

BIG SOUTH FORK FOLKLIFE STUDY:
THE OLD-TIME MUSIC OF THE BIG SOUTH FORK

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SECTION I. THE OLD-TIME MUSIC OF THE BIG SOUTH FORK.

Introduction

The Big South Fork has a rich musical heritage, and it is one of the unique areas of the present-day United States where an appreciable amount of traditional music still survives. Even still, this fact should not be misconstrued, because although the area remains somewhat removed from the American mainstream geographically and in some cultural traits, it is not isolated from the popular cultural trends of our society. Around the Big South Fork, one can simultaneously hear ballads and fiddle tunes that are several hundred years old, and today's "Top 40" or country music hits. In its music as well as in many other respects, the region dramatizes the impact that the mass communication media have had on America's folk heritage, and emphasizes the crucial necessity of documenting the vestiges of it that persist.

Motives and Materials

The Big South Fork's traditional music was deemed such a valuable cultural resource that the Folklife Study delegated one member to the virtually fulltime pursuit of the following objectives:

- (1) surveying and evaluating the present-day status of the various forms of indigenous music.
- (2) establishing rapport and comfortable relationships with important local performers so that examples of their music could be recorded.
- (3) understanding the function, role, and responsive behavior associated with these types of music in their original cultural context.

- (4) considering ways that the Big South Fork's folk music traditions might feasibly contribute to the interpretive dimension of the proposed National River and Recreation Area.

These objectives were accomplished over a period of nine months' fieldwork, which produced 40 tapes devoted to the music of the Big South Fork region. These feature roughly 35 hours of music and interviews involving ^{over} 40 individual performers (some of whom are no longer living) and groups from Fentress County, Scott County, and Morgan County, Tennessee, and from McCreary County and Wayne County, Kentucky. The tapes were originally divided into two series, reflecting two distinct intentions.

The Incidental Series was planned as a general survey of the types of music that can presently be found in the area, through recordings of public performances that would capture audiences' responses to the music as well as the music itself. This series contains ten tapes recorded on six occasions between July and early September, 1979; included are performances by local gospel, country, and rock'n'roll ensembles, and by the dixieland jazz band from York Institute, the high school in Jamestown, Tennessee. A performance by ballad-singers Dee and Delta Hicks at Pickett State Park on August 17, 1979, and more old-time music recorded at Pickett over Labor Day weekend, 1979, are also included. These recordings were made under circumstances where little, if any, audio control was possible, and ^{being} subject to the contingencies that characterize "live" recording, their sound quality varies from fair to very good.

The Documentary Series was limited to the traditional or "old-time" music of the area, and its purpose was to create

better-quality documents of this material under somewhat more controlled recording conditions (ie., informants' homes) that could be used for immediate and future analysis. Eight tapes of this sort, involving twelve local artists, were compiled from a series of recording sessions that began in October, 1979, and culminated in February, 1980. The Documentary Series also includes a recording of a square dance held at Rugby, Tennessee, in November, 1979, and other pertinent material. Three tapes are copies of commercial recordings featuring music by performers from the Big South Fork area, and others ~~that~~ are copies of tapes furnished by the performers themselves, or, in one instance, by the family of a well-known local fiddle player who died in 1965. Bobby Fulcher, a Tennessee Department of Conservation, Division of Parks and Recreation staff member who is very familiar with the old-time musicians of the area, courteously shared recordings of some of the songs that he had taped from the Hicks family of Fentress County. To capture two other important aspects of the region's expressive culture--gospel singing and the preaching styles of local radio evangelists, who aptly must be considered performers in their own right--the Documentary series also includes recordings of gospel broadcasts, taped off the air or at the studios of WBNT radio in Oneida, Tennessee. Later, two recordings were made of rural church services in McCreary County and Scott County.

In addition to the recorded material, a wealth of untaped information about the Big South Fork region's music and its cultural milieu was gathered from local performers during the nine-month fieldwork period, and it is contained in this section

of the Folklife Report.

Traditional Music, Popular Music, and the Folk Process

Western musicologists have customarily made a typological distinction between sacred and secular music in describing the music of a particular area or time period. This seems a logical manner to follow in dealing with the music of the Big South Fork, and since a subsequent chapter will be devoted to religion, it also seems appropriate to postpone the discussion of sacred music until then. This chapter, then, will cover the region's secular folk music^{forms,} but before preceding, a few important ideas should first be clarified.

In common usage, "traditional" suggests an article that has spread through oral transmission, circulating for such a long period of time that it has become part of a common body of folk heritage and lost any association with a particular author or composer. Much folk material explicitly fits this definition, having been handed down and passed around for so long that it is also characterized by conspicuous geographical variation.

"Traditional", however, does not always denote great antiquity. Researchers such as Wiggins (1979) have demonstrated that some of the "traditional" fiddle tunes popular around the Big South Fork and elsewhere in the highland South can be traced to specific late 19th or early 20th Century composers and to printed music sources, even though these facts are unknown to most, if not all, individuals who perform the tunes today. Even more recently, the folk domain has claimed compositions by popular balladeers such as Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, or Bob Dylan;

songs which have been recorded, played, and sung so widely and so often that many people do not identify them with any certain composer or performer. John Prine's song "Paradise" ("Muhlenberg County"), which initially appeared on record in 1972, is an even more astounding example of how rapidly a song can become validly "folk", at least to a good many listeners.

Folk culture has been assimilating popular songs for centuries, regardless of whether the familiar performer of the day was the medieval troubadour, the broadside ballad monger, the 19th Century blackface minstrel show entertainer, or the contemporary recording artist. [*] It is comforting to know that folk tradition persists in the age of electronic mass communication, although a highly ironic and almost paradoxical relationship between the two has evolved. Even though today's popular music has supplanted many of our genuine folksongs, radio, television, and the recording industry have greatly enhanced the folk process itself, as it exists today, by disseminating certain songs so widely and so expediently that they have gained a quasi-traditional status that would otherwise have taken them generations to acquire.

With this process in mind, we might look at the folk music of the Big South Fork as a reservoir that has been fed by several distinct streams of Anglo-American musical tradition and contains remnants of the popular music of earlier periods as well as indigenous material that originated among the "folk" themselves. A variety of styles and forms are represented, including British and early American ballads dating back hundreds

* (insert:) Conversely, as we can see from the examples cited above, elite or popular culture has borrowed elements from folk tradition, embellished them, and returned them to oral circulation.

of years, and instrumental dance tunes of comparable age, all of which were already part of the heritage of the region's early settlers. One can also hear a diversity of songs reflecting facets of the Kentucky-Tennessee frontier lifestyle, as well as light-hearted numbers that entered local folk tradition by way of the minstrel stage, a widely popular form of entertainment in 19th Century America with an influence that penetrated even the most hinterland areas. Finally, there are the maudlin favorites from around the turn of the century, and other items--some traditional, some "composed"--that Southern musicians recorded during the early days of the country music industry, ^{and} that many local performers around the Big South Fork today learned from the radio. This musical reservoir retains something of virtually everything that can be found looking back into the etiology of the people of the Big South Fork region--lingering echoes of their ethnic origins, and of the times and the cultural environments that have blended to make up their common folk heritage.

Vocal Music: Ballads and Folksongs

Some of the folksongs collected around the Big South Fork belong to either of two ballad traditions that have been well-documented in the British Isles and in the United States. The earliest of these ballad families consists of the material contained in the collection of Francis J. Child (1882, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1888, 1890a, 1890b, 1892, 1894, 1896), an American scholar who recorded variants of 305 ancient ballads that were still being sung in England and Scotland during the late 19th

Century. Many counterparts have been found in the United States and Canada (see Cox, 1925; Davis, 1929; Sharp, 1932; Henry, 1938; Randolph, 1946; White, 1952; and other collections).

The Child ballads are long, third-person narratives, and the stories that they tell are usually legendary, abounding with the knights, damsels, castles, romance, intrigue, and supernatural elements associated with the popular concept of what an old ballad should contain. Many of them are tragic, but others end happily and some are genuinely humorous.

These ballads are very old. Scholars believe that they originated during the 1400's and the 1500's, and it is now thought --although debate about this persists--that they were composed by sophisticated writers who intended them to be for the enjoyment and appreciation of cultivated audiences of the day. Eventually, however, they found their way into folk tradition, so that today, after being passed ~~on~~ orally for so many generations and evolving many different variants, the Child ballads are cited as classic examples of folklore.

The broadside ballads represent another oral tradition that was once popular in the Big South Fork region. Of somewhat more recent origin than the Child ballads, these date from the 17th to the 19th Century and were composed by professional song writers who printed them on large sheets of paper called broadsides and peddled them in the city streets of Great Britain, Ireland, and America. In a sense, the broadside ballads were the current hit songs of their day, and were quickly assimilated into folk tradition. Many were based on current events and offer

accounts of murders, disasters, or of outlaws and their crimes. Some offer political satire, and others are purely fictional. Collectively, the broadside ballads furnish insight into the popular tastes of their times through their stories of heroism, true or unfaithful love, and violence. Lyrically, they tend to be more concise than the Child ballads, and their perspective is usually less detached, if only because they concern familiar events. Their narratives may be told in the first person, and their authors often interjected their own wry editorial comment or touches of moralism.

The printed broadside ballad tradition itself survived until the early 20th Century in the form of postcard-sized cards that carried the printed lyrics to popular narrative or "event" songs and were peddled by fulltime musicians who, like Dick Burnett⁽¹⁸⁸³⁻¹⁹⁷⁷⁾ of Monticello, Kentucky, were often blind men who were unable to support themselves any other way. Before the advent of the phonograph record, these cards were the means that most listeners relied upon to remember and learn the words to songs that they heard and liked. In fact, old-timers around the Big South Fork still use the word "ballad" (or "ballet", as it is in the local dialect) not in reference to the song itself, but to the song lyrics in printed form.

Besides the remnants of Child ballads and broadside ballads, the region's folksong repertoire also included a number of different kinds of traditional songs: love songs, courting songs, children's songs and singing games, songs describing funny or exaggerated incidents, and songs about animals, which sometimes possess human characteristics. Much of this material can be

found in collections of American traditional songs, but other articles may well be of local origin. Except for songs about hunting, songs dealing with work-related activities seem to be curiously absent. Occupational folksongs are an important traditional genre, but they do not appear to have been common around the Big South Fork, even in the coal mining areas of Scott and McCreary counties. [Dee Hicks, who probably knows more traditional songs of the region than anyone, says that he does not recall ever hearing a song about coal mining prior to Merle Travis' radio hits "Dark as a Dungeon" and "Sixteen Tons" in the 1950's.]

Today, most of us cannot readily appreciate how important these songs were in their original cultural context, so much do we take for granted the music that we hear around us every day. Reflect on the important role that music occupies in our lives, whether we listen to the radio, records, or tapes for relaxation at home, in the car, to relieve the tedium of work, for dancing, or as "party music": what would our alternative be if the technology that we depend on for our music suddenly disappeared? Before the development of sound recording, of course, people had to make music for themselves, just as they were self-sufficient in other respects. The songs described here were one of the major sources of entertainment when people were enjoying their leisure time, and they helped relieve the monotony of physical labor, housework, travel, and the pangs of loneliness. The ballads, in fact, accomplished the same basic function that television fulfills today, providing melodrama (often based on recent events) and a passive sort of entertainment for the listen-

ing audience around the house. Jean Ritchie's autobiography Singing Family of the Cumberlands (1955) gives a good illustration of the important place that these traditional songs held in family life before the coming of the radio.

Unfortunately, the Big South Fork's early ballad and folksong traditions are now virtually extinct. Aside from Fentress County's exceptional Hicks family, who possess a large repertoire of ballads and songs that have been handed down for at least four generations (We will look at some of these in detail in Section II.), there are only a few other individuals living today who can still recall and sing any of this material. In another decade or so, most of it--aside from what has already been recorded--will have been lost forever, since the area's younger residents do not appear to be interested in learning and keeping any of it alive. This music was probably passing out of vogue even before the turn of the century, losing ground to the wave of shorter, sentimental material so popular in the late 1800's, which called for the use of musical instruments and harmony. Popular songs of the period, such as "The Pale Wildwood Flower", "The Letter Edged in Black", "The Little Rosewood Casket", "After the Ball", "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane", and the many others that were later recorded by the Carter Family and other "old-time" or "hillbilly" performers in the late 1920's and early 1930's are legitimately recognized as folksongs today, but in their own heyday, they superannuated an older body of folk material in much the same way that they themselves were supplanted by two succeeding generations of changing musical taste.

In the style associated with the earlier body of traditional songs, singing was usually done alone and without instrumental accompaniment. This may have partly been due to the scarcity of instruments, especially in the days of settlement, but it also reflects a quality common to much of the music itself and particularly evident in the older material such as the Child ballads. Many of their melodies are based not on a seven-tone scale, as we use in music today, but on ancient scales of five or six tones. These scales are often modal, not corresponding to either our familiar major or minor scales. This accounts for the haunting and not unpleasingly dissonant sound of many Appalachian melodies. Consequently, modern systems of harmony are not applicable, and modern instruments such as the guitar, which are fundamentally based on these principles of chords and harmony, simply do not sound right when used to accompany these old songs.

The solo singing style itself is generally stark, discretely embellished by vibrato and short grace notes, which create the quavering effect one hears in recordings of old-time unaccompanied singing. The higher-than-normal vocal range, which approaches a falsetto among some performers, is not evident on the tapes from the Big South Fork; rather, singers here tend to sing in a fairly natural voice. The ballads are rendered with a conspicuous absence of emotion, even during dramatic passages. It seems almost that the song itself, and not the singer, is receiving the spotlight. The singer can, however, use his or her vocal style effectively to generate an undercurrent of tension that runs through the entire song and greatly enhances it. For example, listen to Dee Hicks singing

"The Vulture" on the recordings from Pickett State Park (UKM/I2a and UKM/I6b). Vocal timbre can also add a soothing tone of reassurance to another sort of piece, such as Dee's rendition of "Lil-de-lil-i-o" on UKM/I2b.

Group singing was also present, and was used for lighter kinds of material such as the singing games and the words sung to dance tunes. It was also fundamental to the church singing.

Instrumental Music: Fiddle Tunes

Before the turn of the century, the fiddle and the five-string banjo were the principal instruments used to create dance music and accompaniment for certain types of songs. The fiddle had been used in the British Isles and the American colonies before the settlement of the Big South Fork region, so it was probably present in the area from the beginning on. It remained the fundamental instrument, next to which the banjo, and later the guitar, were only of secondary importance and served mainly for accompaniment. The repertoire of music associated with the fiddle, numbers which continue to be identified as "old-time fiddle tunes" even when played on another instrument, comprise the Big South Fork's second major category of folk music. This instrumental music, like the balladry and other folksongs, represents another local river of tradition, a juxtaposition of elements that highlight the formative periods of its evolution: ancient Celtic airs ("Soldier's Joy", "Billy in the Lowground", "Rocky Road to Dublin", "Devil's Dream"), melodies that originated on the Appalachian frontier ("Cumberland Gap", "Sally Goodin"), minstrel show numbers ("Arkansas Traveller", "Turkey in the Straw", "Listen to the Mockingbird"), and popular tunes

of the early 20th Century ("Down Yonder", "Chicken Reel").

Breakdowns, or reels, make up the standard part of the local fiddle repertoire. Breakdowns are fast dance tunes played in $\frac{2}{4}$ or $\frac{4}{4}$ time, ~~they are~~ the sort of tunes associated with popular images of mountain fiddle music. Many of these pieces are quite old, with popular counterparts in the British Isles. Their titles are often obscure and may vary from place to place, or even from performer to performer. Titles also appear to have changed through time: Joe Beaty, a banjo-picker who lives in Grimsley, in Fentress County, recalls older names for several tunes still popular around the area. Lyrics survive to quite a few of these numbers and sometimes shed light on the meanings of the titles. But it becomes an unresolvable chicken-and-egg situation: were they originally songs with words, or were they instrumental tunes for which lyrics were subsequently composed? There are undoubtedly instances of both. Aside from the cataloging problems that they impose, the names for these old breakdowns are amusing artifacts of the imagination of many anonymous "somebodies" down the line.

Other fiddle pieces include waltzes, which are slow-to-moderate dance tunes in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, and hornpipes, $\frac{4}{4}$ tunes which originally accompanied a kind of solo dance brought to America in the 18th Century. The hornpipe tunes survive even though the dance has been forgotten, and they are usually played fast, like breakdowns.

There are also fiddle pieces that were not dance tunes at all. "Bonapart's Retreat" is probably the most popular survivor of this idiom. ~~These were~~ Generally performed as solos, Many

retain rhythmic intricacies (the $\frac{9}{8}$ time still common in the British Isles occurs occasionally) and modal elements that make them unsuitable for accompaniment with other instruments. Intended ^{mainly} for listening pleasure, these numbers were played between dance sets to give the dancers a break and to allow the fiddler to demonstrate his skill.

Most fiddle tunes consist of two strains of equal length: a high-pitched part sometimes referred to as the "Fine" and a low part known as the "Coarse". Each part is usually repeated once, but this practice varies from performer to performer. Most tunes begin with the Fine and end on the Coarse, and will be played over and over for as long as the dance demands or until the musicians have given out. Some tunes, such as "Bonapart's Retreat", have three parts: repeated in the same manner.

Fiddle tunes are played in various keys, with the most common keys being D, G, and A, followed by C and F. Fiddlers will occasionally use E and B-flat. Tunes tend to be fixed in certain keys: "Soldier's Joy", for example, is always played in D, "Old Joe Clark" in A, "Tennessee Wagoner" in C, and so forth. Certain breakdowns shift keys, with one part being played in one key and the next part in another. "Fire on the Mountain" rocks back and forth in this fashion between the keys of A and D; "Orange Blossom Special" shifts from E to A and back to E.

Alternate tunings ("round keys"), where all four strings are tuned so they produce concordant notes when played unfingered, or "open", are essential to certain breakdowns. According to Slim Smith, a fiddler who lives in Oneida, Tennessee,

"Black Mountain Rag" has to be played in an open G tuning for it to sound right.

Even today, fiddles are precious heirlooms around the Big South Fork, and every old, well-played fiddle in the area has at least several stories attached to it. Some very old handmade fiddles are still being played by local musicians: Ralph Weaver of Stockton, Tennessee, uses one that is over a hundred years old. In the old days, before mail-order or store-bought instruments became easy to obtain, fiddles must have been even more cherished than they are today. The most difficult stringed instrument to make, a fiddle demanded a special person with special talent, but the Big South Fork had at least one well-known fiddle maker, ~~the late~~ Hiram Sharp (1885-1976), who lived at Norma, in Scott County.

Fiddle-playing style is a highly idiosyncratic matter, and every good fiddler tries to cultivate his or her own distinct sound and elements of technique. Style tends to be transmitted through personal contact and imitation, usually between parent and child, but occasionally between an outstanding local fiddler and an eager ^{young} protégé. Fiddling, like other forms of musical expertise, has predominantly been a family tradition, and, as we will see in Section II, certain families around the Big South Fork have long-standing reputations for producing good musicians.

In spite of all the individual variation among fiddlers, some generalizations about style are still possible. Local informants themselves recognize two distinct patterns. In the common old-time hoedown or "jig" style, the fiddler may hold

the instrument under his chin in the typical violin fashion, or he may play with its bottom resting down against his ribs. He may grasp the bow at the frog, or he may hold it by the shaft, placing his hand on the grip that is usually found at its lower end. The hoedown fiddler relies on short bow strokes, embellished by frequent "digs", where the upward accentuation of a certain note is produced by applying pressure on the bow and changing its leverage slightly as it travels across the string, and by "double-noting", where two adjacent strings are played simultaneously to produce an accompanying drone effect. (Some fiddlers, after modifying their bridge, will even employ "triple-noting".)

Another manner of playing, the "smooth" style, was locally popularized by Leonard Rutherford (c.1900-1954), a well-known Monticello-area musician who many informants consider to have been the region's virtuoso fiddler. (Exactly where Rutherford learned the style remains unclear.) Here, the instrument and bow are almost invariably held in the conventional violin manner. Smooth fiddling is characterized by use of the whole bow, manipulated in slow, smooth strokes that produce a succession of notes. Other technical hallmarks of this style include glides, vibrato, slurred notes, and little double-noting.

Because it was so essential to folk dancing, and because of the revelry that its music seemed to encourage, the fiddle was condemned as "the devil's instrument" during the wave of religious fervor that swept the country in the early 1800's. This disreputation lingers on around the Big South Fork today in conspicuous ways: in the old simile "as

"thick as fiddlers in Hell," in the aspersion toward square dancing that persists in some quarters, in the more conservative rural churches' ban on the use of any musical instruments in their services. These "old believers'" position has become somewhat relaxed, and today, even though square dancing continues to be frowned upon, few, if any, try to conceal their thorough enjoyment of secular music and instruments--in their proper place, of course (ie., outside of church). In some slyly self-conscious ways, local fiddlers maintain the tradition themselves, through the high-spirited revelry suggested by the titles of some of the old tunes, such as "Devil's Dream," "Hell's Broke Loose in Georgia," "Fire on the Mountain," or "Dance All Night With a Bottle in My Hand," and by another surviving practice with symbolic connotations: the custom of putting a few sets of rattlesnake rattles inside one's fiddle, if only for the utilitarian purpose of keeping its interior free of cobwebs.

The Banjo

As for the other important traditional instrument, it is unclear exactly when the five-string banjo entered the Big South Fork region. It assuredly must have been present by the 1870's and it may predate the Civil War. There are at least two very old banjos around the Jamestown, Tennessee area. Doyle Jones, who works for WCLC radio, has a homemade fretless banjo that belonged to his father. Its head was fashioned from a ground hog skin. Joe Simpson has an early factory-made fretted banjo that was formerly owned by Ralph Taylor, the Fentress County Clerk.

The banjo developed from an instrument--or probably more accurately, from the idea of an instrument--that was transported

to this country from Africa, and its presence among black slaves in the Southeast has been documented as early as the 1750's (see Epstein, 1975). Even though colonial plantation owners tried to suppress elements of their slaves' native culture, the ancestral banjo survived, and as the blacks became further acculturated, they adapted their instrument to play the Anglo-American folk dance music that they heard around them. The Americanized banjo came to be used as an instrument to accompany the fiddle. By the 1830's, a fretless model that otherwise resembled its modern form had evolved, and the number of strings--four melody strings plus a chanterelle, or drone string, running halfway up the neck--was standardized. (The four-stringed plectrum and tenor banjos were a 20th Century innovation, a response to the demands of Dixieland jazz musicians who were encumbered by the drone string.) Popularized by the minstrel shows as part of their burlesque of plantation life, the banjo spread among white musicians while blacks, at the same time, were led to reject this artifact of their own heritage.

In the Appalachian region, musicians discovered that the fretless five-string banjo was well-suited for playing the old modal melodies that survived in many of their songs and fiddle tunes. A number of open banjo tunings were devised to facilitate the playing of certain songs, and several of these are still used by old-time banjo-pickers around the Big South Fork.

Factory-made banjos with frets began to appear in the 1880's, but many homemade banjos continued to remain fretless, partly because of tradition, partly because of the difficulty involved in properly installing frets on an instrument, and

partly because the fretless instrument was fundamental to the mountain banjo style. However, fretted banjos became universal as mail-order and store-bought instruments ~~came to~~ replace home-made ones entirely. Frets permitted greater accuracy in noting the instrument, and made both the playing of chords and the playing of melody lines farther up the neck of the banjo possible for the first time. This innovation later enhanced the development of the Earl Scruggs or Bluegrass three-finger banjo-picking style that is so popular today.

The 19th Century methods of playing the banjo were quite different and have recently gained renewed interest among fans of old-time music. The old minstrel show "frailing" or "clawhammer" style (known around the Big South Fork as "knocking it") was probably derived from the Afro-American banjo tradition. Here, the right hand functions as one rigid unit, with the thumb and index finger held in a "claw" position. Melody strings are sounded with the index finger as the hand moves downward across the strings, and the thumb plucks the drone string as the hand moves back up on the following off-beat. Bailey (1972) believes that an African influence may endure in the inherent syncopation common to this manner of playing.

This particular banjo style no longer survives in the Big South Fork area, although most of today's old-time banjo-pickers remember their parents or older musicians like Dick Burnett or Joe Wheeler Gentry playing in that fashion. The prevalent old-time banjo method around the Big South Fork today is a two-finger picking style involving the right thumb and index finger, in a manner similar to two-finger banjo styles that have been recorded

in Western North Carolina. The index finger picks out the melody, punctuating it with rhythmic downward brushes across the lower strings, while the thumb continues to sound the drone string on the accompanying off-beat and occasionally drops down to play a "drop thumb" lick on the second or third string.

It would be interesting to learn more about the origin of this two-finger banjo style and how it came to replace the earlier one in the Big South Fork, matters that present-day informants are unable to shed any light on. Was the two-finger technique always present, or was it an importation that became the popular way to play in the early 1900's, replacing the frailing style in much the same manner that bluegrass banjo later eclipsed older methods of playing?

Banjo-picking, like fiddling, is very idiosyncratic, and individual players ~~all~~ have their own unique technical variations even if they all follow the same basic pattern. Some beautiful examples of old-time banjo playing survive around the Big South Fork in local musicians like Clyde Troxell, Virgil Anderson, W.L. Gregory, and Clyde Davenport in Wayne County, Kentucky, and Dee Hicks, Joe Hicks, and Joe Beaty in Fentress County, Tennessee. Drawing on the simpler aesthetic of an earlier time, their understated playing contrasts sharply with the flashy, exhibitionistic "virtuosity" of today's bluegrass banjo style.

Played together, the fiddle and the banjo were the foundation for the latter-day string band, which developed as the guitar and other instruments became available in the Big South Fork area. But up into the early 20th Century, as Clyde Troxell explains on tape UKM/D22, the local concept of "string band" meant specifically

fiddle and banjo. There were two methods of banjo accompaniment for the fiddle; one, possibly the older, in which both instruments were played practically in unison, with the banjo closely following the fiddle line almost note for note. Other times, the banjo functioned more as a rhythm instrument. Examples of these old-time fiddle-and-banjo styles can be heard on two commercial LP's that feature musicians from the Monticello, Kentucky area. A reissue of songs recorded by Dick Burnett and Leonard Rutherford in the 1920's, Rounder 1004, A Ramblin' Reckless Hobe, captures the duo's unison fiddle-and-banjo sound and Burnett's fast banjo frailing technique on a couple of solo numbers. The second record, Monticello (Davis Unlimited 33014), features W.L. Gregory and Clyde Davenport, two contemporary musicians, performing some of Burnett and Rutherford's tunes and other similar material. The local fiddle-and-banjo styles can also be heard on several Folklife Study tapes. On UKM/D24, you can hear Clyde Troxell's rhythmic banjo accompaniment to his brother Ralph's fiddling, and on the tapes featuring the Rocky Toppers (UKM/D18a and b, UKM/I6a and c), the Big South Fork's last performing square dance band, Ralph Troxell and Ray Souders can be heard playing together in a close unison style. Souders provides a note-for-note accompaniment, even though he uses a three-finger banjo-picking method.

Because of its close association with the fiddle, the banjo shares much of the same repertoire, but just as there are tunes that are exclusively played on the fiddle, there are also certain distinctive banjo pieces. Clyde Troxell's "French Waltz" (UKM/I6d, UKM/D22) and Dee Hicks' "Lost Gander" (UKM/D5,

side two) are good examples. The banjo was also the main instrument that singers used to accompany themselves before the guitar came into the area. A few fiddlers like Leonard Rutherford were able to play the fiddle and sing at the same time, as he demonstrates on the Rounder album mentioned above.

Other Instruments

Several other instruments have been used by folk musicians around the Big South Fork region, and even though none of them were as important to the local musical traditions as the fiddle or the banjo, they are still worth briefly noting.

The guitar has been a relative newcomer that did not come into use until after 1910. Many old-time musicians can specifically remember when they first saw one, and although nearly all of them can play the guitar to some extent, most only use it as a secondary instrument. Of course, the guitar has become the basic instrument for the younger musicians since it is fundamental to the contemporary forms of popular music, and it is the instrument that they invariably start out learning to play now, instead of the fiddle or the banjo. Guitars seem to have originally entered the area by way of mail-order catalogs and companies. Clyde Troxell and Rowe Parker, another informant who lives in Stockton, Tennessee, said that the Lee Manufacturing Company used to offer guitars as bonuses for large orders, and that this was how they acquired their first guitars.

The dulcimer is the third instrument popularly associated with Appalachian music next to the fiddle and the banjo,

but it was never common in the immediate Big South Fork area. Most local old-time musicians are completely unfamiliar with it. Although two old dulcimers were located in Fentress County, both were imported from outside. We do know that dulcimers were present in neighboring Wayne County, Kentucky. Dick Burnett recalled (see Wolfe, 1973a) learning to play one as a child. Robert Lowe (1903-1980), who lived at Pine Haven in Fentress County and was interviewed a few months before his death, played a dulcimer that he said had been made 80-90 years before by Joe Adkins, a blacksmith back in his home area of Powersburg, in Wayne County. Mrs. Luster King of Jamestown also has an old dulcimer that was made by her grandfather Daniel Thomas, who lived in Claibourne County, Tennessee. Her cousin Doyle Parker also made a dulcimer that she believes is presently owned by someone in Armathwaite. All three informants, and Rowe Parker, who is Mrs. King's brother, said that the dulcimer had chiefly been used for playing hymns and sacred music.

Another stringed instrument, the mandolin, has only appeared around the Big South Fork in the last thirty years, and it has been used exclusively by bluegrass bands.

There is evidence of homemade wind instruments being played in the area in earlier times. Mrs. Fronnie Thompson of Oneida has a cane flute that has been a family heirloom. On tape UKM/D5 (side one), Arnold Kimbrell of Armathwaite, Tennessee, describes how he watched his father make a "bark whistle", a long flute-like instrument that he fashioned after carefully removing the bark from a limb of wahoo (Frazier's Magnolia) in one intact piece.

The harmonica, or "French harp", was a popular instrument years ago. Dee Hicks used to play one, and he remembers (see tape UKM/D5, side two) that when he was young, there was a local man named Charlie Murray who played the harmonica and could imitate the sound of foxhounds with it. Herb Tipton, who lives near Jamestown, is a very good country-style harmonica player. People also played jews-harps and other novelty instruments that were obtained from mail-order catalogs or from peddlers. Dick Burnett mentioned (see Wolfe, 1974) that he could play a "human-o-phone", a sort of nose whistle, and on several of his recordings, Burnett also does a very good imitation of a jews-harp with his finger and his mouth.

Finally, a few of the unique and sometimes bizarre musical instruments that were on the market during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries apparently found their way into the Big South Fork area. Some of these were eccentric hybrid contraptions. Some time ago, Joe Simpson acquired a flat, rectangular instrument that was identified by its own label as a ukelin. It has two sets of strings, one played with a bow and the other strummed, harp-fashion. On tape UKM/D5 (side one), Arnold Kimbrell describes another unusual instrument called a celestaphone, which resembled an autoharp but had tiny mechanical hammers that sounded the strings.

Folk Dance

Responsive behavior is an important component of any musical idiom, and this survey of the folk music of the Big South Fork would hardly be complete unless some attention were paid to

the styles of dancing that have been associated with the region's fiddle tunes. In many neighborhoods, dances were one of the two major social functions, with the second being church and its related activities. Of course, dancing was not permitted at all in some of the more pious rural settlements where the tradition continues to be frowned on even today. But most of the more organized communities such as Jamestown and Allardt had dance halls, and even in the smaller places, there was usually a school or some other building that was regularly used for that purpose.

Dances were held to celebrate holidays and other special occasions, and they often provided a finale to all-day community "workings". In some localities, they took place regularly for their own sake. Fiddler Ralph Troxell remembers that years ago, dances were held every Saturday night in his home neighborhood of Rocky Branch, Kentucky. They were usually held at peoples' homes, all over the community, and each weekend they would announce where the dance would be the following weekend.

As a social function, dances died out in the 1930's because of a combination of several factors. Radio was one of the main contributors, and a growing reputation of drinking and violence associated with the dances also discouraged participation. World War II provided the final decisive blow: the absence of so many young men effectively brought an end to a tradition that was already on the decline. It was never successfully revived. Jamestown continued to host street dances in conjunction with Fentress County's annual Chicken Festivals and Bean Festivals, but these had faded out completely by the

early 1960's. Television's converse rise in popularity is not uncoincidental, and is what many informants cite as the reason for the demise of square dancing and the dying interest in local traditional music. A small body of enthusiasts have kept Appalachian square dancing alive around Jamestown and Monticello, and at the time of this writing, there is an effort underway to have dances regularly at Pickett State Park. Jamestown also has a Western square dance group, but this represents another style, and one which was never part of local tradition.

Looking back at the history of the different styles of folk dancing that survive around the area, we can find evidence of two characteristic patterns that have been alluded to earlier. One of these processes is the borrowing and diffusion that occurs between folk culture and elite or popular culture; the other is the interplay between the Anglo-American folk heritage and the Afro-American folk heritage, which has been a formative influence on the types of music that evolved in the Southeastern United States.

According to Green (1979), Appalachian square dance has its roots in traditional English country dances where the couples faced each other in two long parallel lines, a form that still survives in figures like the Virginia Reel. These spread to France in the late 1600's, where, in what became a romanticized version of peasant dance, the long double lines were broken down into "squares" (quadrilles) of four couples and new figures were incorporated. Reintroduced into Britain as a result of upper-class English fascination with this "new" French quadrille or cotillion dancing, the innovated form crossed the

Atlantic, where it became an institution of Southern plantation life and eventually re-entered folk culture. Damon (1952) believes that square dance calling appeared sometime after the War of 1812, and that the familiar practice of "singing" the calls emerged during the 1870's. The French association survives in the terms for square dance figures like allemande, promenade, sashay, and do-si-do.

Square dance calling is an art in itself, and it is as essential to the dance as the music. The caller, who almost universally has been male, serves as master of ceremonies and maintains a great responsibility for the enjoyment of everybody involved, whether they are dancers, musicians, or sideliners. The role demands a special individual who has had enough experience as a dancer to thoroughly know the calls and popular dance figures, as well as an intuitive enough feel for the music to be able to coordinate his calls and the dance movements with the musical cadences. The caller must be familiar with participants' tastes: the figures dancers like to do, the tunes musicians like to play, the favorites everyone likes to hear. Pacing is all-important. The caller must keep the dance running long enough for it to be exhilarating, but not long enough for either dancers or musicians to tire out. He should be imaginative, able to add the right amount of variety and to introduce movements that he might observe elsewhere. Nothing is worse than a caller who does the same thing over and over.

Close attention is necessary to produce the rhythmic synchronization fundamental to a good square dance. Calls

have to be timed not only with the music, but also guided, to an extent, by the dancers' position on the floor. Like the symphony conductor, the square dance caller is more involved than anyone else in all of the activity that is transpiring around him; perhaps, in turn, the caller derives a unique satisfaction from his own contribution to the dance. Above all, the caller is instrumental in bringing the dance to that magical point where everyone--dancers, musicians, and on-lookers--achieves that integrated feeling of "one-ness" that comes when the dance begins to function as an organism in itself.

Square dance calls can take two forms. The simplest are the short, prompting calls like "Circle left!", "Swing your partner!", or "Do-si-do!", which are interjected at the end of a musical phrase to set up the next figure to begin on the first beat of the next measure. Their basic function is simply to remind the dancers what is coming next. But the long singing call transcends mere instruction. Midway between a song and a chant, it is metrical and poetic, with lines timed to fit the dance tune. A form of entertainment in themselves, these calls add a third integral component to the music and the dancing that enhances the atmosphere of the entire gathering. They are a beautiful, litanical folk idiom that unfortunately has received little serious attention.

The following example of a singing call comes from Elmer Hurst, a square dancer and caller from the Jamestown, Tennessee area, and one of the few callers remaining around the Big South Fork. He learned it from his father. Each

stanza contains the directions for a different dance figure. The ones included here are all common standards, and a detailed explanation of the motions involved in executing each of them can be found in Smith (1955) or other sources on Appalachian square dance.

"Get your partner and get them on the floor!"

"Lady on the right and gent on the left,
All join hands and Circle to the Left;
Break and swing your corner lady,
Then swing your own partner and circle four;
Then do-si the ladies,
Swing your partner and promenade!

"First couple out with Right Hands 'Cross,
Then left and back--I told you wrong!--
You swing my partner and I swing yours,
Swing your own partner and circle four;
Do-si the ladies,
Then swing your partner and promenade!

"Second couple out with Four Hands Across,
The ladies bow and the gents know how;
You swing my partner and I swing yours,
Then swing your own and circle four;
Do-si the ladies,
Then swing your partner and promenade!

"The next couple out and Cage the Bird
With three hands around;
The bird flew out and the crow flew in,
The crow flew out and we are gone again;
You swing my partner and I swing yours,
Swing your own and promenade!

"Next couple out and do the Ocean Wave;
The first couple through,
Second couple through the same old trail;
Swing your corner lady,
Swing your own partner and circle four;
Do-si the ladies,
Then swing your partner and promenade!

"The next couple out with the Lady Around the Lady
And the gent also,
Now lady around the gent and the gent don't go;
Swing your partner when you meet her and circle four,
Do-si the ladies out on the floor,

Then swing your partner and promenade home;
Take her out and give her air,
You know where and I don't care;
That's all there is, there ain't no more!"

It is easy to see why a folk tradition like square dancing, which depends on so much cooperative activity and requires a certain level of experience and competency, is hard to sustain once it falls into discontinuity. Another type of folk dancing, buck dancing, has survived around the Big South Fork because it involves less-routinized motions and because it shares hardly any of the necessary limitations of square dancing.

Buck dancing is the foot-stomping, jig-like style of dancing depicted in popular images of "down-home" music and observable at any traditional or bluegrass music festival. It has antecedents in the buck-and-wing dancing of the 19th Century minstrel shows, and is sometimes known as clogging, although clogging suggests a somewhat formalized exhibitionary version that has lost much of the spontaneity that characterizes its folk counterpart.

Buck dancing is relatively easy to learn and follow. Music is its only essential; it doesn't require a caller, a minimum number of participants, or a high degree of cooperative involvement. It can be, and frequently is, performed alone, and around the Big South Fork, it is ^{also} not unusual to see two persons of the same sex dancing together in this fashion. Buck dancing remains highly individualized whether it is performed in couples or by one person, and it emphasizes original expression. In this respect, it is not unlike popular forms of contemporary dance, and this underlying similarity in aesthetic

criteria may be another reason why it has survived.

The analogy is not entirely coincidental, since buck dancing and the familiar types of modern dance are all products of the reciprocity that has been going on between American blacks and whites for a long time. Emery (1972) quotes sources that describe blacks in the early 1800's dancing their own distinct version of the Scotch-Irish jig, along with figures from a genre that was all their own and may have represented elements of an African configuration of animal-imitation dances that survived among the plantation slave culture. The buck-and-wing dance popularized by the minstrel shows evolved as a parody of black dance, taking its name from two of their popular figures, the Buck Dance and the Pigeon Wing.

Rural whites adopted the buck-and-wing, and elements borrowed from juba dancing, another old slave tradition, have become so much a part of white Southern folk dance around the Big South Fork and elsewhere that they are taken for granted. According to Emery (1972), juba dancers would form a circle that might rotate to fiddle or banjo accompaniment, or remain stationary. With everyone singing and clapping their hands in time to the music, one person would enter the circle, "strut his (or her) stuff," so to speak, and would then be joined by a dancer of the opposite sex.

Folk Musicians

One final element should not be overlooked in this survey of the Big South Fork's traditional music and that is the folk musician, who, after all, is the agent through which the music

is created, sustained, and transmitted. We would forfeit a valuable dimension to this study if we limited ourselves to a discussion of the music itself without regard for the role that music plays in the lives of the people who contribute to its continuity as a cultural institution. Since this understanding is best accomplished through involvement with the individuals themselves, in the following section of this report our perspective will shift from the general to the particular. We will briefly meet each of the local musicians who contributed to the Folklife Study, as well as some who are well-remembered by those who were interviewed and who have been very influential within the indigenous musical traditions. We will look at their origins, life histories, musical backgrounds, styles and techniques, and at some of the more interesting items from their individual repertoires.

However, at this time, it might be good to set down a few generalities about the folk musicians of the Big South Fork region, as a way of concluding this initial overview and as a prelude and a convenient transition into the next section.

Scarcely any of these performers has had any semblance of formal musical training. They have all acquired their instrumental skills through imitation and association with other musicians, and perhaps a little informal personal instruction. As noted previously, music has always been very much a family tradition and nearly every musician credits his or her technique to a parent, or else to a cousin or other close relative. They have learned their material orally, with minimal reliance on written sources. Even though ^{vestiges of} the 19th Century shape-note singing-school tradition do linger on, and a few informants mentioned that they could read

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that type of notation at one time, or that their parents could, its use was exclusively restricted to church music. Secular music has always been played "by ear," regardless of whether the performer learns a piece firsthand, over the radio, or from a phonograph record, since these have all been important sources of material for the area's last generation of traditional musicians. In spite of the new technology, the basic transmittal process remains the same.

This will probably be the last generation of musicians around the Big South Fork who can claim to be part of a distinct regional folk music heritage. Transcending the mere replication of local folk material or elements of stylistic technique, it is this lifelong familiarity with the music and its whole surrounding cultural ethos that positively defines the folk musician. In the same way that they are part of the local community, its music is part of them and they a part of it. We cannot separate the music from them any more than we could isolate it from the area or from the local folklife itself. Of course, everyone experiences music and interrelates with it to some extent. It would be absurd to imply that this common musical heritage is any more one's possession than it is anyone else's. Nonetheless, in any culture there are persons who are recognized because they do demonstrate more than an average propensity for music, who "feel the calling," so to speak; as the specialists that others in their community depend on to provide music whenever the situation demands it, because of this endowment they become the ones who maintain that part of the folk heritage and reiterate it for everyone's enjoyment.

In parting, it should be noted that musicianship has only rarely been a fulltime speciality around the Big South Fork. A person might have been respected for being a talented performer and would usually be compensated in some manner for his services, but at the same time he was also expected to be a productive member of the community. Traditionally, the only individuals who became fulltime musicians did so out of necessity, and usually were blind men like Monticello's Dick Burnett or others who were disabled and could not earn a living except through music. In terms of their "real" occupations, the performers who will be described in Section II represent a fairly comprehensive cross section of the various walks of life that have existed in the Big South Fork region, but they are set apart and united by two important common denominators: the special role that they have inherited by virtue of their musical talent, and the musical legacy that they have shared and kept alive.

SECTION II. CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY:
A SURVEY OF REGIONAL MUSICIANS.

A. Wayne County

Monticello, the county seat of Wayne County, Kentucky, is an appropriate place to begin this survey of traditional musicians of the Big South Fork region. Monticello lies a few miles south of the Cumberland River, on the periphery of the Plateau, and for many years has been a crossroads for travel and commerce between the upland and lowland areas. Monticello has long enjoyed a reputation for good local musicians, some of whom have been very influential throughout the South Fork country.

Dick Burnett and Leonard Rutherford

The travelling blind singer Dick Burnett and his protégé Leonard Rutherford are remembered by every old-time musician in the area, and by a good many other residents as well. Burnett was born at Elk Spring Valley, near Monticello, in 1883. At the age of seven, he began picking out religious songs on the dulcimer, and while still a youth, learned to play the banjo, fiddle, guitar, harmonica, accordian--a total of 13 instruments in all--though he said (see Wolfe, 1973a) that the banjo always remained his main instrument.

Burnett was blinded in 1907 at the age of 24, the victim of an armed robbery in Stearns, Kentucky, which forced him to turn to music professionally. By 1909, he was travelling and performing throughout the area, selling postcard-sized "ballets" with the words to some of his songs printed on them. One of these, "The Song of the Orphan Boy," recounted the incident in

which he lost his sight. Sometime later, he published and sold copies of a little songbook containing the lyrics to six of his most popular numbers. He is said to have been quite a showman, performing card tricks and other novelties in addition to his musicianship.

Around 1914, Burnett adopted a young orphan who was to become his travelling and playing partner for the next 35 years. Leonard Rutherford was born in Somerset, Kentucky, about 1900. Dick Burnett had known his family, and took the boy in after his parents died; he remembered (Wolfe, 1973a) that Leonard was about 13 or 14 at the time. Leonard helped Dick find his way around, and he later drove the car that Burnett bought for them to travel in. In the meantime, Dick taught Leonard what he knew about music, and Leonard Rutherford grew up to become the most accomplished and respected fiddle player in the area.

Burnett and Rutherford travelled a circuit through Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia; as far south as Georgia and Florida, as far north as Ohio and Indiana. They performed at places and events wherever people congregated: in coal camps, at local fairs and ~~county~~^{COUNTY} court days. Between 1926 and 1930, they recorded a number of songs for the Columbia, Gennett, and Brunswick record companies in Atlanta and in Richmond, Indiana. They apparently made a good income from the record sales and from the spare coins their listeners would contribute.

Alone, with Rutherford, or in the company of other musicians that he sometimes performed with, Dick Burnett became a fixture in the towns surrounding the Big South Fork. Informants

like Dee and Delta Hicks, Ralph and Clyde Troxell, Slim Smith, Doyle Jones, Harold Stanley, and Joe Simpson all vividly remember him from the years between 1915 and 1950, playing on street corners or on the county courthouse lawns in Monticello, Jamestown, Oneida, or Huntsville, or at fairs in Deer Lodge, Somerset, or London, Kentucky, with a metal cup strapped to his leg for people to drop their coins into, which he would shake his leg and rattle whenever he wanted someone to throw in more money.

Burnett and Rutherford finally parted company about 1952. Leonard was apparently epileptic, and also had a drinking problem. As his health worsened, his unpredictability made Dick reluctant to travel with him. Rutherford died in 1954, and Burnett retired from performing around the same time.

As the years passed, hardly anyone outside Monticello was aware that Dick Burnett was still living. In 1973, Doyle Jones of WCLC radio in Jamestown discovered that he was alive, and reported this to Charles K. Wolfe, a folklorist at Middle Tennessee University and an authority on old-time music. Dick was visited and interviewed several times before his death in January, 1977; by Wolfe and Jones, which resulted in several published articles (see Wolfe, 1973a, 1973b), and by Becky Morse, a student from Western Kentucky University (see Morse, 1976a, 1976b, 1976c, 1976d). Sixteen of Burnett and Rutherford's old recordings were reissued on an album by Rounder Records (#1004) in 1974, with extensive notes by Wolfe.

The influence of Burnett and Rutherford remains very apparent among the surviving old-time musicians of the Big South Fork region. During the years when they were actively performing,

Burnett was the most visible musician in the area, and Rutherford, the most admired and respected. Dee Hicks once remarked that "Dick Burnett was the first singer that ever was around here," a significant observation when Dee's meaning becomes apparent. Burnett was the first musician in the area who was recognized as a fulltime professional specialist, rather than as a community member who played or sang but depended on one of the more conventional avenues of livelihood. Dick Burnett's career spanned the transition of old-time music from a folk tradition to a commercial product, a change which instituted the fulltime professional folk or country "singer".

The sides that Burnett and Rutherford cut in the late 1920's are classic recordings of old-time country music, and their technical musicianship is impressive even today. Their close unison fiddle-and-banjo playing documents the traditional ensemble manner in which the instruments were played. Separately, Burnett's fast, driving banjo, played in the pure Appalachian frailing style, can be heard on "Going Around the World" and "Going Across the Sea" on the Rounder LP. Rutherford's exceptionally smooth fiddling, with its slides and occasionally heavy syncopation, set a standard that local fiddlers still strive to maintain, evidenced in the comment that one frequently hears, that somebody could play a certain tune "almost as good as Rutherford played it."

Through their recordings and live performances, Burnett and Rutherford achieved two other important functions: first of all, by documenting traditional fiddle tunes and popular songs of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries that were already part

of the indigenous folk heritage, and secondly, by introducing and popularizing new material that Burnett composed, or learned from musicians he met and played with in other corners of the Big South Fork and elsewhere. Some of these include his own "Song of the Orphan Boy" (also known as "The Blind Man's Song"), "Are You Happy or Lonesome?", "Sleeping Lulu," which he learned from Elmer Stanley in Elgin, Tennessee, and "Blackberry Blossom," which he said (Wolfe, 1973a) that he picked up from Ed Haley, a blind fiddler in Johnson County, Kentucky.

Black Musicians

The Monticello area has a small black population, which has produced several well-known musicians in the old-time tradition. Dick Burnett remembered (see Wolfe, 1973a) Bled Coffee, a black fiddler during the Civil War, and Shell Coffee (Bled's grandson?), a black banjo-picker, still lives near Monticello. Old-time players also remember the Bertrams, a family of black musicians who originated in the Wolf River area and moved to Monticello, where they operated a saddle and harness shop for many years. There were five brothers, all musicians; Cooge, who played the fiddle, and Andy were the best known. They played throughout the area in the 1920's and 1930's. Bobby Fulcher (pers. comm.) recently located Cooge Bertram, now 85 years old, living in Indianapolis.

A lot of musical interchange must have occurred between blacks and whites in Wayne County, and it would be interesting to know how many standards in the local repertoire came from black sources. Dick Burnett once remarked (Wolfe, 1973a) that he learned "Lost John," which was the most popular of his and

Rutherford's recordings, from a black man.

W.L. Gregory and Clyde Davenport

Many people around Wayne County would consider either W.L. Gregory or Clyde Davenport to be Leonard Rutherford's successor as the premier fiddler of the region. Gregory, a Monticello veterinarian, sounds a lot like Rutherford, which is not surprising since he learned his technique directly from Rutherford himself. Gregory was born in 1905 at Rocky Branch. Neither of his parents were musicians, but around the time he was 12, he and his brother Jim learned to play the fiddle and the banjo, using homemade instruments. W.L. met Leonard Rutherford in 1923, started playing with him, and absorbed much of his style and repertoire. Gregory also travelled with Dick Burnett for a while around 1929-1930, sometimes filling in for Rutherford, and learned a great deal more of their material.

W.L. Gregory's fiddling can be heard on the Davis Unlimited album Monticello (DU 33014), accompanied by Clyde Davenport on banjo and his grandson Gary Gregory on guitar. Gregory and Davenport expertly recreate the old-time fiddle-and-banjo-duet sound that was characteristic of Burnett and Rutherford's style. The record also spotlights Gregory's own unique banjo style on three tunes. One of these is played with a slide, which is apparently his own innovation. Gregory also uses unusual banjo tunings: he employs a key of B tuning on one cut and an F tuning on another.

Unfortunately, Clyde Davenport's fiddling is not featured on the Monticello album. His playing is stylistically less like Rutherford's, but he is an outstanding fiddler nonetheless. Davenport was born at Mt. Pisgah about 1920 and currently lives in

Monticello. He began playing the fiddle at the age of nine, and the banjo when he was sixteen. Like Gregory, Davenport also learned to play using homemade instruments. Like many natives of the Big South Fork, he later migrated to Muncie, Indiana, and performed on the radio during the years he lived there.

Clyde Davenport appears on two of the tapes recorded at Pickett State Park on Labor Day, 1979, UKM/I6b and UKM/I6c.

The Sharp Family

The Sharp Family, who originated in Wayne County and later migrated to Fentress County, Tennessee, have been an important musical family in the Big South Fork region. As his nickname suggested, John Gibson "Fiddlin' John" Sharp (1894-1965) was one of the better-known local fiddlers during his lifetime, and he is still well-remembered. His offspring have contributed notably to the perpetuation of the area's traditional music, particularly--and unsurprisingly--the old-time fiddle tunes.

Fiddlin' John Sharp grew up on Langdon Fork, near Mt. Pisgah. His father, Ewell Sharp, played the fiddle and appears to have been the source for most of John Sharp's music. Two of John's brothers, Albert and Hugh, played the banjo. John Sharp worked for the Stearns Company. He married Bonnie Wood (b. 1895) and they had eight children. The Sharps moved to Fentress County about 1932, and settled in the vicinity of what is now Pickett State Park. According to his daughter Evelyn Conatser (b. 1920), who lives at Pine Haven and furnished most of the information reported here, Sharp Place, Tennessee,

was not named for them, but for another branch of the family that was already living there.

From 1935 up until the Second World War, Sharp, Evelyn, and a banjo-picker named Sherman "Red" Morris, who now lives in Georgia, performed together as the Rock Creek Ramblers at square dances and musical events all over the area. They played every year at the Sharp Place Fourth of July celebration, which took place at Earl Koger's store, near the former location of Eve's Package Liquors on Highway 154. In 1936, they played at a Franklin D. Roosevelt campaign rally hosted by Albert Gore and held in the lobby of the hotel that occupied the site behind the Fentress County Courthouse where the Dairy Mart now stands. The Rock Creek Ramblers also played at the dedication of the Alvin C. York Bridge at Pall Mall, which was attended by Gary Cooper, who had portrayed York in a recent motion picture biography.

Besides the fiddle, John Sharp also played the banjo, guitar, piano, harmonica, and jews-harp. His fiddle style was distinct, and can be heard on tape UKM/D7, a copy of a tape that the family has of material that he recorded in 1940. On the tape, Sharp plays twelve fiddle tunes, accompanied by his son John Sharp, Jr., on guitar. Fiddlin' John Sharp also plays a banjo version of "Shortnin' Bread" and an original guitar piece called "German Blues" (in honor of his mother, a Dobbs, who was of German ancestry). The most conspicuous element of Sharp's fiddling is his speed; he played with a fast, fiery combination of smoothness and drive. He played many tunes which were unusual for the Big South Fork area,

and of uncertain origin. Since he seldom referred to his tunes by name, this makes identifying some of them all the more difficult, and surviving members of his family do not even know the names of some of their father's tunes, which they play themselves.

Fiddlin' John Sharp is survived by his wife, Bonnie, who still lives near Pickett State Park, and by three sons and four daughters, all of whom are musicians to one degree or another. As Evelyn puts it, "Everybody plays a little something." Bonnie plays the harmonica; Evelyn, the guitar and fiddle, and Opal Wright, another daughter, plays the banjo. Paul Sharp, who now lives in Springport, Indiana, is an accomplished fiddler who sounds very much like his father. Eugene Sharp, a resident of Crossville, Tennessee, plays the guitar and sings traditional and religious songs, and Junior Sharp, of Allgood, Tennessee, plays the guitar with a country band. Recordings made Labor Day Weekend, 1979, at Pickett Park feature Paul and Junior playing together (UKM/I5) and an ensemble consisting of Paul, Eugene, and Evelyn (UKM/I6a).

Another branch of the Sharp Family remains musically active in Wayne County. Louella Sharp Souders, the daughter of Fiddlin' John Sharp's brother Hugh, plays with the Rocky Toppers, who are the last square dance band still performing around the Big South Fork area.

The Sharp Family Reunion, traditionally held Labor Day Weekend at Pickett Park, became locally renowned for the music that it featured, and was the direct impetus for the present

Labor Day Old-time Music Festival at the park.

Ralph and Clyde Troxell

Brothers Clyde Troxell (b. 1911) and Ralph Troxell (b. 1920), who live at Griffin, near Rocky Branch, Kentucky, belong to another Wayne County musical family with roots in the Big South Fork area. Clyde is an old-time banjo player who also sings and plays the guitar. Ralph is a fiddler who performs as part of the Rocky Toppers with his neighbors Ray and Louella Souders.

Music has been part of the Troxell's heritage on both sides of their family. Ralph and Clyde's father, Jasper Troxell (1887-1972), was a banjo-picker and fiddler who came from what is now McCreary County. He married Anna Davenport (b. 1889), who grew up near Bell Farm. "Aunt Annie" Troxell's grandfather, Lewis Meniffee, was a singing-school teacher, and her father, Lewis Albert "Al" Davenport, played the fiddle, banjo, and guitar. According to Clyde (see tape UKM/D22), "He was the first guitar player . . . that ever was in this country." As a girl, Anna Davenport Troxell learned to read shape note music and to play the piano and organ.

Clyde Troxell took up the banjo when he was about 12 years old, learning from his father. His banjo style is a variation of the two-finger picking technique common to the Big South Fork region; skillful and well-timed, it is a beautiful example of old-time mountain banjo playing. Clyde's repertoire contains a number of tunes that his father played, including some very nice modal pieces.

Guitars were not common in the area while Clyde was growing up. He recalls (on tape UKM/D22) that when he was young, the fiddle and banjo were the important musical instruments. Clyde got his first guitar when he was about 16 or 17. It arrived as a premium from the Lee Manufacturing Company in return for an order that his mother had gotten together from their neighborhood. She got the guitar for Clyde and his older sister.

There were a lot of musicians around when Clyde was learning to play, and he played with Gregorys, Bells, and with Fiddlin' John Sharp. Ralph Troxell, being younger, associated with a different set of local musicians. He and Clyde did little playing together when they were growing up, although they can make strikingly good music today, as tape UKM/D24 indicates. Ralph learned the fiddle from his father, and he was given a guitar by a school teacher at Parmleysville, Colonel M.W. Peters, when he was about 13. He remembers that it was "Hawaiian," decorated with Indians, the moon, and coconut trees painted on it.

Ralph is a good square dance fiddler, but he has a lot more skill and a more diversified repertoire than that context allows him to demonstrate. Besides the standard square dance numbers that are popular around the Big South Fork, he can also play hornpipes and some of the intricate old solo fiddle airs.

The Troxell brothers appear on six tapes recorded by the Folklife Study. UKM/I6a and UKM/I6c feature Ralph performing with the Rocky Toppers at Pickett State Park on

Labor Day, 1979. Clyde plays on UKM/I6d, recorded at Pickett the same day. UKM/D18a and b feature the Rocky Toppers performing at a square dance at Rugby, Tennessee, on November 3, 1979. UKM/D22 is a documentary recording of Clyde's banjo tunes, recorded at his home January 19, 1980. A tape of Ralph and Clyde playing together (UKM/D24) was recorded at Rocky Branch on February 13, 1980, and features a song sung by their mother, Anna Troxell.

The Troxell repertoire represented on these tapes includes a number of songs and tunes associated with Burnett and Rutherford ("Ladies on the Steamboat," "Little Stream of Whiskey," "Train 45," "Six Months Ain't Long," "All Night Long Blues," etc.), as well as other standard fiddle and banjo tunes and traditional songs of the region. They also play a few items not heard on recordings of other local performers.

Clyde's banjo piece "French Waltz," which appears on tapes UKM/D22 and UKM/I6d, is something unique to the Rocky Branch area. Clyde says that he learned it from Jeff Gregory, an old friend who heard the tune while he was serving overseas in France during the First World War and adapted it to the banjo. On this number, Clyde uses a modification of the open C banjo tuning: ACGCE.

"Big-eyed Rabbit Soup," an old song of Jasper Troxell's that Clyde sings on UKM/D24, may originally be of black origin. Variants with similar verses appear in Henry (1938), Lomax and Lomax (1947), and Lomax (1960) as "Big-eye Rabbit," "Mr. Rabbit," "Buck-eye Rabbit," and so forth. The final reference

gives the "Big-eyed rabbit soup" chorus as "Buck-eyed rabbit, shoo! shoo!", which is interesting since the rabbit was a trickster figure in Afro-American folklore.

"Deaf Ellen Blues," performed by Clyde on UKM/D22, can be traced to a popular source: it is actually "Deep Ellem Blues," recorded by the Shelton Brothers in the 1930's.

Nothing exactly like "The Old True Love," which Anna Troxell sings on UKM/D24, appears in published collections of traditional songs, but the song shares a theme and several common verses with a host of old "rejected lover" songs, including "The Rejected Lover" (Sharp, 1932), "That Rocky Mountain Top" (Sharp, 1932), and "That Long Lonesome Road."

Virgil Anderson

Ralph and Clyde Troxell's brother-in-law, Virgil Anderson, is another important musician who lives in the Rocky Branch neighborhood. An adept banjo-picker and singer of old-time songs from both traditional and recorded sources, Anderson is featured on tape UKM/I6b (Pickett State Park, Labor Day, 1979), where he performs several numbers including a version of "The Boston Burgler," a traditional song of wide distribution (see Cox, 1925; White, 1952). Virgil Anderson also has a local reputation for being a storyteller, and generally a colorful character.

* "I Truly Understand That You Love Another Man"
recorded by Short Buckle Rowle Bristol Va./Tn.
1928

B. Fentress County: The Hicks Family

The Hicks Family of Fentress County, Tennessee, have enjoyed a long-standing local reputation as musicians and storytellers, and their treasury of ballads and songs is one of the Big South Fork's most cherishable cultural resources. Dee and Delta Hicks, residents of the Tinctown area, have received national recognition in the United States and Canada for their ballad-singing, and Dee's brother Joe, who lives in Armathwaite, is also an important source of material.

Along with their sister, Nancy Hicks Winningham, Joe (b. 1899) and Dee (b. 1906) are the three survivors of the nine children that Daniel Hicks (1867-1948) and his wife Serah (sic) Voiles (1868-1941) raised at the old Hicks homestead on Mary's Point, which is formed by the confluence of Crooked Creek and Clear Fork near Peter's Bridge. According to family tradition, the Hickses originally came from North Carolina, and Daniel Hicks' generation was the third that lived in the Big South Fork area.

"Dan'l" Hicks was a well-known singer and musician in his own day. Old-timers around Fentress County remember him vividly, and portray him as a colorful figure. Originally a hunter and trapper, Dan'l turned to farming around 1900, after the area's large game had almost entirely been depleted. A clever, energetic man who played the fiddle and banjo, Dan'l, like most of his contemporaries, had little formal education, but he is said to have been remarkably well-read for the time and for the area. He seems, even then, to have appreciated the value of his family's musical heritage, and tried to pass on

to his children many of the old ballads and songs that had been handed down since at least their great-grandparents' time.

He was always ready to entertain anybody who showed up at his house. On tape UKM/D5 (side one), Arnold Kimbrell tells how he went to Dan'l Hicks one time to try to buy a fiddle from him, and how Dan'l played and sang until far up in the night. He was always singing and playing, folks say. With Dee accompanying him on the banjo, Dan'l fiddled all around his part of Fentress County and nearby areas of Morgan. They played at the fair over in Deer Lodge, and Dee recalls on tape UKM/I2a how they won a contest at Burrville one time with a rendition of "Turkey in the Straw."

Given this musical environment, it is no wonder that Dan'l Hicks raised a family of musicians and ballad-singers. Joe and Dee both learned the banjo from their father, and from cousins Ben Hicks and Joe Wheeler Gentry. Dee became the better musician, mastering the harmonica and the jews-harp as well. He memorized most, but not all, of Dan'l's songs by ear, because they had never been written down. Joe, too, learned some of his father's repertoire. He also acquired songs from the "ballet" cards peddled by local performers like Burnett and Rutherford, and he even composed a few of his own. After he moved to Armathwaite, Joe played his banjo for square dances in Allardt. Another Hicks brother, Besford (now deceased), also became an accomplished singer, and their sister Lou Cromwell (also deceased), who was a school teacher, studied the old family ballads and learned the meanings of some of the archaic expressions that they contained.

A close association developed between the Hickses and the family of Len Winningham, who moved from Morgan County into Fentress and settled in the neighborhood around the Old Barger (now Mt. Pleasant) Baptist Church near Allardt. The Winnings were a musical family like the Hickses. They were united by several marriages: Dee Hicks married Len's daughter Delta (b. 1910), Joe's first wife was her half-sister, and Dee and Joe's sister Nancy married another Winningham relative. Delta brought a number of old ballads and sings that she had learned from her mother and sisters into the Hicks repertoire.

The Folklife Study produced several recordings of Dee, Delta, and Joe Hicks. Tape UKM/I2a and b contain a performance by Dee and Delta at Pickett State Park August 17, 1979, and also 14 songs recorded by Bobby Fulcher of the Tennessee Department of Conservation, Division of Parks and Recreation, at their home in 1977 and 1978. Two performances by Dee and Delta at Pickett Park on Labor Day, 1979, appear on UKM/I6b and UKM/I6d. UKM/D5 (side two) is a tape of banjo tunes played by Dee and recorded at Tinchtown October 16 and December 6, 1979. Dee and Delta's daughter, Lillie Mae Hicks, appears on UKM/I2a and UKM/I6d. Joe Hicks is featured on UKM/I6a, recorded Labor Day, 1979, at Pickett Park, and on UKM/D4, compiled from a tape made by Bobby Fulcher at Joe's home in May, 1979, and from material recorded by the Folklife Study on various dates between October, 1979, and January, 1980, in Armathwaite and Tinchtown.

These tapes contain over 60 ballads, songs, banjo tunes, and a few recitations and stories--a reasonably good initial sample of the Hicks repertoire. Bobby Fulcher has recorded

between 200 and 300 of their songs for the Library of Congress and the Tennessee State Library and Archives, which will eventually be made accessible to the public.

The Hickses' singing is primarily done in the old solo, unaccompanied ballad-singing style, although Dee and Joe both accompany themselves on the banjo on certain songs. Their common musical repertoire is vast, encompassing hundreds of different pieces representing a variety of traditional genres. Some of the material, as they remember and sing it, is fragmentary, but other Hicks items are more complete and more interesting than the published texts of variants of some of these same songs that have been collected elsewhere.

Four, possibly five, of Dee and Delta's ballads that appear on the Folklife Study tapes, and probably a good many more that are on Fulcher's tapes, or that have yet to be recorded, can be traced to the ancient ballads collected in the British Isles during the 19th Century by Francis J. Child.

"Hunter in the Green" (UKM/I2a, UKM/I6d) is a variant of "Sir Lionel," Number 18 in Child's collection (1882). Other versions have been collected in the United States under the more common title of "Ol' Bangham" (see Davis, 1929; Sharp, 1932; Randolph, 1946). Dee's rendition is less corrupted, telling a more complete story than most documented versions. In the forest, a great hunter, Bangham, finds a damsel perched in a tree. She informs him that she has been driven there by a wild boar that has killed her lord and 33 of his men. Bangham attracts the beast with a blast from his horn, and fights it to the death, dispatching it finally with his "wooden" knife. A

wild woman then emerges from the woods, denouncing him for killing her "sportin' pig" and demanding Bangham's "horse and hounds and gay lay-dee" in reparation. She attacks him and he kills her, too. Despite its gruesome story, Davis (1929) said that in Virginia, the song was sung as a lullaby or a nursery song, and that it owes its popularity to the minstrel stage.

Delta sings "Fair Eleanor and the Brown Girl" (UKM/I2a), which is closely based on "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet" (Child No. 73; 1885), which dates to the reign of Charles II (1660-1685). Many American variants of this ballad have been documented (see Cox, 1925; Davis, 1929; Sharp, 1932; Randolph, 1946; White, 1952). This tragedy opens with Lord Thomas asking his mother whether he should marry Fair Eleanor or the Brown Girl. His mother persuades him to choose the Brown Girl, because "she has cattle and sheep, and Fair Eleanor, she has none." Lord Thomas informs Eleanor of his decision, but he invites her to the wedding anyway. Eleanor attends, in spite of her mother's advice, and is stabbed to death by the Brown Girl. Grief-stricken, Lord Thomas decapitates the Brown Girl with his sword, and then kills himself.

Dee's "Little Ol' Dang-devil Song," or "The Old Man Lived Under the Hill" (UKM/I2a, UKM/I6b) is a variant of Child No. 278 (1894), "The Farmer's Curst Wife." It appears in most American collections, and once again, the Hicks rendition contains elements missing in other versions. In this humorous story, the nagging wife of a poor farmer is carried away by the Devil, who eagerly returns her when she proves to be even more than he can handle!

Variants of Delta's "A Sailor, a Sailor" (UKM/I2a) appear in the Cox (1925) collection under several titles: "Pretty Sally," "A Rich Irish Lady," "The Bold Sailor," "The Young Sailor from Dover," and so forth. Its theme resembles "Barbara Allen," but the characters are reversed: in this song, the lady dies of a broken heart after being rejected by her beloved sailor boy. Delta's song contains elements of Child No. 295 (1894), "The Brown Girl" (unrelated to No. 73 described above), although in the Child version, it is the woman who turns down the man.

"Pretty Polly," which is sung by Lillie Mae Hicks on UKM/I6d, is one of the more widely-documented American ballads, in which Pretty Polly is murdered by a psychopath, usually identified as the gambler Willie, who persuades her to elope with him. "Pretty Polly" is a condensation of "The Gasport Tragedy" (see Ashton, 1887), a British ballad dating at least to the mid-1700's. Sharp (1932) gives two versions under the title "The Cruel Ship's Carpenter" that retain earlier verses not commonly found in America. Thematically, the ballad bears a superficial resemblance to Child No. 4 (1882), "Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight," which also occurs in American folksong under the title "Pretty Polly" although it is essentially a different song. In this ballad, Polly escapes from the young man who attempts to drown her.

The unprovoked murder theme found in both "Pretty Polly" ballads is evident in a number of others. These "murder ballads" belong to a body of oral tradition more recent than the material in the Child collection. The murder ballads originated as broad-

sides, and have a wide distribution. They have usually been retitled or slightly reworded to recount local incidents, or what are thought to have been local incidents. The drowning element is also frequently present, albeit sometimes in a modified form where, instead of drowning the girl, the killer disposes of her body in a nearby river.

Two murder ballads sung by Delta Hicks illustrate this pattern well. "The Knoxville Girl" (UKM/I2a) describes a murder that occurred in Berkshire, England, in 1744. The ballad circulated in Britain as "The Berkshire Tragedy," "The Wittam Miller," or "The Cruel Miller." In America, it has been collected under numerous titles: it appears in Cox (1925) as "The Wexford Girl," "The Tragedy," and "Johnny McDowell"; in Sharp (1932) as "The Miller's Apprentice" and "The Oxford Tragedy"; in Randolph (1948) as "The Noel Girl" and "The Expert Girl"; and finally, as "The Knoxville Girl" in Randolph (1948) and White (1952). The drowning-murder theme also occurs in "Little Omie Wise" (UKM/I2b), which also has many variants. According to Lunsford (1930), this ballad describes the murder of Naomi Wise in Deep River, North Carolina, in 1808. However, Randolph's (1948) Ozark informants believed that the incident had occurred in Missouri, and pointed out local places mentioned in the song as evidence.

There are functional aspects apparent in these murder ballads that account for their popularity and explain why their stories have so often been localized. They have repeatedly imparted to countless daughters a word of caution about responding to the advances of a stranger, and encouraged them to

court familiar young men from their own vicinities.

Still another Delta Hicks murder ballad, "Handsome Mary," or "The Lily of the West" (UKM/I2a, UKM/I6b), involves not the murder of a woman, but rather, her jealous suiter's murder of his rival. Other versions can be found in Sharp (1932), Randolph (1948), and White (1952).

On the Folklife Study tapes, Dee Hicks sings several other ballads from the British broadside tradition, but instead of murder, these deal with faithful or unfaithful love. His rendition of "Johnny German" (UKM/I2a, UKM/I6b) is a fragment of a longer ballad that appears in the Cox (1925), Sharp (1932), and White (1952) collections. Its theme occurs in numerous ^{songs} of this genre: like Odysseus, the sailor returns home to his sweetheart in disguise, after many years' absence, and tries her with questions to see if she has remained true to him.

"Young Johnny Sailed From London" (UKM/I2b), more commonly known in America as "The Green Bed" or "Green Beds" (see Cox, 1925; Sharp, 1932; Randolph, 1946; White, 1952) was a popular British broadside that appeared under both of those titles, and also as "Jack Tar" and "The Liverpool Landlady." In this ballad, the sailor returns home and is rejected by his sweetheart's parents, who swiftly change their minds when they discover that he is now wealthy. However, by this time, Johnny has also changed his mind, and he departs.

Dee's rendition of "Lil-de-lil-i-o" (UKM/I2b) is a very complete version of a British ballad that has been collected in this country as "The Merchant's Daughter" or "Jackie Fraisure" (Cox, 1925), "Jack Went A-sailing" (Sharp, 1932), "Jack Munro"

(White, 1952), and "Jackaroo." Here, the soldier's sweetheart follows him to war, disguised as a man, and later rescues him when he is wounded in battle.

"The Deceitful Brilliums" (UKM/I2b) was originally known in England as "In Bruton Town" and has been collected in America as "The Bramble Briar" (Cox, 1925; Henry, 1938), "In Seaport Town" (Sharp, 1932), and "The Jealous Brothers" (Randolph, 1946). In this story, two brothers murder their sister's lover. She is visited that night by his ghost, searches and discovers his body the next morning, and returns home to confront her brothers. "Brilliums" is a corruption of "vill-yans", an archaic pronunciation of "villians."

"Reynardine" (UKM/I2b) is a story of seduction, telling of a nobleman's encounter with a country girl. Other variants can be found in Gardner and Chickering (1939) and Randolph (1946).

"The Rainbow Willow" (UKM/I2b) can be traced to a heroic Scottish ballad, "The Lass o' Bennochie," based on a historical incident that occurred near Fort Augustus in the 1760's (see Ord, 1930). It appears in some American collections as "Locks and Bolts" (Sharp, 1932; White, 1952); in Randolph (1946), it is called "I Dreamed of My True Lover," which describes how the song opens. Awakening, the young man goes to his true love's uncle's house, where she is being kept, and breaks in and steals her away, fighting off the uncle and his men in the process. A favorite ballad of Dee's, it contains some lovely elements of folk poetry.

In addition to their ballads, the Hickses sing a wide assortment of traditional songs, including love songs, courting

songs, funny songs, incredible songs (musical tall tales), songs about animals, and popular songs from the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Some of this material, "popular" folk-songs such as "The Roving Gambler," "In the Pines," "Billy Boy," "The Wabash Cannonball," or "The Lady and the Soldier" ("One Morning in May"), is more or less familiar to members of the American mainstream, but most of it has probably never been heard by the public-at-large. The following are a few of the more interesting songs that appear on the Folklife Study tapes of the Hickses.

Dee's "Hairy Buck" (UKM/I2a), an incredible song about hunting deer, appears to be very old, and in its original form may have been contemporaneous with the Child ballad material. Sharp (1932) includes two variants under the title "Sally Buck." Dee's melody is identical to that of "The Derby Ram," another exaggerated song.

"The Crocodile Song," or "Boys and Girls, You Better Listen to Me" (UKM/I2a) is another of Dee's incredible story-songs, told by a sailor who was swallowed by a giant crocodile and survived inside it for 12 years. Variants have been collected in Canada (see Creighton, 1933; Haywood, 1966). Dee says that he learned it from Homer Harris, a popular country singer who appeared on Cas Walker's Mid-day Merry-go-round radio show during the 1930's and 1940's, and occasionally performed in Jamestown.

Variants of Dee's "Bill Stable" (UKM/I2b) can be found in Cox (1925) and Randolph (1949) as "Bill Stafford" or "An Arkansas Traveller," and another version, identified as "Bob

"Walker" is sung by Willie Tipton on UKM/I6a. The song apparently dates to the 1800's, although its authorship is disputed (see Randolph, 1949). It relates a hireling's experiences in Arkansas, where he is underpaid, underfed, and nearly worked to death.

"Pattania, the Pride of the Plains," sung by Delta Hicks on UKM/I6b, is a cowboy song from the Western United States. It appears as "Pattonio . . ." in Lomax and Lomax (1946) and Randolph (1948). One wonders exactly how it entered the Hicks repertoire.

Another Hicks Family song, "Cumberland Land" (UKM/I6b), probably originated in East Tennessee, perhaps even in the Big South Fork region itself. Describing an early settler's travels and tribulations on the new frontier, it resembles and may be related to an incomplete lyric that White (1952) identifies as "The Cumberland Traveller."

Joe Hicks, having been a Baptist preacher for some 45 years, sings a number of old-time sacred songs, as well as some of Dan'l Hicks' songs that Dee does not remember, and several of his own funny compositions. One of the latter, "True Blue Bill" (UKM/I6a, UKM/D4), relates the adventures of a fictitious individual that are simply too incredible to believe. Another interesting and funny piece, Joe's rendition of "Pompous Nash" (UKM/D4), is a less-corrupted version of a popular minstrel song that appears in Cox (1925) and Randolph (1949) as "Davy Crockett." It tells the adventures of a negro slave and of his fight with Davy Crockett.

The Hicks repertoire also contains a number of items that

do not resemble anything that can be found in any published collection of traditional songs. On tape UKM/I2b, Dee sings an intriguing fragment that he calls "The Sea Fowl." Its enchanting melody and lyric make one wonder where it might have originally come from. Another unique song of Dee's, which he credits to his father, is "Nero" (UKM/I2b), a song about dogs and foxhunting.

Finally, there is "The Vulture" (UKM/I2a, UKM/I6b), Dee's ballad showpiece, which he learned from Dan'l Hicks. Dee tells about this unusual song on tape UKM/I2a: "I guess it's over 200 years old; I'm satisfied it is. And there's not many people--in fact, I don't know of anyone that knows it but me. My wife don't even know it, as many times as she's heard me sing it!" Dee Hicks is probably the only person in the world who sings "The Vulture." Enhanced by a haunting melody that splendidly compliments its melancholy story, the narrator, a traveller, unfolds a shepherd's dismal tale of how his infant son was carried away by a vulture, and of the discovery of the child's bones years later. The song has a tremendous impact on audiences wherever Dee sings it.

In spite of their wealth of folk material, it would be unfair to depict Dee, Delta, and Joe Hicks solely as the perpetrators of an archaic style or body of music. They also possess a trove of commercially popular "old-time," "hillbilly," or country songs from the 1920's and 1930's onward, learned from records, radio, and television. This is probably equal in size to their traditional repertoire, but it has received rather little attention. A few of these songs appear on the

tapes described above. They are also very in touch with the present status of the genre: Delta Hicks, singing at home, can render Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty's, or Kenny Roger's latest hit as competently as she can "Fair Eleanor and the Brown Girl," and Dee and Joe can argue at length about the technical merits of their favorite performers who appear on the Grand Ole Opry or "Hee Haw."

The Hickses are, simply, a very talented singing family who, all their lives, have learned and sung whatever songs were in vogue within the local folk or popular country-and-western idioms. Even still, the fact that they have kept alive a body of traditional songs for at least two generations after they began to vanish elsewhere in the area distinguishes them from other musical families around the Big South Fork. The Hicks Family folksongs are the only appreciable collection of remnants, not discounting a song or a fragment remembered by an informant here or there, of the music that was sung in the region before the advent of the mass communication media. There are few traditional singers of the Hickses' caliber alive in the United States today. Yet ironically, the Hicks Family itself is a microcosmic testament of the impact that those media have had on American folk culture.

Dee and Delta's daughter, Lillie Mae, and Joe's son Theodore, who both live in Jamestown, know some, though by no means all, of their parents' material, so there an assurance that some of it will survive for at least one more generation. Some of the Hicks grandchildren are also quite musically inclined, but tend to sing the songs currently popularized by records and

radio. The appreciation for the family's traditional songs lingers on: the grandchildren enjoy hearing their grandparents sing the old songs, but they do not seem, at least not at the present, to be trying to learn and preserve any of this musical heritage. The destructive element appears to be not so much a lack of interest in the music, but rather the mass media's replacement of the music within its own cultural context.

Aside from the Hickses' repertoire of traditional songs, it should also be mentioned that Joe and Dee Hicks are two of the few surviving old-time banjo players in Fentress County. Joe can be heard accompanying himself on one song on tape UKM/D4, and Dee's playing is featured on UKM/D5 (side two). The Hicks banjo style belongs to the locally predominant two-finger picking pattern, but it has its own idiosyncratic elements as well. Dee employs a graceful, charmingly light touch on the instrument, with a beautifully-controlled accentuative use of ringing harmonic tones, and up-the-neck chording positions not often found in folk banjo playing. Joe's style is similar, but more heavily rhythmic and somewhat less sophisticated. Dee plays at least one original banjo tune, "Deep Snow Blues." He uses various tunings, including two in D: F[#]DEAD and F[#]DF[#]AD.

Joe Wheeler Gentry

Dee credits most of his banjo style to two of his cousins, Ben Hicks and Joe Wheeler Gentry (see UKM/D5, side two). Ben Hicks was the source of Dee's "Lost Gander" piece; according to Dee, he learned it somewhere from a black banjo player. Joe Wheeler Gentry was a local legend in his own time. The son of fiddler Jesse "Whitehead" Gentry and Dan'l Hicks' sister Lissie,

he was born around 1895 under a rockshelter on Clear Fork. He grew up near Allardt, and surviving old-time musicians consider him to have been the best banjo-picker the Big South Fork region ever produced. He is said to have been able to play both right- and left-handed, and he could play in both the frailing and two-finger picking styles.

"White" and Joe Wheeler Gentry were well-known for their musical talent around Fentress and Morgan counties during the early 1900's. They played at dances for the Englishmen at Rugby, for the Germans at Allardt, and at Deer Lodge. Joe Wheeler lost interest in music after his father was disabled by a stroke and could no longer perform. He left the area and eventually drifted to Cincinnati; he has not been heard from for over 20 years and is assumed to be dead.

Joe Beaty

Most of the Joe Wheeler Gentry story comes from Joe Beaty of Grimsley, who is probably the best-known old-time banjo player in Fentress County today. Joe Beaty was born in 1905 in the Banner Springs vicinity of Fentress, and was the son of Shadrack and Marrie ^(sic) Tinch Beaty. Joe is related to the late A.R. Hogue, the Fentress County historian, and to Tinker Dave Beaty, the Civil War leader. Joe's mother played the fiddle, and her uncles John Hogue and Jim Hogue were accomplished fiddlers, too. His father played the jews-harp.

When he was nine years old, as Joe tells it, his sister got him a banjo: ". . . she give four dollars and seventy-five cents for it. That was a good banjo then, though. It had eight brackets. I played it 'til I plumb wore it out, 'til it plumb

wore me out!" Joe learned most of his tunes from Joe Wheeler Gentry, who was his childhood friend even though he was about ten years older than Joe Beaty. He learned others from another neighborhood friend, banjo player Henry Hicks, who was the son of fiddler Frank Hicks and his wife Sena Adkins. Joe was also well-acquainted with Dan'l Hicks and his family, who were "some-how" related to Frank and Henry.

Joe Beaty is featured on three Folklife Study tapes: UKM/I5 and UKM/I6b, recorded at Pickett State Park Labor Day Weekend, 1979, and UKM/D20 (side two), recorded at his home on January 18, 1980. He performs a total of eleven banjo tunes. Joe plays with a heavily rhythmic two-finger style, and his distinctive touch is to alternate playing stanzas of a tune an octave apart. Like most traditional banjo players, he knows a variety of tunings, but the ones he uses most are GCGCD and the standard "open G," GDGBD. Joe's son, David, who also lives in Grimsley, is a very good bluegrass-style banjo player.

The Tipton Family

The Jamestown area has produced a number of fine old-time musicians. Willie Tipton (b. 1906), a fiddler who also plays the banjo and guitar, and his brothers Cotton, another multi-instrumentalist, and Herb, a superb old-time country-style harmonica player, have had a local reputation for many years. Music seems to have always been a Tipton family tradition: the Tipton brothers' father, George Tipton, was a singer, and their uncle Hamilton played the fiddle. Their three older sisters were gospel singers, and one of them played the guitar. Willie remembers that when he was about twelve years old, and Cotton

was about seven or eight, they bought a cheap fiddle with money they had earned selling candy and learned to play it. Later, they got a banjo and learned to play it, too.

Willie is the only one of the Tipton brothers who still performs actively, and he is probably the leading old-time musician associated with the Jamestown area proper. He has played locally and on WCPT-TV in Crossville with his daughter Judy Eacret, who sings country and gospel songs. Willie and Judy appear on tapes UKM/I6a, UKM/I6c, and UKM/I6d, recorded Labor Day, 1979, at Pickett State Park. On UKM/I6a, Willie performs one song alone, playing the guitar; it is a traditional song that he calls "Bob Walker," and it is a variant of the song that Dee Hicks sings as "Bill Stable" (see tape UKM/I2b).

Willie Tipton and Judy Eacret also appear on UKM/D27, a copy of a recording of a 1966 "Variety Hour" broadcast on WCLC-AM radio in Jamestown. The tape also features Cotton Tipton and several other local musicians.

Doyle Jones

Singer-guitarist Doyle Jones (b. 1919), who works for WCLC, has had a long acquaintance with the Tipton Family. Doyle is a great resource because he knows virtually every musician in the Fentress County-Wayne County area, and he is also an authority on the early history of the country music industry. Like most local musicians, Doyle came from a musical background. His father played the banjo. Doyle is familiar with some of the traditional fiddle tunes, but his real love is the popular country-and-western music of the 1930's and 1940's, the music that he heard on the radio and on jukeboxes while he was growing

up. He and his older brother Brad began playing with the Tiptons in the 1930's, and during the 1950's, Doyle, Willie Tipton, and two other local musicians, R.L. Goodin and the late Sharon Voiles, performed together as the Jintown Boys at Jamestown's annual Chicken Festival, Bean Festival, and on other occasions.

Doyle Jones appears on three Folklife Study tapes, all copies of tapes from own personal collection: UKM/D25, recorded in 1961 with local fiddler Harold Stanley, UKM/D26, recorded in 1962 with John Slone, a former resident who now lives in Texas, on fiddle, and UKM/D27, the 1966 WCLC "Variety Hour" show mentioned above.

Harold Stanley

Harold Stanley (b. 1922), who presently lives near Helena, just west of Jamestown on Highway 52, comes from a distinguished musical background. His grandfather was a fiddler, and his father Elmer Stanley and uncle Fred Stanley were well-known musicians around the Big South Fork a generation ago. Elmer Stanley, who was born near Elgin, in Scott County, and later moved to Fentress, played the fiddle and is credited as having been the source of Dick Burnett's popular tune "Sleeping Lulu." Fred Stanley, who lived in Stearns, Kentucky, for a number of years and now lives in Detroit, Michigan, played the banjo and guitar and performed and recorded with Bert Layne, Clayton McMichen, and the Skillet Lickers in the early 1930's.

Harold Stanley started playing the fiddle when he was 13. He learned some material from his father and his uncle, but, like Doyle Jones and other aspiring young musicians of the period, he also learned songs by popular artists that he heard

on the radio, like Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family. Clayton McMichen's records were an important influence^{on his developing style.} Harold and Doyle began playing together in the late 1930's, and "went professional" when they began appearing on WHUB radio in Cookeville during the summer of 1940. As "Red" Stanley, Harold went on to perform and record with a number of major country and bluegrass performers, including Bill Monroe and Ralph and Carter Stanley (no relation to Harold). He retired from playing professionally in 1964 and now devotes most of his time to farming, although in recent years he has played on several gospel albums produced by Billy Mitchell, a Jamestown preacher and radio evangelist (see tape UKM/D9, side one).

Tape UKM/D2 contains nine fiddle tunes and a long interview with Harold Stanley, recorded at his home October 11, 1979. He is also featured on UKM/D25, a copy of a tape that he and Doyle Jones made in 1961. Stanley is an exceptional fiddler whose style incorporates elements of old-time hoedown fiddling, western swing, and even classical violin, all acquired from years of playing, practice, and contact with a variety of different fiddlers and styles during his professional career. His retirement from active playing has been a loss to everyone around the Big South Fork, and to devotees of old-time and bluegrass music everywhere.

Elmer Hurst

Elmer Hurst, who lives on Highway 154 east of Jamestown, is best known around Fentress and Wayne counties as a square dancer and square dance caller, but he was also an accomplished musician at one time, and represents another local musical family.

Elmer's father, Oren Miller Hurst, played the fiddle and banjo, clawhammer style, and his uncle played the banjo, too. Elmer remembers that his father played for the Germans at the old Allardt dance hall: the German waltzes, he says, were a sight! Elmer also says that Fiddlin' John Carson, a Georgia fiddler who was one of the first to record commercially, lived near Jamestown for a short period of time, and that his dad played with him some, too. Elmer himself learned the banjo and guitar and had a string band who played around Jamestown in the 1920's and early 1930's. Arthritis prevents him from playing today, but his involvement in the lingering square dance tradition makes him an important figure in the music scene around the Big South Fork.

Ralph Weaver and Rowe Parker

Ralph Weaver and Rowe Parker have been keeping the traditional Saturday night musical "get-together" alive in the Stockton neighborhood of Fentress County. Weaver, a fiddler, was born in Union County, Tennessee in 1919; his family moved to Fentress in 1932. His mother played the fiddle, and his father, the fiddle and banjo, so Ralph and his two brothers grew up in a musical household. They later formed a string band and played around East Tennessee.

Rowe Parker also came from an East Tennessee family who migrated to Fentress County. His parents originally came from Claibourne County. Neither one of them were musicians, but Rowe and his brother got a guitar as a premium from the Lee Manufacturing Company and learned to play it. Rowe Parker is also one of the few dulcimer players around the Big South Fork.

His family had one that had been made by Rowe's grandfather, Daniel Thomas, a preacher and music teacher back in Claibourne County, and as children, Rowe and his sister, Mrs. Luster King of Jamestown, both learned to play hymns on it.

Ralph Weaver and Rowe Parker have played together for a long time, and still make music regularly, usually every Saturday night at Weaver's home, with Rowe playing the bass fiddle and their sons, Jim Weaver and David and Boyd Parker, joining in on guitar and sometimes fiddle as well. These sessions usually begin about 8PM and may run until 1 or 2AM, with a dozen or so friends and family members present, including 4-6 musicians. The music gets underway after a period of socializing and waiting for people to arrive. Weaver acts as leader, starting the tune or taking requests from the players or others present. The music continues uninterrupted for 1½-2 hours, until the musicians break for coffee, refreshments, and more socializing. This intermission is followed by another long set of music, which dissolves into prolonged late-night conversation as the musicians tire and the guests gradually drift home.

Tape UKM/D3 is a recording of a Saturday night get-together at Ralph Weaver's, made October 13, 1979. It includes 31 fiddle tunes, five of which feature a combination of three fiddles played by Weaver, his son Jim, and David Parker. Ralph himself is a good, hard-driving hoedown-style fiddler, with a repertoire so wide that he rarely has to repeat a tune in the course of the evening, which may include as many as 40 different numbers.

Arnold Kimbrell

Arnold Kimbrell (b. 1900) of Armathwaite, a phenomenal little man and a knowledgeable informant on a variety of topics, proved to be a good source of information about the music of the Big South Fork as well. Arnold plays the fiddle and the banjo. He grew up at Mt. Helen and used to play around the neighborhood with his brother Arthur (now living in Muncie, Indiana) and Richard Bow, who was killed in World War I. Arnold's youngest brother, Aurland, who now lives in California, is also a musician. Arnold remembers a lot of traditional songs and old Baptist hymns. On tape UKM/D5 (side one), recorded during September and October, 1979, he plays "Pretty Polly" and "The Old Time Religion" on the banjo and sings portions of three other songs. He also relates several stories that enhance our knowledge about the music of the region. He recounts a visit to Dan'l Hicks' place. He tells how his father, Barry Kimbrell, fashioned and played a "bark whistle," a homemade flute. He also describes an unusual instrument called a celestaphone that he remembers from his youth.

One of Arnold's songs, "Daddy, Don't Go to the Mines," is interesting because it is one of the few pieces of occupational folksong collected in the area by the Folklife Study. According to Green (1972), the song is of British origin: Composed in 1910 by Robert Donnelly and Will Geddes, and based on a 1907 mining disaster in St. Genaed, South Wales, it appeared in song folios as "The Dream of the Miner's Child." It was widely recorded from the 1920's on, and entered folk tradition.

Other Musicians

Fentress County has an abundance of folk musicians, many more than the Folklife Study was able to spend adequate time with. Cecil Stewart, an old friend of Arnold Kimbrell's who lives at Mt. Helen, plays the banjo. Others who were identified but never contacted include Jerry Norris, a fiddler, banjo player, and an old acquaintance of Joe Beaty's, who lives in the Jonesville vicinity; John Doss, a singer of old-time songs, who lives on Highway 127 near Pall Mall; and Belle Jones, a fiddler who is also the mother of Glen Jones, a country-western singer from the Jamestown area. Jamestown also has an actively performing bluegrass band, the Bluegrass Gospel Quartet, headed by Jerry Lowe of Pine Haven.

C. Scott and McCreary Counties

The surviving folk musicians in Wayne and Fentress counties have benefitted from an appreciative audience and from the lingering existence of an indigenous old-time music "scene" which is currently experiencing a modest revival, largely because of Pickett State Park's programs highlighting local traditional music. Thanks to this, to the attention that they have received from outsiders like Charles Wolfe, Bobby Fulcher, and others, and to the presence of knowledgeable local informants such as Doyle Jones, these musicians have enjoyed a degree of local visibility which, for the purposes of the Folklife Study, considerably reduced the groundwork of making contacts in those counties. Taking advantage of such a wealth of good resources so close at hand, we spent considerably less time documenting

music in Scott County, Tennessee, and McCreary County, Kentucky, aside from the recordings of several gospel-singing groups and one Scott County fiddle-player. However, there is no present reason to assume that these areas are any less endowed with talented folk performers than their neighboring counties to the West. Preliminary but productive inquiries were made in Scott and McCreary, and there are probably good informants left to be discovered there, particularly in the less accessible eastern parts of those counties which lie away from the proposed Recreation Area.

Slim Smith

Fiddler Eldridge "Slim" Smith lives in the housing project on the north end of Oneida. He was born in Oneida in 1906, and although his father played the banjo, Slim did not start seriously learning music until he was about 24 years old. His younger brothers "Tennessee" and "Smitty," who now live in Atlanta, were already experienced musicians, and went on to achieve a fairly successful country-and-western recording career as the Smith Brothers during the 1930's and 1940's. Slim's first tune was "Wink That Other Eye," which he learned off the radio from Uncle Jimmy Thompson, an early fiddler on the Grand Ole Opry.

Slim eventually acquired a large repertoire of fiddle tunes from the radio, from records, and from other local fiddlers, and began playing at square dances around the Big South Fork in the 1930's. He also knew and played with Burnett and Rutherford when they would pass through the area. In 1951, Slim moved to Monticello, where he lived for 24 years and continued his acquaintance with them and other Monticello musicians until he returned to Oneida in 1975.

Slim Smith is featured on tape UKM/D23, which was recorded at his home February 8, 1980, and contains 35 of his fiddle tunes. Slim is a versatile fiddler with a good technical knowledge of the instrument and a very wide repertoire. He enjoys playing waltzes and hornpipes as well as breakdowns, and he plays several unique pieces, including some reminiscent of Irish fiddle music. Slim continues to learn new material and to experiment and refine his technique. On the tape, he introduces a new tune, "Snowflake," which he says he heard for the first time at the Grand Ole Opry a few weeks before. He also demonstrated a new technique he is practicing, called "rolling bow action."

Other Musicians

John Foster, an old-time musician who performed and recorded with Burnett and Rutherford in the 1920's, lives at Robbins, Tennessee, but was not contacted by the Folklife Study. Other folk musicians in Scott County include Leon Newport, also of Robbins, and Noble Smith, a banjo-picker from Oneida. Scott County also has several actively performing bluegrass musicians, including Larry and Mark Hancock and Morris Shannon, who appear on tape UKM/I6c.

McCreary County also has its share of musical talent, including Ed Bybee, a bass fiddle player who travelled with Burnett and Rutherford and who now lives at Stearns. He is featured on tape UKM/I6c as part of an impromptu bluegrass band who performed at Pickett State Park on Labor Day, 1979.

The Spradlins of Bell Farm were a musical family of local renown. Oren Spradlin, the retired postmaster of Bell Farm, is

a good fiddler as well as a lively storyteller. He used to play with Clyde Troxell years ago. Oren's sister Rettie (now deceased) played the banjo, organ, and other instruments. She and Oren can be heard on several tapes recorded by the McCreary County Library.

Other traditional musicians in McCreary County include Naomi Murphey, Andrew Meadows, Roy Anderson, Red Parsons, and Elmer Shoopman.

SECTION III. CONCLUSION: OLD-TIME MUSIC
IN THE BIG SOUTH FORK TODAY.

The material presented here has been an effort at documenting the folk music culture of the Big South Fork region, as it was observed and experienced between July, 1979, and March, 1980, and as it was depicted to have been in previous years by the local informants who contributed to this research. During the nine months' involvement with many of the surviving old-time musicians of the area, it became evident that this part of the local folk heritage has reached a crucial point in its existence. Even though the various musical traditions that have been described here have fallen into discontinuity, they have not yet been forgotten completely, and although their future appears endangered under the present circumstances, they could still be revived and sustained with only a moderate amount of interest and effort.

The basic problem is one that is common to areas to the local folklife other than music, and it also extends far beyond the Big South Fork geographically, because it is characteristic of what has been occurring to traditional regional American culture in general. As folk heritage is progressively superceded by popular culture, by the beliefs, values, creative forms, and behavior promoted by the mass communication and entertainment industries, ~~the~~ folk elements lose their place in peoples' lives, fall into disuse, and eventually become forgotten. Popular culture conveys certain values that are essential to its consumer-market nature but have nothing to do with artistic merit. Among

these are the principle of planned obsolescence, the premiums assigned to innovation and fashion, and the attached assumption that outmoded objects cease to be valid. This ethic has given rise to what has basically become a throwaway "pop" culture, with a canon of taste centered on items that emerge with a deliberately calculated longevity, like the new record album that instantly becomes outdated with the artist's next release, that actually suggests the antithesis to enduring folk tradition.

The survival of a cultural tradition depends on several factors, and the first of these is how successfully it can be transmitted to subsequent generations. Among the younger residents of the Big South Fork region, there seems to be a general hesitancy to identify with the local folk heritage (since nobody wants to be regarded as old-fashioned), and some doubt about its immediate relevance. Attitudes range from total rejection to a benign appreciation that falls short of the determination to at least preserve and retain some of the elements of the folk culture, if not actually embracing the heritage itself.

Music is still a tradition among most of the region's musical families, but the music being played today is not the same. The offspring of many of the local performers described in this report play, but they play the sorts of music that are currently popular, such as rock, country, or bluegrass. There are exceptions, however, that indicate that some traditional continuity is still occurring at the local level. For example, there are the Sharp Family, who are trying to keep a long-standing family heritage alive; Joe Simpson, who has undertaken to learn some of the banjo tunes played by his second cousin Clyde

Troxell; and the sons of Ralph Weaver and Rowe Parker, who are interested in learning the fiddle and some of their fathers' music.

On the other hand, the Big South Fork's folk music has begun to attract the interest of enthusiasts from outside the region. Dee and Delta Hicks, of course, have gained national recognition from preservationists^s in this country and in Canada, and judging from the responses that they receive, unofficial tapes of some of their performances have circulated as distantly as Great Britain and Australia. There are already two record albums available that feature musicians from the Monticello area, and in the near future, County Records, a small company based in Virginia that caters to old-time music lovers, plans to release a series of albums compiled from local material that Bobby Fulcher has recorded. Besides Fulcher's unparalleled involvement with musicians in Fentress and Wayne counties, contributions toward the longevity of this music have also been made by Ray Allen, another Tennessee Park Service employee who worked at Pickett State Park, and Michael DeFosche, a young fiddler from nearby Gainesboro, Tennessee, who has been learning some of Fiddlin' John Sharp's repertoire from surviving members of his family.

Continuity is important, but context and community are also ^{necessary} Δ to the survival of folk heritage. When traditional institutions lose their place in peoples' lives, or even when the important elements are removed from their cultural context, much of the surrounding structure disintegrates as well. As this report will hopefully convey, music, in the anthropological

sense, entails much more than simply ^{the} music itself, and involves a whole complex of associated values and behavior patterns. As a cultural system, the old-time music of the Big South Fork has fallen into disrepair, but its essential components are still present. The traditional music forms have been edged out of their original context, but they have not yet faded away completely; competent performers and a willing audience still exist, but what generally seems to be lacking is a focal point, a place in the cultural milieu where this can all be brought back together.

Over the past few years, Pickett State Park has instituted a very successful program that demonstrates that it is not too late to restore and sustain some of the local folk music heritage. Pickett's activities include informal performances by local singers and musicians during the summer park season, and an all-day old-time music festival that occurs on Labor Day and features performers from ^{Fentress and Wayne counties} playing to a predominantly local audience (see tapes UKM/I2a and b, UKM/I5, UKM/I6a-d). When our fieldwork closed in March, 1980, there was also a move underway to begin holding square dances there on a regular basis.

The festival, or "Old Timers' Day," evolved out of the traditional Sharp Family Reunion, and resulted largely from the efforts of Bobby Fulcher, who spent the summers of 1976 and 1977 as resident naturalist at Pickett and has remained in close contact with the area since then. It has stimulated good effects in a relatively short time by giving performers an appreciative audience and an outlet for their talents. Besides entertainment, it offers older residents a chance to socialize with one another,

and young people and visitors an opportunity to hear and experience the traditional music of the region. If only for one day out of the year, "Labor Day" has created a viable context and community for the surviving elements (fo) the local folk music culture. It has become something of an annual reunion for this community, attracting natives who no longer live there; it has proven to be fun for everyone, and it is anticipated for months in advance. During our preliminary, pre-fieldwork inquiries around the Big South Fork in May, 1979, the Folklife Study was continually advised that if we wanted to hear some good old-time music, to be sure to be on hand for "Labor Day" at Pickett.

This is neither the time or the place to explore the functions of music in its cultural context, nor to argue the merits of preserving local folk heritage. It is sufficient to say that Pickett has served a very beneficial purpose and created an enriching facet to the present-day cultural experience in this area of the Big South Fork. It has proven that given a proper place, the old-time music can survive, at least as long as there are people who still play it, and that it can attract a regional and potentially larger audience, many of whom are willing to travel reasonable distances from the surrounding counties to participate. Most encouragingly, Pickett's program has demonstrated that it can stimulate young peoples' interest and involvement, which is clearly evidenced by the teenagers and children who take part in the dancing, and the ones like Daniel Owens of Jamestown (see tape UKM/I6b) who are ready to get up and sing traditional songs.

With the proper attention, the old-time music of the Big

South Fork could add a unique, entertaining, and informative dimension to the development of the proposed National River and Recreation Area. This folk music heritage is a very rich but steadily diminishing cultural resource that is still capable of being renewed and maintained, and it is an endowment that, like the region's natural beauty and challenging recreational advantages, has demonstrated appeal to individuals from outside the immediate area.

The Big South Fork affords an excellent opportunity for further documentary work with traditional music. The music contained in the Folklife Study tapes is only a sample of the kinds of material that presently exist; there are still a number of potential informants who remain to be contacted, as well as areas like Scott and McCreary counties that have not yet received adequate attention, either previously or from this study. Because of the growing popularity and interest in old-time music, this continued activity has potential commercial as well as archival value.

An interpretive program focusing on local musical traditions, on the order of what Pickett has undertaken, would also enhance the park design. Such a plan, which could include exhibits, demonstrations, music by local performers, and folk dancing, would harmonize well with and serve to highlight the park's intended folklife theme, by inviting a type of participatory experience not offered by other aspects of the regional folk heritage, and by opening other creative outlets for local talent. Since these would basically be small-scale presentations, they could easily take advantage of the available facil-

ities at several of the proposed development areas, such as the lodges or campgrounds. Activities of this nature would appeal to outsiders as well as residents of the area, benefiting local public relations and providing an additional attraction for visitors. Incorporated into an ongoing cultural resource management program, they would extend the park's function by helping to preserve the remaining vestiges of the Big South Fork's musical heritage, and by creating an environment that will insure their continued survival.

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