

## The Bee's Wing Hornpipe

Sheet music for "The Bee's Wing Hornpipe" in 4/4 time, featuring a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb).

The music is organized into six systems, each containing a staff of music with corresponding chords and measure numbers.

**System 1:** Measures 1-3. Chords: Bb, F7, Bb, Eb, Bb. Section marker **A** is above the first measure.

**System 2:** Measures 4-6. Chords: F7<sub>3</sub>, Eb<sub>3</sub>, F7, Bb, F7, Eb, Bb.

**System 3:** Measures 7-9. Chords: Eb, Bb, F7, Bb (first ending), F7, Bb (second ending), Bb. Section marker **B** is above the final measure.

**System 4:** Measures 10-12. Chords: F7, Eb, F7<sub>3</sub>, Eb<sub>3</sub>, F7.

**System 5:** Measures 13-15. Chords: Bb, F7, Eb, Bb, Eb, Bb.

**System 6:** Measures 16-17. Chords: F7, Bb (first ending), F7, Bb (second ending).

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"The Bee's Wing Hornpipe", also known as "The Bee's Wing" is an English (originally), Scottish, Canadian and Irish hornpipe or clog in B Flat Major. The parts are played AABB (Brody, Cole, Cranford/Holland, McNulty), AABBCDD' (Hunter).

It was composed by the 19th century Gateshead (near Newcastle), northern England, composer James Hill, originally born in Dundonia, Scotland (nicknamed the "Newcastle Paganini").

The "Bee's Wing" has become in modern times one of the most popular Scottish fiddle hornpipes. It is attributed to Hill in Köhlers' **Violin Repository (Book 2)** and was named after a famous Newcastle racehorse, a mare. Bee's Wing was foaled in 1833, sired by Dr. Syntax (1811-1838), a champion in his own right and was bred by William Orde, a former Member of Parliament who had inherited an estate at Nunnykirk, near Morpeth, Northumberland. Bee's Wing won the Newcastle Gold Cup six times, the Doncaster Gold Cup four times and the Ascot Gold Cup in 1842-in her career she started 64 times and won an astounding 51 races. So great was her fame that when she retired in 1842, to be put to pasture as a broodmare at Nunnykirk, Northumberland, the whole town of Morpeth turned out to greet her on her return. A local pub was renamed in her honor. It is possible the tune was named with the pub in mind, as well as the racehorse, for Hill was both an aficionado of horseracing (composing several tunes in honor of race horses and owners) and a sometime publican who also played in pubs.

A note in Ryan's/Cole's indicates the tune "can be used as a clog".

"The Bee's Wing" is one of the tunes sometimes requested of Shetland fiddlers because "anything composed in a flat key is considered to be a real test of a fiddler's ability" (Cooke, 1986).

It was printed in Brody's **Fiddler's Fakebook** (1983), Cole's **1000 Fiddle Tunes** (1940), Cranford's **Jerry Holland: The Second Collection** (2000), Hunter's **Fiddle Music of Scotland** (1988), Köhlers' **Violin Repository, Book 2** (Edinburgh) (1881-1885), McNulty's **Dance Music of Ireland** (1965) and Ryan's **Mammoth Collection** (1883).

It was recorded by Arthur Robertson on **Scottish Traditional Fiddle Music** (1978), Carl Mackenzie on **Welcome To Your Feet Again**, Natalie MacMaster on **No Boundaries** (1996), Sean Mcguire on **Irish Jigs and Reels** (c. 1960's) and Frank Ferrel on **Fiddle Tunes**.