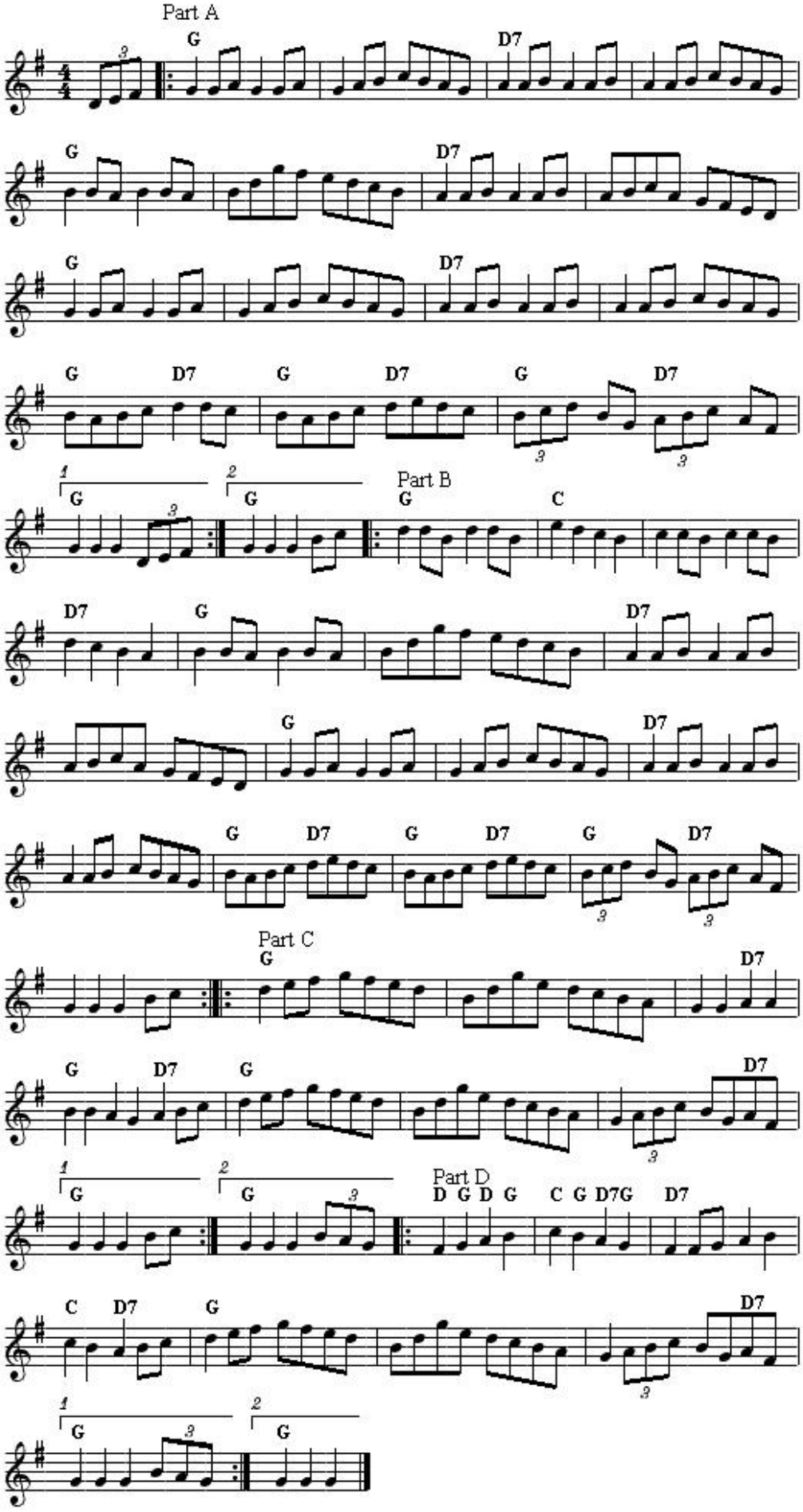
Downfall of Paris



The tune and title "Downfall of Paris" was the product of the West Yorkshire Regiment, dating from the year 1793, however, a manuscript version of the tune titled the "The 7th Regiment Quick March or Surrender of Paris" appears to predate that, and appears in the copybook of flute player Ensign Thomas Molyneaux of the 6th Regiment, who was stationed in Shelburne, Nova Scotia.
It was played by British army bands during the Peninsular War against Napoleon's armies. Its dance roots gradually resurfaced, and in 1805 it was printed in **O'Farrell's Pocket Companion for the Uilleann or Union Pipes**, and in 1816 the melody was again printed, this time in England in London dancing master Thomas Wilson's **Companion to the Ball Room**. Freed somewhat from its military connotations, the dance tune "Downfall of Paris" became widespread in the British Isles, where it appears in collections of Irish music as well as in southern English village musicians' tune books. It was one of the official set dances (for dance competitions) in Ireland.
I learned it from a recording by Eugene O'Donnell.