

The Rout of Glenfruin

Manuscripts

There are settings of “The Rout of Glenfruin” in

- Colin Mór Campbell’s Nether Lorn Canntaireachd (i, 27-9, with the title “MacGrigor’s March”);
- in Angus MacKay’s MS (ii, 65-6);
- and in C. S. Thomason’s MS (f.34).

Published Sources

There are settings in:

- Donald MacDonald’s *Ancient Martial Music of Caledonia* (pp.48-52, with the title – “Ruaig Ghlenne Fruin (properly Glenn a Bhroin). The Valley of Sorrow The Rout of Glenfruin. A Desperate Engagement between the MacGregors and Colquhouns 1602 In the above Glen near Loch Lomond where the latter were routed with great slaughter”).
- C. S. Thomason’s *Ceol Mor* (p.22).
- David Glen’s *Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd* (pp.88-9).
- Piobaireachd Society Collection* (first series—v, 13-14).
- John McLennan’s *The Piobaireachd as MacCrimmon Played it* (p.8).

The sources develop the tune as follows:

Nether Lorn	MacDonald	MacKay	Thomason <i>Ceol Mor</i>	Glen	P.S. <i>(I series)</i>	McLennan
Ground	Ground	Ground	Ground	Ground	Ground	Ground
Thumb var singling doubling trebling	Thumb var singling doubling	Thumb var singling doubling	Thumb var singling doubling	Thumb var sing. doub.	Thumb var sing. doub.	Thumb Var singling doubling
	Ground					
	Siubhal singling doubling trebling		Siubhal singling doubling trebling	Siubhal sing. doub. treb.		Siubhal singling doubling
	Ground					
		Leumluath singling doubling trebling Ground	Leumluath singling doubling		Leumluath singling doubling	
Taorluath singling doubling trebling	Taorluath singling doubling a mach	Taorluath singling doubling trebling	Taorluath singling doubling a mach	Taorluath singling doubling a mach	Taorluath singling doubling	Taorluath singling doubling a mach
	Ground	Ground	Ground			
Crunluath singling doubling trebling a mach	Crunluath singling doubling a mach	Crunluath singling doubling trebling	Crunluath singling doubling a mach	Crunluath singling doubling a mach	Crunluath singling doubling a mach	Crunluath singling doubling a mach
	Ground	Ground	Ground	Ground		

Colin Campbell:

Colin Campbell's setting in the Nether Lorn is both pleasingly symmetrical and musically interesting, with a typically playful extension of the tone row in the doublings of the Thumb, Taorluath, and Crunluath variations. The Thumb variation shows this characteristic arrangement, somewhat thus:

Rout of Glenfruin, Colin Campbell, thumb var. singling, line 1



Rout of Glenfruin, Colin Campbell, thumb var. doubling, line 1



Rout of Glenfruin, Colin Campbell, thumb var. trebling, line 1



- 1st Hiharin hodin hodroo hōdin Two times hiodin hodin chedarodo hodin
2^d Hiharin hodin hodroo hodin hiodin hodin hiodre hodin hiodin hodin chedarodo
hodin
3^d Hiharin hodin hodroo hodin hiodin hodin chedarodo hodroo
- D. 1st Hindili hodili hindili hodroo, hindili hodili hindili hodrocin hiodili hodili
chedarodo hodroo,
2^d Hindili hodili hindili hodrocin hiodili hodili chedarodo hodrocin hiodili hodili
chedarodo hodroo
3^d Hindili hodili hindili hodrocin hiodili hodili chedarodo hodroo
- DD 1st Hindili hodili chedili hodili hindili hodili chedili hodili hiodili hodili chedili
hodili
2^d Hindili hodili chedili hodili hiodili hodili chedili hodili twice Over
3^d Hindili hodili chedili hodili hiodili hodili chedili hodili
- DDD 1st Hindili hodili hindili hodili hindili hodili hindili hodili hiodili hodili hiodili
hodili [etc]

Taolive

1st Hindarid hodarid hindarid hodroo hindarid hodarid hindarid hodrocin hiodarid hodarid chedarodo hodroo [etc]

D 1st Hindarid hodarid chedarid hodarid hindarid hodarid chedarid hodarid hiodarid hodarid chedarid hodarid [etc]

DD 1st Hindarid hodarid, three times hiodarid hodarid hiodarid hiodarid [etc]

Cruive

1st Hinbandre hobandre hinbandre hodroo hinbandre hobandre hinbandre hodrocin hiobandre hobandre chedarodo hodroo [etc]

D 1st Hinbandre hobandre chebandre hobandre twice Over hiobandre hobandre chebandre hobandre [etc]

DD 1st Hinbandre hobandre, three times hiobandre hobandre hiobandre hobandre [etc]

[a mach]

1st Hinbandre hodrodre three times hiotrodre hodrodre hiotrodre hodrodre [etc]

One point of interest about Colin Campbell's system emerges quite strongly in this tune, namely his intended timing of the introductory gesture on A, 'hiharin'. The system as a whole seems quite strongly onomatopoeic, the syllables framed in such a way as to indicate rhythm as well as pitch. 'Hiharin' would thus seem to imply a three pulse gesture, perhaps as follows:



If this were the case, then the modern interpretation which contains five pulses:



would be inappropriate; as, strictly, would the differently accented timings of MacDonald and MacKay:



Campbell's ground may, perhaps, have been timed as follows:

Rout of Glenfruin, Colin Campbell, ground, line 1



This produces an onwardly flowing line, avoiding the sense of frequent interruption induced by MacDonald's cuts down from C and B, which occur at the ends of most of his bars in the Ground. On the other hand, a timing something like the following would be very much in keeping with some of the other scores:

Rout of Glenfruin, Colin Campbell, ground, line 1



Donald MacDonald

Several features of MacDonald's approach are notable, including his heavy cadencing of the ground. Colin Campbell's setting could also be treated in a similar fashion; but I have not done this above because the resulting flow of the melody line is attractive and a feature one might want to preserve. MacDonald's frequent repetitions of the Ground should be noted and also his characteristic placing of the accent on the opening quaver of his a mach figures in the Taorluath and Crunluath variations.

MACGREGOR & COLQUHOUN

(Properly Glenn a Bhroin.)

Valley of Sorrow

The Rout of Glen Fruin.

A Desperate Engagement Between the

MACGREGORS & COLQUHOUNS

1602

In the above Glen near Loch Lomond, where the latter were routed with great Slaughter.

The musical score consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first four systems are the main piece, and the fifth is labeled 'VAR: 1.'. The music is written in a style typical of 18th-century manuscript notation, with various ornaments and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

A historical account of this Piobach ùr will be seen in Vol: 2^d

Walker & Anderson Engravers Edin^g

Doubling VAR
 D.C.
 VAR: 2
 Doubling VAR: 2.
 Trebling VAR: 2.
 D.C.
 3.

This page contains ten systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The notation includes various variations and technical markings:

- System 1:** Labeled "Doubling VAR".
- System 2:** Labeled "D.C." (Da Capo).
- System 3:** Labeled "VAR: 2".
- System 4:** Continuation of the previous system.
- System 5:** Labeled "Doubling VAR: 2.".
- System 6:** Labeled "Trebling VAR: 2.".
- System 7:** Continuation of the previous system.
- System 8:** Continuation of the previous system.
- System 9:** Labeled "D.C." and "3.", indicating a repeat and a triplet.
- System 10:** Continuation of the previous system.

Doubling VAR: 3.

Trebling VAR: 3.

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D.C.

Creanluith or Round Movement.

Doubling of Creanluith.

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Trebbling of Creanluith". The score is written for piano and is organized into two systems. The first system consists of four staves, each with a treble and bass clef, representing a grand staff. The second system consists of eight staves, all with treble clefs, representing a single melodic line. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The notation includes complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests. A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present in the first system. The piece concludes with the instruction "The Piano ends here." and a final double bar line with the marking "D.c." (Da Capo).

Angus MacKay

The Rout of Glenfruin, Angus MacKay, ground

The first system consists of three staves of music in C major, 6/8 time. The melody is written on the top staff, and the accompaniment is on the two lower staves. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplet markings. A bracket labeled "Bis" spans the end of the first two staves.

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. It features similar rhythmic patterns and triplet markings. A bracket labeled "Bis" is placed below the bottom staff.

Var. 1st

The first variation (Var. 1st) begins with a double bar line. The melody is characterized by frequent trills, indicated by the "tr" symbol above the notes. The accompaniment remains consistent with the previous systems.

The second system of the first variation continues the trilled melody and accompaniment. It includes a double bar line and a "Bis" bracket under the bottom staff.

The third system of the first variation continues the trilled melody and accompaniment. It includes a double bar line and a "Bis" bracket under the bottom staff.

The fourth system of the first variation concludes the variation with a double bar line. It includes a "Bis" bracket under the bottom staff.

Variation 2nd

The second variation (Variation 2nd) begins with a double bar line. The melody is characterized by frequent trills, indicated by the "tr" symbol above the notes. The accompaniment remains consistent with the previous systems. A bracket labeled "Bis" spans the first two staves.

The second system of the second variation continues the trilled melody and accompaniment. It includes a double bar line and a "Bis" bracket under the bottom staff.

The third system of the second variation concludes the variation with a double bar line. It includes a "Bis" bracket under the bottom staff.

Var. 3rd.

Musical score for Variation 3rd, consisting of ten staves of music. The notation includes various rhythmic values, rests, and performance markings. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. The score includes several repeat signs (//) and bracketed sections with the following markings: "4 times", "Bis", "Bis", "[Trebling]", and "4 times". The music is written in a single melodic line.

Variation 4th

Musical score for Variation 4th, consisting of one staff of music. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests. The score begins with a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. It includes a repeat sign (//) and a bracketed section marked "Bis".

Doubling, line 1

[Trebling], line 1

Crunluath singling, line 1

Crunluath doubling, line 1

Crunluath [trebling], line 1

MacKay's manuscript is torn at the foot of folio 65 and, with his abbreviated space-saving system, his instructions about repeats are not always clear, but something like the above seems intended. MacKay's treatment of the BCB figure in the singlings of each variation is interesting, and the way the doublings from Variation 3 onwards extend the tone row up to E as Colin Campbell does, although with rather different effect. The Treblings are indicated in square brackets above because, although they are present in the score, they are not labelled by MacKay as separate movements.

C. S. Thomason

When compiling his score Thomason cited the manuscripts of both MacDonald and MacKay and the teaching of Donald MacKay (Angus's nephew), who had been taught the tune by Donald Cameron. Thomason's score has obvious affinities with Angus MacKay, but at the same time it is the longest and most elaborate of the settings. It includes MacDonald's Siubhal along with MacKay's Leumluath and substitutes an a mach for the trebling in the Taorluath and Crunluath variations. The resulting setting is typical of Thomason's eclectic style, combining features from a number of different named scores to produce a composite text, often rather attractively as here:

David Glen

David Glen's attractive score is closer to Donald MacDonald's style but his relatively cadence-free ground contrasts interestingly with MacDonald's and would produce a much more fluent effect (unless one treated MacDonald's cadence groups as cuttings possessing little or no time value). Glen's approach to the development of the tune is also more urgent, eliminating all of MacDonald's internal recapitulations of the Ground:

THE ROUT OF GLEN FRUIN. (1602.)

RUAIG GHLINN FREÒINE.

Urlar.

39. 

Var. 1st 

Doubling of Var. 1st 

Var. 2nd 

Doubling of Var. 2nd 

Trebling of Var. 2nd 

Taor-luath. 

Dùblachadh an Taor-luath.

*Play "G. out" when starting only

Written  played 

Tribleachadh an Taor-luath.

Crùn luath.

Dùblachadh a' Chrùn-luath.

Tribleachadh a' Chrùn-luath.

Repeat Ùrlar

Piobaireachd Society 1st Series

Volume Five which contains 'The Rout of Glenfruin' was published in July 1912 by the Society's music committee, (whose active members were Capt. Colin MacRae, Major Stewart MacDougall of Lunga, and John Bartholomew of Glenorchard) in consultation with Willie Ross, John MacDougall Gillies, John MacDonald of Inverness, and Sandy Cameron (the younger). A new order of things prevailed following the death of the Society's first editor, the fiery Major William Stewart of Ensay, who had been very much a one man band. The Committee which succeeded him had a new remit, to consult widely with pipers and to seek out old and alternative settings. Ross, MacDonald and MacDougall Gillies were present at the meeting on 29 October 1910 which considered the content and style of Volume V. This resulted in a pleasantly playable setting which, although it has obvious links with MacKay, came down through John Bàn MacKenzie. The Ground, if played as timed, would get round the problem of the obtrusive E cadences; these are reduced to a semi-quaver (halving MacKay's values) and his 4/4 translated into a more plausible 6/8 time signature. Also worthy of note is the introduction of a series of interesting cadences into the Thumb Variation, which opens the possibility of moving time values between the cadence and the following melody note, perhaps along the lines of:

Rout of Glenfruin, PS 1st Series, thumb variation singling, line 1 possible timing



MacKay's Leumluath, Taorluath, and Crunluath trebling are removed, the tone row is narrower but perhaps stronger, and the tune is developed in balanced pairs of variations ending with a crunluath a mach. There is no instruction to repeat the ground within the tune or at the end. The Society's notes give the source as follows:

This tune is given as taught to Pipe-Major MacDougall Gillies by John MacGregor, who was piper to Sir Robert Menzies. MacGregor got the tune from John Ban MacKenzie. (PS, first ser., V, v).

Ruaig Ghlinn Bhrain

13

(The Rout of Glen Bruin).

Urlar.



Siubhal Ordaig.



Dùblachadh.



Leum-luath.



Dùblachadh.



The image displays five sections of musical notation for the piece 'Ruaig Ghlinn Bhrain'. Each section is labeled with a specific name: 'Urlar.', 'Siubhal Ordaig.', 'Dùblachadh.', 'Leum-luath.', and 'Dùblachadh.'. The notation is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and ornaments. The first section, 'Urlar.', consists of three staves. The second, 'Siubhal Ordaig.', also has three staves. The third, 'Dùblachadh.', has two staves. The fourth, 'Leum-luath.', has three staves. The final section, 'Dùblachadh.', has two staves. The notation is dense and characteristic of traditional Scottish piping.

Tior-luath.

Dùblachadh.

Crun-luath.

Dùblachadh.

Crun-luath a mach.

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled 'Tior-luath'. The score is written in treble clef and consists of several systems of music. Each system includes a main melody line and a bass line. The piece is divided into sections: 'Tior-luath.', 'Dùblachadh.', 'Crun-luath.', 'Dùblachadh.', and 'Crun-luath a mach.'. The 'Dùblachadh.' sections are marked with 'Bis' and feature a double bar line. The 'Crun-luath a mach.' section is marked with '1. 2.' and 'Bis'. The score is written in a style typical of traditional Scottish Gaelic music.

John McLennan sets the tune as follows:

The Route of Glenamhain

1st 1-1-2
2nd 1-2-2
3rd 1-2

The musical score is presented on ten staves, each with a specific instruction above it. The first staff is labeled 'Theme.' and includes a box with the text '1st & 2nd parts.' and 'in 3rd part only.' The subsequent staves are labeled '1st Vari.', 'Doubling.', '2nd Vari.', 'Doubling.', 'Tri-lugh.', 'Doubling.', 'Tri-lugh a mach.', 'Ceither-lugh.', 'Doubling.', and 'Ceither-lugh a mach.'. The notation includes treble clefs, a key signature of one flat, and a 2/4 time signature. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together in groups. The score is divided into two systems by a vertical line, with the first system containing the first six staves and the second system containing the remaining four.

There are obvious affinities here with Donald MacDonald's setting although with interesting differences in the pointing of the Ground. It is notable, however, that McLennan, like MacDonald, favours the 'down' pointing of the opening gesture on A. Also noteworthy is the timing of the Taorluath a mach, where the movement on A is 'cut'—most unusually—as well as those on B and C.

Commentary:

John Johnston of Coll comments on this tune in General C. S. Thomason's 'Ceol Mor Legends', as follows:

...the piece is one of the very best, & melancholy in the whole range of piping, known to me at least. I have seen old grey haired men reduced to tears on hearing it, its otherwise a very interesting tune, somewhat longer than ordinary piobaireachds...

No books can convey its charms but actual tuition alone i.e. learned from man to man.
(ff.28-29)

The Rev. John Laurie, minister of Rhu, gave an account of the historical events surrounding the Rout of Glenfruin in the entry he wrote for his parish in the *New Statistical Account of Scotland* (1845) referring to "...an age when armed men were the most prized produce of the soil, when military service was the best payment of mail [i.e. rent], and when the muster-roll occupied the place of the rent-roll. In few parts of Scotland was this more the case than in Dumbartonshire west of the river Leven. The three clans of MacFarlane, MacAulay, and Colquhon, plundered each other, or combined to sweep the low country of its flocks and herds. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the annals of this district would present a perpetual recurrence of raid and foray, in which rapine and sword united to embroil and impoverish the neighbourhood...Occasionally, other bands of plunderers invaded this district, among whom the more remarkable were the Macgregors, Campbells, Camerons, and Buchanans. One of those murderous conflicts was of sufficient importance to merit a place in the history of the times, and was fought in Glenfruin in February 1603. The older accounts of this transaction bear such marks of partiality as to be little worthy of credit, and the traditions of the district lead us to into great confusion...It seems enough here to state generally that, Alexander Colquhon of Luss having obtained a commission of lieutenancy against 'thievis, sornaris, and broken men,' who infested the Lennox, arrived in his country just as it had been invaded by Alistair Macgregor of Glenstrae at the head of 400 men. Colquhon rousing his vassals, and being assisted by some of the neighbouring lairds, and a number of the Dumbarton burghers, came up with the marauders at the farm of Strone, near the head of Glenfruin. A desperate combat gave victory to the Macgregors. Of the ir opponents 140 men were slain, the laird of Luss narrowly escaping, and many of those that fell being...landed men of good rank. The plunder carried away by the Macgregors consisted of 600 head of cattle, 800 sheep and goats, and 280 horses. The story of some students from Dumbarton having been massacred in cold blood, does not seem to be borne out by the records. The arm of the law, too long suspended from motives of policy or partiality, now descended upon the unhappy Clangregor, more in vengeance than in justice. The whole race were proscribed, their name prohibited, their children exiled from their native land, and it was not until 1774 that the many penal enactments against them, which defaced the statute book, were finally

repealed. After the battle of Glenfruin, the country became by degrees more settled.” (Rev. John Laurie, Parish of Row [Rhu], Presbytery of Dumbarton, Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, in *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, vol.8).

Following a piping competition once in Fife where he had been judging, R. U. Brown entertained the company after dinner. Carefully settling his beautiful pipe, (nobody tuned up quite *so artistically* as Bob Brown) he launched into his own version of MacDonald’s setting of this tune. None of the younger pipers knew it, and they listened with growing astonishment and admiration, and when he had finished, they enquired, breathlessly, ‘what was *that?*’ And Bob, a man of immense presence and charm, half turned and smiled ‘Why, “The Valley of Sorrow”, or (significant pause), “The Rout of Glenfruin”’. Few doubted that they were in the presence of greatness.

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