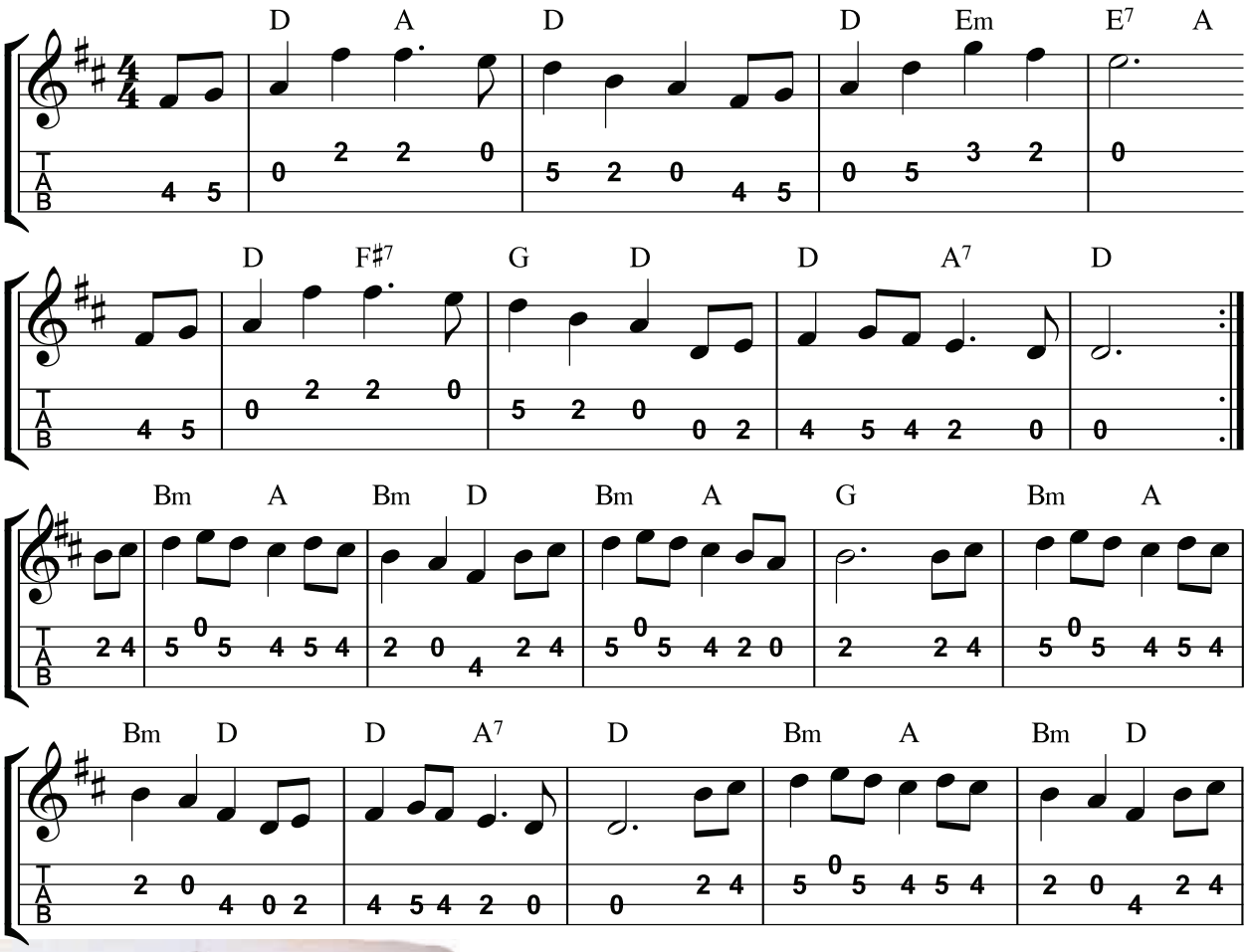
MIXTER MAXTER 33

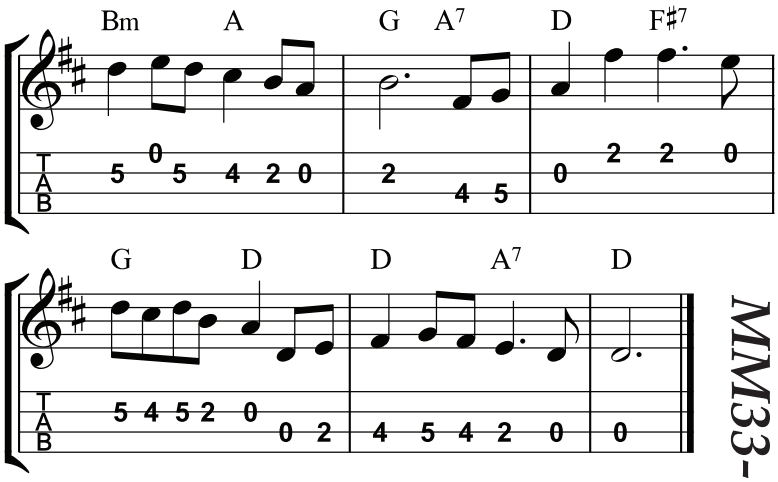
"Uisge Beatha," "Aqua Vitae," "Water of Life;" - or as it's more commonly called, whisky. Distilled in Scotland for centuries, it is one of the things which people think of when Scotland is mentioned. It's our leading export, with a market in every corner of the world, and around 40 bottles shipped every second. Whisky has always been a rich subject of Scots song and instrumental music, as we're going to discover today. Slainte mhath!

Spirit of the Water (John Mason)

slow air



Composed by fiddler John Mason for the Strathisla Distillery in Keith, makers of the popular export whisky Chivas Regal. John Mason MBE (1940-2011) was the co-founder of the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra, and its musical director and conductor for 31 years. He was original from Orkney, but later lived in Wigtown and Troon.



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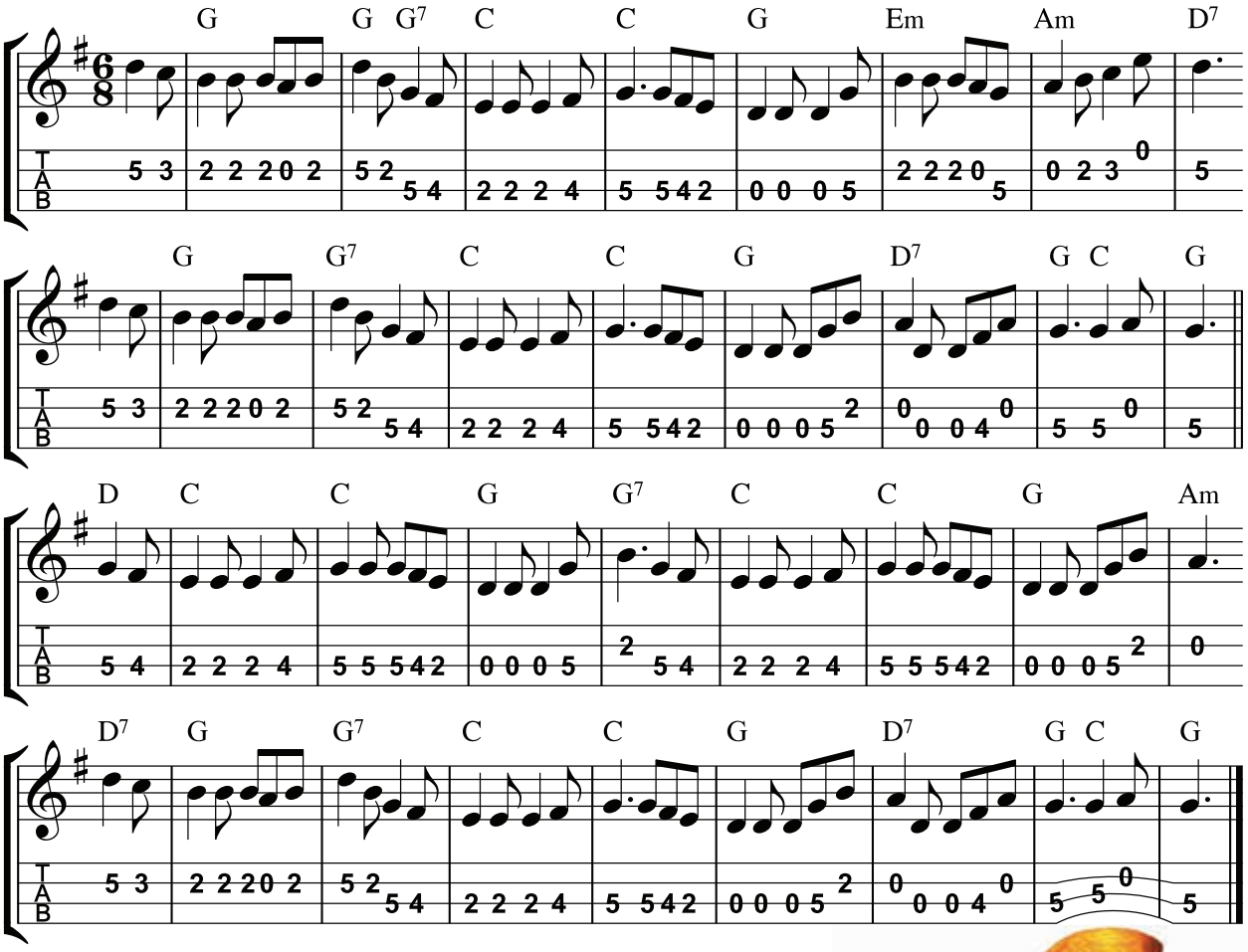
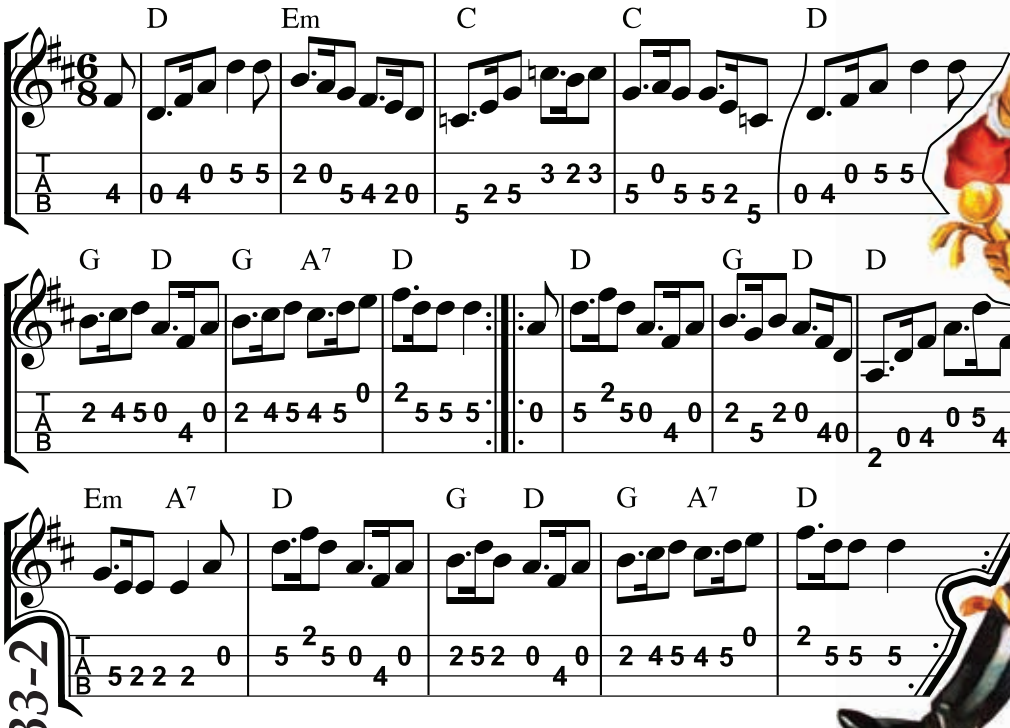
Anne's Whisky Jig (Alastair J MacDonald) jig



Johnnie Walker (Bert Murray) jig



The first jig came from fiddler Addie Harper, leader of the Wick Scottish Country Dance Band. Johnnie Walker *was composed by Aberdeenshire fiddler Bert Murray.*

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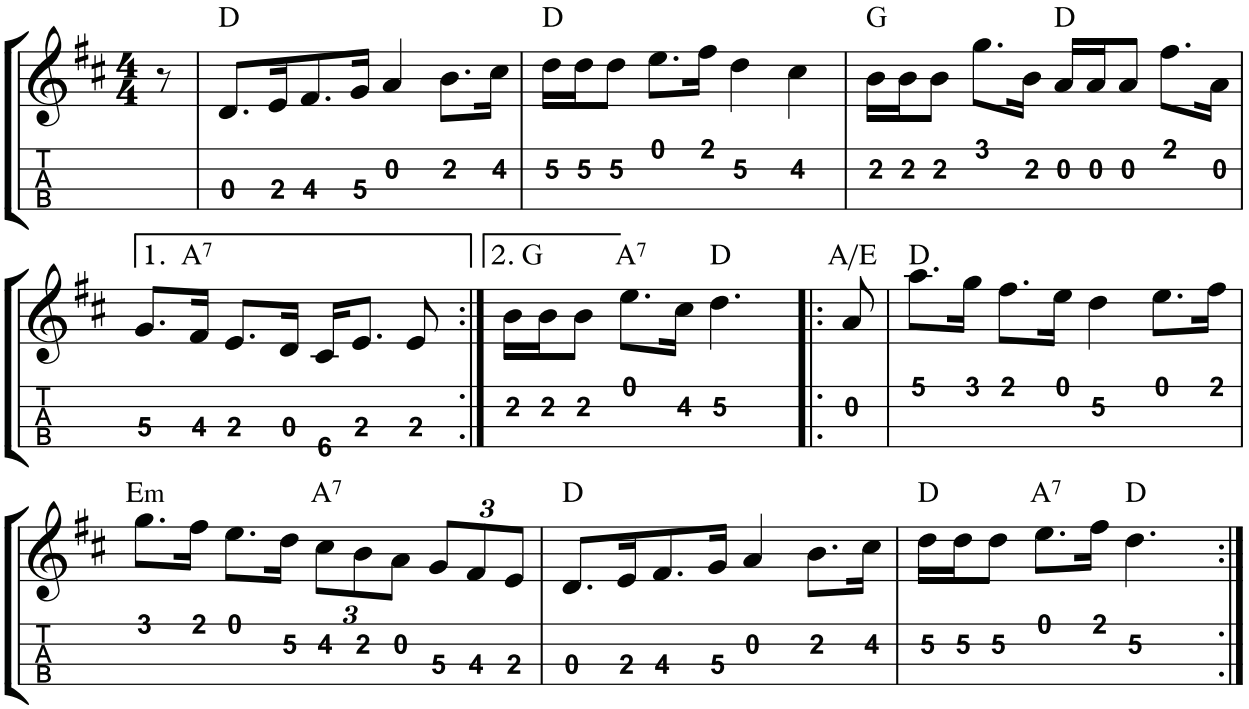
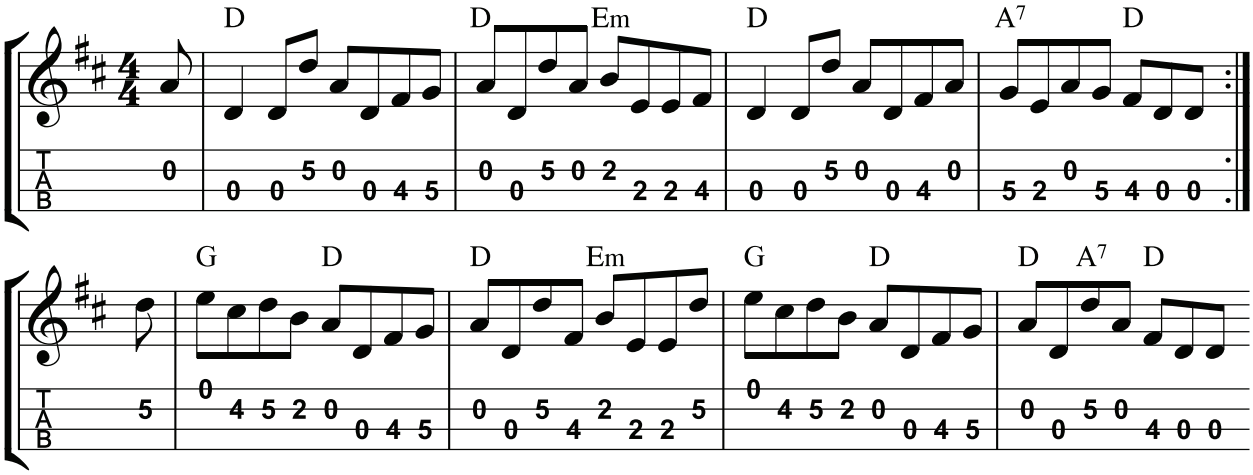
Fill Your Glasses *(traditional)*

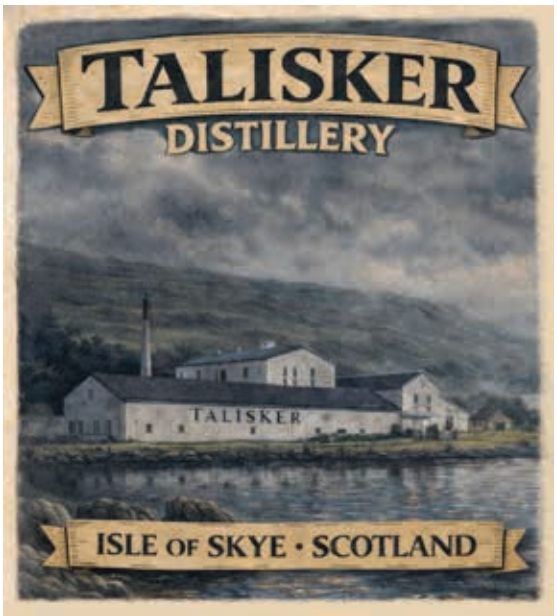
strathspey

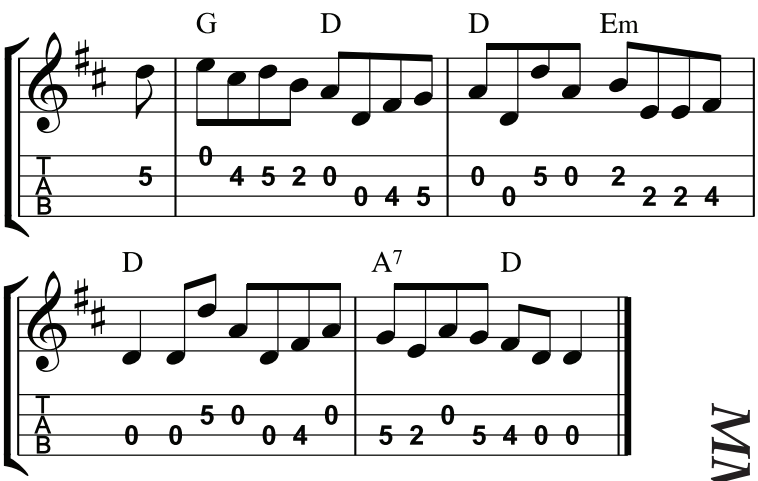


Talisker *(James Scott Skinner)*

reel







I got the first tune from Kerr's Merry Melodies (c1870s). Talisker was a Skinner strathspey which I've turned into a reel.

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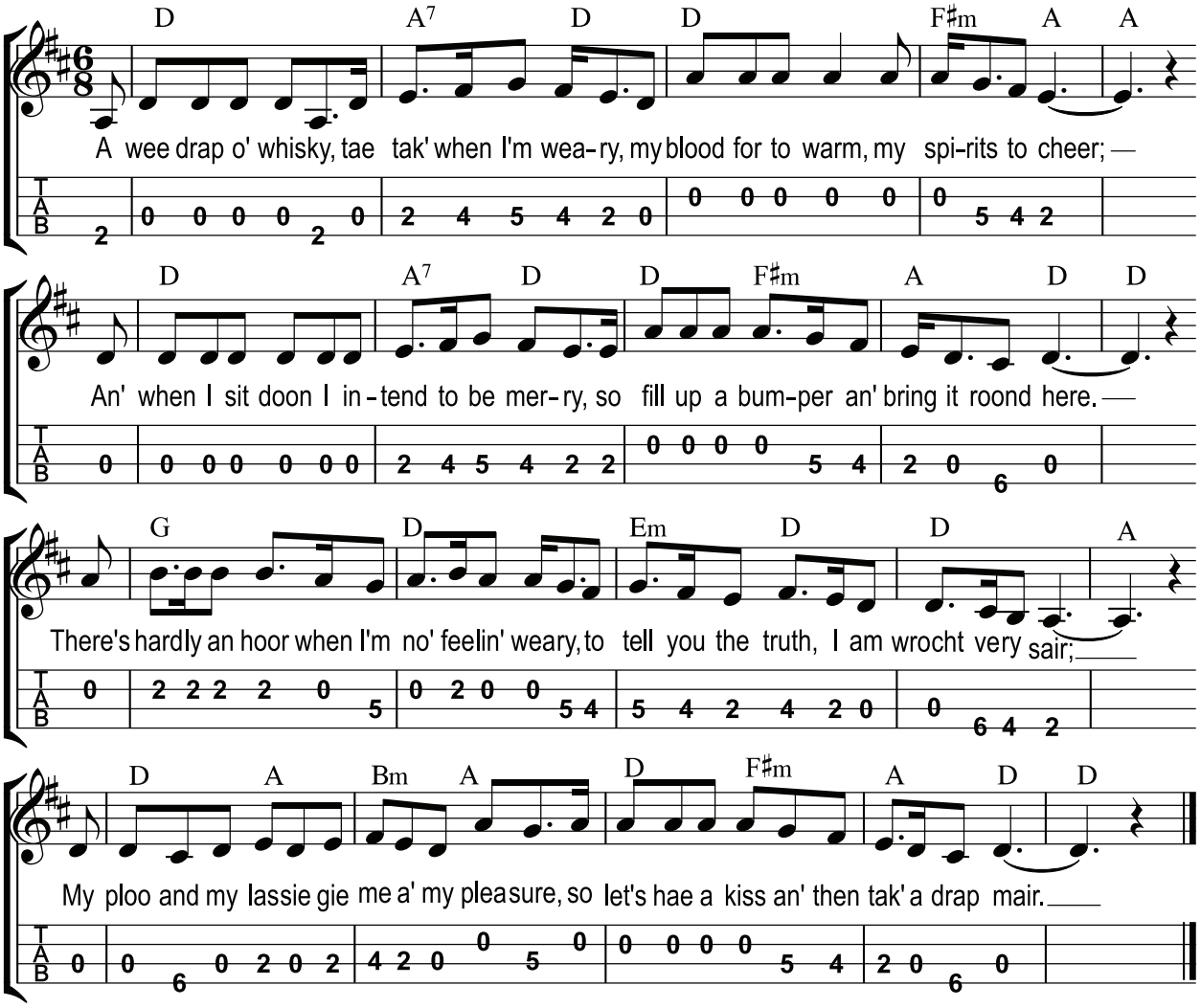
A Wee Drap o' Whisky (traditional)



D / A D

1. A wee drap o' whis-ky, tae tak' when I'm wea-ry,
D / F#m A / /
my blood for to warm, my spi-rits to cheer;
D / A D
An' when I sit doon I intend to be merry,
D F#m A D
So fill up a bum-per an' bring it roond here.
G / D /
There's hardly an hoor when I'm no' fee-lin' weary,
Em D / A / /
To tell you the truth, I am wrocht ve-ry sair;
D A Bm A
My ploo and my lassie gie me a' my pleasure,
D F#m A D / /
So let's hae a kiss an' then tak' a drap mair.

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A Wee Drap o' Whisky *(cont)*

D / A D
2. Contentit I sit, an' contentit I labour,
D / F#m A
Contentit I drink, an' contentit I sing;
D A D
I never dispute or fa' oot wi' my neebors,
D F#m A D
For that is a mean an' a vexatious thing.
G D
An' few, very few ever hear me complainin'
Em D / A
Though oftimes the load of oppression I bear;
D A Bm A
But what is the use o' a man aye complainin'?
D F#m A D
For aye when he tastes, he maun hae a drap mair.

D / A D
3. So come, noble waiter, bring in a large measure,
D / F#m A
I mean a half-mutchkin, the best o' the toon;
D / A D
An' when it is done, an' it's time tae be joggin'
D F#m A D
Wi' the lightest o' care we'll gang toddlin' hame.
G D
So good night to you all. I think it's nae treason
Em D / A
For now that the whisky speaks saft in my ear;
D A Bm A
Good night an' safe hame, till further occasion
D F#m A D
We'll a' meet in freenship an' hae a drap mair.

The original of this song was collected in Aberdeenshire in 1907 and later published in the Grieg-Duncan Collection. This setting is from a recording by Robin Laing, and I suspect the tune is his own.

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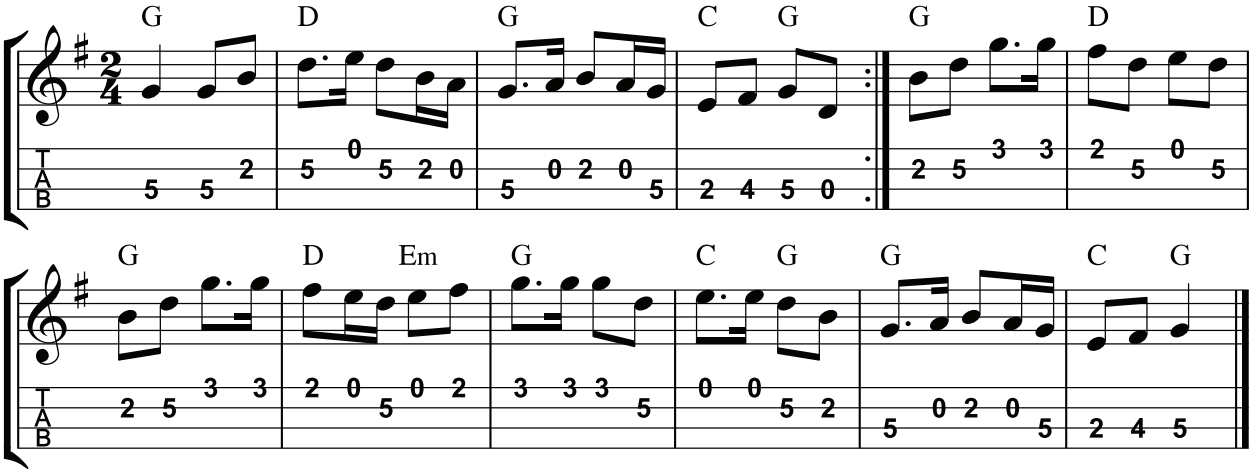
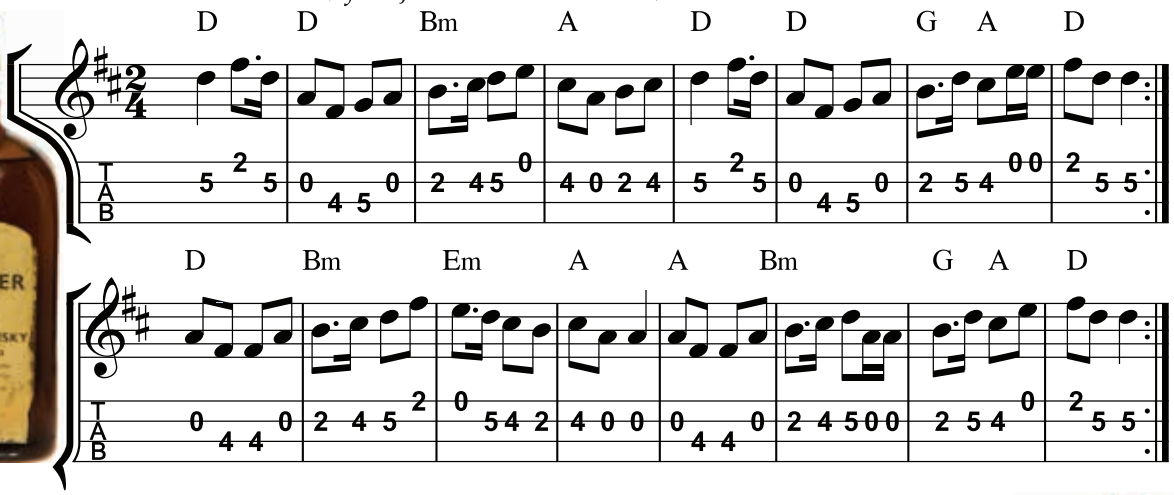
The Whisky Polkas

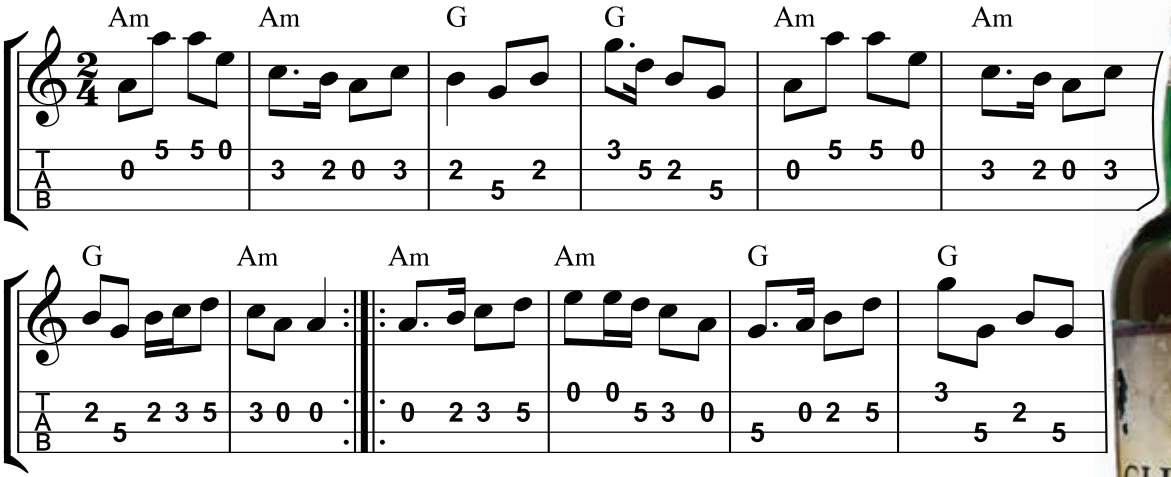
ABSTAIN FROM WHISKY *(trad, arr. Gatherer)*

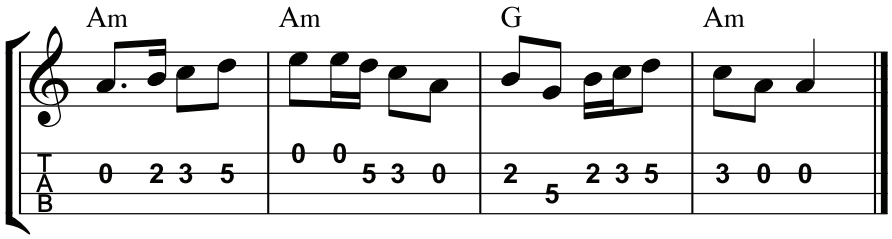


THE TALISKER POLKA *(after James Scott Skinner)*



THE GLENLIVET POLKA *(trad, arr. Gatherer)*





3 tunes adapted from a slip jig and 2 reels.

MM33-6

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Let There Be Drams (Alan Reid/John McCusker)

jig

This tune was written as a reel and recorded on The Battlefield Band's 1991 album New Spring. I thought it would make a good slow air, so I have adapted it for that purpose.

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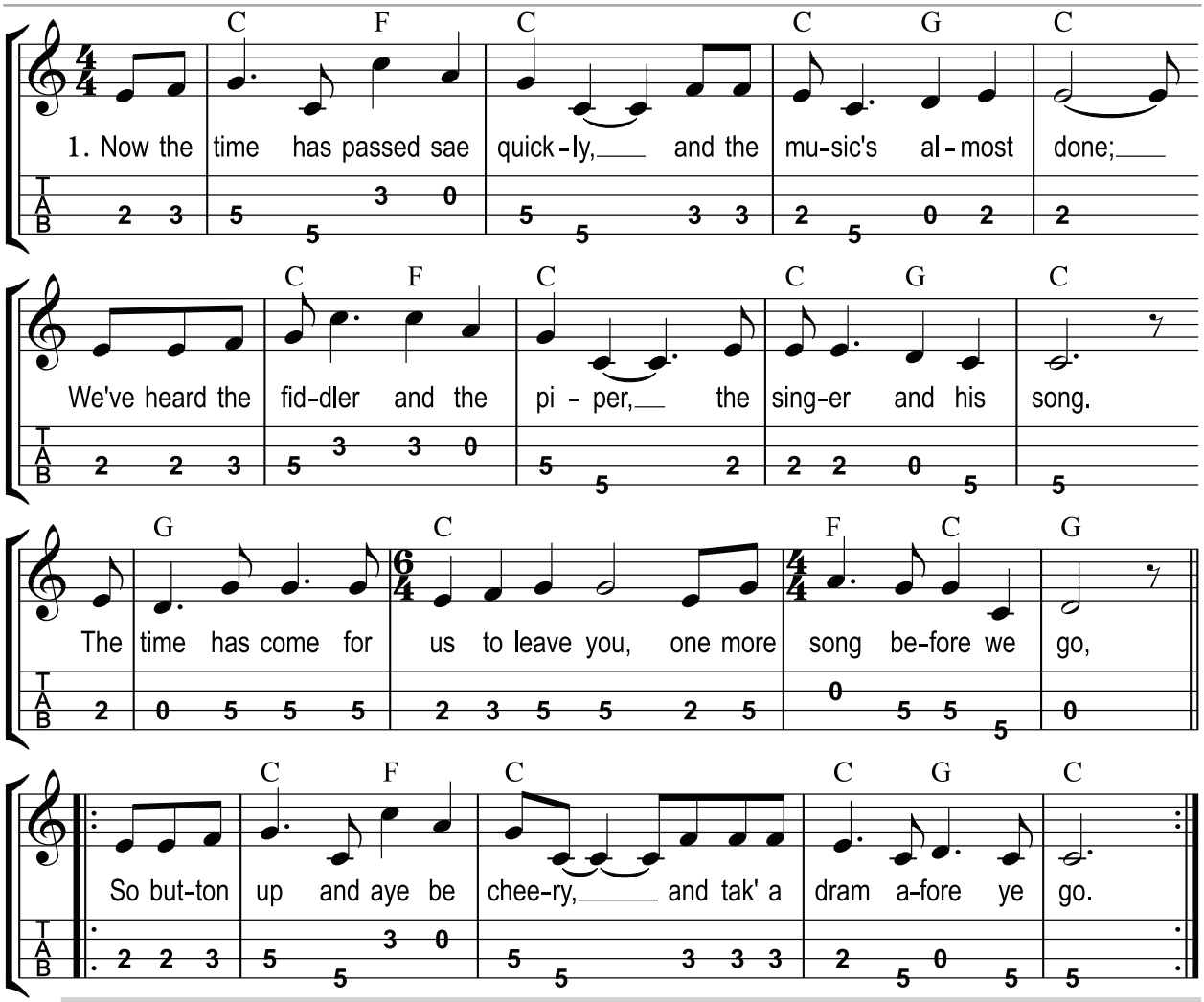
Tak' a Dram *(Ian Sinclair)*



C F C / G C / F

2 For this night we will remember, for the music's been just fine; But the cauld, grey land
C / G C G C
o' Caithness can be cruel and unkind. Noo we must bid fareweel and leave you,
F C G C F C /
traivel through the ice an' snaw, Sae button up, an' aye be cheery, an' tak' a dram
G C / F C / G C
afore ye go. Sae button up, an' aye be cheery, an' tak' a dram afore ye go.

By Ian Sinclair of Caithness and recorded by his band Mirk in 1982

C F C / G C

3 Sae good night, and God go with you, an' watch over you until
C F C / G C
We can a' meet here thegither, an' oor glasses we will fill.
G C F
We will drink a toast tae absent freends and let
C G C F
the beer and whisky flow, Sae button up, an' aye be
C / G C /
cheery, an' tak' a dram afore ye go. Sae button up
F C / G C
an' aye be cheery, an' tak' a dram afore ye go.

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