

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FTS 31073

RED ALLEN Sings In Memory of the Man



RED ALLEN, HARLEY ALLEN Jr., CURLEY SECKLER

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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1980

Special Guest: Harley Allen Jr. & Curley Seckler
Dedicated to **LESTER FLATT**

MUSIC LP

RED ALLEN Sings In Memory of the Man

Special Guests:

Harley Allen Jr. & Curley Seckler

Dedicated to LESTER FLATT

SIDE 1

1. **I'LL TAKE THE BLAME**

PUB Murray Nash WRITER Murray Nash

2. **WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU**

WRITER Vernon Clark and Jerry Orgon PUB Cederwood

3. **OVER THE HILL TO THE POOR HOUSE**

WRITER Lester Flatt and Everett Lilly PUB Pure Int.

4. **SOMEHOW TONIGHT**

PUB Pure Int. WRITER Earl Scruggs

5. **I'LL NEVER SHED ANOTHER TEAR**

WRITER Lester Flatt PUB Pure Int.

6. **GIVE MOTHER MY CROWN**

WRITER Walter Bailes PUB Cederwood

SIDE 2

1. **GOING BACK TO HARLAN**

WRITER Certain and Stacey PUB Pure Int.

2. **I'M WAITIN TO HEAR YOU CALL ME DARLIN**

WRITER Lester Flatt and Chuck Johnson PUB Pure Int.

3. **WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME SO**

WRITER Lester Flatt PUB Pure Int.

4. **MY DARLIN'S LAST GOODBYE**

WRITER Lester Flatt PUB Pure Int.

5. **YOUR LOVE IS LIKE A FLOWER**

WRITER Flatt Scruggs and E. Lily PUB Pure Int.

6. **GONE HOME**

WRITER Bill Carlile PUB Acuff & Rose

ALL SONGS BMI

Red Allen is a first generation member of the family of bluegrass artists. True lovers of the music will already know his credentials, so there's no need to review his lengthy career. Red's past experiences speak loudly enough for themselves.

This present accomplishment speaks pretty loudly too, promising to be one of the most memorable bluegrass LP's to come along in quite a spell. Red and Curley Seckler, a former Foggy Mountain Boy and right hand man in Lester Flatt's Nashville Grass, had for fifteen years toyed with the idea of a joint recording effort.

It was years in coming, but well worth the wait. The result is this outstanding tribute to bluegrass music's most celebrated duo, Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs. Their contribution to traditional

American music can never be fully measured. As Red says, "They done more for bluegrass music than anyone ever done or ever will do. They got it into colleges and big halls, and brought it to the public's attention." One-half of this legendary institution is now "Gone Home," but the music lives on. Therefore, it is to the memory of the great Lester Flatt that this album is so appropriately dedicated.

Here's our chance to relive the good old days, for this album is like a stroll down memory lane. It generates the same high-powered excitement, drive, and spirit that characterized bluegrass music in its infancy. That early sound is one that many of today's "progressive" bands are seeking to update or improve. Yet these noted musicians saw fit to capture once again the "old grass" sound. In so doing, they have reminded us that while the music may get newer, it can never get any more innovative than in the days when Flatt and Scruggs were helping to invent a whole new genre of music. Theirs was the *height* of progressive music. Even today the Lester Flatt G-run and Earl Scruggs' three-finger banjo style are still basics in bluegrass. And no matter in how many ways "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" is played, the fact remains that "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" *is* still played, and is probably the most requested tune at any bluegrass music gathering.

The album is highlighted, of course, by the singing of Red Allen. He has a style all his own, featuring a smooth and deeply resonant voice that seems to spring from an abiding love of the songs he sings. Red delivers with such a sincerity of feeling that each and every song is treated as though it were being sung to last forever. "Why Don't You Tell Me So" and "My Darlin's Last Goodbye" are but two examples of what the unique Allen touch can do for a song. Every cut is proof of why Red is recognized as one of bluegrass music's finest singers.

Harley Allen is featured singing lead on five of the cuts. The younger Allen has inherited that same heart and Soul that was first born in his father's voice. Whether singing lead or high baritone, his voice is pure and true. Harley's lead on the gospel quartet, "Give Mother My Crown," could bring tears to any mother's eyes. And his phrasing on the old song, "Your Love Is Like a Flower," make it a new and refreshing experience.

Curly Seckler provides the one-of-a-kind tenor singing that has become his trademark. For years it was a priceless ingredient in the Flatt and Scruggs vocals. "Curly gave them their lonesome holler tenor sound." "Why, Curly was as much a part of Lester and Earl as Lester and Earl," says Red. There's no denying that Curly is in large part responsible for the old grass sound of this album. After you've heard the Seckler "holler" tenor on such songs as "What's Good For You" and "Over the Hill To the Poorhouse," no one else could quite do them justice.

The picking is provided, appropriately, by present or former members of the late Lester Flatt's Nashville Grass. There are no instrumentals as such, but there is an abundance of breaks on each cut. The licks are redhot, and each song is played with great skill and taste. Instrumentally, "Shady Grove" is a true high point. You'll just have to hear it to believe the break-neck speed with which it's played. The quality of the music is maintained throughout the album, even in the superb phrasing of the back-up. It is always a perfect complement to the vocals and never overpowers them. But probably the most important element is the timing, for this is what drives a tune. Here it is energetic, solid, and precise, demonstrating that each musician is most definitely in the driver's seat.

This album is a sterling monument to Lester Flatt and the legacy he left. Other tributes have been written to tell his story. But Red and Curley knew that there could be no greater tribute to Lester than to sing once again the songs that were such a large part of his life. No well-turned phrases could ever tell the man's story any better than does the music he left behind. Lester Flatt's music *is* his story.

This is also Red Allen's statement. It shows where he stands on the spectrum of bluegrass music. Red says, "It ain't nothin' fancy. Just plain old bluegrass. But that's what people have come to

expect from me." So if you're looking for "citized" music, don't buy this album, for Red has never taken his music uptown. He remains true to his roots—playing it straight and singing it with soul. I, for one, hope that he continues for a long time making memories for the future and carrying on a tradition that he helped build.

Rita Faye Bingham
WYSO Country Jamboree

Personnel

1. Red Allen

Lead singing: I'll Take the Blame, What's Good for You, Over the Hill To the Poorhouse, Somehow Tonight, I'm Waiting To Hear You Call Me, Darlin', Why Don't You Tell Me So, My Darlin's Last Goodbye.

Rhythm guitar: on all of the above

Baritone singing: Give Mother My Crown, Shady Grove, Gone Home.

2. Curly Seckler

Tenor singing: On all except My Darlin's Last Goodbye

3. Harley Allen, Jr.

Lead singing: I'll Never Shed Another Tear, Give Mother My Crown, Shady Grove, Your Love Is Like a Flower, Gone Home.

Rhythm guitar: on all of the above

High Baritone singing: I'm Waiting To Hear You Call Me, Darlin'.

4. Marty Stuart

Mandolin: all cuts

Lead guitar: Give Mother My Crown, Your Love Is Like a Flower

Bass singing: Give Mother My Crown

5. Tater Tate

Fiddle: all cuts

Bass singing: Gone Home

6. Kenny Ingram

Banjo: all cuts except I'll Take the Blame

7. Gene Wooten

Dobro: all cuts

8. Pete Corum

Bass: all cuts

9. Blake Williams

Banjo: I'll Take the Blame

Credits

Produced by Red Allen

Engineered by Steve Scruggs

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