

# The 1927 Bristol Sessions Story

RESOURCE DOCUMENT

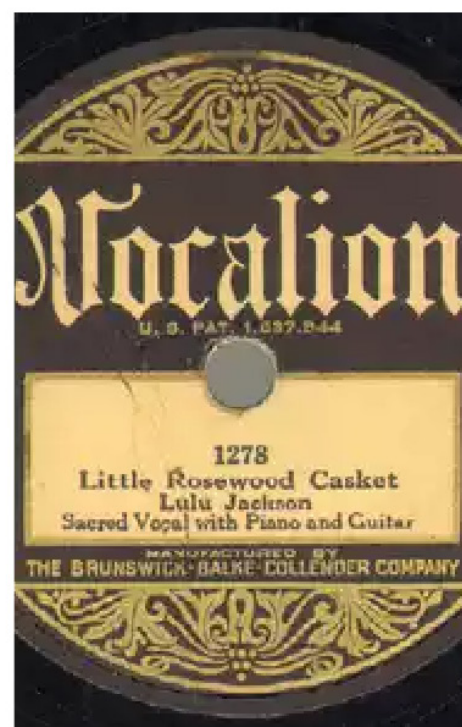
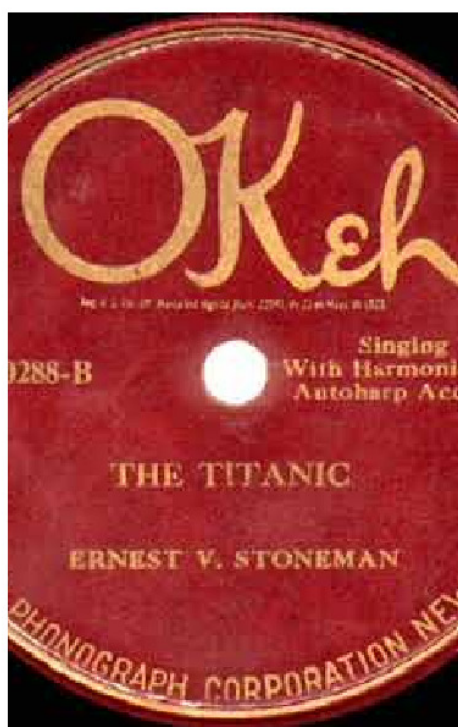
*Images*



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Record labels for the Victor Talking Machine Company, Okeh Records, and Brunswick.

Credit: [www.discogs.com](http://www.discogs.com)

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Promotional photograph of Eck Robertson, circa 1922.  
Credit: Public domain image from [Wikimedia Commons](#)

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**Fiddlin' John Carson playing a fiddle tune.**

Credit: From the [Guthrie T. Meade Collection, #20246](#), Southern Folklife Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



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SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 24, 1927.



### Don't deny yourself the sheer joy of Orthophonic music

A SMALL down-payment puts this great musical instrument in your home. Here is a source of entertainment for yourself and friends without end. You may have it *now* for a little cash and nominal monthly payments.

The Victor Co. will have a recording machine in Bristol for 10 days beginning Monday to record records—Inquire at our Store.

### Clark-Jones-Sheeley Co.

Victrolas — Records — Sheet Music  
621 State St. Bristol, Va.

The New  
Orthophonic



# Victrola

This July 24, 1927 advertisement for Victrola dealer Clark-Jones-Sheeley Co. bears a notice for the recording sessions held by Ralph Peer in Bristol. Credit: Image courtesy of the *Bristol Herald Courier*

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The Taylor-Christian Hat Company building, site of the 1927 Bristol Sessions recordings.

Credit: Courtesy of Gary Rose



## Can You Sing or Play Old-Time Music?

Musicians of Unusual Ability ---  
Small Dance Combinations---  
Singers --- Novelty  
Players, Etc.

### Are Invited

To call on Mr. Walker or Mr. Brown of the Columbia  
Phonograph Company at 334 East Main Street, John-  
son City, on Saturday, October 13th, 1928—9 A. M.  
to 5. P. M.

**This is an actual try-out for the pur-  
pose of making Columbia Records.**

You may write in advance to E. B. Walker, Care of  
John Sevier Hotel, Johnson City, or call without ap-  
pointment at address and on date mentioned above.

This advertisement appeared in the *Johnson City Chronicle* on October 3, 1928.

Credit: *Johnson City Chronicle*



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Acoustical recording session with a large band or orchestra, circa 1920s.

Credit: [Library of Congress](#)



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**This Western Electric microphone is like the one used at the 1927 Bristol Sessions.**  
Credit: Birthplace of Country Music Museum Collection; photograph: [Hillmann & Carr](#)

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A young Ralph Peer.

Credit: Courtesy of [peermusic](#), Peer Family Archives



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**Mamie Smith.**

Credit: Collection of Marshall Wyatt, courtesy of [Old Hat Records](#)

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Postcard of the Victor Talking Machine Company Works in Camden, New Jersey.  
Credit: Birthplace of Country Music Museum Collection



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**Ernest Stoneman with various other musicians, including his wife Hattie standing behind him with the fiddle.**

Credit: From the [John Edwards Memorial Foundation Records, #20001](#), Southern Folklife Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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3261 Address - c/o R. S. Peer

Hillbilly. Records by: Mr. E. Stoneman - Mr. K. Brewer & Mr. M. Mooney.

Marking	Letter	Pitch	Serial No.	Matrix No.	Selection, Composer, Publisher, Copyright, Etc.	Wax	Rec.	F. Cur.	Level	Amp. Set	Eqzr.	Fil.
					Bristol Tenn. July 25th. 1927. #408 State ST. 2nd & 3rd Floor.							
					Inst. Guitar. played by Mr. Stoneman.							
M	BVE	100	39700	1	Dying Girls Farewell. (From Windows Of Heaven)	55-258R	124	.9	4-4	46	no	12
HI	BVE	100	39700	2	Comp. J.D. Patton. Pub. J.B. Vaughn. Athens. Georgia. Copyr. J.D. Patton. 1902.	55-258	"	"	4-4	44	"	"
			21129		040 1257							
HI	BVE	100	39701	1	Tell Mother I Will Meet Her.	55-269R	"	"	4-4	46	"	"
D	BVE	100	39701	2	Comp. Ralph S. Tinsman.	55-300	"	"	4-3	44	"	"
M	BVE	100	39701	3	Pub. J.B. Vaughn. Athens. Ga. Copyr. T.M. Bowditch. 1902. NOTE** Harmonica & Guitar by Mr Stoneman.	55-262	"	"	4-4	46	"	"
			21129									
					Time-- 8.30 To 1000 A.M.							

Cue sheet for 1927 Bristol Sessions recording of Ernest Stoneman, Kahle Brewer, and Walter Mooney for two songs: "Dying Girl's Farewell" and "Tell Mother I Will Meet Her."

Credit: Reproduced from the liner notes by Ted Olson and Tony Russell, *The Bristol Sessions, 1927-28: The Big Bang of Country Music*, 2011, Richard Weize, Bear Family Records



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**The Carter Family promotional photograph.**

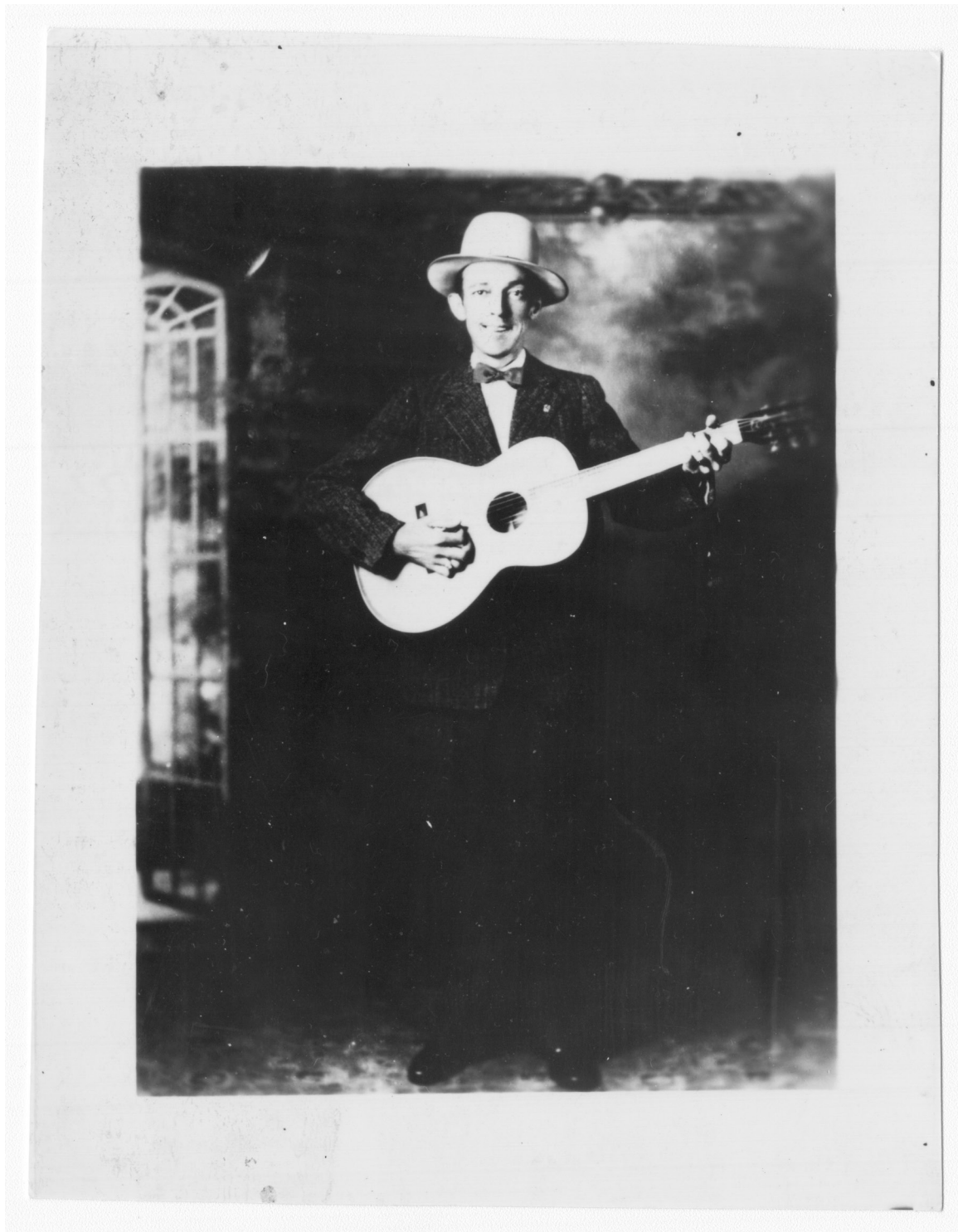
Credit: Courtesy of Dale Jett, descendant of the original Carter Family



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Promotional photograph of Jimmie Rodgers.

Credit: From the [John Edwards Memorial Foundation Records, #20001](#),  
Southern Folklife Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill





## MOUNTAIN SONGS RECORDED HERE BY VICTOR CO.

### Notable Performers Of This Section At Work At Sta- tion In This City

Intensely interesting is a visit to the Victor Talking Machine recording station in Bristol, located on the second floor of the building formerly occupied by the Taylor-Christian Hat company in Bristol. There each day can be witnessed notables of this mountain country doing their best stunts for the microphone, turned into records, and spread at home and abroad.

This morning Earnest Stoneman and company from near Galax, Va., were the performers and they played and sang into the microphone a favorite in Grayson County, Va., namely, "I Love My Lulu Belle." Eck Dumford was the principal singer while a matron, 26 years of age, and the mother of five children, joined in for a couple of stanzas. Lulu Belle is nothing like the production witnessed on the New York stage during the past year. It is a plaintive mountain song, expressing wonder over what the singer will do when his money runs out. The synchronizing is perfect: Earnest Stoneman playing the guitar, the young matron the violin and a young mountaineer the banjo and the mouth harp. Bodies swaying, feet beating a perfect rhythm, it is calculated to go over big when offered to the public.

### An Old Favorite

Probably a number with which the citizens of this city and territory are better acquainted with is entitled, "Skip to Ma Lou My Darling" by the same quartette. It has been one of the favorites at every country dance held in this section for half a century, vieing with "Cripple Creek," and "Old Dan Tucker," "Sourwood Mountain," and other square dance numbers. This morning the management gave the number, following a rendition by the quartette, back over the record and it is a palpable hit.

"Yonder she comes, how do you do," and the ladies were honored all; "You've got money, and I have too," as the rights and lefts were exchanged; "All around the house and the pig pen too," as the birds flew into the cage and out again; "Pretty as a red bird—prettier too," as the ladies do, and gents you knew—through the entire gamut of the figures came trooping out of memory's hall and were re-enacted again as in the halycon days of yore.

The quartette costs the Victor company close to \$200 per day—Stoneman receiving \$100, and each of the assistants \$25. Stoneman is regarded as one of the finest banjoists in the country, his numbers selling rapidly. He is a carpenter and song leader at Galax. He received from the company \$3,600 last year as his share of the proceeds on his records.

Left: Article from the *Bristol News Bulletin*, Wednesday, July 27, 1927, page 1.  
Credit: <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/80539554/the-bristol-news-bulletin/>,  
accessed June 30, 2021



Article from the *Bristol News Bulletin*, Thursday, July 28, 1927, page 9.  
Credit: <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/80541164/the-bristol-news-bulletin/>,  
accessed June 30, 2021