I first heard this tune from an MP# file posted on the Banjo hangout by BHO member Sean Barth. Barth reported learning the tune from Illinois fiddler Harvey "Pappy" Taylor. Searching around, I found another fine version posted on the Fiddle Hangout by Mary Pat Klevin. The two Hangouts have become a great source of tunes.

After working on this for awhile, I realized that it may be a simpler, more archaic version of Bonaparte Crossing the Rocky Mountains (or the Alps). I like the simplicity of it. One of the obvious parallels is the modal ambiguity that both share at the beginning of the B part. The A part is in Dorian mode, employing a flatted third and a flatted seventh. In the second measure of the B part (measures 14 and 33), however, the fiddle moves in the direction of the major third, making the first half of the B part sound Mixolydian, instead.