

Tune of the Month By Amy Shaw

Every now and then I use a tune here simply because I like it. My source for The Plough and the Stars is the young concertina player, Kate McNamara, who played it at the 2009 Willie Clancy Summer School. Her performance was included in the *Rogha Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy* compilation recording for that year. (I highly recommend all the *Rogha* CDs, which are chock full of great music from the concerts and recitals at the summer school.) Kate hails from near Tulla in East Clare. Apparently she was a student of the great concertina player Mary McNamara, but the two are not from the same family. In 2008, Kate released her debut CD, *Are You the Concertina Player?*

“The Plough” is another name for the constellation known as the Big Dipper. *The Plough and the Stars* is also a famous work by the Irish playwright Sean O’Casey that concerns the Easter Rising of 1916. First performed in 1926 at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, the play certainly “ploughed” up a lot of controversy – there was an actual riot during one of the performances!

Usual disclaimers: Any transcription errors are my own. The notation here is not meant to be a substitute for listening. It is simply an aid to learning the tune.

The Plough and the Stars

Rhythm: Reel

Source: Kate McNamara (concertina), *Rogha Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy* 2009, disc 1, track 7