

II.

NOTE ON THE "BANNOCKBURN" BAGPIPES OF MENZIES.

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The office of pipers to the chiefs of Clan Menzies was held hereditarily by a family of MacIntyres, a name which means "the sons of the carpenter." Traditionally they are said to have been the pipers to The Menzies since before the days of Bruce, and to have headed Ólan Menzies playing the bagpipes at the battle of Bannockburn. The pipes preserved in their family, and handed down from father to son until the time of the late Sir Neil Menzies, Bart., are now known as "The Menzies Bannockburn Bagpipes." They are referred to by MacIntyre North.¹ Three portions of them remain :—

(1) The chanter, which has the same number of finger-holes as the modern chanter, but there are two extra holes on each side. These holes are much worn away round their edges. The chanter measures over all $13\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and gradually tapers for 12 inches, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch at the reed socket to 1 inch diameter at the point, from where it is gradually convexed outward for $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches to form the horn-shaped or trumpet end or mouth, which measures 2 inches diameter over all, with three turned lines on its bottom surface. The inside core tapers from $\frac{7}{8}$ inch in diameter at the horn end to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch diameter at the reed end.

(2) The blowpipe, which is square, but graduates to the round at the mouth-piece, measures $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches long over all, with male socket at wide end $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep by $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch diameter ; it is 1 inch square at this end, and tapers for $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch square, then graduates on

¹ *Book of the Club of True Highlanders*, in which is a plate of them (No. 56), as "the remains of the oldest known bagpipes." But the oldest known bagpipes that can be really authenticated as to date are the set bearing the date 1409, the property of Mr Robert Glen, F.S.A. Scot., which are described and figured in the *Proceedings*, vol. xiv. p. 121.

to the round, having a male socket for mouth-piece $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep by $\frac{5}{8}$ of an inch diameter, tapering to $\frac{7}{16}$ of an inch diameter.

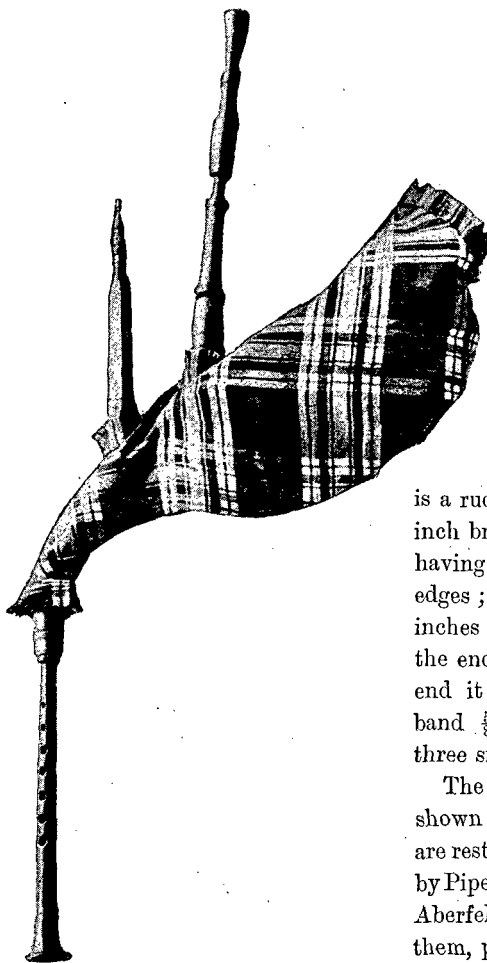


Fig. 1. The Menzies Bagpipes.

(3) The drone. The top half only of it remains. It measures $9\frac{1}{8}$ inches over all, and is bored out inside for 6 inches by $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch diameter bore, then other 3 inches by $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch diameter bore, which forms a female socket: the outside at this part is $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches diameter $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches up, it then tapers towards the centre from 2 inches diameter to $\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter; here there

is a rudely formed band, $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch broad and 1 inch diameter, having two small bands at its edges; from this it tapers for $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches to $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches diameter at the end of drone; at the socket end it is mounted with a horn band $\frac{5}{8}$ inches deep, which has three small lines round it.

The bag and bag-sockets, as shown in the reproduction (fig. 1), are restorations, and were executed by Pipe-Major Duncan MacDougal, Aberfeldy, who, on completing them, played a selection of Highland tunes. To get them to play, however, it was necessary to fill

up the wormeaten holes, but after much trouble and care he was successful in restoring them to a playing condition. Their tone is somewhat loud and harsh : from their having only one drone, the air or melody is heard more distinctly than in the modern bagpipe. He also sent me the following identification of them by an old pupil of the MacIntyres :—

"I have interviewed Alexander Menzies, Aberfeldy, with regard to the old relics of bagpipes, said to have belonged to the MacIntyres, hereditary pipers to The Menzies of Menzies. Alexander Menzies, now over eighty years of age, lived next house to the MacIntyres in Rannoch, 1820-1840, and was a pupil learning pipe-music with them. He well remembers seeing the pieces of the old bagpipes with the MacIntyres, who put great value on them, from their having been in their family for several hundred years."

These Menzies pipers lived at Rannoch in later times. They seem to have been sent by the chiefs of the Menzies from time to time to the MacCrimmons, the well-known teachers of pipe music at Dunvegan, Isle of Skye. The first of them of whom we have any note is Donald Mòr MacIntyre, as having returned from the Isles, as the piper to Sir Alexander Menzies, first Baronet of Menzies, about 1638. His son, John MacIntyre, also completed his knowledge of pipe music under Patrick Oig MacCrimmon, piper to the chiefs of the MacLeods. He is known as the composer of the piobaireachds, "The Field of Sheriffmuir" and "The Menzies Salute," *Fuilte na Meinerich*. Mackay says, in his *Collection of Ancient Pipe Music*, 1838 :—"This fine, bold piobaireachd is the composition of John MacIntyre, son of Donald MacIntyre, in the Brae of Rannoch, who was, at the time of the battle of Sheriffmuir, piper to Menzies of that Ilk, chief of the name about 1715." His son, Donald Bane MacIntyre, succeeded him as hereditary piper to Sir Robert Menzies, third Baronet of Menzies ; Sir John, fourth Baronet ; Sir Robert, fifth Baronet ; and Sir Neil, sixth Baronet of Menzies, some years after whose succession to the chiefship Donald Bane died, and left two sons, Robert and John. Robert had become piper, before his father's death, to the late W. Robertson MacDonald, chieftain of Clan Ranald. On the death of his father, being the elder son, the "Menzies Bannockburn Pipes" came into his possession. He, on the death of

chieftain MacDonald, went to America, but left the old pipes in Scotland with the MacDonalds of Loch Moidart, and they were sent to me by Mrs MacDonald-MacVicar of Invermoidart, and have now been identified by his father's old pupil, Alexander Menzies, who herded the piper's cattle when a boy. John MacIntyre, the brother of Robert, lived in the Menzies Rannoch country, where he died about 1834-5, leaving a son, Donald, who had a farm called *Allarich*, at the top of Loch Rannoch. Robert MacIntyre, the last of the race of Menzies pipers, unfortunately having gone to America, the chief, Sir Neil Menzies, appointed Alexander Dewar as piper to Clan Menzies, but he went to Mid-Lothian about 1842-3, when John MacGregor was appointed to the office, which he held under Sir Neil and Sir Robert, the present chief, until 1890, when he died, and was succeeded by his son, Neil MacGregor, who is now piper to Sir Robert Menzies, seventh Baronet.

[The Society is indebted to Mr D. P. Menzies for the use of the block of the Menzies Bagpipes from the *Red and White Book of Menzies*.]