

# Seely Simpkins' Jig

Dan Emmett



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"Seely Simpkins' Jig" is similar to "Running through the Rain to Keep Your Hair Dry".

It is a fife tune composed by blackface minstrel Dan Emmett, printed in Bruce and Emmett's **The Drummers and Fifers Guide** and later in Dan Emmett's own **Fife Instructor** (1880). It was entered as No. 48 in Dan Emmett's music manuscript book.

It was named for Knox County, Ohio's first fiddler. Simpkins, born in 1799, was a man who reportedly "frequented race tracks, and drew crowds and supplied hoe-downs on demand".

In Hans Nathan's **Dan Emmett and Negro Minstrelsy** (1962), he writes:

Mount Vernon (Ohio, birthplace of Dan Emmett) counted a highly unconventional, droll character among its citizens — Seeley Simpkins. Dan must have known him and been impressed by his antics, because he set him a "monument" many years later, by naming after him one of the tunes in his **Fife Instructor**.

Simpkins' home was adjacent to another pioneering resident, Thomas Snowdon, an ex-slave who had followed his former master to Mount Vernon and both were north of the Emmett homestead. Snowdon was a master whistler and is known to have been the inspiration (if not the composer) of Emmett's famous song "Dixie".