

Gathering of the MacDonalds of Clanranald (Cnocan Ailean mhic Ailean 'ic Iain)

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

**Colin Mór Campbell**, Nether Lorn Canntaireachd, ii, 173-5 (with the title "MacDonalds Gathering");

**Donald MacDonald's** MS, ff.73-5 (with the title "Gathering of the MacDonalds of Clanranald");

**Angus MacKay's** MS, i, 156-157 (with the title "The MacDonalds Gathering. Cnocan Ailean Mhic Ailean 'ic Iain");

**D. S. MacDonald's** MS, i, 130-31;

**David Glen's** MS, f.143;

and in the following published sources:

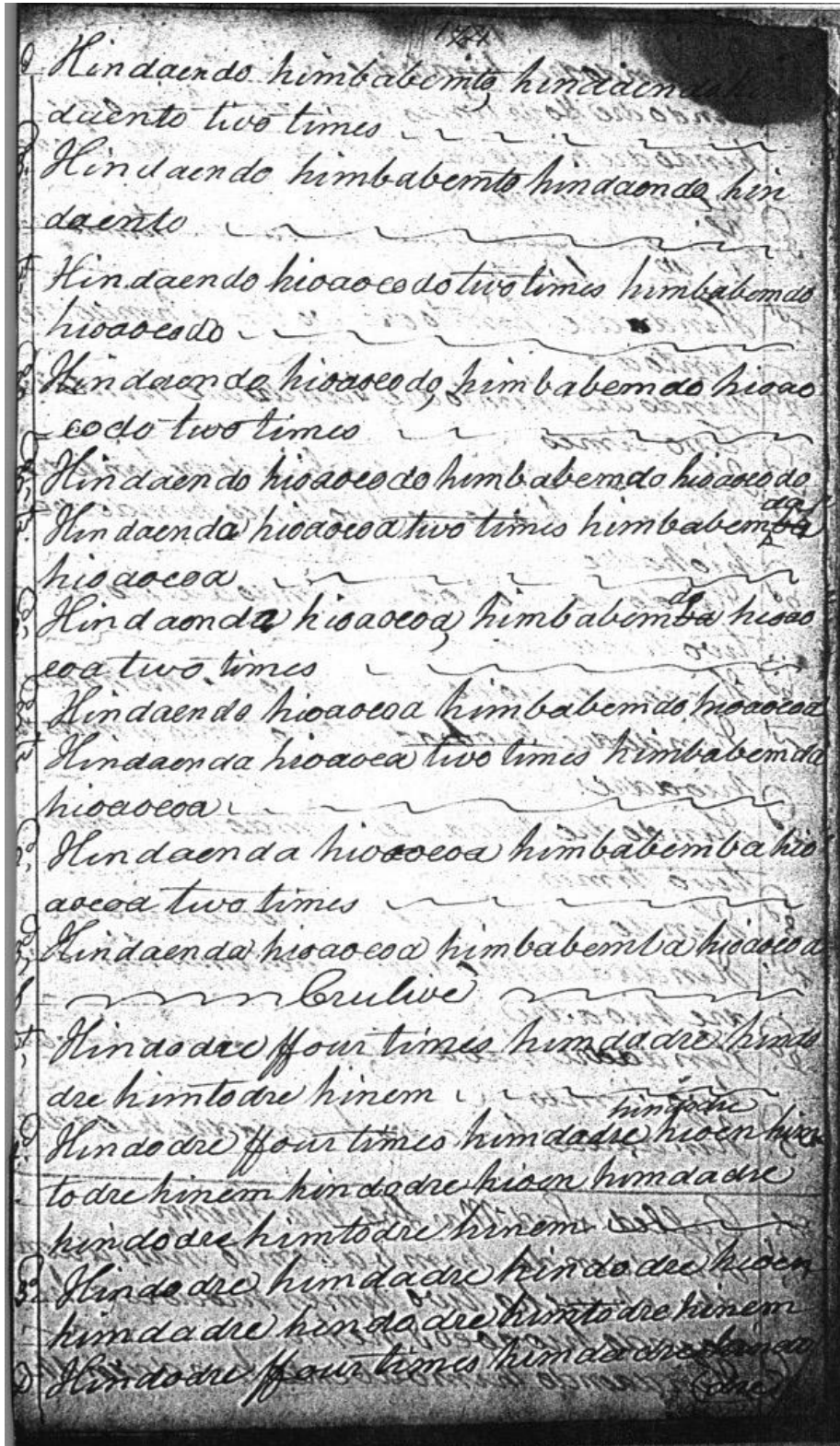
**C. S. Thomason**, *Ceol Mor*, p.46;

**Roderick D. Cannon** and **Keith Sanger**, eds., *Donald MacDonald's Collection of Piobaireachd Volume 2, Manuscript (1826)* (n.p., 2011), pp.62-3.

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



# pipes | drums



pipes | drums

175

hinda dre himto dre  
hinda dre four times himd dre hinda dre  
hinda dre hinda dre himd dre hinda dre himd  
dre himto dre

30 hinda dre four times himd dre hinda dre  
hinda dre himto dre

40 hinda dre himto dre two times hinda dre  
himto dre

50 hinda dre himto dre hinda dre himto dre  
two times

60 hinda dre himto dre hinda dre hinda dre  
hinda dre hioho dre two times himd dre  
hioho dre

70 hinda dre hioho dre hinda dre hioho dre  
two times

80 hinda dre hioho dre himd dre hioho dre  
hinda dre hioho dre two times himd dre  
hioa dre

90 hinda dre hioa dre himd dre hioa dre  
two times

100 hinda dre hioa dre himd dre hioa dre  
two times

110 hinda dre hioa dre himd dre hioa dre  
two times

120 hinda dre hioa dre himd dre hioa dre

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85 Called Sad Mar She the Shinn  
hinda dre himba bento himd dre  
dre cheuho two times hioa dre  
hinda dre hioa dre hioa dre  
hinda dre himba bento himd dre

## pipes | drums

**Colin Campbell's** setting is carelessly notated: there is a missing syllable "hindaento" in line two of the ground, and two vocables have been missed and subsequently added in line three. The development is along the following lines, and presents an excellent example of Colin Mór's highly distinctive style:

*Ground:* with four bars in the first line, eight in the second and four again in line three.

*ffirst Motion singing:* a siubhal, played strongly "down."

*ffirst Motion doubling.*

*Taolive singling:* which moves the tune to a four-six-four bar pattern.

*Taolive later variations:* move the tune to its final three-three-two bar pattern, a dramatic foreshortening of the metre which we see in other gathering and battle tunes, a highly-charged device, which drives the tune to its climax through a series of scurrying *ostinato* figures.

*Crulive:* likewise developed through multiple variations in similar style to the *taolive*.

In staff-notated form, the tune would look something like this:

# pipes | drums

The musical score is presented in four systems, each consisting of two staves. The first system is in common time (C) and features a complex, rhythmic melody with many sixteenth notes. The second system is labeled "first Motion" and continues the melody. The third system is marked with a "D" time signature, indicating a change in tempo or mood. The fourth system is labeled "Taolive" and is in 2/4 time, featuring a more rhythmic and repetitive pattern with frequent triplets, indicated by the number "3" below the notes. The score concludes with a double bar line.

# pipes | drums

[Doubling]



[Trebling]



[Quadrupling]



[Quintupling]



The image displays four sets of musical notation, each consisting of three staves. Each staff contains a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with some notes beamed together. The notation is organized into four distinct sections, each labeled with a technique: [Doubling], [Trebling], [Quadrupling], and [Quintupling]. The patterns become increasingly dense and complex from top to bottom, reflecting the increasing speed of the techniques. Each section concludes with a double bar line.

# pipes | drums

## Cruive

## Doubling

## Trebling

## Quadrupling



# pipes | drums

The image displays a musical score for pipes and drums, consisting of three systems of staves. Each system begins with a treble clef. The first system contains two staves. The second system is labeled 'Quintupling' and contains three staves. The third system is labeled 'Sextupling' and contains three staves. The music is written in a complex, rhythmic style characteristic of traditional Scottish piping, with many beamed notes and rests.

This long, technically demanding, and strikingly asymmetrical tune is full of interest and variety. We note how Colin Campbell moves to the shorter line immediately after the taorluath singling to pack maximum energy into the following sequence; while in the crunluath, the doubling follows the themal pattern of the singling in the normal fashion, and the shorter line is delayed until the trebling. This illustrates the variety of approach possible in the days of the older tradition before the Highland Societies and their successors got to work to standardize the music and strip the master players of their creative autonomy. Taken altogether, Colin Campbell approaches the tune with a freedom and inventiveness that sometimes makes other later editors look pedestrian.

**Donald MacDonald** sets the tune like this:

**pipes | drums**



# pipes | drums



# pipes | drums



**MacDonald's** eccentric barring in the ground may suggest that he, too, encountered notational difficulties here. The wedges below several lines represent suspected lacunae, either inserted by MacDonald or possibly later editors through whose hands his papers passed, including most notably Charles Simeon Thomason, compiler of the great *Ceol Mor* edition. MacDonald's structure seems to achieve regularity finally in the taorluath fogsailte variation. MacDonald's development of the tune is on conventional lines--ground; siubhal singling and doubling; taorluath fogsailte singling and doubling; and crunluath fogsailte singling and doubling.

# pipes | drums

Interestingly he shows the same missing portions that we see in Colin Campbell's canntaireachd score, although MacDonald reflects little of Campbell's quasi-improvisational elaboration in the later variations.

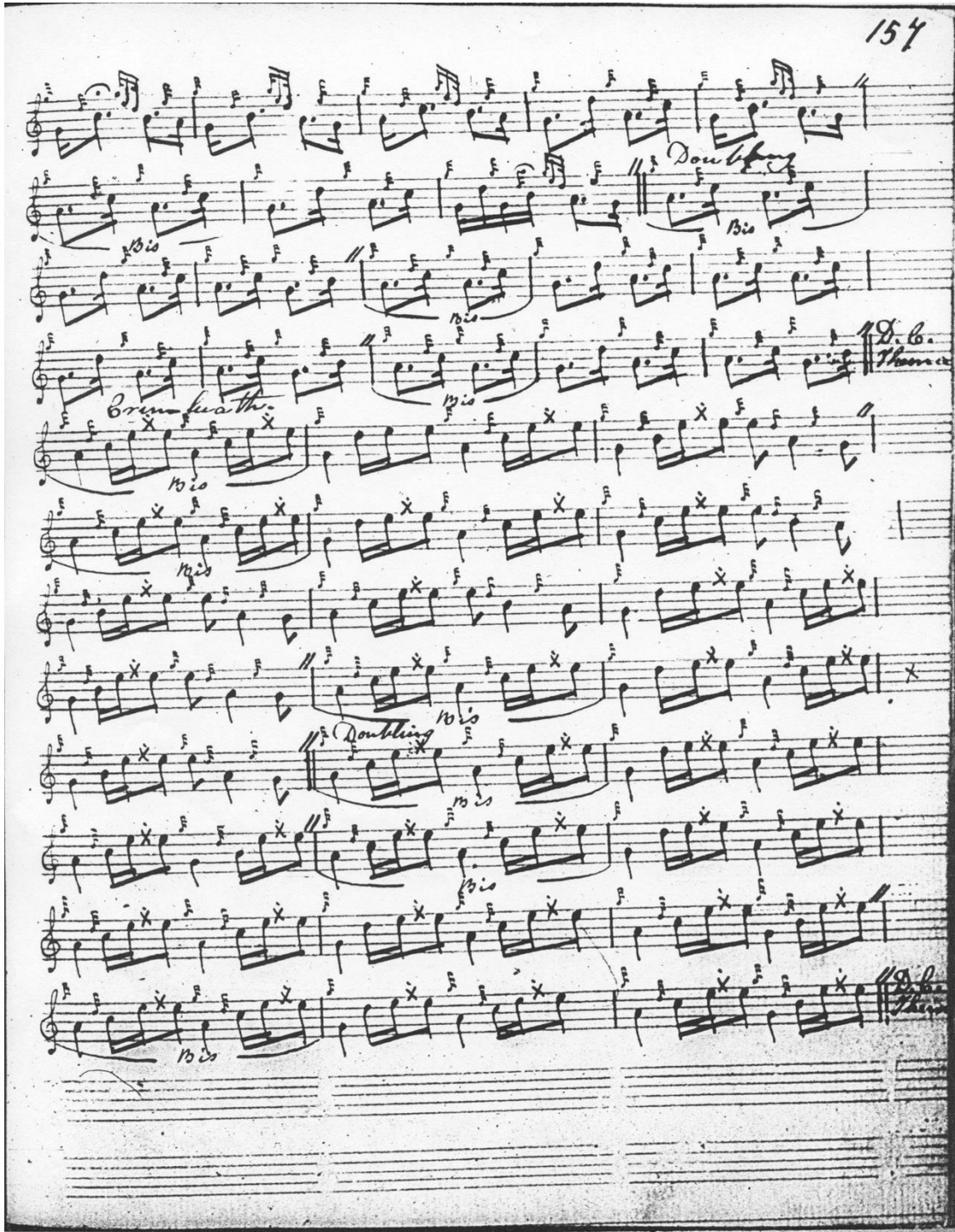
**Angus MacKay** sets the tune like this:

**pipes | drums**

156. *Cruinneachadh Chlann Tomhuicill.*  
*The Mac Donalds Gathering.*  
*Cnocan Aillean Mhic Aillean, ie Iain*

The image shows a handwritten musical score on ten staves. The notation is in treble clef and includes numerous triplets, indicated by a '3' over a bracket. The score is annotated with several 'Bis' markings, which are common in pipe music to denote a repeat or a specific rhythmic pattern. A section of the music is marked with a double bar line and the word 'Douglas' written above it. The number '168.' is written in the top left corner of the first staff. The overall style is that of a traditional manuscript, with clear handwriting and standard musical symbols.

# pipes | drums



## pipes | drums

MacKay is the earliest source to play the treblings in the ground on to an expressed C, B or D crotchet, with a different, more staccato timing from MacDonald's more flowing quaver figures. MacKay's timing here is followed by Thomason and Glen. MacKay doubles the ground and repeats it between the end of the second variation doubling and the crunluath singling as well as once again at the end of the tune. (note: that awkward step in the last bar of the first line from low G to C, seems to be negated later in the tune at this point, where the interval is low G-B as one would expect). He has no taorluath fogsailte unlike MacDonald and Campbell, but proceeds directly from the siubhal doubling to the repeat of the ground, and then on to crunluath fogsailte singling and doubling. Overall, MacKay's development of the tune shows a similar conventionality and restraint to Donald MacDonald's.

**D. S. MacDonald** (who, it will be remembered, was preparing an edition of Angus MacKay's piobaireachd manuscript for publication), follows MacKay closely in the ground singling and doubling as one would expect, but has an interestingly varied pointing in his first variation:



We note that D. S. MacDonald cuts "up" in line one where MacKay cuts "down" and has an interesting Low A/G alternation at the start of his second line.

**C. S. Thomason** sets the tune like this:



# pipes | drums

The image shows a musical score for the tune "GATHERING OF THE MACDONALDS OF CLANRANALD. Gnocan Ailean Mhic Iain". The score is written for pipes and drums and is divided into several sections. The first section is marked "C. time 1. & 7 G." and the second is marked "2. time 2 D.". The score is written in a single system with multiple staves. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals, typical of pipe and drum music. The score is presented in a traditional, somewhat cluttered layout with multiple staves per system.

**C. S. Thomason** gives Donald MacDonal as his single source and marks the score "Ed," meaning that he accepts ultimate responsibility for it. He follows MacDonal in introducing what looks like a taorluath fosgailte following the siubhal doubling but then indicates, as MacDonal does not, that this should be followed by a repeat of the ground, which seems here distinctly cluttered.

**David Glen**'s score bears a headnote saying "Edited from McDo[nald] MS & Ceol Mor." Glen has a ground, siubhal singling and doubling (Thomason's siubhal is a singling merely); then a modern 2/4 style taorluath fosgailte singling and doubling, then straight into his crunluath fosgailte singling and doubling with no indication that the ground should be repeated at any point. Glen sets the tune like this:

pipes | drums

The Gathering of the MacDonalds of Glawnacall, between Aileen Mhic Sam. 143.  
(Edited from Mrs. S. M. Macdonald's MS.)

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. The title is 'The Gathering of the MacDonalds of Glawnacall, between Aileen Mhic Sam. 143.' with a sub-note '(Edited from Mrs. S. M. Macdonald's MS.)'. The score is written in a single system with multiple staves. It features complex rhythmic patterns, including many eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several 'Doubling' annotations and first/second ending markings (1st, 2nd). The manuscript is signed 'W.D.' at the bottom right.

*Commentary:*

"The Gathering of the MacDonalds of Clanranald" is a member of an interesting group of cognate tunes, similar in structure and tonality which includes "MacDonalds of Clanranald's Gathering to the Battle of Sheriffmuir," "The Camerons' Gathering" and "The End of the Little Bridge" all similar in motif and basic development but pitched in different keys. The gathering to the battle of Sheriffmuir follows a similar pattern to the abbreviated versions by MacDonald and MacKay of *Cnocan Ailean mhic Ailean 'ic Iain* quoted above, namely ground and doubling, siubhal singling and doubling, crunluath fosgailte singling and doubling—but transposed down a tone, so that the main themal note is low G rather than low A. Versions are recorded in Angus MacKay's MS, i, 171-172; and D. S. MacDonald, ii, 15-16; also in David Glen's MS, ff.170-171. Among the published sources there are copies in Donald MacDonald's *Ancient Martial Music*, pp.68-70, Donald MacPhee's *Ancient Piobaireachd*, i 40-41 and in Thomason's *Ceol Mor*, p.16.

**Angus MacKay's** setting of "The MacDonalds of Clanranald's Gathering to the Battle of Sheriffmuir" begins as follows:

**pipes | drums**

191

*Crinneachadh Chlann Ramuill, x am*

*The Mac Donalds of Glanranalds Gathering.*

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on aged paper. At the top right, the number '191' is written. Below it, the title is written in cursive: 'Crinneachadh Chlann Ramuill, x am' and 'The Mac Donalds of Glanranalds Gathering.' The music is written on five staves. The first staff is empty. The second staff is empty. The third staff is empty. The fourth staff is empty. The fifth staff contains the beginning of the melody, starting with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are some markings like 'Vivo' and 'Viv' scattered throughout the score.

# pipes | drums

and so on.

## *Commentary:*

Clan Donald was a large confederation, one of the great kindreds of the old Highlands, who claimed as their patrimony "half of Scotland and a house" and who claimed (of themselves) "there is no happiness without Clan Donald." All descended by various routes from the half-legendary Somerled, Lord of the short-lived Kingdom of the Isles, at the dawn of the high Middle Ages. A formidable crew, Clan Donald. Though a spat with a smallish branch like the MacIans of Glencoe might be survivable, collision with a big outfit like Glengarry or Clanranald was likely to be terminal. "Clanranald Country" lay in the southern stretches of the Rough Bounds--Moidart, Arisaig, Morar, Knoydart and Ardnamurchan, with the isles of Eigg, Rum and South Uist. *Cnocan Ailean mhic Ailean 'ic Iain* was evidently a traditional rallying point, similar to the Grants' Craigellachie.

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