

# Three Bucolics

by [Jeffrey Burghauer](#) (April 2019)



*Dance of the Haymakers*, William Sidney Mount, 1845

29th Appalachian String Band Festival

Banjoes can supplicate. Harpsichords can't.

Éxedral shadows released

Music: Arcadian fiddles that pant

Antically into the creased

Region of silence against which the fresh,

Asperous, reddened, unblessed,

Effortless, fleet,  
Buttery, sweet  
Mouth of the music was pressed.

Memory's fingers reflexively pose,  
Buff into classical heat,  
Frame with devotional ornament those  
Anythings found in the sweet

Era that happenstance set just before

All of the colorless fuss

Frothing the plain,

Always mundane

Era belonging to us.



*Roscoe Holcomb*, Photographer Unknown

## Roscoe Holcomb

His bat-like sound, seemingly mindless,  
Harrowingly haphazard, in fact,  
Is absolutely certain—certain  
As construction progress on a dry  
Roman siege ramp; as certain as bone.

He wedged an empty cigarette pack  
Underneath his tailpiece, that he might  
Obtain the ideal tone; he was not  
Alone in learning the banjo as

If it had never been learned before.



*Old Stone Church, Jaro Nerad*

Sabbath Rest

Here's the lane

That extends until

Fiddle's Bane.

Up a mossy hill.

Down a lesser knoll. Repeat.

Thus the upward spill:

Though we're headed toward the feet

Of God, the air grows reciprocally

Heavy, oxidized, discrete.

Yes, the summit-base conceals a free  
Place, ample & weightless as a robin's breast,  
Where banjos & oaten pipes agree;

The afternoon heat is barely overstressed  
By the crest of evening's cool domain,  
And the people know the gain of Sabbath rest.

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