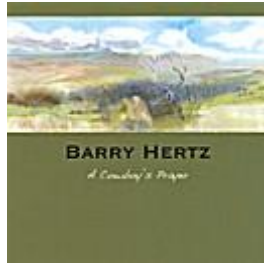


Mp3 Barry Hertz - A Cowboy's Prayer



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Guitar, bass, and fiddle weave their subtle magic over and around the lyrics of Badger Clark, evoking imagery of the vast open spaces of Western mesa and plain. 11 MP3 Songs FOLK: Traditional Folk, COUNTRY: Western Details: Why a CD of songs from Badger Clark poems? In September of 2000, less than a month after releasing *Sure Cure*, my first CD, I happened to hear an old recording on National Public Radio. Badger was reading from *Ridin*, the first poem he ever published. The recording was from 1951, six years before he died. His poem sounded so lyrical that I wanted to set it to music. The next year, in the summer of 2001, I was browsing through a used bookstore in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, when I ran across a copy of *Clarks Sun and Saddle Leather*. I opened the 1920 edition to the preface which begins: Cowboys are the sternest critics of those who would represent the West. No hypocrisy, no bluff, no pose can evade them. Yet cowboys have made Badger Clarks songs their own. So readily have they circulated that often the man who sings the song could not tell you where it started. Many of the poems have become folk songs of the West, we may say of America, for they speak of freedom and the open. Generous has been the praise given *Sun and Saddle Leather*, but perhaps no criticism has summed up the work so satisfactorily as the comment of the old cowman who said, You can break me if theres a dead poem in the book, I read the hull of it. Who in H--- is this kid Clark, anyway? I dont know how he knowed, but he knows. That is what proves Badger Clark the real poet. He knows. Beyond his wonderful presentation of the West is the quality of universal appeal that makes his work real art. He has tied the West to the universe. Charles Badger Clark (1883 1957), wrote most of his more well-known poems, including *Ridin* and *A Cowboys Prayer*, when he was in his early twenties. He is one of the best known of the traditional cowboy poets. As far as I know, however, theres nothing written anywhere that says you have to be a cowboy to enjoy his poems. For myself, I too have the wind and the open skies of

the West in my blood. I guess that might be our connection or as the preface goes on to say: The spirit of them is eternal, the spirit of youth in the open the vast reach of Western mesa and plain that will always remain free the way it was when the world was new. The music here is rich in the acoustic sounds of guitar, steel string and classical, upright bass, fiddle, banjo and piano. It is music rooted in the wide-open spaces of the West. I hope you enjoy it.

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