

The Lament for MacDonald's Tutor

There are settings of this tune in the following

Manuscripts:

- Colin Campbell's "Nether Lorn" canntaireachd, ii, 21-4 (with the title "Tharrin Mach bhat Mhic Cload" which would indicate, roughly, "The Putting or pulling out of MacLeod's Galley")
- Angus MacKay's MS, ii, 5-7 (title, "Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor")
- Colin Cameron's MS, ff.65-6, with the title "Salute for the MacDonald's Tutor".

Published Collections:

- David Glen's *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd*, (pp.4-5)
- C. S. Thomason's *Ceol Mor*, (p.239)

Colin Campbell	Angus MacKay	Colin Cameron	David Glen	C. S. Thomason
Ground	Ground	Ground	Ground	Ground
Thumb variation	Thumb variation	Thumb variation	Thumb variation	Thumb variation
	Siubhal singling doubling	Siubhal singling doubling	Siubhal singling doubling	Siubhal singling doubling
Pendulum movement singling doubling	Pendulum movement singling doubling	Pendulum movement singling	Pendulum movement singling doubling	Pendulum movement singling doubling
Taorluath singling doubling	Taorluath singling doubling	Taorluath singling doubling	Taorluath singling doubling	Taorluath singling doubling
	Ground		Ground	Ground
Crunluath singling doubling	Crunluath singling doubling	Crunluath singling doubling	Crunluath singling doubling	Crunluath singling doubling
	Ground		Ground	Ground

None of the pre-Piobaireachd Society settings has a Crunluath a mach.

Colin Campbell sets the tune as follows:

Called Tharrin Mach bhat Mhic Cload

- 1st Hintradre hintrahodin Two times himtodre chetrahodroo
 2^d Hintradre hintrahodin himtodre chetrahodro himtodre chetrahodroo
 3^d Hintradre hintrahodin himtodre chetrahodroo
- D 1st Hintradili hintrahodin Two times himtodili chetrahodroo
 2^d Hintradili hintrahodin himtodili chetrahodroo hintodili chetrahodroo
 3^d Hintradili hintrahodin himtodili chetrahodroo

ffirst Motion

- S 1st Hindaridda hinde hindaridda hindo Two times himdaridto hinde hindaridda himto
2^d Hindaridda hinde hindaridda hindo himdaridto hinde hindaridda hindo himdaridto hinde hindaridda himto
3rd Hindaridda hinde hindaridda hindo himdaridto hinde hindaridda himto
- D 1st Hindaridda hindaridde hindaridda hindariddo Two times himdaridto hindaridde hindaridda himdaridto
2^d Hindaridda hindaridde hindaridda hindariddo himdaridto hindaridde hindaridda hindariddo himdaridto hindaridde hindaridda himdaridto
3^d Hindaridda hindaridde hindaridda hindariddo himdaridto hindaridde hindaridda himdaridto

Taolive

- S 1st Hindarid hadarid chedarid hindarid hadarid hodin two times himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid hadarid hioem
2^d Hindarid hadarid chedarid hindarid hadarid hodin himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid hadarid hodarid himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid hadarid hioem
3^d Hindarid hadarid chedarid hindarid hadarid hodin himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid hadarid hioem
- D 1st Hindarid hadarid chedarid hindarid hadarid hodarid Two times himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid hadarid hiobabem
2^d Hindarid hadarid chedarid hindarid hadarid hodarid himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid hadarid hodarid himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid hadarid hiobabem
3^d Hindarid hadarid chedarid hindarid hadarid hodarid himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid himdarid [sic] hobabem

Crulive

- S 1st Hinbandre habandre chebandre hinbandre habandre hodin Two times himdarid hiodarid chedarid himdarid hadarid hioem [sic: the compiler strays back into the taorluath variation here]
2^d Hinbandre habandre chebandre hinbandre habandre hodin himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre habandre hobandre himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre habandre hioem
3^d Hinbandre habandre chebandre hinbandre habandre hodin himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre habandre hioem
- D 1st Hinbandre habandre chebandre hinbandre habandre hobandre Two times himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre habandre hibamdre [sic: suggest, himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre habandre hiobamdre?]
2^d Hinbandre habandre chebandre hinbandre habandre hobandre himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre habandre [sic: suggest adding 'hobandre himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre habandre'] hiobamdre
3^d Hinbandre habandre chebandre hinbandre habandre hobandre himbandre hiobandre chebandre himbandre habandre hiobamdre

As ever with Colin Campbell's canntaireachd, this would permit of a number of interpretations. The obvious literal reading would be:

MacDonald's Tutor, Colin Campbell ground, line 1



But perhaps in playing one might push it a little towards the following style to get away from the deadly square three-even-crotchets-to-the-bar feeling that many of the scores seem to imply:

MacDonald's Tutor, Colin Campbell ground, line 1 alternative timing



Likewise the pendulum movement could be played "up", like so:

MacDonald's Tutor, Colin Campbell pendulum movement, played 'up'



or "down", this latter similar to the "round" style favoured by Donald MacDonald and heard to such good effect in some settings of "Beloved Scotland" and "Mary's Praise":

MacDonald's Tutor, Colin Campbell, pendulum movement, played 'down'

Musical notation for MacDonald's Tutor, Colin Campbell, pendulum movement, played 'down'. The piece is in 3/4 time and consists of two staves of music. The melody is characterized by a pendulum-like motion, with notes moving up and down in a regular pattern. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Angus MacKay times the tune as follows:

Lament for the Macdonalds Tutor, Angus MacKay, ground

Musical notation for Lament for the Macdonalds Tutor, Angus MacKay, ground. The piece is in 3/4 time and consists of four staves of music. The melody is characterized by a ground pattern, with notes moving up and down in a regular pattern. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A bracket labeled 'Bis' is placed under the first two staves. A 'Fine' marking is placed at the end of the fourth staff.

Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, thumb variation

Musical notation for Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, thumb variation. The piece is in 3/4 time and consists of three staves of music. The melody is characterized by a thumb variation, with notes moving up and down in a regular pattern. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A bracket labeled 'Bis' is placed under the first two staves.

Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, siubhal singling line 1

Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, siubhal doubling line 1

Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, pendulum movement line 1

Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, pendulum movement doubling line 1

Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, taorluath singling

Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay taorluath doubling line 1



Lament for the Macdonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, crunluath singling line 1



Lament for the MacDonald's Tutor, Angus MacKay, crunluath doubling line 1



In his notes to his setting of “MacDonald’s Tutor” in the *Piobaireachd Society Collection (second series)*, vol.3 p. 86, published in 1930, Archibald Campbell stated that “Angus MacKay’s is the setting printed”, and commented upon several details where his score differed from those of MacKay and Colin Campbell’s canntaireachd. He omitted to mention, however, that in every bar of the Ground he had also turned MacKay’s opening A and G quavers into crotchets, significantly altering the timing of the tune. This prolongation of the themal notes was carried still further in the *Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor* where the Ground was translated from 3/4 into 4/4 time, and cadence notes were further lengthened by use of fermatas (four in a row at phrase endings in the Taorluath and Crunluath singlings).

Colin Cameron's Ground has a similar flavour to Colin Campbell's, and may also give a more precise indication of the intended timings behind MacKay's even quavers (there were close links between Angus MacKay and the Cameron family, although the latter were often independent of him stylistically: see *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society*, pp. 219-22); it is interesting, too, how Colin Cameron varies the timing of the E cadences between Ground and Thumb Variation:

Salute for the Macdonald's Tutor, Colin Cameron, ground line 1



Salute for the Macdonald's Tutor, Colin Cameron, thumb variation line 1



David Glen sets the tune as follows in his *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd*:

THE MACDONALDS' TUTOR'S LAMENT.

CUMHA FIR-FHOGLUIM NAN DÒMHNULACH.

Ùrlar. *Slow.*

2. *twice*

1st time only.

1st Var. *twice*

1st time only.

Var. 2nd Siubhal. *Quick.* *twice*

1st time only.

Doubling of Var. 2nd Siubhal Sleamhuinn. *Q. ter.* *twice*

1st time only.

Var. 3rd *twice*

1st time only.

Var. 4th *twice*

1st time only.

Written Played

Taor-fuath

twice

1st 2nd

1st time only.

Dùblachadh an Taor-luath.

twice

1st time only.

Repeat the Urlar.

Crùn-luath.

twice

1st 2nd

1st time only.

Dùblachadh a' Chrùn-luath.

twice

1st time only.

Repeat the Urlar.

Commentary:

Relatively little is known about the background of this tune, but there is an entry by “Fionn” in the “Historic, Biographic, and Legendary Notes to the Tunes” attached to the complete set of David Glen’s *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd*. These notes were also published as a separate book entitled *The Martial Music of the Clans* (Glasg., 1904). “Fionn” was the pen-name of Celtic journalist, musician and scholar Henry Whyte (1852-1913) who came from Easdale in Argyll, where his father was manager of the slate-works. He was one of the most prominent figures in the Gaelic movement in the later 19th and early 20th centuries and one of the founders of the great annual festival of Gaelic music known as “The Mòd”. He was Glasgow correspondent of the *Oban Times* and in its columns frequently criticised the linguistic and musical practices of the Piobaireachd Society. He also conducted numerous wide-ranging surveys amongst the *Oban Times*’s readers in the fields of language, music, poetry and folklore. Although not eminent as a player, Henry Whyte knew as much about the cultural context and historical background of piobaireachd as anybody in his generation. He wrote of “MacDonald’s Tutor” as follows:

The Tutor in whose memory this Lament was composed was William MacDonald of Aird in Troternish, sometime styled of Bornaskittaig, son of Sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat, and Tutor during the minority of Sir Alexander MacDonald, who figured on the wrong side in the '45. The Tutor fought at Killiecrankie, and was in his day the most outstanding warrior of the Clan Uisdein. His son Ewen MacDonald of Vallay, in North Uist, was a famous piper and composer of pipe music. The Tutor died in 1730. (Glen, *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd*, “Notes”, p.5)

A note to this tune in Angus MacKay’s MS states that “The Tutor[s] of the Macdonalds of the Isles were the Macdonalds of Valley”. (ii, 5)

* * *

Electronic Text © Dr William Donaldson, Aberdeen, Scotland, November 2001