

Reel 147B

- 1-6 Quaker's Courtship; sung by Mrs. Edgar Hewson, Amherst with piano accompaniment; this is much better on 147A without accompaniment; for words see 147A; good version of amusing song
- 6-9 The Sandy Anderson Song; composed and sung by Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River; amusing local song about trip taken by bank manager in snow.
- 9-10 Conversation with Mr. Fisher about the songs he makes up, including the previous song.
- 10-15 The Dinner I Et With the Major; composed and sung by Mr. Fisher; amusing song about a local gathering.
- 15-15½ Breaking In Two Plates; composed and sung by Mr. Fisher about his own trouble with two new sets of teeth.
- 15½-16 The Baldwin Song; composed and sung by Mr. Fisher about a trip
18-21 taken on old boat and its results; amusing
- 16-18 Little Joe's Whiskers; composed and sung by Mr. Fisher, the best of his local songs on this tape; courting song, quite singable.
- 21-28 Talk on Customs and Making Songs; told by Mr. Fisher; his keen sense of fun shows up all through his conversation
- 28-29 Stories told by Mr. Fisher about a comical man named Wellington who lived at Bass River; Potato Yarn is good tale.
- 29-end The Man That Invented the Stone Axes; quick retort of old man which is quite typical of people in this province.

Come learn of Sandy Anderson, the chieftain of the bank,
 In business he is honest and in manners he is frank,
 He is always put for doing good and if you listen in
 I'll sing you of the time that he took the apples out to Lynn.

2

He had to make a business trip to Stanley Roger's camp,
 The road was broken to The Sack and from there he had to tramp,
 The snow was deep, the way uphill, it mattered not to him,
 He was bound to take some apples to those lumberjacks in Lynn.

3

Now lots of things may happen at The Sack I've heard them tell,
 And Scotchmen are a people of a race convivial,
 And on a cold and winter's day I'm sure it was no sin
 If he took in gas and oil enough to run him out to Lynn.

4

He lashed his snowshoes on his feet and his apples on his back,
 And up the Joe McLellan hill prepared to break a track,
 The sack had filled him full of spunk till it nearly bust his skin
 As around the Devil's Elbow he went trudging out to Lynn.

5

Now as he passed by Fiddler Joe's a cow came out to smell,
 That bag he carried on his back and she liked it mighty well,
 But Sandy says, "Gang oot your strap, it's nae for you ye ken,
 It's some apples I'd be takin' out to the lumberjacks in Lynn!"

6

The cow was leary of that bag and she poked it with her horn,
 Then she rang her tongue in through the hole that she had torn,
 It brought her out an apple and she munched it with a grin
 As along with Sandy Anderson she marched away to Lynn.

7

Another and another and the bag was growing light,
 But Sandy never noticed it for he was getting tight,
 He thought the road was narrow when his head began to spin
 And he sang the song of a sourdough as he marched away to Lynn.

8

The lumberjacks knew Sandy and they liked him mighty well,
 And when they saw him coming in they met him with a yell,
 And Sandy says, "Come on my lads, see what I brought yez in,
 Here's a bushel of Ben Davis and I lugged them out to Lynn."

9

He kicked the snowshoes from his feet, reached down to get his pack,
 And then he heard the munching of that cow behind his back,
 He thought that he'd gone hypnotized from smelling canteen gin
 And that beldame cows had followed him the whole way out to Lynn.

10

He turned around and he saw the cow with the bag upon her horn,
 Says he, "May ye be sorry for the day which ye were born,
 May the devil cook your haggis while his goblins stretch your skin
 For you've stolen all the apples I'd be luggin' out to Lynn.

11

Come all ye folks who hear this song, if ye be white or black,
 And when you go to visit Lynn don't stop off at The Sack,
 For if you do you'll surely rue repentin' of your sin
 And the beldame cows will follow you the whole way out to Lynn.

Composed and sung by Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River about a Bank
 of Commerce manager who made a business trip to Lynn in snow, and took
 apples along; recorded by Helen Creighton July 1955.

Conversation with Mr. Edgar Fisher, composer of these songs:

What is the story of that song?

The story of it? Oh, you want to tell it in that? (the microphone)
Well that's a friend of mine. He was the manager of the branch bank of the Bank of Commerce here at Bass River at the time, and he had to make a business trip to the camp out in Lynn. It was deep and full of snow and he had to take a horse and sleigh from The Sack out to Lynn so he took a bag of apples along to treat the men on and while he was in the camp and old cow they had there come out and eat the apples.

And you made up the song about it?

I made up the song about it.

Have you made up many songs Mr. Fisher?

Quite a lot of them (he laughs reminiscently)

It was quite a pasttime, was it?

Many's the time when I was a kid I got my ears slapped for it too. I used to make it on the fellows and girls and they didn't like it too well.

Did you ever collect your debts by making songs up about anybody?

Hum?

Do you say you song a person? Do you use the expression that you song a person? Make a song up about them if you don't like them?

No I do not. No sir. A person I don't like I try to forget them.

As I happened to walk in the sawmill one day
 I heard someone groanin' and moanin',
 And I followed the sound until Perley I found
 With his hands clasped around his abdomen.
 Sez I, "Me poor friend tell me what can be wrong.
 How comes it you're not on the aidger?"
 "Oh listen to me and I'll tell you," said he,
 "It's that dinner I et with the major.

2

The major you know is abit of a blow
 But the 'umble he tries to remember,
 And a banquet he'll hold when the weather gets cold
 Every winter twixt March and December,
 His wife goes away and she leaves him full sway
 While society functions engage her,
 Then he cooks up a meal that would pisin the de'il
 And we all go to dine with the major.

3

There's Roland and Spiker and Arnie and I,
 John Patton and Charles Ed McLellan,
 With Sharp from New Brunswick and Bobby O'Brien
 Whose stomach is quite beyond fillin',
 We go from the shop in our sawdust and rags
 And we aitch lay the other a wage,
 I darst eat more than you of the puddin' and stew
 When we go up to dine with the major.

4

The major don't cook from no recipe book,
 His dishes are all in his noddle,
 He can bake, bile, and stew, fry simmer, and brew,
 And fricasse, frizzle, and coddle,
 He serves it at noon in his grand dining room
 And at carvin' he's quite an old stager,
 And we sing and we toast and we yarn and we boast
 And we drink a long life to the major.

5

He held it to-day in the usual way
 And the regular company attended,
 And I ate like a hog stuff would pisen a dog
 So the major would not be offended,
 There was fricassed tripe ad liver and lights,
 Hen's giblets and Porty de Rager,
 That's a French dish ye see brought from over the sea
 That can only be cooked by the major.

6

The company was seated, the feastin' began
 And aitch of the guests took a plateful,
 Sez Arnie, "That tripe is a bit overripe,"
 As he walloped his jaws on a mouthful.
 Sez John Sharpe, "B'me spot it's this gizzard I got
 Come out of an ostrich I'll wager,"
 And I said not a word that could ever be heard
 Just for fear of offendin' the major.

Then the major arose and sez he, "I suppose,
I believe, I presume, I consider,
I'm glad when yez come and I'm glad when yez go
And I'm takin' the swate with the bitter,
The whistle it sounded, we took for the road
Like bootleggers chased by a gauger,
And I'm chuck full of cramps round the top of me pants
From that dinner I et with the major.

Composed and sung by Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River, and
recorded by Helen Creighton, July 1955.

Question: How did you come to write this song?

Answer: 't just happened somethin' like this. I'd just lost all my teeth one time and another and I had to get some new ones and I got two pla plates, and anyone that ever broke in two plates of teeth at ~~xxx~~ the same time - well you know what kind of a job that is. So one of my shop mates come in one day and he said, "Look here Ed, by golly, I wish I could make rhymes on people like you can. I'd certainly make something up on your false teeth. So I thought that was a good chance so I made it up on myself.

I'm a poor unhappy divil, I'm in misery every day,
 And I've somehow got the feelin' I've been stung,
 For me pocket book is empty and me gob is feelin' sore
 From this thing that's wedged down underneath me tongue.
 I hadn't any grinders, all me teeth was out of joint,
 Sure me face looked like a larrigan in the sun,
 Oh me friends they did advise me to try Doctor MacIntosh
 And they all were certain that something could be done.

2

Sez he, "Yez are flat-footed, I can see it in your mug,
 And your jaws me bye is horribly on the bum,"
 Oh he filled me gob with mortar and he tamped it with a hoe
 And he called that the impression of me gum.
 Oh sez he, "Come back next Tuesday for I want to fit your plate,
 And I've got to get your bite before you're done,"
 "How in the devil I'm goin' to bite 'em in the puzzled I don't know,
 I've got nothing left to bite with but me tongue."

3

He made me imitations of Tom Garvie's river boots,
 Oh the corks is long enough for ridin' stumps,
 Now me face looks like them lanterns that the kids like Hallowe'en
 And me jaws stick out as though I had the mumps.
 Oh me wife says, "Yez must clean them so I washed them with the mop
 And I scoured them with the scrubbing brush and sand,
 But it's when I put them back again they worked a whole lot worse
 And the wobbled around enough to ate the band.

4

They're upside down, they're downside up, they go just where they please,
 Sure they have atourists' liscence on me face,
 And the only remedy I can see I'll have to ate a dog
 Just to keep them devils herded in their place.

Composed and sung by Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River, and
 recorded by Helen Creighton July 1955

Come all you bold factory men listen to me,
A song I will sing that will fill you with glee,
It's about Mr. Tuttle, a man you all know,
Who a voyage the Jess Elliot lately did go.

Cho.

Singing yo ho, row Baldwin row.

2

Now Jess Elliot's a captain who's very well know,
The ships that he sails they are best sailed alone,
Oh they're rotten and leaky, lopsided as well,
And their pumps wouldn't suck if you had them in - .Cho.

3

Now Baldwin'd no notion of goin' with Jess,
He'd retired from business, was takin' a rest,
And he wouldn't have gone by a terrible sight
Only Jim Cook shanghied him aboard in the night. Cho.

4

The anchor was weighted and the Watchman set sail,
When Jess woke up Baldwin and told him to bail,
And he stood at the pump till his back it was broke
With a rotten old craft leakin' five hundred stroke. Cho.

5

Poor old Baldwin got hungry and wanted his chuck,
To pump empty-bellied is mighty hard luck,
And he dreamed of plum duff but it made him say damn,
When Jess Elliot sounded eight bells on a pan. Cho.

6

He went down below singin' brown bread and beans,
But the sight that he saw put an end to his dreams,
There was nothin' but hardtack, boiled herrin', and tea,
And he sat on the floor and he et off his knees. Cho.

7

Poor old Baldwin must eat it, what else could he do?
He broke off his teeth when he tried for to chew,
So he swallowed the herrin' both bones guts and tail
Until Elliot shouted, "All hands shorten sail." Cho.

8

Now aloft in the topsails poor Baldwin fell ill,
His stomach was certainly goin' to spill,
He yelled "Under below I've let go me main brace,"
But the dough struck the captain right fair in the face. Cho.

9

Now for once in his life little Jess couldn't swear,
He had guts in his eyes and he'd bones in his hair,
And he pawed like a dog gettin' rid of the flees
Till the second broadside brought him flat on his knees. Cho.

10

Jess put him in irons to caulking the deck,
And slushin' the spars of the rotten old wreck,
And he swore that before on the Watchman he'd sail
He'd hobo his passage back home in the mail. Cho.

Now Baldwin escaped from the touch of the snag,
He neverence stopped for his wages and bag,
And he beat his way home and got back in the shop
For as long as they'll have him I'm sure he will stop. Cho.

Composed and sung by Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River, and recorded
by Helen Creighton, July 1955

Little Joe's Whiskers

Reel 147B16-18

O me name it is Joseph, I'm sixty or more,
Perhaps I have ought to been married before,
But it took me so long for to make up me mind
All the girls of me age they had left me behind.

Cho.

Singing tiddy hi ho, whack fol de dol dey
Sing tiddy hi ho, whack fol de dol dey.

2

So the first thing I did was to build me a house,
All finished and painted and proof rat and mouse,
And then to go courtin' I felt very brave
But I thought it was better me whiskers to shave. Cho.

3

So one fine Sunday morning along in July
I mowed off me whiskers and stacked them to dry,
I put of me best and went down to the church
Sez I, "It's a partner for life that I've searched." Cho.

4

When the people they saw me they let out a yell,
Sez they there has been a rebellion in - ,
And the parson he sat and bejabers sez he
"That's the devil himself that's appearin' to me!" Cho.

5

O the first thing I met was a calf and a cow,
And just for the practise I made her a bow,
But she down with her head and she up with her tail
Sez she, "That's a goblin me calf come to steal." Cho.

6

O the next thing that met me it was a red squirrel,
I fiddled with a smile like I would at a girl,
But whenever it saw me it howled with affright
"There's the thing takes the hazlenuts all in one night." Cho.

7

When I got to me lodgings old Joe to me ran,
He hid in the pantry and prayed like a man,
"O Father forgive me and cover your frown
Here's the wild man of Borneo just come to town." Cho.

8

Now the heart of me bosom it's heavy within,
And I wish that me whiskers was back on me chin,
For if ever I marry it seems a plain case
It must be a blind girl with a board on her face. Cho.

Question: Did he ever get a wife?

Answer: No, no, nax

Question: He never did? All his life?

Answer: Gosh no; if you'd see him you wouldn't wonder.

Composed and sung by Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River and recorded by
Helen Creighton, July 1955

When I was a youngster we had a good temperance lodge here in Bass River that it was called the Victoria Lodge IOGT and every Friday evening we used to have one hour for entertainment. Well, there was recitations and songs and there was a lot of good singers here then, and then the special entertainment, some of the members used to get up papers on the other members. We'd find out some jokes on them and write it up like it would be in a newspaper, and the poems, they came in along with the newspaper too. It was a regular old-fashioned home-made entertainment. We didn't have any radios or movin' pictures or anything like that them times; like everything else our entertainment had to be homemade, and so we made it. And that's why I made up a lot of these songs and a lot of these foolish pieces of mine were made up for that. They ain't the truth at all; they're only founded on facts but by George they're built out of fiction. There's a lot piled onto them and I hope that if anybody sees them they won't think I'm makin' fun of anybody because that wasn't the idea at all. It was the idea to get a joke on somebody and tell them so it would be the laugh on everyone else, and we all enjoyed it and had a good time.

There, that's good enough. Don't say any more. I hope they won't hang me; if anybody ever hears these songs I hope they won't get mad and hang me.

The time that I made up the song you just heard me brother Nate and I were workin' at the bench glueing up cane seats. He was gluin' them and I was driving them together, and every time he passed a seat over the bench forme to drive up I sung him another verse of the song.

Question: There are a lot of verses to that song. You mean you could make them up that quickly?

Answer: Oh yes, that fast.

Question: And then remember them. Did you ever write them down?

Answer. That song was never written. By George I didn't dare write it.

Question: It's not that libelous.

Answer: No, but it's a song that I wouldn't want to publish very far.

Question: Could you make your songs up very quickly? Did they all come quickly like that?

Answer: When I got started it wasn't any trouble to make them up. The de'il of it was to get a start at the first of it. Once I got it goin' then it was easy enough.

Question: What was your work Mr. Fisher?

Answer: At the time I made a good many of those up I was making cane chair seats in the factory - chair factory. I worked all through the place, and that's what I worked at then and now I work in the bending department.

Question: You still work? At the age of eighty?

Answer: I still work. I can't do anything else now but work.

Question: Good for you. What else did you do during your life? Were you a carpenter? Or a fisherman?

Answer: No no, I always worked in the factory. I went to work in the chair factory down here the next spring after I was thirteen years old, and I've been there practically ever since.

Question: Did you ever go to sea?

Answer: No ma'am I did not. No I never went to sea at all. I never fished. I'm no boatman.

Question: What about hunting. Did you ever go hunting?

Answer: I have gone hunting, yes, and fishin' trout, but that was only for the sport of it.

Question: Do you know any tall tales about hunting?

(Stories follow on next page)

Talk with Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River recorded by Helen Creighton, July 1955.

There were some good comics around here. We had one old fellow that used to drive the furniture team, Wellington McLaughlin, and I think he could say the comicallest things and fit them in the best of anyone that ever I heard of. If the man had been writin' he'd have made a fortune ~~xxxxxxx~~ at it.

There was a United minister lived right across the road from him and he often used to go over and call on him and have a chat with him, and one day he went over and the minister was mowin' the hay around his place and he mowed away and by and by he finished up with a big swoop and he said, "There Wellington, what do you think of that?"

"Well, sez he, " it's naw so bad."

He says, "You fellows think that a ministers no good for anything. He can't split wood or split stone or pick potatoes or mow hay. He can't do anything but preach."

Wellington says, "I've seen a considerable of them that couldn't even do that."

(This story is told on Rev. Rackham) a man with a keen sense of humour)

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Potato Yarn

In his younger days Wellington had drove the furniture team for the Dominion Chair Company and of course people all along the road knew him. He was a dandy off-handed good obligin' old soul and everybody liked him and they liked to hear his tall yarns. And one day he was comin' home from Londonderry station and as he come near Allan Hill's store there happened to be a crowd in there and it was potato diggin' time and they was talkin' about big potato crops. And when they saw him comin' they said, "By George here's Wellington. He's coming in. We'll get a big potato story out of him. So as soon as Wellington landed inside of the store they said to him,

"Wellington, how big was the biggest crop of potatoes you ever saw?"

"Well, "he says, "I think that the biggest crop I ever had anything to do with, I helped to pick five hundred bushels off of a half an acre one time."

Well sir them fellahs went into the air and they howled and stopped and Wellinto says, "Well if you don't believe me, there's the man behind the counter that I picked them for. " Well Wellington went out and of course they all lit on Allan Hill to know what in thunder he meant by backin' Wellington up in a yarn like that." Allan says, "There's no yarn about it boys. I'll tell you that's a fact." He says, "I remember it. I used to take potatoes to Boston in the schooner and one time I went in what they call the King's Rest Beach to pick up Thomas Fulton's potatoes and the schooner kinda beached on and the water slopped into her and the potatoes got wet and I had to take them out and dry them. And when we went to pick them up again Wellington was there and he did help pick them up and there was 500 bushel of them/, and they were on about half an acre of ground.

Told by Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River, and recorded by Helen Creighton, July 1955.

We had another of those old comical fellows around Bass River. He was a ship carpenter by trade, but in his older days he worked quite a bit at the factory. Everybody liked him. He was Mr. Fulton Starrett, and one day he was workin' and there was one of these men, he wasn't really an old man but he was one of these people who looked old. You've seen people look like that. And I happened along and I said,

"Well, Mr. Starrett, this is an old man you got workin' with you to-day"

"Yes, yes," he says, "he's old. He's very old. By golly," says he, "he's the man that invented the stone axes."

Told by Mr. Edgar Fisher, Bass River, and recorded by Helen Creighton, July 1955