

JOHNNY BOOKER

Traditional Old-Time Song and Breakdown; **DATE:** From Minstrel era (1840); Other documented versions appear in the early 1900's; **CATEGORY:** Fiddle and Instrumental Tunes; **RECORDING INFO:** Gus Cannon 1956; Jerry Jordan [pseud. for Walter Smith], "Old Johnny Booker Won't Do" (Supertone 9407B, 1929); Cousin Emmy [Cynthia May Carver], "Johnny Booker" (Decca 24214, 1947; on CrowTold01); New Lost City Ramblers; **OTHER NAMES:** "Mister Booger;" "Knock John Booker;" "John Booker;" "Old John Booker, You Call That Gone;" "Johnny Bucca;" "Johnny Bucka;" "Do Me Johnny Boker;" "Do, Mr. Boker, Do;" "Old Johnny Pigger;" "Old Johnny Pucker;" "Old Johnny Bull" **NOTES:** The tune is known as a banjo/string band piece and comes from the minstrel era (J.W. Sweeny from 1840). The sea shanty versions tend to have names such as Johnny Booker/JohnnyBucca/Johnny Bucka/Dead Horse/Do Me Johnny Boker/Do, Mr. Boker, Do while the minstrel versions tend to have names like Old Johnny Booker/Poor Old Man/Johnny Booger/ Old Johnny Booger/Old Johnny Pigger/Old Johnny Pucker.

There was an old man and he
 went to school, and he made his liv - ing by
Chorus
 driv - ing a mule and - a - what John - ny Book - er would - n't
 do, do, do, And a what John - ny Book - er would - n't do.

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G **C** **G**
 There was an old man and he went to school
D **G**
 And he made his living by drivin' a mule,

G **G**
Chorus: And a what, Johnny Booker, won't you do, do, do,
D **G**
 And a what, Johnny Booker won't you do?

JOHNNY BOOKER

I drove him up to the foot of the hill
And I holler at the mule and the mule stopped still. *Chorus*

I put my shoulder against the wheel,
And a-back in the mud I stuck my heel. *Chorus*

I put my shoulder against the cart
And I hollered at the mule and the mule wouldn't start. *Chorus*

I drove him up to the blacksmith shop,
I hollered at the mule and the mule didn't stop. *Chorus*

I asked that farmer for to mend my yoke,
He hopped on the bellows and blowed out the smoke. *Chorus*

He fixed my yoke and he mend my ring,
And he never charged me a nary thing. *Chorus*

Then an old man came ridin' by,
And he says, "Young man, your mule's a gonna die." *Chorus*

If he dies I'll tan his skin,
If he lives I'll ride 'em agin. *Chorus*

I had an old mule and his name was Steve
He walked on his head as plain as his feet. *Chorus*

I had an old mule and his name was Bill
I worked him on the holler and he died on the hill. *Chorus*

I road him to the river and I couldn't get him in,
And I knocked him on the head with an old yard bin. *Chorus*

I went to the river and I couldn't get across,
Hopped on a bull frog a big as a horse. *Chorus*