

# The Young Tradition

## Oberlin 1968

Fledg'ling Records (70 mins)



Lost concert from *legendary*  
*hardcore folk* trio



It's the 1960s. They wear swinging, Carnaby Street clobber. Their performances are famously forthright and intense, yet funny and entertaining. They record three albums, then split because of the proverbial musical differences. Later, one dies by his own hand, another following a car-crash. The surviving member lives in New York. Sounds all very rock'n'roll.

But The Young Tradition weren't a rock band, but a hardcore folk outfit. Royston Wood, Heather Wood (no relation) and Peter Bellamy sang English ballads and shanties unaccompanied and in harmony.

Sadly, given their reputation as a live act, The Young Tradition made no live albums. Happily, on November 17 1968, Steve Mayer recorded them at Oberlin College, a music conservatory in Ohio, and kept the tape for the next 45 years. It is his recording that the enterprising Fledg'ling Records have released as a CD. Mayer missed the beginning, but there are 25 tracks, solos and group songs. These include 'Banks of Claudy', 'The Banks of the Nile', two sets of shanties and 'Idumea', a Sacred Harp song they picked up in Washington.

The singers are enjoying themselves and their audience responds enthusiastically. Unfortunately none of the introductions are included, so we don't quite get the whole experience of an evening with The Young Tradition.

JULIAN MAY

◀ TRY *Banks of Claudy*