

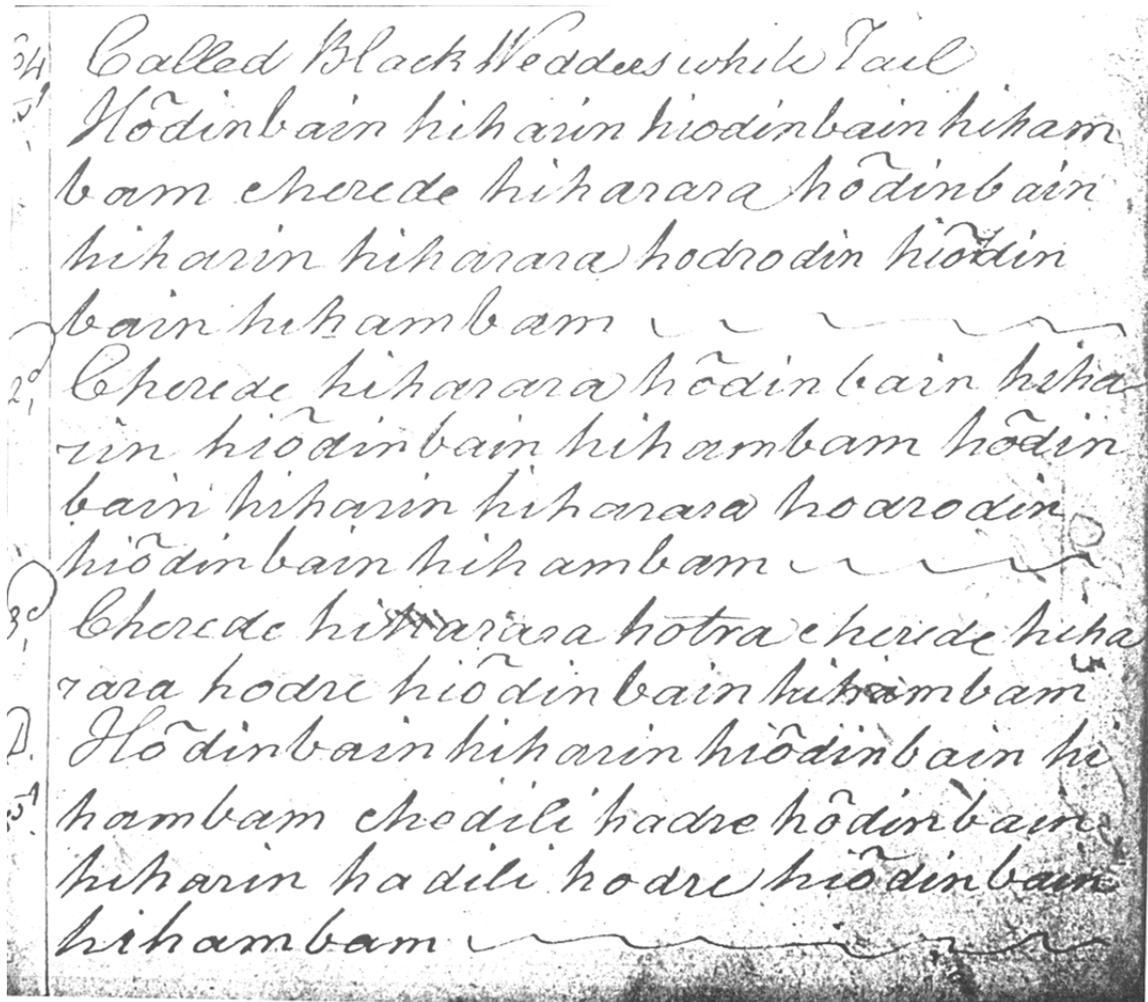
## Black Wedder's White Tail

There is a setting of this tune in the following manuscript source:

– Colin Mór Campbell's "Nether Lorn Canntaireachd," ii, 144-7

It does not seem to be contained in any other written source before 1914.

Colin Mór sets the tune as follows:



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2<sup>d</sup> Chedili hadre hōdin bain hiharain hō  
 din bain hihambam hōdin bain hiharain  
 hadili hodre hōdin bain hihambam

3<sup>d</sup> Chdili hadre hōtra hodre hadili hodre  
 hōdin bain hihambam

S First Motion

5<sup>d</sup> Hoen hinen hoen himen cheen haen  
 hoen hinen haen hoen hoen

2<sup>d</sup> Himen cheen haen hoen hinen hoen  
 himen hoen hinen haen hoen hoen

3<sup>d</sup> Himen cheen haen hoen hoen haen  
 hoen hoen himen

D Hoho hinen hioco himen cheche  
 haha hoho hinen haha hoho hoee

2<sup>d</sup> Himen cheche haha hoho hinen hoee  
 himen hoho hinen hahahoho hioco

3<sup>d</sup> Himen cheche haha hoho hoho haha  
 hōho hoee himen

S Laolive

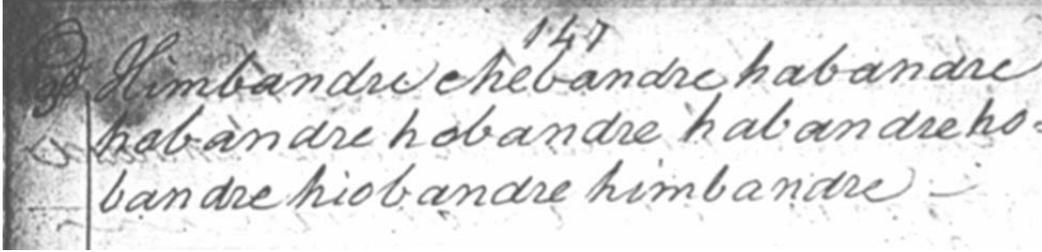
5<sup>d</sup> Hodarid hindarid hōdin himdarid  
 chedarid hadarid hōdin hindarid  
 hadarid hōdarid hōdin

2<sup>d</sup> Himdarid chedarid hadarid hōdin  
~~rid~~ hindarid hōdarid himdarid  
~~hōdarid~~ hindarid hadarid hōda  
 rid hōdin

3<sup>d</sup> Himdarid chedarid hadarid hōda  
 rid hōdarid hadarid hōdarid hōdin  
 himdarid

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1. Hodarid hindauid hiodarid himdauid  
 che darid hadarid hodarid hundauid  
 hadarid hodarid hiodarid  
 2. Himdarid che darid hadarid hoda  
 rid hindauid hiodarid himdarid ho  
 darid hindauid hadarid hodarid  
 hiodarid  
 3. Himdarid che darid hadarid hoda  
 rid hodarid hadarid hiodarid hio  
 darid himdarid  
 4. Loulive  
 5. Hobandre hinbandre hiodin himban  
 dre chebandre habandre hodin him  
 bandre habandre hobandre hiodin  
 6. Himbandre chebandre habandre  
 hodin hinbandre hiodin himban  
 dre hodin hinbandre habandre ho  
 bandre hiodin  
 7. Himbandre chebandre habandre  
 hobandre hobandre habandre ho  
 bandre hiodin himbandre  
 8. Hobandre hinbandre hiobandre himban  
 dre chebandre habandre hobandre  
 himbandre habandre hobandre  
 hiobandre  
 9. Himbandre chebandre habandre  
 hobandre hinbandre hiobandre  
 himbandre hobandre himbandre  
 habandre hobandre hiobandre



### Commentary:

This curiously-named tune occurs only in the Nether Lorn Canntaireachd MS. A fine bold piece if played up to time, it offers the performer many interesting interpretational choices, as discussed in the accompanying MP3 file.

The Black Wedder with the White Tail is a semi-mythical creature who featured in the disputes between the Colquhouns and the MacGregors that culminated in the Rout of Glenfruin. The story is a well-known one; it was cited by Sir Walter Scott in *Rob Roy*, and there are numerous online sources which give the details, including the following:

The old castle of Bannachra, the ruin of which stands on the rising ground in the mouth of Glenfruin behind, was in 1592 the scene of a tragic incident. In one of the feuds of the time, Sir Humphrey, chief of the Colquhouns, was beset by his enemies here. His servant was induced to betray him, and in lighting him up a stair so shone a candle on him as to make him a mark for those outside, who shot him with an arrow through a loophole. The deed has been blamed upon the Macgregors and Macfarlanes, but in Birrell's Diary it is stated that on "Nov. 30 John Cachoune was beheidit at the Crosse of Edinburghe for murdering of his auen brother, the Laird of Lusse," and as it was not John Colquhoun but the next brother Alexander who succeeded Sir Humphrey, Birrell's statement seems to point to the truth. This Sir Alexander, who succeeded, was the chief who took part, eleven years later, in the conflict with the Macgregors, known as the battle of Glenfruin, The ruin of Bannachra overlooks the scene. According to the Macgregors the feud was caused by the Colquhoun Chief hanging two Macgregors who had stolen and suppered off a sheep, though they afterwards offered to pay for it. There is evidence, however, that Clan Gregor was really set on by the Earl of Argyll, who was Colquhoun's bitter enemy. Some three hundred were engaged on each side, but Alastair Macgregor, more practised in war than his opponent, divided his forces, attacked the Colquhouns in front and rear, and soon threw them into confusion. He pursued them to the gates of Rossdhu, and slew a hundred and forty of them, while he himself lost only two followers, including his brother John. Sir Walter Scott, in his novel of *Rob Roy*, makes the Macgregor boatmen, as they row Bailie Nicol Jarvie down Loch Lomond, entertain him with a song of triumph on the subject:

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,  
 And Baunochar's groans to our slogan replied;  
 Glen Luss and Rossdhu, they are smoking in ruin,  
 And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side,  
 Widow and Saxon maid  
 Long shall lament our raid,  
 Think of Clan Alpin with fear and with woe;  
 Lennox and Leven-glen

Shake when they hear again  
Roderich Vich-Alpin Dhu, ho! ieroe!

But the Macgregors themselves had, after all, the most fearful cause to lament the exploit, They followed up their victory by burning and ravishing the whole lands of Luss, and one of them, Dugald Ciar Mhor of Glengyle, set to watch a party of schoolboys who had come from Dunbarton to see the fight, cut short his charge by slaying them all, When Alastair his chief met him rushing to the plunder, and asked what he had done with the students, Dugald held up his bloody dirk and said: "Ask that!"

Such deeds were bound to bring retribution. A band of sixty Colquhoun widows paraded before James VI at Stirling with their husbands' bloody shirts on poles, and the horrified King gave instant orders for the punishment of Clan Gregor. Their houses were burned, their name was proscribed, and they were hunted like wild beasts in the hills. A year later Alastair Macgregor himself was betrayed by Argyll. The Earl undertook to convey him safely out of Scotland, fulfilled the letter of his promise by carrying him to Berwick, then arrested him, and brought him back to Edinburgh where he was tried, condemned, and executed. Assuredly Clan Gregor had ample reason to curse the hour in which "the black wedder with the white tail was ever lambed." Scott has put their resentment with vigour into another of his songs, "Macgregor's Gathering":

Through the depths of Loch Katrine the steed shall career,  
O'er the peak of Ben Lomond the galley shall steer,  
And the rocks of Craig-Royston like icicles melt,  
Ere our wrongs be forgot or our vengeance unfelt!

The ruin of the old castle of Rosdhu still stands beside the modern mansion of the name on the loch-side. Among those who have been entertained within its walls was Mary Queen of Scots, who paid a special visit here and stayed over night on 15th July, 1563.

<<http://www.kellscraft.com/LochLomond/LochLomondCh04.html>>

So the punning musical links to "MacGregors' Gathering" – obvious to a knowing ear – are reinforced in the title of the tune which would signal its clan affiliations to anybody familiar with the history of the south west Highlands.

\* \* \*

Electronic version © Dr. William Donaldson, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 23 April 2012

I. Urlar.

II. Var. I.

III. Var. II.

IV. Var. II. doubling.

V. Taorluath singling. VII. Crunluath singling.

VI. Taorluath doubling. VIII. Crunluath doubling.

IX. Crunluath a mach in usual form.

Abbreviations used

*Basically a re-hash of the M' Gregors' Gathering*

## EARBALL GEAL A MHUILT DHUIBH

(Black Wedder's White Tail)

### EDITORIAL NOTES

THIS tune is only known from the setting in the Campbell Canntaireachd. It is one of a pair — the other being entitled "White Wedder's Black Tail." Nothing is known as to the circumstances which led to their being given these extraordinary names: though it may be surmised that at the time when the MS. was compiled, sheep and all things connected with them were regarded with scorn and loathing in the Highlands.

There is a strong resemblance between the variations of this tune and those of "The MacGregors' Gathering" — the Ground and Thumb, however, are altogether different: and the curious variation singlings are almost unique — calling to mind the cadence-placing in the singlings of the "MacDonalds' Salute." No Crunluath a mach is indicated in the MS., but one should probably be played.

The tune is given as follows in the MS. :—

#### 64. Called Black Wedder's White Tail

Line 1st .. Hòdinbain hiharin hiodinbain hihambam cherede hiharara hòdinbain hiharin hiharara hodrocin hiòdinbain hihambam,  
 ,, 2nd .. Cherede hiharara hòdinbain hiharin hiòdinbain hihambam hòdinbain hiharin hiharara hodrocin hiòdinbain hihambam,  
 ,, 3rd .. Cherede hiharara hotra cherede hiharara hodre hiòdinbain hihambam.

D.

Line 1st .. Hòdinbain hiharin hiòdinbain hihambam chedili hadre hòdinbain hiharin hadili hodre hiòdinbain hihambam,  
 ,, 2nd .. Chedili hadre hòdinbain hiharin hiòdinbain hihambam hòdinbain hiharin hadili hodre hiòdinbain hihambam,  
 ,, 3rd .. Chedili hadre hotra hodre hadili hodre hiodinbain hihambam.

S.

*First Motion*

Line 1st .. Hoen hinen hioen himen cheen haen hoen hinen haen hoen hioen,  
 ,, 2nd .. Himen cheen haen hoen hinen hioen himen hoen hinen haen hoen hioen,  
 ,, 3rd .. Himen cheen haen hoen hoen haen hoen hioen himen.

D.

Line 1st .. Hoho hinen hioeo himen cheche haha hoho hinen haha hoho hioeo,  
 ,, 2nd .. Himen cheche haha hoho hinen hioeo himen hoho hinen haha hoho hioeo,  
 ,, 3rd .. Himen cheche haha hoho hoho haha hoho hioeo himen.

S.

*Taolive*

Line 1st .. Hoda id hinda id hiodin himda id cheda id hada id hodin hinda id hadarid hodarid hiodin,  
 ,, 2nd .. Himdarid chedarid hararid hodin hindarid hiodin himdarid hodin hindarid hadarid hodarid hiodin  
 ,, 3rd .. Himdarid chedarid hadarid hodarid hodarid hadarid hodarid hiodin himdarid.

D.

Line 1st .. Hodarid hindarid hiodarid himdarid chedarid hadarid hodarid hindarid hadarid hodarid hiodarid  
 ,, 2nd .. Himdarid chedarid hadarid hodarid hindarid hiodarid himdarid hodarid hindarid hadarid hodarid hiodarid,  
 ,, 3rd .. Himdarid chedarid hadarid hodarid hodarid hadarid hodarid hiodarid himdarid.

S.

*Cruive*

Line 1st .. Hobandre hinbandre hiodin himbandre chebandre habandre hodin hinbandre habandre hobandre hiodin,  
 ,, 2nd .. Himbandre chebandre habandre hodin hinbandre hiodin himbandre hodin hinbandre habandre hobandre hiodin,  
 ,, 3rd .. Himbandre chebandre habandre hobandre hobandre habandre hobandre hiodin himbandre.

D.

Line 1st .. Hobandre hinbandre hiobandre himbandre chebandre habandre hobandre hinbandre habandre hobandre hiobandre,  
 ,, 2nd .. Himbandre chebandre habandre hobandre hinbandre hiobandre himbandre hobandre hinbandre habandre hobandre hiobandre,  
 ,, 3rd .. Himbandre chebandre habandre hobandre hobandre habandre hobandre hiobandre himbandre.