

## West Virginia Gals

The image shows the musical notation for the tune "West Virginia Gals". It is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The piece is in cut time. The notation is divided into two main sections, A and B. Section A is an 8-measure phrase that repeats twice. Section B is a 4-measure phrase that also repeats twice. The notation includes treble clefs, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is characterized by eighth-note patterns and slurs.

*Transcribed from the playing of Henry Reed by Alan Jabbour*

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"West Virginia Gals", also known as "Last Three Drops" is an American reel in cut time and A Mixolydian/Dorian. (The G notes are played sometimes sharp, sometimes natural and sometimes in between. The parts are played AABB.

The tune was an unnamed tune in Glen Lyn, Virginia, fiddler Henry Reed's (1886-1968) repertoire, named "West Virginia Gals" by the Hollow Rock String Band in 1974 for their recording.

West Virginia fiddler Frank George thought it similar to "Fire on the Mountain" as played by his mentor Jim Farthing.

Krassen (1973) noted similarities to "The Arkansas Sheik" (also known as "The Arkansas Boys") although the closeness of that resemblance is more marked in some versions of that tune than others.

The "West Virginia Gals" released on Brunswick 317 (78 RPM, 1929) by Al Hopkins & His Buckle Busters is a moderately paced song based on an unrelated Irish air.

The standard notation and mandolin and violin tab versions of this tune are from the Alan Jabbour's transcription of the playing of Henry Reed in 1966.

The banjo tab is by John Letscher who has extensively researched banjo versions.

Reed said he had no name for the tune, but musicologist Jabbour believes the high strain to be an instrumental version of an old Appalachian song called "If You Want to go a-Courtin'" (related to "The Arkansas Boys" in the American Songs section).

It was printed in Krassen's **Appalachian Fiddle** (1973).

It was recorded by Henry Reed by Alan Jabbour for the Library of Congress, **AFS 13037A08** (1967) and The Hollow Rock String Band on **The Hollow Rock String Band** (1974).