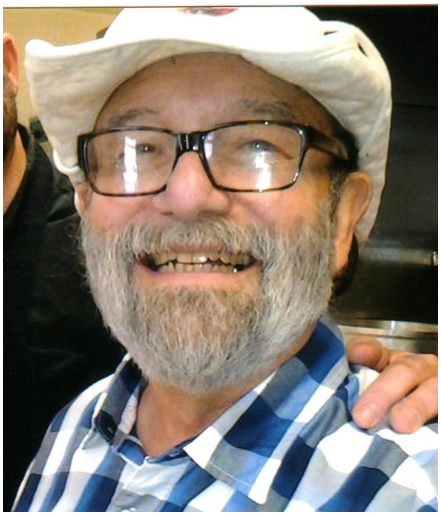
Benicia Session Tune Book

This book is dedicated to the memory of

James Phillip Pecorella



6/15/1946 -12/2/2014

Jim was a valued, dedicated and loved member of the Benicia Session. He would sit quietly next to his wife Janet and played his octave mandolin with great talent, appreciation, and always with a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eyes.

Thanks Jim for bringing such joy into our lives.

The *Benicia Session*
Tune Book was compiled and organized by
RICH ADAMS

We know it was a labor of love and hard work so we thank Rich for his dedication and love for music.

All music in this book was obtained from public sources or with permission of the tunes composer. No profit will be made from distribution of this tune book. It is meant solely for the enjoyment of playing the music.

SESSION ETIQUETTE

Sessions are not a solo performance They are all group sessions, of varying degrees of organized (or chaotic). Naturally, the stronger players will usually take the lead - depending on the egos present, this can be a good thing or a not-so-good thing. Having strong players covering the tunes at all times is beneficial for everyone,
If you are new to the session, let others start the tunes. If you eventually become a regular, nobody will think it odd if you start a set.

The musician who started the tune sets the tempo, and it should never vary or falter until the set is over. Don't play at a speed above your skill level. Remember that it's better to play a tune slowly and well than quickly and badly. At this session we let the person who starts a tune play 4 - 8 measures before others join in so the tempo is set at their speed.

It's more difficult to tune while a tune is being played, so be considerate and wait until everyone is done tuning before starting to play.

Musicians are concentrating when they're playing tunes, so don't walk up and start talking to them. Wait until they've stopped playing for any chatter.

Tape recording a session is common, but it is always appreciated when you ask first. It's unlikely that you'll be told "no", and it is also a good way to preserve a tune for later learning by ear. Be polite and discrete - don't shove tape recorders or microphones in the musicians' faces, even if permission was granted. In beginner's sessions, it is expected that people will record many of the tunes. **NEVER, ever, handle, play, touch or move another musician's instrument without asking them first.** An instrument is of great importance to its owner, and should be approached as a precious object. Since we actively welcome beginners (most sessions do not provide for beginners), it is not necessary to wait for an invitation to play. If you bring an instrument, in fact, we will insist that you play at least one tune that you know at a good speed for you to play it (don't worry if that speed is really slow -- that's better than too fast for you).

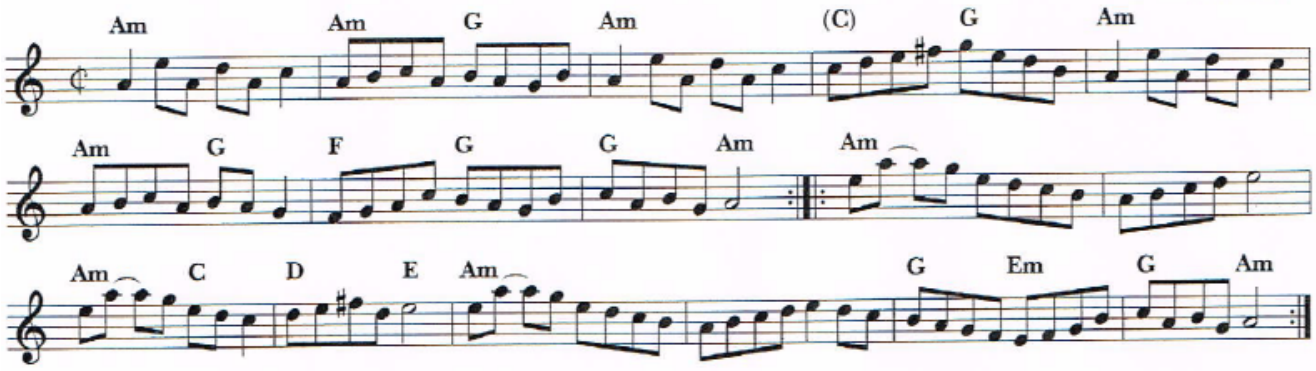
We don't care how many players there are, play away! We're a session that's all about everyone playing and learning together, which is why we allow sheet musit. However, be aware that this is not usual session etiquette. **All we ask is that you try not to clash with each other with chord choices, rhythms, volume, pulse or such, so please pay attention.**

23 Around the World
6 Arran Boat Song, The
9 Ashgrove
4 Atholl Highlanders
27 Banish Misfortune
15 Blackthorn Stick, The
29 Blarney Pilgrim, The
21 Boyne Hunt, The
19 Boys of Bluehill, The
1 Bus Stop Reel, The
25 Butterfly, The
5 Calliope House
32 Carolan's Draught
1 Christmas Eve
31 Christy Barrie's 1
31 Christy Barrie's 2
16 Cleveland Park
10 Cliffs of Moher, The
29 Cook in the Kitchen, The
23 Cooley's Reel
6 Crested Hens
8 Croppie's March, The
23 Cup of Tea, The
36 Dark Island, The
33 Down by the Sally Garden
1 Earl's Chair, The
2 Farewell to Ireland
24 Father Kelly's 1
20 Fisher's Hornpipe, The
11 Foggy Dew, the
9 Frieze Britches, The
20 Galway Hornpipe, The
14 Gary Owen's Jig
12 Gavin's Hornpipe
14 Gobby-O
28 Green Mountain
16 Halloween Set
19 Harvest Home, The
18 Hoppity Jig
18 Hoppy Tooth
11 Irish National Anthem
8 Irish Washerwoman
5 Jig of Slurs
29 Jimmy Ward's Jig
7 John Ryan's Polka
2 Julia Delaney
16 Jump at the Sun
15 Kesh Jig, The
25 Kid on the Mountain
28 Kilmaley
30 King of Faeries, The
6 Lark in the Morning, The
15 Lilting Banshee, The
20 Liverpool Hornpipe, The
22 Longford Collector, The
28 Maid Behind the Bar, The
34 Mairi's Wedding
37 Mermaid, The
8 Merry Blacksmith, The
10 Minstrel Boy, The
14 Miss McLeod's
24 Miss Monaghan
32 Morgan Magan
3 Musical Priest, The
17 Off She Goes!
19 Off to California
27 One-Legged Man, The
16 One Too Many
27 Out on the Ocean
26 Padraig O'Keefe's 1
26 Padraig O'Keefe's 2
26 Padraig O'Keefe's 3
7 Rakes of Mallow, The
30 Rights of Man, The
17 Road to Lisdoonvarna, The
21 Rolling in the Rye Grass
22 Sailor's Bonnet
11 Sailor's Hornpipe
32 Si Bheag Si Mhor
24 Silver Spear, The
4 Soldier's Joy
4 Spootiskerry
10 St. Anne's Reel
30 Stack of Wheat, The
9 Star Above the Garter, The
3 Star of Munster, The
35 Star of the County Down
17 Swallow Tail Jig
22 Tarbolton Lodge
18 Three Hops and Barley
3 Trip to Durrow, The
5 Tripping up the Stairs
7 Wild Geese
38 Wild Mountain Thyme
21 Wind that Shakes the Barley, The

Tunes

27. The bus stop reel

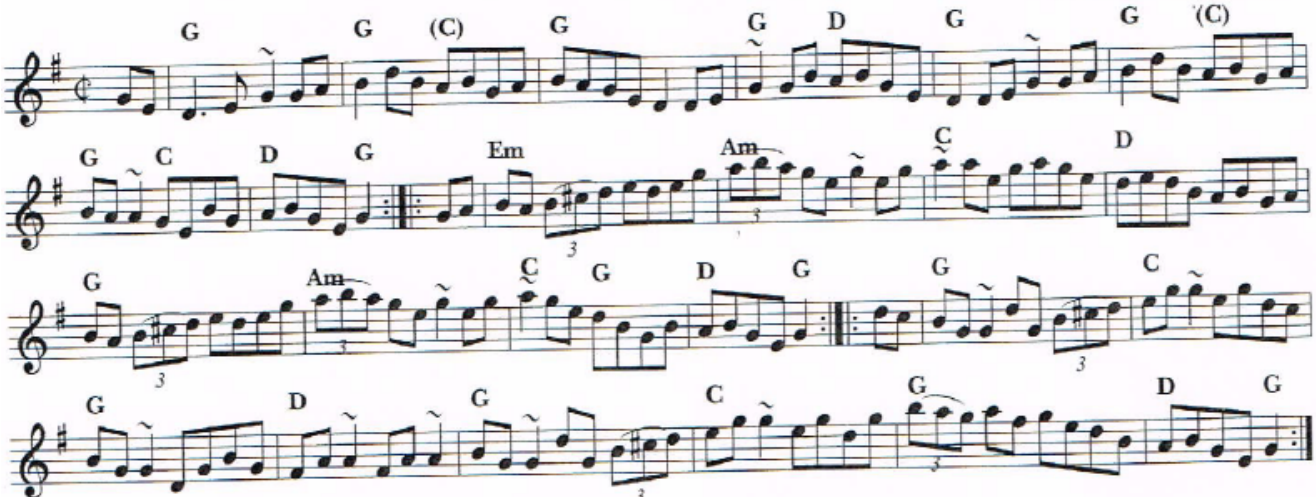
Anita Anderson



36. Christmas eve

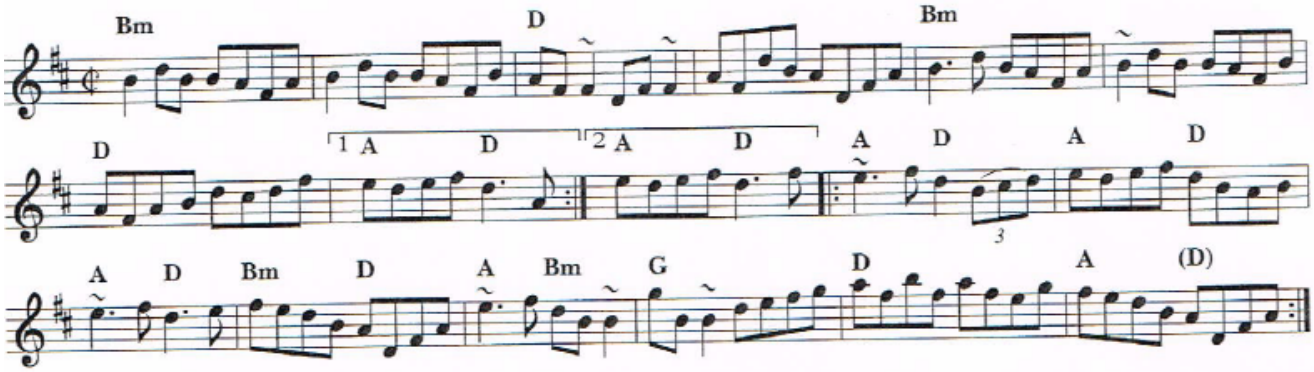
Tommy Coen's reel

Tommy Coen (Ireland)



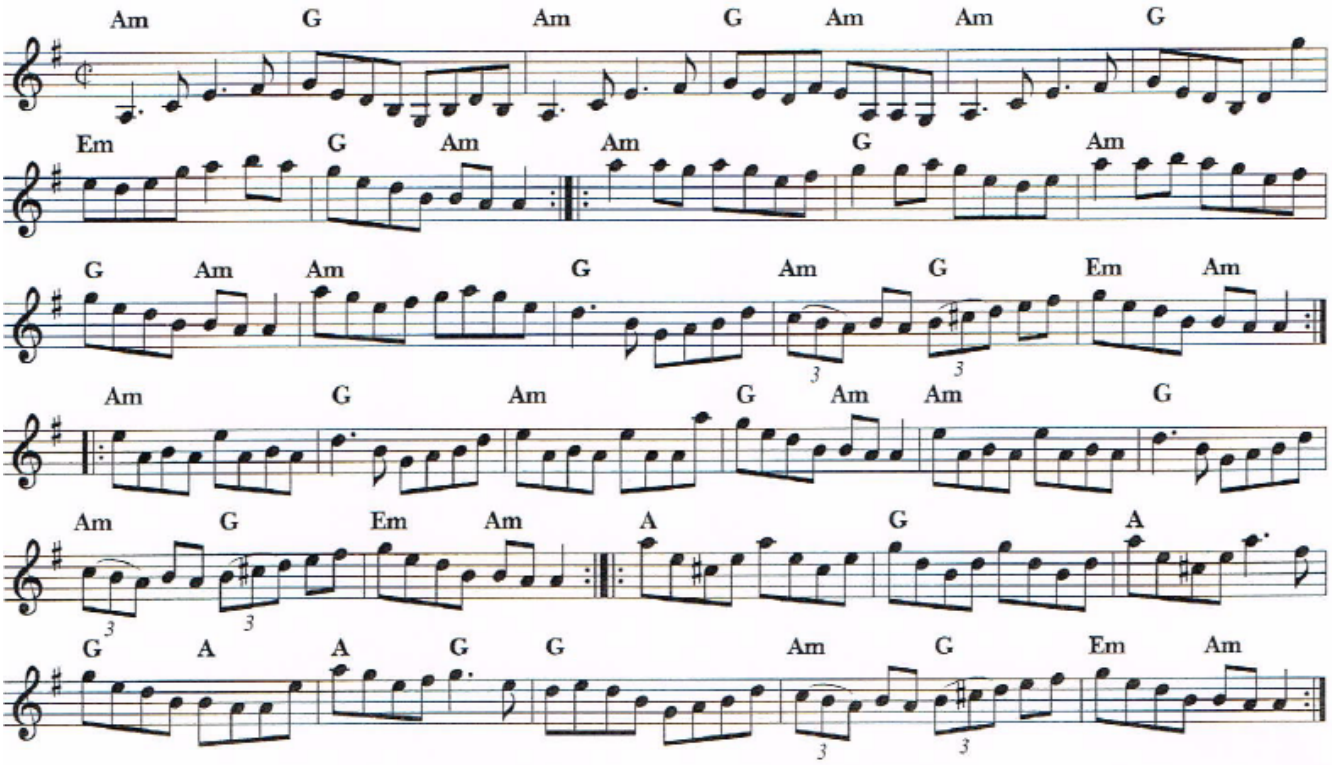
80. The Earl's chair

(Ireland)



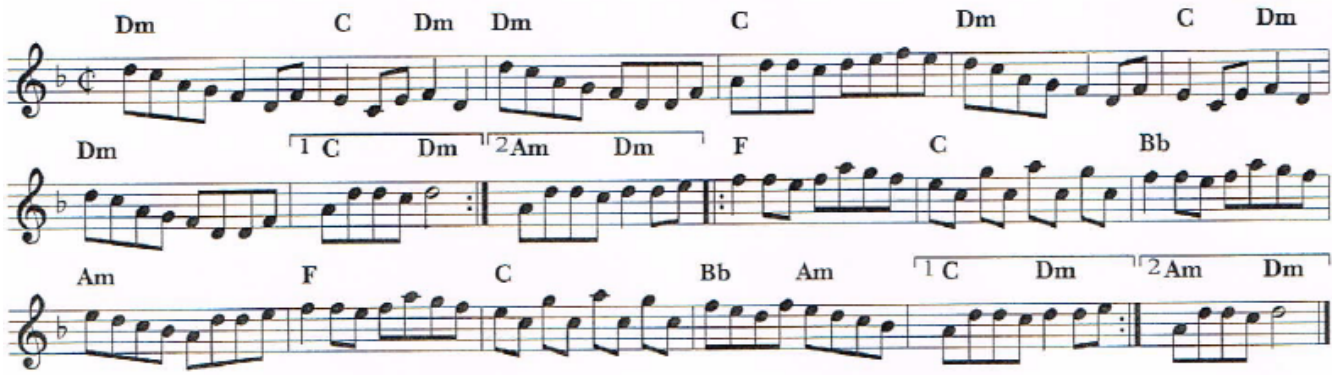
86. Farewell to Ireland

(Ireland)



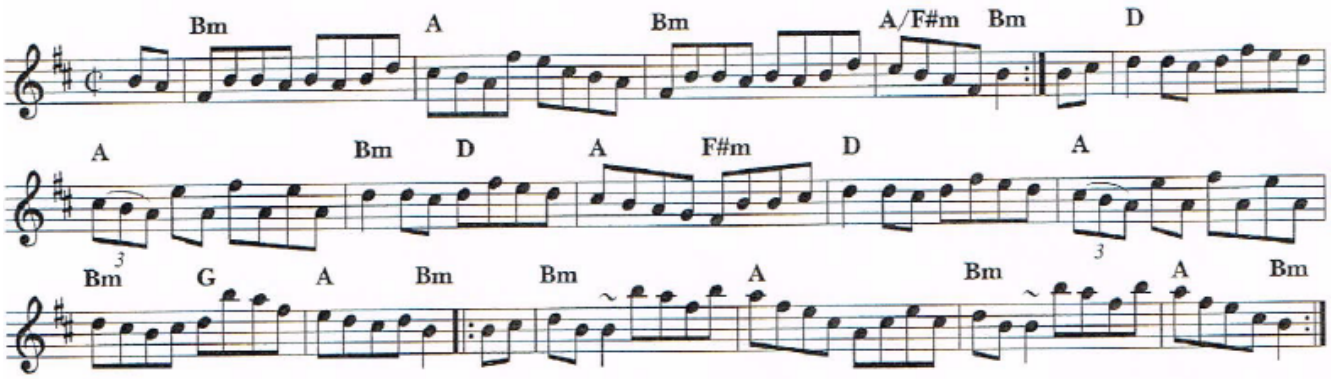
141. Julia Delaney

(Ireland)



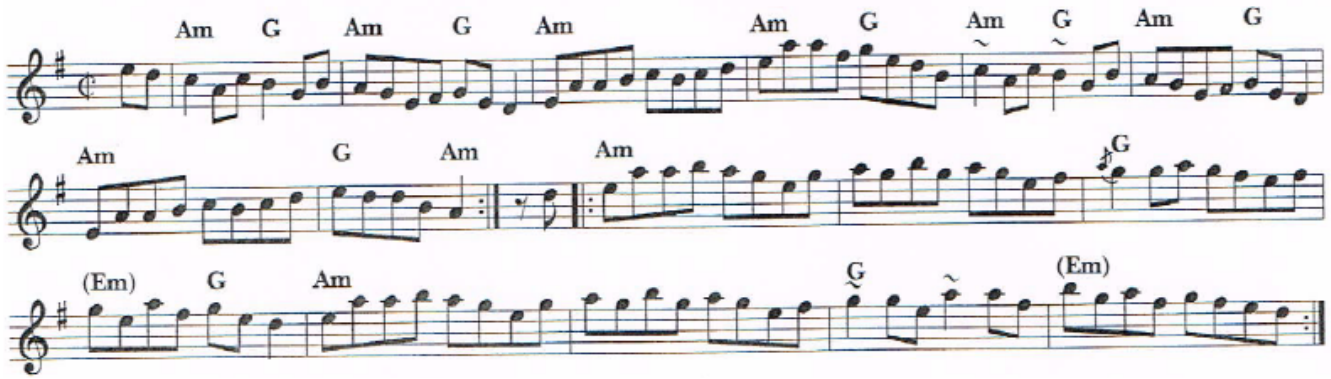
207. The musical priest

(Ireland)



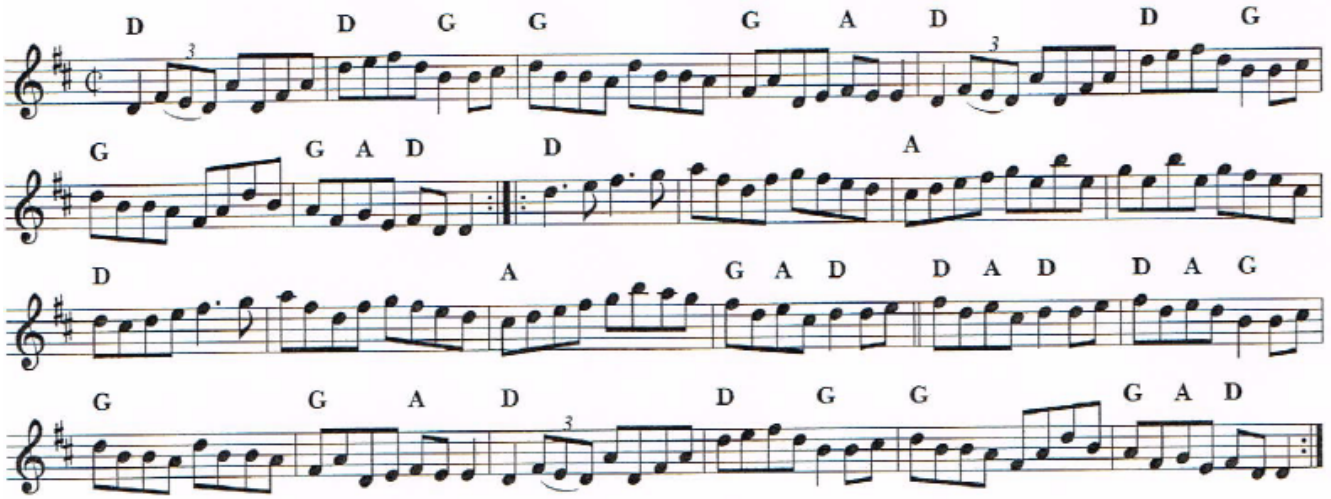
303. The Star of Munster

(Ireland)



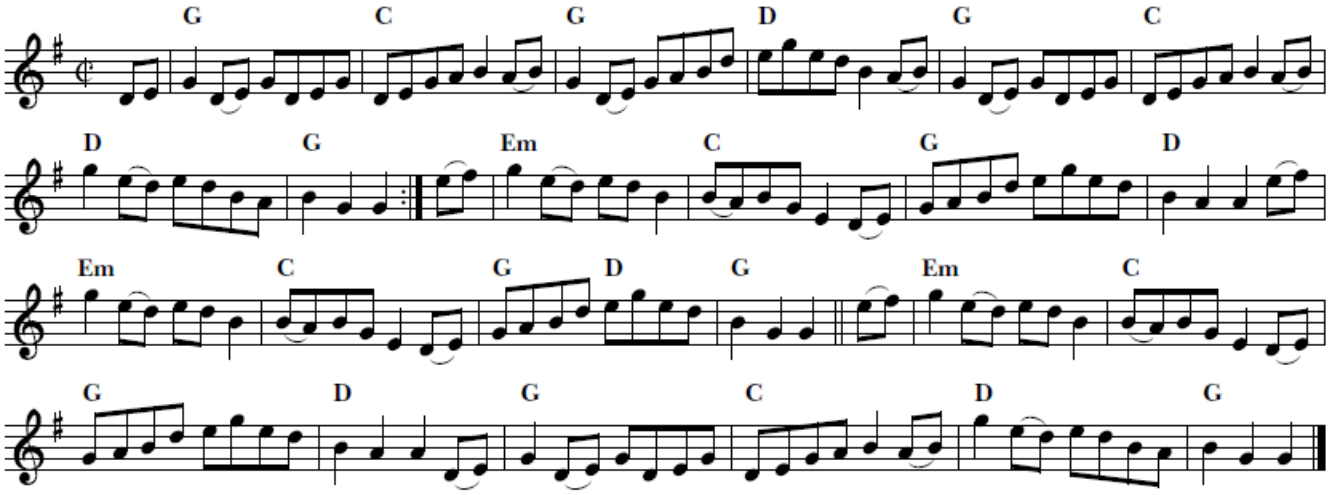
327. The trip to Durrow

(Ireland)



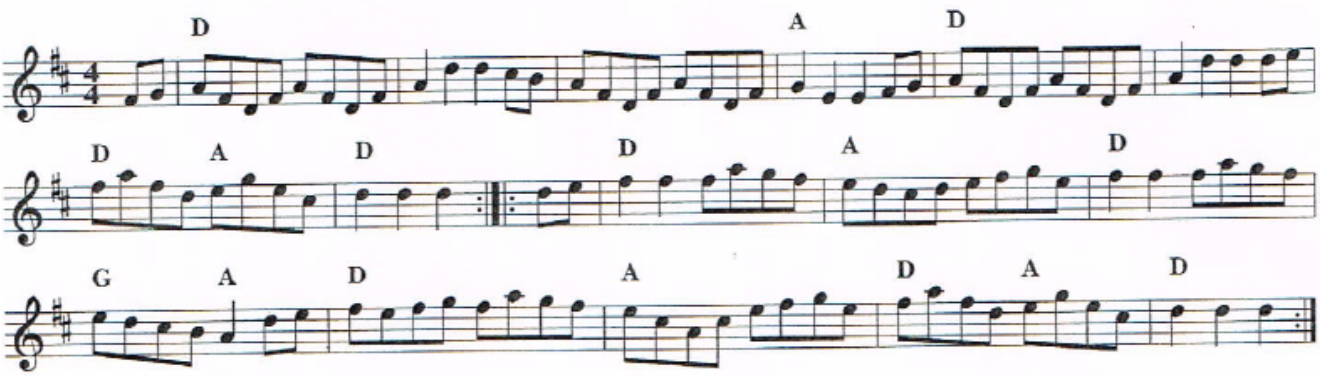
413. Spootiskerry

Ian Burns (Scotland)

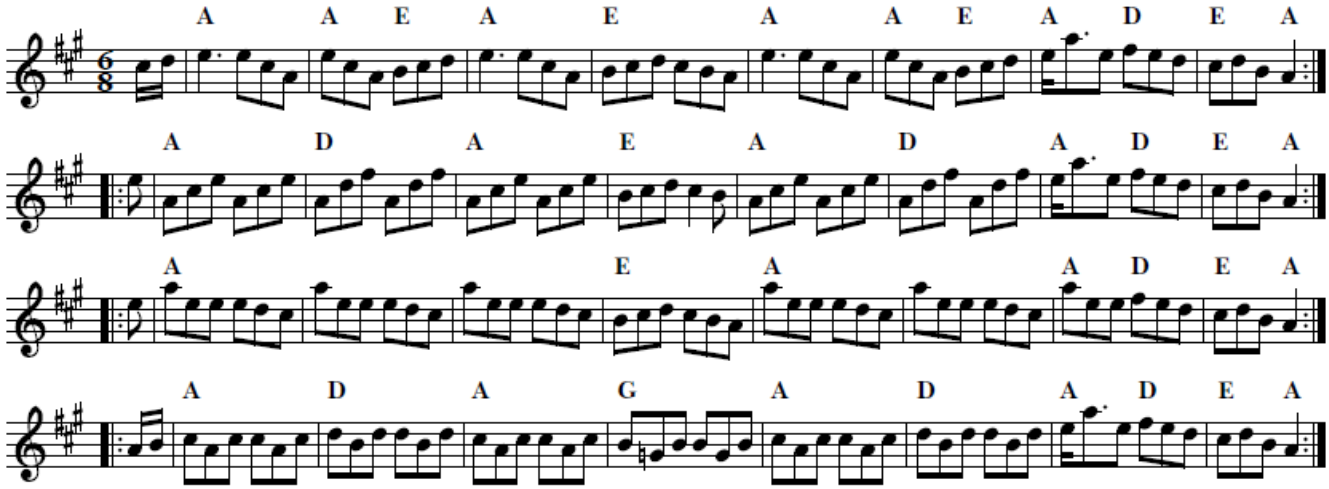


513. The soldier's joy

(Ireland)

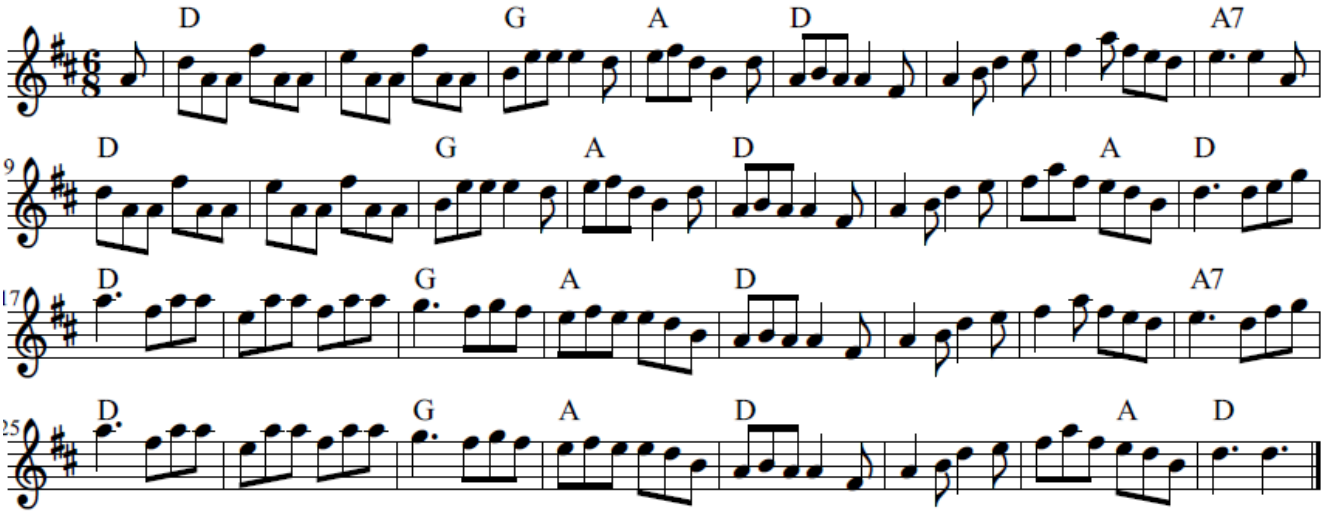


576. Atholl highlanders

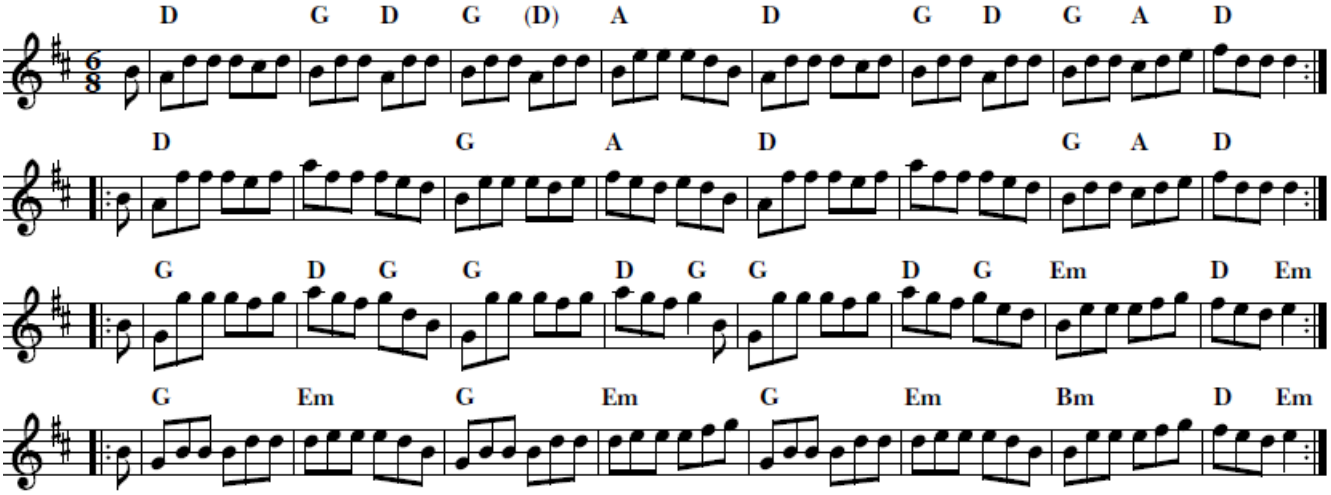


Calliope House

Dave Richardson (U.S.A)

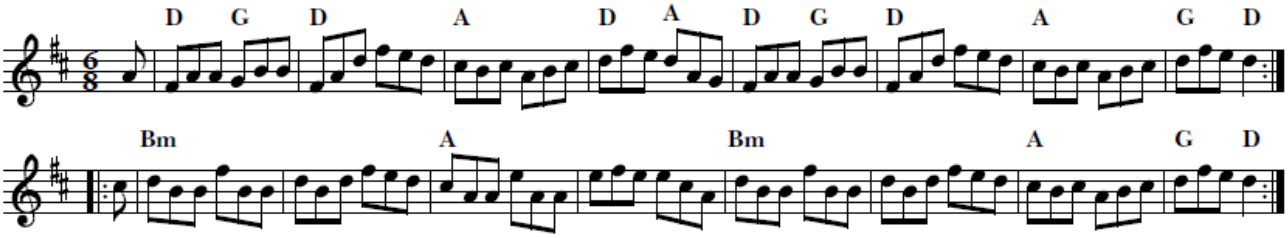


697. Jig of slurs



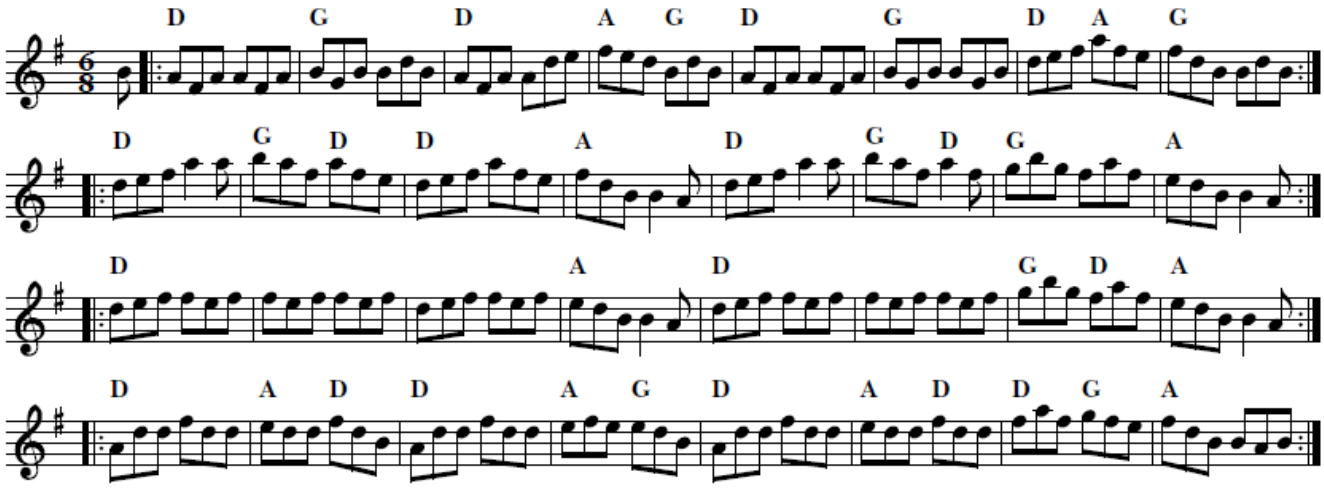
820. Tripping up the stairs

(Ireland)



719. The lark in the morning

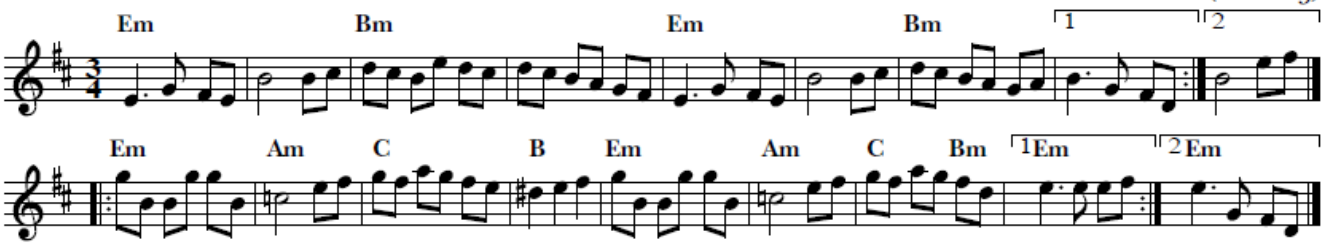
(Ireland)



916. Crested hens

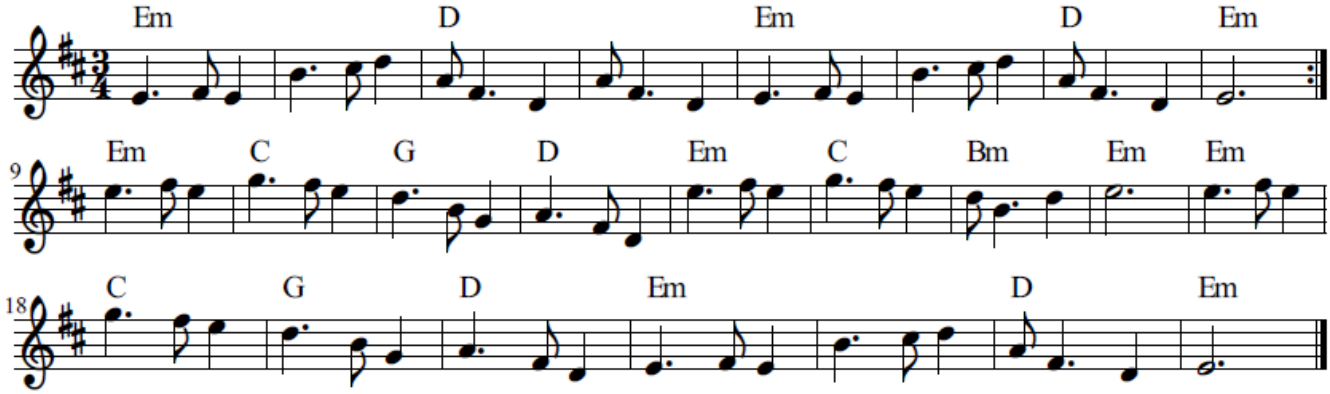
Cockscomb bourree

Gilles Chabenat (Brittany)



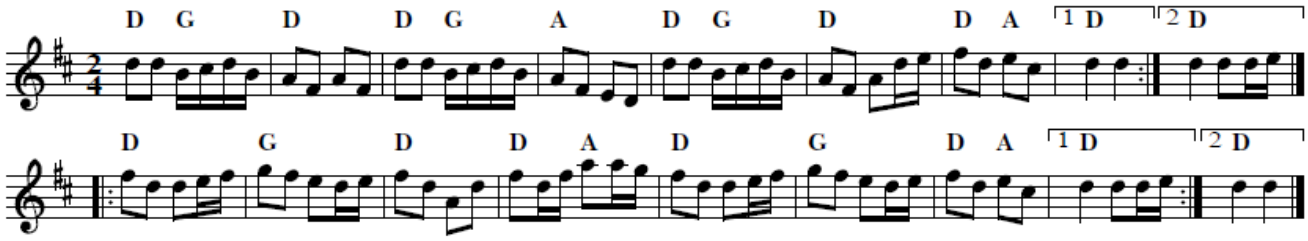
The Arran Boat Song

traditional



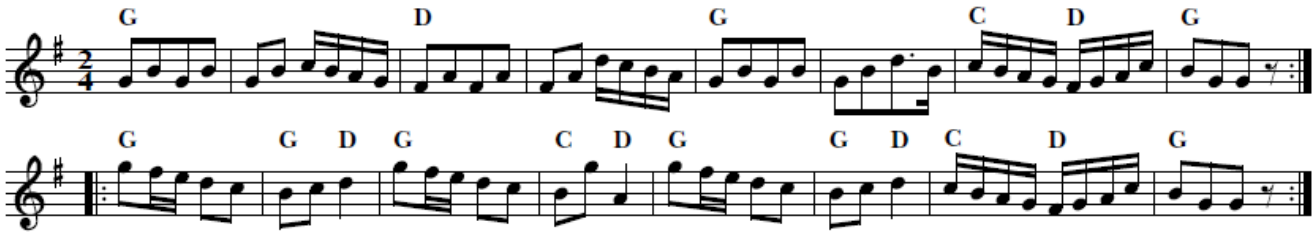
551. John Ryan's

(Ireland)



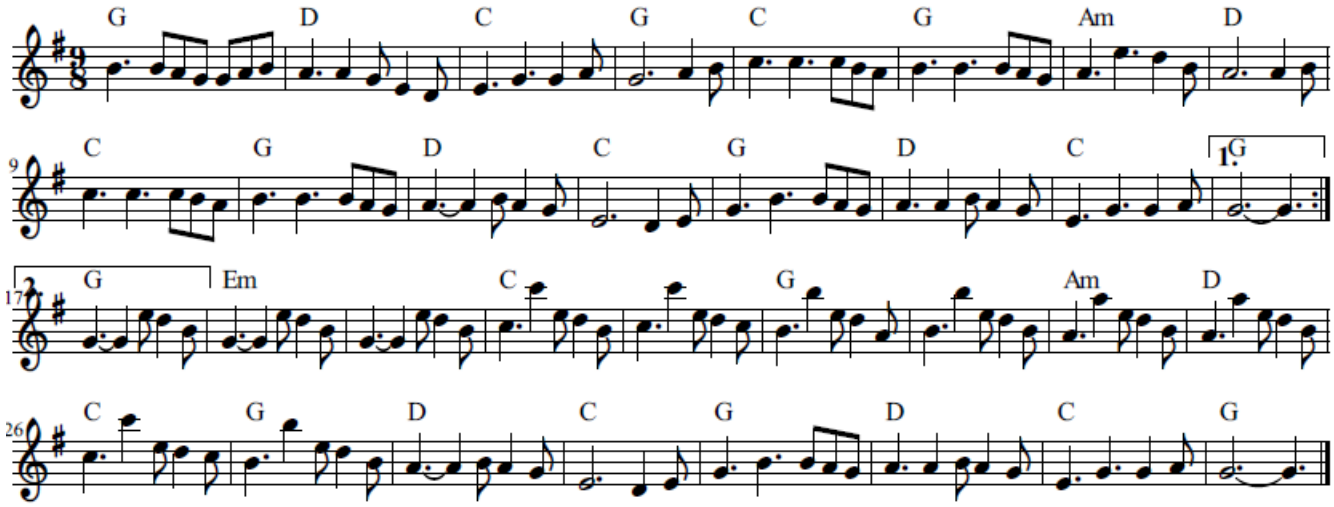
1003. The rakes of Mallow

(Scotland, England)



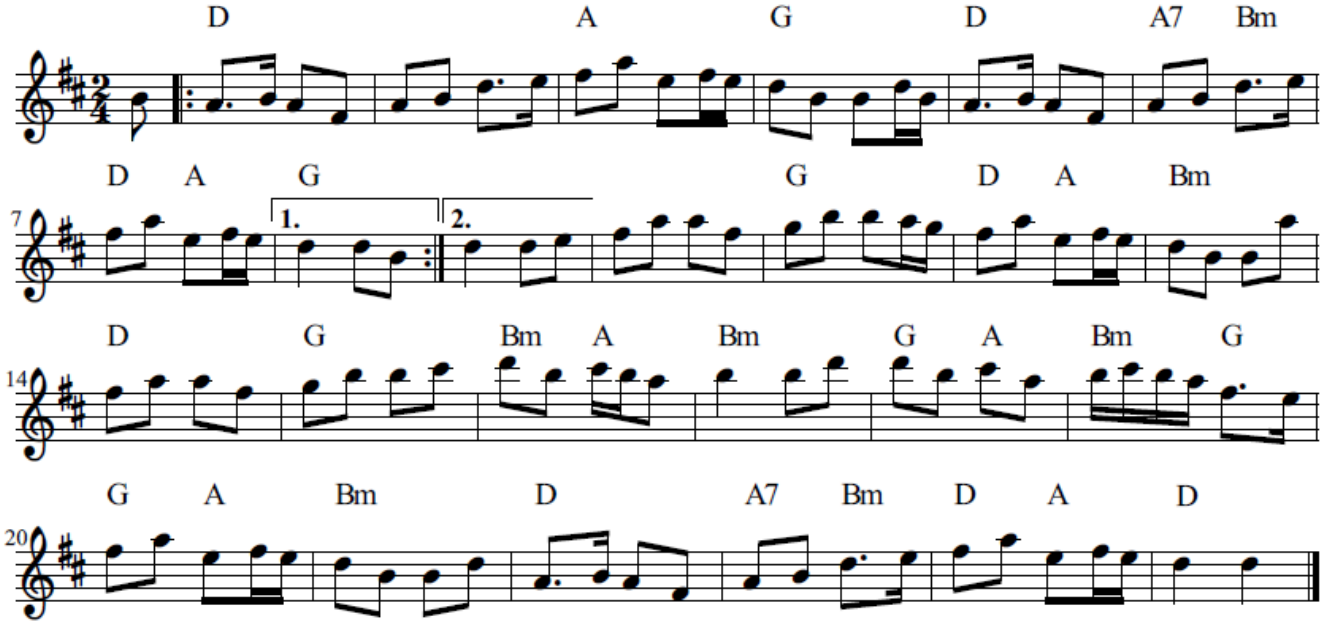
Wild Geese

traditional



The Croppie's March

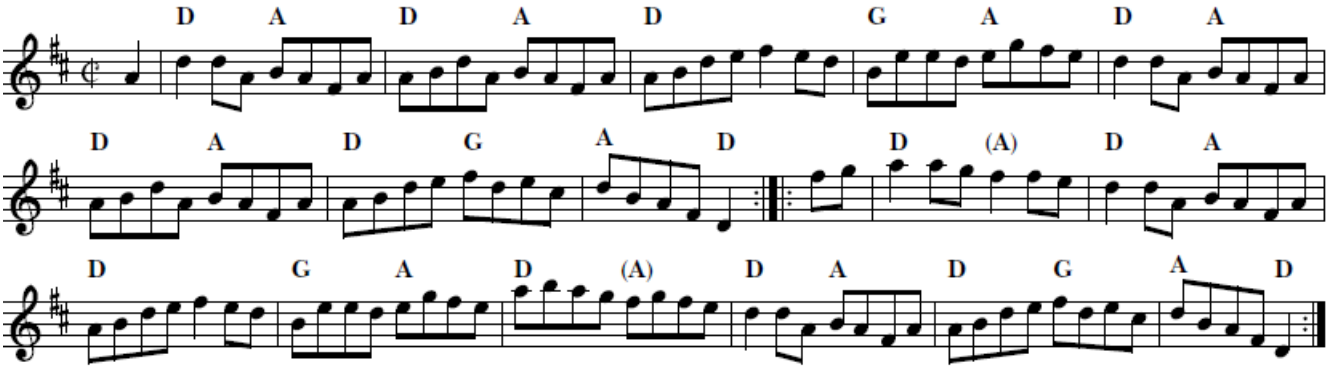
traditional



185. The merry blacksmith

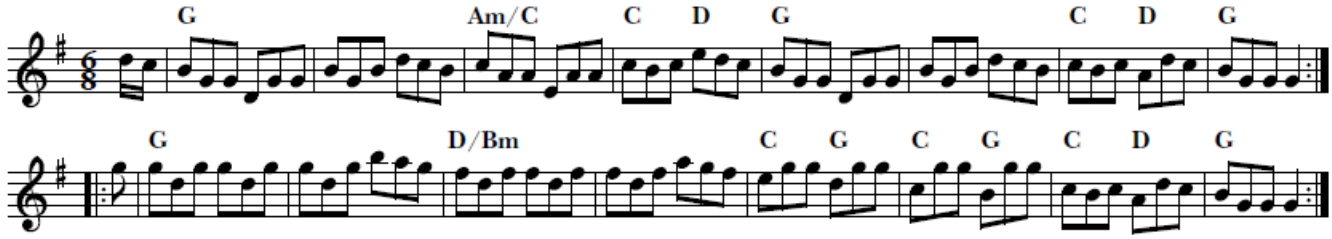
Paddy on the railroad
Policeman's cap

(Ireland)



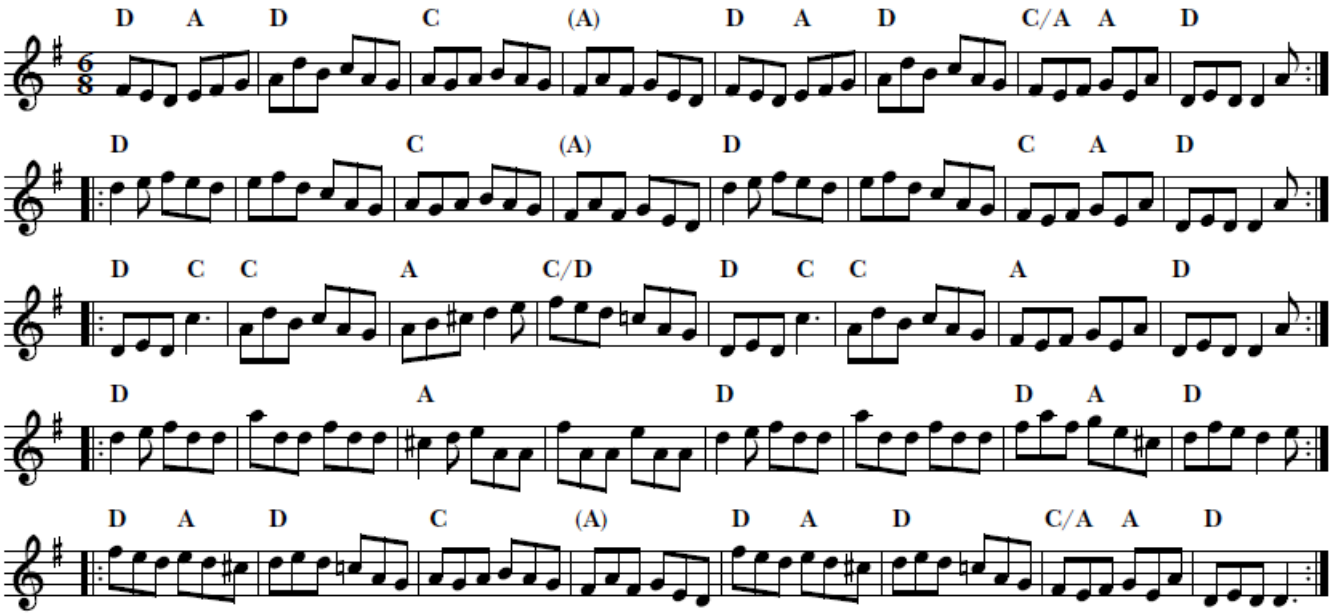
693. Irish washerwoman

(Ireland)



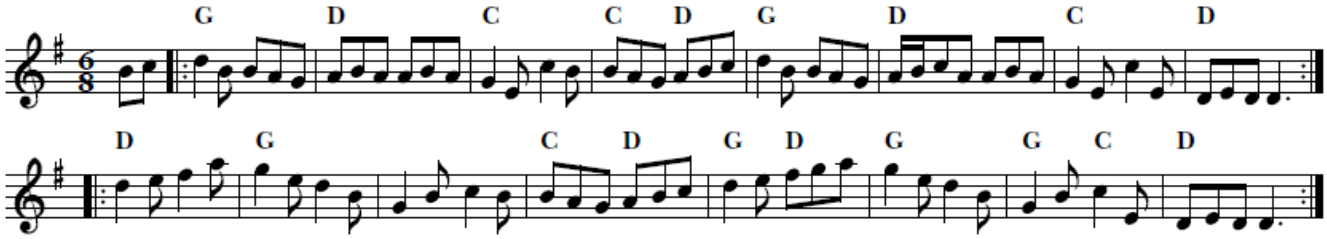
654. The frieze britches

(Ireland)

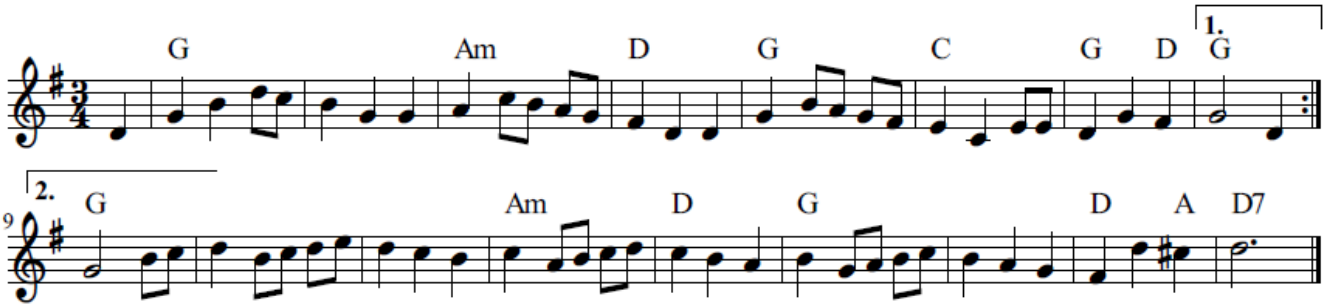


797. The star above the garter

(Ireland)

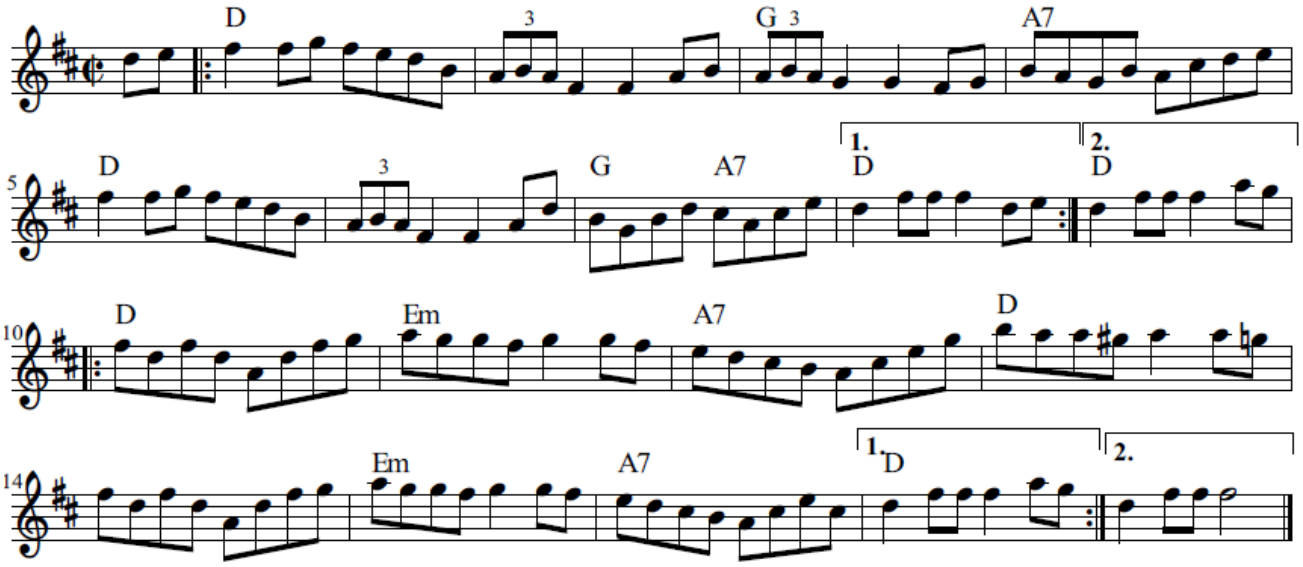


Ashgrove



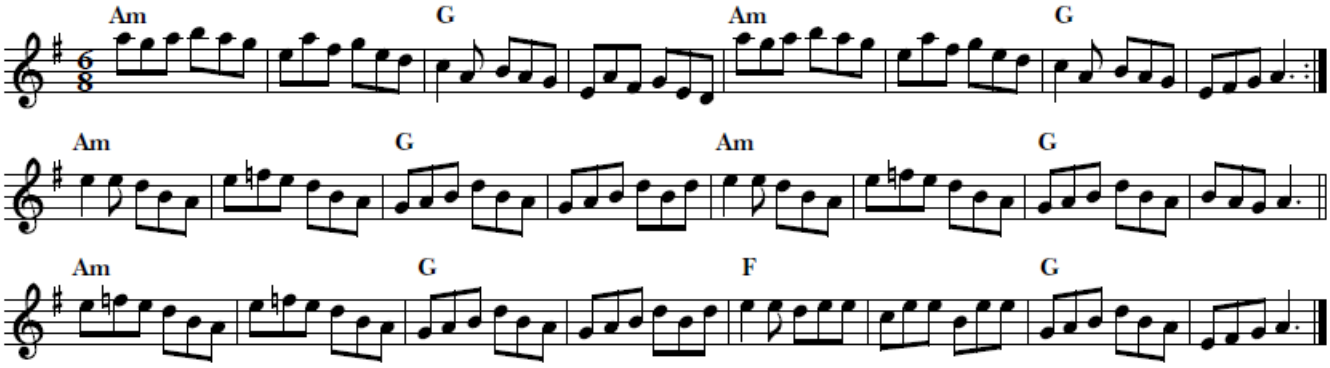
St Annes Reel

Traditional

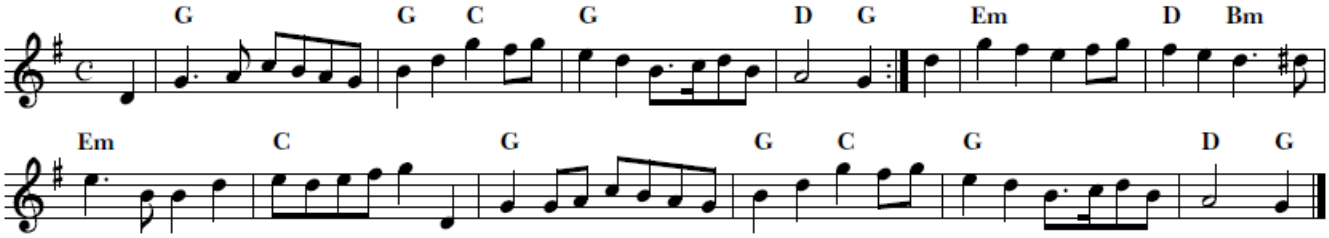


616. The cliffs of Moher

(Ireland)

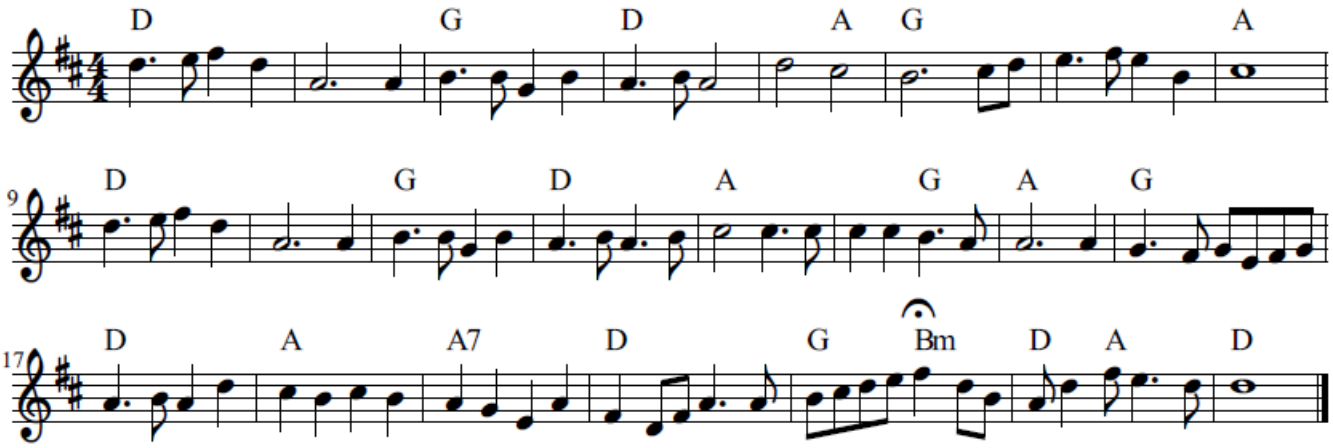


901. The minstrel boy

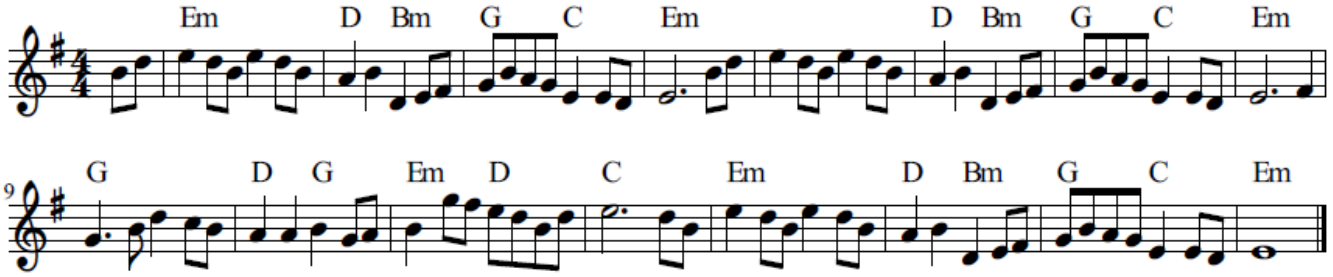


Irish National Anthem

Peadar Kearny

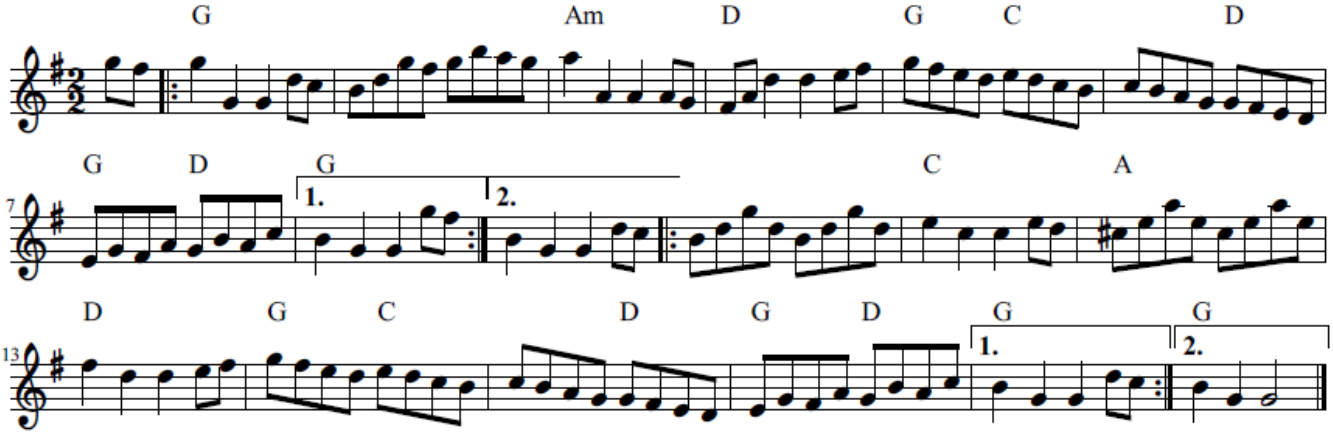


The Foggy Dew



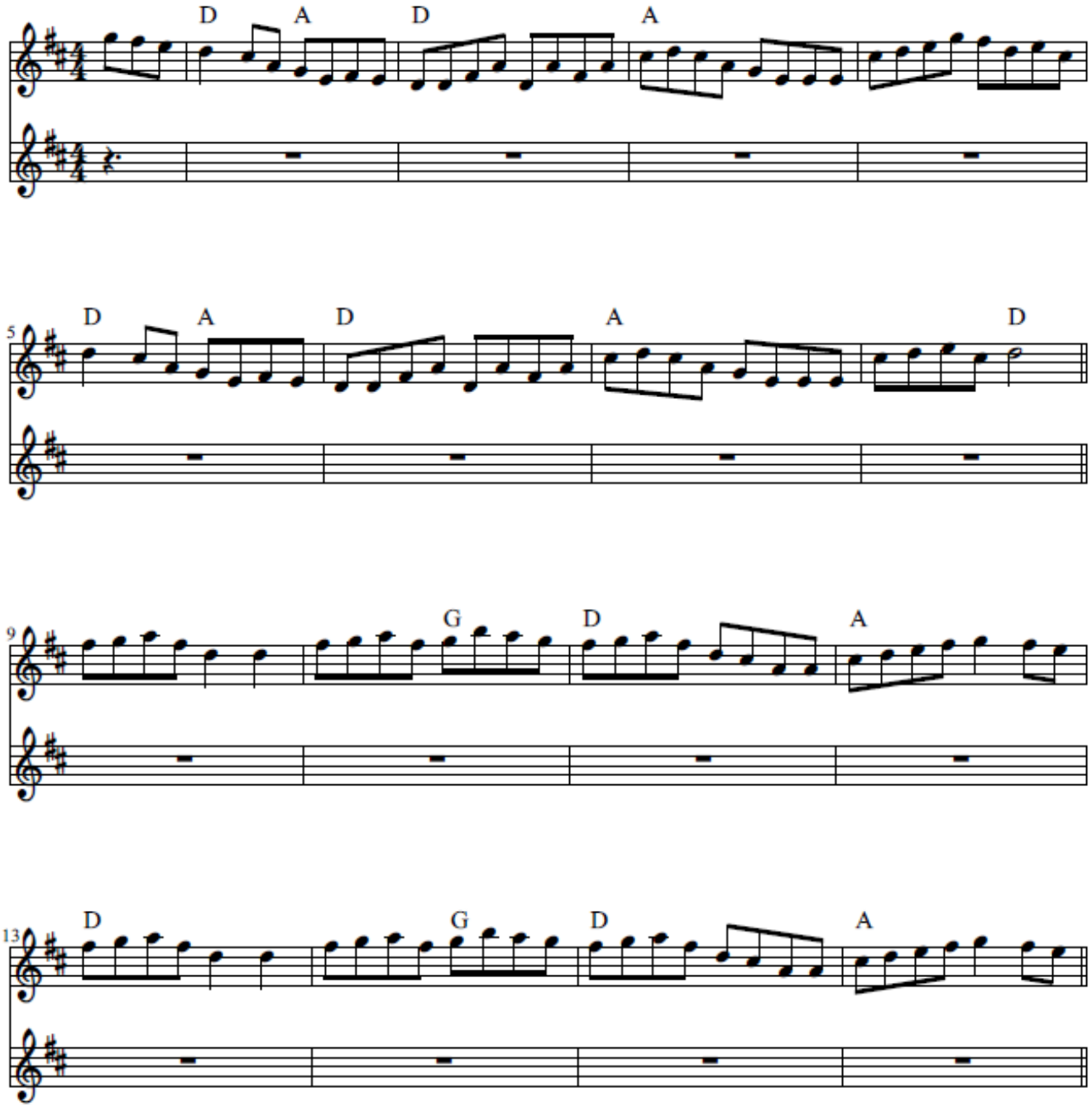
Sailor's Hornpipe

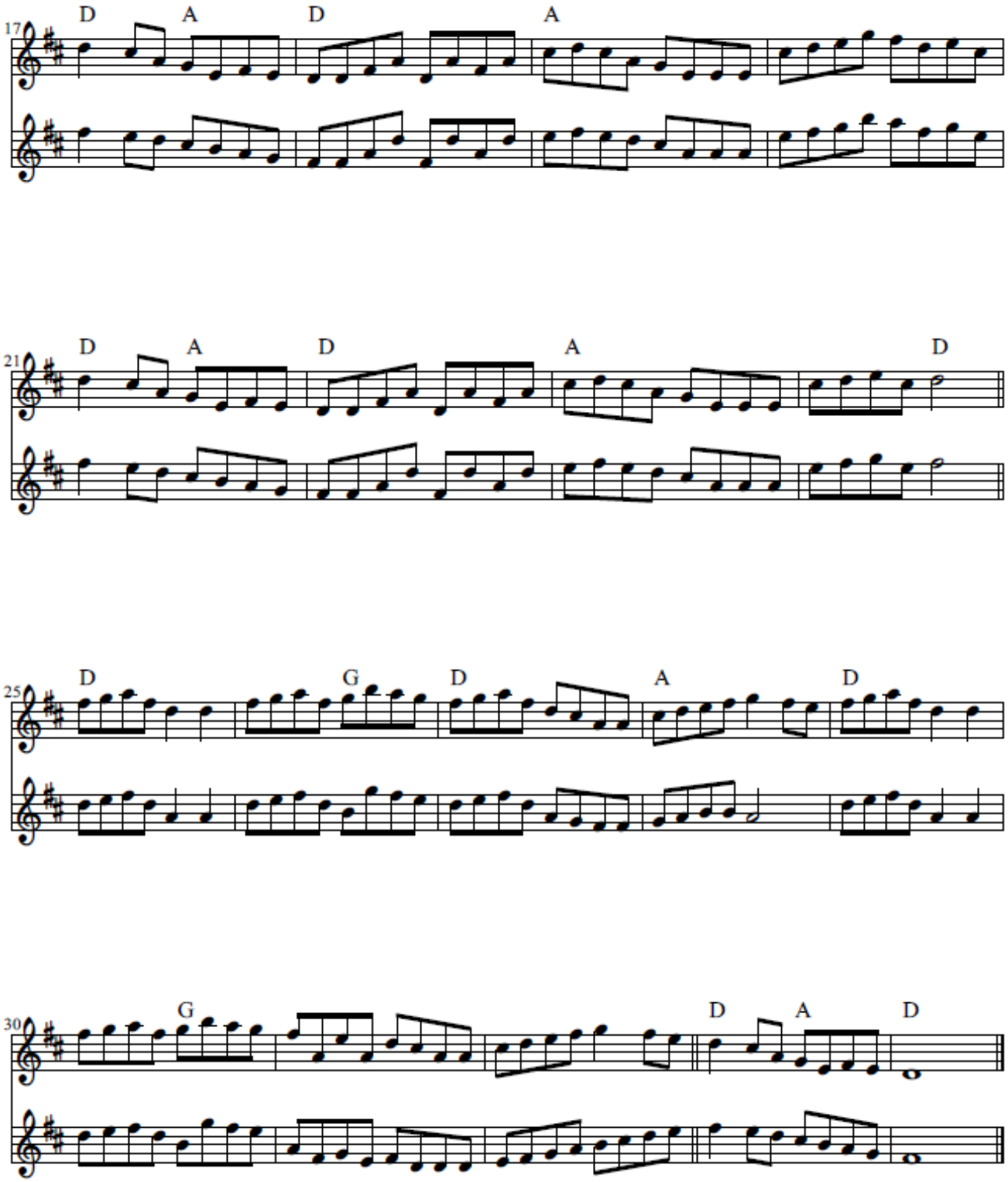
Traditional



Gavin's Hornpipe

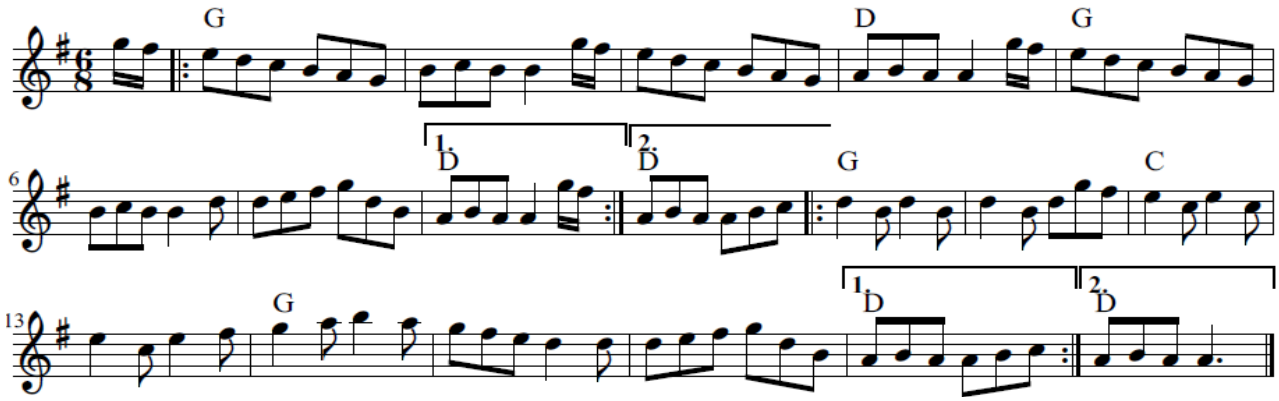
Traditional




17
D A D A
21
D A D A D
25
D G D A D
30
G D A D

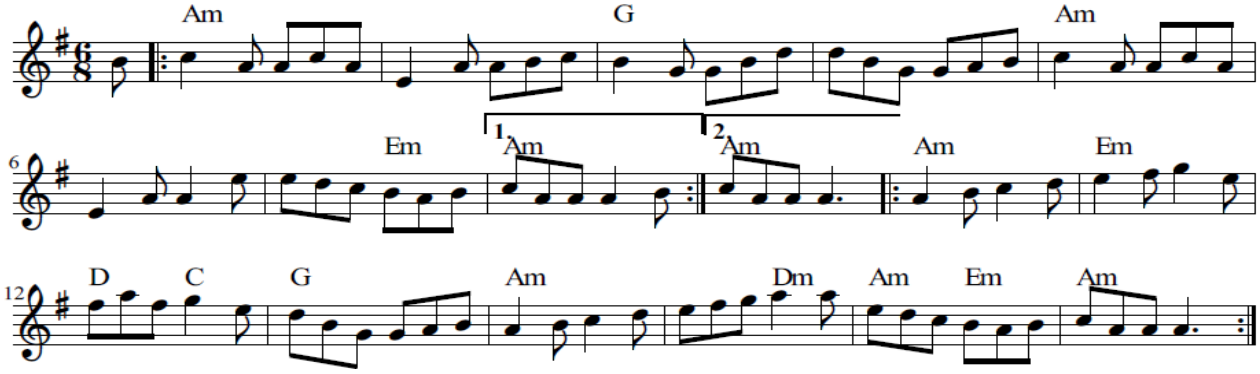
Gary Owen's Jig

Traditional Celtic



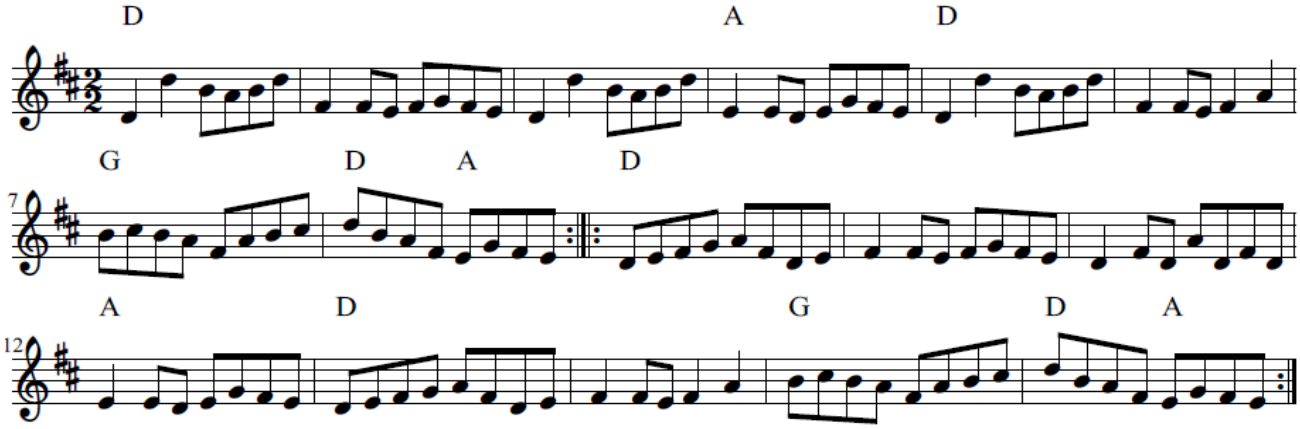
Gobby O

Traditional



Miss McLeod's

(Scotland, Ireland)

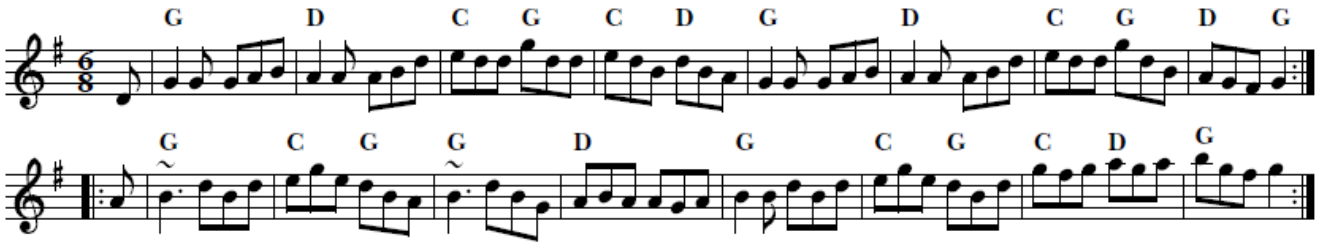


Sets

705. The Kesh jig

The Kincora jig

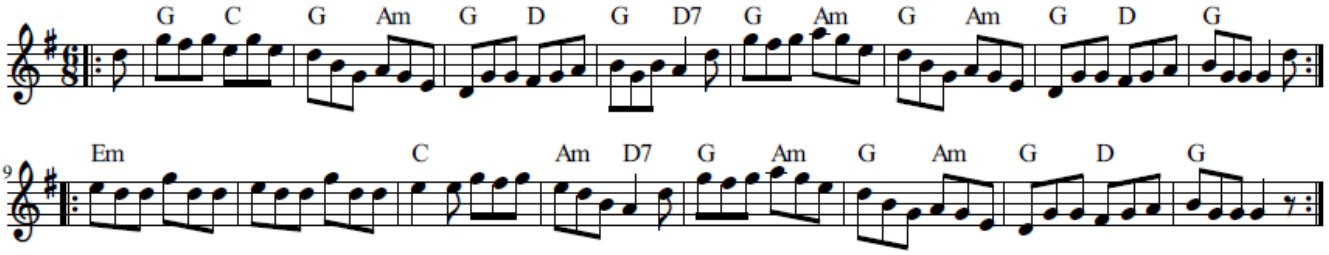
Kerrigan's jig



The Blackthorn Stick

An Draigean Donn

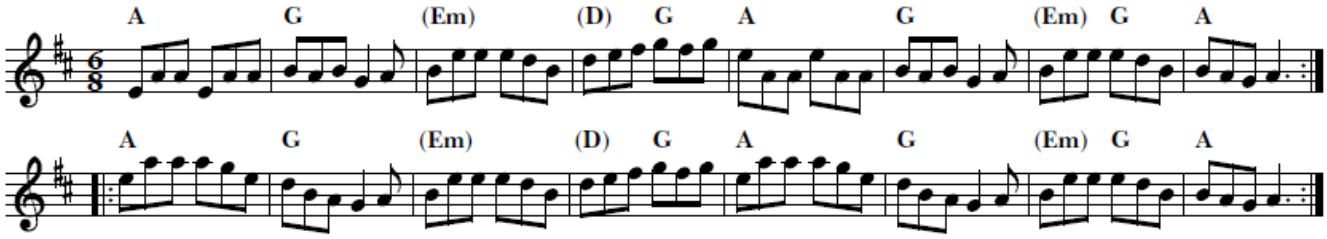
Traditional (Irish)



726. The lilting banshee

The miller of Glanmire

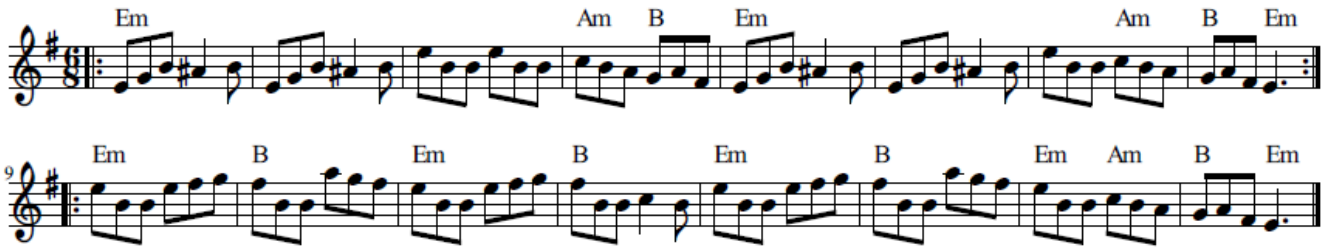
(Ireland)



The Halloween Set

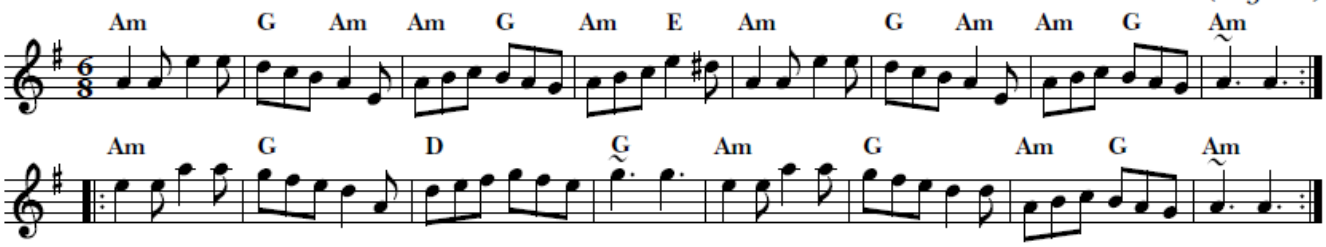
Jump at the Sun

John Kirkpatrick (England)



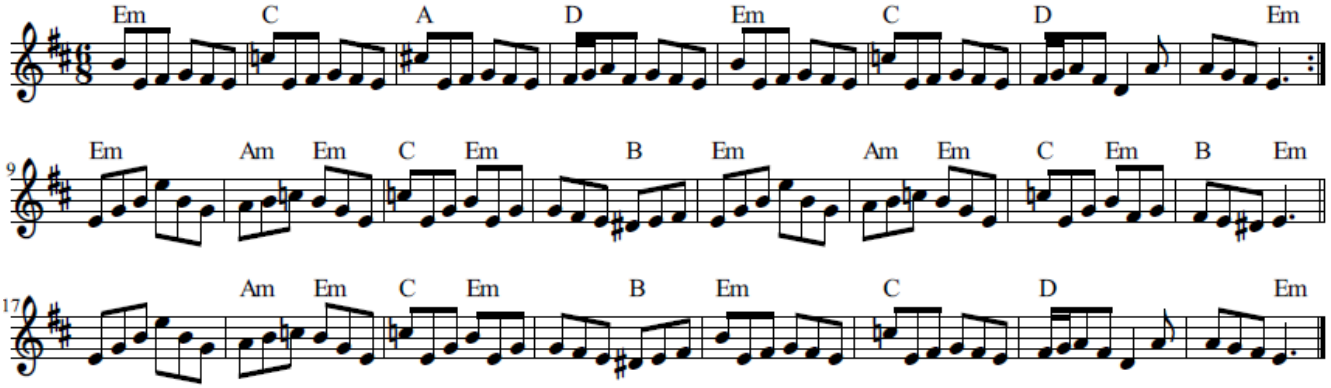
760. One too many

(England)



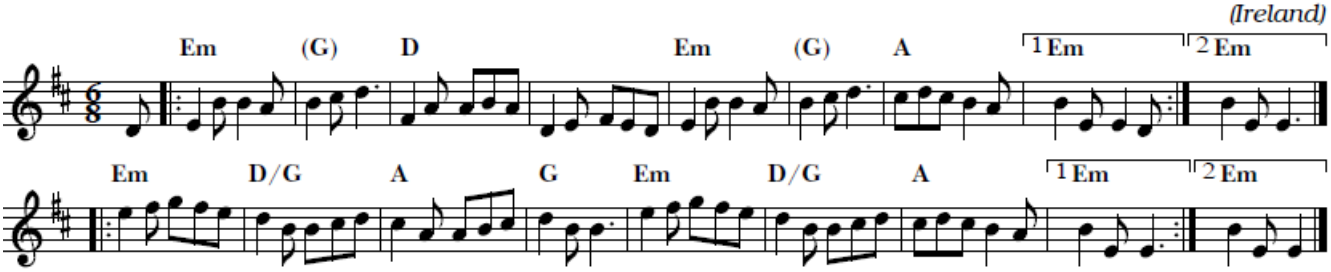
Cleveland Park

Ivan Drever

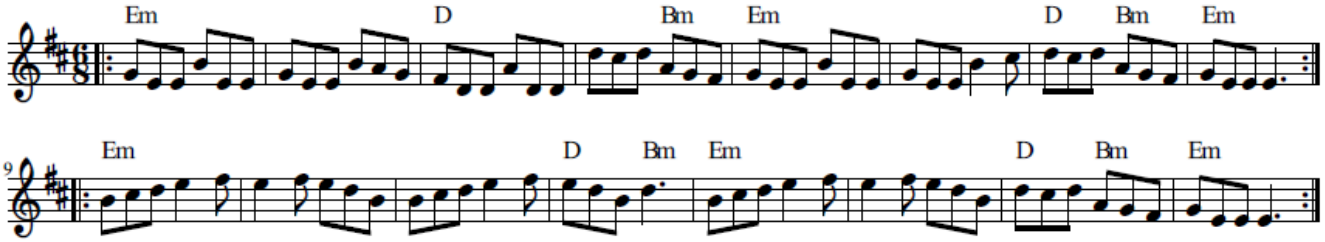


778. The road to Lisdoonvarna

(Ireland)

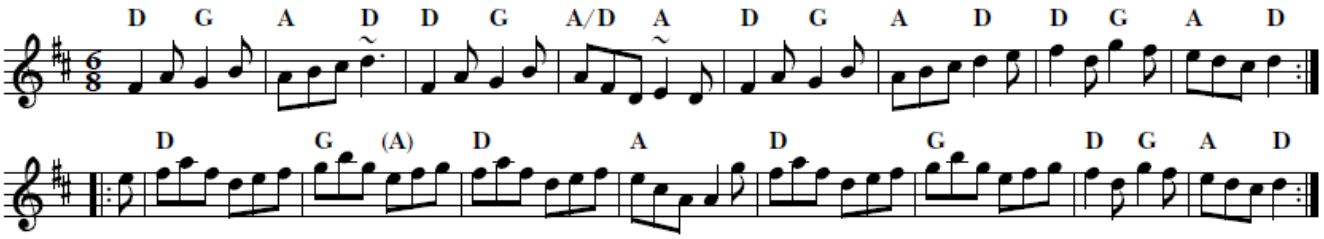


Swallow Tail Jig



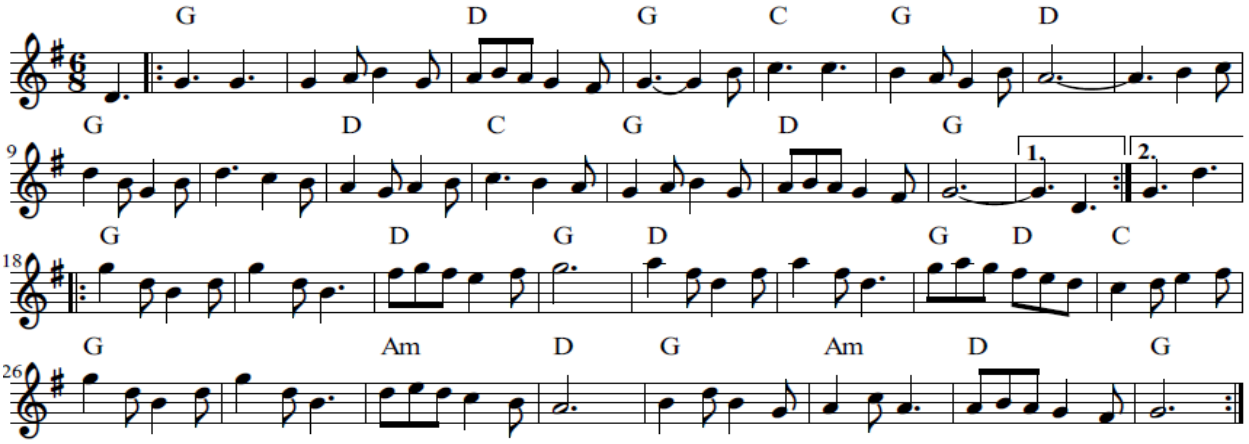
754. Off she goes!

(Ireland)



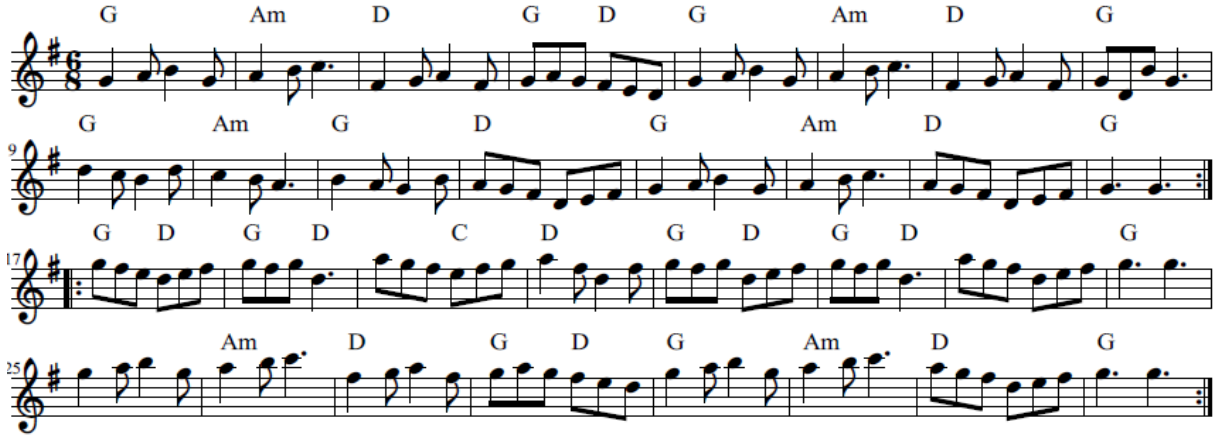
Hoppity Jig

Rich Adams



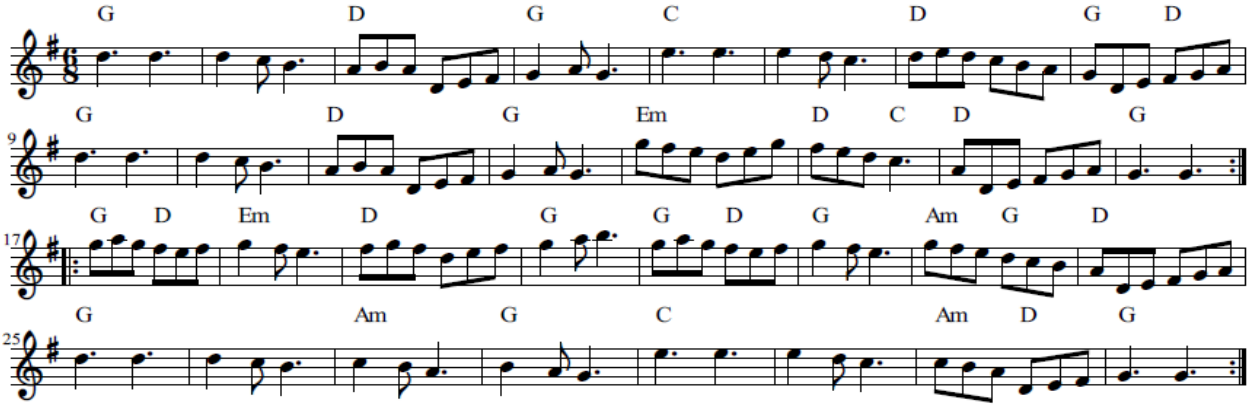
Hoppy Tooth

Rich Adams



Three Hops and Barley

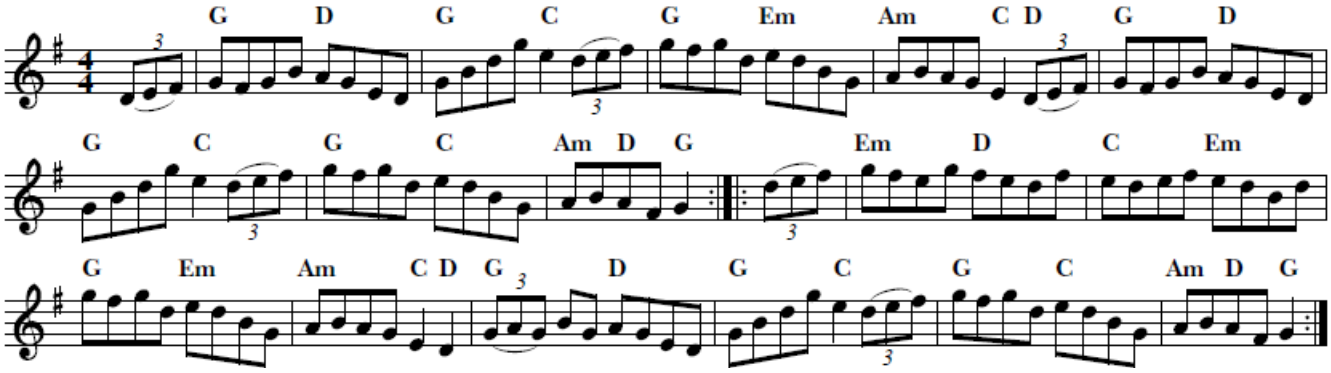
Rich Adams



500. Off to California

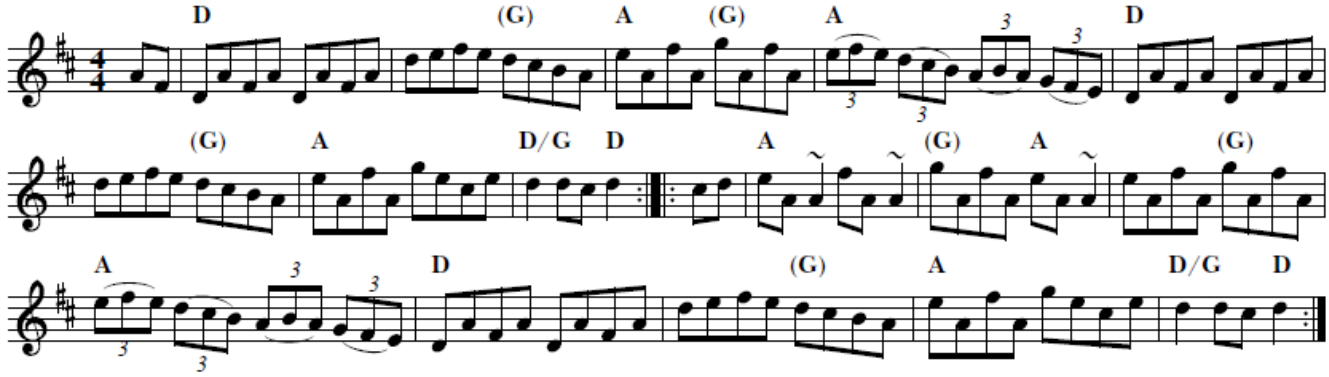
Whiskey in the jar
Whiskey you're the devil

(Ireland)



481. The harvest home

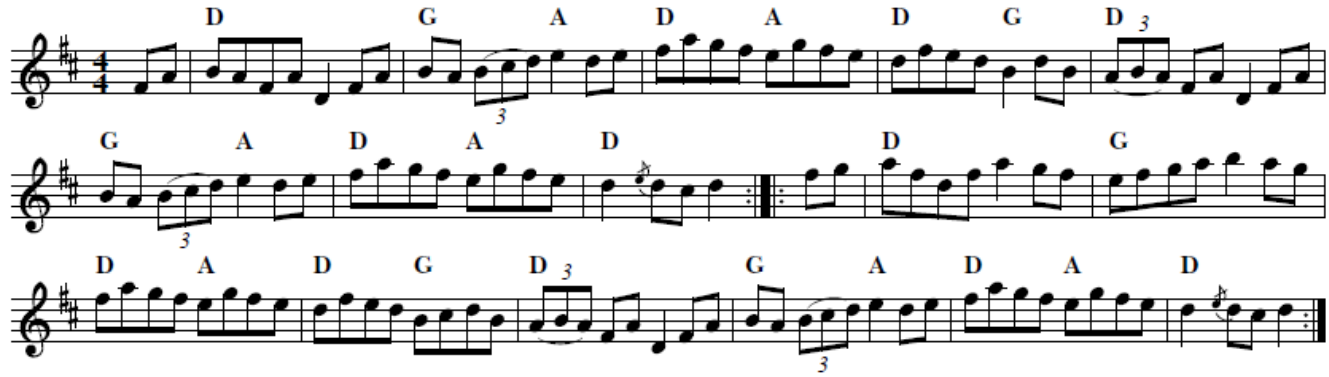
(Ireland, Scotland, England)



457. The boys of Bluehill

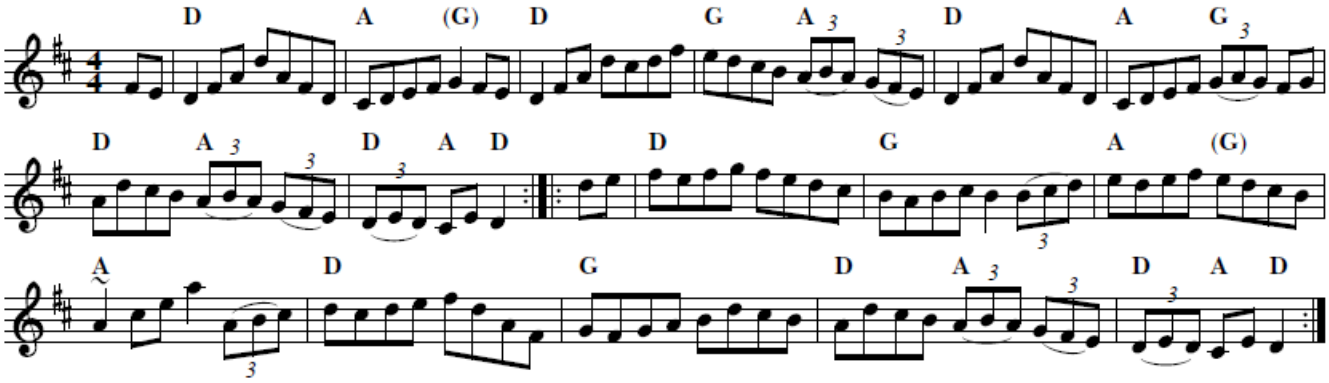
The beaux of Oak Hill

(Ireland)



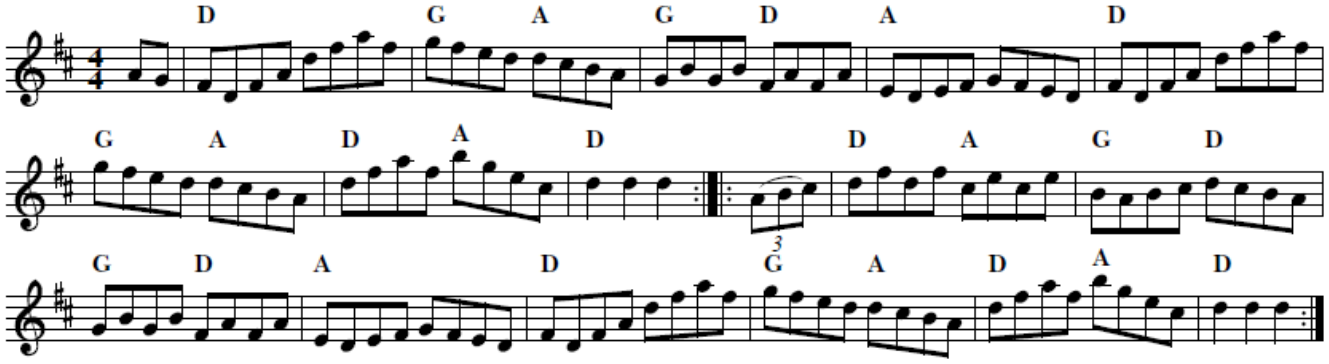
477. The Galway hornpipe

(Ireland, Scotland)



492. The Liverpool hornpipe

(England, Ireland, Scotland)

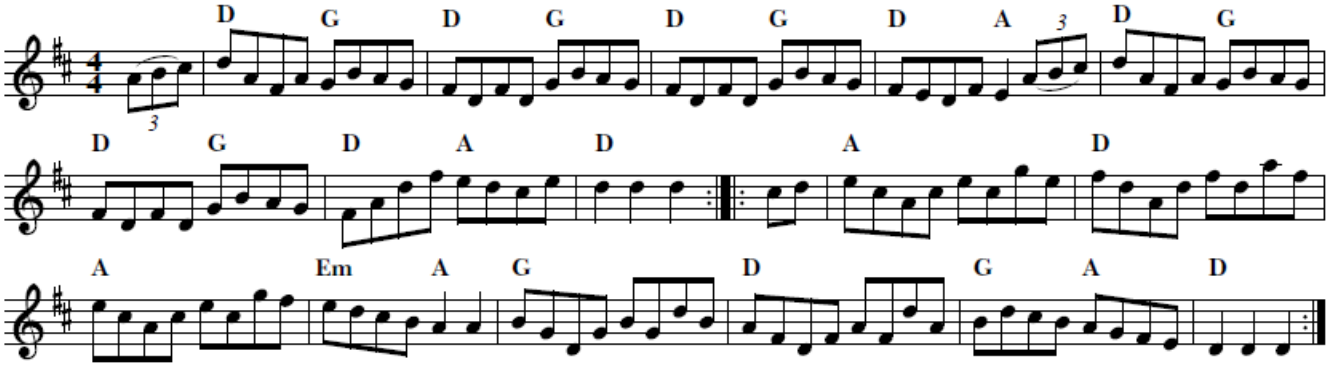


473. Fisher's hornpipe

Blanchard's hornpipe

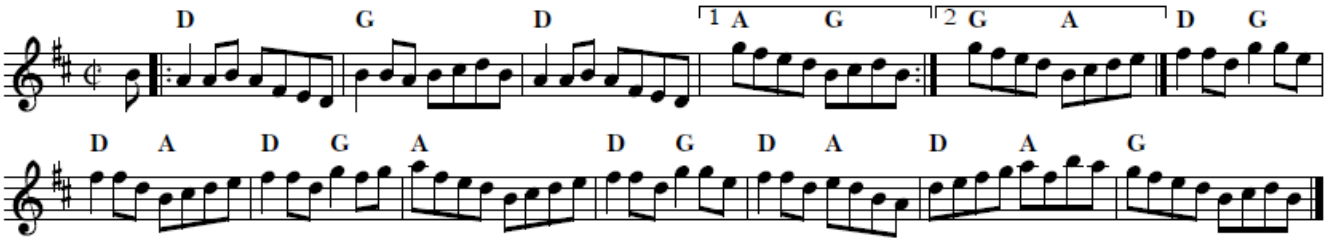
The blacksmith's hornpipe

(Ireland)

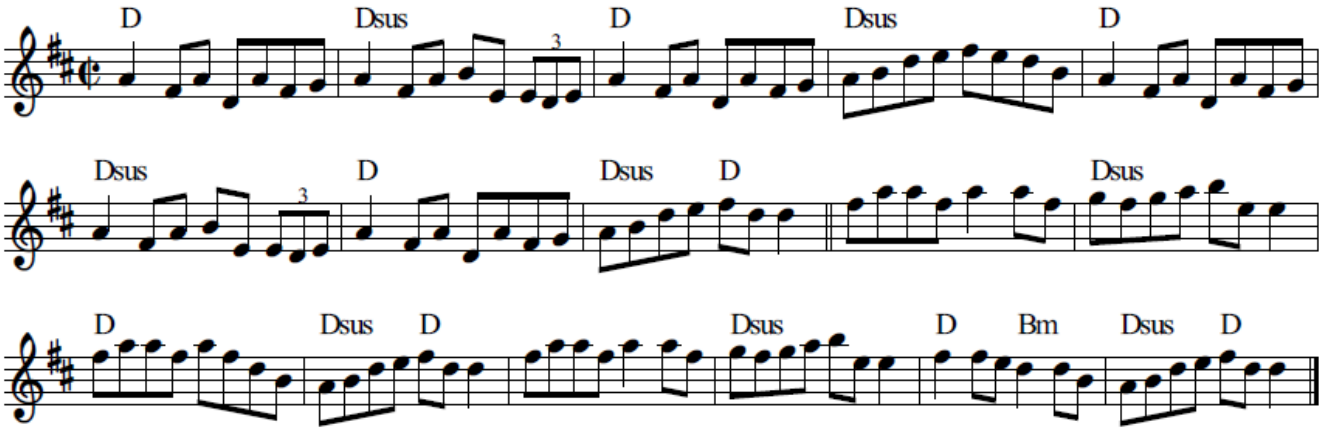


344. The wind that shakes the barley 1

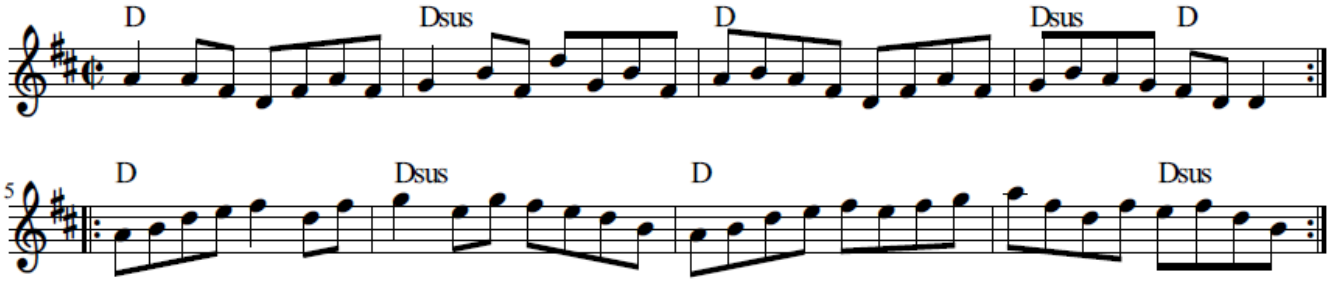
(Ireland)



The Boyne Hunt

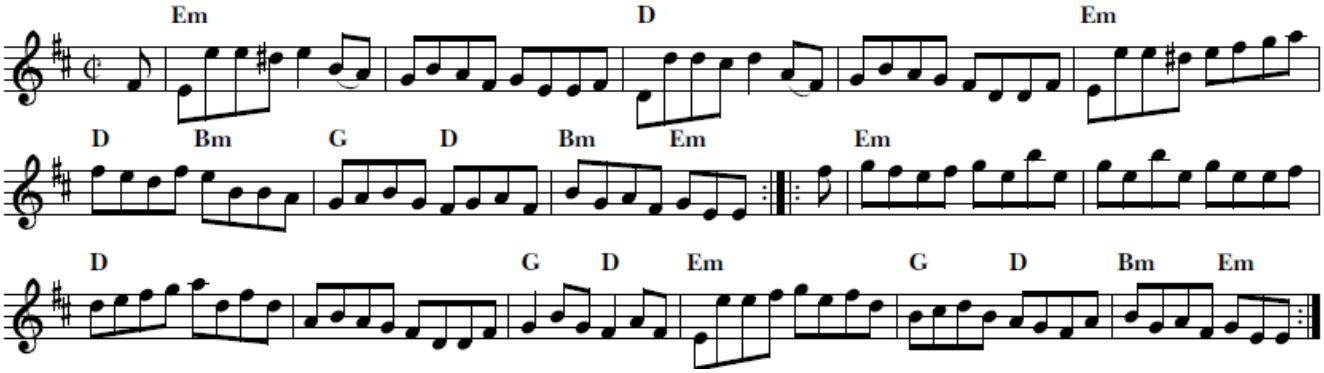


Rolling in the Rye Grass

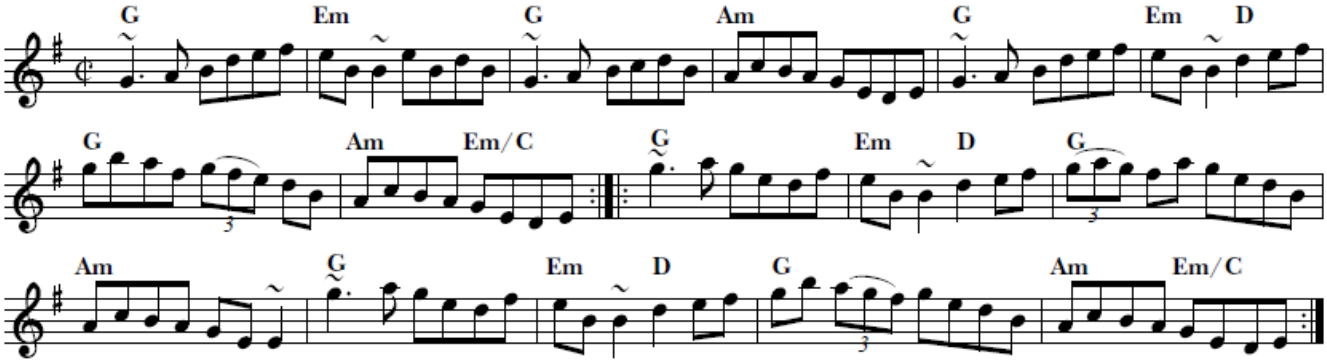


314. Tarbolton Lodge

(Ireland)

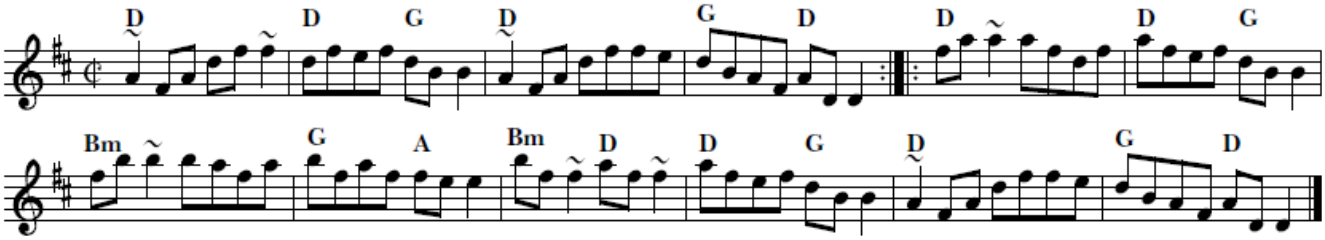


163. The Longford collector

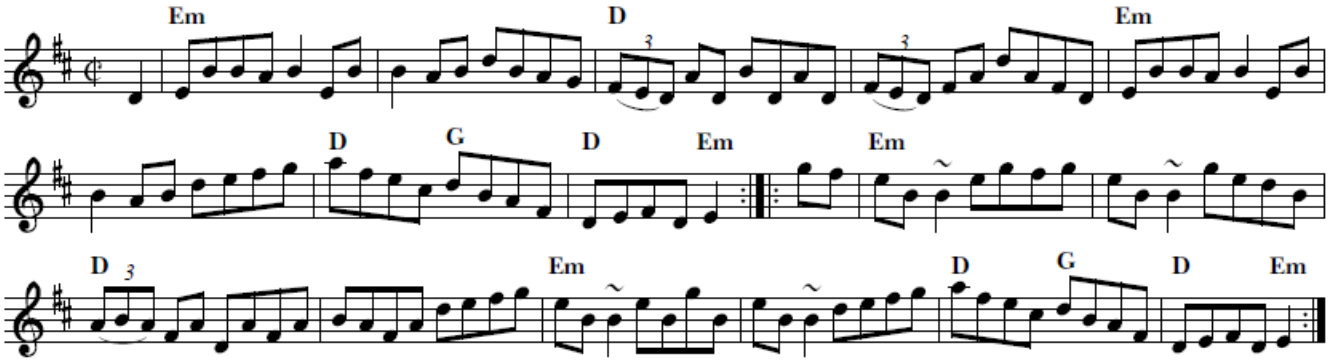


271. The sailor's bonnet

(Ireland)

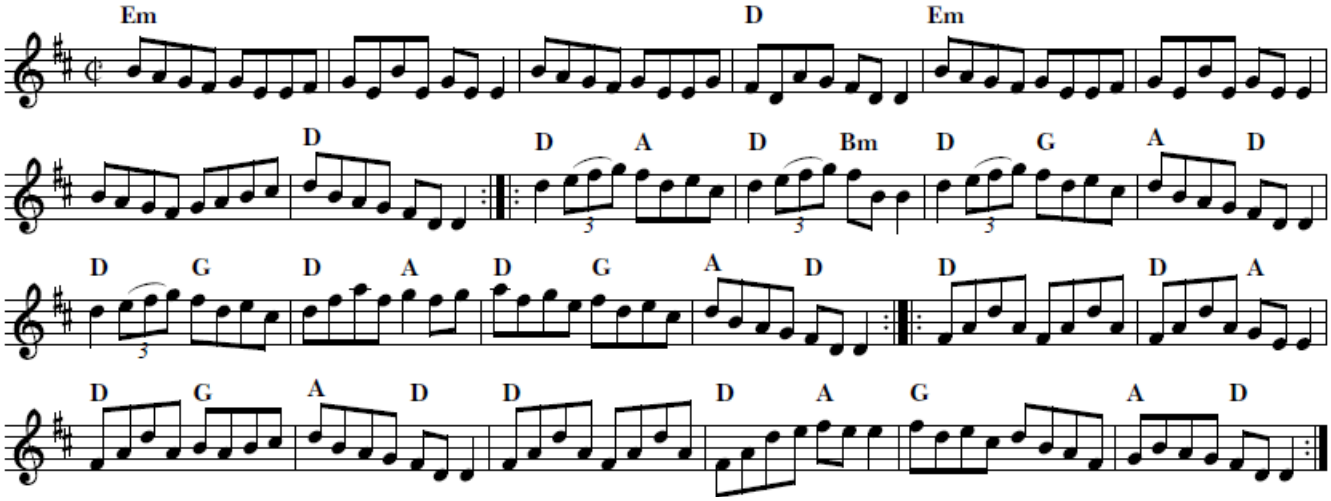


50. Cooley's reel



60. The cup of tea

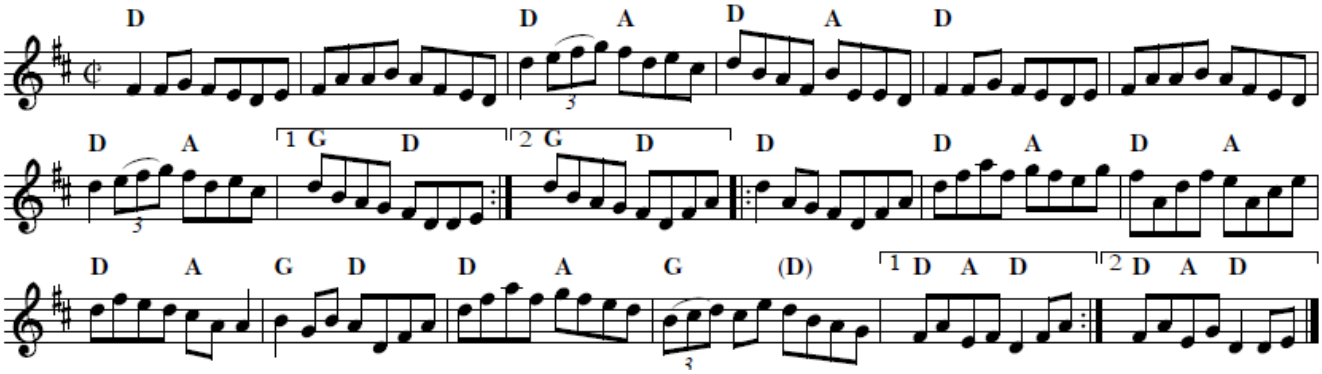
(Ireland)



2. Around the world

The wise maid

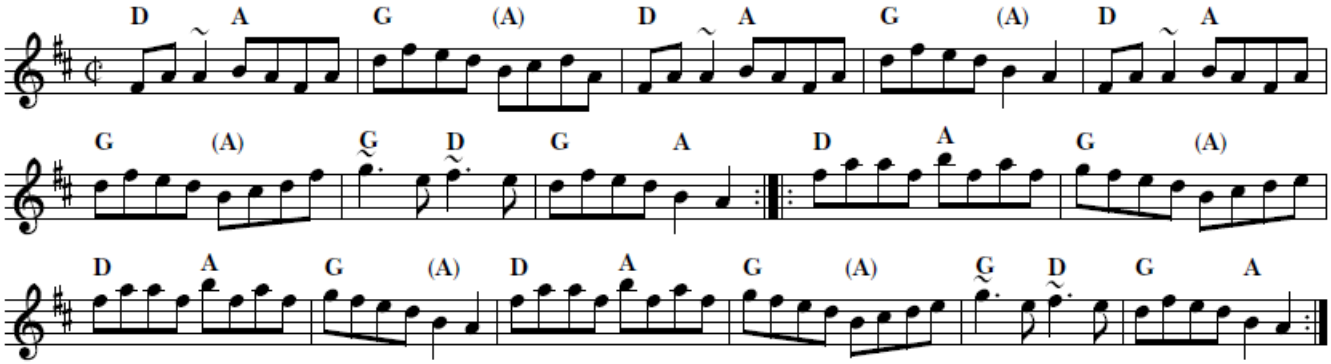
(Ireland)



287. The silver spear

The top of the cliff

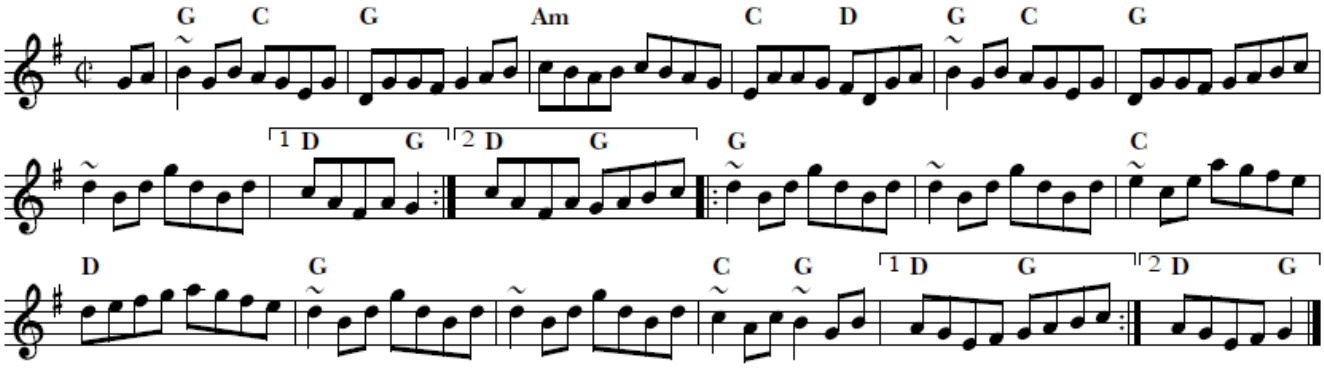
The new mown meadows



88. Father Kelly's 1

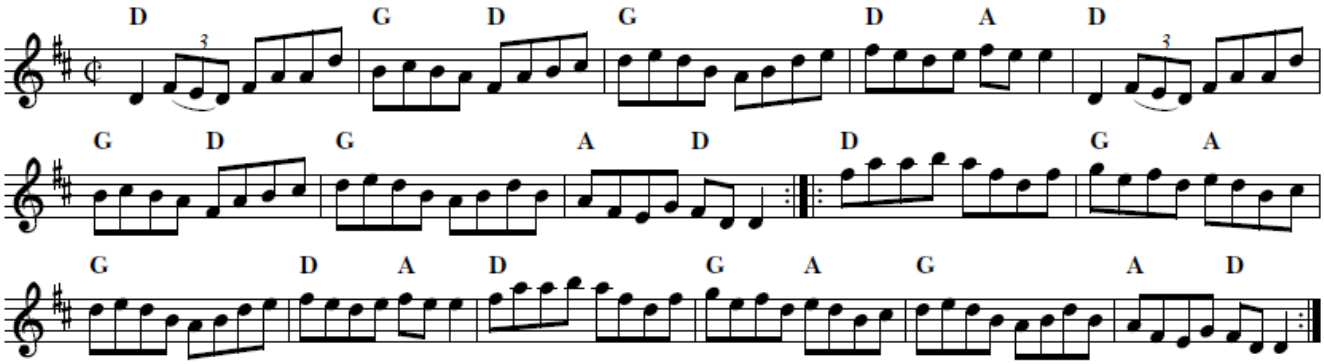
The Rossmore jetty

(Ireland)



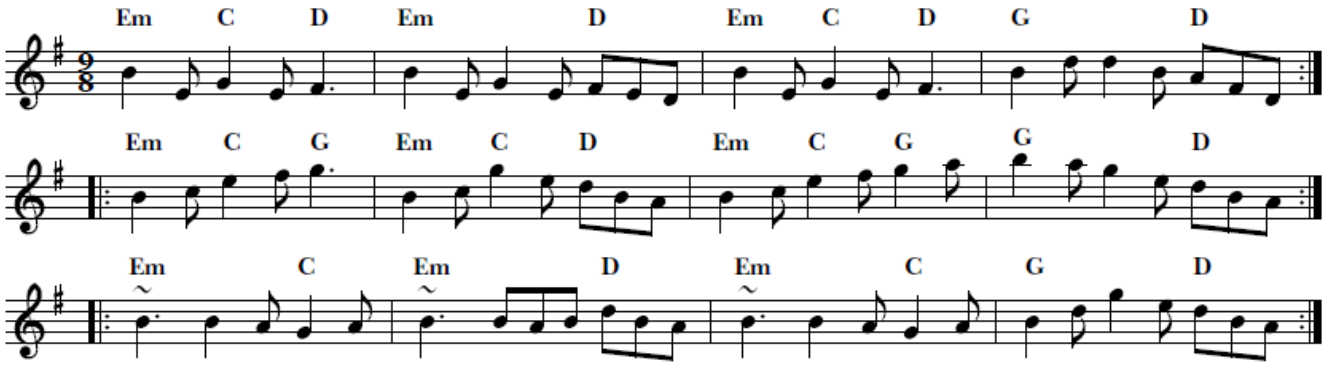
192. Miss Monaghan

(Ireland)



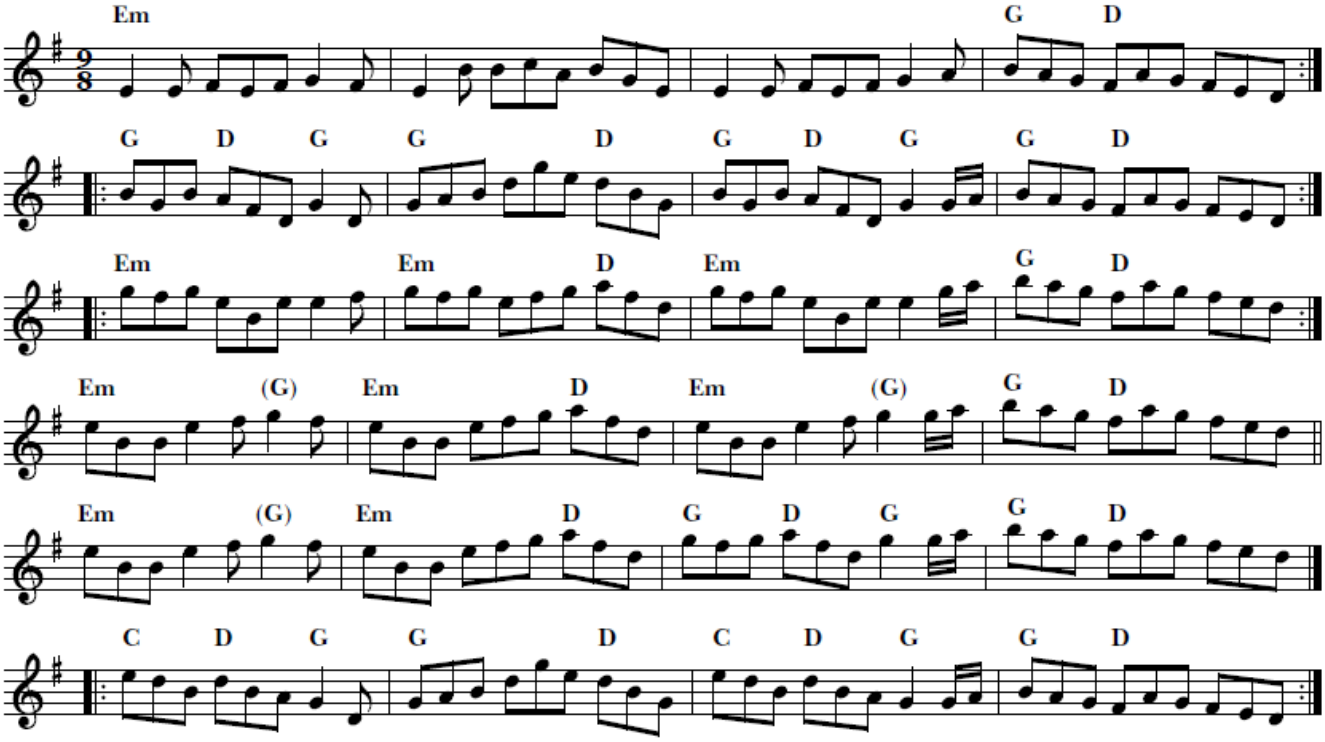
853. The butterfly

(Ireland)



874. The kid on the mountain

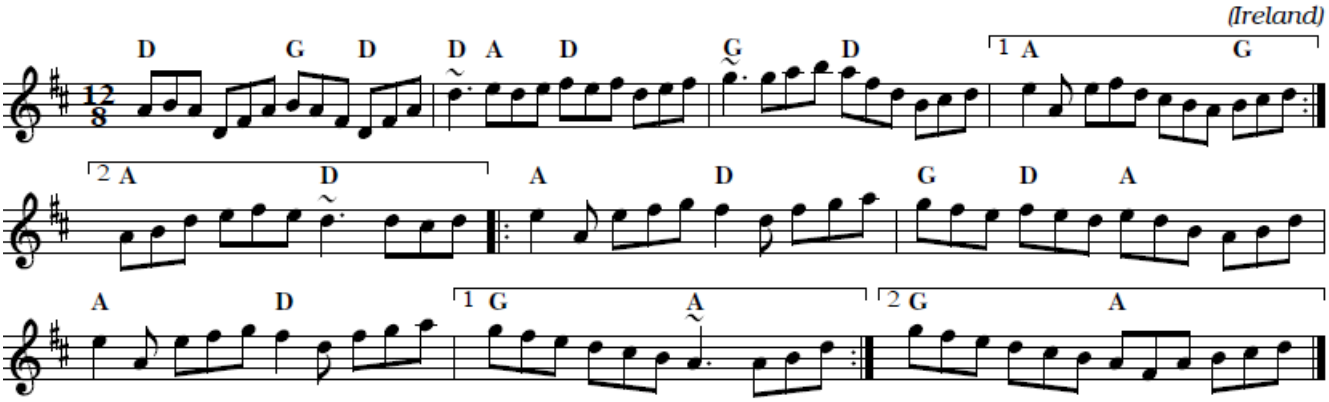
(Ireland)



846. Padraig O'Keefe's 1

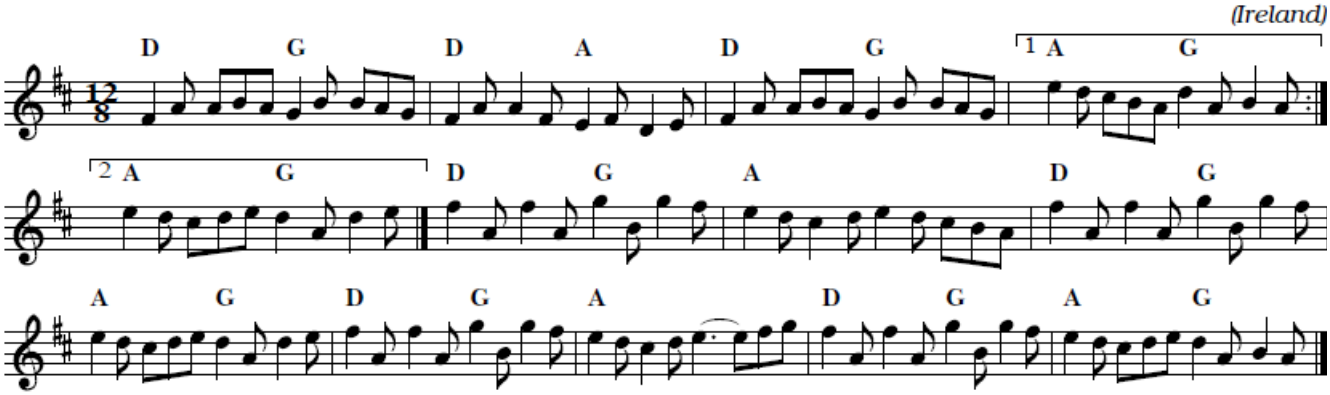
The bank of turf

(Ireland)



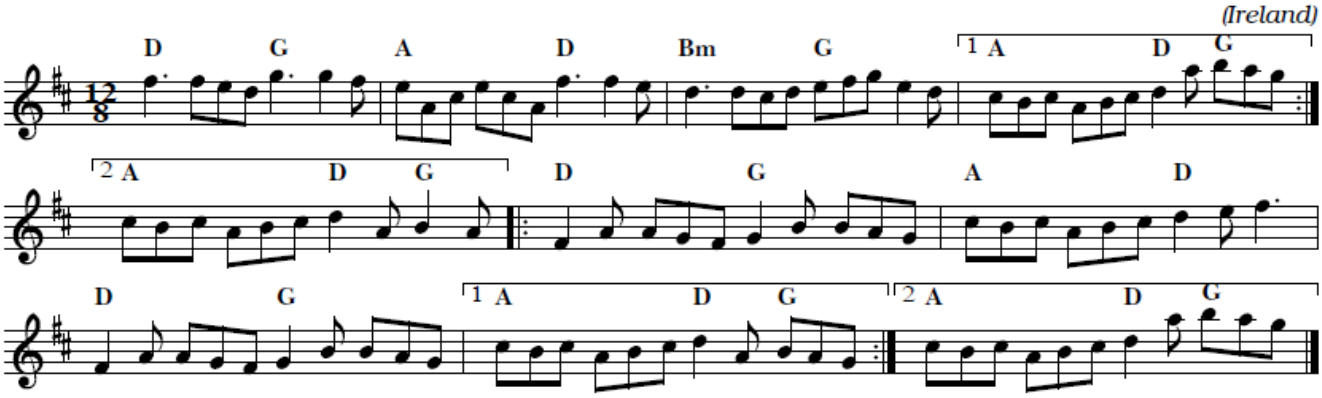
847. Padraig O'Keefe's 2

(Ireland)



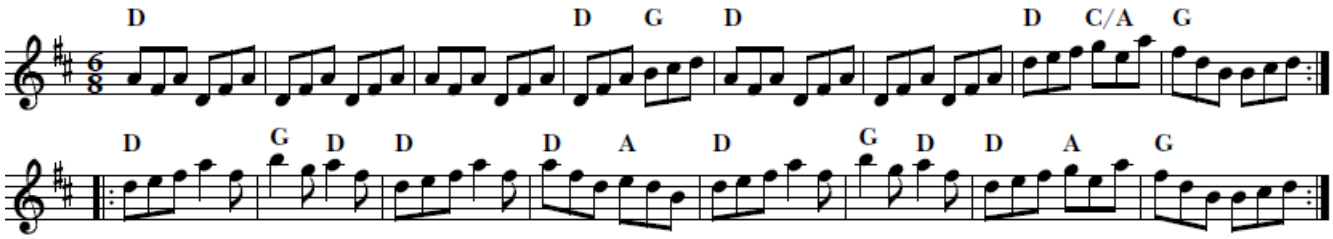
848. Padraig O'Keefe's 3

(Ireland)



759. The one legged man

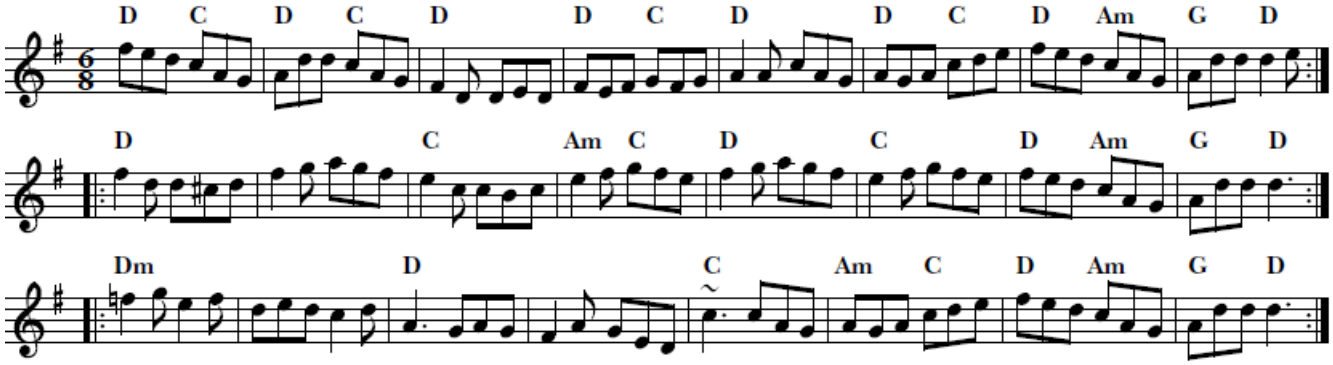
(Ireland)



579. Banish misfortune

The little bag of meal
The humours of Mullinafauna

(Ireland)

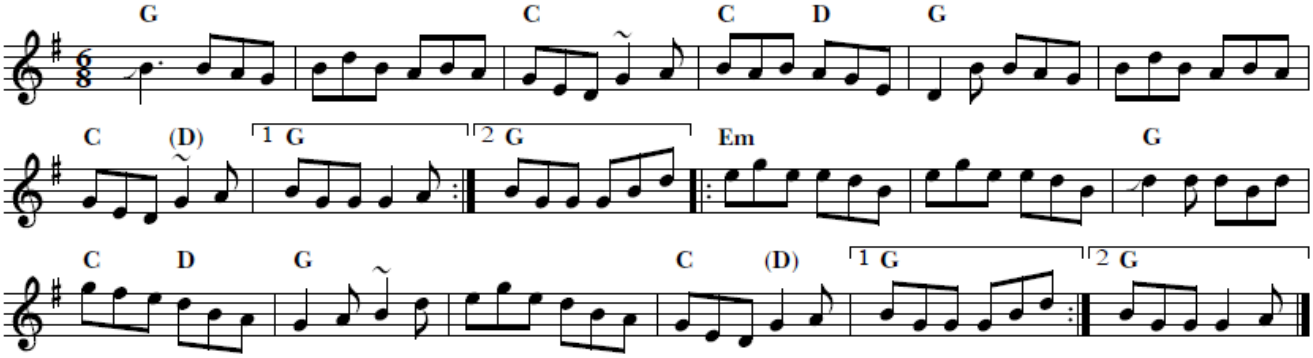


761. Out on the ocean

The Portroe jig

(Ireland)

APB Martin Hayes

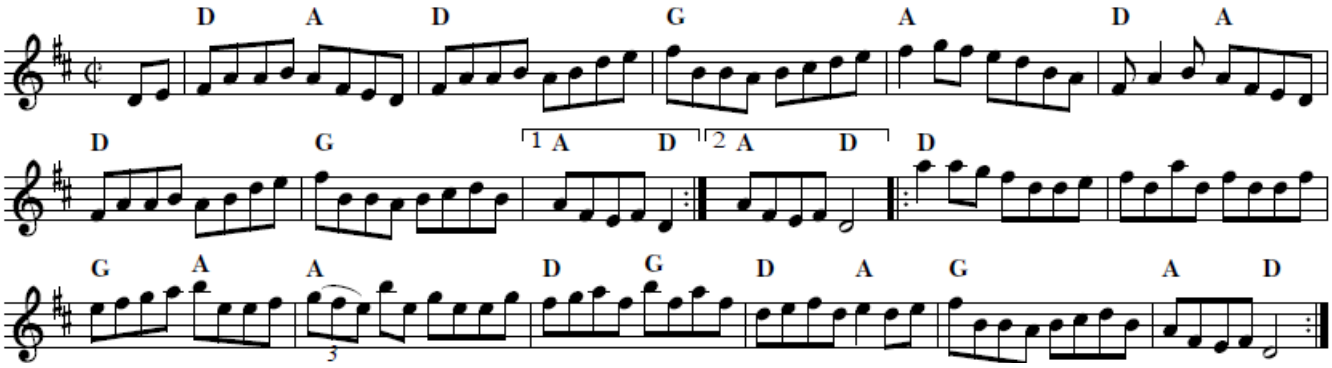


170. The maid behind the bar

The green mountain

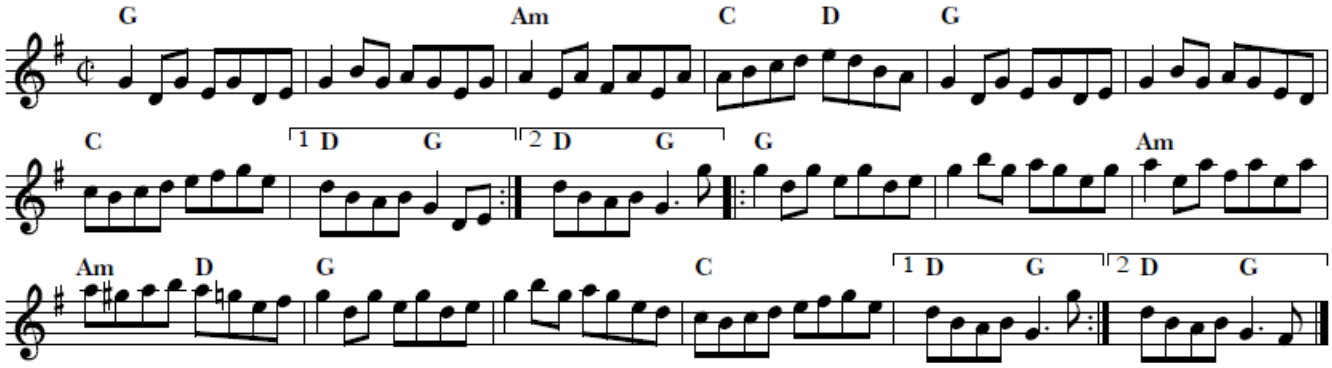
Judy's reel

(Ireland)

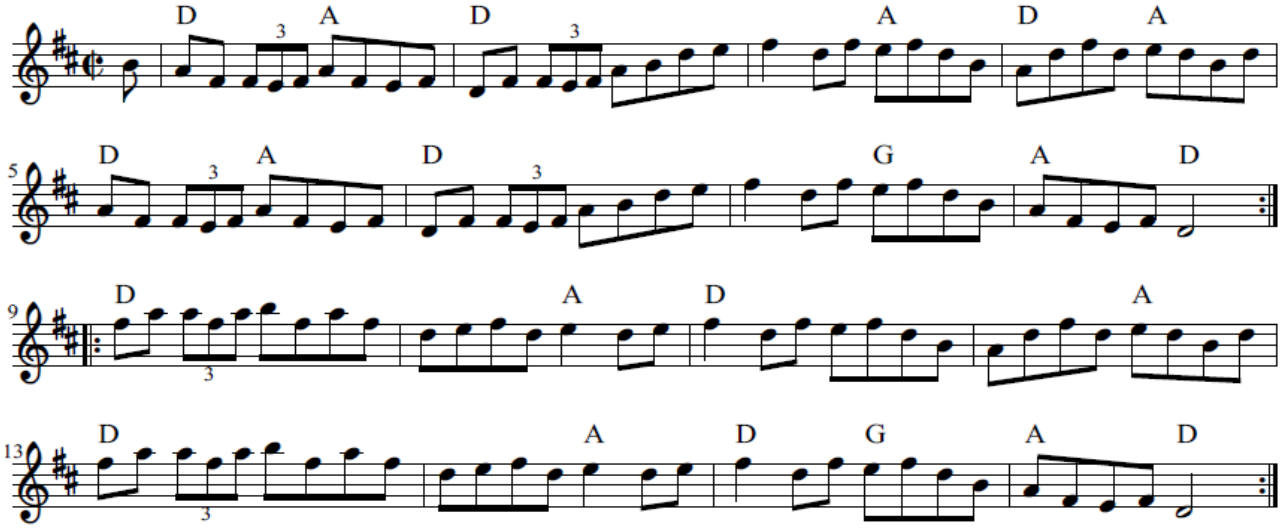


143. Kilmaley

(Ireland)



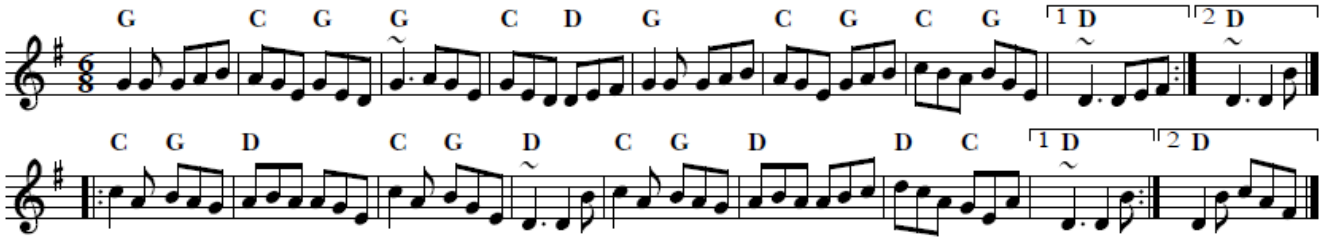
Green Mountain



698. Jimmy Ward's jig

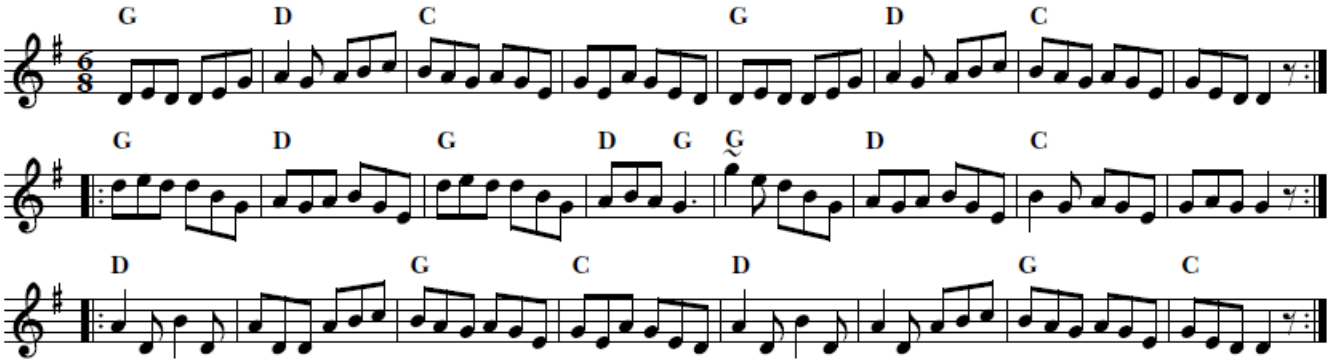
Clare jig

(Ireland)

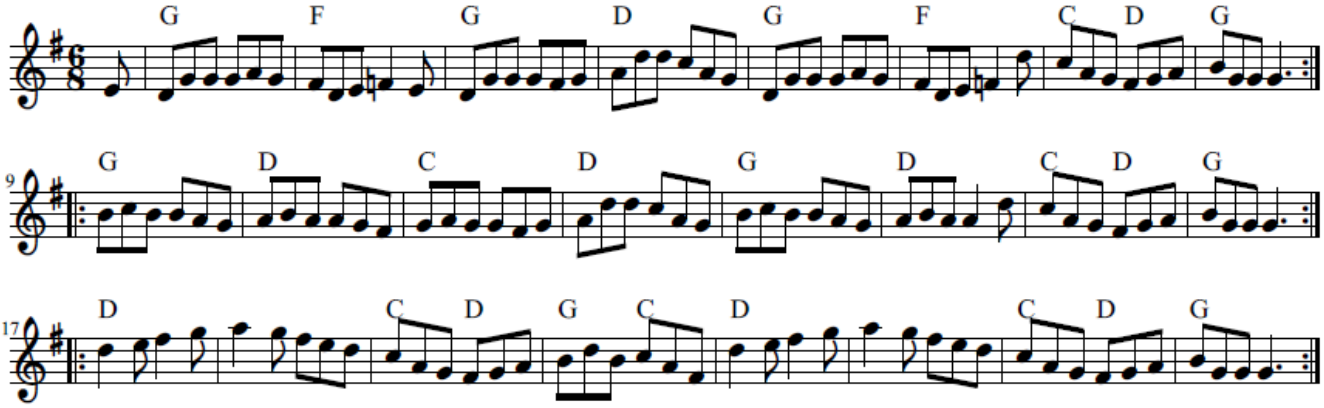


591. The blarney pilgrim

(Ireland)

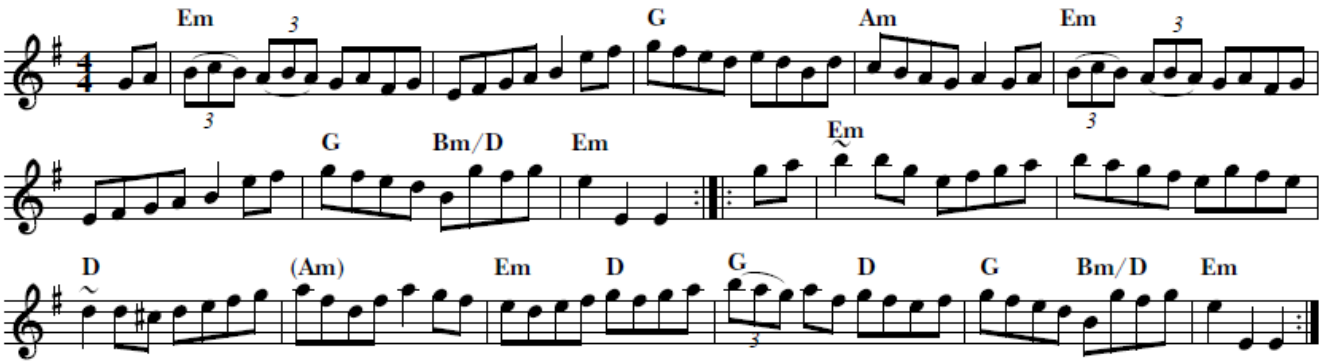


The Cook in the Kitchen

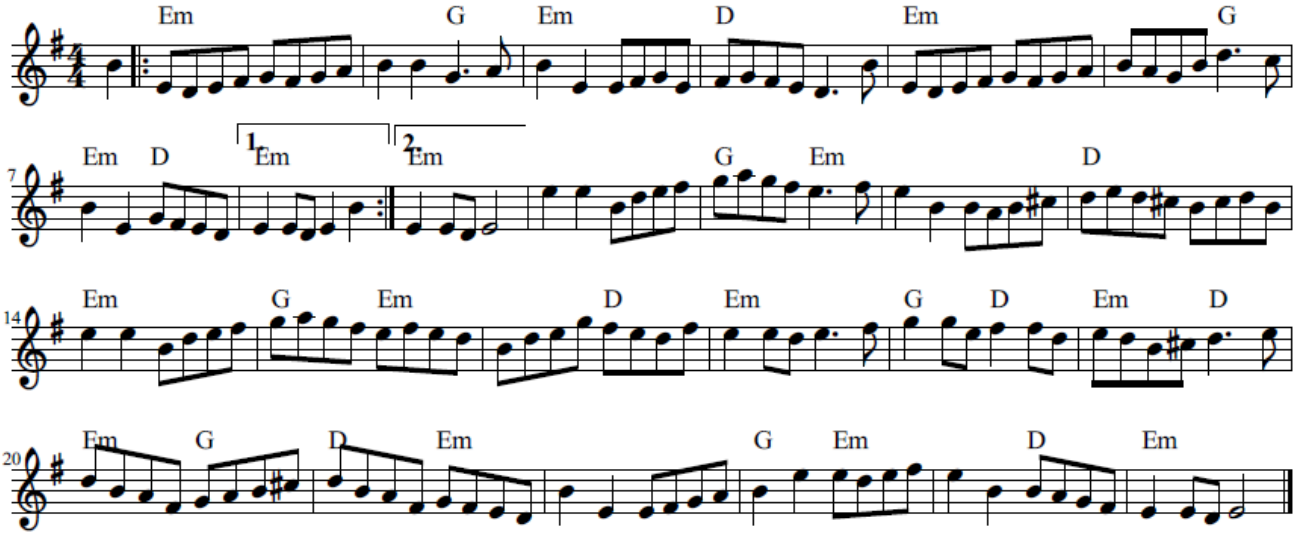


510. The rights of man

James Hill (England)

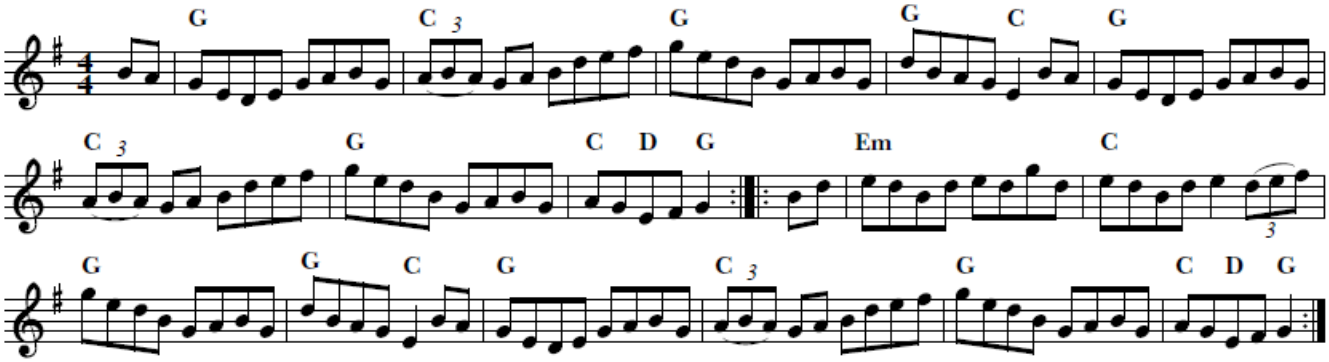


The King of Faeries

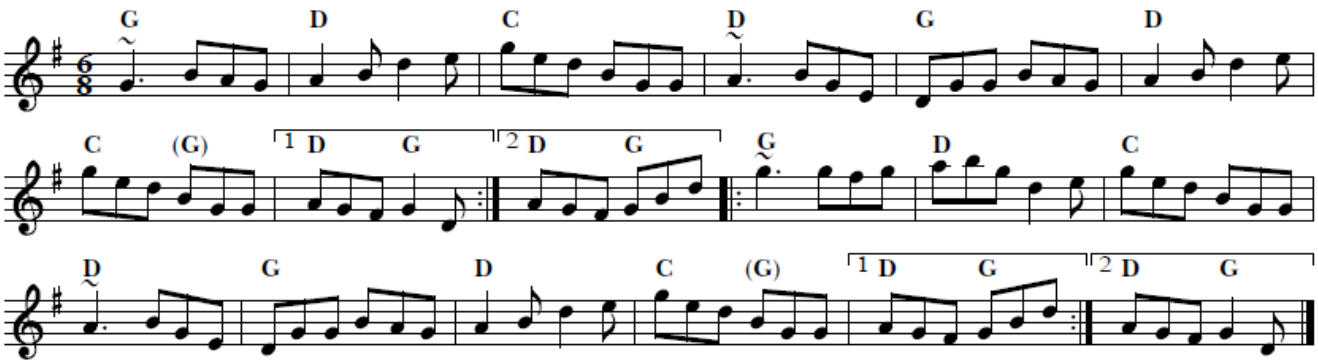


515. The stack of wheat

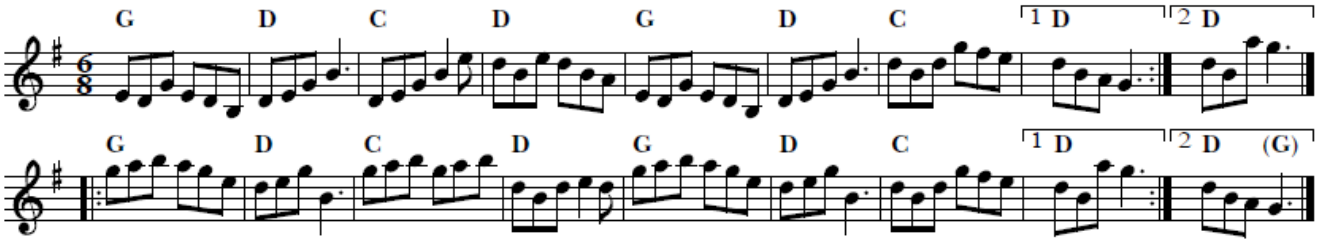
The little stack of wheat



613. Christy Barry's 1



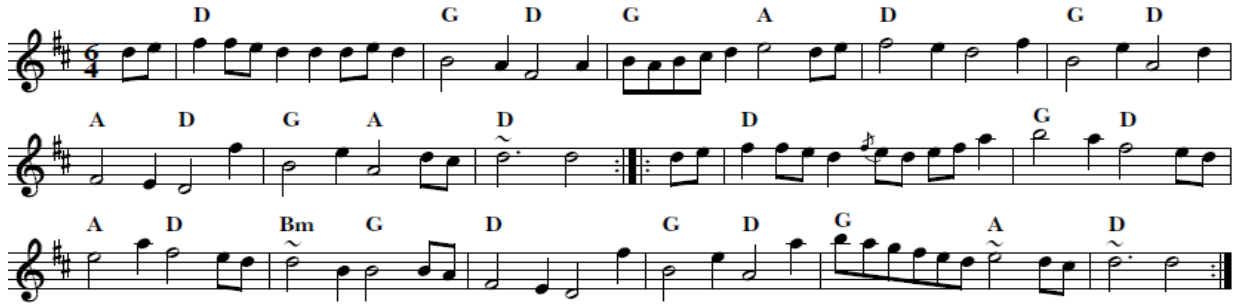
614. Christy Barry's 2



985. Si Bheag Si Mhor

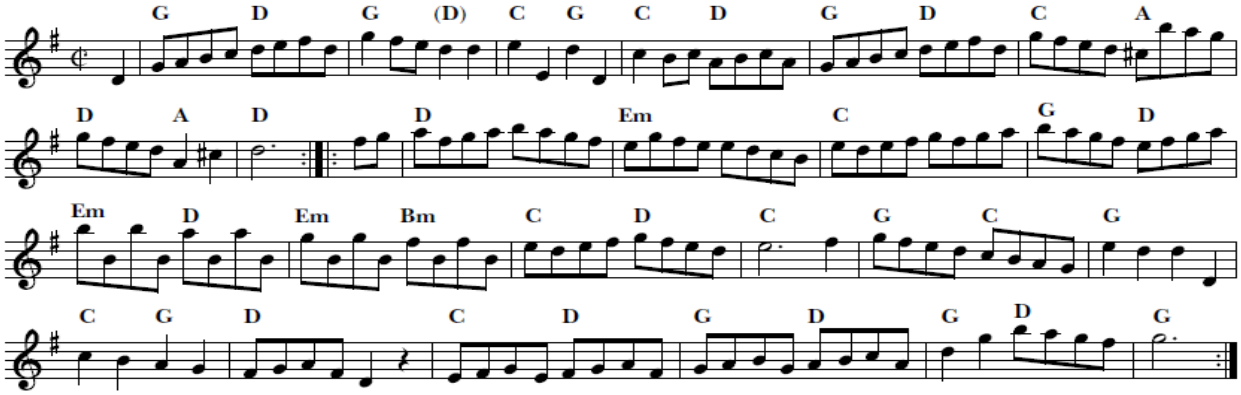
Sheebeg and Sheemore

Turlough Carolan (Ireland)



962. Carolan's draught

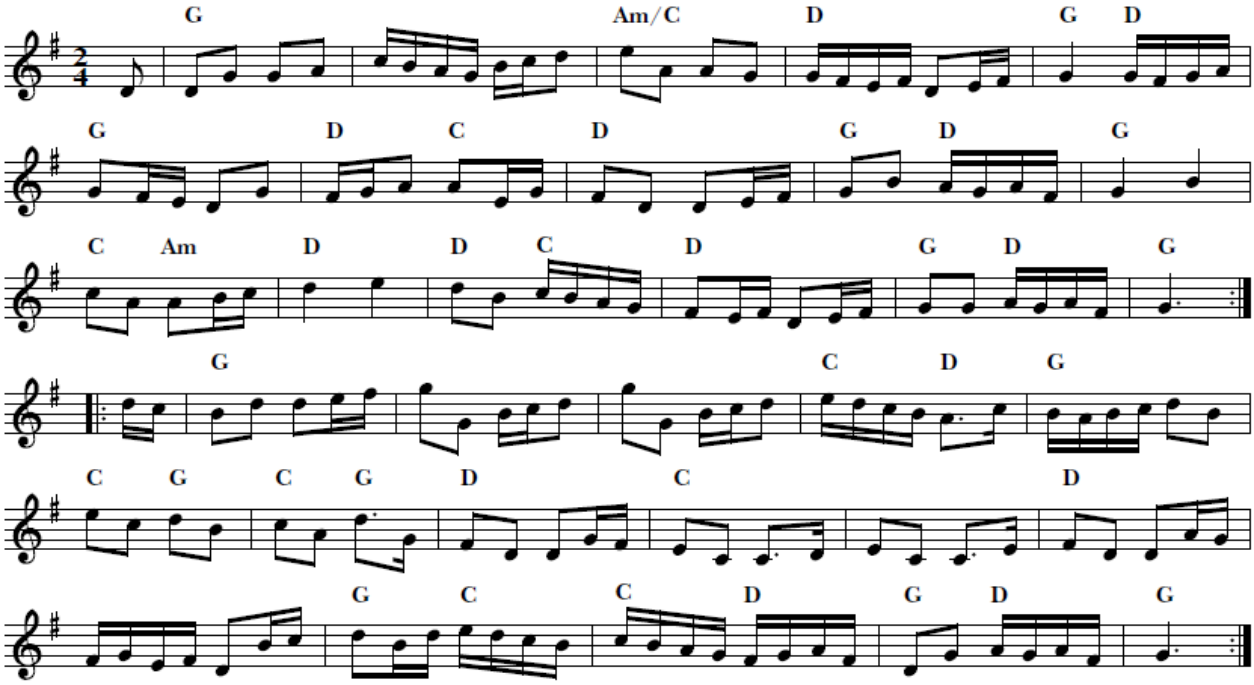
Turlough Carolan (Ireland)



973. Morgan Magan

Morgan MacGann

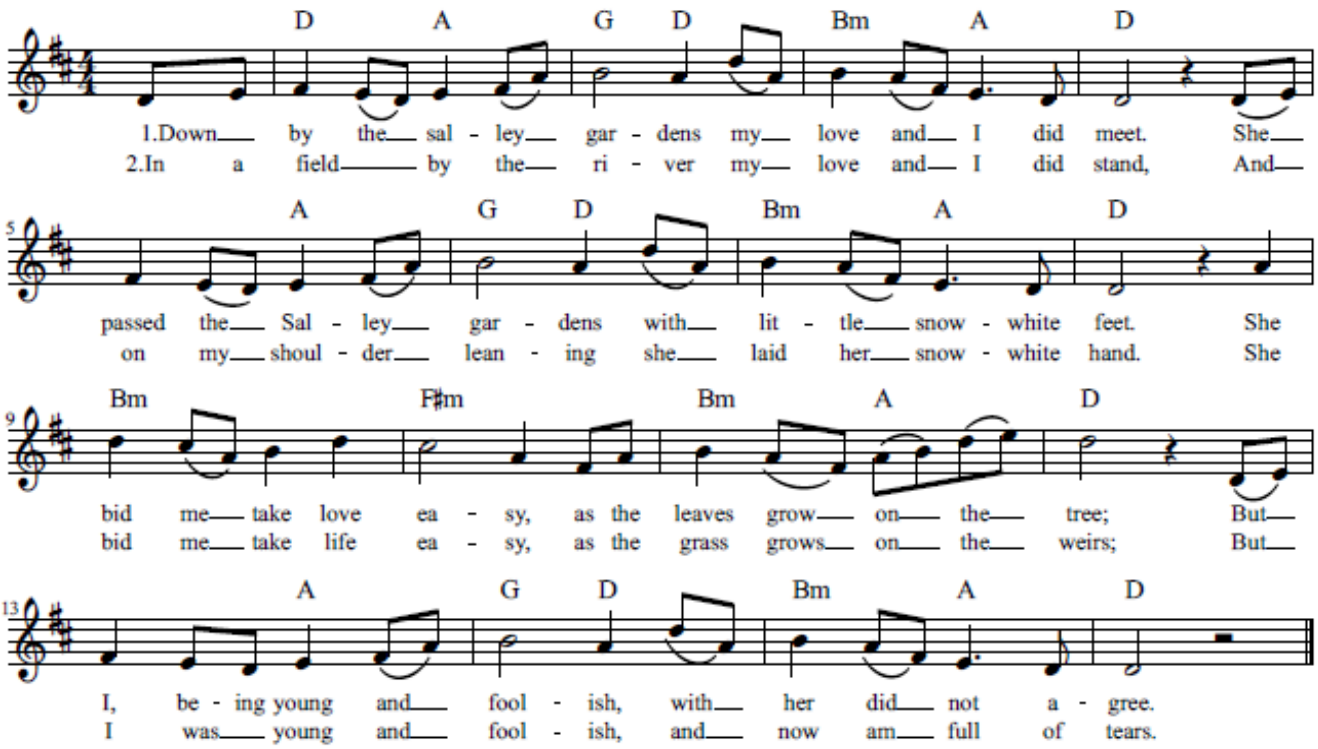
Turlough Carolan (Ireland)



Songs

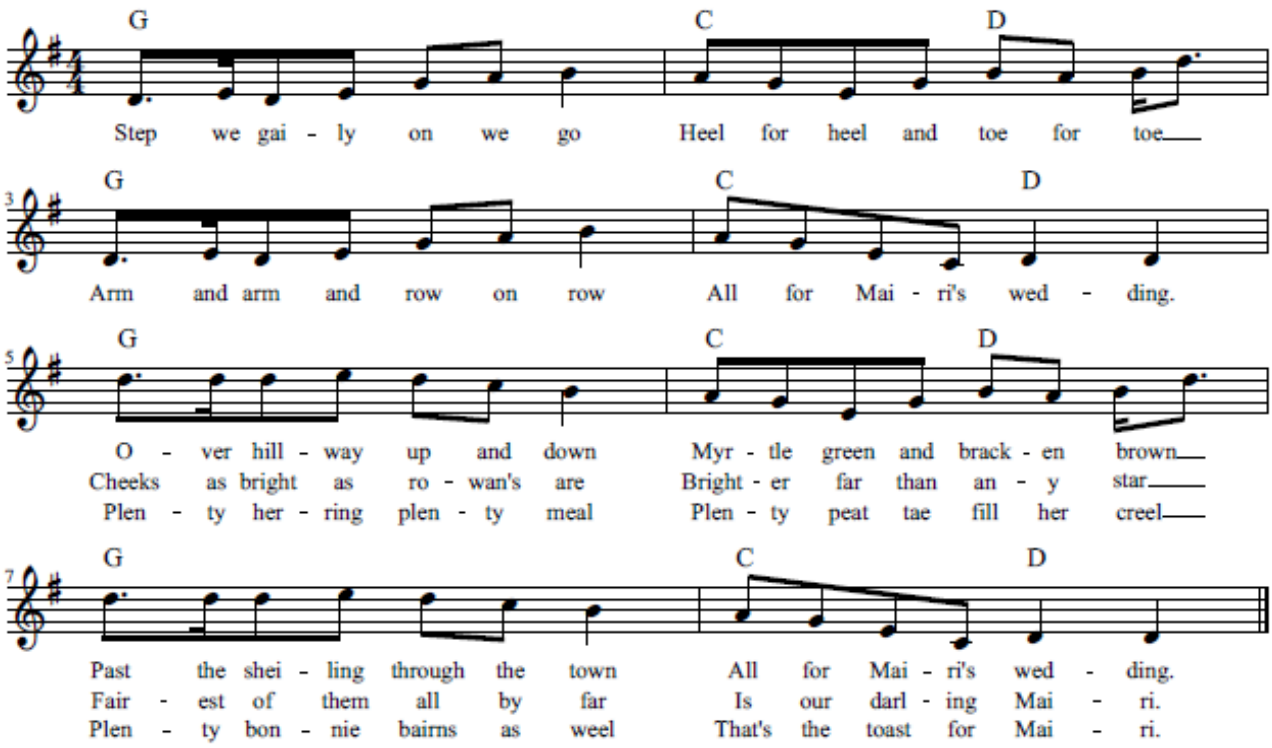
Down by the Sally Gardens

William Butler Yeats *traditional*



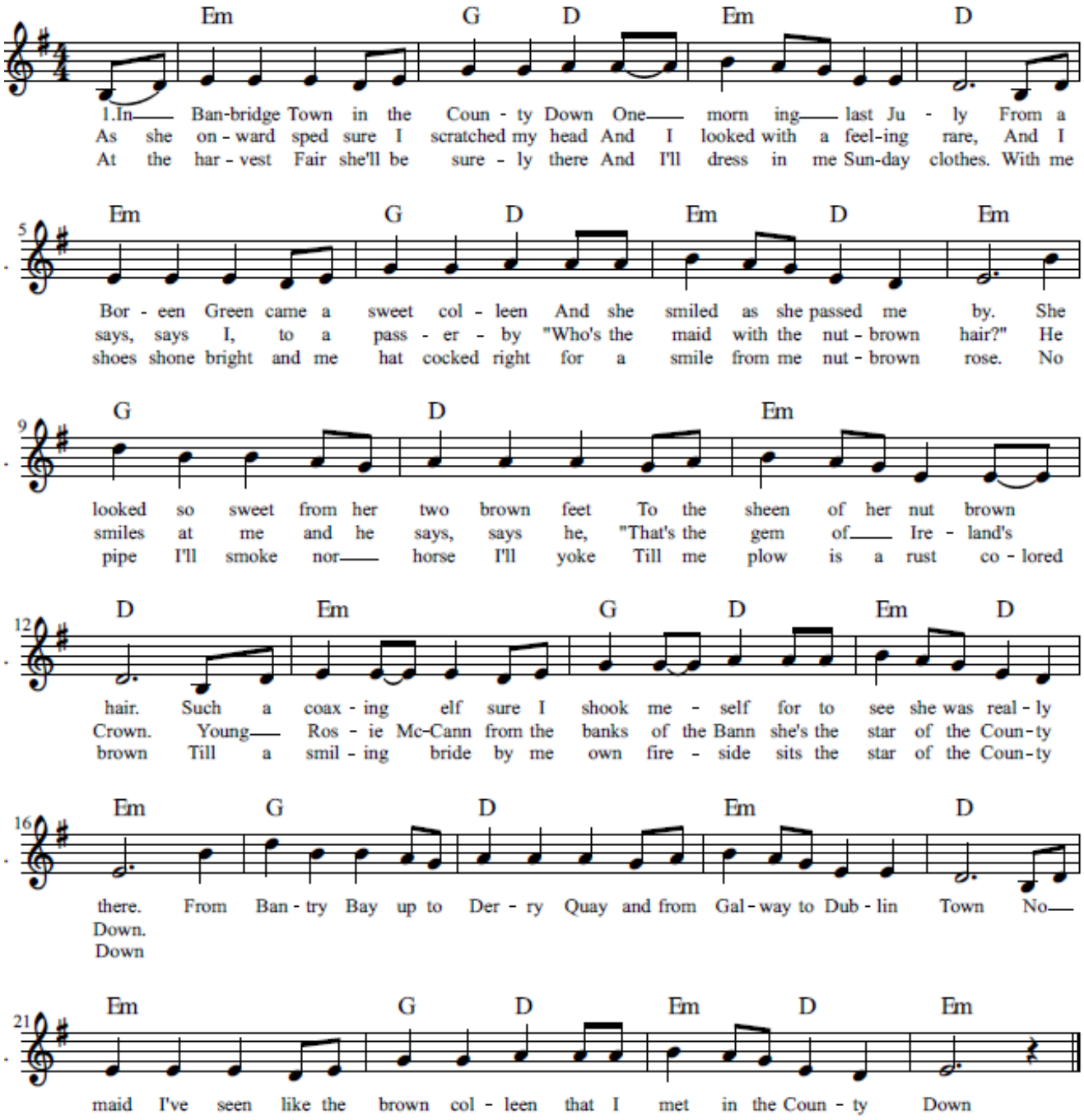
Mairi's Wedding

Hugh Roberton *John Roderick Bannerman*



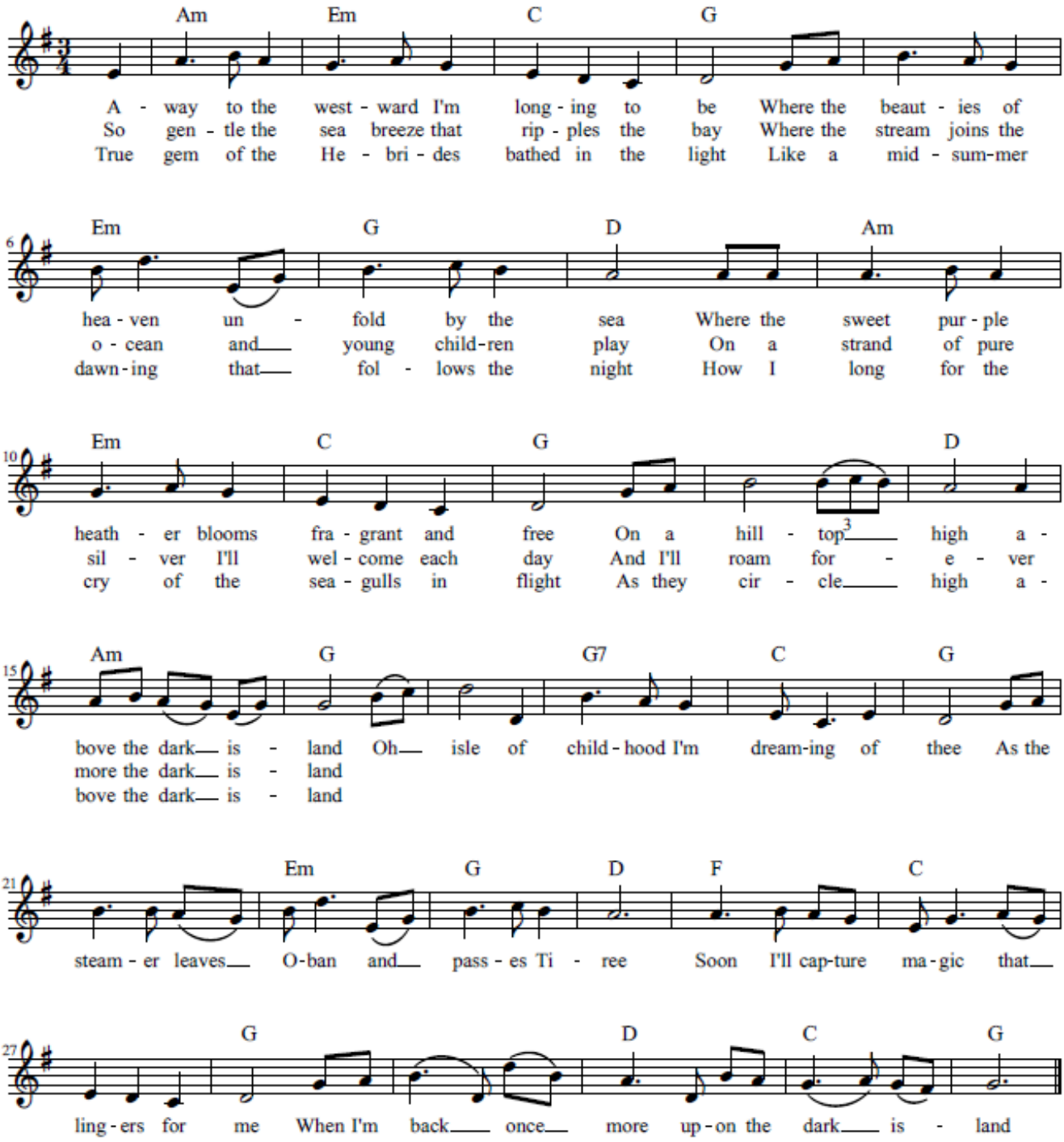
Star of the County Down

traditional



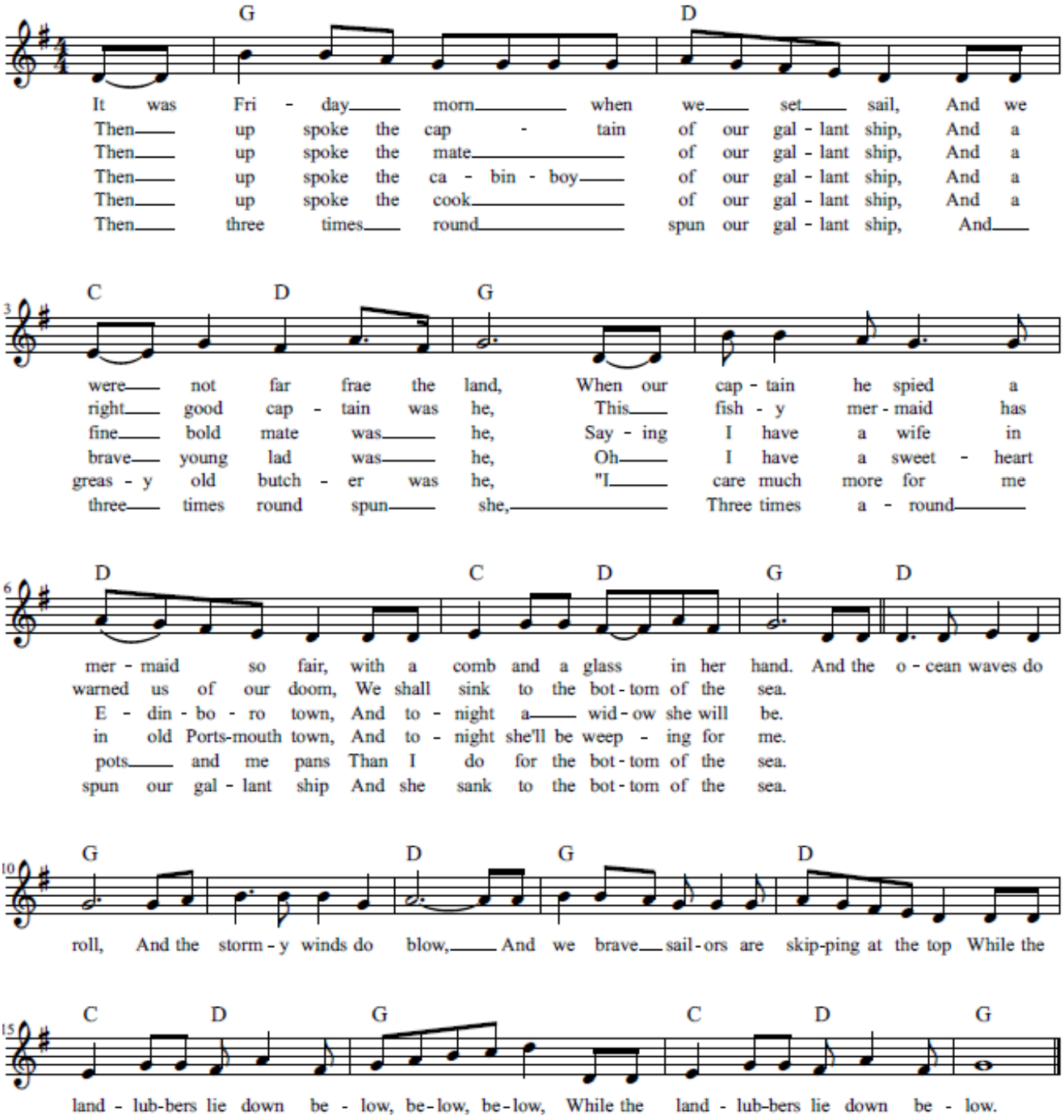
The Dark Island

David Silver *Iain MacLachlan*



The Mermaid

(Child Ballad No. 289)

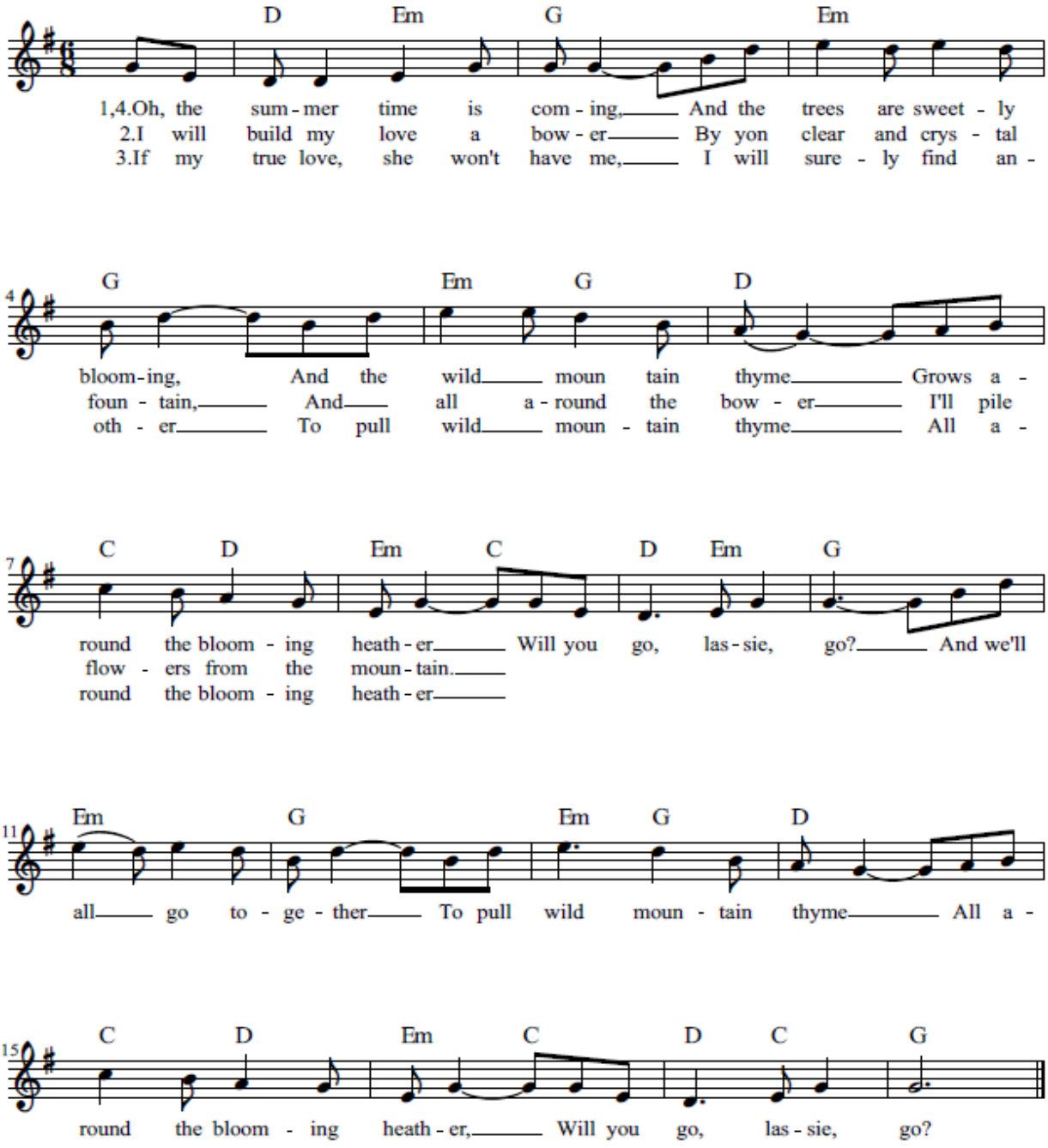


Wild Mountain Thyme

Francis McPeake

Will You Go, Lassie, Go?

Francis McPeake



1957

Irish Session Music Primer

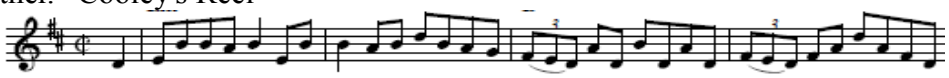
Here are some simple bits of background on the traditional Celtic music found in this session book. It's not definitive, but will give everyone a common vocabulary and understanding of some of the aspects peculiary to traditional music. The three main sections will be on the forms, the tempo, and the ornamentation. First, there'll be a very brief bit of rhythmic music theory.

The beat in music is simply what you walk to, march to, or dance to. The beat in music is divided into “duple,” meaning two or four beats per measure (or bar), and “triple,” meaning three beats per measure. Each of those is further divided into what is called “simple,” or one, sometimes three, upbeats per beat (for a total ot two or four), or “compound,” meaning two upbeats per beat (for a total of three). As an example, a simple rhythm might be counted “one-and-two-and-one-and-two-and” with each beat happening on a number, and each upbeat on an “and.” A compound rhythm might be counted “one-and-a-two-and-a” with each beat happening on number and two equal upbeats between. Don't get it? You will when you get through the next section.

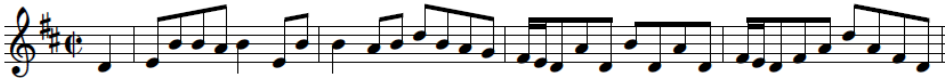
Forms

Forms of traditional Celtic music are defined by how the music falls into the rhythms as described above, and how they are notated. This section describes those found in this book and any peculiarities associated with each.

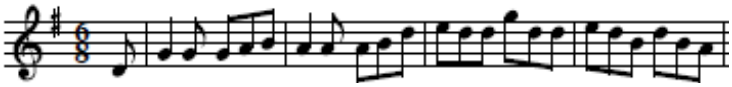
REELS – A reel is a form in simple duple time (see above) and is identified by the cut-time signature (the C with a slash through it). There are two beats (foot taps if your sitting down and playing an instrument) per measure, and the half-note gets the beat. Quarter notes get half a beat each, and eighth notes get ¼ of a beat each and would be counted “one-a-and-a-two-a-and-a”. The eighth notes are all equal to each other. “Cooley's Reel”



One oddity about reels are the “triplets” often used in notation. A triplet is usually a brief duration of compound time injected into simple rhythm, where three noted notes are played equally and identified with the number 3. Not so in the case of a reel. In a reel, the first two eighth notes should be played like two sixteenth notes and the third like a regular eighth note. In the notation above, the last two measures of the example should be played:

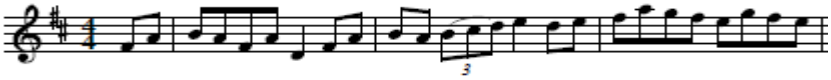


JIGS – A jig is a form in compound duple time and is identified by the time notation of 6/8. Each measure has two beats with three equal eighth notes in each beat. Jigs are probably the most common of all the traditional forms. “The Kesh Jig:”

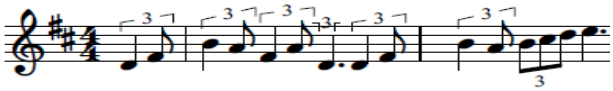


HORNPIPES – Hornpipes can be tricky for two reasons. First, there are two kinds of hornpipes, and second, because the most common tipe is not played as written. Of the second type, the nautical hornpipe, which actually is played as written, an example is here in the book titled “Sailor's Hornpipe,” best known because it was used in the Popeye cartoons and in parts of the Gilligan's Island theme. The nautical hornpipe is in simple duple and is played like a reel.

The other hornpipe is written in 4/4 time for identification, but is played with a compound rhythm, sometimes called a dotted rhythm. In Jazz, it would be referred to as a swing beat. “The Boys of Bluehill” will provide the example:

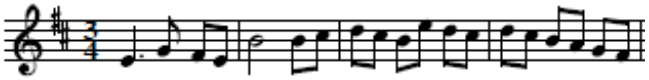


The tricky part is that the triplet written in the music would actually be played as a triplet, and the none triplet parts would be played as if they were all part of unwritten triplets, with the first eighth note played as a quarter note, and the second eighth note played as an eighth note. The first part of the passage above would actually be played like:

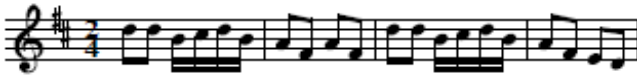


As you can see, it would be a mess to write up, and a mess to read. It's easier to look at the duple notation and just swing it. Jigs, reels, and hornpipes probably comprise 85 to 90 percent of the tunes done. Wrap your head around those, and the rest is easy

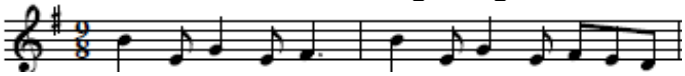
WALTZES – A waltz is a simple triple rhythm, notated by ¾ time, and counted “one-two-three.” Imagine yourself in a German beer garden and hearing the tuba playing “Oom-pa-pa.” The only notable thing is that Celtic waltzes are generally a lot prettier than any of the Strauss waltzes. Here is the opening of “Crested Hens:”



POLKAS – Polkas are in simple duple time and with a signature of 2/4. Nothing special or unusual. Here is the beginning of “John Ryan's Polka”



SLIP JIG – Slip jigs are easily identified by the scary looking 9/8 time signature. It's really nothing more than a compound triple rhythm. If waltzes were “swung,” that is, had a beat like a jig, you'd have a slip jig. There are three beats per measure, and three equal eighth notes per beat. You would count them “one-and-a-two-and-a-three-and-a.” Below is the beginning of “The Butterfly.”



Tempo

Traditional Celtic music is primarily, or at least originally, for dancers. It can seem very fast, not because of the speed of the dancers, but because of all the notes that can be crammed into a single beat. Imagine walking quickly, but not too quickly, down the street. Left, right, left, right. You would probably be taking about two steps per second. In musical terms, that would be 120 beats per minute (BPM). This would also be a top speed for dancers, who are restricted in their movements by gravity. If the music is too slow or too fast, dancers cannot dance. The optimal window is 112 to 120 BPM.

Except for waltzes and slip jigs, which have three beats per measure, virtually all Celtic tunes have two beats per measure. For beginners, playing at 120 BPM is tough. Jigs are probably easiest because there are hardly ever more thant three notes per beat. Reels and hornpipes, which could have 4-6 notes per beat, are much more of a challenge.

Ornaments

Ornamentation is a way to personalize the tunes. By “personalize,” it's a nice way of saying there seems to be no standard. If you do a google search for “Irish music ornamentation” you'll get a lot of hits. Sadly, they all seem to have learned different things, define things differently, and explain things differently. The best bet is to listen to a musician you respect or want to imitate, listen to what they do, and imitate it as best you can. Ornamentation is an aural process, but that said, here are some basic ornaments. There are others. Hopefully, these are not too far off.

CUT – A grace note above the main note in the melody.

TAP – A grace note below the main note in the melody.

CASADH – Start on the note, go above the note, then return.

SHORT ROLL – Imagine a cut, the main note, a tap, and the main note.

LONG ROLL – Starts on the main note, goes up, back to the main note, down, then back to the main note. Called a turnabout in non-Irish music and written with what looks like a tilda.

It should be emphasized that ornamentation should be softer than the main notes in the melody and should not be distracting. They are not a substitute for learning the melody. In general, the following steps should be observed.

1. Learn the piece. Playing from music is the simplest. Learning from a recording is better because it trains the ear (a metaphor for the aural area of the brain that allows us to recognize tunes and recreate them in our minds). Practicing is what strengthens the aural area.
2. Play at a constant tempo. People have a tendency to play the easy parts faster and the difficult parts slower. Notes should be held their full duration. The duration of a note does not end until the start of the following note, unless specifically notated otherwise. Use a metronome to keep you honest. If you have trouble playing with a metronome, then you have trouble playing at a constant tempo, in which case, you REALLY need the metronome.
3. Play by ear. Memorizing from music is time consuming. Repetition reinforces the link between the brain and the muscle positions of the hand. Basically your teaching your subconscious how to play the tune, and the subconscious controls the hands.
4. Push yourself up to tempo. Unless you're a lightning fast sight-reader, you'll find that trying to play fast while reading music is counter productive.
5. Add expression. Once you're up to tempo, you'll begin feeling the flow of the music, the phrasing, and where ornamentation will be effective.
6. **Not going to say “have fun.” If you weren't having fun, enjoying the time spent, and exercising the creative area of your brain by playing and listening, you wouldn't have come this far to begin with.**