

A Complete Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe

Joseph MacDonald 1760

Preface – A Brief Background of Joseph MacDonald and Family

Murdo MacDonald, father of Patrick and Joseph MacDonald, obtained his degree at St. Andrews University in 1722 when he was 26 years old. In 1726, he began his lifelong ministry in Durness in the north of Scotland. MacDonald exercised a wonderful influence in his parish for he was a powerful and melodious singer with a love of music that was to bear fruit in the achievements of his sons and of Rob Donn, a bard and poet. Despite the poet's lack of any formal musical education, Donn was to compose more of his own original airs than any other Gaelic poet of his century and their excellence is one of the most precious gifts he received from his parish minister. Murdo MacDonald preached to his parishioners in Gaelic exactly as he wrote in English in his diary, because he noted on more than one occasion that he had done so.

It is hard to re-enter a literary environment so different from today's, in which poetry still played a central part in people's lives and circulated by oral tradition alone as fast as the contents of any book in a public library. The bagpipe musical tradition was also one of an oratory disposition relying on oral transmission between members of the bagpipe musical community. Patrick and Joseph MacDonald would change that oral tradition by writing out Highland airs and describing a complete theory of pibroch playing. Joseph MacDonald's *A Complete Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe* explains the intricacies and requirements of such compositions in detail.

Patrick MacDonald, Joseph's elder brother, was appointed a minister in Kilmore in Lorne and would later return to Durness in 1754, his theological studies completed. On his return, he would report that his fifteen-year-old brother, Joseph, was making considerable progress in his musical knowledge under their father's instruction and already "played on the violin, with an easy flowing execution," in addition to have "made considerable progress on the bagpipe." Of particular import during Joseph's time of learning the Highland bagpipe was that the suppression of the bagpipe after the "Forty-Five Rebellion" had evidently not been enforced in Durness.

The "Forty-Five Rebellion" is of particular note in Highland bagpipe music tradition as it refers to the rebellion in 1745 and the eventual defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden in 1746 and the following punitive English actions taken against the Scottish Highlands. Among those punitive actions was the suppression of the bagpipe, seizure of land from Scottish lords, proscription of Highland dress, and the disarmament of the Scots making it illegal to possess a gun. The lack of enforcement of the suppression of the bagpipe during Patrick and Joseph's time in Durness meant they were reared in a cultural tradition unstifled by the time's political or religious prejudice. Thus, their contribution to the bagpipe musical tradition and culture was unadulterated by English influence, just as the poet Ron Donn's contributions had been, leading the contributions to complement one another.

Ultimately, Joseph created a collection of piobaireachd and of Gaelic airs, the former which was lost when he took it to India where, at the age of twenty-three, he passed in 1763. Fortuitously, Joseph had copied the collection of Gaelic airs for his sister in Scotland and later, in 1784, the collection was published by his brother Patrick. This would be the earliest printed collection of Gaelic airs ever to appear in Scotland. Eventually, Patrick would also publish a collection of bagpipe music that included his brothers *Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe* in 1803, which includes the earliest analysis of the structure of bagpipe musical tradition that anyone had ever attempted. This collection had been drafted and composed by Joseph in 1760 while embarked on a ship to India a mere three years before his death. The early death of Joseph MacDonald at the age of twenty-three is one of Scotland's incalculable losses. Regrettably, Murdo MacDonald joined Joseph in death in 1763, followed by Rob Donn in 1778. The great Scottish poet Robert Burns would be born in 1759.

Acknowledgements

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Campbell Naismith is credited with countless hours transcribing Joseph MacDonald's *A Complete Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe* from images of the manuscript for the purpose of typesetting the manuscript and its music for the ease and accessibility of future readers and scholars.

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Finally, credit is, of course, due to Joseph MacDonald and family; for Joseph having the interest and scholarly ability to both draft and compose such an informative manuscript, at the age of twenty, and his family for publishing Joseph's work to benefit future generations of bagpipe players, teachers, and scholars.

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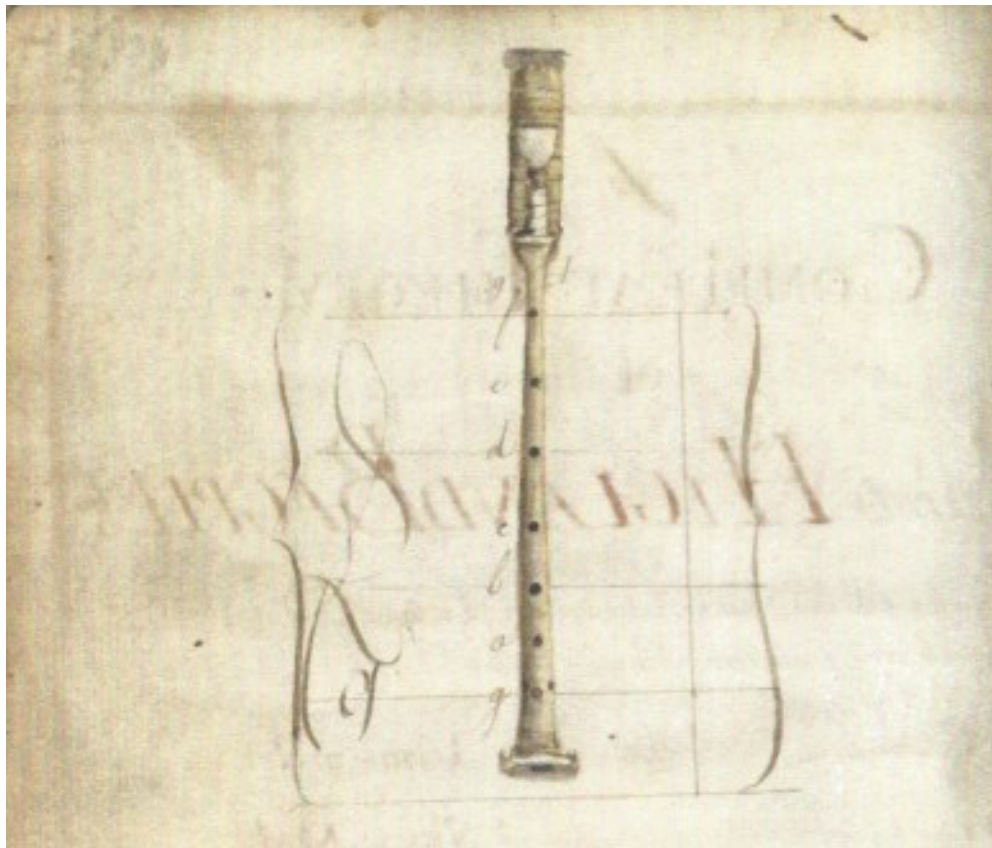
A Complete Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe
Joseph MacDonald 1760¹

A Complete Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe containing all the Shakes, Introductions, Graces, and Cuttings which are peculiar to this instrument. Reduced to order of method, fully explained and noted at Large in 58 tables and examples. With all the Terms of Art in which this instrument was originally taught by the 1st Masters and Composers in the Islands of Skye and Mull.

Also, a full account of the time, style, taste of composition of each type of music with examples of each in the genuine and native style of this instrument and an account of the rules and method by which the pipe composition and time were regulated.

To which is added, Directions and examples for the proper execution and Cutting of the pipe Reels composed by the same masters in the Isles and Highlands.

J. MacDonald



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Scale²



There is no natural C or F in the Bagpipe Scale, nor has it any flats or sharps as neither the Compass of this instrument or the nature of its compositions can well admit of any. The few that might be played would be an entire deviation from the genuine and original style of this music which we alone intend to discover with the rules invented for it by the first and most eminent masters of this instrument.

A disposition of the notes in the Table serving likewise as an exercise of the scale.



By this; the scale is exercised and a nice ear may easily distinguish the peculiarity of the style already appearing in this order of the notes, as shall be soon more plain, the blowing of them must be strong, steady, and equal – which at first is a little hard upon any beginner as it exercises their breath and lungs a little; but practice will give them additional strength of breath and make this familiar and easy. The movement of each finger must be as high as possible that they may return with greater force. For true pipe music, depending chiefly on the disposition and execution of the fingers, must be so performed, with all the strength as well as agility of the fingers to make it well played.

Na Crahinin³

The first species of Shakes dividing the note into 3 distinct parts. Called in our language Na Crahinin.

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1st Table



This is properly a beat and not a shake though in Gaelic the word implies as much. The first things to be noted here is the Principal note (which you see set at large) and the small introductory note that is immediately connected with it. Tis this Diminutive note that distinguishes and divides this Beat, and every one of them refers to their holes below; the principals have none marked below them as they are supposed to be well known from the scale. The holes are marked before the diminutive holes both because there is a small difference of the fingers in their application here and then that they may be the more immediately known. The touching of these little introductory notes must be so quick and slight that they cannot be said to be sounded but only beat upon, as they are properly the Cutting or Division of the Notes. So that these holes that are marked above (which answer the little notes opposite) are no more than beat upon. This you cannot be at a loss in by but a slight notice of the notes, with their holes and the given directions.

Then observe in this scale that there are 9 shakes, the numbers at the head of each. The 1st and 5th differ from the rest. The latter is the nicest and finest beat of the whole and to make it quite plain and obvious they are performed as follows, High G before you begin; the 1st little introductory note at the beginning of each bar falls into the Principal next it as Quick as any of the rest though it's no beat; in High G, no holes marked belong as they are the same as in the first scale. If there is you'll see them marked accordingly. Then the first dividing note in the 1st shake (upon G) arises the fore finger of the upper hand (for some use the right and others the left) so quick as that the motion can be scarce observed, letting it fall into place of it as suddenly which the Principal Note next it and which must be full sounded. In like may let the 3rd little note of the 1st shake fall into its principal which is the same note with the former 2, this raises the 3rd finger of the upper hand, which is directly found from the holes.

In the 2nd Beat (upon A), the little finger touches the lowest hole twice with the same quickness. The finger at the Beat drawing back gently from the hole; at the same time that it prepares it for returning again to the shakes as the little finger. Cannot so conveniently manage itself as the rest, therefore, it must be done with this cast. This shake very frequently closes the Adagio or Ground and is generally play 4 times over to complete the last bar, but never exceeds this number.

In the 3rd Beat (upon B), the 3rd and little finger of the lower hand beat upon both their holes at once. Sounding the last Note as they are directed by the time of the bars, viz., half as long

again as any of the former 2 which are Quavers. You see the beat upon this and the former (vizet) is very plain, as in each you see the holes twice struck pointing each to their diminutive notes.

In the 4th Beat (upon C) the 2 Midd fingers of the lower hand beat in the same way upon their holes (all the rest being shut as in the former 3) N.B. The fingers that beat are marked to in the 1st and 5th there is no such mark as they are differently performed.

In the 5th Beat (upon D) which is the nicest, observe how the holes lead your fingers (after 1st playing the introductory note in the beginning of the beat as in all the rest) and you'll find that the 2 Midd fingers of the lower hand cast off the forefinger of the same and to make the 3rd stroke of the beat the forefinger (returning the Chace) falls down and casts off the 2 Midd fingers. This performs the shake; The holes of the Principal notes are here marked and their little introductory are close by them. Follow them and you'll find it this in effect.

In the 6th Shake (upon E) you see the 3rd finger of the upper hand beats twice upon its hole (all the rest shut but the lowest finger).⁴

In the 7th Beat (upon F) you see the middle finger of the upper hand beats twice upon its hole in the like manner. (All the other holes shut but the little finger).

In the 8th (upon G) the first introductory note changes; as this which was before an introductory to the rest is now become a principal and takes a higher note to introduce it. Then it takes the Thumb hole which needs no directions.

The 9th Beat (upon A) is but simple and being the Thumb hole is beat upon twice with the thumb.

This slow species of a shake (Beat) which belongs to the ground or Adagio of Marches being minutely considered we shall add one or 2 General observations viz.

1st The Learner is allowed at first to sound each note he beats upon that he may understand the nature of the beats but afterwards they must be touched so slight that the noise of the finger on the hole is to be distinctly heard: not the least sound of the note. In which there is some Art and Practice required. This is a shake many that pretend to be masters of this instrument are deficient in and bad players are commonly 1st discovered.

2nd Beside a slight agility in touching these holes so as only to cut the note distinctly, the finger at each beat and movement must rise as high as it is possible to lift them for the reasons already mentioned and Besides the beat by this is much easier executed.

3rd That the position of the lower hand in this and many other shakes depends upon the notes that are beat or shaken upon. E.g.: A, B, C which is the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th beats have the lowest hole all shut with the fingers; as when they beat they are all covered. E, F, G, A (the 6th, 7th, 8th,

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and 9th beats) have the lowest hole open because they are so in the scale. The 1st and 5th are exceptions. N.B. The first line in this scale contains the plain notes. The 2nd the notes discovered in their instructions and the 3rd contain their holes.

Ludh Sleamhuin

So called because it seems to slide along from its smoothness being all slurred though well divided.

2nd Table



This is one of the slowest species of Pipe running or allegro and is commonly the first composed on the ground which it generally follows very close (as does most of these runnings) taking in the heads of the Adagio in their uppermost notes which alone contain the variety of the run. The lower or second of each Couplet being generally the same. This species of pipe variation is more properly an agreeable play on the ground than any real Variety of composition and when properly executed has a very good effect.

This requires a great agility of finger in managing the introductions to keep at their due length and assistance from each other; at the same time to carry them neat and nimbly on neither interfering. – Each Principal having an introduction note before it to divide and cut it. Here the holes of these diminutive notes are set down which none may be easily discovered without setting down the notes.

This specimen is enough for every running of the kind which will be frequently met with. The Dots that run parallel to the introductory Holes is to show that these holes are immediately Connected to the Principal and must directly fall in to them. The Slurr below confirms it.

Ludh Sleamhuin – 2nd Species⁵

3rd Table



This running is so like the former that it is always played the second time as a double (or doubling) of the former; it is rather simpler, but when well applied is a very agreeable vicissitude or alternativement, is moreso in the Pipe than any other Instrument and the small compass of it

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very often obliges it to this variety but the Art, Invention, and Elegance discovered in the Cuttings, Graces, Divisions makes almost this Defect up and renders the Instrument Curious and worth of attention, as will afterwards appear.

The Mark of this Cutting

4th Table



Here all the notes in the Scale except the lowest are cut distinctly after the rules taught by the composers from the earliest times of this Music, this they never before now Set or noted down. There is scarce a note plainer than this when they are played by themselves. Each single note being thus cut by 3 or 4 which must be played with vast strength and Agility of Finger.

The fingers (not withstanding all these little notes which must be carefully noticed) very evidently cast off each other here and observe that they are all set out from the little finger or lowest note except the 5th, 6th, and 8th Cuttings (as you'll see by their numbers) which as the taste of the note seems to be different, they take a different Note to set out from, which is D as you see in the example.

These slurs signify that the one Shake or Cutting Sets out from the last or neighboring note, because they do best with a continued breath as the bagpipe is one continued Sound. To make these shakes quite plain and obvious notice as follows:

1st That in the first cutting (which is on A) set out at first from A, the little introductory note in the beginning (that is) blow it and when it sounds you have nothing more ado than to cast off the forefinger of the Lower Hand with the little finger of the same then return as quickly with the forefinger and cast off the same then return as quickly with the forefinger and cast off the little one; continuing a little on the note after this is done and So you have the cutting on A which is the first, without any more trouble.

(2nd on B) In the 2nd cutting (on B) setting first out from the last note you Cut (which is A), Cast off the forefinger of the lower hand with the 3rd and little fingers of the same then fall as suddenly with the forefinger and cast them both off and you have the Cutting. Look and see whether the holes will not cast off your fingers according to this direction.

(3rd on C) In the third (upon C) Setting out in the same way from the last note the 3rd and little finger of the lower hand casts off the forefinger; which is no sooner done than the forefinger fall down and casts off the 2 midd fingers and thus you have the cutting – look to the holes and they'll show you so.⁶

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In the 4th Cutting (upon D) – Setting from the last note; The 2 Midd fingers cast off the forefinger then it returns the same way and casts off the midd fingers after which the forefinger rises and completes the cutting.

In the 5th Cutting (upon E) the directions as above (in the beginning). The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd fingers on the lower hand cast off the little finger of the same and the 3rd finger of the upper hand, and the same falling down casts off the little finger of the same and that falls down and casts off the 3rd finger. Or in other words the 3rd and 4th fingers of the upper hand rise and fall alternately; The 3rd finger rising 1st and last. This particular cutting has the name **Creanludh**. The meaning of clymax(?) Which the other terms of this instrument also shall provide fair justness, only observe that this particular cutting found amongst the last runnings and makes up the last part of a very grand species of variation or cutting called in our language **Tuludh agus Creanludh**, the latter part of which cutting is that we now describe and which the learner must take a second look at on this account.

The 6th Cutting (on F) is but a species of this last named is performed in the same way with the former (viz) setting out from the last note you played, the first and 2nd finger rise alternately, the 2nd finger rising 1st and last, as the holes will direct you.

(G) The 7th cutting excels all the rest for neatness of execution and is called by the **Barludh**. It cut that note with a vast propriety and is very graceful in some of its applications. Deduce it in the same manner from the former note, cast the 3rd finger of the upper hand, not the whole lower hand, or rather let the whole lower hand (after being once shut and sounded); casts of its little finger and the 3rd of the upper hand, which directly falls down and casts off the midd finger and then it falls down and casts off both that and (the) 3rd finger off and discovers the note that's cut (viz G) – thus the cutting is performed. This shake is of great use and very frequently used.

(A) the 8th is simple compared with the rest and needs no direction. This leads to a little beat used on this hole the 2nd time the Adagio (or ground) of the March is played and serves for a kind of variation until the runnings come in called Luna Hordaig as follows.

Luna Hordaig

5th Table



Luna Horadig (or the Beat of the Thumb) is too plain to need any Directions and is to be found in most Grounds; Here follows an exercise upon the first 9 cuttings on the first table or scale. Creanludh (the 5th shake) is to be noticed here also.

Exercise upon Na Crahinin in the 1st Table after the Scale

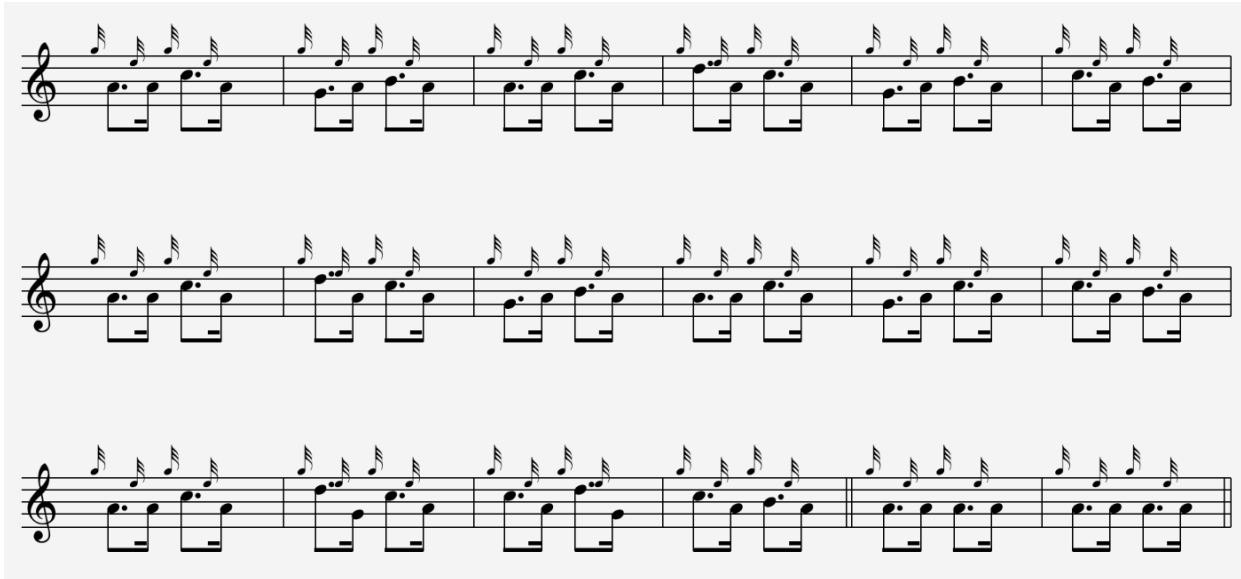


In this Specimen (though Simple and Natural) the vein of true Pipe Composition appears and it happens to be after pretty much the Style of Laments that are composed on this Key; Though this has no variety Composition⁷ as we don't at present mean; it's yet there may be a regularity of composition easily perceived as this is preserved in all true Pipe Composition; except such pieces as are Designedly otherwise of which there are a few as will after appear. This exercise is divided into 4 regular parts and in each part there is 4 bars – after the plan of most Pipe Grounds or Adagios. Here there are also 2 shakes belonging to the 4th table upon E and F – they are marked and whenever this is seen it denotes that this cutting must be played. That on E you marked above with “Crean” for Creanludh which is the name of this cutting. This will then sufficiently exercise the 1st table to which you may refer upon an Difficulty.

This exercise on must be all introduced in the manner you see the little notes set down – and the learner must be always used with these introductions until he can introduce them properly of his own accord if he has any Taste or Genius without which no kind of music can be well taught him. As we have given an exercise of the first it is as proper to set down an exercise of what is hitherto noted. So we can go on for an exercise of the 2nd table.

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Exercise of Ludh Sleamhuin in the 2nd Table



This is a short specimen of the style of this running though in many compositions it is of great Compass – That the learner may not be in the least-Stand the 2 first introductory or dividing notes are set down and after which manner the whole run goes on. Here follows the Specimen of Exercise on the 3rd Table which is no more than a doubling of this or rather a little Variation of it the second time it is played.

Exercise of Ludh Leamhuin in the 3rd Table



This can be called no different species of running being so near the former but is a very agreeable vicissitude or Variation of it. These 2 kinds of runnings will not do to be in the least slovenly played; for if the Introductory notes be but in the least heard at all, it is quite awkward

and unmusical by any other species of Allegro – The general rule for both these exercises is no more than that the fore and 3rd fingers of the upper hand rise and alternately with an imperceptible quickness in the rising and falling (though there must be the difference of Notes Length in tone and sound between them) and then it has a pretty enough effect when the Division of the notes is carried on neat and clean.

There is one other remark on this kind of cutting in the 2nd and 3rd table which (being a little nice) must be refined by his direction only begun.

Exercise of the 4th Table⁸



In this exercise the learner may clearly see the use of the cuttings in the 4th table and how they are applied and for the easier understanding; there are figures of reference placed here (for every shake) to the 4th Table; where they will be seen and explained at first sight. - - This little Adagio (or rather exercise) has some composition in it and is not unlike the Ground of some Marches. At the figure of 3 in the beginning the 2 little cutting notes are placed in order to show how it is begun without putting the learner to the trouble of looking back. Here follow another kind of cutting very frequently met with.

5th Cutting Docheidh an Ludan (The Mark of this cutting “)



This cutting is no more than a common termination of a Bar or Passage shows that they all must be deduced from the little finger as the original from which any cutting has its emphasis.

If these Principal Notes were played plain they would be of no effect, but it may be now very plainly perceived how they and most of the finest cuttings and divisions and Graces of this instrument owe their derivation and Emphasis to the execution of the Little Finger. Here follows a curious and excellent Cutting of the notes in which the use of the Little finger is manifest.

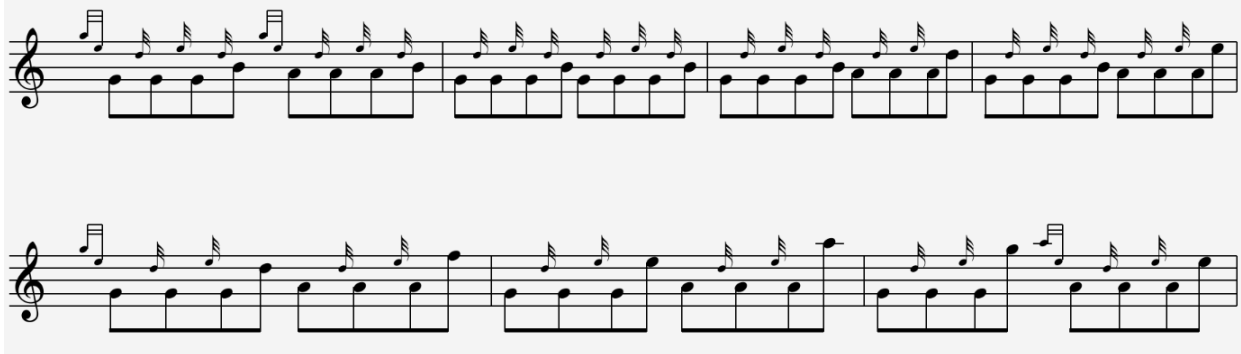
⁸ Manuscript Page 8

6th Cutting



There is little or no direction needful to explain this cutting however curious or often used – the holes being marked for executing them; besides the Learner will be too great a proficient for such minute directions in Tables of no greater execution than these having been made prepared for them before he sees them. This general direction runs through all the tables. That the dividing notes must be cut with strength and prodigious quickness when they once come to be full learned and understood; but till then each little dividing note must be sounded full and distinct lifting each finger slow, but as high as possible and where the dividing holes are played returning the fingers to their holes with an emphasis.

Na Le Leicinín 7th Cutting⁹



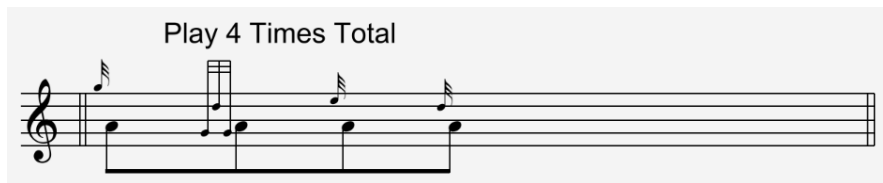
This is a running excessively martial and pretty and so easy that it may be comprehended at first sight: The Holes of the first bar are sufficient for a direction to the whole. You see the forefinger of the lower hand and the 3rd of the upper hand (which is the next finger to it) rise and fall alternately and there is no more in it than this. For the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th bars; the fingers that rise are only made which are the very same with the former. They happen to be in a triangular form and the Dots lead up to the Principals of each. N.B. that any Principal Note is the same way played as in the Scale and need no directions. If at any time they vary it shall be noted.

It is scarce credible from the sight of the Notes of this running what a pretty execution it is when well played in some Marches particularly. This is commonly used as the 2nd or 3rd running and it is (when played the second time or double) ended in the following manner – which is exceptionally Grand and Pretty.

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7th Table

8th Cutting



Thus it frequently ends and this is repeated; the first 4 notes were sufficient for that part and the figure of 4 would be set down in place of 2 (i.e.) it would be repeated 4 times instead of twice and the holes of the first 4 notes show the 2 bars. There is a vast execution in this cutting and he must be no bad proficient that manages it well as it requires more agility of fingers than any of the former examples and many that follows. It would not have been yet set down, but its immediate connection with this running on the other side (as being its conclusion) makes it occasional. [the 7th cutting is on the LHS of the MS, the 8th cutting is on the RHS of the MS]. That there are dividing notes before the 2nd Principal of each bar to be played with equal swiftness and it also prepares the Learner for one of very pretty execution soon to follow. This running is sometimes played in the following manner:

9th Cutting



In this example¹⁰ the cutting runs up the most of the scale in which each Principal has three dividing notes pointing to their holes which will insensibly lead the fingers without any further Directions than that when once they discover the Cutting they are to be played with the forementioned clarity viz. that one finger will only appear to cast off another and this in the proper Execution cannot be perceived. Thus in effect here; in the 1st Bar; the little finger falls down and casts off the forefinger, which again returns and casts off the little Finger – proceedings to the other 2 notes as the holes direct.

In the second bar the first dividing notes are done by the 2 lowest fingers of the lower hand's casting off the fore fingers which directly falls and casts off the 2 lower fingers – proceeding to the other 2 notes as above.

The dividing hole in the third bar begin with the 2 midd fingers falling down and casting off the forefinger of D which falls down and casts off the 2 former proceeding as above.

In dividing the 4 Bar, the 2 lowest finger of the lower hand being placed after the Introductory is played. The first and second Fingers of D fall and cast off the next finger of the

¹⁰ Manuscript Page 10

upper hand which is the third, upon which it falls and casts off the former two, proceeding to the other 2 notes as above.

In the 5th Bar the third finger of the upper hand falling down casts off the middle finger D running as above and so on.

10th Cutting



This is a very beautiful run and is very easily executed each note falling onto its Principal and every dividing note setting off from the former Principal i.e. The under hand remains in the same position in which the last note (or Principal) left it until it falls into the next Principal as may be plainly perceived by the Tables which needs no other direction Here follows an exercise of this table.

Diversity of the 10th Cutting



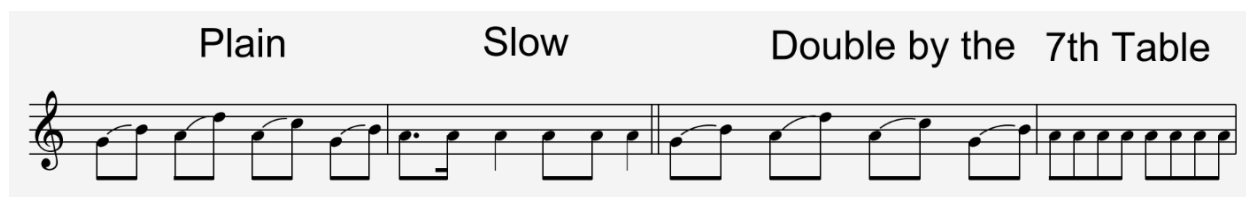
This is a sufficient specimen of this running which when it is used is commonly the second after the Adagio and is in its Proper Language called _____. The little dividing notes are placed hard by their Principals into which they must fall with the utmost quickness. N.B. That the Standard Notes of this running are only 2 viz. G and A and either of these are the first of each couplet. That the variable notes of this running are always the second of each Couplet which have the compass of the whole scale as you may notice in both examples. Lastly that the little dividing note falls from the Thumb hole which is the last and highest. This running when it's doubled is beautifully conclude that example in the 7th tables as follows their numbers marked.

Table 10th above the running – Table 7th Conclusion of this running



Thus the 7th table completes this running which runs beautifully when well executed. This 7th table is often found dispersed through the running but never except when it is doubled. In the following example you have this running plain and the same passage doubled.¹¹

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The last bar of this running is generally played 4 times and is common to the following running which also concludes with the 7th table; when it is double. This last bar of the plain is played so slow time seems to be changed.



This gives an idea of this running – Plain and Doubled – which generally follows the former and that it seems very plain as it is set yet is a most martial and beautiful execution. Next follow a grand Species of running in the example below and one of the 3 last variations of the Pipe March mentioned in page 8th called Tuludh.

Tuludh – first noted plain – 11th Cutting



This is a cutting of beautiful execution and it appears more so when it is considered as only the cutting of 3 notes which are all the same and it cut ever so elegantly on any other instrument cannot have the same effect as this. It being a group of notes so artificially assembled, as not three of the same notes and of the same length have a noble variety. It is noted above in the most contracted way; which is the plainest and is covering the notes which divide or cut this species of running. The Principal or variable note points to the same above which is not altered; and the small notes are the execution of the other 2 notes which are invariable. These small notes being fingered the same way as in the scale there is no occasion for writing down their holes one only differs which therefore points to its holes. Immediately following this a cutting or more execution which is made up on this and the 5th shake (or cutting) in the 4th Table called in its proper language Creanludh (See Music on Staff Below) which is no more than a distinct dividing of the three notes. This joined with Tuludh as in the 11th Table makes up the following running called Tuludh and Creanludh as you'll see at Large in the Table below.

Creanludh / Tuludh and Creanludh 12th Cutting



This in many Marches is the last running. It serving by the Length and Execution of it as a graceful conclusion to the whole. The joining of both the cuttings (viz. Tuludh and Creanludh) here are easily perceived and for the greater plainness their names are placed above. All the rest of the notes except those that are marked are the same as in the scale.

This cutting as it is long and composed of a number of notes must be executed with a proportional strength of fingers without which it will make a disagreeable noise. Let the lowest note from which the whole Cutting sets off be played with all the strength of the little finger, the beat of which must be distinctly heard. N.B. that in¹² C and D the cutting sets off from the midd and forefingers, which must fall down with all the strength possible to make the other fingers cast off with the great force and thus the whole cutting is performed.

The small introductory note in the beginning of the bar must always be played and fall into the Principal with as great a Quickness as the dividing notes. For this reason it is made shorter than a Demisemiquaver.

The first Principal or Variable note must be always played longer and the execution to follow with strength and swiftness of finger. It is the same way with all the grand cuttings this being one of them – also the 7th table.

The next Grand Variation is an improvement or rather a new version of this and it frequently ends marches and has a graceful effect nor has it the execution of the former. It is the name of Suibhil Amach or Creanludh Foisgilt because in it the lower hand is almost kept open and the upper hand executes most. It is a species of the running having the 5th shake in the 4th table in the last part of it. (See the example).

Creanludh Foisgilt: Suibhill amach 13th Cutting



Nothing can be plainer than this example. Both the first two Principals of each bar here, variable notes, the upper shakes remain the same; Observe that the lower fingers remain in the

¹² Manuscript Page 12

same position that the 2 Principal leaves them in, while the upper shake is playing, as you see by the holes, but this Direction is sufficient alone.

In the next table is a cutting of greater execution than any yet being compounded of more notes, exercising the strength and agility of the fingers to the utmost. This running, of which there are 2 or 3 different kinds, the last grandest and most difficult species of Variation; for which the Learner may be by so many different exercises well prepared but requires more practice for a neat execution than any of the rest by the number of notes that must be cut. The 2 low holes are those from which they are all set out. See the example.

14th Cutting



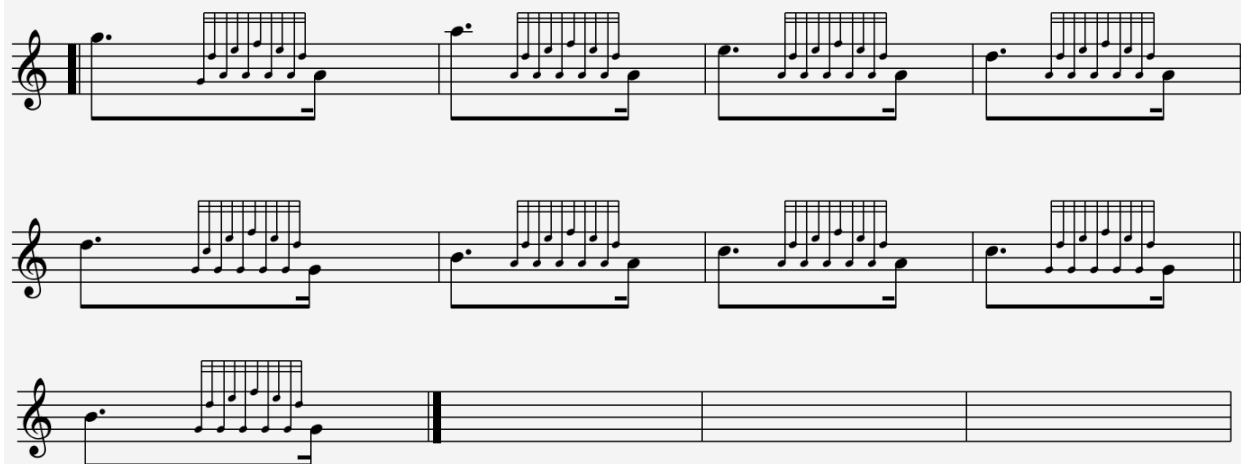
Conclusion



Here is a large specimen of the grandest Pipe cutting or variation requiring nothing but a close view of all the notes that compose it, to play them exactly and practice to execute them nimbly. The number of examples that go before render the fingering so easy that there is little or no use for marking the holes, the 12th Table being fingered just the same way. The last cutting, which is finest, serves for a conclusion to more than one of these running's and is generally repeated 4 times – the following ex. is a little different from this.¹³

¹³ Manuscript Page 13

15th Cutting



Conclusion



This is a cutting of most difficult execution having 11 notes in the most part of it whereas the former on D but 10. The whole Scale being exercised in each of these Grand Cuttings but this will solve upon a reference. Here follows another species of this Cutting frequently found in Laments.

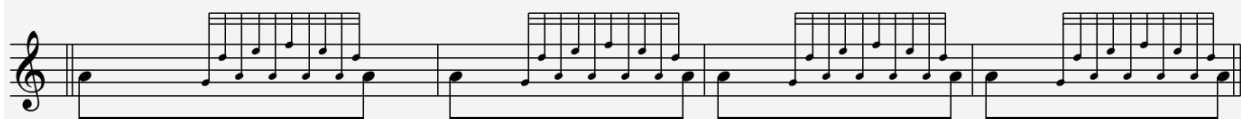
16th Cutting



Conclusion



Or



Thus; this great cutting is performed without difficulty as the former ones by the Discovery of the Notes that composed them. Observe that the 2 lowest notes, A and G, are those that the Cuttings dwell on¹⁴ and therefore the Cutting wholly opens from either of these that it divides each having their introductory note before them. N.B. That after the notes of these cuttings are fully known. It depends as much on the strength as Agility of the fingers to execute them well and the only surest way for this is to lift the fingers as high as possible in learning each shake and cutting by which they will naturally be executed with greater strength, as strength and agility are the Principal Beauties of all other Pipe shakes and cuttings.

Here now follows the longest cutting that there may be occasion for in Marches and of the Greatest execution.

17th Cutting



Any cutting may be performed after the proper management of this which is but rarely met except in that Species of them which may be called Rhapsodys; These compositions are wild and fanciful and are often designed by their difficult cuttings to bring the Hand to Execution. The example below is a variation of the former.

18th Cutting



Conclusion

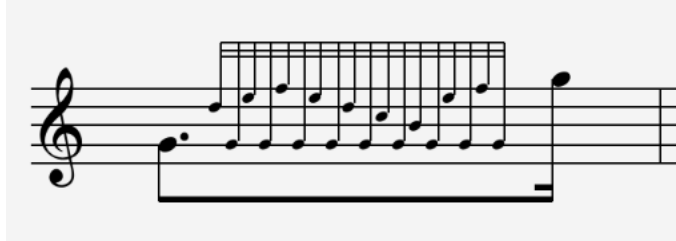


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There is not a Greater or more Difficult species¹⁵ of Cutting or Variation in the Theory of the Bagpipe and it is very seldom that much execution is found in ordinary Marches. In Laments they are sometimes found but seldom or never in Gatherings.

The 7th Shake of the 4th Table called in our language Barludh is sometimes joined to this.

Example: | Barludh |



This is the longest cutting in one bar that can be well contrived in any pipe composition. It being taken from a pleasant Rhapsody or irregular March on this Key. In Pipe Reels (which rather abound more with cuttings than the Marches), the longest cutting never exceeds the length of Tuludh and Creanludh in the 12th Table which is often found in the old Pipe Reels; with this difference that the last Principal (which in Marches is drawn out to a length is here but short).

The following Cutting which is among the last of the Pipe Variations and is a pretty vicissitude of Cuttings and often met with in grand marches.

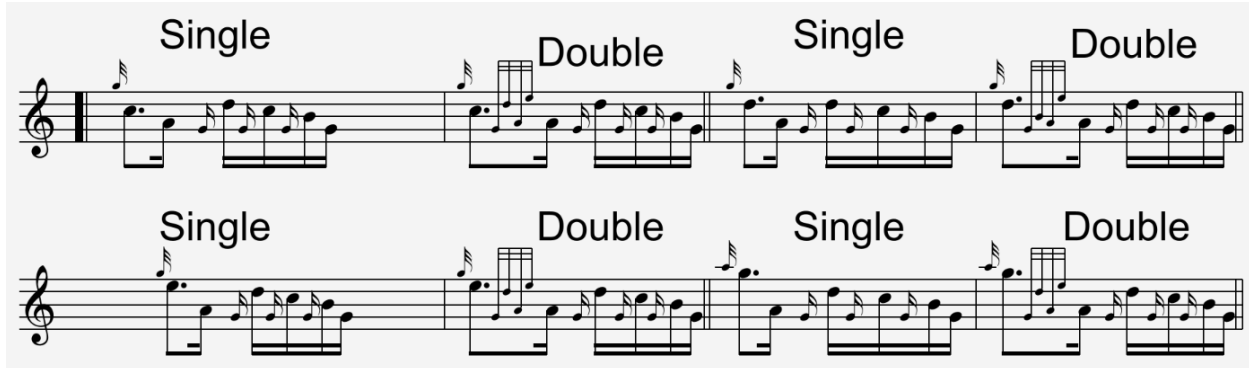
19th Cutting



No marks of holes are requisite here; the dividing notes being the lowest of the scale. When it is doubled it is sometimes joined with Tuludh (the 11th table) which is played before it in the following manner.

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19th Cutting and Tuludh



Here the dividing notes are marked without their holes as Tuludh the 11th table is well known and in the former part of this cutting all the dividing notes are deduced from the lowest hole.

Thus have all the Principal Graces, Cuttings, and Divisions of the true Bagpipe been fully set down and minutely explained. Those cuttings that relate to the Reels (however curious) are but built upon these that are already set down, which when well understood will qualify anyone to Play a Pipe March with all the proper cuttings and graces.

General Prelude for the Pipe – Deachin Gleust¹⁶



As this is a standing Prelude always taught and played before any voluntary one, it is set down with all the dividing notes which it is as full as of Principals. The 1st Group of Dividing notes is a species of Creanludh (viz. the 5th shake of the 4th Table).

The second 2 dividing notes from the third Principal is made up of the cutting (Tuludh the 11th table) and so on in the rest.

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Voluntary Preludes



These are in the exactest style of the Highland Bagpipe and originally played by the composer of the music. They are not long nor designed to be so, once as a just specimen of the method and style which is left to the further improvement and Invention of the player.

Time¹⁷

Common and Triple time (so well known by other instruments) is here diversified by various movements of Adagio and Allegro, yet not so numerous as in instruments of Compass. The reason of which is plain. In Common time here the slowest movement of Adagio is split common time; this instrument not admitting of any slower, for as the Pipe is one Continued, uniform sound a semibreve or any such long note cannot be swelled, but by an additional strength of wind which must occasion a very screaming and rude noise, besides its being contrary to the nature of the instrument. As when the Pipe is well blown it is with the greatest uniformity and the reeds have as much as they are well able to bear. When such a low note cannot be swelled, it has no other recourse but to the Execution of the fingers; which by any shake or cutting must be awkwardly performed; and the small compass of a bagpipe will not admit of any flourish of compass to supply the place of a swell. Therefore, as all must be diversified by artful and curious Cuttings which constitute the principal beauty and singularity of true bagpipe music – all long notes are excluded as semibreves, Breves, and etc. there being no such notes to be found in Marches which is the slowest species of Pipe Music. Though the Pipe is Capable of sounding as long a note as an organ. In the low countries of Scotland where their Pipe Music insists on imitating the music of other instruments, as violins they endeavor to diversify the semibreve by shakes and etc. which carrying short of the swell and being no way natural to the instrument has a very poor effect. As we will have occasion to speak of the low country pipe in its turn it shall now be referred, their music being different. The shakes (properly so called) is seldom or never used in Pipe

¹⁷ Manuscript Page 17

Marches and is only to be found in Reels here there are 20 cuttings to one shake but this is anticipating¹⁸ another point. In Triple Time the slowest movement is rather too slow.

As in common time there is no movement of Pipe Music so slow as Adagio (C) so in triple time there is none so slow as Grave 3/2. See examples of the slowest of common and triple time.

Pipe Adagio Common Time

Slowest



Another Example



Triple Time Slowest – Adagio



Another Example Slow Siciliana



Common Time Allegro



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Another Example



Triple Time Allegro



Another Example i.e. Slow



The first example here is a species of Jig time but different from others by the crotchet and dot at the end of the 2nd bars being marked so (See example below.) Which is peculiar to the style of this instrument, denoting that jumping force which the Dot gives to others Jigs is done here and the length played quite smooth and slurred. This stroke over the note signifying that it must be drawn out to some length or (could it be justly noted) the half of the quaver taken away and added to the crochet where the bar ends with a crochet and it is always played so.



The second example is the same time but somewhat slower, they being both the Grounds of Marches. The one of the MacDonalds Gathering and the other of the MacCleans. The most of the Gatherings beginning with allegros. N.B. There is no Saraband Time in Pipe Composition. The nearest that comes to it is that species of Siciliana in the 4th example. There is a 3/2 Brisk in Triple Time but not Grave.

The Gavott Species of Common Time is seldom found in this music with many other kinds of time that the pipe is not calculated for but as the greater compass and different notes of other instruments occasion many liberties and improvements on the Time, so the different Cuttings and Graces here have their diversities of Time peculiar to it and when we consider that the compass of the Bagpipe is only 9 notes it is surprising what a variety of time and composition has been invented.

The first composers of pipe music having never heard of any other instrument or known any of the Rules ever invented of music except what were suggested to them by nature and Genius;

where in such a confined instrument is surprising; and worth the notice of the Tasty and Curious and here it may not be improper to discover the general rule by which they taught and regulated the Time (having neither of common or triple time, crotchet or quaver) but only their Ear to which they must only trust. This rule we may now properly call the **Rule of Thumb**. In effect it is much the same, for it was by the four fingers of the left hand that all their time was measured and regulated. e.g. An Adagio in common time of such a style must not exceed or fall short such a number of fingers, otherwise it was not regular. If the march was to be but a short composition, the ground must be of so many fingers, for bars they had nothing of; if a Gathering, commonly of Such a number —if a Lament, if a March and etc., according to the occasion it must consist of such a number.¹⁹ They were sure to have no odd number in any piece they designed to be regular. Their adagios when regular commonly consisted of 4 Quarters. In each Quarter there were such a number of Fingers (which we count as bars) 2, 4, or 8 as the Quarter was long or short; or the bar was subdivided into many fingers, according to their length and thus the Adagios and Grounds Counted upon their 4 fingers and measured by the Ear and when the Finger and Ear corresponded all was well.

The ordinary length of a Pipe Adagio being 16 fingers comprised about 16 bars, 4 in each quarter. The regularity preserved (only by the help of this rule) in all their compositions being truly surprising.

It's not in the least to be wondered though there should be little excrescencies and deficiencies in the time by this method of composition, very few of which are to be found.

Being once with 2 or 3 musical gentlemen, in company with one of the Completest Masters of this instrument in all the Highlands for neatness of Finger and Execution, we perceived a considerable Excrescence of the time in one of his Adagios and endeavored to show it him by Rules but in vain as he had been taught by the Ear and Fingers as all his fore fathers. For making his ear and fingers the test of the time and not understanding Rule; he could never be convinced of the mistake as when we cast off the superfluous part of the Bar he complained of a great deficiency in the time and because the excrepancy in the time was not so long as to make up an odd finger in the ground he could not perceive it.

This happening to be a mistake in his Ear which his fingers could not correct for the same number of fingers remained in the ground. The mistake was about a little more than 1/4 of a finger (or Bar) which he had added to one of them insensibly. To such Blunders is the Rule of Thumb, which the pipe was first invented and ever taught by, liable though their exactness of the Ear and Genius occasioned very few. All their excellent cuttings and Graces being now reduced to some method the fingers shall occasion no mistake, as the minutest part of a finger will be considered as the minutest part of a bar.

RESTS

Pipe Music has no rests, as being one continued sound makes it incapable of having any, nor does the Composition require it. It is a kind of compound instrument and the music of its being perfectly contrived for the Nature of the Instrument - does only best by itself unaccompanied, with

¹⁹ Manuscript Page 19

any other music. A good Highland Pipe being far louder than any ordinary concert. The singular and opposite style of its compositions would occasion a very disorderly confusion if introduced with other instruments and besides it were quite opposite to the original Design of the bag pipe; which was to animate a Set of Men approaching an enemy and then to solemnize rural diversions in Fields, and before wailing companies. To play amidst Rocks, Hills, Valleys and Coves where echoes rebounded; and not to join a formal regulated concert.

There are rural Compositions for the Pipe, as well as martial, which are abundantly sweet in their style.

A Diversity of Common Time Peculiar to the Bagpipe



Diversity of Triple Time Peculiar to the Pipe



KEYS²⁰

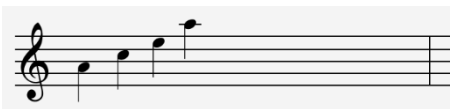
One would think the small compass of the Bagpipe would admit of no Key but one and that same in a very confined manner, but in this little compass they have contrived lively imitations of several Keys, which though they cannot be called distinct ones yet bear a great deal of the taste, which appear very different the one from the other. As there are no flat notes in a pipe there can be no flat Keys. Yet it's surprising what a Grave taste they have for Laments which is a quite distinct taste from the rest, and in several passages of these there are to be found some very expressive Sentiments of Lamentation or melancholy, and indeed it is hard to say if more cultivated geniuses could render the composition of so small a compass more expressive.

In Keys where one can't have the liberty of nine notes the most fertile invention and nicest Judgment must be distressed, and yet the surprising variety and vicissitude that appears in one Key by their disposition of the Notes and art of their Cuttings and Shakes, diversifies the whole and makes it play agreeable to the Ear. The Key for Laments excludes C altogether because it is sharp, and dwells upon the Lower notes; it takes the freedom of all the notes but this. There are other Keys which exclude this note also, see examples of the different Keys of the Pipe.

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A Sharp being also the Key for most of the Martial Marches

Examples:



Low A, C, E, and High A.

The taste of this Key being Low A, C, E, High A, is plainly A sharp. G being natural makes the style somewhat singular but not disagreeable. There is no Dancing Jig on a violin etc. but has G natural in A sharp also.

There are other Keys for martial Pieces but this is the most appropriate one.

A Key or Taste for Rural Pieces



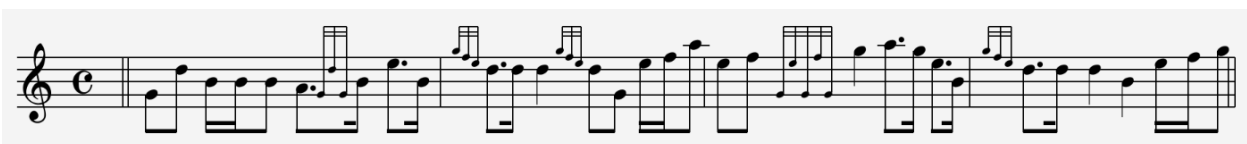
This is well chosen for a rural style the force of the composition lying on these notes:



Low G, D, B, Low A, and E.

It exercises the Higher G seldomer than any other note and the thumb hole seldom to never. It's plain that this a species of G Sharp.

A Small Diversity of this Key for Rural Pieces



Taking the liberty of the higher G, the force of this taste chiefly lying on these notes:



Low A, B, D, High G, and High A.

Shows it to be a species of G sharp which indeed the Pieces of this style exercise to the utmost of invention in such a compass. This being part of a March on that Key which shows abundant sweetness of taste and richness of Genius in the Composer.

Style of Lament on this Key



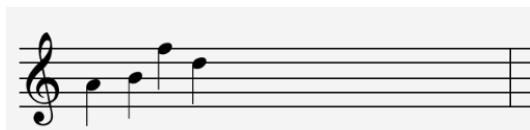
The disposition of the notes even in these 4 bars are Lamentable and obvious to a competent judgment. In this style have many Laments been composed.

Another Key for Rural Pieces and Laments

Example of a passage in one of them.



The force of this style or taste lying on the 4 notes: Low A, B, F, and D, is well adapted for rural Ideas. (See Music Below) It inclines by the taste towards D sharp though with this peculiarity; that it wholly excludes C and seldom or never meddles with the Lowest note, as you can see by the taste and order of the notes.



Low A, B, F, and D.

Another Key or Taste for Laments and Rural Pieces

Example of a lament $\frac{1}{4}$ of an adagio.²¹



Another Style or Taste for Laments

Example $\frac{1}{4}$ of an adagio; 4 fingers



This is the beginning of a very soft Lament, dedicated to the Chief of the McLeods of Skye. It touches upon G in the Ground frequently; as in the runnings the force of the Style lies upon the Lowest G, so we may say it is a different species of that Key.

This relates to the following taste which lays its whole stress upon G, therefore is very different. N.B. that the first 4 notes of this Ground is a specimen of the taste of the whole, the runnings (to discover the taste) flow in this following manner.

5th Style of Taste for Rural Pieces

$\frac{1}{4}$ of a ground, 8 fingers, example.

G Sharp another species.



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This key has something very peculiar in the Taste; the Main force of the notes lying on the Octave G. Many rural pieces have been composed in this style extremely sweet and simple.

A Species of A Sharp where C and G are Singularly Applied

Ex. $\frac{1}{4}$ of an Adaigo or Ground; 4 Fingers



Beginning of the 1st Running – 4 fingers, 2 to each bar.



Beginning of the 3rd Running – 2 fingers, e.g. to 2 bars

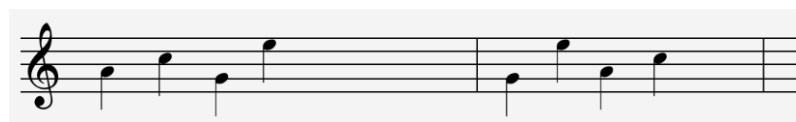


Beginning of the 5th and Last Running – 4 fingers; e.g. to 4 bars.



Here you have not only a full Idea of this different taste (or Style) but an example of Pipe Composition in this Key. There is no style more martial than this; and when this March is well played it certainly is martial. The contrasts of G and D joined, and A and C, make the boldness and singularity of the style.

Example Below: Low A, C, Low G, E; Low G, E, Low A, C; which is very obvious to the Ear.



It is pretty rare how they have imitated the Italian Method in regard to the form of Composition in first having a Ground or Adagio and then their different kinds of Allegro regularly built upon the Ground - but of this in its turn.

Thus the regular different Species of Keys peculiar to the Bagpipe together with a specimen of the various styles of the Marches being sufficiently explained we shall give a short Definition of their Method in composition having before accounted for their Natural and Curious method of regulating time. N.B. of these different tastes or species of Keys more facts might be noted down but these being the Principal they shall suffice.

Method of Composition²²

Having given an idea (in their regulation of Time and the specimens of the Different Keys and Styles) of the Pipe Adagio no more need be said on this.

Their Allegro are for the most part (as was before mentioned) regularly built upon the ground to which it commonly keeps very close; taking in the Heads of the Ground at such and such particular Notes where the Taste of the Adagio seems to lay; sometimes at the end of each second note or each bar and according to the nature and style of the Ground and thus by taking in the Heads or Emphatic Notes of the Ground the whole scope is perceived in the runnings.

For Example:



The image displays two musical staves in treble clef. The top staff shows a sequence of notes with various rhythmic values (eighth, sixteenth, and thirty-second notes) and rests, representing a 'Ground'. Below this staff, the text 'First Running' and 'Second Running' are centered under two separate musical staves. The 'First Running' staff shows a series of eighth notes, while the 'Second Running' staff shows a series of sixteenth notes, both following the same melodic contour as the ground above.

What a just and natural improvement this is on the Ground. Thus they proceed diversifying the Adagio with all their various cuttings which from (one) to another plays upon the ear with an agreeable surprise, then they return and end with the Ground. In Marches which contain a variety of runnings they return to the adagio once or twice. It is usual at the running before the last to return to the Adagio, after which you proceed to the last which is that of greatest execution. When this is well executed every cutting of the fingers are felt as if they seemed to beat or reverberate upon the Ear. This is the test of its being firmly played.

²² Manuscript Page 22

In their Fantasia's or Voluntary Pieces they don't observe the Ground so strictly. The Gatherings (as before mentioned) consist chiefly of Allegros diversified with very curious cuttings and different time also.

Observation on the Proper Style of this Instrument²³

Though there were no Complete or regular set of music composed for the bagpipe (such as Marches, Gatherings, and many other Species tedious to name) it were the most ridiculous and preposterous thing to attempt the Imitation of an Italian tune, Minuet, Slow scotch tune, or any such music peculiar to other instruments, which it is not well Capable of, or never was intended for, as before mentioned. The small Compass rending the imitation extremely insipid, besides its entire deviation from the proper and native style of this instrument.

The drones of a bagpipe (which are a 5th below the E of the chanter) sounding but one note until they are changed concurring to make this imitation still more unnatural and ridiculous.

In the Low Country (where they use bellows to their pipes) having no music in the style of this instrument, they have enlarged the Compass of it by adding Pinching Notes for the better imitation of other music. By this their chanter has the most of the Flute compass. They also have taken away all that loudness and strength of tone that distinguishes this instrument in a Field or in any echoing place by weakening and altering the form of their reeds in order to come nearer likeness by which it is only fit for a room. With this they imitate the Scots Tunes and Minuets and etc. and some Italian music, while they have nothing for another part but their drones; which can no way answer the various passages in a composition of any compass, as they cannot be variegated any more than be setting them to 2 or 3 particular notes which they must sound till they are changed. This must prove but a pitiful concord, can never answer the design of any Part as the notes of a Counter, Tenor, Second Treble Bass & c. must be variegated for every single bar or passage.

Whilst they play this Scots or Italian Composition with Pipe Drones for different parts they must cut and divide the notes in a way that destroys both the Taste and Style of the composition viz. by pipe cuttings which are quite false and irregular (as they never had any Pipe Compositions to reduce or regulate Cuttings for that instrument).

Thus a passage of Correlli, Testin, or Handel and etc. played with pipe cuttings and a drone must carry away a great deal of the author's meaning in it. And so of Scots Airs, Minuets, Songs, etc. What a wretched and insipid jargon is this need be to a judicious ear is obvious. This insipid imitation of other music is what gives such a contemptible Notion of a Pipe, because it must come so short of it, even in the most variegated kind of Pipe which is the Irish Pipe. This they have neither a regular set of music or cuttings for, but they have diversified it into surprising imitations of other music.

The Low country Pipes is tolerably calculated for violin reels and some Pipe jigs but of no great execution as they have neither sound nor strength of reeds for it. The noise of their drones drown any execution of the chanter whereas the chanter should exceed the loudness of the drones

²³ Manuscript Page 23

at least by 5 degrees the drones being the worst part of the music. If the Low Country chanter were taken out and played by itself, as a Hautboy Clarinet and etc., it having pinching notes might enable it to bear a part in Concert with such Instruments and the notes might be cut in the same way but as it is having no proper music of its own and being a most insipid and unnatural imitation of any other music (except by a few Jigs and Reels) is more justly esteemed as an Insipid instrument by such as know other music and don't know the proper management of this. N.B. That 8 notes for one Continued Sound (such as pipe drones are) are as much as the Compass can well be without being ridiculous to the ear. Thus the Style and compass of true Pipe Compositions are such that one Note the drone found (which is a fifth to the D of the chanter, and Octaves to each other) accord with all the Compass and Style because it does not exceed 8 notes. The Contrary of this is what makes the Bellow Pipe so shocking to the ear, viz., when they play pinching notes with the drones in the same tone as in the low notes. N.B. Pinching Notes are entirely opposite to the Proper style of this instrument.

Introductions, Graces, Cadencies, and etc. Transitions²⁴

The small compass of this instrument allows not scope enough for such graces as are peculiar to other instruments, but the abundant variety of cuttings invented for the Pipe are the Principal Graces of it when well executed. And so exact were the inventors of these that there is not one single composition (though never so trivial) but has its particular cuttings assigned to every note; and whenever the Learner arrived at a Perfect degree of proficiency he was Judge where to dispose these cuttings properly. Any graces that relate to Invention is only exercised in the Prelude and little Voluntaries before you begin the March which have been brought to as great a Perfection as the compass can admit, by the best Masters of this Instrument.

The Introductions which frequently occur (being noted down before each Passage) seem to a stranger wild and rude but will appear otherwise when known being well applied to the style.

There are a few cadencies in Pipe music as there are no Flats; the particular excellency of this grace is wanting.

The Pipe knows no transitions from one key to another as it has no flats; but the Composer searches for the best Disposition of in that same Taste or Key which he had pitched upon.

Blowing and Gesture

It is necessary before a Bag Pipe can be blown with the proper ease to have well practiced the Whistle, from which all Pipe Music is at first learned otherwise besides the disagreeable Attitudes and Gesture it must cause in the Performer, it must be very prejudicial to the Breast and Lungs. After being first sufficiently versed in all the Cuttings, etc. belonging to the Pipe on the Whistle, the Pipe may be tried with success but never before then to come at any Perfect Proficiency - the pipe being an instrument of all the most unmusical and worst to manage if the Theory of it be not at least competently known.

²⁴ Manuscript Page 24

The blowing of the Pipe must be steady and uniform and that with the longest breath conveniently possible. The strength of the breath ought to be such as could keep the Reeds in their full sound, quite independent of the assistance of the Arm. The motion of the Arm which holds the bag (while the breath rests) must be such as to keep the reeds in the same strength of should as the Breath: for if the least difference can be perceived, it is a blemish. The motion of the Arm must be so gentle and gradual that to be little or nothing perceived.

The same gracefulness of Attitude and Gesture must be studied in the Pipe as in other instruments, it being as peculiar to it; so much was this observed amongst the best masters of this instrument in the Highlands and Isles that they were at as great Pains to teach an easy Gesture as a good Execution — these 2 were so inseparable that he that never was well taught the instrument was observed to have the most awkward and ridiculous attitudes²⁵ and Gestures of a Mountebank while he grated the ears of his hearers with the most bungling execution: from whence it comes that so many strangers being exploded by those that know the instrument (endeavoring to pass for masters among strangers) have by their insipid music and antic Gestures given the public the most despicable Idea of this instrument, in so much as that an awkward pitiful, Clownish fellow passes for a piper-like figure. But this is all a mistake. For where there are such figures there is commonly the least notion of the instrument.

He that cannot manage a bagpipe without a staring eye, swelled cheek or wry Motion or Body or Arm had better give it over. As slow Pipe Music (viz. the Marches) is always performed walking, it gives the performer a better opportunity of discovering the gracefulness of carriage in feature and Attitude. The bagpipe being extremely well calculated for this, as when it is performed by a skillful Hand and with any thing of a genteel person it is agreeable to the Eye as Ear.

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**The Original Terms of Art Belonging to the Bagpipe as the[y] were invented and taught by
the First Masters of this Instrument in the Islands of Mull and Sky[e]**

Na Crahinin	1 st Table
Ludh Sleamhuin	2 nd Table
Tuludh	11 th Cutting
Creanludh	4 th Table, 5 th Shake
Barludh	4 th Table, 6 th Shake
Ludh na Hordaig	5 th Table
Lu Chrodh	4 th Table, 6 th Shake
Leith Leicinin	6 th Table
Creanludh Foisgilt	13 th Cutting
Docheidh	5 th Cutting
Fridh	An Introduction
Ludan	The Little Finger
Callip Eurlair a ²⁶	Adagio or Ground
Phuirt	
Na Siuibhlichin	Runnings, Variations, Allegro
Suibhil amach	Creanludh Foisgilt (13 th Cutting)
Ceithridh Callip	
Cuairst	
Slighe	
Poirst Tinail	
Cumhe	
Failte	

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March for Beginner²⁷

Piobaireachd

Joseph MacDonald







[End of March for Beginner]




As²⁸ the pipe being as well calculated for dancing Music as any instrument ever contrived there is the most Complete set of Jigs and Reels composed on purpose for it by the first Authors of Pipe Music (as it appears from the style of them) than which nothing can be more truly Highland. They are the most Singular for wild expression, vivacity, execution having also the pipe Cuttings in the greatest perfection and variety every single note being Cut and performed according to the strictest rules of this instrument. They are only danced in the Highlands and Isles and being never introduced any other where; nor can they be well executed by any other instrument being so much in the native style, taste of this instrument.

As they are entirely Pipe Composition they shall be set down with the Collection or after the Marches.


²⁸ Manuscript Page 28

The Pipe also plays all the violin dancing Music (within its compass) very well but as they deviate from its proper style and great many of them they cannot be so properly cut and chiefly on account of the small Dot and Tick (dotted quaver, semiquaver) as this never is peculiar to the pipe. See examples of a bar of pipe reel and that of a violin.


Pipe Reel



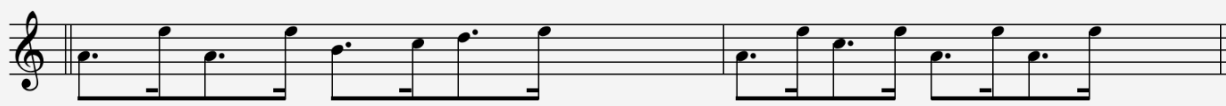
Pipe Reel



Violin Reel



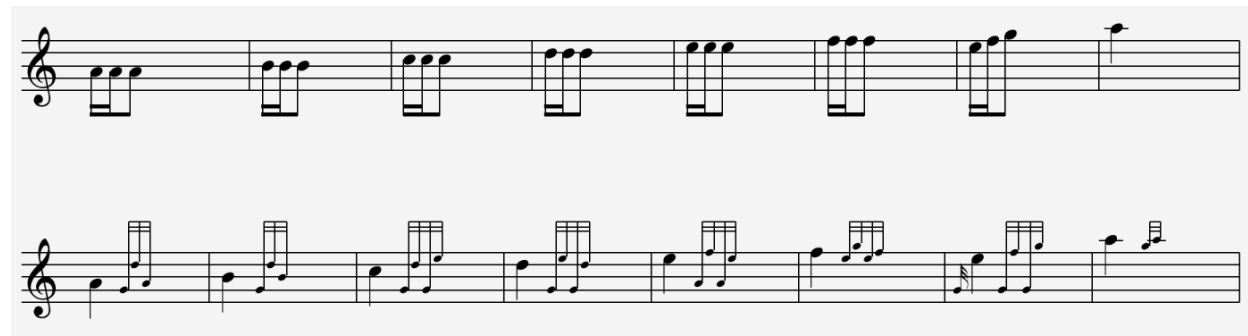
Another



The difference betwixt these examples is very wide; In the 2 examples below the crotchet is half longer and the quaver²⁹ is half shorter. But in the 2 examples above there is no difference in the length of the notes for they run and are cut with the most agile dexterity. The latter jumps and when played on the proper instrument there is no Dexterity of cuttings.

²⁹ Manuscript Page 29

The cutting of the violin reels is easily acquired by any that is well versed in all the Tables and Examples already laid down For they are all built entirely upon them. All the difference is that these large cuttings are not to be formed whole in the Reels; but divided and subdivided into $\frac{2}{3}$ ds, $\frac{3}{4}$ th, and $\frac{7}{8}$ ths of a shake or cutting. The longest that is ever found in a pipe reel is Tuludh and Creanludh, the 11th table and 5th shake of the 4th table; which is to be seen in the first example here. As for these fractional cuttings belonging to the Reels. See examples as follow:



This cutting is just $\frac{4}{6}$ th of Tuludh the 11th Table and played in the very same way. The first line contains the shakes as they appear when cut. The second contains it at large. Example of this cutting:



The peculiarity of the style may attract as much attention as the example of the cutting. This is a middle passage in the 2nd part of one of the wild Reels. The grandest set of them being thus called. A full example of a reel with all the cuttings shall be afterwards given.



This mode of cutting being frequently met with in the wild reels is a sufficient specimen. It is no more than a nimble and gliding manner of applying the Introductory notes to the principals.

Tuludh



The first bar here have the name of the Shake or Cutting over it need no further solution. The rest are performed at sight.

Example for Practice



Example of a Pipe Reel with all its Cuttings³⁰



This is one of the true species and anyone versed in the Theory may see how the cuttings are divided here. Tuludh (the 11th table) is the most frequent here. In the last 4 notes of the first bar it is whole. In the last 2 of the 2nd there are 4/6th of it. In the first 2 notes of the 3rd bar 4/6th of this cutting and so on. A Learner may play all the cutting notes at full the first time he attempts a reel but when right executed there can be none of them perceived.

As to the jigs their cuttings are very emphatic and strong but all built upon the examples laid down. 2 or 3 examples of them shall be given also.

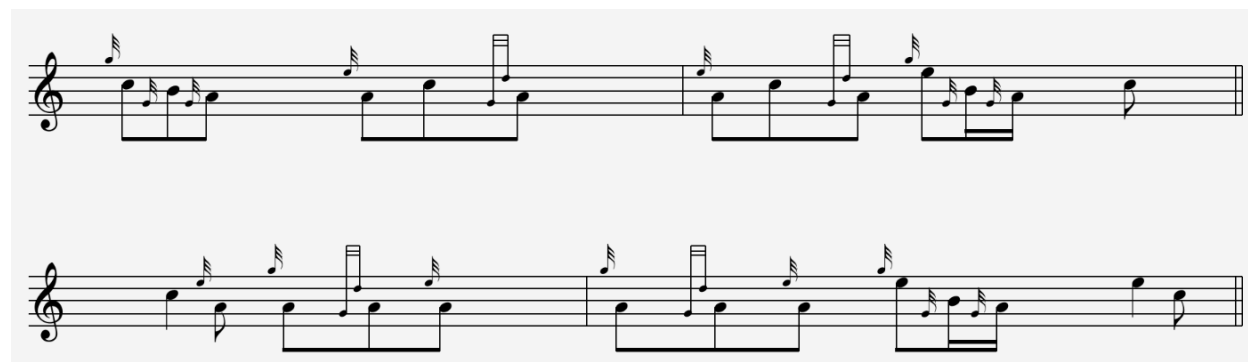


In the first 2 tied notes of the first example you see also the 11th Table all performed except one note but in a much swifter manner as these three dividing must be Cut so as that the least distinction of Time betwixt the 2 notes cannot be perceived. This occurs in the 2 examples also.

³⁰ Manuscript Page 30

Joseph MacDonald used an inverted common time symbol with a slash through it to indicate that the pipe reel should be played at a faster tempo than common time for this example.

In all such examples the dividing notes must cut with the most imperceptible quickness which is not attended with any great difficulty as in effect is but one Finger's casting off another. See the other 2 examples following:



These are 2 methods of cutting the same passage either of which is according to rule and are excellent ways of dividing all such notes. The first is a more emphatic way and the second is more sliding and fluent. See an example of a jig with all its cuttings as follows:





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³² Manuscript Page 32

Glossary

Cutting	Embellishment or Decoration	Movement
Running	Siubhal	Variations within a Tune

Na Crahinin	2 beats		
Quick Species	Slow Species	Echo Tap	Double Echo
J. MacDonald	D. MacDonald	D. MacDonald	Modern

Quick	Slow	Tap Echo	Double Echo
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Ludh Sleamhuin	Dithis or two, a pair; smooth Singling and Doubling
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4 th Table	Slurs or Cuttings
Low A, B, C	Modern Grips
D	Modern Throw on D in both Pibroch and Grip Styles
E Creanludh	Modern Dre Movement
F	Modern Dare Movement
High G Bardludh	Modern Embari Movement
High A	

Luna Hordaig 5 th Table	Modern High A Doubling
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Docheidh an Ludan or 5 th Cutting	Common Termination of a Bar or Passage Ending in a Low A Close with no Clear Modern Equivalent
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6 th Cutting	No Clear Modern Equivalent
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Na Le Leicinin or 7 th Cutting	Similar to Modern GDE Tripling Except the G is not Emphasized; Rather the DED Triangular Grace Noting Pattern is Indicated as Prime
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7th Cutting



7th Cutting Diversity



8 th Cutting	Frequently ends the 7 th Cutting Running as a Cadenza Played Four Times
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9 th Cutting	No Clear Modern Equivalent
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10 th Cutting	A Dithis or Pairing of Notes played Evenly, Falling to Low A or Low G, or Rising from Low A or Low G. This is Concluded with the 7 th Cutting Four Times as a Cadenza
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Tuludh or 11 th Cutting	A Variation of the Modern Taorluath with One Low G Grace Note
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Tuludh and Creanludh or 12 th Cutting	A Variation of the Modern Crunluath with One Low G Grace Note
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Creanludh Foisgilt or 13 th Cutting	A Variation of the Open Crunluath Foisgailte or Suihal a Mach
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14 th Cutting	No Modern Equivalent; Running or Variation Ends with Four Time Cadenza on Low A
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15 th Cutting	No Modern Equivalent; Running or Variation Ends with Four Time Cadenza on Low A
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16 th Cutting	No Modern Equivalent; Running or Variation Ends with Four Time Cadenza on Low A
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17 th Cutting	No Modern Equivalent; Running or Variation Ends with Four Time Cadenza on Low A
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18 th Cutting and Barludh	No Modern Equivalent; Running or Variation Ends with Four Time Cadenza on Low A
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19 th Cutting	No Modern Equivalent; Running or Variation Ends with Four Time Cadenza on Low A
19 th Cutting and Tuludh	No Modern Equivalent; Running or Variation Ends with Four Time Cadenza on Low A
Deachin Gleust	General Prelude for the Pipe
Voluntary Preludes	Preludes are like Tuning Phrases