

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FD 6530

OLD GREY GOOSE

Maine Country Dance Music & Song

BOB CHILDS - Fiddle DOUG PROTSIK - Piano, Fiddle STUART McCONNELL - Melodeon, Tenor and 5-String Banjos, and Mandolin
JEFF McKEEN - Melodeon, Tenor and 5-String Banjos, Guitar, and Bones



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1980

McCONNELL, JEFF McKEEN, DOUG PROTSIK, BOB CHILDS

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAMELA J. FERIN

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

MUSIC LP

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Side One

- 1) Bay of Fundy/Pay de Haut (Reels)
- 2) Connaught Man's Rambles/The Frost is All Over (Jigs)
- 3) Dance Terpsichora
- 4) Indian Reel/Reel de Montreal
- 5) Goose's Minuet/Doug's Waltz (Doug Protsik)
- 6) Up the River (Jig)
- 7) Wait for the Wagon (Song)
- 8) Blanchard's Hornpipe/Good for the Tongue (Hornpipes)

Side Two

- 1) Yester's Reel
- 2) Pretty Girl Milking Her Cow (Polka)
- 3) Blackthorn Stick/Cock of the North (Jigs)
- 4) Swiss Waltz
- 5) Boston Polka
- 6) Popcorn Schottische (Doug Protsik)
- 7) Emmigrant's Reel
- 8) Sweet Rosey O'Grady (Waltz)

Bob Childs - *Fiddle*

Doug Protsik - *Piano, Fiddle*

Stuart McConnell - *Melodeon, Tenor and 5-String Banjos, and mandolin*

Jeff McKeen - *Melodeon, Tenor and 5-String Banjos, Guitar, and Bones*

Recorded by Peter Sturtevant at Fayette Cornor, Maine, March 1979

Produced for Folkways by Richard Carlin

Notes by Bob Childs, Jeff McKeen and Richard Carlin

Cover Photograph by Pamela J. Ferin.

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43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., 10023 N.Y., U.S.A.

**OLD
GREY GOOSE
Maine Country
Dance Music
& Song**

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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OLD GREY GOOSE

Maine Country Dance Music & Song

The Old Grey Goose band is a group of four young musicians from Maine who specialize in the dance music and song of the Northeastern United States and Canada. I was surprised by the extent of the revival of this music and the associated dance forms in Maine, where for some time the traditional entertainment forms have been overshadowed by the encroachment of popular culture. Happily, many bands are now forming throughout the country that are reviving interest in local traditions.

The Goose captures the sound of an old-time maritime dance band. The sound of fiddle, melodian, banjo, piano and bones playing tunes of Irish, French, German and even popular American descent takes us back fifty to a hundred years when each community had its own dance band. The Goose does not attempt fancy arrangements, nor in anyway alters the traditional tunes. They themselves are enlarging the tradition by composing new tunes in the older idioms of reel, waltz, polka and schottische.

I hope you will enjoy this album. I hope also when the Old Grey Goose passes through your neighborhood, you'll go out and hear them. They are one of the best dance bands around. Spread the word.

-- Richard Carlin

Introduction

The Old Grey Goose took its name from a 1953 Chevrolet that we drove on our first Southern tour in 1977. We toured 5,000 miles bringing our fiddle tunes and songs of New England through the Midwest and Southern Appalachian States. Returning home we put the car out behind the barn where she remains today. Jeff and I are the core of the band and have supported ourselves for a number of years playing dances throughout the State of Maine. We asked our good friends Doug and Stu to come along on our second Southern tour. These recording sessions were our final rehearsals for the tour of dance halls, folk clubs, watering holes, and street corners from New England to New Orleans.

The idea of traveling around and playing music goes back to the days when earlier New England dancing masters traveled from town to town on foot, horse, or train, bringing with them their special music and dance. There was once a time in rural Maine when the Saturday night dance was as integral a part of people's lives as raising their own food or haying their fields. People have always been geographically isolated in Maine and the local dance was the one way they were sure to see each other and catch up on the local news. The contra dances which make up a large part of the local dance repertoire reflect this in their emphasis towards simplicity and social interaction.

The music of Maine, as anywhere, is indicative of the people that settled the state. Prior to 1800, beside the large native population, only 1% of the settlers were

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not from the British Isles. Throughout the 1800's, people from Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia, as well as parts of Scandinavia, began immigrating to Maine to work in the woods and mills, bringing with them their fiddles, tunes and dances. As the years went by the music evolved to reflect the mixing of these various traditions. Today we feel at home playing a French-Canadian reel, an Irish jig, even a schottische, or one of the many tunes now regarded as unique to the style of Maine or New England traditional dance music.

Today the old time country dances are enjoying a resurgence in popularity here in Maine. With the coming of radio, television, and the widespread use of the automobile, people began looking away from the local dances for entertainment and instead drove to the city or just stayed at home. More recently, however, people have rediscovered the enjoyment of community interaction that a country dance can give them and have begun establishing the local dances as an important part of their social lives. Equally important is the opportunity that the Old Grey Goose and many of our music-playing friends have had in learning the tunes and dances from older musicians, some in their seventies and eighties. So with this in mind, this record is dedicated to those fine musicians who have shared their music with us. We hope you enjoy this record and hope to see you at a country dance in Maine sometime.

The Music

Side One

- 1) Bay of Fundy/Pay de Haut: Two favorite reels from our Canadian neighbors. Doug, along with his fiddling wife Elaine and John Gawler make up the Pine Hill Band and they taped this first tune from a car radio late one night. It's a Nova Scotian tune and Pay de Haut is French-Canadian. Bones playing is traditional to the dance music of Quebec and the Maritimes though Jeff got his start from Ann Arbor, Michigan's "Mr. Bones," Percy Danforth. (Bob-fiddle, Stumelodeon, Doug-piano, Jeff-bones).
- 2) Connaught Man's Rambles/Frost is All Over: Two Irish jigs played at a steady New England dance tempo. Because of the large number of Irish settlers Maine was almost named "New Ireland." There are a great many Irish jigs and reels common to the country dance repertoire. (Bob-fiddle, Stumelodeon, Jeff-tenor banjo, Doug-piano).
- 3) Dance Terpsichora or Dance of the Terpsichord: We learned this one from Jehile P. Kierkoff of Montrose, Pennsylvania, winner of the World Champion Fiddler's Contest in Waco, Texas in 1952. Jehile told us that this tune was handed down by an ancient tribe of Phoenicians who settled years ago in Sweden. It makes for a fine schottische or cake-walk. (Bob-fiddle, Jeff-melodeon, Stu-tenor banjo, Doug-piano).
- 4) Indian Reel/Reel de Montreal: The first tune comes to us from a collection of tunes and dances put together by New Hampshire dancing master, Ralph Page. We've run across several tunes with the title of this second reel. This one is reminiscent of Stuart's days with "The Howitzers," a now defunct mandolin orchestra. (Bob-fiddle, Stumandolin and tenor banjo, Jeff-melodeon and bones, Doug-piano).

5) Goose's Minuet/Doug's Waltz: Goose's comes from Gale Huntington's William Litten's Fiddle Tunes 1801-1802, taken from a manuscript found in a Ship's log. (Available from Gale Huntington, Vinyardhaven, Massachusetts 02068). Doug's Waltz was composed by none other than Doug Protsik some years back, "...for lack of a better name."

6) Up the River: Also known as Rolling Off a Log (in Cole's 1000 Fiddle Tunes). This one is from Otto Soper a fine old time player of the piano, fiddle and C-melody saxophone. Otto lived in Orland, Maine and began playing at the age of seven learning from his father, a fiddler and dance caller. (Bob-fiddle, Stu-tenor banjo, Jeff-guitar, Doug-piano).

7) Wait for the Wagon: A popular song of the westward movement from the 1800's. (Doug-vocal and piano, Stu-5-string banjo, Bob-fiddle, Jeff-guitar).

8) Blanchard's Hornpipe/Good for the Tongue: Two hornpipes done at a dance tempo, also from the playing of Otto Soper. Otto's band in the thirties played on two live radio shows under two different names, Soper's Old Timers, and Andy and the Farmboys. (Bob and Doug-fiddles, Pete "Brownie" Sturtevant-guitar, Jeff-bones).

Side Two

1) Yester's Reel: A lively dance tune we learned from E. Gale Huntington of Martha's Vinyard. Gale plays fiddle, and provided music for dances on the island for many years. He's the source of many of our favorite tunes. (Bob-fiddle, Stu-melodeon, Jeff-5-string banjo, Doug-piano).

2) Pretty Girl Milking Her Cow: Though sometimes played as a waltz and sung by Judy Garland as an Irish ballad,

we learned this polka version from Gale Huntington. Gale played on Martha's Vinyard with an accordeon player named Artie Look. Jeff now plays the instrument that belonged to Artie, a two row "Lombardi" melodeon, so we guess that it's been playing this tune for some fifty years. (Bob-fiddle, Jeff-melodeon, Stu-tenor banjo, Doug-piano).

3) Blackthorn Stick/Cock of the North: Another set of Irish jigs played at a contra dance tempo. (Bob-fiddle, Jeff-melodeon, Stu-tenor banjo, Doug-piano).

4) Swiss Waltz: A popular Maine waltz, we've seen it in several collections including a hand-written manuscript from the 1880's from Bingham, Maine. (Bob-fiddle, Stu-melodeon, Jeff-tenor banjo, Doug-piano).

5) Boston Polka: Irish accordeon player Jerry O'Brien's tune book has been the source for many fine tunes. (Bob-fiddle, Stu-melodeon, Jeff-tenor banjo, Doug-piano).

6) Popcorn Schottische: Original composition and piano solo by Doug. The schottische is a popular couple dance in Maine and the hop in the dance seems to have reminded Doug of popcorn popping, though he claims the title is due to popcorn being a staple in his diet. (Doug-piano).

7) Emmigrant's Reel: Learned from Everybody's Favorite Songs (N.Y., 1933) handed down from Jeff's grandmother. (Bob-fiddle, Stu-tenor banjo, Jeff-melodeon, Doug-piano).

8) Sweet Rosey O'Grady: Composed by Maud Nugent in 1896, a good night waltz. This one was played by Otto Soper, who inspired Doug's piano playing with a very active left hand. (Doug-piano, Bob-fiddle, Stu-5-string banjo, Jeff-guitar, vocals-all).