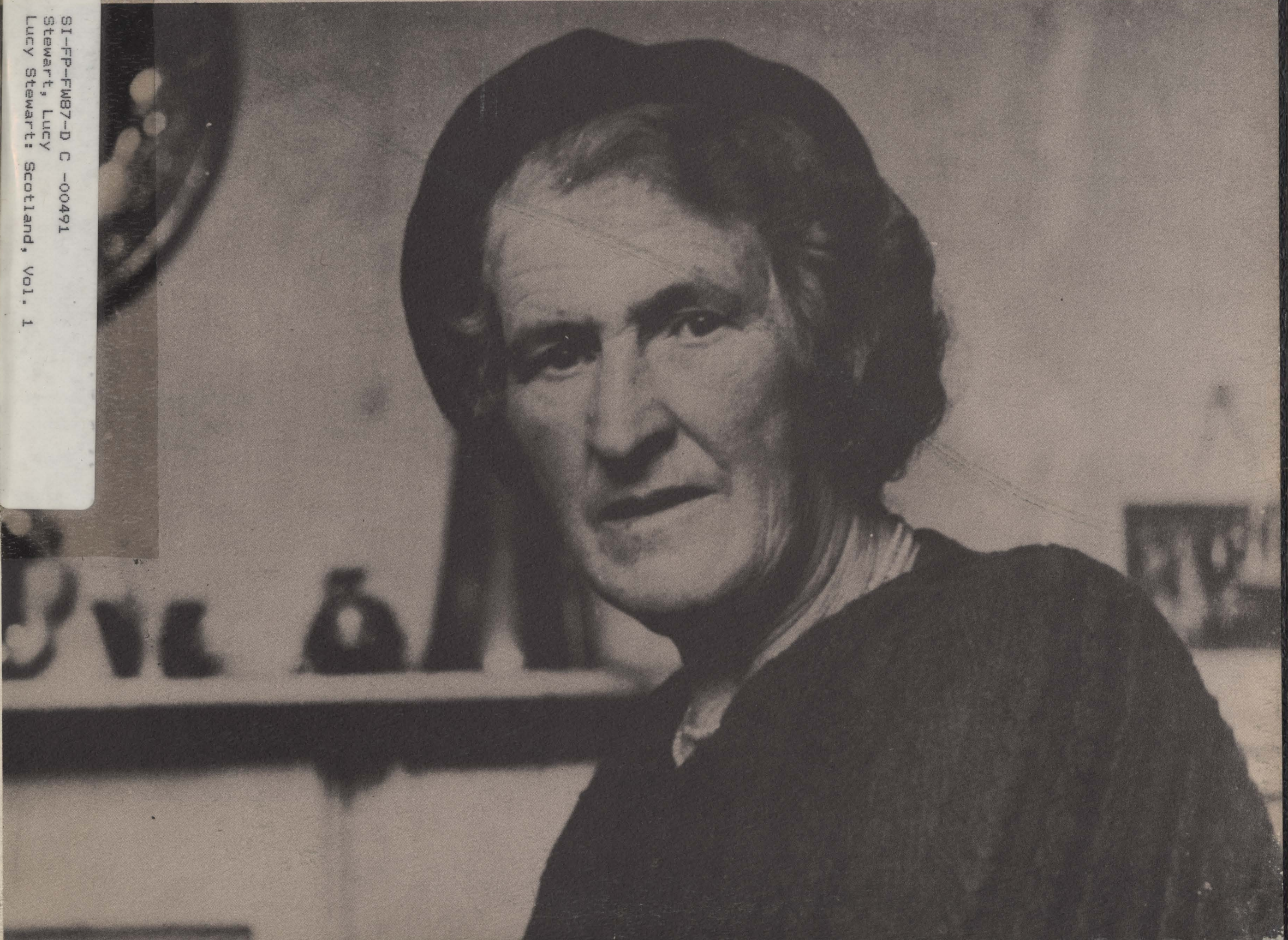


LUCY STEWART

Traditional Singer from Aberdeenshire,
Scotland Vol. 1—Child Ballads collected,
edited and annotated by Kenneth S.
Goldstein Folkways Records FG 3519

KENNETH S. GOLDSTEIN

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Stewart, Lucy
Lucy Stewart: Scotland, Vol. 1



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LUCY STEWART

Traditional singer from Aberdeenshire, Scotland Volume 1 - Child Ballads

Collected, Edited and Annotated by KENNETH S. GOLDSTEIN

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

From October 1959 through August 1960 I had the great privilege to meet, know and work with the Stewart family of Fetterangus, Aberdeenshire. My project was to make a study of the folklore of a Scottish family in the context in which such folklore existed. After several months of meeting and working with a number of families in the Buchan District of Aberdeenshire (long a stronghold of folklore traditions), the variety, quality and amount of the folklore of the Stewarts of Fetterangus convinced me that this was the family on whom I should concentrate my time and efforts. I reaped a handsome reward. After eleven months of working and living with this family - of admiring and loving them, and of collecting their vast treasure of tradition - I was to return to the United States with truly magnificent materials collected and studied in the context in which they normally exist. Numbers alone will give only a superficial index of these materials for the quality, creative functioning and meaning of their folklore is far more important. But the scope of the collection will surely excite interest: more than 200 ballads and songs, over 60 tales and legends, 185 riddles, more than 300 children's games and rhymes, innumerable superstitions and beliefs, examples of witchcraft, devil-lore, weather-lore, dream-warnings, omens, fortune-telling -- indeed the full gamut of folklore traditions existed in this one marvelous family. I should like to claim that I was able to observe and collect the total folklore of this family, but I feel certain that even if I were to spend ten years more with the Fetterangus Stewarts I would still not touch bottom in their deep well of tradition.

The major tradition-bearer in this family is LUCY STEWART, who supplied me with some 70 percent of the total materials collected from the Fetterangus Stewarts. At 59 she was full master of the arts of singing and story telling. Though all members of the Stewart family, her sisters, a brother, nephews and nieces - were fine singers and story tellers, none could approach Lucy in her absolute artistry. And, indeed, this fact was one which the family itself recognized, and when Lucy was in the

mood for singing or telling tales the other members of the family would defer to her. From her alone I collected more than 175 ballads and songs; of this number more than half were complete versions. And even in those cases where Lucy was unable to remember more than a few verses of any song, her tunes were always so well shaped that the lack of a complete text in no way effected the value of the material collected from her. The rich musical tradition of the family was of such a high order that Lucy rarely repeated a tune - only six of her songs were sung to tunes previously used for other songs. Though she was the only member of the family who was unable to read music or play any instrument, as often as not any question concerning music which arose in the family would be settled with Lucy's aid. This despite the fact that everyone in the family was known by friends and neighbors throughout the Buchan District as fine musicians and singers - all except Lucy, that is.

Lucy's tradition was a wholly private family matter. In the very village in which she lived, no one outside of her family even knew that she sang. She was extremely reticent to sing in the presence of persons not related to her, and it took more than two months to pry loose from her the first song. Once we had established full rapport - and I was almost literally adopted into the Stewart clan - her song flowed in a seemingly endless stream.

Some biographical information may help to explain the great traditional genius which is Lucy Stewart's. She was born in the small country village of Stuartfield in 1901, in the very heart of the Buchan District. Her father, James Stewart, had been a tinsmith, a farm servant and odd job worker in Aberdeenshire, after serving 27 years with the Gordon Highlanders in which he achieved the rank of corporal piper. He too had been born in the Buchan District but he traced his ancestry to the highlands of Perthshire, and family tradition has it that the present Stewart family stems from the Appin Stewarts who fought on the side of Prince Charlie in the 18th century. Throughout the centuries the Stewarts were known as fine pipers, and their

musical tradition extended into this century. All of Lucy's brothers were master instrumentalists on pipes, fiddle, pennywhistle, concertina or accordion, and Lucy's sister, Jean Stewart, is a professional musician with a widespread reputation. This instrumental genius, passed on through the agency of Lucy's father who was a hard taskmaster in the training of his children, has stood the Stewarts in good stead and even the youngest of Lucy's nieces and nephews show amazing musical talents.

Lucy's musicality, however, seems to have been shaped by a different set of factors than that of her brothers and sisters. After spending a total of some 4 or 5 years in school between the ages of seven and fourteen, Lucy's main family activity was to take care of her younger brothers and sisters, and to watch over the children of her older relatives. Less attention was paid to her musical education. As a result, Lucy's education in music was restricted to the wholly oral and aural one of learning songs and tunes from her mother and father, brothers sisters and neighbors, on those occasions when the family would be sitting around the fire on a cold winter's night singing and telling stories to entertain themselves. Lucy says her mother knew close to 500 songs, and she learned many of these sitting at her mother's feet singing along with her. Lucy's mother, Elizabeth Townsley, was born in Northumberland, where her father had been a horse dealer and showman with a travelling circus. Her mother's family had been coal miners and circus showman, and a large part of her mother's repertoire must have come from the travelling tradition of the circus performer. Lucy traces most of her songs to the singing of her mother, and the vast breadth of material, running a full gamut from great traditional ballads to music hall ditties, reflects a catholicity of taste and tradition which stems from a musical background inherent in circus activity.

Lucy and her parents, together with most of her 13 brothers and sisters, moved to Fetterangus in 1917, and Lucy has spent her entire life since that time in this small village of some 350 people. Her parents ran a general store for many years, with most of the children helping out in the store or traveling through the countryside selling goods from the shop. Upon the death of Lucy's father in 1935, her mother continued the business, and many people in Buchan describe vividly the fine singing of Betsy Stewart as she drove through the countryside selling her wares from the store. Lucy continued her role as guardian of the family during these years and after her mother's death in 1942. Finally, however, she started a business of her own in 1948 since which time she has been a henwife, raising chickens and selling their eggs.

The great singing and story telling of this spinster-henwife will continue long past her own time, for the children of her sister Jean have learned many of her ballads, songs and tales and will someday pass them on to their own children. At the present time

Lucy's nieces prefer to sing her ballads in rock-and-roll arrangements of their own making, but they are also capable of performing them in the magnificent traditional style which is their heritage. Long after the beat and tempo of today's musical fads have passed into nothing, they will be singing these old songs. For the Stewarts of Fetterangus, at least, the music tradition is a vital and continuing one. And one of the most important cogs in the machinery of Stewart tradition is Lucy Stewart.

This album is part of a series of three records comprising selections from the repertoire of Lucy Stewart.

FG 3519 Volume I - Child Ballads

FG 3520 Volume II - Broadside and other Ballads

FG 3521 Volume III - Folksongs and Lyric Songs

SOME NOTES ON THE METHOD OF COLLECTING AND RECORDING

Since my project was to collect the folklore of the Stewart family in the actual context in which it occurred, the majority of my time with the family was spent simply in living with and observing them, taking notes on the circumstances and occasions of their folklore utterances. For the first half year of the project, the tape recorder was rarely brought into the Stewart home. After I had taken notes on some 20 tales, songs or ballads, I would suggest a recording session. I would then have the Stewarts perform their songs or tales into the microphone. Such performances are of course wholly artificial, but these sessions were held mainly for purposes of obtaining the actual materials - the natural context of their existence had already been observed and noted in the course of day-to-day living with the Stewarts.

During the last five months of my project, I brought the tape recorder into more frequent use, recording the various members of the family singing and telling stories as often as I could get them to do so. I had them repeat materials they had previously recorded for me, in an attempt to study the nuances of change and variation as it exists in the various performances of the same individuals under different circumstances and over a period of time.

Most of these recordings were made under the circumstances of a more or less natural home-life, during which time I was faced with the problems of recording not only the materials of these people but also the every noise existent in their daily living. During my last month in Scotland, however, I arranged to have a considerable amount of the musical traditions of the Stewarts re-recorded under more acoustically favorable circumstances. After shooing the children out of the house (it was summer-time, fortunately), and stopping all other household activity, the Stewarts were recorded in the relative quiet heard in these recordings.

To establish a proper setting for a natural functioning of these materials, it might be wise to describe the normal occurrence of such materials in their context and to compare them with the recordings given here.

Lucy's performance in natural setting was usually exceedingly spirited, fast paced...and fragmentary. That is, in the course of conversation she would suddenly break into song...singing one or two verses, unless prodded to finish the piece. As often as not, such singing was accompanied by laughter or skipping. Any song or ballad - no matter how serious - was fair play for such an occasion. Sometimes the subject of the conversation would seem to suggest the song - sometimes there seemed to be no connection between the song and background talk. On other occasions Lucy was asked to sing such or such a piece to one of her sister's children, or she sang it of her own volition while working...such performances were usually quite rapidly paced.

Lucy Stewart's singing before a microphone was a completely different matter. Aware of the fact that such recording was a permanent record of her performance, she was intent on making as excellent a showing as possible. Her tempo and pacing were slowed down, enunciation was much clearer, and vocal dramatic effects were put to use. (see photos) This description is not given to suggest that such performances are non-traditional when compared to the description of her singing in context. Rather it seems that Lucy was reverting to the style and attitude of singing which was traditional when singing played a different role in the society of which she is a part. Indeed, her own descriptions of the singing of her mother and others in the past are fully consistent with the manner of her own singing before a microphone. But it should be noted that this is a description of traditional singing from the past. Lucy Stewart's performances on these recordings are superb by any standards...their circumstances and context must be kept in mind lest incorrect generalizations about modern traditional singing style be made from them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My trip to Scotland, during which these recordings were made, was made possible by a Fulbright research grant and a grant-in-aid from the Anthropology Department of the University of Pennsylvania. While in Scotland I was affiliated with the School of Scottish Studies of the University of Edinburgh; I am grateful to the director, Basil Megaw, and to the research fellows of the School for their wonderful cooperation and assistance. On this score I especially wish to thank Hamish Henderson, the leading collector of Scots Lawland traditions and folklore, whose intelligence, sympathy for and understanding of Scottish traditions is unmatched; it is to Hamish Henderson that I owe thanks for my first meeting with the Stewart family - I suspect his plan in doing so was to have me study this family...if such was indeed the case, I hope the results of my research match his expectations.

And lastly, and most important, I wish to acknowledge the generosity and sympathetic treatment which my family and I received from the Stewart family of Fetterangus; they gave everything and asked for nothing in return. Such generosity is rare in a world of greed and selfishness.

KENNETH S. GOLDSTEIN
July 1961 Hatboro, Pennsylvania



SIDE I, Band 1: THE BATTLE O' HARLAW
(Child #163)

This ballad describes (rather inaccurately) the battle of Harlaw, fought on July 24, 1411. Donald of the Isles, who justly claimed the Earldom of Ross, invaded the Scottish lowlands with 10,000 islanders and men of Ross in hope of subjugating the people of the country as far as the Tay River. He was met at Harlaw, north of Aberdeen, by the Lowland forces under the command of the Earl of Mar, and was forced to retire for losing 900 of his men; the Lowlanders lost 500. As would be expected, the Lowlanders made a ballad about the battle and, in *The Complaynt of Scotland* (1549), mention is made of a ballad "The battel of the Hayrlaw," but this ballad has apparently been lost.

Child believed the traditional ballad, which he knew in only two texts, to have been of relatively recent tradition, chiefly because of the prominence given to the Forbese, whom history does not report as even being in the battle, and from the omission of the real leaders such as the Earl of Mar.

The ballad is likewise inaccurate in reporting the size of the Highland armies, and in telling of the killing of MacDonald. The names of Sir James the Rose and Sir John Graeme are out of place in this ballad and have probably been borrowed from the ballad of *Sir James the Rose* (Child #213).

The ballad is still very popular in Aberdeenshire, though rarely is it reported in as full a text as that sung here by Lucy Stewart.

For additional information and texts, see:

F.J. Child, *THE ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS*, Vol. III, p. 316 ff.

G. Greig & Alexander Keith, *LAST LEAVES OF TRADITIONAL BALLADS AND BALLAD AIRS*, collected in Aberdeenshire by Gavin Greig, and edited by Alexander Keith, pp. 101-106.

J. Ord, *THE BOTHY SONGS AND BALLADS OF ABERDEEN, BANFF AND MORAY, ANGUS AND THE MEARNS*, p. 473.

THE BATTLE O' HARLAW

As I cam' doon the Geerich lan'
An' doon by Netherha',
There were fifty-thousan' hielan'men
A-marchin' tae Harlaw.

REFRAIN:

Wi' my durumdoe,
My fal the day,
My duddy an' my day.

As I cam' doon an' farther doon,
An' doon by Balaquhain,
It was there I saw Sir James the Rose
An' wi' him Sir John the Graeme.

O come ye frae the Hielands, man,
Or come ye a' the wye,
Saw ye Macdonal' an' a' his men
As they come frae the Skye.

O I come frae the Hielands, man,
An I come a' the wye,
I saw Macdonal' an' a' his men
As they come frae the Skye.

O wis ye near Macdonal's men,
Their numbers did ye see,

Come tell to me, John Hielandman,
What might their numbers be?

O I wis near an' near enough,
Their number I did saw,
There wis fifty-thousan' Hielandmen
A-marchin' tae Harlaw.

If that be the case, said John the
Graeme,
We'll nae come muckle speed,
We'll cry upon our merry men
An' turn our horses hied.

O na, o na, Sir John the Graeme,
Sich things that canna be,
The gallant Graemes were never beat
We'll try fit we can dee.

As we come on an' farther on,
An' doon aneath Harlaw,
There fell fu' close on ilky side,
Sich stracks ye never saw.

The hielan'man wi' their long swords,
They laid on wondrous sair,
They drove back oor merry men
Three acres braith an' mair.

They fell fu' close on ilky side,
Sich stracks ye never saw,
For ilky sword gied clash for clash
At the battle o' Harlaw.

Brave Forbes til his brother did say,
O brother dinna ye see,
They beat us back on ilky side
An' we'll be forced tae flee.

O na, O na, O brother dear,
Sich things they canna be,
Ye'll tak' your guid sword in yer
hand
An' gyang along wi' me.

When back tae back the brothers brave
Gaed in among the thrang,
They sweeped doon the Hieland men
Wi' swords both sharp an' lang.

The first stroke Lord Forbes struck
He garred Macdonald reel;
The niest stroke Lord Forbes struck
The brave Macdonald he fell.

An' sichen a paleerachie
The likes I never saw
Was in among the hielandmen
When they saw Macdonald fa'.

When they saw that he was dead,
They turn't an' run awa',
They buried him at Laggat's Den
A long mile fae Harlaw.

O some they rode an' some they run,
An' some they did accord,
But Forbes an' his merry men
They slew them a' the road.

On Monday mornin',
The battle had begun,
On Saturday at gloamin'
Ye'd scarce ken fa had won.

An sichen a weary buryin',
The like I never saw,
Wis in the Sunday after
In the moors beneath Harlaw.

If anybody askit ye
For them ye took awa',
Ye can tell them this an' tell them
plain
They're sleepin' at Harlaw.

SIDE I, Band 2: TWO PRETTY BOYS
(The Two Brothers,
Child #49)

This ballad appears to be better known

in America than in the old world. And, indeed, until recently it was believed to have completely died out in British tradition. Neither Greig nor Ord reported versions from Scotland in this century; however, Hamish Henderson of the School of Scottish Studies reports that several versions have been collected in Scotland in recent years. Lucy Stewart's version was collected earlier (in 1955) by Peter Kennedy, but as published in "The Journal of the English Folk Dance & Song Society" (Vol. VIII, No. 2, 1957, pp. 112-113) the text is a poor transcription and is a compilation of Lucy's text with that of her brother Donald Stewart of Huntley. The present recording, made in December 1959, is a superb example of Lucy's great singing style.

The present version is most closely related to Child's "C" text in that the mother (stepmother in Lucy's text) of the two boys appears to have instigated the death of the younger (smaller) brother. No reason for the action is given however. Perhaps Lucy's 'stepmother' reference supplies a motive in that the younger boy has displeased his stepmother, who then wished (or prayed) that he would never return. The older son (perhaps the real son of the stepmother) is somehow enjoined to put his mother's prayer into action.

For additional texts and information, see:

Child, Vol. I, pp. 439 ff.

T.P. Coffin, *THE BRITISH TRADITIONAL BALLAD IN NORTH AMERICA*, pp. 60-62.

B. Bronson, *THE TRADITIONAL TUNES OF THE CHILD BALLADS*, Vol. I, pp. 384-402.

JEFSS, Vol. VIII, No. 2, 1957, pp. 112-113.

TWO PRETTY BOYS

Oh two pretty boys they were goin' to
the school,
An' the evenin' comin' hon,
Said the biggest boy to the littlest
boy,
Oh can you throw a stone,
Oh can you throw a stone.

I can neither throw a stone,
Oh little can I play at the ball,
If you come down to this merry green
woods,
I will try you a wrestling fall,
I will try you a wrestling fall.

They went down tae the merry green
woods,
To try their wrestling fall,
The big brother John took out a little
pen knife
An' stabbed William to the ground,
He stabbed William to the ground.

Oh you'll take off my white linen shirt
An' tear it from gore to gore,
You'll a-wrapt him around my wound
An' the blood will come no more,
An' the blood will come no more.

He took off his white linen shirt
An' he tore it fae gore to gore,
He a-wrapt him around his wound
But the blood came ten times more,
But the blood came ten times more.

O what will your dear father think
This night when you go home,

Tell him that I'm at London school
An' a good boy I'll come home.
An' a good boy I'll come home.

O what will your dear stepmother think
This night when you go home;
Tell her the last prayer she prayed
for me
That I would ne'er come home.
That I would ne'er come home.

SIDE I, Band 3: TIFTY'S ANNIE
(Andrew Lammie,
Child #233)

This local Aberdeenshire ballad, still very popular with the country population there, relates to one Agnes (Annie) Smith whose repaired gravestone may still be seen in Fyvie churchyard, where the date of her death is given as January 19th, 1673. The ballad has frequently been reported in Scotland from the middle of the 18th century on, with most 19th and 20th century texts being so standardized as to suggest a great dependency on frequent printings in chapbooks. Indeed, Peter Buchan, the over-maligned Aberdeenshire collector and publisher of the beginning of the 19th century, claims to have sold 30,000 copies of a chapbook version of the ballad.

As it appears in chapbook and modern printings the ballad is rather long, extending to some 50 plus stanzas. Lucy Stewart's version is an ideal example of the economy of the best traditional ballad singers, who simply shear away extraneous story matter to present a full ballad tale in a minimum of verses. Lucy's present version is a very consciously shortened text. When I told her that I had collected a 52 verse version from another singer some few days after I first recorded her 14 stanza version, she replied that she knew many more stanzas, but that the way she sang it told the same story. To prove her point, she proceeded to sing over 40 stanzas before running out of breath. In later recordings of her singing the same ballad, she occasionally sang other stanzas but rarely did her texts run to over 15 stanzas, retaining the full ballad tale throughout.

For additional texts and information, see:

Child, Vol. IV, pp. 300 ff.

Greig & Keith, pp. 174-179.

Coffin, pp. 136-137.

TIFTY'S ANNIE

In the Mill o' Tifty lived a man,
In the neighborhood of Fyvie,
He had a lovely daughter fair,
Whose name was bonnie Annie.

Lord Fyvie had a trumpeter
Whose name was Andrew Lammie
Who had the art to gain the heart
Of Mill o' Tifty's Annie.

Her mother called her to the door,
Come here to me, my Annie,
Did ever you see such a prettier man
Then the trumpeter o' Fyvie.

O nothing she said but thinking sore,
Alas for bonnie Annie,

She durst not own her heart was won
By the trumpeter o' Fyvie.

Her father came to hear o' this,
And a letter wrote to Fyvie,
To tell his daughter had been
bewitched
By his servant Andrew Lammie.

Her father locked the door at night
Laid by the keys full canny,
An' when he heard the trumpet sound,
He said, Your coo is lowin', Annie.

O father dear, I pray forbear,
Reproach not your Annie;
I would rather hear that cow in low
Than a' yer kye in Fyvie.

But if ye strike me I will cry
An' gentlemen will hear me,
Lord Fyvie he'll come ridin' by
An' he'll come in an see me.

Her father struck her wondrous sore,
And also did her mother,
Her sisters also did her scorn
Ah, but woe to be her brother.

Her brother struck her wondrous sore
Wi' cruel strokes, aye, an' many,
He broke her back in yon ha' door
For lovin' Andrew Lammie.

At that same time the Lord comes in,
He said, What ails thee, Annie?
It's all for love that I must die
For lovin' Andrew Lammie.

O mother dear, make me my bed
An' lay my face till Fyvie,
It's there I'll lie till I will die
For lovin' Andrew Lammie.

Her mother then she made her bed,
An' turn't her face to Fyvie;
Her tender hairt then soon did brake
And she ne'er see'd Andrew Lammie.

Now people hear, both far and near,
All pity Tifty's Annie,
Who died for love of one poor lad
For bonnie Andrew Lammie.

SIDE I, Band 4: THE LAIRD O' DRUM
(Child #236)

The earliest known version of this ballad dates from the beginning of the 19th century. The ballad concerns the marriage, in 1681, of Alexander Irvine, Laird of Drum, then 63 years old, to Margaret Coutts, a 16-year old girl of inferior birth. The marriage caused considerable consternation in the Irvine family, through after the death of the Laird in 1687, his young widow proceeded to marry still another member of the Irvine family.

This ballad has long been popular in the northeast of Scotland, and is still widely known there today.

For additional texts and information, see:

Child, Volume IV, p. 322 ff.

Greig & Keith, p. 182 ff.

Coffin, p. 137.

THE LAIRD O' DRUM

The Laird o' Drum a-walkin' gaen,
He was walkin' one mornin' early,
An' fa did he spy but a weel-faured lass

She wis shearin' her father's barley.
She wis shearin' her father's barley.

O could you nae be a gentleman's wife,
Or could you nae be his lady,
Or could you nae be o' some higher
degree
An' leave your shearin' alane O,
An' leave your shearin' alane O.

O I could be a gentleman's wife,
And I could be your lady,
And I could be o' some higher degree,
But I'm nae a match for thee O.
I'm nae a match for thee O.

My father is a poor shepherd man,
He herds in yonder hill O,
An' ony thing he bids me dee,
I am always at his command O,
I am always at his command O.

Oh the lassie can neither read or
write,
She wis never at a school O,
But ony thing weel can she dee
For I learn't the lassie misel' O.
For I learn't the Lassie misel' O.

Oh she canna wash your china cups
Or mask a cup o' tea O,
But weel can she milk coo and ewe,
An' a cogie on her knee O.
An' a cogie on her knee O.

O fa will bake your bridle breid,
An' fa will broo your ale O,
An' fa will stand at the gate o'
the Drum
An' welcome your bonnie lassie in
O.
An' welcome your bonnie lassie in
O.

The baker'll bake my bridle breid,
An' the brewer'll brew my ale O,
An' I will stand at the gate o' the
Drum,
An' welcome my bonnie lassie in O.
An' welcome my bonnie lassie in O.

O up speaks my brother John,
A man o' high degree O;
Ye're marryin' a wife this same nicht,
An' she's nae a match for thee O.
She's nae a match for thee O.

O the last lady we had in this place
Wis far above our degree O;
We daurna enter intil her room
'Til oor hat was below our knee O.
Oor hat wis below our knee O.

If you was dead an' I was dead,
An' both laid in one grave O,
An' nine years doon an' liftit up again,
Fa will ken your dust fae mine O,
Fa will ken your dust fae mine O.

SIDE II, Band 1: DOON BY THE GREENWOOD
SIDIE O
(The Cruel Mother,
Child #20)

Ballad tales of infanticide almost identical to The Cruel Mother have been collected in Denmark and Germany, though no conclusions have been drawn concerning the possible origin of the British ballad in either of those countries.

Most of Child's texts were from Scotland and the ballad has remained alive in tradition there to this day. The ballad is also known in England and has been collected frequently in America.

Lucy's text, very graphic in its presen-

tation of the ballad tale, is especially interesting in two respects. The opening verse has been borrowed from an old bawdy ballad known to Robert Burns as Logan Braes. It is an admirable beginning for a ballad of birth and infanticide resulting from an illicit relationship. Few other texts have the children murdered by being choked with a ribbon. The great majority of versions have the children stabbed to death by their mother.

For additional texts and information, see:

Child, Volume I, p. 218 ff.

Greig & Keith, pp. 21-23.

Ord, p. 459

Coffin, pp. 50-51.

DOON BY THE GREENWOOD SIDIE-O

Oh it's Logan's wids, aye, an' Logan's braes,
Whaur I helped my bonnie lassie on wi' her claithes,
First her hose an' then her sheen,
She gar me the slip when I was deen.

She laid her heid against a thorn
An' twa bonnie bairnies she has borne
An' twa bonnie bairnies she has borne
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

She dug a hole beneath a tree
An' she's buried them whaur nane might see,
An' she's buried them whaur nane might see,
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

Oh right wanly has she gaen hame,
That nane might middle wi' her fair fame,
That nane might middle wi' her fair fame,
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

For days an' weeks she was pale an' wan,
But what ailed her there's neen might ken,
But what ailed her there's neen might ken,
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

As she lookit over the castle wa',
She saw twa bonnie bairnies playin' at the ba',
She saw twa bonnie bairnies playin' at the ba',
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

Oh, bonnie bairnies gin ye were mine
Ye would get the white coo milk and wine
Ye would get the white coo milk and wine
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

Oh cruel mother when we were thine
Ye didna gie us the white coo milk and wine,
Ye didna gie us the white coo milk and wine,
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

But you took the ribbon frae off your hair
An' you chokit us though we grat sair,
An' ye chokit us though we grat sair,
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

An' we two in heaven do dwell
While ye mon dreg the fierce fires o' hell,

While ye mon dreg the fierce fires o' hell,
Doon by the greenwood sidie-o.

SIDE II, Band 2: THE BEGGAR KING (The Jolly Beggar, Child #279)

The earliest printing of this delightful (sometimes ribald) ballad is from the middle of the 18th century, though an English broadside from the Pepysian collection (ca. 1675) has the same story and may have been the foundation for it. Child, however, thought the Scottish ballad "a far superior piece of work" to its English forerunner.

The Jolly Beggar has not been reported from tradition in England and only fragmentary texts have been collected in the United States. It is however, still widely known in Scotland, especially in Aberdeenshire.

Lucy's title for the ballad, "The Beggar King", is a reflection of the popular tradition that this ballad was written by James Fifth of Scotland about one of his adventures in disguise as a beggar. (Lucy also knew various legends relating to "the beggar King" in his guise as "the goodman of Ballengeich".) Alex Keith, however, raises the excellent point that if the ballad was indeed the work of James V, it is certainly strange that there is no trace of it in Scotland before 1750, 200 years after James's death.

For additional texts and information, see:

Child, Volume V, p. 109 ff.

Greig & Keith, pp. 220-226.

Ord, pp. 376-377.

Coffin, p. 279.

THE BEGGAR KING

There was a jolly beggar an' a beggin'
• he was bound,
An' he's taen up his quarters in some lanwart town

REFRAIN:
An we'll gang nae mair a-rovin so late
into the nicht,
We'll gang nae mair a-rovin', let the
moon shine e'er sae bricht.

He widna lie in barns or he widna lie
in byres,
In ahint the ha' door or before the
fire

(REFRAIN)

The beggar's bed was made at e'en wi
guid clean strae and hay,
An' jist ahint the ha' door an' there
the beggar lay.

(REFRAIN)

Up an' raise the guidman's dochter an'
to bar the door,
An' there she saw the beggarman was
standin' on the floor.

(REFRAIN)

He's ta'en the lassie in his arms, into
a neuk he run,

"Oh, holy, holy wi' me, sir, you'll
wauken oor guid man."

(REFRAIN)

He's ta'en a horn fae his side and blawed
both loud an' shrill
An' four an' twenty belted knights came
skippin' ower the hill.

(REFRAIN)

He's ta'en oot his little knife, loot a'
his dudies fa',
An' he stood the bravest gentleman 'at
wis among them a'.

(REFRAIN)

SIDE II, Band 3: THE BONNIE HOOSE O' AIRLIE (Child #199)

This ballad describes the burning and sacking in 1640 of the castle of the Earl of Airlie, a supporter of Charles Edward, by the Duke of Argyle. Airlie, aware that he would be forced to renounce the King, left Scotland, leaving his house in the keeping of his oldest son, Lord Ogilvie. Argyle, ordered to proceed against the castle, raised several thousand men for the purpose. When Ogilvie heard of his coming with such a large force, the castle was abandoned. Lady Ogilvie's defiance is an invention of the ballad muse, for it has been fairly well established that none of the family were there at the time the castle was sacked.

Though fairly well known in tradition throughout Scotland, the ballad is rarely reported elsewhere, a few versions having been collected in North America.

For additional texts and information, see:

Child, Volume IV, p. 54 ff.

Greig & Keith, p. 123 ff.

Ord, p. 470.

Coffin, pp. 119-120.

THE BONNIE HOOSE O' AIRLIE

Oh, it fell on a day, on a bonny summer
day,
When the clans were awa' wi' Charlie,
An' there fell oot a great dispute
A' between Argyle, aye, an' Airlie.

Argyle he's called a hundred of his
men
For to come in the mornin' early,
An' they sat doon by the back o' ol'
Dunkeld
For to plunder the bonnie hoose o'
Airlie.

Lady Ogilvie lookit from her window
high,
And O but she sighed sairly,
To see Argyle an' a' his men
Come to plunder the bonnie hoose o'
Airlie.

"Come down, come down, Lady Ogilvie,"
he cried,
"Come down an' kiss me sairly,
Or I swear by the sword that hangs
doon by my side,
That I'll nae leave a stanin' steen
o'er Airlie."

"O, I widnae come doon, great Argyle,"
she cried,
"Or I widnae kiss ye sairly;
I widnae come doon, great Argyle,"
she cried,
"Though ye never leave a stanin' steen
o'er Airlie."

"Oh I hae bore seven pretty sons,
An' the eighth has ne'er seen its daddy,
But if I had as many, many more,
They wid a' be followers tae Charlie."

"If oor guid lord, he'd a-been at hame,
As he is awa' wi' Charlie,
I swear by the sword that hangs doon
by your side
That ye daursna touch a stanin' steen
o'er Airlie."

SIDE II, Band 4: BARBARY ALLEN
(Child #84)

In his diary entry for January 2, 1666, Samuel Pepys wrote: "In perfect pleasure I was to hear her (Mrs. Knipp, an actress) sing, and especially her little Scotch song of Barbary Allen." Many others have shared his "perfect pleasure" since Pepys' days, for Barbara Allen is certainly the best known and most widely sung of the Child ballads.

The consistency of the basic outline of the story and the amazing number of texts which have been reported on both sides of the ocean is no doubt due, in large part, to the numerous songster, chapbook, and broadside printings of the ballad in the 19th century. A widespread oral circulation has, however, left its mark, for no ballad shows, in its different variants, so many minor variations.

The bedside gifts of the dying youth occurs frequently in Scottish texts of the ballad; Child however would not recognize this as legitimately belonging to the ballad, with the result that he omitted from his canon a version containing such bequests.

In most Scottish versions, the dying lover's name is John Graeme. Lucy's text omitting this point, together with the placing of the ballad tale in London, suggests a possible combination in tradition of Scottish and English variants.

For additional texts and information, see:

Child, Volume II, p. 276 ff.

Ord, p. 476.

Greig & Keith, pp. 67-70.

Coffin, pp. 87-90.

Dean-Smith, p. 51.

BARBRY ALLEN

In London town where I was born
A young man there was dwellin' O,
He courted a fair young maid
Whose name was Barbry Allen O,
Whose name was Barbry Allen O.

He courted her for seven long years,
'Til he couldnae coort her longer O,
'Til he fell sick an' very ill,
An' he sent for Barbary Allen O.
He sent for Barbry Allen O.

It's slowly she put on her clothes,
An' slowly she came walkin' O,
An' when she came to his bed-side,
"Young man," she says, "You're dyin'
O."
"Young man," she says, "You're dyin'
O."

"Oh, dyin' O I canna be,
One kiss from you would cure me O."
"One kiss from me you shall not get,
Young man though you are dyin' O.
Young man though you are dyin' O."

"Oh, it's look you up at my bed heid,
An' see fit you see hangin' O;
A guinea gold watch an' a silver chain,
Give that to Barbry Allen O.
Give that to Barbry Allen O."

"Oh, look you doon at my bed-side,
An' see fit you see settin' O;
A china basin full o' tears,
That I shed for Barbry Allen O.
That I shed for Barbry Allen O."

Oh, she had nae been a mile oot o'
toon,
'Til she heard the death bells
tollin' O,
An' every toll it seemed to say:
"Hard-haired Barbry Allen O.
Hard-haired Barbry Allen O."

"Oh, mother, dear, make me my bed,
An' make it long an' narrow O;
My sweetheart died for me today,
But I'll die for him tomorrow O,
I'll die for him tomorrow O."

SIDE II, Band 5: THE SWAN SWIMS SO
BONNIE O
(The Two Sisters,
Child #10)

One of the most widely distributed of all British traditional ballads, The Two Sisters has proved excellent material for detailed study. Of 27 texts published by Child, the earliest is a broadside dating from the middle of the 17th century, though it may have been sung in Britain at an earlier date.

In an extensive study of the ballad, Paul G. Brewster comes to the conclusion that it is definitely Scandinavian in origin; starting in Norway prior to the 17th century, the ballad spread from there to other Scandinavian countries, and then to Scotland and England. Archer Taylor has made a strong case for his belief that American versions of the ballad derive from English rather than Scottish tradition.

Child considered the heart of the ballad to be the making of a musical instrument from the drowned sister's body, the instrument in turn revealing the identity of her murderer. Most recently collected texts have eliminated this supernatural motif.

Lucy's version containing "the swan swims so bonnie" refrain, is rather uncommon, and, as pointed out by Bronson, seems to have currency in Celtic communities.

For additional texts and information, see:

Child, Volume I, p. 137 ff.

Greig & Keith, p. 9 ff.

Ord, p. 430 ff.

Coffin, p. 38 ff.

Dean-Smith, p. 113

Bronson, Vol. I, pp. 143-184.

Paul Brewster, THE TWO SISTERS, Helsinki, 1953. FFC #147

THE SWAN SWIMS SO BONNIE O

Oh, there were twa sisters lived in this
place,
Heigh ho, my nannie o,
Een was fair an' the ither was deen,
An' the swan swims so bonnie O.

Oh dear sister, dear sister, wid you
take a walk,
Wid ye take a walk down by the miller's
dam.

Dear sister, dear sister, put you your
foot on yon marble stone,
An' so slyly as she pushed her in.

Dear sister, dear sister, lend me your
hand,
An' I will gie ye my gowd an' my land.

Oh I didna come here to lend you my
hand,
I come here for to see you drown.

Noo, the millert had a daughter an'
she bein' the maid,
She came down for some water for to
bake.

Dear father, dear father, swims in your
milldam
Either a maid or a white milk swan.

(Her father took a click, an' he
clickit her out,)
(He laid her on the dyke for to drip
or to dry.)

The king's three harpers, they been
passin' by,
They ta'en three locks o' her bonnie
yellow hair.