

The minor sounding melody of *Shady Grove* gives me that lonesome feeling of a true southern mountainsong. I remember first learning it from a live performance of Doc Watson in the early 1960's. Of course, Doc hailed from Deep Gap, North Carolina, so I'm not surprised that he knew it. In fact, the tune was widely played all through Kentucky, Tennessee and in much of the mountain South. Although it's difficult to pinpoint the exact origins of *Shady Grove*, it bears a strong resemblance to ancient British folk songs such as *Little Matty Groves* and *Little Margaret*. The lyrics under the tab below come from the singing of the Kentucky two-finger banjo player Lee Sexton. The verses that are often sung to *Shady Grove* are what folklorists refer to as "floating" verses because they seem to float from one song to another. Take your pick of verses to sing because they're all quite singable.



Doc Watson

The Cowboy Strum is a good one for *Shady Grove*.

Em D Em

Shady Grove my little love, Shady Grove I'm bound,

G D Em

Shady Grove my little love, bound for higher ground.

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Cowboy Strum

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

↓ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↓ ↑

↓ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↓ ↑

↓ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↓ ↑



Clarence "Frog" Greene & Doc Watson