DÉPART POUR LES ÎLES

Une locution dans cette chanson donne le titre au disque Suivant l'étoile du nord (CEA-1002), réalisé par le Centre d'études acadiennes avec l'aide de notre société. Le livret qui accompagne le disque nous en renseigne de la façon suivante:

"Cette chanson semble être originaire du Canada, où elle a été recueillie chez les habitants francophones de six provinces, de l'Ontario à la Terre-Neuve. De plus, sa mélodie a souvent été empruntée ici par les compositeurs de chansons locales.

"C'est une des nombreuses chansons de départ faisant partie du folklore acadien. Dans cette version, on mentionne les charmes des belles 'Canadiennes'. En Acadie le mot 'canadien' désigne ordinairement les Canadiens-français du Québec. Dans d'autres versions, on parle des belles 'Italiennes'".

Les chanteurs traditionnels Allan et Léontine Kelly du Nouveau-Brunswick y représentent des chansons et en français et en anglais. Suivant l'étoile du nord se vend actuellement au prix spécial chez notre Service de commandes par poste: voir le catalogue!

DÉPART POUR LES ÎLES

The record Suivant l'Étoile du Nord (CEA-1002), co-sponsored by the Society and the Centre d'Études Acadiennes, takes its title from a phrase in this song. The record's accompanying booklet of liner notes supplies the following commentary:

"This song seems to be of Canadian origin, having been found only in this country. It is known in six provinces, from Ontario to Newfoundland, and its melody has often been used by composers of local ballads.

"This is one of several Acadian songs about departures. In this version, the lover is warned of the charms of the pretty 'Canadiennes'. Among Acadians, the word 'canadien' refers to French Canadians from Québec. In other versions, the word most often found is 'Italiennes'."

The record, featuring New Brunswick traditional singers Allan and Léontine Kelly, includes songs in both English and French. It is currently available at a special price from our Mail Order Service — check the catalogue!

J.L.

I'LL BE THE GOOD BOY

Jim Payne gave this song to the Hundred Songs Project after learning it from the singing of Dennis Byrne of Conche, on Newfoundland's Northern Peninsula. He comments: "I don't have any information on the song . . . never heard anything remotely like it before. To me it could well be an early Newfoundland song, or possibly of Irish origin, in terms of the reference to 'my foreign king'."

Not to rule out Jim's conjecture, I'll add one of my own. Could the song be English, dating from the time of the early Georges, William of Orange, or — dare we go so far back? — James I? They all qualified as "foreign" kings to the English of the time, and the song certainly has a feel of antiquity about it. Perhaps someone skilled in dating songs from internal information could expand on our respective conjectures.

J.L.
I'LL BE THE GOOD BOY

When I was a young lad, my age scarce twenty-three,
I courted a damsel, the truth I'll tell to ye;
I courted a damsel, I paid up all I owed,
And it's I'll be the good boy and do so no more.

It's Annie and Bridgit and Lucy likewise,
I courted them together till tears came to my eyes;
I courted them together, I paid up all I owed,
And it's I'll be the good boy and do so no more.

It's many's the good horse I ride all in my time,
It's many's the wild one I stole all in their prime;
My parents were against me, likewise my foreign king,
And the jail door was open, I had to walk in.

I'd not been there scarce but a quarter of a year;
I had to drink cold water instead of small beer;
I had to eat the crumbs as they roll along the floor,
And it's I'll be the good boy and do so no more.

I had a kind old uncle who lived long in the west;
When he heard of my condition he could not take no rest;
When he heard of my condition he paid up all I owed,
And it's I'll be the good boy and do so no more.

I'll go home, I'll go home to my dear beloved wife;
I'll work for to maintain all the days of my life;
I'll work for to maintain and I'll pay up all I owe,
And it's I'll be the good boy and do so no more.