

Soldier's Joy

Musical score for "Soldier's Joy" in D major, 2/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a boxed letter 'A' above the first measure. The second staff has a boxed letter '1.' above the first measure. The third staff has a boxed letter '2.' above the first measure and a boxed letter 'B' above the second measure. The fourth staff has a boxed letter '1.' above the first measure. The fifth staff has a boxed letter '2.' above the first measure. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, A7, G, and D.

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Musical score for "Soldier's Joy" in D major, 2/4 time, labeled "Alternate A". The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff has a boxed letter 'A' above the first measure. The second staff has a boxed letter '1.' above the first measure. The third staff has a boxed letter '2.' above the first measure. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, A7, and D.

"Soldier's Joy", also known as "The King's Head", "The King's Hornpipe", "I Love Somebody", "Payday in the Army", "Rock the Cradle Lucy" and other titles is a hornpipe, reel, country dance and morris dance tune in 4/4 or cut time and D Major (most versions) or G Major. It is widely known in America, Canada, England, Ireland and Scotland.

It is popular with American fiddlers but traces its origin to Scottish and Irish fiddle traditions. It has been played in Scotland for over 200 years and Robert Burns used it for the first song of his cantata 'The Jolly Beggars'.

According to documentation at the Library of Congress, it is "one of the oldest and most widely distributed tunes" and is rated in the top ten most-played Old Time Fiddle tunes.

The term "soldier's joy" may refer to the use of whiskey, beer, and morphine by Civil War soldiers. Sets of floating verses are sometimes sung to this tune.

It has been printed in about every collection of fiddle tunes and recorded by almost everyone.