Van Wagner Songbook

Bridges Burned (Tioga County)	4
Churches and Bars	5
Crosscut Saw	6
Good Thing	7
In a Song	8
North of 80	9
Rattlesnake	10
Something Out In the Dark	11
Where the Bears Dance	12
You Can't Lock up a Good Guitar	13
Waterfall	15
Ash to Ash	16
Started With a Board	17
Be A Tree	18
Shagbark Hickory	19
Green Bridge	20
River Rat	21
Lightning Tree	22
Sit by the River and Dream	23
Four Days of Rain	24
Ridge Runner	26
Bullet Hole	27
Halo Round the Moon	28
Sassafras Tea	29
Ghosts are Real	30
Thankful for the Land	31
Summer of Hawks	32
If Time Could Stand Alone	33
Days Just Like Today	34
Lost in the Mountains	35
Devil's Featherbed	37
Hard Coal Navy	38
Shortleaf Pine	39
Dunnawetter	40
The Winds of Idaho	41
Cold Wind	42
83lb Hammer	43
Leatherman	44
Chickens Lament	45
Women, Words, and Wine	46
Flat Bottom Town	48
Alone and in the Pines	49

The Cowboy and the Hippy	50
I'll Take Love	51
Mountain Lion	52
Smokeless Joe	53
Shikellamy	54
Must've Been My Guitar	55
Be True to You	56
You Can't Force a Mule	57
Alone	59
I'm from the Mountains and I'm Going to the Sea	60
Recluse	61
Confidential Blues	62
Life Keeps Trying to Kill Me	63
All I Ever Wanted	65
Roots	66
30 Something 6-String	67
Rust Never Sleeps	68
Lattimer Massacre	69
Tobacco From Tennessee	70
Sing Out	71
Crescent Moon	72
Forgive My Trespasses	73
\$20 Bill	74
I'm Going Out in the Woods	76
Loose Skinned Dog	77
Hungry	78
Daniel Boone	79
Home Town	80
Mr. Danville	81
Mugsy's Gone	82
Hard Coal	83
Hard Coal Hard Times	84
Jay Smar Just Likes to Play	85
In Alvira	87
Splitting Rails	88
Hemlocks	89
Miner's Wife	90
King of Pennsylvania	91
Fall	92
Collier's Life (In the Shadow of the Mountain)	93
Guns and Religion	94
Going Back to Bald Top Mountain	95
Woolrich Coat	96



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 1: Campfire Classics and Deep Cuts

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Steve Patterson Last Updated: 11/25/2020

Bridges Burned (Tioga County)

Lost in the Mountains

Van Wagner Sept. 2010

Verse 1:	
G	С
When I think bac	k to the bridges I've burned
D	G
I try to count the	lessons learned.
	С
I drop the count a	at 34
D	G
Old mistakes, wo	on't you come no more.
Chorus:	

C G
I'm standing alone in Tioga County
C G
No one on my left
C D
No one on my right

G------Em C G And I've paved every mile of this road that I'm on D G

With bridges burned 12,000 nights.

Verse 2:

Have you been there, have you felt like this? No one but the wind to kiss. Just you, and the hills. All alone standing still.

Chorus

Verse 3:

You choose your path, you dig your ditch. You make your bed, you sleep in it. You baton down, boots straps up. You forge ahead and bid good luck.

Churches and Bars

If Time Could Stand Alone

Tom Flannery and Van Wagner March 2002

01101401				
С	G			
Churches and	bars			
С	G			
Churches and	bars			
С	D		G	
All I need is churches and bars				
С	G	С	G	
Won't find me in a dry old town				
С	•	D		G

Not a drop of religion to be found

Verse 1:

Chorus:

Chorus

Verse 2:

Used to be that coal was king Round here it could buy anything That was yesterday my friend So set 'em up till I reach the end Communion 7 days a week Yuengling to drink, Mrs. T's eat Old time religion and lager beer That's what keeps me living here

Chorus

Verse 3:

Good Lord watches over me especially when I'm too blind to see Lays my head down oh so slow when my stomach does the do-si-do So grab your partner swing her round to that Pennsylvania sound Sing with me just 1 more time Before I head down in this mine.

Crosscut Saw

Only Passing Through

Van Wagner August 20, 2004

Verse 1:

Am

The war was over, Mr. Lincoln had won

G

Am

I drew my navy wages and returned to my home.

Sullivan County where my grandfather came

С

C

Soil was rocky, the sky always rain.

I remember grandpa's stories of when he was a kid

Bison in the valleys elk on the ridge.

Now it's all gone, a new hunt has begun

To find the Tiadoghton that make the sawmills hum.

Chorus:

Am

All I need is a crosscut saw.

G

Am

A double bit ax and 80 trees to fall.

С

Am

The spring is coming I can smell it all around.

С

G

My soul's being tempted by that high water sound.

Verse 2:

Up on the Loyalsock it's straight and it's tall. There's Pine up there like you never saw. Only brave loggers bare the winter cold. Snow falls heavy on the Appalachian fold.

Up in the morning at 5 am
Thrown down some biscuits, coffee, and ham.
12 hour shift on the teamster crew
skiddin' logs to the river in the ice and snow.

Chorus

Capo: 5th fret (live); 3rd fret (album)

Verse 3:

We lash the logs together with hickory and oak No rope nor iron just pins and bows.

A sweep at the front and back, a shack for the crew

20,000 board feet ready to tie loose.

When the ice finally breaks and the water's good and high.

We'll head down the Loyalsock our crew of 5. 3 Days on the raft down to Montoursville we hit the Susquehanna waters smooth and still

Chorus

Verse 4:

Once we get to Marietta we sell off the logs \$100 split by the river hogs.

We head back north, Walking all the way.

One hand on your knife, the other on your pay.

If it's a good season we'll have 2 or 3 more runs. Then the year is over and the summer has begun.

I'll watch as rust builds on my tools And long for the day I'm back with my logging crew.

Good Thing

Started With a Board

Van Wagner Sept 26, 2012

G D G
Gonna play on this guitar all my days
D
Gonna play on this guitar all my days
Em C G D G
Oh Oh short or long I got a good thing going on.

Gonna live on this mountain all my time (2x)
Oh Oh short or long I got a good thing going on.

Gonna swim in this river when I feel (2x)
Oh Oh short or long I got a good thing going on.

Gonna live my wife all my life (2x)
Oh Oh short or long I got a good thing going on.

Gonna live with this cat while I can (2x)
Oh Oh short or long I got a good thing going on.

Gonna write what I feel that's the deal (2x)
Oh Oh short or long I got a good thing going on.

Gonna keep making friends till the end (2x)
Oh Oh short or long I got a good thing going on.

Gonna play this guitar
Live on this mountain
Swim in this river
Love my wife
Gonna live with this cat
Write what I feel
Keep making friends.
Oh Oh short or long I got a good thing going on.

In a Song

A Mountain Man's Dream

Van Wagner Oct 25, 2015

F C
When another day is done
G Am
You're asking what went on
F C G

A song comes on comes on.

Change is the only norm
You keep on keeping on
In a song keeping on keeping on.

The fog of the morning rolls
The night takes it's toll
A song moves it on moves it on.

A friend tells you of the news But what else is new A song keeps it true keeps it true.

You hit your lowest low How much lower can it go A song let's you know let's you know.

You soar your highest soar Higher than you've been before. A song lifts you more lifts you more.

Love will take you in
If you're wise you'll let it win
Love song in the wind in the wind.

North of 80

North of 80

Van Wagner Summer 2001

C Intro

Verse 1:

F G C
When Armstrong stepped on the moon
F G C
America stepped with him too.

Am

But the giant leap left some behind,

G

F G

Buried in the foothills of time.

Not much has changed here today, Prosperity never seems to stay. 100 miles off the map, But we all know exactly where we're at.

Chorus:

F (

North of 80 it ain't the same.

F

I don't know how else to put it to explain.

С

F G C

There's a different tune in the ai

There's a different tune in the air G

There's a northern feel,

, F

that makes it real everywhere.

Capo: 2nd fret (album)

Verse 2:

Pennsylvania's hard to call.

Not just one shoe fits us all.

7 worlds all in one

Sharing nothing but the air and the sun.

The truth is most folks don't see

Much more than the southern tier.

Harrisburg to Philly and out to the West

But they forget about the part where I fit best.

Chorus

Verse 3:

So next time you're on the road And feeling shaky in your soul. Take your watch and throw it away Come up North just for a day.

Once your life learns to breathe You'll find it so hard to leave. Don't be surprised if your tracks disappear And you're surrounded by a future up here.

Rattlesnake

The Fringe

Van Wagner August 24, 2013

Verse 1:

Am I

There's all kinds of snakes that live in these mountains

Am

They slither by rivers they fall into fountains

C G Am

They do it all without arms and legs

Am E Am

Truth much stranger than fiction..

I've heard that Saint Patrick Cast them away
He drove the serpents right into the Bay
There's just one flaw with the Saint Patrick Tale
There were never no snakes in Ireland.

Chorus:

C G

Oh Rattlesnake I've seen you before

Am F

I'm gonna see you again

C G

I go back and forth from fear to respect

Am F

But it's fear in the end.

Verse 2:

Of all my rattlers only one tried to bite me I think deep down he didn't want to fight me Just passed my leg then he made me aware Some timbers not for cutting.

I've moved quite a few off of route 44
Between route 6 and old Jersey Shore
A snake in one hand and a motorcycle band
Reminds you that you're still with the living.

Capo: 2nd or 4th fret depending on size of snake (live); None (album)

Chorus

Verse 3:

So to all who travel throughout Penn's Woods

If you're lucky to see one respect it you should.

Please don't harm it just let it be The only good snake is a live one.

Something Out In the Dark

Flat Bottom Town

Verse 1:

C G Am ------ F

I have a friend from the south of the state, he's your everyday Joe.

C G Am ----- F

He lives his life, day by day and he travels a broken road.

C G Am ----- F

All his life, he's never believed in something that he could not see.

C G Am ------ F

Chorus:

Am---F Am---F

When the world has run you through

Am---F Am---F

He said if God is real, then where is he now, amidst all my (this) misery.

That doesn't mean, he's turned his back on you.

Am---F Am---F

Can't you believe and trust your heart.

Am---F Am---F

That there's something, out in the dark.

Verse 2:

I kind of feel for people like that and the lonely paths they've chose.

The only reason they can't see God is because their eyes are closed.

In the breath of a song, or a night gone wrong his presence is through and through.

If you want to see God then just look in the eyes of the person right next to you.

Chorus

Verse 3:

We've got to stop living our lives, just expecting more and more And start living like miracles, which is exactly what we are. You've got to build your life on faith if you want to get off the ground, Because a sea of apathy's a perfect place for any good soul to drown.

Where the Bears Dance

Woolrich Coat

Ollie and Van Wagner Capo: 5th fret (album)
January 13, 2009

Verse 1:

G C G
Up on the mountain you can see it from the road
D C G
A field a rocks where nothing seems to grow.
G C G
Dad told me that's the spot on the hill
D C G

Where the bears come to dance when the moon is filled.

Chorus:

G D Where they Dance. Where they Dance.

Verse 2:

When the bears dance the world is asleep.
When the bears dance the stomp out all the trees.
Paws and claws dust from the pines.
Bellies full of berries and true moonshine.

Chorus

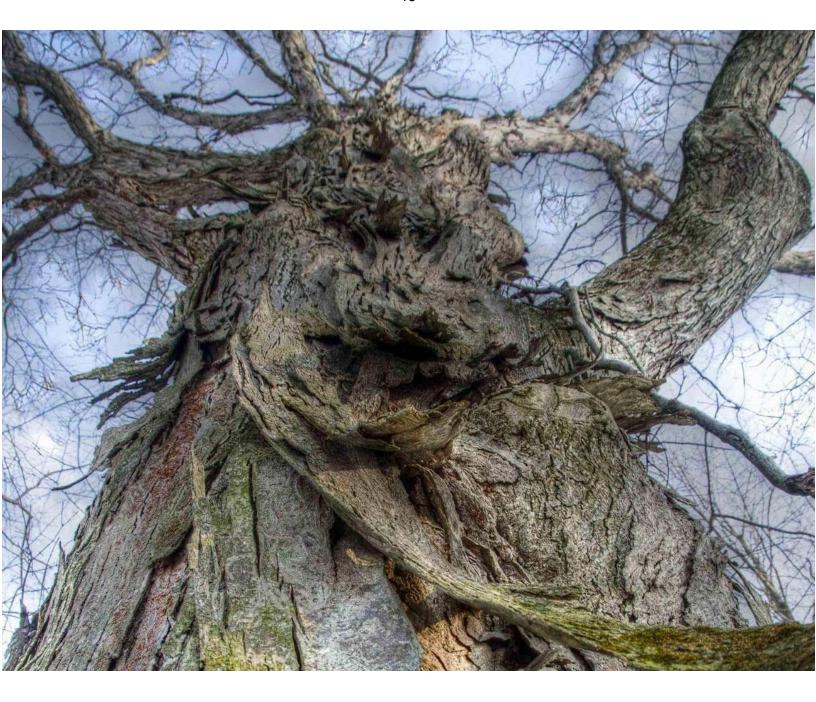
Verse 3:

If you're out camping for an overnight stay
And you wonder from your tent and see the bears play.
Don't take no photos to prove what you saw
Just join in the good times and stomp with them all.

You Can't Lock up a Good Guitar

The Flood Sessions: Four Days of Rain

Van Wagner	Capo: 5th fret (album)
October 12, 2011	
Verse 1:	Verse 2:
G C G	Guitars are meant to be played
There's something about a good guitar	Strummed and picked every day
C D	It's true they get better with age.
I know other pickers know what I mean.	The tone mellows out and finds its way
G C G	It finds its way.
When you've got a soul to lay out	·
C D	I remember Uncle Scott
There's nothing like a good six string	left a guitar on one of his stops.
Em	An outside cat peed all over it
A good six string	Mom threw it on the fire pit
	On the fire pit.
G C G	
I think about the one I learned on	
C D	Chorus
Borrowed my brothers Epiphone.	
G C G	
Years later his church was robbed	Years from now
C D	when my pickin's through
They took that guitar, doors unlocked.	with all these guitars what'll I do?
Em	I'll give them all to my sons
Doors unlocked.	I hope they play em' or pass them on
	Pass them on
Chorus:	
C G D Em	Chorus
No You Can't Lock up a good guitar	
C G D G	
No You Can't Lock up a good guitar	



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 2: Rivers & Trees

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Steve Patterson Last Updated: 11/25/2020

Waterfall

Ash to Ash

Van Wagner August 30, 2014

Intro: Em G D Em x4

Chorus:

Em G D Em The power of a waterfall G D Em Water runs from the mountains tall. Em G D Em Take in some, take in all Em D Em

Verse 1:

D G Em A mystic thing, foggy air

The power of a waterfall.

D G Em

Between 2 mountains there's nothing there.

D G Em
Water waiting to be rain
D G Em
Down the valley like a train.

Chorus

Verse 2:

These mountains once locked in ice Squeezed in a glacial vice. When the melt formed new streams It bashed through boulders and carved ravines.

Chorus

Verse 3:

There's famous ones like Niagara Falls Quiet ones like the seven tubs And though the drive takes awhile My favorite is Ohiopyle.

Ash to Ash

Ash to Ash

Van Wagner December 22, 2014

Chorus:

Am

Ash to ash and dust to dust.

C G Am

Wood to splinters and iron to rust.

Am G Am

Ash to ash and dust to dust.

Am G Am

Ash to ash and dust to dust.

G

Am

Verse 1:

F G Am

My dad taught me of many trees.
F G Am

The Oaks, the Pine, and Hickories.
C G Am

He taught me the Ash but I paid little mind.
Am G Am

A common tree with a simple line.

Chorus

Verse 2:

Here I live in 2014
Not an Ash alive left for spring.
A beetle has come, the Ash is no more.
They all will fall from the emerald borer.

Verse 3:

I sit here now on a floor of Ash.

Rocking chairs and baseball bats.

Hard to believe they'll soon be gone.

Just a few years ago they were so common.

Chorus

Verse 4:

I tell my boys "take a look at that stand" By the skate park on St. Mary's land. They've painted an X on every tree. They'll all be gone in a matter of weeks.

Verse 5:

I'm not high and mighty, I've got no horse.
Ain't pointing fingers just strumming chords.
I'm saying out loud I can't believe.
I'm gonna out-live these trees.

Chorus

Outro:

Ash to ash and dust to dust Ash to ash and dust to dust

Started With a Board

Started With a Board

Van Wagner July 11, 2012

Verse 1:

Am

Some floods come from water Some just come from life

Dm Am

No matter what kind of flood you face

E Am

You need a boat to survive.

Lord Said to Noah
There's gonna be a flood.
Go round up all those critters
Get em' out of the mud.

Chorus:

Am

And it started with a board Just a piece of Pine And it started with a board

E Am And it ended fine.

The biggest things in life Gotta start small You start with a board and you build it tall.

Verse 2:

Crossing a great ocean
Coming to America
Some by choice some by chains
Building a new world.

Nina Pinta Santa Maria
Just a few of the thousands that came
The greatest country there ever was
Built by every race.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Iron tracks and wooden ties
Transcontinental lines.
The World had never seen a railroad
Cross a nation wide.

Promontory Utah

The day that East met West
The greatest railroad that ever was
A golden spike on the crest.

Chorus

Verse 4:

Batter up the umpire said
He dusted off the plate
Up stepped the great Hank Aaron
And beat the record set by the Babe.

Cal Ripken Jr.

Ernie Banks, Willie Mays. Great plays by the greatest players Greatest game ever made

Chorus:

And it started with a board
Just a piece of Ash
It started with a board
The pitches come fast
The biggest things in life
Gotta start small
You start with a board
And you build it tall

Verse 5:

The screams of Jimi Hendrix
The soul of B.B. King
The acoustic sound of Woody Guthrie
Frailing on the strings
All of the great music
Guitars strumming chords
From silent night to rock n' roll
They all started with a board

Be A Tree

Be A Tree

Van Wagner June 8, 2006

Chorus:

D A D A

If I could be anyone but me
G A D

I wonder who would I be.

Α

D A D A

If you could be any type of tree

Tell me, what would you be?

Verse 1:

G

G D

Maybe the white Pine tall among the rest

G D A

Been called the king of the forest.

G D

Or a solid Hickory won't bend before a break

Bm A

One thing's for sure trees make no mistakes.

Chorus

Verse 2:

Oh the Hemlock yeah I'd take that
I'd cool off the trout streams up on Cherry Flats
While on the Cherry well that won't be bad
Highest dollar in the woods maybe I oughta
rethink that

Chorus

Bridge:

E-----F#-------G
Are you solid where you are
E----------- F#---G
Like the spruce in this guitar
E---------F#---G------A
I bet you've got a tale to tell

Verse 3:

Oh goodnight Locust adios American Elm
A moment of silence for the Chestnut and it's
realm

Tomorrow's bringing those Shadberry blooms These woods are calling, calling home to you.

Shagbark Hickory

Shikellamy

Van Wagner August 2007

Intro: Em

Chorus:

Em Am

The Shagbark Hickory is a mighty hard tree

B7 Er

And it grows in the lowlands by rivers and streams.

Am
When the snow is falling and the wind blows cold

B7 En

Then the Shagbark Hickory holds it's own.

Verse 1:

G D

In the deep dark woods where no one ever goes

Εm

There's a stand of timber where the Shagbark grows.

G [

An open hand in solitude.

Em

You'll only be found if you're searching too.

Chorus

Verse 2:

Hard times hit and they never seem to stop.

You're back on the bottom just as soon as you reach the top.

You find yourself standing cause it's all you know to

Like that old tree with a grain straight and true.

Chorus

Bridge: Verse Chords x1

Verse 3:

On the forest floor it might turn to rotten wood.

Or carpenters" hands might work it into good.

As the knife is drawn along the grain. This piece of Hickory breathes life again.

Green Bridge

Walking the Streets

Van Wagner and Robb Bomboy July 2000

	D	G
draws my	eyes to the	bridge
G	•	_
ı kid		
	С	
ith on the	right.	
	J	
he pillars	below	
-		
	e tonight.	
	J	
G		
ur lullaby		
the sky		
Ď		
an eve		
Ď		
skv		
_ •	3	
v. aoodnia	aht	
,, 90001118	···	
e niahts d	one by	
	G a kid aith on the the pillars o. t never lik our lullaby out the sky D an eye D e sky D y, goodnig	draws my eyes to the G a kid C with on the right. The pillars below o. t never like tonight. G our lullaby G the sky D an eye D

Verse 4:

Tonight's her song fills the air Hardly half the town cares. She was as strong, as the century.

Holding breath as the diesel dared me.

Climbing arches in the sky

River Rat

River Rat

Van Wagner June 8, 2016

Intro: Chorus Chords x1

Chorus [Chords x2 Each Time]:

Em

Raised up from the river mud

River rat running in his blood.

Em

G

One thing that was understood С

Am

River rats are up to no good.

Verse 1:

Am

As sure as the river flows

Em

It's something everybody knows.

Am

The kids from across the tracks

Bm

Everyone of them a river rat.

They learn to swim by the river shore Cut off jeans and not much more. The lucky ones have a boat It gets them where they need to go.

Chorus

Verse 2:

The old men remember times When eels were caught on fishing lines. Now the fish don't bite so well Now they're only catching hell.

Kids down town with nothing to do. You can guess what all that leads to. Idle hands bring you down When there's nothing to do in your town. Capo: 4th or 5th fret

Chorus

Verse 3:

Told more than he can count A river rat will never amount. Written off before age 10 But nobody checked with him.

He's got dreams of bigger things. A Mind that thinks a heart that sings. A river rat, that's for sure But this one's gonna change the World.

Lightning Tree

Woolrich Coat

Van Wagner August 28, 2008

Intro: Chorus Chords x2

Verse 1:

G C

Let's all agree, there's no time for misery

G

C

Is that a deal for you and me?

D G

Let's put the past far behind.

G C G

If there's a hatchet, can we go bury it?

C G

There's no need to carry it.

D 0

Bury yours and bury mine.

Chorus:

(F) (Em) G

Let's go up to the lightning tree

(F) (Em) G

It's time to reconcile

(F) (Em) G

Life's too short for enemies

(D)

When you're only here for a while.

Verse 2:

What are we proving, holding firmly to that grudge?

Don't expect it to ever budge

Carried baggage for far too long.

Let's try forgiving, let bygones wash away

History was yesterday

It's time we move along.

Chorus:

Capo: 2nd fret

Verse 3:

If not for you, then do it for the Lord. He was never one for the sword He came from the school of peace. It ain't easy, To let go of all of it To forgive and to forget But in peace is victory.

Chorus

Outro: Chorus Chords x2

Sit by the River and Dream

Ash to Ash

Van Wagner August 2014

Intro: G D Em x2 Verse Chords x1

Verse 1:

G D Em
Gonna sit by the river and dream
G D Em
Let my soul roll on up with the stream.
C D G C
The water, the willow, the maples all green.
Em D G

Gonna sit by the river and dream.

Gonna go to the mountains and heel.

For a day maybe longer if I feel

Where the bridges are wood and the barns are steel

Gonna go to the mountains and heel.

Chorus:

D C G
Why do I worry
C G D
It does, no good, at all.
D C G
Why do I hurry,
C G D
I burn out, then I fall.
G D Em x2

Verse 2:

Gonna pick a direction and walk All alone there's no need to talk. Follow the call of the red tailed hawk. Gonna pick a direction and walk.

Gonna finally lay down for some rest.

As the Sun goes down in the west.

I'm tired from my head, to my feet, to my chest.

Gonna finally lay down for some rest.

Chorus

Bridge: Verse Chords x1

Verse 3:

Gonna sit by the river and dream
Let my soul roll with the stream.
The water, the willow, the maples all green.
Gonna sit by the river and dream.

Outro: Verse Chords x1

Four Days of Rain

The Flood Sessions: Four Days of Rain

Van Wagner September 8, 2011

Intro: D

Verse 1:

G D

All my life I've heard stories of 72

Hurricane Agnes brought the river up to 32, feet.

C G D

I thought that record would stand for all my life.

C G D

But the river may hit 32 later tonight.

Chorus:

C D

The river looks angry after 4 days of rain

She's gonna remind us who's in charge again.

Verse 2:

We got word this morning to go sand bag in town. So we headed over Bald Top road the only road around.

Had to bag a wall from Mahoning Creek.

By noon a foreman said we built 6 feet.

Chorus

Verse 3:

People come together in a flood from all walks of life

I saw a banker on my left and county inmates on my right.

If the levee holds then most of town will stay dry. But they don't have a levee across the river in Riverside.

Chorus

Capo: 2nd fret (just top 5 strings; low E

un-capoed)

Bridge: Chorus Chords x1

Verse 4:

No one talks about it though it's on all our minds. The worst will be the clean up next week some

time

Eventually the mud will dry and town will start

anew.

It will just be a legend like the flood of 72

Chorus

Outro: Chorus Chords x2



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 3: Among these Mountains, Stones, and Creeks

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Steve Patterson Last Updated: 11/25/2020

Ridge Runner

The Flood Sessions: Four Days of Rain

Van Wagner Capo: 5th fret January 23, 2012 Intro: Em---C G D G Chorus Verse 1: Outro: Intro (x1) G Some men love the ocean and spend a life at sea I need a forest a life in the trees Home is where the heart is, find your heart a good home. My heart is in the woodland, lost and alone. Chorus: Em-C Deep in the woods where the highway can't be heard I hear the sound of quiet in the absence of words. Em Born where I belong I belong there still. G God made me a ridge runner in these rolling hills. Intro (x1) Verse 2: When I was a young lad my parents told me then Go out in the woods, find yourself young man First it was hunt and fish, deeper lessons came. Here I sit all grown up and I'm searching just the same.

Chorus

Bridge: Chorus (x1)

Verse 3:

The mountains are a mystery the longer you stay
They'll roll their way in your soul deeper each day
Even if you leave they'll remain in your heart
In the way the world sees you and how you and how you
see the world.

Bullet Hole

Ash to Ash

Van Wagner February 8, 2015

Intro: Em G (x3) C Em D G

Verse 1:

G

There's a stone in Clinton County

G

С

Where a rifle left its sign.

C

When I see it, it reminds me

D

Of a long forgotten time

С

When market hunters roamed these mountains

G

Chasing elk, deer, and bear.

C

The crack of their Winchester

D

O

Their missed shot is still here.

Chorus:

Em

Bullet hole

G

Just a mark left behind

Em

Bullet hole

G

Just a shadow of that day

Em

Bullet hole

G

Just a mark to remind

)

m D

Life's a close call hey hey.

Verse 2:

Last night I was pickin'
With some friends at Ulsh Gap.
They showed me a Woolrich
With a hole front to back.

They say this man is still living He took a round to the hip. Just a hole in a Woolrich From a 30.06

Chorus

Verse 3:

At the camp where I 1st hunted In the kitchen there's spot.
A man came in from hunting And his rifle went off.

The shot went through the ceiling Into the bunk room upstairs.

Just up through the floorboards Into a mattress up there.

Chorus

Outro: Em G (x3)

C Em

Life's a close call hey hey.

Halo Round the Moon

River Rat

Van Wagner Tuning: Drop D
November 15, 2016 Capo: 5th fret

Intro: Dm (x2) Outro: Dm

Verse 1:

Dm

A change in the season, summer to fall

G Dm

The wind takes leaves in, relentless and raw.

The days are shorter, the night so soon.

F A Dr

The frost hangs a halo round the moon.

G F Dm

Halo round the moon.

Verse 2:

A time of migration, ancient herds.
Time to spread wings, millions of birds.
Passenger pigeons, would take to flight.
Wings turned day, into night.

Halo round the moon.

Verse 3:

Bring on the winter, time stands still Every cold breath you take in, every brittle chill. Like a blanket, on everything. After dark days, comes spring.

Halo round the moon.

Verse 4:

The spring comes with water, rain upon rain. The Sun grows bolder, green comes again. Humans need it, we need to see green. It washes our souls until clean.

Halo round the moon.

Halo round the moon.

Sassafras Tea

A Mountain Man's Dream

Van Wagner September 6, 2015

Chorus:

F C F C
Sassafras Tea, Sassafras Tea
G C
From the roots or the leaves
F C F C
Sassafras Tea, Sassafras Tea
G C

The nectar of the mountains to me.

Verse 1:

G C F C

They say it's bad for you if you drink too much.
G C F C

Gallons and gallons a whole bathtub.
G C F C

If you drink that whole bathtub they say it's bad for you
G C F C

If you drink that much I'd say you have issues.

Chorus

Verse 2:

I've always loved, good sweet birch.

A twig in my mouth when I'm working on work.

No matter how I boil, no matter how I steep
I can't make birch into tea.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Indian Spice Bush, I love that smell. The leaves, the berries, they do me well. My neighbor Keith made some into brew Compared to Sassafras it just won't do.

Chorus

Bridge: FCFC

Verse 4:

I suppose you could spike it and give it some kick
I prefer it plain just as is.
When my days are over if you raise a glass to me
I hope that your glass is filled with Sassafras Tea

Ghosts are Real

Be a Tree

Van Wagner April, 2006

Intro: Em

Verse 1:

Em

There's ice in the night air there's rapture in the wind.

You can see it in the window glare or aching in your hand.

D

I never said corruption, no mention of deceit Em

Just acknowledging something I can't hear or see.

C Er

Ghosts are real boys, ghosts are real.

Chorus:

G

Ghosts are real boys, ghosts are real.

D Am Em

Make no mistake about it ghosts are real.

G

You can call them apparitions call them spirits if you feel

Am C Em

Make no mistake about it them ghosts they are real.

Verse 2:

So many times I've traveled highways day and night Both interstates and byways shotgun on my right

I've learned to accept them when they make their presence known

What choice do I have when they come rattling bones.

Ghosts are real boys, ghosts are real

Chorus

Bridge: Verse (x1)

Verse 3:

I know she is here, right now with me. She's a guardian spirit over my family. Although her time on Earth was fast as can be

I think she's found her quiet and peace.

Ghosts are real boys, ghosts are real

Chorus

Outro: Em

Thankful for the Land

Recluse

Van Wagner August 31, 2017

Intro: G C G D

Verse 1:

G C

I'm thankful for the land that I have, it gives so much to me.

Clean water in the well I drink, clean food to eat.

3

The trees heat my home from cold, 7 months of fire.

The trees give me lumber to build, higher and higher.

Verse 2:

I'm thankful for the woods I share, they give so much to me. Venison, the deer I chase berries and seeds. The grouse and turkey too, feed my family.

Squirrel when times are tough, has been a gift to me.

Intro (x1)

Verse 3:

I'm thankful for the streams I have, they give so much to me.

The bass in summer trout in the spring.

Crayfish now and then, just right when steamed.

So much life provided all from the streams.

Verse 4:

I'm thankful for the sounds I hear music to my life Crickets and Cicadas, a katydid choir. Coyotes last night right about sundown I would not trade an orchestra for nature's sounds.

Intro (x1)

Verse 5:

I'm thankful for the colors I see vivid and clean. Shale with it's iron red, trees of forest green. The innocence of winters white, everything so still Painted with the masters brush, a perfect pastel. Capo: 2nd fret

Verse 6:

I'm thankful for all my friends they mean so much to me.

They're there for me when I need them most and also in between.

Love from the start of life love at the end

I'm thankful for the love I feel that comes from good friends.

Verse 7:

I'm thankful for all these things, they give so much to me.

Summer of Hawks

The Flood Sessions: Four Days of Rain

Van Wagner Album: In key of Am July 16, 2011

Intro: Bm D (x2) Chorus, Intro (x1)

Verse 1: D

Bm I hold it firm, nature has a plan. Never seen it like this in years before.

Every now and then, there's a sign for man. I give my word, I'm gonna see this through Ever since July a dozen or more.

Gonna watch these birds and learn something new.

Perched in that Pine, wings soaking the Sun. Bm Chorus

These Red Tailed Hawks own the land they're on.

Chorus:

Bm G D Α

Searching for a sign in this Summer of Hawks.

G D Watch as they glide, in the sky they own.

Bm G D

Shadow on the ground, circling above.

Bm G D

In this summer of hawks the wind rules the woods.

Intro (x1)

Verse 2:

People often look, for human traits in birds.

But I often find, their traits in us.

When it comes to Hawks, there's none in man.

We borrow their skies and we share their land.

Chorus, Intro (x1)

Verse 3:

Getting near sunset and their tree is bare.

All the Red Tailed Hawks have taken to the air.

Night sets in, and dark unveils

There's a thousand hiding places off the trails.

Verse 4:

Outro: Intro (x2)

If Time Could Stand Alone

If Time Could Stand Alone

Van Wagner

van vvagner	Capo: Zha net
February 2002	
Intro: GEm C D G	Bridge: G D
Verse 1:	
G D G C	I want to go to the mountains G C D
If tonight I get called away, in the fog out on the highwa G D C I'd have no choice but to go. G D Em C But I have to admit, I'm not quite cool with it. G D C There's so much I haven't done.	
Chorus:	Chorus
GEm C D G	0.101.00
If time could stand alone, and carry my life on.	Outro: GEm C D G Em G
GEm C D G	Callot o Em ob o Em o
I just can't say amen, lord I don't want this prayer to end	d.

Cano: 2nd fret

Verse 2:

Some folks see a prayer, like a phone call in the air But that doesn't work for me.

My prayer began, when I was born into this land.

Give me a life, true and free.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Some folks see a prayer, like a phone call in the air But that doesn't work for me.

My prayer began, when I was born into this land.

Give me a life, true and free.

Days Just Like Today

Going Back to Bald Top

Van Wagner	Capo: 2nd fret
August 4, 2000	
Intro: C	Chorus (x2)
Verse 1:	Outro (Soldier's Joy): CFCGCFCGC
Am G C	•
I turn around and I blink	
Am G C G	
I have to laugh as I take the time to think.	
Am G C	
900 memories all in today	
F G F G C	
Doing nothing but nothing, as the daylight burns away.	
Started off, in mud up to my knees.	
Tough day for logging but that ain't up to me.	
I got a craving for a chainsaw in my hands	
He says forget about working, let's go pick the banjo Van.	
Chorus:	
F C G	
He's playing Soldier's Joy like he never has before.	
F C G	
There's truth in his smile and mud on the floor.	
C F G F G C	
Oh it's days just like today, that make me live life again.	
Verse 2:	
Just after noon we head into the woods.	
In the month of August there ain't nothing that feels as good.	
He's telling stories about a woman who ate goats,	
In an ocean of ferns we're fishing for cherries and oaks.	
Then another storm rolls in	

Then another storm rolls in
We fall back to the places we had been.
Hard apple cider cold and clean.
With a belly full of venison and a young mind full of dreams.

Lost in the Mountains

Lost in the Mountains

Van Wagner	Capo: 5th fret
December 15, 2010	
Intro: G D C G (x2)	
Verse 1:	
G D C G	
A tune for Ricketts Glen, a song from the trail.	
G D C G	
Water falls when it can, and it freezes when it will.	
Em C G D	
I've known it all my life, Red Rock blue skies.	
Em C G D	
There's a truth in these trees, there's a truth that will set you free.	
Chorus:	
C D	
A soul will search the mountains a thousand times or more.	
C D	
You turn and face the valleys a thousand times over. Em C	
I've seen it up on Montour Ridge and also Ricketts Glen.	
D G	
You must get lost in the mountains to find your way again.	
Verse 2:	
It happened to my dad, it was the Loyalsock trail.	
He helped us hike to our camp, then he returned to the trail.	
He set out all alone, his flashlight shining low.	
Just him and the dark, a faint highway sound led him to his car.	
Chorus	

Bridge: Verse (x1)

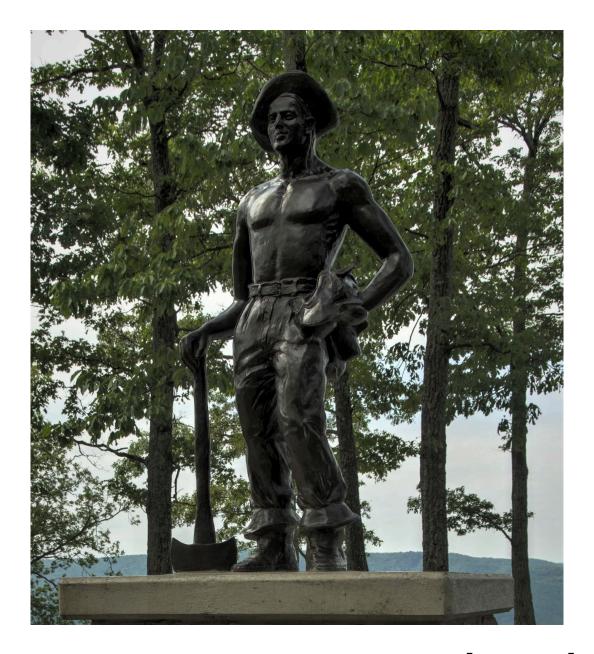
Verse 3:

I know it's in the cards, comes a time I'll be off track.

But some time in the woods, is bound to bring me back.

I'll set course to be lost, I'll find a creek never crossed.

I'll set my mind at ease, surrounded by mountains, stones, and creeks.



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 4: Coal, Wood, Ore, & Lore

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Steve Patterson Last Updated: 11/25/2020

Devil's Featherbed

Lost in the Mountains

Van and Ollie Wagner March 2010

Intro: Em

Em G A G Em (x2)

Verse 1:

Em G A
Not far from the edge of town

G Em

There's a rocky pit to the underground.

Em G A

No map will ever get you there.

G Em

Backwoodsmen know that empty air.

I've seen it with my own 2 eyes
It's filled with snakes and dark sunlight.
100 yards of rocky field
only serpents find comfort there.

Chorus:

Em B7

It's full of emptiness rattlers and copperheads

C B7 Em

Don't go after dark to Devil's Featherbed

Bridge: Em B7 C B7 Em Em G A G Em

Verse 2:

Rocks of icy cold sandstone
The lichens grow all alone.
The wind will rob you to the bone.
I've spent the night almost alone.

Just my dog by my side.

A sleepless night by the fire.

There's not enough Oak in this world

To warm that air and cure that cold.

Capo: 3rd fret

Chorus

Bridge (x1)

Verse 3:

40 days he came to Christ Tempted him with his spite Then he tested Judas too Don't let him try his tricks on you.

Where trouble lays it's broken head Temptation fires are fully fed It's home to fear, home to dread It's the lonely Devil's Featherbed

Chorus (x2)

Outro: Intro (x1)

Hard Coal Navy

Woolrich Coat

Van Wagner August 23, 2008

Intro: Am C D F Am

Verse 1:

Am C

On the banks of the river, rusting away.

D I

A barn red coal barge is all that remains.

Am C

It hasn't touched the water except for a few floods.

F A

It's loaded with river coal and Susquehanna mud.

Up in Wyoming Valley Nanticoke and East

The collieries washed anthracite in the rivers and the creeks.

Some coal was lost to the river, washed downstream and west.

It settled in drifts like snow behind a fence.

Chorus:

G Am

The hard coal navy hasn't sailed for years.

F An

Quiet are the engines and the old paddlewheels.

G Am

They know it's still down there they feel it in their souls

F Am

The captains still longing to go dredging for coal.

Verse 2:

There were hundreds of barges when dredging was at its peak

Harvesting coal that would have washed out to sea.

Loaded on conveyer and rounded like a beet.

Sold up and down the river for cookstoves and heat.

They've all left the river now, the regulations strict.

The pages of paperwork have just grown too thick.

Perhaps it's for the best, for the health of the stream.

But I must admit I miss that old paddlewheel fleet.

Chorus

Bridge: Intro (x1)

Capo: 2nd fret (album)

Verse 3:

Sometimes with my family we head out in the waves.

A 5 horsepower Johnson on the river for the day.

Galvanized buckets are waiting in the haul. We pick the banks by hand that same river coal.

Chorus

Outro: F Am

Shortleaf Pine

Shortleaf Pine

Van Wagner August 27, 2018

Intro: Bm A G Bm Bm A G D

Verse 1:

G D
15 years hunting Ginseng
G D
All these years not a one

Then on the trail at Ricketts Glen

Bm A I almost stepped on one.

A Hellbender in the mountains They're out there hiding in these streams Believe me these things are out there It's my fault if they go unseen.

Chorus:

Bm A G Some things are scarce

Bm And hard to find

Bm A G

Sometimes right before your eyes

D

There's a Shortleaf Pine

Bridge: Bm A G D

Verse 2:

Oh the Pennsylvania Bobcat They've seen you with eyes and ears If you're lucky you'll spot one Just as quick they'll disappear

Rattlesnakes in Montour County 40 years to just see one Some people fear what they don't understand And they kill them with their guns

Chorus

Bridge (x1)

Verse 3:

From here to Alabama
The land of the Shortleaf Pine
Like the period of a sentence
Pennsylvania is the end of the line.

So I rambled over these mountains I had to find one on my own.
When I finally found one
It was 100 feet from my home.

Chorus

Outro: Bridge (x1)

Dunnawetter

Walking the Streets

Van Wagner and Matt Harrison June 2004

Intro: G (x4)

Verse 1:

G

Every time I'm in Sunbury the rain's a coming down.

D

Winds pick up, thunder rolls around.

Em

С

The air gets cool as day turns to night

G

Lightning crashes what a powerful sight.

Chorus:

Em

С

G

D

Oh Dunnawetter, the fields are turning green.

Em

It's the life of the land

С

From God's own hand

G

Making it pure and clean.

Bridge: Intro (x1)

Verse 2:

Miles of water coming down today Miles more headed towards the Bay. The Old Chesapeake up to the brim Back in the North is where it begins.

Chorus

Bridge: Intro (x1) Verse (x1)

Capo: 2nd fret

Verse 3:

From the top of the mountain on Mile Hill Road

See the storm brewing in the valley below The wind picked up, the leaves came down

The storm so close you could touch it from the ground

Chorus

Outro: Intro (x1)

The Winds of Idaho

The Pickle Barrel

Van Wagner September 2002

Intro: D A D G D

Verse 1:

D A D

I woke up to the sound of coyotes

9 [

And the sight of the Sawtooth range.

A Bm

The smell of sage and sawdust

G A Idaho in a morning rain.

G

DA D

A logging camp outside of Stanley

Salmon River between the plains

A Bm

This ground is hard and dusty

D A D

The work is just the same.

Chorus:

G D

As fall sets in on the Aspen

Bm A

The Lodgepole waiting for a snow.

C D

I can almost feel myself changing

A D

With the winds of Idaho

Bridge: DAD

Verse 2:

We're skidding Fir, we're skidding Lodgepole We're setting chokers on the bull line. Every few hours we hit the coffee It's been steepin' on the fire.

That's how it is Pacific logging But no 2 days are the same Something new in every holler This land is far from tamed.

Chorus

Bridge: D A D G D

A Bm

GΑ

Verse 3:

Soon the snow will cut our season And rust will take our chains. Soon we'll be leaving Pack up camp, head home again.

But I'll keep a bag of fresh sawdust For cabin fever setting in I'll close my eyes and smell the forest And breath in the Idaho wind.

Chorus

Outro: DAGD

Cold Wind

If Time Could Stand Alone

Van Wagner and Matthew Harrison 1996/1997

Intro: Am Dm Am E Am

Verse 1:

Am Dm Am

It's mighty dark outside, it's mighty dark outside,
Dm Am E Am

It's mighty dark outside lord lord, there's a cold wind blowin' tonight.

The cold rain's coming on in, the cold rain's coming on in, The cold rain's coming on in lord lord, there's a cold wind blowin' tonight.

Bridge: Intro (x1)

Verse 2:

The fire's burning low in here, the fire's burning low in here, Fire's burning low in here lord lord, there's a cold wind blowin' tonight.

My blankets all got holes, my blankets all got holes, My blankets all got holes lord lord, there's a cold wind blowin' tonight.

Bridge: Intro (x1)

Verse 3:

It's time I rest my weary bones, time I rest my weary bones, Time I rest my weary bones lord lord, I pray that cold wind don't blow.

Outro: Intro (x1)

83lb Hammer

Bridge: Intro (x1)

Recluse

Van Wagner February 2017 Intro: D G A D Chorus: 3 pounds of wood, 80 pounds of iron F 3 pounds of wood, 80 pounds of iron D In a shower of sparks swimming in fire Verse 1: G D You may have seen rollers, you may have seen a press But you never have seen a hammer like this. I swing it all day at the rolling mill D It takes a mighty hammer to straighten a rail. Chorus Bridge: Intro (x1) Verse 2: It takes 2 of us to lift 1 rail. Over 400 pounds we can do it well. We know we're being watched, we take pride in our work. I can show them all what an iron man is worth. Chorus

Tuning: Drop D (album) or capo on 2nd fret of top 5 strings (A D G B E)

Verse 3:

There's puddlers there's helpers there's others on shears

There's no such thing as an easy job here.

I've found my place in this rolling mill Swinging my hammer on these t-rails.

Chorus

Outro: Intro (x1)

Leatherman

Going Back to Bald Top

Van Wagner, Matt Harrison, and Karl Shelle August 2000	enberger	Capo: 2nd fret (album)
Intro: C		Chorus
Verse 1: C The Leatherman is your best friend on your	G r journey through life,	Outro: Chorus (x1)
With it's trusty pliers and its razor sharp kni	fe.	
The handle won't fall apart like the generic C	brands	
There's only one true American Leatherma	n.	
Chorus: F C		
All the ladies know that this tool's for real G		
Made of the finest steel, just see how it fee	ls	
When you break a string while you are out G C	performing	
To pull out the peg, reach down to the top of	of your leg.	
Bridge: F.C.		

Verse 2:

GC

Have you ever been stuck in your harmonica holder? And you couldn't get it loose with a 2-ton boulder. Just take that trusty tool to that stubborn bolt, And you'll bust out of that holder like a wild colt.

Chorus

Bridge (x1)

Verse 3:

When you're on a date and the night is to its end.

And she walks you to the door and she invites you in.

Don't hesitate, procrastinate just go on in,

When your stomach gets queasy pull out your Leatherman.

Note: Song played in G on album

Chickens Lament

Be A Tree

Van Wagner June 16, 2006

Verse 1:

C

It's hard to be a chicken especially on my farm The chickens that live here, aren't living very long

Some in the evening some the morning fog Some from the weasels and some my brothers dog.

Verse 2:

Scratching in the gravel picking in the mash Turn over a rotten log and treat them to the stash

Get them in the morning dodging chicken legs
Boys you haven't lived until you've had my scrambled eggs

Verse 3:

We must have lost a dozen to the weasel and the fox But I never saw her coming that old Red Tailed Hawk

Take pity on these chickens raise your glasses high A toast to my feathered friends before they up and die

Verse 4:

It's hard to be a chicken especially on my farm The chickens that live here, aren't living very long

Women, Words, and Wine

Living In Myself

Van Wagner Winter 1997/1998

Intro: C G Am G C

Verse 1:

C G

Folks ain't the same, down this way Am G

Wish I was back home Susquehanna way.

)

Grinning like a jukebox and spending the whole day,

∖m (

Trying to remember what I did with yesterday.

Chorus:

F C

Seems like I always forget

Am G

Something from my past I should regret.

F C-----Am

I don't know why but I feel so fine

F-G C

Thank God for women, words, and wine

Bridge: Intro (x1)

Verse 2:

What I'd give to be standing in July

Dancing in a rainstorm with my dad outside.

As a kid we'd watch the creek rise and set sail down the mountainside.

Chorus

Capo: 2nd fret (album)

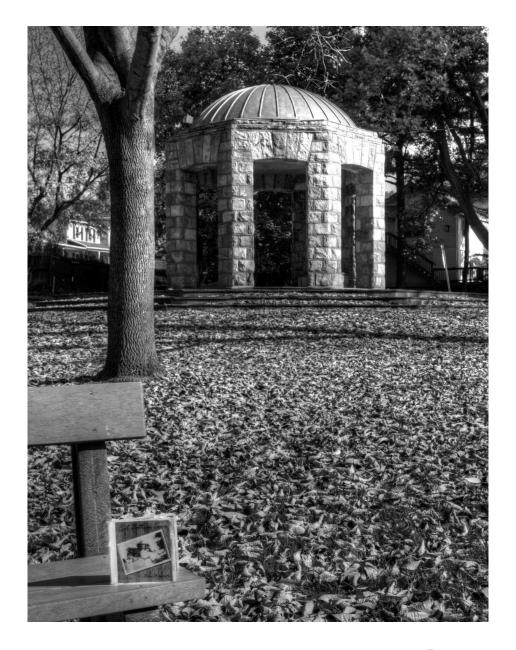
Bridge: Intro (x1)

Verse 3:

The 16th of May found its way into my life the days roll past quicker every night. In a year I'll be looking back at here, Hope her reflection is still shining clear.

Chorus

Outro: C-----Am F-G C



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 5: Legends from a Flat Bottom Town

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Steve Patterson Last Updated: 11/25/2020

Flat Bottom Town

Flat Bottom Town

Van Wagner Spring 1998

Verse 1:

)

Well, just about an hour's dream from here

D G

Only 40 winks away

D G A

There's a town on the river banks that'll carry you away.

D

Chorus:

G---A

I'm going down to a flat bottom town

G /

When the river comes up

) A (

And the people they go down

A D

Flat bottom town

Verse 2:

Talked to an old friend today, she stopped by for some words

Talked about a long lost friend who now lives in Gettysburg

We were from the same neighborhood, and we all grew up with him

But he's forgotten where he's from, I guess we're too "small town" for him.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Train still runs day and night, up on the North Shore line

And the clock by the court house is still 10 minutes behind

Not much has changed here, except the people passing through

They'll never forget you, the denying is up to you

Chorus

Instrumental (Verse Chords)

Chorus

Verse 4:

Well we're all from somewhere, towns big and small

They may not be perfect, but they've made us who we are

These people and places carry us through

If you turn your back on them, you're just turning out the light.

Chorus

Alone and in the Pines

You Can't Force a Mule

Van Wagner September 1, 2019

Intro: Dm, then verse chords

Chorus:

Dm A

Sitting in the pines alone and in the rain

om G

The rain could stop, the Sun could shine and I would

Dm

feel the same.

Dm A

Alone by choice, alone by design

Dm G A Dm

I'll sit and play my banjo alone in the pines.

(play verse chords after every chorus)

Verse 1:

I've been to the city, I'm been to many towns I've been to Spain and Scotland and other foreign ground.

I live my life, a stranger no matter where I go.

The lonesome winds remind me the harder that they blow.

Chorus

Lonesome in my rib cage, lonesome to the core
The screech owl reminds me I'll be lonesome more.
The crickets try to calm me but there's really no use
When a lonesome feeling's got you, it's hard to get
loose.

Chorus

I'll drink a bit of pale ale or cider in my glass And forget about my feelings until the feelings pass.

Tomorrow is a new day by then I'll be fine I'll be sitting with my banjo alone in the pines.

Chorus (x2)

Outro: Verse chords

The Cowboy and the Hippy

Flat Bottom Town

Van Wagner 1998

Intro: DGA

Verse 1:

 \Box

Now the cowboy and the hippy are sitting and

G-----A

talking of life.

D

And the Cowboy looks up to catch the sun

G-----A

sinking to the night.

D

He says "that's how it goes...you're up then

G-----A

you're down for a while."

D

Then the hippy looks up from his drink to agree

G-----A

with a smile.

Chorus:

G

D

It's fountains of dreams and puddles of luck,

(walk down to C)

How they stumble through life and never get stuck.

G

D

Just a cowboy and a hippy too scared to wake up,

C

D

All they ask of tomorrow is to see the sun come up.

Verse 2:

The hippy keeps talking about a band he's trying to find.

A bunch of good songs, and guys that can keep good time.

He says "I hear this music in my head every time I sleep..

And it's just a matter of time, before that band finds me."

Chorus

Instrumental: Verse chords

Chorus

Verse 3:

Now the night has set in, and the place is ready to close.

So they gather their things and head outside by the road.

The cowboy tips his hat, and the hippy just smiled a goodbye.

Then both of their eyes were caught by a diesel streaming by.

Chorus

All they ask of tomorrow is to see the sun come up

I'll Take Love

Started With a Board

Van Wagner December 12, 2012

Intro: First ½ of verse chords

Verse 1:

ח

How many kids never see the stars Or their only green is some city park

Em G [

Oh it's not the same

Em G

Oh what a shame.

To see the sword in Orion's belt To share the sky ah how it felt. Cold and cool the grass below A sky's so clear before the snow.

Chorus:

Α

What a shame

D

What a shame.

G walk down to Em D

To never know a thing of simple things.

If I had the choice to love and lose

G walk down to Em

Or never to have loved

D

I'll take love.

(play intro chords after each chorus)

Verse 2:

A picnic perch at Lover's Leap A mile from the nearest street Oh me and you On a bed of moss and roots.

A frozen night at the canyon rim Black bear saying come join him. Oh Tioga wild Ah just a child.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Now we walk to meet our kids We hike them home just like I did. Oh same woods as these. Ah same creeks and trees.

I wish for you these things and more A smaller life in a bigger World. Oh it's been good to me. The sky above and hills of green.

Chorus (x2)

Mountain Lion

Lost in the Mountains

Van Wagner (with help from Luke and Calvin) December 30, 2010

Intro: Em C D Em (x2)

Verse 1:

Em

In the time of the Minguas the Andastes

D

There were wolves, there were bears among rocks and trees.

С

B7

It was just a fact of life in this land.

But the thing that put fear in the hearts of men was the scream of the cat said William Penn As he slept in the wilderness as a young man.

Chorus:

Em

Call them Panthers or call them Catamount

С

Mountain Lions all been hunted out.

D Em

The stories stay to this day.

C

Em

Mountain Lions were never gone some say.

Verse 2:

Officials say the last was killed In the 1870's Berks County Hills Always struck me they ended so far south.

You would think that a place like the northern tier Where the forest goes for miles, a true frontier Might provide refuge for panthers still around.

Chorus

Instrumental: Verse chords

Verse 3:

I've met folks who swear they're here They've seen their tracks or a hanging deer. Stashed up on a tree like the lions of Africa.

People who with their very own eyes
Have seen the long tail and heard the cries
Don't try to tell them the cougar's gone from
Pennsylvania.

Chorus

Instrumental: verse chords

Outro: Em

Smokeless Joe

Flat Bottom Town

Van Wagner November 1998

Verse 1:

D

Old Smokeless Joe never found the time,

G

D

To cross over the county line.

G

D

G

He wasn't one of the ramblin' kind.

Α

D

Oh, Old Smokeless Joe.

Verse 2:

78 years on fertile land, Lost 2 sons back in Vietnam, Now the years run through the hands, Oh, of Smokeless Joe.

Verse 3:

Then came the banks with their moneybags, Them in suits and Joe in rags. Forced to salute a green back flag, Oh, Old Smokeless Joe.

Verse 4:

Now he bought a place down in the town, Half an acre of old factory ground. The water from his spigot runs rusty brown, Oh, for Smokeless Joe.

Verse 5:

Sits at night on his front porch swing, And tries to remember how the wood cocks would sing. The sounds of Danville just ain't the same Oh, to Smokeless Joe.

Instrumental: Verse chords

Verse 6:

Old Joe died on the first of May, Only thing he owned was a jar of clay, And a beat up bible to show the way, Oh, for Smokeless Joe.

Verse 7:

Well that old man was a friend of mine, I think about him when I cross the county line.

Montour soil was as sweet as wine, Oh, to Smokeless Joe.

Shikellamy

Shikellamy

Van Wagner August 25, 2007

Intro: D

Verse 1:

Bm A Bm A
Oh the say he kept the peace of the confederacy.
G D G D
He and Conrad Weiser, an unlikely pair of men.
G D A G
They walked to Onondaga ice and snow and wind.
D
Shikellamy.

Verse 2:

Oh he was Iroquois from Shamokin shore.

I've read he was well spoken in Philadelphia when he came.

He spoke for 6 nations then the fever spoke for him. Shikellamy.

Instrumental: Verse chords

Verse 3:

Oh so what's it mean today now 3 centuries away He help off the bloodshed while British entrenched If it weren't for Shikellamy we'd all be speaking French Shikellamy.

Outro: D

Must've Been My Guitar

Flat Bottom Town

Van Wagner August 1998

Verse 1:

G

Well it all started back in high school I was playing my D quitar in class

When the teacher came back to my desk, and this G question she did ask

"Mr. Wagner what makes you think, that you can get D away with that?"

I said "your class is boring your voice is annoying and G you smell like a dead cat!"

Then she sent me down to the principal and told him he D was a freak

All I know is I ended up with detention for a week...

Chorus:

Well it must've been my guitar, yea it must've been my
D
guitar
Em
C

Whatever the song it must've been wrong,

Yea it must've been my guitar.

Verse 2:

Then came my senior prom and I went to pick up my date,

But I was busy playing my guitar and I got there three days late.

But I didn't want to hurt her feelings so I took her out to Burger King

But I could only afford a water cause my guitar needed new strings.

Well then she had the nerve to dump me, and she gave me back the ring She never even gave me a reason I guess she wasn't ready for the dating thing.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Then one day I stumbled into college and I was playing my guitar in a frat,

I met one guy named Puker and another guy named Rat.

Well we all had a good time drinking there till I asked them what was on tap

"It's imported triple stout lager bock ale" proclaimed my pal Rat

I said "well I only drink Yuengling, it's what you call the working man's beer

But I suppose that word 'working' ain't spoke much around here.

Well, then they took my cup away from me my imported triple stout lager bock ale.

I suppose Penn State ain't ready for me, maybe I ought to try Yale.

Chorus

G

Instrumental: D G D

Verse 4:

Now I'm driving down the highway with my guitar in my hands,

Just put the car in cruise control and sit back and jam.

I just ran over a Penn dot worker and into a Catholic Church.

I grabbed some bread off the communion table and flew out the back porch.

Now the cops are on my tail and they'll catch me if they can,

You know it just ain't easy being a Presbyterian guitar man.

Chorus

Be True to You

North of 80

Van Wagner Capo: 5th fret June 15, 2001 Intro: GD/GCGDG Verse 3: It's true I've got a college degree, I Verse 1: went to graduate school so I G D could teach. I just told the truth, a freedom that I rarely knew. But no matter how I try, I just don't C G look right in a tie. It cost me a friend, maybe he was no friend at all. Just earned my PhD in diggin' coal and cutting trees. I just strummed a chord, a sound this bar had never heard, I'm as happy as can be, A blue collar feels good on me. They just pointed me to the door, guess I was just singing at the wall. Chorus Chorus: Yes, be true, be true to you G There's truth to tell, there's a song to sing. There's something new, in everything. C G Not to be cliché, but "seize the day" And be true, be true to you. (play intro chords at the end of each chorus)

Verse 2:

Been told I'm awful weird, waste too much time, drink too much beer.

I raise a lot of concern, but I'm just walking my own road.

Ain't nothing wrong with being yourself, instead of trying to be someone else.

That's the wrong way to go, tell em' Van told ya so.

Chorus

You Can't Force a Mule

You Can't Force a Mule

Van Wagner October 6, 2019

Intro: CE/AmF/CG

Verse 1:

C

Raised in the mountains on a family farm

G

С

His dad taught him how to plow a field.

С

He walked behind the plow his hands on the reins

G

С

He'd plow the mountain side to get it tilled.

He worked in the woods skidding logs with the mules Oak and Maple to the sawmill.

His mules were so smart they would jump out of the way If a log got to rolling down the hill.

Chorus:

C E

You can't force a mule

Am I

You can't force a mule

C G

Buddy they are smarter than you

C E

You spend time with animals

Am

You'll find it to be true

C

You can force a horse

G C

But you cannot force a mule.

Instrumental: G C (x2)

Verse 2:

He often worked till dark sometimes miles from home

His mules knew their way back to the farm.

He could unhook those mules and let go of the reins

They'd walk home and back to the barn.

He said "man you should've seen them when we'd give them new shoes We'd paint each hoof with pine tar.

Those mules would trot around feeling proud and feeling new

They were ready to work and work hard."

Chorus / Instrumental

Verse 3:

I've heard it was the same down in the mines

The mules knew the limit they could go Some miners tried to trick em' and the added one more ton

Those mules wouldn't even try to pull the load.

His working years are over now but his memories are strong

I'm so grateful he told me of his mules, We shook hands and parted and I grabbed my guitar

And sang him the mule skinner blues.

ŭ

Chorus / Instrumental



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 6: Alone

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Ryan Patterson Last Updated: 6/14/2021

Alone

Alone

Van Wagner Capo: 2nd fret February 17, 2004

Intro: C

Verse 1:

С

Hey Mr. Mason cut me some stone

I'm gonna build me a wall so I can be alone.

= C

Keep the world on the outside and keep me in.

Dm F

I want no one to see the shape I'm in.

Chorus:

F C

On my own, to moan and groan, hard as stone, in my tone, alone

F C

You can call me a grouch 'cause I am in and you are out of my walls.

G (

But that's how it's gonna be nobody here but me, alone.

Verse 2:

Take your chisel and hammer in your hand
Cut me a block as quick as you can
There's plenty of sandstone on the edge of the field.
Just grab some river mud to point and seal.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Don't try to understand there's no one that can, except for one lady with a ring on her hand.

She must have meant it when she said "thick and thin"

Cause it seems that thin is all it's been.

Chorus

I'm from the Mountains and I'm Going to the Sea

Family Guitar

Van Wagner July 1, 2020

Intro: G D G

Verse 1:

G D G

This year's been a hard one in the mountains.

C

It's been a hard one for all.

D

I'm thankful I can roam, in my forest home

G C

Just hidden in the mountains so tall.

But I find myself thinking of the ocean
I guess there's a salty dog in me.
It's good to mix it up so I've loaded my truck
And I'm headed down to the sea.

Chorus:

G

I'm from the mountains

D G

And I'm going to the Sea

Interlude: Intro chords

Verse 2:

My family left the highlands of Scotland
They settled in Caroline
Did the best they could making tar from wood
In those Carolina pines.

They settled not far from the ocean.
They traded highlands for the sea
I'd take that trade but for just a few days
Then it's back to the mountains for me.

Chorus

Interlude: Intro chords

Verse 3:

Oh highway 95

From Richmond down the Southern line Just what the doctor ordered "south of the border"

_ . . .

Pedro, waving me by.

To the land of the palm tree, and trees with Spanish moss.

It's foreign to the bone from my Pennsylvania

home

If I didn't know I'd swear I was lost.

Chorus

Interlude: Intro chords

Verse 4:

I think it's the essence of nature Both the mountains and also the sea Both of them, feel untouched by men When I'm there it's just nature and me.

I feel it in South Carolina
When I see those beautiful pines
Amazed every time by Loblolly and Slash Pine
I see them and I just feel fine.

Chorus

Outro: Intro chords

Recluse

Recluse

Van Wagner February, 2017

Intro: Em D C (x2)

Verse 1:

Em G

It's hard to be present, hard to be sane.

C

D

- · ·

Put yourself out there again and again.

Em G

Energy's low anxiety high

A C

Too many people, too many times.

I can bring myself back, back from the edge. Refuel my spirit, clear out my head. It's all that saves me, in the chaos of life. I get it together, I get it all right.

Chorus:

Em D Em D I recluse, I recluse.

Em [

Back to the woods, back to the roots.

Fm [

I follow the lead of the Brown Recluse.

Interlude: Intro chords

Verse 2:

The working stiff, the working poor. You take it all day and come back for more. No word of thank you, no word of please Get what you can, take it and leave.

I know there's more to it, I know there is good. See it in people, I know that I should. But I find it exhausting living most days. I'm lonely in crowds and nervous on stage.

Chorus

Interlude: Intro chords

Verse 3:

friends.

Christ went to the mountains to pray and to think. This is the reason that I follow him.
But then he served people both strangers and

This is the part that I struggle with.

People need people, people just need.
I need the mountains alone with the trees.
I'll come back better, a stronger man
And then when I need it, I'll recluse again.

Chorus

Outro: Intro chords

Confidential Blues

Family Guitar

Van Wagner July 3, 2020 Capo: 5th fret

Intro: Am E Am (x2) Chorus

Chorus: Outro: Chorus chords

Am

Got the confidential blues now, feeling pretty low Am

I'll keep it to myself now, not much you can know.

Not much else to do, got the confidential blues.

Verse 1:

Ε Am

Some things aren't for telling, just for you to know.

Am

No sense in yelling, you're hurting and it shows.

Am

You don't need all the details, just keep it to yourself.

Am

I can see how you're feeling, your heart is on the shelf.

Chorus

Interlude: Intro chords

Verse 2:

I spent the morning broken, feeling so alone.

The way the day was going, there was no going home. So I strummed a little guitar, and plucked a string or 2. Guitars keep secrets, they're confidential too.

Chorus

Verse 3:

I look out in the woods, I see different shades of green.

I look into the mirror, I see different shades of me.

I carry this burden, in a bundle on my back.

And I play this guitar, confidential and black.

Life Keeps Trying to Kill Me

Shortleaf Pine

Van Wagner April 27, 2018

Intro: C G (x2) Verse 3: I feel into the river off my dad's sail Verse 1: A rope wrapped my ankle under I got blown up in a coal mine working underground water I did go. I was swimming with the fishes in The powder went off too close you should've heard the sound. the Susquehanna Nothing like being saved by your It twisted up a hatchet throwing coal and throwing slate father's hand. Fate tried to get me but fate was too late. Chorus Chorus: Interlude: Intro chords G Every day, every day Verse 4: I hear a train a coming, it's coming D Trying to stay one step ahead of fate. round the bend, The train's gonna get me I just don't C Close call after close call each and every way. know when. The time will come when I ride that Life keeps trying to kill me each and every day. last ride. That little black train has a seat for Interlude: Intro chords me inside. Verse 2: Chorus

Outro: Intro chords

A log almost caught me flying through the air
The beech I was cutting cut loose and barber chaired.
Accidents usually happen when you're tired and working late.
Your saw gets heavy and your mind has gone away.

Chorus

Interlude: Intro chords



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 7: 20 Years North of 80

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Alex Patterson Last Updated: 6/14/2022

All I Ever Wanted

North of 80

Van Wagner	Capo: 2nd Fret
December 2000	
Verse 1:	
G G—Em	
All I ever wanted was a house in the country	
D	
Facing to the West.	
G G—Em	
All I ever wanted was a woman to love me	
D	
And let the years do the rest,	
Chorus:	
C D GEm	
That's not the way it is for everyone	
C D G	
Not the way for everyone	
C D GEm	
The wind blows so cold, when your back's to the sun.	
C D G	
And you're facing the day on your own.	
, J. 1. 1. J. 1. J	

Verse 2:

I've got no lucky numbers, I have no favorite colors They all suit me just the same. I rarely read instructions, got dust on all the manuals Make my own rules for each game.

Chorus

Verse 3:

I've walked a bit on crutches, had my share of broken bones, Took the pain with a grin.

I've stood outside a coal mine thinking "man I shouldn't be here" And yet I went on in.

Chorus

Roots

Alone

Van Wagner Capo: 4th Fret 1999 - Dec. 24, 2002

Verse 1:

C F C

Like the past my tracks are laid straight down

l l'un hitahina a rail ta aoma laat taur

And I'm hitching a rail to some lost town.

Am Em F

And I'll find my way around this world

_

With a handful of hope and the heart of a girl.

Chorus:

Am C

Gotta put roots down of my own.

Am C (

Gotta put roots down, build myself a home.

Am

Gotta put roots down, in some land

F

Oh, I need a place to stand.

Verse 2:

Last night I wondered my thoughts in a knot Found the end of the string, the truth was all I'd caught. It's skin tight wrapping let me see who I am And tomorrow is dripping, covering the land.

Chorus (x2)

30 Something 6-String

North of 80

Van Wagner Capo: 2nd Fret December 1996 Verse 1: G G D On a hill in Danville, he'd look out across the sky, Slippin' on his Dobro, he'd make the Willows cry. If I was lucky, he'd play my tune again, "Pretty Boy Floyd the Outlaw" on his Gibson Mandolin. Chorus: С G How I miss those Gibsons, singing me to sleep. С G I'd lay awake many a night, to the words that they'd speak. I wonder if they're still in tune, the way I remember them, G That 30 something 6 string, and the Lloyd Loar mandolin. Verse 2: The best thing I ever learned wasn't my ABC's It was the dancing of his fingers, playing G, C, and D.

Chorus

Verse 3:

What I thought would last forever, vanished overnight.

We thought we ruled that mountain, but what gave us the right?

And when old Jeb was leaving, I only thought of him,

And let the dust take the 6 string, and the Lloyd Loar to the wind.

I watched him like a buzzard as I grew up through the years, He'd drink that cool water, with the Sons of the Pioneers.

Chorus

Rust Never Sleeps

Sing Out

Van Wagner June 2, 2021

Intro: Am F C (x3)

G

Verse 1:

Am F C Booker T and MG's

Am F C Took a road trip with me

Am F C

Both along for the ride

G

To a Pittsburgh sky,

Am F C We drove a blue Cadillac

Am F C

Threw guitars in the back.

Am F C

At least that's how I

G

Remember it.

Chorus:

F C G
Rust never sleeps in Steel City

F C G

The land of lost souls and hillbillies

F C G

That night we melted down

When Neil Young came to Pittsburgh town

G

Instrumental: Intro chords

Verse 2:

Down the Copperhead road

Our Cadillac did go. To a guitar town Out in the world.

He had his thumb in the wind.

We made room for him.

Didn't know it then

It was Steve Earle.

Chorus

Instrumental

Verse 3:

Route 119

Adrenaline and caffeine. Staring up at the stars As we drove home.

1993

I was still 16

But I was never the same After Neil Young's show.

Chorus

Outro: Am F C (x7)

Capo: Open, 3rd or 4th Fret

Lattimer Massacre

Climbing to the Top

Van Wagner

1997

Verse 1: Chorus G 1897, it's a cold September morning, Verse 3: D As the men marched on to There's something in the air today that's chilling me to the bone. Lattimer, believing all was fine. Looking out my shack window, up by old number 9, Sheriff Martin had him a D hundred men, waiting down the I can see some man gathering, as the fog takes its time. line. They were armed with the There's wives and kids off to the side, waving as they go. Sheriff's rifles, he had С G C deputized a hundred men. There must be 350 of them coming down the road. Yet not a single marcher had C a weapon in their hand. So I hollered out to one of them "hey what ya marching for?" The Sheriff opened fire, and the flag fell to the ground. He said "we're marching out of this town and on to Lattimer!" It's as if God went deaf that day amidst that dying sound. Chorus: G I ain't ever seen nothing like it, Said "we're marching on for liberty in this land of the brave and free and I hope I never do again. G It's a sin that a dollar weighs I'm sick of living my life, like a piece of machinery." more than a man. He said "son I'm sick of living like a second class human being, Verse 4: G D So for the 19 men that died that G We ain't asking for charity, just a little equality." day, won't you reach into your soul. Verse 2: And tell me who are the real Well the fog has finally rolled away and the sun is to its peak. Americans in this story that Someone said 10 miles have passed beneath our feet. we hold? We come from many countries, many foreign lands, Is it the thugs with the rifles, But we're waving old stars and stripes to show that we're American and the badges on their Just around Hazleton, up stepped old sheriff Martin. chests. He said "you've gone far enough boys, go back to where you come Or those who marched for from." freedom, and lay in eternal Well there wasn't no stopping in these men's eyes you could see rest? right to their souls, Their hearts filled with freedom, and their lungs filled with coal. Chorus

Tobacco From Tennessee

North of 80

Van Wagner Capo: Capo 5th February 2001 Intro: FCGC Verse 1: F С G С I don't know why that I love her so C Maybe her smile or her skin, Am С But I know it is something that is driving me wild No, I can't put my finger on it. I know I usually don't ask you much But this ain't no time for pride. Come on, let me in, put my Jones-in' to an end. I need some of what you got inside. Chorus: С She got lager from Pottsville

C

She got single malt Scotch Whiskey

G

She got roots on the Schuylkill

F C

C

And Tobacco from Tennessee

Verse 2:

Some don't believe in love at first sight, They say that's for fairy tales and such. But I know it's for real, there's no faking how I feel. With You I just can't get enough.

My folks raised me to be cultured and such To appreciate the finer things in life. But I waste no time with cappuccino or wine, No, I prefer the culture of my wife.

Chorus

Sing Out

Sing Out

Van Wagner June 1, 2021

Verse 1:

Am G

Sometimes we get crazy in this country about thoughts

: |

We tell people they ought not think the thoughts that they thought.

1

We place hands on our hearts and we pledge to all be free

F

But what we really mean is "you better think like me".

Chorus:

Am G F G

Sing out, sing out sing out

Am G F G

That's what freedom's about.

Am (

Find your song find your voice

F (

Think your thoughts choose a choice

Am G F G

Sing out, sing out, sing out.

Instrumental: Am G F G (x2)

Verse 2:

Pete Seeger must have felt like he was caught in a bad dream. He and the Weavers and their song Goodnight Irene.

They were the top of the charts the hottest show in town

Then they were called communists and knocked to the ground.

Almost overnight to the bottom they did go

Their concerts were canceled, then years with no shows.

Called before congress Pete had to testify

Pete Seeger the American stared the devil in the eye

Chorus + Instrumental

Verse 3:

Woody Guthrie, Sonny Terry, and Brownie McGee

Played some songs for the men in the US Army.

They offered Woody a fine seat but sent his friends to the back.

Their uniforms were green but their skin was too black.

Woody walked to the head table to the officers crowd

"this fight against fascism starts right here and now"

He flipped the table over and walked out the back

After that they never asked him back.

Chorus + Instrumental

Verse 4:

Sometimes we get crazy in this country about thoughts

We tell people they ought not think the thoughts that they thought.

We place hands on our hearts and we pledge to all be free

But what we really mean is "you better think like me".

Chorus (x1) + Instrumental (x2)

Crescent Moon

North of 80

Van Wagner Capo: 3rd Fret February 2001 **Intro:** D G / Bm A G (x2) Verse 1: D G I had a dream last night that I did something right. Α G And it all worked out o.k. Α D Α G Α I wasn't messing up like I do when I'm awake. D G A dream is a gift in life, a thread spun from the night Bm Α While it's tied around your heart. Α Α G D Α My heart is tied but free to go out in the dark. Chorus: Α D Α I'll dream a dream for you It will be right on it will be in tune. Α G Α I've got nothing to hide

Like a far off star and a crescent moon.

Instrumental: Intro

Verse 2:

In God do you trust or has your faith turned to rust.

Like the car that you drive.

You choose to believe what you want but I choose to be alive.

You've got to be so bold, to let go of the old.

And jump into the new.

We've been given the gift of today and tomorrow can be yours too.

Chorus + Instrumental

Capo: 2nd Fret

Forgive My Trespasses

The Boone Sessions

Van Wagner August 2020

Intro: G C G D (x2)

Verse 1:

G C

I'm a real ridge runner I was born with no shirt

Like the Chestnut Oak I grew from this dirt.

C

I walk where I may I hike where I can

D (

Like the Sun and wind I'm all over this land.

Chorus:

Em

Forgive my trespasses

G

There's gonna be more

Em

Forgive my trespasses

C G

I've gotta explore

Instrumental: Intro + Verse Chords

Verse 2:

No trespassing signs yellow and square Stapled in trees, everywhere. It can't be a crime to walk in the woods Sinning is bad but woods are good.

Chorus + Instrumental

Verse 3:

Up on the mountain down in the holler Find a good spring and get you a swaller Keep an eye on the Sun to keep track of the hour Keep an eye on the ridge and wild wildflowers.

Chorus + Instrumental

\$20 Bill

Hungry

Van Wagner June 9, 2022

Verse 1:

G C G

I am thankful for the money in my pocket

Em--G

I got a \$20 bill

Em--G

I got a \$20 bill

G

С

I am thankful for the food in my gullet

G

Em-----G

I got beef steak 'til I'm filled

Em-----G

I got beef steak 'til I'm filled

Chorus:

G G

Hey, hey, ho, ho

Em--G

I got a \$20 bill

Em--G

I got a \$20 bill

Verse 2:

Can you hear it, can you hear that old gray fox

He is barking like a dog

He is barking like a dog

Have you see it, have you seen that old fox trot

He's climbing trees and logs

He's climbing trees and logs

Chorus

Verse 3:

I've been down, I've been down so long
It must be up from here
It must be up from here
Long gone, like a turkey through the corn
Now it's corn through the deer
Now it's corn through the deer

Capo: 5th Fret

Chorus

Verse 4:

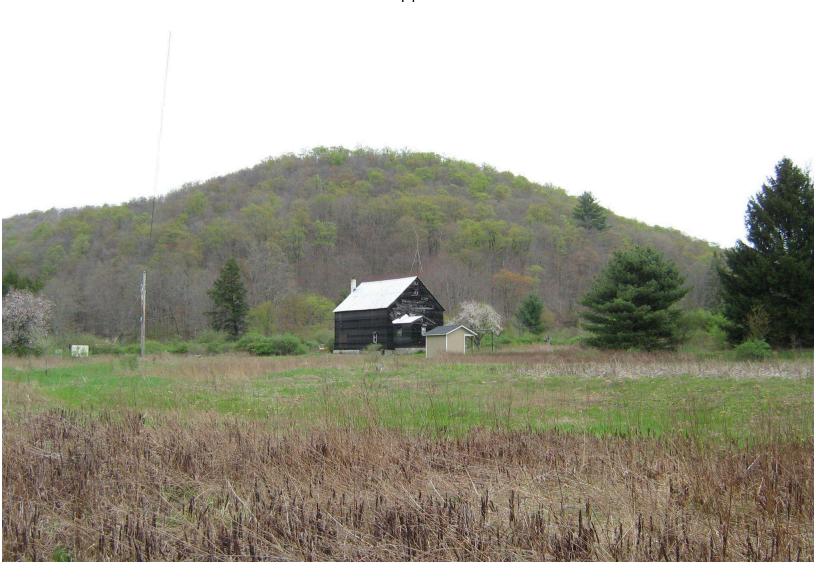
I'm staying where the water tastes like wine
Oh this water tastes so good
Oh this water tastes so good
Hey, I drink it all the time
Water from the woods
Water from the woods

Chorus

Verse 5:

What ya gonna do when you get old Knoxville Going right downtown Going right downtown Living high while there's money in my pocket Til the morning comes around Til the morning comes around

Chorus



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 8: Hard Times & Hometown Heroes

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Alex Patterson Last Updated: 8/16/2023

I'm Going Out in the Woods

Hungry

Van Wagner with musical ideas from Charles

Baucom Dec. 2022

Intro: FCG/CGF/FCGC

Chorus:

F C G

I'm going out in the woods

C G F

I'm never coming back

F C G

I've had enough of this world

C G F

I ain't even looking back

Verse 1:

G C

Have you heard the wind through a white pine

G (

The finest music you will hear

G

The rush of cool water in a ravine

F

Heart medicine you take in your ear

Chorus

Interlude: Intro chords

Verse 2:

Summer sound of the night in the forest Whippoorwill and katydids all around I've laid there looking up at the night sky My only blanket was that sacred sound

Chorus

Interlude

Verse 3:

I've had my fill of hard times
Weight on my heart and pain day by day
I know a peace I can find
I'm heading there today

Chorus

Interlude

Verse 4:

My new friends have fur and feathers
They're covered in beautiful leaves
I sure hope they accept me
Cause once I'm there I'm never gonna leave

Chorus

Outro: Interlude chords

Loose Skinned Dog

If Time Could Stand Alone

Van Wagner Feb. 11

Intro: Chorus Chords

Chorus:

D

Send me a loose skinned dog

Α

Loose skinned dog loose skinned dog

Α

G

Send me a loose skinned dog

D

I

To get this rabbit from this log

Interlude: Intro chords

Verse 1:

D

Send me a polish wife,

Α

we'll have halupki every night

G

And if that girl can't be mine

ח

D

send me some dago wine

Chorus

Interlude

Verse 2:

Send me a Winchester, 32 caliber
The finest gun my father owned, lever action in his bones

Chorus

Interlude

Verse 3:

The cats the pane at the birds outside the birds don't care about the cats inside Birds, cats, frikitee frack, my loose skinned dog is coming back

Chorus

Outro: Interlude chords

Hungry

Hungry

Van Wagner Aug. 2022

Intro: A Em

Verse 1:

Em

Α

A Em Have you ever been hungry

Em

A Em Not enough to eat

Most animals live that way

C [But not you and me

We may know it now and then Short on cash or running late But the animals in the forest Go hungry every day

Refrain:

Em D C D (x2) Oooooo

Verse 2:

Today I saw a white tail
I could count every rib
Her fawn didn't look much better
The spots just kept it hid

The other day I saw a bullfrog In a dry dusty field Such a long way from water Just searching for a meal

Refrain

Verse 3:

The trees thirst for water They're hungry for rain The skies are blue and empty Some clouds pass in vain

So I sit and count my blessings Thanks God for house and food To my friend in the forest I pray you find some too.

Refrain

Daniel Boone

The Boone Sessions

Van Wagner Nov. 7, 2020

Intro: Em D (x4)

Verse 1:

Em

Born in Berks County

D

His Pennsylvania home

Em

Crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains

D

Headed West to roam

First to Kentucky Then Tennessee

He stole skins from the Indians

Catawba and Cherokee

Chorus:

C G D Hey hey Daniel Boone

C G Em

Did you chase the blue Kentucky moon

Interlude: C G D (x2) Em D (x2)

Verse 2:

900 deer skins
Tallow and tongues
7 months of hunting
The long hunt was done

He would have cashed in Had he made it back But he was caught by the Cherokee At Cumberland Gap

Chorus

Interlude

Verse 3:

Once caught by the Shawnees

They took his skins

They left him with a flintlock

And some moccasins

He was lucky to get out

His life still intact

The command of the Shawnee

Go home, don't come back

Chorus

Interlude

Verse 4:

Every hunter feels it It's in your blood
The thrill of the hunt

The hope for more to come,

Boone the long hunter
He lived by the gun
He didn't hate the Indians
Although they killed his son

Chorus

Outro: Interlude chords

Home Town

The Pickle Barrel

Van Wagner Fall 2002

Intro: D

Verse 1:

à

Do you remember the first day of school?

G D

You didn't know anyone and no one knew you

But Mrs. Baylor she brought us around

G

Then you've been to my home town

Verse 2:

Do you remember swimming the elephant rock Susquehanna River where adventure never stops We dodged poison ivy to build our forts underground Then you've been to my home town

Instrumental Break: G D (x2)

Verse 3:

Do you remember Mr. Johnny Lahout His church was the field and orange and purple was his suit Your batting average and every touchdown Then you've been to my home town

Verse 4:

Now get down to Pappas's before it's too late Belly up to the bar and get yourself a hot dog plate Familiar faces as you look around Then you've been to my home town

Instrumental Break

Mr. Danville

Family Guitar

Van Wagner Mar. 20, 2020 For Larry Gipple

Intro/Interlude: C F / C G (x2)

Verse 1:

C F

Have you met my friend Larry, He's gentle and kind

C

He'll give you a hug, maybe a high five

C

He really likes music he loves Danville

Wears orange and purple and keeps things chill

F G C He's Larry, friend to us all

Chorus:

C F

He loves people, he loves this town

C

Our lives are better because he's around

C

C F

Down to the river, up on the hill

C G

Raise a glass to Mr. Danville

Interlude

Verse 2:

He cheers for the ironmen at every game Whenever they're home and sometimes away The basketball court, the football field Baseball, lacrosse, track and field He's Larry, friend to us all.

Chorus

Interlude

Verse 3:

Bloomsburg has fountains, Lewisburg Bucknell You can ice skate in Sunbury, the squeeze-in as well

But Danville has Larry, we're lucky we do He makes life better for me and you He's Larry, friend to us all

Chorus

Outro: Interlude chords (then end on C)

Mugsy's Gone

Shikellamy

Van Wagner	Capo: 2nd Fret
Jan. 15, 2008	
Intro: C	Chorus
muo. C	Cilorus
Verse 1:	Interlude
C G F C	
It knocked me back when he told me the news	Chorus
F C G Am	
He laid it out pure and plain like I already knew	Outro: Interlude chords
F C F	
I guess I should have seen it, seen it all along	
C G F C	
When Mugsy left this valley, he left us with a song	
Chorus:	
Am C	
Mugsy's gone, off of Main Street	
Am G	
Mugsy's gone, not coming back	
F C	
I find myself missing that record store	
G F C	
And the music of the needle as it scratched	
Interlude: F C (x4)	
Verse 2:	
Defense the consequence of the consequence of a true of	

Before the years when you could download a tune We loaded up on vinyl and put the needle in the groove You could get a dozen songs for just 99 cents And the artwork on albums has gone downhill ever since

Chorus

Verse 3:

15 years going in that store.

It turns out I was wrong about something before
For the owner never told me, never told me all along
The dog's name was Mugsy, his name was John

Hard Coal

If Time Could Stand Alone

Van Wagner Spring 2002

Intro: DGD/GDA Refrain Verse 1: Interlude D G D First day at the mine they handed me a bulldog shovel Final Refrain: Α They had me down on my knees in that tunnel muckin' away And it's hard wood, hard coal it's G2 Down there it's all the same you never see the seasons change hard on a man. D Α D No sun only rain day after day

Refrain:

C - Am–G A
All for Friday's pay
D5 G2 D
Hard wood, hard coal it's hard on a man.

Interlude: Verse chords

Verse 2:

Now and then the lucky few got to work on the timber crew Cuttin' props to hold the roof out in the woods Droppin' oak in the morning sun couldn't be no branches on Got to be straight and strong to be any good

Refrain

Interlude: Verse chords

Verse 3:

When it came to the head miner honkey eggs at the diner He's given his share of shiners to men in his days But now his bones are old, I bet half his weight is coal Spent most of his life in a hole, coughin' away

Hard Coal Hard Times

Shikellamy

Van Wagner Oct. 20, 2007 For David Himmelberger

Intro: GC/GDG

Verse 1:

G

David was a miner a miner all his life

C

Worked underground in hard coal 3 children and his wife

G

This year's been a bad one down at the mine

D (

It's hard coal, hard times.

Chorus:

D C G

It rained hard last night and it took our drought away

D C D

But there's no rain hard enough to wash away these days

G C G

So for independent miners whose life is the mines

It's hard coal, hard times

Interlude: Verse chords

Verse 2:

It was a year ago now, an explosion underground
It took the life of a good man and the heart of his town
A death is never easy when they go before their time
It's hard coal, hard times

Verse 3:

Do we even get it? Do we appreciate it all? When we turn on computers or a switch on the wall The power we rely on in these electric lines comes from hard coal, hard times Capo: 2nd Fret

Chorus

Interlude

Verse 4:

There's a saying in the region that every ton of coal
Contains a drop of miners' blood bled in the hole
Please give thanks, think about it from time to time
For it's hard coal, hard times

Chorus

Jay Smar Just Likes to Play

The Flood Sessions: Four Days of Rain

Van Wagner				Capo: 2nd fret (bottom 5 strings only)
Nov. 2011				Album: drop D
Intro: D A (x4) / D				Verse 3:
				Don't be fooled when he calls it a job
Verse 1:				He's still playing when the audience is gone
Α Θ	}	D		I've seen him picking in his kitchen late at
Why people play is d	ifferent that'	s for sure		night
Α		G	D	I listened from his porch hiding out of sight
Some for money som	ne for ego ai	nd some fo	or Church	
G D	Α			Chorus
A few play for the lov	e of song			
	G	D		Interlude
It holds life together v	when life tur	ns wrong		
				Verse 4:
Chorus:				I'm lucky to know him and pick a bit with him
D	G			I hope to hoist a few as soon as he can
He doesn't do it for th	ne money			The whole coal region should crown him king
D				He makes the mountains dance and the
He doesn't do it for fa	ame			valleys sing
Α				
What else can I say?				Chorus (x2)
G	D			
Jay Smar just likes to	play			Outro: Intro chords
Interlude: Intro chord	ds			
Verse 2:				
The Beatles landed a	and captured	d his soul		
Couldn't get enough	of that rock	and roll		
He got a guitar and h	e learned e	very tune		

Chorus

From Norwegian Wood to Rocky Raccoon

Interlude



Van Wagner Songbook Vol. 9: Mountain Ways

Assembled with permission of Van Wagner by fans of Van Wagner

Photo Credit: Alex Patterson Last Updated: 8/13/2024

In Alvira

Government Man

Tom Flannery and Van Wagner July 2023

Intro: D

Verse 1:

D C bass
You want to pry me from this town?
D C bass
You'll need to drag me off this ground
Bb

I ain't moving from this rocking chair

While these lungs still move air

ח

In Alvira

Bb C D Hmmmmmmm, in Alvira

Verse 2:

My farm ain't for bunkers and bombs
So why don't you and your boys just move along
Your 35 cents on the dollar son...
Ain't about to feed anyone
In Alvira
Hmmmmmmm, in Alvira

D

Chorus:

Am7 C D
Hallelujah sing it slow
Am7 C

Cause we ain't got no place left to go

Verse 3:

My walls are covered with broken hearts
From all the stops and all the starts
But they never once had to fear
Not having this place right here
In Alvira
Hmmmmmmm, in Alvira

Tuning: Drop D (?)

Verse 4:

All your promises can go to hell
I know your kind all too well
With your fancy talk and remember whens
Robbing us with a fountain pen
In Alvira
Hmmmmmmm, in Alvira

Chorus

Outro: Verse chords

Splitting Rails

A Mountain Man's Dream

Van Wagner May 12, 2015

Intro: DGAD

Chorus:

 \Box

Splitting rails, splitting rails Gonna build myself a fence.

G

Keep the deer outta here

A D

Keep the apples in.

Verse 1:

G

Abe Lincoln was a splitting man

Α

D

Rail splitter it's said.

G

D

He split logs of chestnut

Α

D

And built himself a fence.

Then our country did some splitting too Tween North and the South He stopped that log from splitting And drove the wedge out.

Chorus

Instrumental: Intro x2

Verse 2:

Get yourself a metal wedge An ax and a sledge Get a log, without knots And an ax with an edge. **Tuning:** Capo 2 (fake drop D)

Start the log with the ax
A strike at the end.

Pound the wedge with the sledge

Drive it on in.

Chorus

Instrumental: Intro x2

Verse 3:

Throughout life they'll be times A wedge will come between. Sometimes it's a mess And sometimes it's clean.

Abe Lincoln, with his ax Or you just the same. Hit those logs straight on It's all about the aim.

Chorus

Instrumental: Intro x2

Hemlocks

The Fringe

Van Wagner Jan. 26, 2014

Intro: Am G Am G Am G Am (x2)

Chorus:

Am G Am

Way out on Roaring Creek

Am G An

The Hemlocks still grow high.

G Am G

Take time to see them before they're gone

Am G Am

From giants to dust in time.

Verse 1:

Am G Am

I thank God for the Hemlock

G Am

an amazing gift of green.

G Am G

Thicker than cotton taller than wind

Am

If you've seen them you know what I mean.

As a kid they were still here in Danville Lovers Leap and behind Beaver Place The cycle path still dark at noon In hot summer a cool hiding place.

Chorus

Instrumental: Intro

Verse 2:

Years ago it was the bark peelers Worked the bark from the trees. A spud and ax to peel the logs bare And ship it to tanneries. The hands of the men stained purple
Tannins soaked in their skin.
In the fall I can see it on the creeks and streams
Like blood from the mighty stands.

Chorus

Instrumental

Verse 3:

Soon they'll be just a legend
A few still alive here and there.
But I fear the age of dense hemlock stands
Will live only in local folklore.

Old foresters will recall their memories
To young folks who never saw for themselves
But like the Hemlocks the old woodsmen too
Will fade from the Pennsylvania hills.

Chorus

Instrumental

Miner's Wife

Alone

Van Wagner Oct. 2003

Intro: Verse chords

Verse 1:

C G C

My wife is a miner's wife hey hey

C

My wife is a miner's wife hey hey

F C C-walk down to Am

My wife is a miner's wife, worries too much of her life.

C G C Somebody tell the lord what's going on.

Verse 2:

A miner works his days towards hell anyway.

A miner works his days towards hell anyway.

A miner works his days towards hell until we ring his death knell.

Somebody tell the lord what's going on.

Verse 3:

His knees are spent and his lungs are going bad.

His knees are spent and his lungs are going bad.

His knees are spent and his lungs are bad a spitting image of his dad

Somebody tell the lord what's going on.

Verse 4:

Then the breaker takes the coal and runs ah ha

Then the breaker takes the coal and runs ah ha

Then the breaker takes the coal and runs like the farmer with his profits gone.

Somebody tell the lord what's going on.

Instrumental: Verse chords

Verse 5:

Now we import our coal from China's soil hey hey

Now we import our coal from China's soil hey hey

We import our coal from China's soil they go through men like motor oil.

Somebody tell the lord what's going on.

Verse 6:

My wife is a miner's wife hey hey
My wife is a miner's wife hey hey
My wife is a miner's wife, worries too
much of her life.

Somebody tell the lord what's going on.

King of Pennsylvania

Government Man

Van	wa	gner
Jan.	12,	2023

Intro: G

Verse 1:

G

C

G

C

G

Hey mountain mama I caught you looking at me

A

D

I'm going to the river won't you come along and see?

G

I know the perfect place and I've got my fishing pole.

G

E

A

D

We'll head to Jer

loose.

Then it's back ho

where it bega

When we wake u

again.

G

E

A

D

C

Chorus

Verse 2:

This weathers getting hot, too hot for me Let's put on our cutoffs and head to White Deer Creek, We can jump off the rocks and cool off by the falls. Out at White Deer Creek, they say nature calls.

Chorus:

C G

Hey I'm living like a king

A D

Cause where I'm living I have everything

G C

I'm the king of Pennsylvania and living is good

G E A D G

Be the queen of Pennsylvania, hey out in the woods.

Verse 3:

You could have your choice the city if you want
Off to Philadeplhia to a fancy restaurant.
If you stay with me you can paddle my canoe
I'm at home on the water but honey can you canoe
too?

We can dine on the island and dance a bit too

We'll head to Jerseytown and we'll really cut loose.

Then it's back home to the mountains to where it began

When we wake up tomorrow, we'll do it all again.

Fall

Started with a Board

Van Wagner Sept. 17, 2012

Intro: C D Em (x3) C D Em G

Verse 1:

G D G

Another day over I'm headed home dry

My bones aren't broken but I'm gone in my mind.

Em Am

There was a time when I could work a whole day

D7

G

Then pick up my guitar and play the whole night away.

C D G-Em

But those years feel so foreign they hardly seem me.

Am L

Just throw me some dinner, some Yuengling, some

G

sleep.

Chorus:

C D G-Em

The soybeans turn yellow as fall takes the year

Am D7

I pass wagons of pumpkins the harvest is here.

C D

G-Em

The bright colors of Summer all faded and brown.

Am7 D

Just the star spangled banner on the post office

G

grounds.

Instrumental: Intro

Tuning: Capo 4 or 5

Verse 2:

It took the wind from me, right out from my sails

I'm too old for the army, tried to join but I failed.

I thought something different might turn things around

But there's no basic training when your years track you down.

So it's stick to the plan now stay steady and firm

Growing season is closing now to see what it's worth.

Chorus

Instrumental

Verse 3:

It's no surprise to me, I've always loved fall. When I think back to Bald Top I smell Oak leaves and moss.

The only thing green then just the moss and pine

The only thing in the forest that pays no mind to time.

So now it's my own call, will I be Oak or Pine?

Give in to my seasons or make it all mine.

Chorus

Instrumental

Collier's Life (In the Shadow of the Mountain)

Lost in the Mountains

Van Wagner March 5, 2010

Intro: Am G Am C G Am

Verse 1:

Am
I've worked in the woods since the time I was young.
C
G
The same as my dad, I'm collier's son.

Am G Am

Four fires a time I tend them alone.

C G

A small bark hut I call my home.

Chorus:

F C Am G

A chopping ax and the fire cracks

C

It's music comes sounding.

F C Am G

And the dust is dry, and the charcoal's black

Αm

In the shadow of the mountain.

Verse 2:

Pennies a bushel, I'm paid for my coal.

My shovel and rake I bought on my own.

To the iron masters' pockets my profits all go.

To pay for Philadelphia and millionaires row.

But that life for mine I never would trade. His master's the dollar, he's still a slave. He mingles at meetings and tips his fur hat. Only fools would chase a life such as that.

Chorus

Instrumental: Intro

Verse 3:

The season goes fast from Spring to the Fall The winter's for chopping, too windy for coal. The work may be hard and the hours long. But I'm free as a king in my forest home.

Chorus

Outro: Am G Am / C G (x2)
Am G Am

Guns and Religion

The Flood Sessions: Four Days of Rain

Van Wagner

Chorus:

G

Give us our guns and religion

D

G

Give us our guns and religion

C

Give us our guns and religion

D

G

That's good enough for me.

Verse 1:

Take the whole coal region
There's no school for deer season
Venison's their reason
And that's good enough for me.

Chorus

Verse 2:

Head up north of 80
They're fracking it like crazy
Is that good or bad or maybe
Well that's good enough for me

Verse 3:

Down in dutch country
They head to church on Sunday
Then it's scrapple and tripe come Monday
Well that's good enough for me

Chorus

Verse 4:

It's the Year of the Bible God forbid if that sounds tribal And don't sue me for libel 'Cause that's good enough for me

Verse 5:

Bullet holes in every road sign It's a firearm past time Illegal? Maybe sometimes Well it's good enough for me

Chorus

Verse 6:

Amish buggies instead of cars Pigeon shoots, churches and bars Mountain men pickin' guitars We'll that's good enough for me

Verse 7:

So pour us a Yuengling we're gonna be a singing It's a Pennsylvania Feeling And that's good enough for me

Chorus (x2)

Going Back to Bald Top Mountain

Going Back to Bald Top

Van Wagner

Started Fall 1999, finished Feb 25th, 8:42pm, 2000 Just before a Frog Holler concert in Reading PA Verse 1: D Verse 3: It was a warm July night, couple years ago D I just got back to Danville from a weekend on the road. I was feeling pretty beat, I was feeling pretty tired, D When my dad came to me with that bad look in his eyes Said "The weather's been ruff, in the days that you've been gone C D We lost part of the family in the winds of that storm." ride. Chorus: G Come back Robbie, come back Ben Chorus Call up David and Brian. Outro: G Come back RJ, Mike, and friends We're going back to Bald Top Mountain. Verse 2: It took the loss of a very good friend For me to wake up and look at my life again.

Chorus

Instrumental: Verse chords

21 tons of steel, 21 years went by.

I was living in myself, too busy to look back Now I finally got it right and I'm back on track.

It was like a diesel train, hit me right between the eyes

Well life's too short to dwell on things like this.

You could drive yourself crazy just thinking what you've missed.

About the days when we were young, about the days when we dreamed

Our bag of tomorrows was busting at the seams.

It's not too late to take another

Let's fire up the 3 wheeler one more time.

Yeah, we're going back to Bald Top Mountain. (x2) CGDG

Woolrich Coat

Woolrich Coat

Van Wagner **Tuning**: Capo 2 (fake drop D) August 18, 20081 Intro: D Verse 1: G 12 years old, first time hunting with his dad. D He flips his collar up, to stop the cold with his red and black, plaid. In a drizzle rain it grows heavy, heavy as a stone. G He's keeping warm, he's got his father's Woolrich coat on. Refrain: F G D I thank dad for the memories and Woolrich for the coat. **Instrumental:** Intro chords

Verse 2:

Hanging on the wall with a patch on the breast.

Smells of mothballs and the old cedar chest.

My favorite is the game pouch on the back.

Feathers from a pheasant or a good rope to drag.

Refrain + Instrumental

Verse 3:

On cool fall days, wake early and put on that wool.

Slip my hands in the pockets by the ribs and go for a stroll.

And so it goes for years, daughters and sons.

Mr. Rich's coat keeps warm, those who keep it on.

Refrain + Instrumental + Refrain