

Fidel Martin

Northern New Hampshire Fiddler

“That’s a Hot One”

Transcriptions of Art Rosenbaum’s field recordings from
1966 & 1967



(Unidentified lumber camp workers)

Andrew Kuntz

FIDEL MARTIN: NORTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE FIDDLER
“That’s a Hot One!”
Transcriptions of Art Rosenbaum’s Field Recordings from 1966 & 1967

INTRODUCTION:

I have regularly visited northern New Hampshire for decades, revisiting places where I was raised and my extended family roots. I have been quite interested in the traditional music of the region, in part as my first fiddle, my great-grandfather’s instrument, was given to me when I expressed an interest in it. My great-uncle played that fiddle for dances, and my grandmother “chorded” the piano in accompaniment for kitchen junkets in Lancaster. I still play the instrument today, keeping it as my “crosstuned” (scordatura) fiddle, although truth is that it’s a rather ordinary factory-made Stainer copy, purchased off a wire in a general store in Quebec’s Eastern Townships when the 20th century was still in single digits. I remember the Berlin of the later century well, notably for the noxiousness of the pulp mills, but also for the rich variety of its ethnic neighborhoods and its central role in shaping the north woods. Berlin was not the recreational New Hampshire of the adjacent White Mountains I also loved, but rather the blue-collar workplace of the north. I had heard of the Berlin’s Riendeau family and owned their 1970 LP “Old Time Fiddling from New England”, but when researching fiddle tunes on the Leger family’s Acadianmuisc.com site, I was surprised to learn that there was another fiddler in the same city, contemporary with the Riendeau’s--Fidel Martin. Intrigued, I followed the links posted on the Legers’ site and was pleased to find an archive of an hour and a half of Martin’s solo fiddle music, recorded in the mid-1960’s by folklorist, musician and painter Art Rosenbaum.

FIDEL MARTIN (1891-1976) was born central-eastern New Brunswick town of Rogersville in the Miramichi valley, now part of the village of Nouvelle-Arcadie, due south of the municipality of Miramichi. The area was settled by the French in the eighteenth century, although was ceded part of British Nova Scotia with the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Irish immigration to the region occurred in the first decades of the 19th century, intensifying during the mid-century Great Famine years when opportunity in the lumber and ship-building industries attracted skilled and unskilled labor. By the 1870’s the Irish were well-established in the Miramichi region and had grown to approximately 40% of the population, 80% of whom were Catholic. To this day, the community of Chatham (also part of municipal Mirimachi) calls itself the Irish Capital of Canada. Nearby Rogersville was named for a Roman Catholic bishop of Chatham. Although today 90% of the village population are French speakers, ‘Irishness’ has remained a regional cultural backdrop that undoubtedly influenced the Martin family.

Fidel was the one of the older children of Calixte “Calliste” and Emilienne Chavarie Martin (1869-1950)¹. He learned to fiddle at the age of 12, growing up in a musical household where his father, siblings, extended family and neighbors all played musical instruments,

¹ At least three siblings, Joseph, Genevieve “Jane”, and Norbert, survived to adulthood. In addition, a baby, Marie Victoire, died in her first year, and a brother Andre (1893-1918) was presumably killed in World War 1.

including fiddles, piano and accordion. He was self-taught and absorbed his skills from his musical household. Fidel recalled that there was playing and dancing at his house almost daily, noting it was “old style” square dancing where the figures of the popular dances were well-known to the dancers who performed them without the aid of a caller or prompter, as was the style in much of Canada.

In 1912, at the age of 20, and like many New Brunswick youth, Fidel sought work in the woods trades, finding employment in lumber camps near Island Falls, Maine, not far from the border with New Brunswick. It was tough, physically demanding work, and after some time he found suitable employment in a mill owned by the Great Northern Paper Company of Millinocket, Maine. At age 26, he moved to Berlin, New Hampshire, where he went to work for the Brown Paper Company, a pulp and papermaking mill and the largest employer in ‘the city that trees built’.

A year after his move to Berlin, the United States declared war on Germany and Austria-Hungary and Fidel enlisted in the United States Army. He served overseas and, on his return, in the United States performing garrison duty². Fidel was proud of his service and was one of the founding members of Berlin’s Veterans of Foreign Wars post.

After his enlistment ended Fidel returned to work for the Brown Paper Company until 1930, when the depression took a toll and businesses struggled³. However, he managed to secure a public works job and was employed as a truck driver for the Berlin Public Works Department, joining Local 1444, the Berlin City Employees Union (AFSCME). It was a job he held for over twenty-five years until he retired in 1956. The Depression also took a toll musically: in 1966 Fidel recalled there were fiddle contests in the Berlin area in the 1920’s, but the bleak economy and changing musical tastes curtailed public performing. Martin wistfully pointed out, “We don’t have them anymore.” He had other interests besides music, however, and founded the White Mountain Beagle Club.

Fidel married Marie Louise Morneau, who predeceased him in July of 1956, and who, like her husband, was a member of St. Anne Parish in Berlin. Fidel himself died in Colebrook, New Hampshire, twenty years later⁴. He was survived by four sons and three daughters (all of whom lived in New Hampshire), and by extended family in New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec.

In 1966, 28-year-old painter, folklorist and collector Art Rosenbaum (1938-2022) was making some casual inquiries, “shotgun collecting” as he called it--showing up somewhere and asking around for people who play old music--in a working-class neighborhood in

² He told a story to Art Rosenbaum of being on guard duty in 1919 and receiving orders to “let no one pass.” A certain Colonel House attempted to pull rank and bully his way past, but Fidel stuck to his orders and arrested the officer.

³ The Brown Paper Company limped on until 1935, when they filed for bankruptcy and the Brown family lost ownership. The Brown Paper Company limped on until 1935, when they filed for bankruptcy and the Brown family lost ownership.

⁴ Fidel and Marie are not buried together: she in Berlin, he in Colebrook.

Berlin, where many people of French-Canadian origin were living and working in the mills and the trades that services them. He was pointed to the Riendeau family and to Fidel Martin, as the premier 'folk' musicians in the city, who, like most, were happy to share their music. "I just wanted to meet people and learn to play directly from them, because the music excited me more than the kind of music that was commercially available," Rosenbaum told interviewer Keith Goetzman in 2009. "So it became an adventure to go out and meet these folks, and the recording was just part of the encounter. Most people were anxious to share their music, even with a stranger." Martin fit this description, and was remembered by Rosenbaum as a friendly individual who seemed to enjoy getting out his fiddle and being recorded by interested strangers.

Art's collector's interest was rewarded with tapes of Fidel's fiddling from two different dates in August, 1966, totaling about an hour of recorded music. Art was impressed enough with the musician that he returned the next year and recorded an additional 30 minutes of music from Fidel, along with several cuts from Fidel's neighbors, Louis and Larry Riendeau.

While Fidel never recorded commercially, a few of his pieces from Art's field work were issued on CD. "Cup of Faith/Beaudoin Quadrille" can be heard on the Rosenbaum anthology "The Art of Field Recording vol. 1" (Dust-to-Digital Records, 2007), as can "La Grondeuse" of "The Art of Field Recording vol. 2" (Dust-to-Digital Records, 2009). According to Rosenbaum, Martin would exclaim at the end of a spirited take: "Jesus Christ, that was a hot one!," unfortunately not captured on the field recordings.

THE MUSIC:

It is difficult to categorize Fidel Martin's music. Much of his repertoire, as reflected in the field recordings, is essentially New England traditional fiddling. His renditions of "Money Musk," "McCloud's Reel," "Flowers of Edinburgh," "Garryowen," and several other pieces are core New England fiddle repertory of the first half of the 20th century, well-known to regional New Hampshire fiddlers. Less well known, perhaps, but by no means rare would be the pieces learned from the recordings of Canadian 'Down-East' radio and TV fiddler Don Messer, and the Irish fiddle masters, represented by his rather reverential references to fiddler "Mike" Coleman (the prolific and renowned County Sligo recording artist of the 1920's-1940's) and the Irish tunes in his repertoire. There are a few pieces that directly tie him to the musical community of his early life in New Brunswick: "Chatham Reel" and "Bededine Quadrille" are prime examples. More telling, in terms of his musical roots, is his accompaniment to his fiddling with his rhythmic foot-tapping, or *podorhythmie*, a characteristic practice among Québécois and Acadian musicians in which the feet produce a repeated percussive pattern. The practice has not been widespread in New England fiddling (although not unknown).

According to Rosenbaum, Fidel did not often recall the names of the tunes he played. He often struggles on the tapes to remember them when Art invariably asked for the title, and is pleased when he can recall a name. Instead, like many fiddler's who recall the music perfectly but stumble on the name of the piece, he called several by the name of the fiddler

he learned the tune from, or associated it with. Thus we have “Tom Doucette,” “Tom Carpenter,” “Jerry Babineau,” “Joe Woulet” and others as tune names⁵. Many fiddlers who learn by ear have similar responses when asked to recall tune names on the spot; the music is firmly recalled, but the associated title is not. Fiddlers who read music and learn tunes from printed music often have the opposite problem. The title is recalled, but sometimes the associated music is not immediately remembered. Two pathways are at play, aural memory and visual memory, and Fidel Martin was an aural learner who may have been musically illiterate, but who nonetheless had a well-developed aural memory for tunes that allowed for more flexibility for spontaneous variety.

A characteristic of many solo fiddlers across genres is idiosyncratic playing elements, of which Fidel has a few. He has a penchant for ‘dwell’ notes at some of his cadences. ‘dwell notes’ according to vernacular researcher and musicologist Chris Goertzen, are notes that are held longer than usual, either for emphasis or for transition to a new phrase or part. Thus it was not unusual for Fidel to add an extra beat to the last measures of his parts. He does not invariably do so, but often enough to indicate this was entirely copasetic with his music making and not a random mistake. Conversely, Fidel also does the opposite: he truncates some cadential measures in both duple and triple time to half their usual beat length, e.g. playing a 2/4 cadence measure in a 4/4 tune, these may be posited as ‘vacate’ measures, the opposite of dwell, which Fidel sometimes plays at cadences when there are held notes and little melodic activity. These dwell/vacate measures are apart from ‘crooked’ tunes—pieces composed with rhythmically irregularly measured parts—that, like podorhythmie, are characteristic of many Québécois and Acadian dance tunes. Fidel plays a few tunes on the tapes that are traditionally considered ‘crooked’ (irregular), “Bededine Quadrille” being a primary example. A refreshing aspect of Fidel’s playing is his penchant for staccato or shortened quarter notes, where he also gives the note a little ‘push’ with his bow. The result is that the note sounds out and is definitive, and emphasizes the phrasing. It’s a dance musician’s detail that helps break up the monotony of the series of eighth notes and helps give ‘lift’ to the music.

Another aspect of his music is also associated with aural learners, and that is the ability to spontaneously adjust details of the music produced while still keeping to the original melodic and harmonic structure of the tune. Musical improvisation would be an example of this, but in traditional (non-bluegrass) fiddling, the melodic and rhythmic adjustments are more subtle and understated. Martin introduces these adjustments continually in his music, never playing a melodic phrase in exactly the same way, but varying it subtly. The result is a piece that has more interest, not only for the fiddler (who is in effect ‘playing catspaw’ with the music), but for the listener. It is this ability that imbues Fidel’s renditions of the old standards sound fresh and alive.

There are questions, however. How much of the recordings were Fidel’s spontaneous selection, and was there any direction or purposeful request from the field recorder? Were there old tunes from his early years in New Brunswick that were deliberately censored?

⁵ Title or no, he would play with enthusiasm and little hesitancy; after playing a vigorous tune he would exclaim, “Jesus Christ, that’s a hot one.”

What were his musical contacts (as indicated in the tunes identified by fiddler's names), and how did he interact with them? Unfortunately, after nearly sixty years Fidel's peers have passed, and no one now recalls his playing. He was not a musical celebrity; he was a competent and sometimes very interesting amateur musician, and we are fortunate to have a record of his music on sound recording.

THE TRANSCRIPTIONS:

Martin generally played through a tune two or three times, occasionally playing them only once through (particularly when it was well known, such as "Irish Washerwoman" or "Pop Goes the Weasel"). The transcriptions are generally of the second full repetition of the tune, although occasionally I have introduced a particularly interesting variation from one of his other repeats of the melody. Some of the transcriptions could be shortened with strain repeats and first and second endings, but instead were written out in one longer strain to be able to capture some of Fidel's variations. All transcriptions were made from the recordings from the Art Rosenbaum Collection deposited at the Walter J. Brown Media Archives and Peabody Awards Collection of the University of Georgia. They may be accessed on-line at:

Tape 1 - (8/1/1966) <https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>

Tape 2 - (8/24/1966) <https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>

Tape 3 - (8/1967) <https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>

LOUIS RIENDEAU: Rosenbaum's Tape 3, from August, 1967, included several tunes from Louis Riendeau (fiddle) and his son Larry (guitar) following Fidel Martin's pieces to the tape, and, even though I have focused on Fidel, it seemed appropriate to include all of Art's 1967 field recordings in this booklet. Louis Riendeau (1900-1985) was the patriarch of a musical family of Berlin who, like Martin, have Acadian roots in the Canadian Maritimes. His son, Henri Louis Riendeau (1928-2016) was a Berlin native and self-taught musician as was his older brother Laurier (Larry) (1926-2015). The Riendeaus played their music in social clubs, kitchen breakdowns, hunting camps and other local settings. The Riendeau family may be heard on their LP "Old Time Fiddling from New England" (County Records 725), originally released in 1970, though now out of print.

Andrew Kuntz 7/2024, Wappingers Falls, NY

References:

- 1) <http://www.acadianfiddle.com/artists2/2021/fidel-martin>
- 2) <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/168679112/fidel-martin>
- 3) <https://www.utne.com/arts/rosenbaums-art-field-recording/>

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to Tamara Henderson for her assistance with translation. She patiently and repeatedly listened to the field recordings for the tunes Fidel identified with French titles—no small task, as they were often difficult to hear, heavily (Acadian) accented, and at times indistinct. Thanks as well to Bob Armistead and Jim Garber, Q70, for your encouragement and companionship.

1. The Chatham (Reel)

Tape 1 at 31:02

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/33630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A



B



2. Pop Goes the Weasel

Tape 1 at 29:48

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/33630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)



3. Paddy on the Turnpike

Tape 1 at 29:02

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A %

6

11

15

B

19

23

27

31

35 % Last

No. 4 Pigeon on the Gate

Tape 1 at 27:51

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

6

10

14

18

22

26

30

5. "Don Messer Tune" (Bride of the Wind)

Tape 1 at 26:50

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A



B



6. Old Man and the Old Woman (La Grondeuse)

Tape 1 at 26:20

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A
%

6

B

10

14

A'

18

22

C

26

30

3

3/4

%

7. Mother's Reel

Tape 1 at 24:46

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A %

5

9

13

B

17

21

C

25

28 %

C' (alternate)

31

2



8. The Flowers of Edinburgh

Tape 1 at 23:13

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A

6

10

14

18

23

9. & 21. "Mike Coleman's" (Chorus Jig)

Tape 1 at 22:18 and 04:19

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A

6

B

10

14

C

18

22

1. 2.

B'

27

31

No. 10 Irish Washerwoman & "Peggie O'Neill" (Larry O'Gaff)

Tape 1 at 19:44

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A 4

7

12

B

17

22

27

32 **A**

37 4

12/8

2

"Peggie O'Neill" (Larry O'Gaff)

42

Musical staff 1: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), starting with a repeat sign. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes.

45

fine

Musical staff 2: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line and a fermata. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' below it.

48

Musical staff 3: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes.

51

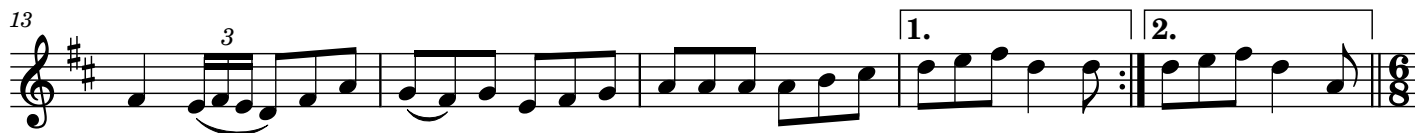
Musical staff 4: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' below it.

11. Untitled Jig (Don Messer Tune)

Tape 1 at 19:44

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)



12. Cup of Faith (compare with "Rakish Paddy")

Tape 1 at 16:02)


(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score is written in treble clef and common time (C). It consists of nine staves of music. The first staff begins with a key signature change to one sharp (F#). The second staff includes a first ending bracket labeled '1.' and a time signature change to 2/4. The third staff features a section symbol (§). The remaining staves continue the melodic line with various rhythmic patterns and phrasing. Bar numbers 6, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, 31, and 35 are indicated at the start of their respective staves.

2

39

D.S. 



13. "Don Messer Reel"

Tape 1 at 14:33

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

(compare the first part with "Ferrel O'Gara" and
the second part with "Sailor's Bonnet")

Fidel Martin (1967, Berlin, N.H.)

A %

5

9

13

B

17

21

1.

25

2. %

14. McDonald's Reel (1st version)

Tape 1 at 13:20

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A

6

10

14

3

B

18

22

C

26

30

34

2

38

Musical staff 1: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), starting at measure 38. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes with some slurs.

42 **D**

Musical staff 2: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), starting at measure 42. A boxed 'D' indicates a chord change. The melody features eighth notes and quarter notes.

46

Musical staff 3: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), starting at measure 46. The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes.

50 **A'**

Musical staff 4: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), starting at measure 50. A boxed 'A'' indicates a chord change. The melody includes eighth notes and quarter notes.

54

Musical staff 5: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), starting at measure 54. The melody concludes with eighth notes and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

15. St. Anne's Reel

Tape 1 at 12:02)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

5

10

14

18

22

26

30

17. Untitled Reel

Tape 1 at 10:17

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

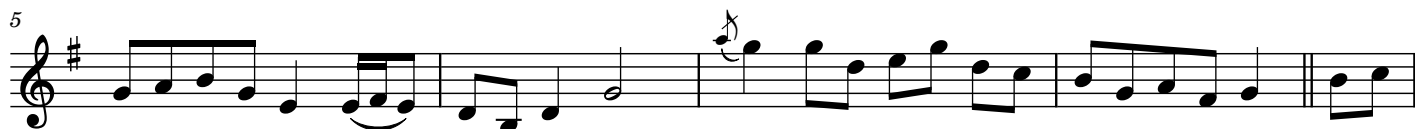
The image displays a musical score for a reel in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The score is written on a single treble clef staff and consists of seven lines of music. The first line begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The music is a continuous sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some phrases marked with slurs and accents. The second line is marked with a measure number '6'. The third line is marked with '10'. The fourth line is marked with '14'. The fifth line is marked with '18' and features a repeat sign at the beginning and a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3'. The sixth line is marked with '22' and contains a first ending bracket labeled '1.' that spans the final two measures of the line. The seventh line is marked with '26' and contains a second ending bracket labeled '2.' that spans the first two measures of the line. The score concludes with a double bar line.

18. Arkansas Traveler

Tape 1 at 09:24

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)



19. Reel du pendu

Tape 1 at 06:08

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A

5

B

10

14

C

18

22

A'

26

30

20. Untitled Reel

Tape 1 at 05:26

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)



21. Chorus Jig

Tape 1 at 04:19

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A

6

B

10

14

C

18

22

1.

2.

B'

27

31

22. John McNeill

Tape 1 at 3:15

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A

5

9

13

B

17

21

25

29

4

23. Louis Riendeau's

Tape 1 at 00:48

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>)

Fidel Martin (8/1/66, Berlin, N.H.)

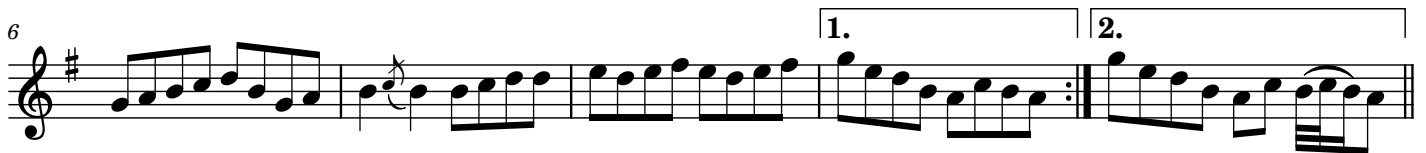


25. McCloud's Reel

(Tape 2 at 22:23)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, N.H.)



24. The Red Haired Boy

(Tape 2 at 23:50)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A



B



Alternate B



28. Untitled Reel

(Tape 2 at 19:06)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, NH)

The musical score is written in treble clef with a common time signature (C). It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a boxed letter 'A' above the first measure. The second staff starts at measure 6 and includes a boxed letter 'A' above the first measure, a '+' sign above the second measure, and two first/second endings labeled '1.' and '2.' at the end. The third staff starts at measure 11 and includes a boxed letter 'B' above the first measure. The fourth staff starts at measure 15 and includes two first/second endings labeled '1.' and '2.' at the end. The fifth staff starts at measure 20 and includes the word 'Substitutions' above the first measure, a '+' sign above the second measure, and a '+' sign above the eighth measure. The score concludes with a double bar line.

29. Tom Carpenter's Reel

(Tape 2 at 17:39)

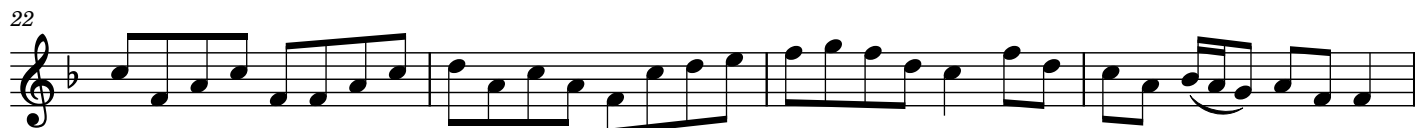
(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, NH)

A



B



30. Joe Woulet's Tune

(Tape 2 at 16:24)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, NH)

A

6

10

14

B

18

22

26

30

31. Jerry Babineaur

Tape 2 at 15:00

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A

⌘



B



33. The Cuckoo's Nest

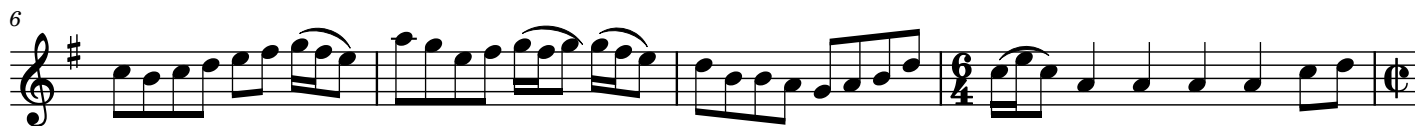
(Tape 2 at 12:38)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (Berlin, N.H., 1966)

A

⌘



34. Little Hunchback

(Tape 2 at 11:24)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A



B



35. Le Petit Bossy

(Tape 2 at 10:20)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Marin (8/24/1966, Berlin, NH)

A



5



9



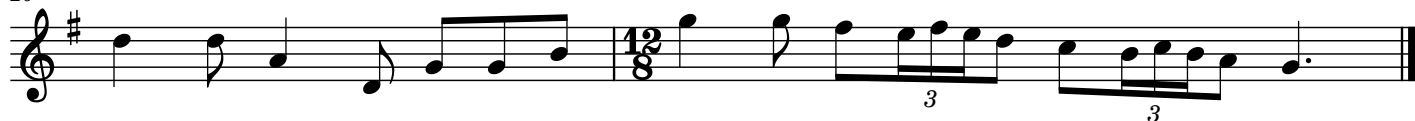
B



17



20



37. The Girl I Left Behind Me

(Tape 2 at 08:27)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a boxed letter 'A' and a repeat sign (§). The second staff is marked with the number '7'. The third staff is marked with the number '13'. The fourth staff begins with a boxed letter 'B' and is marked with the number '18'. The fifth staff is marked with the number '22' and ends with a repeat sign (§) and the word 'Last' above a final note. The melody is primarily composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some sixteenth-note runs.

38. Off She Goes

(Tape 2 at 07:33)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

A %

6

11

B

16

21

25

29 Last %

40. P.E. Reel

(Tape 2 at 5:20)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, NH)

A

5

B

9

13

A'

17

21

B'

25

29

41. Untitled Reel

AKA - The Rainy Day

Tape 2 at 04:20 and Tape 3 at 28:55

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966 and 8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

A



5



9

B



13



43. Ragtime Annie

(Tape 2 at 00:55)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>)

Fidel Martin (8/24/1966, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score for "Ragtime Annie" is presented in a single system with seven staves of treble clef notation. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The score begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The first staff contains the first five measures of the piece. The second staff is marked with a measure number of 6 and contains measures 6 through 10. The third staff is marked with a measure number of 11 and contains measures 11 through 15. The fourth staff is marked with a measure number of 16 and contains measures 16 through 20. The fifth staff is marked with a measure number of 20 and contains measures 21 through 24. The sixth staff is marked with a measure number of 25 and contains measures 25 through 29. The seventh staff is marked with a measure number of 30 and contains measures 30 through 34. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the final measure.

44. Untitled Reel

Reprise of No. 41
(Tape 3 at 28:56)

Fidel Martin (Berlin, N.H., 8/1967)

♩

6

10

14

18

22

25

1.

2.

♩

45. Le bonhomme et le bonne femme

The Old Man and the Old Woman

(Tape 3 at 27:18)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>)

Fidel Martin (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). It consists of eight lines of music. The first line begins with a repeat sign and a boxed letter 'A'. The second line is marked with the number '6'. The third line is marked with '10'. The fourth line is marked with '14'. The fifth line is marked with '18' and a boxed letter 'B'. The sixth line is marked with '22'. The seventh line is marked with '26'. The eighth line is marked with '30' and ends with a repeat sign and the word 'Last'.

47. Untitled Jig

(Tape 3 at 24:26)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>)

Fidel Martin (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in treble clef, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. The piece is divided into three sections: Section A (measures 1-15), Section B (measures 16-31), and Section C (measures 32-44). Section A begins with a repeat sign and a double bar line. Section B contains a triplet of eighth notes in measure 24. Section C includes a change in time signature to 3/8 in measure 39, followed by a change to 6/8 in measure 40. The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign in measure 44.

A

6

11

B

16

21

26

C

32

38

44

48. La Grondeuse

Tape 3 at 17:55

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/index.php/Detail/objects/33158>)

Fidel Martin (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

A %

6

B

10

14 1. 2. D.S.

C

19

23

27 D.S. %

49. Teetotaler's Reel

Tape 3 at 15:19

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/index.php/Detail/objects/331538>)

Fidel Martin (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

A

§



50. McDonald's Reel (2nd version)

(Tape 3 at 14:10)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>)

Fidel Martin (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). It consists of eight staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'A' and begins with a repeat sign. The second staff starts at measure 5. The third staff is labeled 'B' and starts at measure 9. The fourth staff starts at measure 13. The fifth staff is labeled 'A'' and starts at measure 17. The sixth staff starts at measure 21. The seventh staff is labeled 'C' and starts at measure 25. The eighth staff starts at measure 29. The final staff starts at measure 33. The music is a continuous sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes, characteristic of a reel.

2

37

A single staff of music in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music consists of five measures. The first measure contains a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second measure contains a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The third measure contains a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The fourth measure contains a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The fifth measure contains a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata symbol.

51. Jerry's Reel (Jerry Robiehand)

(Tape 3 at 12:20)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>)

Louis Reindeau (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score for "Jerry's Reel" is presented in six staves of music. The key signature is one flat (F major), and the time signature is 2/4. The piece begins with a treble clef and a repeat sign. The first staff contains the first four measures. The second staff starts at measure 5 and includes a first ending (marked "1.") and a second ending (marked "2.") for measures 9 and 10. The third staff continues from measure 10. The fourth staff starts at measure 14. The fifth staff starts at measure 18. The sixth staff starts at measure 22 and concludes with a repeat sign. The melody is primarily eighth-note based, with some sixteenth-note runs and occasional ties.

53. Joe Perreau's Reel

(Tape 3 at 09:25)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>)

Louis Riendieu (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score for "Joe Perreau's Reel" is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of 28 measures. The notation is as follows:

- Measure 1: Treble clef, G major key signature, 2/4 time signature. A repeat sign is placed above the staff.
- Measures 2-5: A series of eighth and sixteenth notes forming a rhythmic pattern.
- Measure 6: Labeled with a '6' above the staff.
- Measures 7-9: Continuation of the eighth and sixteenth note patterns.
- Measure 10: Labeled with a '10' above the staff.
- Measures 11-13: Continuation of the eighth and sixteenth note patterns.
- Measure 14: Labeled with a '14' above the staff. The time signature changes to 6/4.
- Measures 15-17: Continuation of the eighth and sixteenth note patterns in 6/4 time.
- Measure 18: Labeled with an '18' above the staff.
- Measures 19-21: Continuation of the eighth and sixteenth note patterns.
- Measure 22: Labeled with a '22' above the staff.
- Measures 23-25: Continuation of the eighth and sixteenth note patterns.
- Measure 26: Labeled with a '26' above the staff. The time signature changes to 6/4.
- Measures 27-28: Continuation of the eighth and sixteenth note patterns, ending with a repeat sign.

56. Tommy Dussette's Tune

(Tape 3 at 03:21)

(<https://bmac.lib.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>)

Louis Riendeau (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure. The second staff starts at measure 8. The third staff starts at measure 14. The fourth staff starts at measure 20. The fifth staff starts at measure 26 and includes a repeat sign at the beginning. The sixth staff starts at measure 32. The seventh staff starts at measure 38 and ends with a double bar line and a fermata over the final two measures, which are labeled "last".

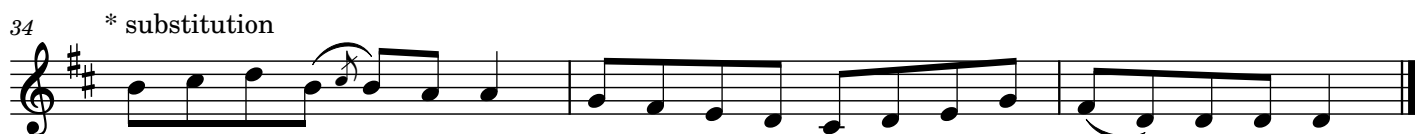
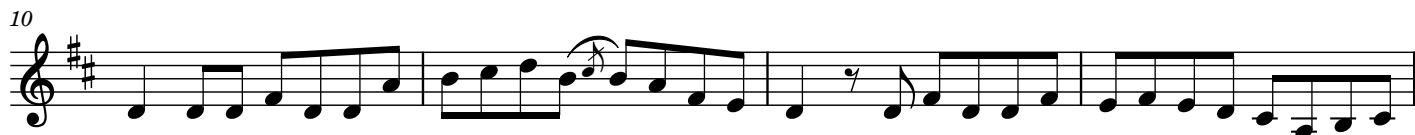
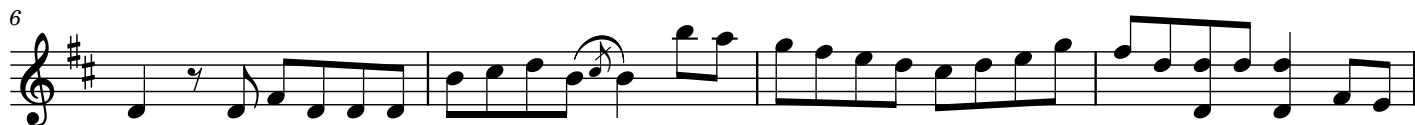
57. Durang's

(Tape 3 at 01:32)

(<https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>)

Louis Riendeau (8/1967, Berlin, N.H.)

Reel time %



Notes on the Tunes:

Except where noted, tune titles are as they appear on the roster of tunes at the Art Rosenbaum Collection site.

FIDEL MARTIN:

- 1) "The Chatham Reel" is a New Brunswick tune, named for the town of Chatham in the Miramichi Valley, since incorporated into the municipality of Miramichi. Chatham is approximately 20 miles north of Martin's home town of Rogersville. The tune was one of the ones selected by Art Rosenbaum for inclusion in his anthology "The Art of Field Recording."
- 2) "Pop Goes the Weasel" was widely known and ubiquitous in fiddlers' repertory in the 19th and early 20th centuries, judging from its inclusion in numerous musicians' music copybooks from the early 19th century onward. The 'weasel' was a tool used by hat makers in England, while *popped* was slang for 'pawned'; thus, it is posited the title indicates a tradesman who was so down on his luck that he would need to pawn his tools.

*Up and down the City Road,
In and out the Eagle [the Eagle was the name of a tavern]
That's the way the money goes,
Pop goes the weasel.*

Instantly recognizable, it was sometimes played as a 'trick' fiddling audience pleaser. The famous Norwegian violinist Ole Bull (1810-1880) is said to have performed a very flashy, gymnastic, virtuoso version of the melody as part of his touring stage act. The jig was a fashionable country dance melody even before 1854 when it was published with dance figures in London as one of "Three Fashionable Dances, As Performed at the Court Balls," issued by the Musical Bouquet Office.

- 3) "Paddy on the Turnpike" is the name given to a favorite reel often played in minor or dorian mode, but just as frequently in mixed-modes. However, Martin's version corresponds rather more to another closely related member of the tune family, the Irish reel "The Bunch of Keys", at least in the first strain. It is often the case that the second strains "suffer" during aural transmission from fiddler to fiddler, as they are less well remembered, and it is common for there to be more variation. However, Martin's second strain has little direct correspondence with the second strains of the "Paddy"/"Bunch" family and is only broadly similar. In addition, Martin inserts an "extra" measure into his second strain, lengthening it slightly, again, not unusual in solo playing of traditional fiddlers, particularly those with Québécois and Acadian musical origins.

- 4) "Pigeon on the Gate" is a not uncommon piece in the repertory of North American fiddlers, often, but not always, played in the Dorian mode. Martin's "Pigeon" is in the mixolydian mode, as are some versions from Prince Edward Island. 2/4 cadences are also in evidence, but otherwise the tune is fairly standard.
- 5) "Don Messer Tune", the title not remembered, is a 'Down-East' standard called "Bride of the Wind" often credited to Ontario fiddler Jim Magill (1905-1954), recorded in 1949. As is often the case, however, the tune has antecedents prior to Magill and it was closely based on Quebec fiddler Jos Bouchard's "Lancier Bouchard Premiere Partie", recorded in 1938. Even earlier, a broadly similar jig was recorded by Michigan fiddler John A. Pattee as the first change in his "Old Catville Quadrille," with a first strain corresponding to "Bride" but with a differing second strain. Don Messer did record the jig, albeit as "Anoy's Jig" but also as "Bride of the Wind" when Magill's recording proved popular.
- 6) "Old Man and the Old Woman" is a member of a Québécois family of tunes loosely organized and called 'Grondeuse' or 'scolding' pieces, often musically represented by a high part and a contrasting low, repetitive strain often interpreted as 'growling'. The tunes are often associated with a dispute or argument (frequently between the sexes), musically represented by the contrasting sections and reflected in the titles of this tune family: "Growling Old Man and Grumbling Old Woman," "La Chicaneuse," "La Disputeuse," "La Marmotteuse," "La Grondeuse," and others. Fidel adds a third strain to his version that is seldom heard and is possibly unique to him.
- 7) "Mother's Reel" was popularized by Maritime radio and TV fiddler Don Messer (1909-1973) and is sometimes attributed to him, but it is a version of "Le reel de mon maton" recorded in 1929 by Montreal fiddler Joseph Allard (1873-1947), who later re-released it as "Reel du régiment."
- 8) "The Flowers of Edinburgh" is another staple of the New England fiddler's repertory, with widespread currency in North America, Great Britain and Ireland. It was first printed nearly 300 years ago by London music publisher John Walsh in his **Caledonian Country Dances** (c. 1737) and remains popular to this day in a number of genres.
- 9) "Mike Coleman's" was Martin's name for this well-known New England dance tune called "The Chorus Jig". It's not a 'jig' in the sense of the 6/8 time jigs, but rather the duple time tune takes its name from the broader meaning of 'jig' which is to dance, or a tune for dancing. The tune has been played by New England musicians since the early 19th century and it is hard to find a reel that is not more connected with traditional dance music of the region. Martin played the tune twice for Rosenbaum on the August 1, 1966, tape, identifying it initially with "Mike Coleman." Coleman was a renowned Irish fiddler from County Sligo who emigrated to New York where he made dozens of recordings in the 78 RPM era, and who was tremendously influential. Fidel spins a fanciful story on the tape of Coleman participating in the Henry Ford Company music contests of the 1920's, and insisted that Coleman played

at northern New England venues. It is unlikely but possible the Irish fiddler did so, as Coleman did play and dance (at the same time!) as a touring vaudeville act and may have played a regional stage.

- 10) “Irish Washerwoman” and “Peggie O’Neill” was played by Martin as a medley. The first jig is instantly recognizable, nowadays a trope of Irishness. It is quite old, with British and Irish antecedents that stretch to perhaps the 17th century, but which certainly by the 1790’s it had coalesced into the form familiar today. The tune Fidel assuredly called “Peggie O’Neill” is actually “Larry O’Gaff,” another well-known Irish jig. It too, has earlier musical antecedents, but the “Larry O’Gaff” title comes from a comic song set to the tune by Samuel Lover (1797-1868) that begins:

*Larry O’Gaff was a brave boy for marching,
His instep was larege—but his income was small;
So he set up, one day, as a soldier of fortune—
The meaning of which is—no fortune at all.
In battles, bombardments and sieges he grew up,
Till he didn’t much care if towns flourish’d or blew up,
And his maxims in life—for he pick’d one or two up—
Were short, sweet and simple for Larry O’Gaff.*

- 11) “Untitled Jig” was identified by Martin as received from the Don Messer recorded repertory and as yet remains unidentified.
- 12) “Cup of Faith” is a variant of the Irish reel “Rakish Paddy.” It was one of the tunes chosen for inclusion in Art Rosenbaum’s recorded anthology “The Art of Field Recording.”
- 13) “Don Messer Reel” was presumably named by Martin (it is not verbally identified on the tape itself). However, his tune is a condensation of two Irish reels that are associated with 78 RPM era Irish fiddlers, including Michael Coleman, and have no known connection with Messer. The first strain compares with the reel “Farrell O’Gara”, recorded by Coleman in 1927, and subsequently by nearly as famed fiddlers James “The Professor” Morrison and still later by Paddy Killoran (albeit under different titles). The second strain of Martin’s tune compares with the second strain of the reel “Sailor’s Bonnet,” which is highly associated with Coleman who recorded it in 1934 as part of his famous “Tarbolton” medley.
- 14) “McDonald’s Reel” is a rendition of a tune popular among Canadian fiddlers based on the Scottish “Lord MacDonald’s Reel.” A altered version of the reel is played by American “Old-Time” fiddlers as “Leather Britches.” It’s one of the “big tunes” in Canadian traditional repertory, with four parts. Fidel seems justifiably proud of his mastery of it, as he played it twice for Rosenbaum at two different recording sessions.

- 15) "St. Anne's Reel" is popular in a several different North American and overseas fiddling genres, including American "Old-Time" and Irish fiddling. Most modern fiddlers know and play it today. However, it was first recorded by Montreal fiddler Willie Ringuette under the title "Quadrille du loup garou—4ème partie" (1927) and by Joseph Allard in 1930, although, rather confusingly, Allard's was simultaneously issued by Victor Records under two separate titles, "Reel de Ste-Anne" and "Reel des esquimaults" (1930). Yet another Montreal fiddler, Isidore Soucy, recorded the reel as "Reel Lune de miel" (1930), while the influential Don Messer issued his recording as "St. Agathe's." Allard's 'Ste-Anne' title is probably a reference to Montreal's Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue district in Montreal, according to researcher Jean Duval. In playing the reel, however, Fidel may have been reminded of the rural Acadian community of Baie-Sainte-Anne on St. Anne's Bay near the mouth of the Miramichi River, New Brunswick, not too far from Rogersville.
- 16) "Reel – Like 'Sally Gardens'" was the name on Rosenbaum's tape roster, but the first strain of Fidel's reel is a version of "The Traveler's Reel", known in Irish and American repertory under that title as well as "Walker Street" (as printed in 1883 in **Ryan's Mammoth Collection**). Québécois versions of the tune have been called "Reel des ouvreirs," "Reel de Saint-Malo" (both recorded by Allard), and "Gigue des artisans" (Isidore Soucy). The second strain of Martin's reel, however, is different than the second part of any of "The Traveler" variants; rather, it broadly corresponds to the second strain of the Irish reel "Sally Gardens."
- 17) "Untitled Reel." Unknown origin at this time.
- 18) "Arkansas Traveler" is an unremarkable setting of the old standard, save that it is usually played by fiddlers in the key of 'D'. Fidel puts it in 'G', but instead of playing the second strain as the high part (which would require position playing on the violin), he plays it down one octave.
- 19) "Reel du pendu" (Reel of the hanged man) is a popular Québécois reel usually played in *scordatura* tuning (AEac#) on the fiddle in the key of A major, and often featuring the use of left-hand *pizzicato* on the open strings. Martin's version is in the key of D major and is played straightforwardly, with full measures at the cadences, and it does not sound like he employs either *pizzicato* or *scordatura* for it.
- 20) "Untitled Reel." Unknown origin at this time.
- 21) "Chorus Jig" is the second rendition of the tune on the 8/1/1966 tape, nearly identical in performance with No. 9 ("Mike Coleman's").
- 22) "John McNeill's Reel" (sometimes "Big John McNeill") is another of the "big tunes" in Canadian repertory (also well-known to American contra dance musicians and fiddlers in County Donegal), mostly in areas that have been heavily influenced by traditional Scottish fiddling, although the reel also well-known nationally. It was composed around 1870 as "John McNeil" by the brilliant Aberdeenshire, Scotland,

fiddler Peter Milne (1824-1908) and named for John McNeill of Edinburgh, a champion Highland dancer of the Victorian era.

- 23) "Louis Riendeau's" was named for his contemporary, friend and neighbor, fiddler Louis Riendeau of Berlin, Fidel's source for the tune. The origin of the reel is unknown.
- 24) "Money Musk" is a Scottish reel and a core piece in Scottish repertory, and, from there to England, Ireland and North America where variants are found in several genres. It takes its name from an Aberdeenshire, Scotland, baronial estate called Monymusk House, and was composed by Perthshire native Donald Dow (1732-1783) originally as "Sir Archibald Grant of Monemusk's Reel." Sir Archibald, the 3rd Baronet, was a music lover and President of the Aberdeen Musical Society, and reportedly had his tenants taught how to sing harmonized psalms. Fidel tries his hand at a few modest variation sets.
- 25) "McCloud's Reel" or "Miss McLeod's Reel" has been a universal favorite in fiddle repertory throughout Ireland, Great Britain and North America, almost from its first printing in 1809 in Edinburgh fiddler, teacher, and music publisher Nathaniel Gow's **Fifth Collection of Strathspey Reels**, where it appears with the note: "An original Isle of Skye Reel, communicated by Mr. McLeod of Raasay." It probably helped the tune's popularity that Gow was the principal bandleader for Edinburgh society, well-known in London social circles as well. 'Miss McLeod' may have been one of Laird McLeod's sisters. Martin's version deviates very little from the well-known tune.
- 26) "The Red Haired Boy", similarly to "Money Musk" is another core Scottish tune that became internationally widespread. The 'Red haired boy' title is an English translation of the Scots Gaelic *Giolla Rua(dh)* also 'Englished' as "Gilderoy," by which name the reel is also called, especially in southern Appalachian tradition. The tune has acquired a number of other names as well, perhaps the next most common being the Irish "Little Beggarman." Historically the "Giolla Ruadh/Gilderoy" title is associated with a famous Scottish highwayman named Patrick McGregor who was captured and executed in 1636, and it is thought the tune dates to the 17th century. It was first published in 1726 in Alexander Stuart's **Musick for Allan Ramsay's Collection of Scots Songs**.
- 27) "Jig", the title not remembered by Martin, is a straightforward version of the Irish jig that goes by the names "The Tenpenny Bit", "The Three Little Drummers" and others.
- 28) "Untitled Reel." A reel of unknown provenance.
- 29) "Tom Carpenter's Reel". A reel of unknown provenance. The title is presumably the name of Martin's source for the tune.
- 30) "Joe Woulet's Tune." A reel of unknown provenance. The title is presumably the name of Martin's source for the tune.

31) "Jerry Babineaur". A reel of unknown provenance. The title is presumably the name of Martin's source for the tune.

32) "The Cuckoo's Nest" dates to at least the 18th century and was very popular in the 19th, where it was entered into fiddlers' manuscripts and country dance collections on both sides of the Atlantic in numerous variants and with a number of alternate titles (including "Come Ashore Jolly Tar with Your Trousers On"). The tune's popularity was not injured by the fact that the title in some quarters was considered quite risqué, with the 'cuckoo's nest' being a euphemism for the pubic area. Northhamptonshire poet and musician John Clare (1793-1864) collected this "bacchanalian" song:

*Now some likes a girl that is pretty in the face,
And others likes a girl that is slender in the waist;
But give me the girl with a wriggle and a twist
That is pleasant and good-tempered with a cuckoo's nest.*

33) "Pigtown Fling" is one of several titles for this popular fiddle tune, but "Pigtown Fling" is the name by which it is usually called in New England. The reel is strongly associated with American fiddling where it is widespread, and there are variants in Quebec such as "L'obstination" and "Se feras tu se feras tu pas." It may well have overseas provenance, though a direct line has yet to be found. It was published earliest in Boston in **Ryan's Mammoth Collection** (1883) under the title "Kelton's Reel." No one knows for sure where 'Pigtown' might have been.

34) "Little Hunchback" is the English title Fidel gave when Rosenbaum requested the name of the tune, translating it himself from the French title which he also speaks on the tape, albeit indistinctly. The title used on the roster of the 8/24/1966 for the next tune Fidel played (No. 35) is given as "Le Petit Bossy." However, Rosenbaum mistakenly separated a single title, as Martin (indistinctly) speaks the French title for No. 34 as "Roule ta Bosse, mon P'tit Bossu," literally 'roll your hump, my little Bossu'ⁱ The melody has all the characteristics of a French-Canadian tune, but has not been traced.

35) "Petit Bossy" is the title on the roster, although as explained above, it is a miss-assignment of part of the longer French title for No. 34 ("Little Hunchback"). The untitled jig No. 35 is surely French-Canadian in origin and one of the few genuinely 'crooked', or irregular meter, tunes that Martin played for Rosenbaum. The first strain is in 6/8 time in six-measure phrases, repeated, for a total of 12 measures (vs. the usual 8 or 16 measure jig strains), while the second strain changes meter and is largely in 9/8 time.

36) "The Garry Owen" is a straightforward version of the well-known Irish jig "Garryowen," the name of a suburb of Limerick and the late 18th century locale of moneyed young hooligans who ran riot in the county at the time. 'Garryowen'

translates as 'Owen's garden', a place that was a general rendezvous for those with leisure time on their hands, situated on the slope of a hill in what was then the outskirts of Limerick City. It was a well-known trysting place. As with most such popular bucolic gathering places, it eventually garnered a reputation for 'high spirits', more abandoned drinking, fighting and vandalism.

*Let Bacchus' sons be not dismayed
But join with me, each jovial blade
Come, drink and sing and lend your aid
To help me with the chorus:*

Cho:
*Instead of spa, we'll drink brown ale,
And pay the reckoning on the nail;
No man for debt shall go to jail
From Garryowen in glory.*

Today many recognize the tune as that played when the cavalry rides to the rescue in old West films.

- 37) "The Girl I Left Behind Me" is an air and country dance tune dating to the 18th century, claimed by both Ireland (as "Spailpin Fanach", 'the rambling laborer') and England (as "Brighton Camp"), and popular in both countries. It made the transition to North America where it is played in several genres, but it is certainly long ensconced in New England fiddle repertory. One of the tune's overseas alternate titles, "The Waxies Dargle" refers to candle-makers and shoemakers/repairers, both of whom used wax in the course plying of their trades. 'Dargle Days' were holidays, tradesmen's days off, from the habit of Dublin's upper classes to travel off the banks of the River Dargle to picnic and engage in field sports in their leisure time.
- 38) "Off She Goes" is one of the most popular 6/8 tunes in traditional music, ubiquitous in Britain and Ireland and an early import to North America. Versions of the tune (as a march or country dance) can be found in musicians' music manuscript collections from on both sides of the Atlantic from the beginning of the 19th century. French-Canadian versions are to be found as "La gigue du bonhomme" and "La Danse des Sutins". One story, probably apocryphal, suggests that in the days of sail a ship's musician would sit on deck and play "Off She Goes" as they departed harbor. Pennsylvania-collected versions, where it is part of fife as well as fiddle repertory, are called "Off She Goes for Butter and Cheese" and "Up She Got and Off She Went."
- 39) "Bededine Quadrille" is a mixed meter tune, and one of Martin's Acadian tunes. It is one of the most unique pieces on the tapes made for Rosenbaum. Fidel identified 'Bededine' as a placename near Rogerstown, but no such place can be found on any maps consulted, nor is there a name with a similar spelling to be found nearby. Fidel's pronunciation on the tape is not always clear, and a number of

interpretations of his spoken words—Beaudoin, Bedevine, Belledine, etc—have been suggested. However, no remotely similar place name is to be found on maps.

- 40) “P.E. Reel” is the title for this tune on Rosenbaum’s tape roster, but is unannounced on the tape itself. It is a reel of unknown provenance at this time.
- 41) “Untitled Reel.” This dorian-mode reel in the key of ‘A’ was recorded twice by Martin, heard on the 8/24/1966 and 8/1967 tapes. Although the fiddler had no name for it, it is a version of the reel that goes by the name “The Rainy Day” in Ireland, and is also similar to “Reel des habitants” in Quebec. The latter was recorded by Montreal fiddler Joseph Allard in 1929 for Victor Records.
- 42) “Charlie King’s” is another tune named for the fiddler Fidel learned it from, however, it is a version of a well-known Irish jig and song air “The Frost is All Over,” also sung as “What Would You do if the Kettle Boiled Over?” or “What Would You do if I Married a Soldier?”

*The praties are dug and the frost is all over,
Kitty lie over close to the wall.
What would you do if the kettle boiled over?
What could I do but fill it again.*

- 43) “Ragtime Annie” is an American reel of uncertain origins but no older than the turn of the 20th century. It was recorded in 1923 by Texas fiddler Eck Robertson with Henry C. Gilliland, and is not strictly a ‘ragtime’ piece but rather a syncopated reel with a ‘raggy’ feel to it, with distinctive and musically different, although complementary, strains.
- 44) “Untitled Reel” is a reprise, a year later, of the unnamed tune Fidel first recorded for Rosenbaum on 8/24/1966. The renditions are very much the same, save that in No. 44 a measure of 6/4 time has been inserted at the cadence of the second strain as well as the first
- 45) “Le bonhomme et le bonne femme” (The Old Man and the Old Woman) is a melody common to the traditional dance repertoire of Quebec. It was originally the air to a song recorded in 1930 by the famous Quebec singer and recording artist Mary Rose-Anna Bolduc (1894-1941), known as Madame Bolduc or La Bolduc, who originally was from Newport in the Gaspé Peninsula. It is nowadays most often heard as a reel.
- 46) “Bededine Quadrille.” A reprise of No. 39, recorded for Rosenbaum a year later.
- 47) “Untitled Jig.” A three part quadrille-like jig of unknown provenance.
- 48) “La Grondeuse” is a reprise of No. 6 in this collection, “The Old Man and Old Woman” which Fidel had recorded for Rosenbaum a year earlier.

- 49) "Teetotaler's Reel" is also known as "Temperance Reel" and popular in North American fiddling. The word *teetotaler* is said to have come about from the stammered pronunciation of the word 'total' by Richard Turner of Preston, England, in 1832. In that year a society in the town was formed, pledged to abstain from intoxicating liquors. There were many who urged that temperance did not mean total abstinence, when an emotional Turner piped up that half-and-half measures were of not use, and that "nothing but te-te-total would do." "Temperance/Teetotaler Reel" was recorded by Acadian fiddlers Tom Doucet (on his LP "Down East Star") and Gerry Robichaud (on "Maritime Dance Party") in the 1970's.
- 50) "McDonald's Reel" is a reprise played in 1967 of No. 14, played for Rosenbaum in the field recording session of 8/1/1966.

LOUIS REINDAU:

- 51) "Jerry's Reel" is parenthetically given as "Jerry Robiehand" in Rosenbaum's roster for the 8/1967 recording session. 'Robiehand' is possibly a mishearing of the name of St. Paul, New Brunswick, fiddler Gerry Robichaud (1932-2013), who made two LP's of Maritime fiddling. Robichaud moved to Waltham, Massachusetts, in the last decades of his life. Larry Riendeau's wife Lise was also born a Robichaud.
- 52) "Joe Landry's Reel" is a reel probably of Québécois origin.
- 53) "Joe Perreau's Reel" is a reel probably of Québécois origin.
- 54) "Arthur Gallant's Reel" is a reel probably of Québécois origin.
- 55) "Ned Landry's Reel" is a reel probably of Québécois origin.
- 56) "Tommy Dussette's Tune" is the name on the tape roster, however, it is probably a reference to Acadian fiddler Tommy Doucet (1902-1992) born in Concession, Digby County, Nova Scotia. Doucet emigrated to the Boston, Massachusetts, area as a young man and became a fixture of the club and dance hall music scene in the 1920's and 1930's. His repertoire was broad, and he played foxtrots and other popular music for dancing in addition to jigs and reels. He recorded two LP's in the 1970's.
- 57) "Durang's", also known as "Durang's Hornpipe" is invariably played as a reel and is a North American fiddling favorite, widely known in numerous variations. It was probably named for dancer John Durang (1768-1821), styled as "the first American dancer" [i.e. stage dancer]. Durang wrote in his memoirs the tune had been composed for him by "Mr. Hoffmaster, a German Dwarf, in New York, 1785." The thespian had taken violin lessons from Hoffmaster, whose size in no way impacted his musicianship.

ⁱ I'm indebted to Tamara Henderson for the identification and clarification of the French title. Thank you!

Berlin, where many people of French-Canadian origin were living and working in the mills and the trades that services them. He was pointed to the Riendeau family and to Fidel Martin, as the premier 'folk' musicians in the city, who, like most, were happy to share their music. "I just wanted to meet people and learn to play directly from them, because the music excited me more than the kind of music that was commercially available," Rosenbaum told interviewer Keith Goetzman in 2009. "So it became an adventure to go out and meet these folks, and the recording was just part of the encounter. Most people were anxious to share their music, even with a stranger." Martin fit this description, and was remembered by Rosenbaum as a friendly individual who seemed to enjoy getting out his fiddle and being recorded by interested strangers.

Art's collector's interest was rewarded with tapes of Fidel's fiddling from two different dates in August, 1966, totaling about an hour of recorded music. Art was impressed enough with the musician that he returned the next year and recorded an additional 30 minutes of music from Fidel, along with several cuts from Fidel's neighbors, Louis and Larry Riendeau.

While Fidel never recorded commercially, a few of his pieces from Art's field work were issued on CD. "Cup of Faith/Beaudoin Quadrille" can be heard on the Rosenbaum anthology "The Art of Field Recording vol. 1" (Dust-to-Digital Records, 2007), as can "La Grondeuse" of "The Art of Field Recording vol. 2" (Dust-to-Digital Records, 2009). According to Rosenbaum, Martin would exclaim at the end of a spirited take: "Jesus Christ, that was a hot one!," unfortunately not captured on the field recordings.

THE MUSIC:

It is difficult to categorize Fidel Martin's music. Much of his repertoire, as reflected in the field recordings, is essentially New England traditional fiddling. His renditions of "Money Musk," "McCloud's Reel," "Flowers of Edinburgh," "Garryowen," and several other pieces are core New England fiddle repertory of the first half of the 20th century, well-known to regional New Hampshire fiddlers. Less well known, perhaps, but by no means rare would be the pieces learned from the recordings of Canadian 'Down-East' radio and TV fiddler Don Messer, and the Irish fiddle masters, represented by his rather reverential references to fiddler "Mike" Coleman (the prolific and renowned County Sligo recording artist of the 1920's-1940's) and the Irish tunes in his repertoire. There are a few pieces that directly tie him to the musical community of his early life in New Brunswick: "Chatham Reel" and "Bededine Quadrille" are prime examples. More telling, in terms of his musical roots, is his accompaniment to his fiddling with his rhythmic foot-tapping, or *podorhythmie*, a characteristic practice among Québécois and Acadian musicians in which the feet produce a repeated percussive pattern. The practice has not been widespread in New England fiddling (although not unknown).

According to Rosenbaum, Fidel did not often recall the names of the tunes he played. He often struggles on the tapes to remember them when Art invariably asked for the title, and is pleased when he can recall a name. Instead, like many fiddler's who recall the music perfectly but stumble on the name of the piece, he called several by the name of the fiddler

he learned the tune from, or associated it with. Thus we have “Tom Doucette,” “Tom Carpenter,” “Jerry Babineau,” “Joe Woulet” and others as tune names⁵. Many fiddlers who learn by ear have similar responses when asked to recall tune names on the spot; the music is firmly recalled, but the associated title is not. Fiddlers who read music and learn tunes from printed music often have the opposite problem. The title is recalled, but sometimes the associated music is not immediately remembered. Two pathways are at play, aural memory and visual memory, and Fidel Martin was an aural learner who may have been musically illiterate, but who nonetheless had a well-developed aural memory for tunes that allowed for more flexibility for spontaneous variety.

A characteristic of many solo fiddlers across genres is idiosyncratic playing elements, of which Fidel has a few. He has a penchant for ‘dwell’ notes at some of his cadences. ‘dwell notes’ according to vernacular researcher and musicologist Chris Goertzen, are notes that are held longer than usual, either for emphasis or for transition to a new phrase or part. Thus it was not unusual for Fidel to add an extra beat to the last measures of his parts. He does not invariably do so, but often enough to indicate this was entirely copasetic with his music making and not a random mistake. Conversely, Fidel also does the opposite: he truncates some cadential measures in both duple and triple time to half their usual beat length, e.g. playing a 2/4 cadence measure in a 4/4 tune, these may be posited as ‘vacate’ measures, the opposite of dwell, which Fidel sometimes plays at cadences when there are held notes and little melodic activity. These dwell/vacate measures are apart from ‘crooked’ tunes—pieces composed with rhythmically irregularly measured parts—that, like podorhythmie, are characteristic of many Québécois and Acadian dance tunes. Fidel plays a few tunes on the tapes that are traditionally considered ‘crooked’ (irregular), “Bededine Quadrille” being a primary example. A refreshing aspect of Fidel’s playing is his penchant for staccato or shortened quarter notes, where he also gives the note a little ‘push’ with his bow. The result is that the note sounds out and is definitive, and emphasizes the phrasing. It’s a dance musician’s detail that helps break up the monotony of the series of eighth notes and helps give ‘lift’ to the music.

Another aspect of his music is also associated with aural learners, and that is the ability to spontaneously adjust details of the music produced while still keeping to the original melodic and harmonic structure of the tune. Musical improvisation would be an example of this, but in traditional (non-bluegrass) fiddling, the melodic and rhythmic adjustments are more subtle and understated. Martin introduces these adjustments continually in his music, never playing a melodic phrase in exactly the same way, but varying it subtly. The result is a piece that has more interest, not only for the fiddler (who is in effect ‘playing catspaw’ with the music), but for the listener. It is this ability that imbues Fidel’s renditions of the old standards sound fresh and alive.

There are questions, however. How much of the recordings were Fidel’s spontaneous selection, and was there any direction or purposeful request from the field recorder? Were there old tunes from his early years in New Brunswick that were deliberately censored?

⁵ Title or no, he would play with enthusiasm and little hesitancy; after playing a vigorous tune he would exclaim, “Jesus Christ, that’s a hot one.”

What were his musical contacts (as indicated in the tunes identified by fiddler's names), and how did he interact with them? Unfortunately, after nearly sixty years Fidel's peers have passed, and no one now recalls his playing. He was not a musical celebrity; he was a competent and sometimes very interesting amateur musician, and we are fortunate to have a record of his music on sound recording.

THE TRANSCRIPTIONS:

Martin generally played through a tune two or three times, occasionally playing them only once through (particularly when it was well known, such as "Irish Washerwoman" or "Pop Goes the Weasel"). The transcriptions are generally of the second full repetition of the tune, although occasionally I have introduced a particularly interesting variation from one of his other repeats of the melody. Some of the transcriptions could be shortened with strain repeats and first and second endings, but instead were written out in one longer strain to be able to capture some of Fidel's variations. All transcriptions were made from the recordings from the Art Rosenbaum Collection deposited at the Walter J. Brown Media Archives and Peabody Awards Collection of the University of Georgia. They may be accessed on-line at:

Tape 1 - (8/1/1966) <https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331630>

Tape 2 - (8/24/1966) <https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331506>

Tape 3 - (8/1967) <https://bmac.libs.uga.edu/Detail/objects/331538>

LOUIS RIENDEAU: Rosenbaum's Tape 3, from August, 1967, included several tunes from Louis Riendeau (fiddle) and his son Larry (guitar) following Fidel Martin's pieces to the tape, and, even though I have focused on Fidel, it seemed appropriate to include all of Art's 1967 field recordings in this booklet. Louis Riendeau (1900-1985) was the patriarch of a musical family of Berlin who, like Martin, have Acadian roots in the Canadian Maritimes. His son, Henri Louis Riendeau (1928-2016) was a Berlin native and self-taught musician as was his older brother Laurier (Larry) (1926-2015). The Riendeaus played their music in social clubs, kitchen breakdowns, hunting camps and other local settings. The Riendeau family may be heard on their LP "Old Time Fiddling from New England" (County Records 725), originally released in 1970, though now out of print.

Andrew Kuntz 7/2024, Wappingers Falls, NY

References:

- 1) <http://www.acadianfiddle.com/artists2/2021/fidel-martin>
- 2) <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/168679112/fidel-martin>
- 3) <https://www.utne.com/arts/rosenbaums-art-field-recording/>

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