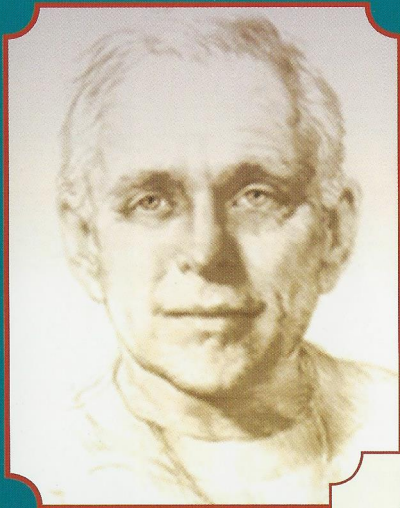


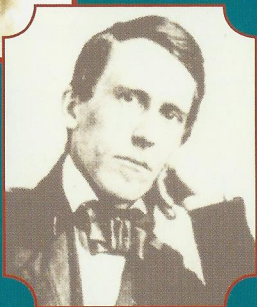
ARSIS



Baritone
RICHARD CONRAD

*Songs of
Stephen Foster*

with Soprano
ELLEN CHICKERING



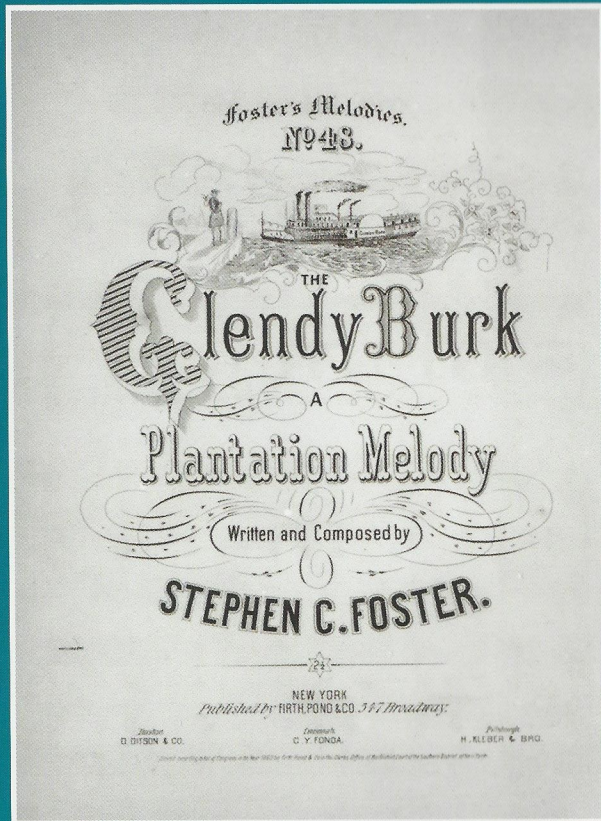
pianist
BEVERLY
ORLOVE

and soloists of
BOSTON ACADEMY
OF MUSIC

SONGS of STEPHEN FOSTER

baritone RICHARD CONRAD

with soprano ELLEN CHICKERING, pianist BEVERLY ORLOVE and soloists of BOSTON ACADEMY OF MUSIC



1	Oh! Susanna	2:07
2	Beautiful Dreamer	2:40
3	My Old Kentucky Home, Good Night!	6:06
4	Wilt Thou Be Gone, Love?	4:20
5	The Glendy Burk	2:22
6	Old Dog Tray	3:49
7	Old Folks at Home	4:28
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9	Camptown Races	2:21
10	Ah! May the Red Rose Live Away!	5:34
11	Maggie By My Side	3:15
12	Gentle Lena Clare	2:21
13	Open Thy Lattice Love	1:56
14	Nelly Was a Lady	3:51
15	Gentle Annie	3:20
16	Ring! Ring de Banjo!	2:02

Total CD Time: 55:00

The documented facts of the life of Stephen Collins Foster are few; the legends are many. He was born on July 4, 1826 (the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of The Declaration of Independence!) in Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. (The Foster home, where the composer was born, is now in Greenfield Village in Dearbourn, Michigan).

We do know that he was considered a “difficult” child, and although he had little formal musical training, he began composing at an early age. By 1850 a number of his songs had been published including the very successful *Oh! Susanna*, and he had signed a contract with the New York publishers, Firth, Pond & Co. 1850 was the year of his marriage, and he also entered into an agreement with E.P. Christy, Director of The Christy Minstrels, which allowed them the first performance of Foster’s songs. The following year his only child, a daughter, was born. In 1852, his single trip to the South took place when he and his wife and some friends took a steamboat down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans, where he remained but two days! Here the legends begin.

We know that from the late 1850’s until his death in 1864, Foster was often separated from his family and lived in various hotels in New York City. In this later period of his life, he was a very famous man and easy prey for the journalistic media. After his death, articles appeared everywhere extoling him as a sensitive artist who loved children, animals, his country, and his mother, and who was cheated by his publishers. The other side hurled invectives denouncing him as an untalented hack who plagiarized the works of others, and who drank himself to death in a sleazy rooming-house in New York.

Stephen Foster was the first American composer whose works were brought out in a complete edition, and the first musician to be nominated to the Hall of Fame for Great Americans. His musical compositions consist of *The Social Orchestra* (a collection of favorite songs and arias arranged as duets, trios, and quartets), *21 Sunday School Hymns*, and about 200 songs. The songs can be divided into two groups: “Parlor” songs and “Minstrel-show songs. The latter, of which there are 28, were written for northern “black-face” shows, and although the texts are mostly in “negro” dialect, the musical heritage is that of American, Irish, and English airs, folksongs, and dances of the 18th century. Some are nostalgic and sentimental, qualities found in abundance in the “Parlor” songs. There’s plenty of Victorian feeling here, with the mourning of departed loved-ones and the longing for bygone happy days. Two of the most sentimental of the minstrel songs, *Old Folks at Home* and *My Old Kentucky Home*, have been adopted as the official state songs of Florida and Kentucky. There are Civil War songs which strongly support the Union cause, and the *Sunday School Hymns* are full of pious goodness, and to modern ears they sound somewhat humorous. An interesting departure from the strophic form which Foster used almost exclusively in the songs is the *Romeo and Juliet* duet, *Wilt Thou Be Gone*. It is like a little Italianate operatic *scena*, and gives us an idea of what he might have done in that genre.

In this recording we have used Foster’s original compositions published by Firth, Pond & Co. The only editing has been in the dialect in a few of the minstrel songs (marked by [] brackets in the texts).

—Richard Conrad

TEXTS

Oh! Susanna (1848)

I came from Alabama Wid my banjo on my knee,
 I'm g'wan to Lou'siana My true love for to see,
 It rain'd all night the day I left, The weather it was dry,
 The sun so hot I froze to death; Susanna, don't you cry.
chorus: Oh! Susanna, Oh! dont you cry for me,
 I came from Alabama, Wid my Banjo on my knee.

I had a dream de odder night When ebery ting was still;
 I thought I saw Susanna, A coming down de hill.
 The buckwheat cake war in her mouth, The tear was in her eye,
 Says I'm coming from de South, Susanna, dont you cry.
chorus

I soon will be in New Orleans, And den I'll look all round,
 And when I find Susanna, I'll fall upon the ground.
 But if I do not find her, [Then I will] surely die,
 And when I'm dead and buried, Susanna dont you cry.
chorus

Beautiful Dreamer (1862)

Beautiful dreamer, wake unto me,
 Starlight and dewdrops are waiting for thee;
 Sounds of the rude world heard in the day,
 Lull'd by the moonlight have all pass'd away!
 Beautiful dreamer, queen of my song,
 List while I woo thee with soft melody;
 Gone are the cares of life's busy throng,
 Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!
 Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!

Beautiful dreamer, out on the sea
 Mermaids are chaunting the wild lorelie;
 Over the streamlet vapors are borne,
 Waiting to fade at the bright coming morn.
 Beautiful dreamer, beam on my heart,
 E'en as the morn on the streamlet and sea;
 Then will all clouds of sorrow depart,
 Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!
 Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!

My Old Kentucky Home, Good Night! (1853)

The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home, 'Tis summer, [we're happy and] gay,
 The corn top's ripe and the meadow's in the bloom While the birds make music all the day.
 The young folks roll on the little cabin floor, All merry, all happy and bright:
 By'n by Hard Times comes a knocking at the door, Then my old Kentucky Home, good night!

chorus: Weep no more, my lady, Oh! weep no more today!
 We will sing one song For the old Kentucky Home,
 For the old Kentucky Home, far away.

They hunt no more for the possum and the coon On the meadow, the hill and the shore,
 They sing no more by the glimmer of the moon, On the bench by the old cabin door.
 The day goes by like a shadow o'er the heart, With sorrow where all was delight:
 The time has come when [we all shall] have to part, Then my old Kentucky Home, good night!
chorus

The head must bow and the back will have to bend, Wherever, [wherever we] go:
 A few more days, and the trouble all will end In the field where the sugar canes grow.
 A few more days for to tote the weary load, No matter 'twill never be light,
 A few more days till we totter on the road, Then my old Kentucky Home, good night
chorus

Wilt Thou Be Gone, Love? (from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*)

Juliet

Wilt thou be gone, wilt thou be gone, love, gone, love, from me?
 Stay! 'tis the Nightingale that sings in yonder tree.
 Deem not 'tis the Lark, love; day is not yet near
 Believe me, 'tis the Nightingale whose song hath piered thine ear.
 Wilt thou be gone, wilt thou be gone, love, wilt thou be gone from me?
 Stay! 'tis the Nightingale that sings in yonder tree.
 Love, 'tis the Nightingale, love, 'tis the Nightingale, love,
 'tis the Nightingale that sings in yonder tree.
 Wilt thou be gone, wilt thou be gone, love, gone, love, from me gone, love, from me?
 Wilt thou be gone, wilt thou be gone, love, wilt thou be gone from me?
 Stay! 'tis the Nightingale that sings in yonder tree.

Romeo

I must be gone, love, I must be gone from thee
'Tis not the nightingale that sings in yonder tree.
'Tis the Lark, 'tis the Lark, 'tis the Lark, 'tis the Lark, love, that sings in yonder tree.
I must be gone, I must be gone, love, gone, love from thee gone, love, from thee.
It is the Lark, the herald of the morn, love; no Nightingale.
See! the clouds are bright'ning, the stars are growing pale
Day is on yon mountain top that veils the eastern sky
I must be gone and live, love, or stay with thee and die.
I must be gone, I must be gone, love, I must be gone from thee.
'Tis not the Nightingale that sings in yonder tree.
'Tis the Lark, 'tis the Lark, 'tis the Lark, 'tis the Lark, love, that sings in yonder tree.
I must be gone, I must be gone, love, I must be gone, love, from thee.

The Glendy Burk (1860)

De Glendy Burk is a mighty fast boat, Wid a mighty fast captain too;
He sits up dah on de hurricane roof And he keeps his eye on de crew.
I cant stay here, for dey work too hard; I'm bound to leave dis town;
I'll take my duds and tote 'em on my back When de Glendy Burk comes down.

chorus: Ho! for Lou'siana! I'm bound to leave dis town;
I'll take my duds and tote 'em on my back When de Glendy Burk comes down.

De Glendy Burk has a funny old crew And dey sing de boatman's song,
Dey burn de pitch and de pine knot too, For to shove de boat along.
De smoke goes up and de ingine roars And de wheel goes round and round,
So fair you well! for I'll take a little ride When de Glendy Burk comes down.

chorus

I'll work all night in de wind and storm, I'll work all day in de rain,
Till I find myself on de levy dock In New Orleans again.
Dey make me mow in de hay field here And knock my head wid de flail,
I'll go wha dey work wid de sugar and de cane And roll on de cotton bale.

chorus

My lady love is as pretty as a pink, I'll meet her on de way
I'll take her back to de sunny old south And dah I'll make her stay
So dont you fret my honey dear, Oh! dont you fret Miss Brown
I'll take you back 'fore de middle of de week When de Glendy Burk comes down.

chorus

Old Dog Tray (1853)

The morn of life is past, And evening comes at last;
It brings me a dream of a once happy day,
Of merry forms I've seen Upon the village green,
Sporting with my old dog Tray.
chorus: Old dog Tray's ever faithful, Grief cannot drive him away,
He's gentle, he is kind; I'll never, never find
A better friend than old dog Tray.

The forms I call'd my own Have vanished one by one,
The lov'd ones, the dear ones have all passed away,
Their happy smiles have flown, Their gentle voices gone;
I've nothing left but old dog Tray.

chorus

When thoughts recall the past His eyes are on me cast;
I know that he feels what my breaking heart would say:
Although he cannot speak I'll vainly, vainly seek
A better friend than old dog Tray.

chorus

Old Folks at Home (1851)

Way down upon de Swanee ribber, Far, far away,
Dere's wha my heart is turning ebber, Dere's wha de old folks stay.
All up and down de whole creation, [Sadly I] roam,
Still longing for de old plantation, And for de old folks at home.
chorus: All de world am sad and dreary, Ebry where I roam,
Oh! [how my lonely] heart grows weary, Far from de old folks at home.

All round de little farm I wandered When I was young,
Den many happy days I squandered, Many de songs I sung.
When I was playing wid my brudder Happy was I
Oh! take me to my kind old mudder, Dere let me live and die.

chorus

One little hut among de bushes, One dat I love,
Still sadly to my mem'ry rushes, No matter where I rove
When will I see de bees a humming All round de comb?
When will I hear de banjo tumming Down in my good old home?

chorus

Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair (1854)

I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Borne, like a vapor, on the summer air;
I see her tripping where the bright streams play,
Happy as the daisies that dance on her way.
Many were the wild notes her merry voice would pour.
Many were the blithe birds that warbled them o'er:
Oh! I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Floating, like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

I long for Jeanie with the day dawn smile,
Radiant in gladness, warm with winning guile;
I hear her melodies, like joys gone by,
Sighing round my heart o'er the fond hopes that die:
Sighing like the night wind and sobbing like the rain,
Wailing for the lost one that comes not again:
Oh! I long for Jeanie, and my heart bows low,
Never more to find her where the bright waters flow.

I sigh for Jeanie, but her light form strayed
Far from the fond hearts round her native glad;
Her smiles have vanished and her sweet songs flown,

Flitting like the dreams that have cheered us and gone.
Now the nodding wild flowers may wither on the shore
While her gentle fingers will cull them not more:
Oh! I sigh for Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Floating like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

Camptown Races (1850)

De Camptown ladies sing dis song Doo-dah! doo-dah!
De Camptown race track five miles long Oh! doo-dah-day!
I come down dah wid my hat caved in Doo-dah! doo-dah!
I go back home wid a pocket full of tin Oh! doo-dah-day!
chorus: Gwine to run all night! Gwine to run all day!
I'll bet my money on de bob-tail nag Somebody bet on de bay.

De long tail filly and de big black hoss Doo-dah! doo-dah!
Dey fly de track and dey both cut across Oh! doo-dah-day!
De blind hoss sticken in a big mud hole Doo-dah! doo-dah!
Can't touch bottom wid a ten foot pole Oh! doo-dah-day!
chorus

Old muley cow come on to de track Doo-dah! doo-dah!
De bob tail fling her ober his back Oh! doo-dah-day!
Den fly along like a railroad car Doo-dah! doo-dah!
Runnin a race wid a shootin' star Oh! doo-dah-day!
chorus

See dem flyin' on a ten mile heat Doo-dah! doo-dah!
Round de race track, den repeat Oh! doo-dah-day!
I win my money on de bob-tail nag Doo-dah! doo-dah
I keep my money in an old tow-bag Oh! doo-dah-day!

Ah! May the Red Rose Live Alway (1850)

Ah! may the red rose live alway, To smile upon earth and sky!
Why should the beautiful ever weep? Why should the beautiful die?
Lending a charm to ev'ry ray That falls on her cheeks of light,
Giving the zephyr kiss for kiss, And nursing the dew drop bright
Ah! may the red rose live alway, To smile upon the earth and sky!
Why should the beautiful ever weep? Why should the beautiful die?

Long may the daisies dance the field, Frolicking far and near!
Why should the innocent hide their heads? Why should the innocent fear?
Spreading their petals in mute delight When morn in its radiance breaks,
Keeping a floral festival Till night loving primrose wakes
Long may the daisies dance the field, Frolicking far and near!
Why should the innocent hide their heads? Why should the innocent fear?

Lulled be the dirge in the cypress bough, That tells of departed flowers!
Ah! that the butterfly's gilded wing Fluttered in evergreen bowers!
Sad is my heart for the blighted plants Its pleasures are aye as brief
They bloom at the young years joyful call, And fade with the autumn leaf:
Ah! may the red rose live alway, To smile upon earth and sky!
Why should the beautiful ever weep? Why should the beautiful die?

Maggie By My Side (1852)

The land of my home is flitting, Flitting from my view;
A gale in the sails is sitting, Toils the merry crew.
Here let my home be, On the waters wide:
I roam with a proud heart; Maggie's by my side;
My own love, Maggie dear, Sitting by my side
Maggie dear, my own love, Sitting by my side.

The wind howling o'er the billow From the distant sea,
The storm raging 'round my pillow Brings no care to me.
Roll on ye dark waves, O'er the troubled tide:
I heed not your anger, Maggie's by my side;

My own love, Maggie dear. Sitting by my side;
Maggie dear, my own love, Sitting by my side.

Storms can appal me never While her brow is clear:
Fair weather lingers ever Where her smiles appear
When sorrow's breakers 'Round my heart shall hide,
Still may I find her Sitting by my side.
My own love, Maggie dear. Sitting by my side;
Maggie dear, my own love, Sitting by my side.

Gentle Lena Clare (1862)

I'm thinking of sweet Lena Clare, With deep blue eyes and waving hair,
Her voice is soft, her face is fair My gentle Lena Clare.
chorus: Gentle Lena Clare My dear lov'd Lena Clare
Her heart is light, her eyes are bright, My gentle Lena Clare.

I love her careless winning ways, I love her wild and bird-like lays,
I love the grass whereon she strays My gentle Lena Clare.
chorus

Her home is in the shady glen, When summer comes I'll seek again,
On mountain height and lowland plain; My gentle Lena Clare.
chorus

Open Thy Lattice Love (1844)

Open thy lattice love, listen to me!
The cool balmy breeze is abroad on the sea!
The moon like a queen, roams her realms of blue,
And the stars keep their vigils in heaven for you
Ere morn's gushing light tips the hills with its ray,
Away o'er the waters away and away!
Then open thy lattice, love listen to me!
While the moon's in the sky and breeze on the sea!

Open thy lattice, love listen to me!
In the voyage of life, love our pilot will be!
He will sit at the helm wherever we rove,
And steer by the load-star he kindled above
His shell for a shallop will cut the bright spray,
Or skim like a bird o'er the waters away;
Then open thy lattice, love listen to me!
While the moon's in the sky and breeze on the sea!

Nelly Was a Lady (1849)

Down on de Mississippi floating, Long time I trabble on de way,
All night de cotton wood a toting, Sing for my true lub all de day.

chorus: Nelly was a lady Last night she died,

Toll de bell for lubly Nell My dark Virginny bride.

Now I'm unhappy and I'm weeping, Can't tote de cotton wood no more;
Last night, while Nelly was a sleeping, Death came a knockin at de door.

chorus

Down in de meadow mong de clober, Walk wid my Nelly by my side;
Now all dem happy days am ober; Farewell my dark Virginny bride.

chorus

Gentle Annie (1856)

Thou wilt come no more, gentle Annie, Like a flower thy spirit did depart;
Thou are gone, alas! like the many That have bloomed in the summer of my heart.

chorus: Shall we never more behold thee; Never hear thy winning voice again

When the Spring time comes, gentle Annie,

When the wild flowers are scattered o'er the plain?

We have roamed and loved mid the bowers When thy downy cheeks were in their bloom;
Now I stand alone mid the flowers While they mingle their perfumes o'er thy tomb.

chorus

Ah! the hours grow sad while I ponder Near the silent spot where thou are laid,
And my heart bows down when I wander By the streams and the meadows where we strayed.

chorus

Ring, Ring de Banjo! (1851)

De time is nebber dreary If [a fella] nebber groans;
De ladies nebber weary Wid de rattle ob de bones;
Den ome again Susanna By de gaslight ob de moon;
We'll tum de old Piano When de banjo's out ob tune.

chorus: Ring, ring de banjo! I like dat good old song,

Come again my true lub, Oh! whar you been so long.

Oh! nebber count de bubbles While der's water in de spring;
[A man] hab no troubles While he's got dis song to sing.

De beauties ob creation Will nebber lose der harm
While I roam de old plantation Wid my true lub on my arm.

chorus

My lub, I'll hab to leabe you While de ribber's running high;
But I nebber can deceibe you So don't you wipe your eye.

I's guine to make some money; But I'll come anodder day

I'll come again my honey, If I hab to work my way.

chorus

RICHARD CONRAD made his debut in opera and in concert in 1961. Since then he has enjoyed a widely varied career as singer, actor, stage director, impresario, writer, and teacher. Though perhaps best known as a specialist in the bel canto repertoire of the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries, he is also renowned for his performances of operetta (especially the works of Gilbert and Sullivan and of Victor Herbert), 20th century composers (including many world premieres of the music of Daniel Pinkham), and the classic musical theater composers (Coward, Porter, Kern, Gershwin, etc.). He has made numerous recordings ranging from operatic works of Handel and the bel canto composers, songs of Arthur Sullivan and of Noel Coward, and American opera (Barber's *Vanessa* and Pinkham's *A Cask of Amontillado*, the latter written especially for him). As a stage director, he has been praised for his productions of Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera*, Puccini's *Il Trittico* and *La fanciulla del west*, and Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial by Jury/The Sorcerer* and *The Mikado*. He was chosen by <Opera on Line.us> as the best leading male performer of 2004-2005 season, (for *Gianni Schicchi*) and as best leading male performer, best stage director, and best moment in opera of 2005-2006 (for *The Mikado*).

ELLEN CHICKERING sang many of the great prima donna roles with Boston Academy of Music in Verdi's *La forza del destino* and *Un ballo in maschera*, Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* (Elisabetta) and *Anna Bolena*, Puccini's *Suor Angelica* and *La fanciulla del west*, Strauss' *Arabella*, and Barber's *Vanessa*. She has also performed with the Minnesota Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Kansas City Lyric Opera, Commonwealth Opera, and Connecticut Concert Opera. She has traveled to Japan for four concert tours and to Kiev to sing and record the title role in Barber's *Vanessa* with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine. Ms. Chickering is Associate Professor of Voice at the University of Southern Maine and directs the apprentice program of Portland Opera Repertory Theater.

BEVERLY ORLOVE grew up in Alabama and is a graduate of The Julliard School of Music. For many years (as Beverly Gibbons) she was the leading accompanist and chamber music pianist in Atlanta, Georgia, and worked closely with Robert Shaw. In 1980 she moved to Boston where she has performed with Opera Company of Boston, Boston Lyric Opera, Boston Academy of Music, and Bostonian Opera and Concert Ensemble.

SOLOISTS of BOSTON ACADEMY OF MUSIC

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BOSTON ACADEMY OF MUSIC was founded by Lowell Mason in the 1830s, becoming an important and influential organization in the city's early cultural life. Richard Conrad refounded the Academy in 1980 as a repertory concert and opera company. For twenty-three years Boston Academy presented many New England premieres: choral works, songs, chamber music, and Strauss' *Arabella*, Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*, Rossini's *La pietra del paragone* and *L'italiana in Algeri*, Verdi's *La forza del destino* (the original "Russian" version), and the first performance in America of Arthur Sullivan's *Ivanhoe*. The Academy also gave the world premiere of early sacred works of Vincenzo Bellini and of the opera, *A Cask of Amontillado* by Daniel Pinkham. In the decade of the 1990s, Boston Academy was continually on the "Best of the Year" lists of the Boston press. In 2003, the company's vocal and instrumental soloists joined Richard Conrad in forming The Bostonian Opera and Concert Ensemble.

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RING OF BANJO

NEW ETHIOPIAN MELODY
WORDS AND MUSIC BY
S. C. Foster.

Author of "NELLY WAS A LADY, NELLY BLY," ETC.

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Conrad
Orlove Chickering