

Elzic's Farewell

Played: AABBACCCDD; end with a final AA.

A

Am Em

Am Em Am

B

Am Em Am

C

Am Dm

Am Dm Am

D

Am Dm

Am Dm Am 1.

2. Am

"Elzic's Farewell" is an old-time breakdown from West Virginia in A Dorian or A minor. It is played in AEae or standard tunings (fiddle). The parts are played ABB (Phillips, Reiner & Anick), AABB (Phillips), AABBC (Brody, Songer) or ABCBABC (Krassen).

This tune has been described as "an old bagpipe tune" from the repertoire of W.Va. fiddler French Carpenter who stated his ancestor (the Elzic or Elzick of the title) played the melody as a farewell before marching off to fight in the Civil War. Elzic went missing in the conflict and never returned, but the tune survived and entered local tradition as "Elzic's Farewell".

The tune's origins have been researched by Jim Comstock of Richwood, W.Va., and were published by him in **The West Virginia Songbag** (1974). The tune was actually written by one Harvey G. Elswick who was born in Pike County, Kentucky in 1838 and who did serve in a unit from that state during the Civil War. After the war Elswick and in 1875 he and his family moved to Kanawha County, West Virginia. There that he wrote the melody now known as "Elsic's Farewell" in April, 1889. Harvey Elswick played the tune at the request of his mother, who was on her deathbed. Complying with her request to "play his fiddle for her once more before she died", Elswick was inspired to play the tune as his farewell.

The banjo tablature is by John Letscher. His notes:

Mainly based on The Freighthoppers and Paul Kirk whose playing supplied the D part of this setting. The Freighthoppers play three parts.

I adapted John's D part to add it to the standard notation and mandolin/violin tablatures. It was printed in **Brody's Fiddler's Fakebook** (1983), Krassen's **Appalachian Fiddle** (1983), Milliner & Koken's **Millener-Koken Collection of American Fiddle Tunes** (2011), Phillips' **Traditional American Fiddle Tunes, vol. 1** (1994), Reiner & Anick's **Old Time Fiddling Across America** (1989) and Songer's Portland Collection (1997).

It was recorded by Pete Sutherland on **Mountain Hornpipe**, French Carpenter (whose version had only two parts) on **Old Time Songs and Tunes from Clay County, West Virginia, Pickin' Around the Cookstove**, Wilson Douglas on **The Right Hand Fork of Rush's Creek** (1975), Scott Nygaard on **Dreamer's Waltz** (1996), Ruthie Dornfeld on **Egyptian Dominoes**, Freight Hopperson on **Where'd You Come From, Where'd You Go**, Ron Mullennex on **Sugar in My Coffee** and Reed Island Rounders on **Goin' Home** (2002).