

Ring, Ring the Big Bell

Informant/Performer:

Eight girls

Kirby Industrial School, Atmore, AL, 1934

Library of Congress AFS 88 A1

Collected by John A. and Alan Lomax

Clap ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ etc...

The musical notation is written on a single staff in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. Above the staff, there are four vertical lines with 'x' marks, corresponding to the lyrics 'Ring, ring the big bell;'. The first line is labeled 'Clap'. The second line is labeled 'etc...'. The lyrics are: 'Ring, ring the big bell; Ain't gon - na ring no more. Fill me a pock - et be - fore I go, ain' gon - na ring no more.'

Ring, ring the big bell; Ain't gon - na ring no more.

Fill me a pock - et be - fore I go, ain' gon - na ring no more.

Transcribed by Gail Needleman

Background Information

"The song may well be a version of the original song which gave rise to the famous ragtime tune, 'It Ain't-a Gonna Rain No Mo'.' The newly freed slave sings with delight that the plantation bell will no longer call him to work and announces his intention of filling his pockets with money from the plantation coffers before he leaves for the great, free world."

Alan Lomax, Liner notes to *Afro-American Blues and Game Songs* (AFS L4)