

MacLeod's Short Tune

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

- **Colin Campbell's** "Nether Lorn Canntaireachd," ii, 73-4;
- **Angus MacKay's** MS, i, 77-8 (and also in his so-called "Kintarbert MS" f.75, with the title "Port Gearr Mhic Leoid, A Taunt on MacLeod or MacLeods Short Tune");
- **Duncan Campbell of Foss's**, MS, ff.41-2;
- **Colin Cameron's** MS, f.131;
- **Uilleam Ross's** MS, ff.53-4, and also f.236;
- **D. S. MacDonald's** MS, i, 18-20;
- **John MacDougal Gillies's** MS, ff.72-3 (with the title "MacLeod's short tune a taunt on the McLeod");
- **David Glen's** MS, ff.41-3;

and in the following published source:

- **C. S. Thomason**, *Ceol Mor*, p. 293 (with the title "A Taunt on MacLeod")

Colin Campbell sets the tune like this:

139 Called One of the Gragish

1st Hintra hiharin hintra hiotra hiotro
heen dreaem hiotro heem hiharin ~~~~~

2nd Hintra hiharin hintra hiotra hiotro
hadri hadili hedili hedili heetra hio
tra hiotro heem dreaem hiotro heem
hiharin ~~~~~

3rd Hindili hedili heetra hiotra hiotro
heem hiharin ~~~~~

4th ~~~~~ Taolive Gear ~~~~~

1st Hindariddaem hiharin hindariddaem
hiodariddaem hiodariddheem hieda
riddaem hiodariddaem hiodariddheem
hiharin ~~~~~

2nd Hindariddaem hiharin hindariddaem
hiodariddaem hiodariddheem hadarid
deem hadaridsem hedaridsem hedar
idsem hedariddaem hiodariddaem
hiodariddheem hiharin ~~~~~

3rd Hindaridsem hedaridsem hedaridda
em hiodariddaem hiodariddheem
hiharin ~~~~~

4th Hindaridda hiharin hindaridda hioda
da hiodariddhe hedaridda hiodaridda
hiodariddhe hiharin ~~~~~

5th Hindaridda hiharin hindaridda hioda
da hiodariddhe hadariddhe hadaridd
had hedarid hedaridda hiodaridda hio
dariddhe hiharin ~~~~~

3 Hindarid hedarid hedariada hiodarid
da hiodaridhe hiharin

8 *Crulive Gear Tada*
Hinbandreaem hiharin hinbandreaem
hiobandredheem chebandreaem hiobandreaem
hiobandredheem hiharin

2 Hindandreaem hiharin hinbandreaem
hiobandreaem hiobandredheem habandredheem
em habandredheem hebandedem hebandedem
dem hebandedem hiobandreaem hioban
dredheem hiharin

3 Hinbandredem hebandedem hebandre
aem hiobandredem hiobandredheem
hiharin

1 Hinbandrea hiharin hinbandrea hio
bandrea hiobandredheem chebandred hio
bandrea hiobandredheem hiharin

2 Hinbandrea hiharin hinbandrea hio
bandrea hiobandredheem hiobandredheem
bandredheem hebandred hebandred hebandrea
hiobandrea hiobandredheem hiharin

3 Hinbandred hebandred hebandrea hio
bandrea hiobandredheem hiharin

30 *Called Thanig Gorie*
Himotra hahioem hōdin hiotra chelad
hōdin hiharara chetodro hiharara ha
hioem

2 Himotra hahioem hōdin hiotra
chelad

As it stands this scarcely seems coherent with an edgy alternation of 4/4 and 6/8 bars in the ground which makes it difficult to scan. Indeed "MacLeod's Short Tune" is a piece that has given editors problems for centuries.

Angus MacKay sets the tune as follows:

Port Gearr Mhic Seoid. 77
A taunt on Mac Leod.

The image shows a handwritten musical score on ten staves. The title is written in cursive at the top. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features various musical notations including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'f' (forte). There are also performance instructions such as '1st time', '2nd time', and 'var. 1st'. The notation includes many 'x' marks, likely indicating specific rhythmic patterns or fingerings for the pipes and drums. The handwriting is elegant and typical of 19th-century manuscript notation.



MacKay points his taorluath variation "down" and his crunluath variation, by contrast, "up."

McKay may have contributed to subsequent editorial difficulties by marking the opening bar of the second part as a second repeat for the first part. MacKay has what looks like an extraneous bar—no. 5— in the first line of the first variation; and a missing bar (no.4) in the second line; he has nine bars in the first line by the time he reaches the crunluath singling, nine in the second line and six in the third, ten bars in line one in the crunluath doubling, eleven in line two and seven in line three. Yet his scores remains the basis of all subsequent attempts at emendation.

The scores of **Duncan Campbell of Foss**, **Uilleam Ross** and **D. S. MacDonald** do not add significantly to the interpretative possibilities of the tune and are not reproduced here.

"MacLeod's Short Tune" began to take on its modern form at the hands of the Cameron family and their pupils during the second half of the 19th century.

Colin Cameron set the tune like this:

Port Gearr Mhic Leoid
A Fuanon MacLeod, MacLeod's Short Tune

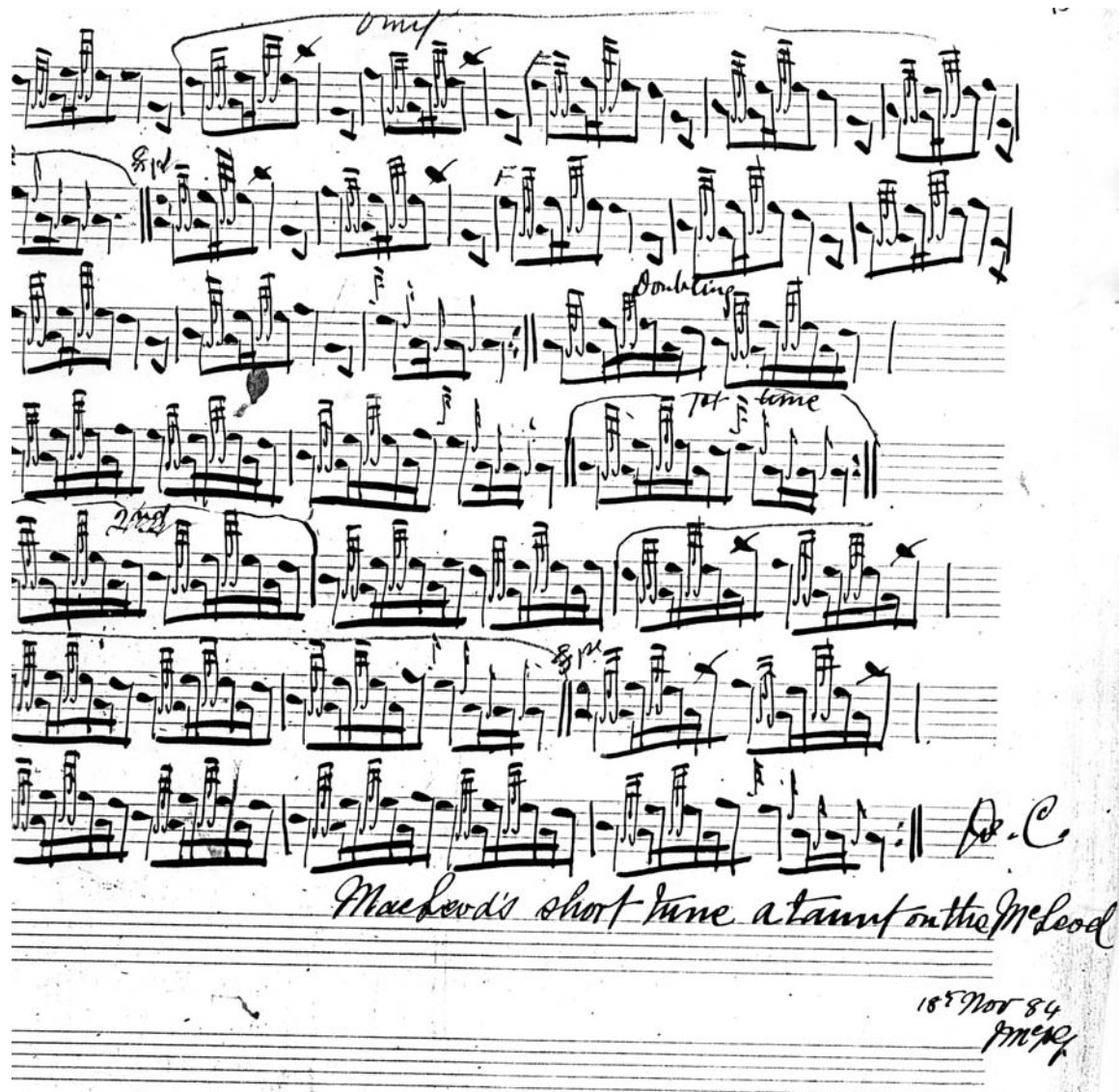
133
65

Doubtless
Doubtless of Runkundh, to be taken from the Doubling of Runkundh

The score is incomplete, being only partially graced and develops in the variations into two lines of nine bars each.

Colin Cameron's brother Sandy's pupil, **John MacDougall Gillies** set it like this:





There are visible signs of editing on the page here, with bars crossed out and inserted at various places, and a number of bars ticked as if as if having been checked against a (probably) written source. As the reader will note there are numerous differences between this setting in Gillies's hand and the version attributed to him in *The Piobaireachd Society Collection* (second series, pp.170-71).

This tune created difficulties even for the resourceful **David Glen**, as his marginalia would indicate:

A Tairnt on Macleod or Macleod's Short Tune.
Port Gearr Mhuir Leoid. *a Tune of 14 Bars only*

note first 2 Bars could be repeated to complete the tune.

in Pev... over... D... ball...

making - 17 bars while in one too many

-? Question this representing the 1st time.

42.

Taor-luath a stach

Doubling (var. vol. 2)

Crunluath a stach

Glen resolves the tune into 4: 6 4 metre, not unpleasingly, and his score may be one of the best options amongst the emended versions. He, too, points his taorluath "down" and his crunluath "up." We know that Glen was in contact with John MacDougall Gillies and a web of late

Victorian master players and editors, so this may represent a collective conclusion, a supposition supported by General **C. S. Thomason's** published setting which is very similar to David Glen's except that Thomason does not repeat the first line in the ground and variations:

The image shows a musical score for the tune "A TAUNT ON MACLEOD". The score is written on six staves. The first staff is labeled "1.4.7 G." and the second staff is labeled "2 T.". The third staff is labeled "3 T." and the fourth staff is labeled "5 C.". The fifth staff is labeled "6 C.". The sixth staff is labeled "7 C.". The score is written in a style that is characteristic of Victorian-era musical notation. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines. The score is arranged in a way that allows for a clear view of the melody and the variations. The title "A TAUNT ON MACLEOD" is written at the top of the first staff. The score is written in a style that is characteristic of Victorian-era musical notation. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines. The score is arranged in a way that allows for a clear view of the melody and the variations.

Commentary:

There is an intriguing similarity in style between this tune and "The Battle of Bealach nam Brog," also included in the Set Tunes series, but the usual sources are silent about its history.

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