

## Shoo Fly

"Shoo Fly", also known as "Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me" or "Shew! fly, don't bother me" is an American reel and air in cut time and D Major. The parts are played AABB (Phillips, Silberberg) or AA'BB' (Songer).

The original "Shew Fly, Don't Bother Me" was a "Comic Song and Dance, or Walk Round" (as the sheet music explained) hit for Billy Reeves (words) and Frank Campbell (music) who are often credited with the composition. The songwriting pair were blackface minstrels and claimed the tune, although it has been pointed out that the reference to 'Company G' in some song versions suggests Civil War origins. A competing claim is made for "Shew fly don't bother me" as the work of Thomas Brigham Bishop from the village of Wayne, Maine. Several versions were published about the same time. Bishop published his in 1869 and tried to recapture his claim by proclaiming that his published sheet music was the "Original Copy and Only Authorized Edition".

It was sung by soldiers during the Spanish–American War of 1898, when flies and the yellow fever mosquito were a serious enemy. It retained its popularity over the years and was assumed into Americana, especially as a children's song.

The title appears in list of traditional Ozarks Mountains fiddle tunes compiled by musicologist/folklorist Vance Randolph, published in 1954.

The banjo tab is by John Letscher based on the version collected from Henry Reed by Alan Jabbour. The standard notation version is based on that played by Clark Kessinger.

It was printed in Phillips' **Traditional American Fiddle Tunes, vol. 1** (1994), Mrs. Joe Person's **A Collection of Popular Airs** (1889), Silberberg's **Tunes I Learned at Tractor Tavern** (2002), Silberberg's **93 Fiddle Tunes I Didn't Learn at the Tractor Tavern** (2004), White's **Excelsior Collection** and Songer's **Portland Collection** (1997).

It was recorded by The Bogtrotters on **The Original Bogtrotters** (1968), The Kessinger Brothers (1930) and The Hoover Uprights on **Known by their Reputation** (2005).