the strong two-way influence between black and white musicians found through-

out the south. Harry Oster had found other bands of this same vintage in Louisiana.

In the playing and singing of Fred McDowell, we come upon the blues proper as they first emerged from the levee camp into country dances — a blues much freer and more improvisational, both lyrically and musically, than those recorded during the 20's and 30's. In John Dudley's blues, we meet a country musician of the sophisticated, yet completely folk, tradition of that later period. Dudley and Robert Johnson both came from Tunica County, Mississippi and belonged to the same school.

The spirituals sung here by Anderson Burten, Viola Jones, and the members of their Mississippi churches represent a style that crystallized around the same time as Fred McDowell's blues. Beginning in the mid 19th century, blacks and whites in rural areas would often meet outdoors to sing repetitive religious songs that would be built around stock phrases and themes. The performances would build to an extraordinary intensity. By the turn of the century, a distinct black spiritual tradition had developed that would influence that later "gospel blues" style of the 20's and 30's.

The prison work songs recorded at the Lambert State Penitentiary and Parchman Farm (where Dudley was incarcerated) probably represent the

oldest traditions and styles: work songs and field hollers. They reflect the song heritage of West Africa, where traditionally singing inspired, organized and eased all kinds of work activities. Songs like these were once sung all over the South, but they survived the longest in the then-segregated prison systems where Alan Lomax and his father John began documenting them in 1933. These improvised lyrics were built around the rhythms that prisoners worked to everyday and were a means of making the time pass a little easier. The men gave voice to their feelings and frustrations, creating unique and riveting performances as they did so.

Lomax returned to this region in 1978 to shoot material for his *American Patchwork* series on PBS. At that time he was dismayed to find many of the singing traditions represented on this record all but gone. "The whittling that has given the world so much is drying up," he stated. While current blues revival has brought much exposure to the urban Chicago style of blues, the older traditions of Mississippi remain a less well-known, less appreciated, and less understood area of American music.

In 1993, Lomax's *The Land Where the Blues Began* (New York: Pantheon), an account of his encounters with African-American musicians in Mississippi and reflections on Southern culture, was awarded the National Book Award for

non-fiction. It contains lengthy descriptions of all of Lomax's work in Mississippi, including the 1959 field trip.

1. LOUISIANA

sung by Henry Ratcliff.

Recorded September 18, 1959 at Parchman Farm, Camp Number 7, Mississippi.

The field holler is the "deep song" of the black south. Every singer in the "pen," where almost every man was a singer, had his own personal holler, blues, or moan voicing his thoughts and fantasies, which singled him out and gave him a sense of individuality. Here, Henry Ratcliff announces his intention of "dropping off" down to good old Louisiana when he has served his time at Parchman.

*O I ever make it, baby I be long gone,
O Captain said, "Hurry, hurry along,"
O then the serpent said "noo",
O if I had my 38-40 I wouldn't do either one,
O I'm givin' down in Louisiana,
don't you want to go? (2x)
O you look for me in Louisiana,
I be long gone. (2x)
O you can tell everybody that I'll be gone,
O I'll be by in see you five the summer gone,
O I might be in a hurry — I can't stay very long*

2. JIM AND JOHN

performed by Ed Young, W.C. Lomax Young Sr. and Lomax Young Jr., drums. Recorded September 25, 1959 in Como, Mississippi.

The Young Brothers' Band had been active in the Como area playing at country picnics in the summer, until about five years before these recordings were made. Here they perform a wordless version of one of their family compositions with the lullaby of the house clapping in magnificent African rhythm. A one-phrase melody is varied playfully in its melodic and rhythmic aspects, creating cross rhythms with a powerful repeated accompanying rhythmic figure — an ancestor of the blues dance form, but far older.

In *The Land Where the Blues Begin* Lomax characterized Ed Young as a winsome, Pea-like figure who delighted in his music. This style of dance music is noted in the historical record — one of Thomas Jefferson's slaves is known to have organized a fife-and-drum group during the Revolutionary War — but how and why this music persisted here alone is uncertain. The patriotic image associated with fife-and-drum music may have allowed Southern blacks to maintain it at a time when drumming by blacks was otherwise banned. Lomax felt that another important factor may have been that in the Mississippi hill country, many blacks owned their own land and thus had

more freedom to maintain old ways.

3. 61 HIGHWAY BLUES

Fred McDowell, guitar and vocal. Recorded in Como, Mississippi, September 25, 1959.

It was on Young's advice that Lomax sought out Fred McDowell, a friend and neighbor. This piece, one of the first that McDowell recorded for Lomax, concerns the north-south highway that runs from Chicago to Memphis to the Gulf, a road of adventure and escape for the blacks of the mid South. Fred McDowell of Como, Mississippi treats it in the free style of the old-time country bluesman, sliding the bottleneck with his left hand to double the melodic part, and playing a complex African-like polyrhythm with his right hand. When he closed this performance in his field log, Lomax wrote a single word right next to it: "Perfect."

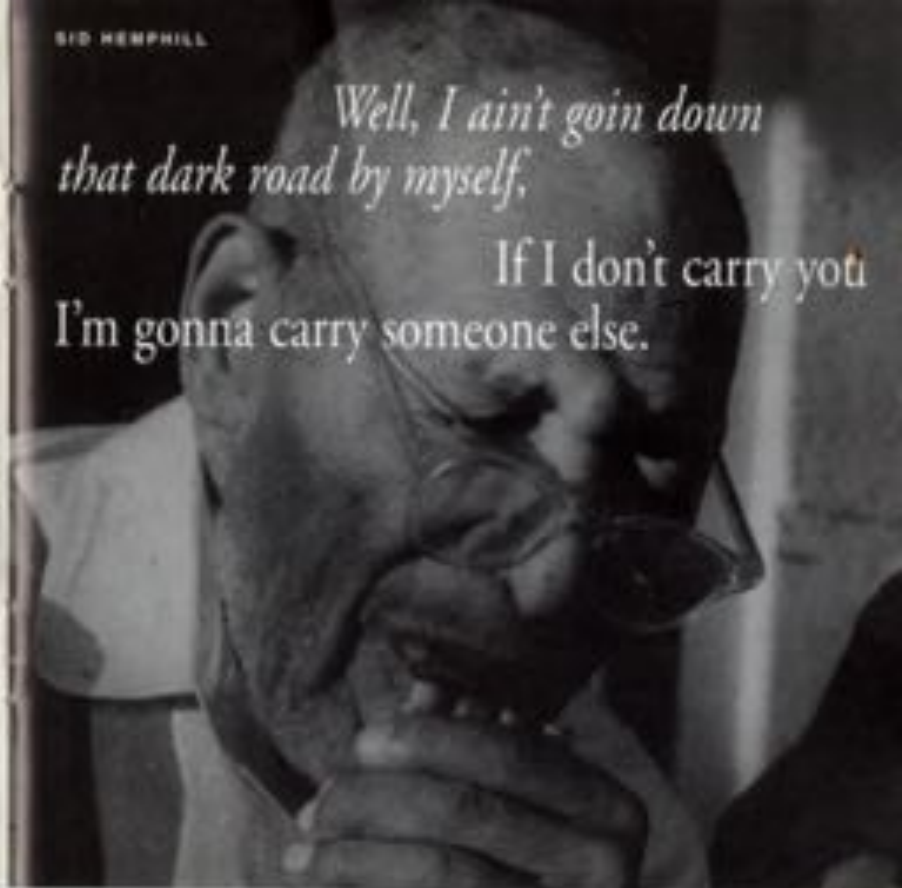
*Lord, that 61 Highway,
it's the longest road I know. (2x)
She runs from New York City
Runs right by my baby's door.*

*Well, she's some fella say
them Greyhound buses don't run (2x)
Lord, just go to West Memphis, baby
Look down Highway 61.*

SID HEMPHILL

*Well, I ain't goin' down
that dark road by myself,*

*If I don't carry you
I'm gonna carry someone else.*



*I said please, please see somebody for me, (2x)
If you see my baby,
Tell her she's all right with me.*

*Lord, if I should happen to die, baby,
before you think my time have come, (2x)
I want you to bury my body
Down on Highway 61.*

4. STEWBALL

song by Ed Lewis, leading a group of prisoners.
Recorded September, 1959 at Lambert State
Penitentiary, Camp 8, Mississippi.

The original of this leader-response work song was an Irish ballad about a legendary Irish race horse named Stevball. This song took several forms in America — one, the Kentucky racing horse ballad, "Molly and Teribrock," and the other this almost epic work song form known in various parts of the South, but most common in the Mississippi penitentiaries. Ed Lewis takes the lead vocal here with a hoarse group from Camp 8 at Lambert.

*Good mornin', oh yeah, young lady, ah-hah,
How you feelin', well, young man, young man!
Run your hand in-in my front pocket, ah-hah,
And don't you know, ah-hah, my name, ah my name.*

Chorus

*Get on the white horse, Molly's gone,
Get on the white horse, Molly's gone*

*Well, I sipped on Katy's window,
And I sipped on the poor gal's door,
Will this is the answer that she give me,
'And nigger, don't say here no more,
No more, you no more.'*

*Way out in East Calumet
Where the timber grow tall,
You could see you lot of money
On that noble grey mare.*

Chorus

*There's a big day down in Jackson,
Don't you wish that you were there!
You could see you lot of money
On that noble grey mare.*

Chorus

*Says ol' Stevball and jockey riders,
And they paint him solid red,
And if it hadn't a-been for Molly,
Says ol' Stevball he might stumble,
And there goes my life.*

Chorus

5. PO' BOY BLUES

performed by John Dudley, vocals and guitar.
Recorded October, 1959 at Parchman Farm
Dairy Camp, Mississippi.

In 1959 Lonnie found John Dudley serving his last few months at Parchman Penitentiary. He was in his sixties. In his younger days he had played at all the country jukes in Tunica County, Mississippi, the area that gave rise to Robert Johnson's extraordinary guitar style. Dudley's vocal play and the complex guitar style of his guitar link him directly to Johnson and other bluesmen of this area, including Charlie Patton and Tommy Johnson. His repertoire included a version of Tommy Johnson's "Cool Drink of Water Blues" (available as "Cool Water Blues" in the *Sounds of the South Atlantic* Records CD box set) and a version of Patton's "Charlottesville Blues" (track 21).

*I'm a poor boy and I'm a great long way
from home (2x)*

*Well, I telephoned my baby, please send my love,
Well, I phoned to my baby, please send me my ring,
I'm a poor boy and I get nowhere to stay.*

*Run here, baby, sit down on my knee, (2x)
Have any trouble, yeah it all to me.*

*I'm gonna sing this song,
and I ain't gonna sing no more! (2x)
Keep down trouble, boys, now I better go.*

6. GOD'S UNCHANGING HAND

song by Anderson Burton, leading congregation at
Independence Church, Tyre, Mississippi.
Recorded September, 1959.

A 20th century spiritual in the swinging congregational style common among black country Baptists of the 1910's and 1920's is here performed by Anderson Burton and congregation in Coon, Mississippi.

*God's unchanging hand, hold to his hand,
God's unchanging hand.*

Refrain:
*Build your hope on things eternal
And hold to God's unchanging hand.*

*Oh elders, won't you hold to his hand,
God's unchanging hand.*

Refrain:
*Oh members, won't you hold to his hand,
God's unchanging hand.*

Refrain

It was soon one mornin'
 death come a-creepin' in the room,
 Oh my Lord,
 my Lord,
 what shall I do to be saved?

7. KEEP YOUR LAMPS TRIMMED AND BURNING

Fred McDowell, guitar and vocal. Recorded in
 Coala, Mississippi, September 29, 1959.

This is a premier piece, a genuine folk spiritual
 dealing with the parable of the wise and foolish
 virgins. It was made popular by guitar-playing
 Blind Willie Johnson, whose record inspired Fred
 McDowell's performance. Good country guitar
 pickers aspire to make their instruments speak the
 words of the song, and here, time after time,
 McDowell leaves out whole sections of the text,
 letting the guitar sing in his place.

*Just keep your lamps trimmed (and burnin').
 See what the Lord has done.*

*Well, just don't get worried, (3)
 See what the Lord has done.*

*Keep a your lamps trimmed and (burnin') (3)
 See what the Lord has done.*

*Children don't get worried, (3)
 See what the Lord has done. Etc., etc.
 Note: Words in brackets () not sung.*

8. EMMALINE, TAKE YOUR TIME

performed by Sid Hemphill, vocal and quills;
 Lucian Smith, drums. Recorded September, 1959
 in Senatobia, Mississippi.
Previously unrecorded.

This fascinating and delightful performance is a
 late echo of a style once common in the South.
 Panpipes, like the set of cane quills played here by
 Sid Hemphill (1876-1963), are one of the oldest
 and most widespread of musical instruments. Just
 Chandler Harris and other writers noted their popu-
 larity among Southern blacks in the 19th century,
 but in this century they have become all but
 extinct. Henry "Ragtime" Thomas, a Texas ros-
 tador of Hemphill's generation, made commer-
 cial recordings featuring guitar, voice and quills, in
 the late 1920's.

The use of a pentatonic scale and vocal "whoops"
 mark Hemphill's performance as strongly African.
 The provenance of the quills is unknown. Similar
 sounding pipes and flutes are common in West
 Africa. The nimble polyrhythms of Smith's banjo
 accompaniment (on an instrument tuned several steps low)
 adds further African flavor.

9. I'M GONNA LIVE ANTHONY 'TILL I DIE

performed by Miles Pratcher, guitar and vocals;
Bob Pratcher, fiddle. Recorded September 21,
1959 in Como, Mississippi.

Miles and Bob Pratcher raised watermelons,
corn, and corn cobs way back in the woods near
Como. In their middle years, they still provided
dance music that made their neighborhood happy
on Saturday nights.

There are a staggering number of blues recordings
available, but only a relative handful of black string
band musicians of this sort had ever been recorded
up to this point, and indeed very few since this
time.

*I'm gonna shake it well for my Lord,
I'm gonna shake it well for you, gal.
Well, sticks and stones gonna break my bones,
Talk about me when I'm dead and gone,
I'm gonna live anyhow...*

*I'm gonna live anyhow 'till I die,
Well, sticks and stones gonna break my bones,
Talk about me when I'm dead and gone,
I'm gonna live anyhow...*

*Good-bye, Lord... (2x)
Sticks and stones, etc...*

Good-bye, Lord, honey, what you do. (2x)

Sticks and stones, etc...

*Well, I'm gonna live anyhow 'till I die. (2x)
Sticks and stones, etc...*

*I'm gonna shake it well for my Lord. (2)
Sticks and stones, etc...*

*I'm gonna live well for my Lord. (2)
Sticks and stones, etc...*

10. LITTLE SALLY WALKER

performed by Mattie Gardner, Ida Mae Towns,
and Jennie Lee Pratcher, vocals and handclapping.
Recorded September 21, 1959 in
Como, Mississippi.

Three ladies of the Pratcher connection here, recall
a ring game of their childhood that has been popular
in America and Great Britain for centuries.

*Little Sally Walker,
Sittin' in a wagon,
Rin, Sally rin,
Wipe your weepin' eyes,
Put your hand on your hip,
Let your backbone slip,
Shake it to the east,
Shake it to the west,
Shake it to the one
That loves you the best.*

11. OLD DEVIL'S DREAM

performed by Sid Hemphill, vocal and guitar;
Lucian Smith, drums. Recorded September, 1959
in Senatobia, Mississippi.

Hemphill and Smith once had the leading band for
three counties around. In those days, this black
variant on the Southern favorite, "The Devil's
Dream," influenced many a country dance. They
recorded a similar version of it for Lomas in 1942.

12. ROLLED AND TUMBLED

performed by Rose Hemphill, vocal and guitar.
Recorded September 1959
in Senatobia, Mississippi.

Rose Hemphill, daughter of Sid Hemphill, sings
this familiar blues theme with a scalding intensity,
measuring each thought, each scrap of verse, each
literary memory on an unswaying phrase that burns
the heart. Most blues are performed for amusement,
with a smile. Rose, on the other hand,
addresses so directly with her anguish.

*Rolled an' I tumbled,
cried the whole night long. (2x)
Get up this morning,
didn't know right from wrong.*

*What you gonna do
when your troubles be like mine?*

*Gonna stand an' sing,
you're using my hands and cry*

*Went with a woman,
she won't do nuthin' de say,
What you want with a woman,
she won't do nuthin' de say*

*Rolled an' I tumbled,
cried the whole night long*

*...de with a woman, won't do nuthin' de say,
...went with a woman, she won't do nuthin' de say*

13. MAMA LUCY

sung by Leroy Gary.
Recorded September 18, 1959 at Parchman Farm,
Camp Number 7, Mississippi.

Another individually-composed field holler, this
time recalling an amusing exchange about a lady of
easy virtue. Lomas recalled that it "caused giggles
in the line at Parchman Penitentiary whenever
Leroy Gary sang it."

*Saw ol' Mama Lucy, doctor, don't you let her die,
O she can furnish me more under powder
than I can buy.*

*O you can go down yonder till the ol' Marty groan
I give her five, five dollar.*

*that little she sits' down on;
That little she sits' on.*

*O I don't know, buddy, but I believe I will
Take my baby to Jacksonville,
O my baby to Jacksonville.*

*O save her, doctor, save her, doctor, don't let her die,
O she can furnish me more under powder
than I can buy.*

Repeat stanzas two, etc.

14. **SOON ONE MORNIN'**

performed by Fred McDowell, vocals and guitar.
Recorded September 25, 1959
in Como, Mississippi.

This dramatic picture of struggle with death comes from the best period of the spiritual, the thirty years after the close of the Civil War. It became popular among quarters and among street roustabouts, and is one of the few old-time songs still known and occasionally sung everywhere in the South.

*It was soon one mornin'
death come a-croopin' in the room, (Ch)
Oh my Lord, my Lord,
what shall I do (to be saved)?*

*Well, hush, hush, I heard my Lord call, (Ch)
Oh, my Lord, oh, my Lord, what shall I do!*

*I've gonna stand right,
gonna wait until Jesus comes, (Ch)
Oh, my Lord, Oh, my Lord,
what shall I do (to be saved)?*

*It was soon one mornin'
death come a-croopin' in the room, (Ch)
Oh, my Lord, oh, my Lord, what shall I do!*

Note: The words in brackets are not sung; McDowell plays the syllables on his guitar.

15. **I'M GOIN' HOME**

15. **INTERVIEW**

sung by Ervin With, leading a group of prisoners.
Recorded October, 1959 at Parchman Farm
Dairy Camp, Mississippi.

Lomax wrote, "The postscriptary, with its hours of hard work and loneliness, has been a song factory. Even in my last visit in 1959, I found three or four new pieces, among which this touching and noble song was, perhaps, the best. Ervin With, the composer, has added a fine new song to the national repertoire." This is the first time the complete rendition by With and group has been released.



Well, go 'head marry
don't you wait on me,
Well, might not want you
when I go free.

Chorus
I'm givin' home, O yes (2x)
I'm givin' home,
Lord, Lord, I'm givin' home. (2x)

My baby sister's cryin' (2x)
"Brother come home, Lord,
Lord, brother, come home." (2x)

Chorus

My old mother's cryin' (2x)
"Come on home, Lord,
Lord, come on home." (2x)

Chorus

My old father's cryin' (2x)
"Come on home, Lord, Lord,
come on home." (2x)

Chorus

I'm gonna run, you better not catch me (2x)

Chorus

If they ask you who I resemble? (2x)
Resemble like hell, Lord, Lord,
resemble like hell (2x)

Chorus

17. FRED McDOWELL'S BLUES

performed by Fred McDowell, slide guitar and vocal; Miles Pratcher; guitar; Fanny Davis, comb.
Recorded September 23, 1979
in Coahoma, Mississippi.

McDowell's name and text are similar to "Louisiana," the field holler that opens this album. The slower tempo of the vocals artfully contrasts with the accompaniment. The voice prolongs the last note of the half phrase, so that the syncopations and delays in the two guitars can be heard at the same point the syncopation appears in work songs. The brooding descending melody is sung again, and again with small variations, to make a three phrase lullaby, a distinctive blues form. The lead guitar then takes over the melodic role. Sometimes the third phrase of the tune brings in the punch line of the conventional blues form with a new text and rhyme for the first two lines, but often the text is simply repeated, as it might be in a field holler (in some country blues, one phrase may be repeated indefinitely). In fact these country blues are like field hollers set to an insistent, driving dance rhythm. McDowell is joined here by his sister, Fanny, playing a comb.

Lord, I'm givin' down South, baby,
I believe I will carry my girl. (2x)
Lord, they tell me them doctors
really is out this world.

Lord, I'm givin' down in Louisiana,
I'm gonna buy me a mule head. (2x)
I'm gonna fix my baby
in the sun 'I have no other man.

Lord, sometime I wonder
what gonna come of me. (2x)

If the river was whiskey, honey,
I was a drink' duck. (2x)
Lord, I would die in the bottom
and I would never come up.

18. TRYIN' TO MAKE HEAVEN MY HOME

sung by Viola James, leading congregation at
Independence Church.
Recorded September, 1959 in Tyro, Mississippi.

Viola James, then a woman in her middle, vigorous years, and the mother of a large family, was the best known and most popular spiritual singer in the Coahoma area. Her song, sung here with congregation, is of 20th century origin.

Chorus
I'm travelin', Lord, I'm travelin',
Tryin' to make heaven my home.

It's a three-way journey, but I'm travelin'
Tryin' to make heaven my home.

Chorus

It's a rough, rocky road, but I'm travelin',
Tryin' to make heaven my home.

Chorus

It's a lonely journey, but I'm travelin',
Tryin' to make heaven my home.

Chorus

19. BERTA, BERTA

sung by Leroy Miller leading group of prisoners,
Recorded September 18, 1959 at Parchman Farm,
Camp Number 7, Mississippi.

Alberta or 'Berta,' is perhaps the favorite feminine name among blues and work song singers. She is the object of fantasies and the subject of verses in scores of work songs from the deep South. Here, Leroy Miller leads a hooping group at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman.

Oh Lord, Berta, Berta, oh Lord, gal - a-a-well. (2x)
Will you head marry don't you wait on me. (2x)
Will, might not want you when I go free. (2x)
Will, now, raise 'em up higher,
Let 'em drop on down. (2x)
Will, don't know the difference
When the sun goes down. (2x)

If the river was whiskey,
honey, I was a divin' duck,
Lord, I would dive to the bottom
 and I would never come up.

*Well, Berta in Meridian
 And she livin' at ease. (2x)
 Well, I'm so at Parchman,
 Got to work or leave. (2x)
 Oh, Alberta, Berta, Oh Lord, gal. (2x)
 Well, now raise 'em up higher,
 Let 'em drop on down. (2x)
 Don't know the difference,
 When the sun go down. (2x)
 Oh, Alberta, Berta, Oh Lord, gal. (2x)*

20. GERMANY BLUES

performed by Fred McDowell, vocals and guitar
 Recorded September 25, 1939 in
 Cairo, Mississippi.

This piece uses a rhythm and accompaniment
 somewhat different than "Fred McDowell's Blues"
 (track 17) but is no less intense or accomplished.

*Lord I'm gain' away Baby
 don't you want to go? (2x)
 Lord I'm gain' somewhere Babe,
 I ain't never been before.*

*Lord I see my baby
 way out on that Price line (2x)
 It ain't but the one thing,
 Honey that gives my mind*

*Lord I'm gain' by the pawn shop,
 put my watch in pawn (2x)
 I don't want nobody tell me
 how long my baby been gone*

*Lord I know you're gonna miss me
 baby when I'm gone (2x)*

21. CLARBOROUGH MILL BLUES

performed by John Duffley, vocals and guitar
 Recorded October, 1958 at Parchman Farm
 Dairy Camp.
 Previously unpublished.

John Duffley's version of this piece owes much to
 Charlie Patton's (the first verse is closely copied
 from Patton's Paramount recording) and also to
 Tommy Johnson's "Big Road Blues." It's a strong
 performance nonetheless, and shows him to be
 within the emerging Mississippi Delta blues style
 of the 20's. As he notes in his interview with
 Lonnie, Duffley was most active in the middle and
 late 20's, and may well have crossed paths with
 some of the local legends in the making, like
 Patton, Tommy Johnson, and Son House.

*Tell me where was you
 when that Clarbrough Mill burnt down?
 I was standing right there
 with my face all full of frown.*

*Oh lord have mercy
on my wicked, on my wicked, soul.
(Baby you know I don't mistreat you)
Wine's my mistress my baby now
for my weight in gold*

*When I marry I'm gonna get me an Indian squaw
So that old Chief squaw can be my father-in-law*

Well, I ain't goin' down that dark road by myself...

If I don't carry you I'm gonna carry someone else

*Anybody ask you, who composed this song?
(What you all gonna tell them?)
Old John Dudley, now, been here and gone.*

22. IF IT'S ALL NIGHT LONG

performed by Miles Pratcher, guitar and vocal;
Bob Pratcher, fiddle. Recorded September 25,
1959 in Como, Mississippi.
Previously unrecorded version.

All of the Pratcher's recordings for Lomaax were
marked by strong syncopation and considerable
acceleration, both strongly African-American char-
acteristics, although the latter is heard much less
nowadays.

*Could it be? Could it be?
You love somebody*

*But you don't love me
Get the blues,
Can't be satisfied,
Get the blues,
Can't be satisfied.*

If it's all night long...

*Have your way
Just have your way
If it's all night long.*

23. LORD HAVE MERCY

performed by Fred McDowell, vocals and guitar.
Recorded September 25, 1959 in
Como, Mississippi.
Previously unrecorded.

Another of Fred McDowell's spiritual perfor-
mances. Once again, he fills in lines of text with
lines of slide guitar, using repetitive text to build
an intense performance of surpassing beauty.

*Well, Lord have mercy on me (2x)
Lord have mercy on me*

*I'm as happy as my brass (2x)
Oh Lord...*

*Lord have mercy on me (2x)
etc.*

24. DIDN'T LEAVE NOBODY BUT THE BABY

sung by Mrs. Sidney Carter. Recorded September,
1959 in Senatobia, Mississippi.
Previously unrecorded.

Sid Hemphill's daughter was a fine singer (hear her
extraordinary performance of "Thames" on *Voice
from the American South*, Vol. 1 in this series).
She loved to entertain her children with her large
repertory of songs. She closes the album with this
plaintive, haunting lullaby from the hill country.

*Go to sleep you little baby (2x)
Your mama gone away and your daddy gonna stay
Daddy's love nobody but the baby*

Original liner notes to *Yassar Delta... Blues and
Spirituals* (Prestige-International 25010) adapted
and expanded for this album.

Original Field Recordings Produced and Recorded by: Alan Lomax with the assistance of Shirley Collins

Collection Producers: Anna L. Chaitrakis and Jeffrey Greenberg

Southern Journey Series Compiled, Researched and Edited By: Matthew Barton and Andrew L. Kaye

Notes: Matthew Barton (adapted from the writings of Alan Lomax)

Series Consultants: Ben Lomax Hayes and Gibson D'Arcangelo

Sound Restoration / Mastering Producer: Steve Roushbal

Mastered at The Master Cutting Room, NYC by: Phil Klum

Art Direction and Design: Luzzi Limited, NYC

Photos: Alan Lomax

Series Coordination for Rounder Records: Bill Newlin

Additional Production Assistance: Marlon Jacobson

Special Thanks: Joe Bessio, David Evans, Elbit Harold, Marian Leighton Levy, Jay Sylvester, John Vizan.

Every effort has been made to make these historic recordings sound as good as they did when Alan Lomax made them in the field. All transfers were made, wherever possible, from the original source materials using the Prism 20 Bit A to D converters and the Prism 20 Bit Noise Shaping System.



*I'm goin' home,
O yes, I'm goin' home,
Lord,
Lord, I'm goin' home.*

SOUTHERN JOURNEY

61 Highway
Mississippi



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Delta Country Blues,
Spirituals, Work Songs &
Dance Music

Volume 3