

Charley Patton

"Tom Rushen Blues"

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Laid down last night, hopin' I would have my peace,
eee
I laid down last night, hopin' I would have my peace,
eee
But when I woke up, Tom Rushen¹ was shakin' me

When you get in trouble, it's no use to screamin' and
cryin', hmm
When you get in trouble, it's no use to screamin' and
cryin', hmm
Tom Rushen will take you, back to the prison house
flyin'

It were late one night, Holloway was gone to bed, hmm
It were late one night, Holloway was gone to bed, hmm
Mister Day² brought whiskey taken from under
Holloway's head

An' it's boozy booze, now, Lord, to cure these blues
It takes boozy boo', Lord, to cure these blues
But each day seems like years in the jailhouse where
there is no boo'

I got up this mornin', Tom Day was standin' around
I got up this mornin', Tom Day was standin' around
If he lose his office now, he's runnin' from town to town

Let me tell you folksies just how he treated me
Let me tell you folksies just how he treated me
Aw, he caught me yellin', I was drunk as I could be

Note 1: Tom Rushen was the town sheriff of Merigold, Mississippi, around the time Patton recorded this song

Note 2: Tom Day had been the predecessor in office. This couplet undoubtedly remarks on the procedure of taking seized liquor to the county courthouse in order to establish proof of an illegal still. Mississippi was a "dry" state well beyond WO II, I believe until the late sixties.

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