

The Folk Music of Anglophone New Brunswick: Old-Time and Country Music in the Twentieth Century

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Abstract

This article, which calls for a flexible and broad understanding of folk music, examines the role of old-time and country music in twentieth-century New Brunswick. Old-time music was primarily for dancing and its chief instrument was the fiddle. In the 1920s and 1930s hillbilly and cowboy music, with an emphasis on songs, began to dovetail with old-time music. Old-time and country music became closely embedded in rural and small-town New Brunswick. This paper argues that these musical forms, despite their commercial origins and dissemination via technology such as recordings, radio, and motion pictures, constituted a de facto folk music for the anglophone populations of the province.

Résumé

Cet article, qui nécessite une connaissance souple et élargie de la musique folklorique, passe en revue la musique d'antan et country dans le Nouveau-Brunswick du 20^e siècle. La musique d'antan en était une principalement pour la danse, et son principal instrument était le violon. Dans les années 1920 et 1930, la musique genre western, centrée sur les chansons, a commencé à s'imbriquer avec la musique d'antan. Ces deux musiques sont devenues étroitement liées dans la campagne et les petites villes du Nouveau-Brunswick. Cet article souligne que ces formes musicales, malgré leur origine commerciale et leur diffusion par la technologie, au moyen d'enregistrements, de la radio et du cinéma, constituent une musique folklorique *de fait* pour la population anglophone de la province.

Introduction

The following is an exploratory essay on a neglected aspect of New Brunswick's popular culture: the role of old-time and country music during the in twentieth century. The emphasis is on the anglophone population, although this music was also played, listened to, and danced to by Acadians.¹ The paper argues that old-time music, as elsewhere, absorbed other musical genres and was performed and consumed as a de facto folk music for anglophone New Brunswick. In academic circles, the concept of folk or traditional music is much contested, with some scholars considering these categories as "dubious if not redundant."² The working definition of folk music in this paper is fairly general: music that was popular among the urban and especially rural working class and was performed and danced to at the community level largely by amateurs. Old-time music coexisted and interwove with commercial country music, especially after the 1930s, which emphasized songs over instrumental tunes. The fiddle was the driving force in old-time music, which was primarily instrumental and played for dances. Old-time musicians composed and performed their own tunes but for the most part adopted and adapted a canon that was already established by the 1920s.³ Old-time music was eclipsed as a popular phenomenon by American-dominated country music, but folklore research suggests that regional instrumental styles and culture continued to influence the performance of country music into the 1970s.⁴

The argument in this paper is a refinement of an earlier article where the author suggested that country music, despite its American roots, was the de facto "folk music" of Canada.⁵ One purpose of the article published in 1988 had been to challenge the older view that folk music had no links to commercial music, was transmitted orally, and represented dead or declining cultures associated with preindustrial society. In the nineteenth century, folklorists portrayed the culture of "the folk" as representing a largely rural, unchanging way of life. Early folk music scholarship was often framed in a nostalgic manner, and utilized by "bourgeois nationalists" to suggest essential national identities.⁶ Folk songs, largely ballads, were assumed to be old, anonymously composed, handed down from one generation to the

next, and existing in many variations. Such “authentic” songs were embedded in communities and not identified with individual singers. The stress in early folk-music collecting in North America was on the text. Composed songs or influences from commercial popular culture were not worthy of study or even threats to the old ways.⁷ Since the 1980s, the field of folk music scholarship has overturned the narrow understandings of the earlier era. As Philip V. Bohlman explained in *The Study of Folk Music in the Modern World* (1988), scholars were recognizing that folk music was eclectic, evolving, and shaped by the consumer society. Technology had made the music more accessible and had created new audiences. Most modern scholars, furthermore, were recognizing that urban-rural distinctions for folk music were meaningless.⁸ As folk music became a commodity throughout the twentieth century, it was affected by professionalization.⁹

This paper adopts the approach explained by Bohlman and others in calling for a more flexible and broader understanding of folk music that recognizes both the realities of modern, urban society and the essentialized, limiting, and often conservative world views of institutionalized folklore studies that dominated folk music scholarship as late as the 1970s. One oversight of the author’s 1988 article was its focus on commercial country music over the older tradition of instrumental old-time music, played for dances.¹⁰ A few years ago the author became involved in Professor G. Joy Parr’s project *Lostscapes*. My contribution included interviewing local old-time and country musicians and filming video clips of a weekly dance at Queenstown, New Brunswick, associated with families that had been displaced by the creation of Canadian Forces Base Gagetown in the 1950s. This led to ongoing research on country music, which is partly driven by the goal of documenting an important but neglected part of the province’s cultural history. This involves interviewing musicians and others involved with the old-time and country music scene. The research also examines New Brunswickers who took part in the music scenes in Ontario and other parts of Canada and the United States.¹¹

The Problem of New Brunswick Identity

In contrast to studying folk or indigenous music in provinces such as Newfoundland or Quebec, or sub-regions such as Cape Breton, researching popular music in New Brunswick faces an identity problem. In the former provinces or regions, local music is often perceived as being closely tied to a historically infused identity that has the intensity of nationalism.¹² This cultural nationalism has two roles. For the internal audience it is a source of cohesion, dignity, and continuity. From the point of view of outsiders (tourists, national media, and funding agencies) a supposedly uniform regional culture rooted in geography and history celebrates how a province or sub-region differs from the Canadian or North American mainstream. These attitudes may be invented, romantic, or nostalgic, but they do exist and they inform popular music performance and consumption within Atlantic Canada—and help project the regional image to the rest of Canada. The situation in New Brunswick is different; containing a large francophone minority, the province lacks of cohesive identity. Starting in the 1940s, Anselme Chiasson began to publish a multivolume collection, *Chansons d’Acadie*, which included songs collected from New Brunswick. With a vibrant Acadian cultural revival starting in the 1960s that included traditional and popular music performed by Edith Butler, Beausoleil-Broussard, and other artists, the prospects of a unified New Brunswick music or popular culture became even more remote. Added to this factor is New Brunswick’s long experience as part of the northeastern borderlands. Finally, indigenous music in New Brunswick tends to be overshadowed by the larger category of so-called “East Coast” or “Maritime” music associated with Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.¹³

Although economically and cultural backward compared to the Canadian mainstream, early twentieth-century New Brunswick as a whole seemed to escape attempts by both internal and external cultural producers to portray it as a society of “the folk.” This contrasted with the situation in Nova Scotia analyzed in the influential work of Ian McKay.¹⁴ Helen Creighton’s portrayal of Nova Scotia as a province of the folk was supported not only by folklorists and the provincial tourism sector, but also national media such as the CBC. For example, folk songs were featured on the late 1940s Halifax radio show *Harmony Harbour*.¹⁵ As explained below, the biggest influence on old-time music in New Brunswick starting in the late 1930s was New Brunswick fiddler Don Messer, whose radio and television shows, recordings, and tune books helped forge the “Down East” sound so popular among the province’s fiddlers and fiddle music fans. For most of his professional career Messer was based in PEI and Nova Scotia. His type of instrumental music was for the most part ignored by folklorists, who instead were drawn to more authentic sources such as the Miramichi Folk Song Festival (MFSF).

The festival, which began in the late 1950s, was a nostalgic attempt to preserve a vanishing ballad tradition identified not with all of New Brunswick, but with the lumbering/fishing region of the Miramichi. The MFSF, although prestigious in academic folklore circles and supported by the local community, exerted little influence outside of its sub-region.¹⁶ More influential was the broader folk revival of the 1960s, which appealed to young, educated urban record collectors, fans, and amateur performers. Media played a large role in the 1960s folk music revival; the CBC's long-running Halifax-based television show *Singalong Jubilee* (1961–74) brought the contemporary folk scene directly to regional and national audiences.¹⁷ That program, together with the CBC's popular *Don Messer's Jubilee* (1959–69), also included musicians and singers from New Brunswick. Another variant of the 1960s folk revival was the popularization of traditional Irish music, whose profile was raised by Irish expatriate groups such as the Irish Rovers and the Carlton Show Band (the latter featured on CTV's late 1960s popular musical program *The Pig and Whistle*). By the 1960s, technology and commercial influences were shaping popular notions of folk music in New Brunswick and the rest of Canada.¹⁸

Modernity Creates Authenticity: Preserving and Performing Old-Time Music

As late as the 1940s, the terms hillbilly, old-time, western, and folk were used to describe commercial country music. According to many scholars, county music's commercial age commenced in the 1920s when record companies and music publishers began to promote old-time and hillbilly performers and songs and the blues-influenced music of Jimmie Rodgers of Mississippi. Old-time music was a blend of popular songs and dance tunes from rural America. As Bill Malone explains, many of these so-called traditional songs were composed in the nineteenth century and circulated by minstrel shows, circuses, songbooks, newspapers, and recordings.¹⁹ In the United States, press references to old-time music, usually connected to fiddle contests, were noticeable in the 1910s.²⁰ Although folklorists in the 1910s and 1920s were searching "remote corners" of the nation for Americana, old-time music, associated with the rural past, was already present in the cities. Much like the banjo, linked with the Black South, the fiddle, at least in press accounts, was associated with remote, backward white rural society.²¹ As Simon Bronner has demonstrated for New York state, old-time music existed outside of the South before the so-called "hillbilly boom."²² Similar trends were present in the various regions of Canada. High-profile fiddling contests, together with recordings and radio, produced celebrity musicians, such as Quebec champion Johnny Boivin, who performed at Quebec City's first folk song and handicraft festival in 1927, an event that also included weavers, spinners, and lumberjacks.²³

As a social force, old-time music appealed to the powerful sentimental streak in American culture, which Jackson Lears has termed "antimodernism."²⁴ American folklorists added to the perception in the 1920s that fiddling, much like ballad singing, was an antique art kept alive in remote "mountain districts" and passed down from father to son.²⁵ In contrast to cosmopolitan, formally trained concert violinists, who in the popular mind tended to have foreign antecedents, fiddlers were purely American, democratic, and accessible. Fiddling contests and square and round dancing were depicted in a nostalgic fashion in contrast to the fast-paced lifestyle of modern North America epitomized by jazz music.²⁶ Despite media interest in the old-time fiddler, folklorists, both amateur and professional, devoted more attention to collecting and studying folk songs as opposed to instrumental music. In 1937, for example, Sir Ernest MacMillan told a Toronto audience that traditional songs, which could still be found in remote corners of Canada such as rural Quebec, helped relieve stress and tension. He feared that these endangered traditions would disappear as a result of homogenizing commercial culture in the form of radio and movies.²⁷

For the media, the 1920s old-time music revival was epitomized by the meeting of Maine fiddler Mellie Dunham and industrialist Henry Ford. Given Maine's proximity to New Brunswick, and the shared musical repertoire of their fiddlers, the Dunham story is an interesting contrast to the early career of Don Messer. In the early 1920s Ford launched a personal crusade to preserve the America (or at least the Midwest) of his youth: the one-room school house, antique furniture and farm implements, and the music and dances of the pioneers.²⁸ Ford explained that he did not expect square dances to surpass modern dances in popularity, but that they were valuable for building a sense of community and bridging gaps between the generations: "They bring back a time that was less hurried and more neighborly. People lived further apart but knew each other better. They worked harder, but had more leisurely recreations. They weren't pushed by a mania for speed."²⁹

Dunham, who lived in Norway, Maine, was an elderly farmer and snowshoe maker who had played at local dances for five decades before entering and winning a state championship at Lewiston. After winning the contest, he wrote Ford, offering to visit the industrialist in Michigan. His letter played on Ford's well-known dislike of jazz. Following a positive response, Dunham spent one week at Ford's headquarters at Dearborn in 1925, instructing Ford's

orchestra. Later he was hired for a lucrative vaudeville tour, recorded with Victor Records, and issued a book of fiddle tunes, including original compositions.³⁰ Dunham was in his 70s, lived on “a quaint old New England homestead,” and was a working farmer, all factors that added to his authenticity in the eyes of the press and fans. After his brush with fame he returned to playing local dances—for a higher fee. He lamented the passing of all-night “kitchen wangs” in farmhouses and the declining numbers of old-time fiddlers.³¹ A reporter explained that although many of the tunes played by Dunham and fellow fiddlers, as well as many of the social dances, originated in Scotland and Ireland, much of his repertoire was American. All of the tunes in Dunham’s repertoire would have been familiar to fiddlers across the border in New Brunswick.³²

During the 1920s, old-time music became part of the emerging hillbilly phenomenon marketed by recording companies and music publishers.³³ Although often identified with Appalachia or the Ozarks, old-time music played on instruments such as banjos and fiddles was performed in all regions of the United States and Canada. Old-time fiddling was popularized on local radio and on influential American stations such as WLS Chicago and WSM Nashville, which were part of national networks and reached many Canadian households. Given their modern elements and mass appeal, publicity for the invented tradition of the radio barn dance was ambivalent on the issue of authenticity.³⁴ The popular barn dance programs, usually broadcast on Saturday nights, were often based in cities with large populations of internal migrants and attracted local live audiences. Radio became even more popular by the late 1920s when battery-powered models were replaced by wired units.³⁵ Historians have argued that the popularity of hillbilly and then country music in the United States was related to the migration of millions of rural and small-town people to industrial cities, and of continued links between migrants and their home communities.³⁶ During the 1930s, American radio networks attracted considerable advertising revenues and began to employ star performers, backed up by publicity machines. Facing slumping record sales, singers and musicians turned to radio.³⁷

The barn dance genre continued to evolve and increase its popularity during the 1930s, introducing more Western songs and images to the existing base of Southern mountain music. The 1935 study *The Psychology of Radio* claimed that barn dance programs were America’s single most popular format. The more popular programs incorporated not only music but also dialogue, novelty acts, and stock characters inherited from vaudeville. By the late 1930s there were at least five hundred of these programs on American radio.³⁸

Canada was both an audience for and a contributor to the barn dance radio trend. Local newspapers, for example, printed publicity materials on popular American shows such as the WLS *National Barn Dance*, and American programs received fan mail from north of the border.³⁹ In the 1920s, many Canadians—subjected to unpredictable, part-time, and local programming with talent often provided by amateurs—began listening to American stations. In the period 1922 to 1932, according to Vipond, most Canadian radio programming consisted of music, and live performance or recordings were dominated by popular, classical, and jazz music.⁴⁰ As late as 1936, the national CBC radio network broadcast mainly at night, although affiliate and private stations often provided more airtime. In 1938, the CBC claimed that in a ninety-eight-hour broadcasting week, less than twenty hours were devoted to American programs with advertising, and less than nine hours to American commercial-free programming such as symphonies and opera. By 1943, the CBC network had expanded to ten stations and twenty-six affiliates, and the national network claimed to reach 96 percent of the population.⁴¹

The American trend of discovering and disseminating old-time music influenced Canada, where radio programming indicated the popularity of dance tunes. The Canadian Radio Broadcast Commission (CRBC), the forerunner to the CBC, promoted a national old-time dance music program featuring George Wade and the Cornhuskers mainly to rural audiences. This program, heard on more than thirty stations, supposedly received more mail than any other on the network. By 1933, the Cornhuskers, who claimed to know eight hundred songs, included three fiddles, a banjo, a guitar, a bass, a piano, a trumpet, and drums. The ensemble, which made recordings, published tune books, and played dances in the Toronto area, was Canada’s top old-time band in the early 1930s. Several years before Don Messer was well known outside the Maritime region, the Cornhuskers were New Brunswick’s first contribution to old-time music on the national level. The group included three Acadian brothers from New Brunswick—Bill, Laurie, and Francis Cormier—who all played fiddle. Publicity photos depicted the band dressed in stereotypical rural garb, such as overalls, but also in suits and ties. Wade, who was the dance caller, claimed that most rural listeners to the Saturday night program rolled up their carpets and danced to the Cornhuskers’ repertoire of French, Irish, and English tunes. Performers such as the Cornhuskers, Montreal-based Bert Anstice and His Mountain Boys, and Don Messer’s Islanders (who began broadcasting a brief

weekly program from CFCY Charlottetown in 1939) satisfied the demands of cultural nationalists who supported public broadcasting and the development of Canadian talent; they were also cheap to produce. Yet although the musicians and the setting were Canadian, there was little that was distinctly Canadian about most of the music performed.⁴²

New Brunswick's old-time musicians, although rooted in local communities, did not think in national terms, and shared a borderlands musical culture with New England and beyond. The province in the 1930s was still largely rural; even in recent decades the rural population has often matched that of cities. It was dominated by the resource economy: farming, lumbering, and fishing. Musicians did not see themselves as preserving a folk tradition, but as playing music that dancers enjoyed and expected. These included melodies from songs composed in recent years as well as tunes that predated Confederation. Most sources emphasize that fiddling was passed down within families and performed at "lumber camps, neighbours, house parties and fundraisings."⁴³ Although New Brunswick musicians would not have used the term, they were involved in transborder popular culture that was increasingly shaped by technology.⁴⁴

In 1930s New Brunswick, old-time music did not enjoy a monopoly in terms of performance. Newspapers carried advertisements for the latest sheet music and recordings, and reviews of internationally known singing stars. Music stores carried the latest popular instruments such as mandolins, banjos, and guitars. Brass band concerts continued and orchestras performed the popular dance music of the day. Touring companies brought vaudeville acts (comedy, music, dancing, novelty routines) and musical comedies. There were also performances of classical and sacred music. Voluntary organizations and community groups often staged dances with live music. In the 1920s various orchestras and combos based in Saint John performed at dances in the city and, during the warmer months, at various "summer colonies" in Saint John and Kings Counties. Fiddlers might be accompanied by a guitar, banjo, harmonica, or piano, but they were also accustomed to solo performance. In the years before talking movies, larger theatres also employed orchestras. Although vaudeville declined after the 1920s, the black-face amateur minstrel show survived beyond the World War II era.⁴⁵ New Brunswickers began to buy radio receivers in 1922 and 1923 but the advent of old-time music on distant and local radio stations did not stop live performance. American hillbilly acts touring into Maine and beyond performed at dances and concerts in order to supplement recording income and radio work.⁴⁶

From Singing Cowboys to Nashville to Nashville North

During the 1930s hillbilly or old-time music began to make a transition to cowboy music, largely because of the popularity of radio programs and Hollywood movies. The commercial success of country music in the post-1945 era was based on the expanding appeal of a number of subgenres. Dance bands in the 1930s and 1940s, influenced by the singing cowboy craze, added singers, a sign of adaptation and the continuing blending of genres. Don Messer's Saint John radio crew in the 1930s, despite its lumberjack image, featured a "yodeling cowboy."⁴⁷ The romanticized American cowboy was an iconic pop culture image by the late nineteenth century, thanks to dime novels and touring Wild West shows.

The arrival of motion pictures changed the face of commercial leisure in New Brunswick's cities and small towns. By 1922, there were fifty movie houses in the province, showing mainly American films.⁴⁸ The singing cowboy phenomenon, embodied by Roy Rogers and Gene Autry, wedded the romance of the West with radio, recordings, and movies. In contrast to the ambivalent figure of the hillbilly or mountaineer, the cowboy image clothed performers with dignity and respectability. The model was much emulated in the late 1930s and 1940s, when even former mountaineer performers began to wear cowboy hats and Western clothes. Singing cowboy movies and radio programs featured clean-cut action-oriented drama, heterosexual romance, comedy, and western music.⁴⁹

In addition to listening to music programs on American radio and the early CBC network, New Brunswickers heard their own musicians on local radio. The province was home to four private radio stations by the 1940s: CHSJ Saint John, CFNB Fredericton, CKCW Moncton, and CKNB Campbellton. In time, CJEM Edmundston came online. New Brunswickers also picked up programs from PEI, Nova Scotia, and Quebec. Starting in the 1940s, the province's radio stations, which had developed their own local country music personalities, also attracted talent from across the border, most notably Harold Breau, a singing cowboy from Maine who performed under the name Hal Lone Pine. Joined by his wife Betty Cody (Rita Cote), Breau hosted radio shows at Moncton and Saint John in the 1940s and early 1950s. He also toured extensively, performing songs such as "Prince Edward Island Is Heaven to Me" and "The New Brunswick Song."⁵⁰

New Brunswick developed its own singing cowboys, such as Kidd Baker. Starting in 1938 he performed on Fredericton radio and at dances in the area before touring the Maritimes and the United States. Following World War II, dressed in Western-style suits and hat and touring in a Cadillac, he became one of the province's few full-time country

musicians, recording on the Gavotte label. This was a path trodden most successfully by Nova Scotia's Hank Snow, who spent much of the 1940s in New Brunswick, in Hollywood cowboy garb, attempting to launch a career in the United States.⁵¹

Although he played at many dances in the 1920s and 1930s, New Brunswick's most famous and influential old-time musician, Don Messer, owed his success to radio. In contrast to nostalgic connotations that surrounded the music of Mellie Dunham, Messer's starting point was that his dance music was popular in towns and cities as well as rural areas. The New Brunswick-born musician—who understood musical tablature, collected sheet music and tune books, and later transcribed the tape recordings of rural players—was no hillbilly (a term he resented), and during his television career he dressed like a banker, not a mountaineer or cowboy.⁵² In another contrast to the old-time fiddlers depicted in the media in the 1920s, Messer ultimately succeeded in making a full-time living from playing fiddle and leading a dance orchestra. Like many early-twentieth-century urban dwellers, he was a product of migration that brought rural musicians, and music consumers, to the city. Born and raised near Harvey Station, he played fiddle as a boy and as an adolescent worked in Boston where he took violin lessons. He returned to New Brunswick, beginning to perform in 1929 on CFBO Saint John and at local dances. Even though hillbilly and rural records had cornered 25 percent of the American market by 1929, and there was local demand for old-time dance music, the market in southern New Brunswick was insufficient to provide Messer with a full-time career. In the mid-1930s his New Brunswick Lumberjacks added a vocalist and guitarist, Charlie Chamberlain, billed as a lumberjack from northern New Brunswick. The lumberjack motif was a natural fit for the timber province and its nostalgic associations fit well with tourism promotion and outsiders' views of New Brunswick as a natural paradise for hunting and fishing. In 1939 Messer, having been rebuffed by the CBC in a bid to land a contract for a national program, moved to Prince Edward Island, where the renamed Islanders performed on CFCY and continued to tour in the region (Chamberlain was rebranded as "the Singing Islander"). In 1947 Messer hired a female singer, Marg Osburne, another New Brunswicker. Despite these roots, Messer and the Islanders are identified with Prince Edward Island because of the band's name and long residence on the island, and with Nova Scotia where the ensemble was based in the late 1950s and 1960s. However, Messer's fiddling style and repertoire, and his group's eclectic musical roots, were forged in New Brunswick.⁵³

Each of New Brunswick's three major urban centres in the 1940s and 1950s featured local old-time or country radio programs that were not only heard in the broadcast zone but also attracted studio audiences. The performers also went to the people, playing regularly in the province's many dance halls, which were often located on the outskirts of urban centres or in rural areas. Like the famous American barn dance programs, these shows generated fan mail and requests and acted as training grounds for musicians. The Maritime Farmers, a replacement for Messer's group, consisted of Ned Landry on fiddle, George Hector on banjo, Bunny Sparks on guitar, Norm Hamilton on harmonica, and Slim Campbell on bass. Many of these musicians were untrained. Hector, an African-Canadian musician originally from Gagetown, played dance music on his tenor banjo. Landry, whose parents were rural Acadian migrants to Saint John, later became a nationally known fiddler. The Farmers would later be a mainstay on CHSJ television.⁵⁴ In the late 1940s CHSJ radio featured, twice weekly, Kidd Baker's Radio Cowboys, who also attracted fans to the studio. CHSJ television gave fiddler Earl Mitton his own program for three years. During the 1950s Fredericton hosted a popular weekly radio program, the Capitol Co-op Saturday Night Jamboree, which also toured the province hosting talent shows. CKCW Moncton's most popular and influential radio act, which also appeared on CKCW television starting in 1954, was the Bunkhouse Boys. Originating in 1944 as the Lone Star Boys, the group consisted of the four Myers brothers, all from Kent County: fiddler Johnny Richard, accordionist Curley Richard, guitarist Pat Doiron, and fiddler and guitarist Bill Budd. The Bunkhouse Boys, who featured amateur guests, were broadcast over the regional CBC television network. The group also staged a popular Saturday night Western jamboree. All of the members in the mid-1950s held regular jobs, which restricted touring, yet they were kept busy with radio and television work and local concerts and dances.⁵⁵

The group fulfilled two of the supposed characteristics of folk music: that it is amateur and community based. In New Brunswick most old-time (and later, country) musicians were part-timers who played and sang on weekends at local dances. For example in 1962 the members of Fredericton's Valley Rhythm Boys, fronted by fiddler Earl Mitton, included a composer, an electrical company salesman, a music store employee, a stockroom clerk, and a railway employee. Ken Harrison, a member of the River Valley Boys in the 1950s and 1960s, was a civilian employee of the Department of Defence.⁵⁶ Similarly, many urban-based musicians (and audiences) had rural roots. The musicians interviewed by Rosenberg in the 1970s had all performed for money, but most were part time and had day jobs. Many came from blue-

collar backgrounds. Their music abilities and time devoted to entertaining gave them status in their local communities. Rosenberg described them as “the folk entertainers for the working-class people of the Maritimes.”⁵⁷

The big American barn dance radio programs, competing with television, continued throughout the 1950s but experienced a relative decline during the following decade. Recordings played by disc jockeys on AM radio and on jukeboxes became the new mainstay of commercial country and western music, and many country recordings in the 1950s and 1960s crossed over into the pop charts. By the late 1950s television programs such as *The Jimmie Dean Show* hit records on radio, and live performance had replaced hillbilly music with a multi-million dollar country and western music industry. The creative and spiritual headquarters was Nashville, a small city in Tennessee.⁵⁸ The modernized “middle of the road” sound of country music on television was emulated in Canada on the local and national level.⁵⁹ The Canadian shows *Holiday Ranch* and *Country Hoedown*, which were scripted and had high production standards, were popular not only with Canadian audiences, but also American border communities.⁶⁰ *Country Hoedown*, built around the fiddle music of King Ganam and the Sons of the West, was described as “a wholesome family show.” It incorporated familiar barn dance elements such as comic character Cousin Clem, regular singers such as Tommy Hunter, and old-time fiddling contests. It also featured ethnic dance groups in order to attract New Canadians. As with *Holiday Ranch*, the music was not pure country but influenced by pop and early rock and roll.⁶¹ CBC’s *Tommy Hunter Show*, first on radio then on television, was the successor to these productions. Although it featured guest spots by emerging pop and folk singers, it was Canada’s most mainstream country program. Unlike CTV’s equivalent, *Country Music Hall*, hosted by American singer Carl Smith in the period 1964–69, Hunter’s show was available throughout New Brunswick and the rest of the Maritimes.

Don Messer was first broadcast on television in Nova Scotia in 1956 and then throughout the Maritimes starting in 1957. The repertoire and performance style reflected tensions between regionalism and authenticity on the one hand, and universalism and eclecticism on the other. Messer’s radio and television shows paid tribute to an older, less commercial genre than the standard country and western programming of the era and included Tin Pan Alley, music hall, and popular standards.

Early in his musical career, Messer exploited the notion of the authenticity of Maritime music as a genuine fragment of the nation’s past. In 1933 he dismissed the music of an old-time group picked by the CRBC as “make believe stuff from Upper Canada.”⁶² Much like CTV’s surprise hit *The Pig and Whistle*, *Don Messer’s Jubilee* appealed to nostalgic connections with the old country as well as to tens of thousands of British immigrants who had migrated to Canada following World War II. Yet Messer’s occasional claims of authenticity clashed with the makeup, professionalism, and eclectic repertoire of his best-known ensemble, the Islanders, who during the 1940s also played swing music at dances. During its last several years Messer’s television program featured a kilted Scottish singer, who also played accordion, and versions of Top 100 radio pop songs.

At the community level, country music performers were affected by changing musical tastes, technology, and changes in the entertainment marketplace. By the 1950s dance bands were adopting amplification and electric and pedal steel guitars. According to Messer, amplification improved the experience for musicians as well as audiences. Few of New Brunswick’s old-time or country musicians recorded; fiddlers were an exception. Messer began to record in the 1940s; he eventually released more than forty LP albums, as well as 78s and 45s. Performers such as Kidd Baker made dozens of transcription recordings for radio stations but most of these have been lost. The tape recorder was another important innovation for musicians; it allowed them to record songs from radio, pre-record programs for local radio shows, and to preserve their own practices and performances and those of other musicians. New Brunswick’s Weston family, headed by fiddler Pappy Weston, recorded shows for broadcast on CKDH radio in Amherst, Nova Scotia. This practice was followed by other performers, such as Ivan Hicks. In the 1980s performers often marketed their own cassette tapes and in the following decade advances in digital recording and the proliferation of recording studios and home-based recording in New Brunswick gave songwriters and musicians more flexibility in producing albums, most of which were sold directly to fans at concerts and dances.⁶³

Most of these amateurs were unknown outside their own communities, but a handful, such as Don Messer and Ned Landry, operated at the semi-professional or professional level. A number of them appeared on radio and television, recorded and toured outside their region.⁶⁴ Nova Scotia, not New Brunswick, was the home of Canada’s two most influential singing cowboys, Wilf Carter and Hank Snow (although Snow spent much time in New Brunswick before moving to Nashville). Both went on to find international success based out of the United States. Canadian icon Stompin’

Tom Connors, who enjoyed his greatest influence as a national balladeer in the 1970s, had to leave the region in order to find success—he actually launched his career from northern Ontario. Although often marketed as a product of PEI, Connors was born and spent his formative years in Saint John. A number of singers, musicians, and record producers—Kidd Baker, Bud Roberts, Cecil and June Eikhard, Al Hooper, Gene O'Connor, Steve Foote, Eloi LeBlanc, Russ Wheeler, Johnny Burke, Fred Melanson, Norma Gallant, the Hachey brothers, Eddy Poirier, and Ben Weatherbee—were involved in the music business in urban Ontario and Quebec in the 1940s, 50s, 60s, and 70s. They were part of a wave of Atlantic Canadian émigrés who supplied talent to central Canada's commercial country and western scene in the postwar era. Gallant, for example, under the name of Norma Gale, played bass in the Horseshoe Tavern's house band. Foote's approach to songwriting paralleled that of Connors in the late 1960s and 1970s in that he attempted to use New Brunswick topics in order to create a Canadian country music that was distinct from Nashville and its imitators. Landry, a skilled musician, probably would have become more of a national figure if he had left the province permanently, although he did perform in Quebec, Ontario, and other parts of Canada. Although he has spent most of his life in the Saint John area, he recorded more than twenty LP albums, as well as many 78s and 45s, in an era when most musicians did not record. Like Messer, he influenced other fiddlers mainly through his recordings.⁶⁵

In addition to being mainly blue collar in origins, New Brunswick's old-time and country musicians were also mostly male. By contrast, their principal venues, usually local dances, were important sites of mixed-gender socializing. The main roles for women at most live performances were as dancers and providers of the late-night lunch, which often gave the musicians their only break. Barn dance radio and touring country shows highlighted the role of the "girl singer," but outside of talent shows there were few opportunities for New Brunswick women in performance. Marg Osburne, who was born in 1927 and began singing on CKCW Moncton before being hired by Messer, was a rare exception. Of a total of 121 individuals inducted into the New Brunswick Country Music Hall of Fame (NBCMHF) between 1983 and 2010, less than one fifth were women, and of these, most were vocalists. One exception was Norma Gallant (Gale), who began as a vocalist in the Moncton area with Val Surette and the Nite Hawks and the Brunswick Playboys. She later graduated to a professional career as a bass player in Ontario and the United States, where she performed with many well-known American and Canadian country musicians. In contrast to commercial country music, instrumentalists (mostly male fiddlers) constituted the single largest category of inductees in this period at 48 percent. Female musicians such as fiddler Matilda Murdoch of Loggieville (born in 1920) were a rarity. Murdoch began playing violin as a girl. Years later she performed on Messer's show and Messer recorded a number of her compositions.⁶⁶

The preferred style of New Brunswick old-time fiddlers, later dubbed "Down East," was melody-driven with much repetition and little ornamentation. This style differed from Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island fiddling, and especially from the dominant style in American commercial country music. According to one accomplished New Brunswick fiddler, Southern style fiddlers "play kinda faster maybe, they fit in a lot of double notes, maybe extra back bowing."⁶⁷ This was not the only fiddle style in the province; Acadian fiddling, for example, reflected influences from Quebec, including the crooked style that deviated from regular 4/4 or 3/4 time. Old-time music was not thought of as ethnic music or folklore, but as the music that audiences expected. It was also accessible to local musicians. Although the subject awaits more research, it appears that the Messer canon continues to influence regional fiddling, especially in New Brunswick and mainland Nova Scotia.⁶⁸ This did not mean that tunes were not altered or that technique did not evolve. In 1955, an Ontario fiddler who had served as a judge at the Canadian national old-time fiddling contest complained that "jazz influences" had been infiltrating fiddling, which he classed as folk music. The main culprit, in his opinion, was the banjo, a staple of Dixieland and other types of jazz, which had become a common instrument in country bands.⁶⁹ Press accounts of the old-time music revival of the 1920s and 1930s often stressed that traditional fiddlers were unable or unwilling to play new forms of music such as jazz. Yet old-time, much of which derived from Victorian-era commercial music, was a flexible genre. The example of Messer indicates how old-time musicians adapted new cowboy, popular, and dance tunes, as well as instruments not normally part of classic string bands, such as drums, saxophone, trombone, and clarinet. Messer on tour in the 1950s and 1960s would often stage a concert, followed by a dance, a practice that emulated the barnstorming country acts that toured Maine and the Maritimes in the 1940s.⁷⁰

Largely because of Messer's influence on fiddlers and the popularity of his radio, television, and touring shows, recordings, and tune books, old-time music became absorbed by the 1950s into a generic Down East category. Interviewed in 1969 following his bitter departure from the CBC network, Messer described his Down East music as "almost unique and a real part of Canada."⁷¹ In the 1970s, as national media began to cover Maritime music, Messer was

credited as its pioneer, and in the 1990s a retrospective rebroadcast of episodes of *Singalong Jubilee* (hosted by former producer Bill Langstroth) paid tribute to “Mr. Messer.”

Messer preferred the term Down East to country music, but was also comfortable with the term folk music. Although often promoted as “Maritime” music, the core of his repertoire was old-time. In 1964 vocalist Charlie Chamberlain explained that Messer was aware of the new “Nashville sound” but that his group would keep to its successful formula. On the other hand, Messer made a concerted effort over the years to incorporate tunes from French Canada and European immigrant cultures, and modern compositions such as Ward Allen’s “Maple Sugar.”⁷² Protests against the cancellation of the program took on a regional nature, with strong support for Messer expressed in the western and Maritime provinces. *Don Messer’s Jubilee*, despite Messer’s assertions to the contrary, appealed to an older demographic (which was one of the reasons used to justify the CBC’s actions). Chamberlain and Messer also described it as “a working man’s show...the last one left on the network.”⁷³ Here was a rare ideological or cultural comment from within the industry, one that echoed themes raised by American scholars of country music who explore issues such as nostalgia, conservatism, class, and whiteness. Messer and Chamberlain did not consider themselves country performers, but their assertions of authenticity and the need to defend a cultural space for the “working man” parallel 1960s and 1970s assertions about country music being the music of the white, native-born American blue-collar male. In their view the CBC, a bastion of elitism, was denying a voice for the working class.⁷⁴

New Brunswick country musicians and fans were shaped by the major changes in the American commercial music scene between the 1940s and the 1970s. New trends (which later were regarded as traditional or “hard core”) included Western Swing and Texas honky-tonk, the Nashville Sound and its rival the California Sound, and, by the 1970s, the Texas-based Outlaw movement, which reflected rock music influences. A number of New Brunswick musicians interviewed by the author referred to various performers in the past (Jimmy Rogers, Hank Williams, Johnny Cash) as “traditional,” even though when they first established their careers they were innovative and reflected various non-country influences.⁷⁵ By the 1980s a so-called neo-traditionalist movement was evident within country music. Throughout these decades the genre struggled with the tension between its Southern, rural roots and a cosmopolitan, pop sound. During the same era the Canadian country music industry, although protected by nationalist broadcasting regulations, struggled in the shadow of the powerful American music industry. Much of Canada’s country music industry was based in “Nashville North,” the greater Toronto area, which was also an important stop for touring American performers.⁷⁶ The lack of a dominant metropolis in New Brunswick, in contrast to St. John’s, Newfoundland, and Halifax, Nova Scotia, with their burgeoning music scenes in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, was another factor behind the outmigration of ambitious musicians.⁷⁷

Starting in the 1950s, American country and western artists expanded the tentative forays into the Maritime region that began in the 1940s. Tours were designed not only to make money but also to boost record sales, the true test of success in the modern industry. The visitations of performers from Nashville and Wheeling such as Johnny Cash, Webb Pierce, Hank Snow, Kitty Wells, and Tammy Wynette were part of a larger wave that included touring concert performers and jazz and pop acts, and later folk and rock music performers and groups. Often these acts performed at fairs and exhibitions. Larger venues such as stadiums became available in the 1970s and 1980s and attracted big-name country and rock acts.⁷⁸ But most New Brunswickers, especially those living in towns and cities, were exposed to commercial country music via radio and television more than at live performances. Although popular dance halls ringed urban centres such as Saint John as late as the 1950s, their days were numbered. The same was true for the local radio shows that had nurtured talent and created a fan base since the 1930s.⁷⁹ There may have been a geographic and class bias to the consumption of the music in the 1950s and 1960s, which in Canada was still considered rural and blue collar. The rural internal migrants to whom the media, social agencies, and politicians were reacting in the 1960s were mainly working class, albeit a working class with an improved standard of living. Media accounts of commercial country music well into the 1960s stressed its working-class fan base.⁸⁰ On the other hand, academic writing stresses that the modernization of country music involved the broadening of its appeal, and market, beyond its regional and class roots in the years after World War II. Part of this success was country music’s incorporation of pop music arrangements, instrumentation, and themes.⁸¹

During the 1960s commercial country music survived the challenges of the folk revival and rock and roll. The commercial folk wave of the 1950s and 1960s revived interest in the traditional music of America and generated interest among young, urban Canadians. County and folk music experienced a cross-fertilization. One New Brunswick example was Fredericton’s Diamond Trio, formed in the late 1950s. The Nashville Sound of the 1960s, and increased influences

from and overlap with pop and rock music, revived commercial country as dance music. Country was becoming more mainstream and appealing to urban audiences. By the early 1970s, specialized radio stations programmed the new country music. The incorporation of drums and electric guitar and bass gave performers the flexibility to play country, rock, or even disco in the 1970s.⁸² The public performance of country music in New Brunswick reflected changing social and economic circumstances and broader trends in popular culture. In the postwar era, local dance halls began to be replaced by other venues, many of which served alcohol. Public venues with liquor licences emerged in New Brunswick only in the 1960s and 1970s, and until the early part of the later decade taverns partially segregated male and female patrons. People had more disposable income and leisure time, and greater access to automobiles. Even with the aging of the baby boomers, the lowering of the minimum legal drinking age by the early 1970s, and the expansion of bars and licensed restaurants, country music did not dominate the commercial concert, dance, and bar scene. Most dances featuring country music continued to be staged in Royal Canadian Legion and other community halls. Live performance was given a temporary boost in the 1980s as a result of the urban cowboy trend, which resulted in the establishment of a number of nightclubs and bars specializing in country music, such as Moncton's Urban Corral.⁸³

Starting in the 1960s, New Brunswick was also affected by growing interest in bluegrass, a subgenre of country music. This coincided with an interest in folk music in the northeastern borderlands region and tours by performers such as Mac Wiseman. Pioneers of bluegrass in New Brunswick were multi-instrumentalist Eddie Poirier (born in Rogersville) and the vocal duet the Phillips Brothers of Cumberland Bay (who later specialized in gospel music). Although it was built on expert instrumental performance, and shared many of the same tunes, bluegrass had a limited fan base among anglophone New Brunswick old-time and country music fans. Bluegrass-gospel was more influential.

The Maritime Folk Festival, first held in 1975, featured Celtic-influenced groups and singer-songwriters who, on the heels of the success of *Singalong Jubilee*, were redefining Down East or East Coast music away from old-time to Celtic-folk.⁸⁴ When Anne Murray joked about the "Maritime mafia" during the 1971 Juno awards ceremonies, she was referring not only to the legacy of Don Messer and the rising popularity of country balladeer Tom Connors, but also folk and rock performers, many of them associated with Nova Scotia and especially *Singalong Jubilee* (such as Gene MacLellan and Brian Ahern, and groups such as Peppertree). The heart of the Maritime mafia by the late 1960s and early 1970s, reflecting the popularity of commercial folk music, was the singer-songwriter. Sources suggest that by the 1960s the younger generation was not taking part in the performance and consumption of fiddle music and old-time music in general.⁸⁵

The hotbed of commercial country music since the 1960s has been radio. Recordings by country vocalists were originally heard on AM radio, which also played tunes from the pop and rock charts. By the 1970s and 1980s, and the rise of FM radio, country music was broadcast on specialized stations in urban markets. By the late 1990s in the United States, country attracted more than 40 percent of listeners.⁸⁶ New Brunswick country musicians were largely excluded from these broader trends. Sales of recordings by New Brunswick country performers have been limited—and, despite CRTC Canon rules imposed on AM radio in the early 1970s—their recordings received limited airplay. As radio stations became part of networks and moved to a disc jockey format featuring charted hits, the earlier tradition of live (or pre-recorded shows) by local musicians died out. By the 1970s, despite the rise of Canadian cultural nationalism, it was rare for anglophone New Brunswick singers or musicians to be heard on local radio; television audiences, especially with the arrival of cable television in the 1970s, continued to watch American country music and variety programs. New Brunswick performers had somewhat better chances on television, but appearances were episodic. New Canadian shows included CBC's *Countrytime*, a weekly program taped at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, in the early 1970s; CTV's *Ian Tyson Show/Nashville North* (1970–75); *The George Hamilton IV Show* (1973–79); and the syndicated *The Family Brown*, produced in Ottawa (1972–1985). Except as occasional guest performers on *The Tommy Hunter Show*, New Brunswick country artists appeared rarely on national television. They fared better at the regional level. One attempt to meld bluegrass and the fiddle revival in the tradition of Messer was the show *Up Home Tonight* (1982–89), produced in Halifax by ATV. A late-night amateur country music program produced in Maine, *Stacey's Country Music Jamboree*, developed a cult following in New Brunswick in the 1970s. The program, which attempted to revive the older cross-border patterns of radio and personal appearances, was disseminated in the Maritimes by the new medium of cable television.⁸⁷

Conclusion

Towards the end of the twentieth century, activists and veteran performers began to consciously preserve the country music heritage of New Brunswick. This effort echoed other cultural revivals such as the founding of a fiddlers'

association in Cape Breton in 1972 and a festival of Scottish music in 1973, and the beginning of Scottish fiddle lessons at the Gaelic College of Cape Breton a decade later. Yet attempts to preserve and promote the old-time and country music of New Brunswick were hindered by the lack of a homogeneous ethnic tradition and of the aura of folklore status that has surrounded musical genres in other parts of Atlantic Canada, even Acadian music in New Brunswick.⁸⁸ Although New Brunswick country music fans and performers were influenced by and contributed to the Nashville North phenomenon—the attempt to build and sustain a viable and somehow distinctive Canadian country music scene—the influence of borderlands music culture, reinforced by American recordings, radio and television programs, and touring acts, has been pervasive. The NBCMHF became a reality in 1983; each year it adds new inductees and hosts a gala awards ceremony. It has been supported by small government grants. The performers honoured by the hall include a considerable number of fiddlers, which reflects the continued influence of old-time music. In this sense the experience in New Brunswick parallels that in the state of New York in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, where the polished, commercial Nashville sound blended with older traditions of music making.⁸⁹ Even a small province such as New Brunswick contains sub-regions, which explains the subsequent organization of the Minto Country Music Hall of Fame to recognize musicians in the Grand Lake area (formerly a coal-mining centre that attracted people and musicians from across New Brunswick) and the Miramichi Traditional Country Music Hall of Fame.⁹⁰ Although these halls reflect provincial culture and a desire to preserve heritage, it is difficult to describe their efforts as capturing the expression of a distinct New Brunswick identity. Much like jazz musicians and fans, country fans do not think in terms of provincial or national boundaries, but see themselves as part of a larger musical culture to which successful Maritime-born entertainers such as Wilf Carter and Hank Snow have contributed. Few have been as outspoken against American country music as Stompin' Tom Connors, and most are clearly influenced by Nashville and other creative environments south of the border. This leads to the final adjustment to the country music as folk music thesis: that the country genre functions as anglophone New Brunswick's de facto folk music more by default than active promotion and wider acceptance. To return to the basic definition used at the outset of this paper, this genre of folk music is characterized by its largely working-class audience, amateur performers, and performance at the community level.

From time to time, New Brunswick produces young commercially driven performers such as Shirley Myers, Joan Kennedy, Chris Cummings, Julian Austin, Shanklin Road, or the Divorcees. Yet the province contains few well-off country musicians. Some of these acts enjoy some local play on country music radio, but not to the extent of their Acadian counterparts. Although these local performers are usually absent in electronic media, at the local level, especially in small towns and rural areas, they are regarded as community leaders. At this level the folk category works best: country music is the genre most likely to be performed in public by amateurs. Amateur and part-time performers are particularly active in jams, jamborees, variety shows, and community fundraisers. The format of these shows is descended from vaudeville and barn dance radio.

Starting in the 1980s, fiddling, which had ebbed in the 1970s, staged a partial comeback but more in a concert setting or as recreation for fiddlers and other musicians than as dance music. By this time commercial country, rock, and pop music had vanquished old-time music on the dance floor. Yet a core of musicianship, and a core of standard tunes rooted in the earlier era, remained.⁹¹ In addition to fiddle classes, "fiddle do's" became popular, partly because of the efforts of respected musicians such as Ivan and Vivian Hicks, Winston Crawford, Matilda Murdoch, and Alison Inch. At these events, seasoned fiddlers teach new tunes to the less experienced. There are also indications that children and youth, who turned away from the fiddle in the 1960s and 1970s, are part of the revival.⁹²

New Brunswick's experience with old-time and country music since the 1920s reinforces the revisionist approach evident in academic folklore beginning in the 1980s that asserted that older notions of folk music were too narrow. Although not recognized as such by the classic ballad collectors, fiddle tunes served as a de facto folk music, but a genre much indebted to commercial music. Old-time music, which was mainly dance music, was affected by regional instrumentation and musical techniques, but was flexible, mediated via technology, and part of the market economy. New Brunswick was also part of a transnational borderlands region, which meant that even before the advent of commercial recordings and radio, old-time and other eclectic genres existed on both sides of the border. The final point to reiterate about old-time and country music in New Brunswick, in contrast to classic nineteenth-century understandings of folk culture, is that it was not rooted in any one place or identified with a homogeneous culture, region, or nation. Inaccurate were the later attempts by Don Messer and others to portray the old-time music popular in New Brunswick and other Maritime provinces as an authentic "Down East" music. This reflected more the professional musician's need for a marketing tool than the origins and social contexts of the actual music.⁹³

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Endnotes

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- ⁵⁶ *Daily Gleaner* [Fredericton, NB], 21 April 1962; Interview with Ken Harrison, 14 December 2007.
- ⁵⁷ Rosenberg, *Country Music*, 16.
- ⁵⁸ *Washington Post*, 26 September 1954; *NYT*, 28 July 1957; McCusker, *Lonesome Cowgirls*, 125.
- ⁵⁹ *Washington Post*, 13 January 1955, 9 April 1957.
- ⁶⁰ *NYT*, 25 July 1954; *Windsor Daily Star* [Windsor, ON], 25 July 1957.
- ⁶¹ *Ottawa Citizen*, 31 August 1957.
- ⁶² Messer Collection, Box 47, Messer to Frank Willis, n.d. 1933.
- ⁶³ *TJ*, 2 August 1969; Rosenberg, *Country Music*, 15; Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Pappy Weston collection, CDs S07267-72; Interview with Ivan Hicks, 19 May 2011.
- ⁶⁴ Landry, for example, was raised in urban Saint John in the 1920s and 30s, and played semi-professionally until he won the Canadian old-time fiddling championship in 1956: *Quebec Chronicle Telegram*, 8 August 1956; Interview with Ned Landry, 27 July 2009.
- ⁶⁵ Interview with Ned Landry; *Times Transcript* [Moncton, NB], 13 August 1998; NBCMHF Inductees; Greg Marquis, "Streets of Bakersfield/Streets of Toronto: Appalachians, Atlantic Canadians and the Music of Outmigration," Canadian Association of American Studies, Montreal, 9 November 2007; Copeland, *Fiddling in New Brunswick*, 185. Detail on Foote can be found on the excellent website, Stevedore Steve, <http://www.backtothesugarcamp.com/stevedore/htm>.
- ⁶⁶ NBCMHF website, available online at: <http://www.nbcmhf.com/inductees.html>; Interview with Norma Gallant, 17 June 2009. In addition to more than one hundred and twenty individuals, the organization has honoured more than a dozen duos or groups.
- ⁶⁷ Lederman, "Ontario: An Introduction." See also, Rosenberg, *Country Music*, 4-5; Neil V. Rosenberg, "Repetition, Innovation and Representation in Don Messer's Media Repertoire," *Journal of American Folklore*, 115 (456) (2002): 192; Interview with Alison Inch, 9 July 2008.
- ⁶⁸ Interview with Ivan Hicks. See also, Ivan Hicks, "Old-Time Fiddling in New Brunswick," *Canadian Folk Music Bulletin*, (3) (1985): 16-17.
- ⁶⁹ *Saskatoon Phoenix-Star* [Saskatoon, SK], 10 September 1955.
- ⁷⁰ *NYT*, 27 May 1934; Johanne Devlin Drew, "Conflicting Visions: Don Messer, Liberal Nationalism and the Canadian Unity Debate," *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 26 (September 2002): 41-57.
- ⁷¹ *CBC Times*, 1-7 November 1953; *TJ*, 2 August 1969.
- ⁷² *Toronto Daily Star*, 20 June 1964; 16 June 1969; Ken Reynolds, *Ken Reynolds Presents: Sixty Years in Canadian Country Music* (Renfrew: General Store Publishing House, 2009), 40. For an example of national media stressing the

Maritimes as a “musical” society, see *Maclean’s* for May 1972, which featured articles on Anne Murray and Hank Snow. In the early 1970s *Maclean’s* also published articles on Stompin’ Tom Connors (May 1972) and John Allen Cameron (December 1973).

⁷³ *TJ*, 26 May 1969.

⁷⁴ Geoff Mann, “Why does country music sound white? Race and the voice of nostalgia,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31 (1) (January 2008): 87-91.

⁷⁵ Interview with Gordon Cole, 29 January 2008.

⁷⁶ *L’Evangeline*, 7 juillet 1977; Marquis, “Streets of Bakersfield/Streets of Toronto.”

⁷⁷ *TJ*, 9 January 1997.

⁷⁸ *Lewiston Daily Sun*, 18 January 1964; *TJ*, 14-15 September 1954; *ETG*, 5 June 1956; *TJ*, 6 November 1967; *TJ*, 10 May 1969; *TJ*, 11 June 1970; *TJ*, 3 September 1973; *L’Evangeline*, 10 mai 1963, 21 juin 1976; Reynolds, *Ken Reynolds Presents*, 102-03.

⁷⁹ *ETG*, 30 September 1999.

⁸⁰ Jack Batten, “County Music is Sweeping the Cities and I Like it (Well, Some of It),” *Maclean’s* (6 June 1964): 23-26; Greg Marquis, “Confederation’s Casualties: The ‘Maritimer’ as a Problem in 1960s Toronto,” *Acadiensis*, XXXIX (1) (Winter-Spring 2010): 83-107.

⁸¹ Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly*.

⁸² *Daily Gleaner*, 9 May 1962; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 12 September 1970; Messer collection, box 45, Miscellaneous, File 6, Earl Mitton to Don Messer, 12 October 1971; Interview with Gordon Cole; Interview with Wayne Hachey, 19 March 2008.

⁸³ *Daily Gleaner*, 3 July 1973.

⁸⁴ *Bangor Daily News* [Bangor, ME], 18 June 1975; *L’Evangeline*, 6 juin 1976; Thompson, “The Myth of the Vanishing Cape Breton Fiddler”; Interview with Ivan Hicks. The standard history of bluegrass is Neil Rosenberg’s *Bluegrass: A History* (Urbana and Chicago: U of Illinois P, 2005).

⁸⁵ John MacFarlane, “Music,” *Maclean’s*, February 1972, 86.

⁸⁶ Mann, “Why does country music sound white?,” 78.

⁸⁷ The show, broadcast on Channel 7 Bangor from 1973 to 1983, was popular in northern New England and the Maritime provinces.

⁸⁸ Thompson, “The Myth of the Vanishing Cape Breton Fiddler,” 25.

⁸⁹ Bronner, *Old-Time Music Makers*, 103, 143.

⁹⁰ The Minto Hall of Fame includes a number of individuals listed in the NBCMHF: <http://www.village.minto.nb.cmwof/location.html>.

⁹¹ Gerry Taylor, "Downhome Music," *TJ*, 21 April 2011. For a detailed account of fiddling in the province, with biographies of many fiddlers, see Copeland, *Fiddling in New Brunswick*.

⁹² *ETG*, 30 September 1999; Interview with Alison Inch; Copeland, *Fiddling in New Brunswick*, chapter 5; Interview with Ivan Hicks.

⁹³ Bohlman, *The Study of Folk Music*.