

Bull at the Wagon

Key: A Major

(Slow, syncopated version)

From The Lewis Brothers*,

♩ = 70 (bull, not antelope)

as taught to Pete Showman

A *Syncopate, and accent the off-beat* **E7**

5 **A** **E7** 1 **A** 2 **A** 3 3

9 **B** *Weak on-beat accents (F#) (Or use A with a g#)* **D** **A** **E** 3

13 **A** **(F#) (ditto)** **D** **A** 1 **E** **A** 2 **E** **A** 3 3

17 **C** *Accents on the beat* **E** **A** **E** **A**

21 **A** **E** **A** **E** **A** 3

* The Lewis Brothers, Dempson (b. ~1891; fiddle), and Denmon (b. 1894; guitar and fiddle) ranched in New Mexico near El Paso. They recorded four tunes on 78 RPM records in 1929, including Bull at the Wagon. There's an article based on an interview with Denmon here: www.OLDTIMEMUSIC.COM/FHOFDLewis.html. You can hear their recording here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=io9Y38_ek5c

A note on the tempo: Though the Lewis Brothers played Bull at the Wagon up-tempo (they played a lot for dances), I was taught to fiddle it at a fairly slow pace, with a lot of syncopation and strong off-beat up-bow chords (drones). I like it that way; the bulls I've seen pulling wagons have been plodding, not fast. So although some like to play it fast (and straight), those speedy versions seem to me like "Antelope at the Wagon." (My general philosophy about old-time tunes is to make what you like of them, rather than trying to emulate a particular old player.)

Basic A-part Melody (with bow marks, slurs and double-stops omitted):

5 **A** **E7**

A **E7** **A** 3

Transcribed and typeset in ABC by Pete Showman 9/21/2015 (rev. 1)