

NIGEL GATHERER'S Music of the British Isles SERIES

THE MUSIC OF the British Isles is incredibly rich and varied, each village, town and county having its own traditions, sometimes dating back centuries. In this,

my third exploration of British music and song for the BMG, we'll visit various corners of our islands and celebrate both their differences and commonalities.



Major McLean (Niel Gow)

slow air

Em Em D G Am Em

G Bm Em G G

D Am D Em C Bm F#m Em Am

Bm Em G G D Am D

Em C Bm F#m Em Am Bm Em



Niel Gow (1727-1807) was one of the most famous fiddlers of all time, being known throughout Scotland even in his own life. He lived in Inver, near Dunkeld, and there is a memorial to him in Dunkeld Cathedral. His son Nathaniel published many collections of tunes played and composed by his father, and these books formed the bedrock of Scottish fiddle repertoire. Niel was in great demand to play for dances and often travelled fair distances to perform.



Speed the Plough (John Moorhead)

Musical score for "Speed the Plough" in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music with guitar chords indicated above the notes. The chords are: G, G, C, G, Am, D7, G, G, C, G, D7, G, G, C, G, Am, D7, G, G, C, G, D7, G.



John Moorhead (c1760-1804) worked at Sadler's Wells theatre, and wrote this tune under the name The Naval Pillar for a musical play; it was so popular it was used in another musical called Speed the Plough, after which it took that name. Although he was well respected as a composer, he suffered from debilitating mental health problems, and eventually took his own life.



Rochdale Coconut Dance (traditional)

Musical score for "Rochdale Coconut Dance" in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music with guitar chords indicated above the notes. The chords are: G, D, G, D, G, D, G, D, Em, Em, Am, G, D, Em, Em, Em, D7, G, D7, Em.



Bacup Coconut Dance (traditional)

G G Bm D C

Am D7 G Em G

G D Em

G D G



Both the Rochdale and Bacup Coconut dances have their origins in the mid-19th century. The Britannia Coconuttters in Bacup continue this tradition to this day



Dregs of the Mashtub (Diferiad y Gwerwyn) (trad)

D D D D G

A G A A D D A

G D D

A G A A D

I learned Dregs of the Mashtub from Christina MacAulay, a Scottish whistle player living in Wales. She learned it from fiddler Bob Evans, who often plays it at Cardiff sessions. He got it from a 19th century collection by Owain Alaw.





The Oak (Steve Knightly)

Am G Am G

The limbs, the veins, the head and the heart The earth, the roots, the leaves and the bark.

Am G Am G Am

For shelter and shade was the oak tree grown; For church and cradle,

G Am G Am G Am G

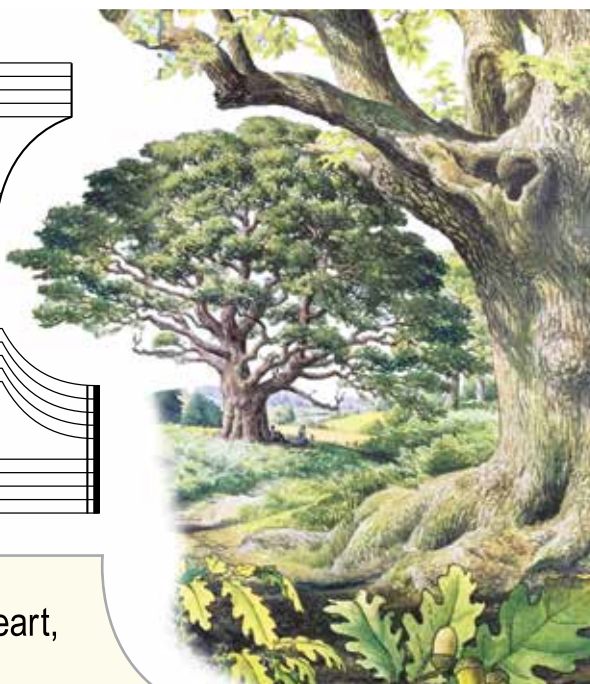
hearth and home. With arms so strong they hold the sky

Am C

Break the branch and the

G Am G

heart won't die.



Am G
Ch. The limbs, the veins, the head and the heart,
Am G
The earth, the roots, the leaves and the bark;
Am G Am G
The limbs, the veins, the head and the heart, the earth, the roots, the leaves and the bark.

BMG16-4

Am G Am G Am
2. What can grow if the sea returns? What can live when the
G Am G Am G
plant grain burns? Cut the branch and your crops will fail,
Am G Am G
Tear the leaves and your ships won't sail.

Am *G*
Ch. The limbs, the veins, the head and the heart,
Am *G*
 The earth, the roots, the leaves and the bark;
Am *G*
 The limbs, the veins, the head and the heart,
Am *G*
 The earth, the roots, the leaves and the bark.



Musical notation for the first two stanzas of 'The Oak'. It consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the first stanza. The second staff contains the melody for the second line of the first stanza, followed by a repeat sign and the melody for the first line of the second stanza. The third staff contains the melody for the second line of the second stanza. Chord symbols (Am and G) are placed above the notes to indicate the accompaniment.

Am *G*
 3. Seven generations the oak trees grow,
Am *G*
 (The limbs, the veins, the head and the heart)
Am *G*
 Roots reach deep to the rocks & bones.
Am *G*
 (The earth, the roots, the leaves and the bark).

Am *G*
Ch. The limbs, the veins, the head and the heart,
Am *G*
 The earth, the roots, the leaves and the bark;
Am *G*
 The limbs, the veins, the head and the heart,
Am *G*
 The earth, the roots, the leaves and the bark.



This song was written by Steve Knightly of the band Show of Hands.



The Flitter Dance (traditional)

Am Am G Em

Am Am G Em Am Am

Am Am Am C G

Am Am Am

Musical notation for 'The Flitter Dance' in G major, 2/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The second staff continues: D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F#3, E3, D3. The third staff continues: D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F#2, E2, D2. The fourth staff continues: D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1. Chords are indicated above the notes: Am, Am, G, Em, Am, Am, Am, Am, Am, C, G.



Peter O'Tavy (traditional)

G Em D D D D7 D7 G

G Em D D D7 D7 G G

G Em C G C G Em D

G Em C G Em D7 G G

Musical notation for 'Peter O'Tavy' in G major, 3/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The second staff continues: D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F#3, E3, D3. The third staff continues: D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F#2, E2, D2. The fourth staff continues: D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1. Chords are indicated above the notes: G, Em, D, D, D, D7, D7, G, G, G, Em, D, G, Em, D7, G, G.



Fly and Dodger (Liz Carroll)

G C G C D

G C G C D

G C Em D G C G D G C

Em D Am C G D



Liz Carroll (born 1956) is one of the most respected Irish fiddler and composer today. She grew up in Chicago in an Irish-American community and started playing fiddle at nine years old. Her tunes have been recorded hundreds of times.

The *Fly and Dodger* was named for "...that boat-lover I married, Charles." and was recorded on her album *Lost In the Loop* (2000).

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Music

BMG The BRITISH
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Harper's Frolic (traditional)

D D A D

D D A 1. D 2. D

D G D A

D G

D A 1. D 2. D

BMG16-Joint Session

I learned this tune from the playing of the English folksinger and melodeonist Pete Coe, with whom I have done a little bit of playing. It's a well-known tune in English sessions which first appeared in the mid-18th century. It was recorded with great effect by the New Victory Band in 1978.



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