

Gaelic folksong collecting, not least because of Patrick's admirable reluctance to "alter or improve the pieces according to his own taste". [vide Matheson W. 1955: 68-70]. The collection was published by subscription, the HSL proving the principal backer (60 copies at a sum of £18), with many individual members of the Society such as John MacKenzie the secretary (20 copies), subscribing privately. [MacDonald P. 1784: 16-22; HSL 268, 34: 1784]. The first edition was dedicated to the HSL, although MacDonald acknowledged a particular debt to his friend John Ramsay of Ochertyre, who helped him raise the subscription, and contributed an important dissertation on "The Influence of Poetry and Music Upon the Highlanders" to the volume.(4)

Besides the music collected by Joseph, Patrick included song airs from Argyll, Perthshire and the Western Isles; 32 reels and jigs, mostly collected from a Sutherland piper; and 4 pibrochs recorded from an "eminent performer" in Lochaber.(2) These latter tunes include many favourites in the pipe repertory, such as John MacKechnie's Reel, and the pibrochs A Ghlas Mheur and MacIntosh's Lament. Patrick named neither of his piping sources, but one likely candidate was George MacLeod, a veteran of the '45 and piper to Lord Reay. The Durness poet Rob Donn recorded at least one occasion when these "brothers in music", Patrick and George, were together in his house. [Grimble I 1979: 108].(5)

Patrick, like many notators before and since, confessed particular difficulty in transcribing the pibroch

variations, and prophetically announced that this would require the attention of a piper ..." able to write from his own performance, to explain the graces and modes of execution ... and to invent and apply proper characters to express them." He suggested that the HSL would almost certainly assist and encourage any such undertaking. [MacDonald P. 1784:7]. Coincidentally, in the precise year in which the Highland Vocal Airs was published, Sir John MacGregor Murray, then a colonel in the East India Company, wrote to the HSL from Bengal on a matter "deserving the particular attention of the Society". [HSL 268, 21: 22]. Sir John, it transpired, had come into possession of Joseph's Compleat Theory, and was anxious to have it published. He forwarded the manuscript to the HSL, who in turn passed it on to the HSS for evaluation, with the promise that if considered worthwhile, they would "print it at their own expense". [HSL 268, 21: 43; 34: 1806; HSS Sd. Bk. I: 90]. The manuscript had reached Edinburgh by November 1785, and there a committee was formed to examine it, comprising five members:

Sir John Clark of Pennycuick

Mr. Clerk of Elden

Mr. Grant of Corrymony

Dr. Gregory Grant

Dr. Alex. MacDougall [HSS Sd. Bk. I: 90].

The Compleat Theory was published 18 years later (in 1803) in a form containing so many editorial errors, omissions and alterations as to render parts of it

worthless. (Two reprints in 1929 and 1971 perpetuated these errors, but fortunately the original manuscript is extant in the Edinburgh University Library). The major flaws lay in the music examples and fingering charts which were hopelessly jumbled; a lack of distinction between gracenotes and melody notes (which Joseph distinguished by size); two major editorial additions to the text which went unacknowledged (one concerning the bass drone, the other the use of small-pipes for dancing); several small omissions; and many simple copying errors, such as "Iuludh" for "Tuludh". The whole savours of sloppy work by an editor with no knowledge of pipe music.

Unfortunately the records of the Highland Societies provide no clues as to who actually edited the work. Patrick MacDonald put his name to the dedication in the 1803 volume, and probably wrote the preface in which Sir John MacGregor Murray was thanked for rescuing a "monument of the genius and abilities of a long-lost brother". [1803: 1]. The title page shows that the work was "printed for Patrick MacDonald", and the HSS records confirm that Patrick himself published the work, "the proceeds to be applied for the benefit of a relation." [HSS Sd. Bk. 4/1 : 101]. It seems highly unlikely, however, that Patrick, (given his knowledge of Joseph and the piping tradition), would have perpetrated the editorial blunders evident in the work.

The manuscript had probably reached Patrick by 1788 (for he dedicated the second edition of the Highland Vocal

Airs to MacGregor Murray in that year), but it is known that it had first passed through the hands of the HSS. A distinct possibility is that the forementioned HSS committee of 1785, or a musician employed by them, edited the work, and made a very poor job of it. Indeed, a second manuscript copy of the Compleat Theory, different from the original, is known to have been in existence prior to World War II [MacDonald M.A. 1948: 131], and this might have been a proof copy drawn up for publication.

A note written on the inside cover of the original manuscript provides a further insight. This reads: "D. Laing. Feby. 1st 1833. Bought at Lord Eldin's Sale." John Clerk of Elden was a member of the 1785 committee. The fact that the original manuscript was retained by him might suggest that he, or an associate, was responsible for the editorial work on the original text.(6)

An authentic edition of the Compleat Theory, based on Joseph's original manuscript, would be an invaluable addition to the modern stock of piping literature. Unfortunately it is questionable whether the 1803 edition made much immediate impact on the piping world. Apart from the editorial blunders which rendered it confusing, it was in any case ahead of its time. Pipers in 1803 were simply not educated in the use of staff notation, and continued to communicate their music orally (through *canntaireachd*) and through performance on practice chanter and bagpipe. Within forty years, this situation had changed, and the Compleat Theory, it is clear, was the

spark which ignited the flame of enthusiasm for "scientific" notation, (in other words, pipe music set on the stave). The Highland Societies, their interest aroused, set to the task of promoting the use of staff notation.

Table IV/7

NOTATION AWARDS AT THE EDINBURGH COMPETITION			
E-sh-d			Primary Source
1806	5- 5-0	Donald MacDonald Pipe Maker, Edinburgh.	Kilberry I:25
1808	2- 2-0	John MacDonald, Son of the above.	Cal Merc July 28 1808
1814	0-10-0	Murdoch MacLean, Pipe Maker, Glasgow.	HSL 268:19
1816	1- 1-0	John Campbell, Nether Lorn. (Campbell Cannt'd)	Kilberry I:44
1817	1-18-0	John Campbell, Nether Lorn. Hector Johnston, Piper to MacLean of Coll.	Kilberry I:47
1818	3- 3-0	Murdoch MacLean John Campbell Adam Graham	HSL 268:19
1820	0-10-6	William MacKay, Piper to the Celtic Society	Kilberry I:12, 51
1821	1- 1-0	Adam Graham, Piper to the Caithness Meeting. MacKay (Wm./Donald?)	HSL 268:19
1822	0-10-6	William MacKay, Piper to the Celtic Society.	Kilberry II:14, 24
1823	1- 0-0	William MacKay	HSL 268:19
1825	0- 5-0	Angus Mackay. Drummond Castle	HSSPMB:38
1841		Angus Mackay John MacLeod, Skye	HSSPMB:157
1844	1-10-0	John MacLeod, Piper to the Celtic Society.	HSL 268:19

(b) The Highland Society Notation Awards. 1804-1844

In early July 1804 Sir John Sinclair examined Joseph MacDonald's newly-published Compleat Theory, and decided that it was "likely to conduce much to the improvement of performers in this warlike and natural music." [HSS Sd. Bk. 4/1: 101]. He therefore determined that the HSS should purchase twenty copies, to be distributed to "such of the competitors as had made the greatest progress" at the next Edinburgh competition. At the same time he suggested that awards should be made to pipers who appeared at the competition with the tunes they intended to play "wrote down or set to music by themselves". [HSS Sd. Bk. 4/1: 101, 2, 4].

Thus started the Highland Societies' initiative to encourage pipers to write music on the stave, through awards made at the annual Edinburgh competitions. Awards were advertised from 1806 to 1812, with a fresh initiative announced in 1815 to

"...facilitate the instruction of performers, and as a means of fixing and improving the music of the national instrument." [HSS 268, 26: 109-120].

The idea of "fixing and improving" the music was an enduring theme of the campaign. In 1825, for instance, the HSL's own manuscript collection, compiled by Angus MacArthur, was promoted as a means of fixing "the proper standard for each tune - for at present scarcely two pipers play exactly the same set of any piobrachd". [Letter

Gordon/Wedderburn 16/11/1825. HSL 268: 2]; and in 1835 Angus MacKay's proposed pibroch collection was advertised as "furnishing a fixed standard for future performers". [MacLellan J.A. 1966: 11]. The Societies were clearly anxious to preserve the music in an easily-accessible form, but were anxious also to preserve it in a standardised form which could be taught easily to learner pipers (particularly army pipers) with a minimum of complication. Music that was straightforward to learn and play, was also straightforward to judge. Significantly, it was Angus MacKay's 1838 Collection, the most rigorously systematic published, which set the trend for the coming century, and furnished the "fixed standard" which the Societies so anxiously sought.

It is clear, also, that the army came to lead the way in the use of staff notation. The first award was presented to the Edinburgh pipe maker, Donald MacDonald, (who was also Pipe Major of the Argyllshire militia), in 1806. On receiving the award he was advised to

"... continue his exertions in this way, and to instruct such other performers as should apply to him to be taught the method of setting to music the most approved piobrachs". [Cal Merc Aug 7, 1806].

Amongst his pupils were his own sons, (John, who received a notation award in 1808, and Donald, P/M of the 72nd Regiment, who compiled a tune collection in 1826), and possibly several army pipers including William Fisher, piper in the Kings Own Borderers, who was sent to MacDonald

in 1820 for the express purpose of learning "by note only". [Kilberry I: 12]. (Another army piper was sent all the way from Ireland to Edinburgh for instruction in 1821. [Boag 1975: 28]). The firmest evidence of the lead taken by the army in the use of staff notation, however, came in a letter from Charles Gordon, secretary of the HSS, to his counterpart in London in 1825:

"It is but very recently," stated Gordon, "that any other but military pipers could note music; those in the country learned their tunes by ear from some old piper who knew as little of music, scientifically, as themselves." [Correspondence 16/11/1825. HSL 268: Box 2].

The actual notation awards made during the Edinburgh competition are detailed in Table IV/(7). In all, 16 awards were made to 9 different individuals, the most substantial being the first of £5.5.0 to MacDonald in 1806, probably for a fairly sizeable collection. In light of future developments, the most significant awards were clearly those to MacDonald (1806) and Angus MacKay (1825), whose manuscripts and published collections together form the core of the modern piping repertory. The three awards to John Campbell, Nether Lorn (in 1816, '17 and '18) are also of interest, for it was he who brought the Campbell Canntaireachd to the competition in 1816, while Murdoch MacLean, the Glasgow pipe maker (awards in 1814 and 1818) offered to decipher it. [Dalyell 1849: 9, 10]. (Note that Campbell's awards were for "scientific" notation, showing that he was not merely rewarded for bringing the

Canntaireachd.) John MacLeod, a young pupil of Angus MacKay's, brought music in 1841 and 1844, and also a rather interesting testimonial note stating that ...

"he can write pipe music, and must therefore be allowed to possess a more correct knowledge of it than such as acquire the same by ear". [NLS Acc 7451, 19: File 3].

This is indeed an important reflection of the importance attached to staff notation, at least by the patrons of pipe music.

William MacKay, who gained notation awards between 1820 and 1823, was a champion piper who hailed from the North. He won the prize pipe in 1820, having competed regularly since 1806 as P/M of the Inverness-shire Militia. From 1820 until his death in November 1841 he acted as piper to the new-formed Celtic Society in Edinburgh, where he was furnished with a "suit of Royal tartan" and an annual salary of 3 guineas, and commemorated his appointment with a fine tune The Celtic Society's Quickstep. [R.C.S. I: 30; II: 13, 216, 247, 273, 299, 306].

William is best known for a collection of light music which he published shortly before his death in 1840, (The Complete Tutor for the Great Highland Bagpipe, comprising 100 quicksteps, reels, jigs, etc.). Although demonstrating a rather crude notation style this was a valuable collection in being only the second of its type (after MacDonald, 1828). On his death it was revised by Angus MacKay, who in 1843 further updated it and incorporated it into his own Piper's Assistant (with fresh

plates, 55 additional tunes, and much-improved prefatory matter). [Cannon 1980: 135, 6,9]. William's experiments with pibroch seem also to have been hampered by a certain crudeness of notation style. In 1820 he produced three tunes (A Ghlas Mheur, The Princes Salute, and Moladh Mairi), but was required to rewrite the latter two "marking the clef properly, and also the grace notes & C.". [Kilberry I: 51]. His choice of tunes was interesting, because these were in fact the three most popular tunes at the Edinburgh competition. (Appendix IV). It has to be said that these were also tunes which featured in Donald MacDonald's pibroch collection, published (most probably) in 1820: one wonders if William derived a certain degree of inspiration from this publication?

A question which has been of rather greater concern to piping historians, is what became of the manuscripts collected at the Edinburgh competition? Unfortunately it seems that very few were preserved, for on the testimony of Charles Gordon in 1825,

"... the very few pipers who were qualified to note the piobrachd, had generally but one copy of the tunes committed to writing, and which copy they declined to leave with the committee: althou' they promised to produce a transcript of tunes after the competition ... in nearly every instance the promises of the piper were made only to be forgotten."
[Correspondence. Gordon/Wedderburn 16/11/1825. HSL 268 Box 2].

A later transaction revealed that in 1833 the HSL had in its possession only its own manuscript of 30 tunes

(produced by Angus MacArthur), plus five additional sheets of pipe music, which, we must assume, represented the sum of the music collected in Edinburgh. [Letter Edmonstone/MacDonald 18/11/1833, HSL 268: 4].

In any case, the value of the scheme lay not in the actual manuscripts produced at the competition, but rather in the fact that the Societies fostered an environment of experimentation and enthusiasm for the new medium of staff notation, which was in time to produce the major collections of MacDonald, MacKay and others. It was the first step on the road to widespread acceptance of staff notation by the piping community.

(c) ANGUS MacARTHUR. The Highland Society of London
Manuscript, 1820.

Although the notation awards were bearing fruit, in London the Highland Society decided to seize the initiative and commission its own collection of pibroch. On 6th March 1819, Mr. Andrew Robertson proposed that John MacGregor (IV), the Society's piper, should be commissioned to write out a collection of tunes on

"a plan lately adopted for simplifying
the process of learning and teaching
bagpipe music." [HSL 268, 43: 2].

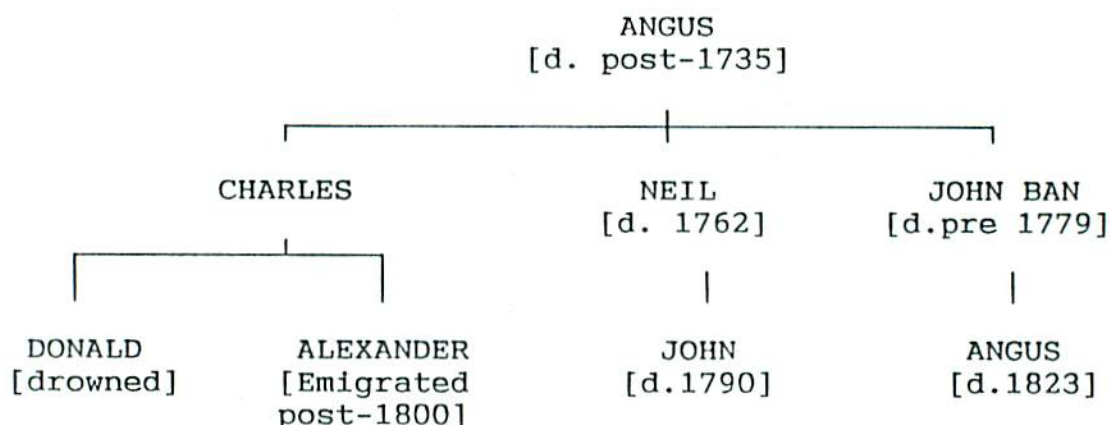
The "plan" alluded to might have been Donald MacDonald's Collection, which in July 1819 was "immediately to be published" [Kilberry I: 51], but was perhaps more likely to have been The Bagpipe Preceptor, a small pipe tutor produced by a member of the HSS in 1818 (discussed in Ch. III). This preceptor was of little value as a teaching tool, but did share with the Highland Society of London manuscript one exceptional characteristic in being written a fifth lower than any other pipe music collection. (Low A was written as Low D, etc.). The author of the Preceptor worked "in the hope that some abler hand will start up to improve upon this original attempt at reducing the study of the bagpipe to science" [Menzies 1818: 10], and it seems plausible that this was indeed the spur to the HSL's efforts. It would certainly explain why MacGregor adopted an unusual key, although in other respects the Preceptor was far too rudimentary to have influenced his

work.

John MacGregor was a versatile musician who played both Highland and Union pipes at the Society meetings (see Ch. III for further details), and who shortly before his death in 1822 gave a concert in Perth at which he played the pipes, flute and whistle. [Scots Mag. 10 (March 1822): 418]. This versatility would account for his familiarity with staff notation at a time when few pipers had knowledge of it. It was not to him, however, that the Society turned for their actual music, but rather to another piper resident in London, Angus MacArthur - "an eminent piper of the School formerly established in the Isle of Skye for the cultivation of bagpipe music." [HSL 268, 43: 6].

Angus was of the family of Skye pipers who occupied the lands of Hunglater in Trotternish by virtue of their office as hereditary pipers to MacDonald of Sleat. They were supposedly of a branch of the MacArthurs of Proaig in Islay, who were armourers and pipers to MacDonald of the Isles. [Whyte 1904: 114]. Of the family, we have definite knowledge of only three generations:

TABLE IV/(8) The MacARTHURS. Hereditary Pipers to the MacDonalds of Sleat



Sources: Note (9)

Angus MacArthur, the first recorded member ("a famous piper in his day") led the clan to battle at Sheriffmuir in 1715, and featured in the estate rentals as late as 1735. [MacDonald A & A III: 127; Sanger 1983: 14]. He had three sons, the eldest of whom, Charles, was reputedly a pupil of Patrick Og MacCrimmon's. [MacKay A. 1838: 11]. In 1726 Charles attended Sir Alexander MacDonald, 14th Chief, whilst a student in St. Andrews, (a period of extravagance and high-living which "taxed the professional capacity of Charles MacArthur to the very utmost". [MacDonald A. & A. II: 85]). Charles featured in the Sleat rentals in 1731, '33, '35 and '49. [Sanger 1983]. In 1735, for instance, the penny land of Hunglater was valued at 84 merks of silver duty, but Charles "being the Laird's piper", retained "three fourths of the haill rent and casualties". [SRO, GD 221/118/23, 9; MacDonald A & A III: 126]. He served three chiefs: Sir Alexander (d.

1746); the scholarly and popular Sir James (1741-1766) whom he elegized in the Lament For Sir James MacDonald of the Isles; and Alexander, 1st Lord MacDonald (d.1795). Pennant in 1772 described him as "quite master of his instrument", and was the first to record that the MacArthurs, like the MacCrimmons, operated a piping seminary. [Pennant 1774: 301]. Johnson and Boswell also heard the Laird's piper in 1773, playing "below stairs both at breakfast and dinner". [Boswell 1936 Edn.: 115]. The precise year of Charles' death is unknown. A subsidy of meal to "Charles MacArthur the piper" in 1778 might have referred to him, or to a younger member of the family. [SRO, GD 221/14/4]. In life he had the respect of his contemporaries such as the Uist bard John MacCodrum(7); in death his epitaph attested to "His fame as an honest man and remarkable piper". [Whyte 1904: 113].

Charles had two brothers. Neil was piper at Monkstadt House in 1735, where he earned a salary of £9.5.4, [SRO, GD 221/14/1(1)], and later joined Montgomerie's Highlanders, raised in 1757 by Colonel Archibald Montgomerie, brother-in-law of Sir Alexander MacDonald. He died in service with the regiment in Cuba in 1762. [SRO.C.C.8 (18/7/1767); Sanger 1986]. His son "professor" John acted as piper to the HSS in the 1780's.

John Ban, the second brother, was piper on the MacDonald barony of North Uist, where in 1745 he earned a salary of £33.6.8. [MacDonald A & A III: 127]. Later he returned to Kilmaluag in Skye, where his widow, Marian MacLean,

received meal allowances in 1779 and 1782. [SRO, GD 221/14/4].

John Ban's son was Angus, compiler of the HSL manuscript. He appears to have accompanied Alexander, 2nd Lord MacDonald, to London in 1796, where he stayed, for Lord MacDonald was content to run his estates from afar. [MacDonald A & A II: 102]. There he probably met his cousin Alexander (son of the celebrated Charles), who in 1800 unsuccessfully petitioned Lord MacDonald for the post of piper on the Sleat estate (and with it the ancient patrimony of Hunglater) [Sanger 1983: 16]; and also another relation, Charles MacArthur, who was at the time piper to the HSL. Angus himself played only intermittently for the HSL (in 1796, 1815 and 1816), but was involved in their plans to establish a piping college at Glenelg (possibly as assistant to Donald Ruadh MacCrimmon), for which service he was paid £5 in 1816. [HSL 268: 141, 196]. In February 1820 he received another payment of £10 from the Society, which was probably intended to heighten his enthusiasm for the notation project, by then well in hand. [HSL 268, 43: 6].

In March 1820 the Society commissioned John MacGregor to write out "24 original piobrachs ... from the information and subject to the approbation of Angus MacArthur and Mr. Andrew Robertson." Each piper was to receive half a guinea per tune [HSL 268, 43: 6]. In June a further 26 tunes were commissioned on the same terms, but receipts show that only 6 of them were actually written,

bringing the total to 30. [HSL 268, 43: 9]. These were initially collected in three volumes, two of 12 tunes, and one of 6, which were later rebound into the single volume which is now in the National Library of Scotland. [NLS MS 1679].

MacKay recorded that Angus MacArthur was "on his deathbed" when the manuscript was written [MacKay 1838: 12], (although in actual fact he was still alive in April 1822 when the Society gave him a £10 subsidy. [268, 27: 6/4/'22]). Angus communicated the tunes to John MacGregor by "whistling" them to him, which probably meant that he played them on the practice chanter. (The Gaelic Feadan can be a whistle or a chanter: Joseph MacDonald likewise spoke of "whistling" pipe tunes [1760: 24]). All the tunes were inspected by Andrew Robertson, the HSL member responsible for overseeing the project(8), and his initials are still to be found on 12 of the 30 tunes. A signed note by Robertson under Tune 21, The Bard's Lament, attests to MacArthur's reliability as an informant:

"This is the only pibroch in which there appeared the least uncertainty in Mr. McArthur's recollection. In all the others there was not the change of a single note in repeatedly whistling them and very seldom even of the time of the dotted crotchets."
[NLS Ms 1679: 21].

The extant receipts of payment to MacArthur and MacGregor prove that they did in fact write all the tunes: there has been some doubt cast on this, since a few of the tunes were written in a heavier pen than the others. [e.g.

PS 1925: ii; Campbell A. 1948: 11; Receipts HSL 268, 17: 1/7/1820, 4/7/'20, 29/8/'20]. The music is neat and legible, although to the modern piper difficult to read, being written in a lower key than usual. The notation style has a good deal in common with other pre-MacKay sources (particularly Donald MacDonald), being characterised by a greater number of gracenote permutations than found in MacKay. Aspects of MacArthur's notation are illustrated in Section 3 of this chapter. Finally, the manuscript shows an understandable bias towards MacArthur tunes, some of which were later popularised by Angus MacKay in his 1838 collection:

TABLE IV/(9) MacARTHUR COMPOSITIONS IN THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY OF LONDON MANUSCRIPT

By Charles MacArthur (Angus' Uncle)	No. 12.	"Murray of Abercairney's Salute"
	No. 23.	Sir James MacDonald's Lament" (1766).
By John MacArthur (Angus' cousin)	No. 10.	"The Highland Club" (c.1786). (e.g. The Highland Society of Scotland's Salute).
	No. 16.	"The Late Lord MacDonald's Lament" (for Alexander, 1st Lord MacDonad, d. 12 Sept. 1785).
By Angus MacArthur	No. 24.	"Lady MacDonald's Lament" (for Lady Elizabeth Diana, wife of the above, d.1789).
	No. 27.	"Lady Margaret MacDonald's Salute". (for Lady Margaret, wife of Sir Alexander, 14th Chief. She was aged 85 when visited by Johnson & Boswell in 1773).

Source: NLS MS 1679

Having spent 30 guineas in compiling the manuscript, the Society was naturally anxious to have it published. In this, however, it singularly failed to distinguish itself. First, in 1821, it wrote to the Scottish Society to see if any more manuscripts had been collected at the Edinburgh competition, and it seems likely that it was their intention to publish these along with the MacArthur manuscript. Nothing, however, came of this inquiry, nor indeed of a similar inquiry along the same lines in 1825. [Kilberry II: 3; HSL 268 Letter Gordon/Wedderburn 4/8/1821, Box 19; 6/11/1825, Box 2]. In March 1824 the manuscript was sent to John Gow, London music publisher, for an estimate of publishing costs, which he duly calculated as follows (each tune to start on a fresh plate):

79 Plates	27.13.0
Paper for 100 copies	7.15.0
Printing costs	7. 0.0
Title page (on pewter)	<u>1.10.0</u>
	£43.18.0

[HSL 268, 27: 6/3/'24; Letter Gow 3/5/'24. Box 2].

On receiving Gow's costing a committee of four members was set up "to procure the same to be printed". [268, 27: 7/5/'24]. This committee, however, proved to be of the particularly inactive variety. In February 1825 it failed to take advantage of an offer of a manuscript of light music (comprising 100 reels, jigs, quicksteps, etc.)

compiled by a Lochalsh piper, John MacRa from "the most celebrated pipers ... some of them now no more"(10), and in November 1825 it failed to procure joint funding from the HSS for the publication of the MacArthur manuscript. [Letter Gordon/Wedderburn 6/11/1825 268, Box 2]. With this set-back all plans for publication appear to have been abandoned.

The later history of the MacArthur manuscript is told in the section on Angus MacKay, for it was almost certainly MacKay who in 1833 travelled to London to inspect it; it was MacKay who indexed it; and it was from MacKay that the manuscript passed into the hands of Michael MacCarfrae, and ultimately to the National Library of Scotland where it now rests. Why, precisely, the HSL failed to publish the manuscript has never been made explicit. Instead, however, the Society later patronised Angus MacKay's collection of 1838, and in so doing helped to popularise MacKay's notation style, at the expense of the style evinced in the earlier manuscripts of Donald MacDonald and MacArthur. The MacArthur manuscript is in fact rarely used as a source for modern tune settings. Despite this, its value lies in the fact that it directly represents MacArthur playing style; and that, next to Donald MacDonald's collection, it is the earliest major collection of pibroch in staff notation.

(d) Donald MacDonald [c.1749-1840] A Collection of the
Ancient Martial Music of Caledonia (c.1820)

It was probably in 1820 that Donald MacDonald's Collection of the Ancient Martial Music reached the book stalls, the first functional collection of pibroch, with twenty three tunes written fully in staff notation, brief but pertinent playing instructions ("the cheeks must be kept firmly contracted"), two pages of scales, and, as a bonus, twelve of the most popular reels and jigs, also written for the bagpipe.

The collection was dedicated to the Highland Society of Scotland, with the caveat that "if, under their auspices it fails, it can be worthy of success under no other". The depth of MacDonald's gratitude to the Society is a bit surprising given that, beyond the notation award to him in 1806, its sum financial commitment to the project was an advance order for five copies (at a guinea each) in 1819. [Kilberry I: 51]. The venture, as J.G. Dalyell was to confirm in talking to MacDonald's publisher in 1839, was in fact undertaken entirely at his own expense, with no advance subscription, and no editorial help. [Dalyell Gen 353D: 12]. Although eventually running to four editions, initial sales were so slow that MacDonald was forced to abandon the idea of publishing a second volume, the proofs of which he offered to a friend in India with the sad story that "the publication of the first had almost ruined the donor." [Thomason 1900(a): 11].

The truth is that there was nothing wrong with the quality of Macdonald's work. It was simply that he was an innovator in a field with an exceptionally ill-defined market. Most pipers in 1820 could not read staff notation. The music-playing public at large could scarcely be expected to beguile the winter's evening playing pibrochs on the piano. To give MacDonald his due, he tried. The collection was advertised as "the Ancient Martial Music of Caledonia ... now also adapted to the pianoforte, violin and violincello", and his professed intention was to introduce "to the more fashionable instruments of the day those strains hitherto confined to the bagpipe". [1820: title page; 3]. A simple bass line was provided for each tune (paying scant regard to drone tonality), and the patronage of the HSS was prominently advertised, in the hope no doubt that such a "distinguished body" would bring with it a respectable readership. In the preface MacDonald pulled no punches. He spoke of his own "patriotic feelings"; he hinted that the pibroch repertory was nearing extinction (a point which we have already disproved); he ridiculed the use of canntaireachd by pipers "ignorant of music", (where he himself had probably learnt by this medium, and his father and old Neil MacLeod of Gesto were known to sit in his own home on the Castle Hill, exchanging tunes in the canntaireachd. [MacGregor A 1878: 464; 1879: 194-6]). He was not slow, either, in appealing to the patriotic and romantic sentiment of the day - these were, after all

"the strains that delighted and animated our warlike ancestors, and of which many had their origin in the most interesting circumstances of dangerous adventure, and romantic attachment". [1820: dedication].

He pushed hard to sell his collection, but the cause was a worthy one, and in so doing he was to set new standards in pipe music publishing.

X He actually didn't turn to notation until quite late in life (when he was in his ³⁰50's), in contrast to the other innovators, Joseph MacDonald and Angus MacKay, who were young men when they set about their work. He was born in about 1749 (11), one of several children of John MacDonald of Glenhinisdale in Skye, friend and retainer of the MacDonalds of Kingsborough. On the evidence of the Rev. Alexander MacGregor, who was a friend of the MacDonald family in the 1830's,

"Donald was a superior performer on the bagpipe, having acquired a correct knowledge of piobaireachd from the last of the MacArthurs". [MacGregor A. 1878: 463].

Which of the MacArthurs taught him is not specified, although he was a near-contemporary of both "professor" John and Angus. His notation style was certainly compatible with Angus MacArthur's, although he professed (in his light music collection at any rate) an eclectic approach, preferring to note the tunes "as played by himself". [MacDonald D. 1828: iii].

By the early 1800's Donald and his family were in Edinburgh, where he proved his piping ability by winning