

# Walkie in the Parlor

(SONGS WITH ANCIENT PSALTERY)

With Fiddler Beers and Evelyne

**FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 2376**  
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*Evelyne, Bob, and daughter Martha sing "family songs" in Montana home*

George Sullivan moved west to Wisconsin from an Irish settlement in Pennsylvania at about the time of the Civil War. The family homesteaded in the vicinity of North Freedom, and Mr. Sullivan was the best known fiddler for a radius of fifty miles. He was also a well known story teller and knew hundreds of folk songs.

These traditions were passed on to grandson Bob Seers, including the violin which the old man played. Beers began fiddling with his grandfather at the age of seven, and actually placed in a tie at an old-time fiddlers contest in North Freedom at the age of twelve. Bob later became a highly accomplished violinist, a member of several symphonies, and a concert master.

In 1943 he met Evelyne Andresen, folk singer, and one of the four original members of the famed Virginia City Players. After their marriage, Evelyne became business manager for her husband's professional violin tours.

However, in 1950 the pair decided to resume interest in summer theater at Lewistown, Montana, home of the Judith Mountain Players. Bob was persuaded to do a character portrayal of his colorful grandfather, George Sullivan.

The sensitive impersonation of the old man was an instant success and became an immediate addition to Bob's concert repertoire. But, by 1955, Evelyne had joined her husband on nationwide tours, and together they sang and played the great folk music of George Sullivan. In March of 1960, their television program, ON STRINGS OF SONG, was voted by TV Radio Mirror Magazine, as the Gold Medal Award winner, "the best TV music program in the western states." The series was based on folk music.

Included on this record are some of the fine songs identified with Fiddler Beers and Evelyne, as well as a number of the outstanding songs of the late George Sullivan.

## THE PSALTERY

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In the background of songs sung by Evelyne and Fiddler Beers is the magnificent psaltery pictured above. This ancient, plucked instrument was the ancestor of harpsichord and serves to make the song art of Bob

and Evelyne quite unique among folk singers.

In addition to his singing and fiddling, Bob is the most accomplished player of this historic instrument in the world today.

### SIDE I, Band 2: THE LEATHERMAN

In early America, homeless wanderers were common on all roads and byways. Such people were regarded with suspicion, fear, and considerable curiosity. They were greeted by the barking of dogs and the taunting questions of children, oblivious of their suffering and of the part they would eventually play in the settlement of a great nation.

Sung by George Sullivan to Evelyne Beers in 1945.

Leatherman, leatherman, where do you go?  
The winds they do whistle, the winds they do blow,  
Yes, the winds they do whistle and blow.  
Leatherman, leatherman, where do you go?  
The way is all frozen and laden with snow,  
Yes, the way is all laden with snow.

I've traveled the ocean, I've traveled the sea,  
And I'm traveling back my dear mother to see.  
Across the high mountains, and under the sky,  
I'll go back to Ossing , and there will I die,  
Yes, I'll go back to Ossing and die.

Then leatherman, leatherman, tell me your name,  
And why you do go thru the forest and plain,  
Thru the lonesome forest and plain.  
Then leatherman, leatherman, tell me your name,  
And why you do travel from Essex to Maine,  
On the road from Essex to Maine.

The sky is my roof, and the grass is my bed,  
I'll live til I die, and I'll die til I'm dead.  
I cannot remember the sound of my name,  
Or why I am clad in the animal skein,  
All clad in the animal skein.

Then leatherman, leatherman, tarry a while,  
From your mumbling, stumbling wearysome mile,  
From your mumbling wearysome mile.  
Then leatherman, leatherman, tarry a while,  
And tell me the reason you never do smile  
Oh why then you never do smile.

My body is aching, and wracked with pain,  
My soul is in torment, and burdened with shame.  
The cause of my torture I never can tell,  
As I trod this cruel road between heaven and hell,  
On the road between heaven and hell.

SIDE I, Band 2: **THE LARK IN THE MORN**

As given to Bob Beers by Mrs. Clara Conine, formerly of Aberdeen, South Dakota and Billings, Montana, now a resident of Montclair, N.J. Descendants of George Sullivan believe that he also sang a version of the song.

As I was a walkin', one mornin' in the spring,  
I met a handsome plowboy, and so sweetly he did sing.  
And as we were a walkin', these words he sang to me:  
There is no life like a plowboy's in the merry month of May.

The lark in the mornin' will rise up from her nest,  
And mount unto the sky, with the dew still on her breast.  
And like the pretty (handsome) plowboy, she will whistle and sing.  
And then at night she will return to her babies once again.

SIDE I, Band 3: **WALKIE IN THE PARLOR**

One of the three or four favorite songs of George Sullivan, and recalled by most of his family. Fiddler Beers began piecing bits of it together in 1956. The words come from the following sources: Mabel Froust (daughter) of Sauk City, Wis.; the late Vera Beers (daughter) of Kirkwood, Mo.; and Mrs. Janet Boyer, Kirkwood, Mo. (a granddaughter).

First they made the earth, and then they made the sky,  
And then they made the clouds so white, and hung 'em there to dry.  
Next they made the moon above, and made the sun to rise,  
And then they made the stars so bright, from pretty babies' eyes.

CHORUS:

Walkie in the parlor boys, walkie in I say,  
Walkie in the parlor boys, and hear the banjos play.  
Walkie in the parlor boys, and hear the banjos ring,  
And watch my honey 's fingers, as he picks upon the string.

Well, next they made the possum, and then they made the quail,  
And then they made the little coon with a ring around his tail.  
Well, next they made the elephant, so big, and wide, and stout,  
But then he wasn't satisfied, until he had a snout,

Next they made old Adam, and laid him on the ground,  
And gave him a dose of lodenum, to make him sleep so sound.  
Well, next they took a piece of rib right out of Adam's side,  
And made him a purty Irish gal to be his lovin' bride.

SIDE I, Band 4: **HINDSIDE BEFORE**

Taught to Evelynne and Bob by Oliver Woods of Lewistown, Montana. Mr. Woods was brought up on the famous N Bar Ranch, located in the Great Snowy Mountains south of Lewistown. The song was taught to him by his father, an early sheriff of Fergus County, who had brought the song with him from Missouri on a cattle drive.

Twas a long time ago, I remember it well,  
Twas away in a poorhouse, a maiden did dwell.  
She lived with her father, and her mother serene.  
Her age it was red, and her hair was sixteen.  
Now, this maid had a lover, who clost by did dwell  
Bald headed in both feet, and toothless as well.  
Says he, "Fly with me to the light of yon star,  
For you are the eye of me apple, you are."

Says this maid to her lover, "Be gintle and wise,  
Or me father will scratch out your nails with his eyes.  
If you love me you will not bring me to disgrace,"  
Sighed this maid as she buried her hands in her face.

And when she refused him, he knocked down this maid,  
And quickly he opened the knife of his blade.  
He then slit the throat of this damsel so fair,  
And he drug her around by the head of the hair.

And just at that moment her father appeared.  
He gazed on his daughter with eyes in his tears.  
Then he seized that vase villain by the hand with his throat,  
And he shot 'im with a horse pistol, raised up from a colt.

SIDE I, Band 5: **MY LAS' RIDE COMIN' ON THE HEAVENLY TRAIN**

As sung by Jumbo Hinkle, employee at the General Refractories Brick Company, Brentwood, Missouri. Song adopted by Fiddler Beers in 1943 while also an employee at the plant.

I tell you one, I tell you all,  
I tell you one, I tell you all,  
A travlin' man ain't got no call.  
A man, he travel, no good at all.

Fom 'is here world I'm goin' away.  
In 'is low down town, I gone astray.  
I come from the far countree, in a railroad car,  
To this mizzable place 'hind the jailhouse bars.

In Hooverville town I cut my pal,  
On account of love for a brown-skinned gal.  
I cut 'im down to the grave so low,  
Lousy devil...done taken my heart and steal-a-my soul.

Tomorry the day I gonna be dead,  
Insteada hit bein' my day for to wed.  
I wish I had done like the Bible done said,  
Stida layin' me down on this jailhouse bed.

Oh bury me low, oh, bury me deep.  
Mamo, mamo, ain't no cause to weep.  
I'm goin' away, where there ain't no pain.  
My las' ride comin' on the Heavenly train.

**SIDE I, Band 6: RETURN FROM THE DEEP**

Representative of the song-craft of Fiddler Beers, who wrote it in 1958 while living on the Spear T Ranch, located in the Judith Mountains, near Lewistown, Montana. Unusual demand for the song forced admission recently of its authorship.

I'll tell you a story of ships and their glory,  
Of men on the sea and the waves running free.  
Twas in the year '63, four ships put out to sea,  
Sails lifted high in the bright golden sky.

**CHORUS:**

All day by the window, the maidens now spin and sew,  
Hear the cruel winds blow, hear the black surf below,  
Never weep, never cry, some return, some may die,  
Out from the darkness come sunshine and grief,  
Oh, never weep, never cry, some return, some may die,  
Gladness and sadness return from the deep.

Two sails in the sunset, tell what some cruel fate has met,  
Lost in the storm on a cold summers morn.

In softness of fading day, women and children pray,  
Down on their knees, hear their heavenly pleas.

SIDE I, Band 7: **THE SAILOR BOY**

A lovely “rockin’ chair” song given to Evelyne by May Kennedy McCord, great singer of Ozark Mountain songs.

This is one of two favorite songs of Mrs. McCord included in this album and will be recognized by her many friends across the nation.

CHORUS:

Black, black, was the color of my true love’s hair,  
His face was like some lilly fair,  
If ever he returns he will bring me joy,  
For none can I love, but my sweet sailor boy.

Oh father go build me a boat  
That I may on the ocean float,  
And I’ll cry to the ships as they pass me by,  
Oh say, have you see my sweet sailor boy?

Oh no, fair lady, that never could be,  
For your lover was drowned in the deep gulf sea.  
Near-by Rock Isle, as we passed by,  
It was there that we lost your sweet sailor boy.

She stove her vessel into the rocks,  
And we thot this poor lady's heart was broke.  
She wrung her hands, and she tore her hair,  
Just like someone in dark dispair.

SIDE I, Band 8: **SULPHUR MOLASSES**

Reconstructed and adapted by Fiddler Beers from an oft-quoted jingle of George Sullivan.

When I was a youth and I lived on the farm,  
My mother's ambition was to keep me from harm.  
And when I got sick, or come down with the flu,  
She doctored me up with the devil's own brew.

CHORUS:

Ohhh...

Sulphur Molasses had a horrible smell, (hell of a smell)  
But whatever I had it would make me get well.  
Sulphur Molasses, the old humble style,  
Together with goose grease and turpentine ile (oil).

So, when I got married and took on a wife,  
I guarded her well from the sickness and strife.  
I dressed her in silks til she looked very nice,  
And when she got pip, rook my mother's advice.

Now we raised up three sons both handsome and strong,  
And gave them the treatment when somethin' went wrong.  
One was a preacher, the other a priest,  
The third he was honest and joined the police.

The preacher went wrong, into jeopardy sank,  
The priest, he was murdered while robbing a bank.  
The third he departed before it was time,  
From a large overdose of my poke berry wine.

Now mother is gone, and my wife she is dead,  
And I am confined on the top of my bed.  
There's bottles galore at my head and my feet,  
And the one I love most hidden under my sheet.

And while they were placing me down in the grave,  
You'd never believe the advice that I gave.  
"I swear by the clods as they fall in my face,  
That here is the cure for the whole human race."

**SIDE I, Band 9: THE OLD SOLDIER**

As sung by both George Sullivan and cowboy Oliver Woods, mentioned previously with the song "Hindside Before."

Oh, there was an old soldier, and he had a wooden leg.  
He had no terbaccer, no terbaccer could he beg.

Another old soldier was as sly as a fox,  
And he always had terbaccer in his old terbaccer box.

Says the one old soldier, "Would ya gimme a chew?"  
Says the other old soldier, "I'll be dammed if I do!"  
"Save your money, and you'll always have rocks (or socks),  
And you'll always have terbaccer in your old terbaccer box."

SIDE II, Band 1: **OLD JIM GRAY**

One of the great ballads of Keith Clark of Ottawa, Illinois. The song has been used continually by Bob and Evelyne since 1957 when it was sung to them by Mr. Clark. Demand for the song has kept it on programs continually. Based on historical fact, names and events in the song are found in the court records of Ottawa. Certain verses are omitted in this recording.

Old Jim Gray, he run away,  
From Mr. Phipps (Phillips) in Missou-ri-ay  
And poor ol' Jim, just as fast as he kin,  
He swum the Mississippi like lightnenin. (Lightning)

CHORUS:

Oh, the fish live in the river,  
The quail live in the stubble,  
And the deer roam around in the forest ground,  
But a pore man (or black man) only got trouble.

And when the marshall catch up to Jim,  
He started to take him back again,  
But a man named Root began to rave\*,  
And he said he was the owner of the runaway slave.

So the marshall, the owners, and old Jim Gray ,  
They went to the court in Ottaway,  
But a man named Hosseck\* rushed him out the aisle,  
And that was the end of the Jim Gray trial.

*(double chorus, to be sung in unison with first chorus, if two people sing)*

Oh - John-John-John-John Hosseck,  
Laddle-laddle-laddle-laddle dee-dee-dee,  
He's the man that made the plan  
To set old Jim Gray free.

They rode him in a carriage out of town,  
To way up north where he'd not be found,  
And there he stayed, just as free and trim  
As a possum hangin' from a hickory limb.

And that's the story of old Jim Gray,  
Who was rushed from the court in Ottaway,  
To way up north where he'd always be,  
Free from the chains of slavery (slav-er-er-ry)

*\*Root's object in claiming  
to be Jim Gray's owner was  
apparently to confuse the  
ownership, requiring a court  
judgement as to the real  
owner, a delaying tactic.  
The escape was effected by  
John Hosseck, who later was  
sentenced to prison for his  
part in the affair.*

SIDE II, Band 2: JOHNNY CAME A 'COURTIN'

Bob, Evelyne, and Martha (their daughter) “thought this song up” while driving to a vacation hideout in the mountains. Later it was found that the words and tune harmonized naturally with an old dulcimer tune played by Fiddler Beers on his psaltery. This recording is the happy combination of the family trio and the psaltery, including 14-year-old Martha Beers.

Johnny came a courtin', in the month of May.  
Will you come a'dancin' is all that he did say.  
I thanked him quite politely and said that I would go  
Down along the seashore to ask my mother-O.

CHORUS:

Yodle-odle-eeho, yodle-odle-hoo,  
Yodle-odle-eeho, Johnny I love you.  
Yodle-odle-eeho, yodle-odle-hee,  
Yodle-odle-eeho, Johnny you love me.

Johnny is a sailor, Johnny went to sea,  
When he said he loved me, he said it tenderly.  
When he asked to marry, I said that I would go  
Down along the seashore to ask my mother-O.

And now that we are married, and I am Johnnies mate,  
He says he wants three children, and he can hardly wait.

I thanked him quite politely, and said that I would go  
Down along the seashore to ask my mother-O.

Now Johnny is a captain of a mighty ship,  
And when he goes a sailing on an ocean trip,  
He kisses me politely, and asks if I will go  
Down along the seashore to see my mother-O.

The children now are married, and I am old and gray,  
I think upon my Johnny, and how he used to say,  
Darlin' do you love me, and I would al ways go  
Down along the seashore to ask my mother-O.

SIDE II, Band 3: **LORD RANDALL**

This is the Sullivan version of a well-known song. Fifth and last verses were added by Bob Beers from other sources in order to fill in the gaps.

Where have you been all day, Randall my son,  
Where have you been all day, my pretty one?  
I did hunt in the wildwood, mother,  
I did hunt in the wildwood, mother,  
Oh, make my bed soon, for I'm sick to my heart,  
And I fain would lie down.

When had you your dinner, Lord Randall, my son,  
When had you your dinner, boy, my pretty one?

When I dined with my true love, mother,  
When I dined with my true love, mother,  
Oh....

What became of your bloodhounds, Lord Randall, my son,  
What became of your bloodhounds, boy, my pretty one?  
Oh they swelled and they died, mother,  
Oh....

Well, what was your dinner, Lord Randall, my son,  
What was your dinner, boy, my pretty one?  
Boiled eels and toadstools, mother.  
Boiled....

What was their color, Lord Randall, my son,  
What was their color, boy, my pretty one?  
They were spickled and spackled, mother,  
They were....

Then, I fear you are poisoned, Lord Randall, my son,  
Then, I fear you are poisoned, boy, my pretty one!  
Oh yes, I am poisoned, mother,  
Oh yes....

Where will you be buried, Lord Randall, my son,  
Where will you be buried boy, my pretty one?  
Neath the cold, cold ground, mother,  
Neath....

And what of your sweetheart, Lord Randall, my son,  
What of your sweetheart, boy, my pretty one?  
Build a rope and a scaffold, mother,  
Build....

#### SIDE II, Band 4: **THE WANDERING JEW**

Written in 1959 for an ill-fated television drama, the lyrics were never used. However, Bob discovered that they fit the rhythm of an old cowboy tune and began singing the song in 1960.

Come, wandering Jew, come tell me your story,  
From whence thee do come, and where do thee roam?  
They say thee do wander from the land of God's glory,  
From ocean to ocean, and never to home.

#### CHORUS:

“On the face of each nation, from the time of creation,  
From seed to ashes, forever I roam.  
From the sad tribulation, to the glad revilation,  
From the Alpee-eye-meego, Kind death is my home.”

Come, Wandering Jew, come sit down beside me.  
Say where do thee travel, and how do thee bide?  
“I travel God’s ship to the shore of eternity,  
...sinner to sinner, to destiny ride.”

Come, wandering Jew, come sing of thy sorrow,  
Come loosen thy trouble, unburden thy woe,  
Come, share my cold bundle, and stay til the morrow,  
Thy chill will pass over, and together we’ll go.

Come, wandering Jew, for the day is upon me,  
Come welcome thy sunrise, come leave thy dark shroud.  
Come, tell me what reason the smile be upon thee,  
And why thee do linger so stiff and so proud?

SIDE II, Band 5: **THE BIG MUD TURTLE**

As sung by Negro employees at the General Refractories Brick Company in 1943.  
The song was recorded by Fiddler Beers while also working in the factory.

I went to the river, and what did I see?  
A big mud turtle was a lookin’ at me  
A big mud turtle was a starin’ at me.  
Go home, go home, he said to me,  
Go home little boy (black boy), and let me be,  
Go home little boy, and set me free.

Well, I went in the cotton, and what did I see?

A big fat coon was a lookin' at me.

A big fat coon was a starin' at me.

Go home, go home, he said to me,

Go home little boy and let me be,

Go home little boy, and set me free.

Well, I went in the simmons (persimmons),

And what did I see?

A big lazy possum was a lookin' at me,

A big lazy possum was a starin' at me.

Go home, go home, he said to me,

Go home little boy, and let me be,

Go home little boy, and set me free.

Well, I went down to hell, and what did I see?

A big red devil was a lookin' at me.

A big red devil was a starin' at me.

Go home, go home, he said to me,

Go home little boy and let me be,

Go home little boy, I'm a settin', you free.

Well, I went up to heavin', and what did I see?

Them pearly gates was op'nin' for me,

Them pearly gates was a swingin' for me.

Come home, come home, they said to me,  
Come home little boy, we're a waitin' for thee,  
Come home little boy, we're a settin' you free.

Goin' home, goin' home, I'm a goin' home.  
I'm a goin' home cause they're waitin' for me,  
I'm goin' home cause, at last, I'm free!

SIDE II, Band 6: **THE CASTLE GRAND**

The second of two songs given to Evelyne by May Kennedy McCord of Springfield, Missouri.

He came from his palace grand,  
And he came to my cottage door.  
His words they were few, but his looks,  
They will linger forever more.

With a smile in his sad dark eyes,  
More tender than words could be,  
But I was nuthin' to him,  
Tho he was the world to me.

And there in his garden strolled,  
All robed in her satins and lace,  
Lady Mary, so strange and cold,  
Who held in his heart no place.

For I would have been his bride,  
With a kiss for a lifetime fee,  
But I was nuthin' to him,  
Tho he was the world to me.

And now in his palace grand,  
On a flower strewn bed he lies,  
With his beautiful lids fast closed  
O'er his beautiful, sad, dark eyes.

Among the mourners who mourned,  
Why should I a mourner be,  
For I was nuthin' to him,  
Tho he was the world to me.

And how will it be with our souls  
When we meet in that spirit land?  
What the human heart ne'r knows  
Will the spirit then understand?

Or in some celestial form,  
Will our sorrows repeated be,  
Will I still be nuthin' to him,  
Tho he is the world to me?

SIDE II, Band 7: THE LITTLE RED LARK OF THE MOUNTAIN

An exquisite Irish song, as sung by the late George Sullivan, grandfather of Fiddler Beers.

Oh, swan of loveliness, dove of tenderness,  
Ruby of joys, arise.

The little red lark, like a glimmering spark,  
Doth soar in the summer skies, the skies,  
Doth soar in the summer skies.

But, 'til he be risen, the earth be a prison,  
Until the cold night wind dies,  
Then, rise up and discover, the sun, and his lover,  
And morning of countless eyes, of eyes,  
And morning of countless eyes.

Oh heather so tenderly kisses the honey-bee,  
Into the break of day,  
Rise up, rise up, from thy dewy cup,  
And dazzle me fair, I pray, oh pray,  
And dazzle me fair, I pray.

And while thou do dazzle me, here's a new song to thee,  
Passion so bonnie and gay.  
The meadow doth listen, and dewy drops glisten,  
And all on a summer's day, oh day,  
And all on a summer's day.

THE LEATHERMAN .....	2:35
THE LARK IN THE MORN .....	1:33
WALKIE IN THE PARLOR .....	1:49
HINDSIDE BEFORE.....	1:06
MY LAS' RIDE COMIN' ON THE HEAVENLY TRAIN.....	1:28
RETURN FROM THE DEEP .....	2:57
THE SAILOR BOY .....	3:24
SULPHUR MOLASSES .....	2:45
THE OLD SOLDIER .....	0:32
OLD JIM GRAY .....	2:09
JOHNNY CAME A-COURTIN' .....	3:31
LORD RANDALL .....	3:38
THE WANDERING JEW .....	2:00
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THE CASTLE GRAND .....	2:47
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