



Sing Out!

Mark Elliott

v.50/3

Pickin' Blackberries

Cub Creek Records 1967

Mark's finely crafted songs really shone in this crisp production of well played, folk-bluegrass. He's joined by a tight band that includes Pete Huttlinger (John Denver) on guitar and others on bass, mandolin, banjo, vocals and more. With a clear but slightly craggy voice, Mark sings uplifting songs about love through the years (the title cut), a banjo driven song about an orphan train, and a sly ode to redneck therapy. The latter, "Redneck Rehab," tells of a guy who only needs a six pack, a bass boat and definitely a visit to the race track. There's warm, nostalgic perspective in "When Christmas Trees Were Tall" and a view from a young Civil War soldier in "Yankeetown"; the last verse ending poignantly, "I swear I Can hear/A bugle boy blow Dixie and angels drawing near." Say amen to "Not All who Wander Are Lost," a great gospel tune featuring some solid backing vocals by the McCrary Sisters. There's a Celtic flavor to 'Red River Rose,' a song written by Jim Moran and Ken Forsythe, one of the few tunes Mark didn't have a hand in writing. Buy this album for all of these great songs but especially "Stealing God," a quietly emotional ballad that links suicide bombers with the murder of Mathew Sheppard. Highly recommended. - JA