

66. OVER THE STUMP AND BACK AGAIN

Played by Mrs. Sarah Armstrong, (near) Derry, Pennsylvania, November 18, 1943.

The musical score consists of five staves. The first four staves are in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time. The first staff is marked 'a--', the second 'b----', and the third 'c---'. The fourth staff concludes with a double bar line. The fifth staff is labeled 'VAR:' and contains three variations: 'a.' (two measures), 'b.' (two measures), and 'c.' (two measures), each ending with a double bar line.

The story Mrs. Armstrong tells concerning this tune illustrates the extremely casual way in which a country dance tune can acquire a new name. On one occasion, when the player was a small girl, her uncle Laney Gray was sitting in their home playing this tune on his fiddle. Someone came into the house with the news that old Dan Riffle (a local character still well remembered by many people in the Derry neighborhood) was trying to drive a team back and forth across a stump. The team was reluctant, and Dan was yelling and swearing at the animals in a great passion. When Laney heard this, he at once exclaimed, "There's a name for my tune — 'Over the stump and back again!'" Mrs. Armstrong did not state that her uncle had composed this air; in all likelihood, he was merely casting about for some suitable name to give to it, and this little incident inspired him!