

The Unbroken Circle

The Musical Heritage Of The Carter Family



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15. Gold Watch And Chain - The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band - With Kris Kristofferson

Produced By John Carter Cash
(except "No Depression" produced by Sheryl Crow)

Engineered And Mixed By Chuck Turner
(except "Engine One-Forty-Three" mixed by John Carter Cash)

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Recorded at Cash Cabin Studio, Hendersonville, Tennessee unless otherwise listed.

Mixed at Quad Studios, Nashville, Tennessee

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Somewhere, not long into the twentieth century, at the foot of a great limestone mountain, a young, bright blue-eyed girl picked up a guitar for the first time. This simple yet mysterious child of Virginia was then Maybelle Addington. In the quiet hollows of Appalachia near Hiltons, Virginia, where the coal smoke lay like early morning fog over the tobacco fields, she developed a style of guitar playing destined to influence musicians around the world. She was a soft and tender lady, always kind and humble, however, the effects she had on music as we now know it are vast. She would someday marry Ezra J. Carter and become known to the world as Mother Maybelle Carter. For decades, guitar players the world over have studied the original recording of "Wildwood Flower." They have heard Maybelle's simple yet magical style and seen the instrument in a whole new way. What if she had never picked up a guitar? As we know them, would there have ever been a Chet Atkins, an Earl Scruggs or Doc Watson? A Jerry Garcia or Keith Richards? These are all musicians who credit Maybelle Carter as a major influence. A tall far-away-eyed young man walked for miles and miles, year after year, across mountains, and down railroad tracks. He sat on the front porches of coal miners and old engineers. He listened. He was ever attentive to the songs of the people. He went to Sunday gatherings and mountain churches, scratching down lyrics everywhere he went. He took songs passed down from generation to generation and added his own undeniable mark. He interpreted what he saw, dreamed, heard, felt and smelled onto the paper. The heat in his insatiable heart urged him on. He wrote and collected poems while memorizing melodies, ever consumed in the music. This writer and historian was Alvin Pleasant Carter. His songs of hope, struggle, tragedy and inspiration were a beacon to the nation during the depression of the 1930's. Woody Guthrie heard A.P.'s words and melodies on the radio when America was at an emotional and financial low. It is easy to notice a strong resemblance in style and melody when listening to "This Land is Your Land" and "Little Darlin' Pal of Mine." Hank Williams and Johnny Cash listened to A.P.'s songs on the radio. Among any other great writers, Bob Dylan, Kris Kristofferson, and John Prine all hold A.P.'s writing close to their hearts. One day, while wandering the mountain hollows and countryside selling fruit trees, A.P. heard what he believed to be an angel singing from the front porch of her home in Midway, Virginia. He was fascinated. This girl, born Sara Dougherty, was soon to become Sara Carter. The music that began between them that day is still with us now. She was a well-kept and beautiful lady who handled herself like royalty. Songs of spirit, God, love, or tragedy rang from her heart with constant clarity. There was no pretension in her approach to this music. With unattended abandon and the passion of a great storyteller, she related these tales of heartbreak and inspiration of the people of her time. Like her cousin, Maybelle, she was also an accomplished musician; an autoharp and guitar player whose style was so intimately connected with Maybelle's, it is sometimes hard to tell if there is one instrument on the recordings or two. The songs of the Carter Family are as relevant and as close to our lives today as they were when first recorded. At the same time they paint a distinct picture of life in the southern United States in the early 20th century. Many of their songs are an immense part of America's musical heritage, yet some of us who could sing every line do not realize that they are ours because of these three simple yet amazing mountain minstrels. With songs of hope and purpose, the Carter Family gave many a listener solace and meaning during the Great Depression. They sang of perseverance and faith in the face of adversity and hardship. They sang of lost love, despair and murder. They sang the blues and ancient Scottish and Irish folk songs. They sang songs of family and of God. There is great diversity in theme and yet the music has a definition and clarity. Between August 1st, 1927 and October 14th, 1941, the Carter Family made nearly three hundred recordings. It is an immense body of work with great purpose. The legacy of this music is very much alive today. When the original Carter Family disbanded in 1941, Maybelle continued playing music with her daughters Helen, June and Anita. Together, they spread the music of the family throughout the world. They performed on numerous radio shows, as members of the Grand Ole Opry line-up and later as an essential part of the Johnny Cash show. The Carter Family in this form continued to perform and write music for over thirty years until Maybelle's passing in 1978. Helen, June and Anita continued on as a part of the Johnny Cash Show until

Johnny and June's retirement from the road in 1997. A.P. died in 1960 and Sara in 1979, however, their children Janette and Joe Carter carry on the family's musical heritage to this day. At the foot of Clinch Mountain, within walking distance of Sara, A.P.'s and Maybelle's homeplaces, sits the Carter Fold. Every Saturday night, within this musical shrine, Janette and Joe perform the songs of the family. The tradition lives on. All of what the Carter Family created and inspired, what they sang about, and how they played their instruments are major factors in the formation of music as we know it today. In 1933, the Carter Family asked the question "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" Undeniably, the answer is no. Over seventy-five years have passed now since the Carter Family's first recording session in Bristol, Tennessee. Now, with hearts forever grateful and humble, an amazing group of musicians and artists gather to pay homage to the first family of country music. With great passion we offer these interpretations of song, spirit, musicianship and lyric. All of the performers contributing to these recordings are a part of this great unbroken circle. Join us - John Carter Cash

WORRIED MAN BLUES

GEORGE JONES

It takes a worried man to sing a worried song / It takes a worried man to sing a worried song / I'm worried now but I won't be worried long / I went across the river and I lay down to sleep / I went across the river and I lay down to sleep / When I woke up I had shackles on my feet / Twenty-nine links of chain around my leg / Twenty-nine links of chain around my leg / And on each link an initial of my name / It takes a worried man to sing a worried song / It takes a worried man to sing a worried song / I'm worried now but I won't be worried long / I asked that old judge what may be my fine / I asked that old judge tell me what may be my fine / Twenty-one years on the R C Mountain line / The train arrived sixteen coaches long / The train arrived sixteen coaches long / The girl I love is on that train and gone / It takes a worried man to sing worried song / It takes a worried man to sing a worried song / I'm worried now but I won't be worried long / I looked down the track as far as I could see / I looked down the track as far as I could see / A little bitty hand was waving back at me /

Acoustic and electric guitar: Pete Wade; Fiddle: Laura Cash;
Drums: Kenny Malone; Acoustic bass: Dennis Crouch;
Steel guitar: Kayton Roberts.

NO DEPRESSION IN HEAVEN

SHERYL CROW

I hear the hearts of men are failing / For these are latter days I know / The Great Depression now is spreading / God's word declared it would be so / I'm going where there's no depression / To the lovely land that's free from care / I'll leave this world of toil and trouble / My home's in Heaven I'm going there / In that bright land there'll be no hunger / No orphan children cryin' for bread / No weeping widows toil or struggle / No shrouds no coffins and no death / I'm going where there's no depression / To the lovely land that's free from care / I'll leave this world of toil and trouble / My home's in Heaven I'm going there / This dark hour of midnight nearing / And tribulation time will come / The storms will hurl the midnight fears / And sweep lost millions to their doom / I'm going where there's no depression / To the lovely land that's free from care / I'll leave this world of toil and trouble / My home's in Heaven I'm going there /

Vocals, acoustic guitar: Sheryl Crow; Acoustic guitar, fiddle;
Background vocals: Larry Campbell; Electric bass: Tim Smith;
Acoustic guitar: Peter Stroud.
Recorded at Avatar Studios, Inc., New York, New York.
Engineered by Roy Hendrickson. Produced by Sheryl Crow.

ON THE SEA OF GALILEE

EMMYLOU HARRIS with the PEASALL SISTERS

(Sarah, Hannah & Leah)

Am I a soldier of the cross / A follower of the lamb / And shall I fear to own His cause / Or blush to speak His name / On the sea (the sea the sea) / Of Galilee (of Galilee) / My Jesus is walking on the sea / On the sea (the sea the sea) / Of Galilee (of Galilee) / My Jesus is walking on the sea / Must I be carried to the skies / On flowery beds of ease / While others fought to win the prize / And sailed through bloody seas / On the sea (the sea the sea) / Of Galilee (of Galilee) / My Jesus is walking on the sea / On the sea (the sea the sea) / Of Galilee (of Galilee) / My Jesus is walking on the sea / There shall I bathe my weary soul / In seas of heavenly rest / And not a wave of trouble roll / Across my peaceful breast / On the sea (the sea the sea) / Of Galilee (of Galilee) / My Jesus is walking on the sea / On the sea (the sea the sea) / Of Galilee (of Galilee) / My Jesus is walking on the sea /

Vocals, acoustic guitar: Emmylou Harris;
Vocals: Sarah, Hannah and Leah Peasall;
Acoustic guitar: Randy Scruggs;
Mandolin: Sam Bush; Acoustic bass: Billy Linneman.
Recorded at the Groove Room, Nashville, Tennessee.

ENGINE ONE-FORTY-THREE

JOHNNY CASH

Along came the FFV the swiftest on the line / Running o'er the C&O road just twenty minutes behind / Running into Cevile head porters on the line / Receiving their strict orders from a station just behind / Georgie's mother came to him with a bucket on her arm / Saying my darling son be careful how you run / For many a man has lost his life in trying to make lost time / And if you run your engine right you'll get there just on time / Up the road he darted against the rocks he crushed / Upside down the engine turned and Georgie's breast did smash / His head was against the firebox door the flames are rolling high / I'm glad I was born an engineer on the C&O road to die / The doctor said to Georgie my darling boy be still / Your life may yet be saved if it is God's blessed will / Oh no said George that will not do / I want to die so free / I want to die for the engine I love one hundred and forty three / The doctor said to Georgie your life cannot be saved / Murdered upon the railroad and laid in a lonesome grave / His face was covered up with blood his eyes they could not see / And the very last words poor Georgie said was nearer my God to thee /

Vocals: Johnny Cash;
Acoustic guitar: Randy Scruggs;
Mandolin: Pat McLaughlin;
Acoustic bass: Dennis Crouch;
Fiddle: Laura Cash.
Mixed by John Carter Cash.

NEVER LET THE DEVIL GET THE UPPER HAND OF YOU MARTY STUART and HIS FABULOUS SUPERLATIVES

My tender parents brought me up / Provided for me well / Twas in the city of Lanson Town / They placed me in a mill / It was there I spied a pretty fair miss / On whom I cast my eye / I asked her if she'd marry me / And she believed a lie / Three weeks ago last Saturday night / Of course it was the day / The devil put it in my mind / To take her life away / I went into her sister's house / At eight o'clock one night / But little did the angel think / On her I had my spite / I asked her if she'd take a walk / With me a little ways / That she and I might have a talk / About our wedding day / We walked along until we came / To my little desert place / I grabbed a stick off of the fence / And struck her in the face / I ran my fingers through her coal black hair / To cover up my sin / I drug her to the riverside / And there I plunged her in / I started back unto my mill / I met my servant John / He asked me Boss why you look so pale / And it's so very warm / Come all young men and warning take / Unto your lovers be true / And never let the devil get / The upper hand of you /

Vocals, electric sitar, mandolin: Marty Stuart;
Acoustic guitar: Kenny Vaughan;
Electric bass, Background vocals: Brian Glen;
Drums, background vocals: Harry Stinson;
Fiddle: Laura Cash.

LITTLE MOSES JANETTE and JOE CARTER

Away by the water so clear / The ladies were winding their way / While Pharaoh's little daughter stepped down in the water / To bathe in the cool of the day / Before it was dark she opened the ark / And found the sweet infant was there / Before it was dark she opened the ark / And found the sweet infant was there / Oh away by the waters so clear / The infant was lonely and sad / She took him in pity and thought him so pretty / And it made little Moses so glad / She called him her own her beautiful son / And she sent for a nurse that was near / She called him her own her beautiful son / And she sent for a nurse that was near / Oh away on the mountain so high / The last one that ever might see / While in Him victorious his hope was most glorious / He'd soon oe'r the Jordan be free / When his labor did cease he departed in peace / And rested in the Heavens above / When his labor did cease he departed in peace / And rested in the Heavens above /

Vocals, autoharp: Janette Carter;
Vocals: Joe Carter;
Acoustic guitar: Dale Jett;
Acoustic guitar: Laura Cash.
Recorded at the Carter Family Home, Maces Spring, Virginia.

BLACK JACK DAVID NORMAN and NANCY BLAKE with TIM O'BRIEN

Black Jack David come a running through the woods / Singing so loud and gaily / Made the hills around him ring / Then charmed the heart of a lady charmed the heart of a lady / How old are you my pretty little miss / How old are you my honey / Answered him with a silly little smile / I'll be sixteen next Sunday / I'll be sixteen next Sunday / Come go with me my pretty little miss / Come go with me my honey / I'll take you across the deep blue sea / Where we never shall want for money / You never shall want for money / She pulled off her high heeled shoes / Made of Spanish leather / She put on her low heeled shoes / And they both rode off together / And they both rode off together / Last night I lay on a warm feather bed / Beside my husband and baby / Tonight I lay on the cold cold ground / By the side of Black Jack David / By the side of the Black Jack David /

Vocals, acoustic guitar: Norman Blake;
Vocals, acoustic guitar, cello: Nancy Blake;
Vocals, bouzouki: Tim O'Brien;
Fiddle: Laura Cash;
Autoharp: John Carter Cash.

BEAR CREEK BLUES JOHN PRINE

Way up on Bear Creek watching the sun go down / Way up on Bear Creek watching the sun go down / It makes me feel like I'm on my last go-round / The water up on Bear Creek tastes like cherry wine / The water up on Bear Creek tastes like cherry wine / You take one drink of it you stay drunk all the time / If you stay up on Bear Creek you'll get like Jesse James / If you stay up on Bear Creek you'll get like Jesse James / You'll take two pistols and rob that Bear Creek train / I'm going high high up on some lonesome ridge / I'm going high high up on some lonesome ridge / Look down on Bear Creek where my good gal used to live / Way up on Bear Creek watching the sun go down / Way up on Bear Creek watching the sun go down / It makes me feel like I'm on my last go-round /

Vocals, acoustic guitar: John Prine;
Mandolin, acoustic guitar, percussion: Pat McLaughlin;
Electric guitar, background vocals: Jason Wilbur;
Electric bass: Dave Jacques.

YOU ARE MY FLOWER WILLIE NELSON

The grass is just as green / The sky is just as blue / The day is just as bright / The birds are singing too / You are my flower / That's blooming in the mountain for me / You are my flower / That's blooming there for me / The air is just as pure / The sunlight just as free / And nature seems to say / It's all for you and me / You are my flower / That's blooming in the mountain for me / You are my flower / That's blooming there for me / So wear a happy smile / And life will be worthwhile / Forget your tears / And don't forget to smile / You are my flower / That's blooming in the mountain for me / You are my flower / That's blooming there for me / When summertime has passed / And snow begins to fall / Just sing this song / And say to one and all / You are my flower / That's blooming in the mountain for me / You are my flower / That's blooming there for me /

Vocals, acoustic guitar: Willie Nelson.
Recorded at Pedernales Studio, Spicewood, Texas.
Assistant Engineer: Boo McCleod.

SINGLE GIRL, MARRIED GIRL SHAWN COLVIN with EARL AND RANDY SCRUGGS

Single girl single girl going dressed fine / Oh she's going dressed fine / Married girl married girl she wears just any kind / Oh she wears just any kind / Single girl single girl she goes to the store and buys / Oh she goes to the store and buys / Married girl married girl she rocks the cradle and cries / Oh she rocks the cradle and cries / Single girl single girl going where she please / Oh she's going where she please / Married girl married girl a baby on her knees / Oh a baby on her knees /

Vocals: Shawn Colvin;
Acoustic guitar: Earl Scruggs;
Acoustic guitar: Randy Scruggs.
Recorded at the Groove Room, Nashville, Tennessee.
Shawn Colvin's vocals recorded at Cedar Creek Recording Studio in Austin, Texas.
Engineered by Fred Remmert.

WILL MY MOTHER KNOW ME THERE? THE WHITES with RICKY SKAGGS

I have changed with changing seasons / I am bent with toil and care / When I stand among the angels / Will my mother know me there? / Yes I know that she will know me / In those mansions bright and fair / Mother's love can ne'r forget me / And I'm sure she'll know me there / All for me my mother wrestled / When she used to kneel in prayer / Do you think she has forgotten? / Will my mother know me there? / Yes I know that she will know me / In those mansions bright and fair / Mother's love can ne'r forget me / And I'm sure she'll know me there. / Mother's face has been a beacon / O'er the sea of deep despair / I shall look for her up yonder / Will my mother know me there? / Yes I know that she will know me / In those mansions bright and fair / Mother's love can ne'r forget me / And I'm sure she'll know me there /

Vocals, mandolin, piano: Buck White;
Vocals, acoustic bass: Cheryl White;
Vocals, acoustic guitar: Sharon White-Skaggs;
Vocals, acoustic guitar : Ricky Skaggs.

THE WINDING STREAM ROSANNE CASH

Oh give to me / A winding stream / It must not be too wide / Where waving leaves / From maple trees / Meet from either side / The water must / Be deep enough / To float a small canoe / With no one else but you / Do not disturb / My waking dream / The splendor of / That winding stream / Flower in my canoe / His eyes they looked me through / There's someone there / With golden hair / Is very much like you / The sparkling trout / Beneath the bank / Does leave his hiding place / Kingfisher on the bough above / So eager to give chase / The spreading branches overhead / The sunlight shining through / When looking dear at you / Do not disturb / My waking dream / The splendor of / That winding stream / Flower in my canoe / His eyes they looked me through / There's someone there / With golden hair / Is very much like you /

Vocals: Rosanne Cash;
Background vocals: Lorrie Carter Bennett;
Acoustic guitar: Randy Scruggs;
Mandolin: Pat McLaughlin;

Acoustic bass: Dennis Crouch.

RAMBLING BOY

THE DEL MCCOURY BAND

I was rich but a rambling boy / Through many a city I did enjoy / And there I married me a pretty little wife / And I loved her dearer than I loved my life / She was pretty both neat and gay / She caused me to rob the road highway / I robbed it yes I do declare / I made myself ten thousand there / Plenty dry goods for to carry me through / My pistol sword my money too / My forty-four she never failed / My true love comes for to go my bail / My mother says she has no home / My sister says she's all alone / My wife she left in sad despair / With a broken heart and a baby fair / Now when I die don't bury me at all / Just place me away in alcohol / My forty-four lay by my feet / Please tell them I am just asleep /

Vocals, acoustic guitar: Del McCoury;

Banjo: Robbie McCoury;

Mandolin, background vocals: Ronnie McCoury;

Fiddle: Jason Carter;

Acoustic bass: Mike Bub.

HOLD FAST TO THE RIGHT

JUNE CARTER CASH

Well I gave you to God in your cradle my boy / And I've taught you the best that I knew / And as long as His mercies permit me to live / I shall never cease praying for you / Hold fast to the right hold fast to the right / Wherever your footsteps may roam / And forsake not the way of salvation my boy / That you learned from your mother at home / Well you leave us to seek your employment my boy / By the world you have yet to be tried / But in temptations and trials you meet my boy / May your heart to the Savior confide / Hold fast to the right hold fast to the right / Wherever your footsteps may roam / And forsake not the way of salvation my boy / That you learned from your mother at home / You will find in your satchel a Bible my boy / It's the book of all others the best / It will help you to live and prepare you to die / And will lead to the gates of the blest / Hold fast to the right hold fast to the right / Wherever your footsteps may roam / And forsake not the way of salvation my boy / That you learned from your mother at home /

Vocals: June Carter Cash;

Acoustic guitar: Norman Blake;

Acoustic guitar: Laura Cash;

Background vocals: Johnny Cash.

Recorded at the Carter Family Home in Maces Springs, Virginia.

GOLD WATCH AND CHAIN

THE NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND with KRIS KRISTOFFERSON

Oh the white rose that blooms in the garden / It grows with the love of my heart / It broke through on the day that I met you / It will die on the day that we part / Oh I'll pawn you my gold watch and chain love / And I'll pawn you my gold diamond ring / I will pawn you this heart in my bosom / Only say that you'll love me again / Darling how could I stay here without you / I have nothing to cheer my poor heart / This old world would seem sad love without you / Tell me now that we never to part / Oh I'll pawn you my gold watch and chain love / And I'll pawn you my gold diamond ring / I will pawn you this heart in my bosom / Only say that you'll love me again / Take back all the gifts you have given / But a ring and a lock of your hair / And a card with your picture upon it / It's a face that is false but is fair / Oh I'll pawn you my gold watch and chain love / And I'll pawn you my gold diamond ring / I will pawn you this heart in my bosom / Only say that you'll love me again / Tell me why that you do not love me / Tell me why that your smile is not bright / Tell me why you have grown so cold-hearted / Is there no kiss for me love tonight / Oh I'll pawn you my gold watch and chain love / And I'll pawn you my gold diamond ring / I will pawn you this heart in my bosom / Only say that you'll love me again /

Vocals, acoustic guitar: Jeff Hanna;

Acoustic guitar, banjo: John McEuen;

Drums, harmonica: Jimmie Fadden;

Accordion, background vocals: Bob Carpenter;

Vocals, electric bass: Jimmy Ibbotson;

Vocals, acoustic guitar: Kris Kristofferson.