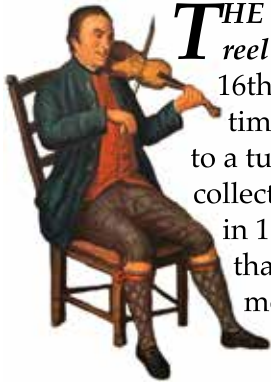


Styles & Genres



Tune Types: Reels



THE FIRST MENTION of the reel as a dance was in the late 16th Century, and the first time the term was attached to a tune was in Playford's collection of "Scotch-Tunes" in 1700. There is no doubt that it became one of the most popular dances and tune forms in Scotland

over the next four hundred years. It was imported across the Irish Sea and, as Caoimin Mac Aoidh says, "the Scottish reel repertoire pervaded all of Ireland." Indeed, many older Irish reels can be traced to Scots originals (e.g. *Miss McCloud's*, *Lord MacDonald's*, *Rakish Paddy*, etc). They also spread to England, the U.S. and Canada, so much so that it's the predominant tune form in many parts of the world.

Rhythm

The reel is a fast dance, and when it comes to notating reels, they can be in 4/4, 2/2, Common time and cut time. There is also a class of reel played in Scotland often notated in 2/4. There is sometimes controversy about the correct way to notate a reel, but what's more important is the way it is played. There is no

substitute for *listening* to reels, and *playing, playing, playing!* Emphasis is usually given to the first beat of a bar, and to a lesser extent the third (see Ex.1). Maintaining a steady tempo is important as well; try practising playing slowly with a metronome, increasing the tempo when you've nailed the previous setting.

Ex.1

The Glenburnie Rant (traditional)

reel

Reels 1