



5 STRINGER

Published by
THE AMERICAN BANJO FRATERNITY

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In Memoriam

In early November of 2010, I was headed out of Dallas to Nashville in a borrowed Ford Explorer. The "Banjo Collectors Gathering" was being held at the Union Station Hotel. I was not a banjo collector but was going there to meet up with Carl Anderton and Clarke Buehling, to play some classic and stroke style banjo. I had no idea what a major fulcrum point this trip would become for my life.

Shortly after arrival, Carl asked me if I had "been Elied yet" – I knew of Elias Kaufman, a force of banjo history that one could not have avoided, but had not ever met him. I don't recall if I was introduced to Eli and Madeleine or if Eli approached me but I don't think I got the chance to "meet" them, as I was treated as if we had always known each other. Seriously, it was as if we were old friends picking up where we left off the last time we were together. Eli seemed to have some knowledge of me, as he had mentioned me in The 5 Stringer Issue 202, Summer 2010. I was not yet a member of the ABF (that was about to change) and had not seen this mention. I was still pretty new to the

whole banjo history/classic banjo thing, having started my fumbling around in about 2006, and still a nobody (admittedly a loud-mouthed nobody).

I quickly discovered what Carl meant by "Elied".

You ask Eli a question and then hold on, as you were in for an answer. This rapid, encyclopedic flow of archaic banjo-related knowledge was like a warm shower on a subzero day. I did my best to absorb as much as I could.

Now, I was still new to this "banjo world" and had been warned about the ABF, which sadly had a reputation (though not deserved). But Eli was persistent and talked me into joining by offering to trade me a membership for some of the banjo thimbles I had started making and had brought to sell.

A few days after the Gathering, I received a package in the mail from Eli which included a stack

of manuscript A notation transcriptions (I was only reading in A notation at the time), as well as an original copy of the A. J. Weidt method in A notation.

My next encounter with Eli and Madeleine was that



Dr. Elias Kaufman

January 25, 1939 – April 4, 2025

summer at the Early Banjo Gathering in Fredrick, MD. This was an event hosted by George Wunderlich that focused on what we then called "early banjo" (basically American Civil War-ish era), which had been a large part of my banjo focus. I don't recall all the facts, but it seems that Eli and Madeleine were on a legitimate vacation (not banjo related) and oh, there also happened to be this event going on. I think this interaction cemented our friendship.

I moved to New England in 2011 (did I mention that I met Aurelia, to whom I've been married for over 11 years as of this writing, at that same Banjo Collectors Gathering? Yeah, life changing event), and in the spring of 2015 I decided to see what this ABF was all about and attended my first rally.

After the rally Eli and I would have semi-regular calls. These would have to be planned as they would start around 8pm or so and sometimes go until 2 or 3am. A couple of times these were done via Skype. Banjo was not the only subject; I heard about his family, folk music, Spanish guitar, poetry, literature, it did not matter – If Eli was telling me about it, I wanted to listen.

I don't know if I am self-aggrandizing, but I feel like Eli was looking to pass the torch. Someone needed to be that person who held the knowledge of classic banjo minutia. I hope that I am eventually up to the task.

As the years went on our calls became less frequent. Right or wrong, I just felt like I was imposing or being a bother. Like that kid who is always hanging around asking too many questions. But I tried to get as much "Eliing" in as I could during the ABF rallies.

Elias is going to be missed. I learned so much from him, yet there was so much more I did not get the chance to ask about.

- Joel Hooks

I find it difficult, if not impossible, to express in print how much of an impression Eli made on me and the greater banjo community. He left an indelible mark through his research, knowledge, kindness, and generosity. I was fortunate to have met Eli early in my banjo journey: as a budding classic banjoist and amateur banjo historian, Eli's guidance proved to be exactly what I needed; and as I developed as a player and enthusiast, our friendship and correspondence continued to motivate me and remains something upon which I look back fondly. Mariah and I recall many happy memories of times spent with Eli; whether we were parsing through historical manuscripts, listening to rare recordings, discussing the ins and outs of Reform and Reconstructionist Judaism, or staying up late reading Tsumura's book about the bathrooms of the Japanese elite, Eli always put smiles on our faces, made us laugh, and left us more knowledgeable.

It is with the deepest admiration that I read Eli's work as I parse through back issues of the 5 Stringer. Eli was one of the first researchers to take the history of the banjo seriously, to question the all too often incorrect assumptions held by so many of his generation. His research remains as relevant today as when it was first published—a testament to the care and diligence with which he approached his task. I have no doubt that his name will remain on the lips of serious historians of the banjo.

Below I reprint "Tommy Turner's Jig," which Eli taught me and was fond of. It's a lovely little tune and, as Eli would point out, bears a likeness to one of the central strains of "Mississippi Breakdowns." I encourage you all to learn it so that, when we play it at the Rallies, we may recall Eli's immeasurable contributions to the Fraternity and the banjo community.

- John Cohen

TOMMY TURNER'S JIG.

Get Yo' Ticket: The Life and Legacy of Harry C. Browne

(Part III)

By Henry Sapoznik

II. Six Months With Uncle Sam

On the evening of February 15, 1898, fourteen hundred miles from North Adams, the *USS Maine* exploded in Havana harbor, where it had arrived three weeks earlier to further Cuba's revolt against Spanish rule. Despite the blast's unclear causes—mysterious now as then—yellow journalism moguls William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer inked war with a vengeance. Americans read all about it.

The slogan “Remember the Maine, to hell with Spain” was hewn to nowhere more keenly than in New England, with its cherished history of answering the call to arms from the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Harry C. Browne was among the first of a mass of young men to respond.

The entire town, together with its press, turned out to send off the North Adams Company M as it left to join the newly formed 2nd Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry on May 3, 1898. Cannons boomed and mill bells rang as the procession—“a platoon of police, Lafayette band, Forest Park Drum Corps, Germania Band, Sayles Post Unit, and Co M”—made its way to the train depot. Amid tearful goodbyes, “old veterans declared the scenes of '61 were being re-enacted,” the *Transcript* reported.

After arriving at Cuba six weeks later, the 2nd Massachusetts made ready to carry out its first orders: to take the Spanish installation at El Caney on July 1, before joining the other American forces, led by Teddy Roosevelt, on nearby San Juan Hill. They were allotted two hours. It took more than twelve.

Mark Your Calendar!
THE ABF FALL RALLY

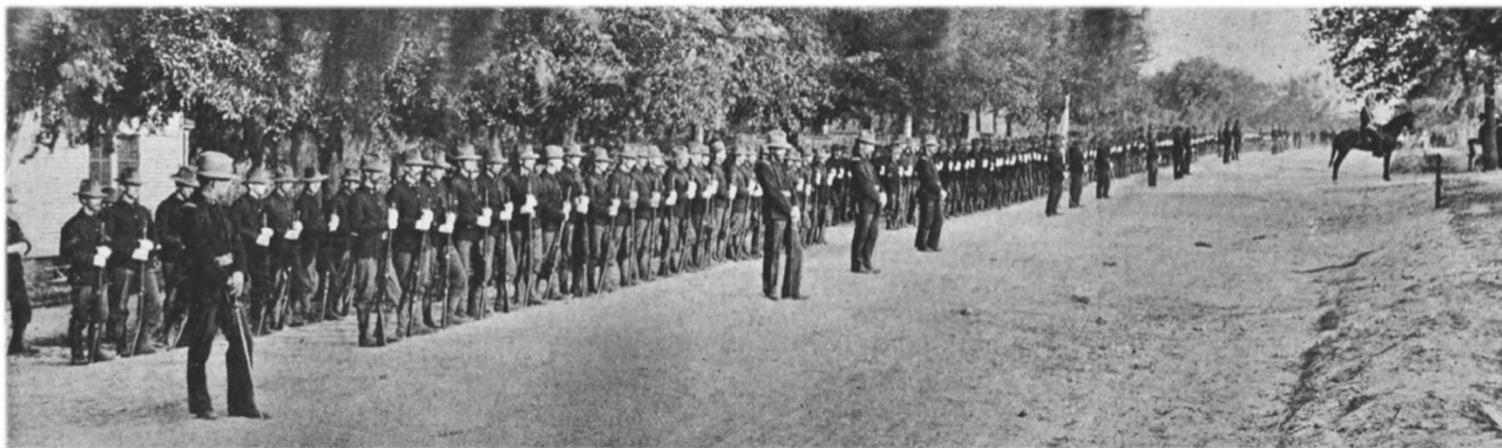
October 16, 17, 18

Best Western Palmyra Inn & Suites,
955 Canandaigua Rd, Palmyra, NY
(near Rochester, NY)

Call (315) 597-8888 for reservations.

Almost from the start Browne's regiment was in trouble. Hefting winter-weight wool uniforms and armed with Civil War-era rifles, the 2nd Massachusetts came against fierce resistance. In addition to a superior defensive position, the Spanish had bolt-action Mausers, discharging five rounds to every one of the Infantry's Springfields. And the fortresses around El Caney, like those that would become common in World War One, were ringed with trenches and hectares of barbed wire to ensnare an enemy whose military tactics matched their ordnance.

In their assignment to cut the wire, “the Massachusetts boys suffered their heaviest losses,” the *Hartford Courant* noted in a July 20, 1904, profile of Browne that recounts his participation. Trapped and fired upon by Spanish snipers, Browne was wounded in the leg but unaware of it until after the fighting had ended. “Browne's wound began to give him trouble and he was ordered to the hospital, where he contracted the Cuban fever that ended the lives of so many of the boys,” the *Courant* article stated, referring to the malaria that would plague him thereafter.



*Evening parade of the 2nd Mass. at Lakeland, Florida, May 30th, 1898.
Somewhere in this photo is Harry C. Browne.*

In sickness as in health, however, Browne was irrepresible:

Browne had one friend with him that gave him much comfort and cheered up the spirits of the boys in those weary days before the fever-stricken troops were removed. . . . It was a guitar which one of his company found for him in Cuba. Harry had a banjo with him when he left for the war, and he knows how to make it talk, too, but it was lost or stolen during the landing in Cuba. He brought the guitar back with him and it is one of the most treasured of his war relics.

By August 20, Browne had been transported to an Army hospital in Montauk, New York, followed by an extended period of recuperation upon his return to North Adams, where he quietly accepted visitors between recurring bouts of malaria. While abed, Browne conceived of a program that would combine his stage persona, derring-do retelling of American adventure in Cuba, and, of course, banjo music.

The December 15, 1898, *Transcript* announced the debut of “Six Months With Uncle Sam” at the Columbia Theater: “Harry C Browne’s lecture Tuesday (tickets on sale at Bartlett’s Drug Store) will be the event of the week and may be counted upon to fill the theater.” Canceled due to another malarial attack, the show was rescheduled as a Christmas event, in which “Harry C. Browne in uniform with songs and stories will render the songs he sang while in the camp,” the ad explained. “He will be assisted by his father, who will play his accompaniments.”

On into the New Year the lectures continued, as all manner of venues sought a booking. On February 8, the

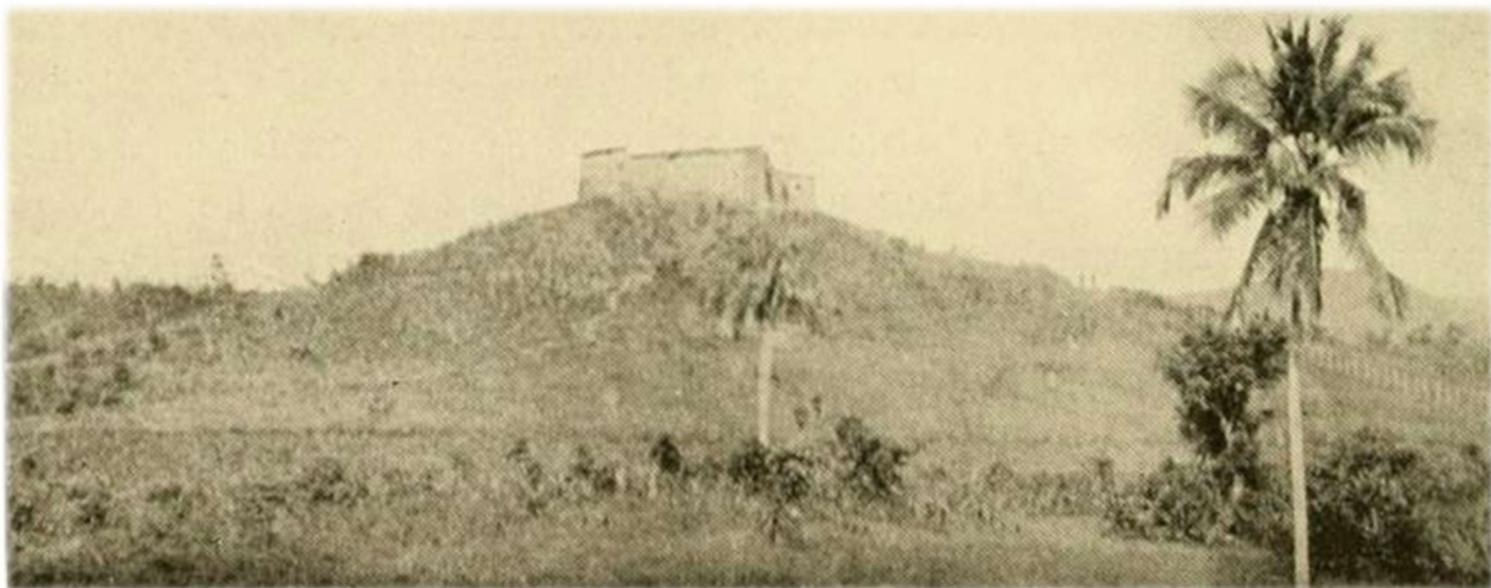
Pittsfield Journal opined that every schoolchild should hear the talk. The very next day the *North Adams Transcript* announced that in lieu of regular classes, Harry C. Browne would provide special schoolwide lectures in the week to come.

And in a piece that might have been headed “Captive Audiences,” the February 27 *Pittsfield Eagle* proclaimed that “prisoners at the house of correction were given a treat Tuesday night in hearing the lecture by Harry C. Browne of North Adams.” *Six Months With Uncle Sam*, together with the banjo selections, were “liberally applauded,” the *Eagle* said, and such a success that Pittsfield’s Sheriff Fuller was considering another entertainment “of similar character.”

Following an engagement in Pownal, Vermont, the show went out with a bang on June 8, in a last performance for the hometown crowd. In addition to his perfected retelling of El Caney and a banjo concert featuring his father and sister Mary, “the Odd Fellows Hall rang with the sounds of the exhibition drill given by M Company Second Regiment MA volunteers in furnishing the closing number,” the *Transcript* reported.

Harry C. Browne was exhibiting a more powerful and dynamic stage presence than ever before. The musical skills honed with his father had now given way to a magnetic performing possibility. Though he was urged to look at a career in politics and law, the stage had created a big itch for Browne, and there was nothing for him to do but to scratch it.

To be continued...



View of a Spanish blockhouse at El Caney.

2024 Fall Rally Recap

The Fall Rally was by all accounts a smashing success. It seems as of late that each rally brings new faces, and this time we were excited to welcome Ethan Schwartz. In a perfectly just world, Schwartz's excellent Master's thesis, *Forgotten Music for a Familiar Instrument: Memory, Narrative, and the Classic Banjo Tradition*, would be required reading for all who call themselves banjoists. We were also thrilled to have Gavin Rice return, this time with a lovely Bacon & Day Silver Bell in tow. The cherry on top was a visit by Eli and Madeleine Kaufman.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON ROUND ROBIN

Drew Frech with Norma Shearer, Joel Hooks, Marc Smith, & Ruth Vitale: "Washington March" (F.H. Bayley), "Bean Club Musings" (Eno)
 Doug Kiessling: "Blue Eyes" (Cammeyer), "Alpine Waltz" (Morley)
 Gavin Rice: "Daisy Bell & Sidewalks of New York Medley" (arr. Rice), "House Rabbit Two Step" (Rice)
 Ethan Schwartz: "Yankee Dandy" (Weidt), "Banjo Blues" (Grimshaw)
 Paul Draper: "Lily Mazurka" (Buckley), "Essence of Old Virginy" (Converse), "Railroad Polka" (Buckley)
 Joel Hooks: "Angel's Lullaby" (C.S. DeLano), "Dance of the Witches" (Ellis)
 Norm Azinger: "College Boys" (Weidt)
 Ruth Vitale: "Take My Life & Let It Be" (Havergal, arr. Vitale), "What A Friend We Have In Jesus" (Charlie Converse)
 Marc Smith: "Cannon Jig" (Morley)
 Tim Spacek: "Gauchos Galopade" (Bradbury), "My Old Kentucky Home" (Foster, arr. Bradbury)

Rally Snaps – October 2024

Right: Joel Hooks, Drew Frech, Norma Shearer, Marc Smith.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON ROUND ROBIN

Drew Frech with Norma Shearer, Marc Smith, & Ruth Vitale: "On the Curve March & Two-Step" (Allen)
 Drew Frech: "Pomeranian Serenade" (Cammeyer)
 Marc Smith with Joel Hooks: "Lillies of the Valley" (Weidt)
 Ruth Vitale: "Old Rugged Cross" (Bennard, arr. W.K. Baur), "Sweet Hour of Prayer" (Walford)
 Norm Azinger: "Red Rover" (Weidt)
 Joel Hooks & Paul Draper: "Kentucky Medley" (Bradbury), "Aunt Susie's Walk In" (B. Gibbs)
 Paul Draper with John Cohen & Joel Hooks: "Champion Jig" (Partee)
 Paul Draper: "Pluto Dance" (B. Gibbs)
 John Cohen: "My Old Kentucky Home" (Foster, arr. Bickford), "The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls" (O'Neill, arr. Bickford)
 Doug Kiessling: "Clarence Polka March" (Ellis), "Wakeup Jig" (Dobson)
 Ethan Schwartz: "Varsity Polka" (Morley), "Fooling the Frets" (Grimshaw)
 Tim Spacek: "Bagpipe Patrol" (Morley), "Cheerio Lads" (Wien)
 Tim Spacek with Drew Frech: "Nola" (Arndt)





AMERICAN BANJO FRATERNITY FALL 2024 RALLY PALMYRA, NY

Top Row: Paul Draper, Ethan Schwartz, Tim Spacek, Norm Azinger, Doug Kiessling, Norma Shearer, Marc Smith.

Middle Row: Becky Schneider, Madeleine Kaufman, JoAnn Azinger, Ruth Vitale.

Seated: Paul Heilman, John Cohen, Eli Kaufman, Joel Hooks, Drew Frech.



Rally Snaps – October 2024

Left: Drew Frech leads orchestra practice with Ethan Schwartz, Ruth Vitale, Paul Draper, Joel Hooks, Tim Spacek, Doug Kiessling, and Gavin Rice.

Below: (Clockwise from Left) Round Robin featuring Joel Hooks, Paul Draper, Doug Kiessling, Ethan Schwartz, and Tim Spacek, Drew Frech, Norma Shearer, Marc Smith, Becky Schneider, Ruth Vitale, Norm Azinger. *Behind the Camera:* John Cohen.





Rally Snaps – October 2024

Above: Madeleine Kaufman visits with Norm and JoAnn Azinger (seated) and Tim Spacek.

Right: Joel Hooks and Paul Draper strike a pose.





Rally Snaps – October 2024

Above: Tim Spacek enjoys listening to Joel Hooks, Drew Frech, and Norma Shearer during the Round Robin.

Below: Tim Spacek and Gavin Rice delight during their evening concert.



2025 Spring Rally Recap

Our Spring Rally was marked by the passings of Eli Kaufman and Mary Smith, but also by *banjoviality*, comradery, and new faces. Attending their first rally were Micah Bowen and Ian Purdum, the latter with a beautiful Bacon “Professional” in tow; Aaron Jonah Lewis, Gavin Rice, and Sam Harris returned to dazzle us with their playing; Lewis and Rice each gave an evening concert; the ABF Banjo Orchestra performed and recorded an original composition by Rice titled *The House Rabbit (a Characteristic Two-Step)*; and, per usual, the jam sessions went late into each night.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON ROUND ROBIN

Aaron Jonah Lewis: “*Banjotown*” (Morley), “*Theme from Babe*” (arr. Lewis)
 Frank Vitale with Ruth Vitale: “*Carolina Hop*” (Ellis)
 Ruth Vitale: “*Old Rugged Cross*” (Bennard, arr. W.K. Bauer)
 Ian Purdum: “*Ballad No. 1*” (Cammeyer)
 Tim Spacek: “*Banjoliers*” (Grimshaw), “*Presto from Violin Sonata #21*” (J.S. Bach)
 Doug Kiessling: “*Blue Eyes*” (Cammeyer), “*My Old Kentucky Home*” (Foster, arr. Bradbury)
 Paul Draper with Joel Hooks: “*Jingle Hornpipe*” (Converse), “*Napoleon W. Gould’s Polka*” (Buckley)
 Joel Hooks: “*My Old New Hampshire Home*” (Von Tilzer, arr. Hooks), “*Sidewalks of New York*” (Lawlor, arr. Bradbury/Hooks)
 John Cohen: “*Tommy Turner’s Jig*” (arr. Magez)
 Gavin Rice: “*Maple Leaf Rag*” (Joplin), “*Leaf Springs*” (G. Rice)
 Sam Harris: “*Narcissus*” (Nevin, arr. Hunter)
 Sam Harris with Micah Bowen: “*Tyro Mazurka*” (Brooks & Denton)
 Sam Harris: “*Buffalo Rag*” (Turpin, arr. Magee)
 Micah Bowen: “*Horace Weston’s Celebrated Minor Jig*” (Weston)

Rally Snaps – May 2025

Right: Frank Vitale, Aaron Jonah Lewis, Drew Frech.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON ROUND ROBIN

Drew Frech: “*Caper Sauce Rag*” (Griffin)
 Gavin Rice with Drew Frech: “*Alexander’s Ragtime Band*” (Berlin, arr. Van Eps)
 Micah Bowen with Sam Harris: “*Margie*” (Conrad & Robinson), “*Hesitation Blues*” (Poole)
 Sam Harris: “*Donkey Laugh*” (Morley, arr. Bradbury), “*Maple Leaf Rag*” (Joplin, arr. Van Eps)
 Tim Spacek: “*Puck*” (R. White), “*Mind the Paint*” (Tarrant Bailey Jr.)
 Paul Draper with Joel Hooks: “*Rainbow Schottische*” (Kleber, arr. Converse), “*Albany Polka*” (Converse)
 Joel Hooks with Paul Draper: “*Jo-Jazzy Rag*” (Armstrong), “*Schaeffer’s Jig*” (arr. Oakley)
 John Cohen with Joel Hooks: “*Minor Waltz*” (Stewart)
 Doug Kiessling: “*Clarence Polka March*” (Ellis), “*Alpine Waltz*” (Morley)
 Ruth & Frank Vitale: “*The Gold Diggers*” (Morley)
 Ruth Vitale: “*Precious Lord, Take My Hand*” (Dorsey)
 Ian Purdum: “*Banjo Frolic*” (Morley)
 Aaron Jonah Lewis: “*Cute and Catchy*” (Lawes), “*Old Folks at Home*” (Foster, arr. Van Eps), “*Prelude in C Minor Funeral March*” (Chopin, arr. Lewis)



Rally Snaps – May 2025

Right: (Clockwise from Top) Ruth Vitale, Frank Vitale, Aaron Jonah Lewis, Drew Frech, Micah Bowen, Sam Harris, Gavin Rice, Joel Hooks (off camera), Paul Draper, Doug Kiessling, Tim Spacek, Ian Purdum.

Below: Gavin Rice entertains another audience with his B&D Silver Bell.





Rally Snaps – May 2025

Above: Joel Hooks, Aaron Jonah Lewis, Sam Harris, Gavin Rice.

Left: Paul Draper, Doug Kiessling, Tim Spacek, Ian Purdum.

Rally Snaps – May 2025

Left: Norm Azinger, Tim Spacek, and Madeleine Kaufman listen to Paul Draper and Joel Hooks during the Round Robin.

Below: Another view of the Round Robin.



The Bradbury Method

By Joel Hooks

Anyone who knows me, or who reads my online rants, is likely tired of hearing about Frank C. Bradbury's banjo method. Bradbury wrote two methods for 5 string banjo. "Modern Method for Banjo, Fingerstyle C Notation" was published by Wm. J. Smith Music Co., Inc. in 1926. It is in the public domain and available free to download from the Internet Archive (thanks to Marc Smith for providing the original I scanned).

The Modern Method is very good but moves along at a fast pace. It is comprehensive and does a great job with the fundamentals of playing, including chord structure. Bradbury jumps right in with alternate fingering, the key to playing classic banjo smoothly.

But ultimately it went out of print. And in the days before the internet as we know it, it was pretty much unavailable unless you could track down a copy.

In 1967, just over fifty years after publishing his first method, Bradbury put out "The Mel Bay Banjo Method, Complete in Two Volumes," published by Mel Bay. At the time the orthodox banjo had taken a back seat to country, folk, and plectrum styles of banjo playing as well as the Spanish "classical" guitar. It is unusual that Mel Bay would have published such a method at that time. Mel Bay advertised guitar methods in the BMG but did not advertise this banjo method.

Volume 1 of this method was briefly reviewed in issue 100 of the "5 Stringer" (all of these have been digitized – reach out to your Exec. Sec. for the files).

This tutor is still available new with used copies going for very cheap on eBay, etc. At some point, Mel Bay combined both volumes into one edition. When they did this, they messed up the page balance, making for awkward page turns. Nevertheless, this method should be the first purchase that anyone interested in playing classic banjo should make. I recommend getting the two-volume set.

Building on his years of experience teaching banjo since the publication of the first method, Bradbury's 1967 tutor is superior in grading and pace. He starts you right away playing chordal accompaniments and includes chord symbols for most of the pieces in the book. The exercises are excellent for daily practice.

Many people discover classic banjo after playing other folk styles of banjo (often for many years!). Already having some skill on the banjo, they jump right into advanced solos that they find tablature for online. For weeks and months, they carefully study the numbers on the lines and listen to recordings and videos to try and learn a piece. Eventually they get there. Months of practice and they now can play one piece of music!

In that same amount of time, had they focused that exact effort on the Mel Bay Banjo Method, they would be well on their way to playing ANY solo at their current level of playing skill, right off of the page. They would have a strong foundation in alternate fingering, and the graded exercises and pieces allow time for the development of good tone and dynamics (a very neglected area in classic banjo).

Additionally, hidden within the short pieces and exercises are Bradbury's "bag of tricks." Ascending arpeggios, rapid triplets, how to fill in with chord patterns: they are all taught without the learner realizing that they are picking them up.

One point of criticism leveled at this method has been that the pieces of music are lackluster. In defense of his choices, I believe they are quite good. Most of the pieces were taken from original classic era compositions, sometimes just one strain and often rearranged and transposed into a different key. Discovering the sources of these pieces has become an obsession of mine. Many evenings I have spent sight-reading through piles of music, trying to match them with Bradbury's music. Some pieces even use the original titles.

"The Marines Hymn" was no doubt included as Bradbury proudly served as a Marine in World War I, with "The Caissons Go Rolling Along" as a nod to his brothers in arms. "Home on the Range" (beautifully arranged) would have been as familiar then as today.

I am excited to include below an incomplete list of all the source pieces I have been able to track down. Most are certain, some are a close match or guess. The originals make great companion pieces to the tutor for building repertoire.

Original Sources for Pieces Found in Bradbury's Mel Bay Banjo Method (pub. 1967).

Pg.	Title	Actual Title	Author	Published	Year	Book or Folio and Part or Extract
16	Pop Corn	<i>Green Corn</i>	Anonymous	Various		Common "banjo tune" found in many Tutors and recordings
25	Pajama Dance	<i>Hallowe'en Dance</i>	Walter Burke	H. F. Odell & Co.	1920	
26	Mountain Polka	<i>Bijou Polka</i>	W. C. Stahl	W. C. Stahl	1916	Stahl's International Banjo Method, pg. 23
32	Cotton Club	<i>Old Pennyroyal (arr. George Lansing)</i>	Si Stebbins	White Smith Music Publishing Co.	1918	Excelsior. Method, pg. 42
41	Banjo Jubilee	<i>Uncle Eph's Hoedown</i>	Don Baxter	White Smith Music Publishing Co.	1926	Bradbury Method <i>Part/Extract</i> : Trio
43	Belle of the Ozarks	<i>Merry Campers</i>	Walter Burke	H. F. Odell & Co.	1922	
43	Belle of the Ozarks	<i>Eli Green's Cakewalk</i>	Sadie Koninsky			<i>Part/Extract</i> : Trio as found in Bradbury manuscript
59	Gauche's Gallopade	<i>The Old Timer Galop</i>	Frank Bradbury	White Smith Music Publishing Co.	1926	Bradbury Method
68	Sailor's Refrain	<i>Darling Nelly Gray melody</i>	Benjamin Hanby		1856	<i>Part/Extract</i> : Basic melody
72	The Banjo Caprice	<i>Honeymoon Caprice</i>	George Lansing	White Smith Music Publishing Co.	1918	<i>Part/Extract</i> : A part
		<i>No. 75 Jig in F major</i>	Frank Bradbury	White Smith Music Publishing Co.	1926	Bradbury Method <i>Part/Extract</i> : B part of both pieces
73	Alabama Moon	<i>Might be Pert and Pretty</i>	A. J. Weidt	Walter Jacobs	1913	
82	Old Virginia	<i>Spirit of Old Virginia</i>	Daniel Acker	Daniel Acker	1895	
85	Waltz Melody	<i>University Grand Waltz Brilliant</i>	Tommy Glynn	L. B. Gatcomb	1897	<i>Part/Extract</i> : Last strain
86	Yankee Clipper Polka March	<i>Yankee Flyer Galop</i>	George Lansing	L. B. Gatcomb	1889	<i>Part/Extract</i> : Transposed keys
102	Ballad in Eb	Reverie in F	C. Hindj	Barnes & Mullins		<i>Part/Extract</i> : Transposed keys
124	In Old Vienna	Piano Sonata No. 16 in C Major or Sonata Facile	W. A. Mozart		1805	<i>Part/Extract</i> : Simplified and abridged

HALLOWE'EN DANCE

BANJO SOLO

.40

C Notation

Lively

WALTER BURKE

5 Pos.

f

mf

f

mf

f

5 Pos.

f

mf

5 Pos.

ff

f

mf

5 Pos.

ff

f

mf

x-x

Fine

D.C. al

M. 28

BIJOU POLKA.

Stahl.

Tempo di Polka.

Old Pennyroyal

(Country Dance)

SI STEBBINS
Arr. by G. L. Lansing

5 P.

10 P. 4

f

1.

2.

10 P.

p

0 3 P.

0 4 3 P.

1.

2.

D. C. al
then Trio

TRIO

3

4

fz

5 P. 4

4 P. 3

1. 4

2.

fz fz

Uncle Eph's Hoedown

DON BAXTER

(Bass to D)
Lively

7B. 1 3 4

mf

7 Bar

mp

(E minor)

4 Bar

4 B.

f

Fine pp

mf

D.S. al Fine

18

THE MERRY CAMPERS

BANJO SOLO

C Notation
Tune 4th to D

.30 Net

WALTER BURKE

Allegretto

4th String.....

f *cresc.* *e* *rit.*

mf a tempo *f* *7 Pos.*

mf *2 Pos.*

f *7 Pos.* *Fine*

1 2 *D.S. al then Trio* *ffz*

mf *cresc.*

TRIO *mf* *f* *mf*

f *cresc.*

Dr. Sl. *7 Pos.*

2 *Dr. Sl.* *D.S. al Fine*

cresc.

The Old Timer Galop

FRANK C. BRADBURY

Bass to D
Allegro

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in treble clef, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The piece is marked 'Allegro' and begins with a 'Bass to D' instruction. The notation includes various dynamic markings such as *ff*, *fz*, *mf*, *p*, *pp*, and *cresc.*. It features numerous fingering indications (0, 1, 2, 3, 4) and articulation marks like accents and slurs. Rehearsal marks are indicated by circled numbers (3, 4, 5, 1 B., 2 Bar, 5 B.). The score concludes with the instruction 'D. C. al Fine'.

Honeymoon Caprice

The musical score for "Honeymoon Caprice" is presented in six staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a 3P. fingering. The second staff features a 3P. fingering and a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff continues the melodic line. The fourth staff includes 5P., 3P., and 7P. fingerings, along with a triplet of eighth notes. The fifth staff starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and includes 10P. and 7P. fingerings. The sixth staff concludes with two first endings, labeled 1. and 2., each ending with a repeat sign.

Jig in F major

No. 75

③

(or)

③

②

Exercise on 3d and 4th strings

No. 76

SPIRIT OF OLD VIRGINIA.

Arranged for Piano very fine.

D. Acker.

Composer of "The Return" March.
A beautiful Concert Solo.
Easy and very taking.
Banjo and Piano 70¢.

INTRO. Moderato.

1st BANJO.

2d BANJO.

Jig.

First system of musical notation. The right hand (treble clef) features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and transitioning to mezzo-forte (*mf*). The left hand (bass clef) provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#).

Second system of musical notation. The right hand continues the melodic line, including a first ending (marked '1') and a second ending (marked '2'). The left hand accompaniment remains consistent. The key signature is three sharps.

Third system of musical notation. The right hand features a melodic line with dynamic markings of *f*, *mf*, and *f*. The left hand accompaniment continues with eighth notes. The key signature is three sharps.

Fourth system of musical notation. The right hand melodic line includes a measure marked '24th' and dynamic markings of *f*, *p*, and *mf*. The left hand accompaniment continues. The key signature is three sharps.

Fifth system of musical notation. The right hand melodic line includes a measure marked '24th' and dynamic markings of *p*, *f*, and *Fine.*. The left hand accompaniment concludes the piece. The key signature is three sharps.

The Flying Yankee

BANJO SOLO

GALOP

GEO. L. LANSING

Composer of "The Darkey's Dream"

C Notation

5

f

mf

②

③

10 Pos.

8 Pos.

fz

f

ff

mf

f

ff

1

2

mf

②

③

10 Pos.

8 Pos.

fz

TRIO

8 Pos. 6 Pos.

p

8 Pos. 6 Pos.

1 2

fz
D.C. al Φ

CODA

p

2 2

f *ff*

Furioso

ffz *ffz*

Reverie in F.

C. Hind.

Moderato.

10 B. *slide* 8 P. 7 P.B. 7 P. 5 P. *slide*
p *cres.*

3 B. *slide* 4 P. *slide* 9 P. 10 B.
rit. *f* *p a tempo*

cres. *rit.* *slide* 6 P. 5 P. 3 P. 2 P. 6 P.
f più animato

5 P. 9 P. 10 P. 9 P. 7 P. 6 P. 3 P. 5 P.
accel. *rit.*

10 P. 9 P. 7 P. 6 P. 3 P. 2 P. 2 B. 1.
a tempo *rit.* *slide*

2.
p a tempo *cres.* *rit.*

f *p a tempo* *rit.* *slide* *Fine*

TRIO. 3 B. 4 3 P. 4 4 P. 3 P. 10 P. *slide*
f *accel.*

15 P.B. *slide* 8 P. 10 B. 3 B. 3 P. 4 P.
rit. *a tempo*

3 P. 3 B. 3 B. 4 P. *slide* 10 P. 8 P. 1. 6 P. 2.
rit. *D.C. al §*

The Last Chord

Mary Elizabeth Smith of Newark, NY, passed away on March 29th, 2025. She was 82 years old.



Mary was born in Newark and earned her degrees from Cortland and Empire State College. She studied at the Eastman School and was a violin student of Drew Frech, who introduced her to the banjo. She herself went on to become a teacher of the violin and banjo. From 1992 to 2009, she served as the Executive Secretary of the ABF, presiding over the Fraternity's fiftieth anniversary rally at the Green Gables in Lewistown, PA.

Mary played a Bay State piccolo banjo in the ABF orchestra as well as Bay State and Bacon & Day regulation banjos. In addition to the classic style five-string, she also played tenor and plectrum banjo. She saved the day at one rally when she generously lent her nylon-strung Sultana Silver Bell to Roger Sprung, who had arrived with a wire-strung banjo in tow. Roger proceeded to play it while eating cookies he found in the reception area, and, according to Mary, she cleaned crumbs out of the resonator until the day she ceased playing.

Mary is survived by a brother, David Smith; a sister, Susan (Robert) Hartman; her longtime partner, Blanche Wellott; one niece, Kerry (Dominic) Vitaro; and one nephew, Charles (Julie) Hartman. She will be sorely missed.



Number 223 Summer Issue 2025 THE 5 STRINGER

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Paul Draper has been involved in "The Remarkable, Irresistible Erie," a production celebrating the 200th birthday of Erie Canal. He'll be performing on Sunday, October 12, at the Visher Ferry General Store in Rexford, NY.

Your Editors recently traveled to Vienna, West Virginia, to pick up a Van Eps flush-fret from the family of John Hammet. They enjoyed listening to Hammet's daughter describe the rallies she attended as a young child, where she heard ABF stalwarts like Frank Bradbury and Fannie Heinlein play. On their way home, they made a detour to drive through St. Marys, the hometown of Hammett and his friend and accompanist Cecil Boyd. They report that not much has changed there since the days when these

two ABFers blazed a path of banjo glory through the region. Hammett's daughter and son-in-law are delighted that his favorite banjo will remain in the Fraternity. Your editors would also like to thank Shawn McSweeney for sharing the lovely portrait of Eli reproduced on the first page of this issue.

Drew Frech's recent engagements have included banjo performances with Becky Schneider, including at the Ithaca Artist Market, the Seneca Yacht Club in Geneva, NY, and as part of the Cooperstown Monday Night Concert Series. In the second week of September, Mr. Frech (violin) will be performing with the Catskills Symphony Orchestra in Oneonta, NY (concert program TBD as of writing). Mr. Frech and Mrs. Schneider are currently rehearsing for the fall Rally, where they will give a concert featuring every size of S.S. Stewart banjo. And in the spring, Mr. Frech will be performing Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue with the Catskills Symphony Orchestra.

Aaron Jonah Lewis completed a month-long residency of weekly concerts and jam sessions in July at Cliff Bell's jazz club in Detroit with their Ragtime Banjo Revival Trio (Alex Belhaj, guitar, six-string banjo; King Sophia, cello; AJL, banjo, fiddle) followed by a weekend-long "micro-tour" in southwestern Michigan with the same group. On that tour they met Ragtime Ephemeralist classic banjo enthusiast Chris Ware, and just yesterday received even more treasures from Pat Doyle of the UK (original large-print editions of Joe Morley's works, plus some bonus Cammeyer pieces). AJL is now preparing to go offline and into retreat mode for an indefinite period, but they look forward to returning to the next ABF rally they can make it to when they return to the world. Oh, and the biggest news of all – AJL has recently released their newest Ragtime Banjo Revival recording, a surf-rock rendition of Temptation Rag! It's streaming on all platforms and downloadable for free from ragtimebanjo.com/music. The download includes bonus tracks of the RBR Trio only available from the website or from Bandcamp.

Sam Harris has been performing around the Raleigh area as part of a string trio, The Oak City Serenaders. He's also been working on banjo notation in MuseScore and may have a few arrangements and transcriptions ready to share in the future.

Gavin Rice, New York City, has been keeping himself busy playing across the United States. He just returned from a tour in Davenport, Iowa, celebrating and playing the music of Leon "Bix" Beiderbecke. He reports that, during his leisure time, he has been making five-string banjo arrangements of popular tunes from the 1920s that are typically played on the four-string banjo. Below we reproduce a self-portrait taken by Mr. Rice with his 1920s studio camera.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

This is your newsletter. Tell us what you want to read about. Let us know what you have going on that is classic-banjo related. Articles and letters submitted will be published!