

Set Tunes Demonstration

Chair Andrew Wright.

The first player this morning is Alan Forbes. The first tune he will play is The Earl of Ross's March, composed by Donald Mor MacCrimmon. The second tune is Mary's Praise. This is a little bit special because it is one of the few piobaireachd with only two phrases. Sometimes these tunes can get boring, but in Mary's Praise this doesn't happen because each phrase is in a different key from the other one.

Alan Forbes

The Earl of Ross is one of the tunes in book 10 that is currently being revised. All I can say is that Malcolm McRae's comment was that it is a suitable case for a PhD Thesis.

Alan Forbes plays the ground and variations 1 and 2 of The Earl of Ross's March, and Mary's Praise to the start of the tripling variation.

AW

Now we have Robert Wallace who is going to play part of Scarce of Fishing, which is also known as Loch Nell's Lament. It is also known in another MS as O'Kelly's Lament, which might indicate that there is an Irish connection. And it appeared in previous Piobaireachd Society series. The Piobaireachd Society was formed in 1903, and re-formed in 1925, because some of the tunes which had been published did not please the editors. Scarce of Fishing was one of them, but the funny thing about it is that the original setting is more played than the modernised setting of 1925. I think that is what Robert might play.

The second tune that Robert is going to give us is The Bells of Perth, which are 15 miles down the road in St John's Church. I've a little story about the Bells of Perth. About 15 years ago I got the job of playing the Piobaireachd up in the church tower one Saturday during the tourist season. I went along and played it, and I went up the bell tower, and in the corner were five little bells on a wooden tressle. The tune has only 5 notes. And the notes of the bells were exactly the same as the notes of the tune.

RW

I am playing the variation, not the doubling of the ground, as most people play it today.

Robert Wallace plays Scarce of Fishing to the start of Variation 3.

Now I will play a part of The Bells of Perth. I'll play it the way I originally got the tune from Bob Hardie. It is quite distinctive. He plays down to the low Gs all the time, and the pendulum variation is quite distinctive too.

Robert Wallace plays The Bells of Perth to the start of the Taorluath variation.

AW

The next player is Jack Taylor. Jack is going to play a silver medal tune, Lament for the Castle of Dunyveg. There is another piobaireachd associated with the Castle of Dunyveg, and that is The Piper's Warning to his Master. There is a nice setting in Colin Campbell's Canntaireachd with an extra variation, and I have a feeling that Jack might play it.

The second tune he is going to play is My King has Landed in Moidart which is another grinding out bottom hand tune, and there is a nice setting which introduces the note C from Colin Campbell's Canntaireachd, and to me it adds a little bit of variation to it.

Jack Taylor

I'll start off, just to settle the pipes down, with one of the tunes set for the Gold Medal this year, Lament for MacSwan of Roaig.

Jack Taylor plays the MacSwan of Roaig to the end of V1 singling.

I will now play Lament for the Castle of Dunyveg. I think it is a fine tune, and as Andrew says, there is an additional variation in the Campbell Canntaireachd. It is mostly played as Angus MacKay wrote it, with a ground, dithis singling and doubling, Taorluath and Crunluath in the same form. It has a fairly straightforward structure. In the Campbell Canntaireachd the 2nd phrase in line 2 is elaborated, and is quite different. I'll put that in, because I think it gives a little bit of extra to the tune. Then there is an additional variation, which really goes quite far from the theme. It is printed on the right hand page of the Piobaireachd Society's collection, no need to delve into websites, just get the old fashioned book out, and it is there. It is very beautiful, it employs the

same mid phrase in the second line, and I've put that phrase into the second line of the variations, rather than what Angus MacKay wrote.

Jack Taylor plays Lament for the Castle of Dunyveg to the Dithis doubling.

I'll now play the Donald MacDonald setting of My King has Landed in Moidart. I see this as a sad tune, and the introduction of the C from the Campbell Canntaireachd, gives it a different flavour. There is another setting where it is played a note up.

In Donald MacDonald there is a singling, a doubling, and a tripling in the dithis variation.

Jack Taylor plays My King has Landed in Moidart to the start of the Taorluath variation.