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in pursuing any of that sort of lifestyle at all. So they came home, an3rway. And the next night, where he was staying at our place, my father sent for Red John? ny Campbell, who was the best local fid? dler around. He was the only fiddler around who could read music, that we knew of. And he was.a fine fiddler. A great fiddler and a good historian. So he came up. And I remember they played for each other that night--Dan R. and Red Johnny. And Dan R., of course, before he settled into playing, he had to know how apprecia? tive you were going to be of his music. He couldn't play his best when somebody real? ly wasn't interested or didn't understand the music too much. So he wanted to test Johnny, So he told him, he said, "I'm go? ing to play a tune for you now," he said, "but I'm going to play it wrong. And you tell me where I'm going wrong on it." So he played this tune. As soon as he came to this passage that he changed deliberately, Johnny held up his hand. "Stop there," he said. So Dan R. right away said, "This fellow knows something." So, boy, they each played for each other the rest of the night. And boy, that was terrific music, I'll tell you. I remember I fell asleep by the stove in the kitchen. I remember waking up during the night and there they were, they were still fiddling --still playing, you know-- sitting in the kitchen. And I thought it was tremendous music, you know, Johnny stayed overnight. It was just great. Dan R. stayed around a week with us, at the time. And at that time, he was just after coming from overseas. He was waiting to get his papers--his discharge--from the army. And his nerves weren't very good. And I suppose us kids were pretty noisy--I Boutiliers* Music Shops 'We're people you can talk to Dealers for Quality Brand Name Pianos • Guitars • Electronic Keyboards • Dutch Church Organs We sell a complete line of top quality musical instruments and accesso? ries. Visit our showroom and try the products for yourself. You will like 'the variety and price. Layaway plan available. No interest for 2 months.' ' We're Open Monday through Saturday Cape Breton Shopping Centre 39 Keltic Drive Sydney River, N. S. B1S1P4 562-0018 Cape Breton's Finest Locally-Owned Musical Outlet think that was bothering him. He stayed a week. And he told us he was going to Port Hood, to Big John Alex's--we called him the Big Fiddler--big tall man, and a fine fiddler, lively dance player. So Dan R. went out there.... And about a week later, John Allan and I and my father went to Port Hood for some? thing. And we were walking back home, and we decided we'd check in and see if Dan R. was at Big John Alex's yet. So we went in there, and there was Dan R. sitting at the table with a book in front of him, playing some of Scott Skinner's music out of the book, at the table. And they gave us tea, and then we proceeded on our way. And we stopped at MacEachern's. MacEachern's daughter, she was our former schoolteach? er. They had a big organ there. She played the organ and Dan R. played the fiddle. And we had a great afternoon there. And we kept on home then. And Dan R. went on his way, then. And we hadn't heard from him for years. Dan R. wasn't very much interested in family, really. He was more, wherever there were musicians. He went off to Boston,



then he ended up in Windsor, Ontario, where he was working for the Ford Company. And he--once in awhile we'd hear him through the '50s, that he was home somewhere--that he was in New Waterford or that he was in Judique or some place. But he never did come to see us. John Allan Cameron: And when John Donald and I first started playing the fiddle--I started playing the fiddle before guitar. And I'll never for? get- -John Donald, being older--I remember getting--and we were living at the house at Glencoe Station, which was Southwest Port Hood. I will never forget Dan R. writing us a letter. He said, "I hear that you have learned to read music." And it was taught to my brother and I by a gentleman by the name of Red Johnny Campbell. My father said, "You want to read the notes, boys? Let's go to visit Johnny Campbell." And Red Johnny Campbell, we went over to visit. We walked, oh, about 4 or 5 miles, got to his place. And he showed us the 7 different notes, and where you can find them on the musical staff. And we just took it from there, and worked on it. But Red Johnny gave us the groundwork--he paved the way. And he told us a good fiddle book to have would be the 1000 Fiddle Tune book. Music
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