

Tales Behind the Tunes played by Brampton Community Band



Martin Coslett

Introduction

Towards the end of 2018, my first session with Brampton Community Band was nerve wracking. I had printed out the music for the list they had sent but was not expecting the onslaught of tunes and at such fast tempos! Of course, they were designed for people to dance to so had to be at specific speeds.

As eventually an accepted member of the band I was fortunate to play at quite a few church halls and birthday ceilidh's before the pandemic came to haunt us and stopped the dancing.

Half an Hour with the Brampton Community Band

Brampton Community Band - 'the brainchild of Peter Gray' - recorded a CD at Donut Studios Chesterfield in 2012 of the following tunes:

1. Morgan Rattler/Banish Misfortune
2. Napoleon Crossing the Rhine/Jimmy Garson's March
3. Woodland Revels
4. The Swallow's Nest/Calliope House
5. The Greenwood Tree/Northern Light
6. The Tenpenny Bit/The Blackthorn stick
7. John Ryan's Polka/Dennis Murphy's Polka
8. The Bishop/Jack Maggot
9. The Gentle Maiden/Road to Lisdoonvarna/O'Keefe's Slide

British music and English folk music includes a variety of important musical styles including dance music like that used in Morris dancing (see types below) as well as sea shanties and other sung genres. From early medieval days tunes were carried from place to place by minstrels who passed on the news of the day in story form (true and 'fake')

At least one of the tunes included here can be dated back as far as 1046 - Morgan Rattler. Ballads about Little John and Robin Hood were sung in the 1300's and the printer [Wynkyn de Worde](#) collected together a series of Robin Hood ballads in about 1495. More history of the individual tunes is below.

Key: Major or Minor? In essence this sets the mood of a tune. It is the group of notes or pitches (also called scale) that are used to play the tune. For example, *God save the Queen/King* can be played in the Key of C Major using the notes C,D,E,F,G,A,B,C which is a major scale. Whereas *Greensleeves* is played in a Minor Key (which can have a few changes of notes – either using an ancient modal scale or more modern scale with slightly different notes)

Time Signature -the way notes are grouped together. Usually in 4's (reels) or 3's (Jigs). More about that below in the various types of tune.

Types

Jigs are always in 3's - triple time 6/8/9/8, (e.g. Single jig – I saw 3 ships -skippy pattern of eighth notes then quarters. Double Jig e.g. Irish Washerwoman repeating eighth notes. Slip Jigs e.g. The Butterfly

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQorlhMTSNA> are 9/8 - Three groups of Three)

A Slide is a jig in 12/8 e.g Denis Murphy's

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Vh8GqTd2-o> (mainly from County Kerry, Ireland) Has a 'Jiggedy' Pulse. Also "Road to Lisdoonvarna". Major or Minor (usually modal) keys.

Reels are tunes in simple time - usually grouped in 4's - 4/4, (sometimes 2/4), used for dances such as the Dashing White Sergeant. (Cumberland Reel is an exception in 6/8-2/4?)

Probably of Scottish origin, the word reel can mean a whole dance, a particular movement or a tune in even time. The Anglo-Saxon word is hreol, and rulla is interpreted as 'to whirl'. According to Grove's Dictionary, the first specific written reference occurred in 1590, so reels are very much part of the musical heritage of the British Isles. Think of tunes like *Bobby Shaftoe*, *Knees Up Mother Brown*, or *Coming Round the Mountain*.

The reel is indigenous to Scotland. The earliest reference was in a witchcraft trial of 1590, where the accused was reported to have "daunced this reill or short dance

Hornpipes usually in 2/4 or 4/4 but with a dotted rhythm (bounce or Swagger) likely to be English (taken to Ireland by sailors) Can rarely be in 3 & 9 too.

Polkas 2/4 (of Czech dance origin) Lively

Waltz - a dance in ¾ -In groups of three beats.

Mazurka also ¾ (of Polish origin)

Air (song) - An air in Italian is ARIA which is a song in an opera (in contrast to the Recitative which is sung narrative) a song-like vocal or instrumental composition. (major or minor keys)

March In 2/4 time. Strict as if an Army Marching. e.g. British Grenadiers or Colonel Bogey March (often at 120BPM) Usually in Major keys.

Slide – in 12/8 (four groups of three's)

In alphabetical order here are some **tales behind the tunes (and one or two we don't play)**:

The BCB Tunes are here in Alphabetical Order

(sources: *The Session*, *Wikipedia* & *Tunearch.org*)



A

L'Aire Mignonne - This is a delicate A Major tune in 4/4 composed by Simon Riopel who lived in Montreal, Canada. Mignonne means 'small/delicate'. He plays it in alternate tuning as AEAE (Source *The Session*)

Here's a You Tube clip of Simon playing it. Has also been called "Canadian Sunshine"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGaiiCRJg7U>

B

Ballydesmond 1/2/3

Formerly KingWilliamsTown, Ballydesmond is a rural village in County Cork, Ireland. Thought to be named after a 'freedom fighter', Gerald Fitzgerald, the Earl of Desmond (1500's) who took refuge in the nearby hills. There are a couple of Ballydesmond Polkas usually played in a set and we added Shoe the Donkey (NOT Shoot the Donkey, Martin!) to go with them. #1 Humours of Ballydesmond/ Rainy Night under the Bridge. Also, #2 called Maurice Manley's Polka (Irish). It belongs to us all now!

'there is more than one way to shoe a donkey, you can put shoes on it or go shoo,shoo!
Posted by [snowyowl](#) (*The Session*)

Boys of the Bluehill (with Rickett's Hornpipe)

In the NE England tune is known as The Lads of North Tyne, and the Scots have a version called The Beaux of Oak Hill. (Source: *The Session* - Creadur Mawn Organig)

Blarney Pilgrim (with Merrily danced the Quaker's wife)

Gaelic Storm appeared in the film [Titanic](#) as the steerage band, performing *Blarney Pilgrim* ([Jig](#)), *John Ryan's Polka*, *Kesh Jig* and *Drowsy Maggie* ([Reel](#))*

There are several places in Ireland all claiming to have the original Blarney Stone. The town of Blarney, County Cork, is the location of Blarney Castle, said to have been the seat of the McCarthy's, the great kings of Munster. A pilgrimage to kiss the blarney stone, which is embedded in the wall of a castle and can only be reached by being dangled out of a window, bestows the gift of eloquent speech. Under the title "The Parish Girl [1]" the melody appears

in Stanford/Petrie with the note: "Set about 1800 by Daniel McHourigan"-O'Neill (DMI) also gives "Parish Girl" as an alternate title.

(Source: https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Blarney_Pilgrim)

It is a Double Jig. D Mixolydian ('A' and 'C' parts) & G Major ('B' part)

Blaydon Races (faster & faster-repeat notes 1862)

A tune from Newcastle written in the 19th century by Geordie Ridley in a style deriving from music hall. It is frequently sung by supporters of Newcastle football clubs. Blaydon is a small town in Gateshead, situated about 4 miles (6.4 km) from Newcastle, in N E England. Until 1916, The race used to take place on the Stella Haugh 1 mile (1.6 km) west of Blaydon. (Source Wikipedia)

Banish Misfortune (partnered with Morgan Rattler)

P.W. Joyce gives the jig as "[The Bag of Meal](#)" and was the first to print it in **Ancient Irish Music**, 1873. It is in D mixolydian mode, which uses a D scale with a C natural. It may be written with one sharp but is not in G major.

comment attributed to [AlBrown](#) (Source: *The Session*).

C

Cumberland Reel is in **6/8 time** and D major which is Ionian mode.
(partnered with Cock o the north and Hundred Pipers)

Cumberland is a historic county in NW England formed in the 12th Century-the name first recorded in AD945. In 1086 at the time of the Domesday book it was part of Scotland.

The tune was published in 1880. Dance: <http://ceilidhfolk.co.uk/cumbNEW.html>

Caddum Woods is in East Scotland (Angus at DD84PG) near the Loch of Kinnordy

The tune is a Polka (with a feel of 2) or a Scottish reel (feel of 4) often written in G major but with added accidentals & partnered with Sheep Shearing)



It was composed by Adam Rennie who was born at Kemnay, Aberdeenshire, in 1897.

In 1916 Adam joined the 5th Gordon Highlanders. Then came the fateful day of July 28th at Soissons where Adam suffered a severe wound in the leg. He lay for two days until he was picked up and taken prisoner by the Germans. The French Red Cross found him in 1919 and, after a series of transfers across Europe, he wrote home for cigarettes and caused a sensation in his family as he was thought to be dead. Back in London he had to have a leg amputated and altogether spent a year in various hospitals.

Adam's crowning success came in 1932 at the Perth Musical Festival where his distinction in Scottish music was fittingly recognised by the presentation of Niel Gow's fiddle, probably the most famous in Scotland. Later Adam became a member of the greatly loved Angus Occasionals and made his first broadcast with them in 1943. Adam formed his Quartet in 1949

and they made their first broadcast on 8th December, 1949, on the old Home Service.

The Quartet, after successful radio broadcasts, attracted the attention of the recording companies and they made recordings for PYE (NIXA) and the Parlophone Company, which were all released as 78s and one small 7" EP (extended playing) disc. The band were also in great demand south of the border and they once did a one thousand mile round trip which took them to Chelmsford, Essex to play for the Chelmsford Farmers Bachelor's Ball in January, 1952. Their final performance was at the Coupar Angus Scottish Country Dance Club in March 1958. Adam retired from business and moved to the Muirton House, Blairgowrie, and died in February, 1960." (Source: *Box and Fiddle January, 1987*)

"Adam was a stickler for tempo, Alex said, and if he felt it needed adjustment after the opening chord he would stamp his 'wooden leg' on the stage until the band modified the speed to his liking." Charlie Todd

Posted by *ceolachan* <https://thesession.org/tunes/1438>

Chinese Breakdown (and Ragtime Annie)

An American tune we don't know how, where or when it "crossed the pond" to the UK, but it has been used by ceilidh bands in the South and South-West of England for at least thirty years.

Here is a recent rendering of the tune by the Jig Mad Wolf Celidh Band:

http://youtu.be/i3B02VT6_04



D

Drowsy Maggie* (with Rolling in the Rye Grass)

(in E minor) Nothing 'drowsy' about this reel. It's to be played very fast. As used in the film *Titanic* * The basic form of this tune is known to most Irish traditional musicians, and has transcended the genre into repertoire around the world in a variety of styles and genres. There is a version of "Drowsy Maggie" particular to County Donegal, where, again, it is a popular reel.

Dribbles of Brandy (with Jump at the Sun and Seven Stars)

This old tune was published in Aird's Selection of Scotch, English, Irish and Foreign Airs, vol. 3, 1795. It is a jig usually in E minor (aeolian mode) The melodic material was employed throughout the British Isles under a variety of titles. The whole tune appears in the 19th century Welch family manuscripts (Bosham, Sussex) under the title "Brothers in York." However, the air first appears in Adam Thompson's ballad opera The Disappointed Gallant, of Buckram in Armour (Edinburgh, 1738). The tune also appears in the Thomas Hardy manuscript collection, based on a handwritten book of dance music collected in Dorset in the latter part of the 18th century by a man named Hook. Barry Callaghan (2007) remarks the 'B' part was inserted into "[Around the World for Sport](#)" by the band Flowers and Frolics (who had learned it from harmonica player Barry Morgan) to make a 48-bar jig in the late 1970's.(Tunearch.org)



The Dark Island (played with Elsey's Waltz)

This beautiful waltz tune had been played on the "Scottish circuit" before being formally copyrighted and had earlier titles including Dr Mackay's Farewell to Creagorry and Dr McInne's farewell to South Uist. Lyrics to Dark Island were written by David Silver and the tune by Iain Maclachlan, an accordionist. This was created for a BBC Thriller called The Dark Island in 1963. The show was filmed in Benbecula, Scotland. Other song versions also exist.

The Drops of Brandy (not to be confused with 'dribbles') Slip Jig (9/8)

There is some evidence a 17th century Scots jig called "[Hey My Nanny](#)" is ancestral to "Drops of Brandy." An early English printing of the melody is to be found in Walsh's **The Compleat Country Dancing-Master, Volume the Third** (London, 1747, p. 37). Drops of Brandy is also the name of a specific country dance known throughout the British Isles. In Ireland, O'Neill (1913) tells us "a special dance was performed to the melody," and indeed, "Drops of Brandy" is a favourite tune for solo step dancing competitions. A Scottish dance called Drops of Brandy was performed to a schottische, while the exact same figures were danced to a jig and known as the dance Strip the Willow.



Dashing White Sergeant (played with The Bottom of the Punchbowl)

A Polka in 2/4 and usually D major. Also said to be a reel, hornpipe or 2/4 march.

The tune of "The Dashing White Sergeant" is derived from a song of the same name, written by an English musical composer, conductor and arranger Sir Henry Rowley Bishop [1] (1786–1855) and published in the mid-1820's. Apparently the song was to be part of one of Bishop's operas, although there is no evidence it ever actually made it into one. Rowley Bishop, who had a long run with various works in the London theaters and was the first musician to be knighted, is perhaps nowadays more famous for his composition "[Home Sweet Home](#)." In his lifetime he composed some 120 dramatic works, including 80 operas, light operas, cantatas, and ballets. He is also remembered for his appointment to the Reid Professorship of Music at Edinburgh University, a post he assumed but which he declined to give any lectures in support of--as consequence of which he was invited to resign two years later [David Murray, **Music of the Scottish Regiments**, Edinburgh, 1994, p. 210]. Afterwards he was appointed Heather Professor of Music at Oxford University, a post he held for five years.

The words to the song are sometimes attributed to General John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne (1722–1792), who surrendered a British army at Saratoga during the American Revolution. Burgoyne himself, after his military career (which did not end at Saratoga), became a fixture of English society and a playwright himself. The lyric goes, in part:

*If I had a beau for a soldier who'd go,
Do you think I'd say no? No, no, not !!
For a soldier who'd go, Do you think I'd say no?
No, no, no, no, no, no, not !!
When his red coat I saw,
Not a sigh would it draw,
But I'd give him eclat for his bravery!
If an army of Amazons ere came in play,
As a dashing white sergeant I'd march away.*



Chorus:

*A dashing white sergeant I'd march away, march away, march away, march away.
March away, march away, march away, march away, march away, march away.*

The lyrics make more sense when you understand that the singer is a woman, whose thought it is to dress as a 'dashing white sergeant' to follow her lover in the army, a not-uncommon 18th and 19th century theme. There are other lyric versions. (Source:TuneArch.org)

Da Slockit Light Tom Anderson

This is a tune by Fiddler Tom Anderson and is a song about the gradual trend of migration away from his homeland - the Shetland Islands. Anderson was born in Eshaness.

“The song reflects his impression that each time the occupants of another croft moved out, or died, another light was 'slockit' (Shetland for extinguished)”

<https://www.scotslanguage.com/articles/node/id/485>

Dorset 4 Hand Reel

This is a fishermen's dance from Bridport, originally collected from a Mr F Masters. Peter Swann and the Ashmore Group of researchers and collectors of Dorset had seen the dance performed by fishermen in a pub in Bridport, and at the request of EFDSS, wrote it down for publication and performance, in 1955 or 1956.

DORSET is a county in the south of England. The same county that was used by Hardy as the basis for his many novels. "Reel" refers to the dance, not the music. It's a reel for four dancers, or several sets of four depending on the space available and is a good one for dancing in confined spaces, such as pubs. The tune is considered to be a polka and comes in lots of regional flavours from Dorset to Yorkshire. Jim Eldon, the Brid(lington) fiddler plays a nice set of variations.

E

Emma Fran Finland – This one sneaked in from the offshoot of BCB a "World Music Group" that met for a short while on Monday evenings. It was first an accordion tune that Tom suggested.

F

Fred Pidgeon's Polkas 1 and 2

Fred Pidgeon (1880-1970)--note correct spelling of the name--was a fiddler, farmer and master baker from the village of Stockland, near Honiton, East Devon. He was from a family of bakers, following his father and grandfather. Pidgeon had played for dances in his youth, along with two cousins (one of whom, Joe Pimm, was his brother-in-law). "We all played all three violins. But the oldest of em, he'd play a lot of seconds and make we youngsters work. And we used to enjoy it. He could never speak to me when he was playing. I'd talk to him and he'd give a nod-he'd never answer. We used to have fine fun."

He was recorded by Peter Kennedy in 1951 and 1954, and was still playing out in his 70's; as Kennedy remarks, "although tired from a long night of fiddling for local dances, Fred used to go straight from the hall to his bake-house to prepare the villager's daily loaves of bread.

G



Geordie is a "child ballad" existing in many variants. Various versions have been sung in Scotland, England, Ireland, Canada and the USA and performed and recorded regularly.

The ballad concerns the trial of the eponymous hero, during which his wife pleads for his life.

The beautiful traditional melody which we retitled 'My Johnny' for The Crooked Spire Medieval Murder-Mystery Musical is sung over the introductory tableau like scene.

There are two very old tunes we based it on: "Geordie" and "The House Carpenter".

It is minor modal (Aeolian mode) and loses the 6th note of the scale – just like the white notes A to A – (although our version is in F sharp minor -suitable for the vocalist)

[A broadside newsletter from the 1600's called it 'A lamentable new ditty, made upon the death of a worthy gentleman, named George Stoodle : dwelling sometime on Gate-side Moore,

and sometime at Newcastle in Northumberland: it connects it to this tune and includes some lyric similarities, such as the lines: *"I never stole no oxe nor cow, Nor never murdered any"*

The Gentle Light (that wakes me) is listed as a reel (on The Session) but we play it as a ballad.

Composed by Phil Cunningham

Nicola Bernadetti plays it slowly. We play it the Goldilocks speed. Here's the man with Aly Bain - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCW1wYLreuo>

'Phil Cunningham has combined a mastery of Celtic music traditions and a melodically rich style of composition. A member of Silly Wizard from 1976 to 1988, Cunningham, who began accordion lessons at the age of three, helped to spark an interest in the traditional music of his homeland. In addition to recording two memorable solo albums -- *Airs & Graces* in 1984 and *The Palomino Waltz* in 1989 -- Cunningham has contributed to a number of influential musical projects. Since the demise of Silly Wizard, Cunningham has periodically worked with his older brother. They recorded a duo album, *Against the Storm*, in 1980, and together with Irish siblings Triona NiDomhnaill and Michael O'Domhnaill, toured and recorded two albums as *Relativity* during the mid-'80s. A collaboration with fiddler Aly Bain of the Boys of the Lough for a 1988 television show spawned a partnership that has resulted in annual duo tours of Scotland and an album, *The Pearl*, in 1994. During the '80s and '90s, Cunningham has focused much of his attention on producing other artists, including Dolores Keane and Altan, and composing and musically directing for the theater. He served as musical director and wrote the instrumental music for Bill Bryden's production *The Ship* in 1990, and was the associate music director for Bryden's *The Big Picnic* in 1994. Cunningham was musical director of four series of BBC Scotland's Gaelic/traditional music show, *Talla a' Bhaile*, and BBC Scotland's *Hogmanay Live*. In January 1997, Cunningham's orchestral work, *The Highlands and Islands Suite* was premiered at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Together with his partner, Wendy, Cunningham opened a 24-track digital studio, CAP Recording Studios, outside Inverness in the Scottish Highlands in October 1993'

Craig Harris (Source: Apple Music)

H

Hesleyside Reel

This is an English Reel. Usually in A Major. Standard tuning (fiddle). AABB.

Hesleyside Hall is in southern Northumberland. The tune was composed by Tommy Elliot about the ancestral home of the Charlton family on the banks of the Tyne.

"On Chesterfield's Streets" is a song based on the tune in *The Crooked Spire* musical (*Coslett/Gray/Hennessy*)

I

No I's yet!

J

JIMMY ALLEN (played with DORSET 4HAND REEL)

Northumbrian musician Jamie Allen (c. 1734-1810) was a famous smallpipes player whose name is associated with this tune. Allen has been credited with devising improvements to the smallpipes, increasing their limited range of an octave with the addition of keys. Allen's father Will (1704-1779) was perhaps a pipemaker and was River Warden of the Coquet. His wife, Jimmy's mother, was a gypsy, and the elder Allen associated much with her folk.

It is said he was at various times piper to the Duchess of Northumberland, that he enlisted in the army, and was a fugitive from justice. At any rate, he was highly regarded by his contemporaries as a musician who was thought to have played the Northumbrian smallpipes, Border pipes, and Union (uilleann) pipes.

The melody is categorized as a 'rant' among Northumbrian musicians, although it could be employed as a polka. The Scottish name for the tune is "[Reel of Tullochgorum \(1\)](#)".

This is one of the ultimates in what 'noxious blanket' would call dag. The treasure-house of Northumbrian minstrelsy contains many of these. But this one's too well-known to be ignored. In North-East England it's a rant, but it could be tweaked up into an Irish polka. Jimmy or Jamie Allen was a piper who lived from 1733 to 1810. He was famed for his expertise on Northumbrian smallpipes and other kinds of bagpipes, but was an all-round rogue. At 70 he was imprisoned for stealing a horse, and spent his last seven years in a gaol under the road down to Elvet Bridge in Durham; he died days before a pardon arrived from the Prince Regent. (The underground gaol, very occasionally opened for guided tours, is left just as it was when abandoned, probably soon after Allen's time: a very dark and spooky place.)

Allen was credited with improvements to the smallpipes, maybe including the first additions of keys to increase the range of the Northumbrian pipes from their basic one octave. If he really did compose this tune as is held - and I don't know how much proof for this exists - then the tune's high A would indicate that the addition of at least one high note key was a feature of the chanter he played.

K

KESH JIG (6/8 in triplets and Ionian major scale) Also known as Castle, The Castle, Kerrigan's, The Kesh Mountain, The Kincora, The Mountaineers' March.

This is likely to have been played by an Irish piper and named after a tiny Irish village in County Fermanagh. A Kesh is a 'wicker bridge' A quadrille is a dance that was fashionable in Europe in the 1800's Performed by four couples in a rectangular formation, it is related to [American square dancing](#). Often paired with the **DENNIS MURPHY JIG** (in 12/8) not to be confused with 'Dennis Murphy's slide'. Also known as The Girl of the House, Cailin An Ti Mhoir, The Girl From The Big House, The Girl In The Big House, The Girl Of The Big House, The Housekeeper, The Lisheen, The Little Girl In The Big House, McLaughlin's, McLoughlins, Robbie Hannan's, Robbie Hannon's. Played with a typical MayDance

The Keel Row (Tyneside folk song 1770 or earlier)

"Keel" refers to boats which carried coal on the Tyne evoking the life and work of the [keelmen](#) of [Newcastle upon Tyne](#). A closely related song was first published in a [Scottish](#) collection of the 1770s, but may be considerably older, and it is unclear whether the tune is Scottish or English in origin.

The opening lines of the song set it in [Sandgate](#), that part of the quayside overlooking the River Tyne to the east of the city centre where the keelmen lived and which is still overlooked by the [Keelmen's Hospital](#).

King of the Fairies

One tale attached to the tune (albeit perhaps a modern piece of 'blarney', as there is no folkloric connection) has it that "The King of the Fairies" is a summoning tune, and if played three times in a row during a festivity the King must appear. Once summoned, however, the King assesses the situation, and if the gathering is to his liking he may join in; if however, he does not find it to his liking he may cause great mischief.

"King of the Fairies" appears to be derived from a Jacobite tune called "[Bonny Charlie \(1\)](#)," appearing in many 18th century Scots and Northern English publications, such as Aird (1783). "[King William of Orange](#)" is a British title for the melody, while "[Briton's Glory](#)" is Glasgow Highland bagpiper, pipe teacher and pipe-maker William Gunn's adaptation of the tune as a pipe quick step.

The set dance was collected in Ireland c. 1840 by John Edward Pigot (published by P.W. Joyce in **Old Irish Folk Music and Songs**, 1909) under the title "Your old wig is the love of my heart." Collector George Petrie also had it as an untitled air (Stanford/Petrie, **Complete Collection**, No. 1281), and it appears as "[Lonesome Wedding \(The\)](#)" in Frank Roches' third volume (1927).

The tune is played by Cape Breton fiddlers with the Irish title ("King of the Fairies"), but as a march. Shetland fiddler John Scollay was recorded in the 1950's by Pat Shuldham-Shaw playing a reel setting of the tune, now known as "[Scollay's Reel](#)," popularized in America in the last quarter of the 20th century by John McCutcheon and New England contra dance musicians.

Vocal Version - *Words by Richard Officer 2018*

L

Les Marjolaine (6/8) (with Tarantella in 3/8)

This tune was composed by Patrice Lacaud. Les Marjolaine is the French name for Marjoram - a herb that belongs to the oregano family.

This herb, native to the Mediterranean basin, is found in all the traditional preparations of the region. It is very popular in Europe. Marjoram is used for seasoning [soups](#), [stews](#), [salad dressings](#), [sauces](#), and [herbal teas](#).

A Tarantella is a group of various folk dances characterized by a fast upbeat tempo, usually in 6/8 time accompanied by tambourines. It is among the most recognized forms of traditional southern Italian music. <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/offbeat/dance-of-the-spider-women-a-mystical-tradition-in-a-forgotten-corner-of-italy/ar-BB1317V0?ocid=spartanntp>

M

Morgan Rattler

Peter Gray (founder of BCB) and I have both played this tune with **Brampton Community Ceilidh Band** and it is Roy, the bass player's, piece de resistance. This fiddler's tune from the 'north' is also very old – some records place it at **1046**.

The Morgan Rattler was a smuggling ship sailing in the North of England in the latter 1600's.

There was a Robert Harrison manuscript of the tune in 1847.

The name has also been linked to a racehorse.



Morgan Rattler means 'something that is dazzling or excellent'.

Apparently Lancashire folk say he's a "regular Bobby Dazzler" whereas the Cornish say he's a 'regular Morgan Rattler'. There's even a definition: "**a loaded club**". And it has lewd references too which I won't expand on here-but perhaps you can imagine. Say no more!

In *The Cr0oked Spire Medieval Murder-Mystery Musical* based on Chris Nickson's novel, the jig is used as underscore for the protagonist, John the carpenter's arrival in Chesterfield which becomes the song "Seize The Day", which is built on the foundation of Morgan Rattler.

The Morpeth Rant

This is a truly great tune and originated in Northumberland sometime before 1800. **The rant** is the National Dance of Northumbria and has specific footwork. There is actually a longways dance called the Morpeth Rant, though we believe that there was originally a whole collection of dances referred to by this name. Certainly, if you go through the manuscripts, you find several versions of the tune. Matt Seattle has produced a book (called the Morpeth Rant) where he looks at the various source versions of the tune. 'Up here', players distinguish between versions of the tune as listed (Morpeth Rant or New Morpeth Rant). Kathryn Tickle plays both but perhaps too fast for dancing.

A well-loved version is the recording by Alastair Anderson, Willy Atkinson and others called Good Old Boys and made at Whitby Festival. 'It is slower than a reel and less dotted than a hornpipe but swings nicely and goes like a train. I would strongly advise players to try and listen to Northumbrian players ranting before getting too fixed in the way they play it.'

Noel Jackson

Angels of the North



N

Napoleon Crossing the Rhine (with Jimmy Garson's March)

The first part of the tune shows up in several melodies from Ireland, Scotland and England; these variants include the Irish "[Centenary March](#)" and "[Comhra Donn \(An\)](#)," and the Scottish "[Caledonian March](#)". Samuel Bayard (1944) was familiar with "Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine" as a common march tune in his primary collecting area of western Pennsylvania, and one which circulated under a variety of names including (in Fayette County) "Bruce's March" and (in Greene County) "The Star of Bethlehem."

It is also known as a nice driving fiddle/bar tune under the name of "Star of the County Down", played as a waltz. It has a beautiful quality as a waltz and works great on the low-d whistle too.

Chorus lyrics:

*From Bantry Bay up to Derry Quay and
From Galway to Dublin Town,
No maid I've seen like the brown Colleen
That I met in the County Down.*

O

Origin of the World - written by Dave Shepherd (violinist in the band: Blowzabella)

This tune is a mazurka which means it is in 3 beats/triple time with strong accents placed unsystematically on second or third beats. The style originated in Poland and became popular in dance halls of Europe in the 1800's especially through the music of Frederic Chopin. There is also a painting by Gustav Courbet called "The origin of the world" which refers to woman as the creator of 'man'. <https://thesession.org/tunes/8237>

Take a deep breath before clicking this link: <https://www.gustave-courbet.com/the-origin-of-the-world.jsp>



O'Keefe's Slide number 1 in 12/8

Padraig O'Keefe ([Irish: Pádraig Ó Caoimh](#) 1887 – 1963) was a noted Irish traditional musician. Also known as Dan O'Keefe's, Dan O'Keefe's, Dan O'Ryarker's, Danny Ab O'Keefe's, Danny Ab's, Danny Ab's No. 1, Denis O'Keefe's, Kerry Slide No. 2, Knocknaboul, O'Keefe's, Padraig O'Keefe's Slides No. 1.

O'Keefe was a farmer in the most general sense of the word: neither Julia Clifford nor her sister Bridie seem to remember him actually doing any farming. As the story goes, he walked in one day while Denis was working in the fields and yelled for him to put the kettle on, and he'd give them some tunes. Denis put the kettle on, and the result was this slide and another before it: <https://thesession.org/tunes/3577>

The eldest of eight children from a musical family. He was known for his talented fiddle playing, self-devised system of notating music, numerous skilled pupils, as well as his notorious quick-wit and humor. He is regarded largely as the greatest fiddler of the [Sliabh Luachra](#) style, and one of the greatest [fiddlers](#) of all time.

P

Padraig O'Keefe's in 12/8 (the Blackbird) in D (I think this is number 2)

According to accordion player Johnny O'Leary, "O'Keefe "wouldn't play without a drink. No way could he without a drink. Denis Murphy was different. He never wanted a drink, and so with Tom Billy. But the drink got the upper hand of Padraig like. But he was the best I'd say, ever caught a fiddle in his hand, no doubt about it."

Not to be confused with O'Keefe's slide - "Blackbird" is simply the name Sharon Shannon born in Corofin, County Clare an Irish musician gave to the tune which is a mashup of two tunes — Padraig O'Keefe's (a slide) and The Happy One-Step. She is best known for her work with the accordion and for her fiddle technique

Q

What no Q tune yet?

R



ROAD TO LISDOONVARNA – a slide (form of Jig - BCB play it with O'KEEFE'S SLIDE)

Lisdoonvarna is a small town on the western coast of Ireland, well known because it hosts an annual Matchmakers Festival and singles from all over the world go there in September. The name Lisdoonvarna comes from 'Lios Duin Bhearna', which means the lios or enclosure of the fort in the gap. In the 18th-century a surgeon discovered the beneficial effects of its mineral waters. So people came to Lisdoonvarna to bathe in the mineral waters and drink it. Because of the popularity of these mineral springs and the huge amount of people going, the "matchmaking tradition" started.

The tune *Road to Lisdoonvarna* originates from a Jacobite era song "All the Way to Galway" and at the end of the 19th century was associated with the matchmakers festival. Here is a beautiful recording of this fiddle tune by [Dulahan Ireland](#).

Red Haired Boy

Irish (originally), Scottish, English; Air or Hornpipe: American, Canadian; Reel or Breakdown. A Mixolydian. Standard tuning (fiddle). AABB (most versions): AA'BB' (Moylan). One of the most popular and frequently recorded traditional fiddle tune. 'Red Haired Boy' is the English translation of the Gaelic title "[Giolla Rua](#)" (or, Englished, "[Gilderoy \(2\)](#)"), and is generally thought to commemorate a real-life rogue and bandit, however, Baring-Gould remarks that in Scotland the "Beggar" of the title is also identified with King James V.

S *(BCB play lots of these S tunes)*

SENECA SQUARE DANCE (coupled with Over the Waterfall reel)

This tune has various other names and variations-most notably 'Waiting for the Federals'. Also, The Session website tells us it can be called Little Home to go to or Shoot the Turkey Buzzard. Seneca was a Roman philosopher (4BC to AD65) The word means "old" in Latin.

The name was used for the Iroquois Indian tribes in NEW YORK. There are towns in the US called Seneca notably in South Carolina and means "the place of the stones".

The tune seems to have been played in the America and the UK - most high profile for the movie Long Riders by Ry Cooder and a version by Aly Bain.

The Federals was the first political party in the United States led by Alexander Hamilton who stood for collaboration between the different states (as I understand it). It became defunct in the 1800's.

(CF The Crooked Spire musical similar theme based on "Geordie" folk song)

T

Tam Lin

Most variants begin with the warning that Tam Lin collects either a possession or the [virginity](#) of any maiden who passes through the forest of [Carterhaugh](#). When a young woman, usually called Janet or Margaret, goes to Carterhaugh and plucks a double rose, Tam appears and asks her why she has come without his leave and taken what is his. She states that she owns Carterhaugh because her father has given it to her.^[3]

Janet then goes home and discovers that she is pregnant; some variants pick up the story at this point. When asked about her condition, she declares that her baby's father is an [elf](#) whom she will not forsake. In some versions, she is informed of a herb that will induce abortion; in all the variants, when she returns to Carterhaugh and picks a plant, either the same roses as on her earlier visit or the herb, Tam reappears and challenges her action.^[1]

She asks him whether he was ever human, either after that reappearance or, in some versions, immediately after their first meeting resulted in her pregnancy. He reveals that he was a mortal man, who, falling from his horse, was caught and captured by the Queen of Fairies. Every seven years, the fairies give one of their people as a [teind \(tithe\)](#) to [Hell](#) and Tam fears he will become the tithe that night, which is [Hallowe'en](#). He is to ride as part of a company of elven knights. Janet will recognise him by the white horse upon which he rides and by other signs. He instructs her to rescue him by pulling him down from the white horse - so Janet "catches" him this time - and holds him tightly. He warns her that the fairies will attempt to make her drop him by [turning him](#) into all manner of beasts (see [Proteus](#)), but that he will do her no harm. When he is finally turned into a burning coal, she is to throw him into a well, whereupon he will reappear as a naked man, and she must hide him. Janet does as she is asked and wins her knight. The Queen of Fairies is angry but acknowledges defeat.^{[1][3]}

In different variations, Tam Lin is reportedly the grandson of the Laird of [Roxburgh](#), the Laird of [Foulis](#), the [Earl of Forbes](#), or the [Earl of Murray](#). His name also varies between versions (Tam Lin being the most common) as Tom Line, Tomlin, Young Tambling, Tam-a-line and Tamlane.

U

Upton on Severn - also known as the Two Sisters, this jig is coupled with Haste to the Wedding. Thought to be an English (Worcestershire) tune as Upton on Severn is in Worcestershire. But is also supposed to have been collected in America by Maud Karpeles. # Posted by [docdick](#)

There is an Upton on Severn Stick dance.

V

Vals E Alfred Andersson - A world music tune: Written for concertina
http://rowlhouse.co.uk/concertina/music/Swedish/Swedish49_mixdown01.mp3

W

Woodland Revels

https://tunearch.org/wiki/Woodland_Revels

The tune is certainly from the early 1900s, and even in 1924 was part of the repertoire of the prize-winning **Tadley Band**, a brass band from the Berkshire-Hampshire border. Although it is usually classified as an English country dance tune, to my ear, *Woodland Revels* has an unmistakable **ragtime** feel about it and, indeed, it is often paired with tunes like *Bill Bailey* and *Alexander's Ragtime Band*.
<https://www.folkrag.org/tunes/2013.html>

Whose Jig (with Major Mackie) 6/8 What? Where? When?



The Water is Wide also called O Waley, Waley

<http://www.contemplator.com/england/water.html>

This song was originally *Waly, Waly*, but in the 19th century came to be known as *The Water is Wide*.

There are versions sourced from all over Britain.

Also called O Wall Waly. It is sometimes reported to be part of a longer Scottish ballad, *Lord Jamie Douglas*. However, when Douglas was first published by Herd (1776) it states it is to be sung to the tune of *Waly, Waly*, so it is fairly certain that *Waly, Waly* is the earlier tune. Many people including Bob Dylan (duet with Joan Baez) Pete Seeger and American songwriter James Taylor have recorded it. 'The Water is Wide' has been arranged by the classical composer, [Benjamin Britten](#), and the tune is sometimes (though not always) used for the hymn "[When I Survey the Wondrous Cross](#)."

Ancestors of the tune

A key ancestor is the lyric *Waly, Waly, Gin Love Be Bonny* from Ramsay's *Tea Table Miscellany* (1724), given below. This is a jumble of verses from other lyrics including *Arthur's Seat shall be my Bed* (1701), *The Distressed Virgin* (1633) and the Scottish scandal ballad *Jamie*

Douglas (1776). The use of *cockleshells* and *silver bells* in Thomson's version (1725) pre-dates the earliest published *Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary* (1744) and may relate to torture.^[1]

Some though not all versions of *Jamie Douglas* have the first verse that starts 'O, Waly, Waly'. Andrew Lang found a variant verse in Ramsay's *Tea Table Miscellany* from a sixteenth-century song.^[2]

O, waly waly upon the bank
And waly, waly down the brae,
And waly waly yon Burn-side
Where I and my love went to gae.

I leaned my back unto an Aik
I thought it was a trusty tree
But first it bow'd and syne it brak
Sae my true Love did lightly me.

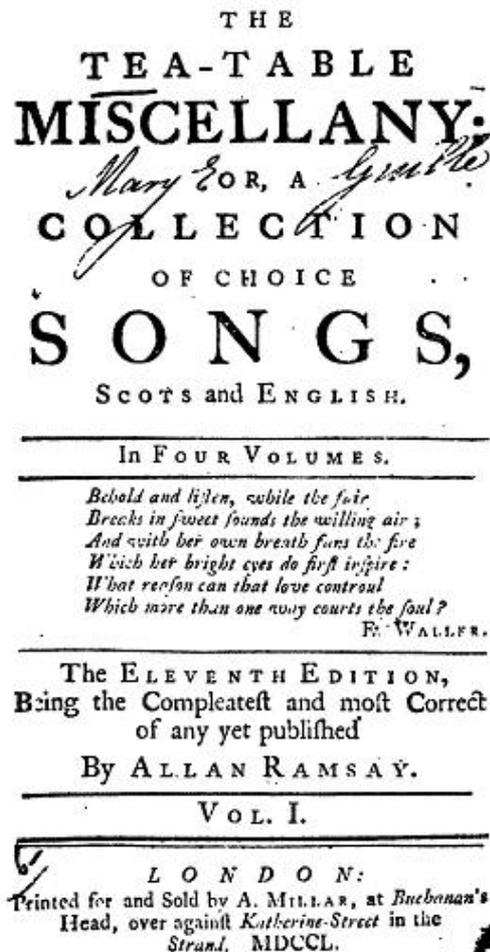
Someone called, Mrs Cox came up with 'Lord Thomas and Fair Ellinor' and again in a version of [...] 'Young Hunting', from the Appalachians", all collected by Cecil Sharp in 1916.

"**I wish my love and I were sailing**" is a version from West Virginia with more or less the same words which was collected by a J. H. Cox (same person?) in 1918 ("Maggie Goddon", Cox, No. 142, p. 424, "learned forty years ago", American song "Fair And Tender Ladies". *Folk Songs of North America* (No. 70, p. 136): Oh, love is a pleasin' and love is teasin'.

Predecessors of *The Water is Wide* also influenced lyrics for other folk and popular songs. These include the American song 'Sweet Peggy Gordon' and the modern version of the Irish *Carrickfergus* (1960s) which shares the lines *but the sea is wide/I cannot swim over/And neither have I wings to fly*. This song may be preceded by an [Irish language](#) song whose first line *A Bhí Bean Uasal* ("It was a noble woman") matches closely the opening line of one known variation of Lord Jamie Douglas: *I was a lady of renown*. However, the content of the English-language *Carrickfergus* includes material clearly from the Scots/English songs not in any known copy of *A Bhí Bean Uasal* suggesting considerable interplay among all known traditions. The Welsh version is called *Mae'r môr yn faith*.^[3]

Scot but Folk Song from Somerset? 1906 Cecil Sharp

The 'original' version of "The Water is Wide" can also be found in *Folk Songs From Somerset. Third Series* by Cecil Sharp and Charles Marson. This collection was published in London by Simpkin & Co. in 1906 (available at [IMSLP](#), here No. LXVI, p. 32/33). Here it was still called "Waly, Waly". In the *Notes on the Songs* (p.76) a "Mrs. Cox, of High Ham" is mentioned



as the source for both the words and the tune. Sharp also remarked that he had "noted this song in Somerset five times - tunes and words varying considerably" but that "our Somerset words have so much affinity with the well-known Scottish ballad 'Waly, Waly' that we are publishing them under the same title".

These notes are somewhat misleading. They seem to suggest that Sharp had collected the song in exactly this form. But in fact he had created it anew by collating bits and pieces from different field-recordings. What he regarded as "Folk"-versions of that old Scottish ballad were in fact mutilated fragments of two different broadside-songs. Already in 1954 J. W. Allen - in a seminal article in the *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* (pp.161-171) - has compared the published version with the original field-recorded variants in the manuscripts and was able to show convincingly how Sharp had put together this song. He even identified one of the two broadside ballads in question.

<http://www.justanothertune.com/html/wateriswide.html>

We can go back to 1720s and have a look at this old Scottish ballad "Oh Waly, Waly, Gin Love Be Bonny". This song was first printed in 1725/6 in two groundbreaking publications. A version with a tune and four verses - including variant forms of two we know from the modern "The Water Is Wide" - can be found in William Thomson's *Orpheus Caledonius, or a Collection of the best Scotch Songs*. Here it was called "Wale' Wale' up yon Bank" (p. 34, available at Early Books of Scottish Songs, NLS) . :

And wa - le' wa - le' up yon Bank, And wa - le' wa - le' down yon brea; And
 wa - le' by yon Ri-ver's side, Where my love and I was wont to gae, and
 wa - le' by yon Ri-ver's side, Where my love and I was wont to gae.

Ramsay has marked "Oh, Waly, Waly" with a "Z" as an "old song", but we don't know how old it was when he published it. Nor do we know if and how much Ramsay and Thomson have edited their texts. But at least one verse was already known a hundred years earlier. A variant of the second can be found in a manuscript from the 1620s (see Child IV, No. 204, p. 93):

A stanza closely resembling the third of this song occurs in a Yule medley in Wood's MSS, about 1620.*

Hey trollie lollie, love is jolly .
 A qhyll qhill it is new ;
 Qhen it is old, it grows full cold,
 Woe worth the love untrew !

This particular lines were also used as the fourth verse in a *Cantus* for three voices that was published in Aberdeen in 1666 in the second edition of Thomas Davidson's *Cantus, songs and fancies, to three, four, or five parts* (ESTC [R213597](#), available at EEBO, image 48):



Of course, this doesn't mean that "Oh Waly, Waly" already existed at that time. It is far more likely that the anonymous creator of this song simply borrowed an older verse. Interestingly five of the seven additional stanzas from Ramsay's text can also be found in other songs. One was part of the ballad "The Seamans Leave Taken Of His Sweetest Margery" (first printed ca. 1650, ESTC [R227870](#), available at EEBO; see also [Pepys 4.158](#), 1681-84, at EBBA):

If I had wist before I had kist,
that love had been so dear to win;
My heart I would have clos'd in gold,
and pin'd it with a silver pin.

But "Oh Waly, Waly" also shares four verses with "Arthur's Seat Shall Be My Bed, or: Love in Despair". This "New Song much in Request" was apparently published circa 1701:

O Arthur's Seat shall be my Bed,
and the Sheets shall never be fil'd for me
St. Anthony's well shall be my Drink,
Since my, true Love's forsaken me.

But the text of "Oh Waly, Waly" also found a place in the most important antiquarian collections of that time: Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765/1775) and David Herd's *Ancient And Modern Scottish Songs* (1769).

Round:

The Water is Wide
I Cannot get over
Nor have I Wings
With which to-o-o fly
O-o-h give me a boat
That can carry Two
We both shall Row
My friend and I

(repeat twice in parts with one part higher than the other and then sing in round with group two beginning to sing at the word 'Nor')

Descendants of the Tune:

The song structure (regular 4 phrases of four bars) is similar to other favourite songs such as:

Danny Boy (a [ballad](#), lyrics written by English songwriter [Frederic Weatherly](#) in 1913, and set to the traditional Irish melody of "[Londonderry Air](#)". Weatherley (a lawyer born in Bristol) is estimated to have written the lyrics to at least 3,000 popular songs, including the religious "[The Holy City](#)", and the wartime song "[Roses of Picardy](#)". The tune was named after [County Londonderry](#), collected by [Jane Ross](#) of [Limavady](#) in the county (there is a lot of speculation about who she first heard play it and in what time signature) It was published in 1855 in the 'Ancient Music of Ireland'.

and **You Raise Me Up** (composed by the Norwegian-Irish duo [Secret Garden](#). The music was written by Secret Garden's [Rolf Løvland](#), and the lyrics by [Brendan Graham](#) in 2001 and it has been covered by many acts including Westlife and Josh Grobhan .

None for the following letters...yet.

X

Y

Z

To be continued...

