The Country Gentlemen
Country Songs, Old and New

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The Country Gentlemen
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Charley Waller: guitar and vocals
John Duffey: mandolin and vocals
Eddie Adcock: banjo and vocals
Jim Cox: bass and vocals

The component stressed by John Duffey's notes is the vocal trio, based in part on the
distinctive sound the Osborne Brothers were bringing
to close vocal harmonies on slow country
ballads, and the popular three-part harmonies
of Jim Ed, Maxine, and Bonnie, the Browns. Instrumentally, Eddie Adcock's banjo-playing
featured licks borrowed from Chet Atkins and
the steel guitar. John Duffey in turn was adding
occasional work on the dobro and finger-style
guitar to his adventurous mandolin style; here
the dobro is obviously overdubbed.

1959 was the year Alan Lomax recognized
bluegrass, unknowingly dubbing it "folk music
in overdrive", and thereby linking it to the folk
revival already in full swing. If the Gentlemen,
with their hip, zany stage performances matched
few expectations of what a bluegrass band was
supposed to be like, their musicianship won over
all but the most skeptical traditionalists. In ret-
spect, their success then, as now, lay in no
small part to their ability to shape classic blue-
glass to their own genius, adding both old tradi-
tional tunes and current folk/pop material to their
arsenal whenever it suited their purpose.
This first of many collections established the
mix; dozens more were to follow. By 1960, Tom
Gray would replace Jim Cox on the bass, forming
a quartet that would endure for the next several
years and carry Country Gentlemen music to
every part of the globe.

Dick Spottswood

Smithsonian Folkways Records

Folkways Records was one of the largest
independent record companies of the mid-
twentieth century. Founded by Moses Asch in
1947 and run as an independent company
until its sale in 1987, Folkways was dedicated
to making the world of sound available to the
public. Nearly 2,200 titles were issued,
 including a great variety of American folk
and traditional music, children's songs, world
music, literature, poetry, stories, documentaries,
language instruction and science and
nature sounds.

The Smithsonian acquired Folkways in order
to ensure that the sounds and the genius of
the artists would continue to be available to
future generations. Every title is being kept in
print and new recordings are being issued.
Administrated by the Smithsonian's Office of
Folklore Programs, Folkways Records is one of
the ways the Office supports cultural con-
servation and continuity, integrity, and equity
for traditional artists and cultures.

Several hundred Folkways recordings are
distributed by Rounder Records. The rest are
available on cassette by mail order from the
Smithsonian Institution. For information and
catalogs telephone 202/357-3262 or write
Folkways, Office of Folklore Programs, 955
L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600, Smithsonian
Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560, U.S.A.
Country Songs, Old and New
Sung and Played by Charley Waller, John Duffey, and the
Country Gentlemen

Individual Biographies
By John Duffey

Charley Waller was born in Jointerville, Texas, on January 19, 1935. Very soon after Charley’s arrival, his family moved to Louisiana and there for twelve years he was a genuine, real ‘cotton picker.’ At the age of ten, he bought a fifteen dollar guitar and from that moment, decided to be an entertainer. Charley figured that pickin’ a guitar was better than pickin’ cotton.

A few years later, Charley came to Washington, D.C. and joined a band in Baltimore, Md. He worked around Baltimore and Washington for several years then returned to Louisiana in 1956. There, for a year, he appeared on the ‘Hay Ride’ along with George Jones, Johnny Cash, Jimmy Neuman, Elvis Presley and others, plus a Monday TV show with Johnny Horton.

Charley returned to Washington in 1957 and during that year he met John Duffey and they formed the Country Gentlemen. Since then his singing and guitar playing has made its mark. He is reputed by a vast majority to be one of the greatest ‘bluegrass’ guitarists in the profession.

On January 9, 1960, Charley married Mona Grigsby of Washington, D.C. They now make their home in Falls Church, Va.

Charley sings most of the lead and does the m.c. work.

John Duffey was born March 4, 1934 in Washington, D.C., but lived most of his life in Bethesda, Md.

Although an ardent fan of country music, John never played any instrument until the age of seventeen when a neighbor influenced him to learn the guitar. He progressed rapidly until about two years later when he bought a mandolin for ten dollars at the annual post office auction. He set aside the guitar and decided to learn the mandolin, which he has stuck with. John played with several local outfits over numerous radio stations, winning a couple of talent contests but only as an amateur, as music was only a hobby with him.

In mid ’57, John swapped fifteen records for a Dobro and learned to play it for his own amusement. At the time he was playing weekends with a band on WJME in Frederick, Md. He took the Dobro along on one of the shows and discovered it to be quite popular with the public and henceforth, it became a part of his music too.

It was not until his meeting with Charley Waller in July ’57 that John decided to make music a full time job and enter it professionally. In his relatively short career, he has played and recorded with such artists as Bill Clifton, of whom John speaks very highly.

In December, 1958, John married Marion Cain of Arlington, Va. They have one child, Ginger Marie and they now make their home in Arlington, Va.

Note: A contrasting fact in John’s musical career is that his father sang with the Metropolitan Opera Co. for some twenty-five years.

Eddie Adcock was born on June 17, 1938, in Scottsville, Va. He worked on a farm until the age of twelve at which time he decided to learn the mandolin. He progressed well and began playing and singing for a spiritual show on WCHV in Charlottesville, Va.

A year later, Smokey Graves of WSVS in Crewe, Va., heard Eddie and gave him his first professional job in the entertainment field. He played mandolin with Smokey for a year and then decided to take up the five-string banjo. This was to be the real starting point in Eddie’s musical career.

After working with the five-string for only a year, Mac Wiseman offered him a job. He worked with him until Mac decided to change his style of music. This did not appeal to Eddie in the slightest, so he left and went to Washington, D.C. There he started a band and worked out of WARL in Arlington, Va. He also worked quite a bit on his own in this area, appearing on local TV, etc., but he found the going pretty rough around the big city.

Fortunately, Eddie received a phone call from an acquaintance made through Mac Wiseman. He then proceeded to Nashville, Tennessee, to work with the ‘daddy’ of bluegrass music, Bill Monroe. He played with Bill on the ‘Opry’ and cut several records with him. Although things were smooth in Nashville, something was missing, so Eddie returned to Wash. to marry his childhood sweetheart, Mildred Gorham of Alexandria, Va.

After his marriage, Eddie more or less ‘retired’ from music until June, 1959, when Charley Waller and John Duffey aroused him back into the music business. As a member of The Country Gentlemen, Eddie has had a chance to play his own original style of banjo along with the usual ‘conformists’ style. His unusual playing will undoubtedly mark a new era in banjo ‘pickin.’

Eddie sings baritone with the band.

Jim Cox was born April 3, 1930 in Vansant, Va. He was raised on a farm with his four sisters and three brothers in an atmosphere of country music. His whole family was musically inclined and they would often sing and play together.

Jim started out on the banjo in the old time ‘claw hammer’ style and later on decided to learn the guitar. He played and sang for some time around his home town mostly on a non-professional basis.

At the age of eighteen, Jim enlisted in the Army and was stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia. There he met a band called The Valley Troubadours and began playing with them. They had a regular radio program, were booking several stage shows and Jim became the featured singer with the band. They went on to gain a TV show in Columbus, Georgia. But, just as his musical career was beginning to brighten, the Korean War broke out and he was transferred to the atomic plant in Hanford, Washington. From there he was sent to Korea where he was wounded and returned to the states.

Jim then came to Alexandria, Va., where he met and married Frances Creel. After his discharge from the service, he decided to take up his music again, only this time, with the bass fiddle.

In the early part of 1958, Jim heard The Country Gentlemen were looking for a bass man and immediately rendered his availability to them. He was hired on the spot and has been with them ever since.

Jim possesses an excellent voice and although he does very little part singing, he renders many fine solos with the band. This, along with his superb bass playing, has made him a mainstay with The Country Gentlemen.
Jim and Frances have two sons, Jimmie Jr., and Larry. They make their home in Alexandria, Va.

'Roving Gambler'
This comes from the song 'The Journeyman' or 'The Roving Journeyman.' In the song he describes his way of life and particularly his success with the girls. The journeyman has become a gambler, a soldier, even a guerrilla of the Civil War. Fairly persistent through all these versions are the lines of the girl's dialogue with her mother.

Roving Gambler:
Bennie & Vallie Cain Adelphi 47 Welby Toomey Gennett 6003 Harleson Moore Paramount 3235 (The Gambler's Dying Words)
'Time Corn Shoochin' Blue Ridge Corn Shoochers Vi 20855 Vernon Doane Victor
also see Archives of American Folk Song—Library of Congress

'Roving Gambler'
arr. John Duffey

I am a rovin' gambler, I've gambled all around
When I meet with a deck of cards I lay my money down—
Lay my money down, lay my money down.

I had not been in 'Frisco many more weeks than three
When I met up with a pretty little girl
She fell in love with me—
Fell in love with me, fell in love with me.

She took me in her parlor, she cooled me down
Whispered low in her mother's ear
'I love this gambling man—
Love this gambling man, love this gambling man.

Oh, daughter oh, dear daughter, how can you treat me so Leave your dear old mother And with a gambler go—
With a gambler go, with a gambler go.

Oh, mother oh, dear mother, I'll tell you if I can If you ever see me coming back I'll be with the gambling man—

With the gambling man, with the gambling man.
I left her in 'Frisco, I wound up in Maine
I met up with a gambling man We got in a poker game—
Got in a poker game, got in a poker game.

He put his money in the pot and dealt the cards around I saw him deal from the bottom of the deck
So I shot that gambler down—
Shot that gambler down, shot that gambler down.

Now I'm down in prison, got a number for my name
The warden said as he locked the door
'You've gambled your last game'—
Gambled your last game, gambled your last game.

I wish I was a little sparrow
And had wings to fly so high I'd fly away to my false true lover
And when he'd ask I would deny.

Love is handsome, love is charming
Love is pretty while it's new
But love grows cold as love grows older
And fades away like morning dew.

'Roving Gambler'
arr. John Duffey

I'm goin' all around this country
I'm goin' all around the world
I'm goin' all around this country
Lord
For the sake of one little girl.

Chorus:
I ain't gonna work tomorrow
I ain't gonna work today
I ain't gonna work tomorrow, Lord
'Cause that is my wedding day.

I love my mom and poppa too
I love my mom and poppa too
I love my mom and poppa too
But I'd leave them both to go with you.

I'm leaving you this lonesome song
I'm leaving you this lonesome song
I'm leaving you this lonesome song
'Cause I'm gonna be long gone.

'The Little Sparrow'
This song is related to the Scottish 'O Waly, Waly, Gin Love be Bonny,' which regarded as very old at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It is often called 'Come All You Fair and Tender Ladies' from its opening line. It is distinguished from other songs of a like spirit by the image of the bird and generally, by the likening of love to a fair dean that turns into bad weather. It is a favorite in the Southern Mts.

Come All You Fair and Tender Ladies:
Carter Sisters Col. 47680
see Archives of American Folk Music—Library of Congress.

'The Little Sparrow'
arr. John Duffey

Come all ye fair and tender ladies Take warning how you court your men
They're like a star on a summer morning
They first appear and then they're gone.

They'll tell to you some lovely story And they make you think that they love you well

Then away they'll go and court some other
And leave you there in grief to dwell.

The Story of the Lawson Family
The precise origin of this song is unknown but the following article taken from 'The New York Times' of Dec. 26 & 27, 1929, gives the facts relevant to this ballad: 'Walnut Cove, No. Carolina, Dec. 25, (AP)—Becoming suddenly insane, a Stokes County farmer today slew his wife and six children and, after having laid them out for burial, went into a patch of woods near his home and killed himself. The body of C.D. Lawson, the father and husband, was found about half a mile from the home with a shotgun wound in his chest.'

'Greensboro, N.C., Dec. 26, (AP)—The theory that a blow on the head a year ago caused Charles D. Lawson, a Stokes Co. farmer, to become suddenly insane yesterday and kill his wife and six children was dismissed today. Physicians who removed the brain of the man found no trace of a blow on the head. The examination, however, revealed a low grade degenerative process in the middle of the brain.'
The Story of Charlie Lawson:
Morris Bros. BB7903
The Carolina Buddies Col. 15537
The Little Sparrow

'The Story of the Lawson Family'
It was on last Christmas evening
The snow was on the ground
At his home in North Carolina
The miner he was found.

His name was Charlie Lawson
He had a loving wife
But they never knew what caused him
To take his family's life.

They say he killed his wife at first
While the little ones did cry
'Please papa won't you spare our lives
For it is so hard to die.'

But the raging man could not be stopped
He would not heed their call
He kept on firing fatal shots
Until he'd killed them all.

They did not carry him to jail
No lawyer would be pay
They'll have his trial in another land
On the final judgment day.

They all were buried in a crowded grave
While the angels watched all above
Come home, come home my little ones
To the land of peace and love.

And now farewell kind friends and home
I'll see you here no more
But when we meet in another land
Our troubles will be o'er.

'Turkey Knob'
An original instrumental by Eddie Adcock named after a spot near his hometown of Scottsville, Va.

'Turkey Knob (Instrumental)
by Eddie Adcock

'Paul & Silas'
Red Allen Kentucky 4-591

'Paul and Silas'
arr. John Duffey

Paul and Silas down in jail, all night long
Paul and Silas down in jail, all night long
Paul and Silas down in jail, all night long
Who shall deliver for me.

That old jail just reeled and rocked, all night long
That old jail just reeled and rocked, all night long
That old jail just reeled and rocked, all night long
Who shall deliver for me.

That old jailer he locked the door, all night long
That old jailer he locked the door, all night long
That old jailer he locked the door, all night long
Who shall deliver for me.

Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, all night long
Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, all night long
Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, all night long
Who shall deliver for me.

'Ellen Smith'
This ballad (also called 'Poor Ellen Smith' and 'Poor little Ellen') tells of an occurrence around Mt. Airy, North Carolina, about August, 1893. A man by the name of Peter De Graff was convicted of murdering Ellen Smith by Forsyth Superior Court Judge Winston. When De Graff appealed to the North Carolina Supreme Court, on several technicalities, the verdict of the lower court was affirmed. Chief Justice Shepard alludes to the flight of the prisoner to Roanoke and New Mexico and his subsequent return to North Carolina, and to a letter found in the bosom of the dead woman, alleged to be in the handwriting of the prisoner. De Graff supposedly composed this song while in prison awaiting his execution.

After his execution the feeling was so great both for and against De Graff, that it was considered a misdemeanor to sing the song in a gathering of any size as it always fomented a riot.

Poor Ellen Smith:
Molly O'Day & The Cumberland Mtn. Folks Col. 20629
Henry Whitter Ok 40237 (72985a) Kykes Magic City Trio Brunswick Cecil Suratt and Smitty Smith King 5226
Library of Congress

'Ellen Smith'
Poor Ellen Smith, how was she found
Shot through the heart lying cold on the ground.

Her clothes were all scattered and thrown on the ground
The blood marks the spot where poor Ellen was found.

They picked up their rifles and hunted me down
They found me a-loaing all around the town.

They picked up her body and carried it away
And now she is sleeping in some lonesome old grave.

I got a letter yesterday, I read it today
The flowers on her grave have all faded away.

Someday I'll go home, and say when I go
On poor Ellen's grave, pretty flowers I'll stow.

I've been in this prison for twenty long years
Each night I see Ellen through my bitter tears.

The warden just told me that soon I'll be free
To go to her grave 'neath that old willow tree.

My days in this prison are ending at last
I'll never be free from the sins of my past.

Poor Ellen Smith, how was she found
Shot through the heart lying cold on the ground.

'The Long Black Veil'
An original composition by Wilkins and Dill.

'The Long Black Veil'
by Dill and Wilkins

Ten years ago on a cold dark night
There was some one killed 'neath the town hall light
The people that saw, they all agreed
That the slayer who ran looked a lot like me.

The judge said son what is your alibi
If you were somewhere else then you won't have to die
I spoke not a word though it meant my life
For I had been in the arms of my best friend's wife.

The scaffold was high and eternity near
She stood in the crowd and shed not a tear
And sometimes at night when the cold winds moan
In a long black veil, she cries o'er my bones.

She walks these hills in a long black veil
She visits my grave when the night winds wail
Nobody knows, nobody sees
Nobody knows but me.

' Honky Tonk Rag'
An original instrumental by John Duffey.

' Jesse James'
Probably the exploits of no other American bandit are so widely celebrated as those of this Missouri outlaw of the years immediately following the Civil War. After about fifteen years of successful operations on banks and trains he was shot by one of his own gang, Robert Ford, for the sake of the $10,000 reward offered by the governor of the state. James was living at the time (1882) in St. Joseph, Missouri, under the name of Howard. One day, so the story goes, James climbed a step-ladder to straighten his wife's picture on the wall and Ford, who was in the house at the time, seized the opportunity to shoot him.
There are several versions of the song and this is an excerpt from the most well-known one.

***Jesse James***
George Renre (The Blind Musician of the Smokey Mtns.)
Voc. 14987
B.L. Lunsford Ok 40155 (3578a)
Grandpa Jones King 847
Marc Williams (The Cowboy Crooner)
Brusswick 269
Whitney & Hogan Cowboy CR1301
Toby Straw & The Blue Mtn Boys New Star N-100
see also Archives of American Folk Song—Library of Congress

***'Jesse James'***
arr. by John Duffey

Jesse James was a lad who robbed many a man
He stopped the Glendale train
He took from the rich and he gave to the poor
He'd a heart and a hand and a brain.

Chorus:
Jesse had a wife to mourn all her life
Three children they were brave
'Twas that dirty little coward that shot Mr. Howard
And laid poor Jesse in his grave.

It was on a Wednesday night when the moon was shining bright
They stopped the Glendale train
The people they did say for many miles away
It was robbed by Frank and Jesse James.

It was Robert Ford, that dirty little coward
I wonder how he feels
For he ate of Jesse's bread and he slept in Jesse's bed
Then he laid poor Jesse in his grave.

It was on a Saturday night when Jesse was at home
Talking to his family brave
Robert Ford came along like a thief in the night
And laid poor Jesse in his grave.

***'Have Thine Own Way'***
arr. John Duffey

Have thine own way, Lord, have thine own way
Thou art the potter, I am the clay.
Mould me and make me after thy will
While I am waiting, yielded and still.

Have thine own way, Lord, have thine own way
Search me and try me, master, today
Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now
As in thy presence, humbly I bow.

Have thine own way, Lord, have thine own way
Wounded and weary, help me I pray
Power—all power—surely is thine
Touch me and heal me, Savior divine.

***'A Good Woman's Love'***
An original composition by Cy Cobin.

***'Good Woman's Love'***
by Cy Cobin

I was a rover on land and on sea
'Til a good woman's love made a new man of me
Life had no meaning it was all incomplete
'Til a good woman's love put me back on my feet.

'Stead of roamin' I go home in the evening and she's waiting there
And I know that no matter what happens, she'll always care—and
And when the night falls and the moon shine above
I'm a man with a dream and a good woman's love.

***'The Double Eagle'***
(Under the Double Eagle) This was originally composed as a marching band number by Josef Franz Wagner (1856—1908) in 1903.

***Under the Double Eagle***
Kessinger Bros. Brunswick 592
Blue Ridge Highballers Col 15070
Hank Thompson Capitol
also see Archives of American Folk Song—Library of Congress

***'The Double Eagle' (Instrumental)***
arr. Charlie Waller

***'Darling Alalee'***
The song is originally from a pre-Civil War ballad called 'Ella Rhee.' It is, no doubt, from the Negro-minstrel stage, though its history is vague. The chorus is unchanged from the original but the verses in this version are of the post-Civil War era. It is the story of a slave who has run away from his master but longs for his love (Alalee, who is undoubtedly a slave also) and therefore wishes to return.

***Sweet Alalee***
Blue Sky Boys Bb6854

***'Darling Alalee'***
arr. John Duffey

Sweet Alalee, so dear to me
She's gone for ever more
My home was down in Tennessee
Before the cruel war.

Chorus:
Then carry me back to Tennessee
There's where I long to be
Among the fields of yellow corn
With my darling Alalee.

Oh, why did I from day to day
Keep wishing to be free
And from my master run away
And leave my Alalee.

They said that I would soon be free
And happy all the day
And if they'll take me back again
I'll never run away.

**Charley Waller** guitar and vocals
**John Duffey** mandolin and vocals
**Eddie Adcock** banjo and vocals
**Jim Cox** bass and vocals

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**About Smithsonian/Folkways**

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1947 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, releasing a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

The Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways from the Asch estate in 1987 to ensure that the sounds and genius of the artists would be preserved for future generations. All Folkways recordings are now available on high-quality audio cassettes, each packed in a special box along with the original LP liner notes.

Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings was formed to continue the Folkways tradition of releasing significant recordings with high-quality documentation. It produces new titles, reissues of historic recordings from Folkways and other record labels, and in collaboration with other companies also produces instructional videotapes, recordings to accompany published books, and a variety of other educational projects.

The Smithsonian/Folkways, Folkways, Cook, and Paredon record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies. They are one of the means through which the Center supports the work of traditional artists and expressing its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

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