CAMPBELL NOTATION

TABLE 1. Basic notes

	plain from low G/A	plain from B–high A	with E grace	with D grace	with low G grace	
high A	*dℐ*	*ℐ*	~	~	~	**8ve**
high G	*di*	*i*	~	~	~	**7th**
F#	*dhe*	*ve*	~	~	~	**6th**
E	*de*	*e*	~	~	~	**5th**
D	*da/ba*	*a*	*ea*	~	*ra/da*	**4th**
C#	*ho*	*ho*	*eo*	*do*	*ro*	**3rd**
B	*o*	*o*	*eo*	*to*	*ro/do*	**2nd**
low A	*en*	*n/en/in*	*en*	*dan/ban*	*din*	**drone=1**
low G	*em*	*m/em*	*em*	*dam/bam*	~	**O**

TABLE 2. Finger movements with rhetorical function

	either a high G/A grace or a form of cadence	double beats	throws	grips	
high A	~	*ℐlili*	*dili*	~	**8ve**
high G	*hi/chi*	*hiriri*	*dari/embari*[1]	*hedari*	**7th**
F#	*he*	*herere*	*dāre*	*vedare*	**6th**
E	*che*	*cherede*	*dre*	*edre*	**5th**
D	*ha*	*hiharara*	*tra*	*adeda*	**4th**
C#	*ho*	~	*dro*	*odro*	**3rd**
B	*hio*	*hihorodo*	*tro*	*otro*	**2nd**
low A	*hin*	*hiharin*	*ban/bain*	~	**drone=1**
low G	*him*	*hihambam*	~	~	**O**

[1] *bari* includes low G grace notes in the throw, *dari* does not.

TABLE 3. Finger movements applied to whole cycles

	dithis doubling	tripling	leumludh	taoludh	crunnludh	
high A	~	~	*bar𝒥*	~	~	**8ve**
high G	*hihi*	~	*bari*	~	~	**7th**
F#	*hehe*	~	*barhe*	~	~	**6th**
E	*cheche*	~	*bare*	~	~	**5th**
D	*haha*	~	~	~	*tradre*	**4th**
C#	*hoho*	*hodaoeho*	~	*droho*	*drodre*	**3rd**
B	*hiohio*	*hioaoeo*	~	*troho*	*trodre*	**2nd**
low A	*hinen*	*hindaen*	~	*darid*	*bandre*	**drone=1**
low G	*himbam*	*himbaem*	~	*darem*	*bamdre*	**O**

TABLE 4. Significant chronological developments

earlier	later	notes
hi	*chi*	introduced to clarify when *hio* means two notes, not one
hihara	*hiharara*	*hihara* corresponds to *hiharin* (*rar* contracts to *r*)
himhin	*himban*	disambiguation (e.g. PS 16)
dare	*dre / dāre / barhe*	disambiguation
bare	*bare / barhe*	disambiguation
dar	*bar*	evolution notating the leumludh
darem	*bamem, babem, baem*	evolution notating the taoludh to low G
hoho	*hoahoeho*	evolution notating the tripling on C
hioho	*hioao, hioeo, hioaeo, hioaoeo*	evolution notating the tripling on B
rode	*bare*	experimental notation of leumludh from D to E
roden, roen	*darid*	experimental notations of taoludh from D, later rejected
rodem, roem	*bandre*	experimental notations of crunnludh from D, later rejected
ademda	*adeda*	experimental notation of grip on D, later rejected

Other vocables

ādin, hōdin, ōdin, rōdin	the tilde marks a short note
hi	an introductory run or cadence
darodo	the 'bubbly note'
chelalho	a type of reflexive shake

What is Campbell notation?

Between 1782 and 1819, Colin Campbell appears to have written out over 800 pages of notation. About half of this survives. 'Campbell notation' is his personal adaptation of canntaireachd, the expressive vocal substitute for piping. His notation system is not a regional dialect of canntaireachd and was never sung, at least not as written. He transformed a vocal medium intended for the ear into a scribal one intelligible to the eye.

It would be extraordinary for anyone to be consistent throughout an endeavour of this scale. Not only did his manuscript production span thirty-three years, but the canntaireachd tradition he grew up in was full of expressive variability. In singing, expressive nuances are an *asset*, helping to convey musicality from teacher to pupil; on paper, they are a *problem*, giving rise to uncertainty. This is immediately apparent when reading Gesto's transcriptions of the singing of Iain Dubh MacCrimmon (?1731–1822). When written down as syllables without transformation, canntaireachd is unintelligible.

Colin Campbell did not transcribe anyone's singing. He forged out of canntaireachd a serviceable notation system, one that is innovative and idiosyncratic. To accomplish this, he basically did three things:

1. He removed inconsistency, or expressive variability. Where visibly different syllables on paper conveyed the same fingering, he selected one and supressed the others. For example, *die dru* and *did tri* in G_B.18 are always *bandre* in Campbell notation.

2. He removed ambiguity, introducing visual distinctions whenever identical syllables could mean more than one fingering. For example, *hodroho* in G_B.3 translates as either *hodroho* or *hiotroho* in Campbell notation, depending on which pitch it was sung on.

3. He changed the meaning of many vocal sounds: those which were not part of the tune but variable aspects of its musical expression or vocalisation. The ephemera of personal interpretation were thus eliminated in favour of communicating pitches unambiguously. For example, Gesto's *hio* normally indicates a cadence and his *ho* a grace note (on either B or C); Campbell's *hio,* however, indicates a B and his *ho* a C (with or without a cadence).

Campbell's manuscripts contain on-going notational experiments, accidents left uncorrected, and variants where a single solution was either unnecessary or undesirable. Table 4 summarises the chronological developments found in the four sources: C_0, C_K, C_1 and C_2. In the two large volumes (C_1 and C_2), which appear to be a revised copy of a lost compilation, the notation occasionally reverts to an earlier stage in its development. In other places, Campbell seems to have leafed through making revisions, not to the music, but to his notation system. He never stopped tinkering with it.