

1, 2. *Grand + Stup.* XLVII. *Israel Mackay.*

6. Cruin S.

7. Cruin S.

**Isabel Mackay**

I learnt this from A. Cameron who is very fond of it. Gillies does not play it much.

(A) Sound this semi-quaver well.

\* | The first variation is considerably faster than the thumb. A. Cameron plays it much faster than anyone else I have ever heard. I think that the 6/8 time in which I have written it represents his way pretty well. The quavers marked (B) should be well sounded and should not be merely half the value of the following note as written by A. MacKay. Care must be taken not to scamp the double echoes though playing them faster than I recollect their being played anywhere else. Slow down at the end before going into the Taorluath.

Taorluath and Cruinluath singings should be slow and doublings considerably faster than the singings. Play in accordance with the rules laid down under MacSwain of Roaig's Lament.<sup>1</sup>

**Subsequent note dated 17.2.21**

With reference to \* above, A. Cameron writes (15.2.21, letter filed on file of Glengarry's March in the Collection) "Isabel MacKay. The Siubhal Ordaig is played almost in time of the ground, but an dara Siubhal is played faster – but not *too* fast".

**Extract from letter to N.J. McKay dated 7.8.46**

No definite rules can be laid down about the tempo of a piobaireachd variation. It all depends on the particular tune. Sandy Cameron, from whom I learnt, used to play some variations quite fast, and then slow down to the Taorluath singling. The doubling of variation 1 of Mary MacLeod<sup>2</sup> and variation 2 of Isabel Mackay were two examples. In most cases he played Taorluath and Cruiluath doublings distinctly faster than the singlings, but, so far as the other variations were concerned, there was not much difference in pace between singling and doubling. In a long tune like Donald Ban MacCrimmon's Lament, the urlar doubling was just a shade faster than the urlar, and the doublings of the next two variations were distinctly faster than the singlings. Otherwise the tune might take half an hour to play. Most piobaireachds should be finished in a quarter of an hour. Two examples of what should take 10 minutes each are A Kiss of the King's Hand and My King has landed in Moidart.

1. S. 29-31
2. S. 55.