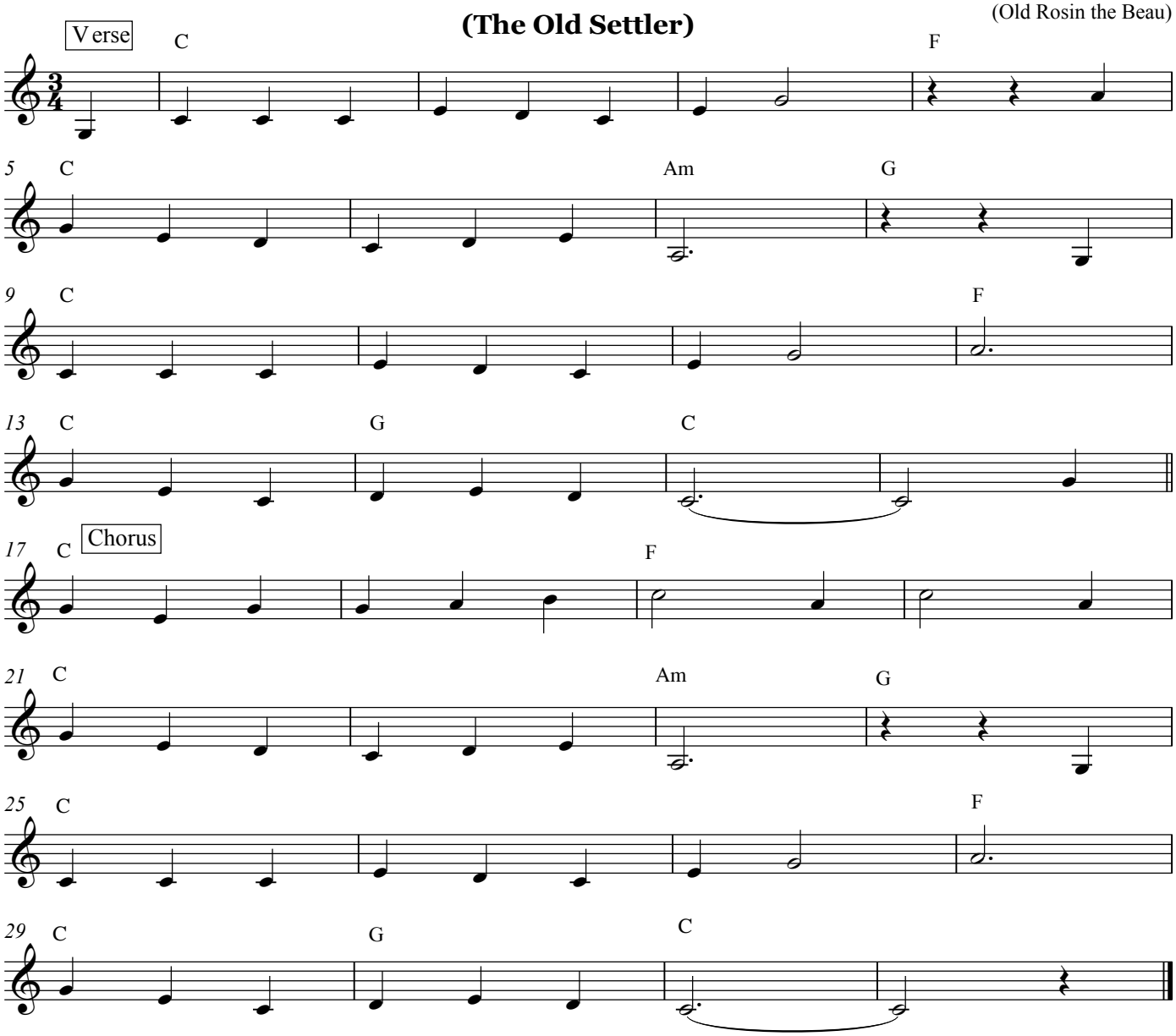
Lyrics (1874): Francis D. Henry

Acres of Clams
(The Old Settler)

Tune: Rosin the Bow
(Old Rosin the Beau)



I've traveled all over this country
Prospecting and digging for gold;
I've tunneled, hydraulicked and cradled,
And I have been frequently sold -
And I have been frequently so-o-old,
And I have been frequently sold:
I've tunneled, hydraulicked and cradled,
And I have been frequently sold!

For one who gained riches by mining,
Perceiving that hundreds grew poor,
I made up my mind to try farming,
The only pursuit that was sure -
(chorus)

So, rolling my grub in my blanket,
I left all my tools on the ground
And started one morning to shank it
For the country they call Puget Sound -
(chorus)

Arriving flat broke in midwinter,
I found the land shrouded in fog
And covered all over with timber
Thick as hairs on the back of a dog -
(chorus)

When I looked on the prospects so gloomy,
The tears trickled over my face
And I thought that my travels had brought me
To the end of the jumping-off place!
(chorus)

I staked me a claim in the forest,
And sat myself down to hard toil:
For six years I chopped and I labored,
But I never got down to the soil -
(chorus)

I tried to get out of the country,
But poverty forced me to stay -
Until I became an old settler,
Then nothing could drive me away!
(chorus)

And now that I'm used to the climate,
I think that if a man ever found
A place to live easy and happy,
That Eden is on Puget Sound -
(chorus)

No longer the slave of ambition,
I laugh at the world and its shams
As I think of my pleasant condition,
Surrounded by acres of clams -
(chorus)

Arranged by Diane Moss, 2009. Group Tunes for Crystal Mountain Folk Harp Festival, June 2009