



SLOWER THAN DIRT TUNEBOOK

This tunebook contains tunes commonly played at the Slower Than Dirt old-time jam in Seattle, where “commonly” means “played more than twice since I’ve been keeping records”. It is almost certainly missing a few commonly-played tunes which haven’t been transcribed yet. For the full logs of what’s been played, see <http://slowerthandirt.org/tune-list/>

I am trying to make fresh transcriptions of all these tunes, but in some cases I have cribbed from a previously-published book. Usually I will have made some minor changes to those tunes to reflect more closely how they’re played at the jam, and I have included attribution notes for tunes I didn’t transcribe by ear. My intent is to eventually replace any transcriptions borrowed from books with transcriptions entirely my own. This is a work in progress.

These transcriptions are mostly stripped-down versions suitable for learning the basic tune, not exact transcriptions of any particular performance. As such, they should definitely not be used as a canonical source of how any tune “should” sound. Add your own variations, search out YouTube videos and recordings, and learn from other players in your area how they play it. The goal of this tunebook is to be descriptive, not prescriptive.

Tools used in the preparation of this tunebook include abcm2ps, EasyABC and L^AT_EX. The idea came from Paul Hardy’s tunebooks at <http://www.pghardy.net/concertina/tunebooks/>. There is a GitHub repository of files which should (with some modification) be sufficient for you to create your own set of tunebooks at <https://github.com/rjl20/abc-tunebook>

The current version of this tunebook as well as other collections I’ve prepared, in both ABC and PDF formats, is available at <http://slowerthandirt.org/tunebooks/> – check the version in the page footers against the version listed on the site before downloading a new copy.



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Commonly-played tunes missing from this tunebook:

- Boatman
- Shady Grove

Tunes By Key

Key of A

Grey Eagle 5

Key of A dor

Cluck Old Hen 4

Key of A mix

Old Joe Clark 10

Red Haired Boy 11

Sandy Boys 12

Key of C

I'll Twine 'Mid The Ringlets 7

* Wildwood Flower 7

Key of D

Angeline the Baker 1

Arkansas Traveler 1

Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine 3

* Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss 13

John Lover's Gone 8

Johnny Don't Get Drunk 8

Liberty 9

Needle Case 9

Over the Waterfall 10

Soldier's Joy 12

St. Anne's Reel 13

* Suzanna Gal 13

Western Country 13

Whiskey Before Breakfast 14

Wind That Shakes The Barley, The 14

Key of G

Barlow Knife 2

Big Sciota 2

Blackberry Blossom 3

Boogerman 4

Girl I Left Behind Me, The 5

Ida Red 6

Red Wing 11

Tunes By Title

| | | | |
|--|----|--|----|
| Angeline the Baker (D) | 1 | Liberty (D) | 9 |
| Arkansas Traveler (D) | 1 | Needle Case (D) | 9 |
| Barlow Knife (G) | 2 | Old Joe Clark (A mix) | 10 |
| Big Sciota (G) | 2 | Over the Waterfall (D) | 10 |
| Blackberry Blossom (G) | 3 | Red Haired Boy (A mix) | 11 |
| Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine (D) | 3 | Red Wing (G) | 11 |
| Boogerman (G) | 4 | Sandy Boys (A mix) | 12 |
| Cluck Old Hen (A dor) | 4 | Soldier's Joy (D) | 12 |
| * Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss (D) | 13 | St. Anne's Reel (D) | 13 |
| Girl I Left Behind Me, The (G) | 5 | * Suzanna Gal (D) | 13 |
| Grey Eagle (A) | 5 | Western Country (D) | 13 |
| Ida Red (G) | 6 | Whiskey Before Breakfast (D) | 14 |
| I'll Twine 'Mid The Ringlets (C) | 7 | * Wildwood Flower (C) | 7 |
| John Lover's Gone (D) | 8 | Wind That Shakes The Barley, The (D) | 14 |
| Johnny Don't Get Drunk (D) | 8 | | |

Angeline the Baker

D

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.5

More than half the people I encounter play this tune in the reverse order of the two parts shown. The tune derives from Steven Foster's "Angelina Baker." My reading of the original is that this order is closest to the original, for what that's worth. Also, I like the V chord at the end of each part as shown, but this is for you to decide yourself. -- G.S.

Arkansas Traveler

D

5

8

13

Aural Source: Sarah Comer

Barlow Knife

G

9

17

Written Source: Appalachian Fiddle, p.25
Chords from Complete Tractor

Big Sciota

G

5

8

13

Written Source: <http://archive.mandolinsessions.com/feb06/tune.pdf>
Named after the Scioto River in Ohio. Also spelled Sciota, Sciote, Scioty.
The article contains Wendy Anthony's simplified version plus variations.

Blackberry Blossom

G

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Chords: G, D, C, G, C, G, A, D, G, D, C, G, C, G, Em, D, Em, G, D, Em, D, Em, D, G, D, G

Written Source: The Fiddler's Fakebook, p.47

Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine

March
D

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Chords: D, G, D, A, D, G, A, D, G, A, D, G, A, D, G, A, D, G, A, D, G, A, D, G, A

Boogerman

G



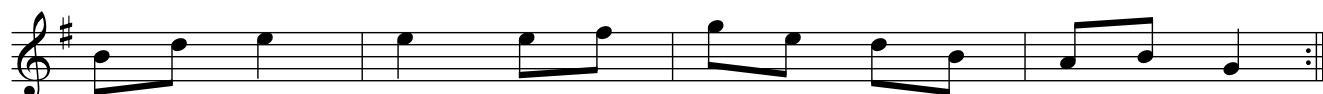
5



9



13



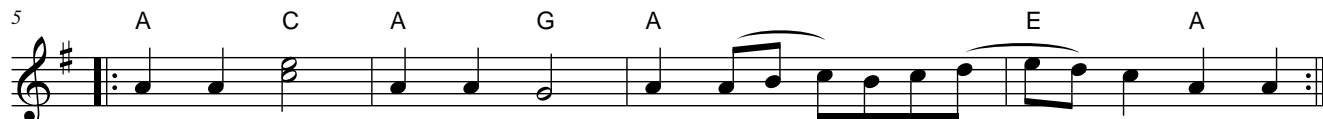
Written Source: Appalachian Fiddle, p.30

Cluck Old Hen

A dor



5



Written Source: Fiddler's Fakebook, p.70

The Girl I Left Behind Me

G

5

8

13

I like the Em, but that's probably more of a contra-ish thing than old-time.

Grey Eagle

A

4

7

9

12

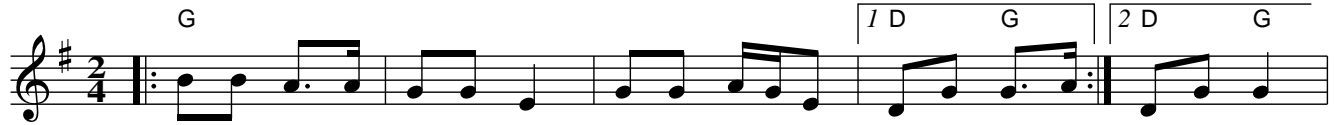
15

Written Source: Appalachian Fiddle, p.73

Chords from Brody -- find better fit?

Ida Red

G



5



Written Source: Appalachian Fiddle, p.16

I'll Twine 'Mid The Ringlets

Wildwood Flower

Music by J.P. Webster

Words by Maud Irving

C

The musical score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of six staves of music, each with a corresponding line of lyrics. Chord symbols (C, G, F) are placed above the staves to indicate the harmonic structure. The lyrics are: 'I'll twine 'mid the ring - lets of my ra - - ven black hair. The li - - lies so pale and the ro - ses so fair. The myr - - tle so bright with an em - - er - ald hue. And the pale ar - on - - a - - tus with eyes of bright blue. The myr - - tle so bright with an em - - er - ald hue. And the pale ar - on - - a - - tus with eyes of bright blue.

I'll sing and I'll dance, my laugh shall be gay
I'll cease this wild weeping, drive sorrow away.
Tho' my heart is now breaking, he never shall know
That his name made me tremble and my pale cheeks to glow.

I'll think of him never, I'll be wildly gay
I'll charm ev'ry heart, and the crowd I will sway.
I'll live yet to see him regret the dark hour
When he won, then neglected, the frail wildwood flower.

He told me he loved me, and promised to love
Through ill and misfortune, all others above
Another has won him, ah! mis'ry to tell
He left me in silence, no word of farewell.

He taught me to love him, he call'd me his flower
That blossom'd for him all the brighter each hour
But I woke from my dreaming, my idol was clay
My visions of love have all faded away.

Written Source: (Music) Joseph Webster manuscript circa 1863, University of Wisconsin Digital Collections
(Lyrics) Wikipedia

I'm including this version because it's demonstrably in the public domain,
unlike the Carter Family's "Wildwood Flower".

John Lover's Gone

D

5

9

Written Source: Mainly from Levenson's Festival Tunes, p.116

Detailed description: The musical score for 'John Lover's Gone' is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The melody starts with a quarter note D4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note E4, and a quarter note F#4. This is followed by a repeat sign. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C#5. The third staff continues with a quarter note D5, a quarter note C#5, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4. The piece ends with a double bar line. Chord symbols 'D' and 'A' are placed above the notes. A first ending bracket labeled '1' and a second ending bracket labeled '2' are shown at the end of the first staff.

Written Source: Mainly from Levenson's Festival Tunes, p.116

Johnny Don't Get Drunk

D

5

9

13

Aural Source: A combination of YouTube and someone who brought it to Slower Than Dirt.

Detailed description: The musical score for 'Johnny Don't Get Drunk' is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The melody starts with a quarter note D4, followed by a quarter note E4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note G4. This is followed by a repeat sign. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C#5, and a quarter note D5. The third staff continues with a quarter note E5, a quarter note D5, a quarter note C#5, and a quarter note B4. The fourth staff continues with a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. The piece ends with a double bar line. Chord symbols 'D', 'G', and 'A' are placed above the notes. A first ending bracket labeled '1' and a second ending bracket labeled '2' are shown at the end of the second staff.

Aural Source: A combination of YouTube and someone who brought it to Slower Than Dirt.

Liberty

D

5

9

13

Aural Source: Dusty Strings jam?

Needle Case

Arr. Scott Marckx/Jeannie Murphy

D

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.132

Old Joe Clark

A mix

5

9

13

Aural Source: Sarah Comer

Over the Waterfall

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.142

Red Haired Boy

A mix

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.156

Red Wing

G

By Kerry Mills, 1907; arr. Gene Silberberg

9

17

25

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.157

Sandy Boys

A mix

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.172
Chords from Sarah Comer

Soldier's Joy

D

5

8

13

Aural Source: Sarah Comer

St. Anne's Reel

D

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.184

Western Country

Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss
Suzanna Gal

D

5

9

13

Written Source: Levenson's Festival Tunes, p.80

Whiskey Before Breakfast

D

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.210

The bluegrassers all play that E minor chord in measure 11, but most old time backup players just play A.

The Wind That Shakes The Barley

D

5

9

13

Aural Source: As played at Slower Than Dirt