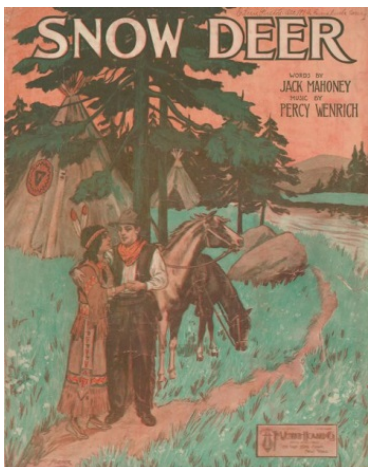


SNOW DEER

Percy Wenrich, Music, 1913
Jack Mahoney, Lyrics, 1913

Percy Wenrich, aka 'The Joplin Kid', was a prolific song writer in the Tin Pan Alley era of American popular music. Born in Joplin Missouri in 1887, he learned to play piano at an early age, primarily mimicking the ragtime style prevalent at the time. By 15 he was writing his own melodies, many of which were used for local advertisements and political campaigns. While he attended the Chicago Musical College for formal training, he earned money working for a number of Chicago based publishers, as well as a 'song plugger' in a Milwaukee department store. After graduation, he moved to New York City to work on 'Tin Pan Alley', which had become the center of the music publishing business in the United States. There he met and married vaudeville performer, Dolly Connolly, and started writing songs for some of the productions she was in, including such hits as *Red Rose Rag*, *Rainbow*, *Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet*, *When You Wore A Tulip*, and perhaps his greatest hit, *On Moonlight Bay*.

Tin Pan Alley era music was a 'copycat' industry, and once a song became popular, many other publishers would try and capitalize by trying to emulate it. In 1907, the song *Red Wing* was such a huge hit that it spun off a number of other songs about 'Indian maidens'. Percy Wenrich teamed up with Edward Madden in 1910 for the similarly themed *Silver Bell*, the success of which encouraged him to go back to that theme again in 1913, when he teamed up with Jack Mahoney to write another Indian maid song named *Snow Deer*. His wife introduced it in one of her vaudeville shows,



and it quickly became another hit, selling nearly 2 million copies of sheet music within just a few years. It remained popular in shows and eventually on the radio for the next 30 years.

In music and friendship,

~Tull