



American Folk Tales and Songs (Dover Books on Music)

Richard Chase

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Ever heard the story about the hoe-handle that was bitten by a snake? Or the one about the man in the kraut tub? These and many more tales of wry complexion are included in this collection of uninhibited tales and ballads of the Anglo-American tradition. Collected in the Appalachians, the folklore in this book reflects the hardships, humor, and creative instinct of the robust men and women who have lived in the hills of Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky for centuries.

Mr. Chase has collected a wide variety of folklore for inclusion in this volume. Here you will find tales of dry humor whose telling will enliven any friendly gathering, or the "jump" tales that literally require the teller to jump at his listener, mostly ghost stories that have enthralled generations of children and grandchildren. Here, complete with guitar chords, are American versions of old English ballads like "The Devil's Questions" and "Bold Robin Hood," and original mountain ballads like "Old Bangum and the Boar." Here too are many hymns and children's songs current in the mountains of the South. A sample of fiddle music and country games can provide inspiration for all manner of parties or family amusements.

In addition to the ballads, songs, and stories, Mr. Chase also gives such amusing folk miscellany as riddles, love-rhymes, and jokes. For anyone who seeks a wider familiarity with folk materials, Mr. Chase provides an ample list of suggested further reading and an amateur collector's guide. Notes accompanying each item identify the informant or origin and give details concerning the author's editing "For popular use."

American Folk Tales and Songs is meant to be used. The author, one of America's foremost folklorists, has presented his stories and songs so that they can increase the repertory of both storytellers and fireside singers, for folk traditions can live only through the voices and imaginations of those who love good stories and good songs.

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