

Greenland and Baffin,  
And the white Labrador,  
In the winds and the terrible snow,  
When they carried their icepicks  
Just to bring you about  
In the light from the lanterns below.

And now you've got hard times . . .

So rest, lady, rest  
From the fog and the gales.  
Let the harbor protect you,  
Let the sun dry your sails,  
Let a hundred old sailors  
Tell their saltiest tales  
Of the hardest of times you've been through.

And we'll see your masts mingle  
With the spruces and pines,  
And we'll bow as we all pass you by.  
For a boat is more patient  
Than a sailor can be  
When the sun and the wind fill his eyes.

And now you've got hard times . . .

NOTE: Some lyrics in this recording may differ from those included in this booklet. The intended words are the printed versions. (LK)

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All words and music by Larry Kaplan, BMI

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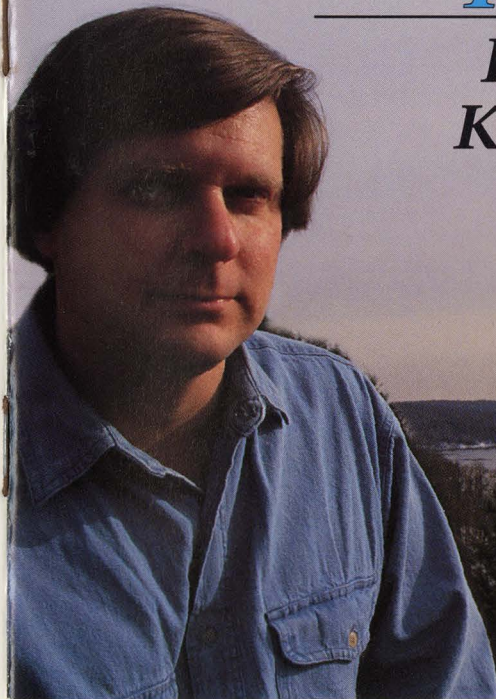
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# *Worth All the Telling*

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**LARRY  
KAPLAN**



**Folk-Legacy Records CD-122**

## Worth All the Telling

Good times and hard times,  
They're worth all the telling . . .

These lines from Larry Kaplan's "Song for Gale" describe his music quite well. Many of the songs on this recording are truly ballads, or stories told in song. Larry often gives us thoughtful stories of real people, their good times and their hard times, and the ways they manage to deal with whatever they are dealt. Larry is a keen and sympathetic observer of the human condition. He cares deeply and writes eloquently about the concerns of others, yet he also enjoys the humor of those situations in which there is humor. Larry once told me that, for him, music is "one way to observe, explain, and make sense out of the things I allow myself to see and to worry about."

Originally from Boston, Larry spent many of his formative years in Maine. He crewed on the schooner Bowdoin up there, and got to know some of Maine's working folk. He's one of the few people I know who actually worked his way through college and graduate school. He spent some time as a night-clerk in a New Orleans hotel (while studying the biology of mental retardation at Tulane). He met his wife, Nora, one evening when he was singing in a Providence coffeehouse while doing further graduate work at Brown. It was during those years that he got to know Gale and Mil Huntington out on Martha's Vineyard, a friendship that is expressed in several of his best-known songs, including the opening song of this recording.

I've known of Larry's songs for a number of years. I'd heard them sung by others (Gordon Bok and Cindy Kallet, among others, have recorded some of his songs), but it was only quite recently that I had the opportunity to hear Larry, himself, sing them. Caroline and I once visited Larry and his wife while they were living in Vermont, but, for some reason, we didn't get around to singing that evening. Too busy getting acquainted, I guess. Now Larry and his family live in the southeastern part of Connecticut. Last year we heard that he was to perform at the Trinity Coffeehouse in Branford, so we drove down there to hear him. I want to thank Deborah Winograd for making that evening happen. I can't remember an evening in which I've heard a singer/ songwriter weave so many lovely songs into a two hour program. I asked him to make a record for us (yes, I still call them that). He agreed, and this is the result: a generous collection of fine songs, each very definitely "worth all the telling."

**Sandy Paton**

Sharon, Connecticut, February, 1993

A friend of mine once told me that if you can't make a song rhyme, at least make it tell the truth. Rhyming is easy — you either have the words right there, or you can wait for them.

But it's the truth that's tough.

To me, a truthful song is one that doesn't confuse someone else's story with your own. It means taking responsibility for others' privacy, their dignity, or their pride. It means trying to find the words people (or places) would let you use if they had any say in it — no matter how clumsy or imperfect those words might be.

These are songs I've been singing for a long time, about people, places, and stories I've known even longer. I hope you enjoy them, share them, and sing them.

**Larry Kaplan**

February, 1993

### 1. SONG FOR GALE (Kaplan, © 1988, BMI)

**Larry: guitar, 2nd guitar, vocal • Frank: fiddle**

This was written for E. Gale Huntington of the island of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. Gale is an author, historian, farmer, fisherman, sailor, teacher, fiddle player, song collector, and a close friend who, in his 90 years, has brought so many wonderful songs to so many people. During one of his recklessly slow drives "up island," Gale recalled for me how quickly so much has changed there.

Blue skies,  
South wind,  
Fish jumping into your hand.  
What a time to be working  
Old Nantucket Sound  
From the islands into the mainland.

Worn out,  
Smelling of bait,  
You'd come home by the end of the day.  
And the sun over West Chop,  
Those warm summer breezes,  
Made you think it would never change.

Get me my fiddle,  
We'll sing all the old songs.  
Now you take the high notes  
And I'll sing the low.  
Good times and hard times,  
They're worth all the telling;  
It won't matter to me  
If you sing 'em that well.

I remember the time  
When you worked for a living,  
Pushing hard just to get back to shore.  
When you busted your back  
Or you just wouldn't eat.  
They don't talk much of that anymore.

When you sat with the old folks,  
Fell asleep from their stories,  
Stayed awake with the howling winds,  
Sang your songs till the children  
Were all tucked away warm,  
And the night tides come rolling back in.

Get me my fiddle . . .

Blue skies,  
South wind,  
Fish jumping into your hand.  
What a time to be working  
Old Nantucket Sound  
From the islands into the mainland.

Get me my fiddle . . .

## 2. TURN THE BOAT AROUND (Kaplan, BMI)

**Larry: guitar, banjo, vocal, chorus vocal • David: concertina • Sandy: chorus vocal**

The Connecticut River was for many years a major commercial link between northern and southern New England, and between the cities and towns of the region. Late at night, sometimes you can still hear the engines of tugs as they push oil barges along the tidal portion of that great river. Most of the Connecticut's commerce has been replaced by rail and truck now, and the working vessels mostly by pleasure craft. This is about another time when jobs were plentiful working on that river.

Turn the boat around;  
It's a long walk home  
If we go aground,  
And it's two more days  
Till we reach the Sound.  
Turn the boat around.

I'm an old landlubber  
When it comes to boats and sea.  
I wouldn't know a rudderpost  
If it fell on top of me.  
When times are rough, you take a job  
That wasn't meant to be.  
Work is work, but this is work  
To put an end to me.

Turn the boat around . . .

This river moves so quickly,  
It fools you constantly.  
Dodging rocks, no time to stop  
Or mind the fallen trees.  
The Captain used to tell me,  
"You'll pick it up somehow,"  
But I'm at home in a pickup truck  
And working with a plow.

Turn the boat around . . .

Well, we haul big rocks from Brattleboro,  
Logs from old St. J.,  
Meet the train at Middletown . . .  
Oh, it so confuses me!  
Tide goes out, we make good time;  
Tide comes in, we crawl.  
When the snow blows hard and the ice is thick,  
We don't even move at all.

Turn the boat around . . .

I miss my home and family,  
I miss the solid ground,  
Miss bein' dry when the corn is high  
And it's time to cut it down.  
I'd rather be with farmers;  
I've got better things to do  
Than to feel like I'm the dumbest fool  
In this whole dang-blasted crew.

Turn the boat around . . .

Well, it's fifty miles to Saybrook Point;  
From there it's out to sea.  
The current's swift; the tide is right,  
And she's goin' too fast for me.  
When next she makes it through Hell's Gate  
They won't find me aboard.  
Enough's enough; I'd rather have  
A job I can afford.

Turn the boat around . . . (2X)

### 3. MEADOWLARK WALTZ (Kaplan, BMI)

Larry: guitar, second guitar, vocal • Frank: fiddle • Caroline: chorus vocal  
Sandy: chorus vocal

Sometimes the best way to keep track of time is to think of the people we miss the most.

Can you remember the meadowlark's song,  
And the moon rising out of the glen?  
Or the stories we told on those warm summer nights?  
Don't you think we can hear them again?  
That's a long time ago, my old friend.

Don't you think you've been gone just a little too long?  
You've seen trouble enough in your time.  
And it sure wouldn't hurt to know who your friends are;  
Some are long ago, some far behind.  
Some are long ago, some far behind.

Rust on the hillside,  
Clouds in the sky,  
And a river too tired to flow.  
Half-finished letters,  
Good friends who know better,  
There just aren't that many to know.

Now there's ice on the windows and there's frost in the fields.  
No, nothing much changes 'round here.  
We are all a bit older, but now then, so are you.  
You count miles and we measure in years.  
You count miles and we measure in years.

Rust on the hillside . . .

Can you remember the meadowlark's song  
And the moon rising out of the glen?  
Or the stories we told on those warm summer nights?  
Don't you think we can hear them again?  
That's a long time ago, my old friend.

#### 4. MY BROTHER MIKE AND ME (Kaplan, BMI)

**Larry: guitar, second guitar, vocal**

While traveling across Nova Scotia three years ago, my son very astutely noticed "too many" small, family-owned fishing boats sitting in their cradles or on blocks while the bigger company-owned vessels were hard at work. He pointed out that, if fish don't know the difference between little boats and big boats, why can't the smaller boats fish, too? That would give everyone a chance to work catching fish. This song is for a time later, when the explanations may be harder.

It's my brother, Mike, and me,  
With my oldest son, Anthony,  
On this wooden trawler, built in our backyard.  
Now it's time to set our nets;  
The big boats haven't got here yet.  
When you're out here all alone, it isn't hard.

Well, the young men say that the fishing's slow,  
But we're catching plenty; it's the price that's low,  
And it's either this, or join the company.  
But, if the rates they pay to those tubs of steel  
Are the same for mine with her wooden keel,  
I'd rather fish these waters with just us three.

Wind's against us, tide's against us;  
Bad bills, and the fog leans hard against us.  
... It's a rotten deal.

But it's the best job that a man can do  
When his two best friends are his only crew,  
When his own son says he's glad to take the wheel.

Well, each time we make this run,  
She sticks out like a big sore thumb.  
She's the oldest vessel on these fishing grounds.  
And no profit has she turned,  
Except for all the respect we've earned,  
And that's still worth something in this fishing town.

I've fished the same way on this sea  
That my father learned and he taught to me,  
Though the big boats guarantee you'll get your share.  
But they make the rules for the work you'll do,  
Then they'll scrap your boat and let go your crew,  
Just to pay you steady twelve months of the year.

Wind's against us . . .

Ah, but what's that worth to me?  
I'd rather go out slow, with dignity.  
No catch of mine I'll sell to foreign lands.  
Besides, any wage I'd make a year  
Still couldn't pay off all this broken gear.  
When it's time to quit, I'll know just where I stand.

Wind's against us . . .  
(repeat first verse)

#### 5. CONNECTICUT TWISTER (Kaplan, BMI)

**Larry: guitar, banjo, bass, vocal • David: hammered dulcimer**

The Northeast has had its share of violent weather, including tornados. Pretty big ones, too. They kind of sneak up on New Englanders while they're busy talking about when the next hurricane will arrive. I am told that this may be the only song about tornados in Connecticut which also mentions the city of Meriden. If so, I hope I got the facts right!

Well, I've been sitting here, looking at the summer sky;  
Hotter than the hottest day you ever get in mid-July.  
Nothing much is growing and the ground's a-getting awful dry.  
A little rain might do a lot of good.

And I've been wondering why it's raining south of us,  
Storming on the shoreline, thundering a mighty fuss.  
Why can't rain just turn around and come to us?  
Mary, cut another piece of pie.

But it's . . . Oh, no! Think it's gonna blow.  
Gonna get the rain we were hoping for a year ago.  
Oh, sure, bet it's gonna pour.  
Put another bucket by the door.

Nimbus, cirrus, got no stratocumulus.  
Fair weather looks better, but it isn't feeding us.  
Nothing like a rainy day to wash away the mean in us  
And let you get your boots and slickers on.

Then out of the west come a mess of clouds I never seen.  
And I don't hear thunder, just the rattle of the window screens.  
Dust flying everywhere; sky's a-looking awful green.  
Something tells me this ain't rain.

But it's . . . Oh, no . . .

Fetch up all the chickens; don't forget to grab the laying hens.  
Put 'em in the kitchen, then go back and get the horses in.  
I'll head around the back. Go and open up the cellar, then  
We'll all sit, waiting for the storm.

Go and get your brother Bill; run and let your sister know.  
Wait a minute! First tell Aunt Lucy it's a-gonna blow.  
Have you seen your Uncle Bob? He wandered off a year ago.  
Hope the storm don't bring him back here!

But it's . . . Oh, no . . .

Well, the wind slammed down and we didn't feel a drop of rain.  
Barn blew up; we'll never see them pigs again.  
Cow's on a shopping mall the other side of Meriden;  
Tractor's in the middle of the field.

There were shingles in the air and the twister took the silo down.  
Ducks, wild geese and turkeys flying at the speed of sound.  
Uncle Bob a-circling and Lucy's staying underground.  
Gonna have to wait another year.

But it's . . . Oh, no . . .

Well, I started farming here back in 1943.  
Never saw a storm that could relocate your property.  
Now go and get your Uncle Bob; he's stuck up in that willow tree.  
Children, put the chickens in the yard.

But it's . . . Oh, no . . . (2X)

## 6. EAST OF THE RIVER (Kaplan, BMI)

Larry: guitar, second guitar

I'd been playing these two melodies for a long while, only to discover one day that they were nearly the same tune. When in doubt, play them together!

## 7. THE HARD WAY TO PEACHAM (Kaplan, BMI)

Larry: guitar, second guitar, vocal • Abby: cello • Cindy: vocal harmony

In 1869, near the Vermont town of Peacham, a homeless family froze to death while seeking shelter during a late winter storm. That event is still a painful reminder that homelessness and poverty can occur anywhere: in the country or the city, in these times and in the future.

From Lamoille County rails  
To the old north logging road,  
It's a hard way to Peacham;  
Never go it all alone.  
Where the snow hides the trail,  
Where the trees they grow in stone,  
And the wind in these hills  
Takes the skin from off your bones.

It was a family, most folks tell,  
With no settled abode.  
They set out that cloudy morning  
On that lonely uphill road.  
The town's wary now of paupers,  
So the papers all did say,  
And the work's too thin in winter,  
So they sent them on their way.

Where is the shame  
In a poor and hungry man,  
In the heart of a village,  
In the soul of this hard land?  
Where shall we place the blame  
On a cold and snowy night,  
When the curtains are all drawn  
And the doors are bolted tight?

They made seventeen miles  
Past the next little town.  
"We must cross through these Green Mountains  
To West Barnet's farming ground.  
In the spring we will find work there.  
Now there's snow up in the sky.  
We will ask for one night's shelter  
When the little one's cry."

From a light, there in the distance,  
They could hear the welcome sound  
Of the bells from off his horses  
As he bedded them both down.  
"Sir, will you give us shelter?  
The snow's deep on the ground."  
"I'll not have any beggars,"  
And he slammed the doors all 'round.

Where is the shame . . .

In the morning light they found them,  
Half a mile down from his shed,  
The torn cloth of their blanket  
Churned up by his own sled.  
And he swore he thought the crying  
Was the wind from off the hills.  
All alone here on this mountain,  
It's the wind you know too well.

In the town they spoke too little,  
And the men they cursed the cold.  
"It's been one God-awful winter;  
Makes the best of us get old."  
And the spring that year came early,  
And the church that year was full;  
And the sun shone down so sweetly  
Upon that windy hill.

Where is the shame . . .

## 8. OLD ZEB (Kaplan, © 1977, BMI)

Larry: guitar, banjo, vocal

Mildred Tilton Huntington first told me about the life and times of her great-uncle, Zebulon Northrup Tilton, back in 1975, but I had known about this great fisherman and coasterman from Massachusetts a number of years before. Zeb was born in 1867, and died in 1952 at the age of eighty-five. He lived long enough to see the coasting schooner trade all but disappear. This song is about the day Zeb's daughters, Rosie and Gertie, helped him ashore, leaving his favorite vessel, the *Alice S. Wentworth*, for the last time.

I'm not tired of the wind;  
I'm not weary of the sea.  
But she's probably had her belly full  
Of a damn old coot like me.  
I'm goin' ashore;  
She's gone for better days.  
But I'll see her topsail flying  
When I come down off the ways.

Rosie, get my Sunday shoes;  
Gertie, get my walking cane.  
We'll take another walk to see  
Old Alice sail again.

I'd like to have a nickel  
For the men I used to know  
Who could load three cord of lumber  
In half an hour or so,  
Who could put on sail by hauling,  
'Stead of donkeying around.  
Then I'd be the poorest coasterman  
This side of Edgartown.

Rosie, get my Sunday shoes . . .

Any fool can work an engine!  
Takes brains to work a sail.  
And I never seen no steamer  
Get much good out of a gale.  
You can go and pay your taxes  
For the rationed gas you get,  
But, at least to me, the wind is free  
And they haven't run out yet.

Rosie, get my Sunday shoes . . .

If I ever get back to her,  
You know I'll treat her just the same.  
I'll jibe her when I want to, boys,  
And I'll sail in freezing rain.  
I'll park the old dear on the beach  
And go dancing in the town,  
'Cause a man who's fit for hanging  
Prob'ly never will get drowned.

Rosie, get my Sunday shoes . . .

## 9. THE PERFECT FIELDS OF FREDERICKSBURG (Kaplan, BMI)

Larry: guitar, banjo, vocal • Frank: viola

On our way home from a visit with our friends Bob and Kay Zentz in Norfolk, Virginia, we stopped one early morning at the Fredericksburg Battlefield. I had never been to a Civil War battlefield before, and was struck more by the peacefulness of this place than I was by any sense of history. The quiet was interrupted by the distant sound of a Park Service lawn-mower cutting the wet grass on Marye's Heights, the hill where Confederate forces waited for the advancing Union troops in one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War.

The mower cuts the lower field,  
The grass grows slow this year.  
Still, every week, all summer long,  
I see that mower here.  
Around the fields of Fredericksburg,  
In this fair morning light,  
A place we call a monument  
Straight lines up Marye's Heights.

A mile further down this hill,  
The river Burnside crossed,  
Who razed this town clear to the ground,  
Then every soldier lost.  
The engine drones, the mower slows  
Where young boys stood in fear.  
It stops for time to clean the blades,  
Then slowly disappears.

The broken walls, the soldiers' calls,  
The frightened guns are gone.  
Still, shops that sell the souvenirs  
Say, "Choose which side you're on."  
And children search for evidence  
To prove a war was here.  
And perfect fields of Fredericksburg  
Hide blood and bones, and tears.  
(repeat last four lines)

## 10. BELLE, IS THERE MUSIC TONIGHT? (Kaplan, BMI)

Larry: guitar, second guitar, vocal • Frank: fiddle • Caroline: vocal harmony

This song is for those who think they don't have to tell others how important they are to them because, after all, it's just "assumed." Before we know it, there's precious little time to be sure they know.

Belle, I'm afraid I've forgotten;  
Belle, is there music tonight?  
There's a glow on the water;  
Don't you think that we ought to  
Go dancing? The evening seems right.

Been years since we've done this together.  
Most times, it's been just you or me.  
Me and my fiddle,  
Or you in the middle  
With folks you've been meaning to see.

So, I'll bow;  
If you want, you can curtsy.  
In a while there'll be folks in the room.  
Haven't done this for years.  
There ain't nobody here;  
Let's dance by the light of the moon.

I know living with me isn't easy;  
I don't gab when there's nothing to say.  
Never been good at tellin'  
That I love you darn well;  
Wouldn't last long if you went away.

But, so Phil said he'd bring his new banjo  
And Ed's fixed his cousin's guitar.  
There's rum in the cellar.  
Damn! Why did I tell her?  
Now she'll know where the last bottles are.

So, I'll bow . . .

Remember me in my new red suspenders  
And you in your grandmother's gown?  
You don't like bein' flattered;  
Sixty years — it don't matter.  
I was the proudest young boy in this town.

So let's put out the food on the table;  
Let the kids do the music tonight.  
With the moon that we're under,  
It's 'bout time I should wonder:  
Is there anything I'm doing right?

So, I'll bow . . .  
(repeat first verse)

# 11. THE KITCHEN DANCE (Kaplan, BMI)

**Larry: guitar, banjo, bass, vocal • Frank: fiddle**

Let's just say that this song is "true enough."

Was a lonely old night; longest night of the year.  
Biggest moon in the sky; biggest moon in ten years.  
There's a chill in the air; hear the wind in the trees.  
Says it's just another winter night. He doesn't mind.  
He says, "It suits me."

Come a bump on the door, then a snap of the wind.  
But there hasn't been a single soul come calling here since

I don't know when.  
Put the coffee pot down; better turn into bed.  
There ain't nothing like a little sleep  
To get these devils out of your head.

It's a lonely night; he could use a few songs.  
Needs a banjo and a fiddle, and a little tune that isn't too long.  
Dancing in the kitchen; talking 'bout the fishing last June.  
Flirting with the ladies. Would you take a look at that moon!

In a minute or two he was deep in a sleep;  
But there were tunes in his ear and the music was sweet.  
Then he heard a voice call, "Roll the carpet back now.  
Put the chairs in the corner. If you want to dance,  
We're starting right now."

There was singing all night; how that fiddle bow flew!  
Kids on the stairs, folks alone and in pairs; not a soul there he knew.  
Won't you come out tonight? Take a turn on the floor.  
So they spun him 'round a little,  
Then he spun himself around a bit more.

It's a lonely night . . .

Then the music grew dim; then they all disappeared.  
He sat up with a start. Where's the music he hears?  
Throws open the door; just a little new snow.  
Fire in the fireplace; it must have started  
Minutes ago.

Sun up in the trees. There ain't nobody there,  
But there's rosin on the table, and he can't remember moving them chairs.  
What a curious dream; what a wonderful night!  
Well, the winter gets long, but he's got a new song,  
And the moon is still bright.

It's a lonely night . . .

## 12. KAE LAN'S CEILIDHE (*Kaplan, BMI, and trad.*)

Larry: guitar • David: concertina

I was experimenting with some new chords one day, and stumbled upon these melodies — some, if not all, traditional. I should have known they would end up as an instrumental for this recording, since David happened to have his concertina nearby.

## 13. AROOSTOOK (*Kaplan, BMI*)

Larry: guitar, second guitar, vocal

The largest county in the state of Maine is larger than most of the other counties combined. To get to the major town in "The County" requires over a three-hour drive north of Bangor. The people there are some of the proudest and most patient folks I have ever known.

Well, up here in The County,  
These winters last too long.  
There's plenty time to think about  
This land we're living on.  
A million hills that never change,  
And folks who like it fine,  
Who scrimp and save all through the year  
Until it's planting time.

They say Maine ends in Bangor;  
Further north ain't worth your time:  
Potato fields and lumberwoods,  
Just snow and summertime.  
But that's all right with me;  
I've never liked it south of here.  
I'd rather walk out on my land  
And watch the moose and deer.

Stop all your worrying  
And put away the plow.  
The best of years are over here;  
You can see it anyhow.  
Save your tears for harvest time;  
There's too much left to do.  
This might be a better year;  
Somehow, we'll make it through.

We've got families up here from the Base;  
Each year a few remain.  
Got folks moved in from Canada,  
From Sweden, France, and Spain.  
City folk out in the woods  
Who won't say why they came.  
Got folks just trying to get by;  
Got even folks from Maine.

But, when you've lived here all your life,  
It's harder than you know  
To sink your last cent in your farm  
When your wife and kids say, "No."  
But, tell me, what else can I do?  
It's all I've ever known.  
If they can't wait to move Downstate,  
I'll farm here on my own.

Stop all your worrying . . .

The wind sweeps down across these hills;  
We're done with harvest time.  
The hard frost is a week away.  
Let's try this one last time:  
You'll go down to Waterville  
And start your winter job;  
Me back to the lumberwoods  
This side of St. Leonard.

But everywhere you look, you see  
Another farm go down.  
The banks are tight on credit  
And there's no help from the town.  
Something just ain't right here,  
When the world still needs to eat  
And we grow the crops to feed them,  
But we just can't make ends meet.

Stop all your worrying . . .

Well, up here in The County,  
These winters last too long.  
There's plenty time to think about  
The land we're living on.  
A million hills that never change  
And folks who like it fine,  
Who never thought they'd have to wait  
This long for better times.

#### 14. DEAR FRIENDS AND GENTLE HEARTS (Kaplan, BMI)

Larry: guitar, second guitar, vocal • Abby: cello • Cindy: vocal harmony

Stephen Foster was only thirty-eight years old when he died, impoverished and alone, in New York City. In his pocket at the time of his death was a small piece of paper containing the first few lyrics of, perhaps, his next song. Foster lived and wrote music in a time when America as a nation was desperately trying to define (or redefine) its own identity, a time of intense nationalism, and yet a time of civil war. Perhaps more than any other popular musician of his time, he helped to shape some of that identity. I have gratefully borrowed the final verse from his "Hard Times Come Again No More."

Down at Bellevue Hospital,  
Out on those nameless wards,  
Tonight a young man passed away,  
Alone, without a word.  
Brought there from a boarding house  
On the Bowery downtown,  
And on his bed a list of things  
The nurses there had found.

A coat, a hat, his pants, a vest  
And a beat-up pair of shoes,  
And, in his pocket, signed by him,  
A dollar I.O.U.  
And a slip of folded paper  
Torn off from a paper bag:  
The first words of another song  
This whole world might have had.

"Dear friends and gentle hearts . . ."  
Wherever your last songs may be,  
Are they lost out in America  
Between the centuries?  
Are the melodies still waiting  
For the ones who need to hear,  
Though the piano halls and minstrel shows  
Have faded through the years?

Well, the hospital had sent for me,  
But no more would they do,  
My name and address taken from  
Poor Stephen's I.O.U.  
They said "He's just a vagabond;  
So many more like him.  
They spend the last few cents they have  
On poor man's rum and gin.

But hard times in America  
Are hard times for us all.  
Some folks bide for better days;  
Some must take the fall.  
Some can turn to poetry,  
Or lose themselves in song;  
Some set out to change the world,  
Then lose the path they're on.

"Dear friends and gentle hearts . . ."

So, yes, I knew this gentleman.  
Perhaps you've heard the cheers  
When Mr. Foster graced this country's  
Finest halls for years.  
And he led us in the choruses  
This whole great nation knew,  
But he never recognized his worth,  
Or what his songs could do.

Now pride brought down by poverty  
Is such a tragic thing.  
No matter who the man may be,  
It steals most precious things.  
It takes the faith to know yourself;  
It robs the will to try.  
But, if it spares your poetry,  
The music never dies.

"Dear friends and gentle hearts..."

Though we seek mirth and beauty, and music light and gay,  
There are frail forms fainting at the door.  
Though their voices are silent, their pleading looks will say,  
"Oh, hard times, come again no more."

## 15. THE WRECK OF THE BAY RUPERT (Kaplan, © 1990, BMI)

Larry: guitar, banjo, vocal

In earlier times, Canada's Hudson's Bay Company, now a large chain of department stores, operated vessels throughout the Maritime Provinces and above the arctic circle, delivering yearly provisions to the small coastal communities having no other access to these supplies. I learned this true story about one ill-fated steamer from the late Miriam MacMillan who, with her husband, Admiral Donald MacMillan, spent much of her life on the coast of Labrador and in northern Greenland.

Oh, the Hudson's Bay Company  
Runs its ships in the summertime,  
And they stock the stores of the Labrador,  
And they stock them full for the wintertime.  
The *Bay Rupert* sailed in '28,  
Bound out for Baffinland.  
But to get to Hopedale, don't you know,  
You'd be better off by land.

Well, they got no charts for the Labrador;  
All you hear is "Stay away,"  
For it's rocks and ice, dark as hell at night  
From Jack Lane's Way to Bromfield Bay.  
They've got wooden ships, steamer ships;  
They've got frozen men below.  
They've got mountains right beneath your keel,  
So, for God's sake, don't you go.

She had shoes and coffee, boots and tea,  
She had butter, pipes, and bridles,  
Sleeping bags and saddle soap,  
And she brought a score of Bibles.  
She was opened wide, pushing through the tide,  
When she hit them granite rocks.  
Both her ends went down with a mighty sound,  
And her middle opened up.

Well, they got no charts . . .

It was Sunday when that ship went down  
And the town was all to prayer.  
No missionary ministers  
Or the word of God could have kept them there.  
"All's lost, all's lost," the Captain cried,  
"And we'll never sail the more!"  
"All's found, all's found," yelled the Eskimos  
As they waited by the shore.

Well, they got no charts . . .

When the tide come in all those goods did, too,  
And they saved them from the sea.  
And they said, "It's great doing business with  
The Hudson's Bay Company!"  
They had shoes and coffee, boots and tea,  
They had butter, pipes and bridles,  
Sleeping bags and saddle soap,  
But, "To hell with all those Bibles."  
Well, they got no charts . . .

#### 16. CHARLIE SANG LAST NIGHT (Kaplan, © 1977, BMI)

Larry: guitar, vocal • David: concertina

This true story is about "Charlie," who was supposed to have sung in public only once in his life at a small Saturday night musical get-together. That song was "Rolling Down to Old Maui," which he unfortunately couldn't remember the next morning. That apparently didn't stop people who appreciated good music from trying to help him remember. There are a number of versions of "Maui," some more tropical than others.

I must go and learn the song  
That Charlie sang last night;  
The one about the tropic isles  
Where southern skies are bright.  
He never sings for anyone;  
His voice could numb your ears.  
Last night he sang the sweetest tune  
I know I'll ever hear.

Oh, that chorus; oh, that song;  
The last note's on the wind.  
He sang it, oh, so sweetly.  
How does that song begin?

We played until the early morn;  
Sang everything we know.  
Though Charlie didn't speak a word,  
To home was last to go.  
He drank a toast to each of us  
For every chorus done,  
Then, with a laugh, filled up his glass  
To toast another one.

Oh, that chorus . . .

And as the last fine melody  
Slipped out across the hills,  
And as the last "good night" was said  
And all the house was still,  
He raised his glass and sang at last  
Ten verses, bold and clear,  
Of silver sands and foreign lands.  
Sweet magic to my ears.

Oh, that chorus . . .

All my life I've waited for  
A song as fine as that.  
So I set out to learn the words,  
Find Charlie, bring him back.  
I told him I'd trade anything  
To have that very tune  
Of coral seas, palmetto trees,  
And south sea island moons.

Oh, that chorus . . .

Well, Charlie says, "I wanna know,  
For God's sake, what ya mean.  
I don't recall no song at all;  
You must be havin' dreams.  
The only tune I've ever known  
Is 'Rosin Up the Bow.'  
Ain't sung that one for fifty years;  
Now how's the damn thing go?"

Oh, that chorus . . .

I'm going back to Charlie's house.  
I'll rouse him from his rest;  
Remind him of his sailing days  
When Trade Winds served him best.  
I'll talk for hours of turtle shells,  
White clouds and clear lagoons,  
And keep his glass filled up with rum  
Until he sings that tune.

Oh, that chorus . . .

## 17. SONG FOR THE BOWDOIN (Kaplan, © 1977, BMI)

Larry: guitar, second guitar, vocal • Abby: cello

I helped restore, then served for some time as crew aboard the arctic exploration schooner *The Bowdoin*. This vessel, built in 1921 by Admiral Donald MacMillan, was designed to be graceful at sea, but at the same time able to withstand the ice and the weather of the arctic. After retiring on twenty-six trips north, and after MacMillan's death, she fell on hard times until dedicated and talented people like Capt. John Nugent (who now sails his own passenger schooner, the *Olad*) and Dr. Edward Morse, along with the *Bowdoin* Association, finished the restoration and turned her over to the Maine Maritime Academy. Today she serves as a sail training vessel, once again voyaging above the arctic circle. I wrote this song during those hard times, when only a few people were sure this great vessel would ever sail again.

Well, you sailed the cold waters  
Of the great northern bays,  
Ice thick on your rigging,  
Lee rail under the waves,  
And the snow on your canvas,  
Like a winter gull's wing.  
Oh, all the times you've been through.

And now you've got hard times,  
And now you lie still,  
And you're fast to the anchor and chain.  
Broken and tired,  
Summer winds pass you by,  
But you're bound to go sailing again.

Well, you cleared out of Boothbay  
On a gentle south swell;  
With the breeze on your quarter,  
How that bow rose and fell.  
There are those who remember  
So much more than they'll tell;  
Oh, all the times you've been through.

# Worth All the Telling

## LARRY KAPLAN

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. Song for Gale ( <i>Kaplan</i> , © 1988, BMI)                | 3:44 |
| 2. Turn the Boat Around ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)                 | 3:46 |
| 3. Meadowlark Waltz ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)                     | 3:58 |
| 4. My Brother Mike and Me ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)               | 4:17 |
| 5. Connecticut Twister ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)                  | 3:36 |
| 6. East of the River ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)                    | 2:51 |
| 7. The Hard Way to Peacham ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)              | 5:48 |
| 8. Old Zeb ( <i>Kaplan</i> , © 1977, BMI)                      | 3:29 |
| 9. The Perfect Fields of Fredericksburg ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI) | 3:58 |
| 10. Belle, Is There Music Tonight? ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)      | 4:08 |
| 11. Kitchen Dance ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)                       | 4:58 |
| 12. Kaelan's Ceilidhe ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)                   | 2:46 |
| 13. Aroostook ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)                           | 5:41 |
| 14. Dear Friends and Gentle Hearts ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)      | 6:30 |
| 15. The Wreck of the Bay Rupert ( <i>Kaplan</i> , © 1990, BMI) | 3:25 |
| 16. Charlie Sang Last Night ( <i>Kaplan</i> , BMI)             | 3:57 |
| 17. Song for the Bowdoin ( <i>Kaplan</i> , © 1977, BMI)        | 3:46 |

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TOTAL TIME: 70:38

LARRY KAPLAN: Guitar, banjo, bass,  
vocals

### GUESTS AND FRIENDS:

CINDY KALLET: vocals

CAROLINE PATON: vocals

ABBY NEWTON: cello

DAVID PATON: concertina, hammered  
dulcimer

FRANK ORSINI: fiddle, viola

SANDY PATON: vocals

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Mixed by Sandy Paton and Larry  
Kaplan

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