



His Father's Lament for Donald MacKenzie

This tune is to be found in the following published source:

–C. S. Thomason's *Ceol Mor*, pp.246-7;

and in the following manuscript sources:

– Disbound MS volume inscribed "Pipe Major Alexander Mackenzie 78th Highlanders (Ross Shire Buffs) October 8th 1891," NLS. MS 22125, containing a setting of "His Father's Lament for Donald Mackenzie" written by "Pipe-Major **Ronald MacKenzie** 78th Highlanders in 1866."

–**Donald MacKay's** "Ballindalloch manuscript," Glasgow University Library MS Gen 1455.

–**David Glen's** manuscript, ff.16-19.

–**Robert Meldrum's** manuscript, ff.72-75.

Ronald MacKenzie's setting shows the F's in the triplet run in variation one given time duration quite unmistakably. MacKenzie times the breabachs as even quavers, and the reader will note the unusual timing of the taorluath movements. The chief points of style are as follows:

'His Father's Lament', Ronald MacKenzie's setting, var 1, NLS MS 22125



'His Father's Lament', Ronald MacKenzie's setting, taorluath, line 1, NLS MS 22125



In his notes to the tune in the *Piobaireachd Society Collection* (second series, vol.9, p.275), Archibald Campbell says "What is give here is the tune as written by **Donald MacKay**, and subscribed 'From Ronald MacKenzie, May, 1876'," but this is not so. Donald MacKay's setting is given below. The reader will note the silent alteration to the timing of the opening figure in the ground and whenever it appears thereafter. Bob Brown knew the style represented by Donald MacKay's MS, although how it came down to him I do not know:

*Cumha Domhnuill Mhìo (Chòimich
Donald Mac Neill's lament, composed by his son
shortly after his death at Mumloch 1863*

Thumbl Variation

Variation

Doubling of Variation 1st

Donald MacKenzie's Lament Continued

Variation II

Doubling of Variation II

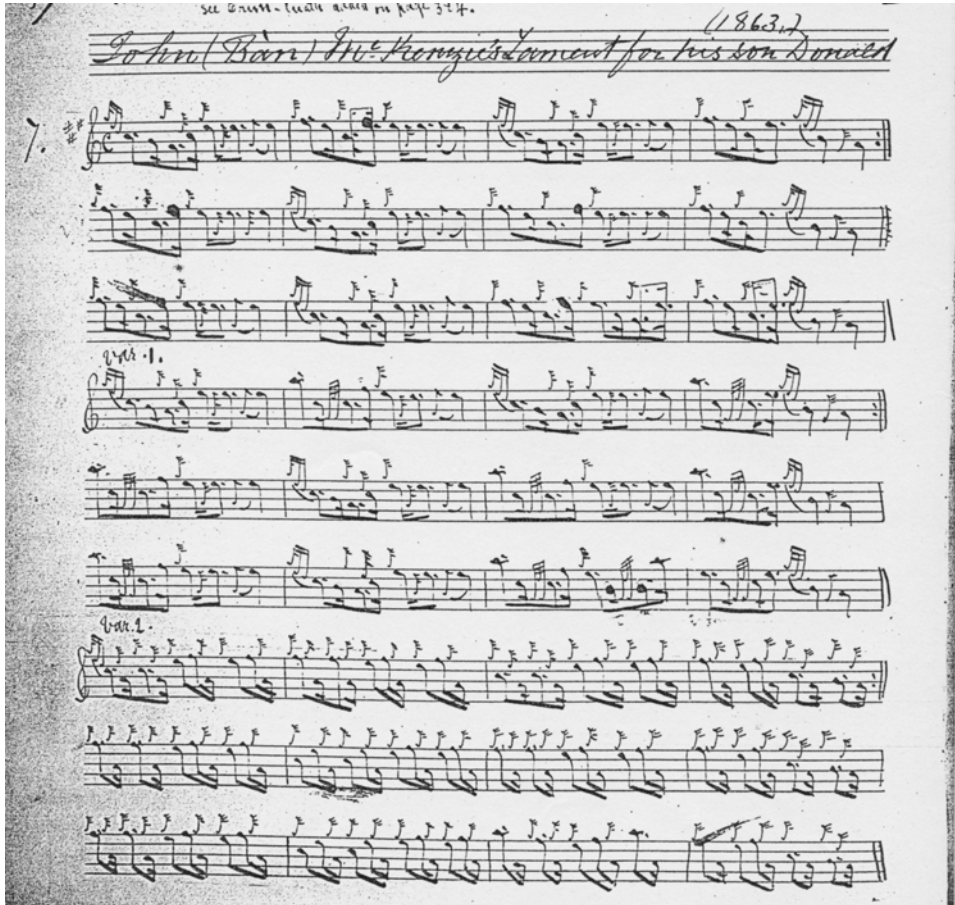
Taorluath

Doubling of Taorluath

The Cunnluath can be taken from last Variation from Donald in it.

David Glen's title is "John (Bàn) McKenzie's Lament for his son Donald (1863)," and his setting is rich in alternative stylings, such as his extensive use of triplets in lines two and three of variation one; his offering of alternatively 'up' or 'down' timings in the taorluath

variations; and his "duinte" timings as an alternative to the breabach taorluath and crunluath movements:



Drubbling Var 2, 1/7

Handwritten musical score for "Drubbling Var 2". The score consists of ten staves of music. The notation is handwritten and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is written in a cursive, handwritten style. Handwritten annotations include "2nd setting" on the right margin, "2nd setting runs so" on the right margin, "Doubling" on the left margin, and "2nd setting runs so" on the right margin.

18.

Two styles.

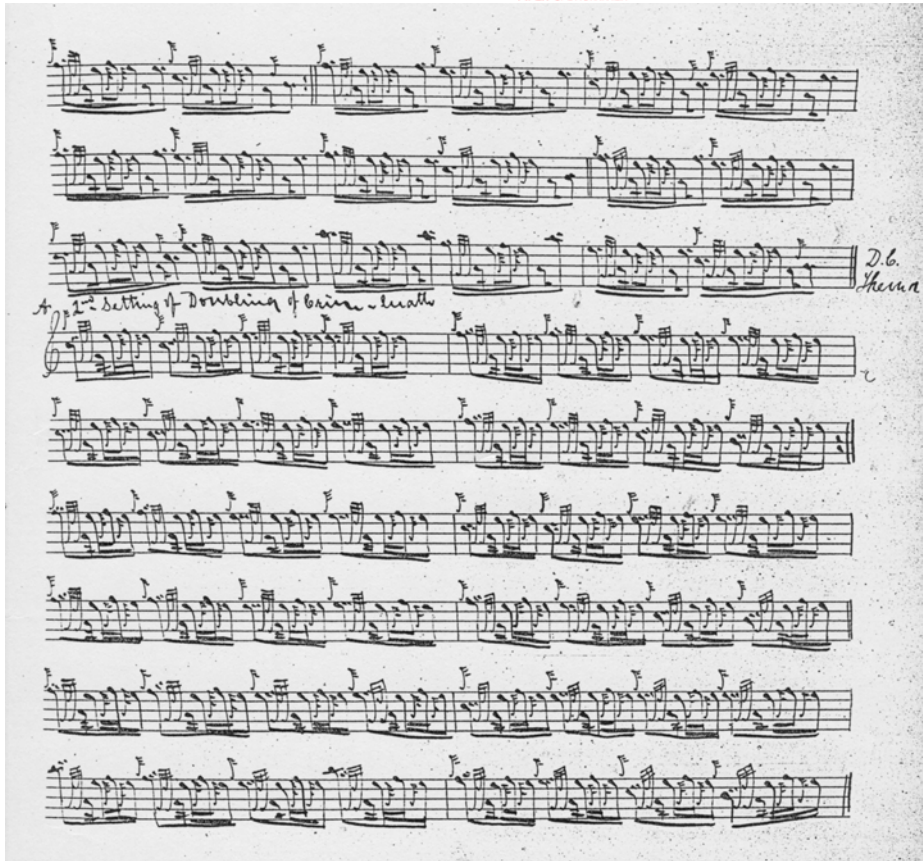
Doubling of Two. luth.

A 2nd Setting of the Doubling of Two. luth.

Gram-luth.

Doubling.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on aged paper. The notation is written in ink and consists of several staves of music. The first staff is labeled '18.' and 'Two styles.' and 'Doubling of Two. luth.'. The second staff is labeled 'A 2nd Setting of the Doubling of Two. luth.'. The third staff is labeled 'Gram-luth.'. The fourth staff is labeled 'Doubling.'. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines. The handwriting is cursive and appears to be from the 18th or 19th century.



C. S. Thomason's setting came to him through Donald MacKay and a MS preserved in the 2nd Seaforths. His inclusion of 3Vii/4Vii along with 5D, 6D (R) may seem excessive, particularly in a tune which is arguably a variation too long already. One obvious route through this would be ground, thumb variation, 3Vii, 4Vii, dropping everything in the middle, and then coming back in at 9.TB (the taorluath singling), and playing from thence through to the end of the tune. The subtle little variations in timing and melodic contour we see in this tune, may be particularly visible in this recent composition, because it rapidly became such a favourite: everybody had his own particular 'way' of it:

246. CLXIII. **DONALD MACKENZIE, His father's LAMENT FOR.** *John Bain MacKenzie.*
1. 2. 11. 14. 6.

This musical score is for a piece titled 'DONALD MACKENZIE, His father's LAMENT FOR.' by John Bain MacKenzie. It is identified as No. 246, CLXIII. The score is written for a single melodic line on a single staff. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked '1. 2. 11. 14. 6.' The score consists of several measures of music, including a section marked '8 VII.' and another marked '4 VII.'.

5.D., 6.D(R) 2.Viv. 8.Viv. CLXIII. 247.

This musical score shows variations 5 through 13 of a piece. The variations are labeled as follows: 5.D., 6.D(R), 7.Viv., 8.Viv., 9.TB, 10.TB, 11.TB, 12.CB, 13.CB. The score is written for a single melodic line on a single staff. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked '2.Viv.' and '8.Viv.'. The score consists of several measures of music, including a section marked 'CLXIII. 247.'.

Robert Meldrum follows C. S. Thomason fairly closely, but sensibly drops Thomason's 5D, and 6D (R). Those who dislike the latter's 'down' pointing of the later variations will note that Meldrum comes to different conclusions about this (and we remember that he was a pupil of Ronald MacKenzie):

Thomason

This musical score is for variations by Thomason. It is written for a single melodic line on a single staff. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score consists of several measures of music.



Commentary:

In the autumn of 1892, Donald MacKay wrote to Ronald MacKenzie requesting further details about the tune. In his reply of 1st October 1892, dated from Gordon Castle, Fochabers, MacKenzie stated "...it was my Dear departed uncle that composed it on the death of his son Donald at Munlochy Rossshire in the year 1863. There I lerned [sic] the tune from himself & when lying in Gibraltar in 1866 I put it into music the best I could—it always was a favourite, and when at Oban on the 14th of Sept. last The Marchioness of Lorne asked me to play it specially for her.

Keith Cameron or any body else can say what they like about the setting of it, but then the tune is as an authority backed by my Uncle, [sic] & learned from him by me, further I can add that it was the last tune he composed on earth—" [National Library of Scotland, "Campbell, (Archibald), Jurist & Piper. Piobaireachd Research Papers of (ca. 1903-1963, n.d.)," MS.22112, ff.15-16].

Donald MacKenzie (1833-1863) was himself a champion, winning the prize pipe at Inverness in 1847, and gold medals at Inverness in 1853 and 1861. For details see Angus Fairrie, *The Northern Meeting 1788-1988* (Edinr., 1988), p.168.

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