

# Oh My Little Darling

The image shows a musical score for the song "Oh My Little Darling" in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The score is written on five staves. The first staff begins with a boxed letter 'A' above it. The second staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled '1.' above it. The third staff begins with a second ending bracket labeled '2.' above it, and contains a boxed letter 'B' above it. The fourth staff continues the melody. The fifth staff contains two first ending brackets, both labeled '1.' above them. Chord symbols (A, D, E, G) are placed above the notes to indicate the accompaniment.

Thaddeus C. Willingham's lyrics:

1. Oh, my little darling, don't you weep and cry,  
Some sweet day a-coming, marry you and I.
2. Oh, my little darling, don't you weep and moan,  
Some sweet day a-coming, take my baby home.
3. Up and down the railroad, 'cross the county line,  
Pretty little girls a-plenty, but a wife is hard to find.
4. Nigger drives the wagon, nigger walks behind,  
Kill yourself a-laughing to see them horses flyin'.

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"Oh, My Little Darling", also known as "My Little Dony" is an American reel in A Major/Mixolydian. It is often played in AEae fiddle tuning. The parts are played AA'BB'. "Oh, My Little Darling" was recorded in the field by Herbert Halpert during his 1939 collecting trip for the Library of Congress from the playing and singing of Alabama farmer Thaddeus C. Willingham. Willingham learned many of his tunes from former slaves who still worked on his father's farm. The lyrics given here are from Willingham's singing. A version of the tune was played as an instrumental by fiddler Charles Long in 1929 under the title "My Little Dony".

The banjo tablature is from John Letscher. His comment:

This is a kenophobic Round Peak version of the tune. A calmer one can be found on Rachel Eddy's Chilly Winds CD.

It was printed in Songer's **Portland Collection vol. 3** (2015), Silberberg's **The Complete Fiddle Tunes I Either Did or Did Not Learn at the Tractor Tavern** (2007) and Lamancusa's **The Gettysburg Collection of Old-Time Fiddle Tunes** (2021).

It was recorded by Mike Seeger on **Old Time Country Music** (originally issued 1962), Corn Dodgers on **Nobody's Business If I Do** (1980), County Down on **Living in the Country** (1983), Charles Long on **Great Big Yam Potatoes: Anglo-American Fiddle Music From Mississippi** (1985), Plank Road String Band on **Plank Road String Band** (1976), Kirk Sutphin on **Masters of the Banjo** (1994), Volo Bogtrotters on **Backside of Buncombe** (1989) and Thaddeus C. Willingham, on **Oh, My Little Darling; Folk Song Types** (1977).