

# The Braes of Marr

The musical score for "The Braes of Marr" is written in D major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of eight staves of music. The chords used are D, G, A7, and D. The score includes several repeat signs and first/second endings.

Staff 1: Chord **D** (boxed A), D

Staff 2: Chord **B** (boxed), D, G

Staff 3: Chord **C** (boxed), D, G, D, A7, D

Staff 4: Chord **1. A7** (boxed), G, D

Staff 5: Chord **A7** (boxed), **D** (boxed), G

Staff 6: Chord **D** (boxed), G, D, A7, D

Staff 7: Chord **1. G** (boxed), D, A7

Staff 8: Chord **2. G** (boxed), D, A7, D

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"The Braes of Marr", also known as "Braes o' Mar", "Braes of Mor", sometimes known as "Johnny Will You Marry Me", "Love Won't You Marry Me?", "Lasses of Donnybrook", "Lord MacDonald", "Sir Alexander McDonald's Reel" or "Some Say the Devil's Dead" is a Scottish and Canadian strathspey. It is known in Canada in Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton. It is in D Major. The parts are played AAB (Gow, Milne), AABB (Athole, Kennedy, Kerr, Skye [Old Set version]), AABB' (Perlman, Skye), AABBC (Cranford/Holland), AABCD (Dunlay & Greenberg/Campbell), AABBCCD (Davie, Martin), AABBCDD (Dunlay and Reich) or AABB'CCDD' (Skinner).

It is attributed to John Coutts of Deeside and used for the dance the Highland Fling or Highland Schottische.

Imported by Scottish emigrants to the new world, "Braes of Marr" is considered an old tune in the Cape Breton and Nova Scotia fiddling repertoire. The third turn may be of Cape Breton origins. From there it perhaps entered into French-Canadian fiddling repertoire, for Willie Ringuette recorded the melody as a reel in 1927 under the title "*Reel des noces*".

In western Ireland the tune is known as "Johnny Will You Marry Me" and is used for the dance "the Fling". Irish versions of strathspeys usually are played as reels, without the distinctive dotted rhythm. It was printed in Anderson's **Anderson's Budget of Strathspeys, Reels & Country Dances** (c. 1820), Carlin's **The Gow Collection** (1986), Cranford's **Jerry Holland: The Second Collection** (2000), Davie's **Davie's Caledonian Repository** (1829-30), Dunlay & Greenberg's **Traditional Celtic Violin Music of Cape Breton** (1996), Dunlay and Reich's **Traditional Celtic Fiddle Music of Cape Breton** (1986), Gow's **Complete Repository, Part 2** (1802), Gow's **Complete Repository, Part 3** (1806), Henderson's **Flowers of Scottish Melody** (1935), Honeyman's **Strathspey, Reel and Hornpipe Tutor** (1898), Hunter's **The Fiddle Music of Scotland** (1988), Kennedy's **Fiddler's Tune-Book, vol. 2** (1954), Kerr's **Merry Melodies, vol. 1** (c. 1880), Lowe's **Collection of Reels, Strathspeys and Jigs, book 3** (1844-1845), MacDonald's **The Skye Collection** (1887), Martin's **Traditional Scottish Fiddling** (2002), Milne's **Middleton's Selection of Strathspeys, Reels &c. for the Violin** (1870), Morison's **Highland Airs and Quicksteps, vol. 2** (c. 1882), Perlman's **The Fiddle Music of Prince Edward Island** (1996), Skinner's **Harp and Claymore** (1904), Stewart-Robertson's **The Athole Collection** (1884) and Banalari's **Celtic Encyclopedia** (1999).

It was recorded by Hector MacKenzie on **MacNeil's Highland Ceilidh** (1992), Alasdair Fraser & Jody Stecher on **The Driven Bow** (1988), Doug MacPhee on **Cape Breton Piano** (1977), Winnie Chafe on **Highland Melodies of Cape Breton** (1979), Donny LeBlanc on **Rosining Up the Bow** (1993), Tommy Basker on **The Tin Sandwich** (1994), Dan Joe MacInnis on **Celtic Music of Cape Breton, vol. I.** and Jerry Holland on **Crystal Clear** (2000).