

Far from Home

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Far from Home" in G Major. It consists of two strains, A and B, each with four measures of music. The first strain (A) begins with a boxed letter 'A' and a G chord. The second strain (B) begins with a boxed letter 'B' and a C chord. The score includes treble clefs, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. Chords are indicated by letters G, C, and D7 above the staff lines. The music is written in a fiddle style with eighth and sixteenth notes.

"Far From Home", in Gaelic "*Slan Beo Leat*" or "*Fad Ua Baile*" is an Irish, English, Shetland and American reel in G Major. The parts are played AB (O'Neill/1850 & 1001) or AABB (Cranitch, Frets Magazine, Miller & Perron, O'Neill/Krassen, Raven).

Bayard (1981) collected a version in Pennsylvania called "The Butcher's Row". Many have pointed out the similarity to the popular hornpipe "Off to California", especially in the first four measures of the 2nd strain, which are quite similar, as is the return to the 1st strain theme for the finish of the 2nd (i.e.: AA'BA form).

Nigel Gatherer remarks that "many people think of this tune as a Shetland reel; I've even seen it on CD's as 'Far Frae Home'!" He attributes this to its being included in sets of Shetland tunes by the Boys of the Lough on their albums **Good Friends, Good Music** (1977) and **Far From Home**. Francis O'Neill learned his version of the tune in the San Joaquin Valley, California, when he was aged 19 in the 1870's "from the whistling of a companion while herding a flock of 3,000 sheep on the plains at the foot of the Sierra Nevada range". Presumably the title appealed to the young O'Neill, who left Ireland in his mid-teens or was his own invention).

I got the banjo tab from Ken Perlman at Midwest Banjo Camp.

It was printed in Cranitch's **The Irish Fiddle Book** (1996), "Boys of the Lough" **Frets Magazine**, October 1980, Kennedy's **Fiddler's Tune-Book, vol. 2** (1954), Miller & Perron's **New England Fiddler's Repertoire** (1983), O'Neill (Krassen) (1976), O'Neill's **Music of Ireland: 1850 Melodies** (1903), O'Neill's **Dance Music of Ireland: 1001 Gems** (1907), Raven's **English Country Dance Tunes** (1984), Silberberg's **Fiddle Tunes I Learned at the Tractor Tavern** (2002) and Songer's **Portland Collection** (1997).

It was recorded by Boys of the Lough on **Good Friends, Good Music** (1977) and **Far From Home**.