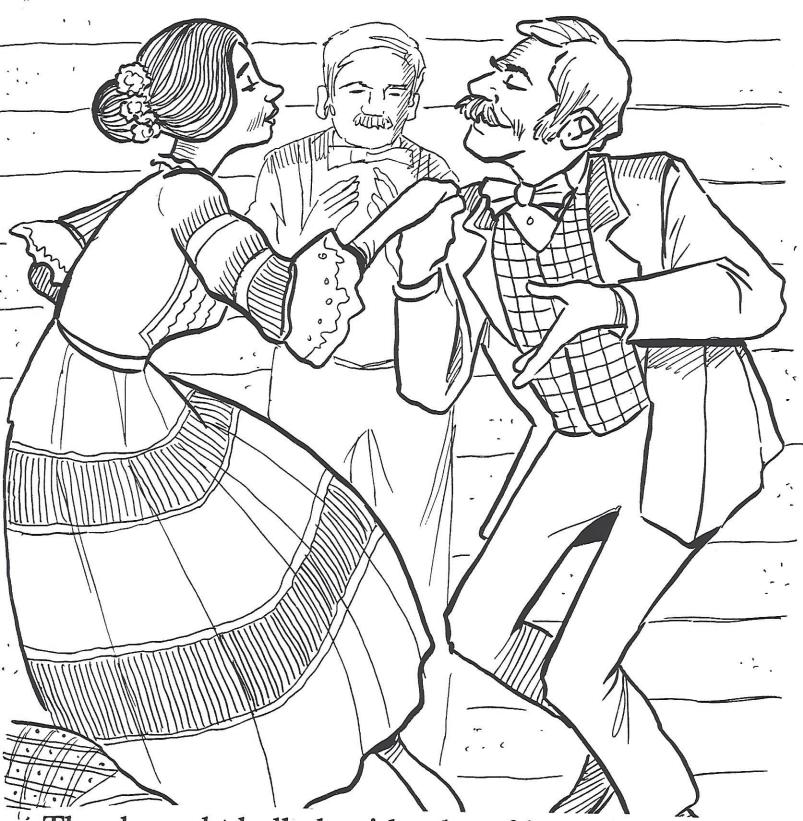


In the 1600's immigrants from the British Isles settled in the American Colonies. They came from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Later migrations were to come from all over Europe. With these early settlers came their culture, their ethnic backgrounds and their taste in music . . . brought to America from their homelands.



These early settlers brought music that was transmitted from one generation to another, not in written music, but music played by families and neighbors at barn-raisings, quilt-making, corn-huskings, etc.

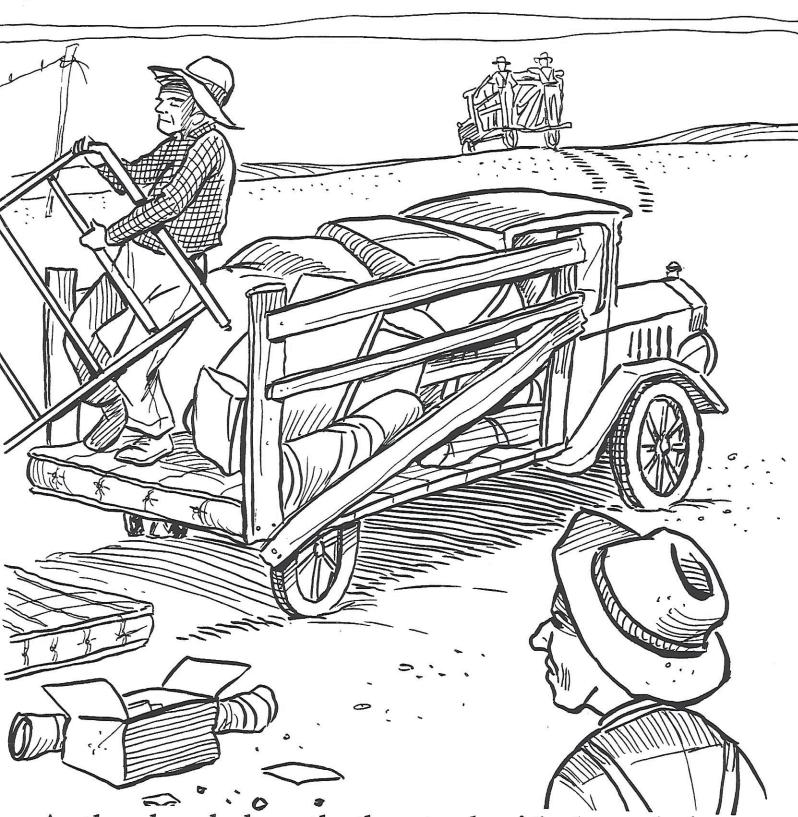


They brought ballads with tales of love, death and despair; jigs, reels and popular dances for music at weddings and funerals. Early country music thrived in the colonies of Virginia, the Carolinas, Kentucky and Tennessee.

4



Up until the 1930's country music was isolated in the rural south. Along came the great depression, uprooting and destroying this way of life. Men, losing their farms, left to seek work in the north and mid-west.



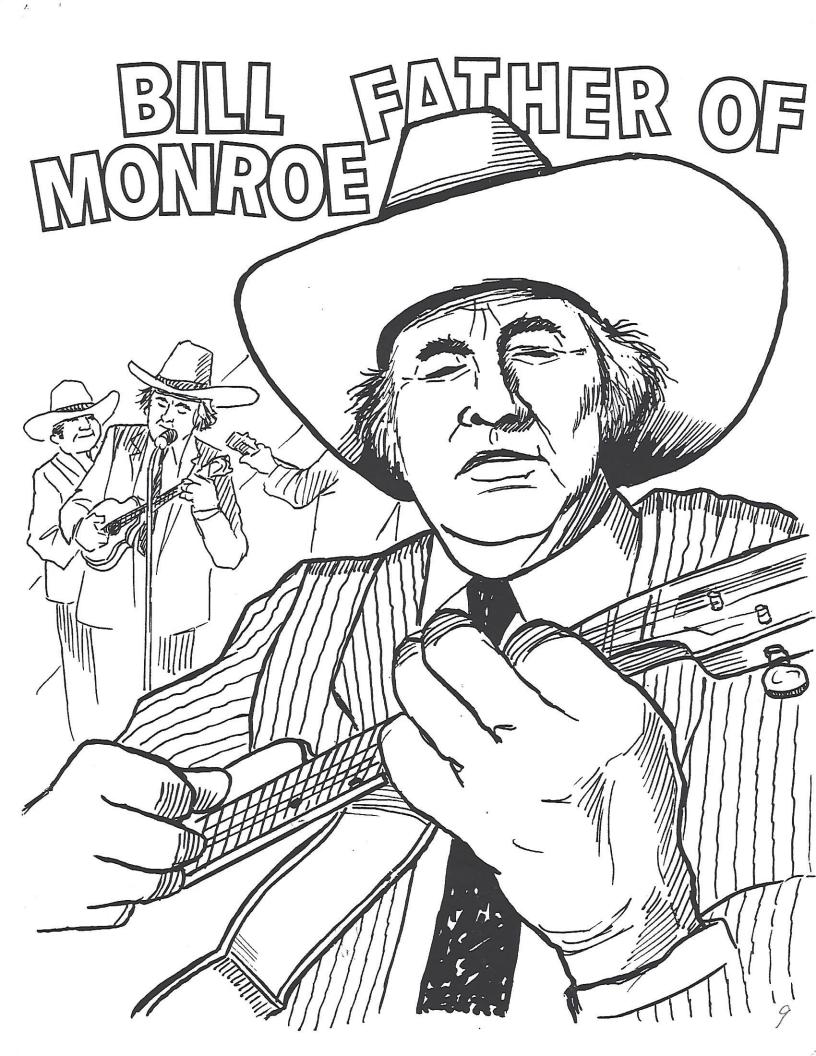
As they headed north, they took with them their way of life, their love of country music. For the first time factories in the north and mid-west were hearing the sounds of country music that would years later sweep across the entire country.

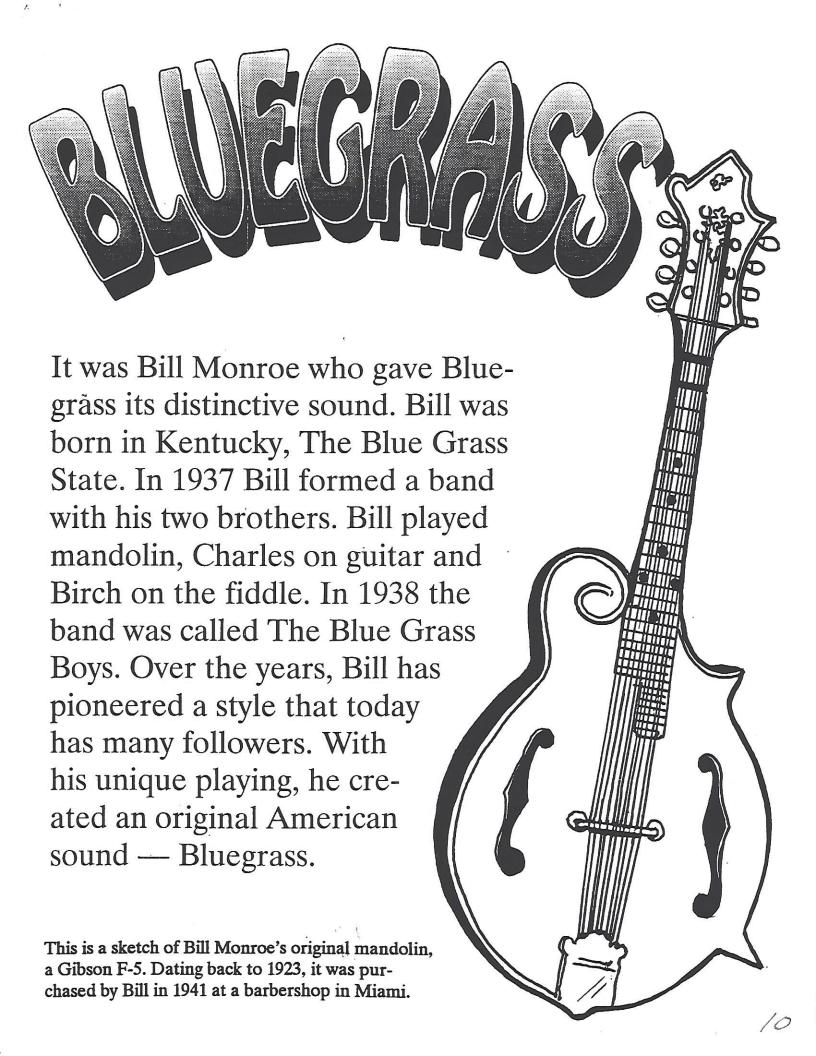


Also in the 1930's, radio was bringing to listeners the sound of country music on such popular programs as the *Grand Ole Opry*, WSM in Nashville and *The National Barn Dance* from WLS in Chicago.



Along with radio, recordings were creating a demand for country stars and introducing the distinct sound of bluegrass to a mass audience.







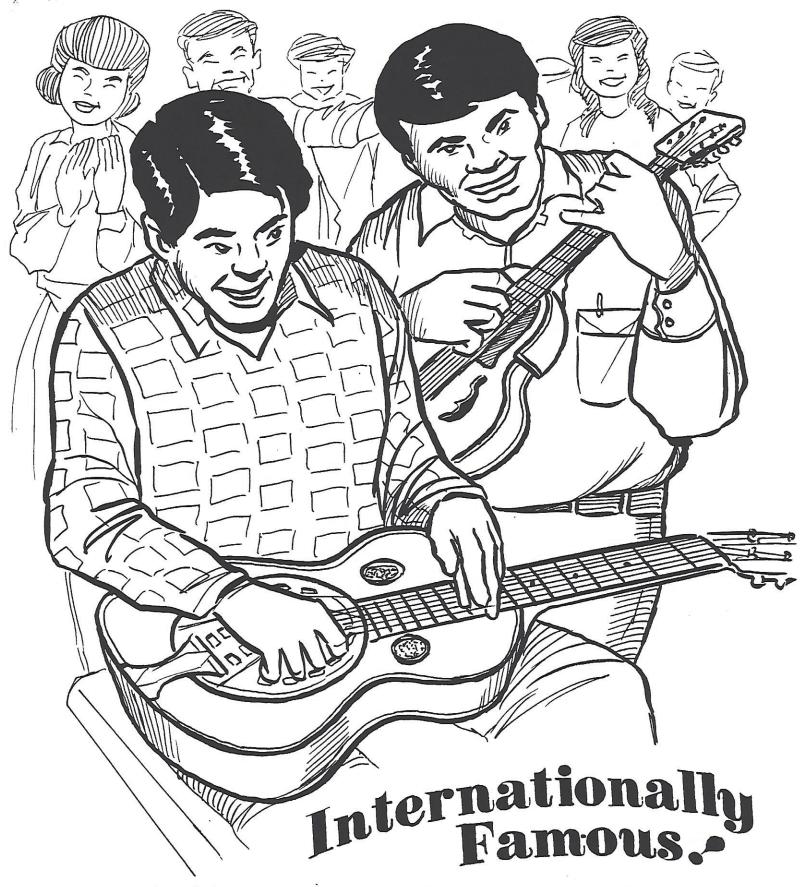
In the 1940's World War II brought many soldiers from all over America together for the first time. The 5-string banjo was now coming into its own and the bluegrass sound was finding a new audience.



In the 1950's, with many bluegrass bands forming all over the country, the word "bluegrass" was now used to identify this sound. It was competing with rock 'n' roll and moving away from country music to establish its own following.



By the 1960's bluegrass was beginning to draw large crowds at colleges and folk festivals. Female vocalists were now joining the bluegrass bands in songs and gospel sings.



Today the bluegrass sound is heard on every continent. In Australia, Japan and Europe numerous festivals are held and many bluegrass clubs are formed.

14



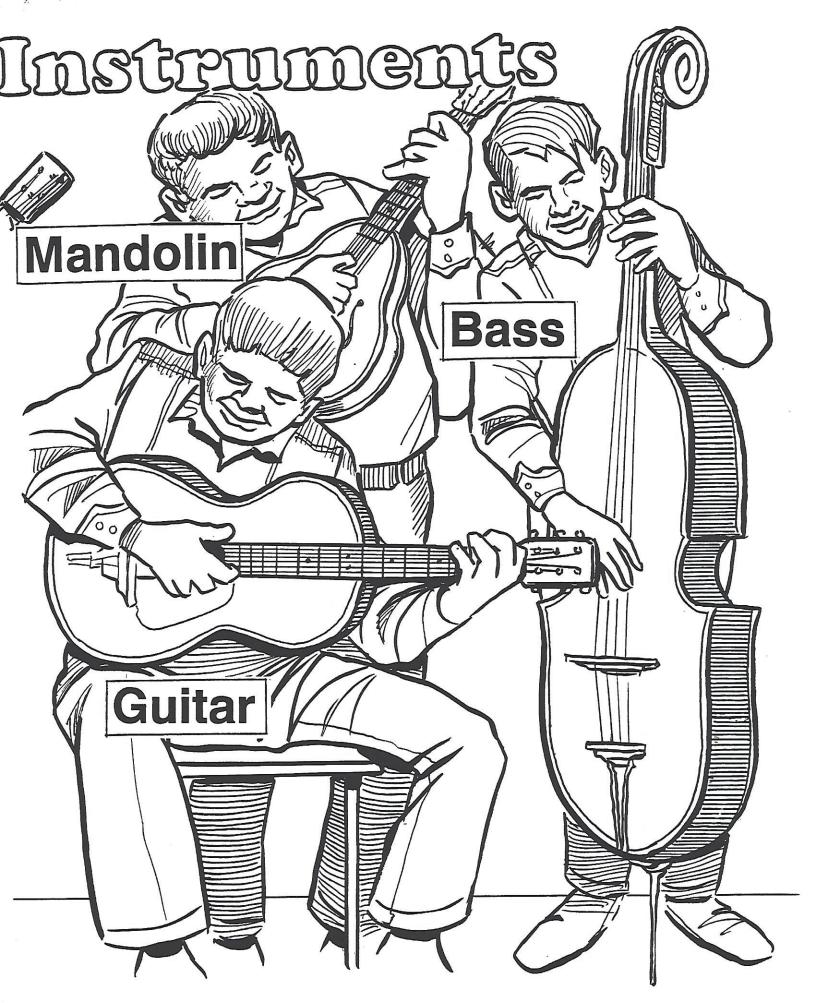
Earl Scruggs (banjo) and Lester Flatt (guitar), formerly with Bill Monroe's Band, formed their own band, The Foggy Mountain Boys. They introduced the bluegrass sound to TV with The Ballad of Jed Clampett on the very popular show The Beverly Hill-billies. The movie Bonnie and Clyde featured Foggy Mountain Breakdown. The Dueling Banjos made its debut in the movie Deliverance in 1972.

es an

Bluegrass Band



17





GUITAR

The guitar was first discovered in excavations in early Egypt. It was introduced to Spain by the Arabs and was called a guitern. The guitar was especially popular in Italy and Spain. Like most early stringed instruments, no 2 guitars were



alike. They had 4 or 5 strings not like today's 6-string standard guitar. The guitar was so famous in Europe it was manufactured by

such well known violin makers as Stradivari. Brought to America by the early immigrants, it became a standard instrument in country music.



BANJO

Of all the string instruments in a bluegrass band, the banjo is the original American instrument. The first one came from Africa during the slave trade in the 1600's. It was a crude hollowed-out gourd covered with animal skin, with a stick for a neck. In America in the 1800's, a wooden shell replaced the gourd. Up to this time the banjo had from 1 to 9 gut strings. In the mid-1800's the 4 and 5-string banjo appeared in minstrel shows, music halls and vaudeville.



Proof of the early fiddle (violin) goes back to the 10th century. It was first plucked like a guitar. Later when a bow

was added, the player was called a fiddle-striker.
From the east, the fiddle was introduced to
Europe and brought to
America by the early immigrants. It could be held

vertically and bowed with the palms up, held in the lap across the body or, like today, placed on the left shoulder. The early fiddles had 3, 4 or 5 strings.





MANDOUN

Called the mandoline in Italy, the mandolin was chiefly played as a melody instrument to be accompanied by the guitar. Like the guitar and fiddle it first appeared in the east, introduced to Europe and came to America with the early immigrants. After the 1700's the mandolin was almost forgotten but became popular again in the late 19th century. In the bluegrass movement, Bill Monroe was the early leader in making the mandolin important in the bluegrass band.



The dobro was developed in 1927 and in the later 1920's and 30's was used in

recordings with popular country singers of the day.

The dobro is a steel-stringed guitar equipped with a metal vibrating disc to amplify the sound. It is played with a metal bar in the left hand. The dobro made its

bluegrass appearance around 1955 in the Earl Scruggs-Lester Flatt's Bluegrass Band. Today it is a standard instrument in most bluegrass bands all over the world.





BASS

Instruments of the Bluegrass Band

(Acoustic bass) The bass as played today in bluegrass, also came from Europe with the early immigrants to America. The early bass had from 4 to 7 strings. Since no 2 basses were made alike in the early days, the smaller ones were played resting vertically on the lap and the larger ones as the bass is played today. The bass appeared in Europe in the 15th century and when played with a bow was especially popular in England with its many string quartets. The bass, like the fiddle, has no

frets. Today it is an important part of the bluegrass band.

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and more

