By the fireside
Cois tine

CCÉ Craobh Mhullach Íde

A selection of the Malahide Branch's favourite tunes

Christina Cotter

Do mhéadú glóire Dé

We gratefully acknowledge
the generous support of

MEITHEAL

in the production
of this book

Illustrations by pupils of Craobh Mhullach Íde

Design by Christina Cotter

Cover photograph of Kitty Hatch (author's grandmother)

Printing History
2006 Johnston Print
2007, 2009, 2011 FeverPrint

Réamhrá – Foreword

This little book contains many of the tunes that have become associated, over the years, with the Malahide Branch of Comhaltas, including examples of most of the forms of tunes found in Irish traditional music. Part of the story of the music is told in the narrative.

This book is the product of much work by our senior tinwhistle teacher, Christina Cotter, with contributions from teachers and students of the Malahide Branch. It has been carefully and lovingly put together; I hope you derive great joy from it.

Ambrose Jameson
Chairman Malahide CCÉ 2003 - 2005

Buíochas – Acknowledgements

The Malahide Branch of Comhaltas began with a small group of musicians who played together in the early 1970's. It is still going strong today, celebrating and sharing Irish music and culture, thanks to the many volunteering spirits who generously gave of their time and energy over the years. A sincere thanks to you all.

I would also like to thank the current committee for their help and support in this project, especially Ambrose Jameson, and Christopher Duff.

Thank you also to Caroline Doyle for her interesting article on the Bodhrán and her help in researching the origins of different types of Irish tunes. Thanks to Peter J. Rodgers for his informative articles on the impact that recording technology has had on Irish music and also his article on the use of ornamentation. Thanks to the pupils who contributed drawings and several mini-biographies of musicians.

Thanks to Lorcán Early, Ex-Chairman, for checking the Irish translations throughout the book.

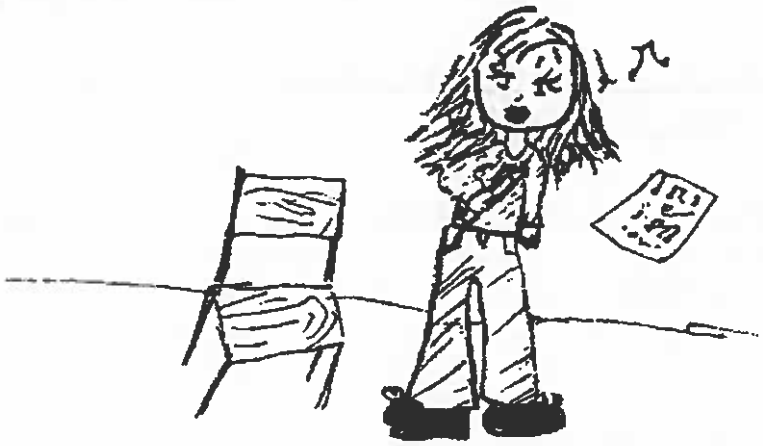
Finally, I would like to thank my mother, Lorraine, for the warm turf fires and the hearty, healthy and tasty dinners over the 2 years of putting this book together!

Brollach – Introduction

I think that the next time I get a 'good idea' I won't be so quick about saying it out loud! It has taken a good deal of work over the past two years to put this book together, and I'm sure I wasn't the only one who wondered if it would ever be completed! While it's not the definitive book of Malahide Branch's favourite tunes (inevitably some tunes had to be left out), I hope that Branch members will recognise many old favourites here. One of the beauties of Irish traditional music is that you can add your own personal and unique stamp to it! Some of the variations on tunes found in this book are those played by the Malahide Branch. I'll be glad if, rather than being left in pristine condition on a dusty shelf, this book will become a grubby much-used manual for teachers and pupils alike!

Christina Cotter
2/11/2005

Clár



Ruthie McCrohan
age 8

The Accordion

The Button Accordion is often played in traditional music. It usually has two rows of buttons on the right side and 8 bass buttons on the left
It was first invented in the early nineteenth century and became widely used in traditional music in the 1920's and 1930's.

When a button is pressed, air is blown across a set of paired metal reeds, causing them to vibrate and produce a particular note. The bellows are pulled out and pushed in by the arms, so it also became known as the 'squeeze box'. Usually on a button accordion you get a different note when you pull (draw) out or push in (press) the bellows while pressing the same key. There are also 8 bass keys to be played with the left hand but they are not always used.

Traditional music is not played as frequently on the Piano Accordion. This has keys similar to a piano and press and draw produces the same note. It may have 80 bass keys for the left hand. It is more popular in Northern Ireland and Scotland and in the past was commonly used in céilí bands

The melodeon is a simple accordion. Many of them have ten buttons, giving it twenty notes altogether. It also has two bass keys on the left side, which give the chords. It became popular in the 19th century for set dancing instead of the uilleann pipes.

The Banjo

The Banjo most commonly used to play Irish Traditional Music is called a Tenor Banjo. It has 4 strings and G, D, A, E the same as the fiddle but is tuned an octave lower. It has frets marked up along the shaft to tell you where to put your fingers. The shaft of the banjo is short and the strings are plucked using a plectrum.

There is also a 5 string banjo that has a fifth string coming half way down the shaft. The shaft of this banjo is longer and it is usually picked with the fingers and not a plectrum.

One of the best known banjo players is Barney McKenna of the Dubliners. His playing did a lot to make it more popular.

The Bodhrán

By Caroline Doyle – Teacher of Bodhrán and Tinwhistle

The bodhrán is a simple and very old type of drum known as a frame drum. Many believe that the bodhrán evolved in Ireland mid-20th century from the tambourine, which can be heard on some Irish music recordings dating back to the 1920's. However, in remote parts of the south-west, the "poor man's tambourine" - made from farm implements and minus the cymbals - was in popular use among mummers, or wren boys. Frame drums by different names are found in many different countries around the world, including Algeria, Morocco, China, Russia, and Egypt. Native American Indians also used frame drums. While most of these drums from different countries are similar in appearance or playing technique, Ireland's version, the bodhrán, has developed its own look and playing techniques.

The bodhrán can vary in size from 15" to 22" in diameter, with 18" being the most common. The wooden rim or shell can be from 2" to 6". The bodhrán can be made of: Deer, Sheep, Calf, Goat*, Greyhound or Horse skin.

*The most common and favoured material! It is particularly sensitive to humidity and temperature. If the weather is hot/dry, then the skin shrinks and tightens. This gives a 'pingy', high note. If the weather is humid, then the skin sags and the note gets low and boomy. Usually, we need something in between, so adjustments to the skin are required. The classical way to soften a dry drum is to apply moisture - usually water. This loosens the skin and we get the deeper note.

People believe that the head is cleaned and treated by a secret process, stretched over the shell, glued and tacked in place, and then left to dry. Modern manufacturers have also begun producing bodhráns with synthetic skin heads, which are more durable and unaffected by the weather, but a skin head still produces the best tone.

There has traditionally been a crosspiece of one or two bars mounted inside the shell. The purpose of the crosspiece is to make the bodhrán easier to handle, and enables the player to play and walk at the same time - which is very important to the Irish tradition! The bodhrán served an important role in many festivals, such as St. Stephen's Day, when the "Wren Boys" carried a captured wren from house to house, playing and singing as they went! Nowadays, bodhráns are also used to support favourite sport's teams. As traditional music began to move indoors to the concert hall and recording studio, many players found they no longer had need of the crosspiece, and that without it, new techniques became possible. Many of today's bodhráns are made with no crosspiece or with a crosspiece that is removable.

Prehistoric bodhráns

The exact origins of the bodhrán are still unknown, but there are two theories as to the way that this unique instrument developed.

1) In ancient Ireland, and in fact up until the 1950's, a skin tray or sieve was used to sift various materials. This skin tray was called many names. Interestingly enough, one of those names was 'bodhrán'. The Irish words 'bodhrán' can be translated as "tray" or "thundered", "deafening" or "dull sounding". It is believed that during the use of this skin tray, it was noticed that it could be used to produce a soft rhythmic sound, and that the drum developed from there.

2) It is possible that another form of frame drum arrived in Ireland through the Roman Empire or Arabic traders. There is in Arabic countries a frame drum called a 'def' or 'daff', which taken phonetically in English and translated to Irish could have become 'bodhrán'.

Whichever theory is correct, the Irish frame has developed into an instrument that is unique, using playing techniques found almost nowhere else in the world.

Tambourine origin of the bodhrán

Sean D. Halpenny in his booklet " Secrets of the Bodhrán" says that the instrument arrived into the popular area of music in the late 1950's. He adds: "Its close cousin the tambourine was a lot more popular, but its use has nearly died out. The author has been using the tambourine for nearly 20 years and remembers hearing old recordings of percussionists from the west of Ireland using the instrument and some years ago Seamus Tansey, the Sligo flute player, doubled on the tambourine on an LP recording".
Going further back, to a recording from 1927, John Reynolds from Co. Leitrim can be heard playing the tambourine as he accompanies flute player Tom Morrison. The jingles may have been suppressed by taping, as it sounds uncannily like a bodhrán. In the mid-20th century spoons and bones also provided percussion for Irish dance music while the snare and pedal drums were popular with the Céilí bands.

It seems that the bodhrán found its place in the traditional music of recent times largely through the work of Seán Ó Riada and Ceoltóirí Cualann, in which the late Peadar Mercier played the instrument. One of Mercier's colleagues in Ceoltóirí Cualann was Eamon de Buitléar. They often played together at sessions in the youth hostel in which Mercier worked in north Wicklow. Eamon de Buitléar supposedly said that the bodhrán had been played in some parts of Kerry, and that, its use in *Sive*, John B. Keane's play (staged in the Abbey Theatre in Dublin in 1959) influenced others to take up the instrument. Keane had heard the bodhrán played by mummers from the Listowel hinterland.
In 1960 Ó Riada used the instrument for the incidental music in the Abbey's production of Listowel writer Bryan MacMahon's *The Song of the Anvil.*

Holding your bodhrán

To hold the bodhrán, rest it on your left knee with the head parallel to your leg. Tuck the shell under your arm so that you can squeeze the drum against your body. Be careful not to dampen the head more than necessary to hold the drum securely. Place your left hand against the back of the head just inside the shell to help steady the drum. If your bodhrán has crosspieces, rest it on your leg and hold it by the crosspieces.

Holding your stick

The bodhrán is played with a double-ended stick called a 'cipín', meaning 'little stick' (pronounced 'ki-peen'). It may also be called a 'tipper'. This stick and the way that it is employed is one of the things that separates the bodhrán from other frame drums, which are more often played with the hands.

Pick up the tipper just as if it were a pen or pencil. Then, turn your wrist so that the end of the tipper (which would be the point of the 'pen') is pointed at your stomach. The tipper should be parallel to the head of the bodhrán. The 'point end' of the tipper makes a downward arc and strikes the head in approximately the middle of the arc. Hold your wrist loosely as you do this. Next, rotate your arm in an upward motion so that the head is stuck in an upward arc. Practise alternating the downward and upward motions to produce a steady rhythm. Remember to keep your wrist loose. The motion produced will be similar to that of strumming a guitar.

Playing trebles – using both ends of the stick!

Turn your wrist angle inward a little further (towards your elbow), angle it down, and hold the tipper a little more loosely. By exaggerating your follow-through on the downward stroke, you can cause the back end of the tipper to strike the head immediately after the front end of the tipper. The front end will play again on the upstroke this will produce three quick notes, which should sound like 'diddle-de'. Add another down-stroke to produce 'diddle-de-dum'. This is the sound of the distinctive treble.

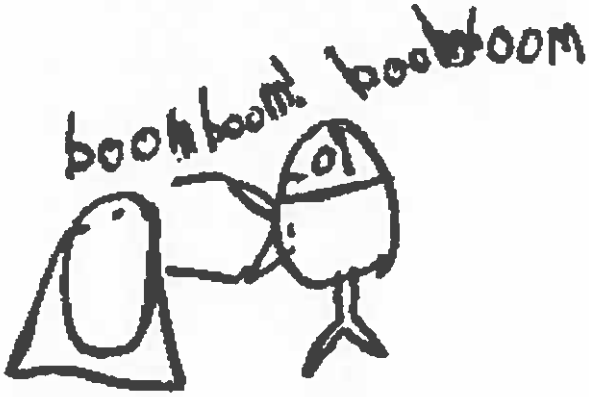
Rim clicks

These are produced by striking the shell of the drum with the tipper. This produces a nice change of sound. The Rim Shot is produced by the same basic motion as playing on the head, but may require an exaggerated motion, or lifting and lowering the drum itself. A Rim Shot on a down stroke should be played at the 12 o'clock position on the shell, and on an upstroke at the '6 o'clock position. (With jigs, this Rim Shot may take place on the 4th beat of the rhythm (i.e. 1, 2, 3, click, 5, 6), and for reels, it may take place more frequently (e.g. 1, 2, click, 2, 1, 2, click, 2).

Producing tone on your bodhrán

By sliding the left hand along the back side of the head, different tones can be produced. Experiment with different hand positions from edge (very open) to the centre (muffled). By pressing harder against the head, the pitch can be changed. Try this in combination with trebles for a nice effect.

In the hands of a skilled player the bodhrán can be a subtle and exciting instrument - striking the skin in a variety of ways, one hand tucked in behind the skin, pressing and moving to vary the colour and intensity of the sound. The side of the beater is also used to good effect on the wooden rim. Genuine goatskin is a natural 'live' material, expanding and contracting slightly with changing temperatures. It has an infinite variety of subtle 'veining' and it's rich lustre becomes more beautiful with age.



a fish playing a bodhrán

by Niall McKenna, age 7

The Concertina

The concertina is a small, hexagonal accordion. It was patented in England in 1829. There are keys on either end of the bellows (usually two rows of five keys on either end).
There is a strap each side to hold your hand in place and you then press the keys and pull the bellows out and push them in to make the notes.

It sounds a little like a harmonica as it uses one reed per note. It became popular because, unlike the pipes and fiddle, it remained in tune and was good for playing for dancers.

Co Clare is the main centre of concertina playing in Ireland, where it is particularly common among women players. In each area in Clare the concertina players have their own style of playing.

The Fiddle

The fiddle is the familiar or colloquial name given to the 'violin'. This is stringed instrument which has four strings stretched the full length of a fingerboard. The fingerboard is attached to a 'soundbox'. Sliding the 'bow' over the strings causes them to vibrate and make a musical sound which is amplified by the hollow soundbox. The bow is comprised of horse-hairs attached to a wooden frame, although bows made from synthetic fibres are also available. The different musical notes are created by pressing down on a string at specified intervals. This shortens the string which causes it to vibrate differently thus creating the discrete musical notes of the scale. The shorter the string, the higher the pitch.

The fiddler uses 'rosin' on the bow to keep the horse-hair smooth so that it can slide easily over the strings. Rosin is a hard, brittle resin that is a (usually) amber-coloured by-product of the distillation of turpentine.

The fiddle is a popular traditional Irish instrument thought to have been introduced to Ireland in the 11th century. It is not clear whether the fiddle used then was similar to that used today. At that time, dancing was a popular activity in the houses of Ireland and the music was provided principally by lilters and pipers. However, as fiddles could be played longer than the lilter could lilt, the fiddle became a lot more popular and began to replace lilting.

There have been many skilled fiddlers in the Irish tradition, some influential musicians in the last century were Michael Coleman and Johnny Doherty among many others.

Instruments similar to the fiddle are used by different ethnic musicians around the world, ranging from the American Apache fiddle which is frequently made of cactus, to the African 'rabab' fiddle which resembles a shoe.

The Flute

This keyed flute is commonly used in traditional music. It can be divided into three parts and put into a small case for carrying. It has silver keys.
Both keyed and keyless flutes are used in traditional music. The keyed flutes may have up to 8 keys and the keyless flutes have six holes.

The flutes are usually made from African Blackwood and silver. The wood gives them a softer tone than the metal flutes used in classical music.
The instrument can be broken into 3 pieces. The flute is tuned by moving the pieces closer together or farther apart.
The Flute or Concert Flute in Irish traditional music is generally a wooden flute played with the simple fingering system (as in the tin whistle) and is normally in the key of D. Sometimes the silver flute is played. The concert flute is a very popular instrument in traditional music and among its greatest exponents are Matt Molloy of the Chieftains and the late John McKenna from Leitrim.

The Harp

The harp is a stringed instrument with a long history (over 1200 years documented) of being played in Ireland. The harp is often seen as the emblem of Ireland. It still appears on the back of our coins. For many years the image of a golden harp set on a green background was the flag of Ireland, until the tricolour which we still use today was substituted in the early 1900's. The harpist was a very important person in Irish history. In the past, harps were highly decorated with jewels and ornamentation. Turlough O'Carolan (1670 - 1738) is probably the most famous harpist and many of his compositions are still played today.
The harp was traditionally held against the left shoulder, the left hand playing the upper strings and the right hand, the lower strings. Today, harps are held against the right shoulder and the hands playing positions are reversed.

Due to the harp's long history of being played in Ireland, a rich and varied tradition has developed, showing the influence of various historical music styles. At least 5 main stylistic periods can be identified...

1. The Sean Nós or Old Gaelic style. This style is representative of the 1500 - 1600's before influence of art music. It is mostly associated with the playing of Slow Airs and particularly of lamentations. These have survived well in the Uilleann piping tradition.

2. The Classic Irish style. This evolved from the 1600 - 1700's. It is associated with the hybrid style of the older Irish patron music but for the new English and Scottish gentry who favoured the music of the Italian masters, in particular Geminiani, Gabrieli, Vivaldi and Correlli whose music was most popular in the Dublin music theatres at the time. An example of harp music from the time is that of Turlough O'Carolan (1670-1738).

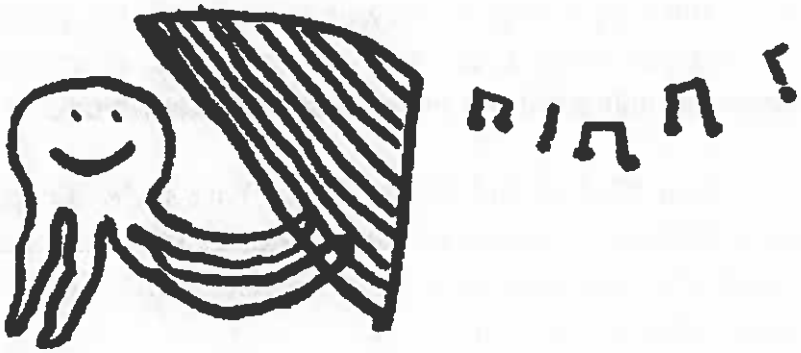
3. The Romantic Irish style. This developed in the 1800 and 1900's and is a sentimental music mostly characterised by 'quaint' Irish songs, which nonethe-

The Harp

less often disguised passionate political ideals. Examples of this musical style include the compositions of Thomas Moore (1779-1852).

4. The Traditional Irish style. Since 1970, the traditional music of the social Irish Seisiún where mostly dance music is played for pleasure or dancing.

5. The 'New Irish' style. This current style shows the influence of new rhythms taken from world music traditions such as jazz, rock and also classical music. An example is 'Riverdance'.



an octopus playing a harp

by Áine Boyle Age 7

The Tinwhistle

The Tin Whistle or Penny Whistle is a cylindrical wind instrument, made of metal, wood, or plastic and is sometimes referred to as a 'fipple flute'. It belongs to the group of instruments called flageolets. The term 'fipple' refers to how the sound in the tinwhistle and other flageolets is made. The fipple is formed by a small plug, or block, set into the mouthpiece of the instrument. In some cases it is part of the instrument itself. A small space is created inside the mouthpiece between the fipple and the inside 'wall' of the tin whistle. When the player blows, the air-stream passes through this space and meets the sharp edge that is cut into the tin whistle tube below the fipple. This produces sound.

The tinwhistle, as we know it, has been in existence for at least 200 years. However, the myths and legends of ancient Ireland and evidence from archeological digs show that its origins go much further back in time. The exact form of the instrument has changed in the intervening years. Nowadays, the Irish tin whistle has a plastic mouthpiece and six finger holes. It usually comes in the key of D, which refers to the pitch of the instrument, although tin whistles are also available in a range of keys. The tin whistle which we are familiar with is primarily used in Irish and Scottish traditional music, however a similar instrument is also used by other ethnic groups.

The tinwhistle is an inexpensive instrument that is relatively easy to learn. It is both versatile and portable making it popular with beginner musicians! Some world class whistle players include Mary Bergin, Joanie Madden of Cherish the Ladies, and Micho Russell.

The Uilleann Pipes

The Uilleann Pipes (meaning 'elbow' pipes), which evolved from the old war pipes, are only several hundred years old. They first started to appear around the beginning of the 1700's and have also been known as the "Union Pipes" or the "Irish Bagpipe". These early pipes were made mainly from boxwood and later ebony with a flatter pitch than the instruments of today. It ranged: B flat, B natural, C natural and C sharp. In earlier times many pipers were blind as music was one of the few professions a blind person could find employment.

Timothy Kenna, originally a maker of spinning-wheels, began to make pipes in the 1700's. His son Thomas, who followed him into the business, continued to make pipes into the early part of the 19th century. Many of the sets made by Kenna are still in use today and are noted for their sweetness and tone.

By the mid 1800's pipe-making had become more widespread in Ireland. The impact then of the famine was that some pipe-makers also emigrated, bringing their trade with them. For example, the Taylor brothers, who set up in Philadelphia, made many sets and developed what is now referred to as Concert D sets. The older type of pipes were too quiet for playing in the large concert halls of America, so they enlarged both the size of bore and the finger holes on the chanter, in order to raise the sound volume. The pipes made before this period were known as flat pitch pipes.

A full set of Uilleann Pipes today consists of a bag, bellows, chanter, 3 drones and 3 regulators. A practice set does not include the drones or regulators. The bellows is strapped to the musician's elbow. This allows air to be pumped into the bag, which flows through to the chanters. There are finger holes on the front of the chanter and a thumbhole on the back. The melody is played through the chanter. The drones provide accompaniment in bass, baritone or tenor to the chanter. The regulators provide chordal accompaniment.

Ornamentation in Traditional Irish Music

By Peter J. Rodgers, Fiddle Teacher.

Anyone who has ever learned to play an Irish instrument, or who enjoys listening to Irish traditional music is bound to have come across ornamentation in one form or another. Ornamentation is a means of embellishing or decorating the basic notes of a tune and consists of rapid and subtle variations on the melody, sometimes impossible even to distinguish as individual notes.

Common forms of ornamentation in Irish music include the triplet, which is a note played three times in quick succession. On fiddle and accordion this entails changing direction rapidly, while on wind instruments it requires breaking the flow of air using the back of the tongue (a glottal stop) or the front (tonguing).

Another widely used technique is the 'cut' which can be used to 'cut' a single root note into two or more notes using a fast finger movement above the root note. This can be done either in the middle of the note or just before it. Similar to this is the 'tap', which involves fingering on and off a lower note, and is generally used on wind instruments.

The 'roll' combines the 'cut' and 'tap' into five notes starting and ending with the root note. Again this is played rapidly so that the effect is more rhythmic than melodic as it is not heard as five individual notes. There is also a 'short roll' of four notes which starts just above the root note but ends on it. The 'crann' is another version of the roll mainly used on the uilleann pipes, which contains two different cuts, and no tap.

There are many other similar types or ornamentation consisting of several notes played in rapid succession, and these are generally referred to as 'grace notes'. Other types include the 'slide' or 'glissando', where one note is 'slid' into the next, and on the fiddle the 'double stop' where two strings are played together.

The origins of ornamentation probably go back as far as the roots of music itself, and it is common in folk music from all parts of the world, as well as in Indian and Arabic classical music. Irish music is, however, unique in some of the techniques of ornamentation used, in particular the roll.

The oldest known forms of Irish traditional music surviving today, Sean Nós singing and pipe playing, are particularly rich in ornamentation, and it

is possible that its use in modern times on other instruments largely stems from these forms. Irish traditional music today, however, has its immediate roots in solo music as played for dancers in the 19th and early 20th centuries, mainly for house parties. For this purpose ornaments such as rolls or triplets helped to emphasise the rhythm or to provide opportunities for fancy footwork on the part of the dancers.

The amount and type of ornamentation used when playing Irish music depends on several different factors. The type of instrument is important, as this effects which notes can or need to be ornamented and in what way. 'Cranns', for example are a variation on the roll normally played on the lowest note of the uilleann pipes. A triplet can be far easier to play on a button accordion than a roll, whereas the opposite may be true for the whistle or flute.

Solo playing in general allows the greatest freedom to ornament a tune as an individual performer sees fit, whereas group playing, particularly unison playing such as in Céilí bands, often demands that it be kept to a minimum.

Regional styles also dictate which types of ornament are appropriate. The robust Donegal style as typified by the late fiddler John Doherty, for example contains little except for triplets, whereas the Sligo style of fiddler Michael Coleman is rich in many forms of ornamentation, to the extent that the tunes themselves can be difficult to follow.

The tune itself also dictates a certain level and style of ornamentation. Reels, Jigs and Hornpipes generally have more, while other tunes such as Slides, Marches, Barndances and Polkas generally have less, though this again depends on the other factors, such as for example, the particular tune in question.

Through experience, both of playing an instrument and also through listening to others playing, musicians gradually develop their own distinct style of ornamentation reflecting their own personal taste.

The Impact of Recording Technology on Irish Music

By Peter J. Rodgers, Fiddle Teacher.

The development of sound recording technology at the end of the last century in America began a gradual revolution in the way music and musical styles could be heard and learnt. For musicians, who previously had relied entirely either on other musicians or on written notation to learn their tunes, this, and subsequent developments in recording technology were to have a huge impact on the nature and understanding of Irish 'traditional music', both directly and indirectly.

For the first time musicians in various parts of the country would be regularly exposed to regional styles from outside their own area, other than from the occasional visit by a travelling musician, allowing a gradual mixing and blending of regional styles and techniques.

This was to affect, not only the musicians who deliberately sat down and learned from these recordings, but also people who picked up various techniques by listening to the records. An example of this is the frequent playing of tunes in pub sessions to this day which were first popularised by the early recording giants, such as Michael Coleman.

The original sound recording machine was the Edison, or cylinder phonograph, which used a cylinder the size of a coffee jar on which sound was recorded in a continuous spiral around it. The device, invented by Thomas Alva Edison's company in 1877 was known as the cylinder phonograph and allowed both recording and playback on the same machine. It was convenient and portable enough to carry around and take into people's homes. For collectors, it was to revolutionise both the quality and quantity of tunes they were able to compile. This is apparent from the collections of Francis O'Neill in the early part of the century, which are still a primary source of tunes for many musicians.

The exposure of this 'traditional' music to non-musicians also helped form a fairly coherent public perception of what was to be regarded as traditional and what wasn't. Commercially, some records were privately produced, notably by Irish piper Patsy Tuohy. Patsy Tuohy was then well known on the Vaudeville circuit, and these records were made to order and sold by mail order. Many of these found their way back to Ireland and were much prized possessions. Despite their poor sound quality, they are still an important reference point for Irish musical styles around the turn of the century.

Rising Tide

The development of recording technology came at a crucial time in the history of Irish music and politics. At the end of the nineteenth century, Irish politicians were fighting for Home Rule, and a cultural renaissance was taking place involving literature, sports, language and music. One of the organisations founded at this time was the Gaelic League, which played a crucial role in setting standards and exposing Irish music to a wider audience abroad. In the United States they organised large functions and concerts with highly respected musicians such as piper Patsy Tuohy. However, the Gaelic League drew much of its support from the affluent middle classes, who tended to have more eclectic tastes and were gradually moving away from native Irish music.

Meanwhile, in Ireland at around the same time:-

'Ireland's Catholic clergy entered into one of its most reactionary and puritanical stages; singing and dancing were declared sinful, supposedly leading to promiscuity, drunkenness and debauchery. A national campaign was mounted to sup press Irish dance music...There were widespread accounts of clergymen breaking into houses, smashing musical instruments and even beating up musicians 'in the name of the Lord'*

All of these factors led to Francis O'Neill's deep pessimism, in 1918, over the future of Irish music. As he wrote to a friend that year: 'Few of our people care a snap for Irish music.' Presuming that 'our people' include the vast amounts of Irish immigrants in New York at the time, he was soon proven to be very much mistaken.

The Cylinder phonograph, invented in 1877 was followed by another form of recording technology, which was soon to replace it altogether. Flat disc recording had one major advantage over the cylinder system. While only one reproduction of the original recording could be made with the cylinder system (without a substantial loss in sound quality), the flat disc system allowed hundreds, or thousands of copies to be made of a single recording. However this advantage came at a price. Recordings now had to be made in prohibitively expensive, purpose-built recording studios. The means of production was now in the hands of a few wealthy entrepreneurs or record companies.

During the war years some records were produced by imitators of the Irish style. One of the best known was John Kimmel, a German accordion player who recorded under several pseudo Irish names. His style is still influential in the US in Canada, as well as in Ireland, up to the present day. The first large scale production, however, of a re-

** Sleeve notes of "I'm leaving Tipperary", a CD collection of Irish music recorded in the United States, mostly early in the 20th century on Globe Style records*

cording of Irish Music by Irish musicians took place in early 1917 when, not long after the Easter rising in Dublin, Irish nationalist feeling was running high. The record was recorded by the Columbia Record Company and featured two immigrant musicians, Eddie Herburn and John Wheeler on accordion and banjo. The 500 copies issued were reported to have sold out 'almost immediately'.

Boom Time

From then on up to the mid 1920's, as New York experienced an economic boom, several independent Irish labels continued to issue Irish music to the Irish community in New York. Labels such as Keltic, Emerald, Gaelic and New Republic, as well as the majors, catered for this audience, recording current Vaudeville and variety acts, as well as several unknown musicians, with a virtually guaranteed audience . Most of these records were anonymous, with the records only revealing the company name and perhaps some cursory information, such as the name of the tune or song or the instruments involved (in case the listener couldn't tell from the scratchy recordings).

Musicians who featured on these recordings often made use, either at their own or at the record companies' insistence, of various forms of accompaniment which would have been unfamiliar to Irish ears at that time, including jazz style piano, guitar, mandolin or even piccolo, which would eventually become an integral part of people's perception of Irish music.

Some of the better musicians, however were reluctant to record due to the nature of the process, and the poor quality of the recordings, though this changed as the process itself was improved. This was especially the case with fiddle players, who were forced to use the Stroh violin, which gave a harsh and metallic, but very loud, sound through a large metal horn. Among the earliest highly skilled fiddle players to be persuaded to use this process were Michael Coleman and James Morrison. Both Irish emigrants from the Kilavil district of Sligo, these two fiddle players played in the distinctive Sligo style, while being highly individual players in their own right

The Coleman and Morrison recordings came back to Ireland in their thousands, where they had and extraordinary impact. In remote rural areas where regional styles and repertoires dominated, it became almost imperative to play in the Sligo style as exemplified by Coleman and Morrison. This involved not only playing like them, i.e. imitating their technique and ornamentation, but also playing their repertoire. As a result, local styles of playing, tunes and tune settings went out of fashion.

Séamus Mac Mathuna recalls the emotional impact of hearing old Irish tunes played to such a high standard by an Irish 'exile' in New York in the 1930's who 'wept for sheer joy on hearing Coleman playing 'Lord MacDonald': 'It cannot be, it cannot be' he repeated, 'no earthly man could make music like that.' His influence and almost universal appeal is also apparent in Ciarán Carson's laconic remark in his book 'Last Night's Fun'. After explaining the technical construction of the 'roll' in Irish music: 'the fiddle player Michael Coleman has been deified because he rolled a lot. Some think he rolled too much, and might prefer the playing of his contemporary Paddy Kiloran', who 'used the roll for occasional rhythmic variation.'

Many Irish musicians, including several other Sligo style fiddlers, such as Paddy Kiloran and Hugh Gillespie, as well as singers, notably John McCormack, 'Stage Irish' comedy acts, pipers and other musicians recorded throughout the 1920's. The smaller labels were mostly swept away by the major companies by around the mid '20s, and by the early thirties only a few big names were still recording.

These records more often than not featured non-Irish accompanists who played in a variety of styles, jazz, classical, 'country', on instruments such as piano, guitar or mandolin some of which would rarely have been heard in Ireland at the time. This added a distinctive 'American' element to the recordings which was also to prove influential. Guitarist Jack McKenna, for example, who played with Hugh Gillespie had a distinctive and innovative style which has proved influential in forming a 'traditional Irish' guitar style, as exemplified by Dónal Lunny and Arty McGlynn in recent years.

The recordings of these early masters were to have a major impact on the standardisation of Irish traditional music, and consequently on the dominant public perceptions of Irish music, and the images associated with it, giving it a new air of respectability. This standardisation has become apparent not least with the growth of the pub 'session' in various parts of Ireland, as well as Céilí bands and ensembles, which often differed radically from local, regionally defined musical gatherings, mainly in houses.

Similar developments were taking place in the UK as in the US, as the London based majors began recording Irish immigrant musicians, as well as native Irish talent. Notable among these was piper Leo Rowsome. Original recordings, as well as re-issues of American originals were also produced to supply a growing demand both in Britain and Ireland. As demand for native singers and musicians grew, the Parlophone record company responded by sending a recording team to Ireland in 1929, resulting in 76 rec-

ords, and again in 1930. In these trips, efforts were made to include talent from all parts of Ireland, though several prominent Sligo musicians were included. By 1936 HMV had set up recording studios. Up to the start of the second World War, many solo, unaccompanied musicians were recorded here. Recording activities were wound down during the War, to resume again in earnest in the late 1940's.

Post War recording

With the development of tape-recording technology in the 1940's, it became possible both to record musicians in their own homes, and to carry out large scale field recording projects. In the Summer of 1947, the BBC began recording a number of musicians both from rural and urban backgrounds. Seamus Ennis collected and transcribed thousands of tunes from all over Ireland for the Irish Folklore Commission and for RTÉ in the '40s. Most of the 1,500 or so performances he and others recorded in Ireland, as well as England and Scotland were eventually broadcast on the BBCs popular 'As I Roved Out' radio show. By the mid 1950s, Ciarán Mac Mathúna's 'Ceolta Tíre' and 'A Job of Journey work' were also winning huge audiences in Ireland. These shows helped to secure an urban audience for what was predominantly rural-based music. In the early 1960s, he also took his portable recording equipment and recorded celebrated figures such as accordionist Joe Cooley and fiddler Martin Wynne. Also in the 1950s and '60s, the thriving Irish music scene in London was documented on records produced by Topic and other companies. The new found self-confidence associated with Irish music was apparent in the late 50s, with the founding of two new Irish record companies devoted exclusively to Irish traditional music. These companies, still active today, were Gael Linn and Ceirníní Cladaigh (Claddagh Records). Well-known names associated with these record companies have included the Chieftains, Seán Ó Riada and Clannad.

Meanwhile, back in New York, where the Irish music recording industry was far from booming, four Irishmen, inspired by Greenwich Village's thriving Folk and Blues scene, decided to adopt American-style instrumentation and sing commercially the songs with which they had grown up back home. The Clancy brothers, along with Tommy Makem, set up an independent record company and released some records of their songs. However, Irish-Americans, unfamiliar with the songs, and suspicious of the group due to Greenwich Village's socialist connections, tended to shun them. But when, due to a twist of fate, the group appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show for a longer than usual eighteen minutes, their new-found fame soon made them, according to Mick Moloney, 'the first Irish born entertainers since John McCormack (in the 1920s) to achieve in-

ternational recognition'. Records found their way back to Ireland courtesy of Ciarán Mac Mathúna, and frequent airplay on RTÉ soon made them household names back home. This popularity helped to spawn a major 'Ballad Boom' in Ireland in the late 1960s. Groups such as the Dubliners, Sweeney's Men, Emmet Spiceland and The Johnstons emerged at this time, along with countless others in pubs across Ireland. They were inspired in part by the Clancy brothers, as well as by the folk revival which took place in England in the 1960s. This folk revival was itself very much inspired by the field recordings aired on 'As I Roved Out'. These new groups sang 'traditional' songs popularised by the Clancy brothers, as well as other songs, old and new in the same 'hearty' style and with similar instrumentation.

Irish music recording and distribution activities were stepped up a notch or two in the 1970s with the setting up of two independent American labels devoted to Irish music. Shanachie records and Green Linnet records began recording Irish musicians resident in the United States, and before long, established links with Irish-based record companies. This allowed the distribution of records by groups such as the Chieftains, Planxty, the Wolfe Tones as well as many solo (mostly accompanied) musicians. Creative decisions on the part of record company executives, such as Shanachie's preference for the Greek Bouzouki, or guitar for solo accompaniment, have also influenced accepted definitions of Irish music.
During this period there was an unprecedented level of experimentation with different styles and instrumentation, inspired partly by the influence of early 78 records, as mentioned earlier, as well as by increased exposure of musicians to Rock and Roll, Jazz, Classical and American folk music.

Donegal supergroup Clannad, even in their pre-synthesiser days, had strong elements of Jazz and Classical music mixed in with their traditional Donegal songs and tunes. In contrast, Planxty presented an interesting mix of Woody Guthrie/Bob Dylan style folk, Macedonian rhythms and melodies along with not-so-well-known Irish tunes and songs. This was very successful by Irish music standards. Planxty were succeeded by the Bothy Band who introduced a powerful acoustic rhythm section to Irish tunes and songs. Above all, these groups were progressive and forward-looking, while still relying on old material for their sources.
Leaning far more towards Jazz-rock were the Horslips, who based their epic sound around traditional tunes, ancient Irish legends and a mixture of electric rock and traditional instruments. All of these groups helped bring new audiences to traditional music, as well as new elements to the music itself.

A Recipe for learning music

Some important ingredients:

1. Fun! Fun! Fun! Children (and adults too!) learn best when they enjoy what they are learning and experience success. For children it may be possible to invent some games around music (see overleaf for some game ideas!). Praise your child for every attempt and give opportunities for your child to 'show off' what they know.

2. Short and Sweet! Practice should be done *every day* for at least five – ten minutes, rather than once a week for an hour before your music lesson! It will be less daunting that way and you will actually make quicker progress.

3. Posture! Check that you are sitting in a comfortable position. This will help you get the most from your instrument and also avoid any repetitive strain injury. Ask your teacher is there a recommended way to sit.

4. Hold your instrument correctly. This is very important. It is so easy to get into bad habits which can work against you later on. Check with your child's teacher how the instrument should be held; it can be hard for children to remember this when they get home.

5. Patience! You have to learn to coordinate quite a lot of different skills in order to play an instrument e.g. fingers, wrist, arm, breathing, listening, reading music etc., so it won't happen overnight! And remember: you are never too old to learn an instrument!

Music Games

Listening Games

- Listening to one note: each child takes a turn and plays a note on his or her instrument (without the others being able to see!). The next child tries to guess the note by playing it on *his/her* instrument. Once he/she has guessed it, he/she takes a turn playing for the next child in the circle. If the children are unsure what note has been played, let them listen to several repetitions. As the children get better at listening, limit the amount of repetitions allowed!
- Listening to rhythm: listen to Irish Traditional Music from a tape, CD, or on the radio. Join your child in clapping, tapping or even dancing (!) along in time.
- Play musical chairs or musical statues while listening to traditional music.
- Distinguishing between jigs / reels / polkas: see if you and your child can figure out which type of tune it is by listening to its rhythm. Jigs have a '1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3' etc. rhythm. The rhythm of a jig matches the rhythm of the word 'elephant' (which can be said in 3 parts: 'e-le-phant'). If you can say repetitively 'e-le-phant-e-le-phant-e-le-phant...etc.' (i.e. 1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3...) in time with a tune, it is probably a jig! Likewise a reel is an 'alligator' (1-2-3-4) and a polka could be a 'chicken' (1-2)!

Learning about musical instruments

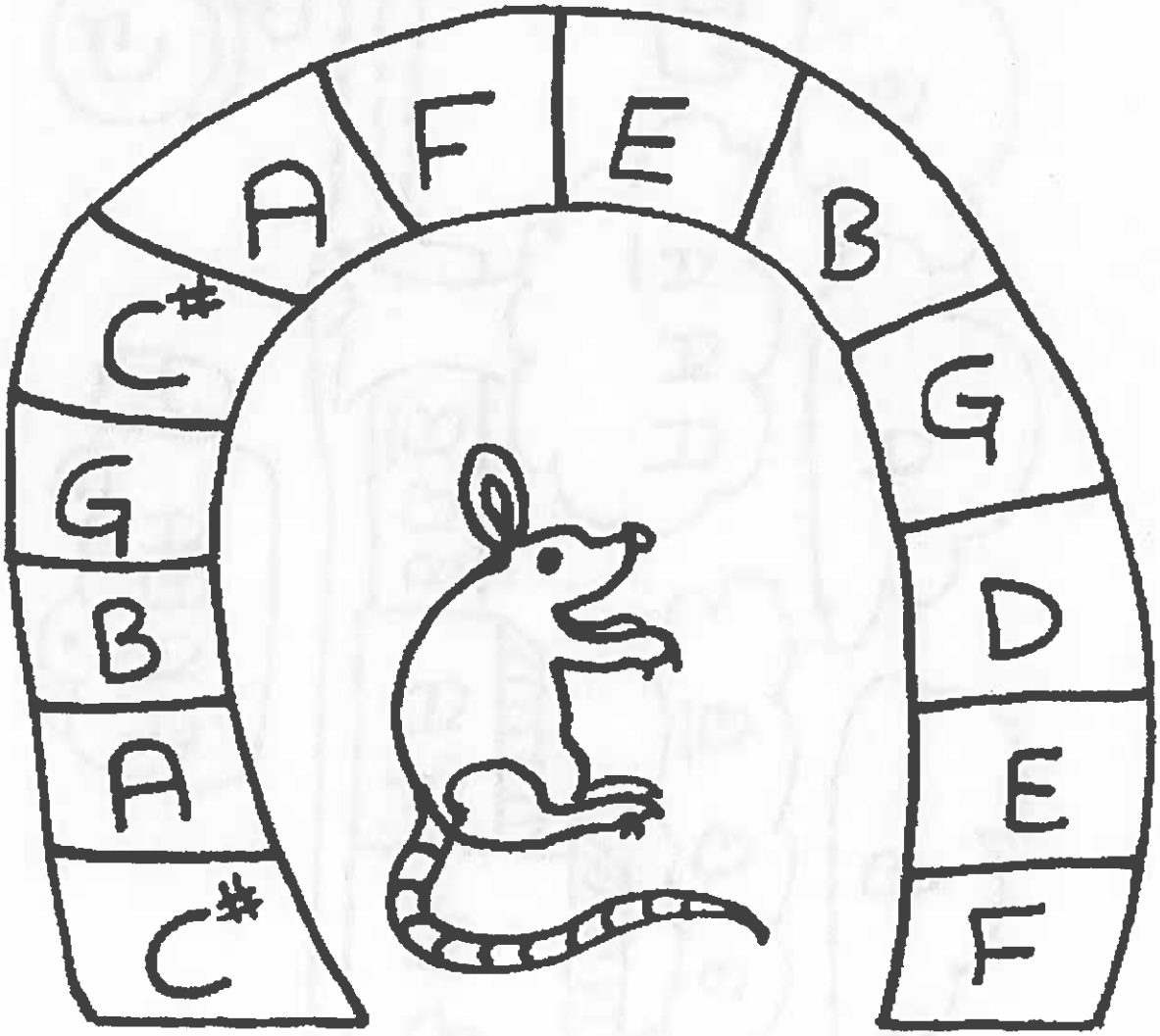
- Brainstorm: have a quiz to see how many Irish traditional instruments the children can think of in 60 seconds
- Charades: each child takes a turn pretending to play a different traditional instrument. The other children must guess which instrument is being played!

Keeping up children's motivation!

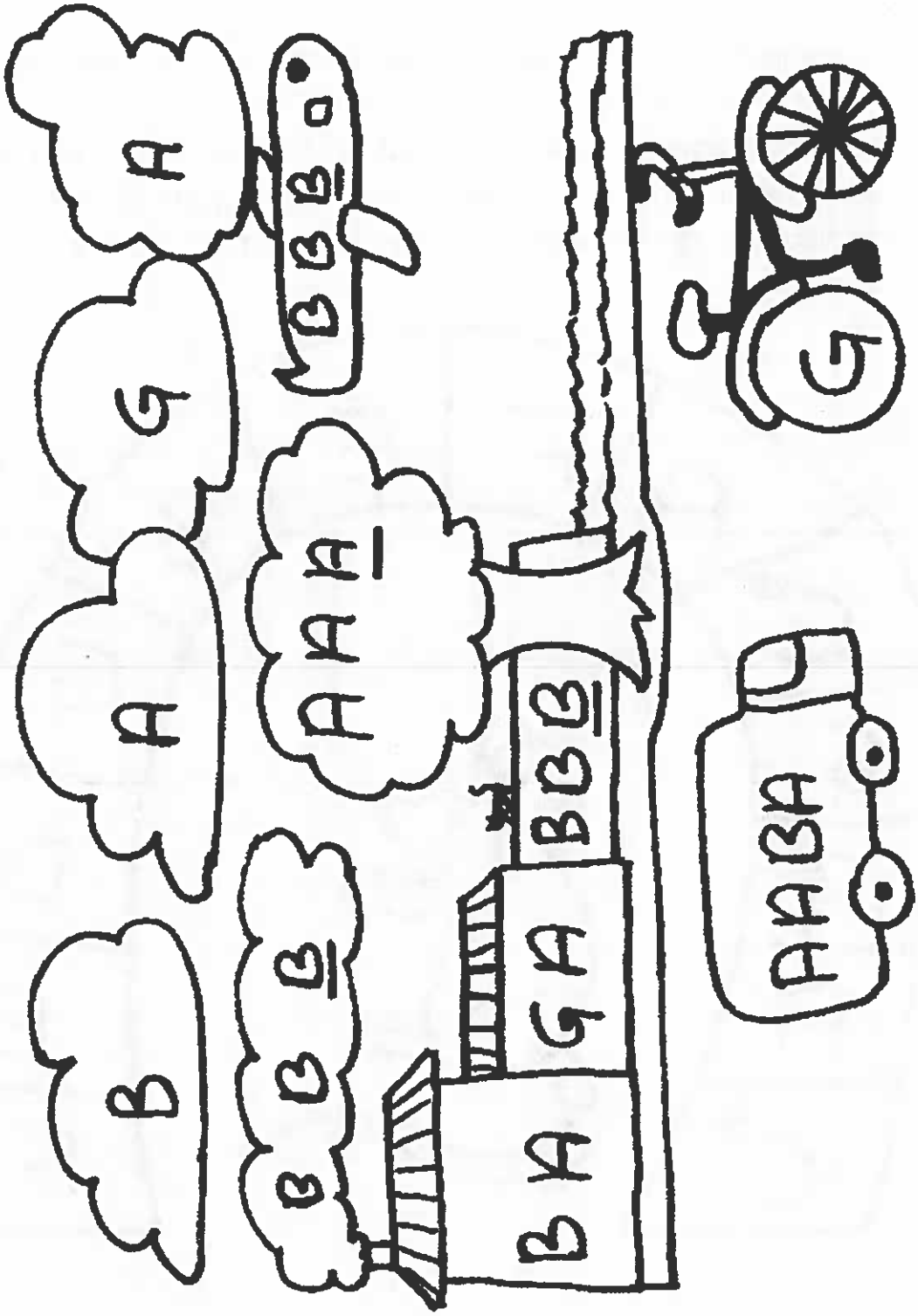
- Let your child be the teacher! Let your child teach you how to play the instrument. Children love when their parents get it wrong and have to be shown. The 'slower' you are to learn and the sillier the mistakes you make, the better! (E.g. hold the instrument in a ridiculous way!)
- Draw pictures: Irish tunes have some funny names! Draw pictures to represent the title of the tune.
- Draw pictures of instruments or point out the instruments in books etc.
- Play the mouse game! (See overleaf) This can be an encouraging game for children at the very beginning of learning to play an instrument.

Mouse Game

Have a competition with the other girls and boys in your class! You must start at one end of the horse-shoe and try to get the other end without making a squeaky sound or playing the wrong note on your instrument. If you do, you must stop on that square and wait for the next person to take a go. See who is first to the finish!



Beginning Tune



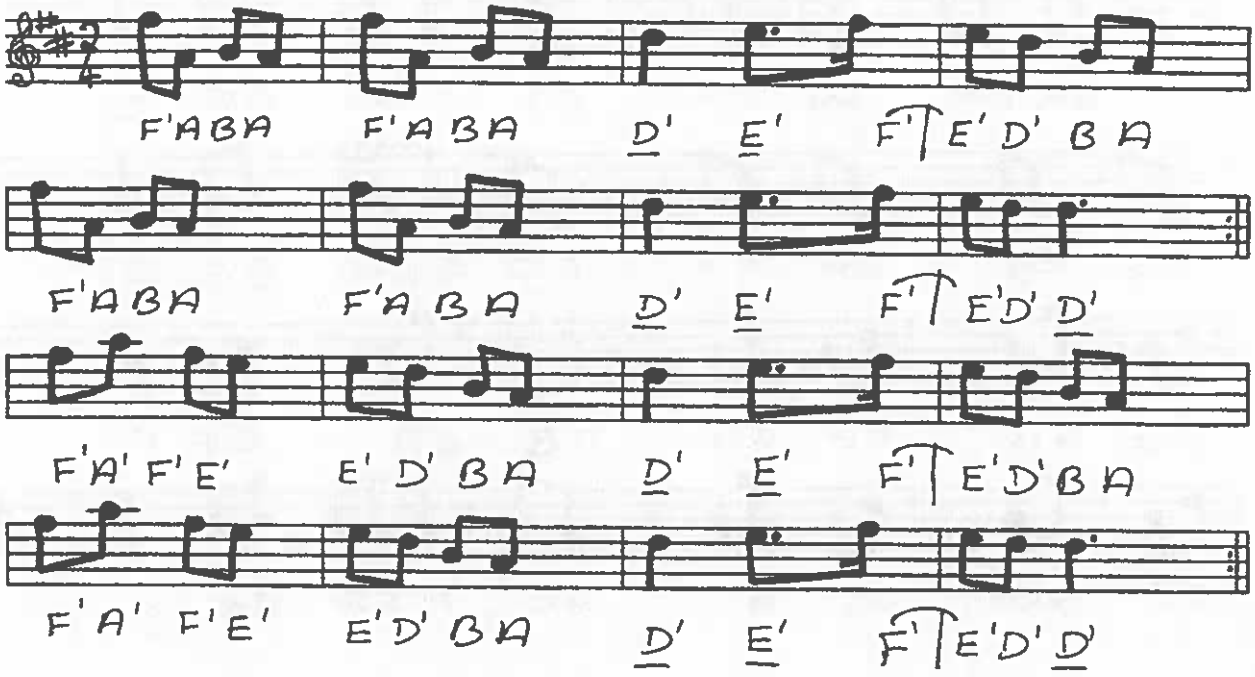
Polkas

The Polka was introduced into the ballrooms of France and England in 1843. The Times of London described it as embracing the "intimacy of the waltz combined with the vivacity of the Irish Jig". Polka, from the bohemian word '*pulka*', meaning 'half', cleverly refers to the half little step or close-step that is characteristic of this dance. The Schottische, which has lasted in Scotland, is a form of polka. The Irish polka is almost a different type of tune - it has developed into a dance tune peculiar to Ireland, bearing very little resemblance to the Polish polka.

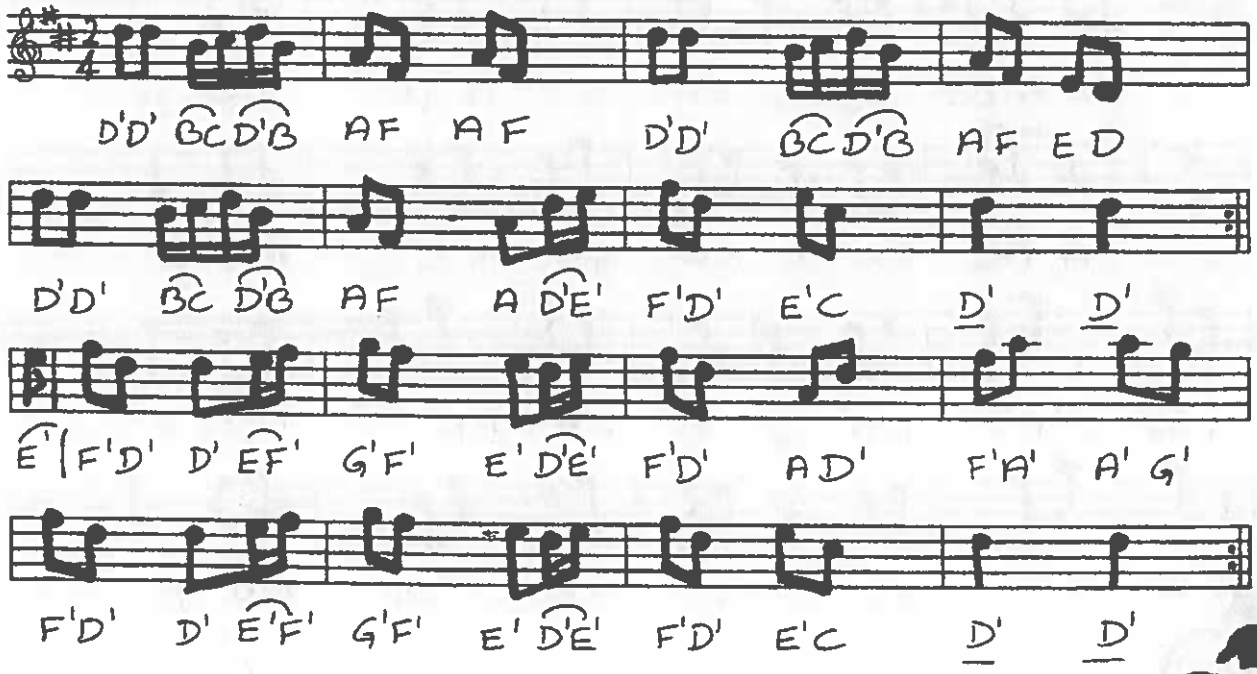
The Irish polka has become a popular part of the repertoires of musicians all over the world. In Ireland the polka is particularly popular in the Sliabh Luachra area of Kerry where it is the predominant dance tune. This is unlike the rest of Ireland where the reel reigns supreme!

We in Malahide Comhaltas are familiar with two polkas named after the well-known musicians Dennis Murphy and his sister Julia Clifford, both from Sliabh Luachra.

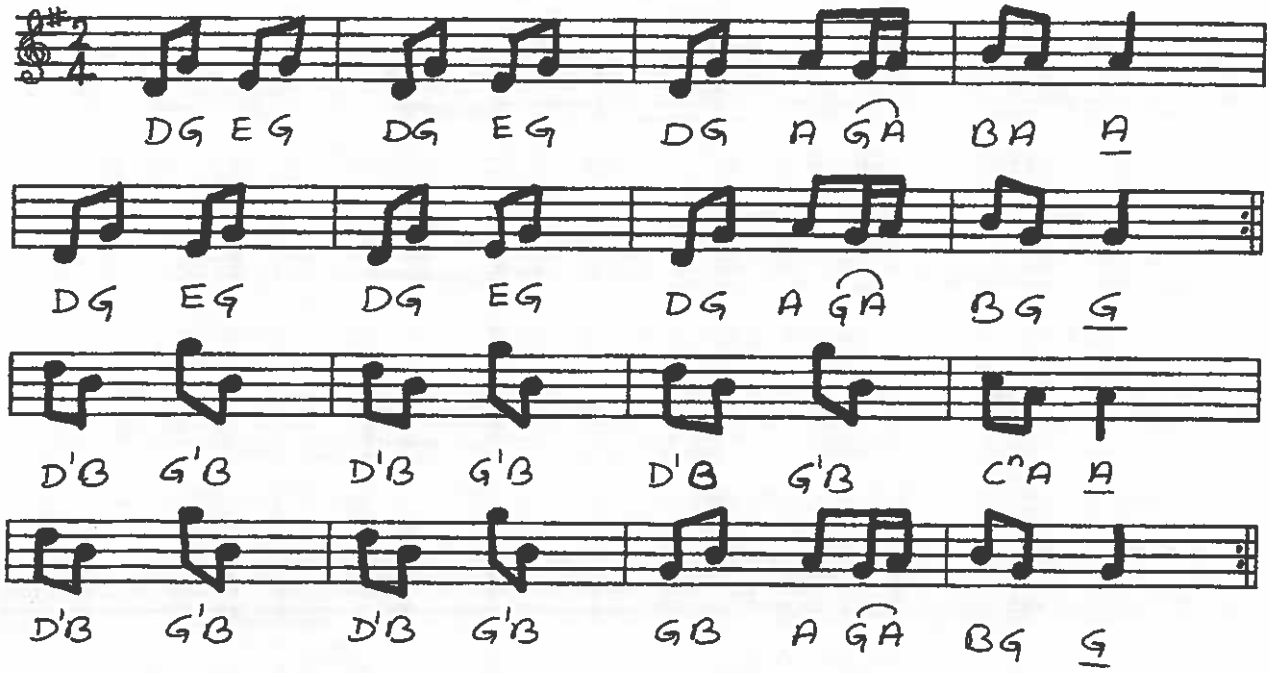
The Kerry Polka



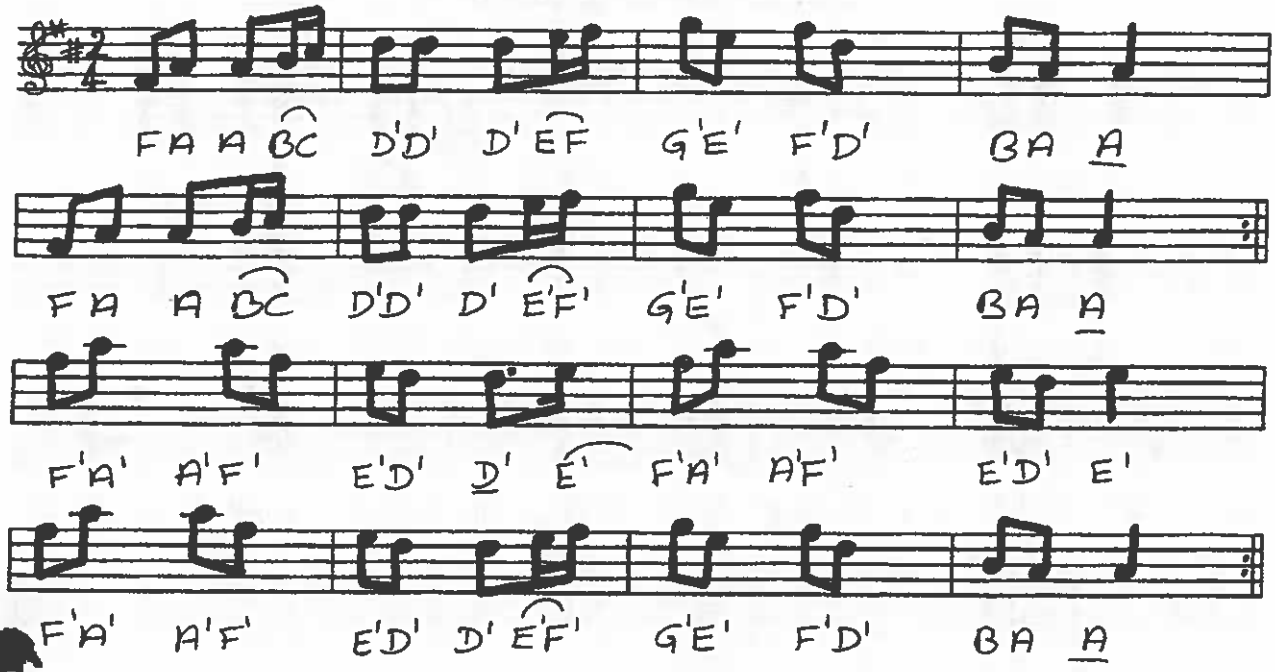
Ryan's Polka



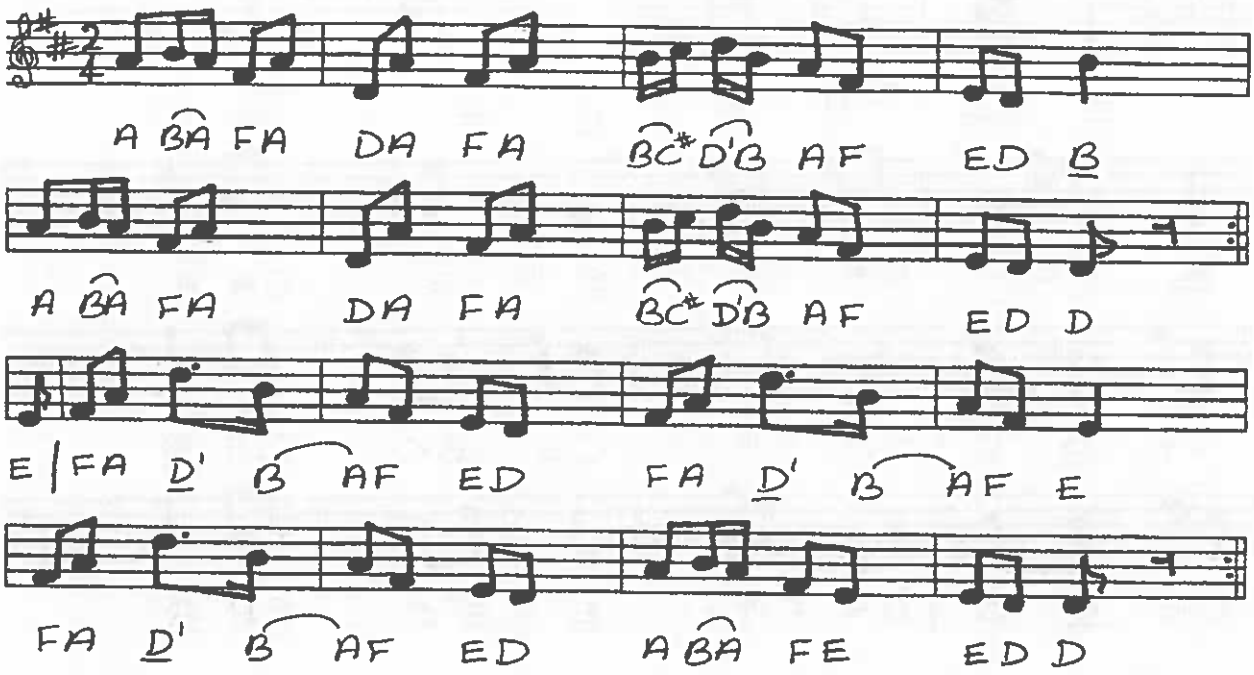
Mrs. Crowley's



The Spanish Lady



Denis Murphy's

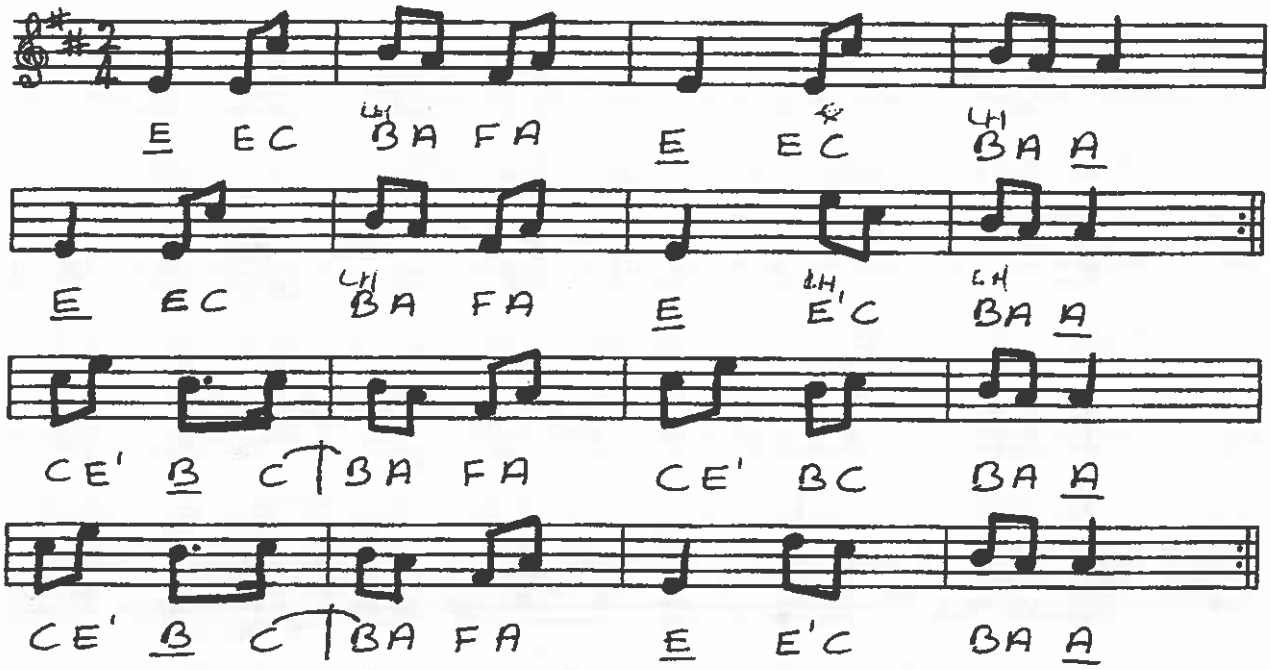


Paddy Reynolds

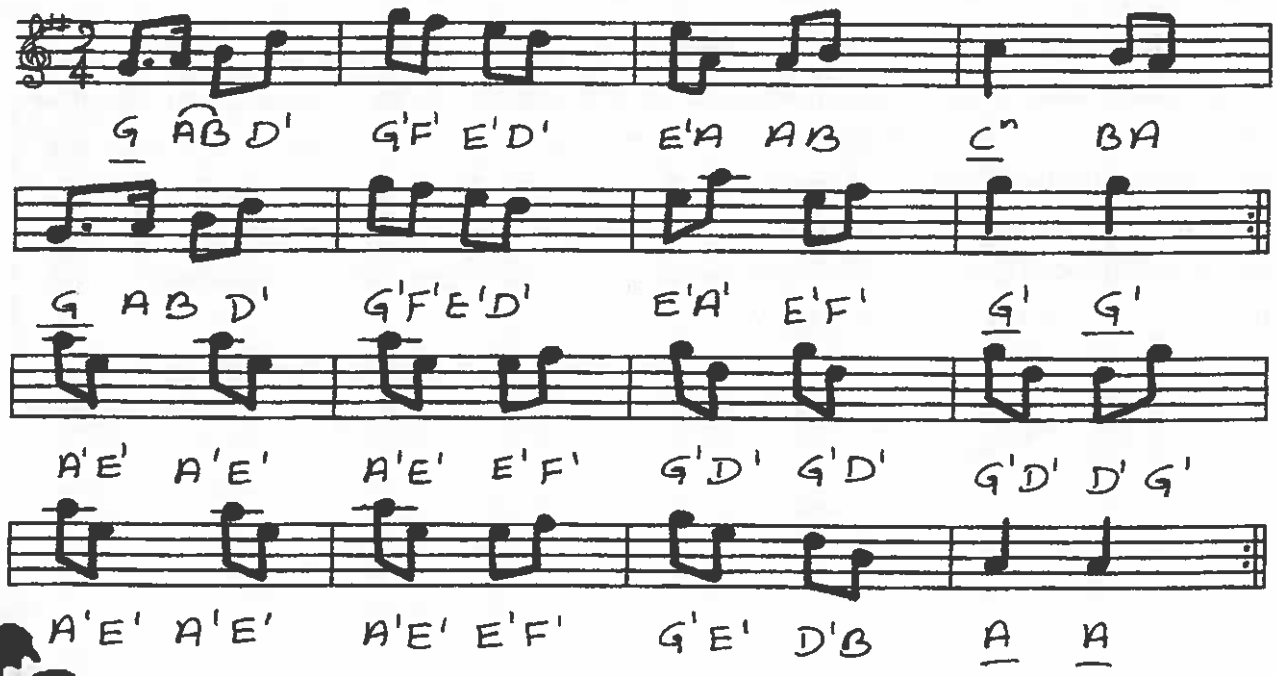
Paddy Reynolds is a well-known Irish fiddler now living in America. He was born in Garvary, Ballinamuck, Co. Longford in the early 1920's. He started to play fiddle at six. He was taught by his mother and went on to learn tunes by ear through listening to music from records. He went to America in the late 1940's where he continued to play music. He often played with other well-known musicians including James "Lad" O'Beirne and Andy McGann. Paddy Reynolds, I am happy to say, is my Granduncle.

By Mairéad Maguire, Age 6 years.

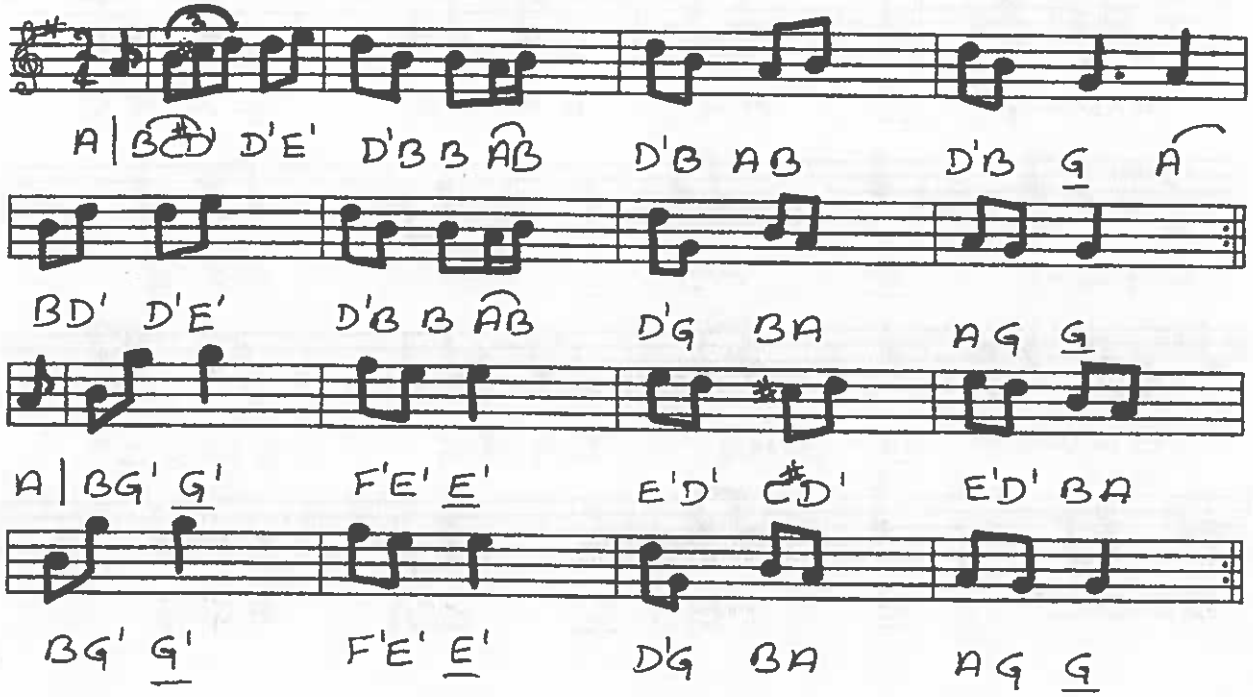
Keefe's Fancy



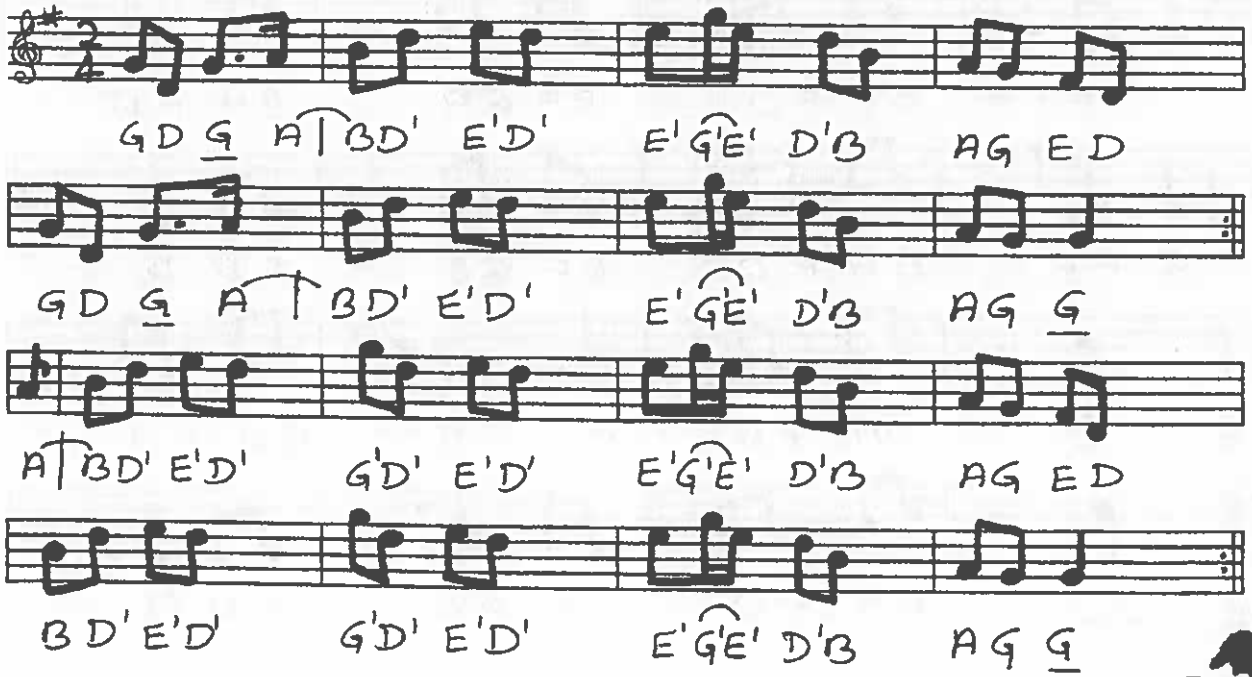
Julia Clifford's Polka



Denis Warren's Polka

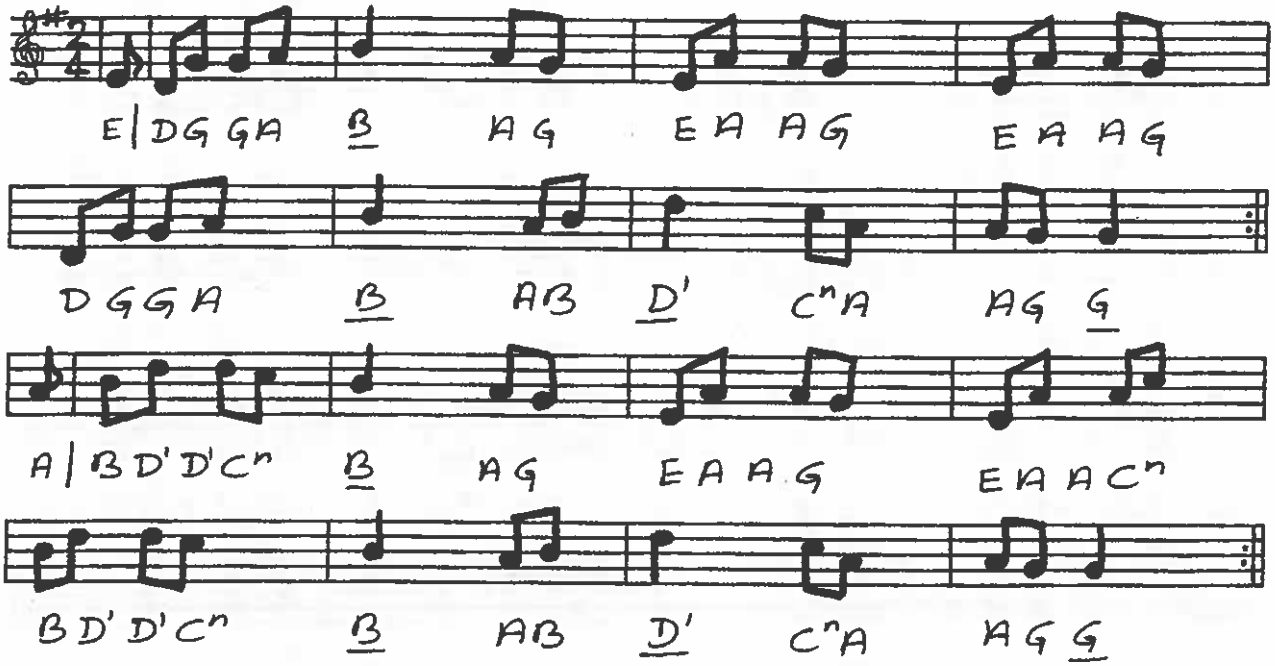


Gan Ainm

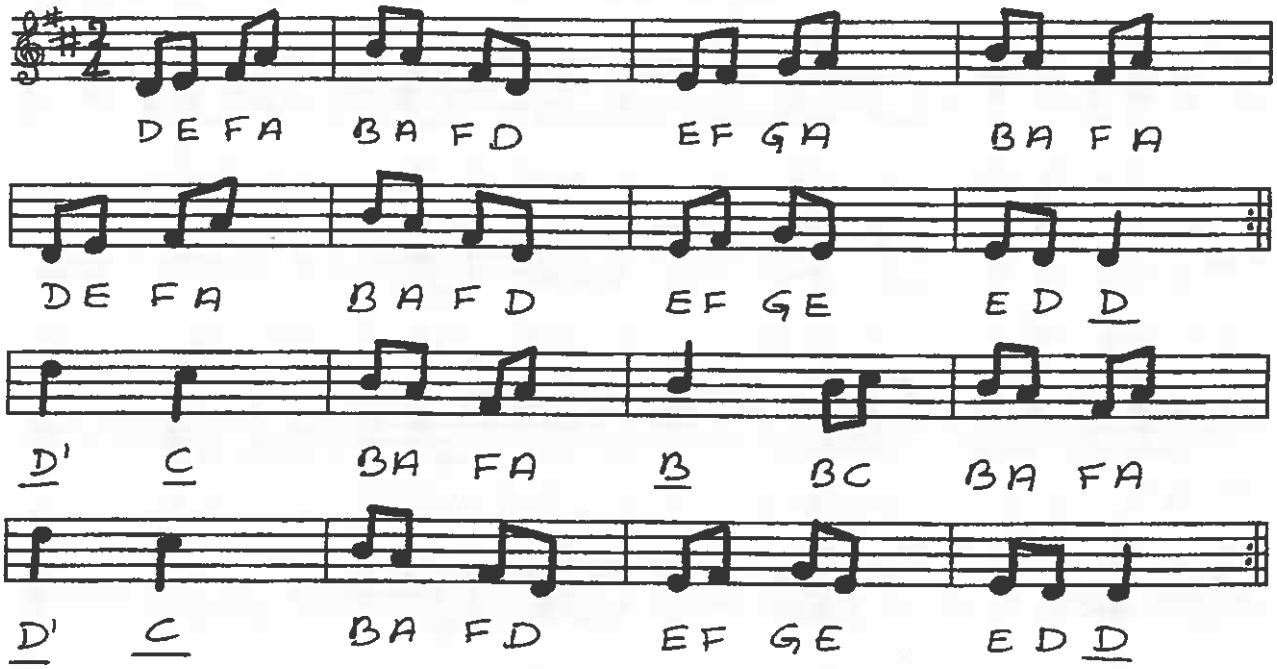


Brendan Begley Polkas

Polca 1

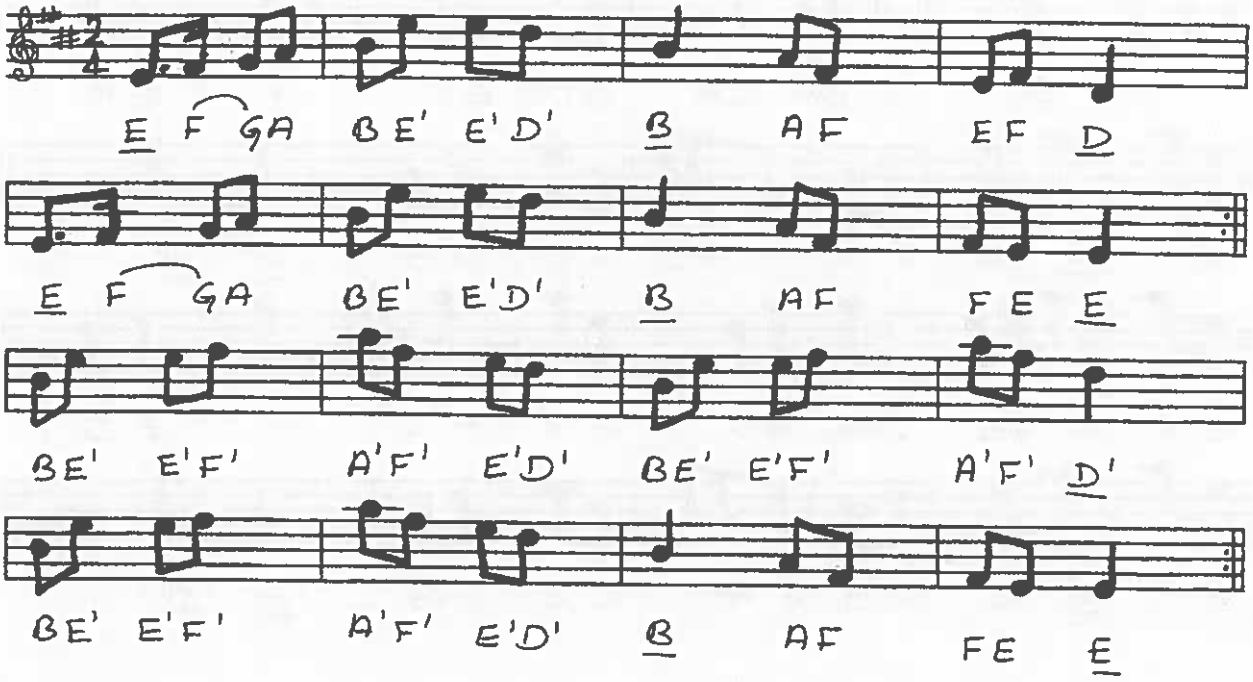


Polca 2

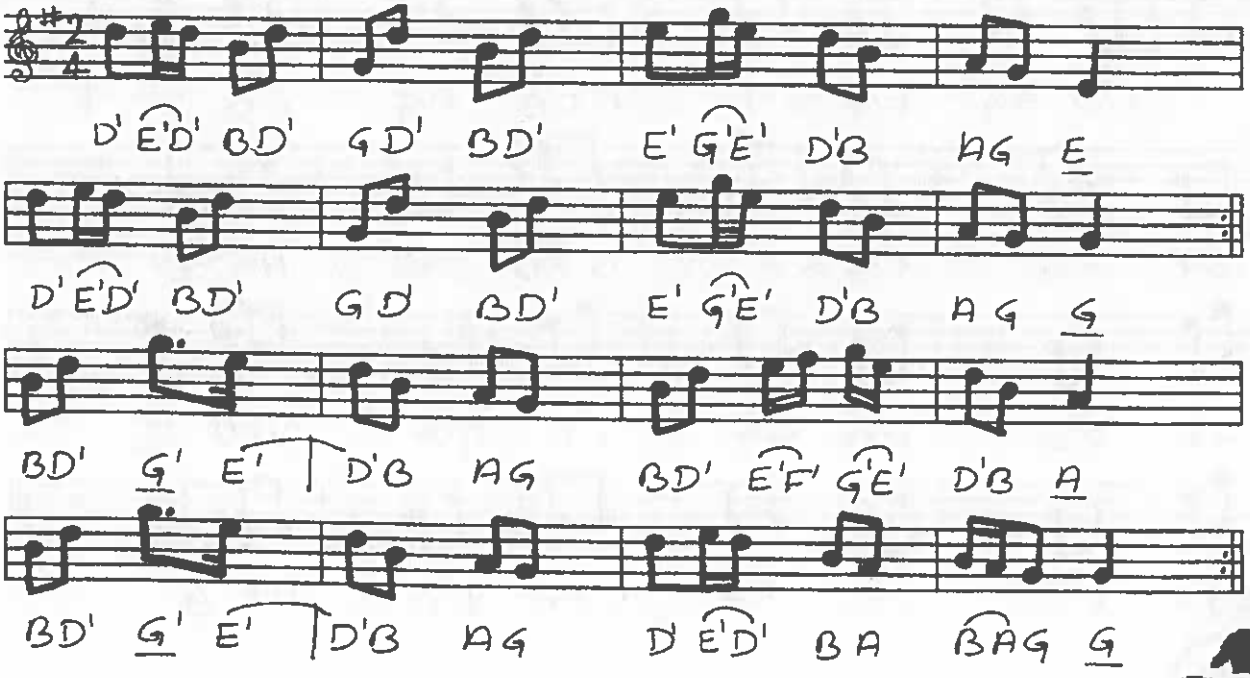


Brendan Begley Polkas

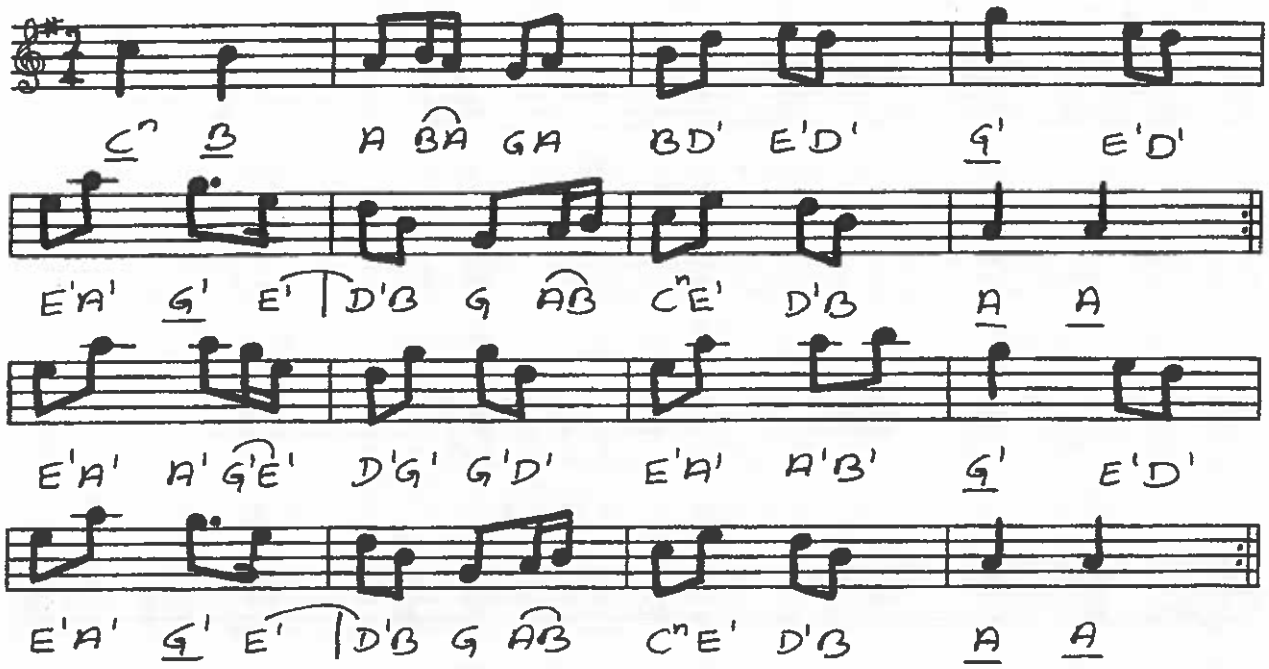
Polca 3



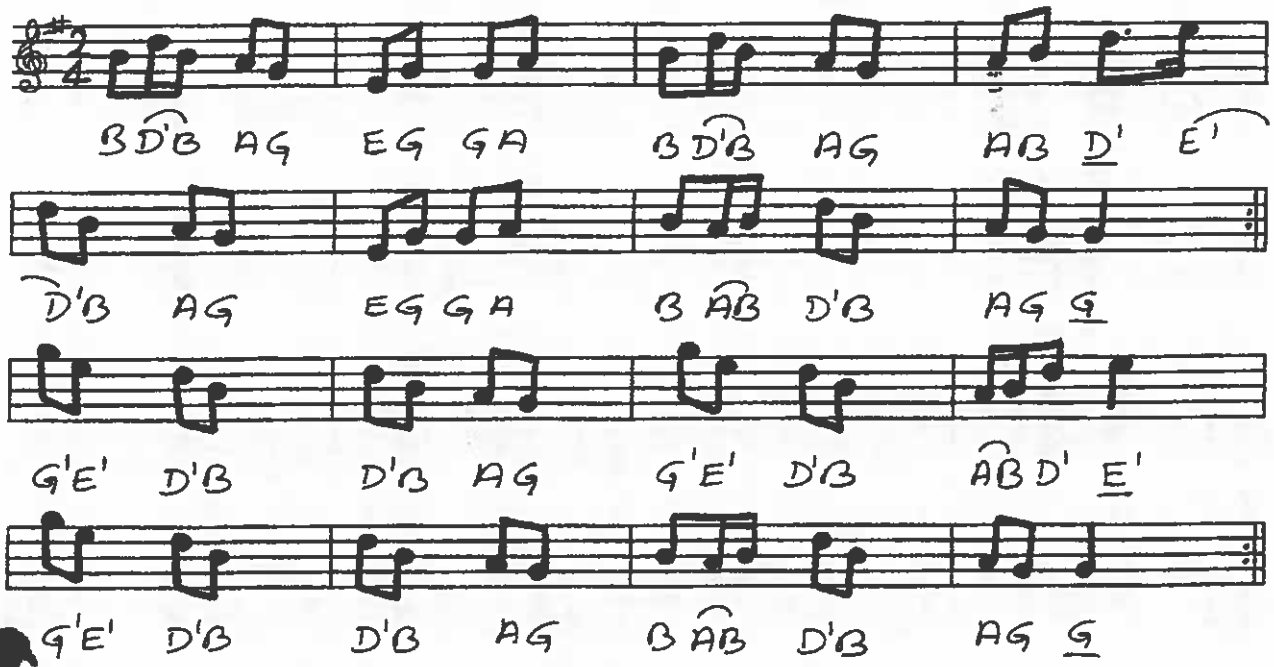
Sweeney's Polka



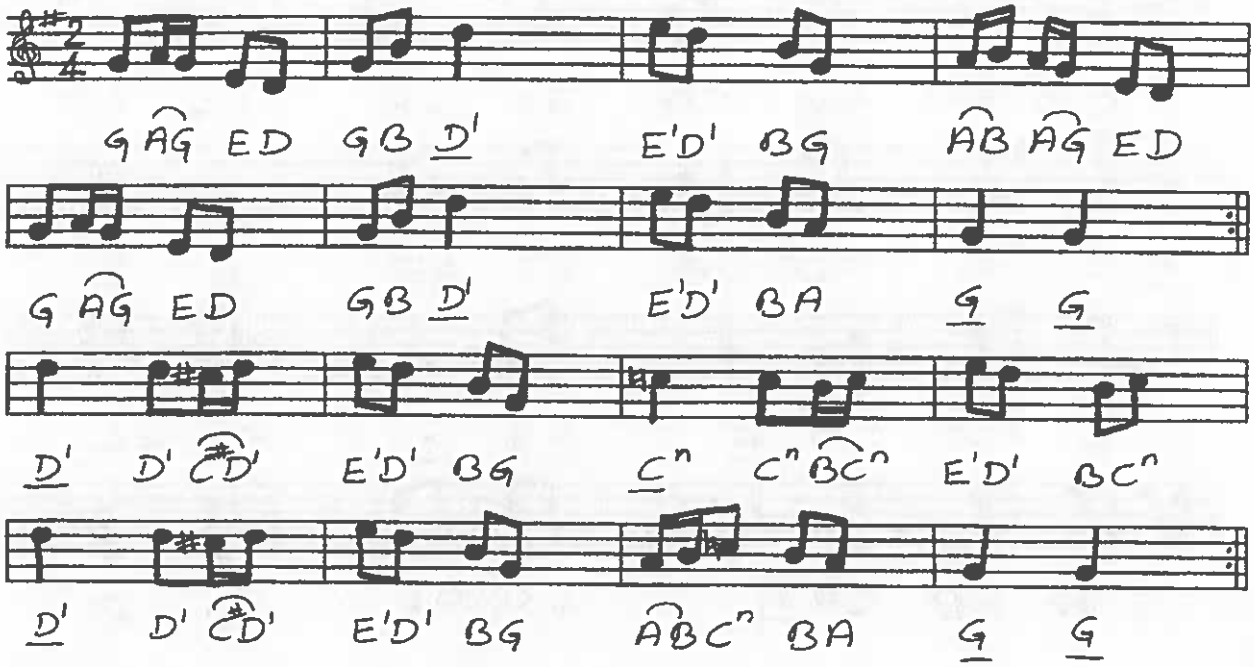
Ballydesmond Polka



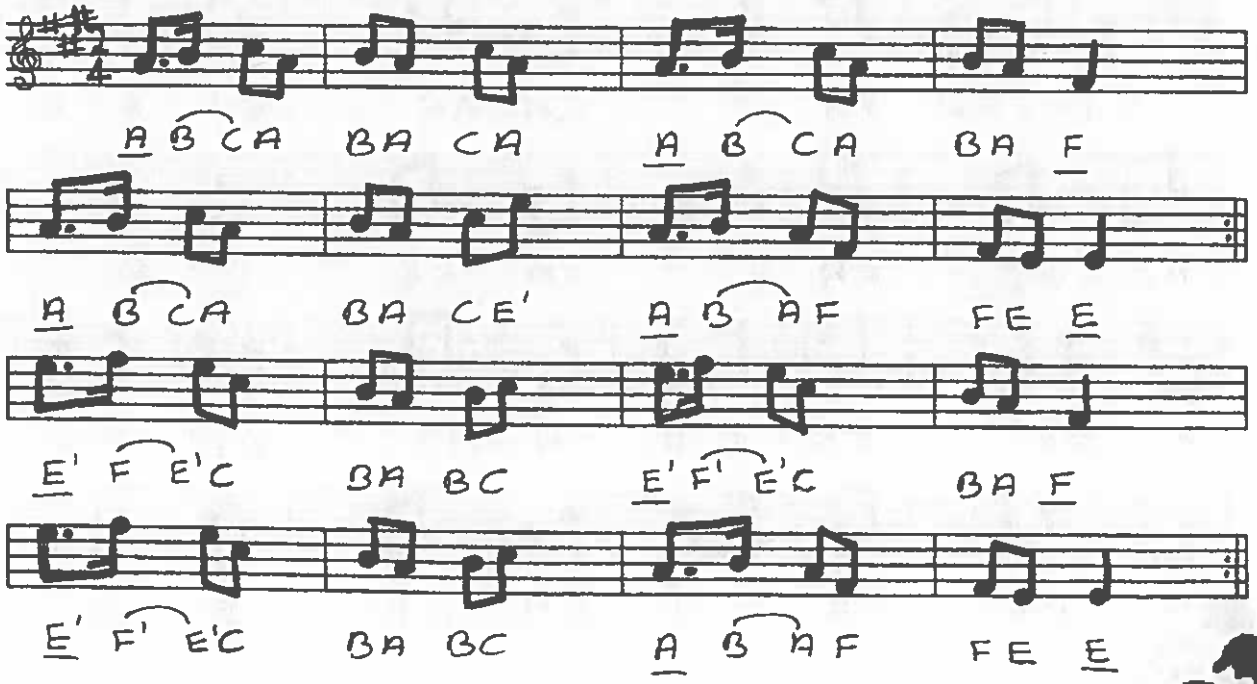
Teahan's Favourite



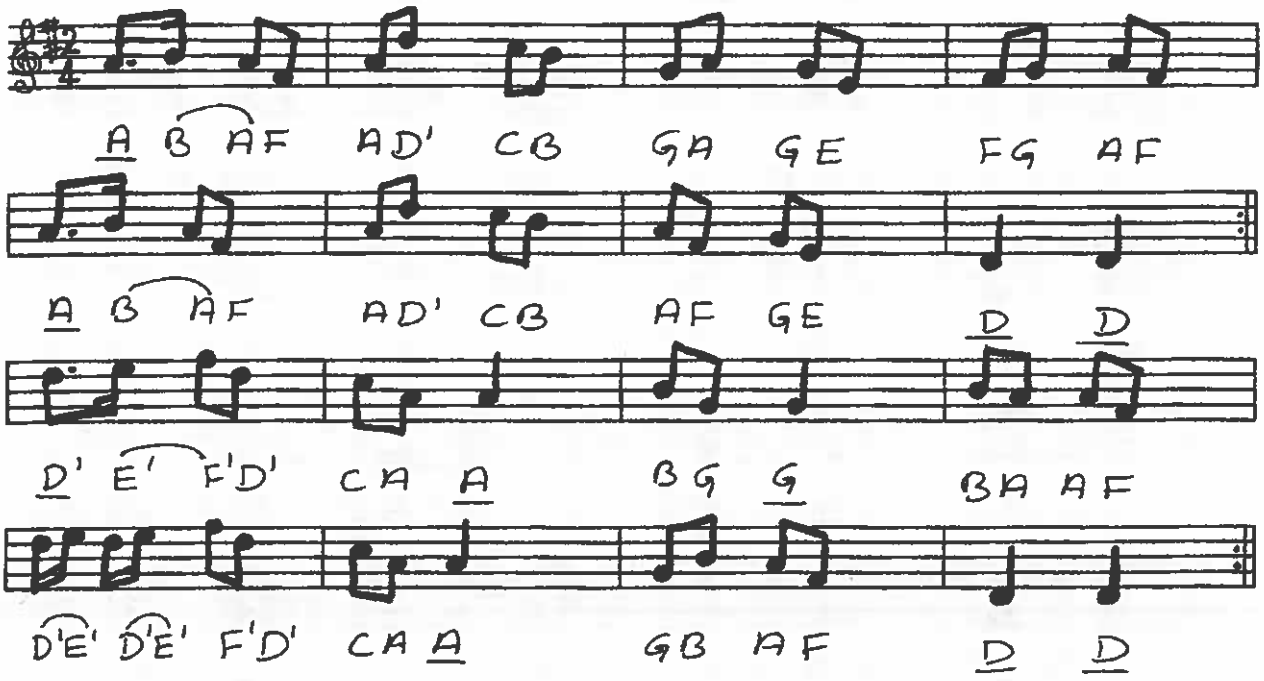
John Brosnan's Polka



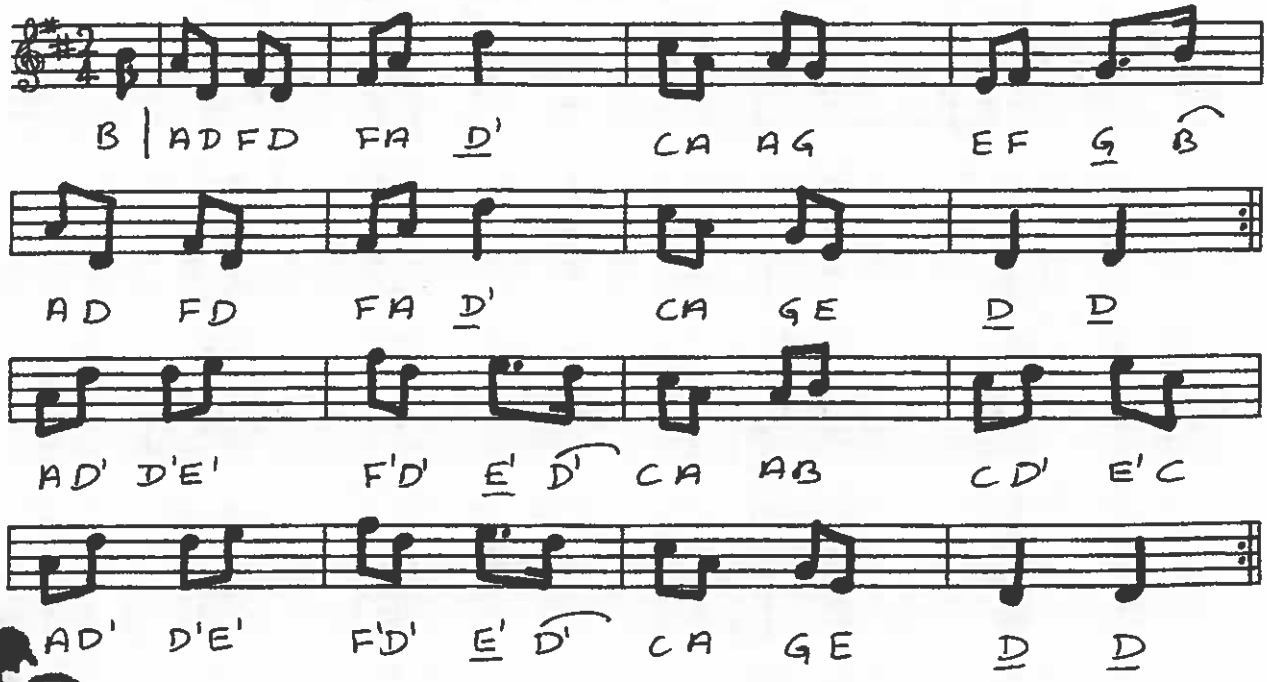
The Britches Full of Stitches



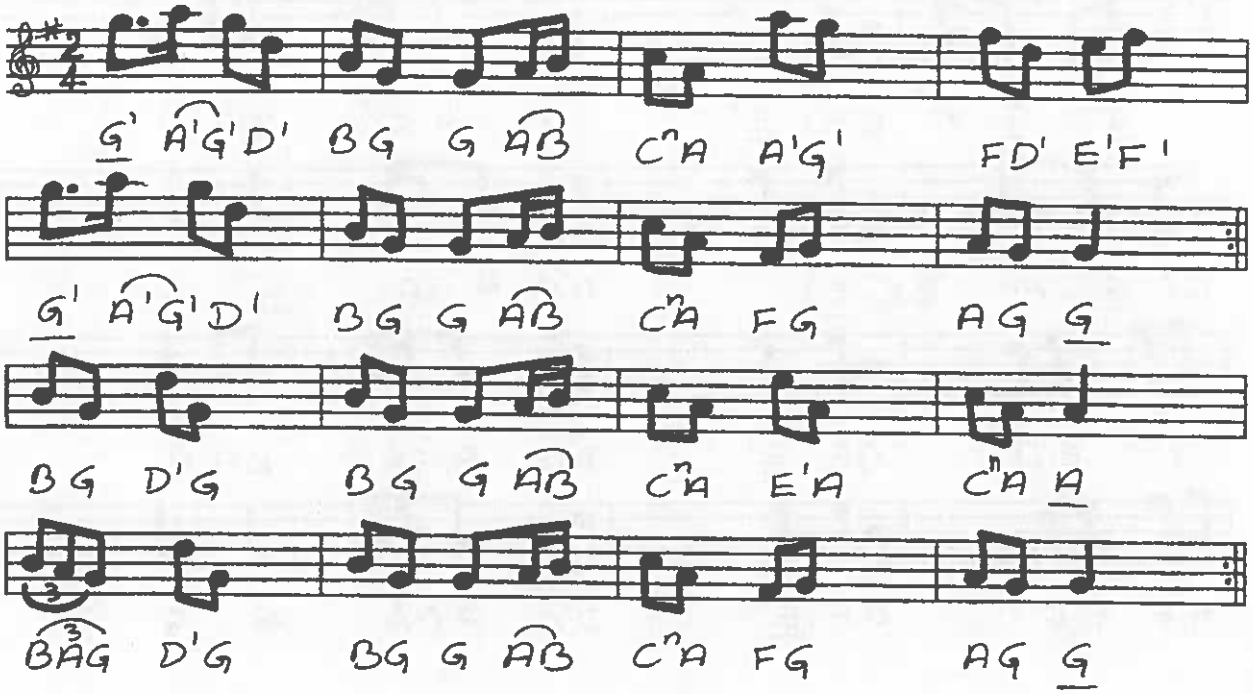
The Kerry Cow



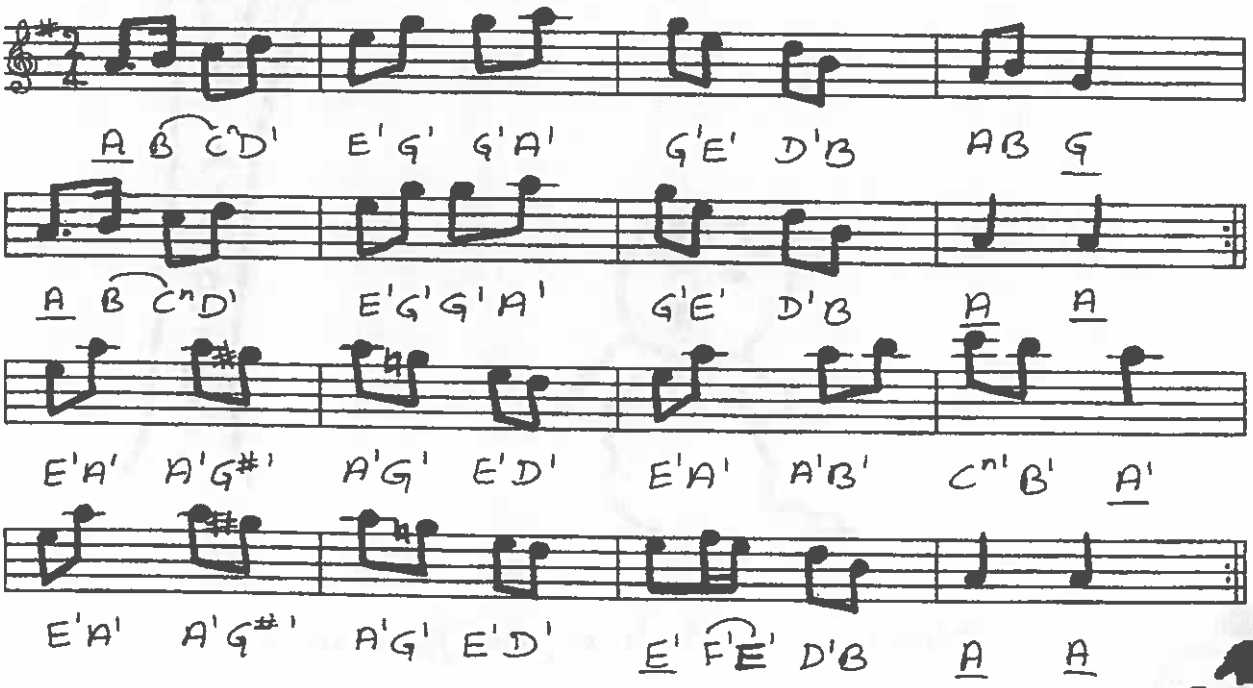
The Lonesome Road to Dingle



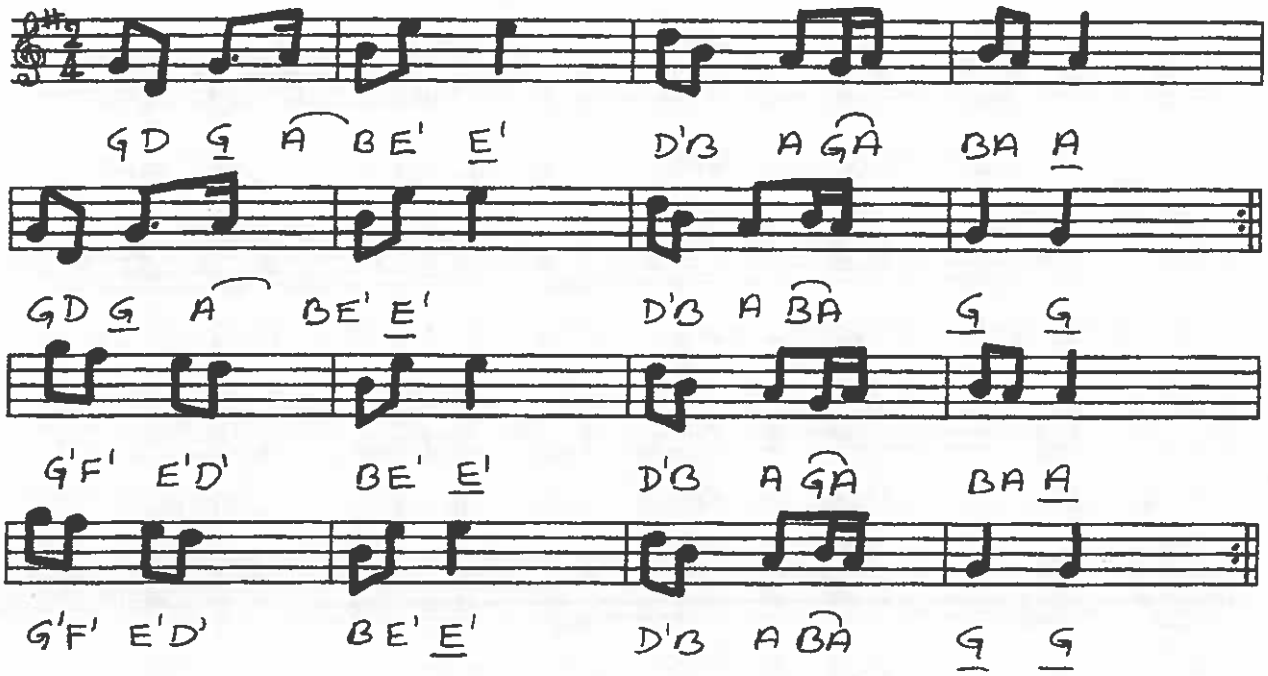
Captain Byng / The 97½ Polka



The Cat That Ate The Candle



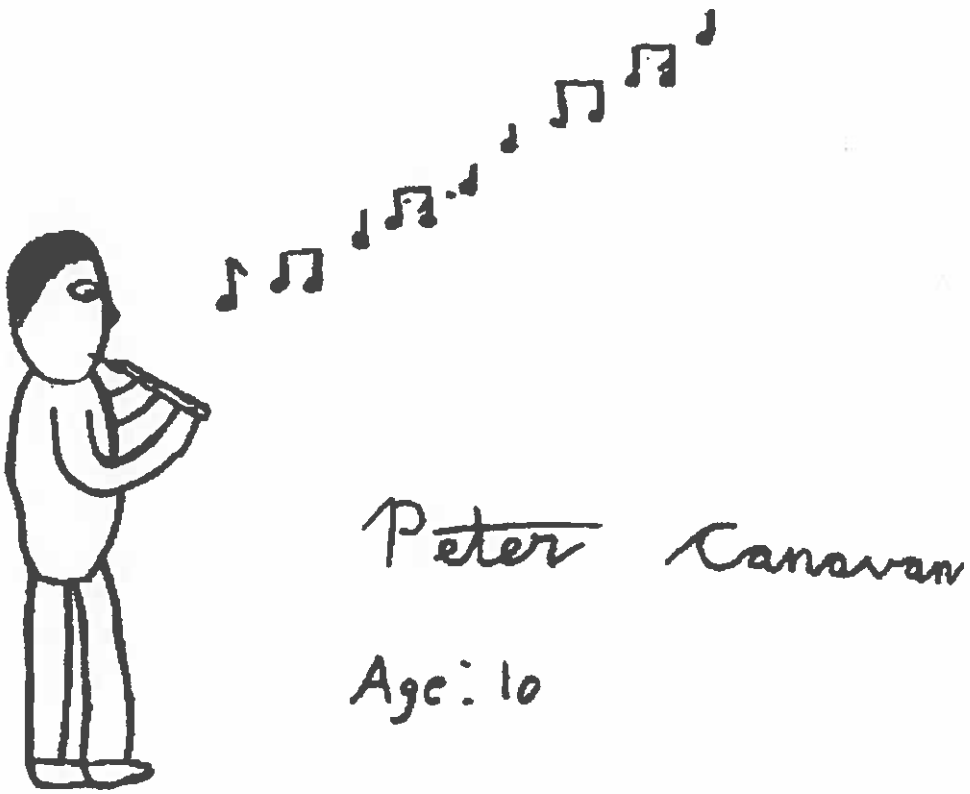
Maggie in the Woods



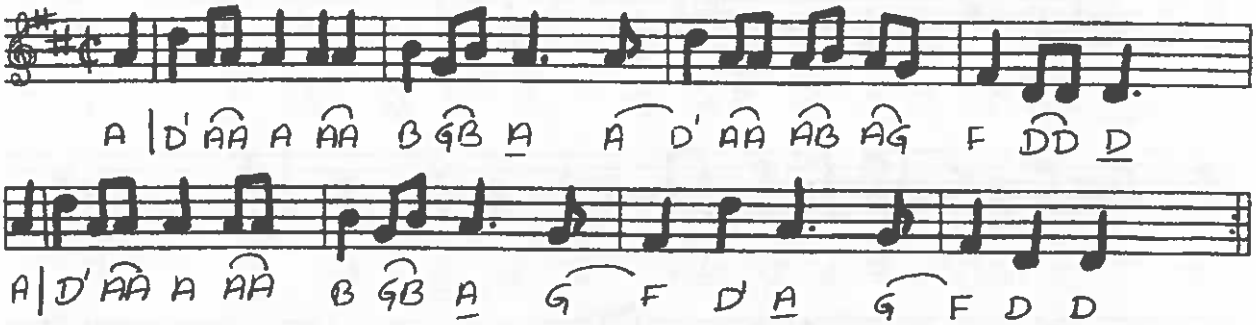
Maggie in the Woods, by Áine Boyle age 7

Marches

Marches are usually in 4/4 time or sometimes in 6/8 time, with a strong rhythmic beat. This reflects the origins of the march as a musical composition used to organise the movements of large groups of people, particularly soldiers. Although marches were originally used for primarily military purposes, by the middle of the 17th century they were also being used for ceremonial occasions.



Beidh Aonach Amárach

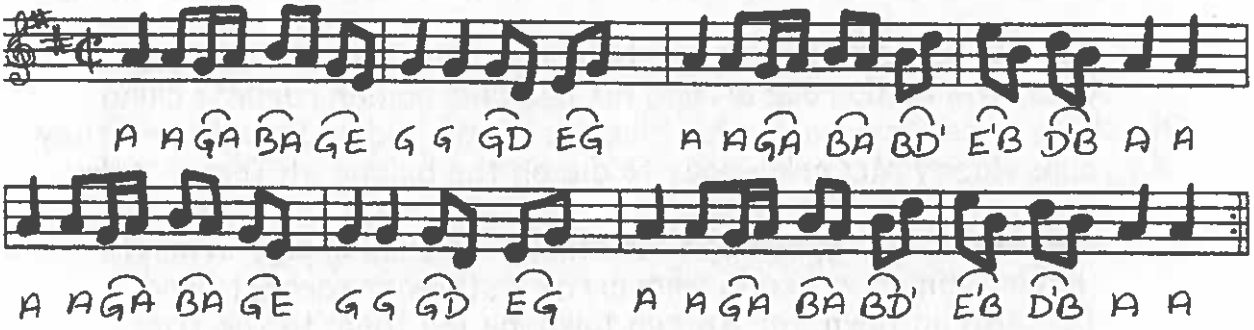


Beidh aonach amárach i gContae an Chláir. Beidh aonach amárach i gContae an Chláir.
Beidh aonach amárach i gContae an Chláir; Cé'n mhaith dom é? Ní bheidh mé ann.

"A Mhaithrín, a' ligfidh tú chun aonaigh mé? A Mhaithrín, a' ligfidh tú chun aonaigh mé?
A Mhaithrín, a' ligfidh tú chun aonaigh mé? A mhuirnín ó, ná héiligh é!"

"Níl tú a deich nó a haondéag fós. Níl tú a deich nó a haondéag fós.
Níl tú a deich nó a haondéag fós; Nuair a bheidh tú trí déag, beidh tú mór."

Oró Sé do Bheatha 'Bhaile

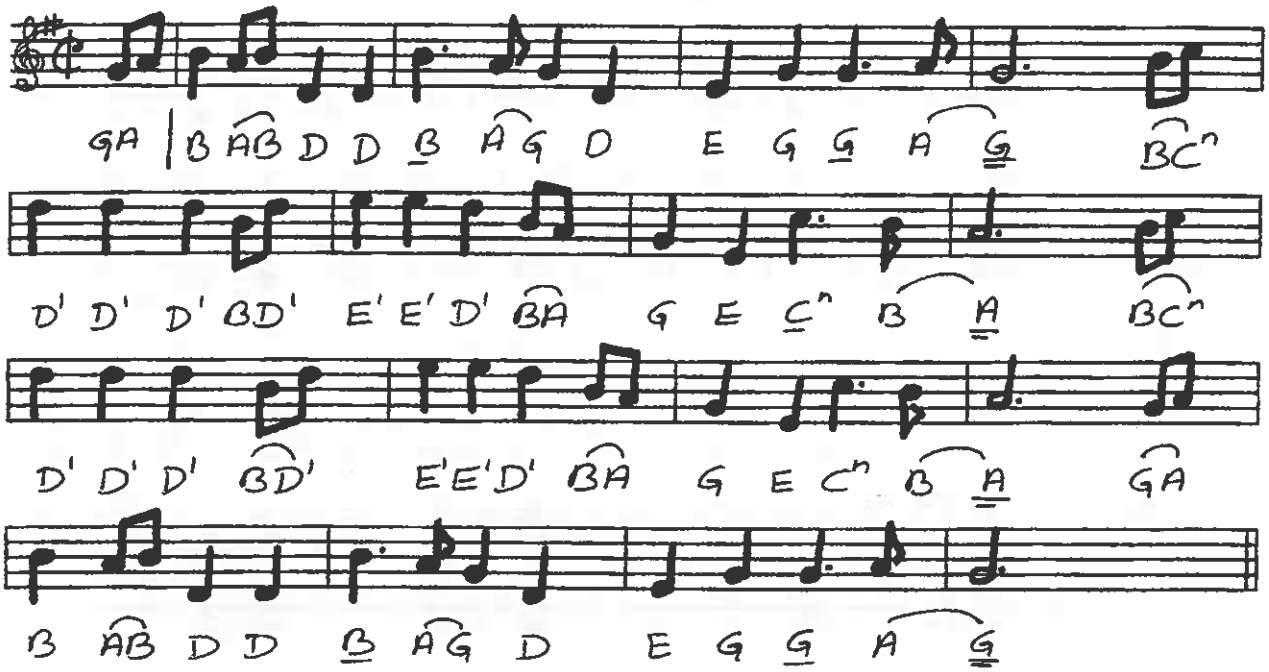


Sé do bheatha a bhean ba léanmhar. B'é ár gcreach tú bheith i ngéibheann,
Do dhúiche bhreá i seilibh meirleach, 's tú díolta leis na Gallaibh!

Curfá:
Oró sé do bheatha 'bhaile. Oró sé do bheatha 'bhaile.
Oró sé do bheatha 'bhaile. Anois ar theacht an tsamhraidh.

Tá Gráinne Mhaol ag teacht thar sáile; óglaigh armtha léi mar gharda,
Gaeil iad féin is ní Gaill ná Spáinnigh; is cuirfidh siad ruaig ar Ghallaibh.
(Curfá)
A bhuí le Rí na bhFeart go bhfeiceann; muna mbíonn beo ina dheoidh ach seachtain,
Gráinne Mhaol is míle gaiscíoch; ag fógairt fáin ar Ghallaibh.
(Curfá)

Roddy McCorley



Oh, see the fleet-foot hosts of men who speed with faces wan
From farmstead and from thresher's cot along the banks of Ban
They come with vengeance in their eyes too late, too late are they
For young Roddy McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

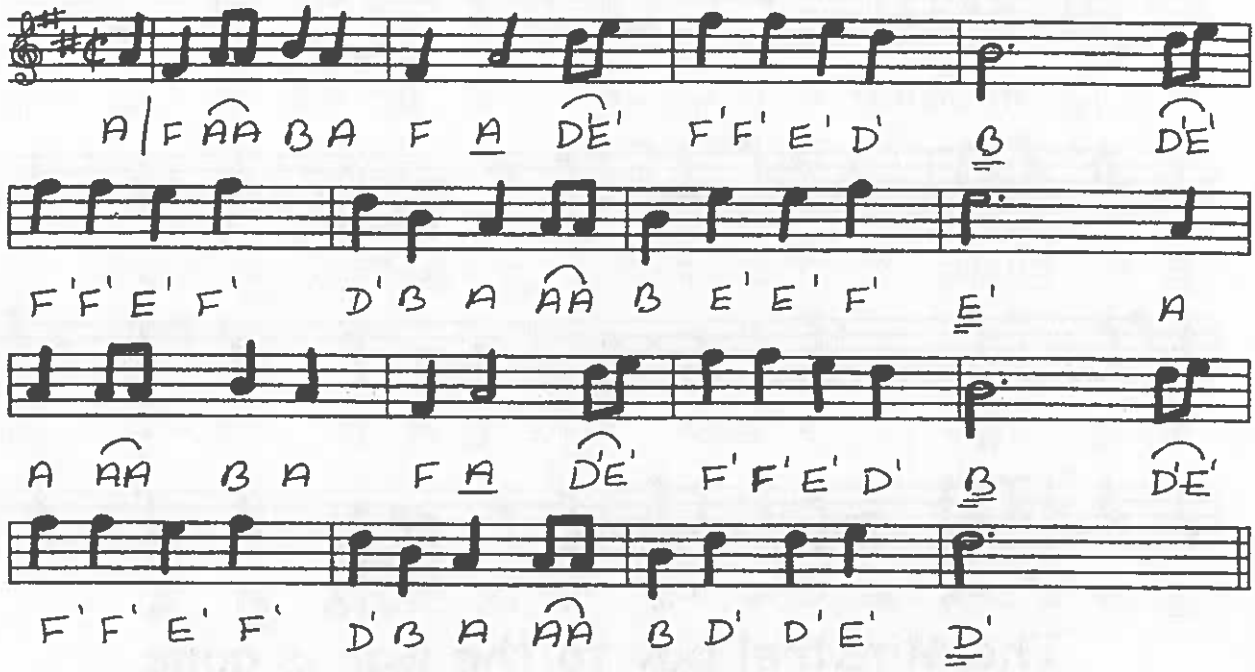
Up the narrow streets he stepped smiling proud and young
About the hemp rope around his neck his golden ringlets clung
Oh, there is never a tear in his blue eyes both sad and bright are they
As young Roddy McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

When he last stepped up that street his shining pike in hand
Behind him marched in grim array a stalwart earnest band
For Antrim town, for Antrim town, he led them to the fray
As young Roddy McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

There is never a one of all your dead, more bravely fell in fray
Than he who marches to his fate on the Bridge of Tomb today
True to the last! True to the last! He treads the upward way
As young Roddy McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

By Ethna Carberry

The Golden Jubilee

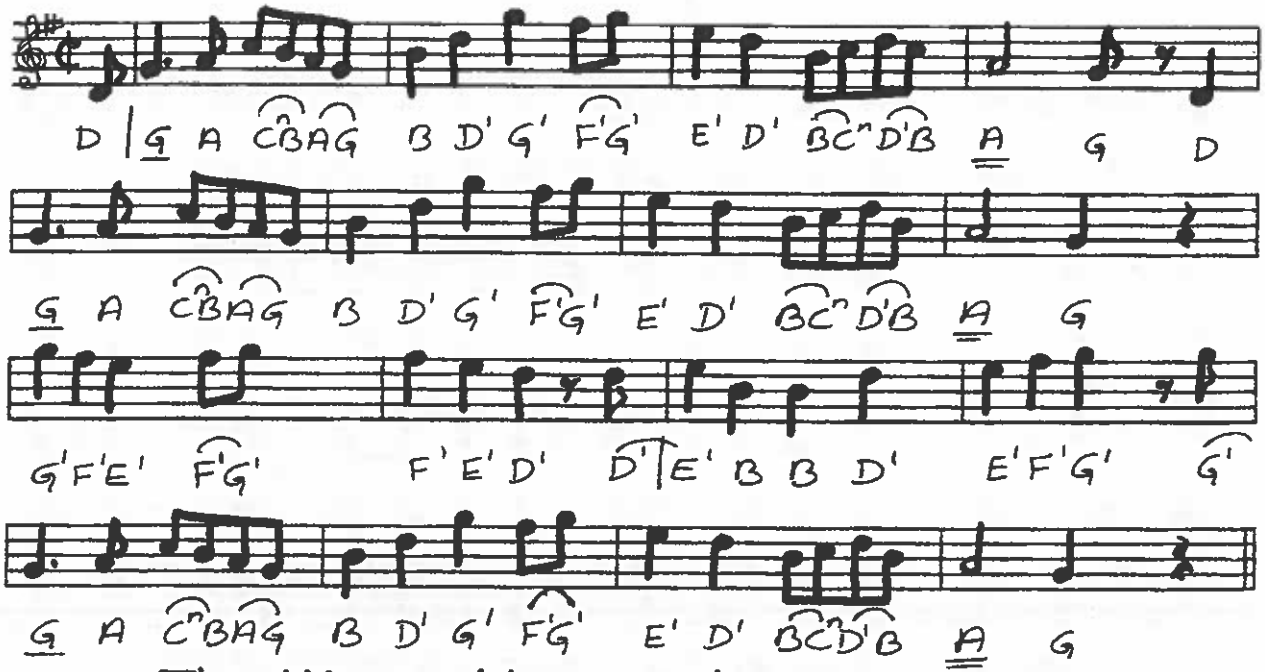


Way down in the County Kerry
In a place they call Tralee,
A fine old couple they lived there
Named Kate and Pat McGee.
They were going to give a céilí
On their golden jubilee;
Said Kate to Pat come over here
And listen now to me.

Chorus
Ah put on your oul knee britches
And your coat of emerald green
Take off your hat me darlin' Pat
Put on your old colleen
For today's our golden wedding
And I want them all to know
How we looked when we were wed,
Fifty years ago.

Now well do I remember
When we danced on the village green
You held me in your arms dear Pat
And called me your Colleen
Your hair was like a raven's wing
But now it's turned to grey
Ah come over here, me sweetheart dear,
And this to you I'll say:
(Chorus)

The Minstrel Boy



The Minstrel boy to the war is gone,
In the rank of death you'll find him.
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him.
"Land of song!" said the warrior bard,
"Though all the world betrays thee,
One sword at least thy rights shall guard,
One faithful heart shall praise thee."

The minstrel fell, but the foeman's chain
Could not bring that proud soul under.
The harp he loved never spoke again,
For he tore its chords asunder;
And said, "No chain shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery!
Thy songs were made for the pure and free,
They shall never sound in slavery."

Jigs

Double Jigs

The jig is a dance in ternary time (predominantly 6/8 time, but also 9/8 and 12/8 time i.e. Slip Jig). Irish double jigs are written in 6/8 time and consist largely of six eighth notes per bar (i.e. 6 quavers) grouped into two groups of three. However, the way jigs are written down does not tell the whole story! If you play these notes as written, you will not produce a good rhythm. The first note in each group of three should be slightly emphasised. Historically, jigs appeared a little later than reels and are a slower dance. In contrast to reels, most jigs in the tradition are native to Ireland.

Jigs are generally considered to be much easier to learn and play than the reels. They are catchier and easier to memorise than reels, and so beginners tend to tackle them quite early on in their Irish-music learning career. They one of the most popular of tunes played in sessions. However, although the Irish jig may appear simple and jolly, in reality it is quite complex and sophisticated in character!

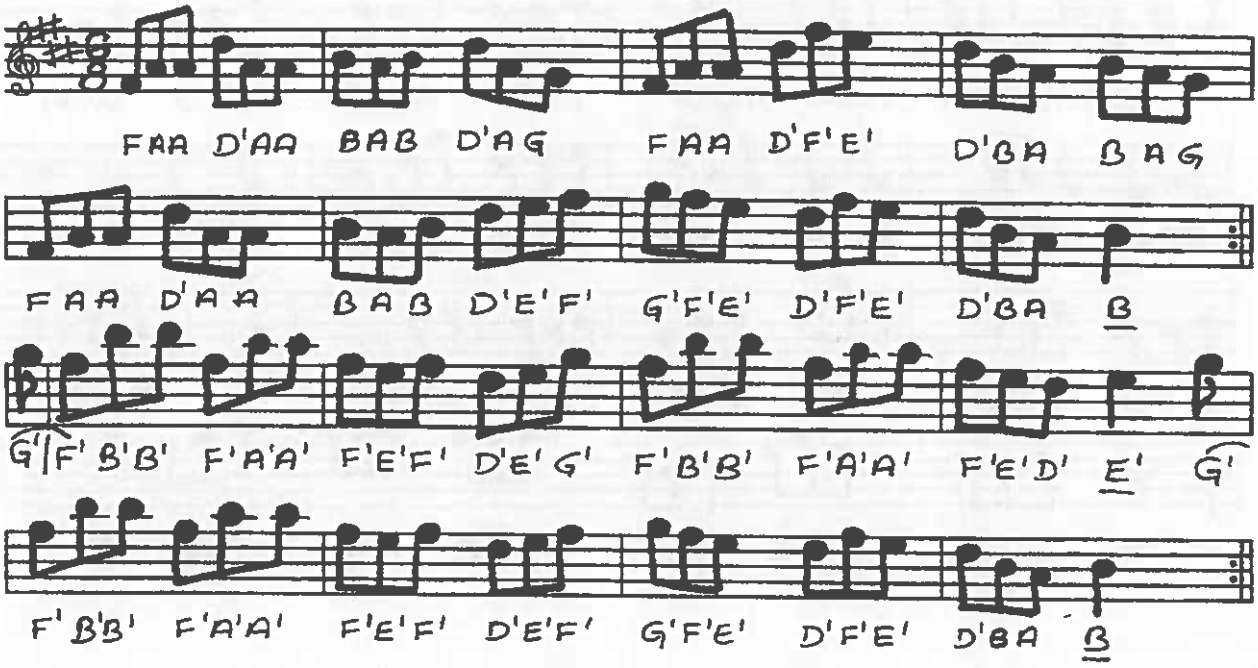
Single Jigs

The single jig is a dance in ternary time, sometimes notated in 12/8 time (i.e. 12 quaver beats per bar), but more often in 6/8 time (i.e. 6 quaver beats per bar), which is how the single jig is defined in terms of bar counts. Although its name misleadingly indicates a relationship to the double jig, it is really much closer rhythmically to the fling. In comparing it to the double jig, you will note the high frequency of heavy-light pairs where a double jig would have the three-note jig pattern. (The term 'heavy-light pairs' refers to the jig rhythm of a long note followed by a short note, immediately followed by another long and short note). The step-dancing community has kept the single jig dance alive.

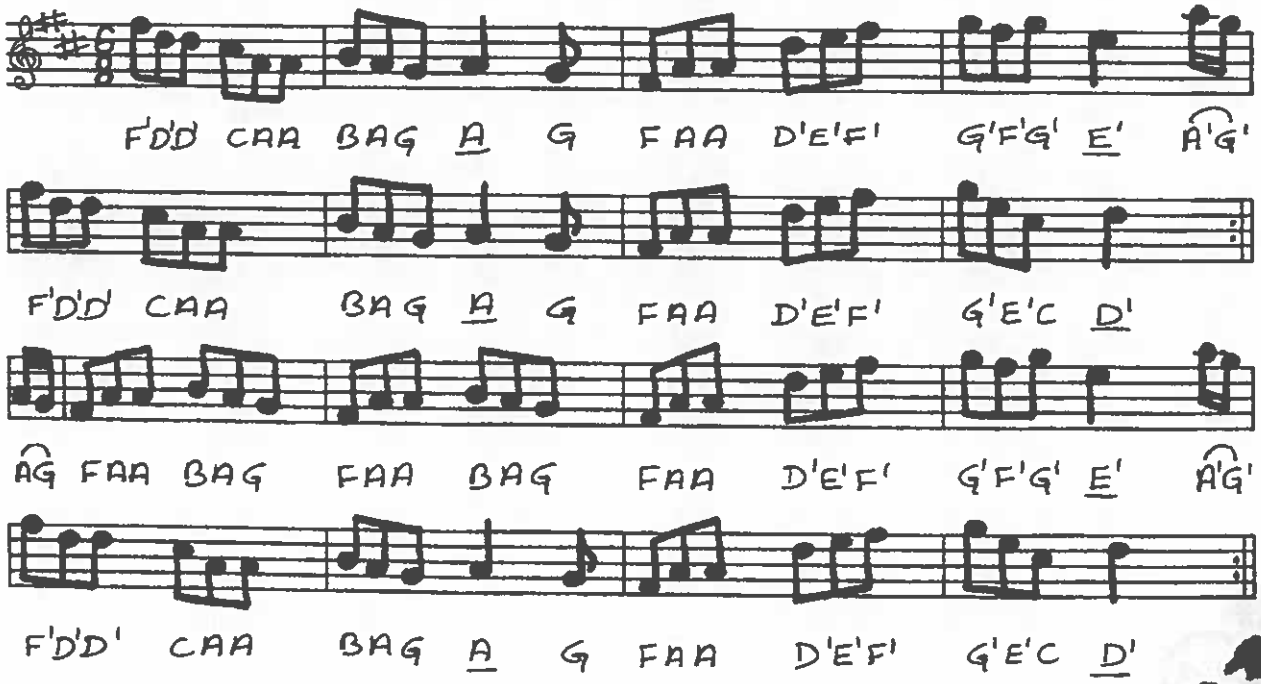
Slip Jigs

These are also known as 'hop jigs' and are usually notated in 9/8 time. Some slip jigs are comprised of mainly heavy-light pairs, others mainly follow the jig pattern.

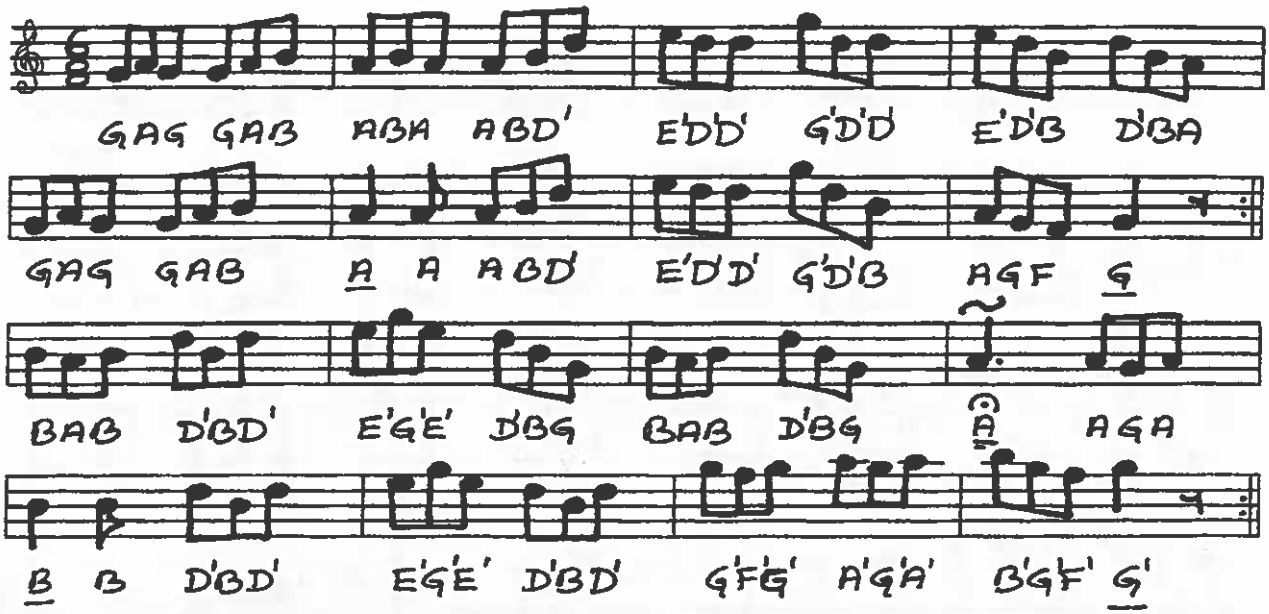
Connaught Man's Rambles



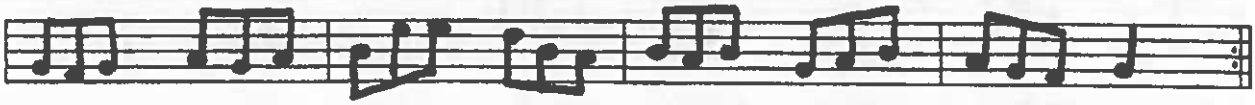
My Darling Asleep

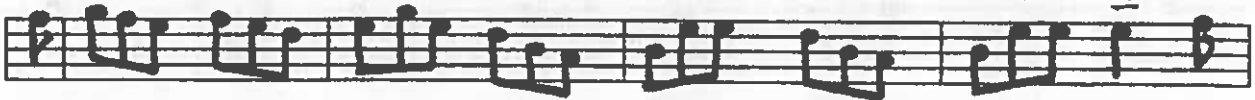


Kesh Jig

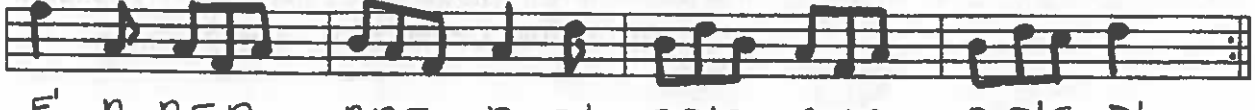

GAG GAB ABA ABD' E'D'D' G'D'D' E'D'B D'BA
GAG GAB A A ABD' E'D'D' G'D'B AGF G
BAB D'BD' E'G'E' D'BG BAB D'BG A AGA
B B D'BD' E'G'E' D'BD' G'F'G' A'G'A' B'G'F' G'

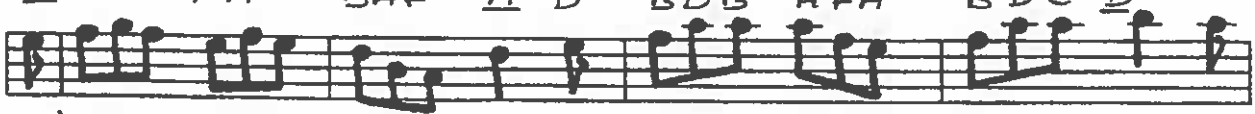
Donnybrook Fair

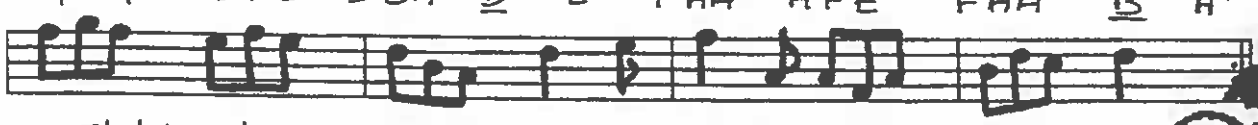




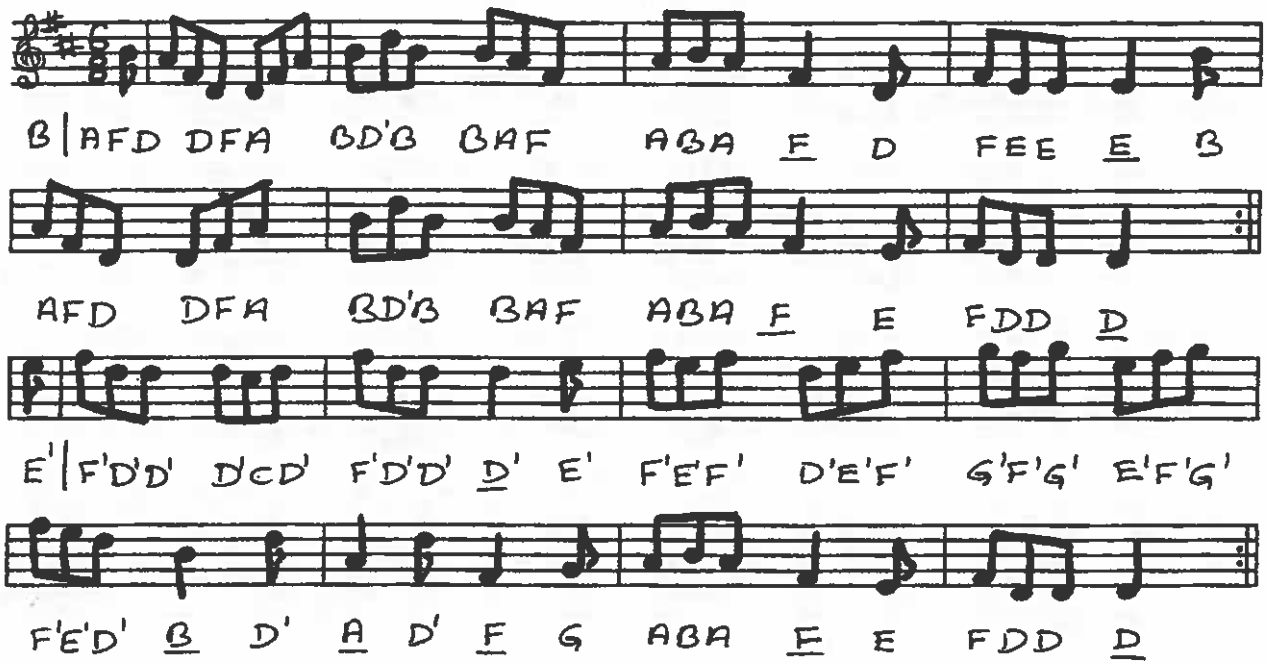
Rose in the Heather







Paddy's Return

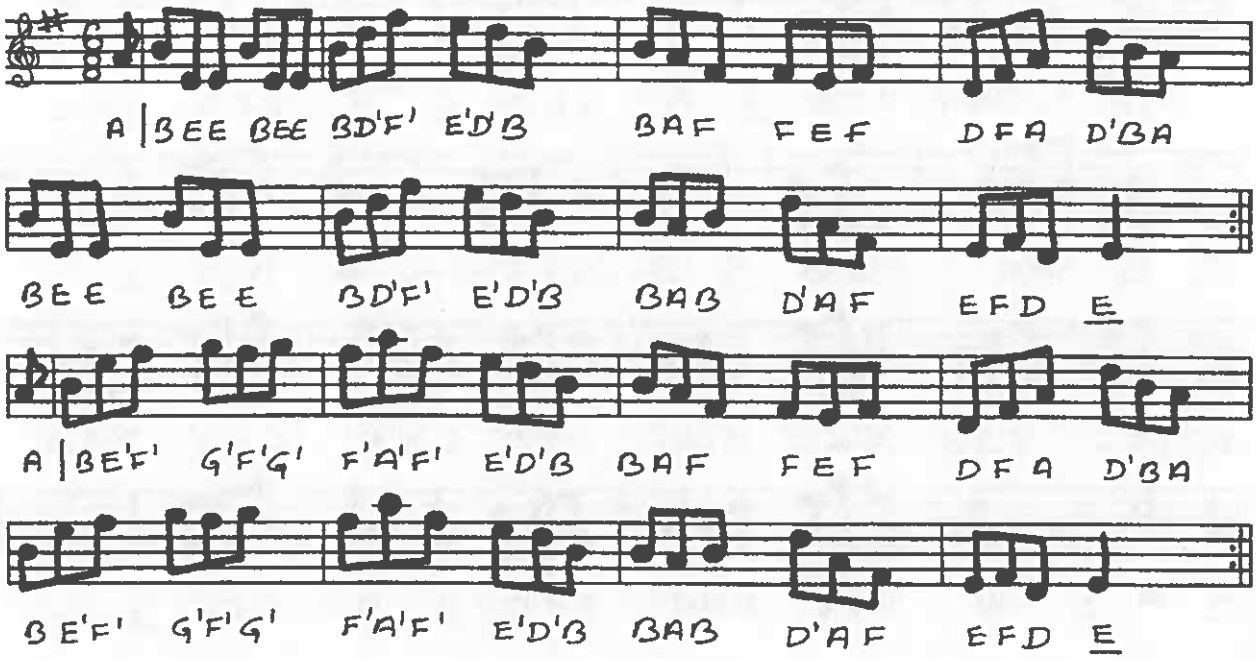


Matt Molloy

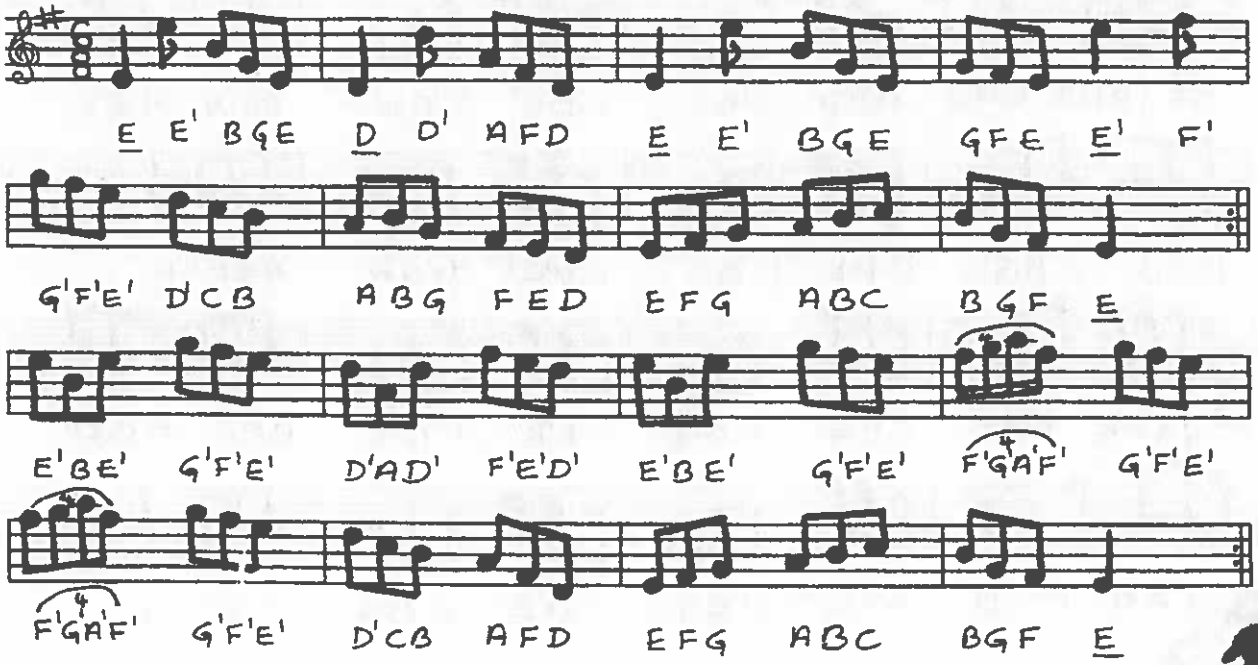
Matt Molloy was born in Co. Roscommon. Matt has been playing the Irish flute since he was eight, and has become great. Matt won the Irish music contest when he was 17. When he moved to Dublin he lived in Portmarnock and worked in the airport. Matt joined some famous folk-rock bands such as *The Bothy Band* and *Planxty*. After these Matt joined *The Chieftains* and has played with them ever since. He has made almost twenty albums with them. Matt Molloy lives in Westport, Co. Mayo, where he owns a famous pub called Matt Molloy's.

By Aisling Drumgoole, Age 9 years.

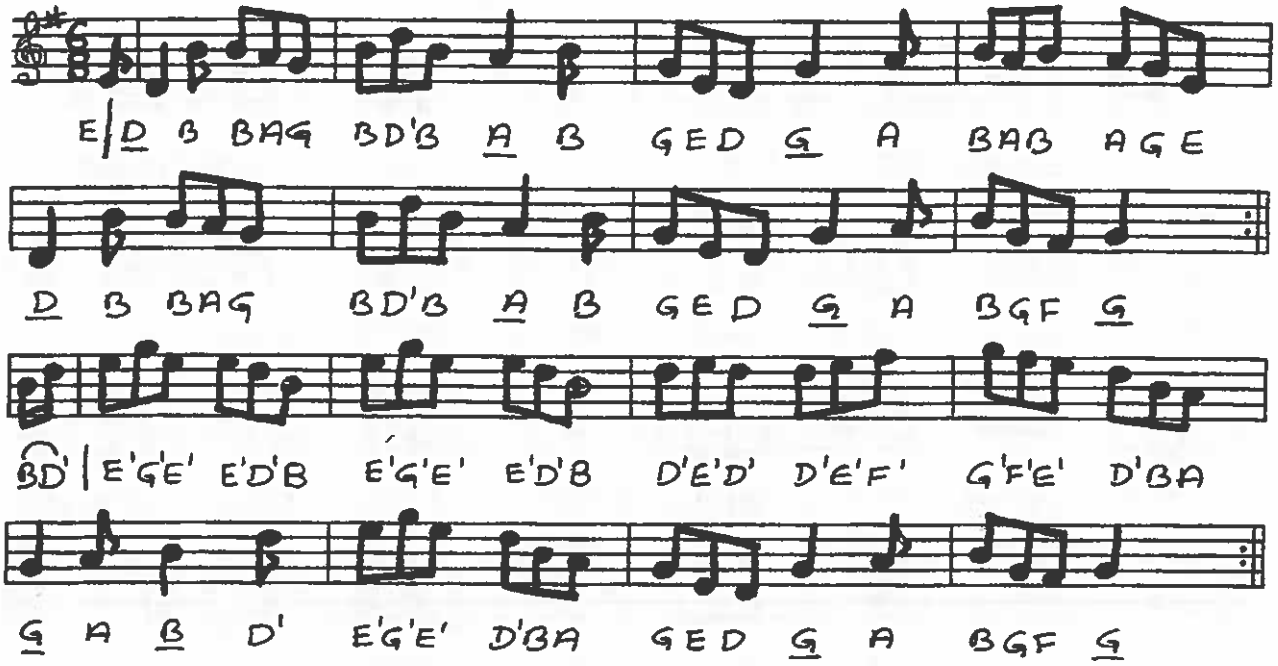
Killovial Jig



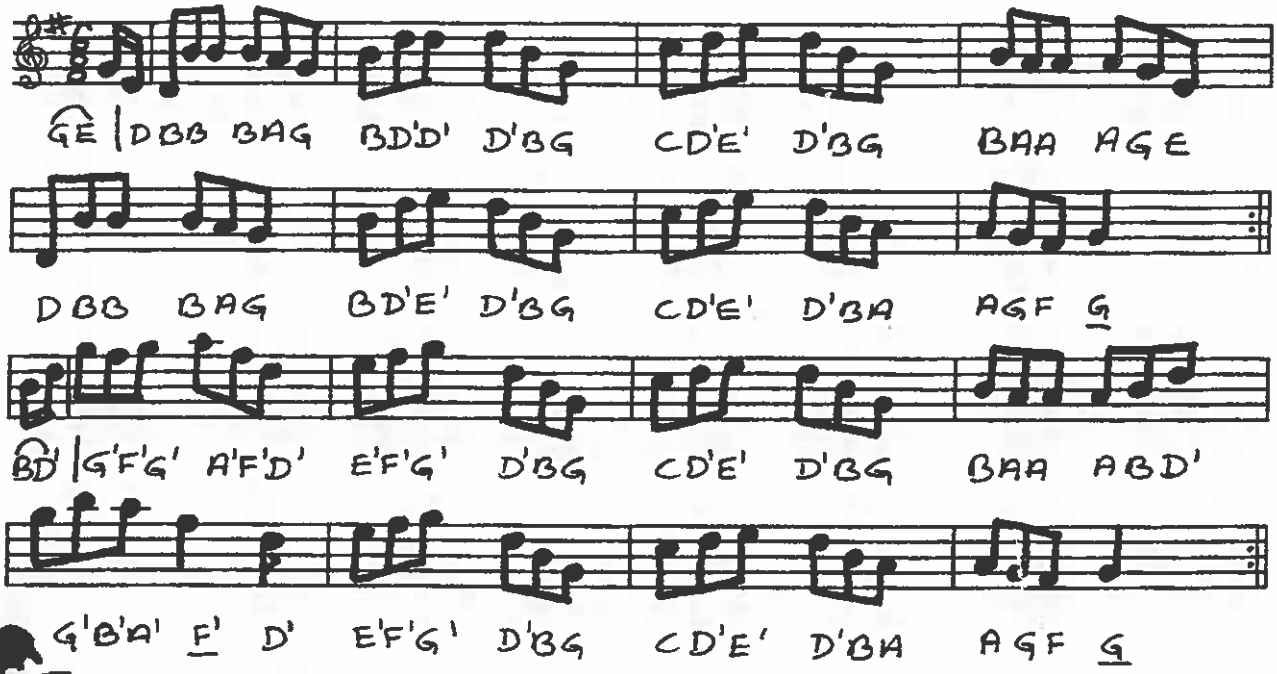
Trip to Sligo



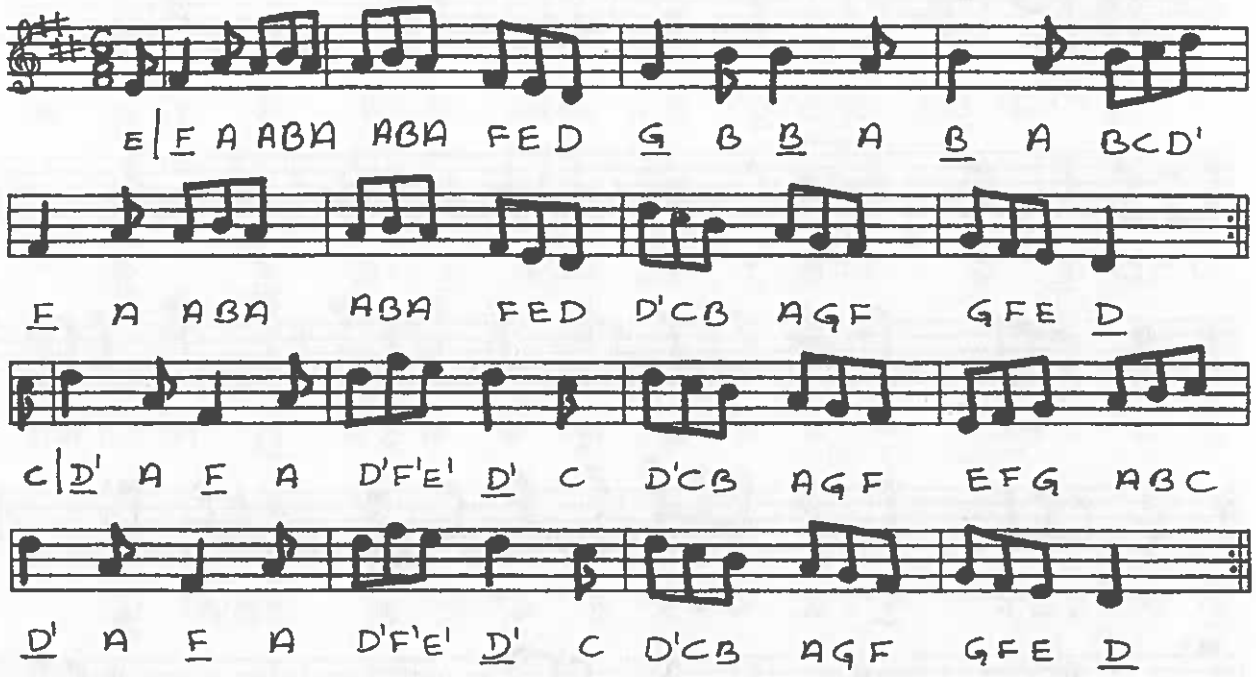
Out on the Ocean



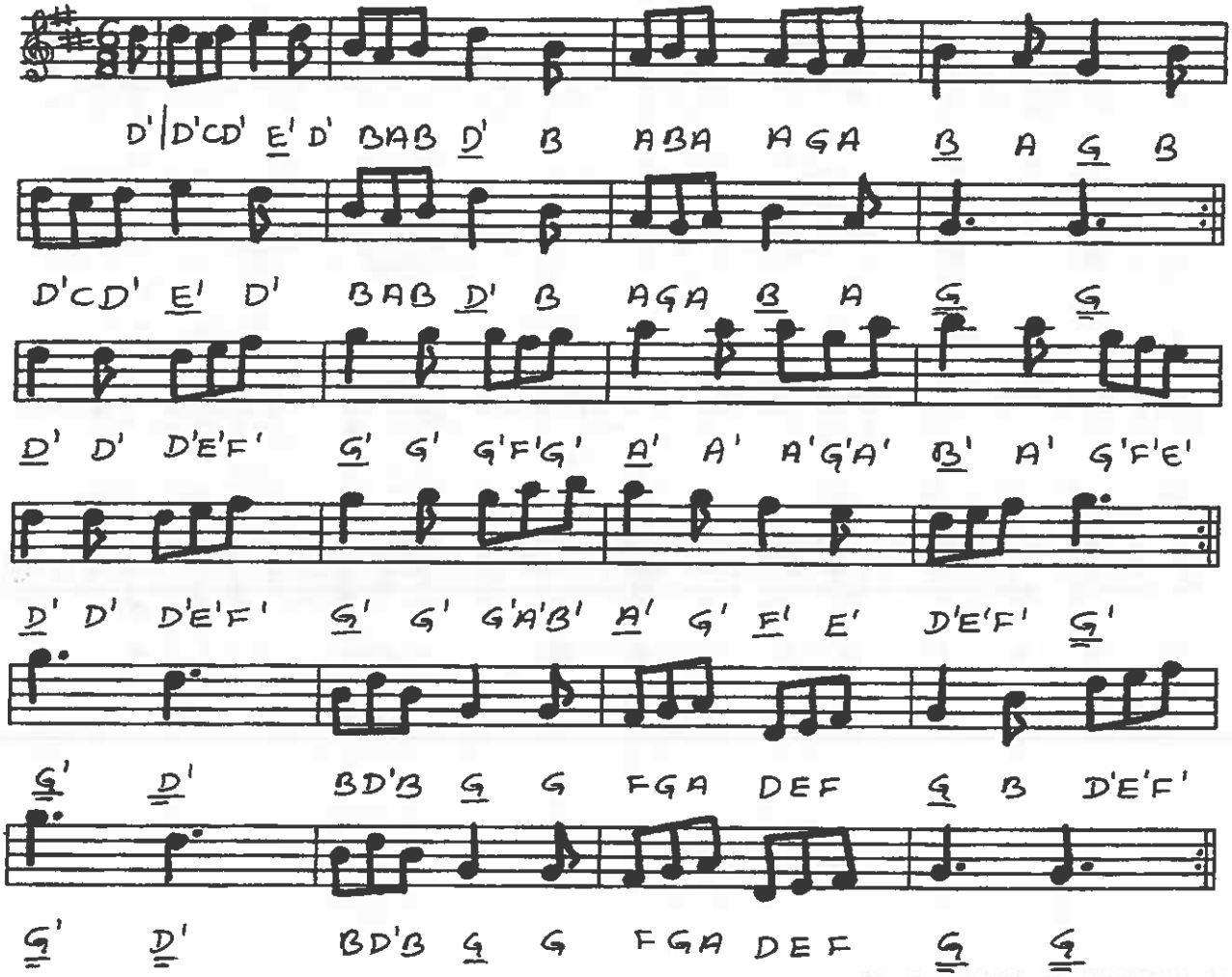
The Eavesdropper



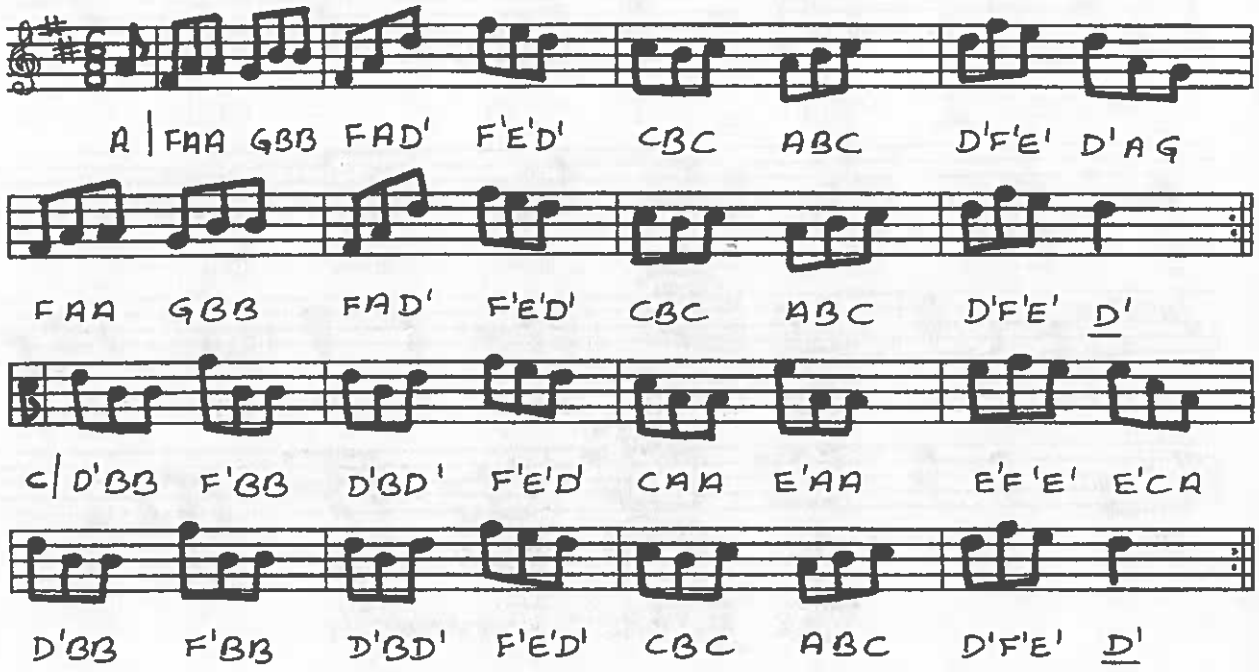
The Steamboat



Dingle Regatta



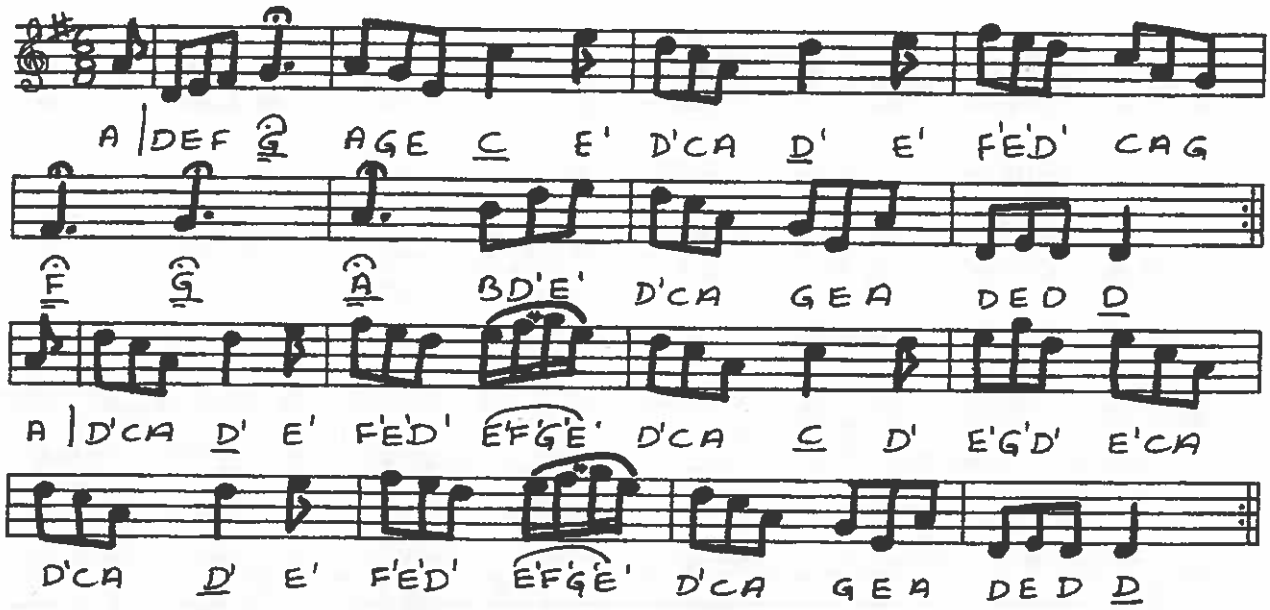
Tripping Up the Stairs



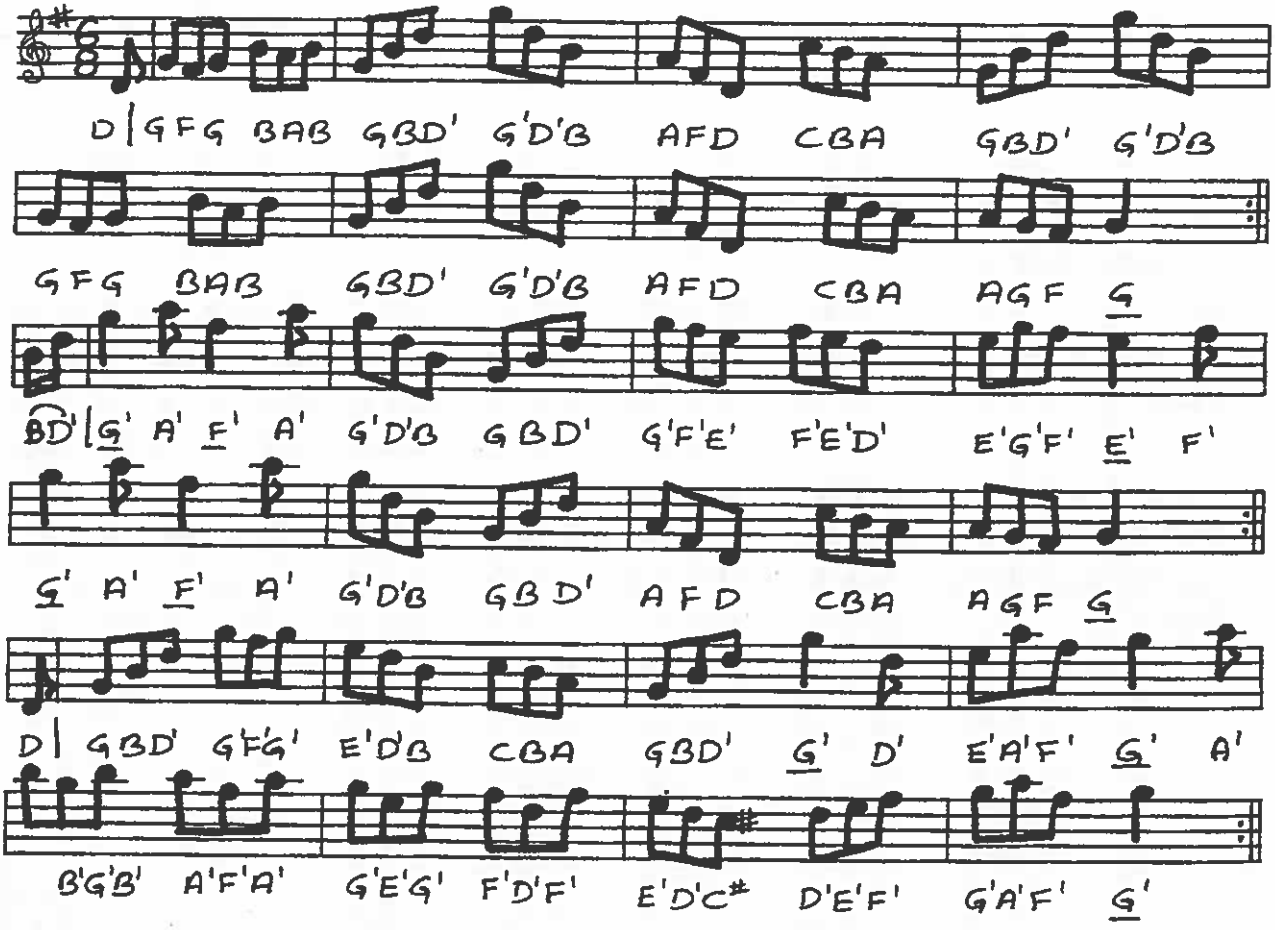
Willie Clancy

Willie was born in Miltown Malbay Co. Clare in 1918. He began learning the Tinwhistle at about 7 years of age, and took up the Uilleann pipes at about 18 years. Willie moved to London in his 30's and was influenced by the piper Séamus Ennis. He later moved back to Miltown Malbay and became a well-known musician there. He was also well-known for his sense of humour, singing and storytelling. Willie died in 1973 and Scoil Éigse Willie Clancy was set up in his memory. People now travel from all over the world to take part every summer.

Garrett Barry's



The Bride's Favourite



The Mug of Brown Ale

G EAA ABD' E'D'B C A BGG D'GG BD'C BAG

EAA ACD' E'D'E' A' G' E'D'C BCD' E'CA A

F'|G'E'F' G' A' G'E'F' G' D'C BGG D'GG BD'C BAG

G'E'F' G' A' G'E'F' G' D' E'D'C BCD' E'CA A

F'|G'E'F' G' A' G'E'F' G' D'C BGG D'GG BD'C BAG

EAA ACD' E'D'E' A' E' E'D'C BCD' E'CA A

The Blackthorn Stick

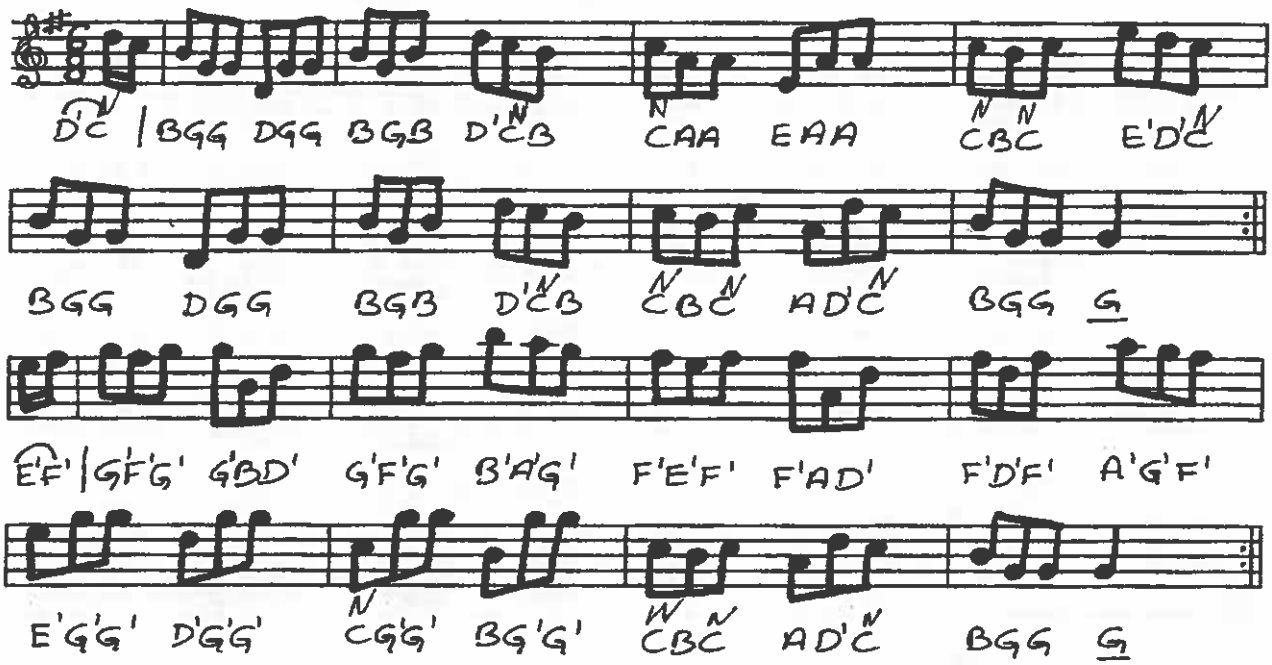
D'|G'F'G' E'G'E' D'BG AGE DGG FGA BGB A D'

G'F'G' E'G'E' D'BG AGE DGG FGA BGG G

D'|E'D'D' G'D'D' E'D'D' G'D'D' E'D'E' G'F'G' E'D'B A D'

G'F'G' E'G'E' D'BG AGE DGG FGA BGG G

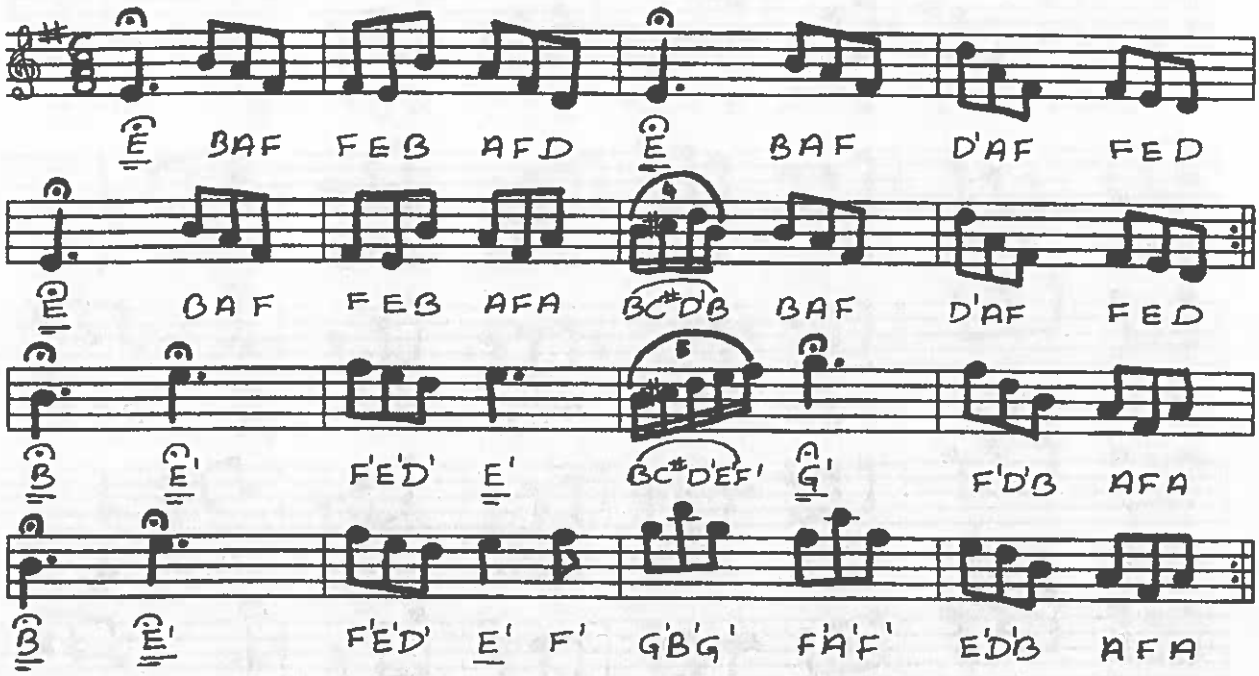
Irish Washerwoman



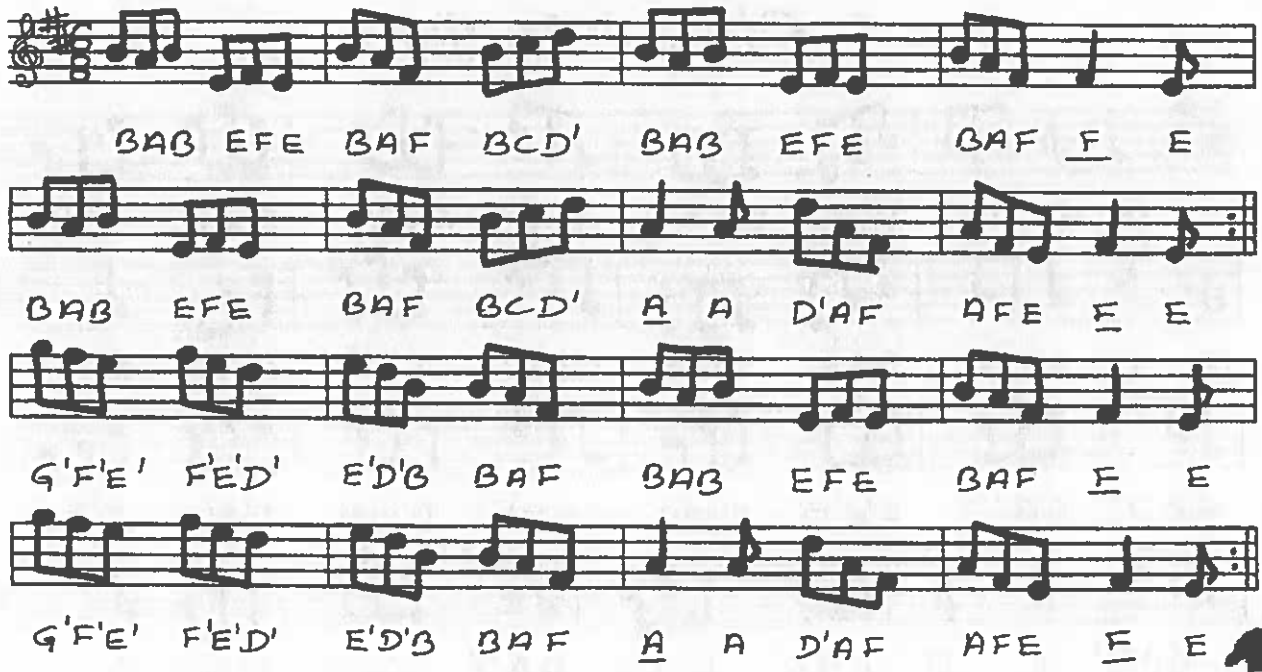
Micho Russell

Micho was born in Doolin, Co. Clare, in 1915 . His parents were native Irish speakers but spoke English to their children. When Micho was young all the people in the area used to gather in different houses for an evening of music, singing, storytelling and dancing. Micho used to listen to all this music and, as he got older, began to join in. He got his first tinwhistle at 11 years. He later got a wooden flute which he played with his brothers Pakie, on the concertina, and Gus on the flute. Micho began playing in a pub called Slattery's in Capel Street in Dublin in the 1960's. He was also a talented storyteller and singer and was invited all over Europe and the United States. Micho's music was characterised by a lack of over ornamentation. He died in 1994.

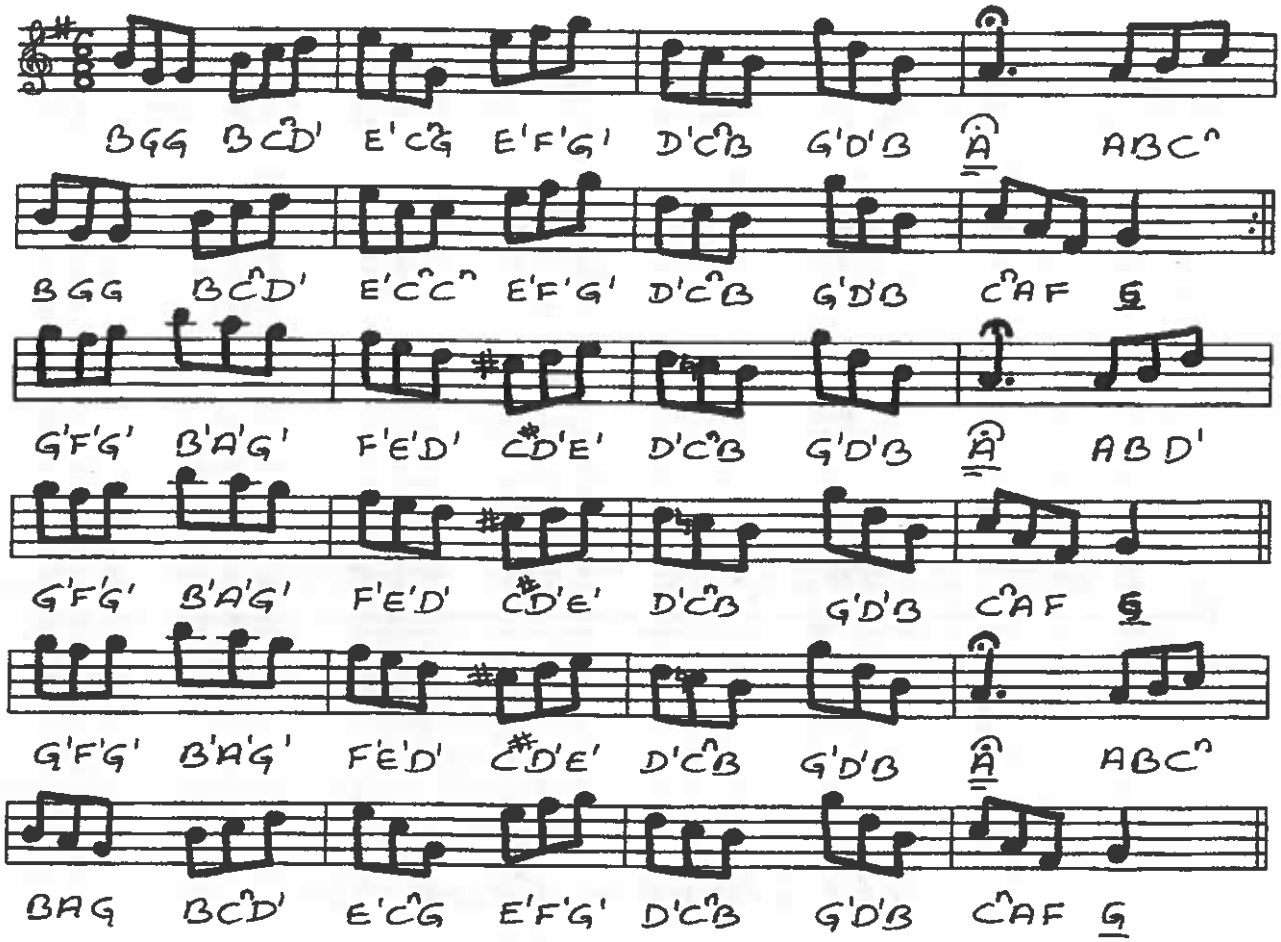
Whelan's Jig



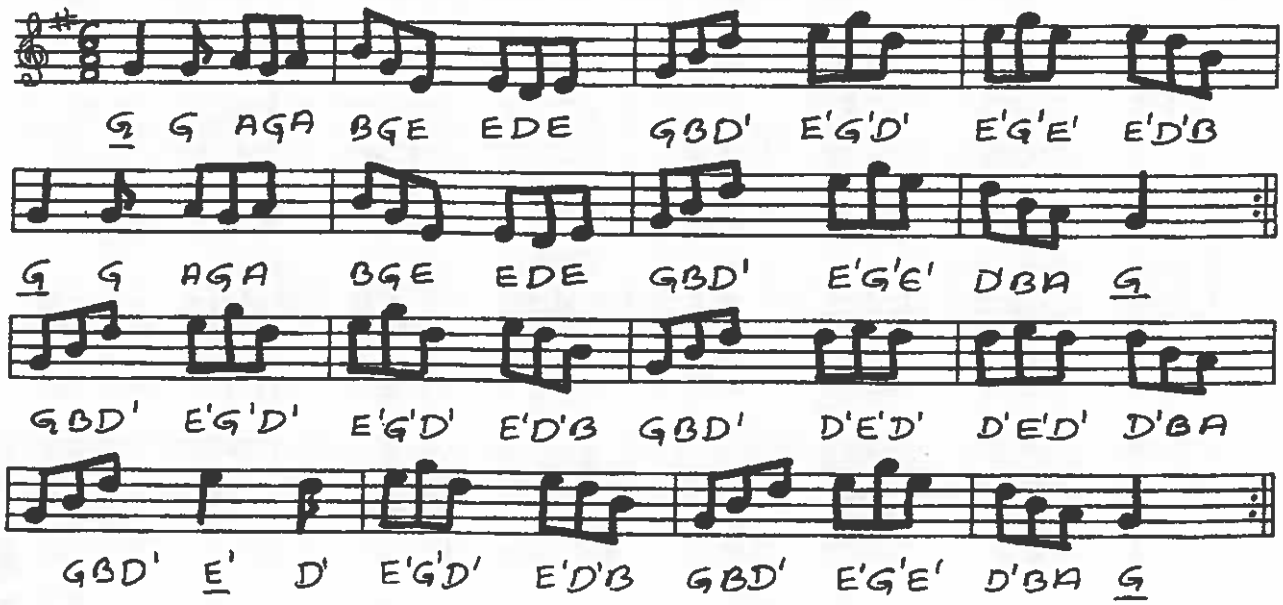
The Munster Storyteller



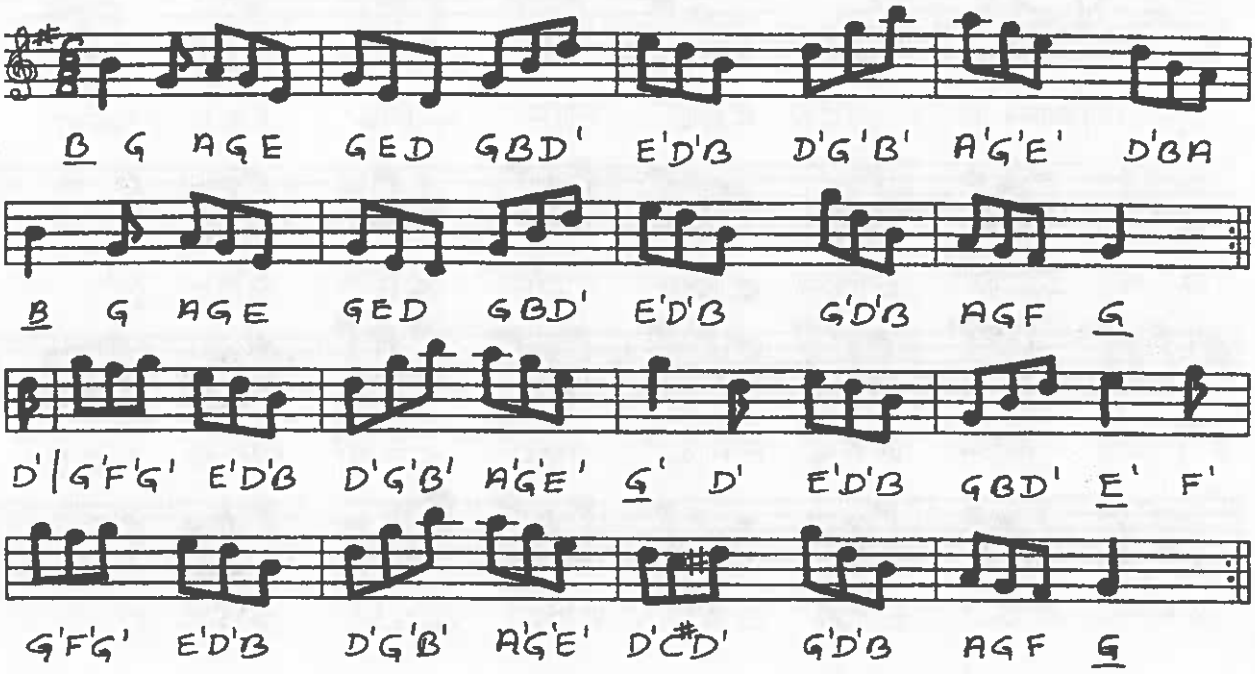
Humours of Kesh



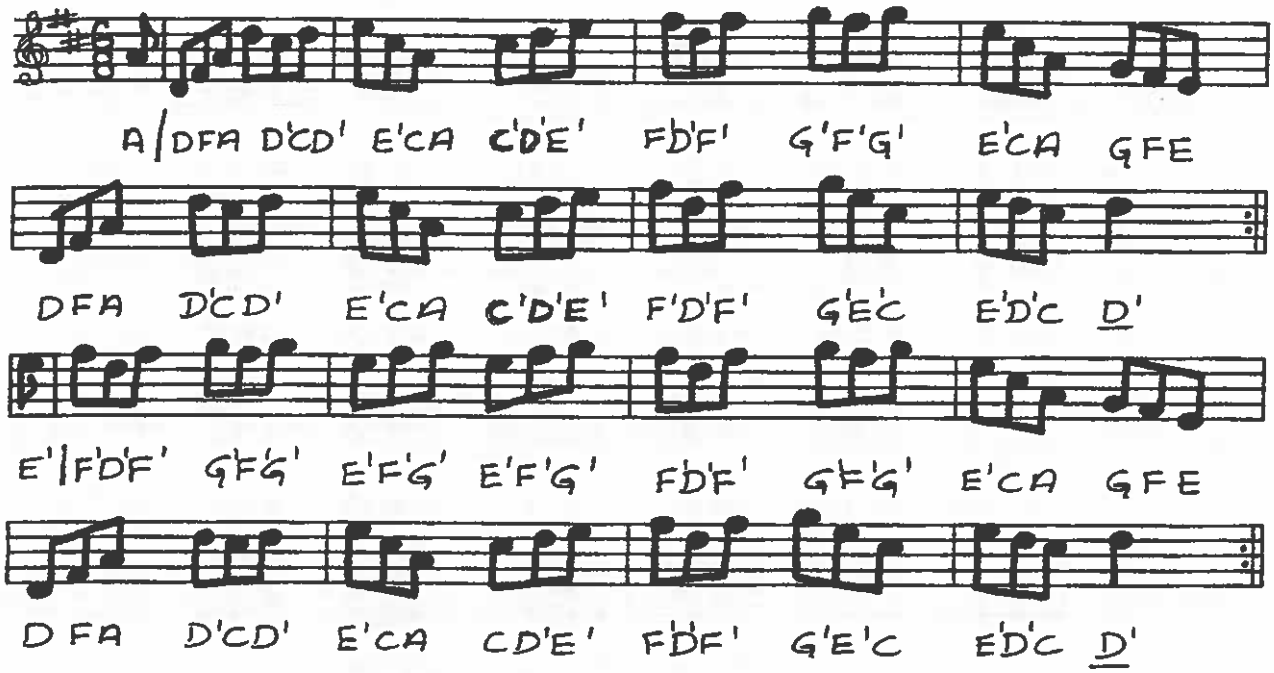
Old Leitrim Jig



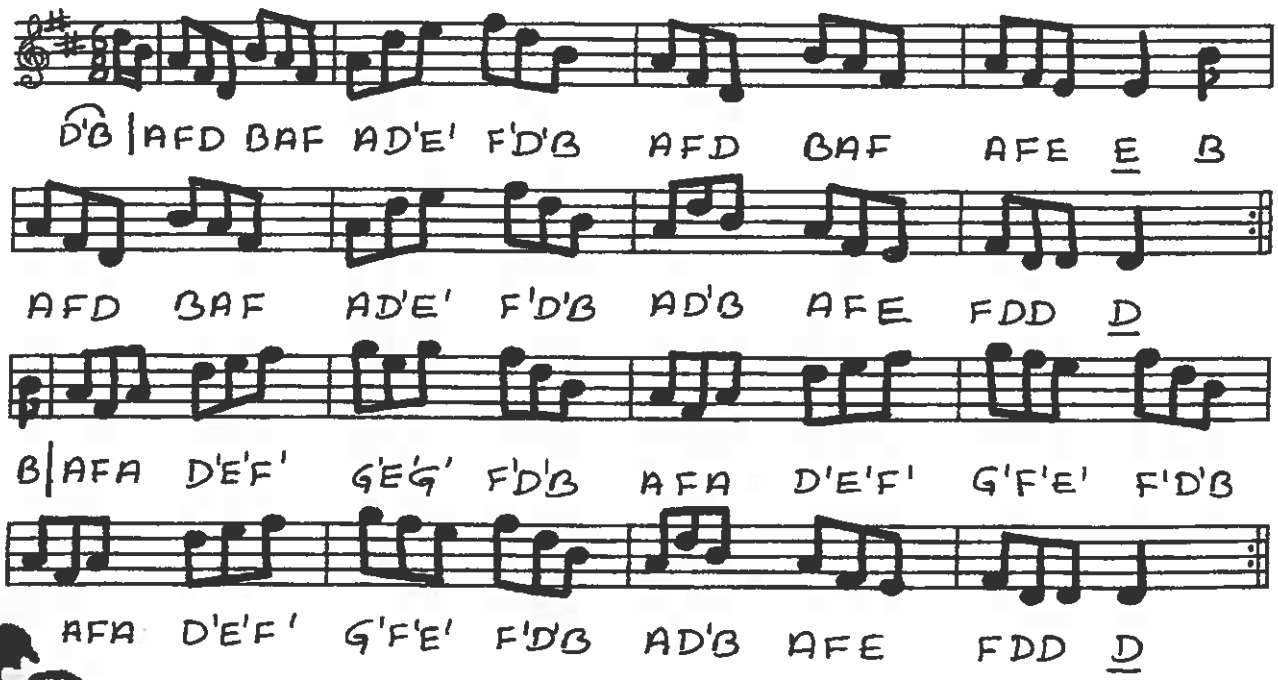
Willie Coleman's Jig



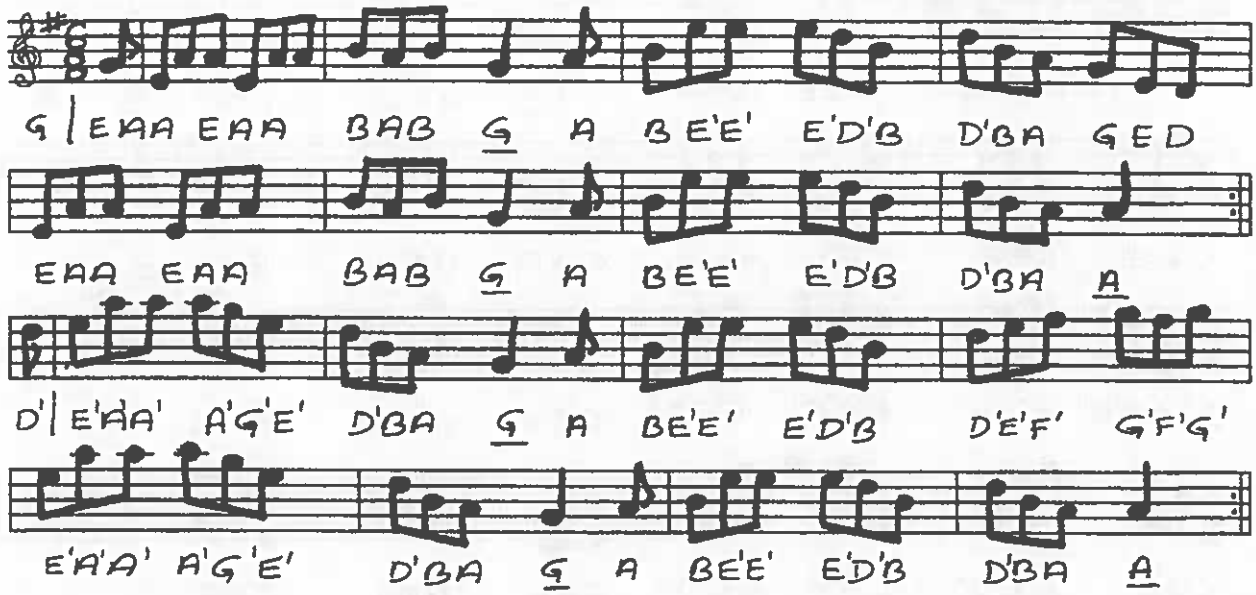
Tobin's Fancy



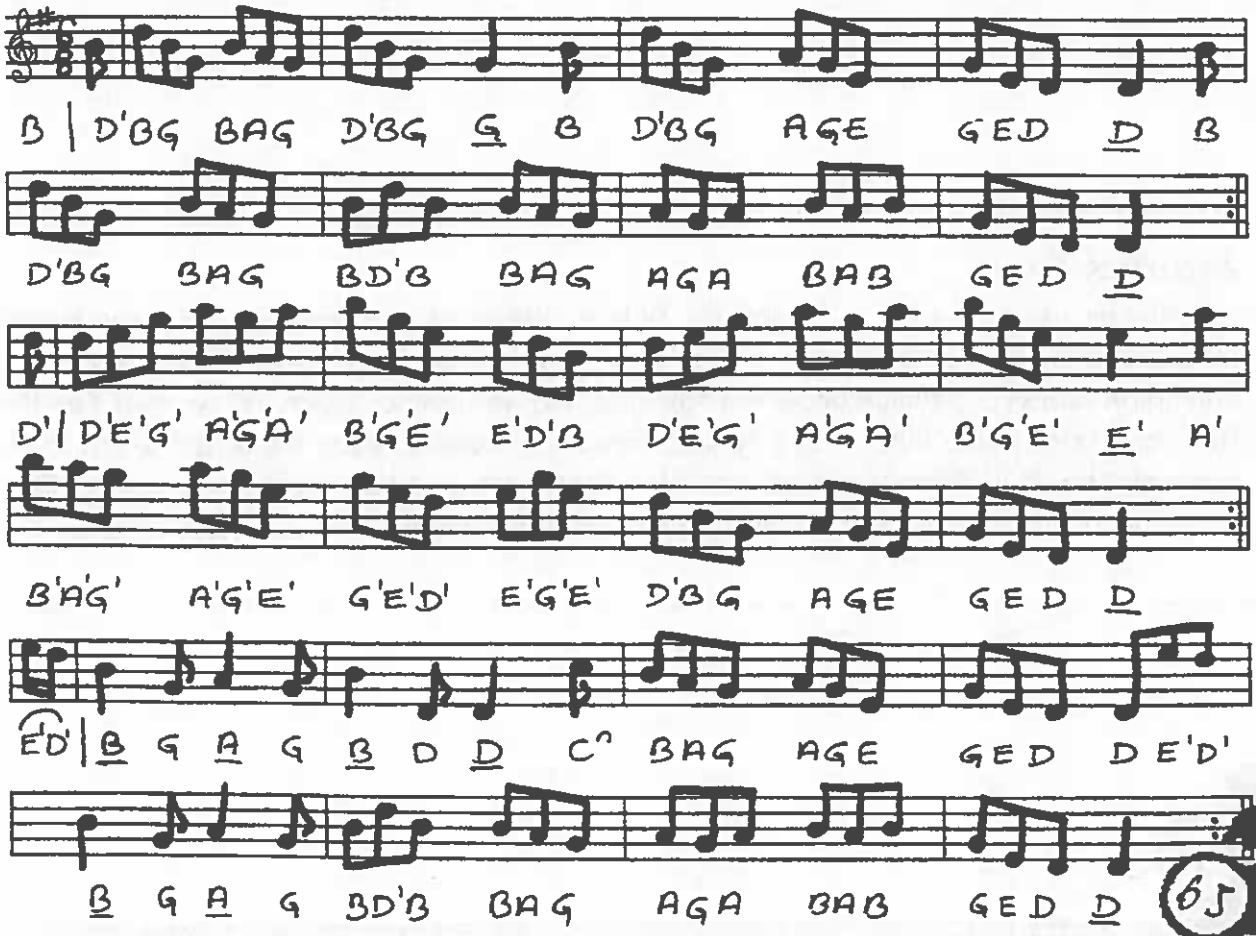
The Merry Maiden



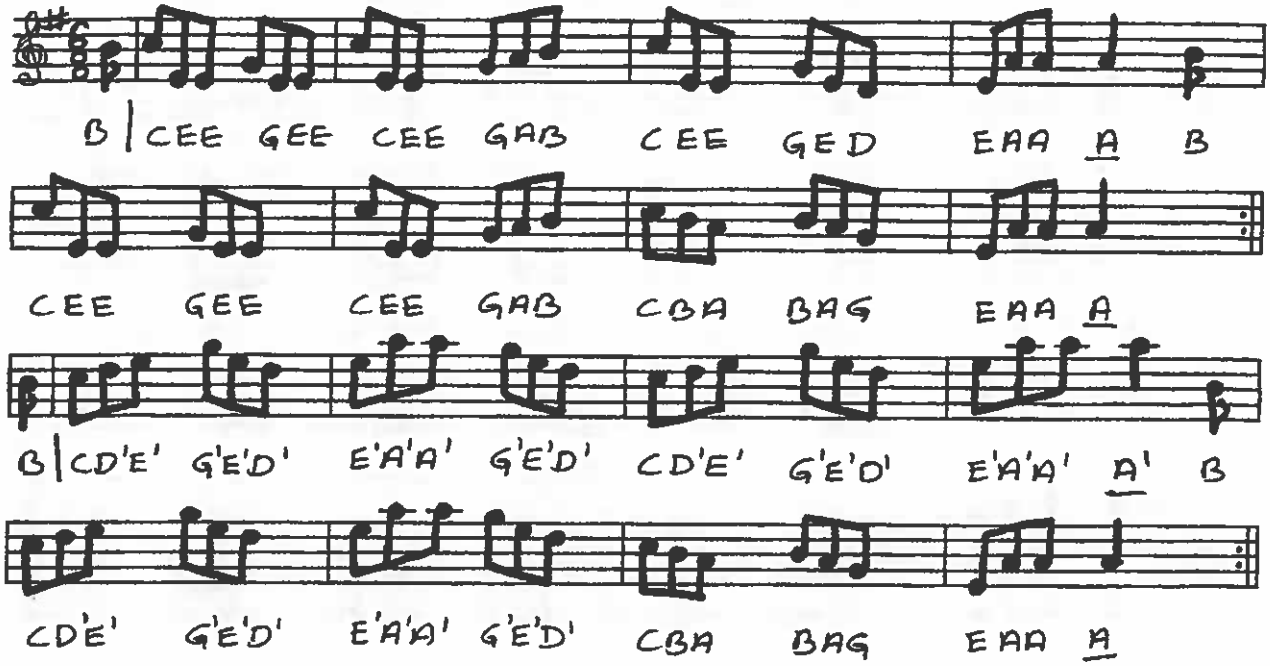
The Lilting Banshee



Battering Ram Jig



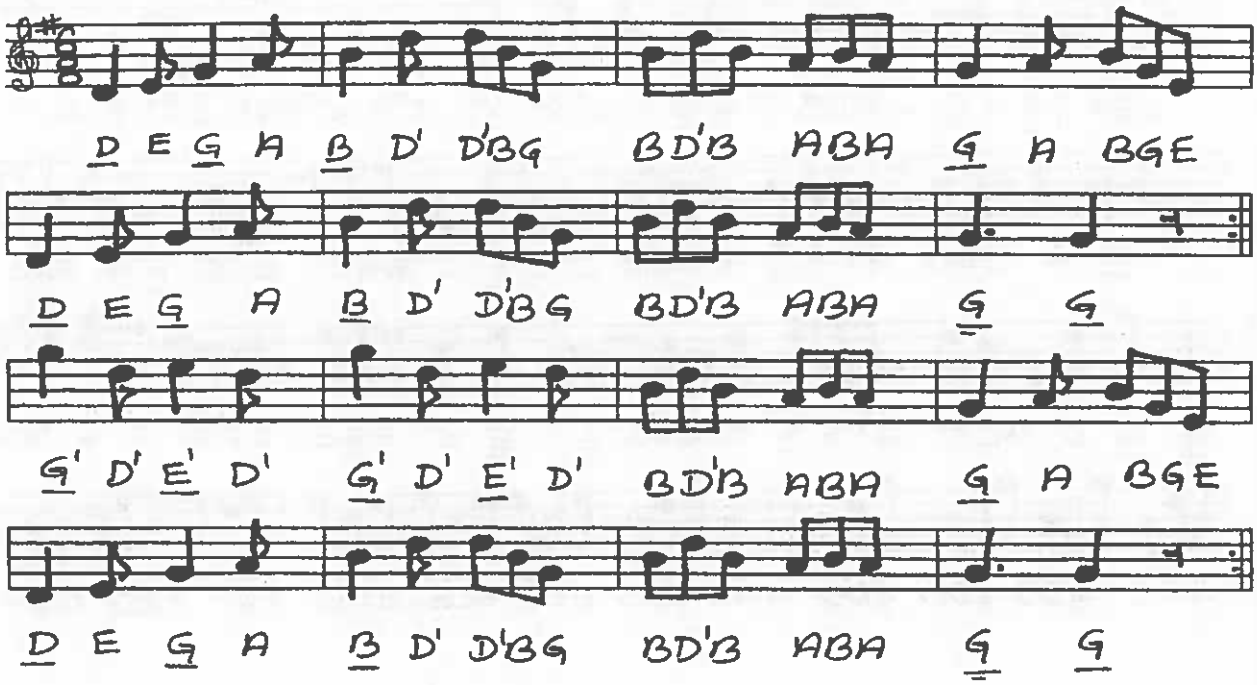
The Geese in the Bog



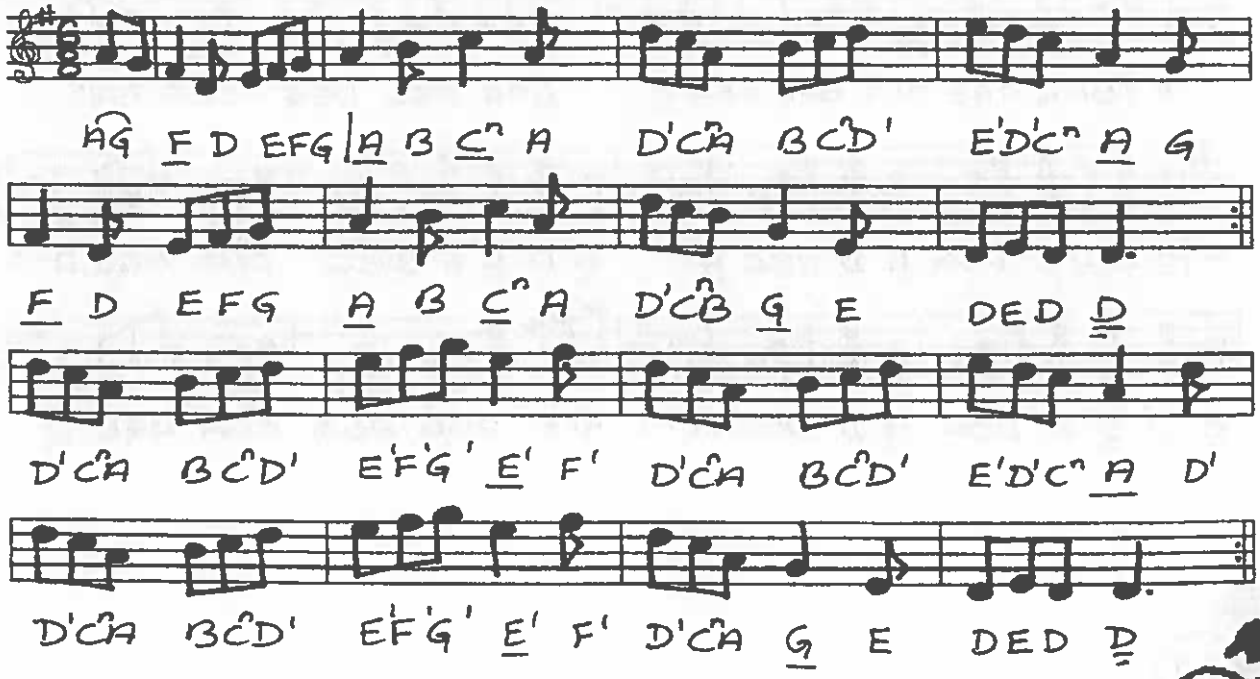
Séamus Ennis

Séamus was born in 1919 in Finglas, Co. Dublin. When he was growing up he was hugely influenced by his father, James Ennis, who played several instruments and was also a champion dancer. Séamus became a talented and well-known piper. He worked for the BBC, and later Radio Éireann and Teilifís Éireann, recording many important Irish musicians of the day. Séamus played very old Uilleann pipes, which were made about 1800. Because of his work much music was preserved which might otherwise have been lost.

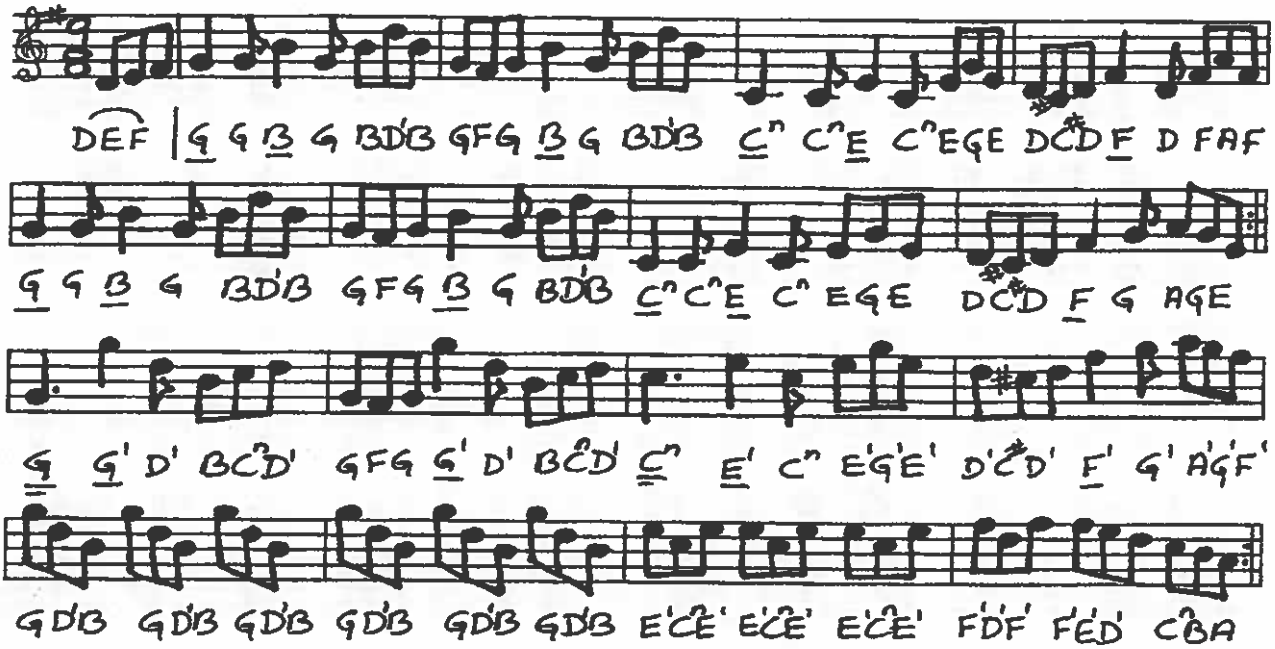
Sergeant Cahill's Favourite



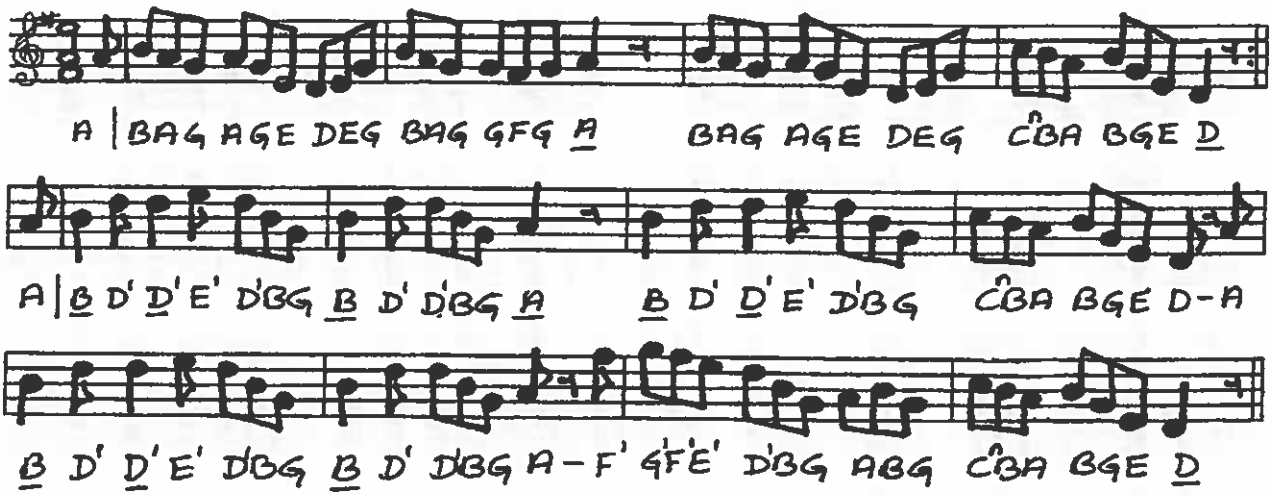
Port an Achréidh



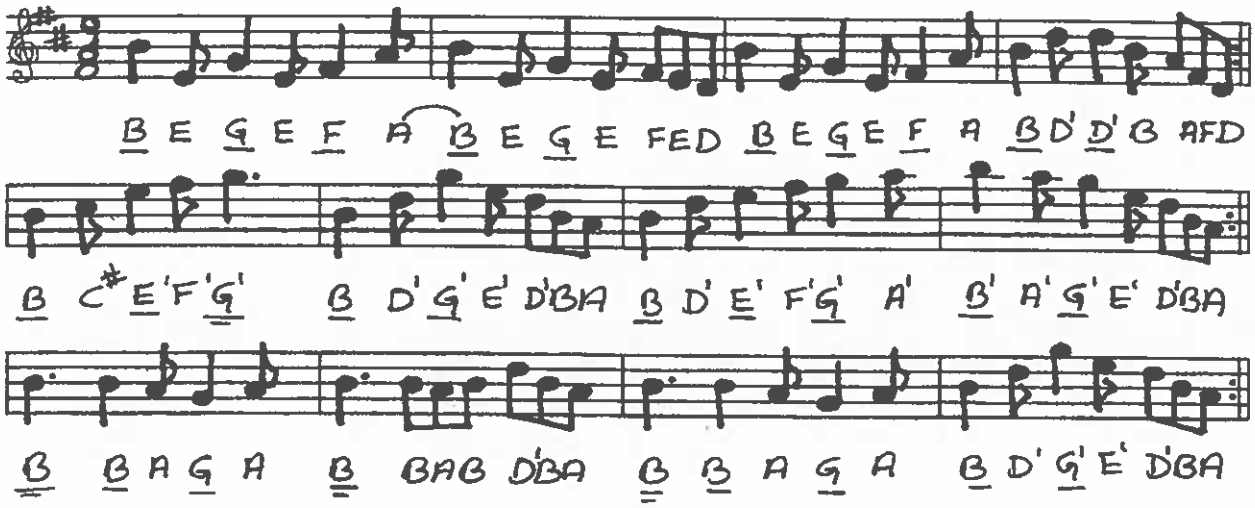
Sport of the Chase



The Swaggering Jig



The Butterfly



Slides

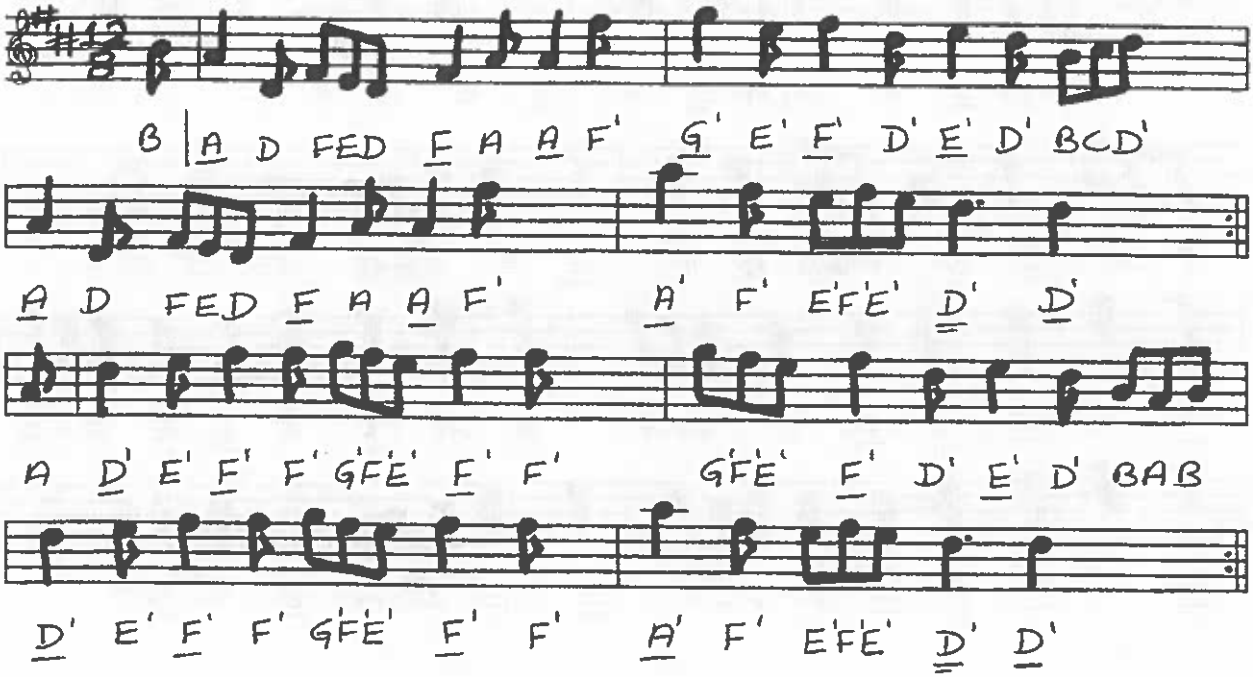
Over the course of the 20th century, the customary notation for slides has shifted from 6/8 to 12/8 time (i.e. 12 quaver beats in a bar), which is an improvement in accuracy.

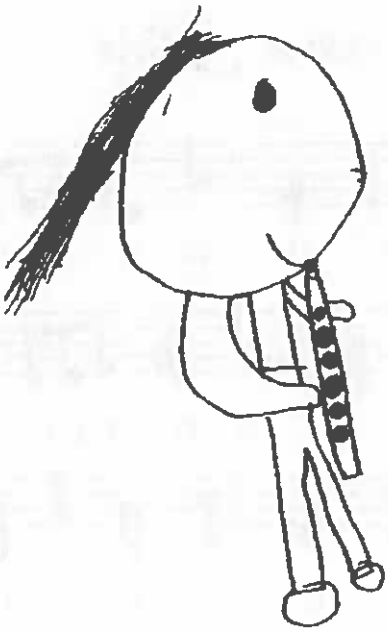
The first note of each bar of a slide is clearly emphasised and the tempo is quite quick. Slides contain heavy-light pairs and fairly even triplets. Unlike in jigs, where the first note of a group of three is emphasised, the notes of the triplet are given an almost equal value. The slide is a popular session tune in the south-west of Ireland.

There is some controversy on the identification of slides versus single jigs and whether or not they are one and the same! You will find quite ardent arguments in both directions, and therefore may find the same tunes identified under diverse headings in different places. The complicate the matter, single jigs may be played as slides and vice versa.

Some musicians simply use the term "single jig" to mean "slide", and may be unaware or disbelieving of the existence of the distinctive single jig rhythm in Irish music. 'Merrily Kiss the Quaker' is an example of an Irish Slide that we in Malahide Comhaltas are quite fond of!

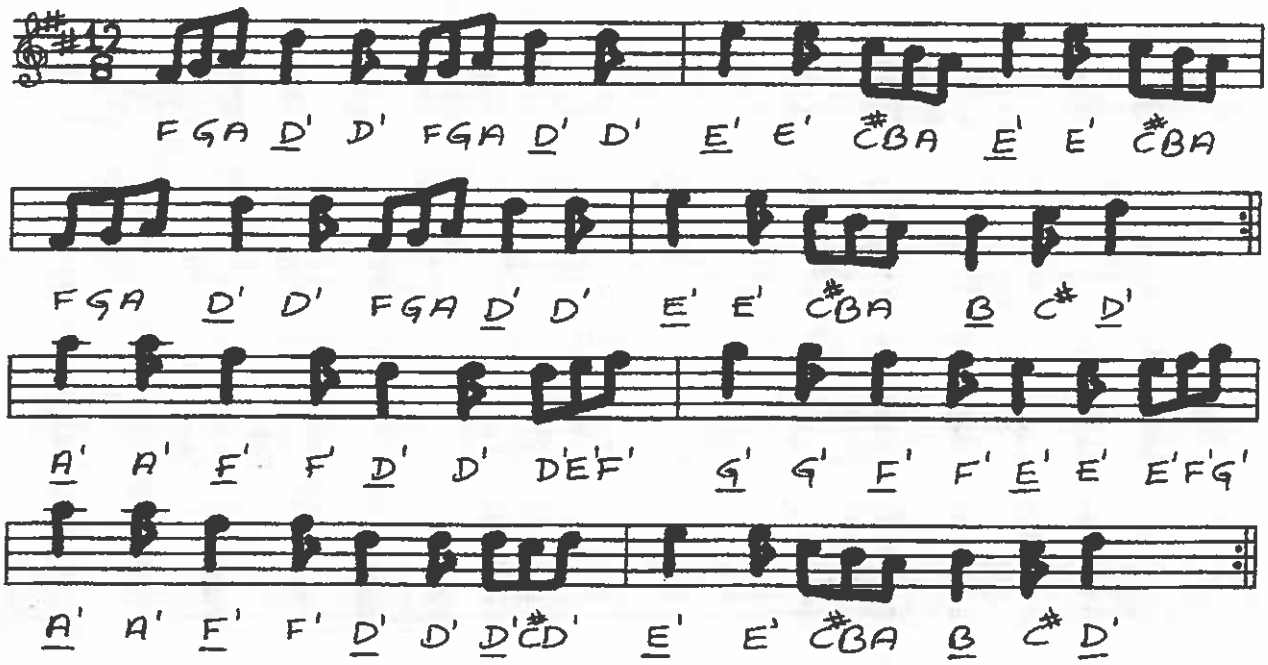
Denis Murphy's



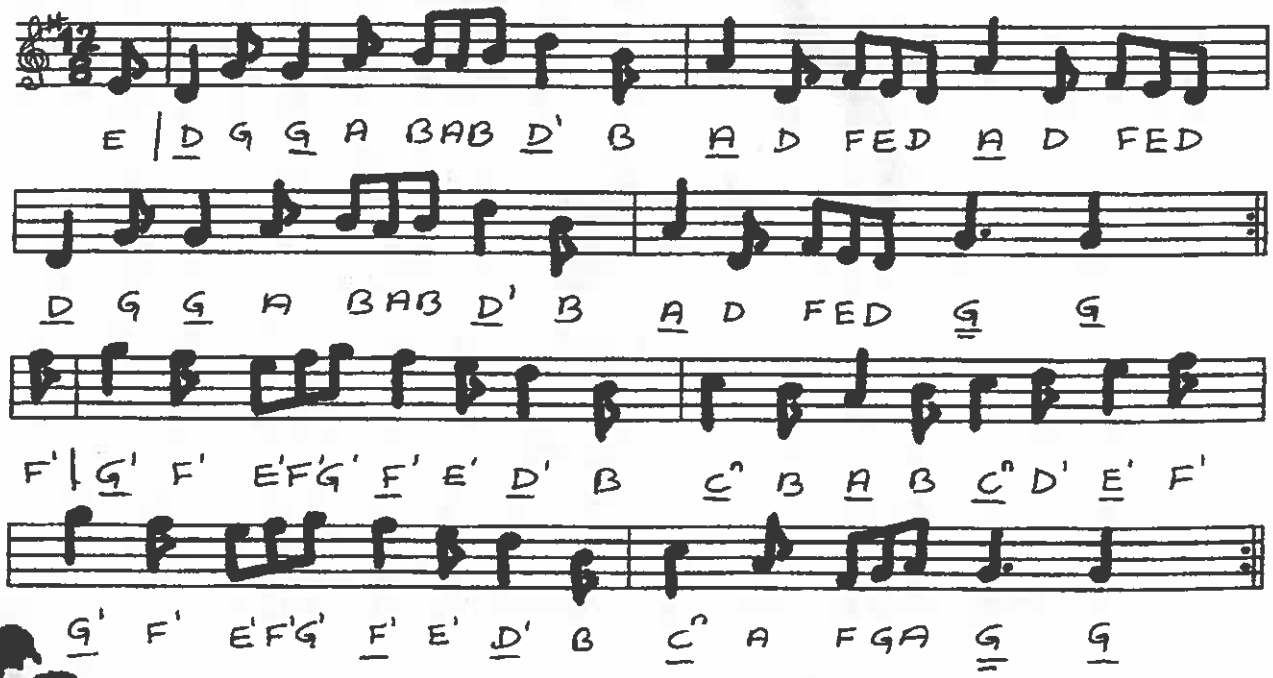


Playing the tinwhistle, by Mairéad Maguire age 7

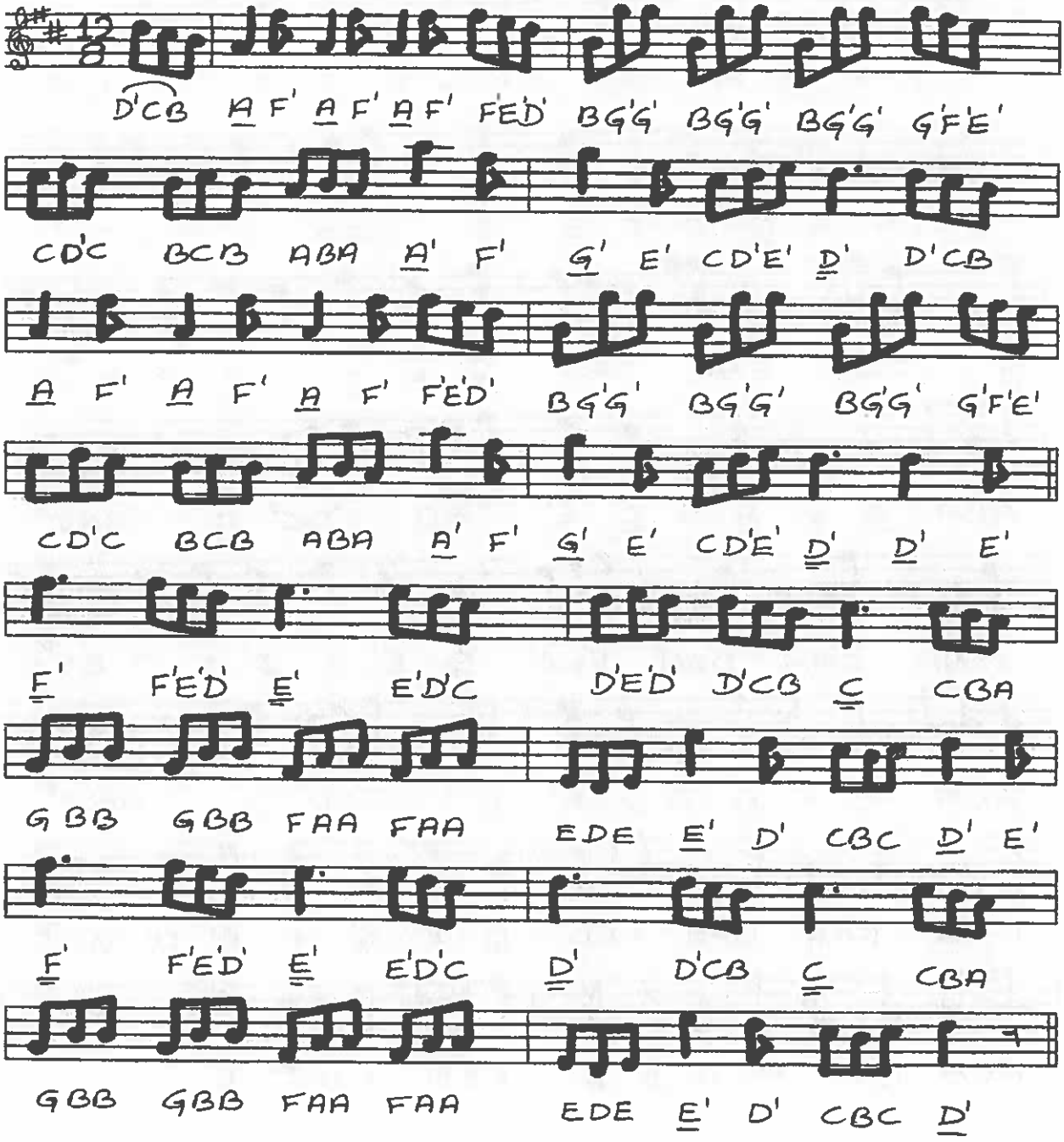
Scattery Island Slide



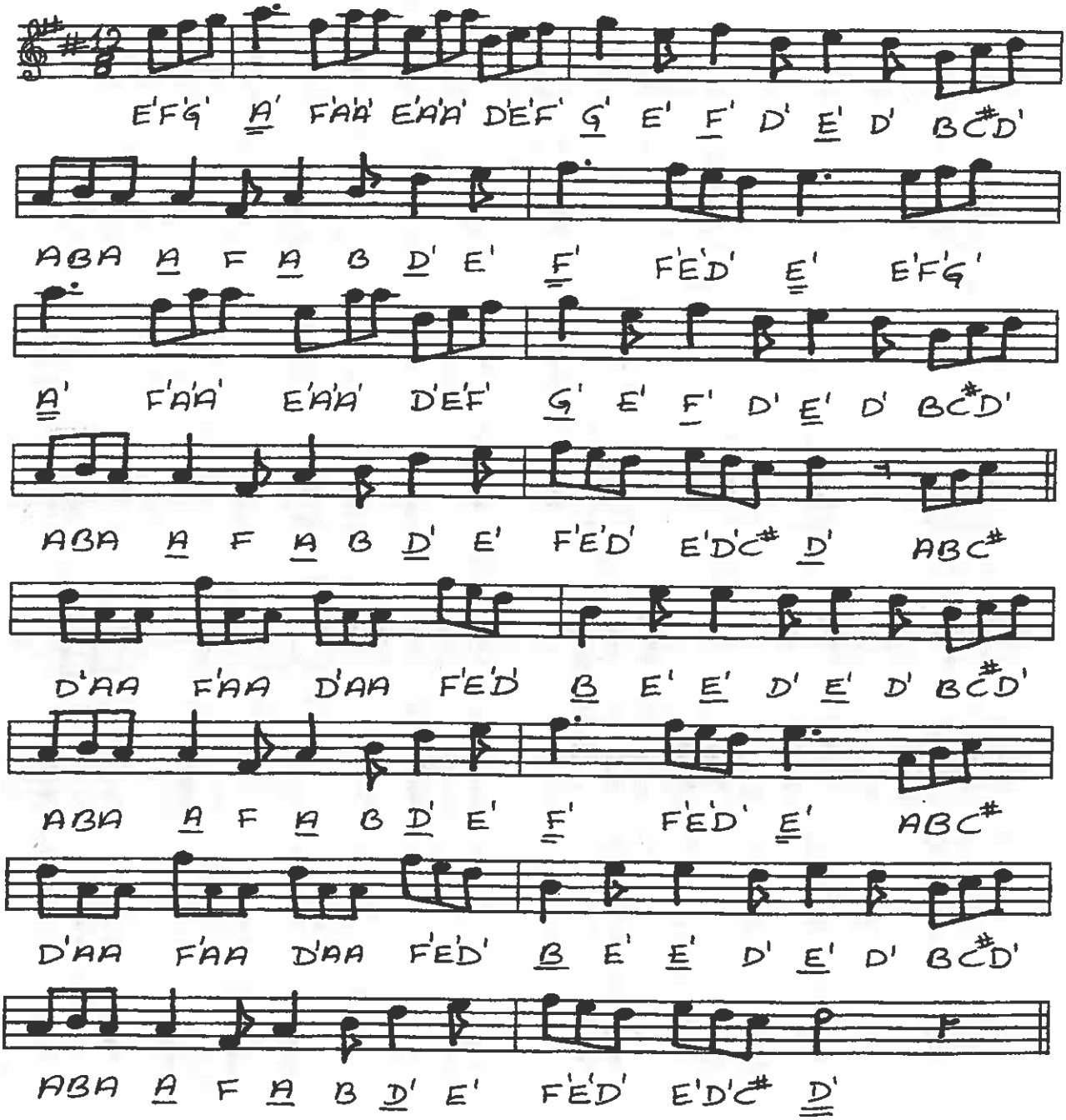
Brosna Slide



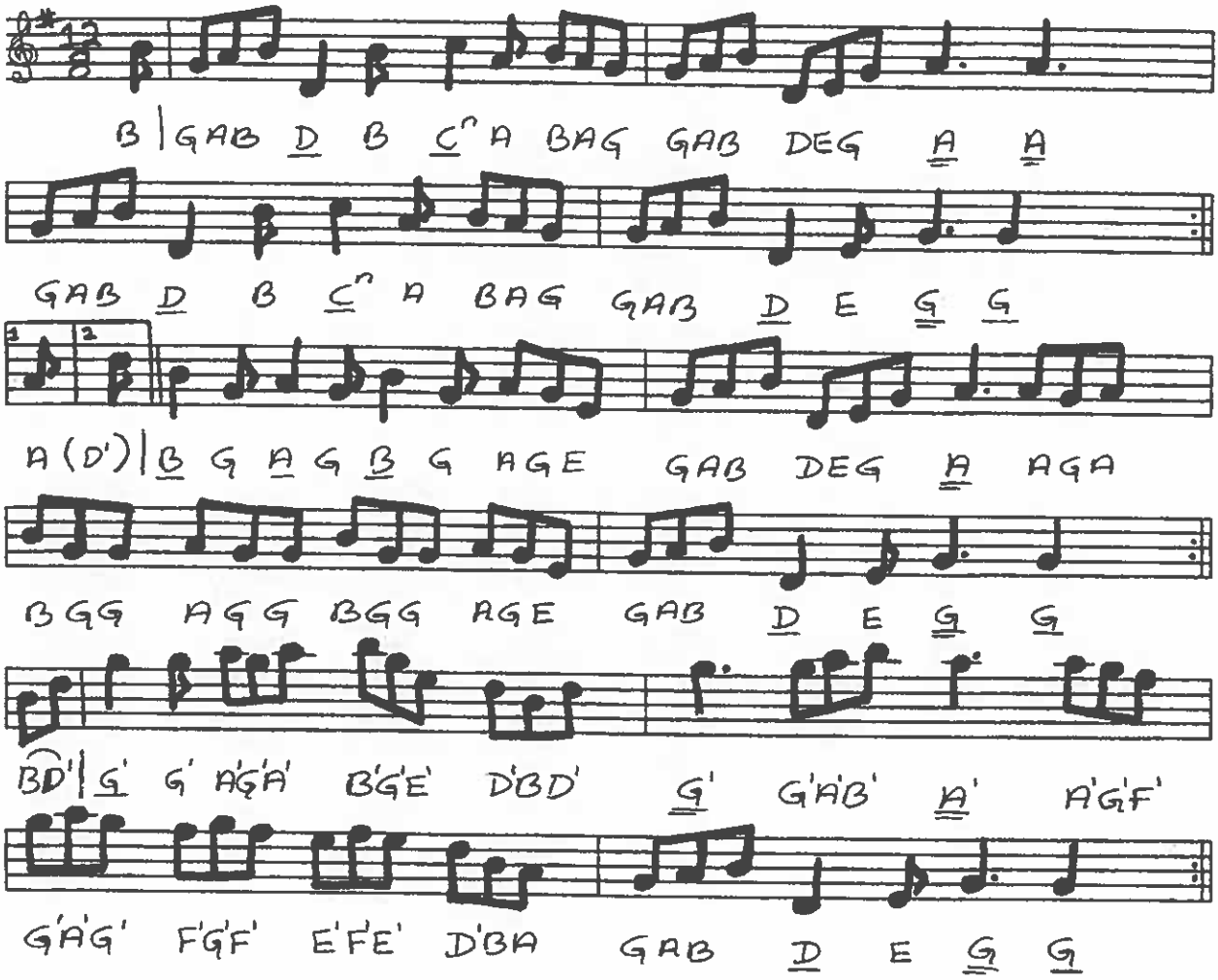
Going to the Well for Water



Waterboy's Slide



Merrily Kiss the Quaker



Tommy Peoples

Tommy Peoples was born in St. Johnstown, where he learned the Donegal style of playing. Since then he has played everywhere in Ireland and in many countries abroad and has been a member of the Kilfenora Céilí Band and The Bothy Band. He lived in Co. Clare for many years and blended the local style of playing into his music. He is a master of technique and plays wonderful fiddle music.

By Emer McCarthy, Age 10 years.

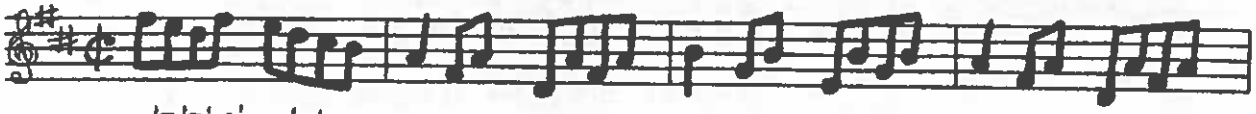
Reels

The reel is a fast dance in 4/4 time (i.e. four crochet beats per bar) or 2/2 time (i.e. 2 semibreves per bar). The reel is probably older than the jig and many of the older reels in the Irish tradition were imported from Scotland. Reels have a similar time signature to the Hornpipe i.e. 4/4 time. However, hornpipes are often played at a slower tempo to match the dancing tradition, and the hard-shoed dancer! Hornpipes are also played with more of a 'swing' created by an almost dotted rhythm. This means that different notes in the bar are emphasised or played for longer, whereas in the reel each note has a more equal value.

An Irish reel is distinctly different from the Scottish version, even when the two are based on the same melody.

In a single reel the first part, which has 4 bars, is played twice, while the second part which has 8 bars is played only once.

Saint Anne's



F'E'D'F' E'D'CB A FA DAFA B GB EBGB A FA DAFA

F'E'D'F' E'D'CB A FA DAFA BE'E'D' CABC E'D'D'C D'

E'|F' F'E' F'E'D'C BG'G'F' G' G'F' E'D'CB ABCD' B'A'A'G#' A' A'G'

F' F'E' F'E'D'C BG'G'F' G' G'F' E'D'CB ABCD' E'D'D'C D'

Miss McCleod's

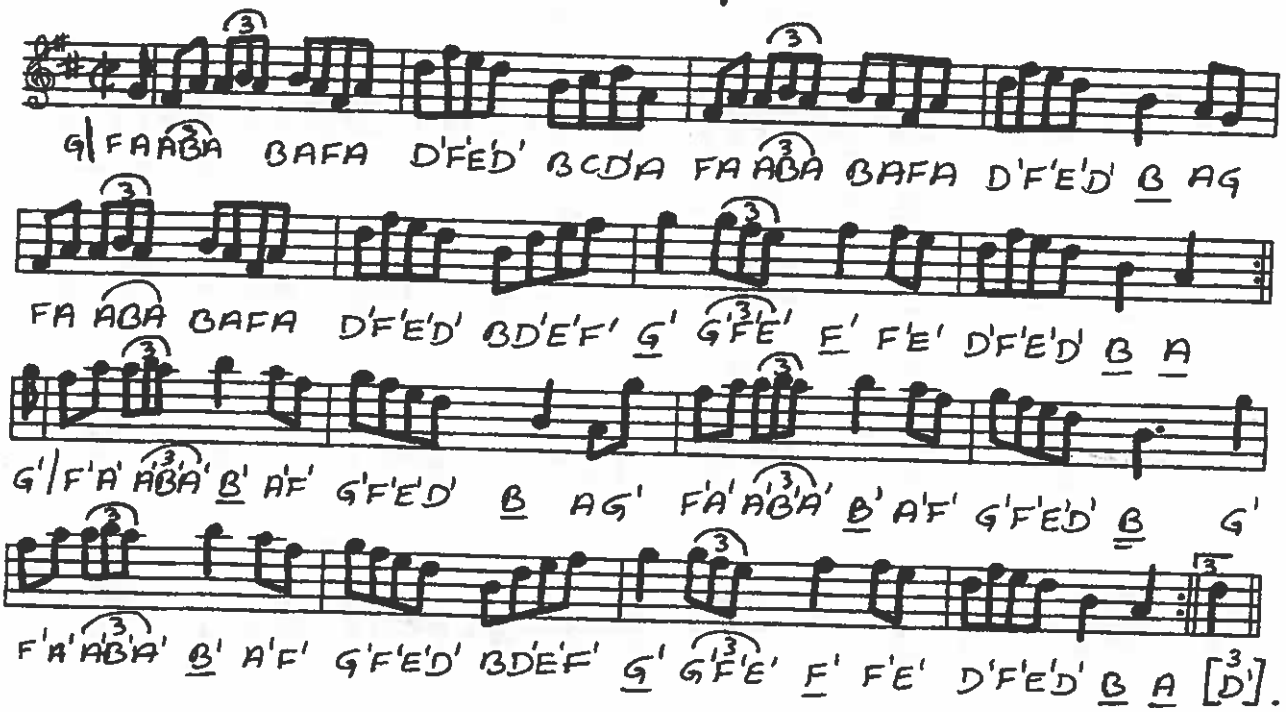
G BG D'GBG B BA BCBA G BG D'GBG A AG ACBA

G BG D'GBG B BA B D' E'F'E'D' BD'E'F' G'E'D'B ACBA

G G' E'F'G'E' D'BBA BCBA G G' E'F'G'E' A' G' A'G'E'F'

G' G' E'F'G'E' D'BBA B D' E'F'E'D' BD'E'F' G'E'D'B ACBA

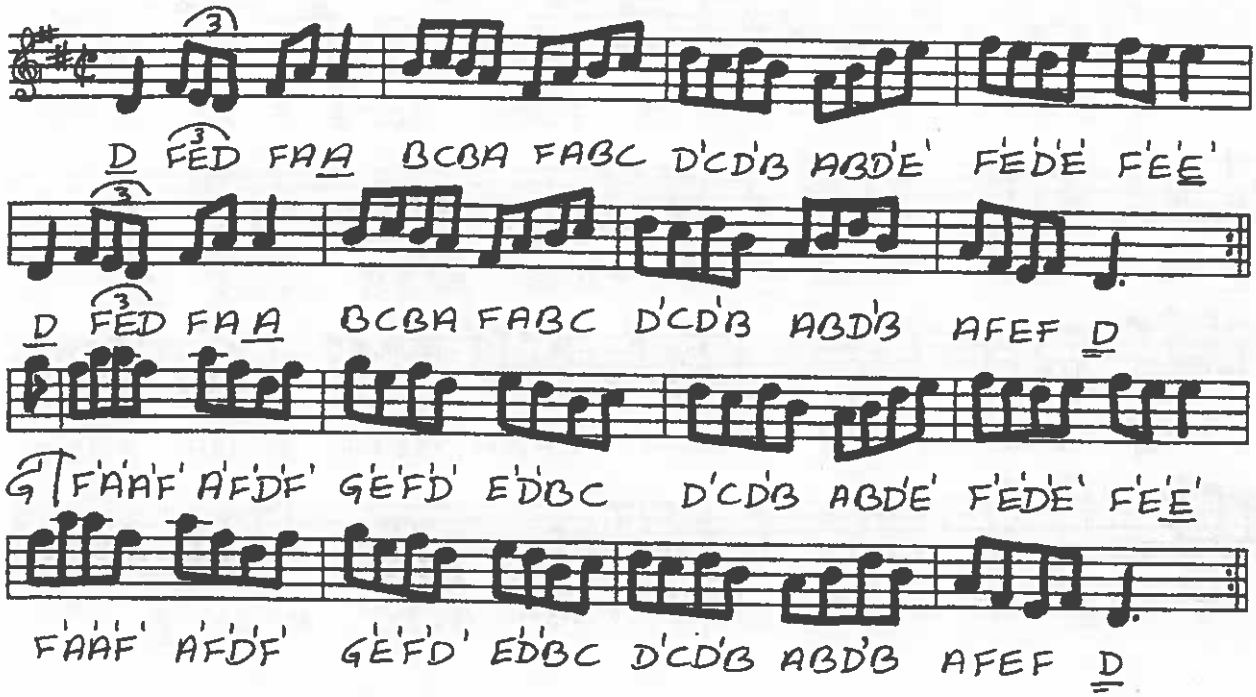
Silver Spear



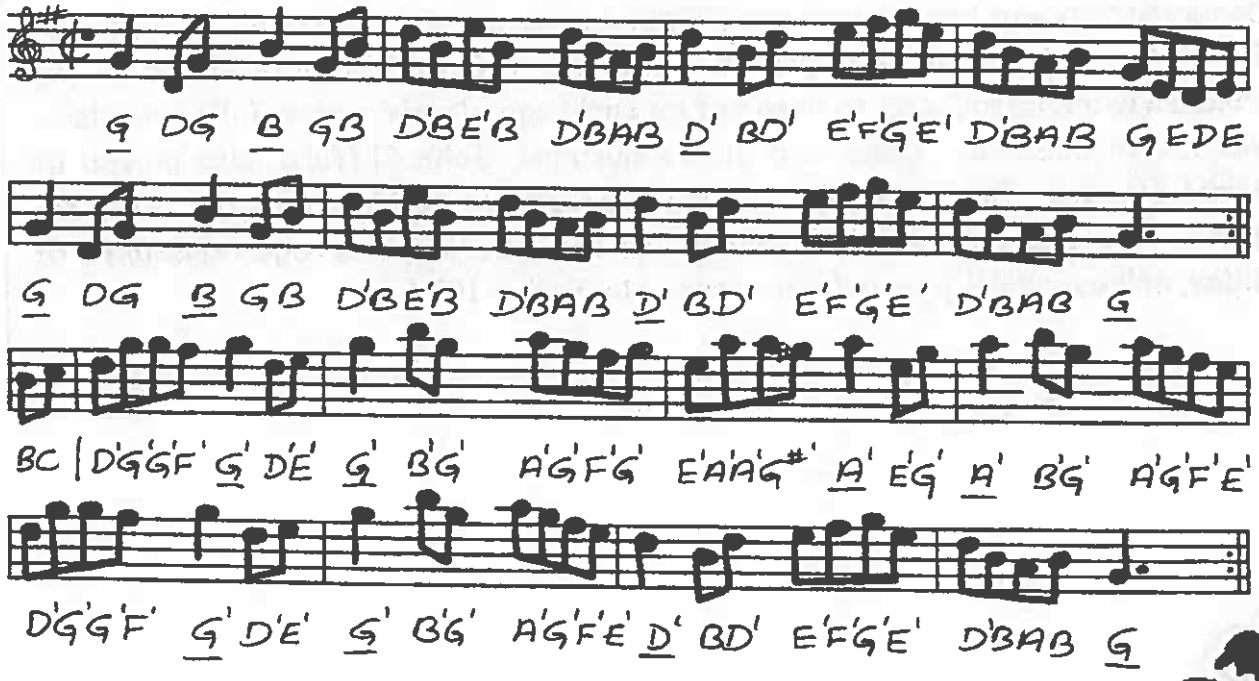
Elizabeth Crotty

Elizabeth Crotty was born in Cooraclare, West Clare in 1885. She taught herself how to play the concertina and did not learn how to read or write staff notation or tonic solfa. Although she did not make any commercial recordings, we can still hear her music on Raidió Éireann recordings. She and her husband Miko Crotty ran a pub in Kilrush. Elizabeth Crotty was a founding member of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann in Co. Clare in 1954. She died in 1960.

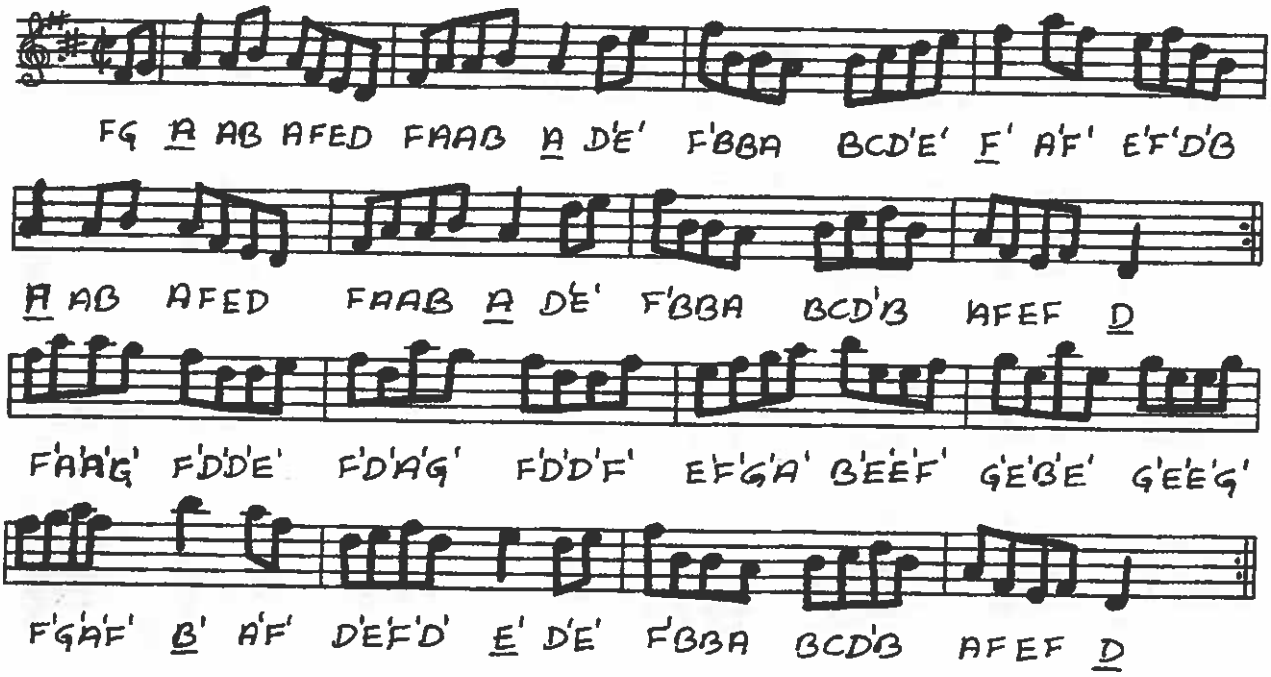
Miss Monaghan's



Sally Gardens



Maid Behind the Bar



Denis Murphy

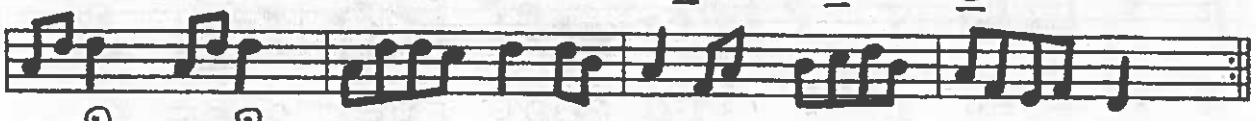
Denis Murphy was born in Lisheen (Sliabh Luachra area) in 1912 into a family of 9 children. His father, Bill, played in the local Fife and Drum band and all the children were introduced to music at an early age. Denis' sister Julia was also a well-known musician. Denis and Julia's husband, John Clifford, also played on Raidió Éireann. Denis and his wife Mary emigrated to New York but later returned to Ireland and settled again in Lisheen. Denis had a huge repertoire of slides, polkas, reels, jigs and hornpipes. He died in 1974.

The Concertina

A FA BAFB A FA BAFA B CA B CA B CA BAFB

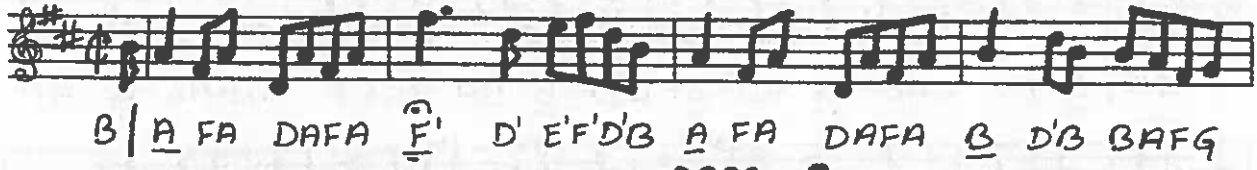
A FA BAFB A FA BAFE DEFA D' D'B AFEF D

AD'D' AD'D' AD'D'C BAFA B CA B CA B CA BAFB

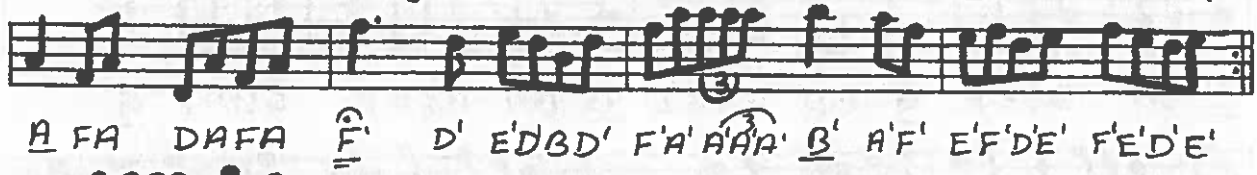


AD'D' AD'D' AD'D'C D' D'B A FA BCD'B AFEF D

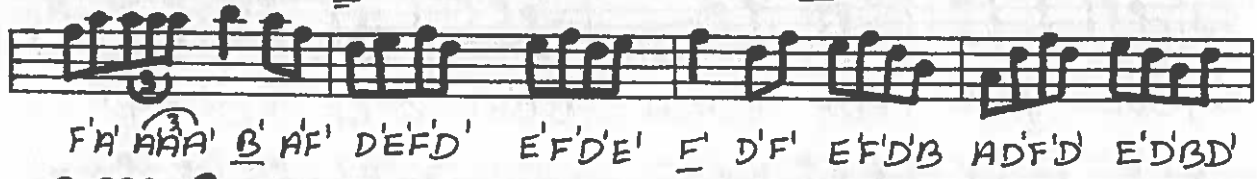
Anderson's



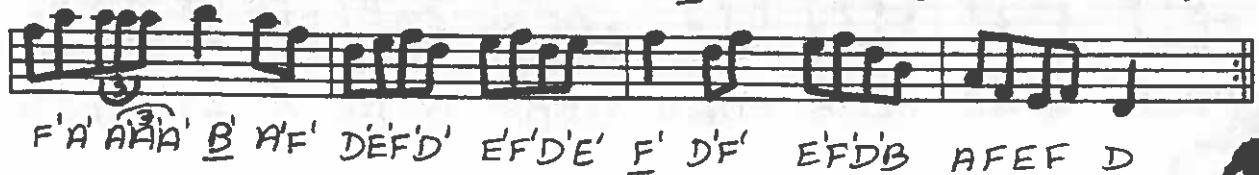
B| A FA DAFA F' D' E'F'D'B A FA DAFA B D'B BAFG



A FA DAFA F' D' E'D'BD' F'A' A'A'A' B' A'F' E'F'D'E' F'E'D'E'

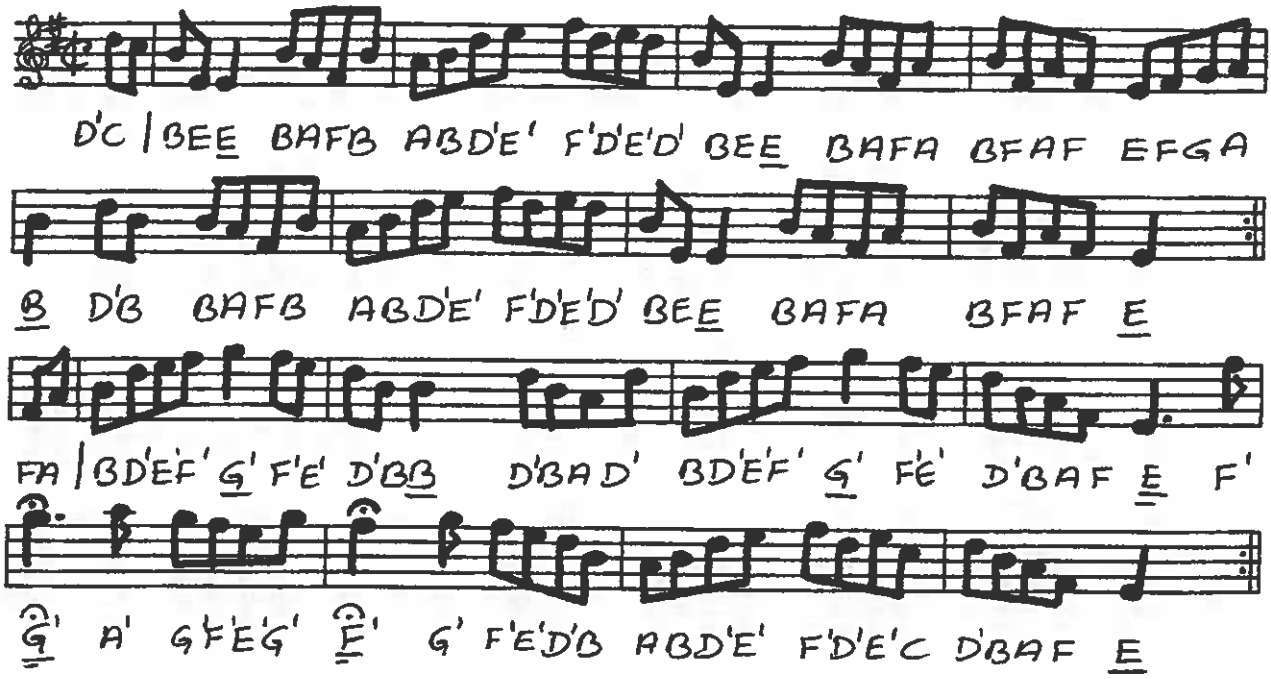


F'A' A'A'A' B' A'F' D'E'F'D' E'F'D'E' F' D'F' E'F'D'B AD'F'D' E'D'BD'

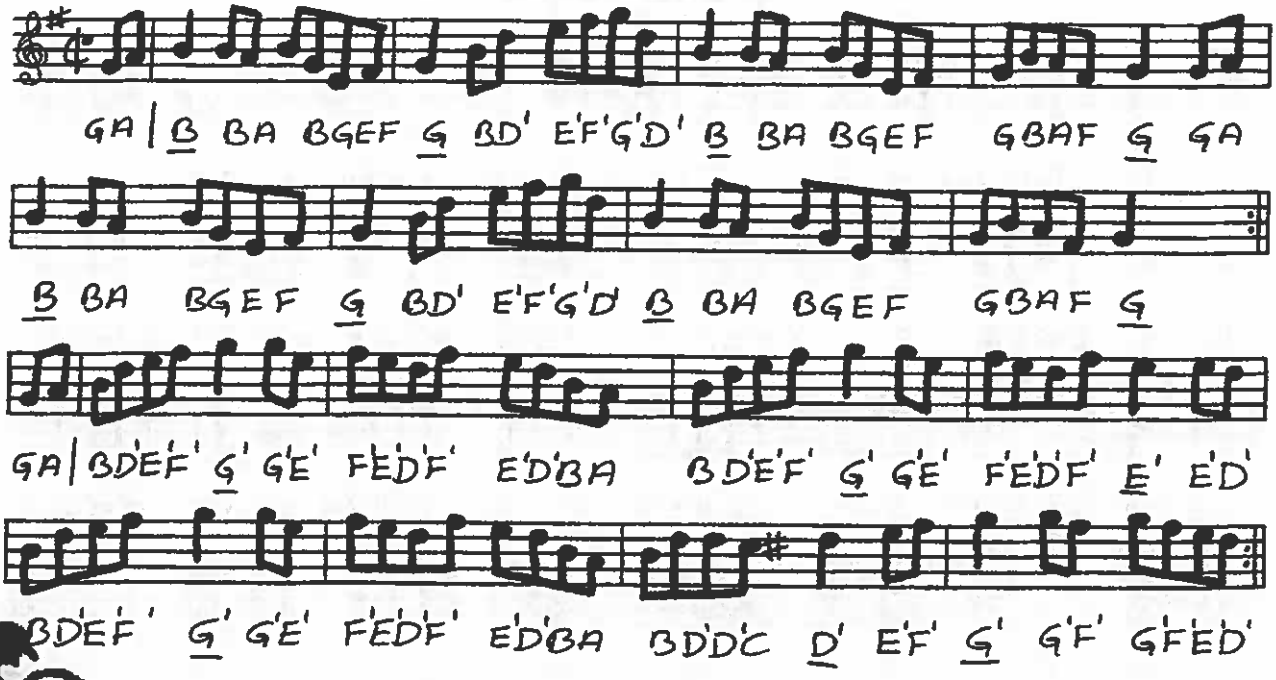


F'A' A'A'A' B' A'F' D'E'F'D' E'F'D'E' F' D'F' E'F'D'B AFEF D

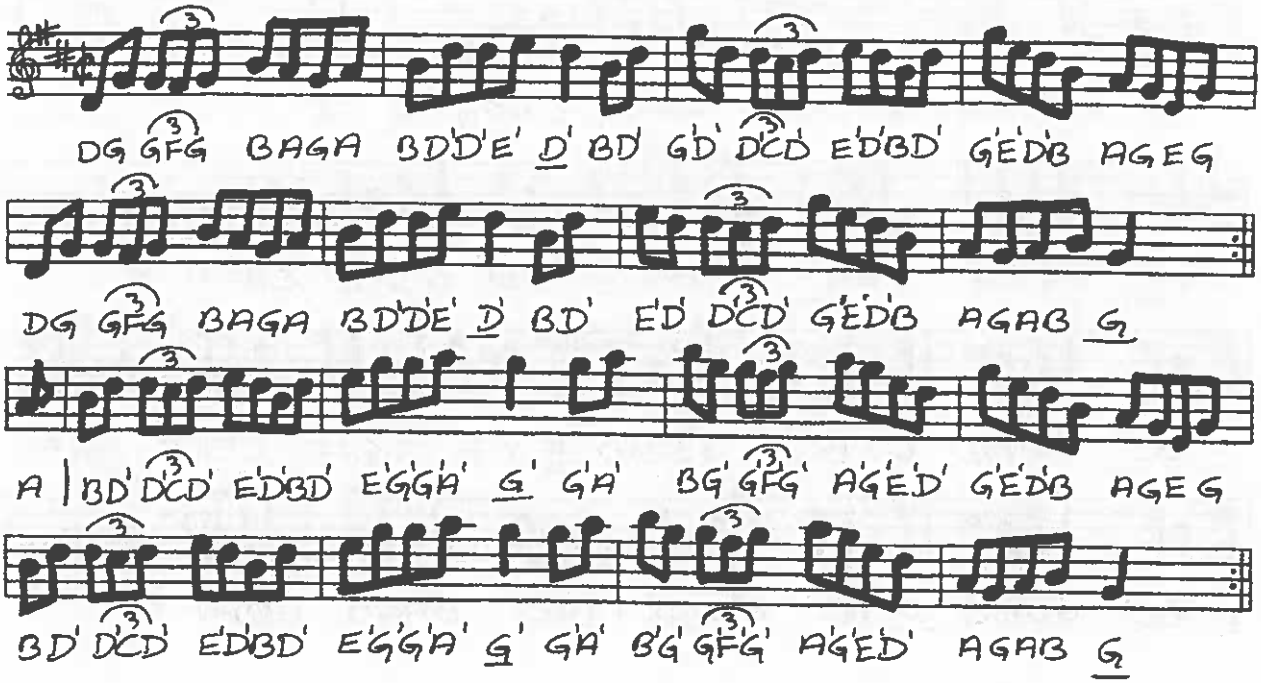
The Kerry Reel



The Morning Star



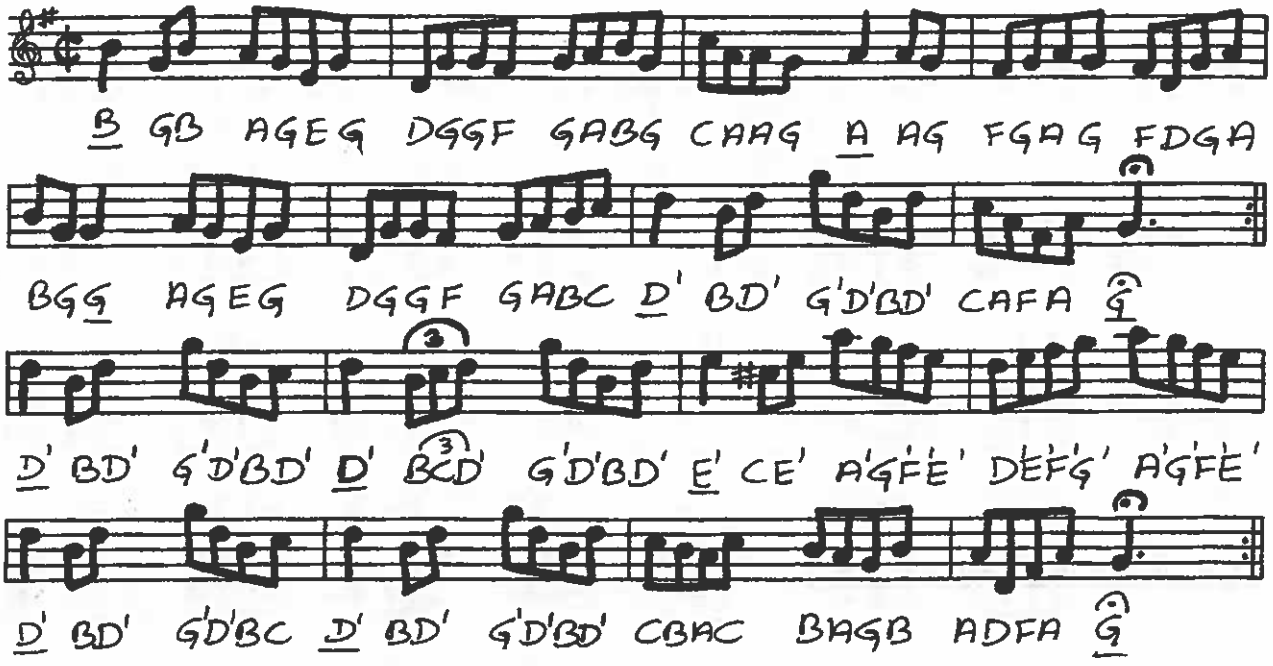
The Road to Ballymac



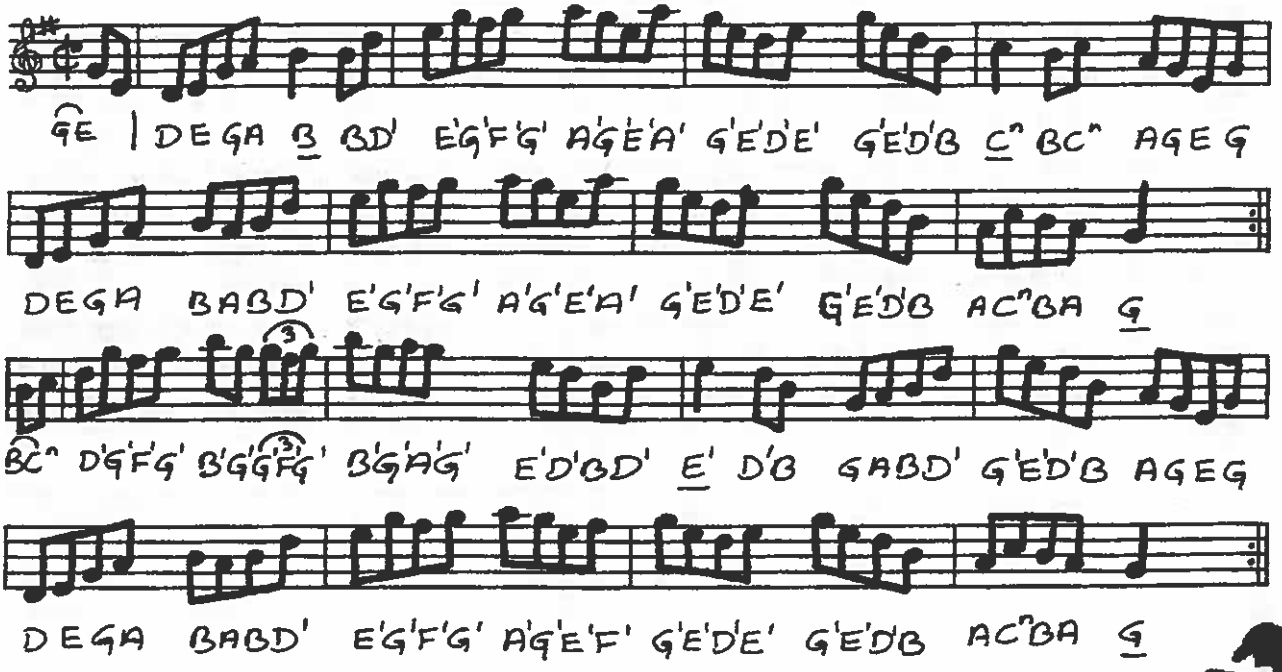
Leo Rowsome

Leo was born in 1903 into a musical family. His father, grandfather and uncles played the Uilleann Pipes. His father made Uilleann pipes and Leo himself became an expert player of the pipes and also a pipe-maker. He taught at the College of Music in Dublin for 50 years. He played several times on Radio Éireann with other musicians and this let people from all over Ireland hear different types of Irish music. In the 1940's he was involved in reviving the Piper's Club in Dublin, where musicians who played all kinds of instruments, could learn from other musicians. Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann developed out the Piper's Club in 1951. Leo had a huge influence on the playing of the Uilleann pipes and had his own distinctive style. He died in 1970.

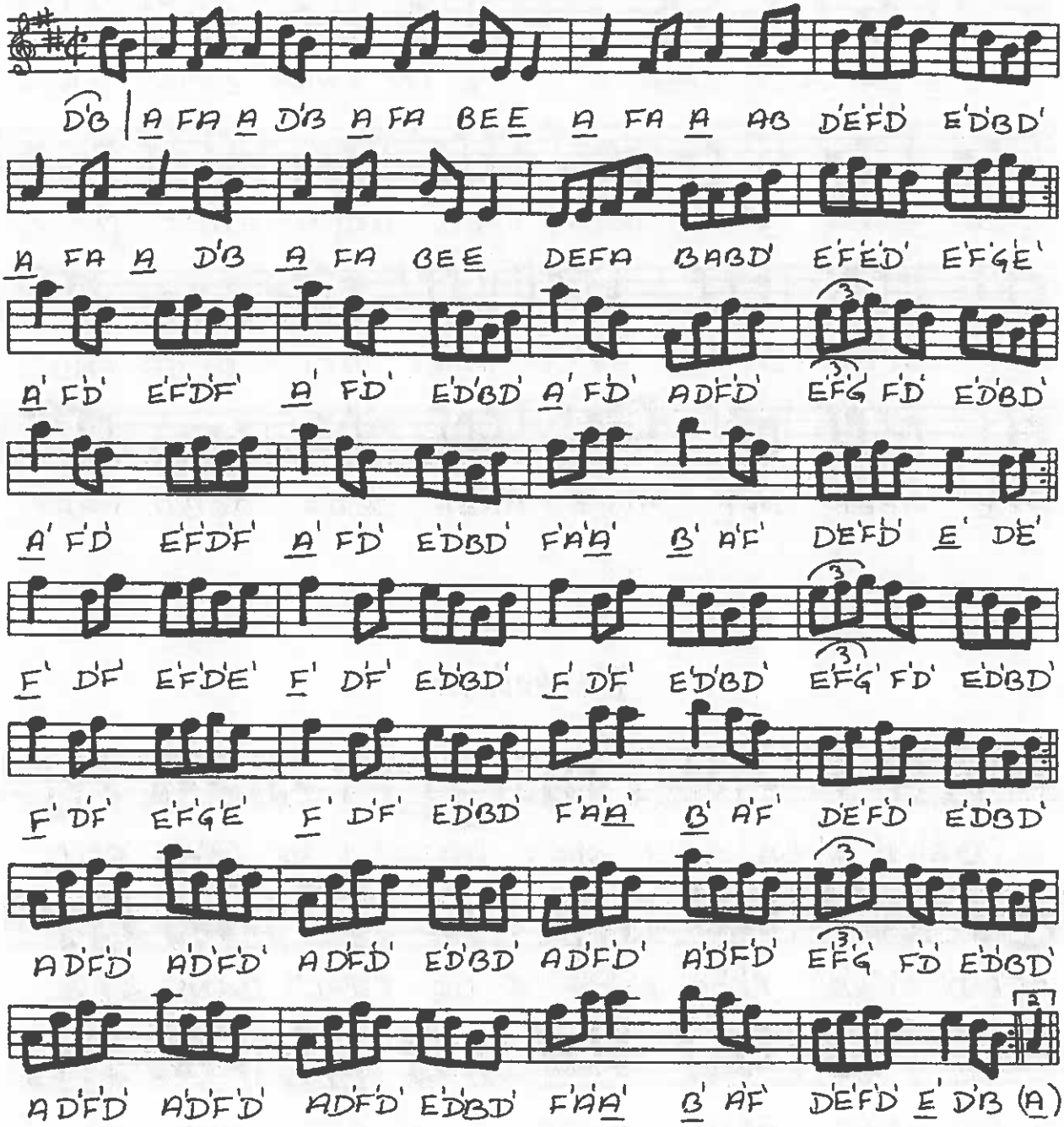
Father Kelly's



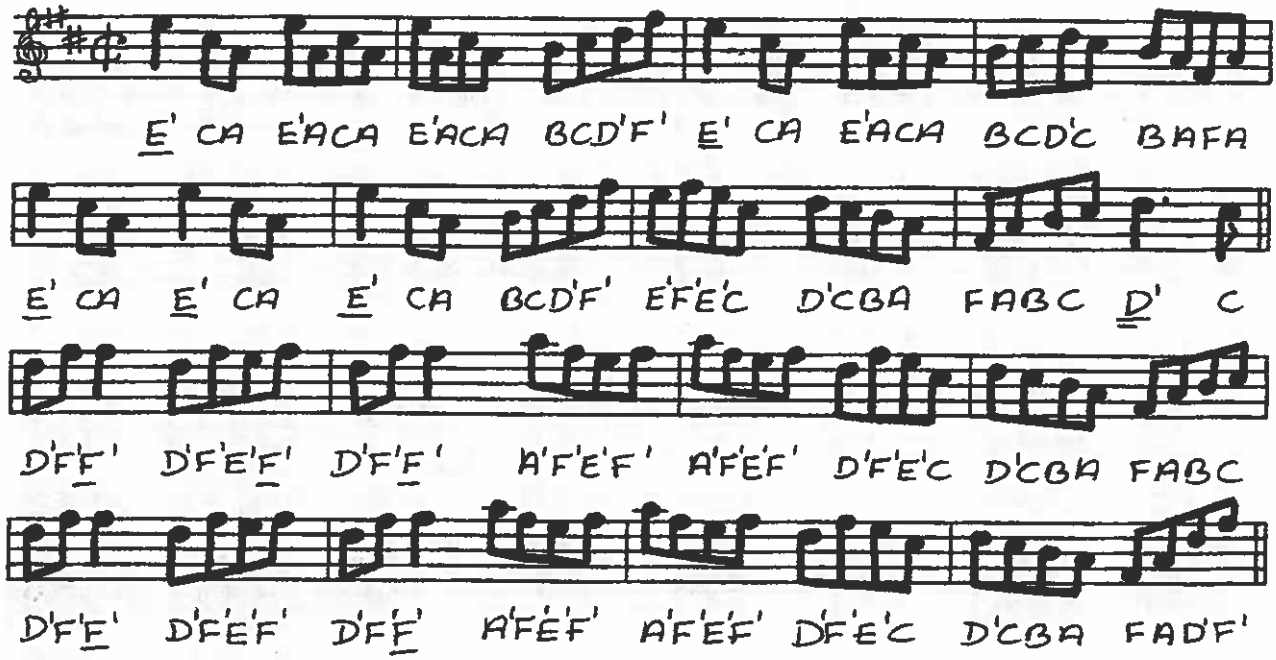
Reel of Rio



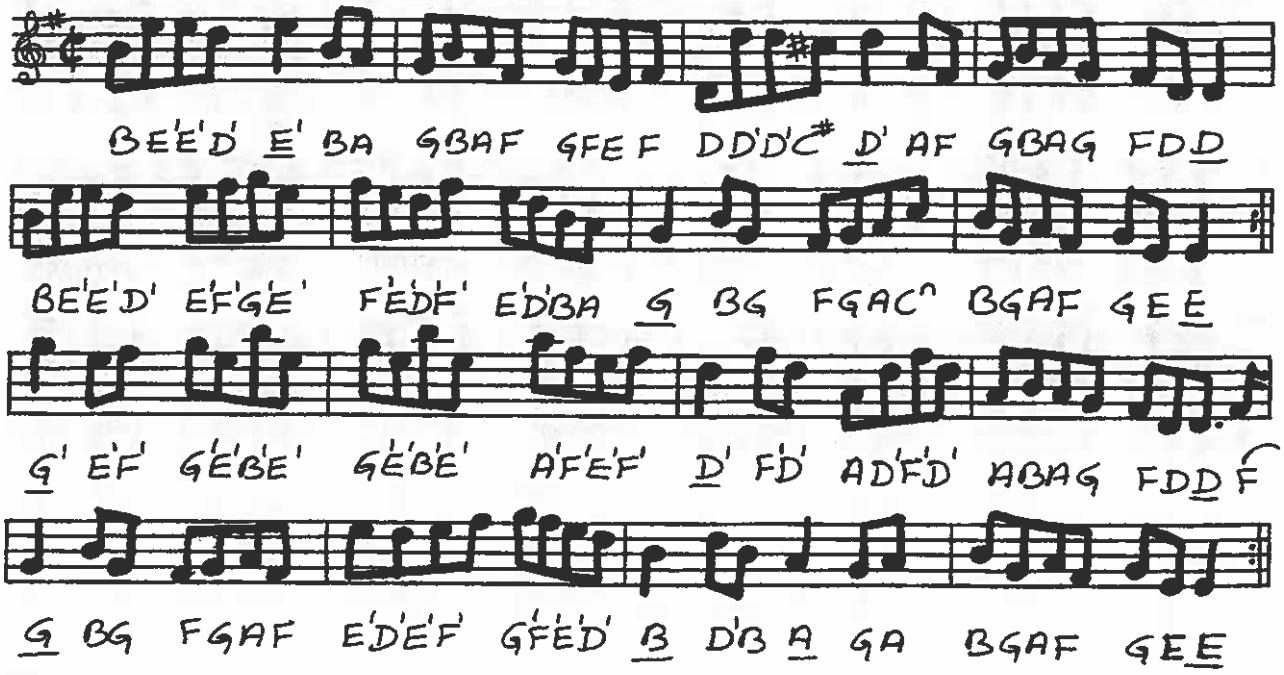
The Bucks of Oranmore



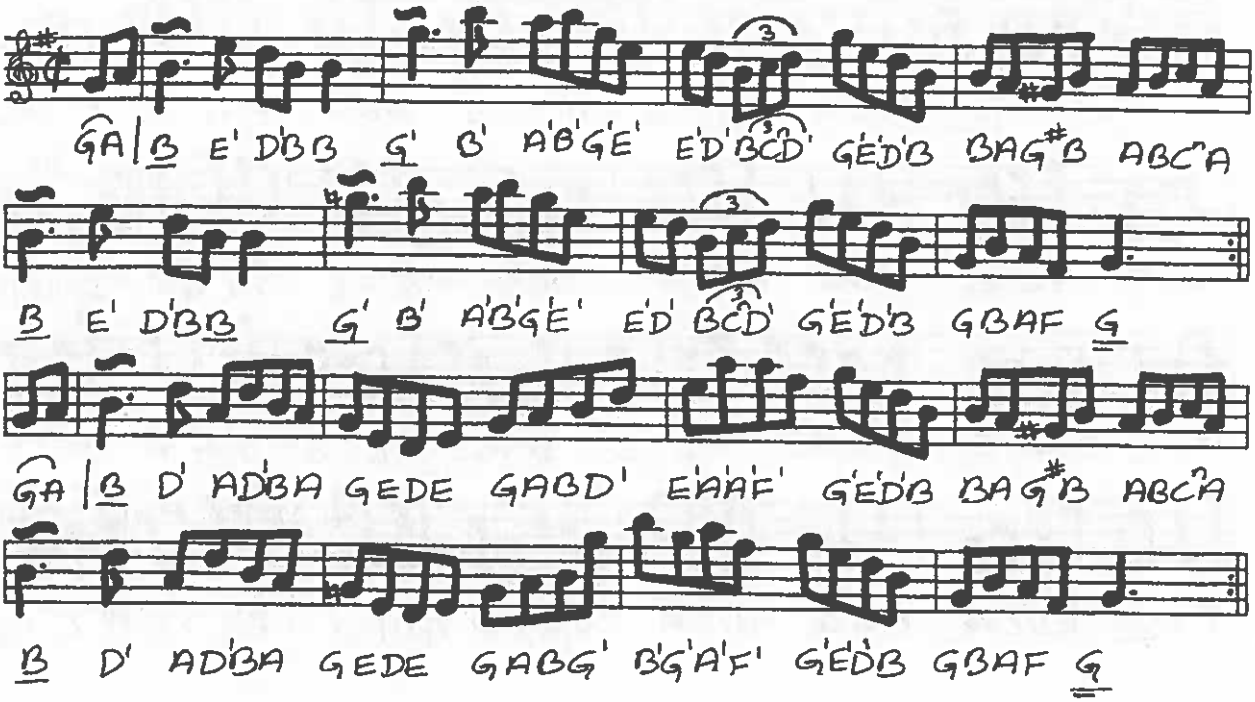
Union Reel



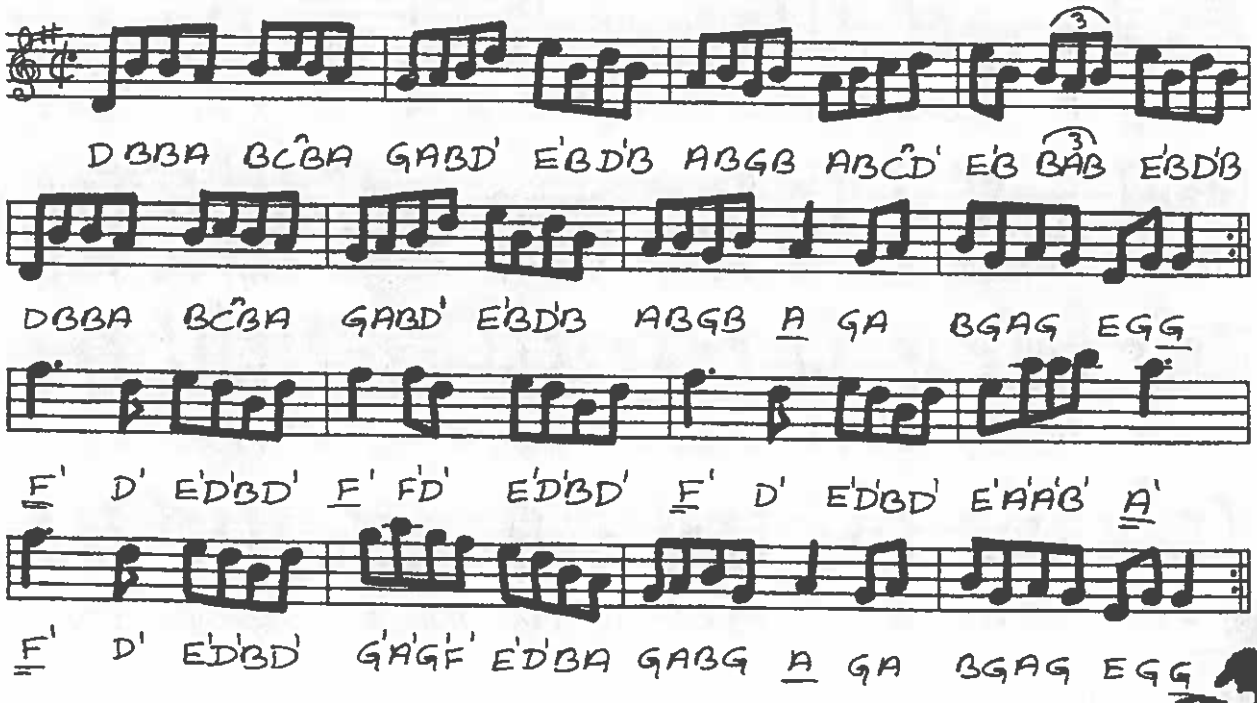
Tarboltan



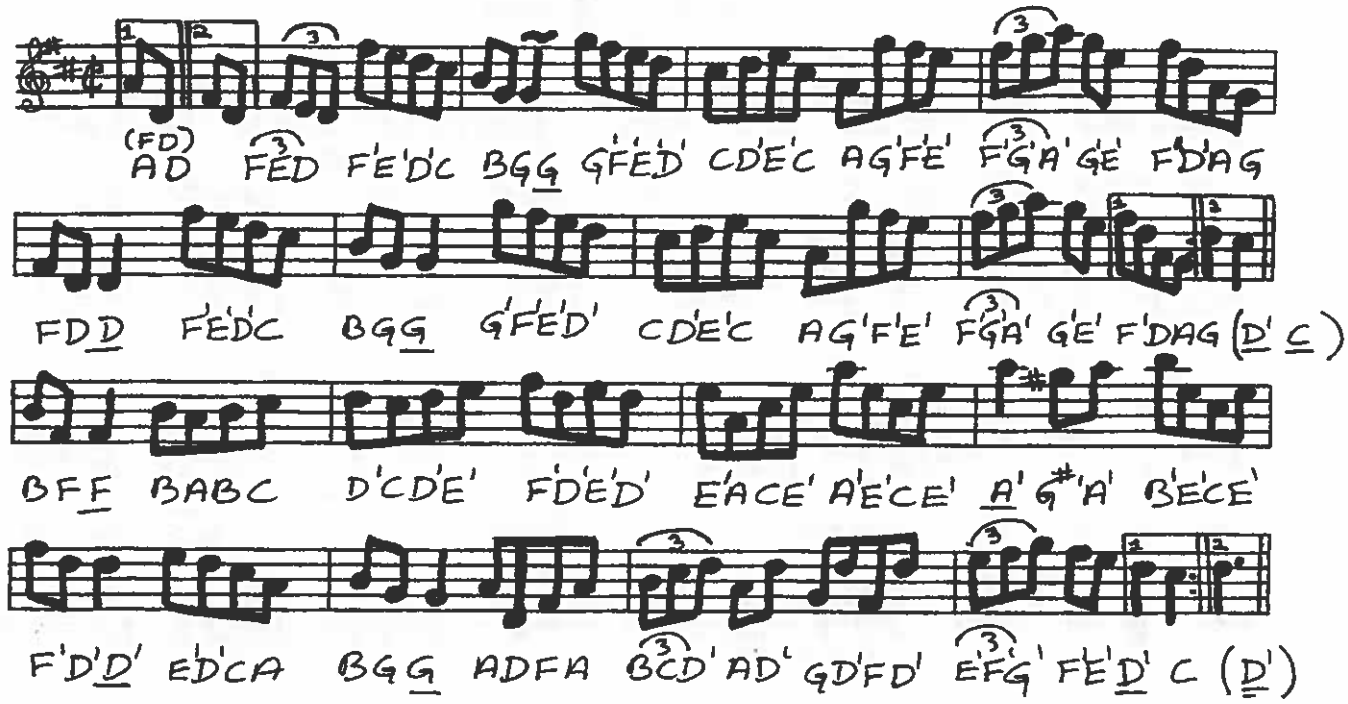
Gan Ainm



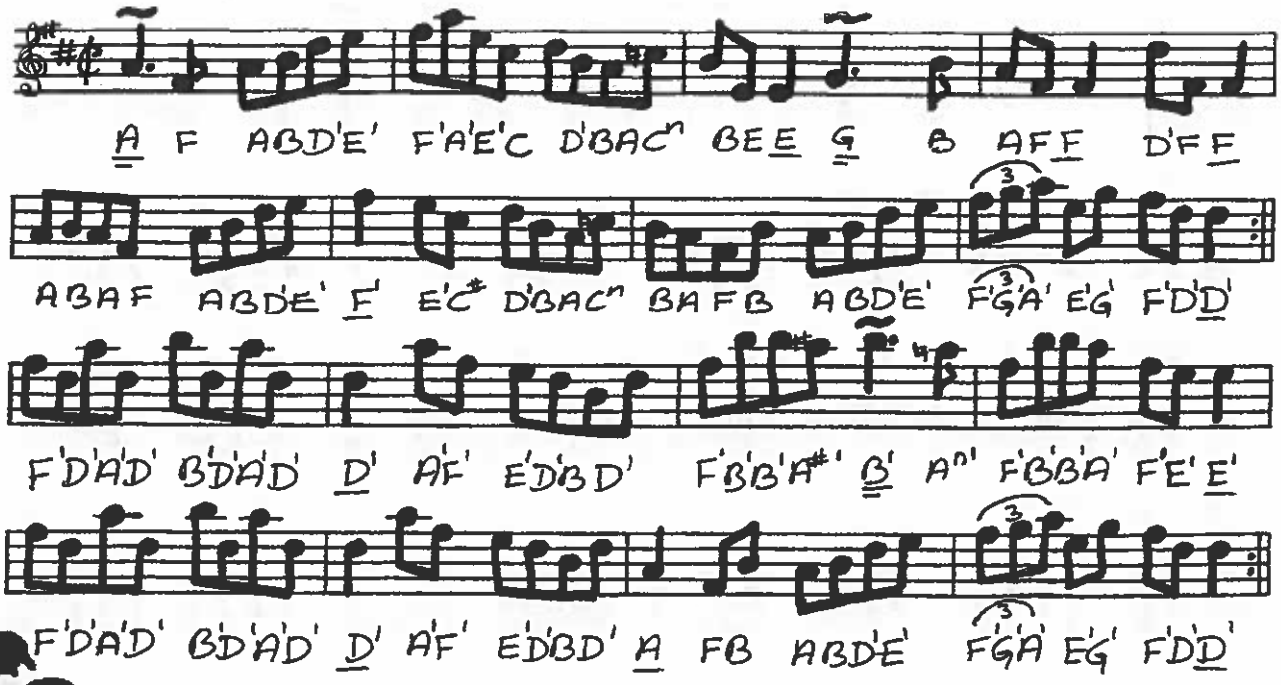
The Woman of the House



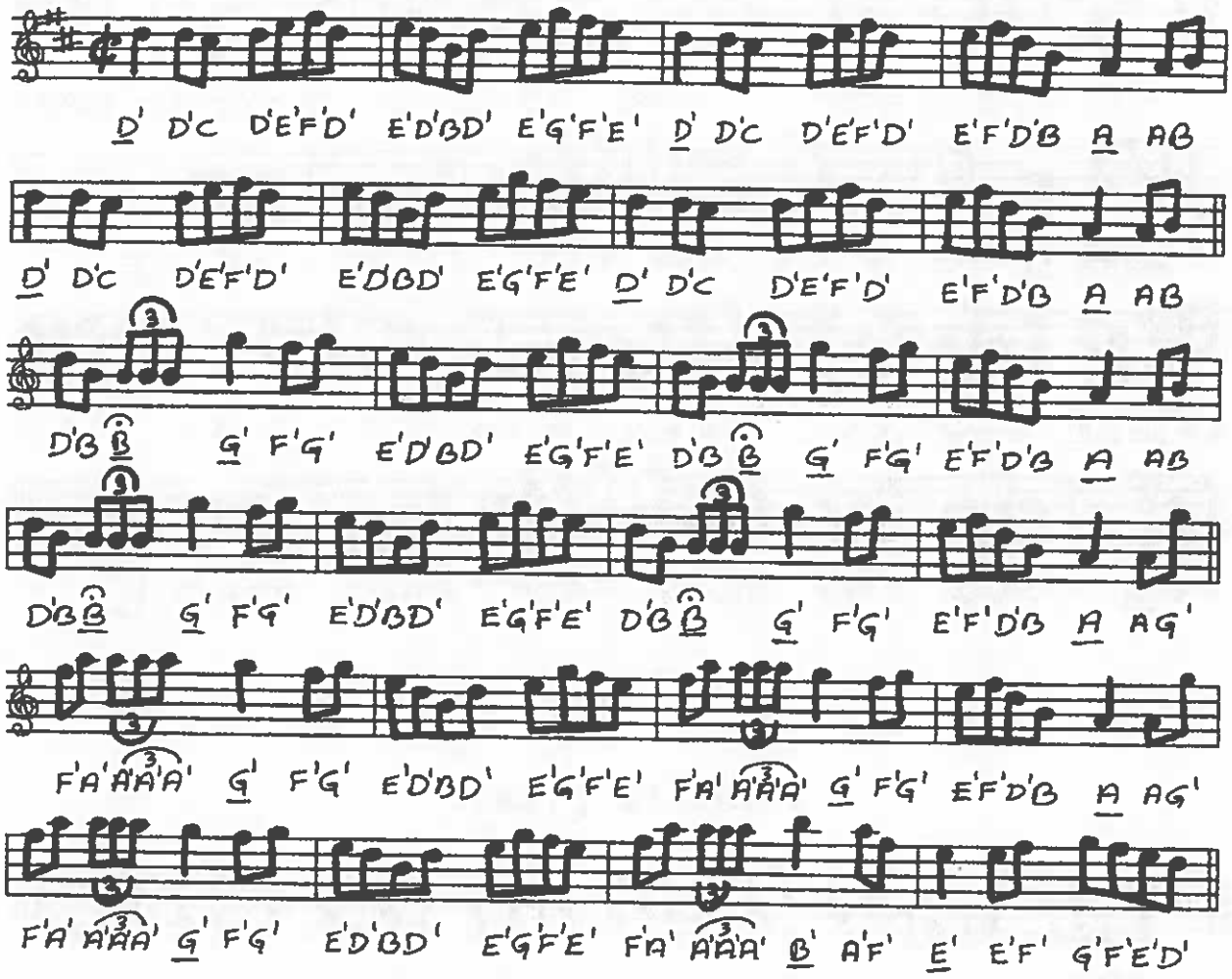
Cape Breton Reel



Fred Finn's



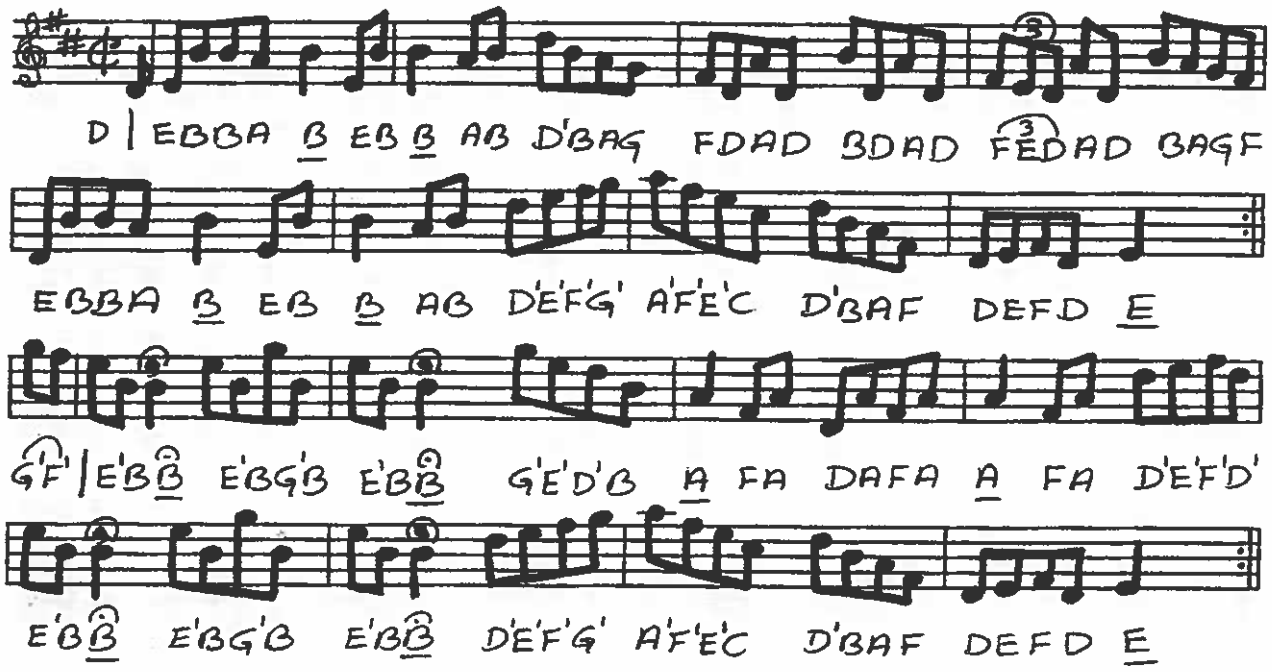
PJ's



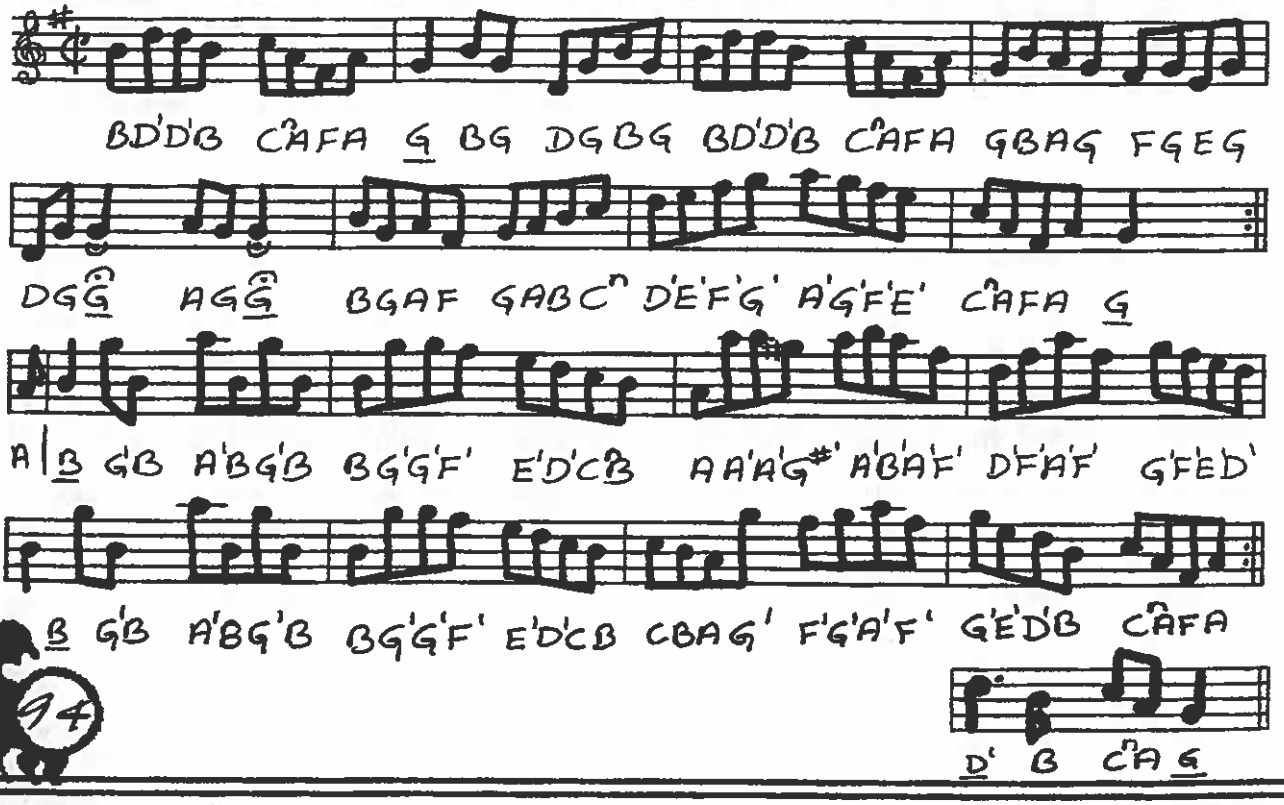
The Union Reel

The Union Reel was named after the Irish Uilleann Pipes, or Union Pipes. The tune was forgotten around the early 1900s, and emerged again through a 78 rpm recording of Frank Quinn, a melodeon player, during the 1920s. It was recorded by other musicians in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s and played by Joe Derrane and later Gerry O'Brien, accordion players, in the US. The tune made its way back to Ireland when Irish musicians learnt it from the 78 records.

Joe Cooley's



Hunter's House

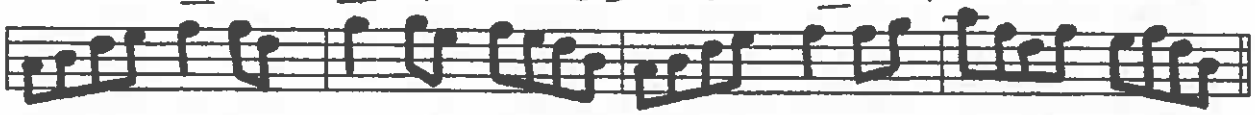


Rolling in the Rye Grass

A AF DFAF G BG D'GBG A AF DFAF GBAF E DF

A AF DFAF G BG DGBG A AF DFAF GBAF E DF

ABD'E' F' F'D' G' G'E' F'E'D'B ABD'E' F' F'G' A'F'D'F' E'F'D'B

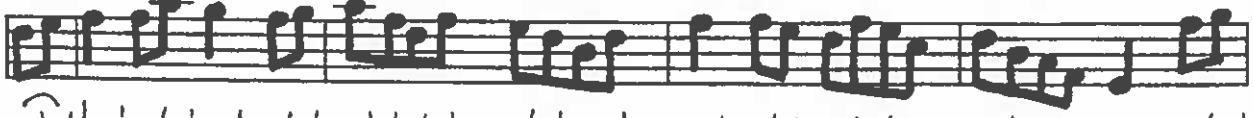


ABD'E' F' F'D' G' G'E' F'E'D'B ABD'E' F' F'G' A'F'D'F' E'F'D'B

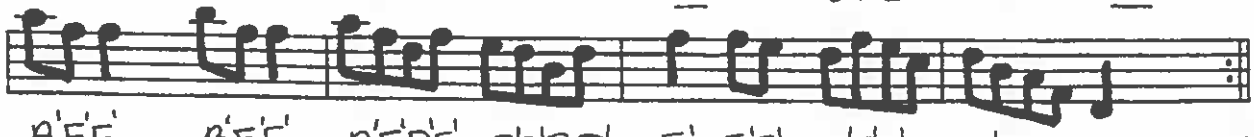
Mulvey's

D'B| AFF G FG ADFD EGFE DEFA D'F'E'C D'BAF E D'B

AFF G FG ADFD EGFE DEFA D'F'E'C D'BAF D



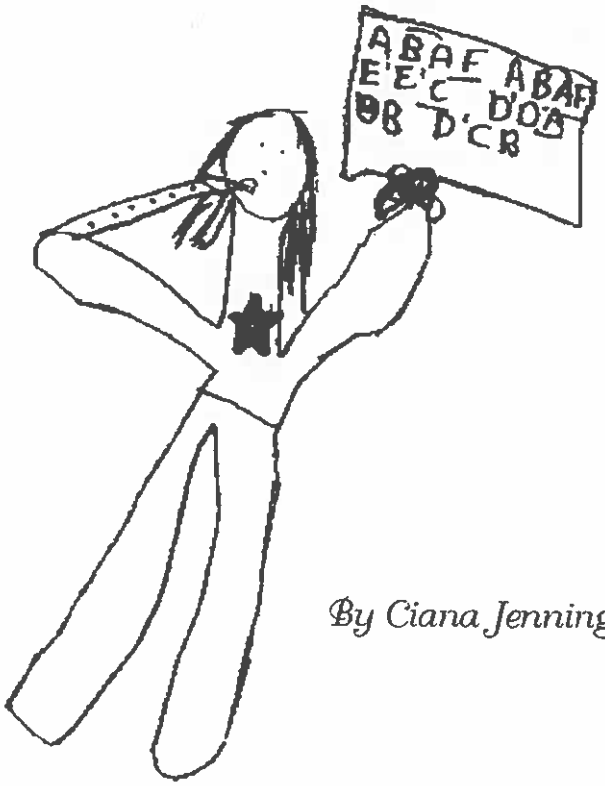
D'E'|F' F'A' G' F'G' A'F'D'F' E'D'BD' F' F'E' D'F'E'C D'BAF E F'G'



A'F'F' B'F'F' A'F'D'F' E'D'BD' F' F'E' D'F'E'C D'BAF D

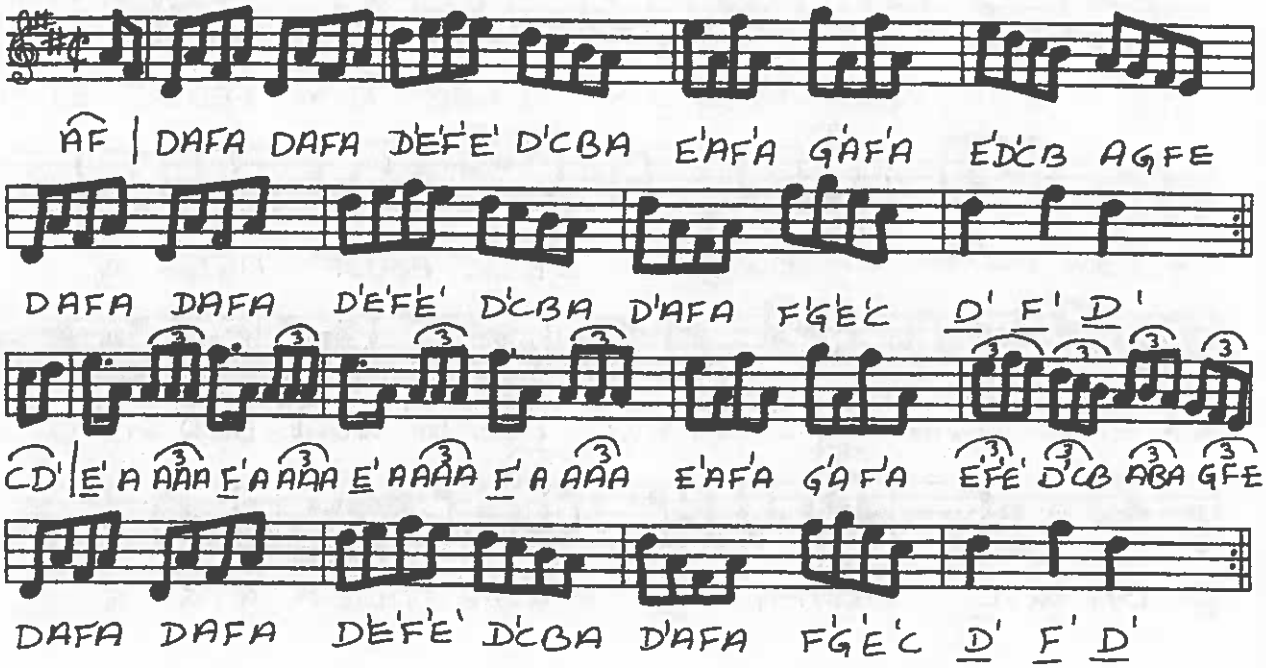
Hornpipes

Hornpipes are often written in 2/4 or 4/4 time, however they differ from reels in several characteristics. Rhythmically the hornpipe has a more uneven distribution of weight within the heavy-light pairs and also shows more frequent use of triplets in place of heavy-light pairs. Hornpipes are also played at a slower tempo.

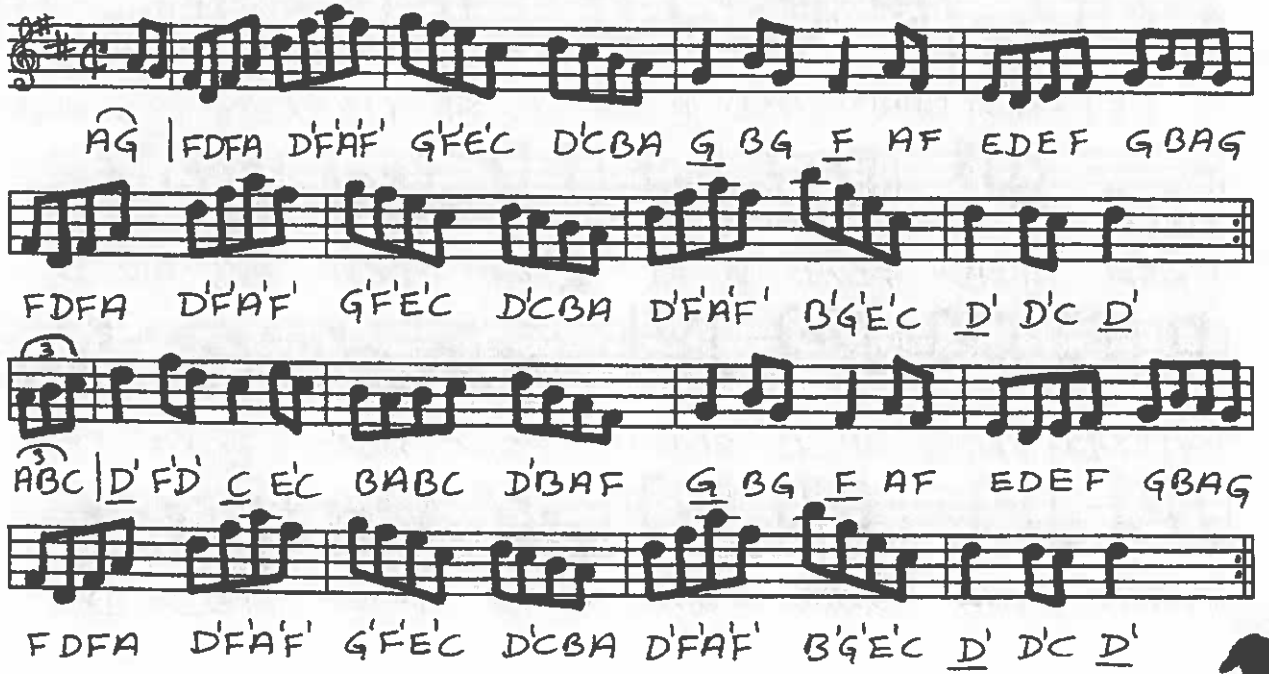


By Ciana Jennings, age 9

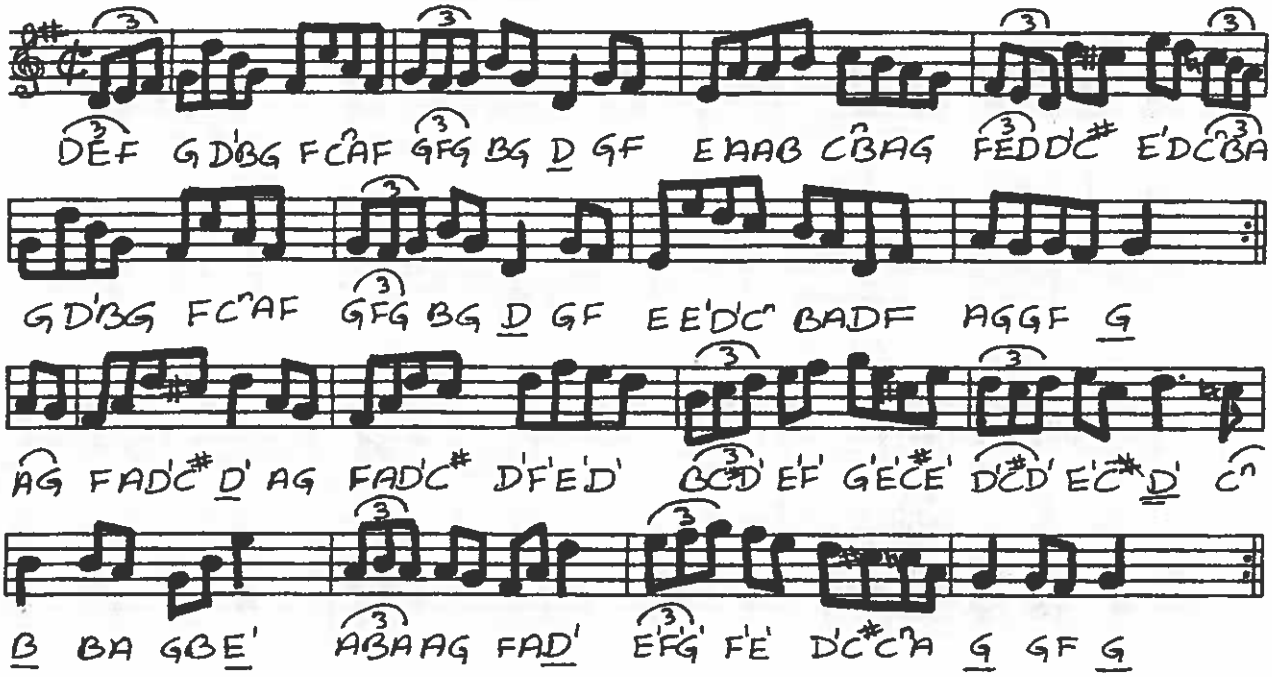
Harvest Home



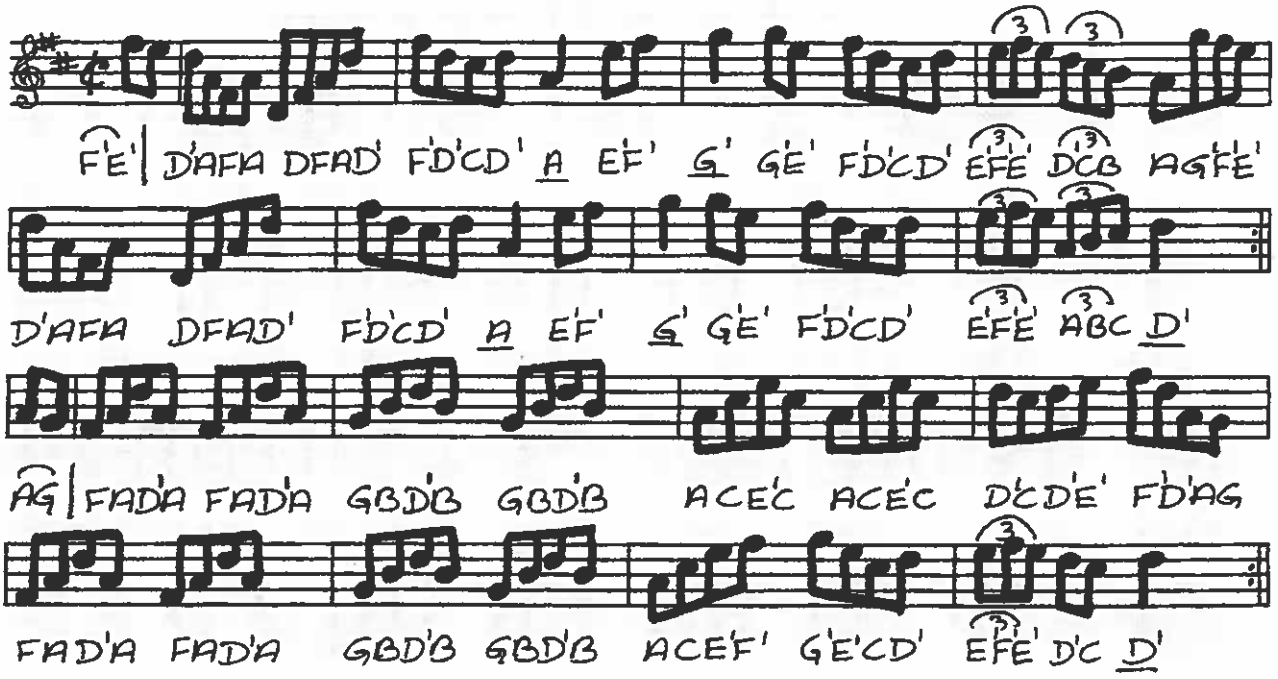
Liverpool Hornpipe



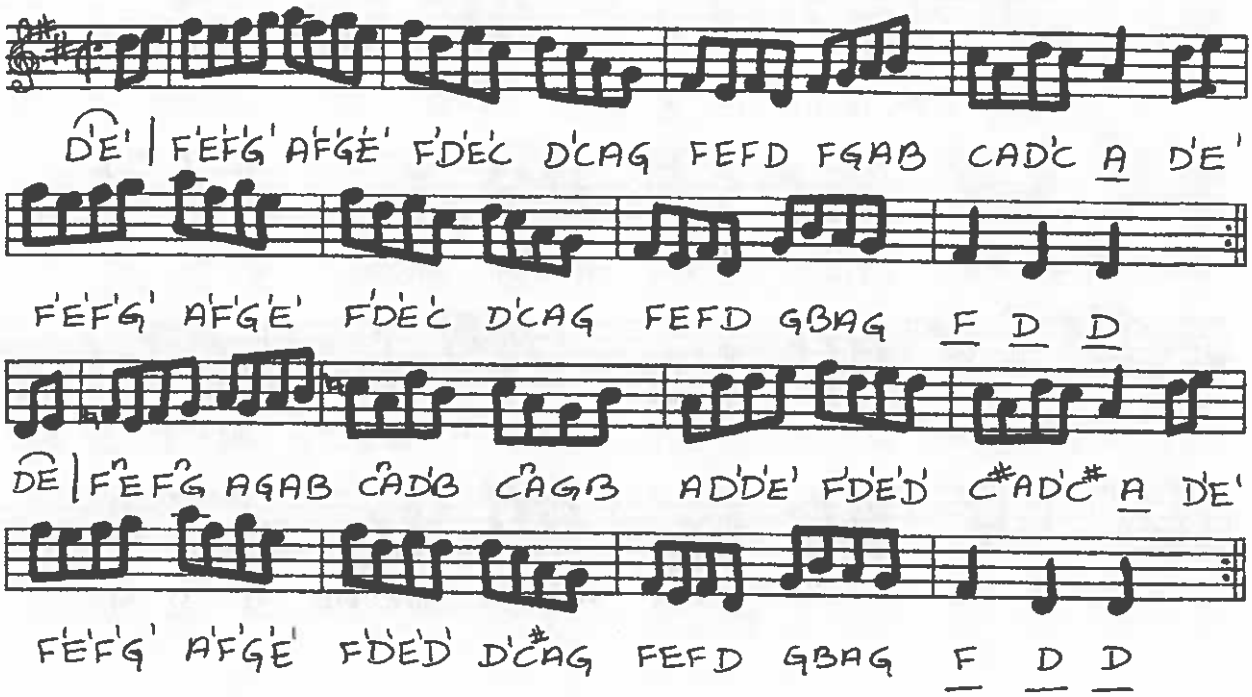
The Wonder Hornpipe



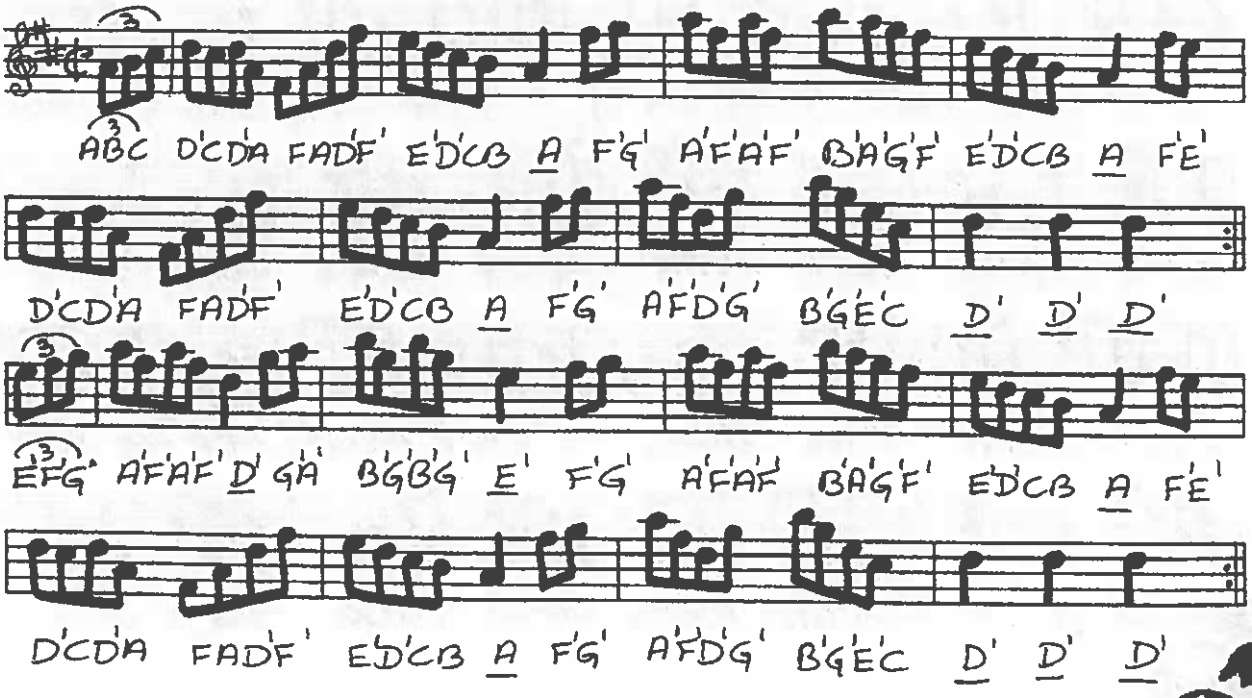
Alexander's



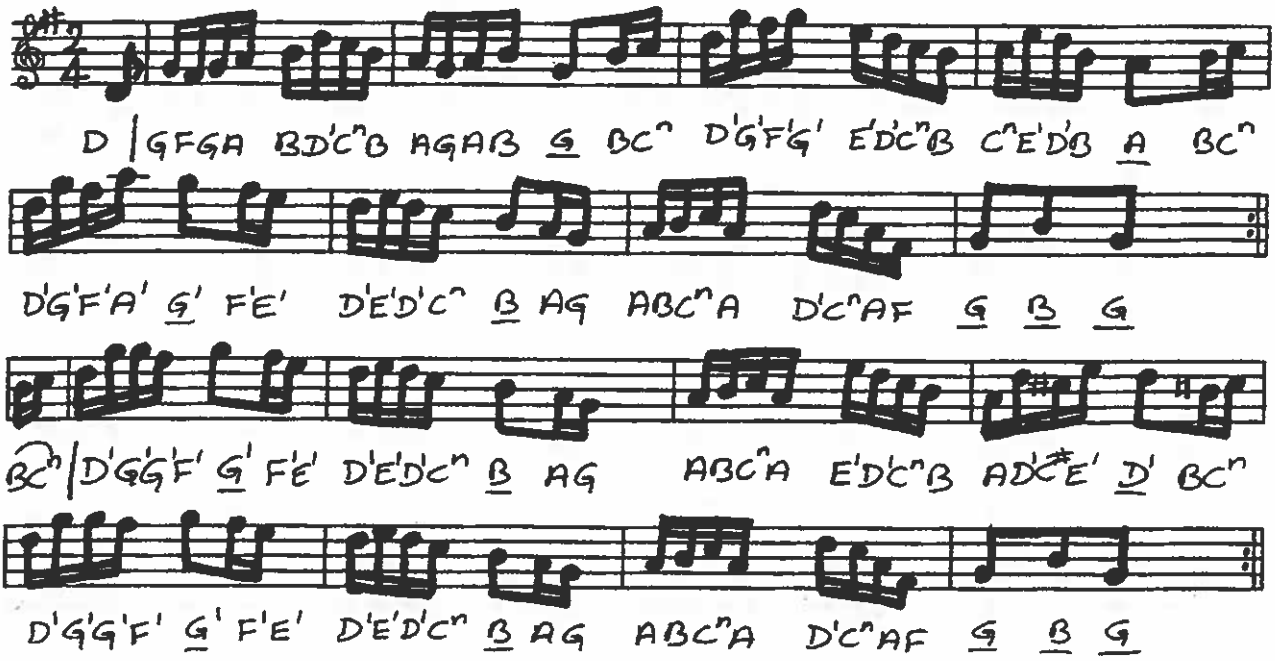
Chief O'Neill's Favourite



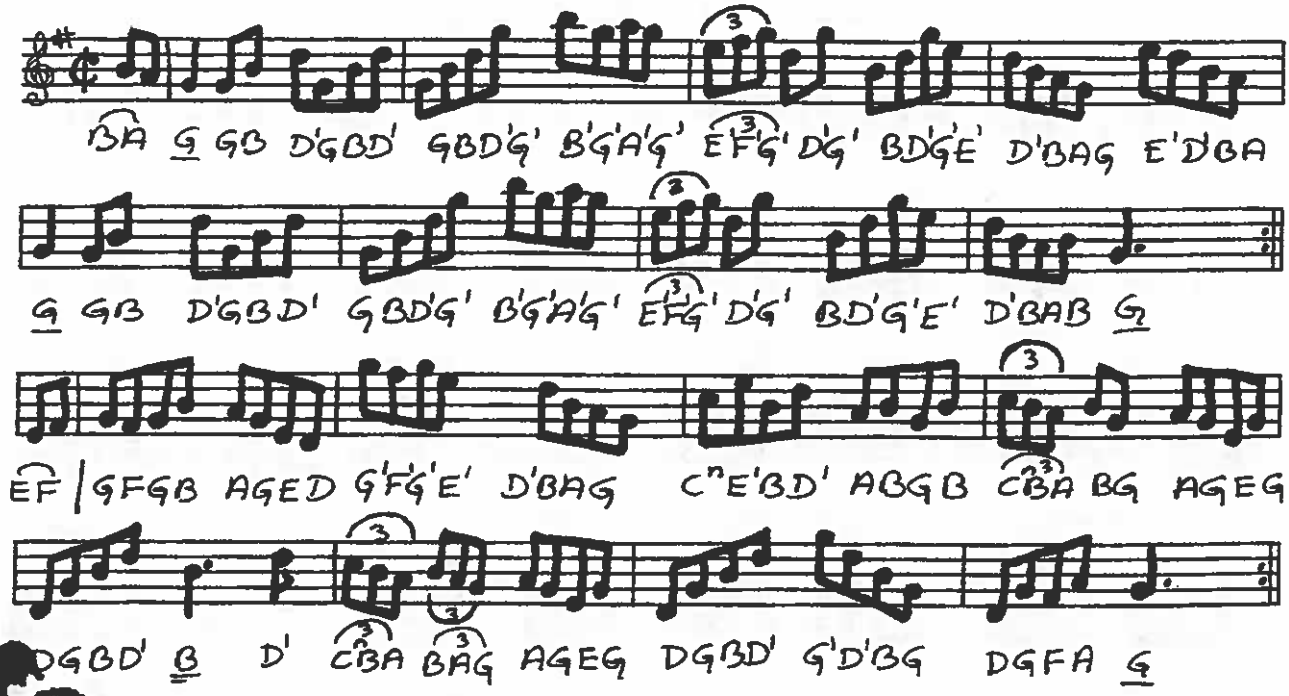
Sailor's Hornpipe



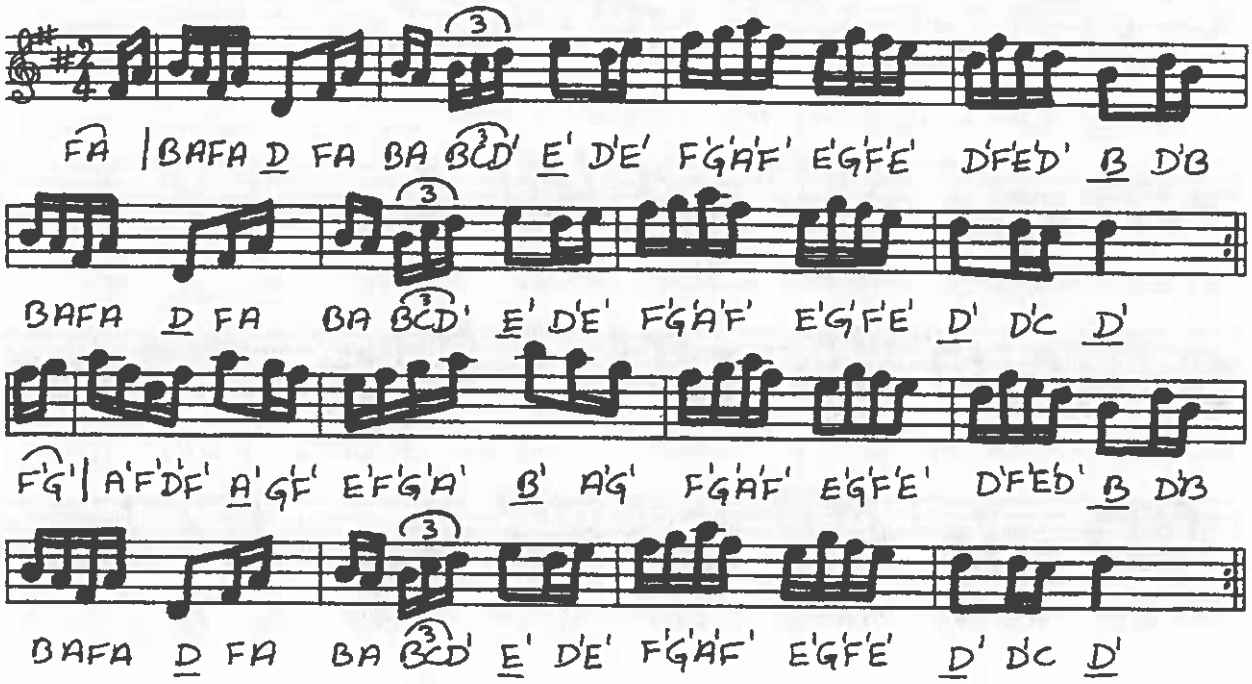
Fairies Hornpipe



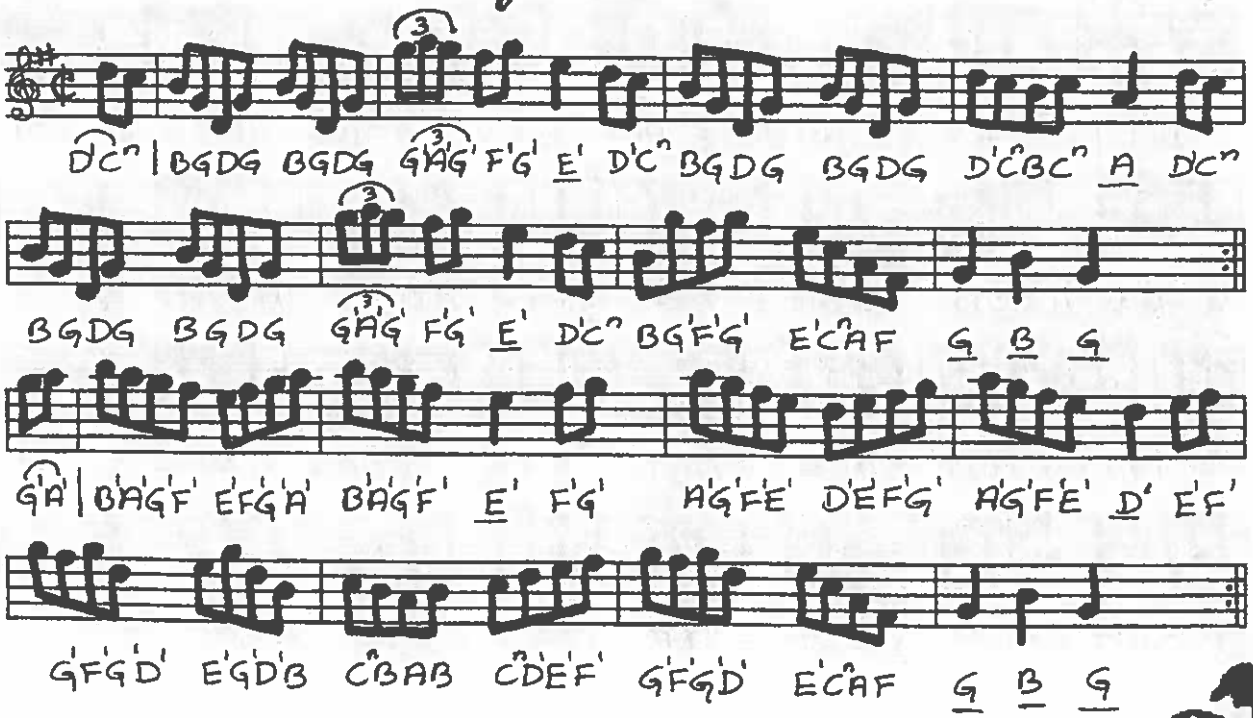
The Flowing Tide



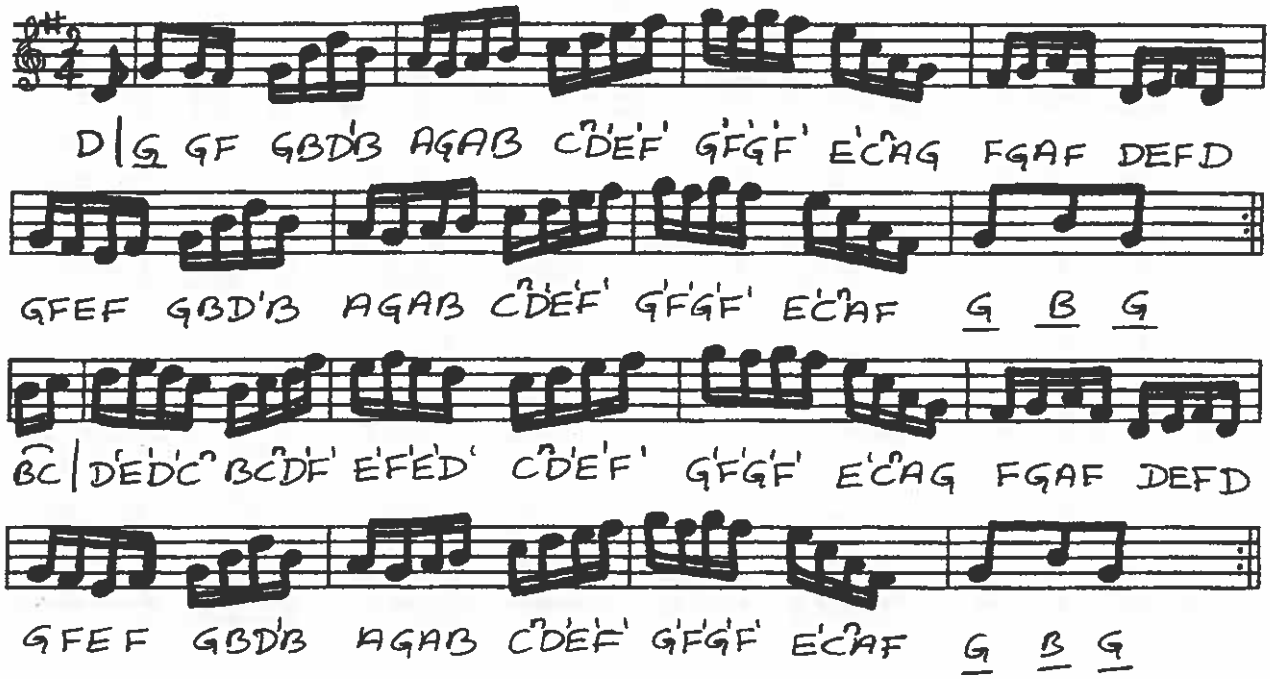
Boys of Blue Hill



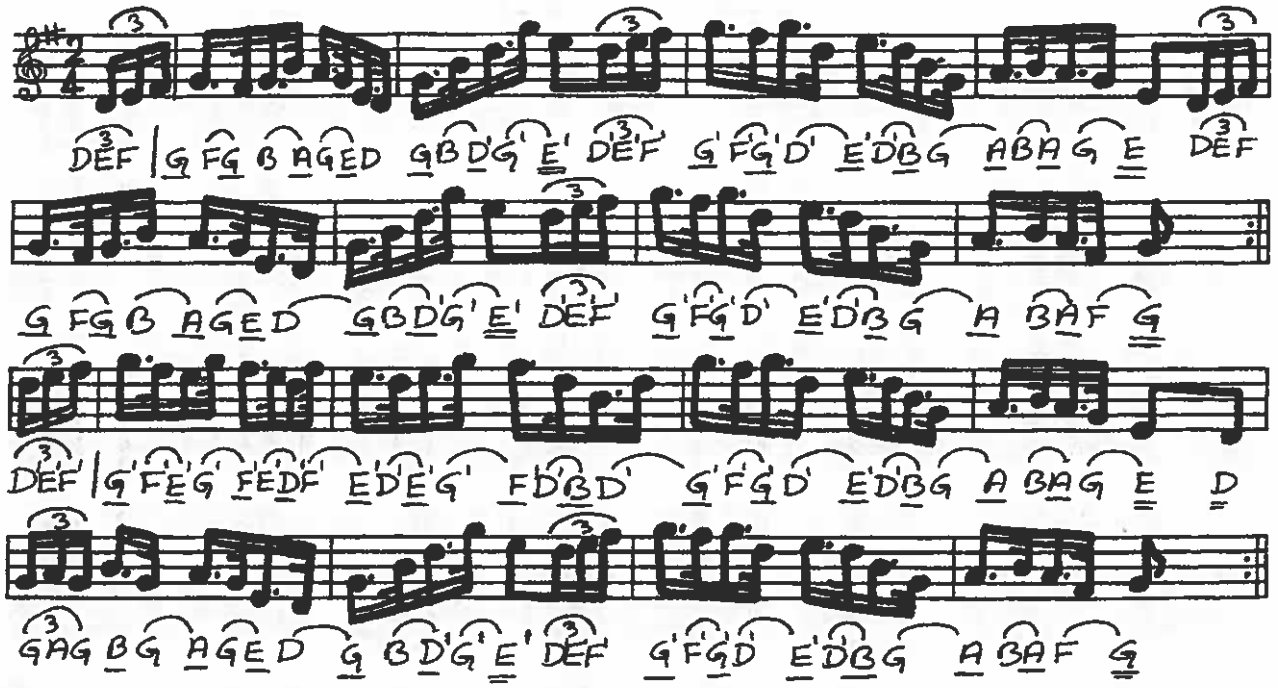
Greencastle



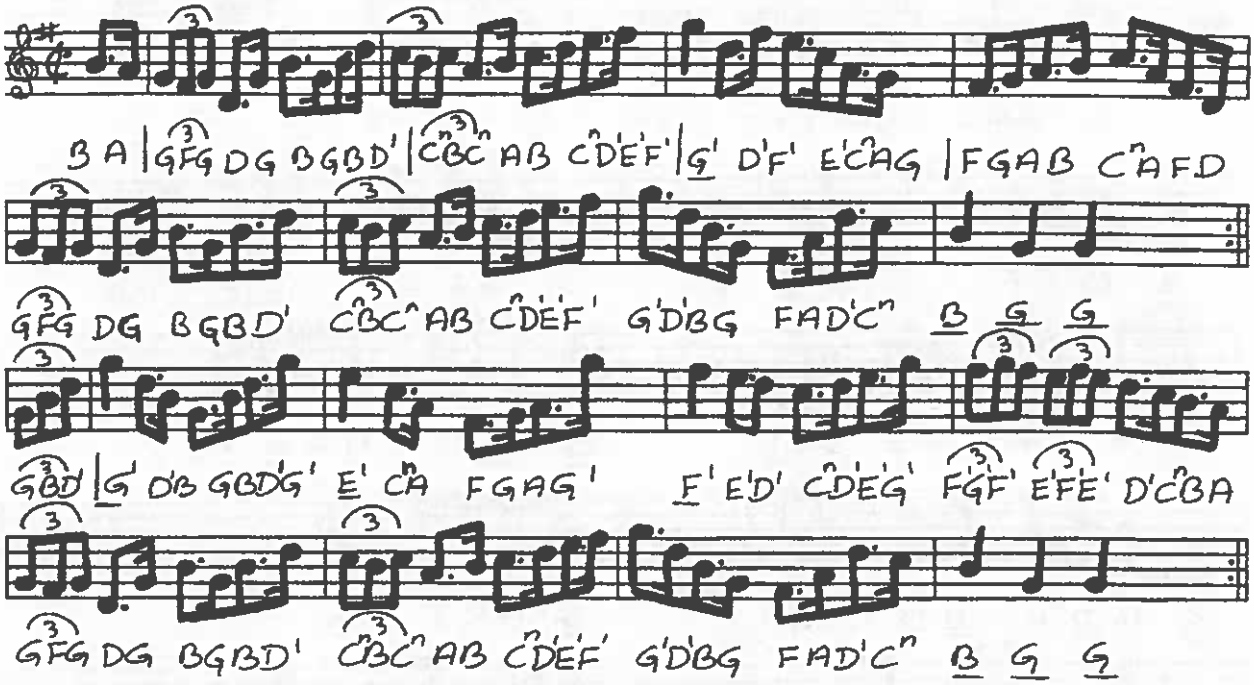
Cooney's



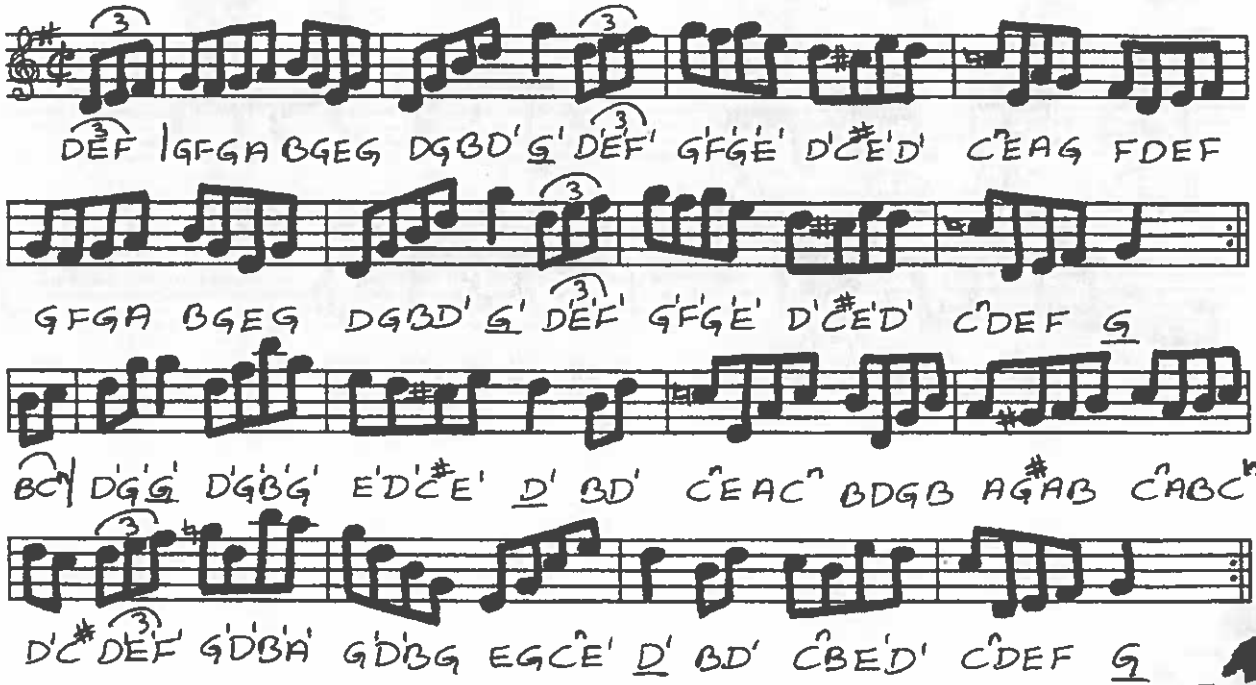
Off to California



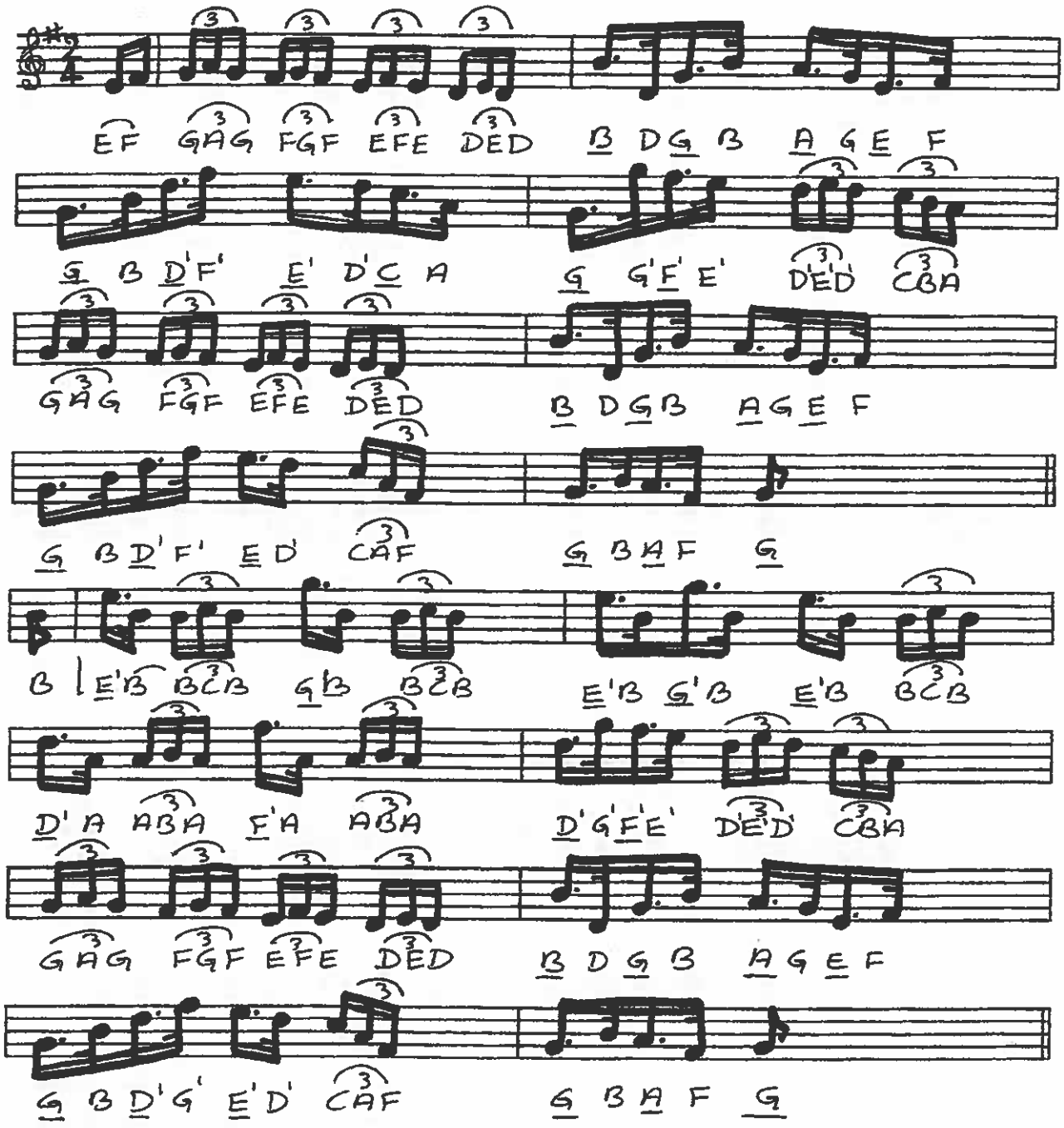
The Friendly Visit



Swan on the Lake



The Quarrelsome Piper



The Mazurka

The Mazurka is a traditional Polish dance for a circle of couples which originated among the Mazurs of central Poland in the 16th century. It spread through Europe in the early 17th century as a ballroom dance for one, four, or eight couples. The Mazurka is in 3/4 time with a strongly accented second beat. 'Shoe the Donkey' is a favourite Mazurka of the Malahide Branch, however there are very few Irish Mazurkas.

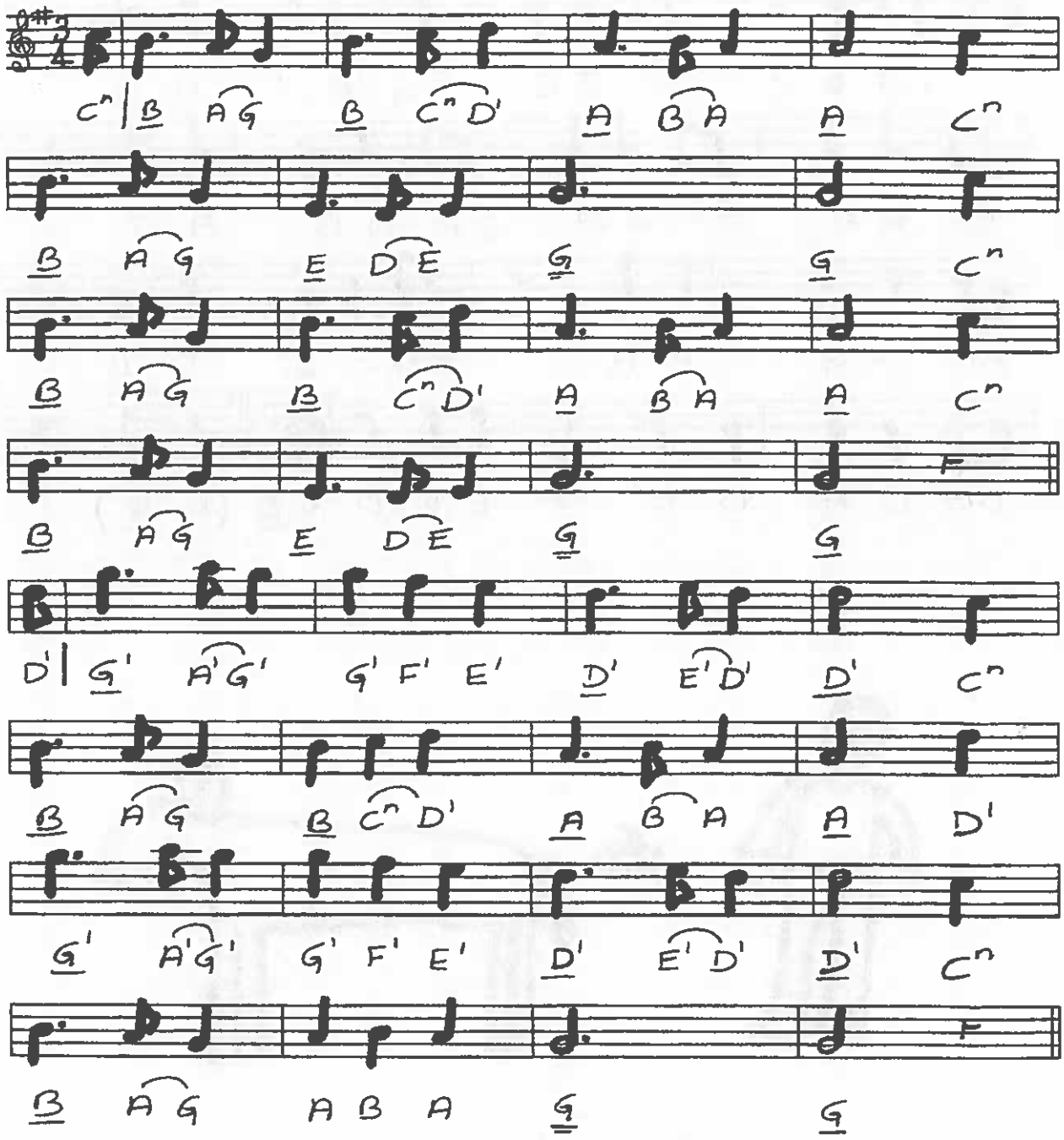
The Waltz

The waltz is a type of couple dance in 3/4 time which developed in central Europe about 1800. The word 'waltz' is derived from the German 'walzen', meaning 'to revolve'. The three beats of the waltz are characterised by a strong first beat and lighter second and third beats. The waltz is a relatively recent introduction to the Irish musical tradition, so there are not very many native Irish waltzes. Irish musicians frequently adapt other traditional tunes to a waltz when required.

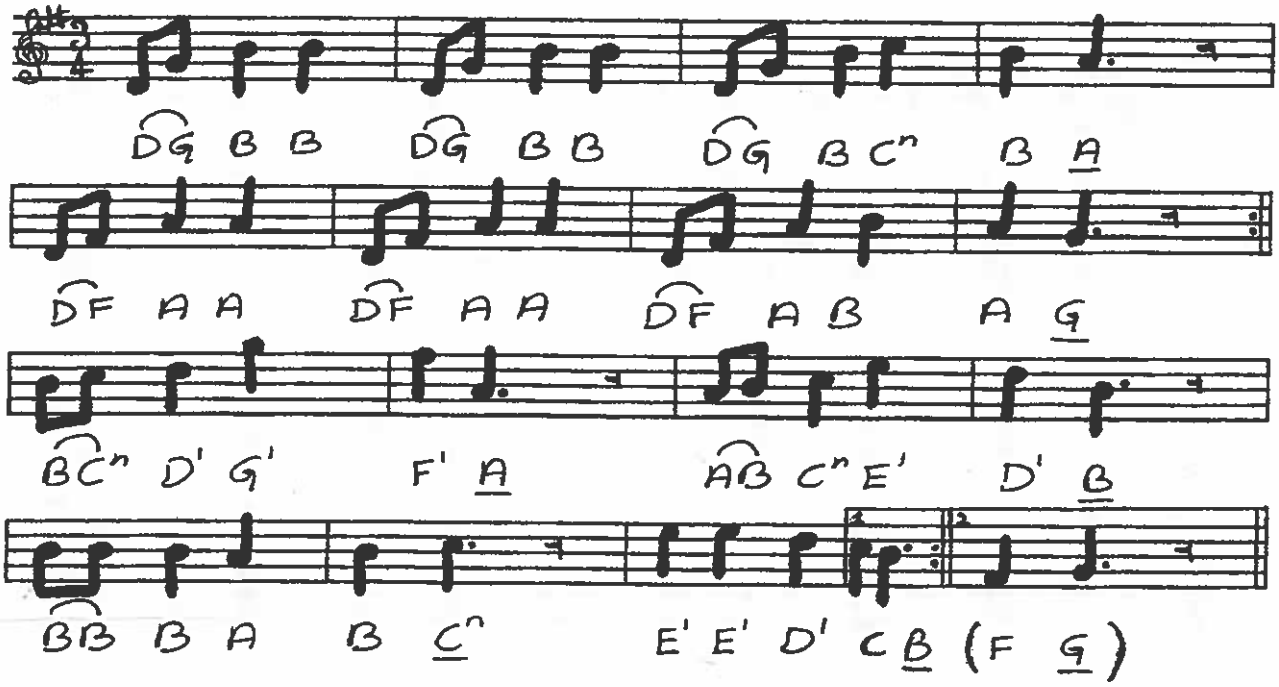
The Planxty

There seems to be some doubt as to the origin of the word 'planxty'. However, it generally seems to refer to a musical composition composed in tribute to another person. As such, the planxty seems to be most commonly associated with Turlough O'Carolan, a blind harpist who travelled around the big houses of Ireland in the 1700's. At the end of his stay with a particular household, he would play a 'planxty' or specially composed 'tribute' to the head or the house. The planxty does not come in a specific musical metre. A favourite planxty of the Malahide Branch is 'Fanny Poer' which was composed by O'Carolan.

An Ghaoth Aneas

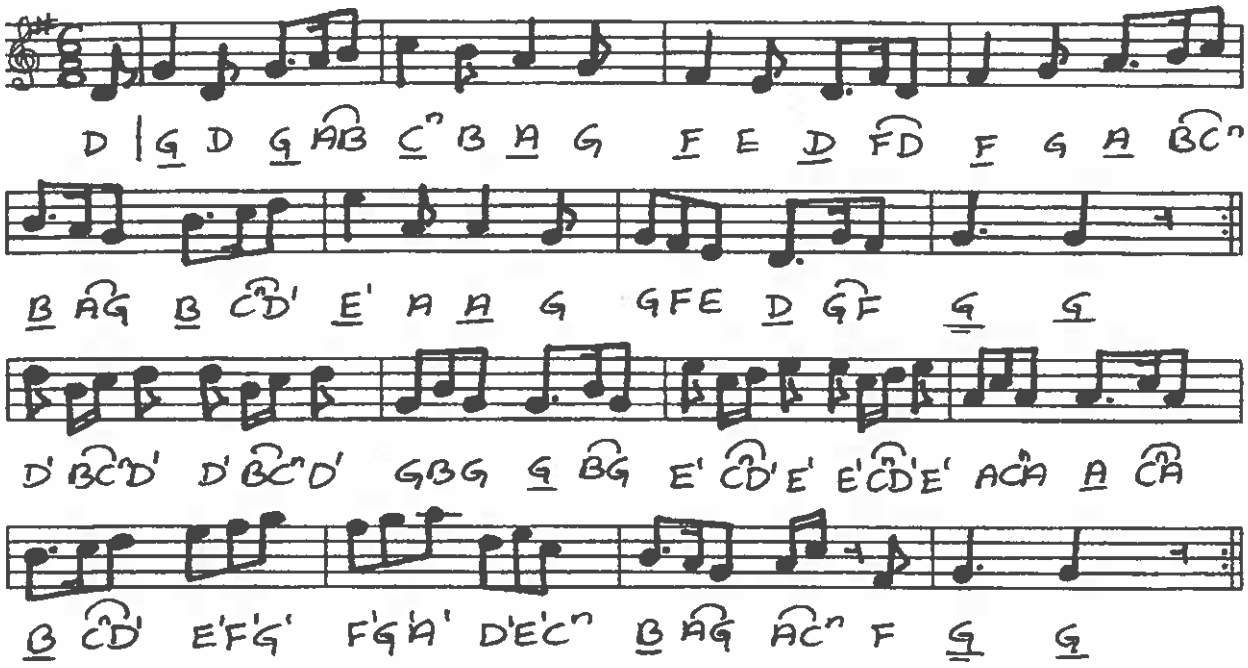


Shoe the Donkey



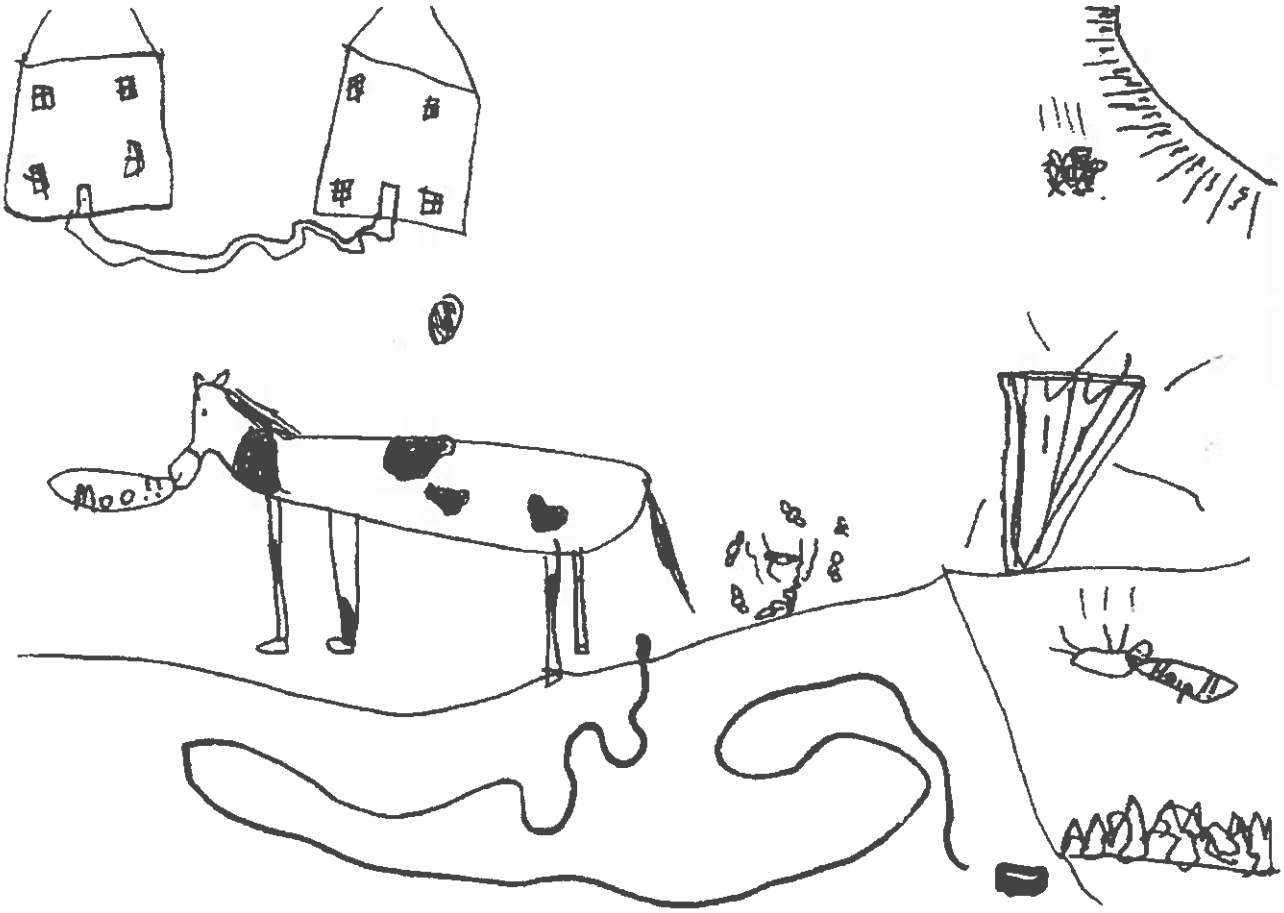
By Áine Boyle, age 7

Fanny Poer


D | G D G AB C' B A G F E D FD F G A BC'
B AG B CD' E' A A G GFE D GF G G
D' BC'D' D' BC'D' GBG G BG E' CD' E' E' CD' E' ACA A CA
B CD' E'F'G' F'G'A' D'E'C' B AG AC' F G G

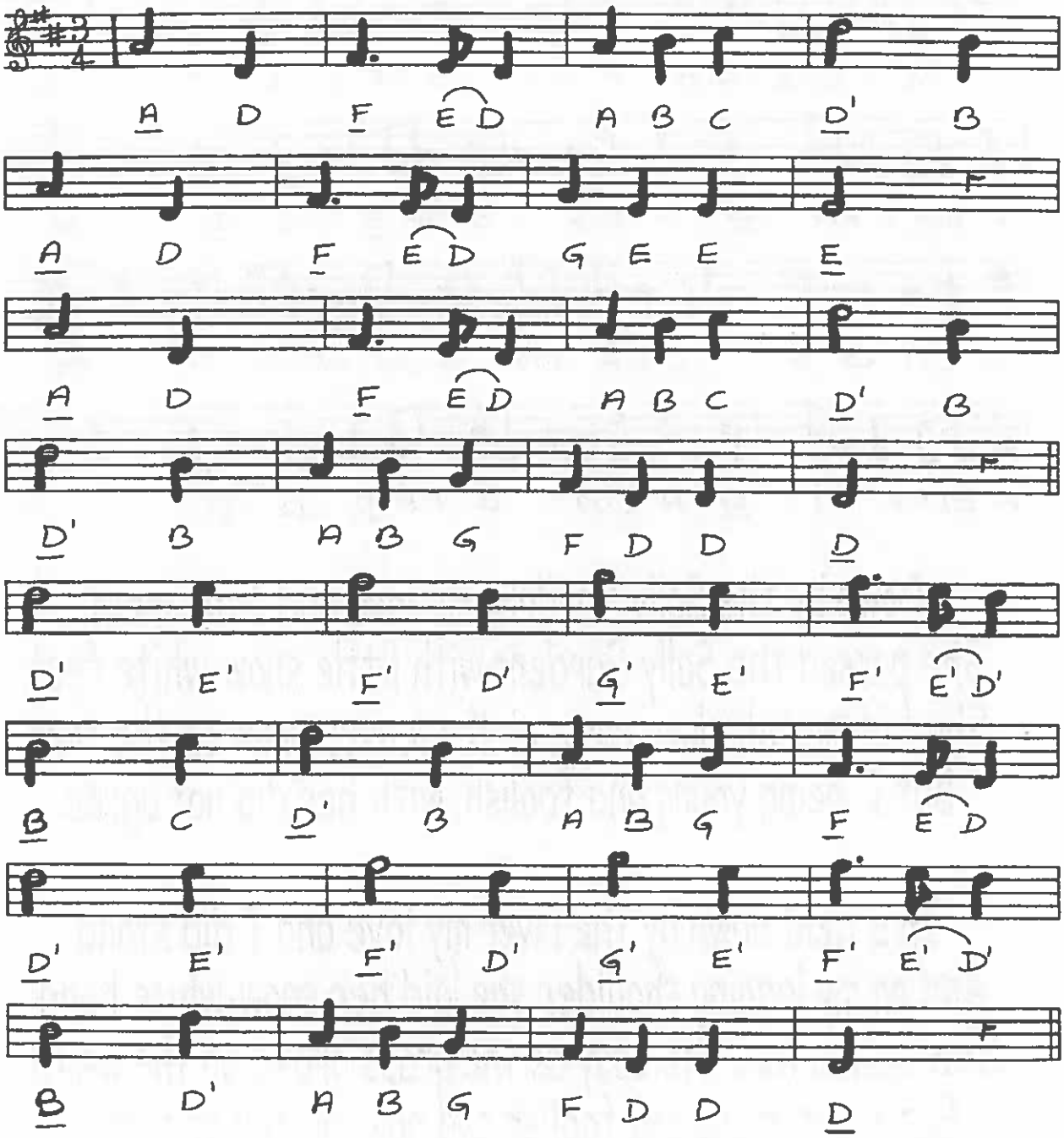
Songs

This section contains the music and lyrics to a small number old favourites.

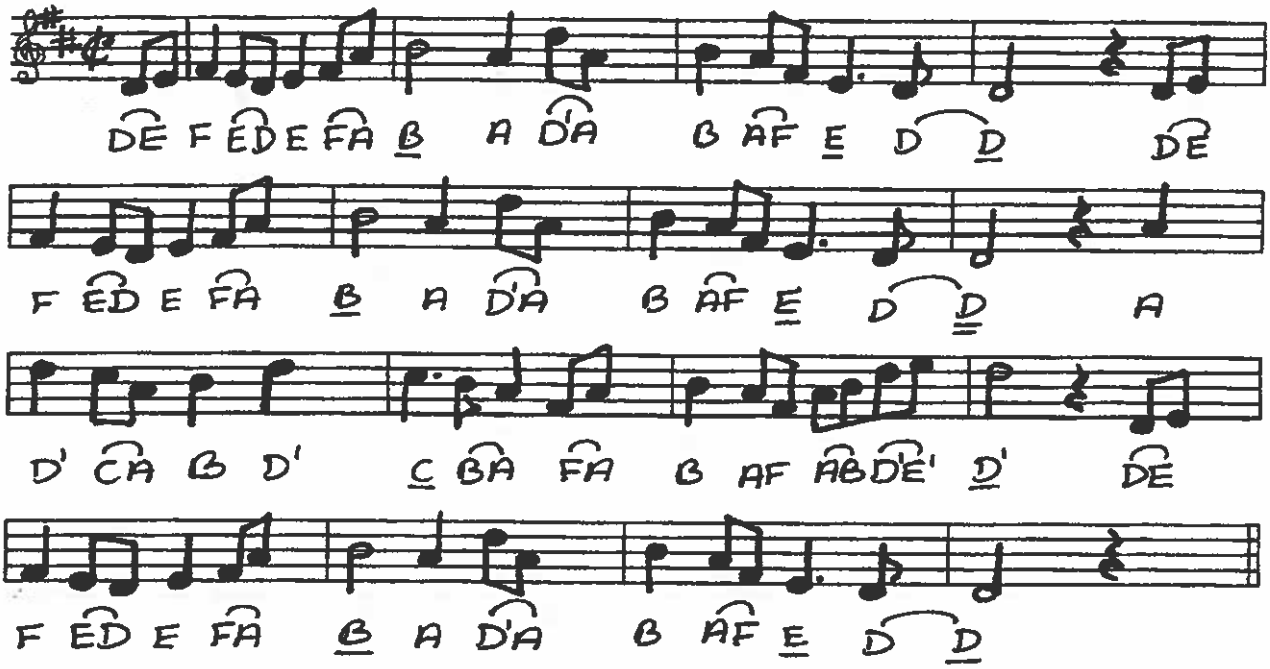


The Story of Turlough O'Carolan, by Niall McKenna, age 7

Bâidín Fheidhlimidh



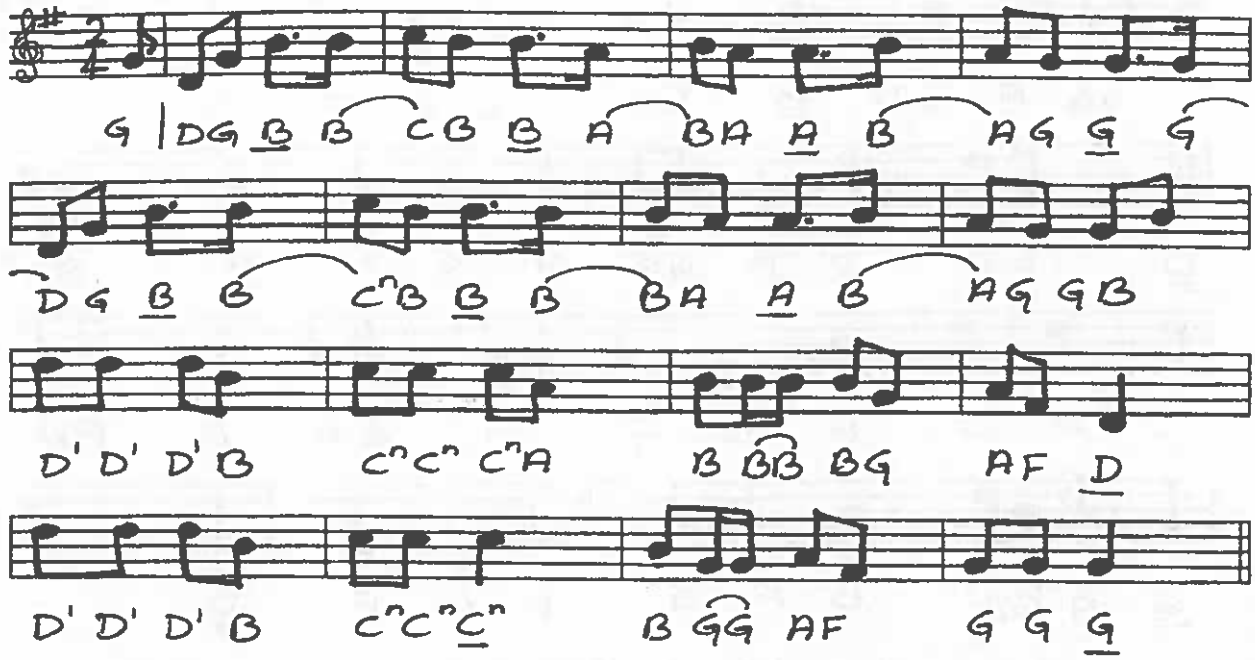
Down by the Sally Gardens



Down by the Sally Gardens my love and I did meet.
She passed the Sally Gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree.
But I, being young and foolish, with her did not agree.

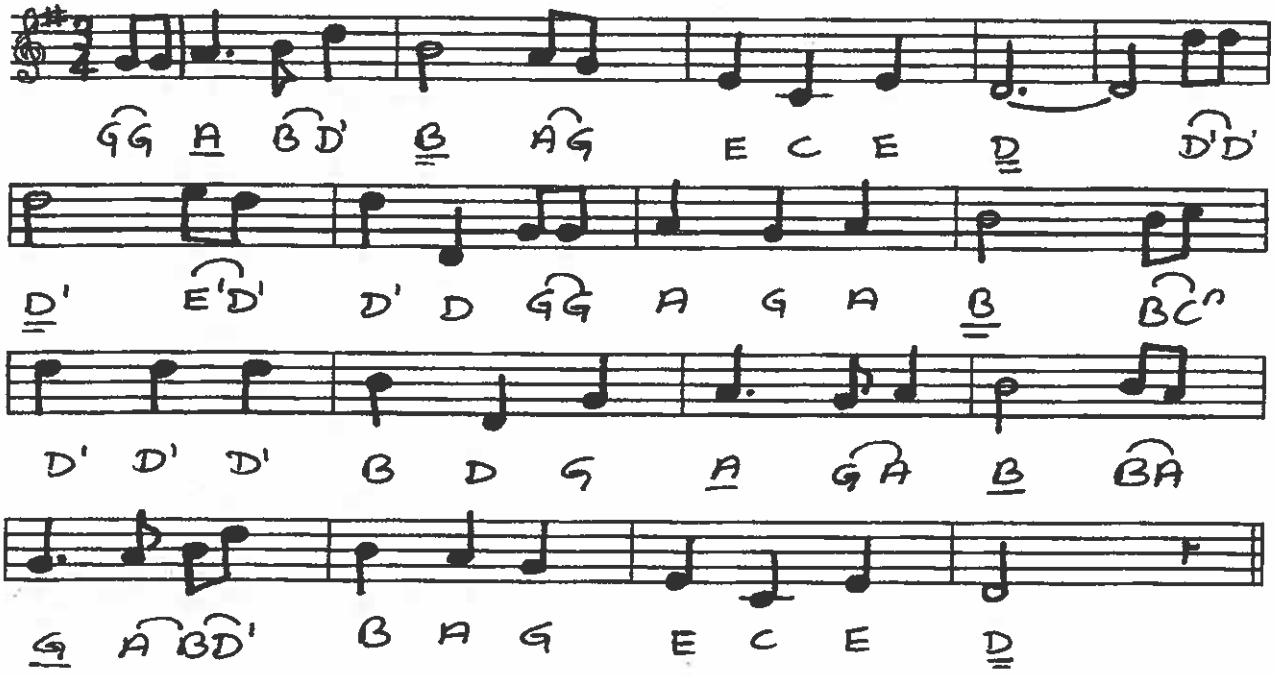
In a field down by the river my love and I did stand
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy as the grass grows on the weirs.
But I was young and foolish and now am full of tears.

I'll Tell Me Ma



I'll tell me Ma when I get home
The boys won't leave the girls alone.
They pull my hair, they steal my comb,
But that's alright 'til I get home.
She is handsome, she ispretty
She is the Belle of Belfast city.
She is courting, one two, three.
Hey, won't you tell me, who is he?

Cliffs of Doneen



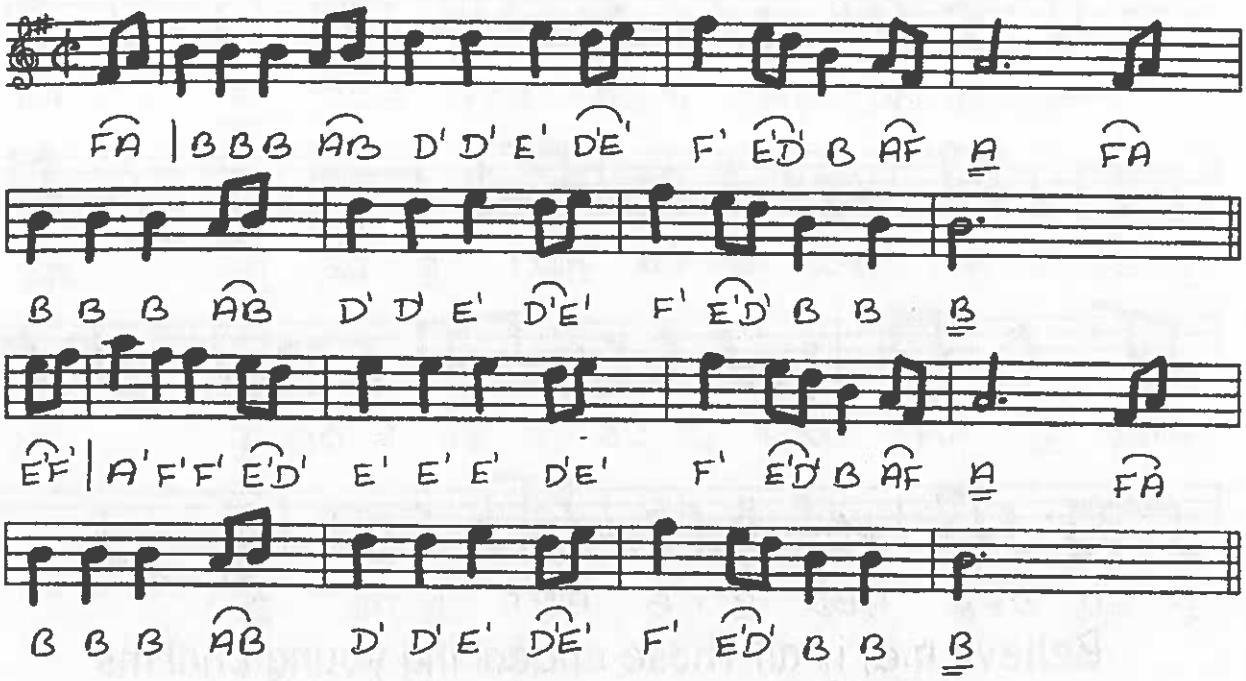
You may travel far far from your own native land
Far away o'er the mountains, far away o'er the foam
But of all the fine places that I've ever been
Sure there's none can compare with the cliffs of Doneen.

Take a view o'er the mountains, fine sights you'll see there
You'll see the high rocky mountains o'er the west coast of Clare
Oh the towns of Kilkee and Kilrush can be seen
From the high rocky slopes 'round the cliffs of Doneen.

It's a nice place to be on a fine summer's day
Watching all the wild flowers that ne'er do decay
Oh the hares and lofty pheasants are plain to be seen
Making homes for their young 'round the cliffs of Doneen.

Fare thee well to Doneen, fare thee well for a while
And to all the kind people I'm leaving behind
To the streams and the meadows where late I have been
And the high rocky slopes 'round the cliffs of Doneen.

Star of the County Down

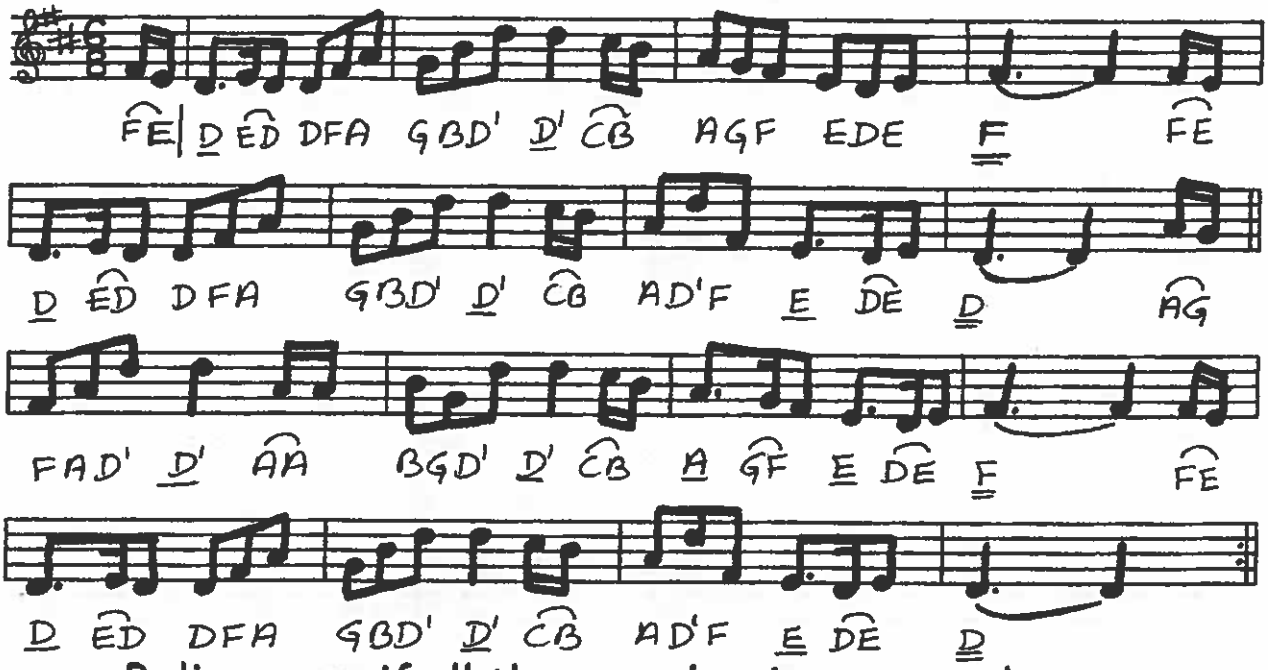


Near Banbridge town in the County Down, one morning last July
Down a boreen green came a sweet colleen, and she smiled as she passed me by.
She looked so sweet from her two bare feet, to the sheen of her nut brown hair.
Such a coaxing elf, sure I shook myself, for to see I was really there.

Chorus:
From Bantry Bay up to Derry Quay, and from Galway to Dublin town,
No maid I've seen like the brown colleen that I met in the County Down!

At the harvest fair she'll be surely there, so I'll dress in my Sunday clothes
With my shoes shone bright and my hat cocked right for a smile from my nut brown Rose
No pipe I'll smoke, no horse I'll yoke, till my plough is a rust-coloured brown
Till a smiling bride by my own fireside sits the star of the County Down.

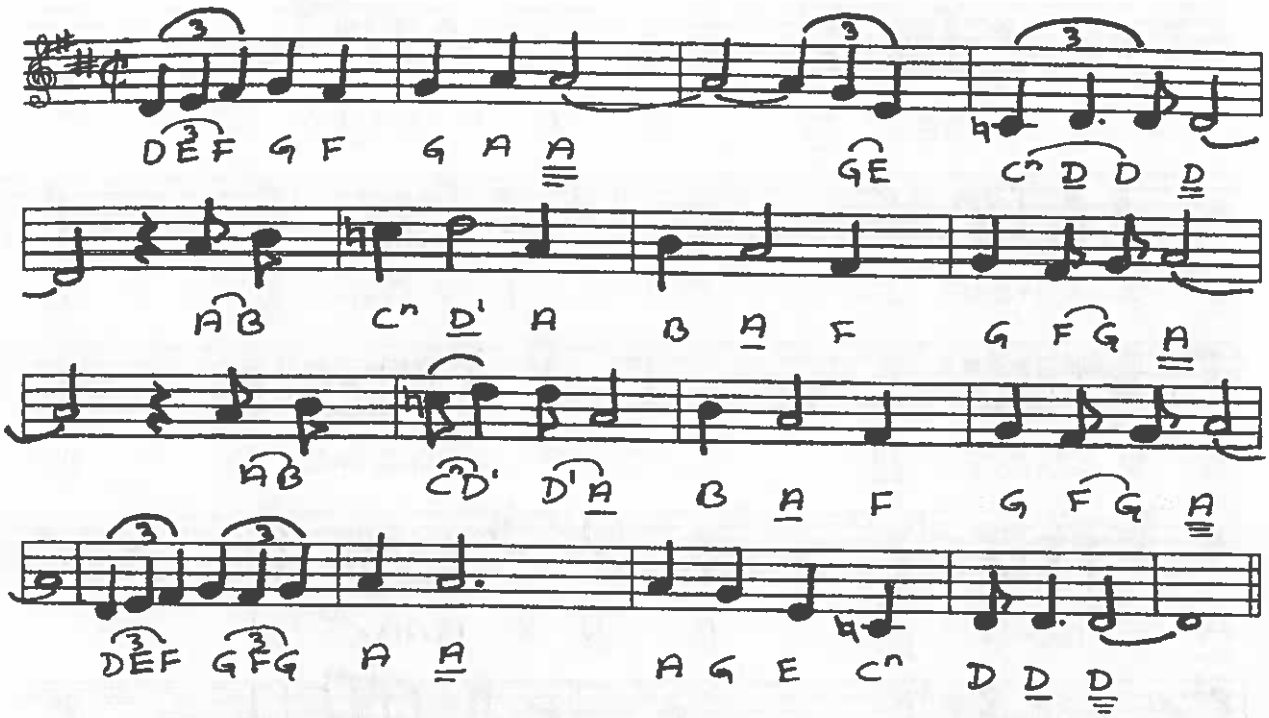
Believe me if all those endearing young charms



Believe me, if all those endearing young charms
Which I gaze on so fondly today,
Were to change by tomorrow and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy gifts fading away.
Thou wouldst still be adored as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will
And a round the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervour and faith of a soul can be known
To which time will but make thee more dear.
Oh! The heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns on her god when he sets,
The same look that she gave when he rose.

She Moved Through the Fair



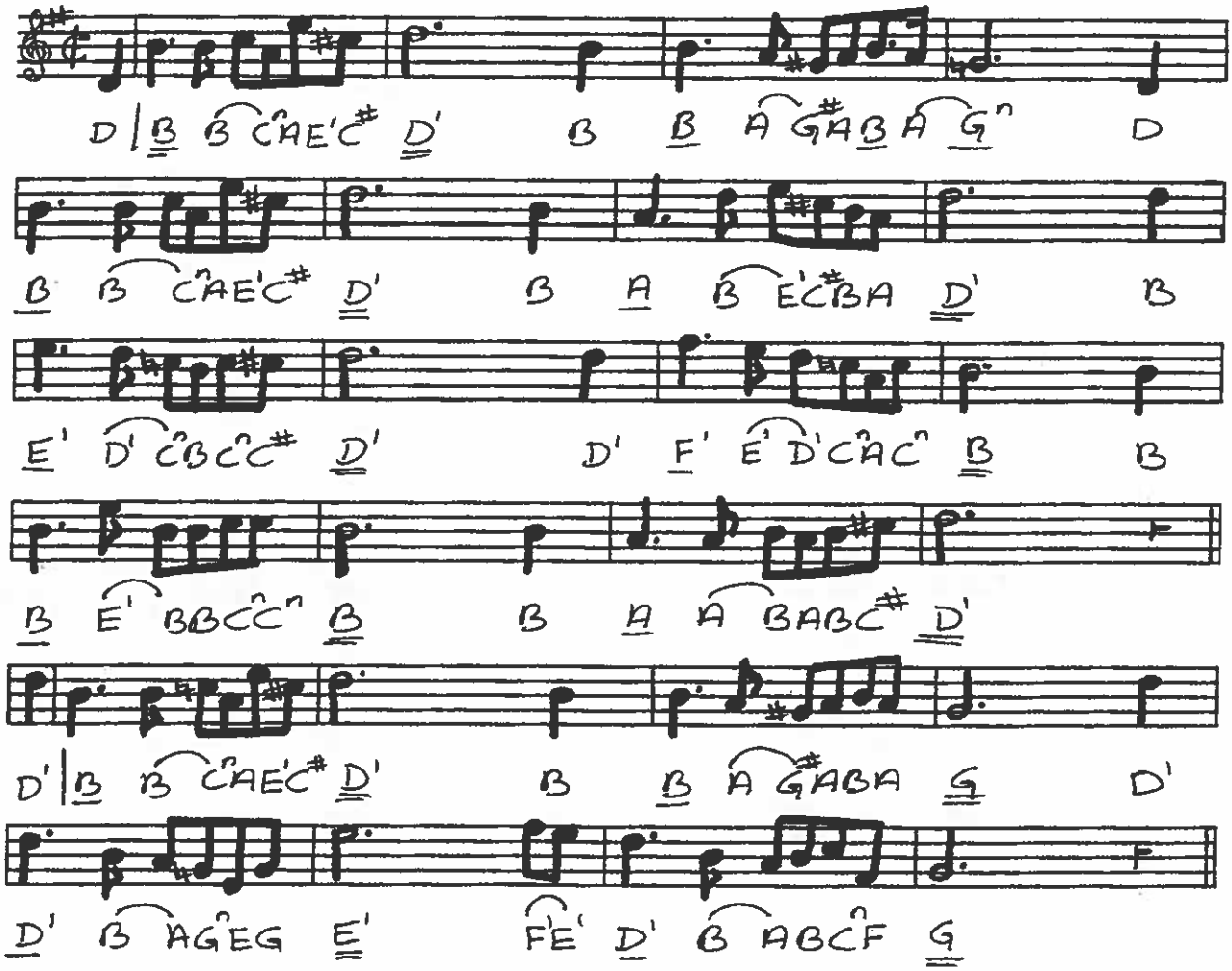
My young love said to me "My Mother won't mind
And my father won't slight you for your lack of kind."
And she stepped away from me and this she did say;
"It will not be long, love, 'til our wedding day."

As she stepped away from me and she went through the fair
And fondly I watched her move here and move there
And then she turned homeward with one star awake
As the swan in the evening moves over the lake.

The people were saying, no two e'er were wed
But one had a sorrow that never was said
And I smiled as she passed with her goods and her gear
And that was the last that I saw of my dear.

Last night she came to me, my dead love came in.
So softly she came that her feet made no din
And she laid her hand on me and this she did say
"It will not be long, love, 'til our wedding day."

I'll take you home again, Kathleen

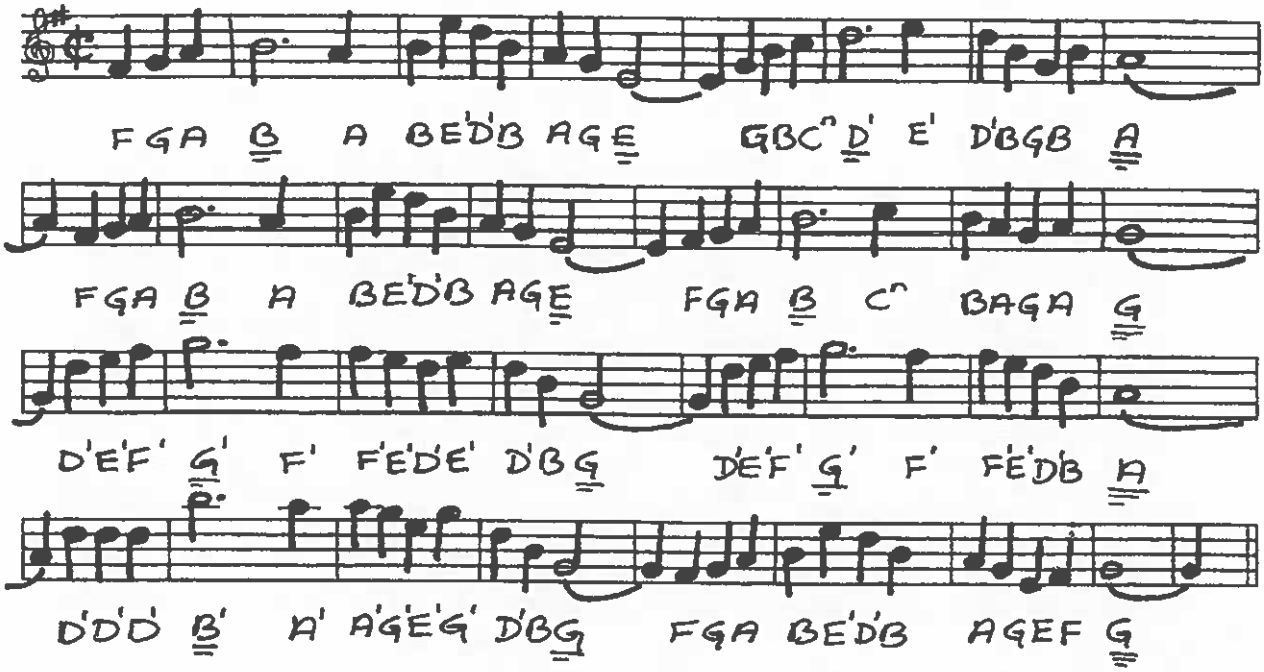


I'll take you home again, Kathleen, across the ocean wide,
To where your heart has ever been, since first you were my bonny bride.
The roses all have left your cheeks, I've watched them fade away and die:
Your voice is sad whene'er you speak, and tears be-dim your loving eyes.

Chorus:
Oh! I will take you back, Kathleen, to where your heart will find no pain,
And when the fields are fresh and green,
I'll take you to your home again.

I know you love me, Kathleen, dear, your heart was ever fond and true;
I always feel when you are near, that life holds nothing dear but you.
The smiles that once you gave to me, I scarcely ever see them now,
Though many, many times I see, a dark'ning shadow on your brow.
(Chorus)
To that dear home beyond the sea, my Kathleen shall again return,
And when thy old friends welcome thee, thy loving heart will cease to yearn.
Where laughs the little silver stream, beside your mother's humble cot,
And brightest rays of sunshine gleam, there all your grief will be forgot.
(Chorus)

Danny Boy



Oh Danny Boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling
From glen to glen and down the mountain side.
The summer's gone and all the flowers are dying
'Tis you, 'tis you must go and I must bide.

But come you back when summer's in the meadow
Or when the valley's hushed and white with snow,
'Tis I'll be there, in sunshine or in shadow,
Oh Danny Boy, Oh Danny Boy I love you so.

And if you come, when all the flowers are dying
And I am dead, as dead I well may be
You'll come and find the place where I am lying
And kneel and say an 'Ave' there for me.

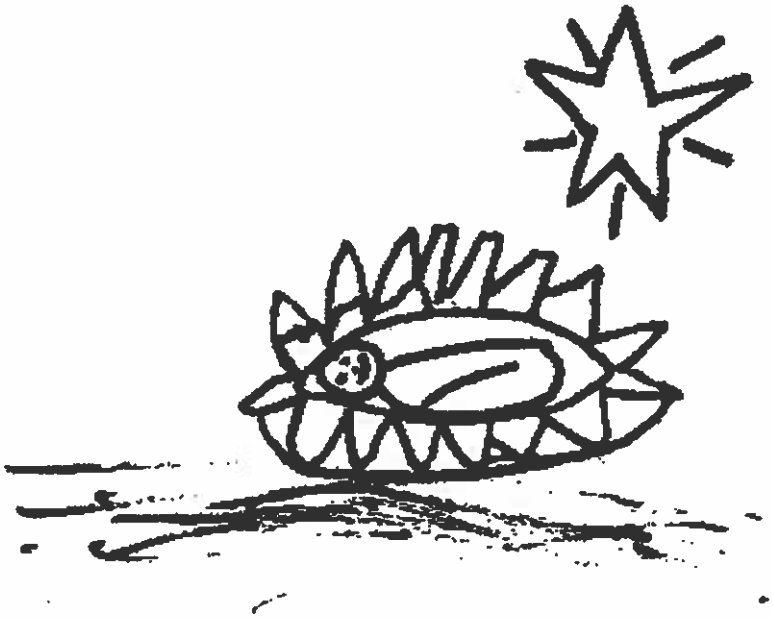
And I shall hear, though soft you tread above me
And all my dreams will warm and sweeter be
If you'll not fail to tell me that you love me
I simply sleep in peace until you come to me.

Christmas Carols

The carol was a popular religious song, usually associated with Christmas, but also celebrating Easter and other folk holidays. There were also several secular carols. The carol became popular in medieval England and many compositions remain from that era. However, carols then went out of fashion for a while. About 1800, religious reformers revived the carol, leading to new carols at the time such as "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" by Charles Wesley. The carol became more focused on Christmas. It has continued to be a popular tune right up to the present day.

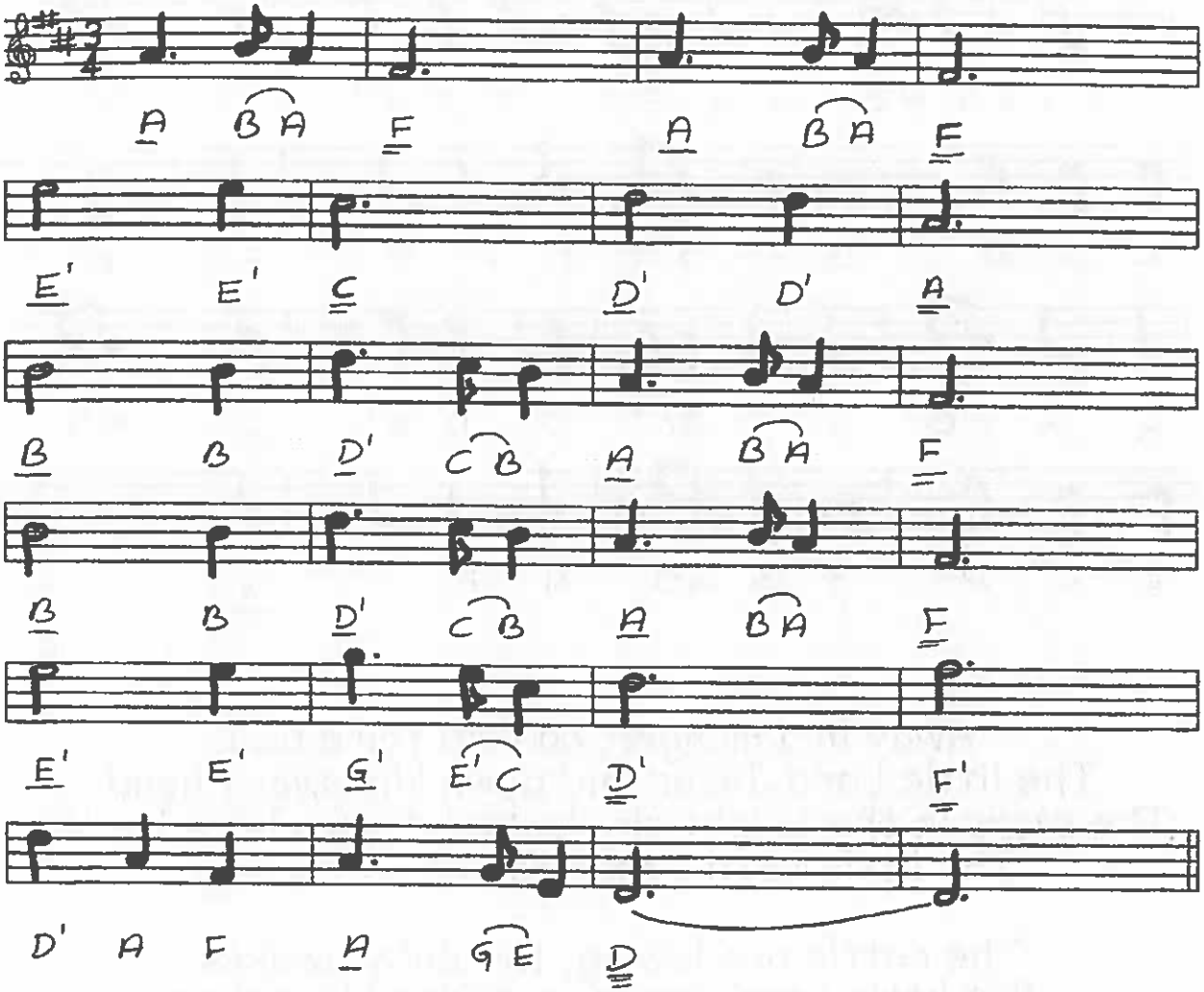
By Niall McKenna, age 7

Jesus



By Shannon Flynn-Dunne, Age 10

Silent Night

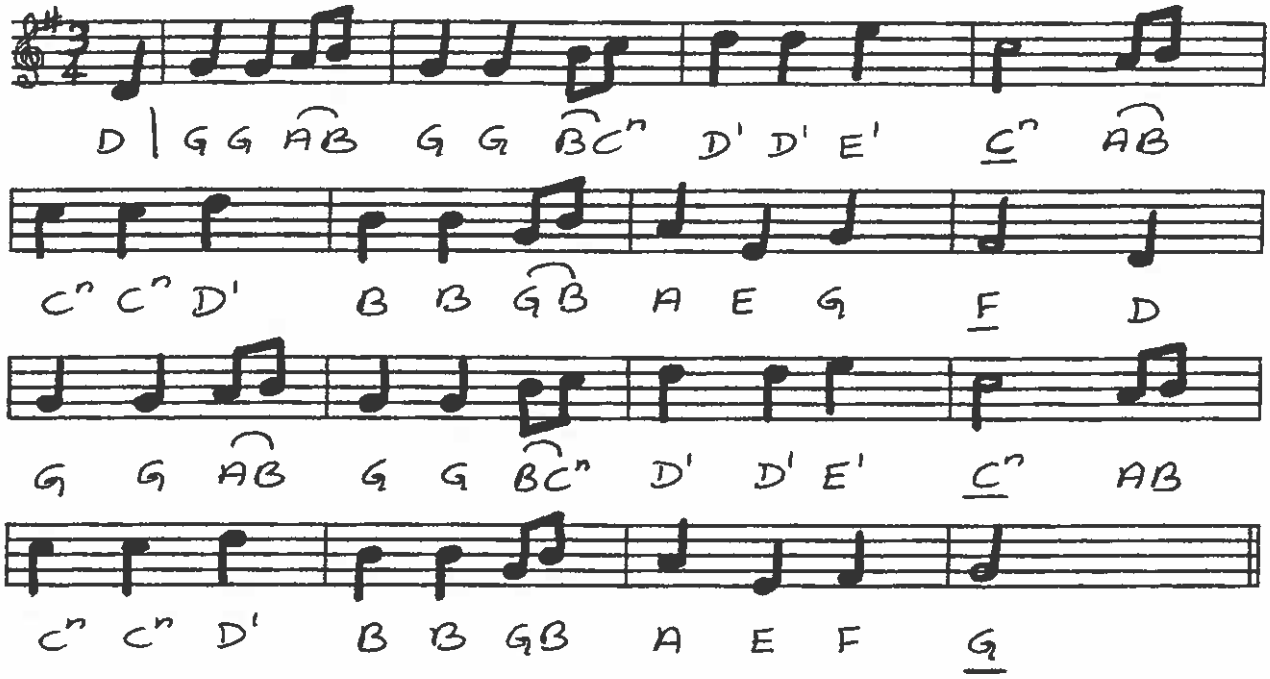


Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild.
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven above; Heavenly hosts sing 'Alleluia!'
Christ the Saviour is born, Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

Away in a Manger

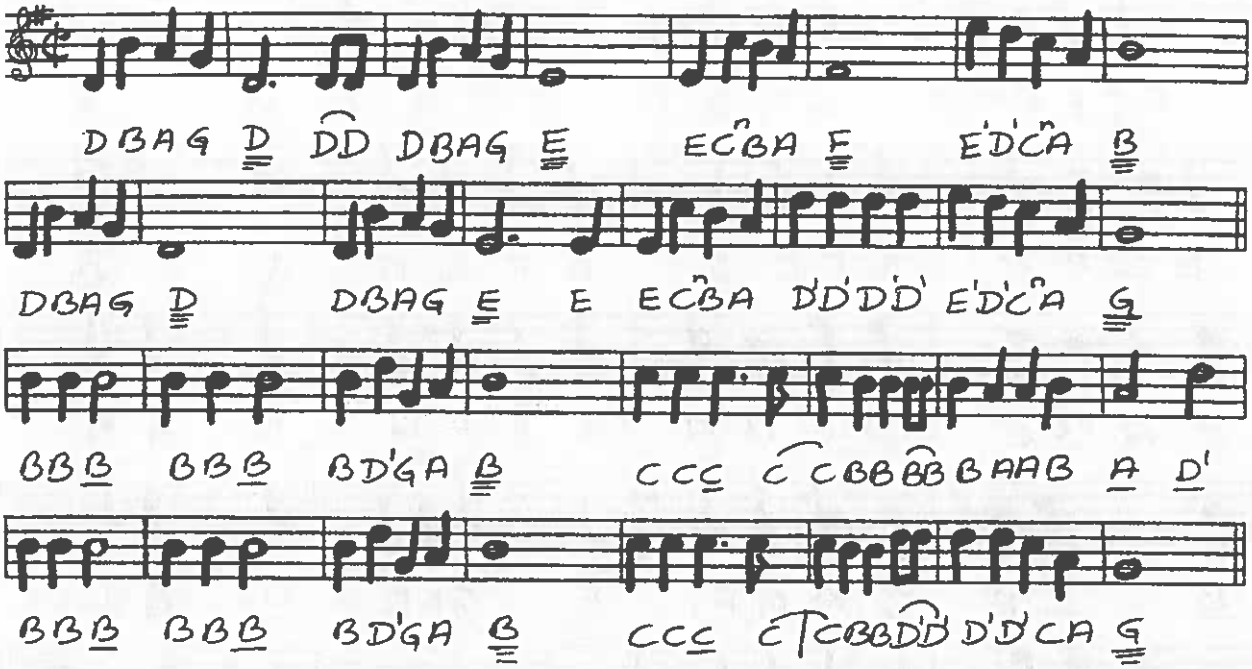


Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay,
Close by me forever, and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven, to live with Thee there.

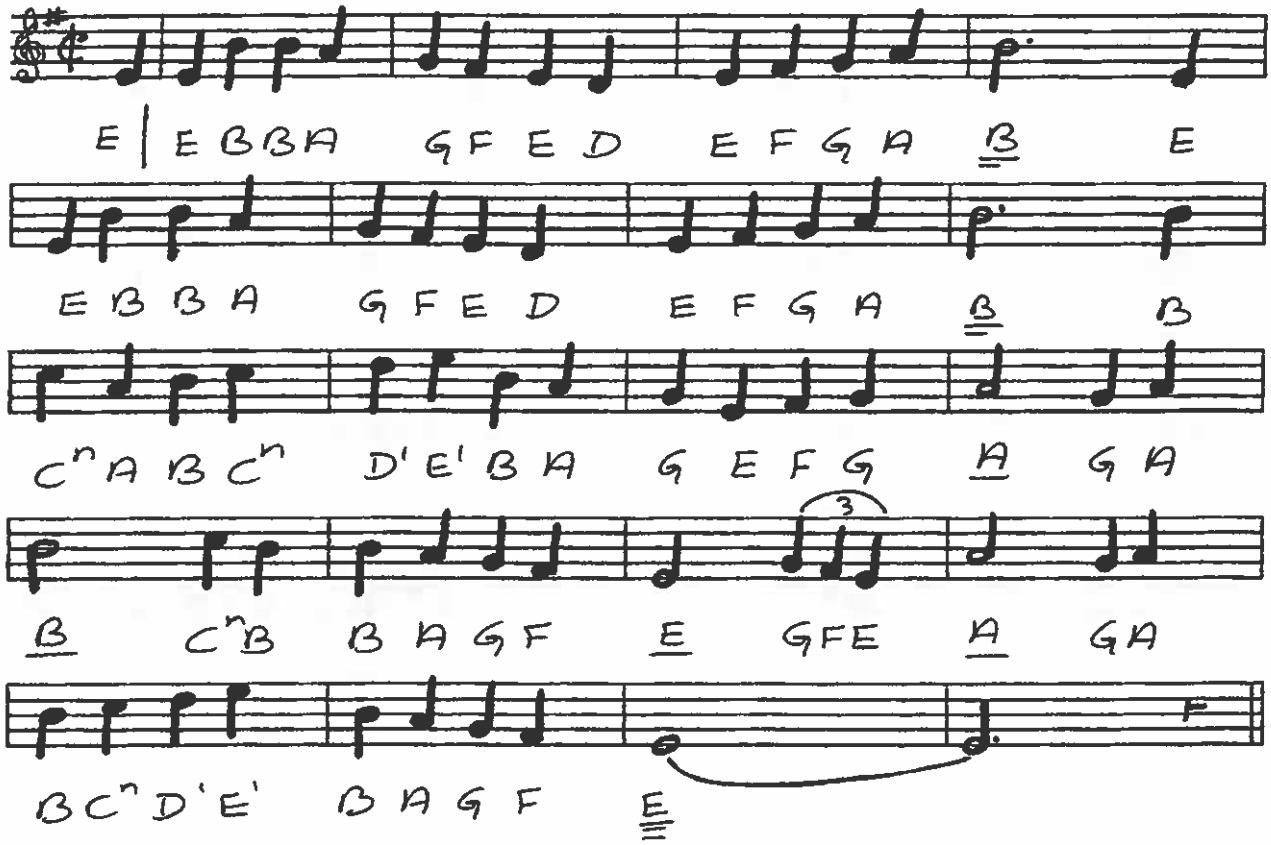
Jingle Bells



Dashing through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh,
O'er the fields we go, laughing all the way.
Bells on bobtail ring, making Spirits bright.
What fun it is to ride and sing a sleighing song tonight!

Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way.
Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh.
Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way.
Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh!

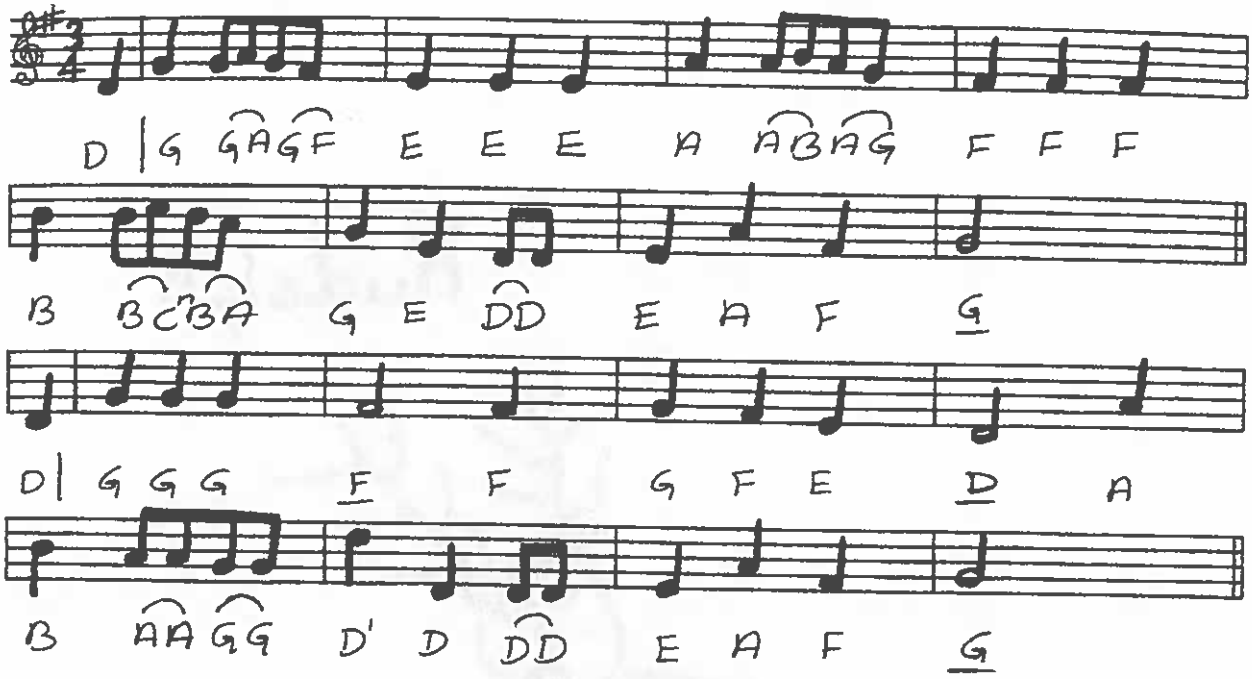
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen



God rest ye merry , Gentlemen! Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray,
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!

From God that is our Father, the blessed Angels came,
Unto some certain shepherds, with tidings of the same,
That there was born in Bethlehem, the Son of God by name,
And it's tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!

We Wish You a Merry Christmas



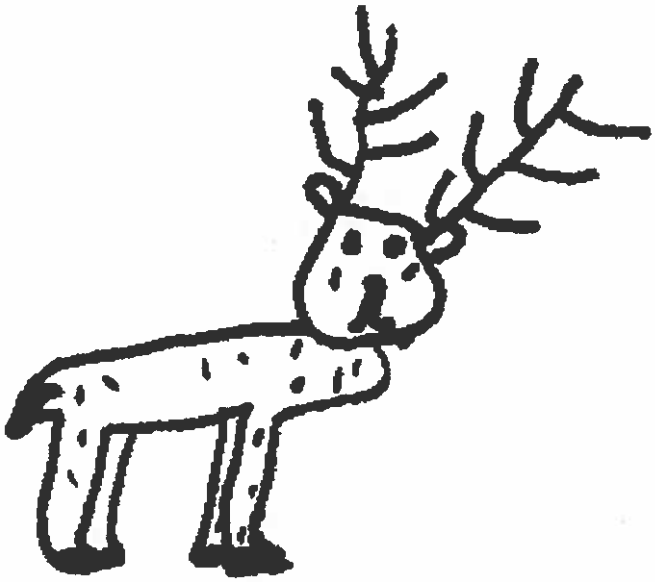
We wish you a Merry Christmas, We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Chorus:
Good tidings I bring to you and your kin.
I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

w bring us some figgy pudding, now bring us some figgy pudding,
Now bring us some figgy pudding, and bring some out here.

For we all like figgy pudding, we all like figgy pudding,
We all like figgy pudding, so bring some out here.

Rudolph



By Cliodhna Walsh

Sources of Information on Traditional Music

With the advent of the internet, a huge amount of information can be found online in relation to practically every aspect of Irish Traditional Music and culture. If you want to find the lyrics of an old song you used to know, it's often enough just to type in the name of the song or the opening line and you can source the rest of the lyrics! If you search long enough you can probably hear most of this music *played* on the internet too!
However, a computer is not always necessary – your local library or music-store often has a lot of information or can indicate the best place to find out what you would like to know.

Here are some sources of information which I have found particularly helpful. However the list really is endless, particularly on the internet!

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, 32 Belgrave Square, Monkstown, Co. Dublin.
Tel. 01 2800295 / Fax: 01 2803759 / Email: enquiries@comhaltas.com
Website: www.comhaltas.com
Comments: this is the HQ of the CCÉ in Ireland. Many musical and cultural events are held in Belgrave Square. The website contains much useful and interesting information regarding Irish music and culture as well as links to other informative websites.

www.itma.ie
Comments: This is the site of the Irish Traditional Music Archive, a non-profit organisation which was established in 1987. It also contains some interesting articles regarding "What is Irish Traditional Music?' and tips on learning and studying music.

www.thesession.org
Comments: This is an informative and helpful website containing hundreds of Irish Traditional Tunes in classical notation across a range of tune types. There is also the opportunity to join in interesting discussions regarding any aspect of the music. You can run a search for your favourite tune from this website or post a request, or indeed post your own tune on the website. It also contains useful links to other websites.

Sources of Information on Traditional Music

www.ceolas.org
Comments: information re Celtic music on the internet and also useful links to other websites.

www.8notes.com
Comments: This website contains free sheetmusic (in classical notation) for a range of music, including many traditional Irish songs. It also has 'midi-files', or the 'sound files' for the tunes, so that you can hear what the music should sound like. Tunes are helpfully graded into three levels of difficulty: beginners, intermediate and advanced.

Clár Poirt don Scrúdú Ceol Tíre

Index of Tunes for Traditional Irish Music Exam

The following tunes are suggested as possible exam tunes on the Scrúdú Ceol Tíre syllabus. However, it is also recommended to look for other tunes outside of this list which are of a comparable standard.

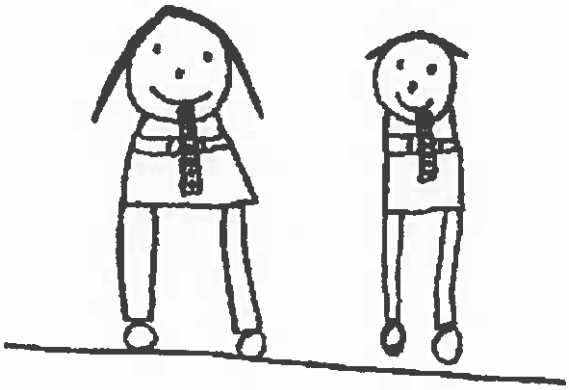
Elementary Cycle

Junior Cycle

Senior Cycle

Rebecca Guyett age 11

Clár na nAinmneacha



Sarah Meehan
10