**Earliest Origins**

"Charles, Earl Grey was born at Falloden in Nortthumberland in 1764 and died in 1845. He was a Prime Minister

and a hero of the Reform Bills. A well known landmark in the centre of Newcastle is Grey's monument, which was

erected in 1838. Also in the 1850's there were public houses with his name located in both Newcastle and Gateshead."

(Ref: Dixon's book below.)

Graham Dixon's definitive book **The Lads Like Beer - The Fiddle Music of James Hill's Tyneside**, concludes

that this tune was composed (not merely "in the repertoire of") as a strathspey sometime around the 1840's

by the renowned Tyneside Fiddler James Hill, in the key of A. A version attributed to Hill, incorporating ordinary

syncopation, snaps (reverse syncopation) and triplets timed to match, is presented there. Strathspeys are

played for dancing to this day, but almost exclusively for Scottish Country Dancing and Cape Breton step

dancing. Imo it would be inconceivable to play that "original", with all its ornament, for contra dancing.

**Adaptations**

The extensive John Chambers archive *http://john-chambers.us/~jc/cgi/abc/tunefind* has numerous versions,

very similar to each other, and basically "stripped down" to the very most basics. Imo they lose much of the

genius left to us by Hill. I doubt I'd have taken notice of such versions had I first encountered them.

**This Version**

Pete Coe of Ripponden W. Yorks. is a distinguished melodeon and banjo player, singer, tune and song writer,

dance caller, festival performer, producer of numerous LP's and CD's, and scholar of traditional English and

U.S. music. He has managed to remain "genuine' as a full-timer in traditional and traditional-style music. (He

was also, briefly, the distributor of Hohner melodeons foe England, at the time my first D/G English-market-only

black Erica was purchased for me and brought to the U.S.)

In the mid 1980's Pete Coe did a concert and dance-calling tour of some cities in the US, including Seattle,

bringing with him mss sheets of North English and Northumbrian tunes to copy and distribute to those

who attended his tune workshops and played in pickup bands behind him at the dances. This version of

Earl Grey was included in one of those sheets (##).

**Turns particular to this version**

Viewing the James Hill version in Graham Dixon, and Pete's version here, it is clear (to me, anyway) that Pete

went to work doing a serious and scholarly job of adapting the tune: First to the English ceilidh dances of the time

- country dances infused w/ trad. English step-hops, polka, and rant steps, rather than Scottish or Cape Breton

strathspey stepping; Secondly to his instrument. The goal seems to have been both to retain and adapt, without

unnecessary simplification.

Pete Coe's turns in first half of bars A2,A6,B14 and in 1st half of A7,B15, do not seem to appear elsewhere,

and imo seem to derive from natural motions of a D/G melodeon, ie one plays them 'cuz one can! Similarly the

quarter + two eighth notes pattern that repeats at the beginning of lines 1-3 of the B part seems unique to Coe.

Imo all these impart rhythmic interest, beyond what's present in the more stripped-down versions, making the

tune more "alive" .

I didn't know any of this back in the mid 1980's, but the tune version "grabbed" me and I went to work learning it.

## (Coincidentally the "direct from North-England" version of Seven Stars that I and other veterans of Pete Coe's

pickup bands play, was in those tune sheets as well)

**Historical "rediscovery"**

This tune came to Vivian W probably in the mid 1990's when I copied her those Pete Coe's mss pages,

likely when she played some dances with Salmonberry (in whose "book" copies reside). Whereupon the

pages lay fallow for some 20 years until Vivian rediscovered them. She thought that the tune might fit in a

contra dance medley she was building. By contrast, I'd long concluded that the tune really would only

fit the slower-tempo (104-110) English "stepped" ceilidh dances(rant, olka, step-hop).

I suspect that this pattern of re-mining long ignored tunes is not unique to this situation. Indeed Vivian's

re-publishing of several substantial U.S. NW pioneer-era tune mss (cf the Voyager Recordings website)

was the same thing on a grander scale. What makes the Earl Grey rediscovery interesting is that in

a sense Vivian was both the source and the end of the process.