Wallace "Cheese' Read"

Cajun House Party

"C'ez Cheese"

with Marc Savoy and Other Friends
Wallace "Cheese" Read was born in Eunice, La., in 1924, a very pure era in the history of cajun music due to the people's isolation from the outer world. There were mostly fiddlers in the area ( accordions became popular somewhat later ) and the tunes were still tunes 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. Cheese says that the earliest settlers around the Prairie Rhonde region weren't 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 1930's Cheese and his father went to many black dances and it was here that Cheese really began to want to express himself through music. He heard jazz, blues, and French music played on fiddles and washboards. At the dances Cheese made the acquaintance of Adam Fontenot, an accordion player who taught lots of young musicians to play the accordion ( his son, Canray Fontenot, is a well known Cajun fiddle player heard on Arhoolie LP1070). 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. Later he got a fiddle which he figured out how to tune himself. He formed his first band when he was fifteen years old. Cheese's young band consisted of a banjo, a fiddle, and a guitar. He loved the music of the Breaux family, the Robins, and Maycous Lafleur.

As a young man Cheese was greatly influenced by Leo Soileau, J.B. Fusilier, Harry Choates, and 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 peppy more strong band sound of the Hackberry Ramblers, and of the polished, smooth sounds of Bob Wills and Harry Choates. You will hear a New Orleans blues sound on "Keep A Knocking" and a variety of other sounds all pulled together to form the unique and powerful sound of Cheese Read.

**Wallace "Cheese" Read**

**“CAJON HOUSE PARTY”**

*with Mark Savoy and Other Friends*

You might not see Cheese Read at the local dance hall in Eunice because Cheese 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 fiddler player couldn't be found in Southwest Louisiana.

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**Tolan Waltz**

Hé, 'tite fille, moi je connais Ça t'as fait, il y a pas longtemps Tu vas pleurer, ca, ca 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'll 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 'tittes brunes Il y en a des 'tittes blondes Il y en a qui est si brunes, Quo mi, je peux pas les voir C'est ça qui me fait du mal. Ils vont te faire les aimers Ils vont te faire des promesses Et là sa tourment 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.

Il y en a des 'tittes blondes Il y en a des 'tittes brunes Il y en qui est si blondes Que le diable peut les voir C'est ça qui me fait du mal. Ils vont te faire les aimers Ils vont te faire des promesses Et là sa tourment le dos Et ça, ça me fait du mal.

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'Acadie

Oh, chère 'tite fille que moi j'aime autant Oh, chère 'tite fille que moi j'aime autant Un jour va venir, tu vas voir ça l'as dit Si tu te maries dans le pays de l'Acadie.

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.

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'aimer Si tu la maries dans le pays de l'Acadien." J'ai 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

La bague 'jai acheté ça coûté pleine de l'argent La bague 'jai acheté ça coûté pleine de l'argent Si tu la veux, chère, il faudra tu me promets Ou, de marie dans le pays de l'Acadien.

If you want it, dear one, you'll have to promise To get married in the land of the Acadians.

**'Tit Canard Mulet**

(Chère Maman Créole)

Hé, y aie, tous les soirs On s'en va, ou, là-bas, à la veille chez Mémère, Tous les soirs on se rencontre les 'tittes canâilles. "Tit canaille mulet, 'Tit canaille mulet, 'Tit canaille mulet, y-aie, 'Tit canaille mulet, bebe, Que j'ai rencontré et aimé il y a pas longtemps."

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 . . .

*This is the corrected version of the last line, according to Cheese.

(Transcriptions and notes by Ann Savoy, Eunice, La., 1979)

**BAYOU POM POM** (3:05)
**ONE STEP A CHAUMONT** (3:10)
**LES VEUVES DE LA COULEE** (3:05) (a)
**TOLAN WALTZ** (3:07)
**GRAND TEXAS** (3:25) (a)
**BOSCO STOMP** (3:10)
**CHERE MAMA CREOLE** (2:50)
**LE PAYS DE L'ACADIEN** (3:10)
**KEEP A KNOCKING** (2:30)
**PERRODIN TWO STEP** (1:20)
**CANKTON WALTZ** (2:25)
**J'AI LAISSE DE LA MAISON** (2:20)
**'TIT CANARD MULET** (2:45) (b)

**Side A:** Wallace "Cheese" Read—vocals and fiddle; Marc Savoy—accordion; John Stelly—guitar and vocals on (a).

**Side B:** Wallace "Cheese" Read—fiddle and vocals; Marlin Manuel—guitar; Harry LaFleur—bass; Eston Bellow—drums; Marc Savoy—fiddle on (b) only.


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