

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FD 5250 STEREO

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mandolin and electric guitar: alan senauke; electric guitar: bob norman; bass: jerry mitnick; guitar: jeff ampolsk.

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god
guts
& guns
jeff
ampolsk

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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FOLKWAYS RECORDS FD 5250 STEREO

GOD, GUTS & GUNS / JEFF AMPOLSK

FOLKWAYS FD 5250

god
guts
& guns
jeff
ampolsk



god guts & guns

Songs by Jeff Ampolsk

this album is for gorden and sis the most selfless
people I know

cover design, gorden friesen
produced by gorden friesen and alan senauke
mandolin and electric guitar, alan senauke
electric guitar, bob norman
bass, jerry mitnick
guitar, jeff ampolsk
engineer, mike sobol
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by jeff ampolsk and Low Lite Music

SALLY SELLS HER CHARMS FOR MONEY THESE DAYS

well the sun was on the slide
the moon was on the rise
she walked the quarter lookin for a man
but she weren't the painted lady
that you've often heard about
she was just another pretty girl
whose money had run out

Refrain

Sally sells her charms for money these days
ain't that an awful way to pass the time
sally sells her charms for money these days
but i can't help believin that she was so much happier
when she didn't have a dime

well she stands out on the corner
down at bourbon and toulouse
waitin for a catcall or a smile
knowin if she stays there
hanging half out of her clothes
she'll make that other fifty in a while

Refrain

She was tired of all the lovers
tired of all the lies
tired of all the lines she'd heard before
tired of all the housechores
tired of so much more
but mainly she was tired of bein poor

Refrain

BASKETBALL HERO

First two names was george washington
his last name was brown
great big basketball player
from a little bitty louisiana town

and his daddy was just a farm worker
and his momma was only a maid
but everyone knew deep down in their hearts
That george'd be a big star one day

So george went to school in new orleans
and he played for st. augustine
and he lived with his good uncle william
and also his pretty aunt jean
deep down in the depths of the ghetto
but not to be there for too long
cause georgie had won him a scholarship
for him to play basketball on

now george was a star at the college
by himself he saved every game
yea george was so good
on the basketball wood
that all the white folks knew him by name
as the years run by he run harder
down the road to basketball fame
when a bad run of luck and a big diesel truck
made george paraplegically lame

so now there's no cheers for the hero
white folks call him jungle bunny instead
and the doctor who got him addicted
says "just thank the lord you're not dead"
yea it's back to the ghetto for georgie
back to welfare and dreams that can't wait
ain't it weird ain't it weird
how a flip of the coin
can change the niggers we love into the niggers we hate

I was fixin' to ship out when an old sailor told me this.

STARTED OFF LONESOME

well i started off lonesome
but i ended up blue
for the life of a sailor
it will do that to you

yea you'll cling to the bottle
and you'll forsake your friends
and you'll marry the ocean
and you'll drink to the end

seen a many young writer
lose his talent to wine
for a pen don't move easy
in a burgandy mind

and a many young singer
lose all of his songs
to singing how sailin
set his life off all wrong

yea they started off lonesome
but they ended up blue
for the life of a sailor
finally got to them too

and they clung to the bottle
and they forsook their friends
and they married the ocean
and they'll drink til the end

so to all you young ramblers
with adventure in mind
if ya sail toward sailin
then you'll sail out your time

yea you might start off happy
but you'll end up all gray
and serve time on the ocean
till the end of your days

cause i started off lonesome
but i ended up blue
for the life of a sailor
finally got to me too

and i clung to the bottle
and i forsook my friends
and i married the ocean
and i'll drink till the end

When I first got to New York City, I tried my hand
playin' on street corners. One day I figured I'd go and
play by the fancy hotels near Central Park. Couldn't get a
nickel for all the noise. Packed up my guitar. Walked on
down the street. Two winos stopped me and I played 'em
this. They gave me a buck and a couple of hits of wine,
which was more than I could say for all the rich folks at
the fancy hotel. This is for my two favorite winos, Tom
Waits and Mo back home in New Orleans.

ALCOHOL HEAVEN

Lock me up in a padded cell
bring me a bottle of your alcoholic pills
do me a favor before i go in
get me a suitcase and fill it full of gin

I'm gonna get straight baby one of these days
I'll get a lifetime membership down at A.A.
Just give me a triple before i go home
cause i gotta get drunk just to face myself alone

Lock me up in a padded cell
strap me up and wrap me up until I'm well
but do me a favor before i die
Feed me intravenously with water and rye

you say i'm a wino babe; you know that ain't true
cause i never drunk nothin till i met you
when was i sober? what the hell do you care?
In alcoholic heaven honey you won't be there

rack me and retrain me in a rubber room
you know i'm dyin dyin dyin in this dead end saloon
do me a favor before i'm done
ship my casket down to puerto rico and fill it full of rum

you started me drinkin honey but don't apologize
i've found happiness in cirrhosis and bloodshot eyes
i got new firends i don't need you no more
i like makin out with barstools and talkin to the floor

used to like my fridays for gettin loose
now it's everyday a one a day and antibuse
when i die please bury me deep
it takes half the scotch in scotland just to put me to sleep

yea you say i'm a wino babe you know that ain't true
cause i never drank a damned thing till i met you
well when was I sober? what the hell do you care?
in alcoholic heaven honey you won't be there.

Between 1966 and 1972 thousands and thousands of young
men from all over the country came to Mexico and south-
ern Texas to get in on the marijuana trade. With a lotta
guts and a few hundred dollars, a guy could get in a busi-
ness that would make him rich. The attrition rate was high.
Everyday new stories of friends and acquaintances getting
caught by the federal customs or U.S. feds filled the air.
Highjackings, robberies and old style shootouts became com-
monplace. Between 1970 and 1972 the border was just
about closed to the small timers. Air mattresses were re-
placed by airplanes as a means of crossing the Rio Grande.
Big money paid bribes and pushed the small timers away
from the borders and into the college towns of southern
Texas and Louisiana. Marijuana put many a poor boy
through college. Dealers didn't make good students. It
was hard to study in the world of marijuana, women, guns
and country music.

Violence soon hit the small college towns. Towns like La-
fayette, Louisiana, saw the last stands of young unknowns.
Jim Bourgoise, as the story goes, took his last stand in front
of Antlers Bar in Lafayette on October 4th, 1973.

BIG JIM BOURGOISE AND ANTLERS BAR

sundown in lafayette town
streets is empty; there ain't no one around
'cept big jim bourgoise the dealer holed up down at
antlers bar
with the sheriff outside in the deputy's car

Refrain

and a night at antlers is a mighty fine thing
where the folks still two step to the country swing
swear a finer time just can't be found
let a louisiana lady swing you round and round
sheriff looked down his watch; said quarter to six
said "deputies ya'll get your weapons fixed
on that open door down by antlers bar"
said "Jim, come on out; you know you can't get far"

Refrain

Jim leaned out; said "sheriff, please go on home
you wouldn't shoot your second cousin; that much I know"
sheriff said "i swear by the star i wear
i'll shoot you deader than dead you don't come out of there"

Refrain

Jim decided it was time to make his move
catch him alive is one thing they would never
so he yelled "i surrender" shot the deputy down
when a blast from the sheriff put big jim on the ground

Refrain

now there's a message for all you bootleggers out there
carved into big jim's tombstone down in belle terre
it says a bootlegger's life is like the cajun dance
if ya ask the lady, you gotta take the chance

I've seen all kinds a ways a man has to get your money, but the funniest way was in the Bowery in New York City. The winos stand out in the cold by the corner of Lafayette and Houston with buckets of dirty water. When you stop your car, they throw this filthy water on your windshield. Roll your window down and give 'em a quarter and they'll clean your windshield before the light changes. This is called Johnny Cash's Father; it's not about Johnny Cash's father but about the winos in the Bowery.

JOHNNY CASH'S FATHER

Some folks say he's nothin'
when they see him but they're wrong
he's just a hungry pilgrim
on a road that's cold and long

so tip your hat to the winos
say good mornin' to the bums
who wash cars on the corner
everytime the red light comes

country music in the mornin'
country music every night
down at the Mobil carwash
by the Lafayette stoplight

he's a worn thin winestone cowboy
all the way from Tennessee
pourin' shots into his radiator
so New York don't make him freeze

and if he had a lousy nickle
for every time you passed him by
he'd crawl into the gutter
and that's just where he'd lie

but since he don't have nothin'
he'll stay there on the bum
washin' cars down on the corner
every time the red light comes

country music in the mornin'
country music every night
down at the Mobil carwash
by the Lafayette stoplight

he was once a rich and famous
song writer millionaire
with songs on every jukebox
and a lot more on the air

till he turned in his cowboy hat
pedal steel and silver spurs
for half a pint of muscatel
and a night out with the girls

so if you think he's lyin'
when he says bus ticket and meal
you just aren't understandin'
how good a good drink makes him feel

he's Johnny Cash's Father
and Jimmy Rodgers' son
and everyone in Nashville
stands amazed at what he's done

so tip your hat to the winos
say good mornin' to the bums
who wash cars on the corner
every time the red light comes

country music in the mornin'
country music every night
down at the Mobil carwash
by the Lafayette stoplight

This is a ghost train story. When I sing it, I think of a wagon train floatin' across the nighttime sky carryin' all the old-time country musicians who "lost their way a long time ago."

LONG LONG WAY TO CALIFORNIA (LONGER WAY TO MEXICO)

pull them covered wagons in
circle around the fire
let them ponies run the woods
to fill out their desires

get them guitars near the flames
let's hear fiddles and mandolins
banjo pickers reachin' for the stars

Refrain

it's a long long way to California
it's a longer way to Mexico
where we're headed no one really knows
we lost our way a long time ago

this wagon train left Boston in 1885
to many it's a wonder that we are still alive
but in your world of automobiles
to us we're the only thing that's real
we roll by day play country music every night

Refrain

your history books will tell you that all of us have died
wiped out by the cholera in 1889
but if you look into the clouds, you might see us roll by
we may be dead but still we're doin' fine

We live in a land of plenty but some people are so greedy that they'll steal from the blind. One of the worst things I ever saw was the way blind people who work in mop factories are treated. I hope the government will step in and do something about the conditions which many blind folks are forced to live under. These organizations that receive tax-exempt status for hiring the blind and being "nonprofit organizations" pay slave wages to people who can get no other job because of their loss of sight.

MOP FACTORY BLUES

well my name is Edward Tyner
and I'm blind as you can see
my eyes didn't used to work too well
now they don't work at all
used to be a welder before I had my fall

Refrain

I got them mop factory blues mop factory blues
and once you got 'em it's impossible to lose
them mop factory blues

losin' my eyes was tough ya see
but it weren't the worst thing that ever happened to me
if you ever go blind, just pray to god
you don't have to work at the mop factory

Refrain

well they pay us by the piece they don't pay us by the hour
I thought that went out long ago
and the bosses around here walkin' round like
they're our saviors think we're too blind to realize
we're jus' inexpensive labor

Refrain

well I live inside the project down by St. Thomas Street
every mornin' I walk to work through the St. Thomas fog
it ain't too bad ya see in a couple of years
mop factory gonna buy me a seein' eye dog

Refrain

yeah my name is Edward Tyner and
I'm blind as I can be
like I said before it weren't the worst thing
that ever happened to me no
so if you know a blind man, please do him this one favor
tell him take a tip from me
starve before you work at the mop factory

GOD GUTS AND GUNS

it was wet and cold on Bourbon Street and I was hot and dry
so I dropped into a barroom; they were out of bourbon
so I ordered rye
the barmaid stared down at me through the pancake on
her face
asked me what a guy who dressed like me was doin' in
the place
said I didn't know
she said it didn't matter though cause business had been
a little slow
and as long as I was drinkin' she was gonna
let it slide yeah she was gonna let it go
so I stared up at the bar stage where a naked girl
was shakin' everything she owned
to the rythm of the latest A.M. radio don't say a damned
thing drone
yeah she was tellin' them old conventioners to run away
from home
by every once in a while shakin' a couple of parts that was
previously unknown
now I was gettin' bored and high; my tab was gettin' higher
I figured it be best for me to be sayin' my good-byers
when this one old man come up sat down next to me
said son you can thank American freedom to God Guts
and Guns

Refrain

he said God Guts and Guns made America free
at any price we must keep all three
God Guts and Guns young man can't you see
that's the cornerstone of American liberty

well he lectured on the evils of gun control
threw in a couple of words about how the savior pulled
himself up out the hole
said he didn't know for sure but he'd been told
that the jungle bunnies was usin' welfare to buy weapons
on the public dole

yeah he talked about Christian society and whiteman's
privileged destiny race war comin' in 1983
and if I was a man I'd go out and join the klu klux klan
told him I was a simple man and all them heavy questions
of philosophy left me without too much to say
but didn't he think a few too many people was gettin'
shot to death these days
he said now that's what I daon't understand

how come all you young fellos daon't realize
that if everybody a had a gun on their hip
nobody would shoot anybody cause everybody would be
too scared to die
that made sense
he repeated his refrain

Refrain

now a crowd it gathered round us two
for him they'd cheer for me they'd boo
if I'd had a gun I prob'ly would have shot a few
but since I didn't I figured it was time to change my tune
so I told him I'd been meanin' to buy me one of them shootin'
pens
only my drinkin' habit kept my wallet thin
so if he'd kindly buy a round
tomorrow I'd put my payment down
well he bought one for me and one for the bar
just then them hundred and forty seven American legionaires
struck up a hymn like a bunch of newborn rock and roll
stars
they sang

Refrain

now four a clock come; they closed the bar
we's walkin' down Bourbon Street arm and arm
cheek to cheek and shoulder to shoulder
gettin' drunker and feelin' bolder
looked behind and what did I see?
all them legionaires followin' him and me
so we figured we'd show New Orleans who we are
by pullin' a raid on Pete's gay bar

yeah we beat them sissy's till they was almost dead
tore the whole damned bar to shreds
old man grabbed the manager and this is what he said
said "set ya free if you sing along with me"
manager began to sing

Refrain

things was gettin' mighty odd when in popped this fellow
from the riot squad
hit a couple of female impersonators over the head
put his hand to my ears and this is what he said
said job well done boys job well done
but accordin' to the city's protocol
seems I'm gonna half to arrest you all
but don't worry none cause when you get to jail
fraternal order of police is gonna post your bail
well went to jail got out all right
went to court the followin' night
judge was lookin' hungry and lean
said thank you boys for keepin' the city clean
this whole damned story might sound absurd
but it ain't the funniest thing I heard
no to tell you the truth the funniest thing
is when the judge and the jury began to sing

Refrain