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

Folkways Records FW 8776
NICKY TAMS
Jimmy Scott—voice
Strathpiper—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
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Tom Scott—voice
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Tom Scott—voice
THE NORTUMBRIAN SMALL PIPES
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NORTUMBRIAN AIR AND VARIATIONS
BORDER REELS
THE PIPES
SHEPHERD LADDIE
BLACKTHORN STICK
Tom Breckons—Northumbrian small pipes and voice
THE KIELDER HUNT
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THE COUNTRY FIDDLE
THE FLOWERS OF EDINBURGH (Reel)
DE’IL AMONG THE TAILORS (Reel)
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WALTZES
(Mist Covered Hills of Home, Bonnie Galloway, etc.)
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THE COMMON RIDING
Tom Scott and Jimmy Scott
I LIKE OLD HAWICK THE BEST (common riding song)
Nan Scott—voice

THE BORDERS

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 feet, 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 grisly 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 town 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 townpeople 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.

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

"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.

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 twine, I can cheat them wi’ their skin, But I wish the cauld east wind would never blow.

When the winter time is here for their lives I sometimes fear, To some sheltered nook my flocks I’ll gently call. Or when I’ve done my work, let the night be ere I go, With a swaggerin’ pace I’ll hie myself awa’.

In the lambin’ time, I vot, I vot, 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.

I can cut or mark or spean, I can drive them to the drive. I can cut the corn and bin it all, That will stand the autumn winds when houses fa’.

And when I’ve done my work, let the night be ere I see 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’.

Now my neighbor hearts beware, when ye gan to show or fair, The fiery liquor never taste a’ ye. If you’re dreuchlie2 thole awa’ till yer ain braw hills you see And the bonnie bubblin’ streams will quail4 it all.

(Irvine: 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 characteristics 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 Combie, 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 Kelty. From the windows of the house the land slopes away toward the Pithk 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 Dunfermline. Jimmy Scott, who sang "Nockie Tams", is Sandy’s older brother. Will Scott, himself, has left his family with a strong musical heritage which they are carrying on with considerable talent and enthusiasm.

A STILE IN THE SHEEP MEADOWS, ROXBURGHSHIRE.

Band 4. Jig - "FIRST OF MAY" 1'10"
Rob Bobbirk - 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 see awa’, Freq 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 men 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 our friends stood ’round the coach, their hearts were broke in twain.

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 from 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'er we'll meet by Clyde's clear stream, nor by the Broomielaw.
For I must leave the hills and dales of Caledonia.

Oh, let us chance to meet again, I hope 'twill be above,
Where hallelujas will be sung to Him who reigns in love.
Na earthy judge will judge us then, but He who rules us.
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

Tom Scott - voice.

Band 7. "BONNIE JEANIE SHAW"

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 so braw,
And I'll wand' back to Scotland and my bonnie Jeanie 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 Jeanie 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 Jeanie Shaw.

Repeat second verse.

THE NORTHERN SMALLPIES


Band 9. NORTHERN AIR AND VARIATIONS

Band 10. BORDER REELS

Band 11. The Pipes.

Band 12. "SHEPHERD LADDIE"

Band 13. "BLACKTHORN STICK"

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

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 Northumberland. It is only within recent times, in fact, that the highland pipe has become universal throughout Scotland. 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 bagpipe 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 engravings which Hogarth did for a new edition of Samuel Butler's EARLYBAS in 1726 the largest of the drawings, depicting Bollibrook's unsuccessful encounter with the village "rough music" procession, includes a bagpipe player in the center foreground. Butler's description of the instrument's sound may help to explain the decline of the bagpipe in popularity.

BRECKONS, PLAYING THE NORTHEM SMLLPipes.

"Then Bagpipes of the loudest Drones
With snuffling broken-wind tones,
Whose blasts of Air in Pockets shot,
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 Northumberland 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
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. 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 Northumbrian 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 1705 by Francis Peacock, giving the instrument a musical repertoire almost as large as that of the highland pipe, excepting, of course, the piobhach 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 unbraided 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 be tuned 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 piobhac. 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 retuned 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 pipes 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 rim shapes of the Cheviot Hills, perpetually cloud hung. It was across the valleys and small clumps of forest in this lonely country that the Border riders 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 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.

**THE FIELDS OF SELKIRKSHIRE.**

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**SID E TWO**

**Band 1. "THE KIELDER HUNT"**


*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 would grew,1 W1 wiry terrier gane and keen and fox-bound fleet and true.*

**CHORUS:**

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

Hark away.

There was Houdy frae Emesthough, there was Royal frae Bakehillinn,

There were hounds frae Red and Kilderhead and Ruby by the Linn,

They were bounds of fame frae Irthlingside, they try baith moss and crag.

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1. Addendum: If "money a guide would grew," is not a traditional phrase, it is an old English expression meaning "to earn a living."
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 sportsmen from a wide area who come to run their dogs in large field trials.

**THE COUNTRY FIDDLER**

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

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

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

Band 5. Hornpipe - "HARVEST HOME" 1'35"

Band 6. "THE TINKER'S WEDDIN'" 3'35"

**A SHELTER IN THE BORDER COUNTRY.**

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.

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**Glossary:**

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

Assistance in transcription from Hamish Henderson.

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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 warst 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 doo, ma day, der ma doo ma daddy, O. Der ma doo, ma doo, ma day, hoora for the tinker's weddin', O. The bridegroom was wild Norman Scott, wha thrice had broke the nuptial knot, And yence was sentenced to be shot, for breech o' martial order, O. His gleason was Madge McKell, a speawife match for Nick Hi'sel, Wi' glamor and cantrip, charm and spell, she frightened baith o' the Border, O.

**CHORUS:**

The pipes and fiddler played the grace, to set their gabs a-sterrin', O. Wong beef and mutton, pork and veal, 'gong paunchees, pluck, and fresh cowheel, Fat haggis and a cauler jeel, the clatter wa' carerin', O.
A BORDER FARMYARD.

(Chorus)

Fresh salmon newly taen in Tweed, saut ling and cod o' Shetland breed.
They worried till kites were like to screeed, 'lil 'mang flagons and flaggs o' gravy, 0. There was raisin, kail, and sweet milk saps, and ewe milk cheese in vangae and flapes.13 And they rubbed their guts 'mjd scabs and alaps, richt many a cadger's cavey, 0.14

(Chorus)

The drink flew round in wild galore and soon upraised a hideous roar, But Comus ne'er a queerer core, saw seated round his table, 0. 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, 0.

(Chorus)

Now they drink it down before their drouth, and vexed be many a maw and mouth, It damped the fire o' age and youth, and every breast did saadden, 0. 'Til three stout loons flow o'er the fell at risk o' life their drouth to quell, And robbin' a neighborin' smuggler's still, to carry on the weddin', 0.

(Chorus)

With thunderous shouts they hailed them back, to break the barrels they were na' slack, While the fiddler's plane tree leg they brak for playing "Farewell to Whiskey", 0. Delerium seized the prodigious throng, the bagpipes in the fire they flung, And they wrangled and tangled among the throng, the drink played siccan a pliskey, 0.

(Chorus)

Now the sun fell laich o'er Solovay's banks, while on they played their roughsome pranks, And the stalwart shadows o' their shanks, wide o'er the muir was spreadin', 0. 'Til heads and thaws among the whins they fell wi' broken brown and shins, And sair cast tame filled many skins, at the close of the Tinker's weddin', 0.

(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
8. suggested meaning: mouths watering.
9. considerable noise.
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

The Statue to the "Boys of Hawick", 1514.

This very popular bothy 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.


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 village complete. There is something particularly pleasing about this village.

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.

Ham Scott - voices. 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 own long Community 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. Sandy 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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Photos by S.B. Charters and A.R. Danberg.