



Eddy Lawrence **"Going To Water"** Snowplow Records

I last ran across, upstate New York based, Eddy Lawrence back in 1996, on his mostly acoustic, fifth album, **"Locals."** It seems that between then and now, he sang about **"Guitars, Guns and Groceries"** in 1998. The first thing that hits you with **"Going To Water"** is that the instrumentation he employs is much fuller, consisting of electric and acoustic guitars, electric bass, mandolin, drums, harmonica and sundry other items, all played by Lawrence. The Native American influenced liner artwork – a Natasha Smoke-Santiago painting titled *"Three Sisters"* - provides a clue as to the subjective slant of Lawrence's fourteen originals this time around. Yes, folks this is Eddy's tilt at *genuine Americana* – his ancestral bloodline includes Cherokee – and his songs require attentive listening to catch the numerous nuances. In fact a basic knowledge of Native American affairs will prove helpful in understanding some of the lyrical references in his songs. In the lyrically bitter opening cut "Five Dollar Indian" Lawrence tries to reconcile how those ancestors were [mis]treated [and cheated] with the words *"Breaking down my history, Into eighths and sixteenths,"* and goes on to mention the Dawes Commission Rolls [1893 - 1914], set up to arrange the transfer of land rights to the Five Civilised Tribes, including the Cherokee nation. Within decades, most of that land – *the eighths and sixteenths* - was in the ownership of white men. The aforementioned cover painting features a turtle, and darn if the second track isn't the lyrically negative "Turtles." *"Three sisters"* turn up in the lyric of "Your Own Frontier." It has long been an irritation to the Native American nations that the carvings of four presidents – "Four Faces" - should have taken place on Mount Rushmore, since that rocky outcrop lies within an area that is sacred to the Native American. The lines *"Four great white fathers telling great white lies"* and *"Like swastikas on a synagogue or a black church in flames"* amply give vent to this *eternally raw* wound. As for multitude of applications defined in "The Most Universal Solvent In The World," it can only be, and is that precious commodity that ensures survival - water. The Mohawk Native American radio station CKON, located near where Eddy lives, runs a radio bingo game and is undoubtedly the inspiration for "Radio Bingo." "Catching A Dream" contains references to many circular things – a dream catcher, traffic light lenses, a spinning ball, a roulette wheel – and deduces that dreams can come true, if the gamble works out. The distorted [heavy metal] guitar sounds that introduce "Gravity" are subsequently picked up by a pounding drum beat, while the lyrics furnish images of flight from the natural and man-made world, and draws the conclusion that all airborne things *return* to the ground eventually. For some species, the *return* to *Mother Earth* can include an element of risk. You have probably deduced already, that lyrically this album requires your undivided attention. As an interpretation of historical events, it seeks to present a truth that varies somewhat from the official version. Food for thought.....

Folkwax Rating 7 out of 10

Arthur Wood
Kerrville Kronikles 01/02