

MacLean of Lochbuie's Lament [vide Reid P. 1826: 62]. An early reference to this family is to be discerned in a court case of 1759 when, on trial along with John MacLean of Lochbuy (for illegally imprisoning a neighbour), was "Donald MacLean his piper's son". [Scots Mag 21 (Aug 1759): 441]. The "Notices of Pipers" (on uncertain authority) states that in 1760 Lochbuy's piper was Hector MacLean [PT June 73], while the HSL accounts show that in 1789 Neil's father (unfortunately unnamed) held that post. [HSL 268, 34: 17/2/1789]. It is of interest that prior to his winning the prize pipe in 1783, Neil spent six weeks in the Spring with John MacGregor (II) receiving instruction [Trigge 1783: 3], which suggests that he was then a novice rather than a seasoned piper.

Neil first performed for the Society, resplendent in new uniform, in January 1785, and held this position for six years, with an initial salary of 12 guineas per annum, increasing to 15 guineas in 1787. [HS2 268, 21: 37]. Unfortunately he was unable to hold down full-time employment in London, and incurred several debts which the Society paid. (These eventually amounted to some £52, compounded by apothecary's charges of £14 incurred by illness in 1789. [268: 34]). Although in 1788 the committee members resolved "to use their interest individually to procure him some appointment", and provided him with a good reference [HSL 268, 21: 90, 92], their efforts were unavailing, and on being faced with a final bill of £15 in December 1790, they decided that MacLean had

been a source of excessive "trouble and expense to the Society", and dismissed him. [HSL 268, 21: 123].

The accounts suggest that after this MacLean, still a young man, emigrated to India [HSL 268, 34: 9/6/1791], but there is evidence that he was back in Mull by 1794. [SRO GD 174/1501]. Remarkably, in 1968 the old Tíree pipers Calum and John MacLean were familiar with Neil MacLean, his son Allan, and his grandson Hector, which attests to their enduring reputation as pipers. [SA 1968/250/A1]. Neil's son Allan in fact won the prize pipe in Edinburgh in 1810, whilst piper to Alexander MacLean of Ardgour, and there is a strong likelihood that Murdoch MacLean, the Glasgow pipe maker who offered to decipher the Campbell Canntaireachd in 1816, was also of the family. (In 1814, when he won the 4th prize in Edinburgh, he too was listed as piper to MacLean of Ardgour. [Competition Records]).

Charles MacArthur (1791-1805)

MacLean was replaced by Charles MacArthur, most probably the same man who, as piper to the Earl of Eglinton, had won the 2nd prize at the inaugural Falkirk contest in 1781. [E.E.C. 15/10/1781]. There was a well known family connection between the Montgomeries of Eglinton and the MacDonalds of Sleat(10), which suggests that Charles was of the famed Skye piping family discussed in Ch IV 3(c). (It is of interest that Neil MacArthur of

this family served with Colonel Archibald Montgomerie's 77th Highlanders in the 1750's [Sanger K. 1986: 52].) Seton Gordon collected a fascinating tale in Skye in the 1930's which featured Charles MacArthur "piper and valet to Lord Eglinton" in a typical feat of piping endurance (see Appendix XI), and this too might lend credence to the notion that Charles was of Skye origins.

Whilst piper to the HSL he was paid a guinea per performance (varying from between two to five performances per year), and demonstrated considerable guile in informing the Society that the instrument on which he played was old "and hardly fit for performance to company's so respectable". [HSL 268, 22: 84, 87]. This had the desired effect, and resulted in the purchase of a new bagpipe for him in 1803. [HSL 268, 24: 36; 34: 1803]. In 1801 the Society provided him with a rather sumptuous new uniform(11), but he retired in 1805, most probably to continue service with Eglinton in Ayrshire. [HSL 268, 34: 1805]. An unsigned notice in the Piping Times states that he participated in the famous tournament arranged by Archibald, 13th Earl of Eglinton, in 1839. [PT Feb. 1970].

John MacGregor (IV) (1805-1822)

MacArthur's successor was another of the Fortingall MacGregors, John IV (1782-1822), son of Peter, the Society's piper in 1782. John accompanied his father to London in 1799, and stayed on there to become piper to both the Society, and to the Duke of Sussex. [Scots Mag 10 (March 1822): 415]. Between 1800 and 1804 he accompanied Charles MacArthur at the monthly meetings, and took over as official piper in his own right in 1805. [HSL 268, 34: 1805].

He appears to have been something of an infant prodigy, winning the 3rd prize at the Edinburgh competition in 1792, when only 10 years old, and gaining the prize pipe in 1806. [Cal Merc 26/7/1792; 7/8/1806]. He was also an accomplished player of the flute and the union pipe (on which instrument he doubled at Society meetings) [Scots Mag (op. cit)], and demonstrated his familiarity with staff notation in helping to compile the Society's own pibroch collection in 1820. [Q.V. Ch.IV 3(c)]. Archibald Campbell records that he was P/M of the Loyal North Britons, (a distinct possibility given that this volunteer regiment was raised by the Society itself), and also that he had a pipe making business in London, a fact which has yet to be substantiated. [Campbell A. 1950(d): 12]. It is known, however, that his regular assistant at Society meetings between 1805 and 1815, Malcolm MacGregor(12), had an instrument-making business in London, and it is a

possibility that John was a partner in this business.

Malcolm MacGregor himself was a reputable player of both Union and Highland pipes (he had won the prize pipe in 1804), but is best remembered for his innovative pipe making, and his production in 1810 of a keyed Highland pipe chanter(13). In 1810 he took out a patent on a flute with improved keys, applicable also to "various other wind instruments", [Patent A.D. 1810: 3349], and at the 1810 piping competition unveiled his new keyed chanter, of which the judges thoroughly approved, but which the competitors viewed with grave suspicion. (J.G. Dalyell recorded that "viewing it only as a flagrant and needless innovation" they "clandestinely sacrificed the instrument to their malevolence" - in other words, they broke it. [Dalyell 1849:8, Gen 351D: 54, 69]). Nothing deterred by this, however, the HSL appointed Malcolm their official pipemaker (he made the competition prize pipe between 1812 and 1815), and instructed him to make the 1812 prize chanter "upon his improved plan". [HSL 268, 25: 121, 122, 147]. Malcolm attended the 1812 competition in person to instruct the lucky winner in its use, and was on this occasion presented with a 10 guinea award "for essential improvements made by him on the Great Highland pipe, and on the Union and Northumberland pipes". [Cal Merc 30/7/1812]. This shows that the Highland Societies took his innovations seriously, but his keyed chanter, like all subsequent experiments in the same vein, failed to gain widespread support.

John MacGregor remained principal piper to the HSL

until the end of 1821, when, on New Year's night, he met a premature death by falling down the stairs at the home of Mr. Wedderburn, the Society secretary. [Scots Mag 10 (March 1822): 415]. Much later, in 1841, his widow petitioned the Society for financial aid in her old age, and was provided with a 5 guinea annuity from 1841 to 1845. [HSL 268, 6: Petition 25/11/1541; 18: Receipts].

George Clarke (1816-1837)

Prior to MacGregor's death, the piping duties at the Society had already devolved in part on George Clarke, a native of Tongue in Sutherland [Celtic Monthly Oct 1910: 190], and former Pipe Major of the 71st Regiment. From 1816 he played regularly at all meetings, initially being paid a guinea per performance, and, from 1824, an annual salary of 10 guineas, in recognition of his "high personal character". [HSL 268, 27: 6/3/1824].

Clarke was possibly the most famous piper of his day, not because of his piping skills (which have gone utterly unremarked), but because at the Battle of Vimiera in August 1808 (in the Peninsular campaign), he played his regiment on to victory, despite having been wounded in the legs. His contemporary James Logan recounted that

"Finding himself disabled, he sat down on the ground, and, putting his pipes in order, called out 'weel lads, I am sorry I can gae nae further wi' you, but deel hae my saul if ye shall want music;' and struck up a favourite

warlike air, with the utmost unconcern for anything, but the unspeakable delight of sending his comrades to battle with the animating sound of the piobrachd". [Logan J. 1876 Edn. II: 282].

This incident has been the subject of poems, paintings, and many paragraphs of martial prose(14), and from the very outset gripped the imagination of the public at large.

The Highland Societies found in Clarke an object worthy of their plaudits: the HSS presented him with a special Robertson-made bagpipe in 1809(15); and the HSL employed him to play at their meetings from 1816, providing him with another new instrument (made by Malcolm MacGregor) in 1820 [268, 43: 4/3/1820], and presenting him in 1822 with a specially-cast medal in recognition of "his gallantry as a soldier ... his individual worth, and musical talents". [HSL 268, 27: 2/2/1822]. In 1810 he had in fact returned to Portugal with his regiment [Inverness Courier 28/9/1810], but by 1815 he was back in Scotland and anxious to compete at the piping competition of that year.

The competition committee, however, were swift to deter him (probably reluctant to see him bested in competition), and instead awarded him with a Gold medal. [HSL 268 26: 120; Dalyell 1849: 25, 6]. It was thus bedecked with medals and presentation pipes, that he was pictured in his prime, in a print circulated in 1816. [Fig. XI].

From 1829 Clarke was frequently helped out at HSL meetings by his successor John MacBeth, for his health had started to deteriorate [HSL 268 14: April 1829], and

Fig. XI

GEORGE CLARKE, "Hero of Vimiera". Piper to the HSL 1816-1836. Print (1816). [National Museums of Scotland]



THE HIGHLAND PIPER, GEORGE CLARKE.

He was presented by the Highland Society, with the above delineated silver pipes, upon which his Ensigned.

although his salary continued until 1837, it is likely that his duties in later years were negligible. There exists in the Society records a poignant letter dated 6th February 1838, in which he informs the Society that he has returned "the pips and flag together in a small box". Sadly, he states that "I am not able to go out of doors, my limbs is verry bad". [HSL 268, Box 14]. Thus ended Clarke's involvement with the Society. He was a legend in his own lifetime. He died, according to one record, in 1851, aged 67. [PT Aug 1968: 21].

Later Pipers to the HSL

Clarke's successor, John MacBeth, was another Sutherland man, who after his term of office with the HSL (1829-1842) became piper to the Duke of Sutherland at Dunrobin Castle. [HSL 268, 18: 7/8/1846]. He performed regularly for the Society from 1829, initially on a salary of 8 guineas per annum, rising to £40 in 1837 when he took on the dual function of piper and officer. [268, 18: Receipts]. He won the prize pipe in 1838, but is best remembered, on the testimony of Donald Cameron, as a jig player. ["Notices of Pipers", PT March 1970]. A Quickstep written by him for the Society (The Scottish Society of London) is contained in McLachlan's collection. [1854: 67]. He was officially succeeded in 1843 by Donald MacKay, piper to the Duke of Sussex, but continued to play

quite regularly at the anniversary dinners until 1850.

Donald MacKay (1794-1850) was the eldest son of John MacKay, Raasay, whose family is discussed in some depth in Ch. IV 3(e). Between approximately 1821 and 1829 he was piper to R.G. MacDonald of Clanranald, in which capacity he won the prize pipe in 1822 [Cal Merc 3/8/1822], and participated in the pageantry of George IV's visit to Edinburgh. [Scott J.E. 1965(c)]. He first performed for the HSL in early 1829, when he was voted a 5 guinea gratuity in recognition of his "eminent professional abilities". [HSL 265, 14: 2/5/1829]. From this time he accompanied Clarke and MacBeth regularly, being listed, from March 1830, as piper to the Duke of Sussex at Kensington Palace. [268, 14: 22/3/1830]. Whilst in London he started making pipes, and received the commission for the Edinburgh prize pipe in 1841 and 1844. [HSL 268, 18: Receipts]. (J.G. Dalrymple examined the 1844 set, "made of black ebony mounted with ivory" [Dalrymple Gen 379D: 14, 15]). He died suddenly in 1850, to be succeeded between that time and 1854 by his brother Angus, then piper to the Queen. [Q.V. Ch.IV 3(e)].

The last and longest-lived piper to the Society (from 1855 to 1891) was P/M William Ross of the 42nd Highlanders who in 1855 had also been appointed Queen's piper. Details of his involvement strictly fall outwith the scope of this work, but it might be noted that in April 1874 the Society made a £5 donation towards the 2nd edition of his pipe music collection, which Ross duly acknowledged by

including his own tune, The Highland Society of London's Salute in the edition, ("dedicated to the Highland Society of London to whose encouragement and assistance the author is greatly indebted ..."). [HSL 268, 28: 106; Cannon 1980: 148]. The Society also provided a university bursary for his son in 1889 and 1890, and on his death in July 1891, wrote a letter of condolence to his widow praising the "faithful and conscientious manner in which he discharged his duties". [HSL 268, 30: 173, 273; 38: 72]. With Ross' death the permanent post of piper to the Society was abolished.

2. The Highland Society of Scotland (1784-1833)

Table III/2

Although the HSS did employ a piper to play at their meetings, on the whole they took this side of their activities much less seriously than did the HSL. Their first piper, in fact, was the most accomplished of all: he was John MacArthur of the Sleat piping family (his genealogy is discussed in Ch.IV.3(d)), who at the time was a grocer in Buccleuch St., Edinburgh. [E.E.C. 20/20/1783]. He bore the nickname "Professor", presumably in allusion to his fame as a teacher, and was described in contemporary accounts as "The only surviving professor of the ancient college of Dunvegan", which suggests that he was MacCrimmon trained. [E.E.C. 27/10/1783].

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Culloden, but he unfortunately died soon after his appointment in 1793. [HSS Sd. Bk. II: 139, 177, 210, 288].

(The Society provided his widow with a £4 annuity until 1823.(16)). His successor was William Henderson, whose chief recommendation was that he had been piper to the Lord President of the Court of Session, but he proved so inept that the Society was "ashamed to allow him to exhibit or play as the Society's piper", and he was dismissed in 1796. [HSS Sd. Bk. II: 327, 333; III: 81, 230]. Finally, with the appointment of Donald MacLean, a Kintyre man, in 1798, the Society found a suitable candidate for the job. MacLean had won the second prize in 1795, but thereafter performed only "exhibition tunes" on behalf of the Society. He held the post for 35 years, being paid £10 p.a. throughout, but his duties were not arduous, involving at most one or two performances per year. He finally retired in 1832 (aged 77), with a £10 annuity which he drew until his death in 1837. [HSS Sd. Bk. XII: 244; XV: 29]. With him went the Society's last concession to its original cultural trappings.

Table III/2

PIPERS TO THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND

	Years	Salary	Other Outlay
John MacArthur	1784-1791	£5 pa until 1786 £10 pa 1786-91	Dress - Unspecified Sum
Ronald MacDonald	1792-1793	£10 pa	Dress £13-4-6 Funeral £5-0-0
William Henderson	1794-1796	£10 pa	-
Donald MacLean	1798-1833	£10 pa	Dress - Unspecified Sum Sundries - £13-8-0

Source: HSS Sederunt Books I-V.

(1) John Macdonald (c.1721-1805) had been with the 42nd at Ticonderoga in 1758 (Cal Merc 16/7/1801), and in 1781 piped at the anniversary meeting of the Society of Antiquaries in Edinburgh. [Dalyell Gen 378D: 23]. A possible descendant of his was Roderick Macdonald, piper to Glenarry in the 1830s, who composed Mrs. Macdonnell of Glenarry's Lament. Glenarry recorded in 1815 that his present piper was "... two and twentieth in a direct male line who have piped for my family" [HSL 268, 26: 141-6].

(2) John Bruce, although by repute MacCrimmon trained [Orme 1979: 37-40], was clearly not an outstanding piper: he competed unsuccessfully in Edinburgh between 1818 and 1835, and even Scott [vide Lockhart 1842: 411], recognised his deficiencies in this respect. His elder brother Alexander, however, won the second prize in Edinburgh in 1807, and had 3 sons, all successful estate pipers, who emigrated to Australia in the 1850s. [Orme, op.cit.] John Bruce in 1832 was piper on the U.K. Steamship [Comp'n records], and died in rather indigent circumstances in 1847. [Inv. Courier 1/4/1848].

(3) Ranald Macdonald of Staffa (d. 1838) inherited Ulva and other lands in Mull in 1800. [Macdonald A. & A. III: 295]. He judged regularly at the Edinburgh competitions (1822-1835), and was Honorary Secretary of the Society from 1813-1835 [Ramsay 1879: 515].

(4) Archibald MacArthur is known to have been a pupil of Donald Ruadh MacCrimmon's [Campbell 1815(a): 9], and in turn maintained a "seminary" in Ulva. [Gordon S. 1923: 110; McCormick J. 1923: 46-8]. There has been speculation as to his relationship, if any, with the Sleat MacArthurs in Skye. [vide Gray W. 1973: 13].

(5) John Campbell's grandfather, Donald, served the Campbells of Carwhin at Armaddy House near Oban, and was by repute a MacCrimmon pupil. [MacKay 1838: 13]. He was succeeded by his son Colin Mor, and in turn by his son Donald (John's brother). [Glasgow Herald 12/9/1834]. In 1782 John Campbell of Carwhin inherited the title and estates of Breadalbane. [Campbell 1871: 133-8].

(6) See Price [1984: 5] for a discussion of Gaelic-speaking parishes in the early 19th century.

(7) Known pupils of Donald Ruadh MacCrimmon were:
 - Archibald MacArthur from Ulva [Campbell 1815(a): 9].
 - Alexander MacArthur (son of Donald Ruadh's own

- teacher, Charles MacArthur). [Sanger K. 1983: 16].
- Alexander Bruce from Glenelg. [Campbell 1815(a): 62.
 - (Possibly also Hector Johnson, piper to MacLean of Coll. Gordon S. 1923: 107]).

(8) Irish Pipers To The HSL

PIPER	YEARS	PUBLICATIONS
James Murphy	1788, 89, 1794-1802	<u>Collection of Irish Airs and Jiggs (c.1810)</u>
Dennis Courtney	1788-1794	
James Macdonnell	1793, 1798	
Fitzmaurice	1803-1806	<u>Fitzmaurice's New Collection of Irish Tunes (c.1805)</u> <u>Irish Tunes By Mr. Fitzmaurice (c.1809).</u>
P. O'Farrell	1804-9, 1822	<u>Collection of National Irish Music (1804)</u> <u>Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes (nd)</u>
John & Malcolm MacGregor	1810-1821	

Sources: HSL 268: Minute Books 16, 17, 25, 26
HSL 268: Accounts Book 34
Cannon [1980: 81-91]

- (9) This cognomen derived from the fact that he "wanted the whole third finger of the upper hand ... he used the little finger instead". [MacKay 1838: 9].
- (10) Margaret Montgomerie, sister of Colonel Archibald Montgomerie of Eglinton (1726-1796) was married to Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat [DNB- Achd. Montgomerie; MacDonald A & A II: 85]. Another sister (Christian) was married to James Murray of Abercairney.
"This connection produced a friendship and many reciprocal visits, and Abercairney ... had MacArthur, his brother-in-law's piper, a frequent guest at his own seat". [MacKay 1838. Hist. Notes: 9].
Note that another piper at Eglinton Castle in 1810 was John Murphy, Union piper to the HSL. [vide Cannon 1980: 90].

- (11) MacArthur's uniform: "Superfine scarlet for jacket and waist^{ct}, superfine green cloth for cuffs and collar, platted buttons with thistle and crown, chain plated shoulder wings, silver lace for jacket ..." etc. £8-8. [268, 16: 8/6/1801]. Also (1797), "bonnet dressed up and feathered in the handsomest manner". [268 34: 1797].
- (12) Malcolm MacGregor, too, might have been of the Fortingall family, although there is no positive proof of this. Between 1802 and 1804 at the competition he was "from Glasgow" [Records].
- (13) This was most likely of similar design to Henry Starck's Brien Boru pipes, with keys for C and F natural, and extending the range above and below the normal gamut. [vide Starck 1908; Dalyell Gen 351D: 69]. Specimen's of MacGregor's union pipes are in the Edinburgh University collection of Historic Musical Instruments. [Cheape 1983(a): 8, 12, 13].
- (14) e.g. Keltie 1879 II: 490; Celtic Monthly 15: 197; Manson 1901: 129; MacKay Scobie 1909(b): 32; Malcolm 1927: 114. The military artist, Skeoch Cumming, made a painting of the event c. 1897 [PT Aug 1968: 21]. A poem "The Highland Piper's Song" is to be found in NLS [MS 298; folio 124].
- (15) This instrument was presented to Clarke by the Marquis of Huntly at the anniversary dinner of the HSL, June 1809. [HSS Sd. Bk. 4/2: 342, 515, 522, 549, 556, 564; HSL 268, 25: 63-66].
- (16) Sources: HSS Sd. Bks. II-VII.

The following pages examine the music played at the Edinburgh competition, and the music set on paper by the pioneer notators of pipe music prior to 1840. The Highland Societies were influential in both respects: they determined the musical format of the competitions; and they actively encouraged pipe music notation through awards disbursed at the competition, and through financial involvement in certain of the early collections.

The music at the Edinburgh competitions was unequivocally pibroch (Ceòl Mòr). When the competition was inaugurated in the 1780s this was quite natural, since beyond pibroch, the pipe repertory consisted of little more than song airs and dance tunes. From the late eighteenth century, however, a new trend in pipe music was discernable, initially involving the composition of quicksteps for military purposes (in other words, marching music), and from the 1820s, a new style of technically demanding competition music based on the Ceòl Beag format of the March, the Strathspey and the Reel. This development was coeval with the upsurge in popularity of Highland Games in which professional pipers competed for a range of awards in a range of music categories, and

doubtless was associated with the need for a varied yet demanding repertoire.

Throughout such developments the Edinburgh competition stuck to a tried and tested formula of pibroch, interspersed with Highland dances. In 1832, in fact, the HSS did moot the possibility of introducing a Strathspey and Reel competition in Edinburgh, but this was shelved, partly on the grounds of unfavourable competitor response. Mr. MacDonald of Dalness, who prepared a report on the proposal, had this to say of the pipers' reaction to Strathspey and Reel playing:

"It was a branch of his art which the Highland piper viewed with feelings approaching to contempt, accompanied with a strong prejudice against it from a belief that the practice of it was incompatible with anything like perfection in the nobler and more important strains with which he is wont to salute his chief and his friends, or to summon his Countrymen to battle. The committee are of opinion that this is a unfounded prejudice, and ... are satisfied that the occasional practice of reel and Strathspey Musick does give an ease and freedom to the fingering in Pibrochs, which the performer will in vain seek to acquire by any other means of equal facility." [Dalness Report. HSSPMB: 95-101].

This was indeed important testimony to the regard in which pibroch was held by pipers in the early nineteenth century. Unfortunately, as the century progressed the new competition music of the March, Strathspey and Reel came to supersede pibroch to the extent that in the early 1900s there was a genuine fear for its survival. This spurred the creation of the Piobaireachd Society in 1902 to counter

the threat, and this body has undoubtedly done much to preserve the art in its present healthy state. [Campbell G. 1944].

Both Highland Societies (and in particular the London Society) keenly supported efforts to set pipe music on the stave. Their concern was in part cultural (they were anxious to preserve the pibroch repertory as fully as possible), and in part practical (they were anxious to promote a medium by which the piper, and in particular the army piper, could be taught quickly and effectively). The extent of their influence is to be discerned in the number of early collections dedicated to the Societies (or leading members of the societies):

TABLE IV/1 Collections Dedicated to the Highland Societies

			DEDICATION
1784	Rev. Patrick MacDonald	<u>Collection of Highland Vocal Airs</u>	HSL
1803	Joseph MacDonald	<u>Compleat Theory</u>	Sir John MacGregor Murray
1816	Simon Fraser of Knockie	<u>Airs and Melodies</u>	HSS
1818	Archibald (?) Menzies	<u>The Bagpipe Perceptor</u>	Sir John MacGregor Murray
c.1820	Donald MacDonald	<u>Collection of Ancient Martial Music</u>	HSS
1828	Neil MacLeod of Gesto	<u>Collection of Piobaireachd</u>	HSL
1838	Angus MacKay	<u>Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd</u>	HSL

The Societies were undoubtedly aware of the fact that the old clan society in which pibroch had formerly been nurtured was defunct. The notion of a long and testing apprenticeship with a pibroch master, followed by a lifetime of study and performance in the service of a chief or patron, was long gone. The piper now held a functional position on the estate or in the army, with part-time piping duties, and limited time to dedicate to his art. The piper's apprenticeship probably amounted at best to the sort of six week stint which Neil MacLean had with John MacGregor in the Spring of 1783. [Trigge 1783: 3]. Many rued this state of affairs, and its detrimental effect on the art of piping. In 1838, for instance, Angus MacKay remarked that

"It was formerly the practice for gentlemen to send their pipers for instruction to the celebrated masters, paying the cost of their board and tuition; but the performers now are chiefly educated at their own expense, which induces them to attempt the accomplishment of much in as short a time as possible; hence they play incorrectly ... " [MacKay 1838: 22].

Pibroch in the old society had been taught in part through example (by performance on practice chanter and bagpipe), in part through a rigorously structured system of singing tunes, termed Canntaireachd. This was a system of non-lexical vocables wherein particular combinations of vowel sounds and consonants represented specific notes and gracing formulae. [Chambers C. 1980; Grant J.P. 1920]. The system was only effective where singer and listener

alike understood the same canntaireachd (and there are indications of familial and regional diversity), and where the canntaireachd was actually performed by singing. When written down the system had two major failings: the precise rhythmic grouping of notes was obscured; and the pitch of certain notes was ambiguous.

Two major written collections of canntaireachd have survived to the present. Both were written during the period under study, but were essentially anachronistic in representing an ageing medium which was rapidly being superseded by the use of staff notation. The major collection, known now as the Campbell Canntaireachd, was produced by a family of Campbells who acted as pipers to the Campbells of Carwhin in Nether Lorn. The manuscript is in two volumes, the first of which is dated 1797, and contains 168 tunes in total (about 60 of which are otherwise unknown). [NLS MS 3714, 5]. There has been some debate as to the precise provenance and history of these volumes, but this need not concern us here. It is clear that a further volume (now lost) was produced at the 1816 piping competition by John Campbell of the Nether Lorn family (then piper to Walter Campbell of Islay), and was bought by Sir John MacGregor Murray. [Bartholomew c.1909; Campbell A 1948: 11; 1961(1): v; Kilberry I: 44]. It had first been examined by the music committee of the HSS, who found that the contents resembled a "written narrative, in an unknown language, nor bearing any resemblance to Gaelic". It was to them "utterly unintelligible".

[Dalyell 1849: 9]. A Glasgow pipe maker, Murdoch MacLean, offered to decipher the manuscript for the committee, but his offer was declined. [Dalyell, *ibid.*]. J.G. Dalyell, an active member of the committee, demonstrated in his notebooks that he himself was unsure of the precise nature of the contents, but he was curious, and in the 1840s attempted to trace the volumes through John Campbell's brothers (on information supplied to him by Angus MacKay). [Dalyell Gen 350D: 35; 353D: 32; 374D: 19; 1849: 9,10]. In this, unfortunately, he was unsuccessful, and the volumes remained hidden from the public view until recovered by Sheriff John Bartholomew in 1909, from a descendant of the Campbell family. [Bartholomew c.1909]. It is only in the present century that these volumes, through the attention paid to them by the Piobaireachd Society, can be said to have had any influence on playing style and repertoire amongst pipers at large.

The other collection of canntaireachd involved 20 tunes "as verbally taught by the McCrummen pipers in the Isle of Skye to their apprentices", published by Captain Neil MacLeod of Gesto in 1828. [For a detailed appraisal of this work see Cannon n.d.]. MacLeod of Gesto was a member of the HSS, and a well known piping enthusiast of moderately eccentric habits. He was of a Skye family, and had derived his music directly from the canntaireachd of Iain Dubh MacCrimmon. In May 1828 the HSL agreed to subsidise his collection to the tune of 10 guineas, but on being presented with the finished product early in 1829

they appear to have been somewhat taken aback, and enquired of Charles Gordon, the Secretary of the HSS,

"how far the work may be considered as a means of cultivating the knowledge of pipe music, or of enabling a piper without a previous acquaintance with the tunes to play the piobaireachds". [HSL 268, 27: 7/2/1829. See also 27: 3/5/28; 14: 2/5/29; HSS Sd. Bk 10: 28, 374].

MacLeod in the end got his money, but the volume itself seems to have made little impact. Certainly, it was not what the HSL was looking for: it needed an easy and practical teaching medium for the untutored player, and for this it turned to staff notation.

The four notated collections examined in this chapter all bear the hallmark of the Highland Societies' involvement in some form or other - from their rescuing from India of Joseph MacDonald's 1760 treatise, (published in 1803), to their commissioning of Angus MacArthur's collection (1820), to their patronage of the works of Donald MacDonald and Angus MacKay (1820 and 1838). If these works had not been produced, not only would our knowledge of pibroch have been the lesser, but the actual pibroch repertory would have been considerably diminished.

In all, the Highland Societies fostered a climate of enthusiasm for staff notation, which spread beyond the works in which they were directly involved, and promoted a widespread use of the medium.

Enthusiasm on the part of the Societies, however, was not entirely sufficient, and to this day pibroch and staff