

1. MANDOLIN BOOGIE (Floyd Armstrong – Acuff Rose)
2. THREE MILES SOUTH OF CASH (Carolina Cotton)
3. MOTHER'S ONLY SLEEPING (P.D.)
4. MANDOLIN RAG (Armstrong and W.S. Stevenson – Acuff Rose)
5. SPARKLING BLUE EYES (Bill Cox – Poca River Music)
6. BEETLE WITH THE BOOGIE WOOGIE BEAT (Bertelero & McIntosh – Acuff Rose)
7. ADDRESS FROM HEAVEN (Nolan Clyde Spradlin – Nolan Publishing)
8. ALABAMA BABY (Floyd Armstrong – Acuff Rose)
9. IT'S NEVER TOO LATE (Carter Stanley)
10. ARKANSAS SPECIAL (Armstrong and W.S. Stevenson – Acuff Rose)
11. EIGHT THIRTY BLUES\* (Douglas Venable & Lester L. Blackwell – Sunshine Music Co.)
12. SILVER HAIRE DADDY OF MINE\* (Gene Autry & Jimmy Long – Gene Autry's Western Music Publishing Co.)
13. JUST A COUNTRY BOY\*
14. GREENBACK DOLLAR\* (P.D.)
15. OLD THREE ROOM SHACK\*
16. WHY NOT CONFESS\* (Ralph Hamrick)
17. BEAUTIFUL BROWN EYES

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 vocals and guitar

**Lloyd Armstrong**  
 vocals and mandolin

**"Oscar" Billy Hughes**  
 fiddle

**Zane Beck**  
 dobro on \*

**Monte Avery**  
 Bass on \*

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# THE Armstrong Twins

*Floyd and Lloyd*



*Mandolin Boogie*

ARHOOIE 9046





# The Armstrong Twins

Close harmony duet singing has long been a strong tradition in both American and Mexican Country music. Many of its greatest exponents have been family groups and especially brother duets. Some of the best known duet teams of the 1930s were the Monroe Brothers (Bill & Charlie), the Dixon Brothers (Howard & Dorsey), the Blue Sky Boys (the Bolick Brothers), and the Delmore Brothers (Alton & Rabon). In more recent times the duet tradition was carried on by Johnny & Jack (the Anglin Brothers), the Louvin Brothers, Jim & Jesse McReynolds, the Stanley Brothers, and of course the more pop oriented Everly Brothers, just to name a few. Floyd and Lloyd Armstrong, however, seem to be the only twins among this great family of brother duets. They were not only great singers and players, but even won trophies in 1951 and '52 as the most

handsome male twins at the Twin Convention in Huntington Beach, California!

I first heard the Armstrong Twins via their records about 1948 over radio station XERB, a powerful 50,000 watt station beamed north from Rosa Rito Beach, in Baja California, Mexico. The station was at that time broadcasting almost exclusively country music, usually in 15 minute segments devoted to certain artists, along with similar segments devoted to various fundamentalist preachers. The ads you heard between the records ranged from plugs for the labels which presented the artists, to rather bizarre appeals such as this one: "Are you afraid of the dark? Are you afraid of being alone at night? Then why not get one of our beautiful statues of Jesus Christ which glows in the dark. Send only \$1.98 to Glowing Statue - Box 1190 - San Diego,

California." XERB was no doubt one of the most important outlets for country music on the West Coast during the post World War II period. Their clear channel frequency and the directional signal made the station heard loud and clear all over Southern California in the daytime and as far as Canada at night.

The sound of the Armstrong Twins was at that time the purest hillbilly duet singing I had ever heard. Only later, after hearing records by the Dixon Brothers, the Blue Sky Boys, and others, did I realize on what a remarkable tradition their sound was based.

Early in 1979 I released some of the material heard on this CD for the first time on an LP album. I had tried hard to locate the Armstrong Twins and with the help of Bob Pinson of the Country Music Hall of Fame Library in Nashville, Tennessee, I obtained a picture of the two boys probably taken in the late 1940s when they were making their radio debut at KLRA in

Little Rock, Arkansas. Bob sent along whatever information he could find in an old magazine article and told me that they also recorded a 45 rpm disc in the 1960s. I contacted the publisher of the songs but even that lead gave me no clue as to their current whereabouts. Several months after I had released the LP I went off on one of my annual trips of the South. Upon calling my office one day, I was told that a Mr. Armstrong had been trying to get in touch with me and he had left a phone number in Little Rock, Arkansas! Since I was in Memphis at the time, another phone call finally got me in touch with the elusive Armstrong Twins and that same evening we finally met face to face! The twins were happy that someone appreciated their music enough to release an album and were keen to record a new one for me as well which they did the next spring.

Finally meeting the Armstrong Twins was naturally quite a thrill for me, having been such a fan of theirs over the





# HERE'S CLIFFIE STONE'S DINNER-BELL ROUND-UP GANG FROM KXLA 11:30-12:30 NOON



**EDDIE KIRK**  
NOT ONLY A GOOD-LOOKER AND  
SWEET-SINGER, BUT A HIGH-FLYER.  
HE OWNS HIS OWN PLANE.



**CLIFFIE STONE**  
ORIGINATOR OF "DINNER-BELL  
ROUND-UP". PREFERENCES BEING  
JUST ONE OF THE GANG INSTEAD  
OF BOSS.



**MERLE TRAVIS**  
KENTUCKY BOY NOTED FOR HIS  
DIFFERENT STYLE OF GUITAR PICKING  
AND OLD TIME SONGS.



**HAROLD HENSLEY**  
FROM WHITETOP  
VIRGINIA, AND  
A FINE  
FIDDLER.



**JUDY HAYDEN**  
SINGS, MAKES COFFEE,  
TAKES CARE OF THE RINGS  
MAIL, AND DINNER  
BELL.



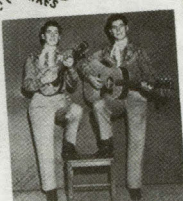
**BILLY LIEBERT**  
STUDIED MUSIC AS A KID  
IN DETROIT, BUT LIKES  
COUNTRY MUSIC LIKE  
THE DINNER BELL.



**TENNESSEE ERNIE**  
IS REALLY FROM TENNESSEE.  
HIS REAL NAME IS  
ERDIE FORD.



**HERMAN THE HERMIT.**  
OLDEST IN AGE, BUT YOUNG IN  
SPIRIT. HIS BEARD IS  
REAL.



**ARMSTRONG TWINS**  
ARKANSAS BOYS WHO SING FROM  
THE HEART. LLOYD PLAYS  
MANDOLIN, FLOYD, GUITAR.



years. We sat down and made an official contract for the release of the album. They gave me the photo (on the cover of this CD), taken about the time of their first recordings, and I also interviewed them.

Floyd and Lloyd Armstrong were born January 24, 1930, in Dewitt, Arkansas, just when the Great Depression was beginning to be felt and in 1933 the family moved to Little Rock. Their mother, Lois Armstrong, was quite musical and played piano, zither, and ukelele and sang with Edna Douglas as the "Sunshine Girls" over KLRA. When the twins were five years old, Mrs. Armstrong taught them harmony singing and the boys soon appeared on children's programs over KARK in 1935. By the time they were eight, Floyd and Lloyd appeared regularly every Saturday at the local Boys' Club. A few years later their sister Patsy joined them and they got a regular program on radio station KLRA. They worked all over the Little Rock area – in

school houses, at dances, theatres, on the streets, in churches, wherever people were willing and eager to listen to them.

After World War II in 1947 the twins moved to the Los Angeles area and through their mother's one-time partner Edna Douglas, who knew "T. Texas" Tyler, they landed a spot on his radio program. That same year Floyd and Lloyd got their own radio program over KXLA in Pasadena and every Saturday night they appeared at the 97<sup>th</sup> Street Corral in Bell Gardens. By 1950 they joined Cliffie Stone's very popular "Dinner-Bell Round Up" every day at noon also over KXLA and appeared on his Saturday night TV show on KTLA (Channel 13).

All the mono recordings on this CD were recorded during 1948 and '49. The tunes ranged from their own instrumentals like "Mandolin Boogie" and "Arkansas Special" to old southern standards as well as current country songs being promoted like Carolina Cotton's "Three Miles South of Cash."

At this time country music was becoming very popular on the West Coast with many people from Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana having moved West for better jobs in industry. "T- Texas" Tyler, the Maddox Brothers & Rose as well as Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys were some of the biggest names but all types of country music got heard on the radio and in the dance halls. Western Swing and Hollywood cowboy singers probably gained the most popularity. By the early 1950s tastes were already changing and the older styles of country music were on the wane, leaving acts like the Armstrong Twins a little behind.

Floyd and Lloyd moved to Odessa, Texas, in 1952 where they continued to perform on radio stations KECK and KOSA and even got a regular daily TV program over KMID-TV sponsored by the Pioneer Furniture Company. During this time the Twins also appeared on the Louisiana Hayride and

made appearances with the Johnny Horton show. In the late 1950s the Armstrong Twins moved back to the West Coast and for a time became regulars on the "Town Hall Party."

Around 1960 Floyd & Lloyd returned to Little Rock, Arkansas, and found employment in nonmusical fields. With the release of the Arhoolie album in 1979 the twins became active once more in music and appeared at various folk clubs and festivals including the National Folk Festival in Washington, D.C., the Frontier Folklife Festival in St. Louis, the Western Regional Festival in San Francisco, and in 1981 they appeared at the Gambier Folk Festival. In 1979 Floyd and Lloyd also made a new album for Arhoolie Records with Monte Avery on bass and Zane Beck on dobro. Several of the selections from that album, which was recorded in stereo, constitute the balance of this CD.

Chris Strachwitz, 2004

# TIME Armstrong Twins

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"In 1948, the Armstrong Twins impressed me as one of the purest hillbilly duets I had ever heard."

Chris Strachwitz

Featuring their first recordings from the late 1940s (#s 1-10), and their 1979 reunion session for Arhoolie Records (#s 11-17).

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