



*Muriel Johnstone*

*Masters of  
the Tradition*

*Volume 1*

*Niel Gow (1727 - 1807)*

*Robert Mackintosh (1745 - 1807)*

*William Marshall (1748 - 1833)*

*Simon Fraser (1753 - 1852)*

*Nathaniel Gow (1763 - 1831)*

*Scott Skinner (1843 - 1927)*

## *Masters of the Tradition Volume 1*

### 1. **Sir George Clerk of Pennycuick; Loch Earn; Lady Charlotte Campbell; Earl of Lauderdale**

**Sir George Clerk of Pennycuick** is a truly beautiful tune written by Nathaniel Gow and played here from "*The Beauties of Niel Gow, Part 1*". This strathspey is familiar to dancers the world over as the tune played for the dance "Up in the Air". The reels **Loch Earn** and **Earl of Lauderdale** are from "*Niel Gow's Collections*" of 1788 and 1792. **Lady Charlotte Campbell** is another elegant strathspey from Nathaniel Gow, published in "*The Beauties of Niel Gow, Part 2*".

### 2. **Frank Gilruth; Ward's Hornpipe**

These tunes come from "*The Harp and Claymore*" - a marvellous collection of music by James Scott Skinner, one of the greatest exponents of Scotland's national music. Although probably more famous for his strathspeys and reels, Scott Skinner wrote many other types of pieces. These hornpipes are terrific fun to play.

### 3. **Willie's Rare and Willie's Fair; Todlen Hame**

**Willie's Rare and Willie's Fair** appears in the "*Caledonian Museum (~1810), A Favourite Collection of Ancient and Modern Scots Tunes*". The title of the tune refers to the Border Ballad entitled "Willie's Drowned in Yarrow" which describes the tragic loss of a husband. There is a dance called **Todlen Hame** to this hypnotic jig tune from "*Aird's Collection*" of 1782. This is followed by an adaptation of **Willie's Rare and Willie's Fair** in jig time before returning to the haunting song version.

### 4. **Earl of Elgin's Favorite; Mr. Stuart Trotter's Reel; Mr. Alexander Laing's Hornpipe**

These tunes are all in the key of E major which I love for its brightness in the higher register and its sonority in the lower register. **Earl of Elgin's Favorite** from "*The Beauties of Niel Gow, Part 1*" is yet another beautiful tune by Nathaniel Gow. **Mr. Stuart Trotter's Reel** or **The Captain's Fancy** comes from Robert Mackintosh's "*Sixty Eight New Reels, Strathspeys and Quicksteps for the Violin and Piano Forte*" of 1793. The masterly strathspeys, reels and jigs of Robert Mackintosh rank among the very best and have always been great favourites of mine. The jaunty **Mr. Alexander Laing's Hornpipe** comes from William Marshall's "*Scottish Airs, Melodies, Strathspeys & Reels*".

### 5. **Dargai; Dr. Baird; The Field of Bannockburn**

**Dargai** is an aching lament written in the style of the pipes. It conjures up anguish and grief for the loss of life during battle at the Heights of Dargai, India. The strathspey **Dr. Baird** sounds almost

defiant following the lament but it too is tinged with sadness. Finally, the march is launched in all its pride and glory - a magnificent piece of music named after an appalling massacre on the **Field of Bannockburn**. All three tunes were written by James Scott Skinner.

### 6. **Earl of Haddington; Major Molle; Lady Hunter Blair's Reel; Cross of Inverness**

This set of two strathspeys and two reels could easily be danced to. It includes two great tunes from the collections of Niel Gow - **The Earl of Haddington** and **Lady Hunter Blair's Reel**; a strong A minor strathspey **Major Molle** written by Andrew Gow, one of Niel's sons; and the set heads for home with the rollicking reel **Cross of Inverness** from Captain Simon Fraser.

### 7. **Mr. Wilson's Hornpipe; Miss Ann Cameron's Jig - Balvenie; Miss Gordon of Liverpool**

These three tunes cry out for a revival of the 9/8 rhythm in Scottish dance - great foot-tapping tunes. I wonder - was **Mr. Wilson's Hornpipe**, danced today in reel time, originally a dance in 9/8 time to this tune by Robert Mackintosh? What steps did **Miss Ann Cameron of Balvenie** perform to her tune by William Marshall? How much better does **Miss Gordon of Liverpool** sound in her original rhythm rather than in the 6/8 adaptation for the dance Jubilee Jig?

### 8. **The Lea Rig**

The Lea Rig is a very old, very well known tune and song. This variation set, from David Johnson's splendid book "*Fiddle Music of the 18th Century*", takes the tune on an incredible journey of development and ornamentation.

### 9. **Miss Mary Douglass's Favorite; Lady Hope of Pinkie; Miss Macleod of Macleod; The Princess Royal**

Here is a set of simply wonderful tunes some of which will be familiar to dancers - "Miss Mary Douglas" and "The Princess Royal" being popular dances in the mid 20th century. **Miss Mary Douglass's Favorite** and the unusual reel **Miss Macleod of Macleod** appear in Robert Mackintosh's "*A Fourth Book of New Strathspey Reels*" of 1803. **Lady Hope of Pinkie**, by Nathaniel Gow, can be found in "*Gow's 6th Book*" and **The Princess Royal** in "*Gow's Repository*".

### 10. **Lady Peel; The Earl of Angus & Arran; Miss Betty Hunter**

William Marshall wrote some very elegant tunes. **Lady Peel** and **The Earl of Angus and Arran** from "*Volume 2nd of a Collection of Scottish Melodies, Reels & Strathspeys*" are two of his

finest. Dancers will recognise **The Earl of Angus & Arran**, used for the dance “Sugar Candie” and **Miss Betty Hunter** by Charles Duff, used for the dance “Miss Bennet’s Jig”, but here played with a different interpretation.

**11. The Flo’ers o’ the Forest - Old Air (TheLiltin’); The Flo’ers o’ the Forest - Modern Air**

The earliest copy of the old air has been preserved in lute tablature in the Skene musical manuscript held in the library of the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh. The ballads that apply to each of these tunes commemorate the battle of Flodden Field in 1513 when the majority of the Scots nobility and supporting army were killed. This music is taken from *“The Scots Fiddle - Tunes, Tales & Traditions”* by J. Murray Neil.

**12. Lord Rosslyn’s Fancy; Sodger Laddie; The Merry Dancers; Miss Nancy Frowns**

These are four of my favourite jig tunes for dancing. Each has a dance of the same name taken from various old dance collections including Walsh’s Complete Country Dances, 1731 and Bremner’s Scots Reels & Country Dances, 1757.

**13. Niel Gow’s Lament on the Death of his Second Wife**

Surely one of the most beautiful tunes in the repertoire, **Niel Gow’s Lament** is really the property of fiddlers. Over the years I have enjoyed accompanying some fine renditions of this tune played by some of the best Scottish fiddlers. Only when playing solo piano concerts can I include this tune for my own indulgement! Thank you to the two ladies attending the Australian Winter School in July 2000 who requested this track.

*All music traditional*

*All arrangements by Muriel Johnstone*

*Recorded by Bill Zobel*

*Produced by Muriel Johnstone*

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