Georgia Camp Meeting

1. A camp meeting took place
   By the colored race
   Way down in Georgia
   There were coons large and small
   Lanky, lean, fat and tall
   At this great coon camp-meeting
   When church was out
   How the "Sisters" did shout
   They were so happy
   But the young folks were tired
   And wished to be inspired
   And hired a big brass band.

2. The old "Sisters" raised sand
   When they first heard the band
   Way down in Georgia.
   The preacher did rare
   And the deacons did stare
   At the young darkies prancing.
   The band played so sweet
   That nobody could eat
   'Twas so entrancing.
   So the church folks agree'd
   'Twas not a sinful deed
   And joined in with the rest.

Chorus:
   When that band of darkies began to play
   Pretty music so gay
   Hats were then thrown away
   Thought them foolish coons
   Their necks would break
   When they quit laughing and talking
   And went to walking
   For a big choc'late cake.

"Georgia Camp Meeting", originally published as "At a Georgia Camp Meeting" is a ragtime cake-Walk was composed in 1897 by Frederick Allen Mills (who wrote under the name Kerry Mills) who also composed "Red Wing", "Whistling Rufus" and his tribute to the 1904 World's Fair, "Meet Me In St. Louis, Louis".
A cake walk is a type of tune associated with a popular dance craze which probably entered southern tradition around the turn of the century.
The original tune was the work of prolific composer Kerry Mills (1869-1948), who published it in 1897 to be played as a cakewalk, two-step or polka. Mills was "steeped in the strong march tradition of the 19th century" and others identify that he helped bridge the two-step dance and the emerging styles of cakewalk and early ragtime. The colony of Georgia was named in honor of King George II, in 1732.
It was recorded by Tump Spangler on **The Old Virginia Fiddlers:...Patrick County, Virginia**, Leake County Revelers on **Saturday Night Breakdown: 1927-1930 Recordings** (1975), Alan Jabbour, James Reed, Bertram Levy on **A Henry Reed Reunion** (2002) and John Phillip Sousa and band on **Cakewalks, Rags and Blues** (1908).