

The Bunch of Keys

The musical score for "The Bunch of Keys" is presented in two parts, A and B. Part A is a 4-measure phrase in G Major, 4/4 time, starting with a G chord and ending with a Dm7 chord. Part B is a 4-measure phrase in G Major, 4/4 time, starting with a G chord and ending with a Dm7 chord. Both parts feature a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.), each with a G, Dm7, G chord progression.

"The Bunch of Keys" is part of a large family of related tunes which includes "The Ewe (or Ewie) with the Crooked Horn", "The Flowers of Limerick" and "Paddy on the Turnpike". It is also known as "Lady Elmer's Reel", "The Mills are Grinding", "Old Town Reel", "Second Wellington", "Telephone Reel" or "Yellow Heifer". It is an Irish reel in G Dorian (Brody), G Major (O'Neill) or G Major/Mixolydian (Cranitch). The parts are played AABB (Brody), ABC (O'Neill) or AABBC (Cranitch).

"The Bunch of Keys" may refer to the winged seeds (sometimes called keys) of the ash tree (significant in Gaelic, British and Nordic folklore), which hang in bunches before dropping. A version of the reel in two parts was entered into Book 2 of the large c. 1883 music manuscript collection of County Leitrim fiddler and piper Stephen Grier (c. 1824-1894) as an untitled tune. "The Bunch of Keys" was recorded on 78 RPM in 1936 by Sligo/New York fiddler Paddy Killoran.

A version called "Second Wellington" was printed by music publishers J. Alexander & Co. in 1826.

It was also printed in Brody's **Fiddler's Fakebook** (1983), Bulmer & Sharpley's **Music from Ireland** (1974), Cranitch's **Irish Fiddle Book** (1996) and O'Neill (Krassen) (1976).

It was recorded by Bobby Casey on **Casey in the Cowhouse** (1992), Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin & Patrick Ourceau on **Tracín** (1999), Jack Wade on **Ceili Music From Ireland**, Kevin Burke on **Sweeney's Dream**, Barry, Gorman, Ennis, and Heaney on **Irish Music in London Pubs**, Mike McHale on **The Schoolmaster's House** (2000), Paddy Glackin & Paddy Keenan on **Doublin'** (1978) and Jimmy O'Brien-Moran on **Seán Reid's Favourite** (1996).