

Happy Fingers

Easy Songs for Braille Music Readers

Collected & Edited by
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Book 2

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Braille Music Literacy



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Introduction & Dedication

(Book 2)

The HAPPY FINGERS books are designed to challenge and encourage braille readers of all ages so that ears, voices, and fingers can work together in the enjoyment of music. Songs are presented in order of difficulty, beginning with the easiest. A new section entitled “Notes to Students and Teachers” has been added to summarize the music terms and concepts presented in each song.

The HAPPY FINGERS books are gratefully dedicated to Louis Braille and Bettye Krolick. In the nineteenth century, Louis Braille invented the braille music system so that visually impaired musicians could read, learn, and write music independently. In the twentieth century, Bettye Krolick stabilized and publicized braille music so that braille readers could continue to benefit. Throughout her many years of transcribing and teaching, Bettye insisted that braille music is not hard to learn. She knew that musical fulfillment must be more than mere imitation or rote learning. Bettye helped us understand that braille music skills enable visually impaired musicians to excel as creators and leaders.

Now in the twenty-first century, we are using the computer to share the joys and opportunities that Louis and Bettye have given to us.

Karen Gearreald
& Christina Davidson
June 2011

Notes to Students & Teachers

HAPPY FINGERS BOOK 2 introduces sharps and flats, repeats, first and second endings and melodies that will challenge your braille reading skills. Listed below are a few notes to guide you in your journey to braille music literacy. Please note, the guitar chords shown in the printed music score are not included in the braille transcription.

1. America the Beautiful: This song is a review of the key of C and the use of dot 5 in the music to indicate that a measure is incomplete and will continue on the next line. The piece introduces the sharp sign on the single note, C sharp.
2. Yankee Doodle: Introduction to the key of G. One sharp is in the key signature and all F notes are sharp. The time signature of "common time" is introduced, and is counted the same as 4/4 time: four beats to a measure. Quarter note rests have been added for practice in reading the code for this one-beat rest.
3. Dona Nobis Pacem: Another song in the key of G that can be sung as a three-part round. The melody has intervals of sixths, sevenths, and octaves, all of which require octave signs. The single measure repeat sign and slurs of three and four notes are introduced for the first time.
4. Hush Little Baby: Introduction to the key of F. One flat is in the key signature and all B notes are flat. Extra verses are listed and the words do not match the first verse rhythm. You will have to figure out how to squeeze them in or spread them out over each measure.
5. Are You Sleeping: Another song in the key of F that can be sung as a four-part round. Repeats are introduced and signs for the beginning and end of a repeated phrase. Text repeats are also used.
6. America (My Country, 'Tis of Thee): Key of F in 3/4 time and dotted rhythms. The melody of this song is also the British National Anthem "God Save the Queen."
7. Skip to my Lou: Introduction to the key of D. Two sharps are in the key signature; all F and C notes are sharp. The words in both the VERSE and CHORUS are repeated three times, shown as a text repeat.
8. Home on the Range: Introduction to the key of B-flat. Two flats are in the key signature; all B and E notes are flat. The melody has quite a wide range and octave signs are required.
9. Jingle Bells: Introduction of first and second endings and the fermata sign.
10. This Old Man: This very familiar song is written out with each verse in a new key. It begins and ends in the key of C and modulates to the keys of D, E, F, and G. The key signatures are not shown; all the flats and sharps are shown in the music.

SPECIAL SYMBOLS

♭	Flat
♯	Sharp
♮	Natural
⏹	Beginning of a repeated section
⏸	End of a repeated section
♩	Single measure repeat
⏹	Fermata: hold the note extra long
⏹	Sectional double bar
⏹	Beginning of first ending
⏹	Beginning of second ending

America the Beautiful

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

C G

O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies, for

G⁷ C

am - ber waves of grain; for pur - ple moun - tain

G A⁷ D⁷ G⁷

maj - es - ties, a - bove the fruit - ed plain. A -

C G⁷

mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God shed His grace on

C C⁷ F C

thee, and crown thy good with broth - er - hood, from

F G⁷ C

sea to shin - ing sea.

Yankee Doodle

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The melody consists of quarter notes and half notes. Chords are indicated by letters G, D7, and C above the staff. The lyrics are written below the staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

Yan - kee Doo - dle went to town, rid - ing on a
pon - y, he stuck a feath - er in his hat, and
called it mac - a - ro - ni.
Yan - kee Doo - dle keep it up, Yan - kee Doo - dle
dan - dy. Mind the mu - sic and the step and
with the girls be hand - y.

Dona Nobis Pacem

(A Round in 3 Parts)

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

1.



Do - na no - bis pa - cem pa - cem,
do - na no - bis pa - cem.

2.



Do - na no - bis pa - cem,
do - na no - bis pa - cem.

3.



Do - na no - bis pa - cem,
do - na no - bis pa - cem.

Hush Little Baby

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

The musical score is written on four staves in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. Chords are indicated by letters above the staff: F, C7, and F. The lyrics are written below the notes.

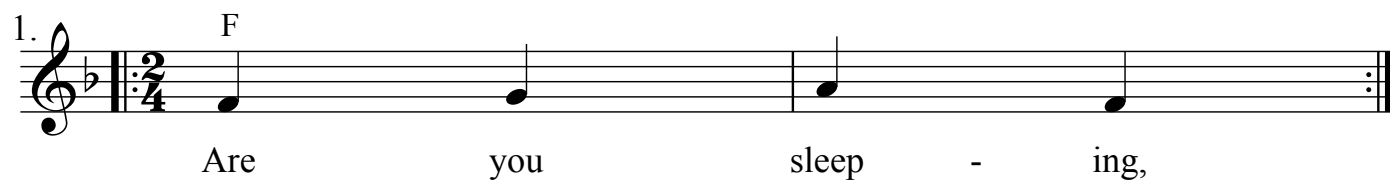
F C7
Hush lit - tle ba - by, don't say a word,
C7 F
Pa - pa's gon - na buy you a mock - ing - bird
F C7
If that mock - ing - bird don't sing,
C7 F
Pa - pa's gon - na buy you a dia - mond ring.

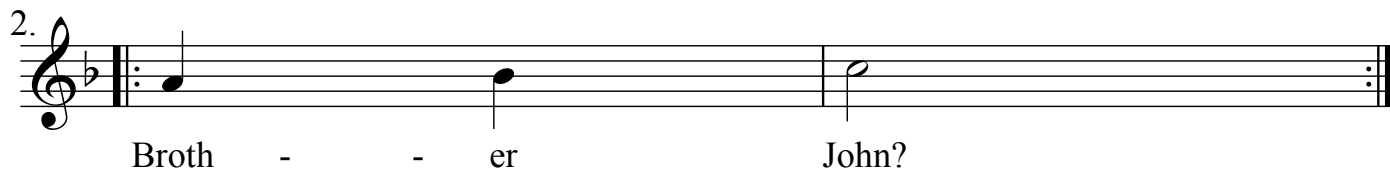
- 2) If that diamond ring turns to brass,
Papa's gonna buy you a looking glass,
If that looking glass gets broke,
Papa's gonna buy you a billy goat.
- 3) If that billy goat won't pull,
Papa's gonna buy you a cart and bull,
If that cart and bull turn over,
Papa's gonna buy you a dog named Rover.
- 4) If that dog named Rover won't bark,
Papa's gonna buy you a horse and cart,
If that horse and cart fall down,
You'll still be the sweetest little baby in town.

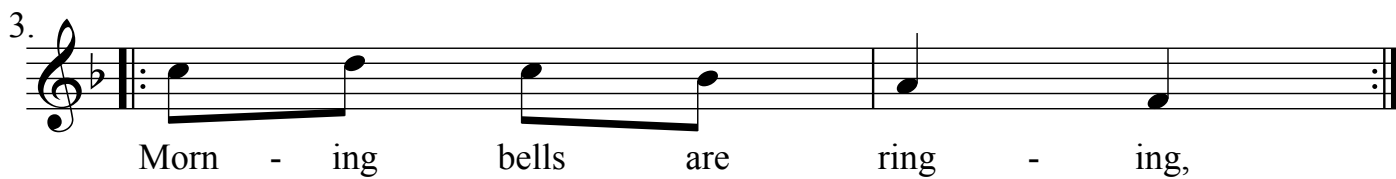
Are You Sleeping

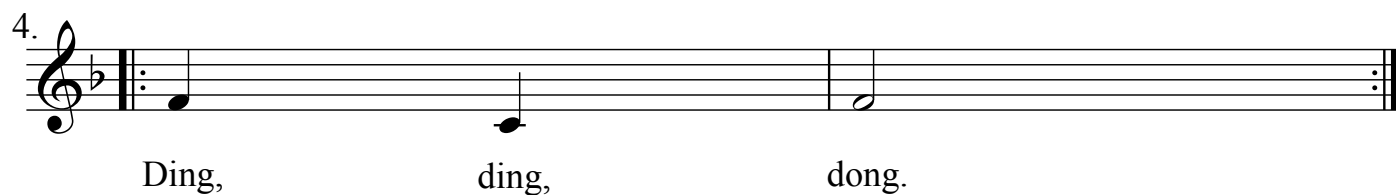
(A Round in 4 Parts)

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

1.  F
Are you sleep - ing,

2. 
Broth - - er John?

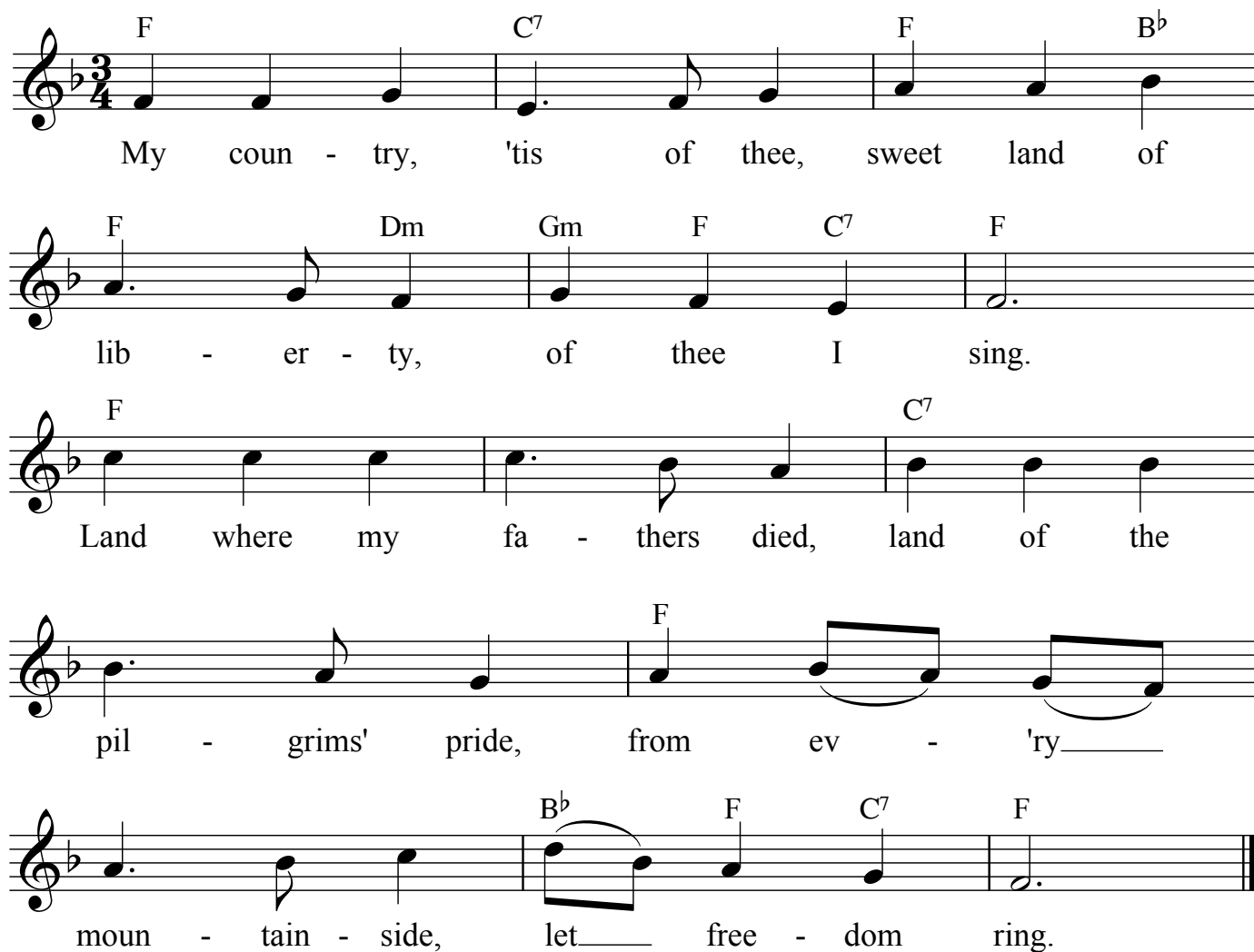
3. 
Morn - ing bells are ring - ing,

4. 
Ding, ding, dong.

America

(My Country, 'Tis of Thee)

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald



My coun - try, 'tis of thee, sweet land of
lib - er - ty, of thee I sing.
Land where my fa - thers died, land of the
pil - grims' pride, from ev - 'ry
moun - tain - side, let free - dom ring.

Skip to my Lou

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

VERSE:

D



1) Fly in the but - ter - milk, shoo fly shoo!

A⁷ D



Fly in the but - ter - milk, shoo fly shoo! Fly in the but - ter - milk,

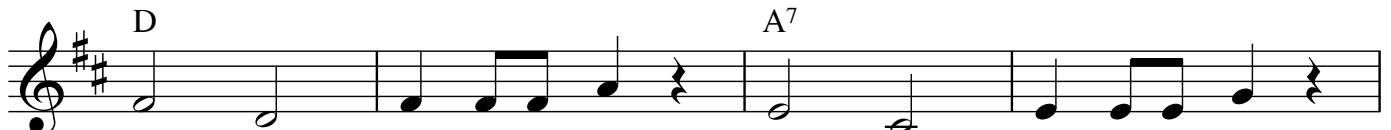
A⁷ D



shoo fly shoo! Skip to my Lou, my dar - ling.

CHORUS:

D A⁷



Lou, Lou, skip to my Lou. Lou, Lou, skip to my Lou.

D A⁷ D



Lou, Lou, skip to my Lou. Skip to my Lou my dar - ling.

2) Lost my partner, what will I do? (3 times)
Skip to my Lou, my darling. CHORUS

3) I'll get another one, prettier than you. (3 times)
Skip to my Lou, my darling. CHORUS

Home on the Range

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

Oh, give me a home where the buf - fa - lo roam, where the
deer and the an - te - lope play. _____ Where
sel - dom is heard a dis - cour - ag - ing word, and the
skies are not cloud - y all day. _____
Home, home on the range, _____ where the
deer and the an - te - lope play. _____ Where
sel - dom is heard a dis - cour - ag - ing word, and the
skies are not cloud - y all day. _____

Chords: B^b, E^b, B^b, C⁷, F, F⁷, B^b, F⁷, B^b, B^b, G^m, C⁷, F, F⁷, B^b, B^{b7}, E^b, B^b, F⁷, B^b

Jingle Bells

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

Dash - ing through the snow, in a one horse o - pen sleigh.

O'er the fields we go, laugh - ing all the way.

Bells on Bob - tail ring, they're mak - ing spir - its bright. What

fun it is to ride and sing a sleigh - ing song to - night. Oh,

jin - gle bells, jin - gle bells, jin - gle all the

way. Oh, what fun it is to ride in a

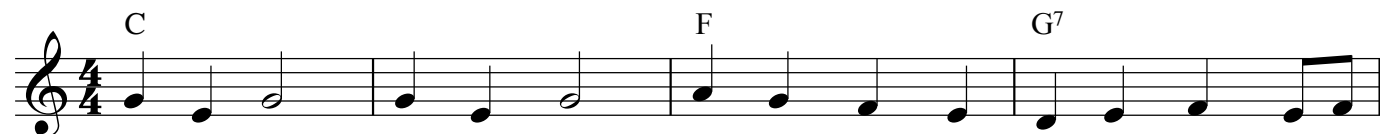
1. one horse op - en sleigh! _____

2. one horse o - pen sleigh!

This Old Man

Arr. by Christina Davidson &
Karen Gearreald

C F G⁷




(1) This old man, he played one, he played nick - nack on my thumb, with a

C G⁷



nick - nack pad - dy whack, give a dog a bone, this old man came

C A⁷ D




roll - ing home._____ Oh! (2) This old man, he played two,

G A⁷ D



he played nick - nack on my shoe, with a nick - nack pad - dy whack,

A⁷ D B⁷



give a dog a bone, this old man came roll - ing home._____ Oh!

E A



(3) This old man, he played three, he played nick - nack

B⁷ E



on my knee, with a nick - nack pad - dy whack, give a dog a bone,

B⁷ E C⁷
 this old man came roll - ing home. _____ Oh!

F B^b
 (4) This old man, he played four, he played nick - nack

C⁷ F
 on my door, with a nick - nack pad - dywhack, give a dog a bone,

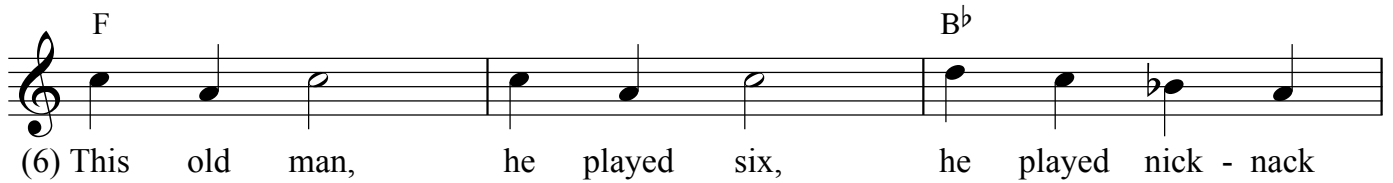
C⁷ F D⁷
 this old man came roll - ing home. _____ Oh!

G C
 (5) This old man, he played five, he played nick - nack

D⁷ G
 on my hive, with a nick - nack pad - dy whack, give a dog a bone,

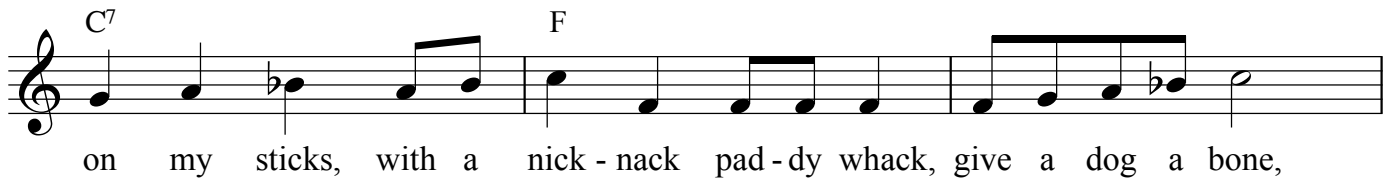
D⁷ G C⁷
 this old man came roll - ing home. _____ Oh!

F B \flat



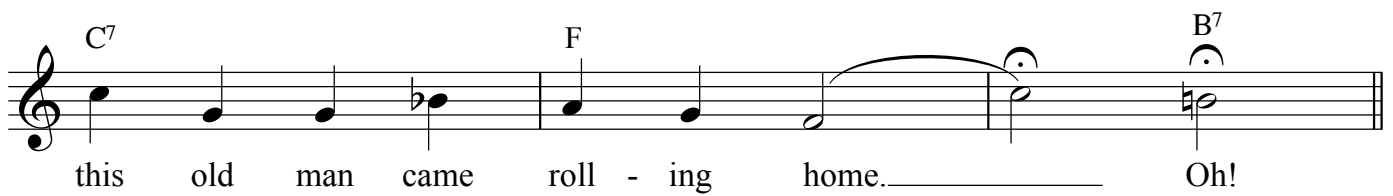
(6) This old man, he played six, he played nick - nack

C 7 F



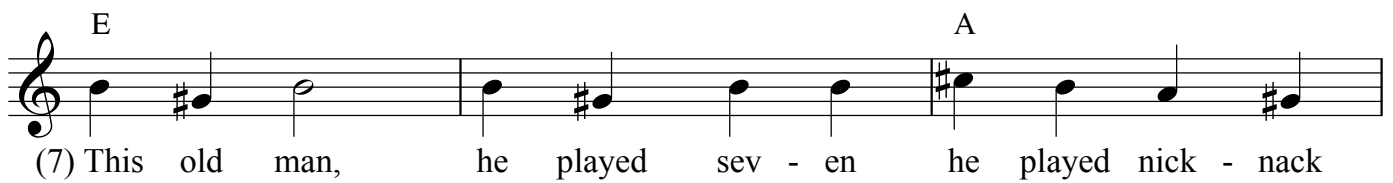
on my sticks, with a nick - nack pad - dy whack, give a dog a bone,

C 7 F B 7



this old man came roll - ing home. Oh!

E A



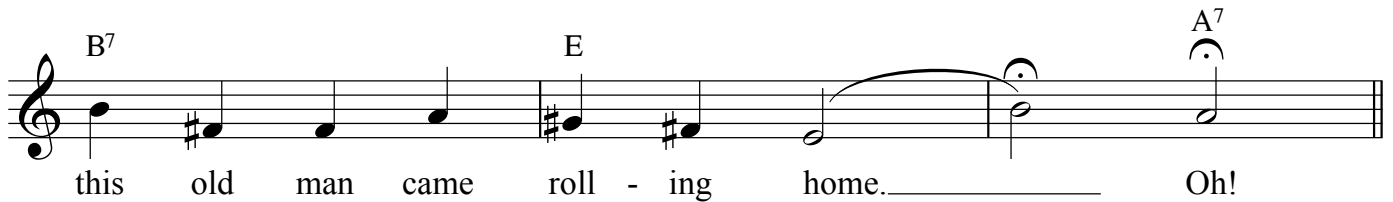
(7) This old man, he played sev - en he played nick - nack

B 7 E



'til e - lev - en, with a nick - nack pad - dy whack, give a dog a bone,

B 7 E A 7

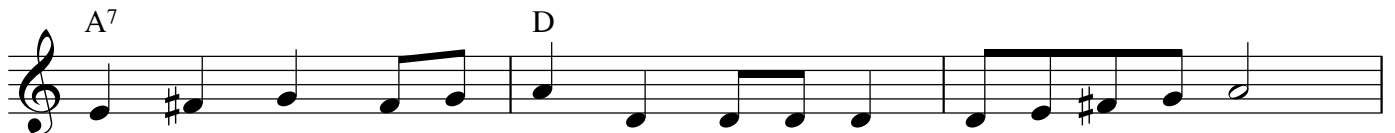



this old man came roll - ing home. Oh!

D G



(8) This old man, he played eight, he played nick - nack

A⁷ D

 on my gate, with a nick - nack pad - dy whack, give a dog a bone,


A⁷ D C⁷

 this old man came roll - ing home. Oh!

F B^b

 (9) This old man, he played nine, he played nick - nack

C⁷ F

 on my spine, with a nick - nack pad - dy whack, give a dog a bone,


C⁷ F G⁷

 this old man came roll - ing home. Oh!

C F

 (10) This old man, he played ten, he played nick - nack

G⁷ C

 o - ver a - gain, with a nick - nack pad - dy whack,

G⁷ C G⁷ C

 give a dog a bone, this old man came roll - ing home!