

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Them Stars

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How often I've laid on the prairie and watched 'em go sweeping around
My bronco a dosin' beside me and nary a breeze nor a whisper of sound
I've learnt the main bunch of the heavenly ranches,

 there's Jupiter, Venus and Mars

Religion?

He don't know it's primary branches,
 what ain't been alone with the stars

Some clusters is branded, the Dipper.

 the Lion, the Eagle, the Sarpent, the Bear

The Horns O' the Bull and the Belt O' Orion,
 and Cassie O' Whats Her Name Chair

But lots of 'ems mav'ricks roamin' the ranges, stampeded all over the sky
No part of the big panorama that changes from winter to summer, and why?

Well maybe it's gospel and maybe be sold me, but here's the whole
 story at least,

That Big Chief Citola he told to me the night of the corn-planting
 feast

When all of the mountains was set in their stations an' threaded with
 canyons and rills

The star worlds, the last of the mighty creations was layin' in heaps on
 the hills

In masses of silver, gold and of copper, shining and polished and new
Poured out on the granite like corn from the hopper, a-waitin' their place
 in the blue

First come the Bear o' the Mountain who faces the North from his cave afar
He lifted his paws to the heavenly spaces an' laid out his picture in stars
Then over the peaks of the Western Dominion the Eagle who battles the storm
Flew up to the heavens with star dusted pinions and printed the line of his
 form

Next that the tribes and nations should wonder, the Buffalo leaped to the
 sky

That shag headed bison whose beller is thunder emblazoned him image on high

Well maybe it's gospel and maybe he sold me, but here's the whole
 story at least

That Big Chief Citola he told to we the night of the corn-planting
 feast

And then came coyote so crafty and clever, a scalawag all the way through
That yap throated critical varmint who never is pleased with what other
folks do

Sez he "Them Stars was intended to brighten the outermost reaches of night
And you go and use 'em in pictures to heighten your glory and that isn't
right"

Sez he "I'll show you how Stars should be planted" and he jumped in the
glittering piles

He kicked and he gamboled, he danced and he rambled and he scattered 'em
millions of miles

So that's why they glimmer at sixes and sevens, stamped all over the
vault

A lastin' disgrace to the orderly heavens, and it's all that coyote chaps
fault

Well maybe it's gospel and maybe he sold me, but here's the whole
story at least

That Big Chief Citola he told to we the night of the corn-planting
feast

From Margaret MacArthur CD, _Them Stars_, Whetstone Records, 1996

(Tune by Margaret MacArthur, (c) 1996, words: traditional)

She found the poem, "Star Planters" in the Ben Gray Lumpkin archives at the
University of Colorady in 1983. It was contributed by Emma Rachel Moomaw
Hutchins in 1964 as a song collected by Hazel Ecker of Green River, Utah.
Unable to forget the verses and unable to contact either of these women,
MacArthur was eventually wrote the tune.

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