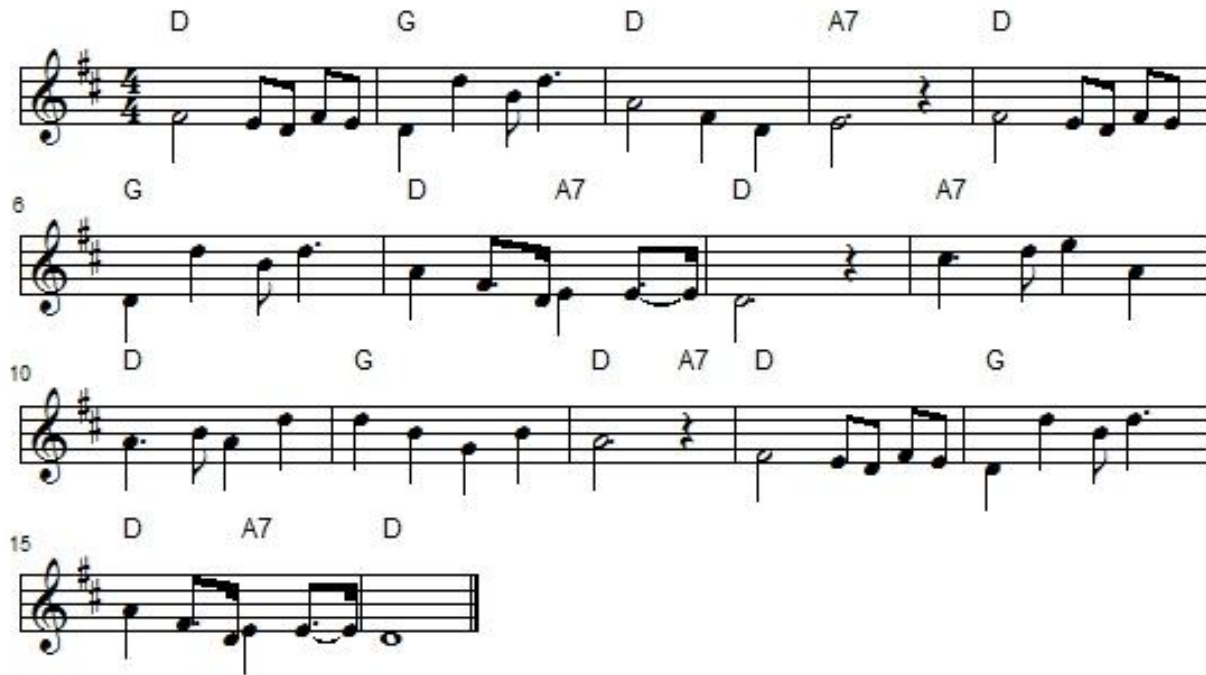


# Old Folks at Home

*Stephen Foster*



1. Way down upon de Swanee Ribber,  
Far, far away,  
Dere's wha my heart is turning ebber,  
Dere's wha de old folks stay.  
All up and down de whole creation  
Sadly I roam,  
Still longing for de old plantation,  
And for de old folks at home.

## **Chorus**

All de world am sad and dreary,  
Eb-rywhere I roam;  
Oh, darkeys, how my heart grows weary,  
Far from de old folks at home!

2. All round de little farm I wandered  
When I was young,  
Den many happy days I squandered,  
Many de songs I sung.  
When I was playing wid my brudder  
Happy was I;  
Oh, take me to my kind old mudder!  
Dere let me live and die.

## **Chorus**

3. One little hut among de bushes,  
One dat I love  
Still sadly to my memory rushes,  
No matter where I rove.  
When will I see de bees a-humming  
All round de comb?  
When will I hear de banjo strumming,  
Down in my good old home?

## **Chorus**

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"Old Folks at Home" (also known as "Swanee River" or "Suwannee River") is a minstrel song written by Stephen Foster in 1851. Since 1935 it has been the official state song of Florida, although in 2008 the original lyrics were expurgated.

"Old Folks at Home" in print was credited to E. P. Christy on early sheet music printings. Christy had paid Foster to be credited, which Foster himself had suggested but later came to regret. Foster had composed most of the lyrics but was struggling to name the river of the opening line, and asked his brother to suggest one. The first suggestion was "Yazoo" (in Mississippi), which despite fitting the melody perfectly, was rejected by Foster. The second suggestion was "Pee Dee" (in South Carolina), to which Foster also rejected. His brother then consulted an atlas and called out "Suwannee!" Adding it to the lyrics, he purposely misspelled it as "Swanee" to fit the melody.

Other songs by Stephen Foster in this section:

“Camptown Races”

“Gentle Annie”

“Hard Times Come Again No More”

“Oh! Susanna”

“Old Folks at Home”