



Seneca Square Dance

“Seneca Square Dance” has been, and continues to be, a popular tune among regional fiddlers, now widespread and a part of the core “old-time revival” repertory. The origin of the title is obscure. Jim Kimball, a musicologist from Genesco, NY, points out that many Seneca indians (part of the Iroquois nation) were relocated to Oklahoma after the War of 1812, and that there is still a large community of Seneca in the northeastern part of that state, not far from southwest Missouri. They



were located between the Wyandot reserve and the Cherokee Nation on the Grand River. The tune may also be called after the town of Seneca, Missouri, in the southwestern part of the state (which may itself have taken its name from the Indian tribe). It appears to have had a long history in the United States, judging from some of the alternate title that suggest pre-Civil War times and hiding from authority. A Civil War connection is made with the alternate title “Shelby’s Mules,” a reference to the Confederate cavalry commander General Joseph Shelby.

~ from tunearch.org

Joe Ross is our guest contributor with this Tune of the Month. Hear Joe play this tune on the OOTFA Facebook page.

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