

## Lament for MacSwan of Roaig

This tune is found in the following manuscript sources:

- **Nether Lorn Canntaireachd**, ii, 157-8 (with the title "Roag's Lament");
- **Donald MacDonald**, ff.83-87;
- **Angus MacKay**, ii, 53-55;
- **D. S. MacDonald**, i, 57-9;
- **John MacDougall Gillies**, f.101;
- **David Glen**, ff.144-146;
- **Robert Meldrum**, ff.129-131;

and in the following published source:

- C. S. Thomason, *Ceol Mor*, pp.85-6.

- **Colin Mór Campbell** treats the tune like this:

1<sup>st</sup> Hiodinbain hioendam hinotra hiharin himbari cherede hadre hioendam

2<sup>d</sup> Hiodinbain hioendām hinotra hiharin hindre harodin hihorodo hiodin himbari chedare hadre hioendām

3<sup>d</sup> Hiodinbain hioendam hinotra hiharin himbari chedari hadre haotro chedari haotro himotro hiharin

Sffirst Motion

1<sup>st</sup> Himto hinda hioendam hintoemda hiharin himde hindi cheotro himda hinde hihorodo himde hinda hioendam hintoemda hiharin

2<sup>d</sup> Hinde hinde harodin himda hioa hihorodo himde hindi cheotro himda hinde hihorodo  
himde hinda hioendam hintoemda hiharin

3<sup>d</sup> Himde hindi cheotro himda hinde haotro himde hindi haotro himto hinda hiharin

D Himto himda himto himto himda himto hindaiddan himde hindi himde himde himda himde himda himda himto himda himto himto himda himto hindaiddan

2<sup>d</sup> Himde himde himda hinda himto hinda himto hinto himde hindi himde himde himda himde  
himda hinda [himto hinda] himto hinto himda hinto hindariddan

3<sup>d</sup> Himde hindi himde hinde himda hinde himda hinda himde hindi himda hinda himto hinda  
hinderiddan

And there the score ends. Colin Campbell does not develop the tune beyond the doubling of the ffirst Motion, which is a pity because his pleasing alternation of low Gs and low As may strike many as more pleasing than anything offered by the later scores.

**Donald MacDonald** times the tune as follows:

LAMENT FOR MACSUAIN OF RRAT ROAIG. 88

The image displays a musical score for a pipe and drum piece. It consists of 12 staves of music, arranged in two groups of six. The notation is written in a traditional style, featuring a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The music is composed of a series of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests, which are characteristic of the 'Lament' genre. The title 'LAMENT FOR MACSUAIN OF RRAT ROAIG.' is printed at the top, and the page number '88' is in the upper right corner.

## pipes | drums



85

The image displays a page of musical notation for pipes and drums, numbered 85 in the top right corner. The notation is arranged in 12 staves, each containing a series of rhythmic patterns and notes. The notation is complex, featuring many beamed notes and accidentals, characteristic of traditional Scottish music. The page is set against a white background with a red header box at the top.

# pipes | drums







One notes the varied timing of the double echo beats in the ground, and the nice little cadence high G on the double echo on E in bar three balancing those which follow later in the line. MacDonald points the siubhal "down" MacKay "up" (although there are signs of several obvious changes of mind by MacKay about the timing, especially in the siubhal singling) both imply an "up" timing in the taorluath and crunluath variations, otherwise their settings are similar.

**Angus MacKay** times the tune like this:

*Mac Lellan of Roags & amair*  
*lunan*

53



54

*Doubling.*

*VAX - 2nd.*

*Doubling.*



55

*Green-leaf*

*Doubling*

*D. G. Hanna, M. Hanna*

## pipes | drums

Those attracted by **David Glen**'s characteristic style might like to consider the following setting which Glen describes as an "edited" version based on the one in Donald MacDonald's manuscript:

*A Lament for MacDugall of Roiaic* from MacDugall's "Edited"

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a pipe and drum piece. The title is 'A Lament for MacDugall of Roiaic' and it is from 'MacDugall's "Edited"'. The score is written on ten staves. The first four staves contain the main melody, which is a lament. The fifth staff is marked 'Bar 1st' and the sixth staff is marked 'Doubting'. The remaining six staves continue the melody. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines. The handwriting is in ink on a white background.

# pipes | drums

*Lair-luath*



*Doubling.*



*Lair-luath.*



‡ These Notes are frequently used as is. I write them here as I play them. (MacKay's style)



## pipes | drums



**C. S. Thomason's** score combines features of both MacDonald and MacKay's manuscript settings. He plays his taorluath singling and doubling "down" and his crunluath variations "up." Those drawn to this combination may find the arrangement attractive:

LAMENT FOR MACSUAIN OF ROAIG.

A printed musical score for a piece titled "LAMENT FOR MACSUAIN OF ROAIG." The score is arranged in two systems, each with five staves. The notation is more formal than the handwritten version, with clear note heads, stems, and rests. There are some markings above the staves, including "1. 6. 6." and "1. 6." which might indicate specific rhythmic patterns or fingerings. The right side of the score shows a continuation of the melody on a separate staff.





**D. S. MacDonald** adds nothing to his source, Angus MacKay, and is not reproduced here.  
**John MacDougall Gillies**'s setting is an outline sketch only and is not reproduced here.  
**Robert Meldrum**'s score adds nothing to the stylistic possibilities of the tune and is not reproduced here.

### *Commentary*

Archibald Campbell wrote of this tune that "I had no hand in choosing the original text as I was in India but only had to do the Editorial notes afterwards." (Letter to R. U. Brown, 27/12/1955). Yet his editorial papers show him writing to J. P. Grant the main nominal editor of the *Piobaireachd Society Collection (second series)* volume one, with detailed advice about how the tune should be set, which Grant appears to have duly followed (National Library of Scotland MS22103, f.109).

A note in Alexander Nicolson's *History of Skye* (Glasg. 1930) suggests that the dedicatee should be "MacSween of Roag" rather than MacSwan (p.65).

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