



## The Halifax Three "The Complete Halifax Three" Collector's Choice Music

"Complete," in this instance, amounts to the twelve-track [each] albums "**The Halifax Three**" and "**San Francisco Bay Blues**" released by Epic Records, respectively, in January and July 1963, augmented by "All The Good Times" from the trio's November 1963 single. The Trio, who hailed from Nova Scotia, consisted of Patrick La Croix, Richard Byrne and future Mugwump/Mama and Papa, Denny Doherty.

Based on the liner credits Byrne appears to have been the trio's driving force, musically, since, across the two albums, he is credited with arranging ten traditional songs and penning four others. The remaining material consists of cover songs from acknowledged folk performers of the day, including John Phillips, Mike Settle, Bob Gibson and Oscar Brand. As for the blues, Jesse Fuller's "San Francisco Bay Blues" was the opening cut of their sophomore album, while the aforementioned "All The Good Times" is an arrangement of the Huddie Ledbetter/John Lomax song "Good Night Irene."

These album appeared during the same era as recordings by The Cumberland Three, The Kingston Trio, The Clancy Brothers, The Journeymen, New Christy Minstrels and more, and as such fits into a category that I would [respectfully] term, *cabaret folk*. Although there was a concerted attempt to cover generic and ethnic material, sadly, the forced Irish accents and dated attempt at humour on cuts such as "Come Down The Mountain Katie Daly," make for a *one time only* hearing. "The Man Who Wouldn't Sing Along With Mitch" hails from similar territory. It's fascinating to note that, "Bull Run," the opening cut on their debut album was penned by John "Papa" Phillips, yet liner note writer Richard Barton Campbell fails to acknowledge the connection in his text.

These guys were fairly accomplished harmony singers, albeit in the *conventional folk* style of day. Half a decade later The Mamas And Papas, The Association, The Sunshine Company and the hardly acknowledged Curt Boettcher, and many others, would reinvent harmony singing. As for closing track "All The Good Times," I'll swear that I can hear Cass Elliot's voice and, historically, it is just possible that she contributed to the session.

"**The Complete Halifax Three**" is ideal as a sing-along disc, and you can *peel back* the years as you try to remember the lyrics to "All My Trials," "Fare-Thee-Well," and "Oh Mary Don't You Weep." As an artefact for Mamas And Papas fans, I guess it's akin to finding some long lost treasure.

Folkwax Rating 6 out of 10

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