

Duncan Macrae of Kintail's Lament:

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

- **Angus MacKay's** MS, i, 112 and again at f.213; f.112 bears an annotation: "Note p.112 as played by the editor's father"; (this tune is also in the so-called "Kintarbert MS," f.55);
- **Duncan Campbell of Foss's** MS, ff.112-113;
- **Uilleam Ross's** MS, f.27;
- **Donald MacKay's** "Ballindalloch" MS, f.29;
- **D. S. MacDonald's** MS, i, 101-2;
- **McLennan Papers**, f.22;
- **Robert Meldrum's** MS, ff.108-110;

and in the following published sources:

- **Uilleam Ross**, *Ross's Collection*, p.103 (with the title "Colin Macrae of Invereenat's Lament"; Ross notes "There is no Doubling on any of the Variations of this Tune. Copied from Alex. MacDonald Piper to the Late Earl of Fife");
- **C. S. Thomason**, *Ceol Mor*, pp.204-5.

In his main MS, **Angus MacKay** sets the tune as follows:

112. *Cumha Dhùnna Mhàire*
Duncan MacRae of Kintail's Pament

No. 49. *le p 21/3*

1st var.

2nd and last var.

The second version in **Mackay's** MS is as follows:

Duncan Mac Rael's Lams 2/13
see page 112.

Note Page 112. As played by the Editors father.

There are considerable differences between the two scores. Broadly similar in the ground, version one proceeds to a couple of thumb variations and closes with an instruction to repeat the ground. But version two is developed on a more expansive scale with two thumb variations and ending with taorluath and crunluath singlings. Although the first version seems to have been the preferred setting of the redoubtable John MacKay, widely acknowledged as the greatest piper of his age, the second set seems by some distance the more musically developed and interesting arrangement, although from the point of view of notation there seem to be problems with metre in the later variations. I have tried to smooth some of these in

the accompanying audio recording. The settings in the so-called "Kintarbert Manuscript" seems little more than a fair copy of MacKay's first setting above and is not reproduced here.

Amongst the other manuscript settings, **Duncan Campbell of Foss** is structurally flawed, with a missing bar (no.2) in line one of the ground, and a parallel omission in line three. It is not reproduced here. **Uilleam Ross** does not depart significantly from Angus MacKay's first setting, while **D. S. MacDonald** does not depart significantly from MacKay's second one; neither is reproduced here. The setting in the **McLennan Papers** is a rough draft only, adding little to the interpretational possibilities. **Robert Meldrum** reflects the published settings of Uilleam Ross and C. S. Thomason and his score is not reproduced here.

This tune is called "Colin Macrae of Invereenat's Lament" in the earliest published source, **Uilleam Ross's** *Collection* (p.103) in a setting from John MacDonald of Inverness's father, Sandy MacDonald. His published score is the earliest printed versions to furnish the tune with the taorluath and crunluath variations.

Ross sets the tune as follows:

CUMHA CHAILAN MHIC RATH INBHIRINAID. 103

COLIN MACRAE OF INVEKEEN, ITS LAMENT.

* There is no Doubling on any of the Variations of this Tune. Copied from Alex. Macdonald Piper to the Late Earl of Fife. D.C.

C. S. Thomason set the tune as follows in *Ceol Mor*:

204 CXXXIII. DUNCAN MACRAE OF KINTAIL — LAMENT FOR

1. III. 2 VI. 3 VII. 4 VIII.

This image shows the first page of a musical score for the pipe and drum tune 'DUNCAN MACRAE OF KINTAIL — LAMENT FOR'. The score is arranged in two columns. The left column contains measures 1 through 10, and the right column contains measures 11 through 20. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' (Allegro). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is written for a single melodic line, likely for a piper, with a drum accompaniment indicated by a small drum icon in the left margin. The measures are numbered 1. III., 2 VI., 3 VII., and 4 VIII. at the beginning of their respective lines.

5 Viv. 6 Vv. CXXXIII. 205

This image shows the second page of the musical score, continuing from the first page. The left column contains measures 21 through 30, and the right column contains measures 31 through 40. The tempo is marked 'Vivace' (Viv.). The key signature remains one flat. The score continues with a single melodic line and drum accompaniment. The measures are numbered 5 Viv. and 6 Vv. at the beginning of their respective lines. The page number '205' is visible in the right margin.

Thomason cites the Ballendalloch MS and Uilleam Ross's published book as his sources, but his setting— in accordance with his usual practice of including all recorded variations, is a composite of the MacKay no 1 setting with additions from Ross, making it the longest of the available versions which might make it an attraction in competitive settings.

Commentary:

There are one or two stories associated with this tune. The Macraes are stated to have been hereditary castellans of Eilean Donan, and the dedicatee of this tune is claimed to have shot the fatal arrow that felled Donald Gorm of Sleat at the siege of the castle in 1539.

Uilleam Ross's title, "Sir Colin MacRae of Invereenat's Lament," may spring from Ross's habit of re-christening older tunes to compliment people prominent in Victorian court circles (Ross was for many years first piper to the Queen). Colin Macrae was one of the rival claimants of the then-vacant chieftainship of Clan Macrae, a prominent public figure, and very much the kind of person one might encounter in a shooting-party at Balmoral, hence bringing him within the orbit of Uilliam Ross.

Whatever the title, this is a lovely tune in all its versions, and is widely played.

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