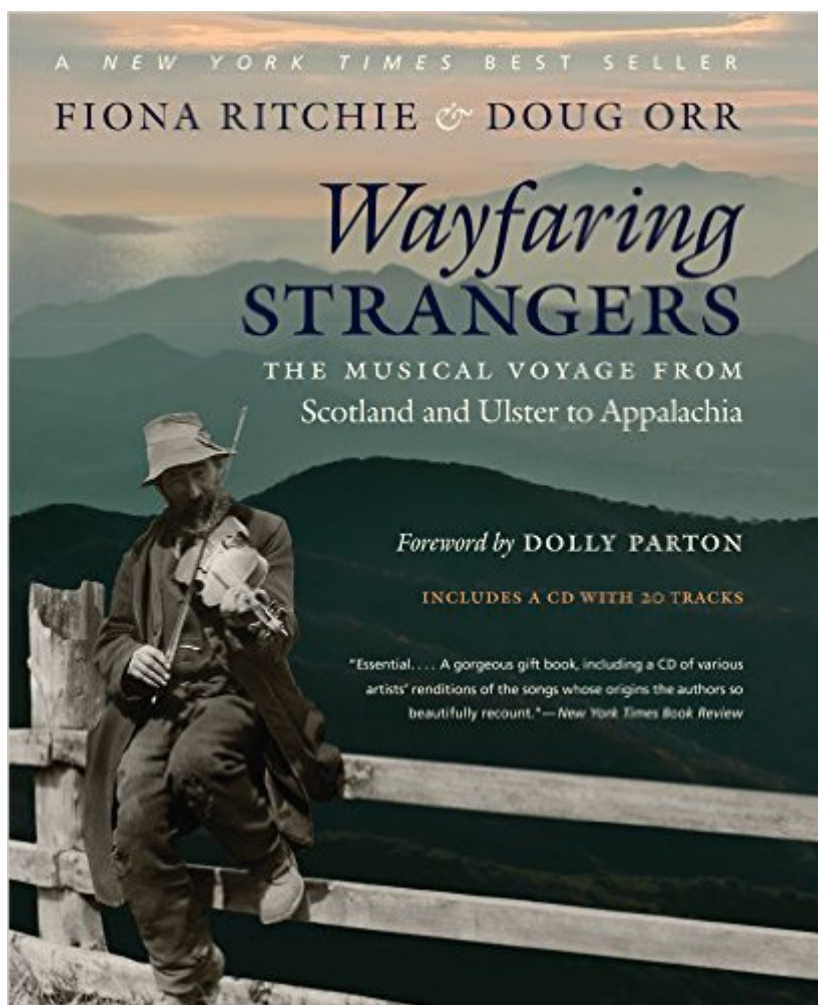


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Wayfaring Strangers: The Musical Voyage From Scotland And Ulster To Appalachia



Synopsis

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a steady stream of Scots migrated to Ulster and eventually onward across the Atlantic to resettle in the United States. Many of these Scots-Irish immigrants made their way into the mountains of the southern Appalachian region. They brought with them a wealth of traditional ballads and tunes from the British Isles and Ireland, a carrying stream that merged with sounds and songs of English, German, Welsh, African American, French, and Cherokee origin. Their enduring legacy of music flows today from Appalachia back to Ireland and Scotland and around the globe. In *Wayfaring Strangers*, Fiona Ritchie and Doug Orr guide readers on a musical voyage across oceans, linking people and songs through centuries of adaptation and change. From ancient ballads at the heart of the tradition to instruments that express this dynamic music, Ritchie and Orr chronicle the details of an epic journey. Enriched by the insights of key contributors to the living tradition on both sides of the Atlantic, this abundantly illustrated volume includes a CD featuring 20 songs by musicians profiled in the book, including Dolly Parton, Dougie MacLean, Cara Dillon, John Doyle, Pete Seeger, Sheila Kay Adams, Jean Ritchie, Doc Watson, David Holt, Anais Mitchell, Al Petteway, and Amy White.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book took a lot of jigsaw pieces in my head and shook them all in to place. My years of listening to Ritchie's Thistle & Shamrock show and bluegrass music and my knowledge of American and Scottish history all fell into place to give my brain a grand, coherent narrative of the

subject. I was acquainted with many of the musicians, singers, recordings, poets, and historical events mentioned, but there was plenty I learned:— Why American blacks became so dissociated with the instrument, the banjo, they brought from Africa.— How the final gatherings of family and friends before some crossed the sea became the inspiration for many songs.— Why the bagpipes did not cross the sea to America and how the dulcimer entered Appalachia music.— The efforts of American "songcatchers" to continue the work of Robert Burns and Walter Scott.— The differences in performance and recordings between bluegrass and "old time music".— Why the 1927 recordings in Bristol, Tennessee/Virginia are considered the "Big Bang" of country music.— The relation of the Ulster Scots to the "regular Scots" and the immigrants who came to America.— The influence of Cherokee culture on Appalachian music and the close ties between the Cherokee and descendants of immigrant Scots. (Well, except Andrew Jackson.) The book has a wealth of ancillary material: a discography of suggested recordings, biographies of the figures mentioned, a timeline putting the history and music into context, and notes for the accompany cd. I have recordings by a lot of the people mentioned, but I picked up suggestions for future listening: the Carolina Chocolate Drops, Anais Miller, and Jefferson Hamer. There are a few minor gripes.

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