

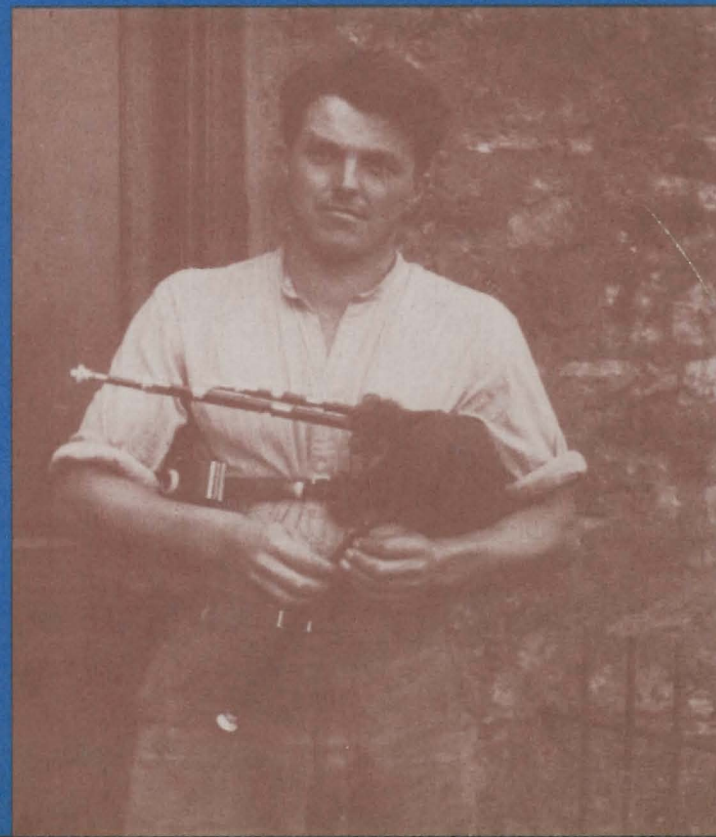
THE BORDERS

Songs and Dances of the English-Scottish Border

*Recorded in Roxburgshire and Fifeshire, Scotland, and Northumberland, England, by Samuel B. Charters;
technical assistance by A. R. Danberg, August, 1960*

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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MUSIC LP

NICKY TAMS
Jimmy Scott—voice

Strathspey—THE LAIRD OF DRUMBLAIR
Rob Hobkirk—fiddle

THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE
Will Scott and Sandy Scott—voices

FIRST OF MAY (Jig)
Rob Hobkirk—fiddle

JIMMY RAEBURN
Tom Scott—voice

THE BORDERS (Scottish side)
Tom Scott—voice

BONNIE JEANNIE SHAW
Tom Scott—voice

THE NORTHUMBRIAN SMALL PIPES

THE BORDERS (English side)

NORTHUMBRIAN AIR AND VARIATIONS

BORDER REELS

THE PIPES

SHEPHERD LADDIE

BLACKTHORN STICK
Tom Breckons—Northumbrian small pipes and voice

THE KIELDER HUNT
Will Scott and Sandy Scott—voices

THE COUNTRY FIDDLE

THE FLOWERS OF EDINBURGH (Reel)

DE'IL AMONG THE TAILORS (Reel)
The Country Dances

WALTZES
(Mist Covered Hills of Home, Bonnie Galloway, etc.)

HARVEST HOME (hornpipe)
Rob Hobkirk—fiddle and voice

THE TINKER'S WEDDIN'
Jimmy Scott—voice, with friends

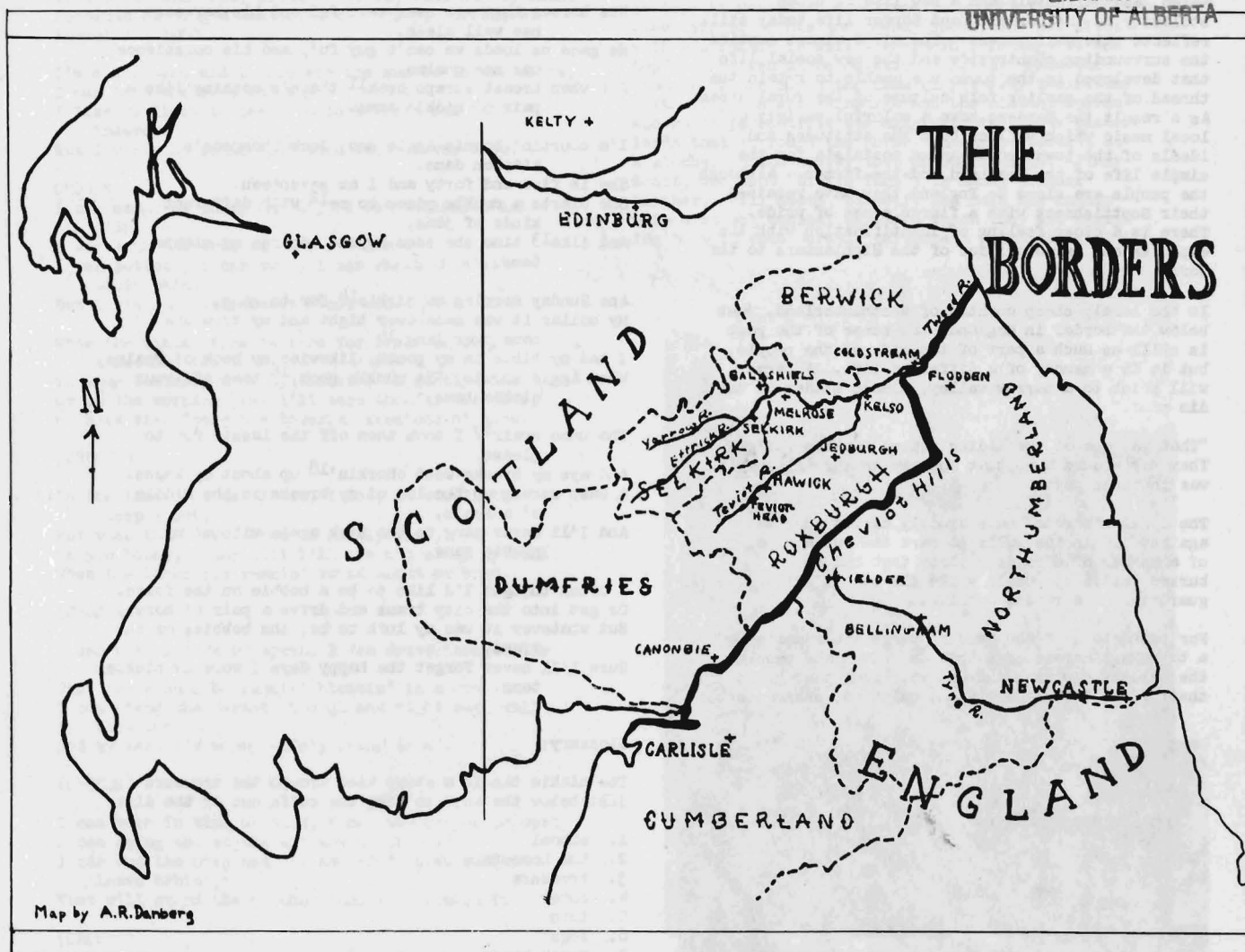
McALLISTER DANCES BEFORE THE KING (Concert recitation)
Sandy Scott—voice

THE COMMON RIDING
Tom Scott and Jimmy Scott

I LIKE OLD HAWICK THE BEST (common riding song)
Nan Scott—voice

THE BORDERS

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET



THE BORDERS: songs and dances of the English-Scottish border, recorded in Roxburghshire and Fifeshire, Scotland, and Northumberland, England, by Samuel B. Charters.

The road from Newcastle to Jedburgh slowly moves out of the pall of industrial smoke and haze that fills the Tyne Valley, crosses the empty moorland of Northumberland; then rises into the low range of hills, the Cheviots, that marks the border of Scotland. At the crest of a winding stretch of road, at a place called Carter Bar, there is a small sign marking the line of the border itself. An enterprising local business man has parked a small wooden van on the side of the road and sells tea and sandwiches. Usually there are several cars uncomfortably pulled to the side of the road and small parties standing along the fences looking down the barren slopes of the Cheviots. It is not a high pass, even by English standards - the elevation is only 1376' - but the hills seem to be always shrouded in mist, with a drizzle hanging in the air. In the late summer the patches of blooming heather turn the slopes a rich, deep purple, standing out against the rich green of the grassy stretches. Bedraggled sheep move slowly along the dim lines of the stone walls built many years before to keep them from straying onto the road. It is barren country, a few trees marking the streams in the lower valleys, the hills empty, almost grim and menacing in their stillness. The parties standing along the wall usually stop only long enough to finish their tea and take a hurried snapshot.

The Scottish border towns are a few miles to the North, in the river valleys that divide the hills into low folds of grazing land rising above the meandering, shallow streams. Jedburgh is on the Jed River, Hawick on the Teviot, Galashiels on the Gala, Selkirk on the Ettrick, and Kelso and Melrose on the Tweed. They are older towns, most of them with a dreary facade of granite buildings clustered around a small square. They stood between the armies of both Scotland and England in the hundreds of years of warfare between the two proud kingdoms and in all of them there are still ruined chapels and abbeys carefully set apart as "Ancient Monuments", for which a shilling can be charged to go inside the fence. By the eighteenth century the Border towns had almost outlived their tradition of lawlessness and fierce raiding on their English neighbors, and refused to take part in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. By the end of the century a new tradition of industrialism was rising. Dorothy Wordsworth, the sister of the poet, wrote of Galashiels in 1803,

"The village is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Gala. A pleasant place it once has been, but a manufactory is established at it, and a townish bustle and ugly stone houses are fast taking the place of the brown roofed, thatched cottages, of which a great number yet remain, overshadowed by trees."

The "manufactories" which Dorothy Wordsworth disliked brought prosperity to the knitting mills of Hawick, Kelso, and Galashiels and a new life of urban stolidity to the Borders, and Border life today still reflects this seriousness. The mills almost emptied the surrounding countryside and the new social life that developed in the towns was unable to retain the thread of the earlier folk culture of the rural areas. As a result the Borders have a colorful variety of local music which reflect both the attitudes and ideals of the townspeople and a nostalgia for the simple life of the shepherd and the farmer. Although the people are close to England they have retained their Scottishness with a fierce sense of pride. There is a close feeling of identification with the exploits and personalities of the Highlanders to the North.

In the lonely sheep country of Northumberland, just below the border in England, the sense of the past is still as much a part of the life of the people, but it is a memory of a different life. A farmer will point to a narrow valley, almost hidden in the dim mist.

"That was one of the hiding places for the raiders. They say around here that Johnnie Armstrong himself was in these parts."

The lonely churches have crudely carved stones against the inside walls to mark the burial spot of a member of a raiding party that had to be buried inside its walls while the others stood guard in the darkness outside.

For both sides of the Borders there are memories of a turbulent heroic past that has given the people of the Borders a warmth and understanding that gives their music its sincerity and quiet expressiveness.



TOM SCOTT with his housekeeper.

SIDE ONE

Band 1. "NICKIE TAMS"

2'25"

Jimmy Scott - voice. Recorded at Hawick, Roxburghshire, August 20, 1960.

When I was barely ten year old I left the parish skill,¹

My father sent me to the Mains² to earn his milk and meal.

I soon get on my narrow breeks³ to hap⁴ my spinnel⁵ trams,⁶

And I wrappit roun' my nappet⁷ knees a pair o' nickie tams.

First I get on for Bailey Loon, soon I get on for third.⁸

And then I had to teach myself the horseman's grip and word.⁹

A loaf o' bread to ca' ma' piece, and a bottle for drinkin' drams,¹⁰

Now you canna gae through the caufhouse door without your nickie tams.

The farmer that I'm workin' for he's wealthy but he's mean.

His horses they are neer well fed and his harness nae well clean.

He gaes us loads we can't guy fu', and his conscience has nae qualms,

But when breast straps brakll there's nothing like a pair o' nickie tams.

I'm courtin' bonnie Aggie noo, Jock Thompson's kitchen dame.

She is five and forty and I am seventeen.

She clarts a muckle piece to me¹² with different kinds of jams,

And ilka¹³ time she sees me she admires my nickie tams.

Ane Sunday morning to kirkie¹⁴ for to gang, My collar it was nane ower tight and my trousers nane ower lang.¹⁵

I had my Bible in my pouch, likewise my book o' Psalms, When Aggie shouts, "Ya muckle gook,¹⁶ take off your nickie tams.

The unco sweir¹⁷ I took them off the lassie for to please.

And aye my breeks went chorkin'¹⁸ up about my knees.

A wasp sprung up the leg o' my breeks in the middle o' a Psalm,

And I'll never gang to the kirk again without my nickie tams.

I often thought I'd like to be a bobbie on the force. Or get into the city trams and drive a pair o' horse. But whatever it was my luk to be, the bobbies or the trams,

Sure I'll never forget the happy days I wore my nickie tams.

Glossary:

The nickie tam is a strap tied around the trousers just below the knee to keep the cuffs out of the dirt.

1. school
2. the home farm
3. trousers
4. cover
5. thin
6. legs
7. knock knees
8. various degrees of job
- 9.-10. This refers to a sort of initiation into the important positions of farm life.
11. refers to plowing harness.
12. gives me a big piece of bread.
13. every
14. church
15. not very tight, not very long
16. silly fool
17. not very willingly
18. pulling up

(Glossary of Scottish terms and assistance in transcription from Hamish Henderson.)

"Nickie Tams" is a very popular colloquial ballad, and is sung in nearly every part of Scotland. It is often included in the group of songs known as "Bothie Ballads" and the singer of this version, Jimmy Scott, referred to it himself as a "bothie song". These were songs that were sung at "bothies", or meetings of farm workers, that were an important part of Scottish rural life until very recent times. Its use of broad dialect and gusty humor have an immediate appeal to everyone, even if - as was the case with the people sitting around Jimmy Scott as he was singing - they have heard it many times before.

Band 2. Strathpey - "THE LAIRD OF DRUMBLAIR" 1'10"

Rob Hobkirk, fiddle. Recorded at Hawick, Roxburghshire, August 20, 1960.

Will Scott and Sandy Scott - voices, Will Scott, lead.
Recorded at King's Seat of Auth, Keltie, Fifeshire.
August 16, 1960.

I'm a shepherd and I rise ere the sun is in the skies,
I can lamb the ewes wi' any o' them a'.
I like my flock to feed, to look fresh and fair
indeed,
But I wish the cauld east wind would never blow.

CHORUS:

I can smear my sheep and dip, I can udderlock and
clip.
I can lamb the ewes wi' any o' them a'.
I can puttock, I can twin, I can cheat them wi'
their skin,
But I wish the cauld east winds would never blow.

When the winter time is here for their lives I
sometimes fear,
To some shetered nook my flocks I'll gently call.
Or in the morning gray I'll turn them to the brae,
Or seek them 'mong the towerin' wreathes o' snow.

(CHORUS)

In the lambin' time, I wot, I wot, it was little
sleep I got,
But when the summer breezes gently blow,
On yon bonny, sunny hill I'll lie and sleep my fill
When the lambs are runnin' round about me braw.

(CHORUS)

I can cut or mark or spean, I can drive them to the
train,
Tho' their dams be runnin' bleatin' in a row.
I can stand the market through and right well sell
them too,
And my master's money safely bring it a'.

(CHORUS)

I can work in time o' need, I can sow or hoe or weed,
I can swing the scythe wi' any o' them a'.
I can cut the corn and bin and right braw stooks
leave behin',¹
That will stand the autumn winds when houses fa'.

(CHORUS)

And when I've done my work, let the night be ere
sae dark,
With a swaggerin' pace I'll hie myself awa'.
To my lassie, dearest Jen, she's the best beneath
the sun,
She'll name the day we'll be no longer twa'.

(CHORUS)

Now my neighbor hearts beware, when ye gan to show
or fair,
The fiery liquor never taste awa'.
If you're drouthie² thole away³ till yer ain braw
hills you see
And the bonnie bubblin' streams will quail⁴ it all.

(CHORUS)

(Glossary: Most of the terms which are unfamiliar
refer to specific jobs involving the sheep.

1. to pile up the sheaves of grain in a strong pile
or "stock."
2. thirsty
3. don't think of it.
4. quench

Assistance in transcription from Hamish Henderson and
Jack Flucker.)

"A Shepherd's Life" seems to have many of the charac-
teristics of a literary background, especially the
final verse, with its reference to the evils of liquor.
Will Scott is himself a shepherd and the song has
been one of his favorites for many years. Although

Will now lives in Fifeshire, where he is working as a
shepherd, he is from the Border country and spent
nearly all of his life in Roxburghshire. He was born
in 1897 in Conanbie, a village in Dumfrieshire. The
other singer is his son, Sandy Scott, who now lives
with his family in Will's shepherd's cottage at the
top of a barren slope outside of Keltie. From the
windows of the house the land slopes away toward the
Fikth of Forth and Edinburgh and the distant spires
and rooftops contrast strongly with the empty pasture
lands that surround the house. Sandy is working as
a plumber in the nearby town of Dumfermline. Jimmy
Scott, who sant "Nickie Tams", is Sandy's older
brother. Will Scott, himself, has left his family
with a strong musical heritage which they are carry-
ing on with considerable talent and enthusiasm.



A STILE IN THE SHEEP MEADOWS, ROXBURGHSHIRE.

Band 4. Jig - "FIRST OF MAY"

1'10"

Rob Hobkirk - fiddle. Details as above.

Band 5. "JIMMY RAEBURN"

2'35"

Tom Scott - voice. Recorded at Hawick, Roxburghshire,
August 20, 1960.

My name is Jimmy Raeburn, in Glasgow I was born.
My place and habitation I'm forced to leave with
scorn.

My place and habitation I never gae awa',
Frae the bonnie hills and dales of Caledonia.

'Twas early one morning just at the break of day.
I overheard the turnkey, who unto us did say.
"Arise ye helpless convicts, arise ye yen and all,
This is the day ye are to stray from Caledonia."

We all arose, put on our clothes, our hearts were
filled with grief.

And all our friends stood 'round the coach could
grant us no relief.

All all our friends stood 'round the coach, their
hearts were broke in twa.

To see us leave the bonnie braes of Caledonia.

Farewell, my ancient mother, I'm vexed for what
I've done.

I hope none will accost you the race that I have
run.

I hope you'll be provided for when I am far awa'.
For frae the bonnie hills and dales of Caledonia.

Farewell, my honoured father, he is the best of
men,
And likewise my own sweetheart, it's Catherine is
her name.
Ne mair we'll meet by Clyde's clear stream, nor by
the Broomielaw.
For I mun leave the hills and dales of Caledonia.

If en we chance to meet again, I hope 'twill be
above,
Where hallelujas will besung to Him who reigns in
love.
Na earthly judge will judge us then, but He who
rules us a'.
Farewell ye bonnie hills and dales of Caledonia.

A similar text of this very popular street ballad is
given in Ford's "Vagabond Songs", and it has been
traced to a penny broadsheet published in the 1840's.
Ford states that Raeburn was transported for theft.
The singer, Tom Scott is the older brother of Will
Scott, who sang "A Shepherd's Life". Tom is six
years older than Will. He is living in Hawick now,
a warm, friendly man with a sincere affection for
his "Old songs".

Band 6. The Borders - The Scottish Side 45"

Tom Scott - voice.

Band 7. "BONNIE JEANIE SHAW" 1'27"

Tom Scott - voice.

I'm fair for bonnie Scotland, ne'er loving yen is
here.
I dinna see the old folk, the folk I love so dear.
I'll leave this foreign land with scenes and sights
sae braw,
And I'll wander back to Scotland and my bonnie
Jeannie Shaw.

Give me back the days on the flowery Galpin's braes,
And the bonnie lass that I love best of all.
I would cross the ocean wide for to wander by the Clyde
In the gloamin, with my bonnie Jeannie Shaw.

I dinna see the thistle nor the heather on the hill,
I dinna hear the mavis sing its fairly fill.
My heart with pure delight sae up in Glee awa'
To be home in dear old Scotland and my bonnie
Jeannie Shaw.

Repeat second verse.

THE NORTHUMBRIAN SMALL PIPES

Band 8. The Borders - The English Side. 1'05"

Band 9. NORTHUMBERLAND AIR AND VARIATIONS 1'40"

Band 10. BORDER REELS 1'05"

Band 11. The Pipes. 1'15"

Band 12. "SHEPHERD LADDIE" 40"

Band 13. "BLACKTHORN STICK" 1'05"

Tom Breckons - Northumbrian Small Pipes and voice.
Recorded August 21, 1960, at Bellingham, Northumber-
land.

The great highland bagpipes of Scotland have become
so well known that it is often forgotten that there
are three traditions of pipe music in the British
Isles, the highland bagpipe, the uilleann - or union -
bagpipe of Ireland, and the small pipe of Northumber-
land. It is only within recent times, in fact, that
the highland pipe has become universal throughout Scot-
land. Until twenty or thirty years ago it was still
possible to find a smaller lowland pipe, employing
an arm bellows rather than the blown air pipe in the

military band, as much as anything else, that has
given it such a colorful predominance.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the bag-
pipe was almost as popular in England as it was in
Scotland; so much so that Henry VIII included the
bagpipe in the court musical consort. There are
numerous references to the pipe in literature of
the time and it is often included in paintings and
drawings of English country life. In the set of en-
gravings which Hogarth did for a new edition of Samuel
Butler's HUDIBRAS in 1726 the largest of the drawings,
depicting Hudibras' unsuccessful encounter with the
village "rough music" procession, includes a bagpipe
player in the center foreground. Butler's descrip-
tion of the instrument's sound may help to explain
the decline of the bagpipe in popularity.



BRECKONS, PLAYING THE
NORTHUMBRIAN SMALLPIPES.

"Then Bagpipes of the loudest Drones
With snuffling broken-winded tones,
Whose blasts of Air in Pockets shut,
Sound filthier than from the Gut,
And made a viler Noise than Swine
In windy Weather when they whine . . ."

By the end of the eighteenth century the bagpipe
had become an uncommon sight in the English
country side.

The small pipe of Northumberland is the last of
the English bagpipes and it is unfortunate that
the instrument is still little known outside of
the Border counties. The Scots who live along
the Northumberland line have almost a friendly
affection for the "wee pipes" of their English
neighbors. The Scottish shepherd who performed
on the fiddle, Rob Hobkirk, remembered spending
an afternoon at a piping competition in Northum-
berland and being charmed by the light sound and
agility of the pipe music.

"There wasn't anyone saying a word all the time
they were playing."

The present small pipe seems to be a descendant of
the seventeenth century musette of the French court.
It has been suggested that the musette was developed
for the use of court ladies who considered it vulgar
to blow into an air pipe and were delighted with

costly playthings. The bagpipe that was designed to please them was a small instrument blown by a small bellows that was tied to the right arm with a piece of bright ribbon and pressed between the arm and the right side. The bag itself was covered with elaborately embroidered tapestry. The drones were enclosed in a small ivory cylinder and tuned by sliding buttons along the sides of the cylinder. Unlike the highland pipe the musette had four drones instead of the highland pipe's three and the elaborately turned ivory chanter was cylindrical rather than conical. The musette enjoyed considerable popularity and considerable music was written for it by the most talented composers connected with the French court, among them Lully. Although there doesn't seem to be any evidence of an importation of the musette into England in the Eighteenth century the first Northumberland pipes, which became popular about this time, are similar to the musette in almost every detail. By the end of the century the instrument had been altered so that the drones were in separate pipes, but in other respects the instrument still has many similarities to the older musette. The first collection of airs for the Northumbrian pipe was published in 1765 by Francis Peacock, giving the instrument a musical repertoire almost as old as that of the highland pipe, excepting, of course, the pibroch music, which may be considerably older than the rest of the highland pipe repertoire.

The first early developments in the small pipe seem to have been made by John Peacock, who added four keys to the chanter in 1800 and published another collection of airs five years later. The early instruments were still made of ivory, with silver keys. The most famous makers of small pipes in the nineteenth century were Robert Reid and his son James Reid of Newcastle, who sold music, manufactured pipes, and repaired umbrellas in their small shop for many years. They developed the instrument until eighteen keys were fitted onto the chanter and the number of drones had been increased to six so that they could tune to any key, major or minor. The modern instrument has gone back to the original four drones, but seventeen keys are used on the chanter, giving the instrument a flexible chromatic scale of two complete octaves, a considerable advance over the nine notes available to the performer of the highland pibroch. Ivory is no longer used in either the chanter or the drones, which are most commonly made of ebony. The fittings are invariably of metal, often silver, unlike the ivory fittings of the highland pipe. Many Northumbrian players have covered the bag of their instrument with Scottish tartans, but this is not reflected in the music, which is still based on the old Northumbrian repertoire.

Usually the drones in the small pipe are tuned to the key of G. The lowest drone is tuned to G an octave below the lowest G of the chanter, the second drone to the dominant, D, above it, and the third drone to the unison with the chanter's G. The fourth drone is tuned to a higher D, but is usually not used except when the instrument is returned to play in the key of D. The chanter's range is two octaves, beginning with D above middle C. It is a closed, rather than an open, pipe, and when the holes are completely covered there is no sound from the chanter. Like the highland pipe the chanter uses a double reed, the drones a single reed, but unlike it, the reeds on the small pipe are "dry" reeds. Since the instrument is played with the bellows there is no moisture present and the reeds often last twenty or thirty years. The highland pipes have to be played for some time before the moisture in the players' breath has dampened the reeds enough so that the instrument is playing well.

Tom Breckons, who plays the Northumberland pipes on these recordings, is a young, hard working farmer who lives in the barren sheep country along the Tyne River. To the north are the dim shapes of the Cheviot Hills, perpetually cloud hung. It was from the valleys and small clumps of forest in this lonely country that the Border raiders rode out to attack their traditional enemies in Scotland a few miles away across the moorland. Tom studied the pipes with John Armstrong, one of the important players still active, and heard, many times, the "Prince of



THE FIELDS OF SELKIRKSHIRE.

Pipers", the late Tom Clough, who was widely regarded as the most brilliant modern performer on the instrument. Tom has found himself playing less and less in recent years, as friends with whom he used to play have moved out of the neighborhood. He admitted winning "... four or five of the competitions" when he was playing steadily and his playing still had the distinctiveness of the gifted performer. As he sat in the front parlor playing, his mother sat across the room listening, smiling with pleasure at hearing the delicate music of the pipes.

Of the four selections on the record two are Northumbrian and two from other sources. The first set of variations is a competition piece, as is the set of reels that follows it. "Shepherd Laddie" is widely known under several titles and Tom played it to show the flexibility of the instrument. "Blackthorn Stick" is an Irish jig.

SIDE TWO

Band 1. "THE KIELDER HUNT"

4'35"

Will Scott and Sandy Scott - Will Scott, lead voice.
Recorded at King's Seat of Auth, Kelty, Fifeshire.
August 16, 1960.

Hark! Hark! I hear hear Lang Will's clear voice
soundin' through the Kielder Glen,
Where the raven flaps her glossy wing and the fell
fox has his den.
There the shepherds they were gatherin' up wi'
money a guide yauld grew,¹
Wi' wiry terrier game and keen and fox-hound fleet
and true.

CHORUS:

Hark away! Hark away! O'er the bonnie hills of
Kielder,
Hark away.

There was Moudy frae Emmethaugh, there was Royal
frae Bakethinn,
There were hounds frae Reed and Kilderhead and Ruby
by the Linn,
There were hounds of fame frae Irthingside, they try
baith moss and crag.

Hark! Hark! that's Moudy's loud clear note, he holds
bold Reynard's drag.²

(CHORUS)

Hark forward, hark ye gallant hounds, hark onward,
hark away.
He kens the hauds on Tosson hills, he kens the
holes at Rae,³
There's no a den round the Kail Stane but he kens
well, I trow,
And a' the holes on Lariston he kens them thro'
and thro'.

(CHORUS)

Away, away, o'er hill and dale, and up by yonder
stell,
The music of the gallant pack resounds o'er muir⁴
and dell.
And see the lish yald⁵ shepherd lads how Monkside
heights they climb,
They're the pride o' a' the Border wide for wind and
wiry limb.

(CHORUS)

Away, away, o'er bank and brae, they drive the
wily game,
Where Moudy, Ruby, Royal still applaud their
glorious fame;
And see the lish yald shepherd lads how Monkside
heights they climb,
They're the pride o' a' the Border wide for wind
and wiry limb.

(CHORUS)

Thro' yon wild glen they view him now right for the
yearning Linn,
By cairn an' crag, o'er moss and hagg, sae glorious
was the din.
Well done! Hurray! They've run him down, yon's Moudy
twirls him now,
The hunt is done, his brush is won, I hear the death
hal-loo.

(CHORUS)

Then here's to Will o' Emmethaugh, for he's a sports-
man true.
Here's to Robbie o' Bakethin, and Rob o' Kielder too.
At the Hope, Bewshaugh, an' Kersie Cleuch, Skaup,
Riggend and the Law,
In Tyne, and Reed, and Irthinghead, they're gallant
sportsmen a'

(Glossary:

1. large quantity
2. scent
3. refers to the foxes hideaways
4. moor
5. agile

Assistance in transcription from Hamish Henderson.)

Many singers along the Borders are locally famous
for one or two songs, and over the years Will Scott
has been asked to sing his "Kielder Hunt" at many
gatherings and occasions. Kielder is just over
the Border on the English side, but as the song
relates it is often the meeting place for sportsman
from a wide area who come to run their dogs in large
field trials.

THE COUNTRY FIDDLE

Band 2. Reel - "THE FLOWERS OF EDINBURGH" 1'10"

Band 3. Reel - "DE'IL AMONG THE TAILORS" -
the Country Dances 1'45"

Band 4. Waltzes - including "MIST COVERED
HILLS OF HOME" and "BONNIE GALLOWAY". 2'25"

Band 5. Hornpipe - "HARVEST HOME"

1'35"

Rob Hobkirk - fiddle and voice. Recorded at Hawick,
Roxburghshire, August 20, 1960.

Rob Hobkirk is a shepherd from the village of
Teviothead, about fifteen miles south-west of
Hawick. He is well known for his skill on the
violin and has played for dances in many Border
communities. He is a quiet, thoughtful man in
his thirties, speaking a dialect that is almost
halfway between the speech of the Scots to the
north and the English to the South. He played
a selection of nearly every kind of dance music
popular at the country dances, the strathspey,
the jig, the reel, and the hornpipe, and included
a medley of favorite waltzes. The jig "FIRST
OF MAY", with its almost pentatonic modality,
was taught to him by his mother, who remembered
it from her own childhood. The reel "DE'IL
AMONG THE TAILORS" seems to be the source of the
American breakdown tune "DEVIL'S DREAM". Like
most country musicians Rob does almost all of
his playing in the first position, going up the
neck of the violin only on the E string, but he
plays with a brilliant suppleness and his music
is infectiously danceable.



A SHELTER IN THE BORDER COUNTRY.

Band 6. "THE TINKER'S WEDDIN'"

3'35"

Jimmy Scott - voice, with friends. Recorded at
Hawick, Roxburghshire, August 20, 1960.

In June when broom in bloom was seen, and bracken
was fu' fresh and green,
And warm the sun with silver sheen, the hills and
dales did gladden, O.
Yen day upon the Border bent, the tinker pitched
his gypsy tent,
And old and young with ae consent resolved to have
a weddin', O.

CHORUS:

Der ma doo, ma doo, ma day, der ma doo ma daddy, O.
Der ma doo, ma doo, ma day, hoorah for the tinker's
weddin', O.

The bridegroom was wild Norman Scott, wha thrice had
broke the nuptial knot,
And yence¹ was sentenced to be shot, for breech o'
martial order, O.
His gleesom² joe³ was Madge McKell, a speawife⁴ match
for Nick Hi'sel,⁵
Wi' glamor⁶ and cantrip,⁷ charm and spell, she
frighted baith o' the Border, O.

(CHORUS)

Nae priest was there with solemn face, nae clerk to
claim the crowns a brace,
The pipes and fiddler played the grace, to set their
gabs asterrin', O.⁸
'Mong beef and mutton, pork and veal, 'mong paunches,
pluck, and fresh cowheel,
Fat haggis and a cauler jeel, the clatter wa'
careerin',⁸ O.



A BORDER FARMYARD.

(CHORUS)

Fresh salmon newly taen in Tweed, saut ling and cod o' Shetland breed.
They worried⁹ till kites¹⁰ were like to screeed,¹¹ 'mang flagons and flasks o' gravy, O.
There was raisin, kail, and sweet milk gaps, and ewe milk cheese in whangs¹² and flaps,¹³
And they rubied their guts 'mid scabs and slaps, richt many a cadger's cavey, O.¹⁴

(CHORUS)

The drink flew round in wild galore and soon upraised a hideous roar,
Bli¹⁵ Comus ne'er a queerer core, saw seated round his table, O.
They drank, they danced, they swore, they sang, they quarreled and 'greed the whole day lang,
And they rangled and tangled among the throng, 'twould match the tongues o' Babel, O.

(CHORUS)

Now they drink it down before their drouth,¹⁶ and vexed be many a maw and mouth,¹⁷
It damped the fire o' age and youth, and every breast did sadden, O.
'Til three stout loons¹⁸ flew o'er the fell¹⁹ at risk o' life their drouth to quell,
And robbin' a neighborin' smuggler's still, to carry on the weddin', O.

(CHORUS)

With thunderous shouts they hailed them back, to broach the barrels they were na' slack,
While the fiddler's plane tree leg they brak for playing "Farewell to Whiskey", O.
Delerium seized the prodious throng, the bagpipes in the fire they flung,
And they wrangled and tangled among the throng, the drink played siccan a pliskey,²⁰ O.

(CHORUS)

Now the sun fell laich²¹ o'er Soloway's banks, while on they pleyed their roughsome pranks,
And the stalwart shadows o' their shanks,²² wide o'er the muir²³ was spreadin', O.
'Til heads and thraws²⁴ among the whins²⁵ they fell wi' broken brows and shins,
And sair cast banes²⁶ filled many skins, at the close of the Tinker's weddin', O.

(CHORUS)

(Glossary - The song presents considerable difficulty in many of the expressions, but the following suggestions should help to make some of it a little more clear.

1. once
2. merry
3. sweetheart
4. witch

5. to match the devil.
6. magic
7. incantation
- 7-a. suggested meaning: mouths watering.
8. considerable noise.
9. ate voraciously
10. stomachs
11. burst
12. and
13. containers
14. suggested meaning: something to do with a carrier's hen coop. This is very confused.
15. blithe
16. thirst
17. stomach and mouth or throat and mouth
18. young men
19. valley
20. such tricks
21. low
22. legs
23. moor
24. head to feet
25. bushes
26. sore bruised bones

Assistance in transcription from Jack Flucker and Hamish Henderson, assistance with glossary from Hamish Henderson.)



THE STATUE TO THE "BOYS OF HAWICK", 1514.

This very popular bothie song is also found in a similar version in Ford's "Vagabond Songs". Ford states that it was written by William Watt of Peeblesshire and first published in 1835. It is found everywhere in Scotland and despite the difficulties of the dialect is sung with noisy enthusiasm for almost any occasion. The Scottish tinkers - or "traveling people" - are not gypsies, although there were similarities in their ways of life. There were several friends and neighbors in the room when Jimmy Scott was singing and they all joined in the chorus, even though they felt a little shy about the microphone.

Band 7. "McALLISTER DANCES BEFORE THE KING" - A "concert" recitation. 2'05"

Sunday Scott - voice. Recorded at Kings Seat of Auth, Kelty, Fifeshire, August 16, 1960.

Recitations and readings are still an important part of the rural entertainment in the Borders and no



THE TOWN OF HAWICK, ROXBURGHSHIRE.

village "concert" - often called a "mod" - would be complete without a dramatic recitation of one of the popular ballad poems or stories. It is a tradition that seems to have survived from the earliest periods of Scottish life. The most important event in which recitations play a large part are the popular "Burns' Suppers", held to commemorate Burns' birthday on January 25. Robert Burns still is a living poetic voice to the people of Scotland and at the Burns' Suppers the entire evening is given to a long speech on Burns, recitations of his poems - "Tam O'Shanter" is especially popular - and performances of his songs. In many ways the Suppers emphasize the sentimentality that is such a strong part of the present Scottish temperament and Sandy Scott's recitation, "McAllister Dances Before The King", is the kind of poem which has a strong appeal to this same sentimentality. There is something particularly pleasing about this poem's hero, McAllister, and his success as a dancer and as a "figure of a man" at the court of England. In the most cosmopolitan pubs of cities like Glasgow or Edinburgh, if the poem is mentioned, someone will immediately straighten up, stretch out his glass and solemnly begin to recite,

"Clansmen, the peats are burnin' bright . . ."

COMMON RIDING

Band 8. The Common Riding. 1'45"

Tom Scott and Jimmy Scott - voices.

Band 9. "I LIKE OLD HAWICK THE BEST" - 1'30"
A Common Riding song.

Nan Scott - voice. Recorded at Hawick, Roxburghshire, August 20, 1960.

As Tom and Jimmy Scott explain, the Common Riding is a yearly ceremony of considerable importance in the large Border communities. Most of the Common Riding days are simply local "gala" days and are of fairly modern origin, especially in towns like Musselburgh, a small community outside of Edinburgh that has its Common Riding for a number of years. In Hawick and Selkirk, however, the ceremonies seem to be founded in customs which have lasted for hundreds of years. The music of all the Common Ridings seems to be quite modern, and all of it is sentimental in

the same way that Sandy Scott's recitation was sentimental. These are songs to be sung by the entire community and they are well known to the local people. As Tom Scott said,

"The night of the Common Riding you can hear them singing in the local all the way to the center of town."

The "local" is the local pub, and these songs certainly fill an important need for self expression in the last hour or so before the locals close up. Nan Scott, the wife of Jimmy Scott, is a cheerful young housewife who has lived in Hawick all her life. She remembered other Common Riding songs, "Bonnie Teviot Dale" and "Hawick - The Flower of the Borders", but "I Like Old Hawick The Best" seems to express this popular local music as well as any other song does.

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The recordings in Fifeshire were done by S. B. Charters; the recordings in Roxburghshire and Northumberland by S. B. Charters, with the assistance of A. R. Danberg.

Photos by S.B. Charters
and A.R. Danberg