

Hector The Hero

James Scott Skinner 1903

Mountain dulcimer arrangement by
Wayne Jiang

Musical notation for the first system, including a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. Below it are three staves for the dulcimer, labeled D, A, and D from top to bottom. Chords are indicated above the melody: D, G, D, D, Bm, G. Fingerings and dynamics are shown below the dulcimer staves: *h*, *p*, *p*, *p*, *h*, *p*, *p*.

Musical notation for the second system. Chords: Em, A, Bm, G, D, G. Fingerings and dynamics: *s*, *p*, *p*.

Musical notation for the third system. Chords: D, A, D, D, G, G. Fingerings and dynamics: *p*, *h*, *h*, *h*, *p*.

Musical notation for the fourth system. Chords: D, D, Bm, Bm, Em, A, Bm, G. Fingerings and dynamics: *s*, *h*, *p*, *h*, *h*, *s*, *h*, *p*.

Musical notation for the fifth system, marked with a first ending bracket (1). Chords: D, G, D, A, D. Fingerings and dynamics: *s*, *h*, *p*.

Musical notation for the sixth system, marked with a second ending bracket (2). Chords: D, G, D, A, D. Fingerings and dynamics: *p*, *h*, *p*.

p = pull off *h* = hammer on *s* = slide

From Wikipedia:

"Hector the Hero" is a classic lament penned by Scottish composer and fiddler James Scott Skinner in 1903. It was written as a tribute to Skinner's friend Major-General Hector MacDonald, a distinguished Scottish general around the turn of the century.

Major General Sir Hector Archibald MacDonald, (4 March 1853 – 25 March 1903) born at Rootfield, near Dingwall, in later life he was also known in Gaelic as Eachann nan Cath ('Hector of the Battles', Fighting Mac). The son of a crofter and stonemason he was promoted through the ranks of the British Army on merit alone.

He distinguished himself in action at Omdurman (1898), became a popular hero in Scotland and England, and was knighted for his service in the Second Boer War. Posted to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) as Commander-in-Chief of British forces.

He was disliked by the ruling classes as he was not born a gentleman. There were rumours circulated about Sir Hector forcing him to end his life, by shooting himself in a Paris hotel on 25/03/1903.

MacDonald's funeral was held at Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, 30,000 people turned up to pay their last respects. In the weeks following thousands more from all over the world came to say farewell, James Scott Skinner wrote a tune in his honour called Hector the Hero, and Robert W. Service wrote his poem "Fighting Mac".

"Fighting Mac" remains a national hero in Scotland. A 100 ft high memorial was erected above Dingwall in 1907, as well as another memorial at Mulbuie on the Black Isle, near where MacDonald was born.

The suicide of the famous war-hero caused great public shock. Over a century after his death it is widely asserted by his many modern supporters that the crofter's son was the victim of a conspiracy by the British Establishment, motivated by jealousy and snobbery, with the allegations of homosexuality a total fabrication.

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Low Octave Melody

D G D D Bm G

D A D

Em A Bm G D G

D A D

D A D D G G

D A D

D D Bm Bm Em A Bm G

D A D

¹ D G D A D

D A D

² D G D A D

D A D

p = pull off *h* = hammer on *s* = slide