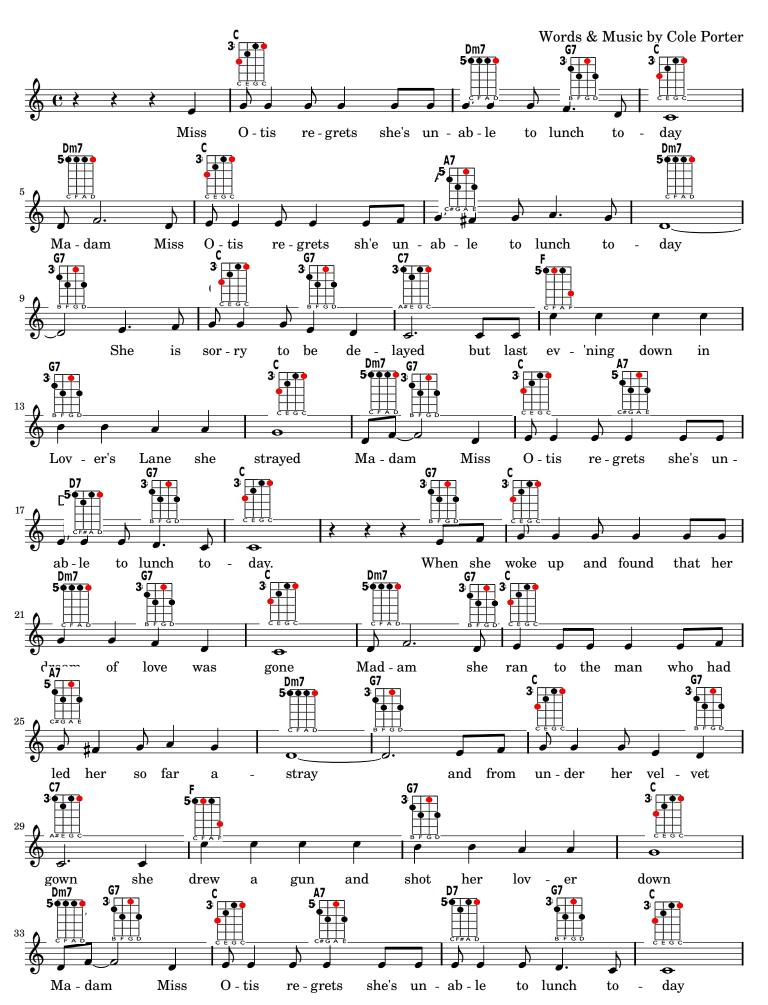
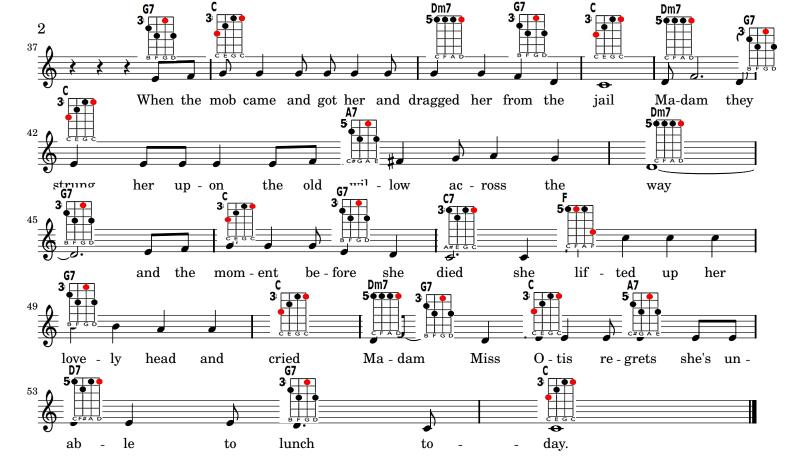
Miss Otis Regrets





MISS OTIS REGRETS SHE IS UNABLE TO LUNCH TODAY..

Many stories about the origins of songs are apocryphal, but the story of how Cole Porter came to write this song, seems to have withstood the ravages of time.

It would appear that Cole Porter was dining with friends, amongst who was his friend "Monty Wooley". Monty Woolley was an American stage, film, radio, and television actor. Woolley and Cole Porter enjoyed many adventures together in New York and on foreign travels, although Porter reportedly disapproved of Woolley taking a black man as his lover. Woolley has been described in scholarly and other works as "gay, and closeted".

During the meal a conversation around writing songs came up. Porter boasted that he could write a song about "anything"; with that, Wooley dared him to write a song about the next thing they heard from the table beside them. It was within a moment or so that the Maître d' walked over to the table and announced that "Miss Otis regrets that she is unable to lunch today"

Cole Porter duly wrote a "story song," told by Miss Otis' maid or butler. It was first performed on stage by Douglas Byng in Hi Diddle Diddle, which opened October 3, 1934 at the Savoy Theatre, London