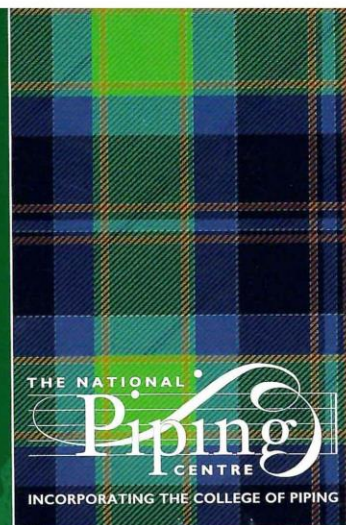


THE HIGHLAND BAGPIPE TUTOR BOOK 1

BEGINNERS

PATRON
HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay, KG, KT, GCB



LEARN THE
HIGHLAND
BAGPIPE
BEGINNER





THE
HIGHLAND
BAGPIPE
TUTOR BOOK 1

First Published in 1969 by the College of Piping

Authors: Seamus MacNeil and Thomas Pearston

Revised in August 2019 by The National Piping Centre

© The National Piping Centre, Glasgow.

THE NATIONAL
Piping
CENTRE

INCORPORATING THE COLLEGE OF PIPING

The National Piping Centre in Scotland is dedicated both to preserving the history of the Highland Bagpipe and to safeguarding its future. It serves as a world centre of excellence for the instrument and its music. The Centre was officially opened in 1998 by HRH The Prince of Wales who is now its patron.

The Centre is housed in a fine historic building in the City of Glasgow's musical heartland. It incorporates a piping school with additional rehearsal rooms and a concert hall noted for its excellent acoustics, The National Museum of Piping with a multi-lingual audiovisual presentation, a reference library, comfortable hotel accommodation and conference facilities.

The Centre offers an undergraduate degree in piping with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Scotland's National Conservatoire. It also runs numerous summer schools, individually tailored courses and weekly lessons for every level of piper, taught by some of the world's most eminent pipers.

The National Piping Centre provides facilities of the very highest quality for both the piping and non-piping fraternity. We guarantee a warm welcome to visitors and regulars, from home and abroad, whether for study, performance, or simply pleasure.



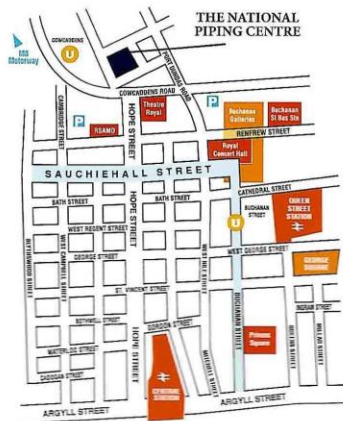
HOW TO FIND US

TRAVELLING westbound on the M8 from the south (M74) or from Edinburgh, follow signs for City Centre and Greenock. Exit the motorway at Junction 16, proceed straight ahead at the first set of lights onto Dobbie's Loan. At the next set of traffic lights turn left onto Port Dundas Road, take the second turning on the right into McPhater Street. The National Piping Centre is located 100 yards on the right.

Travelling from the airport take Junction 18 exit. Turn right at the set of traffic lights then turn right after the bridge. Pass through the next set of lights and turn right onto Port Dundas Road, take a second turning on the right into McPhater Street. The National Piping Centre is located 100 yards on the right.

Cowcaddens Underground, Buchanan Bus Station, Central and Queen Street Railway Stations are all close by. The National Piping Centre is a 20 minute taxi journey from Glasgow International Airport.

www.thepipingcentre.co.uk



Pg 4

Pg 4

BLANK PAGE

Pg 4

1

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	7
CHAPTER	PAGES
1. TECHNIQUE DEVELOPMENT	12
Lesson 1 – Placing Fingers On The Chanter And Playing The Notes	13
Lesson 2 – Gracenotes	25
Lesson 3 – The Throw On D	35
Lesson 4 – First Tune -Scots Wha Hae	37
Lesson 5 – Strikes and 2nd Part of Scots Wha Hae	39
2. BROWN HAIRE MAIDEN & THE HIGH ROAD TO GAIRLOCH	42
Lesson 6 – Strike on d, half doubling of f, and the brown haired maiden	43
Lesson 7 – second part of the brown haired maiden	47
Lesson 8 – Clefs, The Stave, and Note Values	49
Lesson 9 – Doubling on C and B and The High Road to Gairloch	55
Lesson 10 – 2nd Part of The High Road to Gairloch	59
3. HIGHLAND LADDIE & THE MIST COVERED MOUNTAINS	60
Lesson 11 – Doubling on F and E and Highland Laddie	61
Lesson 12 – Doubling on High A and 2nd Part of Highland Laddie	65
Lesson 13 – The Grip and The Taorluath	67
Lesson 14 – The Birl and The Mist Covered Mountains	69
Lesson 15 – 2nd Part of The Mist Covered Mountains and The 79th's Farewell to Gibraltar	73
4. 79TH'S FAREWELL TO GIBRALTER & THE EARL OF MANSFIELD	76
Lesson 16 – 2nd Part of The 79th's Farewell to Gibraltar	77
Lesson 17 – Grip to C and 3rd Part of The 79th's Farewell to Gibraltar	79
Lesson 18 – 4th Part of The 79th's Farewell to Gibraltar	81
Lesson 19 – Thumb Gracenote and 1st Part of The Earl of Mansfield's March	83
Lesson 20 – Thumb Doubling and 2nd Part of The Earl of Mansfield's March	85
Lesson 21 – 3rd Part of The Earl of Mansfield's March	87
5. THE INVERNESS RANT & THE PIPER OF DRUMMOND	88
Lesson 22 – 1st Part of The Inverness Rant	89
Lesson 23 – The Tachum and 2nd Part of The Inverness Rant	91
Lesson 24 – Strikes on B & C and The Piper of Drummond	93

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGES
Lesson 25 – 2nd Part of The Piper of Drummond	95
6. THE GREEN HILLS OF TYROL & THE ATHOLL HIGHLANDERS	96
Lesson 26 – Rodin, D Doubling and Green Hills of Tyrol	97
Lesson 27 – A New Movement and The Atholl Highlanders	99
SUPPLEMENTARY TUNES	102
The Campbells Are Coming & The Bloody Fields Of Flanders	103
The Piobaireachd Of Donald Dhu	105
All The Bonnets Are Over The Border	106
APPENDIX	108
Practice Scales PDQB / SQA 2	109
Practice Scales PDQB / SQA 3	111
PDQB / SQA Information And Syllabi	113

INTRODUCTION

THE HISTORY OF THE HIGHLAND BAGPIPE

The bagpipe itself was invented about three thousand years ago when a reed pipe was adapted with an arm - operated bag and was thus able to produce continuous sound and volume. By the middle ages every country in Europe and around the Mediterranean had a form of bagpipe. These may have been primitive, but they were able to be played in all weathers when festive occasions were always outdoor affairs.

The Scottish Highland Bagpipe was derived from other forms of European bagpipes and played in its earliest forms in the northern and western parts of Scotland from around the 15th Century. By that time there were several different bagpipes in Britain and had been since the Roman occupation. The Highlanders did not invent the bagpipe, but they did develop it for their own needs and satisfaction.

- They made it more powerful by lowering the pitch and having a conical bore in the chanter.
- They made it more presentable by having the drones on the shoulder, allowing the piper to stand whilst playing.
- Most significantly, they adjusted the intervals between the notes in order to suit their fondness for pentatonic music and contrived three pentatonic scales from the nine notes. As an important bonus the nine notes then accorded with the tones or harmonics of the fixed drones. The nine notes are GABCDEFGA and the three pentatonic scales are as follows:

The 'G' Scale:



The 'A' Scale



The 'D' Scale



Each of these scales has a different character. In light music, a good example of a tune in the 'G' scale is *'The Campbells are Coming'*. In the 'A' scale, *'The 79th's Farewell to Gibraltar'*, and in the 'D' scale, *'Highland Laddie'*.

Much of the music of the Highland Bagpipe, referred to as *Ceol Mor*, or *Piobaireachd*, is based on these pentatonic scales. Anyone with further interest in the subject should read Seumas MacNeill's BBC book, '*Piobaireachd, the Classical Music of the Highland Bagpipe*', and the introduction to '*The Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor*' by Archibald Campbell.

PRELIMINARY NOTES

The equipment you require to begin learning the art of the the great Highland bagpipe consists of this book, a practice chanter and a manuscript notebook. You will find that by far the quickest way to learn to read music is to write down each tune as you learn it, and by the time you have copied ten tunes you will understand staff notation very well. You also require seven fingers, two thumbs and an interest in the bagpipes. Of all the requisites the last named is the most important. Enthusiasm can make up for a lot, and the beginner who is prepared to practice regularly, often, and slowly, will inevitably become a competent player. Regular periods of practice are absolutely essential, and you should set aside at least one hour each day for careful playing of the fundamental movements on the chanter. The chanter should be held firmly but not tightly. Fingers should be moved with precision but should never be in a state of tension. By frequent reference to the videos, photographs and diagrams in the tutor, you can make sure that your hands maintain at all times the classical positions.

When you first begin to play the practice chanter rest the sole on a table top or on your thigh so that the weight of the chanter is not borne by the hands. It is important from the beginning to place the mouthpiece in the middle of the lips, and try not to puff out the cheeks, and not to grip the mouthpiece in the teeth. We cannot over-emphasise the importance of practicing slowly. In each lesson only sufficient finger movements are taught to enable the next part of a tune to be learned, and thus you may progress very rapidly while at the same time building a firm foundation – provided that you practice. If you make an error in a tune or a scale start again from the note before the mistake. There is no need to go over the part you played satisfactorily.

THE PRACTICE CHANTER

A practice chanter should be bought from a recognised bagpipe firm, or dealer, who has a tradition to uphold. A new practice chanter purchased from these well-known suppliers – such as The National Piping Centre shop – has the name of the manufacturer stamped on it, usually at the top of the bottom section. Chanters which have no name are to be treated with caution. Many sold in general music dealers' shops are made of boxwood or similar cheap material and are to be avoided. They are very much lighter in weight than polypenco, ebony or African blackwood chanters, and if one looks through the bore one usually finds a ragged finish. In addition, when a reed is tried, it is often out of tune, producing a scale that is unevenly balanced. There are now perfectly satisfactory plastic chanters available. Fancy ornamental or ivory parts have no influence whatever on the tone. There is nothing wrong

with buying a good second hand chanter provided it bears the name of a reputable maker and has no cracks or flaws. Before using, wash thoroughly with soap and warm water and buy a new reed.

Some makers have developed a type of practice chanter with holes which simulate the larger finger holes of the full bagpipe chanter thus giving the learner the chance of playing as if on the bagpipe. The holes are counter-sunk, the outside diameter being almost the same as the pipe chanter, and the inside diameter the same as the ordinary practice chanter. This type of practice chanter can be an asset for the beginner.

CLEANING

Use soap and warm water with a little mild disinfectant to clean the chanter. Use a long, broader bristle brush for the top and a thinner one for the bottom. Dirt frequently lodges just inside the edges of the holes, especially the smaller ones at the top. This can be removed by cleaning first with a darning needle or similar object, and then with the brush. Dry the outside with a piece of old towelling and leave the chanter to dry fully in a warm room.

RE-HEMPING

Pre – waxed yellow hemp is recommended for the chanter. The chanter top should not fit too tightly, just firmly enough to prevent the escape of any air. The practice chanter usually requires more frequent re-hemping than any part of the bagpipe as continual wetting and drying causes the hemp to deteriorate readily. The hemp should be applied evenly. Check frequently if you have used too much or too little by replacing the chanter top. Once you have a firm fit, finish with a couple of half hitches and trim the end. After every practice, dry the reed and chanter.

THE REED

Two types of reeds can be purchased – plastic and cane. Plastic is by far the more popular nowadays. Some types of plastic reeds are very easy to blow and are specially recommended for beginners. The slightest flow of air sets the reed going and gives the novice a chance to concentrate on fingering. A plastic reed requires no ‘blowing in’ and will last much longer than cane. A new cane reed will become harder to blow as moisture penetrates the cane. A plastic or a cane reed will be difficult to blow if the blades are curved apart so that the mouth of it is too open. The less the curve at the mouth will generally mean the reed will be easy to blow or ‘weak’.

Several methods may be used to weaken and sharpen a strong reed. An elastic band wrapped round the blades is the most popular. The extra pressure on the blades will bring them together and give the desired effect. Repeated pressing together at the bottom of the blades is also helpful. Another way of sharpening the pitch of the chanter is to remove some hemp and

sink the reed further into its seat. To flatten a reed, gently squeeze the blades at the sides and/or raise the reed in its seat by applying a little more hemp. When removing a reed from the chanter, grip it on the lower part, the staple. Be very careful when re-assembling the chanter. Make sure the reed is straight and you do not catch the corner of the blades with the chanter top. To dry the reed, hold it by its staple (the metal part) and blow excess moisture out from the bottom. Carefully dry each blade on a tissue. To completely dry the reed, leave it in a safe place in a warm room for a short time.

BUYING A REED

Before purchasing a reed make sure that the blades are evenly bound together with no overlapping. Each side of the reed should be completely symmetrical. Lack of symmetry is the fault of the reed maker and cannot be rectified. To choose a good reed the following test should be made: place the reed in your mouth and blow gently. A sound will be heard which will be roughly in unison with Low A on the practice chanter. When given a slightly stronger blow, a second sound is heard which is higher than the first and corresponds approximately to the note E of the practice chanter. Pick a reed which is fairly easy to blow and does not squeal from High A to Low A and Low G when tried in the chanter. Remember to take your own chanter for the test.

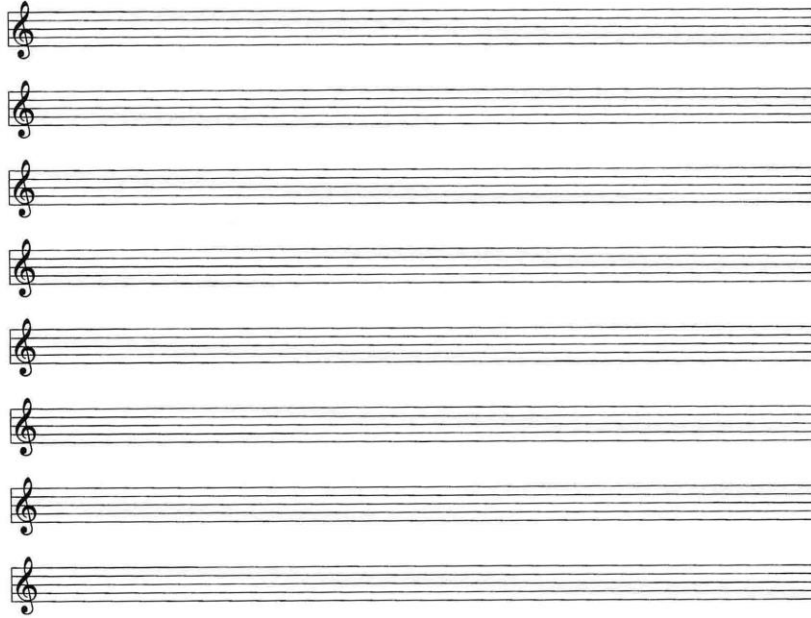
DISMANTLING THE CHANTER

Very great care must be taken in doing this otherwise the reed may be damaged. The lower half of the chanter is gripped just above the High A hole, and the top is held by the other hand at the ferrule (usually a metal band at the bottom of the chanter top). Both hands now being close together, the two portions are drawn apart with a screwing motion; care should be taken that the top does not scrape the corners of the reed. Assembling the parts is done in a similar fashion. When removing the reed, always grip the staple and do not touch the blades.

CARRYING

A convenient way to carry the chanter is to place the reed inside the chanter top, staple first, and plug with a cork or with paper. Top and bottom portions can now be transported without much fear of mishap.

NOTES



CHAPTER 1





Lesson 1

PLACING FINGERS ON THE CHANTER AND PLAYING THE NOTES

THE NAMES OF THE NOTES

The pipe chanter has nine notes. They are called (reading from the lowest note upwards) Low G, Low A, then B, C, D, E, F, High G, and High A.

A framework consisting of five parallel straight lines (called 'the staff') is used for writing music. Each line and space represents a different note, and the notes of the chanter are represented as follows:



As you see, the seven letters of the alphabet, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, are used for the names of these notes. Since we have two Gs and two As they have to be distinguished by 'Low' and 'High'.

THE NAMES OF THE FINGERS

The eight holes of the chanter are covered by the thumb and first three fingers of the top hand, and by the four fingers of the bottom hand. It is conventional to play with the left hand above the right in the vast majority of cases, but there are always some players who find it easier to play with the right hand on top, and this is perfectly acceptable.

Fingers are called by the name of the note they produce when lifted. The way of placing your fingers is given in the photograph overleaf.

Memorise the names of the notes.

FINGER POSITIONS - FRONT VIEW



FINGER POSITIONS - REAR VIEW



THE FIRST NOTE - LOW G



The first note you must learn to play is Low G. Place all fingers on the chanter as shown.

Note very carefully the following points:

1. Your fingers must be perfectly straight, even when off the chanter, and must hold the chanter quite firmly but not tightly. Wrists should be straight also, and not kinked.
2. The holes are covered by the middle sections of the B, C, and D, fingers and by the end sections of the other fingers.
3. The two fingers not used for playing (if the left hand is the top hand) are: the little finger of the left hand (which is always kept relaxed), and the thumb of the right hand, which is placed approximately opposite the D and C fingers (see following pages). This will cause a little discomfort in the right wrist at first but if you persevere it will soon feel quite natural.

Begin by placing each finger in turn carefully on the chanter and then ask someone to compare the final result with the photographs and diagrams, or you may examine the position of your fingers with a mirror. After any corrections have been made, blow the chanter, and if your fingers are covering the holes properly, a low steady note will be heard.

More likely, however, a high or wavering note will come out, which means that some of the air is escaping at one or more of the holes because your fingers are not properly covering them. Continue alternately blowing and adjusting your fingers until the low steady note is heard. This is the first important step in piping. Practice until you can be sure of playing Low G every time you want to.

THE SECOND NOTE - LOW A



The second note is made very easily once you have mastered Low G. To make Low A, you simply lift your little finger, so that your hands are in the position shown above. Remember to keep the little finger straight even when it is off the chanter. When you are sure you can play Low G and Low A try:

THE THIRD NOTE - B



This one, as you can see, is also very easy. You only have to play Low A and then lift the B finger off the chanter and you find you are playing B. Be sure that the little finger and B finger are straight and about the same distance from the chanter. Practice now playing Low G, Low A, B, Low A, Low G.

This is written:



Practice this many times until you are sure you are playing each note correctly.

THE FOURTH NOTE - C



To play C, lift the B finger and C finger off the chanter, BUT KEEP THE LITTLE FINGER ON. Make sure that the two raised fingers are straight and at the same level. Try now to play up the scale from Low G to C. As you go from B to C be careful to replace the little finger. When you go from C to B raise the little finger at the same time as you replace the C finger. It is very important to move the little finger and the C finger AT THE SAME TIME.

Play now:

Low G Low A B C B Low A Low G



The note C is played with the little finger on the chanter. Some players are erroneously instructed to play an open C (little finger off). This note can sound out of tune on the modern pipe chanter.

Crossing noises constitute the main reason why some learners do not become good players. Too much stress cannot be placed on the necessity for slow, careful, practice at the early stage so that clean fingering habits may be developed. A learner should be his/her own most severe critic.

THE SEVENTH NOTE - F



Our troubles with the scale are nearly over. All the remaining notes are quite simple. The Low A finger is kept raised from now on, and for F, the E and F fingers are taken off too, but at the same time. Just be careful again to make sure that the raised fingers are kept straight and not far from the chanter.

Play:



Try also very slowly:



Listen carefully for crossing noises. *Can you name these notes?*

THE NINTH NOTE - HIGH A



When playing High A, the Low A, F, High G and High A fingers are off the chanter. This means that if you go from High G to High A you must lift off your top hand thumb and replace the E finger **AT THE SAME TIME**. You will notice that High A is written above the staff on what is known as a ledger line. Conversely, when going from High A to High G, the E finger must come off the chanter again at **EXACTLY THE SAME TIME** as the thumb hits the chanter.

Practice slowly:

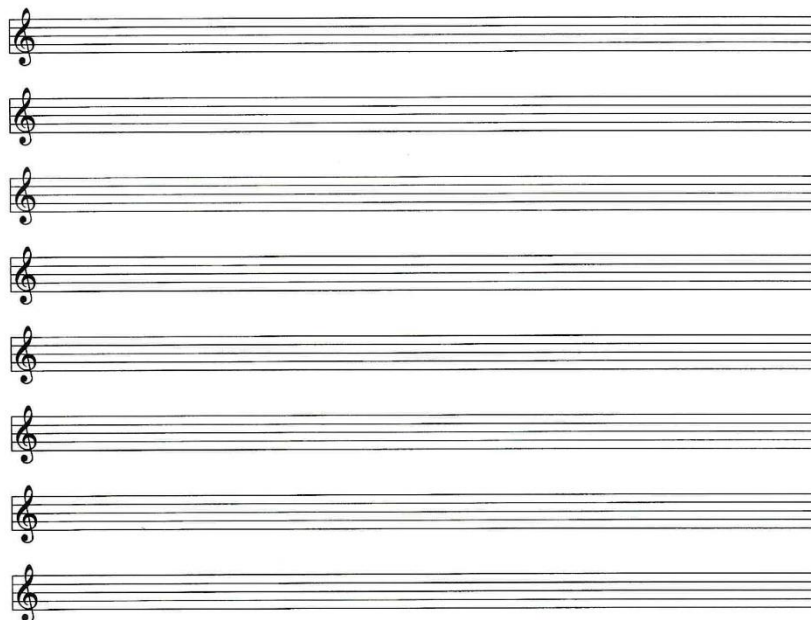


Make sure that as the thumb goes on for High G the E finger comes off.

You are now able to play all the notes on the chanter. Starting from Low G, play slowly all of the notes up to High A, and then play down to Low G again. Take care to form each note correctly, with all fingers straight and not too far from the chanter when raised (about 2.5 to 3 centimetres is ideal). Listen carefully when changing from D to E and E to D to ensure that you are not making crossing noises. Write each note of the chanter scale in your manuscript book. Try to do it without having to refer to any pages here. If necessary, write the names of the notes below them in order to help you to memorise them.

That is the end of the first lesson. You should now continue to practice playing slowly up and down the scale taking care to form each note correctly, listening carefully for crossing noises. When you are confident of this part and have memorised the names of the notes and their positions on the staff, you are ready to pass on to Lesson 2.

NOTES






Lesson 2

GRACENOTES


If you listen to a song being sung, or a tune being played on the violin or piano, you will notice that considerable effect is attained by varying the loudness of different notes and so emphasising them. It is impossible to do this when playing a tune on the practice chanter or bagpipe. We can, however, emphasise a note in piping by playing a very short note in front of it. This short note is called a gracenote. (Ask any piper to play a simple tune, and then play it again without gracenotes, and you will hear immediately how lifeless and monotonous the second rendering is).


Gracenotes are also used to separate two of the same note when played one after the other. If you were asked to play two Low Gs you would probably blow a Low G, then take a breath and blow another Low G. This is the method used for separating notes in some instruments. When playing the bagpipe, the flow of air to the reeds is continuous, so we use a gracenote instead. Gracenotes are produced in many ways, but mainly by using the G, D, and E fingers.

To do this, begin by playing Low G. Then lift the High G finger off the chanter and replace it smartly. Do the same with the D finger only, then with the E finger only.

The G gracenote is written: 

As you see, the head or blob of the note is in the High G space, but to show that it is a gracenote and not a full note, the tail is turned upwards and it is much smaller.

In the same way:  represents a D gracenote

and:  an E gracenote.

The three strokes on the tail indicate that the note is of short duration. We will deal with duration of notes later, but at present it is sufficient to know that the more strokes a note has, the shorter it is to be played.

Two Low Gs separated by a G gracenote would be written:



and the three gracenotes on Low G are written as:



Usually we make the first gracenote as we start to blow. Try this a few times and you will find it quite simple – move the G finger for the short gracenote and blow at the same time. This means that we miss out the first of the four Low Gs shown above.

Practice now:



Gracenotes, of course, are not done only on Low G, so now try the G, D, and E gracenotes (in that order) on Low A.

That is:



and also on B:



and also on C:



Practice these slowly many times.

Remember that the time taken in playing a gracenote must always be much less than the time you give to the note itself, even when you are playing slowly. Gracenotes, therefore, can never overlap one another.

THE G GRACENOTE

The G gracenote is the most commonly used and is one of the most important embellishments in pipe music.

1. To play a G gracenote on Low G

Step 1 Sound Low G

Step 2 Lift and quickly return the High G finger to sound the G gracenote on Low G.



2. We now have to change note from Low G to Low A while playing the G gracenote.

Step 1 Sound Low G

Step 2 Lift the High G finger

Step 3 Now quickly return the High G finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the Low A finger to sound the G gracenote on Low A. This all has to be done in one smart movement. The gracenote should be sounded ON low A and NOT after the Low A is sounded.



3. To change from Low A to B with the G gracenote

Step 1 Sound Low A

Step 2 Lift the High G finger

Step 3 Quickly return the High G finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the B finger to sound the G gracenote on B. These movements MUST be made at the same time to avoid crossing noises.



4. To change from B to C with the G gracenote

Step 1 Sound B

Step 2 Lift the High G finger

Step 3 Quickly return the High finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the C finger to sound the G gracenote on C. Make sure that the C is played properly ensuring that the Low A finger is also placed back on the chanter. Again, these movements MUST be made at the same time.



5. To change from C to D with the G gracenote

Step 1 Sound C

Step 2 Lift the High G finger

Step 3 Quickly return the High G finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the D finger to sound the G gracenote on D



6. To change from D to E with the G gracenote.

Step 1 Sound D

Step 2 Now make the change from D by lifting the High G finger at the same time as the E finger, keeping the F finger on the chanter. At the same time the D, C and B fingers should be returned to the chanter and the Low A finger must be raised. The top and bottom hand movements here must be synchronised. Take care to avoid a crossing noise.

Step 3 Quickly return the High G finger to the chanter to sound the G gracenote on E.



7. To change from E to F with the G gracenote

Step 1 Sound E

Step 2 Lift the F and High G fingers at the same time

Step 3 Quickly return only the High G finger to the chanter to sound the G gracenote on F.



EXERCISE 1



The next step is to practice playing down the scale with the G gracenote

1. To change from F to E with the G gracenote

Step 1 Sound F

Step 2 Lift the High G finger

Step 3 Quickly return the High G and the F fingers to the chanter at the same time to sound the G gracenote on E

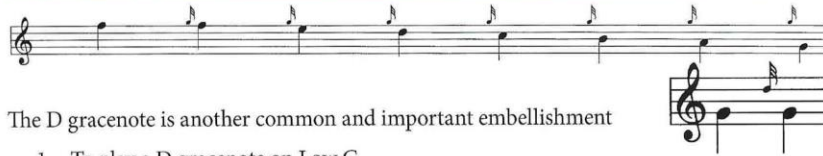


2. To change from E to D with the G gracenote

- Step 1 Sound E
- Step 2 Lift the High G finger so that the High G finger and E finger are off the chanter at the same time.
- Step 3 The High G and E fingers should be quickly returned to the chanter while at the same time lifting the D, C and B fingers and returning the Low A finger to the chanter to sound the G gracenote on D. Be careful to avoid crossing noises.
3. To change from D to C with the G gracenote
- Step 1 Sound D
- Step 2 Lift the High G finger
- Step 3 Quickly return the High G finger to the chanter and at the same time return the D finger to sound the G gracenote on C.
4. To change from C to B with the G gracenote
- Step 1 Sound C
- Step 2 Lift the High G finger
- Step 3 Quickly return the High G finger to the chanter and at the same time return the C finger, remembering to lift the Low A finger to sound the G gracenote on B.
5. To change from B to Low A with the G gracenote
- Step 1 Sound B
- Step 2 Lift the High G finger
- Step 3 Quickly return the High G finger to the chanter and at the same time return the Low A finger to sound the G gracenote on Low G
6. To change from Low A to Low G with the G gracenote
- Step 1 Sound Low A
- Step 2 Lift the High G finger
- Step 3 Quickly return the High G finger to the chanter and at the same time return the Low A finger to sound the G gracenote on Low G.



EXERCISE 2



The D gracenote is another common and important embellishment

1. To play a D gracenote on Low G

Step 1 Sound Low G

Step 2 Lift and quickly return the D finger to sound the D gracenote on Low G.

2. We now have to change note from Low G to Low A while playing the D gracenote.

Step 1 Sound Low G

Step 2 Lift the D finger

Step 3 Now quickly return the D finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the Low A finger to sound the D gracenote on Low A. Again, this all has to be done in one smart movement, with the gracenote being sounded ON Low A and NOT after the Low A is sounded.



3. To change from Low A to B with the D gracenote

Step 1 Sound Low A

Step 2 Lift the D finger

Step 3 Quickly return the D finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the B finger to sound the D gracenote on B.



4. To change from B to C with the D gracenote

Step 1 Sound B

Step 2 Change to D, remembering to place the Low A finger on the chanter.

Step 3 Now quickly return the D finger to sound the D gracenote on C.



EXERCISE 3



The next step is to practice playing down the scale with the D gracenote.

- 1. To change from C to B with the D gracenote

Step 1 Sound C

Step 2 Lift the D finger to play the note D

Step 3 Quickly return the D and C fingers to the chanter to sound the D gracenote on B, remembering to lift the Low A finger to sound B correctly.

- 2. To change from B to Low A with the D gracenote

Step 1 Sound B

Step 2 Lift the D finger and at the same time return the B finger to the chanter.



Step 3 Quickly return the D finger to the chanter to sound the D gracenote on Low A.

- 3. To change from Low A to Low G with the D gracenote

Step 1 Sound Low A

Step 2 Lift the D finger and at the same time return the Low A finger to the chanter.

Step 3 Quickly return the D finger to the chanter to sound the D gracenote on Low G.



EXERCISE 4



EXERCISE 5



EXERCISE 6



1. To play an E gracenote on Low G

Step 1 Sound Low G

Step 2 Lift and quickly return the E finger to sound the E gracenote on Low G.



2. We now have to change note from Low G to Low A while playing the E gracenote

Step 1 Sound Low G

Step 2 Lift the E finger

Step 3 Quickly return the E finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the Low A finger to sound the E gracenote on Low A. Again, this all has to be done in one smart movement with the gracenote being sounded ON Low A and NOT after the Low A has sounded.



3. To change from Low A to B with the E gracenote

Step 1 Sound Low A

Step 2 Lift the E finger

Step 3 Quickly return the E finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the B finger to sound the E gracenote on B.



4. To change from B to C with the E gracenote

Step 1 Sound B

Step 2 Lift the E finger

Step 3 Quickly return the E finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the C finger and return the Low A finger to the chanter to sound the E gracenote on C.



5. To change from C to D with the E gracenote

Step 1 Sound C

Step 2 Lift the E finger

Step 3 Quickly return the E finger to the chanter and at the same time lift the D finger to sound the E gracenote on D.



The next step is to practice playing down the scale with the E gracenote.

1. To change from D to C with the E gracenote

Step 1 Sound D

Step 2 Lift the E finger

Step 3 Quickly return the E and D fingers to the chanter to sound the E gracenote on C

2. To change from C to B with the E gracenote

Step 1 Sound C

Step 2 Lift the E finger

Step 3 Quickly return the E and C fingers at the same time to the chanter while also raising the Low A finger to sound the E gracenote on B.

3. To change from B to Low A with the E gracenote

Step 1 Sound B

Step 2 Lift the E finger

Step 3 Quickly return the E finger to the chanter and at the same time replace the B finger to sound the E gracenote on Low A



4. To change from Low A to Low G with the E gracenote

Step 1 Sound Low A

Step 2 Lift the E finger

Step 3 Quickly return the E finger to the chanter and at the same time replace the Low A finger to sound the E gracenote on Low G.



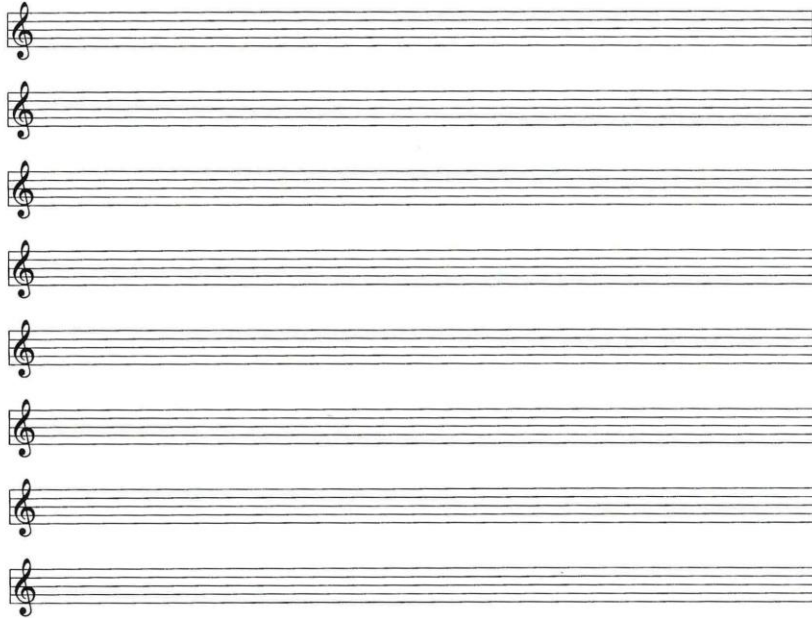
EXERCISE 7



EXERCISE 8



NOTES



THE NATIONAL
Piping
CENTRE
INCORPORATING THE COLLEGE OF PIPING



Lesson 3

THE THROW ON D

Each note has associated with it a 'doubling' which is a group of three gracenotes played before the note for the purpose of embellishing it and adding interest to the melody. On some notes we can also do a 'throw' which has the same effect.

Most of the top pipers, especially in piobaireachd (*Ceol Mor*), will make the throw on D like this:

1. Sound a Low A
2. Go to Low G
3. Make a D gracenote on C
4. Play D

This could be written:



Another perfectly acceptable way of playing the throw on D is as follows, again beginning on Low A:

1. Sound Low A
2. Go to Low G
3. Make a D gracenote so that another Low G is heard
4. Play C
5. Play D

This could be written:



It does not matter very much which one you decide to play. The best of the present day performers play them both, although in light music (marches, strathspeys and reels, hornpipes and jigs) you would choose to play one or the other – never a mixture.

In piobaireachd, or *Ceol Mor* (Big Music), you would always play the first method, the one which places the D gracenote on the C.

Practice the throw on D slowly and evenly many times. SLOWLY, because that is the only way to become proficient in any tune or exercise, and EVENLY so that eventually the proper sound will emerge.

No matter how you play it, it will always appear written like this:



The throw on D usually appears in tunes immediately following some other note, so it is important to be able to perform this movement after other notes without mistake or hesitation. When the movement has been practiced for a while it can be done quite quickly and some of the notes become so short that they are really gracenotes and are joined together.

Before doing so, let's try the throw on D from the note F, like this:



And also from C:



And finally,

from High A:



We are practicing the throw on D from these three different notes because they occur like that in your first tune, which you are now almost ready to try! No matter the note which precedes the throw, you always go directly to Low G which is the first note in the movement. This is called "closing the chanter", and it is imperative that all the fingers required move together and hit the Low G note at *exactly the same time*. If they do not, the result will be a type of catching sound which will spoil your music. With this ability soundly acquired, the playing of tunes only requires the co-ordination of eyes and fingers. Remember that the job of the eyes is to watch the music; do not allow yourself to develop the bad habit of watching your fingers.



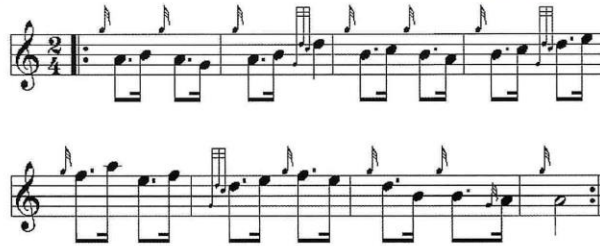
Lesson
4

**FIRST TUNE -
SCOTS
WHA HAE**

SCOTS WHA HAE

Slow Air

First Part



The above is the first part of 'Scots Wha Hae Wi' Wallace Bled' (*Scots Who Have With Wallace Bled*), or 'Bruce's Address to His Troops At Bannockburn'.

The sign:



is called the treble clef; its significance will be explained later. At present we can get on with learning the tune without worrying about it.

The vertical lines :



divide the measure into 'bars', which are convenient phrases of the tune.

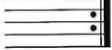
Study the first two bars. You may sing or hum them aloud if you wish. If we spread them out and write the names of the various notes underneath, they look like:



Low A B Low A Low G Low A B D

Now try playing these bars SLOWLY and CAREFULLY on the chanter. Repeat them many times, then tackle the other bars in the same way. As a general principle, you must always, when learning a tune, sacrifice the melody for the sake of correctness in making throws or doublings, or in playing other new or difficult movements. In this tune you must play the throw on D very slowly at first even though this will mean that the melody will be broken. The particular points to note in playing each bar are as follows:

- Bar 1:** The tune begins with a G gracenote on Low A, so start to blow as you make the gracenote.
- Bar 2:** Be sure to close the chanter properly at the start of the throw on D. You must always hear a distinct Low G at the beginning of this movement.
- Bars 3 & 4:** Make sure that the little finger is on the chanter when playing the Cs.
- Bar 4:** Remember to perform the throw on D slowly and correctly. Be careful of the crossing from D to E.
- Bars 5 & 6:** In going from F to the throw on D, be sure to 'close the chanter' (that is, sound Low G) at the start of the throw.
- Bar 7:** The Low G gracenote, written after the second B and before the first Low A, is produced by putting down both fingers on to the chanter to sound Low G, and then lifting the little finger almost immediately to form the Low A.
- Bar 8:** Be sure to give the final Low A its full two beat value.

The double bar lines at the start and end of each part:  signifies the finish of a part.

The two dots (in the Low A and C spaces) and the double bar lines mean that the part has to be played twice.

After you have tried playing this part several times, you should copy it carefully into your manuscript book and continue practicing the tune from your own copy. This procedure is absolutely essential if you are to learn to read music quickly.

At this stage it is worth pointing out that while your fingers should rest in a relaxed manner on the chanter, and should grip it without tightness or tension, the fingers should be as straight as you can make them. This is *vitaly important* at this stage, and you should also check your hand and finger posture. Your wrists too should be fairly straight and not bent or kinked.




Lesson
5

**STRIKES AND 2ND
PART OF SCOTS
WHA HAE**

STRIKES

Gracenotes between two similar notes – for example, between two Fs or two Es – can be produced by touching the chanter with one or more of the raised fingers. If you play F and then touch the chanter lightly and quickly with the F finger, a little E gracenote comes out, and then F is sounded again.

This would be written: 

Similarly if you play E and then touch with the E finger you produce a Low A gracenote

between two Es: 

Practice these touches slowly.

HIGH G DOUBLING

This doubling is performed as follows:

1. Make a High G gracenote on F, then
2. Raise the High G finger

When practicing this, it is convenient to start by playing some other note, Low A for example, but it, of course, is not part of the doubling. On first thoughts we might imagine that a doubling on High G should be written:



and the extra strokes on the F would indicate, as usual, that this note is of short duration. But the F is actually so short, with practice, that it becomes a gracenote, and the doubling is written:

Again, practice this slowly.



Play also:



Now we are almost ready to try the second part of the tune, but before we do, as we did with the first part, let us sing over the first bars aloud, and then try it slowly and carefully on the chanter.



Here now is the second and final part of the tune:

SCOTS WHA HAE

Second Part



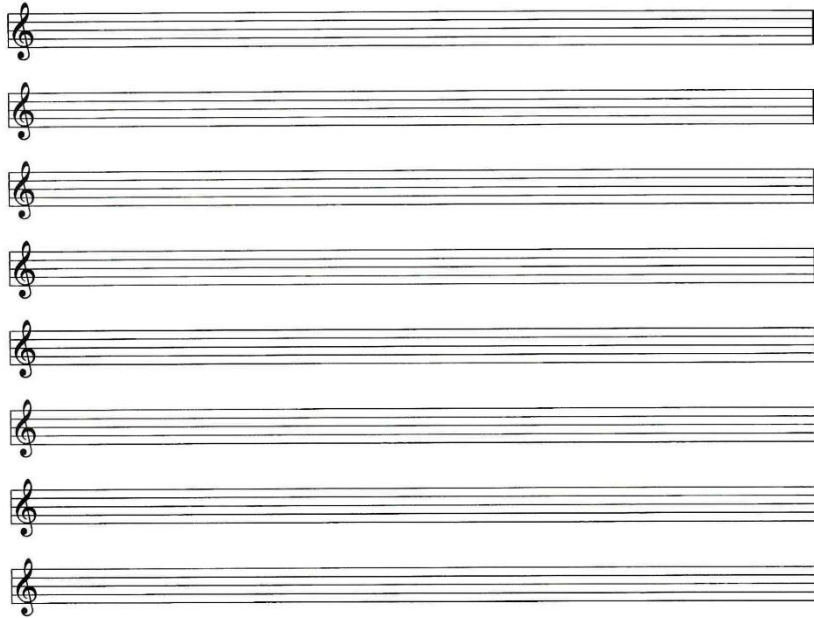
Sing the first bar and then try playing it slowly and carefully on the chanter. Repeat it many times then try the other bars in the same way. The particular points to note are:

Bars 1 & 2: A dot immediately after a note means that the note must be played a little longer than normal. (Half of the value of the note, again.) You must rest therefore on the three dotted F's and the dotted High A in these bars.

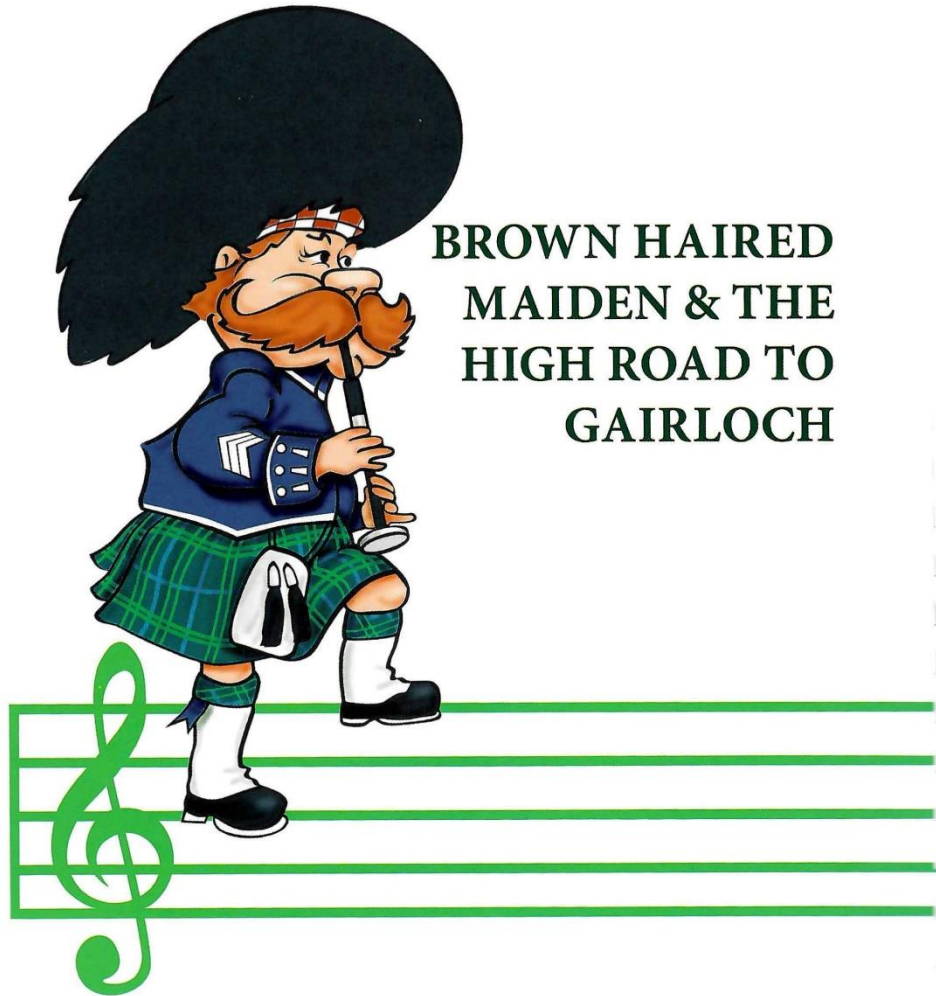
Bars 3 & 4: Rest similarly on the dotted E's. Making a clean crossing from D to E.

Copy this part into your manuscript book, and, as before, continue practicing from your own copy. Remember to play each part twice, and keep in mind the various points mentioned above.

NOTES



CHAPTER 2





Lesson
6

STRIKE ON D, HALF DOUBLING OF
F, AND THE BROWN
HAired MAIDEN

When you think you have mastered 'Scots Wha Hae' it is time to prepare for the next tune. Before we start it, however, you must learn some new finger movements. The first is called:

HALF DOUBLING ON F

In tunes, this occurs usually after a High A, so we will practice it always with High A in front. Place your fingers in position for the note High A, then change to F, and then make a G gracenote still on F.

Try this first without blowing so that you understand what is to be done.

You have to:

1. Play High A
2. Change to F
3. Make a G gracenote on F

You might imagine that this movement should be written:



but the first F is so short that it really becomes a gracenote itself, and when the two gracenotes are tied together for convenience, High A followed by half doubling on F looks like:



Practice this slowly many times. Be sure to make a clean G gracenote after the first short F.

Next we have to learn:

G GRACENOTE STRIKE

This strike is another of the simple movements in piping. It is performed as follows:

1. Make a G gracenote on D
2. Strike the chanter holes lightly and quickly with the three raised fingers (that is, the B, C, and D fingers) so that a little Low G is heard before D is heard again.

This movement shows the necessity of keeping all raised fingers close to, and at the same distance from, the chanter at all times. When playing the strike to Low G you must be sure to hit the chanter *at the same time* with all three fingers, otherwise annoying little extra notes will be heard.

The strike on D might be written:





The little tail on the first D indicating that it is a shorter note. As a matter of fact, however, the first D becomes very short after you have practiced the movement often, and eventually becomes a gracenote. The three gracenotes are then tied together, and the strike on D is written as:



Again practice this slowly many times. Remember that you must hear a distinct, though short, D before the three fingers touch the chanter TOGETHER to make the Low G gracenote.

You are now ready to try a couple of different combinations of G gracenote strikes which you are likely to encounter in tunes:

The strike on B:  and then, the strike on C: 

A lighter D strike movement can also be played by simply striking the D finger to C. On the note D, the movement would be written like this:



Similarly to the two ways of playing the throw on D, in light music pipers can choose to play one type or the other, although you would never mix the two ways within the one tune. It is probably best just now to stick to the "full" G gracenote strike as opposed to the lighter one.

When you are sure of these movements you are now ready to learn the second tune, *'The Brown Haired Maiden'*. The first thing to do when learning this and the next seven or eight tunes, is to sing them aloud slowly, so that you are quite sure of what is required before you start to play. It is important to realise each time that there is nothing new to learn in the tune itself. Only the sequence of the notes and doublings can be different, because you will have learned all of the new movements before tackling the tune.

THE BROWN HAIRE MAIDEN **March** **First Part**

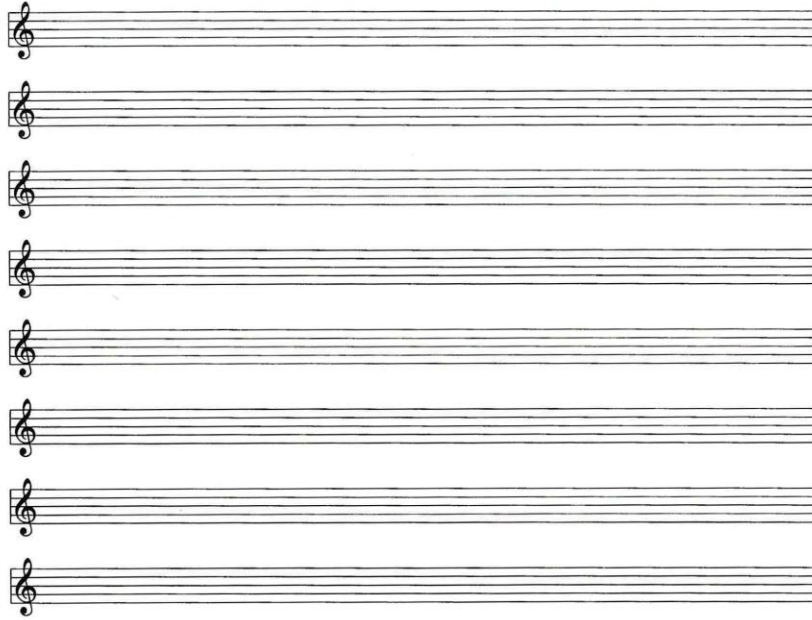


Proceed now to sing the whole of this first measure. When you are sure that you understand all the notes and doublings, begin to play the tune slowly on the chanter. Remember the golden rule. *NEVER TAKE A BREATH AT A CROSSING*. Listen carefully for any suspicion of crossing noises. The important points to watch are as follows:

- Bar 1:** Close the chanter cleanly for the throw on D – make sure that the first Low G gracenote is clearly heard. A dot immediately after a note means that that note must be played a little longer than usual. You must rest a little, therefore, on the first D. The Low G gracenote from B to Low A is made in exactly the same way as in the last bar of Scots Wha Hae, that is, put down the B and little fingers firmly on the chanter, and then lift the little finger immediately.
- Bar 2:** Close the chanter firmly for the throws on D. Rest well on the first D throw.
- Bar 3:** Make a clean G gracenote on F. Play doubling on High G slowly.
- Bar 4:** The Low A gracenote between the two Es is made exactly as in the previous tune by touching the E hole smartly with the E finger.
- Bar 5:** Rest on the dotted High A. Play half doubling of F slowly.
- Bar 6:** Rest well on the Low A because it is a longer note than even the throw on D which is dotted.
- Bar 7:** Make a clean G gracenote on F, and rest on F.
- Bar 8:** Watch the strike on D.

Practice this part slowly many times, and when you feel that you understand it, copy it carefully into your manuscript book. Continue to revise all that you have learned so far. Consult the photographs and diagrams regularly to check that you have your fingers straight and in the correct position for each note. You should be fully satisfied with your performance before passing to the next lesson.

NOTES



INCORPORATING THE COLLEGE OF PIPING



Lesson
7

SECOND PART
OF THE BROWN
HAired MAIDEN

The second measure of 'The Brown Haired Maiden' contains no new movements, so when you are sure of the first part you can move on.

THE BROWN HAired MAIDEN March Second Part

The musical notation consists of four staves of music in treble clef. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is written in a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes various note values such as quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, along with rests and dynamic markings. The second staff continues the melody from the first. The third and fourth staves show further development of the piece, with some notes marked with 'acc' (accents) and 'f' (forte). The notation is presented in a clear, legible format suitable for a beginner's music book.

Begin, as before, by singing the tune. Try to play the measure slowly and carefully on the chanter.

It starts with a High G Doubling, so start to blow as you make the G gracenote on F in the doubling. Only the first bar in line four is new. All the other bars have appeared already in the first measure. In this new bar, rest on the first High A, and be careful of the half doubling on F which is played from High G this time.

You will already be able to see how simple some very good melodies can be. Musical construction is based upon two apparently contradictory qualities – repetition and variation.

The repetition is very evident in *'The Brown Haired Maiden'*, for there are only nine different bars in the 32 which make up the tune. When you feel you understand this measure, and are playing it correctly (though slowly), copy it carefully into your manuscript book.

Continue to revise the previous lessons, and practice your tunes SLOWLY and OFTEN.

Congratulations! You have now completed your first two tunes, and have learned all of the material necessary in order to be ready for and to sit the Piping and Drumming Qualifications Board Level 1 (SCQF2) Certificate. Information can be found at www.pdqb.org on the PDQB/SQA examinations.



Lesson
8

CLEFS, THE STAVE,
AND NOTE
VALUES

We must now take some time to consider more fully the writing of music. Do not be led astray by the common belief that reading music is difficult. It is very simple. In a short time you will be able to read a tune as quickly as you are able to read its title.

The Stave: We have seen that the Stave consists of five lines and can be used to represent the different notes of the scale.



The Treble Clef: This is the name given to the sign which is really just an old form of the letter G. You will notice that it is always entwined round the second bottom line of the stave to indicate that that line is the G line.





Here now is a simple diagram which shows all of the notes of the scale, as well as the notes made from the drones, which are the long tubes which sit on the shoulder of the piper and make a constant, steady tone which harmonises with the chanter. All of these notes are placed on what we call the **Great Staff** which includes the *Bass or 'F' Clef*:

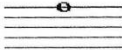
You should be able to play the correct notes and gracenotes in any tune, just by observing the position of the head of the note on the stave.

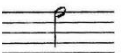
Chanter Scale


The actual Low A of the modern bagpipe is somewhere above Bb.

For example:  is the note D,  is a High G gracenote.


The problem arises now of how long we should spend on each note. How do we know which notes are long and which are short? The answer to this is to be found in the *shape* of the note. The longest note we are ever likely to use is the semi-breve or whole note, which is represented by:


As you see, it has an open head and no tail. 

Half a semi-breve, or a **half-note**, is shaped thus:  and is called a minim.


A **quarter-note**, or half of a minim, is:  and is called a crotchet.


An **eighth-note**, or half of a crotchet, is called a quaver. 


A **sixteenth-note**, or half of a quaver is:  and is called a semi-quaver.

Finally, a **thirty-second-note**, or half a semi quaver, is:  and is called a demi-semi-quaver.

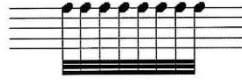
To sum up, the principal notes used in piping (omitting the semi-breve and the minim, which only occur rarely) are:

The 1/4 note: called a **crotchet**. 



This equals two 1/8th notes: called **quavers**. 

And equals four 1/16th notes: called **semi-quavers**. 

Which equals eight 1/32nd notes: called **demi-semi quavers**.





You will notice that often when two quavers occur together, a stroke is drawn to join both tails.

That is, instead of writing:  we write:  and so on.

THE USE OF THE DOT

Very often we require to play a note which does not fit in with the scheme outlined above. That is, it is longer than one note but not so long as double that note.



For example, suppose we wish to play a note which is longer than a quaver 

but not so long as a crotchet  which is, of course, equal to two quavers.


The obvious thing for us to do is to play a note which is equal to one and a half quavers. This note is called a **dotted quaver**, and is represented by putting a dot after the quaver:



A dotted note is equal to one and a half times the value of the same note without the dot.

A dotted crotchet:  therefore equals three quavers. 

BARS

For convenience, all tunes are divided up into **bars** by **bar lines** thus: 

The part of the tune contained between two successive bar lines is called a 'bar' of the tune. Generally speaking, the total time taken to play each bar in any particular tune is, on paper, the same, since each bar usually contains the same total value of notes. In other words, bars are just convenient, equal divisions of the tune.



COUNTING THE NOTE VALUES

Different tunes contain different total values of notes in each bar. For example, some tunes have the equivalent of two crotchets in each bar, some have the equivalent of three crotchets in each bar, and so on.



Look at the first bars of '*The Brown Haired Maiden*':



Gracenotes and doublings do not count when adding up time values. The time taken to play these is very small, and in fact is taken off the melody notes. Looking at the sample above, the first two notes in bar 1 are D (a dotted quaver) and C (a semi-quaver).

One dotted quaver  equals three semi-quavers: 

And so:  plus  equals 

Which equals  and therefore 

The first two notes in the first bar (which does not include the introductory note Low A) get the total time value of one crotchet or one quarter note. Similarly, we can add up the time values of the other notes in the bar and we find that the bar contains the equivalent of two crotchets. You can now check that all the other bars in '*The Brown Haired Maiden*' contain the equivalent of two crotchets.

TIME SIGNATURES

To show the total time value in each bar of a tune, we place two numbers at the beginning. This is called the *time signature*. If each bar of a particular tune contains the equivalent of two crotchets, then our time signature for that tune could be two crotchets. A crotchet is a quarter note so we could write 2 1/4 at the start but this is always shortened to 2/4. We read this as *two-four* and we know that any tune with the time signature 2/4 placed on the staff at the beginning is a tune having the equivalent of two crotchets in each bar. In the same way, the time signature 3/4 means that each bar contains three crotchets or their equivalent, and 4/4 means four crotchets or their equivalent in each bar. 4/4 time, read as *four - four* time, is also called *common time*, so usually the time signature for it is simply a large letter C. '*The Brown Haired Maiden*' is in 2/4 time, having the equivalent of two crotchets in each bar, and, later in this book, '*The Mist Covered Mountains*', with the equivalent of six quavers in the bar, is in 6/8 time. Commonly used Simple Time signatures used in piping are 2/4, 4/4 and 3/4. Commonly used Compound Time signatures are 6/8 and 9/8.

BEATING TIME

You will probably have noticed that beating time is often a necessary accompaniment to playing music. The piper keeps time as he or she marches, or, if standing still, beats time with the foot. In many tunes, one beat is given to every quarter-note or crotchet. Such tunes are said to be in simple time. For '*The Brown Haired Maiden*', therefore, the time signature 2/4 only tells us there are two quarter-notes in each bar.

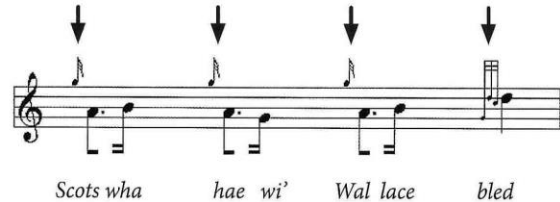
MONOTONES

Monotone simply means one single sound. For examinations a monotone exercise means repeating that single sound in the note value pattern of a given tune within a time signature. To demonstrate a monotone exercise you simply take a pencil or pen and lightly tap out the note durations contained in the piece of music, whether it be a few bars, or a whole part. For instance, if we take the first two bars of '*The Brown Haired Maiden*' again, we simply tap for each note, giving each of them proper value. A good way of doing this is to sing the tune in your head as you tap the notes.

RHYTHM PATTERNS

In all kinds of music, some notes are strong, or accented, while others are weak. By emphasising certain notes at regular intervals we produce what is called rhythm. As we have seen, another method of producing emphasis in piping is by means of gracenotes. Try this experiment of doing several things at one time. Turn to your copy of '*Scots Wha Hae*', then sing the melody and beat time with your foot watching the music at the same time. The quality of your voice

does not matter! Now when you have tried this a few times and know you are beating your foot at the right time, mark a stroke like this / above the notes which get a beat. **Do this now before reading further.** The first two bars spread out should look like:



The first beats in the song fall on *Scots*, *hae*, and *Wal*, so notes corresponding to these must be the accented ones. Complete the accent marks (↓) for the rest of the tune.

You will notice now the following rules:

1. There is one strong beat in each bar.
2. The first note in each bar gets a beat.
3. The last beat is at the end of the bar but not always on the last note.

Now mark in the accent marks on your copy of the '*The Brown Haired Maiden*'. When you are able to play it well, try beating time as you play. Remember that you have to be able to play a tune very well before you can beat time to it. When learning a tune you have to sacrifice melody and regular tempo for the sake of correctness in making doublings or in playing other new or difficult parts.



Lesson
9

**DOUBLING ON C AND B
AND THE HIGH ROAD TO
GAIRLOCH**

Before trying the next tune you must learn some more doublings.

C DOUBLING

This one really lives up to its name, for it is just two Cs, the first one having a G gracenote and the second a D gracenote on it. Place your fingers in position for the note C, then blow and make a G gracenote and then a D gracenote with a short interval between them.

This could be written: 

but the first C, after some practice, can be very short and becomes a gracenote.

The three gracenotes are tied together for neatness and C doubling looks like:



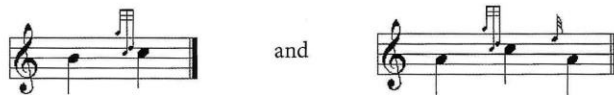
Practice C Doubling after Low A, that is:

To do this:

1. Sound Low A
2. Make a G gracenote on C
3. Make a D gracenote still on C



Very often, C doublings are followed by E gracenotes onto another note, so try this:




The C doubling is one of the most important doublings in piping. It appears very simple after a while, but don't fall into any bad habits. Be careful always: to separate the G and D gracenotes so that the little C gracenote is always distinctly heard. *In fact it is vitally important that this middle gracenote is as big as possible while at the same time not unnecessarily breaking the flow of the music.*



We have to tackle another doubling and then we will be ready to start the next tune.

B DOUBLING

This follows the same pattern as the previous one. All you do is make a G gracenote on B followed closely by a D gracenote still on B.

As you might expect by now, this is written: 

with the B gracenote separating the G and D gracenotes. Be extremely careful when practicing this doubling that the G and D gracenotes are always quite separate and distinct. Like C doublings, B doublings are also followed by E gracenotes onto another note.

Try:  and then: 

From Low G, sound the starting note, then change to B making a clean G gracenote at the same time, and then make a distinct D gracenote. Concentrate, as always, on accuracy and let speed of performance come along in its own good time. Practice these doublings, and keep revising all that you have learned so far, and you will soon be ready for 'The High Road to Gairloch'.

THE HIGH ROAD TO GAIRLOCH March First Part



Begin, as usual, by singing the part so that you are quite sure of what is required.

Try the tune slowly, watching particularly the following points:

Bar 1: Rest on the first E. Make clean G gracenotes.

Bar 2: Play C doubling carefully.

Bar 3: Be sure to sound the Low G gracenote in the D throws.

Bar 4: Make a good doubling on B; the D throw has been written so that you will easily recognise it, but the first Low G gracenote of the throw is absorbed in the Low G note preceding it.

Bar 5: As bar 1.

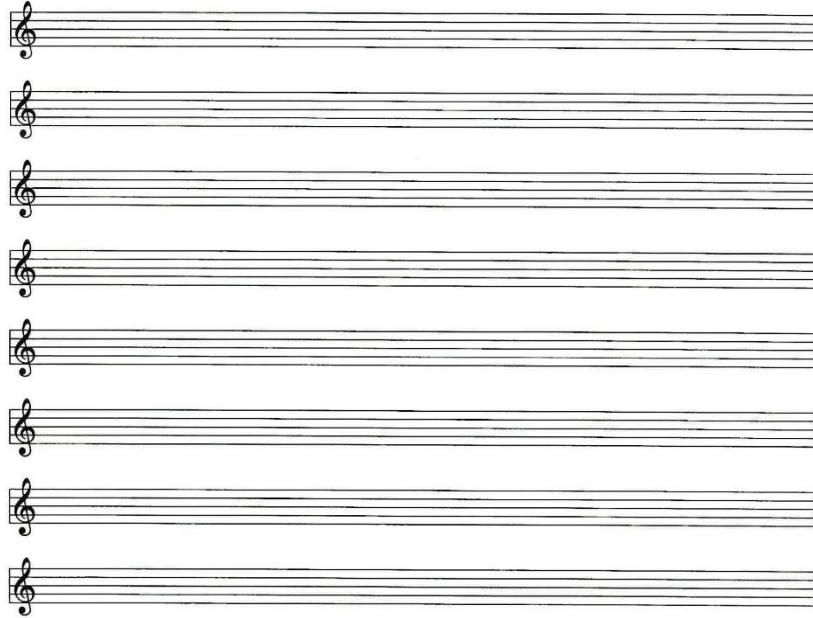
Bar 6: As bar 2.

Bar 7: Rest on the first Low A. Separate the gracenotes carefully in a C doubling. Make a clean E gracenote on Low A.

Bar 8: The B doubling and the Low A each have a separate beat. The Low G gracenote on Low A is made in the usual way.

Practice this measure slowly and carefully, and when you think you understand it, copy it into your manuscript book. Continue to revise all the other lessons during your daily practice.

NOTES



THE NATIONAL
Piping
CENTRE
INCORPORATING THE COLLEGE OF PIPING



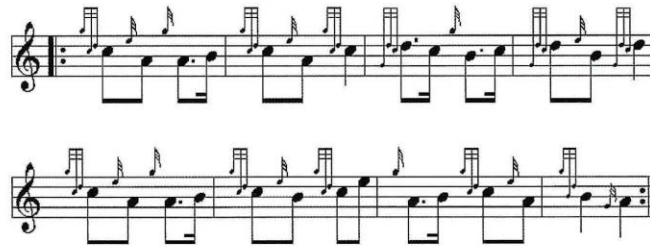
Lesson
10

**2ND PART OF
THE HIGH ROAD
TO GAIRLOCH**

Once again the second measure of the tune contains no new movements, so when you can play the first one reasonably well you may pass on.

THE HIGH ROAD TO GAIRLOCH

Second Part



As usual sing the part and then have a go at playing it.

Watch your playing of these three movements: C doubling, the D throw and B doubling. In bar 6 it is easy to make a mistake and play a Low A in between the two C's instead of the correct note B. Each time, in this and all tunes, make sure that you play these correctly, even if you are slow with them. Make the other gracenotes cleanly on the notes. You will now have overcome any tendency to take a breath at a crossing. You should by this time be able to play at least half a measure, even quite slowly, in one breath. Do not get into the bad habit of taking a lot of short breaths. This is a 2/4 tune, which means that a 1/4 note (or crotchet) goes to make up each beat. When you think you understand this part, copy it into your book and continue to practice it and your other tunes from there. In piping, because of the nature and function of the bagpipe, every tune must be memorised. You should now be trying to play the first few tunes without looking at the music.

CHAPTER 3





Lesson
11

**DOUBLING ON F
AND E AND
HIGHLAND LADDIE**

We are now ready to learn some more doublings. The first is:

F DOUBLING

This one again lives up to its name, for it is just two Fs, each having a G gracenote on it. Place your fingers in position for the note F, then blow and make two G gracenotes, one after the other, with a short interval between them. You might think that this doubling should be written:



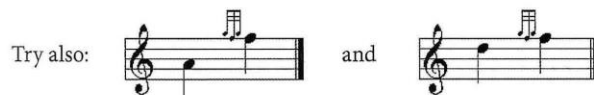
but the F between the two gracenotes is so short that it is really a gracenote itself, and when the three gracenotes are tied together for convenience, F doubling looks like:



Practice F doubling after E, that is:



Sound E, make a G gracenote on F by lifting the G and F fingers at the same time and dropping the G finger to F, followed by another G gracenote on F.




many times until you have thoroughly mastered this doubling. Be sure each time to make the two G gracenotes quite distinct with the short F between them.

Next to be learned is:

E DOUBLINGS

This one is performed by making a G gracenote on E followed closely by an F gracenote, still on E. The gracenotes must be done smartly but must not be run together – a very short E note separates them.

Again the doubling done slowly would be written: 

but eventually becomes: 

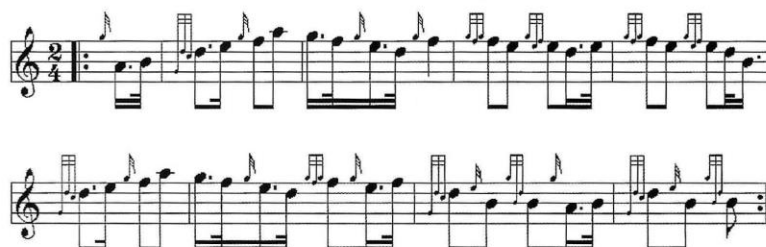
as the E between the G and F gracenotes becomes quite short. Be careful at all times, however, to keep the G and F gracenotes separate with a distinct E between them. Never let them run into one another. To avoid this common error, practice the doubling slowly at all times and think consciously of separating the G and F gracenotes.

Practice also: 

In each case sound the first note, make a clean G gracenote on E and then a distinct F gracenote, still on E. F and E doublings are of the highest importance. The ability to do them cleanly with the gracenotes big and separate is the mark of the well-trained piper.

From F, the G gracenote must be made as you would a plain High G with the three top hand fingers raised. One of the most common errors in piping is the false E doubling from F caused by beginners not adhering to this rule. When you have practiced E doublings for a while you are ready to try the next tune, the well-known:

HIGHLAND LADDIE **March** **First Part**



Begin, as usual, by singing the first part.

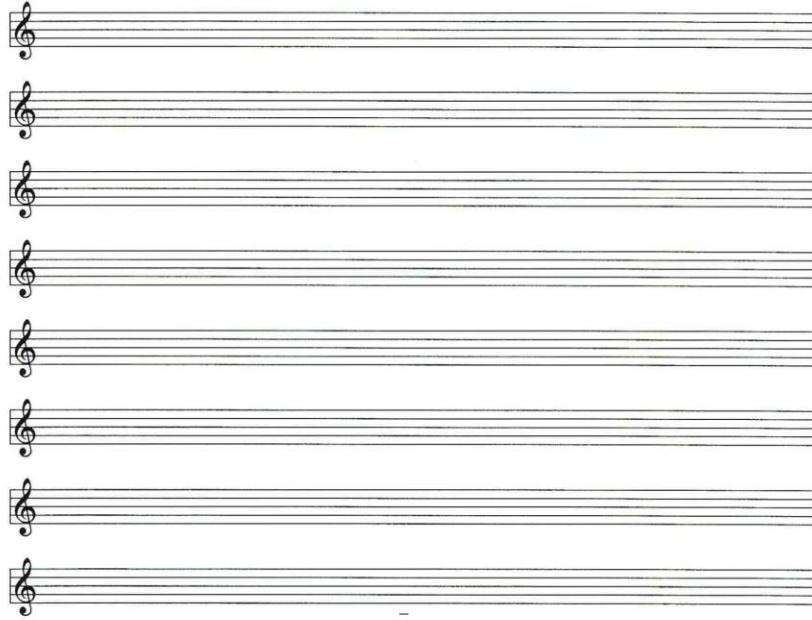
Proceed now to read aloud the whole of this first measure. When you are sure that you understand all the notes and doublings, begin to play the tune slowly on the chanter. The tune starts with a G gracenote on Low A, so start to blow as you make the gracenote.

Other points to watch are as follows:

- Bar 1:** Close the chanter cleanly for the D throw – make sure that the first Low G gracenote is clearly heard.
- Bar 2:** The first four notes should be played slowly at first. The last note, F, is a crotchet, and is therefore as long as the other four notes in the bar put together. Be sure to rest on it.
- Bars 3 & 4:** Play the F doubling and E doubling slowly and correctly.
- Bar 5:** Watch the D throw.
- Bar 6:** Make a clean F doubling from D.
- Bar 7:** Close the chanter properly for the throw on D from F. Be careful of the E gracenote on B.
- Bar 8:** As bar 7.

Practice this measure many times, and then, when you feel you understand it, copy it into your manuscript book. Continue to revise all that you have learned so far and be satisfied with your performance before passing on to the next lesson. You should be able to check now that rules 2 and 3 at the end of Lesson 8 apply to this tune and also to 'The High Road to Gairloch'.

NOTES





Lesson
12

**DOUBLING ON HIGH A
AND 2ND PART OF
HIGHLAND LADDIE**

This lesson starts with another doubling – a very simple one however:

HIGH A DOUBLING

To perform it:

1. Play High A.
2. Your top hand thumb is now off the chanter. Bring it down quickly in a sweeping motion so that it brushes over the High A hole. This causes a short High G (not a true High G because the E finger is kept on) to be heard. Thus a doubling, consisting of two High As separated by a High G, is formed.

When performed slowly, this would be written:



Normally the first High A is very short and becomes a gracenote too, so that the doubling is properly written:



Practice this doubling from High G. That is, sound High G, change to High A, and then immediately sweep the thumb down, brushing the High A hole for the doubling. This doubling takes a lot of explaining, but is one of the easiest to perform. You should be ready now to try the second measure of 'Highland Laddie'.

HIGHLAND LADDIE

Second Part



Begin, as before, by singing the part. Then try the part slowly and carefully on the chanter.

The points to note are:

- Bar 1:** Play the doubling on High G and doubling on High A slowly.
- Bar 2:** Make a clean F doubling, with distinct gracenotes. The last note in the bar, F, is a crotchet so be sure to rest on it.
- Bars 3 & 4:** As first measure.
- Bars 5 & 6:** As bars 1 and 2.
- Bars 7 & 8:** As first measure.

You will be beginning to notice that piping gets easier as you go along. The second measure of this tune has eight bars, but only two of them are new to us. Keep playing this measure over slowly until you feel you are beginning to grasp it, then copy it into your manuscript book. Continue practicing your four tunes regularly, remembering to play each measure twice and of course practice the doublings separately as well.

You have now completed about twelve weeks' study of the technique necessary to play the pipes well. After a few more days of practice you should be ready to proceed with the next stage.

An important point to note is that the mouthpiece of the chanter should be held in the lips in the centre; try to avoid gripping it with your teeth. You should always rest the end of your chanter on the table top, or on your thigh, and particular attention should be given to not blowing the cheeks out, which leads to weakened muscles and problems when beginning the bagpipes. Look at yourself in a mirror to ensure that your posture is straight and relaxed.



Lesson 13

THE GRIP AND THE TAORLUATH

THE GRIP

The next new movement is called a “Grip” or “Leumluath”(pronounced ‘lumlooa’)

The Grip (leumluath) on E is written:  which means that you

1. Play E
2. Close the chanter to sound Low G
3. Make a D gracenote (still on Low G)
4. Play E

The two Low Gs and the D become short with practice and so are written as gracenotes.

Try also these: 

Practice each one slowly and carefully.

TAORLUATH

The next movement you have to learn is called the ‘Taorluath’ (pronounced ‘torlooa’). This is a movement done on various notes, but we shall consider it first from Low A to Low A.

We will begin this time trying to play it by examining the way in which it is written. Obviously it starts with a G gracenote on Low A. Next follows a Low G gracenote. Well, there is only one way to do that, and that is to close the chanter by putting on all fingers.

Then we have a D gracenote followed by a Low G gracenote, so obviously you just make a D gracenote on the Low G you are playing, and both are formed. Finally we have an E gracenote on Low A, so you do that and finish the movement.

To summarise, then:

1. Make a G gracenote on Low A
2. Close the chanter (or in other words, sound Low G)
3. Make a D gracenote, still on Low G
4. Make an E gracenote on Low A



The taorluath is one of the most important movements in piping. It appears in every class of pipe music, and your ability to play it is one of the strongest factors in determining how good a player you are. *Quite simply you cannot become a good piper if you do not make the taorluath properly*, and so it is most important that you learn to play it well. As usual, practice it slowly and carefully. It is really very easy to play provided you always remember to make sure the first Low G gracenote is clearly heard. The important thing is to close the chanter well at the beginning.

We will try one other taorluath at present, from B to B, and then leave you to practice them for a while.



Again this is performed in much the same way as the taorluath on Low A. That is:

1. Make a G gracenote on B
2. Close the chanter
3. Make a D gracenote (still on Low G)
4. Make an E gracenote on B

When practicing a taorluath slowly, it should sound like 3 perfectly even notes, with the introductory note before the first Low G being longer:

ONE	<i>Two</i>	<i>Three</i>	<i>Four</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>Low G</i>	<i>Low G</i>	<i>B</i>

As always, you will have no trouble if you practice it slowly, evenly and often.

N.B. When playing a taorluath from D to Low A, you make a B gracenote instead of the normal D gracenote.



Lesson
14

THE BIRL AND
THE MIST COVERED
MOUNTAINS

THE BIRL

This is quite different from all the other doublings because, for one thing, only one finger, the little one, is used. For another, the birl takes a little longer to learn. What you have to do is strike the Low A hole with the little finger twice in rapid succession. There are many ways to do this, but we will explain the best way:

1. Place the fingers in position for Low A.
2. Move the little finger slightly up towards the B finger, then bring it down on to the chanter and strike the Low A hole a glancing downwards blow (this makes a Low G gracenote on Low A).
3. Now curl up the little finger on itself, bending both joints so that, in so doing, it touches the Low A hole once more (this makes another Low G gracenote on Low A). If you think about the figure seven with the tip of the finger it may help.

Practice this movement slowly and carefully very often. Make sure that the B finger does not move off its hole when you curl the little finger. This doubling takes more practice than any of the others before you get the proper sound from it, but once learned the birl is one of the most satisfying of flourishes.

When, after a lot of practice, the two strikes with the little finger are being made close together, the little Low A in the middle becomes so short that it too is a gracenote.

The birl is therefore written:



Practice this movement in the usual fashion from every note on the chanter, especially from Low G. You will see that when the birl is written from notes other than Low A, we play a very short Low A prior to the birl. From Low A, there is no need to write this short Low A, as it is contained in the Low A melody note itself.

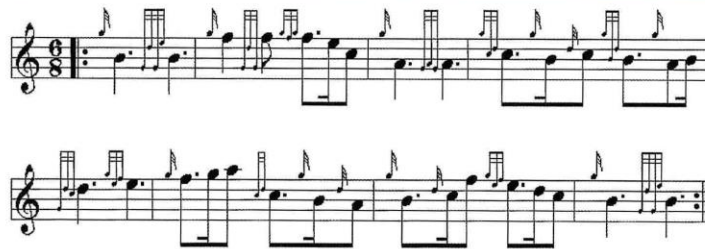


Keep exercising the little finger in spare moments, even when you can't play the chanter. Most pipers develop the unconscious (but very useful) habit of exercising the little finger at all times, so that we can often recognise a piper by remarking, as Coll did of Rory:

*'You have the skill of the pipes;
I know by the drum of your fingers on the horn spoon.'*

Now you are ready for the next tune.

THE MIST COVERED MOUNTAINS **Slow Air** **First Part**



This tune is in 6/8 time (read 'six-eight time'). The rules regarding time in Lesson 8 apply to this, as to all tunes. 6/8 time is called 'Compound Time' (as distinct from Simple Time). In Compound Time each beat can be divided into three equal parts, whereas in Simple Time each beat can be divided into two (or four) equal parts. In other words, a tune in Simple Time goes like: 'One, two; one, two . . .' while a tune in Compound Time goes: 'One, two, three; one, two, three; one, two, three . . .' In 6/8 time we have in each bar the equivalent of six eighth notes (or quavers). Each group of three quavers (or the equivalent) gets one of the two beats in each bar.

The time of the tune, of course, need only concern us once we can play it fairly well. The most important thing is to play all the notes, gracenotes and doublings correctly. Sing the part and then try to play it slowly, as usual. Although this tune is a slow air, all 6/8s are not slow – 6/8 quick marches are among the sprightliest tunes we have. The special points to note here are:

- Bar 1:** Take the taorluath slowly. The beats are on the two dotted crotchets.
- Bar 2:** When making the F to F Grip, make sure that all fingers hit the chanter at *precisely* the same time when making the first Low G gracenote, and also that they leave at the same time when returning to F.
- Bar 4:** Make clear, clean doublings, and make sure the single gracenotes are neatly played.

Bar 6: Contains what is called a half doubling of C. You cannot make a G gracenote from High A, so the G gracenote which is normally in all of the ordinary doublings is simply omitted.

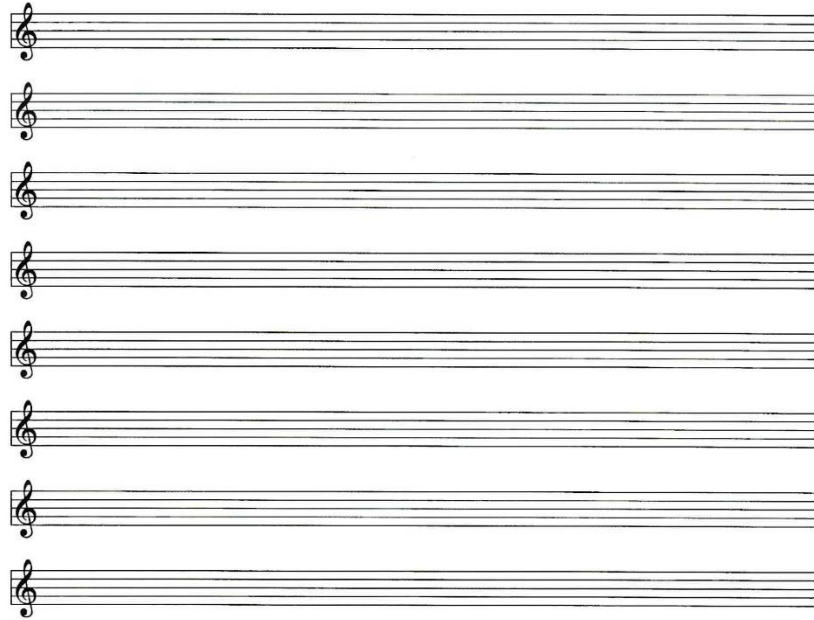
Bar 7: A clean E doubling from F is essential here.

Bar 8: As Bar 1.

Practice this part in the usual way, paying particular attention to the taorluaths. Copy it into your manuscript book and continue to practice it with all your other tunes. You should now be able to play some more of your tunes off by heart, but check them occasionally with the copy in case you are making any mistakes.

Examine the values of the notes in the tunes, and be sure that you are giving each one its correct value. Continue to try beating your foot as you practice the tunes you can play well. Remember that each lesson is something new added to the number of things you must keep practicing.

NOTES





Lesson 15

2ND PART OF THE MIST COVERED MOUNTAINS AND THE 79TH'S FAREWELL TO GIBRALTAR

As before, the second measure of 'The Mist Covered Mountains' contains no new movements. Whenever you feel confident that you thoroughly understand the first part you may proceed with the second.

THE MIST COVERED MOUNTAINS

Second Part



By now you may be able to make your first attempt without reading the whole part, so start playing it in your usual careful fashion.

The points to note are:

- Bar 1:** Rest and beat on the two dotted F's.
- Bar 2:** Be very careful of the half doubling on F from High A. The F grace note is played clearly before you make the following G grace note.
- Bar 4:** As in the first part, be careful with the E doubling from F.
- Bar 5:** Use the time available in a slow tune to make the best possible throw on D.
- Bar 7:** Again, play the E doubling from F accurately.

The other difficulties are the same as some which occurred in the first measure. Copy this measure as usual whenever you feel that you understand it.

This measure and the next tune require that you should revise E doubling after F, so let us check up on your playing of this:



Remember that you must play F and make a clean, distinct G grace note on E. For this grace note all three top hand fingers are off the chanter. Drop the top two to E and then make a clean F grace note still on E. You must be very careful of two things:

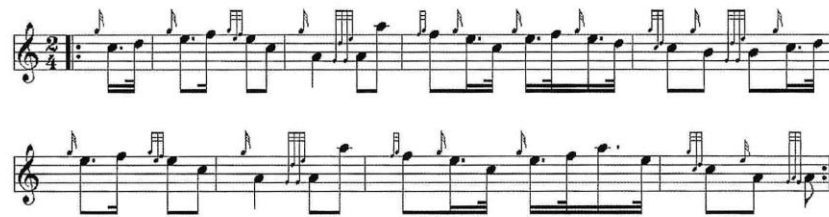
1. The first finger to move is the High G finger, when it starts to make the grace note.

2. The G and F gracenotes must be kept separate, with the E gracenote in between sounding clearly.

Play the movement slowly many times. Sometimes it helps to think of making a big G gracenote.

You are now ready to tackle one of our very best marches 'The 79th's Farewell to Gibraltar'. It is a little more advanced, but will let you know how much work you still have to do on your technique.

THE 79TH'S FAREWELL TO GIBRALTAR March First Part



If you like, begin by singing the part to make sure that you understand what is required, then try playing it very slowly on the chanter. Make sure that when you come to any of these new movements you play them very slowly and correctly. Points to watch are:

Bar 1: Be careful of the E doubling after F.

Bar 2: Taorluath – make the first Low G gracenote firmly.

Bar 3: Half doubling on F.

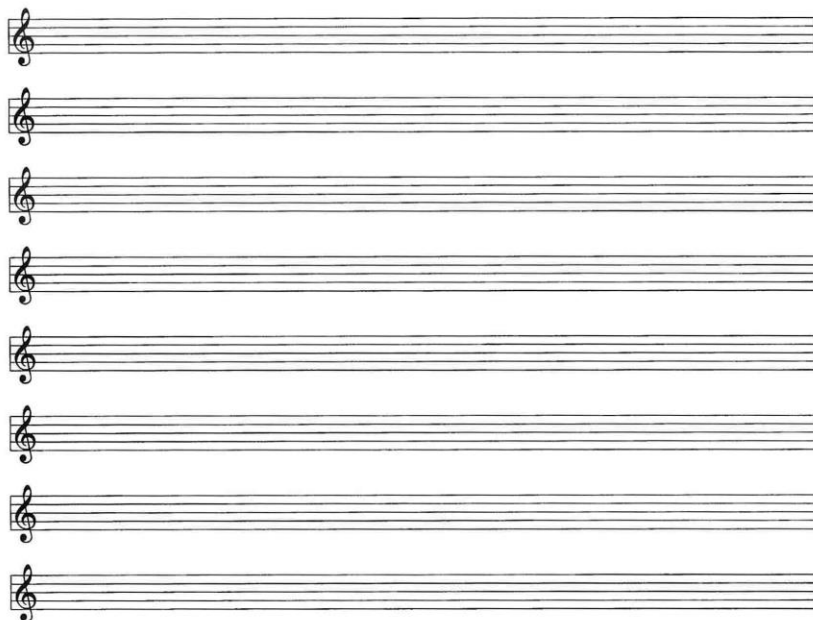
Bar 4: Separate the gracenotes in C doubling. Be careful of the B taorluath.

Bars 5, 6, 7: As 1, 2, and 3.

Bar 8: C Doubling; birl.

Play this over many times and, when you think you are sure of it, write it into your book and practice it from your own copy. Remember that at present the taorluaths and doublings must be played slowly, even although this means that the regular rhythm is being broken. Speed of playing will come in good time. *You will become a good piper sooner if you practice slowly.*

NOTES



CHAPTER 4



**79TH'S
FAREWELL TO
GIBRALTER &
THE EARL OF
MANSFIELD**

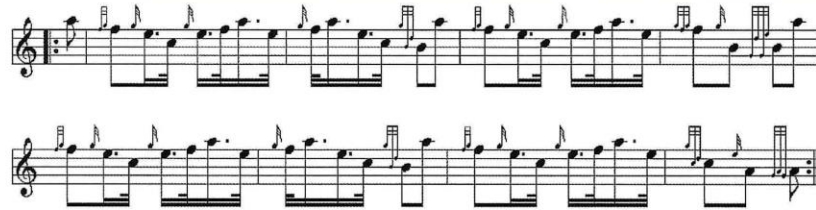


Lesson
16

**2ND PART OF THE
79TH'S FAREWELL
TO GIBRALTAR**

THE 79TH'S FAREWELL TO GIBRALTAR

SECOND PART



Bar 1: Half doubling on F.

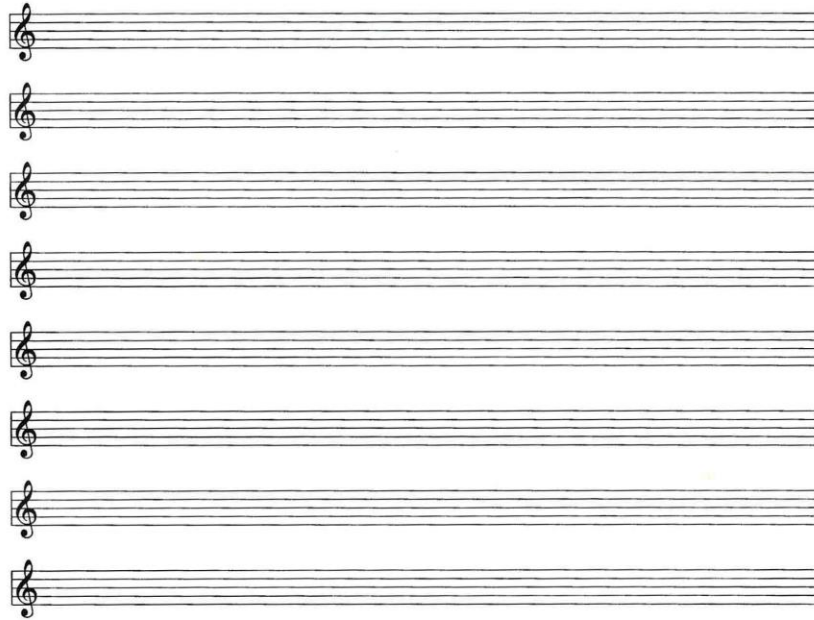
Bar 2: B doubling.

Bar 4: F doubling – make the gracenotes large and separate; B taorluath.

Bar 8: Be careful of C doubling from E. Make the G gracenote big and early. Watch the B finger when you are playing the birl.

Write this into your book and practice the two measures together. Keep revising your other tunes and all the doublings etc.

NOTES





Lesson 17

GRIP TO C AND 3RD PART OF THE 79TH'S FAREWELL TO GIBRALTAR

THE GRIP TO C

In the third part of the '79ths' we find the grip from B to C. It is written:



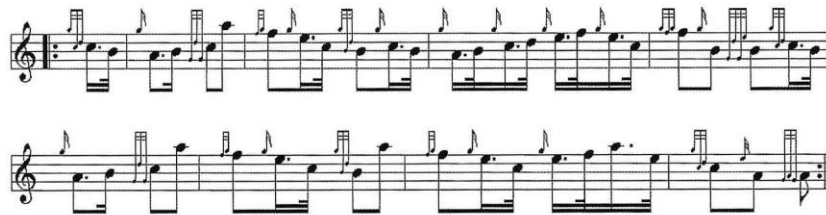
To play this you:

1. Sound B
2. Close the chanter (Low G gracenote)
3. Make a D gracenote still on Low G
4. Sound C

Practice this many times, being careful to sound both of the Low G gracenotes clearly. Now we are ready for the third measure of 'The 79th's Farewell to Gibraltar'.

THE 79TH'S FAREWELL TO GIBRALTAR

Third Part



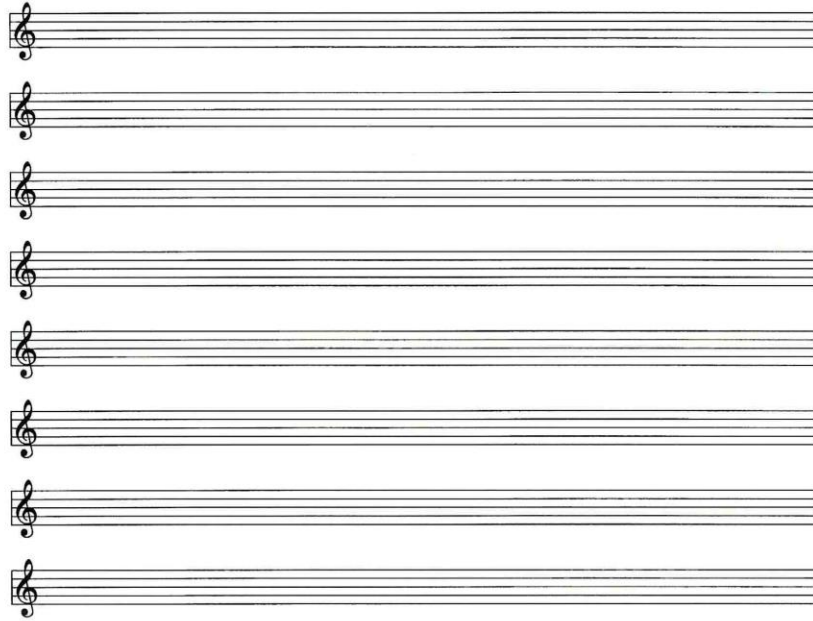
As usual, sing it and then try it carefully. Play the grip from B to C very slowly each time, making sure that you sound both Low G gracenotes clearly. Other points to watch are:

Bar 2: Make a clean B doubling. Be sure to put the little finger down for the C immediately following.

Bar 4: Separate the gracenotes in C doubling, here and at the beginning of the measure. Be sure the little finger is on for these Cs.

Write this measure into your manuscript book.

NOTES



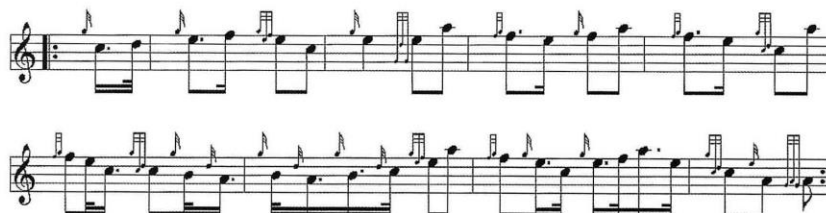


Lesson
18

**4TH PART OF THE
79TH'S FAREWELL TO
GIBRALTAR**

THE 79TH'S FAREWELL TO GIBRALTAR

Fourth Part



Sing the part, paying particular attention to the gracenotes in bars 5 and 6, then try it on the chanter slowly. Be careful of:

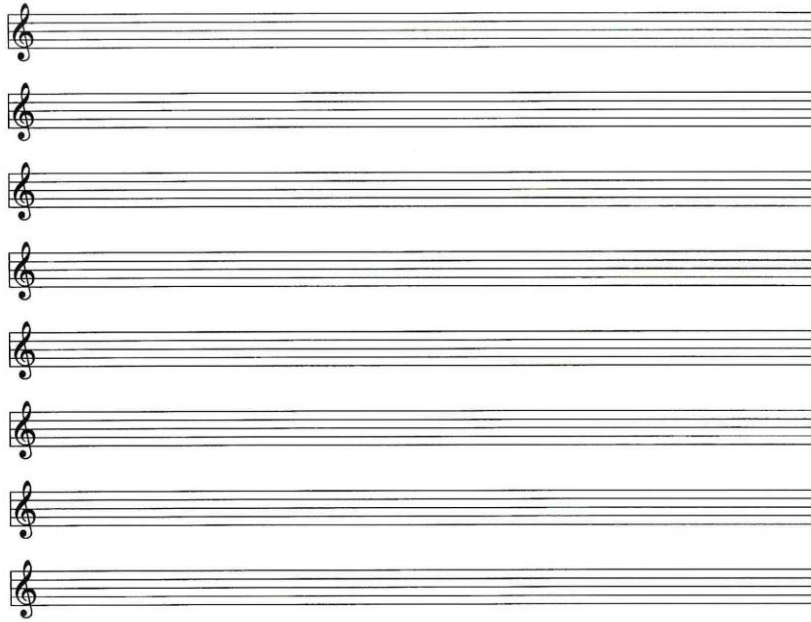
- Bar 1:** E doubling after F.
- Bar 2:** Grip E to E.
- Bars 3 & 4:** Half doubling on Fs.
- Bar 5:** Half doubling on F, C doubling, G gracenote on B, D gracenote on Low A.
- Bar 6:** G gracenote on B, D gracenote on Low A, G gracenote on B, D gracenote on C.
- Bar 8:** C Doubling, birl.

Practice particularly bars 5 and 6 because, although they may not look it, they are the most difficult phrases you have so far tried to learn. Write this fourth and final measure of the tune into your book.

When you have practiced this tune until you can play it as well as the others, you have reached a definitive stage in your piping career. If you are learning on your own you really need now to have an experienced teacher hear you play your tunes so that he or she can correct any basic mistakes in the positioning of your fingers, or in the actual fingering during tunes. Before you do this revise all eighteen lessons in detail.

'*The 79th's Farewell to Gibraltar*' is not only a pleasant melody, it is a test tune. If you can play it competently, and master Lessons 1 to 18 successfully, then you can definitely be a good piper. Whether you become a very good or an excellent player depends on the amount of practice you are prepared to do.

NOTES





Lesson 19

THUMB GRACENOTE AND 1ST PART OF THE EARL OF MANSFIELD'S MARCH

THUMB GRACENOTES

Occasionally, as you have seen, we make use of fingers other than G, D, and E for making gracenotes. For example, in E doublings the F finger makes a gracenote. The thumb also is sometimes used.



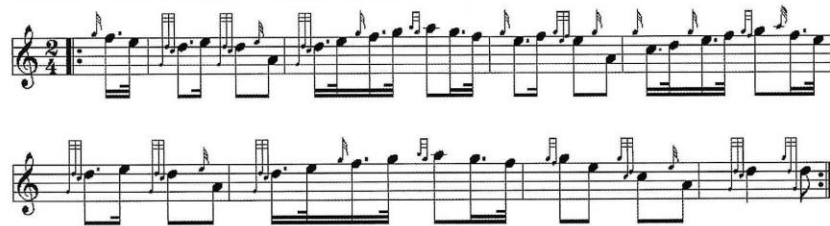
This example represents High G followed by a thumb or High A gracenote on F. (The ordinary G, D, or E gracenotes would be impossible here as you will have worked out.)

To do this, sound High G, then change to F, making a gracenote with your thumb at the same time. These instructions should be sufficient by this time for you to accomplish the movement, but just in case you are not quite sure, here are the details:

1. Sound High G
2. Lift off the thumb a little bit
3. Replace the thumb and put on the High G finger at the same time to sound F.

Most of the important finger movements have to be learned at the beginning in piping. Although you must always be on the alert, and though you will require a lot of help as tunes become more difficult, you have now not very many new movements to learn – at least not until you start *ceol mor*, the most important part of the piping art. The next tune we shall learn has three parts.

THE EARL OF MANSFIELD March First Part



Try it over slowly, noting the following points:

Bar 3: In E doublings, make a clean G gracenote on E.

Bar 7: Make a big G gracenote at the start of the C doubling.

Again, practice the measure slowly. Note that the beat falls on the first group of tied notes.



Lesson
20

THUMB DOUBLING AND 2ND
PART OF THE EARL OF
MANSFIELD'S MARCH

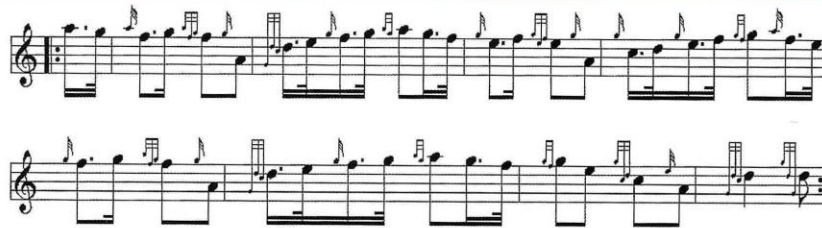
THUMB DOUBLING ON F



This is called the 'thumb doubling on F', and is just an F doubling except that the first gracenote is done with the thumb instead of the High G finger. To do this, sound High G, make a thumb gracenote on F, then make a High G gracenote. This is fairly easy to do, but practice it slowly and carefully just the same. When you think you have got the idea of thumb gracenotes, it is time to try:

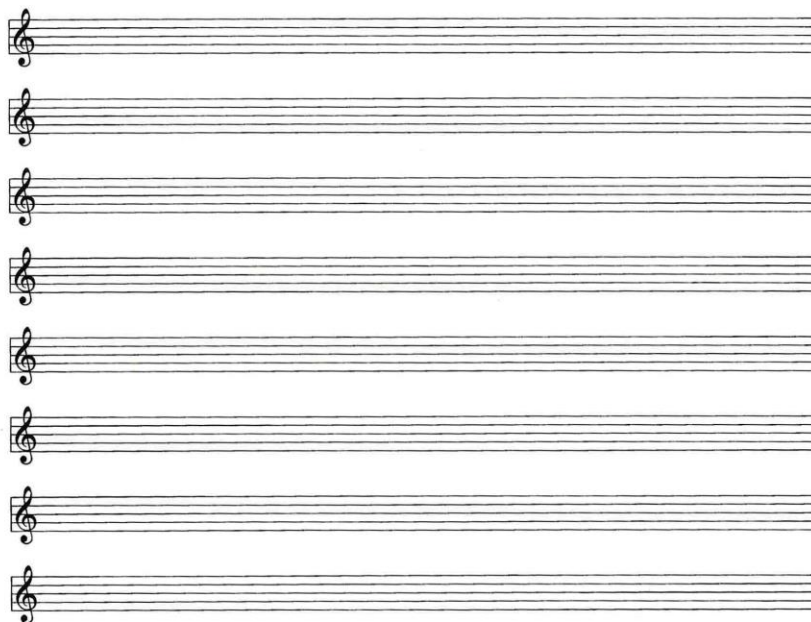
THE EARL OF MANSFIELD

Second Part



You will notice that, apart from the thumb gracenotes and doublings, this part is much the same as the first part, so you just have to watch the same points. Practice the two parts slowly together and write them into your manuscript book as usual. If you are sure of the first two parts of 'The Earl of Mansfield' you are now ready for the third.

NOTES





Lesson
21

**3RD PART OF THE
EARL OF MANSFIELD'S
MARCH**

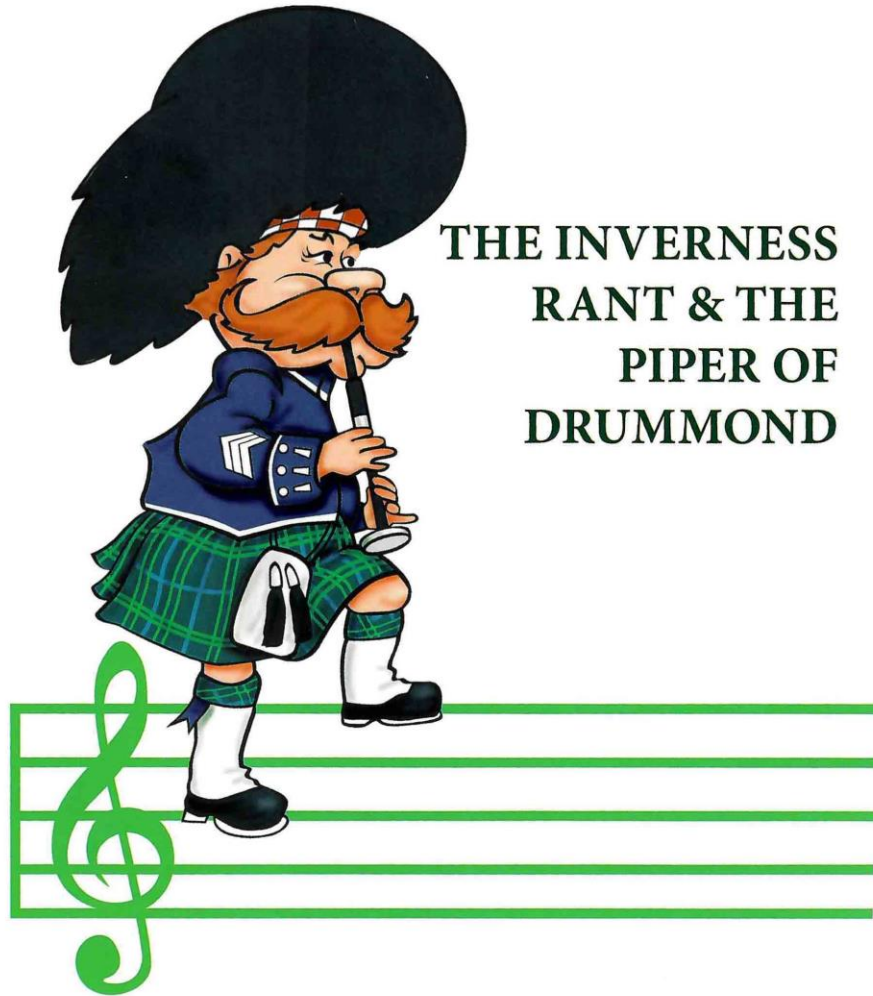
THE EARL OF MANSFIELD

Third Part

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in treble clef. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and contains 12 measures. The second staff contains 12 measures, with a first ending bracket over the final two measures. The third staff begins with a second ending bracket over the first two measures, followed by 12 measures. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

You will notice that a variation is introduced when this part is repeated, the part marked '2nd' being played instead of the piece marked '1st'. This is a common shorthand way of writing a measure which does not repeat exactly. Practice the whole tune now, watching carefully the important points already indicated.

CHAPTER 5





Lesson 22

1ST PART OF THE INVERNESS RANT

You have now learned several tunes, marches and a slow air, and provided you are practicing these regularly, it is time to try a strathspey. This type of tune can be used to accompany dances of the same name. They are characterised by four snappy beats in each bar. Strathspey is also the name of a particularly beautiful region of the Scottish Highlands.

A word of explanation is now needed about what is known as the triplet. This is when we play three notes in the time of two; in other words each note is shortened slightly in order to fit them all into a single beat.

Try this small exercise before you begin '*The Inverness Rant*':



At this time, it is important that you beat time with your foot at the start of every beat; in other words, this beat lands precisely and only on the first note of each beat or triplet grouping.

THE INVERNESS RANT

Strathspey

First Part



As usual, begin by singing the part aloud, and, just to help you a little, here is how to play the first notes: Low A, throw on D, G gracenote on Low A, D, G gracenote on B, D, G gracenote on Low A, B. Read through the rest of the measure, and then try it slowly and carefully on the chanter.

Watch the following points:

- Bar 1:** Close the chanter properly for the throw on D. Rest on the first and third Ds (longer on the first one), and on the two Low As.
- Bar 2:** Watch the D throw. Make clean distinct doublings of F and E. Be sure to get your little finger down for the C.
- Bar 3:** As bar 1.

Bar 4: Be careful of the thumb gracenotes. The 3 above the E, F, and High G means that they should be played in the time of two quavers; that is, evenly, in a little run.

Practice the measure slowly and carefully as usual. Remember the significance of the two dots at the end. Keep revising your other tunes and all the other things you have learned so far.



Lesson 23

THE TACHUM AND 2ND PART OF THE INVERNESS RANT

THE TACHUM

Again, we start with a new movement. This one is called the ‘tachum’ because that is what it sounds like.



and, as you see, is read D, G grace note on C, D grace note on Low A. The important thing is that the C is a semi-quaver, a fairly short note, so you have to make a D grace note to Low A fairly quickly after the G grace note on C. This takes just a bit of careful practice to get the D grace note in properly. As always, practice the movement slowly for a time with a big D grace note and the correct tachum sound will soon be heard. When you have learned it thoroughly you will be ready for:

THE INVERNESS RANT

Second Part



The particular points to notice are:

- Bar 1:** Play the doublings carefully. Make sure there are no crossing noises. Be sure to raise the little finger cleanly for the High A at the same time as the top hand fingers move. Rest on the D, and also on the two Fs and the High A.
- Bar 2:** This is where the tachum appears. Be sure to separate the two G grace notes in F doubling, and the G and F grace notes in the E doublings.
- Bar 4:** E doubling is followed by the grip on E.

Bar 7: The little run is similar to that in bar 4 of the first measure.

This now completes your first strathspey and you should practice it slowly and carefully as usual, not forgetting to keep revising your earlier tunes. Always keep in mind that *accuracy is important*, whereas speed doesn't matter at all.



Lesson
24

**STRIKES ON B & C
AND THE PIPER OF
DRUMMOND**

STRIKES ON B AND C

The strike on B appears in the next tune, so we will try it first.



As you see, it consists of two Bs separated by a Low G gracenote. To do this:

1. Play B, then
2. Strike the chanter holes lightly with the two raised fingers so that a little Low G is heard before the second B.

Try this over several times, and then try also the strike on C:



Be careful each time that the striking fingers are kept level and arrive on the chanter at the same time. You should now be able to start the next tune, a reel.

THE PIPER OF DRUMMOND Reel First Part

As usual sing the measure aloud to make sure that you understand what is required, and then try each bar slowly. Be careful of the D throws, and note that the B strike appears in the second bar. In the fourth bar note also that the G gracenote separates two Ds, and be sure to rest slightly on the first of the three Low As at the end.



Although the B strike is the only thing which is new in this tune, don't become too confident and start rushing it. This is a good opportunity to find out whether or not you have laid the foundations of your piping properly. Listen carefully as you play the measure slowly.

Are you sounding the first Low G in the D throw?

Are you holding the chanter gently though firmly?

Are all your fingers straight, but not stiff, at all times?

Are you making all your crossings cleanly without any wrong noises?

If the answer to all these is 'yes', you are going to be a champion piper.



Lesson
25

**2ND PART
OF THE PIPER OF
DRUMMOND**

The second part of 'The Piper of Drummond' contains no new movements, so whenever you feel you can play the first measure reasonably well, you are ready to try the rest of the tune.

THE PIPER OF DRUMMOND

Second Part



Again, begin by singing the part. This is about the easiest lesson in the book, for there is only one new bar, the first. In fact, this tune again demonstrates how easy piping is when a whole tune of 16 bars can be constructed out of only four different ones.

The only thing you have to watch, particularly in the new bar, the first, is the last F. There is a tendency among beginners to forget to put the B finger down for this note. After you have played through the measure a few times you will become very aware of two Bs, one before and one after this F, and the lazy habit of leaving the B finger off tends to develop. The difference in the sound produced can hardly be detected, but it would be very obvious when you come to play the tune on the pipes, so *guard against false fingering*, as this is called. Now write this measure into your book, and continue to practice it and your other tunes from your own copy.

CHAPTER 6





Lesson 26

RODIN, D DOUBLING
AND GREEN
HILLS OF TYROL

The next tune is a 'Retreat'. It belongs to the class of music often played at the end of the soldiers' day in Scottish regiments of the British Army. Nowadays retreats are popular with soloists and bands – civilian and military – all over the world. They are usually very beautiful melodies with an instant appeal, even for the non-piper. They are often written in 3/4 time and are played at a steady marching pace.

Some of the movements require a little explanation before you start. This one is called

RODIN



This *Rodin* from C to Low A with Low G, B, and Low G gracenotes occurs quite often and should be given special attention.

To do it:

1. Play C
2. Play Low G
3. Make a big B gracenote still on Low G
4. Play Low A

The important point is to sound the second Low G clearly. Be sure that the little finger remains on the chanter until after the B finger returns. Practice the movement very slowly, and then try:

THE GREEN HILLS OF TYROL Retreat March **First Part**



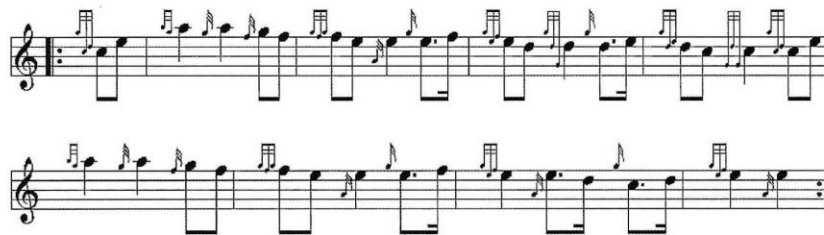
Next comes an important movement, D Doubling. This is written:



and consists of G and E gracenotes on D. Practice it slowly and from various notes, making sure that you separate the two gracenotes and make them big and distinct.

Now try:

THE GREEN HILLS OF TYROL **Second Part**



Points to watch are:

Bar 1: The High G gracenote between the two High As is produced by simply brushing the thumb against the High A hole. The F gracenote between the second High A of bar 1 and the High G of bar 2 is made by playing a very quick F between the two notes.



Lesson
27

A NEW MOVEMENT
AND THE ATHOLL
HIGHLANDERS

The last lesson in this book introduces a tune which has a couple of movements which you have not seen before. The first one is moving from C to Low A with a D gracenote and the other one is going from Low A to C with a D gracenote. They should be simple enough, as they are only single D gracenotes placed on a single notes; however, these movements are often not made well and can result in sloppy fingering which results in fumbles and catching sounds, so it is important to practice these slowly before trying the tune, the rest of which you should find to be quite easy.

Try the movements slowly:



When you have practiced these many times and are satisfied that they are correct, you can move onto the tune:

THE ATHOLL HIGHLANDERS

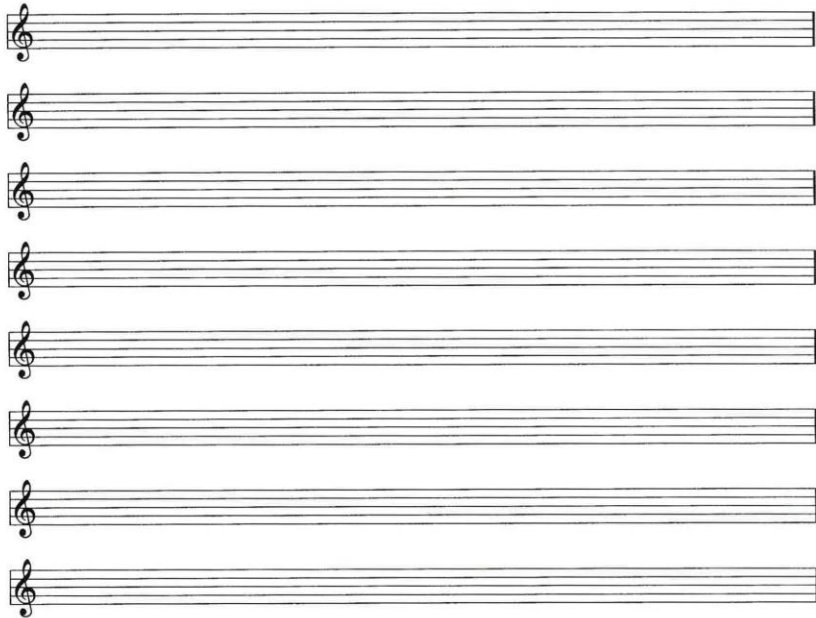
March



Congratulations once more! You are now ready to try for the PDQB/SQA Level 2/3 examination, because you now have learned all of the tunes needed, and have studied all of the theoretical aspects which you might be asked questions on. This is an exciting time for you, because you are now more than ready to start the bagpipe itself, and are well on the road to becoming a really good piper. Ask your teacher or alternatively contact The National Piping Centre in order to arrange for your examination, which when passed, will result in national academic credit for you.

Good luck!

NOTES



CHAPTER 7



THE CAMPBELLS ARE COMING

March

The musical score for 'The Campbells are Coming' is presented in four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 6/8 time signature, and a repeat sign. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some beamed pairs. The second staff continues the melody with similar rhythmic patterns. The third staff features a more active melody with frequent beaming and eighth notes. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a final cadence, marked by a double bar line and repeat dots.

THE BLOODY FIELDS OF FLANDERS March Pipe Major John Mclellan

The musical score is presented in five staves, each containing a line of music. The notation is dense, with frequent beaming of notes to indicate a fast, rhythmic character. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes repeat signs at the beginning and end of sections, and first and second ending brackets to indicate where the piece concludes.

THE PIOBAIREACHD OF DONALD DHU

March

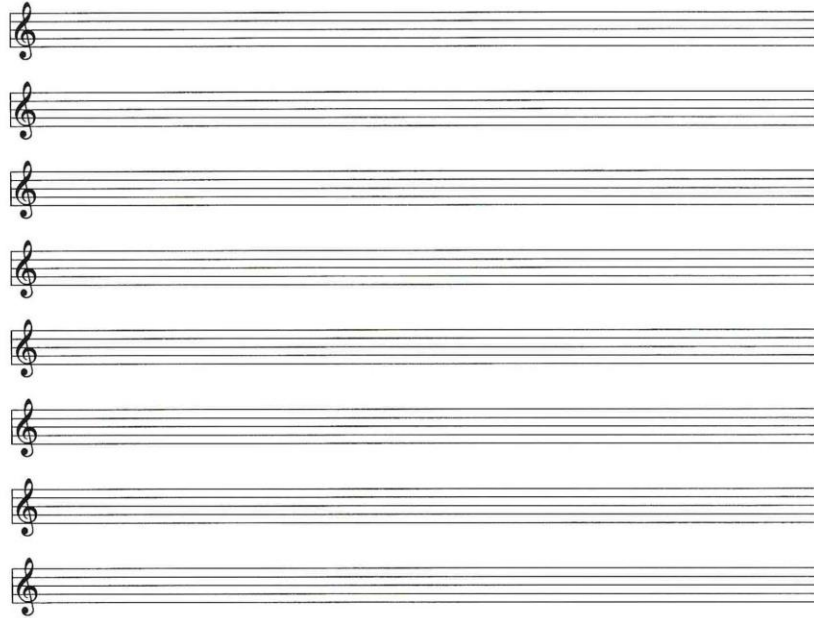
The musical score consists of eight staves of music, each beginning with a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. The first staff includes a repeat sign. The music is written in a single melodic line with various note values including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

ALL THE BLUE BONNETS ARE OVER THE BORDER

March

The image displays a musical score for a march titled "All the Blue Bonnets are over the Border". The score is written in 6/8 time and consists of eight staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is characterized by a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, typical of a march. The score includes repeat signs at the beginning and end of the piece, indicating a single-measure rest and a repeat sign at the start, and a double bar line with repeat dots at the end.

NOTES



APPENDIX



PRACTICE SCALES – PART 1

These exercises cover all requirements for PDQB1 / SQA2 qualifications

Scale



G Gracenote Scale



D Gracenote Scale



E Gracenote Scale



G, D and E Gracenotes



Strikes



Thumb Gracenotes



Throw on D



Doublings



PRACTICE SCALES - PART 2

These practice exercises cover all requirements for PDQB2 / SQA3 qualifications

Doublings on High A



Doublings on High G



Doublings on F



Doublings on E



Doublings on D



Doublings on C



Doublings on B



Doublings on Low A



Doublings on Low G



Grips



Grips and Rodin



Birls



G Gracenote Birls



equates to the learning outcomes achieved through a notional 10 hours of learning. In certain circumstances SCQF Credit Points can assist learners by minimising the duplication of learning in similar subject areas, and it may be possible to transfer credit between qualifications with the same learning outcomes.

To arrange a PDQB/SQA examination, arrange with your tutor or call The National Piping Centre directly.

PDQB CERTIFICATE 1 (SCQF LEVEL 2)

Practicing Exercises:

- The Scale
- The Scale to F with a G Gracenote, to C with a D Gracenote and to D with a E Gracenote
- GDE Gracenote groupings
- All Strikes
- Thumb or High A Gracenotes
- The Throw on D from Low A
- Doublings on High A, High G, F, E, D, C and B from Low A

Monotone exercises:

You must tap or clap out the rhythm of four monotone exercises selected by the Assessor.

- Tap or clap out rhythms with accurate note values
- Tap or clap out rhythms with accurate rests
- Tap or clap out rhythms in Simple Time – 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4

Performing on the Practice Chanter:

You must show musical skills on the Practice Chanter by playing two tunes in Simple Time from memory. The tunes must be played in accordance with the written score presented to the Assessor. The tunes must incorporate some of the embellishments from the exercise section of this Unit. The Assessor must observe and grade all practical performances.

Each tune will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Rhythm
- Tempo
- Technique
- Melody/musical expression
- Mistakes/faults

Theory Requirement:

You must write out the answer to questions about aspects of music theory as listed below. You must answer questions on:

- Music notation and relative note values
- Clefs and Bar Lines
- Dotted and Cut Notes

Writing music in Simple Time:

You must write on manuscript paper four bars of a tune with a 2/4 Time Signature by copying from set music provided by the Assessor. You must:

- Write music notation clearly
- Use correct Clefs and Bar Lines when writing notation
- Write Dotted and Cut Notes

Practice Chanter maintenance:

You must show that you can describe in writing the practical exercises detailed below:

- Dismantle the Practice Chanter
- Clean and dry the Practice Chanter
- Correctly hemp the Practice Chanter

PDQB CERTIFICATE 2 (SCQF LEVEL 3)

Practicing exercises:

You must play on the Practice Chanter all the following exercises:

- All Doublings (Low G to High A), from any note of the Scale
- The throw on D from each note of the Scale
- Grips (including Grips with a B Gracenote)
- The Birl and Birl with a G Gracenote from each note of the Scale
- Taorluaths to Low A from each note of the Scale (including Taorluaths from D with a B Gracenote)
- Tachums

Monotone exercise skills:

You must tap or clap out the rhythm of four monotone exercises selected by the Assessor.

- Tap or clap out rhythms with accurate note values
- Tap or clap out rhythms with accurate rests
- Tap or clap out rhythms in Simple Time — 2/4 and 3/4; and Compound Time — 6/8, 9/8
- Performing a programme of Bagpipe music:

You must show musical skills by selecting and playing on the Practice Chanter, five tunes from memory. At least one tune should be in Compound Time. The tunes must be played in accordance with the written score presented to the Assessor. The tunes must incorporate some of the embellishments from the exercise section of this Unit. The Assessor must observe and grade all practical performances.

Theory requirement:

You must write out, in music notation, all movements and embellishments as listed below.

- All Doublings (Low G to High A), from any note of the Scale
- Throw on D from each note of the Scale

-
- Grips (including Grips with a B Gracenote)
 - Birl and Birl with a G Gracenote from each note of the Scale
 - Taorluaths to Low A from each note of the Scale (including Taorluaths from D with a B Gracenote)
 - Tachums
 - C Doublings to Low A, and B Doublings to Low G with E Gracenote as used in Strathspey playing (Round movement)
 - Basic monotone exercises in Simple and Compound Time

Music notation:

You must write out the answer to questions about aspects of music theory as listed below.

- Music notation and relative note values
- Clefs and Bar Lines
- Time Signatures
- Rhythmic patterns in Simple Time

Writing Music in Simple Time:

You must write music notation, from memory, for one part (eight bars) of a tune in Simple Time, the tune to be selected by you from those submitted for your practical test.

'To the make of a piper go seven years.... At the end of his seven years one born to it will stand at the start of knowledge, and leaning a fond ear to the drone he may have parley with old folks of old affairs. Playing the tune of the Fairy Harp, he can hear his forefolk, plaided in skins, towsy-headed and terrible, grunting at the oars and snoring in the caves, he has his own whittle and club in The Desperate Battle (my own tune, my darling), where the white-haired sea-rovers are on the shore, and a stain's on the edge of the tide; or, trying his art on Laments, he can stand by the cairn of kings, ken the colour of Fingal's hair, and see the moon-glint on the hook of the Druids.'

Neil Munro

