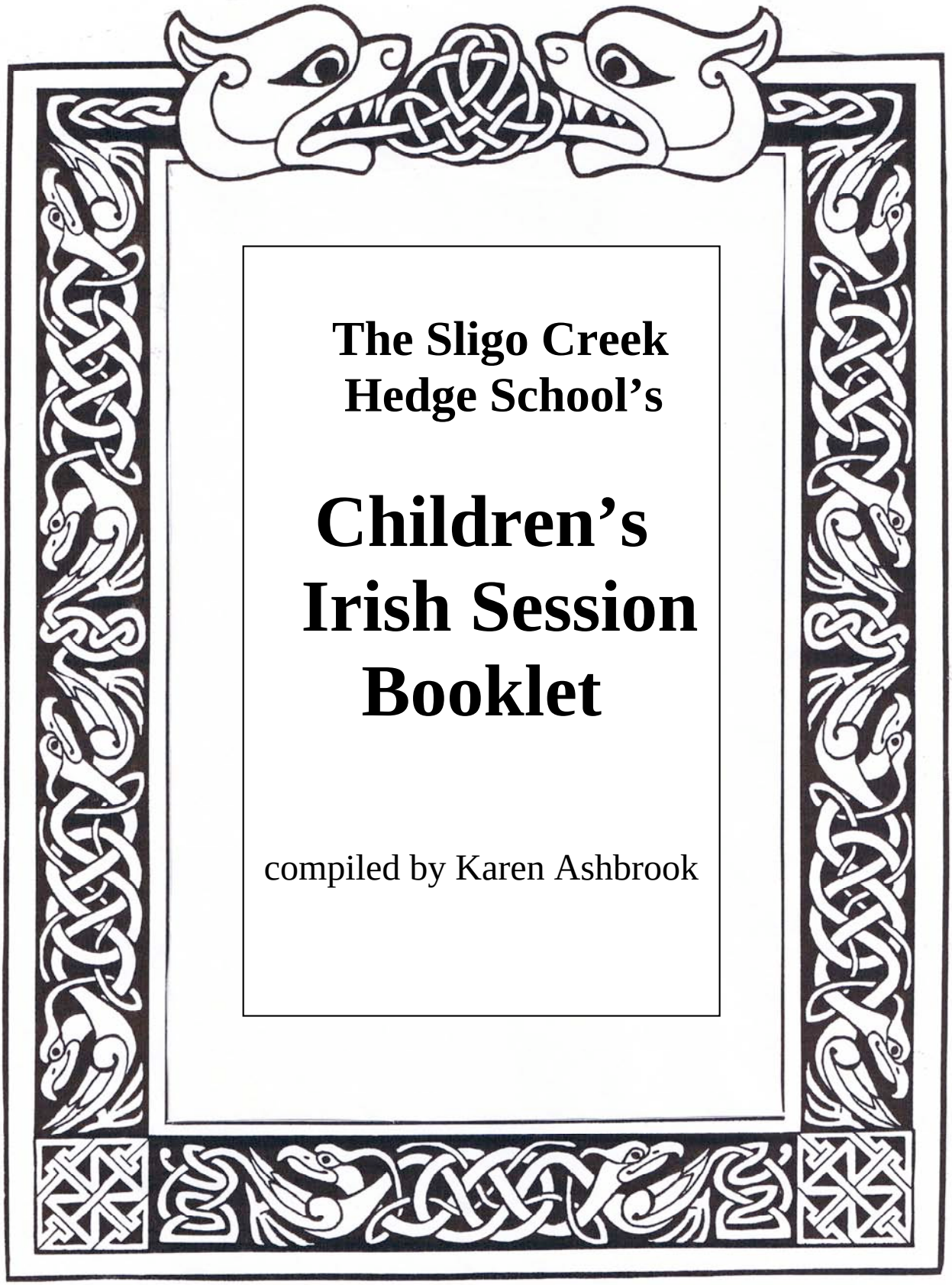

The Sligo Creek Hedge School's

Children's Irish Session Booklet

compiled by Karen Ashbrook

Irish Tune Types

Reels - fast 4/4, can be accented on beats 1 & 3 or 2 & 4. Ornamentation- grace notes, triplets, rolls. The majority of tunes played in sessions are reels. A “single” reel is a reel that is only 16 measures once through (as opposed to the standard 32 measures.)

Jigs - 6/8 (double jigs) are the most common and should be played at a *moderate* tempo. 9/8 jigs, also called "slip" or "hop" jigs, are rarer. Occasionally you will find 6/8 or 9/8 marches (more common in Scottish music). 12/8 (single) jigs are also called "slides" and are played for the Kerry Set (dance). Basic slide rhythm is quarter eighth. They can be ornamented the same as reels.

Hornpipes - are a *moderate* tempo 4/4 with a bouncy beat. Although generally written out in straight eighth notes, they are played rhythmically with a slightly dotted beat. Hornpipes favor lots of triplets!

Slow Airs - are played primarily as solos or with a single accompanest, allowing flexibility of interpretation and a loose meter. The best way to learn a slow air is from a *sean nos* singer. Also listen to harp arrangements.

Polkas - are popular in Kerry and are used for set dancing. Sixteenth notes are often used to spice up polkas.

Set Dances - are tunes in 6/8 or 4/4, often with an unusual number of measures. There are specific tunes for specific dances.

Marches, Waltzes, Mazurkas, Flings, Highlands, Barndances - the latter three are found mostly in Northern Ireland and are from Scottish and Scandinavian derivations. Irish waltzes are played on the fast side and are often songs.

Planxty - is **not** a tune type. It is a tune that has been composed in someone's honor, thus they can be fast or slow, in any meter. Since the blind harper Turlough O'Carolan made his living playing and composing music for patrons, many of his tunes are titled "Planxty (your name here)."

"Songs" have words. "Tunes" are instrumental melodies without words.
A "session" is an informal gathering of musicians to play tunes together.

Please note in an Irish session if someone starts to sing or recite a poem, it is proper etiquette for everyone to be quiet until it is through.

1998 Karen Ashbrook

The 2005 Sligo Creek Hedge School's Children's Irish Session Booklet

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Table of Contents

POLKAS & MARCHES

Peg Ryan's (Kerry Polka) P-1
Mickey Chewing Bubblegum P-1
Rattlin' Bog P-2
John Ryan's (DUM DUM) P-2
69th Street (Galway Rogues) P-3
O, the Britches Full of Stitches P-4
The Murroe P-4
Rakes of Mallo (march/polka) P-5
O'Donnell Aboo (march) P-5
The Rosetree (march) P-6
Dawning of the Day (march) P-6
Toomore #1 & 2 ..... P-7
Jer the Rigger P-7

HORNPIPES

The Rights of Man H-1
The Boys of Bluehill H-1
Belfast Hornpipe - simple H-2
Belfast Hornpipe (Sweeps) H-3
Harvest Home Hornpipe H-4
The Stack of Barley H-5
Home Ruler H-5

JIGS

Morrison's J-1
Lark in the Morning J-2
The Road to Lisdoonvarna J-3
My Darling Asleep J-3
Charlie Mulvihill's J-4
The Butterfly (slip jig) J-4
Fig For a Kiss (slip jig) J-5
Another Jig Will Do (slip jig) J-5
The Weaver's (slide) J-5
The Scattery Island Slide J-6
Cliffs of Moher J-6
The Lilting Banshee J-7
Swallowtail Jig J-7
Connaughtman's Rambles J-8
Foxhunter's (slip jig) J-9
Barney Brallaghan (slip jig) J-9
Rambling Pitchfork J-10
Kesh Jig J-10

REELS

Red Haired Boy (Little Beggerman) ... R-1
Mountain Road R-2
Stenson's #2 ..... R-2
Glass of Beer R-3
Silver Spear R-3
Bag of Potatoes R-4
Humours of Tulla R-4
Woman of the House R-5
St. Anne's Reel R-5
Man of the House R-6
Concertina Reel R-6

MISCELLANY

South Wind (waltz) M-1
Innishere (slow air) M-2
Primrose Lasses (fling) M-3
The New Harp -Y Delyn Newydd
"PINK BUNNIES" (Welsh reel) M-3
Lucy Farr's (barndance) M-4
Shoe the Donkey (mazurka) M-4

POETRY INDEX

Sleep Waltz - *Terence Winch* J-8
The Potato - *Mary Fell* R-4
The Fiddler of Dooney - *W. B. Yeats* .....
final page

ODE

We are the music-makers
and we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea breakers,
And sitting in desolate streams; - World-
losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy (1844-81)

Updated March 12, 2006
www.karenashbrook.com

About the 2005 Sligo Creek Hedge School's Children's Irish Session & this Booklet

The children's Irish music session at Nanny O'Brien's in Washington, D.C. started in January of 1998. Inspired by a house session with Jim Coogan, an Irish accordion player visiting from New York, I realized that a regular session was the only way to help my students (and my son) build and retain repertoire while having fun. Little did I suspect how successful it would be. Every month we see new faces. Many of the tunes in this booklet were brought to the session by the children. The session has also led to the start of the Sligo Creek Hedge School - a children's Irish music and arts camp.

Aside from the fact the session is fun, I do this because I love seeing the children play and I finally feel like I am giving back to the tradition. Thanks to the many musicians who have helped me learn over the years - Danny Lennihan from County Limerick; Roger Sherlock in London; Philippe Varlet, Brendan Mulvihill and Billy McComiskey are but a few that shared their time and tunes with me.

Thanks to the O'Neill Malcom Branch of Comhaltas Ceóltoiri Eireann for financial support for these booklets. CCE was formed in Dublin in 1950 to promote Irish culture, dance, music, language and literature. It now has 460 branches around the world including Moscow, Tokyo and Anchorage. Our local branch runs ceilis, music classes, a feis (dance competition) and a festival. The CCE homepage is www.comhaltas.com.

Thanks for chordal help from Paul Oorts. The chords are only a suggestion and should be treated as such.

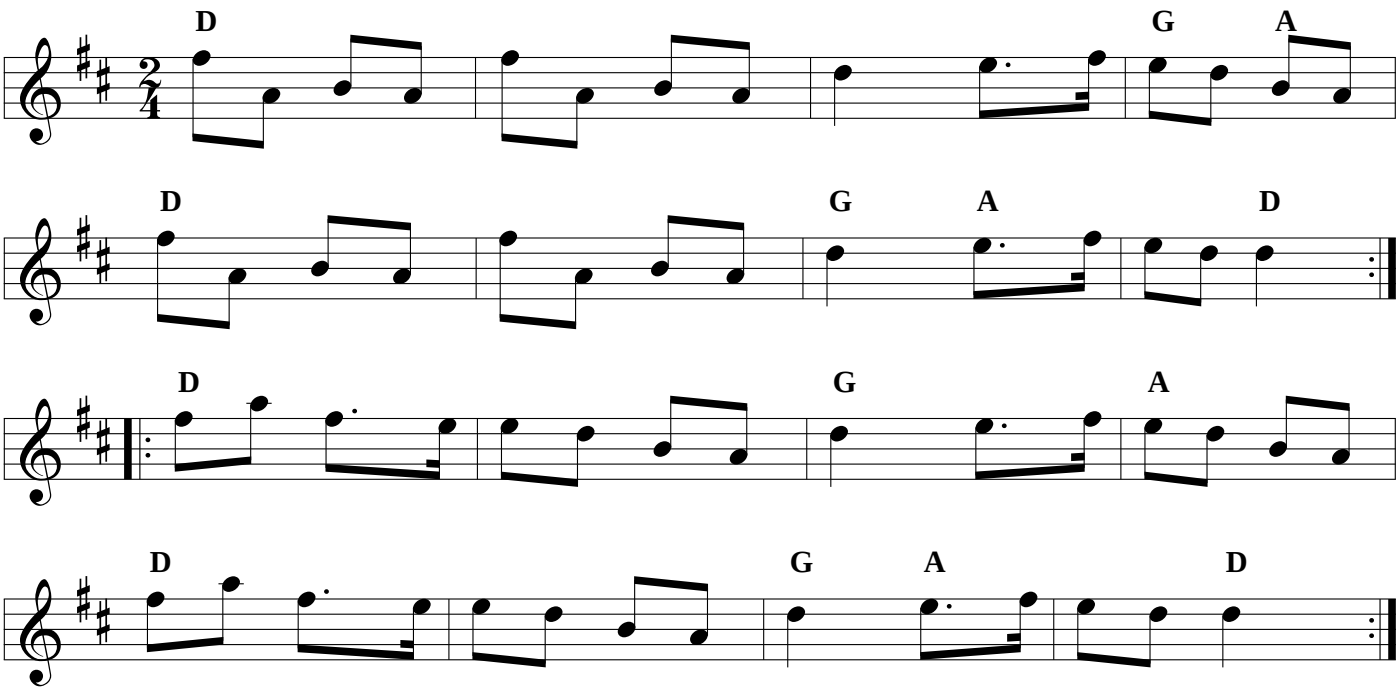
Our session has met for 6 years in the backroom of Nanny O'Brien's Pub. Nanny's was wonderful host for many years. In January 2005 we moved the session up to Mrs. O'Leary's Pub, at 555 Quince Orchard Dr in Gaithersburg, MD (corner of Clopper Rd and Quince Orchard). Come join us on the second Monday night of each month, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Musicians (under 18) get free drinks !

Karen Ashbrook
301/592-0101
mail@karenashbrook.com
http://karenashbrook.com

POLKAS

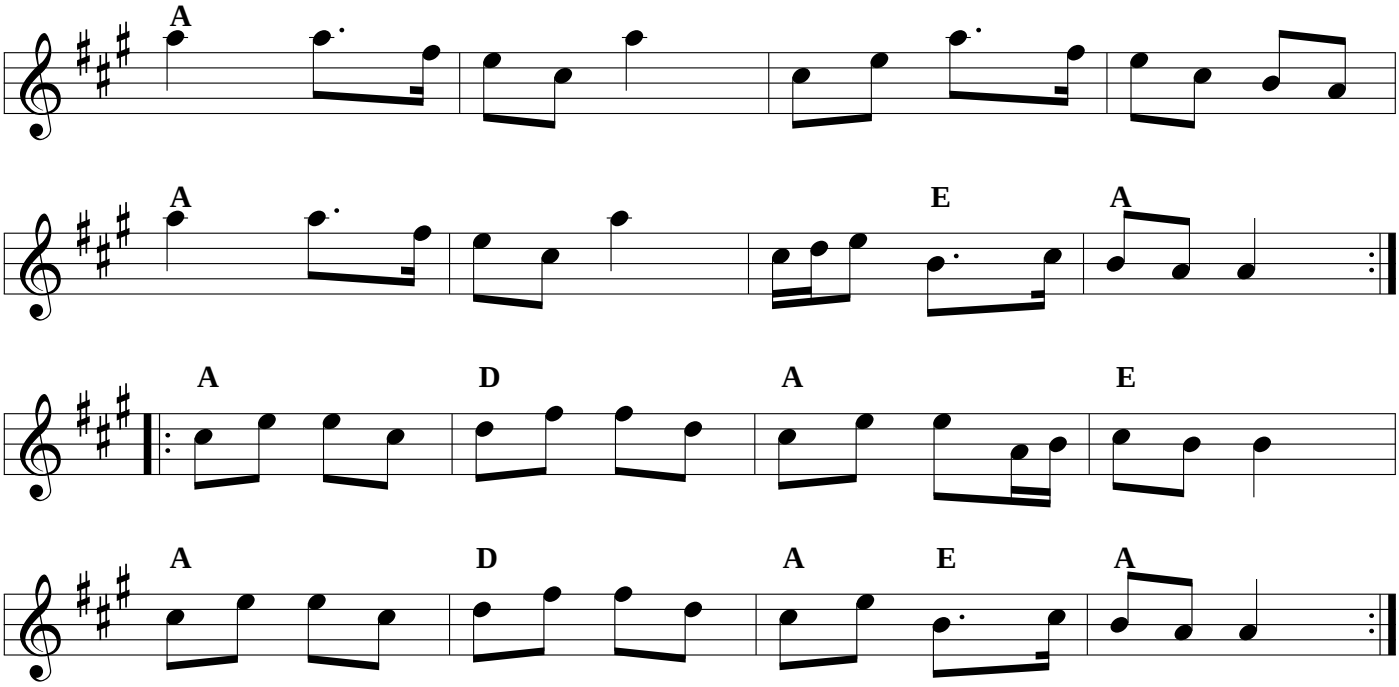
Peg Ryan's
(Kerry Polka)

Polka



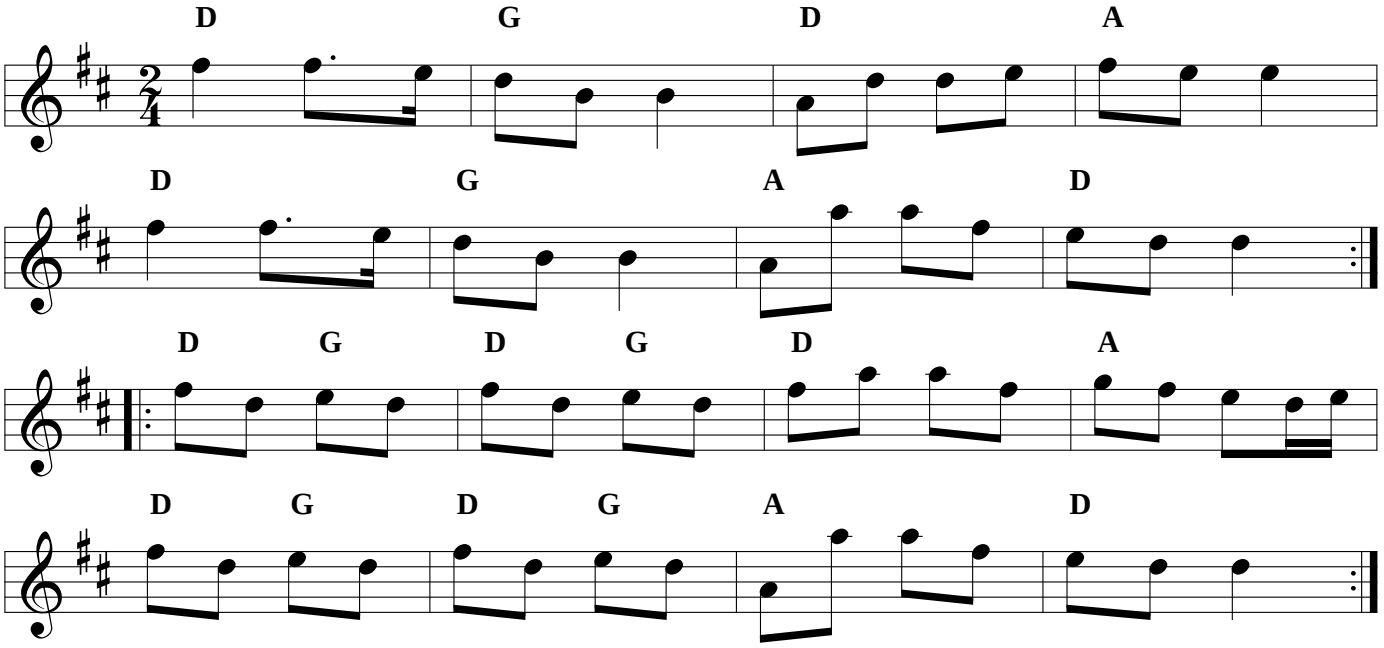
Mickey Chewing Bubblegum
(Bill Sullivan's)

Polka



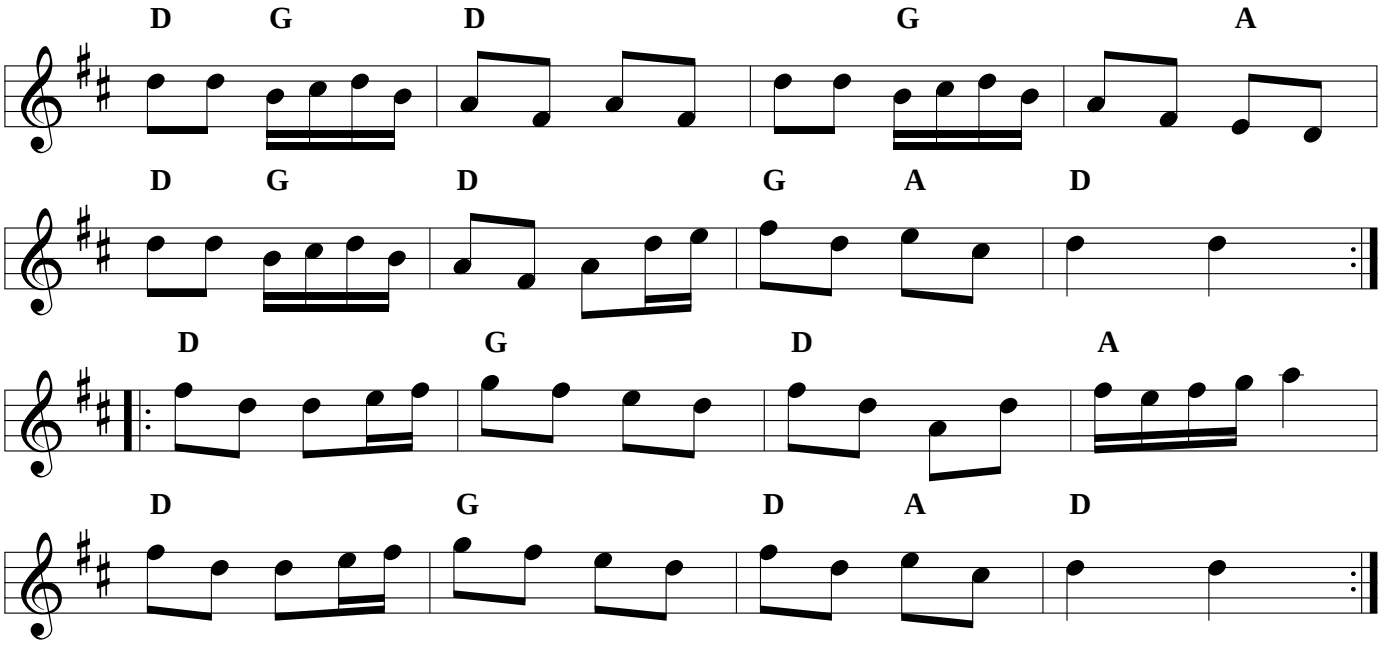
Rattlin' Bog

Polka



John Ryan's (Dum Dum)

Polka



69th Street

Polka

Em D

Em D Bm Em

Em D

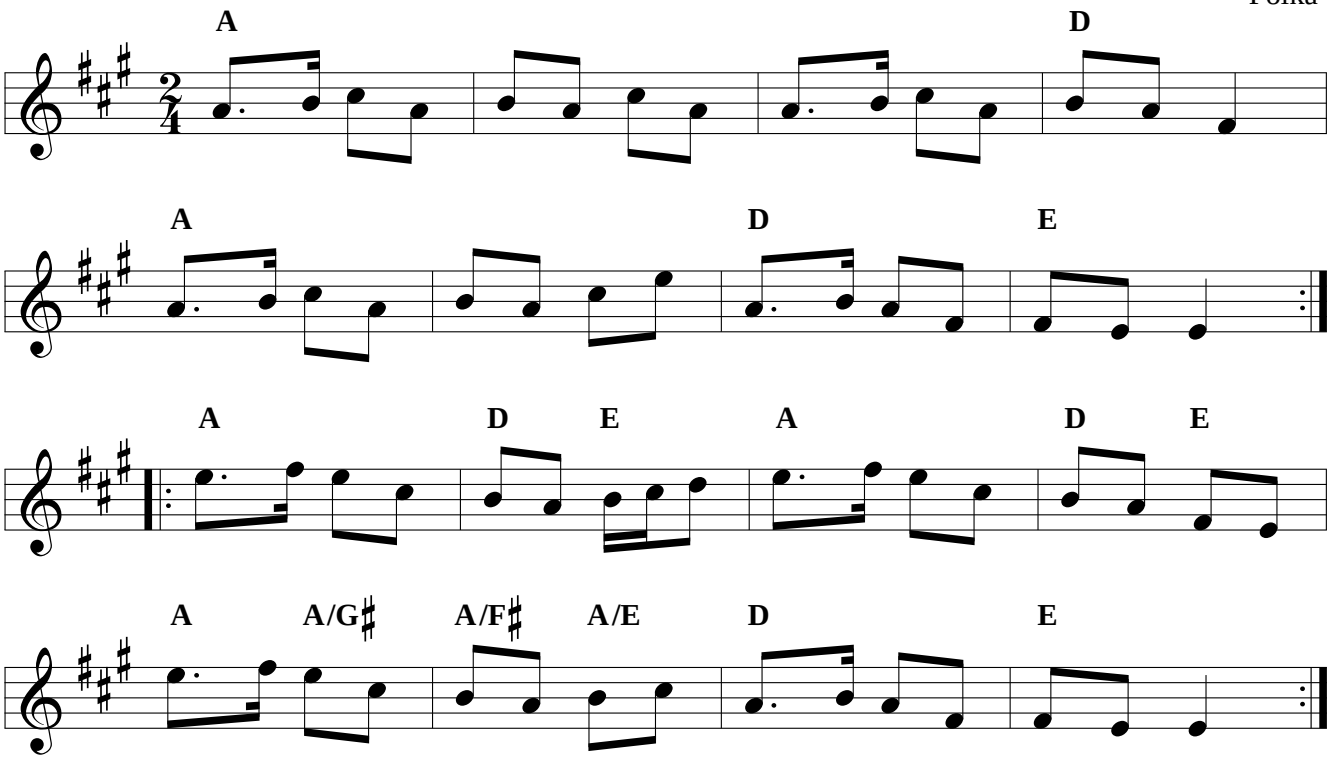
Em D Bm Em

Em D

Em D Bm Em

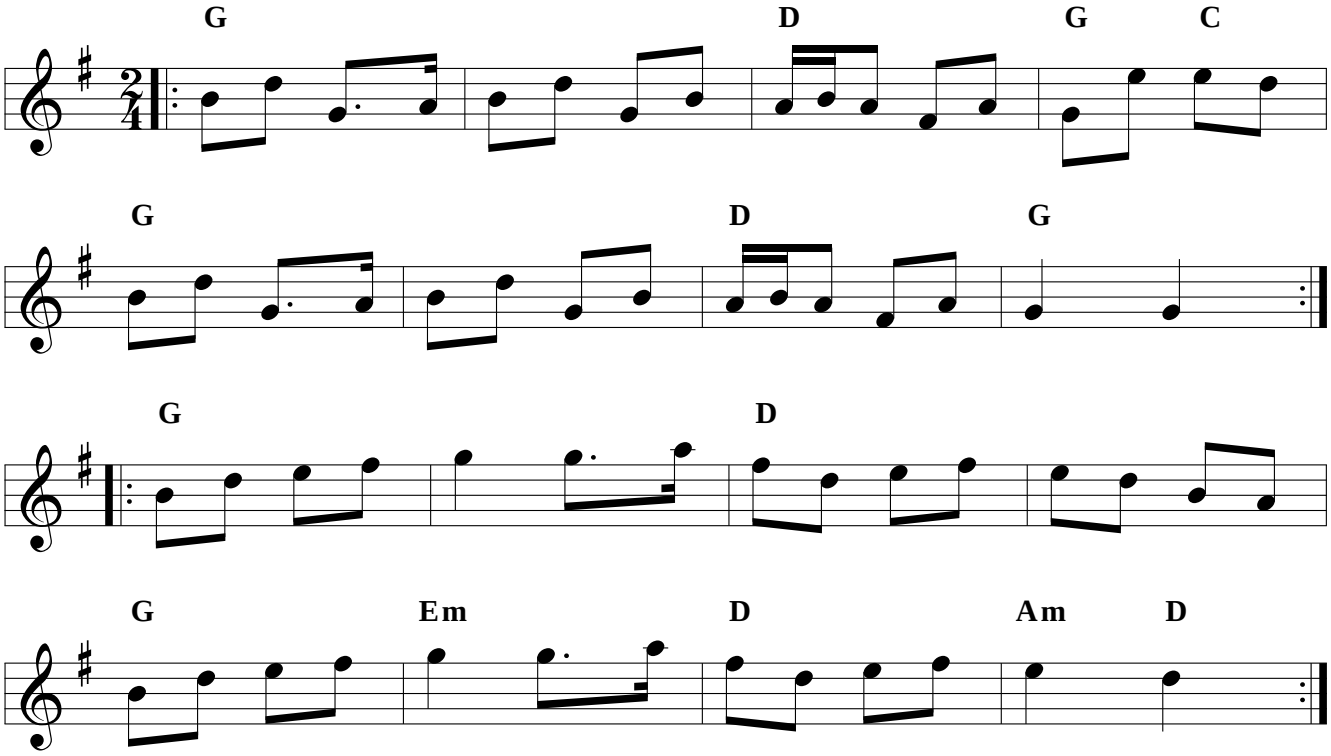
O, The Britches Full of Stitches

Polka



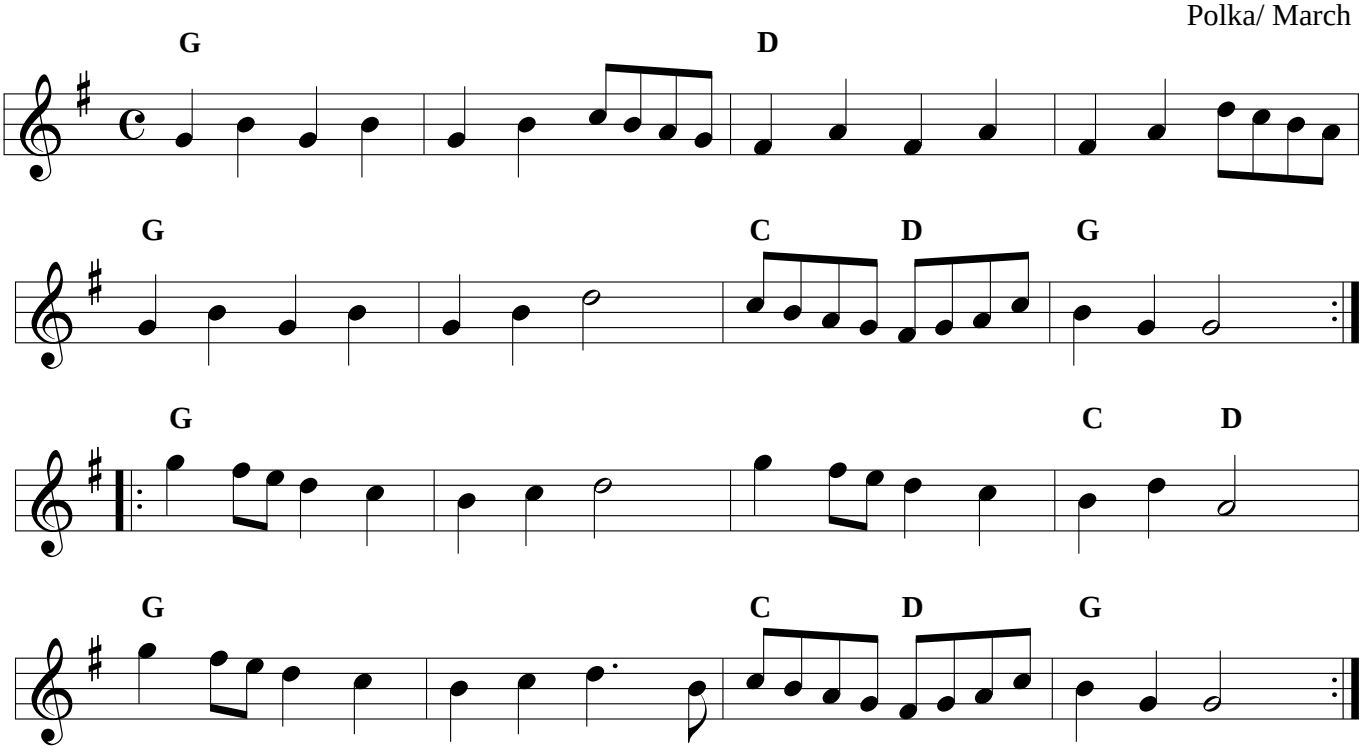
The Murroe

Polka



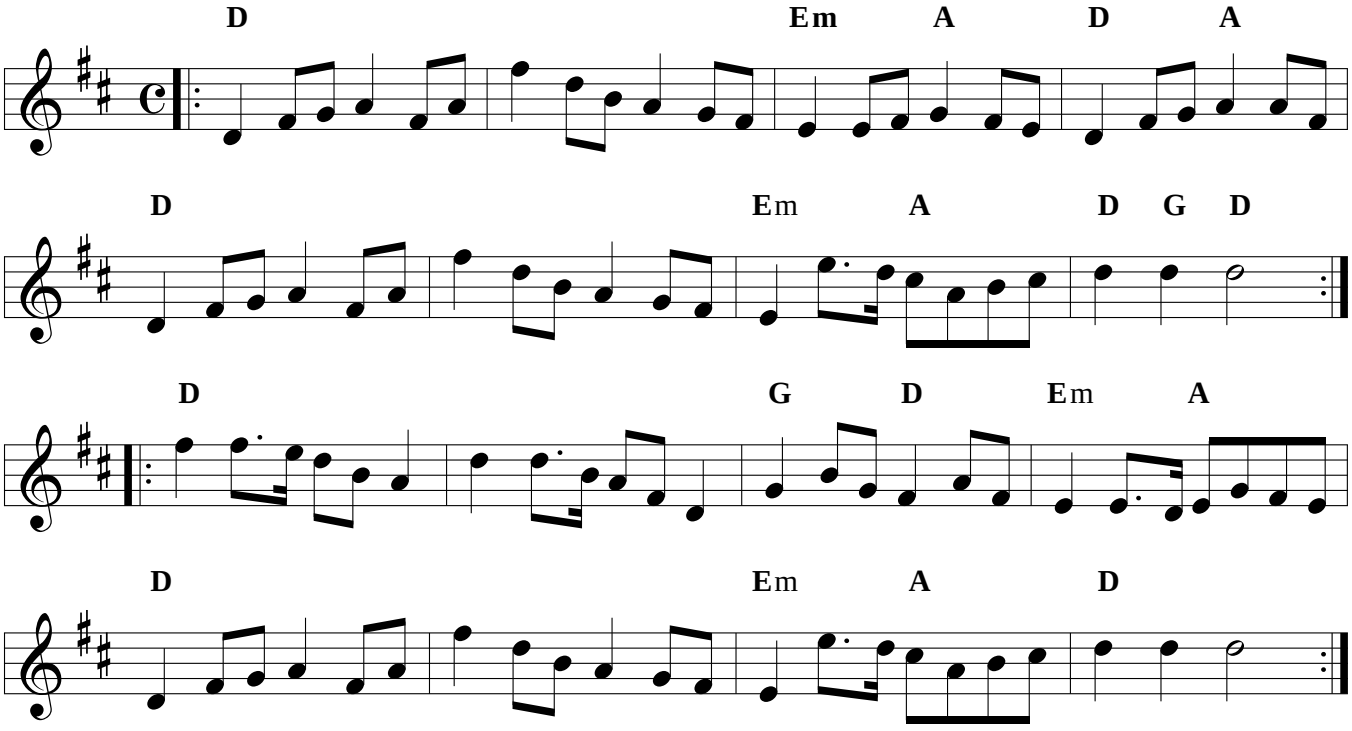
Rakes of Mallo

Polka/ March

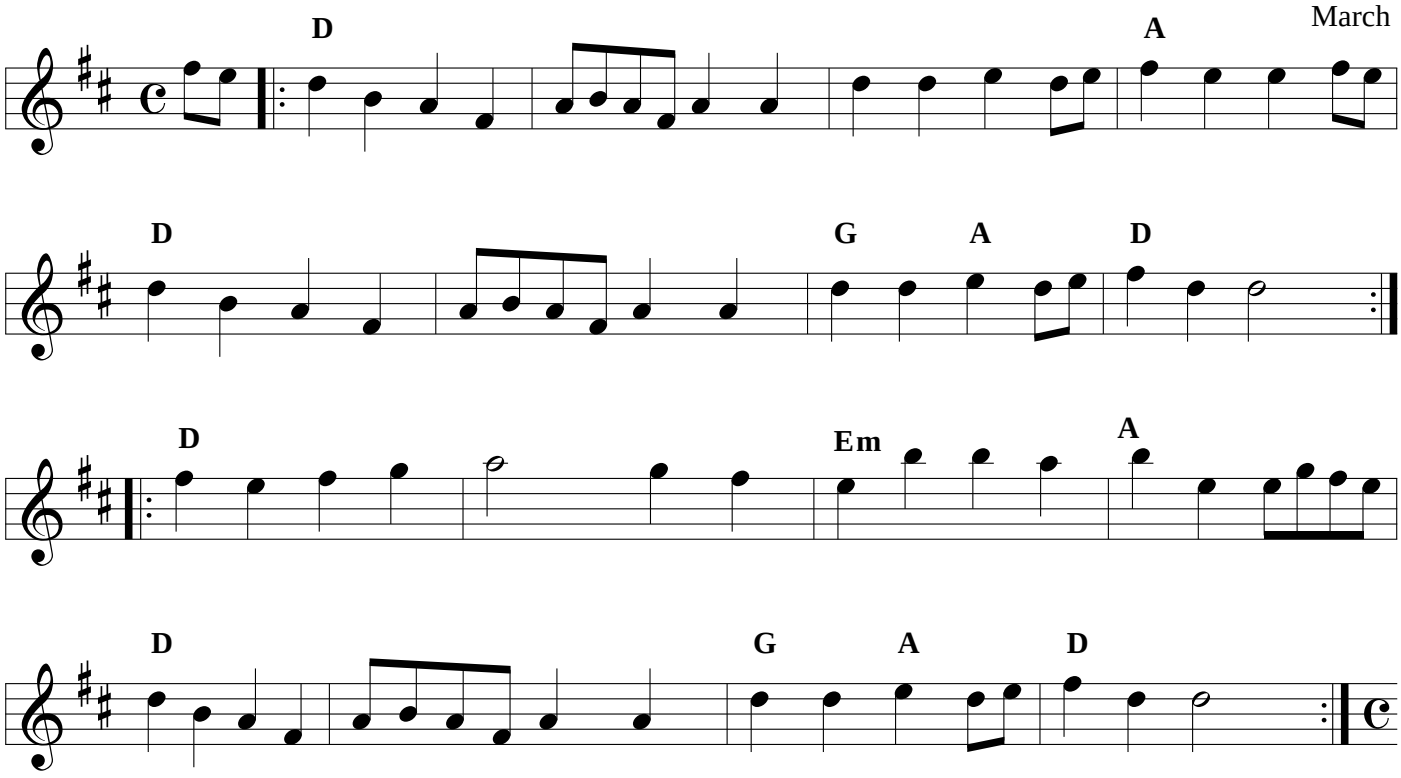


O'Donnell Aboo

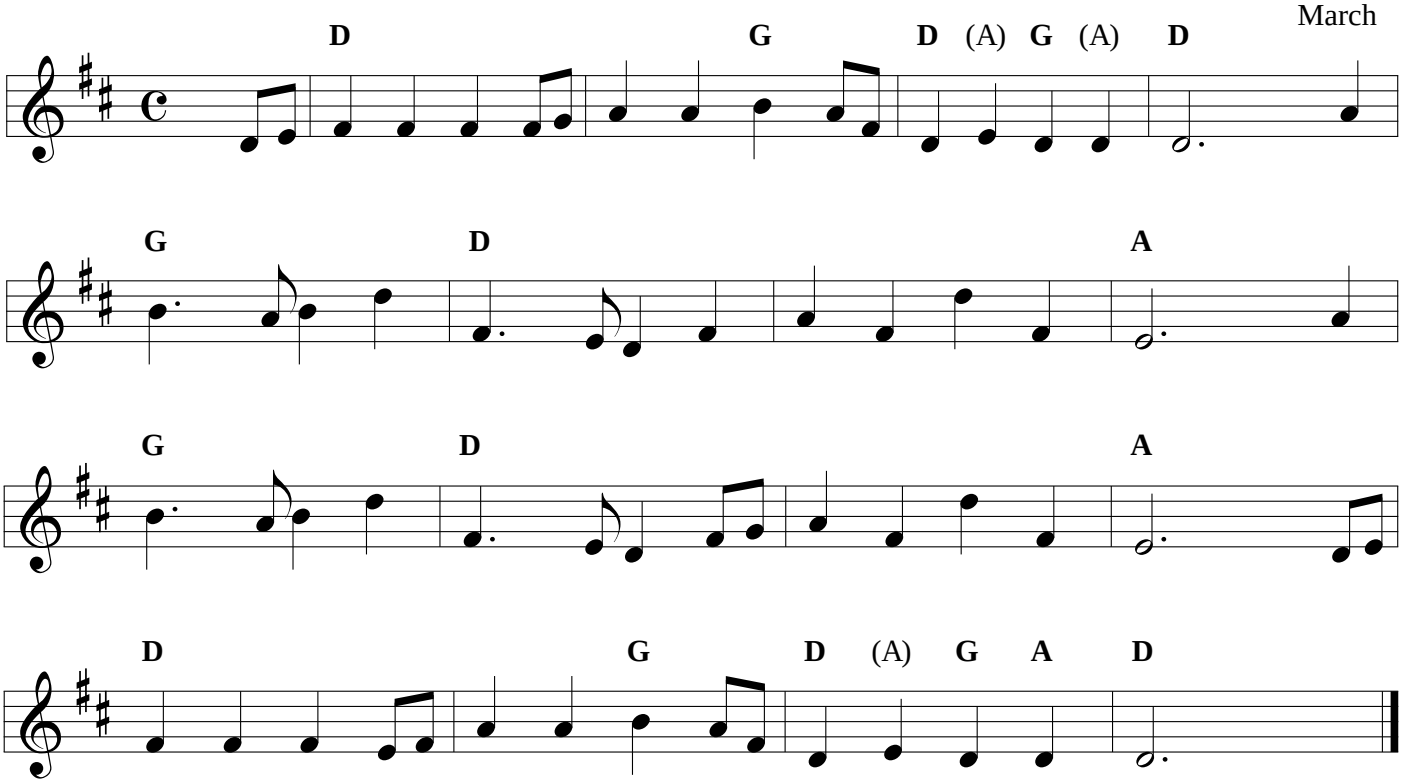
March



The Rosetree



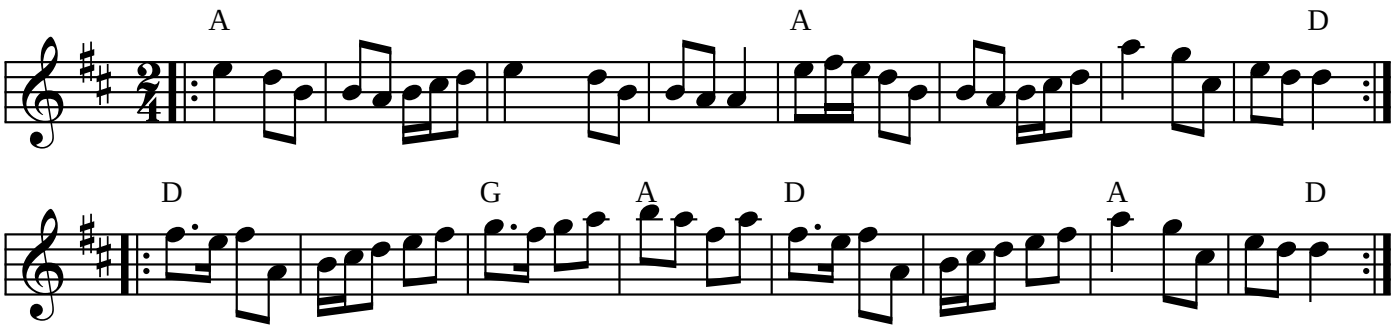
The Dawning of the Day



Toomore #1

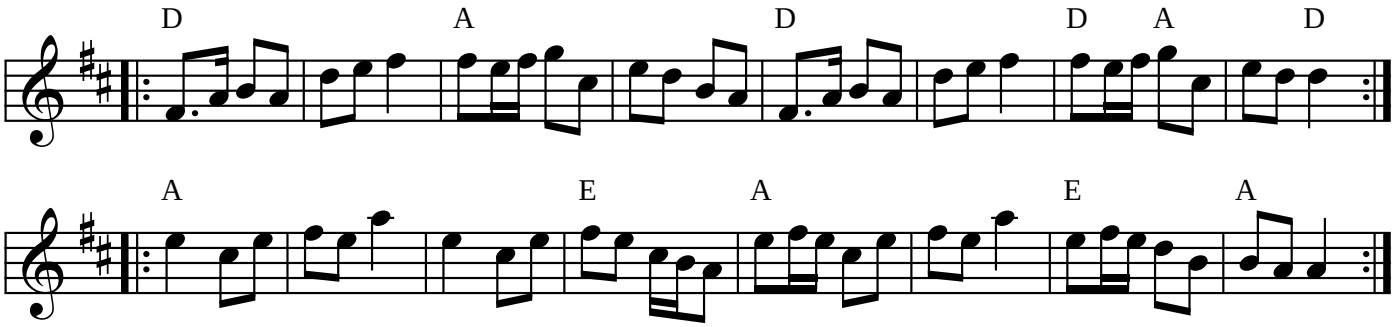
Polka

from Music From Ireland, Vol IV



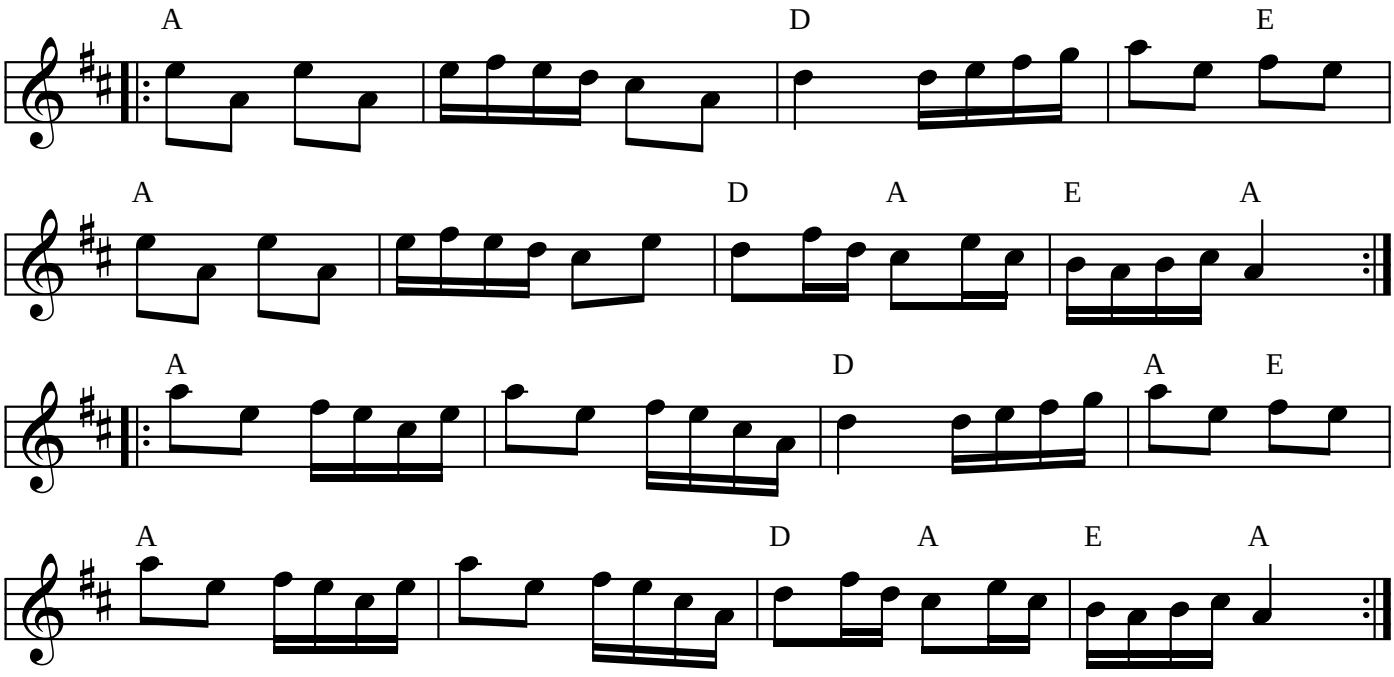
Toomore #2

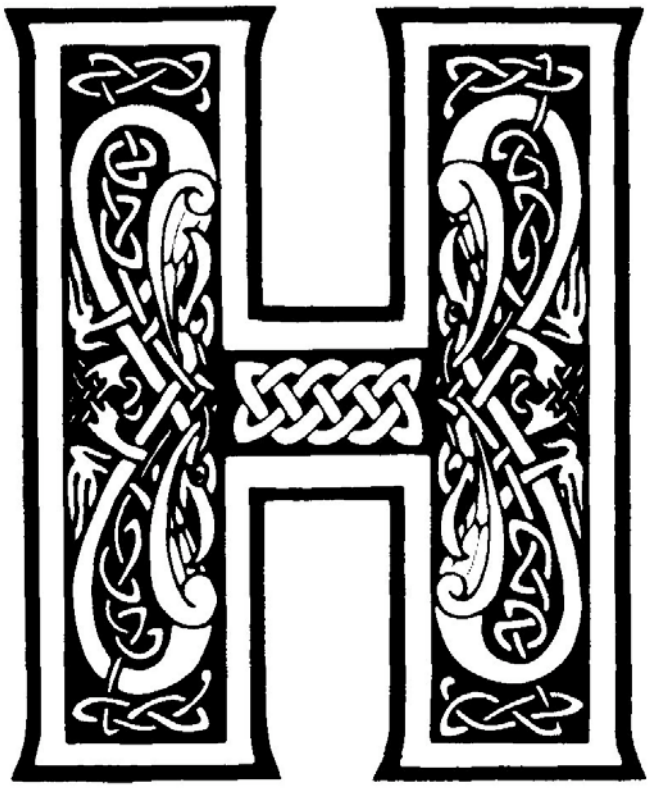
Polka



Jer the Rigger

Polka



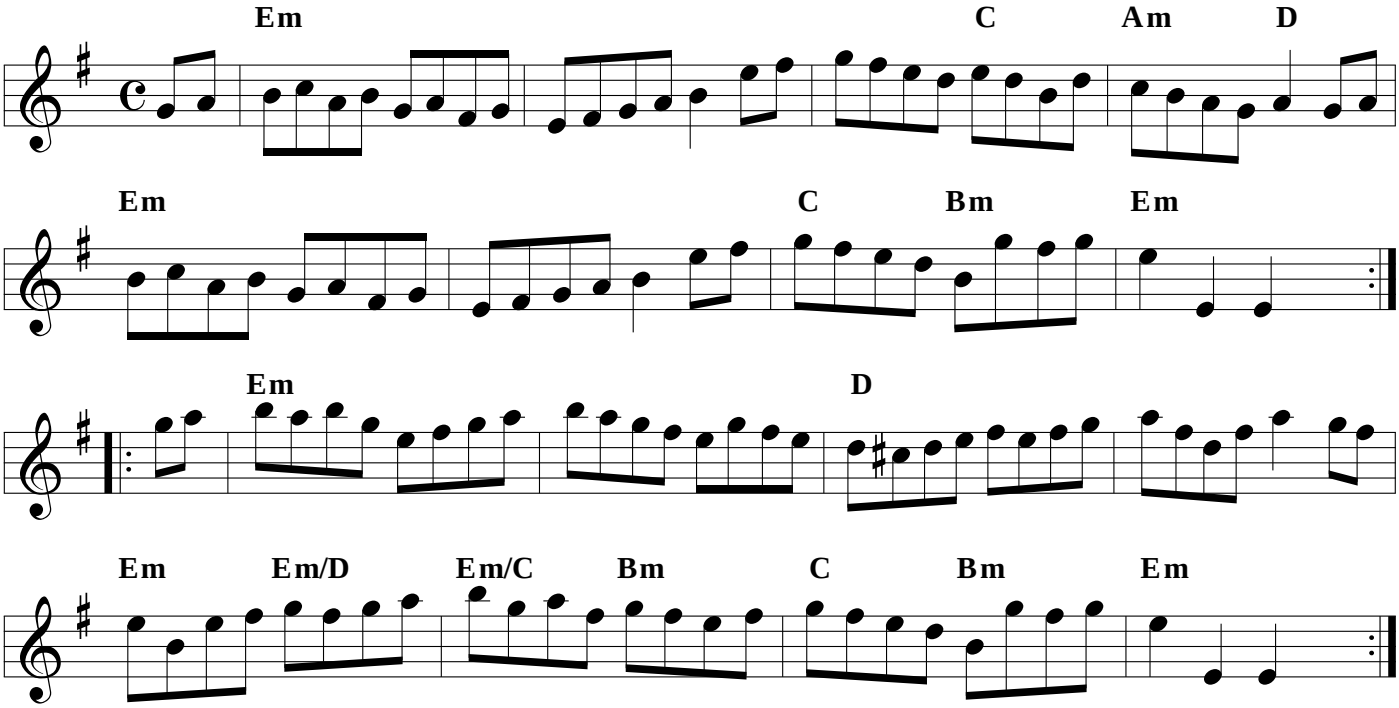


HORNPIPES

Rights of Man

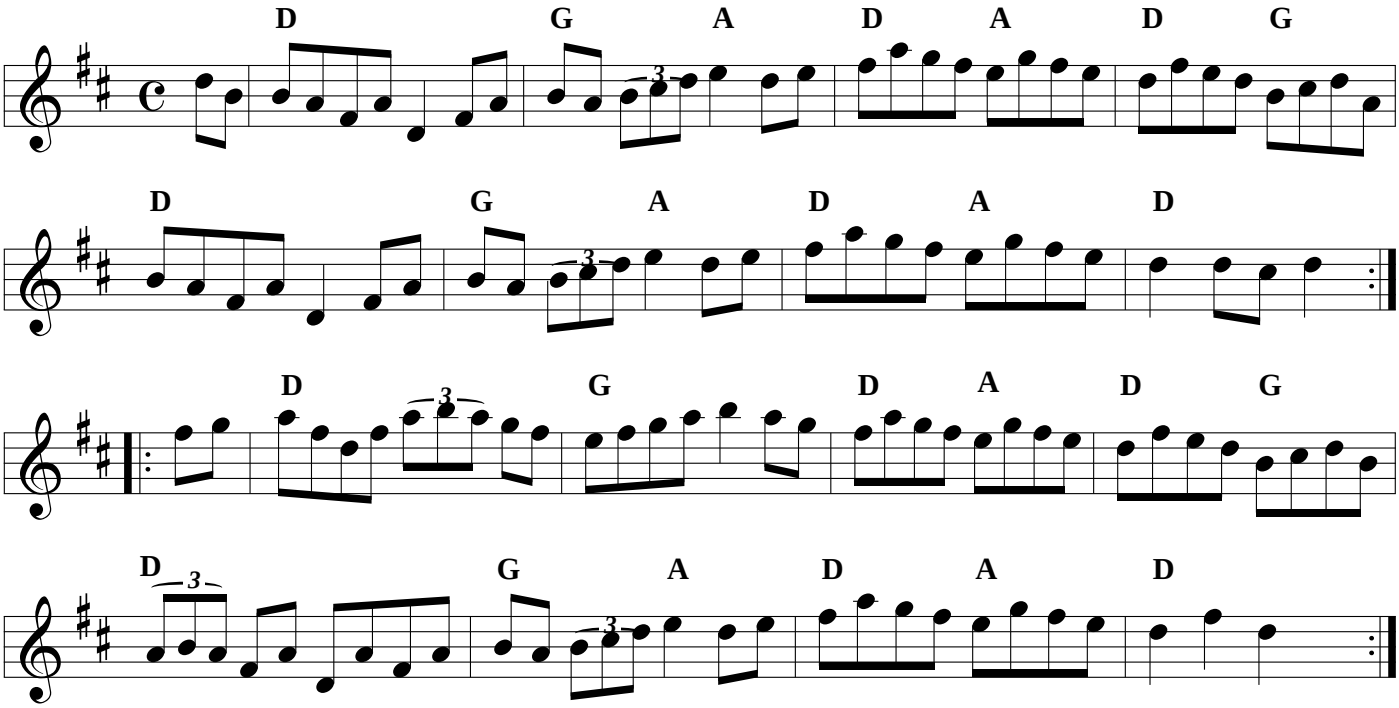
Hornpipe

Note: hornpipes are played with a bouncy rhythm



The Boys of Bluehill

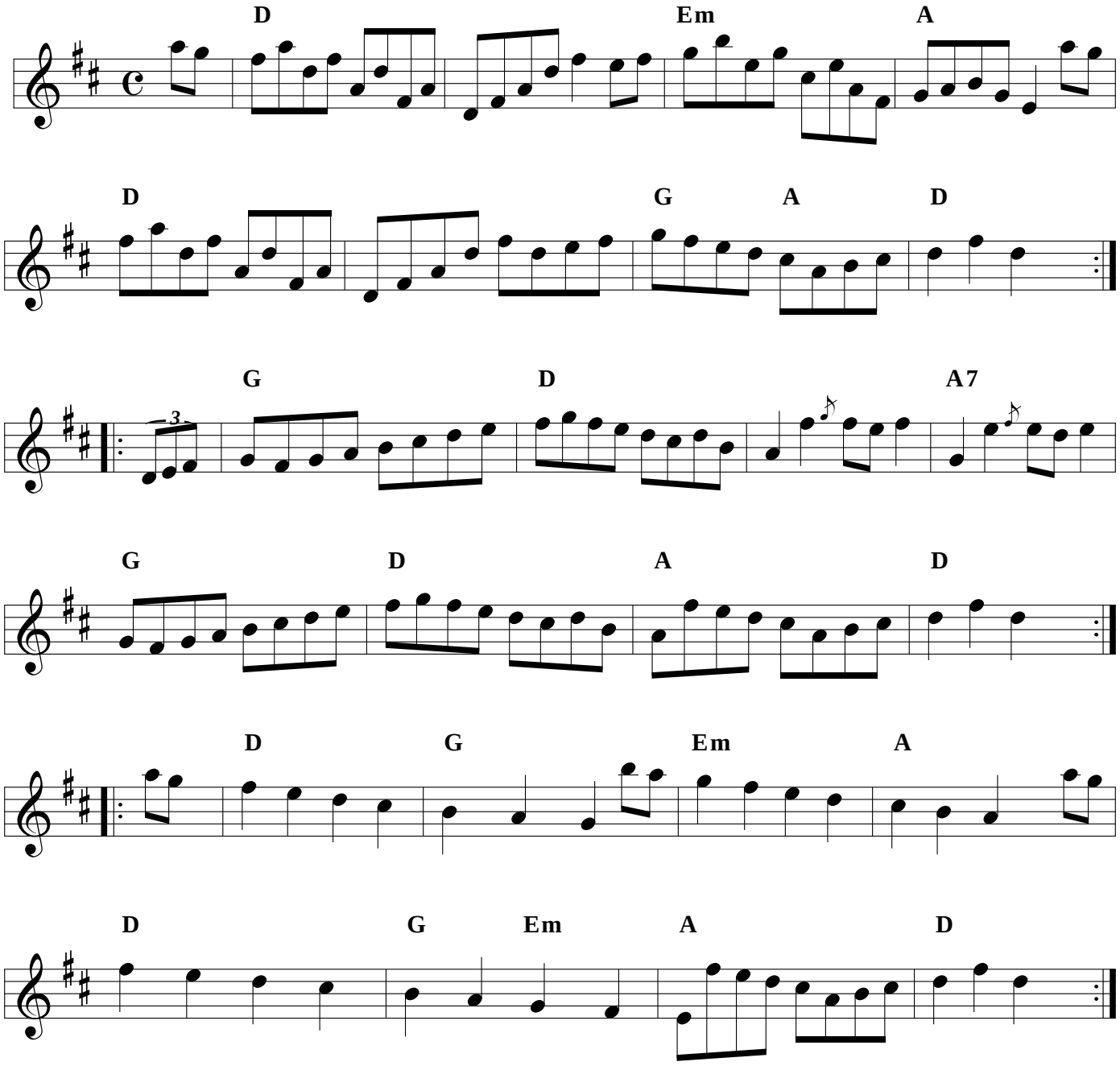
Hornpipe



The Belfast Hornpipe

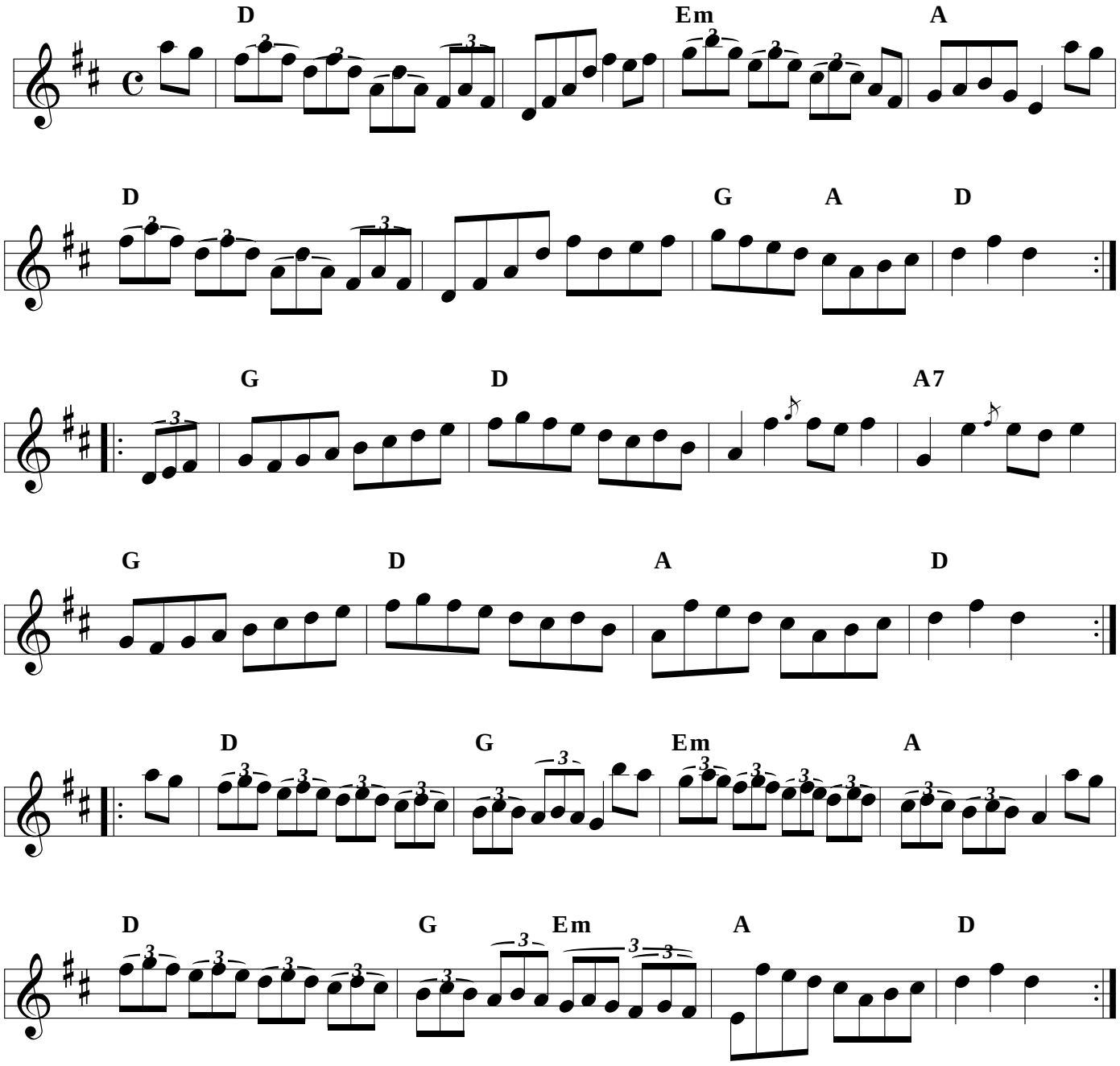
(simple version)

Hornpipe



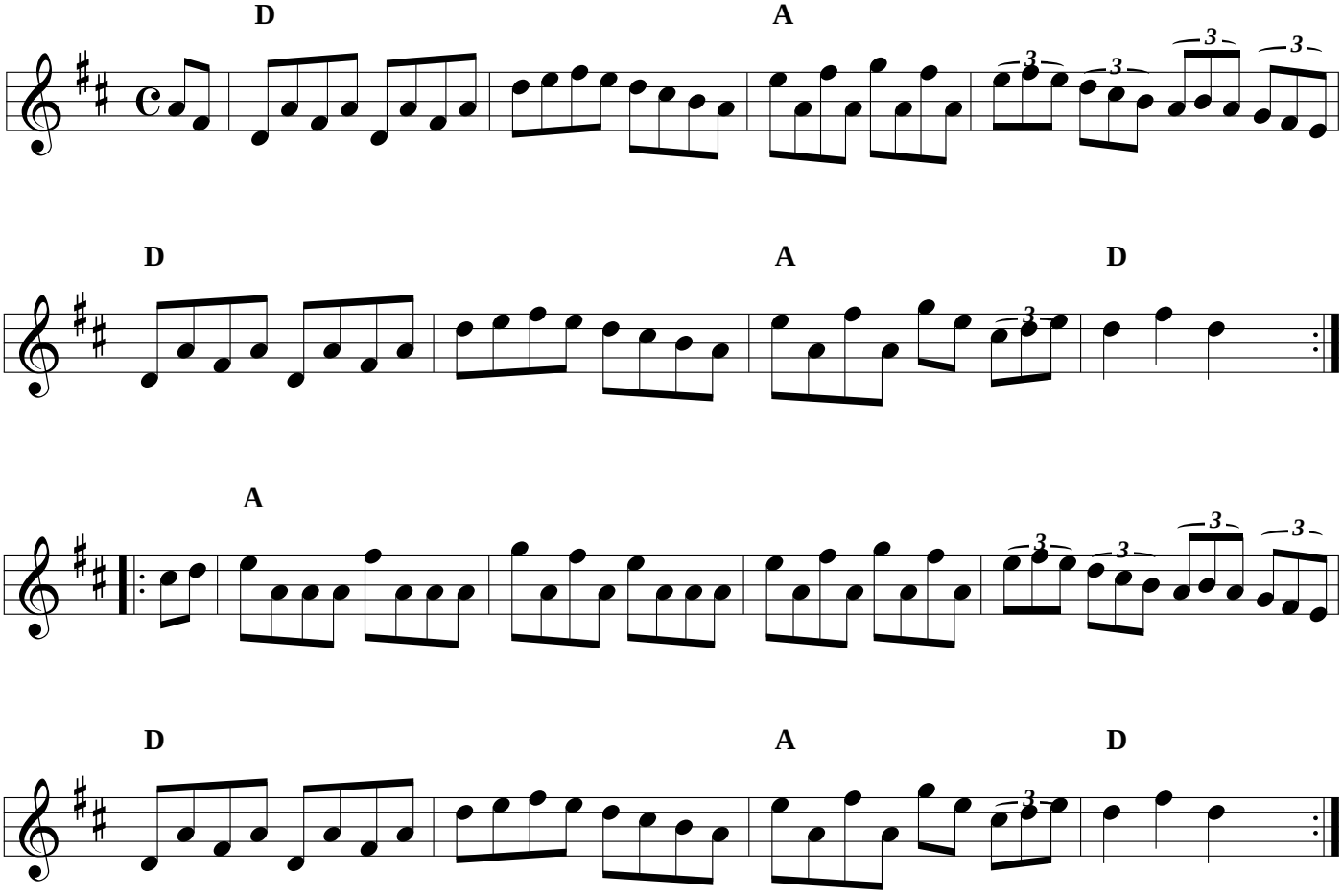
The Belfast Hornpipe

Hornpipe



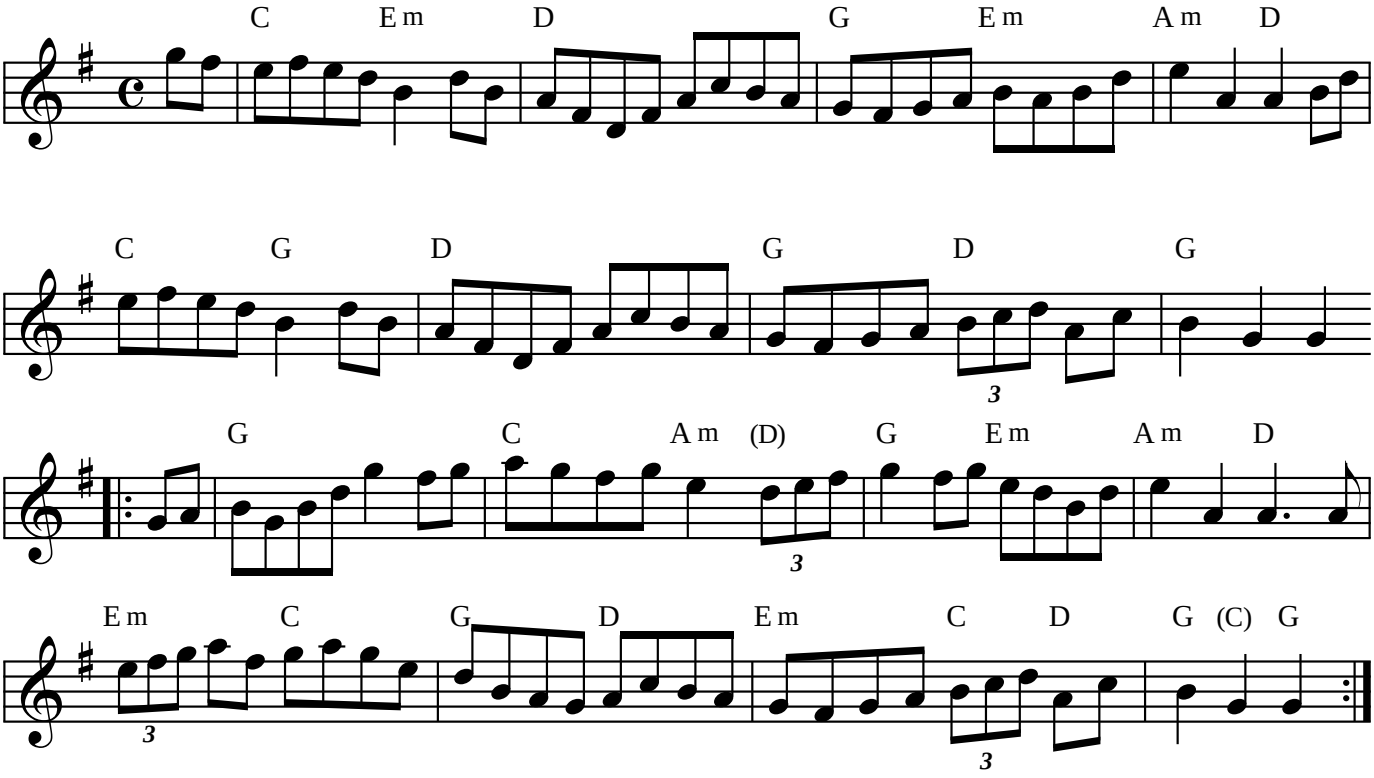
Harvest Home

Hornpipe



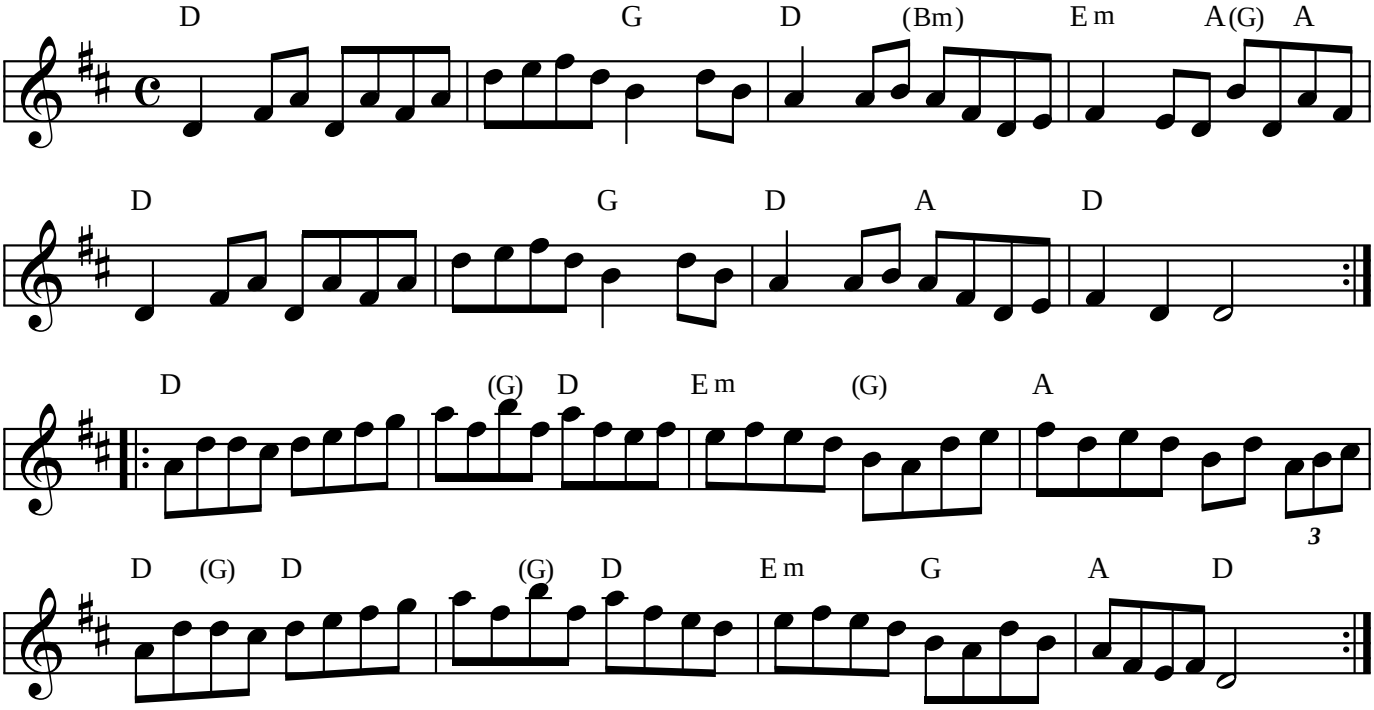
The Stack of Barley

Hornpipe



Home Ruler

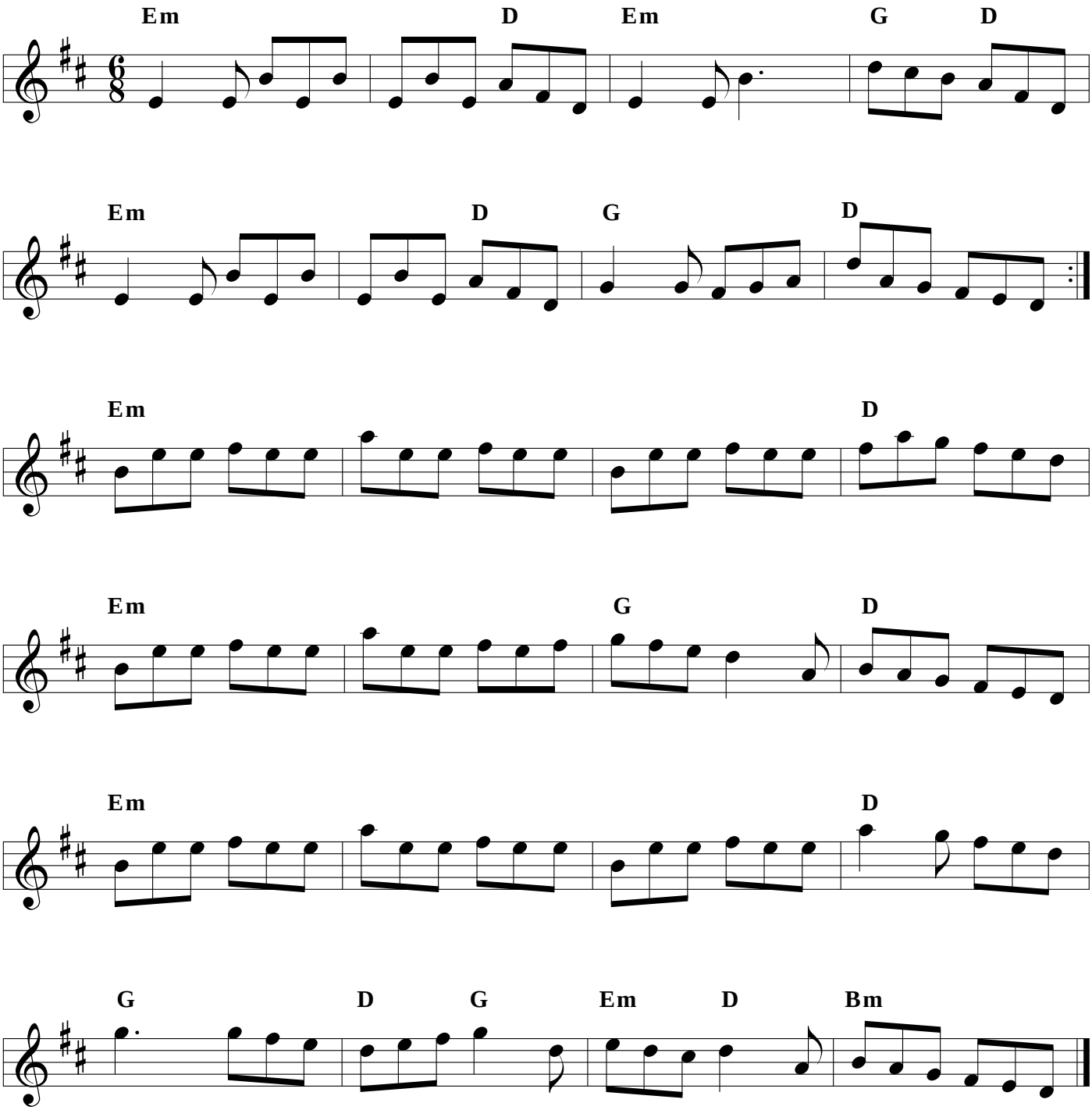
Hornpipe
Frank McCallum



JIGS

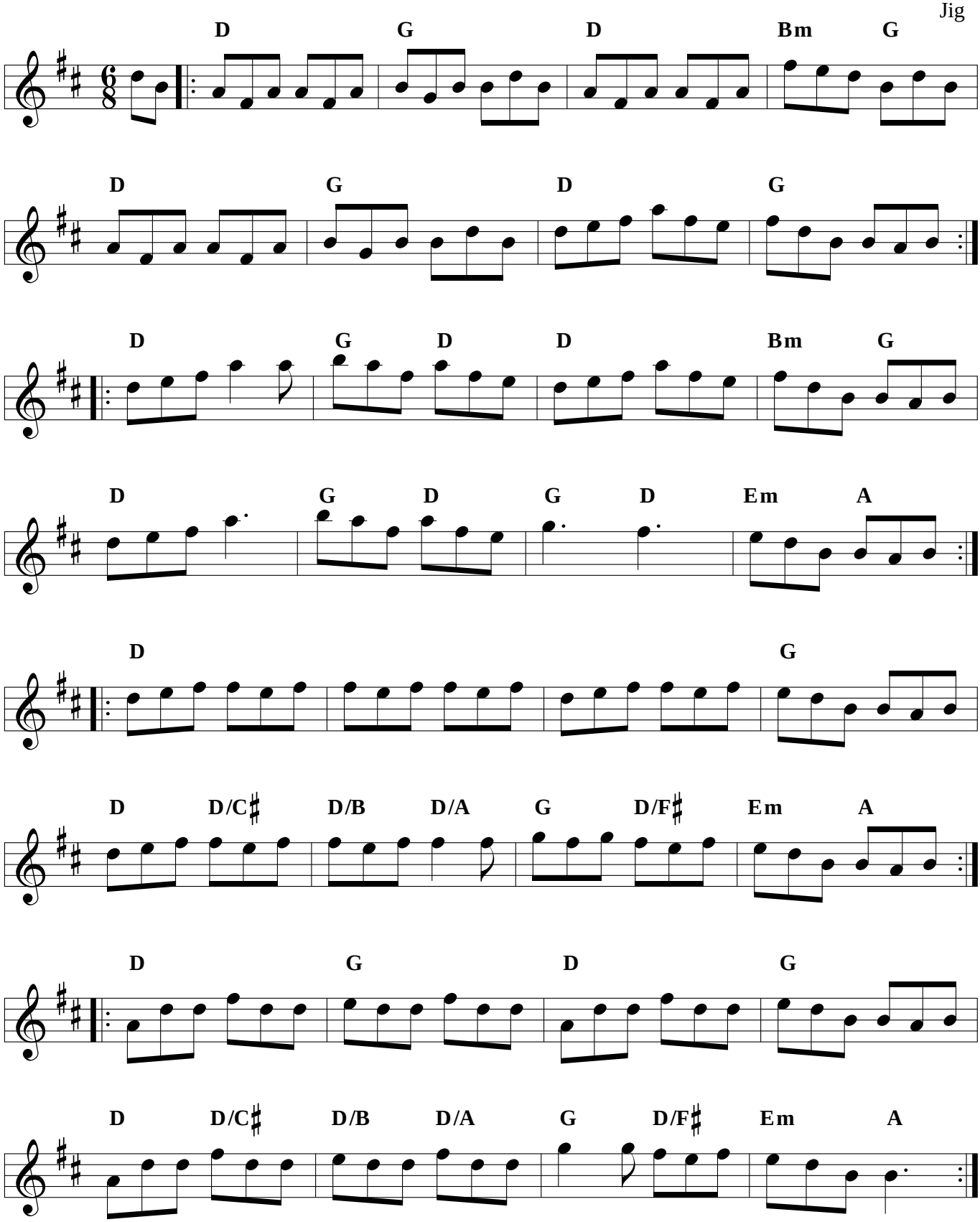
Morrison’s

Jig



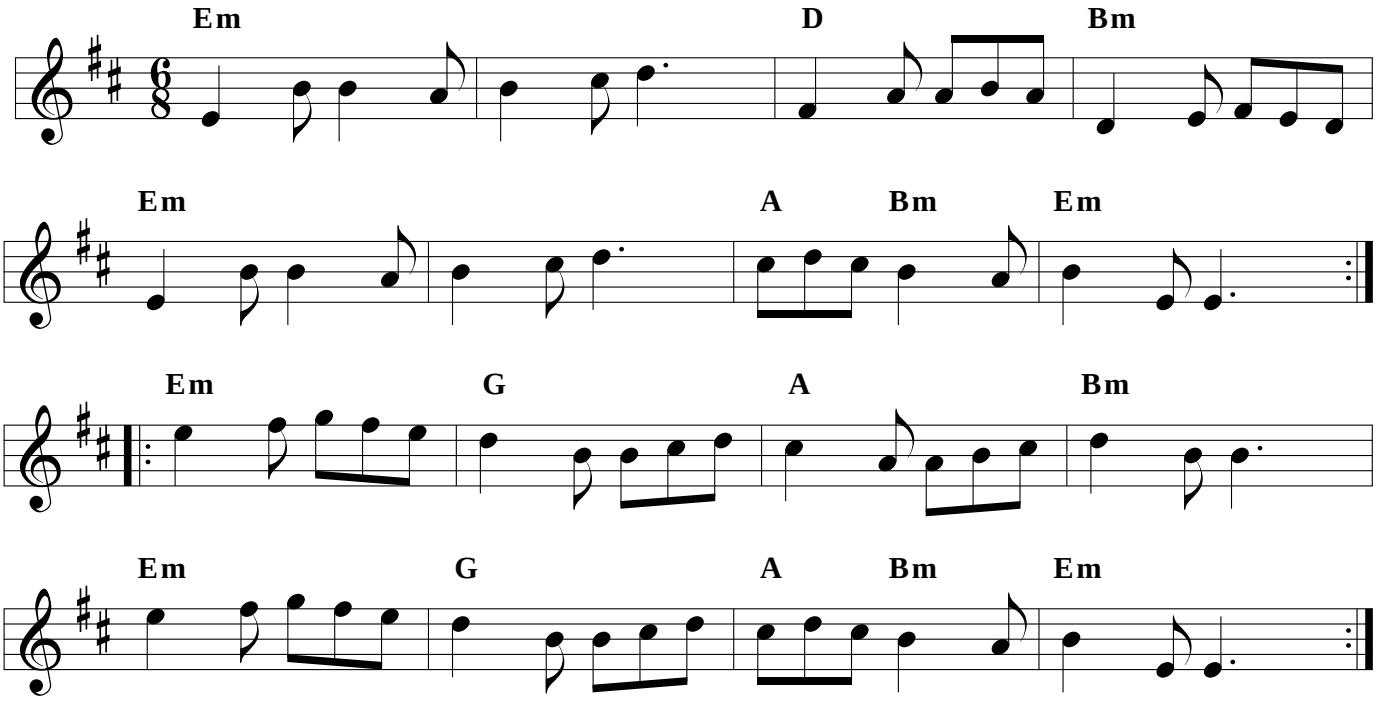
Lark in the Morning

Jig



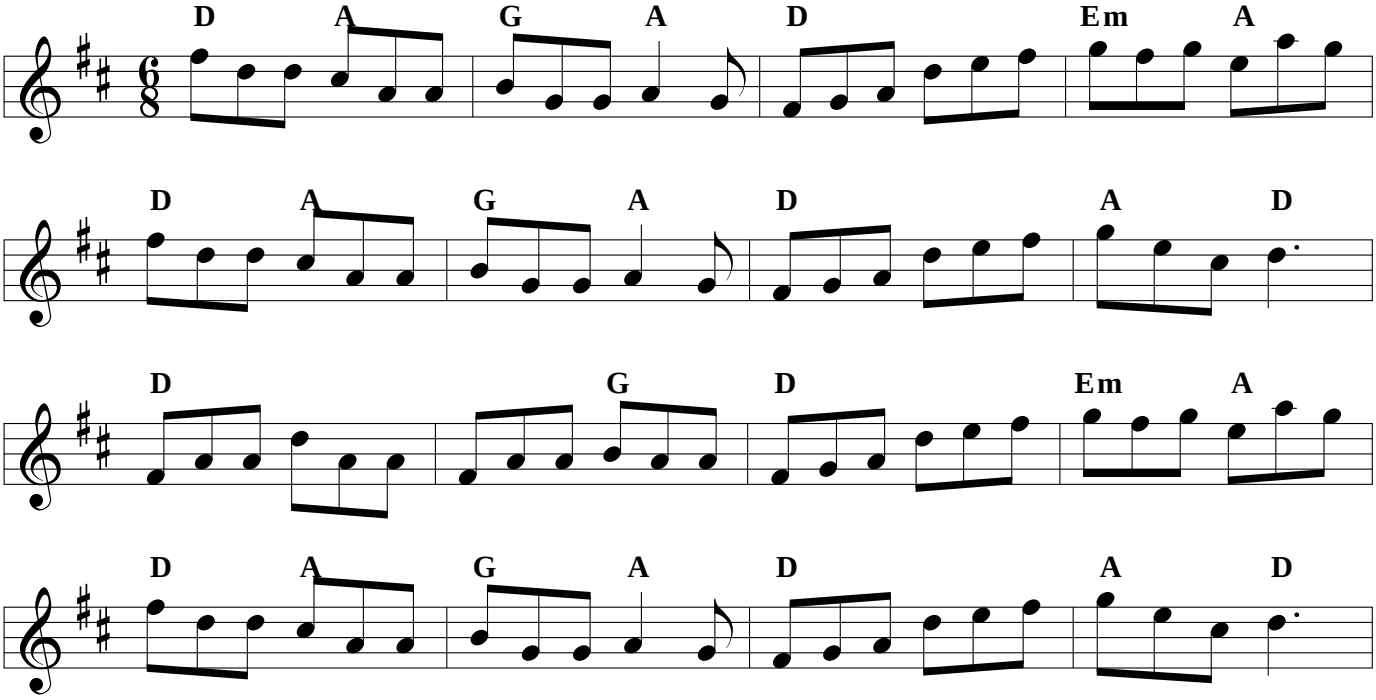
Road to Lisdoonvarna

Jig



My Darling Asleep

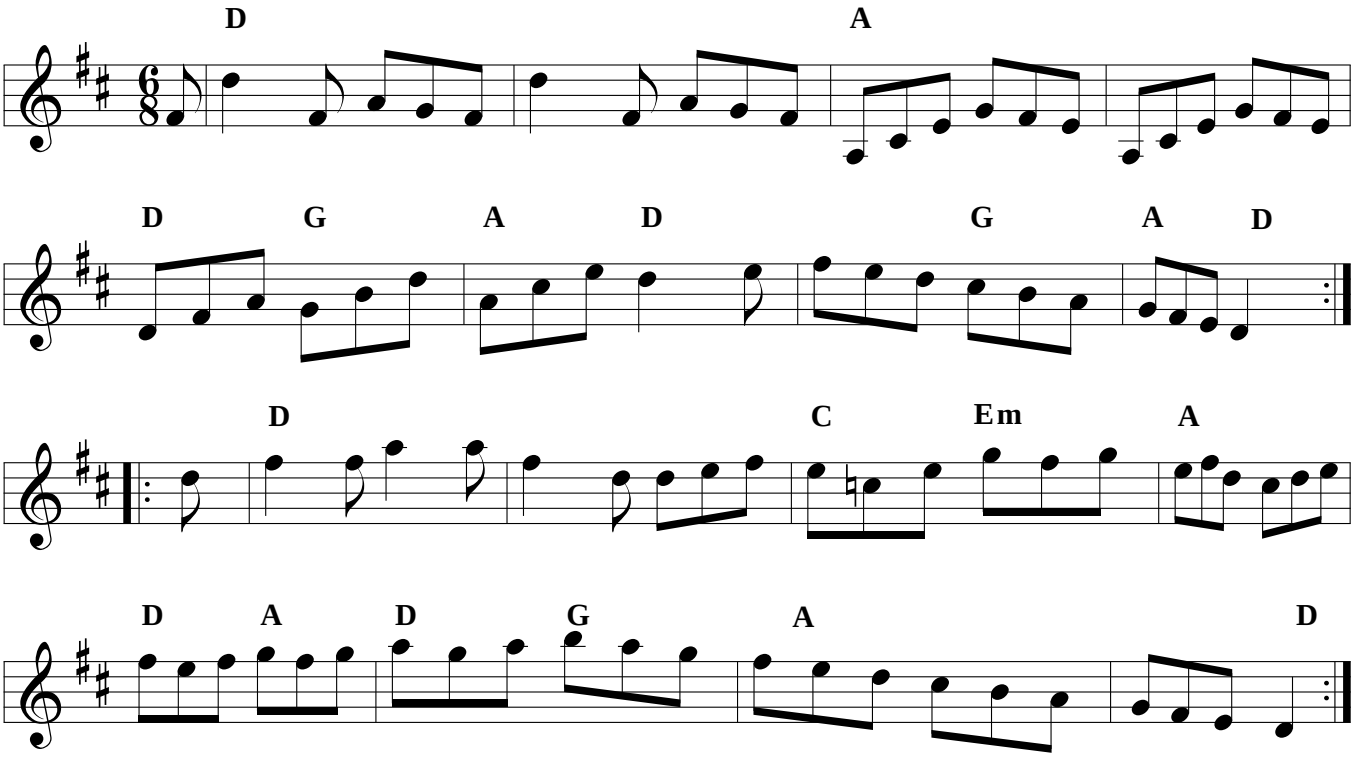
Jig



Charlie Mulvihill's

Jig

composed by Charlie Mulvihill



The Butterfly

Slip Jig

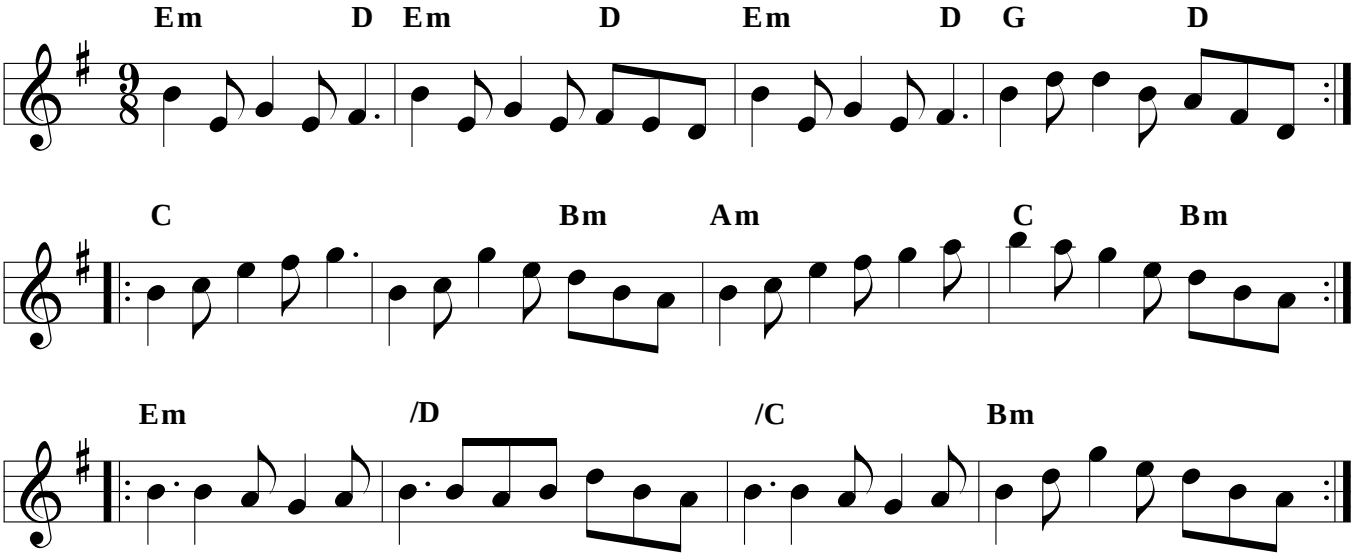
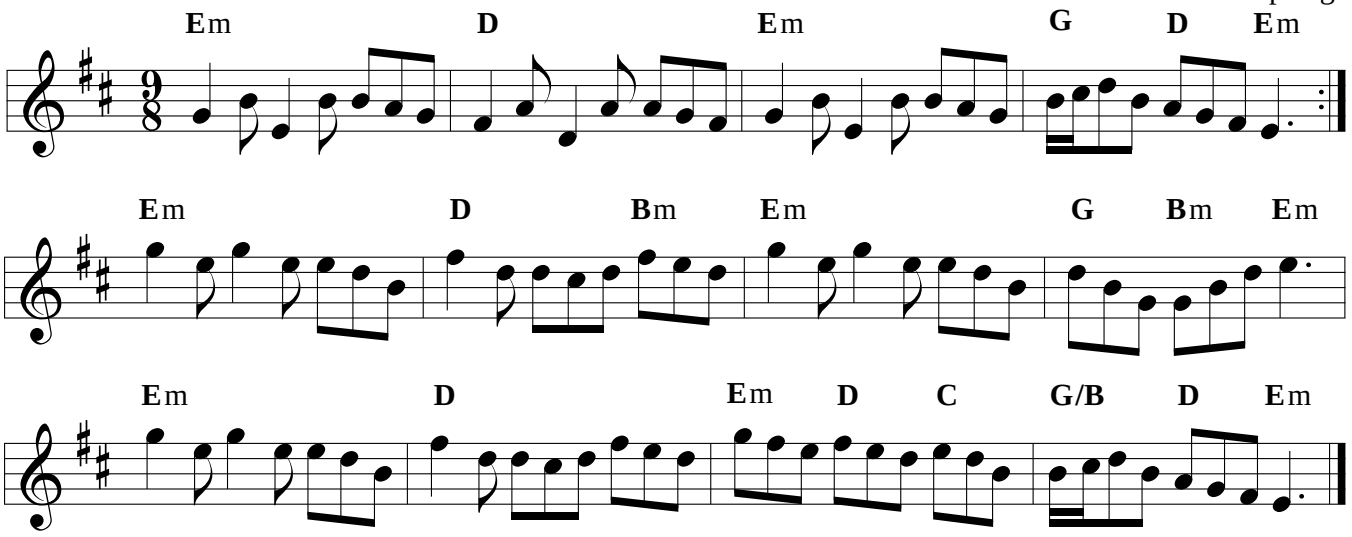


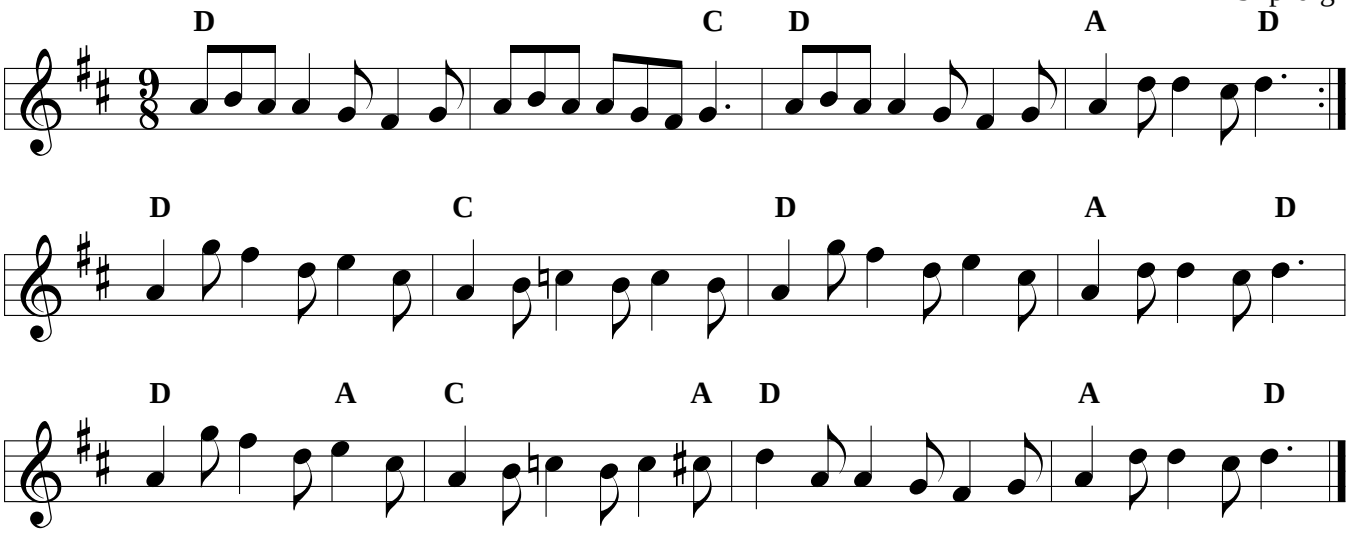
Fig for a Kiss

Slip Jig



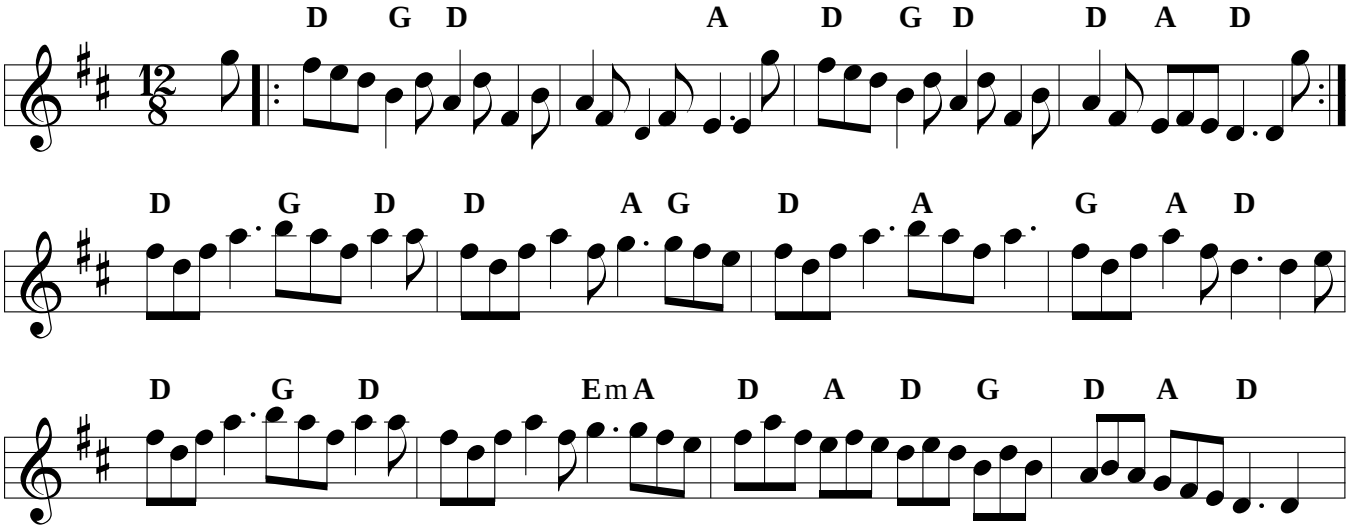
Another Jig Will Do

Slip Jig

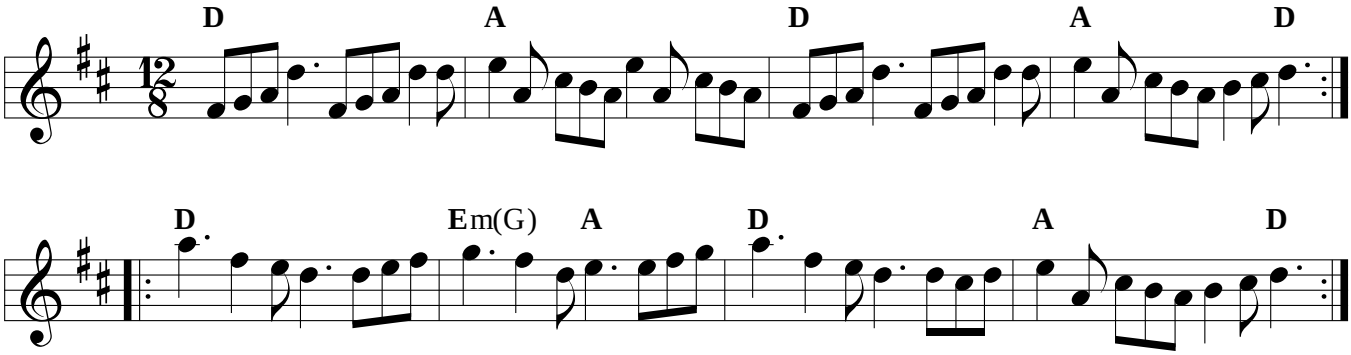


The Weaver's

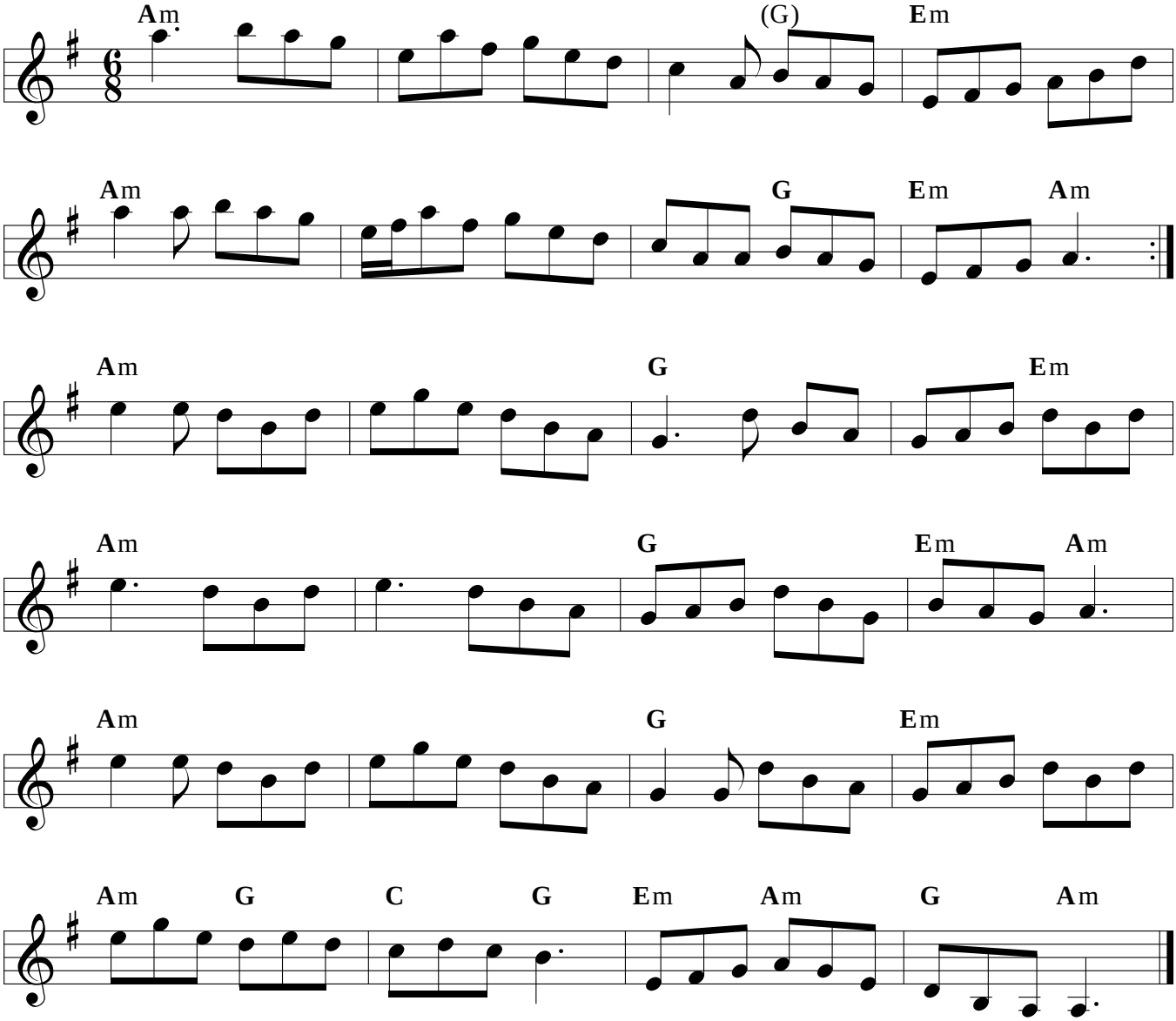
Slide



The Scattery Island Slide

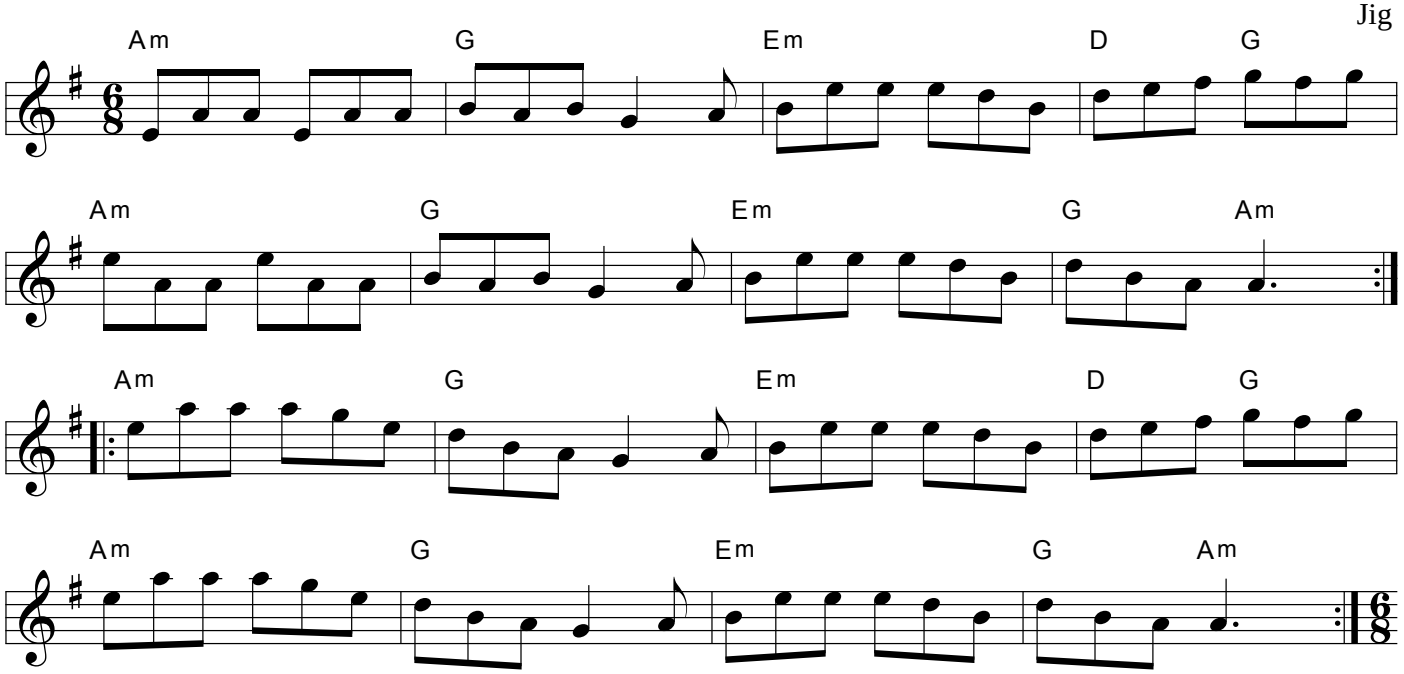


The Cliffs of Moher



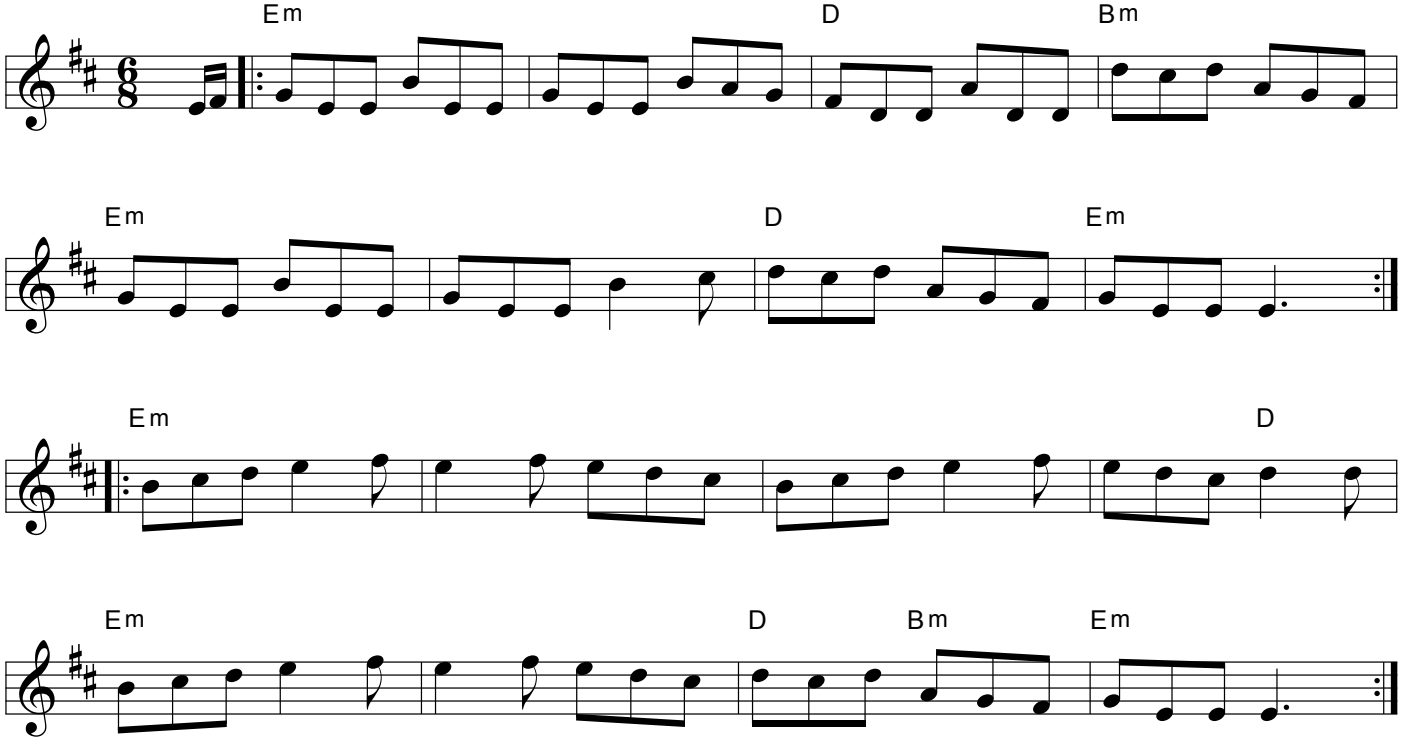
Lilting Banshee

Jig



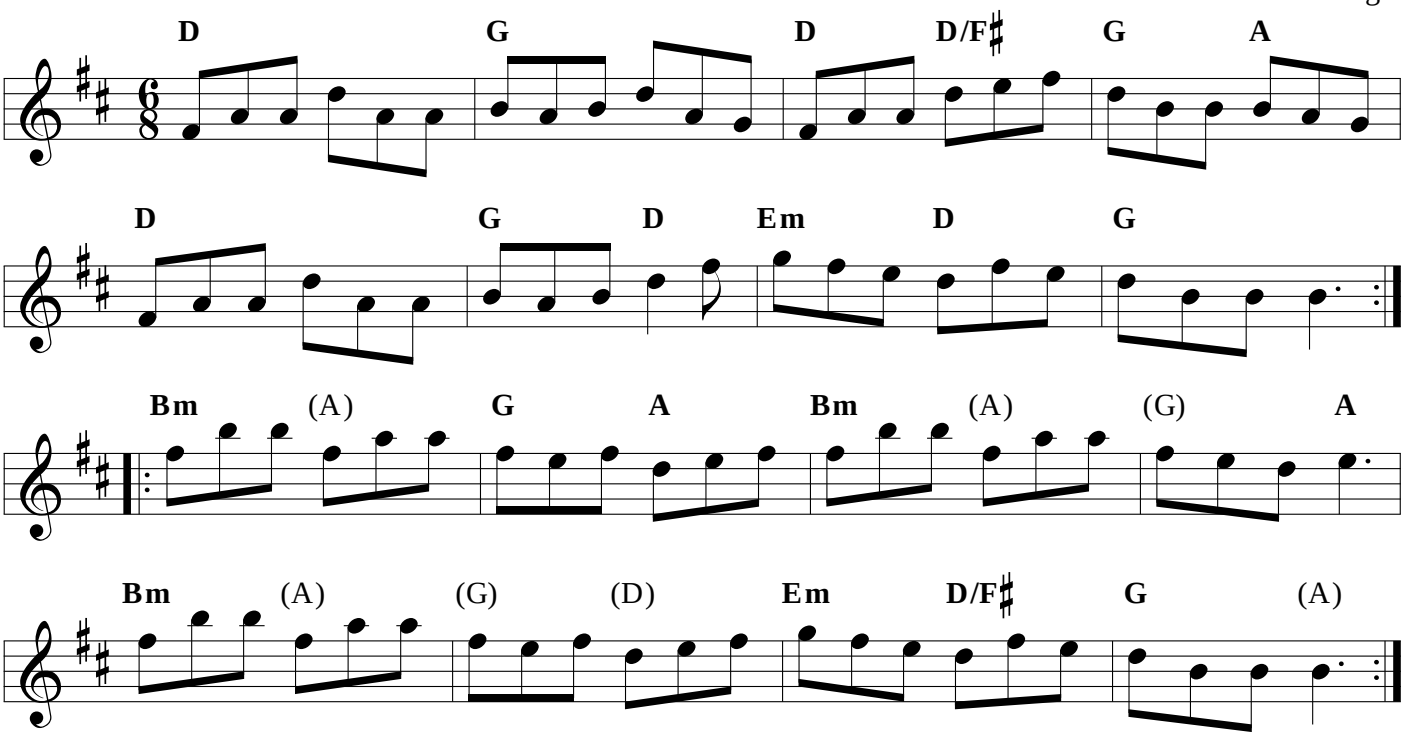
Swallowtail Jig

Jig



Connaughtman's Rambles

Jig



Sleep Waltz
for mew

Get old enough so you won't have much to fear.
By then, the music plays inside your head
and everything beautiful must be learned by ear.

In the bathroom mirror I behold my wear and tear.
In our bedroom I try to levitate in bed.
Get old enough so you won't have much to fear.

Meanwhile, my son at six wants to keep me near
and we sing together every night head to head.
So everything beautiful must be learned by ear.

His father's tunes, though, will one day disappear
beyond today's routines and daily bread.
But get old enough so you won't have much to fear.

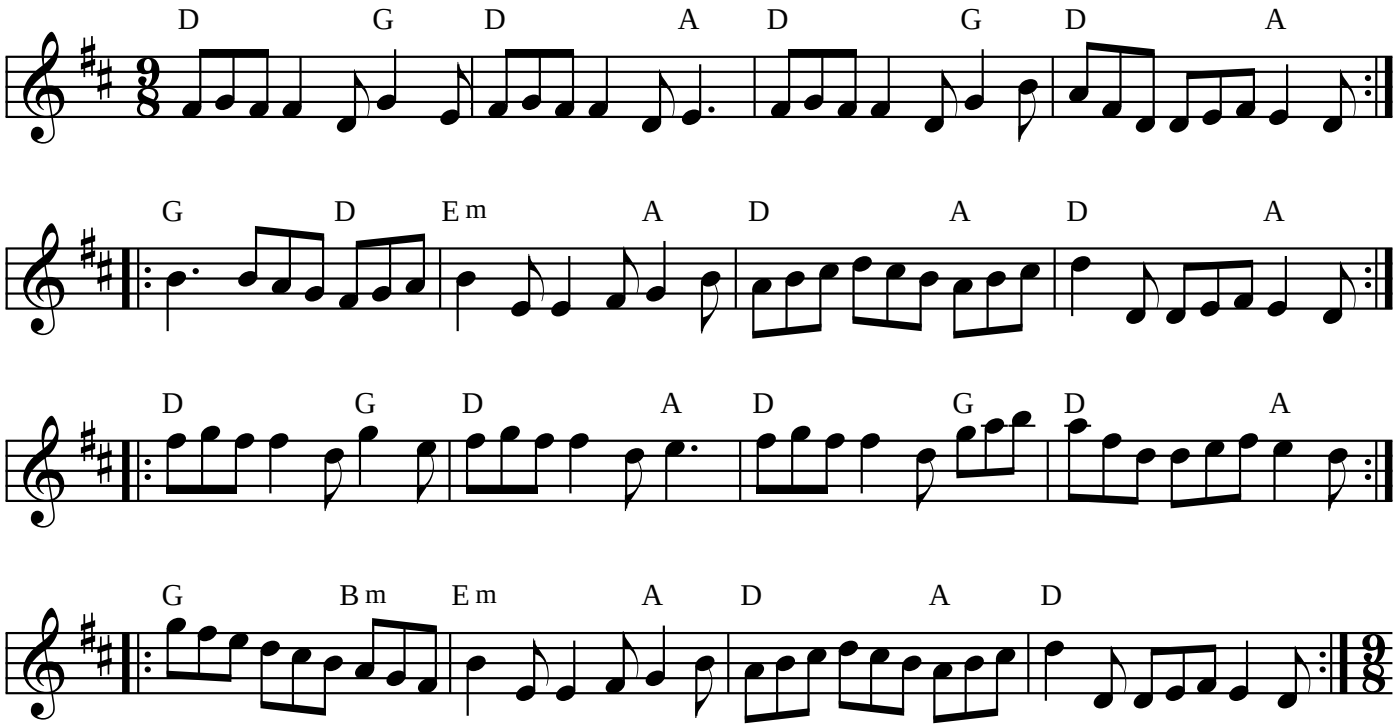
Remembering my mother was my first career
and the songs surrounding her on which I fed,
knowing everything beautiful must be learned by ear.

We may waltz in the kitchen now, my dear,
or dance out of time in our sleep instead.
Get old enough so you have nothing left to fear.
Everything beautiful must be learned by ear.

Terence Winch ©2000 used with permission.
This poem was first published in the "Paris Review"
and later in the collection "The Drift of Things."

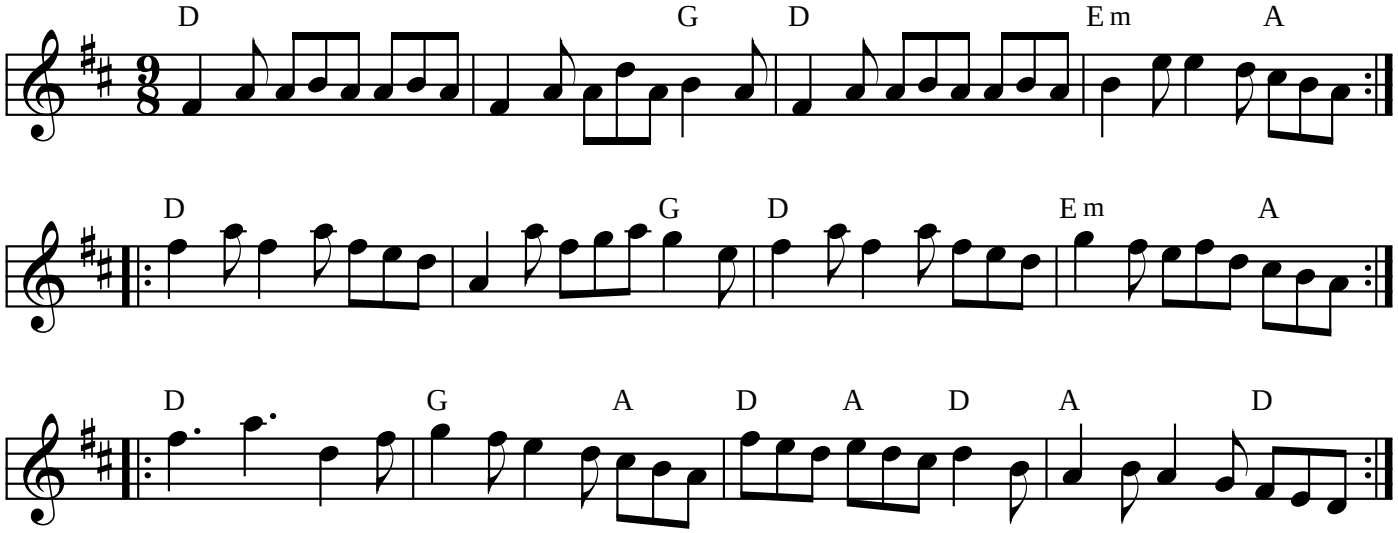
Foxhunter's

Slip Jig

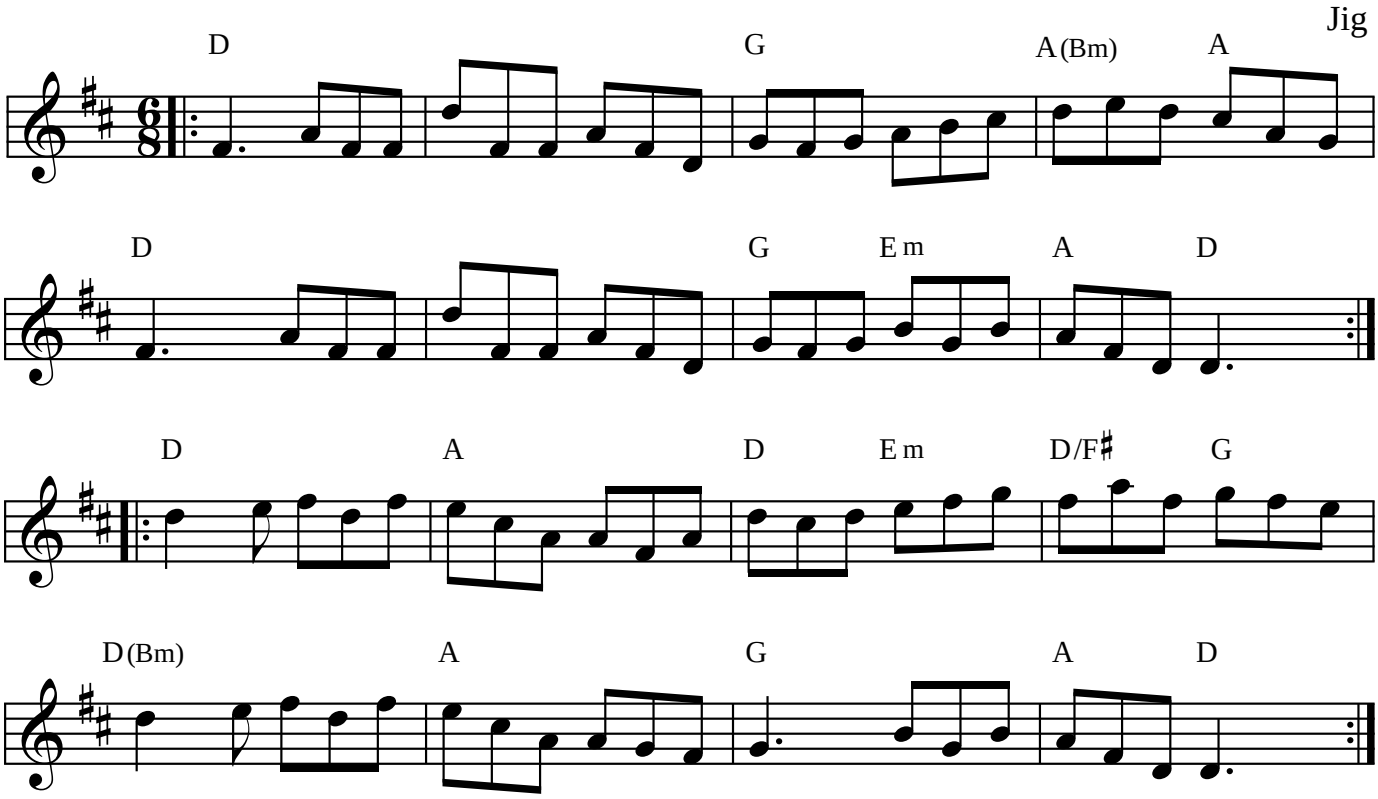


Barney Brallaghan

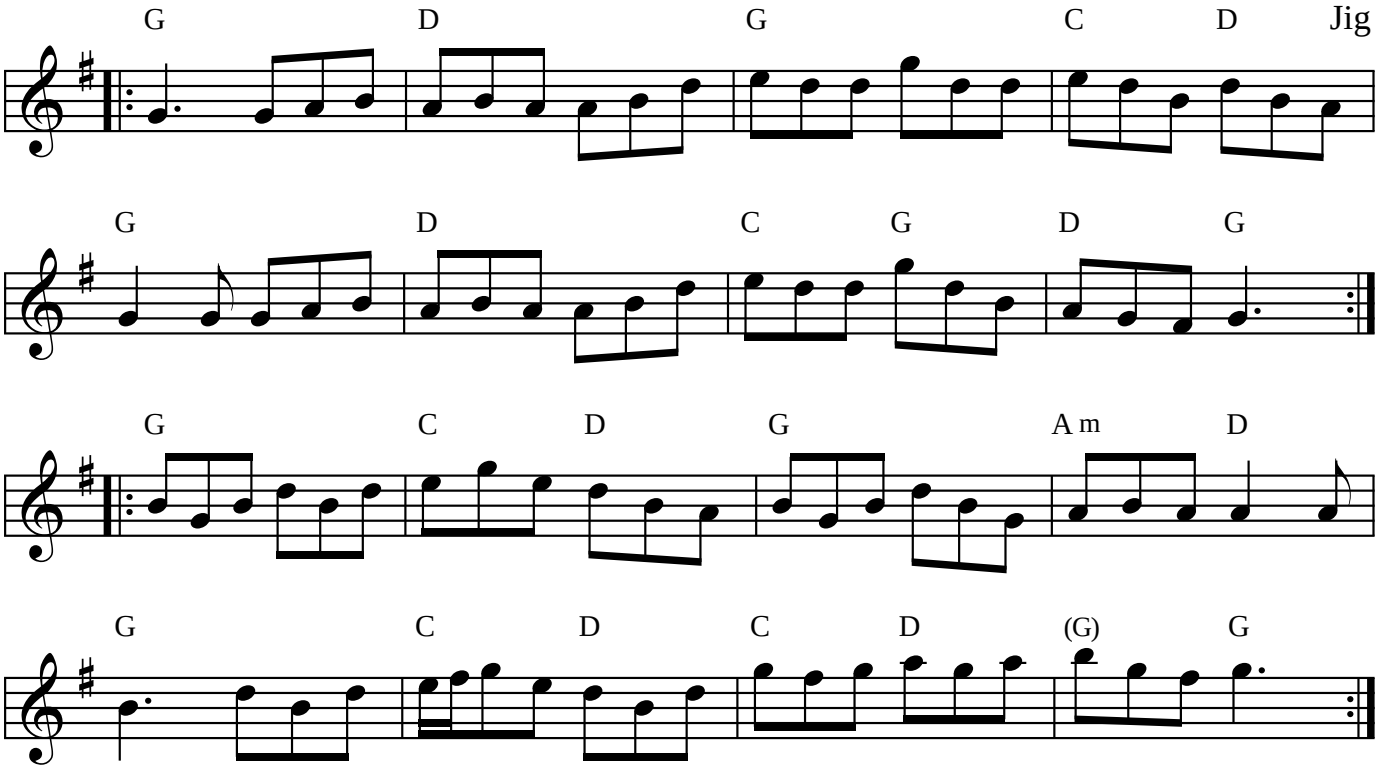
Slip Jig
from Steve Hickman

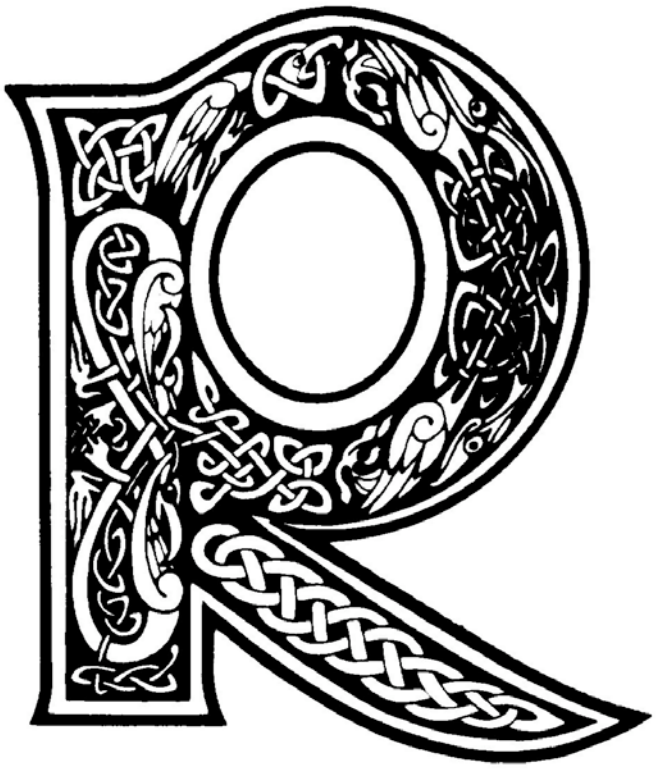


Rambling Pitchfork



Kesh Jig

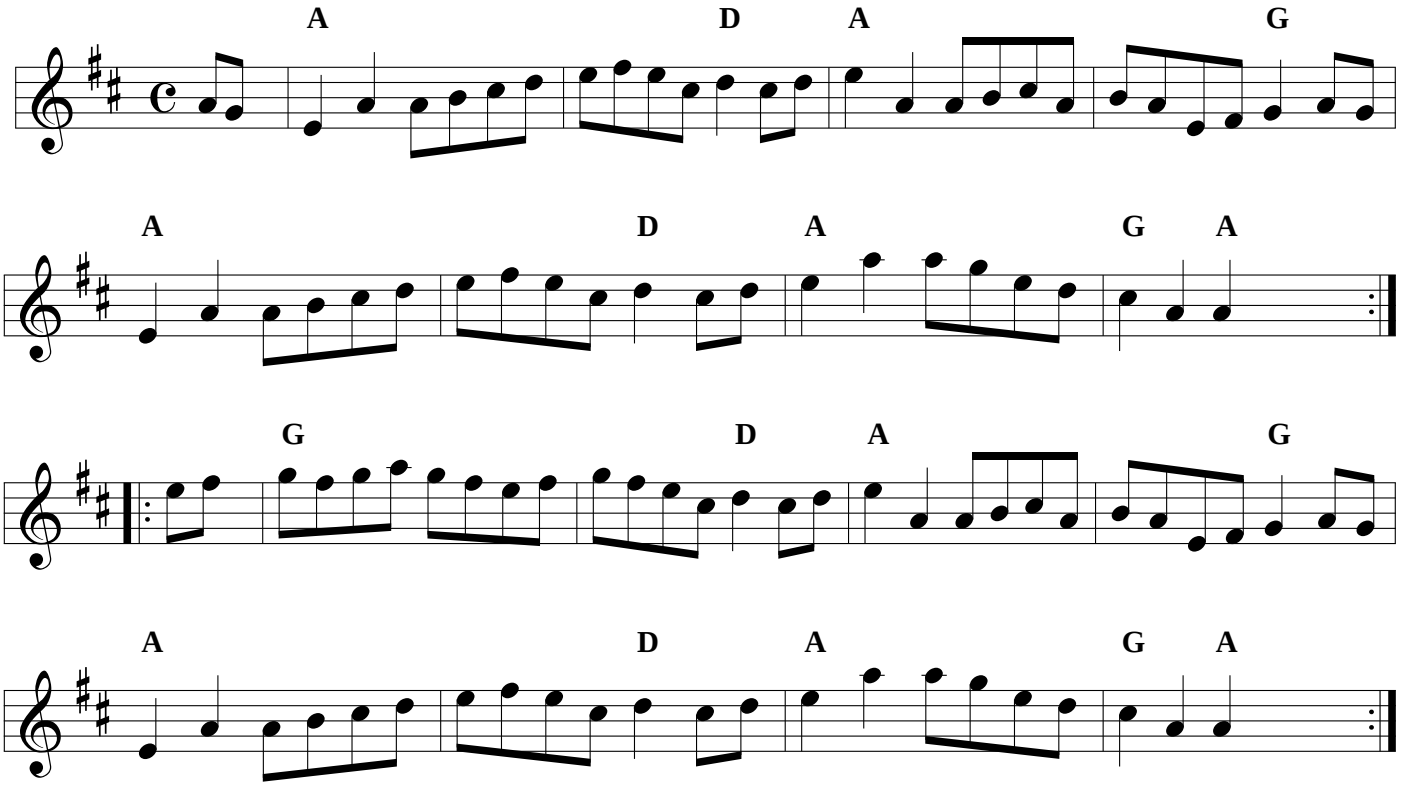




REELS

Little Beggerman (Red Haired Boy)

Irish & American Reel



I am a little beggarman, a beggin' I have been,
For three score and more in this little Isle of Green,
and up to the Liffey and down to Tessague,
And I'm known by the name of Bold Johnny Dhu.

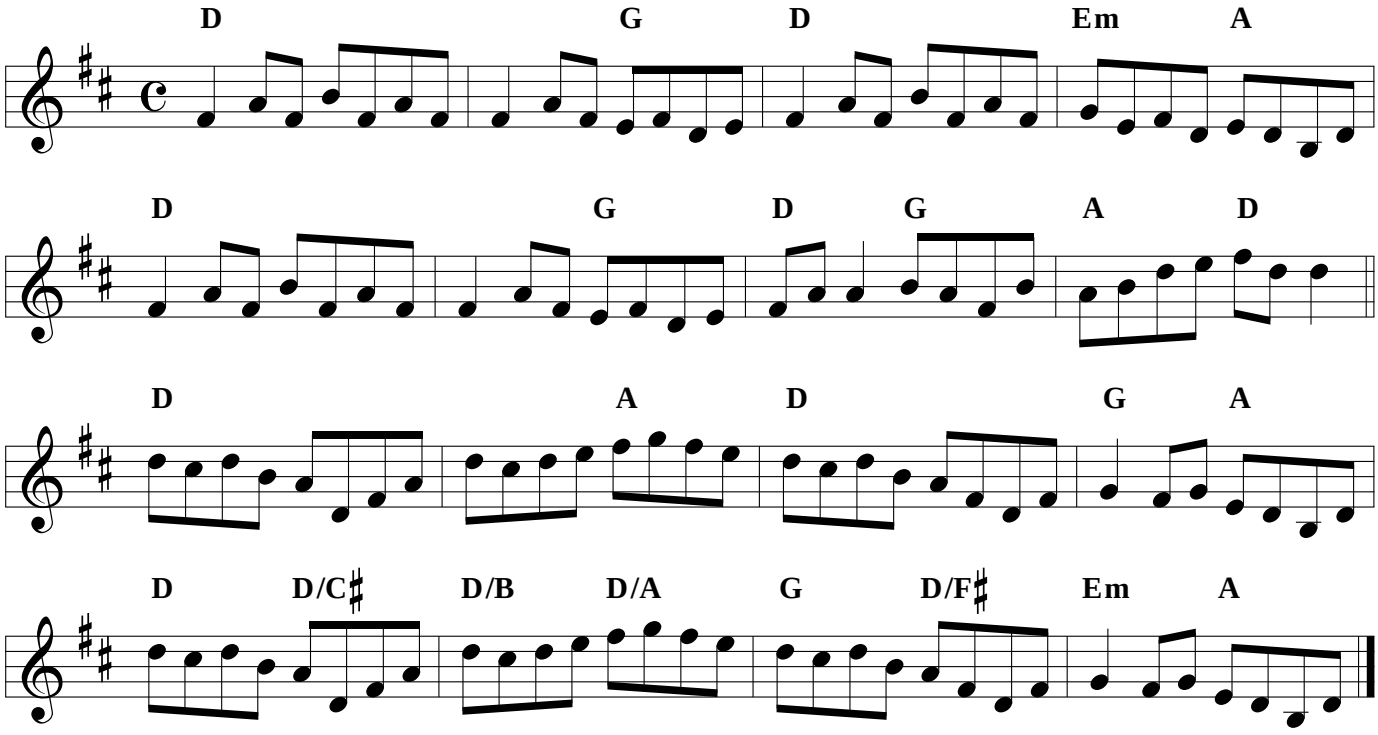
Of all the trades that's goin' sure a beggin' is the best,
For when a man is tired he can sit down and rest.
He begs for his dinner, and he's nothin' else to do,
Only cut around the corner with his old ricadoo.

I slept last night in a barn at Currabawn,
A wet night came on and I slipped through the door,
Holes in me shoes and the toes a peepin' through,
Singin' skiddy-me-re-me-doodlum,
for ould Johnny Dhu.

I must be gettin' home for its gettin' late at night,
The fire's all raked and there isn't any light.
An' now you've heard me story of the old ricadoo,
It's Goodnight and God bless you! from ould Johnny Dhu.

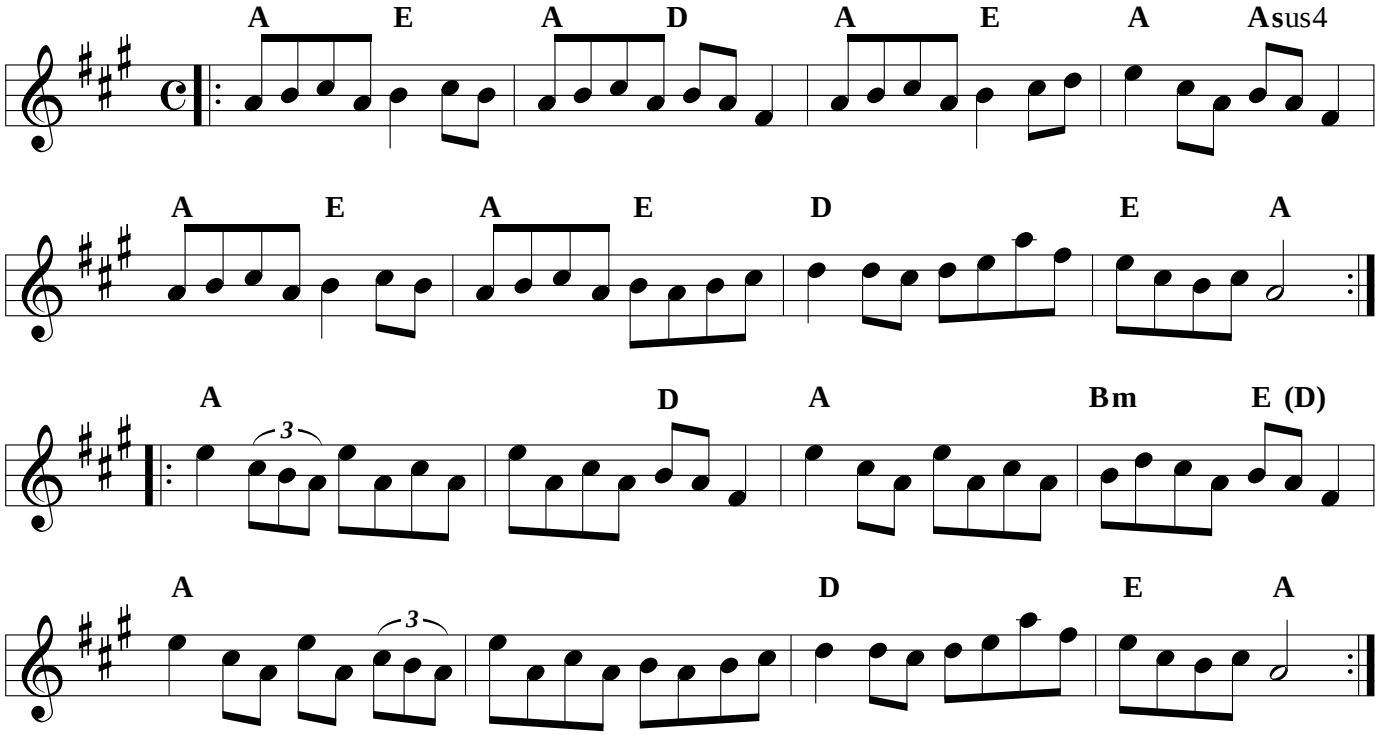
Mountain Road

Single Reel



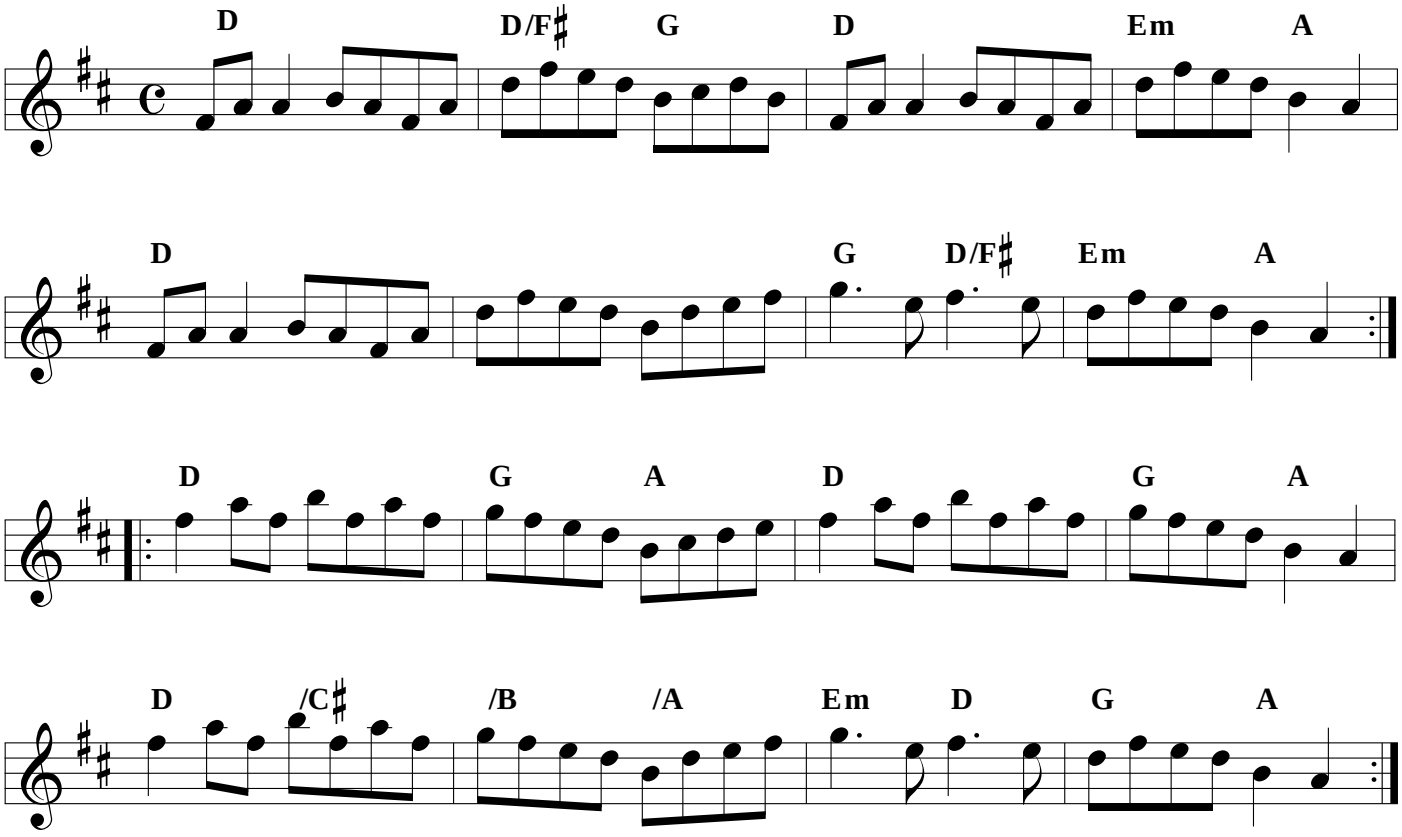
Stenson's #2

Reel



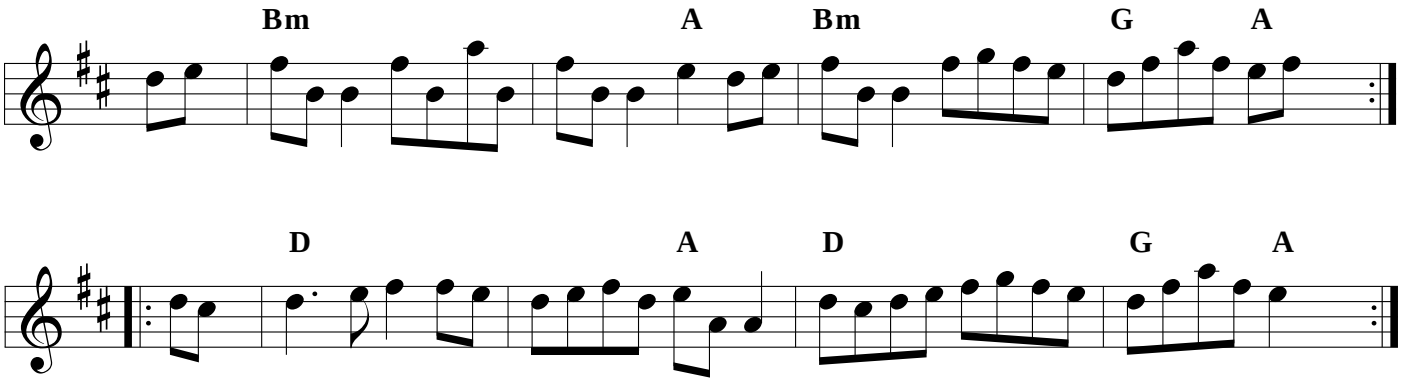
The Silver Spear

Reel



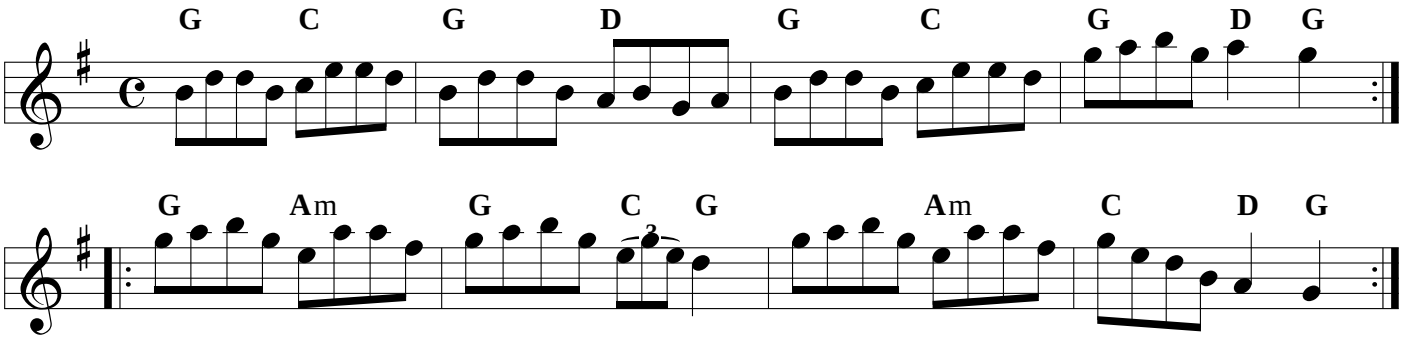
The Glass of Beer

Single Reel



Bag of Potatoes

Single Reel

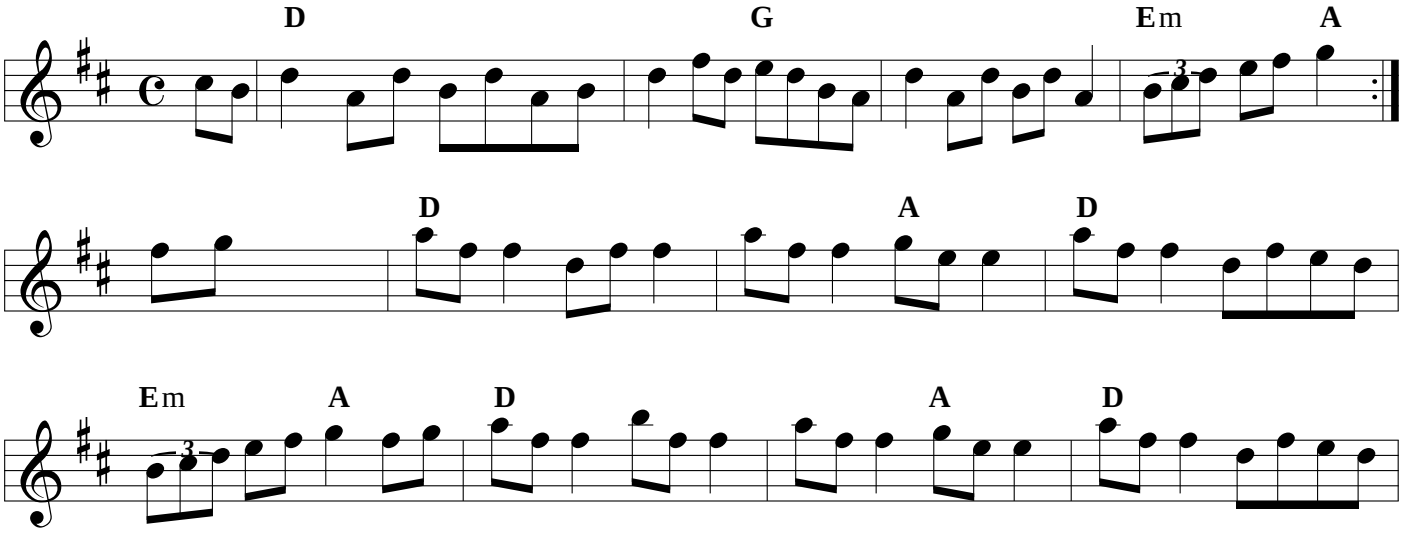


“What I say is that, if a fellow really likes potatoes, he must be a pretty decent sort of fellow.”
A.A. Milne

The Potato
From among blind stones
they dug out this
many-eyed beauty,
jewel of the island.
Thick-skinned, like them,
with a soft white center,
its value more than gems:
bread and meat it was,
a heart
shaped like their own,
that kept beating
until it blackened
and returned to the ground.
-Mary Fell

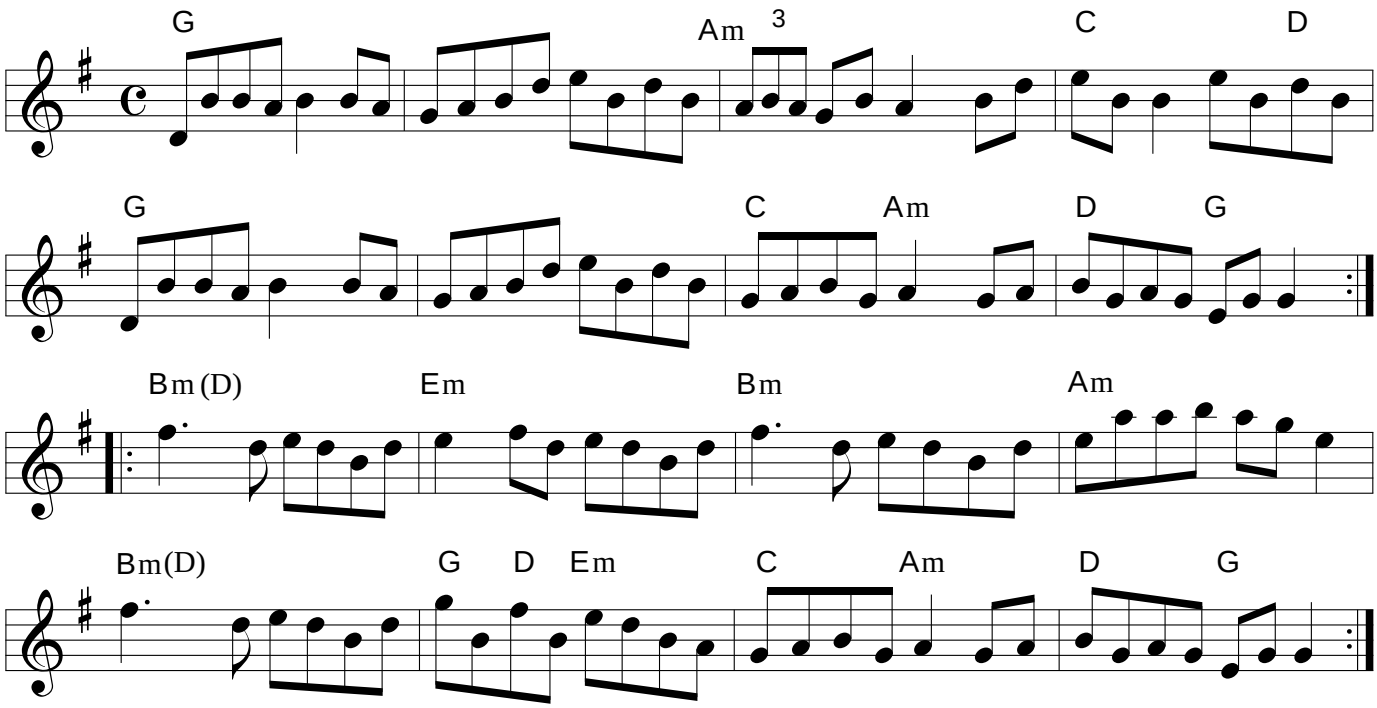
Humours of Tulla

Single Reel



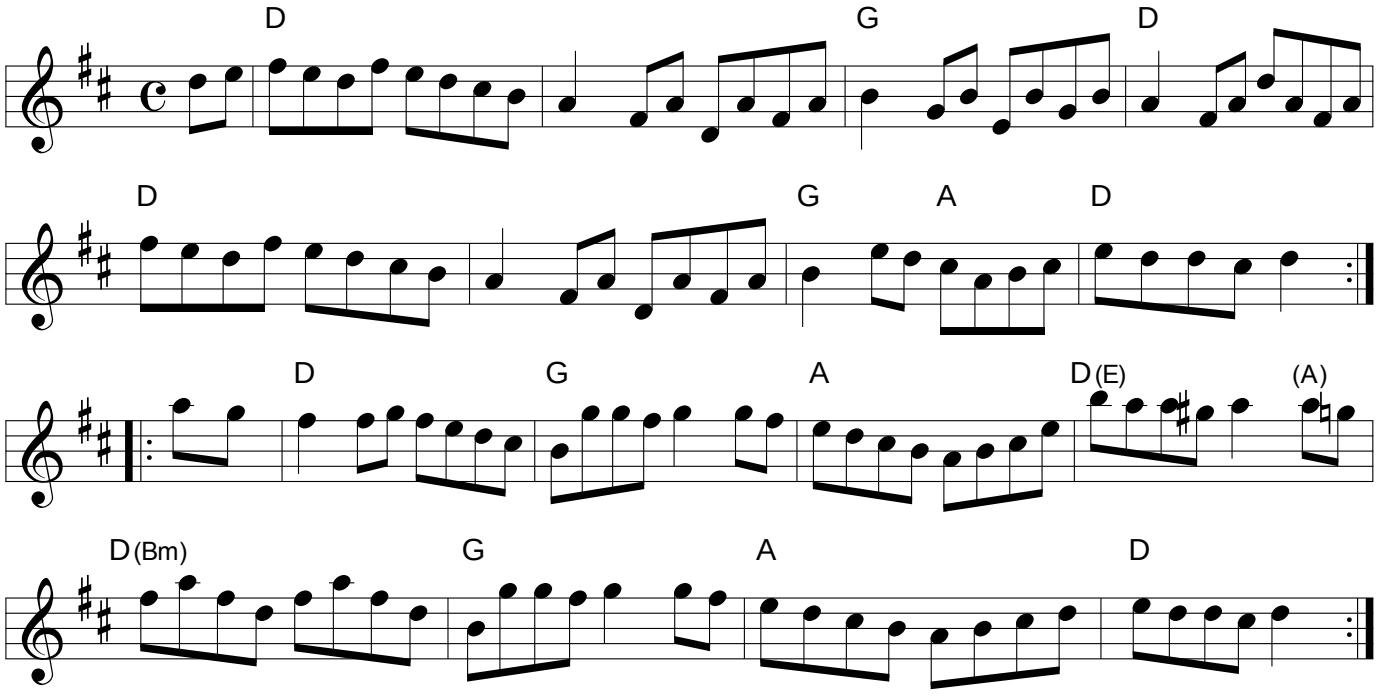
Woman of the House

Reel



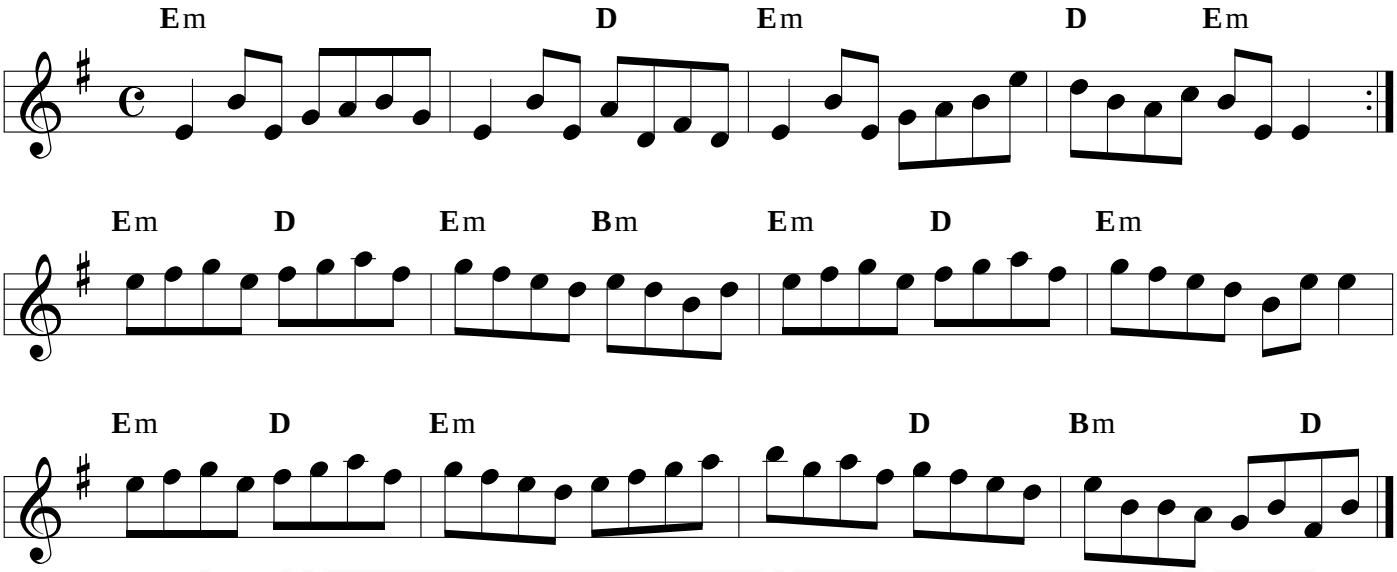
St. Anne's Reel

Reel

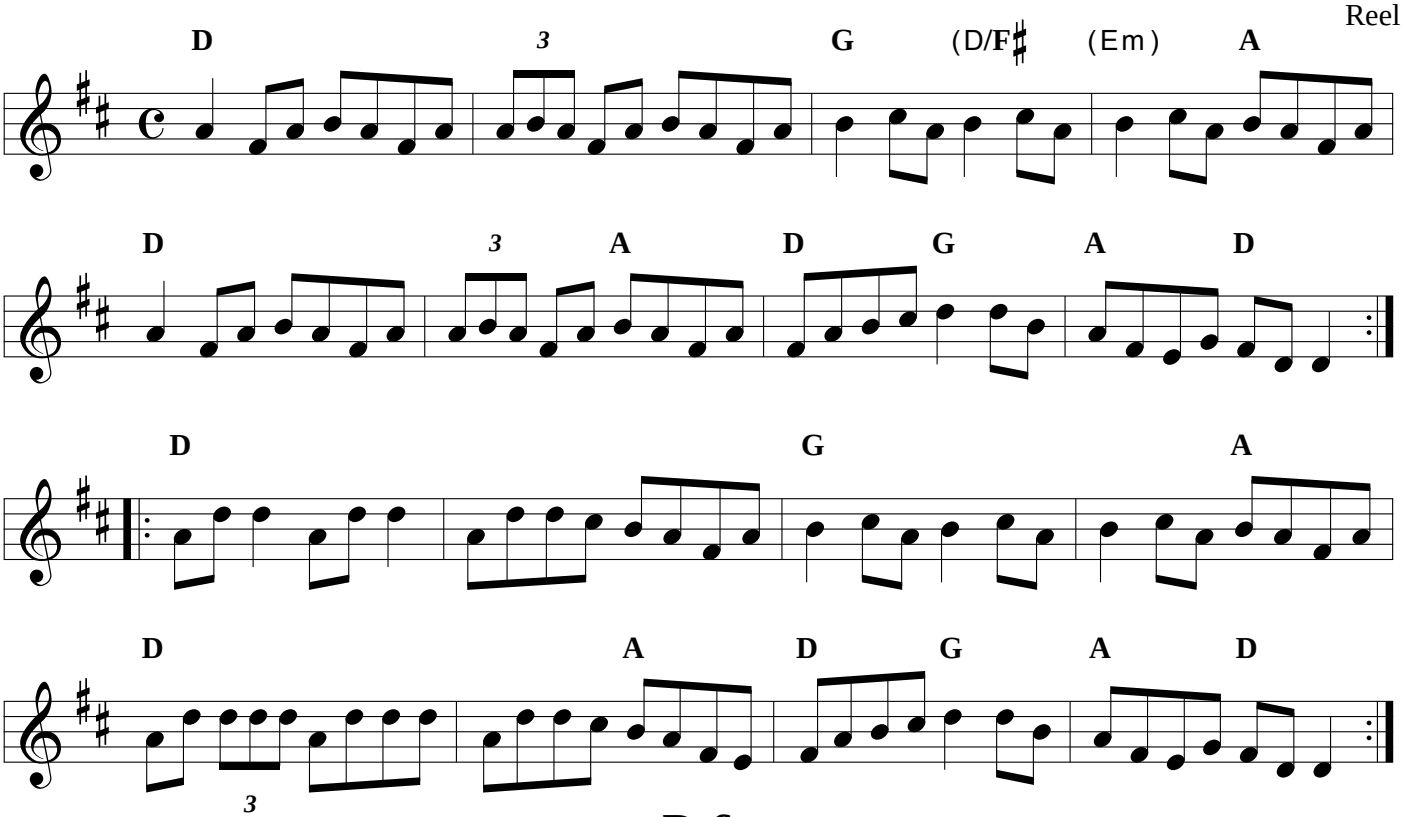


Man of the House

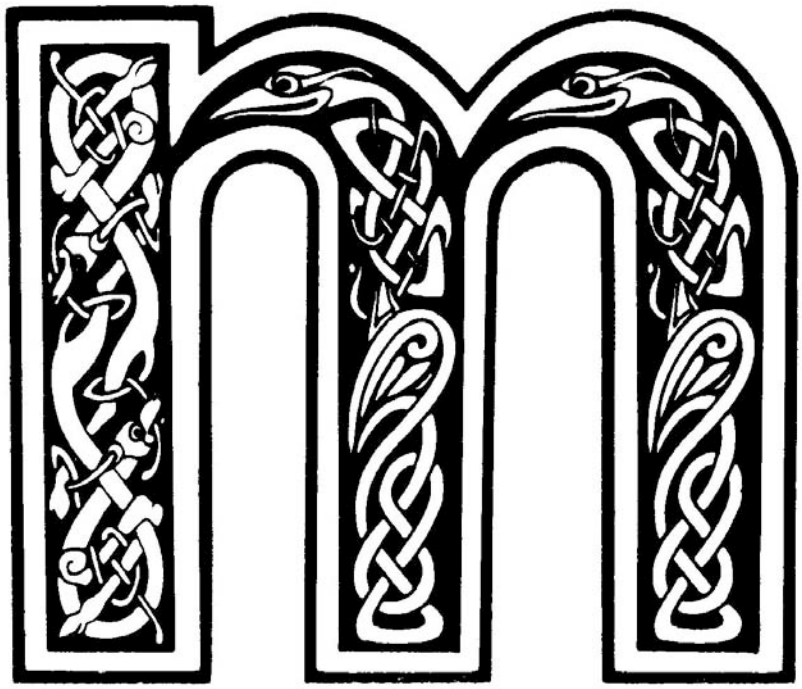
Single Reel



Reel



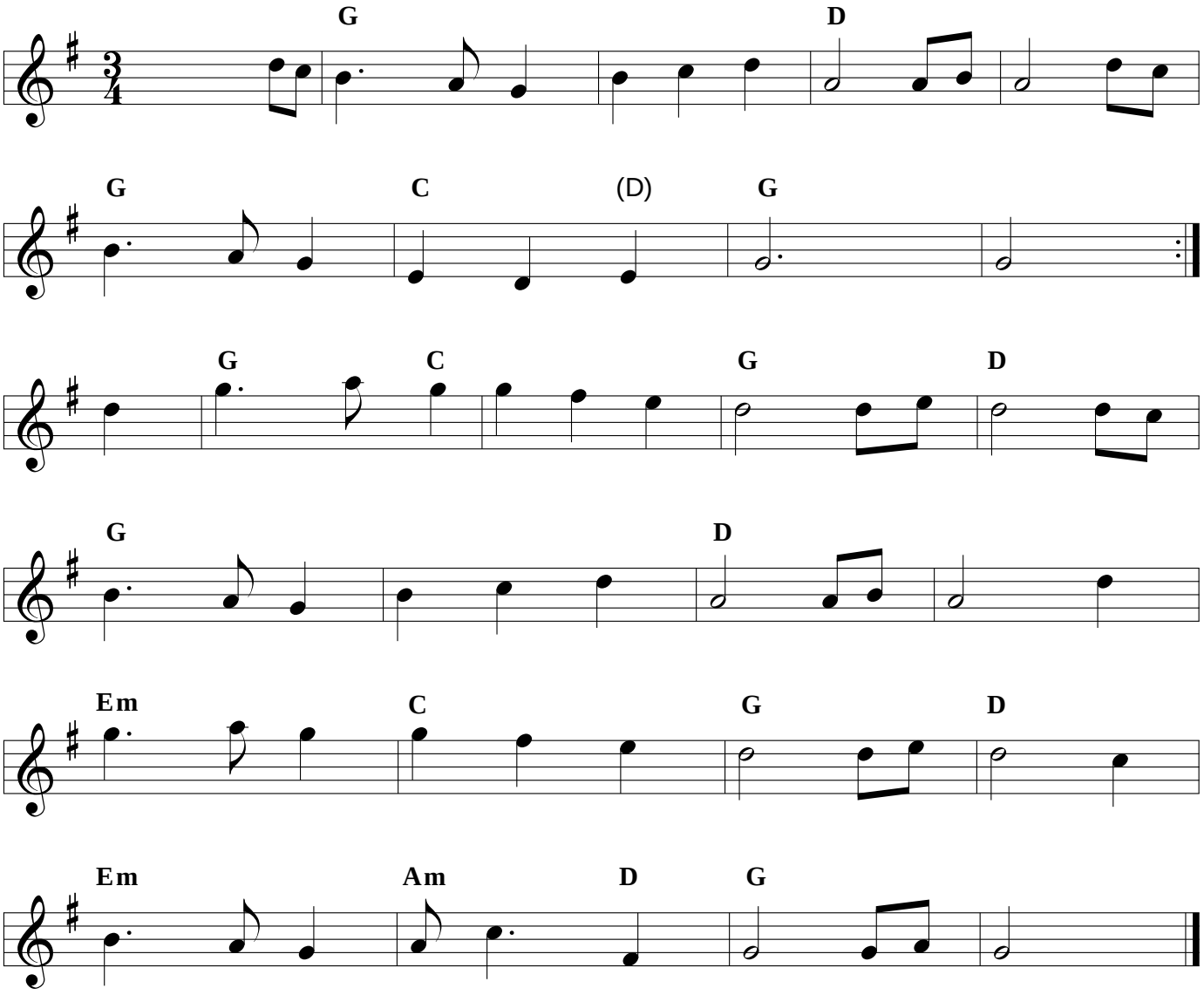
R-6



MISCELLANEOUS

South Wind

Waltz



Innishere

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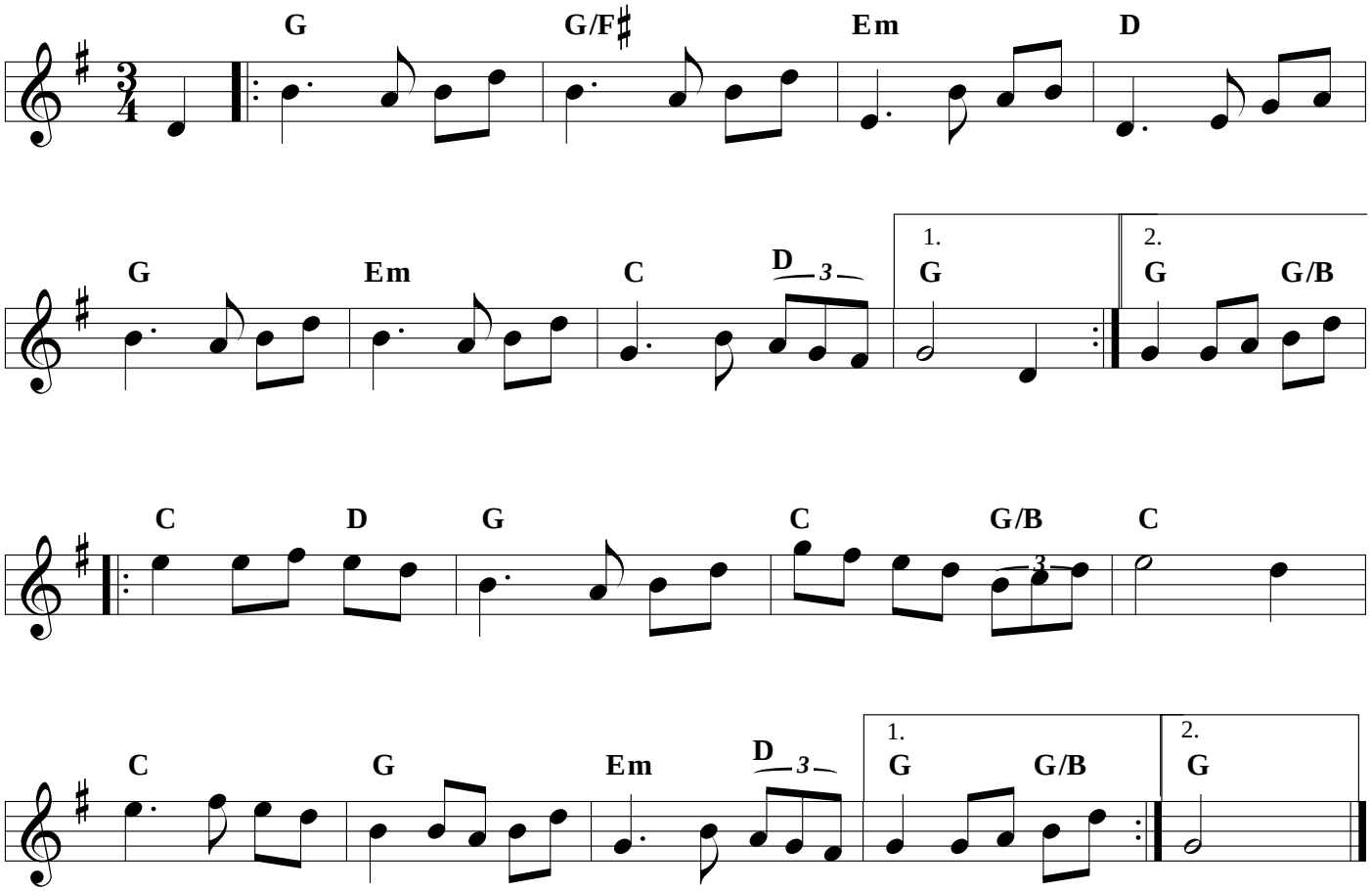
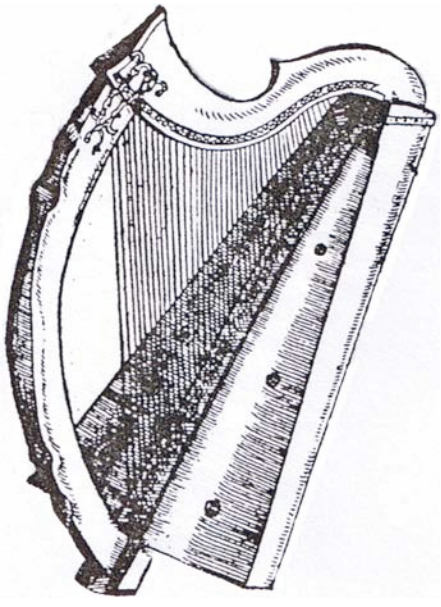
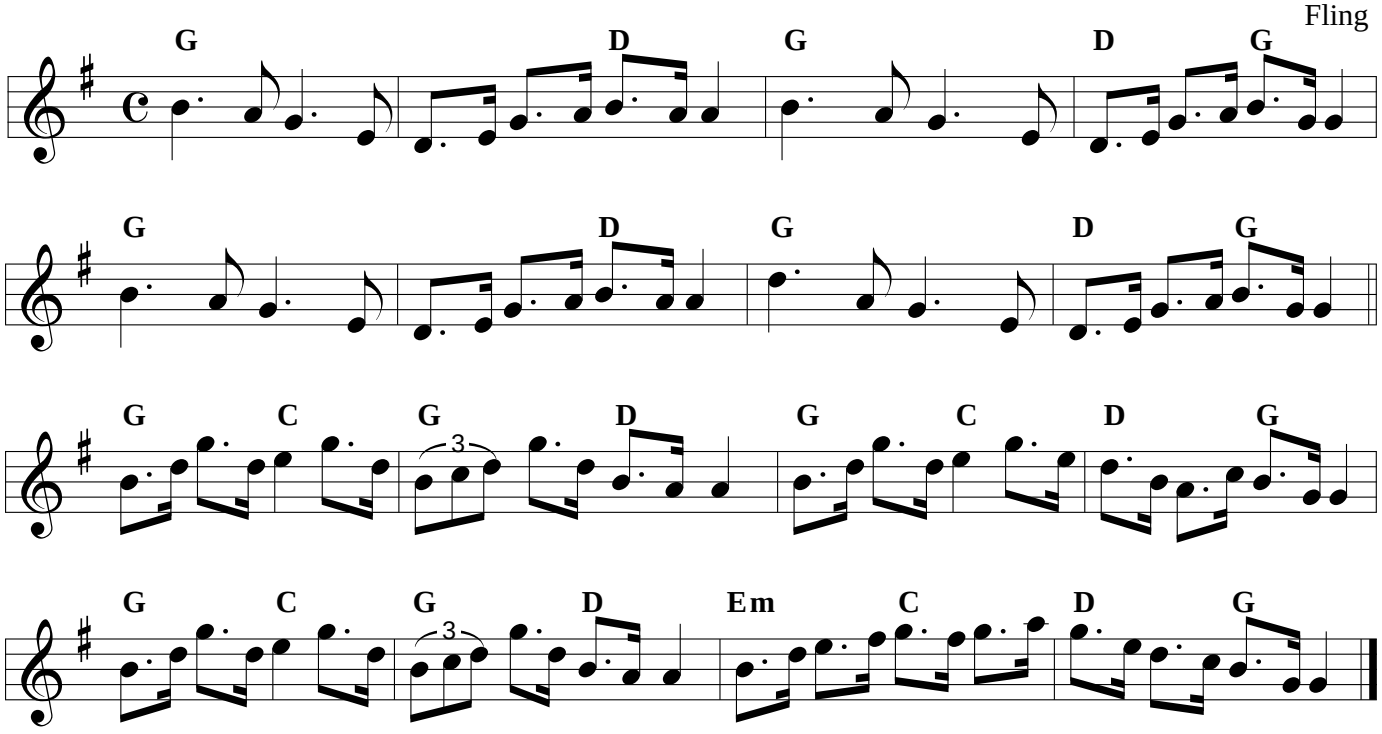
Slow Air





Primrose Lass

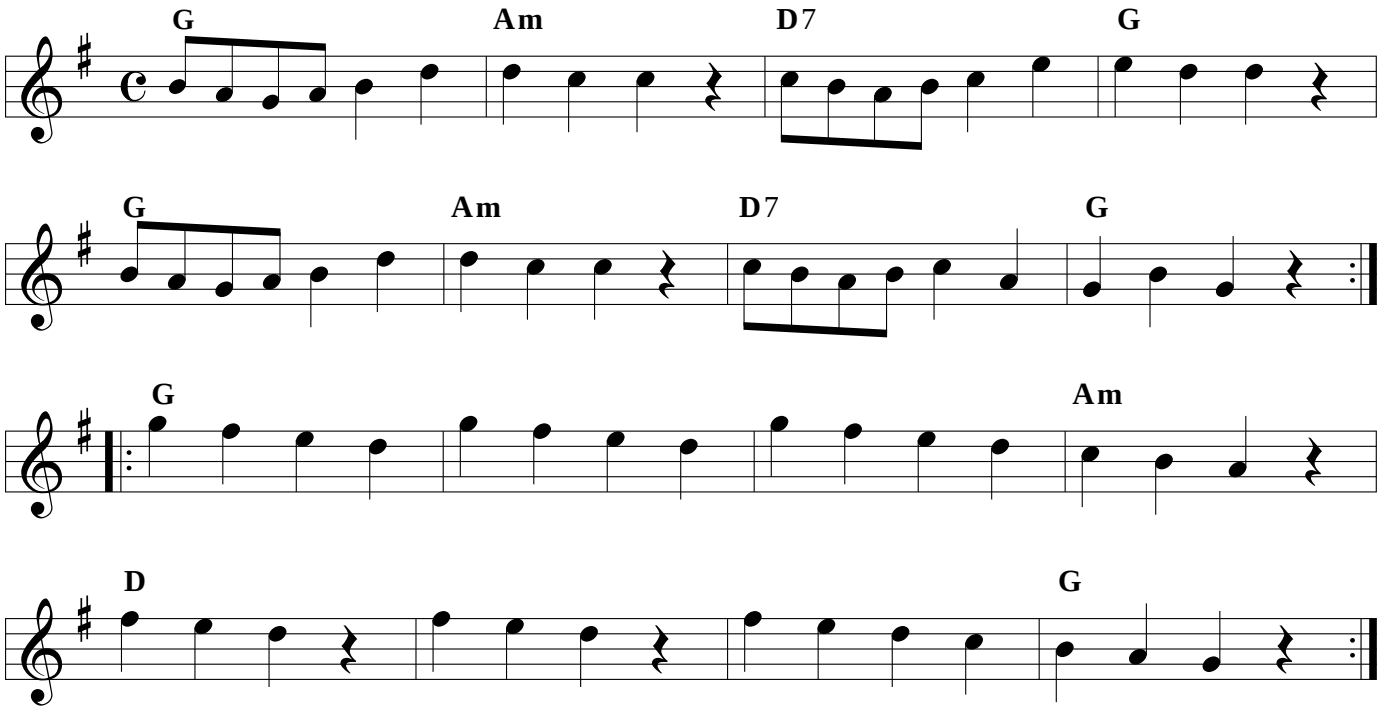
Fling



*Y Delyn Newydd "The New Harp"

this tune medlies well with the Rakes of Mallo found in the Polka section

traditional Welsh reel

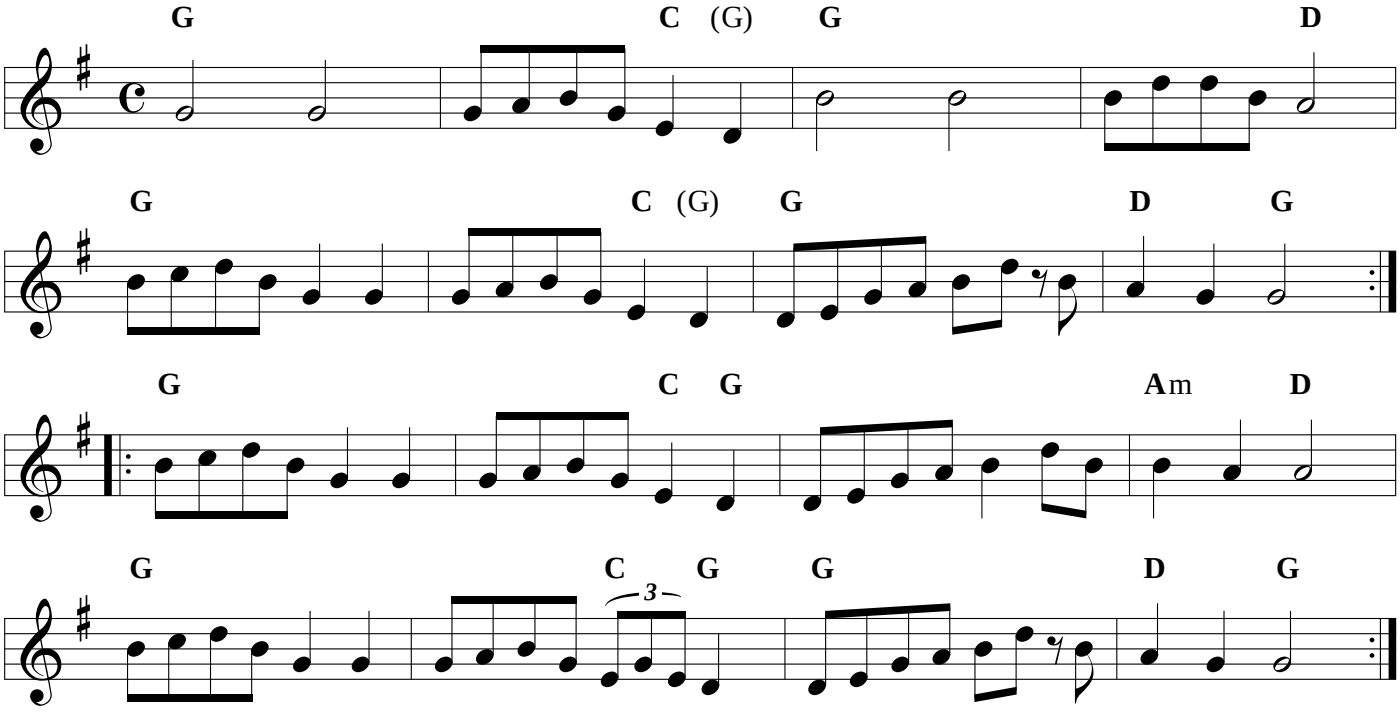


*Rebecca calls this "Pink Bunnies"

Lucy Farr's

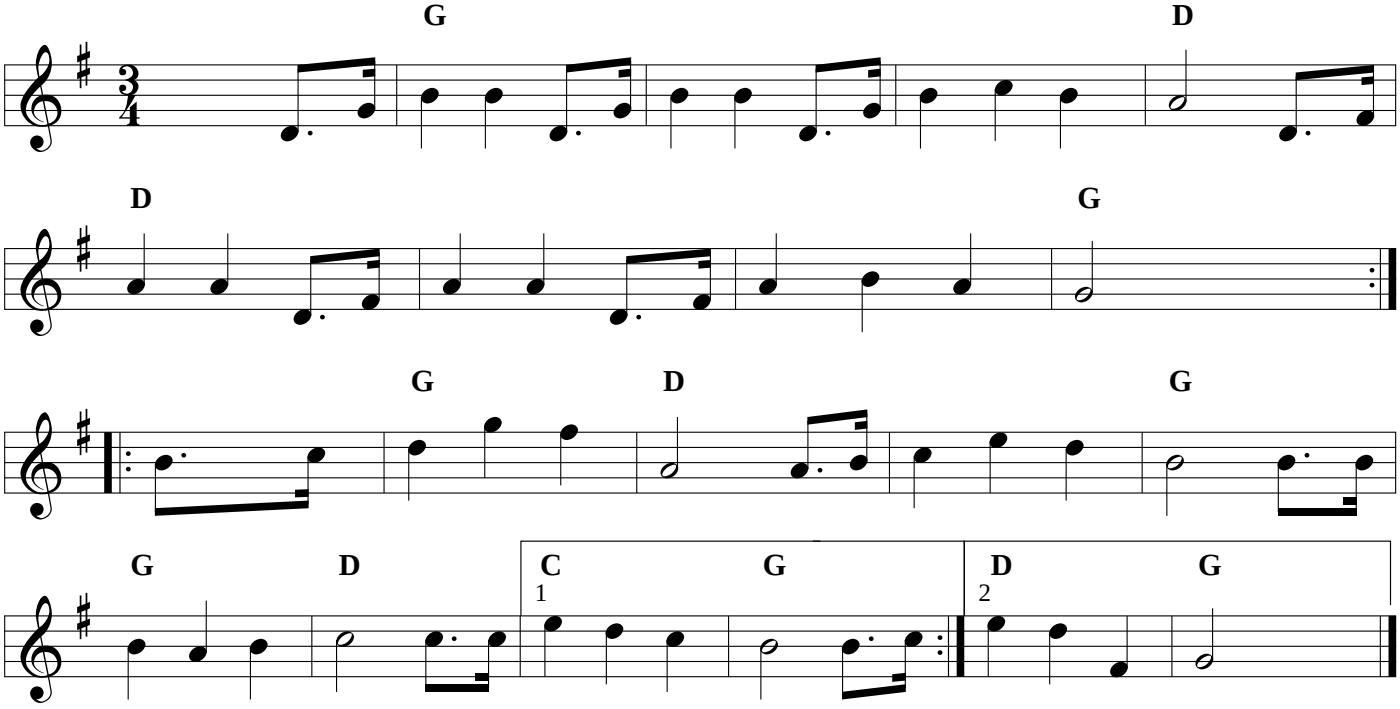
Play with a bouncy beat

Barndance



Shoe the Donkey

Mazurka



couple dances in mirror images -
start on outside foot
Hop step step, Hop step step, Hop step step & TURN
REPEAT
Hop step step & turn (4X)
REPEAT

The Fiddler of Dooney
William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

When I play on my fiddle at Dooney,
Folk dance like a wave of the sea.
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
my brother in Mocharabui.

I passed my brother & cousin
They read in their book of prayers.
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo Fair.

When we come to the end of time
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate.

For the good are always merry
Save by an evil chance
And the merry love the fiddle
And the merry love to dance.

And when the folk there spy me
They will all come up to me
With "Here is the Fiddler of Dooney!"
And dance like a wave of the sea.

***

Three accomplishments well regarded in Ireland:
A clever verse, music on the harp, the art of shaving faces.

***

Uaisle a éisteas le helaîon
It is a sign of nobility to patronise art.

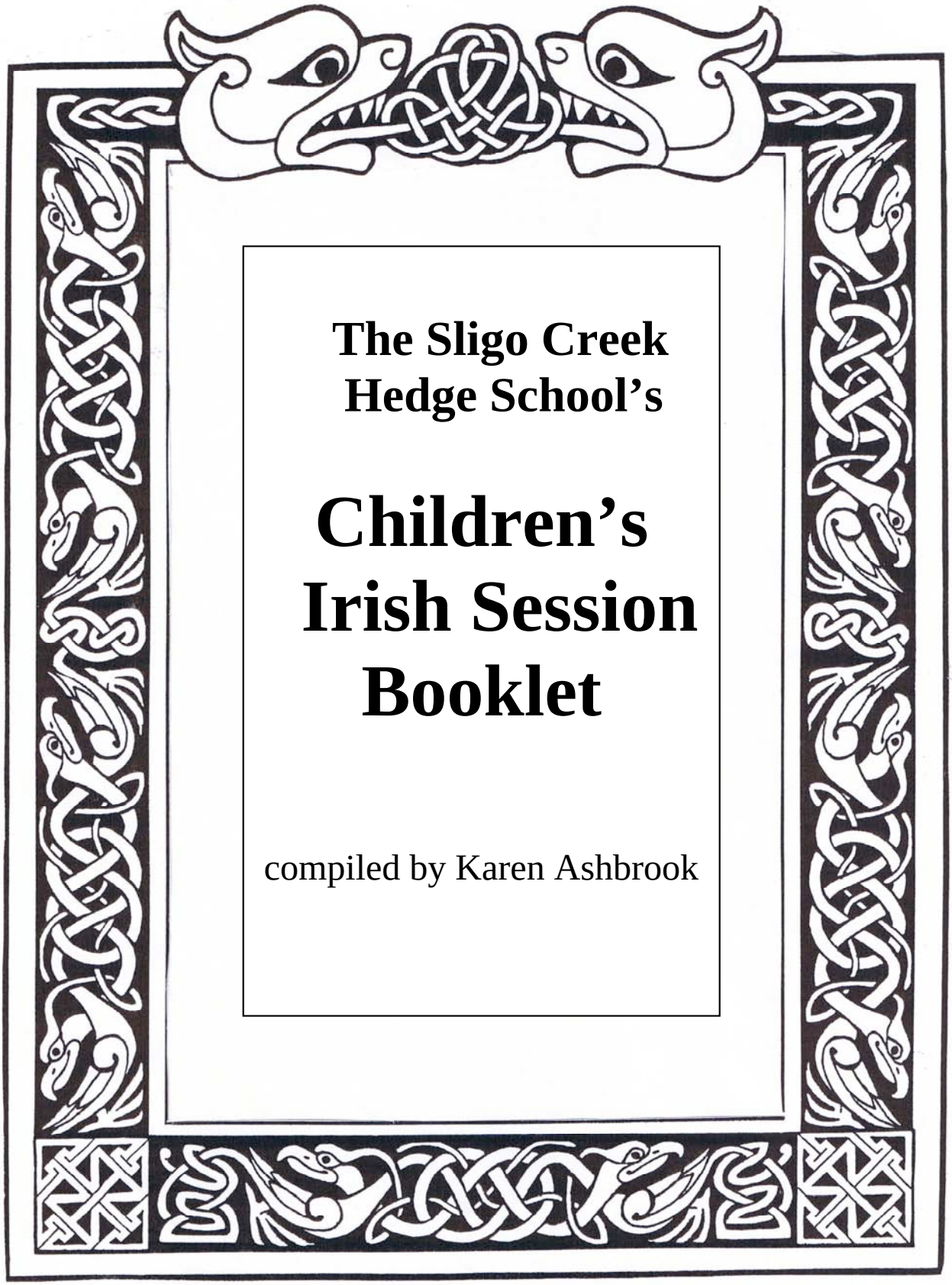
Slainté

Three cheers for Karen Ashbrook. Let us all stand.
Now three cheers for Paul Oorts, Karen's right hand,
And the "Kid's Music, Chowder and Ginger Ale Band"
And an honorable mention to the parents caravaned,
And to Nanny O'Brien's and to Gaffney and friends,
To the cooks, servers, bartenders, sessioneers, kin,
And the crowd who are smoking and making a din,
(Now you'll have to excuse us; this is where we came in.)

Steve Outterbridge, 2001

"The sweet harmony of music not only affords us pleasures, but renders us important services. It greatly cheers the drooping spirit, clears the face from clouds, smoothes the wrinkled brow, checks moroseness, promotes hilarity; of all the most pleasant things in the world, nothing more delights and enlivens the human heart."

Giraldus Cambrensis, 12th century
translation T. Wright



The Sligo Creek Hedge School's

Children's Irish Session Booklet

compiled by Karen Ashbrook