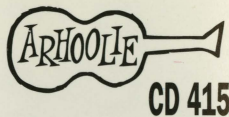


# Wallace "Cheese" Read

## Cajun House Party



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2. ONE STEP A CHAUMONT (3:10)
3. LES VEUVES DE LA COULEE (3:05)
4. READ'S TWO-STEP (3:12)
5. TOLAN WALTZ (3:07)
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7. BOSCO STOMP (3:10)
8. CHERE MAMA CREOLE (2:50)
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18. PARTING WALTZ (3:10)
19. SAUTE CRAPEAU (1:35)
20. LA BRANCHE DU MURIER (1:40)
21. CHÈRE MEON (1:55)
22. MADAME SOSTHENE (1:37)
23. CHÈRE TOUT-TOUTE (3:00)



24. MAMOU BREAKDOWN  
(Perrodin Two-Step) (1:55)
25. LA VALSE DE MAUVAISE  
PENCHANT (Drunkard's Waltz) (2:32)
26. MON COER (EST BARRÉ)  
DANS L'ARMOIRE (4:38)
27. BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS (:58)
28. CHÈRE BÈBÈ (3:22)
29. VALSE DE L'ANSE MAIGRE  
(Mauvaise / Evil One) (2:25)

Total playing time: 78:45

#1-7, 15 & 16: Wallace "Cheese" Read – vocal & fiddle; Marc Savoy – accordion (fiddle on 15 & 16); John Stelly – guitar (& vocal on #3 & 6). Recorded at Mr. Read's home, north of Eunice, by Chris Strachwitz on May 7, 1979.

#8-14 & 17: Wallace "Cheese" Read – vocal & fiddle; Marlyn Manuel – guitar; Harry LaFleur – bass; Esten Bellow – drums. Recorded at the Savoy Music Center, east of Eunice, La. by

(Continued inside on page 10)

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# WALLACE "Cheese" Read

## Cajun House Party







Wallace "Cheese" Read

## Wallace "Cheese" Read

### *Cajun House Party*

You probably won't see Cheese Read at the local dance halls around Eunice because he is not a professional musician. He prefers to play music at home or at parties with a few friends. But a more powerful singer or a more precise, knowledgeable fiddle player couldn't be found in Southwest Louisiana.

Wallace "Cheese" Read was born in Eunice, La., on August 12, 1924, a very pure era in the history of Cajun music due to the people's isolation from the outer world. There were mostly fiddles in the area (accordions became popular somewhat later) and the tunes were still those remembered by the French, Irish, German and Spanish descendants living around Eunice.

Cheese's grandfather was from Germany and settled in the Eunice-Prairie Rhonde area where he practiced medicine. Through his contact

with the local people he learned the language and the music. It was from him that Cheese eventually acquired the fiddle he has today. Cheese's great grandmother was from Bordeaux, France, and Cheese says that the earliest settlers around the Prairie Rhonde region were not from Canada but from Europe. The actual Acadians settled further in the Bayou country and only later drifted up to the prairies.

As a teenager in the 1930s Cheese and his father went to black dances on many occasions and it was here that Cheese realized that he really wanted to express himself through music. He heard jazz, blues, and French music played on fiddles and washboards. At one of these dances Cheese made the acquaintance of Adam Fontenot, an accordion player who taught many young musicians to play the accordion. His son, Canray Fontenot, is a well-known fiddler heard on Arhoo-



lie CD/C 381. Cheese also recalls a singer named Oliver Edwards, whose strong vocal style Cheese tried to imitate.

It didn't take Cheese long to figure out that he had music in his soul, and at the age of twelve he began playing harmonica. Not long thereafter he got a fiddle which he figured out how to tune himself. He formed his first band when he was fifteen years old. The young band consisted of himself on fiddle, a banjo player, and a guitarist. Cheese loved the music of the Breaux family (which included Amédée Breaux on accordion, Cleoma Breaux, who married Joe Falcon, on guitar, and several brothers), the Robins, and especially Mayeus Lafleur.

As a young man Cheese was also greatly influenced by fiddlers Leo Soileau, J.B. Fusilier, Harry Choates, and Luderin Darbone of the Hackberry Ramblers. Bob Wills was also one of his favorites and Cheese played in a band with some of Bob Wills' musicians when he was in the service in Amarillo, Texas.

So, as Cheese says, the style of music he plays "makes history." It is a melange of many styles that Cheese has heard and loved throughout his life. As you listen you will hear pieces of the old fiddle styles of Dennis McGee, of the strong and peppy band sound of the Hackberry Ramblers, and of the polished, smooth sounds of Bob Wills and Harry Choates. You will also hear a New Orleans blues sound on "Keep A Knocking" and a variety of other influences all pulled together to form the unique and powerful sound of Cheese Read.

*(Ann Savoy, Eunice, La., 1979)*

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***Producer's note:***

I first heard "Cheese" Read in the early 1960s when I bought a copy of Harry Oster's album entitled **Folksongs of the Louisiana Acadians** (now available with many additional selections on Arhoolie CD/C 359). Two players on that record, Cheese Read and Chuck Guillory, really stood out as great fiddlers and singers and their sounds kept haunting me.



*Cheese Read with Ethel Lee Fruge, ca. 1970s.*



In 1979 I met Cheese Read and recorded an album (Arhoolie LP/C 5021) where on one side Cheese was joined by Marc Savoy on accordion and second fiddle (on a few cuts) and on the other side Cheese was backed by a rhythm section without the accordion. That entire album is on this CD along with a number of previously unreleased selections by Cheese Read recorded by Dr. Harry Oster at

various house parties in Mamou, La., during the late 1950s when Harry was documenting the regional folk traditions of southwest Louisiana. Wallace "Cheese" Read died in Eunice, La. on November 15, 1981, and this recording is dedicated to his memory and the wonderful musical legacy he shared and left behind for future generations to enjoy.

(Chris Strachwitz - 1994)

## Some of the Songs:

### Tolan Waltz

Hé, 'tite fille, moi je connais  
Ça t'as fait, il y a pas longtemps  
Tu vas pleurer, il sera trop tard  
Malheureuse, pour ça t'as fait.

Hé, chérie, tu m'as quiné  
Il y a pas longtemps, vilaine manière  
Ça t'as fait un jour va venir  
Tu vas revenir en demandant  
des pardons.

Hey, little girl, me I know  
What you did, it wasn't long ago  
You're going to cry, (it will be too late  
Unhappy one) for what you did.

Hey, my darling, you left me  
It wasn't long ago, one with ugly ways,  
For what you did, a day will come  
When you'll come back asking for my  
forgiveness.

### Bosco Stomp

Il y en a des 'tites brunes  
Il y en a des 'tites blondes  
Il y en a qui est si brunes,  
Oue moi, je peux pas les voir  
C'est ça qui me fait du mal.

Ils vont te faire les aimer  
Ils vont te faire des promesses  
Ils vont te faire des acroires  
Et là sa tournent le dos  
Et ça, ça me fait du mal

Il y en a des 'tites blondes  
Il y en a des 'tites brunes  
Il y en a qui est si blondes  
Cue le diable peut les voir  
C'est ça qui me fait du mal.

Ils vont te faire les aimer  
Ils vont te faire des promesses  
Ils vont te faire des acroires  
Et là sa tournent le dos  
Et ça, ça me fait du mal.

There're some little brown haired girls,  
There're some little blondes,  
There're some that are so brown  
That me, I can't even see them,  
And that, that makes me feel bad.

They'll make you love them  
They'll make you promises  
They'll make you believe things  
And then they'll turn their backs  
And that, that makes me feel bad.

There're some little blondes  
There're some little brown-haired girls  
There're some who are so blonde  
That the devil can see them  
It's that that makes me feel bad.

They'll make you love them  
They'll make you promises  
They'll make you believe things  
And then they'll turn their backs  
And that, that makes me feel bad.



## Le Pays de L'Acadien

Oh, chère 'tite tille que moi  
j'aime autant

Oh, chère 'tite tille que moi  
j'aime autant

Un jour va venir, tu vas voir ça t'as dit  
Si tu te maries dans le pays  
de l'Acadien.

J'ai demandé à ton père pour te marier,  
J'ai demandé à ta mère pour te marier,  
Ils m'ont répondu, "Tu peux l'avoir  
Si tu la maries dans le pays  
de l'Acadien."

La bague j'ai acheté a ça coûté pleine  
de l'argent

La bague j'ai acheté ça coûté pleine  
de l'argent

Si tu la veux, chère, il faudra tu me  
promets

Oui, de marie dans le pays de  
l'Acadien.

## Land of the Acadians

Oh, dear little girl that I love so much

Oh, dear little girl that I love so much,

A day will come, you'll see what you said  
If you'll marry me in the land of the  
Acadians.

I asked your father if I could marry you,  
I asked your mother if I could marry you  
They answered, "You can have her  
If you marry her in the land of the  
Acadians."

The ring I bought cost much money

The ring I bought cost much money

If you want it, dear one, you'll have to  
promise

To get married in the land of the  
Acadians.



*Cheese Read, left, with wife Ella Mae and granddaughter. Eunice, La. 1979.  
(Photo by Chris Strachwitz)*



## 'Tit Canard Mulet

Hé, y aie, tous les soirs  
On s'en va, oui, là-bas, à la veille chez  
Mémère,  
Tous les soirs on se rencontre les 'tites  
canaïlles.

'Tite canard mulet,  
'Tite canard mulet,  
'Tite canard mulet, y-aie,  
'Tite canard mulet, bebe,  
Que j'ai rencontré et aimé il y a pas  
longtemps. \*

*\* This is the corrected version of the last line, according to Cheese.*  
(Transcriptions and translations by Ann Savoy, Eunice, La., 1979)

*(continued from back cover)*

Chris Strachwitz on May 2, 1979.

#18-25: Wallace "Cheese" Read – vocal & fiddle; Isaac Soileau – fiddle. On #19 add Isom Fontenot – harmonica & vocal. Recorded in Mamou, La., by Dr. Harry Oster late 1950s.

#26-29: same as last but add Cyprien Landreneau – accordion & vocals; Isom Fontenot – triangle; and Mrs. Rodney Fuselier

## Little Muley Duck

Hey, every night  
We go over to a party at Grandma's  
house,  
Every night we meet up with the little  
sly ones.

My little muley duck,  
My little muley duck,  
My little muley duck, ee-yaie,  
My little muley duck, baby,  
That I met and loved, not so long ago

– guitar. Recorded in Mamou, La., by Dr. Harry Oster late 1950s.

# 4, 11 & 16 - 28: previously unissued  
# 1-15 (except 4 & 11): previously issued as Arhoolie LP/C 5021  
# 29: previously issued on Arhoolie LP 5015

Cover photo of Cheese Read, Marc Savoy and John Stelly by Chris Strachwitz  
Cover by Wayne Pope  
Produced by Chris Strachwitz



*Left to right: Harry LaFleur, Marlin Manuel, Cheese Read, Esten Bellow, & Marc Savoy (1979).*

Photo by Chris Strachwitz

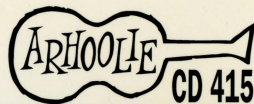
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*Total playing time: 78:45*

**Wallace "Cheese" Read – vocal & fiddle with**  
various accompanyments including Marc Savoy,  
Isaac Soileau, John Stelly, Isom Fontenot, etc.  
Cover photo of Cheese Read, Marc Savoy and John  
Stelly by Chris Strachwitz.

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