

FIDDLE AND BOX TUNES

The North East Style

Strathspey

The North East Style: This is in grateful memory of the playing of Hector MacAndrew and the huge talent of composer William Marshall of Fochabers (1748-1833). Hector was acquainted with Bob Brown and Bob Nicol and on at least one occasion played a joint concert with them. His father Peter MacAndrew was a piper and fiddler and initially trained Hector on the pipes, but the latter suffered from nosebleeds when he played and decided to concentrate on the fiddle. Although the absolute apogee of the North-East fiddle style, he remained strongly influenced by pipe music throughout his career. Inspired by the pipers he heard in the North African desert campaign during the Second World War, he vowed that if he were spared he would do everything in his power to advance the cause of Scottish music. He was a consummate musician, with wonderful phrasing and expression, and I was much influenced by his recordings, although too timid to go and visit him in the flesh. Of William Marshall it is difficult to add to John Glen's appraisal that he was "the most brilliant as well as the most prolific composer of strathspey music Scotland ever produced" (*The Glen Collection of Scottish Dance Music*, vol.2, 1895, p.69).