



Songs and dances of

**A U G B E C**

party songs, reels and squares  
recorded in Canada

fw 6951 Folkways Records and Service Corp.—New York

M  
1678  
S712  
1956

MUSIC LP

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**QUEBEC**

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES INSIDE POCKET

"DANSE CARRE"  
"LE REEL DE L'HARMONICA"  
"C'ETAIT UNE JEUNE FILLE"  
"REEL DU BON VIEUX TEMPS"  
"MA FEMME AVAIT UN GRAND CHAPEAU"  
"C'ETAIT UNE PETITE VACHE NOIRE"  
"FIDDLE REEL"  
"REEL CARRE"  
"LA BASTRINGUE"  
"LES FRAISES ET LES FRAMBOISES"

Folkways Records FW 6951

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NOTES  
by  
Francis Coleman

French Canadians are a happy people, frequent assertions to the contrary, and this recording goes well along the road to proving it.

The changes involved in moving from the regime of old France into the British orbit, the growth of confederation into a new Canada, and the gradual move, in particular, from agricultural communities into the different values of urban living have all put heavy pressures on French Canadian culture.

After all these developments the French Canadian race has strengthened and extended itself in a remarkable way. The French language is in a stronger position today and more widely used than ever, and as a climatic stroke of irony the folk music of French Canada has actually in many cases been exported back to France where it frequently had died out.

Casual observers may sometimes mistake solidity and tenacity for sadness, a certain heaviness for gloom, or again the "Complaintes" of French Canadian folk songs for self pity. The facts are quite different however, and even the "Complaintes" are often love songs or romantic reminiscence rather than any deep rooted sorrow.

When French Canadians gather to this day, songs are often an integral part of the celebrations. Folk songs are very much a living tradition in French Canada, and there are examples of this at every hand.

PERFORMERS:

Violin: Jean Caragnan  
Harmonica: Aldor Morin  
Jigs and Calls: Edgar Morin  
Guitar: Bob Hill  
Singer: Madame Richard  
Singer: Gerard Delorier

- SIDE I, Band 1: "DANSE CARRÉ" - literally a translation of Square Dance.

This reel, complete with foot tapping by the harmonica player, is similar to the American barn dance, or square dance.

-SIDE I, Band 2: "LE REEL DE L'HARMONICA"

Mr. Aldor Morin who performs with informal virtuosity in this reel, to a guitar accompaniment, is a self taught musician. He never learned to play on a chromatic harmonica, so to be able to play in different keys he simply welded six different harmonicas together. Mr. Morin's whole family participates in these jigs and reels. Since Mr. Morin is a good jigger, and also adept at other instruments such as the spoons, he often passes on his harmonica to others in the group while he makes the switch.

SIDE I, Band 3: "C'ÉTAIT UNE JEUNE FILLE" -  
(Son Voile qui volais au vent.)

This song, like the others of the recording, is a cumulative song, a form very popular in French Canada and of which the best known example is "Alouette."

C'était une jeune fille  
Qui n'avez pas quinze ans (bis)  
Elle s'étais endormie  
Au pieds d'un rosier blanc.

CHORUS:

Son voile par ice, son voile par la  
Son voile qui volez, volez,  
Son voile qui volez au vent.

There was a young girl  
Who was not yet fifteen (ditto)  
She went to sleep  
At a white rose tree.

CHORUS:

Her veil went here, her veil went there  
Her veil flew and flew  
Her veil flew up in the wind.

Le vent souleva sa robe Puis voire son jupon blanc.	The wind lifted up her dress To show her white petticoat.
Et ses belles jartieres roses Et son beau jupon blanc.	And her pretty rose garters And her little white petticoat.
Et d'autres choses aussi De bien plus seduisants.	And other things too Even more attractive.
Et heureux celui Qui sera son amant.	And happy will be he Who becomes her lover.
Il aura du plaisir De lui prendre ca souvent.	He will have fun Taking it often.
De ce que je veut dire La boule de son ruban.	What I meant to say The ball of her ribbon.
Il aurai du tort Qui pensais autrement.	And he would be wrong Who thought otherwise.

- SIDE I, Band 4: "REEL DU BON VIEUX TEMPS"

This "old time reel" is played by Jean Caragan, a fiddler from St. Jerome who now lives in Montreal and who is in great demand for such occasions.

SIDE I, Band 5: "MA FEMME AVAIT UN GRAND CHAPEAU" - (My Wife Had a Big Hat)

These participation songs of French Canada are the result of popular interest rather than artificial encouragement of any kind.

Ma femme avez un grand chapeau  
un beau collier  
une belle blouse

Yip - yip - yip  
Oui - oui - oui!

My wife had a big hat  
a fine necklace  
a lovely blouse

Yip - yip - yip  
Yes - yes - yes!

SIDE II, Band 1: "C'ÉTAIT UNE PETITE VACHE NOIRE" - (The Little Black Cow)

This is another party song, with an interesting repetition of syllables used to fill out the musical phrases. This isn't a nonsense song by any manner of means, the device here being merely an arrangement of convenience. The song also is far less sadistic than any translation can indicate. All in all this is a highly flavoured idiomatic song, and an extremely good example of country spirits - well preserved!

C'était une petite vache noire  
Que vous tacher be blanc (bis)

Elle avais des cornes derrière  
Et la queue en avant - man!

REFRAIN:  
Oh va t'ont avoir du plaisir  
Va t'ont avoir de l'agrément - ment!

Elle enfonça ses cornes  
Dans le dos d'un habitant.

Elle y enfança si fort  
Qu'elle y dessous le cadran.

Faut arreter leur fête  
Pour faire souder le cadran.

Souder souder en fer  
Je vous paierais comptant.

Si je ne vous paie pas comptant  
Je vous paierais le printemps.

Si je ne vous paie pas le printemps  
Eh bien - je vous le devrais tout le temps!

There was a little black cow  
That you spotted white (repeat)

She had horns behind  
And a tail in front - ront!

CHORUS:  
Oh won't we have a time  
Won't we have some fun - un!

She planted her horns  
In the back of a farmer.

She planted them so far  
That she "stopped his clock."

They have to stop their party  
To weld back his "clock."

Weld weld in iron hard  
I'll pay you off in cash.

If I don't pay you cash  
I'll pay you in the spring.

If I don't pay you in the spring  
Well then - I'll owe it to you forever!

SIDE II, Band 2: "FIDDLE REEL"

Another solo of French Canadian fiddling virtuosity by Jean Caragan. To be noted are the foot tapping accompaniments by the fiddler himself, and the different manner of tuning the violin, a feature that often varies with Canadian fiddlers. A number of left handed ones are to be found, with the violin completely re-strung, the bridge sloping in the opposite direction than normally, and the pegs of the instrument changed around. M. Caragan happens to play in the standard fashion with the bow in the right hand.

SIDE II, Band 3: "REEL CARRÉ" - Square Dance.

The caller animates the dancing, much as found in general reels of this type. A few regional French Canadian expressions that may be distinguishable in the joyful mêlée are a rich rural corruption of the word "Envois" meaning in this sense to "go," (of which the more recent jazz expression "go - go" is another example) and "Domino," which is frequently called at the end of a reel.

SIDE II, Band 4: "LA BASTRINGUE" - Reel.

This is another form of square dance popular throughout French Canada. It is older than most of its counterparts. When danced by earlier French colonists in

America it was actually almost a sedate dance, without the benefit of feet tapping loudly or the more raucous noises that are now customary on such occasions. Since this recording does not deal with history, but with the sounds of folk music as it resounds through Quebec and other spheres of French Canadian influence today, the extraneous sounds are included.

Mademoiselle voulez-vous danser  
La Bastringue, la Bastringue?  
Mademoiselle voulez-vous danser  
La Bastringue va commencer.

Oui Monsieur je veut bien danser  
La Bastringue, la Bastringue,  
Oui Monsieur je veut bien danser  
C'est pour vous accompagner.

Mademoiselle vous avez danser  
La Bastringue, la Bastringue,  
Mademoiselle vous avez danser  
Vous aller vous fatiguer.

Oh Monsieur je veut bien danser  
La Bastringue, la Bastringue,  
Oh Monsieur je veut bien danser  
Je suis prête a recommencer!

Mademoiselle je peut plus danser  
La Bastringue, la Bastringue,  
Mademoiselle je peut plus danser  
Parce ce que j'ai des cors aux pieds!

Mademoiselle do you wish to dance  
The "Bastringue," the "Bastringue."  
Mademoiselle do you wish to dance  
The "Bastringue" will soon begin.

Yes Sir I would like to dance  
The "Bastringue," the "Bastringue,"  
Yes Sir I would like to dance  
To be able to accompany you.

Mademoiselle you have danced  
The "Bastringue," the "Bastringue,"  
Mademoiselle you have danced  
You will soon tire yourself.

Oh Sir I would like to dance  
The "Bastringue," the "Bastringue,"  
Oh Sir I would like to dance  
I'm all ready to start again!

Mademoiselle I can't dance  
The "Bastringue," the "Bastringue,"  
Mademoiselle I can't dance  
Because I have corns on my feet!

SIDE II, Band 5: "LES FRAISES ET LES  
FRAMBOISES" -  
(Strawberries and Raspberries)

This final selection is a medley of songs highly colloquial in style which naturally also loses much in translation. Songs about fruit analogous with people, are common in the folk literature of almost every country. There are many examples of these comparisons in French Canadian folk songs, of which this is one of the more innocent. Most of the others would be considered highly spiced, not to say risqué today. Longueuil and Chambly, near Montreal on the south shore of the St. Lawrence and on the Richelieu rivers respectively, were among the first forts and seigneuries of French Canada. They played an important role in defense and early colonization and remain not only celebrated in song, but bustling communities today.

Ah les fraises et les framboises  
Du bon vin j'en ai bu.  
Croyez-moi belle villageoise  
Jamais je me suis tant plus.  
(bis - refrain)

Sur la route de Longueuil  
De Longueuil à Chambly,  
J'ai rencontré trois belles  
Trois belles filles du pays.

Ah the strawberries and raspberries  
Good wine have I drunk.  
Believe me pretty country girl  
I have never been more pleased.  
(repeat - chorus)

On the road of Longueuil  
From Longueuil to Chambly,  
I met three beauties  
Three beauties of our country.

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