

## Lonesome John

AEae tuning (fiddle)

Am D Am D Em7

Am D Am Em7 Am

2. Am Em7 D Am D

Em7 D Em7 Am Em7

1. Am 2. Am

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"Lonesome John" is an American reel in cut time and A Aeolian (Krassen), A Dorian (Reiner) or A Mixolydian (Titon). It is played in Standard or AEae fiddle tunings. The parts are played AAB (Krassen) or AABB (Reiner, Titon).

A popular east Kentucky tune, particularly in Magoffin and Morgan Counties.

Jeff Titon (2001) notes that his source, John Salyer (1882-1952) played his 'c' notes at an intonation between a 'c' natural and a 'c' sharp. This is not a mistake or poor technique, but a legitimate characteristic of the tonality of many old-time fiddlers. Salyer himself called such intonation 'wild' notes.

Mike Yates (2002) believes this tune to be related to "Salt Creek", "Salt River" and Hobart Smith's "The Pateroller Song".

The banjo tablature is by John Letscher. His comment:

I think Ralph Stanley got a hold on this one and called it "Clinch Mountain Backstep". Good tune either way. This from the playing of Rayna Gellert.

It was printed in Krassen's **Appalachian Fiddle** (1973), Reiner's **Anthology of Fiddle Styles** (1979) and Titon's **Old-Time Kentucky Fiddle Tunes** (2001).

It was recorded by John M. Salyer on **John M. Salyer, Home Recordings 1941-42** (1993) and John McCutcheon on **Fine Times at Our House** (1982) (Learned from Scott Boatright, Fort Blackmore, Va.).