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From Your Volume Three Editor

I never really understood that "best laid plans of mice and men" bit until I assumed the editorship of this volume of the Journal. According to my predecessor, George Simpson, this volume, was to be devoted to oral history. Surely my students would collect enough oral history to fill several volumes. Unfortunately, most of their prospective informants were less than eager to cooperate, for as one man put it, "Go to the library and read all about it in an old newspaper." How wrong he was about the nature of oral history is shown in the first three articles of this volume.

Of the contributors, I wish to single out Michael Weiss, an Honors student at the University of Maryland. Michael came to me one day and asked me if I would sponsor his folklore collecting project in Canada. Although I had never met him before, he impressed me so favorably that I signed my name on some official document and wished him the best of luck. He returned last September with fourteen cassette tapes, which he subsequently deposited in the Maryland Folklore Archives, along with transcriptions, photographs, information on his informants, and descriptions of the project in general.

Finally, I wish to thank all the people who gave me so much help and encouragement. Special thanks to Sharon Landolt who typed all of the copy. I hope that Kay Cothran, my successor, will find as cooperative a typist as Sharon.

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THE TRUTH AS A LIE--THE LIE AS TRUTH: A VIEW OF ORAL HISTORY

By Kay Cothran

Endeavoring to ascertain the factual reliability of oral history has been the principal task of students of oral history, and this work's importance cannot be gainsaid, particularly when a studied society lacks written history.[1] Nevertheless, as we know, the study of both oral and written history amounts to a great deal more than fact-finding, just as the study of folklore calls, though often in vain, for much more than collection of nice bits of folklore. As Malinowski says, in the essay in which appears his celebrated definition of myth as social charter, "it is easier to write down the story than to observe the diffuse complex ways in which it enters into life, or to study its function by the observation of the vast social and cultural realities into which it enters. And this is the reason why we have so many texts and why we know so little about the very nature of myth."[2] We have to interpret and to gather interpretations from our informants' statements and actions, because nothing uninterpreted makes any sense, not even "raw sense date," an expression that has always impressed me as self-contradictory. The hallmark of man's perception is selectivity, coding, not rawness.

Attempts to get back to "the" invariant event, "the" truth, what "really" happened, whether testimonies are written, oral, or both, usually produce very low-level, unsophisticated, unimaginative results, adumbrating little. In working toward his own synthesis, a good historian will use eyewitness accounts if available, later interpretations, and critical studies of accounts and interpretations. "The" event eludes the student of written history as much as the oral history researcher. So long as historians seek the invariant event as their primary goal, they are fish in a barrel for those of us who ask how they know when they have made a mistake about that event. If they cannot specify the kind of evidence that could disconfirm their conclusions, then they do not speak scientifically but follow their sensitive noses--a perfectly valid research method that needs neither apology nor disguise. If we do not chase after invariant events but instead, taking a relativistic tack, look for the structure of variation in accounts of an event as remembered or portrayed by socially various informants, we may never find the truth about the past, but we will learn much about a society.

It would be extreme to deny that oral history can be unassailably true, but what do we mean by "true" here? It can be true in the syntactic sense of internal consistency within a testimony or within a body of testimony, although we ought not expect this kind of truth. It can be true in the semantic sense, that is, true with respect to the past event to which it appears to refer; we often have no way at all to gauge this kind of truth.

What interests us ethnographically-inclined folklorists (and folklife researchers), however, is that oral history always possesses pragmatic truth, even if the informant consciously lies to the interviewer. Pragmatic truth has to do with the patterned portion of a culture in which a given individual in society participates. It has to do with historical behavior in human society--what people do with their history, narrating it, shaping it, taking a stance with respect to it, forgetting and denying it, reinterpreting it,

and so on. When we go after pragmatic truth in oral history we do not ask for answers but for information that will enlighten us as to how a portion of a society views itself and its past right now. When we add up these viewpoints, often expressed via folklore (in the very widest sense of the term), that exist in a given society, we do not expect the sum to be internally consistent and to show what "really" happened. Viewpoints, whether of present or past, prove singularly unamenable to addition, and indeed what we want is not a neat whole but a realistically complicated multidimensional maze of relationships.

In fact, what "really" happened was that people, differentiated systematically by social and maybe psychological groupings, shared an experience somehow locatable with respect to some spatiotemporal reference system (clock, calendar, village plaza), and that other differentiated people remember that experience in sensible but probably inconsistent ways. Whether it makes sense to say that they remember or experience the "same" event is a philosophical question with which folklorists interested in oral history have simply not yet come to grips. This is one reason why the often-repeated simplism that folklore "reflects" folklife (or culture) in the end simply will not wash. Giving a characterizing name to a relationship does not necessarily say anything of import about the relationship; more often it boils down to word magic. Basic questions are not answered. Does folklore (or oral history) reflect basic anxieties and concerns so as to give direct catharsis? Does it reflect them indirectly, metaphorically, by displacement and condensation, or does it warp them like a funhouse mirror or repress them altogether? Is folklore a society's charter or its steam valve? Is it essentially didactic, essentially expressive, essentially cognitive, or essentially defensive in its reflection? Let us remember that a person finds out how he looks partly by looking at his reflection in a mirror, thereby obtaining another's point of view. He may decide to change his appearance or change the mirror. Reflection is a complicated activity, involving the properties of silvered glass, light, and the human's socially sensitized vision.

The idea that folklore reflects folklife, or that history tells about "the" past, depends on an outdated concept of communication imagining the principal function of language, seen as a system of names, to be the picturing of phenomena and relationships. Today, some of us think that an important cultural function of communication is integration, the cross-indexing that maintains both a given interaction and the general possibility of interaction. This is to say that communication helps things make sense not so much by naming them as by organizing them into various patterns. History, like culture, like folklore, constitutes both an environment and a technique, by means of which people create and maintain themselves in all the richness and complexity that both exhilarates and exasperates the student of human behavior.

Oral history, then, can be factual. It can also be fantastic and possess the truth of fantasy, of fiction and poetry. It can be as right and as relative as a man's sense of who and what he is. For my own part, since I am a folklorist inclined toward the ethnography of communication and symbolic anthropology, I have more interest in understanding and reconstructing what people think happened and learning why they think so than in trying to discover the nature of bare events. There is revealing structure in the most flagrant error or deception. It is good to know, if possible, when an informant is lying and when he is simply wrong, but only because this knowledge is itself data. Lies and errors have rational structure and may be lived truths. A man may tell a particular version of his past, his family's a society's past,

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in order to place himself at a particular social spot; tomorrow, in a differently-angled interview, he may tell another story. The interviewer ought not decide too quickly that the informant is a liar or mentally queer, or that oral historical work is a waste of time. The lie the informant tells may reveal more about his thinking as a social being than could any mere factual truth.

In my fieldwork in the deep south I have collected from whites a number of tales about lynchings that well substantiate the idea that historical truth is not invariant. Individual tales about lychnings rarely enter oral tradition in anything like a fixed form, but narrating lynching tales is a deeply traditional activity among some classes of white men, just as narration of closely-related paranoid fantasies and frightening "real" experiences having to do with assaultive male behavior constitutes an important portion of oral tradition for at least some groups of white women. Roughly parallel genres exist in black tradition. These stories are anecdotal biography. One of their characteristics is third-person narration, although narrators sometimes begin a tale in the first person and then switch over, at least in telling the stories to an outsider.

I have no basis besides educated guesswork for judging the degree of factuality of lynching tales and women's fright stories. What counts for informants in both cases is not what took place way back when but rather what they imagine, believe, and wish to have happened to the victim. Keep in mind that these are both historical-biographical anecdotes and tall tales: aggressive, hyperbolic fantasies tinged with macabre and often hysterical humor. Fantasies, semantically, are neither true nor false; their truth lies in the social situation of narration. An informant once related a gruesome enough lynching tale and then said, in effect, that in his opinion what should have been done to the man who allegedly murdered and raped a child was still more bloody. Here I obtained not only event transmuted into highly dramatic narrative, but also narrative pushed into the realm of what might or ought to have taken place, in a clear example of a storyteller's reshaping a narrative grounded in facts of the past toward a story that would convey his notions of the socially proper.

Like its written counterpart, oral history is something people use to construct and maintain interactions and the possibility of intereaction in society; they use it and change it in order to present and re-present themselves, using history to change history via narrative, ritual, and ritual drama[3], as some of us noted in watching televised portions of the "revolutionary ballet" attended by President Nixon in Peking. The event to which oral history principally refers is not the past event, what I call the referent event, but rather the present event, whether a storytelling session at the gas station or a remolding of an entire culture through revolutionary change.

For those of us who want to do unified studies of folklore and folklife that deal with both history and structuring independent of history, developing productive ways of handling the historical aspects of folklore is a crucial methodological problem. I believe that we will do best to work with ideas of history and folklore that emphasize their double aspects of environment and technique and not try to strip cultural experience down to something as impoverished as a railroad timetable. I doubt that criteria of internal consistency within or among testimonies or of "fit" between testimoney and "the"

imaginarily unitary past event will finally prove productive of either good answers or good questions about human behavior. Most value, I believe, will come from investigation of the social distribution and significance of genres of behavior, including folklore, that have historical import for a society and for us who study it. This investigation of the social and psychological uses of history is a task that folklorists and folklife researchers may profitably incorporate into their own.[4]

Footnotes

[1]A resume of oral historical study will be found in Jan Vansina, Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology (Chicago: Aldine, 1965).

[2]Bronislaw Malinowski, "Myth in Primitive Psychology," in Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays by Bronislaw Malinowski (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor, 1954), p. 111.

[3]As shown in the writings of Arnold van Gennep, James Peacock, and Victor W. Turner, among others.

[4]Portions of this essay first appeared in my doctoral dissertation, "Such Stuff as Dreams: A Folkloristic Sociology of Fantasy in the Okefenokee Rim, Georgia" (University of Pennsylvania, 1972), which was ably supervised by Don Yoder.

ON A FOLKLORE PROJECT IN WESTERN CANADA

By Michael Weiss

Of the contributions Wayland D. Hand has given to the field of folklore are his early studies which still find relevance to today's researchers. In 1942, Hand published a systematic study of the folklore of the late nineteenth century miners, (above and below the ground). Moreover, Hand categorized sources that often provided a large quantity of folklore materials for the collector of mining traditions.[1] The results of my own research during A Folklore Project in Western Canada in the summer of 1971 reiterate the value of his work today. In this study, the traditions of miners and cattle ranchers in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia were recorded.[2] The differences and similarities between Hand's findings and my own will be the subject of this article. That the folklore sources for mining will be considered for ranching, too, is an idea that Hand discussed only a few years ago. He explained that there is a very small body of custom and belief specifically for ranching, and that most of the folklore materials fall into the category of folk song, folk narrative, and folk speech.[3]

A thirty years difference in time between the two studies is also an important factor to consider when drawing correlations between the nineteenth century data that Hand was dealing with, and the early twentieth century data that I collected. George Korson noted the problem for today's collector and set a goal for his work:

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> I wanted these songs in pure form before they had been influenced by radio and corrupted by drug store mineworkers and so-called hillbilly singers. [4]

Thus changes in industrialization and communication will definitely affect the recent study's data, even with the careful search for purity.

Consider, first, the folklore of the gold miners of Western Canada. The accidental discovery of gold was termed by Hand as a "fruitful source of tales" (p. 27). True to his word, Jens Hansen of Wells, B.C. supported this statement on almost every visit to his shack or placer mine. His stories that told of findings on old deer trails far away from water, or under the post holes of an old, buried mine, provided exciting details about sniping for gold.[5] The excitement was often intensified by the expressed value of the nugget or strike. Known in the Cariboo region of British Columbia is "Lucky Swede" for the 500 dollar strike he chanced upon in 1937, his first gold find even points up his lucky streak:

> And I'm down there panning; I got maybe ten cents in the pan, but I took my cigarette, it's all soaking wet, and I put it right on a ten dollar nugget. I says, 'Hi!' From then on, I looked for nuggets, (Jens Hansen; Tape 3-Side 1).

This example could also be categorized, in Hand's terms, as the "Boob's Luck" source of folklore material (p. 36).

The "high-grading" of gold ore also provided numerous stories in Hand's research (p. 145) and likewise in the present study. Miners enjoy talking of ways that gold might be taken from mines for their own profit, and Fred Ludditt's tale about "Crazy Fraser" is a case in point. The story is of a Chinaman who slips a nugget into his boot as he cries out about a (mythical) strained back to be carried out of the mines by his fellow workmen (Fred Ludditt; Tape 6-Side 1). In Fred's words, "He wasn't so 'crazy'".

There were, however, variations in story content under topics that prompted many tales in both Hand's and in the 1971 survey. These sources included themes about holiday celebrations and mining heroes. When dealing with festival celebrations, Hand found Christmas an important occasion for the miners (p. 151), whereas the Cariboo folk made Labor Day a gay time for games, sports, and relaxation after the Fall Clean-Up.[6] As for mining heroes, even today, there are those who tell of a Paul Bunyan-like character who worked in the Cariboo gold fields for almost eighty years around the turn of the century. Billy Brown was said to carry a shovel three times the size of any other miner, and boasted that if "there was any man on the job who could do more work than he could, then he'd quit." But, Billy Brown was a local character, and his fame was restricted to the interior of British Columbia. There was never mention of the Cornishman's "Tommy Knocker" or "Cousin Jack" that Hand found to be a universal theme among gold miners.

There were also contrasting sources that produced a profuse amount of folklore material in each study. Two common themes among Hand's informants were the accidental discoveries of gold that were made by animals (p. 30), and the dreams that miners followed which produced gold strikes (p. 44). Neither of these topics was found in stories recorded in the 1971 study, and

it can be hypothesized that the industrialization of the Cariboo's mining operation had a lot to do with taking away the need for animals by the miners. That fantasies and superstitions were all but neglected in the remembered traditions might point out that much of the British Columbia mining was an individualized effort, and that group settings at the local pub were not conducive to passing on unrealistic hunches or fears. On the other hand, the topics of bootlegging and the pub, which found little outlet with Hand's subjects, were an important source of stories in Western Canada. In Wells, "Cold-Ass Marie" becomes the topic for Lucky Swede' friendly bootlegger, and in Barkerville, Harold Garden Wells of a gold mining process that he terms, "beer-parlor mining":

> Instead of lagging a drift into a hill of hardrock, we were going to make sixteen-foot sections of ready-made tunnel, aluminum, corrogated iron roofs, and aluminum timbers...Take that uphill, open it up, and let that roll down the hill and you have your geology right there...They called this the Blimey Portable Tunnel Company. Congolium Geology! (Harold Garden; Tape4-Side 1).

A limited number of songs and poems, representing different genres of folklore material that were not dealt with in depth in the Hand studies, were taped in Western Canada. Esther Luddit's poems, "September, In", "Aumtumn Dream" and Lucky Swede's renditions of "I'm Only a Crazy Old Mucker" and "There's Gold Upon the Tullamine" were examples of these genres. Certainly, they express the spirit of the miners:

> There is gold upon the Tulaime, platinum in the sun;
> Fishes in the river, and there's years upon the land;
> Berries for your pickin, and there's grouses at your door;
> There's a dear old Polly, why go roaming anymore? (Jens Hansen; Tape 2-Side 1).

The coal miners' folklore of Banff, Canmore, and Bankhead, Alberta offers comparison and contrast with the findings of Wayland Hand. Because coal mining has always been, historically, a dangerous and tense job for the men working the mines, both studies found mine accidents to be a topic often referred to in tales. The tragedy of the "fatal last shift" for a miner, that Hand noted (p. 138), reappeared in Jim Anderson's story of an Italian coal miner who was to return to the old country after one last night shift in the mine. But, due to a cave-in disaster, "he is still in that mine, way up on 'C' level."

Superstitions and hunches that surrounded the miners' lives as a prolific source of folklore in Hand's research (p. 132), found few informants in 1971 who would refer to these beliefs. Jim and Lillian Anderson posited some explanations for the scarcity of this material today:

> Jim: ...a lot of people won't admit it, that there is all this superstition, you know, especially among miners. A miner is quite superstitious---
>
> Lillian: But he won't admit it, you know.

> Jim: ---the fact is that there was alot of people there, I suppose, they think that, 'Well, maybe I'm going to have an accident, so I don't go to work today.' But they won't tell you that. The next day, if something happens, they go and tell you, 'You know, I was a little supperstitious that something was gonna happen so I didn't show up!...But, most miners will tell you that in those days, that at the money they were making, they couldn't afford to miss a day by superstition, (Jim and Lillian Anderson; Tape 8-Side 2).

Consequently, the Alberta informants did not verbalize a conscious superstitious tradition. For example, when Canmore's Harold Musgrove was questioned about the custom of women in the mines, (a fact that Hand observed as a superstitious tradition), he answered:

> Well, there was a Belgium woman here by the name of Forman, and she used to work in the mines in Belgium. But she didn't do anything here. No, I don't think they ever allowed that much.... (Harold Musgrove; Tape 7-Side 1).

Only Maude Kidney, a Banff woman who had been around mining all her life, spoke of one peculiar mining custom, where "nobody left the mine, when they came up from underground, until everybody, every lad, had picked up."

The miners' social life, which Hand noted only briefly in his studies, was a major source of stories in the Canadian project. Much of the off-shift activities was centered at the town bar. As Harry Musgrove explained, "That was quite a place, too. All they had to do here was drink and eat and work...." The effects of alcohol proved to be worth quite a few stories from Jim Anderson. For example:

> Yeah, this guy, you know, he'd get absolutely stoned, you know. And on Sunday morning, he had to go to Church. You know, there was no way. He'd go in with no hat, and he'd come out with a bowler...He'd always have somebody else's hat! (Jim Anderson; Tape 8-Side 2).

Similar to the mixed origins of the California miners of the nineteenth century, the Albertan Rockies attracted many East Europenas in addition to the common, Anglian stock. Most of the groups kept their ethnic traditions concerning social occasions, and in Lillian Anderson's words:

> If there was a wedding here, everyone used to turn out. And you'd be surprised, too. Oh the gifts they used to give! Everybody'd donate all the food and stuff like that. And a big dance afterwards, (Lillian Anderson; Tape 8-Side 2).

The next examination will be of the ranching folklore of two areas, based in Kamloops British Columbia, and Calgary, Alberta. As was previously noted by Hand's recent findings concerning the folklore material of ranching and mining, similar traditions and social institutions proved to be valuable sources of folklore. As with the miners, certainly, the beer parlor played an important role in the ranchers' off-duty time. Consequently, the following analysis of the ranchers will first discuss folklore sources reflective solely of the ranching

occupation and later examine those traditions that might be compared to those of the gold and coal miners of Western Canada.

The ranching customs that are concerned with an individual ranch's operation, from the chores completed by the children, to bronco busting by the hired hands yielded a vein of stories usually descriptive of an activity in great detail, with an anecdote often attached. In Kamloops, Jesse McDonald cited the requirements for obtaining a 160-acre government homestead:

> ...you had to live there for three years and improve it: put a house on it, a barn and some chickens, cow and a horse. See, and everybody had seven or eight kids. Heh, and everybody was raisin' kids...and that's how it started, (Jesse McDonald; Tape 10-Side 1).

Certainly, J. Angus McKinnon's stories about sharpening the hay sickles, chopping the firewood, killing the prairie garter snakes, and collecting grain bag strings told as much about the jobs on the homesteads as they did about the ranchers themselves when confronted with a problem:

> And how is two fellows gonna milk three cows, you see? So it was generally supposed that he, whoever finished first, would milk the third cow (J. Angus McKinnon; Tape 14-Side 1).

Exaggerated stories about the rough life of the cowboy also proved a valuable source for ranching folklore. Here, the miners' oral tradition contrasted with the ranchers' concerning overstatements: unlike the miners, the ranchers used this source freely in rendering stories about their lives. One who often used this technique was a neighbor of Lawry Johnson's, Old Dave McDougal. Famous in the Calgary area, he once told of a time that he roped a coyote with his speeding horse, or in another tall tale, how he was flown home by a group of ducks who had become stuck in a sheet of ice that he was sitting one. In Kamloops, B.C., Tom Patton sung an untitled tune about some of the cowboy's hardships:

> I was in town a-hangin' around, I saw the cattle king;
> I asked him to give me a job. He says, 'My boss is in town,
> If you see him I think he'll take you around.'...
> He put me in charge of the cattleyard, and told me not to work too hard;
> All I had to do was mind a horse from getting away.
> I had three hundred-and-seventy head, and oft times wished that I was dead,
> 'If one was to get away, then hell would be to pay.'
> They saddled me up an old gray hack, with two set tracks on his back.
> They padded him down with a gunny sack, my bed he'd taken all;
> He left the ground and when I came down, I had an awfull fall.
> They carried me out and rubbed me down with an iron stake pin (Tom Patton; Tape 12-Side 1).

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However, sometimes, the stories of the dangerous life weren't as exaggerated as they may have appeared. Unlike the scarcity of animals used by the miners, much of the ranch operation constantly depended on horses for travel and control of the cattle. Consequently, horses were a prime source of stories for informants, both as the wild beast fighting the bronco-buster, and as the tame animal carrying a dozen children to school, riding one hundred miles in one day, or cutting steers out of a herd.

Changes that affected the structure of ranching also prompted a good many stories. This heading included a variety of tales that concerned the occurrences imposed on the ranch livelihood: the prairie fire, the drastic shift in prices for cattle and sheep, and the freezing winters. Accounts of these events often told of the fraternity of the ranchers in dealing with such catastrophes.

By far, however, the largest number of stories came under the topic of colorful, local characters. Unlike a comparable source among the miners of Western Canada, these tales often centered on the cowboy and the law as their subjects: the cowboy as a heroic lawman, the prairie's wild gunslinger, or even the Robin Hood-type outlaw. Jesse McDonald and Edward Veale told stories of two provincial policemen and their tragic deaths at the hands of lawbreakers: Officer Carr while investigating a band of Indians brewing illegal squirrel whiskey, and Policeman Usher, while tracking down two young horse thieves. However bad-tempered these outlaws appeared in the tales, there was also the bittersweet mention of such figures as Bill Miner, an old train robber who became the subject of a Jesse McDonald story:

> And he didn't harm anybody; when he did rob, he robbed the rich and gave it to the poor. He had a sister living up here on Grove's Hill, and he used to go back and forward. But, nobody ever dreamt that that's what he was. He had such a beautiful saddle-horse. But they made a booboo that day. They got the wrong train, or car, or something..., (Jesse McDonald; Tape 10-Side 2).

Like Billy Brown of the Cariboo, Bill Miner's fame was confined to Western Canada. However, there were those who had become known all over North America as famous and infamous cowboys. In a Calgary session, Jean Johnson talked about Butch Cassidy, Harry Longbow (popularized as "The Sundance Kid"), and Ev Johnson (Jean's father-in-law and the hero in a book by Owen Wister, The Virginian). Clearly, Jean's story of her Dad at the age of fourteen almost duplicate the scenario out of an old T.V. western:

> and he had his bedroll, and six-shooter and horse; and he heard shots and the first thing he knew, comin' down through the live oaks came this Mexican, all out on his horse. And as soon as the Mexican saw him, the Mexican shot at him... and as Dad's horse dropped, he shot the Mexican dead. Just like that. And just then, the Texas Rangers came up (Jean Johnson; Tape 13-Side 2).

Similar to the tales about the various ethnic groups that worked the mines, the interactions between the whites and Indians were also a fruitful source of folklore. However, unlike the equality of races that was felt by these early

twentieth century miners, the Indian was often presented as an inferior to the cowboy. Among Jesse McDonald's stories are tales of the homesteading cowboys who "used to get the Indians to take a homestead, and give them a bottle of whiskey for it", and of the ranch family, expecting a child, that needed to contact the doctor with a messenger, "and we had to pay two dollars in order to have a letter delivered. Get some Indian to deliver a message for you. And they used to say Daddy kept the Indians busy every two years." Sometimes, superstitions surrounded a subject about the Indians, concerning those Indians who imagine ghosts, and an Indian who comes out of a grave, and an Indian who finally accomplishes some unfinished business after he has died.

Most ranch informants, like their mining counterparts, used the oral story to relate the source of their folklore. Although few songs and poems intermingled into these genres, Tom Patton added an exciting dimension to the folklore of a dance celebration by rendering a square dance call:

> First lady out to the right, and swing the man that stole the sheep, now the one that ate the meat; Now the one that gnawed the bone, now the one that'll take you home. Everybody swing! (Tom Patton; Tape 12-Side 1).

Other celebrations took place during Christmas on the prairies. It seemed, however, that both occupations found alcohol and the celebration spirit to walk hand in hand. Stories about the cowboy who would teetotal for an entire year and then blow his savings on a binge were common. J. Angus McKinnon told of one, Billy Pender who once posited a philosophy concerning this phenomena:

> 'Well,' he said, 'I don't think I'm doing too bad,' he said. 'I didn't have any money when I come to this country, and I still got it.' He said, 'Alot of you fellows that don't drink ain't any better off.' (J. Angus McKinnon; Tape 14-Side 2).

Footnotes

[1]Wayland D. Hand, "California Miners' Folklore: Above Ground," California Quarterly, 1 (1942), 24-46; California Miners' Folklore: Below Ground," California Quarterly, 1 (1942), 127-153). All references to these studies will be cited by page number in the text.

[2]The project was carried out with the sponsorship of the University of Maryland's General Honors Program. All future references to data collected will be noted by the informant's anme and the tape where the material was recorded. The tape recordings and accompanying transcriptions are currently housed in the University of Maryland's Folklore Archives.

[3]Wayland D. Hand, "The Miner," in Kontake Und Grenzen Fetschrift Fur Gerhard Herfurth. (Gottengen: Verlag Otto Schwartz & Co . 1969).

[4]George Korson, Black Rock: Mining Folklore of the Pennsylvania Dutch (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1960), p. 354.

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[5]Sniping is the search for gold on an already-worked claim, or someone else's property.

[6]Gathering gold from sleuceboxes and pans that had been collected over the past year.

BASEBALL RECOLLECTIONS OF ARTHUR "RATS" HENDERSON: WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By John Holway

Arthur "Rats" Henderson was one of the top pitchers of the old Eastern Negro league of the 1920's, one of the two major black leagues of that era, which were playing some of the most exciting--and just possibly the best--baseball in America in the "blackball days" before Jackie Robinson. Old-timers who saw him agree that he was one of the finest curve ball pitchers of his day, with a side-arm curve ball that reminds many veterans of Denny McLain's in his prime. Newt Allen of the Kansas City Monarchs, one of Black baseball's top second basemen, says Henderson could throw five straight curves before one hit the bat: "He could throw two out of four right over the plate, and the others would break outside and you'd swing at them anyway and miss them."

Henderson's career was short but brilliant. A sore arm finally forced him out of the game. He lives today in retirement in Wilmington, Delaware. In his hey-day, he pitched the Atlantic City Bacharachs into the Negro world series of 1926 and '27. Washington's Holsey "Scrip" Lee, who pitched many a game against him, says Henderson was the best right-hander he ever saw: "Nobody could throw harder than Satchel Paige, but I thought Rats Henderson was a better pitcher."

Short stop Paul Stephens recalls him as "very gentlemanfied." He says: "In the hotel the girl would ask, 'Do you care for another pork chop, Mr. Henderson?' 'Oh, that's one of the things I dearly love,' he'd say. 'Would you care for more desert, Mr. Henderson?' 'Oh, that's one of the things I dearly love.' Everything was 'one of the things I dearly love.'

"He was a prince," Stephens continues. "But he would always beat us. We'd carry rat traps down to catch the rat, but Rat would beat us 2-1, 2-0. We called him Rat. His wife would say, 'Don't say Rat; his name is Arthur.' I'd say, 'Oh Arthur, it's a pleasure meeting you.' He'd give me the wink job, say, 'When you come around here, you better not say Rat. I never use that name around here.'"

I guess the best game I ever pitched was when I beat Dolph Luque, of the Cincinnati Reds 1-0 in Cuba in 1926. The Reds won the pennant that year and he was the ace of their staff. I played for Luque's team in the winter, but at the end of the season we'd split up into whites versus coloreds for a game. Well, we were tied 0-0 until the seventh when Oscar Charleston of our team got hold of a fast ball. It went over the infield like a bullet about as high as your head and just kept rising on a line over the centerfield fence. John

McGraw and Judge Landis were in the stands that day, and they came up to me after the game was over and shook my hand. McGraw told me, "That was great pitching. I'd give any amount of money for you, if you were only white."

I had a fast ball and a curve that would come in like a fast ball and then about two feet from the batter, it would just break--like that. Sharp. They'd be leaning back and it would break over. Mile Gonzales, a catcher with the Cardinals used to catch me in Cuba, and he said he'd never seen a curve like that.

I have the privilege of saying I struck out Babe Ruth. That was also in 1926 down in Baltimore. We barnstormed with Ruth, Gehrig, Lefty Grove, Mickey Cochrane, Jumping Joe Dugan, all that gang, every fall after the season was over. This one game I pitched against George Earnshaw, and I struck Ruth out--but the next time up he made it rough for me. He hit a fast ball, I guess it's still going.

I couldn't do anything with Gehrig; I think he got a couple of hits off me. But I beat them. I don't recall the score now, I think it was 7-3 or 7-4.

We used to barnstorm against them every fall after the big league season was over. We'd play down in the old Black Sox' park down toward Baltimore's east side. I believe we won five out of seven one year. Another year they beat us six to one.

I was born in 1898, and when I see the kind of money some of these fellows are making now, well, I was born just 30 years too soon.

How did I get my nickname? Well, when I was a kid in Richmond, Virginia, working in a glass factory, I used to bring a lunch bucket with me. I was about 12 or 14 years old at the time, I guess. I used to work with the mould board, where they poured the hot glass in. I closed them and the blowers would blow the glass into the shape of a bottle. Well, one day when I opened my lunch bucket there was a rat in it. I don't know how it got there, whether the other kids were playing a joke on me or what. But they started calling me "Rats," and that's been my nickname ever since.

I was pitching for the Richmond Giants in 1921--we weren't in a league, we'd travel around Norfolk, Newport News and other towns and play. Well, the Bacharach Giants of Atlantic City stopped by in Richmond one day coming up from spring training, and they played our team and I beat them. They asked me to join them, but my parents didn't want me to go. You know how parents are. With 12 kids, six boys and six girls, they just wanted us all around home. But later in that season they sent a man down to get me. He guaranteed that he'd take care of me while I was away, and that satisfied my mother, so that's how I started. I won my first ten games with them and ended up the season with a record of 16-4 or 16-5, something like that.

In 1925, two years after I joined the Bacharachs, we went back to Richmond for a game, and that was the biggest thrill of my life. Ten thousand fans, the biggest crowd ever in the old park there, gave me a hand bag, and my mon and dad came out--the first time they'd ever seen my play professional ball. That was my biggest thrill.

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The Bacharachs played our home games in an old converted dog track, and we had pretty good crowds, especially tourists. The hotels used to sent their guests out to see us play.

And we had a good team. Dick Lundy was short stop and manager when I first came up. As a fielder, I think he had it over Cronin, Appling, Boudreau and them. And he could hit too.

Oliver Marcelle was on third. They used to argue who was better, Marcelle or Judy Johnson of the Philadelphia Hilldales. Judy could always outhit Marcelle. But in the field, Brooks Robinson is the best third baseman in my book. Nobody could made plays better than he does.

Ambrose Reed was at second, and a Cuban by the name of Garcia played second too.

First base was Chance Cummins, a big, awkward fellow, clumsy, you know, but a good fielder. He wasn't much of a hitter, but he could sure shift at first base. And he could steal signs.

In the outfield we had Chainey White, Country Brown and Luther Farrell. Farrell was something like Babe Ruth, he was an outfielder and a pitcher both. He could pitch and hit that ball.

Chainey White could hit too, and he was a fast man. You'd see him walking around, you'd think he was slow, loafing around. But he was fast on those bases. A good center fielder, and he could hit that ball. I think he passed away a couple of years ago.

Country Brown was a regular clown, like Nick Altrock, always fooling around, always making you laugh. He'd come up to hit on his knees and say, "Come on, throw that ball, come on"--things like that.

John Henry Lloyd came to the Bacharachs as manager in '24. A fine fellow. He had been with the Hilldales, then joined us in 1929, '25 and '26.

Lefty Grove is the best pitcher I ever saw, but the best Negro pitchers were Bullet Joe Rogan of the Kansas City Monarchs, and Nip Winters and Phil Cockrell of the Philadelphia Hilldales. Rogan had a fast ball and a slow ball, he'd mix them up. If you're hitting it up here around your chest, he'd just throw it up a little higher. He was a good hitter too.

Winters was a tough left-hander. Cockrell was another tough man, a spit baller. You didn't get many runs off those two, the scores would be 1-0, 2-0, 2-1. I think the last time I pitched against Nip I beat him 2-1.

We had a lot of great pitchers. Cyclone Joe Williams had a good fast ball but not much of a curve. A real tall man. He may have been half Indian, he looked like it. Cannonball Dick Redding was another one. He had a good fast ball, like Joe Williams. They both had that smoke, you know. They never developed a curve. They'd just throw the ball by the batter, overpower him.

And we had some great hitters. Martin Dihigo of the New York Cubans gave me more trouble than any other hitter. I'd give him curves and sometimes he'd

bite at an outside one, but I remember one time he broke my game open. I was winning, 3-1, and put two men on base and Dihigo hit it over the fence on me. Beat me, 4-3. And the best catch I ever saw was by Dihigo. It was hit to center, about 400' or so, and he turned around and ran back, then turned again at the last minute, stuck his long arm up and caught it.

The Cubans had a great outfield--Dihigo, Pablo Mesa and Alejandro Oms. That Oms could catch a fly ball behind his back. He'd hold his hands behind him and lean forward and catch it. But not in a close game of course.

The Harrisburg Giants were good team back then, although they never won a pennant. They almost won one year but Hilldale beat them out. They were a tough club. They had that boy who used to play basketball--Fats Jenkins--in the outfield. John Beckwith caught or played short. And then they had Oscar Charleston in center field. No, I wouldn't say Charleston compared with Willie Mays; that Mays can really play ball! But Charleston was a good hitter. They used to call him "the black Babe Ruth." But I had pretty fair success with him. I'd jam him with my curve, wouldn't dare give him a fast ball.

Charleston was red hot on the field. Off the field he was a nice man. But I remember one game I was pitching against him in Harrisburg. I was arguing with the umpire over a pitch and Charleston was sitting in the dugout. He came right off the bench, walked right over to the mound and hit me on the jaw. I couldn't chew for a week. Well, the next time his club came to Atlantic City, our boys all said, "All right, anything you want to do to him now is OK. Here's your chance." But I figured it was all over then and I said, "Forget it."

Out west the Chicago American Giants had a great team. Rube Foster was the manager, a big heavy-set guy. He was like John McGraw, he could get a lot out of his players. He was a smart manager, too, and he always had a running team. They did a lot of bunting. They'd bunt it into the ground and beat it out for a hit before the ball came down. Sometimes they'd even take second. Jelly Gardner was good at that. He was the fastest man I ever saw.

We played the American Giants twice in the Negro world series, 1926 and '27. I pitched the first game here in Atlantic City. That was a tie game. But we played in Philadelphia that weekend and won three straight. The next game I pitched, I think I beat them 3-0 in Chicago. But they finally beat us out, five games to four.

We won the pennant again in 1927. Out of the 27 league games we won that year, I won 18 of them. But Chicago beat us in the series again.

The next year, 1928, I was about 13-2 by June, and then my arm went dead. I couldn't even finish the year, and we lost the pennant.

I retired in 1930. My arm was still bad, and I was getting a little heavy--I was 5'7 and weighed about 180-185 at my playing weight--and there was the Depression, so I took a job selling rugs on the boardwalk. I did that for about ten years and played a little on the side with Pop Lloyd's Johnson Stars, a semi-pro team. Then I got a war job and after the war Judy Johnson got me a job with the Continental Can Company. I stayed with them for 18 years until I retired in '65 to take it easy.

My best salary as a player was up around $375 a month. In the early 20's that was pretty good, I thought. I was one of the highest paid Negro players around the east at the time. But oh boy, as I say, I was just born 30 years too soon, that's all.

TRADITIONAL PROVERBS AS PERCEIVED BY CHILDREN FROM AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT

By Catherine Hudson

A number of years ago, when I was teaching a class of fourth- and fifth-grade children, a particularly astute student came up to me one day and remarked, "You know, Miss Hudson, that's the third time today you've said 'Too many cooks spoil the broth .' What do you mean by that anyway?" Since little pitchers have big ears, a number of his classmates heard him ask the question, and chimed in, wanting to know what my reply would be. I explained that the sentence was an old proverb which meant that if too many people got involved in a project, something surely would happen to spoil the work. Then, sensing the "teachable moment," I asked how many of them know what a proverb was. I received for my efforts blank stares and a chorus of "No's," spiced with what I could see was a burgeoning curiosity on the subject.

This simple question and answer led us to pursue an investigation of proverbs and proverbial sayings which eventually led to an interesting, albeit small-scale, study of this particular genre of folklore. The children progressed from the point at which they knew, or had heard, very few proverbs, to one in which they not only ferreted out some rather obscure items, but also came to know innumerable familiar proberbs and their meanings.

The children never reached the point where they used proverbs in their conversation, but they did become quick to catch others, mainly adults, when they heard the sayings used in adult conversation.

The small study discussed above served to provide me with an impetus toward the further study of children's knowledge of proverbs, and also brought to mind several questions I thought might be interesting to investigate.

In the first place, the fourth and fifth grade children I had taught came from a suburban middle-class neighborhood and were white. I wondered if black children, living in a strictly urban environment were more or less familiar with proverbs as were the others. Also, is age per se, a variable, or is familiarity with proverbs more a factor of environment and background? Does race make a difference, i.e.; do black children in an urban environment hear more proverbs than do white children in the suburbs?

In addition to the variables of age, race, and locale, I questioned whether children were more knowledgeable of some proverbs than of others. For example, I couldn't conceive of a child who never had heard the traditional "An apple a day. . ." or "Little pitchers. . .," whereas I doubted that many were acquainted with such sayings as "Good fences make good neighbors," or "New brooms sweep clean."

Therefore, entertaining such questions as those posed above, I set out to try to determine some answers. Immediately, I hit a roadblock. How was I going to discover what proverbs urban black children knew--or didn't know, as the case might be--when I worked in a suburban school with an essentially all-white enrollment? Fortunately, a friend of a friend teaches at Shepherd Elementary in Washington, D. C., and when she heard about my project, volunteered the services of 50 fourth- and sixth-graders from that school. It wasn't exactly what I was looking for, being located in a rather middle-class black neighborhood, but I had to be content since I know no one who could grant me access to a school in the inner city. I had already decided to do some kind of comparison with children of the same grade level in my school, and with children from an upper middle-class school in suburban Bethesda.

The limitations were established. I would compare the "proverbial knowledge" of children in two grade levels--fourth and sixth--from three distinctly different metropolitan environments (Table 1). The collection presented would consist of samples from only the black children at Shepherd, the other samples collected to be used only for comparative purposes. The proverbs given to the children would be taken from Archer Taylor's The Proverb to insure authenticity of tradition, and would consist of 25 traditional sayings, some very well-known and others more obscure. To determine the child's knowledge of the proverbs, each child would be given incomplete proverbs and asked to complete each as he knew it, had heard it, or thought it should be.

Ideally, I knew I should obtain the children's responses orally. However, this process just wasn't feasible, as I was dealing with 142 informants and time was a major factor. I simply could not relieve myself of my administrative responsibilities for as long a period as would be necessary to visit and talk with that number of children on an individual basis. This being the case, I devised the following form for the children to complete.

1. An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
2. When the cat's away, the mice will play.
3. Don't count your chickens before they hatch.
4. His eyes are bigger than his stomach.
5. People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.
6. March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb.
7. A stitch in time saves nine.
8. A penny saved is a penny earned.
9. Too many cooks spoil the broth.
10. Do as I say, not as I do.
11. You must eat a peck of dirt before you die.

TABLE 1

RACIAL COMPOSITION BY GRADE

	NEGRO		CAUCASIAN		OTHER		
Metropolitan Area	4th Gr.	6th Gr.	4th Gr.	6th Gr.	4th Gr.	6th Gr.	Total
D. C.	30	20	0	0	0	0	50
Hyattsville	1	2	17	21	3	2	46
Bethesda	0	0	20	22	3	1	46

12. Dead men tell no tales.

13. Don't bite the hand that feeds you.

14. The longest way there is the shortest way home.

15. Where there's smoke there's fire.

16. A tattle-tale is worse than a thief.

17. Don't put the cart before the horse.

18. If the shoe fits, wear it.

19. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

20. New brooms sweep clean.

21. Every cloud has a silver lining.

22. Good fences make good neighbors.

23. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink.

24. You can't get blood out of a turnip.

25. Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.*

Next, I met with the teachers of two schools to explain how I would administer the form, and began, in addition to working with the children, to conduct a search for what others had found regarding children's knowledge of proverbs.

At this juncture, I again reached an impasse. In none of the work I investigated pertaining to the folklore of urban children was any mention made of their use of proverbs. Nor, seemingly, had anyone made any attempt to discover if children really knew proverbs. Roger Abrahams' indicated that proverbs are most often used by adults when speaking to each other in the presence of children, thus placing a restriction on further conversation.[1] Also, adults sometimes direct proverbs to a child, indicating to him an approved way of acting. Rarely, if ever, do children use proverbs, either to their peers or to adults.[2] The Lore and Language of School Children[3] revealed nothing about proverbs, nor did the Withers' articles. The results of my small investigation and collection, therefore, cannot to my knowledge be corraborated by research, but nonetheless prove rather interesting.

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*Explanatory note

The underlined portion of each proverb was omitted when presented to the informants. They were to complete the proverb as they knew it, had heard it, or thought it should be. In the collection proper, that portion of the proverb given by the informant is likewise underlined.

It is important to note that the collection presented in this paper is not all-inclusive in two respects. First, of the total population (142 informants), only 26 of 50 D. C. informants are sampled here. Secondly, of the 25 proverbs given to each informant for completion, only selected samples of response were drawn for the collection.

The reason for not including the work of the total population is fairly obvious--the task of interpretation, comparison, and analysis is simply too immense for a project of this limited size. The inclusion of only representative samples from each of the selected 26 informants was done for a number of reasons. I decided that in order to qualify as a legitimate answer, the response should at least be logical and sensible. This factor eliminated a large number of responses given. Further, to my surprise, the 50 D. C. informants (Table 1) were familiar with several of the proverbs, responding verbatim to the portions of the proverbs given them (Table 2). Finally, I chose to include in the collection those samples which were most similar to the traditional proverb, or which were simply amusing or thought-provoking.

TABLE 2

STATISTICS WITH REFERENCE TO CORRECT RESPONSES GIVEN*

	D. C.		Hyattsville		Bethesda		Total
	Gr. 4 N=30	Gr. 6 N=20	Gr.4 N=21	Gr.6 N=25	Gr.4 N=23	Gr.6 N=23	N=142
1. An apple...	24	19	18	25	17	23	126
2. Don't count your chickens...	25	20	11	25	20	23	124
3. Where there's smoke...	16	15	5	23	18	17	94
4. A penny saved...	14	17	11	22	7	12	79
5. March comes in...	13	14	1	7	10	7	62
6. Early to bed...	4	14	4	12	9	15	58
7. His eyes are bigger...	7	15	1	14	7	8	52
8. If the shoe fits...	6	19	2	15	2	8	52
9. A stitch in time...	7	9	6	14	0	13	49
10. Too many cooks...	6	7	0	10	11	15	39
11. You can lead a horse...	4	7	2	15	3	6	37
12. When the cat's away...	10	12	1	9	1	1	34
13. Every cloud has...	3	6	5	9	2	4	29
14. Don't bite the hand...	2	8	3	4	5	4	26
15. Don't put the cart...	4	11	2	3	2	2	24
16. Do as I say...	1	4	1	2	3	8	19
17. Dead men tell...	4	8	1	2	2	2	19
18. A bird in the hand...	0	7	1	3	1	3	15
19. You must eat...	2	5	2	1	2	1	13
20. You can't get blood...	1	5	0	0	0	0	6
21. People who live...	0	1	0	0	1	4	6
22. New brooms...	0	2	0	1	0	1	4
23. Good fences make...	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
24. A tattle tale is...	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
25. The longest way...	1	0	0	0	0	2	3

*Exact wording supplied by informants.

An examination of Table 2 lends support to the hypothesis that a few proverbs are very familiar to most children, regardless of race, age, or locale. Over half of the informants gave the traditional response to the first four proverbs listed. Of this number, it is noted that the black children of fourth-grade age were significantly more knowledgeable of numbers 1-4 than were the fourth-grade children in the suburban areas. In constrast, the sixth-grade children in the Hyattsville and Bethesda areas showed a significant knowledge of these same four proverbs, the Hyattsville group having an almost 100% correct response.

Beginning with the fifth proverb on Table 2, black sixth-grade children seemed more knowledgable than did their fourth-grade counterparts. This is true not only of the black children sampled, but also of the children from the predominantly white suburban schools. It seems fair to draw the implication from this that older children know, or are familiar with, more proverbs than are children who are approximately two years younger.

Further study of Table 2 leads to the conclusion that, of the 25 proverbs given, approximately 50% of the children sampled knew only four well; the percentage of correct response diminishes as the proverbs become more obscure in the children's knowledge. This holds ture regardless of age, race, or locale.

Although many of the urban black children did not know the traditional proverb given, there were a number of common variants among the responses (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Listing of Common Variants

Variant	Number of Responses
1. Do as I say, not as he say.	27
2. Every cloud has rain.	26
3. Dead men tell no lies.	26
4. If the shoe fits, buy it.	25
5. Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy and wise.	15
6. When the cat's away, the mouse will stay.	13
7. A tattle-tale is worse than a liar.	12
8. Too many cooks spoil the brew.	9
9. You can't get blood out of a dead man.	8

Because I included each of these variants in the collection proper, a short discussion of them seems appropriate at this point.

There is a definite use of non-standard English indicated in the response to the first proberb given in Figure 2. "As he say," or "he say" are both common expressions among urban blacks. It is not surprising that the proverb was completed with this usage, and it is evident that the traditional ". . .as I do" is foreign to the children.

It is clear that some children associate clouds with rain, as indicated by the common responses to that proverb. However, I can think of no reasonable explanation for the responses to "Dead men tell. . . ." None of the suburban informants gave the response shown, which might imply that the "Dead men tell no lies" variant exists only in the black urban areas.

Because half of the informants replied in a like manner to the fourth proverb given in Figure 2, it could be inferred that the traditional ". . . wear it" has taken on a modern connotation. It is interesting, too, to note that, while a number of children thought "A tattle-tale is worse than a liar," only two (see Table 2) knew he was ". . .worse than a thief." Evidently it is more redeeming to lie than to tattle! I wonder if they would feel the same way about thievery if they knew the traditional proverb?

I should imagine that mice- or rat-infested dwellings are not commonplace in the neighborhood from which these informants come. However, of the 50 informants, 13 said "When the cat's away, the mouse will stay." Another 15 responsed with similar endings: ". . .mice will stay;" ". . .mouses stay;" . . .mouse stays." Perhaps this explains the children's awareness of housing problems in the inner city.

Actually, the children's knowledge and awareness of life in a contemporary urban environment can be noted throughout the collection. Such items as "The longest way there is by foot," "Good fences make good protection," "People who live in glass houses worry about stones," "Good fences make a lot of money," "Where there's smoke, there's pollution," are all indicative of the child's perceptions of the world around him.

Perhaps the perceptiveness of children is what I was looking for all the time, rather than something so cut-and-dired as the "they either know proverbs or don't know them" sort of thing. If the latter is the case, then in my opinion, the collection only serves to substantiate Abrahams' contention that proverbs are essentially foreign to children. On the other hand, if one looks at the collection as being rather like a "window on the world" to children's perceptions of their environment, then it might serve some justifiable purpose.

Certainly, as I have previsouly implied, a much more sophisticated study than the one presented here would shed more light on this genre of folklore as it applies to children. However, the following samples give some idea of the variants of traditional proverbs in an urban environment, as well as an idea of the informants perception of the world:

Good fences make safe lawns.

People who live in glass houses cut themselves a lot.

If the shoe fits, you will become a princess shows that the Cinderella influence is still strong.

Footnotes

[1]Roger D. Abraham, "A Rhetoric of Everyday Life: Traditional Conversational Genres," Southern Folklore Quarterly, 32 (March, 1968), 45-59.

[2]Iona and Peter Opie, The Lore and Language of School Children (London: Oxford University Press, 1959).

[3]Carl Withers, "Current Events in New York City Children's Folklore," New York Folklore Quarterly, 3 (Autumn, 1947), 213-222; see also Alta Jablow and Carl Withers, "Social Sense and Verbal Nonsense in Urban Children's Folklore," New York Folklore Quarterly, 21 (1965), 243-257.

MAN AND SOCIETY IN LABARRE'S THE GHOST DANCE: THE ORIGINS OF RELIGION:

AN ESSAY REVIEW

By Kay L. Cothran

Once again we have a monomyth, shaped in a Freudian tradition this time. We do not have pseudo-documented, mystic monomania, but psychoanalytic, ethnographic, and folkloristic knowledge woven into a developed argument. LaBarre holds that religion originates as crisis cult (i.e., cargo cult or revitalization movement), that these cults in general and in particular result from anxieties which occur typically, probably necessarily, in human individuals and groups. The context of religion in general, LaBarre says, "is the universally human neclear family, the condition is the individual human neoteny" (p. 12), so that "religion is the group dream, or perhaps nightmare, that teaches men the proper stance vis-a-vis the parental divine" (p. 12). The historical origin of a particular religion lies in "some dramatic individual revelation or dream" (p. 13). Hence LaBarre writes a detailed review and discussion of not only the literature on crisis cults but also of that treating shamanism.

In addition, LaBarre reviews ideas held by anthropological and psychological students of religion, attacks cultural relativism, remarks upon personality-and-culture studies, jabs irreverently at the mystique of fieldwork, recounts the development of the human species, discusses distinctions between magic and religion and between charisma and mana, and closes with polemical chapters of biblical Hebrew and classical Greek religion, culture, and philosophy. Bibliographical notes abound. In the origins of religion LaBarre has an immodestly huge subject matter. One need be modest if capable only of modest achievements. LaBarre's book isn't a Frazerian patchwork catalogue but an integrated whole cloth.

LaBarre's flexible, seductive writing style enhances his thought, sometimes, if the reader isn't a Freudian, beyond its merits. On the other hand, when

simply literacy, not to mention lucidity, in social scientific writing is rare enough to be a mark of distinction, it makes no sense to complain that in addition to good, straightforward exposition LaBarre writes intense passages that lure and move.

Rather than paraphrase LaBarre's arguments, doing them injustice and boring informed readers, I want to talk about LaBarre's assumptions about the nature of man and the nature of society and to show how these assumptions lead to what he says about anthropology's present ideology. In writing as good as LaBarre's, tonalities require attention, especially when something clangs, because they inhere in the thought and are not mere cosmetics.

"The individual" for LaBarre refers to the biological individual; similarly, "the family" means the biological family. Man is as he is because of certain prehistoric biological, ecological adaptations of the species--for example, culture. A human organism does not become an individual through participating intelligibly, reasonably predictably, in an ongoing human social group, that is, by being a relative in several senses of the word. Prominent in some present-day anthropological thought and thoroughly classically Greek as well, such an idea of individuality as fundamentally social and relative has no place in LaBarre's scheme. For LaBarre, one is an individual somatically, absolutely, in biological fact. Relations with others have nothing to do with the fact of individuality but only with its development.

Nonetheless, LaBarre calls his "man" fundamentally social. He explains culture shock in terms of social deprivation, which, however, turns out to be a special case of sensory deprivation, an absence of extrasomatic stimuli. How does LaBarre picture society, if his individual is an absolute entity, a somatic unit possessing or saturated with mind? How, in other words, does he articulate psychology, biology, and society? For LaBarre a society amounts to a sum of somatic individuals: mutually stimulating entities. Culture he calls an abstraction, "the observed consistency in the behavior of a number of individuals in a society" (p. 46). Such an abstraction from an individual's behavior is personality.

Contrast with LaBarre's naive-realistic idea of society as an immediately perceptible group of somatic individuals that of writers influenced by Durkheim, by the concept of emergent evolution, or more recently, by general systems theory (see Bertalanffy 1968). They think of society as real, not an abstraction, but existing at a level of organization different from that of sums of human bodies. Such a society cannot be immediately accessible to the senses of somatic individuals. If this sounds too far-fetched, imagine what an atom would make of the idea of a molecule, a circle of the idea of a sphere, a sphere of the idea of a hypershpere. We can't perceive hyperspace but can represent it mathematically; it is not an abstraction but another level, an added dimension (see Abbott 1952).

Society in this alternative sense is defined not by the absolute units it comprises but by relations among units. At the social level, so to speak, relations signify more than particular units. At its own level, the somatic individual remains the supreme organization, whose significance exceeds that of any of its particular organs or muscles, and yet this individual depends upon society, not just groups of other bodies, for its sustenance and definition.

By introducing this contrast in ideas of man and society, I want to suggest that LaBarre argues for a one-level, unidimensional world. He does not reduce everything to biology but does make biology superordinate to psychology and society in a way that brings reductionism to mind. Like some other critics of the genuniely flawed concept of the superorganic, LaBarre attacks the idea of a multidimensional, multilevel world, a world that allows multiple realities, or hyperspaces, as though such a multiplicitous world were a defective, even wickedly perverted version of unidimensional reality. In so doing he collapses what ought not be collapsed, committing a category mistake and unnecessarily identifying multidimensional world views with systems oppressing, devaluing, and denaturing human beings.

I know that what I have said does not absolve Plato of his authoritarian sins. Plato maintains one ultimate reality, to which there is a hierarchy of approximations, but his rationalism never altogether excludes myth--today we might say educated guesses, reasonable hunches, imaginative hypotheses. His system never closes tight. LaBarre's shrill, immoderately-worded attack upon Plato as father of fascism and nearly all other evils of western civilization (St. Paul having sired the rest) really shocks. Of course, Plato showed himself an authoritarian, though maybe not a totalitarian as some argue. Freud was himself a powerful authoritarian figure, judging from early psychoanalytic techniques. At one point LaBarre likens Freud to Moses, with I'm not sure how much humorous intent. LaBarre's attacks upon Plato sound like intemperate retorts to challenges to Father Freud's supremacy. The names Adler and Jung, incidentally, do not appear in the book.

The social individual beloved of the Greeks and of some of our colleagues in anthropology has nothing to do with the lobotomized zombies of Zamiatin's We, Orwell's 1984 (shamelessly derivative of We), or with the victims of any other negative utopia. If we want to think of this kind of individual in terms of science fiction, we should turn not to horror stories but to a provoking little tale of hyperspace called Flatland, by Edwin A. Abbott.

Now, to back up, if "society" equals "$\text{Individual}_1 + \text{Individual}_2 + \ldots + \text{Individual}_n$," then it makes some sense to see abstractions from group behavior (culture) as comparable to abstractions from individual behavior (personality). LaBarre does not tell us how to arrive at such abstractions--presumably it's obvious to a Freudian--but his contention that they are in principle comparable stands up, given his assumptions. LaBarre assumes that we need be interested only in individuals as he pictures them and that we need not bother ask what "+" means (see Bertalanffy 1968: 18-19). Essence alone, not realtion, counts.

If individuals and societies are comparable in principle, it follows that if individuals may be adjudged insane, out of touch with reality, then so may societies or portions of societies. Since a society can be out of touch with reality, reality's locus can't be society. To turn this around, a society can't legitimately manufacture its own reality or realities. Any world a society makes, and all make at least one, must be other than the "real" unitary reality. Consequently, the reality that is religious departs from the true real. LaBarre lets science off much more easily than religion, without much justification aside from faith in The Method. It also follows, parenthetically, that reality's locus can't be the individual, who started the whole sad mess with his maladjustments.

LaBarre thinks that we already know the meaning of "+." We can literally see behaviors in mutual adjustment as men react to one another's actions in series of stimulus-response dyads. We can see the nuclear family. We can observe stress and anxiety, push and pull. The primitive relation, the base "+," is the oedipal relation, divisible into three dyads. All other relations are workings-out of this primal, biological-rooted three-in-one. LaBarre's referencesto sensory deprivation and his portrayal of human relations as essentially simply syadic, bring out the curious affinity between behavioristic and psychoanalytic concepts of relation upon which Bertalanffy remarks (1968: 107-8). Neither sort of psychology has any place for auto-stimulation, wholesome or at least harmless fantasizing.

Quite the contrary. LaBarre thinks of culture as a set of technological and psychological defense mechanisms. A cult's function is to "assuage individual suffering from common human vicissitudes" (p. 14). At one point LaBarre warns that function does not equal origin, nor use essence, but this isn't that point. Through religion, a group neurosis--i.e., an elaborated individual one--with much maladaptive potential, culture responds defensively to the principal universal uniquely human problem, the oedipal one. Since he sees no discontinuity of essence between the public and the private, LaBarre can call the nature of religion private.

I suspect that when the basic human social relation is defined biologically and as additive, we can't get from biological to social relations, in theory or history, without portraying societies as warped. What would a sane society be, for a Freudian, who has to derive society from ecology, with all the primeval, apparently irreconcilable tensions the Freudian thinks inherent in biology? Society would be a sane group of individuals. Name one. Imagine one.

What does it mean to say that a society is crazy? Here we encounter the old Cerberus now called the problem of cultural relativism and that of etics/emics. LaBarre flays cultural relativism without distinguishing senses of the term; I think he falls victim to one of them. He never touches upon etics/emics, despite the apparent pertinence of these terms to comparative study, probably because he finds them quite fatuous, affected rationalizations.

In the midst of the current social scientific guiltfest, it would be refreshing if discussants would say what they mean by "cultural relativism." Let me offer some possibilities. If by "cultural relativism" we mean that the informant is always right, then ethnographers can be replaced by sycophantic stenographers. We can forget about analysis, since conflicting data cannot exist because all native exegeses are absolutely correct. We assume that the informant cannot or will not lie or err, because his mind isn't that complicated, because he is in touch with something Basic, or because we western decadents crave the approval of poor, dear, maligned Natural Man enough to malign him the more.

Suppose, alternatively, that "cultural relativism" means that we have to like, or at least refrain from disliking, everything and everyone in the societies we study on pain of guilt and accusation of racism. Here, cultural relativism is double-binding, irresponsibly destructive of disciplines and researchers, because it is impossible. Respect for our informants' dignity doesn't require us to be either funereal or mealy-mouthed, any more than it requires us to play Uncle Tom. We must have the same sort of ciritcal attitude

toward our customs that we have toward theirs, however, which brings me to a third sense of "cultural relativism."

If "cultural relativism" means that whatever other cultures do is all right for them then the doctrine oscillates between odiousness and silliness. There follows from this glib phrasing of cultural relativism the tacit clause, "because they don't know any better." This notion is never applied consistently. If it is all right for a tribe to be cannibals specializing in babies, isn't it also all right for some warlike western society to commit atrocities upon its own or other people? But, says our relativist, we know better while they do not, and besides, we haven't the right to judge others--as though he didn't judge them when he said that what they do is right for them. Since we can do right or wrong as a group whereas they can only do right, we are either worse than they because we can do wrong or better than they because we know wrong from right.

Although he excuses no one and thinks that any group can do wrong as a group, LaBarre clearly has more sympathy for cults in nonwestern societies, especially those peoples whose crisis cult aberrations result from the assaultive impact of western culture, than for the cults of western man, exemplified by Platonism, Nazism, Christianity, and American messianic imperialism. Why? Possibly because these latter have much deeper affective significance for LaBarre than have indigenous beliefs of other societies. He feels for the assaulted, against the attackers, even when the attackers are themselves victims in a sense. Our cults remind us that in fact we don't know better than the exoitcs. We all had fathers. Each time, in the ritual of doing ethnography, we triumph over the bewildering otherness of a new culture, as LaBarre sees, and re-enact the adolescent conflict with parents, with our culture. We want both to excuse cultures, for not knowing better and for giving us a chance to re-assert our mastery, and to damn them, for not knowing better and for imperiling our mastery. We want to be loved by our informants but to be "on top of" their cultures.

Suppose, finally, that "cultural relativism" enjoins us from making blanket diagnoses of a culture's sanity, from clapping our emics on the natives' emics and branding all or some natives mentally aberrant in terms of our own pandemonium. We must admit that Freudian thought is less culture-bound than opponents once maintained. As a guide to intuition it can lead to astonishingly insightful representations irrespective of cultural boundaries. Freudians go farther, holding their terms of analysis to be universal owing to their pinpointing something innate in human mentation and behavior. Freudian thought, say its adherents, reveals a universal emic system and is thus the ultimate etic system. Therefore, cultural relativism is a rationalization, not a scientific problem. Etics/emics are just so much methodological and theoretical foofaraw. Rigor bows before revelation. If individuals can be crazy, the societies can be crazy in similar ways, because "Public" = "Private + Private + Private. . . ."

To me, Freudian thought is technical and metalinguistic but not an etic system. "Not-native" is not equivalent to "etic," as though by virtue of being scholarly we were freed from emics. A discipline is as

much a subculture as a society. Ordinarily, we impose our disciplinary emic systems upon those of the cultures we study. A freshly-manufactured set of terms (motifs or motifemes, either one) is not automatically an etic system, however wide its applicability, as an intelligent reading of Harris (1960) shows. In many if not all cases, disciplines and other subcultures having the nature of cults and sects speak metalinguistically. A mythology doesn't have to be true to be instructive.

LaBarre's portrayal of cultural relativists tends to miss the mark because his concepts of man and society make cultural relativism seem absurd. Some forms of the doctrine make fools of their proponents and inhibit scholarship. We ought, however, to see relativists in historical context, not judge them cheaply and tack on epithets. This admonition hits LaBarre less squarely than, ironically, some guilt-ridden self-admitted relativists whose penchant for calling people "racist" knows no mercy, bounds, or reason. Rabies has never cured cancer, to my knowledge.

We ought not call LaBarre a racist, as some undoubtedly will on the grounds that Freud's thinking owes much to nineteenth-century evolutionary ethnology. In fact, LaBarre's portrayal of women, a masterpiece of orthodox Freudian ethnocentrism, raises the hair and hackles of this woman. Better examine and question his assumptions, however, than to allow them, watch his argument develop beautifully, and then call names. In his haste to condemn what most of us would freely admit to be evils, LaBarre charges at straw ogres, his literary tone all a-clang. His remarks on Plato and on Germany are more often demonology than scholarship. He becomes shrill, his reasonableness disappears, when he speaks of Vietnam, other U.S. errors, Plato, Paul, and Germany. We can, and as scholarly thinkers we must, understand without excusing, even ourselves.

That LaBarre's account of the origins of religion follows from his assumptions about individuals and societies proves nothing about historical origins. Some religions clearly begin as crisis cults; we know nothing certainly about others. If we accept LaBarre's assumptions, we accept his account. If not, we don't. We have to assent to the idea that religion has only one fuction and must agree that religion is a meaningful term with constant cross-cultural meaning (see Leach 1971), if we agree with LaBarre's argument. Many of LaBarre's certainties are for me conjectures tending toward the circular and are unamenable to investigation, let alone proof. Despite my doubts, I cannot imagine denying this book's importance and urge folklorists to read it and fight out its issues for themselves.

Footnotes

[1]Abbott, Edwin A., 1952 Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions. 6th ed., rev. New York: Dover.

[2]Bertalanffy, Ludwing von., 1968 General System Theory: Foundations, Development, Applications, New York: George Braziller.

[3]Harris, Zellig S., 1960 Structural Linguistics. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books.

[4]Leach, Edmund., 1971 "The Politics of Karma." New York Review of Books, November 18 pp. 43-45.

[5]Zamiatin, Eugene., 1924 We. Gregory Zilboorg, trans. New York: E. P. Dutton.

How to Play the Mountain Dulcimer: A Manual for Beginners. By H. S. Evans. Photographs by the author. Lynchburg, Va.: H. S. Evans, 1969. 23 pp. Bibliography, illustrations, music. Paperbound. Address: 4314 Tremont St., Lynchburg, Va. 24502.

Play the Dulcimer by Ear and Other Easy Ways. 2nd edition. [By] Su and Len MacEachron. Minneapolis: Here, Inc., 1970. [ii], 26 pp. Illustrations, music, photos. Paperbound. $2.00 ($1.00 with kit). Address: Box 341, Minneapolis, Minn. 55440

Both of these little booklets were produced by commercial dulcimer makers, apparently to serve as owner's manuals for their instruments. The Evans booklet is much the more sober of the two, and this, coupled with a text devoted relentlessly to the particular style of dulcimers made and sold by Mr. Evans, makes it valuable primarily to the owner of an Evans dulcimer.

The MacEachrons book is an altogether delightful surprise. Packed into a much more compact format than the Evans booklet are over twice the words, written in a breezy and humorous vein that is well-matched to the subject matter. There is an unusually reasonable discussion of dulcimer history, an excellent chapter on the multitude of ways a dulcimer can be fretted, plucked and tuned, and a section on strings and repairing. They also describe a highly original and elegant solution to the problem of making that final elusive adjustment when tuning a dulcimer.

There appears to be a tradition that a dulcimer booklet isn't complete without a listing of the ancient Greek modes, each with an appropriate tuning and a list of songs to fit. This is quite a burden to load onto a simple dulcimore, and any of the dozen or so traditional players I have heard would have been amazed to be told he was using an Ionian or Mixolydian tuning. Nevertheless, knowing esoteric tuning is fun and even useful; the MacEachrons present them clearly and list a number of songs playable in each, with the exception of their "Lydian tuning" to which they have appended an invitation to the reader to let them know if he finds one. Well, a few minutes fooling around produced "Cumberland Gap," "Johnson Boys," and "Down the Road," for a start. Doubtless other readers will turn up more.

Scott Odell
Smithsonian Institution

A Basic Instruction Manual in Bluegrass Banjo. Book #1. 1968. 12 pp. Photographs, illustrations. Paperbound.

An Advanced Instruction Manual in Bluegrass Banjo. Book 2. 1969. 21 pp. Illustrations. Paperbound.

Chords for 5 String Bluegrass Banjo. 1968. 10 pp. Photographs, illustrations. Paperbound.

All three books written by Bill Blaylock. Published by Bill Blaylock and Son, P. O. Box 25, Marietta, Ga. 30060. Prices not given.

These three books were written for the beginning bluegrass banjoist. Book 1 contains basic information and rolls for the right hand; Book 2, a summary of Book 1 with a few tunes; Book 3, banjo chords. The booklets do not include information about banjo history or construction and do not begin to have depth of information of Earl Scruggs and the 5-String Banjo, also published in 1968, but they are interesting, nonetheless.

The first book states in the introduction that "...we will be concerned only with the ever-popular clawhammer style using three picks on the right hand." I assume that there was a misprint and the author meant the word "clawhammer" to be "bluegrass".

I agree with Book 1 up to a point. The author stresses an eight-beat forward roll throughout without mentioning reverse, skip, forward and backward, or hammer-on rolls. He may have developed his own style of banjo in this manner so that it sounds adequate, but as instructor he should have acquainted the reader with more patterns.

Blaylock states that "The banjo is a right-hand instrument...the left hand will become adept quicker than the right hand." In my experience, the process has been just the reverse.

Five pages in the second book are taken verbatim from the first book. In the second book, Blaylock states that practice is the key to success in bluegrass banjo. Certainly he should have added that of equal importance is playing with other musicians and watching other banjo players. I think that the rolls given in tablature in Book 2 leave something to be desired, but for anyone beginning banjo there are some interesting sections. I would not, however, agree with the author in calling his songs "advanced picking songs."

The third book is a brief outline of chords used in a couple of different keys, but there are many more chords and variations which I think should have been shown. In conclusion, I think that the author has made a good try at writing something about which too little has been written. His booklets are reasonably accurate and I found them relatively easy to follow.

Reed Martin
Bethesda, Maryland

A History of the Musical Careers of Dewitt "Snuffy" Jenkins, Banjoist, and Homer "Pappy" Sherrill, Fiddler. By Pat J. Ahrens. Columbia, S.C.: the author, 1970. 26 pp. Bibliography, discography, photographs. Paperbound. No price given. Address: 4212 Willingham Drive, Columbia, S.C. 29206.

Just when and where did Snuffy Jenkins find his pre-war Gibson? Where and when was Julian Leonard (Greasy) Medlin born? Who arranged the bookings of the personal appearances of the Monroe Brothers in 1935-36?

The answers to these and many other questions of comparable interest can be found in this booklet. This is not written in derision; some of us are interested in such things. However, the reader looking for a brief survey of the meta-esthetics of high-baritone harmony, hot tips on new hot licks, or songs to learn, will not find satisfaction here, and might as well be fore warned. This booklet is pretty much just what it purports to be: a straight history of the careers of two interesting and not unimportant musicians, lasting from the early "golden" days of hillbilly recording to the present. It also contains histories of some other members of Byron Parker's Mountaineers (later Hillbillies), who upon Parker's death became The Hired Hands the band in which Snuffy and Pappy have starred since 1939.

This history is well constructed and pleasantly written although it gets fatuous at times. It is nicely printed and contains a well-compiled discography and many interesting photographs, including one of Snuffy playing with Earl Scruggs, who became well known playing Jenkins-style banjo.

What is Mrs. Homer Sherrill's maiden name? Where did Snuffy Jenkins go to high school? Who was the fiddler with the Blue Sky Boys when they started performing?

Joel Shimberg
Arlington, Virginia

Folk Songs of Central West Virginia Vol. 2. By Michael E. (Jim) Bush Ravenswood, W. Va.: Custom Printing Co., 1970. 104 pp. Cover photo, music. Paperbound with plastic spiral binding. $1.50. Address: Songbook, P. O. Box 127, Glenville, W. Va. 26351.

This book contains 44 songs collected by Mr. Bush from traditional singers in and largely from the central West Virginia area. Mr. Bush is a high school teacher and an active leader in the annual West Virginia Folk Festival at Glenville. This volume is dedicated to the memory of Mr. H. J. Shinn, one of the finest ballad singers encountered by Mr. Bush in his collecting experiences. Mr. Shinn died in 1970.

The collection contains interesting variants of many familiar and lesser known ballads and songs and includes a few songs of local origin. The local ballads include an account of Sheridan's ride written by a West Virginian serving in the Union Army at the time. It was collected from the author's grandson, M. L. Springston of Cox's Mill. Another local ballad tells of the murder of Sheriff Jay Legg of Clay County by his wife in 1904.

The book is in hand-printed form and contains the melody line of each song.

Gene Anderson
Alexandria, Va.

A Century of Ballads: Collected, Edited, and Illustrated in Facsimile of the Originals. [By] John Ashton. London: Elliot Stock, 1887. Reissued by Singing Tree Press, Detroit, 1968. xx, 354 pp. Appendix. $13.50.

A century of broadsides would be a more accurate description of this book, though it certainly contains some items which qualify as ballads in the oral tradition. These songs were printed as broadsides in seventeenth century England, usually written to popular tunes of the day.

Categorization makes it wonderfully easy to pick out a drinking song or an occult song when you need one, but there is probably not much here to add to a performing repertory unless your bag is characterized by the lute-bouts-cape-and-feather syndrome. On the other hand, if you have a compulsion to engage in obscuremanship with Barry O'Neill or J. C. H., this may be just the volume required.

The titles in this volume are often more entertaining (and sometimes longer) than the songs. One which has gained my affection is: "The Distressed Damsels" or "A Doleful Ditty of a Sorrowful Assembly of Young Maidens that were Met Together Near Thames Street to Bewail the Loss of Their Lovers Which were lately Pressed Away to Sea" to the tune of: "An Orange."

Another broadside technique was the use of a verse in the subtitle. An example is:

"The Valiant Commander with His Resolute Lady"

shewing

"A brief discourse of a Commander bold
Who had a wife was worth her weight in gold
Shee bravely fought to save her husband's life
Let all men judge, was not this a valiant wife,"

to a new Northern tune called."I would give ten thousand pounds shee was in Shrewsburg' or 'Ned Smith.'" We feel it might be easier to find 'Ned Smith' than the former tune, but looking for "Ned Smith" might be a more entertaining enterprise.

"The Country Farmer" was a popular tune for about six broadsides in this collection. "Let Ceasar Live Long" was also frequently used (or perhaps abused as even I have done to the good public domain).

The book is illustrated with woodcuts from the original sheets, which lend a great deal of atmosphere to the work. It is a pleasant addition to the balladeer's or collector's library with potential for many hours, days, or even years of verse memorization.

Richard L. Rodgers
Falls Church, Va.

Minstrelsy Ancient and Modern, with an Historical Introduction and Notes. By William Motherwell. New Edition. Paisley: Alex. Gardner, 1873. Reissued by Singing Tree Press, Detroit, 1968. iii, cv, 390, xxxiii pp. Appendix, music. $16.50.

William Motherwell was one of the early English-language ballad collectors, predating Francis James Child's first work by a generation. Of course, Child's monumental The English and Scottish Popular Ballads (1882-98) is so much more complete and accurate that the only reason anyone might care to read Motherwell's book would be for historical exactitude and for his pioneering comments on editorial practice and ballad variation. So, to those of historical bent I recommend the book.

In the main, my personal objection to the reprint is pragmatic: who needs it? All but two ballads herein are included in Child (along with other versions, which is not so in Motherwell's book), and Child's comments are so much more complete as to make one wonder why Motherwell bothered (except that if he and others like him hadn't, would Child have done his work so effectively?)

Anyway, reprinting Motherwell is like reprinting a 1910 dictionary. All the material in it is available today, and much more is known about the subject.

Robert J. Clayton
Washington, D. C.

The History of Myersville. By Ira C. Moser, 1905. By Thomas Rose and Charles S. Martin, 1971. Myersville, 1971. Myersville Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., pp. vi 147. Photographs. Paperbound. $5.00.

Myersville is a quiet town of 1,7000 nestled in Middletown Valley just off U.S. Route 40 west of Frederick, Maryland. This is its second major history and includes a photo-offset printing of the first, the 1905 History of Myersville, Frederick County, Maryland, including Biographical Sketches of its Representative Men.

The book is chock full of excellent photographs. There are pictures of groups, individuals, structures, activities, and scenes. Included are some serial photographs. Among the more interesting pictures are those indicating the devastation caused by fires and floods (pp. 66, 67, and 140). In some cases, you can compare the same scene taken at different times, for example, the Myersville Savings Bank, 1905 and 1971 (pp. 14 and 121).

Another attraction is the poetry of one of the town's first mail carriers, John M. Grossnickle, whose picture appears both in Moser's history (p. 11) and in Rose and Martin's history (pp. 77 and 78). His pedestrian work often soars in humor, pathos, and even spleen. The poems, all appearing in the latter section of the book, have such titles as "My Old Ford," "The Town Water Installation under W.P.A.," "The Trolley Wreck, January 26, 1936," "No Liquor in Town," and "Snallygaster." There are also two poems, one a "Thanks to Charles and Tom," by Grossnickle's daughter, Clara Grossnickle Metzger. Rounding out the poetry

is "Song of the Happy Tinker," dated 1887 and written by D. H. Mowen, the town tinker.

It's interesting to compare the histories. Moser primarily was concerned with pillars of the community, banks and churches, and military and political history. He appends to his history "Hero of the Highlands" by Nellie Blessing Eyster, a brief, incredible tale of the superheroic, single-handed defense by one local resident of his farm during the Civil War. Rose and Martin's work, twice as long as Moser's, treats of such things but also of many others, inculding beliefs and customs. For instance, there is documentation of a performance of the "Womanless Wedding" with men dressed accordingly playing all the parts (p. 60) and Charles W. Harp's detailed remedy for a witch's spell, calling for a hoop, a hog -- and a witch p. 144).

The book's last page is blank except for the title, "Things We Forgot." One's an index.

Five dollars (plus twenty-five cents for postage and handling) seems steep for a paperback. But all profits from the sale of the book go to the Myersville Volunteer Fire Company, and, though Rose and Martin are by no means skilled writers, the type of work they are doing should be encouraged. Currently, they are working on a history of Wolfsville, a small town a few miles above Myersville, where the roads become more sinuous and the pace even slower.

George A. Simpson
Bethesda, Maryland

AMERICAN FIDDLE TUNES From the Archive of Folk Song, edited by Alan Jabbour, Head, Archive of Folk Song, Music Division of Library of Congress, Washington 1971, ($4.95, by mail, $4.50 in person at room G152, Library of Congress).

It would be hard to write a review of this LP better than the introduction in the pamphlet accompanying the record. I therefore urge everyone to buy the record and read the pamphlet. Acutally it's the other way around: buy the pamphlet and listen to the record, Here is a surpassingly good little (36 pp.) book about playing styles, repertory, and historio-biblio-discographical matters concerning traditional American fiddling. It is illustrated with well-chosen and competently reproduced sound recordings from the Archive of Folk Song.

The pamphlet notes by Alan Jabbour are outstanding because (a) he is a good fiddler and (b) he is a good writer. This rare combination of skills has enabled him to speak the unspeakable and unscrew the inscrutable - especially in regard to style. Jabbour understands (and explains understandably) special tunings, unusual rhythmic patterns, and the differences between hornpipe and reel tempo - to mention a few of the areas he discuses more thoroughly than does your average academic folklorist. The historical commentary is interesting and often amusing; bibliographical references are excellent. The critical apparatus includes a comprehensive list of pre-1950 unpublished recordings of variants (from the Archive of Folk Song) and a useful but sketchy list (if not off the

top of Gus Meade's head, then at least without pretension to completeness) of published recordings of the fiddle tunes represented on the record. These tunes, twenty-eight of them, include "most of the popular or once-popular forms... reel or breakdown, hornpipe, jig, quadrille, schottische, highland fling, and quickstep." The selection (intentionally) omits waltzes, song airs, and slow 4/4 marches. Side B consists of recordings by Fiddlers from the South; Side A, from the rest of the country.

As a phonograph record, this one is analagous to other LC folk music records; they do the best they can with poorly recorded originals. In this instance, every example is from an instantaneous disc, and most were cut in the field. As a listening experience, this record will best please those who already like old-time fiddling; I can't see its making many converts to the cult. But it is primarily a teaching tool, and there is much to be learned from it - be you a fiddler, folklorits, or any other kind of freak.

Richard Hulan
Nashville, Tennessee

"La Guimbarde," by John Wright. 12" stereo LP, "Special instrumental" series, issued by Le Chant du Monde, 32, Rue Beaujon, Paris 8^{e}, France. Price (in France): 28.40 New Francs.

Well recorded, and wrapped in a handsome jacket which unfolds to a four-page illustrated booklet, this record is one of several recently issued by the French company "Le Chant du Monde" to explain, demonstrate, and explore the musical potential of some "folk" instruments.

John Wright's disc begins with a six-minute lesson on the technique of playing the guimbarde -- also known as the jews harp or jaw harp. This is followed by several of his own adaptations and improvisations; one, a duet with Tran Quang Hai, is interesting because of the interaction of the two instruments (especially in stereo), the effect being something like a kind of electronic music. The entire second side is devoted to very fine performances of traditional Irish jigs, reels, slow airs, and hornpipes -- Wright's main interest in instrumental music, he explains, although he received his first lesson from a Scotsman, Angus Lawrie, and he himself is an Englishman now living in France.

The liner notes are excellent; Wright touches on the history, geographic distribution, ethnology, and materials and manufacture of the guimbarde. It appears to be very ancient in principle: some very modern-looking examples in silver, in a museum at Rouen, are believed to date from the Gallo-Roman era. Illustrated are some of the variety of forms and materials found -- bone and bamboo, as well as various metals -- and several of the instruments shown were used in the recording.

The player's primer is thorough and includes information on the selection and care of the instrument, pictures and text showing how to hold and play it, and the text of the lesson given on the recording. (Unfortunately for some, the text is in French, but this should not be a major problem.)

Wright was a fortunate choice to make this record. As he explains, he has spent the past three years working at the Musee de l'Homme, the anthropological museum associated with the University of Paris, developing a descriptive catalog of the 150 or so guimbardes in that museum's collections. This task has involved not only some detective work on origins but also development of a satisfactory system of description, including research into the technology of manufacture and into the surprisingly complex acoustical qualities of the instruments. (A sample sonogram is shown on the record liner.) Wright's knowledge and wide experience of the numerous forms of the guimbarde -- combined with his evident ability to play it well, made this record particularly valuable and interesting.

Incidentally, the museum catalog of guimbardes is nearly done, but it is written in French and will probably not be published for some time.

The company Le Chant du Monde, which distributes Folkways records and Oak publications in France, also produces a number of other discs which may be interesting to readers of this journal. Among these are a fairly popular variety of series of regional misic of France, and a very impressive series of 24 discs, the UNESCO musical anthology of the Orient, as well as an anthology of African music (ten discs) and a six-volume collection of the music of Mall. The "special instrumental" series also includes one on the dan tranh, the Vietnamese cithara -- a smaller cousin of the Japanese koto -- by Tran Quang Hai; Indian flutes, by Alfredo de Robertis and "Los Condores"; the guitar of the Andes, by Atahualp Yupanqui; and "American guitar," by Roger Manson and Steve Waring.

Lani Herrmann
Boulogne-Billancourt,
France

"On the Mountains High," by Margaret MacArthur and Family of Marlboro, Vermont. Twelve-inch, LP, Stereo. F-LFR-100, Living Folk Records, 65 Mt. Auburn Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138. $4.50.

It's a pleasure to watch Margaret MacArthur sing. Obviously, she is moved by her songs and able to move her listeners. Her songs, she chooses carefully, learning most of them from other singers mostly in living rooms, but in one case even over the telephone (see the notes to this record on "I've Courted Thee Before, Miss"). The folksong revival is in her debt for resuscitating "Rinordine" (Laws P15) in a New England version, which she has been singing and which recently has been picked up by other singers. There are a number of ballads and broadside-type songs in her repertory and on this record. Among them, besides "Rinordine," are "You're Welcome Home, Young Johnny" (Laws K36), "Stratton Mountain Tragedy" (Laws G18), "Raspberry Lane" (Laws K43), "Banks of Florida" (Laws N40), "Peri Meri Dixi and Domini" (noted under C46), "Old Yellow Mare" (C13), "Cambric Shirt" (C2), and others as yet to be (of I may) canonized, "William Ismael" and "Central Vermont." The record also includes two lively dulcimer instrumentals, "Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine" and "Swallowtail Jig."

Besides the dulcimer -- and Mrs. MacArthur both as accompanist and lead performer is an excellent dulcimer player -- there are on the record guitar, dobro guitar, fretless banjo, fiddle, and two quaint instruments -- a harp and breadboard harp. These harps seem to my ear never in tune when played in ensemble. However, one of these precious instruments -- the ancient harp -- adds an ethereal quality to the haunting Stratton Mountain Tragedy."

The notes, by Linda Morley and Mrs. MacArthur, are a model of scholarship, thoroughness, and , it seems, honesty. The main shortcoming of the record is that the sixteen selections are not enough. Perhaps on the next record, we'll hear Margaret MacArthur's version of "Get Up, Jack, John, Sit Down." And, on future records, it's learned that Washington stalwarts -- Helen Schneyer, Bob Clayton, and Andy Wallace -- are being recorded by Living Folk Records for future publication.

George A. Simpson
Bethesda, Maryland

"More Fiddle Jam Sessions" (VRLP 304 ; and "The Working Girl: Women's Songs from Mountains, Mines and Mills," by Kathy Kahn with the Cut Cane Ramblers Fiddler Band (VRLP 3058). Voyager Recordings, 424 - 35th Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98122. $4.00 each.

Voyager continues to add to its small but respectable catalog. "More Fiddle Jam Sessions" is a followup of "Fiddler Jam Session" (VRLP 301) and offers more of the same -- recordings made during informal jamming at formal fiddlers' gatherings in the far northwest. The LP is more satisfying than its forerunner, which, on the whole, offered more showy performers, although this record like the first includes Bill Long of Billings, Montana, whose version here of "Waggonner" is about the most flashy I've ever heard.

The highlights here are the moderately-paced duets ("Snow Deer and "Possum Up the Gum Stump") of Don Gish of Yakima, Washington, and Lloyd Wanzer of Caldwell, Idaho, and the sure, mellow fiddling on "Bailey's" and "Victory Breakdown" by Llewellyn Sexsmith of Whitehorse, Yukon. Though guitar accompanists are unidentified, some of the back-up playing is top-notch. The guitarist not only keeps up with Bill Long on "Waggonner," but tends to match his virtuosity in the accompaniment. There is also solid guitar work behind "Fiddler's Dream" by Herman Johnson of Shawnee, Oklahoma.

Voyager records are produced by Phil and Vivian Williams. The latter is a fiddler and plays with others fiddlers on selections on both Voyager's fiddle records. Her knowledge and ability doubtless have aided greatly in the success of these records.

Just in time for the women's liberation movement (and in stereo yet) comes "The Working Girl," a collection of original, traditional and folk-like feministic and anti-capitalistic songs, sung by a female. However, Kathy Kahn's voice is a shock, somewhere in timbre between Jean Ritchie and Loretta Lynn but shy of subtlety and strength. Fortunately, her words are somehwat better.

For twenty-one years she lived in a cotton mill village and actually, for a time, worked in the mill. A segment from her book Hillbilly Women is included in the liner notes; it reveals some of the hardships of cotton mill life and makes one eager to read the entire book. Included with this record is a slim, attractive booklet with words to the songs on the record.

George A. Simpson
Bethesda, Maryland

ALSO RECEIVED:

Catalogue of English and American Chapbooks and Broadside Ballads in Harvard College Library. Compiled by Charles Welsh and William H. Tillinghast. Cambridge: Library of Harvard University, 1905. Reissued by Singing Tree Press, Detroit, 1968. Introductory Note by Leslie Shepard. xii, 171 pp. Indexes. $9.50.

Dansons a la Ronde: Roundelays. Folk Dances and Games Collected in Canada and New England and Prepared by Marius Barbeau. Piano arrangements by Maurice Blackburn. Interpreted in English by Joy Tranter. Illustrations by Marjorie Borden. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1963. (National Museum of Canada, Bulletin No. 151; Anthropological Series, No. 41) 104 pp. Annotations. Paperbound. $2.50.

Folk-Songs of Old Quebec. By Marius Barbeau. 2nd Edition. Song Translations by Regina Lenore Shoolman. Illustrations by Arthur Lismer. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1964. (National Museum of Canada, Bulletin No.75; Anthropological Series, No. 16) 72 pp. Music, bibliography of French-Canadian folksongs. Paperbound. $1.30.

An American Garland: Being a Collection of Ballads Relating to America, 1563-1759. [By] Charles Harding Firth. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1915. Reissued by Singing Tree Press, Detroit, 1969. xlviii, 91 pp. Introduction, notes. $7.50.

English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases: A Historical Dictionary. [By] George Latimer Apperson. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1929. Republished by Gale Research Co., Detroit, 1969. x, 721 pp. $16.00.

English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases: Collected from the Most Authentic Sources, Alphabetically Arranged and Annotated, With Much Matter Not Previously Published. [By] William Carew Hazlitt. London: Charles Tindley, 1884. Reissued by Singing Tree Press, Detroit, 1969. [50], 390 pp. (sans 307-336). Illustrations, index. $11.50.

Louisiana French Folk Songs. By Irene Therese Whitfield (Mrs. Lloyde Neil Holmes). "Unabridged and slightly corrected republication of the work originally published by Louisiana State University Press, University, La., in 1939 as Number I of the Romance Language Series. The author has prepared a new Preface and a new Appendix of 11 additional songs specially for the present edition." New York: Dover Publications, 1969. xv, 171 pp. Bibliography, discography, music. Paperbound. $2.00.

The Music Hunter: The Autobiography of a Career. By Laura Boulton. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1969. xiv, 513 pp. Introduction by Andrew W. Cordier. Index, maps, plates. $8.95. [Personal account of forty years in the field resulting in a large ethnomusicological collection now housed at Columbia University.]

The Book of Noodles: Stories of Simpletons; or, Fools and Their Follies. London: Elliot Stock, 1888. Republished by Gale Research Co., Detroit, 1969. xviii, 228 pp. Analytical table of contents, annotations, index. $8.50.

The Music Merchants. [By] Milton Goldin. New York: Macmillan; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1969. ix, 242 pp. Bibliography, index, plates. $6.95.

Folk Songs of the Blue Ridge Mountains: 50 Traditional Songs as Sung by the People of the Blue Ridge Mountains Country. Collected, transcribed and compiled, with notes on the people and the music by Herbert Shellans. New York: Oak Publications, 1968. 96 pp. Music, photos. Paperbound. $2.95. [With one exception these songs and ballads were all obtained from the Vass Family of Hillsville and Fancy Gap, Va., between 1956 and 1960. The versions and interesting, the photographs worthwhile, but the notes reveal scant information on the songs as a family repertoire and activity. Occasional rare pieces appear, like "For the Day Is A-Breakin' in My Soul" (pp. 89-90), a variant of "Bright Morning Stars Are Rising."]

J.C.H.

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