

Hunting the Hare

The musical score for "Hunting the Hare" is written in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a boxed letter 'A' above the first measure. The second staff begins with a boxed letter 'B' above the eighth measure. The third staff has 'A7' above the first measure and 'A7' above the eighth measure. The fourth staff begins with 'D' above the first measure and 'Fine' above the second measure. Chord symbols G, A7, and D are placed above the notes throughout the piece.

"Hunting the Hare", known in Wales as "*Helar's Ysgfarnog*" is also known as "Newcastle Beer", "Mr. Basse His Career", "The Career" or "Mount Taragh's Triumph" is an English, Irish, American Jig in F Major (Raven) or D Major (Ashman, Cole, Joyce, Kerr, Williamson).

The parts are played AB (Cole, Joyce), ABB (Kerr, Raven) or AABB (Ashman, Williamson).

The title "Hunting the Hare" probably has sexual connotations similar to "The Cuckoo's Nest".

The melody appears in **Twenty Four Dances for the Year 1768** and was used as the melody for various song sheets in the 18th century, including a song called "Newcastle Beer" by John Cunningham (1729-1773). Chappell traces the tune to an air for much older ballads and notes that it was printed in 3/4 time in John Gay's ballad opera of **Achilles** (1738) entitled "A Minuet." He finds versions in **Antidote to Melancholy** (1661) and **Pills to Purge Melancholy** (1707) under the title "The Green Gown", a name derived from the last line of each stanza of the song. Finally, versions of the tune can also be found as "Room for Company", a ballad in the Pepys **Collection**, and as "Room for Cuckolds" in Playford's **Musick's Recreation on the Lyra Viol** (1652). In the United States it appears in several MS collection of around 1800. The title is not to be confused with that of another and different popular melody of the period, "Hunt the Squirrel".

It was printed in Ashman's **The Ironbridge Hornpipe** (1991) (appears as "Hunt the Hare"), Cole's **1000 Fiddle Tunes** (1940), Joyce's **Old Irish Folk Music and Songs** (1909), Kerr's **Merry Melodies, vol. 3**, Preston's **Preston's Twenty-Four Country Dances for the Year 1798** (1798), Raven's **English Country Dance Tunes** (1984), Ryan's **Mammoth Collection** (1883) and Williamson's **English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish Fiddle Tunes** (1976).

It was recorded by Alistair Anderson on **Alistair Anderson Plays English Concertina** (1972).