

THE BLUE SKY BOYS 1939-1949 RADIO BROADCASTS

Patuxent Music
CD-280



It's high time for another Blue Sky Boys retrospective. Fifteen years after the Bear Family compilation of the duo's Bluebird and RCA Victor recordings, and more than 20 years after a Copper Creek radio compilation, Patuxent Music (Tom Mindte and Dick Spottswood producers) have released a wonderful four-CD, 128-track compilation of Bill and Earl Bolick's radio broadcasts between 1939 and 1949.

This is perhaps where the brothers shined best because, as Dick Spottswood writes in his liner notes, "Their broadcasts revisited traditional songs and hymns that were responsive to listener tastes and their own." We also get to hear the great trios with Curly Parker and later Leslie Keith. We have these recordings because the brothers originally recorded these 15-minute radio shows to disc for airplay on stations such as WGST in Atlanta and WCYB in Bristol.

Patuxent Music did a masterful job of transferring the discs to digital from the Southern Folklife Collection at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and now their available to all of us. This is a treasure of songs that influenced all of the later brother duos, including the Louvins and Ralph and Carter Stanley. And the radio ads where they sell their songbooks are a reminder that this was indeed a commercial enterprise.

The only thing I could have asked more of is the liner notes of Dick Spottswood, but that is easily remedied by his new biography of the Blue Sky Boys (also reviewed in this issue). Thanks to both Dick and Tom for a timely reminder of just how great Bill and Earl Bolick were and why they should be remembered and emulated by each generation. Highly recommended. (Patuxent Music, P.O. Box 572, Rockville, MD 20848, www.pxrec.com.)CVS