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WILLIAM MCGIBBON AND NIEL GOW: REFLECTIONS OF TRADITION AND TASTE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LOWLAND SCOTLAND

by

BARBARA L. DOWNIE

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE MASTER OF MUSIC

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1997
ABSTRACT

William McGibbon and Niel Gow: Reflections of Tradition and Taste in Eighteenth-Century Lowland Scotland

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Barbara L. Downie

The nature of Scottish fiddle music in the mid-eighteenth century was shaped by three main factors: the social context of music-making for performer and audience, the coexisting traditions of folk and classical music, and international influences. These factors are analyzed and extensively illustrated in a detailed examination of the compositions and performing styles of two musicians; the classical style is exemplified by William McGibbon and the folk tradition by Niel Gow. The decline of Scottish music from the end of the eighteenth century is explained in terms of the limited possibilities for classical development of folk music, the rise of nationalism, and the stifling of the native idiom by a combination of these factors.
Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Two musical traditions thrived in eighteenth-century Scotland: the native folk tradition, and the "classical" tradition that was imported from Italy. It is tempting to think that these two traditions were enjoyed by two different social classes and performed by two different sets of musicians, but this assumption would be misleading. Although the two traditions initially developed separately, they were in fact appreciated by the same audience, played by the same musicians, and eventually there was considerable influence of one upon the other.

This period of rich musical life in Scotland continued into the last part of the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, as the century drew to its close, the relationship between the two traditions became too close, producing a mutually stifling effect. The popularity of the folk tradition encouraged "classical" composers to make extended use of folk music as a thematic basis for classical compositions. This over-reliance on folk music effectively took Scottish composed music out of the main European tradition, leaving it stagnant until the renaissance of Scottish composed music in the second half of the twentieth century. Likewise, the popularity of folk music led classical composers to harmonize and set it in ways quite alien to its native tradition, thereby destroying many of the idioms associated with the original tunes.
In order to understand the cultural tradition in which these musical styles arose, it is important to examine the historical, social, and economic position of Scotland at this time. Scotland seems always to have suffered from its geographical and psychological distance from the metropolitan centers of Europe and England.¹ A number of disadvantages combined to create an unusual cultural situation in eighteenth-century Scotland: economic constraint forced physical hardship upon many people, the education system was limited in many respects, including the lack of good music teaching, and political differences with England continued the historical instability between the two countries. Although the arts flourished in Scotland, the most prominent musicians were foreigners, while the best of the native talent left Scotland to study abroad. Even those Scots musicians who did remain in Scotland tended to be itinerant, with an overall movement from rural areas to the bigger cities, particularly Edinburgh. Nearly all of the Scots musicians who left went to London, but Scotland nurtured foreign musicians from a variety of places, such as England, Germany, Italy, and other European centers. So it seemed that although the Scottish people were keen to support the arts and welcomed the “modern” compositions coming in from Europe, the native musicians felt that Scotland did not provide an adequate platform for them.

This attitude was not unique to Scotland; the pattern of traveling to another country to gain a foreign perspective has always been common
among artists. Geographically, there was more of a connection between London and Europe (where many of the famous classical composers were working); the extra distance to Scotland tended to delay new ideas. In addition, there was an underlying feeling in Scotland that London was at the forefront of all the innovations, and that to achieve real success one had to go to London.

This feeling of inferiority and reluctant dependence on England had been ingrained in many of the Scots people by physical necessity and economic hardship at the beginning of the eighteenth century. When Scotland emerged from the end of the seventeenth century, it was a poor, agricultural country barely able to support its people; the methods of farming were inefficient and outdated, and in the 1690s many people died from starvation. Foreign trade was minimal, so that Scotland was isolated and deprived of business with Europe.

Despite Scotland’s poverty, the English were afraid of invasion through Scotland by the French, with whom Scotland had close ties. Many bitter battles had been fought between England and Scotland, creating strong feelings of hostility between the two countries. However, despite the resentment engendered by nationalistic pride, the harshness of the poverty in Scotland became such that some kind of agreement with England was inevitable.
In 1603, the crowns of the two countries had been united, so that only one king, (beginning with James the Sixth of Scotland, the First of England), governed both countries. However, the political situation remained unstable, as there were differences between England and Scotland with regard to the laws of succession to the throne, and because each country still retained its own parliament. The Act of Union in 1707 was the agreement that Scotland was forced to make; the independent parliament and laws of monarchical succession in Scotland were foregone (thus reducing the threat to the English borders) in exchange for access to England’s trade routes. The economic benefits to Scotland were by no means immediate, and the violent Highland rebellions of 1715 and 1745 exacerbated the political situation.

As a result of this turmoil, many of the Scots people felt that they had sold their culture in exchange for financial gain, and that by accepting the gradual social and economic benefits of the Union, Scotland’s past character was being denied. The effect of these sentiments was inevitably reflected in the music of Scotland, the separation of folk from classical music being one of the most obvious changes. Whereas the two cultures had previously blossomed side by side, deriving healthy influences from each other, folk music gradually came to represent “Scottish” music in the minds of the people, while classical music was seen as a symbol of “foreign interference.” Thus, even if the actual content of a piece of classical music was appreciated, it was viewed with skepticism and disapproval because it represented
Scotland's loss of autonomy. Previously, both folk and classical music had enjoyed the same audience, but with these political changes, each category formed its own circle of associates and attitudes. "Classical music" people regarded folk music as low-class and unsophisticated, while "folk music" people resented the foreign elements and snobbery connected with classical music. However, the effects of these political changes were gradual, and both classical and folk music were widely performed and appreciated throughout the eighteenth century.

William McGibbon and Niel Gow were both significant figures in this period of musical history, typical of different types of music and representative of coexisting traditions. The first chapter of this paper will examine the background of the musical traditions in which they thrived, discuss the important venues and occasions for the performance of music, and illustrate the way in which the Music Society concerts flourished alongside country dances. The function that music played in this society indicated the cultural needs and structuring of the people: the need for intellectual and social fulfillment, the alignment of class hierarchies, the influence of foreigners, and a loyal adherence to native idioms that was counterbalanced by a desire to "develop" classically alongside Europe. William McGibbon may be considered representative of the "classical" tradition, and the second chapter will focus upon his life, studies, playing, and composition with respect to the European/Scots style. Similarly, in the third
chapter, the folk-fiddler tradition in which Niel Gow thrived will be discussed with reference to his life, playing, compositions, and role as a musician. The compositions of these men represent contemporary tastes and traditions. The analysis of their works is intended to illustrate the conflicts and common elements in Scottish music at this time.

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1 In the eighteenth century Britain did not generally consider itself to be a part of Europe. Consequently the terms "Europe" and "the Continent" are used here to refer to the European mainland and are not intended to include the British Isles.
Chapter 1

Social Contexts of Music-making

1.1 Concert Life and St. Cecilia's Hall

The first documented public concert in Britain was given by John Banister in London, 1672. It was later followed by the first private concerts, also in London, given by the Academy of Antient Music (founded in 1710).

Scotland quickly followed suit, beginning with isolated concerts and culminating in the foundation of music societies. The establishment of these societies was one of the most significant events in eighteenth-century Scotland. The most influential was the Edinburgh Music Society, which was formally constituted in 1728. Other music societies were founded subsequently (Aberdeen in 1748, Glasgow in 1799, Dundee by 1757), and there were also concerts in smaller towns. Since the format of the Edinburgh Music Society can be taken as typical, and the model on which the others were built, it is instructive to examine its function in some detail. It provided a context for many musicians of the type and caliber of William McGibbon. In emerging from the repression of secular music in the seventeenth century, concert life in Edinburgh is generally considered to have followed a pattern of sixty years' growth, culminating in a twenty-year period of thriving musical activity (1760-80), which gradually declined over the next twenty years.
Much of the productivity of this era centered around the social, financial and musical life of the formal concert, and in particular, the existence of the music society.

The first public concert in Edinburgh was held in 1693, and was probably given by musicians playing for amusement in their free time. However, the first landmark concert in Edinburgh, entitled "Grand Concert of Music," was held on St. Cecilia's Day, 22 November, 1695. The concert was performed by thirty musicians, (including William McGibbon's father, the oboist Malcolm McGibbon), eleven of whom were professional music teachers, the remaining nineteen being fashionable amateurs. The program included works by Bassani (1657-1716) and Corelli (1653-1713), indicating the popularity that Italian music had already achieved in Scotland.

This was an important event in several ways: it established a social outlet for the genteel life-style of the upper classes, it marked the beginning of a new type of musical performance in Scotland, and it helped to shape the style of musical composition that was to flower throughout the eighteenth century. That this was the first ambitious concert of its time can be inferred from the ensuing disagreement between the "Master of Revels," a William Maclean, and Beck (a German music teacher who worked at Balcarres House in Fife), who was responsible for arranging the concert. Maclean claimed that it was within the authority of his position to demand a license fee for the performance from Beck; however, the Court of Session in January, 1694, ruled
that Maclean was only authorized to demand license fees for music "in connection with plays and puppet shows," and that Maclean was abusing his position when he "used it to drain money from them [the promoters of the concert] without restraining immoralities, if they paid him." Although it is rather amusing that the main reason for the documentation of this significant concert was a squabble over money, the decision made by the court was obviously setting a precedent, thus indicating that the public concert was a new phenomenon.

Concerts continued to be given in homes and public places after 1695. The involvement of the aristocracy in music-making is demonstrated by the several entries describing musical expenses in the Household Book of Lady Grisell Baillie, a fashionable member of society. Example 1, Household Book:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>To the little Italian Mr.</td>
<td>2 0 0 0 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For fine sope</td>
<td>0 2 0 0 0 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For a hat to James</td>
<td>1 4 0 0 5 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For copying Music</td>
<td>2 6 0 0 10 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To Doctor</td>
<td>5 4 0 1 1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To the Mantua Maker me</td>
<td>4 0 0 0 16 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To the Mantua Maker Gris</td>
<td>4 0 0 0 16 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For my velvet mittons</td>
<td>1 7 0 0 6 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For copying music at 1 C. the 4 lines</td>
<td>5 1 0 1 12 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For 5 Lottery Ticket of Millan</td>
<td>7 2 0 1 8 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For Tuning spinet a month</td>
<td>1 2 0 0 4 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For a pr. short furd gloves me</td>
<td>0 5 0 0 2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To S. Carmany Playing master</td>
<td>4 5 0 0 18 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For St. Josephs pictor</td>
<td>0 2 0 0 0 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1720, a Mr. Gordon, who had been traveling in Italy, and a Signor Lorenzo Bocchi arrived in Edinburgh. They submitted proposals "for the improvement of music in Scotland, together with.....a scheme for establishing a pastoral opera in Edinburgh." Perhaps as a result of this, Allan Ramsay produced a pastoral comedy, The Gentle Shepherd, in 1725, and the following year Bocchi published a Scots cantata to Ramsay's words. Bocchi is known to have been in Edinburgh for some time, as records show that he gave a concert at Taylor's Hall in the Cowgate in 1729. Public concerts were also held at the old Theatre Royal, the Assembly Rooms, the Concert Hall in Playhouse Close, the new Assembly Rooms (opened 1787) and at Natale Corri's Concert Rooms (from 1793).

In 1750, open-air concerts were started in Edinburgh, following the success of this initiative in London. They were first held in Lauriston Gardens in Edinburgh, where (for the cost of a shilling) anybody could go, be refreshed by coffee, tea, and teabread while listening to "a good band of music, accompanied by two French horns." This idea was taken up the next year by a Mr. Lampe, who arranged concerts in Heriot's Gardens for days that "the weather is not unfavourable."

Domenico Corri, Passerini and Pasquali (all foreigners residing in Edinburgh) also arranged public concerts, featuring Overtures by Handel, instrumental solos, and songs. Additionally, most of the music teachers
organized public concerts in halls in the city, but the main impetus of the concert revolved around the Music Society.\textsuperscript{13}

The Edinburgh Music Society is known to have been active for some time before its formal establishment in 1728. In 1701, a music society was responsible for an annual St. Cecilia's Day concert.\textsuperscript{14} By 1717 weekly meetings were being held at Patrick Steil's tavern in the High Street, The Cross Keys Tavern, at which the most popular music was that of Corelli and Handel.\textsuperscript{15} Its existence is confirmed by Allan Ramsay's poem, \textit{To the Music Club} (1721):

\begin{quote}
And show that music may have as good fate
In Albion's Glen as Umbria's green retreat,
And with Corelli's soft Italian song,
Mix 'Cowdenknowes' and 'Winter nights are long'.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

This poem is also significant in that it alludes to the desire of the Scots to maintain their native music alongside the new foreign compositions.

By 1727 the Society had grown to a membership of sixty, and because the Cross Keys Tavern was no longer a suitable size for a meeting place, the venue was moved to St. Mary's Chapel in Niddry Wynd. The "Gentlemen Members" met every Friday night to hold a concert consisting of three parts, each of which included one orchestral piece and one solo vocal work. The program for the following week was decided at the end of the concert; different members of the Society were chosen to be the leader of the orchestra from week to week, but professional singers were hired for the season.\textsuperscript{17}

In its early days, before St. Cecilia's Hall was built, the Edinburgh Music Society employed native Scots to take the position of leader of the orchestra;
Adam Craig (d. 1741) and William McGibbon (c.1695-1756) were two of the earliest to hold this position. In its later days, the society tended to favor foreign leaders, such as Francesco Barsanti (fl.1740-50), Johann Lampe (d.1751), Nicolo Pasquali (d.1757), Thomas Pinto (d.1773), Johann Schetky (d.1824), and his brother, Karl Schetky, Girolamo Stabilini (d.1815), Wilhelm (d.1799), Joseph Reinagle, Jr. (d.1825), Giuseppe Puppo (d.1827) and Johann B. Cramer (d.1858). There were also several Italian singers involved in the Society concerts, the most notable of whom were Pietri Urbani (d.1816), Domenico Corri (d.1825) and his wife, Miss Bacchelli, and the famous castrati Francesco Senesino (d.c.1750) and Tenducci.¹⁸

The concerts were usually unrehearsed affairs, often consisting of large-scale works, such as overtures, concerti, sonatas, symphonies, and oratorios. The most popular composers were foreigners; Handel, Pergolesi, Bach, Haydn, Corelli, Jommelli, and in later years, Mozart and Beethoven. Some music by English composers was also included, notably Arne, Purcell and Croft, but the only Scottish composers involved were the Earl of Kelly (whose Overtures appear frequently in Society programs), John Fergus, and Hugh Clerk. A typical program, taken from the title page of the Concert Programmes in the Fuing Music Collection, follows.¹⁹
Example 2, Concert Program:

Monday, March 22, 1779.

Concert of Ancient Music.

ACT I

Overture in Solarmes. Handel.
Lo thus we bow. Purcell.
Rendi il fiorito al ciglio (from Sigismund) Handel.
O sing unto the Lord. Handel.

ACT II

8th Concerto Corelli.
Kyrie Eleison. Pergolesi.

Despite the heavy bias towards foreign composers, the programs usually included a "Scots Song." Indeed, at the Aberdeen Music Society concerts, there were complaints that the Scots Song was left to the end of the concert, when the audience was tired and ready to leave. It seems that the exact program was often chosen at the last minute, as the program of 21
November, 1783 indicates: "Haydn's Overture in E flat if the Bassoon is there if not the Overture in D."\textsuperscript{21}

The type of fashionable amateur who had taken part in the concert of 1695 played a large part in the development of the Music Society, and only a small number of professionals were hired to reinforce the orchestra. Music appreciation began to pervade all the social classes, since membership of the Society was not limited to the aristocracy. Indeed, as Henry Farmer states, "the liberal professions and the merchant class outnumbered the aristocracy by three to one."\textsuperscript{22}

The financial budget at this stage was fairly modest, and only three professional violinists were hired, at a cost of three guineas each. William McGibbon was one of these, and indeed he benefited from the Society in other ways, with the sale of seven sets of parts of his first set of trio-sonatas when they were published in 1729, and ten copies of his second set in 1734. The Society had several functions: it gave concerts, encouraged efforts at composition (as is demonstrated by McGibbon's immediate sales), stocked an increasing library (by 1736, a new catalogue had to be compiled), and even acquired some musical instruments, such as the harpsichord of the deceased Lord Colville of Ochiltree for four pounds.\textsuperscript{23}

By 1762 the Society was prosperous enough to be able to construct a new building, St. Cecilia's Hall, the design of which was based on the Grand Opera House at Parma.\textsuperscript{24} The hall was built by Robert Mylne and was
renowned for its clear acoustics and for its carefully planned seating arrangement. The audiences at the concerts were described by Henry Cockburn as:

literary and fashionable gentlemen predominating in their side-curls, and frills, and ruffles, and silver buckles; and our stately matrons stiffened in hoops and gorgeous satin; and our beauties with high-heeled shoes, powdered and pomastered hair, and lofty and composite head-dresses.\textsuperscript{25}

Indeed, the splendor of those interested in the Society began to be a source of irritation to the existing members, because despite the original aim of the Society to accept performing members only, the meetings began to be swamped with self-invited non-performers. The worst offenders were the ladies, so the Society tried to introduce "Ladies Nights" to control the situation; however, the meetings had become a popular place for the fashionable to meet prospective partners, and the music had begun to take second place.\textsuperscript{26}

The glamorous descriptions of the aristocracy at Society meetings should not give the impression that the upper classes considered themselves to be above the native folk traditions. Although the Society programs seemed to feature music by Europeans, English composers, or Scots writing in "classical" style, Scots songs, jigs, reels, and strathspeys were popular with all social classes and became more so throughout the century.

The increase of interest in the Society also had a positive effect on music, in that the new fashionable image increased subscriptions, and
waiting-lists for admission expanded the financial means of the Society considerably. It enabled foreign musicians to be brought in, the latest works to be acquired, and caused performance standards to rise.

This period (c.1760-1780) in which St. Cecilia’s Hall was opened and became the fashionable center of aristocratic musical activity was one in which Edinburgh set the standards in taste and style for all of Scotland, and should be regarded as the supreme point of musical growth in the century. The attitude towards music at this time is summarized by a Captain Topham in his Letters from Edinburgh:

Music alone engrosses every idea. ...In religion, a Scotchman is grave and abstracted, in politics serious and deliberate: it is in the power of harmony alone to make him an enthusiast.27

However, the Society began to overspend its means to some extent, and the aristocracy started to find a more exciting night-life in the town to replace concert-going. The income decreased dramatically throughout the 1780s and 1790s, until the Society finally closed in 1798.28

The importance of the Society to music in eighteenth-century Scotland is immeasurable. As well as providing a financially viable way for musicians to earn a living through playing and composing, the power of the Society enabled European music to reach Scotland. Foreigners from different cultures were drawn to Edinburgh where they mixed with native Scots, and the Society provided a central location for the exchange of ideas.
1.2 Dancing

The eighteenth century saw the blossoming of a new social life as the puritanical hold of the Church of Scotland finally began to weaken. The Church had traditionally taken an uncompromising view of dancing; the General Assembly had officially banned "promiscuous dancing" (dancing in mixed groups) in an act of 1649, reasserting its position in 1701.29 Because of this prohibition, there was almost no dancing in Scotland in the seventeenth century. However, in the early eighteenth century, the upper-classes began to defy the rulings of the Church, and the dance soon established itself as one of the main amusements of the Scottish people. The attitude of the aristocratic ladies who instigated the movement is reflected in the title of the famous dance tune, "The de'il stick the minister."

The results of this relaxation in "moral" standards became apparent in various ways, such as the publication of the first regular Scottish newspaper, the Edinburgh Gazette (1699), the first publication of a collection of Scottish contemporary verse, The Edinburgh Miscellany (1720), the establishment of coffee-houses and gentlemen's clubs, and, in particular opposition to the teachings of the Church, the staging of dramatic productions. From a musical point of view, the two most significant effects
of the Church's diminished power were the establishment of the public
concert, (previously discussed), and the introduction of dancing.\textsuperscript{30} The
association between devilry and Scottish dances is demonstrated by the
following lines from \textit{Tam o'Shanter}, a poem written in 1791 by the famous
Scots poet, Robert Burns:

\begin{verbatim}
Warlocks and witches in a dance:
Nae cotillon, brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.\textsuperscript{31}
\end{verbatim}

Several attempts were needed to overcome religious opposition to
dancing; records show the first dances beginning in 1705, when the Earl of
Selkirk opened a club called the "Order of the Horn," which hosted various
entertainments, including a masked ball.\textsuperscript{32} This attempt to introduce dancing
was quelled. It was followed by another unsuccessful attempt in 1710, and
finally a more fruitful effort was made in 1723.\textsuperscript{33} By the winter season of 1723,
an aristocratic dancing-club, the Edinburgh Assembly, had been established.
This club met once a week and provided an important platform for music.
This is not to say that the Church now approved of dancing; an anonymous
writer of the time expressed these sentiments:

\begin{verbatim}
It will....tend to vitiate and deprave the Minds and
Inclinations of the younger Sort....a Machine of Luxury, to
soften and effeminate the Minds of our young Nobility and
Gentry...They, instead of employing themselves in the
useful Arts and Sciences...now made it their greatest care
who should be best equipp'd and dress'd for an Assembly
Night, and to strain their Fancies to invent some agreeable
Love Tattle to tell the Belle Creature[s] whom they shall
happen to most admire in the Meeting.\textsuperscript{34}
\end{verbatim}
Although supposedly a Club open to all, in its early days the Assembly was in practice dominated by the upper-classes. As dancing grew to be more common throughout the century, and the price of dancing lessons became accessible to all classes, dancing did in fact become a universal pastime.

Following a pattern similar to that of the Music Society, the Edinburgh Assembly met weekly, and became a model for the Assemblies which subsequently appeared in other towns. It is not known exactly what music was played at the early meetings, but the band of 1746 probably consisted of four violins, two oboes, and one bassoon.\textsuperscript{35} The Assembly was not the only venue for dancing; a culture of music and dancing developed in the Great Houses belonging to the aristocracy; in fact, many of the houses developed idiosyncratic versions of the dances and the music that went with them.

Many of the trends were set by the dancing-masters, who were responsible for teaching the dances to the public. Because the instrument most commonly played by the dancing-masters was the fiddle, this became the traditional instrument at the dance. Another combination of instruments at the Dance was two, three, or four fiddles playing in unison, either unaccompanied or with a simple bass-line (perhaps consisting only of an alternation between the tonic and flattened seventh) played on the cello. Sometimes oboes were used in place of fiddles, and in the most sophisticated halls the music was played by a larger band. In addition, in a genteeel
gathering place such as the Edinburgh Assembly Hall, the music was probably more classically harmonized than in the private houses, where idiomatic styles tended to develop.\textsuperscript{36}

The most common dances were the reel, English country-dances such as the hornpipe, jig, schottisch, and rant, and the imported Continental minuet. Additionally, in the 1760s a new, slower form of the reel, the strathspey, was developed.\textsuperscript{37} As was also to be the case with the country-dance, much music was rearranged to fit the strathspey; existing tunes were altered, and other types of dance tune were rewritten as strathspeys. At around the same time (1760s), the Earl of Kelly, a native Scottish composer, wrote several minuets for the Assemblies, many of which were widely circulated in manuscript form, suggesting that they were frequently played at the dances.\textsuperscript{38} As was common with many imported forms in Scotland, the English country-dance soon became naturalized; it was rewritten to go with traditional Scots folk-tunes, or written in a style characteristic of a particular Great House.

The first Scottish description of a country-dance with its music occurs in the Agnes Hume Manuscript; the tune is \textbf{John Anderson} and it is written out in its entirety four times, and includes directions for the dance:

\begin{quote}
The first man and 2[nd] \textit{[ad]ly} turn right hands round and into their place and the second man and the first \textit{[ad]ly} the same. Then \textit{dance} back all four and turn \textit{s[ideways]}.
Then all hands round till the 2[nd] couple come in the first place. The tune is to be played over through once over
\end{quote}
every time so the first couple has time to take their drinks. To be danced with as many pairs [as] you please.\textsuperscript{39}

In terms of instrumentation, the styles of the different dances generally affected the type of musical accompaniment. Whereas country-dances, reels and strathspeys were danced to folk music, the minuet (originally a Continental dance) followed a classical pattern. It was French in style up to 1710, and became more Italianate in the period leading up to 1760, before developing into the galante style. Accordingly, the instrumentation of the minuet differed from that of the country-dance, reel and strathspey; a full band was required, and classical harmonies replaced the folk sound of the other dances. For more modest occasions, however, a solo fiddle was often all that was available, so the minuet had to be adapted to fit smaller forces. This necessity gave rise to the "folk minuet," a genre written for solo fiddle, but following typical "classical" figurations and melodic shapes.\textsuperscript{40}

Before further examining the features of these dances, it is important to mention that a dance tune may be referred to by the name of the type of dance (i.e. the steps) while the music may be in the form or style of another dance. Thus, Flett states that "On the mainland of Scotland, the Western Isles, and Orkney, Reels were almost invariably danced to strathspeys and reels."\textsuperscript{41}

This ambiguity may stem from a confusion of terminology; the term "reel" was initially used in Scotland to refer to any communal dance, but it later came to mean a specific dance, known as the "Highland Reel" or "Scotch
Reel.” It could also refer to the music which accompanied the dance. Sometimes it was even used to denote the characteristic weaving dance figure of the reel as it was known in the Middle Ages.⁴²

Despite the confusion caused by many interpretations of the term, there are several specific characteristics associated with the music of a reel. It is usually in a common time signature, the four beats in the bar receiving almost equal accentuation with a slight emphasis on the first beat. Although a duple time signature was more common, it was not unknown for reels to be performed in the 6/8 or 9/8 time of a jig.⁴³ The usual rhythm of a reel is a pattern of eighth notes, or sometimes a quarter note and two eighth notes, with a smooth, flowing melody. Example 3, The De'il Amang the Tailors:⁴⁴

Along with the reel, the strathspey formed one of the two most basic types of Scottish dance music. The strathspey shares some of the characteristics of another dance of the time, the schottisch. They are both in 4/4 time and follow a steady quarter note pulse, but the accentuation and make-up of the beats distinguishes the two dances. Like the reel, the
strathspey had evenly accented beats (again with a slight emphasis on the first beat), but in the schottisch the first and third beats were stressed more than the second and fourth. The typical schottisch rhythm was a dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth note.

A strathspey is also characterized by its dotted rhythm but in reverse; a sixteenth followed by a dotted eighth, or an eighth followed by a dotted quarter. This rhythm is an idiosyncratic Scottish rhythm that is known as the "Scots snap." Although particularly associated with the strathspey, the snap also occurs in jigs and other dances. There are various theories as to the origins of this rhythm; the jerky nature of the snap has been considered to be a result of the bowing technique of the fiddler (using a quick flick of the wrist), or the movement of the fingers on the bagpipe, or the natural vocal inflection of a Gaelic singer.\(^5\) The following strathspey, entitled Tullochgorum, displays these characteristics. Example 4, Tullochgorum:\(^6\)

Two of the most common types of country-dance were the hornpipe and the jig. As with the reel, the terminology surrounding the hornpipe is
misleading; "hornpipe" is the name of a reed-pipe known in Lowland Scotland as the "stock-'n-horn," but it is also the name given to a step-dance, or tap-dance. It had a time signature of 3/2, 6/4 or 3/4, and a cheerful spirit. John Hawkins described the hornpipe in 1776 as follows:

the measure of the Hornpipe is triple time of six crotchets in a bar, four whereof are to be beat with a down, and two with an uphand.\(^{47}\)

The hornpipe is often characterized by syncopation or rhythmic interest created by the different groupings of six beats, especially hemiola.

Example 5, The Marchioness of Tweed-Dale's Delight:\(^{48}\)

However, to add to the confusion, any piece of music which was a tap-dance, even if it was performed to the music of another dance (such as a jig), was referred to as a hornpipe. The hornpipe had pastoral connotations, and shepherds were associated with its cheerful tone.\(^{49}\) Many present-day hornpipes are in a duple or quadruple-time signature and are related to the original triple-time hornpipe by name only.

The last significant native dance was the jig, which was in 6/8 time, had a lively character, and a repetitive rhythm usually consisting of a quarter note and eighth, or three eighth notes together. It was not dissimilar to the
hornpipe in terms of character and the triplet sound of the rhythm, although the jig had two beats per bar and the hornpipe had three. Example 6, Scotch Jig, Set of the Air of The Moudiewart.\textsuperscript{50}

Additionally, it is important to mention a style associated with the country-dance, the “rant.” Many Scottish tunes are set in the style of a rant; unlike the others, this term refers solely to a style, and is not in itself a particular dance. The rhythmic characteristic of the rant is two sixteenth notes and an eighth note, usually occurring on the first beat of the bar. The word “rant” is Germanic and means “romping” or “frolicking”; the style of the tune is consequently very spirited. Many of the tunes that are in the style of a rant are reels, such as the Duke of Perth’s Reel, but there are also “strathspey rants,” which maintain the dotted rhythm of the strathspey. Some tunes which have the character associated with a rant do not include the word in their titles; Green Grow the Rashes-O (used as Example 8 on page 31) is an example.\textsuperscript{51}

The music of reels, strathspeys, and the country-dances (hornpipes, jigs, schottisches, rants, and so on) were all performed at similar tempi, so that the music was often interchangeable for different dances.\textsuperscript{52} However, the minuet
was noticeably different in style; it was written in a more sedate triple meter, and had more "Continental polish" than other dances of the time.

Between 1720 and 1780, dancing had become so popular that there was a flourishing market for dance-tunes. To meet this demand, many traditional folk-songs were made into instrumental dance tunes. This adaptation gave rise to some problems because dances generally required two strains of music to be complete, whereas Scots songs from the seventeenth century generally had only one. In order to avoid exact repetition in the second half of each dance, fiddle adaptations of the songs usually consisted of the original stanza followed by a second stanza that was a variation on the first. For an eighteenth-century fiddler, the ability to improvise a second stanza based on the original became an indispensable skill. Often the second stanza was played an octave above the first, but ended in the same register and manner as the first. As the art advanced, the first two stanzas came to be regarded as the theme, on which the next three or so repetitions were variants.\textsuperscript{53}

The integration of foreign dances and the development of native forms encouraged the flourishing current of ideas that was prevalent in Scotland. By the middle of the century, it was common to have folk music, classical music, and hybrid forms of both played side-by-side in the dance hall, often written and performed by Scottish musicians.
1.3 Native Idiom

The ancient invaders and occupants of Scotland have contributed in various ways over the centuries to the collection of characteristics which are recognized as being typically Scottish. Today, although English is the predominant language, three languages are spoken in Scotland: English, Scots, and Gaelic. English and Scots are both amalgamations of Germanic and Romance languages, with some Scandinavian influences, but Gaelic comes from the same Celtic group of languages as Irish. However, several other languages used to be spoken in Scotland. Until the late ninth century, an early form of Welsh (a Celtic language) was spoken in the south of Scotland, and the Picts, who occupied the remainder of the country at the time, spoke a language which is thought to have been non Indo-European. The Gaelic-speaking Scots from northern Ireland invaded Scotland and absorbed the Picts into their culture. Their languages probably shared influences of rhythm, syntax, vocabulary, and accent. In addition, a Scandinavian language, Norn, was spoken until recently in the islands of Orkney and Shetland, and even in the early eighteenth century it was heard on the mainland of Scotland. The influence of Latin is also evident, especially as an “educated” language from Europe; from the seventh century onward, priests in Scotland were trained to sing, compose and have discussions in Latin.
The different languages and cultures which have co-existed in Scotland are reflected geographically and stylistically in the national music. In the North, where Scandinavian languages were spoken, the fiddle music shows Norwegian influences, whereas in the Highlands there is a solid tradition of Gaelic culture. In the Borders there is more influence of Scots; the ballads from this area show characteristics of this language. The European influence of classical music, existing alongside folk music, is particularly obvious in Central Scotland. Throughout Scotland, vocal music, and consequently instrumental music, absorbed particular speech rhythms, accents, and vowel sounds, and helped to form the idiosyncratic whole of Scottish music.\(^{34}\)

In terms of the stylistic characteristics of the music, a linguistic influence can be detected in the origin of the Scots snap. This rhythm (a sixteenth followed by a dotted eighth) has been associated with the tendency of the Gaelic and Scots language to stress the first syllable of a word. However, as we have seen, it has also been connected with a particular bowing technique used in the strathspey on the fiddle, whereby a strong flick of the wrist creates the quick sixteenth-note, eighth-note rhythm. This style of playing was perfected by Niel Gow in the eighteenth century.

Much of the characteristic sound of Scottish melodies comes from the gapped scales around which most of the tunes are composed. These scales help to create the melancholy quality so often associated with Scottish folk melodies. The most common scale is the pentatonic; the five notes are
formed within the octave with two gaps (usually occurring where the fourth and seventh notes would be in a diatonic scale, e.g. F and B natural in C major). The pentatonic scale is used in five positions, beginning on each of the notes in the scale, the first position being C, the second D, the third, E, the fourth, G and the fifth, A. These positions are sometimes referred to as having a "Final” on the keynote of the scale, as is the tradition with the Medieval Church modes. Each of the positions has a distinctive sound, depending on the ordering of the intervals. For example, the first position has the sound of a major key because of the major third interval between C and E. The scales can have a major, minor, or indeterminate mixture of triads, depending on which notes are emphasized, or on the general contour of the tune.55

The hexatonic scale, which was also a typical basis for a Scottish tune, is generally considered to have evolved from the pentatonic scale by filling in one of the gaps that falls naturally in the five-note scale. Either of the two gaps in the five-note scale could be filled in, and, like the pentatonic scale, the hexatonic could be formed into different positions or inversions. The fourteen possible inversions also had different characteristic sounds; major, minor or modal.

In addition, there was a seven-note scale which was constructed by filling in two of the gaps in the five-note scale. Although in theory the option of filling in both gaps with either a semi-tone or a tone, and beginning
each position on a different key-note would lead to many permutations of the seven-note scale, in practice the scale was used in only seven positions. The resulting seven scales correspond to the Church Modes: Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian and Locrian. However, not all of the seven Modes were used in writing Scottish tunes. The Ionian mode was used frequently, for example in such tunes as *The Birks of Invermay*, *Bonny wee thing*, *Duncan Gray* and the following example, *Here's a Health to Ane I Lo'e Dear*. Example 7, *Here's a Health to Ane I Lo'e Dear.*

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Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear.
Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear.
Thou art sweet as the smile when
fond lovers meet, and soft as their parting tear. Jess-ic
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The Dorian mode, notable for the major sixth (D to B natural) in an otherwise minor scale, was used much more commonly in Gaelic music than in Lowland Scotland. The Phrygian mode was used in a few tunes, such as *Auld Robin Gray*. Very rarely used was the Lydian mode, distinguished by the tritone between F and B natural, although some examples in both Lowland Scots and Gaelic melody exist. The Mixolydian mode is associated with bagpipe music because it is the natural mode of the Highland bagpipe. Probably the most commonly used of all the modes, the Aeolian mode has
minor-scale associations not unlike the Dorian mode. The Locrian mode, which was not used by the Church because of the tritone interval (B to F), is also rare in Scots tunes.

It seems highly probable that the origins of the pentatonic scale are vocal, whereas the added semi-tones in the six-note and seven-note scales, which would have posed more of a problem to an untrained singer, may be instrumental in origin.

A common feature of the tunes was the practice of beginning in one mode or key and ending in another. This was achieved without a loss of coherence in the tune, and was most common in tunes that started with a major-sounding scale and ended in the relative minor, as illustrated in the following example. Example 8, *Green grow the Rashes-O*:

\[\text{Staff notation}\]

There's nought but care on ev'ry han' In ev'ry hour that pass-es-o; what

sig-ni-fies the life of man, an' 'twere na' for the lass-ies-o?

Green grow the rash-es-o; green grow the rash-es-o; The

sweet-est hours that e'er I spend are spent a-mang the lass-ies-o.

Some tunes will end on the second degree of the scale, as in *Lassie wi'the Lint-White Locks*. This tune is pentatonic, beginning on Bb, equivalent in intervals to the pentatonic scales on C and G.
Example 9, Lassie wi’the Lint-White Locks:

Many of the Scottish figurations in fiddle melodies are derived from traits native to the bagpipe. Of particular note is the common sequence of consecutive triads; for example, a melodic figure based around A major which is repeated one tone lower around G major. The origin of this “double tonic” lies with the consecutive triad relationship also found in bagpipe music. The term refers to the sense of the tonic being shifted between two keys; the actual tonic and the root of the triad one tone below it. The double-tonic characteristic also occurs between minor and major triads, for example, a tune based around the Aeolian mode on A with frequent shifts to a G major triad.

Although the fiddle is not designed to suit one particular key, the influence of bagpipe keys and ornamentation characteristics is echoed in many fiddle tunes. It is true that many of the early fiddle tunes were taken from existing bagpipe tunes, but even in works composed solely for the fiddle some piping traits were retained. In the following example, Tullochgorum, by Niel Gow, parallel major triads reflect the characteristic idiom of the bagpipe.
Example 10, *Tullochgorum.*

The natural melodic decoration that is an integral part of the folk music of many cultures must often be connected with the particular language or instruments of the country. Many of the tunes in Scotland have very wide ranges, often with large and dramatic intervallic leaps, even to such distances as an octave or eleventh. Despite these wide leaps, many of the tunes have a basic structure of thirds. This structure is thought to have come from the Welsh-speaking parts of Britain, and from the Scandinavian areas of the North. The common occurrence of widely-spaced descending grace-notes in singing in the Lowlands and Highlands probably comes about partly as a result of the style of music idiomatic to the bagpipe. The addition of grace-notes is an intrinsic part of bagpipe playing, often used to create a virtuosic sound through the use of octave leaps and melodic variation. This tradition
was carried over into singing, although this is not a natural vocal technique. The grace-notes are sometimes simple decorations of the tune from a neighbor tone, but can also be very complex, melismatic variations on the main tune. The more complicated and involved ornamentation was a feature of music in the Highlands and Islands, particularly the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides. Music in the Lowlands was often characterized by falling grace-notes of a large range. The wide pitch variations and intonations inherent in Gaelic speech probably influenced the wide ranges of the melodies as well as the decorative style. In the following example, the use of grace-notes that are not adjacent to the main pitch, double grace-notes that fill in the scale between the two main pitches, decorative turns, and syncopation resembling speech rhythms indicate the lilting effect of the Gaelic language.

Example 11, *Oran Na Leanabh Òg*.
It is difficult to distinguish the influence of language from that of idiosyncratic instrumental techniques, such as the bowing styles of the strathspey or melodic variation of the pipes. However, it does seem clear that the national characteristics of any country's music must arise through the traits of the people, their languages, influences, instruments, expression and culture, creating music that is a blend of all these unique features.

1.4 Instruments: The History of the Violin in Scotland

The fiddle in Scotland can be traced back many centuries, and its history relates to that of a number of ancestral instruments, notably the fedyl or fethill (fiddle) and the rybid or rybybe (rebec), both of which were bowed instruments. The origins of the word "fiddle" have been connected with the early Roman vidula and the old English fithele ("fiddle" in modern language and "fidhel" in Gaelic). These instruments are mentioned in the following poem, written in the 13th century, by Thomas the Rhymer:

Harp and fedyl both he fande,
The getern and the sawtry
Lut and rybid ther gon gan,
Thair was al maner of mynstralsy.

The third contributory ancestor of the violin was the bowed croud or crwth, which is particularly important in Scottish musical history because it is considered to be an indigenous instrument.
The earlier instruments varied in shape; the rebec was pear-shaped and had a belly of parchment or a thin layer of pine. The early fithel probably had a flat body (unlike the modern violin) and only two strings, but it is difficult to be certain of this because some of the evidence is based upon stone carvings, which may not be accurate. The name, "fidil," is known to have existed in sixth-century Ireland, although this may in fact have been used to refer to the crwth, but it is likely that this instrument would also have been used in Scotland at the same time. The French historian and soldier, Brantome, who came to Scotland with the court of Mary Queen of Scots, wrote:

There came under her window [at Holyrood] five or six hundred citizens of the town who gave her a concert of the vilest fiddles and little rebecs, which are as bad as they can be in that country. Ah! what melody it was! What a lullaby for the night!

A different account of the same night was given by the famous Scots reformer, John Knox, who described the musicians as "a company of honest men, who with instruments of music, gave their salutation at her chamber window," and he continued that, "the melody, as she alleged, liked her well, and she willed the same to be continued." However, she is said to have changed her apartment to a more secluded part of the house.67

The crwth, a native Celtic instrument appeared in various places with a number of different names: crot, cruit, cruth Goe or Goe in Shetland, Jouhikantele in Finland, Talharpa in Swedish parts of Estonia, and crwth in
Wales. It was a rectangular box-shaped instrument with a hole near the top of the soundbox, fitted with two strings and played with a bow. It is considered to have originated either in Scandinavia, later spreading to Britain, or to have appeared first in Britain, migrating from there to the North.  

Influence from another direction came through the introduction of viols to Scotland. The viol was in particular associated with the court, and as such was seen as a "polite" instrument. James the Fifth of Scotland is credited with having introduced these instruments from France after his marriage to the daughter of the King of France in Paris in 1537. The main differences between the violin and viol families are that viols have wider and longer necks to allow for six strings and a seventh fret, the shoulders of viols slope towards the neck, the backs are flatter, and the sides are deeper.  

Viols were made in three basic sizes: viola da gamba in the bass register, viola da braccio in the tenor, and treble or descant viol in the upper register. These instruments appeared to be the most widely used in court until the time of the Restoration (1660); concerts were given by "Consorts" or "Chests" of viols, and music was commonly written with the subtitle, "apt for viols or voices." At court, the French influence of the viols could be seen in the types of dance performed: Basse dances, Pavans, Branles, and other new French imports.
During this period, fiddlers were associated with a vagabond life-style, and indeed, at the time of the Reformation, "vagabonds, fiddlers and pipers" living in Edinburgh without employment from the aristocracy or the town were branded and exiled. Viol players, on the other hand, were regarded as artists fit to entertain royalty.\textsuperscript{72}

However, the dominant string instrument was soon to become the modern violin, as the instruments of the great Italian makers (particularly Amati and Guarnerius) arrived in Scotland. The exact date of the introduction of these violins, and the subsequent demise of the viol, is unclear, but is considered to have been around 1660, the time of the Restoration.\textsuperscript{73} Once the violin reached Scotland it quickly became popular, and the Italian models were diligently copied by local craftsmen. It was a widely accessible instrument, available to all social classes, and, even into the early twentieth century, cost very little. Sandy Milne, a fiddler in Banchory, reports buying his first fiddle (violin) in 1903 for "the price of five rabbits, and that included the green baize bag in which the traditional fiddler carried his instrument."\textsuperscript{74}

A variety of tunings have been used in Scottish fiddling in order to make it easier to play chords in specific keys, for example, by increasing the availability of open strings. The sympathetic vibrations of the altered strings also create a different resonance in the instrument. The sources for the practice of scordatura in Scotland are somewhat confused; in Europe and in
England c.1670-1730 it became popular to re-tune bowed string instruments (violin, viol and cello), while at the same time plucked string instruments in Scotland (lute, citern, mandora) had a variety of tunings throughout the seventeenth century. The influence of either one of these factors may have led to the scordatura fashion in fiddle playing. The finer points of this practice will be discussed in more detail with relation to Niel Gow.

The arrival of the modern violin, with its rhythmic attack and rounded tone, was opportune as Scotland entered the eighteenth century. The violin had further significance in Scotland because of its potential for stylistic diversity; its accessibility laid the way for a type of music that could be enjoyed by all social classes.

1.5 Instruments: General

The instruments used in eighteenth-century Lowland Scotland have some interesting social and cultural implications beyond the more obvious relationships of the instruments to the types of music being written. Society consisted of various class levels, with which different instruments were associated. Within this hierarchy, there were gender distinctions which made some instruments appropriate for men and others more suitable for women. The social structure of the time generally meant that the men went out to
work while the women stayed home. As a result, the men formed social groups at work and played instruments in an ensemble, while the women tended to play solitary, harmonically-sufficient instruments appropriate for a private home.

Certain instruments were viewed as being "professional" and were played exclusively in the theater and in army bands; these included all the brass and percussion instruments and all the woodwinds except flute and recorder. Most of the music played by "professionals" was classically derived because at this time there were few professional folk-musicians.

Other instruments were regarded as "amateur" in the eighteenth century: recorder, flute, violin, cello, viola da gamba, harpsichord, spinet, virginal, clavichord, piano, and cittern, although these instruments did not all flourish simultaneously. The "professional" instruments would have been played by men, as women were not generally employed, and of the amateur instruments, the recorder, flute, violin and cello tended to be played only by men, and the cittern only by women. At the beginning of the century, the gamba and keyboard instruments were played by both sexes, but gradually keyboard instruments became more the domain of women.

A similar division according to occupation is to be found in vocal music; men sang together in taverns or in choirs at the concert-hall (such as the choruses in a Handel oratorio), while women sang solo songs in their homes.
There was little differentiation in Scotland between vocal and instrumental pieces, because so many tunes were adapted for different idioms and were transmitted orally, or were widely known from being played in public places (for example, by a town piper).

Folk instruments in use in the eighteenth century can be divided into three levels of social class. At the highest level was the town piper, who, before public striking clocks were introduced, performed the task of waking the town up in the morning and sending the people to bed in the evening by walking around the town playing the fife, a type of small flute. In the sixteenth century, most towns in Scotland had a piper, but by the seventeenth century many towns stopped employing pipers in favor of a drummer. However, several towns in the Borders continued to employ pipers until the end of the eighteenth century. Pipers were considered to be "high-class" musicians and consequently received either civic or aristocratic patronage.

Although the idea of having a patron was more traditionally associated with classical music than with folk music, the pipers' repertoire was made up almost exclusively from folk-tunes. The music of the town piper played an important part in shaping the folk music of the time, because everyone was familiar with the tunes that the piper played.

In Edinburgh, perhaps because of the more cosmopolitan influences, the public music was performed by a "band of waits," who were classically trained. In England, these highly trained musicians were commonplace in the
sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but in Scotland there were only a few to be found in Edinburgh at certain times. "Waits" were traditionally oboe and bassoon players, hired by the town council to perform civic functions. Many of the duties were the same as those of the piper; they were to walk through the town in the morning and evening to act as a public time-keeping service, but were also required to give a daily recital in the town center at noon. By the eighteenth century, the tradition of the waits had largely died out, and in 1804 the office of the leader of the waits was officially abolished.77

Another public musical event occurred in Edinburgh in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Between 1697 and 1699 a carillon containing twenty-one bells was constructed by John Meikle in the tower of St. Giles' Cathedral, and, beginning in 1699, an hour-long recital was given every day except Sundays and holidays.78 This recital seems to have followed in the tradition of the public recitals given by the waits earlier in the century. The music played on the carillon was a mixture of Scots, English, Irish and Italian tunes, and, like the music of the waits, was heard by a large audience throughout the town.

All the people of business at Edinburgh, and even the genteel company, may be seen standing in crowds every day from one to two in the afternoon, in the open street, at a place where formerly stood a market-cross...the company... are entertained with a variety of tunes, played upon a set of bells, fixed in a steeple hard by —As these bells are well-toned, and the musician, who has a salary from the city, for playing upon them with keys, is no bad performer, the entertainment is really agreeable.79
After the pipers, waits and carillon-players, the next class level of folk-musicians was made up of fiddlers and bagpipers. Although not professional musicians, most players of this level were literate in musical notation and were skilled instrumentalists. They were not members of the aristocracy, but generally held respectable jobs such as tradesman or schoolmaster. Both the bagpipes and the fiddle required serious practice, and in addition, many fiddle-players undertook the difficult task of making their own instruments. Some of the upper-class families owned genuine Italian violins; most amateur fiddles were based upon these examples. There were also some renowned Scottish violin-makers working in the eighteenth century, most notably Joseph Ruddiman in Aberdeen (c. 1760) and Matthew Hardie in Edinburgh from 1790.

The bagpipes used in Lowland Scotland in the eighteenth century were the Border pipes, which were inflated by bellows held under the player’s left arm. However, the Border bagpipe gradually fell out of use as the violin rose in importance.

Homemade instruments existed at the most basic level of folk instruments. They were made from crude natural materials as available. Examples of this are pipes made from tree-branches or bones with holes cut out, reed whistles, cow or goat horns used as bugles, corn stems with notches, the trump or Jew’s harp, and the more advanced stock-and-horn. This was a folk version of the oboe, and was made from three basic parts; a corn-stem, a
meat-bone with holes, and a bugle. The stock-and-horn was a more advanced instrument because the parts were adjustable; it was generally used by shepherds and rural people.\textsuperscript{80}

\textbf{1.6 Foreign Influence}

Foreign cultural influence on Scotland in the eighteenth century was wide-spread, and is demonstrated by the number of Scots who traveled abroad to study music. Ironically, at the time that many Scots were leaving, a variety of accomplished immigrants were taking up residence in Edinburgh. The influx of talented and ambitious musicians from Europe and the north of England more than compensated for the musical loss of the departing native musicians, so that the thriving musical scene in Scotland came to be dominated primarily by foreigners.

In other music-related fields, however, several Scots were very successful. The publishing business in Edinburgh, for example, was dominated by important Scots, such as Neil Stewart, James Johnson, and John Hamilton. Meanwhile, in London, James Oswald and Robert Bremner became famous publishers. In terms of performance, there were some outstanding natives, notably William McGibbon and the singer William Thomson.\textsuperscript{81}
After c.1770 there was an increase in art music composed in Scotland. With the change of circumstances brought about by the financial support of such institutions as the Edinburgh Music Society, resident composers were encouraged to write more music. The Society was keen to support most efforts at composition, thus enabling composers to attempt large-scale works, such as orchestral pieces, without worrying about finding a patron. This situation created an ideal platform for musical exploration and development, one in which the integrity of the composition could be maintained. Thus, towards the end of the century, musical composition had reached an unprecedented level of activity.

Gradually, however, the incentives of this period of musical activity began to have a negative effect. Many more composers were competing for a living, and the Society was no longer blindly supporting new works. As a result, the numbers of composers giving up began to increase, while at the same time the musical quality of composition plummeted. In most cases, survival was only possible by writing commercial music for domestic purposes, and attempts to write large-scale “real” music usually resulted in bankruptcy. By 1830, the short flourishing of composition in Scotland was at an end.\(^2\)

The foreign influence on Scottish music had presented itself in a variety of ways; in purely musical terms (harmonies, rhythms, melodies and phrase structures), in forms (the types of music written), and in practical
outcomes (events that were conceived by the fresh, entrepreneurial minds of newcomers).

The musical influences were those of the classical ideal; proportion and balance in phrasing and melodic shape, homophonic texture, a slow harmonic rhythm, and goal-oriented structures. In terms of fiddle music, pieces intended purely for listening began to emerge (as opposed to the functional dance music previously written). These pieces displayed many Italianate features, such as trills, slurred bowings, double-stopping, changes in meter and tempo, and leading-tone implications of classical harmonies. Books of fiddle music appeared, showing a deeper integration of Italianate techniques. David Young’s three-volume set of fiddle music (1740), containing music by the Scots composers McGibbon, McLean, and Disblair, as well as some of his own compositions, is an example of this. Variation sets of a classical style were written on traditional Scots tunes, often with Italian-style movements (Largo, Vivace, and a Giga acting as a finale), while the ornamentation and fast scale-work of Corelli’s music was emulated.

The genres of classical music being written were regarded as having varying degrees of value; in the earlier part of the century, when support was more indiscriminate and there were fewer composers, more opportunity existed for musical experimentation. However, with the increasing immigration of trained musicians to Scotland, the atmosphere became competitive, and composers ventured less into novel or ambitious genres.
The most commercially successful genres were simple keyboard pieces, songs, instrumental duets, and string chamber works. As compositions increased in number of parts and complexity (orchestral, operatic or sacred vocal), composers were risking financial security for musical expression, because the likelihood of the purchase of a large-scale work was far more remote.

The success of Scottish composers who traveled abroad to receive musical training is worth noting. The most eminent Scottish composer of this group is Thomas Alexander Erskine, the Sixth Earl of Kelly (1732-81), who received an adequate early training in Scotland because of his aristocratic position, later traveling abroad to study with Johann Stamitz. He was regarded as a very gifted composer throughout his life; Charles Burney remarked: "The late Earl of Kelly was possessed of more musical science than any dilettante with whom I was ever acquainted ...Indeed, he had a strength of hand on the violin, and a genius for composition, with which few professors are gifted."84 Kelly was an important figure in the success of the Edinburgh Music Society, in which he acted as committee member from 1757. His career spanned the twenty-year period of blossoming musical activity in Edinburgh (c.1760-80), and he was known in Edinburgh not only for his fame as a composer and performer, but also for his wild social activities and important aristocratic position.

Kelly had traveled to Europe in 1753, returning to Scotland in 1756 to have his music played and published with considerable success. The
influence of the Mannheim School is clearly evident in his early compositions, which emphasize dynamic contrasts, texture, timbre, and dramatic effects such as string tremolos and high horn parts. As Kelly's style matured, his skills of harmonization increased, and his formal concepts expanded to include fully worked-out sonata forms and counterpoint. The genres in which he wrote are also those of the Mannheim School: overtures, symphonies, concertos, string quartets and sinfonias. The Earl of Kelly was therefore an unusually successful figure in the native Scottish music scene, who was no doubt at an advantage due to his aristocratic position.85

Sir John Clerk of Penicuik provides another example of a Scot who ventured abroad for training; he received three lessons a week in violin and composition from Corelli in Rome between September 1697 and December 1698. However, despite the success of his compositions at this time, when he returned to Scotland, the opportunity to compose was diminished by duties to the Penicuik estate, his family, and an appointment to Parliament. Thus, although the upper-classes could afford to travel abroad, upon returning to Scotland the responsibilities of their class often prevented them from fulfilling their potential.86

The reason for the lack of Scottish composers to establish a tradition of classical music can be traced back to the education system. There was a distinct absence of musical training in the Scottish schools for the general public, so that only a select handful of people had the opportunity to receive a
musical education. These were the children of the upper-class who were privately tutored at home, the children of professional musicians, who were also taught at home, or the very few students who attended a music school. These schools were run by the town council, and followed in the tradition of the sixteenth-century chorister schools. The schools were regarded as being rather low-class, and the music master’s salary was pitifully low, so that the overall success rate of the music schools was negligible.87

The absence of a reasonable musical training essentially crippled Scotland’s chances of producing a series of successful composers when faced with the established training practices in Europe.

The “foreign” elements in Scottish music in the eighteenth century can thus be examined from a variety of standpoints: the influence of resident foreigners in Scotland, the introduction of foreign musical elements to the compositions of native Scots, the work of Scots who studied abroad, and the social impact of different cultures settling in Scotland.
3 Ibid., 102-111.
5 Ibid., 41.
6 Ibid., 32.
8 Ibid., 37.
10 Henry Farmer, Music in 18th Century Scotland reprint from Scottish Art and Letters no. 2 (Spring 1942), 6.
11 Farmer, “Concerts in 18th Century Scotland,” 100.
13 Ibid., 317-18.
14 Johnson, Music and Society, 34.
15 Emmerson, 38.
17 Johnson, Music and Society, 35.
19 Concert Programmes in Euing Music Collection, 17 vols. (London, 1779-1845) Glasgow University Library Special Collections.
20 Farmer, Music in 18th Century Scotland, 7.
21 Johnson, Music and Society, 35.
22 Farmer, “Concerts in 18th Century Scotland,” 101
23 Johnson, Music and Society, 34-35.
25 Emmerson, 38.
26 Johnson, Music and Society, 36.
28 Johnson, Music and Society, 41.
29 Ibid., 120.
30 Ibid., 11.
34 Alburger, 30-31.
35 Johnson, Music and Society, 122.
36 Ibid., 121-122.
37 Ibid., 121.
38 Ibid., 49.
39 Alburger, 34-35.
40 Johnson, Music and Society, 124.
42 Emmerson, 115.
43 Ibid., 115.
44 Ibid., 140.
45 Ibid., 144.
46 Ibid., 145.
47 Ibid., 120.
48 Ibid., 121.
49 Emmerson, 116.
50 Ibid., 160.
51 Ibid., 130-143.
52 Flett, 90.
56 Ibid., 4-11.
57 Ibid., 21.
58 Ibid., 22-23.
59 Ibid., 22.
60 Ibid., 25.
61 Purser, 16-17.
62 Collinson, 26.
63 Ibid., 26.
64 Alburger, 11.
67 Collinson, 201.
68 Ibid., 200-201.
70 Collinson, 202.
71 Hunter, ix.
72 Alburger, 12.
73 Hunter, x.
74 Ibid, x.
75 Johnson, Fiddle Music, 107.
76 Johnson, Music and Society, 23-25.
77 Ibid, 97-98.
78 Ibid., 98.
80 Johnson, Music and Society, 100.
81 Ibid., 59.
82 Ibid., 67.
83 Ibid., 117.
84 Charles Burney, A general history of music, from the earliest ages to the present period Vol. 4, (London: 1776-89), 677; quoted in Johnson, Music and Society, 68.
85 Johnson, Music and Society, 68-84.
86 Ibid., 59-60.
87 Ibid., 28-32.
Chapter 2

William McGibbon and the Classical Tradition

2.1 McGibbon's Life

McGibbon was born in Edinburgh circa 1690, and died there on October 3, 1756. His father, Malcolm McGibbon, was a well-known professional oboist in Edinburgh, and it was no doubt with his father's encouragement that William went to London at an early age to study violin and composition with William Corbett. His studies there must have been completed by 1716, because in that year Corbett settled in Italy. After this, nothing is known of McGibbon until the winter of 1726-7, where he appears on the regular payroll of the Edinburgh Music Society. He remained in Edinburgh for the rest of his life, becoming a successful violinist and performing regularly as an employee of the Edinburgh Music Society.

McGibbon's total output consists of three concerti and an overture (lost), four sets of six sonatas for two violins or flutes with basso continuo, (the first set, 1727, survives only in an incomplete manuscript; the remaining three survive in published editions from 1729, 1734, and c.1745), six sonatas for flute or violin and basso continuo (1740), six sonatas for two flutes (1748),
three collections of Scots tunes (some with variations) arranged for violin and basso continuo (1742, 1746, 1755), and folk tune variations for solo violin.⁸⁸

McGibbon epitomized the type of musician who made a living through the Edinburgh Music Society. He was one of the first musicians to be employed by the Society in the position of leader of the orchestra, and his steady income came from the regular concerts given by the Society. The Society account books for 1727 show that three guineas were paid to each of the three employed violinists, William McGibbon, Adam Craig and Alexander Stewart, for performing throughout the winter session. In 1752, the success of the Society was reflected in McGibbon's increase in salary to £25 for the year.⁹⁹ McGibbon also found support for his compositions through the Society; he sold seven sets of parts of his first complete set of trio-sonatas in 1729 and ten copies of his second set in 1734 to the Society.⁹⁰ As well as providing financial security, the purchase of the music for the Society library ensured wide circulation of McGibbon's works throughout Edinburgh.

As the fashion for European-style concerts took hold in Edinburgh, McGibbon was primarily involved with the performance of classical music. The style of concert given by the Society favored the performance of European and English music, and as a result McGibbon would have been exposed to all the current foreign trends. The forms, harmonies and various treatments of themes in the overtures, symphonies, concerti, oratorios and other such
large-scale works which were played at Society concerts would have heightened McGibbon's awareness of European and English compositional methods. However, the Society audiences were also enthusiastic about native Scots music, so that McGibbon was required to play some Scots tunes. The idiomatic features of the native dances, such as gapped scales and modes, the double tonic effect, and the Scots snap also had an influence on McGibbon's compositional style. Knowledge of both of these types of music was often the source of Scots "classical" music; music that was both idiomatically and classically conceived. McGibbon's own sets of variations for solo fiddle are typical of this type of music, based on folk-tunes but utilizing classical violin technique and compositional practice in the variations.

McGibbon was an important player in the Edinburgh Music Society, a violinist of extreme technical proficiency with a musical background in both European classical music and Scots folk music. The folk-fiddler Niel Gow, who is discussed in detail in the context of folk music in Chapter 3, had a different kind of career as a violinist in Scotland. In order to gain a perspective on the position, status, duties, typical audience, venue, and representative value of each of these musicians, a comparison of their careers proves useful.

McGibbon's status differed from that of Niel Gow because of his employment by the Society. In some respects, Gow retained the role of servant because he received patronage from a member of the aristocracy.
McGibbon's social status was somewhat different because he was hired by a committee and was not a servant; he was not regarded as aristocratic, but was respected as a professional man. His duties to the Society included participation in the Friday night and any additional concerts, and possibly some responsibility regarding the selection of the program and hiring of musicians. The orchestra did not seem to be overly eager to rehearse, but as the Society grew in importance and a high standard of entertainment became expected, McGibbon would also have been involved in the preparation of the group. He would have had a role in ensuring that the Society remained current with the trends in Europe, as the fashionable status of the Society was very important to its members. McGibbon's duties involved more organization and responsibility than Gow's, and he must also have had to practice in order to keep up with the technical advances in classical violin-playing.

As regards venue, McGibbon tended to perform in public or private concert halls, notably St. Cecilia's Hall for the Edinburgh Music Society, whereas Gow was generally hired to play in aristocratic homes. This is not to say that the two musicians entertained different audiences; Gow and McGibbon simply fulfilled different artistic functions. Gow was hired to play reels, strathspeys, hornpipes and jigs, many of which the audience would have recognized and participated in as dance music, but McGibbon performed music that was often new and unfamiliar (recent works by European
composers such as Haydn) to an audience that listened and appreciated in a more passive manner.

There was widespread acceptance of different types of music within society at this time. The venues for Gow and McGibbon differed because the music they played had different purposes, but the same people who enjoyed the latest classical works entertained at home to their native music. In addition, although it became fashionable for members of the upper-class to join the Society, the membership was not exclusive, and classical music was readily available to the lower classes both through the Society and around the city. It was not until the end of the century that the new styles of music began to be regarded as threatening or as a sign of foreign intrusion. Thus, although the occasions, venues, and repertoire were often different for Gow and McGibbon, the people they served were largely the same.

However, unlike Gow, McGibbon was representative of the many Scots musicians who had left Scotland to study elsewhere and then returned home with advanced technical skills. Most musicians of this type were involved in formal concerts, either as performers or as composers. McGibbon was fortunate to be working in Edinburgh at the time that the Music Society was expanding, and he benefited from the cultural cross-currents that placed Edinburgh at the forefront of musical ideas. Although he was able to play in the folk style, he had adopted the classical style to earn a living (his wistfulness for the folk style can be seen in certain Scottish traits in his
sonatas, and in his interest in folk variation sets). These traits are also representative of the times; the trend, especially until the middle of the century, tended to lean towards financing classical music, so that most violinists who were to make a living had no choice but to learn to play in the classical style. Niel Gow, as a performer beginning his career in the 1740s, was one of the first fiddlers for whom the possibility of becoming a professional folk fiddler was viable; he never had to learn to play classical music, and, as a result, his career is notably undiversified.
2.2 Playing Style

That McGibbon was a violinist of outstanding capability for the time is demonstrated by the level of technical difficulty found in some of his compositions. High positions, string-crossings, fast passage-work and complicated bowing-patterns are common occurrences in McGibbon's own compositions, and his acquaintance with the new works from Europe would have maintained his playing at a similar standard to the Italian virtuosi.

In addition to his expertise with classical playing, McGibbon was undoubtedly an excellent performer of Scots tunes. His familiarity with native tunes is clear from the many ways in which he used Scots tunes in settings, but he would also have been able to play the native tunes and dances in unadorned fashion. The technique for playing the dances was somewhat different from that required for European-based music. Players of exclusively "folk" music had a more advanced technique for bowing than for the left hand. Rapid bow-changes were necessary to execute the dotted rhythms, especially the Scots snap, and an ability to play fast string-crossings for consecutive triads lying across two or three strings was necessary. Many of the dances are written in first position, so that the main challenge for the left hand would be adding the improvised ornamentation and executing runs at great speed. McGibbon's classical training would therefore have stood him in
good stead for playing traditional Scots music, but his job geared him more towards the new European trends, and it is really as a classical player that he is known.

The Variation Sets (discussed later) provide a good example of McGibbon's position as a Scots musician trained in European styles. From the standpoint of his playing, these sets show that he knew the style of the Scots tunes, but applied his extensive technique in writing the variations. This background made him a very versatile musician, capable of playing in different styles.

In addition to drawing conclusions about McGibbon's playing by examining his compositions, there are several contemporary sources which may be consulted. Geminiani's *Art of Playing on the Violin* (1751) was the first important treatise on violin playing written during this period, and it was followed by similar volumes by Leopold Mozart (1756), Herrando (1756) and Tartini (1771). Additionally, various copies of Violin Tutor Books that included scales and tunes for practice were coming into circulation. Mr. Dean's Tutor was published in 1703 in London, not long before McGibbon began studying with Corbett in London. The description of the contents of this tutor gives some insight into the instruction that McGibbon may have had.
Example 12, Mr. Dean's *Tutor*. 91

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This demonstrates that the circulation of new repertoire was considered a natural part of learning the violin; McGibbon would have been exposed to European trends from an early age. However, because Geminiani was an international figure, renowned as a violinist, composer, and the author of several music books, and resident in Edinburgh, the description of playing style and technique given in his treatise is probably the most relevant to McGibbon.

It is difficult to sketch an accurate picture of McGibbon's style because of the diversity of trends practiced in Europe at the time. Geminiani was a pupil of Corelli, and therefore the Italian school may have had significant influence in Edinburgh, but Geminiani also had an interest in the French school of
playing. There had traditionally been a great rivalry between the French and Italian schools of violin playing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many of the differences resulted from a disagreement in the approach to aesthetic ideals. French music was designed with a distinct purpose in mind, usually as dance music. By contrast, the Italians conceived music in more abstract terms, developing the sonata genre as absolute music. Although the French gradually conceded that music need not always be representative of a specific idea, and some French sonatas in imitation of the Italian style were produced around 1720 by composers such as Leclair, the spirit of the rivalry can still be detected in the eighteenth century.

In terms of basic technique, the Italian style of holding the bow with the thumb on the stick, as opposed to the French style with the thumb on the hair, was admired in Geminiani’s treatise, as well as in those by Mozart and Herrando, for the variants of tone production that were possible. However, the descriptions of the exact bow hold vary between the treatises. Geminiani describes the bow hold as follows:

The Bow is to be held at a small distance from the Nut, between the Thumb and Fingers....the Motion is to proceed from the Joints of the Wrist and Elbow in playing quick Notes, and very little or not at all from the Joint of the Shoulder; but in playing long Notes, where the Bow is drawn from one End of it to the other, the Joint of the Shoulder is also a little employed.

Although this bow hold is more modern than the French grip, the frontispiece of the French edition of Geminiani’s treatise shows the player
holding the bow in a more Baroque style, some distance from the frog.

Example 13, Geminiani Illustration:⁹⁵

In Leopold Mozart's treatise, a different method of holding the bow is described in detail:

The bow is taken in the right hand, at its lowest extremity, between the thumb and the middle joint of the index-finger, or even a little behind it....The little finger must lie at all times on the bow, and never be held freely away from the stick, for it contributes greatly to the control of
the bow and therefore to the necessary strength and weakness, by means of pressing or relaxing.\textsuperscript{96}

Mozart emphasizes strength and firmness, suggesting that the ideal was a relatively robust tone. The main difference between these two descriptions is in the placement of the right hand, Geminiani's remaining higher up the stick. Example 14, Mozart Illustration:\textsuperscript{97}
Another discrepancy in these contemporary treatises occurs over the
"Rule of the Down-Bow." The essence of this rule is that the player should
endeavor to make every bar, regardless of meter or rests, begin on down-bow.
Mozart states in his treatise:

So the first and chief rule should be: if the first crotchet of
the bar does not begin with a rest, whether it be even or
uneven time, one endeavours to take the first note of each
bar with a down stroke, and this even if two dotted
strokes should follow each other.  

Naturally, the origins of this rule lie with dance music rhythms, where the
aim is to place the stress on the down-beats of the bar. The prevalence of
French dance music is perhaps responsible for Geminiani's antagonism to
this rule. In Example 8 in his treatise, he writes:

...you are to execute them [Scales] by drawing the Bow
down and up, or up and down alternately; taking Care
not to follow that wretched Rule of drawing the Bow
down at the first Note of every Bar.  

Geminiani recommends that "the Violin must be rested just below the
Collar-bone, turning the right-hand Side of the Violin a little downwards."  
Again, this manner of holding the instrument is more old-fashioned than
the method described in Mozart's book. Although Mozart mentions the
method whereby the violin is held against the chest, slanting down, he
advises against it because of the difficulties of shifting to high positions.
Instead he recommends the following, more modern hold:
The violin is placed against the neck so that it lies somewhat in front of the shoulder and the side on which the E (thinnest) string lies comes under the chin, whereby the violin remains unmoved in its place even during the strongest movements of the ascending and descending hand.\textsuperscript{101}

This method of holding the violin, so that it was supported under the chin, would allow the left hand a greater freedom to shift into high positions and would facilitate virtuosic high passages.

Geminiani focuses a great deal of attention on the issue of expression. He discusses certain types of technique within the context of emotional expression, most notably ornamentation and vibrato. For example, the description of the “turned shake” is given in terms of the type of mood being expressed:

\begin{quote}
The turn’d shake being made quick and long is fit to express Gaiety; but if you make it Short, and continue the Length of the Note plain and soft, it may then express some of the more tender Passions.\textsuperscript{102}
\end{quote}

Similarly, a relatively continuous use of vibrato is advocated as a means of sweetening the sound:

\begin{quote}
when it [the vibrato] is made on short Notes, it only contributes to make their Sound more agreeable [sic.] and for this Reason it should be made use of as often as possible.\textsuperscript{103}
\end{quote}

In the early part of the eighteenth century, the performer was expected to play in a particular style or affect to achieve the intended emotional state of the music. In many cases, improvisation was expected within the framework
of the piece. Although ornamentation was implied, Geminiani advises against the use of excessively florid passages:

...playing in good Taste doth not consist of frequent Passages, but in expressing with Strength and Delicacy the Intention of the Composer. \(^{104}\)

In his *A Treatise of Good Taste*, Geminiani has taken several Airs by the Scottish composer, David Rizzio, and cultivated them in much the same way that McGibbon did with other Scots melodies. Geminiani’s describes his work as follows:

..I have lately undertaken to improve the Melody of Rizzio into Harmony, by converting some of his Airs into two, three, and four Parts; and by making such Additions and Accompaniment to others as should give them all the Variety and Fullness required in a Concert. \(^{105}\)

Geminiani also includes some tables of ornaments, “Of the Element of playing and singing in a good Taste,” to be added to the melodies. McGibbon’s works are of a similar nature and it is very likely that the same type of ornamentation would have been applied to his music.

The comparison of the treatises reveals the lack of a universal technique in Europe at this time, and it is difficult to deduce exactly which influences predominated in McGibbon’s playing. The limitations created by Geminiani’s old-fashioned technical approach suggest that McGibbon may have learned some of the modern technical ideas advocated in Mozart’s treatise. McGibbon was renowned for his virtuosity, and many of the works
he played required an advanced technique. However, it is likely that McGibbon was influenced by Geminiani’s ideas, especially those concerning expression. Additionally, McGibbon would have been exposed to the virtuosity of such players as Corelli, who was renowned for his flair as a performer. In 1709, Galliard wrote of Corelli:

I never met with any man that suffered his passion to hurry him away so much whilst he was playing on the violin...[he] gives in so much to what he is doing that he doth not look the same man...[his] eyes will sometimes turn as red as fire; his countenance will be distorted, his eyeballs roll as in an agony...\textsuperscript{106}

The image described here, of a performer consumed by the expression of music, also suggests a technique mystifying to the listener. Corelli’s example was quickly followed by various Italian composers, and technical prowess was recorded elsewhere among violinists. Vivaldi’s playing was described by von Uffenbach as follows:

Towards the end [of the opera] Vivaldi played a solo accompaniment admirably, adding at the end a free fantasy which quite frightened me, for it is scarcely possible that anyone ever played or will play this way, for he placed his fingers a hair’s breadth from the bridge, so that there was hardly room for the bow, doing this on all four strings with imitations at incredible speed.\textsuperscript{107}

McGibbon must have been aware of such reports, and, given his high profile as a violinist in Edinburgh, was very probably considered to be of an equivalent standard.
2.3 Instrument and Maker

During the Baroque period, string instruments underwent a great number of changes until eventually the ideal sound became that created by the Italian violin makers. Some of these Italian instruments reached Scotland and were copied by local craftsmen, so it is possible that McGibbon had a violin of Italian style, especially considering the Italian influences in his compositions. However, it was not until the late eighteenth century that instruments of the Stradivari school became widely established. Prior to this time, violins had advanced at different rates throughout Europe, with modern features often being introduced gradually. For this reason, a brief examination of the Baroque violin will place the instrument of McGibbon's generation in context.

The typical Baroque violin had a short neck and wedge-shaped fingerboard with a smaller bass bar and narrower soundpost than its modern counterpart. Originally the strings were made of gut, but by the early eighteenth century they were often wound with silver. Invented in Bologna in the mid-seventeenth century, silver-wound strings are mentioned in England by Playford in 1664. He advertised them as a "late invention...which sounds much better and lowder than common Gut Strings, either under the Bow or Finger."
The sound of Baroque string instruments was clear and light, and placed less emphasis on volume and a sustained sound. The type of bow used was largely responsible for this quality of sound. Designed to suit the music of the time, the bow of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was appropriate for distinct articulation and a clean sound production. The stick was generally shorter than that of the modern bow and curved in an arc over the hair, rather than bending away from it, as was later to become the case. The sustaining power of this bow was minimal when compared with the modern bow.

The introduction of the Tourte bow in the second half of the eighteenth century was a reflection of the desire for a new and more sustained sound. This timbre was developed in the Tourte bow via an increase in the length of the bow, a decrease in the arch over the hair, and the balance of the height of the head with the frog. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, bow length had varied from 61 to 71 centimeters; by the end of the century, the standard bow length was just over 74 centimeters. Likewise, the outward arch of the stick was modified by the middle of the century so that the hair and stick were roughly parallel. This trend developed to the point that sticks were often bent slightly inward by the second half of the eighteenth century.

In order to compensate for the inward curve of the stick, the angles of the head relative to the shaft and of the frog to the shaft had to be moved into
a right-angled position. This had a substantial effect on the action of the bow, which had previously been most stable in the middle. The strong part of the new bow was extended in both directions so that the sustaining power was far greater, but the execution of passages of rapid notes necessarily became less clear with the new balance.\textsuperscript{111}

Although there is no record of the exact type of instrument that McGibbon had, it is likely that he played with a less sustaining bow, and a violin with softer colors and less brilliance, as most of the changes mentioned were only beginning to take place during his lifetime.

\subsection*{2.4 Background to Fiddle Tunes}

McGibbon composed and set music for various occasions, ranging from his simple tune-settings through pieces in the Scots "drawing-room" style and fashionable minuets, to his sonatas and variation-based works. An examination of these genres helps to illustrate McGibbon's historical context.

In the first twenty years of the eighteenth century, Scots fiddle tunes were either derived from existing songs or used as an accompaniment to dancing. Of those that were designed as recital pieces, a variety of styles can be found. Many are based on gapped scales, especially the pentatonic scale, while others are centered around two consecutive chords and create a "double
tonic” effect. These features occur in much of the later dance music, and are discussed more fully with reference to Niel Gow. However, some interesting European connections can be made in various of the other tunes, most notably in those tunes based on Italian chord progressions.

Two particular chord progressions, known as the passamezzo antico and the passamezzo moderno, became significant in Scottish music. The progressions were the outgrowth of an Italian dance in duple meter, called a passo e mezzo or pass’e mezo (meaning “a step and a half”) that was popular between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries. Originally a number of different musical types of the dance existed but the two named above became the best-known. Each type was built on a chordal scheme from the Renaissance:

Passamezzo antico : i-VII-i-V-III-VII-i-(V)-i

Passamezzo moderno : I-IV-I-V-I-IV-I-(V)-I

The series of chords would be repeated consecutively a number of times during the dance, and would often be followed by a dance in triple meter based on the same chord structure.

These progressions were used in a new context in Scotland, and the other Italian aspects of the original passo e mezzo were dropped. Both types of the passamezzo ground were used as the basis for Scots tunes. Tunes based on the passamezzo antico were usually in G minor; one of the more famous of this type being Greensleeves, an English tune well-known in Scotland.
Another popular tune belonging to this category was *When she cam ben, she bobbit*, which was set by (amongst others) William McGibbon.

Example 15, *When she cam ben, she bobbit*: 114

![Musical notation for When she cam ben, she bobbit]

2.5 Scots Drawing-room Style

In addition to demonstrating the way in which the *Passamezzo antico* might be used, McGibbon’s setting of *When she cam ben, she bobbit* provides an example of the way in which native melodies were given genteel harmonizations; this genre became known as the “Scots drawing-room style.”

As the century progressed, the harmonization of Scots tunes became fairly common in social circles. The fiddle, playing the Scots melody, would be harmonized in an art-music style by the harpsichord and cello, or perhaps by lute, harp or small pipe-organ.115 The aristocracy of Edinburgh hoped to appear fashionable by having chamber music performed in their homes in
the same manner as the Europeans, but at the same time, nationalistic feelings aroused by the loss of a separate parliament in the Act of Union in 1707 added a symbolic value to native Scots tunes that made them indispensable in music-making.

The poet-playwright-editor Allan Ramsay was at the forefront of the move to make Scotland both internationally respected and locally supported. He published several literary works, most notably the *Tea-Table Miscellany* (1723), a four-volume collection of texts for folk-songs, many of which were in the Scots dialect. The new lyrics contained in this collection were fashioned along the same lines as contemporary London verse, and illustrate Ramsay's attempts to make Scottish culture both true to its roots and reflective of cosmopolitan trends. Ramsay published other works of differing natures: *The Gentle Shepherd* (1721-9) was a pastoral Scottish ballad opera, designed to popularize various tunes, *The bonny Earl of Murray* was an old Scots ballad, and *Ever Green* (1724) was a collection of Scottish court poetry dating from the 15th and 16th centuries. Through the publication of such works, Ramsay hoped to build a respected tradition of Scottish culture that could exist regardless of the loss of independence.

For composers, however, the new genre of the "Scots drawing-room style" created the problem of how to reconcile the idiomatic features of Scots tunes (double-tonic, pentatonic and generally undiatonic melodies) with the strong tonality of European music. All of the Edinburgh composers involved
in the fusion of the Italianate with the Scots style (Adam Craig, Alexander Stuart, Alexander Munro, James Oswald, Francesco Barsanti, Charles McLean and William McGibbon) had solid backgrounds in European compositions to complement their instinctive knowledge of Scots music. However, many of the native tunes did not lend themselves to tonal harmonizations; a modulation to fit the notes in the tune might give undue stress to a particular note, the extensive ornamentation designed for Italianate melodies might destroy the shape of a pentatonic tune, harmonization of a double-tonic tune might become pedantic, and so on.

In 1742, McGibbon published *Scots Tunes*, his collection of Scots chamber-style pieces. This was a significant publication in two ways. For McGibbon it marked a major turning point in his career, as the work contained in this collection was far superior to anything he had produced prior to this time; he was suddenly recognized as a skilled and significant composer within Edinburgh. In terms of this style of music, after the many clumsy attempts of his predecessors, McGibbon proved that the Scots drawing-room style could work in an elegant and successful manner. The 1742 collection was used as a model for all later collections. McGibbon produced two further collections of Scots tunes that are largely based on the 1742 publication, and the fashion for the genre continued until around 1780. Towards the end of the century, German music began to be favored over Italian, and the drawing room-style pieces were gradually replaced.
As can be seen in the following example, the pieces were closely based on Italian violin sonata models, particularly those of Corelli, and were notated as a melody with bass line. As in Continental music, the bass line was intended to be realized by a keyboard instrument, probably a harpsichord, in addition to the cello line. However, as the collections became widely circulated, the refined workings of continuo practice were probably omitted or the bass line corrupted in the more remote areas of Scotland where the musicians were less literate. Example 16, Leith Wynd.
2.6 Variation Sonatas

Alongside the Scots drawing-room style, another genre, the Variation Sonata, enjoyed a brief flowering. It arose in the 1730s, first appearing in the 1732 Munro Collection of Alexander Munro (1697-1767), believed to be the first professor of anatomy at Edinburgh University. During the first period of interest in the genre (1732-42), a few Edinburgh composers experimented with it; Charles McLean, James Oswald and William McGibbon, but by the 1740s it had gone out of style. Later in the century, there was a short renewed interest in the genre from the composer Robert Mackintosh, who published several variation sonatas in the McLean Collection of 1772, but the genre was not picked up by other composers.

The variation sonata consisted of a popular tune on which variations were based. Unlike those in the long variation set (discussed later), which had a continuous form, the variations in the sonata were separate and easily distinguishable.

The form arose from the late seventeenth century Scottish practice of taking a native tune and playing it in different styles. There might be one version of the tune as an air, one as a jig, one as a hornpipe, and so on. The most common form was an "air-jig." However, rather than extending this form by adding more Scottish dance forms of the tune, the form was amalgamated with the Italian sonata da camera to create the form that
became known as the variation sonata.\textsuperscript{123}

Whereas the typical Italian sonata da camera by Corelli consisted of a Preludio and series of dances, such as an Allemanda, Corrente, Sarabanda, and Giga, the Scottish form based every dance movement on the same dance tune, so that it was essentially a monothematic work. The characteristics of the Italian dances were retained, but every movement was based on the original Scots tune. This is a prime example of the way in which Italian characteristics were adapted to fit Scottish tunes, or, to put it another way, it is an example of the way in which Scots composers used European techniques to develop native tunes. Mc gibbon did not devote much time to the variation sonata, but the following example is one of his better attempts.

Example 17, I love my love in secret (in air-minuet form):\textsuperscript{124}
The tune is stated first in the form of an air and is continued in virtuosic variations; it is then restated with a new meter in Minuet form.

It can be seen how this form was derived not only from the Italian sonata, but also from the Scots drawing-room style. Both the Scots drawing-room style and the variation sonata are created by merging a native Scots tune with some aspect of European music; in one case, the native tune is harmonized in a European manner, in the other the tune is recast in the style of various Italian dances.
2.7 Minuets

Unlike most other music by Scottish composers during this period, the Minuet was neither a native entity nor an imported piece with added idiomatic Scottish qualities. It became accepted in Scotland, and was later written by Scottish composers, almost exclusively in its foreign form. The Minuet was first introduced from Europe in the first half of the eighteenth century, but was danced to only by the aristocracy in Edinburgh. After 1750, various factors contributed to a rise in the Minuet's popularity: dancing lessons became more affordable and available in many remote areas, fiddlers became more aware of the dance and increased their knowledge of the repertoire, and the boom in music publishing helped to disseminate the tunes. By 1780, many of the Minuets in circulation had been written by local composers who adopted the European style. The minuet flourished until about 1800, when it suddenly disappeared from the scene.

The Earl of Kelly was particularly important in encouraging native composers to write their own Minuets. He was regarded as a truly Scottish composer (thus allaying any suspicion of "foreignness") but, having studied with Stamitz in Mannheim, was familiar with European compositional methods. Kelly's minuets were popular in Scotland, and gradually minuets started to appear alongside reels, jigs, hornpipes and strathspeys in collections.
A few examples exist of Scottish tunes being rearranged into a Minuet format; the accents and articulations would be redistributed, the tempo would be adapted to fit the character of the dance, and the title might be changed. These adaptations probably occurred on the spot as the sudden rise in popularity of the Minuet overtook fiddlers playing for the dances.

Various instrumentations were used for the performance of Minuets, depending on the abilities of the composers, and also on the grandeur of the occasion and the budget of the employer. The most lavish Minuets used a chamber orchestra in the style of a European group; first and second violins, cellos, winds and horns. A lesser version of this, without winds or horns, was sometimes used. The less expensive and complicated versions, a fiddle band consisting of unison violins and cello, or a single fiddler, were naturally more common.\textsuperscript{125}

A few minuets were written before 1750, including a book of minuets by James Oswald (1736), two single minuets each by John McLachlan, Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, Charles McLean, and one by the Italian Lorenzo Bocchi, a resident of Edinburgh. McGibbon's contributions to the Minuet date from this period, before it became generally accepted. He wrote some minuets intended as recital pieces, and probably also some for dancing.\textsuperscript{126}

The following minuet, presumably intended as a concert piece, is written with a bass line, and shows McGibbon's approach to composing variations. Example 18, McGibbon's Minuet in A with variations: \textsuperscript{127}
2.8 Sonatas

The complex nature of an art-music sonata discouraged many of the Edinburgh composers from attempting the form. Only six or seven composers in the period 1730-80 produced such works, McGibbon being the first and one of the most successful. His formal education provided him with the knowledge of form, harmony and style needed to produce a work of around ten minutes' duration, and his violin technique enabled him to write well for the instrument. In addition to the six violin sonatas of 1740, he produced four sets of six trio sonatas, although the first set (c.1727) was unpublished and remains only in an incomplete manuscript. The second set of 1729, however, was very successful and sold well, as did the following two sets in 1734 and 1745. McGibbon's early sonatas are regarded as being the first instrumental pieces to be printed in the Italian Baroque style in Scotland.

2.9 1734 Trio Sonatas

McGibbon's Sonata no. 5 from the 1734 set of trio sonatas, scored for two flutes or violins and continuo, is headed "In Imitation of Corelli," and illustrates how the Italian sonatas of Corelli (1653-1713) and his contemporaries provided models for the sonatas being written in Edinburgh.
The title, "two flutes or violins," indicates that McGibbon was carefully considering his market, and trying to make his music as appealing as possible to different instrumentalists. Several composers (including McGibbon in his second set of 1729) had written trio sonatas for flute, violin and continuo, giving the cantabile melodies to the flute, and the passage-work to the violin. In the 1734 set of trio sonatas, although two flutes or two violins are suggested, the parts are often composed in the manner of a flute and violin sonata, so that one has a smooth melody, and the other busy passage-work. The continuo part would have been played by keyboard and cello.\textsuperscript{130}

The 1734 set was dedicated to Susanna, Countess of Eglinton, who would no doubt have bought several copies. In addition, the subscription list included the amateur composer Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, the literary figure Allan Ramsay, the publisher William Thomson, the violinists/composers, Adam Craig and David Foulis, and the Edinburgh Music Society, which purchased ten copies.\textsuperscript{131}

The Sonata no. 5 is in G major and consists of four movements: Adagio: Allegro: Largo: Allegro; a format commonly found in similar sonatas by Corelli and his contemporaries. Example 19, top, middle, and continuo parts of McGibbon's *Trio Sonata No. 5*\textsuperscript{132} (see also a modern score of this work, attached at the end of the chapter\textsuperscript{133}):
The first movement of this sonata may be compared with that of Corelli’s C major Sonata Da Camera, Op.4, No.1.
Example 20, Corelli’s C major Sonata Da Camera, Op.4, No.1:

The similarities between the two sonatas are quite apparent; in both cases the melodic voices alternate between an overall homorhythmic movement that is sometimes varied, and sections where one part has tied-
over or held beats that alternate with the other part.

The two upper voices in both the McGibbon and the Corelli Sonatas begin in a homorhythmic style at the interval of a third; both movements then continue with slight rhythmic differences to a cadence (m.4 in Corelli, m.5 in McGibbon). The homorhythmic style then returns for one or two bars (mm.4-5 in Corelli, mm.5-6 in McGibbon).

The technique of tying notes over with each part moving alternately, creating a chain of suspensions, also occurs in both sonatas, mm.7-8 and 11-12 in McGibbon (and occurring to a greater extent in later movements) and, in a similar rhythm, mm.6-8 and 8-11 in the Corelli.

The McGibbon movement can be divided into four phrases with a two-bar addition which moves to the dominant. The first phrase, mm.1-5, moves to a half-cadence in mm.3, and ends with a perfect cadence mm.4-5. The second phrase, mm.5-9, begins half-way through the bar, but with a reduced version of the rhythm of the opening, and modulates to D major by m.9. The second half of the movement, starting in m.9, begins with exactly the same rhythm as the opening, but becomes more contrapuntal in m.11. This phrase ends in E minor in m. 14; the voices continue to interact more contrapuntally (e.g. with the rests occurring at different times, and with sixteenth notes in one voice, eighths in the other) throughout the last phrase (mm.14-18). The last full phrase ends in G major and prepares the following movement by moving to the dominant. This type of harmonic movement is typical of
Italian Baroque movements; for example, it occurs in the Sonata Op. 2 No.8 in C minor by Antonio Veracini (1690-1733), where the last movement, *Affettuoso*, is prepared by the last three chords of the *Largo* fourth movement. Having arrived in C minor in m.31, the final three chords of the *Largo* move away from the tonic to G major, so that the movement ends on the dominant. In this case, the following movement also starts on the dominant, adding emphasis to the arrival on the tonic chord when it occurs in m.2. Example 21, end of fourth and beginning of fifth movements of Veracini Sonata.\(^{135}\)

McGibbon uses standard Italian chords and modulations (G major, C major, D major, A major, E minor and A minor in the first movement). Various Italianate techniques have also been used, such as the rhythmic imitation between the voices in mm.2-3, the trills, and the interaction
between the voices during the tied-note passages.

The second movement of the McGibbon is rather more ambitious and is fugal in conception. The subject stands out mainly for its scalar motion and the motive of three eighth-notes on a repeated pitch. The answer is real and begins in m.3 in the second part; it occurs in the bass line in m.6. Throughout the middle section, McGibbon employs various Italianate techniques, such as the passage of suspension and resolution between the voices in mm.12-13, (as seen in the Corelli example, mm.8-11) and the imitation in mm.16-20. Much of the bass-line in the middle section resembles a walking bass-line because of the continuous eighth-note rhythm, as in mm.20-23.

In other places, the rhythm of the bass line matches that of one or both of the upper two voices. In measures 30-33, McGibbon matches the continuo to the rhythm of the second voice while the first voice builds a sequence based on the repeated three-note motive from the subject.

There is a complete statement of the subject in the bass line in the relative minor, E minor, beginning in m.24, and many shadows of it in all the parts; it is fully restated in the second part in the tonic in m.35.

The third movement, a Largo, is written with a Sicilienne rhythm in 12/8, and is in the relative minor (E minor). A similar rhythm occurs in the Andante first movement of the Sonata Op. 6, No. 5 in C minor by Pietro Locatelli (1695-1764): Example 22, first movement of Locatelli Sonata:136
In the McGibbon work, the rhythms in the upper voices alternate in the first measure, creating the same type of balance between the voices that is to be found in European sonatas. The bass repeats the swinging rhythm throughout most of the movement (a quarter and eighth), so that a mood of calm is created after the activity of the fugue in the previous movement. In performance, the musicians playing the upper parts would probably have added ornaments to much of the melody, in the Baroque tradition.

McGibbon introduces some interesting harmonic sequences in the second phrase, beginning m.3; first a modulation to the secondary dominant, A major, then to the relative major, G major, before returning to E minor. It is not strikingly unusual, but for a movement of 8 bars’ duration, it is the sort of refreshing unpredictability that indicates that McGibbon was not merely copying famous composers. The Adagio at the end of the movement,
moving to the dominant chord, B major, is again quite in keeping with Italian practice.

The last movement is also fugal, but is lighter and more like a *giga* in character. The second voice enters half-way through the bar in m. 4, the bass half-way through m.8. Neither voice is strict in the answer, the second voice deviating after two full bars, the bass after one and a half bars. The subject is stated fully in the second voice beginning in m.16, but in this movement McGibbon seems to be more concerned with passage-work, sequences, imitation and rhythmic interest than with adhering strictly to the rules.

The interaction of the voices builds throughout the movement, for example through the simultaneous (but different) sequences in the upper parts (mm.37-39), and the imitation (mm.41-43). McGibbon creates a sense of finality by pulling all the parts together in a homorhythmic manner in the last four bars (mm.45-48). This sense of verticality is very effective after the extensive counterpoint, and demonstrates McGibbon’s skill at writing in the European style. The sonata is characterized by a linear and vertical balance, made apparent through contrapuntal, harmonic and rhythmic means.
2.10 1740 Violin Sonatas

McGibbon's 1740 set of solo violin or flute sonatas is also written in the European tradition. This set has no dedicatee, but several musical figures from Edinburgh were on the subscription list: Adam Craig and David Foulis (who also subscribed to other works by McGibbon, including the 1734 trio sonatas), the resident Italian composer, Francesco Barsanti, and the publisher/composer, James Oswald.¹³⁷

Like the 1734 trio sonatas, this set of solo sonatas is titled "for flute or violin." Keys with several flats were very awkward for the Baroque flute, and for that reason, some of these sonatas are better suited to the violin. For example, Sonata no. 5 is in C minor, and would be less suitable for the flute than Sonata no. 2 in D major and Sonata no. 3 in E minor. However, the decorated cantabile writing in the second and third sonatas was particularly characteristic of Baroque flute writing of the time. The continuo would again consist of the keyboard and cello, although the cello part might on occasion be omitted; the fifth sonata contains a low B-flat that can be played on the English harpsichord, but not on the cello or six-string bass viol.

The second sonata, No. 2 in D, consists of a dramatic Andante movement, an Allegro jig movement, and a Minuet with variations.
Example 23, solo and continuo parts to McGibbon Sonata No. 2 in D,\textsuperscript{138} (see also a modern score of this work attached at end of chapter):\textsuperscript{139}
The Andante opens with the rhythm of a dignified Baroque dance, emphasizing the first beat and second beats, leaving a feeling of poised waiting on the third beat. In places that the emphasis falls particularly on the second beat, the rhythm is suggestive of a Sarabande. The dotted rhythm adds drama in mm.1-8, while the sequence of paired eighth notes in mm.9-11 creates a contrasting sense of continuity. The first half (mm.1-19) is comprised of two eight-bar phrases, followed by a two-bar addition ending on the dominant (mm.16-19).

The second half recalls the dramatic character of the opening with dotted rhythms, but it has more sense of flow. The first phrase is mm.19-27, ending in B minor, the relative minor. In this phrase there is an example of McGibbon's awareness of ornamentation practices, as he repeats m.24 in a decorated version in m.25.

In mm.27-35, McGibbon explores material in E minor and returns to D major in mm.32-33 in preparation for return of the opening material in mm.36-7. In mm.38-9, a new sequence is used, but there are hints at material previously used; for example, m.40 is based on m.24. The dramatic dominant seventh chord in m.43, followed by a two bar resolution to the tonic is truly in the style of the Continent; this type of device might be found in a sonata by Handel.

The second movement is a Giga, using typical triplet rhythms and conforming to expected phrase lengths. The first phrase (mm.1-6) ends on the
dominant, A major. The second phrase (mm.6-10) begins with D major, cadences on G major in m.8, and continues via a sequence through E major, before ending on A major in m.10. The third phrase (mm.10-16), six bars in length like the first phrase, returns at first to D major but modulates to A major in m.15.

The first two bars of the second half begin with the same phrase as the opening, transposed to A major; however, in m.18, this phrase is transposed to B minor and altered. In mm.21-23, there is sequential motion, and more virtuosic gestures are used in mm.24-26. This section ends in F sharp minor in m.27, and the opening material is restated in m.28. However, in m. 30, the material is altered, with a question/answer motive in mm.30-31. This is followed by a series of bars that are each repeated; m.33 is a repeat of m.32, m.35 of m.34, and m.37 of m.36. This pattern is continued less strictly in mm.38-40, leading to a confident ending in D major. By writing this pattern of bar repetitions, McGibbon presumably intended the player to implement some of the different forms of contrasts, notably dynamic ones, that were fashionable in the Baroque.

The last movement is a Minuet, marked Andante, with four variations. The original Minuet follows the traditional binary layout of two eight-bar sections, ending the first in the dominant, introducing some other keys (G major and A major) at the beginning of the second half, before returning to the tonic at the end. In addition, the monotony of the three-in-
the-bar pulse is broken up by the introduction of ties throughout the modulatory section (mm.9-12). The bass pattern is very simple; repeated quarter notes on the appropriate chord-tone allow all the interest to be focused on the violin part.

Throughout the rest of the movement, McGibbon places much emphasis on creating rhythmic diversity between the variations. The first features tied notes and sixteenth notes, grouped in various ways and based around the melody notes of the original. In the second half, the framework of the triad on the first and second beats in the original (A, D, D in m.9, B, E, E in m.11, E, A, A in m.13) is filled in by a scale (mm.25, 27 and 29), while the distinctive minor seventh leap on the third beat is retained.

The second variation takes the triplet rhythm of a giga, and consists simply of arpeggiated chords fitting the harmony in the bass-line. It is followed by a variation exploiting syncopated rhythm. Unlike the previous variation, which was concerned primarily with the chord-notes in the underlying harmony, this variation shadows the melody of the original. The first note in each bar corresponds to the first note of the melody in the corresponding bar of the original. The exception to this is m.62, which corresponds to m.14; in this case, the appoggiatura in the original is omitted.

Like the second variation, the fourth concentrates on filling out the notes in the chord suggested by the bass-line. In this case, the chord is realized in running sixteenth-notes rather than in triplets; some of the first notes of
each group of four sixteenths in the fourth variation (the ones that appear aurally to form some manner of melody) correspond to the equivalent notes in the triplet version of the second variation. A comparison of the important notes in mm. 33-36 with the equivalent notes in mm.65-68 reveals the following:

Var. 2:

mm.33-36: F sharp, A, F sharp | E, A, C sharp | D, G sharp, B | C sharp, C sharp, E

Var. 4:

mm.65-68: F sharp, A, F sharp | E, A, E | D, G sharp, B | C sharp, C sharp, A

In the second half of the fourth variation, the four-note patterns are rephrased, creating a new sense of direction and building to the last two bars, which end in almost the same way as the equivalent bars in the original.

The three movements in this sonata are very different, and the contrasts between and within the movements show that McGibbon was accomplished in a variety of European techniques.

2.11 Variation Set

Another way in which European music showed its influence in Scotland was through the rise of the variation set. This genre arose around the same time as the variation sonata, but was more successful and lasted
from about 1730 to 1800. Although a similar variation form had previously existed in Scotland, the introduction of European techniques allowed the variations to be longer and more varied and to express a larger range of moods. The variation sets were not necessarily extremely long; some of them had a slow pulse and were substantial without having many bars, or in some of them, the moods differed widely enough that a few variations sufficed. A considerable number of sets of variations were published by James Oswald in the *Caledonian Pocket Companion*, (15 volumes, published c.1747-69) which was one of the best-selling publications to come out of London in the eighteenth century. Many of the variation sets were produced as a joint effort; the tune would be passed from musician to musician with some variations, other variations would be added or replaced, some of it would be written down, some passed on aurally. This practice can be deduced from an examination of different manuscripts of the time, in which the same tune might appear with different variations, or with the same variations, but in a different order.

Various techniques were implemented to create the variations. One method was simply to ornament the original, often transposing the tune up an octave, perhaps with some embellishment of the melody, as follows in this example, *Through the wood, laddie*, from one of the McGibbon Collections.
Example 24, *Through the wood, laddie*.

Another common technique was to arpeggiate the underlying chord progressions of the tune, an Italian formula that replaced any reference to the melody. This technique is used in *The East Nook of Fife* in the last three variations, sometimes introducing some standard "Scottish" phrases as a recognizable alternative to the original tune.
Example 25, The East Nook of Fife.\textsuperscript{142}

This type of chordal variation was also popular in contemporary Italian music, for example in these virtuosic variations by Tartini. Example 26, Tartini Variations: \textsuperscript{143}
Increasingly, the types of variation technique were derived from European music; the ornamentation in decorative variations became more Italianate, standard Italian figures were used in variations using replacement material for the tune, and arpeggiated figures were often based on standard European chords. In addition, certain features of the Italian violin and advanced violin technique were exploited; the warmth of the G string, high positions of the E string, double or multiple-stopping, wide ranges, using drone-notes in fashionable imitation of the Continental bagpipe, and slurred bowings in virtuoso passage-work.¹⁴⁴

_Duncan Gray_ by McGibbon displays some of these features, including different patterns of slurred bowings, running sixteenth-note passages, and wide leaps; in addition, extra flourishes would probably have been improvised. Many variation sets involved more virtuosic displays of technique. Example 27, McGibbon's _Duncan Gray_.¹⁴⁵
2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on the interaction of classical music with native Scottish music, and has taken the career of the violinist, William McGibbon, as being representative of many of the overlapping elements in these traditions. As an illustration of the role that classical music played in society, McGibbon’s status, technique, type of instrument, position in the Edinburgh Music Society, and compositions were discussed in detail. Additionally, the role of international influence, particularly from Italy, was examined with reference to Scottish music. The closeness of the two musical traditions, folk and classical, is demonstrated by the many ways in which mutual influence is apparent, and it is clear that classically-trained musicians, such as William McGibbon, were also intuitively grounded in the native tradition.
Sonata no. 5 in G major
In Imitation of Corelli

William McGibbon
McGibbon - Sonata no. 5 in G major
Sonata no. 2 in D

William McGibbon
3: Andante

McGibbon - Sonata No. 2 in D
McGibbon - Sonata No. 2 in D
McGibbon - Sonata No. 2 in D

Johnson, Music and Society, 34-8.

See Chapter 1, page 13.


Ibid., 49.


Ibid., front cover illustration.


Ibid., 55.

Ibid., 74.


Ibid., Example 1B.


Ibid., vi.

Ibid., vi.


Ibid., 72.


Gill, 51.

Ibid., 51.

Ibid., 52.

See Chapter 3.


Johnson, Fiddle Music, 34.


Johnson, Fiddle Music, 35.

Ibid., 37-8.

Ibid., 39.


Johnson, Fiddle Music, 162.

Ibid., 161.

Ibid., 162.

McGibbon, Collections of Scotch Tunes, (c.1757), vol. 1, 4-5. Source: National Library of Scotland: GLEN 230 (1-3).

Johnson, Fiddle Music, 147.

Ibid., 144.


Johnson, Fiddle Music, 192.

Ibid., 192.


Ibid., vi.

William McGibbon, Three Sonatas for two flutes or violins and continuo, (Edinburgh: R.Cooper, 1734) Sources: Dedication Page and Top part: Library of Congress; Middle and Bass Parts: Scottish Music Information Centre.

116.
117 Brainard, ed. *Italienische Violinmusik*, (score), 50.
119 William McGibbon, *Six Sonatas or Solos For a German Flute or Violin and a Bass*, (Edinburgh: R. Cooper, 1740) Source: Scottish Music Information Centre.
122 McGibbon, *Collections of Scotch tunes*, (c.1757), vol. 2, 6-7. Source: NLS GLEN 230 (1-3).
Chapter 3

Niel Gow and the Folk Tradition

3.1 Folk vs. Classical

Niel Gow's fame stemmed from his legendary status as a folk fiddler. For a full appreciation of his importance in the context of eighteenth century music, a proper understanding of folk music is necessary. In 1955, the International Folk Music Council (founded 1947) produced the following definition of folk music:

Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are: (1) continuity that links the present with the past; (2) variation which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group; and (3) selection by the community which determines the form or forms in which the music survives.

The term can be applied to music that has been evolved from rudimentary beginnings by a community uninfluenced by popular and art music and it can likewise be applied to music which has originated with an individual composer and has subsequently been absorbed into the unwritten living tradition of the community.

The term does not cover composed popular music that has been taken over ready-made by a community and remains unchanged, for it is the re-fashioning and re-creation of the music by the community that gives it its folk character.\textsuperscript{146}

This definition emphasizes the distinctions between folk music and other
music. However, it is worth noting that not all cultures differentiate folk music from other types of music; such distinctions are predominantly Western in concept. Indeed, as Klaus P. Wachsmann notes in his article on “Folk Music,” from which this definition is taken, several ethnomusicologists in the Society for Ethnomusicology emphasize the different social and cultural organizations of society that underlie music as a basis for musical research. In terms of this discussion, the awareness that other cultures do not so distinctly separate “folk” music from other styles of music lends strength to the ties between folk and classical music in Scotland.

The definition given by the International Folk Music Council describes folk music in its purest form, and therefore does not allow for the eclectic elements that make music difficult to accurately categorize. Niel Gow’s music is folk in style, but it fits almost none of the elements in the Council’s definition. However, in order to demonstrate that folk and classical music in Scotland at this time had much in common, and were almost two sides of the same culture, it is interesting to compare the native Scottish style with the purist definition of “folk.”
3.2 Why Folk Music was not "Traditional"

Some interesting paradoxes arise when the nature of folk music in the eighteenth century is examined more closely. Today, folk music is often described as being "traditional." The word "traditional," in its original Latin sense, means "handed down," i.e. something that has been passed on from generation to generation. As regards music, a traditional culture would therefore be one in which a tune had been passed on orally for years, the composer often forgotten, and the roots and origins of the piece lost in time.

Traditions are also usually associated with a particular area, perhaps having originally arisen in one village, and belonged to everybody in that area; traditions were not necessarily socially exclusive.

The folk music, or the "traditional" music of Scotland in the eighteenth century, if seen as distinct from European art music, did not fit the most basic definitions of either folk or traditional music. By the second half of the century, the composers, far from being anonymous, were often famed for their "traditional" compositions. New dance-tunes appeared everywhere, and although the tunes were accessible to all classes, many of them involved more advanced playing techniques than amateur musicians could manage. European art music also influenced the nature of the "Scottish" qualities in "traditional" music, so that the basic character of Scottish music changed
throughout the century. Finally, the development of the publishing business increased the circulation of the tunes, so that they no longer belonged so specifically to a particular area. Many fiddle players moved to Edinburgh and the styles of local areas merged in the city.

The history of the type of music that became known as folk music may offer some clues as to its claim to be regarded as "traditional." Before the arrival of the modern Italian violin in Scotland around 1660, native fiddling was carried out on the medieval fiddle and the rebec. It is difficult to establish exactly what the music was like on these instruments because it was not written down. However, the type of bow used to play these earlier instruments suited the short bow-strokes used to play jigs and reels.\textsuperscript{147}

Several new types of dance from England and the Continent were introduced to Scotland along with the Italian violin and added to the existing styles. These new forms became quickly adopted into the "traditional" fiddler's repertory, so that manuscript books contained side-by-side English country dances, sonatas in the style of Corelli, transcriptions of harpsichord pieces and pieces in imitation of the Baroque trumpet style, Italian style gigas, Scottish jigs, hornpipes, transcriptions of bagpipe pieces, and indigenous Scottish tunes.\textsuperscript{148}

Thus, by the mid-eighteenth century, the fiddle repertory had greatly expanded, and works of completely different styles (Italian Baroque, Scottish reels, English dances) now formed an integrated whole. Many composers had
written pieces that incorporated the elements of a variety of styles, so that the
differences no longer seemed so apparent. Most fiddle players had dabbled in
all the current styles, although not every player performed every kind of
music. Niel Gow’s son, Nathaniel, is an example of a fiddle player who
played in the professional St. Cecilia’s Hall concerts of the Edinburgh Music
Society on Friday nights, while playing in the most lucrative dance band in
Edinburgh on other nights of the week.

Although Niel Gow made his living from playing Scots-style pieces,
Nathaniel Gow’s Select Collection of Original Dances includes Corelli’s
Violin Sonata op. 5, no. 9, of which Nathaniel writes, “of all Italian
Compositions this was my Father’s Favourite.”

So even Niel Gow must have played through some Corelli in his leisure time.

The dual careers of many of these fiddle players (in classical concerts
and in dance bands) indicate that Scots and European fiddle playing cannot
have differed as dramatically then as they do today. Technically, research has
shown that classical European violin music in the eighteenth century was
played with very little vibrato, the frequent use of open strings and first
position fingerings, and a light clean sound. The violin was held without the
use of a shoulder or chin rest, and the bow was held several inches up the
stick. Although the Romantic era and twentieth century ushered in many
changes to classical violin technique and style, the technique of the native
tradition of fiddle music in the twentieth century is similar to that which
scholars consider European violinists to have used in the eighteenth century. Because of this, it seems likely that techniques and styles for playing native Scots and European music were similar in the eighteenth century. Presumably, the separation between the two styles in the twentieth century is partly due to the fact that the composition of European music (and consequently the technique for playing it) developed, while the composition of Scots music largely died out; thus, the existing Scots pieces continued to be played in the same way.

A comparison of Scottish folk music at this time with the definition given by the International Folk Music Council yields some interesting results. According to this definition, a shaping factor should be a continuity in the tradition that links the present to the past. However, although some of the dance forms (e.g. jigs and reels) were probably in existence before the arrival of the modern violin, the majority of the forms were new and imported. Even existing forms were heavily influenced by the imports.

That the pieces in circulation were varied by individuals is highly likely; improvised ornaments and idiosyncratic bowings were two basic ways in which the pieces could be shaped. However, because the tunes were printed and circulated, rather than being learned and passed on by ear, the variations would have been somewhat restricted. Nonetheless, perhaps this aspect of the definition can be regarded as fitting the Scottish folk style.
The third stipulation is that the community should select the form in which the music survives. The influx of new tunes and styles constantly appearing in Scotland meant that old tunes often existed in a number of forms; a tune might be used as the basis for a variation sonata, classically harmonized, or kept in its original form with some Italian influences. There was such a merging of styles and cultures that it would be difficult to keep track of all the adaptations that a particular tune might undergo. The main obstacle in fulfilling this part of the definition is that the meaning of community, and of the particular tunes belonging to it, had become confused. Tunes from all over Scotland were meeting in the melting-pot of the city, and being adapted and shaped by individuals from all over the country, not to mention the many resident foreigners. It could be argued that the community had simply redefined itself in the city, but even so, many of the newly formed tunes could be attributed to a known individual, later to be distributed via publication to areas anywhere in the country.

Additionally, although an individual, known composer might write a folk tune (which then became absorbed into the “unwritten living tradition of the community”), the prolific manner in which many composers were producing fashionable tunes, and circulating them via written means, does not correspond to the idea of organic absorption by a community.

Finally, the music should not be ready-made popular music that is the same no matter who is playing it. Whereas many tunes were known in
essence and were "re-fashioned" and "re-created," the more that pieces were written down in manuscript books or published in collections, the less spontaneous and folk-like they became.

The modern violin had also brought with it an increase in the learning of notation. Violin lessons began quite regularly to include instruction in reading music, which was necessary if the student wished to learn the latest Country-dance from England or a new Italian sonata. Scots tunes were used as practice pieces and although the tradition of playing them from memory was continued, many people liked to have a written-down copy of the piece in manuscript. From this, publishers soon came to realize that there was a market for collections of printed fiddle tunes, and tunes began to be passed on in print more than by ear.

Despite the discrepancies between the "folk" style in eighteenth century Scotland and the meaning as defined by the International Folk Music Council, there are certain gray areas which allow that a certain style of music, although not entirely fitting the definition of "folk," may contain enough characteristics or resemblances of traditional music to be called folk music. It is in this category that the music of Niel Gow most aptly fits.
3.3 Absolute vs. Dance music

To clarify the role that Niel Gow played, it is worth distinguishing between absolute music and music used primarily as accompaniment for singing and dancing. Absolute music should be considered to be music for its own sake, whereas accompanimental and dance music has a purpose beyond pure listening. Historically, instruments in Scotland had had different musical roles. The national instrument of Scotland in the sixteenth century had been the harp, of which there were two types, Lowland and Celtic (the latter was also known as the clarsach). The harp was later supplanted by the bagpipe, an instrument that appeared with a repertory of absolute music that seemed surprisingly established. Although the music for these ancient harps has been lost, it seems likely that at least some of the repertory was absolute, and that the bagpipe took over some of the forms that had been established by the harp. The clarsach was revived at the end of the nineteenth century by the daughter of the famous singer, Marjorie Kennedy Fraser, who arranged her mother's collection of Hebridean songs for voice and clarsach accompaniment. Clearly, this placed the instrument in an accompanimental, rather than a solo, role.

The bagpipe has a far greater repertory than the harp, and because it is almost exclusively a solo instrument, most of its music is absolute. Typical forms for the bagpipes are the "Pibroch," in essence a form of variations on a
ground bass, and the "Air," a slow expressive piece. Certain dance movements were also played as absolute pieces on the bagpipe; for example, the sequence of march, strathspey and reel. However, as previously discussed, pipers were often needed to play for specific occasions or purposes, such as the waking of the town. In this case, the music had a purpose beyond that of being heard for its own sake; it was used as a means of time-keeping, and as such, cannot be considered absolute. Although today only the Highland form of the pipes is still in use, it should be mentioned that the instrument of the Lowlands of Scotland in the eighteenth century was the Lowland or Border pipes. When that instrument was unavailable, the fife was substituted.\textsuperscript{150}

Fiddle music in the seventeenth century had a distinct purpose: it was music for dancing. The fiddle is well-suited to the dance rhythms of Scottish music, especially the Scots snap, and therefore its primary role as an instrument for the dance was appropriate.

In the eighteenth century the fiddle rose in popularity, and although one of its main purposes continued to be as an accompaniment for dancing, a repertory of absolute music also arose. Most of these pieces were sets of variations, and were clearly not intended for dancing because the tempo changes are so frequent. These early eighteenth century works also show the first Italian influences; trills, double-stopping, slurred bowing, fast arpeggio-style string-crossings, and flattened and sharpened sevenths, displaying some
awareness of classical harmony.\textsuperscript{151} A common structure for the variation-form pieces was to have a song-tune followed by instrumental variations. In addition to variation-form pieces, slow airs, a tune titled in honor of somebody (e.g. \textit{Lord Elcho's Favourite}), and slow strathspeys (not for dancing) were popular absolute forms.\textsuperscript{152}

\textbf{3.4 Gow's Life}

Niel Gow was a Scots fiddler who gained a status among his contemporaries equivalent to that of a modern pop star. A performer and composer of legendary skill, he was largely responsible for elevating the native tradition to a new professional level. He was born in Inver, Perthshire, on 22 March, 1727, and died on 1 March, 1807. Although Gow sometimes traveled with one of his patrons, essentially he lived all his life in the same small village. This is indicative both of the local, simple tradition from which he came and of the purposes and culture of Scots fiddle music.

As a career, he intended to become a plaid weaver and even began an apprenticeship as such, but his ability and talent on the fiddle soon allowed him to abandon this trade. The previous two centuries had seen many local and amateur fiddlers, but Gow's technical skill caused his playing to become so much in demand that he was able to make a good living from music alone.
Gow began playing the violin when he was nine, and when he was thirteen, Gow took some lessons from John Cameron, the greatest player in Perthshire at the time. However, unlike William McGibbon, Niel Gow was largely self-taught, earning his reputation from his idiosyncrasies rather than from anything he learned from a teacher. It was most specifically Gow’s distinctive bowing technique that became famed throughout Scotland. In 1745, at the age of eighteen, he entered a fiddle competition in which the blind judge remarked that he could “distinguish the stroke of Niel’s bow among a hundred others.”

He was patronized first by the Dukes of Athole of Dunkeld House, near Inver, then by the Duchess of Gordon, and later by other Scottish aristocratic families. Gow’s reputation quickly became widespread and he was hired to play at balls, parties, and other occasions all over the country. Although he was largely dependent upon the upper-classes and aristocracy for his living, he seemed to avoid an attitude of fawning or affected ingratiations. He has been described as a man of:

open, honest and pleasing countenance, and a homely, easy and unaffected manner, accompanied by a perfect honesty and integrity of thought and action, placing him on a footing of familiarity and independence in the presence of the proudest in the land.

This attitude and Gow’s confidence in the presence of his aristocratic employers is demonstrated by the following story. The daughter of a duchess was playing the piano in Gow’s presence, when he was said to have
remarked:

"That lassie o' yours, my lady, has a gude ear." One of the gentlemen present took offence at the use of the colloquial word, "lassie," whereupon Gow replied, "What would I ca' her? I never heard she was a laddie."¹⁵⁵

Gow was married twice and had four surviving children, of whom Nathaniel Gow was the most successful. He was significant in terms of Niel's life because of his knowledge of music and talent for business. The publication of the first Collection of Strathspey Reels in 1784 was prompted and organized by Nathaniel. Although the publication was a great success, and attracted a substantial number of subscribers, the Gows' often deliberate inattention to detail has led to lasting confusion over the historical authenticity of certain tunes. The collection includes two unacknowledged pieces written by friends and a mixture of Scots tunes and compositions by Gow himself, not all of which are distinguished from one another.

Through the publication of these collections, Gow became well-known for his compositions, so that by the time of his death, he was famed both as a composer and as a fiddler. His reputation went beyond that of being considered merely a skilled musician; stories abound about his dealings with people, his humor and quick-witted replies, his kindness, and his gift for making the evening's entertainment. His legendary reputation extended so far that he was nick-named "the Scottish Paganini," but, as we shall see, this name really indicated the esteem in which he was held as a person and
overall performer, rather than the pure extent of his technique.

Gow was fortunate in the ownership of a genuine Gasparo da Salò violin of Brescia. As mentioned in Chapter 1, many copies of Italian violins were available in the eighteenth century, but usually only members of the upper classes could afford to buy the original makes.\textsuperscript{156} The measurements of the instrument were reported as being as follows: body length, 14 inches; lower bouts, 8 inches; upper bouts, 6 5/8 inches; neck, 5 inches; scroll, 4 5/16 inches; ribs, 1 3/16 inches. This instrument was renowned for its characteristic rich tone and deep sound.\textsuperscript{157}

3.5 Professional folk player

It is interesting to note the different receptions of classical and folk music in eighteenth-century Scotland. Although native Scots music was a thriving culture before the time of Niel Gow (it provided enjoyment for a large number of people, and involved a wide variety of amateur musicians), it was impossible for a musician to make a living from this type of music alone. Correspondingly, although classical music entertained a far smaller audience, it was one which was prepared to pay for its musicians. Thus, although a professional class of classical musicians was in existence, no such equivalent existed for folk musicians. Folk musicians had little choice but to
turn to classical music if they wanted to be professional musicians. The famous dancing master, James Oswald, is an example of a folk composer who gave up writing folk-fiddle music in order to publish classical music in London.\textsuperscript{158} Niel Gow was the first fiddler to succeed in being solely a folk musician, composing and playing with tremendous acclaim throughout Scotland, while still keeping his simple roots and culture.

Gow is interesting for a number of reasons, one of which is his social status. Like many other musicians of the time (e.g. Haydn), Gow was held in high esteem for his talents as a musician, but also retained a servant status in some respects, due to his patronage by the Duke of Athole and other aristocratic families. Consequently, although he was hired to play all over the country, the Duke's permission was officially needed in order for him to perform elsewhere. Part of Gow's duties to the Murray family (the family name of the Dukes of Athole) included accompanying them to London for the winter season. It was customary for aristocratic families to go to town for the winter, during the sitting of Parliament, returning to their estates in Scotland for the summer. In London, Gow entertained the family and their friends at their residence. Mary Murray, a young relative of the Duke, gave the following account after hearing Niel Gow play in London in 1779:
In the evening we had Gow, the famous Scotch player on the fiddle, who played several tunes... The Maddens sung again and the Scotch fiddler played Donald and other tunes... I went to General Robertson's. After tea Miss Robertson Played. Then the Scotch Fiddler appeared. I danced a reel with Miss Murray, Lord Drummond and Captain Murray. 159

This account indicates the involvement that Gow had with the entertainment of the family, and the type of service he was expected to provide. These sojourns in London helped to spread Gow's fame, so that he also became well-known in England, but it was in Scotland that he was most in demand. Because the Duke did not restrict his services, Gow was hired to play at a variety of venues. These included Great Houses, Masonic Lodges, balls (notably the Caledonian Hunt Balls), the homes of the aristocracy, and other entertainment functions, both private and public.

At the dances and Assemblies, Niel was usually accompanied on the cello. For a number of years, the cellist was his brother, Donald. After his death, Malcolm McDonald, and later Patrick Murray, provided this accompaniment. These players were all from Niel's native Inver, a fact which emphasizes the local nature of the art. However, Niel was much better paid than his contemporaries; in addition to the £5 annual retainer he was paid by the Duke of Athole, he was earning as much as fifteen shillings for a single engagement, compared to the normal rate of between two-and-sixpence and five shillings. 160 Gow was held in such high esteem, in fact, that sometimes events were arranged around him; even the famed Caledonian
Hunt Ball is said to have been postponed once when he was ill at the time of the original date. His presence seems to have livened up the guests:

the effect of the sudden shout with which he frequently accompanied his playing in the quick tunes, and which seemed instantly to electrify the dancers, inspiring them with new life and energy, and rousing the spirits of the most inanimate.\textsuperscript{161}

As can be seen from Gow’s career; patronized by the nobility and in demand for parties, balls and other festive occasions, his native Scottish folk music was not regarded as being lower-class. It was functional music, primarily dance music, and consequently his audience included all social classes. It is likely that as Gow’s fame spread, the lower classes would no longer be able to afford him at their dances, but the fact remains that the type of music was the same at the dances of all social classes, even if there was a hierarchy of individual fiddlers.

3.6 Playing style

Much of Niel Gow’s importance arises from his playing technique, because it not only influenced other fiddle players, but also affected the types of pieces written in the native tradition. His bowing style was described by one of his contemporaries, Alexander Campbell, in 1802:
[Gow's] manner of playing his native airs is faithful, correct, and spirited. He slurs none, but plays distinctly, with accuracy, precision and peculiar accentuation.162

The essence of the style seems to be that the sixteenth note was not slurred on to the eighth note that followed it; to create the right kind of energy the short note had to be distinct both in rhythm and in articulation. The articulation in the strathspey style was generally short, although in some of the slower airs or laments a longer stroke could be used. However, the very sustained style of the later romantic period was not a part of Scottish fiddle music.

The accentuation of the dotted rhythm defines the strathspey style, and there were four main ways to bow it: hack-bowing, snap-bowing, cross-bowing, and back-bowing.163

Hack-bowing places the down-bow on the beat so that the beat is continually emphasized (the down-bow being naturally heavier than the up-bow). This is usually executed with the dotted eighth on the down-bow and the sixteenth on the up-bow; the stroke can sound labored if it is overused. Example 28, Hack-bowing:

Snap-bowing, or "hooked" bowing, as it is often labeled today, indicates that both the eighth and the sixteenth should be played in the same bow, but
with a stop in between the notes. This can be executed on either an up or a down bow, so long as the sixteenth remains clearly detached from the eighth.

Example 29, Snap-bowing:

Cross-bowing is one of the few bowings in which a slur is permissible, but the legato effect occurs over the beat. This technique would be used only to provide some contrast within the phrases and would not generally be used for the entire piece.

Example 30, Cross-bowing:

Back-bowing refers to the use of an up-bow, generally on a strong beat of the measure. This bowing would not be employed continuously, but rather to correct the direction of the bow (to land on a down-bow at the beginning of a new bar or phrase) or to change the accentuation. Example 31, Back-bowing:

Further methods of bowing technique are used to play the famous Scots snap rhythm, a sixteenth followed by an eighth. The main feature of
this rhythm is that the dotted eighth should be staccato with the bow coming off the string. It was for the ability to lift the dotted eighth cleanly with a fast wrist-stroke that Niel Gow was particularly renowned. Example 32, Scots snap:

```
\begin{music}
\begin{musicstaff}
\begin{musicnotes}
\begin{musicnote} E \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} F \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} G \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} A \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} B \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} C \end{musicnote}
\end{musicnotes}
\end{musicstaff}
\end{music}
```

In fact, Niel Gow took this type of stroke even further, to the point that the initial down-bow sixteenth provided the momentum for the next three notes to follow on the up-bow stroke. The second note of the up-bow (on the beat) is given an accent to re-emphasize the rhythm, and the last sixteenth is staccato. This technique is referred to as the up-driven or driven bow because of the "driving" effect created by the accented beat in the up-bow.\textsuperscript{164} It was most particularly the power of Gow's up-bow stroke that is remarked upon in nearly every account of his playing; the stroke referred to by his contemporaries is the up-driven bow technique, a stroke that is not used in classical playing. Example 33, Up-driven bow:

```
\begin{music}
\begin{musicstaff}
\begin{musicnotes}
\begin{musicnote} E \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} F \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} G \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} A \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} B \end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote} C \end{musicnote}
\end{musicnotes}
\end{musicstaff}
\end{music}
```

Occasionally, the reverse of this stroke, the "down-driven" bow (where the beat is re-articulated within the down-bow) is used, but it occurs rarely, and usually at the end of a phrase.
One final bowing that is sometimes employed is the "swinging or long bow" which slurs groups of four notes, or two beats, in one bow, with the last note of each group being played staccato. Because the main emphasis in the strathspey style is on the accentuation of the dotted rhythm, this bowing is not part of the main-stream method of playing, but it is used occasionally to break up a monotonous phrase. Example 34, Swinging bow:

![Swinging Bow Diagram]

The ability to execute fast string-crossings was an important part of this type of bowing technique. When combined with the different ways of bowing the dotted rhythms, these string crossings required a good deal of skill to perform at speed. As was previously discussed, the device of scordatura was sometimes practiced in order to facilitate awkward intervals in particular keys by re-tuning the strings to suit the layout of specific chords. The primary purpose of this was technical (i.e. to make the fingering easier) but the subsidiary effect was that the strings resonated slightly differently. This resonance in itself was appealing to players, and may have been a factor in encouraging players to use scordatura. In Scotland in the eighteenth century there were three sets of standard alternative tunings as follows:

1) a d' a' e''  
   (raise the g string by a tone)

2) a e' a' e''  
   (raise the g and d strings by a tone)
3) a e' a'' c sharp  (raise the g and d strings by a tone, and lower the e string by a third)

The following three excerpts provide examples of each of these types of tuning. Example 35, three sets of scordatura: 166

Playing with the alternative tuning led to more double-stopping, drones, and chords than occurred with the regular tuning. The scordatura was always related to a particular key: pieces using the first tuning were always in D major, pieces using the second and third were always in A major. 167 Pieces notated in scordatura normally had a staff at the beginning of the piece indicating the tuning notes of the strings, and the pitches of the
piece were transposed. In other words, the note usually played by a particular finger would be written, but the different tuning of the string would produce a different pitch. This system made it easier for the fiddle player, because the fingerings did not then have to be adjusted.

Although this system worked well for the fiddle players, for the keyboard player it demanded the skill of being able to transpose; therefore, scordatura pieces were usually unaccompanied. Eventually, it was the incompatibility with the keyboard that brought about the demise of scordatura. As the publishing trade began to flourish in the later part of the century, the market for amateur pianists expanded, and fiddle-books were in demand for use at the keyboard. Thus, it became unprofitable to publish pieces that had been transposed for the scordatura fiddle, and scordatura returned to the oral tradition, still used by players such as James Scott Skinner in the nineteenth century, but effectively dying out in the twentieth century.¹⁶⁸

Gow's left-hand technique seems to have been rather less advanced than his skill with the bow. To judge from his own compositions, it seems that he remained mainly in first position, and avoided the use of the fourth finger as much as possible. His dislike of shifting into higher positions (consequently moving up the neck of the instrument) may have been connected with the way in which he held the violin. Of the various depictions of Gow, probably the most famous is the portrait by Sir Henry
Raeburn in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (see Appendix 2). In this representation, Gow is playing with his chin on the "wrong" (right-hand) side of the tail-piece, using no chin-rest, and pointing the peg-box towards the floor. This manner of managing the instrument would make it very difficult to grasp the weight of the violin under the chin (and indeed in the portrait Gow does not appear to be using his head for support). His hold, instead of facilitating the movement of the left hand, places a heavy reliance on it in terms of supporting the instrument. If the left hand is occupied with holding the neck, it is much more difficult to shift into the higher positions.

Obviously, allowances must be made for such observations being made from a portrait which may not be a completely faithful representation of technical details. However, other pictures show Gow holding the fiddle in a similar position; indeed, the angle of the fiddle to the head is often more extreme. Furthermore, his compositions are written almost exclusively in the first position. This is arguably an integral part of the style, but may be due (at least in part) to a limitation in technique.

His fingering was also unadventurous, with a conspicuous avoidance of the fourth finger, and keys which involved particular use of that finger. That Gow was a part of the oral tradition and preferred to learn music by ear is demonstrated in a negative way by his abhorrence of sightreading. It is reported that at a ball at Glamis Castle, a gentleman presented Gow with a new strathspey and reel which he had named Lady Glamis' Medley. Gow
noticed that the piece was written in the key of B-flat major (which would necessitate the use of the fourth finger to play the E flat, as opposed to other keys where the open E string could be used) and is said to have turned to his young student, Cuthbert, who was playing along with him in the band and said: "Man, I'm no gude at using my pinkie. You had better gang on for a wee yersel while I pit on a new first string."

By the time that Cuthbert had played through the strathspey a couple of times using the music, Gow was able to join in a little, but when the reel began, he began tuning his strings again until his student had played through the reel for him as well. This story indicates both that Gow had a distinct inability to sightread, avoided keys that involved the fourth finger, and appeared to dislike keys with too many accidentals. Hence, it was really the vigor of his playing, and of course the famed bow-stroke, along with the charisma of his person that caused him to be dubbed "the Scottish Paganini."

The low positions used by Gow meant that the register of his playing and of his compositions was approximately from g to b" or c"; so that the excitement of the playing came from other sources than the use of high notes or high positions on the strings. Many pieces were based around pentatonic scales, using stepwise motion or small intervals, often with additional melodic ornamentation to fill in the gaps between the main melody notes. The type of ornamentation was left to the discretion of the player, and was an outlet through which the player could distinguish himself from others. As a
result of this decoration, the contour of the melodic line was generally quite smooth, in many cases, providing a contrast to the jagged nature of the rhythms. Between phrases, intervals of a sixth or octave were common, but these intervals often included an open string so that the left hand fingers were generally used consecutively. Because the natural run of the fingers was so often used, some of the pieces could be executed at tremendous speed (adding great excitement to a dance) and it was this potential that was one of the most characteristic aspects of fiddle music.

The sequential triads that are so typical of Scots fiddle music, however, do not reflect a technique inherent to the fiddle. These triads do not generally use the same fingers over and over in different positions (unless a good deal of shifting is involved) as the consecutive sound might suggest, so they do not fall particularly easily to the hand. They reflect, in fact, a technique intrinsic to the bagpipe which had become ingrained in the fiddle tradition.171

The individuality of the player was expressed primarily through the medium of ornamentation (improvised on the spot) and the particular character of the bowing style. As no dynamics are notated in Niel Gow's published collections, it can be assumed that any contrasts in volume were left to the discretion of the performer, although it is likely that because the majority of this music was intended to be danced to, the music was all played reasonably loudly.
Despite the activity of the left hand in terms of quick runs, mordents, trills, acciaccaturas, and other types of decoration, double-stopping seems to have been quite unusual. Unisons, using an open string and the fourth finger to stop the string below were sometimes used as a means of reinforcing the main notes of a tune. Likewise, open strings were sometimes used to emphasize the harmony, for example, sounding a sixth or octave below the tune note. Occasionally, an open string was used as a drone (perhaps as a reflection of the bagpipe) or to reinforce the tonic key, but in general the fiddle played only one line of music.

Although the fiddle pieces are so clearly based around particular scales and can be played unaccompanied, it should be remembered that Niel’s brother, Donald, (and others) accompanied Niel on the cello. Some of these bass lines are included in the printed collections that Nathaniel Gow published, and demonstrate how self-sufficient the harmonies of the fiddle part were. The harmonic motion is slow; usually changing chord once every one or two bars (although sometimes a whole phrase is based upon the same chord) and the rhythm is most often continuous quarter notes. The fiddle was thus both a melodic and harmonic instrument in these pieces.

It should be mentioned that fiddle technique expanded after the eighteenth century and more recent esteemed fiddle-players, such as James Scott Skinner, played in higher positions, used multiple-stopping and other virtuosic techniques. These included: martélé bowings, arpeggiated ricochet,
3.7 Different Types of Pieces and the Collections

The main types of dance tunes in the last forty years of the century, when Niel Gow was working, were the hornpipe, strathspey, reel, and jig. Of these, reels and jigs had been traditional Scottish dances in the sixteenth century, hornpipes had come from England in the seventeenth century, and the strathspey (a slower type of reel from Speyside) had developed popularity throughout Scotland only in the 1760s, having previously been confined to the Spey Valley in Inverness-shire. To distinguish them from strathspey reels, the other types of reels were sometimes referred to as “Atholl reels” at this time. Many of the tunes in popular circulation in the last forty years of the century had been recently composed.

The dances that were newly composed from the 1760s until the end of the century tended to use the same kinds of formulae as those that had been successful in the earlier jigs and reels; gapped scales, consecutive triads, shifting sense of tonic, flattened sevenths, and a modal sound. Unlike other types of music that had readily accepted innovations from Europe, the new dances showed more similarity to older or indigenous dance models.
The Gow family produced six complete Collections of Strathspey Reels published in 1784, 1788, 1792, 1800, 1809, and 1822. Besides the Strathspey Reels, there was a Complete Depository of Original Slow Strathspeys and Dances, edited by Niel Gow and Sons, published in four parts (1799, 1802, 1806, 1817), various other collections (some containing tunes from existing collections), some published airs by Niel Gow's students, and a huge number of separate sheets containing works by the Gows and others. It would be difficult to assess the extent of Niel Gow's output because (even apart from the deliberate alterations to the truth by the business-minded Nathaniel, and the vagueness of Niel himself) the Published Collections probably do not contain all of Niel's compositions.

In fact, the entire 1784 collection had been organized by Nathaniel, who had selected about eighty of the best tunes of the day, some composed by fashionable Edinburgh composers, others by less well-known figures, still others written by the Gows themselves. Nathaniel was well-versed in the trends of the day, having himself had a good musical education; he had moved to Edinburgh from Perthshire while he was young, taking violin lessons from Robert Mackintosh and trumpet lessons from Joseph Reinagle, while also becoming the cellist in McGlashan's dance band. When he was nineteen, he became a member of the Edinburgh Music Society Orchestra, and later became one of His Majesty's Trumpeters for Scotland. Because of his association with many important musicians and his proximity to the music
publishers, Nathaniel was able to use his knowledge of existing collections to market his own from 1784.

He added a distinct business angle to the Gow publications, changing the titles of tunes to make them more appealing to the right people (for example, changing the title to honor a particular patron) and making careful editorial decisions about which composers to credit. The pattern seemed to be that the composer’s name was used if he was respected and upper-class, but if the piece had been written by someone of a less favorable family name, Nathaniel attributed the tune to being “traditional.” Initially, he even extended this treatment to the tunes by his father and himself, perhaps thinking that the Gow name had lower class associations, but later he realized that in fact having “Gow” next to a tune was a selling point. Nathaniel’s technique seemed to work because the Collection became the best-selling music book of its time. The aristocracy subscribed eagerly; the Duke of Atholl, Duke and Duchess of Gordon, and Lady Charlotte Murray purchased six copies each, while the Duchess of Atholl and the Duchess of Hamilton each bought twelve.175

The Collections became very important, particularly to Nathaniel, who eventually became the richest musician in Scotland due to his talent for business. The Gow Collections were not, of course, the only collections of fiddle music to be published in the last decades of the eighteenth century, but the marketing tactics employed by Nathaniel Gow had another effect; they
embraced some of the popular ideals of the Romantic era.

The idea that some of the tunes in the Collections were ancient, that they had been handed down by generations and were part of a misty Highland tradition (in keeping with the image of such popular legendary figures as Rob Roy) was appropriate for the time. Nathaniel had deliberately blurred the lines between genuinely traditional tunes (sometimes appearing with flattering new titles), and new tunes made to look ancient and anonymous because the composer's name had been omitted. The fact that Niel Gow's name headed the entire operation sealed the mystical image of the Collections; his reputation as an honest Highland figure, his refusal to leave his home-town or to defer to the upper-classes (an attitude which only added to his charm) was widely known, and the Collections benefited from it.

The facts of the matter, that the Church of Scotland had sternly forbidden dancing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that prior to c.1760, very few dance tunes had been written, were blithely passed over; the dance tunes of the late eighteenth century were viewed as being in the tradition of Scottish music.

The normal instrumentation for the pieces in the Collections was two to four fiddlers with an optional cellist. The fiddlers all played the tune together, so the purpose of the extra numbers was to add volume, or to divide the work between the players; for this reason, a single fiddler was adequate for many occasions. The cello part provided only basic harmony notes and
hardly ever came with the continuo figures of a harpsichord part. The reason for not including a harpsichord in the band was probably more practical than musical; the band would often have to walk to the venue, or travel by horse and cart, so the transportation of a harpsichord was not feasible. In Niel Gow's case, it seems that he sometimes played with another fiddler (e.g. in the story at Glamis Castle his student, Cuthbert, is playing along with him) and it is known that a number of different cellists played with him.

3.8 Specific Pieces of the Collections

The following sample pieces, selected from Gow's Collections, are intended to show the variety of styles and the characteristics of Gow's music. Various types of dance, native idiom, and foreign influence will be illustrated, as well as particular violinistic techniques employed by Gow and fiddlers like him. The first example is Dunkeld House, taken from Gow's First Book of Reels. The title of this tune refers to one of the residences of the Duke of Atholl, and is typical in that it honors a place connected with a patron. It is a jig, and therefore has the characteristic 6/8 meter, and a combination of triplet eighths, a quarter and an eighth, or two sixteenths and two eighths rhythms. The mood is lively, and many of the rhythms repeat themselves in
sequence (in particular, the second strain). Example 36, Dunkeld House.\textsuperscript{177}

The basic key of this jig is e natural-minor, but the idiomatic shifting between two consecutive triads, e minor and D major, lends the piece a "double tonic" sound. Although the piece begins and ends on the same triad, this is really the extent of any European influence; the underlying harmony consists of an oscillation between only two chords, the tonic and flattened seventh characteristic of the natural minor. The cadences do not play an important part here, as they primarily emphasize the chord changes rather than providing the function of harmonic stability. The bass line has been included in this edition, and the simplicity of its harmonic accompaniment demonstrates that the fiddle line is self-supporting, and that the interest of the tune does not come from its harmonic variety.
The form of the piece is also very simple; the first eight bars (which are repeated) are then played up an octave and varied by such devices as a different rhythmic pattern (the figure of two sixteenths and two eighths takes the place of three eighths) and sequence (both in pitch and rhythm). The repeat is written out in the second half and a slightly different ending is used. This form (A A') is taken from the style of fiddle transcriptions of songs in the first half of the eighteenth century, in which the fiddler would play the song as written the first time, the second time varying it by transposing it up an octave and perhaps adding some ornamentation. The different rhythms used in the second half of Dunkeld House probably have their origins in the kinds of ornamentation typically added to the second halves of these songs.

Within each triad, e minor and D major, there is a suggestion of a gapped scale; the main notes used in the e minor harmony are: e, f sharp, g and b, and the main notes in the D major triad are d, f sharp, g, a. The modal sound is really more an impression than technically accurate; the seventh bar in the first strain contains the notes b, c and d, and the up-beat to the second strain (bar 8) is a. The seventh bar is harmonically rather ambiguous; if the notes are connected with the e minor triad, they suggest a natural minor scale and an overall sense of a hexatonic scale because the fourth note of the scale, a, has so far been omitted in connection with e minor. If connected with the D major triad, the notes associated with D major are then: d, f sharp, g, a, b, c natural, which is also a hexatonic scale, the second note of the scale, e, being
omitted and the seventh being flattened. These scales do not fit any of the
gapped scale models, and much of the modal sound may come from the
predominant double-tonic sound; nevertheless, the scales are not used as in
classical harmony, and certain notes (mainly triadic) are stressed much more
than others.

The technical side of the fiddle playing is also apparent; the piece
would be played entirely in first position, it involves string-crossing and
arpeggic motion but no double-stopping, and it mainly involves short
articulation. A slur is indicated over the sixteenth notes with a dot marked
over the following eighth note; the sixteenth notes would probably have been
played on a down-bow with a quick flick of the wrist used to make the eighth
note a short up-bow. This is perhaps the compound meter version of the
Scots snap. The key is simple, involving only one accidental, and improvised
decoration may have been added, especially in the second strain.

In addition, this particular jig is interesting because it is often played
with scordatura tuning. Specifically, the second tuning listed earlier
(a,e,a',e'') would be used, because of the stressing of the e minor triad at the
beginning (the music is not transposed here).
Example 37, Dunkeld Bridge.¹⁷⁹

This example, also titled in honor of the Duke of Atholl, is a reel. The edition contains the added note “This is the last Tune Composed by Niel Gow,” although this may be the work of Nathaniel’s business mind. It is in 4/4 meter with the typical eighth-note and quarter note rhythm; there would have been a slight emphasis on the first beat of each bar, but in general the accentuation between the beats would have been equal.

Some dotted eighth-note/sixteenth-note rhythms have been added for variety. The dotted rhythms might easily have been reversed, (thus becoming the Scots snap) or other eighth notes dotted in performance; these notations represent only the bare bones of the tunes. The slur across the bar-line in bars 3-4 and in bars 11-12 provides an interesting change to the four-square rhythm; this sort of articulation change might have been added in other places, and no doubt allowed Niel Gow to show off the quick motion of his
bowing arm.

The key of this reel is F major, and there is strong sense of tonality; the two basic chords are the tonic and dominant (with a suggestion of the supertonic or subdominant every so often). The printed bass-line, although still very rudimentary, shows more harmonic variety than in other pieces; for example, bar 4 and bar 12 are the same in the melody line, but are harmonized differently in the bass (a simple dominant-tonic the first time, a tonic second inversion, dominant, tonic the second time). Cadentially, the piece shows significant signs of classical harmony, with a dominant-tonic movement between bars 3 and 4, a half-cadence in bar 6, perfect cadence in bar 8, half-cadence in bar 10, and a final perfect cadence in bar 12. Admittedly, this is very repetitive harmony, but it is clearly diatonic rather than modal. The fiddle line remains self-sufficient with the triads played out in stylistic string-crossings.

The tune is in two halves which are both repeated (the repeat in the second half is written out with the ending of the first half used the second time). The second half is really a variation on the first, with more eighth notes instead of quarter notes. However, the register is actually lower in the second half with a greater use of string-crossing. Again, the key is quite simple, the notes remain in first position, and the bowing would be short and light. Some ornamentation is written in (the trills on the first beats of bars 1, 2, and 3, and in the middle of the bar in bars 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12), mainly to
emphasize the chord change, but the melody could be further decorated in performance.

Example 39, *Niel Gow's Lament*.\(^{189}\)

This tune is more in the style of an air, a slow expressive work less suited to dancing; the character of the piece is indicated as “Slow and Pathetic.” The lament is for the death of his second wife, and below the piece is the note: “They lived together upwards of thirty years; she died two years before him. She had no Issue.” (meaning no children; Niel’s children were from his first marriage).
The characteristics of a lament are less definitive than those of a dance, but in this case the expressive nature is shown by the slow swing of the 6/8 meter, the ornamentation, and the low register and pentatonic sound of the opening (a, b, d, e, f sharp provide the frame-work of the tune). The modal tendency is further implied by the use of the flattened seventh grace-note in bar 7. A c-sharp is written in the previous measure (bar 6); the same juxtaposition occurs at the end in bars 22-23. Thus the piece ends both halves with a flattened seventh as the final indication of harmony; this brings into question the key or mode of the tune. The key of G major is suggested because of the c-natural, but in fact this tune also corresponds to the fourth position, or third inversion of the pentatonic scale. That is to say, if the "first position" of the scale is considered to be d, e, f-sharp, a, b, then the fourth inversion of the original is: a, b, d, e, f-sharp, with the final or keynote of a. The piece does in fact end with the interval of a fourth, d and a, which is suggestive of this mode, and also harks back to the Medieval period in the use of a fourth over the more diatonic third or sixth.

The tune does not adhere strictly to this model; other notes are used to fill in the gaps between those of the mode. However, the underlying modal structure does help to create a mood of pathos.

In terms of cadences, the sub-dominant is the most frequent chord; in bar 4 there is a half-cadence on the sub-dominant, and in bar 8, if diatonic harmony were to be used, a plagal cadence would be most appropriate. The
bass part indicates the use of the sub-mediant, for example in bar 6. This minor chord also has a quality of pathos. The second half, which is based on the first half, has similar cadential structures, and recurring motives from the first half.

In terms of form, the entire tune is 32 bars long, each half being 16 bars long (the repeat in the first half is not written out). There are altogether four eight-bar phrases, and within each there are two closely related four-bar phrases. That is to say, mm.4-8 are based upon mm.1-4 (varying only towards the end) and the equivalent is true within mm. 8-16. The last eight-bar phrase, mm. 16-24, begins the same as mm. 8-16, but after the first two bars, introduces two bars of different variation, and then returns almost exactly to the material of mm.4-8 (instead of going to the note b in bar 22, the tune extends to a d with a fermata). Thus, although this is a perfectly balanced tune in two halves, it is really a rounded binary form.

Various other techniques are employed to give the tune a melancholy character; the slower tempo, the repetitive form, the recurring motifs in the tune, the appoggiaturas slurred in pairs (emulating a sigh) in mm. 10, 14, 18 and 19, the expressive ornamentation and the dotted, swinging rhythms, notably the sixteenth/dotted eighth in mm. 8 and 24. The fiddle is entirely suited to this tune; it fits around the open strings easily, remains in first position, uses scalar motion, and utilizes the round sound of the Italian instrument.
Example 39, Mr. Murray's Strathspey.\textsuperscript{181}

This strathspey is dominated by its characteristic rhythm, the sixteenth and dotted eighth (Scots snap) or its reverse. It would be played more slowly than a reel, but has the same 4/4 meter, and should be played with a slight emphasis on the first beat. In the first half, this accentuation seems to be less evident because a trill is marked on the second beat of the bar, but the chord change at the beginning of each bar may compensate for this.

The harmonic structure of the piece is very simple; it oscillates between the g minor tonic chord and the flattened seventh chord of F major, with a suggestion of a dominant minor (d minor) at the main cadential points (mm. 4, 8 and 12). The constant switching between g minor and F major creates the "double tonic" effect, giving the impression of modality. However, the scales involved are major and minor and do not show any influence of the gapped scales. The bass line is again superfluous, playing only the basic bass notes of
a harmonically sufficient melody.

The form is rounded binary; the first four bars are repeated, making an eight-bar section, which is balanced by a written-out eight-bar section in the second half. The second half is comprised of a 2-bar phrase (mm.5-6) that ends on a type of half-cadence on F major; this is answered by another 2-bar phrase (mm. 7-8) ending with a dominant-tonic motion to g minor. These four bars are answered by two bars that are a repeat of mm.5 and 6 (mm.9 and 10) and then two bars that are the same as the end of the first half (mm.11 and 12). The material is repetitive and would be appropriate for dancing.

The key of this tune might be seen as more difficult for an eighteenth-century fiddle player because of the two flats, but in fact the e-flat never occurs in the violin part. The tune is based mainly around triads, with some sequential sixths motion, remains in first position, and would feature the ability of the player to execute the dotted rhythms cleanly. Trills and other decoration could be added at will, especially to provide variation in all the repeating sections.
Example 40, Tail Toddle:¹⁸²

The inclusion of this piece in the Gow Collections is an interesting indication of the mixing that was occurring between the European traditions and Scottish dance music. The instrumentation notated as part of the title is the most deliberate reference to classical fashion; harpsichord and German flute were not native instruments.

The form is also rather obviously composite ternary, with a key change in the middle section (indicated "Minore"). The A section (mm. 1-8) is divided into two halves, each of which are repeated, followed by a repeated
four-bar section in the B section (mm. 9-12) and a written-out eight-bar section (mm.13-20), before the return to the A section. In terms of form, it is similar to a Minuet and Trio, indicating further classical influence from Europe.

Harmonically, it is both simple and unclear. The first four bars are based on tonic and dominant seventh chords in A major; m. 5 at first hints at a dominant seventh function of the subdominant key, D major, (perhaps a hint of the mixolydian mode) but then a g-sharp is juxtaposed (interestingly while the added bass line is still playing a G major triad). In m. 7, a further g appears in the melody; this time the bass modulates to C major, but the g-sharp returns in the melody at the end of the bar. The middle section is simple; it is the key of the tonic minor, a minor, and its relative major, C major, and the final cadence is rather abrupt and unprepared.

The Scottish elements in the piece can be classed as the strathspey-like use of dotted rhythms (strathspey rather than reel, because of the slow tempo suggested by the marking, "Pomposo"), the harmonies that are not quite comfortable with European tonality, the triadic filling-in of the chords on the fiddle, the register encompassing first position, and the style of ornamentation (e.g. trill in bar 2).

The European elements, apart from the instrumentation and form, are evident in such aspects as the overdone Alberti bass-style accompaniment of the A section. In this particular case, it seems likely that Mr. Nisbet himself
wrote the bass part to go with the melody. Even if it is the realization of the harpsichord continuo part, it shows only a basic acquaintance with classical accompanimental techniques, and demonstrates little imagination; the triplets in the first half do not suit the snappy rhythm of the melody, and are incongruous within the piece. The bass line in the middle section fits more smoothly in terms of harmonization, and is less obtrusive, but is still not very interesting.

The melodic line leads off with an anacrusis of elegant European style, but the direction then becomes rather dull; for example, in bar 3, instead of reaching for a new note as the high-point of the phrase, the e of the previous bar is repeated.

The impression given by the piece is that a native Scottish composer, probably an amateur musician, experimented with new compositional techniques in the style of the European sonatas while retaining much of the native dance style of Scottish music.

3.9 Conclusion

Niel Gow has been discussed in detail because of his relevance to the folk tradition of eighteenth-century Scottish music. To establish the nature of his contribution, the concept of "folk" music of this period was discussed with reference to the true meaning of "folk," and a number of significant differences were pointed out: many of the folk-style pieces were newly-
composed and widely circulated, the composer’s name was often known, and there was considerable outside influence from England and Europe. However, such pieces were set apart from “classical” music because they retained many characteristics of the native idiom.

Gow’s role as a musician was discussed as an indication of the function that folk music played in society, in particular his status, duties, venues, and professional position. Additionally, his violin technique and playing style were examined both in the context of the music he played and to demonstrate the differences between contemporary folk and classical violin technique. Finally, several compositions from his Collections were analyzed to illustrate the characteristics of different genres, Scottish idioms, fiddling technique, and the introduction of some European concepts.

144 Klaus P. Wachsmann, “Folk music,” in New Groves Dictionary Vol. 6, 693.
145 Johnson, Fiddle Music, 3.
146 Ibid., 4.
147 Ibid., 5
149 Johnson, Music and Society, 116.
152 Hunter, xii.
154 The story of how Gow came to possess the instrument is to be found in Appendix 1.
156 Johnson, Music and Society, 127.
157 Alburger, 95.
158 Ibid., 95.
160 Hunter, xix.
161 Ibid., xix-xxii
162 Alburger, 96.
163 Hunter, xix-xxii
164 Johnson, Fiddle Music, 106-114.
165 Ibid., 107
166 Ibid., 108-109.
169 Wood, 56, or Cover illustration of Honeyman, Strathspey Players.
170 Honeyman, Strathspey Players, 11-12.
171 Collinson, 24-5.
173 Johnson, Fiddle Music, 213.
175 Johnson, Music and Society, 128 and Fiddle Music, 219.
176 Johnson, Fiddle Music, 219-221.
177 Johnson, Music and Society, 121.
178 Niel Gow, "Dunkeld House" in First Book of Niel Gow's Reels 2nd ed. (Edinburgh, 1801), 18.
179 Hunter, xxiii.
182 Gow, "Mr. Murray of Abercarnay's Strathspey" in First Book 2nd ed., 23.
183 Niel Gow, "Tarle Todle" by Mr. Nisbet in A Collection of Strathspey Reels with a Bass by Niel Gow (Edinburgh, 1784), 32.
Conclusion

In this thesis an attempt has been made to examine the nature of fiddle music in eighteenth-century Scotland and its subsequent decline towards the end of the century. A number of factors were involved: the social context of music-making for performer and audience, the coexisting traditions of folk and classical music, and the international influence on Scottish music. These factors were discussed and illustrated in the work of William McGibbon and Niel Gow, who are representative of the main musical trends of this period. Finally, it was argued that the feelings of nationalism which contributed to the flourishing of these traditions grew in strength throughout the century and eventually led to the cultural isolation and decline of Scottish music.

The most significant contexts for music-making in eighteenth-century Scotland were public concerts and concerts given by the music societies, private concerts (usually given in aristocratic homes or in places of exclusive membership), music-making in the home, and dances. From the performers' point of view, these occasions provided employment, the opportunity to meet other musicians, hear new compositions, and exchange ideas, while for composers they often meant the chance to have compositions performed.

From the perspective of the audience, concerts of a mainly classical nature, such as those given by the Edinburgh Music Society, created an accessible platform for contemporary works by European, English, and native
composers, while also providing the focus for a fashionable meeting-place. Music performed in private homes often involved a mixture of classical and folk music, as well as a combination of dancing, singing, and playing, while music at official dances included active participation in European and Scots tunes and dance-styles.

Consideration of the second factor, the "folk" and "classical" traditions, requires an examination of the nature of Scottish folk music as a national style, while the "classical" aspects of the art music should be approached in terms of international eighteenth-century trends. It should be noted, however, that although each of these traditions grew from separate roots, gradually there came to be a large amount of musical overlap between them. As emerged in discussion of the context of music-making, folk and classical music were often performed side by side, with the same musicians playing different types of music to an audience equally accepting of a variety of styles. The development of these traditions and their influence on each other can be traced by first examining traits particularly associated with each.

Various idioms are identified with Scottish folk music. In terms of rhythm, the "Scots snap," a sixteenth followed by a dotted eighth, is considered to be characteristic because of its possible origins with the emphasis of the Gaelic or Scots languages, or the bowing technique used by Scots fiddlers. Melodically, folk tunes in Scotland are usually based on the pentatonic or hexatonic scales, or the seven modes, Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian,
Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, and Locrian. The goal-oriented writing of
diatonic writing is avoided. There are several distinctive patterns of writing
in fiddle music, such as the use of consecutive triads, often known as a
"double tonic" and related to bagpipe characteristics, or the ornamented wide
leaps that originated in the Highlands and Islands.

Although the native music of Scotland can be identified by these
idioms, the term "folk" in this context needs some clarification. Folk music is
often considered to be traditional, indicating that it has been handed down
over generations, whereas the "traditional" music in eighteenth-century
Scotland was often newly-composed. Additionally, the rise in music
publishing increased the circulation of the new tunes, thus destroying any
regional link that the music might have had as a "traditional" work. The
foreign influence on native folk music became progressively more extensive
in the second half of the century, making the traditional nature of folk music
yet more dubious. However, the music retained an individual character, often
related to the idioms described, and was certainly different from
contemporary art music, thus giving rise to its description as folk music.

The genres usually written for fiddle in folk style included many
dances; the Reel, Strathspey, Hornpipe, Jig, and Rant. Other dances, such as
the European Minuet, were also played at dances, and some were written in
Continental style by Scottish composers. Many collections of dance-music
were published, such as the popular collections by the Gow family. In
addition, a large number of songs were adapted as fiddle-tunes, and both existing and newly-composed slow tunes, such as Airs and Laments, made use of the expressive side of the fiddle.

The third factor was international influence; this affected both musical traditions. Folk music was often influenced by foreign styles at dances. Because dances from England and Europe were commonly performed alongside Scottish tunes, many classicizing elements from the Continent were introduced. Music of different origins was juxtaposed at dances, causing these occasions to become a melting-pot for musical styles. The changing fashions for particular dances contributed further to this situation; musicians were forced by the sudden demand to adapt native tunes to fit a new style. In this way, the characteristics of both native and foreign music became altered and interchanged, while performers, composers, and audiences alike became actively involved in different musical trends.

The art music of eighteenth-century Scotland was deeply influenced by international trends, while still retaining some of the national traits of native music. Many Scots travelled abroad to study, while at the same time several influential foreign musicians took up residence in Scotland. The genres of the Continent, from large-scale symphonies, choral works, and overtures to simpler works for keyboard, instrumental combinations, and songs, were made available, and many features of Italian art music were introduced in Scottish compositions. European classical harmonies, melodies, phrasing, and
structures provided a compositional basis, while the technical advances in Italian violin-playing were reflected in the increase in virtuosic writing and playing in Scotland.

In Scottish art music, classical genres and forms were often applied to native melodies. Many of McGibbon's compositions are examples of native tunes treated in classical style, often using composers such as Corelli as a model. In the works described as being in Scots Drawing-room style, a Scots tune is harmonized using European progressions. Another technique, used in the Variation Sonata, was to adopt the characteristics from each movement of the Italian sonata da camera as the basis for a new variation on the Scots tune. Even genres such as the solo or trio sonata often used newly-composed melodies with a slightly modal sound, or harmonies that were not closely bound to contemporary European practice.

The two musicians, William McGibbon and Niel Gow, are representative of each of the main musical traditions in eighteenth-century Scotland. While exemplifying two different styles of music, these musicians should not be labelled only according to the type of music through which they made a living; Gow is reported to have enjoyed playing art music sonatas in his spare time, while McGibbon's knowledge of native music is apparent through his use of Scots tunes in his compositions. This broad-minded acceptance of music epitomizes the success of the two traditions, and is an indication of why folk and classical music were able to flourish side by
side, attracting largely the same audience.

McGibbon was an important member of the Edinburgh Music Society; he was leader of the orchestra, performing mainly in public venues in classically-based concerts, while also receiving support from the Society for some of his compositions. He represented one common trend among Scots musicians in studying elsewhere, returning to Scotland with a heightened awareness of foreign trends. The practices of the Continent are apparent in both his compositions and his violinistic skills. Compositionally, McGibbon's use of harmony, counterpoint, form, development technique, and ornamentation resemble those used in similar Italian works, while his technique and playing style can be linked with the virtuoso style of violin-playing that arose in Italy in the eighteenth-century.

Niel Gow was famed as a folk-fiddler, and was noted as one of the outstanding players of the eighteenth century. Because most available money was given in support of classical music, Gow is significant for his success in becoming a professional folk-fiddler. Gow was supported mainly by patrons, often travelling with them to provide entertainment. His venues were generally dance-halls and private homes, and, although he was widely respected and well-treated, he retained the old-fashioned status of a servant. Gow typically wrote and played dance music, publishing several collections of Reels and Strathspeys with his son, Nathaniel Gow, and slower works such as Airs and Laments. His technique was less cultivated than the Italian style
practiced by violinists like McGibbon, but Gow had a famed idiosyncratic bow-arm that was suited to the incisive rhythm of the music he played.

There were two reasons for the decline of Scottish music; one was musical and the second was socio-political. First, although European methods initially created avenues for the composition of art music, ultimately it was the attempts to amalgamate native music with classical techniques that destroyed the music of both traditions. From the point of view of folk music, the characteristic idioms were often destroyed by the attempts of composers to set them as art music. Equally, classical music in Scotland could not be developed in the same way as music on the Continent because of the idiomatic writing of many Scottish composers. Folk music based on the native tradition continued successfully on a smaller scale after the eighteenth century, but the composition of classical music largely disintegrated until the twentieth century.

Secondly, it was perhaps unfortunate that the folk and classical trends in Scotland developed symbolic value. War and political instability between Scotland and England had created strong feelings of nationalism in Scotland, especially after the Act of Union in 1707, through which Scotland was forced to become much more dependent on England. After the Jacobite Rebellion (1745-6), the English denied the Scots the right to many of their cultural traits; the wearing of the kilt, for example, was made illegal. Consequently, aspects of national culture assumed even more importance to Scotland, with folk
music symbolizing cultural independence. Because classical music was largely imported from England and Europe, it represented "foreign" culture in Scottish society. Thus, a contradictory attitude towards classical music was formed: although people in Scotland were anxious to find a place in contemporary trends and to be considered fashionable, at the same time there was a deep-rooted dislike of culture from outside Scotland. This problem was in part responsible for the decline in classical music from the end of the eighteenth century onwards.

Legacy

In postscript, and to end on a more positive note, it should be noted that the decline in Scottish music was not terminal. In the twentieth century, there has been a strong resurgence of Scottish music. The cultural revival in Scotland has been apparent in a number of ways, including the success of composers, performers, musical events, and audience interest. Interestingly, this renaissance shares some of the characteristics of the flowering in the eighteenth century. Many composers, such as Judith Weir, James Macmillan, Sally Beamish, and Peter Maxwell Davies, have incorporated folk tunes into their compositions using a more successful approach than that taken by McGibbon and his contemporaries. Typically, in present-day writing, the tune is treated "in character," as opposed to the eighteenth-century technique
of trying to merge the tune with another style. The use of folk tunes is of course only one technique used in contemporary Scottish composition.

Similarly, in terms of the active musical scene, there are a number of different styles of music current in Scotland. The international scale of the Edinburgh Festival ensures that every type of culture is annually available in Scotland, while smaller festivals devoted to such events as jazz and early music give "foreign" music a high priority in twentieth-century Scotland. In addition, classical performances are given by groups such as the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, BBC Scottish Orchestra, Scottish Opera, and Scottish Ballet.

Folk and similar music is becoming increasingly important in present-day Scottish culture. A number of folk/pop bands, such as "Capercaillie," "Runrig," and "Old Blind Dogs," have recently emerged on the musical scene, and, interestingly, the venue for both classical and folk/pop bands is often the same. In Glasgow, for example, the series of concerts known as "Celtic Connections," featuring folk-style groups, is held in the concert hall where the Royal Scottish National Orchestra performs. As in the eighteenth century, a large number of the audience members for the folk and orchestral concerts are the same, many of the musicians are classically trained, and there are even some new influences in the music, such as tonal harmonies or jazz-influenced solos.

From the current cultural trends, it is clear that traditions and taste in
Scotland have reached a point in the twentieth century that is remarkably similar to that of the eighteenth century, and that music is again assuming both nationalistic and cultural value within society.
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Appendix 1: Stories of Niel Gow

The violin that Niel Gow played was a genuine Gasparo da Salò of Brescia. As often seems to be the case with Gow, a good story is needed to relate the manner in which he received his fiddle. A Colonel MacQuarrie and his wife were giving a party in their home in George Square, Edinburgh, and because of the rather upper-class circles that attended these occasions, only the best musicians could be hired. Accordingly, Mrs. MacQuarrie wrote to the Duke of Athole to request the services of Niel Gow, who duly attended along with his brother, Donald. As the brothers waited in the kitchen, Gow took down a violin that was hanging on the wall and began to play it. He is said to have exclaimed to his brother, "Save us a', Donald! Was there ever in the world sic a fiddle? It sounds like an organ!"

Gradually the company that was upstairs came down to the kitchen and watched as Gow played the violin. When the party was over, the Colonel (also anxious to have a memento of the famous Niel Gow) said to the fiddler, "When ye think sae muckle o' the fiddle what do ye say to niffering it for your ain?"

Apparently, Niel Gow pulled his own fiddle out of his bag as quickly as he could, shoved it into the Colonel's hands, and left with the Colonel's fiddle as fast as possible, saying to his brother, "Come awa, Donald, for fear he may rue it and want his fiddle back."183
The story continues that some time later, in 1784, Gow damaged the front of the violin by slipping on the ice at Stairdam one night when returning from a ball at Dunkeld House. Gow took it to the best available instrument repairman, Joseph Ruddiman in Aberdeen. William C. Honeyman mentions this incident in his book, *Scottish Violin Makers: Past and Present*:

[Ruddiman] appears to have repaired Niel Gow’s *Gasparo da salo* violin after it had been fractured by a fall on the ice at Stairdam in 1784, an accident to which violins were then more liable, as they were carried in a green bag instead of in a fiddle-case as now. The owners also usually carried more whisky than they do now.\(^{184}\)

After Niel Gow’s death, the violin came into the possession of another Perthshire man, who took it to Moritz Hamming in Dresden in 1880 for general repairs. Hamming examined the violin and proclaimed it to be a genuine *Gasparo da Salò*, of Brescia, and found the following written inside the violin, “Broken on the ice at Stairdam in 1784 and mended in Aberdeen – N. Gow.”

Some time after the violin was repaired, Gow nearly lost the violin altogether. He had been playing at Morton Hall, about a mile outside Edinburgh, and was walking back to the city in the early hours of the next morning, when he was suddenly confronted by a “weird figure in the shape of a poorly clad man.” The poor man asked Gow for some snuff, and while Niel was searching his pockets, the man grabbed the fiddle hanging around
Niel’s neck and ran off towards the city. Despite Gow’s more advanced years, he managed to catch the thief by his coat collar. At this point, the thief begged for mercy, and explained that his name was Pate Baillie and that he too was a fiddler, but had been forced to pawn his own violin, had lost his job in the Theatre Royal Orchestra and had no money to provide for his sick wife and child. Gow showed his kind-heartedness, for despite the attack he had just suffered, he gave the man some money and later went to visit him. When he arrived at the man’s house, he was pleased to see food on the table, thus showing that his money had been well-spent, and when he lent the man his own violin, found that he really was an excellent player. Gow’s efforts went even further than this, for he sought the help of the Duke of Atholl, and the man was reinstated in his job in the Theatre Royal Orchestra.¹⁸⁵

Niel Gow’s old fiddle enjoyed its own adventures after it came into the possession of Colonel MacQuarrie. The Colonel took it with him when he was sent abroad on active service, and had it with him when the Balearic Islands in Egypt were captured in 1801, at the siege and capture of Burgos at Orthes, Toulouse, Salamanca, and Vittoria, and at the siege and capture of Badajos (where the Colonel was wounded), and at the battle of Corunna, where the army was forced to retreat. The Colonel defied the orders of General Sir John Moore to abandon everything but bare necessities in the retreat, as the fiddle was all the time hidden under the Colonel’s military cloak. Eventually, the fiddle returned to Scotland completely unharmed, and
is said still to be in the safe-keeping of the Colonel's descendants.\textsuperscript{186}

Finally, there is a story to explain how Gow came to own his bow. He went to Andrew Wood's Music Shop in Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, to look for a bow, and having found one, asked for a fiddle and some music on which to sample it. The shopkeeper handed him the recently published "Pease and Beans," one of Niel's own more difficult compositions, and, spurred on by Niel's simple country appearance, offered him the bow for free if he could play the music without a mistake. Of course, Niel agreed to the bet immediately, and executed the music perfectly. The shopkeeper was amazed and asked Niel if he had seen the music before. Niel frankly admitted that he must have seen it fifty times before when he was making it up. When the shopkeeper realized that the great Niel Gow stood before him, he was glad to present the bow to him for free, and wished him many years of great music-making.\textsuperscript{187}

\textsuperscript{186} Honeyman, \textit{Strathspey Players}, 16-18.
\textsuperscript{188} Honeyman, \textit{Strathspey Players}, 27-33.
\textsuperscript{189} Ibid., 33-34.
\textsuperscript{190} Ibid., 14-15.
Appendix 2: Portrait of Niel Gow

by

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