

**HISTORIC, BIOGRAPHIC**  
AND  
**LEGENDARY NOTES**  
**TO THE TUNES**

BY

**“FIONN”**

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## **The Battle of Waternish Là Blàr Dhruim Thalasgair.**

This battle was fought between the MacDonalds and Macleods about the end of the sixteenth century, a few years after the Battle of "*Milleadh Gàraidh*," at which it is said the Fairy Flag of Macleod was unfurled. It would appear that a body of the MacDonalds came at night through the hills to Waternish to surprise the Macleods and avenge the slaughter of "*Milleadh Gàraidh*," but finding the Macleods prepared and on the lookout for them they changed their purpose, gathered all the sheep and cattle they could find, and moved away with them; but the Macleods, having been apprised of their conduct, followed them, came up to them at daybreak two miles from the township, and a bloody battle was fought in which the MacDonalds suffered severely. Two of the Macleod leaders fell - John, son of Alexander Macleod of Trumpan who was in full armour, and did great execution, and Roderick Macleod of Unish, a place situated at the point of Waternish, Skye. A large cross was erected to the memory of the former on the spot where he fell, and the place is called "*Crois Mhic Alastair*" to this day. The knoll on which "*Ruairidh Mac Iain Bhatornis*" (Roderick, son of John of Waternish) fell is called by two names to this day, viz. - "*Cnocan Mhic Tain*," the Knoll of John's Son, and "*A' Chrois Bhàn*," or the White Cross, from a high wooden cross which was erected to Roderick's memory.

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## **The MacDonalds' Tutor's Lament. Cumha Fir-fhòghluim nan Dòmhnallach.**

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 Vally, in North Uist, was a famous piper and composer of pipe music. The Tutor died in 1730.

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## **King James the Sixth's Lament Cumha Rìgh Seumas an Sèathamh**

James VI. of Scotland was the son of Mary Queen of Scots. He was born at Edinburgh Castle in 1566. On the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603 he became King of England and Ireland. His rule in Scotland was much disturbed by political and religious discontents. He died in 1625. It is evident James VI. had some liking for the bagpipes, for we find it recorded that in 1581, returning from Church at Dalkeith one Sunday, he had two pipers playing before him.

## **Campbell of Cawdor's Salute Fàilte Caimbealach Chaladair.**

The Campbells of Cawdor spring from Sir John Campbell, third son of the second Earl of Argyll, who married Muriel, heiress of Calder of Cawdor, in 1510. He resided permanently at Cawdor from 1524 till 1546, the year of his death. The *Book of the Thanes of Cawdor* says of Sir John - "He was a Campbell of the old stamp, seeking incessantly to increase his possessions and extend his influence. His treaties with cousins of his own class, with the Macleans, MacDonalds, and MacNeills, show both his policy and his acknowledged power! . . . His possessions in Argyll were large and increasing. He seems already to have pretended some right to Isla." In the seventeenth century Croy was sold and other possessions mortgaged in order to purchase Islay. The Campbells of Cawdor kept possession of this island from 1612 to 1726, when it was purchased by Daniel Campbell of Shawfield, one of the Skipness family. This tune is also known as "Young King George's Lament."

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## **The Lament of the Old Sword Cumha an t-seana Chlaidheimh.**

This Lament is understood to be the expressed sorrow of an old sword, which doubtless had done valiant deeds, because it was no longer of use in battle. While it may be difficult to prove that the Gael indulged in "Sword worship," there is no doubt he had considerable regard, nay reverence, for weapons of defence. There is a Piobaireachd belonging to the Clan Maclean called "*Claidheimh Mòr Iain Ghairbh*" - John Garve of Coll's Great Sword. (See Note to "Maclean of Coll's Lament," [link].)

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## **Struan Robertson's Salute Fàilte Thighearna Shrùthain**

There's a tradition in the Clann Donnachaidh that this tune was composed to commemorate the appearance of the Clan at Bannockburn. It is known in the Athole district as "*Teachd Chlann Donnachaidh*" - The Coming of Clan Donnachie - and the story goes that it was the timely arrival of this Clan which turned the tide of battle. It is said that Bruce at a certain stage, despairing of the arrival of Struan and his Clan, had exclaimed, "I'd give my right hand for *Donnachadh Reamhar* this day!" when the welcome appearance of Duncan, and the sudden onset of himself and his Clan, turned wavering into victory. To this "*Donnachadh Reamhar*" the Clan owes the name of Clan Donnachie, or children of Duncan; while to Donnachadh's loyalty and Robert Bruce's gratitude the name of Robertson bears witness to this day. Bruce desired the Clan Donnachie Chief to name his eldest son Robert after him, a name thereafter

handed down in the family of the Chief, until, in commemoration of the capture of King James I's murderers by Robert Reoch, Donnachadh's great-grandson, it was perpetuated in the surname of Robertson.

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### **The Desperate Battle An Cath Gailbheach.**

This tune is understood to have been composed to commemorate a fierce battle fought on the shoulder of the Cullin Hills in Skye in the year 1601.

It seems that, in the absence of Rory Mòr Macleod in Argyll seeking the aid and advice of the Earl of Argyll against the MacDonald Gorm Mòr assembled his men and made an invasion into Macleod's lands, determined to force on a battle. Alexander Macleod of Minginish, the brother of Rory Mòr Macleod, collected all the fighting men of the Siol Tormoid and some of the Siol Torquil from the Lews, and encamped by Beinn a' Chiulinn. Next day they and the MacDonald engaged in battle, which continued all the day, both contending for the victory with incredible obstinacy. The leader of the Macleods, together with Neil MacAllister Roy and thirty of the leading men of Macleod of Dunvegan, were wounded and taken prisoners, and the MacDonalds gained the day.

Shortly thereafter the Privy Council requested the Chiefs to disband their forces and quit Skye. We find an entry, dated Stirling, 22nd August 1601, in which both parties are ordered to dissolve their forces and to observe the King's peace. Macleod is commanded to repair to Archibald, Earl of Argyll, and MacDonald to George, Marquis of Huntly, within six days after being charged, and to remain in the company of the said noblemen till the King and Council take order anent the present "trouble," under pain of treason.

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### **Black Donald Balloch of the Isles' March to the Battle of Inverlochy Piobaireachd Dhòmhnuille Duibh.**

This is one of the best-known tunes associated with the *piob-mhòr* and is claimed by the MacDonalds and the Camerons. As a MacDonald tune it is linked in story with the Battle of Inverlochy, which was fought in 1431, doubtless precipitated by the events of 1427. The Royal army was opposed by Donald Balloch and his clansmen the MacDonalds. From far and near, wherever the Lord of the Isles held sway, the loyal vassals and their followers mustered under the ancient banner. The fiery cross had done its work in isle and glen, and the Islesmen were eager for the fray. Regarding the conflict, the historians of Clan Donald state - "The issue was not long doubtful. The wild onset of the Islesmen, who carried death upon the blades of their

claymores and Lochaber axes, plunged the Earl of Mar's army into confusion, while the galling fire of Alastair Carrach's archers, whose successive volleys from the height seemed to darken the air, still further carried destruction into the ranks of the enemy. The result was the complete discomfiture and utter rout of the King's army, accompanied by great slaughter." (Clan Donald, vol. I., p. 186.)

The MacDonalds' connection with this tune is strengthened by the fact that in Oswald's *Caledonian Pocket Companion*, published in 1764, it is called "*Piobaireachd Mhic Dhonnill*." As already stated, "Piobroch of Donald Dubh" is claimed by the Camerons, and is called "Lochiel's March." They doubtless base their claim on the fact that "*MacDhomhnuill Duibh*" is the patronymic of Lochiel. It is also the March of the 79th Cameron Highlanders. To the march form of the tune Sir Walter Scott wrote his famous words, "Piobroch of Donald Dubh," which first appeared in *Albyn's Anthology*, 1816, with music. The Gaelic words associated with the March will be found in "Loyal Lochaber," p. 415.

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**The Glen is mine  
'S leam fèin an Gleann.**

This well-known tune is said to have been composed by John MacCrimmon, one of the last, if not the last hereditary piper to Macleod of Dunvegan. There is a tradition that the occasion of its composition was when the piper was passing through Glenshiel, Ross-shire, with the Earl of Seaforth, and the words associated with it are :-

"'S leam féin an Gleann, 's leam féin na th'ann."  
(The Glen is mine and all therein.)

John MacCrimmon (*Iain Dubh*) is said to have held the office of hereditary piper to Macleod up to 1795, when he left for Greenock, intending to sail to America. According to Angus Mackay (1813-39), the compiler of the "Collection of Piobaireachd" published in 1838, *Iain Dubh* "altered his mind and returned to his native isle, where he spent the remainder of his life in quiet retirement . . . . He died in 1822 in the ninety-first year of his age."

John MacCrimmon was twice married and left two families. The last Patrick Mor was a son of *Iain Dubh*. He was a piper in the 42nd Regiment, and served under Sir John Moore at Corunna, and was also at the front at Waterloo.

## **The Chisholm's Salute Fàilt' an t-Siosalaich.**

This Clan is of Norman origin, and those of Berwick and Roxburghshire came from Tindale, in England, and were successively called- "De Chesé," "de Chesèholm," "de Cheseholm vel Chesholm." The original Border seat was the Barony of Chisholme in Roxburghshire. In the fourteenth century Sir Robert de Chisholme came to the Highlands of Scotland and married the daughter and heiress of Sir Lauder of Quarrelwood and Constable of Urquhart Castle. He succeeded to the Lauder and other lands in the North. The Chisholms of the North becoming strong in wealth and followers, severed from the Border house and held independent sway. The Chief of the Chisholms is called in Gaelic "*An Siosalach*" and is the only Highland Chief who is entitled to the prefix "The."

Connected with this family it is said there was a chanter, which, at the death of a Chief, spontaneously burst. After each successive fissure it was carefully repaired by a silver fillet, being an improvement on the primitive mode of firmly binding it with a leathern thong, which, from a fancied resemblance to the lacing of the *cuaran* or buskin, procured it the designation of "*Maighdean a' chuarain*," the maiden of the buskin. On one occasion the family piper, being from home at a wedding, heard his chanter crack, and, perceiving the fissure, arose, and said he must return, as Chisholm was no more, and it was found to be so.

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## **The Prince's Salute Fàilte 'Phrionnsa.**

This tune appears in Donald MacDonald's Collection of *Piobaireachd*, 1806, and it is there stated to have been "Composed by John Macintyre, Braes of Rannoch, Piper to Menzies of that ilk, on the landing of H.R.H. James, Prince of Wales, in Britain, Anno 1715." Some have expressed the view that it was really composed to Prince Charlie, who landed in 1745, but it may be pointed out that the same piper has also composed a welcome to Prince Charlie on his landing at Moidart. It is known as "My King has landed in Moidart." (*See Book 3, [link]*)

While the Jacobites of 1715 began active operations in August of that year, and succeeded in raising the Standard of King James VIII. at Braemar on 6th September, James himself did not arrive till 22nd December, when he landed at Peterhead from a French ship attended by a retinue of six gentlemen only. News of his landing reached Perth on the 26th of December, and it was probably then that this salute was composed. The composer was hereditary piper to Menzies of Menzies, having succeeded his father Donald Macintyre in that office. John had been under the tuition of Patrick Og MacCrimmon at Borreraig, Skye. This doubtless accounts for the fact that this tune, "*Fàilte Phrionnsa*," was known and appreciated by the MacCrimmons as the composition of one of their pupils, for it will be found in that interesting collection of

tunes in piper's notation called "*Canntaireachd*," preserved by Captain Neil Macleod of Gesto, and published in 1828. First published by Daniel Dow about 1755 as the "Stewarts' March."

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### **Patrick Og MacCrimmon's Lament Cumha Phàdruig Òig Mhic Cruimein.**

Patrick Og was the son of Patrick Mòr MacCrimmon, and he succeeded his father as hereditary piper at Dunvegan. This Lament was composed while Patrick Og was still living. The composer was John Mackay, better known as "*Am Pìobaire Dall*," or the blind piper, who was also a Gaelic bard of some note. He was born at Gairloch, Ross-shire, in 1666, and lived for the long period of ninety-eight years. He acquired the elements of music from his father, "Ruairidh Dall," or blind Rory, who was a native of Sutherlandshire. John *Dall* Mackay was sent to be educated at the MacCrimmon College, where he soon outstripped all the other students, a fact which caused them to seek to get rid of him by throwing him over a cliff-known to this day as "The Blind Man's Leap"- "*Leum an Doill*." Leaving the College at Skye he succeeded his father at Gairloch, where he composed many Piobrochs, Reels, and Jigs. Having heard of the demise of his preceptor, Patrick Og MacCrimmon, he composed a Lament for him. Some time afterwards he discovered that the report was unfounded, and decided to visit Skye. Among the tunes he played during his visit was the recently composed Lament. MacCrimmon enquired where he had learned it, and, after some hesitation, John Dall admitted that he had composed it for Patrick Og. "Indeed," said MacCrimmon, "*Cumha Phàdruig Òig fhèin beò fhathast*" (a Lament for Patrick Og and he still alive), adding, "I must learn to play my own Lament." John *Dall* Mackay died in 1754.

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### **The Mackintosh's Lament Cumha Mhic-an-Tòisich.**

There is a considerable amount of uncertainty regarding the origin of this well-known and touching Lament. The music is generally admitted to be as old as the middle of the sixteenth century. The Lament is first printed in Patrick MacDonald's "Collection of Highland Airs, 1781," where it has a sub-title "*Cumha Mac Fir Arasaig*," Lament for the son of the Laird of Arisaig. Tradition associates the Lament with a Chief of the Clan called Hugh or Evan, but the late Dr. Fraser-Mackintosh declares "There was no Chief of the Mackintoshes named either Hugh or Evan, and no incident such as is related (in the usual traditionary story) is known in any authentic Mackintosh tradition. A History of the Mackintoshes, written in Latin in 1676 by Lachlan Mackintosh of Kinrara uncle of the then Chief, refers to the Lament as follows: - 'It

was this William (second of that name and thirteenth Laird of Mackintosh), that in his expedition to Rannoch and Appin (Perthshire), took the bard Macintyre, of whom the Macintyres of Badenoch are descended, under his protection. This Macintyre was a notable rhymer. It was he who composed that excellent Erse epitaph called *Cumha Mhic-an-Tòisich* in joint commemoration of Farquhar vic Conchie and William vic Lachlan, Badenoch, Laird of Mackintosh. Farquhar, fourth of that name, and twelfth of Mackintosh, died at Inverness, 10th October 1514, a year after his release from his very lengthened imprisonment as a state prisoner in the castle of Dunbar. William, thirteenth Laird, was murdered at Inverness by some lawless members of the Clan on the 20th or according to the Manuscript of Croy, on the 22nd May 1515."

Tradition has cast a halo of romance around this ancient Lament. Mr A. Carmichael, LL.D., Edinburgh, collected a version of the words in Barra in 1872, along with the following traditional history of the tragic incident bearing on its origin: - It seems there was a prediction that Mackintosh of that day was destined to die through the instrumentality of his beautiful black steed. Whatever he felt, the Chief determined to show his people that he treated the prediction lightly, and so he continued to ride his favourite, notwithstanding the entreaties of his friends to the contrary. On the day of his marriage the Chief rode his black charger, which became more than usually restive. He became so restive that the Chief, losing control over himself and his horse, drew his pistol and shot him dead. Another horse was at once procured for him, and he proceeded to the church. After the ceremony was over, the bridal party set out on their homeward journey. The bride and her maids, upon white palfreys, preceded, and the bridegroom and his friends followed. In passing, the Chief's roan horse shied at the dead body of the black horse, and the rider was thrown to the ground and killed on the spot. A turn on the road hid the accident from those in front, and thus the bride, unconscious of the fatal fall of her husband, continued her way home the happiest of brides. Tradition relates that she not only composed the beautiful and weird air of the Lament, but chanted it as she moved forward at the head of the bier at her husband's funeral, and marked the time by tapping with her fingers on the lid of the coffin. This, it is said, she continued to do for several miles from the family castle at Dalcross to the burying place at Petty, near Inverness, and ceased not until she was torn away from the coffin when it was about to be lowered into the grave.

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### **Lord Lovat's Lament Cumha Mhic Shimidh.**

This Lament was composed in memory of that extraordinary mortal Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat of the '45. Owing to his connection with the "Queensberry Plot" he was obliged for a second time to seek safety by a flight to France. He was still the darling of his Clan, and in 1714 they called him over. Next year, his cousin's husband, the holder of the estates, having joined the

rebellion, Simon took the Government side; his Clan at once left the insurgents; and for this service he obtained a full pardon, with possession of the Lovat territory. In the '45 Lovat sent forth his Clan under his son to fight for the Pretender, whilst he was protesting his loyalty. After Culloden he fled, but was captured and brought up to London. After trial by impeachment before the House of Lords, he was beheaded 9th April 1747. At his trial he defended himself with ability and dignity, and he met death gallantly.

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**Macleod of Raasay's Salute**  
**Fàilte Mhic Gille Chaluim.**

This Salute is said to have been composed by Angus Mackay of Gairloch, son of Iain Dall Mackay, on the birth of James Macleod, tenth of Raasay, in 1761. John, ninth of Raasay, who was Laird during the visit of the learned Dr. Johnson, had a large family of daughters, six of whom were born before the birth of the heir in 1761. There were great rejoicings at the birth of James, and Angus Mackay, seeking to give expression to his own joy as well as that of the Macleods of Raasay, composed this well known composition. James, tenth of Raasay, died in 1824, and was succeeded by his son John, eleventh of Raasay.

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**Isabel Mackay**  
**Iseabal nic Aoidh.**

This beautiful Piobaireachd was composed by some unknown piper to Isabel Mackay, daughter of John, second son of Hector Mackay of Skerry. She was celebrated for her accomplishments and personal beauty. She is immortalised by Rob Donn, the bard, in a poem of considerable merit. She married Kenneth Sutherland of Keoldale. Here are some lines of a translation of the bard's verses : -

Isabel Mackay, list to her sigh;  
Isabel Mackay, all so lonely;  
Isabel Mackay, list to her sigh;  
Isabel Mackay, all so lonely.

Sad laggard I trow, lone bachelor thou,  
Come never or now, and all thy love vow  
To Isabel divine, tending the kine;  
O, why let her pine! O, why let her pine  
While tending the lane all so lonely.

Isabel Mackay, list to her sigh, &c.

Was such a prize ever seen before  
Upon the mountains green before,  
A pining noon and e'en before?  
A maid so divine, O, why let her pine;  
O, why let her pine while tending the kine  
All so lonely.

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### **The Massacre of Glencoe, 1692 Mort Ghlinne Comhann.**

The scenery of Glencoe, Argyllshire, is allowed to be the grandest and most magnificent in Scotland, and would have attracted visitors from all lands even had the gloom of its misty mountains, with their sombre shadows, not been associated with a deed of blood every way in keeping with the scene of its commission. The massacre of Glencoe will for ever remain a foul blot on the memory of King William, but trebly so on the men who planned and carried it out. The real moving spirits in the bloody drama were the Earl of Breadalbane, Secretary Stair, the Duke of Argyll, and Campbell of Glenlyon.

It is unnecessary to enter into details regarding this foul stain on the page of Scottish History. Suffice it to say that it was carried out with fiendish cruelty by the very people who shared the hospitality of the MacIains of Glencoe. No mercy was shown to young or old, and the victims were in many cases cruelly outraged by the soldiers. The houses were set on fire as soon as the inmates had been butchered, and the sufferings of the women and children who were allowed to escape were horrible in the extreme. Women with babes in their arms sat down and slept their last sleep in the snow, or perished of cold and hunger in the corries on the mountain sides.

## **Glengarry's Lament** **Cumha Mhic Mhic Alasdair.**

This Lament was composed on the death of Alastair Ranaldson Macdonell XV. of Glengarry, who may truly be called the last specimen of the Highland Chiefs of history. He on all occasions wore the Highland dress, and adhered to the style of-living of his ancestors; and, when away from his Highland home, was invariably accompanied by a body of his retainers in full Highland costume. His attempts to maintain in his own peculiar manner the ancient customs of Highland chiefship cost him so much that he was forced to burden the estate to an extent which necessitated its transference by his successor to other and strange hands.

Glengarry was killed on 14th January 1828 attempting to get ashore from the wrecked steamer "*Stirling Castle*" at Corran, near Fort-William.

The Lament is said to have been played by Archibald Munro, Glengarry's piper, at the funeral of his chief. A large concourse of clansmen, about 1600 it is said, assembled to pay their last duty to their chief. The chief mourner was young Glengarry, the only surviving son of his father.

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## **The Carles with the Breeks** **Bodaich nam briogais.**

This tune is said to have been composed by Findlay MacIvor, piper to Sir John Campbell of Glenorchy. In the year 1672 George, Earl of Caithness, in consideration of certain sums of money advanced to him by Sir John Campbell, assigned to him all his titles and possessions, but binding him to take the surname Sinclair. On the death of Earl George in 1676, Sir John took the Caithness title, but was resisted by the next heir-male George Sinclair of Keiss, who gathered together a strong band of Sinclairs and seized the lands. In 1680 Sir John Campbell proceeded to Caithness with a strong following, and defeated the Sinclairs at a place called Alld-nam-mèirleach. The matter, after many difficulties, was arranged by Sir John being created Earl of Breadalbane, and Sinclair of Keiss being reinstated in the Earldom of Caithness.

Sir John's followers wore the Highland dress, while the Sinclairs wore trews - hence the contempt expressed for "*Bodaich nam briogais*," the carls with the breeks or trews. It is told that the tune was played by Sir John's piper, who, observing the Sinclairs wavering, struck up :-

"Tha bodaich nam briogais, nam briogais, nam briogais,  
Tha bodaich nam briogais a nis a retréuta

which may be freely rendered: -

The carles with the breeks, with the breeks, with the breeks  
The carles with the breeks are flying before us.

This incident associated the tune with Caithness, and secured for it the name of "Breadalbane's March," or "Salute" as it is sometimes called. The March form of the tune is also known to Highlanders as "*A mhnathan a' Glinne so*," Wives of this Glen, and is associated with the Massacre of Glencoe, which took place on 12th February 1692. (See note to "The Massacre of Glencoe," [link].) Tradition says it was played by Breadalbane's piper in the hope of warning the MacIains of Glencoe of their danger, and the Gaelic words associated therewith begin : -

" ' Mhnathan a' Ghlinne so, Ghlinne so, Ghlinne so,  
' Mhnathan a' Ghlinne so 's mithich dhuibh éirigh  
'S mis rinn a' mhoch-éirigh 'mhoch-éirigh 'mhoch-éirigh  
'S mis' rinn a' mhoch-éirigh agaibhs' bha feum air."

which may be freely rendered:

Wives of wild Cona-glen, Cona-glen, Cona-glen,  
Wives of wild Cona-glen, wake from your slumbers,  
Early I woke this morn, early I woke this morn,  
Woke to alarm you with music's wild numbers.

First published in Daniel Dow's Collection of 1775.

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### **Captain Donald Mackenzie's Lament Cumha Chaiptein Dòmhnuaill Mhic Choinnich.**

It is difficult to determine who the Captain Mackenzie was to whom this Lament was composed by John Mackay, piper to Macleod of Raasay, as so many members of the Clan have distinguished themselves in the tented field.

The first of the Mackay pipers to come to Raasay was Roderick Mackay. He came from the Reay country, and received his training from his countryman and namesake the *Pìobaire Dall* of Gairloch. He was celebrated in his day, and composed some famous tunes. He died quite young, leaving a boy called John, who was adopted into the family of Malcolm Macleod, brother to the Laird of Raasay. This Malcolm Macleod was a piper himself, and gave every encouragement to John Mackay to acquire a knowledge of pipe music. He ultimately sent his

pupil to the MacCrimmon College to complete his musical education. At the end of his studies he became piper to Macleod of Raasay, where he remained till increasing misfortunes overtook that family. He was afterwards piper to Lord Willoughby de Eresby in Perthshire, and finally settled in the village of Kyleakin. He had four sons - Donald, Roderick, Angus, and John - all of whom were pipers. John had many pupils in Kyleakin, including John Ban Mackenzie. Of the sons, Donald was for some time with MacDonald of Glengarry, and latterly with H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex; Roderick was with Mackay of Arisaig and Moray of Abercairney; John was with Lord Gwydys; while Angus was piper to Davidson of Tulloch, Campbell of Islay, and ultimately piper to the late Queen Victoria.

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### **The Gordons' Salute Fàilte nan Gàrdanach**

The surname Gordon is territorial. The first Gordon of which we have any distinct trace is Richard, who was Lord of the Barony of Gordon in Berwickshire, and who in 1150 and 1160 granted from that estate a piece of land to the monks of St. Mary at Kelso. In the time of King Robert the Bruce, Sir Adam, Lord of Gordon, obtained a grant of the Lordship of Strathbogie in Aberdeenshire. His great-grandson Sir Adam was slain in battle, 1402, leaving an only child, Elizabeth, who married Alexander, second son of Seton of Seton. Her only son, Alexander, was created Earl of Huntly in 1449. So powerful was the Clan Gordon in the Highlands at one time that the Chief was known as "The Cock of the North" (The Marquis of Huntly). Two regiments named the "Gordon Highlanders" have been raised from this Clan. The first was the old 81st, formed in 1777 and disbanded 1783. The second was the 92nd or Gordon Highlanders, raised in 1794.

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### **Macleod of Macleod's Lament Cumha Chinn-chinnidh nan Leòdach**

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 phìob is thèid mi dhachaidh,  
Is truagh leam fhéin mo léir mar thachair,  
Tog orm mo phìob 's mi air mo chràdh  
Mu Ruairidh Mór, mu Ruairidh Mór

Tog orm mo phìob-tha mi sgèth,  
'S mar faigh mi a théid mi dhachaidh;  
Tog orm mo phìob-tha mi sgèth,  
'S mi air mo chràdh mu Ruairidh Mór

Tog orm mo phìob-tha mi sgèth,  
'S mar faigh mi i théid mi dhachaidh ;  
Clàrsach no pìob cha tog mo chrìdh,  
Cha bheò fear mo ghràidh, Ruairidh Mór.

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.

### **The Macnabs' Salute Fàilte Chloinn an Aba.**

Like several other Highland Clans, the Macnabs are of ecclesiastical origin. In Gaelic they are called "*Clanna an Aba*," Children of the Abbot, and are descended from the Abbots of Glendochart. The Clan lands were situated at the side of Loch Tay, and stretched along the course of the Dochart to the head of Strathfillan. The residence of the Chief was at Kinnel, on the banks of the Dochart. The Macnabs suffered much in the early decades of the fourteenth century. They took arms against The Bruce, and after Bannockburn their estates were forfeited, and granted by Bruce to his loyal supporters. In 1336 Gilbert Macnab made peace with King David II., and obtained a charter for the Barony of Bovain in Glendochart. In 1612 the sons of Macnab stormed the stronghold of the Neishes, and put all save two to the sword. The last Chief was Archibald XIII, who died in France in 1860, aged eighty-three.

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### **Macleane of Coll's Lament Cumha Mhic Gill-eathain Cholla.**

John Garbh, third son of Lachlan Bronnach of Duart, was the first Maclean of Coll. He became Laird of Coll shortly after 1431, and married Isabel, daughter of Fraser of Lovat. He seems to have been a man of great bodily strength - tall and broad, hence the name, *Iain Garbh*, Stout John. From a bone of his body dug up when burying one of his descendants, and which was kept in Coll Castle up to 1856, when the estate passed from the Macleans, anatomists declare that he was a man of more than ordinary height. He wielded a double-handed sword of immense size, for which a Piobaireachd was composed, called "*Claidheam mór Iain Ghairbh*," John Garbh's Great Sword. There remains yet a mysterious and well-concealed recess in the old castle wall at Coll, where undoubtedly John Garbh lived, which goes by the name of John Garbh's bed. He died at a comparatively early age, and was buried at *Cill-an-àigh*, in the eastern part of Coll.

## **The Finger Lock A' Ghlas-Mheur.**

This tune is the composition of *Raonull, mhic Ailein òig*, Ronald, son of Allan Og of Morar, a man of wonderful strength of arm and body, and the composer of several well-known pipe tunes. It is said that when MacDonald, Boisdale, renounced the Catholic faith, he resolved to coerce his clansmen to follow his example. He fixed on a certain Sunday to carry out his purpose. When this came to the ears of Ronald, son of Allan Og, he resolved to frustrate the scheme. Taking with him a dozen of chosen clansmen and a piper, he sailed for Uist early on the Sunday morning. He and a trusty henchman went ashore and called on the minister, who treated them hospitably - the "shell" circulating freely. When Ronald saw the parson getting hearty, he suggested that he should accompany him to the birlinn, where he said he had a fine keg of brandy. The parson, nothing loath, accompanied Ronald. After sampling the brandy, the Laird of Morar, to gain time, suggested that they would sail a short distance from the shore, and that he would play his reverence his latest composition, "*An tarbh breàc dearg*," the brindled red bull. To this the parson was agreeable, and, while engaged in this performance, the minister forgot all about his duties to his congregation. They noticed Boisdale with a large congregation at the church. They immediately landed the parson, but the brandy had taken effect, and he walked with difficulty, and was in no mood for preaching. There was nothing for Boisdale but to return home. On Monday, Ronald of Morar went to Boisdale, and told him, if ever he heard of him trying the same trick again, he would double him up like an old pair of pipes. Boisdale desisted, and allowed his followers to follow their own convictions. The Gaelic words associated with this tune, and in conformity with the incident recorded, will be found in *The Gael*, vol. III., page 74.

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## **The Macintyres' Salute Fàilte Chloinn-an-t-saoir.**

The name Macintyre is Gaelic - *Mac-an-t-saoir* - the carpenter's son. The traditional history of the Clan states that they are a sept of the MacDonalds of Slate, Skye. On one occasion the Chief's galley sprung a leak. The hole was discovered, and a clansman, fixing his thumb into it, cut off the thumb and left it there, so that he might be at liberty to assist in the work of sailing the galley. By so doing he saved the crew from drowning, and was ever afterwards called "*Saor-na-h-òrdaig*" - the joiner of the thumb. Sometime afterwards a son of this carpenter - who was known as "*Mac-an-t-saoir*" - the carpenter's son, leaving Slate in his galley, resolved to seek his fortunes elsewhere, taking a white cow with him, and vowing that wherever the cow would lie down to rest after landing he would settle there. This she did at Glenoe, Lochetive-side, at a place still known as *Làrach na bó bàine* - the site of the white cow. It is a well-known fact that the Macintyres of Glenoe possessed these lands for a period of five hundred or six

hundred years before 1806. The tenure by which they held Glenoe from Breadalbane was the payment annually in summer of a snowball and a white fatted calf reared on the land, which was delivered over at a stone still called *Clach an laoigh bhiota* - the stone of the fatted calf. The snowball could easily be got at the back of Cruachan, and as they always kept a white cow or two, a white fatted calf was also procurable. This arrangement continued till about the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the Chief of Glenoe at the time foolishly agreed to the payment being commuted into money, which then became rent.

The poet Allan MacDougall (*Ailein Dall*) makes the following reference to the Macintyres : -

"Clann-an-t-saoir o thaobh Chruachain bha cruadalach treun,  
Ged chaill iad a chòir bh'aig an seòrs' ann an Sléibht."

Which may be translated : -

Macintyres from Cruachan, bold, hardy, and fleet,  
Though they lost what belonged to the Clan when in Slate.

There were Macintyres in Rannoch who had no connection with the house of Glenoe. Representatives of the Rannoch Macintyres were pipers to Menzies of Menzies, and composed several well-known tunes.

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### **The Battle of the North Inch of Perth, 1396 Cath Innis Thuath Pheairt.**

This historic Clan battle took place in 1396, in the presence of the King and his Nobles, on the North Inch of Perth. The names of the leading combatants as given by the oldest historians has been the cause of much guessing. The most popular theory at present is that the combatants were the Camerons and Mackintoshes, who were enemies for three centuries thereafter; the Mackintoshes were represented by the name Clan Cheoill, the Chief being Shaw, son of Fercher, of the Rothiemurchus branch, while the Camerons were the Clan Hay, with Gilchrist MacIain as Chief. The contemporary writer Wyntown mentions the Chief on both sides. He says in Laing's edition : -

Tha thre score were clannys twa,  
Clahynnhé, Qwhewyl and Clachinya ;  
Of thir twa Kynnys ware the men,  
Thretty agane thretty then :  
And thare thai had thair Chifitanys twa,  
Schir Ferqwharis sone was ane of twa,  
The tothir Christy Johnesone.

(For further particulars see Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. III., page 3ro.)

## **The Gathering of the Clan Chattan Cruinneachadh Chloinn Chatain.**

A number of Clans in the north formed a confederation in 1609. With the exception of the Macleans of Dochgarroch, the component septs were all clearly descended from the same tribal stock. That being so, all the septs so confederated wore the same badge, and had the same war-cry--" Loch Moy," a loch near the seat of the Chief at Moyhall. The Macphersons of Badenoch never acted very cordially with the Mackintoshes, and so they have a Chief of their own in Cluny Macpherson, and a different war-cry. The following are the surnames admitted by the Clan Chattan - Cattanach, Clark, Crearer, Davidson, Farquharson, Gillespie, Gillies, Gow, Macbain, Macbean, Macgillivray, Mackintosh, Macphail, Macpherson, Macqueen, Noble, Shaw. The name "*Catan*" or "*Gille-Chatain*" means the servant of St. Catan, which denotes "little cat," and the crest, motto and armorial bearings of the Clan bear out that this was understood to be the meaning of the name.

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### **Alastair Mór MacDonald of Boisdale's Salute Fàilte Fir Bhaosdail.**

The MacDonalds of Boisdale are descended from Donald MacDonald of Benbecula. Alexander MacDonald (*Alastair Mór*) was first of Boisdale in South Uist, which lands he inherited as his portion in 1730. He is said to have been the first who introduced the manufacture of kelp from Ireland to the Long Island, and to increase the quantity of sea-ware for that purpose, he planted stones in the various bays on his property. He was thrice married, and had three families. He was succeeded by his eldest son Colin, second of Boisdale.

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### **My King has landed in Moidart Thàinig mo Rìgh air tìr am Mùideart**

The Gaelic words associated with this tune are –

"Thàinig mo Rìgh air fir am Mùideart,  
Rìgh nan Gàidheal Teàrlach Stiùbhart."

My King has landed now at Moidart,  
Royal Charlie, Charlie Stewart.

In that interesting work "Moidart : or Among the Clanranalds," it is stated that, "while the Clans were busily mustering throughout the various districts, Charles crossed by boat from Borrodale to the Moidart shore. On landing at Glenuig he was met by a crowd of natives, some of the oldest of whom; in the exuberance of their joy, danced a reel in his presence, and a very excellent spirited reel it is, known for years afterwards as the 'Eight Men of Moidart.' " Shortly afterwards he proceeded with a band of trusty warriors to Glenfinnan, where the "Bratach Bhàn" - the White Banner – was unfurled. Among those who were present at Glenfinnan was the Jacobite bard Alexander MacDonald of Ardnamurchan. He received a captain's commission, and was present at the raising of the Standard on 19th August O.S. 1745. The bard and his brother Angus followed the Prince through the disastrous campaign, being both present at Culloden.

The composer of the tune was John Macintryre who was piper to Menzies of Menzies.

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### **I got a Kiss of the King's Hand (1651)** **Fhuair mi pòg 'o laimh mo Rìgh.**

This tune has been attributed to Patrick Mór MacCrimmon, and associated with the appearance of Roderick Macleod and his pipes before Charles II about 1660. There seems to be no historic proof of the alleged incident. From a volume of the Scottish History Society's annual publication published at Edinburgh in 1905, and entitled "Extract from Chronicles of the Frasers, the Wardlaw Manuscript by Mr. James Fraser, Minister of the Parish of Wardlaw (now Kirkhill), Inverness. Edited from the original MS., with notes and introduction by William Mackay." We read, "...in the camp at Torwood, 1651, never was the Prince more taken up with an army as our King was, especially with the Scots Highlanders, whom he tearmed the flour of his forces. ...There was great competition betuixt the trumpets in the army. One, Axell, the Earl of Hoome's trumpeter, carried it by the King's own decision! The next was anent the pipers; but the Earle of Sutherland's domestic carried it of all the camp, for none contended with him. All the pipers in the army gave John Macgurmen (MacCrimmon) the van, and acknowledged them for their patron in chiefe. It was pretty in a morning (the King) in parad viewing the regiments and bragads. He saw no less than 80 pipers in a crowd bareheaded, and John M`Gyurmen in the middle covered. He asked what society that was? It was told his Majesty, `Sir, you are our King, and yonder old man in the middle is the Prince of Pipers.' He called him by name, and coming to the King, kneeling, his Majesty reacht him his hand to kiss; and instantly played an extemporanian part, 'Fouris Pooge i spoge i Rhì – "I got a Kiss of the King's Hand " of which he and they all were vain."

Rev. James Fraser, the writer of this MS., was alive at the date of this incident. It seems to be quite clear now that the composer of the Pibroch "I gave a Kiss to my King's Hand" was a John MacCrimmon, who was piper to the Earl of Sutherland.

Some of the words associated with the tune are as follows: -

Thug mi pòg, is pòg is pòg,  
Thug mi pòg do làmh an Rìgh;  
Cha do choir gaoth an craicionn caorach,  
Fear a fhuair an fhaoilt ach mi.

Which may be rendered

I gave a kiss, a kiss, a kiss,  
A kiss I gave the Royal hand ;  
who got such honour save myself,  
There is not piper in the land.

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**MacCrimmon will never return (1745)**  
**Cha till Mac-Criomain.**

This tune is generally known as MacCrimmon's Lament, and is the composition of Donald Ban MacCrimmon. It was composed on the occasion of the Clan Macleod, headed by their Chief Norman XIX. of Dunvegan, embarking to join the Royalists in 1745. It is said that the sympathies of the piper and the Clan were with Prince Charlie. When leave-taking, the scene was a sad one; wives, mothers, and sweethearts weeping for their loved ones, and MacCrimmon, in sympathy with the scene, and having a presentiment that he should never return, struck up the sad notes of the tune "*Cha till mi tuille*" - I return no more. The presentiment was fulfilled, for Donald Bin MacCrimmon returned no more to his beloved Dunvegan, being killed in the skirmish known as the "Rout of Moy," when the blacksmith and a few others routed the Royalists. It would appear that MacCrimmon had a sweetheart in Dunvegan, who, on hearing of his death, composed the touching Gaelic verses which are usually sung to a vocal setting of this Lament. The Gaelic words can be had in several collections of song. Here is a translation of the first verse and chorus : -

O'er Coolin's face the night is creeping,  
The banshee's wail is round us sweeping;  
Blue eyes in Duin are dim with weeping,  
Since thou art gone and ne'er returnest.

No more, no more, no more returning,  
In peace nor in war is he returning;  
Till dawns the great day of doom and burning,  
MacCrimmon is home no more returning.

## **Clan Ranald's Salute Fàilte Chlann Raonuill.**

The descent of this Clan is from John, Lord of the Isles, who married Ami de Insulis, and had a son, Ranald - hence the appellation of Clanranald.

Dougall, Chief of Clanranald in the sixteenth century, made himself so obnoxious by cruelties that the tribe slew him; and then, by election, the command of the Clan and lands was given to Alister Allanson, his uncle, to the exclusion of his sons, who were then young. Alister died in 1530, when his natural son John of Moydart was acknowledged as Chief, but for turbulence was lodged in prison by James IV. The Frasers now attempted to reduce the rights he had acquired in favour of Ranald Gallda, who was a son of Allan MacRuairidh, Chief of Clanranald 1481-1509. This brought about the battle known as *Blar-Iéine* in 1544. Young Ranald was slain, and John of Moydart became eventually the firm friend of Lovat, and died in 1584. It is unnecessary to follow the history of the Clan in detail. Ranald, who was Chief in 1745, was "out" with the Prince - with a following of 700. He lived in exile after Culloden.

This tune was published by Daniel Dow about 1775, who calls it "Clan Ranald's March to Edinburgh."

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## **The Bells of Perth Cluig Pheairt.**

This tune is probably an attempt to imitate the eight bells for which Perth has long been famous. The bells are connected with the Church of St. John the Baptist. The Magistrates made a "*visitatione*" or inspection in the year 1652, and they state that the "Preaching Bell" was then one hundred and forty-seven years old, being cast in 1506. The "Common Bell" is dated "Anno Domini 1520," while the "Skelloche Little Bell" bears the date "A.D. 1403," and those who made this "*visitatione*" state in their report-" 253 zeiris old this bell is." Reference is also made to the "Curfew Bell" and "The Seven Houre Bellis." The Highland mind reverts naturally to the famous bell of Scoune, near Perth, rendered historic by the Gaelic saying, which embodies the advice of that sage counsellor : -

"Comhairle clag Sgàin ;  
An rud nach buin duit na bean dà."

Which may be rendered -

Counsel of the bell of Scone,  
Touch not what is not thine own.

Scone, it will be remembered, was the ancient seat of Scottish Royalty, and its bell was taken to represent the voice of Law and Justice.

**The Earl of Seaforth's Salute (1715)**  
**Fàilte Uilleim Dhuibh Mhic Coinnich.**

This "*Uilleam Dubh*," or Black William, was the fifth Earl of Seaforth. He lived in a most critical time in the history of the Highlands. He was present with his Clan at Sheriffmuir, and after that battle he followed James III. (The Pretender) into exile. His estates were forfeited, although it was found extremely difficult to carry the forfeiture into effect. For several years after the estates were forfeited the rents were collected by the Earl's faithful henchman at Sheriffmuir, Donald Murchison, and conveyed to his exiled master in Spain. There is a story told of a faithful Kintail man, who, when he found the Earl of Seaforth casting peats in Spain, expressed his astonishment in what has since become a proverb, by exclaiming, "*Bha latha eile aig muinntir na mòna*," the peat-cutters have seen better days. The Earl was equal to the occasion, and promptly replied, "*Cha'n'eil neach gun dà latha ach fear gun lath' idir*," there is none without a change of days but he who has no day. Here are some of the words associated with this Salute : -

Slàn gu'm pill fear a' china-duibh,  
Slàn gu'n till fear a' china-duibh,  
Slàn gu'm pill fear a' china-duibh,  
Slàn gu'n till Uilleachan.

Slàn gu'n tig, slàn gu'n ruig,  
Slàn gu'n tig Uilleachan,  
'S toigh leam fhèin fear a'chinn-duibh,  
'S toigh leam fhèin Uilleachan.

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**Donald Dugal Mackay's Lament (1649)**  
**Cumha Dhòmhnuille Dhùghail Mhic Aoidh.**

This tune is also known as Lord Reay's Lament. This Donald Dugal Mackay, who was born in 1590 was knighted in 1616 as Sir Donald Mackay of Strathnaver. Shortly after this the "Thirty Years' War" was raging on the Continent, and, as the Clan Mackay historian puts it, "Sir Donald heard the brazen blare of the war trumpet in distant Strathnaver, saw an opportunity of taking part in the struggle, and found himself overmastered by the fighting instincts of his race." Accordingly, he got permission from King Charles I. to raise a regiment. The Mackays had their first bloody baptism towards the end of July 1627 at Boitzenburgh, on the Elbe. After several encounters the regiment was so reduced in numbers that Sir Donald started for Scotland to beat up new recruits. While recruiting at home Sir Donald proceeded to London, where he was created Lord Reay as a reward for his valuable services. He afterwards entered the service

of the Kings of Denmark and Sweden, where he served with great distinction until recalled by his sovereign, who unfortunately himself required the best assistance of his subjects. He arrived in England in 1644. He died in 1649, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

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### **The Mackays' Banner Bratach Bhàn Chloinn Aoidh.**

This Banner, which is believed to be four or five centuries old, has been frequently referred to in works bearing on the Clan Mackay and the Reay country. In the "First Statistical Account," written about 1792, it is stated, in connection with the Parish of Tongue, "There is a cave in the rock on which Castle Varrich is built called "*Leabaidh Evin Abaruich,*" i.e., John of Lochaber's bed, whither he is said to have retired in time of danger. A family of Mackays is descended from him, and are reported still to have in their possession his Banner, with the motto wrought in gold letters, '*Biodh treun - Biodh treun,*' i.e., Be Valiant."

Towards the close of 1897 the administrators of the estate of the late Alexander Mackay, Assessor of the County of Caithness, handed over the Banner into the custody of the Clan Mackay Society, who in turn deposited it for preservation in the National Museum, Edinburgh, where it now rests. The Banner is of cream-white silks, hence the name "*Bratàch Bhan,*" i.e., Fair Banner, by which it is sometimes known, and is in a tattered condition. It is very evidently a fragment of its former self.

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### **The Piper's Warning to his Master Caismeachd a' Phìobaire d'a Mhaighstir.**

This historic pibroch has been associated with several ancient castles on the west coast of Argyllshire, such as Duntroon Castle opposite Crinan, Dunyveg, Islay, and Dunaverty, Kintyre, but the preponderance of evidence seems in favour of Duntroon. The hero is Coll Citto MacDonald (*Colla Ciotach,* i.e.-left-handed Coll), father of the heroic Sir Alexander MacDonald, the Lieutenant of Montrose. When Coll Citto was ravaging Argyll he seized the castle of Duntroon, where he left some of his men while he proceeded to Dunyveg, Islay. In Coll's absence the Campbells were able by stratagem to re-capture the castle, killing all Coll's followers except his piper, whom they made prisoner. One day the piper from the battlements espied Coll's *birlinn* returning from Dunyveg, Coll being ignorant of the fact that in his absence the castle had been captured by the Campbells, and in order to apprise his master of the position of affairs he played the Pibroch ever since associated with the incident: -

A Cholla, a rùin, seachain an dùn,  
Tha mise an laimh, tha mise an laimh ;  
A Cholla, a ghaoil seachain. an caol,  
Tha mise an laimh, tha mise an laimh.

This may be freely rendered : -

Coll, O, my dear, dinna come near,  
Dinna come near, dinna come near;  
Coll, O, my dear, dinna come near,  
I'm prisoner here, I'm prisoner here.

Coll understood the warning, and immediately returned to Dunyveg, Islay. (*See* also note to “The MacDonald’s Warning” [\[link\]](#).)

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### **The Rout of Glenfruin (1602) Ruaig Ghlinn Freòine.**

This tune is associated with the terrible encounter which took place at Glenfruin, near the south-western extremity of Loch Lomond, between the MacGregors and the Clan Colquhoun. The latter, though superior in numbers, were completely routed. and a merciless slaughter was exercised on the fugitives, of whom betwixt two and three hundred fell on the field and in the pursuit. The MacGregors were victorious, but it was a dear-bought victory, for the severity which the victors exercised in the pursuit was reported to King James VI. in a manner most unfavourable to the Clan Gregor; and the remedy resorted to was at least as severe as the cruelties which it was designed to punish. By an Act of Privy Council, dated 3rd April 1603, the name of MacGregor was expressly abolished, and those who had hitherto borne it were commanded to change it for other surnames, the pain of death being pronounced against those who should call themselves Gregor or MacGregor. Under the same penalty all who had been at the conflict of Glenfruin, or accessory to marauding parties charged in the Act, were prohibited from carrying weapons except a pointless knife to eat their victuals. By a subsequent Act of Council, 24th June 1613, death was pronounced against any persons of the tribe formerly called MacGregor who should presume to assemble in greater numbers than four.

## **The MacGregors' Salute Fàilte nan Griogarach.**

This tune is also known as "The MacGregors' Gathering," and appears as early as 1818 in the second volume of "Albyn's Anthology." Alex. Campbell, the editor of that work, says, "This melody was taken down with all possible care from Captain Neil Macleod of Gesto's MS. Collection of Pibrochs as performed by the celebrated MacCrimmons of Skye . . . The process was tedious and exceedingly troublesome." In the "Anthology" the words written by Sir Walter Scott are arranged under the notes taken down from Captain Macleod of Gesto. The editor adds a number of interesting notes regarding the MacGregors and the hardships which they endured. Well might Sir Walter Scott say of them, "They were famous for their misfortunes and the indomitable courage with which they maintained themselves as a Clan."

The air to which Sir Walter Scott's song, "The MacGregors' Gathering," is now sung is credited to Alexander Lee.

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## **Donald Ban MacCrimmon's Lament Cumha Dhòmhuill Bhàin Mhic Cruimein.**

This distinguished member of the MacCrimmon family was killed at the rout of Moy, near Inverness, in 1746. (*See Note to "MacCrimmon will never return,"* [link].) It is generally supposed to have been composed by Donald Ban's brother, but which it is difficult to determine, as there seems to have been several members of the family alive at the same time, all able to maintain the traditions of the School of Music at Dunvegan. All that need be said is that it is in every way worthy of a MacCrimmon.

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## **The Lament for the only Son Cumha an aona mhic.**

This Lament is generally understood to have been composed by Patrick Mòr MacCrimmon, and is in every way worthy of the theme. It may be difficult to determine whether it was his own son or not, but the composer has evidently put his soul into the performance and has produced a Lament expressive of great poignancy of grief.

Patrick Mór MacCrimmon was a son of Donald Mór. It is said that he composed more Pibrochs than any one of whom we have account. (*See Note to "Cumha na Cloinne,"* [link].)

## **MacCrimmon's Sweetheart Maol Donn, no leannan Mhic Cruimein.**

This tune is said to have been composed by Donald Roy MacCrimmon. As far as can at present be ascertained, Donald Roy was a son of Malcolm, brother of Donald Ban MacCrimmon. Donald Roy was a brother of *Iain Dubh*, who is generally regarded as among the last of the hereditary pipers to the Macleods at Dunvegan. History is silent as to who "Maol Donn" was, but the tune may be accepted as the composition of the later generation of these historic pipers. (See Note to "MacCrimmon's Sweetheart, 2<sup>nd</sup> setting [link].)

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## **The Lament for the Children Cumha no Cloinne.**

This Lament was composed by Patrick Mór MacCrimmon, and records a most pathetic event in the history of his family. It is recorded that on one occasion Patrick Mór and his eight sons, all "braw lads," marched to church, and that before the end of that year seven of them slept beneath the sod in Kilmuir Churchyard. This melancholy fact supplied him with the sad theme of his plaintive wail "*Cumha na Cloinne*" - The Children's Lament.

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## **Donald Gruamach of Slate's Lament Spaidsearachd Dhòmhnuill Ghruamaich.**

Donald Gruamach or Grim-looking was son of Donald Gallach, and grandson of Hugh, Lord of Sleat or Slate. His father Donald Gallach was murdered in 1506. Donald Gruamach was a man of war, and, although not leader of ail the MacDonalds, he seems to have taken a prominent share in all the warlike proceedings of the Clan. He could handle the sword better than the pen, for on a "Bond of offence and defence" between Sir John Campbell of Cawdor and others and "Donald Ilis of Slate," entered into at Inverness on 30th April 1527, the last signature upon it is "Donald Ilis of Slate *with my hand al the pen*," guided by Sir William Munro, Notary Public. "It is after and from him," says Dr. Fraser Mackintosh, "that the family of Slate, now represented by Lord MacDonald, had the patronymic in Gaelic of *MacDhòmhnuill nan Eilean*, or MacDonald of the Isles, to distinguish his family from other branches." Donald Gruamach died in 1534. It is said that the Lament was composed by Donald Gruamach on the death of his brother.

## **Glengarry's March Cille Chrìosda.**

Cille Chrìosda is situated in the Parish of Urray in Ross-shire, and was the scene of a fearful tragedy. It originated in the many quarrels which arose between Mackenzie of Kintail and MacDonell of Glengarry. Arriving at Cille Chrìosda on a Sunday morning, the MacDonells of Glengarry found their foes assembled for worship in great numbers in the Church. Without a moment's delay, it is said they set fire to the building, which, being thatched, was soon in a blaze. Those who rushed to the doors were met with a row of bristling swords. It is said that Glengarry's piper marched around the burning building playing "Glengarry's March." It may here be stated that the story of the burning of the Church at Cille Chrìosda has been discredited, but there doubtless was a raid, in which many houses were burned.

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### **Too long in this condition. Is fada mar so tha sinn.**

This is understood to be a MacCrimmon extempore composition. According to certain authorities, it was composed by Patrick Mòr MacCrimmon after being stripped of his clothes at the battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715. According to others, it is the composition of Donald Mór MacCrimmon on the occasion of his flight to Sutherlandshire on account of some depredation. Having entered the house of a relative named Mackay, who was getting married that day, he sat in a corner unnoticed and unattended. When the piper who had come to the marriage festivities began to play, Donald was fingering his stick, and the piper observing this knew that he could play. He asked him to play, but Donald declined. The whole company pled with him to give them a tune, and he ultimately struck up the tune "Too long in this condition," with which the following Gaelic words are associated: -

'S fada mar so, 's fada mar so,  
'S fada mar so tha mi ;  
'S fada mar so, gun bhiadh gun deoch,  
Air banais Mhic Aoidh tha mi.

He played so well that all the company knew that this was the famous Donald Mór MacCrimmon, and as he made the pipe speak Gaelic they understood his complaint, and he was duly entertained.

## **The Drunken Groat An Gròt misgeach.**

Various origins have been ascribed to this tune, but seem to agree that it is a MacCrimmon composition. It is remarkable to find so many good pipe tunes compose on trifling incidents in the life of the composer. It is abundant clear that in a number of cases the incident to which the tune owes its origin was only made known long after the event - so long many cases that it has been found impossible to verify several such incidents. The value of the composition, fortunately, does not suffer on account of its trifling origin.

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## **The MacDonalds' Warning A Cholla mo rùn.**

The history bearing on the origin of this tune is given in the note to "The Piper's warning to his Master," No. 38, page 86. We here give the Gaelic words associated with the tune, as they are of historic interest, and hitherto unpublished in a permanent form: -

### **A CHOLLA MO RUN.**

*An t-ùrlar*

'Cholla, mo run, seachain an dùn,  
Tha mise 'an laimh, tha mise 'an laimh;  
'Cholla, mo ghaol, seachain an caol,  
Tha mise 'an laimh, tha raise 'an laimh.  
    'Cholla, mo rùn, seachain an dùn,  
    Tha mise 'an laimh, tha mise 'an laimh  
    'Cholla, mo ghaol, seachain an caol,  
    Tha mise 'an laimh, tha mise 'an laimh.  
'Cholla, mo rùn, seachain an dùn,  
Tha mise 'an laimh, tha mise 'an laimh;  
'Cholla, mo ghaol, seachain an caol,  
Thoir ort a' Mhaoil, the mise 'an laimh

### **An ceud shiubhal**

Seachain an dùn, seachain an dùn,  
Seachain an dùn, seachain an dùn;  
'Cholla, mo ghaol, 'Cholla, mo ghaol,  
Seachain an caol, seachain an caol.

'Cholla, mo rùn, seachain an dùn,  
Seachain an dùn seachain an dùn;  
'Cholla, mo ghaol, seachain an caol,  
Seachain an caol, 's mise 'an laimh.  
'Cholla, mo rùn, seachain an dùn,  
'Cholla, mo ghaol, seachain an caol ;  
'Cholla, mo rùn, seachain an dùn,  
Tha mise 'an laimh, tha mise 'an laimh

### **An darna suibhal**

'Cholla, mo rùn 'Cholla, mo ghaol,  
Seachain an dùn, seachain an caol;  
'Cholla, mo ghaol, 'Cholla, mo rùn,  
Seachain an caol, seachain an dùn.  
'Cholla, mo rùn, 'Cholla, mo ghaol,  
Bean do'n ni 's bith'dh dhuit daor;  
'Cholla, mo ghaol, 'Cholla, mo rùn  
Seachain an dun, 's thoir ort a' Mhaoil.  
'Cholla, mo ghaol, 'Cholla, mo ghaol,  
Seachain an caol, seachain an caol;  
'Cholla, mo rùn, seachain an dùn,  
Tha mise 'an laimh, the mise 'an laimh.

### **An taobhlauth**

'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh tu, thigeadh tu;  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh tu 'laochain.  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh tu, thigeadh tu;  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh -  
'S e'n tighinn bhiodh daor dhuit  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh tu, thigeadh tu;  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu-  
Thigeadh tu 'laochain.  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh tu, thigeadh tu;  
'Cholla ma thig thu 'n so -  
Crochar ri craobh thu.

'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh tu, thigeadh tu;  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh to ghaoil ghil.  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh tu, thigeadh tu;  
'Cholla gu'n tigeadh tu -  
'Chiamair 'tha 'dh'aoise.  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu,  
Thigeadh tu, thigeadh tu;  
'Cholla na'n tigeadh tu -  
Ghiorraichear saoghal dhuit.

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### **The Piper's Salute to his Master Fàilte a' Phiobaire d'a mhaighstir.**

This tune is not to be confused with other tunes in this Collection bearing somewhat similar titles (*see* "The MacDonald's Warning" [link] and "The Piper's Warning to his Master" [link]). It seems the circumstances under which this tune was composed have not transpired, nor has the name of the composer come down to us. It is but natural to think that, in the "good old days," when pipers were highly esteemed by their masters, and formed part of the Chief's household, more than one of them must have sought to give musical expression to his appreciation of a kind and considerate master.

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### **Mrs Smith's Salute Fàilte Mhrs. Smith.**

This is the only specimen of a Piobaireachd we have from John Bàn Mackenzie. It is understood Mrs Smith was a lady belonging to a Highland family, and was resident for a time at Taymouth Castle when John Ban Mackenzie was piper to the Marquis of Breadalbane. It was doubtless to her he also composed "Mrs Smith's Reel." "*Am pìobaire Bàn,*" as this piper was familiarly called, was born near Dingwall in 1796, and died at Munlochry, Ross-shire, in 1864. He was for twenty-eight years piper at Taymouth. He was a fine specimen of a Highlander, and a capable exponent of the *piòb-mhòr*. He composed a number of tunes, one of the best known being "Mackenzie's Farewell to Sutherland." He was one of the few who held the title of "King of Pipers."

**The Massacre of Glencoe (second setting)  
Mort Ghlinne Comhann (an dàrna dòigh).**

(See Notes to “The Massacre of Glencoe, first setting” [link].)

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**Mackintosh of Borlum's Salute  
Fàilte Fir Bhòrlum.**

The Laird of Borlum in Inverness-shire, better known as Brigadier William Mackintosh, was early in the field on the side of the Stewarts in 1715 and 1719. He managed to escape from Newgate, but died after long captivity in Edinburgh Castle. He was born in 1662 and died in 1743. He was an early arboriculturist.

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**The Waking of the Bridegroom  
Dùsgadh fir na bainnse.**

In the Highlands in byegone days no marriage feast was considered of any consequence unless it lasted at least a week. There is a Gaelic proverb which bears out the truth of this - "*A di-chuimhneachadh gu bheil thu pòsda leis cho bochd 'sa bha bhanais,*" Forgetting you are married, the feast was so poor. The company broke up at an early hour each morning, the young couple being escorted to their new home by the company, preceded by the piper. Next morning the piper came and played round their new home to waken the bridegroom. Then he escorted the couple to the house where the marriage festivities were being carried on.

The tune is said to have been composed by Ranald MacDougall, piper to MacDougall of Lunga, Argyllshire.

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**The Menzies Pibroch  
Piobaireachd nam Mèinnearach.**

It is generally understood that the Chiefs of this Clan are not of original Celtic descent, though the Clan itself is descended from a Gaelic-speaking race, according to Robertson. The name Menzies, or Mengues (as it was originally spelt), was among the first names, according to Scottish antiquaries, adopted in Scotland in the reign of Malcolm III., when these designations were introduced into the kingdom.

In 1745 the Lord President estimated the fighting force of the Clan, whose Chief, he says, is called in Gaelic "Menairich," at 300 men, but they were not "out" with the Prince, though Colonel Menzies of Shian was, and had a small regiment under his standard. A family of Macintyres, in Rannoch, were for many generations hereditary pipers to this family.

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**The End of the High Bridge (1427)**  
**Ceann na Drochaide mòire.**

According to certain authorities, this tune was composed to commemorate the Battle of Inverlochy. While it is quite likely that the tune was composed years subsequently to commemorate this battle, it is very doubtful if the *pìob-mhór* was present at Inverlochy, for the bagpipes were not common in the Highlands for about a century after that famous battle. The late Mary Mackellar, *nee* Cameron, says the High Bridge referred to in the Cameron tune is the High Bridge a few miles below Spean Bridge, which was built by General Wade. At this bridge, in 1745, the Highlanders had the first skirmish with the red-coats. The prisoners taken were marched to Glenfinnan on the day of the raising of the Standard of Prince Charles.

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**The Desperate Battle of the Birds**  
**Còmhrag gharbh nan etin.**

This tune is said to have been composed by Angus Mackay of Gairloch after having witnessed a desperate battle between certain domestic fowls. It will be observed that he has arranged the music to represent the order of battle, beginning with the "Challenge." The incident which occasioned the composition may be regarded as trivial, but it will be admitted that the composer made the most of it, and has succeeded in producing a meritorious performance.

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**Scarcity of Fish**  
**Spiocaireachd iasgaich.**

It is said that this tune owes its origin to some wrangling in a fishing village owing to the scarcity of fish, the goodwives alleging that the young men were more intent on courting than they were on going to sea to fish. It is another instance how an incident trivial in itself may have been the occasion of a pleasant musical composition.

## **War or Peace Cogadh no Sìth**

This composition is also known by the title of "The Gathering of the Clans." Its style is simple and bold, which goes a long way to prove that it is more or less ancient. No doubt the Highlander appreciated the blessings of peace, without being afraid, however, of the arbitrament of war. There is some humour in the Gaelic distich: -

"S coma leam, 's coma leam cogadh na sìth,  
Marbhar 'sa chogadh, no crochar 'san t-sìth mi."

Its all the same to me, war or peace,  
I'm killed in the war or hung during peace.

This tune will be found in Patrick MacDonald's Collection of 1784.

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## **The Lament for the Harp Tree Cumha Craobh nan teud.**

The name indicates that this tune is reminiscent of the time when the Harp or Clarsach was the popular musical instrument in the Scottish Highlands. There is a tradition in Skye that the famous pipers of the island were in the habit of meeting and having musical competitions at a place called "*Rudha Craobh nan feud*," the headland of the harp tree, or tree of chords.

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## **The Royal Bicker Am Biceir Rioghail.**

This tune is also called "The Little Drinking Cup," and is said to have been composed by Lord Reay's piper, hence, doubtless, it is sometimes called "Sutherland's Gathering." To Gaelic speaking people it has the further title of "*Port a' Mhàidsear*," the Major's Tune.

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## **Beloved Scotland, thee I am leaving Albainn bheadarrach, 's mise 'gad fhàgail.**

This fine Pibroch is said to have been the favourite March of Sir Donald MacDonald XX. of Slate when marching to the Battle of Sheriffmuir. This Chief was known as "*Dòmhnall ca' Chogaidh*," Donald of the Wars, from the part he took in Killiecrankie and other engagements. He died in 1718.

## **The Red Ribbon An Riobain Dearg.**

Although found in some MSS. bearing this title, this tune is generally recognised as "The Sinclairs' March." The Sinclairs are not, strictly speaking, a Highland Clan. The founder of the family was Comte de Sancto Claro, who accompanied William the Conqueror to England. William, son of the Comte, settled in Scotland in the reign of King David I, and obtained from that monarch a grant of the Barony of Roslin. Sir Henry de Sancto Claro, his descendant, was a constant supporter of King Robert the Bruce. Sir William, the grandson of Sir Henry, laid the foundation of the northern family of Sinclairs by marrying one of the daughters and co-heiress of Malise, Earl of Strathearn, Caithness, and Orkney. The eldest son of this marriage, Henry Sinclair of Roslin, was recognised as Earl of Orkney. William, third Sinclair Earl of Orkney, received in 1455 a grant of the Earldom of Caithness. The direct line of Sinclair, Earls of Caithness, came to an end with the death in 1676 of George, sixth Earl. The Sinclairs of the West, especially of Argyllshire, do not seem to have any connection with the Sinclairs of Caithness.

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## **The Daughter's Lament Cumha na h-ighinn.**

It is impossible to say how or when this tune got the above designation, as it is generally known as "Claver's Lament," Claver being the common designation of Lord Claverhouse. John Graham, Viscount Dundee, the elder son of Sir William Graham of Claverhouse, in Forfarshire, was born about 1649. He took up arms against the Covenanters, but was routed at Drumclog in 1679 by a body of Covenanters. He was also present at the battle of Bothwell Brig, when some 400 Covenanters were killed. He was killed in 1689 at the battle of Killiecrankie.

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## **The King's Taxes Màl an Rìgh.**

In the good old times, under the Clan system the Clansmen neither paid rates or taxes, all such payments being made in service. One of our Gaelic bards, J. MacCuraig, singing of these times, designates them the Golden Age of the Highlands ("Linn an Aigh"). Here is a quotation from the original poem:

An nuair bha Gàidhlig aig na h-eòin,  
Bha'm bairn' air an lòn mar dhriùchd,  
A mhill a' fàs air bhàrr an fhraoich,  
A h-uile ni cho saor 'sam bùrn.

Cha robh daoine pàigheadh màil  
Orra cha robh càin no cìs ;  
Iasgach, sealgach agus coill,  
Gun fhoighneachd aca is gun phris

When the birds in Gaelic sang,  
Milk lay like dew upon the lea,  
The heather into honey sprang,  
And everything was good and free.

No tax or tribute used to fall  
On honest men or any rent ;  
To hunt and fish was free to all,  
And timber without price or stent.

This tune may have been composed about the time when the King's taxes were first imposed.

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### **The Stuarts' White Banner Bratach Bhàn nan Stiùbhartach**

This tune was doubtless composed to commemorate the "Bràtach Bhàn," or White Banner, which was unfurled at Glenfinnan when Prince Charlie raised his Standard on 19th August (O.S.) 1745.

"When in deep Glenfinnan's valley,  
Thousands on their bended knees,  
Saw once more the stately ensign  
Waving in the northern breeze."

It is said that, when the Royal Standard was unfurled, and the Prince and the Chiefs were about to partake of some refreshments, Allan MacDonald, brother to Kinloch-Moidart, set the Prince on the knee of Alexander MacDonald, the Bard, who had joined the Prince's army with "gun and pistol," and who straightway proceeded to extemporise the spirited strain: -

"O Theàrlaich mhic Sheumais,  
Mhic Sheumais, mhic Theàrlaich,  
Leat shiùbhlainn gu h-eutrom,  
'Nam éigheach bhi marsal," &c.

which may be rendered: -

“Charles, son of James,  
Son of James, son of Charlie,  
I'd answer the summons  
And follow thee early.”

The Bard was regarded as a valuable adherent to the Stuart cause; not only was he an energetic officer, but as a poet he was both able and willing to arouse enthusiasm on behalf of the cause, and to stimulate the energies of those who, like himself, had given up their all to follow their Prince.

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### **The Men went to Drink Chaidh na fir a dh'òl**

This tune is evidently reminiscent of a spree in a wayside inn called "Tigh-an-lòin." Some of the words associated with the tune may interest pipers : -

Tha na fir ag òl  
Ann an Tigh-an-lòin,  
Uisge-beatha 's beòir  
Tha na fir ag òl.

Chaidh na fir a dh'òl  
Ann an Tigh-au-lòin,  
Uisge-Leath a 's beòir  
Chaidh na fir a dh'òl.

Tha na coin a tathunn,  
Tha na fir a tighinn,  
Tha na coin a tathunn,  
Tha na fir a tighinn.

'Chuid nach òl sinne dheth  
Oladh na gillean e,  
Dh'òladh na gillean e  
Phàigheadh na gillean e.  
Chaidh na fir a dh'òl, &c.

## **Squinting Patrick's Flame of Wrath Lasan Phàdruig Chaoig Mhic Cruimein.**

Donald Mòr MacCrimmon had a brother who, on account of some defect in his eyes, was known as *Padruig Caogach* or Squinting Patrick. He lived on the Macleod estates, Glenelg, Ross-shire.

Patrick had a quarrel with his foster brother, a native of Kintail. Sometime after the dispute the Kintail man took Patrick unawares and dealt him a deadly blow with his dirk. This being made known to Donald Mor at Dunvegan, he prepared to revenge the untimely death of his brother, informing Macleod of his intention. He was informed that if he remained at home Macleod would see justice done before the expiration of one year. Macleod thought the irate piper's wrath would cool before then. Such, however, was not the case, for at the termination of twelve months Donald Mor set out for Glenelg without informing anyone of his intention, and finding that the murderer of his brother had gone to Kintail, he pursued his journey thither.

The offender, having been apprised of his arrival, concealed himself in the house of a friend, and the inhabitants of the village not choosing to deliver him up, MacCrimmon was so enraged that he resolved to set their houses on fire, a resolution which he found an opportunity of carrying into effect that night, and burned eighteen of their houses, which caused the loss of several lives. This incident was known as "*Lasan Phàdruig Chaogaich*," or Squinting Patrick's Flame of Wrath. Donald then made his escape to Lord Reay's country, where he remained for some time under the protection of Donald Dugall Mackay, afterwards Lord Reay, with whom he had been formerly acquainted.

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### **Clan Macnab's Salute Fàilte Chloinn an Aba.**

In addition to the historic reference to this Clan made in "The MacNab's Salute" [link], page 54, it may be stated that a family of Macnabs were, for a period of four hundred years, hereditary armourers and jewellers to the Campbells, Knights of Lochawe, whose seat was at Kilchurn Castle, Lochawe. The last of the race died about the beginning of the last century at Baran, near Dalmally. There is a Clan Macnab Society with its headquarters in Edinburgh.

## **MacCrimmon's Sweetheart Maol Donn, no leannan Mhie Cruimein**

Another setting of this tune is given elsewhere (see “MacCrimmon’s Sweetheart” [link]). It is there stated that "History is silent as to who *Maol Donn* was, "yet tradition says that the tune was composed on the death of a favourite cow bearing this name, which, by the way, is a common name for a Highland cow.”

In the *Northern Chronicle* of 13th May 1888 there appeared a letter from D. S. MacDonald, Sergeant-piper, 1st Battalion Royal Scots, regarding this tune. MacDonald had access to all Angus Mackay's MSS. (both musical and others), which are now among the Duke of Hamilton's collection. According to Mackay's manuscript, this tune, which is there entitled "Cumha Mhaoilduinn," dates back to the 14th or even the 13th century, Mackay, in a note to this tune, says that Maol Donn was the son of Conal, King of Kintyre. According to historical accounts he was the son of Conal II., a Scoto-Irish King, and he himself, after the death of his brother, reigned for sixteen years.

In Reid's manuscript this tune is called "A' Mhaol Donn" – “Morar’s March.” (See Note to “MacCrimmon’s Sweatheart” [link].)

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## **"Craigellachie," Creag Eileachaidh The Grants' Gathering, Cruinneachadh nan Granddach.**

The Clan Grant, historically speaking, are undoubtedly Norman. The name, too, despite Gaelic possibilities, is Norman; it is simply a modification of the French *grand*, English "grand." The first Grants mentioned in Scottish records are Lawrence and Robert de Grant in 1285. The name was common in England in Norman times, especially in Lincoln and Notts; and there was a famous Normandy family of Grante whose motto, also, was "Stand Fast."

John Ruskin, in his work "Two Paths," thus alludes to the well-known slogan of the Clan Grant: - "In one of the loveliest districts of Scotland, where the peat cottages are darkest, just at the western foot of the great mass of the Grampians, which encircles the sources of the Spey and the Dee, the main road traverses the chain, winds round the foot of a broken rock called the Crag or Craig-ellachie. There is nothing remarkable in either its height or form; it is darkened with a few scattered pines and birch trees, and touched along the summit with a flush of heather; but it constitutes a sort of headland or leading promontory in the group of hills to which it belongs - a sort of initial letter of the mountains - and thus stands in the mind of the inhabitants of the district - the Clan Grant - for a type of the country upon themselves. Their sense of this is beautifully indicated by the war-cry of the Clan, `Stand Fast, Craigellachie!' “

## **The Macraes' March Spaidsearachd Chloinn Mhic-rath.**

This Piobaireachd celebrates the gallant deeds at "*Blàr-na-Pàirc*" of a Clan Macrae warrior, who at that battle earned for himself the title of "*Donnachadh-Mór-na-Tuaighe*" - Great Duncan of The Axe - by which he was ever afterwards known. "*Blàr-na-Pàirc*" - Battle of Park - was fought at a well-known spot, still pointed out, near Kinellan, Strathpeffer. The fight was between the MacDonalds, aided by various other Clans, and the Mackenzies, who were assisted by the Macraes. Although disposed at the beginning of the contest to take things easy, if not actually to shirk the battle, "*Suarachan*," before the close of the day, had gained the place of a hero, for he had in single combat killed Lachlan Maclean of Lochbuie. While the tune "The Macraes' March" may have been composed to celebrate "*Blàr-na-Pàirc*," it does not follow that it was composed at the date of this battle; in fact it is more than likely it was written at a much later period. (See "History of the Clan Macrae.")

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## **John Garve Macleod of Raasay's Lament Cumha Iain Ghairbh mhic Gille Chailium Rathasaidh.**

It is generally understood that this well-known tune was composed by Patrick Mór MacCrimmon. John Garve was VI. of Raasay, and met his death at the early age of twenty-one while returning from Lewis, where he had been on a visit to his relative George, Second Earl of Seaforth. The birlinn went down in a great storm on the north coast of Skye, when John Garve and his crew perished. Tradition ascribes his death to the evil powers of a noted witch. In the "Wardlaw MS." there is a paragraph dealing with this tragic incident.

The author of the manuscript, Rev. James Fraser, was born in 1634, and died in 1709. He got the account of the drowning of John Garve from his brother, Alexander Macleod. Here is the passage referred to: - "This April the Earl of Seaforth, dwelling in the Lewes, a dreadful accident happened. The Earl sent for John Garve M'Kleud, Laird of Rarzay, to witness the christening of his son; and after the treat and solemnity of the feast, Rarzay takes leave to go home, went aboard of his birlinn, and sailed away with a strong north gale of wind, and whether by giving too much sail and no ballast, or the unskilfulness of the seamen, or that they could not manage the strong Dutch canvas sails, the boat whelmed, and all the men drowned in view of the coast. The Laird and 16 of his kinsmen the prime perished, and none of them ever found, a greyhound or two cast ashore dead, and pieces of the birlinn. One Alexander Macleod, Lewes, the night before had voice warning him thrice not to go at all with Rarzay, for all would drown in their return; yet he went with him, being infatuated, and drowned with the rest. This account I had from Alexander, his brother, the summer after. Drunkenness did the mischief."

The famous bardess, *Màiri, nighean Alasdair Ruaidh* composed a touching lament to his memory, beginning -

Mo bheud 's mo chràdh,  
Mar dh' èirich do'n  
'N fhear ghleusta ghràidh  
Bha treun 's an spàirn  
'S nach faicear gu bràth thu'n Rathasaidh.  
. . . . .  
'S e'n sgeul cràiteach  
Do'n mhnaoi a dh'fhàg thu,  
'S do t-aon bhràtbair  
A shuidh 'n ad àite;  
Diluain Càisge  
Chaidh tonn bàit' ort,  
Craobh a h' àird' de'n abhal thu.

His sister also composed a Lament for John Garve beginning -

'S mi 'nam shuidh' air an fhadhlainn  
Gun fhaoilte gun fhuran, &c.

which will be found in several collections of Gaelic song.

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**The Earl of Antrim's Lament  
Cumha Iarla Antruim.**

The Earl of Antrim, Ranald MacDonald, was made Marquis by Charley I. in 1643 in anticipation of his raising an army for service in England. He was to raise 10,000 men, but failed to do so. In 1644 he sent 1600 men to assist Montrose. His father died in 1636, and some hold that this Lament was for him.

## **The Little Spree An Daorach Bheag.**

This is one of three tunes composed upon the same person, who was addicted to whisky-drinking. (See Note to the Big Spree, "*An Daorach Mhor*," [link].)

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## **A Salute to the Corry of the Tiny Fall Fàilte Choir'-an-Easain.**

This long-lost Salute is the composition of *Ruairaidh Dall*, father of the celebrated "*Piobaire Dall*," John Mackay, both of whom were pipers to the Mackenzies of Gairloch. John Mackay ("*Am Piobaire Dall*") was a celebrated piper and poet. He was born in the parish of Gairloch in 1666. He acquired the rudiments of music from his father *Ruairaidh Dall* (Blind Roderick), and he was not long with the MacCrimmons when he easily outstripped all the other students who attended their College of Pipers at Borreraig, Skye. His superiority aroused a good deal of jealousy among his fellow-students, and it is related that on one occasion they sought to get rid of him by throwing him over a rock. Fortunately he alighted on his feet and suffered no material injury. The place is still known as "*Leum an Doill*," The Blind Man's Leap. Before leaving Skye he seemed to excel his master as a composer, and it is believed that this fact gave rise to the Gaelic saying, "*An gille toirt bàrr air MacCriomain*," the lad surpassing MacCrimmon (the apprentice excelling his master).

The poem "*Coir' an-Easain*" will be found in Mackenzie's "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry." In it the piper-poet holds converse with the corry, and makes it tell of the stirring events it has witnessed. This poem be adapted to the Salute composed by his father "*Ruairaidh Dall*."

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## **Mary's Praise for her Gift Moladh Màiri**

This tune is ever associated with the Clan Maclachlan. It is one, however, whose origin is attributed to a simple incident. It would appear that a certain piper was in need of a new windbag for his instrument, and, when he was presented with the necessary sheepskin, he thought it necessary to reward the donor by composing a Pibroch in her praise for her timely present or gift. It would appear as if a piper's praise was lightly bought. We feel inclined to regard the story as apocryphal.

## **Lady Elizabeth Diana MacDonald's Lament Cumha Bain-tighearn Mhic Dhòmhuill.**

This lady was a daughter of Sir Alexander MacDonald of Slate. She married as his second wife the Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, in the county of Caithness, whose name is associated with the "Statistical Account of Scotland."

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## **Roderick Mór Macleod's Salute Fàilte Ruairidh Mhóir**

This Salute is said to have been composed on the birth of "*Ruairidh Mòr*" XIII of Dunvegan, who was so called, "not so much from his size or stature of his body - which was not remarkably large, as from the strength of his parts," and who was, perhaps, the most distinguished Chief of his time. During the greater part of his reign he was at feud and fought several engagements with the MacDonalds of Slate. He succeeded his brother William, who died in 1590 but it was 1596 before he was infeft in the whole of the family estates. Early in 1613 Roderick received from James I. the honour of knighthood. Sir Roderick's hospitality was unbounded, and he was in all respects well entitled to be called *Mòr*, or great, in all the good qualities that went to constitute a great Highland Chief and leader of men in his day. He died in 1626 at the Chanonrie of Ross (Fortrose), and his remains were interred in the aisle of Fortrose Cathedral, where his tomb with inscription can be seen. (See No. "MacLeod of MacLeod's Lament" [link].)

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## **A Lament for Great Findlay Cumha Fhionnlaidh Mhóir**

The progenitor of the Farquharsons was Farquhar, fourth son of Alexander Ciar, the third Shaw of Rothiemurchas. Taking up their residence in Aberdeenshire, the descendants of this Farquhar were called Farquharsons. In their early history the name of Farquhar's descendant, Findlay Mór, Standard-Bearer at Pinkie, when he fell, 1547, stands prominent, and from and after him the Farquharsons were termed "*Clann Fhionnlaidh*," or descendants of Findlay.

Through the kindness of Miss Farquharson of Invercauld I am enabled to give the following interesting references to this brave Highlander "*Fhionnlaidh Mór*" - Big Findlay: -

**Quotation from Lyon King-at-Arms.** - I testify and make known that the Coat-of-Arms appertaining and belonging to John Farquharson of Invercauld, lawfully descended of Shaw, son of M'Duff, Thane of Fife, whose successors had the name of Shaw, son of Shaw of Rothiemurchas, chief of the whole name, came to be called Farquharson about ten generations ago, and approved of and confirmed by me to him, is matriculate in my said publick Register

upon the day and date of these presents. Two Coats quarterly, First and Fourth, or a Lyon rampant, Gules armed and Languid Agies, as the paternal Coat by name Farquharson Shaw or M'Duff; Second and Third Argent; a Fir Tree growing out of a mount in base, keded proper on a chief Gule; a *Banner of Scotland* displayed as a canton of the first charged with a dexter hand couped at the wrist fissways holding a dagger point downwards of the chief. The same having the Fir Tree for their sign and badge in time of battell. The banner from Findlay Mór of Invercauld, one of their predecessors being killed at Pinkie Field bearing the Royal Banner, and who lyes buried in the Churchyard of Inveresk . . . I have subscribed this extract and cause, append my seal . . . the fifteenth day of July 1696.

(Signed) ALEX. ARESKIN, *Lyon*.

Findlay Mór married Beatrice, daughter of Gordon of Banchory, who afterwards married Robertson of Lude. Tradition asserts she played the harp before Queen Mary.

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**A Lament for Mary Macleod (the Skye Poetess)**  
**Cumha Màiri nic Leod.**

This Gaelic poetess flourished during a portion of the 16th and 17th centuries. She was bardess and nurse to several of the Chiefs of Dunvegan. She was banished to the Island of Mull for some bardic offence committed in the stately Halls of Dunvegan, and it was while there that she composed " *'S mi 'm shuidhe air an tulaich,*" in which she laments her own banishment, and desiring to be once more installed at Dunvegan. It is said that on her deathbed she was seized with qualms at having forgiven the Chief who had banished her, and specially on having, on being released, composed a song in his praise. As punishment and penance she made a death-entreaty (*còrachd*) that she should be buried face downwards in token of the ignominy which would for ever consume her conscience, although she slept in Rodel of her ancestors, the idyll of her heart. (See "Memoir" in "*Dain Iain Ghobha,*" by Dr. George Henderson.)

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**The Blue Ribbon**  
**An Ribean Gorm.**

There are several "Ribbon Tunes." This one seems associated with more than one Clan. It is claimed by the Grants, while *Clann Donnachie* (the Robertsons) claim it, asserting it was the tune played when they marched to the field of Bannockburn and turned the tide of battle on that important occasion. It must, however, be noted that it is difficult to determine what Clans were present on the field of Bannockburn, as we have no authentic list of Clans at so early a date as 1314.

**Kinloch-Moidart's Lament**  
**Cumha Fir Cheann-Loch-Mùideart.**

The Lament was composed in memory of Donald MacDonald of Kinloch-Moidart, who was executed at Carlisle in 1746 for his share in the Rebellion. Donald joined the Prince, who visited him in his house at Kinloch-Moidart, and at the head of a faithful band of a hundred of his retainers, he accompanied him throughout the whole campaign.

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**A Lament for the Duke of Hamilton**  
**Cumha Dhiuc Hamilton.**

James, son of the Earl of Selkirk (1658-1712), was in 1698 created Duke of Hamilton, and in 1711 Duke of Brandon in England, a title challenged by the House of Lords. He fell in the famous duel with Lord Mohun in Hyde Park in 1712. It was to him that this Lament was composed.

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**The Great Spree**  
**An Daorach Mhor**

This tune, it is said, was composed by one of the Chiefs of the MacGregors on one of his vassals, who was a valiant man. He was a blacksmith by trade, and he was often the foremost at all the battles he was engaged in, but there were times when he would get quite deranged, occasioned by his partaking too freely of ardent spirits, which was the cause of this, tune being composed, for he is admonished in the phrase, "*Tha 'n daorach ort 's feairrd thu cadal,*" You are drunk, you'd better sleep. There are three Daorachs: "*An Daorach Mhòr,*" "*An Daorach Bheag*" (The Little Spree, [link]), and "*An Daorach Mheadhonach,*" all of which were composed upon the same wild hero.

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**Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch's Lament**  
**Cumha Thighearna Gheàrrloch.**

The Mackays were long hereditary pipers to the Mackenzies of Gairloch. Sir Hector, the fourth Baronet, flourished during the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1815 he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of his native county. He was much beloved by his people, who regarded him as a

father and a friend. He was considered by all who knew him the most sagacious and intelligent man in the county. He was frequently pressed to go to Parliament, but he replied, "Who will then look after my people?"

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### **The Red Hand in the MacDonalds' Arms Lamh Dhearg Chloinn Dòmhnuaill**

How the MacDonalds got the Red Hand which is ever associated with them is well known. Somerled of the Isles had three sons - Dugald, Reginald, and Duncan - who disputed as to which of them should have the lands of Slate in Skye. At last it was decided that each of them should man his own birlinn and race for Skye from some of the other Western Isles, and that the land should belong to the son who first placed his hand on it. In this race Dugald's boat was soon left behind. Duncan's boat began to leak at the plug, which he withdrew, inserted his thumb to make it tight, and urging his man was on the point of winning. When Reginald saw this, he placed his left hand on the gunwale of his own boat, severed it at the wrist with a blow from the claymore in his right, threw it ashore, and as the red hand was the first to touch the land he got himself declared winner.

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### **The Lament for the Dead Cumha nam Marbh**

There is little or no information extant regarding this tune, or who composed it. It probably is a tune that was played at ordinary funerals when there was no special tune associated with the family to which the deceased belonged.

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### **Melbank's Salute Fàilte Fir Mhìlbanc.**

This tune was composed to Kenneth Mackenzie of Millbank, Ross-shire, son of Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Gairloch. He was much respected, and was famed for his unostentatious liberality. (*See " History of the Mackenzies."*)

## **A Lament for Captain MacDougall Cumha Chaiptein Mhic Dhùghail.**

This Lament was composed on one of the Chiefs of the MacDougalls of Dunolly by the hereditary piper of the Clan, Ronald MacDougall, who also composed a Salute known as "Captain MacDougall's Salute." The MacDougalls had hereditary pipers to the time of Admiral Sir John MacDougall, K.C.B., who died in 1864, when his piper Ronald - Raonull Mòr - left for some reason or other, and was afterwards appointed Pipe-Major to the local Militia. These Clan pipers lived at Moleigh, near Oban, where they had a portion of land called "*Croit nam pìobairean*," or the Pipers' Croft. They were all MacDougalls; the last who kept a school of pipers there being Ronald Bàn. Ronald Mór, who was grandson of Ronald Bàn, was the last hereditary piper of the Clan.

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## **A Lament for Ronald MacDonell of Morar Cumha Raonail Mhic Ailein Òig.**

Ronald MacDonell of Morar was famous as the composer of many pipe tunes that have stood the test of time. Reference has already been made to him as the composer of "The Finger Lock," [link], and it is well known that he was the composer of the tune called "*A' Bhòilich*" - The Vaunting. In addition to being a first-class piper, he was also a player of the harp and violin. He was known as Ronald of Cross, and was the third son of Allan Og of Morar, fourth in descent from Allan, eldest soil of Dougal, Chief of Clan Ranald, who was killed in 1520. In MS. history of the Clan Ranalds dated 1700 he is referred to as "The best player upone the pype now living."

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## **Duntroon's Pibroch Piobaireachd Dhun-t-Sròin**

History relates that Sir Alexander MacDonald, better known as *Alastair, mac Cholla Chiotaich*, invaded Argyllshire about the year 1644. Landing at Campbeltown with a force of about 1500 rank and file, he marched forward through Kintyre to Tarbert. "Arriving at the passes," says a local historian, "he ordered his men to march in loose order over Sliabh-gaoil (an extensive mountain range, many miles in length), and to descend on the Campbells' country, Ceanntarbert (Kintarbert) and on to Knapdale, with power to massacre every person who attempted. to oppose them. He moved himself, in a small fleet of galleys, by the west, landed at Castle-Sween, already burnt by his father, from thence he proceeded to Duntroon Castle, which he surrounded by sea and land, determined to massacre every person within its walls for the murder of his father's piper, &c. Alexander ordered his piper to play the MacDonalds March,

in place of which he instantly composed a war-cry (or warning), and played it to alarm Duntroon and warn him of his approaching danger, by way of a Salute, which, in the original, runs thus-`*Fàilte dhuit, slàinte dhuit, fàilte dhuit a Dhùn-t-Sròin.*' The warm effusion of the piper could not be better expressed to suit his purpose. After saluting Duntroon, and wishing him good health, he warns him of his danger - that the enemy was ready to attach him by sea and land, right, left, and front. This war-cry or warning tune was understood on board, and the poor piper instantly hoisted up mast high, and executed for his temerity. Alexander, finding he could not reduce Duntroon Castle, moved northward to his work of destruction."

The Gaelic words associated with the various movements of the Pibroch will be found in Vol. V., "*Celtic Monthly*," page 8.

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### **Macleod of Macleod's Salute** **Fàilte Mhic Leòid**

This tune is said to have been composed about 1603 to *Ruairidh Mór* Macleod, Chief of the Clan, by Donaid Mor MacCrimmon. The occasion was the end of a long feud between Donald Gorm and *Ruairidh Mór*. On a reconciliation being effected, Donald Gorm was invited by Rory Mór to banquet in Dunvegan Castle. When Donald Gorm appeared in sight of the Dùn he was met by Macleod's famous piper, Donald Mor MacCrimmon, who welcomed the Chief of the MacDonalds by playing "The MacDonalds," which tune he composed for the occasion. It was in connection with the same banquet that he played "*Fàilte Mhic Leòid*"

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### **The Marquis of Argyll's Salute** **Fàilte Mharcuis Earra-ghaidheal.**

Archibald, Eighth Earl of Argyll, was born in 1598. His abilities secured him, in 1626, at the age of twenty-eight, the high office of Privy Councillor to King Charles I. He was created Marquis of Argyll in 1641. In 1644 he dispersed the Royal Forces under Huntly, but Montrose in 1645 annihilated his army at Inverlochy. In 1651 he crowned Charles II. at Scone. He was beheaded at the Cross of Edinburgh on 27th May 1661.

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### **In praise of Marion** **Moladh Mòraig**

The Clan March or grand *Piobaireachd* of the Clan MacDougall is known as "*Moladh Moraig*." This, however, is but the modern name of the March, the old one having been forgotten. Alexander MacDonald, the Jacobite Bard, better known as "*Alasdair, mac Mhaighstir Alasdair*," wrote a poem in praise of *Morag* which he arranged to suit the various

movements of the Pibroch. The Bard was born about 1700. He was a teacher in Ardnamurchan at the time of the '45, and followed Prince Charlie, and wrote many poems to stimulate the energies of those who, like himself, had given up their all to follow their Prince. His poems were first published in 1751.

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### **The Unjust Incarceration Am Prìosanachadh eucorach.**

There is nothing to indicate what deed had occasioned this incarceration which had made such a deep impression on John Dall Mackay, but it is evident that it was deemed undeserved. It must have occurred long ago, as the unfortunate piper had his feet made fast in the stocks. John Dall, the poet and piper, lived to a great age. He was born in 1666, and died in 1754. He was buried with his father, *Ruairidh Dall*, in the clachan of his native parish Gairloch.

Romance associates this tune with the imprisonment of a certain Neil Mackay on the Bass Rock, which caused him to be afterwards known as Neil Bhass (Vass), and there is a curious legend about his having been relieved in order that he might meet the challenge of an Italian wrestler who had defeated the best man in England. It is said that the King and his nobles attended the match.

The Italian laughed with contempt when he beheld the uncouth Neil Mackay but it was his last laugh, as Mackay broke his back at the first throw.

So much for romance, now for history. Neil Mackay escaped from the Bass Rock about 1436, and took his place at the head of his clansmen. (See "Book of Mackay," pages 64-65.)

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### **The MacDuffs' Gathering Cruinneachadh Chloinn Duibh.**

MacDuff is the patronymic of the first or Celtic Earls of Fife. Ethelred, son of King Malcolm Canmore, is the first recorded Earl of Fife. Constantino was Earl of Fife in the early days of David's reign, and, dying about 1129, was succeeded by Gillimichel Mak-duf, or son of Duff or Dufagan, probably his brother. The origin of these three Earls is unknown, but it is a remarkable fact that the genealogies given for King Lulach and King Macbeth are headed "Genealogy of Clan Duff."

In an Act of 1384 certain privileges accorded to Clan Duff are referred to. These privileges were – *First*, That they should seat the King in his royal chair on his coronation day; *second*, that they should lead the vanguard in every royal battle; and *third*, a remission for homicide on a fixed payment, with sanctuary at Cross Macduff, which stood to the north of Newburgh.

### **The Battle of Aulderne Latha Alit Eire.**

The martial music of the Grahams seems to be chiefly associated with the great Montrose and Claverhouse. The Gathering of the Clans is called "*Lathes Allt Eire*," commemorative of the battle fought at Auldearn, near Nairn, between Montrose and the Covenanters under Sir John Hurry, when the latter was defeated. This occurred in 1645.

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### **Lady Margaret MacDonald's Salute Fàilte na Bain-tighearna Màirearad Nic Dhomhnuill**

The MacArthurs were hereditary pipers to the MacDonalds. The most famous of them was undoubtedly Charles, whose musical education was perfected by Patrick Og MacCrimmon. Charles had two sons, Donald and Alexander, the former of whom was drowned; the latter went to America. His brother Neil had a son John, who was taught by his uncle Charles, who settled in Edinburgh, and was appointed piper to the Highland Society of Scotland, an appointment which he held until his death. He taught the art to many students, from which he was usually styled Professor MacArthur.

John Ban MacArthur, another brother, had a son named Angus, who went with Lord MacDonald to London, where he remained till his death. He is believed to have been the last of the MacArthurs, hereditary pipers to the MacDonalds of the Isles.

Lady Margaret, to whom this Salute was composed, was the daughter of Alexander, Ninth Earl of Eglinton, and wife of Sir Alexander MacDonald of Slate, mother of Sir James, the "Scottish Marcellus," and of Alexander, Lord MacDonald. She entertained the Prince in Skye, though Sir Alexander, her husband, was on the other side.

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### **My Dearest on Earth, give me your Kiss Thoir dhomh do phòg a luaidh mo chridhe!**

This pleasant tune is evidently the composition of some amorous piper who seeks to impress on his sweetheart the sincerity of his affection by means of his *pìob-mhòr*.