


# Contents

ABOUT THE AUTHOR .....	3	CHAPTER 5—Hornpipes & Strathspeys .....	32
INTRODUCTION .....	4	Hornpipes .....	32
CHAPTER 1—Getting Started .....	5	<i>The Scent of the Bog</i> .....	32
The Guitar in Celtic Music .....	5	Strathspeys .....	34
Ornamentation .....	6	<i>The Flax of Bloom</i> .....	34
Harmony and Arrangement .....	8	CHAPTER 6—O’Carolan Tunes .....	36
Tuning .....	10	<i>George Brabazon, 2nd Air (Standard Tuning)</i> .....	37
Melodic Development .....	11	<i>George Brabazon, 2nd Air (DADGAD)</i> .....	38
The Songs and the Recordings .....	15	<i>Shi Beg Shi Mhor (Standard Tuning)</i> .....	40
CHAPTER 2—Jigs .....	16	<i>Shi Beg Shi Mhor (DADGAD)</i> .....	42
<i>Blarney Pilgrim</i> .....	16	CHAPTER 7—Arrange It Yourself! .....	44
CHAPTER 3—Reels .....	20	<i>Fairy Jig (Standard Tuning)</i> .....	44
<i>Conlon’s 2</i> .....	20	<i>Fairy Jig (DADGAD)</i> .....	45
<i>The Morning Dew</i> .....	22	RECOMMENDED DISCOGRAPHY .....	46
CHAPTER 4—Slow Airs and Laments .....	24	Solo Artists .....	46
<i>My Fair Young Love</i> (A Lady to her Husband who was Killed at the Battle of Culloden) .....	24	Duos and Ensembles .....	46
Harmonics .....	26	Compilations .....	46
<i>My Fair Young Love</i> (A Lady to her Husband who was Killed at the Battle of Culloden) (Harmonics) .....	28	FINAL WORD .....	47
<i>Highland Boat Song</i> .....	30		

 Online audio is included with this book. This recording can make learning with the book easier and more enjoyable. The symbol shown at the left appears next to every example that is on the recording. Use the audio to help ensure that you’re capturing the feel of the examples, interpreting the rhythms correctly, and so on. The track number below the symbol corresponds directly to the example you want to hear. Track 1 will help you tune your guitar to the audio.

**Have fun!**

One good way to keep the rhythm of the accompaniment from being too boring or too complex is to occasionally vary the regularity of the bass notes, which involves establishing a steady rhythmic pulse and then either dropping bass notes or adding extras whenever you think the feel is getting stale.

8  
Track 9

Basic Pulse      Dropping      Adding

H H      H H      P H      P      H H

T 2 3 5 0 2 3      2 0 2 3 0 2      0 0 0 0 3      0 0 0 0 2 3

A 0      0      0      2      0 0 0 0 3      0 0 0 0 1 2

B 0      0      2      0 0 0 0 3      3 3 0

1 2 4 0 2 3      2 0 2 3 0 2      0 0 0 0 3      0 0 0 0 1 2

0      0      0 1 2      0      2 2 0

You'll notice that many of the tunes that follow appear to have two parts, and often, but not always, are eight bars each. These parts are commonly referred to as the "A" section and the "B" section. A standard way to play these tunes is AABB (play the "A" section twice, then the "B" section twice), but it's really up to you. This means that you should feel free to make any structural arrangement you like. You could do ABAB, AABA, etc.

You can embellish and harmonize these melodic sections differently each time they come around. For example, you can start with the melody alone and gradually add more elements of harmony. One mark of a sophisticated traditional musician is the ability to keep a simple two-part melody interesting for a long time with seemingly endless variation.

As you play the tunes in this book, it's highly recommended that you take a very open approach to the arrangements and the harmonies. As you become familiar with the melodic lines, experiment with different bass notes and try to throw in (or remove!) some chords. You might also try playing sections of these tunes completely without bass lines or harmony as is done with the beginning sections of "George Brabazon" (DADGAD version, page 38) and "Blarney Pilgrim" (page 16).

Your enjoyment of Celtic fingerstyle guitar will increase dramatically as you learn to arrange and embellish these melodies in your own way. When you've finished working through this book, consider purchasing a book of fiddle tunes written without accompaniment and start working them out. It's easier than you might think and it is tremendously fun and rewarding. Let everything you learn in this book be a step towards doing it yourself!

Born in 1965 in Paisley, Scotland, **Tony McManus** is considered by some to be the world's greatest Celtic guitarist. His astonishing technique and unmatched ability to capture the complex phrasing of traditional Celtic music truly set him apart in the world of fingerstyle guitarists.



PHOTO • CHARLOTTE HALE/COURTESY OF DENISE MOORE

$8^{va}$  = *Ottava*. Sounds an octave higher than written.

Let's look at the scale created from the lowest to the highest of the common harmonics in standard tuning.

20  
Track  
37

Harm. etc.

This collection of notes is a substantial subset (six out of seven notes) of several common scales. These include G Major and D Major as well as their respective relative minor scales; E Minor and B Minor. That means that in these keys, harmonics can be used to play many of the melody notes, adding a fresh and unusual quality to the song.