



The lyrics in this version stem from a Combination of Doc Watson and Jean Ritchie's recordings.

The earliest recording was The Kentucky Thoroughbreds 'Shady Grove' recorded in September 1927 in Chicago and issued as Paramount 3080.

The song Shady Grove probably began life in eastern Kentucky/Tennessee in the 1800s. There are towns called Shady Grove in Virginia or Kentucky, though the title originally refer to a place, it is now used as the name of a person. It's even possible that Shady Grove might be a mishearing of Matty Grove, though the two songs are different and not related. While certain verses seem to be linked with the tune, other 'floating' verses are often attached by different singers.

Verse

Am G Am G

Checks as red as a bloom - ing rose, eyes of deep - est brown.

Am G

You are the dar - ling of my heart, say till the sun goes down.

Am G

Refrain

Shad - y Grove my lit - the love, Shad - y Grove I know.

Am G

Shad - y Grove my lit - the love, bound for the Shad - y Grove.

Cheeks as red as a bloomin' rose,
Eyes of the deepest brown,
You are the darlin' of my heart,
Stay till the Sun goes down.

Shady Grove, my little love,
Shady Grove I know,
Shady Grove, my little love,
Bound for the Shady Grove.

When I was a little boy,
I wanted a Barlow knife
Now I want little Shady Grove
to say she'll be my wife

Shady Grove, my little love,
Shady Grove, my little love,
Shady Grove my darling
Shady Grove, my little love,
I'm going back to Harlan

These verses have also been heard at various times:

Cut a banjo from a gourd
string it up with twine
The only song that I can play
is "Wish that gal was mine"

Apples in the summer time
peaches in the fall
If I can't have the girl I love
I don't want none at all

I've got a big fine horse
and corn to feed him on
All I need's little Shady Grove
to feed him when I'm gone



Doc Watson, despite being blind since childhood, was a bluegrass visionary in all the right ways. He walked the line between centuries-old Appalachian musical traditions—owing to his being in rural North Carolina—and pushing bluegrass forward alongside contemporaries like Clarence White and John Hartford. His guitar picking style is one of the most unmistakable in all of bluegrass, and one of the most off-imitated.

Watson was born in Deep Gap, North Carolina, in 1923, and left the world in 2012.



It is impossible to place any one label on Jean Ritchie. She is a traditional musician by virtue of her life and works, but she is also a commercial performer, author, recording artist, composer, and folk music collector.

Ritchie was born in 1922 in Viper, Kentucky, into a family that considered music extremely important. In addition to singing as a means of entertainment, they had songs to accompany nearly all of their activities, from sweeping to churning to working in the fields. When they got together in the evening to sing as a family, they chose from a repertoire of more than 300 songs. Among them were hymns, traditional love songs and ballads, and popular songs by composers like Stephen Foster. For the most part, these songs were learned orally and sung without accompaniment.

References:
<http://www.bluegrassmessengers.com/shady-grove-version-2-doc-watson.aspx>
Lyrics and some history of the song
<https://alexbledsoe.com/2010/02/08/shady-grove-and-the-tradition-of-living-songs/>
More history on the song
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pDUNdRm5Toc>

Performance of the song by Jean Ritchie
<https://education.ket.org/resources/mountain-born-jean-ritchie-story>
Information about Jean Ritchie

- Song Suggestions**
- Mattie Groves
 - Roll on Clouds in the Morning
 - Barbry Ellen (Barbara Allen)
 - Will the Circle be Unbroken
 - House of the Rising Sun

♥ Zines about Kentucky Folk songs ♥



Shady Grove

