

Volume 1

THE SONGS

August 1961 #1: A highlight of this episode is “**Jimmie Brown the Newsboy**,” a Carter Family favorite, first recorded by Flatt & Scruggs in 1951. Former Foggy Mountain Boy Mac Wiseman registered his biggest country hit with the song in 1959. Also from 1951 comes the gospel quartet “**Brother, I’m Getting Ready to Go**.” Earl played banjo on the original, but in this TV performance he plays guitar. Earl also plays guitar on a traditional instrumental, “**Georgia Buck**,” which he would record in 1964. Paul Warren takes center stage four times during the show, singing lead on “**Pig in the Pen**,” and playing the fiddle tunes “**Shortnin’ Bread**,” “**Durham’s Bull**,” and an unidentified selection that fills out the show. Flatt & Scruggs recorded the gospel song “**Jesus Savior Pilot Me**” as a quartet number in 1958. “**Before I Met You**,” a waltz, comes from the repertoire of Joe “Cannonball” Lewis. Flatt & Scruggs recorded it as a trio number in 1955, and it was a Top Ten country hit for Carl Smith in 1956. “Cousin Jake” Tullock and “Uncle Josh” Graves team up for “**Feast Here Tonight**,” recorded by the Monroe Brothers in 1938 as “Have a Feast Here Tonight.”

February 1962: Flatt & Scruggs primed the market for release of their next single, “**Just Ain’t**,” by performing it on this show. Recorded in May 1961, the song entered the country chart in April 1962, eventually climbing to #16. Hylo Brown does two songs he released as singles on Capitol: the traditional “**John Henry**” and an original number, “**Lovesick and Sorrow**.” “**Don’t Let Your Deal Go Down**” and “**Earl’s Breakdown**” are Flatt & Scruggs classics. “Deal” was a mainstay of early country music. Bluegrass historian Neil Rosenberg has pointed out that the band’s 1957 recording of the song marks the first time Flatt & Scruggs used gospel-style quartet harmony in a secular song. “**Earl’s Breakdown**” was the first instrumental Scruggs recorded for Columbia Records, and it introduced his popular technique of shifting tuning during a song. Flatt & Scruggs recorded the gospel quartet “**I’ll Never Be Lonesome Again**” in 1959. “**Precious Memories**,” sung a cappella, is an oft-recorded traditional hymn, but notable because Flatt & Scruggs did not record it for commercial release. “**A Hundred Years from Now**” comes from the same 1957 session as “**Don’t Let Your Deal Go Down**.” Josh Graves is featured on “**Down in the Valley**” (also called “Birmingham Jail”), and Paul Warren and Earl Scruggs close out the show with a fiddle tune, “**The Hollow Poplar**.”

Volume 2

THE SONGS

July 1961: “**Polka on a Banjo**” climbed to #12 on the country charts in 1960–61. The band recorded “**Go Home**,” an Onie Wheeler tune, on May 23, 1961, only a few weeks before taping this TV show. It was even more successful, rising to #10 after its release in the fall of 1961. “**Fire Ball Mail**” (which Lester calls “Farewell Blues”) comes from the pen of Fred Rose and was a Roy Acuff favorite; Flatt & Scruggs included it on their important 1961 album *Foggy Mountain Banjo*. “**Foggy Mountain Special**,” first

recorded in May 1954, ended up on another influential album, *Foggy Mountain Jamboree*. **“I Won’t Be Hanging Around”** dates from a session in July 1957. Country singer Skeeter Davis (next week’s guest on the show, Lester says) chose it for her 1968 RCA album *I Love Flatt & Scruggs*. **“We’ll Meet Again Sweetheart”** was one of four songs cut by Flatt & Scruggs at their very first recording session, in 1948, at Knoxville radio station WROL. **“Walking in My Sleep”** found its way into the repertoires of a number of artists, including Arthur Smith, the Prairie Ramblers, Acuff, and Al Dexter. Flatt & Scruggs never recorded the well-known hymn **“Are You Washed in the Blood.”** For their cameo, “Cousin Jake” Tullock and “Uncle Josh” Graves choose a Cowboy Copas tune, **“You Live in a World All Your Own.”** Paul Warren fills out the show with a fiddle number, **“Dance All Night with a Bottle in My Hand.”**

August 1961 #2: What **“Foggy Mountain Breakdown”** is to banjo pickers, **“Wildwood Flower”** is to acoustic guitar players—the instrument’s anthem and proving ground. On this episode Flatt & Scruggs welcome country music pioneer Mother Maybelle Carter, who picks her trademark “Wildwood Flower” and, on autoharp, plays **“The Liberty Dance”** (the old fiddle tune “Liberty”). Scruggs acknowledged Carter’s influence on his music, and within weeks of this performance Flatt & Scruggs released the album *Songs of the Famous Carter Family*. The album contained the Carter Family song **“Homestead on the Farm,”** performed here by the band with Carter, and introduced by Flatt as “I Wonder How the Old Folks Are at Home.” **“Have You Come to Say Goodbye”** does not show up in the Flatt & Scruggs discography, though Flatt recorded it later as a solo artist. Neither does **“I Dreamed about Mama Last Night,”** recorded by Hank Williams as “Luke the Drifter.” **“Down, Down, Down”** is associated with the great country singer Rose Maddox. Paul Warren’s performance of **“Durham’s Bull”** was a Flatt & Scruggs favorite, as was **“Down the Road,”** first recorded by the group in the spring of 1949 in Cincinnati. Warren winds up the show with **“Over There.”**