Improvised metric flexibility in early recordings of self-accompanied “hillbilly” songs: Clarence Ashley’s “The House Carpenter” (1930) and Buell Kazee’s “The Butcher’s Boy” (1928).

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Fig. 1: Clarence Ashley, “The House Carpenter” (1930, Columbia 15654), verse 1-6, transcription of vocals (accompanying banjo articulates quarter = ~130, but no larger spans).

"Well met, well met" said an old true love

Come in, come in, my old true love

Well I can't come in and I can't sit down

Now it's I coulda married a king's dear,

Now will you forsaken your house carpenter

She picked up her little babe and kisses gave it three

I'm just returning from the salt sea and it's all the love of thee

It's been three fourths of a long long year since together we have been.

For I haven't but a moment's time; They say you're married to a house carpenter your heart will never be mine

I'm sure she'd married me; But I've forsaken crowns of gold and it's all the love of thee

And go along with me? I'll take you where the grass grows green on the banks of the deep blue sea.

Says stay right here my darling little babe and keep your papa company.
Fig. 2a: “Disruptions of expected pulse layers” (in the spirit of Rockwell 2011) in “The House Carpenter”: Disruptions indicated by circles around pulse-dots.

Fig. 2b: Possible underlying normalization for Fig. 2a?

Fig. 2c: Another possible underlying normalization for Fig. 2a, with a different set of problems.
Fig. 3: Projective Analysis of “The House Carpenter”, verses 2, 5, 10.

Legend: Synopsis of analytical signs used in Hasty (1997)

Projected potential (dashed) ...

... realized
... denied (by early third event)
... denied (by late third event)
... realized “incompletely” (early third event)
... realized despite late third event = Hiatus

Rhythmic qualities:

beginning
silent beginning
continuation
anacrusis
reinterpretation
deferral
Fig. 4: Buell Kazee, “The Butcher’s Boy” (1928, Brunswick 213A). Transcription of Verses 1–4.
Annotation: Time spans (in quarters) between stressed syllables for explanation of 3*-anacuses, see Ex. 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Phrase A</th>
<th>Phrase B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>She went up - stairs to make her bed</td>
<td>And not one word to hermo-ther said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Her mo-ther she went up stairs too</td>
<td>Says ”Daughter; dear daugh - ter, what troubles you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;Oh Mother, oh Mo - ther, I cannot tell</td>
<td>That railroad boy I love so well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>He courted me my life a - way And now at home he will not stay&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: Variation in time spans between stressed syllables in "The Butcher’s Boy," quantized to quaternotes.

**Bold & Italic:** Time spans that deviate from the most frequent value for each column.

* asterisks: Anacrases to each line are ambiguous (see Ex. 5: the relevant beginning can be heard to occur either on the first or on the second quarter of the three-quarter-duration.)
Fig. 5: Anacruses in “The Butcher’s Boy,” verse 1. Denials of projection by late and early events in both interpretation a) and b).

a) two-beat anacrusis

\[ \begin{align*}
 &\text{(very) late microtiming} \\
 &\text{She went up - stairs} \quad \text{to make her} \quad \text{bed} \quad \text{And} \quad \text{not one word} \quad \text{to her - mo - ther said} \\
 &\text{(denial by late third event)}
\end{align*} \]

b) three-beat anacrusis

\[ \begin{align*}
 &\text{She went up - stairs} \quad \text{to make her} \quad \text{bed} \quad \text{And} \quad \text{not one word} \quad \text{to her - mo - ther said} \\
 &\text{(denial by late third event)}
\end{align*} \]

Bibliography (selection):