

Anderson gave a bold and lively performance of a complete range of Ceol Beag. His playing of the light 2/4 march was in particular most striking and an object lesson to the young pipers in the audience. Audiences for piping recitals in London are over recent months getting larger and this was no exception being extremely well attended.

THE HISTORY OF PIPING

by Captain John MacLellan

The Hereditary Pipers

(continued)

THE MACARTHURS

RESULTS FROM THE PAST — 1957 CROOK OF DEVON —

March — 1 J. Young, 2 R. Lawrie, 3 J.D. Burgess, 4 W. Drysdale.
Strathspey/Reel — 1 W. Drysdale, 2 MacDonald (Glasgow), 3 J.D. Burgess, 4 J. Young.

COMRIE

March — 1 J. Young, 2 D. Rodden, 3 J.D. Burgess/W. Drysdale.
Strathspey/Reel — 1 D. Ramsey, 2 W. Drysdale, 3 P. McFarquhar, 4 D. Maclean

THORNTON

March — 1 J.D. Burgess, 2 D. Ramsey/W. Drysdale.
Strathspey/Reel — 1 W. Drysdale, 2 D. Ramsey, 3 J.D. Burgess.
Piobaireachd — 1 W. Drysdale, 2 D. Ramsay, 3 J.D. Burgess.

ALVA March — 1

ALVA
March — 1 D. MacLean, 2 W. Drysdale, 3 D. Ramsey, 4 J. Young.
Strathspey/Reel — 1 D. Ramsey, 2 W. Drysdale, 3 P. MacFarquhar, 4 D. MacLean.

AIRTH

March — 1 W. Drysdale, 2 D. Ramsey, 3 P. MacFarquhar, 4 D. Stewart.
Strathspey/Reel — 1 D. Ramsay, 2 W. Drysdale, 4 Cpl. Anderson

LONACH

March — 1 W. Drysdale, 2 R.U. Brown, 3 L. Trevell, 4 I. Grant.
Strathspey/Reel — 1 R.U. Brown, 2 W. 3 R. Barron, 4 L. Turrel.
Piobaireachd — 1 R.U. Brown, 2 W. Drysdale, 3 I. Grant, 4 R. Barron

KINLOCH RANNOCH

March — 1 W. Drysdale, 2 D. Ramsay, 3 D. MacDiarmid, 4 D. Rodden.
Strathspey/Reel — 1 D. Ramsay, 2 W. Drysdale, 3 D. Rodden, 4 D. MacDiarmid.

PITLOCHRY

March — 1 W. Drysdale, 2 D. Ramsay, 3 J. Young, 4 D. MacLean.
Strathspey/Reel — 1 D. Ramsay, 2 D. Johnstone, 3 W. Drysdale, 4 G. Dodds.

The MacArthur pipers were hereditary pipers to the MacDonalds of Sleat and anciently to the Lords of the Isles.

There is a tradition that the MacArthur pipers ran a school of piping on the small island of Ulva which is situated off the coast of the Isle of Mull. They were a celebrated race of pipers considered second only to the MacCrimmons. The ancient residence of the Lords of the Isles was Duntalim Castle and in accordance with the custom of the times the MacArthur pipers were granted land at Hunglatter and they set up their teaching establishment at Peingown, near Kilmuir, in the Isle of Skye.

CHARLES MACARTHUR

According to Angus MacKay's excellent notes on the traditional history of ancient piping families, Charles MacArthur was taught by Patrick Og MacCrimmon (c1645-1730) and attended for tuition over a period of eleven years. He was piper to Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat and it is thought that it was of Charles MacArthur that Pennant (who wrote a journal of his tour of the Hebrides) referred to when he wrote: "Take a repast at the house of Sir Alexander Macdonald's piper, who, according to ancient custom, by virtue of his office, holds his lands free"

He was so highly thought of as a player and teacher that Malcolm MacCrimmon sent his son Donald Ruadh to Charles MacArthur for finishing.

In 1781 at the first of the Highland Society of London's competitions he was placed second; he was by that time piper to the Earl of Eglinton. He is credited with composing *Abercairney's Salute* and *The Lament for Sir James MacDonald of the Isles*.

Little is known of his sons Donald and Alexander. Angus MacKay records that Donald was drowned when crossing between Uist and Skye and that Alexander emigrated to America. Charles also had two brothers Donald Bane and Niel.

ANGUS MACARTHUR (? — 1800)

Angus was John Bane's son and nephew of the celebrated Charles. He was thought by Angus MacKay to be the last of the hereditary pipers to the MacDonald of the Isles and accompanied MacDonald to London, where he, Angus, died. While on his deathbed he dictated to John MacGregor a manuscript which contains 30 Piobaireachd. This is the oldest of the manuscripts and a full description of it is contained in the series *The Literature of the Highland Bagpipe* Vol. 1, No. 12, p.8.

In 1790 and 1796 respectively he composed laments for Lady and Lord MacDonald. Donald MacDonald the Edinburgh bagpipe maker was taught by him.

JOHN MACARTHUR

Although the son of Neil, John MacArthur was taught by his uncle, the famous Charles. He was appointed piper to the Highland Society of Scotland and settled in Edinburgh. He was greatly admired for his fine style of performance and was much sought after as a teacher. In this respect he was known as "Professor MacArthur". At the Highland Society's competitions he frequently gave exhibitions of his skill.

Angus MacKay records that in 1783 at the Highland Society's competition John MacArthur played *Lament for Abercairney* and *Salute to Abercairney* after which he and Donald MacIntyre, the first prize taker, played in concert.

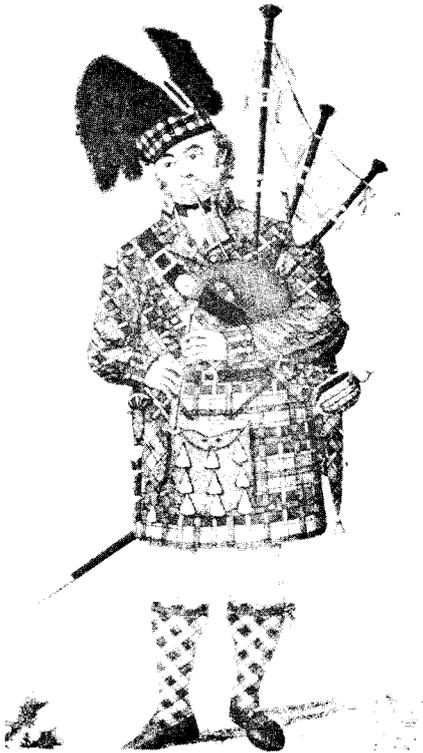
At this gathering the President ordered that: "Hugh Robertson make one of the handsomest Highland bagpipes he possibly could, at his expense, which was to be delivered to the much celebrated performer on the warlike instrument, Professor MacArthur, as a mark of approbation of so great a performer's merit, accompanied with the signed declaration of the whole pipers then present."

He also gave exhibitions of his playing in 1785, and in 1790 when he played

his compositions *Salute to the Prince of Wales* and *Salute to the Highland Society of Scotland*.

JOHN MACARTHUR
(Nephew of "Professor John")

John was piper to Ranald MacDonald, Esq, of Staffa in 1804 when he was awarded 3rd prize at the prize pipe competition in Edinburgh. In 1806 he was awarded 2nd prize, but declined it. A facsimile of his portrait appears in this article.



The style of the MacArthur School of piping is thought to be preserved through the works of Donald MacDonald who acquired his knowledge of Piobaireachd from the MacArthurs, presumably Angus or his cousin "Professor John".

ROBERT REID

Successor to Pipe Major Robert Reid
Bagpipe Maker and Repairer.

MINIATURE PIPES TO ORDER

Premises at — 23 Eastmuir Street,
(off Annick Street)
Glasgow G32 OHS.
041-763-0187

**A MANUAL FOR THE
IRISH UILEANN PIPES**

by Patrick Sky

84 pages, 91 photos, diagrams, sketches make this work the definitive work on the Irish uileann pipes. 33 pages on reed-making, excellent tips and hints for beginners, PLUS discography of great uileann pipe performances and historical notes on the Irish pipes. This is a book for pipers of all persuasions, styles, and idioms. Book \$11.95, Accompanying Cassette \$7.95 Book + Tape \$19.95 (Outside U.S./Canada please add \$2.00 for shipping)

silver ★ spear

publications

P.O. Box 81085
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217

**YOUR RADIO LISTENING
FOR SEPTEMBER**

- ★ **Wednesday 3rd September**
Pipes and drums — featuring Glasgow Skye Association Pipe Band. Pipe Major Donald MacLeod.
- ★ **Wednesday 10th September**
No piping —
Football — Sweden v. Scotland.
- ★ **Wednesday 17th September**
Pipe Major Evan Macrae.
Selection of light music, Piobaireachd, The Macrae's March.
- ★ **Wednesday 24th September**
Chanter. Magazine Programme for the Piping World, Compiled and introduced by Seamus McNeill.

continued from page 4

Doublings on B and C are shown as being made with two D gracenotes. Part II (Fifth Thousand) sees the introduction in one tune only, of the modern method of writing the birl at the end of the part.

All Taorluaths are written with the so-called redundant low A — e.g.



a note combination not played by the majority of pipers now-a-days. Leumluaths (grips) are shown as:



it should be noted that the D gracenote is played on Low A and not on Low G as we do at present. In part 13 the form of this note combination becomes:



Note that the low A is still retained although grips to B & C have the D gracenote on Low G:



The only example of a Taorluath made after D which can be found is in Glen's Tutor where he shows the movement in two forms, both using a B gracenote in preference to the D gracenote used in other Taorluaths, e.g.:



With regard to pointing within the time groups this seldom happens in 2/4 time rhythm, particularly in groups of 3 or 4 notes. Yet in 6/8 time rhythm the time groups of three notes are invariably pointed in Marches, and occasionally in

jigs. The frequency of embellishment is fairly well in accord with common usage, although fewer doublings are used in 2/4 time in four note time groups.

In general the notation of the **Edinburgh Collection** follows that of **David Glen's Collection** moving towards our present day notation with the introduction of the High G gracenoted Birl in some tunes, in the last book of collection. Occasionally too, there appears a doubling on B written as



but not as far as one can make out on the doubling of C.

As far as the writer's impression about melodic content between the two collections is concerned **David Glen's Collec-**

tion of Highland Bagpipe Music wins hands down. The tunes in his **Edinburgh Collection** are generally mediocre, although to be fair some of the books are redeemed with the inclusion of some of the popular competition marches such as *John MacFadyen of Melfort* and *Jeannie Carruther* which appear in Part 10.

In the general progression of improving the competition music, (if we can honestly say what is played today, is an improvement on the past and in all probability it is) there is practically no advancement in Strathspeys and Reels from Book 1 of Glen's initial collection to the last book of his Edinburgh collection. Indeed some of the pointing in the competition marches is surprising for it only leads to stilted and staccato playing.

Both collections contain examples of Piobaireachd in most cases Grounds only, although there are a number of full tunes included. As the next part of this series will contain a review of David Glen's

Piobaireachd contribution, further comment on Ceol Mor will be left until then.

David Glen's Highland Bagpipe Tutor was more comprehensive than those published by his relatives. In contained full instructions as to fingering with a series of exercises to acquire good technique and develop simple and compound rhythm. It is surprising that in his two collections David Glen does not use all the note combinations which he shows in the tutor, they cover the majority of the movements in use today. However, his instructions for beginning to play and tune the bagpipe are far from clear but are an improvement on Angus and William MacKay. A good selection to tunes follow the playing instruction but most are hardly suitable for a beginner, such as four parts of the *Barren Rocks of Aden*, the *71st H.L.J. Quickstep* and the *Reel of Tulloch*, seven parts, the last complete with Crunluath!

Series to be continued

13. **March — "Kilbowie Cottage."*** Wm Lawrie.

The musical score consists of seven staves of music. The first staff is the main melody, followed by a first ending (1st) and a second ending (2nd). The music is in 2/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and ornaments.

*The Residence of John MacColl, The Champion Piper. The Edinburgh Collection, Part XI.