

# Down in the Valley

Informant/Performer:  
Bessie Jones and group of children  
1979

Source:  
Bessie Jones  
*Step It Down*  
Rounder Records 8004, 1979

$\text{♩} = 132$  Clap:  $\text{♩}$   $\text{♩}$   $\text{♩}$   $\text{♩}$   $\text{♩}$   $\text{♩}$   $\text{♩}$  etc.

Down in the val - ley, two by two, my ba-by, two by two, my ba-by, two by two.

Down in the val - ley, two by two, now\_ rise, Sal - ly, rise.\_\_\_\_ rise, Sal - ly, rise.\_\_\_\_

Let me see you make a mo - tion, two by two, my ba-by, two by two, my ba-by, two by two.

Let me see you make a mo - tion, two by two, now\_ rise, Sal - ly, rise.\_\_\_\_ 3. Let me

Transcribed by Gail Needleman

3. Let me see you make another one, two by two, etc.

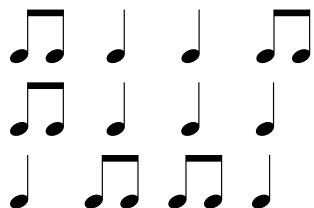
4. Now choose somebody, two by two, etc.

Last time only:

2. Everybody make a motion, two by two, etc.

3. Everybody make another one, two by two, etc.

Tambourine Patterns:



### Game Directions

Circle of players standing and clapping. Two center players crouch down in the beginning of verse 1. They rise as the song indicates. The two now "show a motion." This should be the same motion, so the two players must simply work it out between them. On verse 3, they show another motion. On verse 4, each player chooses a new player to take her place in the middle of the circle for the repetition of the game. Game ends with "Everybody make a motion..." and "Everybody make another one..."

### Background Information

"This is a game here ... I went up in the mountains and I heard the children singing up there and I've been hearing it all my life 'Down in the Valley' and I come to find out that it's sung, whatsoever you are, like it is there, see. So they was children in Newport, Rhode Island, at that time, they were singing 'up in the mountain,' same identical thing what I sing 'down in the valley,' down in the South, so that's what [we] sing now, we calls it 'Down in the Valley'."

And when playing the song with her grandchildren:

" 'Down in the Valley' now. Get down together. You get down together. Yeah, have to let you know when you're down in there, you're down that low, you got nothing, but you're gonna rise, you have to rise and do something, help yourself. And as you help yourself, you help somebody else, all right."