



BOB DAVENPORT AND THE RAKES
1977



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- 1 **Waltzes: With My Love on the Road** (*band*)/**The Wild Colonial Boy** (*vocal & band*)
- 2 **The Ploughboy Lad** (*vocal*)
- 3 **Single Jigs: Patsy Geary's/The Peeler and the Goat** (*band*)
- 4 **Set Dance: Princess Royal** (*fiddle duet*)
- 5 **The Lakes of Coolfin** (*vocal*)
- 6 **Waltz: The Man in the Moon** (*band*)
- 7 **The Jealous Sailor/Jealous Heart** (*vocal*)
- 8 **Keep Your Feet Still, Geordie Hinnie** (*vocal* Kid Sheik, *trumpet* Eric Webster, *banjo* Alan Mears, *bass* Norman Emberson, *drums*)
- 9 **Three Men Went a-Hunting** (*vocal*, with *chorus*)
- 10 **Country Dance: Three Around Three** (*band*)
- 11 **The Dowie Dens of Yarrow** (*vocal*)
- 12 **Polkas: McCuskers' No. 1/ McCuskers' No. 2/Jenny Lind** (*band*)
- 13 **Slieve Gallon Braes** (*vocal*)
- 14 **The Star of the County Down** (*vocal & band*)
- 15 **Old Green River** (*vocal*)

Bob Davenport *vocal*
Michael Plunkett *fiddle*
Paul Gross *fiddle*
Reg Hall *melodeon*

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Photographs by John Harrison & Tony Engle
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Bob Davenport and The Rakes in 1977 aren't so very different from the way they were when they first met in London twenty-odd years previously. More self-assured, perhaps; certainly their music shows signs of maturity resulting from extensive experience playing all sorts of functions in widely different situations. Love of traditional music - an extremely rare phenomenon in 1956 - brought them together and has sustained them.

An equal regard for the values and attitudes of the people they've known and rubbed shoulders with and played music with in pubs, dance halls and house parties, perhaps, guarantees that any success they may have had on the folk club circuit isn't going to lead them towards any sort of show-business cop-out.

Characteristically, this record wasn't programmed, but is simply a selection of songs and dance tunes that came to mind at the recording session. Several musicians were affectionately remembered too, notably Jack Elliott of Birtley, Co. Durham who used to sing **Three Men Went a-Hunting**, Scan Tester of Horsted Keynes, Sussex (**The Lakes of Coolfin** and **The Man in the Moon**) and the McCusker Brothers from Co. Armagh. Michael and Paul played the McCuskers' **Princess Royal** as a duet in the 1959 Bethnal Green Feis; they didn't get anywhere, but what a night that was!

The Wild Colonial Boy and **The Star of the County Down** were sung by Margaret Barry and were two of her standards at 'The Bedford' in Camden Town. Davie Stewart sang **The Dowie Dens of Yarrow** and the McPeake Family of Belfast **Slieve Gallon Braes**. **The Ploughboy Lad** comes from Lucy Stewart of Blair and **Old Green River** from the 6 7/8 String Band of New Orleans. Kid Sheik, or to give him his formal name, George Cola, is a working musician from New Orleans, Louisiana, leader of his own dance band, The Storyville Ramblers and bulwark of The Eureka and Olympic Brass Bands, and his downhome style comes from two legendary trumpet players now long dead, Wooden Joe and Chris Kelly. Reg Hall spent a lot of time with Sheik, drinking and chatting in Buster's Bar and looking up other old-time musicians during a holiday in New Orleans in 1965. Shortly afterwards Sheik toured in England with Barry Martyn's Band and played at 'The Fox', Islington Green, supported by Bob and The Rakes. On that occasion Bob sang **Keep Your Feet Still**, **Geordie Hinnie** while Sheik played *My Darling Nelly Gray*. Eleven years later at a party at Reg and Claire Hall's they had another go at it and by the strangest coincidence Tony Engle just happened to have his recording equipment set up.

1977

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