



Back in the late '50s and early '60s, bluegrass greats Flatt & Scruggs had a regional TV show that was very popular in the South. For the first time, four episodes of the show have been released on two separately sold DVDs as *Best of the Flatt & Scruggs TV Show, Vol. 1* and *Vol. 2*. These 30-minute black-and-white programs come complete with the original ads for Martha White baking products. There are moments of cornball humor, but the focus is squarely on the music, as singer-guitarist Lester Flatt and banjo player Earl Scruggs are joined by their band, the Foggy Mountain Boys, who run through original and traditional tunes, including a weekly sacred number. It's an illuminating, and entertaining, window into another place and time. And seeing these pickers in this environment gives you a new appreciation for their virtuosity, especially Scruggs: Watch, at one point, as he changes the tuning on his banjo while playing it. Mother Maybelle Carter guests on the August 1961 episode on *Vol. 2*.

--Nick Cristiano