

**Tunes Played at
Piobaireachd Society of Central Pennsylvania
Meetings**

A Son's Salute to His Parents

- Thompson McConnell (February 3, 2025) – Urlar, Var 1 S&D, Var 2
- Thompson McConnell (March 10, 2025)

The Battle of Auldearn (Setting #1)

- Karen Helm (March 4, 2006)
- Scot Walker (March 4, 2006) – Urlar
- June Hanley (March 29, 2008)

The Battle of the Pass of Crieff

- Dan Lyden (April 14, 2018)

Beloved Scotland

- Adam Green (June 18, 2006)
- Karen Helm (November 3, 2007) – Urlar
- Robert Mitchell (March 11, 2024)

The Bicker

- Tyler Destremps (February 3, 2025) - Urlar

The Big Spree

- Thompson McConnell (January 13, 2018)

The Boat Tune

- Isaac Fisher (January 27, 2019)
- Isaac Fisher (March 31, 2019)
- Isaac Fisher (January 26, 2020)

Cabar Feidh Gu Brath

- Michael Philbin (March 29, 2008)
- Thompson McConnell (April 14, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (February 24, 2019)

Catherine's Lament

- Rory McConnell (December 2, 2018)

The Cave of Gold

- Thompson McConnell (November 3, 2007)
- Thompson McConnell (March 29, 2008)
- Thompson McConnell (November 30, 2008)
- Thompson McConnell (March 6, 2010)
- Thompson McConnell (February 24, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (September 9, 2024)

Chisholm's Salute

- Scot Walker (March 4, 2006) – Urlar

Ceol Na Mara (Song of the Sea)

- Laura Neville (March 4, 2018)

Clan Campbell's Gathering

- Daniel Emery (December 2, 2006)
- Karen Helm (November 3, 2007)
- Karen Helm (December 1, 2007)
- Karen Helm (February 23, 2008)
- Ken Campbell (March 4, 2018)
- Daniel Emery (April 8, 2018)

The Clan MacNab's Salute

- David Bailiff (December 1, 2007)

Colin MacRae of Invereenat's Lament

- Ken Campbell (January 21, 2006) – Urlar & Variations I & II
- Marty McKeon (November 3, 2007)
- Tom Miller (November 30, 2008)
- Gustav Person (January 13, 2018)
- Gustav Person (March 4, 2018)
- Gustav Person (March 31, 2019)

The Company's Lament

- Patrick Regan (December 2, 2006)

Corrienessan's Salute

- Tom Miller (January 3, 2009) – Urlar
- Matt Davis (April 14, 2018)
- Rory McConnell (December 2, 2018)
- Rory McConnell (January 27, 2019)
- Rory McConnell (February 24, 2019)

Cronan Corrievrechan (The Corrievchan Lullaby)

- Karen Helm (December 1, 2007)

The Desperate Battle

- Thompson McConnell (March 4, 2006)
- Scot Walker (March 4, 2006) – Urlar
- Thompson McConnell (November 4, 2006)
- John Bottomley (January 19, 2008)
- Thompson McConnell (January 3, 2009)
- Thompson McConnell (February 4, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (February 24, 2019)
- Thompson McConnell (January 26, 2020)
- Thompson McConnell (May 5, 2025) – Variations
- Thompson McConnell (January 18, 2026)

Duncan MacRae of Kintail's Lament

- Stuart Erwin (March 29, 2008)
- Megan Amoss (December 29, 2019)
- Megan Amoss (May 5, 2025) – Urlar

The Earl of Seaforth's Salute

- Jason Weibel (March 10, 2025)

Farewell to the Laird of Islay

- Thompson McConnell (February 5, 2024)
- Thompson McConnell (July 8, 2024) – Ground

The Field of Gold

- Marty McKeon (January 13, 2018)
- Marty McKeon (February 4, 2018)
- Sean Reidy (January 27, 2019)
- Shawn Woll (May 13, 2024) – Ground & Variation 1

The Flame of Wrath for Squinting Patrick

- Joshua Dye (February 24, 2018)

Glengarry's Lament, Setting No. 1

- Thomas Thomson (November 5, 2005)
- Thomas Thomson (January 21, 2006) – Urlar
- Thomas Thomson (April 1, 2006) – Urlar
- Thomas Thomson (June 18, 2006) – Urlar
- Marty McKeon (November 4, 2006)
- Thompson McConnell (January 3, 2009)
- Thompson McConnell (January 13, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (October 7, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (December 29, 2019)
- Thompson McConnell (May 5, 2025)

Glengarry's March (Cill Chriosd)

- Thompson McConnell (February 23, 2008)
- Thompson McConnell (October 7, 2018)

The Glen is Mine

- Daniel Emery (April 8, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (March 11, 2024)
- Rory McConnell (May 13, 2024) – Urlar
- Rebecca Connor (September 9, 2024) – Urlar and first 3 variations

Hector MacLean's Warning

- Scot Walker (March 4, 2006)
- Karen Helm (April 1, 2006)

Hector Roy MacLean's Lament

- Derek Midgley (April 14, 2018)

Hiharintra Hiotra Dreha

- David Hester (December 2, 2018)

His Father's Lament for Donald MacKenzie

- Thompson McConnell (January 21, 2006)
- Thompson McConnell (January 13, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (March 31, 2019)
- Thompson McConnell (July 8, 2024)

Isabel MacKay

- Jim Diener (January 19, 2008) – Urlar

The King's Taxes

- Donald Lindsay (February 23, 2008)

Lady Doyle's Salute

- Thompson McConnell (December 2, 2018)

Lachlann MacNeill Campbell of Kintarbert's Fancy

- Thompson McConnell (January 27, 2019)

Lament for Alasdair Dearg MacDonnel of Glengarry

- David Laughlin (April 1, 2006)
- Wade Reeser (April 1, 2006)
- Andrew McGowan (February 23, 2008)
- Dan Emery (October 7, 2018)
- Marty McKeon (February 24, 2019)
- Marty McKeon (March 31, 2019)

Lament for Alan, My Son

- Marian Beck (January 13, 2018)

Lament for Captain MacDougall

- Tyler Destremps (July 8, 2024) - Ground

Lament for the Children

- John Bottomley (January 19, 2008)

Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay

- Thompson McConnell (April 1, 2006)
- Liz Cherry (March 29, 2008)

Lament for Donald of Laggan

- Marty McKeon (December 1, 2007) – Urlar
- Marty McKeon (February 23, 2008)
- Marty McKeon (March 29, 2008)
- Joshua Dye (November 30, 2008)
- Marty McKeon (January 3, 2009)
- Marty McKeon (March 6, 2010)
- Marty McKeon (April 8, 2018)
- Marty McKeon (February 5, 2024)
- Rebecca Connor (May 13, 2024)

Lament for MacDonald of Kinlochmoidart #1

- Jean Gould (March 4, 2018)
- Geoff Douglas (November 11, 2024)

Lament for Mary MacLeod

- Tom Miller (January 3, 2009) - Urlar
- Marty McKeon (January 3, 2009)
- Megan Amoss (January 18, 2026)

Lament for the Old Sword

- Rhys Weibel (May 13, 2024)– Urlar
- Megan Amoss (May 5, 2025)

Lament for the Only Son

- Tom Miller (January 3, 2009) – Urlar, Thumb, Thumb Doubling

Lament for Red Hector of the Battles

- Megan Amoss (January 18, 2026)

Lament for Ronald MacDonald of Morar

- Thompson McConnell (February 3, 2025) - Urlar

Lament for the Viscount of Dundee

- David Bailiff (January 21, 2006)

The Little Spree

- Andrew Chalfoun (March 29, 2008) – Urlar
- Marty McKeon (March 4, 2018)
- Marty McKeon (December 2, 2018)

Lord Lovat's Lament

- Thompson McConnell (January 18, 2026) – Kilberry Setting

MacCrimmon Will Never Return

- Daniel Emery (4/8/2018)

MacDougall's Gathering

- Karen Helm (January 21, 2006) – Urlar & Variations I & II
- Karen Helm (April 1, 2006)

The MacLean's March

- Derek Midgley (April 14, 2018) – Urlar & Variation 1 Singling & Doubling from both the Angus MacKay Setting & MacArthur-MacGregor Setting
- Thompson McConnell (November 11, 2024) – Angus MacKay Setting
- Thompson McConnell (February 3, 2025) – Angus MacKay Setting – Urlar, Variation 1 (Singling and Doubling)
- Thompson McConnell (May 5, 2025) – Angus MacKay Setting

MacFarlane's Gathering

- Beth Bandy (January 19, 2008)

The MacGregor's Salute

- Kevin O'Brien (January 27, 2019)

Mackintosh's Banner

- Thompson McConnell (November 5, 2005)
- Gustav Person (January 13, 2018)
- Gustav Person (April 8, 2018)
- Dan Emery (October 7, 2018)

MacKenzie of Gairloch's Lament

- Kevin O'Brien (March 31, 2019)

Mackintosh's Lament

- Thompson McConnell (December 2, 2006)
- Thompson McConnell (December 2, 2018)
- Rory McConnell (December 29, 2019)

The MacLeod's Salute (Rowing Piobaireachd)

- John Bottomley (March 6, 2010) – Donald MacDonald Setting
- Ben McClamrock (February 24, 2018)
- Kevin O'Brien (January 26, 2020)

MacNeill of Barra's March

- Kevin O'Brien (December 2, 2018)

The Marquis of Argyll's Salute

- Thompson McConnell (June 18, 2006)
- Thompson McConnell (January 3, 2009)
- Thompson McConnell (March 4, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (January 26, 2020)

The Massacre of Glencoe

- Joshua Dye (January 21, 2006) – Urlar
- Joshua Dye (November 4, 2006)
- Thompson McConnell (November 3, 2007) – Urlar
- John Bottomley (March 6, 2010) – Angus MacKay Setting
- Thompson McConnell (February 4, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (January 18, 2026) – Jimmy McIntosh/Angus MacKay Setting

The Munro's Salute

- Karen Helm (December 2, 2006)
- Thompson McConnell (December 1, 2007)
- Thompson McConnell (January 13, 2018)
- Rory McConnell (February 24, 2019)

Nameless – Hiharin odin hiharin dro

- Thompson McConnell (May 13, 2024)
- Thompson McConnell (January 18, 2026)

The Old Woman's Lullaby

- Karen Helm (January 19, 2008)
- Marty McKeon (November 30, 2008)
- Marty McKeon (March 11, 2024)

The Pretty Dirk

- Adam Schaller (June 18, 2006) – Urlar

Rory McLoude's Lament

- Thompson McConnell (March 4, 2018)
- Thompson McConnell (January 27, 2019) – Ground, Var. I, Var. II

Sir James MacDonald of the Isle's Salute

- Brandon Bryce (March 31, 2019)

Struan Robertson's Lament

- Andrew Chalfoun (November 3, 2007)
- Andrew Chalfoun (December 1, 2007)

Too Long in this Condition

- Wade Reeser (November 5, 2005)
- Karen Helm (March 29, 2008)
- Jim Diener (November 30, 2008) – Urlar
- EJ Jones (September 9, 2024) – Urlar
- Rebecca Connor (March 10, 2025) – Urlar and 1st variation

Tulloch Ard (The MacKenzie's Gathering or March)

- Dave McCrabb (January 19, 2008)

Tune Histories

*Sources of the Tune Histories vary for each tune, however, a majority of the tune histories provided here are taken from “Binneas is Borerraig – The Complete Collection” edited by Roderick Ross or “Historic, Biographic, and Legendary Notes to the Tunes” by Fionn.

A Son’s Salute to His Parents

This is a modern piobaireachd written by Pipe Major Donald MacLeod and can be found in his Donald MacLeod’s Collection of Piobaireachd Book 1. In his editorial notes, Donald MacLeod writes this, “A tribute to my parents and through them, to all parents who, even beyond the bounds of parental duty, made many sacrifices on the altar of the family.”

The Battle of Auldearn

Setting No. 1 appears in the Campbell Canntaireachd without a name. A different setting, No. 2, is the version played by Alexander Cameron, J. MacDougall Gillies, and other pipers of their time.

The Battle of Auldearn in 1645 which was fought at Auldearn, near Nairn, was won by Montrose against superior numbers fighting the Covenanters’ cause. It was a typically well planned and executed action by Montrose with huge losses among the Covenanters who were commanded by Sir John Hurry. Alasdair MacDonald was heavily involved on the Montrose’s side while the Campbells of Lawers were with the Covenanters.

The Battle of the Pass of Crieff

This tune is in the manuscripts of Angus MacKay, John MacKay, and Reid, and is in the Campbell Canntaireachd. The Battle of the Pass of Crieff was not a battle but simply a skirmish between excisemen supported by the army and a gang of freebooters about 1730. The other name for the tune is The Laird of Coll’s Barge and this is a more suitable name since the tune is a rowing tune or “iorram”. This suggests that it was composed by one of the Rankins, pipers to the MacLean Lairds of Coll, an island in the Inner Hebrides. Alex Haddow laments the term “barge” which is quite misleading in describing a very fast and maneuverable “birlinn” or galley. These birlinns were propelled by long oars or sweeps with three men on each oar, one pushing and two pulling. The bow oar was the “stroke”, the one who sets the timing and this timing, which is of paramount importance, would be helped by the piper or by all the oarsmen singing.

Beloved Scotland

Little is known about the origin of this tune. According to Fionn (Henry Whyte) it is said to have been the favorite march of sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat when marching to the Battle of Sherrifmuir. This chief was known as “Domhnall a’chogaidh”, Donald of the Wars, from the part he took at Killiecrankie and other engagements. He died in 1718.

The Big Spree

There are three tunes said to be linked together entitled The Little Spree, The Middling Spree, and The Big Spree. There are different schools of thought in regard to these tunes and how they came to be composed. Some maintain that the word "Spree" was merely used to distract attention from the real nature of the occasions for which the tunes were composed. They say that these tunes were composed to celebrate convocations of Roman Catholics who, at the time in Scotland when they were not allowed to practice their religion in public, held conventicles in much the same way as did the Covenanters. To support this view, some say that there are echos of the Roman Catholic litany in them.

General Thomason gives as his authorities for this tune Donald MacDonald's unpublished manuscript of Pibrochs, the Ballindalloch Collection, and Donald MacKay.

It is also said that this tune was composed by one of the Chiefs of the MacGregors in honour of one of his clansmen who was a very valiant man and during the battles in which his Clan was engaged he was always in the forefront. Unfortunately, however, there were times when he apparently celebrated victory with more whisky than good sense, and according to the MacGregor story, therefore this was the reason for the three tunes being composed and so named. It may be noted that this tune has an alternative Gaelic name, "Tha'n daorach ort's f'earid thu cadal", meaning "You are drunk, and had better sleep" – which, if correct, would seem to support the MacGregor theory.

The Bicker

THE authorities for this setting are Angus MacKay's MS., Angus MacKay's Seaforth MS., and Duncan Campbell's MS. All three correspond. The name in all three is "Port a Mheadair," translated in the Seaforth MS. as "The Bicker or Cogue." In his main MS. Angus MacKay gives in his English index, "The Bicker (MacDougall's sett)."

The explanation of the curious title in Ceol Mor, "The extirpation of the tinkers, by the King's order," appears to be as follows. In Angus MacKay's MS., below the title "Port a Mheadair," are pencilled the words "the extirpation (sic) of the Tinkers by order of the King-D. Cameron, author." These words do not correspond with Angus MacKay's ordinary writing, though they do correspond with certain writings in John MacKay's MS., which internal evidence suggests were not the work of Angus MacKay. The author of Ceol Mor worked on a copy of Angus MacKay's MS., not on the original. This copy did not reproduce the original indexes, where Angus MacKay was more careful to record names than above the scores of the tunes. The pencilled words were transcribed by the copyist in ink, and in such a manner as to make it appear that they were an authentic alternative name to "Port a Mheadair." In point of fact the words "D. Cameron-author" were changed by the copyist to "composed by A. Cameron." Angus MacKay's MS. included a second and different tune, also called "Port a Mheadair," which was described in the index as "John MacKay's sett," and over the score of which appears, this time apparently in Angus MacKay's handwriting and also in pencil, "2 faced Englishman J. M. K. MSS." That tune was duly inserted in Ceol Mor as "The Bicker," on p. 292, and the one with which we are dealing was given the fantastic designation alluded to above, presumably as a distinguishing mark. If the pencilled note was intended to record a nickname conferred on the tune by some D. Cameron, that nickname does not appear to have survived, apart from the note, for "The Bicker" is the name by which the tune is usually known nowadays.

The Bicker is also recorded in the Campbell Canntaireachd as "Robt. Sinclair's Wife Lament." The setting is very similar to Angus MacKay's though there are a few minor differences.

The Boat Tune

This tune is printed in The Piobaireachd Society Collection, Book 13, as it is recorded by Angus MacKay in his manuscript. The tune is to be played as in the rowing of a boat.

This tune was on the 2005 Silver Medal list.

Chisholm's Salute

“Chisholm’s Salute” is supposed to have been composed in 1836 to mark his election as Member of Parliament for the County of Inverness, according to the Rev. Robert MacGregor, Kilmuir, Skye, who wrote as follows in 1838 – “the bearer (Kenneth Stewart, from the Isle of Skye) can play several new piobarachs and also the Shisalach for the Chisholm composed on the occasion of his being elected...in 1838. – From Binneas is Borreraig

This Clan is of Norman origin, and those of Berwick and Roxburghshire came from Tindale, in England, and were successively called – “De Chesé,” “de Cheséholm,” “de Cheseholm vel Cheseholm.” 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 the 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 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. – From Fionn

This was a 2006 & 2018 Silver Medal Tune.

Cabar Feidh Gu Brath

Cabar Feidh Gu Brath was written by the late Pipe Major Donald MacLeod. It is gaelic for “The Stag Horns Forever” and is the motto of the Seaforth Highlanders.

Catherine’s Lament

Angus MacKay of Raasay had attributed the name of “Catherine’s Lament” to this tune. Other sources suggest that this tune should be named “Fraser’s Salute” or “Fraser’s Gathering”.

The Cave of Gold

This tune has found a resurgence since Murray Henderson recorded it on his World’s Greatest Pipers Volume. Jimmy McIntosh, MBE, reviewed the tune in the Summer 2006 edition of The Voice Magazine (Publication of the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association). This tune is attributed to Donald Mor MacCrimmon, circa 1610.

Uamh an Oir (Cave of Gold) - An ancient Hebridean legend tells of a famous piper who goes into a cave to find out why it claims so many lives. From deep within, his pipe music echoes out, telling those listening that a green fairy-demon is attacking him. This surreal song imitates the pipes and begins “It’s a pity I didn’t have three hands, two for the pipes and one for the sword.” The chorus repeats his promise to return.

Clan Campbell’s Gathering

Nothing is known of this great gathering tune attributed to Clan Campbell.

The Clan MacNab’s Salute

According to General Thomason this tune was composed by Donald MacDonald who called it Salute to J.W. Grant, Esq., (of Elchies in Strathspey) but it is now referred to as MacNab’s Salute or Clan MacNab’s Salute. It is in Donald MacDonald’s manuscript and in Angus MacKay’s book.

Colin MacRae of Invereenat’s Lament

This tune is another version of the short tune, “Duncan MacRae of Kintail”. Jimmy McIntosh provided this tune in the Summer 1999 issue of the Voice, EUSPBA’s quarterly magazine. It is taken from the William Ross Collection, first published in 1869. Jimmy took the history of the tune from Alex Haddow’s book, “The History and Structure of Ceol Mor”, published in 1982:

“There can be little doubt that this tune (Duncan MacRae of Kintail) is dedicated to the memory of the ninth Macrae chief, Duncan of the Silver Cups, of the Inverinate family. He was a man of many attainments, and a renowned poet. His poems in a strangely tolerant way are Jacobite and Episcopalian. This keen, liberally minded, religious man, was also an engineer and a mechanician of some note. The great grandson of Duncan of the Silver Cups was Farquar who narrowly escaped after Culloden and was the last of the family to hold Inverinate. Colin Macrae was Farquar’s youngest son born in 1776. He became a merchant and planter in Demerara and married the daughter of the Dutch governor there. He eventually returned to Edinburgh where he died in 1854. As the piobaireachd first appears in Angus Mackay’s manuscript, it cannot originally have been a lament for Colin Macrae and must have been composed much earlier – almost certainly in honor of Duncan of the Silver Cups.”

The Company's Lament

Little is known about the origins of this tune which is said to have been composed to mark the untimely death of a young piper serving in India at the time of his death.

Another source suggests that this tune may have been composed by Joseph MacDonald who wrote the Treatise 'A Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe' circa 1770/3. This was at a time prior to the dissolution of the great MacCrimmon school of piping at Boreraig. The tune [untitled] is one of two 'marches' [spaisdearach in Gaelic] included in his Treatise. The tune is meant to be played 'while walking about' and not as a 'march' as we know it today. It was probably written before he went to India to join the East India Company. His inspiration for the tune is unknown.

Corrienessan's Salute

In his "Historic, Biographic, and Legendary notes to the tunes" in David Glen's Ancient Piobaireachd, Henry Whyte, writing under his pen-name "Fionn," claimed "Corrienessan's Salute" as a composition of Ruairidh Dall, father of the famous John Dall MacKay, but the tune—at least in the form in which it is commonly heard today—seems likely to have been more recent.

According to Archibald Campbell, it had its origins in a sheet of manuscript in the hand of Angus MacKay which when Campbell wrote (in 1938) was in the possession of the Piobaireachd Society (i.e. himself—since he held its music manuscripts). Campbell says that when Angus MacKay's papers had been acquired by Dr. Charles Bannatyne (this happened in 1904; the Society bought them in turn following Bannatyne's death in 1924), the latter had found the ground and first variation sketched out by MacKay and that either he (Dr. Charles Bannatyne) or David Glen had completed the tune with a taorluath and crunluath breabach.

Cronan Corrievrechan (The Corrievrechan Lullaby)

This tune was written by Donald MacLeod and appears in Donald MacLeod's Collection of Piobaireachd Book I.

Traditionally, this whirlpool sings "Pos mi's posadh mi thee" ("Marry me, and I will marry you"). It was believed that if one entered its clutches, there was no escape. There is an old Gaelic song of the same title.

The Desperate Battle

This tune is in Angus and in John MacKay's manuscripts. Both refer to it as to do with birds fighting. In Fionn's notes in David Glen's Ancient Piobaireachd, he gives it as an Angus MacKay of Gairloch composition describing a fight between domestic fowls. This tune certainly fits this role, but it could also be related to a well-known song (18th century) of the same name describing birds attacking an evil woman. General Thomason reckoned it commemorated the Battle of the North Inch of Perth in 1396.

Duncan MacRae of Kintail's Lament

See the description under "Colin MacRae of Invereenat's Lament".

The Earl of Seaforth's Salute

This is said to have been composed by Finlay Dubh MacRae about 1715 in honour of William, fifth Earl of Seaforth. The Earl himself was engaged with his Clan at Sherrifmuir, and after the battle he followed James III into exile. His estates were forfeited but it was found extremely difficult, if not impossible to bring the forfeitures into effect because for several years after, the rents were collected and held by the MacKenzies, who were the first clan to be called upon by General Wade to deliver up their arms which they are supposed to have done at Brahan Castle near Dingwall.

It is said to be not so much a salute as a plaintive plea to Seaforth to return home from exile and this is certainly what it sounds like.

Farewell to the Laird of Islay

This is the only complete piobaireachd to have been composed by Angus MacKay. We have it in his own handwriting." "Angus MacKay was in Islay's service between 1835 and 1843, when he entered that of Queen Victoria. The date at the heading of this tune indicates that he left Islay in 1840, although a newspaper report of a competition held in Glasgow on 28th July, 1841, describes him as then piper to the Laird of Islay. This tune was on the 2024 Gold Medal list and 2026 Silver Medal list.

A Flame of Wrath for Squinting Patrick

The first piper of the MacCrimmons was called Iain Odhar, or Sallow John, of whom little is known. He was succeeded by his son Donald, better known as Domhnull Mor, or Big Donald, who, being a special favorite with MacLeod, was sent to Ireland to complete his musical education. This Donald Mor had a brother called Patrick, who on account of some defect in his eyes was as Padruig Caogach. He lived on the MacLeod estates, Glenelg, Ross-shire.

This young man had a quarrel with his foster brother, a native of Kintail. Sometime after the dispute, while he was in the act of washing his face in a burn or rivulet joining his dwelling, the Kintail man came behind him, and treacherously with his dirk gave him a mortal blow. This being made known to Donald Mor at Dunvegan, he prepared to revenge the untimely death of his brother, and taking his pipes up to MacLeod's room, he threw them on the bed. MacLeod, surprised, demanded to know what had occurred. In few words he related to him the affair, when the laird pacified the enraged piper, and promised him, on condition of his remaining at home, to see justice done before the expiration of twelve months. MacLeod thought that his wrathful piper would forget the cruel murder by that time and allow his ire to abate; but such as not the case, for on the termination of the twelve months he set out himself for Glenelg, without informing anyone of his intention, and finding on his arrival there 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. Donald then made his escape to Lord Reay's country, where he remained for some time under the protection of Donald Diabhul Mackay, afterwards Lord Reay, with whom he had been formerly acquainted.

As soon as Lord Kintail was apprised of this affair he offered a great reward for the apprehension of MacCrimmon and sent a party in pursuit of him; but they returned without being able to trace the fugitive. He, however, thought it prudent to seek a place of concealment in a more remote district, and wandered among the hills for a considerable time, making several nocturnal visits to his friend Mackay; who, to avoid detection, recommended him to one of his shepherds, with whom he was assured he might remain in safety, and, for greater security, a bed was constructed concealed in the wall of the house.

Soon afterwards Lord Kintail, whose daughter had been married to Donald Diabhul, having learned where MacCrimmon was lurking, dispatched his son and twelve men to seize him. It was a very wet day, and Donald Mor happened to be at home when the party approached the house; but while they were at a distance the shepherd's wife espied them, and immediately gave the alarm to the unfortunate piper, who betook himself to the bed already mentioned, and the woman made a large fire, which was always in the middle of the house, for the entertainment of his pursuers. On their arrival they were welcomed, and asked to be seated, civilities of which they gladly availed themselves, being thoroughly soaked by the rain. The woman then spread their plaids on ropes, which had been placed along the house, for the purpose of forming a safe passage for MacCrimmon's retreat, whom she then apprized of the opportunity, and thus he effected his escape, unobserved by MacKenzie or any of the party. All this was the work of a moment, and MacKenzie was hardly seated when he asked where their guest Donald Mor was concealed. "I know nothing about him," replied the shepherd; "I have indeed heard that your father has offered a great reward for his apprehension, but he has not come my way, else I should certainly have given him up." A lengthened conversation regarding MacCrimmon then ensued, and MacKenzie, finding he could gather nothing from the faithful couple, ordered his men to search the house and its vicinity, which they did, but to no purpose. The night continued extremely rainy and boisterous, so that the party was glad to remain in the shepherd's cot; and, after partaking of what refreshment it could afford, retired to rest.

The goodwife managed matters well. She made MacKenzie's bed in a corner of the house by itself, so that there might be an easy access to it. When all were fast asleep, MacCrimmon, having been informed of what had passed, entered the house, and taking Mackenzie's arms and part of those of the men, laid them once across the other over the place where MacKenzie lay, and took his departure without disturbing anyone, the party after their fatigues sleeping very soundly. When MacKenzie awoke in the morning and found so many arms placed over him, he called to his men to get up, saying, "I might have been a dead man for aught you could have done for me. If Donald Mor MacCrimmon be alive, it was he that did this; and it was as easy a matter for him to take my life as to do so."

On going out they saw MacCrimmon walking on the other side of the river, with his claidheamh-mor, or great sword, in his hand. Seeing the man they were in pursuit of, they prepared to ford the stream, with the intention of seizing or dispatching him; but MacKenzie threatened to shoot the first man who would dare to touch him. He then approached MacCrimmon and desired him to cross the river. "No," replied he, "it is as easy for you to come to me as it is for me to go to you." "If you will come over," rejoined MacKenzie, "I pledge my word of honour that you shall not be injured." "Not so," says the other, "swear all your men, and I will take your own word;" which was accordingly done, and MacCrimmon crossed over the river. MacKenzie then asked him if it was he who put the arms over the bed during the night, when he was answered in the affirmative. Then, said MacKenzie, "you might have easily taken my life at that time, so I now promise to procure your pardon if you will be at my father's house this day three weeks." This being agreed to, MacKenzie took his departure for the residence of Donald Diabhul, where he remained a few days, and then proceeded to Kintail, and told his father all that had happened. MacCrimmon also went to Donald Diabhul, who consented to accompany him to his father-in-law's, and arrived the evening of the appointed day at the house of Lord Kintail's fiddler. They were shown into an upper room, where Mackay left his companion, and went alone to Lord Kintail's. By some means the fiddler discovered that his guest was Donald Mor; he therefore sent for a party of men in order to secure and carry him before his Lordship, claiming the reward for his capture. So after everything had been arranged, the wary musician went upstairs and said to MacCrimmon, whose door was secured inside, that his wife had laid him a wager that he would not come down and drink his share of a bottle with them. MacCrimmon replied that he had no objections to do so, and, opening the door, came out. There was along with the fiddler a younger son of Lord Kintail, who had formerly seen MacCrimmon, and who took an opportunity to whisper to him, "Will you go downstairs where a house full of people await to take you prisoner?" Donald Mor immediately knocked the fiddler downstairs, and again fastened himself in the room. The youth went straight to inform Donald Diabhul, whom he met on the way, and he on hearing what had taken place, made all possible haste, and arrived just in time to save the piper by producing a pardon for him, received from Lord Kintail. All then dispersed peaceably, and Mackay and MacCrimmon proceeded to the castle of the Lordship, where they made merry all night, and next day the piper returned to Skye, where he remained without many further adventures until his death.

This is an excerpt from: "The Martial Music of the Clans", pp. 115-121. Written by "Fionn", originally published in 1904. Published by Scotpress, PO Box 778, Morgantown, WV. ISBN: 0-912951-21-4

The Field of Gold

Written by Donald MacLeod and found in "Donald MacLeod's Collection of Piobaireachd Book 1".

They were only buttercups, but it was an uplifting experience, to see the sun shining on a field of such ordinary flowers, giving this enchanting acre a look of burnished gold.

The Glen is Mine

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.

Glengarry's Lament

This was composed by Archibald Munro on the lamented death of his master, 1828, and it was the last tribute he paid to him, when he played it preceding the funeral procession. Mr. MacDonell of Glengary was on his way to Edinburgh, on board the Stirling steam boat, accompanied by his two daughters. The boat was sailing tolerably well, till she came abreast of Drumarabin, a farm of the Duke of Gordon's, the blast out of which glen became too powerful, and drove her on the Ardgower shore at Inverscaddel. The landing was extremely dangerous, *as* the passengers had to be dragged ashore by means of ropes. Glengary was much hurt in the face and head on the rocks, as he was brought to shore. He was able, however, to walk to the farm house of Inverscaddel, where he had his wounds dressed, and did not appear to be in a dangerous state. He was put to bed; and in the evening was seized with convulsions, which terminated his life at ten o'clock. The remains of this distinguished chief were consigned to their "narrow house" on the first of February. A large concourse of clansmen (about 1600) assembled to pay the last sad duty to their chief, and were plentifully regaled with bread, cheese, and whisky. The procession commenced about two o'clock in the afternoon, and reached Kilfinan, the place of interment, between four and five o'clock. The coffin was borne breast high by eighteen Highlanders who relieved each other at regular intervals. The chief mourner was the young chief of Glengary, (the only surviving son of the late *MacMhic Alasdair*,) dressed in the full Highland garb of his ancestors, with eagle's feathers in his bonnet covered with crape. Some hundreds of the people were arrayed in the Highland garb. The mournful Piobaireachd was wailed forth by six Pipers; and none of the formalities usually attending on the obsequies of a chief, were omitted; at least none that were fitted to give a character of impressiveness to the solemnity.

Glengarry's March (Cill Chriosd)

The Gaelic name for this tune Cill Chriosd refers to a church which is situated in the parish of Urray in Ross-shire and which is reputed to be the scene of a tragedy which occurred because of a feud between the MacDonells of Glengarry and the MacKenzies of Kintail. It is said that the MacDonells found the MacKenzies at worship in the church, and taking advantage of the position they surrounded the church and set fire to it burning everyone inside and killing those who attempted to escape. The piper is said to have marched round the burning building, playing this tune. Vengeance was swift and the MacDonnells were overtaken by the MacKenzies inside an inn and 37 of them were burned alive, or according to another account, they were driven into Loch Ness and drowned. Later, when Glengarry's son was killed in a fight near Eilean Donan he was buried in the doorway of the church in Kintail so that the MacKenzies might trample over his body every Sunday when they came to worship.

Hector MacLean's Warning

According to MacKay's Legends, Hector MacLean was, like his father, a noted marauder. He was suspected of having designs on the young Laird, Lachlan Mor, and this led to a long imprisonment in Duart Castle, ending with his execution, being beheaded in Coll, without a trial in 1579. It is not clear what links the tune has with Hector. Perhaps it is a warning to others not to be like him. The tune is in Angus MacKay's book and in slightly different form in Angus MacArthur's and Donald MacDonald's manuscripts.

Hector Roy MacLean's Lament

There are many Hector MacLean's through the long history of MacLean's of Duart. However, it is believed that this lament was written for Sir Hector MacLean, 2nd Baronet of Morvern (1620-1651). He was the 18th Clan Chief of Clan MacLean. Hector was killed fighting for the Royalists at the Battle of Inverkeithing. It was during this battle that seven brothers died protecting their Clan chief, each brother crying "Another for Hector" as they stepped forward to protect him. This tune was written by A. Maclean, the chief's piper, on his way home to Duart, being one of 40 survivors of the carnage of Inverkeithing.

Hiharintra Hiotra Dreha

This tune is part of the Campbell Canntaireachd (1796). This tune can be found in the recently published book "Pipers Meeting: New tunes from the Campbell Canntaireachd" by Patrick Molard and Dr. Jack Taylor. This book contains 45 piobaireachds from the famous Campbell Canntaireachd (1796) newly in staff notation. 33 for the first time with none in current publications. This book is currently available from The Piobaireachd Society (UK).

His Father's Lament for Donald MacKenzie

Donald MacKenzie (1832-1863) was the eldest son of the famous John Ban MacKenzie, and was a most notable piper. His prize winning career at the Northern Meeting commenced in his boyhood. In 1846 he was second for piobaireachd, playing "My King has Landed in Moidart," and third for "Strathspeys & Marches." He was first for piobaireachd in 1847, and again third in the other competition. And he won the gold medal for former first prize piobaireachd winners in 1861.

He was, first, piper to the Duke of Sutherland; then in the Land Transport Corps in the Crimean War; and afterwards Pipe Major of the 25th Borderers, 2nd Battalion. At the age of thirty he died of smallpox in his father's house at Munloch. It is said that Donald Cameron played "The Lament for the Children" as the funeral cortege passed through Munloch.

The sole authority for the record of this lament was Ronald MacKenzie, nephew of John Ban, Pipe Major of the 78th, and subsequently piper to the Duke of Gordon. On 1st October, 1892, he wrote to Donald MacKay, then piper to the Prince of Wales:

"In answer to your letter of yesterday's date, I am pleased to state concerning Donald MacKenzie's Lament that it was my dear departed uncle that composed it on the death of his son, Donald, at Munloch, Ross-shire, in the year 1863. There I learnt the tune from himself, and when lying in Gibraltar in 1866, I put it into music the best way I could. It always was a favourite, and when at Oban on the 14th of September last, the Marchioness of Lorne asked me to play it specially for her. Keith Cameron or anybody else can say what they like about the setting of it, but there the tune is as an authority made by my uncle and learned from him by me; further I can add that it was the last tune he composed on earth."

Isabel MacKay

There is a dispute as to what is the correct name, title and origin of this tune. In Ceol Mor, General Thomason calls the tune The Battle of Maolroy or Isabel MacKay, and gives as his authorities for his setting Donald MacDonald's manuscript, Angus MacKay and Donald MacKay, although he himself accepts the final responsibility for the setting which he has given. In Book 6 of the Piobaireachd Society's Collection, it is said that the tune was published by Angus MacKay and also in Gesto's Canntaireachd manuscript as Isabel MacKay, but it appears in the Campbell Canntaireachd as Clann Donail Roaich and in Donald MacDonald's manuscript as The Battle of Maolroy. Angus MacKay, however, has a totally different tune named The Battle of Maolroy. It is included in his manuscript, and also that of Angus MacArthur, and is published by William Ross, 1885, as The Battle of Red Hill (Maolroy). So far as the name "Isabel MacKay" is concerned, Angus MacKay states that this tune was composed by an unknown piper in honour of a lady named Isabel MacKay who was the subject of Rob Donn MacKay's song of that name. Isabel and her husband died in 1747 just a year after their marriage. Angus MacKay states that John MacKay was the second son of Hector MacKay of Skerra, and owned the lands of Clashneach and others about the year 1729. John married Katherine, daughter of William MacKay of Milness, and he had a daughter Isabella who was celebrated for her accomplishments and her personal beauty. She is, of course, the person referred to both in Rob Donn's song, and in the piobaireachd itself. MacLeod of Gesto agrees with this derivation of the tune. The event which is supposed to be commemorated by the tune called the Battle of Maolroy was a battle fought between the MacIntosh's and the MacDonalds of Keppoch, but so far as historical legend is concerned, this conflict would appear to have little or nothing to do with Isabel MacKay.

The King's Taxes (Mal an Righ)

Mal an Righ could be translated as Angus MacKay wrote as “The King’s Tribute” or as the late Rev. Dr. Neil Ross suggested “The King’s Rent”. Most people reckon that refers to that time when the Clan system gave way to government rates and taxes. How such a beautiful and clever composition came to be associated with rents or taxes is difficult to understand. Bridget Mackenzie thinks that it describes Rory Mor’s defiance, refusing to pay the King any of his estate rents. The King was trying to impose a tax on rents from Highland estates early in the 1600s. There is a penciled note in Angus MacKay’s manuscript suggesting it to be a MacDougall tune and it appears that he got the tune from Ronald MacDougall. It is not in the Campbell Canntaireachd.

Lachlann MacNeill Campbell of Kintarbert’s Fancy

This piobaireachd is found in the manuscripts of Angus MacKay, John MacKay and Duncan Campbell. Lachlan MacNeill Campbell's reputation as a piobaireachd player survived in Argyllshire at the time of writing the PS book 8 note. He was one of the judges at the competitions in Edinburgh, is said to have known the MacKay family well, and to have been a pupil of either Angus MacKay or his father, or perhaps both.

Because no authorship of the tune is given by Angus MacKay or Duncan Campbell it would seem to be not a contemporary composition but an older nameless tune which was fancied by Lachlan MacNeill Campbell, and therefore was so nicknamed.

This tune was on the 2019 Gold Medal list.

Lady Doyle’s Salute

Lady Doyle was a daughter of Major Ross, who married Isabella, sister of the late James MacLeod, Esq. of Raasay. Her father and mother having died when she was in infancy, the former in the East Indies, and the latter on her passage to Scotland, she was left under the guardianship of her uncle, who brought her up in his own family at Raasay.

She became a great favorite with all who knew her, being imbued with the finest feelings of the Highlander. Her musical taste was remarkably good, and she was so fond of Piobaireachd, that she acquired many of the longest pieces from the performance of the family Piper, and was accustomed to play them on the piano with much effect.

She accompanied her cousin, the Marchioness of Hastings, to the East Indies, where she married the Hon. Sir Charles Doyle. Here she did not forget John MacKay (1767-1848), the Piper of Raasay, but had an elegant stand of Pipes, of peculiar native workmanship, prepared, which she presented to him, and which will be handed down as an heir-loom in the family.

This Piobaireachd was composed in gratitude for her Ladyship's liberality.

This tune was on the 2005 Silver Medal list.

Lady MacDonald's Lament

This tune is stated to have been composed by Angus MacArthur in the year 1790. MacArthur was piper to the MacDonald family and on the death (which is said to have taken place on the 18th October 1789) of Elizabeth Diana, Lady of Alexander, first Lord MacDonald, he composed this tune.

Lament for Alasdair Dearg MacDonnel of Glengarry

Alasdair Dearg was the son of Donald of Laggan, for whom another wonderful Lament was composed by Patrick Og MacCrimmon. Alasdair Dearg died before his father and this fine tune was written in his memory.

Lament for Alan, My Son

Alan Johnstone was the 2nd youngest of Duncan Johnstone's children. A young policeman, Alan died tragically of leukemia in 1980 at the age of 20. Duncan had told friends that a strong but plaintive melody at the Urral was filling his thoughts while on a night vigil by Alan's bedside. The remainder of the Piobaireachd was completed two days after Alan's death.

Lament for Captain MacDougall

There is no doubt, from the MacDougall family papers, that the lament was composed for Captain Alexander MacDougall, younger of Dunolly, who was killed in the Peninsular Wars at Ciudad Rodrigo in 1812 aged 27. It is one of the sweetest and saddest laments and reflects the heartfelt feelings of the family and clan expressed by the clan piper Ronald Mor MacDougall for an exceptionally popular and well-loved son.

Lament for the Children

This, arguably the most beautiful, and said by some to contain the most musical melody line in any music is credited to Patrick Mor MacCrimmon after he lost seven of his eight sons within a year due to an outbreak of smallpox brought to Skye by a visiting ship. The surviving son was Patrick Og. It was, however, also called The Lament for the Clans (probably at Worcester in 1651) which still makes it a Patrick Mor composition. It can be found in the manuscripts of Donald MacDonald senior and junior, Angus MacKay, John MacKay, and Henderson. Untypically Angus MacKay has not completed the tune. What is recorded in Binneas is Boreraig and in the Piobaireachd Society's Book 3 is the setting that has long been established by tradition among pipers and was probably handed down by Donald Cameron.

Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay

This very popular and tuneful composition was most probably composed by Iain Dall MacKay, and not by Donald MacCrimmon. It celebrates the first Lord Reay who fought with great distinction in the 30 years' war for which he had raised a regiment and also as a mercenary for the Kings of Denmark and Sweden. He died in 1649 in his 59th year in Bergen where he was Governor. He was also a Baronet of Nova Scotia.

Lament for Donald of Laggan

There are three well-known laments for three different chiefs of Glengarry. This is in most pipers' opinion the best of the three. The other two are The Lament for Alasdair Dearg, his son who predeceased Donald of Laggan and for a much later chief who died in 1828 and had Glengarry's Lament composed for him by his piper Archibald Munro. Donald of Laggan was born in 1543 and died in 1645 aged 102, and although he was "Glengarry" for over 70 years he was always known locally as Donald of Laggan since he had lived there as a young man. His daughter Isabella MacDonald married Sir Rory MacLeod of Dunvegan. She lived to the age of 103 and the story goes that she was lulled to sleep every night by MacCrimmon playing Cumha Dhombnail an Lagain, her father's lament. There seems little doubt that it is a Patrick Mor composition. Although these MacDonalds are also known as MacDonnell the name MacDonnell was first introduced by Donald of Laggan's grandson when he was raised to the peerage in 1660 and became Aeneas Lord MacDonnell and Aros.

Lament for Mary MacLeod

Fionn describes Mary MacLeod as a poet or "bardess" who also nursed several of the chiefs of Dunvegan. She had a period of banishment to Mull for some king of bardic offense which is rather intriguing. She forgave the chief who had banished her but the ignominy lasted all her life and she made a death-entreaty that she should be buried face down in recognition of her shame. She was much loved and admired for her poetry in which she refers to the playing of Patrick Og MacCrimmon, who composed this beautiful tribute to her.

MacDonald of Kinlochmoidart's Lament

Two tunes of this name are here given. They both appear in Angus MacKay's MS., where No. 1 is named MacDonald of Kinlochmoidart's Salute, and No. 2 MacDonald of Kinlochmoidart's Lament.

The setting of No. 1 is that of the late Alexander Cameron, with whom it was a great favourite. According to Alexander Cameron the tune is a lament and should be played as such. Kinlochmoidart's Lament is the name by which it generally goes, and under which it has been published by W. Ross, and David Glen.

Tune No. 2 is found in the Campbell Canntaireachd.

Lament for the Old Sword

This has always been a well-known tune and it appears in most of the early manuscripts. It was natural that a sword which had seen valiant deeds in battles would become revered by a family or clan. With time and use, even the best sword would become unsound for fighting, but such was its reputation that it would be remembered in poetry and music. It is not known to which family the sword in this tune belonged but there is a later tune which is more specific; John Garve MacLean of Coll's Claymore.

Lament for the Only Son

General Thomason gives as his authorities for printing this tune – the Ballindalloch manuscript Collection of Pibrochs, William Ross and Donald MacKay. Colin Cameron is credited with having stated that the tune was composed by Patrick Mor MacCrimmon, and in Henry Whyte's notes he also states that the tune is generally understood to have been composed by Patrick Mor. It is not known whether the tune was composed in respect of Patrick's son or not, but it is a well-known lament which is very expressive indeed, and which is still very popular with pipers. Patrick Mor was, of course, the son of Donald Mor, and it is said that Patrick Mor composed more piobaireachd than anyone else before or since.

Lament for Red Hector of the Battles

Roderick Ross, in Binneas is Boreraig, says "Red Hector or Eachainn Ruadh, died at the Battle of Harlow in 1411. He was the sixth chief of the MacLeans of Duart and had been leading the right flank of Donald, the second Lord of the Isles' army in an attempt to add the Earldom of Ross to his extensive domain. Hector had been in a tremendous struggle with Sir Alexander of Drum in which both protagonists were so badly wounded that they both succumbed. Red Hector, mourned by many and loved by all, was carried from the field and buried on Iona. The custom started then of the Irvines of Drum and the MacLeans of Duart exchanging a sword each year on the anniversary of the battle. The opposing army led by the Earl of Mar was a smaller force and although the Lord of the Isles won the battle, such was the cost of victory that he was unable to carry through his full plan to take over everything within that area. The Battle of Harlow made a great impression on the people of Scotland at the time, and for generations afterwards. For this reason it may be that the tune was not composed at the time of the battle, but it must nevertheless be one of our earliest piobaireachds. It is not the easiest tune to express as a lament because the composer has obviously had in his mind the great fight, which took place between the two men while the battle raged around them. It is important however with this and all other piobaireachds that the player knows what it is about. Having set his pipe, being sure of the tune and proud of his technique, he should think of the battle, of the many brave men who died and of the gallantry which continued thereafter."

Lament for Ronald MacDonald of Morar

The footnote in Binneas Is Boreraig reads, "Ronald MacDonald of Morar is credited with composing The Fingerlock and The Vaunting. In a 1700 manuscript he is described as 'the best player upon the pype now living.'"

Lament for the Viscount of Dundee (A.D. 1689)

John Graham of Claverhouse, being brigadier and captain of the Royal regiment of horse; marched them into England on the landing of the Prince of Orange, to support his master, King James, for which he was raised to the dignity of Viscount Dundee. In 1689 he attended the Convention of Estates, when he discovered a plot to assassinate him, and perceiving the meeting determined to dethrone King James, he withdrew from their deliberations, and the result of a conference with the Duke of Gordon, governor of Edinburgh Castle, at the postern gate, determined this chivalrous nobleman to appear in arms for his Majesty. He therefore withdrew to the Highlands, with a party of horse, where he summoned the loyal clans to his standard, and was joined by a reinforcement of 800 Irishmen. With these he gave battle to General MacKay, whom he overthrew with a slaughter of 2000 men, but received himself, in the first charge, a musket ball in his right side, from which he almost immediately expired. The spot where he fell is still seen in the pass of Killiecrankie, where a rude stone was raised to commemorate the sad event; but his body was conveyed to the church of Blair, and deposited in the vault of the Marquis of Athole.

The learned Dr. Pitcairn wrote an elegant Latin epitaph ob Dundee, which was thus rendered into English by Dryden:—

" O last and best of Scots! who didst maintain
Thy country's freedom from a foreign reign;
New people fill the land, now you are gone—
New gods the temples, and new kings the throne.
Scotland and thou did each in other live,
Thou could'st not her, nor could she thee survive.
Farewell thou living, that did support the state,
And could not fall but by thy country's fate."

The death of this accomplished General, ruined the fair prospect which appeared of reducing Scotland to the rule of its ancient Princes. No one of sufficient ability to head the clans seemed to be found, and the chiefs having no confidence in General Cannan, who took the command, retired to their respective countries, and came into terms with the existing government.

The Little Spree

According to Fionn, the three tunes, The Great, The Middling, and The Little Spree were all composed by a MacGregor chief (and they do seem related) about a blacksmith who was very valiant in battle but rather fond of strong drink which caused him to be deranged from time to time. What is interesting is to consider the three degrees of 'Spree', whether there were indeed degrees of inebriation. In fact it would be difficult to relate the music of any of the three tunes to this story. Archibald Campbell in his introduction to Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor quote Dr Bett in reckoning that The Little Spree is indeed one of the saddest tunes.

Lord Lovat's Lament

The author of this Lament was David Fraser (1716-1812), piper and trusted servant of the famous Simon Lord Lovat. He bound himself by indenture dated 9th March, 1743, to serve Lord Lovat for seven years, on condition of the latter sending him to Skye to be "perfected a Highland piper by the famous Malcom McGrimon," His Lordship to maintain him in food, lodging, and clothes, pay his teaching fees, and give him a yearly salary. Two years later he was sent by Lord Lovat to Edinburgh in charge of fourteen "recruits" to be delivered to two officers of the rank of Captain, and afterwards he fought on the Stuart side at Prestonpans, Falkirk and Culloden. He died on 27th December 1812, and was buried in Kirkhill.

MacCrimmon Will Never Return

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 Ban 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 war is he returning;
Till dawns the great day of doom and burning,
MacCrimmon is home no more returning.

The MacDougall's Gathering

This tune appears in Angus MacArthur's, Angus MacKay's and Duncan Campbell's manuscripts but none of these give it a name. In Angus MacKay's copy of the MacArthur manuscript he states, "The name is not known", but an unknown person, later but before Dr Bannatyne had the manuscript, has written in the name as The MacDougall's Gathering and this name has been used since. It may have been composed by one of the MacDougalls.

The MacFarlane's Gathering

This tune was "discovered" in Glendaruel by John MacDougall Gillies. It is very similar to Too Long in this Condition. The latter tune is referred to as MacFarlane's Gathering in some early sources. In an article in the Piping Times, Archibald Campbell, Kilberry, examines these two tunes and concludes that Too Long in this Condition is a better example of piobaireachd than MacFarlane's Gathering, the latter having perhaps too many of the characteristics of ordinary music. For all that or perhaps partly for that very reason the tune has been very popular with beginners.

The MacGregor's Salute

Angus MacKay's chapter of Traditional and Historical notes is silent about this tune. We know that it was heard by Alexander Campbell in 1815 at Gesto, and possibly it was the composition of some member of the Clann an Sgeulaiche.

The Clann an Sgeulaiche, or race of the story teller, was a family of MacGregors belonging to Glenlyon, the members which possessed outstanding merits as piper, fiddlers, raconteurs and bards. The pipers were pipers to their chiefs until well into the 17th century and one of them is believed to have composed "The Rout of Glenfruin" to commemorate the battle of 1602. It is also said that at one time they had a piping school at Drumcharry, and used to send their best pupil for a year to the MacCrimmons in Skye.

Anyone reading the descriptions in Angus MacKay's book of the Highland Society's competitions from 1781 onwards must be struck by the number of successful MacGregor competitors in the early years of the series. From 1781 to 1813 at least seventeen MacGregors competed, and perhaps a few more, and of these, twelve were first prize winners. It is not easy to identify them all, but by piecing together fragments of information derived from Angus MacKay's descriptions, from extant records of the competitions kept by the Highland Society of Scotland, and from an article in the Celtic Magazine (V. 404) by the Rev. Alexander MacGregor, one of the joint editors, the remarkable conclusion is arrived at that possibly all, and certainly most of these experts belonged to one family; that nine of the twelve first prize winners undoubtedly were sons or grandsons of a single man, and that possibly all were. Since these competitions, in numbers of competitors and in standards of performance, were at least as important as those for the gold medal subsequently held at the Northern Meeting, this is a record which is likely to stand for all time.

The "single man" mentioned above was John (1708-1789) who joined Prince Charles Edward at Glenfinnan, and became his piper and personal attendant. He served throughout the campaign and was wounded at Culloden. But he managed to make his way back home to Fortingall, and was afterwards piper to Col. Campbell of Glenlyon. He had four sons (five according to one account) and eight grandsons, all pipers of high class.

John MacGregor at the age of 73 won third prize at the first competition at Falkirk in 1781. In 1782 he was second, and in 1783 he attended both Falkirk and Edinburgh as piper to the Highland Society of London and as "an intermediary betwixt the judges and competitors."

MacKenzie of Gairloch's Lament

This tune is found in the MacArthur/MacGregor manuscripts and Angus MacKay's *Ancient Piobaireachd* where it is described as "Composed by John Roy MacKay The Family Piper." The lamentations of the clan were perpetuated in the strains of the piobaireachd, by the family Piper, blind John MacKay, when death removed Sir Hector to a better world.

Mackintosh's Banner

"Composed by William M. MacKenzie around 1881-1884. He was good piper and a good bagpipe maker. Entered the Northern Meeting at Inverness from 1881 to 1890 as 'Piper to The MacKintosh'. Won 4th prize in 1890. Moved to Dublin about 1911 and started a business making bagpipes. After the Easter Rising in 1916 he moved to Liverpool. His tune is a praise or salute to the standard of the MacKintoshs."

Mackintosh's Lament

The origin of this popular tune has been the subject of much conjecture. Dvorak's New World Symphony has some passages rather similar to MacKintosh's Lament. One hypothesis has been that it commemorates Lachlan Beag, the 14th Chief of MacKintosh, who was murdered by his half brother's natural son John and another disaffected retainer in the 1520s.

A more romantic tale is that it concerned a clan chief who had a fine black stallion, which only he could manage and that with difficulty. His wedding day was approaching when the prancing stallion caused an old woman to be unceremoniously pushed into a ditch beside the path. The old crone roundly cursed the chief, ending with words to the effect that the horse would be the death of him. A very natural imprecation that he heard and immediately dismissed from his mind. On the morning of the wedding, however, when his thoughts turned philosophically to considering his life past and future, he remembered the old woman's curse and it began to bother him. He dismounted and shot the stallion dead with his pistol. He continued his preparation for the wedding and proceeded to the church with a more sedate mount and was married. While returning home after the ceremony, the more sedate horse shied violently as they passed the dead stallion, throwing the chief and killing him. The bride was thus, maiden, bride, and widow all in one day. Grief stricken she composed this lament and is said to have sung it as the coffin was carried to the graveyard, marking time on the coffin lid with her hands. (Slapping the coffin was an expression of grief while keening.) A very sad tale, which, if it is in your mind, will make you give full value to the plaintive double echoes on F in the Urlar.

James E. Scott in the Piping Times (Vol. 12, No. 10), makes the point that the name MacKintosh became associated with the tune purely by an accident of translation to and from Gaelic. He says that the likely subject of the lament is Alexander MacLean of Aros in Mull. He was a mercenary in Spain and through some error in justice was put to death in Madrid in 1739. He further suggests that it be probably by Ronald MacDonald of Morar, who also composed The Vaunting.

The MacLeans' March

This tune is said to be the composition of Ailean nan Sop, a noted freebooter of the 16th century. He was a scion of the Duart family, and there are several stories accounting for his nickname. One is that, being of doubtful legitimacy, he was born in a corn barn; another that he was born in a hayfield; a third that he was in the habit of setting alight bundles of straw or hay in order to smoke his victims out of the caves in which they had taken refuge.

The tune is seldom heard nowadays. Fifty years ago (written in 1961), Angus MacDonald, Morar, in a conversation with one of the Editors, implied that it was one of his favourite composition tunes, and many years earlier, in 1835, it figured in the lists of Angus MacKay and of his brother, John. Perhaps its length scared both competitors and judges. A modern competition is too often a race against time.

The MacLeod's Salute (The Rowing Tune)

There had seldom been peace between the MacLeods and the MacDonalds in the 16th century, and when there was it did not take much for that peace to be broken. At the end of the century there is a story of an event, possibly apocryphal or certainly adorned, that brought to an end any semblance of peaceful coexistence. Donald Gorm Mor of Sleat had married a daughter of the MacLeods, but before the year was up he took advantage of the old Scots custom called "hand fasting" whereby if a man was not satisfied with his bride he could return her whence she came. In this case the lady in question had only one eye and the story describes how Donald Gorm sent her back to Dunvegan on a one eyed horse, attended by a one eyed groom and a one eyed dog. This was more than enough of an insult to have the battle lines drawn up and the old habit of raiding and invading each others' territory started up again, culminating in the Desperate Battle of the Cuillen in 1601. This battle was won by the MacDonalds but could be seen that both sides had lost a great number of men, and after years of fighting the resources of both were at a very low ebb.

A reconciliation was effected by Angus MacDonald of Kintyre, with, one understands, the authority of King James VI. The formal agreement took place at Dunvegan Castle in 1602, ending a feud which had been going on for at least a hundred years. This was indeed an occasion for celebration and Donald Mor MacCrimmon, MacLeod's piper, composed not one, but three great tunes, *MacLeod's Salute*, *MacDonald's Salute*, and *MacLeod's Controversy*. All of them have been highly esteemed by pipers since and indeed there is a suggestion that the three colours of the Piobaireachd Society tie represent these three tunes.

MacLeod's Salute is often referred to and called "The Rowing Tune" and is a firm favourite. It has the "Donald Mor rundown" a sequence of notes EDBAG used by Donald Mor in several of his tunes and variously interpreted in these. The other device, which is almost exclusively his is the "triplet beat" in the dithis.

MacNeill of Barra's March

This tune is found in many manuscript and published settings. It is found under the names of "MacNeill of Barra's March", "MacNeill of Barra's Lament", and "The Pride of Barra."

The Marquis of Argyll's Salute

This tune commemorates the only Marquis of Argyll, who, during the decade 1640 to 1650, was head of the Covenanting Party and the most powerful noble in Scotland. But he was defeated more than once by Montrose and the disastrous defeat of Inverlochy in 1645 resulted in the Shire of Argyll being raided from end to end by the MacDonalds from Ireland, who had thrown in their lot with Montrose. When Charles II was restored in 1660 the Marquis, who had placed the crown on his head at Scone some ten years before, went to London to offer his allegiance, but owing to the successful hostility of his enemies, he was arrested, sent back to Edinburgh, tried for treason, condemned and executed in 1661.

The Massacre of Glencoe

It is not known who composed it although Colin Cameron wrote that he thought it would be composed by Henderson who was piper to MacDonald of Glencoe. Legend has it that Henderson played the tune we know as "Carles wi' the Breeks" on the eve of the massacre.

The massacre of the MacDonald's of Glencoe is one of the most notorious acts of infamy in Scottish history and is remembered even now with bitter distaste by many of that clan.

In 1691 all Highland Clan Chiefs were required to swear and sign an oath of loyalty to the new, protestant King William III by no later than 1 January 1692.

The penalties against those who failed to do so would be ferocious, and carried out with the full backing of the law. These would include the forfeiture of all lands, the destruction of their homes, the outlawing of their entire families and even murder at will.

Faced with such a convincing argument, the Clan chiefs, believing discretion to be the better part of valour, practically queued to sign the oath by the appointed time.

One who failed to do so was MacIain of Glencoe, the elderly head of a small branch of MacDonalds. His non-appearance, however, was not the deliberate and defiant act of a rebel, but the simple result of unfortunate circumstance. MacIain had set off in ample time to sign his allegiance, but, misinformed, had gone to the wrong place. He then faced a frightful, forty mile journey in mid-winter to Inveraray near the head of Loch Fyne, where he arrived and swore the oath around a day late.

His lateness, though, provided just the excuse that certain parties in power were looking for to teach the unruly and lawless highlanders a lesson. Hey, a deadline's a deadline.

The plan was devised by no less a person than the Secretary of State for Scotland, John Dalrymple of Stair, who, to cover his own ass no doubt, secured the King's signature for it.

On the 1st February a division of troops from the Earl of Argyll's regiment arrived in Glencoe under the command of Captain Robert Campbell of Glenlyon. The Campbells had been the hereditary enemies of the MacDonalds for centuries, but in spite of this the Highland tradition of refusing no visitor hospitality was upheld and the Campbell troops were invited into MacDonald homes where they were given food, drink and quarters.

For four days the Campbells enjoyed full MacDonald hospitality, while Captain Robert awaited his superiors' orders. When those orders arrived, they left no room for doubt. He was instructed to butcher everyone, man, woman and child, under the age of 70. There was to be no mercy for any amongst this "sept of thieves."

On the evening of 5th February Captain Robert dined with MacIain and his wife. At first light the following morning his men fell upon the unsuspecting MacDonalds and slaughtered 38 of them, a less than satisfactory result in view of his explicit orders to spare none.

What makes Glencoe so chilling is that it was no inter-clan affair but a deliberate, government sponsored massacre, carried out by regular troops under proper military command, carrying out a national policy.

It is this complicity at the highest levels of government that makes Glencoe so notorious, and it is hard to drive through this wild, haunting place even today without the hairs standing up on the back of your neck.

The Munro's Salute

Angus MacKay attributes this tune to John Dall MacKay, piper to MacKenzie of Gairloch. He further states that MacKay, who was a great favourite with the Munros, was a frequent guest at their stronghold of Fern Donald, the seat of the Munro chiefs at that time. John Dall MacKay was apparently treated with particular kindness and in compliment to the hospitality which he received from the Munros he composed this salute.

Nameless – Hiharin odin hiharin dro

This tune is reproduced in the Piobaireachd Society Book #5 from Angus MacKay's manuscript. A setting, precisely similar, is in Duncan Campbell's manuscript. The tune is provided from the manuscript without a name but is referred to the canntaireachd for the opening phrase. This tune was on the 2024 Gold Medal list.

The Old Woman's Lullaby

In the editorial notes to the Piobaireachd Society's setting of this tune it is said that it was often played at funerals by Donald Cameron and indeed it was played at his own funeral. Several other names have been given to this tune. William Ross (1885) called it Seaforth's Lament, whilst another name George Donald MacKay's Lament is given to it in John MacKay's manuscript. The story of this old woman is included in J.F. Campbell's "Sgeulachdan Gaidhealach". The old woman in question is said to have lived in Jura, and she must have been something of a witch as by various strategies she could get men into her power. In any event, the tune is a very beautiful one.

The Pretty Dirk

Angus MacKay records that the weapon which gave rise to its composition was in the possession of the Laird of MacLeod. Patrick Og MacCrimmon, admiring the dirk very much, was told by the Chief that if he could compose an appropriate tune in its praise it would be presented to him. Patrick wanted nothing more. Next morning he played this tune and MacLeod was so pleased by it that he presented the dirk to MacCrimmon. He added that having composed so excellent a tune in so short a time he more than deserved it.

Rory McLoude's Lament

There is little known about this tune. It is only found in its entirety in the Campbell Canntaireachd, but it is believed to be written for one of the Rory MacLeod's of Dunvegan.

This tune was on the 2017 Senior Competition set list.

Sir James MacDonald of the Isle's Salute

Sir James MacDonald of the Isles flourished from 1613 to 1678. Having gone on a shooting excursion to the island of North Uist in 1664, accompanied by Colonel John MacLeod of Talisker and others, as they were on day deer-stalking, the gun of Colonel MacLeod, who was behind Sir James, accidentally went off, lodging the contents in his leg, on which he fell. The gentlemen present immediately procured blankets and men from the nearest cottages, in order to have him removed to Vallay house.

As soon however as the people of the island became acquainted with what had happened, believing that, instead of being accidental, it was intentional on the part of Talisker, they flew to arms, and gathered from all quarters, when, surrounding the house of William MacDonald of Vallay, they would have slaughtered MacLeod, had it not been from the influence of Vallay and other MacDonalds; but so much was their chief esteemed, and so enraged were the people at the supposed treachery of MacLeod, that it was with difficulty they could be persuaded to disband and return to their homes.

Sir James was confined by this accident for a considerable time, and when he had recovered so far as to be able to leave his chamber, Vallay, who was an excellent performer, on the Bag-Pipes, composed a salutation, to evince joy, in seeing Sir James' restoration of health.

Struan Robertson's Salute

Fionn reminds us of the tradition in the Clan Donnachaidh that this tune was composed to commemorate the appearance of the Clan at the Battle of Bannockburn and that indeed the tune was also known as Teachd chlann Donnachaidh – The Coming of Clan Donnachie. Their arrival did in fact have a great influence on the course of the battle and Robert Bruce expressed his gratitude by desiring that the chief named his oldest son Robert. Following a further service to Royalty some generations later, the name Robertson was adopted by the clan. For a tune going back to events in the 14th century, it is strange that it only appears among the early sources in Angus MacKay's book.

Too Long in this Condition

Henry Whyte states that the composer of this tune was Patrick Mor MacCrimmon who composed it after he had been stripped of his clothes after the Battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715. He took refuge in a nearby house and hid himself in a cupboard; on the return of the occupants he found he could no longer rest there, and there and then composed this tune. The occupants on hearing the sound of MacCrimmon's chanter opened the cupboard and realizing who the piper was gave him both food and clothing.

According to the other story, the tune was composed by Donald Mor MacCrimmon on the occasion of his flight to Sutherland because of some misdeeds where he took refuge in the house of a friend. The friend was being married that day and MacCrimmon went unnoticed, being offered neither food or drink. This piqued him, and he then composed this tune, and played it to draw the attention of the people in the house to himself. When he was recognized he was well entertained. Some have gone so far as to say that this tune is based on Sheridan's song, "Here's to the Maiden of Bashful Fifteen", but as this was not published till 1777, it may well have been Sheridan and not MacCrimmon who was the plagiarise. General Thomason stated that the composer of the tune was Patrick Mor MacCrimmon and gives its date as 1715.

Tulloch Ard (The MacKenzie's Gathering or March)

In his "Ceol Mor", General Thomason gives two versions of this tune. In the first version he states that his authorities are the unpublished manuscripts of Donald MacDonald and Angus MacKay. In the second version of the tune he gives as his authority the latter, but he also states (on p.273) that the version given is Reid's according to Donald MacKay. Tulloch Ard signifies a high hill. It is said that in olden times the Clan MacKenzie used to resort to a high hill named "Tulloch Ard" when they wished to hold a Council of War and it was often the practice on such occasions to have pipers posted to different parts of the country for the purpose of calling the clansmen together. The signal for the pipers to play was a beacon being lit on "Tulloch Ard". Angus MacKay states that the tune itself is very old, but the date of its composition and its author are both unknown. In the heraldic achievement of the family of Seaforth "Tulloch Ard" forms the crest and it is often mistaken for a volcanic mountain, probably due to the fact that it is heraldically termed "A mountain inflamed", and is of course accompanied by the motto "Luceo non uro", i.e. "I enlighten, I do not burn."