

Key: G

Genre: Folk

Harp Type: Diatonic

Skill: Beginner

Dirty Old Town – NOT Pogues!

“Dirty Old Town” is not Irish. It was written by Ewan MacColl about Salford, the town where he grew up. During rehearsals of a play about the industrial north by MacColl, they found that a scene-change was taking too long, so he sat down and wrote “Dirty Old Town” to cover it, completing it in about ten minutes.

It is a tragedy that the Pogues ever got hold of “Dirty Old Town” and ruined it by raucous shouting. The melody and lyrics are dreamy and wistful: “dreamed a dream by the old canal”, “clouds are drifting across the moon”, “smelled the spring on a smokey wind” (Salford

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Council objected to "Salford wind"!)"saw a train set the night on
fire" – wonderful imagery.

The trouble with starting on 3+ as many tabs do, is that you can't get
the E (in key of G) which is needed. So I suggest moving up the harp
and starting on 7+, like this.

6+ 6- 7+ 8+ 8- 7+ 8+ 7+ 6+
I found my love by the gasworks croft

8+ 9+ 10- 9+ 8+ 8- 7+ 8+
Dreamea a dream by the old canal


10- 9+ 8+ 8- 7+ 8+ 7+ 6+
Kissed my girl by the fact'ry wall

6- 7+ 8+ 8- 8- 7+ 6- 7+
Dirty old town, dirty old town

Lyrics

I met my love by the gas works wall Dreamea a dream by the old canal
I kissed my girl by the factory wall Dirty old town
Dirty old town

Clouds are drifting across the moon Cats are prowling on their

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beat Spring's a girl from the streets at night Dirty old town
Dirty old town

I heard a siren from the docks Saw a train set the night on
fire I smelled the spring on the smoky wind Dirty old town
Dirty old town

I'm gonna make me a big sharp axe Shining steel tempered in
the fire I'll chop you down like an old dead tree Dirty old
town Dirty old town

I met my love by the gas works wall Dreamed a dream by the old
canal I kissed my girl by the factory wall Dirty old town
Dirty old town

Dirty old town Dirty old town

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