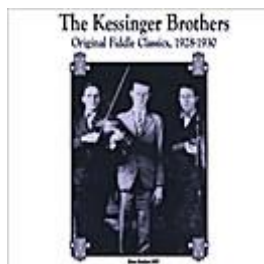


Mp3 Kessinger Brothers - Original Fiddle Classics 1928-1930



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Traditional Old-time Fiddle Tunes 12 MP3 Songs in this album (36:34) ! Related styles: COUNTRY: Old-Timey, FOLK: String Band People who are interested in Uncle Dave Macon Clark Kessinger should consider this download. Details: The Kessinger Brothers Original Fiddle Classics, 1928-1930 During the Golden Age of old-time music, the duo known as the Kessinger Brothers produced some of the best traditional fiddle music ever recorded. In actuality, the team consisted of an uncle-fiddler Clark Kessinger (1896-1975) and his nephew-guitarist Luches Kessinger (1906-1944). Between February 1928 and September 1930, they recorded seventy tunes for the Brunswick label. The Kessingers lived most of their lives in Kanawha County, West Virginia, primarily in the town of St. Albans, a suburb of state capital Charleston. According to oral information, Clark took up the fiddle at the tender age of five and was considered an accomplished fiddler by the time he was ten. One of his early influences was a legendary blind Ohio Valley fiddler named Ed Haley (1883-1953). The Kessinger Brothers did their first recordings in Ashland, Kentucky, in February 1928. They made two trips to New York in 1929 and had a final session in 1930 as the Great Depression had begun to seriously reduce record sales. While many of their numbers were well known, such as Turkey in the Straw and Mississippi Sawyer, others such as Boarding House Bells Are Ringing Waltz rank among the more obscure. The depressed economy ended the recording career of the Kessinger Brothers, but the two continued to play square dances in the Charleston area. After Luches died, Clark played less frequently although his talents, if anything, improved with age. During those middle years, he usually made his living as a house painter. In 1964, Ken Davidson found Clark and his career revived. Over the next seven years, Clark won several fiddle contests, competed in others, and recorded four albums for Kessinger's Kanawha label and another for

Rounder. He also did a guest spot on the Grand Ole Opry. In 1971, Clark suffered a stroke, which forced his virtual retirement. He died four years later. Nonetheless, he left an enviable musical legacy. The dozen tunes heard here represent a good sample of his early recordings. Five date from his first session and some contain square dance calls provided by Ernest Legg. The most common one heard here, Turkey in the Straw, dates from an 1834 composition that was originally titled Old Zip Coon. Goodnight Waltz was composed in 1877. Garfield March is sometimes titled Garfields Funeral March and obviously dates from 1881. Forked Deer dates back to at least 1839 and has been widely recorded. Sixteen Days in Georgia is more commonly known as Fourteen Days in Georgia and may have been composed by Charlie LaPrade of the Blue Ridge Highballers, who first recorded it in 1926. In February 1929, the Kessingers returned to the Brunswick studios where they cut several more tunes including the widely known and recorded traditional tune Mississippi Sawyer. In June they did more numbers including Going Up Brushy Fork which is a variant of the more widely known Cripple Creek, and Sopping the Gravy which is an adaptation of the 1861 Henry Clay Work Civil War song The Year of Jubilo. They also rendered Midnight Waltz and Dont Let Your Deal Go Down, which is an instrumental version of the most famous Charlie Poole song. The last Kessinger Brothers session yielded more tunes, many of them quite scarce today because of poor sales in the depression economy, but one number is included here, Mexican Waltz. In all, these fine fiddle favorites help to illustrate why Clark Kessinger held the reputation as being one of the finest traditional fiddlers who ever wielded a bow. Even today he remains a legendary musician in the Ohio and Kanawha Valleys, and perhaps wherever old-time fiddlers are discussed. Ivan Tribe
Professor of History University of Rio Grande October 2005

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