TONY'S TUNEBOOK

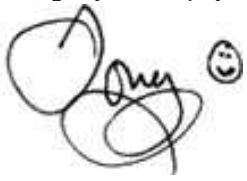
July 19, 2005

About This Tunebook

This tunebook is a collection of tunes I've written over the past few years. Not all the tunes I've written are in this book, but I've at least tried to put in the ones I think turned out the best out of the bunch.

Please feel free to make use of these tunes for your own personal enjoyment. If you are interested in recording any of these tunes (why would you want to do that??), all I ask is that you let me know first and that you credit me as the composer of whichever tune(s) you're using.

I hope you enjoy these tunes!



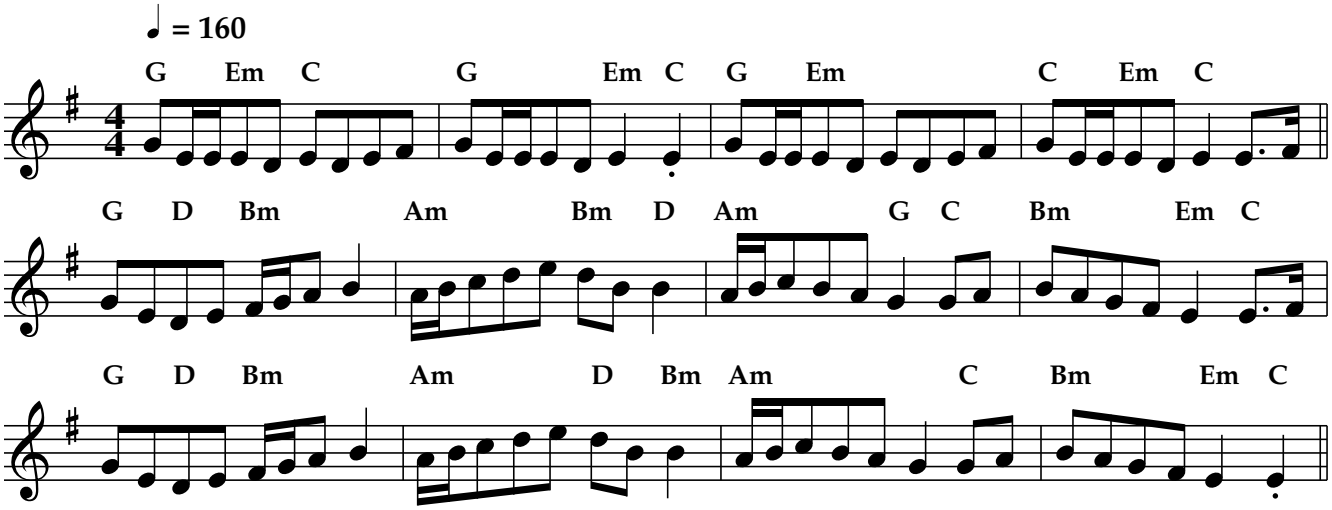
Tony Upton

BRETON TUNES

An deiz ha bloazh (The Birthday)
An dro
Gouere (July)
Untitled #1
Untitled #2

An deiz ha bloazh
(The Birthday)

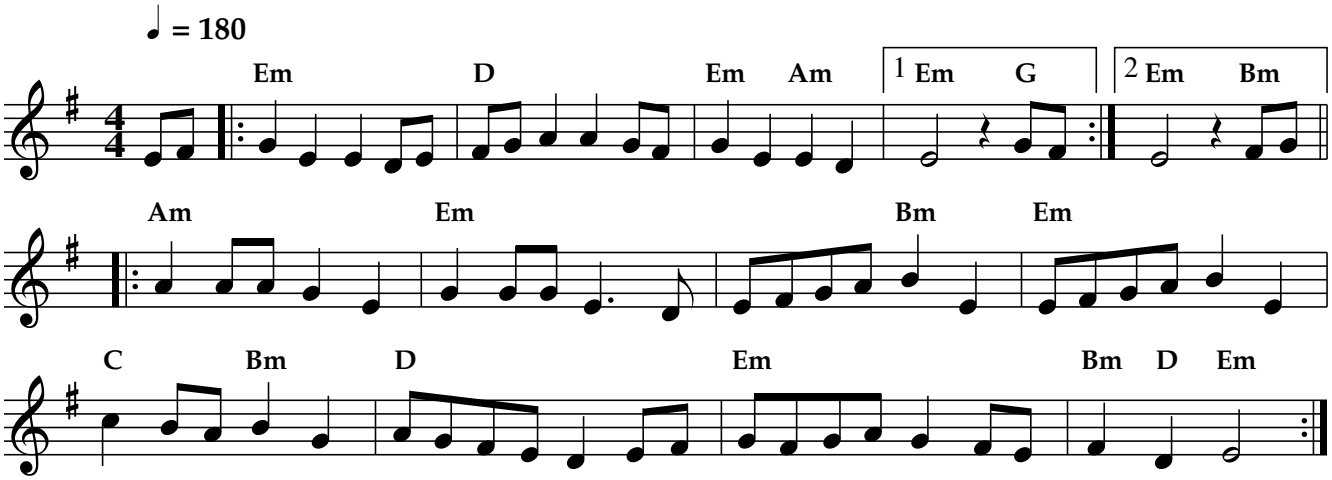
Tony Upton, 7/26/01
dañs plin



This tune got its name because it was composed on my 25th birthday.

An dro

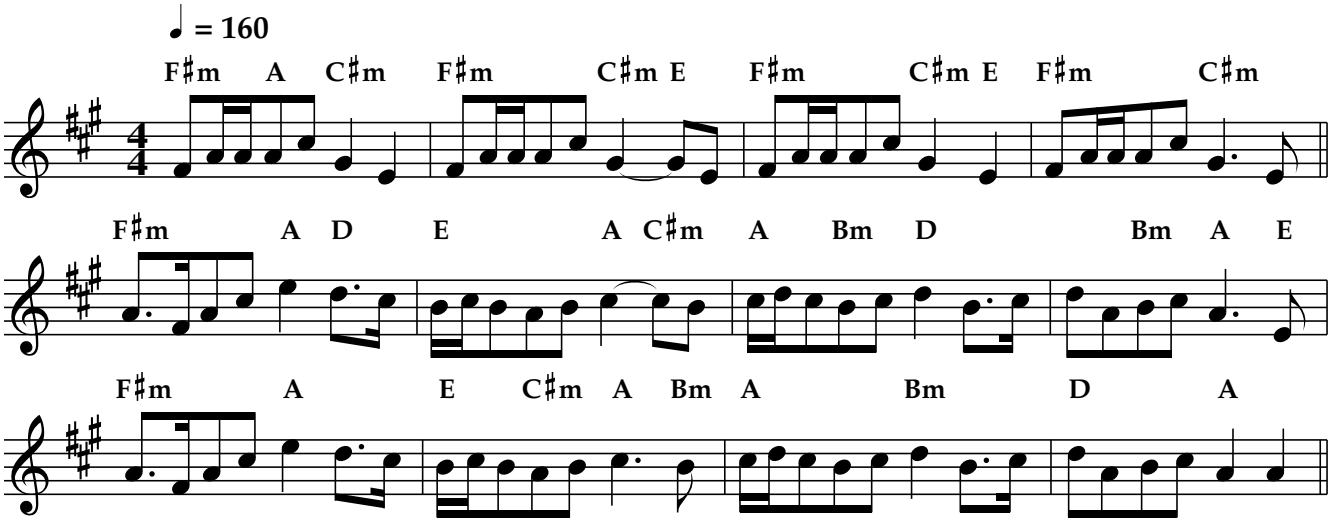
Tony Upton, 5/25/02
an dro



This tune, which doesn't have a name yet, reminds me a bit of a modern tune ("War Hent Kerrigouarc'h") composed by Soïg Siberil.

Gouere
(July)

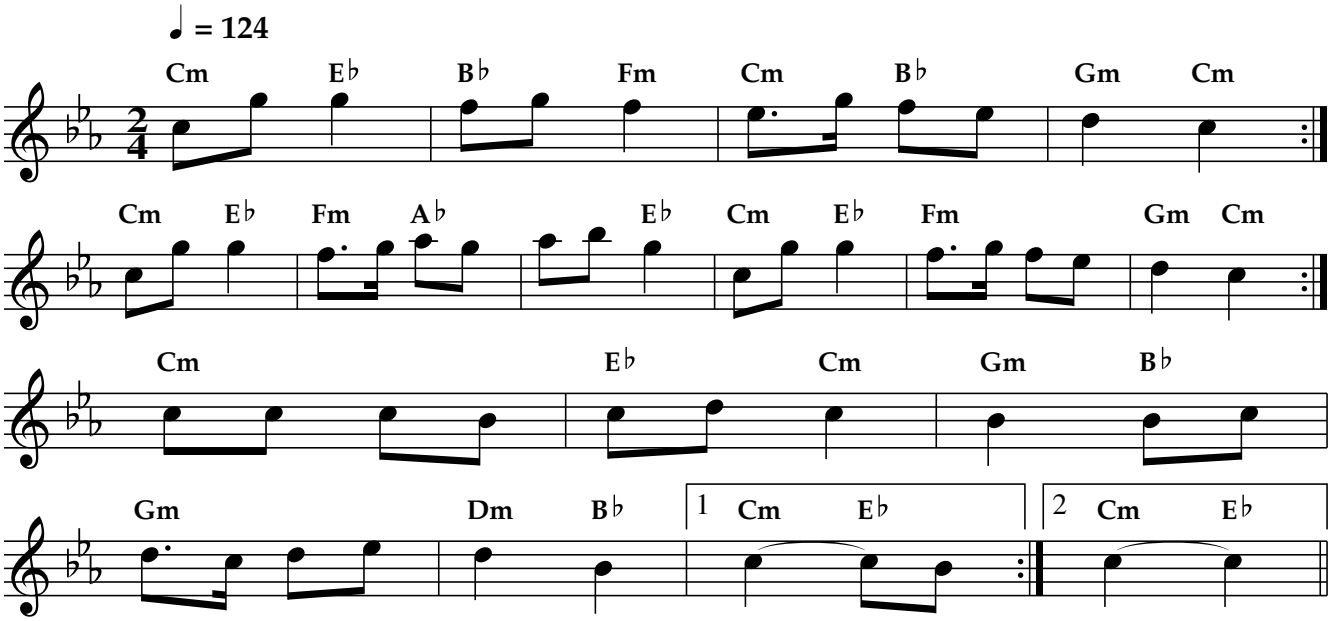
Tony Upton, 7/28/01
dañs plin



I named this tune for the month in which it was composed.

Untitled

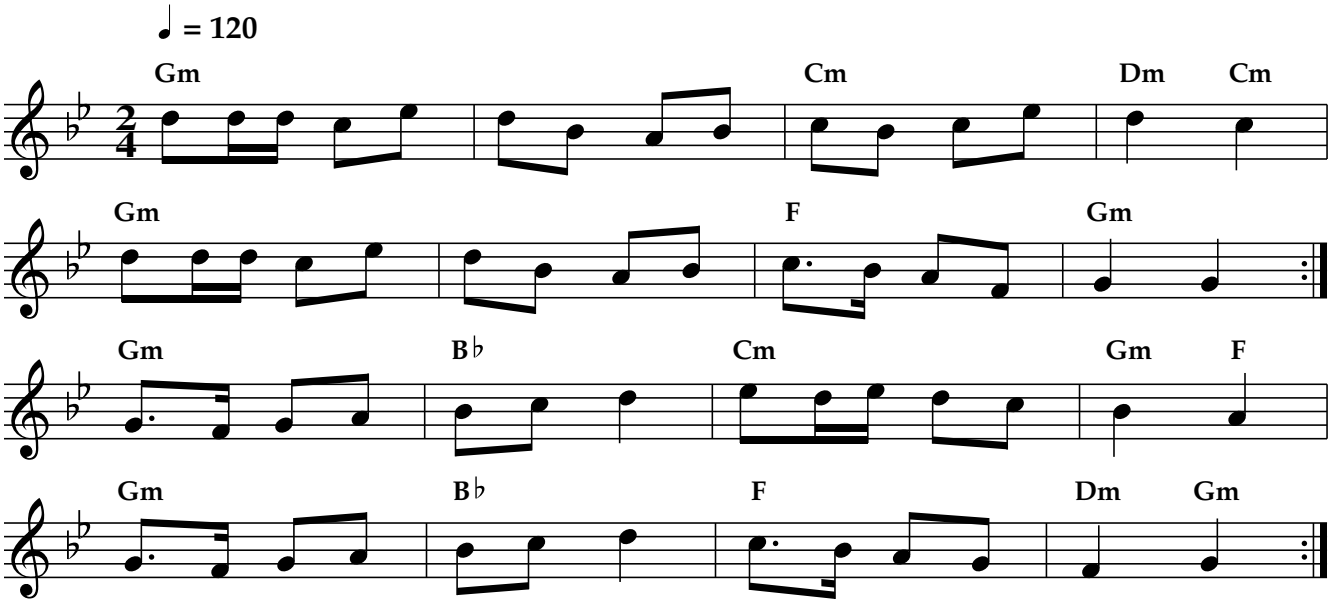
Tony Upton, 11/16/02



This tune started out as an extra part to a traditional Breton tune that I was working with, and it evolved into a completely separate tune.

Untitled

Tony Upton, 12/31/02



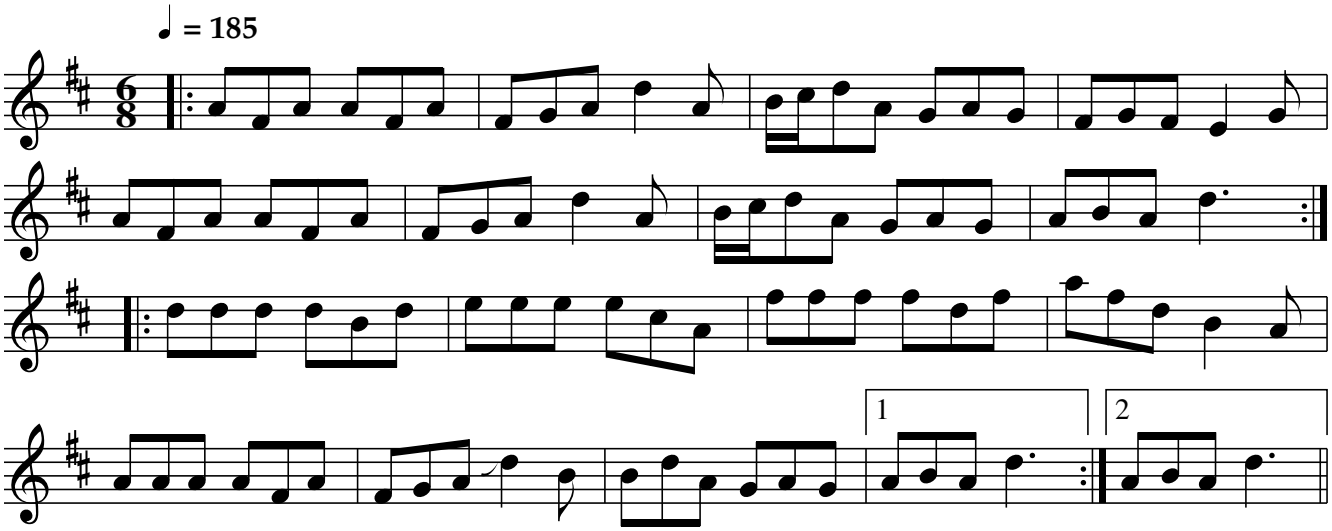
I'm not sure what inspired this tune, but here it is!

"CAROLAN–STYLE" TUNES

Planxty Hines

Planxty Hines

Tony Upton, 9/7/98



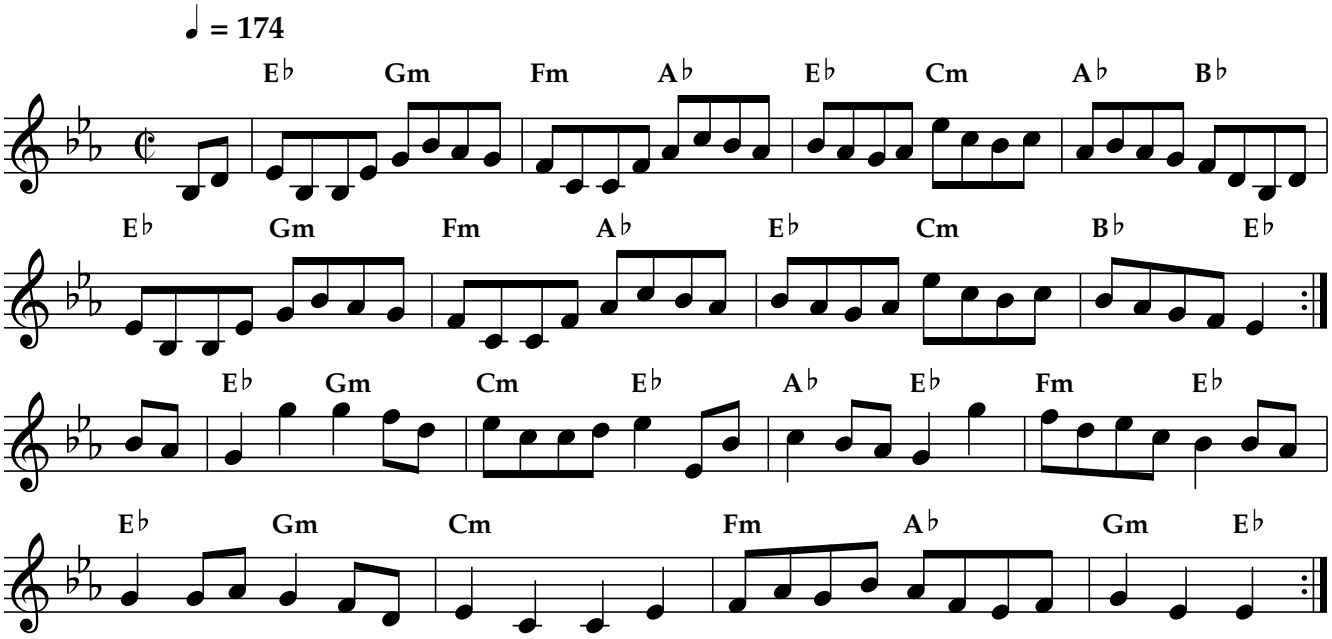
This tune in the style of Turlough O'Carolan was written for a friend of mine (the same one for whom "Amber's Jig" was written).

HORNPIPES

Blackwater Hornpipe
Compliments to Natalie MacMaster
Cows in the Cornfield (added September 14, 2003)
The Flowers of Pittsburgh
Philadelphia Hornpipe
Union Station

Blackwater Hornpipe

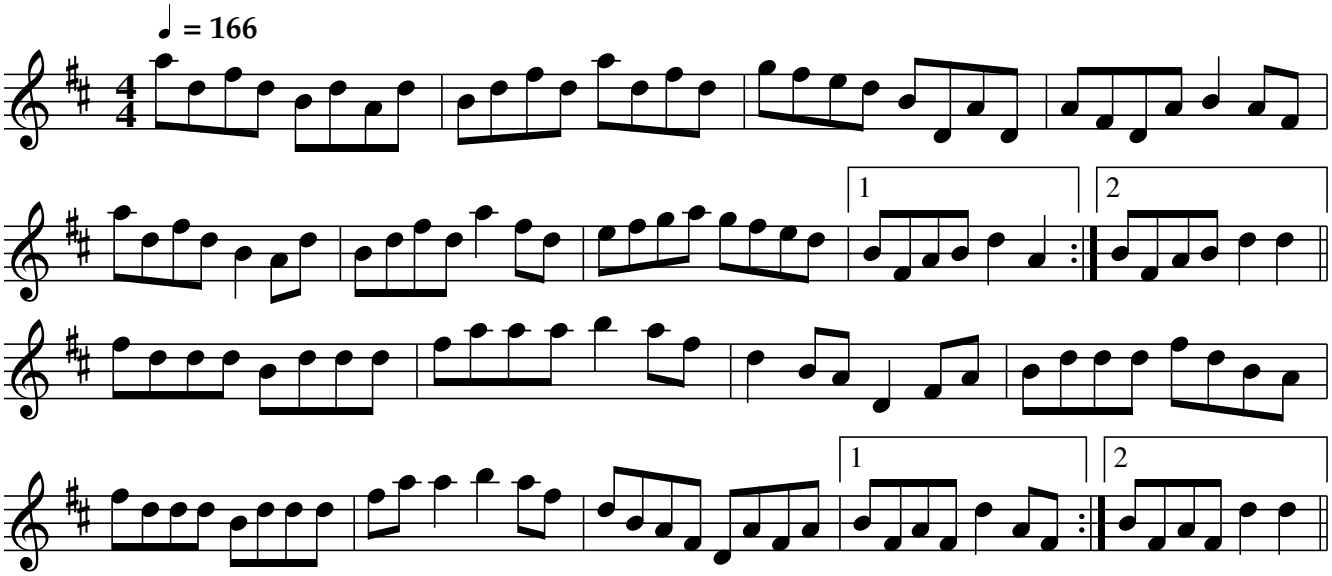
Tony Upton, 8/15/02
hornpipe



This tune is named for the Blackwater River, which forms the western boundary of Isle of Wight County, Virginia. As you might imagine, the river gets its name from the color of its water. The water is very dark because of the leaves that fall off the trees and decompose, creating tannic acid which is naturally a dark brownish color. After flowing south past the city of Franklin, the Blackwater River meets up with the Nottoway River to become the ChowanRiver at the border between Virginia and North Carolina.

Compliments to Natalie MacMaster

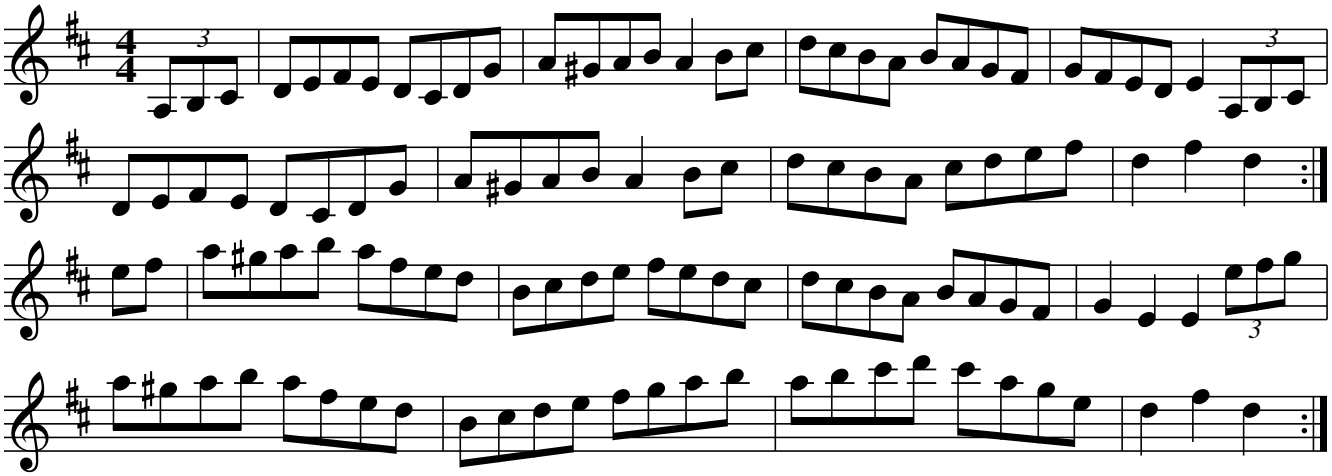
Tony Upton, 3/26/98
hornpipe



This tune got its name because of a Christmas card I got from Natalie a few years ago. At the time, I had recently purchased a CD called "Celtic Legacy" which has some of her music on it. After hearing it, I decided I'd like to hear more of her music. So, I wrote her a letter, and she sent me a Christmas card with her reply since it was around that time of year. That's the story!

Cows in the Cornfield

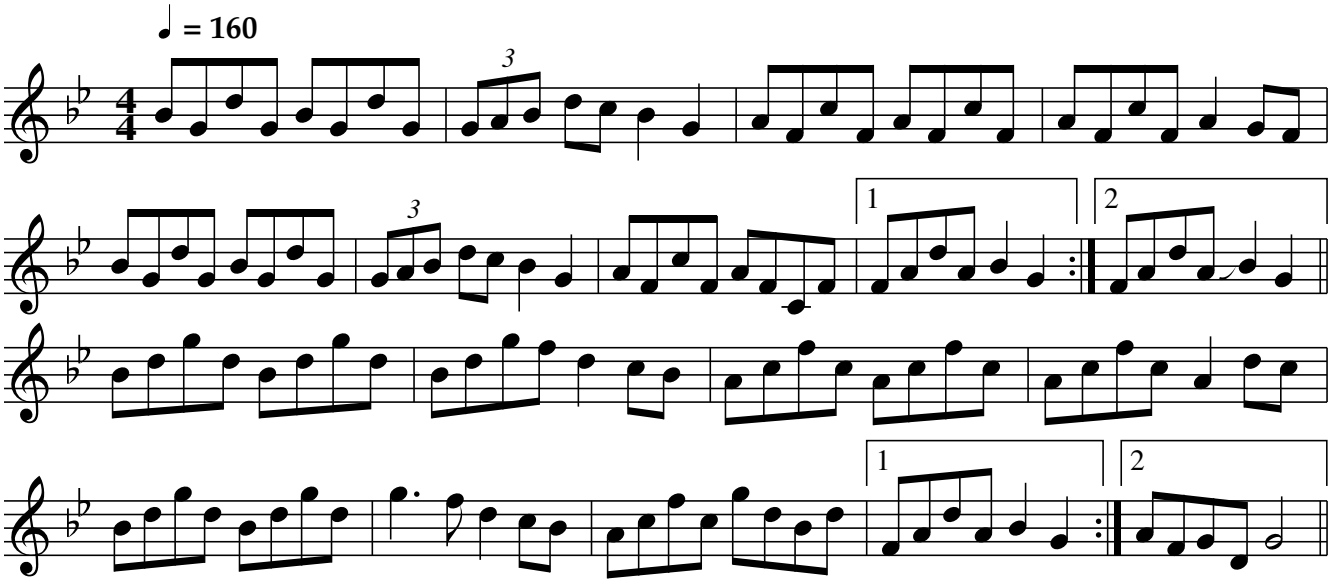
Tony Upton, 9/12/03
hornpipe



The name of this tune came to mind as I was walking down a road near my house which goes between a couple of corn fields. All the corn in one of the fields had been harvested already, and the field was full of cows who were happily making a meal of the bits and pieces left behind.

The Flowers of Pittsburgh

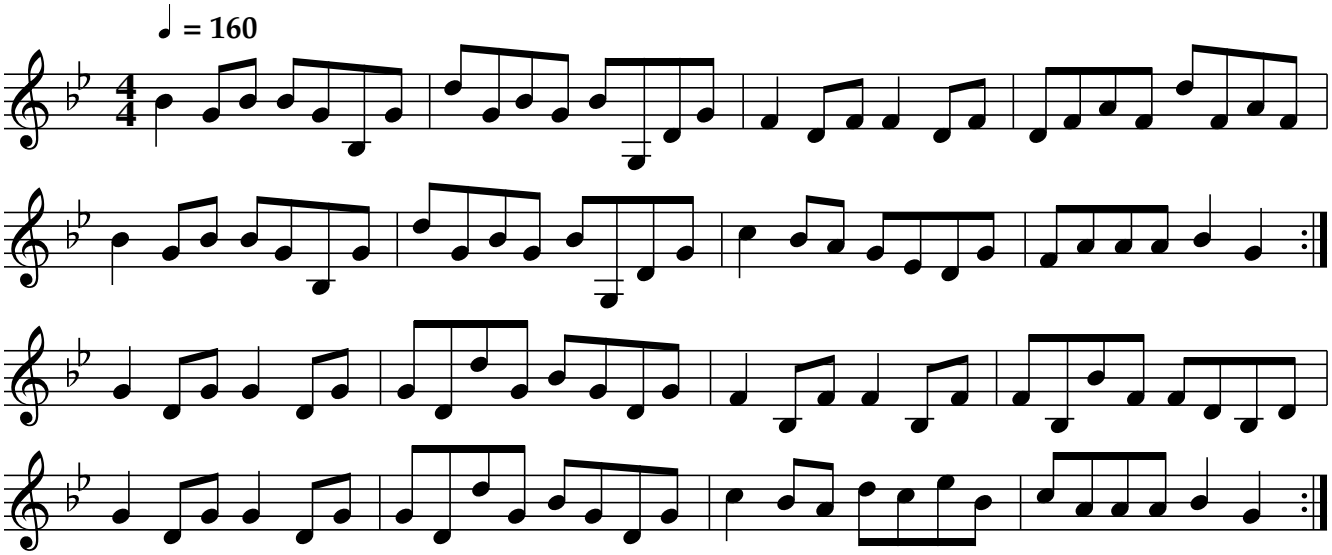
Tony Upton, 12/9/98
hornpipe



I really don't know where the idea for the name of this tune came from. If I ever figure it out, I'll be sure to put it here.

Philadelphia Hornpipe

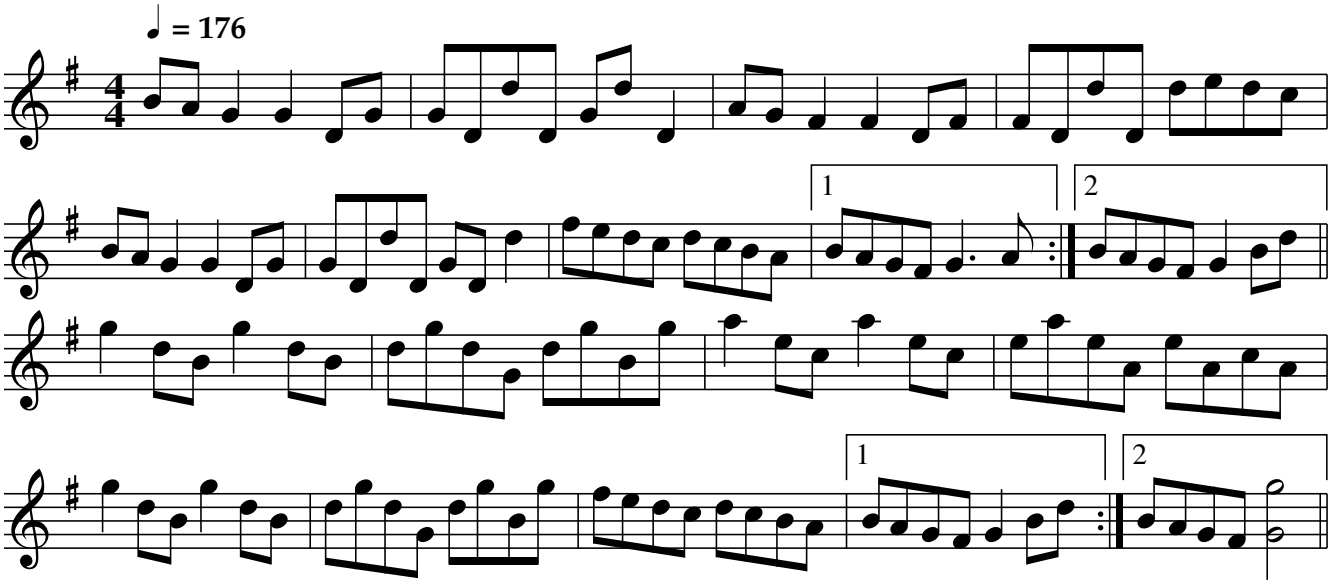
Tony Upton, 7/14/98
hornpipe



For some reason, this tune reminds me of the one time I visited Philadelphia. I was in college at the time, and I was part of a marching band that was in a Thanksgiving parade there. That trip would have been so much better if it hadn't been so cold!! It was about 20 degrees the morning of the parade, and even though I was wearing several pairs of gloves, my hands were extremely cold by the time we were done.

Union Station

Tony Upton, 8/17/98
hornpipe



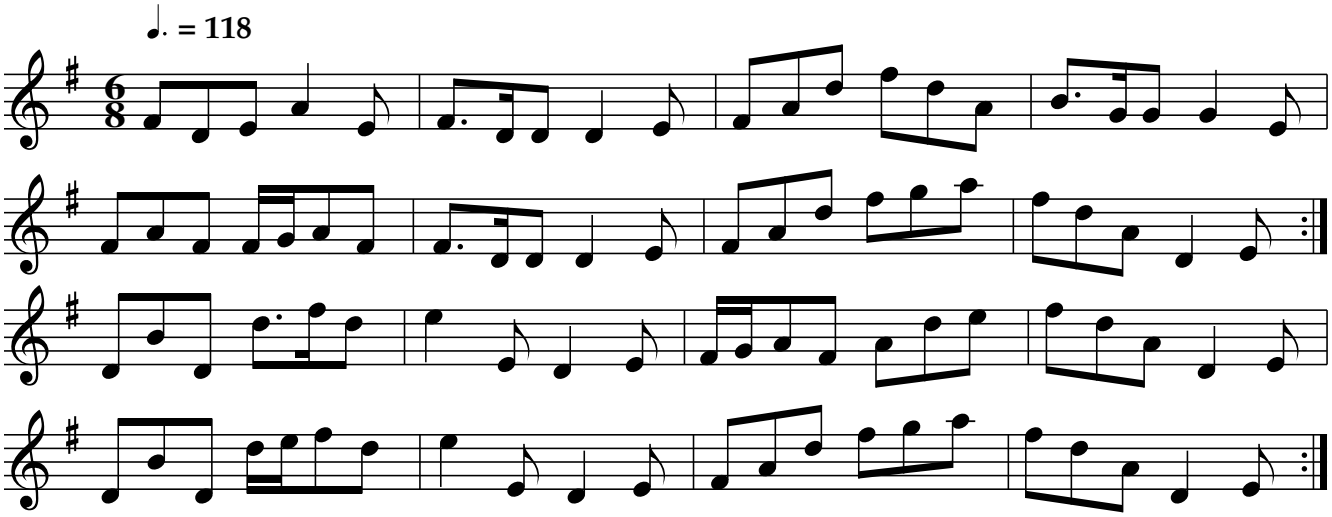
This tune was composed after the same trip that inspired "Trip to Alexandria." Union Station is the name of the train station in Washington, DC...although there's so much in Union Station that you could call it a small city of its own and not merely a train station. In fact, a couple of my favorite CD's came from there!

DOUBLE JIGS

Amber's Jig
Carnival Jig
Egan's Jig
Friday Night Jig (added March 27, 2004)
The Home Stretch
James River Jig
Maire Ni Chathasaigh's
Rambling in Circles
The Sunday Special (added July 19, 2005)
Whistlin' Around
Yellow Hammer Jig

Amber's Jig

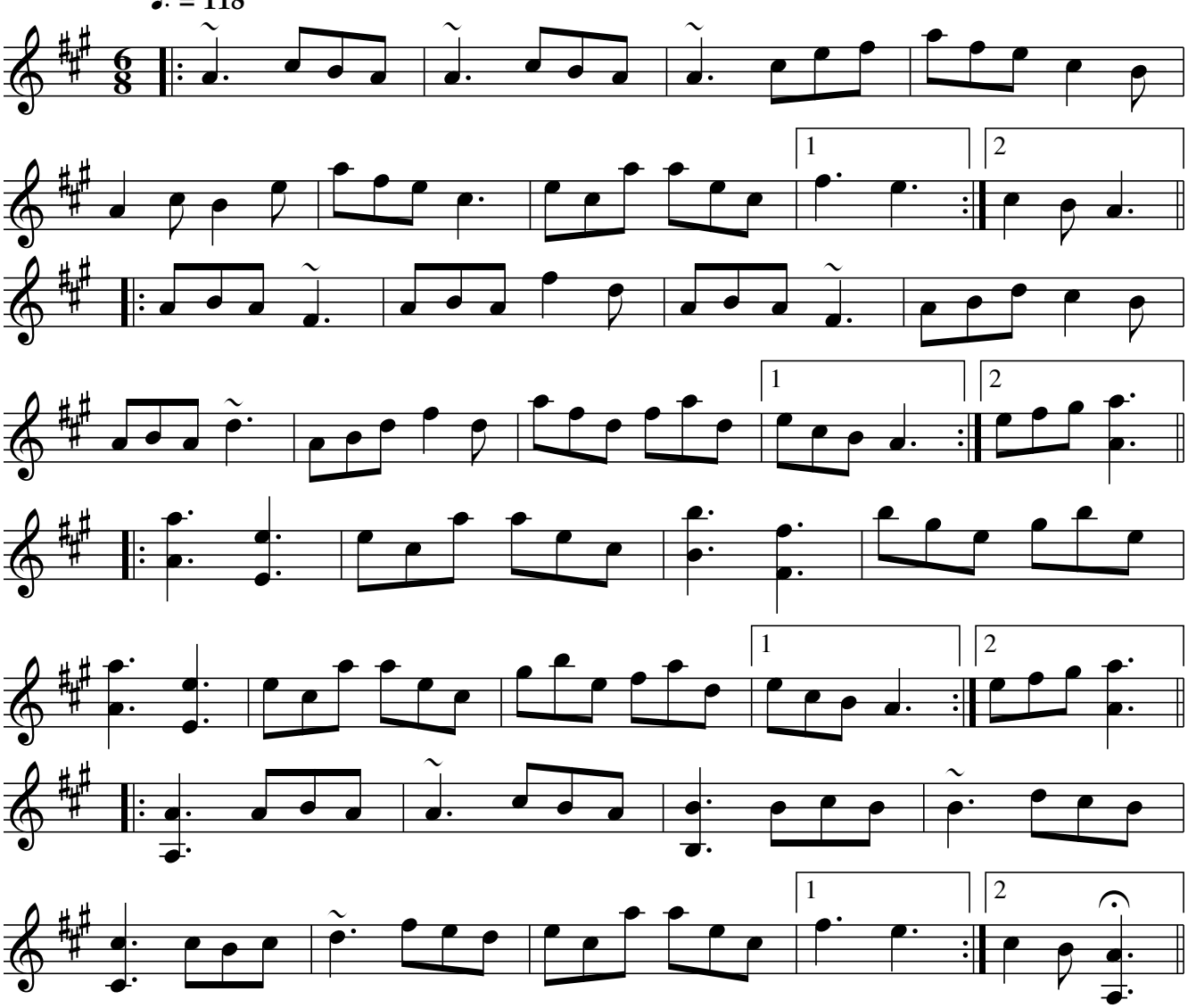
Tony Upton, 8/6/01
double jig



This tune was composed after a visit from a friend of mine who used to live down the street from me. By the way, this is the same friend for whom I composed "Planxty Hines."

Carnival Jig

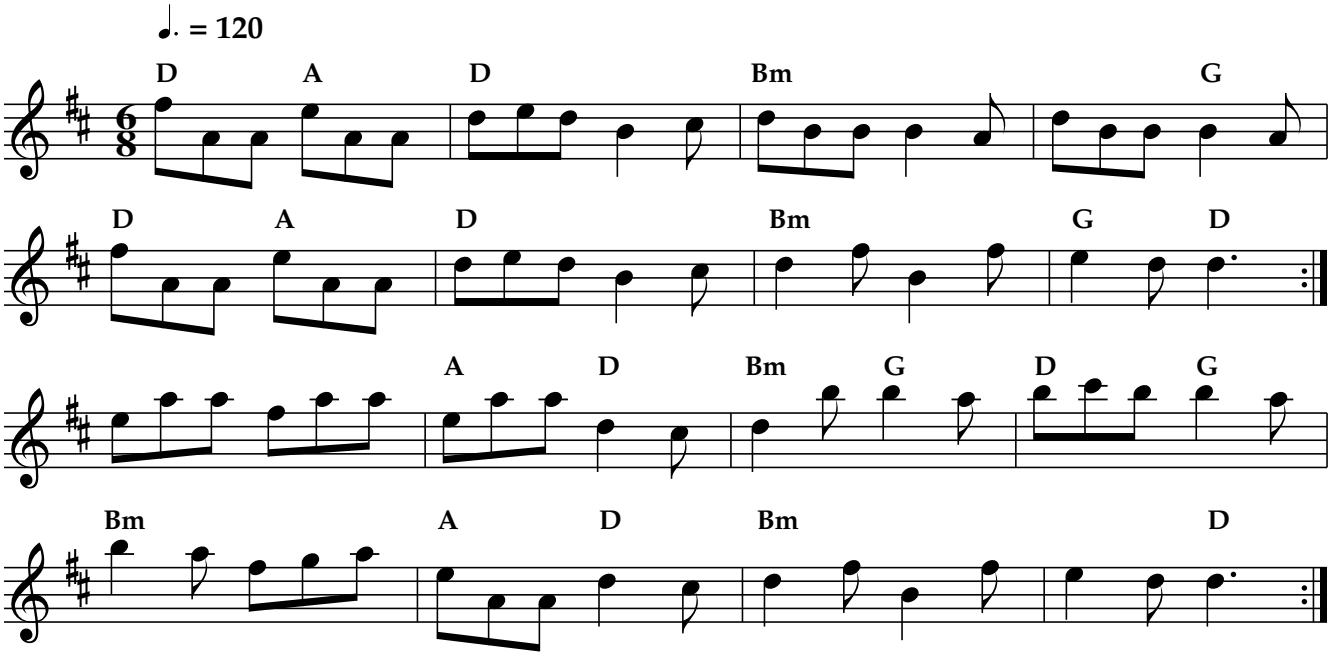
Tony Upton, 5/8/98
double jig



This tune is one of my earlier compositions. The title doesn't refer to any specific carnival – I just think this tune has the sort of upbeat, lighthearted feeling most people would get from being at a carnival.

Egan's Jig

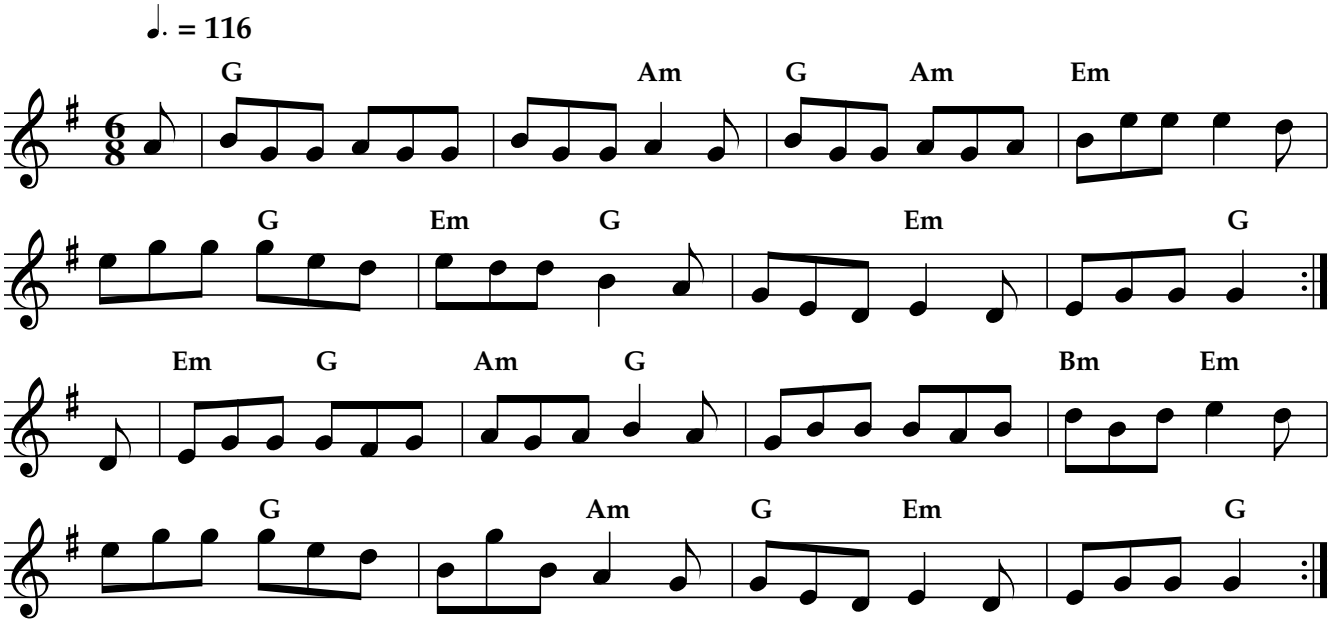
Tony Upton, 3/17/02
jig



This tune is a jig version of "Egan's Gone to Finland." I'd never thought of trying to turn a polka into a jig until I tried it with this tune, but I think it turned out fairly well.

Friday Night Jig

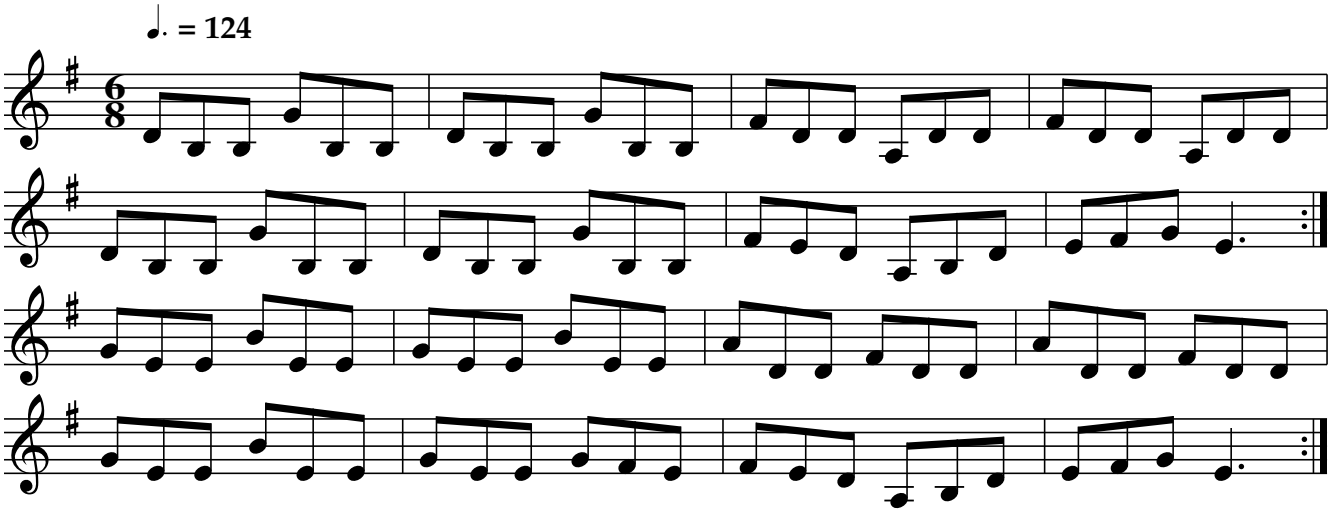
Tony Upton, 3/26/04
jig



The title for this tune is easy to explain...it was written on a Friday night!

The Home Stretch

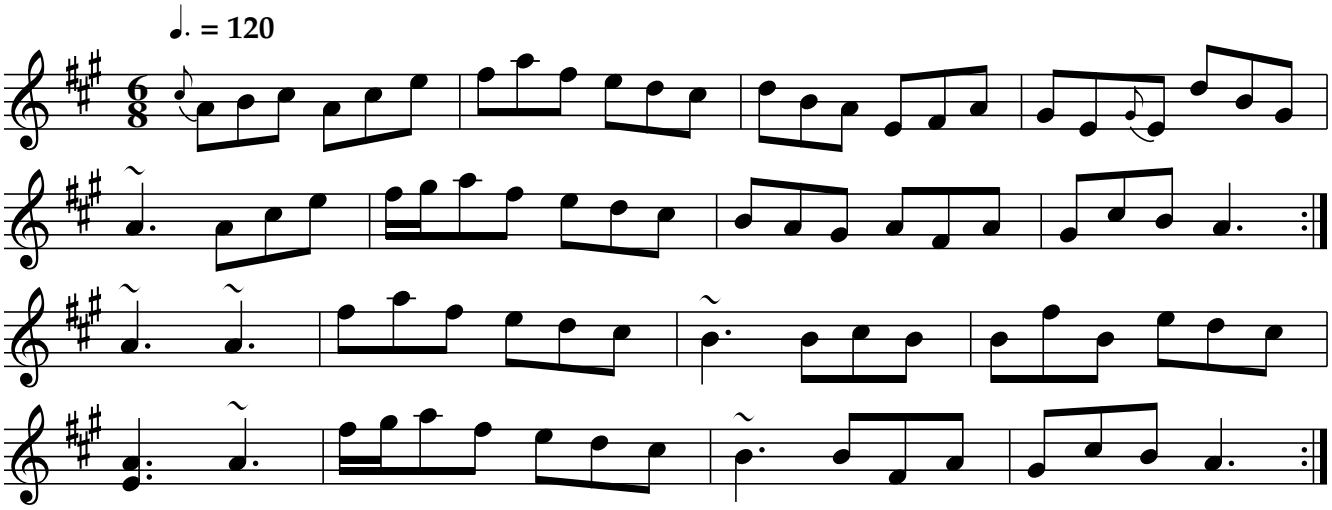
Tony Upton, 3/21/98
double jig



The name of this tune is a reference to my interest in running. As I'm coming to the end of a run, (or approaching "the home stretch," if you prefer) my heart and lungs are usually working at least as fast as this tune is.

James River Jig

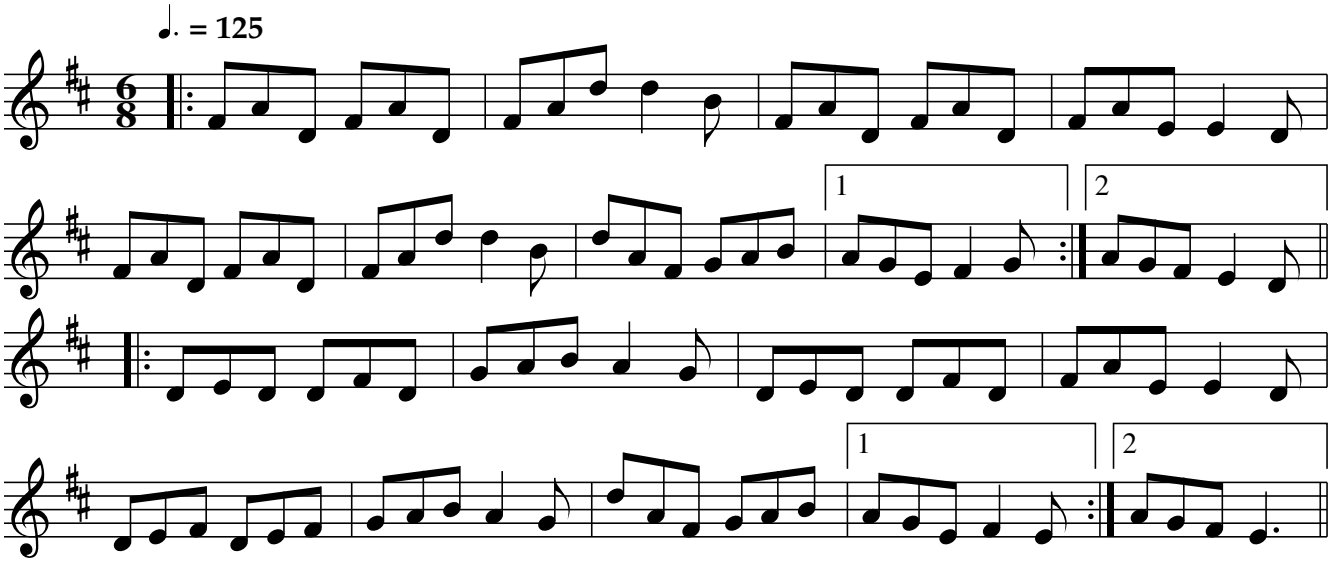
Tony Upton, 2/6/99
jig



This jig is named for the James River, which is Virginia's largest river. By the time it reaches southeastern Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay, it's about 5 miles wide.

Maire Ni Chathasaigh's

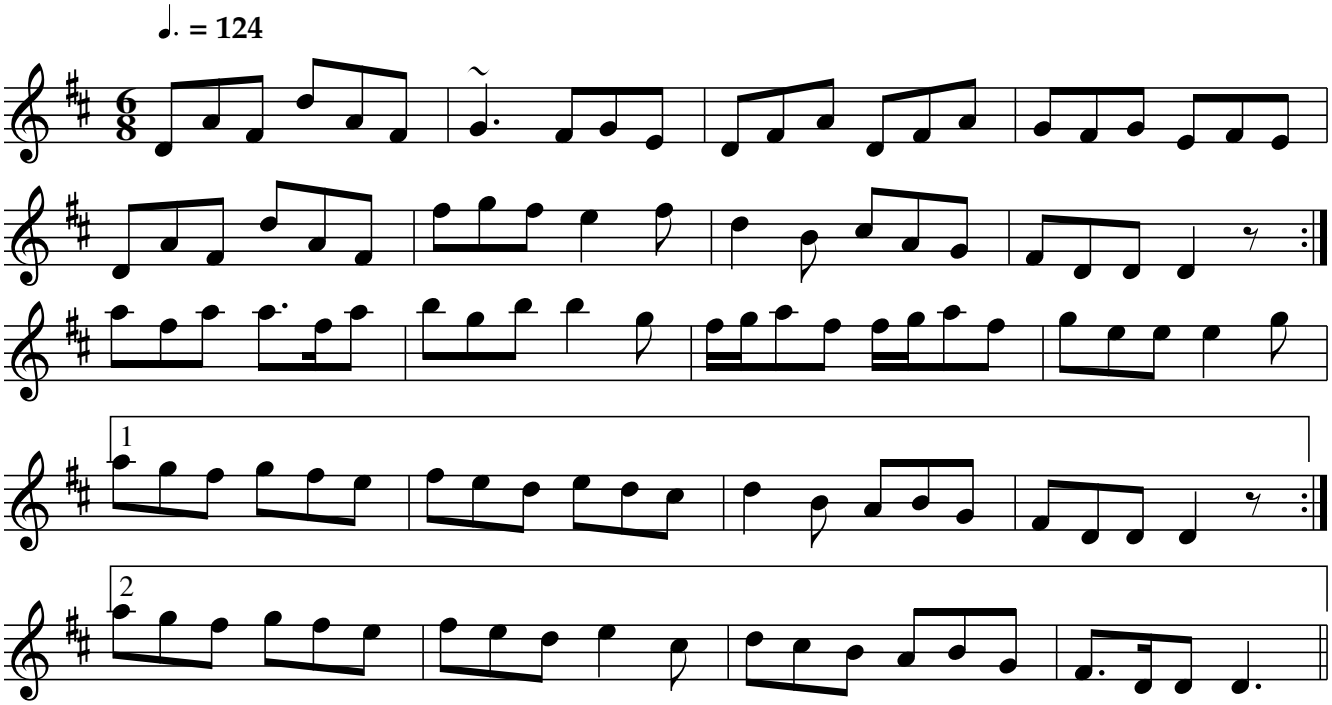
Tony Upton, 12/27/98
jig



This tune was intended to be played on the harp, although it might sound just fine on other instruments. It's named for an Irish harper who's pretty well–known.

Rambling in Circles

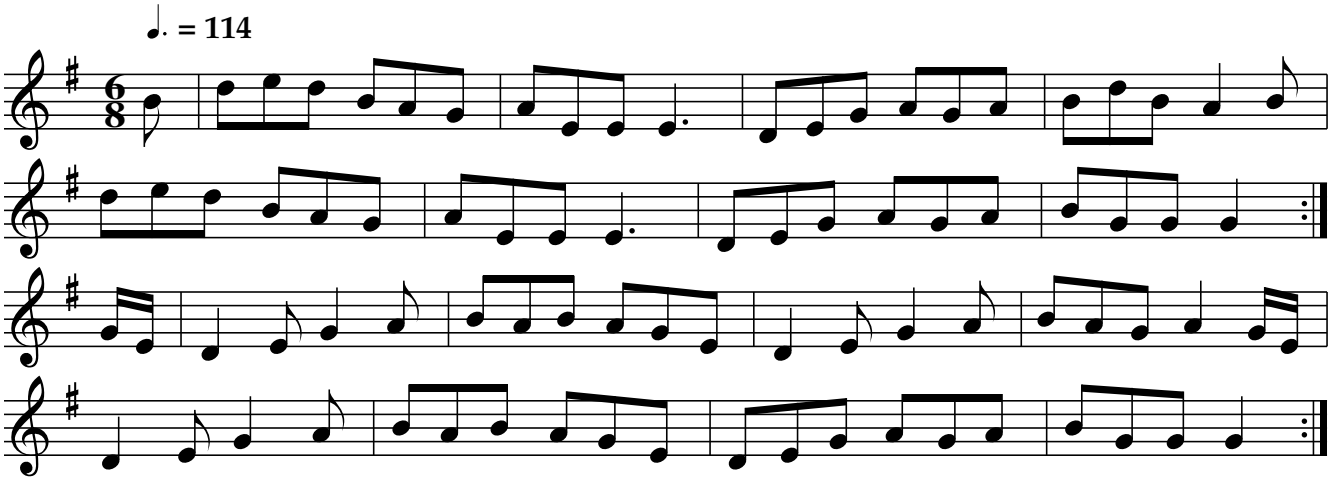
Tony Upton, 8/8/01
double jig



The title of this tune is a phrase that just miraculously popped into my head a couple of days before I wrote the tune.

The Sunday Special

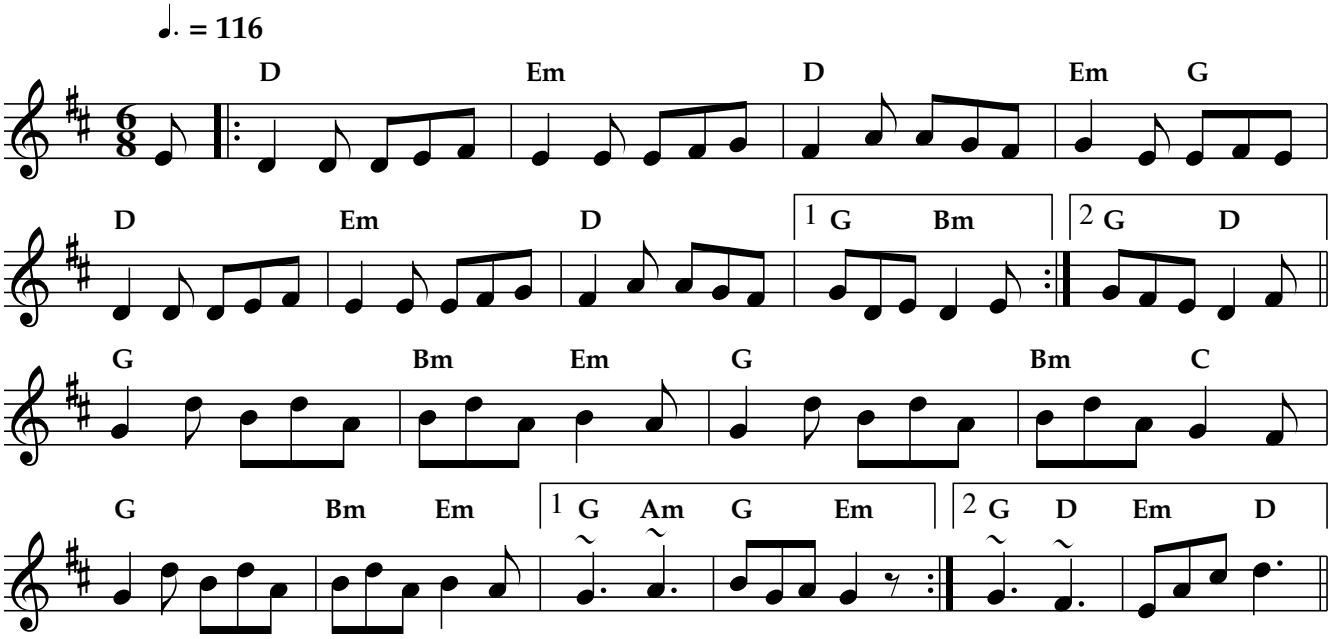
Tony Upton, 7/17/05
jig



The title of this tune is pretty easy to explain – it was composed on a Sunday, and it was pretty special because it was the first one I'd composed in quite a while. Even so, it seemed to come together rather quickly. So, since it was written on Sunday and it was special in some way, I decided to call it "The Sunday Special."

Whistlin' Around

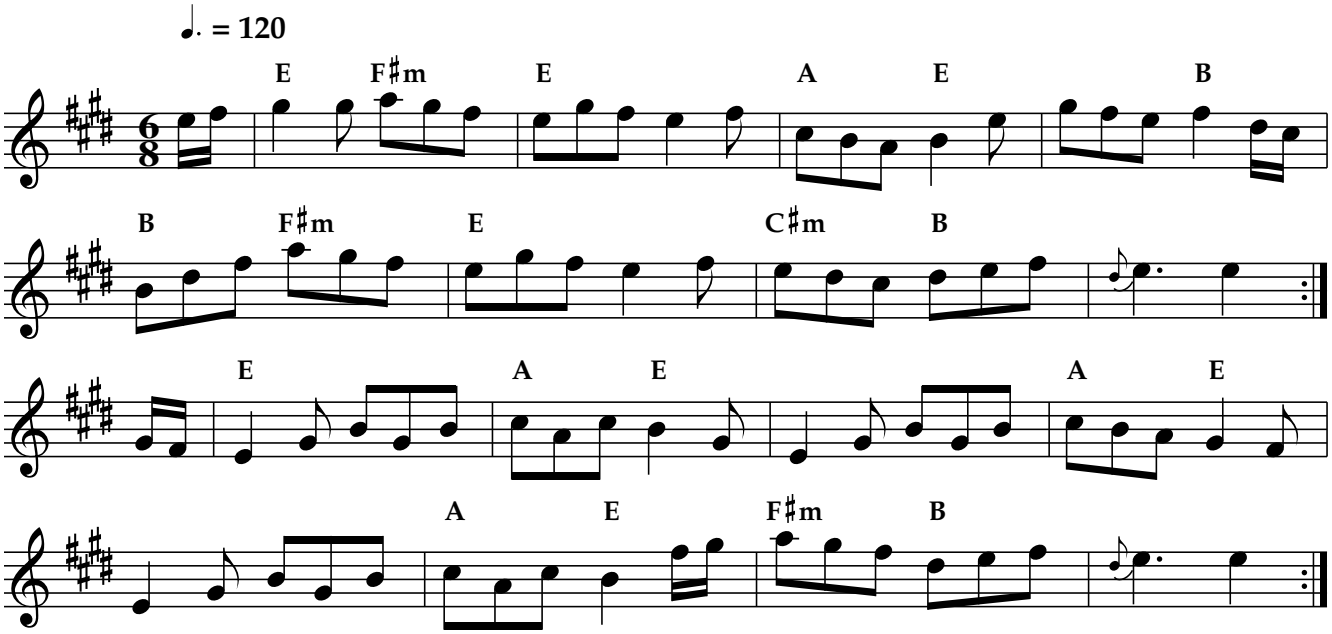
Tony Upton, 7/12/02
jig



This tune is named for what I was doing just before I wrote it – I was playing around on one of my tin whistles and trying to play a tune, when this one just started to come out instead.

Yellow Hammer Jig

Tony Upton, 10/24/02
jig



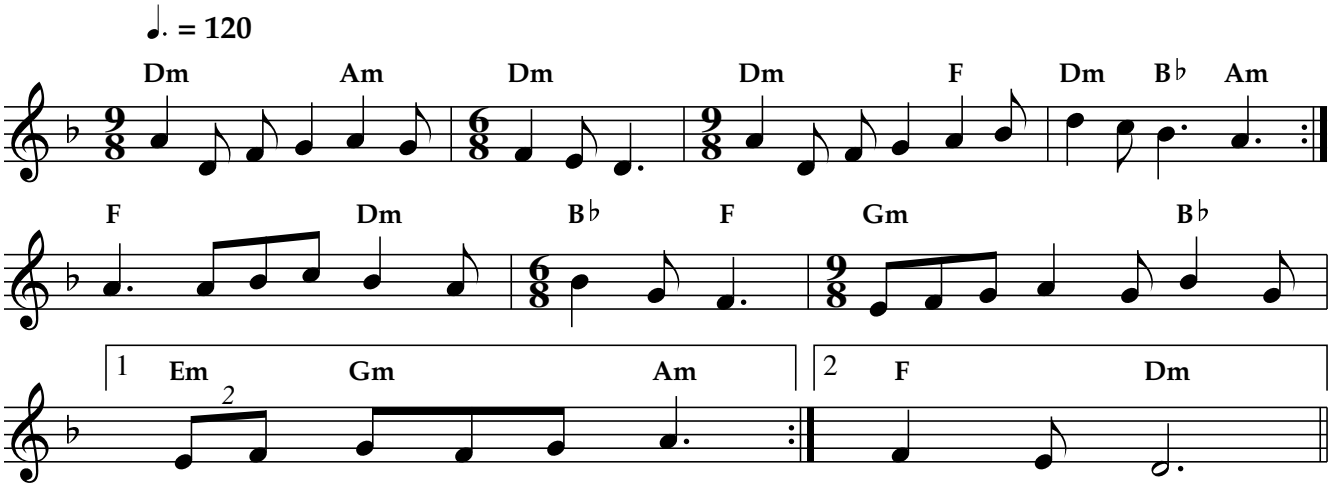
This tune is named for a road near Zuni, Virginia, a small town about 20 minutes southwest of Smithfield. When the roads in Isle of Wight County were finally named about 10 years ago, some roads were named after people (like Harry Wilson Road), some were named after the towns they pass through (like Central Hill Road), and some were named after geographical features they are close to (like Burwell's Bay Road). And then some were given names that make no sense at all...like Iron Mine Springs Road (which is not near an iron mine or a spring), and Yellow Hammer Road, the road for which this tune is named.

MARCHES

The Irregular March

The Irregular March

Tony Upton, 7/19/02



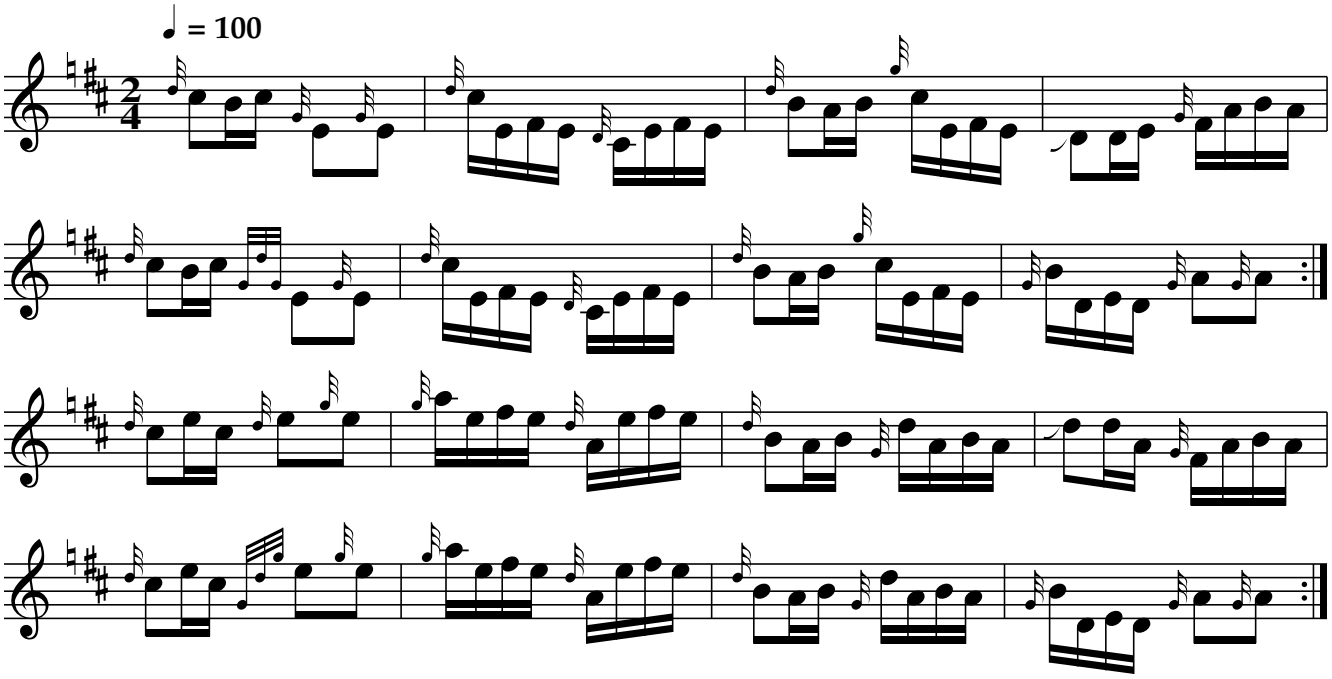
This tune, as its name implies, is rather irregular. I don't know what inspired it, but it's certainly one of my most unusual tunes.

POLKAS

The Devil and the Piper
Egan's Gone to Finland
Greenbrier Polka

The Devil and the Piper

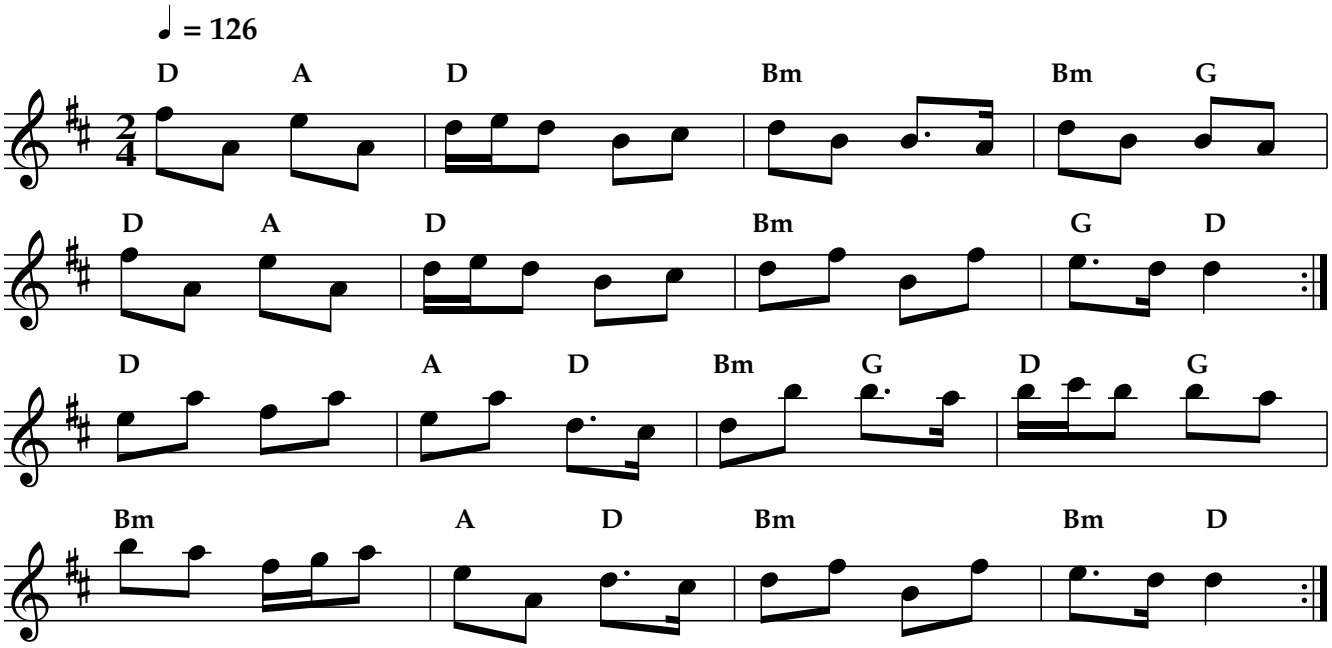
Tony Upton, 2/21/99
polka



This is a rather unusual tune – whenever I hear it I think of a piper who's been possessed by an evil spirit which makes him play tunes he doesn't even know.

Egan's Gone to Finland

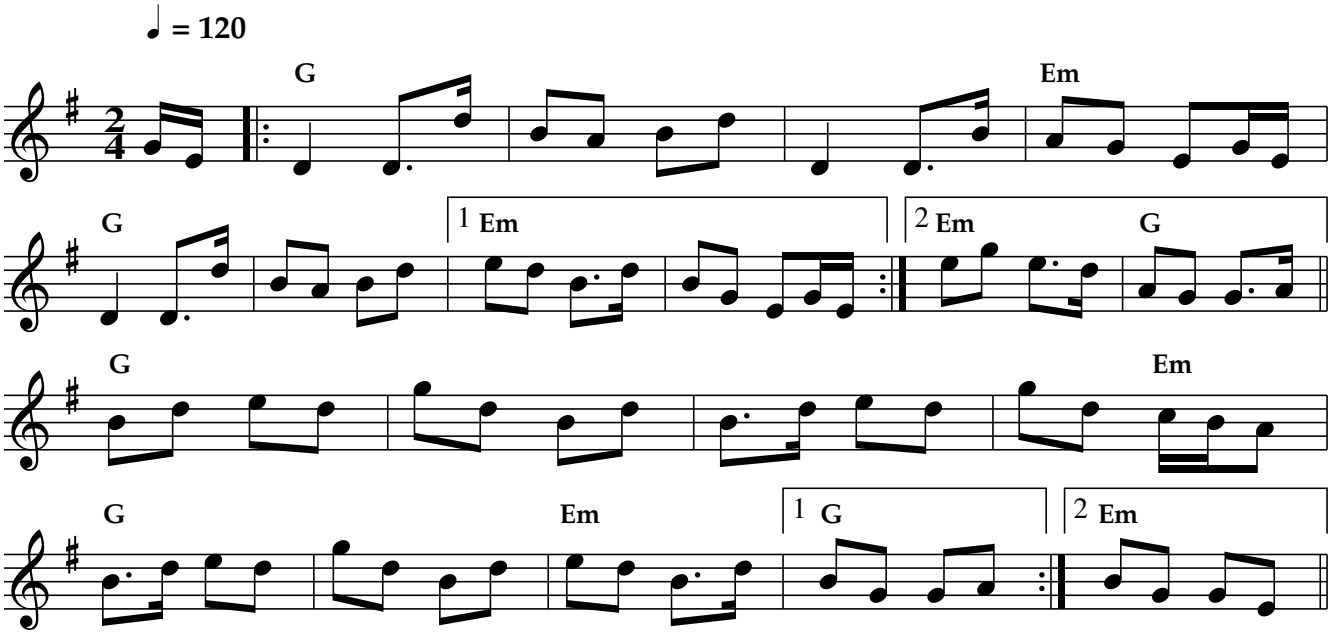
Tony Upton, 3/9/02
polka



The name of this tune comes from the fact that parts of this tune sound very similar to an Irish tune called "Egan's Polka," and other parts sound a bit like a polka from Finland played by Kevin Burke on his album "Up Close."

Greenbrier Polka

Tony Upton, 1/2/03
polka



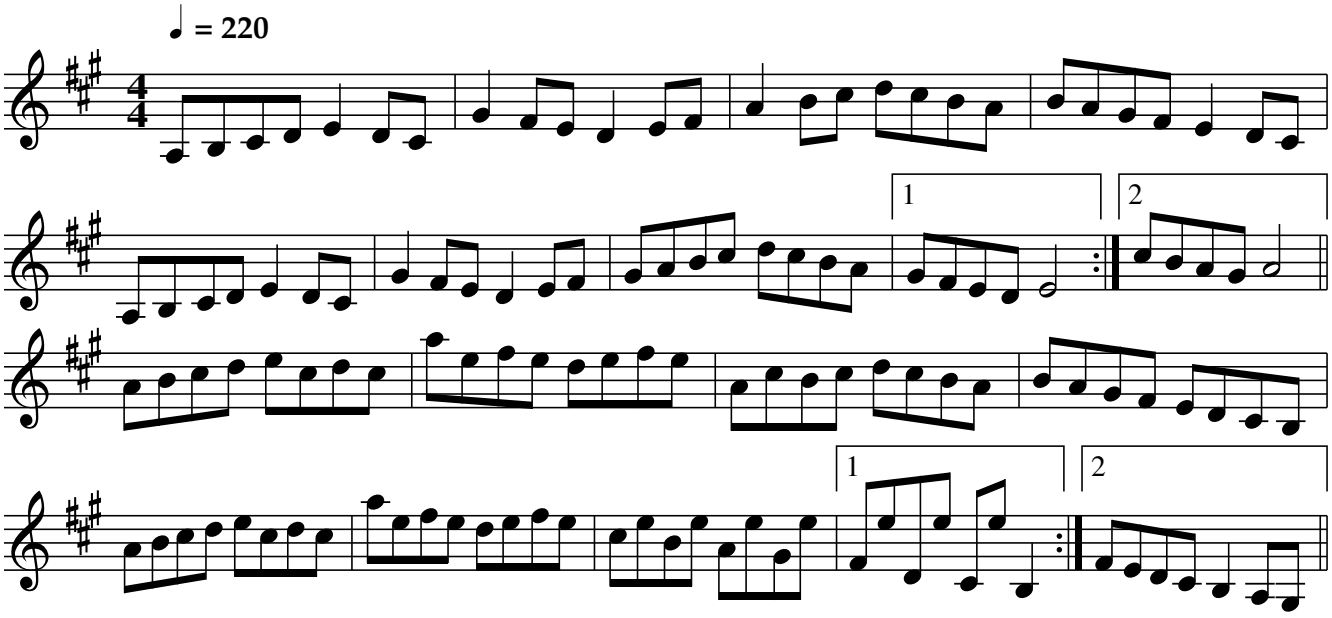
This tune is one that just started taking shape in my mind without me even trying to do it. It's named for a mall that I shop at on occasion.

REELS

Aly Bain's Favourite
Bach's Trip to Brittany
Battery Park Road
Fifteen
Gale Warning
Leahy's Broken Strings
The Rising Tide
The Trip to Rescue

Aly Bain's Favourite

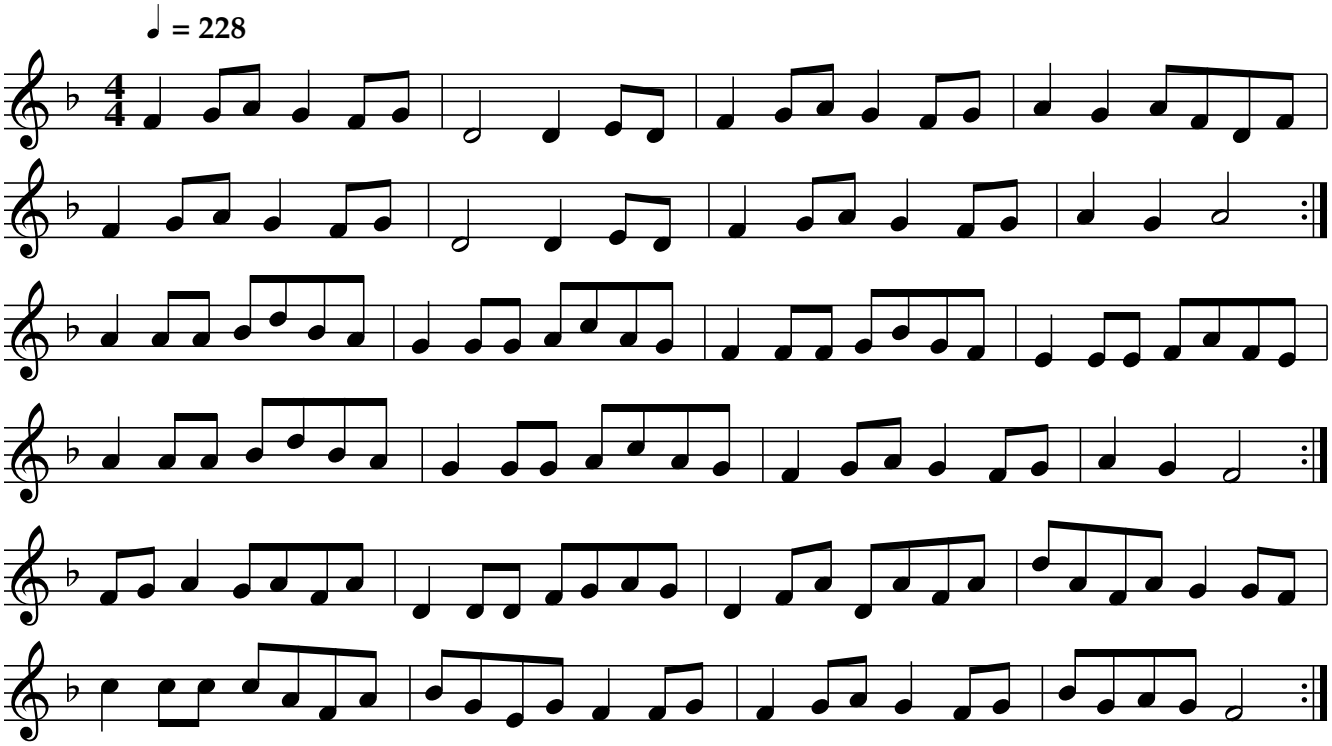
Tony Upton, 5/22/98
reel



This tune really doesn't have any connections with Aly Bain, the great Shetland fiddler. I honestly don't know why I gave this tune the name I gave it, but I did, and I'm not going to change it now!

Bach's Trip to Brittany

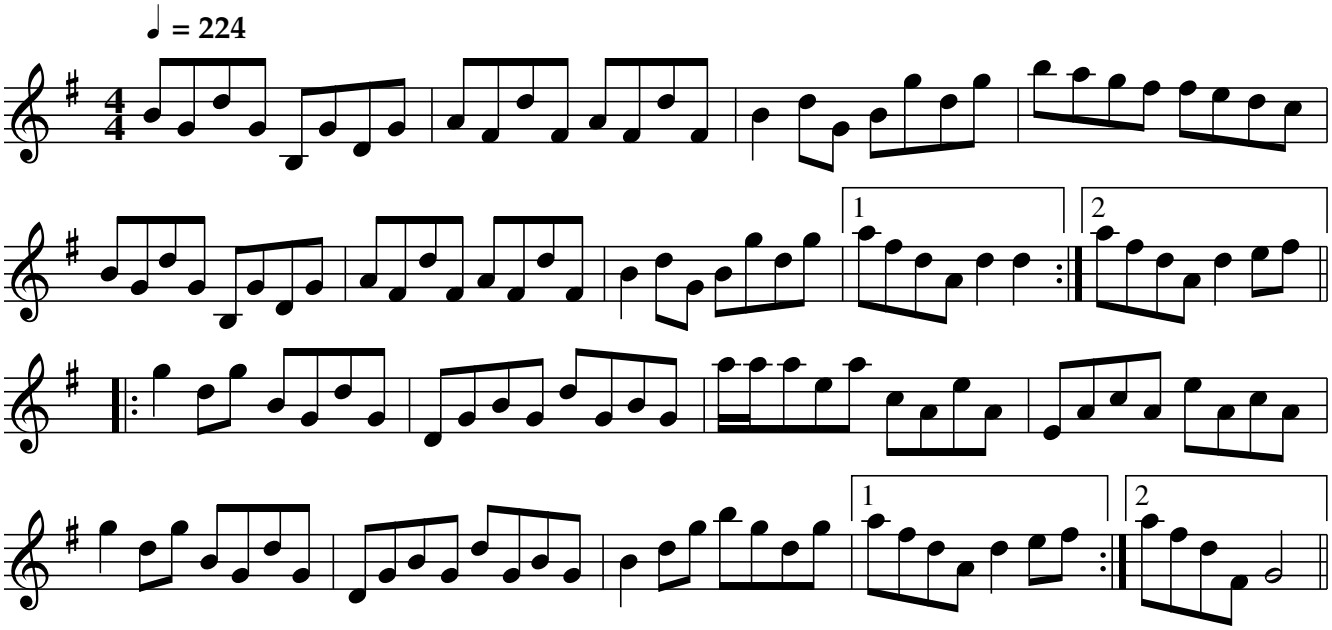
Tony Upton, 9/21/98
reel



This reel sounds like a strange mix of classical music and Breton music, so I tried to make sure the title was just as strange and mixed–up. (Well, maybe not strange...but certainly mixed–up.)

Battery Park Road

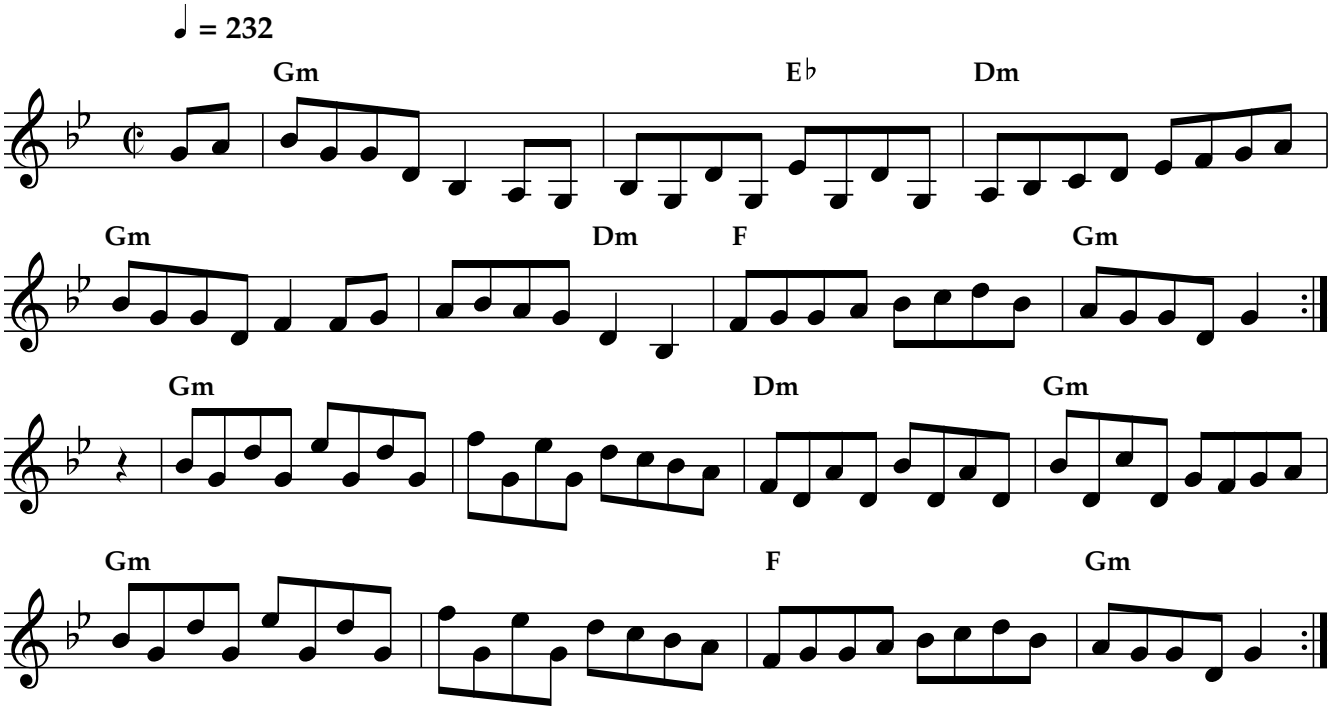
Tony Upton, 7/6/98
reel



This reel is named for a road which connects Church Street, one of the main roads in Smithfield, with Battery Park, a small village about five miles east of Smithfield. It's one of my favorite places to go on one of my bike rides.

Fifteen

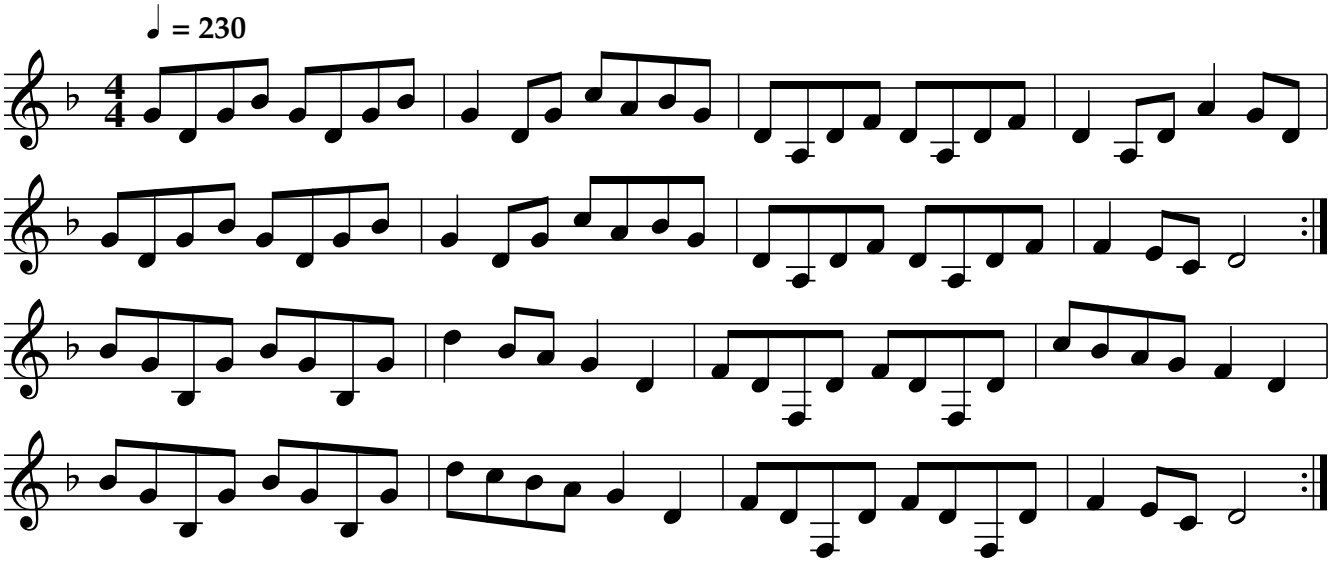
Tony Upton, 2/5/03
reel



If you take out the repeat signs, I think you'll find that the number of measures in this tune give it its name.

Gale Warning

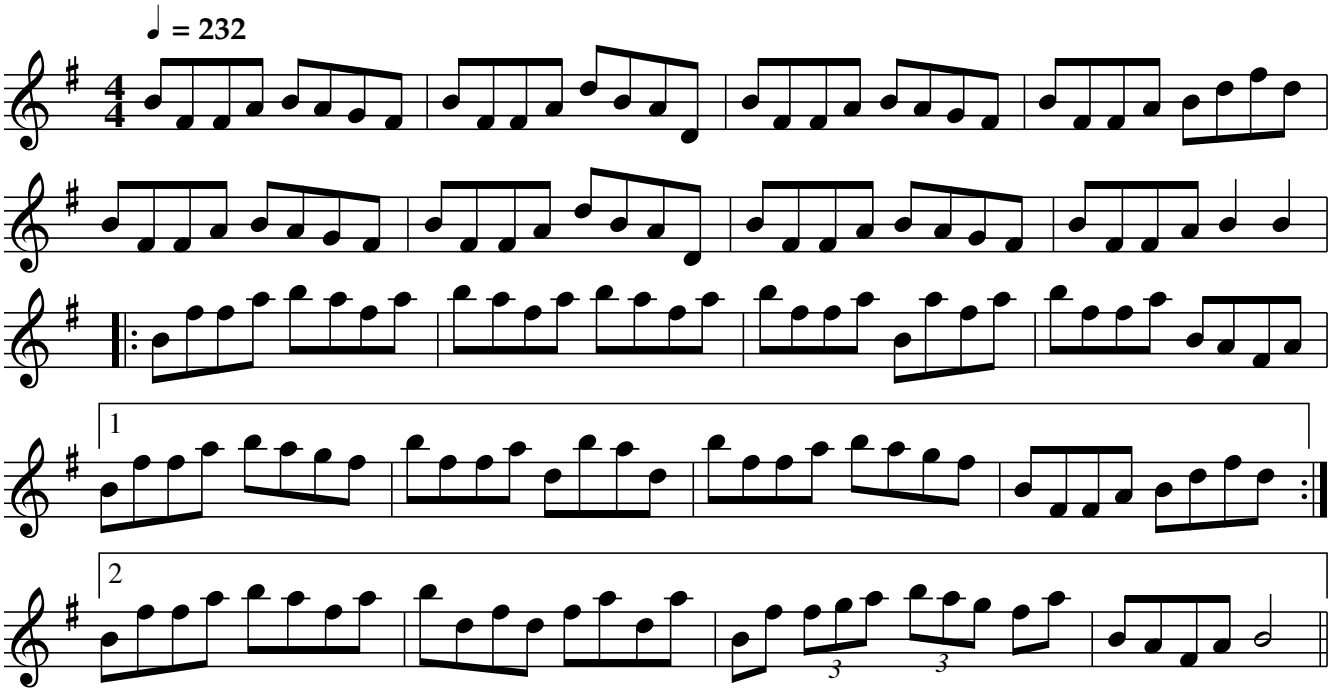
Tony Upton, 3/20/98
reel



This is one of my earliest compositions. I think it goes well with "The Rising Tide," another tune I wrote at about the same time, and "Tam Lin," a traditional Irish reel.

Leahy's Broken Strings

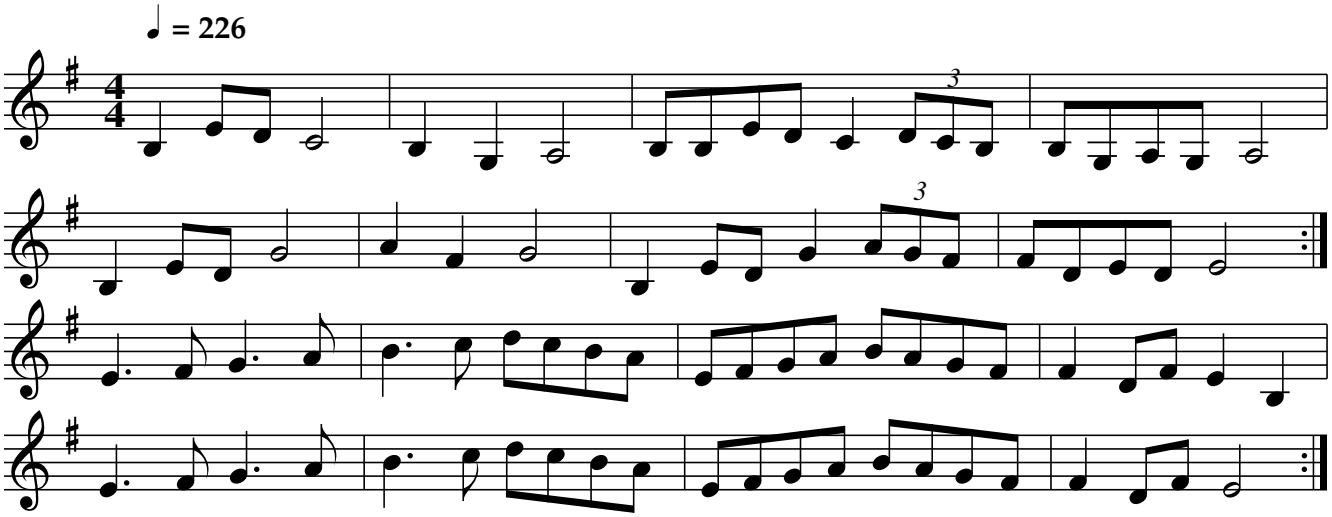
Tony Upton, 3/28/98
reel



This tune was inspired by the last five minutes of a Leahy concert I saw on TV a few years ago. I came home that night just in time to see the very end of it, but what I heard and saw then was enough to get me started on this tune.

The Rising Tide

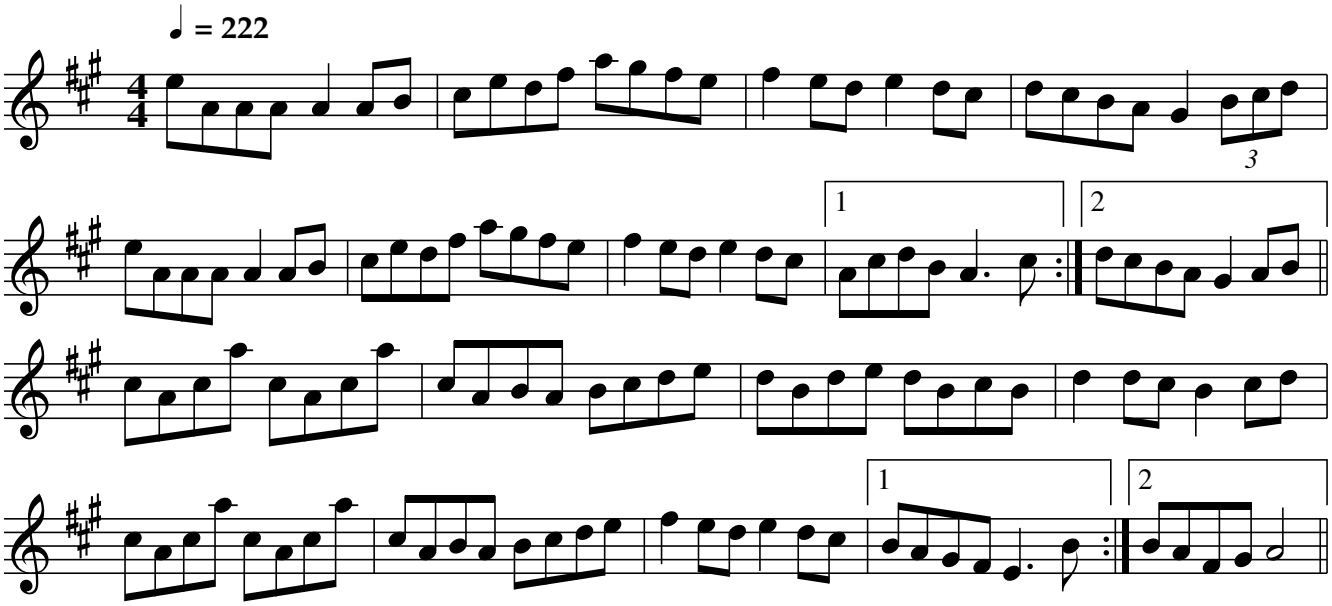
Tony Upton, 3/20/98
reel



This tune has sort of an ominous sound to it. I guess that's appropriate, since it describes what what happens around here whenever the wind blows out of the northeast for a few hours or so.

The Trip to Rescue

Tony Upton, 1/2/99
reel



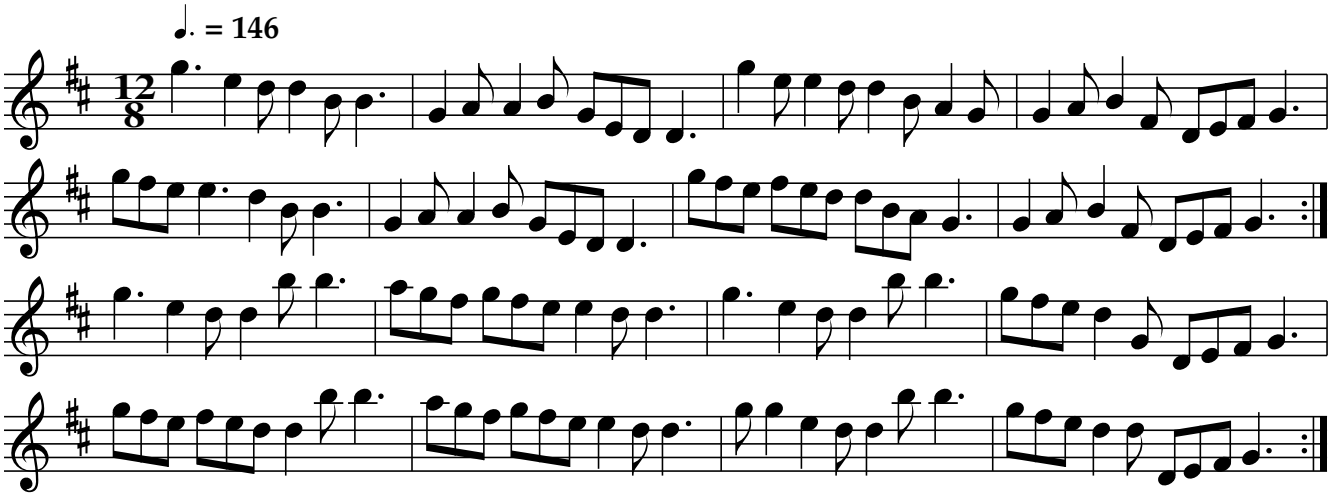
This tune is named for the trips I've taken on my bike to Rescue, a small village near the. James River. It's about a mile or so beyond Battery Park – in fact, after Battery Park Road reaches Battery Park, it turns into Rescue Road and goes on into Rescue.

SLIDES/SINGLE JIGS

The Back Road
The Rainy Morning

The Back Road

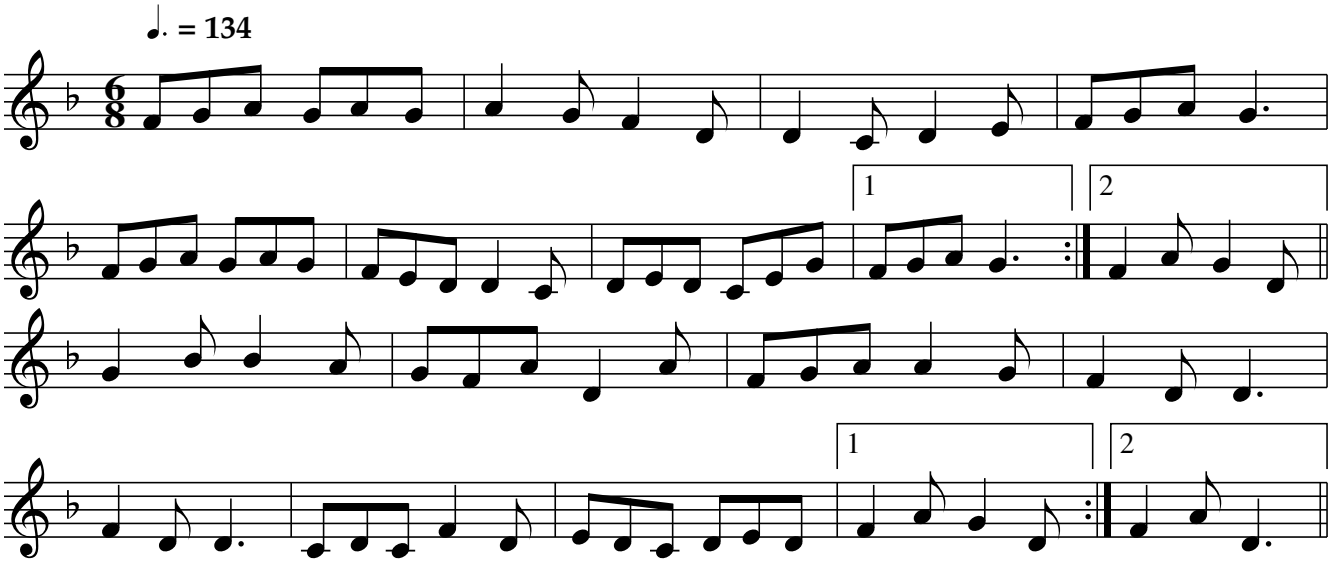
Tony Upton, 3/21/98
slide



This tune, which is one of my earliest compositions, is named for the dirt road behind the house I used to live in. I used to spend a lot of time walking and riding my bike on that road.

The Rainy Morning

Tony Upton, 10/4/98
single jig



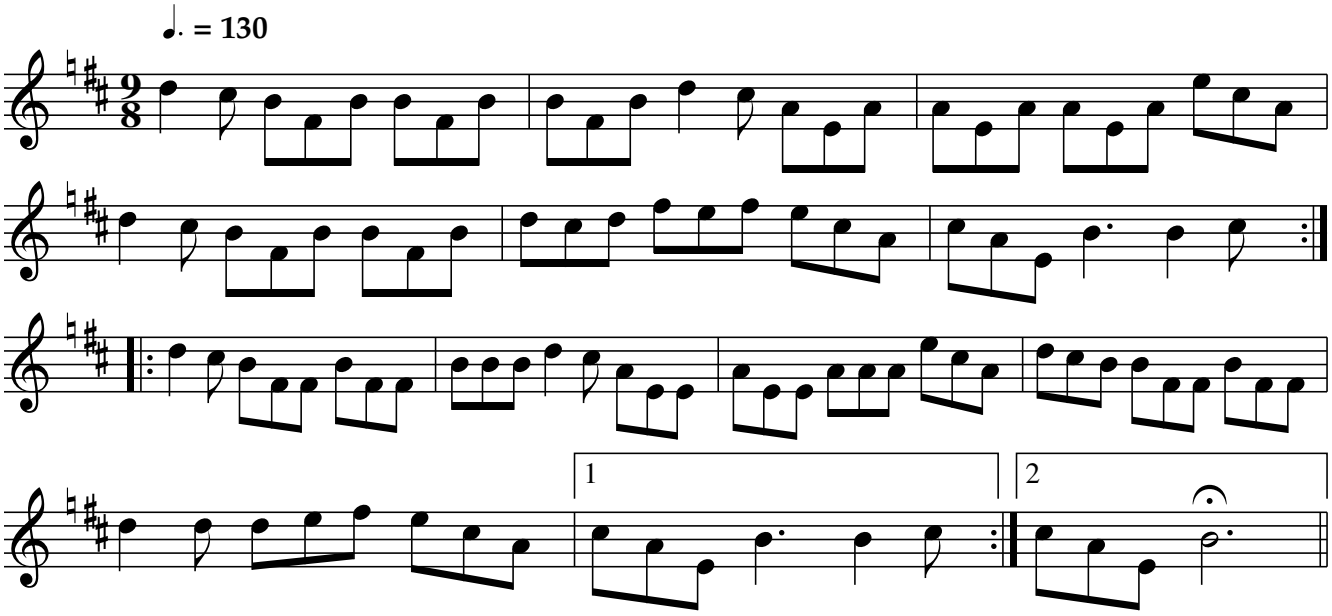
This tune was vaguely inspired by a wet and dreary morning.

SLIP JIGS

The Six–Bar Jig
Skipping Along

The Six–Bar Jig

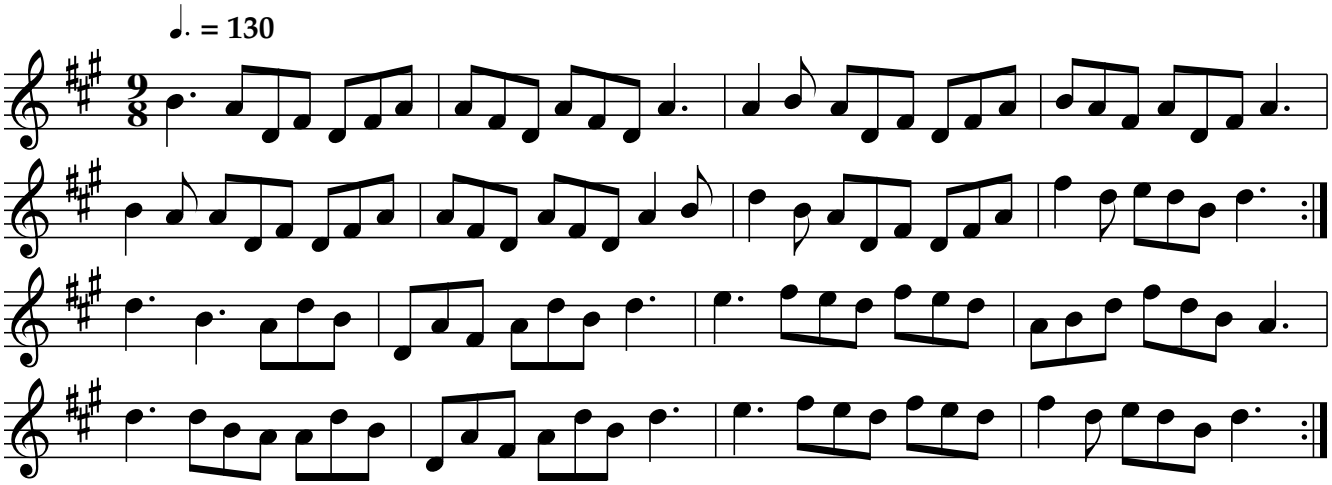
Tony Upton, 6/2/98
slip jig



The reason for the title of this tune should be obvious if you pay attention to the sheet music!!

Skipping Along

Tony Upton, 3/21/98
slip jig



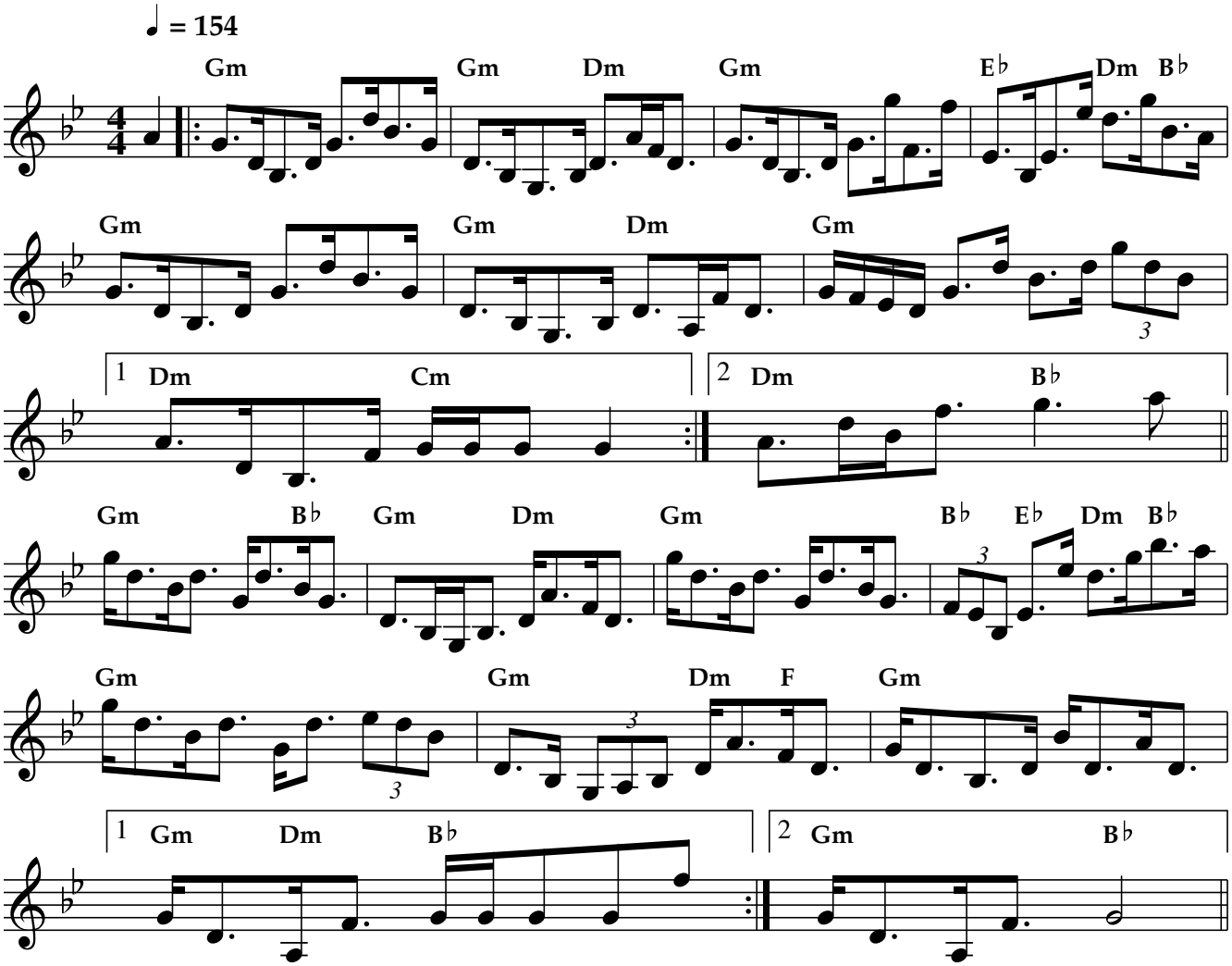
The name of this tune describes something I used to do quite a bit when I was a kid.

STRATHSPEYS

Battle of the Ironclads
The Cromartie Rant
The January Storm
Megan's Favorite
The Missed Note
Trip to Alexandria

Battle of the Ironclads

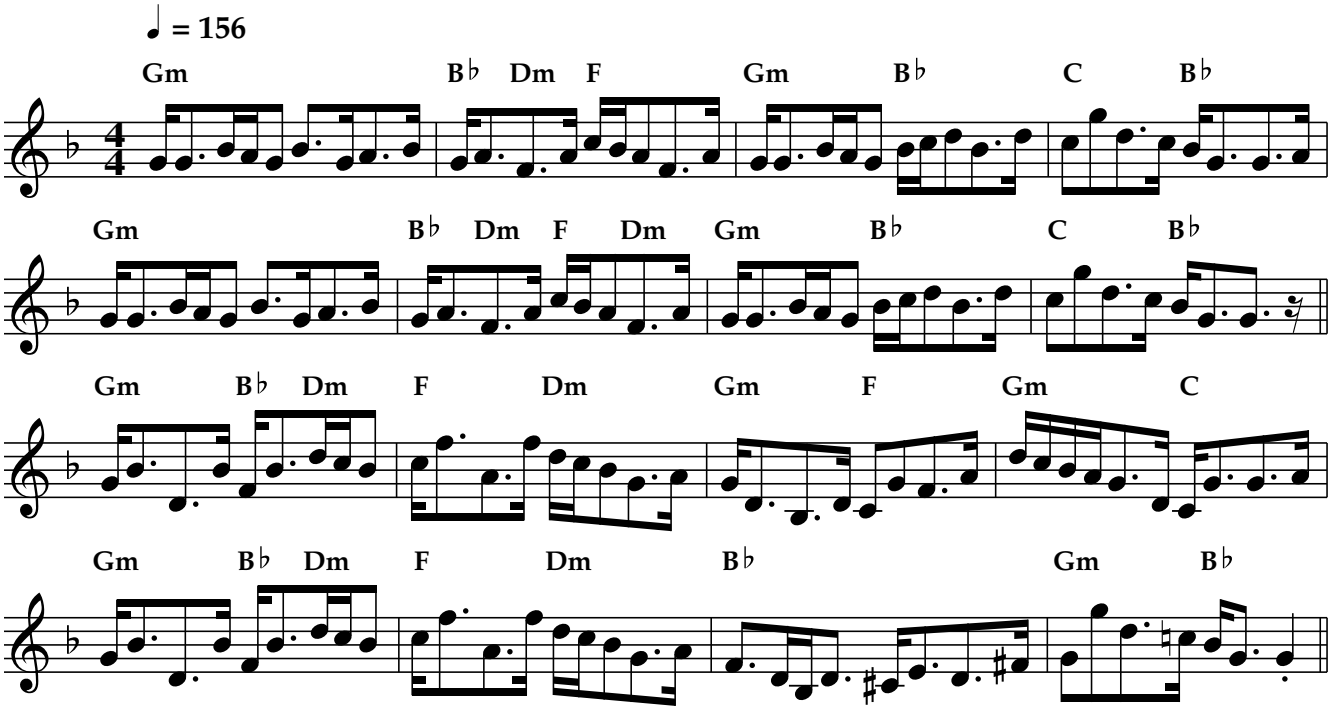
Tony Upton, 1/12/02
strathspey



This tune originally started out as a transposed version of my first tune, "Megan's Favorite," and ended up with what you see here. The title refers to the famous Civil War battle between the two ironclad ships (the Monitor and the Merrimac) which ocurred in Hampton Roads Harbor, about 20 miles or so east of Smithfield.

The Cromartie Rant

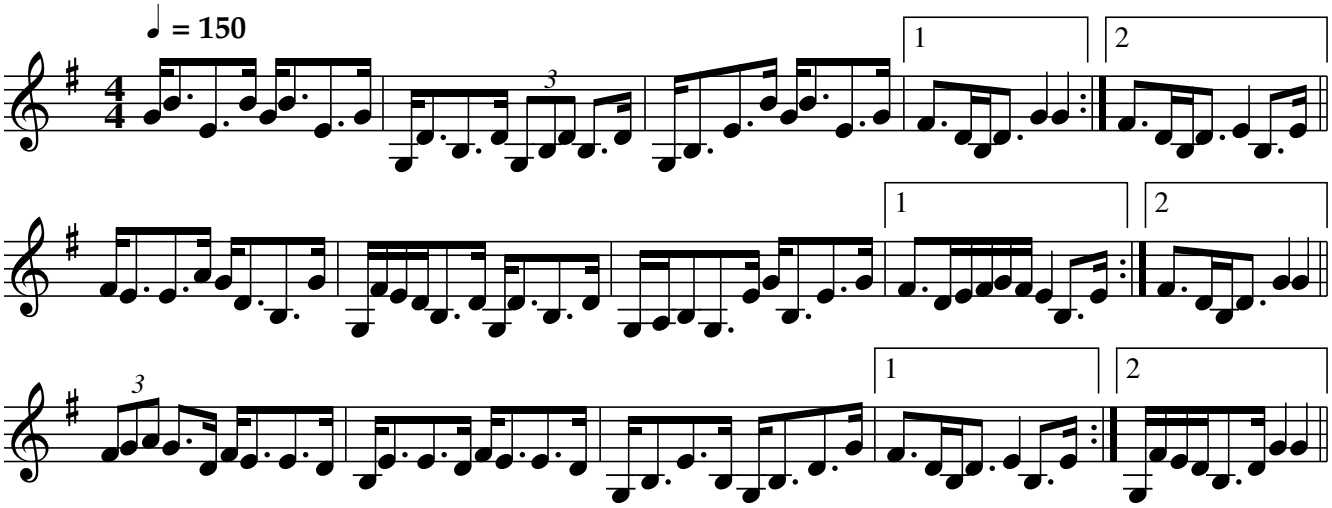
Tony Upton, 2/11/99
strathspey



This strathspey, which almost sounds like some of the tunes from the 1700's to me, is (sort of) named for a tune ("The Firth of Cromartie") that actually was written in the 1700's.

The January Storm

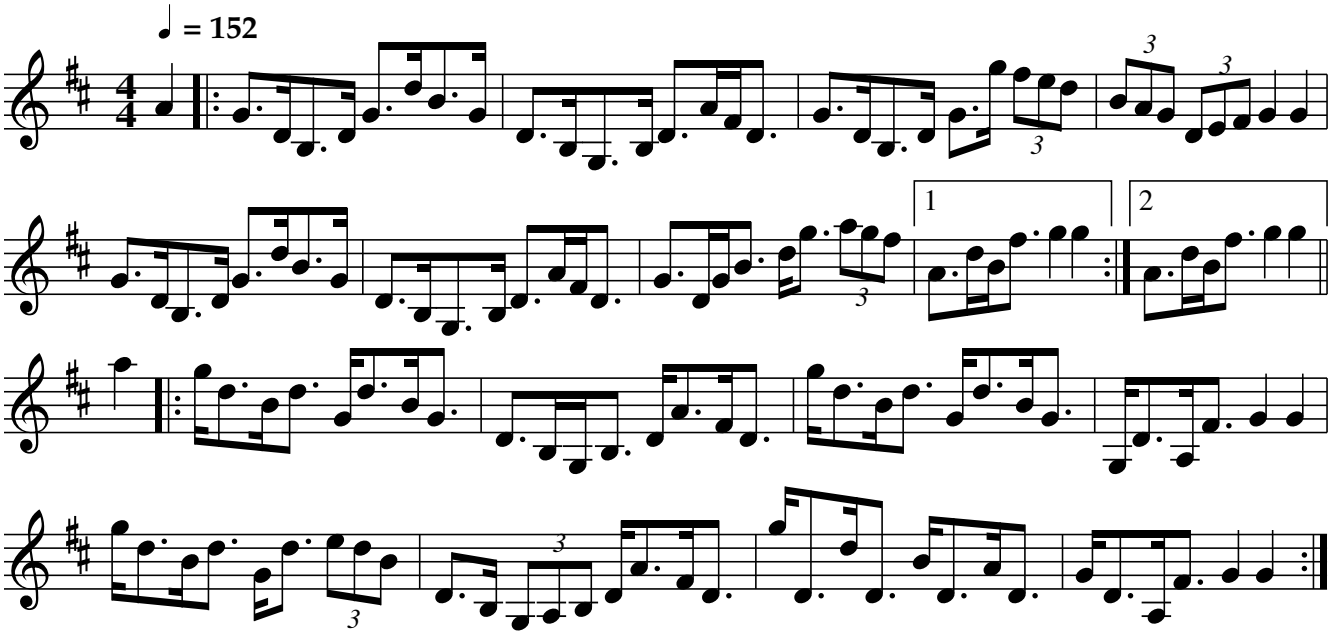
Tony Upton, 1/18/99
strathspey



This tune is named for a surprise thunderstorm that came through Smithfield back in January of 1999.

Megan's Favorite

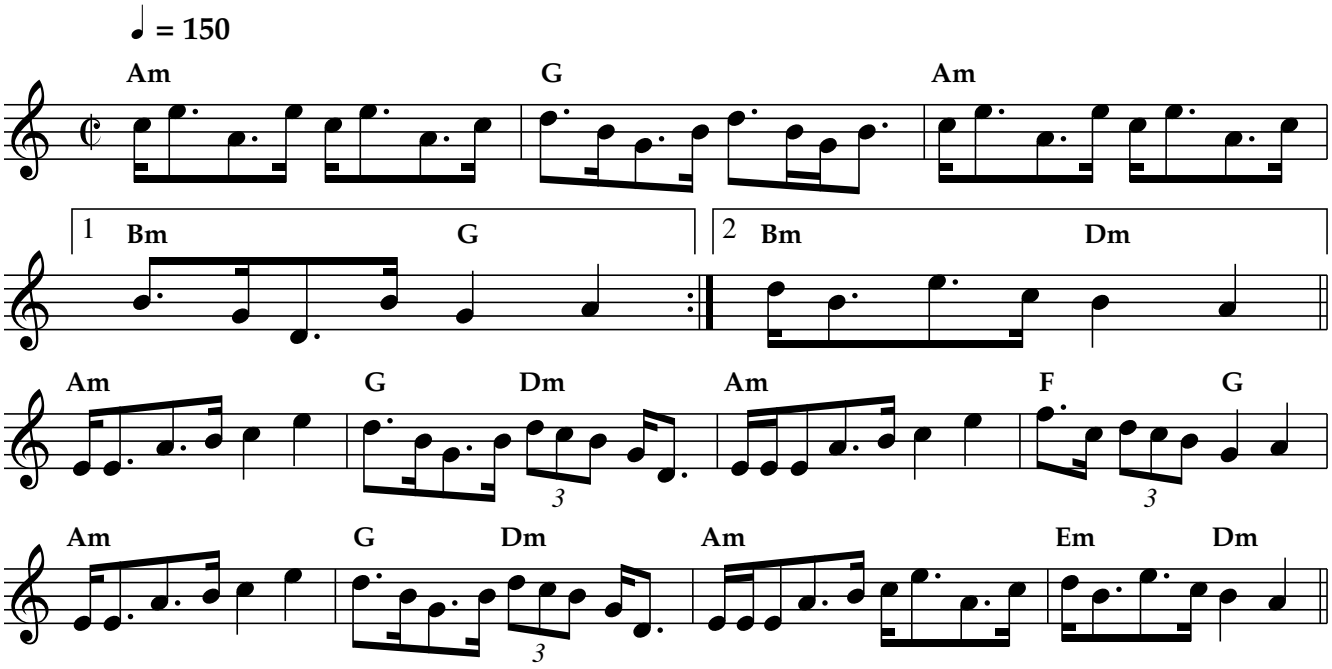
Tony Upton, 3/19/98
strathspey



This is the first tune I ever wrote, and it's still my favorite. I named it for a friend who was the first person to hear it besides me.

The Missed Note

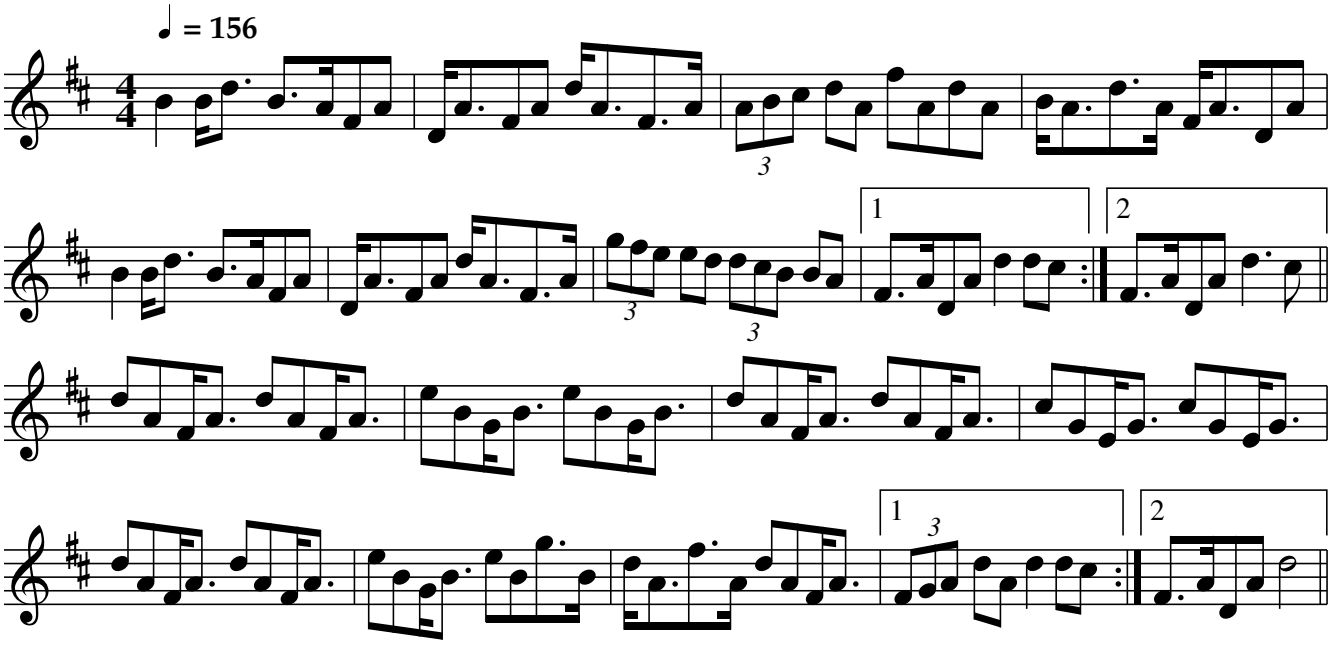
Tony Upton, 1/3/03
strathspey



This tune started taking shape when I was trying to play "Miss Drummond of Perth" on my keyboard and I missed a note. The sequence of notes that produced inspired the first part of this tune.

Trip to Alexandria

Tony Upton, 8/17/98
strathspey



This tune was composed after I came back from a trip to Alexandria, Virginia (to visit the person for whom "Megan's Favorite" was named), which is just outside of Washington, DC.