

## Dulcimers in Scotland

Despite the drop in its popularity after the piano came to power in the 18th C the dulcimer didn't die out totally in the UK. A few areas became 'strongholds' for the instrument. One of these areas was Glasgow in Scotland.

Dulcimer and melodeon duos were popular for dances.

Jimmy Cooper, a Glasgow dulcimer player in the early 20th century had decided opinions about other instruments...

*"The fiddle was looked on as a very unusual instrument... in fact you were looked on as a cissy if you played the fiddle... I knew one or two fiddlers but they never amounted to much."*



One of the best-known dulcimer players in late 19thC/ early 20thC in Scotland was **William McNally**, who began his musical career playing in theatres, hotels and private social events in Scotland, before taking his musical performances further afield throughout Europe. He appeared on BBC radio broadcasts and made several recordings.

### ***"Sawing up the coal-house door": after the First World War***

*"There were dozens of dulcimer players after the first war - they were so easily made. Now, the likes of violins and accordions were expensive and we'd no money to buy them, so you'd to make your own instrument. They had wee houses, no bathrooms, just single ends and down in the yard were coal cellars where you kept the coal - I've seen them take the door up and saw it up to make a dulcimer, a couple of planks of wood for the sides, old keys [tuning pins] from a piano."*

**Jimmy Cooper, Glasgow dulcimer player, early 20thC**



Though not the smallest of instruments for shipboard life, this dulcimer - on HMS Edinburgh - was centre-stage during the Spithead 'Review of the Fleet' for **Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee** in 1897

