MacLeod of MacLeod's Lament

There is a setting of this tune in the following manuscript source:
– Robert Meldrum's MS, ff.221-3;

and in the following published sources:
– Angus MacKay's *Ancient Piobaireachd*, pp.131-4;
– Donald MacPhee's *Collection of Piobaireachd*, ii, 11-14;
– C. S. Thomason's *Ceol Mor*, pp.165-6;
– David Glen's *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd*, pp. 51-3;

Robert Meldrum's version is based closely on Angus MacKay's published score and is not reproduced here.

The earliest written score of this tune is that of Angus MacKay. The version published in *Ancient Piobaireachd* was an eallach short at the end of the first line, this feature being replicated throughout the successive variations. MacKay develops the tune thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ground</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subhal singling/doubling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taorluath fosgailte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singling/doubling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taorluath duinte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singling/doubling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crunluath duinte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singling/doubling</td>
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</tbody>
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This pattern is followed by nearly all the later published settings.

There are basically three routes through the tune: that established by Donald MacPhee who corrected the deficiencies of Angus MacKay's score, and whose emendations were accepted by Thomason and Glen; the setting produced by William Stewart in *The Piobaireachd Society Collection* (first series) and the version of G. F. Ross who develops the tune differently from the others.

Donald MacPhee set the tune as follows:
CUMHA CHEANN-CINNIDH NAN LEODACH.
MACLEOD OF MACLEOD’S LAMENT.
Composed by
Donald Mor Mae Crimmon. 1626.

Vav. #1. Sidhbal.

Doubling of Vav. #1.
William Stewart's response to the problems of Angus MacKay's score was to retain the single eallach at the end of line one and make the line up to the requisite length by adding additional material from corresponding positions elsewhere in the ground. Stewart set the tune as follows:
G. F. Ross follows William Stewart in the ground, but points the siubhal "down", and proceeds from the taorluath fosgailte doubling straight to a crunluath fosgailte singling and doubling, presumably accepting the taorluath fosgailte as the determining variation, and adjusting the crunluath to the same pattern, dropping the taorluath duinte entirely. Ross times the tune as follows:
LAMENT FOR SIR RORY MOR MACLEOD. (1626)

Bar No. | 1 & 5 | 2 & 6 | 8 & 7 | 8 & 8
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

1. Ground.

2. Subhail.

3. Doubling*

*Note: the * indicates the second note, rather than the first of each group. The reversed or written is recommended.

Donald Mor MacGrummes,

Bar No. | 1 & 5 | 2 & 6 | 8 & 7 | 8 & 8
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---


5. Doubling.

6. Cnualdhu: Fosguilté (Singling*) (7 Doubling as printed)

*For the Singling substitute for the basic sound, * in the Singling staves in the corresponding places in Tachloch: Fosguilté.
Commentary:

In his "Historic, Biographic, and Legendary Notes to the Tunes" attached to David Glen's Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd, "Fionn" writes:

This is a Lament for Rory Mor Macleod, who flourished as Chief between 1596 and 1626. Padruig Mor was piper to this famous Chief, and when "Ruairadh Mòr" was gone, Dunvegan and its halls lost all charm for Patrick Mor MacCrimmon, and he could no longer remain within its walls. He got up, seized his pipes, and marched off to his own home at Borreraig, consoling his grief by playing as he went a Lament for his Chief, which is one of the most melodious and plaintive tunes on record. The Gaelic words associated with the tune are as follows:

CUMHA RUAIRIDH MHOIR.

Tog orm mo phiob is théid mi dhachaidh,
Is truagh leam fhéin mo léir mar thachair,
Tog orm mo phiob 's mi air mo chràdh
Mu Ruairidh Mòr, mu Ruairidh Mòr

Tog orm mo phiob-tha mi sgith,
'S mar faigh mi i théid mi dhachaidh;
Tog orm mo phiob-tha mi sgith,
'S mi air mo chràdh mu Ruairidh Mòr

Tog orm mo phiob-tha mi sgith,
'S mar faigh mi i théid mi dhachaidh ;
Clàrsach no piob cha tog mo chrìdh,
Cha bheò fear mo ghràidh, Ruairidh Mòr.

The following is a free English rendering:

RORY MOR'S LAMENT.

Give me my pipes - I'll home them carry,
In these sad halls I dare not tarry;
My pipes hand o'er, my heart is sore
For Rory Mor, my Rory Mor.

Fetch me my pipes - my heart is breaking,
For Rory Mor his rest is taking;
He wakes no more, and to its core
My heart is sore for Rory Mor.

Hand me my pipes-I'm sad and weary,
These halls are silent, dark, and eerie;
The pipe no more cheers as of yore
Thy race is o'er, brave Rory Mor!
Rory Mor was an extremely able man, and succeeded in extricating himself and his Clan from difficulties of a very serious nature. He was the first of his family who could write, the earlier Chiefs all signed their names "with my hande led at ye pene of the notar," and he is said to have been the last Highland Chief who continued to write in the language of his fathers. (p.9)  
****Note: this is repeated work; you did this tune in 2005.
  
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