

Welcome Johnny Back Again

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

- **Colin Mór Campbell's** Nether Lorn Canntaireachd, ii, 138-41;
- **Angus MacKay's** MS, ii, 1-2 (and in the so-called "Kintarbert MS" ff.1-2);
- **Duncan Campbell of Foss's** MS, ff.1-2;
- **Uilleam Ross's** MS, ff.55-56;
- **John MacDougall Gillies's** MS, f.36;
- **David Glen's** MS, ff.30-31;
- **McLennan Papers**, f.12.

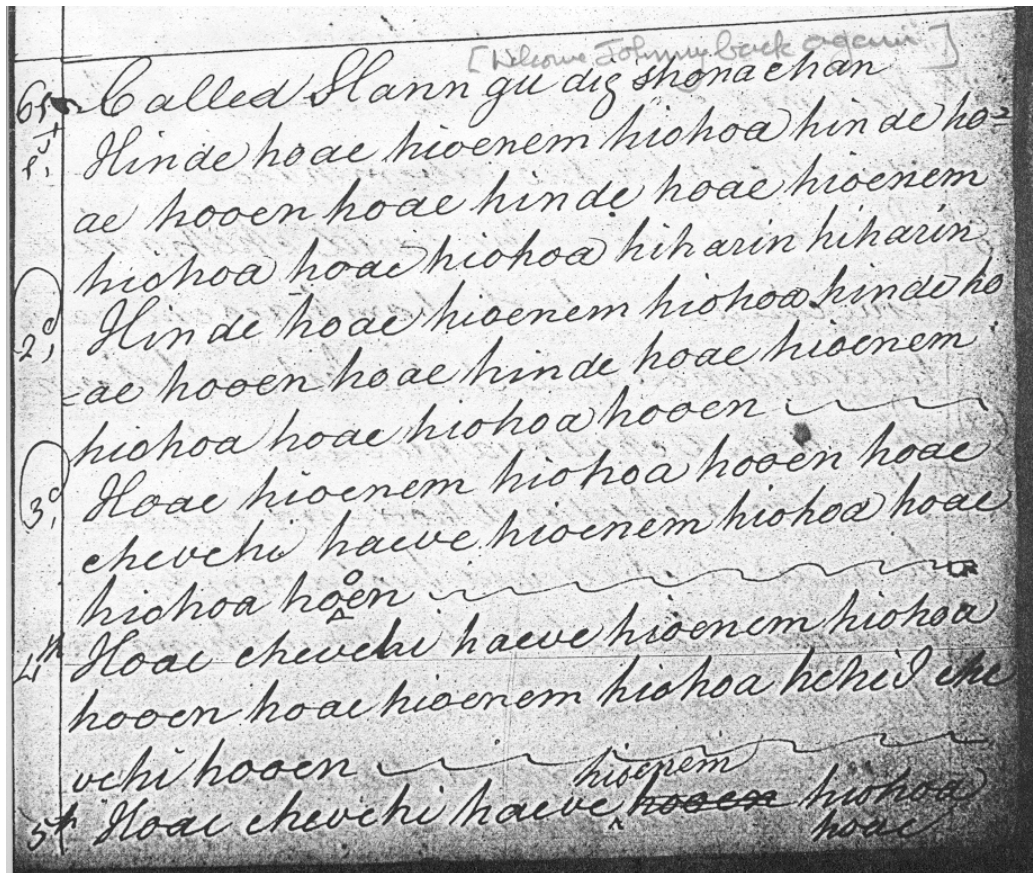
And in the following published source:

- **C. S. Thomason**, *Ceol Mor*, p.304.

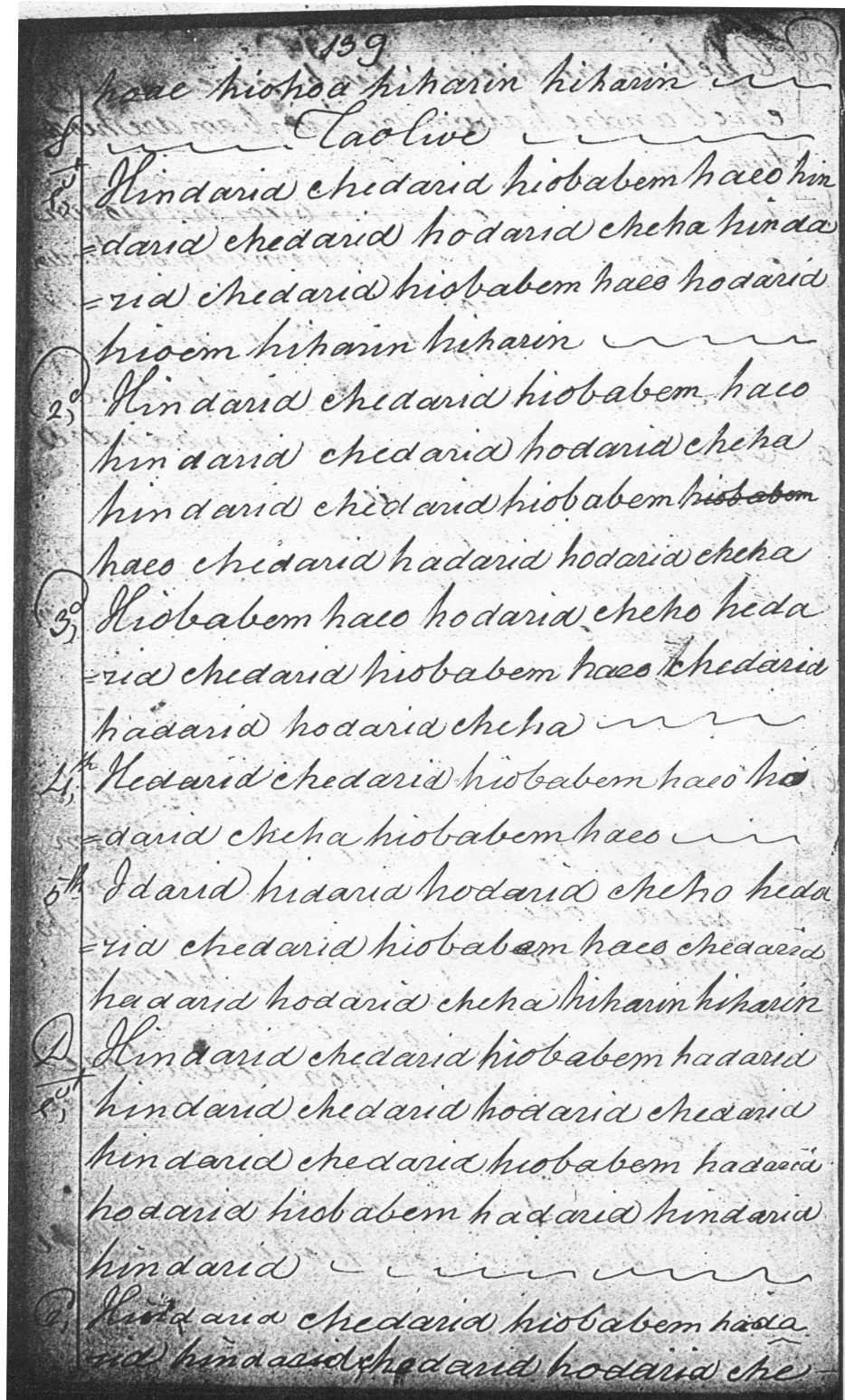
This is quite a widely diffused tune, preserved in many of the old manuscripts.

Colin Mór sets the tune like this:

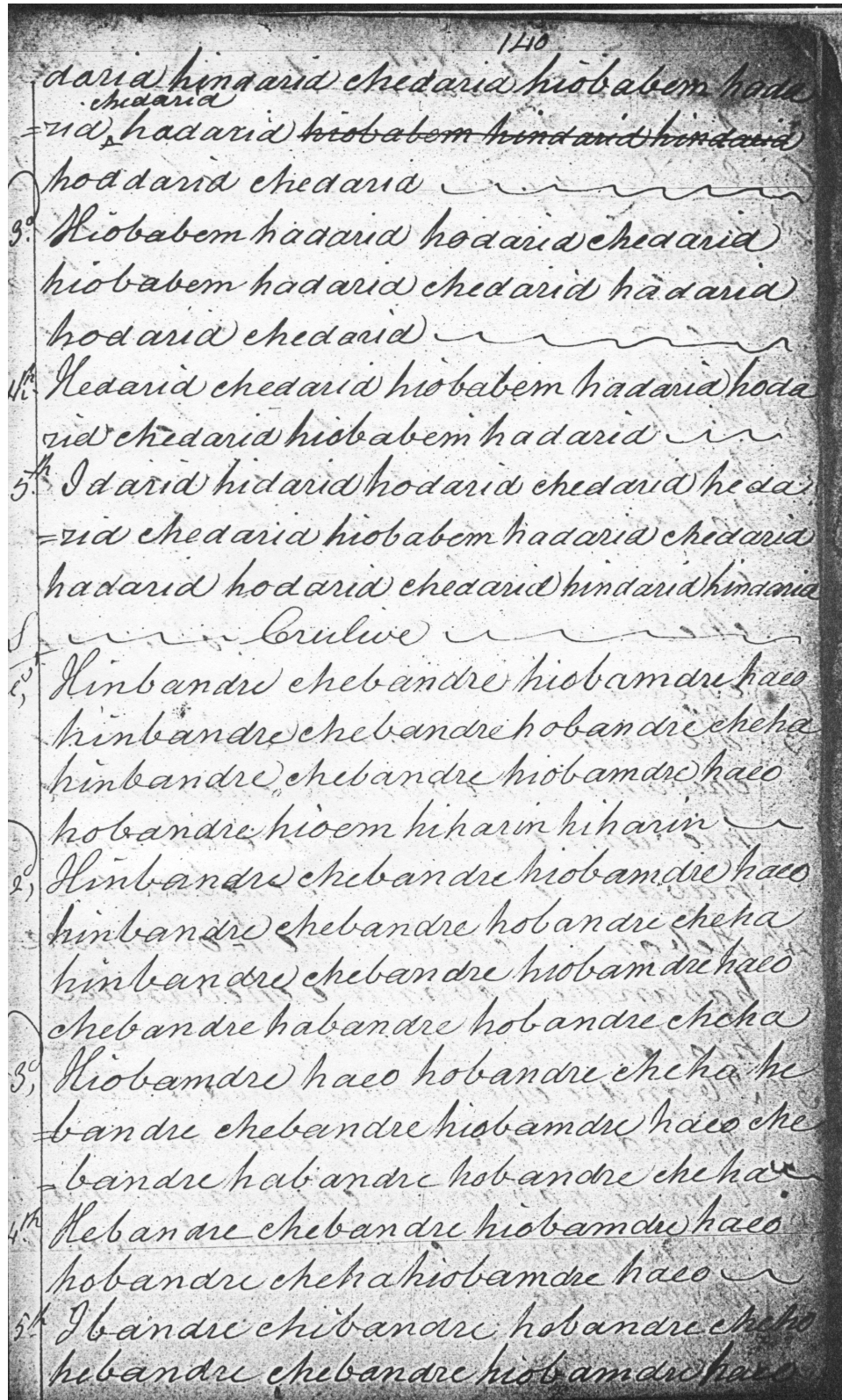
pipes | drums



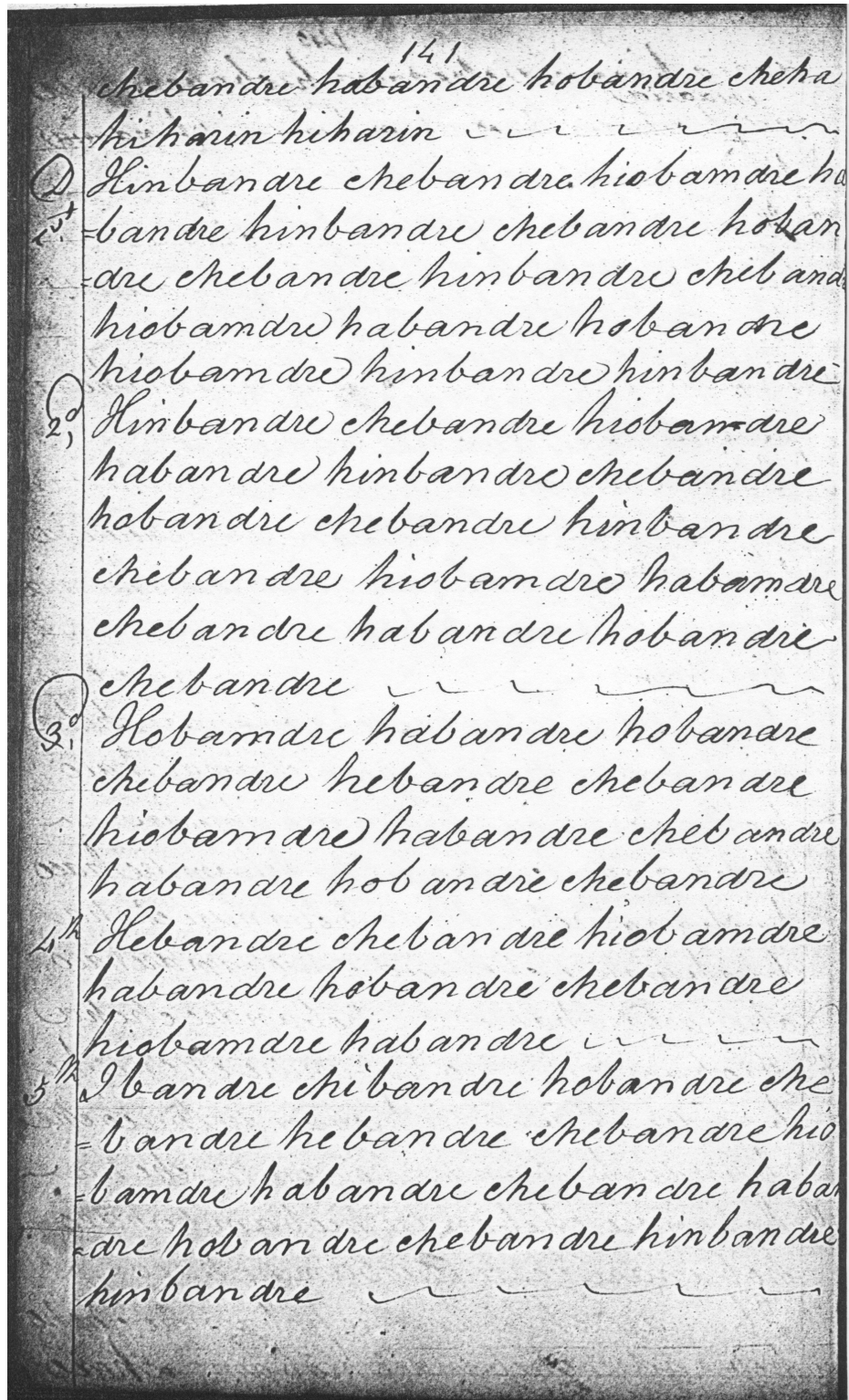
pipes | drums



pipes | drums



pipes | drums



pipes | drums

The strings of linking triplets at the heart of this piece seem to have created notational difficulties for several of the early editors. Here in Colin Mór we find line endings rather uncertainly marked. The line numbering seems clearly approximate reflecting the problems of fitting such a tune accurately on to the written page. An overall pattern can be deduced readily enough, however: four lines of eight bars each, a first line very similar to Angus MacKay's, and two further lines in which the tune is developed rather more freely than in MacKay; roughly as follows:

pipes | drums



Taolive



pipes | drums

D[oubling]

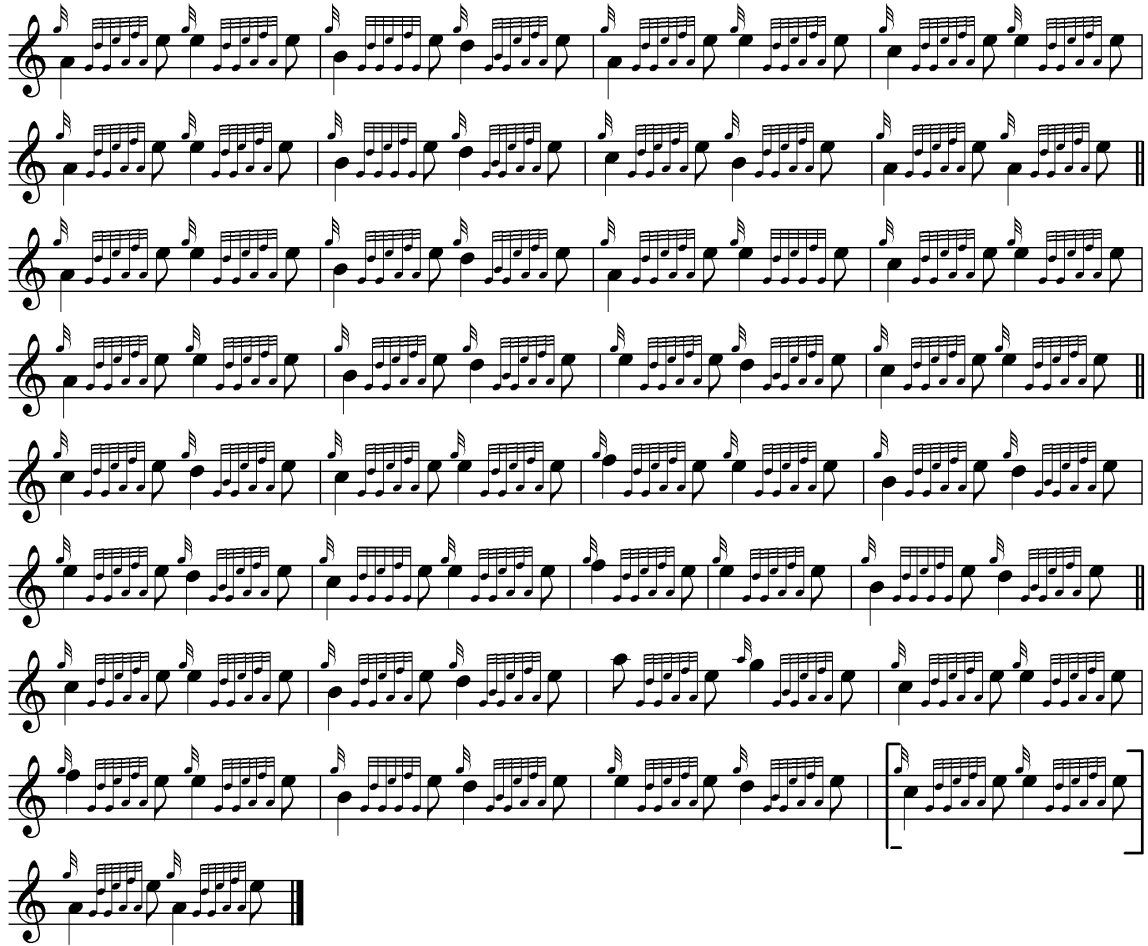


Crulive



pipes | drums

D[oubling]



The Gaelic title means something pretty close to "here's a health on your return..." so There may be a degree of musical onomatopoeia involved here with the playful returns of motif reinforcing the sentiment of this salute.

Angus MacKay sets the tune like this:

pipes | drums

Slàn gu'n till Conachann

Welcome Johnie back again * *same*

Variation 1st time

2nd time

3rd time

4th time

5th time

6th time

7th time

8th time

9th time

10th time

11th time

12th time

13th time

14th time

15th time

16th time

17th time

18th time

19th time

20th time

21st time

22nd time

23rd time

24th time

25th time

26th time

27th time

28th time

29th time

30th time

31st time

32nd time

33rd time

34th time

35th time

36th time

37th time

38th time

39th time

40th time

41st time

42nd time

43rd time

44th time

45th time

46th time

47th time

48th time

49th time

50th time

51st time

52nd time

53rd time

54th time

55th time

56th time

57th time

58th time

59th time

60th time

61st time

62nd time

63rd time

64th time

65th time

66th time

67th time

68th time

69th time

70th time

71st time

72nd time

73rd time

74th time

75th time

76th time

77th time

78th time

79th time

80th time

81st time

82nd time

83rd time

84th time

85th time

86th time

87th time

88th time

89th time

90th time

91st time

92nd time

93rd time

94th time

95th time

96th time

97th time

98th time

99th time

100th time

pipes | drums

2

The image shows a handwritten musical score for pipes and drums, consisting of 12 staves. The notation is in a single system, with each staff representing a different part of the music. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. Key annotations include:

- 10 is* (written below the first staff)
- 10 is* (written below the second staff)
- 10 is* (written below the third staff)
- 10 is* (written below the fourth staff)
- 10 is* (written below the fifth staff)
- 10 is* (written below the sixth staff)
- 10 is* (written below the seventh staff)
- 10 is* (written below the eighth staff)
- 10 is* (written below the ninth staff)
- 10 is* (written below the tenth staff)
- 10 is* (written below the eleventh staff)
- 10 is* (written below the twelfth staff)

The score is written in a clear, legible hand, and the notation is consistent throughout. The page is numbered '2' in the top left corner.

pipes | drums

MacKay's setting has three lines of eight bars each, 8 8 8, in the ground, but the variations stretch to four lines, the last showing something of the playful elaboration we see in Colin Mór Campbell. We note that the word "Campbell" is jotted down following the title in the English index of the manuscript (although not the Gaelic one). The score in the so-called "Kintarbert" MS is an outline one only and is not reproduced here. There is a further MacKay setting of this tune in the Seaforth MS, as follows:

*Slant gu'n till Conachann,
Willcome Johnie back again.*

5

from the original MS. by M.H. Vol 2. p. 1.

variation 1st

variation 2nd

variation 3rd

variation 4th

variation 5th

variation 6th

variation 7th

variation 8th

variation 9th

variation 10th

variation 11th

variation 12th

C. MacDonald

And so on. Here we see the tune made up to four lines 8: 6 6, presumably to square more precisely with the variations. The Seaforth Manuscript came into the possession of Donald Cameron and his sons, and it is interesting to see it clearly reflected in the version preserved by John MacDougall Gillies, a leading Cameron pupil.

Duncan Campbell of Foss's score is marked "from MacGregor," but the music follows the score in MacKay's main manuscript closely. It adds nothing of significance to the tune and is not reproduced here. **Uilleam Ross's** score probably has its source the "Kintarbert" MS or a transcript of it. This latter was the volume containing 88 tunes compiled by Angus MacKay (and probably intended as the second volume of his published collection) which came into the possession of Sir Charles Forbes (1803-1877) of Castle Newe, Strathdon, whose piper was Duncan Campbell of Foss. On the basis of a single word "Kintarbert" scrawled casually in the end leaf, probably indicating a loan, it was later designated the "Kintarbert MS" although its connections are with Aberdeenshire rather than Argyle. If it spent time, as we might expect, on upland southern Aberdeenshire, then it was going to be fairly accessible to Uilleam Ross who was periodically at Balmoral—Ross could probably have seen it in London as well. Neither score is reproduced here. John MacDougall Gillies's score is along similar lines, but there are transcription issues and his score is not reproduced here. The setting in the McLennan papers is a rough partial transcript only and is not reproduced here.

David Glen follows MacKay's main MS in the ground and we see him fascinatingly editing on the page:

pipes | drums

30. Welcome John back again. Slanu gu'n till Bonachann.

14.

1st.

2nd.

Sing
Pipe
Line

Bis

14.

2nd.

this

appears foreign to the tune & should be omitted. Bis

2nd.

Doubling.

1st.

2nd.

too much

Bis

um-uaath.

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. The title is '30. Welcome John back again. Slanu gu'n till Bonachann.' The score is written in a single system with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of several staves of music. The first staff has a '14.' written to its left. There are various annotations throughout the score, including '1st.', '2nd.', 'Bis', 'Sing Pipe Line', 'this', 'appears foreign to the tune & should be omitted. Bis', 'Doubling.', 'too much', and 'um-uaath.' at the bottom. The handwriting is in ink and appears to be from the 19th or 20th century.

pipes | drums

31,

1st

2nd

Bis

Superfluous

Doubling of Grims - lenth.

1st

2nd

Superfluous

Bis

D.C. Thoma.

pipes | drums

Glen indicates that bars seven to ten of his second part are in his judgment superfluous and should be dropped, sacrificing to "regularity" what some might regard as an appealing feature of the tune.

C. S. Thomason's score, identifying Angus MacKay and John MacDougall Gillies as his sources shows a similarly revisionary tendency, reminding us that the editor had a number of late Victorian piper-editor informants which included both Glen and Gillies, although Thomason takes an interestingly different route to Glen in reducing the tune to contemporary notions of "regularity":



Commentary:

This tune offers a fine illustration of the variety of interpretations available to the performer in the older manuscript tradition, ranging from the free and expansive Nether Lorn version, to the stricter later Victorian scores, guided more narrowly by contemporary notions of "regularity."

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