



Melbank's Salute

This tune appears in the following published sources:

- **Uilleam Ross's** *Collection*, pp. 16-19;
- **C. S. Thomason's** *Ceol Mor*, pp. 271-2;
- **David Glen's** *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd*, pp. 214-5;

and in the following manuscript sources:

- **Angus MacKay's** MS, i, 189-191;
- **Colin Cameron's** MS, f.72;
- **Uilleam Ross's** MS, ff.196-200;
- **Donald MacKay's** 'Ballindalloch' MS;
- **David Glen's** MS, ff.128-129;
- **McLennan MSS** (NLS Acc.11516/8), f.23 [this is only a partial sketch of the tune. The 1st Variation is played "up"; eallachs are played "down"];

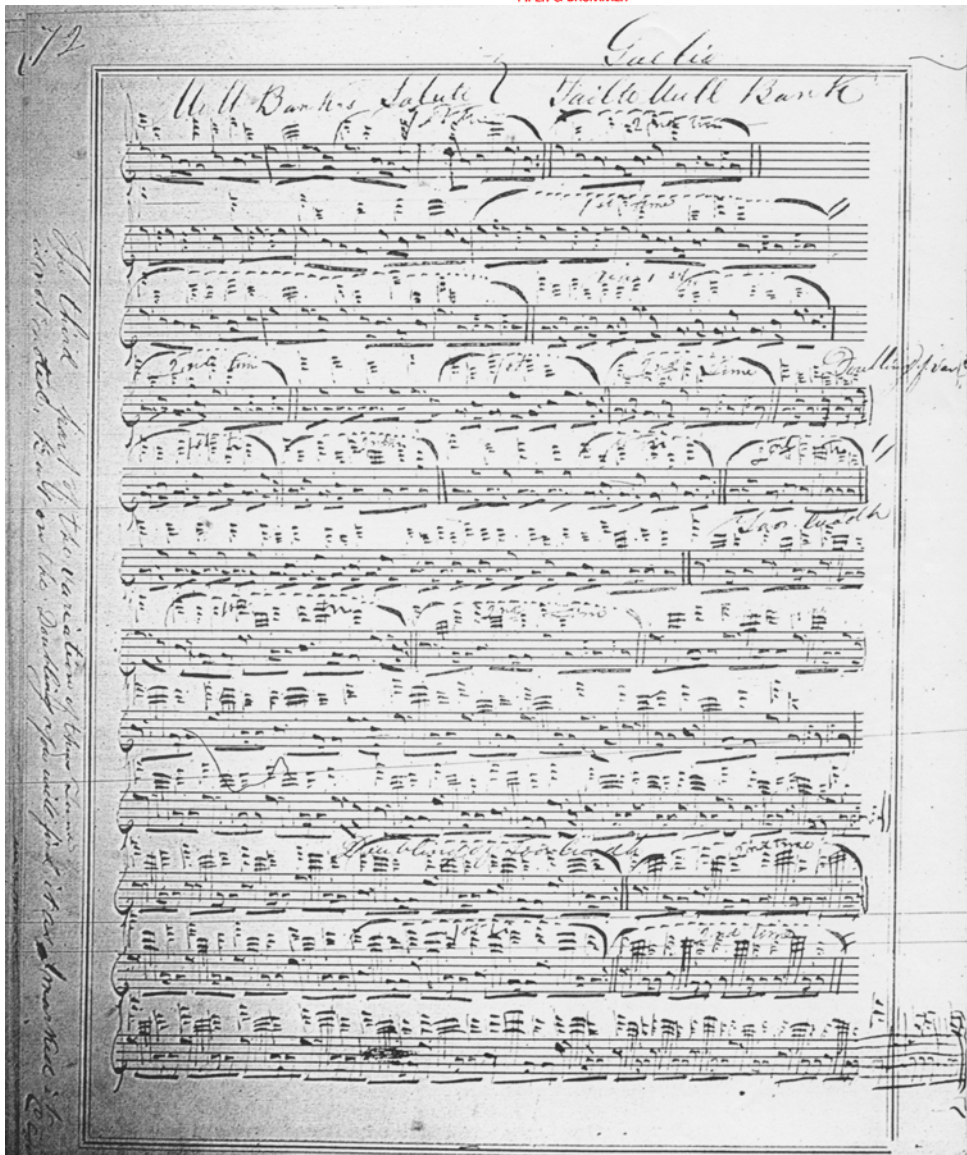
Angus MacKay sets the tune as follows:

MacKenzie of Hillbank's Salute.
composed by
John MacKay
1821.

and so on.

MacKay times Var 1 singling as even quavers, but cuts the doubling “up,” unlike Uilleam Ross who cuts it “down,” as do Thomason and Glen. MacKay gives both a fosgailte and a “duinte” taorluath, singling and doubling, and brings the tune to a “duinte” crunluath resolution (without a balancing crunluath fosgailte variation); all the other settings omit the “duinte” taorluath altogether and proceed directly to a fosgailte crunluath singling and doubling. MacKay directs that the ground be repeated at the end of the “duinte” taorluath doubling and again at the end of the tune. He has no crunluath a mach.

Colin Cameron times the tune as follows:



There are a number of interesting differences between this score and the setting in MacKay's manuscript, including the "run down" timing of the opening figures in bars one and two in the ground and wherever they occur, the "down" pointing of the siubhal, the omission of the taorluath fogsailte movement singling and doubling. Colin Cameron moves from the siubhal straight to a "duinte" taorluath and presumably a "duinte" crunluath was intended to follow. There is a note in the margin stating "The third part of the variation of this Tune is not noted. But on the Doubling you will find it as I marked it. C. Cameron."

Uilleam Ross: this was the first appearance of this tune in print. It was included in Ross's first edition in 1869. It is interesting that Ross uses two different eallachs, and an "opened" fogsailte:

FAILTE FEAR BHELBHANK.

MELBANK'S SALUTE.

6.
Moderate.

1st Var.

Doubling 1st Var.

2nd Var.

V.S.

18

Doubling 2nd Var:

Creannluidh 3rd Var:



and so on. Ross proceeds directly from his fosgailte taorluath to a fosgailte crunluath (singling and doubling in each case), omitting the “duinte” variations altogether. Many may feel that this is an attractive solution to the problems of length in this tune.

David Glen adopts a similar approach and is perhaps the best of the published settings in view of his typographical clarity and the helpful way he beams the notes, giving the clearest possible guide to the actual timing of the tune. Glen plays the “closed” MacKay-type crunluath fosgailte and times his eallachs “down”:

MELBANK'S SALUTE.

FÁILTE FIR MHELBANG.

Úrlar.



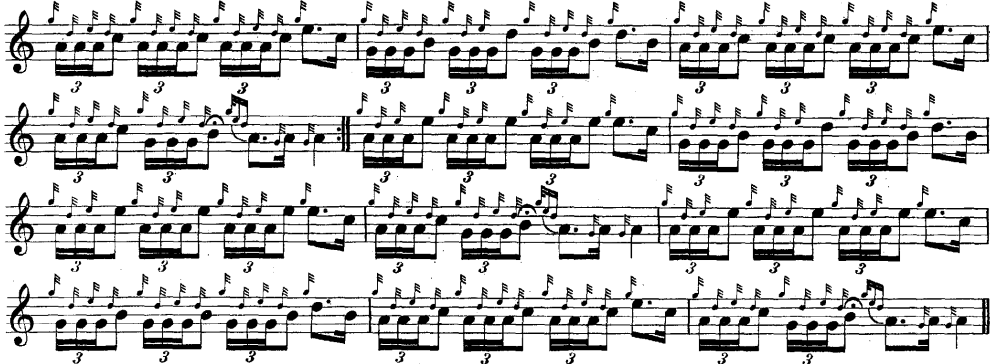
Var. 1st Siubhal.



Doubling of Var. 1st



Var 2nd



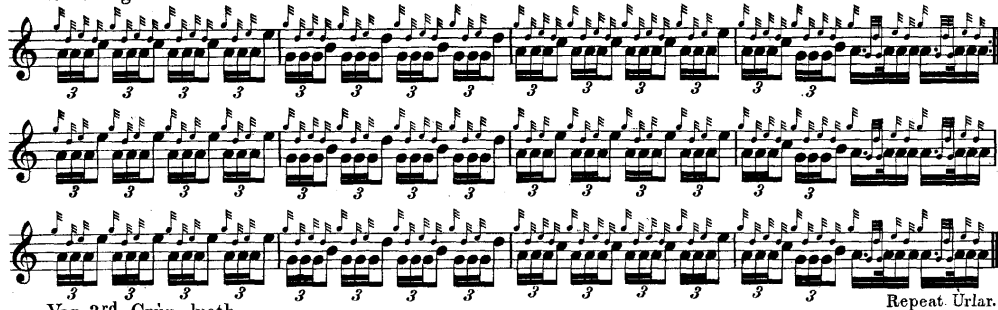
Written.



Played.



Doubling of Var. 2nd



Var. 3rd Crùn-luath.

Repeat Ùrlar.



Doubling of Var. 3rd Dùblachadh a' Chrùn-luath.



Repeat Ùrlar.

Commentary:

“Melbank’s Salute” is a “modern” tune that shows an interestingly wide range of ways of timing it developing within a generation of its composition. This may indicate something of



the creative vigour of the tradition at a time when many self-appointed “legislators” and “guardians” fancied that it was in serious decline.

In his note in the section “Historic, Biographic and Legendary Notes to the Tunes” attached to David Glen’s *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd* “Fionn” says: “This tune was composed to Kenneth Mackenzie of Millbank, Ross-shire, son of Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Gairloch. He was much respected, and was famed for his unostentatious liberality. (See [Alexander MacKenzie], “History of the Mackenzies.”)” p.44. But there seems to be a slight mix up here. In her book *Piping Traditions of the North of Scotland* (Edinr., 1998), Bridget MacKenzie says that this man was the father of the dedicatee, Alexander MacKenzie of Melbank or Millbank, an offshoot of the MacKenzies of Gairloch. Alexander MacKenzie was a noted sponsor of pipers. Apparently he paid for the advanced training of John Bàn MacKenzie, whom he sent to John MacKay on Raasay, and probably also supported Donald and his brother Sandy Cameron in a similar way (*Piping Traditions*, pp.92-4).

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