

SPRING OF '65

Peter Stampfel of the Holy Modal Rounders wrote this song about the Reconstruction period. For many years we introduced it as a traditional American folksong until we learned its true origins. We heard the tune from someone who heard it from someone else and so forth. That is exactly the nature of the folk process. We've changed a few words from the original. For instance, "newsy women" is changed to "newsy people".

We like the spirit of the song. The freedom for improvisation is enhanced by being in the D-Aeolian mode. The addition of the single seventh tone below the tonic (resolved on the first fret) gives a solid springboard for finalizing phrase endings. Many of the breaks are set up just for the swapping of lead-lines, using counterpoint and various rhythmic alterations. The bass drone becomes really resonate, adding a hollow whistling that could well be the "crippled kingfisher" himself. "Cash for cuff" means paying for the whiskey.

