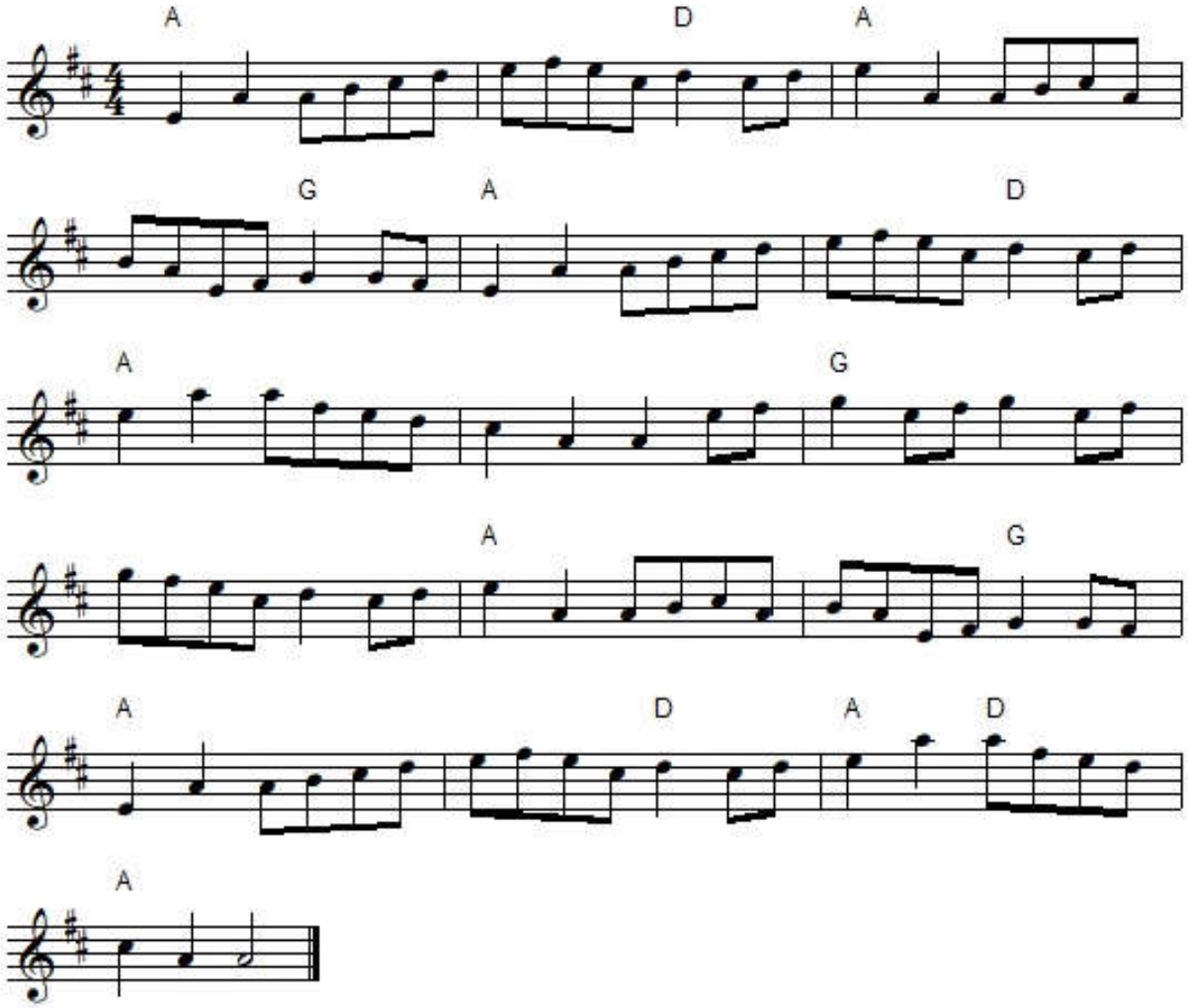
The Little Beggarman



1. I am a little beggarman and begging I have been,
   For three score or more in this little isle of green.
   I'm known from the Liffey down to Segue
   And I'm known by the name of old Johnny Dhu.
   Of all the trade's that's going, sure begging is the best
   For when a man is tired, he can sit down and rest.
   He can beg for his dinner, he has nothing else to do
   Only cut around the corner with his old rig-a-doo.

2. I slept in the barn, down at Caurabawn.
   A wet night came on and I slept 'till the dawn
   With holes in the roof and the rain coming through
   And the rats and the cats, they were playing
   peek-a-boo,
   When who did I waken but the woman of the house
   With her white spotty apron and her calico blouse.
   She began to frighten and I said "boo,
   Aarah, don't be afraid mam it's only Johnny Dhu".

3. I met a little flaxy-haired girl one day.
   "Good morning little flaxy-haired girl" I did say.
   "Good morning little beggarman, a how do you do
   With your rags and you tags and you old rig-a-doo".
   "I'll buy a pair of leggings, a collar and a tie
   And a nice young lady I'll fetch by and by.
   I'll buy a pair of goggles and I'll colour them blue
   And an old fashioned lady I will make her too.

4. Over the road with my pack on my back,
   Over the fields with my great heavy sack
   With holes in my shoes and my toes peeping through
   Singing "skinny-me-rink a doodle o" and old
   Johnny Dhu.
   I must be going to bed for it's getting late at night.
   The fire's all raked and out goes the light.
   So now you've heard the story of my old rig-a-doo,
   It's good-bye and God be with you says old
   Johnny Dhu.

"The Little Beggarman", also known as "*An Giolla Ruadh*", "The Beggar Man", "The Beggarman", "The Jolly Beggar", "The Red Haired Boy", "The Auld Rigadoo", "The Old Rigadoo" and "The Rigadoo", is an Irish song. The lyrics are sung to some version of the reel "The Red Haired Boy". It was recorded by Callanish on ***An Dara***, Planxty on **Between the Jigs and Reels: A Retrospective**, Claddagh on **Easy And Slow**, High Level Ranters on **High Level**, The High Kings on **The High Kings**, The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem on **Recorded Live In Ireland** and by many others.