



Partington & Sweeney - Commonplaces

Commonplaces is inspired by the centuries-old practice of commonplacing or recording wisdom and ideas for later recollection in notebooks that bear the name "commonplaces."

Mary Lee Partington & Ed Sweeney tell stories of immigrants, farmers and factory workers during 19th & 20th century America, where self-educated mill girls earn their own keep, an orphan endures to tell her tale, where old ballads have taken root and where migrants go farther west.

November 1, 2020 Release

1. **The Manchester Mule Spinner*** (5:00) recalls a young mill worker who leaves Britain's 19th century "Cottonopolis" (another name for Manchester, UK) for a new life in the factories of New England.
2. **Times Are Getting Hard, Boys**** (2:50) is a Dust Bowl Era (1930 – 1940) song. Severe drought along with the destruction of grasslands gave rise to deadly dust storms that swept across the American and Canadian prairies. By 1940 over 2.5 million people had lost everything - homes, farms and livestock - and migrated to the West Coast.
3. **Young but Daily A Growing**** (3:20) is a traditional ballad that crossed the Atlantic with early settlers in America. The song's setting casts a dark shadow over a bride's ambitions.
4. **Deer Island*** (6:30) in Boston Harbor held thousands of Famine-era Irish in quarantine. Emigrants and exiles, sick and dying, perished in great numbers only to be buried beneath wooden markers that weathered away. This song tells the tale of a young Irish emigrant who haunts the cliffs.
5. **New England's Daughter*** (4:29) is a part historic, part tragic figure stitched from the legacy of young mill girls who faced or faced down foremen and factory owners among the looms and spindles.
6. **Like Bread Upon the Water*** (2:45) is drawn from the pages of the Blackstone River Valley autobiographical novel *Three Holes In The Chimney*. A young Ann May reflects on harsh treatment on a Yankee farm where she is sent after the death of her mother.
7. **So Here's To You***** (4:25) is by Alan Bell, beloved folk singer/songwriter from the North West of England. We first sang this song with our friend Bridget Fitzgerald, a sean nós singer from County Galway who currently lives near Boston.

* Written by Mary Lee Partington, ** Public Domain, *** Written by Alan Bell

Musicians: **Mary Lee Partington** - Vocals, **Ed Sweeney** - 6 String Guitar. 5 String Banjo
Guest Artists: **Sheila Falls**, Fiddle, **Torrin Ryan** - Uilleann Pipes, Flute, Whistle

Ed Sweeney is a solo musician who performs nationally and internationally. His music has been heard on television soundtracks, Ken Burns' *Not for Ourselves Alone*, and even as background music in Disneyland Paris. Ed's recordings, which have earned top reviews, have been featured on NPR and other radio networks.



Mary Lee Partington was the voice, songwriter and tunesmith for the internationally acclaimed New England-based group **Pendragon**. In addition, Mary Lee's award-winning music was featured in the National Park Service series *Along the Blackstone*.

RADIO PROMOTION

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