THE NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS
'In the Great Divide'

SIDE A

1) John Brown's Dream - from Da Costa Waltz Southern Broadcasters
   Tommy Jarrell and Fred Cockerham - Country 715
   Mike - dulcimer
   Tracy - fiddle
   John - banjo
   This song was one of the tunes that the NLCR had recorded twice (NLCR String Band Instrumentals FA 2493). The addition of the dulcimer allows us to dwell heavily on the drone qualities which become the central core of this intense tune.

2) Old Johnny Booker Won't Do - from Jerry Jordan, Supertone 9047
   John - voice & guitar
   Mike - fiddle
   Tracy - fiddle
   This song is full of nostalgia for an experience we never had. It's a wonderful composition, and it was recorded in 1969.

3) Railroading On The Great Divide (Sara Carter)
   from Pine Mountain Records PMR 208
   Mike - lead voice & autoharp
   John - bass voice & lead guitar
   Tracy - tenor & guitar
   In the early '60s, while on a visit to the home of Sara Carter at Angels Camp, Calif., she suggested that we might sing this song which she and her partner had composed. I recall that song in the context of the clear air of the high Sierras, and the isolated life of this dignified woman who gave it to us.

4) Love of Polly And Jack Monroe from George Davis-Folkways FTS 31016
   Tracy - voice & banjo
   Mike - fiddle
   John - guitar
   This is a tune that a friend called 'Jackaroo', and it was performed by the early Bluegrass band typical of groups like the Stanley Brothers. In the last verse the usual "... so did they agree to join the band of Germany" which shows how real these stories are taken to be. Learned from John's field recording of George Davis, the Singing Miner, of Hazard, Ky.

5) Walking Bass (adapted by TC Ashley)
   from Tom Ashley at his home (also Folkways 2359)
   John - vocal & banjo (tuned GDDD)
   This song probably would not have been known but for the folk revival. We visited Ashley at his home shortly after his first concert for the Friends Of Old Time Music in N.Y. City. He was so pleased by the reception given him by the city kids, that he started to record old songs which had been put away. This was one of them.

6) Who Killed Poor Robin from the Archive of American Folksong (lib. Congress) sung by Edith Harmon. Recorded near Maryville, Tenn. 1939 by Herbert Holler
   Mike - vocal, guitar & mouth harp
   Tracy - fiddle
   John - banjo
   Although Dobie Gillis was not the source for this songs, we perform it here in his style and spirit. It is through people like Dobie that we have been allowed access into the actual life of the old music.

7) The Old Man At The Mill (adapted by TC Ashley) from Folkways FA 2435 and Galax Old Fiddlers Convention.
   John - vocal & guitar
   Tracy - fiddle
   Mike - mouth harp & guitar
   This is from the singing of Clint Howard - who met as part of the Ashley band with Fred Price, Galen Carlton & Doc Watson. Clint recorded this song with string band accompaniment, but later heard him perform it unaccompanied at the Galax Old Fiddlers Convention. It seemed as if he had found the courage to sing it to this day, with the encouragement of his trip to the city, and the all the folk-songs purists met there.

8) On Our Turpentine Farm from Pigment Fete & CatJuice Charlie Cole 14485 (149105)
   John - vocal & lead guitar
   Mike - tenor harmonica & mandolin
   Tracy - lead guitar & vocal interactions
   Here we are given the opportunity to observe some of the cruel realities of country living. I recall learning this song from a tape one afternoon in San Francisco, prior to a night-time performance at the Family Dog Ballroom, On the Great Highway, at the edge of the Western World, and at the end of the psychedelic scene, where we shared some of the reality of the Haight district. We added the last verse in respect to the art schools where John has been teaching.

9) Little Satchel trad. (adapted by Fred Cockerham) from County 713
   Tracy - vocal & three finger style banjo
   John - claw hammer style banjo
   Mike - guitar
   The hard driving banjo and lonesome bluesy voice of Fred Cockerham inspired the recording for the slight updating here from old tune to Bluegrass. Although some popular "Katy Dear" themes do appear, this song is actually unique enough to be considered Fred's personal adaptation of an old ballad. Learned from the recording of "Down To The Cider Mill" (County 713), and Fred directly.

SIDE B

1) Dry & Dusty from Morrision Twin Brothers String Band VI 40323
   Tracy - fiddle (standard tuning)
   Mike - fiddle (cross-tuning)
   John - guitar

2) If The River Was Whiskey from Charlie Poole & the North Carolina Ramblers Col. 15545
   Mike - vocal & guitar
   Tracy - fiddle
   John - banjo
   This song must have been a small rage in the 1920's. Beside the recording by Charlie Poole, it was also recorded by Bennett & Rutherford (Gratitude Blues) and by Uncle Dave Macon (As Morning Blues). The Jim Kweskin Jug Band did their own adaptation in the '60s, and for the NLCR it is a return to one of our original preferences in the string band style with ornamented fiddle, syncopated & arpeggio oriented three-finger banjo & rolling four finger guitar, along with folk based & zany lyrics.

3) Come All You Tender Hearted from Carter Stanley (Stanley Bros.) via personal tape made by Larry Erlich in 1956 of Stanley Bros. record at Bristol, Tenn., also Friends Of Old Time Music - Folkways FA 2390
   Mike - lead voice & mandolin
   Tracy - tenor voice & guitar
   The words to this song are found in the Old Regular Baptist Song Book, and the style of singing reveals the influence of this church style on Bluegrass music. When the Stanley Bros. performed this song at the first University of Chicago Folk Festival in 1961, it was a crucial moment in the relationship between the city revival and Bluegrass music. The urban audience was profoundly moved by the actuality and sentiment expressed in the song, and this flow of emotion broke through some hostile ice towards acceptance.

4) The Time's Been Swiftly Rolling By (traditional) from Dillard Chandler (Folkways 301)
   Tracy - unaccompanied vocal
   A beautiful and haunting version of "Hick's Farewell", purportedly written by an itinerant preacher and deceased of being ever able to return home. This song comes from Dillard Chandler, an excellent singer of unaccompanied songs from the ballad-rich area of Western North Carolina, via friend and legendary information source Peter Gott. The original by Dillard can be heard on "Old Love Songs and Ballads", (Folkways 2309).

5) There's Comin' A Time from Roscoe Holcomb
   Mike - vocal, fiddle & french harp
   Roscoe Holcomb (from Daisy, Kentucky) was touring with Mike over west, and sang a fragment of this song. Months later, Mike called Roscoe and tape-recorded the exact words and melody over the phone.

6) A Night At The Country Opera freely adapted from "The One Man Melodrama" (Fiddler Joe) Onke 40344 (75-235-25)
   Tracy - fiddle and vocals
   Learned from a skit recorded by Fiddler Joe, this vaudeville spoof is as much fun to perform as it is to watch. It never comes out the same way twice, and audiences vary greatly in their reactions. A rather full sample however seems to indicate that at this point the villain has received more applause than the hero. Now more than ever we can appreciate a simple, good old honest down-to-earth cad.

7) Hawkins Rag (Ted Hawkins) from Gil Tanner & His Skillet Lickers BB B 5435
   Tracy - spoons & vocal effects
   Mike - mandolin
   John - guitar
   Another remake of a tune we'd first recorded in 1959. The addition of the spoons has given us the freedom to clown around on stage in actions as well as words, and a spoonging tune has become a basic part of our NLCR concert.

8) La Valse Des Bambocheurs (Dewey Balfa, Flat Town Music BMI) from Swallow 6011
   Tracy - vocal & lead fiddle
   Mike - second fiddle
   John - guitar
   Entitled in English "The Drunkard's Sorrow Waltz," a popular theme in Cajun music of hard times, painful love and 99 years with a wheelbarrow on a 6 inch plank. Learned primarily because of an incredibly moving performance by Dewey Balfa at a University of Chicago Folk Festival, Dewey, who lives in the Basile, Louisiana area, sings it with a full band on "The Balfa Brothers Play Traditional Cajun Music," (Swallow 6011).

9) Cotton Eyed Joe from Carter Bros. & Son. Onke
   John - vocal & guitar and introduction
   Mike - fiddle
   Tracy - fiddle
   This is the fifth song that we have recorded which was learned from Carter Bros. & Son. It has become an exercise in improvisation within the limits of great consistency and madness.

Photo: Chris Strachwitz
Library of Congress Card: 75-750043

© 1975 by Folkways Records Inc.
43 West 61st St., N.Y.C., N.Y. 10023
Librarian of Congress Card: 75-750043

Printed in U.S.A.