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Introduction

The Ring of Harps is a collection of some of my favorite tunes from Scotland and Ireland. Working with great melodies, I enjoyed writing these arrangements, and the music seemed to suggest places, people, and a visual landscape. Harp sounds seem to naturally portray the motion of water and wind. The lonely beauty of the sea, islands and peninsular landscapes of Ireland and Scotland are felt in tunes from these places.

In **Cliffs of Moher**, I was remembering the steep walk up the path to the hilltop where a splendid view unfolds, of the majestic cliffs, with rippling seas all around. For **The Aran Boat Song**, I imagined a journey of long ago, when the inhabitants of Aran rowed to and from the mainland in canvas covered currachs. The arrangement begins with patterns of sun glistening on the water, and there are seabirds above, and the rhythm of rowing. After the motion of the crossing, the boat arrives home on the island.

The haunting melody in **One Day I was Travelling the Mountains** suggests another sort of journey, perhaps by foot. There are glimpses of beauty amidst the ponderous thoughts of the traveller. A very different person is portrayed in **Little Donald of the Sweets**. In the arrangement, we see his swagger and hear the jingling of coins in his pocket.

In **The Butterfly**, the playful motion of flight is felt, as well as the fluttering of butterfly wings. For an old lullaby from South Uist, **I Will Not Rock You to Sleep**, the character of the arrangement has an ancient quality. Similarly, for the 18th c. tune, **Miss Murphy** by Turlough O'Carolan(1670-1738) the style and harmonies of the period are reflected in the arrangement.

Playing in a harp ensemble is bliss! These arrangements have multi-level parts so everyone can join in and play together.

I dedicate this book to harp rings everywhere!

Nancy Hurrell
2007





Loch Gamhna

Reel
♩=140

Traditional Irish
Arr. Nancy Hurrell

Measures 1-3 of the piece. The treble clef staff contains a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The bass clef staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and eighth notes.

Measures 4-7 of the piece. The treble clef staff continues the melody. The bass clef staff continues the accompaniment. A measure rest is present in the bass staff at the beginning of measure 4.

Measures 8-11 of the piece. Measures 8 and 9 are marked with a repeat sign. The treble clef staff features a melodic line with some grace notes. The bass clef staff has a more complex accompaniment with chords and eighth notes.

Measures 12-14 of the piece. The treble clef staff continues the melody. The bass clef staff continues the accompaniment. A measure rest is present in the bass staff at the beginning of measure 12.

Measures 15-17 of the piece. The treble clef staff continues the melody. The bass clef staff continues the accompaniment. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots in both staves.