

PETER LA FARGE SINGS OF THE COWBOYS

Cowboy, Ranch and Rodeo Songs, and Cattle Calls



FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 2533

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

SIDE 1

THE TRAIL

WHOOPIE TAI YO!
CHISOLM TRAIL
TRAIL TO MEXICO

THROW THE HOOLIHAN (the devil song)

SIREY PEAKS
LAVENDER COWBOY
I'VE GOT NO USE FOR THE WOMEN
I RIDE AN OLD PAINT
COWBOYS LAMENT

PROPERTY OF

FOLKLIFE PROGRAM

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

SIDE 2

THE MEN

YAVIPII PETE
WHEN THE WORKS ALL DONE THIS FALL
COWBOYS DREAM

THE HORSE

THE BLACK STALLION
WALKIN' JOHN
STRAWBERRY ROAN

RODEO

THE RODEO HAND (calls)
CATTLE CALLS

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OF THE COWBOYS

Cowboy, Ranch and Rodeo Songs, and Cattle Calls

Peter La Farge comes from Fountain Colorado, where he was raised as a cowboy on the Kane Ranch. His second home is Santa Fe New Mexico, where his father Oliver La Farge resides. The thirty two year old folk musician whose tribe, the Nargasets were wiped out was adopted, with his sister Povy, by the Tewa Tribe of the Hopi Nation, whose reservation is near Santa Fe.

Peter left school when he was sixteen, to sing and rodeo. He had his own radio program when he was fourteen. Peter was dancing the Hopi eagle dance with his father playing drums before he was ten, on his first appearance in New York. In 1946 Josh White came through Petes' country, and stopped off to work with him. This was the beginning of his apprenticeship to the greats of folk music. Much work with Josh, Big Bill Broonzy and a close friendship with Cisco Houston followed with the years.

Peter went to Korea and returned to sing and rodeo, collecting the cowboy songs which are his birthright, collecting a broken nose in the ring as a professional boxer, collecting the USA. He took his eyes off a brahma Bull at a rodeo in '56, and saw that the resulting injury, (through which he almost lost a leg) spelled the beginning of the end of his athletic career. He then took himself to the Goodman School of Theatre in Chicago. After appearing in New York City in the highly successful revival of "Dark of the Moon," he made a comeback on the Rodeo circuit. In '59 he found himself riding at Madison Square Garden with his right foot in a cast, and a spur set into the cast; at the same time he was cast in the Shakespearwrites New York Production of King Lear. Pete has had a broken wrist, a mangled, surgically saved knee, a broken (but healed) leg, a crushed ankle and other injuries from rodeo. He retired.

Working closely from this time on with Cisco, who believed Peter could contribute much as a performer-writer, composer, he began to concentrate entirely on the folk field. This album, the answer to a long dream and the other Folkways releases are the result.

INTRODUCTION

I want to dedicate this album to the man who raised me, Andy Kane of the Kane Ranch, Fountain Colorado. Andy is my step father, and it wasn't easy for either of us. I owe him my love and knowledge of horses and the west, and the ability to ride bucking horses and rope calves in rodeo. Andy is a tall man, who was raised in tough circumstances, he rose from milking cows to owning a fine cattle ranch, where the only milk cows are for convenience. He's a tough man, but an honest one, and I learned that from him too. So here you are Kane, I hope you enjoy it.

Pete La Farge

SIDE I THE TRAIL Band 1. Whoopee Ti Yi Yo!

This song describes the beginning of a trail herd. The roundup of the cattle, the branding, ear marking and de-tailing of the calves (the latter a seldom thing), the gather of the cavvy (horses), etc. The prickly pear and the cholla, pronounced (choya), are cactus.

Band 2. Chisholm Trail

This song I also learned at an early age, when my mother was Secretary of The Turtle Association... that which came before the Rodeo Cowboys Association. It was taught to me by Burl Mulkey and Pete and Nick Knight, who were rodeos' best then. It's a story of a cowboy on the trail, but if you listen carefully, there is a poignant touch when he remarks on the end of the trail drives, and of whole cattle ranches dying beneath them. You will also hear the strength and pride of the cowboy, even in as tough a spot as the boss turning him down for wages unfairly. Yet in this ball (high trot and work -- though it is) you can feel, get and love these men who brought beef over trails reputed to be impossible.

Band 3. Trail to Mexico

A classic trail song of the cowboys, dramatic, true and slightly glamorized by his own inclination. A. J. Stinson was one of the early great cattle barons.

THROW THE HOOLIHAN Band 4. Sirey Peaks (the Devil Song)

A running iron is like a pencil. You can draw most any brand with it. Usually stamp irons are used today. A seago is a braided leather rope, a rieata the same.

Band 5. Lavender Cowboy

This little song is the cowboys reaction to being made the hero he was always convinced he was. Having been created into what he took for granted, he saw the humor in it.

Band 6. I've Got No Use for the Women

NIGHT HERDING Band 7. I Ride An Old Paint

This, perhaps the king of the night herding ballads, needs little introduction. Coolies are drawn with water and visa versa. A Hoolihan is a left hand-and-around horse throw. The rope is released with a minimum of movement.

Band 8. Cowboy's Lament

This old ballad is the first cousin of the St. James Informary Blues. In it's own way it holds the same position in relationship to the cowboy songs that St. James does to blues. Sad, touching and tough it reflects the true romanticism of the boys who ride the horses. Without being a blues it has all the punch and cyclone bitter hurt of a rough profession. All cowboys songs are done to one gait or another of a horse. As you can feel the ship and the sea in sailor ballads, here you can feel the horse.

SIDE II

THE MEN

Band 1. Yavipii Pete

I learned this from Ray Balsingame, who married an aunt of mine. Ray is a fine horse breaker, was any kind of rough stock rider you can imagine, and a good rodeo hand. He also has good taste in blondes.

Band 2. When the Work's All Done This Fall

Stampede stories override all the others in the west. This was the obvious way to die quick. And it could be done. It still can be. Most of the fat oxen erected on western ranches today are harmless. But the old long horn trailed to Kansas over the Chisom Trail and others stood as high as a man with horns fairly wider. And they could run. They killed many a twister trying to turn the rest. Yet they are, what's left, some of the most handsome stock we ever raised. This is Andy Kane's favorite song.

Band 3. Cowboy's Dream

This is the only truly religious song I ever heard the cowboys sing.

THE HORSE

Band 4. The Black Stallion

This horse haunted New Mexico during the late forties and early fifties. He was a fine looking animal, standing about 16 hands tall, and jet black. The only marks on him were bullet scars and barbed wire cuts. Many attempts were made to catch him, but he always got away. He had a small band of stolen mares, but he was usually seen among pure quarter horses or thoroughbred herds, servicing every mare in sight. Many an unwanted crossbred and damned uncooperative colt was dropped after his visits. This infuriated the breeders of papered horse flesh, for he carried no papers. They tried poisoning him but he was too smart. They shot him, he went on. They finally erected a metal barrier across a box canyon, and to this they chased him with several planes. He got in, broke it down and left. They put a large price on his head, dead or alive, but the weight didn't slow him at all. He became a great folk legend, and so, here's his song.

In these days, when chastity belted rabbits, the symbol of impotency, represent sex in this country, we should set more stallions loose.

I was raised by a man named Andy Kane, on his ranch outside Fountain Colorado. All of these songs I learned by osmosis at the ranch or in my Rodeo

rambling through the west. I never thought of them as rare, in my younger years the bunk house was full of them. Now the cowboys watch TV. There was a story about a twister who had worked on our ranch years ago, when it was the horse headquarters for the old great Diamond Trail spread. He took a young bronc into town, tied up and got drunk. He arrived at the ranch at full speed, coming through the willows crashing and a hollering. The boys piled out to see him emerge from the underbrush riding the bronc without a hackamore. How he got home with nothing over his horse's head to guide it was a matter of intense speculation. He said at the time, "I just aimed him with my spears (spurs)." He and his kind guided these songs and the cowboy legend into immortality, who the hell needs a hackamore when they have that kind of genius? This album is to them all, and don't think the breed has died out. The twisters, the bronc tigers, the hands of all kinds still ride. For cows need cowboys. It's an intricate, tough trade with a love and a humor all it's own. Take a deep seat and a long rein. And, now, OUTSIDE...

Band 5. Walkin' John

In 1930, my father and mother rode from Sante Fe, New Mexico to the Grand Canyon in Arizona. There my father encountered an amateur song collector and folk singer named Mike Harris. Mike was a park service Ranger as well as a guitarest with a fine reputation. He gave my father this song, which I later achieved when it was handed down to me. This is a classic, a real beauty. A rope horse is an animal trained to jockey the cowboy into the right position behind the running steer (cow etc.) so that he may rope the animal. Then the horse will take up the slack and hold the animal. Terripin shell is a saddle, twine is a rope, dally-welta, means you rope the beast and then dally around the horn before you throw (often losing saddles and falling on your head). You takes your choice. Cholla is a cactus that has a reputation of being able to jump three feet. It's damn nasty stuff, and if you ride around it at all you will find yourself inclined to agree that it does have a leaping tendency. When a horse bogs his head he bucks. No horse (or very few, with apologies to Golden Fan and the Butler Brothers) can buck with his head up. A horse having his fiddle between his feet has his head bogged down between his front feet.

Band 6. Strawberry Roan

RODEO

Band 7. The Rodeo Hand (calls)

This poem is from my one act play, "The Girl and the Unicorn." It was about a model and a rodeo cowboy and was produced off Broadway in New York in '61. This poem is a tribute to the rodeo people and horses, gentle and rough, that I spent so many years with.

Band 8. Cattle Calls



SIDE I, Band 1: WHOOPEE TI YI YO

As I was a-walkin' one mornin' for pleasure,
I spied a young cowboy come a-ridin' along,
His hat was thrown back and his spurs were a-jinglin',
As he was a-ridin' a-singin' this song.

CHORUS:

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

Well it's early in the springtime we round up the
dogies,
We brand 'em, earmark 'em and bob off their tails,
Round up the cavvie, load up the chuck wagon,
And then throw them dogies out on the trail.

(CHORUS)

Now some boys they goes up the trail for pleasure,
That's where they've got it most awfully wrong,
For you got no idea of the troubles they give us,
As we go a-drivin' them dogies along.

(CHORUS)

Your mother was raised a way down in Texas,
Where the Jimson weed and the sand burrs grow,
We'll fill you up on the prickly pear and cholla
And throw you on the trail down to Mexico.

(CHORUS)

SIDE I, Band 2: CHISHOLM TRAIL

Now come along boys and listen to my tale,
And I'll tell you of my troubles on the old Chisholm
Trail

CHORUS:

Come a ti yi yipee, yipee, yay, yipee, yay
Come a ti yi yipee, yipee, yay.

Well we started up the trail September twenty-third,
Well we started up the trail with the tune U Herd,

(CHORUS)

Well, woke up one mornin' on the old Chisholm Trail,
With a ribbon on a hieffer and a bull by the tail.

(CHORUS)

Well, it's bacon and the beans 'most every day,
Pretty soon I'll be eating that prairie hay.

(CHORUS)

It's a-cloudy in the west and a-lookin' like rain,
And my dammed old slicker's in the wagon again.

(CHORUS)

Well, we hit Cauldwell, we hit her on the fly,
And we bedded down the cattle on a hill close by.

(CHORUS)

Well, me and my boss we had a little chat,
And I hit him in the face with my ten gallon hat.

(CHORUS)

Went to the boss for to draw my roll,
He figured me out twenty dollars in the hole.



(CHORUS)

Well, we rounded 'em up, we threw 'em on the cars,
And that was the end of the old Two Bars.

(CHORUS)

With a ten dollar horse and an eighty dollar saddle,
Gonna quit punchin' Texas cattle.

(CHORUS)

With my foot on the stirrup and my hand on the horn,
I'm the best damn cowboy ever was born.

Come a ti yi yipee, yipee, yay, yipee, yay
Come a yi ha, cowboy, yay.

SIDE I, Band 3: TRAIL TO MEXICO

It was in the Spring of '83,
That A.J. Stinson said to me,
"I say young man, I want you to go,
And follow this herd down to Mexico."

It was in the merry month of May,
I started for Texas far away,
Through rain and snow twas a lonesome go,
As the herd rolled on down to Mexico.

It was in the springtime of the year,
We started out to drive them steers,
I left my darlin' gal behind,
She said, "Sweetheart, you're only mine.

Her caress was soft, and her kiss was sweet,
Sayin, let's get married next time we meet,
Through rain and snow twas a lonesome go,
As the herd rolled on down to Mexico.

When I arrived in Mexico,
I wanted my girl but I could not go,
So I sent a letter to my dear,
But not a word for a year did I hear.

Well, I started back to my once loved home,
I asked for the gal I'd called my own,
They said she'd married a richer life,
Therefore, wild cowboy, find another wife.

Oh, Buddy, oh Buddy, please stay at home,
Don't be forever on the roam,
There's many a gal more true than I,
So pray don't go where the bullets fly.

Well, damn your gold and the bullets too,
God pity a woman who can't prove true,
I'm a-headin' back where the bullets fly,
And stay on the trail till the day I die.

SIDE I, Band 4: SIREY PEAKS

Way up high in the Sirey Peaks,
Where the yellow jack pine grows tall,
Sandy Sam and Rusty jigs
Had to round up camp last fall.

Well, they had their ponies and their runnin' irons,
Maybe a cowdog or two.
And they vowed they'd brand every lopeared dogie,
What hove within their view.

Well every old dogie with long flap ears,
What didn't hole up by day,
Got his long ears nitched and his old hide scorched,
In a most artistic way.

Says Sandy Sam to Rusty Jigs,
As he threwed his seago down,
I reckon I'm tired of cowpography,
It's time for us to head for town.

So they saddled their ponies and they hit a lope,
For it was one helluva ride,
But them was the days when a good cowpoke,
Could wet down his dry inside.

Well, they started out at the Kentucky bar,
That's up at the head of the road,
And they ended up at the depot house,
Just seventy drinks below.

Well they caught 'er there and headed it around,
Started back the other way,
But there aint nobody in the company here can deny,
Them boys got drunk that day.

Well, as they was a-ridin' back to the camp,
A-carryin' of that awful load,
Who should they meet but the devil himself,
Come a-walkin' right down the road.

Says the devil to them, "you cowpunchin skunks,
You'd better get a hunch of a hole,
For I've come up from the rimrocks of hell,
Just to gather in your souls."

Says Sandy Sam to Rusty Jigs,
"Now we might be a little bit tight,
But no devil ever got him a good cowpunch,
Without some sort of a fight."

So he made his loop and he threw it right,
And he swung it straight and true,
And he got him the devil by both of his horns,
And his rope was anchored too.

Now Sandy Sam was a riata man,
With his gut line coiled up neat,
Well, he underhanded and he done it right,
And he got him the devil's hind feet.

Well, they pulled him down and they stretched him
out.

And they got their irons red hot,
They sawed off his horns, they notched his ears,
And scorched him up a helluva lot.

Then they left him there in the Sirey Peaks,
Necked up to a big black oak,
They left him there in the Sirey Peaks,
With a knot in his tail for a joke.

Now if you're ever up in the Sirey Peaks,
And you hear one helluva wail,
You know it's just the devil himself,
And he's a-cryin' bout the knots in his tail.

SIDE I, Band 5: LAVENDER COWBOY

He was only a lavender cowboy,
And the hairs on his chest they were two,
But he longed to be somebody's hero,
And to fight as them he-men do.

Now hair oils and many hair tonics - bear grease,
He rubbed in each mornin' and night,
But though he gazed into the mirror,
No new hairs came in sight.

Well, he fought for his Red Nellie's honor,
He cleaned out the hold-ups' nest,
And he died with his six guns a-smokin',
But with only (two) hairs on his chest.

SIDE I, Band 6: I'VE GOT NO USE FOR THE WOMEN

I've got no use for the women,
A true one may seldom be found,
Stay with a man when he's winnin',
When it's gone they'll turn him down.

They're all alike on the bottom,
Selfish and graspin' for all,
Stay with a man when he's winnin', Good Lord,
They'll laugh in your face at your fall.

Well, my pal was an honest young puncher,
Honest and upright and true,
Turned to hard shootin' gunman,
On account of a gal named Lu.

Fell in with evil companions,
Them kind that are better off dead,
When a gambler insulted her picture,
He filled him full of lead.

Well all through that long night we trailed him,
Through mesquite and thick chaparell
And I couldn't help think of that woman,
When I saw him pitch and fall.

If she'd been the pal that she should have,
He might have been raisin' a son,
Instead of out there on the prairie,
To die by the rangers' gun.

Well, there's many another young puncher,
As he rides by that pile of stone,
Recalls some similar woman,
And thinks of his molderin' bones.

They're all alike at the bottom,
Selfish and graspin' for all,
Smile at a man when he's winnin', Great God,
They'll laugh in your face at your fall.

SIDE I, Band 7: I RIDE AN OLD PAINT

I ride an old Paint, I lead an old Dan,
I'm a-goin' to Montan for to throw the Hollihan,
Well, they water in the coolies, they feed in the
draw,
Their backs are all matted, their tails are all raw.

CHORUS:

Won't you ride around easy,
Ride around slow,
For the fiery and the snuffy are rarin' to go.

Now old Bill Jones had two daughters and a song,
The one went to Denver, the other went wrong,
His wife she died in a poolroom fight,
But still he keeps singin' from mornin' till night.

CHORUS:

Won't you ride around easy,
Ride around slow,
For the fiery and the snuffy are rarin' to go,
Well they water in the coolies, feed in the draw,
Their backs are all matted, their tails are all raw.

Now when I die, take my saddle from the wall,
Put it on my pony, lead him out of his stall,
Tie my bones to his back, turn our faces to the West,
And we'll ride the prairies that we love the best.

CHORUS:

Singin', ride around easy,
Ride around slow,
For the fiery and the snuffy are rarin' to go,
Well, they water in the coolies, feed in the draw,
They backs are all matted, their tails are all raw.

Won't you ride around easy,
Ride around slow,
For the fiery and snuffy are rarin' to go.

SIDE I, Band 8: COWBOY'S LAMENT

As I walked out in the streets of Laredo,
I walked out in Laredo one day,
I spied a young cowboy all wrapped in white linen,
Wrapped in bright linen and cold as the clay.

"I see by your outfit that you are a cowboy",
These words he did say as I boldly stepped by,
"Come sit down beside me and hear my sad story,
Got shot in the breast and I know I must die."

"It was once in the saddle I used to go dashing,
Once in the saddle I used to go gay,
Well, I first took to drinkin' and then to card-
playin',
Got shot in the breast and I'm dyin' today.

"Get sixteen cowboys to carry my coffin,
Seven pretty ladies to sing me a song,
Put a good bronc tiger on board of my coffin,
Raise hell as you carry me along.

"Put the red, red roses all over my coffin,
Put the red, red roses all over my pall,
Put the red, red roses all over my coffin,
Roses to deaden the clods as they fall.

"Go get me a cup, a cup of cold water,
To cool my parched lips," the cowboy then said,
Before I'd returned his soul had departed,
He'd gone to the roundup; the cowboy was dead.

We played the fife lowly, we beat the drum slowly,
Played the dead march as we carried him along,
For we all loved that cowboy, so brave, young and
handsome,
We all loved our comrade although he'd done wrong.



SIDE II, Band 1: YAVIPII PETE

Now Yavipii Pete was a cowpuncher neat,
And he come from Arizona's fair clime,
He was raised in the saddle, he was built
just to straddle,
No pony for old Pete was too tough.

He'd been in the weather, his hide was like
leather,
And his hands were all horny and rough,
You could tell by his stride, he was just
meant to ride,
No pony for old Pete was too tough.

Now they once told the tale of how Pete hit
the trail,
A-huntin' a new range to ride,
When they hung up a bounty in Yavipii county,
For whoever could bring in his hide.

Now Pete hit the trail a-hidin' his frail,
Rode right up to a ranch,
Said to the boss, "now you look like you might
toss,
I'm a-huntin' a new job today."

"Well," the boss said, "you look tough, but you
aint rough enough,
For my Bronc Peeler you wouldn't do,
Just ride down the road, go on carryin' your load,
We can't use you, you aint enough."

Well he rode down the swale, he was battin' his
eyes,
And a-gazin' off into the swale,
And he come to the lair of a she grizzly bear,
And the bear was a-holdin' the trail.

Then takin' in hand a long barbed wire strand,
And crawlin' along on the ground,
Pete made a big loop with his barbed wire scoop,
And they both went around and around.

Then he mounted that bear with a handfull of hair,
For a quirt used a live rattlesnake,
And they made a big rush off through that buckbrush,
Old Pete swearin' that beast he would break.

Then he rode to the ranch where Pete hollered,
"Whoa",
Asked the boss what he might pay,
Said he, "this bear's gentle I rode her a mile,
But I'm huntin' a new job today."

Well, the boss called his stack he said, "come to
the shack,
You look like you might be alright,
Cause that growlin' old bear that you're ridin'
right there,
Ate up my old ranch boss last night."

SIDE II, Band 2: WHEN THE WORK'S ALL DONE THIS FALL

A group of jolly cowboys discussin' plans at ease,
Says one, "I'll tell you somethin', boys, if you
will listen, please,
I am an old cowpuncher and here I'm dressed in
rags,
But I used to be a wild one and to go on great big
jags.

Now I have got a home, boys, a good one you all know,
Though I have not seen it since long, long ago,
I'm goin' home to see my mother, once more to see
them all,
I'm goin' home to see my mother, boys, when the
work's all done this fall.

That very night this cowboy went out to stand his
guard,
Well, the night was dark and stormy and rainin'
very hard,
Them cattle got excited, they rushed in wild
stampede,
And the cowboy tried to head them, runnin' at full
speed.
Ridin' through the darkness so loudly did he shout,
Doin' his best to head them and turn the herd about,
His saddle horse did stumble and down on him did
fall,
And he won't see his mother when the work's all done
this fall.

His body was so mangled, we boys all thought him
dead,
Till he opened wide his blue eyes and this is what
he said:

Said, "Cisco, take my saddle", he said, "Moe, you
take my gun,
Jack, you take my horses after I am done,
Send my wages to my mother and a letter to them all,
Just carve upon my tombstone, "I won't be home this
fall".

SIDE II, Band 3: COWBOY'S DREAM

Last night as I lay on the prairie,
And looked at the stars in the sky,
I wondered if ever a cowboy,
Made it up to that sweet by and by.

CHORUS:

Roll on, roll on,
Roll on, little dogies, roll on, roll on,
Roll on, roll on,
Roll on, little dogies, roll on.

They said there will be a great roundup,
And cowboys like dogies will stand,
To be cut by the riders of judgement,
Who are posted and know every brand.

(CHORUS)

The road to that bright happy region,
Is narrow and twisted, they say,
But the broad one that leads to perdition,
Is posted and blazed all the way.

(CHORUS)

Last night as I lay on the prairie,
And looked at the stars in the sky,
I wondered if every a cowboy,
Made it up to that sweet by and by.

(CHORUS)

SIDE II, Band 4: BLACK STALLION

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There's a black stallion loose in the mountains
and the mesas,
Cabbaleros tell the tale over their servesas,
He's never worn a saddle and never borne a brand,
Tho' many men have tried he's untouched by human
hands.

CHORUS:

Well, the wise ones let him run,
Let him go and let him come,
Runnin' free, runnin' free,
There's no stallion, roan or dun,
That can catch the restless one,
Runnin' free, runnin' free.

He's a seldom and a solitary legend of the badlands,
And he's scattered many colts up and down the
rio grande
You can catch him if you see him, you can catch him
if you dare,
Dare to capture thunder and to ride the desert air.

CHORUS:

But, . . .

Fences do not keep him out, corrals aint held him
yet,
And if you think they're goin' to, I'm covering
your bet,
And if in the spring a baby colt is wild and black,
Just give him a rebel name and don't get on his
back.

CHORUS:

For, . . .

(Repeat first verse and chorus)

CHORUS:

And, . . .

SIDE II, Band 5: WALKIN' JOHN

Now Walkin' Johnny was a big rope horse,
Come from over Morongo way,
When you laid your twine on a ragin' steer,
Old Johnny was there to stay.

As long as your terripin shell stayed on,
And your twine was tight and strong,
You could dally welts or hard and fast,
It was all the same to John.

When a lop eared dogie would curl his tail,
Decidin' that he might not wait,
Old Johnny forgettin' that scenery,
Would hit an amazin' gait.

He'd bust through them murderous cholla
spikes,
Not a-losin' one inch of his stride,
And maybe you wished you was home in bed,
But, brother, he made you ride.

Now, Johnny, he was willin', he was stout
and strong,
Sure-footed and Spanish broke,
But I'm tellin' this knock-kneed universe,
Old Johnny did enjoy his joke.

Well, as soon as the mornin' sun come up,
He would bog his head right down,
Till your chaps stuck out like an angel's wings,
And you're hat was a-floatin' crown.

Well, that was your breakfast regular,
Whether you fell or you stuck,
I'm a-tellin' the world, old Johnny was there,
Educatin' the world to buck.

Well, we give him the name of Walkin' John,
Once durin' the roundup time,
And them was the days when beef was beef,
And old Johnny was in his prime.

Now Pete he was walkin' and Tex was sore,
And willie couldn't even talk,
When somebody said, "Call him Walkin' John,
He's made all the cowboys walk."

But hell, he was sold to a livery,
What was willin' for to take the chance,
On old Johnny becomin' a gentleman,
Not a-scared of them English pants.

And maybe was the sight of them toy balloons,
What is worn on the tourists legs,
But from that time on old Walkin' John,
He walked like he walked on eggs.

Till a tourist guy bogged down,
In a new boughtn pair of chaps
And the rest of his ignorance plum disguised,
By the rest of his rig, perhaps.

Came a-flounderin' down to the livery,
And demanded for to see the boss,
But the boss he savvied his number right,
And he give him a gentle horse.

Now Walkin' Johnny had never pitched,
From a year come the first of June,
But I'm tellin' the company assembled here,
Old Johnny recollected soon.

Well, somebody wanged that breakfast gong,
Though we'd all done had our meat,
And Johnny he started to bust in two,
With his fiddle between his feet.

Oh well, the dude took off a-like a sailin' bat,
And went floating across the sky,
He may not have been built for to aviate,
But, brother, he sure did fly.

Well, we pulled him out of a cholla bush,
And a few of his clothes stayed on,
We felt of his spokes and we wired his folks,
It was all the same to John.

SIDE II, Band 7: RODEO HAND ©1963 by Peter La Farge

A rodeo hand is a twister. You can tell them easy
cause even the short ones have a tall walk. They're
dust devil damned with a punch of bourbon, and
graced with a big black hat politeness, their rain-
bow shirts like flags in a thousand arenas, and down
every road that ever led to a rodeo.

The oldest Indian war gods blow smoke four ways when
they pass. The bronc riders on the big rebel horses,
they ride the wild ponies, and name them to fit: Big
Bear Mountain, Chief Tyhee, War Paint, Widow Maker,
Wagon Wheel, Five Minutes to Midnight and Kings X.

Calf ropers with the fast hands, Billy the Kid and
Jesse James Quick, with the ropes that move like an
answered prayer, and the lives gauged in tenths of
a second on the snap finger nimble rope horses.
Horse and man moving together as though they had
traded souls some prairie night.

Steer wrestlers making the long jumps from the backs
of the locomotive train, train tracked, dogging horses,
the leaping reach onto the running steer, rope horses
and dogging teams as valuable as diamond humming birds,
Bull riders on the Brahma bulls, with the snide horns
bent to smash, and death as an alibi, the rider out-
weighed by just two thousand pounds, whoop swagger cow-
boys, ignoring with a care the adding of the constant
stampede hurts, always able to go that other further,
past the hellgate odds, happily screaming the oldest al-
most lost cries in the night, these are the heirs to
the last of the old West.

SIDE II, Band 8: CATTLE CALLS

Ya-a-a-a- ye-ee- he-e-
Who-o-o-a ha-a

O-o-o-o- horses, horses, horses,
O-o-o-o- mares
O-o-o-o- big horses
Oo-oo-oo

Cowboys and cowgirls,
And burn the barn down,
You bare back riders,
Your horses are in the chute,
Yi-i-yah, cowboys.

Ye-ow cattle, ye-ow cattle
Yi-i-h cattle, cattle,
Hi-i-o cattle,
Yi-i-hoo cattle,
Ya-a-hah cattle,
Yih yih yi yihaw yi



Historical Society of Montana

FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album # FN 2531
 ©1962 by Folkways Records & Service Corp., 121 W. 47th St. NYC USA

IRON MOUNTAIN and other songs

Composed and
Sung

PETER



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID GAHR

(All songs ©1962 by

About the songs

STUMBLING

I took my eyes off a bull
 a ruined leg. God took h'
 and it crooketed my mind.
 ing this land. Every bod
 had some problem of this
 the rain, you don't know
 them without a rain coa
 night this song occurr
 after a radio show. T
 sitting there where I

POP REED

Frank Reed was the
 Reed boys of Color
 singer and a fine
 sheriffs. He had
 him for a job onc
 violins, mandoli
 and then he call
 hang a gun on t
 and the Reeds t
 Perhaps you ca

PONY CALLED I

I wrote this

MARIJUANA

Yeah.

SNOW BII

This is

Notes from; John Collier
 John La Farge
 War of 1812 Documentary
 Moses Asch

Peter La Farge comes from Fountain Colorado, where he
 was raised as a cowboy on the Kane Ranch. His second
 home is Santa Fe New Mexico, where his father Oliver
 La Farge resides. The thirty two year old folk musi-
 cian whose tribe, the Margasets were wiped out was
 adopted, with his sister Povy, by the Teva Tribe of
 the Hopi Nation, whose reservation is near Santa Fe.

Peter left school when he was sixteen, to sing and
 rodeo. He had his own radio program when he was
 fourteen. Peter was dancing the Hopi eagle dance
 with his father playing drums before he was ten, on
 his first appearance in New York. In 1946 Josh White
 came through Peter's country, and stopped off to work
 with him. This was the beginning of his apprentice-
 ship to the greats of folk music. Much work with
 Josh, Big Bill Broonzy and a close friendship with
 Cisco Houston followed with the years.

Peter went to Korea and returned to sing and rodeo,
 collecting the cowboy songs which are his birthright,
 boxer, collecting the USA. He took his eyes off a
 brahma Bull at a rodeo in '56, and saw that the result-
 ing injury, (through which he almost lost a leg) spelled
 the beginning of the end of his athletic career. He
 then took himself to the Goodman School of Theatre in
 Chicago. After appearing in New York City in the high-
 ly successful revival of "Dark of the Moon," he made a
 comeback on the Rodeo circuit. In '59 he found him-
 self riding at Madison Square Garden with his right
 foot in a cast, and a spur set into the cast; at the
 same time he was cast in the Shakespearean New York
 Production of King Lear. Pete has had a broken wrist, a
 mangled, surgically saved knee, a broken (but healed)
 leg, a crushed ankle and other injuries from rodeo. He
 retired.

Working closely from this time on with Cisco, who be-
 lieved Peter could contribute much as a performer-
 writer, composer, he began to concentrate entirely on
 the folk field. This album, the answer to a long dream
 and the other Folkways releases are the result.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID GAHR

AS LONG AS THE GRASS SHALL GROW

PETER La FARGE
sings of the
Indians

