



Track 1

Grimstock ; Muneira d'Florencio ; Muneira d'Ibias

"Grimstock" is an old tune, first put into print in 1651 in John Playford's "The English Dancing Master", it is likely much older than that. It is possible that its named for Grimstock Hill, on the River Cole in Warickshire, the site of an Iron Age Celtic hill fort and temple. The second and third tunes are Muneiras, a traditional dance style from Galicia and Asturias in north-west Spain. We were taken with the similarity of feel and the compatibility of all three, and thought they would make a lovely set. "Muneira d'Florencio" comes from the playing of the late Florencio Lopez Fernandez of Fonsagrada, central Galicia, one of the last of the Galician blind fiddlers. "Muneira d'Ibias" is a traditional Asturian tune named for the beautiful Ibias region of western Asturias. We got it from the wonderful Asturian band Llan De Cubel.

Track 2

A Scottish Estuaries Set - Two Highland bagpipe marches – Cullen Bay & Farewell to Nigg

"Cullen Bay" composed by Pipe Major Ian P. Duncan, for the bay North West of Aberdeen. Unusually, it is in 5/4 time – rare amongst pipe marches, but a damn good idea, to 'go that extra leg'.

"Farewell to Nigg" by the great Duncan Johnstone, possibly to commemorate the launch of the first oil rig from the Cromarty Firth (though Roger believes it a heartfelt lament on leaving the birthplace of Glenmorangie Malt Whisky.)

It is said Johnstone composed it while on the Nigg to Cromarty ferry, writing the first four bars on the inside of a cigarette packet.

It is now held in some circles that both oil and cigarettes are bad for our health, but it's still a jolly fine tune.

Track 3

3/2 Hornpipes - Old Lancashire; The Rusty Gully; The Third Bee Keeper

Dancing the 3/2 hornpipe is typically a Northern English pursuit, clogs and all, although similar dance tunes and songs in this interesting timing are also to be found in the Welsh, Manx, and Scottish border traditions. The first is tune is old, and there is controversy about its name, known in the north-west as the "**The Old Lancashire Hornpipe**", and in Northumbria, in the north-east, as "The Reed / Read House Rant". On this album, we have favored the north-west moniker.... there's a great version on The Albion Band's mighty recording "Battle of the Field"

The middle tune, "**The Rusty Gully**", is likewise quite old, and indisputably Northumbrian. A "Gully" in Northumbrian parlance, is a long-bladed knife, and this tune is named for a rusty one of those. It's been a great favorite of several of the band members for many years, and we finally found somewhere to put it.

Jon Boden, English traditional musician and composer, also plays it, and he composed the third tune in the set, the enigmatic "**Third Beekeeper**" – we are glad he did !

And – were these 3/2 tunes originally played on an instrument called a 'Hornpipe' ?

Maybe we'll get one ! Regardless, Cymbrogi loves the 3/2s.

Track 4

Kas a Barh

A set of tunes for the dance of that name (it translates as "*send to the middle*", referring to a manoeuvre in the sequence.) We got the set from the great Breton band, Storvan, sadly no longer active.

The "*Kas a Barh*" is a couples dance, descended from the older An Dro, a circle dance. It may have arisen after the First World War, challenging the Church's preference for communal circle dances (much less likely to lead to sin ?)

The dance seems to have arisen in the Pays Vannetais, in South East Brittany.

Here's how it goes -

<https://youtu.be/KGfi0d4dRGQ>

Track 5

Bold Doherty

We first heard the song sung by Cathy Jordan, the fabulous singer for the Irish band, Dervish

It's such a fun and rousing song and we have been singing it for many years with many friends around tables and campfires

On investigation the song was said to have been collected in North Antrim in 1903. It was called *Molly of Cushendall*, an interesting note is also that a saucepan (that was being divided), is a measure of ale

Always was wondering how they were going to go ...dividing a saucepan and would it be useful once divided?

Track 6

An Briste Breidin; The Girls of Balladoole; The Humours of Whiskey

We love slip jigs (and hop jigs). Jigs have been commonly played in Ireland for many centuries, and the 9/8 slip jigs are played for a dance that many regard as "the ballet of Irish dance" for its graceful, light, 'lilting', character.

"An Briste Breidin" is thought to be a very old slip, the title meaning literally the broken / torn tweed, though our great friend, Ian Mackenzie, from whom Glenda learnt the tune, understands it

to be "The Little Frieze Breeches" – he got it from a piping record about thirty years ago.

"The Girls of Balladoole" is from Ellan Vannin – The Isle of Man, and was performed by Manx band Barrule a while back. There's a suggestion that the jig is derived from a Manx song in 3/2 time. We'd welcome further info.

BTW – Balladoole, on the island's South Coast, has a long and fascinating history, reaching back to at least the Mesolithic – check it out !

"The Humours of Whiskey" ("The High Road to Dublin") is obviously Irish – note the spelling of "Whiskey"

Track 7 – A Trip to Ystrad Cludd: Trip to Galloway; Trip to Cartmel; Dear Tobacco

Three tunes from Cumbria, in the north-west of England. This set is our homage to the old Kingdom of Strathclyde (Ystrad Cludd), the land of the Cumbrians. It once stretched from Lancashire to Glasgow, and remained largely Brythonic speaking until its final demise in the 12th century. Cumbrian shepherds could still be heard counting their sheep in the Brythonic language Cymbric, well into the 20th century.....perhaps even today.... For centuries after its demise, it was lamented in Cymraeg (Welsh) poetry as "Yr Hen Ogledd", the old north, referring to its people as "Cymbrogi", companions of the heart. These tunes remind us of the lost kingdom of Ystrad Cludd, Yr Hen Ogledd and the Cymbrogi....

Track 8

Colbagh Breck; Hunt the Squirrel; Colbagh Breck

"Colbagh Breck", the speckled heifer, is another Manx tune dating back to at least the 19th century. With a wonderfully haunting quality, belying its somewhat agricultural moniker, we thought it flowed seamlessly into Hunt the Squirrel.

We first heard "Hunt the Squirrel" played by the wonderful Martin Hayes and the Gloaming a band that we followed around when they toured in 2014 a transporative experience in many ways.

This tune seems to have had a dance to accompany it -

The dance involves a person following or 'chasing' the partner for a phrase of music, after which they turn and 'hunts' them..... the whole being a stylization of pursuing love....

It has been recorded many times, most recently by us....

Track 9 The Hills of Trencrom; Pedn Olva; Of Bare Root and Buckthorn

The four tunes in this set, which our Roger likes to call, "*the bunch of fives*", are contemporary pieces composed for the Kernewec (Cornish) dance in 5/4 time, the Kabm Pym, or Five Step. The dance itself was originally created by two doyens of the Kernewek traditional music revival, Hillary Coleman and Neil Davey. The dance is now a mainstay of the Nos Lowan (happy night) dance festivals, extremely popular in Kernow (Cornwall) and beyond.

For those keen, here is an instructional video on how to dance the Kabm Pym, featuring Neil Davey: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU9K5TAJgg0>

"Hills of Trencrom" was composed by Neil Davey. Trencrom Hill, holds a commanding position overlooking St Ives on the Kernow coast. Its use as a place of protection and refuge dates back at least 6,000 years, first as a Neolithic Stone Enclosure, then much later, a Celtic Hill Fort. Known in Kernewec as Torr Crobm, in local mythology, it's associated with the giant, Trecobben, who is credited with accidentally killing another giant, Cormelian, when he threw a hammer over Trencrom Hill. He was apparently endeavouring to "pass" Cormelian the tool.....unfortunate and a lesson in there for all of us probably....

"Pedn Olva" was also composed by Neil. The title translates as *"Lookout Headland"*. Copper has been mined in Cornwall for around 3,000 years, and it's said that the ancient Phoenicians sailed there to trade with the locals for it. The Pedn Olva mine was first sunk at Pedn Olva Point, St Ives, in the 1700s, and was operated by the optimistically named *"North Wheal Providence Mining Company"*. It is said that the mine was also used by smugglers to store brandy. Speaking of storing brandy, today the site is occupied by a renowned and charming boutique hotel, the Pedn Olva.

"Of Bare Root and Buckthorn" was composed by the extremely talented Louis Bingham, a Devon based traditional musician and composer. It is a *"suite"* of two Kabn Pymptunes in 5/4 timing, and was inspired by Louis' love of the natural world, and days spent planting bareroot fruit trees in his beloved Devon countryside. <https://louisbingham.com/2020/03/04/of-bare-roots-buds-and-buckthorn/>