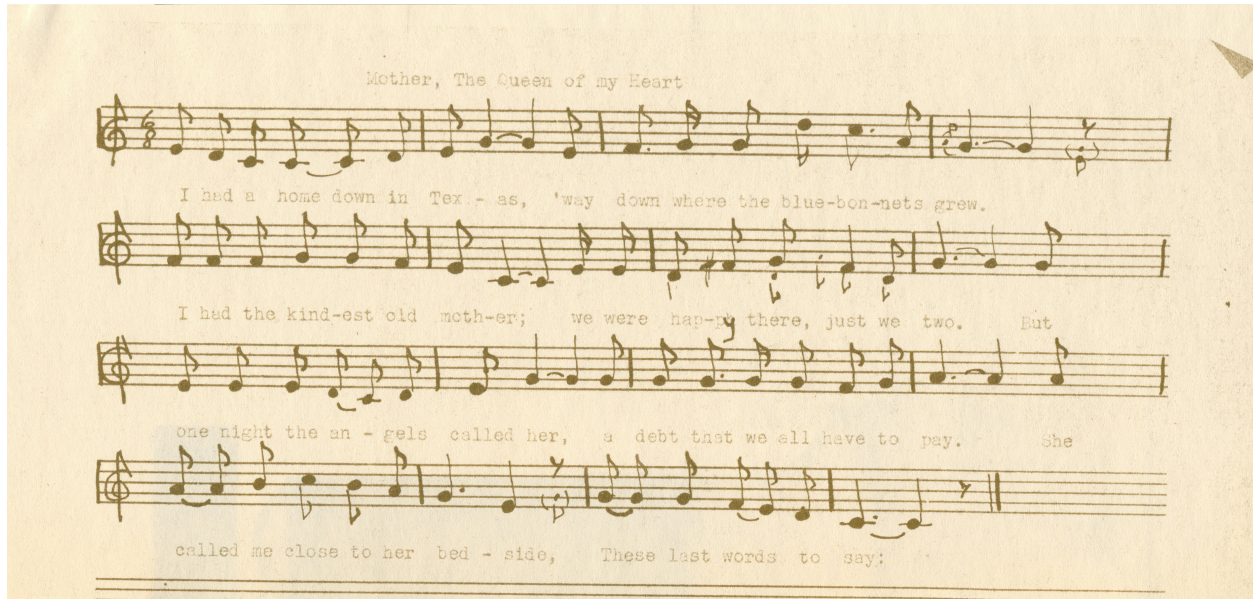


# Mother, the Queen of My Heart

As sung by  
**Alfred Whitt**  
07-28-1941 Crandon, WI



## Verse 1.

I had a home down in Texas, down where the bluebonnets grew.  
I had the kindest old mother; we were happy there, just we two.  
But one night the angels called her, a debt that we all have to pay.  
She called me close to her bedside, these last words to say.

## Verse 2.

"Son, don't go drinking and gambling. Promise mother you'll always go straight."  
Many years have passed since that parting, the promise I broke all the same.  
I first started gambling for pastime, but soon got the best of me all.  
I found that I'd spent all my money, never thinking that I'd ever fall.

## Verse 3.

One night I had bet all my money; nothing was left to be seen.  
I needed one card to beat them and that card was a queen.  
The cards were dealt 'round the table. Each man took his turn at the draw.  
I drew the card that would beat them; I turned it and this is what I saw.

## Verse 4.

I saw my dear mother's picture; somehow it did seem to say,  
"Son, you have broken your promise." I threw the cards all away.  
I gave my winnings to a newsboy, for gambling and me had to part.  
And now I shall always remember Mother, the queen of my heart.

*Transcription from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection; lyrics from Peters.*

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## Critical Commentary

Transcriptions by Peters, p. 258, and HST

### HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

*Alfred Whitt, age 15, Crandon.*

*Alfred learned these songs after one or two hearings from the men who would gather in the streets of the village. The men took great pleasure in hearing him sing their songs, many of which Alfred was not to appreciate until many years after the spankings his mother administered.*

### Editor's notes:

Kienzle writes that Slim Bryant composed this song after overhearing the story in a diner, and Jimmie Rodgers recorded it in 1932.

### Sources:

Kienzle, Rich. "Legendary Jimmie Rodgers embraced Bryant's 'Mother, Queen of My Heart'" *Arts and Entertainment*. Sunday, August 11, 2002 <<http://www.post-gazette.com/ae/20020811bryantside0811fnp5.asp>>

"Mother, the Queen of My Heart." From the Digital Tradition Mirror. <<http://sniff.numachi.com/~rickheit/dtrad/pages/tiMQNHEART.html>> [accessed 27/05/05] text only, nearly identical. Note at bottom credits "Jimmy Rodgers via Arlo Guthrie"

Peters, Harry B., ed. *Folk Songs out of Wisconsin: An Illustrated Compendium of Words and Music*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977.

Randolph, Vance, collector and editor. *Ozark Folksongs*. Vol. IV. Columbia, Mo.: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946-50.

K.G.