

THE CAMPBELL CANNTAIREACHD NOTATION

(Revised 2000 by R.D. Cannon)

This is the notation used in the manuscripts compiled by Colin Campbell, who was piper to the Earl of Breadalbane, at Ardmaddy House, in Nether Lorn, Argyll. Canntaireachd is a system of vocalising pipe music, which was used by the early teachers of piobaireachd, and is still used to some extent today. The basic principle is that vowels and m or n sounds carry the notes of the melody, and consonants represent short grace notes, grips, throws etc. The Campbell notation is considered to be an adaptation of sung canntaireachd, modified in various ways to produce a written record. For further details see the article "Canntaireachd and Colin Campbell's verbal notation" by Frans Buisman, in *Piping Times*, 50, No. 3, December 1997.

In the present series of books, the Campbell MSS have been used as sources, and the Campbell notation is also used in the editorial notes, when quoting from other sources. It must be emphasised that the MSS have not yet been edited in full: the information given here is intended to help the reader to follow the editorial notes in the present books, and does not claim to be a comprehensive key to the original. It should also be noted that descriptions of movements apply to the ways they are commonly played today, and do not imply any speculations as to how Colin Campbell himself would have played them.

Pronunciation

The Campbell notation as such was probably never used extensively for singing, and some of the vocables would be difficult if not impossible to pronounce. But the following suggestions will cover most cases. Vowels: short *a, e, i, o* as English; long *a, e, i, o* as in English "hah", "hay", "he", "hoe". Double vowel in *hio*, pronounce the *i* as a short *y* before the long *o*. Consonants: *h, t, v* as English; *b, d* also approximately as English, or better as Gaelic, the *b* intermediate between English *b* and *p*, the *d* intermediate between English *d* and *t*; *ch* as Scots *ch*, or better as Gaelic *ch* in *cheann* or *chi*.

Melody Notes

	plain	with high G gracenote*	with E grace note	with D grace note
Low G	em,m	him	em	dam, bam
Low A	en, in, n	hin	en	dan
B	o	hio	eo	to
C	ho	ho	eo	do
D	a, da, ba	ha	ea	—
E	e, de	che	—	—
F	ve, dhe, he	he	—	—
High G	di, vi, hi	hi, chi	—	—
High A	I	—	—	—

*high A grace note before or after high G

Throws and Grips

On low A, *ban, bain*, B *tro*, C *dro*, D *tra*.

From D to D *adeda* or *ademda*, to E from a lower note *dre*, from a higher note *edre*, to F from a lower note *dare* or *dâre*, from a higher note *vedare*, to high G from a low-hand note *bari*, from E or F *dari*, to high A *dili*.