

Songs and Stories of Canada

Jon Bartlett & Rika Ruebsaat. *Songs and Stories of Canada*. [CD-ROM, with sixteen 26-minute audio programs in MP3 format, plus a 125 p. *Teacher's Guide* in PDF] (contact address: <http://www3.telus.net/jonbartlett-rikaruebsaat/index.html>).

Anyone who has tried to teach students about Canadian folksong knows how badly we need more and better resources in order to do the job properly. Yes, of course there are some good printed collections, especially Edith Fowke's, Helen Creighton's and Kenneth Peacock's, although almost all of them are out of print. Yes, one can get the old Folkways LPs as special order Smithsonian CDs, although they are unreasonably expensive. Yes, there are a few user-friendly archives, especially MUNFLA and Special Collections at University of Calgary, with invaluable research collections, provided graduate students can physically access them. But a straightforward, introductory text, accompanied by recorded examples? Forget it! Now, this CD-ROM isn't that, but it does do much the same job.

Songs and Stories of Canada consists of sixteen 26-minute audio programs in MP3 format, plus additional sessions designed to teach some of the songs. All the songs are performed by Jon Bartlett and Rika Ruebsaat, two very accomplished and well-known B.C. folksingers who need no introduction to readers of *Canadian Folk Music*. Also on the disc is a PDF file that contains a 116 page Teacher's Guide that discusses the material in each program and provides transcriptions of some of the songs performed in the programs. All this is done in a straightforward, genial and often amusing fashion. It is aimed at school rather than college students, but I would have no hesitation in using the material in an introductory university course. Through the medium of folksong and folktale it provides a valuable perspective on the social history of Canada.

The series was apparently made for radio, some years back. It is not perfect. There seems to be no obvious order to the sequence of programs. Only one or two songs per program are transcribed in the Guide. A few of the commentaries in the Guide, such as that on corruption and parody in folksong, are too brief and lack sufficient information about the songs. One big drawback is that the CD-ROM doesn't play on an ordinary CD player—not on any of the three that I tried it on, at any rate—so you have to use either a computer or an MP3 player to hear the programs.

But these are minor quibbles. For \$30.00 you get much more music than could be accommodated on a single CD, so, from a financial point of view, it's a great buy! The same holds good from a musical point of view. The performances are excellent. Other musicians help out on the up-tempo numbers, which brings a welcome variety to the sound, and there is some fine fiddling. Jon is in good voice, and his unaccompanied ballad singing in particular is controlled and expressive. I was simply amazed at Rika's ability to sing fast, tongue-twisting franco-phone material with such apparent ease. Take a listen to her remarkable performance of "La famille Latour" in the Quebec program. So you won't be disappointed by the quality of the music making, and there are some great songs here: some familiar, others less so. It is especially good to have recordings of so many items from the Phil Thomas collection. The sound quality is perfectly acceptable, although perhaps a little brighter and thinner than on Jon and Rika's CDs.

Readers of this review who already possess Jon and Rika's CDs will want to know precisely what more they will be getting if they also purchase the CD-ROM. So here is a breakdown of the programs, with a listing of the songs in each:

1. *Moving West*: "C'est l'aviron"; "A Life in a Prairie Shack"; "Forty Below (The Red River Valley)" & "Saskatchewan".
2. *Saltchuck and Asphalt*: "The Kettle Valley Line", "The Oda G.", "The P.G.E. Song", "Teaming Up the Cariboo Road" & "The Truck Driver's Song".
3. *The Homesteaders*: "The Alberta Homesteader (Dan Gold)", "Way Out West in Alberta", "Flunky Jim", "Old Granma" & "The Poor Little Girls of Ontario".
4. *The Parish Hall Dance*: "Dondaine la ridaine", "Froggy Went A-Courting", "Sirop d'erable/Maple Sugar", "Staten Island" (instrumental), "Where Am I to Go?" & "Willie Drowned in Ero".
5. *The Immigrants*: "Come to Me in Canada", "The Green Fields of Canada", "V'la l'bon vent" & "The Young British Rancher".
6. *Fishing East and West*: "The Doryman", "The Greenland Whale Fishery", "I'se the B'y", "Lukey's Boat" & "The Song of the Sockeye".
7. *The Rush for Gold*: "Far from Home", "Klondike", "Old Faro" & "The Young Man from Canada".
8. *Songs of the Deep Sea Sailors*: "A Hundred Years Ago", "John Kanaka", "The Mary Somers", "The Sailor's Alphabet", "Stormalong" & "Strike the Bell".
9. *The Lumbering Woods*: "The Logdriver's Waltz", "The Lumberman's Alphabet", "Peter Amberley", "Les Raftsmen" & "The Jam on Gerry's Rocks".

10. *Logging in the West*: “Buck’s Camp Down at Monroe”, “The Frozen Logger”, “The Grand Hotel”, “The Greenchain Song”, “The Greenhorn Song”, “The Peekaboo Waltz” (instrumental) & “Way Up the Uclelaw”.

11. *Songs of the Miners*: “The Ballad of Springhill”, “Coal Town Road”, “Hard Rock Miner”, “The Pluck Me Store” & “Taku Miners”.

12. *Folk Instruments*: “Mussels in the Corner”, “Reel du Québec” (instrumental), “Scrambled Eggs” (instrumental), “The Ship in Distress” & “Ste. Anne’s Reel” (instrumental).

13. *The Kangaroos of Nova Scotia*: “The Kangaroo”, “The Red River Valley”, “Forty Below”, “When it’s Springtime in the Rockies”, “When it’s Winter in the Kootenays”, “Climbing Up the Golden Stairs”, “Teaming Up the

Cariboo Road”, “The Lumberman’s Alphabet”, “The Sailor’s Alphabet” & “This Land is Your Land”.

14. *The Atlantic Provinces*: “The Bonnie Lass o’ Fishero” (instrumental), “Dans la prison de Londres”, “Glengarry’s Dirk” (instrumental), “The Shantyman’s Life”, “Tickle Cove Pond”, “Hard, Hard Times” & “The Unquiet Grave”.

15. *Songs and Stories of Quebec*: “La Danse des foins”, “Nous sommes trois frères”, “La famille Latour” & “En montant la rivière”.

16. *Songs of the Land*: “The Black Fly”, “Henry Hudson”, “The Homesick Trapper”, “’Twas Out in Alberta” & “The Wild Goose”.

David Gregory, Athabasca, Alberta.

Sixteen Songs from *Songs and Stories of Canada*

In the following pages we print transcriptions of sixteen songs from *Songs and Stories of Canada*, one from each program. In the main these are songs that you cannot find in any of Edith Fowke’s four general collections of Canadian folksongs, so they complement our usual resources. When Edith did print one of these songs, the version here has a superior tune. Many of the items are from the P.J. Thomas collection, and so this selection provides a foretaste of the goodies to be found in the forthcoming second edition of *Songs of the Pacific Northwest*. We thank Phil for permission to print or reprint them. Please note that in order to fit music on page we have sometimes had to print the lyrics before and sometimes after the tune, or even (with reluctance) both fore and aft.

1. “Drill Ye Tarriers, Drill” from *Moving West*:

Moving West documents the history of settlement in Canada, with *voyageur* songs, songs about homesteading on the Prairies, and this song, “Drill Ye Tarriers, Drill” about building the CPR railway. Before the trans-Canada railroad was completed as far as the Prairies, settlers had to take a circuitous route via the U.S.A. and the Red River to get to Winnipeg. From the mid-1880s onwards they could travel by train from Halifax, St. John or Montreal to the west. But building the railway had not been easy, and the life of a tarrier on the CPR had been a hard one.

Every morning at seven o’clock
 You see a gang of tarriers drilling in the rock;
 And the foreman yells, “Now don’t stand still,
 But come down heavy on that cast-iron drill!”

CHORUS: Then drill, ye tarriers, drill!
 Drill, ye tarriers, drill!
 For we work all day without sugar in our tay
 When we work on the C.P. Railway,
 So it’s drill, ye tarriers, drill!

The boss sent us to drill a hole—
 He swore and cursed our Irish soul,
 He cursed the ship that brought us through
 To work on the C. P. Railway crew.

The foreman’s name was Pat McGann,
 And b’gosh he was a darn fine man;
 One day a premature blast went off
 And a mile in the sky went big Jim Gough.

When payday next did come around,
 Big Jim a dollar short was found:
 “What for?” says he; came this reply,
 “You’re docked for the time you were up in the sky.”

Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill

P. J. Thomas

Ev - ery morn - ing at seven o'clock, You see a gang of tar - ri - ers
dril - ling in the rock; The fore - man yells, "Now don't stand still, But
come down hea - vy on that cast iron drill!" Then drill ye tar - ri - ers
drill! Drill, ye tar - ri - ers drill! For we
work all day with - out sug - ar in our tay, When we work on the C. P.
Rail - way, So it's drill, ye tar - ri - ers, drill!

2. "The Oda G." from *Saltchuck and Asphalt*:

Saltchuck and Asphalt is on the theme of transportation. It deals mainly with the pioneer decades, when roads were near impassable, paddlewheelers plied the open stretches of inland water, tugboats went up and down the B.C. coast, and spur lines were being added to the transcontinental railroads. "The Oda G." is the story of one of the coastal tugboats that serviced the logging industry.

Oh, come all ye jolly tugboat men,
And listen unto me,
While I tell you a story of hardships and glory,
Of a lusty old life on the deep, briny sea.

There once was a stalwart old tugboat,
Her name was the *Oda G.*,
And I'll let you know, boys, at pullin' a tow, boys,
There was no huskier tugboat than she.

She came off the ways in eighty-nine,
For storms she cared not a hang;
It was boasted around, 'twas the talk of the town,
That she knew that old coastline as well as a man.

Now her mate was an expert at running the logs,
He ne'er seemed to come to no harm,
But he ran out of luck when he fell in the chuck

With a rusty old boom-chain wrapped 'round his left arm.

Her engineer was a lazy young tramp,
All day he did nothin' but read;
On the fantail he sat on his young lazy prat
Till a big roarin' wave swept him into the sea.

Her deckhand was paintin' the bulwarks so fine,
Paintin' so carefully,
But he met his fate when, to admire his paintin',
He took a step back and fell into the sea.

Now her skipper, he was a very fine man,
At seafarin' he was a pip,
But without a crew, he didn't know what to do,
So he grabbed up a lifebelt and abandoned the ship.

But the old *Oda G.*, she kept tuggin' along,
She towed those logs down to Long Bay,
And old Penny hurrayed for the money he saved,
And he sent her back north on the very same day!

The Oda G.

Stanley G. Triggs

O come all ye jol - ly tug - boat men, and
list - en un - to me, While I tell you a sto - ry of
hard - ships and glo - ry, Of a lus - ty old life on the deep bri - ny sea.

3. “Way Out West in Alberta (The Alberta Homesteader)” from *The Homesteaders*

In 1872 the first Dominion Lands Act set the legal framework for homesteading in the Prairies, although it was not until the 1880s, with the building of the CPR, that the settlement boom began in earnest. By the eve of World War I most of the best, accessible land had been claimed, although two further waves of American and East European settlers followed in the 1920s and 1930s respectively. Although most of the songs about life as a pioneer on the Prairies date from the first thirty-year period of homesteading, a few are of later date and reflect the hardships of a farming life during the years between the wars. “Way Out West in Alberta” is an example of the latter; it was written by an American, Bud Baldwin, who settled near Rocky Mountain House in 1922.

It was way out west in Alberta,
Where the coyotes howl and sing,
Where it rained and hailed all summer,
And we never raised a thing.

Oh I came out here one summer,
Away out in the west,
I think I'll turn and go back,

Or I will starve to death.

We traveled through Battle Lake valley,
Through muskeg, mud and mire,
Till I came where they were surveying
A road for the CPR.

I built a little log cabin,

With a roof of natural clay;
 Dear friends, I'm sorry to tell you,
 But I'm bound for the USA.
 Of money I haven't one dollar,
 And the grub-stake she's run mighty low;
 Just as soon as the frogponds freeze over,

It's back to the US I'll go.
 Farewell to the poor old homesteader,
 Farewell to the land so free;
 Farewell to sunny Alberta,
 It's too darn cold for me!

Way Out West in Alberta

Bud Baldwin/P.J. Thomas

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is as follows:

It was way out west in Al -
 -bert - a, Where the coy - otes howl and
 sing, Where it rained and hailed all
 sum - mer, And we nev - er raised a
 thing.

4. "Where Am I To Go?" from *The Parish Hall Dance*:

This program recreates the sounds of a parish hall dance in Cape Breton and a fancy dress party at a house on Vancouver Island. The singers at the party include a sea captain, and his contribution is a shanty that used to be sung on one of the tall ships he sailed on. "Where Am I To Go?" describes various jobs to be done on a sailing ship rounding Cape Horn.

O, where am I to go, my johnnies, where am I to go?
 To me way, hey, hey, oh roll and go!
 O, where am I to go, my johnnies, where am I to go?
 For I'm a young and sailor lad, and where am I to go?

You're bound away around Cape Horn, that's where you're bound to go,
 To me way, hey, hey, etc.,
 You're bound away around Cape Horn, all through that ice and snow,
 That's where I'm bound to go, my johnnies, where I'm bound to go.

It's out upon that tops'l yard, it's there you're bound to go,
 To me way, hey, hey, etc.,
 It's out upon that tops'l yard and take that tops'l in,
 For I'm a young and sailor lad, that's where I'm bound to go.

It's out upon that royal yard, it's there you're bound to go,
 To me way, hey, hey, etc.,
 It's out upon that royal yard, the royal for to stow,
 For I'm a young and sailor lad, that's where I'm bound to go.

Where Am I To Go?

Anon

The musical score for "Where Am I To Go?" is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of six staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "O where am I to go, me john-nies, where am I to go? To me way hey hey, O roll and go! O where am I to go, me john-nies, where am I to go? For I'm a young and sail-or lad, and where am I to go."

5. "The Young British Rancher" from *The Immigrants*:

This program presents a selection of immigrants' songs in English and French, reflecting Scottish (Cape Breton), English (British Columbia) and French (Quebec) culture. The inner mainland of British Columbia was settled from both the west coast and, after the CPR breached the Rockies and the Selkirks, the east. Since "The Young British Rancher" includes a reference to the Klondike Gold Rush, it likely dates from the late nineteenth century, and its protagonist appears to have moved inland from Victoria. Like other "remittance men" (i.e., settlers who could rely on a regular income from family back in the U.K.), in order to be a successful rancher he has to learn some practical skills. To be accepted by his neighbours he also has to abandon some of his upper-class social airs.

When the half-baked remittance man comes to the West,
 Arrayed in short pants, which he thinks suits him best,
 He parades around town, while he takes a short rest,
 Ere assuming the role of a rancher.

CHORUS: Role, role, role of a rancher,
 A rancher of B.C.

Now all you remittance men, listen to me,
 And I'll give you some pointers, as far as I may,
 Which might make you a rancher if you will obey,
 A rancher, that's fit for a rancher.
 Fit, fit, fit for a rancher, etc.

First, mind you don't stay in Victoria long,
 The water is bad and the liquor is strong,

And as you must drink something, you're sure to go wrong,
 And spoil your success as a rancher,
 'Cess, 'cess, 'cess as a rancher, etc.

Take advice if you buy a fine ranch by a stream,
 Don't leave for trout fishing your cows and your cream,
 But make butter and wealth beyond your greediest dream,
 Which is the best plan for a rancher.
 Plan, plan, plan for a rancher, etc.

If when riding your bronco he starts to buck,
 And you fear if you fall by his hoofs you'll be struck,
 Throw your arms round his neck, man, and trust to
 your luck,

If you can't keep your seat like a rancher.
 Seat, seat, seat like a rancher, etc.

If in hunting for deer on some lone mountain top,
 Across a big bear you should happen to drop,
 Just climb the first tree and be sure there to stop
 Till assistance arrives for the rancher.
 'Rives, 'rives, 'rives for the rancher, etc.

If, after long striving on Vancouver's plains,
 You find that your debts are the whole of your gains,
 Go up to the Klondike with the cash that remains,
 And get better off than a rancher.
 Off, off, off than a rancher, etc.

The Young British Rancher

J. Cartmel/P. J. Thomas

Style/Tempo

When the half-baked re-mit-tance man comes to the West, Ar-
 -rayed in short pants which he thinks suits him best, he pa - rades a - round town, while he
 takes a short rest, Ere as - sum - ing the role of a ranch - er.
 Role, role, role of a ranch - er, a ranch - er of B.
 C.

6. "The Doryman" from *Fishing East and West*

The songs in this program evoke the lives of two different kinds of fishermen: inshore cod and salmon fishers using their own small craft off the coasts of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and British Columbia, and deckhands working on large boats, such as Greenland whalers and Alaskan halibut schooners. "The Doryman" is an anonymous song from the Phil Thomas collection that describes the practices of halibut fishermen in the 1920s. The schooners would sail up the B.C. coast to the halibut grounds off the coast of Alaska. Small rowing-boats called dories were launched to set 'long lines' with baited hooks: the lines sat on the bottom but were attached by ropes to marker buoys. The lookout on the schooner kept watch for bad weather, and, if signalled to do so, the dorymen would have to abandon their lines and row back for safety to the schooner.

Oh, some may sit in their swivel chairs,
 'Midst the cities' rush and rumour,
 And fret o'er the cares of the world's affairs

And the woes of the poor consumer.
 But I don't envy such gilded ease;
 Just give me the salt-soaked ocean breeze,

The lift and surge of the white-capped seas,
And the deck of a halibut schooner.

I want no fuss with the pale-faced cuss,
The clerk or piano tuner,
Who spend their lives in those stifling hives
In the struggle for more mazuma.
But give me the windswept ocean's space
Where the 'flat ones' flop in the dory's waist,
And the salt scud whips in your upturned face
As you pull for the side of the schooner.

Yes, give me a packet that's sound and tight,
And a skipper with guts to boom her,
Up under the heel of the northern lights
Where the grey seas strive to doom her.
Through the grinding ice, where the ground lines
freeze,
Through the howling gales and the pounding seas –
For it's into such tranquil spots are these

You must drive with a halibut schooner.

We earn what we get, you may lay to that
Though we sometimes 'pull a boner',
For the weather that's brewed off Yakutat,
It can change like a woman's humour;
When the 'queer thing' flies to the schooner's truck
We slash our gear and damn our luck,
For we've time for naught but to cut and duck
For safety, aboard the schooner.

And then, when our schooner is safe in port
And we land in a boisterous humour,
We thank the gods that our stay is short
And wish we were leaving the sooner.
We're rough and we're coarse and we're loud – what then?
We're the salt of the earth, we're dorymen,
And tomorrow night we'll be off again
To the banks in a halibut schooner.

The Doryman

Anon/A. K. Larsen

Oh, some can sit in their swi-vel chairs, 'Mdst the
cit - ies rush and ru - mour, And fret o'er the cares of the
world's af - fairs, And the woes of the poor cons - um - er, But
I don't en - vy such gild - ed ease, Just give me the salt - soaked
oc - ean breeze, The lift and surge of the white - capped
seas, And the deck of a hal - i - but sch - oo - ner.....

7. "Far from Home" from *The Rush for Gold*:

The Klondike may have been the most famous Canadian gold rush, but it was preceded in the 1860s by the Cariboo gold rush along the upper shores of the Fraser River. This program includes songs from both 1860s and 1890s, and one of them, "Far From Home, even predates the main Cariboo rush. It was written by a California miner panning for gold on the sandbars of the lower Fraser River, near Hope, in 1858.

Far From Home

W.H.D./P. J. Thomas

Where might - y wat - ers foam and boil, And
 rush - ing torr - ents roar, In Fras - er Riv - er's
 north - ern soil Lies hid the gold - en ore. Far from
 home, far from home, On Fras - er Riv - er's
 shore, We lab - our hard, so does our bard,
 To dig the gold - en ore.

Where mighty waters foam and boil
 And rushing torrents roar,
 In Fraser River's northern soil,
 Lies hid the golden ore.

CHORUS:

Far from home, far from home
 On Fraser River's shore,
 We labour hard, so does our bard,
 To dig the golden ore.

Far, far from home we miners roam,
 We feel its joys no more,
 These we have sold for yellow gold
 On Fraser River's shore.
 Far from home, etc.

In cabins crude, our daily food

Is quickly counted o'er;
 Beans, bread, salt meat is all we eat –
 And the cold earth is our floor.

Lonely our lives – no mothers', wives',
 Or sisters' love runs o'er,
 When home we come at set of sun
 To greet us at the door.

At night we smoke, then crack a joke,
 Try cards 'til found a bore;
 Our goodnight said, we go to bed
 To dream of home once more.

With luck at last, our hardships past,
 We'll head for home once more,
 And greet the sight, with wild delight,
 Of California's shore.

And once on shore, we never more
Will roam through all our lives;

A home we'll find, just to our mind,
And call our sweethearts wives.

8. "A Hundred Years Ago" from *Deep Sea Sailors*:

This program continues one of the themes of program # 6: the daily lives of deckhands on large ocean-going sailing vessels. Clipper ships, built for speed and carrying passengers as well as cargo, came into their own in the 1820s, and their golden era lasted for about fifty years, before they slowly gave way to fierce competition from steamships and, later, diesel-powered ships. Shanties were work songs, used by the crew to coordinate their work of hauling ropes and to make the monotonous but ever necessary task of pumping bilge water pass more quickly and easily. Hauling shanties were of two types: 'short-haul' and 'long-haul'. The former, which were sung quickly and rhythmically, were often used for raising the smaller sails. "A Hundred Years Ago", noted in Vancouver in 1979 from the singing of Bob Webb, is an example.

A Hundred Years Ago

Anon

The image shows three staves of musical notation for the shanty "A Hundred Years Ago". The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Well, a hun - dred years on the east - em shore,
Oh, yes, oh! Well, a hund - red years on the
east - em shore, A hun - dred years a - go!

Well, a hundred years on the eastern shore,
Oh, yes, oh!
Well, a hundred years on the eastern shore,
A hundred years ago!

When I was a young man in me prime,
Oh, yes, oh!
Well, I went to sea and I served me time,
A hundred years ago!

Well, it's Bully John from Baltimore,
Oh, etc.

Well, I knew him well on the eastern shore,
A hundred, etc.

Well, it's Bully John's the boy for me,
He's a bucko on land and a bully at sea.

Well, it's been a long time and a very long time,
Well, its been a long time since I made this rhyme.

Well, I thought I heard the old man say,
"Well, it's one more pull and then belay."

9. "The Lumberman's Alphabet" from *The Lumbering Woods*:

As soon as there were people overwintering in Newfoundland, Acadia and New France, trees were cut down for firewood and for replacing masts and planking on storm-battered boats, but industrial lumbering in the east was a product of the nineteenth century, beginning with the Napoleonic wars. Pine trees were felled, hewn into squared timbers and exported to Britain. By the middle of the century America had taken over from Britain as the chief customer for Canadian lumber. By the end of the century, when the supply of easily accessible virgin pine was running low, pulpwood also became a major export, which meant the opening up of the spruce and balsam fir forests. The logging was done in winter, by large groups of men living in logging 'shanties', who came – in the east,

but not in the west – to be called lumberjacks or shantymen. They had their own culture and their own songs, although they often worked as seamen in the summer and exchanged their songs and ballads with other sailors. Edith Fowke, of course, collected many shantymen’s songs, and a variant of this one is in *Singing Our History: Canada’s Story in Song*, but this is a better tune.

The Lumberman's Alphabet

Traditional/Bartlett & Ruebsaat

A is for ax - es and that youse all know, B is for boys that can
 use them al - so; C is for chop - ping that now be - gins, And
 D for the dan - ger that we do stand in, and how mer - ry are we.....
 No mor - tal on earth is as hap - py as we. To me hi der - ry
 ho der - ry hi der - ry down, give a shan - ty boy whis - key, there's no - thing goes
 wrong.

A is for axes, and that youse all know,
 B is for boys that can use them also.
 C is for chopping that now begins, and
 D for the danger that we do stand in.

CHORUS: And how merry are we,
 No mortal on earth is as happy as we.
 To me hi derry, ho derry, hi derry down,
 Give a shantyboy whiskey, there's nothing goes wrong...

E is for echo that rings through the woods,
 F for the foreman that bosses a job,
 G for the grindstone we grind our axe on, and
 H for the handle, so stout and so strong.

I for the ile we burn in our lamps,
 J for the jolly boys all in the camps,

K for keen edges we all have to keep, and
 L for the lice, boys, that keep us from sleep.

M for the moss we stow in our camps,
 N for the needle as we sew our pants,
 O for the owl that screeches by night, and
 P for the tall pine that we do slay right.

Q is for quarreling, we do not allow,
 R is for the rivers we run our logs down,
 S for the sled built so stout and so strong,
 T for the big team that hauls them along.

U is for uses we put ourselves to,
 V is for the valley we run our roads through,
 W for the woods that we leave in the spring, and
 Now I have sung all I'm going to sing.

10. "Greenhorn Song" from *Logging in the West*:

Logging in the west began in an organized way in the 1860s but was hampered by the size of the trees, the thickness of the stands and the turbulence of the rivers, which made it difficult to apply eastern logging methods successfully. A technological breakthrough in the early 1900s, the use of 'donkey' engines, cables and 'chokers' to haul logs over 'skid-roads' of greased 'corduroy', transformed the scale and efficiency of commercial logging in British Columbia. It was difficult and dangerous work, and one of the worst jobs was that of hooking choker cables around the felled logs to allow them to be hauled by the donkey. That is the subject of Dick Pollard's "Greenhorn Song" from the Phil Thomas collection.

Greenhorn Song

Dick Pollard/ P. J. Thomas

One day I thought I'd have some fun, And
 see how hook-in' chokers was done, Since Duncan logging
 had begun, I tackled a boss that night. He
 says, "My choker-man's bit the dust, his head is bashed in and his
 legs are bust, and though with luck he'll live, I trust, Of
 chokers he hates the sight."

One day I thought I'd have some fun
 And see how hookin' chokers was done,
 Since Duncan logging had begun,
 I tackled the boss that night.
 He says, "My choker-man's bit the dust,
 His head is bashed in and his legs are bust,
 And though, with luck, he'll live, I trust,
 Of chokers he hates the sight."

We hit the river the very next week,
 That Duncan country looked awfully bleak,
 Of that I will not even speak –
 It's just a great big bog!
 The mosquitoes are huge and so are the fleas,
 We only have rotten cedar for trees,

And every step, it's mud to the knees,
 And that's where I learned how to log.

They hauled me from bed at about midnight,
 Breakfast was only a sniff and a bite,
 And then began a terrible fight –
 A knock-down and drag-out deal.
 I picked up a choker, 'twas sixteen feet long,
 It tangled my legs, it gave me a bong!
 The boss only said, "You're doin' it wrong,
 But someday you'll get the feel."

I sure got the feel, and soon enough, too;
 My gloves were torn off, my fingers chewed through,

My shins were all bruises, and all that I knew
 Was how to buckle my belt.
 The logs were a mystery, how they could stay,
 Well, I worked on the same one for most of the day,
 When the boss came along, not one word could
 he say
 As he tore off his hat in a rage.

I've sat in jail a couple of times;
 If again I hook chokers, I've made up my mind –
 Put one right around my head!
 For setting chokers you get no relief,
 You only have bruises and all kinds of grief,
 So here is my thesis, and you'll find it brief –
 I think I would rather be dead!

I've worked in the cities, I've worked in the mines,

11. "The Coal Town Road" from *The Miners*:

This program is about hard rock mining for copper and gold in British Columbia and coal mining in Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia has been the site of some of the most notorious mining disasters, one of them commemorated in song by Peggy Seeger as "The Ballad of Springhill". In Cape Breton many of the coal mines ran out under the sea, and the miners had to walk a mile or more to the coal face after the cage took them underground. In the 1930s the culture of the Cape Breton mining communities was evoked in song by local writer and musician Alistair McGillivray, and "The Coal Town Road" is taken from his 1939 publication, *Song for the Mira and Other Compositions* (Sydney, N.S.: New Dawn enterprises, 1939):

The Coal Town Road

Alistair McGillivray

We get up in the black down the coal town road, And we
 hike a - long the track where the coal trains load, And we make the pon - ies pull till they
 near - ly break their backs, and they'll nev - er see a - gain down the coal town road.

We get up in the black down the coal town road,
 And we hike along the track, where the coal trains load,
 And we make the ponies pull till they nearly break their backs,
 And they'll never see again, down the coal town road.

We hear the whistle call, down the coal town road,
 And we take our towels and all, where the coal trains load,
 In the cages then we drop till there's nowhere else to fall,
 And we leave the world behind us, down the coal town road.

We never see the sun, down the coal town road,
 At a penny for a ton, where the coal trains load,
 When the shift comes up on top, we're so thankful to be done,
 We head home to sleep and dream about the coal town road.

There's miners' little sons, down the coal town road,
 Playing with their cowboy guns, where the coal trains load,
 But they'd better make the best of their childhood while it runs,
 There's a pick and shovel waiting down the coal town road.

If there's a God for us down the coal town road,

All the miners he can bless, where the coal trains load,
 For we're sweating in the hole, sucking down the devil's dust,
 Just to keep the fires a-blazing down the coal town road.

12. "Mussels in the Corner" from *Folk Instruments*:

Like program # 4, this program is about amateur music-making and recreates the spirit of family and community singing, story-telling and dancing in Quebec and Newfoundland. Fiddles, accordions and concertinas are prominent, supplemented by mouth music, clogging and the occasional fo'c'sle song from local sailors. "Mussels in the Corner" is a Newfoundland dance tune fitted with words to make it function as mouth music. Jon and Rika learned it in Vancouver in 1977 from the singing of Fred Weihs.

Mussels in the Corner

Anon

I took Nell - ie to a ball, Nell - ie wouldn't dance at all, Nailed her up against the wall,
 left her there till Sun - day. 'Deed I am in love with you, out all night in the fog - gy dew,
 'Deed I am in love with you, Mus - sels in the corn - er. [instrumental]

I took Nellie to a ball, Nellie wouldn't dance at all,
 Nailed her up against the wall, left her there till Sunday.

CHORUS: 'Deed I am in love with you, out all night in the foggy dew;
 'Deed I am in love with you, mussels in the corner.

Here they come as thick as flies, dirty shirts and dirty ties,
 Dirty rings around their eyes, dirty old Torbaymen.

Ask a Bayman for a smoke, he will say his pipe is broke,
 Ask a Bayman for a chew, he will bite it off for you.

All the people in Belle Isle don't get up till half past nine,
 Wash their face in kerosene oil; Polly, you're a corker.

13. "Forty Below" from *Kangaroos of Nova Scotia*:

The odd title of this program derives from the Nova Scotia children's song, "The Kangaroo", a variant of "The Carrion Crow". The program treats the subject of transformation and corruption in oral tradition, but its main focus is on parody (the writing of new words, often comic, to a well-known tune). This song is a good example of such a humorous parody.

Forty Below (Red River Valley)

Chris Dafoe

Oh, my grand - pa came west in the eighties, To the
 prai - ries where grain grows like grass..... But the Wheat Board and freight rates got
 grand - pa, And so grand - pa went east se - cond class.

Oh, my grandpa came west in the eighties,
 To the prairies, where grain grows like grass;
 But the Wheat Board and freight rates got grandpa,
 So grandpa went east, second class.

It was raining and hailing this morning,
 On the corner of Portage and Main;
 Now it's noon and the basements are flooded,
 And the duststorms are starting again.

CHORUS: Oh, it's forty below in the winter,
 And it's twenty below in the fall,
 And it rises to zero in springtime,
 And we don't have no summer at all.

Come and pay for my fare if you love me,
 And I'll hasten to bid you adieu;
 And farewell to your Red River Valley,
 And its natives all shivering and blue.

14. "Hard, Hard Times" from *The Atlantic Provinces*

This program illustrates the variety of folk music found in eastern Canada, from Cape Breton fiddle tunes to francophone songs from Acadia, logging songs, traditional ballads, and songs collected by Gerald S. Doyle that evoke everyday life in Newfoundland. The latter include "Tickle Cove Pond" and this song, "Hard, Hard Times", which, according to Jon and Rika, has been in existence there, in one form or another, for over a hundred years. To quote their program notes, "It is a song to be revived with every economic depression, and the verses describe the everyday life of a fisherman, fishing from spring until fall off the coast... 'West Indie' means the lowest grade of codfish, which in early days was sent south to the West Indies for the consumption of slaves."

Come all you good people, I'll sing you a song
 About the poor people, how they get along;
 They start in the spring, finish up in the fall,
 And when it's all over, you got nothing at all,
 And it's hard, hard times.

Well, you start with your jigger, first thing in the spring,
 Across the gunnel you'll make the line sing;
 Perhaps lose your jigger, get froze with the cold,
 And that's how you start to go into the hole,
 And it's hard, etc.

When so much fish is caught, then it's put out to dry;
 The next is the trouble to keep off the flies;
 It's buzz all around, more trouble for you,
 Then out comes the sun, and it's all split in two.

Then here comes the schooners – go get your supplies.
 A good price this summer – just make it good, boys;

Seven dollars for large and six fifty for small,
 Get out your West Indie, you got nothing at all.

And then comes the carpenter to build you a house;
 He'll build it so snug, you can scarce find a mouse.
 With holes in the roof and the rain it will pour,
 The chimney will smoke and it's open the door.

Well, next comes the doctor, the worst of them all,
 Saying, "What's been the matter with you all the fall?"
 He says that he'll cure you of all your disease –
 When your money he's got, you can die if you please.

Well, the best thing to do is to work with a will,
 And when it's all over, you're hauled on the hill,
 You're hauled on the hill and way down in the cold,
 And when it's all over, you're still in the hole!

Hard, Hard Times

Anon

A

Come all you good peo - ple, I'll

E A D

sing you a song, A - bout the poor

A

peo - ple, how they get a - long; They

D A

start in the spring, fin - ish up in the

A

fall..... And when it's all ov - er you got

E

no - thing at all, And it's hard.....,

A

hard..... times.

15. “En Montant la Rivière” from *Songs and Stories of Quebec*:

The focus of this program is on the cultural heritage of New France, and it includes a folk tale about “Lougarou” (the werewolf) as well as songs illustrating family life, farming, logging, and the fur trade. “En Montant la Rivière” is a paddling song, a favourite of the *voyageurs*.

C'est dans le mois de mai,
En montant la rivière,
C'est dans le moi de mai,
Que les filles sont belles,
Que les filles sont belles, au gai!
Que les filles sont belles.

Et que tous les amants,
En montant, etc.
Et que tous les amants,
Ils changent leurs maîtresses,

Ils changent, etc.

Pour moi, je ne changerais pas,
Car la mienne est trop belle.

Elle a de beaux yeux bleus,
Une bouche vermeille.

O, qu'il me serais doux,
De vivre avec elle.

En Montant la Riviere

Traditional/Bartlett & Ruebsaat

C'est dans le moi de mai, En montant la riv-ier-e, C'est
 dans le moi de mai que les fill-es sont bell-es, Que les fill-es sont bell's, au gai,
 Que les fill-es sont bell-es.

16. "The Homesick Trapper" from *Songs of the Land*:

This last program is about the historical interaction of man and environment across Canada. It includes a couple of Wade Hemsworth's best known songs, "The Black Fly" and "The Wild Goose", and Chris Rawling's moving evocation of the plight of Henry Hudson. Less well-known is this song by Harold Smith and Stanley Triggs, from the Folkways LP *Bunkhouse and Forecastle Songs of the Northwest*, "The Homesick Trapper".

The Homesick Trapper

Harold Smith/Stanley G. Triggs

There's a twist-ing trail a-wind-ing to my trap-line in the mountains where the
 silky pel-ted mar-ten love to play There's a bit-ter north wind blowing, but I'm
 packed up, so I'm going to those lone-ly moun-tain val-leys far a-way.

There's a twisting trail a-winding to my trapline in the mountains,
 Where the silky-pelted marten love to play.
 There's a bitter north wind blowing, but I'm packed up, so I'm going
 To those lonely mountain valleys far away.

I hear the Red Gods calling from where the cricks are brawling,
 And their voices stir me to the very core.
 And I cannot crush the longing for that little old log cabin,
 Where the virgin forest grows beside my door.

When the bear comes out of hiding, down the trail I'll come a-striding,
 Till I reach the icy waters of the lake;
 And you'll know that I'm a-coming when you hear my outboard humming,
 As it leaves a trail of bubbles in its wake.

So I'll see you in the springtime when the ice goes down the river,
And the noisy geese are winging o'er the bay;
To those secret trysting places in those wide and open spaces
Up the muddy Duncan River far away.

Songs of the North Woods

Songs of the North Woods, as sung by O. J. Abbott and collected by Edith Fowke, edited by Laszlo Vikar & Jeanette Panagapka. Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary Press, 2004.

This is a very welcome publication. The core of the book is sixty-six transcriptions by Laszlo Vikar of songs sung by O. J. Abbott into Edith Fowke's tape-recorder. He has also written a short (three page) but concise and substantive discussion of the challenges he faced in making the transcriptions, which alerts us to some of the musical/editorial decisions he had to make while doing the job. There is also a technical 'song analysis', which indicates the metre and range of each song and sorts them into major/minor scales or modes.

Jeanette Panagapka seems to have been responsible for most of the other editorial matter in the book. It includes brief biographies (would they were longer!) of Edith Fowke and O. J. Abbott, and transcripts of two interviews, one with Frank Fowke and one with Richard Johnstone. There is an appendix giving the texts of two stories, "Cutting Square Timbers" and "Curing the Toothache", that Edith recorded from Abbott, and there is a listing of Edith's books and recordings held in Special Collections at the University of Calgary Library.

Most useful of all is an attempt to list all the songs noted and/or recorded from Abbott. There are 120 of them, and to see or hear them all a researcher would have to visit not only the University of Calgary but also the Museum of Civilization, as well as listen to Abbott's Folkways LP and peruse *Traditional Singers and Songs of Ontario*, *Lumbering Songs of the Northern Woods* and the *Penguin Book of Canadian Folksongs*. The chart indicating where each song may be located is therefore invaluable.

When so much has been done, and in such a scholarly way, it seems uncharitable to be critical of the resultant publication, but I did have a couple of unanswered questions. It is never really made clear why the decision was taken to transcribe only 66 of 120 songs. Obviously a complete collection of Abbott's songs would have entailed nearly twice as much work by Vikar and would have resulted in a two-hundred page book rather than a 108 page one, but wouldn't it have been worth the extra effort?

And why the decision to include among the 66 some 26 songs that have already been published in Edith's books? Yes, I recognise that the transcriptions have been made anew, and that they are probably more accurate than the old ones, but I would still have preferred to have been given additional rather than repeat items from the 120.

Having got those two grumbles off my chest, I want to emphasize that this book is a real treasure. We are lucky to have it because there are significant copyright issues concerning Edith's collecting and publications. University of Calgary Press is to be congratulated on its fortitude in working through these problems and not abandoning a publication that sadly will only find a small, specialized market. Of course, to complement the book we need a double CD set of O. J. Abbott singing these sixty-six songs. If CSTM had its own record label, this would be the sort of project we could do. How about it, folks? In the meantime we will have to be content with the song-book. It contains many interesting traditional songs, some of which have lovely melodies. For lovers of Anglo-Irish traditional song, this is a 'must have' item: don't be without it.

David Gregory, Athabasca, Alberta