THE DAYS OF '49

Songs of the Gold Rush

Sung by Logan English with guitar accompaniment

WHAT WAS YOUR NAME IN THE STATES?
SACRAMENTO
A RIPPING TRIP
SWEET BETSY FROM PIKE
CROSSING THE PLAINS
PROSPECTING DREAM
LIFE IN CALIFORNIA
I OFTEN THINK OF WRITING HOME
THE DAYS OF '49
HE'S THE MAN FOR ME
CLEMENTINE
THE GAMBLER
JOE BOWERS
THE CALIFORNIA STAGE COMPANY
CALIFORNIA BLOOMER
SACRAMENTO GALS

Recorded by Kenneth S. Goldstein
Sung by Logan English

The Days of '49

Songs of the Gold Rush

Recorded by Kenneth S. Goldstein

English Accompaniment

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FH 5255 Album No.

FOLKWAYS RECORDS

Album No. FH 5255

67. Days of '49

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FH 5255 Album No.
SAN FRANCISCO, 1849.

From an Old Print.

MINING SCENE.
ABOUT THE SINGER

LOGAN ENGLISH was born in Henderson, Kentucky, the son of a Baptist preacher. When his father retired, the family moved to a farm in Bourbon County, near Paris, Kentucky, and it was there that he first learned many of the songs in his vast repertoire.

Music was always an important element in his life. His grandfather and mother were both trained singers of grand opera, and it was only natural that his first contact with music was opera. He developed a keen distaste for classical music as a result, and used to slip off to listen to the folk-singing that went on all around him on the farm. Though the farm was located in the Kentucky lowlands, old mountain ballads and songs for many of the farm tenants had come to the farm directly from the eastern Kentucky mountains, or were only one generation removed from the heart of the ballad-singing country. All of them carried a vast store of English, Irish and Scottish folk songs.

In college (Georgetown College in Kentucky), his interest turned to the theatre and he studied acting and speech there with a professional career in mind. After a two year hitch in the Army, he attended the Yale School of Drama where he obtained a Master of Fine Arts in acting. It was while he was a student at Yale that his interest again turned to folksinging. Since his graduation from Yale, he has alternated his time between acting and folksinging. He has appeared in various nightclubs as a folksinger, and intends to spend as much time as possible singing for college audiences in several projected concert tours.

He has previously recorded for FOLKWAYS an album of KENTUCKY FOLK SONGS AND BALLADS, FA 2136, and is currently working on several more albums of American folksongs for this company.

RECORDED BY KENNETH S. GOLDSTEIN
PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE COLLECTION OF MOSES ASCH
MASTERED BY QUE RECORDING STUDIOS
PRESSED BY PLASTYLITE
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR - MOSES ASCH

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

by

Kenneth S. Goldstein

According to history, the first authenticated discovery of Gold in California was made near Los Angeles in 1842. But the first discovery of real historical importance was made on January 24, 1848, at John A. Sutter's mill, on the south fork of the American River near Coloma. It would not be incorrect to date California's history as of that moment, for in the truest sense "Gold made California".

Our story begins with some of John Sutter's employees digging a millrace for a grain mill needed to grind Sutter's stores of grain. While digging, one of the workmen, James W. Marshall, dislodged some rocks - among which was a solid gold nugget! An attempt was made to keep the discovery secret, but such secrets are not easily kept. In a short time, rumors flew across the country: Gold had been discovered! And the rush was on.

From every corner of the United States - and other countries as well - thousands of people gave up their normal pursuits to find the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow...and the end of the rainbow was California. In 1849 alone, more than 80,000 men reached the coast. About half of these had come by overland routes in wagon-trains. Gold seekers would congregate at the end of the railroad lines in one of the mid-western states. There they would form a wagon-train, purchase supplies for the long arduous trip, and hire scouts and escorts. The trip was a rough one - through Indian territory, a large part of the way. Many of those who were fortunate enough to evade death at the Indians' hands died of sickness, exposure, thirst, and starvation. But still some 40,000 managed to reach the land of their hopes. Travel by sea routes was no easier. Sailing around Cape Horn at the southern tip of South America was a long dangerous voyage, and many of the ships were undermanned, overcrowded, and unfit for sea travel generally. Whether by land or sea route, only the strongest lived to reach California. And the rush was to keep on for several more years.
California society was - to say the least - vastly disturbed by the gold rush. Ships were deserted by their sailors (500 ships crowded the bay at San Francisco in July of 1850), soldiers deserted their regiments, churches were emptied, town councils ceased to function, and everybody took off for the foothills. Merchants, clerks, judges, lawyers, prostitutes, gamblers, criminals and honest folk found themselves in common company. Somehow, order was kept - usually by primitive lawmakers whose instruments were lynch law, popular courts and vigilante committees.

To be sure, there was no home life in the California of the 'fifties. Women numbered eight percent of the population, and in the mining regions only two percent. The population was a motley crew; some three quarters of the miners were from the American states, while others were Russian, French, English, Chinese, and citizens of a host of other nations. The indigenous population of California, largely Spanish and Mexican, was cruelly treated by the newcomers who passed laws to their own liking - disregarding the claims of the region's citizens.

By the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico ceded California to the United States in 1848. With the discovery of gold, the new territory took on great national importance. Early in 1849, local governments sprang up in several communities, and by September of that year, a convention framed a free state constitution and applied for admission to the union. On September 9, 1850, California was admitted to the union. The new state was faced with many problems brought on by the gold rush. Of all the inequities perpetrated in the region none were so abusive as those directed against the Chinese settlers and miners. The law and its officers treated them with even more contempt than they treated the Indians and Mexicans, and these injustices were to continue long after 1879, when the Chinese were excluded by national law. Somehow, California came through it all to become one of the greatest states in the Nation.

But what of the miner's themselves? Millions of words have been published concerning those riotous times. Diaries, journals, biographies and historical works all give us some insight into the period and the people. But the best insights may be gotten from the songs they sang. In a popular California songster of 1858, we find an introductory notation stating that the 37 songs in that volume give "...in a few words what would occupy volumes detailing the HOPES, TRIALS AND JOYS OF A MINER'S LIFE." This is not an overstatement, as the songs in this album will readily attest.

With some few exceptions, the songs in this album come from paper bound songsters published in California before 1860. Few of these songsters included music, but most of them indicated the tunes to which they were sung - folk and popular tunes which were familiar to California settlers of the period.

The most famous of the song writers and collectors of the period was John A. Stone, who became known to the many who sang his songs as "Old Put". A large number of the songs in this album come from two of his pocket songbooks - "Put's Golden Songster" and "Put's Original California Songster". Little is known about "Old Put" beyond what he wrote in the dedication to his first songster:

"In dedicating this little Book of Songs to the Miners of California, those hardy builders of California's prosperity and greatness, the author deems it his duty to offer a prefatory remark in regard to the origin of the work and the motive of its publication.

"Having been a miner himself for a number of years, he has had ample opportunities of observing, as he has equally shared, the many trials and hardships to which his brethren of the pick and shovel have been exposed, and to which in general they have so patiently, so cheerfully, and even heroically submitted. Hence, ever since the time of his crossing the Plains, in the memorable year of '50, he has been in the habit of noting down a few of the leading items of his experience, and clothing them in the garb of humorous though not irreverent verse.

"Many of his songs may show some hard edges, and he is free to confess, that they may fail to please the more aristocratic portion of the community, who have but little sympathy with the details, hopes, trials or joys of the toiling miner's life; but he is confident that the class he addresses will not find them exaggerated, nothing extenuated, nor ought set down 'in malice.'

"In conclusion, he would state, that after having sung them himself at various times and places, and latterly with the assistance of a few gentlemen, known by the name of the Sierra Nevada Rangers, the songs have been published at the request of a number of friends; and if the author should thereby succeed in contributing to the amusement of those he is anxious to please, enliven the long tedious hours of a miner's winter fireside, his pains will not be unrewarded."

- San Francisco, September 1855

We have no way of knowing which of the songs in his books were wholly his own composition, and which came from other sources, but most of them were good, singable songs, and if not actual 'folk' songs, they are certainly of the same stuff from which folk songs are made.

It is with great pride in the singing history of our country that this album is dedicated to "Old Put", who did so much to let us know what the men (and women) of the Gold Rush days were like.
MINING IN CALIFORNIA

SIDE I, Band 1: WHAT WAS YOUR NAME IN THE STATES?

Many men who left their Eastern homes for the California diggings were of unsavory reputation. Others were previously respectable men who caught the gold fever and took off to "make their pile" without a word of leave to their dear ones. Some were gamblers and criminals who found in the gold rush a double excuse for taking off to California: a chance to strike it rich, and a way to avoid the troublesome laws which they flouted. No matter their social status, most forty-niners had ample reason for changing their names. This little ditty incorporates a favorite joke of those roaring days, and whether the fortune seekers came by water or overland, they were sure to be greeted with this song. The tune and text may be found in Carl Sandburg's The American Songbag.

Oh, what was your name in the States? Was it Thompson, or Johnson or Bates? Did you murder your wife And fly for your life? Say, what was your name in the States?

SIDE I, Band 2: SACRAMENTO

When news of finding gold (mostly exaggerated) came from Sutter's Creek, men took off singly and in groups for 'the promised land.' Ships were chartered to make the long trip round the "Horn," and wagon trains were formed to cross the great western plains. As they made their way West, they sang this song with enthusiasm and jubilation, and as they made their way back, they added bitter stanzas which mirrored their disappointment. Then the refrain would be sung:

Then, Ho, boys, Ho, to California-O There's plenty of stones and dead men's bones On the banks of the Sacramento.

The version sung here is obviously from the early days when men dreamed of fantastic 'strikes' and tremendous fortunes to be had for the 'picking'. When the gold rush fever died down, the song remained at sea, where it was sung, with appropriate verses, as a captain shanty.

1. When formed our band, we are all well manned To journey afar To the promised land, The golden ore is rich in store On the banks of the Sacramento shore.

Chorus: Then, Ho, boys, Ho, to California-O, There's plenty of gold, so I've been told, On the banks of the Sacramento.

2. As oft we roam o'er the dark sea's foam We'll never forget kind friends at home, But memory kind still brings to mind, The love of friends we left behind.

3. We'll expect our share of the coarsest fare, And sometimes sleep in the open air, On the cold damp ground, we'll all sleep sound, Except when the wolves go howlin' around.

4. As we explore to the distant shore, Filling our pockets with the shining ore, How it will sound as the shout goes 'round, Filling our pockets with a dozen pounds.

5. The gold is there most anywhere, We dig it out rich with an iron bar, But where it is thick, with spade or pick We take out chunks as big as a brick.

SIDE I, Band 3: A PANNING TRIP

When the rush to California began, every type of boat or ship afloat was pressed into service. Many of these were in bad repair and never reached their destination. But the gold seekers were a determined lot. Hardships on board leaky vessels were no deterrent.
There were two sea routes available to the hunters. One was to make the long arduous journey around Cape Horn; the other meant to take a ship to Panama, cross the isthmus by foot or rail, and board ship on the other side for San Francisco. The latter seemed the shorter route, especially when a railroad was supposed to have been built connecting the East coast of Panama with the West, but the promised railroad was never built and the trip had to be made by foot. The forty-niners sang of their travails on such excursions in this light-hearted, satirical song. The text appeared in "But's Golden Songster," printed in San Francisco in 1852, with instructions to be sung to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel."

1. You go aboard a leaky boat,  
   And sail for San Francisco;  
   You've got to pump to keep her afloat,  
   You have that, by jingo!  
   The engine soon begins to squeak,  
   But nary a thing to oil her;  
   Impossible to stop the leak -  
   Rip goes the boiler!

2. The captain on the promenade,  
   Looking very savage;  
   Steward and the cabin maid  
   Fighting 'bout a cabbage;  
   All about the cabin floor,  
   Passengers lie sea-sick -  
   Steamer's bound to go ashore -  
   Rip goes the物理!

3. Pork and beans they can't afford  
   To second cabin passengers;  
   The cook has tumbled overboard  
   With forty pounds of "passengers";  
   The engineer, a little tight,  
   Bragging on the Main Line,  
   Finally gets into a fight -  
   Rip goes the engine!

4. Now, cholera begins to rage,  
   A few have got the scurrvy;  
   Chilkens dying in their cage -  
   Steerage topay-turvy,  
   When you get to Panama,  
   Greasers want a back-load;  
   Officers begin to jaw -  
   Rip goes the railroad!

5. When home, you'll tell an awful tale,  
   And always will be thinking  
   How long you had to pump and bail,  
   To keep the tub from sinking.  
   Of course, you'll take a class of gin,  
   'Twill make you feel so funny;  
   Some city sharp will rope you in -  
   Rip goes your money!

      SID E I, Band 4: SWEET BETSY FROM PIKE

Just as the sea-going gold hunters sang light-heartedly of their tribulations, so too did the overlanders. Thousands came across the Great Plains in their covered-wagon trains, and for every man who reached his goal there was some poor unfortunate who met his death from disease, poisoned food, the sand and the sun, or from Indians. But still the land routes rang to the sound of gay, but satirical, songs like "Sweet Betsy from Pike."

Betsy and Ike are probably the best known children of Pike County, Missouri, and the story of their adventures has probably done more to put that area on the map than any other thing. The song has been collected from widely separated parts of this country, suggesting that disappointed forty-niners brought the song back with them as they returned to their homes. It is sung to the much-parodied tune of "Villikins and His Dinah."

1. Oh, don't you remember sweet Betsy from Pike  
   Who crossed the wide mountains with her lover Ike,  
   With one yoke of oxen and a big yellow dog,  
   A tall Shanghai rooster and a one-spotted hog.  

   Chorus:
   Singing too-ral-i-early, li-early, li-ay,  
   Singing too-ral-i-early, li-early, li-ay,  
   Singing too-ral-i-early, li-early, li-ay,  
   Singing too-ral-i-early, li-early, li-ay,

2. Out on the prairie one bright starry night  
   They broke out the whiskey and Betsy got tight;  
   She sang and she shouted, she danced o'er the plain,  
   And made a great show for the whole wagon train.

3. The Injuns come down in a wild yelling horde,  
   And Betsy got scared they would scalp her adored;  
   Behind the front wagon wheel Betsy did crawl,  
   And fought off the Injuns with musket and ball.
4. They soon reached the desert, where Betsy give out;
   And down in the sand she lay rolling about;
   While Ike in great terror looked on in surprise,
   Saying, "Get up now, Betsy, you'll get sand in your eyes."

5. The wagon tipped over with a terrible crash,
   And out on the prairie rolled all sorts of trash;
   A few little baby clothes done up with care
   Looked rather suspicious — though 'twas all on the square.

6. The Shanghai run off and the cattle all died,
   The last piece of bacon that morning was fried;
   Poor Ike got discouraged, and Betsy got mad,
   The dog wagged his tail and looked wonderfully sad.

7. One morning they climbed up a very high hill,
   And with great wonder looked into old Placerville;
   Ike shouted and said, as he cast his eyes down,
   "Sweet Betsy, my darling, we've come to Hangtown."

8. Long Ike and sweet Betsy attended a dance,
   Where Ike wore a pair of his Pike County pants;
   Sweet Betsy was covered with ribbons and rings,
   Said Ike, "You're an angel, but where are your wings?"

9. A miner said, "Betsy, will you dance with me?"
   "I will that, old hoss, if you don't make too free;
   But don't dance me hard. Don't you want to know why?
   Doggone you, I'm chock-full of strong alkali."

10. Long Ike and sweet Betsy got married of course,
    But Ike, getting jealous, obtained a divorce;
    And Betsy, well satisfied, said with a shout,
    "Goodbye, you big lummox, I'm glad you backed out."

(SEE FOLKWAYS RECORD ALBUM FP 5003 "FRONTIER DAYS" FOR DOCUMENTATION OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN AND THE CROSSING OF THE PLAINS.)

SIDE I, Band 5: CROSSING THE PLAINS

Here's another overlander's song, in the form of a warning from one who has already made the trip. There is laughter to its lines, but it takes just a little reading between them to realize the hard task the overlander had cut out for himself. But with all the hardships, the gold seekers continued to make the journey in ever increasing numbers, their wagon trains stretching for miles across the lonely deserts of the West. Carl Sandburg informs us that a traveler of the period once counted 450 wagons in a ten mile stretch along the Platte River, plodding their way to the end of the rainbow.

The text to this song first appeared in Put's Original California Songster with the annotation that it was to be sung to the tune of the old British street ballad of "Caroline of Edinboro Town".

1. Come all you Californians, I pray one wide your ears,
   If you are going across the plains with snotty mules and steers;
   Remember beans before you start, likewise dried beef and ham,
   Beware of venison, dang the stuff, it's often times a ram.

2. You must buy two revolvers, a bowie-knife and a belt,
   Says you, "old feller, now stand off, or I will have your pelt;"
   The greenhorn looks around about, but not a soul can see,
   Says he, "There's not a man in town, but what's afraid of me."

3. You shouldn't shave, but cultivate your down
   So when you do return, 'twill be soft and white as snow;
   Your lovely Jane will be surprised, your ma'll begin to cook;
   The greenhorn to his mother'll say, "How savage I must look!"

4. "How do you like it overlant?" his mother she will say,
   "All right, excepting cooking, then the devil is to pay;
   For some won't cook, and others can't, and then it's curse and damn,
   The coffee-pot's begun to leak, so had the frying-pan."

5. You calculate on 60 days take you over the plains,
   But where you lack for bread and meat, for coffee and for brains;
   Your 60 days are a hundred or more, your grub you've got to divide,
   Your steers and mules are alkali, so foot it - you cannot ride.

6. You have to stand a watch at night, to keep the Indians off,
   About sundown some heads will ache, and some begin to cough;
   To be deprived of health we know is always very hard,
   Though every night someone is sick, to get rid of standing guard.

7. Your canteens, they should be well filled with poison alkali,
   So when you get tired of travelling, you can cramp all up and die;
   The best thing in the world to keep your bowels loose and free
   Is fight and quarrel among yourselves, and seldom if ever agree.
11. When they were able to pan out some four or five to where a man

wished they'd

Says Bill, "Let's leave this for it. This

and spill the tea,

what's newly born,

in Prospecting Dream", a miner describes the travelings, and hopes of a typical prospector. Though the

the glittering mineral specks which

and tripped out my liver;

in the river.

if ever I die, they'd take me to the

dug, I'm a used-up man, etc.

PICKING UP CRACKS

As I lay on the

burn a hand.

burnt

for I'm a used-up man, etc.

pigs all died, hens flew

miners, and many of them

of Los Angeles, the girl I

and a cent, not even

To treat set

scares people to

fever-n-a-\[;er"

are used in the

made

WASHING WITH THE LONG TOM


SIDE 1, Track 6: PROSPECTING DREAM

Prospecting for gold was not fun. Few were the cases

were able to pan out more four or five hundred dollars worth of gold a day, but most miners

found gold below the ground, it might be on the

there were a few men fortunate, and struck gold claims

where they were able to pan out some four or five to

where they were able to pan out some four or five
to

I thought the damned marquises would

was Harl'leri

and the glittering mineral specks which

and sit

or sieve

in the river.

I couldn't

to

in the river.

The text of this song appeared in the California Songster,
published in San Francisco in 1875. The first

the river.

To treat set

and kindy ask

used-up

mules,

darned mosquitoes would

in no time.

PICKING UP CRACKS

The men who tore up long-established routes in distant
cities to take off for the land of gold were soon to

I thought the damned marquises would

the river.

I've tried to keep my courage, and swore I

my farming

I shouldn't,

I got into a steamboat and started up the river,

I got into a steamboat and started up the river,

the river.

and spill the tea,

be lost;

and sit

wanted to die, they'd take me to the

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

dug a hand.

dug a hand.

and spill the tea,

be lost;

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.

I'm a used-up man, etc.
And let it rip, till I return, and tell them all I know.

CHORUS:
For it keeps a man a-hunting round to keep up with the times, and pen and ink is very scarce with people in the mines, and writing don't amount to much unless you have the time.

2. If I could write them every nail I know it would be none, but neighbors would till them then, like a man of boats - and great would be the cry abroad that such a man's a fool, and if he were a friend of mine, I'd send him out to look.

3. I'd half a mind to drop a line and tell them I'm alive; and watch the California boats whenever they arrive, for I intend to lose return, wherever I feel inclined, then drop a line informing then I've lately arrived.

4. I like to live among the hills, and pleasant mountain towns, and like the cities better since they drove away the gold; but were they fifty times as fair, for all I would I would to be a man for evermore, and write then every nail.

5. There was old Jesse, a hard old cuss, who never did repent; he never was known to miss a drink nor to ever swear a word; but old Jesse, like all the rest, to death he did resign; and in his bloom went up the sun in the days of '49.

6. There was Peter Bill, one of the boys, who was always in for a game, whether he lost or whether he won, to win it was the same; he would rise up and drow his eyards, he would go you a hearty drink, in the game with death Bill lost his breath, in the days of '49.

7. There was New York Jake, the butcher's boy, he was always getting killed; and every time that he'd get full he was spelling for a fight; but Jake ramgaged against a knife in the hands of old Bob Stein, and over Jake the long wake, in the days of '49.

8. There was Jigzag Bill from Buffalo, I never will forget, he would roar all day and he roar all night and I guess he's roaring yet; one night he fell in a prospect hole in a roaring bad design; and in that hole he roared out his soul in the days of '49.

9. Of all the comrades that I've had there's none that's left to boast; and I'm left alone in my misery like some poor wandering ghost; and as I pass from town to town they call me the madrigal singer - 'There goes Tom Moore, a bumper shore, of the days of '49.'

CHORUS:
In the days of old, in the days of gold, how oftimes I regret - for the days of old when we dug up the gold in the days of '49.

IDE II, Band 2: "I'm no man for me"

The lure of gold was powerful enough to make all sorts of men leave for the golden shores of California, but not all were equipped or prepared to put in the long hours of hard work and the risk of making a fortune. Like the speaker in this song, some did find their fortunes would be much easier made by marrying a rich senorita; and if that didn't work out well, one could always avoid turning to mining by stealing if necessary. Such a ruse was held in respect by the miners, more for his good nature ways than for setting an example.

1. I'm Tom Moore from the bummer's shore, in the good old golden days, they call me a bummer and a ginsin', too, but what care I for praise? I wander around from town to town, just like a roving sign; and all the people say, "There goes Tom Moore, a side show for me.

2. My companions, they all loved me well, a jolly easy cuss, a few hard cases I admit, though they were brave and true; whatever the pitch they would never flinch, they would never turn their backs on a friend - like good old brigs, they stoned the kicks in the days of '49.

3. There was old Jesse, a hard old cuss, who never did repent; he never was known to miss a drink nor to ever swear a word; but old Jesse, like all the rest, to death he did resign; and in his bloom went up the sun in the days of '49.
Many of the people who went to California in 1850 had no intention of staying. There were other, and in most cases, easier ways of making a pile. Most of these people were parasites living off the good luck - or misfortune - of the miners. These included entrepreneurs, estate salesmen (a trade usually in the woods for as much as $1000.00), forgers, gamblers, and squatters. The latter, both honest and dishonest, preyed on the miners who came into town for a good time after working their claims for a while. The gambler, like other rogues, came in for a great deal of admiration from the miners, who realized the gambler's lot was far easier, and much safer, than their own.

This song first appeared in Pat's Original California Songster with the information that it "was sung to the Tune of Bob-Tail Mare", better known as the famous minstrel song "I'm Gambolmover's"

CHORUS:
I'm bound to play all night,
And I'm bound to play all day,
I'll bet my money on the ace and king,
And dare bet on the trey.

SID II, Band 4: THE GAMBLER

I. There's no respect for youth or age,
On board of a California Stage,
But pull and pull about the seats
As belshaws do about the sheets.

SID II, Band 5: JOE BOVERS

Next to Betsey and her lover Ike (See "Sweet Betsy from Pike"), Joe Bowers stands probably as the most celebrated citizen of Pike County, Missouri. Certainly the songs about these comic lovers are the best known and sung, and come down in tradition from the Gold Rush days of '49.

The authorship of "Joe Bowers" has been the subject of much discussion, but amounts of research, disputed claims and the establishment of little in the way of factual data. The song is an excellent example of American humor, made to fit the lives of lumberjacks and cowboys.

1. My name is Joe Bowers, I've got a brother Ike,
I come from old Missouri, yes all the way from Pike;
I'll tell you why I left there, and how I came from home,
And leave my poor old money, so far away from home.

2. I used to love a gal there, they called her Sally Black,
I axed her for to marry, she said it was a shame;
Says she to me, "Joe Bowers, before you hitch
You oughter have a little house to keep your little wife."

3. Says I, "My dearest Sally, oh Sally, for your sake,
I'll go to California and try to raise a stake.
Says she to me, "Joe Bowers, do you think you can win,
Give me a kiss to seal the bargain," and she threw a dross in.

4. I shall ne'er forget my feelings when I bid adieu to all,
Sally caught me round the neck, and I began to sob;
When I set in, in the town I met you, you never heard the like,
How they all took out and cried, the day I left Pike.

5. When I got to this country, I hadn't nary red,
I had such woeful feelings, I wished myself most dead;
But the thoughts of my dear Sally soon made
Then feelings git,
And whispered hopes to Bowers - Lord, I wish I had 'em yet!

6. At length I went to minin', put in my biggest slick,
Come down upon the miners just like a thousand briddled;
I worked both last and first, in rain, and snow, and sun;
But I was working for my Sally, so 'twas all the same to Joe.

7. I made a very lucky strike, as the gold itself did tell,
And saved it for my Sally, the gal I loved so well;
I saved it for my Sally, that I might pour it at her feet,
That she might kiss and hug me, honey, and call me Joe.

8. But one day I got a letter from my dear, kind brother Ike -
It come from old Missouri, sent all the way from Pike;
I brought me the darndest news as ever you did see;
My heart is almost bustin', so pray, excuse this tear.

9. It said my Gal was sickly, that her love for me had fled;
That she had married a butcher, whose hair was red -
It told me more than that - oh, it's enough to make one weep -
It said Sally had a baby, and that baby had red hair!

10. Now I've told you all that I could tell, about this sad affair,
"Bout Sally marrying the butcher, and the butcher had red hair.
Now whether 'twas a boy or girl, the latter it was,
It only said its cursed hair was inclined to be red.

11. There's no respect for youth or age,
On board of a California Stage;
But pull and pull about the seats
As belshaws do about the sheets.

CREDO:
They started as a thieving line
In eighteen-hundred-and-forty-nine;
All "opposition" they defy,
So the people must root for.

SID III, Band 6: THE CALIFORNIA STEEL COMPANY

Traveling between distant parts of California territory and from other western areas to California was no fun, as this song well attests. The several stage companies in business in the area were primarily run - schedules were rarely adhered to, the comfort of the passengers was never considered, the feasibility of stage travel over occasionally rocky ground was never thought about. But a great deal of money could be made in such a venture, and profiteering company owners were anxious to jump in with those who could control, and so the California society was to put the miners from his hard-earned gold. A man had little choice - he wanted to make a trip, for few of the miners owned horses of their own, or knew how to ride them, so they were able to purchase any. So the miners rode the stages - and complained.

The text to this song first appeared in A'll's Golden Songster, and is much the same as the time of the minstrel song "Dandy Jim of Caroline."
There were other women in California, beside the prostitution and female miners. Actresses and chorus girls who performed in local "opera" houses and saloons were very much admired by the miners who came into town after working hard on their claims. And of course, there were the many women who made up the families of tradespeople and officials in those towns. To the weary, and often love-starved, miners such women presented a sight for sore eyes. And wherever there are lonely men and pretty women, there will also be songs - composed by the lonely men about the pretty women. Such a song is "Sacramento Golds."

The text of this song first appeared in Put's Golden Songster, and is sung to the tune of a popular Civil War instrumental song of the day, "Bucking Around."

1. Well the Sacramento golds are gone, Nipping around, around, around; They're down on men what live on rum, As they go nipping around.
2. They're pretty gals, I must confess, Nipping around, around, around; Their bustles lift them off the ground, As they go nipping around.
3. On "J" street they are to be found, Nipping around, around, around; Their bustles lift them off the ground, As they go nipping around.
4. Their hoops will reach around a tray, Nipping around, around, around; They're "airy" on a windy day, As they go nipping around.
5. There's many a gal from "J" street, Nipping around, around, around; Who will remember their "airy" ways, As she went nipping around.
6. Their faces covered with paint and chalk, Nipping around, around, around; They're as tough as the whole sidewalk, As they go nipping around.
7. They're here and there, like Santa Anna, Nipping around, around, around; They're fresh and mellow as ripe bananas, As they go nipping around.
8. Give me a good country gal, Nipping around, around, around; No matter if her name is Ella, As she goes nipping around.
9. But of all the gals I ever see, Nipping around, around, around; The Sacramento gals for me, As they go nipping around.