



Mrs. MacLeod of Talisker's Salute

There are two Talisker salutes, one for the laird and one for the lady. Talisker was the chief cadet family of the MacLeods of MacLeod.

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

- Angus MacKay**, ii, 13-15
- Colin Cameron**, ff.94-95
- Duncan Campbell of Foss**, ff.69-72
- Uilleam Ross**, ff.98-101
- David Glen**, ff.316-319

and in the following published sources:

- Uilleam Ross's** *Collection*, pp.66-69
- C. S. Thomason's**, *Ceol Mor*, pp.284-5

Angus MacKay sets the tune as follows:

Faillt Wan - Thughiarna Thaliger.

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Mr MacLeod of Tullisk's Salute

composed by

Gordon Roy MacCrummen

The musical score is written on ten staves. It begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Key annotations include:

- No.* at the beginning of the first staff.
- 2nd Word* and *Line* written above the third staff.
- Var. 1st.* written below the fourth staff.
- 1st time* written below the fourth and sixth staves.
- Doubling* written above the sixth staff.
- Var. 2nd.* written above the eighth staff.

The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the tenth staff.

Handwritten musical score for a piece titled "A thread of pride and self esteem...". The score is written on ten staves, each beginning with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several performance markings: "Doubling." appears above the fourth staff, and "Var - 3rd." appears above the seventh staff. The score concludes with a double bar line on the tenth staff.

Dr. C. Thomas

trumpet

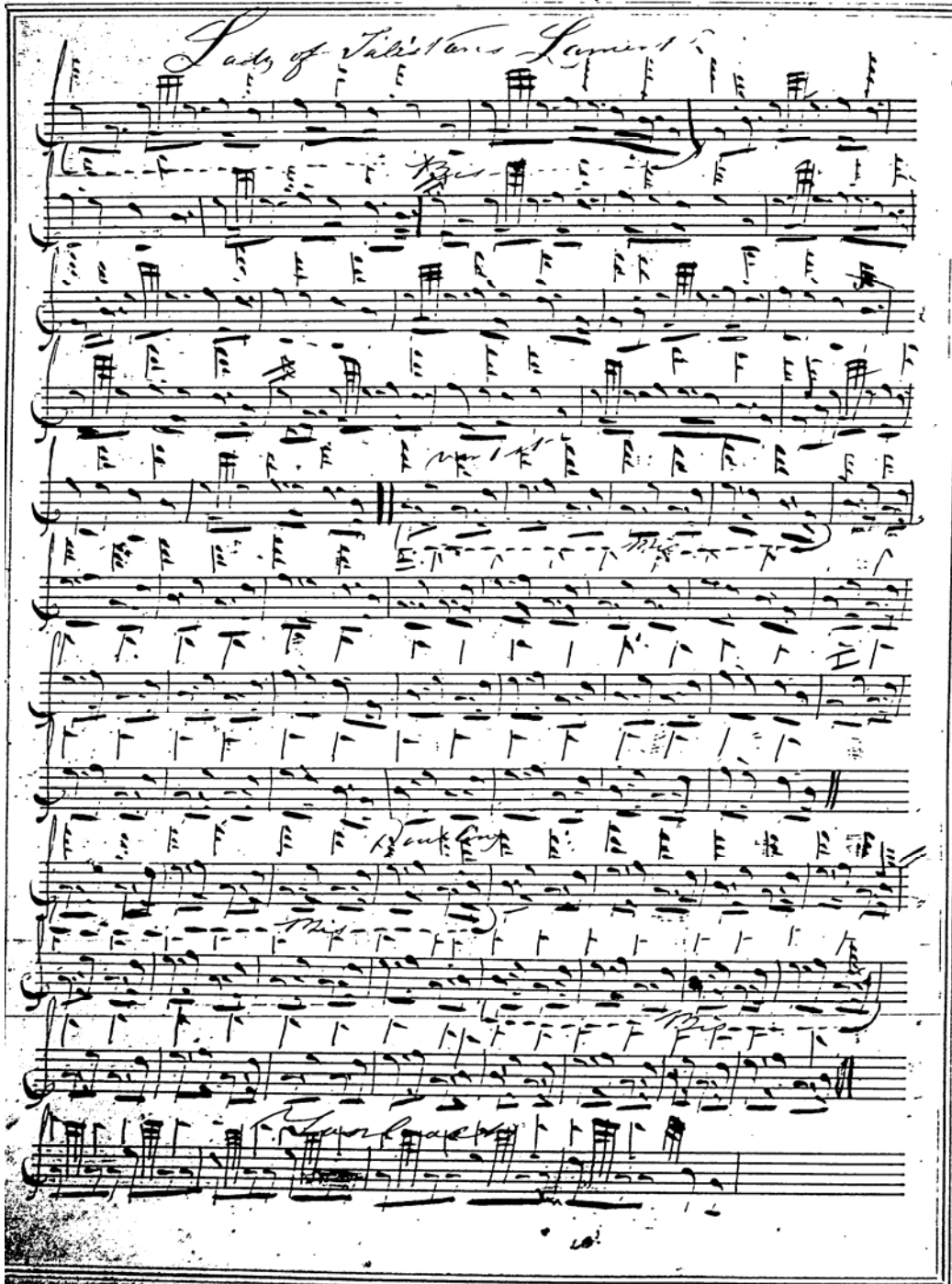
Doubleing.

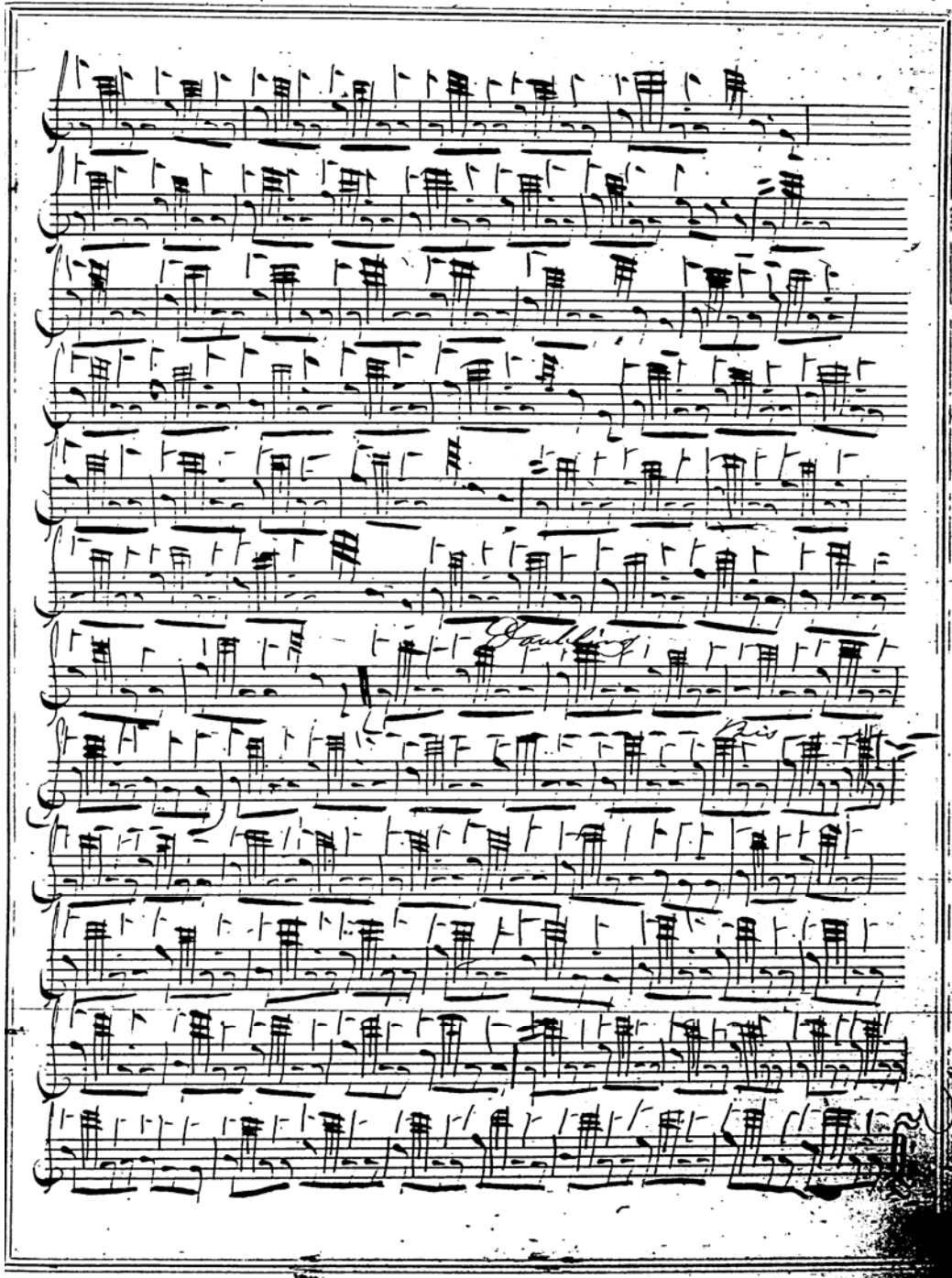


Angus times the 1st Variation and doubling as even quavers but with interesting and stylish little cut up from E to F in line one. The inclusion of taorluath variations in both foscailte and duinte forms might be thought excessive in such a relatively slight piece, as might the instruction to repeat the ground at the end of the duinte taorluath doubling.

Angus omits the dal segno marks which should be present in lines 3 and 4 from the taorluath foscailte variation onwards. In his otherwise neat and orderly score, once the pattern has been unmistakably established he simply gives the first two lines of the succeeding variations leaving the player to construct line 3 for him/herself following the normal expected conventions. MacKay directs that the ground be repeated after the taorluath and crunluath doublings. He has no crunluath a mach.

Colin Cameron times the tune as follows:





Colin Cameron's title is "Lady of Talisker's Lament." He indicates all the dots and cuts; some might well prefer his first variation, which he points "down" to that of Angus MacKay, since in his doubling he does not alternate every melody note with low A or B, coming



sometimes to E, which varies the pattern and gives a less "heavy" feel. Interestingly he drops the taorluath fosgailte and proceeds straight to a duinte taorluath singling from the end of his first variation doubling. His tone row is different from MacKay's in the A phrase, preferring the more varied AEDE to MacKay's AEDF which some may feel a more shapely disposition of the tune, in that the entry of the all-important F is delayed until the end of the line, creating a pleasing sense of climax. Colin Cameron's score ends at the taorluath doubling: there's no indication of a crunluath movement, although presumably one was intended.

Duncan Campbell of Foss adds nothing of significance to the other scores.

In his manuscript, **Uilleam Ross** times the ground and first variation as follows:



and so on.

The reader will note Ross's interesting styling of variation one here.



David Glen's score is very similar to Uilleam Ross's, and adds little of significance to the earlier settings.

Amongst the published scores there is one in **Uilleam Ross's** *Collection*—the earliest published version of the tune--which shows a number of individual touches:

FAILTE BHAN-TIGHEARNA THAILISGAR.

MRS MC LEOD OF TALLISKAR'S SALUTE.

5

By Donald Roy M^c Cremon.

Slow.

3.

biss

1st time 2nd time

1st var.

biss.

1st time 2nd time

biss

Doubling 1st var.

biss.

2nd var.

biss

biss



6

biss

Doubling 2nd var: biss

biss

Taorluidh. biss

biss

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in treble clef, 6/8 time. It consists of 11 staves of music. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth, sixteenth, and thirty-second notes, often beamed together. There are several repeat signs and first/second endings. The word 'biss' is written above the staff at the beginning of the first staff, above the first ending of the second staff, above the first ending of the fourth staff, above the first ending of the sixth staff, and above the first ending of the eighth staff. The word 'Taorluidh.' is written above the staff at the beginning of the seventh staff. The score is divided into sections by dotted lines.

Doubling of Taorluith.

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Sheet music for the first section, "Doubling of Taorluith." It consists of five staves of music in 6/8 time. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A "biss" (bitter) marking is present above the first staff, and another "biss" marking is present above the third staff.

Creanluith.

Sheet music for the second section, "Creanluith." It consists of five staves of music in 6/8 time. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A "biss" (bitter) marking is present above the first staff, and another "biss" marking is present above the third staff.

Doubling of Creanluith.

Sheet music for the third section, "Doubling of Creanluith." It consists of one staff of music in 6/8 time. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A "biss" (bitter) marking is present above the staff.



Ross sets the ground rather differently here from the way in he does it in his MS, and he has an interestingly accented fogsailte tripling, different once again from the MS (where he uses even quavers) in which the first note of each group receives the accent.

C. S. Thomason's setting differs from Uilleam Ross's only in trivial details such as timing the taorluath fogsailte movements as evenly accented demi-semi-quaver runs and is not reproduced here.

Commentary:

This tune seems to be closely linked to the dedicatee's family. The Mrs. MacLeod in question was probably Margaret Isabella MacDonald, wife of Magnus MacLeod, 5th of Talisker. Her family were the MacDonalds of Castleton, which would have meant she was a member of the great house of Clanranald. It looks as if Donald Roy MacCrimmon has cleverly quoted motifs from famous Clanranald tunes and woven them into his musical tribute:



to be. It is a sobering thought that one dare not accept the Ceol Mor setting of any tune as corresponding with any source, without carefully checking it in the MS. from which it is alleged to have been taken. Certainly Gen. Thomason usually gives his authorities for treatment of any tune, but it isn't enough to say, in effect, that you as Editor have altered a tune--the point is, HOW have you altered it? And when several fingers are in the pie, it is sheer conjecture who did what. The risk of learning from it is that you may be spending your time and talent on a thoroughly bad setting of a tune which might at once be turned down by anyone that knew it. Worse still, if not turned down, such a setting might gain an acceptance to which it wasn't entitled. It is to me a matter of amazement that anyone so very ill-qualified could ever have had the brass neck to take on this enormous task. I suppose Ceol Mor gave some sort of stimulus to piping and in particular to the cause of piobaireachd, but it is easy to understand the resentment that may have been felt. Yet we have all heard about fools rushing in--would there have been any revival of piobaireachd without this one? It is also a matter of astonishment that the desire to learn, coupled with the excellent teachers he studied under, should have combined to leave him so ignorant of the art. What, I wonder, did Sandy Cameron think of him?

Did he write him off as hopeless: a mere crank who would never make a piper and whom he humoured more than taught? Or was he polite to the General as a matter of policy? Politeness, it has been said is one of the curses of Scotland [...] It is possible that some or all of his expert contemporaries looked on him as in more modern times Donald Main or G. F. Ross were regarded, in other words, as a great authority in his own estimation only.'

It could be said that the current Piob. Soc. series supplants--or will eventually supplant--Ceol Mor, but the claim is risky and it is not likely that it ever will supplant it in totality, for several reasons.

One thing is that there is a large amount of rubbish in Ceol Mor which doesn't deserve republication. Another is that the current series is best regarded as a study in depth of the known settings of the various tunes and the space required for a comparable treatment of the entire contents of Ceol Mor would involve a prodigious expenditure for mediocre results [...] (NLS. Acc 9103/28, "Memoranda concerning Piobaireachd Society publications," typescript essay "Ceol Mor Notation").

It had begun to dawn on Kenneth that all was not well with the Piobaireachd Society's own scores, but he clearly did not appreciate the scale of the liberties that Archibald Campbell had taken with the sources. He was in a position to have checked Thomason against the latter's stated sources, but evidently did not do so, assuming that if Thomason differed from what Archibald Campbell said, he must, by that very fact, be "wrong."

Kenneth seemed unaware that Thomason continued to be held highest esteem by leading members of the performer community, though his work was virtually unobtainable. So scarce had *Ceol Mor* become that Bob Nicol's own copy had been stolen and he was greatly grieved by its loss. He described what had happened to Thomason as follows; "they put him off the Piobaireachd Society --for knowing too much." Thomason was deposed as President of the Society in 1904 and Bob Nicol was born in 1905.

Bob's mother was a ClanRanald MacDonald. ClanRanald's Salute and Mrs MacLeod of Talisker's Salute have musical links and are posted together to mark the centenary of Robert Bell Nicol's birth on 26th December 1905.

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