

# COUNTRY MUSIC

## FLOYD COLLINS BALLADS

### FIRST JENKINS BALLAD

Late: 1930 to 2005

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#### NON COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS

#### In chronological order by recording date

#### Introduction

Between 1928 and 1935 no other recordings were made of first Jenkins ballad. During that period, thanks to the phonograph record, the song was heard and thus entered the oral tradition to become an American folk song.

Archie Green explains the process – “... it is important to know that by 1925 the sound recording industry was able to release topical records while the events portrayed were vivid in memory... [This] illustrates the phonograph record’s broadside function. Printed broadsides normally carried words only. When notes were present they had meaning to music readers alone. A disc was a broadside in which one heard rather than saw text and tune. It was awkward to learn words from a disc but this practice had the virtue of not separating lyrics and melody... it can be said that that commentary on new records in advertising supplements was comparable to a ballad monger’s cries when hawking fresh material.” (Green 1972)

Norm Cohen comments further – “a folk song is a song the survival of which does not depend entirely on commercial media. Thus a song need not be old in order to qualify, but it must outlive its vogue in sheet music and records... Variation is another useful indicator. Respect for the printed word means that the existence of variation generally is proof that the printed authority has lost its influence... Oral transmission is by its very nature proof that the transmitted piece is not entirely dependent on commercial media; therefore, if we can convince ourselves that a single documented case of oral transmission is not unique, we can be satisfied that it indicates a folksong.” (Cohen 1980) There are numerous variants of the first Jenkins ballad that were collected orally and later published in collections (see several references listed below).

Of the three versions here recorded by people at the Archive of American Folk Song, we know that two of the singers learned the song directly from phonograph records.

**Ref:** Belden, Henry M. & Hudson, Arthur P. (Editors) 1952, *The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Vol. 2*, Folk Ballads from North Carolina, Duke University Press, Durham, NC, p. 498-501 (Three variants)

Boswell, George W. 1950, Five Choice Tennessee Folksongs, in Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin, v. XVI, n. 2, June 1950, p. 29 (Sung by Mrs. William M. Jones)

Cohen, Norm 1980, America’s Music: Written and Recorded, *JEMF Quarterly*, v. XVI, Fall 1980, n. 59,

p. 121-131

Gardiner, Emelyn E. & Chickering, Geraldine J. 1939, *Ballads and Songs of Southern Michigan*, Folklore Associates, Hatboro, PA, p. 307-308 (Miss Mabel Tuggle, Detroit)

Green, Archie 1972, *Only a Miner: Studies in Recorded Coal-Mining Songs*, University of Illinois Press, p. 126

Thomas, Jean 1939, *Ballad Making in the Mountains of Kentucky*, Henry Holt & Co., NY, p. 109-111

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**CY-OT-FC-LT1** United States 1935

## **FLOYD COLLINS**

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Perf:** Bascom Lamar **LUNSFORD**

(vocal & commentary)

**Prod:** George W. Hibbitt & William Cabell Greet

**Prod. Co:** Columbia University Library; New York, NY

**Rec. Eng:** George W. Hibbitt & William Cabell Greet

**Rec. Date:** Feb. or Mar. 1935

**Dubbing Eng:** Charles Seeger

**Dub. Date:** Winter 1937

**Time:** (?)

**Label:** Archive of American Folk Song  
(Non-commercial Phonodisc)

**Cat. No:** AFS 1812 A-3 & AFS 1812 B-1

**Spec:** 12" 78rpm (aluminum discs)

**Notes:** We are told that "Lunsford learned his text from a record by John Carson. [See under First Jenkins Ballad – Early: 1925-1930 – [CY-OT-FC-EY1](#)] He has evidently forgotten, or the Carson record omitted [not so], the second stanza found in most variants. The only major variation in Lunsford's text occurs in the last two lines of the final stanza." (Beard 1959)

In 1949 he was invited by Duncan Emrick, head of the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress, to come to Washington and re-record his memory collection. He recorded 317 songs, fiddle tunes, and dance calls for the Archive, but this ballad was not included.

Then in February-March 1935 Lunsford recorded about 315 songs (with commentary) from his "memory collection" for the Columbia University Library. Jones notes – "He was 52 years old at the time, and his voice was probably at its best. The recordings are a priceless legacy that reflected the scope of Appalachian folklore but also the personal interests and aesthetic of one remarkable man. It was the largest repertory ever recorded by one person." (Jones 1984)

These 80 12-inch aluminum discs were made available to the Archive of American Folk Song and copied in 1937 by the Music Program of the Resettlement Administration. His version of the Jenkins ballad was included in this repertoire. Lunsford gives his sources for the ballads and songs in his memory collection and for this one he notes – "Floyd Collins (tune of Charles Guiteau). Laws G 22. Learned from phonograph record (1925)." (Jones 1984)

Coltman writes about him – "A natural entertainer of great charm, Lunsford sings like nobody else, his voice urgent, whining, drawling, and unaccompanied."

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., Bascom Lamar Lunsford, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)

Bascom Lamar Lunsford, Floyd Collins, Traditional Music & Spoken Word Catalog, Library of Congress, [memory.loc.gov](#)

Beard, Anne Winsmore. 1959, *The Personal Folksong Collection of Bascom Lamar Lunsford* (Thesis), Miami University, p. 607-609

Coltman, Bob, *The Record Roundup*, n. 16, Apr.-Jun. 1980, p. 27

Jones, Loyal 1973, The Minstrel of the Appalachians: Bascom Lamar Lunsford at 91, *JEMF Quarterly*, v. IX, pt. 1, Spring 1973, n. 29, p. 2, 3, & 7

Jones, Loyal 1984, *Minstrel of the Appalachians*, Appalachian Consortium Press, Boone, NC, p. 48, 67, 77, 151, & 167 (Available online, go to page – [books.google.fr](#))

Waltz, Bob n.d., Remembering the Old Songs: Charles Guiteau, [lofgrens](#)

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CY-OT-FC-LT2 United States 1936

## FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Perf:** H. J. BEEKER

**Prod. Co:** Archive of American Folk Song;  
Library of Congress; Washington , DC

**Rec. Eng:** John A. Lomax

**Rec. Date:** July 1936

**Time:** (?)

**Label:** Archive of American Folk Song  
(Non-commercial field recording)

**Cat. No:** AFS 843 A-1

**Spec:** 10" 78rpm

**Notes:** Beeker was a member of the faculty at the Appalachian State Teachers College in Boone, North Carolina when John Lomax came there to record him. The illustration here is the original file card on this recording from the Archive of American Folk song, now called The American Folklife Center. He only remembers a few fragments of the Jenkins ballad and sings with a rather simpering voice and a phony accent. Strangely enough, he starts out singing stanzas 3, 7, and 8 then stops abruptly halfway through verse 3 of stanza 8. He comes back again and sings stanza 1 all by itself, changing the first 4 verses to –

*Come an' gather 'round me*

*This story I will tell*

*Of the fate of Floyd Collins*

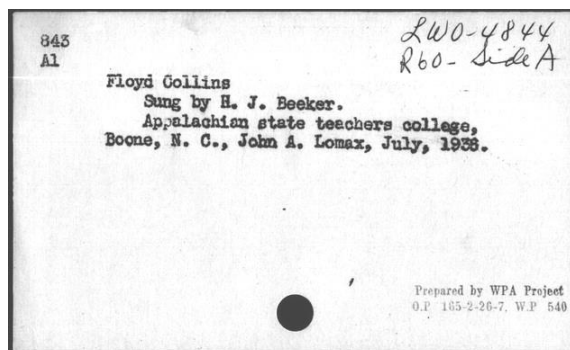
*A lad you all know well.*

Of the three phonodisc recordings of the Jenkins ballad known to exist in the collections of the Archive of American Folk Culture this smorgasbord version is certainly the least interesting.

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., John Lomax, Folklorist, [Wikipedia](#)

H.J. Beeker, Floyd Collins, Traditional Music & Spoken Word Catalog, Library of Congress, [memory.loc.gov](#)

Russell, Tony, *Old Time Music*, n. 7, Winter 1972-73, p. 21



CY-OT-FC-LT3 United States 1945

## THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Perf:** L. Parker TEMPLE (vocal & guitar)

**Prod:** Rae Korson

**Prod. Co:** Archive of American Folk Song;  
Library of Congress; Washington , DC

**Rec. Co:** Recording Laboratory, Library of Congress

**Rec. Eng:** Arthur Semmig

**Rec. Date:** Apr. 3, 1945

**Time:** (?)

**Label:** Archive of American Folk Song  
(Non-commercial phonodisc)

**Cat. No:** AFS 8857 B-2

**Spec:** 16" 78rpm

**Notes:** Originally from the Baltimore, MD area, "Pick" Temple started learning guitar when he was in high school in the 1920s. He first heard the Jenkins ballad probably sometime during 1925 or maybe as late as 1926. "But I learned it from the Dalhart record that I had heard and later on bought a copy of the record for myself." Pick tells how he came to hear the Dalhart record in a little confectionary store in the outskirts of Baltimore – "They had an old wind-up Victrola there and a table what had 78rpm records all over it, many of them scratched and in bad shape. But we latched onto several of them. One of them was "The Wreck of

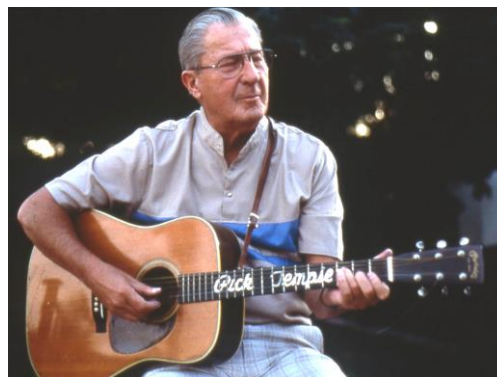


Photo by D. Brison – Phoenix, AZ– Sept.1984

Old 97" sung by Vernon Dalhart... And there was one, "The Death of Floyd Collins," which we liked also. And we used to stop an' just play those things over and over again. We loved it. The phonograph was there for the edification of the customers. Juke boxes not having been invented by then." (Temple 1983)

At a party one night in 1945 he was invited by Rae Korson to play for Duncan Emrick, the new curator at the Archive of American Folk Song. This led to his recording of several railroad songs plus the Jenkins ballad for the Archive collection.

In order to obtain a cassette copy of this recording from the Archives I was required to write Pick Temple for permission. Thus, starting in February 1983, I was able to begin a very worthwhile correspondence with Pick.

Here he sings stanzas 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9 making several changes in the text. Just a few examples –

Stz. 2, Vs. 7 – *Is weeping* tears of sorrow

Stz. 3, Vs. 6 – *Whose life they* could not save

Stz. 5, Vs. 1-8 – *His poor ole mother begged him*

From follies to desist

*His gray-haired father warned him*

*Of the dangers and the risk*

But Floyd would not listen

To the *good advice they* gave

His body now lies sleeping

In *that* lonely sandstone cave.

Stz. 8, Vs. 3 – The rescue squad still labored

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., Pick Temple, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)

Eder, Bruce 2012, Pick Temple, Biography, [Allmusic](#)

Temple, L. Parker, Cassette tape letter to the author dated Feb. 14, 1983, Sun City, AZ

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## **COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS**

**(Continued)**

**In chronological order by recording date**

CY-OT-FC-LT4 United States 1944

### **THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS**

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Perf:** **RED RIVER DAVE** [aka. David McEnery] (tenor)

Frank Novak & The Sourwood Mountain Boys

Esmereldy

Dick Thomas

**Prod. Co:** Musicraft Corp.; New York, NY

**Rec. Date:** Early 1944

**Matrix:** 5150

**Rel. Date:** May 1944

**Time:** 2:54

Boxed Set **78s:** AUTHENTIC HILLBILLY BALLADS

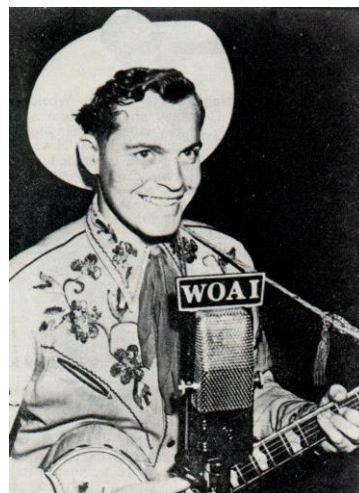
Musicraft 60 (Blue or Maroon red labels)

10" 78rpm (5X78s)

**Label:** Musicraft 286-B (Disc 2 – Sd 2)

**Flip Sd:** I Wish I Had My First Wife Back

**Notes:** The Jenkins ballad was revived toward the end of World War II by one of the new generation of folk singers. This renewal took place indirectly through the influence of Vernon Dalhart. As early as 1925, Texas-born Dave McEnery had been learning guitar by listening and playing along to records by Dalhart







and Carson Robison. In 1938, when Dalhart was trying to make a recording comeback, he discovered McEnery playing in a New York club and was to help this fellow Texan get a start in the recording business. Talking about the entire boxed set, the Billboard critic said – “All the selections are everlasting ones in American outdoor balladry, and the album goes a long way in stimulating wider interest in our own folk music. For the music machine operators searching out the hillbilly sides, the album is a veritable nickel mine.” (Orodenker 1944)

Backed by a violin orchestra here, Red River Dave follows the original text very closely, singing stanzas 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9. He includes the unusual stanza 6 – “Oh how the news did travel.” The only other performer before him to do this stanza was Blind Andy Jenkins. This inclusion plus his faithfulness to the original text seems to indicate that

Red River Dave had a copy of the 1925 sheet music.

However he does change a few words in stanza 3 –

Stz. 3, Vs. 5 becomes – I dreamed I was a prisoner

Stz. 3, Vs. 8 becomes – *Here* within this silent cave.

**Ref:** Anon. 2012, David McEnery, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)

Comber, Chris, Red River Dave, *Country Music People*, v. 3, n. 3, Mar. 1972, Kent, England, p. 21

Haywood, Charles 1951, *A Bibliography of North American Folklore and Folksong*, New York, p. 132

Malone, Bill C. & McCulloh, Judith 1975, *The Stars of Country Music*, Avon Books, New York, NY (1976), p. 87

Orodenker, M. H. 1944, *The Billboard*, July 15, 1944, Folk Record Reviews, p. 19, [books.google.fr](#)

Red River Dave, Authentic Hillbilly Ballads, [45worlds](#)

Red River Dave, The Death of Floyd Collins (2:54), [YouTube](#) (◀COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE)

Russell, Tony 2002, Red River Dave, *The Guardian*, March 21, 2002, [guardian.co.uk](#)

Wolfe, Charles K. 2001, *Classic Country: Legends of Country Music*, Routledge, New York, p. 265-267

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**CY-OT-FC-LT5** United States 1957

## FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Oral Source:** Mrs. Cassie Craiger (Big Laurel, VA)  
& Smith Harmon (Beech Creek, NC)

**Perf:** Paul **CLAYTON** (vocal & guitar)

**Prod:** Kenneth S. Goldstein

**Prod. Co:** Folkways Records

**Liner Notes:** (4-page Booklet) Paul Clayton

**Time:** 3:28

1. Original **LP:** CUMBERLAND MOUNTAIN FOLKSONGS

Folkways FA 2007 (mono)

2. Reissue **LP:** (Same title)

Folkways FP 2007 (mono)

**Spec:** (Nos. 1 & 2) 10" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 3)

**Notes:** An early release on the Folkways label one of the driving forces behind the folk music revival movement of the late 1950s. This is the only known recorded version, which includes the complete lyrics with the nine original published stanzas. Only an occasional word here and there has been changed. For example, these verses become –

Stz. 1, Vs. 1-2 – Come all you young people  
And listen *to what* I tell

Stz. 3, Vs. 3 – I'll tell you all *of* my troubles

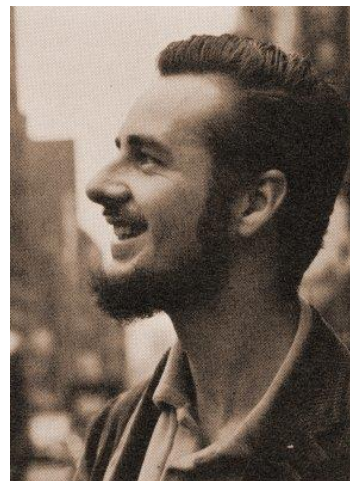
Stz. 4, Vs. 5 – *But* Floyd did not listen

Stz. 6, Vs. 3 – It traveled through the *people*

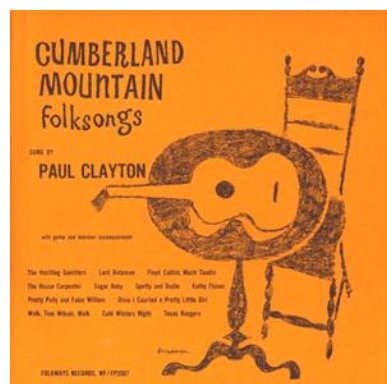
Stz. 8, Vs. 7 – His body *there* was sleeping

Stz. 9, Vs. 2-5 – *This is for you and I*

*We may not be like Collins*



*But you and I must die.  
It may not be a sandstone grave*



It is interesting that the lyrics collected here by Clayton from independent oral sources almost exactly duplicate Jenkins' published sheet music. A useful song booklet is included (inside the sleeve jacket) which provides the lyrics, some historical and background notes on the song, and a short bibliography (see references below). Clayton, a trained folklorist, goes out of his way to give all sorts of different song sources and in the end never mentions the true author of the ballad.

According to Jean Thomas "this ballad was written by fifty-six year old Adam Crisp who lived in Fletcher, North Carolina, at the time of Floyd's death." (Thomas 1942) But Clayton prudently points out in his liner notes that "This claim has never been substantiated." The regularly credited authors on song sheets and discs from 1925 up to 1944 were always Jenkins and Spain. Thomas incorrectly titles the ballad as "Floyd Collins' Fate" and provides only stanzas 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, & 9 (with just a few wording changes) of the original published Jenkins lyrics. She also provides another completely unknown Floyd Collins ballad of six stanzas entitled "The Fate of Floyd Collins" written by a rural minstrel, Jilson Setters (aka James William Day), who like Charlie Oaks traveled around performing in towns around the South. (Thomas 1942) This Setters ballad was never recorded so it is not included here.

The Clayton version of the complete nine-stanza Jenkins ballad was included in the NSS Audio-Visual Aids program, "Caves on Phonograph Records," which I had first presented at the 1967 NSS Convention held in Huntsville and Birmingham, Alabama.

**Ref:** Anon. 2012, Paul Clayton (Folksinger), Biography, [Wikipedia](#)  
Laws, G. Malcolm 1950 (1964), *Native American Balladry*, The American Folklore Society, Philadelphia, PA, p. 223  
Paul Clayton, Cumberland Mountain Folksongs, Floyd Collins, [Deezer](#) (◀ **COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE**)  
Paul Clayton, Cumberland Mountain Folksongs, Stanzas 1 & 2, [folkways.si.edu](#) (◀ **AUDIO SAMPLE**)  
Thomas, Jean 1939, *Ballad Making in the Mountains of Kentucky*, Henry Holt & Co., New York, NY, p.110  
Thomas, Jean 1942, *Blue Ridge Country*, Duell, Sloan & Pearce, New York, NY, p. 235-239, 303  
White, Newman I. (Editor) 1952, *The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, v. 2, Folk Ballads from North Carolina*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC, p. 498  
Wirz, Stefan n.d., Paul Clayton Discography, [wirz.de](#)

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**CY-OT-FC-LT6** United States 1960

## **THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS**

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Perf:** Estel LEE (vocal)

(with steel guitar, banjo, & fiddle)

**Prod. Co:** Arvis Records; Cincinnati, OH

**Matrix:** CP-3387

**Time:** 3:28

**Label:** Arvis 105

**Flip Sd:** Joe Elliott – Crazy Medley

**Spec:** 7" 45rpm

**Notes:** The Jenkins ballad was once again covered this time by a country artist. He sings stanzas 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9, leaving out a word and adding a couple, as shown here –

Stz. 2, Vs. 3 – Its memory will linger

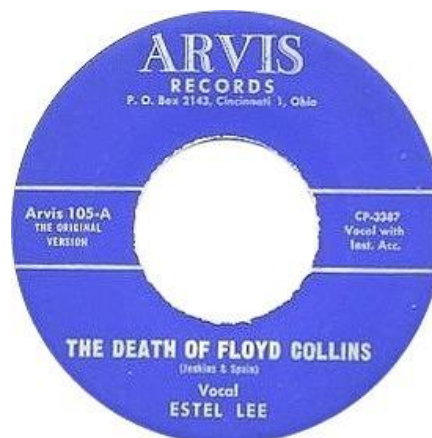
Stz. 3, Vs.8 – *Here* within this silent cave.

Stz. 8, Vs.7 – His body *now* lies sleeping

The instrumental bridge after the third stanza features nice solos on steel guitar and fiddle. However, the accompaniment behind the singer is an annoying banjo picking that detracts from the mood.

Estel Lee was from Hamilton, Ohio and he performed many times on different Ohio radio stations and also on WMS in Nashville, TN.

**Ref:** American eBay posting, Nov. 2009



Daniels, William R. 1985, *The American 45 and 78 rpm Record Dating Guide, 1940-1959*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, p. 14

Estel Lee, *The Death of Floyd Collins*, [rateyourmusic](http://rateyourmusic) & [buckeyebeat](http://buckeyebeat)

Estel Lee, *Biography, Encyclopedia of Country, Western & Gospel Music*, [traditionalmusic.co.uk](http://traditionalmusic.co.uk)

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**CY-OT-FC-LT7** United States 1960

## **THE TALE OF FLOYD COLLINS** (Retitled: **THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS**)

Folk – Country – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Comp:** (On label) Ronnie Hawkins

**Rts:** Patricia Music Publ. Co. (BMI)

**Perf:** **Ronnie HAWKINS** (vocal)

ANITA KERR SINGERS (chorus)

Joe REISMAN'S Orchestra

Jimmy Ray Paulman (guitar)

Willard Jones (piano)

Levon Helm (drums)

(with harmonica, steel guitar, & bass)

**Prod. Co:** Roulette Records Inc.

**Rec. Co:** Bell Sound Studios; New York, NY

**Rec. Date:** May 26, 1959

**Matrix:** 13915

**Time:** 3:03

A. American Releases:

1. Single **45:**

Roulette R 4231

**Flip Sd:** The Ballad of Caryl Chessman

2. **LP:** FOLK BALLADS OF RONNIE HAWKINS

Roulette R 25120 (mono)

Roulette SR 25120 (stereo)

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 5)

3. Compilation **LP:** BEST OF RONNIE HAWKINS

Roulette SR 42045 (stereo)

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 3)

4. Reissue on **CD:** THE FOLK BALLADS OF RONNIE HAWKINS (1994)

Edsel EDCD 386 (Tk 11)

5. Reissue on Compilation **CD:** RONNIE HAWKINS/

THE FOLK BALLADS (1999)

Collectables COLCD 6220 (Tk 23)

B. Canadian Single **45:**

Roulette 9-4231 (Maroon label)

**Titles:** Death of Floyd Collins/Ballad of Caryl Chessman

C. British **LP:** FOLK BALLADS OF RONNIE HAWKINS (Feb. 1961)

Columbia 33 SX-1295 (mono)

Columbia 33 SCX-3358 (stereo)

12" 33rpm (Sd 2 – Bd 5)

D. Danish Single **45:** (Pic cover – shown here)

Sonet T 7104 (Red or black vinyl)

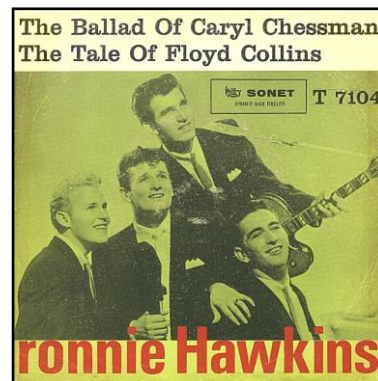
E. Dutch Single **45:**

Roulette RL 4231

F. German Single **45:**

Sonnet T 7104

G. Italian Single **45:** (Pic cover)





Roulette R-4231

**Titles:** Death of Floyd Collins/ Ballad of Caryl Chessman

H. Brazilian Single **78:**

Philips 90.011

**Flip Sd:** A balada de Caryl Chessman  
10" 78rpm (Sd 2)

**Flip Sd:** (Nos. D & E) The Ballad of Caryl Chessman

**Spec:** (Nos. A1, B, D, E, F, & G) 7" 45rpm

**Notes:** A drastically abridged, slow-tempo, country-style version with choral backing which has practically no relation to the original. This is the only attempt ever made to "modernize" the ballad by giving it a popular, country and western arrangement. The result is a disaster.

Hawkins is credited as the composer on the label and no mention is made of either Jenkins or Spain. When this version was reissued on the LP albums the original song title was reinstated.

Of the original nine stanzas only stanzas 1 & 2 have been retained and stanza 4 has been turned into a refrain. Stz. 4, vs. 1 – Oh, Floyd, cried his mother

Becomes – His mother often warned him

Don't go my son, don't go ...

The repetition of the "mother" stanza in the refrain tends to deform the ballad making Floyd into nothing more than a disobedient kid or even a mother's boy. Also the inclusion of a chorus violates the true narrative ballad form by interrupting the listener's emotional involvement in the song's story. The sentimental mush of the choral and orchestral backing sounds are far too contrived in this context.

Hawkins was a rockabilly singer, justly famous for his several rockin' hits, who decided to try his hand at folk ballads. One record critic wrote in *New Kommotion* that he was "one of the very few stars who virtually never recorded a bad record." That guy overlooked this one. How it got to be included in his "Best of" compilation LP remains a mystery.

Speaking in his own defense about many of the things he had to record for Roulette, Hawkins said, "Yeah, it was a real bad scene there [at Roulette] and they had me on a Ku Klux Klan contract, I did what I was told ... I didn't want all them women and organs and things on my records but that's what they wanted so ole Ronnie don't say a word." (Taylor 1981)

Notice that this version of the Jenkins ballad was released in Canada, England, Holland, Denmark, Italy, even Brazil. Some of Dalhart's versions had been released in Canada and Harry Smith's version was issued in Australia, but Hawkins was the first performer in history to introduce Floyd Collins in a song, deformed as it is, to the Europeans and South Americans.

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., Ronnie Hawkins, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)

Campbell, Mike 2008, Ronnie Hawkins Biography, The Official Ronnie Hawkins Website, [ronniehawkins](#)

Barrett, Paul, Discographie: U.S., *Shake*, n. 7, Déc. 1966, Seloncourt, France, p. 22-23

Dickerson, Pete, Ronnie Hawkins: UK Issues, *The Vintage Record*, n. 1, Summer 1975, p. (12)

Jeffrey, Willie & Komorowski, Adam, Ronnie Hawkins Discography, *New Kommotion*, v. 2, n. 8, Issue 8, Winter 1978, p. 6-8, & 37

Leigh, Spencer, Ronnie Hawkins & Complete UK Discography, *Record Collector*, n. 89, Jan. 1987, Ealing, London, p. 36-39

Munson, Bill, Mailman, *New Kommotion*, v. 3, n. 1, Issue 21, p. 20

Ronnie Hawkins, Folk Ballads of Ronnie Hawkins LP, [Deezer](#) (◀COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE)

Ronnie Hawkins, Folk Ballads of Ronnie Hawkins CD, Stanza 4, [Allmusic](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Simmons, Screamin' Brian; Wild Little Willie; & Boppin' Bob 1974, Discography of Rockin' Ronnie Hawkins, *The Camel-Walk-er Magazine* (Fanzine), n. 3, Oct.-Nov. 1974, Farnborough, England, p. 14

Simmons, Screamin' Brian 1977, The British Disco of Ronnie Hawkins, *The Camel-Walk-er Magazine* (Fanzine), n. 5, Sept. 1977, Farnborough, England, p. 4

Taylor, Hank, Interview, *Not Fade Away*, n. 17, 1981, London, p. 35



CY-OT-FC-LT8 United States 1961

## THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Ly:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.



**Perf:** Pick **TEMPLE** (vocal & guitar)

**Prod:** Kenneth S. Goldstein

**Prod. Co:** Prestige Records Inc.; Bergenfield, NJ

**Rec. Co:** Rodel Audio; Washington, DC

**Rec. Date:** Dec. 5 & 6, 1960

**Liner Notes:** Kenneth Goldstein

**Time:** 2:19

**LP:** THE PICK OF THE CROP

Prestige/International 13008 (mono)

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 4)

**Notes:** Pick Temple was among the first performers to parlay folk music into a television career. "Following the advent of television's commercial era after World War II, Temple wrote, produced, and performed a series of programs on folk music for Washington station WTTG. He also appeared on radio during this period, and in the fall of 1948, he started working on WMAR-TV in Baltimore as an actor and folk singer... He quickly picked up an audience of young viewers in the D.C. and Baltimore areas, through hundreds of broadcasts and personal appearances. By 1952, he was on television seven days a week, and was writing as well as producing his show. He became something of a pop culture phenomenon in the D.C. and Baltimore area from 1952 onward." (Eder 2012)



This was Pick's second album of folk songs, recorded in 1961, after his long-running television show in the D.C. and Baltimore area ended. Regarding this ballad, contrary to what Pick told this author (see above), the liner notes say that "*The Death of Floyd Collins* was learned from an old school teacher friend, Mr. Washburn, of Lutherville, Maryland... The ballad's composer is said to be Reverend Jenkins, an evangelist from Atlanta, Georgia." (Liner notes) Notice that the producer here, Kenneth Goldstein, is the same as for the Paul Clayton album on Folkways.

Here Pick omits stanzas 3 and 4 and he shuffles stanzas 2 and 5 around to obtain the following order: stanzas 1, 5, 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9. Most of the lyric changes are the same as those he sang in his earlier 1945 version for the Archive of American Folk Song.

For the first four verses of his second stanza (original stanza 5) he again makes several wording changes –

*His poor ole mother begged him  
From follies to desist  
His gray-haired father warned him  
Of the dangers and the risk ...*

Then in stanza 6 he completely changed the last four verses to – *And how the people waited  
For all the news they gave  
About the brave explorer  
Trapped in that awful cave.*

Other lyric changes occur in stanza 8 where verse 3 becomes – *The rescue squad still labored*

And verses 7 & 8 of this stanza become – *His body rests eternal  
Within that silent cave.*

In the late 1960s Pick developed an abiding interest in the Floyd Collins tragedy that went far beyond a simple study of Jenkins first ballad. Together with John Johnson he started gathering documents, photos, and interviews about the event with the intention of writing a book on the subject. The book was to be entitled, "Nor All Your Tears," and Pick had already written the first chapter by May 1970. He and Johnson were about ready to wind up their researches when they learned about Robert Murray and Roger Brucker's book, *Trapped*, which treated the same subject. This caused them to abandon the project. (Temple 1983)

In 1983 I carried on a regular correspondence by cassette letter with Pick and was able to visit and interview him in 1984 in Phoenix. A year after he died in 1991, I was again able to visit Phoenix and contact Pick's daughter, Faye Lang, about preserving all the extensive research that her father had done regarding Floyd. She very graciously contributed these papers to the Archives of the National Speleological Society and through the efforts of Ray Keeler, of the Central Arizona Grotto, Pick's valuable research has been safeguarded.

**Ref:** Eder, Bruce 2012, Pick Temple, Biography, [Allmusic](#)

Pick Temple, The Pick of the Crop LP, [dcmemories](#)

Temple, Pick 1970, *Nor All Your Tears*, Unpublished Manuscript, 42p

Temple, L. Parker 1983, Cassette tape letter to the author dated Feb. 14, 1983, Sun City, AZ

CY-OT-FC-LT9 United States 1969

## DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Bluegrass – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Arr:** Uncle Jim O'Neal

**Rts:** Sage Brush Music (BMI)

**Perf:** Morris HERBERT (vocal & banjo)

Bill Daton (guitar)

Earl Cheek (bass)

Jerry Sutton (washboard)

**Prod:** Lee Sutton

**Prod. Co:** Rural Rhythm Records; Arcadia, CA

**Time:** 2:05

**LP:** J.E. MAINER – VOL. 6 – FIDDLIN' WITH HIS  
GAL SUSAN

Rural Rhythm RRJE 222(mono & stereo)

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 4)

**Notes:** One of the criterions of a genuine folk song according to the International Folk Music Council in 1954 is that the song evolves through a process of oral transmission with variations, which spring from the creative impulse of the individual or group. A world specialist on the folk song, A.L. Lloyd, felt that the "Death of Floyd Collins" definitely qualifies as an American folk song despite its relatively recent origin. This old-timey bluegrass rendition of the song is further proof.

Herbert sings, in a fairly dispassionate manner, only stanzas 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8 of the original 9 stanzas. And there are several major wording changes. Here are just a few examples –

Stz. 1, Vs. 2 becomes – *A story I will tell*

Stz. 2, Vs. 7-8 – *And now his heart gets lonely  
When he goes to Floyd's grave.*

Stz. 3, Vs. 3 – *I'll tell you all the stories*

Stz. 7, Vs. 4 – *That pulled them in that cave*

Stz. 7, Vs. 6 – *This was the great reply*

Stz. 8, Vs 2-3 – *That sun rose in the sky  
The workers they were busy*

Stz. 8, Vs. 6-7 – *The life was not received  
His body now lies sleeping*

J.E. Mainer, who plays fiddle and sings most of the songs on this album does not perform on this particular number. Mainer and his group, The Mountaineers, remained in the tradition of "old time" music, adopting only certain facets of modern bluegrass instrumentation. In the later years, as here, his banjo picker, Morris Herbert, became the main vocalist in Mainer's band.

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., Joseph Emmett Mainer, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)

J.E. Mainer – Vol. 6, Allen's Archive of Early & Old Country Music, [blogspot.fr](#)

Forney, Gerald, Speleomemorabilia Exchange, *The Journal of Spelean History*, v. 5, n. 1, Jan.-Mar. 1972, p. 24

Lloyd, A.L. 1967, *Folk Song in England*, Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., (Reprinted by Paladin; St. Albens, Herts, England, 1975, p. 15, 70-71)

Nagy, Bobbi 1967, Personal communication about this recording, Pennsylvania



CY-OT-FC-LT10 United States 1976

## FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Spoken Word

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Perf:** Baybie HOOVER (vocal, tin cup, & commentary)

**Prod:** Priscilla Herdman, John Diamond, & Bill Schubert

Photo by Ann Meuer

**Prod. Co:** Philo Records Inc.; North Ferrisburg, VT



**Rec. Co:** Earth Audio Techniques Inc.; North Ferrisburg, VT

**Liner Notes:** (8-page booklet) Priscilla Herdman  
(+ Braille sheet of text)

**Time:** (Intro) 0:38; (Ballad) 1:56; & (Postscript) 0:24  
(Total) 2:58

**LP:** THE MUSIC OF REVEREND BAYBIE HOOVER AND VIRGINIA BROWN

Philo 1019

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 4)

**Notes:** Baybie Hoover was born totally blind either in 1915 or 1916. Originally from Kansas, she eventually became a self-made preacher there and then moved to New York with her friend, Virginia Brown, where she continued her work. In her spoken introduction to the ballad she says:

Well, every time I sing this "Floyd Collins," why, I see a little girl sitting on the floor with her ear fastened to an old-fashioned Victrola with a speaker – with a great big speaker made out of wood with cloth in the front of it.

And this little girl is myself and I have just a little, poor little gingham dress on an' I'm sittin' there trying to catch every word of this song because it took my heart when I first heard it. I was nine years old at this time when I first heard this song and I learned this song. An' I heard this song three times an' then I had it.

Keeping rhythm with her tin cup, she sings stanzas 1, 3, 7, 8, and 9 and only makes a few significant changes –

Stz. 3, Vs.3 – I'll tell you all my *story*

Stz. 3, Vs.6 – My life *they* could not save

Stz. 9, Vs.6 – In which you find *your* tomb

She concludes with a spoken afterthought –

And one other thing connected with the song. I had moved out into the oil fields [*in Kansas*] for the first time in my life.

And the oil fields would pump oil an' they'd go an' I'd beat out the song at night to the rhythm of the pumping oil wells.

And I used to call it my piano.

The fact that stanza 2 is missing here seems to indicate that Hoover learned the lyrics listening to the radio from either the Al Craver version or the Charlie Oaks version, probably the former as it is unlikely the latter was played on the radio. All the other early versions from the 1920s included stanza 2 except the Gloria Geer, but the Geer version includes stanza 4 which Baybie Hoover didn't know.

The 8-page booklet contains photos and the transcript of Hoover and Brown telling their life stories in their own words.

**Ref:** Jones, Glenn K. 1978, *The Record Roundup*, n. 9, Oct.-Dec. 1978, p. 8

Reverend Baybie Hoover & Virginia Brown LP, [worldcat](#)

**CY-OT-FC-LT11** United States 1976

## THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Ballad – Vocal & Spoken Word

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Perf:** George **TUCKER** (vocal & commentary)

**Prod. Co:** Rounder Records; Somerville, MA

**Liner Notes:** George Tucker & Mark Wilson

**Time:** (Intro) 0:28; (Total) 2:59

**LP:** GEORGE TUCKER

Rounder 0064

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 2)

**Notes:** With this recording we come full circle back to where it all happened in 1925 and back to the original version by Fiddlin' John Carson (the liner notes tell us that Tucker took the lyrics from the Carson recording). Born in 1917, George Tucker was an Eastern Kentucky coal miner for nearly 30 years. Singing with a real Kentucky accent, Tucker's raspy voice fails him on certain notes and it's easy to understand why. He was the victim of the black lung disease and the chairman of the Kentucky Black Lung Association. The photo by Guy Carawan shows George and Della Tucker.

Tucker recorded some autobiographical information (with background sounds of people talking and moving around) before singing the ballad without any accompaniment –

I'm the father of fourteen kids. Don't laugh when I say it. Yeah, I've got – I've got nine kids living an' I've got five



dead. Had a pretty hard time through my life. Tried to raise a family – which I've raised pretty fair – family which I'm proud of. I worked through community action, so it would be with Kentucky. Pretty well keeps me busy, which I – which I delight. Anything that's has to do working with poor people.

His performance is just about the purest, down-to-earth rendition of the ballad to be found. Hearing the ballad sung this way takes one right into the heart and soul of the folk tradition and supports the statement made by A.L. Lloyd regarding modern folk songs in general and this one in particular – "The dissemination of the song is by a process similar to that of broadside ballads with the gramophone record replacing the printed leaflet." Here Tucker did not take his version from the famous Dalhart recordings, as most of the other singers did, but instead went straight to the original recording by Carson. However, he leaves out stanza 7 and only sings stanzas 1, 2, 3, 8, repeating the first four verses of stanza 8, and then stanza 9 with several changes in the text, such as –

Stz. 1, Vs. 2 – *A story I will tell*

Stz. 2, Vs. 1 – *How sad, how sad was the story*

Stz. 2, Vs. 3-4 – *In memory true it will linger*

*For a many, many a year*

Stz. 3, Vs. 6 – *My life could not be saved*

Stz. 8, Vs. 1-7 – *It was on that fatal morning*

*When the sun rose in the sky*

*The workers ceased their digging*

*They bid him bye an' bye.*

*But, oh, how sad was the ending*

*His life they could not save*

*His body now is asleepin'*

These last four verses get repeated and then in stanza 9 the first four verses are taken more or less directly from the text sung by Fiddlin' John Carson, but the last four verses were modified by Tucker –

*Young people, oh, take warning*

*It's just for you and I*

*It may not be like Collins*

*But you an' I must die.*

*It may not be the lone sand cave*

*In which we find our doom*

*Soon after life and judgment*

*Us too must meet our doom.*

**Ref:** George Tucker, Rounder Records, [ibiblio.org](http://ibiblio.org)

Lloyd, A.L., 1967, *Folk Song in England*; Paladin, Frogmore, Herts, England (1975), p. 71

Russell, Tony, Reviews, *Old Time Music*, n. 22, Autumn 1976, p. 22-23

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CY-OT-FC-LT12 United States 1976

## DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Perf:** Tom SPENCER (vocal, guitar, dulcimer, & harmonica)

**Prod:** Tom Spencer & Steve Davis; (Reissue LP) Charles Wolfe

**Prod. Co:** Davis Unlimited Records; Clarksville, TN

**Rec. Co:** Pinebrook Studios; Alexandria, IN

**Rec. Date:** Dec. 4 & 17, 1976

**Liner Notes:** Steve Davis & Tom Spencer; (Reissue LP –  
24-page booklet) Charles Wolfe

**Time:** 3:40

1. Original **LP:** SONGS: SAD, SILLY & SENTIMENTAL

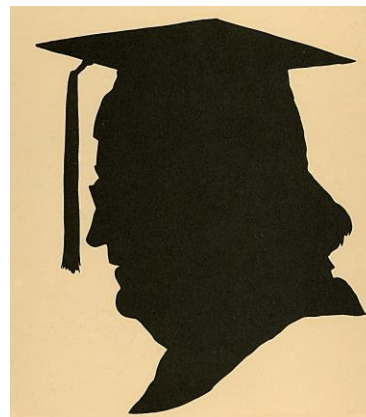
Davis Unlimited DU 33034

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 2)

2. Reissue on **LP:** HISTORICAL BALLADS OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY (1982)

Tennessee Folklore Society TSF 105

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 4)





**Notes:** First recorded by Davis Unlimited Records and six years later reissued by the Tennessee Folklore Society on a curiously titled LP album. The Jenkins ballad is in no way an historical ballad from the Tennessee Valley. The Tennessee Folklore Society LP does not give original recording data.

Tony Russell commented briefly on this Davis Unlimited album – "... a selection of pleasant old time songs, which he [Spencer] delivers well enough, if with a trifle too much deliberation at times (and too much echo all the time)." (Russell 1978)

Tom Spencer, from Muncie, Indiana, performed many times at the Tennessee State Championship Old Time Fiddling Contest in Clarksville, where he first popularized his version of "Floyd Collins." (Wolfe 1982) He sings stanzas 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, & 9 making several changes in the text –

Stz. 1, Vs. 4 – The *man* we all knew well

Stz. 2, Vs. 4 – Through *all the coming* years.

Stz. 2, Vs. 6 – Who tried his *son* to save

Stz. 3, Vs. 3 – I'll tell you all my *story*

In the *Song Notes* booklet there are three errors in the transcription of the text –

Stz. 1, Vs. 4 reads – And the *hand* we all knew well

Stz. 4, Vs. 6 – *He'll* never, no, we'll never

Stz. 9, Vs. 8 – We too must meet our *due*.

**Ref:** Cohen, Norm 1983, Record Reviews, *JEMF Quarterly*, v. XIX, Winter 1983, n. 72, p. 249-250

Russell, Tony 1978, Catchall, *Old Time Music*, n. 28, Spring 1978, p. 31

Russell, Tony 1986, Record Reviews, *Old Time Music*, n. 42, Winter 1985/ 86, p. 24

Tom Spencer, Songs: Sad, Silly & Sentimental LP, [biblio.org](http://biblio.org)

Wolfe, Charles 1982, *Song Notes* (for TSF LP105), The Tennessee Folklore Society, Middle Tennessee State Univ., Murfreesboro, TN, p. 13-14

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CY-OT-FC-LT13 United States 1984

## THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

**Perf:** Abe **HORTON** (vocal & fiddle)

**Prod. Co:** Heritage Records; Galax, VA

**Rec. Co:** The Heritage Studio; Galax, VA

**Rec. Date:** July 1983

**Liner Notes:** Dale Morris

**Rel. Date:** Spring 1985

**Time:**

**LP:** SWEET SUNNY SOUTH

Heritage 043

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 5)

**Notes:** Born in 1917 in Virginia, Abe Horton came from a musical family. It is interesting to note that "Red River Dave" McEnery (b. 1914), Baybie Hoover (b. ca.1916), George Tucker (b. 1917), and Abe Horton (b. 1917) were all born around the same time and would all have been at the impressionable age from eight to eleven in 1925 when these events took place and this ballad was first recorded.

In an interview with Debbie Marshall, Abe was asked how old he was when he picked up the fiddle – "I uz 'bout maybe 'tween 10 and 11. I could play hit the first time I ever picked it up. The fiddle I learnt to play on, my oldest brother had it."

He leads off with an erratic fiddle, much like Fiddlin' John Carson, and accompanies himself as he sings stanzas 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, and 9 with a few bars of fiddle between stanzas 2 and 3 and between stanzas 8 and 9. There are some noteworthy lyric changes –

Stz. 1, Vs. 1 – Come all you *kind* people

Stz. 2, Vs. 3 – Its memories too *shall* linger

Stz. 2, Vs. 6-8 – *Whose boy he tried* to save

*Lies teardrops and sorrow*

At the door of Floyd's *grave*.

Stz. 7, Vs. 6-7 – This was *the* battle cry

We'll never, *never*, no, never



A. HORTON with banjo – Photo by C. Robinson

Stz. 8, Vs. 2 – The sun *was* in the sky  
Stz. 8, Vs. 6 – His life *they* could not save  
Stz. 9, Vs. 1-2 – *Come all you* young people  
*An' listen to Floyd's fate*

**Ref:** Abe Horton & Harold Hausenfluck, Sweet Sunny south LP, [worldcat](#)  
Horton, Abe 1985, Interview with Debbie K. Marshall, June 1985, [mtnlaurel](#)  
Morris, Dale 2010, Abe Horton & Harold Hausenfluck – Sweet Sunny South LP, Liner Notes,  
Necessary Music, [blogspot.fr](#)

CY-OT-FC-LT14 United States 1986

## COLLINS' CAVE

Folk – Bluegrass – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN

**Rts:** Shapiro, Bernstein & Co. (ASCAP)

**Perf:** Phil **ALVIN** (vocal & guitar)

Richard Greene (fiddle)

**Prod:** Phil Alvin & Pat Burnett

**Prod. Co:** Slash Records; Los Angeles, CA

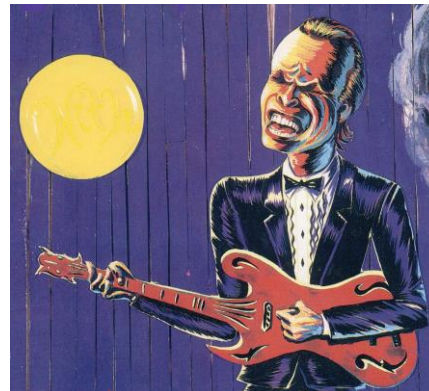
**Time:** 3:47

**LP:** UN "SUNG STORIES"

Slash 25481-1

12" 33rpm (Sd 2 – Bd 4)

Artwork by Georganne Deen



**Notes:** Proof that the Jenkins ballad is being passed on and picked up by the younger generation. A good sign of the staying power and lasting appeal of this ballad, which has now become a classic American folk song. Old time purists and folk song scholars are probably not going to approve of the blues overtones here. You may have heard the Jenkins ballad ten or fifteen times, but when you hear the openings strains of Greene's wailing fiddle with his bluegrass licks, it's like you are hearing it for the first time and you may find that this version rekindles all the heart-rending emotion of the original. With much feeling Alvin sings stanzas 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, and 9 making several changes in the text, especially in stanzas 2, 7; and 8. For

stanza 9 he follows pretty much the John Carson rendering –

Stz. 1, Vs. 4 – A lad we *should* know well

Stz. 2, Vs. 1-8 – How sad, how sad *this* story  
It fills *my* eyes with tears  
The memory *now* will linger  
For many, many *a* year  
*The* broken-hearted father  
*Whose boy they could not save*  
Will now weep tears of sorrow  
At the door of Collins' cave.

Stz. 3, Vs. 6 – My life *they* could not save

Stz. 7, Vs. 1-4 – The working party *gathered*  
They *labored* night an' day  
To move the might *volume*

Stz. 7, Vs. 6 – *That* was their battle cry

Stz. 8, Vs. 3-4 – The *working party labored*  
To *free* him by and by

Stz. 8, Vs. 6-7 – His life *they* could not save  
His body *now* lies sleeping

Stz. 9, Vs. 1-8 – Young people, take warning  
This is for you an' I  
It may not be like Collins  
But you an' I must die  
It may not be a sand cave  
In which we find our tomb  
But at the mighty judgment  
We *soon* must meet our doom.

Richard Greene does the inspiring fiddle breaks after stanzas 3 and 8, then comes back to do the coda.

The fourth and fifth stanzas (original Stanzas 7 & 8) of this ballad was included in my paper, "Caves Celebrated in Recorded Music and Songs," which was presented in July 1996 during the international symposium, "Caves in the Arts," in Jósvalfö, Hungary.

**Ref:** Anon. 2012, Phil Alvin, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)

Anon. n.d., Richard Greene (Musician), Biography, [Wikipedia](#)  
Phil Alvin, Un "Sung Stories" LP, Stanzas 1 & 2, [Amazon](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)  
Phil Alvin, Un "Sung Stories" LP, [Discogs](#)  
Richard Greene, Biography, Official Website, [richardgreene](#)

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**CY-OT-FC-LT15** United States 2005

## THE BALLAD OF FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – Ballad – Vocal & Instrumental

**Mus. & Lyr:** Andrew JENKINS (Unaccredited)

**Mus. Trans:** Irene SPAIN (Unaccredited)

**Arr:** John McEuen

**Rts:** Video Wizards Music (BMI)

**Perf:** John **McEuen** (vocal & banjo)

Jonathan McEuen (vocal & guitar)

Phil Salazar (fiddle)

Tom Corbett (mandolin)

Randy Tico (bass)

**Prod:** Mike Denecke & John McEuen

**Prod. Co:** Rural Rhythm Records; Arcadia, CA

**Rec. Co:**

**Rec. Loc:** Pasadina & Ash Grove; Santa Monica (Live)

**Liner Notes:** (6-page Foldout) John McEuen

**Time:** 3:24

**CD:** ROUND TRIP – LIVE IN L. A.

Rural Rhythm RHY-1026 (Tk 20)

**Notes:** A very recent recording of the Jenkins ballad which shows that the song has survived 80 years right into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. John McEuen was a founding member of the renowned Nitty Gritty Dirt Band for some 30 years. This, however, is a rather pedestrian rendition of the ballad that lacks conviction.

Accompanied himself on banjo throughout McEuen sings stanzas 1, 2, and 3. For the bridge, the fiddle solos, but it's difficult to hear over the banjo due to a bad mix. McEuen returns with the last three stanzas (7, 8, & 9). On stanzas 2, 3, 7, and 8 he is joined for a few verses by a lackadaisical backup voice.

Very minor wording changes are made such as –

Stz. 1, Vs. 4 – A *man* we all knew well

Stz. 2, Vs. 1 – How sad, how sad *his* story

Stz. 2, Vs. 3 – The memories *do* linger

Stz. 3, Vs. 3 – I'll tell you all my *story*

Just when you think it's all over it picks up again and ends with a short coda on banjo and fiddle followed by a radio voice announcing, "This program was brought to you by WFM, Nashville, Tennessee."

**Ref:** Anon. 2012, John McEuen, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)

John McEuen, Round Trip – Live in L.A., Stanzas 1 & 2, [Amazon](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

John McEuen, Round Trip – Live in L.A., Stanzas 2 & 3, [Allmusic](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)



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## Footnote

Since 2005 yet another version by Mac Martin and Ed Brozi was released in 2010 on the CD album *Sun Racer* (see [CDBaby](#)).

[caveinspiredmusic.com](http://caveinspiredmusic.com)