

# PALLET ON THE FLOOR (ATLANTA BLUES)

Old-Time, Blues Tune; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **DATE:** Early 1900's; 1923 by W.C. Handy; **RECORDING INFO:** Leake County Revelers in 1928 on Columbia 15264-D; Bogtrotters; Original Bogtrotters; Mississippi John Hurt; Mike Seeger and Paul Brown; Doc Watson; **RELATED TO:** "Ain't No Tellin';" **OTHER NAMES:** "Make Me a Pallet on Your Floor;" "Atlanta Blues;" "Make Me a Bed on Your Floor;" **NOTES:** The title was recorded for the Library of Congress by musicologist/folklorist Vance Randolph from Ozark Mountain fiddlers in the early 1940's. The first printed version by W. C. Handy is under the title, "Atlanta Blues" in 1923 with lyrics by Dave Elman. The song is referenced in the Journal of American Folklore XXIV 278 in 1911. A favorite amongst blues players, it was remembered as one of the Bolden Band's specialties. W. C. Handy used it as a strain in his 1917 recording "Sweet Child."

C G C

Make me down a pal-let on your floor Makeme down a pal-let on your

D G B7 C

floor Make it soft make it low— so my good gal will ne - ver

G D G

know Make me a pal - let on your floor.

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C G

**Chorus:** Make me down a pallet on your floor

C D

Make me a pallet on your floor

G B7 C

Make it soft make it low so my good gal will never know

G D G

Make me a pallet on your floor.

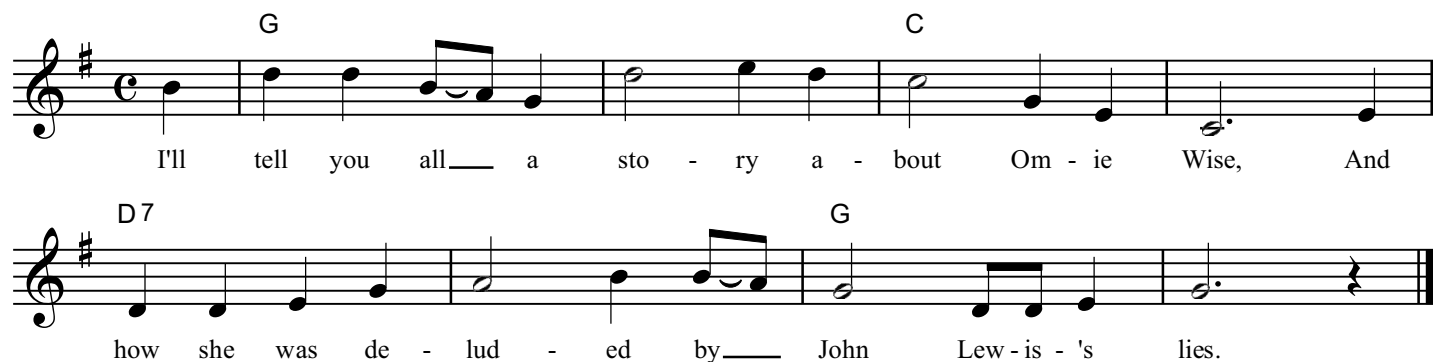
I'm goin' to the country through the cold rain, sleet and snow.  
I'm goin' to the country through the cold rain, sleet and snow.  
I'm goin' to the country through the cold rain, sleet and snow, ain't no tellin how far I will go.

Come all you good time friends of mine  
Come all you good time friends of mine  
When I had a dollar you treated me just fine  
Where'd you go when I only had a dime. *Chorus*

I'd be more than satisfied  
If I could catch a train and ride  
When I reach Atlanta and have no place to go  
Won't you make me a pallet on your floor. *Chorus*

# OMIE WISE (LAWS F4)

Traditional Old-Time and Bluegrass Song; **DATE:** 1874; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Grayson & Whitter-Victor 21625, 1927; Clarence Tom Ashley-1929; Doug Wallin; Dock Boggs; Roscoe Holcomb; Doc Watson; **OTHER NAMES:** Naomi Wise; **NOTES:** Nineteen year old Naomi Wise was murdered in the summer of 1808, in Deep River near Asheboro NC. Her husband Jonathon Lewis was arrested for the crime, escaped, and not recaptured until 1815 at which time he was acquitted.



I'll tell you all a sto - ry a - bout Om - ie Wise, And  
how she was de - lud - ed by John Lew - is - 's lies.

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**G** **C** **D7** **G**  
I'll tell you all a story about Omie Wise, How she was deluded by John Lewis's lies

**G** **C**  
He told her to meet him at Adams's spring

**D7** **G**  
He'd bring her some money and some other fine things.

He brought her no money nor other fine things  
But get up behind me, Omie, to Squire Ellet's we'll go  
She got up behind him, so caref'ly we'll go  
They rode 'til they came where deep waters did flow.

John Lewis he concluded to tell her his mind  
John Lewis he concluded to leave her behind  
She threw her arms around him "John spare me my life  
And I'll go distracted and never be your wife."

He threw her arms from 'round him and into the water she plunged  
John Lewis he turned 'round and went back to Adams's hall  
He went inquiring for Omie but Omie she is not here  
She's gone to some neighbor's house and won't be gone very long.

John Lewis was took a pris'ner and locked up in the jail  
Was locked up in the jail around, was there to remain a while  
John Lewis he stayed there for six months or maybe more  
Until he broke jail, into the army he did go.



# OLD SOLDIER (RED HAIRD BOY)

Traditional Irish and American Reel or Breakdown; **DATE:** Bunting's 1840: A Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland; **CATEGORY:** Fiddle and Instrumental Tunes; **RECORDING INFO- REDHAIRD BOY:** Doc Watson; Tony Rice; Norman Blake; **OTHER NAMES:** Red Haired Boy; "The Duck Chews Tobacco;" "The First of May", "Gilderoy" "Johnny Dhu," "The Little Beggarman" "The Old Soldier with a Wooden Leg" **NOTES:** "Old Soldier with a Wooden Leg" from the Civil War period, is a US version of the "Red Haired Boy" tune popular at bluegrass and fiddle conventions. The song is quite common as "The Little Beggarman" throughout the British Isles.

O there was an old sol - dier and he had a wood - en leg, He\_\_\_  
 had no to - bac - co but to - bac - co he could beg. A noth - er old sol - dier, as\_\_\_  
 sly as a fox, He\_\_\_ al - ways had to - bac - co in his old to - bac - co box.

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C F

Oh, there was an old soldier and he had a wooden leg.

C Bb C F

He had no tobacco but tobacco he could beg. Another old soldier, as sly as a fox,

C G C

He always kept tobacco in his old tobacco box.

Said one old soldier, "Won't you give me a chew?"  
 Said the other old soldier, "I'll be hanged if I do,  
 Just save up your money and put away your rocks,  
 And you'll always have tobacco in your old tobacco box."

Well, the one old soldier, he was feeling mighty bad,  
 He said, "I'll get even, I will begad!"  
 He goes to a corner, take a rifle from the peg,  
 And stabs the other soldier with a splinter from his leg.

Now there was an old hen and she had a wooden foot,  
 And she made her nest by the mulberry root,  
 She laid more eggs that any hen on the farm,  
 And another wooden leg wouldn't do her any harm.

# OLD RATTLER

Traditional Old-Time and Bluegrass Song; **DATE:** Early 1900's; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** George Reneau- 1924; Elizabeth Cotton; Grandpa Jones-1947; John Snipes; **OTHER NAMES:** Here Rattler Here; **NOTES:** Listed as *Here Rattler Here* by Meade from George Reneau's 1924 recording, Old Rattler closely resembles the song, Fox Chase. The classic recording of this song is Grandpa Jones recording on King 668 in 1947.

Old Rat-tl-er was a good old dog. As blind as he could be.

Ev-ry night at sup-per time, I be-lieve that dog could see. Here, Rat-tl-er, help help

Here, Rat-tl-er, Help call Rat-tl-er from the barn. Here, Rat-tl-er, here.

**C** Old Rattler was a good old dog; **G7** As blind as he could be

**C** Ev'ry night at supper time; I believe that dog could see.

**G7** **Chorus:** Here! Rattler, (Help! Help!) Here! Rattler! (Help!)

**C** Call old Rattler from the barn; Here! Rattler! Here!

Old Rattler tree'd the other night; And I tho't he'd tree'd a 'coon  
When I come to find out; He was barkin' at the moon.  
Well, grandma had a yeller hen; We set her as you know  
We set her on three buzzard eggs; And hatched out one old crow.

Grandpa had a muley cow; She was muley when she's born  
It took a jaybird forty year; To fly from horn to horn.  
Now if I had a needle and thread; As fine as I could sew  
I'd sew my sweetheart to my back; And down the road I'd go

Old Rattler was a smart old dog; Even tho' he was blind  
He wouldn't hurt one single thing; Tho' he was very fine.  
One night I saw a big fat 'coon; Climb up in a tree  
I called old Rattler right away; To get 'im down fer me.

But Rattler wouldn't do it; Because he liked that 'coon  
I saw them walkin' paw in paw; Later by the light of the moon.  
Now old Rattler's dead and gone; Like all good dogs do  
You better not act a dog yourself; Or you'll be goin' there too.

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# OLD JOE CLARK

Traditional Old-Time and Bluegrass Song; **DATE:** Late 1800's, Journal of American Folklore 1912; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Fiddlin' John Carson 1923; Carter Family; Dillards; Kentucky Colonels; Clark Kessinger; Kingston Trio; **NOTES:** Bayard thinks it was originally a song tune that later became a fiddle standard and play party tune. Mike Seeger relates the local story of the origins of the tune where he lives in Rockbridge County, Va.: Joe Clark's father settled around Irish Creek, near South River, in the early 1800's. Joe Clark had a daughter, and a jilted beau is said to have written the song, out of jealousy, in the late 1800's. The Clarks have been family-style string musicians right down through the years. Another investigation determined the source of the tune to be the murder in Maryland of a traveling salesman named Herbert Brown by Joe Clark and Brown's wife Betsy sometime after the Civil War. Joe and Betsy attempted to cover up the crime by asserting that Brown was on a trip up North. This perhaps explains the verse: "Old Joe Clark killed a man/Layed him in the sand" and the chorus which includes "goodbye Betsy Brown." Virginia family band "Fiddlin'" Cowan Powers and Family's recording of the piece was the third best-selling country music record of 1924, while the Skillet Lickers (north Georgia) 1926 recording was the fourth best-selling for that year. Typically it is played A B B form.

Old Joe Clark was a good old man Nev-er did no harm said he would not  
 hoe my corn might hurt his fid-dl-ing arm Fare thee well Old Joe Clark Fare thee well I  
 say Fare thee well Old Joe Clark I am going a - way.

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**G** **F**  
 Old Joe Clark was a good old man, Never did no harm  
**G** **D** **G**  
 Said he would not hoe my corn, Might hurt his fiddling arm.

I went down to Old Joe's house, Never been there before  
 He slept on a feather bed, And I slept on the floor.

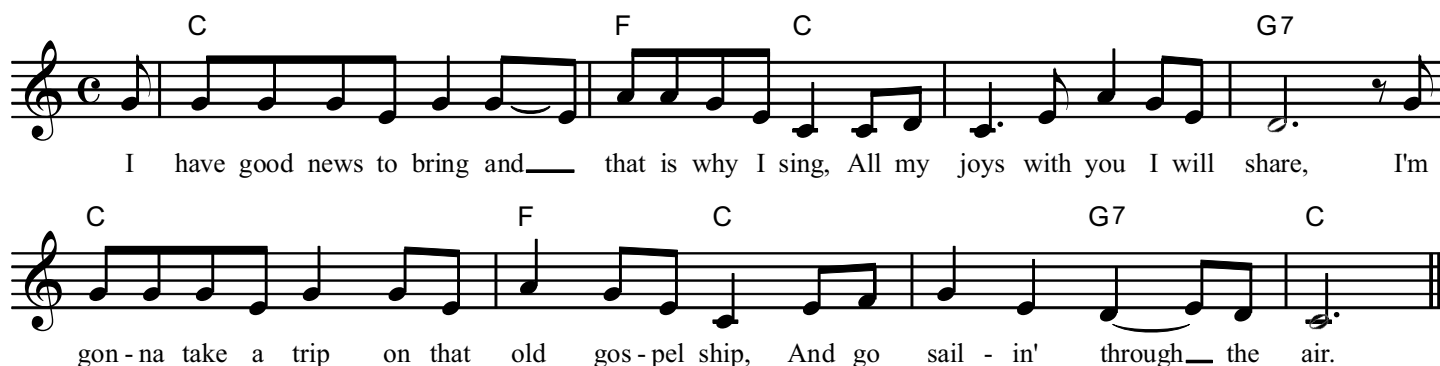
**G** **F**  
**Chorus:** Fare thee well Old Joe Clark, Fare thee well I say  
**G** **D** **G**  
 Fare thee well Old Joe Clark, I am going away

I went down to Old Joe's house, Old Joe wasn't home  
 Ate up all of Old Joe's meat, And left Old Joe the bone.

I went down to Old Joe's house, He invited me to supper  
 Stumped my toe on a table leg, And stuck my nose in the butter. *Chorus*

# OLD GOSPEL SHIP

Traditional Southern Gospel Song; **DATE:** Early 1900's; **CATEGORY:** Early Southern Gospel Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Carter Family-1935; Monroe Brothers-1937; Red Smiley and the Bluegrass Cut-Ups; Joan Baez; New Lost City Ramblers; **OTHER NAMES:** Gospel Ship; **NOTES:** This popular Southern gospel song shares the melody with "Have a Feast Here Tonight." A.P. Carter and the Carter Family have an excellent version. Alan Lomax collected a version from Ruby Bass on Southern Journeys- Vol. 4, Brethren, We Meet Again: Southern White Spirituals. The melody for the chorus is almost identical to the verse.



I have good news to bring and that is why I sing, All my joys with you I will share, I'm  
gon-na take a trip on that old gos-pel ship, And go sail - in' through the air.

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**C** **F** **C**  
I have good new to bring and that is why I sing,  
**G7**  
All my joys with you I will share  
**C** **F** **C**  
I'm gonna take a trip on that old gospel ship,  
**G7** **C**  
And go sailing through the air.

**C** **F** **C**  
**Chorus:** I'm gonna take a trip on that old gospel ship  
**G7**  
I'm going far beyond the sky  
**C** **F** **C**  
I'm gonna shout and sing, until the bells do ring  
**G** **C**  
When I'm bidding this world good-bye.

If you are ashamed of me, you ought not to be  
And you better have a care  
If too much fault you find, you'll sure be left behind  
When I'm sailing through the air.

I can hardly wait, I know I won't be late  
I'll spend all my time in prayer  
And when my ship comes in, I'll leave this world of sin  
And go sailing through the air.

# OLD DAN TUCKER

Old-Time and Bluegrass Song- Daniel Decatur Emmett; **DATE:** 1841; Published in 1843; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Fiddlin' John Carson- 1924; Uncle Dave Macon- 1925; Homer and the Barnstormers; **OTHER NAMES:** Dan Tucker; **NOTES:** In Richard Walser's 'North Carolina Legends', 1980, is the legend of 'Old Dan Tucker', where it is said that he was born in London in 1714, and moved with his parents to Bath Town, North Carolina six years later. He is said to have married Margaret DeVane in 1740 and moved to what is now Randolph County and built a cabin there. Daniel Decatur Emmett wrote the song from black sources and published it in 1843. The *Dan Tucker* melody used was by Bob Wills in "Stay All Night" and is similar to the *Johnny Booker* songs.

Old Dan Tuck-er's a fine old man, washed his face in a fry - ing pan.

Combed his head with a wag - on wheel. Died with a tooth - ache in his heel.

*Chorus* Get out the way old Dan Tuck-er. You're too late to get your sup-per.

Sup-per's gone and din - ner's cook-in'. Old Dan Tuck-er just stands there look-in'.

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G D  
Old Dan Tucker's a fine old man, Washed his face in a frying pan,  
G D G  
Combed his hair with a wagon wheel, Died of toothache in his heel.

G C D G  
**Chorus:** Get out the way old Dan Tucker, You're too late to get your supper,  
C D G  
Supper's gone and dinner's a-cookin', Old Dan Tucker's just stands there lookin'.

Old Dan Tucker he come to town, Riding on a billygoat, leading a hound,  
Hound dog bark and the billygoat jump, Threwed Dan Tucker on top of a stump.

Old Dan Tucker, he got drunk, Fell in the fire and he kicked up a chunk,  
Red hot coal got in his shoe, Oh my Lawdy how the ashes flew.

Old Dan Tucker, he come to town, Swinging the ladies round and round,  
First to the right and then to the left, And then to the gal that he loved best.

And now old Dan is a dead gone sucker, And never will go home to his supper,  
Old Dan he has had his last ride, And the banjo's buried by his side.



# OLD BLUE

Traditional Old-Time and Bluegrass Song; **DATE:** Early 1900's; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Jim Jackson- 1928; Mike Seeger and Alice Gerrard; Dillards; **OTHER NAMES:** Dog Blue; **NOTES:** Hill people and back country folk used to live off hunting, and a good hound dog was worth his weight in gold. Old Blue has been sung by African-American construction gangs, 1915-1916 and Perrow collected a version in 1909.

I raised a dog and his name was Blue, And I bet - cha five  
E - ver - y night just a - bout dark Blue goes

dol - lars he's a good one too. Come on Blue you good dog you,  
out and be - gins to bark

Come on Blue you good dog you.

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**D** **A7** **D**  
I had an old dog and his name was Blue, Betcha five dollars he's a good dog too.

**D** **A7** **D**  
Every night just about good dark, Blue goes out and begins to bark

**A7** **D** **A7** **D**  
Come old Blue, you good dog you. Come old Blue, you good dog you.

Blue chased a possum up a 'simmon tree, Barked at the possum and grinned at me.  
Chased that possum way out on a limb, Blue sat down and he talked to him  
Come old Blue, you good dog you. Come old Blue, you good dog you.

Blue got sick, he got mighty sick, Called for the doctor to come right quick.  
The doctor come and he come in a run, But he said old Blue your huntin's done.  
Come old Blue, you good dog you. Come old Blue, you good dog you.

Old Blue died and he died so hard, He shook the ground in my back yard.  
I dug his grave with a silver spade, And lowered him down with a length of chain.  
Come old Blue, you good dog you. Come old Blue, you good dog you.

There's just one thing that troubles my mind, Blue went to heaven and left me behind.  
When I get to heaven, first thing I'll do, Is get my horn and call for Blue.  
Come old Blue, you good dog you. Come old Blue, you good dog you

# OH DEATH

Traditional Old-Time and Bluegrass Song; **DATE:** Early 1900's; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Carter Family; (Charlie) Monroe's Boys; Dock Boggs; Sarah Ogan Gunning; Ralph Stanley; New Lost City Ramblers; **OTHER NAMES:** Money Cannot Buy Your Soul; Death Have Mercy on my Age/Soul; Conversation With Death; Death Is Awful; Awful Death; **NOTES:** A gripping version of "O Death" is sung by Ralph Stanley on the soundtrack of the movie "O Brother, Where art Thou?" Oh Death is found in both the white and black tradition from Texas to the Georgia Sea Islands and is available today in widely contrasting settings: unaccompanied vocal solo, hillbilly duet (with guitars), and bluegrass band. A similar dialogue with Death turns up in the traditional English song "Death and the Lady" published by J. Deacon between 1683 and 1700.

D \* frequently F natural C D

What is this that I can see with icy hands taking hold on me.

2 \*

I am death and none can excel I'll open the doors to

C D 2 D

heav - en or hell. Oh death oh

C D 2

death. Can't you spare me over til another year.

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D C D  
Well what is this that I can't see, With ice cold hands taking hold of me?

C D  
"Well I am death, none can excel, I'll open the door to heaven or hell."

D C D  
**Chorus:** Oh, death- Oh death- Won't you spare me over til another year?

Whoa, death, someone would pray. Could you wait to call me til another day?  
The children pray, the preacher preached; Time and mercy is out of your reach.

"I'll fix your feet til you can't walk, I'll lock your jaw til you can't talk,  
I'll close your eyes so you can't see- This very hour come and go with me."

"In death I come to take the soul, Leave the body and leave it cold;  
To drop the flesh off of the frame; The earth and worms both have a claim."

My mother came to my bed, Placed a cold towel upon my head,  
My head is warm, my feet are cold, Death is a-movin' upon my soul.

Oh death, how you're treatin' me, You close my eyes so I can't see.  
Well, you're hurtin' my body, you make me cold, You run my life right out of my soul.

Oh, death, please consider my age. Please don't take me at this stage.  
My wealth is all at your command, If you'll remove your icy hands.

"Oh the young, the rich or poor, All alike to me you know.  
No wealth, no land, no silver or gold, nothin' satisfies me but your soul."

# NINE POUND HAMMER

Old-time Song; **DATE:** Late 1800's- Early 1900's; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Al Hopkins & his Buckle Busters (Brunswick 177, 1927); Frank Blevins & his Tar Heel Rattlers; Grayson and Whitter-1928; Flatt & Scruggs & the Foggy Mountain Boys; Greenbriar Boys; Jim & Jesse and the Virginia Boys; Monroe Brothers; Don Reno and Bill Harrell with the Tennesse Cutups; Merle Travis; **OTHER NAMES:** "Spikedriver Blues;" "Roll On, John;" "Roll On Buddy, Roll On" "Take This Hammer." **NOTES:** "Nine Pound Hammer" is one of the few work songs to ever enjoy popularity. Early string bands such as Frank Blevins' Tar Heel Rattlers and Al Hopkins Bucklebusters were the first to introduce it as a performance piece. Bluegrass pioneers Bill and Charlie Monroe and fingerpicker Merle Travis brought it to a wider audience and are largely responsible for its continuing popularity. Some versions use a second part that echos the melody.

This nine pound ham-mer is a lit-tle too hea-vy for my  
size bud-dy for my size Roll on  
bud-dy don't you roll so slow how can I  
roll when the wheels won't go?

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G C G D G

This nine pound hammer is a little too heavy, For my size, buddy for my size

C G D G

Roll on buddy, don't you roll too slow, How can I roll when the wheels won't go.

It's a long way to Harlan, it's a long way to Hazard  
Just to get a little booze just to get a little booze  
Oh, the nine pound hammer killed John Henry  
Ain't gonna kill me, ain't gonna kill me.

There ain't one hammer down in this tunnel  
That can ring like mine, that can ring like mine  
Rings like silver, shines like gold,  
Rings like silver, shines like gold.

Buddy when I'm long gone, won't you make my tombstone  
Out of number nine coal, out of number nine coal  
I'm going on the mountain, just to see my baby  
And I ain't coming back, no I ain't coming back.