

**Follow the Drinking Gourd:  
Song of the Hemings/Freeman/Shorter Clan**

Trad., new verses by Lew Toulmin, 2021; chords for guitar and bari uke  
strum: DUDU or waltz

Intro: Em A G Em

**Chorus:**

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd,  
[Em] For the Hemings are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] From the African coast we did sail; [Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] A cruel slave ship it was our [G] jail, [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For the Hemings are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] When the sun comes up, and the first quail calls; [Em] the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] We'll escape to freedom's [G] halls; [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For the Hemings are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] Well at Monticello we did stay; [Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] But four of us done got [G] away; [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For the Hemings are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] We were enslaved at the big White House; [Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] And those British flames we could not [G] douse; [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For the Freemans are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] The Potomac River is a mighty good goal; [Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] We'll take back all of what was [G] stole; [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For the Freemans are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] We hammered and planted at Montpelee; [Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] In the year '15 we seized our [G] free; [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For the Freemans are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] We fought for the Union at Honey Hill; [Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] Those boys in gray soon had their [G] fill; [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For the Shorters are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] We were wounded at Fair Oaks; [Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] But we soon destroyed slavery's [G] yokes! [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For the Shorters are [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!

[Em] More generations are yet to be; [Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd  
[Em] And all will fight for a free [G] family! [Em] Follow the [A] drinking [Em] gourd

[Em] Follow the [G] drinking gourd; [Em] follow the [G] drinking gourd;  
[Em] For a free clan is [A] a'waitin' for to [G] carry you to [Em] freedom  
[G] Follow the drinking [Em] gourd!