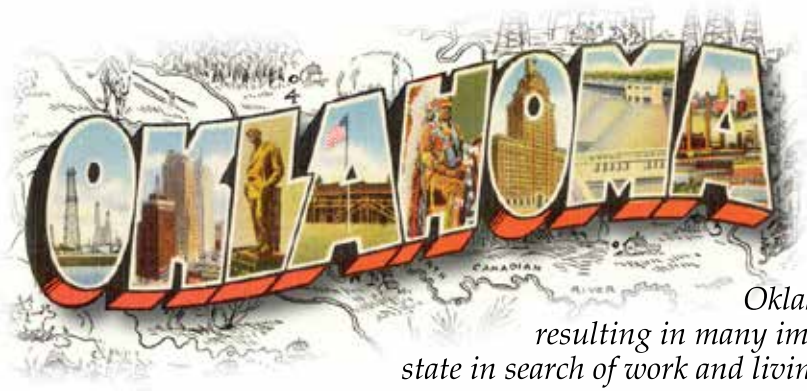
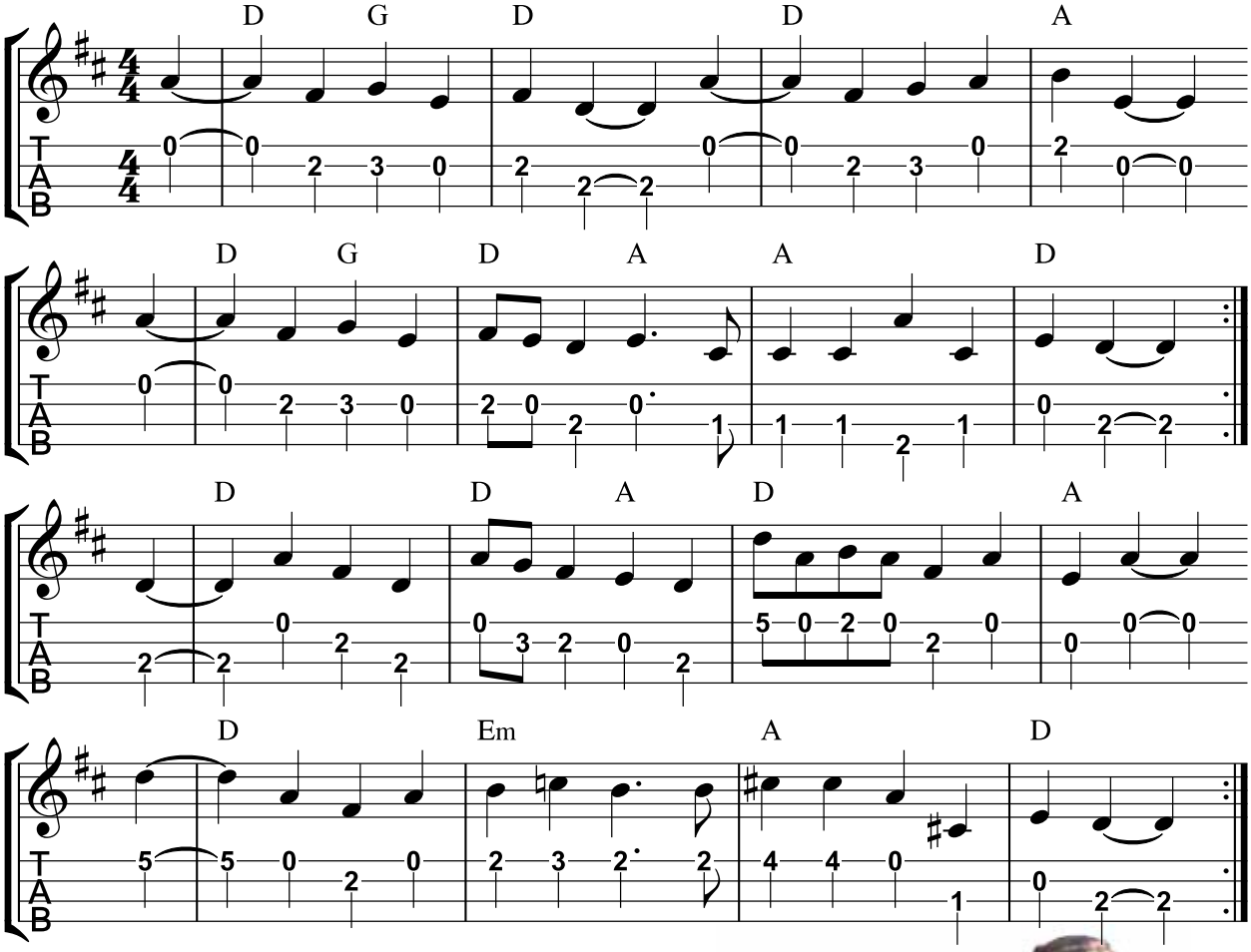
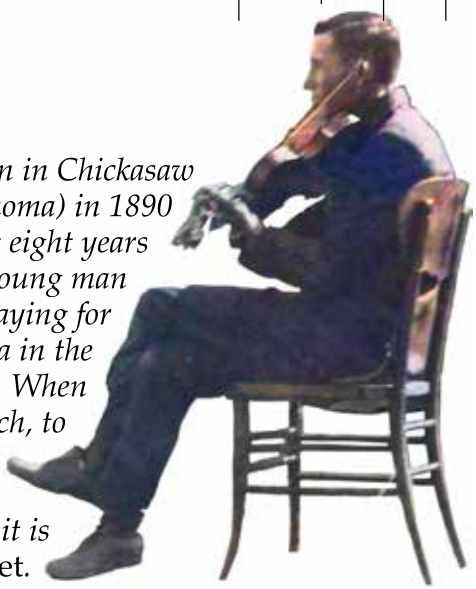
Nigel Gatherer's Workshops



OKLAHOMA derives its name from the Choctaw for Red People, *but it was known as* Indian Territory *until 1907, when it became the 46th state of the union. In the 1930s, as a result of bad farming practice, Oklahoma suffered dust storms, resulting in many impoverished families leaving the state in search of work and living.*

Love Somebody (traditional)





Tom Fuller (1890-1979, pictured right) was born in Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory (what was to become Oklahoma) in 1890 and had an unsettled childhood, becoming orphaned at eight years old and receiving little in the way of schooling. As a young man he taught himself to play fiddle by ear and started playing for local dances. When the oil boom came to Oklahoma in the 1920s, Tom's fortunes changed, and he worked for Shell. When Tom was 81, he met then 18-year-old Brad Leftwich, to whom he taught many of his tunes.

Love Somebody *has been found in many versions across America. Its origins are in Great Britain, where it is usually called* My Love She's but a Lsssie Yet.

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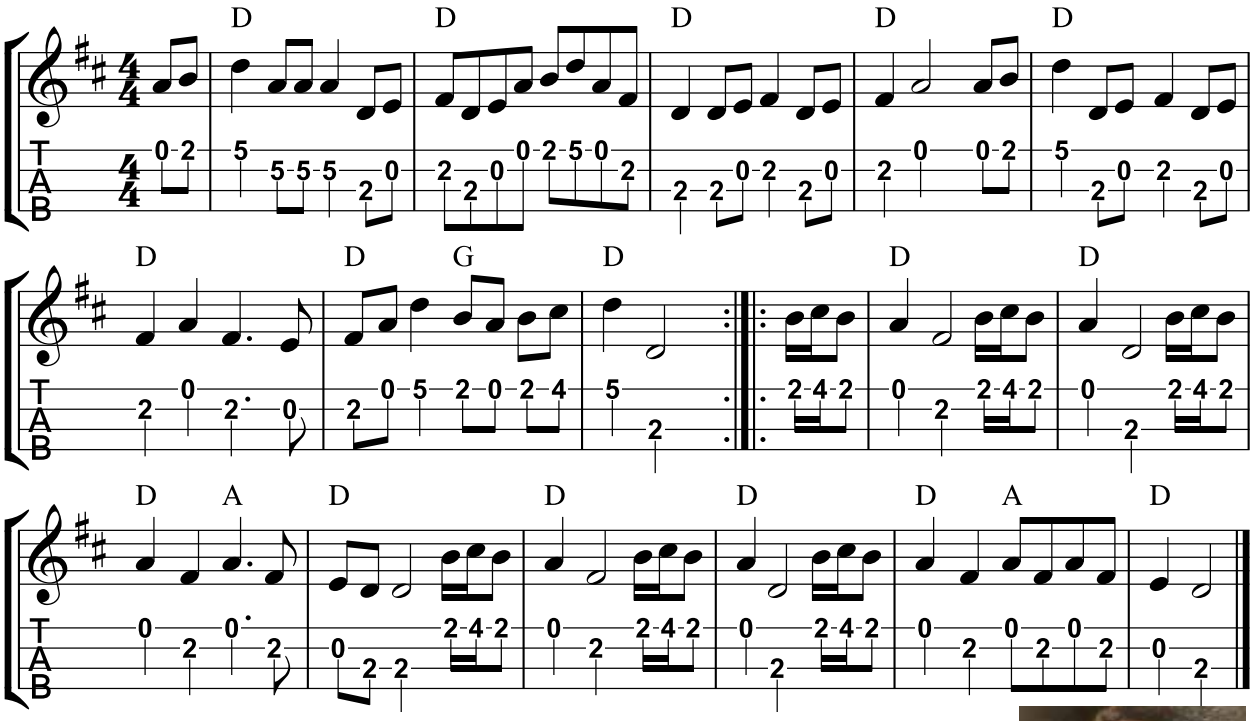
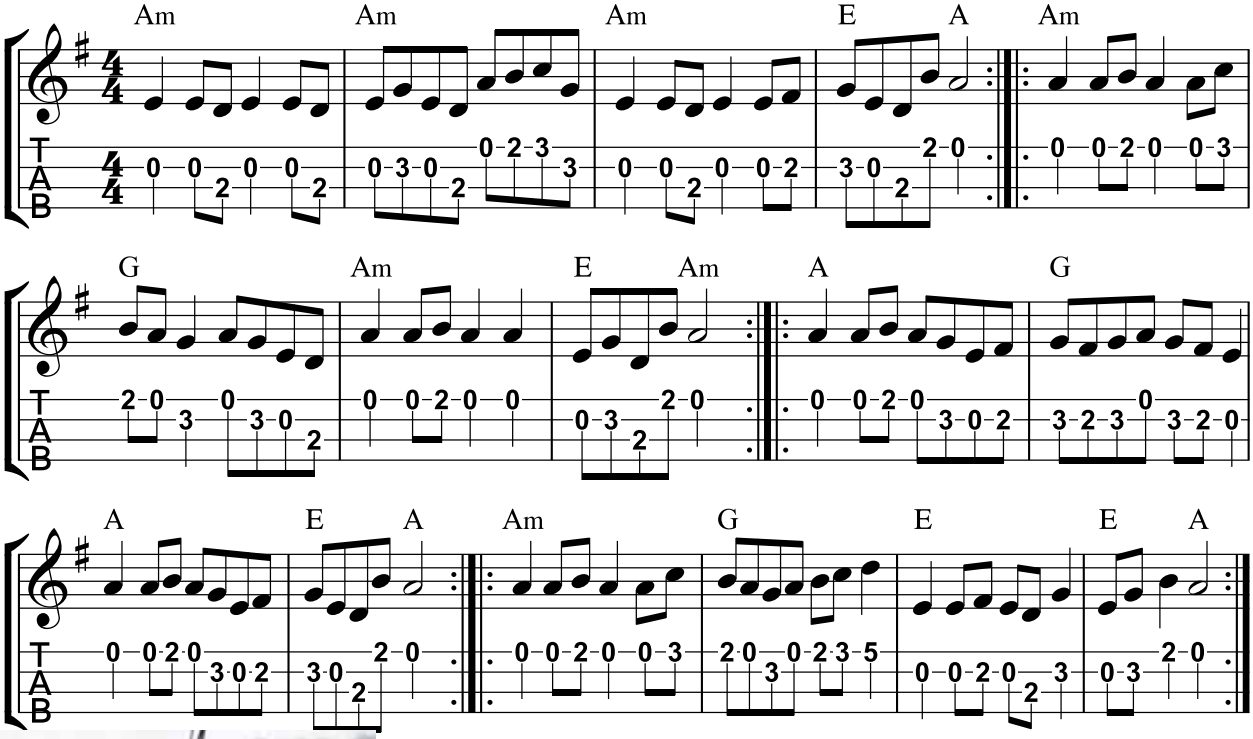
Dry and Dusty *(Abbie Morrison)*



Dry and Dusty *was first recorded by The Morrison Brothers Band in the early 1930s. This setting is transcribed from the playing of Brad Leftwich, a fiddler from Stillwater, Oklahoma (pictured right).*

Dust in the Lane *(traditional)*



The Dust Bowl *is the name given to a period of severe dust storms caused by drought, wind erosion and the destruction of the natural topsoil by farmer settlers. The Dust Bowl affected a number of states, but it centred on the Oklahoma Panhandle, and many thousands of "Okies" left the state, heading for California. April 14th 1935 became known as Black Sunday, when the worst dust storms turned day into night.*

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Dusty Old Dust *(Woody Guthrie)*

C G7 C G7
1. I've sung this song, but I'll sing it again, of the place that I lived on the wild windy plains,
C C7 F G7 C
In the month called April, the county called Gray, and here's what all of the people there say,

C G7 C
Chorus: So long, it's been good to know yuh, so long, it's been good to know yuh,
C C7 F C G7
So long, it's been good to know yuh, this dusty old dust is a-gettin' my home,
G7 C
I've got to be driftin' along.

C G7 C
2. A dust storm hit, and it hit like thunder, it dusted us over,
G7 C C7
and it covered us under, blocked out the traffic and
F G7
blocked out the sun, straight for home,
G7 C
All the people did run, singin',

C G7 C C C7 F
Chorus: So long, it's been good to know yuh, so long, it's been good to know yuh, so long, it's been good to
C G7 C
know yuh, this dusty old dust is a-gettin' my home, I've got to be driftin' along.

C G7 C G7
3. We talked of the end of the world, and then, we'd sing a song and then sing it again
C C7 F G7 C
We'd sit for an hour and not say a word, and then these words would be heard... *[Chorus]*

C G7 C G7
4. Sweethearts sat in the dark and sparked, they hugged and kissed in that dusty old dark,
C C7 F
They sighed and cried, hugged and kissed, instead of marriage, they talk like this, honey *[Chorus]*

C G7 C G7
5. Now, the telephone rang, and it jumped off the wall, that was the preacher, a-makin' his call,
C C7 F G7 C
He said, "kind friend, this may the end, and you've got your last chance at salvation of sin."

C G7 C G7
6. The churches was jammed and the churches was packed and that dusty old dust storm blowed so black
C C7 F G7 C
Preacher could not read a word of his text and he folded his specs, an' he took up collection...

C
Chorus: So long, it's been good to know yuh,
G7 C
So long, it's been good to know yuh,
C C7 F
So long, it's been good to know yuh,
C G7
This dusty old dust is a-gettin' my home,
G7 C
I've got to be driftin' along.

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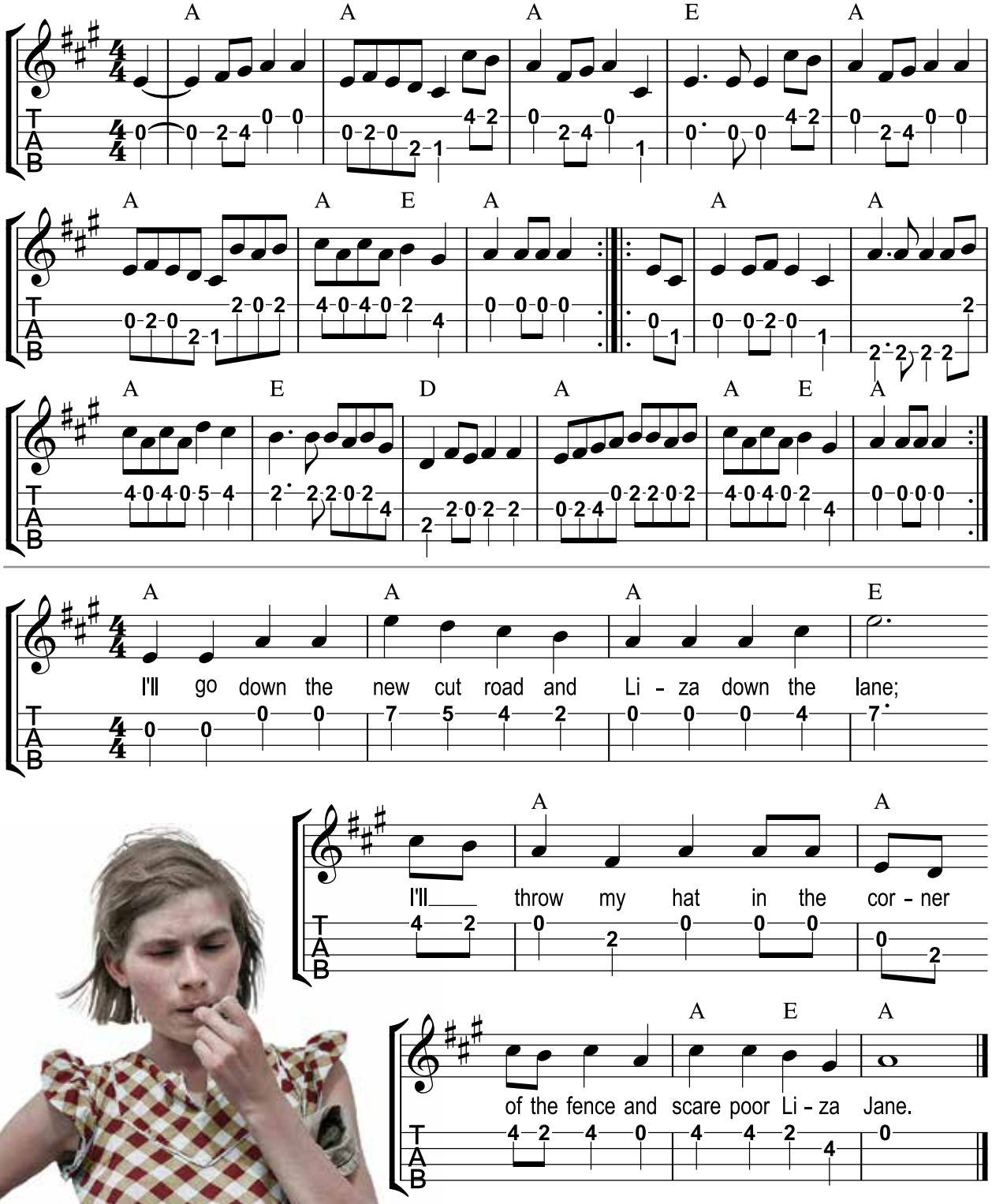
Liza Jane No.3 *(traditional)*


A A A E A
A A E A A A
A E D A A E A
A A A E
I'll go down the new cut road and Li - za down the lane;
A A
I'll throw my hat in the cor - ner
A E A
of the fence and scare poor Li - za Jane.

Liza Jane must have been popular, as there are lots of songs, ballads and tunes with that name in the title. This one came from Joe Wilsie from Cherokee County, near the eastern border with Arkansas.

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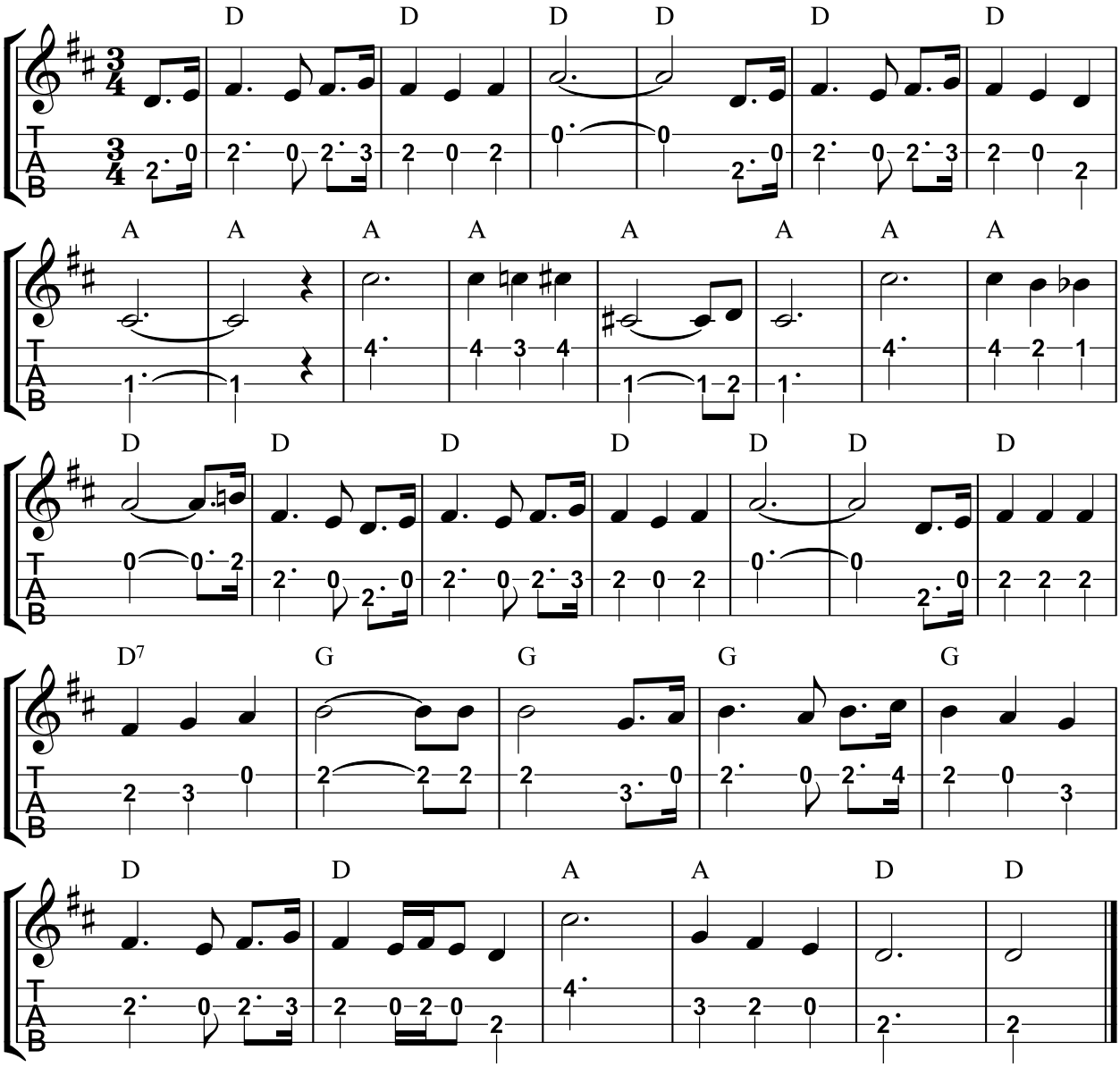
Oklahoma Waltz (1) *(traditional)*



There are several tunes and songs under the title Oklahoma Waltz, *including at least three from traditional fiddlers from the state. This one comes from the playing of Earl Collins, who came from a family of musicians. He lived in Shawnee, Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma, not far from Oklahoma City.*

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6

All Across Oklahoma (Bill Bryson)

G D A D G D /

1 They're pouring a highway, it starts in Chi - cago, it runs with the sun all the way to
A / D / G D
the sea; Straight as an ar - row, all a - cross Okla - homa
G D A G D A D G D A D
They say there'll be labor for a poor man like me.

G D A D G D

2 I'm a hardscrabble farmer with a young wife and daughter, raisin' nothin' but dust
D A / D / G D
on this old family ground. So I'll lay down the plough and pick up a shovel,
G D A G D A D
Go to work on the new road with the neighbors all round.

A / G D / G D

Ch And the cool nights will find us out on the new highway, a ribbon of silver,
D A / D / G D /
a dance floor so grand; and the fiddles will play as we sway in the moonlight,
G D A G D A D
All a - cross Okla - homa to the new promised land.

G D A D G D

3 Oh the concrete sets swiftly in the hot prairie sunlight, every mile takes us further
D A / D / G D
on the new road we laid. From sunup to sundown the ribbon gets longer
G D A G D A D G D A D
As we waltz our way westward on the dance floor we made. [Chorus]

A / G D / G D

Ch And the cool nights will find us out on the new highway, a ribbon of silver,
D A / D / G D /
a dance floor so grand; and the fiddles will play as we sway in the moonlight,
G D A G D A D
All a - cross Okla - homa to the new promised land.

G D A D G D

4 I'll lay myself down to dream by the highway, of a whole country movin'
D A / D /
on the work that we've done. Now we're both cracked and weathered,
G D G D A G D A D
and both are forgotten, and we sleep in the quiet of the warm prairie sun.

A / G D / G D

Ch And the cool nights will find us out on the new highway, a ribbon of silver,
D A / D / G D /
a dance floor so grand; and the fiddles will play as we sway in the moonlight,
G D A G D A D
All a - cross Okla - homa to the new promised land.

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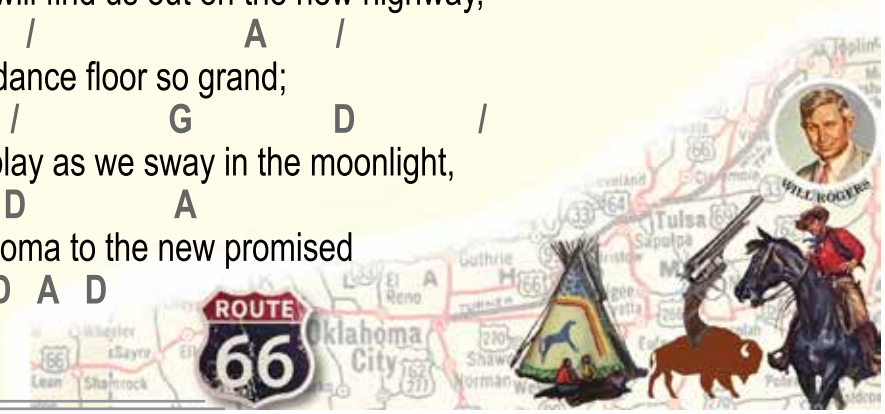
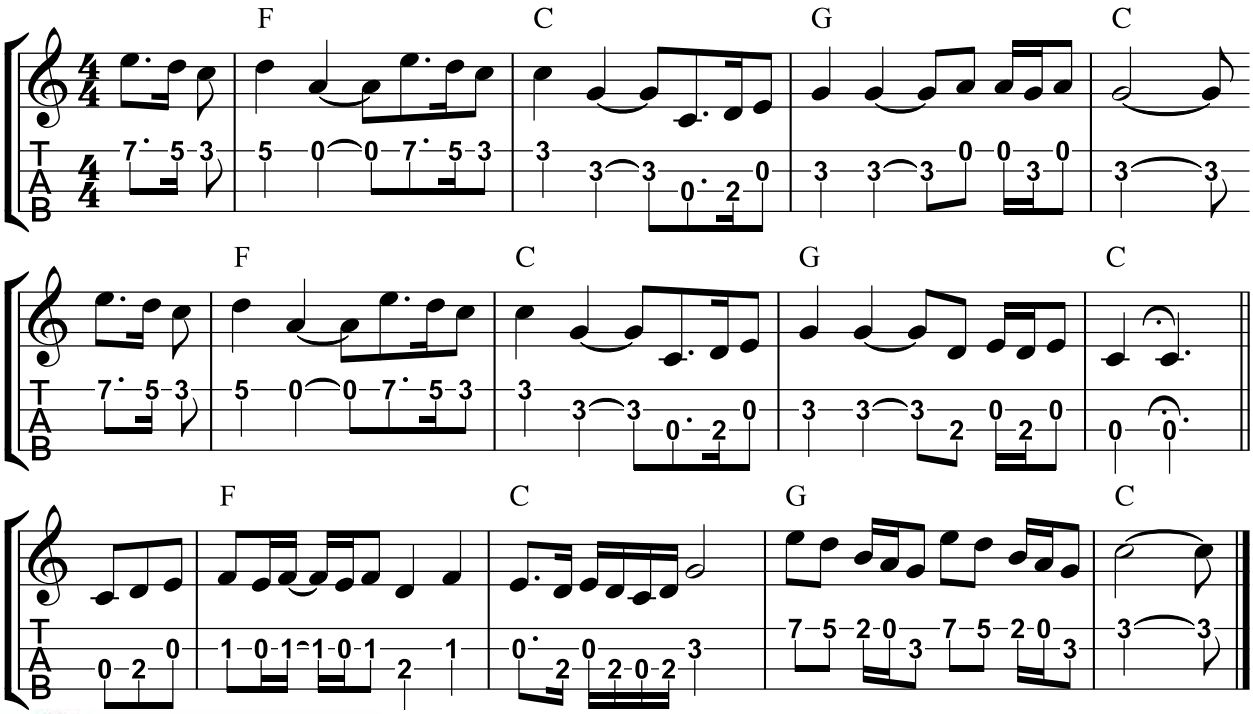
A / G D /
Ch And the cool nights will find us out on the new highway,
G D / A /
A ribbon of silver, a dance floor so grand;
D / G D /
And the fiddles will play as we sway in the moonlight,
G D A
All a - cross Okla - homa to the new promised
G D A D G D A D
land.



This song is set during the construction of Route 66, designed to connect the main streets of many urban and rural communities. Route 66 runs from Chiucago to California, passing through Oklahoma. In The Grapes of Wrath (1939) it symbolises escape, loss and hope.

Back Up and Push *(traditional)*



Back Up and Push *was first recorded in 1929 by the Georgia Organ Grinders (featuring fiddler Clayton McMichen). This setting was recorded by the Oklahoma Wranglers in 1951. It has become widespread through the US thanks to versions by bluegrassers Bill Monroe and Kenny Baker.*

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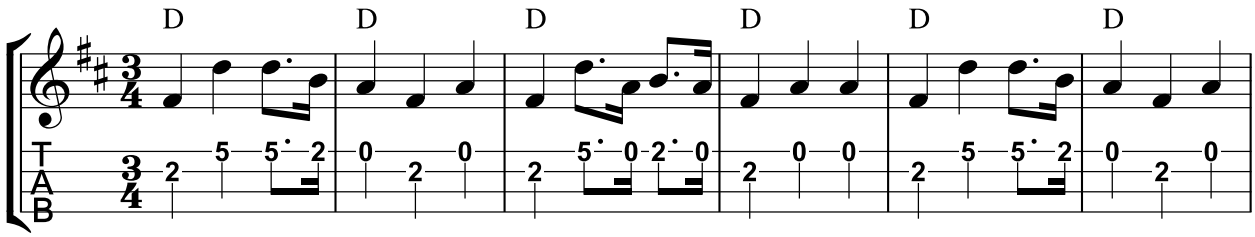
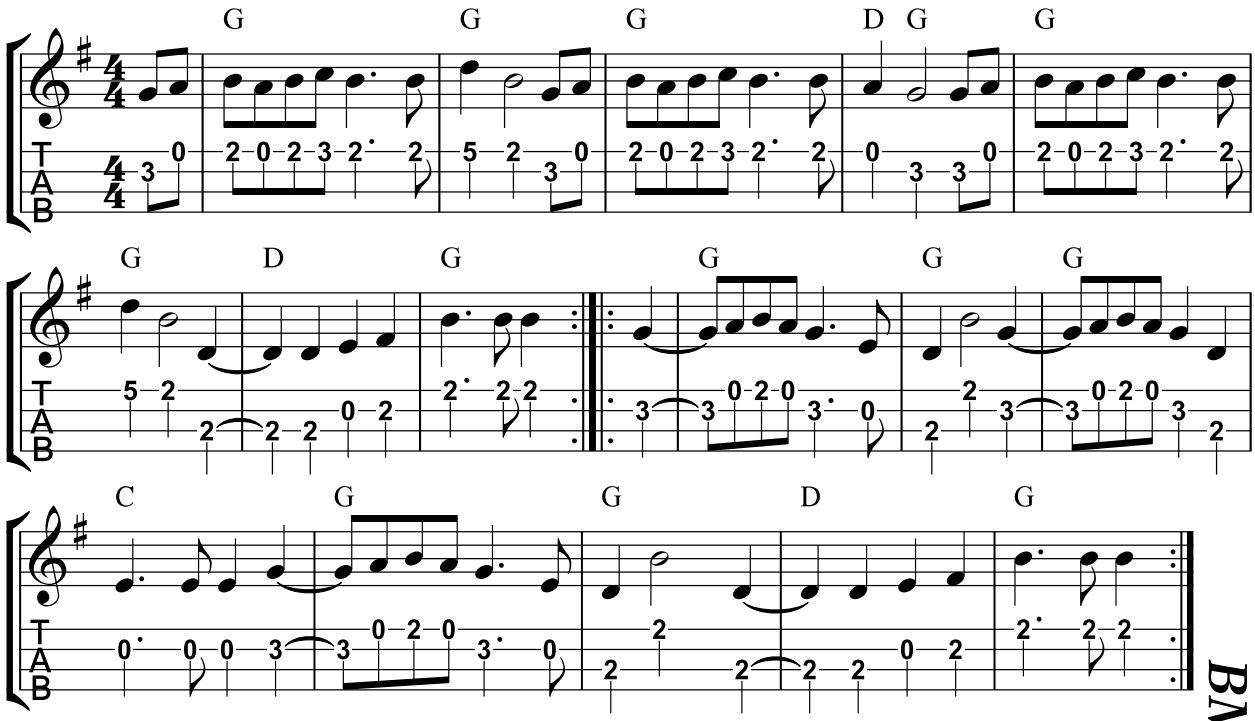
Oklahoma Waltz (2) *(traditional)*



This Oklahoma Waltz *came from Clarence "Shird" McCraw (1892-1985, pictured lefy). His family owned some land in Oklahoma and settled there in 1901. Clarence taught himself to fiddle aged 12 and played for dances as a boy, and entered fiddle contests into his 80s.*

Heel Flies *(traditional)*



This tune was transcribed from fiddler Charlie Lindsay from Beckham County on the western Oklahoma border with Texas. It is related to the tune known as The Seneca Square Dance, *or* Waiting for the Federals.

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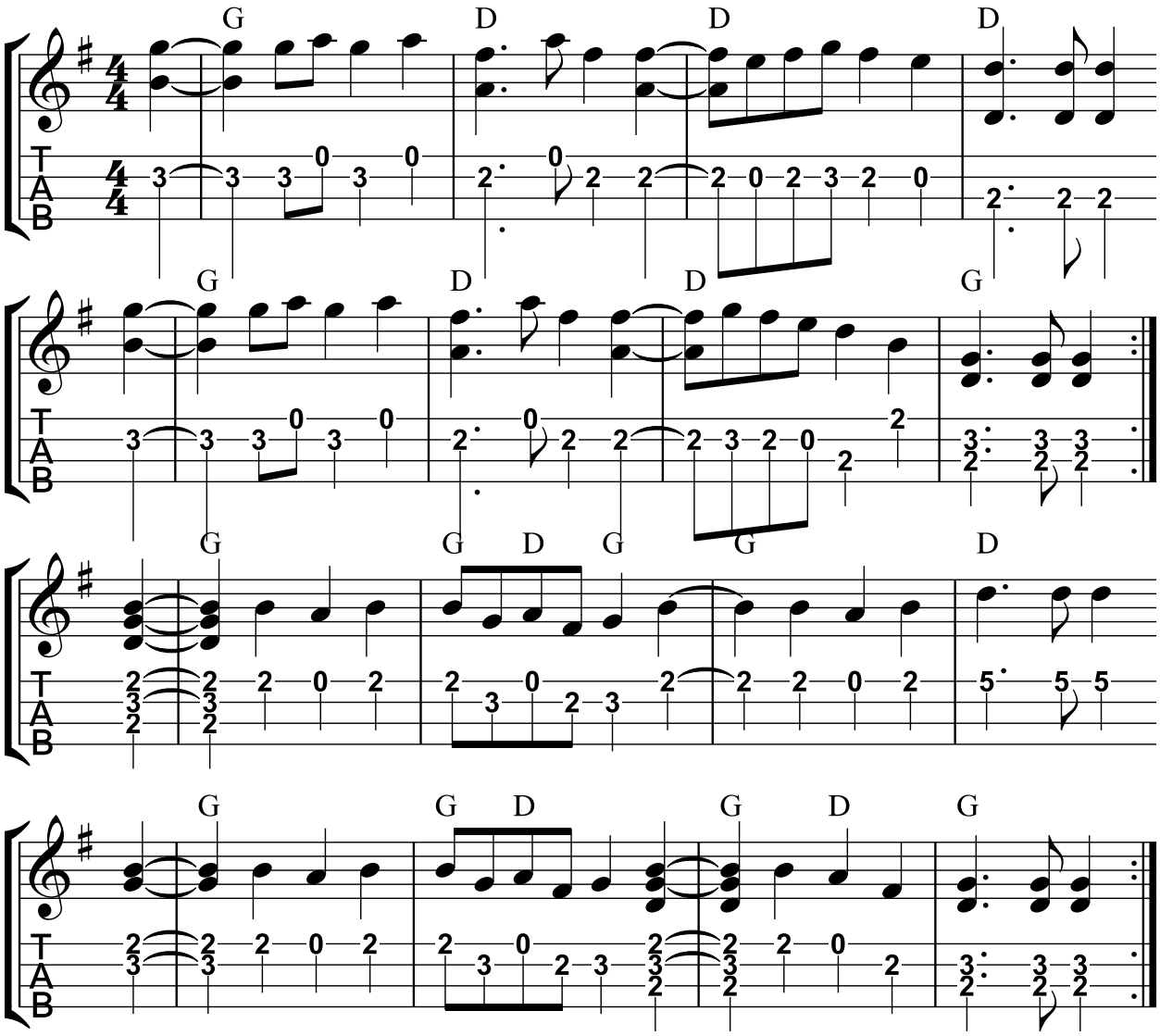
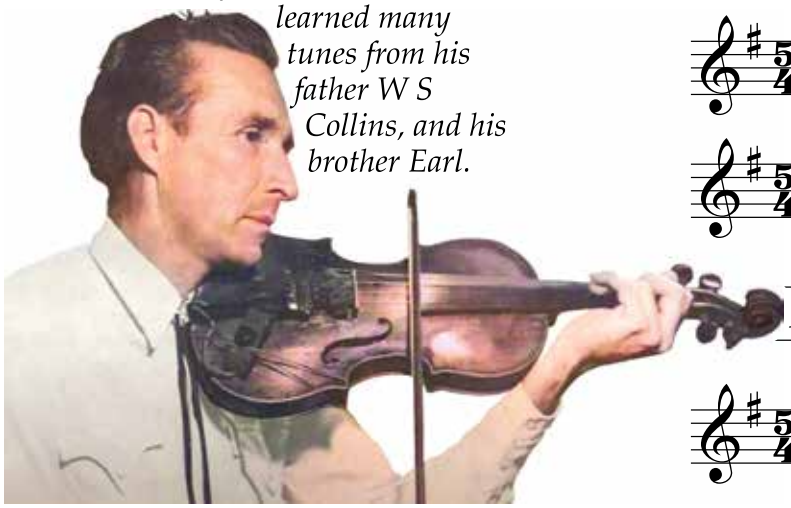
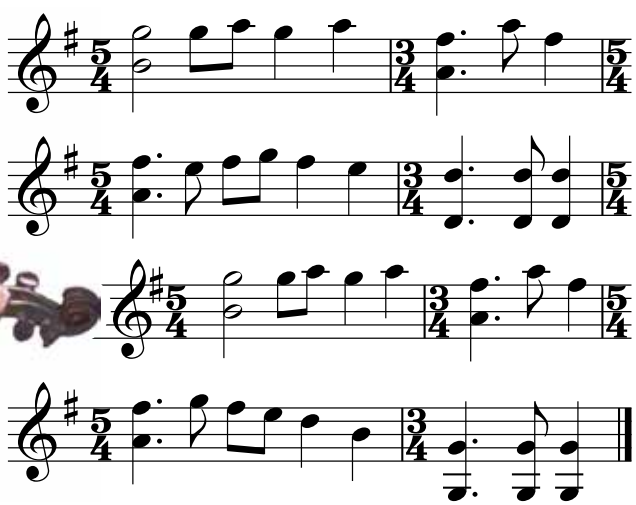
Sail Away Ladies *(traditional)*



This setting of Sail Away Ladies is from the fiddling of Max Collins (1916-2001), one of a family of old time fiddlers from Pottawatomie County in Oklahoma. He learned many tunes from his father W S Collins, and his brother Earl.



One feature which is often a part of old-time music is what I call "anticipated notes," when some notes seem to start before they're expected. It can be tricky to get to grips with, but for some people it may be easier to think of different bar lengths. See if this makes more sense to you:



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