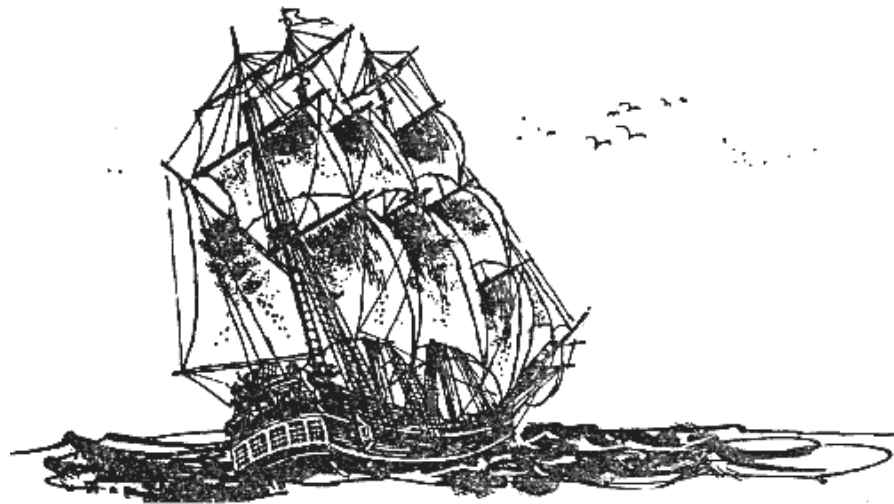


A SELECTION OF
WILLIAM LITTEN'S
FIDDLE TUNES
1800-1802



ARRANGED IN SETS BY DAVID JOHNSON 2009
CHORD ARRANGEMENTS JAMES JOHNSON 2006

INTRODUCTION

William Litten was a ship's fiddler in George the Third's Royal Navy in the first years of the nineteenth century. The Royal Navy often included a musician in the crew, presumably for the entertainment and exercise of the crew as well as synchronising the timing of some of the heavier manual work. Where the merchant ships had a chanteyman the Royal Navy of this period had an official musician usually a fiddler.

What makes Litten remarkable amongst his peers was his ability to transcribe music. In the years 1800 to 1802 he was aboard the HMS Gorgon, part of the British India Fleet, leaving England in May 1800, visiting the settlement at Port Jackson, then arriving in China in February 1801 and passing through St Helena in 1802. During the voyage he wrote down much, perhaps all, of his repertoire. Thus giving us a unique snapshot of the musical and, in particular, the fiddle repertoire of his time.

The original manuscript is in the library of the Dukes County Historical Society in Edgartown, Massachusetts, on the Island of Martha's Vineyard, where it was found by Gale Huntington. Huntington (1901-1993) was a noted regional collector of folklore and history, best known for his work on the folk music and songs of whalemens, and the regional music of southeastern New England. He did a fine job of interpreting Litten's handwritten notes in the manuscript book but says that "the tunes themselves were transcribed without too much difficulty, for Litten was a good musician." Some tunes were edited lightly. The collection was originally published by Hines Point Publishers in 1977, with notes about each tune as written down by Litten and compared to other versions of the period.

All that is known about Litten is derived from the disjointed notes crowded onto the pages of the manuscript and the inside of the front and back covers. The notes are hard to decipher because of Litten's poor spelling and writing and due to ink sometimes faded and sometimes bled through the paper. Huntington says "about William Litten himself we know very little. We do not know even whether he was English, Scottish, Irish or American. There are some very good Irish tunes in the book and some equally good Scottish and English ones. However Litten did not seem to care too much for the typically Scottish dotted eighth and sixteenth note combination. In fact, some of his Scottish tunes play like Irish versions of them."

I was given a photocopy of some of the material by fellow collector and musician, Don Brian, and in 2006 presented a workshop on the material at the Australian National Folk Festival in Canberra. Through the National Library of Australia a copy of Huntington's book was obtained by inter-library loan. A reproduction of the original book was produced for the workshop, and a basic recording of the tunes played through once each by Jessica Randall was provided. James Johnson arranged chordal accompaniment for the tunes.

This extract is a personal selection of 40 of the tunes arranged into compatible sets.

William Litten has vanished from the historical record, but his collection of music remains as his ongoing legacy.

David Johnson 2011

A PAGE FROM THE LITTEN MANUSCRIPT



Interpretation of the writing

Miss Mans Reel

This was wrote by my own blood

Cut my Thumbb with a Pankknife

Blood of W Litten.

Kissing and Flirting

Miss Flora McDonands Reel

Welcom here Again

William Litten Waterman

Kiss in the Furss

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Life Like a Sea in Constant Motion

Musical score for 'Life Like a Sea in Constant Motion' in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff has chords A, D, A, D, G, A, D above it. The second staff has chords A, D, G, A, Bm, E7, A above it. The third staff has chords D, G, A, G, D, A above it. The fourth staff has chords G, Em, G, D, A, D above it. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Patrick's Hill

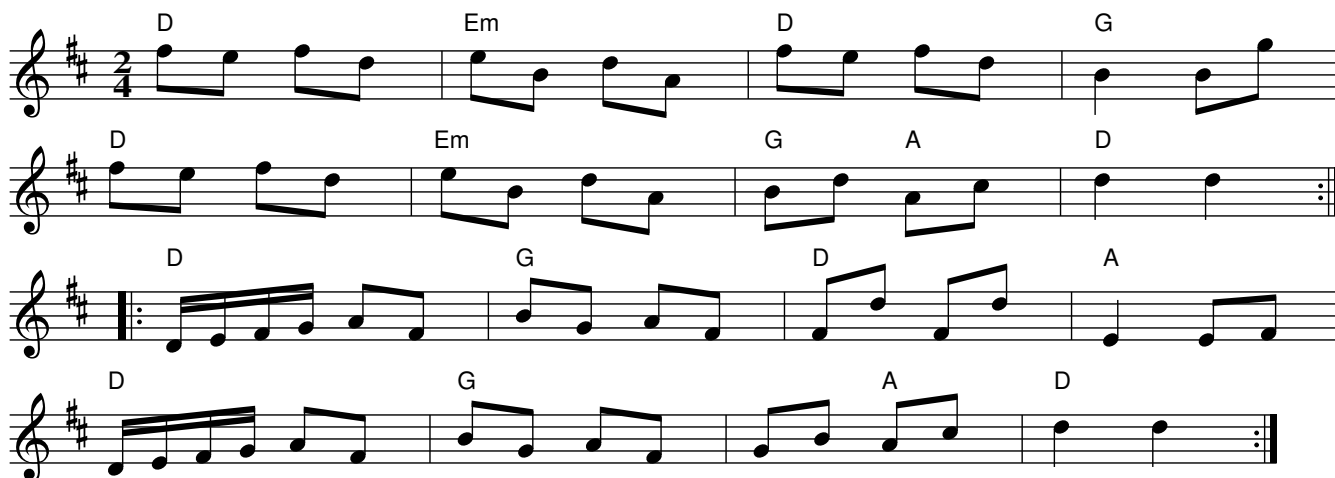
Musical score for 'Patrick's Hill' in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff has chords A, D, A, E above it. The second staff has chords A, D, A, E7, A above it. The third staff has chords A, Bm, A, E7 above it. The fourth staff has chords A, E7, A, E7, A above it. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Royal Review

Musical score for 'Royal Review' in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff has chords D, G, Bm, A above it. The second staff has chords D, G, A, D above it. The third staff has chords D, A, Bm, F#m above it. The fourth staff has chords G, D, A, D above it. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

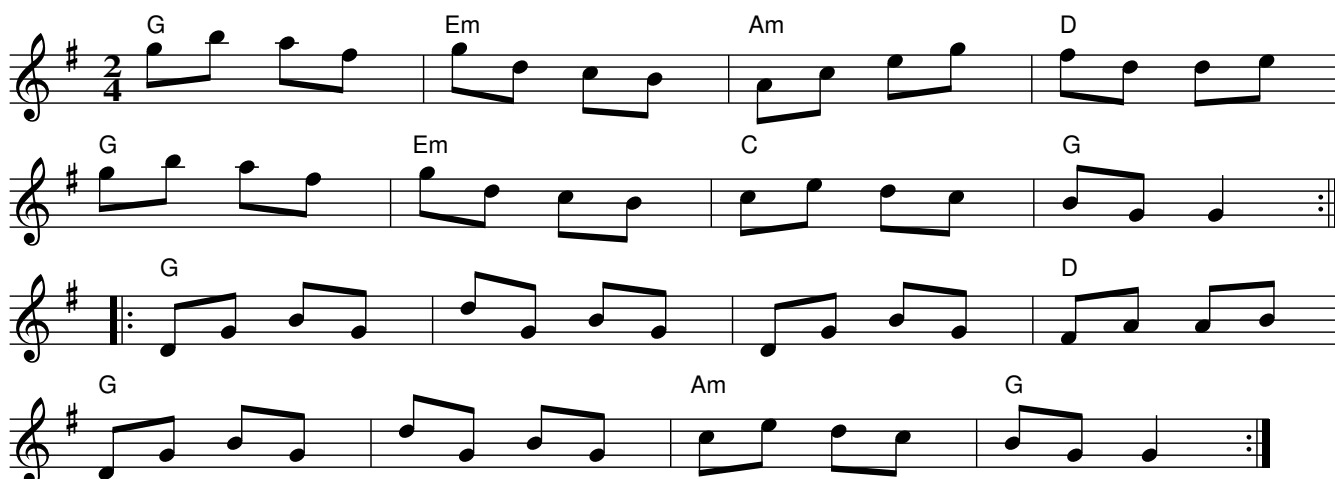
William Litten's Fiddle Tunes 1800-1802

Miss Blair's Reel



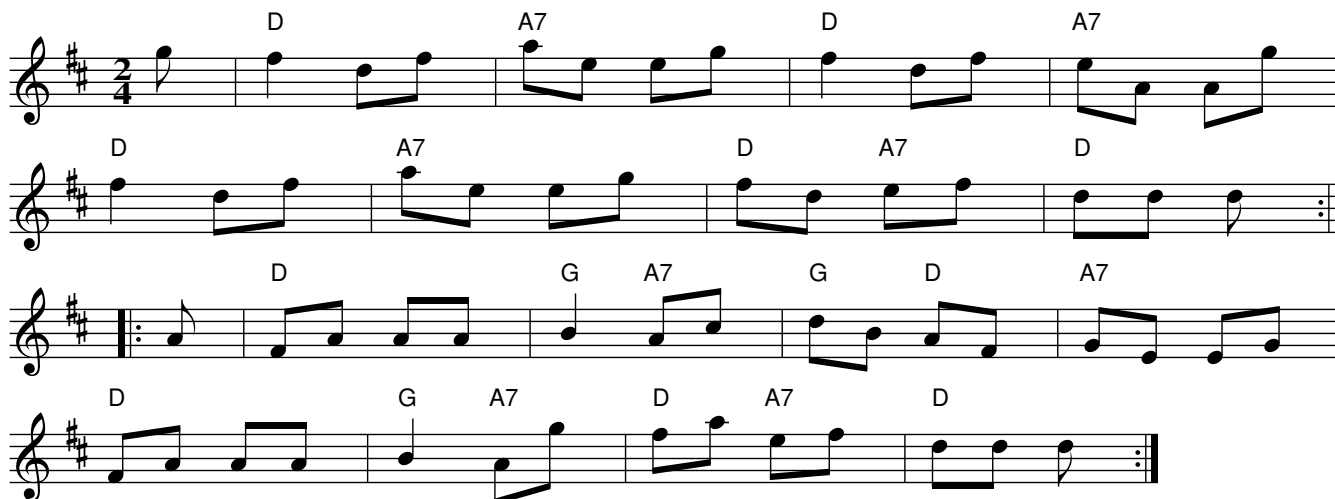
Musical score for Miss Blair's Reel, featuring four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are a repeat section. Chords are indicated above the notes: D, Em, D, G, D, Em, G, A, D, D, G, D, A, D, G, A, D.

Lady Bruce's Reel



Musical score for Lady Bruce's Reel, featuring four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are a repeat section. Chords are indicated above the notes: G, Em, Am, D, G, Em, C, G, G, D, G, Am, G.

Lady Hardwick's Reel



Musical score for Lady Hardwick's Reel, featuring four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are a repeat section. Chords are indicated above the notes: D, A7, D, A7, D, A7, D, A7, D, G, A7, G, D, A7, D, G, A7, D.

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Welcome Here Again

Musical score for 'Welcome Here Again' in D major, 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a D chord. The second staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The third staff begins with a repeat sign. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. Chords are indicated above the notes: D, A, D, G, A, D.

Light Horse Reel

Musical score for 'Light Horse Reel' in D major, 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a G chord. The second staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The third staff begins with a repeat sign. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. Chords are indicated above the notes: G, Am, D7, G, Em, D, C, D, G.

Navy Dance

Musical score for 'Navy Dance' in D major, 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a D chord. The second staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The third staff begins with a repeat sign. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. Chords are indicated above the notes: D, Em, D, Em, D, D, G, D, A, D.

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The Miners of Wicklow

Musical score for 'The Miners of Wicklow' in D major, 6/8 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is the melody, with a repeat sign at the beginning. The second staff is the first fiddle part, and the third and fourth staves are the second fiddle part. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, F, G, D, Em, A7, D in the first staff; D, F, G, D, G, A, D in the second staff; D, A, D, A in the third staff; and D, A, G, A, D in the fourth staff.

The Scullion Peasant

Musical score for 'The Scullion Peasant' in D major, 6/8 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is the melody, with a repeat sign at the beginning. The second, third, and fourth staves are the fiddle parts. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, A, D, A, D, G, A in the first staff; D, A, D, A, D, G, A, D in the second staff; D, A, D, A, D, G, A in the third staff; and D, A, D, A, D, G, A, D in the fourth staff.

Go To the Devil and Shake Yourself

Musical score for 'Go To the Devil and Shake Yourself' in D major, 6/8 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is the melody, with a repeat sign at the beginning. The second, third, and fourth staves are the fiddle parts. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, Bm in the first staff; D, A7, D in the second staff; D, G, Em, A in the third staff; and D, A7, D in the fourth staff.

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Ship New Rigged

Musical score for 'Ship New Rigged' 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 one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is written in a single voice. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, A, G, A, D. The second staff continues the melody with chord symbols D, G, A, D. The third staff begins with a repeat sign and continues with chord symbols D, G, A. The fourth staff concludes the piece with chord symbols D, G, D, A, D.

Off She Goes

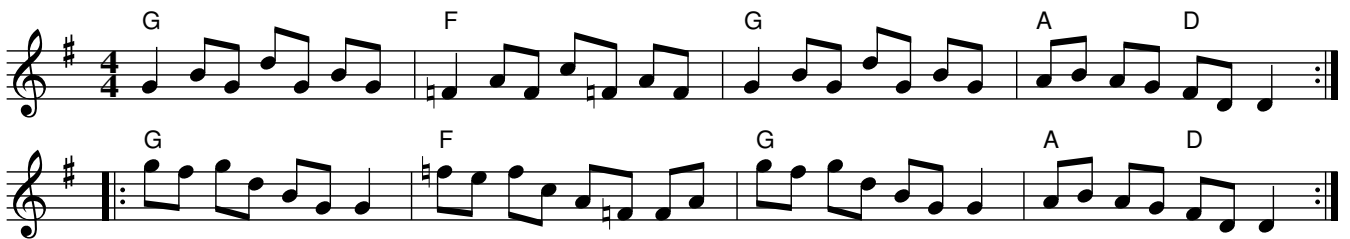
Musical score for 'Off She Goes' in D major, 3/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is written in a single voice. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, G, A, D, G, D, A. The second staff continues the melody with chord symbols D, G, A, D, A, D. The third staff begins with a repeat sign and continues with chord symbols D, G, D, A. The fourth staff concludes the piece with chord symbols D, G, D, A, D.

Boring the Leather

Musical score for 'Boring the Leather' in D major, 6/8 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single voice. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Em, G, D7, Em, G, D7. The second staff continues the melody with chord symbols Em, Bm, Em, G, D. The third staff begins with a repeat sign and continues with chord symbols G, Em, D7. The fourth staff concludes the piece with chord symbols G, Em, G, D.

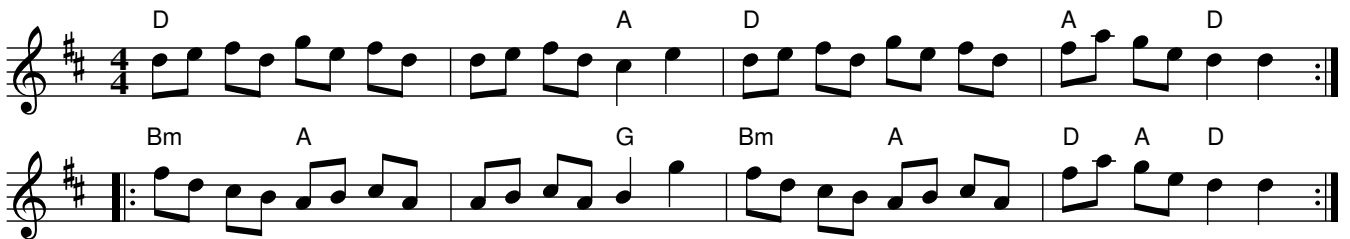
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Miss Mann's Reel



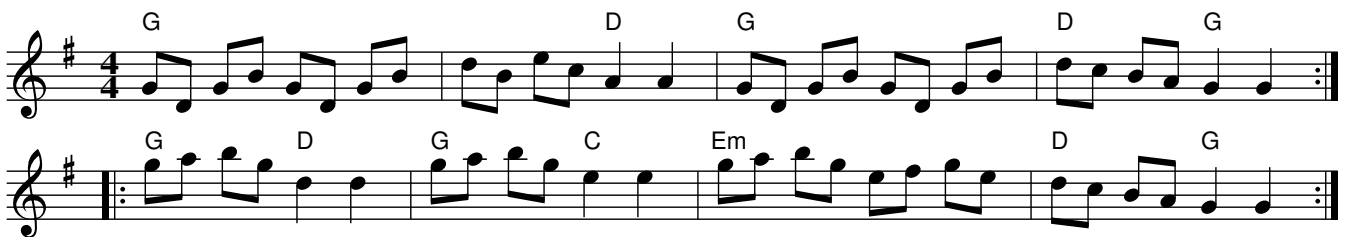
Two staves of musical notation for Miss Mann's Reel. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first staff contains the melody with chord markings G, F, G, A, and D above it. The second staff contains the bass line with chord markings G, F, G, A, and D below it. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Wild Irish Man



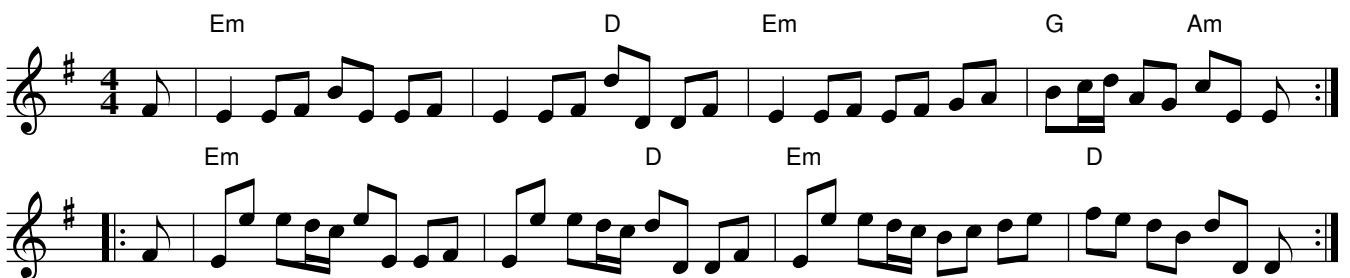
Two staves of musical notation for Wild Irish Man. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first staff contains the melody with chord markings D, A, D, A, and D above it. The second staff contains the bass line with chord markings Bm, A, G, Bm, A, D, A, and D below it. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Duke of Gordon's Reel



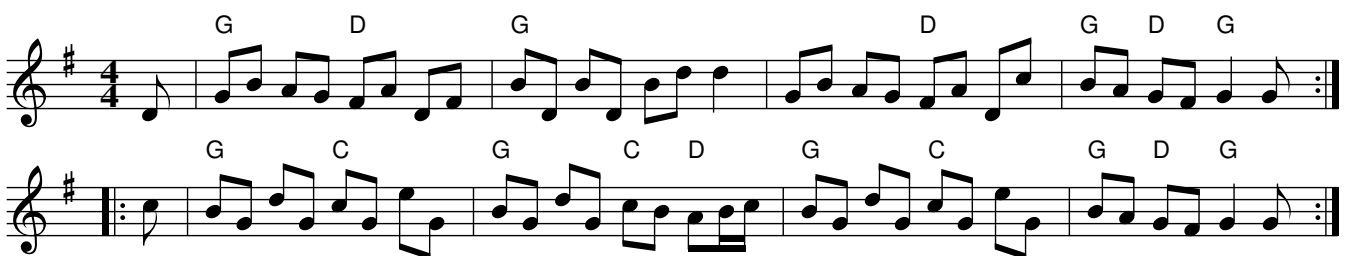
Two staves of musical notation for Duke of Gordon's Reel. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first staff contains the melody with chord markings G, D, G, D, and G above it. The second staff contains the bass line with chord markings G, D, G, C, Em, D, and G below it. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Miss Flora McDonald's Reel



Two staves of musical notation for Miss Flora McDonald's Reel. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first staff contains the melody with chord markings Em, D, Em, G, and Am above it. The second staff contains the bass line with chord markings Em, D, Em, and D below it. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Garrison Frolick



Two staves of musical notation for Garrison Frolick. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first staff contains the melody with chord markings G, D, G, D, G, D, and G above it. The second staff contains the bass line with chord markings G, C, G, C, D, G, C, G, D, and G below it. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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St Catherine's Lane at Five

Musical score for 'St Catherine's Lane at Five' in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are the accompaniment. Chords are indicated above the notes. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Alemande

Musical score for 'Alemande' in D major, 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are the accompaniment. Chords are indicated above the notes. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is common time (C). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Miss Carberry's Reel

Variant of Mason's Apron

Musical score for 'Miss Carberry's Reel' in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are the accompaniment. Chords are indicated above the notes. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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The Royal Hunt

Musical notation for 'The Royal Hunt' in D major, 2/4 time. The first staff contains the melody with chords D, G, D, A, D, Em, D, A, D. The second staff contains the accompaniment with chords D, Bm, A7, D, G, A, D, A7, D. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Over Young to Marry

Musical notation for 'Over Young to Marry' in D major, 2/4 time. The first staff contains the melody with chords Em, D, Em, Am, Em, D, C, D. The second staff contains the accompaniment with chords Em, Am, Em, Bm, Em, D, C, Bm. The third staff contains the accompaniment with chords Em, Am, Em, Bm, Em, G, Em, Bm. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it in the second staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Lady Campbell's Delight

Musical notation for 'Lady Campbell's Delight' in D major, 2/4 time. The first staff contains the melody with chords D, Bm, D, Em, D, Bm, A. The second staff contains the accompaniment with chords Bm, D, A, D, Bm, A. The third staff contains the accompaniment with chords D, Em, F#m, Bm, D, Bm, A. The fourth staff contains the accompaniment with chords Bm, E, Bm, G, D. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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Phil Ormand

Air

Musical score for "Phil Ormand" in G major, 3/4 time. The score consists of eight staves of music. The first four staves form the first system, and the last four staves form the second system. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is written on a treble clef. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: G, D, A, Bm, D, Bm, G, D, A, Bm, D, G, D, A, Bm, D, G, D, A, Bm, D. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The Yellow Hair Ladie

Air

Musical score for "The Yellow Hair Ladie" in G major, 3/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is written on a treble clef. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, Bm, D, A, D, G, A, D, D, A, G, A, D, G, A, D. The piece features a first ending (marked '1') and a second ending (marked '2'). The first ending leads back to the beginning of the piece, and the second ending leads to a final cadence. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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The Caledonian Laddie

Air or Reel

Musical score for 'The Caledonian Laddie' in D major, 2/4 time. The score consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The melody is written in eighth and sixteenth notes. Chords are indicated above the staff: D, G, A, D, Em, A. The second staff continues the melody with chords D, G, A, D, Em, A, D. The third staff features a repeat sign and includes chords Bm, Em, A, F#m, G, Bm. The fourth staff has chords D, Bm, G, D, G, Em, A. The fifth staff includes chords D, Bm, B, Em, Bm, A. The sixth staff concludes with chords Em, A, F#m, Bm, A7, D.

Listen to the Voice of Love

Air

Musical score for 'Listen to the Voice of Love' in D major, 2/4 time. The score consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The melody is written in eighth and sixteenth notes. Chords are indicated above the staff: D, A, D, G, D. The second staff includes chords Bm, A, G, A. The third staff has chords D, A, D, A. The fourth staff features chords G, F#m, Em, A. The fifth staff includes chords D, A, D, G, A. The sixth staff concludes with chords G, A, Bm, A, D.

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Woodlands

Chord symbols: G, C, D, Am, D7

The Lass of Patty's Mill

Air or Reel

Chord symbols: G, A, D

The Galley Slave

Chord symbols: C, G, F, D, Am, Dm, Em, G, A, B

William Litten's Fiddle Tunes 1800-1802

Kissing and Flirting

Musical notation for 'Kissing and Flirting' in D major, 3/8 time. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff contains the melody with chords D, A, D, D, A, G. The second staff contains the accompaniment with chords D, C, D, A, D, Em, G. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Kiss in the Furz

Musical notation for 'Kiss in the Furz' in D major, 3/8 time. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff contains the melody with chords D, A, Bm, C. The second staff contains the accompaniment with chords G, D, A, G, D, A, G, D, A, C. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Jigg Poltaque

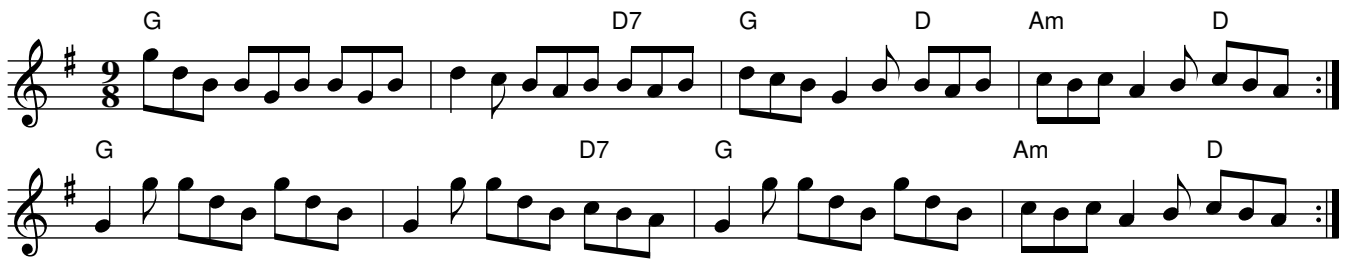
Musical notation for 'Jigg Poltaque' in D major, 3/8 time. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff contains the melody with chords A, G, A, E7. The second staff contains the accompaniment with chords A, G, A, E7. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Hey My Nancy

Musical notation for 'Hey My Nancy' in D major, 3/8 time. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff contains the melody with chords D, A, D, G, A, D. The second staff contains the accompaniment with chords D, A, D, A, D, A, G, A, D. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

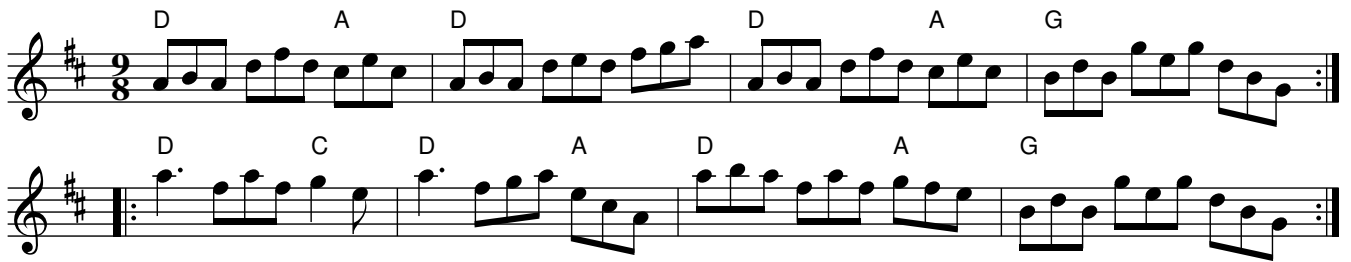
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Lummdon



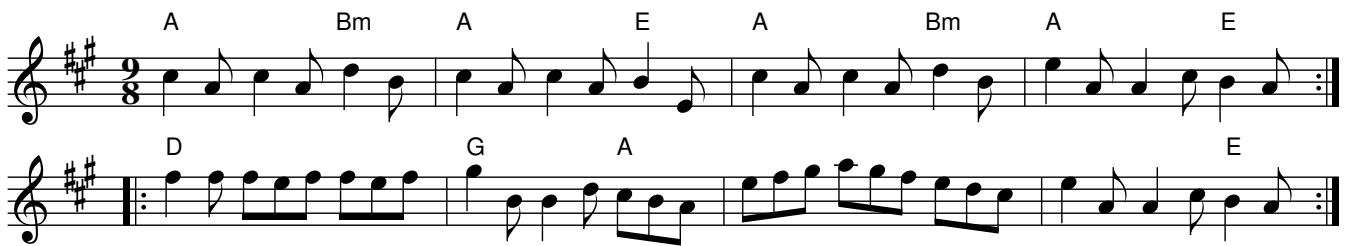
Musical notation for the fiddle tune "Lummdon". It consists of two staves in G major and 3/8 time. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: G, D7, G, D, Am, D on the first staff, and G, D7, G, Am, D on the second staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Kissing and Drinking



Musical notation for the fiddle tune "Kissing and Drinking". It consists of two staves in D major and 3/8 time. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The second staff has a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, A, D, D, A, G on the first staff, and D, C, D, A, D, A, G on the second staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Fox Hunters Jigg



Musical notation for the fiddle tune "Fox Hunters Jigg". It consists of two staves in D major and 3/8 time. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The second staff has a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: A, Bm, A, E, A, Bm, A, E on the first staff, and D, G, A, E on the second staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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