

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 8779

LOVE IS TEASING

Scottish & English early Ballads

Shanna Beth McGee

WITH DAVID JOHNSON



COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

M
1738
M478
E125
1980
MUS LP



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SIDE ONE

- Band 1. Wild Mountain Thyme
- Band 2. Love Is Teasing
- Band 3. Cruel Mother
- Band 4. Barbara Allen
- Band 5. Black Is The Color
(String Interlude)

SIDE TWO

- Band 1. Geordie
- Band 2. The Water Is Wide
- Band 3. Mary Hamilton
- Band 4. John Riley
- Band 5. Bonny Boy Is Young
(String Finale)

SHANNA BETH McGEE - Vocals, Six and Twelve String
Guitar.

DAVID JOHNSON - Violin, Viola, Mandolin, Autoharp,
Bass, Steel Guitar, Six and Twelve String Guitar

Produced and Arranged by JOHN R. CRAIG

String Interlude Written and Arranged by JOHN R. CRAIG
String Finale Written and Arranged by DAVID JOHNSON
Recorded at STAR RECORDING COMPANY, Millers
Creek, North Carolina.

Recording and Mixing Engineer: MARSHALL CRAVEN

Mixing: JOHN R. CRAIG

Photography: MAC DULA

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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SHANNA BETH MCGEE

Born in Texas; reared in Minnesota and Indiana, Shanna Beth McGee has drawn on all of these experiences to write and sing about what she has seen and felt. Though still young, Shanna Beth has recorded many memories and experiences through her poetry and songs which bring a fresh approach to the songs of others.

Singing in coffee houses at age thirteen was the start of her musical career, and it was here that her love of folk music was born. Accompanying herself on guitar, she has woven the experiences of her ever-changing life into those of centuries-old ballads and everything is better for it.

After participating in two professional revues and winning first prize in two Indiana State solo competitions, Shanna Beth enrolled at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, to study theatre and music.

Shanna Beth still finds time to sing in local clubs and research the many folk ballads and stories associated with the North Carolina mountains. It was during one of her performances at a local theatre near Boone that she was heard by John R. Craig, President of TAM Records, who suggested the idea of an album, the material of which is contained on this recording.

The songs recorded here have been around for quite some time and through the interpretation of Shanna Beth McGee, they will remain for many future generations to enjoy.

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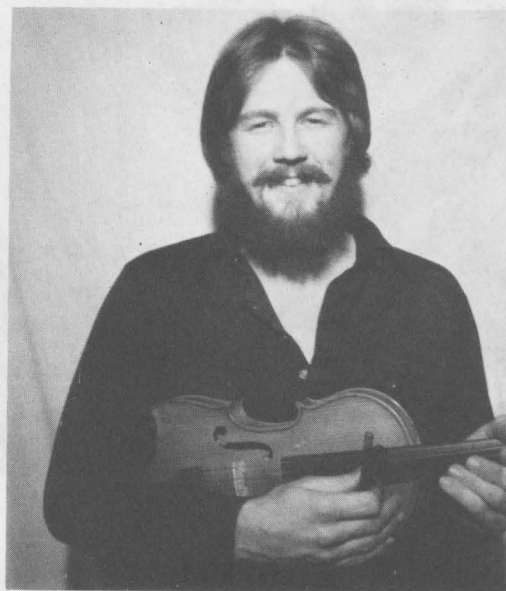
DAVID JOHNSON

Born in the mountains of Western North Carolina, David Johnson began his musical training at age four on a guitar given him by his father. Since both his mother and father were guitarists, David had an accessible teacher at all times to answer his many questions.

At age ten, David began playing professionally in his father's band and soon was learning the banjo and fiddle. By age thirteen he had taken up the steel guitar, an instrument of which he has great mastery.

David began recording at age fifteen, and he is in great demand as a session musician having taken part in numerous recording sessions throughout the Southeast and as far north as Ohio.

At present he is working on an album of Bluegrass music in which he plays all of the instruments.



In keeping with the tradition of folk music itself, all of the songs contained in this album have been learned from various sources. It is difficult to give credit to this artist or that book because each song is a culmination of many years spent in studying, listening and performing, and through it all continual change.

Equally difficult is the task of pinpointing changes in songs which have come from the British Isles through Nova Scotia and down from Canada to be eventually adopted by settlers in North Carolina. As one can easily see there is ample time for numerous changes, not the least of which is the title. Some of the selections on this album may be known by numerous titles and the verses are at times only vaguely similar to other versions. This constant adding and deleting is the very essence of songs of the people reflecting their heritage, beliefs, dreams, loves, fears and even superstitions.

One basic fact remains throughout-these songs contain the same elements as their predecessors although they have undergone many changes and revisions. This continual change retains the basic message and beauty of each song while adapting to current modes of expression.

(Side One)

WILD MOUNTAIN THYME

The beauty of the Scottish countryside is given prominence over the human love relationship which takes on a secondary importance in this lovely ballad.

LOVE IS TEASING

Reflections on love grown cold is the story behind Shanna Beth's version of this old English ballad. The story line can be found in numerous early American songs.

CRUEL MOTHER

From Scotland comes this haunting melody and tragic story of twin babes murdered by their mother for fear her illicit relationship would be discovered. The story ends on a strong moralistic point which is just as relevant in today's society.

BARBARA ALLEN

Barbara Allen is probably the best known of all British-American folk songs. The story of a cruel hearted maid who appears not at all disturbed at the approaching death of her former lover is soon contrasted with one of a repentant, loving soul who realizes what she has lost. Some versions paint a different picture with Barbara cast as the spurned lover who seeks revenge by refusing to acknowledge that she cares for "Sweet William". Although never clear who was at fault over their break up, the final verse sets everything right through one of the best written verses in any folk song.

BLACK IS THE COLOR

Although based on an older British version, the modern text by John Jacob Niles is perhaps his most respected work and certainly one whose popularity is universal.

(Side Two)

GEORDIE

Of Scottish origin, this ballad tells the story of a lady trying to save the life of her true love who is sentenced to hang for the theft of "The King's Royal deer". This song is probably about George Gordon, a Scottish Earl of the 16th Century. The urgency of her mission to gain the release of her husband is felt by the rapid, flowing tempo in both the vocal and accompaniment.

THE WATER IS WIDE

A truly lovely song which sounds as fresh today as centuries ago when it appeared in another form and by another title. Scottish in ancestry, this ballad is a gem of beauty and simplicity.

MARY HAMILTON

This is one of the most popular of all English ballads. Though historic in sound, there is no reason to believe Mary Hamilton is based on actual events at the court of Henry VIII. The fact that the events could have happened is all that is needed to make for its universal appeal. Shanna Beth portrays Mary as anything but a maid who is afraid of her fate and shows her to be of great strength amid very trying circumstances.

JOHN RILEY

This 17th Century English broadside has had numerous variants, but the main theme of a maid who remains true to the memory of her long, lost love is always the focal point of the story. John Riley enjoyed a unique popularity in the sixties through a folk-rock recording by the Byrds.

BONNY BOY IS YOUNG

Known by other titles as well, Bonny Boy Is Young is a descriptive narrative of the growth of a young man that encompasses college, marriage, parenthood and an untimely death. It is clear evidence that many folk-song events are as real today as they were centuries ago.