CAJUN SONGS FROM LOUISIANA

Recorded by I. Bonstein / Ethnic Folkways Library FE 4438

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS
FE 4438

SIDE I

Band 1. GABRIEL, sung by Bobby Bourke, with guitar
Band 2. LES MARINGOUINS ONT MANGE MA BELLE, sung by Bobby Bourke, with guitar
Band 3. LA CHANSON DE CINQUANTE SOUS, sung by Madame Marion Dugadet, with guitar
Band 4. LA FILLE DE QUATORZE ANS, sung by Madame Daniel Bourke
Band 5. VALSE DE CHAR' TOUTOUNE, sung by Roy Brulé, with accordion
Band 6. ALLONS DANSER COLINDA, sung by Roy Brulé, with accordion
Band 7. VALSE DE CHURCH POINT, sung by Roy Brulé, with accordion

SIDE II

Band 1. JOLIE BLONDE, sung and played by Tony and Rufis Allemand on violin and guitar
Band 2. J'AI PASSE DESSOU' L'POMMIER, sung by a group of children
Band 3. FLEUR DE LA JEUNESSE, sung by Madame Elie Landry
Band 4. LES FILLES DE VERMILLION, sung by Madame Elie Landry
Band 5. LE PAPIER D'EPING', sung by Madame Elie Landry
Band 6. J'AI PASSÉ DEVANT TA PORTE, sung by Bobby Bourke
Band 7. LA NOCE A JOSEPHINE, told and sung by Fernand Labore

Library of Congress Catalogue Card No. RA-57-79

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CAJUN SONGS FROM LOUISIANA

Recorded by I. Bonstein

INTRODUCTION AND TEXTS
By Lucie de Vienne

The name "Cajun" is the local Louisiana pronunciation of the name Acadian. Cajun songs are sung mostly in Cajun dialect, which is a version of 17th and 18th century rural French still spoken in most of French Canada. People who settled in what was known as New France in the 16th century came mostly from rural regions of metropolitan France and were either sailors, farmers or fishermen from Brittany, Normandy and Picardy.

Most of the French nobility who came at the wake of the first landing of Jacques Cartier on the Gaspé Peninsula in 1534 returned to France between that time and the signature of the Treaty of Paris (1763) which established British rule over the French settlement in New France. They left behind men and women who proved to be gallant people, but who had little education, if any; their language, their customs and their songs were those of rural France.

Amongst the French settlers, the Acadians were those who had settled in a region centered in what is now Nova Scotia, formerly Acadia, including also Prince Edward Island and the mainland coast from the Gulf of St. Lawrence South into Maine. In spite of many troubles, the little colony had grown to be fairly prosperous, with farmers on their dike-protected farms, fishermen on the shores and fur traders in the woods.

In 1613, while the settlers were barely starting their new life, Samuel Argall, "a Virginian sea-captain of piratical tastes" who was later to be governor of the province, without warning swooped down upon the French Colonies at Port-Royal and Mount-Desert Island -- the latter a Jesuit outpost on the firing line -- burned the buildings and expelled the inhabitants. (Tyler, England in America, Am. Nation. Vol. IV, pp. 72-289)

Nine years after this outrage, in 1622, and while the former residents were gradually repeopling the shores of Annapolis Basin, James I of England conveyed to Sir William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, the Acadian Peninsula which the French held by right of occupation but which the English King now claimed and rechristened Nova Scotia. (loc. cit. French in America, R.C. Thwaites, p. 14)

Sir Alexander was able to maintain a nominal stronghold upon the country only by spasmodically coming to terms with whichever faction chanced at the moment to be uppermost -- a feast of opportunist diplomacy imitated by the French court whose authority the prevailing chieftain also privately acknowledged. Throughout the nominal changes in political mastery, this little theatre of discord witnessed the same play of international intrigue reprehensible to all concerned which was to end in the ruin of the unhappy Acadians. (R.C. Thwaites, p. 16)

In 1632, after Canada had been retroceded to France, the Jesuit Fathers were allowed a monopoly of the interior missions, the Recollects being thereafter confined to the Maritime districts, the ill-defined region to which was now applied the general term Acadia, heretofore confined to the Nova Scotia Peninsula. (Thwaites, p. 22)

Another wave of foreign war reached the shores of Acadia in 1654 and, once more, the Peninsula was restored to France by the Treaty of Breda (1667). The White population at that time was only about four hundred souls; but they had become toughened by the harsh conditions of a protracted civil war, the frequent struggles now imposed upon them by English invaders and the roving character of their life had brought them to an independence of thought and action seldom met with elsewhere in New France. The frugal habits and simple tastes of their forbears were tenaciously retained; bookishly ignorant, they were easily satisfied as to material things; they held devotedly to the Catholic faith, being content to allow the priests -- men quite of their own type -- to influence their action in temporal as well as in spiritual affairs. They hated the English as they had good right to -- for heretic raiders from New England bent on burning and harrying these coastwise settlements had become an annual possibility.

For a few years, there had not been any serious attempt on the part of the English colonists to venture westward of the Alleghany barrier, but they were now (1689) eagerly spreading all over the Atlantic slope. A clash was inevitable. Frenchmen upon the Bay of Fundy had had long and severe military training; among them were competent Indian leaders. The English borderers were not long discovering that Acadia had become a hotbed for French and Indian marauding parties; Acadians also sought to capture English fishing vessels that entered their waters.

King William's War (1689-1697) occurred when the entire population of the New France was not greater than twelve thousands, against one hundred thousand in New England and New York. New France would have suffered greatly in a struggle with the English Coast Colonies had it not been for the help of her Indian allies, the strategical importance of her stronghold, the fighting capacity of her well-trained militia and the dissensions which existed in the councils of the English colonists.

Historically important, if the results proved feeble, is the first Colonial Congress held at New York on the 1st of May, 1690, to devise joint expeditions against French Canada, for it furnished a precedent for further colonial co-operation. (Firthingham, The Rise of the Republic, pp. 90-93, which gives material from Massachusetts archives not readily accessible elsewhere)

The French at that time stoutly asserted that by the term Acadia was meant only the Peninsula of Nova Scotia, a plausible contention in view of a treaty phrase, and the English were caustically notified not to meddle with the rest of the country, especially to the west and southwest of the Bay of Fundy involving most of the hotly disputed border-line between New France and New England. The French claim extended to the Kennebec River, and up to that stream they proceeded to strengthen their defences.

On the other hand the English contended that Acadia was in 1691 included in the new charter of Massachusetts and comprised also Cape Breton, New Brunswick and so much of Maine as lay beyond the Kennebec. This found abundant warrant in old French documents, it being proved that so long as the French were in control the term Acadia was accepted among them as embracing the entire stretch of country between the Kennebec and the St. Lawrence.

Such was the situation when a New England fleet with eighteen hundred militia commanded by Sir William Phipps captured Port Royal in the summer of 1696 and consequently Acadia; but in the following season, Phipps having left too small a garrison, the French inhabitants retook the district and their king retained it under the treaty of Ryswick (1697). (Greene, Provincial America, Am. Nation, VI, Chap. 8)

As Lahontan said in 1703: "The Coast of Acadia extends from Kenebeki, one of the frontiers of New England, to L'Isle Percée, near the mouth of the River of St. Lawrence. This sea coast runs almost three hundred miles in length." (Parkman, Half Century of Conflicts, pp. 273-287)

By the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht (1713): "All Nova Scotia, or Acadia, comprised in its ancient limits, as also the city of Port Royal was definitely ceded to Great Britain." (France in America, R.C. Thwaites, p. 28) Louis XIV of France had obtained that the Acadians would retain their properties in toto, providing they would swear allegiance to the Government of Great Britain -- which they did -- under the condition however that they never would be forced to combat against the French.

The Acadians should have found themselves happier under English rule which, when carnage ceased, had left them free to manage their own domestic affairs, whereas French officialdom seeking to fasten upon them the feudal conditions elsewhere prevalent in New France greatly annoyed these honest folks who had become accustomed to town-meeting methods.

Nevertheless, at the outbreak of the Seven-Year War (1755) the Acadians, forgotten by their mother country, still grieved to be under the British rule. They had perhaps some premonition that the right given them by the British, that they would not fight the French, would soon be disregarded.

In fact the English began to fear that the Acadians, French at heart, would become allies of the French. Therefore, their deportation was conceived and organized, in spite of all previous promises.

The Acadians were assembled in each county under the pretext of harvesting the crop. Once gathered, they were informed that they were prisoners of the English and would be deported to various English colonies along the Atlantic coast, and that their land, cattle and furniture were confiscated. They were allowed to take with them only such belongings that could be carried aboard the awaiting vessels and whatever amount of money they had in their possession. The farms and barns were meanwhile set afire to prevent their hope of returning. In a single district 273 houses, 276 barns, 10 mills and one church were burnt to the ground. Some of the families who sought cover in the woods were exterminated by the British, and young men were killed whenever they tried to escape. The others were "re-located" in the colonial English colonies where we must say they were humanely received by the earlier settlers. There is a pathetic account of the hardships of the Acadians in Longfellow's Evangeline, for the world was astounded by the cold-blooded cruelty with which the English treated the Acadians.

After the Treaty of Paris which ended the Seven Years War, some 300 families still roamed the peninsula; out of those who had been deported to New England, some 140 families undertook to return to Acadia across an unsettled country and eventually re-settled in Canada. There are now close to 300,000 descendants of the 18th century Acadians in Canada still very much attached to the mother country and to their religion.

But some of the deported Acadians settled in Louisiana, composing a group of originally some hundred families (whose names can be found in Les Acadiens Louisianais et leur parler , Institut Francais de Washington, 1901).

The displaced settlers found the south Louisiana climate probably even worse than what they had encountered in New France, but at least they found people of their own speech and blood -- the French who had come toward the end of the 17th century down the Mississippi Valley at the wake of the expedition of Cavalier de LaSalle and of the Sieur d'Iberville, two of the first Canadians to whom the King of France had granted a title of nobility.

In 1800, the population of southern Louisiana consisted roughly of some five thousand Whites and two thousand Negro slaves. The Whites were German, British and Scottish settlers. There were Indians in the north. Louisiana was then under Spanish rule. The country was officially of Roman Catholic faith.

The newcomers from New France joined their fellow Frenchmen, growing rice and sugar cane near the swamp region, fur trading in the North, fishing on the shore. They were bound to make friends both with the Negroes of the plantations and with the Indians in the north. For one thing, they never accepted the Spanish rule; for another, they were resented, if not despised, by the Protestant British settlers

As stated above, the "Cajun" dialect is derived from continental rural French of the 17th and 18th Centuries. In some ways, it is similar to French "Creole" and at the same time studded with colloquial expressions still in use today in rural Quebec.

However French they may be in origin, Cajun folksongs have in some cases a definite Negro flavor to be found in the super-imposed elementary rhythms which give them sort of a "jazzy" atmosphere, nowhere else to be found in folksongs derived from France other than in the Caribbean.

Many of the customs of the Cajuns are typical of rural 18th century France. The wedding ceremonies in particular have retained the buoyancy of some rural weddings in present day France. In the Attacapas, the top of the chimney of the house of a girl looking for a husband is painted white. On Saturdays, young bachelors gather at the house and play at various games still to be found in France: "Berlingue", "Chiquette", "Pigeon-Vole" etc. When a young man has made his choice, a friend of his family calls at the young lady's house and talks to the parents. Nothing is really decided nor talked openly about during that first visit. Later, when all goes well, the parents get together and the "demand" is presented very officially at the end of an evening meal. The young lover seated next to his prospective fiancee offers her his picture and a purse containing a sum which varies with his financial means. Should the young lady accept the presents , the engagement is decided and declared official. Should she later on change her mind, she is expected to give back twice the amount of money she was given in the first place.

On the day of the wedding, the young lady waits at her home, busying herself with the everyday chores for she is not supposed to know why so many people are coming to her parents' house. All this ado is altogether childish and demurely charming. While she is finally being dressed by her girl friends, the happy parents chat together and praise their respective offsprings without undue flattery however. Before leaving for church the bride and groom kneel in front of the girl's father to hear his advice. Nowadays this part of the ceremony is conducted by the curé. The wedding takes place at the parish church.

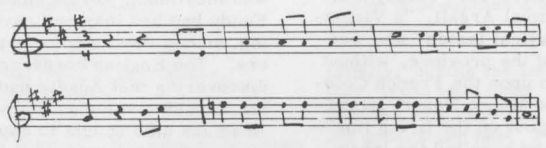
Soon after someone has died, two persons (who must not belong to the household of the dead) come and close his eyes, and proceed to dress and shroud the body. All mirrors in the house are shrouded, clocks are stopped at the time of the death, and any water in the house is thrown outside, lest the soul of the deceased should drown. In many places, hymns are sung. It was also a custom to burn the straw or the hay of the mattress of the bed where a person has died, and the saying goes that death would descend upon the house of the neighborhood toward which the smoke drifts. When the funeral proceeds toward the cemetery after the church rites, everyone who has known the deceased follows the hearse.

Much more cheerful are the veillées. During the long winter evenings, families visit one another, eat, sing and chat. Nothing escapes the vigilant ears of the veilleux; crops, hunting, fishing, trade, scandals, and many a neighbour is "chewed upon".

There are many other singing traditions originated in France that are still carried on, such as the "collect songs" around Christmas and Easter. Children collect pennies, eggs or food from door to door, singing such songs, called chansons de quête. Some are sung on the Eve of All Saints Day, the purpose of which is to awaken the sleepers in order that they ponder upon eternity and pray for the dead.

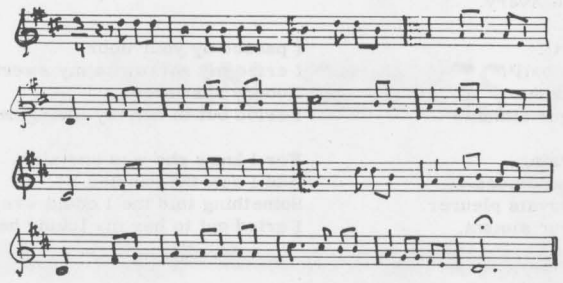
Modern times have changed the way of life of rural regions and many Cajuns have left the hardships of farming for the nearby factories and cities.

SIDE I, BAND 1: GABRIEL
Sung by Bobby Bourke, from
l'Isle Avery, with guitar.



Gabriel c'était mon parrain,	Gabriel was my god-father,
Et Madeleine c'était ma marraine.	And Madeleine was my god-mother.
Gabriel c'était pas joli,	Gabriel wasn't pretty,
Et Madeleine c'était pas plus belle.	And Madeleine wasn't prettier.
Gabriel avait un beau chapeau,	Gabriel had a fine hat,
Et Madeleine avait de beaux souliers.	And Madeleine had pretty shoes.
Gabriel avait un beau chapeau,	Gabriel had a fine hat,
Mais c'est dommage, il avait pas d'galoches.	But alas, he had no overshoes.
Gabriel avait un beau chapeau,	Gabriel had a fine hat,
Et Madeleine avait de beaux souliers.	And Madeleine had pretty shoes.
Madeleine avait de beaux souliers,	Madeleine had pretty shoes,
Mais c'est dommag', el' s'était teint les ch'veux.	But alas, she had dyed her hair.
Gabriel a tombé malade,	Gabriel was taken sick,
Ils l'ont guéri avec des haricots	They cured him with beans.
Madeleine a tombé malade,	Madeleine was taken sick,
Ils l'ont guérie avec du carayo.	They cured her with carayo.

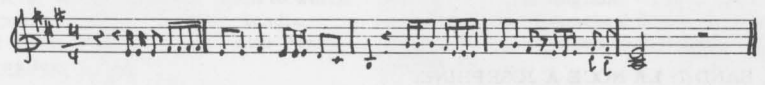
SIDE I, BAND 2: LES MARINGOUINS ONT MANGE MA BELLE.
Sung by Bobby Bourke, from l'Ile Avery, with guitar.



Les maringouins,l'ont mangé ma belle.
Y n'ont resté de ses gros orteils
Pour toucher les demi-bouteilles.
Et mon papa s'en allé mulet,
Ma maman s'en allait 'léphant,
Mon p'tit frèr' sur un ouaouaron,
Et my p'tit' soeur, sur un coin d'mon coeur.

The mosquitoes have eaten my sweetheart.
They left but her big toes
To touch the half-pints.
And my father went on a mule,
My mother went on an elephant,
My little brother on a toad,
And my little sister, on a corner of my heart.

SIDE I, BAND 3: LA CHANSON DE CINQUANTE SOUS.
Sung by Madame Marion Dugadet, from l'Ile Avery, with guitar.



Moi et ma bell' on a été z'au bal,
C'était un Sam'di soir.

On a rev'nu l'lend'main matin l'lend'main matin z'au jour,
J'l'ai demandé si ell'avait pas faim pou' manger quéqu'chose.

El' m'a dit ell'avait pas beaucoup faim,
Mais ell' aurait mangé quand même.

Moi j'croyais ell'aurait ordonné un p'tit lunch de quinz' sous,
Ell' a ordonné un' volail' rotie et un' demi-douzain' de zuit'.

Moi j'ai mis mon cinquant' sous dessus le comptoir,
M'a sacré dans un coup d'poing et m'ont tiré dans la f'nêtre,
M'a sacré dans un coup d'pied et m'ont tiré dans la rue.

Prenez un conseil de moi, tous les jeun' 'tits Beaux,
Allez jamais dans un nestaurant avec cinquant' sous dans la poch'.

My sweetheart and I went to the dance,
It was on a Saturday night.

We came back the day after at daybreak,
I asked her if she was hungry to eat something.

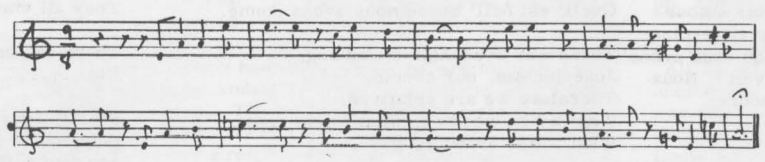
She told me she was not very hungry,
But she could eat something.

I thought I would order a little lunch for fifteen cents,
She ordered a roast chicken and half a dozen oysters.

I laid my fifty cents on top of the counter,
They damned me with a blow and threw me out the window,
They damned me with a kick and threw me in the street.

Take advice from me, all young suitors,
Never go to a restaurant with fifty cents in your pocket.

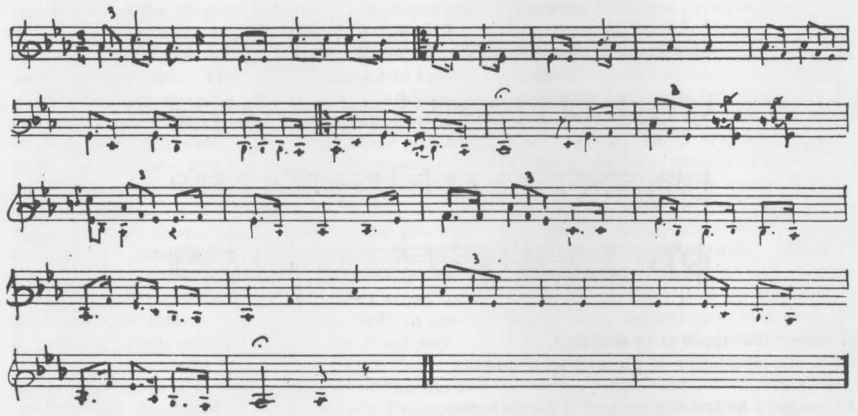
SIDE I, BAND 4: LA FILLE DE QUATORZ ANS.
Sung by Madame Daniel Bourke, from l'Ile Avery.



L'est une fill' de quatorz' ans.
Voilà, grands dieux, l'est un' bel' brun'.
Un jour, al' dit à son papa:
"Papa, je veux me marier."
"Oh, taise-toi, fillet' jeunet', t'as pas encor', encor' quinz' ans."
Ell' avait pris qu'un seul 'tit frèr' pour la reconsoler de nuit et jour.
"Reconsol'toi, ma chère soeur; Papa te mettra dans un couvent,
Dans un couvent des orphelin' et où on prie à Dieu, mais bien souvent."
Son beau galant l'est parti z'en guer', i' s'est battu quatr' ans de temps
Quand il est rev'nu d'sa révolt', droit au lo(r)gis de chez son pèr':
"Bonsoir, bonsoir, mes beaux yeux noirs, j'voudrais les r'voir encor un' fois."
Il a répondu: "La belle à toi, el' est plus là pour toi la revoir zencor'.
Oh ell' est mort' et enterrée, trois jours de temps, qui est pas bien longtemps."
"Je me f'rai faire un beau crêp' noir et dessur moi je la porterai.
Bonsoir, bonsoir, mes beaux yeux noirs; tu es dans la tomb', je t'aim' toujours."

There is a girl of fourteen years.
There, great gods, is a beautiful brunette.
One day she told her father:
"Papa, I want to get married."
"Oh hush, young girl, you are not yet fifteen."
She had but one young brother to console her night and day.
"Consôle yourself, my dear sister; Father will put you in a convent,
In an orphanage where one prays to God, but quite often."
Her sweetheart has gone to war, he has fought four years.
When he returns from his fighting, straight to her father's house he goes.
"Good night, good night my beautiful black eyes, I want to see them once more."
He replied: "Your sweetheart is still there for you to say goodbye.
Oh she died and was buried three days ago, not long past."
I will order a beautiful black crepe and wear it.
Good night, good night, my beautiful black eyes; you're in your grave, I love you always.

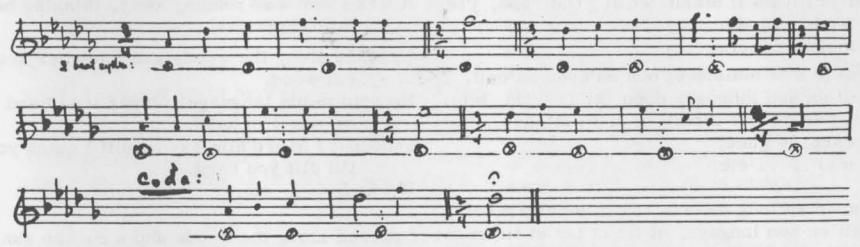
SIDE I, BAND 5: VALSE DE CHAR' TOUTOUN.
Sung and played on accordion
by Roy Brulé, of Arnaudville.



Eh, char' Toutoun', toi you conter
j'connais pas me mariera.
Si joyeux, j'avais rien qu'toi dans c'pays.
Char' Toutoun', j'avais rien qu'toi,
mon 'tit copain.
Eh, (.....).
Eh, jamais ben pourquoi don' tu viens pas
z'un jour aimer rà ma maison?
Toi t'soigner bébé jusqu'à l'heur ' de ta mort.
Char p'tit coeur vaillant ... j'ai t'oublié toi.

Eh, dear Toutoun', you say I shall not marry.
I was so happy, I had no one but you in
this country.
Dear Toutoun', I had nobody but you,
my little companion.
Eh, (.....).
Eh, why don't you ever come for love
at my house?
I would take care of you, baby, until you die.
Dear gallant little heart ..... I've forgotten you.

SIDE I, BAND 6: ALLONS DANSER COLINDA.
Sung and played on accordion
by Roy Brulé, of Arnaudville.



Allons danser, Colinda, allons danser, Colinda.
Le pa'quet l'est bien bon, allons danser,
Colinda.

Allons danser, Colinda, pou' pavoiser le départ.
Allons danser, Colinda, danser, Coli, Colinda.

C'est pas tout l'monde qui connait danser
les valses à deux temps.
Allons danser Colinda, danser, Coli, Colinda.

Let's go dancing, Colinda, let's go dancing,
Colinda.
The floor is very good, let's go dancing,
Colinda.

It isn't everyone who knows how to dance the
two-beat waltzes.
Let's go dancing, Colinda, dancing, Coli,
Colinda.
Let's go dancing, Colinda, to celebrate the
departure.
Let's go dancing, Colinda, dancing, Coli,
Colinda.

SIDE I, BAND 7: VALSE DE CHURCH POINT.
Played on accordion and sung
by Roy Brulé, of Arnaudville.

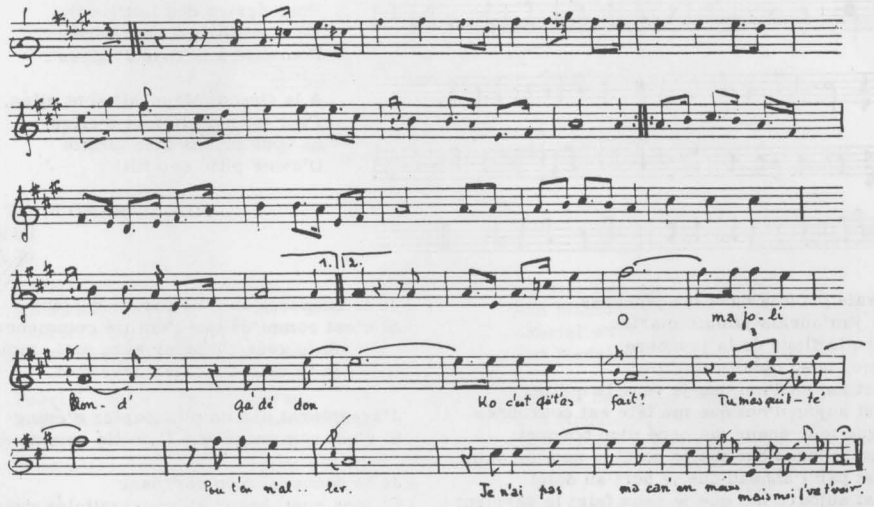
O Bibi, pourquoi dehors? Plutot, dis, viens
voir à ma maison, l'est bien joyeux.
Viens Bibi, ga' donc voir, si j'a t'appris après
m'quitter, moi tout seul après pleurer
dans la maison.
O Bibi, douillett'ment, avant d'mourir, viens
rester dans ma maison.
Ayee!

Oh Baby, why stay outside? Better to come to
my house where it is cheerful.
Come Baby, look here, if I learn you are
leaving me, I will cry alone in the house.
Oh Baby, cozily, before you die, come and
stay at my place.
Ayee!

SIDE I, BAND 8: JOHNNY KANE DANCE.
Played by Roy Brulé,
of Arnaudville, on accordion.

Endless two-beat reel. Most of the words are
those of the caller telling the dancers what to do.

SIDE II, BAND 1: JOLIE BLONDE.
Sung and played by Tony and
Rufis Allemand on violin and
guitar.



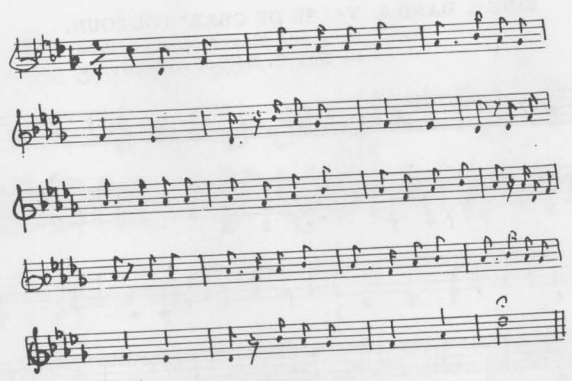
Ah! my beautiful blonde. Look what you've done.
You left me to go away.
I don't have my stick on hand, but you'll get it!

Ah! my beautiful blonde. I am going to sea.
You will cry before long, that'll teach you;
You will want to come back to your old negro.

Ah! ma joli' blond'. Ga(r)dez don(c) qu'o c'est
qu't'as fait.
Tu m'as quitté pou' t'en aller.
Je n'ai pas ma canne en mains, mais toi t'vas
l'(a)voir!

Ah! my joli' blond'. Moi j'm'en vais-t-à
naviguer.
Tu vas pleurer-zavant longtemps pou' t'att(r)aper;
Tu voudras t'en rev'ni avec ton vieux nèg'.

SIDE II, BAND 2: J'AI PASSE DESSOU' L'POMMIER.
Sung by a group of children.



J'ai passé dessous l'pommier et you les pom' tombé.
Il disait en son langage, et pic et pac et pic et pac.
Et moi j'croyais il disait: Et si j't'attrape, j'te fich' des tapes.
C'est moi qui m'en filait, croyant qu'il m'en suivait.

J'ai passé au long du bois et un coucou chantait.
Il disait en son langage, et coucoucou et coucoucou.
Et moi j'croyais il disait: et si j't'attrape, j'te coup' le cou.
C'est moi .....etc.

J'ai passé au long du bois et un bucher buchait.
Il disait en son langage, oh oui c'est dur oh oui c'est dur.
Et moi j'croyais il disait: et si j't'attrape, j'te fends r'en dur.
C'est moi ..... etc.

J'ai passé à la maison et oun ba'ceau ba'cait.
Il disait en son langage, dodo, bibi, dodo, bibi.
Et moi j'croyais il disait: et si j't'attrape, j'te cass' le gueul'.
C'est moi ..... etc.

J'ai passé au long du bois et oun moulin moulait.
Il disait en son langage, et tic et tac et tic et tac.
Et moi j'croyais: il disait et si j't'attrape, j'te fourr' dans l'sac.
C'est moi qui m'en filait, croyant qu'il m'en suivait.

I went under the apple tree and fell.
It said in its language, et pic et pac et pic et pac.
And I thought I heard it say: and if I catch you I'll slap you.
It was I who was running away, thinking he was following.

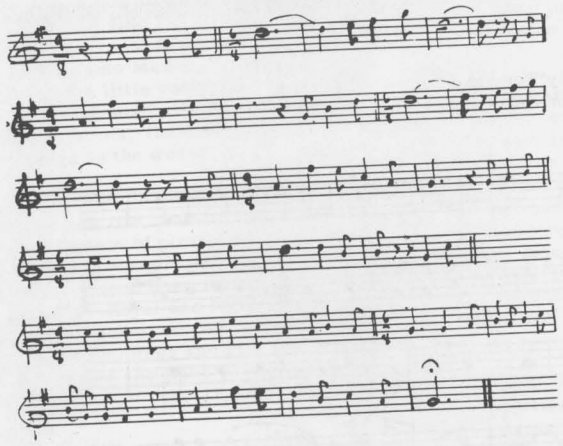
I passed along the woods and a lumberjack cut wood.
He said in his language, oh yes it is hard oh yes it is hard.
I thought I heard him say: and if I catch you I'll slit you hard.
It was I ..... etc.

I passed along the woods and a cuckoo sang.
It said in its language, et coucoucou et coucoucou.
I thought I heard it say: if I catch you I'll cut your throat.
It was I ..... etc.

I passed the house and the cradle rocked.
It said in its language, sleep, baby, sleep baby.
I thought I heard it say: if I catch you I'll break your jaw.
It was I ..... etc.

I passed along the woods and the mill was grinding.
It said in its language, et tic et tac et tic et tac.
I thought I heard it say: if I catch you I'll put you in a sack.
It was I ..... etc.

SIDE II, BAND 3: FLEUR DE LA JEUNESSE.
Sung by Madame Elie Landry, of Abbeville.



J'avais promis dans ma jeunesse
Que j'm'aurais jamais mariée.
Adieu la fleur de la jeunesse
Laïno, beau qualité de fille,
C'est aujourd'hui que je veux la quitter
C'est aujourd'hui que ma tête est couronnée
Et que mon coeur est orné d'un bouquet.
C'est aujourd'hui que je port' le nom de dam'
C'est par l'anneau que je port'au doigt.
C'est aujourd'hui que je veux fair' le serment
C'est de finir mes jours avec toi.
I promised in my youth
That I'd never marry.
Farewell, flower of youth
Laïno, handsome girl,
It is to-day that I want to leave it behind.
To-day my head is crowned
And my heart is adorned with a bouquet.
To-day I will become a woman
By the ring I wear on my finger.
To-day I wish to pledge
That I will end my days with you.

SIDE II, BAND 4: LES FILLES DE VERMILION.
Sung by Madame Elie Landry, of Abbeville.

En Vermilion, j'étais assuré,
Il y a des fill' en quantités,
Des p'tit' et des grandes
Et voudrionts se marier,
Mon Pèr' s'on les d'mande.

Les fill' ont fait un'assemblée
Pour écrire des lett'(res)
Pour envoyer à leur curé
Pour lir' à la Grand' Mess'.

A la Grand' Mess' il' sont allés, les garçons,
Pour prendr' le mot d'elles.
Et vous prions z'en amitié
D'avoir pitié des fill'.

In Vermilion, I was assured,
There are girls aplenty,
Some small some big
Who wanted to get married,
My Father, if asked.

The girls held a meeting
To write some letters
To send to their curé
To read at the High Mass.

To the High Mass they went, the boys,
To take their word.
And please in all friendship
Do have pity upon the girls.

SIDE II, BAND 5: LE PAPIER D'EPING'.
Sung by Madame Elie Landry, of Abbeville.

Je te donnerai un p'tit papier d'éping'
Si c'est comm'çà que l'amitié commence,
Si tu veux t'marier avec moi, moi, moi,
Si tu veux t'marier avec moi.

J'accepterai pas un p'tit papier d'éping'
Si c'est comme çà que l'amitié commence.

Je te donnerai mon carrosse
Et mes quat' beaux ch'vaux-zattelés dessus ...

J'accepterai pas ton carrosse ...

Je te donnerai la rob' de noces
Qu'est tout'ourlée-z'en fil d'argent ...

J'accepterai pas la rob' de noc' .....

Je te donnerai la clé d'mon cof'
Et tout mon or et mon argent ....

J'accepterai pas la clé d'ton cof' ....

Je te donnerai la clé d'mon coeur
Et tout' mon amitié-z'avec ...

J'accepterai bien la clé d'ton coeur
Etc ...

I'll give you a paper of pins
If that's how friendship starts

If you want to marry me, me, me,
If you want to marry me.

I shan't accept your paper of pins
If that's how friendship starts
To marry you, you, you
To marry you.

I'll give you my carriage
And my four nice horses with it ....

I shan't accept your carriage ...

I'll give you the wedding gown
That's embroidered with silver thread . . .

I shan't accept the wedding gown . . . .

I'll give you the key to my chest
And all my silver and gold . . . . .

I shan't accept the key to your chest . . .

I'll give the key to my heart
And my friendship with it . . . .

I shall accept the key to your heart
Etc. . . . . .

SIDE II, BAND 6: J'AI PASSÉ DEVANT TA PORTE.
Sung by Bobby Bourke,
of l'Ile Avery.

J'ai passé devant ta port'.
J'ai crié ma peine à ma bell'.
Ya parson' qui m'a répondu.
J'ai crié à elle mon coeur aimant.

Car ma mie la-haut savais,
Et j'ai vu les chandell' allumées.
Quéqu' chose m'a dit pouvais pleurer.
J'ai crié à elle mon coeur aimant.

I passed by your door.
I cried my sorrow to my sweetheart.
Nobody answered.
I cried out to her my loving heart.

For I knew she was upstairs,
And I saw the candles lit.
Something told me I could weep.
I cried out to her my loving heart.

SIDE II, BAND 7: LA NOCE A JOSÉPHINE.
Told and Sung by
Fernand Labore, of Abbeville.

Y a la noc' à Joséphine,
Joséphinette notre cousine,
Nous sommes parents par conséquence.
Quelle est bell' noc', quel beau diner,
Quelle est belle bosse nous avons donné.

On fait un peu gris ici, mes amis. Nous sommes allés dans la Ville de St. Martinville. Savez-vous c't'une très grand'ville. Y s'sont tous mis à chanter:

Y a la noc' à Joséphine,
Etc . . . . . .

J'ai été invité d'aller au repas. Avant le repas, y m'ont d'mandé si j'voulais un appétisant. J'ai dit: "Certain'ment, j'veux un appétisant." Y m'ont vidé quequechose de rouge dan' un verr'. Après la troisième gorgée, j'voyais tout' couleurs, bleu, vert et rouge. Enfin, mon pied gauche allait à droite et le cui-là de la droit' allait à la gauche. Finalement, nous sommes rendus au repas. Au repas, qu'est-ce qu'il y avait? Y avait des p'tits cochons farcis qui flottaient dans la graisse et y s'étaient là-d'dans com' si' z'étaient contents d'nous voir autour d'eux. Y avait d'la mangeaille pour vingt-cinq, nous étions cinquant'. Savez-vous qu'nous avons bien vit' "barificoté" tout c'qui y avait? Nous nous sommes tous mis à chanter encore:

Y a la noce à Joséphine
Etc . . . . .

Enfin, après tout ceci, j'étais invité d'aller à la noce . . . à le "bal des noces" qu'i' z'appellent enfin. Eh ben, fallait voir la grand' Joséphine avec sa grand'robe . . . chaq'fois qu'etait gaie, balaie plancher propre . . Et son pauv'p'tit mari qui lui arrivait à peu près à la ceinture . . la moitié du temps, ses pieds touchaient pas l'plancher. Enfin, l'musiciens ont commencé à tord' les oreilles de leu' zinstruments qui z'appellent le bétail autour la, et pis, fallait voir ça! Et pus qu'i' z'essayaient de s'accorder et pus qu'i' z'étaient en désaccord! Enfin, la danse a pris fin. Fallait voir le pauv' p'tit malade malheureux-là qui lui arrivait à la ceintur' encore et la moitié du temps ses pieds touchaient pas l'plancher. Y s'sont tous mis à crier:

Y a la noc' à Joséphine
Etc . . . . . .

Enfin, dans l'intervalle du temps, y a un' demoiselle, bien charmant' bien zagréable et bien ornementée de tas du ruban. La moitie du temps, j'la comprenais pas. J'lui ai mesuré du bec ent' six affaire embrassé. Sa maman vien' z'à moi, dit: "Mon p'tit insolent, s'tu viens pou' becotailler les filles, t'es mieux d't'en r'tourner chez toi. Moi qu'avais deux doigts d'épaisseur de rouge sur la figur', j'm'entortillais comme un ver dans la "mélasse" (?). Savez-vous qu'j'avais bon' mine? Mais j'me suis mi' à chanter encore:

Y a la noc' à Joséphine,
Joséphinette notre cousine,
Nous sommes parents par conséquence.
Quell' est bell' noc', quel beau diner,
Quell' est bell' bosse nous avons donné.

There was Joséphine's wedding,
Joséphinette, our cousin,
Therefore we are relatives.
What a fine wedding, what a fine dinner,
What a fine brawl we gave.

It's dull here, my friends. We went to the town of St. Martinville. Do you know, it's quite a town. They all sang:

There was Joséphine's wedding,
Etc . . . . . .

I was invited to the meal. Before the meal, they asked me whether I wanted an aperitif. I said: "Sure, I want an aperitif." They poured something red in my glass. After the third gulp, I was seeing all colors: blue, green and red. Well, my left foot went to the right and the right went to the left. Finally, we went where the dinner was served. At the dinner, what was there? There were little stuffed pigs floating in deep fry and they looked as if they were pleased to see us around. There was food for twenty-five. We were fifty. Do you know that we took no time cleaning all there was? We all sang again:

There was Joséphine's wedding,
Etc . . . . . .

Well then, after all this, I was invited to the wedding. The ball of the wedding, as they call it. Well, you should have seen the tall Josephine with her big dress that swept the clean floor. And her poor little husband that reached just about to her waist; half the time,his feet did not touch the floor. Then, the musicians started twisting the ears of their instruments that call the cattle around here, and then, you should have seen that. The more they tried to tune them, the more out of tune they were. Then, the dance came to an e end. You should have seen the poor little sick unhappy one who barely reached to her waist, most of the time, his feet were off the floor! They all started shouting:

There is Joséphine's wedding,
Etc. . . . . .

Finally, during the intermission, I saw a young lady, quite charming, quite pleasant and well adorned with ribbons. Most of the time, I did not understand her. I gave her a kiss between lots of things. Her mother came to me and said: "My little impertinent, if you come here to kiss the girls, you better stay home." I, having just about two-fingers-thick of red in the face, I was squirming like a worm in molasses. Do you think I was looking good? But I started singing again:

There is Joséphine's wedding,
Etc . . . . . .

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