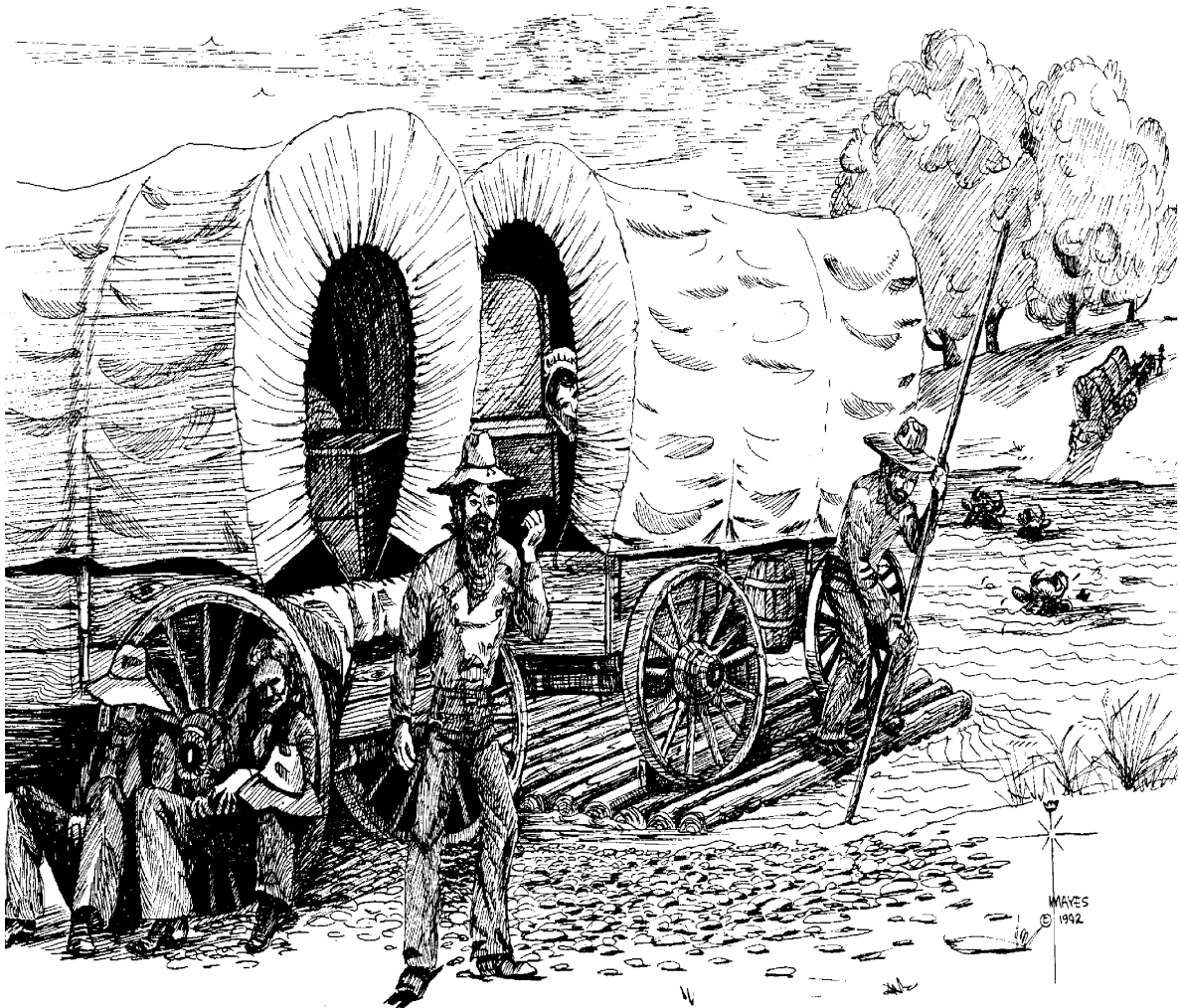


The National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center

Activity Pioneer Music



National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center Popular Songs of the Emigration Era

This is a partial list of songs popular during the era of primary westward emigration (1835-1870). Listed dates are years of publication or copyright, or year the song is documented as having come into popular use by having been mentioned in newspapers or other printed literature. Some are popular tunes without lyrics. All are likely to have been known by emigrants and sung around wagon camps, as publication and distribution of sheet music and performances by traveling entertainers usually spread the knowledge of new songs throughout the country within a few months.

Popular music of the time included many church hymns and revival songs, numerous songs by composer Stephen Foster (1826-1864), songs introduced on tours by Jenny Lind, the Christy Minstrels, the Hutchinson Family and other famous singers, and songs related to political issues and to the Civil War. Many of these songs, because of the era in which they were written, contain lyrics demeaning to various racial groups - especially African-Americans. Slavery and the tradition of "blackface" minstrels are reflected in lyrics, and in some cases - especially Stephen Foster classics - altered lyrics have been accepted by the modern public (ex: substituting "people" for "darkies"). If using traditional, historic lyrics, it is advisable to include an introduction explaining the historical context that brought about popular usage of negative slang terms.

Songs written pre-1835, and traditional folk songs still popular in mid-19th century: "My Country 'Tis of Thee"(1832), "Home, Sweet Home"(1823), "Yankee Doodle" (1750), "Go Tell Aunt Rhody the Old Gray Goose is Dead", "Skip to My Lou", "London Bridge", "The Wayfaring Stranger", "Wondrous Love"(hymn), "The Riddle Song (I bought my love...)", "The Cambric Shirt (parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme)".



National Historic Oregon Trail Center at Flagstaff Hill

Year	Songs written that year
1835	“Long, Long Ago” “Kathleen Mavoureen” “Old Rosin the Beau”
1837	“Woodman, Spare that Tree”
1838	“Vive la Compagnie” “Annie Laurie” “Flow Gently Sweet Afton” “A Life on the Ocean Wave”
1840	“The Two Grenadiers” “Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep” “The Old Arm Chair” “Tippecanoe and Tyler Too” Also, the saxophone was invented this year.
1841	“Niagara Falls”
1843	“Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean” “Stop Dat Knockin’ at my Door” “The Old Granite State(tune of the hymn “The Old Church Yard”) “Old Dan Tucker” “Excelsior”
1844	“The Blue Juanita”
1846	“Jim Crack Corn, or the Blue Tail Fly” “The Bridge of Sighs” “The Rose of Alabama”
1847	“The Last Rose of Summer” “Liebestraum”
1848	“Oh! Susanna!” “Ben Bolt, or Oh! Don’t You Remember” “Old Uncle Ned”
1849	“Happy Farmer” “Santa Lucia” “Nelly was A Lady” “It Came upon the Midnight Clear” “Nelly Bly”
1850	“Camptown Races” “Cheer, Boys, Cheer”
1851	“Old Folks at Home” “Wait for the Wagon”
1852	“Massa’s in de Cold, Cold Ground” “Lily Dale”
1853	“My Old Kentucky Home, Good Night” “Old Dog Tray” “The Hazel Dell”
1854	“Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” “What is Home Without Mother”
1855	“Listen to the Mockingbird” “Star of the Evening” “Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming” “Rosalie, the Prairie Flower”
1856	“Darling Nelly Gray” “Gentle Annie” “Root, Hog, or Die”
1857	“We Three Kings of Orient” “Jingle Bells” “Mrs. Lofty and I”
1858	“The Yellow Rose of Texas” “The Old Grey Mare (Get Out of the Wilderness)”
1859	“Ave Maria” “Nearer My God to Thee” “Dixie” “La Paloma”
1860	“Old Black Joe” “The Glendy Burk” “Annie Lisle” “Tis but a Little Faded Flower”
1861	“Aura Lea” “Maryland, My Maryland” “The Vacant Chair” “John Brown’s Body”
1862	“Battle Hymn of the Republic” “We’ve a Million in the Field” “We are Coming, Father Abraham, 300,000 More” “The Bonnie Blue Flag” “The Irish Jaunting Cart” “Drafted into the Army” The Taps bugle call composed and first used in this year.
1863	“When Johnny Comes Marching Home” “Clementine” “The Rock Island Line” “The Battle Cry of Freedom” “Just Before the Battle, Mother” “Babylon is Fallen” “Weeping, Sad and Lonely, or When This Cruel War is Over”
1864	“Beautiful Dreamer” “All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight” “Tenting on the Old Camp Ground” “Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!” “When the War is Over, Mary” “Come Home, Father” “Wake Nicodemus!” “Der Deitcher’s Dog (Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone)”
1865	“Ich Liebe Dich” “Marching Through Georgia” “Ellie Rhee”
1866	“We Parted by the River” “When You and I Were Young, Maggie”
1868	“The Flying Trapeze” “Sweet By and By” “O Little Town of Bethlehem”
1869	“The Little Brown Jug” “Shew, Fly, Don’t Bother Me” “Sweet Genevieve”

Sweet Betsy From Pike

HAVE YOU HEARD THE TALE OF SWEET BET-SY FROM PIKE? SHE
 CROSSED THE WIDE PRAI-RIE WITH HER LOV-ER IKE? WITH TWO YOKE OF
 OX-EN, A BIG YEL-LOW DOG, A TALL SHANG-HAI ROO-STER AND
 ONE SPOT-TEED HDG. SING-IN DANG DOD-DLE DANG DOD-DLE DANG DOD-DLE DAY

Out on the prairie one bright starry night,
 They broke out the whisky and Betsy got tight;
 She sang and she shouted, danced over the plain,
 Made a great show for the whole wagon train.
 Singin' Dang doodle, dang doodle, dang doodle-day.

When they reached the desert, Sweet Betsy gave out.
 Down in the sand she lay rolling about;
 Ike looked at her, with great fear and surprise,
 He said "Betsy, get up, you'll get sand in your eyes."
 Singin' Dang doodle, dang doodle, dang doodle-day.

The Shanghai ran off and the cattle all died,
 The last piece of bacon that morning was fried;
 Poor Ike got discouraged, and Betsy got mad,
 The dog wagged his tail and looked wonderful' sad.
 Singin' Dang doodle, dang doodle, dang doodle-day.

They swam the wide rivers and crossed the tall peaks,
 Camped on the prairie for weeks upon weeks.
 Starvation and cholera, hard work and slaughter,
 They reached the Far West in spite of hell and high water.
 Singin' Dang doodle, dang doodle, dang doodle-day.

BUFFALO GALS

As I was walk-ing down the street, down the street,
 Down the street, a pret-ty girl I chanced to meet, And
 she was fair to me. Oh Buf-fa-lo gals will you
 come out to-night, will you come out, to-night, will you come out to-night?
 Buf-fa-lo gals, will you come out to-night and dance by the light of the moon?

I asked her if she'd stop and talk.
 stop and talk, stop and talk.
 Her feet took up the whole sidewalk
 As she stood close by me.
 Chorus

I asked her if she'd be my wife.
 be my wife, be my wife.
 I could be happy all my life.
 If she would marry me.
 Chorus

Old Rosin the Beau

I live for the good of my nation And my sons are
all grow-ing low, But I hope the next gen-er-a-tion
will re-sem-ble old Ros-in, the Beau. Re-sem-ble old
RO-sin, the Beau. Re-sem-ble old Ros-in the Beau.
I hope that the next gen-er-a-tion will re-sem-ble old
Ros-in the Beau.

I've traveled this country all over,
And now to the next I will go;
For I know that good quarters await me,
To welcome old Rosin, the Beau
To welcome old Rosin, the Beau. (etc.)

In the gay round of pleasure I've traveled,
Nor will I behind leave a foe;
And when my companions are jovial
They will drink to old Rosin, the Beau.

But my life is now drawn to a closing,
As all will at last be so.
So we'll take a full bumper at parting
To the name of old Rosin, the Beau.

When I'm dead and laid out on the counter,
The people all making a show,
Just sprinkle plain whiskey and water
On the corpse of old Rosin, the Beau.

Oh when to my grave I am going,
The children wil all want to go;
They'll run to the doors and the windows,
Saying "There goes old Rosin, the Beau."

I'll have to be buried I reckon,
And the ladies will all want to know,
They'll lift up the lid of my coffin,
Saying "Here lies old Rosin, the Beau."

Then pick me out six trusty fellows,
And let them all stand in a row,
And dig a big hole in a circle,
And in it toss Rosin, the Beau.

Then bring out two little brown jugs;
Place one at my head and my toe;
And do not forget to scratch on them
The name of old Rosin, the Beau.

Oh! Susanna

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the song 'Oh! Susanna'. It consists of seven staves of music, each with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with 'I come from A-la - ba - ma with my ban-jo on my knee, I'm-'. The second staff continues with 'goin' to Lou-si - an - a, my - true love for to see. It -'. The third staff has 'rained all night, the day I left, The wea-ther it was dry, The -'. The fourth staff says 'sun so hot I froze to death, Su-san-na don't you cry.'. The fifth staff starts with 'Oh! Su - san-na, Oh don't you cry for me, I've'. The sixth and seventh staves repeat the first line: 'come from A-la - ba - ma with my ban-jo on my knee.'.

I come from A-la - ba - ma with my ban-jo on my knee, I'm-
goin' to Lou-si - an - a, my - true love for to see. It -
rained all night, the day I left, The wea-ther it was dry, The -
sun so hot I froze to death, Su-san-na don't you cry.
Oh! Su - san-na, Oh don't you cry for me, I've
come from A-la - ba - ma with my ban-jo on my knee.

*I had a dream the other night,
When everything was still;
I thought I saw Susanna,
A coming down the hill.
The buckwheat cake was in her mouth.
A tear was in her eye.
Says I "I'm coming for you now.
Susanna don't you cry."
Chorus*

*I soon will be in New Orleans.
And then I'll look around;
And when I find Susanna,
I'll fall upon the ground.
And if I do not find her,
this man will surely die;
And when I'm dead and buried,
Susanna don't you cry.
Chorus*