

Reel 186A

- 000-061 The Little Low Plain; sung by Mrs. Ray LeBlanc, Eastern Passage; 5 vs. U.S. lumberman's song; see also reel 203A&B by singers from N.B.
- 168-093 The Gypsy Laddie; sung by Mrs. LeBlanc; 4 vs.; good as far as it goes.
- 097-183 Caroline and Her Young Sailor Bold; sung by Mr. Augustine MacDonald, North Sydney and Meat Cove; 6½ double vs.; love and sea song; good song; interesting.
- 188-264 Here's A Health to Bonny Scotland; sung by Mr. MacDonald; this must be an old song adapted to Hon Angus L. MacDonald, former Minister of National Defence and Premier of N.S.; nice tune
- 266-322 The Dumb Girl; sung by Mr. MacDonald; 9 vs. amusing song; husband has doctor operate so wife can speak, then wishes she were dumb again; singable
- 188-418 Stories of Songs and Meeting the Devil; told by Mr. MacDonald; interesting for customs, beliefs, and dialect of northern Cape Breton.
- 419-end,  
concluded
- 186B 503 St. John's Girls; sung by Mr. MacDonald; 7 double vs.; man going to war sings praises of girls; this is probably first world war; good of its kind.

Can you tell me the name of your foreman,  
Describe him as well as you can,  
For years I've taught school on this river,  
And perhaps I have met the same man.

2

His coat and his jacket were dyed  
From the back of a butternut tree,  
His shoes they were number eleven

3

He wore an open-faced tucker,  
Strung down on an inches of chain,  
And on it was stamped Johnny Murphy  
From the banks of the little low plain.

4

And when I had finished my story  
She fell on the ground like one dead,  
I dipped up my hat full of water  
And I poured it all over her head.

5

She opened her eyes and exclaimed  
"I'll never teach school any more,  
I'll travel through England and Ireland,  
And I'll travel through Scotland and Spain,  
But I'll never forget Johnny Murphy  
From the banks of the little low plain."

Story: She lost her lover and she couldn't find him, and every place she'd go she'd ask about him and enquire, and she went to this mill where they were sawing, and he described him and it was this Johnny Murphy, but he had just left that day. There's a whole lot of words to it but I can't remember them all. I remember my sister singing it when I was a kid round Amherst.

Sung by Mrs. Ray LeBlanc, Eastern Passage, and recorded by  
Helen Creighton, June 1958

The Gypsy Laddie

Reel 186068-093

The landlord he came in that night  
Enquiring for his lady,  
He was answered by the servant maid,  
"She's gone with a gypsy Davy."

2

"Would you forsake your house and home,  
Would you forsake your baby?  
Would you forsake them all and go  
Along with a gypsy Davy?"

3

"Yes I'd forsake my house and home,  
My husband and my baby,  
Yes I'd forsake them all and go  
For the love of a gypsy Davy."

4

"Last night I lay in a nice warm bed  
With my husband and my baby,  
But to-night I lie on the cold cold ground  
By the side of a gypsy Davy."

Sung by Mrs. Ray LeBlanc, Eastern Passage, and recorded by  
Helen Creighton, June 1958

It's of a rich nobleman's daughter  
So comely and fair I am told  
Her father possessed a large fortune  
Of twenty-five thousand or more.  
He had one comely daughter  
Caroline being her name I am told,  
One day from her dining-room window  
She admired a young sailor bold.

2

His cheeks were as red as the roses,  
His eyes were as black as the jet,  
She watched him until his departure,  
Went around and young Willie she met.  
Crying, "I'm a rich nobleman's daughter,  
Possessed of two thousand or more,  
I'll forsake both my parents and riches  
For to wed with a young sailor bold."

3

"O no dearest lady, remember,  
Your parents you're bound for to mind,  
For in sailors there are no dependence,  
When their loved ones are left far behind."  
Not one in this world can persuade me  
One moment to alter my mind,  
I'll ship and proceed with my Willie  
And I know he'll not leave me behind."

4

She dressed like a gallant young seaman,  
Forsook both her parents and gold,  
Three years and a half on the ocean  
She ploughed with her young sailor bold.  
Three times with her love she been shipwrecked,  
And she always proved faithful and true,  
Her duty she did like a sailor,  
Went aloft in her jacket so blue.

5

Three times with her love she been shipwrecked  
And she always proved constant I'm told,  
Till at last they arrived in at England,  
Caroline and her young sailor bold.  
Caroline she went straight to her father,  
In her trousers and jacket so blue,  
He received and immediately fainted  
When first she appeared in his view.

6

Crying, "Father dear father forgive me,  
Deprive me forever of gold,  
Grant me a request to live happy  
And wed with my young sailor bold."

Her father admired young Willie  
And vowed that in sweet unity  
If life should be spared till to-morrow  
It's married this couple would be.

27

They got married and Caroline's portion  
Weighed over two thousand in gold,  
And now they live cheerful and happy,  
Caroline and her young sailor bold.

Sung by Mr. Augustine McDohald, North Sydney, and recorded  
by Helen Creighton, June 1958

Come ye friends of the thistle,  
 Join here and sing,  
 And rejoice in the triumph that wins,  
 By MacDonald the hero, the rose of his clan,  
 Well may Scotland be proud of his name.

Cho.

Here's a health bonny Scotland  
 The land of the brave,  
 Here's a health to the brave and the true,  
 And as long as the thistle and heather shall bloom,  
 Here's a health bonny Scotland to thee.

2

It's no use to inform you how well what you know,  
 How the Irishmen challenged our clan,  
 But the rose of MacDonald not yet in his bloom  
 Made him feel what the challenge contained. Cho.

3

When the day of engagement had duly arrived  
 And the giants had appeared on the stage,  
 Had the Irish to win in the contest that day  
 Some old Scotchman would rise from his grave. Cho.

4

At the east of Lake Ain-sa-lée where he was born,  
 Now he rests with his laurels well won,  
 And the name of that lake I am proud to make known  
 He has engraved it in bright letters of gold. Cho.

Mr. McDonald, what's the story of that song?

It was made by a fellow of the name of Malcolm Gillis up in  
 Margaree. He made that song you know for Angus L. MacDonald when  
 he ran his first election in Halifax.

When he ran his first election? That's a long time ago, isn't  
 it?

Yes, a long time ago.

That's a lovely tune.

Yes, that's a nice air onto it all right.

Is that the air of a song called Bonny Scotland?

Well it's partly the same, pretty near. I think it was - it might  
 have been taken off of that alright.

But the words are about Angus L. MacDonald, isn't that nice.

Yes, the time that he ran against - oh what the dickens is that  
 fellow in Halifax there that's premier now?

Sung by Mr. Augustine McDonald, North Sydney, and recorded by  
 Helen Creighton, June 1958

Come all ye people round me and listen to my song, 266-322  
 It's of a young girl that was dumb dumb dumb,  
 She was neat and she was trim, she was neat in every rim  
 But alas poor girl she was dumb.

2

She could bake and she could brew,  
 She could spin and she could sew,  
 She could sweep out the house with a broom broom broom,  
 She was neat and she was trim, she was neat in every rim,  
 But alas poor girl she was dumb.

3

There came a country lad and he courted this fair maid,  
 So he named her and took her to his home, home, home,  
 She was neat in every part and she pleased him to the heart  
 But alas poor girl she was dumb.

4

In the morning he arose, to the doctor he did go,  
 Crying, "Doctor, dear doctor, can't you cure the dumb?"  
 "Oh it is an easy part and I find it in my heart  
 For to make a woman speak who is dumb."

5

The doctor then he brings and he cuts the prattering strings  
 And that woman got the use of her tongue tongue tongue,  
 Then her tongue began to talk and her legs began to walk  
 And he wished in his heart she was dumb.

6

Next morning he arose, to the doctor he did go,  
 Crying, "Doctor, dear doctor, I'm done done done,  
 For you learnt my wife to scold and her tongue she will not hold,  
 And she rattles in my ears like a drum."

7

"I will tell you what you'll do, what it is of your vow,  
 Take a veil of a vessel that is strung strung strung,  
 Then bind her body round till you fill the house with sound  
 And perhaps that will make her hold her tongue."

8

"And if that will not do there's no other care for you,  
 But do the best that you can can can,  
 And mind before you leave that you never are too late  
 For that is the mination of a man."

9

"When I will undertake for to make a woman speak  
 It's a thing that is easily done done done,  
 But it's beyond the help of man, let him do the best he can,  
 For to make a scolding woman hold her tongue."

Sung by Mr. Augustine McDonald, North Sydney, and recorded  
 by Helen Creighton, June 1958

Stories of Songs and Meeting the Devil

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
Here's A Health

Reel 186A188- 418

I left down there (Bay St. Lawrence) November 1926. A couple of years before that they had a card game in a house and they were playing for a pair of men's socks, you know. There was a bunch of us played cards and I won the socks, and anyway in the front room - they had a big front room - and they were dancing in there. Some more were singing, and when the card game was over there was one of the fellows entertaining, you know, he went outside. When he was going out the door he made a sign for me to go out. A little while after he went out I walked out and he says, "They're going to try and give you a skinnin'," he says, "on singing songs." I says, "They're welcome to try it any time they have a mind to."

Question: What is a skinnin'?

Answer: It's to beat me. He had a bunch of them in the room and they were singing and I came in and I let on nothing and they were singing, and when one would stop the other'd come step right in, you know, just showing that they weren't going to give me a chance at all. I let them go for a while. Well one of them was a little too slow. I started. I sung seventeen songs right off of the bat without stopping, and there was an Irishman there. His name was Canary, a councillor down there in Bay St. Lawrence. He got up and walked over and struck me on the shoulder ( he laughs heartily)

"That's enough Mr. MacDonald," he says, "thank me too," he says, and he was one of the ones that was into it. He was a good singer and I right. He had a lot of Irish songs, you know.

Question: They weren't able to skin you?

Answer: I sung seventeen songs and it was getting daylight and they all ~~xxxxxxx~~ shut up. Some of them were sitting on the bench longside the wall and they were asleep. (He laughs again heartily as one does after having got the best of a situation).

Question: You were walking home after listening to the radio?

Answer: It was a hockey game from Toronto. I walked along and when I came up to the YMCA I heard a crack and I looked down. Here was the old Satan standing on the ice. He had a pitchfork in his hand, oh all dressed out in all his toggeries (laughs) anyway I stopped and I looked at him for a while and I told him, I says, "Look mister," I says, "you better get back to where you came from." Well in the flash of an eye everything was gone.

Question: How was he dressed?

Answer: Red. All red clothes. There were horns on him and a tail and hooves and a great big fork in his hand and everything and I guess that was how some of the stories got started. I told a lot of them that. I guess that's what they -

Question: You hadn't been drinking that night, had you?

Answer: No, no I never drink.

Question: Well what do you think he wanted?

Answer: I don't know. I couldn't say what he was wanting but I told him to go back to where he came from, and in the flash of an eye he was gone.

Question: You must have been frightened.

Answer: They were more scared than I was. I seen him lots of times in different shapes and forms, you know like everything you could think of pretty near. I seen him once, I was walking the road down there in the country and he was in the shape of a horse, a great big horse. I knew because I had never seen a horse as tall. That's how I knew he was - a black horse, and a little white star in his forehead. I was walking along and I heard like a horse coming along, the hooves you know striking the rocks and the first thing I noticed, this little white star almost ~~at~~ O my God, as high as a loft. He passed on one side of the road and I passed on the other.

O there's a lot of things I seen down there in the country. Nobody'll believe me. I was only crazy, I was a liar and that is and that, just like they say about the election. When I told them how the election would come off I was a dang fool. (He had forecast it exactly, and hear sounds very pleased about it).  
Question: Did you ever talk to the devil?

Answer: No, just that. And I was passing the Catholic Church down at Bay St. Lawrence one night and all the lights were lit. At that time in the country they used kerosene lamps and they were here and there on the wall, you know. I was passing on one side of the church and I could see the lights lit on the altar and everything. I got up to the graveyard, a little short road I was going that way, and I got up and I looked around, and no light. A couple of days after I seen the priest and I told him what I seen, and he said to me, "Why didn't you come and wake me up?" I says, "It was after twelve o'clock and you were asleep." "Well," he says, "if you ever see the like again go to whatever place it is and wake - go to the priest and wake him up right away. You don't know what that means?" I says, "Partly. Somebody might have give money to a priest some time for to say a mass and perhaps the mass was never said." He says, "You're right, but I'm going to tell you one thing," he says, "if you see the devil on this world you'll never see him on the next." Now I told that to a lot of people, and nobody'd believe me at all.

Question: And those lights were showing because a mass was supposed to have been said and it wasn't said?

Answer: Somebody give the priest money to say a mass for somebody that died, you know. He said, "I'll say a mass to-morrow morning," he says.

Question: You never saw it again?

Answer: No, no more.

Talk with Mr. Augustine MacDonald, North Sydney and Meat Cove, recorded by Helen Creighton, June 1958.

St. John's Girls

Reel 186A&B419-

There is a girl in St. John's town  
That I am going to see,  
No fellow in the regiment,  
No sir but only me,  
She smiled so as I leave her,  
I thought it would break my heart,  
And it 's if I ever do find her out  
From her I'll never depart.

2

She's like the rose in colour,  
A soldier ever knew,  
Her eyes do shine like diamonds  
And sparkles like the dew,  
You may talk about your Scotaland girls,  
From Boston of the Strand,  
But there is none of them in it like  
The girls from Newfoundland.

3

When the summer breezes and sighing and  
The starry nights are bright  
I take her to the Nickle  
Most every week day night,  
As we sit and watch the pictures  
I oft to her did say,  
"I hope you'll not forget me  
When I am far away."

4

It's now I'm going to leave you  
And soon I'll have to go,  
And soon I will be sailing  
To fight the German foe,  
And should I die in battle,  
'Neath shell and cannon's roar,  
There is one brave girl will think of me  
On Terra Nova's shore.

5

O sweetheart keep your courage up,  
Wherever you may be,  
You'll find I am no slacker,  
I'm not downhearted, no,  
To fight for you and those at home  
This khaki suit I'll wear,  
And fighting in the trenches  
You may bet I'll do my share.

6

I hope some day to please God  
And when this war is o'er  
The only girl I love on earth  
On Terra Nova's shore,

I want no men to fight for me,  
My country on me calls,  
And I'm prepared to see it out  
Or in the trenches fall.

7

And now the boys that's in the ranks  
From Terra Nova shore  
Have the courage of their fathers  
When their fighting days were o'er,  
Who fought well at Sebastapool,  
Likewise at Waterloo,  
And now their sons takes up their guns  
To show what they can do.

Sung by Mr. Augustine MacDonald, North Sydney and  
Meat Cove, and recorded by Helen Creighton, June 1958