

The Last of Callahan

The musical score for "The Last of Callahan" is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a boxed section marker 'A'. The second staff contains a measure with a '5' below the note, indicating a fifth fret. The third staff contains a boxed section marker 'B'. The fourth staff contains a measure with a '5' below the note. The fifth staff contains a measure with a '5' below the note. The sixth staff contains a measure with a '5' below the note. The seventh staff contains a boxed section marker 'C'. The eighth staff contains a first ending bracket with two endings: 1. E7 A and 2. E7 A.

"The Last of the Callahan", also known as "Callahan", "Callahan Reel", "Last of the Callahans" or "Old Sport" is an American reel in cut or 2/4 time and D Major. It is played in AEae or Standard fiddle tunings. The parts are played AABB (Thede) or AA'BB'CC (Brody, Reiner & Anick). Thede says that fiddlers in Arkansas and Oklahoma attribute the tune (as in the "MacPherson's Farewell" story) to an outlaw who, just before being hanged, requested to play the fiddle one last time. In his standing position he played an unnamed fiddle tune and then handed the fiddle down to one of the bystanders. Justice was meted out and the tune became "The Last of Callahan".

Reiner & Anick (1989) say the first published report on the tune is from 1912, which relates the story of a Kentucky outlaw named Callahan who was executed around the year 1835; only in this account he played his tune while sitting on his awaiting coffin and when finished broke the fiddle over his knee before stepping up to the gallows.

It was printed in Brody's **Fiddler's Fakebook** (1983), Milliner & Koken's **Milliner-Koken Collection of American Fiddle Tunes** (2011), Reiner & Anick's **Old-Time Fiddling Across America** (1989) and Thede's **The Fiddle Book** (1967).

It was recorded by Mike Cross on **Child Prodigy** (1979), Luther Strong on **Library of Congress AFS 01537 B01** (1937), Highwoods String Band on **Fire on the Mountain** and Fuzzy Mountain String Band on **Fuzzy Mountain String Band** (1972).