

Flatpicking Guitar Magazine

Free Lesson — March 2017

Banks of Ireland

Arranged by Mickey Abraham

Hello and welcome once again to Flatpicking Guitar Magazines free lesson portion of our monthly newsletter. This month in honor of Saint Patricks Day I have decided to supply you with a cool Irish reel entitled the “Banks of Ireland.”

I first learned “Banks of Ireland” fifteen years ago from Tallahassee fiddler Jane Scott. Back then Jane was the director of the Florida State University Irish Ensemble. I was a young impressionable guitarist trying to soak up as many cool tunes as I could. I remember thinking how cool this tune was when I heard her class play it!

One interesting aspect of “Banks of Ireland” is that the A section is half the length of the B section. The A section is only 4 measures long and is repeated. Irish musicians will often call this type of form a half reel. But, the B section consists of the usually 8 measures. For this reason I don’t think I’d call “Banks of Ireland” a half real. It just might not be the best idea to square dance to this song as it’s four measures shy of the standard fiddle tune form.

I also find it interesting that the tune hints at different modes. At first the tune has a strong A dorian sound. Am to D almost always suggests A dorian. Then, the song takes on a D ionian (major) tonality. D to A really brings out that classic major sound. Just when the major sound is getting into your year, the tune takes a left turn and slips back into A dorian. Make sure to click on the included lesson mp3 to hear the chords and melody in action.

I hope you enjoy working on this cool Irish melody. Remember to play it for your friends on Saint Patricks Day! As always should you have any questions or comments on this e-lesson just drop me a line at michabraham@comcast.net

Banks of Ireland

Arranged by Mickey Abraham

1 **Am** **G** **Am** **D**

T
A
B

6 **Am** **G** **Am** **D**

1 2 0 1 2 0 0 2 0 2 0 1 2 0 0 2 3 3 2 3 2 0 3

10 **D** **A** **D** **A** **D** **A** **D** **A** **D**

2 3 2 0 0 2 3 2 0 3 2 2 2 0 3 2 0 2 3 5 2 3 0 3

14 **Am** **C** **D** **Am** **D** **A** **D** **A** **D**

0 5 5 3 0 2 3 0 3 2 0 3 3 1 2 2 0 2 3 3 2 3 0 2 3 5 2 3 0 3 3 0 2 5 2 3 0 3