

Coppers & Brass

Dick Gaughan

Scots and Irish Dance Music on Guitar with Tom Hickland, piano

- 1 Jigs: **Coppers and Brass** / **The Gander in the Pratie Hole**
- 2 Reels: **O'Keefe's** / **The Foxhunter's**
- 3 Hornpipes: **The Flowing Tide** / **The Fairies' Hornpipe**
- 4 Reels: **The Oak Tree** / **The Music in the Glen**
- 5 Planxty: **Planxty Johnson**
- 6 Slip Jig: **Gurty's Frolics**
- 7 Reels: **The Spey in Spate** / **The Hurricane**
- 8 6/8 Marches: **Alan MacPherson of Mosspark** / **The Jig of Slurs**
- 9 Reels: **The Thrush in the Storm** / **The Flogging Reel**
- 10 12/8 Jig and Reels: **Ask My Father** / **Lads of Laoise** / **The Connaught Heifers**
- 11 Reels: **The Bird in the Bush** / **The Boy in the Gap** / **MacMahon's Reel**
- 12 Jigs: **Strike the Gay Harp** / **Shores of Lough Gowna**
- 13 Shetland Reels: **Jack Broke the Prison Door** / **Donald Blue** / **Wha'll Dance wi' Wattie**

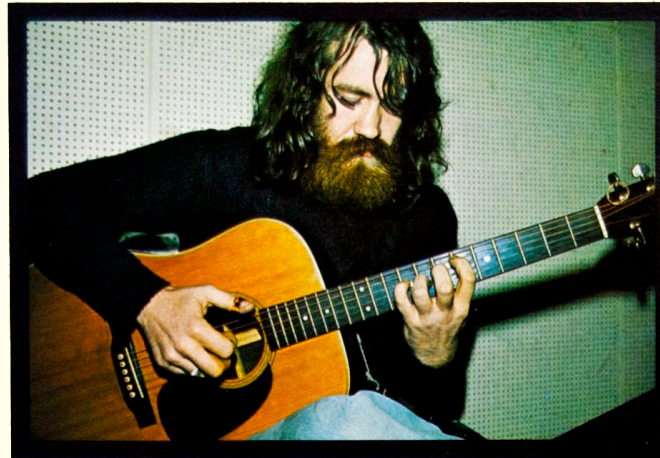
Dick is accompanied by Tom Hickland, piano on all tracks except 3 (first tune), 5, 8, 10 (first tune).

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Notes by Dick Gaughan

Photography and sleeve design by Tony Engle



I would like to give sincere thanks to all the musicians from whom I have learned the tunes on this record, and all the others who have helped, instructed or encouraged me. I would like to dedicate it to my late paternal grandfather, Dick Gaughan of Ballina, Co. Mayo, who probably has had more influence on me than anyone else. I think he would have approved. I would also like to express my gratitude to Tom Hickland for playing piano here and for all his helpful suggestions, the serious ones of which were followed.

Dick Gaughan

Coppers & Brass

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Coppers and Brass / The Gander in the Pratie Hole

Two jigs, the first of which I learned from Finbar Furey, who taught me a lot. The second I learned from Cathal McConnell, to whom I owe a great amount of anything I know in the way of tunes.

O'Keefe's Reel / The Foxhunter's Reel

I learned the first of these two reels from Liam O'Flynn. As *Tom Billie's Reel* it is included by Dave Bulmer and Neil Sharpley in the first volume of their excellent little series 'Music from Ireland'.

The Flowing Tide / The Fairies' Hornpipe

Two fairly well known hornpipes. The second comes from the playing of that giant of a man and musician, Seamus Ennis.

The Oak Tree / The Music in the Glen

Two reels which I love playing. *The Oak Tree* is very much a fiddle reel so I hope it doesn't sound too strange on guitar.

Planxty Johnson

One of the planxties composed by Turlough Carolan, the famed Irish harpist who lived from 1670 to 1738. It is played here with the fingers to try to suggest the effect of a harp. The guitar is tuned EADEAE.

Gurty's Frolics

A slip jig, that is, a jig in 9/8 time. In O'Neill's famous collection this is credited to Gillan, an Irish businessman in Chicago with a huge fancy for dance music.

The Spey in Spate / The Hurricane

Two reels composed by the legendary Scottish violinist (he didn't like being called a fiddle player), J. Scott Skinner (1843-1927), whose influence extended far outside Scotland. The river Spey runs through the area of Scotland known as Speyside whence come vast quantities of a peculiar intoxicating amber liquid called 'uisge beatha' or, in English, 'the water of life', and the form of tune native to Scotland, the strathspey. I have always had the notion that Skinner sometimes composed tunes with the aid of a slide rule, but these reels are melodic as well as being technically interesting.

Alan MacPherson ol Mosspark / The Jig of Slurs

Two 6/8 jigs for the Scottish bagpipes. The first sounds modern but I have not been able to discover its composer. The second is rather a strange tune in that it appears to be in the key of D changing to G but sustaining a drone of A. The guitar is tuned EAAEAE in an attempt to recreate the atmosphere of the pipes.

The Thrush in the Storm / The Flogging Reel

The first of these two reels can be found in Breandan Breathnach's 'Ceol rince na hEireann'. The second I learned from Finbar Furey. Some people believe it comes from the time when flogging was the common punishment for trivial misdemeanours in the days when mainly English landlords held the power of life and death in Ireland, though in fact the title may have another meaning.

Ask My Father / Lads ol Laoise / The Connaught Heifers

The first is a somewhat unusual piece of music in 12/8 time. The second two are fairly well known reels.

The Bird in the Bush / The Boy in the Gap / MacMahon's Reel

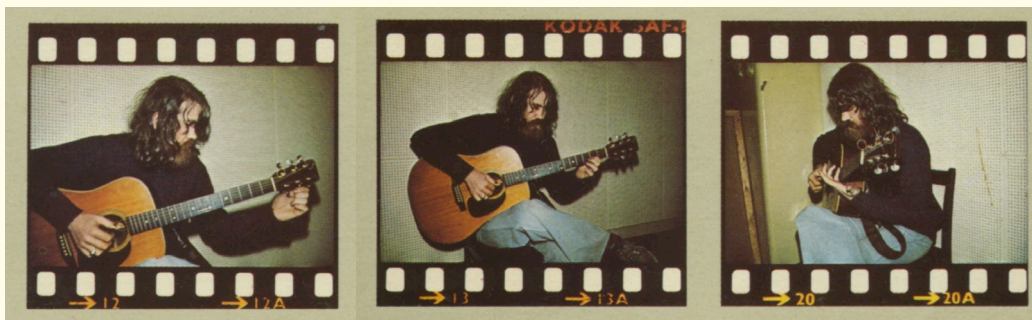
The first is sometimes called *The Bird in the Tree* but I've always known it as *The Bird in the Bush*. I learned it from an old recording of the great Sligo fiddle player, Michael Coleman. I first heard *The Boy in the Gap* on a recording by Paddy Taylor. *MacMahon's Reel* I learned from Cathal McConnell of The Boys of the Lough.

Strike the Gay Harp / Shores of Lough Gowna

Two jigs half remembered from the playing of Seamus Tansey. The change of key between these two jigs fascinates me.

Jack Broke the Prison Door / Donald Blue / Wha'll Dance wi' Wattie

Three Shetland reels learned from Aly Bain, close friend, business associate, and oftentimes drinking companion. The first was apparently written by the Jack in question after he had demolished the door of the local jail as a protest at being locked behind it, The last tune was composed for Wattie, who seems to have been the local 'bear', so the title is self-explanatory.



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