

FSI-82

JONATHAN EBERHART

LIFE'S TROLLEY RIDE



FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC.



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Produced by: Sandy Paton
Jonathan Eberhart
Mia Gardiner

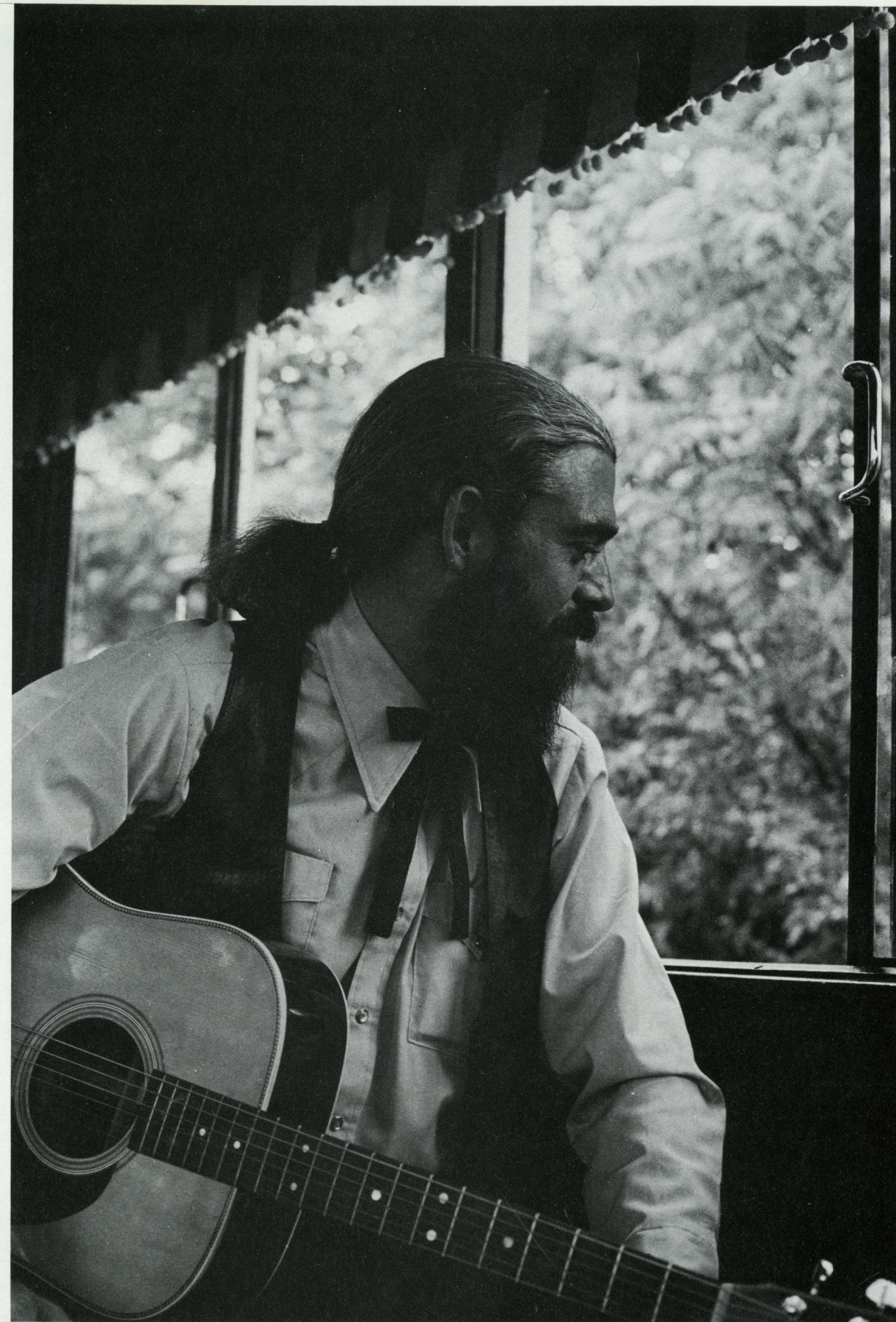
Jonathan Eberhart is the most versatile singer of folksongs I've heard in years. He can belt out a shantey, rasp out a blues, soften down to a gentle rumble for a tender love song, or enunciate a complex text with the precision of an auctioneer trained in the art of Gilbert and Sullivan.

Actually, I suspect that he's a genius, although I don't know how one makes such a judgement. Mine is based on the fact that he's a world-class player of word games such as "Limerick" or "Fictionary," with a command of our language that rivals that of Espy, Sperling, Brandreth, and the marvelous Mrs. Byrne. In fact, Jonathan is a writer by profession, a specialist in space-exploration for the highly respected *Science News*, and, although he doesn't think of himself as a songwriter, he can hardly ignore the fact that five of the songs on this record are his own. (Sorry, Jonathan, but there they are.)

If I were asked to describe him, I would say that he resembles a congenial Rasputin whose distinctive voice is backed by some fine guitar and great piano. I first heard him when he was adding his vigorous bass to the gospel songs sung by Helen Schneyer and her daughter, Riki. That was impressive enough, but, later, when I heard him performing alone, I was astounded by the wide range of his material and truly moved by the strength of his delivery. His respect for his sources, which are diverse (though, more often than not, traditional), may account for the sincerity of his presentation, but it is his personal creativity that allows him to make each song his own without resorting to the obvious stylistic devices of those who caricature the tradition. When you hear him, you know it's Jonathan, but you are also aware of the source from which each song has been derived. I can offer no greater compliment to a creative interpreter of our varied traditional music.

Caroline and I once spent an enjoyable and edifying afternoon in a Sushi bar, allowing Jonathan to introduce us to the customs and tastes of that exquisite cuisine. His expertise was acquired during a tour of Japan, making music with Andy Wallace and Mike Rivers. They sang in English, of course, but Jonathan guided us through the delectable Sushi ritual in very convincing Japanese. After the meal, he collected a song from one of the waitresses, a Japanese song about the great Haiku poet, Issa, for which Jonathan had been searching since he'd first heard it, some twenty years earlier. It would appear that this man's versatility is equalled only by his perseverance.

Sandy Paton
Sharon, Connecticut
February, 1981



SIDE 1:

Life's Trolley Ride (Eberhart, BMI)	2:35
Laurel (Eberhart, BMI)	3:00
Hear Jerusalem Mourn	3:57
Chicken on a Raft* (Tawney)	2:25
Push, Push, Push (Spoelstra)	2:21
The Winnie the Pooh Rag (Eberhart, BMI)	3:33
Dawn (Eberhart, BMI)	4:47

SIDE 2:

I Have a Song to Sing, O* (Gilbert & Sullivan)	4:40
Methodist Pie	2:33
Chicken Road (Greene)	3:58
All I Need*	3:18
Death, Ain't You Got No Shame	2:05
Joe Hill's Last Will (Raim)	2:20
Lament for a Red Planet (Eberhart, BMI)	3:08

*Recorded by Gypsy Studios, Arlington, Va. Cover photos by Sandy Paton Cover graphics by Swede Plaut Recorded by Sandy Paton

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FSI-82

JONATHAN EBERHART

LIFE'S TROLLEY RIDE

INTRODUCTION

I've waited many years to either read these words or write them, and I'm pleased to be asked to do the latter. Those of us who have known Jonathan Eberhart have looked forward to the arrival of this record. His unique interpretations of traditional material, and his own compositions, some of which are already passing into the folk song tradition, have been a source of pleasure to the Washington, D.C., folk music scene for years. There are already hundreds of people familiar with the sweetness of "Laurel" or the haunting nostalgia of "Lament for a Red Planet" (an outgrowth of a major love of Jon's life: Space, and the adventure of it) or the intensity of "Life's Trolley Ride," a hymn that E. C. Ball liked so much that he took the words home with him.

I know of no one with more respect than Jonathan has for traditional folk music and the people whose lives have produced that music, and in spite of my own leaning toward the "purist" camp, I find that I take particular pleasure in hearing what Jon does with the traditional material he plays and sings. While some he does "straight," additionally and fortunately for us, his originality, creativity and spirit of fun combine to enable him to sing, play and compose in a style distinctly his own, and to present us with variations on themes which expand on our own appreciation of the fabled folk process. I am honored to be a part of this record.

Helen Schneyer

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PREFACE

Maybe it's Yuri's fault. Early in 1960, I'd been fooling with a guitar for about two weeks when I brazenly got up on the tiny open stage of a Washington, D.C., coffeehouse called the Unicorn and sang a few songs. For some reason, Yuri Kaprakov (I hope I've spelled his last name right — I never saw it in writing), who owned and ran the place with his wife, Laura, offered me a two-week paid engagement — starting in a week. It was seven days of terror, staying up all night trying to get conversant with more than three chords and learn songs at the same time, while wracking my brain for any songs I might already know from years past to pad my fledgling repertoire. It was a pretty abrupt introduction, both to performing folk music and to taking a deeper look at it than I had in previous years, but the experience was priceless.

I didn't grow up in any particular tradition — I've just picked up old songs and new, but with a preference for ones that show or at least suggest their roots. Because that's when the differences in songs and styles show, and that's what interests me. When a traditional-music-only rule was instituted for the Monday-night open stage at a Bethesda, Md., club called the Red Fox a few years ago, some people complained that the "restriction" would limit the variety of what one might hear. Instead, the music got more diverse than ever, coming as it did from people who were interested in the widespread styles that went with the traditions. And it's not only diversity. Such songs are far more than just words and tunes; they come wrapped in their up-bringsings, making their different styles perhaps their most enriching aspects. You can hear reflections of the people who sang them, of different social values, political climates, cultural factors, musical influences and more. Even with the songs I write, I'll do them usually in some traditional style, because of the associations and feelings that the style evokes.

I liked square-dance tunes in grade school (I still occasionally haul out my parents' old 78s of Floyd Woodhull's Old Time Masters), got hooked on the gentle-boogie Chicago piano style of Jimmy Yancey when I was about 13, did madrigals and jazz in highschool and college, and so on. If I'd made this record in, say, 1962, it would probably have included a number of political, labor-movement and otherwise topical songs, of which I sang (and in many of whose causes I was active) a lot in those days. Short-lived and specialized as such songs often are, they're the stuff of tradition, steeped in the times, troubles and attitudes of the people who make them. That was also the year I wrote my first folk-style song, a bitter ballad that I slammed together one afternoon after hearing on the radio that Governor Ross Barnett was planning to stand in the door of the University of Mississippi to keep James Meredith out. (Several weeks later I heard it sung at the Unicorn by a guy I'd never met who said he'd learned it at a civil-rights demonstration 200 miles away.) In subsequent years, I might have added a rural blues, a field holler, perhaps a shape-note hymn, a mother-and-God bluegrass song and a sea shantey. Speaking of shanteys, I'd been singing them for a couple

of years, loving the sailing and whaling lore, when I had a chance to help sail the Hudson River sloop *Clearwater* down the coast from its birthplace in Maine. It could take as many as a dozen inexperienced hands on each halyard to raise the sloop's heavy mainsail, but with a shantey for rhythm and togetherness it could be done in a pinch with as few as three and three. Once a group of visitors was helping to shantey up the sail, absorbed in the yo-ho-ho but forgetting the point of a worksong. Out of synchronization, a couple of people were pulled off their feet by an unexpected jerk on their halyard, and one of them came within about a quarter-inch of having a hand squeezed like toothpaste through a block (pulley) at the foot of the mast. The lesson was graphic, and sea-shanteys abruptly became a lot more than just songs to me with that real-life reminder of the difference they could make.

The kinds of music that actually ended up here include some of the above as well as an old-timey stringband number, a piece from Gilbert and Sullivan (whom I have loved since I was very young and whose clearly non-folk songs nevertheless say a lot about their time and setting), a song that I believe to be a southern black funeral walk, and some other things. None of them were put in just for purposes of this record — they're what I sing, and like me, they change.

This record was not just a matter of walk-in-and-do-it. A lot of people helped, and I'm grateful to them all. The contributions of the musicians aboard are better described elsewhere in these notes, but there were also many other folks who readily and gratefully agreed to join me and for various reasons didn't end up on the finished version. My thanks, too, to the several people who have done me the particularly heartwarming honor of being moved to sing some of the songs I've written. (I owe a special debt, by the way, to Edward Ryglewicz, who led the highschool chorus in Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y., when I was there in the late 1950s. He communicated a lot more to me about music than just what to sing and how to sing it, and I cherish those experiences.) As for the recording itself, working with Sandy and Caroline Paton was both fun and, as was sometimes necessary, restorative. Mike Rivers and his mobile recording van in the D.C. area made it possible to include some musician friends I would have hated to do without, and the Schwellings and Gardiners offered their homes and hospitality to make those sessions possible. Sandy Paton took the cover photos at the National Capital Trolley Museum in Maryland, and I'm grateful to Ed Frazier of the museum for making available our wonderful "prop" — a 1924, four-wheel, double-ender trolley, built in Berlin and bedecked with tassels, paper flowers and other goodies from its days in the annual Karlsruhe Flower Festival. Finally, my special thanks to Mia Gardiner for help ranging from research to consultation and from rehearsal-scheduling to battling my inertia. Without her assistance and support, I don't think this record would exist.

Jonathan Eberhart

THE SONGS

LIFE'S TROLLEY RIDE (Eberhart, BMI)
Side 1, Band 1.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar
Andy Wallace: vocal and banjo
Mike Holmes: mandolin
Jay Ungar: fiddle
David Paton: concertina

For several years, early in July, a group of us have gathered out in Wheaton, Maryland, to sing at the anniversary of the National Capital Trolley Museum, where a bunch of street-car enthusiasts have hand-laid a couple of miles of track through the woods and built a car barn to house their collection of trolley cars dating back to 1898. (It's on Bonifant Road, and you can drop by, buy a ticket for next-to-nothing, and ride. I was saddened when I once asked a large adult audience how many of them had ever been on a trolley and saw only two hands. How about you?) We'd sing about trains, cars, almost anything but trolleys, since no one could think of any trolley songs except "The Trolley Song" ("Clang, clang, clang, goes the trolley..."), which failed to — er — produce much enthusiasm. In 1974, I decided to write a couple, and this is one of them.

It was originally going to be a satire — one of those over-metaphorical country-and-western songs that take some down-to-earth comparison and beat it into the ground — and I began by simply calling up Mike Holmes and compiling a list of trolley jargon. All I had otherwise was the phrase that later became the title. But it was the tune that ultimately changed my whole conception of the song. I had put together a fairly straightforward, gentle, country-style tune — nothing particularly memorable — and it seemed to suffice, but there was something about it, some musical phrase that I couldn't quite isolate, that was making it seem just a bit too forgettable. For about three weeks I wandered around humming it to myself, trying unsuccessfully to put my finger on the part that wanted changing. I had finally almost stopped trying (maybe that was the key to the whole thing), when one morning, as I was walking down the street — this

may sound like a cliché, but it's what happened — three notes popped into my head. They were the last three notes in the third line (in the chorus they fit the words "peace of mind"), and I knew at once that they were the answer. I had neither pencil nor paper, and I ran all the way to where I was going, humming the three notes over and over, literally frightened that I would forget either what they were or where they fit in the song. I think I felt that if I forgot them then, I'd never recapture them. I wrote them down as soon as I reached my destination, made a few minor alterations to the tune on either side, and that was it. But over the next few days, as I sang the result over to blend words and tune, I came to like it more and more, until it struck me that the tune was just too nice to throw away on a satire. Yet I didn't want to abandon the theme. Instead, I went back through the words, replacing some of the more exaggerated uses of the trolley metaphor, and it was done.

The band: Andy Wallace is one of my oldest friends, a singer, picker, instrument-maker, festival-producer and more, and for purposes of this song he was willing to go through the hassle of learning a harmony part that was only a few notes different from what he'd been singing for years. Mike Holmes was inevitable. Besides being a fine mandolin player, he's been the organizer of those trolley-museum performances, and he was the first person to know that I was working on this song. Jay Ungar has played with everybody, and he's simply a musical wonder — he not only gets the notes right, but seems to have a natural feeling for all the styles he's asked to play in.

I'd like to add a special word, by the way, about a friend of mine named Michael Quitt, who first contributed the sound of the concertina to this song — not exactly typical of songs of this type. In 1975, while he, Andy and I were sitting around between takes of recording a nautical-type soundtrack for a puppet-show production of *Treasure Island*, I was playing through the song when Mike picked up his concertina and

joined in. It was a subtle addition, but I was, in a word, smitten. Logistics prevented bringing Mike up for this recording session, and I'm grateful that David Paton was both willing and able to bring to this arrangement a sound that I've been hearing in my head with the song ever since Mike first made it happen.

*When you come to the end of your
life's trolley ride,
Just recall all the rails you have
known.*

*In the car barn you'll find rest
and sweet peace of mind —
God's conductor won't strand you
alone.*

*As a child at half-fare, when your
seat you would share
With a traveler foot-weary or old,
You were earning your way on a
route that would pay
In a token more worthy than gold.*

(chorus: same as first verse)

*Put your fare in the hand of the
Lord's motorman,
And ride on toward the end of the
line.
The conductor will hear as your
last stop draws near,
And he'll warn you in plenty of
time.*

(chorus)

*As the click of each tie marks the
years passing by,
Shun all sidings of hatred and
crime.
You'll transfer by and by to that
route in the sky,
Where the streetcars will all run
on time.*

(chorus, repeat last line)

LAUREL (Eberhart, BMI)
Side 1, Band 2.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar

This song could be about a plant, and if you like, it is. In fact, however, I wrote it in 1977 for and about the woman after whom it is

named. She was a gentle soul, a vegetarian, a non-smoker and a crafts person (in general making me feel like a dinosaur), and it seemed appropriate that the green forest in which grew her namesake should also have provided her metaphor. I play the song with the guitar in open-G tuning, with a capo on the third (in the morning) or fourth fret. And there are blue lilies.

*Some seek red roses, crying morning
tears of dew.*

*Some turn to lilies, wearing summer
skies of blue.*

*I've paid small heed to flowers, but
evermore I will,*

*Since I saw the white and gentle
bloom of Laurel on the hill.*

*Leaves and branches, weaving as a
loom;*

*So begins my springtime when I
see my Laurel bloom.*

*Leaves and branches, weaving as a
loom;*

*So begins my springtime when I
see my Laurel bloom.*

*Roses in winter have long since
passed away.*

*Lilies lose the petals that have fled
from blue to gray.*

*But one among the flowers stays to
turn the snows aside,*

*And I see the Laurel, ever green,
upon the mountainside.*

(chorus)

*White and soft the blossoms, like snow
against the ground.*

*Black and strong the branches — the
head that bears the crown.*

*Green, green the bladed leaves, a
shelter from the storm.*

*The wildest wind is gentled when the
Laurel keeps me warm.*

(chorus)

HEAR JERUSALEM MOURN
Side 1, Band 3.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar
Andy Wallace: vocal and mandolin
Mike Holmes: mandolin
Jay Ungar: mandolin

This one's for the band. Mike Holmes had come to the recording session expressly to play mandolin, but Jay does too (as in "Push, Push, Push"), and Andy's no slouch either. I hadn't really been planning to include this song, but at one point when I was just noodling around with it — I like the syncopation in the chorus — the idea of a triple-mandolin extravaganza came up. We sat around in four chairs, knee to knee, while the "M-squad" worked out the parts, and did it. I couldn't begin to tell you who played what.

I discovered the song a couple of years ago when I went up to visit Andy at his home in New York State. The first thing he said when I walked through the door was "Boy, have I got a song for you!" A friend had found it on an old 78 recorded in 1928 by Bill Chitwood and his Georgia Mountaineers. At first listen, a lot of the words were not too clear, and as Andy and I could best reconstruct them, some of the lines still didn't make a whole lot of sense. We played around with the tone controls on his hi-fi, which helped some, and I took a tape of the record home and ran it through some fancier gadgets to clean up the noise still more. I'm pretty confident that we've finally got it right (although Andy and I still disagree about whether one word is "well" or "when"), and it's nice to discover that the words to such a good tune make sense after all. Compare the first verse, for example, with this one from a version by the Skillet Lickers (or at least as printed in SING OUT! as contributed by Jody Stecher as learned from Jerry Mitchell as learned from the record): "Now the Methodist preacher, you can tell him where to go/ Don't snobble that chicken just big enough to crow." Snobble? Hmmm. The Skillet Licker version also says "moan" instead of "mourn," and I no longer remember which way Chitwood did it.

The last verse, incidentally, is my own addition.

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?

*Now the Methodist preacher, you can
tell him where he goes.*

*Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
Don't never let a chicken get old
enough to crow.*

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?

*Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
Thank God that the heavens am
a-ringin' in my soul,
and my soul's set free.*

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?

*Now the Baptist preacher, you can
tell him by his coat.*

*Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
Got a bottle in the pocket that he
couldn't hardly tote.*

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn.

(chorus)

*Now the Campbellite preacher, so they
say,*

*Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
Well, he got to be baptized every
other day.*

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?

(chorus)

*Presbyterian preacher don't never
take the blues.*

*Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
He chews his own tobacco and he
drinks his own booze.*

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?

(chorus)

*Now the hardshell preacher, well, he
kneels uptown.*

*Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
His neck's so stiff can't hardly look
around.*

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?

(chorus)

*Now the Holy Roller preacher, well,
he sure am a sight.*

*Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
Let me tell you how he get 'em all
a-rollin' and he kick out the
light.*

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?

(chorus)

Unitarian preacher don't never bend
your ear.

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?
But I bet he'd like a tune like
this one here.

Don't you hear Jerusalem mourn?

(chorus twice)

CHICKEN ON A RAFT (Tawney)

Side 1, Band 4.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal

Dave Tucker: vocal

Andy Wallace: vocal

Pete the Spy: vocal

Greg Artzner: vocal

I'm especially happy about being able to include this recording here, because of one of the people who sings on it. Dave Tucker was the first regular singing partner I ever had, from about 1960 to 1964, and we piled up a lot of music and a lot of experience over those years, working at clubs, concerts, festivals, demonstrations, all-night parties and what-have-you. We roomed together for a while, made up countless topical songs (some of which were so topical they were good for about a week), even recorded a 45. In the last 15 years or so, however, he has hardly sung at all, not even sitting around his own living room. His voice is as strong and rich as ever (he's a good guitar player, too), and it means a great deal to me that he was willing to come "out of retirement" to be on this record. He has a tremendous repertoire stored away in his head, and if he should ever be moved to get back into music, we'll all be the richer for it.

Actually, the crew on this song is something of a time capsule for me. Andy was my second singing partner, for about a decade, and we share a musical ESP I've never known with anyone else. Within a year or so of Andy's moving away from Washington, Pete came to town, and although he's only an occasional singer, he's also a multi-national cook, a linguist, an eclectic music enthusiast (he helped me for about half a decade with a

weekly radio program on international and experimental music) and one of my all-time favorite people. It was just luck that he happened to be visiting the recording session when two more voices were needed for this song. The other voice is that of Greg Artzner, who was there with his singing partner, Terry Leonino, who had been helping me with "I Have a Song to Sing, O."

I learned "Chicken on a Raft" from a British trio called the Young Tradition, whom I first heard at the 1967 Newport Folk Festival after a bunch of us had been singing sea shanteys in a little isolated pocket around Washington for two or three years. I found the YT's sharp-edged, modal harmonies breathtaking, and when the occasion presented itself, I was fortunate to be able to arrange two more U.S. visits for them. It was during one of those that I picked up the song.

It's not "authentic," if that has to mean it was sung under Bully Hayes a century and a half ago — Cyril Tawney wrote it in 1966. But it's got the right feeling, or maybe I mean the right attitude. As sung here, the harmony (except for one note) is just parallel fifths, typical of modern shantey singing, but which also sounds more shantey-like to me than even the simple unison in which most shanteys were probably sung. (But what do I know? I think Gregorian chant sounds better in parallel fifths, too.) The only conscious butchery I've performed on the song has been to delete the fourth verse, whose reference to a bus somehow strikes me wrong. ("We kissed goodbye on the mid-night bus, / but she didn't cry and she didn't fuss. / Am I the one that she loves best, / or am I just a cuckoo in another man's nest?") Oh, and the word "lady's" was originally "feather." Given the last two verses, I think the revised sentiment is closer to the mark.

Some more words about words: there's a lot of slang and jargon in this song, and although no one needs a glossary to sing songs this good, here's a bit of translation from the British sea-going parlance: the Jimmy is the first officer, and the "comic cuts" he's perusing (named for a now-defunct British satirical maga-

zine) are periodic, confidential reports on each seaman. Dabtoes are deck-swabbers, dustman are coal-stokers, and middle and forenoon are shifts on watch. Donny B is the Scottish town of Donny Bristle, and "pusser" — pursar — is sailor's slang for anything to do with sea-going authority.

Skipper's in the wardroom drinking
gin.

Aye-oh, chicken on a raft.

I don't mind knocking but I ain't
going in.

Aye-oh, chicken on a raft.

The Jimmy's laughing like it'd
rain.

Aye-oh, chicken on a raft.

Been looking in me Comic Cuts
again.

Aye-oh, chicken on a raft.

Chicken on a raft on a Monday
morning,

Oh, what a terrible sight to
see.

Dabtoes forward and the dustmen
aft,

Sitting there picking at a
chicken on a raft.

Aye-oh, chicken on a raft,

Aye-oh, chicken on a raft,

Aye-oh, chicken on a raft,

Aye-oh, chicken on a raft.

(similarly:)

They gave me the middle and the
forenoon, too,

And now I'm pulling in a whaler's
crew.

With seagulls wheeling overhead,
I ought to be sleeping in my lady's
bed.

(chorus)

I had a little girl in Donny B,
And she did make a fool of me.

Her heart was like a pusser's
shower,

From hot to cold in a quarter of
an hour.

(chorus)

An Amazon girl lives in Dumfries.
She only had kids in twos and threes.
Her sister lives in Maryhill;
She says she won't, but I know she
will.

(chorus)

PUSH, PUSH, PUSH (Spoelstra)
Side 1, Band 5.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar

Jay Ungar: mandolin

Andy Wallace: banjo

"It just had to be said," according to Mark Spoelstra, "because it made me feel better to say it." Not so for me. I've had my share of woes and complaints, but they've generally not been of the hell-with-you-babe variety — I just like to play the song. When Mark wrote it in about 1962, by the way, he called it "You Don't Worry My Mind." I've been playing it almost that long, yet I didn't realize I had it wrong until I recently looked back at his Folkways record of it. Now it's "Push, Push, Push" to me, which also reflects the way I feel when I play it, sort of leaning into the rhythm. It was one of the first songs for which I worked out a guitar part elaborate enough for me to feel that I was really playing it, rather than just accompanying myself. A word or two has changed over the years, and I've left out the last verse ("I bought the groceries but I didn't pay the rent/ You thought I was king 'til I didn't have a cent/ Then when I suggested that you get a job/ You stopped your screaming and you started to sob"), but otherwise it's intact. I'd been meaning for a long time to record it, but other songs had nudged it aside until Jay, Andy and I were fooling around during a recording session for this album, and it struck me that we ought to give it a try. It was fun all around, particularly with Jay's manic mandolin, so here it is.

(chorus A:)

You don't worry my mind,
You don't worry my mind,
But if you push, push, push,
Gonna take my traveling time.

I wanted you to love me of your own
free will,
But it was a job to you.
All you could do was push, push,
push,
So here's what I'm a-gonna do:

(chorus B:)

Gonna find me a woman, sweeter than
you've ever seen.
She's a good-looking woman and she
runs on naturaline.
When I kiss that gal, it ain't
gonna be routine.

Well, I said I'd stay and I believed
I would;
Then you started pushing me around.
Well, I guess a bonafide bitch can't
quit,
So now I'm California bound.

(chorus B)

(Chorus A)

(Chorus B)

Now all the time you talk about
yourself;
You almost drove me insane.
Every time I pick up my guitar to
sing,
You start screaming and shouting
and throwing things.

(chorus A)

(Chorus B, repeat last line)

THE WINNIE-THE-POOH RAG (Eberhart, BMI)
Side 1, Band 6.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar
Jay Ungar: fiddle
Mike Holmes: mandolin

Pooh people are probably born, not
made. Or at least the real devotees
seem to be those who soaked up the lore
in their early childhood, and maybe were
then reexposed to it later on. I've
been one ever since I was a cub. In
fact, if this record were long enough,
I'd love to read you a bedtime story
("It rained and it rained and it
rained..."). It's not, of course, and

anyway, hasn't Walt Disney bought up all
the rights or something? Unca Walt has
done a lot of great stuff, but somehow
that seems to me like trying to corner
the market on recess, or peanut butter,
or something equally fundamental.

Before this song ever existed, the
title was just a phrase that popped into
my head one day and rattled around for a
couple of weeks like some kind of sawed-
off mouth music. At first I had trouble
even fitting the rhythm of the phrase to
a tune, though now that I'm so at home
with it I can't imagine how that was
ever the case. There have been other
songs about Poohbear, of course, but the
ones I've heard have all seemed kind of
syrupy and not at all like my image of
Bear, who is out there even as you read
this, getting into trouble of some kind
over in the Forty-Acre Wood. Jay Ungar's
jazzy-raggy fiddle fits right in, and
Mike Holmes has the inside connection in
the form of his daughter, Stacy, who
maintains a fine relationship with Pooh
and is thereby obviously a young woman
of discriminating taste.

Apologies to woozles, heffalumps and
others omitted. But then, you can never
tell with bees...

(chorus:)

Come all you children standing there,
I'll sing you all a song about my
favorite bear.

Do the Bumble-bear Boogie, baby, don't
be a drag;
Come on along and diddle a bit of the
Winnie-the-Pooh Rag.

(spoken:)

Now I'm gonna start off singing about
Kanga and Roo.
You remember Kanga — she used to come
hopping through?
Don't confuse her with Owl — he was
the grouch —
Kanga was the one with the pouch.
Her verse goes:

Kanga, always hopping around,
She had a kangaroo's ups and a mother's
downs.
When she was cooking there was plenty
for you,
But be sure to leave a bit of a bite
for baby Roo.

(chorus)

(spoken:)

Now my favorite character was your
classic lump.
He was gray, and he was a donkey,
which makes for your classic
slump.
He was mopey, and maudlin, and
miserable and worse,
But I think he deserves his own
verse.
It goes:

Eeyore, the donkey, always feeling
so sad,
His face was about the droopiest
thing he had.
And when he lost his tail you could
hear him howl,
Till he found it ringing the door-
bell of his good friend Owl.

(chorus)

(spoken:)

'Course there's lots of others, like
Rabbit and Tigger,
But I didn't want the song to get
too much bigger.
But if you don't think it's making
the song too big,
Let me sing the last verse about
Piglet:

Piglet got stranded when it started
to rain,
And then this Bear of Very Little
Brain
Corked up a honey pot and floated
away
To fetch Christopher Robin and
save the day.

(chorus, repeat last line)

DAWN (Eberhart, BMI)
Side 1, Band 7.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar

Written for the occasion of an sen-
awakening to share the sunrise.

Dawn is a very special time — of
beauty, rebirth, peace — and it can be

particularly meaningful when it is ex-
perienced together with someone very
close. It's easy to take for granted,
since the dawn is a daily occurrence and
the sharing may have become routine. But
sometimes the full richness of the event
can transcend all tendencies to ignore
it, such as when the natural beauty of
the setting simply pierces one's aware-
ness, or when limitations such as dis-
tance make the sharing less than common.

The song was an attempt to tell some-
one about whom I cared very much just
what our rare dawn meant to me. I chose
to approach the experience of sunrise
through the story of Genesis not for
religious reasons, but simply to suggest
the beauty and importance of a long-
awaited occasion.

I'll tell you a tale of the way the
world grew.
If I had the power, I'd give it to you.
On the first day was nothing, neither
left nor to right,
Till a voice rang eternal, saying,
"Let there be light."

Yet the light omnipresent little
wonder did yield.
'Twas the coming of darkness light's
glory revealed.
One turn of the wheel, and daylight
is gone,
But it's night that enables the
birth of the dawn.

Then the second day's cycle its
motions began:
Out of emptiness, order there came
to the plan.
First the light, then the darkness,
in their turning they came,
As the heavens appeared for to give
them a frame.

On the third day, with merely the
wave of a hand,
Were created the oceans and also
the land,
Then the trees and the flowers in
uncountable sum,
As the heralds of life in profusion
to come.

On the fourth day, the stars,
scattered high and away,
And to lead them, the moon, silent
echo of day.

But then came the sun and, my
darling, ere long
Came the high, golden blossom
whose blooming is dawn.

On the fifth day, the fish and the
birds of the air
Came to border the kingdom that
man would soon share.

On the sixth day, the animals came
to the land,
And among them was woman, and
beside her was man.

On the last day was rest, yet the
cycle still turned:
At dusk came the moon, and at
dawn the sun burned.
They've rolled through the ages,
unblemished by time,
But this dawn is yours, my beloved,
and mine.

I HAVE A SONG TO SING, O
Side 2, Band 1.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar
Terry Leonino: vocal
Andy Wallace: banjo

Gilbert and Sullivan enthusiasts are a bit like Winnie-the-Pooh fans — the real addicts got hooked in childhood. I'm one; Andy Wallace is another. This lovely duet, a cumulative song in both words and tune, is from "Yeoman of the Guard," a G&S operetta first performed on October 3, 1888. It is sung by a strolling jester named Jack Point and his singing companion, Elsie Maynard, to a melody that Sullivan wrote from a fragment heard by Gilbert from some sailors. (One reference says it's "founded on an old sea shantey." Wish I knew which one.) "Yeoman" has a typically intricate G&S plot, and it's the only tragedy among the authors' famous collaborations — Jack Point collapses insensible to the stage at the end. But the song stands by itself.

I've sung the song several times in the past with Andy in Elsie's role,

since we were singing together at the time and loved the song enough to welcome the chance to do it regardless. For this recording, however, I'm grateful to Terry Leonino, who performs mostly with Greg Artzner under the collective name of Magpie. (They've an album on Folkways Records.) Her Elsie brings feeling to the part and sweetness to the harmony (my embellishment on the original), and was wonderfully responsive to my nit-picking in working out the arrangement. Anyone who gets through the last verse, by the way, should get some kind of award just for finding places to breathe.

Jack: I have a song to sing, O.
Elsie: Sing me your song, O.

Jack: It is sung to the moon by a love-
lorn loon
Who fled from the mocking throng, O;
It's the song of a merryman, moping
mum,
Whose soul was sad and whose glance
was glum,
Who sipped no sup and who craved
no crumb
As he sighed for the love of a lady.

Both (chorus): Heigh-dee, hey-dee,
Misery me, lackaday-dee.
He sipped no sup and he
craved no crumb
As he sighed for the love
of a lady.

Elsie: I have a song to sing, O.
Jack: What is your song, O?

Elsie: It is sung with the ring of the
songs maids sing
Who love with a love lifelong, O.
It's the song of a mermaid,
peerly proud,
Who loved a lord and who laughed
aloud
At the moan of the merryman, moping
mum,
Whose soul was sad and whose glance
was glum,
Who sipped no sup and who craved no
crumb
As he sighed for the love of a lady.

(chorus)

Jack: I have a song to sing, O.
Elsie: Sing me your song, O.

Jack: It is sung to the knell of a
churchyard bell
And a doleful dirge —
ding-dong, O.
It's the song of a popinjay,
bravely born,
Who turned up his noble nose
with scorn
At the humble mermaid, peerly
proud,
Who loved a lord and who laughed
aloud
At the moan of the merryman,
moping mum,
Whose soul was sad and whose
glance was glum
Who sipped no sup and who craved
no crumb
As he sighed for the love of a lady.

(chorus)

Elsie: I have a song to sing, O.
Jack: Sing me your song, O.

Elsie: It is sung with a sigh and a
tear in the eye,
For it tells of a righted wrong, O.
It's the song of a mermaid once
so gay,
Who turned on her heel and tripped
away
From the peacock popinjay, bravely
born,
Who turned up his noble nose with
scorn
At the humble heart that he did
not prize,
So she begged on her knees with
downcast eyes
For the love of the merryman,
moping mum,
Whose soul was sad and whose
glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup and who craved
no crumb
As he sighed for the love of a lady.

(Both (final chorus):
Heigh-dee, hey-dee,
Misery me, lackaday-dee.
His pains were o'er and he
sighed no more,
For he lived in the love of
a lady.

METHODIST PIE
Side 2, Band 2.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar
Andy Wallace: vocal and banjo
Jay Ungar: vocal and fiddle
Mike Holmes: vocal and mandolin
Caroline Paton: vocal
Sandy Paton: vocal

This is a fine example of those "sing-all-day-and-dinner-on-the-ground" songs that are often as much fun to sing as it is to attend the happy gatherings they describe. It's been sung by the likes of Bradley Kincaid and Grandpa Jones, and I first heard it in 1964 from the Greenbriar Boys. Over the years, as often happens, I find that I've changed the tune and shuffled the verses from the way I thought I'd learned it, but when I went back to make what I thought would be a few small corrections to restore the "original" for this record, I found that some early versions were far more different even than this one. So I just kept it my way, including the line "Lord, I'm born to die," which often appeared as "How is this for high?"

As you can tell, there's a veritable houseful of singers here (except that it's the Patons' house, which always has a few more musicians lurking in odd corners), and this is not one of those recordings with two voices carefully placed on the right, two more on the left, a couple in the middle and so on. I did ask Sandy and Caroline to deliberately include a half-tempo, antiphonal chorus part, just because I like the way it sounds in songs like "The Sunny Side of Life" or "He Will Set Your Fields on Fire," but the overall result is more like a rambunctious picnic in a meadow on a beautiful summer's day — which suits the subject of the song just fine.

Went down to camp meeting just the
other afternoon
Just to hear 'em dance and sing,
Hear 'em tell each other how they
love one another
And hear the hallelujahs ring.
There was old Brother Benny and
cousin Ebenezer,
Uncle Rufus and his lame gal, Sue,
Aunt Polly, aunt Melinda and old
Mother Bender,
Well I never seen a happier crew.

chorus:

Oh, little children, I believe.
Oh, little children, I believe.
Oh, little children, I believe.
I'm a Methodist till I die.
I'm a Methodist, a Methodist,
it is my belief,
I'm a Methodist till I die.
When old grim Death come
a-knocking at the door,
I'm a Methodist till I die.

Don't they all go there just to have
a big time
And to eat their grub so fine?
Friends, there was applesauce-butter
and sugar-in-the-gourd
And a great big Methodist pie.
And you ought to hear 'em ringing
when they all get to singing
That good old "Bye and Bye,"
And I pour on that sugar-in-the-gourd
And I finish off the Methodist pie.

(chorus)

Then they all join hands and dance
around a ring,
Just a-singing all the while.
You'd think it was a cyclone coming
through the air —
You could hear about a half a mile.
Then a bell rings loud and a great
big crowd
Breaks ranks and up they fly,
And Brother Billy McGhee, in the
top of a tree,
Says, "Lord, I'm born to die!"

(chorus)

I'm a Calvinist, a Eucharist, it is
my belief,
I'm a Methodist till I die.
When old grim Death come a-knocking
at the door,
I'm a Methodist till I die.

CHICKEN ROAD (Greene)
Side 2, Band 3.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar
Jay Ungar: fiddle

This wonderful, wry, cantankerous,
eerie, loving mood piece is one of the
most unusual songs I know and one of
my all-time favorites. I learned it

in the early 1950's from an album by
Tennessee Ernie Ford, and I haven't
heard anyone else sing it since. As
with the best of poetry, its images
evoke far more than they actually say —
of slate-gray skies, little scrabbly
creatures, soft noises on summer
nights — and some people seem to believe
that it has an air of bitter mockery.
I disagree. To me the words are filled
with the most long-held, deep-seated
affection — the kind the author couldn't
leave behind if he wanted to.

Jay Ungar is the only person I've
ever been able to think of who could
help me communicate the mood I get from
this song. Before we ever tried it out
(several years ago), just to give him
the idea, I rambled on at him about a
hodge-podge collage of Saroyan, Tennes-
see Williams, dustbowls, striking photos
of old people in the Depression and a
lot of other things, some of which had
nothing whatever to do with a tiny town
in Missouri. But he certainly got the
message. His fiddle first appears like
a wisp of smoke under the door, grad-
ually evolving into a scorpion, a mouse
and a whole cast of characters and
feelings. Its departing sound just
climbs and climbs until it floats
shimmering out through the roof. I'm
not sure it isn't hovering there still.

Once I had a splinter in the joint
of my little toe,
And a garter snake bit my heel by the
bend in the Little St. Joe.
Honey, that's Missouri, land of the
dust and the toad.
Wonderful town, Chicken Road.

And once I had a scorpion on the lobe
of my good right ear,
And a great, great grandma who could
hear what she wanted to hear.
Honey, that's Missouri, land that the
Lord never knowed.
Wonderful town, Chicken Road.

Beasts of burden nip at their hay,
And a poolroom banjo plays the
end of each day.
Nights so quiet, you could hear
a mouse
Tippin' through the parlor of a
boarding house.

And once I had a boil on the back
of my itching neck,
Took a ride with a girl in a
Model T and died in a
wonderful wreck.
Honey, that's Missouri, land where
the sky overflowed.
Wonderful town, Chicken Road.

ALL I NEED (C. P. Jones)
Side 2, Band 4.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and piano
Riki Schneyer: vocal
Helen Schneyer: vocal
Jeff Deitchman: vocal
Joe Hickerson: vocal

Being able to read music a bit is
really a help. I discovered this song
while skimming through an old Baptist
hymnal, ignoring the words, just try-
ing out tunes. (In fact, I've still
never heard anyone else sing it.)
Written around the turn of the century,
it struck me at first hum as practi-
cally rhythm-and-blues, and it stopped
me right in my tracks. Strangely, for
such a driving melody, the meter as
written is almost stultifyingly regular
— there are only two eighth notes, for
example, in the entire arrangement
(everything else is blocks of quarters
and halves), and they're in the bass
part. I haven't really bent the meter
very far out of shape, but it's enough
to contrast with the chorus parts,
which are straight out of the book.
The piano arrangement is my own doing,
and would probably speak to a pretty
different kind of congregation than
the one for which Jones was writing.
Andy Wallace says it reminds him of
Sunday-morning radio in New Orleans.

The choir here has so much soul that
I felt a little uncomfortable asking
them to stick to the book's inflexible
rhythm. Riki Schneyer sings anything
from Almeda Riddle to Bessie Smith, and
her mother, Helen (who records for Folk-
Legacy), is one of the great people and
singers of this world. There was no
way I was going to make this album
without her, and I'm only sorry that
this wasn't an arrangement in which she
could really let go. Jeff Deitchman
assimilates and writes music in styles
from Cajun to shape-note, and Joe Hick-

erson (with three Folk-Legacy albums of
his own), besides knowing an almost
indecent number of songs from every-
where, has just the edge in his voice
to put a solid bottom on songs like this.

I find this tune so infectious that
I play it almost every time I sit down
at a piano. I changed the order of the
verses around from the original, so if
you want to reconstruct it, the present
order is 2-3-1-5-6. (The verse I left
out is the 4th: "To my Savior I will
cleave/ He will not his servant leave.")

Jesus is my all in all,
All I need, all I need.
While he keeps I cannot fall,
He is all I need.

Wisdom, righteousness and power,
Holiness for evermore.
My redemption full and sure,
He is all I need.

He redeemed me when He died.
All I need, all I need.
I with him was crucified.
He is all I need.

(chorus)

Jesus Christ is made to me.
All I need, all I need.
He alone is all my plea.
He is all I need.

(chorus)

He's the treasure of my soul.
All I need, all I need.
He hath cleansed and made me whole.
He is all I need.

(chorus)

Glory, glory to the Lamb.
All I need, all I need.
By his spirit sealed I am.
He is all I need.

(chorus twice)

DEATH AIN'T YOU GOT NO SHAME
Side 2, Band 5.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal

In 1926, Francis Arthur Robinson of Nashville sang this song for collector George Pullen Jackson, saying it was a "barefoot white" song he'd heard in the backwoods of Wayne County, Tennessee. I haven't been able to find out much about it, but I feel almost certain that this powerful, simple moan is from black tradition (and not just because Jackson acknowledges an account of a black congregation singing it in Beaufort, S.C.), possibly a "funeral walk" of the sort used to summon neighbors to a new grave-laying at the cemetery, like "Let's Go to the Burying."

You can find the version Jackson collected in Alan Lomax's Folk Songs of North America, but I'd recommend looking for Jackson's own book, Spiritual Folk-songs of Early America. It was first published in the 1930's, but there was a Dover paperback reprint edition published beginning in 1964, and I think there's still an inexpensive hardcover version in print (Peter Smith, Inc.). It's a small book, but it contains 250 songs — spirituals, hymns (including some from shape-note tradition, though no harmonies are provided), ballads and more. It is, as the Dover reprint called it, "the standard modern collection of these 'good old songs'," and it's so full of gems that it well deserves this plug.

Death ain't you got no shame, shame?
Death ain't you got no shame, shame?
Oh, Death, ain't you got no shame?
Death ain't you got no shame?

You know you left my mamma to moan,
moan.

Left my mamma to moan, moan.
Left my mamma to moan.

Death ain't you got no shame?

(chorus: same as first verse)

You know you left my papa alone,
'lone.

Left my papa alone, 'lone.

Left my papa alone.

Death ain't you got no shame?

(chorus)

JOE HILL'S LAST WILL (Haaglund/Raim)
Side 2, Band 6.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar

In 1910, in San Pedro, California, a Swedish immigrant born under the name of Joel Haaglund joined a labor organization called the International Workers of the World — the Wobblies. Five years later, he was dead. But in that brief span, the man known as Joe Hill wrote and tossed into the seething cauldron of the active workers' movement some of the most powerful and best-remembered songs of their kind: "Casey Jones — the Union Scab," "The Preacher and the Slave" ("You'll get pie in the sky when you die — that's a lie!") and more. His songs made a difference, embodying the motto of the Wobblies' Little Red Song Book (still available after 70 years and dozens of editions) to "fan the flames of discontent." So much difference, some say, that they prompted fabrication of the murder charge for which he was arrested in January of 1914, tried and convicted. Jailed in Utah, he continued to turn out songs ("The Rebel Girl" was one), until, in the early morning of November 19, 1915, he was executed by a firing squad.

The words to this song are probably the last verses Joe Hill ever wrote. "...When I make a song," he is said to have written from his cell the previous year, "I always try to picture things as they really are. Of course a little pepper and salt is allowed in order to bring out the facts more clearly." On the day before his execution, however, the pepper and salt were missing when a reporter happened to ask what he planned to do about his personal belongings. "I really have nothing to dispose of," he replied. "As for trinkets, keepsakes and jewelry, I never believed in them nor kept them about me. But I have a will to make, and I'll scribble it." Sitting on the edge of his cot, according

to the reporter, Joe Hill wrote his brief, parting poem.

Music did not catch up with it for nearly half a century. The tune was written in 1962 by Ethel Raim, a remarkable singer in her own right whom I hope you have heard with The Penny-whistlers. (You can find it written out in the June-July 1961 issue of SING OUT!) The tune is as simple and strong as the words it complements, and I've been singing it almost since I first came across it. One of my great pleasures was being able to sing it in Ethel's presence. Thanks to Joe Hickerson, by the way, for a nudge that reminded me how long I had been hoping to put it on a record.

My will is easy to decide,
For there is nothing to divide.
My kin don't need to fuss and moan.
Moss does not cling to a rolling
stone.

My body, oh, if I could choose,
I would to ashes it reduce,
And let the merry breezes blow
My dust to where some flowers grow.

Perhaps some fading flower, then,
Would come to life and bloom again.
This is my last and final will.
Good luck to all of you,

Joe Hill

LAMENT FOR A RED PLANET (Eberhart, BMI)
Side 2, Band 7.

Jonathan Eberhart: vocal and guitar

Some of the most heartfelt of songs have been those inspired by places — a favorite mountain, perhaps, or a shady glen — and concerned not with the inhabitants, but with the textures, dimensions and even feelings of the places themselves. This is a "place" song. The place is the planet Mars.

I wrote the song in the summer of 1976, while I was out in Pasadena, California, at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, control center for the four Viking spacecraft that were then just beginning their study of Mars.

I spent nearly half a year there, writing regularly for a magazine about the unfolding reality of the planet and finding that I was developing some real feelings for that increasingly familiar sphere. The flashy technology of an endeavor like Viking can be pretty impressive, but spacecraft are just exotic extensions of hammers and screwdrivers — tools. The real wonders are the natural ones out there in the sky, unaffected by the presence of such hardware. I took several months with this brief song, as conscious of what I was leaving out as of what I put in. It is not about spacecraft, or any other gadgetry. It invokes no imaginary Martians, nor is it concerned with any Earthling's gee-whiz reactions to being on another world. Those things don't matter here. I wondered for some time about what sort of tune it ought to have — should it sound alien, or "Martian," whatever that is? — before finally deciding that it should simply be gentle and comfortable and sit well with its intended hearers, since what it's really about is feelings.

All over the surface of the planet are shapes that look as if they were made by flowing, liquid water. Nowadays, liquid water would just boil away in the thin atmosphere with nary a chance to go cutting streambeds and floodplains, but once upon a time, a thicker atmosphere might have let the waters live and flow, providing warmth, clouds and more. The Plain of Gold is a cold, dry expanse where, a billion or more years ago, gentle winds may have rippled the waters of a Martian river. But something changed — the planet's tilt, or its orbit, or even the warmth of the sun — and most of the "air" and water now remaining are frozen into the polar caps or locked in the rust-colored sands. The song looks at Mars as the spirit of the planet might see it, wistfully recalling those more temperate times and reflecting sadly on the bleak present, but taking some comfort from the real if fragile hope that, in the immense span of the life of a world, continuing changes could free that trapped reservoir and bring about a new beginning.

This song is dedicated to two friends of mine, though it was not written for them: Charon True, whose thoughts, feel-

ings and outspoken comments prompted me to get out from behind the nuts and bolts of spacecraft technology and really see the planet itself, and Carl Sagan, who planted some seeds. (Thanks also to Mark Washburn, for helping me order my thoughts about the song so that I could write about it afterward.) A lot of science contributed to the song's ideas, but it's not the point. Mars is a place of its own. It was here before Earthlings began asking their questions, and it is likely that, regardless of who endures to understand the answers, Mars will remain.

*Ten thousand times a hundred thousand
dusty years ago,
Where now extends the Plain of Gold
did once my river flow.
It stroked the stones and spoke in
tongues and splashed against
my face,
Till ages rolled — the sun shone
cold on this unholy place.*

*So many stars bedeck my skies, where
once there were but few,
But oh, to know again the clouds
that hid them from my view.
My ochred cliffs and rusted sands
stand regal and serene,
But oh, my wan and wasted world,
I miss your blue and green.*

*But it's just the weight of waiting,
not a deathwatch o'er a friend.
Tomorrow has a starting, as does
yesterday an end.
For the water of my river and the
air that was my wind,
Though bound in rocks and wintry
wastes, I pray may flow again.*

*My ochred cliffs and rusted sands
stand regal and serene,
But oh, my wan and wasted world,
I miss your blue and green.*

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