

# Hamilton Iron Works

**A**  
D A D A G D

Musical notation for the first staff of section A, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes.

**B**  
D G D G D

Musical notation for the first staff of section B, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes.

Musical notation for the second staff of section A, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes.

Musical notation for the second staff of section B, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes.

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"Hamilton Iron Works", also known as "Hamilton Ironworks" is an American reel in D Major/Mixolydian. The parts are played AABB Hartford/Devil's Box: AAAABBBBC. According to Missouri fiddler and writer Howard Marshall, John Hartford learned this tune from Missouri fiddlers Gene Goforth and Roy Wooliver in the late 1950's, although it had originally been in Wooliver's repertoire (he had been Goforth's mentor).

Missouri fiddling researcher Howard Marshall writes:

John Harford always felt that Roy Wooliver probably authored this tune, but the feeling or the culture of fiddlers was that fiddlers who made up tunes generally attributed them to someone else, usually older fiddlers than themselves. So Wooliver never owned up to having composed it. Goforth himself said that he and brother Cecil Goforth, along with Clifford Hawthorne, learned it from Wooliver in the 1950's, but that the tune never spread from beyond their local region.

John Hartford himself explained:

Gene and Cecil Goforth, Clifford Hawthorne and us learned this from Roy Wooliver in the 1950's and it never seemed to spread out of our area. We never figured out if Roy learned it somewhere or made it up himself. Roy worked for Cousin Emmy one time on KNOX but she fired him because he wouldn't wear socks. He was in the pen twice for stealing the same watch (so the story went). The warden at Jeff City, MO., loved fiddle music and was always glad to see Roy come and he would check him out on weekends and carry him around to fiddler's contests and then would lock him up during the week. Roy always played on borrowed instruments and made his rounds through the country side staying with a family for a week sleeping in the barn, cutting a little wood and playing for some dances.

For some time no one knew where the Hamilton Iron Works had been located, although Marshall believed it would have been in the upper eastern Ozarks and south or southwest of St. Louis. Drew Beisswenger (2008) finds that the Hamilton Iron Works was located near Sullivan, Missouri, in the present location of Meramec State Park and dated to the 1880's. Hartford thought the tune was a distant cousin to "Cumberland Gap".

The banjo tablature is from John Letscher.

The tune was printed in Beisswenger & McCann's **Ozark Fiddle Music** (2008), Stephen F. Davis **Devil's Box, vol. 26, No. 4, Winter 1992** and Phillips' **Traditional American Fiddle Tunes, vol. 1** (1994).

It was recorded by Gene Goforth on **Eminence Breakdown** (1997), Jane Rothfield on **IFiddle, TheyBanjo** (2008), John Hartford on **Hamilton Ironworks** (2001) and Cecil Goforth on **Fiddle Music of the Ozarks, vol. 1** (1999).