

*Harry
&
Feanie
West*

*Songs of the
Southland*

Folkways Records FA2352

Harry & Jeanie West / Songs of the Southland Folkways Records FA2352

LITTLE JOE	HILLS OF ROANE COUNTY	ROSA LEE MCFALL
COAL MINER'S BLUES	FREE LITTLE BIRD	BUILDING ON THE SAND
CURLLEY HEADED BABY	NINE POUND HAMMER	FAR BEYOND THE STARRY SKY
END OF MY JOURNEY	SOMEWHERE SOMEBODY'S WAITING	WILL YOU ALWAYS LOVE ME
SUGAR CANE MAMA	TENNESSEE GAMBLER	JENNY JENKINS

Songs of HARRY and JEANNIE WEST

After hearing this record, the listener will notice that our music is far from being a carbon copy of material recorded by others past or present.

Our repertory has always been varied and derived from numerous sources.

Early influences were same of the old people who still remembered the old songs and ballads, many better as well as lesser known radio performers, guitar and banjo pickers, etc., also Church singing as well as material recorded by various older musical groups in the 20's, 30's and early 40's. Among our favorite old artists are Carter Family, Blue Sky Boys, Monroe Bros., Roy Hall, Carlisle Bros., Bradley Kincaid, Uncle Dave Macon, Mainers.

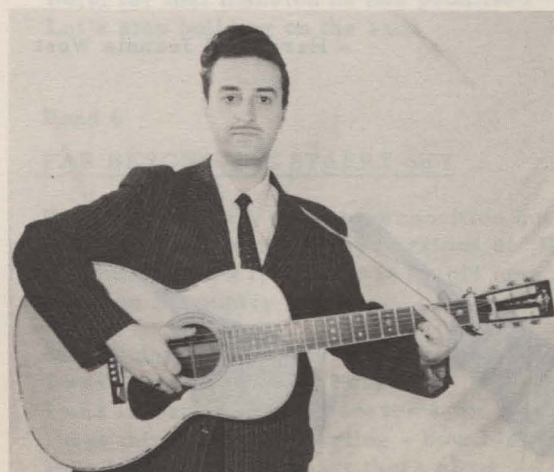
Regarding the material in our repertory--we never paid too much attention as to type or source or whether "traditional music" or otherwise. To us there were only two types of songs - those which appealed to us and those which didn't.

Since we mostly sing the older songs, a goodly percentage of our material is traditional as of a "folk" type. I would like to comment here on how quickly a non-traditional song can become acceptable if in the repertory (and especially on record) of an artist already accepted by the folk music crowd.

Not too many years ago the majority of urbean folk song enthusiasts would reject anything in the "Country music" field and would have nothing to do with "hillbilly" music.

Things have changed radically to say the least and especially performers in the "Blue grass" idiam such as Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs, Bill Monroe, Stanley Bros. now play for enthusiastic folk song audiences who have discovered "foot tappin music".

The folk audiences have not only been influenced by "Blue Grass" performers - but in turn have influenced the "Blue Grass" performers to include more of the old and sometimes traditional songs and tunes in their programs. All in all it has worked out very well and it has helped the music as far as "Harry and Jeanie" are concerned -- well, we find that through little or no effort of our own, many of the songs



we've sung for years have suddenly become popular once more.

Our music is much the same now as it was some years ago ---so with half of the former "folksong" crowd gone "Blue Grass" we are considered "folk music" now.

Strange to say, we used the same instruments as in "Blue Grass" before the latter became popular.

We are not "Blue Grass" in the strict sense of the word but oftens add a "Scruggs" style banjo picker to make it "Blue Grass". Actually our music is our own and while we enjoy all the current "Blue Grass" groups we do not minnic. Ordinarily Harry and Jeanie sing with mandolin and guitar. On this record we have used the following combinations - mandolin and guitar two guitars, banjo and guitar - (Played by Harry and Jeanie). Artie Rose plays the Dolero on all selections.

To those not familiar with the Dolero - it is an accoustical Hawaiian guitary - i. e. it has a built in resonator.

The Dolero and other similar Hawaiian guitars were used in the 30's by "strolling Hawaiians" lent were almost immediately absorbed by the "hillbilly" musicians - only to be crowded out of the picture in favor of the electric Hawaiian steel guitary in the 40's.

If any one helped popularize the Dolero it was Pete Kirley known as "Bashful Brother Oswald" whose Dolero playing added sparkle to Roy Scuff's band and it's mournful, "lovely" sound contributed considerably to Roy Scuff's success by accentrating his equally mournful and lovely sounding voice.

Later other Dolero "virtuosos" came up among them "Uncle Josh" (Buck Graves) and "Shot" Jackson.

It has gotten to a point where a number of electric steel guitarists have laid their "biscuit board" (relectr. steel guitar), down in favor of the old Dolero.

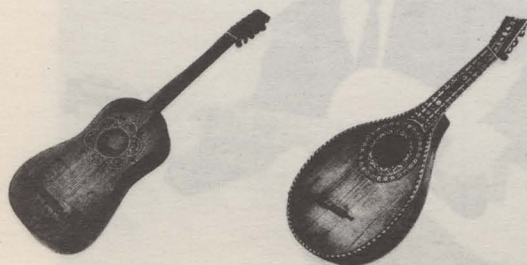
In addition to preferring the old songs, Harry and Jeanie also prefer the older instruments.

Though Harry passes some of these on to other (deserving) musicians he maintains quite a collection of mandolins, guitars and banjos.

Harry and Jeanie's most prized instruments include an old Martin D-45 guitar and several old Gibsan F-5 mandalins. (Both were used on this record).

We feel very strongly about the old instruments as far as appearance and sound is concerned and would neither use nor recommend most of the currently manufactured instruments to others.

- Harry and Jeannie West



Side I

Band I

LITTLE JOE

Apparently an old "plantation type" parlor song. Older recorded versions by CARTER FAMILY, MONROE BROS.

LITTLE JOE

What will the birds do mother in the spring
When they gather the crumbs around our door
Will they hop from the trees and tap at my window
Asking why Joe wanders out no more.

What will the kitten do mother all alone
Will he stop from his frolic for a day
Will he lie on his rug by the side of my bed
As he did before he went away.

What will Thomas, the old gardner say
When you ask him for flowers for me
Will he give you a rose he has tended with care
The fairest, first bloom of the tree.

I have seen the tears come in his honest old eyes
But he said it was the wind that brought them there
As he gazed oe'r my cheek growing paler each day
And his hand trembled over my hair.

Keep tied, dearest mother, my poor little dog
For I know that he'll mourn for me true
Keep him when old and useless he grows
Sleeping all the long Summer through.

Show him my coat, mother so he'll not forget
Little master who will then be dead
Speak to him kindly and often of Joe
And pat him on his brown, shaggy head.

And you, dearest mother may miss me for a while
But in heaven I'll no larger grow
And any kind angel will know at the gate
When you ask for your darling Little Joe.

Band 2

COAL MINER'S BLUES

Originally recorded by the Carter family. Probably a product of the small East Kentucky and S. W. Virginia coal mines (A. P. Carter was a collector in his own right - offering a premium to anyone in his various audiences who could teach him a song he could re-arrange for the use of his group and copy-right under his name.)

COAL MINER'S BLUES

Some Blues are just blues - mine are the miner's
blues
Some Blues are just blues - mine are the miner's
blues
My troubles are coming by threes and by two's

Blues and more blues - it's those coal black blues
Blues and more blues - it's those coal black blues
Got coal in my hair - got coal in my shoes

These blues are so blue - they are the coal black
blues

These blues are so blue - they are the coal black
blues

For my place will cave in and my life I will loose

You say they are blues - these old miner's blues
You say they are blues - these old miner's blues
Now I must have sharpened these picks that I use

I's out with these blues - dirty coal black blues
I'm out with these blues - dirty coal black blues
We'll lay off tomorrow - with the coal miner's blues

Band 3

CURLEY HEADED BABY

This song is typical of numerous "hillbilly" banjo-lyric songs. Verses are leased on older songs and chorus (from which title is derived) is repeated for effect. Verses here are similar to "Green Back Dollar", "East Virginia", "Little Maggie".

CURLEY HEADED BABY

CHORUS:

She's my curley headed baby
Used to sit on mama's knee
She's my curley headed baby
She's from Sunny Tennessee

I have loved her since I met her
More than any tongue can tell
If she leaves me for another
I could never say farewell

I's rather be in some dark holler
Where the sun don't never shine
Than for you to be some other's darling
When you promised to be mine

Band 4

END OF MY JOURNEY

A spiritual type. Used by whites as well as Negroes.

END OF MY JOURNEY

If when you give the best of your service
Telling the world that the Saviour has come
Be not dismayed when men don't believe you
He'll understand and say "Well done".

CHORUS:

Oh when I come to the end of my journey
Wearied of life - the battle is won
Carrying the staff and Cross of Redemption
He'll understand and say "Well done".

Misunderstood Saviour of Sinners
Hung on the Cross - it was God's only Son
Oh hear Him calling His Father in heaven
Not my will but thine be done

If when you try and fail in your trying
And so in scars from the work you begun
Take up your Cross and run swiftly to meet Him
He'll understand and say "Well done"

Band 5

SUGAR CANE MAMMA

A back woodsy, flatland white blues with a double beat rather than usual blues rythm. Probably composed or arranged to his liking by Cliff Carlisle.

SUGAR CANE MAMA

Way down in Louisiana - there's my blue-eyed Jane
Way down in Louisiana - there's my blue-eyed Jane
Now she's sweet as sugar - from chawin' on that
sugar cane

Got ears like a donkey - rolls her eyes like a dying
calf

Got ears like a donkey - rolls her eyes like a dying
calf

Long black hair like a horse's tail - neck just like a
giraffe

Gonna take my sugar mama - gonna make her my
sugar queen

Gonna take my sugar mama - gonna make her my
sugar queen

She's six foot two in her stocking feet - Lord she's
lanky and lean

They say she's full of sugar - but I think she's full of
prunes

They say she's full of sugar - but I think she's full of
prunes

With a face that only a mother could love
Eyes like a couple of spoons

She was born in Louisiana - down where the weather
is warm

She was born in Louisiana - down where the weather
is warm

She's my little sugar mama when she gets mad
She's like a cyclone storm

Band 6

HILLS OF ROANE COUNTY

A good example of some of the best material of the early "Radio Hillbillies". Many of these magic songs are leased on true experiences though sometimes names of persons involved and/or of places named became confused. Roane County is in Tennessee.

HILLS OF ROANE COUNTY

In the beautiful hills in the midst of Roane County
There's where I have roamed for many long years
There's where my heart's been pending most ever
There's where the first step of misfortune I made

I was about thirty years when I courted and married
Armanda Gilbreath was they called my dear wife
For some unknown reason her brother Sam stabbed
me

Just three months later I had taken his life

I was captured and tried in the Village of Spencer
Not a man in that county would speak one kind word
When the jury came in with the verdict next morning
A lifetime in prison was the words that I heard

When the train pulled out poor mother stood a weeping
And sister she said all alone with a sigh
And the last words I heard was "Willie, God bless
you!"
Was Willie, God bless you, God bless you, goodbye

In the scorching hot sand of the foundry I'm a work-
ing
Just working and toiling my life all away
They'll measure my grave on the banks of old
Cumberland
Just as soon as I finish the rest of my days

No matter what happens to me in Roane County
No matter how long my sentence may be
Boys, when you write home from this prison in
Moundsville
Put one of my songs in your letter for me

Band 7

FREE LITTLE BIRD

This song has many variants and variations. Sort of
a banjo picker's delight and widely sung among per-
formers of "old timey" music. Very closely re-
lated to "KATY CLINE".

FREE LITTLE BIRD

CHORUS:

I'm a free little bird as I can be
I'm a free little bird as I can be
I'm sittin' by the roadside a weepin' all the day
For nobody cares for me

I wish I was a pretty little bird
I'd never build my nest on the ground
I'd build my nest in some solid oak tree
Where the wild boys couldn't tear it down

If I was a little bumble bee
I'd never steel no honey from the comb
I'd steel some sugar from my true lover's lips
And then I'd fly to my home

I wish I was a fish in the brook
I'd swim to some cool and shady nook
I'd swim to the East, I'd swim to the West
I'd swim to the one that I love best

Side II

Band I

NINE POUND HAMMER

This song takes a brighter point of view of the lot of
the coal miner than "COAL MINER'S BLUES" (also
on this record). Though the chorus complains about
the weight of the hammer the rolling rhythm of this
song creates an entirely different mood. (Previously
recorded by Monroe Brothers and others).

NINE POUND HAMMER

Nine pound hammer's a little too heavy
For my size, honey, for my size

CHORUS:

Roll on buddy, don't you roll so slow
Baby how can I roll - when the wheel won't go

Upon the mountain - for to see my darling
But I ain't comin' back - no I ain't comin' back

Ain't one hammer in this tunnel
Rings like mine - rings like mine
Rings like silver - and shines like gold
Rings like silver - and shines like gold

Somebody stole my nine pound hammer
They took it and gone - they took it and gone

Nine pound hammer - killed John Henry
Ain't gonna kill me - ain't gonna kill me

Band 2

SOMEWHERE SOMEBODY'S WAITING

Probably an old parlor song or vanderbilt number.

SOMEWHERE SOMEBODY'S WAITING

In a cool, shady nook by the side of a brook
Two maidens were fishing one day
They talked while she fished and the younger girl
wished
For a sweetheart she never had known
The older girl said with a toss of her head
Sweetheart, you've no cause to be blue
For the time is not yet and I love you my pet
And there's somebody waiting for you

CHORUS:

Somewhere, somebody's waiting for you, you, you
Somewhere, somebody's waiting with a smile that's
true
Sometime you'll love somebody who loves you too
Somewhere, somebody's waiting for you, you, you

Then a youth passing by heard the maiden's reply
And joined in their chat half in fun
He said it is true, someone's waiting for you
And I pray that I may be the one

She paused for a while and then with a smile
She said, perhaps it is true
But if you are wrong, you won't worry long
For there's somebody waiting for you

Band 3

TENNESSEE GAMBLER

"Meel and Han", the "Kentucky Twins" receive credit for authorship of this song on the label of their old Mercury release issued in late 1940's. Theme of song is one of a repenting, "wandering boy".

I left my home in Tennessee
I left my home in Tennessee
Now I am wanted - now I am haunted
I'm wanted back in Tennessee

I was gambling down in Tennessee
When a man he slipped a card on me
Now that's why I'm wanted - that's why I'm haunted
I'm wanted back in Tennessee

It was a gambling game you see
It was either that gambling man or me
Now that's why I'm wanted - that's why I'm haunted
I'm wanted back in Tennessee

I wish I'd listened to old day
He told me that gambling was lead
I didn't heed him - now how I need him
I wish I'd listened to old dad

Take me back to Tennessee
No matter what the verdict be
I'm tired of being wanted - tired of being haunted
Take me back to Tennessee

Band 4

ROSA LEE McGALL

The only other version of this song I have ever heard is by Charlie Monroe (of the Monroe Bros.). Charlie could be the author as he may have rearranged it to fit his style much as we did to fit our own needs. If Charlie Monroe composed this song he truly captured the flavor of songs written in "days of yore". A pretty song with a quaint air.

ROSA LEE McFALL

Out on a lonely hillside - in a cabin low and small
Lived my sweetheart of the mountains
My Rosa Lee McFall

Her eyes were bright and shining
Her voice was sweet to me
I knew that I would always love her
I thought that she loved me

I asked her to be my darling
And this is what she said
I know that we'll be happy
When you and I are wed

But God up in heaven
For her one day did call
I lost my bride - oh how I loved her
My Rosa Lee McFall

I've roamed this wide world over
Through cities great and small
'Till God prepares my home in heaven
With Rosa Lee McFall

Band 5

BUILDING ON THE SAND

Another country style "scared song" based on a parable from the Scriptures comparing the firm foundation of a house built on solid rock to one built on sand and comparing a Godly life to the former. Most of these songs have a charm which is repeated after each verse. Often a singer will perform the verse solo and is joined by one or more voices (of accompanying musicians) on the chorus. Usually duet or trio - sometimes quartet.

BUILDING ON THE SAND

See that man in yonder castle
Holds a firm and upper hand
All through life himself he praises
For he's building on the sand

CHORUS:

Building, building on the sand
Building houses that won't stand
Oh weak in faith and hope is man
For he is building on the sand

See that drunkard over yonder
Getting all the drink he can
O'er his past life he does ponder
For he's building on the sand

Let's humbly pray to God in heaven
Heed the truth and truth shall stand
Build for that mansion he has promised
Let's stop building on the sand

Band 6

FAR BEYOND THE STARRY SKY

Probably of fairly recent composition but tune is similar to one of the many versions of "East Virginia". New lyrics set to an old tune are quite common in country music.

On one dark and cloudy morning
I was lonesome for my house
I was lonesome, oh so lonesome for my house
I was thinking of my darling - how I left her there alone
How I left my sweetheart there alone

In my dreams I often saw her
Saw her weeping there for me
Saw her weeping, weeping there for me
Oh how sad this story ended
Nothing will cheer my weary soul
Nothing will cheer my weary, weary soul

Now she lies out yonder sleeping
On the hillside all alone
On the lovely hillside all alone
And the last words that she uttered
Hear, my darling, I forgive
Hear, my darling that I do forgive

Standing o'er her grave and weeping
Though I know she's happy now
Though I know she's oh so happy now
Now she waits for me up yonder
Far beyond the starry sky
Far beyond the blue and starry sky

Band 7

WILL YOU ALWAYS LOVE ME, DARLING?

Another sentimental song dating back a while to a time when there were fewer divisions between folk, popular and country music. Theme is like "Silver threads among the gold", etc.

WILL YOU ALWAYS LOVE ME, DARLING

Yes, my dear you say you love me
Life is young and gay today
But tomorrow may be heartaches
Will you love me just the same

CHORUS:

Will you always love me, darling
When September's morn has come
Will you always love me, darling
When the flowers of May have gone

We are dwelling in life's May time
The sun is shining bright today
But some day 'twill be September
Will you love me just the same

My cheeks are like the blushing roses
But tomorrow they will fade
Silver hair that once was golden
Will you love me just the same

Youth will fade and step will falter
I'll grow old and bent with pain
Unlike the girl that left the altar
Will you love me just the same

Band 8

JENNY JENKINS

A rollicking banjo song which makes little pretense at telling a story. Choruses vary in different

versions but all are nonsense lyrics and more like those of a nursery rhyme.

JENNY JENKINS

Will you wear red my dear, oh my dear
Will you wear red Jenny Jenkins
I won't wear red, it's the color of my head

CHORUS:

I'll buy me a folly dolly
Fur to see such a gee
Blue, black, brown, double rose
Sally, Katy, Jenny Jenkins

Will you wear blue my dear, oh my dear
Will you wear blue Jenny Jenkins
I won't wear blue - it's the color of my shoe, etc.

Will you wear green my dear, oh my dear
Will you wear green Jenny Jenkins
I won't wear green for it can't be seen, etc.

Will you wear brown my dear, oh my dear
Will you wear brown Jenny Jenkins
I won't wear brown - it's the color of the ground

Will you wear black, my dear, oh my dear
Will you wear black, Jenny Jenkins
I won't wear black - it's the color of my slacks, etc.