



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 `LATEX`. The idea came from Paul Hardy’s tunebooks at <http://www.pghardy.net/concertina/tunebooks/>. There is a GitHub repository of files at <https://github.com/rjl20/abc-tunebook> which should (with some modification) be sufficient for you to create your own set of tunebooks.

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.

NB: The license below applies only to the transcriptions, not to the underlying compositions. It is up to the performer to determine whether a composition is playable without licensing fees.



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Commonly-played tunes missing from this tunebook:

- Bile Them Cabbage Down
- Bill Cheatham
- Boatman
- Cripple Creek
- Goodbye Liza Jane
- Cold Frosty Morning
- Shady Grove
- Campbell's Farewell to Red Gap
- Sally Anne
- Old Jack Gillie
- Prettiest Girl in the County
- Little Rabbit, Where's Your Mama

Tunes By Key

Key of A		* Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss	17
Grey Eagle		John Lover's Gone	8
		Johnny Don't Get Drunk	8
		Liberty	9
Key of A dor		Midnight on the Water	10
Cluck Old Hen		Mississippi Sawyer	10
		Needle Case	11
		Over the Waterfall	12
Key of A mix		Soldier's Joy	15
Kitchen Girl		Spotted Pony	15
Old Joe Clark		St. Anne's Reel	16
Red Haired Boy		* Suzanna Gal	17
Sandy Boys		Western Country	17
		Whiskey Before Breakfast	17
		Wind That Shakes The Barley, The	18
Key of Am			
Elzic's Farewell			5
Key of C			
I'll Twine 'Mid The Ringlets			7
* Wildwood Flower			7
Key of D			
Angeline the Baker		Barlow Knife	2
Arkansas Traveler		Big Sciota	2
Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine		Blackberry Blossom	3
		Boogerman	4
		Girl I Left Behind Me, The	5
		Ida Red	6
		Rat's Gone To Rest	12
		Red Wing	13
		Seneca Square Dance	14
		Turkey in the Straw	16

Tunes By Title

Angeline the Baker (D)	1	Mississippi Sawyer (D).....	10
Arkansas Traveler (D)	1	Needle Case (D)	11
Barlow Knife (G)	2	Old Joe Clark (A mix).....	11
Big Sciota (G)	2	Over the Waterfall (D)	12
Blackberry Blossom (G)	3	Rat's Gone To Rest (G)	12
Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine (D)	3	Red Haired Boy (A mix).....	13
Boogerman (G)	4	Red Wing (G)	13
Cluck Old Hen (A dor)	4	Sandy Boys (A mix)	14
Elzic's Farewell (Am)	5	Seneca Square Dance (G)	14
* Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss (D)	17	Soldier's Joy (D).....	15
Girl I Left Behind Me, The (G)	5	Spotted Pony (D).....	15
Grey Eagle (A)	6	St. Anne's Reel (D)	16
Ida Red (G)	6	* Suzanna Gal (D).....	17
I'll Twine 'Mid The Ringlets (C).....	7	Turkey in the Straw (G).....	16
John Lover's Gone (D).....	8	Western Country (D)	17
Johnny Don't Get Drunk (D)	8	Whiskey Before Breakfast (D)	17
Kitchen Girl (A mix)	9	* Wildwood Flower (C).....	7
Liberty (D)	9	Wind That Shakes The Barley, The (D)	18
Midnight on the Water (D)	10		

Angeline the Baker

Key: D

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

Key: D

Aural Source: Sarah Comer

Barlow Knife

Key: G

9

17

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

Big Sciota

Key: G

trad American

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

Key: G

G D C G C G A D
 5 G D C G C G 1 D G 2 D G
 9 Em D Em G D
 13 Em D Em 1 D G 2 D G

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

Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine

March
Key: D

D G D A
 5 D G A 1 D 2 D
 9 D G G D A
 13 D G A 1 D 2 D

Boogerman

Key: G

5

9

13

Written Source: Appalachian Fiddle, p.30

Cluck Old Hen

Key: A dor

5

Written Source: Fiddler's Fakebook, p.70

Elzic's Farewell

Key: Am

5

9

13

17

Aural Source: Hillbillies From Mars

Swing the eighths.

Played: AABBACC; end with a final AA.

The Girl I Left Behind Me

Key: G

5

8

13

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

Grey Eagle

Key: A

4

7

9

12

15

1

2

D.C.

Written Source: Appalachian Fiddle, p.73
Chords from Brody -- find better fit?

Ida Red

Key: G

5

1

2

Written Source: Appalachian Fiddle, p.16

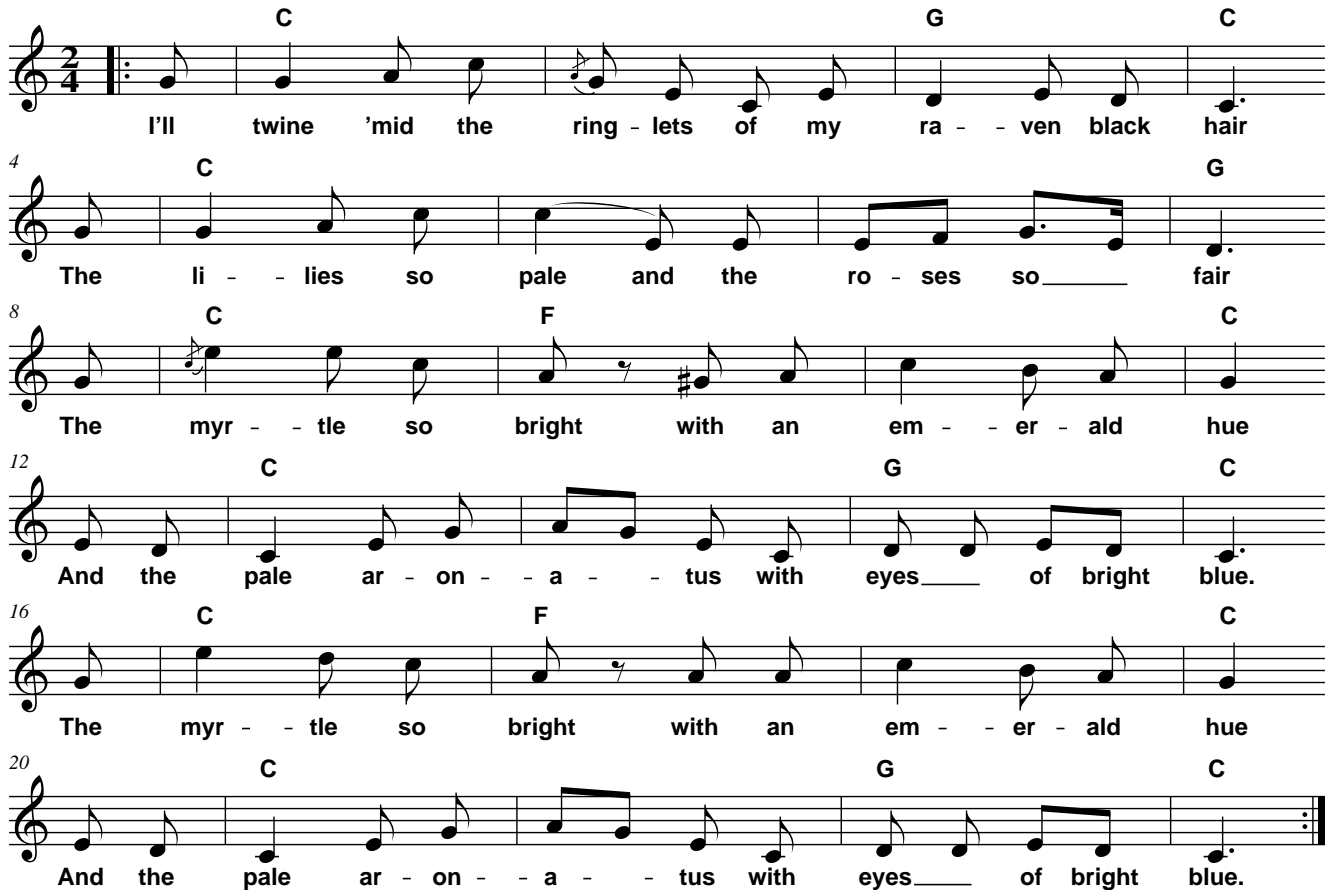
I'll Twine 'Mid The Ringlets

Wildwood Flower

Music by J.P. Webster

Words by Maud Irving

Key: C



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

Key: D

5

9

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

Johnny Don't Get Drunk

Key: D

5

9

13

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

Kitchen Girl

Key: A mix./A min.

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.104

Liberty

Key: D

5

9

13

Aural Source: Dusty Strings jam?

Midnight on the Water

Waltz
Key: D

Luke Thomasson

Musical score for 'Midnight on the Water' in D major, 3/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 3/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note D, a half note E, and a quarter note F#. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note G, a half note A, and a quarter note B. The third staff features a quarter note C, a half note D, and a quarter note E. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a quarter note F#, a half note G, and a quarter note A. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, (DM7), (D6), D, D, G, D, A7, D, D, Em, Bm, G, D, D, G, D, A7, D, D.

Written Source: The Waltz Book, p.35
Copyright Benny Thomasson, Winwood Music Company

Mississippi Sawyer

Key: D

Musical score for 'Mississippi Sawyer' in D major, 4/4 time. The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note D, a half note E, and a quarter note F#. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note G, a half note A, and a quarter note B. The third staff features a quarter note C, a half note D, and a quarter note E. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a quarter note F#, a half note G, and a quarter note A. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, G, D, A, D, D, D, A, D, G, A, D.

Written Source: Sarah Comer, Dusty Strings dance band class.

Needle Case

Key: D

Arr. Scott Marckx/Jeannie Murphy

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.132

Old Joe Clark

Key: A mix

5

9

13

Aural Source: Sarah Comer

Over the Waterfall

Key: D

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.142

Rat's Gone To Rest

Key: G

5

Aural Source: George Hawkins

Red Haired Boy

Key: A mix

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.156

Red Wing

Key: G

By Kerry Mills, 1907; arr. Gene Silberberg

9

17

25

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.157

Sandy Boys

Key: A mix

5

9

13

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

Seneca Square Dance

Key: G

5

8

13

Written Source: Slow Jam For Old-Time Music

Soldier's Joy

Key: D

Aural Source: Sarah Comer

Spotted Pony

Key: D

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.184

Bobby Taylor, who I learned roughly this version from, plays the high part first.

St. Anne's Reel

Key: D

5

9

13

Written Source: Complete Tractor, p.184

Turkey in the Straw

Key: G

5

9

13

Written Source: Sarah Comer, Dusty Strings dance band class.

Western Country

Key: D

Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss
Suzanna Gal

5

9

13

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

Whiskey Before Breakfast

Key: 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

Key: D

5

9

13

Aural Source: As played at Slower Than Dirt