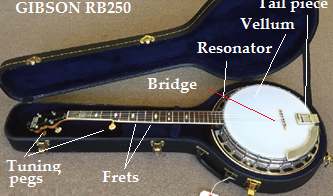
**The Banjo**

The banjo (left) is thought to have originated in Africa, transported to America with the slaves in the 18th/19th centuries. The first American adaptations of the instrument retained the skin stretched over a round base – a gourd or wood – with gut strings. The number of strings varies from 4 to 6 normally with one of the strings being shorter (the thumb string or 5th string – which is used as a drone (same note all the time).

This developed into a five string fretless banjo (right). Frets are metal bands placed across the finger board to enable an exact note to be played. The fretless sound is more like a plucked violin and lacks resonance so the music would be fast, continuous single notes.

The ultimate banjo is the Gibson RB250 (left) which has a coated, plastic vellum, 5 strings (4 long, 1 short), a resonator, tuning pegs, frets and tail piece.

Pete Seeger, needing a banjo with a lower register created the long necked banjo which has an extra 3 frets and when played at the third fret is just like the standard 5 string banjo.

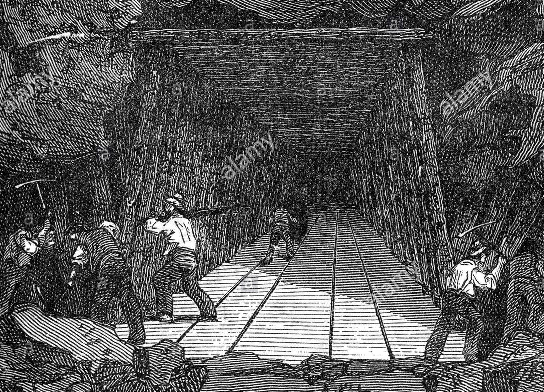
The banjo is played with fingers or finger ‘picks’ which enable a single note to be played. The 5th string, or thumb string, is played at the end of every ‘strum’. A strum is a sequence of notes played in a set form.

****Extra notes are added using the left hand by slapping a finger down (hammering on) or by plucking the string as a finger is removed (pulling off). The result is a very fast sequence of rhythmic notes suitable for dancing. If the fingers of the right hand pluck down on the strings all the time we have a style called ‘frailing’ or ‘framing’ the banjo, used particularly in the mountain music of Kentucky, USA.

**Capos and finger picks**

To adjust the pitch of the instrument to the singing voice we use a capo. Then the same shape of chords can be used. Finger picks make playing louder easier and is more precise once the player gets used to them.

**John Henry**

1. When John Henry was a little baby

You could hold him in the palm of your hand

He gave a long and a lonesome sight

Said going to be a steel driving man Lord, Lord

Going to be a steel driving man

2. Well they put John Henry in the tunnel

And they put him in the lead to drive

The rock was so tall and John Henry so small

He laid down his hammer and he cried, Lord, Lord

3. Well John Henry started on the right hand

The steam drill started on the left

Before I’ll let that steam drill beat me down

I’ll hammer my fool self to death, Lord, Lord

4. The Captain said to John Henry

I think my tunnel’s sinkin’ in

Stand back Captain and don’t you be afraid

It’s only my hammer catchin’ wind, Lord, Lord

5. Well John Henry hammered in the mountain

Till the handle of his hammer caught fire

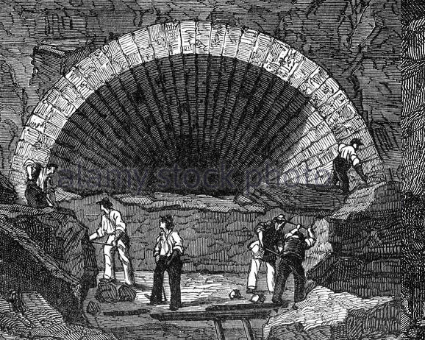
He drove so hard that he broke his poor heart

And he laid down his hammer and he died, Lord, Lord



John Henry was a 19th century ‘hammer man’, who used a hammer to drill holes with a bit held by the ‘shaker’ when building cuts and tunnels. The ‘bit’ was a steel bar around 2 metres long and had to be rotated as it was struck by the hammer.

The hole was for explosives. ‘dynamite’ – a new, safe explosive was invented by Alfred Nobel 1867.

Top right: Tunnel, hand worked, shored up with wooden beams

Middle right: A ‘cut’ or ‘cutting’ through rock. Railway lines should not be too steep.

Bottom right: Men working in the cut

Left: Men work in a hand cut tunnel installing a stone roof as they proceed.

**Sourwood Mountain**

**Charlie**

Chorus:

Charlie he’s a fine young man

Charlie he’s a dandy

Loves to hug and kiss the girls

And feed ‘em on sweet candy

1. Step her to your weevily wheat

Step her to your barley

Step her to your weevily wheat

And beg a cake for Charlie

2. My pretty little pink who would think

That you and I would marry

Now I've lost all hope of you

And I've no time to tarry

3. My pretty little pink who would think

I care but little about you

Let you know before I go

I cannot do without you

1. Chickens a crowin’ on Sourwood Mountain

Hey de ding dang diddle um a day

Too many pretty gals I can’t count them

Hey de ding dang diddle um a day

Refrain:

I’ve got a girl at the head o’ the holler

Hey de ding dang diddle um a day

She won’t come and I won’t foller

Hey de ding dang diddle um a day

2. I’ve got a gal a blue eyed daisy

She won’t come and I’ll go crazy

3. I’ve got a gal across the river

Two more jumps and I’ll be with her

**Young Man who wouldn’t hoe his Corn**

1. Gonna sing you a song and it ain’t very long

About a young man who wouldn’t hoe his corn

The reason why I cannot tell

That young man was always well

**Trouble on my Mind**

1. Once I had an old banjo, And it was strung with twine

The only song that I could sing, Trouble on my mind

Trouble on my mind, boys, trouble on my mind

Chorus: Trouble, trouble, trouble on my mind

If trouble it don’t kill me boys I’ll live a long, long time

Live a long, long time boys, Live a long, long time

2. I went down to Ginsburg, To get me a bottle of wine

They tied me to the whippin’ post and give me ninety nine

Give me ninety nine, boys, give me ninety nine

3. I went down to Ginsburg to get me a bottle of gin

They tied me to the whippin’ post and give me hell again

Give me hell again, boys, give me hell again

4. It’s rainin’ it’s hailin’ it’s fallin’ from the sky

My true love’s gone back on me an’ surely I will die

Surely I will die, boys, surely I will die

2. He planted his corn in the month of June

By July it was knee high

First of September come a great frost

All that poor man’s corn was lost

3. He went to the fence and there peeped in

Weeds and grass grew up to his chin

Weeds and grass they grew so high

Caused that poor young man to sigh

4. So he went down to his neighbours door

Where he had often been before

Pretty little miss will you marry me

Pretty little miss what do you say

5. Here you are a wantin’ for to wed

Cannot bake your own corn bread

Single I am and single I remain

A lazy man I’ll not maintain

6. You go down to that pretty little widow

And hope like the heck that you don’t get hurt

She gave him the hint and sure as you’re born

All because he wouldn’t hoe his corn

**Willie Moore**

1. Willie Moore was a king he’s aged 21

He courted a maiden fair

Her eyes was bright as diamonds in the night

And raven black was her hair

2. He courted he both night and day

Till to marry they did agree

But when they went to get their parent’s consent

They said it would never be

3. She threw herself in Willy Moore’s arms

As oft she had done before

And as he left her that very night

Young Anna he would see no more

4. Young Ann was known all far and wide

Her friends were all about

And in the brook down by the cottage door

**Chilly Winds**

I’m going where those chilly winds don’t blow, darlin’ baby

I’m going where those chilly winds don’t blow

I’m goin’ to my long lonesome home

1. Way down in jail on my knees, darlin’ baby

Way down in jail on my knees

Where they feed me on corn bread and beans

2. Make me a pallet on you floor, darlin’ baby

Make me a pallet on you floor

For I’m goin’ to my long lonesome home

**Cindy**

1. You ought to see my Cindy, She lives away down south

She’s so sweet the honey bees, Swarm around her mouth

Chorus:

Get along home Cindy, Cindy, Get along home

Get along home Cindy, Cindy, I’ll marry you some day

2. Cindy is a pretty girl, Cindy is a peach

She threw her arms around my neck, And hung on like a leach

3. I kissed my Cindy the other night, An’ I had to do it sneaky

I missed and kissed her on the nose, An’ the goddam thing was leaky

The body of sweet Ann was found

5. She was taken by her weeping friends

And laid in her parent’s room

And there was dressed in a shroud of snowy white

And laid in a lonely tomb

6. Willy Moore never spoke that anyone knew

Till at length from his friends did part

And the last I heard of him he was in Montreal

Where he died of a broken heart

**Cripple Creek**

1. Cripple Creek’s wide and Cripple Creek’s deep

I’ll wade Cripple Creek as I sleep

American mountain men lived rough and were familiar with the native population. They lived and died a solitary life.

Roll my breechers to my knees

I’ll wade Cripple Creek as I please

Chorus:

Goin’ down Cripple Creek goin’ in a run

Goin’ down Cripple Creek to have a little fun

Goin’ down Cripple Creek I’m goin’ in a whorl

Goin’ down Cripple Creek to find my girl

2. I’ve got a gal and she loves me

She’s as sweet as sweet can be

She’s got eyes of baby blue

Makes my gun shoot straight and true

3. I went down to cripple creek

See what the boys were havin’ to drink

I got drunk and fell against the wall

Old corn liquor was the cause of it all

**Land of the Muskeg**

1. Well there’s girls in the village and there’s girls in the town

And it’s a long time, a very long time

When a man is after being out on his own, out on his own

With the whisky-jacks whistling so cheerful and free

In the land of the muskeg and the shining birch tree

The shining birch tree

2. It’s all very well in the full of the day

When there’s no time, not very much time

For a man to keep thinkin’ of the things that don’t pay, things that don’t pay

And the rapids are rushin’ so grand and so free

In the land of the muskeg and the shining birch tree

The shining birch tree

3. At the end of the day when the camp settles down

And the night is cold, so very cold

And old Rory-Bory is shifting around, shifting around

You’ll think of the warm ups and laughter so free

In the land of the muskeg and the shining birch tree

The shining birch tree

4. Come the in-between seasons of the freeze-up or the thaw,  
And it's let's go - hey, look out let's go,  
For we're off for some fun with the girls of the town-  
The girls in the town.  
He's a popular guy when his money flows free  
In the land of the muskeg and the shining birch tree,  
The muskeg and the shining birch tree.

Above:

1 Map of the tundra

2 Tundra in summer

3 Dog sled in tundra

Left:

Tundra in winter

Below:

Mountain man

**Going across the Mountains**

Going across the mountains, oh fare thee well

Going across the mountains, don’t you hear my banjo tell

Got my rations on my back, my powder it is dry

Going across the mountains, Crissy don’t you cry

Long before its good daylight, if nothing happens to me

I’ll be way down yonder, in old Tennessee

Going across the mountains, to join the boys in blue

When this fighting’s over, I’ll come back to you

Going across the mountains if I have to fall

To give ol’ Jeff’s men a little ‘ma rifle ball

Going across the mountains oh fare thee well

Going across the mountains Crissy fare thee well

Going across the mountains, oh fare thee well

Going across the mountains, don’t you hear my banjo tell

Got my rations on my back, my powder it is dry

Going across the mountains, Crissy don’t you cry

When the civil war started (1861-1865) mountain men, skilled in the arts of hunting, were excellent recruits for both the Union (North) and the Confederates (South). They exchanged their ‘buckskins’ for jeans (Levis were invented in 1823) and dark blue (North) or grey (South) jackets.

The picture depicts the Union army on the left, with the ‘stars and stripes’ and on the right, the Confederates, with their flag with its 13 stars (13 states).



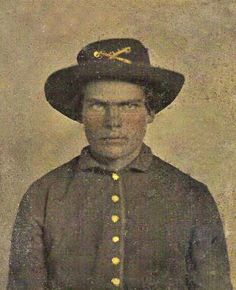
 

Top left: Ohio infantrymen

Above: Union infantryman

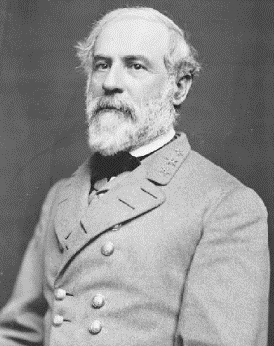
Left: Confederate cavalryman

Near left: Union soldiers relaxing before a battle

Left to right: Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S Grant, William Tecumseh Sherman, Jefferson Davis

Famous Union leaders above and famous Confederate Generals left

Left to right: Robert E Lee, ‘Stonewall’ Jackson

**My little black dove**

My little black dove  
Curl up in your nest of love  
The moon is a charm  
To keep you from harm  
Here at my breast

The stars all are alive  
To watch over you all night  
The river of sleep  
Blows gentle and deep  
To rock you to rest

So sleep little one  
Till darkness is by  
Sleep till the sun  
Rises up in the sky

My little black dove  
Curl up in your nest of love  
And go to your rest  
Asleep at my breast  
My little black dove

sung by Nina Mae McKinney shown above with Paul Robeson in ‘Sanders of the River’ (Alexander and Zoltan Korda 1935)

# All the pretty little horses

Hush a bye, don’t you cry

Go to sleep-a-little baby

When you awaken you shall have cake

And all the pretty little horses

Blacks and bays, dapples and greys

Coach and six-a-little horses

Way down yonder, down in the meander

There’s a poor little lambie

The birds and the butterflies peckin’ out its eyes

Poor little thing cried mammie

Hush a bye, don’t you cry

Go to sleep-a-little baby

When you awaken you shall have cake

And all the pretty little horses



Left: Pete Seeger playing his extended necked banjo.

All the Pretty Little Horses was the title of one of his banjo music publications in the 1950s and the inspiration for Steve’s version of the song.