

Forks of Sandy

The musical score for "Forks of Sandy" is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It is divided into two sections, A and B. Section A consists of the first three staves of music. The first staff begins with a boxed 'A' and a repeat sign, followed by a G chord. The second staff continues the melody with a G chord. The third staff features a first ending (marked '1.' with a D7 chord) and a second ending (marked '2.' with a D7 chord). Section B consists of the last three staves. It begins with a boxed 'B' and a G chord. The second staff has a D7 chord, and the third staff has a G chord. The final staff ends with a D7 chord and a G chord, followed by a double bar line and repeat dots.

Also known as "Roll 'em Up Sandy", "Three Forks of Sandy", and "Three Forks of Big Sandy". The title refers to the Big Sandy River on the West Virginia/Kentucky border, the 3 forks being the Big Sandy River, Levisa Fork and Tug Fork. Oscar Wright maintained the song was popularized in his area of West Virginia (Mercer County) by North Carolina banjo player and band leader Charlie Poole and his fiddler Posey Rorer when they played the area in 1916, 17 or 18. He claimed to have learned it directly from Rorer. West Virginia fiddler Clark Kessinger (1896-1975), who probably learned the tune as a boy in the Kanawha Valley, recorded the melody in 1930 for Brunswick Records (as "Three Forks of Sandy"). It was also recorded by Kirk Sutphin, John Hartford and others.

I play this in medleys with:

"John Brown's March"

"Greasy String"

both in this section.