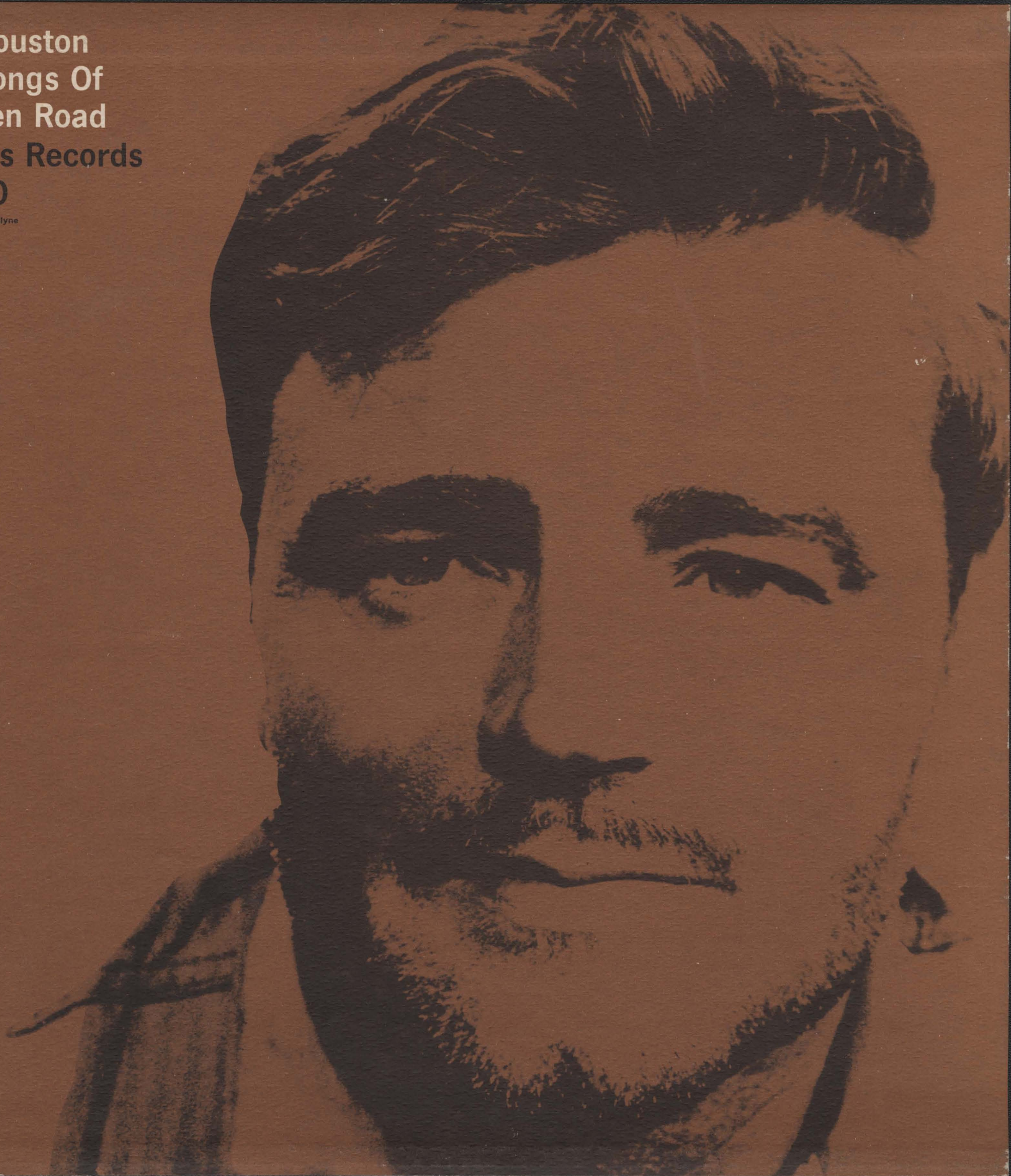


Cisco Houston
Sings Songs Of
The Open Road
Folkways Records
FA 2480

Cover Design By Ronald Clyne



Cisco Houston Sings Songs Of The Open Road

Mule Skinner Blues
Git Along Little Dogies
Erie Canal
Hobo's Lullaby
East Virginia Blues
Travel On
Pie In The Sky
Mysteries Of A Hobo's Life
Soup Song
Beans, Bacon And Gravy
Tramp, Tramp, Tramp
Cryderville Jail
I Ain't Got No Home

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album No. FA 2480

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CISCO HOUSTON SINGS

SONGS

OF THE

OPEN

ROAD



Some notes on me: Born in Virginia 1918, Mother's side of family from Virginias. Father's side from the Carolinas. Family moved to California, when I was two years old, grew up in California. Heard my grandmother sing folksongs as a child, had an interest in them at an early age. Met Woody Guthrie in California in 1939. We traveled up and down California singing together in the Fruit Pickers lamps and Saloons. We have been close friends ever since. We shipped out together in the Merchant Marines during the war. I also have studied acting and have acted in Summer Stock, Broadway, T.V. and Pictures. Have sung in nightclubs, schools, colleges, and concert halls. Had my own T.V. shows and a five day a week radio show over The Mutual Network. Been from coast to coast at least thirty times. Also traveled a good part of the world. Always interested in meeting new people and hearing songs I haven't heard.

SIDE I, Band 1: MULE SKINNER BLUES

Good morning, Captain - Good morning son,
Good morning Mister Captain - I said, good morning
son
Do you need another good mule skinner out on your
new road line?

Well, I like to work - I'm rolling all the time.
Lord, I like to work - Boy, I'm rolling all the
time.
I can put my initials right on a mule's behind.

Well, it's hey little water boy bring your water
'round (come on son).
Lord, it's hey little water boy bring your water
'round.
And if you don't like your job just set that water
bucket down.

I work out on the new road for a dollar and a dime
a day.
Lord, I work out on the new road, I make a dollar
and a dime a day.
I've got three women on Saturday night waiting to
draw my pay.

Well, I'm going to town honey, what can I bring you
back?
Well, I'm going to town, baby, what can I bring you
back?
Just bring a pint of good rye (that's all I need)
and a John B. Stetson hat.

Lord, it's raining here and it's storming on the
deep blue sea.
Lord, it's raining here and it's storming on the
deep blue sea.
Cain't no blonde-headed woman make a monkey out of
me.

If your house catches fire and there ain't no water
'round.
If your house catches fire and there ain't no water
'round
Just throw your good gal out the window - let your
house just burn on down.

Well, I'm leaving here and I ain't gonna take no
clothes
I'm leaving here and I ain't gonna take no clothes
There may be good times in this old town but it's
better on down the road.

SIDE I, Band 2: GET ALONG LITTLE DOGIES

As I was a-walking one morning for pleasure
I spied a cowpuncher come strolling along.
His hat was throwed back and his spurs was a-jingling
And as he approached he was singing this song.

CHORUS:

Whoopie ti, yi yo, get along little dogies
It's your misfortune and none of my own.
Whoopie ti, yi yo, get along little dogies,
For you know that Wyoming will be your new home.

It's early in the springtime we round up the dogies,
We cut 'em out, brand 'em and bob off their tails.
Round up our horses, load up the chuck wagon
And then throw the dogies upon the long trail.

Well, your mother was raised away up in Texas,
Where those prickly pears and chollas grow.
We'll fill you up on prickly pear and briars
Until you are ready for Idaho

SIDE I, Band 3: THE E-RI-E CANAL

We were forty miles from Albany,
Forget it, I never shall,
What a terrible storm we had one night
On the E-ri-e Canal.

CHORUS:

O, the E-ri-e was a-rising,
And the gin was a-getting low.
And I scarcely think we're gonna get a little drink
Till we get to Buffalo-o-o; till we get to Buffalo.

We were loaded down with barley,
We were chock full up of rye,
And the captain he looked down at me
With his goldurn wicked eye.

Well, the captain he come up on deck,
With a spy-glass in his hand,
And the fog it was so 'tarnal thick
That he could not spy the land.

The cook she was a grand old gal,
She wore a ragged dress.
We hoisted her upon a pole
As a signal of distress.

Well, the captain he got married,
And the cook she went to jail.
And I'm the only son-of-a-gun
That's left to tell the tail.

SIDE I, Band 4: HOBO'S LULLABY

CHORUS:

Go to sleep you weary hobo,
Let the town drift slowly by.
Listen to the steel rails humming,
Well, that's the hobo's lullaby.

Do not think about tomorrow,
Let tomorrow come and go,
Tonight you have a nice warm boxcar,
Free from all the ice and snow.

I know the police cause you trouble,
They make trouble everywhere.
But when you die and go to heaven,
Well, you will find no police there.

Now, do not let your heart be troubled
If the world calls you a bum,
'Cause if your mother lives, she'll love you,
Well, you are still your mother's son.

SIDE I, Band 5: EAST VIRGINIA

I don't want your greenback dollar,
I don't want your silver chain,
All I want is your love darling,
Won't you take me back again.

I was born in East Virginia,
North Carolina I did go,
There I met a fair young maiden,
And her name I did not know.

Well, her hair was dark of color,
Cheeks they were a rosy red.
On her breast she wore white lilies,
Where I longed to lay my head.

At my heart you are my darling,
At my door you're welcome in,
At my gate I'll always meet you,
You're the girl I tried to win.

I'd rather be in some dark holler
Where the sun would never shine,
That to see you with another,
When you promised to be mine.

(Verse one.)

SIDE I, Band 6: DONE LAID AROUND

I've laid around and stayed around this old town too
long,
Summer's almost gone and winter's coming on.
I've stayed around and layed around this old town too
long,
And I feel like I want to travel on.

Well, the chilly winds will soon begin and I'll be
on my way,
I'll be on my way - gone a lonesome day.
The chilly winds will soon begin and I'll be on my
way
And I feel like I want to travel on.

There's a lonesome freight at 6:08 comin' through the
town,
Comin' through the town - I'll be homeward bound.
There's a lonesome freight at 6:08 comin' through the
down
And I feel like I want to travel on.

I've waited here for 'most a year, waiting for the
sun to shine,
Hoping you'll be mine - waiting for the sun to shine.
I've waited here for 'most a year waiting for the
sun to shine
And I feel like I want to travel on.

SIDE II, Band 1: PIE IN THE SKY
(THE PREACHER AND THE SLAVE)

Long-haired preachers come out every night,
Try to tell you what's wrong and what's right.
But when asked about something to eat
They will answer in voices so sweet.

CHORUS:

You will eat bye and bye,
In that Glorious Land above the sky.
Work and pray - live on hay,
You'll get pie in the sky when you die.
(That's a lie.)

And the "Starvation Army" they play,
And they sing and they clap and they pray.
When they get all your coin on the drum,
Then they tell you that you're on the bum.

Holy Rollers and jumpers come out,
And they holler, they jump and they shout.
Give your money to Jesus, they say;
He will cure all your troubles today.

If you fight hard for children and wife,
Try to get something good in this life,
You're a sinner and bad man they tell,
When you die you will sure go to hell.

Working men of all countries, unite.
Side by side we for freedom will fight.
When the world and its wealth we have gained,
To the grafters we'll sing this refrain:

FINAL CHORUS:

You will eat bye and bye,
When you've learned how to cook and to fry.
Chop some wood, it'll do you good -
And you'll eat in the sweet bye and bye.

SIDE II, Band 2: THE JOB I LEFT BEHIND ME

I took a job on an extra gang away up in the mountains,
I paid my fee and the shack shipped me and the ties
I soon was countin'.
Well the boss put me to driving spikes and the sweat
was enough to blind me,
He didn't seem to like my face so I left that job
behind me.

I grabbed ahold of an old freight train and around this
country travelled
The mysteries of a hobo's life to me were soon un-
ravelled.
I travelled east and I travelled west and the shacks
could never find me,
Next morning I was miles away from the job I left behind
me.

Well, I ran across a bunch of stiffies who were known as
Industrial Workers,
They taught me how to be a man and how to fight the
shirkers.
I kicked right in and joined the bunch, and now in the
ranks you'll find me.
Hooray for the cause - the hell with the boss, and the
job I left behind me.

SIDE II, Band 3: SOUP SONG

I'm spending my nights in the flop house,
I'm spending my days on the street.
I'm looking for work but I find none,
I wish I had something to eat

CHORUS:

Soup, soup, they gave me a bowl of soup, soup, soup.
Soup, soup, they gave me a bowl of soup.

I spent twenty years in the factory,
I did everything I was told.
They said I was loyal and faithful,
Now even before I am old:

I saved fifteen bucks with my banker,
To buy me a car and a yacht.
I went down to draw out my money
And this is the answer I got.

SIDE II, Band 4: BEANS, BACON AND GRAVY

I was born long ago in 1894,
And I've seen may a panic, I will own.
I've been hungry, I've been cold and now I'm growing
old,
But the worst I've seen is 1931.

CHORUS:

O, those beans, bacon and gravy, they almost drive
me crazy,
I eat them till I see them in my dreams.
When I wake up in the morning and another day is
dawning,
I know I'll have another mess of beans.

We congregate each morning at the county barn at
dawning,
And everyone is happy, so it seems.
But when our work is done we file in one by one,
And thank the Lord for one more mess of beans.

We have Hooverized on butter, for milk we've only
water,
And I haven't seen a steak in many a day
For cakes and pies and jellies
We substitute sow bellies, for which we work the
county road each day.

If there ever comes a time when I have more than a
dime
They will have to put me under lock and key.
For I've been broke so long I can only sing this song
Of the workers and their misery.

SIDE II, Band 5: THE TRAMP

If you all will shut your trap, I will tell you 'bout
a chap
That was broke and up against it too for fair;
He was not the kind that shirk, he was looking
hard for work,
But he heard the same old story everywhere.

CHORUS:

Tramp, tramp, tramp and keep on tramping,
Nothing doing here for you.
If I catch you 'round again, you will wear the ball
and chain,
Keep on tramping that's the best thing you can do.

He walked up and down the street till the shoes fell
from his feet,
In a house he spied a lady cooking stew,
And he said, "How do you do, may I chop some wood for
you",
What the lady told him made him feel so blue.

Cross the street a sign he read, "Work for Jesus", so
it said,
And he said, "Here is my chance, I'll surely try",
So he kneeled upon the floor till his knees got rather
sore,
But at eating time he heard the preacher cry:

Down the street he met a cop and the copper made him
stop,
And he asked him, "When did you blow into town?"
"Come with me and see the judge", But the judge he
said, "O fudge,
"Bums that have no money needn't come around".

Finally came that happy day when his life did pass
away,
He was sure he'd go to heaven when he died.
When he reached the Pearly Gate, Santa Peter, mean
old skate,
Slammed the gate right in his face and loudly cried:

In despair he went to hell, with the Devil for to
dwell,
For the reason he'd no other place to go.
And he said "I'm full of sin, so for Christ's sake
let me in",
But the devil said, "O beat it, you're a 'bo".

SIDE II, Band 6: CRYDEVILLE JAIL

Crydeville jail - no jail at all;
Lice in that jail are chewin' the wall.

CHORUS:

It's a-hard times in the Crydeville Jail,
It's hard times, poor boy.

There's a big bull ring in the middle of the floor,
And a damned old jailer to open the door.

Your pockets he'll pick, your clothes he will sell,
Your hands he will handcuff, O damn him to hell.

Our bed it is made of old rotten rugs,
And when we lay down we are covered with bugs.

The bugs they swear if we don't give bail,
We are bound to get lousy in Crydeville Jail.

I wrote to my mother to send me a knife
For the lice and the chinchies have threatened my life.

And here's the lawyer, he'll come to the cell,
And swear he will clear you in spite of all hell.

Get all of your money before he will rest,
Then say, "Plead guilty", for I think it the best.

Old Judge Simson will read us the law,
The damndest fool judge that you ever saw.

And there sits the jury, a devil of a crew,
They'll look a poor prisoner through and through.

And here's to the sheriff, I like to forgot,
The damndest old rascal we have in the lot.

Your privileges he will take, your clothes he will
sell,
Get drunk on your money, goldurn him to hell.

And now I have come to the end of my song,
I'll leave it to the boys as I go along.

SIDE II, Band 7: I AIN'T GOT NO HOME IN THIS WORLD
ANYMORE

I ain't got no home, I'm just a-roam-in' round.
I'm just a wand-rin' worker,
I roam from town to town.
The police make it hard where ever I may go,
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore.

My brothers and my sisters are stranded on this
road,
A hot and dusty road that a million feet done trod.
Rich man took my home and drove me from my door,
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore.

Was a-farmin' on the share and always I was poor,
My crops I laid into the banker's store.
My wife took down and died upon the cabin floor,
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore.

Now as I look around, it's mighty plain to see,
The world is such a great and funny place to be,
The gamblin' man is rich and the workin' man is poor,
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore.