

Six Songs by Dark Willow

Ellen van der Hoeven: voice, mandolin, guitar

David Donaldson: pennywhistles, synthesizer

2014

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Recorded at Hominid Studio, 4408 W. 15th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6R 3B2, Canada by David Donaldson (whistler4[at]mac.com)

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1. The Doffing Mistress 1:51: Doffers, who worked in spinning mills, changed the bobbins and tied the ends of the thread to a new one. In the past, the job was usually done by children (both boys and girls). This traditional song expresses appreciation for a kind and considerate boss, Elsie Thompson. In this recording, Ellen sings and David plays a low whistle in G by Michael Burke.

2. I Know Where I'm Going (trad.) 2:18: I Know Where I'm Going is a traditional song. We do it faster than most because the singer sounds like a woman who knows her own mind, plans for her future, and gets there. A spirited girl might be proud to wear "shoen of bright green leather" with her silk stockings. In this recording, Ellen plays guitar and David plays a Burke whistle in D.

3. Swords into Plowshares (David Donaldson) 3:27: Swords into Plowshares was written by David and we've enjoyed playing it ever since. The title is based on a verse from the Bible: "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks:

nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (King James Bible: Isaiah 2:4). A story goes with the tune. It says that, in the near future, all the nations of the world decide to end war. When word goes out to the soldiers, they throw their weapons into the recycling bin and march home with a light, happy step. And Swords into Plowshares is the tune they march to. In this recording, David plays a D whistle by O'Riordan and synth harp, and Ellen plays mandolin.

4. Tarry Trowsers (trad.) 1:48: Ellen learned this song Tarry Trowsers from Newfoundland singer Andrew Draskoy. It has a historic theme: the young rebelling against their parents' wishes. Ellen sings and David plays a Burke whistle in A.

5. The Good Ship Kangaroo (trad.) 5:22: The Good Ship Kangaroo is an Irish nonsense song. It has a catchy tune with a chorus and it's fun to sing and play. In this recording, Ellen plays mandolin and David plays whistles in D and G made by Michael Burke.

6. Mandolin Ann (Ellen vand der Hoeven) 1:15: Mandolin Ann, an original by Ellen, was inspired by a fellow student in a mandolin class a few years ago. Ellen sings it beautifully; we're sure you'll enjoy it. Ellen plays Mandolin and David Plays a whistle in D by Michael Burke.

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