

Great Big Taters in Sandy Land

The musical score is written in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It consists of several staves of music with various chords and melodic lines. The score is divided into sections labeled A, B, and C. Section A is the first line, Section B is the second line, and Section C is the third line. The score includes a variety of notes, rests, and accidentals, as well as chord symbols like D, E7, and A. There are also first and second endings indicated by '1.' and '2.'.

1. Great big tater in the sandy land,
Plow it up Henry Hilderbrand;
Great big tater in the sandy land,
Git there Eli of you can. (*Thede*)
2. Great big taters in sandy land,
We-all dig 'em out as fast as we can.
The folds all buy 'em from a foolish man,
Raisin' great big taters in sandy land.
3. Sow them oats, but you can't get a stand,
Corn won't grow in that sandy land.
Folks won't think you're much of a man,
If you can't make a livin' on sandy land. (*Ford*)
4. Sift the meal and save the bran,
Goodby gals I'm goin' in
Raise big taters in sandy land,
Raise big taters in sandy land. (*W.E. Claunch*)

"Great Big Taters in Sandy Land", also known as "Great Big Taters", "Big Sweet Taters in Sandy Land", "Sandyland", "Sandy Land", "Sandy Lot" and "Grease that Wooden Leg Sally Ann" is an old-time breakdown in A Major (Brody & Silberberg) or G Major (Beissweger & McCann, W.E. Claunch, Kuntz, Sweet). It is played in AEae or Standard fiddle tuning. The parts are played ABB (Rankin), ABB' (Phillips/Wills), AABB' (Sweet), AA'BB' (Beisswenger & McCann), ABC (Silberberg) or AABBC (Brody & Phillips/Eck Robertson).

The melody is directly related to "Sail away Ladies" (and thus to "Sally Ann") and some indicate it is merely a variant of that tune, though the title "Great Big Taters" and its variations is considerably disseminated in the South and Old Southwest.

Drew Beisswenger (2008) states that fiddlers in Arkansas and neighboring states call the tune by the "Great Big Taters in the Sandy Land" or "Sandy Land" while in other regions of the U.S. it is called "Sally Ann" or "Sail Away Ladies". It has also been linked to a song/tune, primarily in the Mid-west, called "The Hound Dawg Song", published in 1912, but likely much older (perhaps as early as the mid-19th century, according to Alan Lomax and Vance Randolph).

The version of "The Hound Dawg Song" in this collection is similar to only the C part of this tune. The lyrics given here similarly fit either tune.

The title was one of those in a list of traditional Ozark Mountain fiddle tunes compiled by musicologist/folklorist Vance Randolph, published in 1954.

As with several popular old-time tunes, there is a play-party lyric called "Sandy Land" that mirrors the sung ditties of the fiddle tune.

It was printed in Beisswenger & McCann's **Ozarks Fiddle Music** (2008)(appears as "Sandy Land"), Brody's **Fiddler's Fakebook** (1983), Ford's **Traditional Music in America** (1940), Phillips' **Traditional American Fiddle Music, vol. 1** (1994)(two versions), Rankin's **Great Big Yam Potatoes: Anglo American Fiddle Music from Mississippi** (1985), Ruth's **Pioneer Western Folk Tunes** (1948), Silberberg's **Tunes I Learned at Tractor Tavern** (2002), Sweet's **Fifer's Delight** (1964/1981) and Thede's **The Fiddle Book** (1967).

It was recorded by Earl Collins on **That's Earl**, Eck Robertson and J.B. Cranfill on **Texas Farewell**, Sam Long on **Echoes of the Ozarks, vol. 1** (1995)(Reissue recordings, various artists), Ship in the Clouds on **Old Time Instrumental Music** (1978),

Gennet 3255 (78 RPM) Sam Long (1926)(Appears as "Sandy Land"),

W.E. Claunch on **Great Big Yam Potatoes: Anglo-American Fiddle Music from Mississippi** (1985), Curly Ray Cline on **My Little Home in West Virginia** and Eck Robertson on **Master Fiddler** and **Victor 40205** (78 RPM), Eck Robertson (1929).