

Arkansas Traveller

USA

Ballad Index: This was a popular minstrel-show sketch in the 1900s, earliest date 1847
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1. Oh, once up-on a time in Ar-kan-sas an old man sat in his lit-tle cab-in door and

fid-dled at a tune that he liked to hear, a jol-ly old__ tune__ that he played__ by__ ear. It was

rain-_ ing__ hard,__ but the fid-dler did-n't care, he sawed a-way at the pop-_ u-lar air. Though his

roof-_ tree__ leaked__ like a wa-_ ter-_ fall, that did-n't seem to bo-_ ther that man__ at__ all.

2. A traveller was riding by that day, / and stopped to hear him a-practicing away.
The cabin was afloat and his feet were wet, / but still the old man didn't seem to fret.
So the stranger said: "Now the way it seems to me, / you'd better mend your roof," said he.
But the old man said, as he played away: / "I couldn't mend it now, it's a rainy day."
3. The traveller replied: "That's all quite true, / but this, I think, is the thing for you to do;
Get busy on a day that is fair and bright, / then pitch the old roof till it's good and tight."
But the old man kept on a-playing at his reel, / and tapped the ground with his leathery heel:
"Get along," said he, "for you give me a pain; / my cabin never leaks when it doesn't rain."