

This tune is an old Gaelic tune that I first heard on David Russell's "Message of the Sea" CD. I looked in all my Gaelic tune books and couldn't find it anywhere. I wrote David Russell and he said he had no plans to publish it. I started work on transcribing David's arrangement but decided it was far too difficult to play "nicely" at my skill level. So, I decided to make an arrangement that an advanced beginner or intermediate player could play. This is it.

In searching online the first question was the meaning of Mòrag. Several definitions came up including "star of the sea", lake, great, and the name Mary. I was in Scotland last year and asked the locals. Almost everyone replied "That's the name "Mary"". Jeff Ashton, my guitar teacher and friend of many years found an early photostat of a book containing the piece. The title of the book on the photostat was "Hamilton Universal Tune Book". I transcribed that piece as best I could into Finale and included it here for those who might be interested in making their own arrangement. I also found online a small group singing the piece (in Gaelic). I would like to see that in written form and translated which might give more meaning to the title.

My arrangement follows that of David Russell's. It takes the "Hamilton" tune and swaps the order of the two themes. This gives it a more haunting and dramatic feel. I expanded the middle section by just doing a slight variation on the tune. The tuning is "drop D". There are one or two places where I've indicated a "b natural". That is intended. I harmonized this to be a bit Dorian.

I've added the fingerings I am using. I was reluctant to do this because I prefer to find my own fingerings when I look at a new piece. Still, I was advised to always add fingerings (I'm sure the older players remember the clamor on the unfingered Villa-Lobos pieces!). If anyone wants an unfingered version of this please contact me and I'll mail you one so you can do your own fingerings. I very much appreciate Jeff Ashton giving his advice and making suggestions on this arrangement. I can be contacted at ricktinling@comcast.net

Mòrag

From Hamilton Universal
Tune Book

Traditional Gaelic
Air

Slow



Mòrag

Arranged for Guitar
by James Tinling

Traditional Gaelic
Air

⑥ = D 1/2 CX 1/2 CIII

3

6

9 1/2 CV

12

15 *rit.* harm 5