HILLEL RAVEH, now in his early forties, was brought to Israel as a baby and grew up as the country began to mature. While in his teens, he joined the Hagannah, the Underground movement from which the present-day Israeli army evolved. During the Second World War, Hillel was a member of the Jewish Brigades that fought with the British Artillery. While on duty with these "shock troops," Hillel lost a leg and was, therefore, disqualified for further service. The "shock troops" of these special Jewish Brigades subsequently developed into the "Palmach," the Israel Defense Army.

HILLEL RAVEH is no stranger to the Folkways label. Together with his wife, Aviva, he has made three other albums of Israeli music for Folkways:

FW6841 SHEPHERD and other FOLK SONGS OF ISRAEL
FW6842 SONGS FROM THE BIBLE
FW6847 SONGS OF ISRAEL

On these recordings, Hillel plays the shepherd's pipe (the Challil) which has been traditional to the Middle East for thousands of years. Hillel's Challil, however, is no mass-produced instrument. The singer fashioned it himself, as he did all of the instruments which he makes, from reeds found along the banks of the Jordan River. One of Hillel's pipes has been passed on to the American folksinger, Pete Seeger, who has learned to use it expertly and generally includes some Challil selections on most of his concert programs.

The instrumental accompaniment in this album includes the accordion of Gil Aldema, as well as the Challil.

SONG OF THE SOLDIER

From volunteers in the Jewish Brigades of the British Army during World War II. (Some 30,000 volunteers served in these Brigades.)

Our blood is a river and a waterfall,
And our oath calls out: revenge!
We have sworn, brothers, to arms!
Which will not return empty!

CHORUS:
Come up, O come up
Flame of mine,
In the blood of your slain ones kindle a light.
Be, O be
Flame of mine,
A song in the mouths of your slain ones.

We shall fulfill the oath,
And it shall be eternal.
Happy is he who shoots forward,
Happy is he who returns in the forest.

(CHORUS)

And when light bursts forth from the night,
And when a son is born to this generation,
Let him sing the song of the soldier
Who never retreated.

(CHORUS)
THE PITCHER

From the War of Independence, 1948-49.

I see you with a pitcher attached to your lips,
And I sit at my lonely post.
And you in your thirst drink its water.
Oh, pity, pity, that I am not a pitcher too.

Oh, pity, pity, pity, pity,
That I am not a pitcher too.

If I were only a pitcher in your arms,
If only you'd warm me with your burning throat,
As to a battle, I'd run to you.
Oh, pity, pity, that I am not a pitcher too.

Oh, pity, pity, pity, pity,
That I am not a pitcher too.

We two would be attached then both in heart and arm
And we'd go down to draw water from the well.
Tell me, girl, in the name of God,
Would you consent to love a thirsty pitcher like me?

Oh, pity, pity, pity, pity,
That I am not a pitcher too.

I will then be content and not tell many tales,
And my eye will not be filled with looking at you.
Oh, my "home-base", I've wounded my heart -
And I am not sure that I'm myself.

Oh pity, pity, pity, pity
That I am not a pitcher too.

I sing a song to you of a pitcher and of lips,
And of one who is struck away on a lonely base.
How great it is to live between the earth and sky,
And to drink with you, my darling, from that pitcher.

Oh, pity, pity, pity, pity,
That I am not a pitcher too.

YUDDA

Based on an incident in the War of Independence.

We'll remember how for days as long as chains
The pause had fallen on the battle lines.
A Fall wind moved in the sky,
Tattered clouds, and stifled hearts.
When suddenly the sound of an harmonica burst forth
In a lonely melody.

The melody penetrated, spread,
From hill to hill they answered in song,
All over they knew, everyone knew,
It was Yudda, beating out the tunes.

We'll remember that night in the Negev,
On jeeps we galloped into the heart of the desert.
The pulses hammered at the trigger fingers,
Tonight there'll be battle, murmured the silence
When suddenly the sound of an harmonica burst forth
In a lonely melody.
The melody spread through the breadth of the land,
From jeep to jeep they answered in song,
The Negev knew then that at night in battle
It would be Yudka, beating out the tunes.

And when the shooting and the storm had calmed down
We found Yudka lying on the hill.
In his hand the accordion, orphaned and dumb,
Silent on a dark gloomy night.
Suddenly with the wind, the harmonica hummed
In a lonely melody.

The melody was soft and sad
Like the whisper of falling leaves in the gardens.
The company knew that to one who is loved
The wind will beat out the tunes.

TSISBAT ("THE TALE")

Palmach song from the War of Independence.

Tell us about the conquest of Kir El Chat
Of the battle-night that took place,
How Yossele* sheltered from three hundred yards
Swinging in the dark night.

Oh, comrades, we'll remember Tzipka in battle,
Trodden down from head to foot,
She was surrounded like an apple in autumn,
But she was strong and able... kill.

We'll remember our division's journey in the desert
And the red of the fires on the hills.
We'll remember the crawling to Roder,
We'll remember how no one returned.

But a day will yet come and the fire will yet burn,
And the moon will float over our homes,
And around the fire, a little "tsisbat"
Perhaps they will tell about us!

* a sniper
NIGHT, NIGHT

Romantic ballad from the War of Independence.

Night, night, the wind is blowing,
Night, night, there is whispering in the treetops.
Night, night, a star is shining.
Sleep, sleep, put out the candle.

Night, night, close your eyes;
Night, night, on their way to you;
Night, night, there rode in arms;
Sleep, sleep, three riders.

Night, night, one was killed by a beast;
Night, night, one fell by the sword;
Night, night, and the one who was left;
Sleep, sleep, didn't remember your name.

Night, night, the wind is blowing,
Night, night, there is whispering in the treetops.
Night, night, only you are waiting;
Sleep, sleep, the road is empty.

GO TO THE DESERT

From the War of Independence.

Go forth to the desert,
The roads will lead you;
Before the evening comes,
Go, my brother, to the desert.

Again, again we shall return!
The cliffs will shout it out!
A great light of the sun
Will yet shine over us.

To the desert, the land without water;
Oh my land, we've returned to you.
Land full of spirit and wrath,
The warriors have returned in rage.

To the desert, the land without water,
Oh, my land, we've returned to you.
This is a Hagannah song concerning a convoy of DP's which broke through the British Blockades. (Such incidents are described in the current best-selling novel, *Exodus*.)

Between the borders and the mountains without paths, In nights devoid of stars, Endless caravans of brothers To the homeland we escort.

For the young and for the weak, we will open up these gates; For the poor and for the aged, we are the shielding wall.

We'll break down and destroy the gates! We'll smash each fortified wall! We'll widen and open each crack!

No weeping now, no grief, O wanderers, Lean on my arm, poor aged one. And also to him who closed the gate A day of vengeance and retribution will come.

---

**THE FINJAN (KETTLE)**

A Palmach folk song from the War of Independence.

A cool wind blows; We'll add some wood to the fire, And so in arms of purple It will go up in flame like a sacrifice.

The fire crackles; a song it shouts The Finjan goes around and around.

The flames murmur to the kindling; Our faces are red in the fire. If we receive strength From every branch in the garden, Each tree and each board, We'll then sing quietly

We'll remember the Finjan; how to it The comrades came from battle; How Muske the Gingi grumbled: "No one will return here again." In tears without end It goes around in sorrow, The Finjan goes around and around.

Years will pass and generations, Borders, bridges, and bonfires No stranger will ever fathom The real flavor of the song that was sung. Paratrooper and reservist Are there remembered In the eternal song of the Finjan.

---

**BETWEEN THE BORDERS**

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Between the borders and the mountains without paths, In nights devoid of stars, Endless caravans of brothers To the homeland we escort.

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We'll break down and destroy the gates! We'll smash each fortified wall! We'll widen and open each crack!

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Years will pass and generations, Borders, bridges, and bonfires No stranger will ever fathom The real flavor of the song that was sung. Paratrooper and reservist Are there remembered In the eternal song of the Finjan.
A romantic ballad from the War of Independence.

A slow wind blows and moves the treetops
And in thy window the candle light goes out,
You pass among us like a radiant dream
And each one remembers you.

As the day grows dark, a boy calls your name
And a boy whispers: 'Mother, mother,
Does the hair on your head whiten from grief?
For your weeping leaves through my blood.

The wind moans in the pathway,
A lonely tree sheds his leaves;
On the roads that lead to the South,
A company goes out to war...

With the twinkling of the stars, she goes out into
the night;
The ancient desert takes in vast expanses.
"Who knows, sister, if we will return again to you,
Perhaps this will be the last battle".

Evening will come again and howl in the sky
And suddenly, in your window, light will burst
forth -
We will gather round the table, lift glasses of
wine, and
Everyone will remember you.

We will come to the doorstep suddenly, sister,
We will rest our weapons against the
wall.
The fallen, too, will stand in the
doorway,
Their foreheads turning white in the night.

As the stars are extinguished, she comes
in
from the night,
The ancient desert is a vast
expanse.
Smile, please, sister, we've returned again to you
From the last battle.

---

SONG OF THE SABOTEURS (Commandos)

This song comes from Special Mission troops in the
War of Independence. These troops undertook many
daring and dangerous assignments, such as blowing
up bridges and ammunition dumps.

Night has fallen already and envelopes the mountain
And the jackal howls in the gardens,
In the sloping lane that leads to the village
There marches once more a group of "Saboteurs".

The pack on our backs is a heavy load
And the pathway is hard and rocky;
Three more kilometers from Elish, 0 Destroyer,
And then, the dynamite will speak!
To the enemy towns we will bring destruction
With our line and our wick;
More than one thing will be thrown in the air
When the Saboreurs do their stuff!

And if it happens that we return to our base
And if the wind blows in the gardens;
Again, at evening, we'll load our packs,
And then - On the road, Saboteurs gang!

This Palmach song is a lament for a fallen comrade
who was loved and admired by all who knew him for
his warm and out-going personality.

When twilight dims the reddish sky
And treetops bend before the sharp wind
We sit around and tell the story
Of the man of Palmach named Dudu.

Together with us, he made many a trip
He would join us on border patrols.
At our celebrations, he would sing the loudest,
He'd join us to rob the chicken-coops.

Pass the kettle and tell us, is there
Another Palmachnik like Dudu?
He had a head of curly hair,
His eyes had a smile.
And when girls surrounded him up to his neck
His laugh went as high as the skies!

The debarkation night will stay in the heart
When the anchor bit in, in the dark.
A child he carried from the sea onto the beach,
Patted his cheek, and kept still.
The comrades all thought, "He is lost,
Where have you disappeared to, Dudu?"

And then the enemy came one night,
The moon filled the sky with light;
And Dudu grasped his "Sten" in his hand
And went out into the night.

At dawn, we carried him home from the field,
The cypress bowed its head;
Only he who seeks the good in man
Will be able to understand what we felt.
Tell us friends, and tell us true -
Does he still smile there, our Dudu?
The first marching song of the Palmach when the group was still a part of the Underground Army.

All around us, the storm is raging
But our heads will never bow,
We are ever ready for the command,
We are men of the Palmach!

From Metulah to the Negev,
From the Sea to the desert
Every man young and brave -
Every man - on guard!

The eagle has his pathway in the heavens,
The wild beast through the hills -
We ascend to meet our enemy
Among the mountain passes and rocks.

We are always in the vanguard,
By light of day or dark of night -
We are ever ready for the command,
We are men of the Palmach!

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