Reels

Reels are very old and over time their expression and timing among pipers has changed dramatically, reflecting the increased importance of competition playing. In the 19th century they were played much rounder than today and could be alternatively played as either a Strathspey or a reel. The major difference between a reel and what was formerly known as a Strathspey-reel is timing and rhythm. From a step-dancers perspective most bands and solo pipers today do not play a "true " reel, but a Strathspey-reel. For many of the old dance players, the Strathspey version of tune precedes the reel version, and the contrast is quite effective. As a good friend mentioned to me many years ago "The Strathspey are the appetizer but the reels are the main course!"

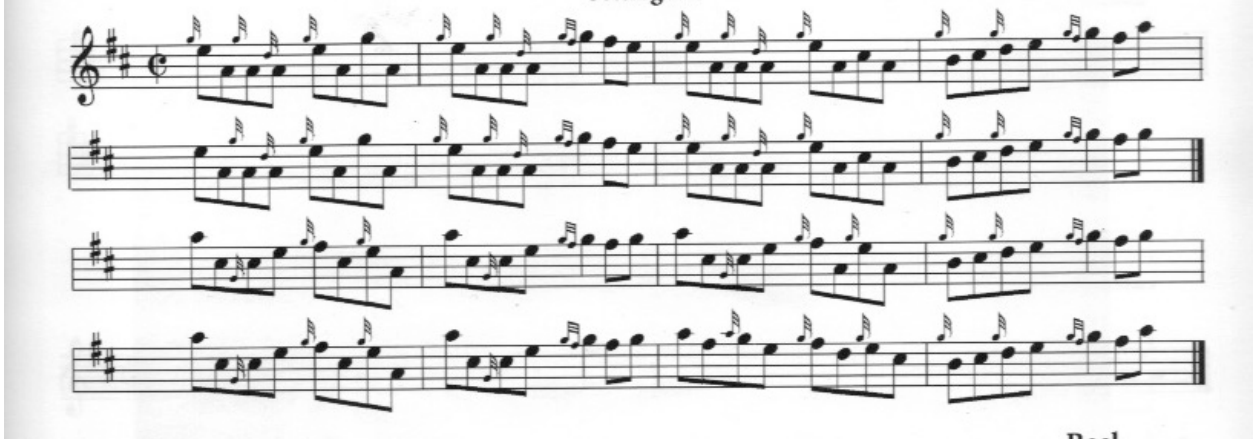
Musical examples*: The Devil in the Kitchen, The High Road to Linton, Roddy MacDonald's Fancy*

152. The Devil in the Kitchen

Setting III

Reel

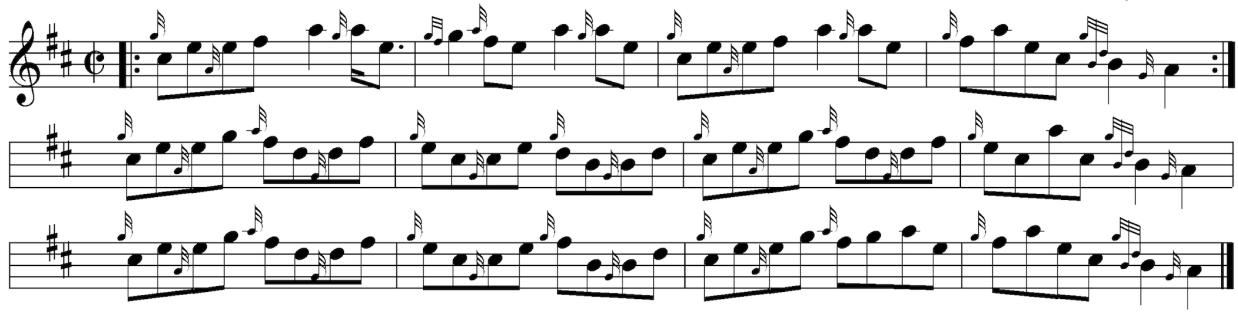
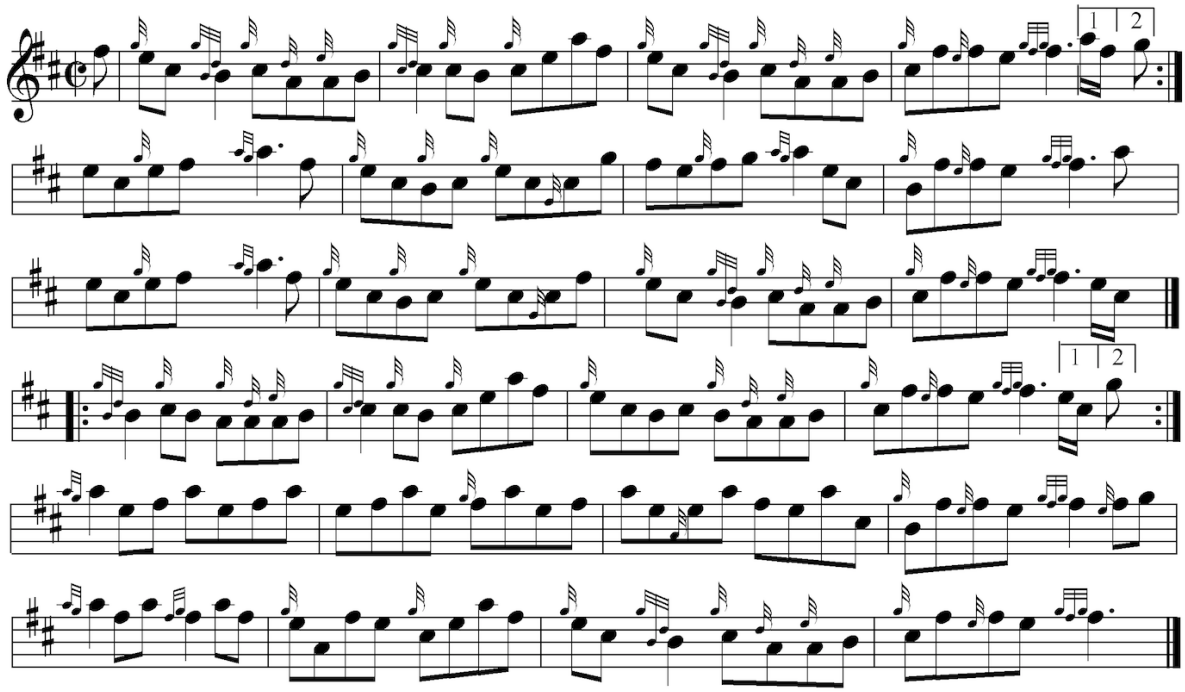
Arr. Barry Shears



26. The High Road to Linton

Reel

Arr: Barry Shears



Roddy MacDonald's Fancy