

Fletcher Collins Jr. Collection

AFC 1939/003

Prepared by Todd Harvey



American Folklife Center, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

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Encoded by Judy Ng, December 2005

Finding aid URL: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadafc.af006005>

Collection Summary

Collection Number: AFC 1939/003

Title: Fletcher Collins Jr. Collection

Repository: Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Inclusive Dates: 1935-1944

Extent (original): 10 linear inches; 2 boxes of manuscript materials; 33 recorded discs

Creator: Collins, Fletcher, 1906-2005

Language: English

Abstract: Documents the Anglo-American folksong collecting activities of Fletcher Collins Jr. from the mid-1930s to the early 1940s in North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Scope and Content

The manuscript materials in this collection reflect Collins's Anglo-American folk music collecting activities from 1935 to 1944. Collins undertook numerous projects, including a song book titled *A Southern Songster* and a radio series on WBIG, Greensboro, NC. Administrative papers and correspondence for these and other projects are included among the manuscript materials.

The song and tune transcriptions reflect, for the most part, Collins's collecting in North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia from 1935 to 1941. Many are the result of Collins's fieldwork, while others were mailed to him or transcribed from printed sources. Contextual information (performer, date, place) is provided for about two-thirds of the songs. Some of the disc recordings were transcribed and are included among the manuscripts.

Collins made twenty-one disc recordings in March 1939 (AFS 2235, AFS 3769-3788) under the auspices of the WPA Joint Committee on Folk Arts and deposited them that year at the Library of Congress. In fall 1941, as part of the Library's equipment loan program, Collins borrowed a Presto disc recorder and blank discs. During November and December 1941 he made fifteen disc recordings in Brown Summit (AFS 6491), Burlington (AFS 6365-6366, perhaps 6494), Elon College (AFS 6492-6493), and Greensboro (AFS 6482-6486), North Carolina, and in Fancy Gap, Virginia (AFS 6487-6490). The two discs made in Burlington, Dec. 8, 1941, were in response to Alan Lomax's call for "man-on-the-street" reactions to the Pearl Harbor attacks the day prior. Collins quickly shipped those to Washington, D.C.; today they are included in a separate collection (AFC 1941/004: The Man-on-the-Street Interviews Collection). The remainder of Collins's 1941 recordings were shipped to the Library in early 1942. In 1942 Collins was asked to participate in Lomax's follow-up program, "Dear Mr. President," for which he recorded three discs (AFS 6417-6419). These were sent to the Library in 1942 and are today housed as a separate collection (AFC 1942/003: "Dear Mr. President" Interviews Collection). Collins describes his collecting experiences in the Fletcher Collins Jr. Oral History Collection (AFC 2002/004).

Biographical History

Fletcher Collins Jr. was born on November 19, 1906, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Yale University (Ph.B. 1928, Ph.D. 1934) and was a professor of English at Elon College in North Carolina (1936-42). Collins founded the drama department at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia, where he was professor emeritus (1946-77). He is the author of *Alamance Play-Party Songs and Singing Games* (1940, reprint 1973), *Medieval Church Music-Dramas* (1976), *Troubadour and Trouvère Songs in Singable English* (2 vols. 2000-2001), and numerous other books and articles.

Subjects

Ballads

Fiddle tunes

Fiddling

Folk songs

Locations

Alamance County (N.C.)

Arthurdale (W. Va.)
Brown Summit (N.C.)
Burlington (N.C.)
Elon College (N.C.)
Fancy Gap (Va.)
Greensboro (N.C.)

Names

Note: performers from the sound recordings only.

Cole, Calvin
Greer, I. G. (Isaac Garfield), 1881-1967
Greer, Mrs. I. G.
Hawkins, Louis
Meredith, Russell
Newman, Mrs. J. U.
Quesinberry, Jackson
Tate, Dan, b. 1896
Wagoner, John
Wagoner, Pete
Wagoner, Vasteen
Weddle, Mrs. Susan

Instruments

Fiddle
Banjo

Administrative Information

Arrangement

Manuscript materials in the *Correspondence* and *Collecting and Recording Projects* sub-series are arranged chronologically. Song indexes and transcriptions are arranged: 1) by collections ordered by the donor and 2) alphabetically by song title. Sound recordings are arranged by AFS number.

Access

Listening and viewing access to the collection is unrestricted. Listening copies of the recordings are available in the Folklife Reading Room. While the American Folklife Center is the custodial division for this collection, some materials may be stored with other divisions, e.g., Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division. Restrictions may apply concerning the use, duplication, or publication of these and other items in this collection. Consult a reference librarian in the Folklife Reading Room for specific questions or to request a database of sound recordings created with Access 2000 software (afc_1939003.mdb).

Acquisition

The collection was acquired in three separate gifts: 21 discs in 1939, 12 discs in 1942, and all manuscript materials in July 2002. Preservation copies of the discs were made as part of Library Work Order (LWO) 4872 in the 1960s. The manuscript materials were processed by Todd Harvey in 2003.

Preferred Citation

Fletcher Collins Jr. Collection, Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Related Materials

"Man-on-the-Street" Interviews Collection (AFC 1941/004) and "Dear Mr. President" Collection (AFC 1942/003) are available online as *After the Day of Infamy: "Man-on-the-Street" Interviews Following the Attack on Pearl Harbor*, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afcphtml/afcphtml.html>.

See also: Radio Research Project Manuscript Collection (AFC 1941/005); September 11, 2001, Documentary Project (AFC 2001/015); Fletcher Collins Jr. Oral History Collection (AFC 2002/004).

Collection Concordance by Format

Quantity	Physical Extent (original)	Location	Item Numbers
Manuscript Materials			
22	folders	AFC	Box 1-2
Sound Recordings			
33	21 12-inch aluminum based discs; 12 12-inch glass based discs	M/B/RS	AFS 2235, AFS 3769-3788; AFS 6482-6493

Description of Series

Container

Series

[Series I: Manuscripts](#)

[Series II: Sound Recordings](#)

Container List

Container

Contents

Series I: Manuscripts

BOX 1

Administrative Files

FOLDER 1 Collection Guide

Correspondence

FOLDER 2 Correspondence-General, 1936-44

FOLDER 3 Correspondence-Library of Congress Recording Project, 1941-43

Collecting and Recording Projects

FOLDER 4 Indexes-Library of Congress Recording Project, 1939-42

FOLDER 5 "The Wreck of Old '97" Project, 1939

FOLDER 6 WBIG Radio Programs, 1940

FOLDER 7 "A Southern Songster" Project, 1940-44

Song Indexes and Transcriptions

FOLDER 8 Songs-Original Folders, Photocopies

FOLDER 9 Songs-Collections

FOLDER 10 Songs-Collections, Spiral Notebooks

FOLDER 11 Songs-Collections, Arthurdale Fiddle Tunes

BOX 2

FOLDER 12 Songs: A-B

FOLDER 13 Songs: C-D

FOLDER 14 Songs: E-F

FOLDER 15 Songs: G-H

FOLDER 16 Songs: I-J

FOLDER 17 Songs: K-L

FOLDER 18 Songs: M-N

FOLDER 19 Songs: O-P

FOLDER 20 Songs: Q-R

FOLDER 21 Songs: S-T

FOLDER 22 Songs: U-Z

Series II: Sound Recordings

AFS 2235, AFS 3769-3788

original discs (preservation tapes: LWO 4872, reels 142B, 245B-246)

Series II: Sound Recordings

Container

Contents

AFS 6482-6493

original discs (preservation tapes: LWO 4872, reels 413B-414A)

Appendix: Song Titles

These titles are taken from both the manuscript materials and the sound recordings.

"Adam and Eve"
"All My Sins Are Taken Away"
"Arkansas Traveler"
"As I Went Out One Morning in May"
"As the Ship Went Down"
"Aunt Jemima"
"Babes in the Wood"
"Baggage Coach Ahead, The"
"Barbara Allen"
"Berayna"
"Best Old Man in the World"
"Bible Is the Engineer, The"
"Big Black Billy Goat"
"Bill Bailey"
"Billy Boy"
"Billy Grimes"
"Birmingham Jail"
"Blind Child's Prayer, The"
"Blind Girl, The"
"Blue Juniata, The"
"Boll Weevil, The"
"Bonny Barbary Allen"
"Boston Burglar, The"
"Boy's Best Friend Is His Mother, A"
"Brambly Briars"
"Brown Eyes"
"Buckeye Jim"
"Bully of the Town, The"
"Butcher Boy"
"Captain, Captain, Tell Me True"
"Casey Jones"
"Charleston Merchant, The"
"Charlie Lawson"
"Charlie over the Water"
"Chick-a-ma-craney-ma-crow"
"Cindy"
"Claude Allen"
"Cock Robin"
"Coffee Grows in a White Oak Tree"
"Come All You Fair and Tender Ladies"
"Come All You Good People"
"Common Bill"
"Cruel Mother, The/Down by the Greenwood Side/Hangman"
"Death of Jesse James, The"
"Derby Ram, The"
"Derby Town"
"Devil and the Farmer, The"
"Dog and Gun"
"Down by the Seashore"
"Down in Arkansaw"
"Drowsy Sleeper"

"Dusty Miller"
"Dying Cowboy, The"
"Dying Cowboy's Lament"
"Edward/The Little Guinea Pig"
"Eliza Jane"
"Ellen Smith"
"Fair Charlotte/Young Charlotte"
"Fair Young Maid, A"
"Fare You Well, My Own True Love"
"Farmers, The"
"Fellow That-A Looks Like Me, The"
"Fickle Lover, The"
"Flop Eared Mule"
"Foggy Foggy Dew"
"Fond Affections"
"Fox, The"
"Frankie and Johnny"
"Frog in the Park"
"Frog in the Pool"
"Frog Went A-Courting"
"George Came Riding through the Town"
"George Collins"
"George Riley"
"Giddyap Napoleon"
"Git on Board, Little Children"
"Give Me Three Grains of Corn"
"Go In and Out of the Window"
"Go Tell Aunt Patsy"
"Go Tell That Weary Travelling Man"
"Going Down the Road Feeling Bad"
"Good Old Man, The (Four Nights Drunk)"
"Grasshopper Sittin' on a Sweet Potater Vine"
"Green Beds"
"Green Grow the Rushes-Ho/The Ditty Song"
"Green Grows the Laurel"
"Green Grows the Willow Tree"
"Green Mountain Polka"
"Ground Hog"
"Guerilla Man, The"
"Gypsy Laddie, The/The Blackjack Davy"
"Gypsy's Warning, The"
"Hangman, The"
"Hi! Lowlanders"
"House Carpenter, The"
"How Old Are You My Pretty Little Pink?"
"I Asked My Love to Take a Walk/Pretty Susan"
"I Caught a Beau"
"I Don't Love Nobody"
"I Lost My Glove"
"I Married Me a Wife"
"I Stepped Out One Morning in May"
"I'll Build Me a Castle"
"I'll Need Not Your Kind Caresses"
"I'm Happy"

"If I Had a Butcher Knife"
 "Independence Song"
 "Independent Lover"
 "Indian Song"
 "Irish Molly-O"
 "Is This the Promise You Made to Me?"
 "Jack Has Gone A-Sailing"
 "Jealous Lover of Lone Green Valley, The/Fair Young Ellen"
 "Jeff Davis"
 "Jew's Daughter, The"
 "Jockey Hat, The"
 "Joe Bowers"
 "John Henry"
 "Johnny Doyle"
 "Johnny Home from Sea"
 "Johnny Randolph"
 "Journeyman Tailor"
 "Kenny Wagoner"
 "King William Was King George's Son"
 "Kitty Cline"
 "Kitty Runs"
 "Kitty Went Fiddle-Die-Dee"
 "Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight"
 "Let My Name Be Kindly Spoken"
 "Letter Edged in Black, The"
 "Lexington Murder/Nellie Cropsey"
 "Little Brown Jug"
 "Little David, Play on Your Harp"
 "Little Mary Fagan"
 "Little Mohee, The"
 "Little Rosewood Casket, The"
 "Little Sparrow/The Cuckoo/I'll Build Up a Castle"
 "London Bridge Is Breaking Down"
 "Long Time Ago"
 "Lord Bateman"
 "Lord Lovel"
 "Lord Randal"
 "Lord Thomas and Fair Ella"
 "Love Henry"
 "Lover's Leap"
 "Maggie"
 "Mary and Sandy (Sandy Far at Sea)"
 "Mary Golden Tree, The"
 "Mary, Martha, and Lazarus"
 "Maumee Maid, The"
 "Mermaid, The"
 "Michael Roy"
 "Miller and His Son, The"
 "Miller's Will, The"
 "Mister Frog Went A-Courting"
 Mnemonic school songs: (a) ABC's, (b) Spelling, (c) Multiplication table, (d) Geography
 "Molly Bond"
 "Molly Bright"
 "Moonshiner's Dream"

"Moravian Song"
"My Grandmother's Advice"
"My Soldier Scarce Twenty-Four Years Old"
"Naomi Wise"
"New River Train"
"Nightingale, The"
"Nobody's Business"
"Oats, Peas, Beans"
"Oh, To Me the Time Draws Near"
"Oh, What a Happy Land Is England"
"Oh, Where is My Sweetheart?"
"Old Arm Chair, The"
"Old Bangum"
"Old Gray Goose, The"
"Old Joe Clark"
"Old Maid, The"
"Old Rosin the Beau"
"Old Sally Brown"
"Old Smokey"
"Old Woman and the Preacher, The"
"On the Tennessee"
"On to Richmond"
"On Top of Old Smokies/The Wagoner's Lad"
"Orphan Girl"
"Our Camp's in the Wilderness"
"Oyster Girl, The"
"Paddy the Barber"
"Paper of Pins, A"
"Pig in the Parlor"
"Pretty Sarah"
"Quaker Lover, The"
"Raggedy Ann"
"Red River Valley"
"Reply to the Gypsy's Warning, The"
"Rich Man and Lazarus, The"
"Rich Merchant, The (The Brown Girl)"
"Rock Island Line, The"
"Romish Lady, The"
"Run, Nigger, Run"
"Sailor Boy"
"Saint James Infirmary"
"Seaman on the Doe, The"
"Seven Long Years I Served My King"
"Shabby Genteel, The"
"Sheepskin and Beeswax"
"Shoot the Buffalo"
"Silver Dagger"
"Silvery Tide, The"
"Single Gal (When I Was Single)"
"Skip to My Lou"
"Soldier and the Lady, The"
"Soldier, Soldier"
"Soldier, Won't You Marry Me?"
"Soldier's Advice, The"

"Soldier's Poor Little Boy, A"
"Soldier's Sweetheart, The"
"Sourwood Mountain"
"Sparkling Sunday Night"
"Springfield Mountain"
"Steamboat Bill"
"Stepmother, The"
"Storm Is on the Ocean, The"
"Sugar Hill"
"Sweet Are the Flowers in Springtime"
"Sweet William and Fair Ellen"
"Sydna Allen"
"Take This Hammer"
"There's Some Sees Lots of Pleasures"
"Three Babes, The"
"Three Little Girls Went Skating"
"Time Draws Near, The"
"Tom Boleyn"
"Tree in the Wood, The"
"Turkey in the Mountain (I Don't Have Old Cindy)"
"Turkey in the Straw"
"Twenty Long Years We've Been Married"
"Two Brothers, The"
"Two Sisters"
"Ugly Mug"
"Villikin's Dinah"
"Wabash Blues"
"Waily, Waily"
"Wayfaring Stranger"
"We've Come to Judgement"
"Weeping Willow Tree, The"
"Weevily Wheat"
"When the World's on Fire"
"Whistle, Daughter, Whistle"
"Whoa Mule"
"Wife of Usher's Well, The"
"Wild Irishman, The"
"Will the Circle Be Unbroken"
"William Taylor"
"Willie and Polly (Pretty Polly)"
"Willie My Darling Come Back"
"Willie Ransome"
"Woman Who Made Her Old Man Blind, The"
"Wreck of Ninety-Seven"
"Wreck of Number Nine, The"
"Ye Guardian Powers"
"Young Collins"
"Young Man Who Wouldn't Hoe His Corn, The"