

COUNTRY MUSIC

FLOYD COLLINS BALLADS

FLOYD COLLINS WALTZ

SONG BACKGROUND for First Jenkins Ballad (See First Section – Early 1925 to 1950)

Due to the enormous popularity of the original song, "Death of Floyd Collins," the public demanded and got this waltz version that they could dance to, just as had happened the year before with Dalhart's tremendous hit, "The Prisoner's Song." (Walsh 1960)

This is a string band instrumental version with only the first stanza being sung near the end. As noted in the section on the first Jenkins ballad, the tune here was borrowed from, "Charles Guiteau" (ca. 1882), a ballad about the assassination of US President James Garfield while the latter in turn was based on another earlier ballad, "James A. Rogers" (1858). (Waltz n.d.)

In late 1925, this tune had been linked to the words of a political song composed by Andrew Jenkins, "Thomas E. Watson," which was recorded by Dalhart in Nov. 1925 (Columbia 15053) and on Jan. 28, 1926 (Edison Diamond Disc 51693). Thus by February 1926 the music had already made a re-appearance in the Dalhart repertoire within an entirely different context before being reinstated and re-associated with Floyd Collins.

Ref: Anon. 1971, Notes on Thomas E. Watson, *JEMF Quarterly*, v.7, pt. 2, Summer 1971, , n. 22, p. 66
Walsh, Jim 1960, Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists: Vernon Dalhart, Part VI, *Hobbies*, Oct. 1960, p. 35 (Reprinted in *JEMF Quarterly*, v. 18, Fall-Winter 1982, n. 67-68, p. 141)
Waltz, Bob n.d., Remembering the Old Songs: Charles Guiteau, lofgrens

In chronological order by recording date

CY-OT-FCW1 United States 1926

THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS (WALTZ)

Folk – Old Time – String Band – Waltz – Instrumental & Vocal

Mus. & Lyr: Andrew JENKINS

Mus. Trans: Irene SPAIN

Rts: Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

Perf: **DALHART'S TEXAS PANHANDLERS**

Vernon Dalhart (tenor & harmonica)

Carson Robison (guitar & whistling)

Murray Kellner (fiddle)



Carson J. Robison. Vernon Dalhart

Prod: (78) Frank Walker
(LP) Steve Davis, Charles Wolfe, Walter Haden,
& Wayne Glenn

Prod. Co: Columbia Phonograph Co.; New York, NY
(LP) Davis Unlimited Records; Clarksville, TN

Rec. Date: Feb. 16, 1926

Matrix: 141637-1

Liner Notes: (LP) Walter Haden & Charles Wolfe

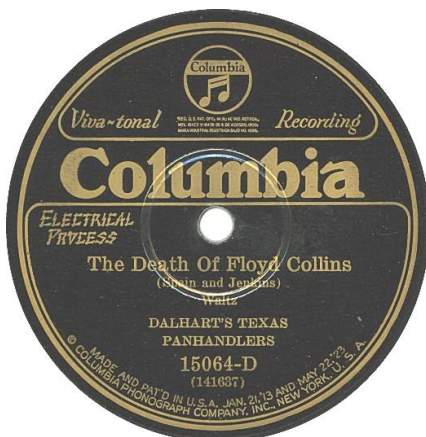
Time: 3:18

1. Original **78:**

Columbia 15064-D

Flip Sd: Better Get Out of My Way

10" 78rpm



2. Reissue on **LP:** VERNON DALHART – OLD TIME SONGS 1925-1930 (1976)

Davis Unlimited DU 33030

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 7)

Notes: Columbia had also been the first to record a Dalhart version of the original ballad. Notice that the original ballad title is used here followed by the word "waltz" in parenthesis, whereas all the other versions are simply titled, "Floyd Collins Waltz."

For further information on Carson Robison see under *The Death of Floyd Collins* – Early: 1925-1930 – [CY-OT-FC-EY2](#) & [CY-OT-FC-EY13](#).

In the 1920s Murray Kellner and his orchestra recorded several dance band records and he also did many sessions as a sideman. (Chadbourne 2012) But for the country records, Carson Robison tells how – "I had worked for long time with an excellent violinist [Kellner],

teaching him hill-billy style of 'fiddlin' and he had gotten really outstanding in this type of work and did all our dates with us." (Robison 1951)

On the reissue LP the labels sources are not given for each song. However, since the version which is included is listed under this title (shared only by the less known Pathé/Perfect version), it was probably this version which was reissued and not one of the five others.

Ref: Abrams, Steve & Settlemier, Tyrone 2012, Columbia 1500OD series Numerical Listing, [78discography](#)

Anon. 1970, A Preliminary Vernon Dalhart Discography, Part 1: Columbia Recordings, *JEMF Quarterly*, v. VI, pt. 4, Winter 1971 (sic. 1970), n. 20, p. 162

Anon. 2012, Carson Robison, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)

Chadbourne, Eugene 2012, Murray Kellner, Biography, [Allmusic](#)

Coltman, Robert 1978, Carson Robison: First of the Rural Professionals, *Old Time Music*, n.29, Summer 1978, p. 5-13, 27

Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers, Death of Floyd Collins, [honkingduck](#)

Laws, George Malcolm Jr. 1950 (1964), *Native American Balladry: A Descriptive Study & a Bibliographical Syllabus*, American Folklore Society, Philadelphia, PA, p. 51, 223

Robison, Carson 1951, Letter to Jim Walsh, Dated Oct. 1951, Quoted in Walsh, Jim 1960, Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists: Vernon Dalhart, *Hobbies*, Part VII, Nov. 1960, Reprinted in *JEMF Quarterly*, v. XVIII, Fall/ Winter 1982, n. 67/ 68, p. 144

Russell, Tony 1977, Reviews, *Old Time Music*, n. 23, Winter 1978/ 77, p. 23

Russell, Tony & Pinson, Bob 2004, *Country Music Records: A Discography 1921-1942*, Oxford University Press, p. 255 (Available online – [books.google.fr](#))

Smyth, Willie 1984, Country Music Recorded Prior to 1943, JEMF Special Series No. 14, Los Angeles, CA, p. 28

CY-OT-FCW2 United States 1926

FLOYD COLLINS WALTZ

Folk – Old Time – String Band – Waltz – Instrumental & Vocal

Mus. & Lyr: Andrew JENKINS

Mus. Trans: Irene SPAIN

Rts: Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

Perf: DALHART'S TEXAS PANHANDLERS

Vernon Dalhart (tenor & harmonica)
Carson Robison (guitar & whistling)
Murray Kellner (fiddle)

Prod. Co: Edison Phonograph Co.

Rec. Co: Edison Studios; Orange, NJ

Rec. Date: Mar. 1, 1926

Matrix: 10858-A & -C

Liner Notes: (No. 3) Jack Palmer (8-page Booklet)

Time: (Disc) 4:08

(Cylinder) 4:00

1. 78 Disc:

Edison Diamond Disc 51714-L

Flip Sd: Better Get Out of My Way

10" 78rpm (Thick disc)

2. Cylinder:

Thomas A. Edison Blue Amberol 5148

2" (outside diameter) Standard Cylinder (1 3/4" – inside diameter)

3. Reissue on Compilation LP & CD: PUTTIN' ON THE STYLE: THE EDISON COLLECTION

(LP) Document 1105

12" 33rpm (Sd 2 – Bd 2)

(CD) Document DOCD 1105 (2007) (Tk 11)

4. Reissue on Compilation LP & CD: THAT GOOD OLD COUNTRY TOWN – VOL. 4 (1988)

Old Homestead OCHS 198 (Tk 24)

Notes: Two different takes were cut on March 1. (Russell & Pinson 2004) The disc used take 10858-A-1-5.

Ref: Anon. 2008, Venerable Music, venerablemusic.com Web site

Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers, Floyd Collins Waltz (1:16), Cylinder, [YouTube](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Edison Diamond Discs, T & J Records, Section 3, [tripod](#)

Old Time Edison Disc Records, Orange, NJ, Reprinted in *JEMF Quarterly*, v. VII, pt; 1, Spring 1971, n. 21, p. 24

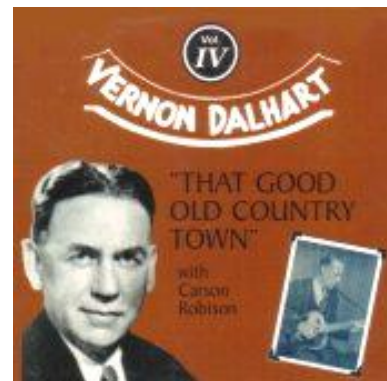
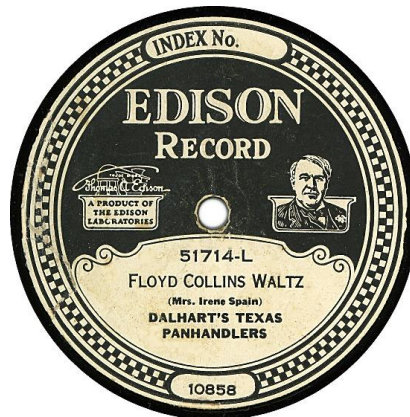
Rocky Productions 2009, Vernon Dalhart, Biography & Discography, [rocky-52.net](#)

Russell, Tony & Pinson, Bob 2004, *Country Music Records: A Discography 1921-1942*, Oxford University Press, p. 256
(Available online – [books.google.fr](#))

Vernon Dalhart, Puttin' on the Style (CD), [CDUniverse](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Walsh, Jim, Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists: Vernon Dalhart, Part VI, *Hobbies*, Oct. 1960, p. 35 (Reprinted in *JEMF Quarterly*, v. 18, Fall- Winter 1982, n. 67-68, p. 142)

Welch, Walter L., A Preliminary Vernon Dalhart Discography – Part V: Edison Recordings, *JEMF Quarterly*, v. VII, pt. 4, Winter 1971, n. 24, p. 156



CY-OT-FCW3 United States 1926

FLOYD COLLINS WALTZ (FLOY (sic.) COLLINS – VALS)

Folk – Old Time – String Band – Waltz – Instrumental & Vocal

Mus. & Lyr: Andrew JENKINS

Mus. Trans: Irene SPAIN

Rts: Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

Perf: VERNON DALHART TRIO

Vernon Dalhart (tenor, Jew's harp,
& harmonica)

Carson Robison (guitar & whistling)

Murray Kellner (fiddle)

Prod. Co: Victor Talking Machine Co.; Camden, NJ

Rec. Co: Victor Studios; 24th St., New York, NY

Rec. Date: Mar. 2, 1926

Matrix: 34662-2



Time:

Label: Victor 19997-A

Flip Sd: Better Get Out of My Way

Spec: 10" 78 rpm

Notes: The Spanish subtitle with the misspelling of "Floyd" would seem to indicate that this 78 was released in Mexico.

Ref: Cohen, Norm, A Preliminary Vernon Dalhart Discography – Part VI: Victor Recordings, *JEMF Quarterly*, v. VIII, pt. 1, Spring 1972, n. 25, p. 10

Murray Kellner, Victor Discography, ucsb.edu

Russell, Tony & Pinson, Bob 2004, *Country Music Records: A Discography 1921-1942*, Oxford University Press, p. 256 (Available online – books.google.fr)

Vernon Dalhart Trio, Floyd Collins Waltz, Encyclopedic Discography of Victor Recordings, ucsb.edu

Walsh, Jim, Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists: Vernon Dalhart, Part VI, *Hobbies*, Oct. 1960, p. 35 (Reprinted in *JEMF Quarterly*, v. 18, Fall-Winter 1982, n. 67-68, p. 143)

CY-OT-FCW4 United States 1926

FLOYD COLLINS' WALTZ (Valse de Floyd Collins)

FLOYD COLLINS (Reissue)

Folk – Old Time – String Band – Waltz – Instrumental & Vocal

Mus. & Lyr: Andrew JENKINS

Mus. Trans: Irene SPAIN (not credited on label)

Rts: Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

Perf: DALHART'S TEXAS PANHANDLERS

Vernon Dalhart (tenor & harmonica)

Carson Robison (guitar)

Fiddlin' Murray Kellner (fiddle)

Prod. Co: Brunswick-Balke-Collender Co.; Chicago, IL .

Rec. Date: Early 1926

Orig. Matrix: E18279-80-81

Matrix Re-No: E2605-06-07W

Rel. Date: Mar. 9, 1926

Time:

1. Original **78:**

Vocalion A15303

Flip Sd: Better Get Out of My Way

2. Reissue **78:** (Titled – "Floyd Collins")

Vocalion 5092

Flip Sd: Better Get Out of My Way

Spec: (Nos. 1 & 2) 10" 78rpm

Notes: The Brunswick matrix of this tune was recorded in early 1926 (exact date unknown) and transferred to the Vocalion label on March 9, 1926.

The French sub-title may indicate that this record was released in French Canada.

Ref: Anon. 1930, Vocalion Record Almanac of Old Time Tunes for March, 1930, (Reprinted in *JEMF Quarterly*, v. VIII, pt. 1, Spring 1972, n. 25, p. 30)

Cohen, Norm, A Preliminary Vernon Dalhart Discography – Part III: Brunswick/ Vocalion Recordings, *JEMF Quarterly*, v. VII, pt. 2, Summer 1971, n. 22, p. 61

Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers, Floyd Collins Waltz, honkingduck

Rocky Productions 2009, Vernon Dalhart, Biography & Discography, rocky-52.net

Russell, Tony & Pinson, Bob 2004, *Country Music Records: A Discography 1921-1942*, Oxford University Press, p. 256 (Available online – books.google.fr)

Vocalion Numerical Listing, 5000 Country Series (1926-1933), 78discography



CY-OT-FCW5 United States 1926

FLOYD COLLINS WALTZ

Folk – Old Time – String Band – Waltz – Instrumental & Vocal

Mus. & Lyr: Andrew JENKINS

Mus. Trans: Irene SPAIN

Rts: Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

Perf: DALHART'S TEXAS PANHANDLERS

Vernon Dalhart (tenor, Jew's harp, & harmonica)

Carson Robison (guitar & whistling)

Murray Kellner (fiddle)

Prod. Co: General Phonograph Co.; New York, NY

Rec. Date: Mar. 9, 1926 (acoustic)

Matrix: S-74027

Rel. Date: Mar. 9, 1926

Time:

Label: Okeh 40584

Flip Sd: Better Get Out of My Way

Spec: 10" 78 rpm

Notes: This version has never been seen or heard.

Ref: Cohen, Norman, A Preliminary Vernon Dalhart Discography – Part II: Okeh Recordings, *JEMF Quarterly*, v. VII, pt. 1, Spring 1971, n. 21, p. 28

Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers, Floyd Collins Waltz, [honkingduck](#)

Laird, Ross & Rust, Brian 2004, *Discography of Okeh Records, 1918-1934*, Greenwood Publishing Group Inc., p. 336, (Available online – [books.google.fr](#))

Russell, Tony & Pinson, Bob 2004, *Country Music Records: A Discography 1921-1942*, Oxford University Press, p. 257 (Available online – [books.google.fr](#))

Settlemier, Tyrone 2011, Okeh 40000 series Numerical Listing pt. 2, [78discography](#)

CY-OT-FCW6 United States 1926

THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS

Folk – Old Time – String Band – Waltz – Instrumental & Vocal

Comp: (On label) P. C. BROCKMAN

Mus. & Lyr: Andrew JENKINS

Mus. Trans: Irene SPAIN

Rts: Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.

Perf: TEXAS PAN HANDLERS

Vernon Dalhart (tenor, whistling, & harmonica)

Carson Robison (guitar)

Murray Kellner (fiddle)

Prod. Co: Pathé Phonograph & Radio Corp.

Rec. Date: ca. Mar. 1926 (Acoustic)

Matrix: 106722-2

Rel. Date: ca. Mar. 1926

Time:

1. Pathé 36434

Flip Sd: Better Get Out of My Way

2. Perfect 14615 (Brown shellac)

Flip Sd: Better Get Out of My Way

Dist: Perfect Record Co.; Brooklyn, NY

Spec: (Nos. 1 & 2) 10" 78 rpm

Notes: The label of the Perfect release falsely credits this string band waltz to "P. C. Brockman," who may well have been the producer or A&R man here, but he surely wasn't the composer.

The misappropriation of song authorship has a long history in the recording industry. Obviously this was done to appropriate the song royalties and cheat the true song writer out of his due. Regarding the first Jenkins ballad Andy Jenkins was "paid only for his recording [of the ballad] – the common twenty five-dollar fee – and never received anything as composer." (Wiggins 1987) However, G. M. Laws says otherwise –



“The composer was paid twenty-five dollars for the song and another twenty-five dollars for the recording he later made of it.” (Laws 1964) Polk Brockman who had originally commissioned the song from Jenkins may have considered the song his own, but it was up to the copyright holder, Shapiro, Bernstein & Co. in New York to straighten this out and properly pay the royalties to Jenkins.

As usual for the Floyd Collins waltz only the first stanza is sung and the first verse becomes – “Oh, come, oh, you good people...”

The only known published mention of it is in Russell & Pinson 2004.

Ref: Laws, George Malcolm Jr. 1950 (1964), *Native American Balladry: A Descriptive Study & a Bibliographical Syllabus*, American Folklore Society, Philadelphia, PA, p. 51, 223-224

Russell, Tony & Pinson, Bob 2004, *Country Music Records: A Discography 1921-1942*, Oxford University Press, p. 257 (Available online – books.google.fr)

Wiggins, Gene 1987, *Fiddlin' Georgia Crazy*, Univ. of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL, p. 94-96

Settemier, Tyrone 2010, Pathé 36000 series Numerical Listing, [78discography](#)

caveinspiredmusic.com