EXPRESSION AND PHRASING

. Understanding effective expression

. Differentiating between rhythm and expression

. Phrase definition in different tune categories

. Understanding levels of sophistication within the phrases

. Phrasing and Unison Playing

. Understanding the role of the "offbeat"

. Tempo and Musicality

EXPRESSION, PHRASING and DYNAMICS in 2/4 MARCHES

1. EXPRESSION

* Length of the note
* Going beyond the printed score
* But, staying on the beat
* Both "on" and "off" beat accents must be considered

2. PHRASING

* Combination/grouping of notes
* Creation of musical units
* Not necessarily confined to bars
* May be less than a bar in length
* May be several bars in length
* Parts &/or tunes may/may conform to a uniform structure
* Requires the identification of possible connecting/bridge notes

3. DYNAMICS

* The result of differing degrees of expression given to opposing phrases
* The bagpiper's solution to playing an instrument producing a constant volume
* Is closely associated with rhythm
* Results in differing levels of intensity in the presentation of the music
* Helps keep the listener's attention
* Gives sophistication to the simplest of tunes

ADDITIONAL MUSICAL CONTROLS

***TEMPO**

***RHYTHM**

THE STRATHSPEY IDIOM

* 4 PULSE PHRASES
* **STRONG**, WEAK, **MEDIUM**, WEAK (BARS 1, 3; 5 & 7)
* WEAK, WEAK, **STRONG**, WEAK (BARS 2, 4, 6 & 8)
* AT TIMES, THE TREATMENT OF THE 4TH PULSE IN BARS 2, 4, 6 & 8 IS MORE LIKE THAT OF A CONNECTING PULSE TO THE NEXT PHRASE (Consequently, some phrases may come across as 3 pulse phrases and others as 5 pulse phrases)
* PULSE EXTENSION AND "SHARP" PLAYING ARE CRITICAL

WORKSHOP EXAMPLES:

THE REEL IDIOM

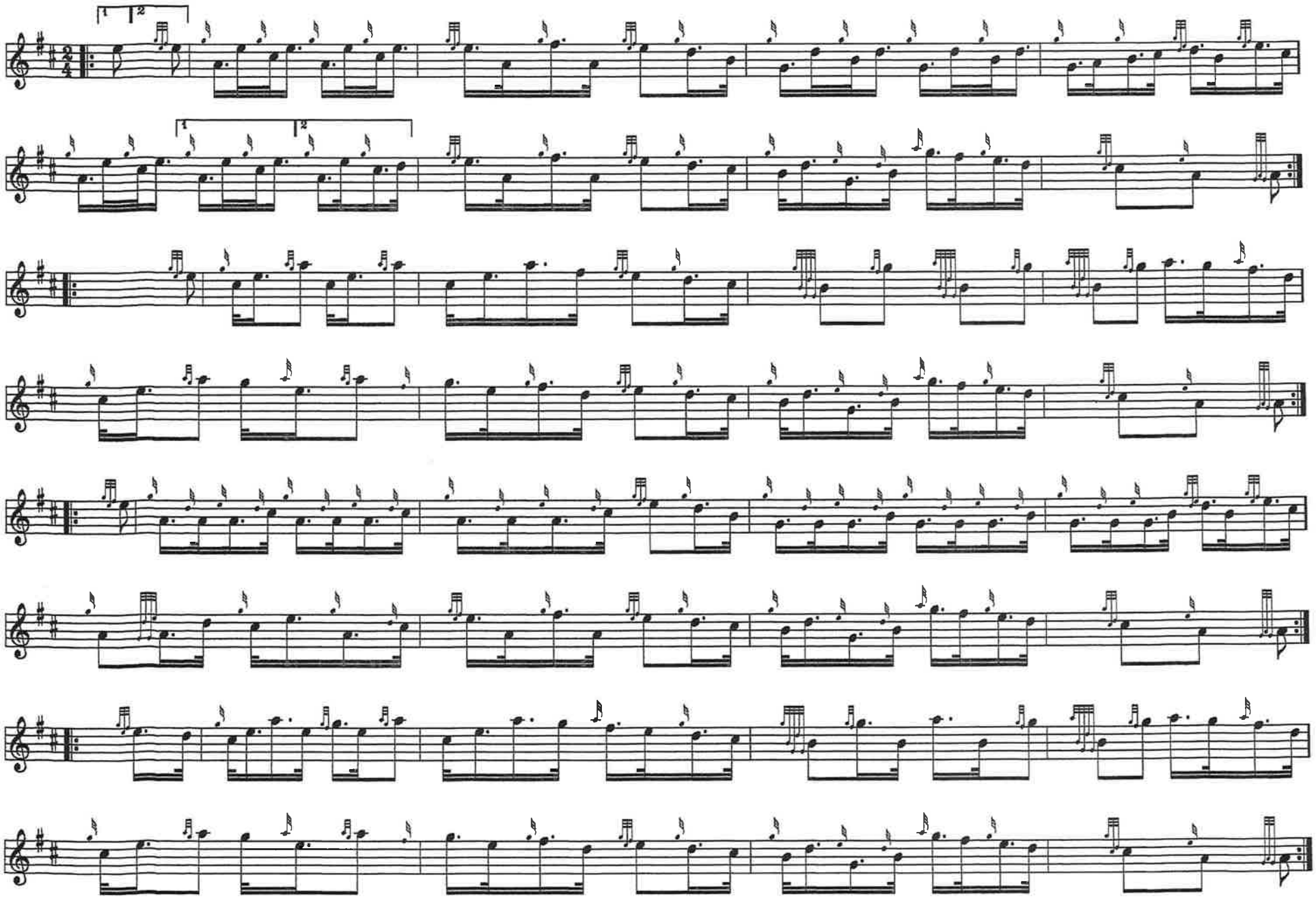
* ONE OR TWO BAR PHRASES ARE THE USUAL STRUCTURE.
* AS A GENERAL RULE, BARS 1, 3, 5 & 7 GET A LITTLE MORE EXPRESSION ON BOTH "ONBEAT" ACCENTS.
* BARS 2, 4, 6 & 8 TEND TO COME ACROSS WELL IF THE THE FIRST "ONBEAT" PULSE IS GIVEN LESS EXPRESSION AND THE SECOND "ONBEAT" PULSE IS GIVEN A LITTLE MORE EXPRESSION. THIS TREATS THE SECOND PULSE AS AN ANCHOR PULSE TO THE PHRASE.
* DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF THE "OFFBEAT" PULSES. THESE NEED A GREAT DEAL OF EMPHASIS IN REELS.
* DON'T OVERCUT TO PULSES. MAKE OPTIMUM USE OF THE TIME BETWEEN PULSES.

WORKSHOP EXAMPLES:

The Balmoral Highlanders

March

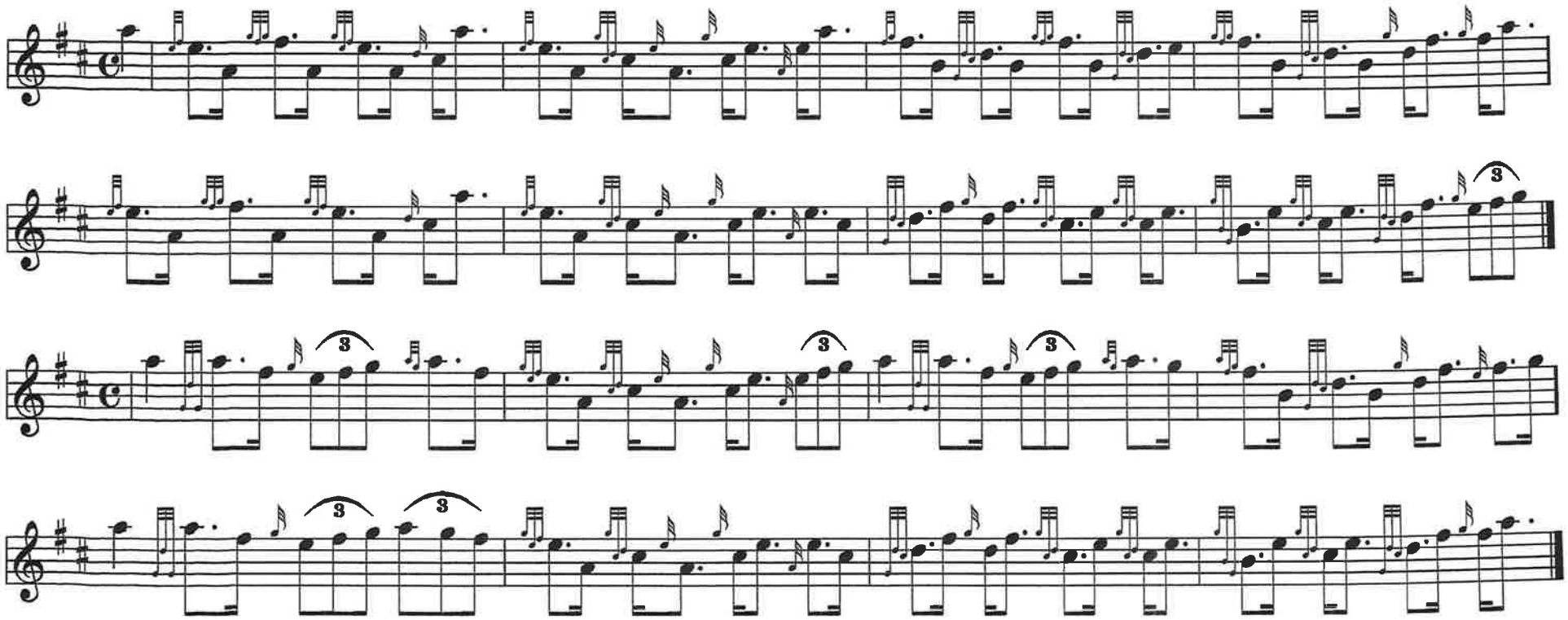
A. MacKay



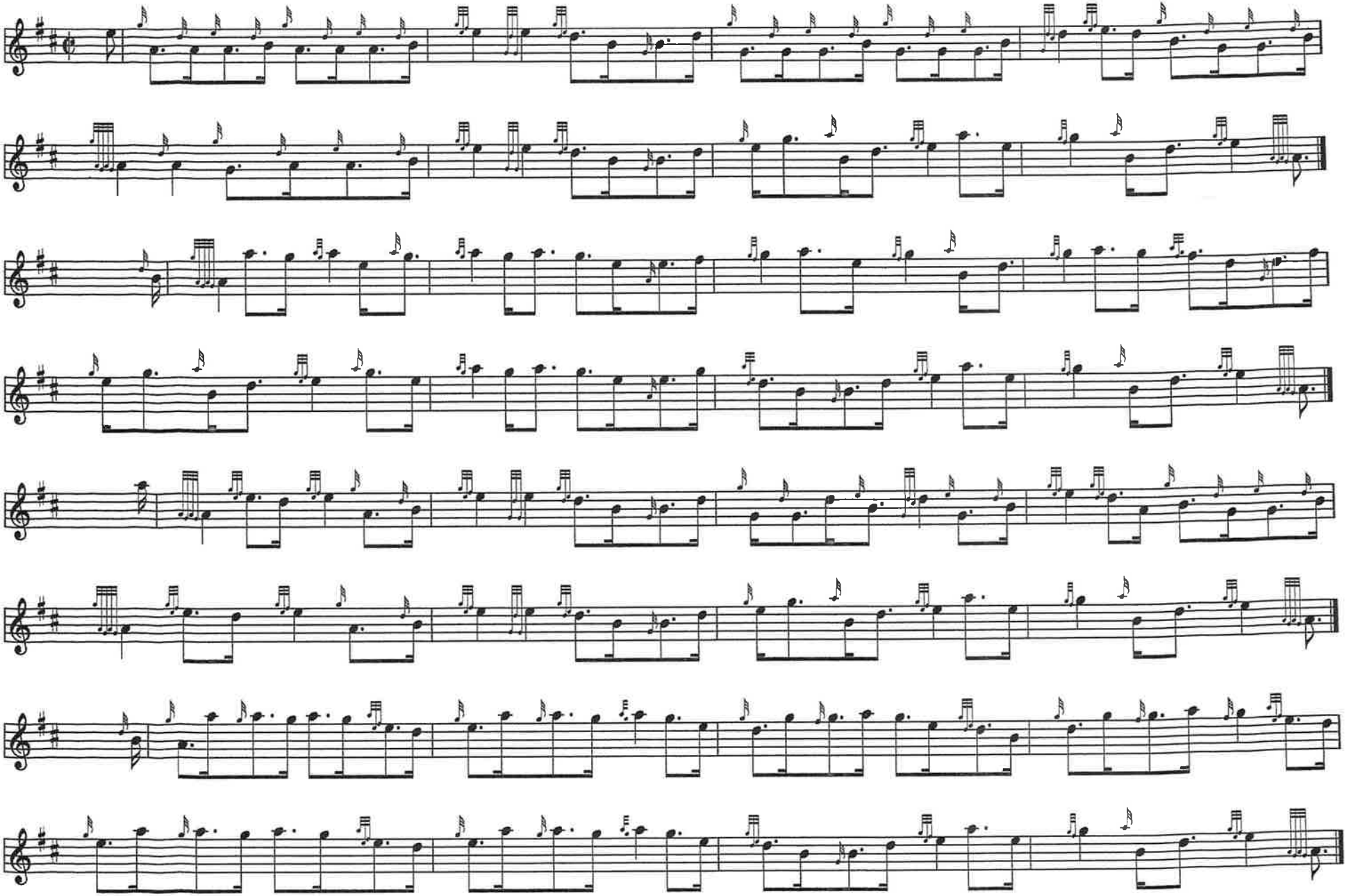
02/12/2006

The Caledonian Society of London

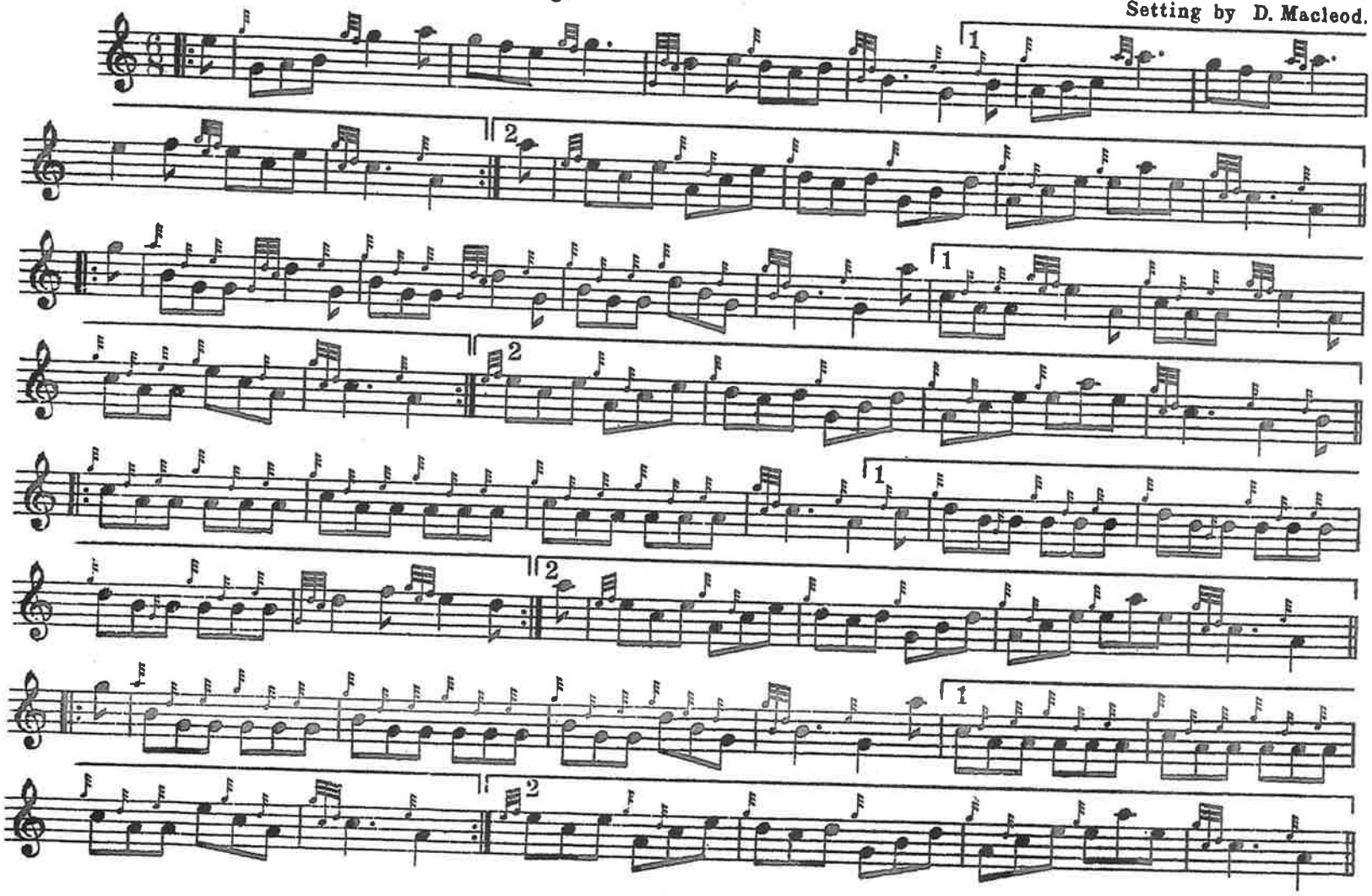
Strathspey



John Morrison, Assynt House Reel P.M. Peter MacLeod



John Paterson's Mare.

Jig.

Setting by D. Macleod.