

## **The Carles with the Breeks**

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

– **Colin Campbell**'s "Nether Lorn Canntaireachd," i, 44-5; (with the title "Lord Bredalbin's Gathering");

and in the following published sources:

– **Donald MacDonald**'s *Ancient Martial Music*, pp.102-5 (with the title "Bodaich na 'm Brigis Lord Braidalbane's March To the Battle fought betwixt him and the Sinclairs of Caithness at Wick.");

– **Angus MacKay**'s *Ancient Piobaireachd*, pp.5-6;

– **Donald MacPhee**'s *Collection of Piobaireachd*, ii, 17-18;

– **C. S. Thomason**'s *Ceol Mor*, p.45;

– **David Glen**'s *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd*, pp. 45-6;

– **William Stewart**, *et al.*, eds., *Piobaireachd Society Collection*, first series, iv, 12-13;

**Colin Campbell** sets the tune like this:

# pipes | drums

19th Called Lora Bredalbins Gathering

1st Miharain heetra hikorodo haroem shiharain heetra  
chorae cheha Twice Over

2nd Miharana Idari horere heetra hiharana Idere heereche  
che Miharana Idere horere heetra Idere heetra  
chorae cheha

3rd

4th

First Motion

1st Minbarche barchio bare harodde himbare he bareche  
barecheha Twice Over

2nd Harodde Idare hebare hebare heche cheha  
Harodde Idare hebare hebare Idare hebare chebare  
Minbarche barchio bare harodde himbare he bare  
che bareche Twice Over

3rd Harodde Idare hebare  
hebare Twice Over

4th Harodde Idare hebare  
hebare Idare hebare chebare chebare

5th

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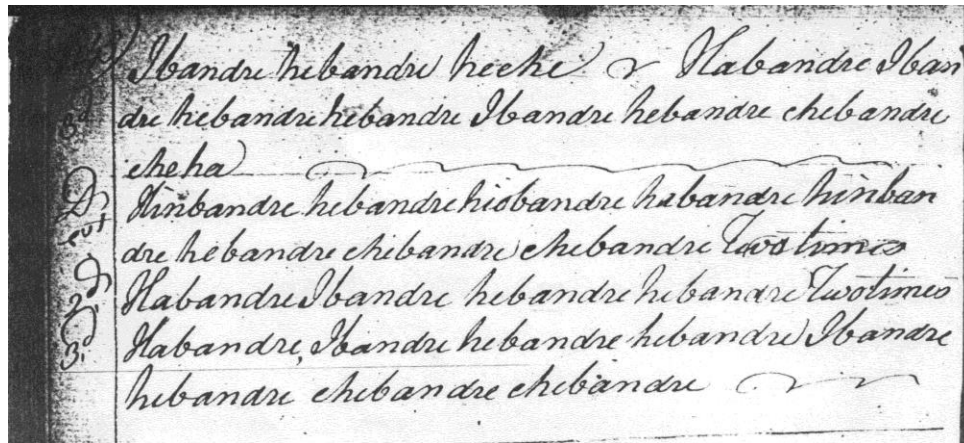
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## pipes | drums



**Colin Campbell**, who actually worked for the Breadalbanes and may be expected therefore to have known this tune particularly well, develops the piece in a straightforward and logical manner: ground; lemluath singling and doubling; taorluath duinte singling and doubling; and crunluath duinte singling and doubling. The only real interpretational difficulty is what to make of the introductory notes to the movements of the ground, hiharin, hiharara, hihorodo, and whether these were intended as cadence notes or cuttings. A possible interpretation is suggested in the accompanying MP3 file.

**Donald MacDonald's** published setting is as follows:



BODACH NA M BRIGIS  
**Lord Breadalbane's**  
**MARCH**

*To the Battle fought betwixt him and the*

**SINCLAIRS OF CAITHNESS**

AT UTICK

The musical score is written for piano and pipe/drum. It consists of five systems of music. Each system has a piano part on the left (treble and bass staves) and a pipe/drum part on the right (treble staff). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The piano part is a continuous melody, while the pipe/drum part consists of rhythmic patterns. The score ends with a double bar line. Below the score, there is a note about a historical account and the publisher's name.

A historical account of this Pìobaireachd will be given in Vol. 2!

Walker & Anderson Engravers Edin.

# pipes | drums

103

The musical score is written for piano and consists of two systems of staves. The first system has four staves, and the second system has four staves. The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is highly rhythmic, featuring many triplets and sixteenth notes. The first system ends with a double bar line. The second system begins with the instruction 'Doubling VAR: 1.' and continues with the same rhythmic pattern. The second system ends with a double bar line and the instruction 'D.C.' (Da Capo). The third system begins with the instruction 'VAR: 2.' and continues with a variation of the melody. The third system ends with a double bar line. The fourth system continues the variation and ends with a double bar line.



# pipes | drums

104

Doubling VAR: 2.

D.C.

Creanluith or Round Movement.

# pipes | drums

105

Doubling of Creanluich.

D.C.

## pipes | drums

**MacDonald's** setting is much more profuse in its use of introductory notes in the ground, so much so, perhaps, as to impede the flow of the tune if given any significant time value. We note the attractive run down D-B-G at the end of the A phrase in the singlings of the later variations where **Colin Campbell** had used a basic duinte taorluath and crunluath figure in such locations, and the fact that MacDonald repeats the ground after every doubling of the variations which implies a pretty brisk approach to the timing of the tune as a whole.

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



**BODAICH NA'M BRIGAIS.**  
The Carles With the Breeks.  
Lord Breadalbane's  
March.

*Andante.*

II. 

*Variation 1.*



*Doubling of Variation 1.*



# pipes | drums

## Variation 2.



## Doubling of Variation 2.



## Crun-luath.

*D.C. Thema.*



## Doubling of Crun-luath.



*D.C. Thema.*



## pipes | drums

MacKay's square 4/4 timing stands in contrast to the lilting duple timing of Campbell and MacDonald. (although the rhythm of the words of the little song quoted beneath line suggest something closer to MacDonald and Colin Campbell). MacKay develops the tune in a similar manner however, with a ground followed by lemluath, taorluath and crunluath variations, singling and doubling. Here, though, the ground is restated only once within the tune, at the end of the taorluath doubling.

**Donald MacPhee** largely follows **MacKay**, but has a number of interesting individual touches, thus:

**BODAICH NAM BRIOGAIS.**

**THE CARLES WITH THE BREEKS.**

**Lord Breadalban's March.**

*Andante.*

Var. 1<sup>st</sup> Round Movement.

Doubling of Var. 1<sup>st</sup>

Taorluath or Var. 2<sup>nd</sup>

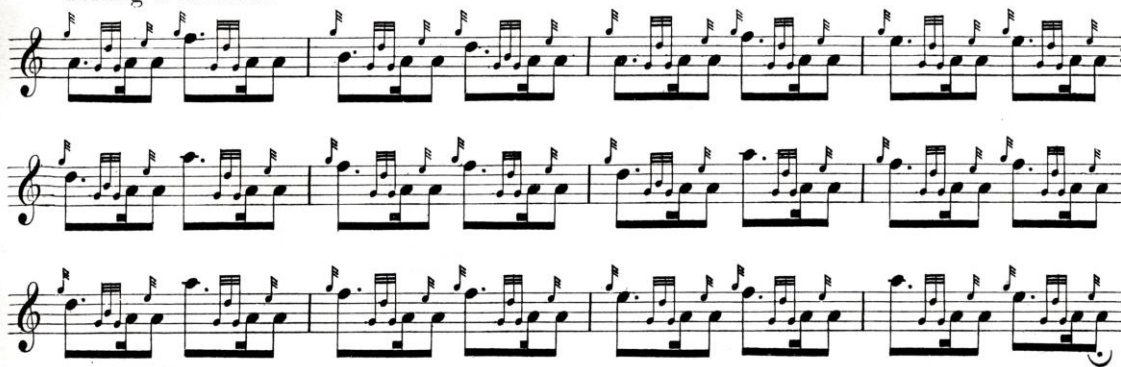
The musical score is presented in three systems, each containing three staves. The first system is marked 'Andante.' and features a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second system is marked 'Var. 1<sup>st</sup> Round Movement.' and shows a more complex rhythmic pattern. The third system is marked 'Doubling of Var. 1<sup>st</sup>' and 'Taorluath or Var. 2<sup>nd</sup>', featuring a faster, more intricate melody. The score is written in a single key and time signature, with various musical notations including beams, slurs, and repeat signs.



# pipes | drums

18

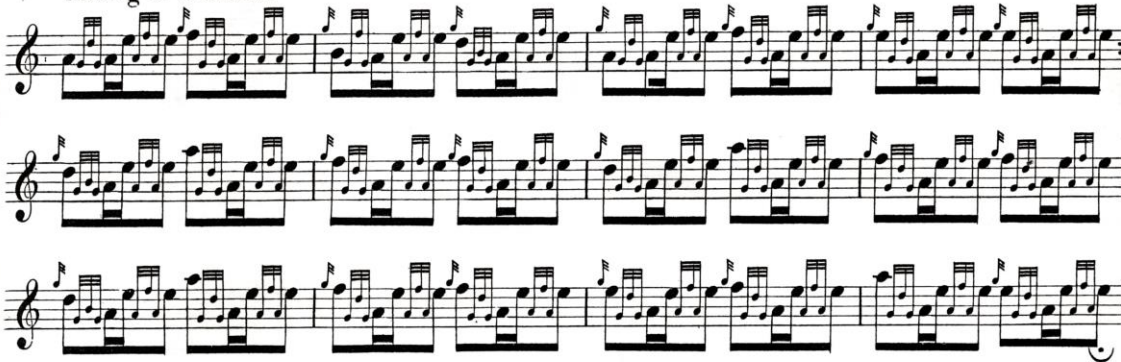
Doubling of Taorluath.



Crunluath.



Doubling of Crunluath.



Tripling of Crunluath.



## pipes | drums

**MacPhee** emphasises the initial low A in his gairm movement, unlike the cut version in **MacKay**, he drops the repeat of the ground at the end of the taorluath doubling, and includes a crunluath a mach – so for those who wanted to go down this route MacPhee would represent an attractive, very playable option if one is reconciled to the square 4/4 timing of the ground.

**C. S. Thomason** follows Donald MacDonald (although adopting **MacKay**-style double-echo beats throughout). Otherwise his score adds little to the interpretative possibilities of the tune and is not reproduced here.

**David Glen** also follows the MacDonald style, setting the ground in duple time and playing the gairm on to a low A dotted quaver. Interestingly he returns straight to E from high A in the final bar of the ground, presumably to follow the tone row of the variations more exactly; doubly interesting in view of the fact that **Donald MacPhee**, of whose editorial approach this was a typical feature, did not elect to do it on this occasion, but came back down to E via a throw on F like most other people did.



# THE CARLES WITH THE BREEKS (Lord Breadalbane's March.)

## BODAICH NAM BRIOGAIS.

Ùrlar. *Moderate.*



Var. 1<sup>st</sup> Leumluath.



Doubling of Var. 1<sup>st</sup>



Var. 2<sup>nd</sup> Taor-luath.



# pipes | drums

46

Dùblachadh an Taor-luaith.



Repeat the Ùrlar.

Chrùn-luath.



Dùblachadh a' Chrùn-luath.



Repeat the Ùrlar.

It is

interesting that neither Thomason nor Glen follows MacPhee in including a crunluath a mach.

The *Piobaireachd Society Collection* (first series) score adds nothing to the interpretational possibilities of the tune and is not reproduced here.

## *Commentary:*

This tune is associated with a raid by Breadalbane's people into the far North East in the year 1680]. The most convenient brief summary of the complex of legal claim and counter-claim which lay behind what was effectively an act of territorial aggrandisement is given by James Logan in the notes to Angus MacKay's *Ancient Piobaireachd*. One might add that there is a story that the night before the battle, the canny Perthshire folk deliberately ran aground a small vessel crammed with barrels of whisky in the immediate rear of the Caithness people, and awaited the inevitable:

There had been, for a considerable time, misunderstandings and mutual jealousies between the Sinclairs and the Mackays, which circumstances, ripened into feud, mutual aggression, and slaughter. In 1668, Colonel Hugh MacKay of Scourie was subjected to so severe an imprisonment by Lord Caithness that it cost him his life. Shortly after this event his brother Hector was waylaid in Aberdeenshire by Sinclair of Dunbeath and Sinclair of Murkle, and was killed after a stout contention in which MacKay's servant severely wounded both the assailants, - Murkle so much so, that a cut in his neck rendered him ever after incapable of holding up his head. The Earl of Sutherland, Lords Rea and Strathnaver, Hugh Munro of Eribol, and several others, raised an action before the justiciary, against George, Earl of Caithness, and several who were concerned with him in those lawless proceedings which harassed the country. This was met by a counter-action, in which various complaints were made against the pursuers, extending downwards from the year 1649 and both parties were summoned to appear on the 10th of December 1668.

A compromise took place, and Caithness withdrew his action: the case as to Dunbeath and Murkle being however excepted. These stubborn gentlemen had not found the caution or security required for their appearance, and had eluded all attempts to apprehend them. A commission of fire and sword was promulgated against them, but the service being declined by those to whom the letters were first addressed, John Campbell younger of Glenurchy undertook it with alacrity, and proceeded to Caithness; but meantime by the influence of their friends, the outlaws obtained a remission of their crimes. Although Glenurchy found this an unprofitable expedition, he resolved to turn his visit with Caithness to some account, and ingratiated himself with the Earl, who had married Argyles' daughter, and who was consequently his own kinswoman. The Earl, who was advanced in life and in great pecuniary difficulties, was advised by Campbell to execute a bond of entail, 7th October 1672, conveying the earldom and estates to Glenurchy, failing issue male of his own body. He died in 1675 without that issue, leaving his lands encumbered with debt, which Campbell, who was himself a principal creditor, redeemed, and not trusting in the deed of entail and disposition, he married in 1678 the dowager Countess, who had enjoyed a handsome life rent. He then led a process of adjudication against the whole property, and ultimately obtained a charter under the great seal and a royal grant of the earldom. George Sinclair of Geiss, son of Francis Sinclair of Northfield, second son of George Earl of Caithness, grandfather to the last Earl, laid claim to the title and was cheerfully acknowledged by a majority of the clan, who would not submit to Glenurchy's assumption. The lawyers, however, seem to have given the preference to Glenurchy, in whose favour a proclamation from the privy council was issued, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1677, forbidding Sinclair to claim, or others to give him the style or title.



## pipes | drums

Sinclair, in support of his claims, alleged a disposition of the lands of Geiss, Northfield, and Tister, from the Earl his grandfather, which he maintained was his sole and in alienable patrimony; but Glenurchy also resisted this claim. Sinclair however defended his right, and with his friends opposed Glenurchy's collection of the rents, and otherwise annoyed him, who thereupon obtained the protection of letters of lawborow's against the Sinclairs, who had been previously summoned by the sheriff to compare and resign the lands to the newly created Earl of Caithness; who had moreover obtained an act, charging all his kin, friends, and followers to assist him in the recovery of the disputed lands. In consequence of this, Glenurchy invaded Caithness with an array of about 1000 men from Glenlyon, Glenfallach, Glendochart, Achaladair, with the followers of his brother-in-law, the Laird of MacNab; and finding the Sinclairs prepared to oppose the march, he drew up his army at Allt-na meirlich, about two miles from the town of Wick. His enemies were somewhat more numerous, and unfortunately spent the night preceding the battle in carelessly feasting and drinking, the effect of which was seen in the irregular line of march, when they went forward next morning. The Campbells with becoming prudence, knowing the population so hostile to them and that defeat would be irretrievable ruin, selected the most advantageous ground, and nerved themselves for the onslaught of the advancing host.

Their firmness secured the advantage; for the unsteady ranks of the Sinclairs were broken, and the slaughter was great. Many attempting to cross the river of Wick, escaped the sword, but found a watery grave. The bodies so accumulated in the stream, that it is

traditionally reported the Campbells could step over on the carcasses, dry shod. The gentlemen being mounted, made good their retreat, but the victory was so complete and so easily obtained, that on first perceiving the Sinclairs giving way, Glenurchy's Piper poured forth a voluntary, the notes of which appeared to re-echo the contemptuous exclamation, that "the carles with the breeks were flying from the field!"\* This piobaireachd has ever been called, "Lord Breadalbane's march to the battle," and does appear in the ears of lovers of Pipe-music, to articulate very expressively "Bodaich na'm Briogais," &c.

\* The gentlemen of the Sinclairs being on horseback, wore the Truis; hence the appellation Bodaich na'm Briogais. The late Caithness fencibles, raised and commanded by Sir John Sinclair, Bart. were dressed in this distinguished garb of their ancestors. See Stewart's Sketches of the Highlanders, p. 399. Douglas' Peerage, &c.

There is a famous song to this tune, associated with the Massacre of Glencoe, usually called from its opening words, "*Mnathan a' ghlinne seo*," a warning to the women of the glen that there are armed men lying in wait for them,. For further details and a sung performance, see

<http://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/101931/>

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