

ROSIN THE BEAU

Traditional

This is a five part arrangement "*Rosin the Beau*", an American folk song popular in the 19th century, first published in Philadelphia during 1838. It is probably of British or Irish origin, which is why it is often referred to as a traditional Irish drinking song. Included is a basic melody, which is fretted on the middle string only while the bass and melody strings provide drone accompaniment. There is also a chord melody, harmony, bass, and backup. So gather a few dulcimer playing friends and head on down to your local Irish pub!

Both the tune and early lyrics for "*Rosin the Beau*" are traditional, with no known author. The original words classified the tune as a hearty Irish drinking song, but the melody has been recycled many, many times with different sets of lyrics. Among these are "*Self-Employed Worker*", "*Liberty Ball*", "*Paddle My Own Canoe*", "*Old Settler's Song* (aka "*Acres of Clams*"), "*Men of the West*", "*He's the Man for Me*", "*Catalpa*", and "*Acres of Apples*". In the 1840's, during the height of the Temperance Movement in this country, a new set of lyrics were paired with the melody of the popular drinking song to promote a different set of values. It was called, "*The Washington Badge*".

Several US presidential campaign songs were set to the tune of "*Old Rosin the Beau*", including for William Henry Harrison ("*The Hero of Tippecanoe*"), Henry Clay ("*Harry, the Honest and True*") and Abraham Lincoln ("*Lincoln and Liberty*").

Perhaps the most ironic use of the original drinking song was the request by Rev. Benjamin Sawyer to have it used to accompany the verses of a Sacred Harp hymn he had composed on his deathbed. It came to be known as "*Sawyer's Exit*."

In music and friendship,

~ Jull