

## Chinese Breakdown

3

7

13

19

28

---

"Chinese breakdown" is also known as "Chinese Rag" although it has no resemblance to Chinese music. It does bear a resemblance to "The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down", a song written in 1937 by Cliff Friend and Dave Franklin which was best known as the theme tune for the **Looney Tunes** cartoon series. The origins of this tune are unclear, although it is widespread from the South to Midwest, the North and Canada and even to England and Scotland.

"Chinese Breakdown" was first recorded by the "Dixie String Band" in 1925 followed by a recording in Atlanta in 1927 by the Scottdale String Band. It is possible that the tune was composed by Fred Roe of the Walker Mt. String Band. "Chinese Breakdown" was recorded from Ozark Mountain fiddlers by musicologist/folklorist Vance Randolph for the Library of Congress in the early 1940's.

It was also recorded by The New Lost City Ramblers (1964), Ed Hayley, the Skillet Lickers (1934), The Arm and Hammer String Band, Dan Gellert & Shoofly, Adam Hurt and others.

I learned it from the New Lost City Ramblers' and Adam Hurt's recordings.