

Many of the songs in *Uncle Coffee's Ethiopian Songster* are common, blackface, minstrel songs from the antebellum period. Each retains the original words of the original songs. Some contain particular words which are harsh and offensive to the modern ear. Despite this, the songs have been kept in the original for reasons of authenticity.

What may be appropriate on the march or around the campfire at a Civil War living history is not necessarily appropriate around all campfires. The proper circumstances for these songs to be sung depend upon time, place and manner .

- *Silas Tackitt and Uncle Coffee*
(Seattle, 2009)

I, at de Raccoon, take a peep,
An' den so softly to 'im creep ;
I foun' de Raccon fast asleep,
An' pull him off de rail.
*Pull him off de rail, pull him off de rail ;
Pull him off de rail ; an' fling him on de ground.*

De Raccoon 'gan to scratch and bite,
I hit him once wid all my might ;
I bung he eye, an' spile he sight,
Oh, I'm dat child to fight.
*I'm dat child to fight, I'm dat child to fight ;
I'm dat child to fight, and play de banjo, too.*

I tell de Raccoon 'gin to pray,
While on de ground de Raccoon lay ;
But he jump up, and run away,
An' soon he out ob sight.
*Soon he out ob sight, soon he out ob sight ;
Soon he out ob sight, sittin' on a rail.*

My ol' Massa dead am gone,
A dose ob poison help him 'long ;
De Debil say he funeral song,
Oh bress him, rhet him go.
*Bress him, rhet him go, bress him, rhet him go ;
Bress him, rhet him go, an' joy go wid him, too.*

De Raccoon hunt it am berry quare,
Am no touch to kill de deer ;
Because you kotch him wid out fear,
A sittin on a rail.
*Sittin' on a rail, sittin' on a rail ;
Sittin' on a rail ; sleepin' berry sound.*

I drest myself from top to toe,
 And down to Dinah, I did go ;
 Wid pantaloons strapp'd down behine,
 Like Dandy Jim from Caroline.

*CHORUS : For my ol' massa tol' me so,
 I de best lookin' nigger in de County O ;
 I look in de glass an' I found it so,
 Jus' like massa told me O.*

De bull dog clar'd me out ob de yard,
 I taught I'd better leabe my card ;
 I tied it fast to a piece ob twine,
 Signed, "Dandy Jim from Caroline.

She got my card an' wrote me a letta,
 An' eb'ry word she spelt de betta ;
 For eb'ry word an' eb'ry line,
 Was "Dandy Jim from Caroline."
For my ol' massa &c.

Oh, beauty it is but skin deep,
 But wid Miss Dinah none compete ;
 She chang'd her name from lubly Dine,
 To Mrs. Dandy Jim from Caroline.

An' ebery little nig we had,
 Was de berry image ob dar dad ;
 Dar heels stick out tree feet behine,
 Like Dandy Jim from Caroline.
For my ol' massa &c.

I took dem all to church one day,
 An' hab dem christened wid-out delay ;
 De Preacher christened eight or nine,
 Young Dandy Jims from Caroline.

Dare de Yankee boys do de job so slick,
 Dare de Yankee, &c.
 For dey coch Packenham, an row'd him up de creek.
Possum up a gum tree &c.

Now way down South, close to de moon,
 Now way down South, &c.
 Dare libs de ole rogue dat dey calls Calhoun.
 Now long time past he has been trying.
 Now long time past, &c.
 Dat sas-sy trick what day call nullify-in.
Possum up a gum tree &c.

He try to run ole Hickory down,
 He try to run, &c.
 But he strike a snag an' run-a-ground,
 Dis snag by gum it ware a whopper,
 Dis snag by gum, &c.
 An' sent him into dock to get new copper.
Possum up a gum tree &c.

In Phil-a-del-fi-e is ole Biddle's bank,
 In Phil-a-del-fie, &c.
 Ole hickory examined him an' found him rather crank.
 He tells Nick to go an' not to make a muss
 He tells Nick &c.
 So hurrah for Jackson, he am de boy for us.
Possum up a gum tree &c.

I tell you what will happen now, berry soon
 I tell you &c.
 De Nited States Bank will be blown to de moon.
 Dare General Jackson will him lampoon.
 Dare General Jackson &c.
 And de berry next president will be Zip Coon.
Possum up a gum tree &c.

My eyes are getting blinded, and I cannot see my way ;
 Hark! Dare's somebody knocking at de door.
 Oh! I hear de angels calling, an' I see my Nelly Gray ;
 Farewell to de ol' Kentucky shore.

LAST CHORUS :

*Oh! my darling, Nelly Gray, up in heaven dare dey say ;
 Dat dey'll never take you from me any more ;
 I'm a coming, coming, coming, as de angels clare de way,
 Farewell to de ol' Kentucky shore.*

DE BOATMAN DANCE

*CHORUS - 2x : Hi ho, de boatmen row,
 Floating down de river, de O-hi-o.*

De boatman dance, de boatman sing,
 De boatman up to ebry ting ;
 An' when de boat men gets on shore,
 He spends his cash and works for more.

*REFRAIN : Den dance de boatman dance,
 O dance de boatman dance ;
 O dance all night till broad daylight,
 An' go home wid de gals in de morning.*

THEN CHORUS

De oyster boat should keep to de shore,
 De fishin' smack should venture more ;
 De schooner sails before de wine-d (wind),
 De steamboat leaves a streak behind.

REFRAIN, THEN CHORUS

I wen' on board de odder day,
 To see what de boatman had to say ;

Cause she nebber see his like again.
Den lay down de shubble &c.

OLE ZIP COON

I went down to Sandy hook t'other arternoon,
 I went down to Sandy hook t'other arternoon,
 I went down to Sandy hook t'other arternoon,
 And de fus man I chanced to meet was old Zip Coon
 Ole Zip Coon, he a larned scholar,
 Ole Zip Coon, he a larned scholar,
 Ole Zip Coon, he a larned scholar,
 Sings, "Possum up a gum tree" an' "Cooney in de hollar."

*CHORUS : Possum up a gum tree and Cooney on a stump,
 Possum up a gum tree &c.
 Den ober dubble trubble, Zip Coon will jump.*

Possum on a log playin' wid him toes,
 Possum on a log, &c.
 Up comes a guinea hog an' off her goes.
 Buffalo in a cane break, ole owl in a bush,
 Buffalo in a cane break, &c.
 Lauffin' at de black snake tryin to eat mush.
Possum up a gum tree &c.

Nice corn's a growin, and Sukey loves gin.
 Nice corn's a growin, &c.
 Rooster's done crowin at ole nigga's shin.
 Oh, Coone's in de hollow an possum in de stuble.
 Oh, Coone's in de hollow, &c.
 An' its walk, chalk, ginger blue, jump, double trouble.
Possum up a gum tree &c.

I come down dare wid my hat caved in ;
 Doo-dah! doo-dah!
 I go back dare wid a pocket full ob tin ;
 Oh! doo-dah day!

*CHORUS : Gwine to run all night!
 Gwine to run all day!
 I bet my money on de bobtail nag ;
 Somebody bet on de bay.*

De long tail fly and de big black hoss ;
 Doo-dah! doo-dah!
 De fly de track and dey both cut across ;
 Oh! doo-dah day!

De blind hoss stricken in a big mud hole ;
 Doo-dah! doo-dah!
 Can't touch bottom wid a ten foot pole ;
 Oh! doo-dah day!
Gwine to run all night &c.

Ol' muley come on de track ;
 Doo-dah! doo-dah!
 De bob-tail fling her ober his back ;
 Oh! doo-dah day!

Den fly along like a rail-road car ;
 Doo-dah! doo-dah!
 Runnin' a race wid a shootin' star ;
 Oh! doo-dah day!
Gwine to run all night &c.

See dem flyin' on a ten mile heat ;
 Doo-dah! doo-dah!
 Round de race track, den repeat ;
 Oh! doo-dah day!

I went to town to buy some goods,
 I lost myself in a piece of woods ;
 De night was dark I had to suffer,
 It froze de heel of Daniel Tucker.
So, get out de way &c.

Tucker was a hardened sinner ;
 He nebber said his grace at dinner.
 De ol' sow squeel, de pigs did squall ;
 He 'hole hog wid de tail and all.
So, get out de way &c..

OLD KING CROW

Now gemmen hear what I'se gwine to say,
 It am a fac' and dat you know ;
 It cum for pass on a berry fine day,
 And its all about dat "Ol' King Crow!"

*REFRAIN : Dat ol' King Crow,
 He's de brackest tief I know ;
 He nebber say nuffin,
 But, "Caw! Caw! Caw!"*

*CHORUS : Jenny get yer hoe cake! Oh! don't bodder me!
 Fetch along de hoecake! I tell you tain't done.
 Will you bring de hoecake! Go long, don't bother me,
 I'll fetch along de hoecake ; Soon it am done.*

I went out in de ol' corn field,
 Someting holler, "hulloa Joe" ;
 I look'd up in de ol' oak tree,
 And dere he sot dat Ol' King Crow.

REFRAIN THEN CHORUS

*CHORUS : Den in soft repose I take my sleep,
And I'll dream for eber more ;
Den take me back to ol' Virginny,
To de ol' Virginia shore.*

EPHRAIM'S LAMENT

Come niggers listen to dis song, dat I is gwine to sing ;
It will not be so berry long, but 'tis de berry ting.

To make you start and ope your eyes, and like a Bullfrong croak ;
For when you see dis nigger cry, you know him heart am broke.

*CHORUS : Oh! Ephraim's heart am broke,
Oh, Ephraim he must die ;
He thought her love was in her heart,
But only in in her eye.*

*Oh! Ephraim's heart am broke,
Oh, Ephraim don't you cry ;
Dat gal will soon come back again,
And to your arms will fly.*

My Chloe was de lublied gal, in all Virginny state ;
She was de flower of ebbry ball, de star dat ruled my fate.

She say for me her lub no change, doe all de nigger tease her ;
Tru field and wood wid dem to range, 'Spec-ly dat nigger Ceasar.
Oh! Ephraim's heart &c.

Upon her truth I did rely, and tink she change would nebber ;
She say for me she'd sooner die, dan her lub from me to sebber.

But wid my heart she only play, like angler wid de fishes ;
Wid nigger Ceas she run away, while I was washing dishes.
Oh! Ephraim's heart &c.

A few more days for to tote de weary load,
No matter, 'twill never be light ;
A few more days till we totter on de road,
Den my ol' Kentucky Home, good-night!
Weep no more, my lady &c.

OH! SUSANNA

I come from Alabama, wid my Banjo on my knee ;
I's g'wine to Lou'siana, my true lub for to see.
It rain'd all night de day I left, de wedder it was dry ;
De sun so hot I froze to deaf, Susanna, dont you cry.

*CHORUS - 2x : Oh! Susanna,
Do not cry for me ;
I come from Alabama
Wid my Banjo on my knee.*

I jumped aboard de telegraph, and trabled down de ribber ;
De 'lectrick fluid magnified, and kill'd five hundred nigger.
De bul-gine bust and de hoss ran off, I really thought I'd die ;
I shut my eyes to hold my breafe, Susanna, don't you cry.
Oh! Susanna &c. - 2x

I had a dream de udder night, when ebry ting was still ;
I thought I saw Susanna dear, a coming down de hill.
De buckwheat cake was in her mouf, de tear was in her eye ;
I says, *I'se coming from de souf, Susanna, dont you cry.*
Oh! Susanna &c. - 2x

Oh! when I gets to New Orleans, I'll look all round and round ;
And when I find Susanna, I'll fall right on de ground.
But if I do not find her, dis darkey will surely die ;
And when I'm dead and buried, Susanna, don't you cry.
Oh! Susanna &c. - 2x

GWINE OBER DE MOUNTAIN

'Twas in a slash Vir-ginny break,
 Sambo lib, some call him Jake ;
 Picked up on dem banjo strings,
 Dis am de song dat he would sing.

*CHORUS : Ree Rom-a Ro-ree-o,
 Come along my darling!
 Or fare thee well my Dinah gal,
 For I'm gwine ober de mountain.*

Push de ol' horse on like mad,
 Wop him till he grin quite glad ;
 Dey come for debt upon dat day,
 He cut him stick 'cause he couldn't pay.
Ree Rom-a &c.

O, Dinah, cut along wid me,
 Come wid me to a new country ;
 Says, she, "*dear Sambo, dat I will,*"
 Gidee! how I slash de knacker up de hill.
Ree Rom-a &c.

Him play de Banjo all de day,
 Crows meat couldn't feed de way ;
 Dinah for to make him go,
 Wop him well wid de ol' Banjo.
Ree Rom-a &c.

When our journey slick through done,
 Kick our legs 'way wid much fun ;
 Split de wing an' on we go,
 Play-ing 'way on de ol' Banjo.
Ree Rom-a &c.

*CHORUS : Oh! take your time, Miss Lucy,
 Take your time, Miss Lucy Long ;
 Oh! take your time Miss Lucy,
 Take your time, Miss Lucy Long.*

Miss Lucy she is handsome,
 And Miss Lucy she is tall ;
 To see her dance Cachucha,
 Is death to Niggers all.
Oh! take your time Miss Lucy, &c.

Oh! Miss Lucy's teeth is grinning,
 Just like an ear ob corn ;
 And her eyes dey look so winning!
 Oh would I'd ne'er been born.
Oh! take your time Miss Lucy, &c.

I axed her for to marry ,
 Myself de toder day ;
 She said she'd rather tarry,
 So I let her habe her way.
Pray take your time Miss Lucy, &c.

If she makes a scolding wife,
 As sure as she was born ;
 I'd tote her down to Georgia,
 And trade her off for Corn.
Then take your time Miss Lucy, &c.

De worl was made in just six days,
 An' finish berry strong ;
 But I guess it de seventh,
 To finish Lucy Long.
So take your time Miss Lucy, &c.

JIM ALONG JOSEY

I'se from Lucianna as you all know,
 Dat's whar Jim along Josey's all go ;
 Dem niggers all rise when de bell does ring,
 And dis am de song dat dey sing.

*CHORUS - 2x : Hey get along, Jim Along Josey,
 Hey get along, Jim along Joe!*

My sister Rose de udder night did dream,
 Dat she was floating up and down de stream ;
 And when she woke she began to cry,
 And de white cat picked out de black cat's eye.
Hey get along &c. - 2x

Now way down South not very far off,
 A Bullfrog died ob de hooping cough ;
 And de oder side of Mississippi as you must know,
 Dar's where I was christen'd Jim along Joe.
Hey get along &c. - 2x

De New York boys tink dey're fine,
 Because dey drink de genuine ;
 De Southern boys dey lib on mush,
 And when dey laugh dey say, "Oh Hush."
Hey get along &c. - 2x

JIM JAWBONE - (tune : Yankee Doodle)

Jim Jawbone was a color'd man,
 Ob de true nigga blood, sah,
 In old Viriginny he did grow,
 Among de 'bacca buds, sah.

An' if de blacks should get free I guess dey'll fee some bigger ;
 An' I shall consider it a bold stroke for de niggas.
 I'm for freedom an' for Union altogether ;
 Although I'm a black man de white is call'd my brodder.
Wheel about and etc.

I'm for union to a gal an' dis is a stubborn fact ;
 Bit if I marry an' don't like it I'll nullify de act.
 I'm tired of being a single man an' I'm tarmined to get a wife ;
 For what I think de happiest is de swee married life.
Wheel about and etc.

Its berry common 'moung de white to marry and get divorced ;
 But that I'll nebber do unless I'm really forced.
 I think I see myself in Broadway wid my wife upon my arm ;
 And to follow up de fashion dere sure can be no harm.
Wheel about and etc.

Now my Broder Niggers, I do not tink it right ;
 Dat you should laugh at dem who happen to be White.
 I'm so glad dat I'm a Nigger, an' don't you wish you was too ;
 For den you'd gain popularity by jumping Jim Crow.
Wheel about and etc.

KEEMO KIMO

In South Car'lina de niggers go :
Sing song kitty can't you ki' me oh!
 Dats whar de white folks plant dere tow.
Sing song kitty can't you ki' me, oh!

Cover de ground all over wid smoke.
Sing song kitty can't you ki' me, oh!
 And up de niggers heads dey poke.
Sing song kitty can't you ki' me oh.

Dis pipe I cut out ob de bone,
 Dat growed out ob his shin, sah,
 An' de more I smoke de 'bacca out,
 De more keeps coming in, sah,
Success to de tobacco leaf, &c.

**JOHNNY BOKER, or
 DE BROKEN YOKE IN DE COALING GROUN'**

As I went up to Lynchburg town,
 I broke my yoke on de coaling ground ;
 I drove from dare to Bowling Spring,
 And tried for to mend my yoke and ring.

*CHORUS - 2x : O, Johnny Booker, help dat nigger ;
 Do, Johnny Booker, do.*

I drove from dare to Wright's ol' shop,
 I hollered to my driver and told him to stop ;
 Says I, "Mr. Wright have you got a yoke?"
 He seized his bellows and blew up a smoke.
O, Johnny Booker &c. - 2x

Says I, "Mr. Wright hab 'nt long for to stay."
 He cotched up his hammer, an' knocked right away,
 Soon as he mended my staple and ring.
 Says I, "Mr. Wright, do you charge for any thing?"
O, Johnny Booker &c. - 2x

Says he to me, "I never charge
 Unless dat job am mighty large.
 For dose jobs dat am so small,
 I nebber charge for any ting at all."
O, Johnny Booker &c. - 2x

I drove from dar to Anthony's Mill,
 And tried to pull up dat are hill ;
 I whipped my steers and pushed my cart,
 But all I could do, I could 'nt make a start.
O, Johnny Booker &c. - 2x

I put my shoulder to de wheel,
 Upon de ground I placed my heel ;
 Den we make a mighty strain,
 But all our efforts prove in vain.
O, Johnny Booker &c. - 2x

Dare cum a waggoner driving by,
 I sat on de ground and 'gan for to cry ;
 Says me to him, "some pity take
 And help me up for conscience sake."
O, Johnny Booker &c. - 2x

Says he to me, "I will help dee."
 He took out his horses number three ;
 I wiped from my eyes de falling tears,
 He hitched his horses before my steers.
O, Johnny Booker &c. - 2x

Den to me he did much please.
 He pulled me up wid so much ease.
 His horses were so big and strong.
 De way dey pulled dis nigger along.
O, Johnny Booker &c. - 2x

JUMP, JIM CROW

I come from ole Kentucky, a long time ago,
 Where I first larn to wheel about and jump Jim Crow.