

Fort Smith

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Fort Smith". It is written in G Major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The score is divided into two main sections, A and B. Section A consists of two staves of music. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. It begins with a repeat sign and a box labeled 'A'. The melody is primarily eighth notes. Chords G and D7 are indicated above the staff. The second staff continues the melody, ending with a double bar line and a repeat sign. It features a first ending (1.) with chords D7 and G, and a second ending (2.) with chords D7 and G. Section B also consists of two staves. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 2/4 time signature. It begins with a repeat sign and a box labeled 'B'. The melody is primarily eighth notes. Chords C, D7, G, and D7 are indicated above the staff. The second staff continues the melody, ending with a double bar line and a repeat sign. It features a first ending (1.) with chord G and a second ending (2.) with chord G.

"Fort Smith", also known as "On the Banks of the Cane" or "Rabbit in the Grass" is an old-time breakdown known in Arkansas, Missouri and Kentucky in G Major.

The parts are played AABB (Thede) or AABBAACCAADD (Beisswenger/McCann).

It is a popular tune throughout the Ozarks Mountain region, generally played in two parts, although other parts may be inserted by some fiddlers. Fiddler Charlie Walden gives "Old Fort Smith" in his list of one hundred essential Missouri fiddle tunes and it is presumably "Fort Smith".

The melody may go back to the time when a cavalry division of the US Army was stationed at Fort Smith, Arkansas, as an outpost to the Indian Territory to the west. Another possibility this tune was brought from Sweden and renamed 'Fort Smith' by an immigrant the name of Bottefur, who formed a musical organization in the town around 1843.

It was printed in Beisswenger & McCann's **Ozarks Fiddle Music** (2008) and Thede's **The Fiddle Book** (1967).

It was recorded by Art Stamper on **The Lost Fiddler** (c. 1982), Cotton Combs on **Parkin' Lot Jammin'** (c. 1970's) and Vesta Johnson on **Down Home Rag**.