

The Gunns' Salute


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

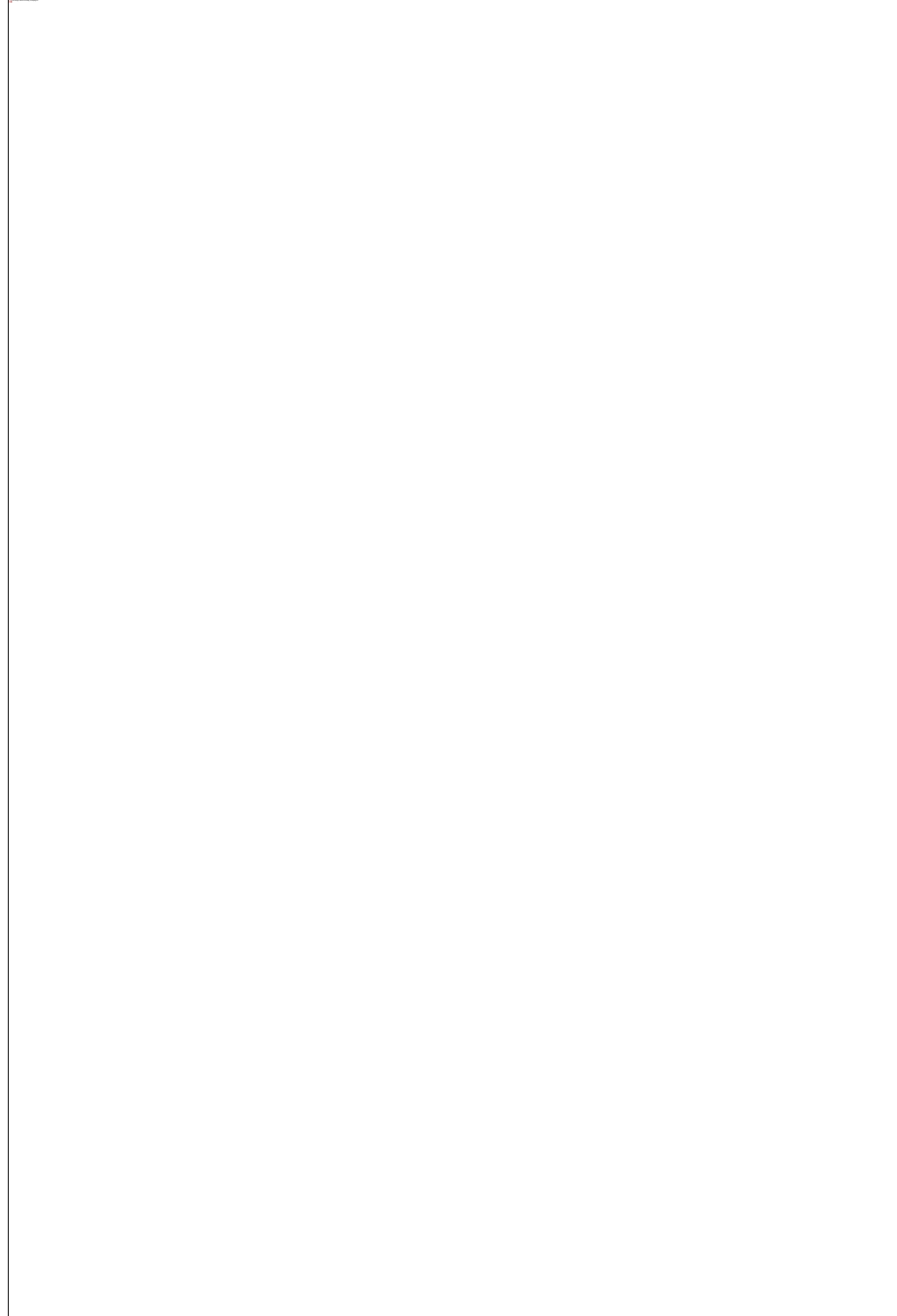
- **Angus MacKay** in the so-called "Kintarbert MS" ff.152-4 (with an ascription to William Gunn);
- **Duncan Campbell of Foss's** MS, ff.131-134 (where the tune is ascribed to Donald Gunn);
- **Uilleam Ross's** MS, ff.67-70;
- **David Glen's** MS, ff.319-322 (ascribed to Donald Gunn);

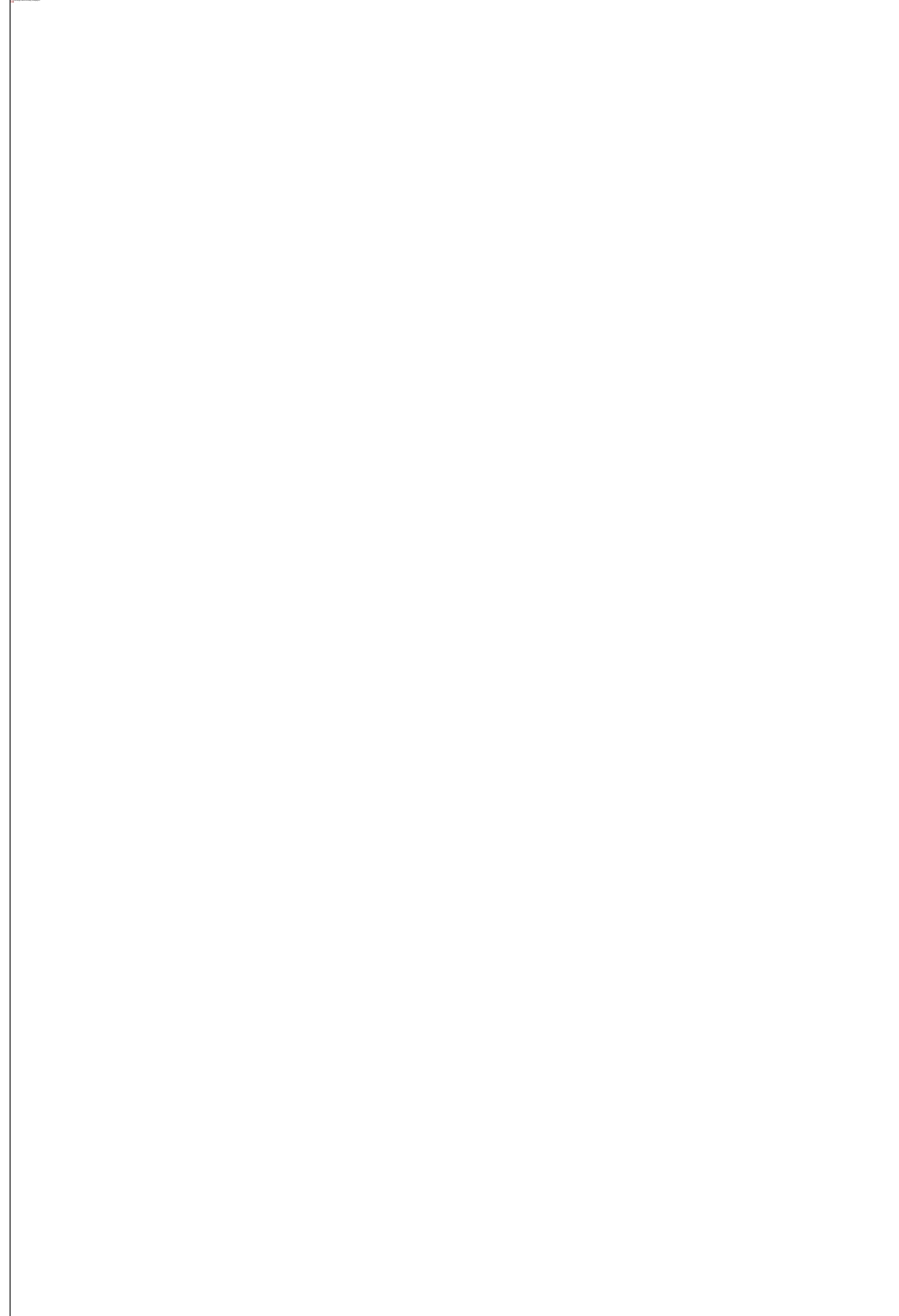
And in the following published sources:

- **Uilleam Ross**, *Ross's Collection*, pp.69-72 (bearing the ascription "By William Gunn." This tune was not in Ross's first edition, but was by the time of the third, published in 1885);
- **C. S. Thomason** *Ceol Mor*, pp.265-6.

Angus MacKay sets the tune as follows:

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Duncan Campbell of Foss's score is clearly derived from Angus MacKay's (or a transcript of it) but he shows an interestingly different way of timing the E/A/B figure which completes the opening motif, holding the initial E (after the first statement of it in line one):

131

The Gamms Salute
By *Ronald Wilson Gunn*

1st time
2nd time
Var-1
Doubling of Var

Cowan & Co., [Edinburgh]

And so on. The reader will note the transcription error in line one of the siubhal and the altered ascription, this time to Donald Gunn. Campbell's score is a full one, supplying the ornamentation missing in MacKay's outline score and he drops the repeat of the ground at the end of the taorluath duinte doubling, restating it only at the end of the crunluath doubling. He times the siubhal, as MacKay does, in even quavers leaving open the possibility that it could be played either "up" or "down" i. e. with the accent on either the first or the second member of the group as taste might determine.

Uilleam Ross points the siubhal "down" in his published book (as he does in his manuscript, where the tune is marked "Printed"), as follows:

FALTE NA'N GUINNIACH.
GUNN'S SALUTE.

By William Gunn,

Moderate.

4.

70

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff in 2/4 time. It begins with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piece is divided into several measures, with some measures containing triplets. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and repeat signs. Key annotations include '1st time', '2nd time', 'Doubling 1st var.', and '2nd var.'. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

And so on. This is presumably to offer a pleasing contrast with the "up" cut taorluath fosgailte which immediately follows. Ross directs that the ground be repeated at the end of the crunluath doubling but not at the end of the taorluath doubling.

David Glen times the double echo beats in his characteristic manner, and plays the siubhal "down" in the singling and "up" in the doubling, as follows:



320

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. The score is written in a single system with ten staves. The notation is a mix of treble and bass clefs, with various musical symbols including notes, rests, and bar lines. There are several annotations in cursive: 'vnu' on the second staff, '1st time' on the fifth staff, 'doubling (own arrangement.)' on the sixth staff, and 'Tao-luath' on the eighth staff. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some minor staining and a small dark mark at the bottom right.

321

Doubling.

Uinn-luth.

1st

2nd

Doubling.

Conte



C. S. Thomason gives Uilleam Ross's published book as the main source of his setting; it adds little to the stylistic possibilities of the tune and is not reproduced here.

Commentary:

The sources are not consistent in the attribution of this tune, some ascribing it to composer and pipe-maker William Gunn (1789-1867), one of the most prominent pipers in early Victorian Scotland, others to Donald Gunn, who was probably the pipe-major of the Perthshire Militia who took third prize at the Edinburgh Competition in 1816. A set of judge's notes from that year are preserved among the papers of Duncan MacDiarmid (to whom I am grateful for this information) which rank Donald as "Tolerably good" (unlike another poor soul who was scathingly dismissed as "Dam bad"). His list included "My King has Landed in Moidart," "The Prince's Salute," "The Finger Lock," "The Lament for the Children," "The Rout of Glenfruin" and "Salute to Edinburgh." Donald Gunn took second prize in 1818. In the first of the regular Edinburgh competitions back in 1784, we read of a competitor named Donald Gunn variously described as late of the 77th and as piper to Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, but this perhaps may not be the same man.

William Gunn, described as "from Glasgow" appeared at the Edinburgh competition 1824. His list included "The Prince's Salute," "The Finger Lock," "The Menzies Salute," "Fraser of Lovat's Salute," "The Massacre of Glencoe," "Mary's Praise," "The Lament for the Children," "MacKenzie's Salute," "The Lament for the Only Son," "Glengarry's March," and "The Duke of Hamilton's Lament." William Gunn was one of the most prominent pipers in early Victorian Scotland, a pipe maker and publisher of bagpipe music. His *Caldeonian Repository of Music, Adapted for the Bagpipes*, Glasg., 1848 with numerous later editions became one of the most durable Victorian light music collections. He was also a capable composer of light music, as we see in his attractive march "The Glasgow Gaelic Club" to whom apparently he acted as piper. William Gunn is also credited as composer of the "Lament for Captain Wemyss Sutherland." Bridget MacKenzie states that Gunn was born and brought up in the Strath of Kildonan later

moving to Glasgow and setting up as a pipe-maker and teacher of the pipes (*Piping Traditions of the North of Scotland*, Edinr., 1998, pp.248-50).

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