

## The Earl of Ross's March

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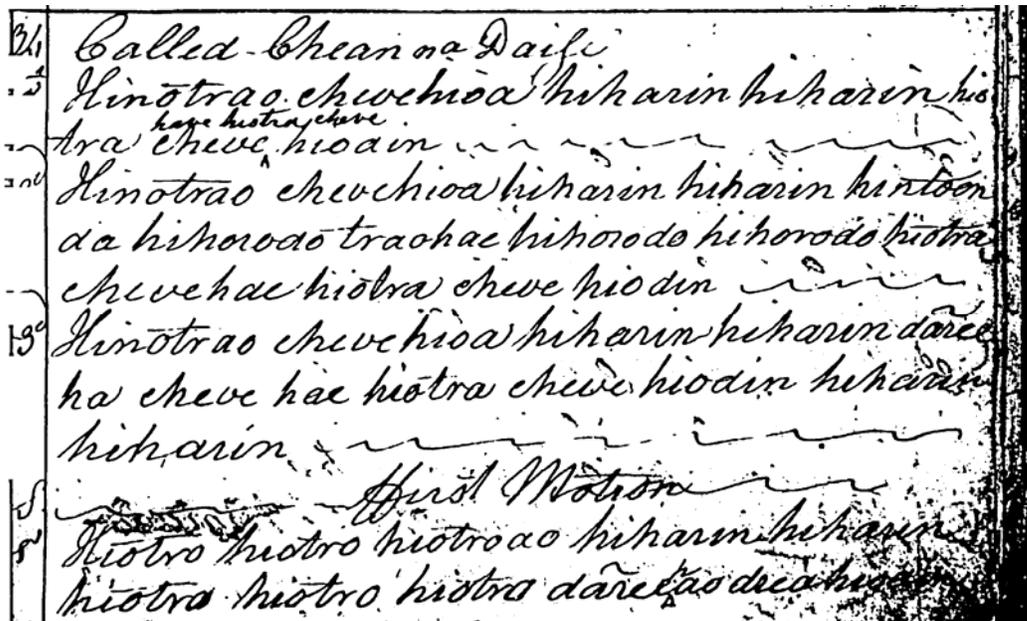
There are settings of this tune in the following MS sources:

- Colin Mór Campbell's** Nether Lorn Canntaireachd, ii, 82-5 (with the title "Chean na Daise")
- Donald MacDonald's** MS, ff.6-9
- Peter Reid's** MS, ff.17-18
- David Glen's** MS, ff.130-135

And in the following published sources:

- Niel MacLeod of Gesto**, *Pibereach or pipe tunes* (1828), pp. 16-19 (with the title "Kiaunidize")
- Angus MacKay**, *Ancient Piobaireachd*, pp.122-4 ("Composed by Donald Mor MacCrummen. About the Year 1600." according to MacKay/Logan)
- C. S. Thomason**, *Ceol Mor*, pp. 201-2

**Colin Campbell's** setting begins like this:



2<sup>o</sup> Hiotro hiotro hiotroao hiharim hiharim hio  
 todrea hihoroao hao drea hihoroao hih  
 orao hiotro hiotro hiotro dree hao drea  
 hiodin

3<sup>o</sup> Hiotro hiotro hiotroao hiharim hihao  
 dreeha chetro dreehao drea hiodin  
 hiharim four times

4<sup>o</sup> Chetro chetro chetroao hiharim hiharim  
 chetro chetro chetro dreehao drea hio  
 5<sup>o</sup> Chetro chetro chetroao hiharim hiharu  
 hinto drea hihoroao hao drea hihoroao  
 hihoroao chetro chetro chetro dreeha  
 o drea hiodin

6<sup>o</sup> Chetro chetro chetroao hiharim hih  
 rin dreeha chetro dree hao drea hio  
 din hiharim hiharim

Second

7<sup>o</sup> Hinda hinto hinto hinda hiharim hiharu  
 hinto hinto hinda hinda hinto hinda  
 hiodin

8<sup>o</sup> Hinda hinto hinto hinda hiharim hih  
 rin hinto hinda hihoroao hinda hinda  
 hihoroao hihoroao hinda four times  
 hinto hinda hiodin

9<sup>o</sup> Hinda hinto hinto hinda hiharim hih  
 rin hinto hinto hinda hinda hinto hinto  
 hinda hinto hiharim four times

10<sup>o</sup> Hinda hinto hinda hinto hinda hinda  
 hinto

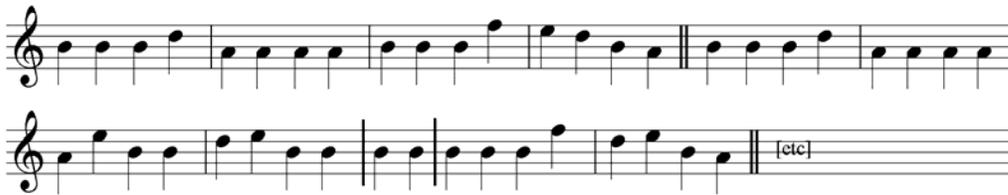
And so on.

None of the settings seems "regular" in the modern acceptance of the term. There are differences in line lengths, apparently "redundant" beats, and a tone row which, in Colin Campbell's case at any rate, changes between the various movements:

Earl of Ross, tone row, Colin Campbell, ground



Earl of Ross, Colin Campbell, tone row, first variation singling



One problem for the interpreter in many of the "Earl of Ross" scores lies in the timing of variation one. Colin Mór's version could imply something along the following lines:

Earl of Ross's March, Nether Lorn, possible rhythmical pattern for variation 1.



which would suggest perhaps:



or



It is difficult at some points to get the Nether Lorn score to scan rhythmically. Also there seems to be an "extra" double echo on B in line 2; nor is Colin Mór consistent in the number of eallachs at the end of each part. He begins at 4, 6, 6 in the ground (if you add the extra hiharin); but his doublings are short and oddly constructed like everybody else's in this tune.

**Donald MacDonald** plays his eallachs "down." His ground, like Colin Mór's, is a little erratic. He points his siubhal predominantly "down," while Angus MacKay plays his "up." MacDonald's doublings seem strangely truncated throughout:

A handwritten musical score consisting of 12 staves. The notation is written in black ink on a white background. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The music is a single melodic line, featuring a variety of note values including eighth, sixteenth, and thirty-second notes, as well as rests. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots. The handwriting is clear and legible, typical of a composer's manuscript.

A handwritten musical score consisting of 12 staves. The notation is dense and includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The score is written in a cursive, handwritten style. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The music is organized into measures across the staves, with some measures containing complex rhythmic patterns and accidentals.

A handwritten musical score for a single melodic line, likely for a flute or violin. The music is written on 12 staves in a 6/8 time signature. The notation includes a variety of rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together in groups. There are also rests and some dynamic markings. The handwriting is clear and professional, typical of a composer's manuscript.



**Peter Reid** has his usual nice little reflexive gracenotes. He is different from MacDonald and turns the ground rather more nicely; plus he has a thumb variation which nobody else has got and it works well with this tune, but he still seems "out" in his variations:

*Pòrtaich an t-Sìobha*  
*The Seal of the Royal Society*

*Apprentice*  
*Surv. W. H. H. H.*  
*of the Royal Socy*

*slow*

*Variation*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Variation* *Pointed*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Variation* *Revised*

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation. At the top, there are two staves of music. The first staff is marked 'Variation 1' and the second 'Variation 2'. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines. Below the staves, there are two lines of lyrics written in cursive. The first line reads 'Horsing over the hills' and the second line reads 'D. MacKay's ground from Parthenon. Found the original in 1844. John Graham Speer's ground from 1844. Found the original in 1844.' The page is framed by a thick black border.

David Glen gives both MacKay's and MacDonald's grounds, following MacKay from var.1 onwards, commenting "McD being far wrong." Both are marked as "edited." Gives as an alternative title, "Heds of Corn. Ears of Corn," presumably following Gesto. Glen corrects the missing bar in MacKay's crunluath doubling as well. Both settings are given below as offering an interesting insight into the editorial process:

1.30  
The Earl of Ross's March or Pibroch. Heads down  
Urslar (from midlands ms.) Edited least of them

For the  
to the  
see  
1334126

Urslar from Mackay's coll. Edited. added from the Amp's set

in 2000  
9th Dec

Mackay's bar. 1st (Edited) from a volume of Mackay's (which was a copy of Mackay's) but not a copy of Mackay's  
no. 20  
being  
bar  
wrong

Bar 2<sup>nd</sup> (Play 3 times from beginning of bar)

1<sup>st</sup> time

2<sup>nd</sup> time

3<sup>rd</sup> time

Doubling. Play 3 times

1<sup>st</sup> time

2<sup>nd</sup> time

3<sup>rd</sup> time

Bar 3<sup>rd</sup> (Triple bar)

1<sup>st</sup> time

2<sup>nd</sup> time

3<sup>rd</sup> time

Doubling

1<sup>st</sup> time

2<sup>nd</sup> time

3<sup>rd</sup> time

132

Grim-math. *Play 3 times*

*Play 3 times*

1<sup>st</sup> time

2<sup>nd</sup> time

3<sup>rd</sup> time

Bus

Doubling

*Play 3 times*

1<sup>st</sup> time

2<sup>nd</sup> time

3<sup>rd</sup> time

The Donald Gunn of the Shetland or termination of  
the Grim-math

Mcdonalds Bars (Very much edited).

133

Handwritten musical score for 'Mcdonalds Bars'. The score is written on ten staves. The first staff is marked with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several annotations in the score: '6/8' and '13/16' in the first staff; 'troubled' written below the third staff; 'Doubling' written to the left of the fourth staff; and 'Doubling (added by self. M's all wrong & newly all awaiting.)' written below the sixth staff. The score concludes with a double bar line.

(Last combi)  
(15 Bars)  
Over the  
see below  
page 130

**Angus MacKay's** published setting is if anything even more irregular than MacDonald's. His ground is 4, 6, 6; Var 1=6, 8, 8; Var 2 singling 4, 7, [misplaced 'bis' sign] 6; doubling is 4, 6, 6; taorluath fogsailte singling is 7, 11, 9; doubling is 7, and then a long line of 20 bars. Angus then repeats the ground. Crunluath singling is 7, 11, 8; doubling 7, long line of 20 bars, probably dividing 11, 9. MacKay is followed by the Piobaireachd Society editors with minor

changes to time signatures and the silent omission of his instructions to repeat the ground after the taorluath and crunluath doublings:

122

**SPADSEARACHD IARLA ROIS.**  
**The Earl of Ross's March.**

Composed by

**Donald Mor Mac Crummen.**

About the Year 1000.

XLVIII.



Variation 1.

Variation 2.

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. It begins with a series of eighth-note patterns. The first section is labeled "Doubling of Variation 2" and contains two measures marked "1st" and "2nd". This is followed by "Variation 3", which consists of two measures marked "1st" and "2nd". A section labeled "Doubling of Variation 3" follows, with two measures marked "1st" and "2nd". The score concludes with a "Bis" marking. The piece is identified as "D.C. Thema."

124

*Crun-luath.*

*Doubling of Crun-luath.*

*D.C. Thema.*

Niel MacLeod of Gesto begins as follows:

No. VII.

*Played at a time when the Scotts were at War in  
England, and obliged to feed on the Ears of  
Corn for want of Provision, commonly called  
KIAUNIDIZE.*

I him botrao, hievio va,  
hierin, hierin,  
ho dra, hievi, havie,  
ho dra, hievi, hiodin,  
him bodrao, hievio va,  
hiererin, hiererin,  
hindo, hinda, hierero,  
hao, havi, hierero,  
hierero, ho dra, hievi, havi,  
ho dra, hievi, hiodin,  
him bodrao, hievio va,  
hiererin hiererin,  
betrio, ha hievi, havi,  
hodra, hievi, hiodin,  
hiererine, hiererine,  
hiererine, hiererine.

1st Var. I hiedro, hiedro, hiedro, vao,  
hiererine, hiererine,  
hiedro, hiedro, hiedro, hiedro bitrio, vao,  
bietria, hiodine,  
hiedro, hiedro, hiedro, vao,  
hiererine, hiererine.

hindo, bitrica, hierero,  
 vao bietria, hierero,  
 hierero, hiedro, hiedro, hiedro,  
 bietrio, vao. bietria. hiodin,  
 hiedro, hiedro, hiedro vao,  
 hiererine, hiererine,  
 bietrio, va hiedro, bietrio, vao,  
 botria, hiodine,  
 hiererine, hiererine,  
 hiererine, hiererine.

2d Var. I hinda, hindo, hindo, hinda,  
 hiererine, hiererine,  
 hindo, hindo, hinda, hinda,  
 hindo, hinda, hi odine,  
 hinda, hindo, hindo, hinda,  
 hiererine, hiererine,  
 hindo, hinda, hierero, hierero,  
 hinda, hinda, hierero, hierero,  
 hinda, hinda, hinda, hinda,  
 hindo, hinda, hio dine,  
 hinda, hindo, hindo, hinda,  
 hiererine, hiererine,  
 hindo, hindo, hinda, hinda,  
 hindo, hinda, hinda, hindo,  
 hiererine, hiererine,  
 hiererine, hiererine.

ouble. I hinda hindo, hinda hinda,  
 hindo hindo, hinda hinda,  
 hindo hinda, hindo hinda,  
 hindo hindo, hinda hinda,  
 hinda hindo, hindo hinda,  
 hindo hindo, hinda hinda,  
 hindo hinda, hindo hindo,  
 hinda hinda, hindo hindo,  
 hinda hinda, hinda hinda,  
 hindo hinda, hindo hindo,  
 hinda hindo, hinda hinda,  
 hindo hinda, hindo hindo.

and so on.

Thomason bases his score on MacKay and is unable therefore to resolve the timing difficulties which I, at least, think attach to MacKay's first variation. I do not see how to time this section in any way pleasingly.

*Commentary:*

The disputed succession to the fertile and strategically important Earldom of Ross long kept the north in ferment. Donald, Lord of the Isles, having been deprived of the Earldom through various kinds of feudal skulduggery, marched upon Aberdeen, and was defeated on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1411 at a place called Harlaw in the uplands of the Garioch by a force of North-East gentry and the citizens of Aberdeen. It was a brutal, drawn encounter, known locally as "the reid Harlaw," and is celebrated in a ballad sung to this day, "The Battle of Harlaw," notable alike for the energy of its language and an historical inaccuracy more or less complete. The tune goes somewhat thus:



The words begin:

As I cam' in by Dunideer,  
 An' doon by Netherha',  
 There was fifty thoosan' Hielandmen  
 A' marchin' tae Harlaw.  
*Wi' my dirrum doo,*  
*My fal de dal,*  
*My diddie and a day.*

[...]The first straik that Lord Forbes strack ["Forbes" *pron.* as an evenly stressed  
 He gar't MacDonald reel; disyllable: "For-biss"]  
 The neist straik that Lord Forbes strack  
 The great MacDonald fell.  
*Wi' my dirrum doo, [etc.]*

An' siccan a pileerichie  
 The like ye never saw;  
 As was amang the Hielandmen  
 When they saw MacDonald fa'.  
*Wi' my dirrum doo, [etc]*  
 (Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection, song 112)



And so on. (The curious will find it sung in stirring style by Andy Hunter in his album, *King Fareweel*, Lismor Folk, LIFL 7002).

This was more than a raid. If MacDonald had taken Aberdeen he would have cut the country in two, effectively controlling most of the north and poised, not just to defy the King of Scots but to replace him.

After a good many further contretemps, the Earldom of Ross was detached from the Lordship of the Isles and annexed to the crown in 1476.

\* \* \*

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