

'Abbotsford Collection of Border Ballads': Sophia Scott's Manuscript Book with Airs

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William Macmath was one of Child's most important correspondents in the search for Scottish ballads: Child makes frequent references to his help in *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. Macmath kept a complete record of this correspondence, and William Montgomerie recently paid tribute to his work in an article published in 1963. In his study of Macmath's letters Montgomerie found references to the manuscript volume which is the subject of this present article; he listed it in his *Bibliography of the Scottish Ballad Manuscripts* (1966:6), and later was the first scholar to see the book at Abbotsford.

It is unnecessary here to repeat the full account of Macmath's attempts to gain access to Scott's manuscripts at Abbotsford (Montgomerie 1963:93-8). Father Forbes-Leith eventually arranged for his first visit in 1890: Macmath wrote, of this visit, 'the Reverend Father is producing the chief treasures by degrees from some repository in the private part of the mansion which no ordinary mortal is allowed to enter'. A second visit in 1891 left him still unsatisfied: Father Forbes-Leith 'had spoken of a small volume' (also referred to as 'a red morocco volume') 'containing the songs which were sung in Sir Walter's family but had no idea where it was. *Macmath had expected to find something of the kind from what Lockhart said in his edition of the Minstrelsy as to the tunes* [my italics]. Ultimately he wrote to Fr. Forbes-Leith about the red morocco volume. He got the informal answer that the family did not wish that volume published' (*op. cit.*:96-8). As will be seen, Macmath and Child had no inkling of the size of the volume.

Although Macmath saw a number of manuscripts at Abbotsford he did not succeed in gaining access to the red morocco book but he was the first to establish its existence and to lay the trail which leads to this the first introductory account of it.

Some years ago Dr Emily Lyle was able to study this manuscript: impressed by its musical content she suggested that I should look at it. Mrs Patricia Maxwell-Scott not only agreed to my request to see it but also kindly lent the book, first to the National Library of Scotland and later to Edinburgh University Library, and subsequently granted permission for the entire contents to be photo-copied. These photographs are in the archives of the School of Scottish Studies.

Miss Jean Maxwell-Scott has told me that some of the songs which Sophia, Scott's daughter, copied into the book were probably taken from separate copies and sheets

which would be used in family music-making. J. G. Lockhart, Sophia's husband, later had it bound for their daughter Charlotte, and she and her husband J. R. Hope brought it with them when they came to live at Abbotsford. It has been there ever since among the family possessions, and was known as 'the Red Book'.

The compilers of this collection of ballads would have agreed with Bertrand H. Bronson that a ballad is not a ballad when it has no tune (Bronson 1959:1. ix), for each of its 125 ballads is accompanied by a tune, with simple pianoforte accompaniment. The words and music were all written out by hand, for the most part during the eighteen years or so before the death in 1837 of Sophia Lockhart; some of the later entries may have been added after her death and before about 1850. Since the handwritings show that at least five people wrote in the book it may be interesting to look at the background to it, and particularly at the attitudes to music of the members of Scott's family during this period, and of certain musical friends of the family.

Scott himself considered that his musical ear was 'imperfect' but added that 'the airs of our native country . . . always have made the most pleasing impression on me' (Anderson 1972:29). Alexander Campbell, who had been set to teach music to the young Walter, 'would never allow that I had a bad ear; but contended, that if I did not understand music, it was because I did not choose to learn it' (Lockhart 1902:1. 44 n.). Coming from so stern and impatient a teacher of music as Campbell was known to be (*op. cit.*:44 n.) this remark should be taken seriously and not dismissed as flattery. (Years later, in his preface to *Albyn's Anthology*, Campbell acknowledged that Scott, 'whom the author may emphatically call *Friend*', had generously offered his assistance in producing this 'great National Repository' of Scottish music and poetry—Campbell 1818:ix). 'I have often wondered if I have a taste for music or no', wrote Scott in his *Journal*. 'My ear appears to me as dull as my voice is incapable of musical expression, and yet I feel the utmost pleasure in any such music as I can comprehend, learnt pieces always excepted' (Anderson 1972:335). He goes on to quote Jeremy in Congreve's 'Love for Love': 'I have a reasonable good ear for a jig but your solos and sonatas give me the spleen'.

This quotation calls to mind a famous essay by Scott's contemporary, Charles Lamb, in which he describes his misery in listening to Italian opera, oratorio, and 'above all, those insufferable concertos'; although he suspects he has 'an undeveloped faculty for music' he complains of 'the measured malice of music' and of his 'inaptitude to thrid the maze; like an unskilled eye painfully poring over hieroglyphics' (Lamb 1906:46). The European literary mind is very different from the musical mind as defined by western European art-music, in which harmony and polyphony have been highly developed, but there are other kinds of music and consequently there are other musical parameters. Scott's remark concerning Alex^r (Sandie) Ballantyne's violin playing is most illuminating: 'I do not understand or care about fine music but there is something in his violin which goes to the very heart' (Anderson 1972:334). Clearly he liked melody, and the less confused by harmonic accompaniment, I suspect, the better

he liked it. He loved singing—but it had to be simple singing: writing of an occasion when he 'expected to see Made. Caradori . . . sing "Jock o' Hazeldean",' he says, 'I wrote the song for Sophia and I find my friends here [*i.e.* Edinburgh] still prefer her to the foreign syren' (*op. cit.*: 569). Add to this two facts: that most of the art-music played in Scotland at that time was German- or Italian-dominated, and that Scott was deeply immersed in the traditional lore and culture of his native country—and we may decide that it is surely time to stop thinking of this man as unmusical.

Of his daughter Sophia he wrote, 'she is quite conscious of the limited range of her musical talents and never makes them common or produces them out of place—a rare virtue' (*op. cit.*: 17). She and her sister Anne learned to play the harp (their instrument is still at Abbotsford) and Hogg recalled of Sophia ' . . . she loved her father so . . . I shall never forget the looks of affection that she would throw up to him as he stood leaning on his crutch and hanging over her harp as she chaunted to him his favourite old Border Ballads or his own wild Highland gatherings' (Hogg 1972:125).

Anne, his younger daughter, was also a musician. Scott wrote in his diary, 1825: 'Anne is practising Scots songs, which I take as a kind compliment to my own taste, as hers leads her chiefly to foreign music. I think the good girl sees that I want and must miss her sister's peculiar talent in singing the airs of our native country . . .' (Lockhart 1902:IV. 400).

Sophia had married J. G. Lockhart in 1820; his biographer Marion Lochhead says, of their Edinburgh days,

The musical zenith may have passed with the great days of St. Cecilia's Hall (which was now no longer a concert hall) but it was still a musical society and a fair standard of musical accomplishment, both in singing and in harp or piano-playing, was expected of a well-educated woman. Henry Mackenzie recalled . . . unaccompanied singing by the ladies was the custom . . . They sang as they sat round the fire, nearly always the old Scots songs. He remembered too the progress or procession of instruments in fashion: first the guitar, then the lute, though it had no long vogue, then the harp; followed by the key-instruments, the spinet and pianoforte (Lochhead 1954:90).

As we shall see, the ballad-book which is our subject was almost exclusively compiled by women. Of Lockhart's own musical abilities or leanings we know little, but his great fondness for children is well attested and it is unlikely that their daughter Charlotte would have become the fine singer she was without paternal as well as maternal encouragement.

In 1847 Charlotte married J. R. Hope, a lawyer and parliamentary barrister ('he was, Mr. Gladstone declared, the most winning person of his day'—Lockhart 1902:v. 486). Robert Ornsby wrote of Charlotte, 'Without marked accomplishments, unless [*sic*] that of singing most sweetly, with a good taste and natural power that were always evident, she had a passion for books, about which, however, she was particularly silent, as she dreaded anything like pretensions to literature' (Ornsby 1884:II. 134-5).

The music-making in Scott's family circle was led by his two daughters, but the close friendship of another highly creative family (two of whose handwritings appear in the Red Book) seems to have contributed greatly both to their musical endeavours and to their social life. In his diary for August 1814, Scott writes of a visit to Torloisk on Loch Tua, Mull, 'the seat of my valued friend, Mrs MacLean Clephane, and her accomplished daughters' (Lockhart 1902:II. 490). Of these three daughters, Margaret Douglas, the eldest, married Lord Compton (later Marquis of Northampton) on 24 July 1815, shortly after the battle of Waterloo. She and her sisters had chosen Scott for their guardian, 'and on him accordingly developed the chief care of the arrangements on this occasion' (and in fact this was the only reason he was still in Scotland. Lockhart writes, 'That he should have been among the first civilians who hurried over to see the field at Waterloo, and hear English bugles sound about the walls of Paris, could have surprised none who knew the lively concern he had always taken in the military efforts of his countrymen'. Scott left Edinburgh for his journey to Waterloo on 27 July—*op. cit.*:III. 39–42). Lockhart refers to Margaret, a year before her marriage, as 'Another friend'—(*i.e. of Scott*)—'and he had, I think, none more dear . . .' (*op. cit.*:II. 532).

In 1827 Scott met the Clephanes in Glasgow, and wrote in his Journal 'After dinner the ladies sung, particularly Anna Jane who has more taste and talent of every kind than half the people going with great reputations on their backs' (Anderson 1972:348). Lockhart wrote that 'the others [*i.e.* Anna and Wilimina] had much of the same tastes and accomplishments which so highly distinguished the late Lady Northampton' (she had died, near Naples, in 1830), 'and Scott delighted especially in their proficiency in the poetry and music of their native isles' (Lockhart 1902:III. 250).

The girls seem to have been great friends: Sophia wrote to Lockhart, shortly before their marriage, 'I cannot think how we missed seeing you, as Anne, Miss Clephane and myself walked three times round the Calton Hill' (Lochhead 1954:72). And in a letter from Scott to his son (Cornet W. Scott, 18th Hussars, Cork) in 1819, we read of the visit of Mrs Maclean Clephane and her two unmarried daughters to Abbotsford: 'Your sisters seem to be very fond of the young ladies, and I am glad of it, for they will see that a great deal of accomplishment and information may be completely reconciled with liveliness, fun, good-humour and good breeding' (Lockhart 1902:III. 384).

So much for the general background and the persons involved in this collection of ballads and tunes: a description of the book itself is now due. It is a very beautiful manuscript, bound in red morocco with gold leaf ornamentation on the outer covers: it is 11½ inches broad by 9½ inches deep, and is slightly more than 1½ inches in thickness. The book is closed with a handsome brass clasp and lock, and the spine has the title MANUSCRIPT BALLADS with, underneath, the initials C.H.J.H. [for Charlotte Harriet Jane Hope]. The reverse sides of the outer covers are in tan-coloured morocco with much more highly ornate gold leaf decoration, and the front reverse cover has in addition the name MRS. JAMES ROBERT HOPE also in gold. These inside covers may have been the original binding, which would have been removed from the spine when the volume

was re-bound. The red leather of the outside cover is lapped over on to the inside, and joins the tan leather $\frac{3}{8}$ inch from the edge. Next to the outside covers, at both ends of the book, are the fly-leaves: these are thicker than the other pages and the upper sides have a shiny, pale yellow surface covered with a gold star-shaped pattern.

The next page in the front of the book is pale blue on both sides, and the reverse side has a charming water-colour vignette stuck on to it. This depicts a man on horseback pointing into the distance and speaking to a girl (? in boys' clothing) who is seated by a hillside path; two hounds are in the background and a bird is flying overhead. There is no clue as yet to the title of the painting, but it is signed, in the lower righthand corner and over the paint, 'W. Allan fecit 1821'. Sir William Allan was a distinguished painter and a friend of Sir Walter's; and the painting may very probably depict a scene from a ballad.

Facing it, on the right, is another pale blue page with the title

ABBOTSFORD COLLECTION
of
BORDER BALLADS

in gold lettering. There are several blank pages before page 1 of the text. The first ballad is set out with words on the left (p. 1), music on the right (p. 2), while for the next ballad the order is reversed: music on the left (p. 3), and the corresponding verbal text on the right (p. 4)—and so on. The book has two parts: in the first (and longer) one the water-mark J. WHATMAN 1819 is on eight pages, and J. WHATMAN, TURKEY MILLS, 1819 on one; while in the second the watermark BASTED MILL 1823 is found on eight pages—thus proving that the first part could not have been written before 1819, nor the second before 1823. There are a number of blank pages at the end of part two, including several ruled for music notation.

In what follows I shall refer to this book as Sophia Scott's Manuscript, to distinguish it from the older and very much smaller Abbotsford Manuscript, 'Scottish Songs', referred to in Child v 'Ballad Airs' (The Abbotsford MS is described below, p. 98).

For each ballad, the words of the first verse—and occasionally the second as well—are written underneath the vocal line. Most of the accompaniments are simple and effective, confining the harmonies to the notes of the melody although there is a tendency for the sharp 7th to appear in minor tunes even when this note is flattened where it appears—if at all—in the melody. (The thick chords which appear for the left hand in many of the accompaniments would clearly be more suited to an early nineteenth-century pianoforte than to a modern instrument.) A few accompaniments are more complex (*e.g.* with broken chords) but these are usually for the composed tunes. Only one ballad, *The Burning of Frenndraught* (Child 196), has no tune, and this page—unnumbered, although incorrectly given as page 109 in the index to the first part—is interposed between pages 109 and 110. These two pages have the words and music for *Lady Frennet* (omitted from the index), which is the version of Child 196

called *Frennet Hall*. Child himself does not include this version, merely referring to it as 'the modern and extremely vapid ballad of "Frennet Hall"' (Child 1965:iv. 39); but Bronson includes it with a tune (Bronson 1966:III. 190) which is virtually the same as Sophia's Manuscript tune—which also fits *The Fire of Frenndraught* version given here—so we have one tune for two versions of the same ballad.

The first part of the book has 188 pages plus an index page at the end. The second part has no index: it has 4 pages at the beginning and 22 pages at the end which are unnumbered, while in between there are 50 numbered pages. Part one contains 65 Child ballads, including a few borderline cases, such as *Young Lochinvar*—by Scott but modelled on Child 221, *Katherine Jaffery*—and *Jock o' Hazeldean*, only one verse of which is traditional (Child 293),¹ and 26 other songs; part two has 13 Child and 21 others. The non-Child as well as the Child include: 40 from Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, about a quarter of which are partially different from Scott's versions; songs from longer poems by Scott (e.g. *The Imprisoned Huntsman* and *Allan-bane's Song*, both from *The Lady of the Lake*, and *Allan-a-dale* from *Rokeby*); and songs from Scott's novels including two appearances of *The Gallant Graemes*, with two different tunes, (one of which is referred to in *Old Mortality*—Scott 1901:37), also *Hie away* (song from *Waverley*) and *County Guy* from *Quentin Durward*.

The total for the whole book is 78 Child and 47 non-Child, making 125 ballads all of which have tunes. Fifteen of these tunes are stated to be by Lady Compton or Miss Maclean Clephane, and some traditional tunes have second strains² which may have been added (as Dean Christie did, in his *Traditional Ballad Airs*, 1876–81—Shuldham-Shaw and Lyle 1974:11); but the printed collections of Scottish folksong which already existed at that time would be known to Sophia and her friends and it is not impossible that she herself may have noted down tunes she heard sung by the country people around Abbotsford.

A closer examination of the verbal texts is not possible here. The compilers of the book often chose what they considered to be the most important verses of a long ballad, in order that the main outlines of the story could be contained within the compass of one page; they also altered freely many lines and phrases—chiefly it would seem in order to make the words fit in with the tune more easily, but also perhaps for poetic or 'romantic' reasons on occasion.

The words show five clearly distinct handwritings: the music shows four. In a number of instances the title is written in a different hand from the rest of the page. By far the largest number of pages are written by Sophia Lockhart (Plate II): her elegant, regular, somewhat angular handwriting appears on no fewer than 90 pages of words and on 70 pages of music mostly in the first part but including 8 verbal and 11 music pages in the second part (cf. N.L.S. ms. 1552, in the hand of Sophia Lockhart). The next two handwritings, in order of frequency, suggest at first the two younger Clephane sisters—Wilimina, the youngest, and Anna Jane, i.e. Miss MacLean Clephane (cf. N.L.S. ms. 894, in Clephane handwritings). The first of these two hands (Plate II) appears on

47 pages of part one—8 pages of words and 39 pages of music—and one's first guess is that it could be Wilimina's, since an example of handwriting which is hers beyond all doubt has not been found. Material in the second Clephane hand (Plate II) is found on 45 pages of part two, in almost equal proportion of word-pages to music-pages, and includes the phrase 'Air, ADC [Anna Douglas Clephane,]' in a monogram: *Air, ADC*

This monogram was used by Anna and can be seen, as written by her, in several of her letters (*cf.* N.L.S. MS 1552, in Anna Clephane's hand). The monogram in Sophia's manuscript resembles this very closely, and it seems unlikely that anyone else would use it—yet the *first* Clephane hand is more like Anna's as shown in her letters. The second Clephane hand, very flowing and legible, bears some resemblance to Mrs MacLean Clephane's (*cf.* N.L.S. MS. 934, in Mrs Clephane's hand), and she might have felt justified in using the monogram to describe Anna's authorship of a tune. Both these handwritings resemble those found in the xerox copies of the Torloisk Clephane family manuscripts (N.L.S. Acc. 6574), so it seems likely that Sophia, Anna and either Wilimina or Mrs Clephane worked at copying out this collection over the years (Anne Scott's handwriting does not appear). Lady Compton's contribution was probably the number of airs composed by her and possibly some accompaniments, but she may also have taken an active part in the compiling of the songs; her handwriting does not appear.

We cannot be as certain regarding the two Clephane handwritings as we can of the remaining two, which account for only four pages between them: the words of *Lady Maisery* (part one p. 17) are written by Lockhart (*cf.* N.L.S. MS. 820, in the hand of Lockhart), and the words and music of the last three pages of part two (*What's a' the steer Kimmer?* and *Shoul, shoul*—both with traditional tunes) by Charlotte (*cf.* N.L.S. MS. 2522, in the hand of Charlotte Lockhart).

It is, then, mainly Sophia's book, but her old friends the Clephanes contributed much to it (increasingly, towards the later part), and her husband and daughter a little. I came across a black-edged sheet of notepaper with Sophia's writing in the National Library of Scotland (N.L.S. MS. 893) containing a few ballad titles with remarks on both words and music, and a reference to 'my book', followed by a longer list headed 'Tunes and Ballads in my book and not in the *Minstrely*'. Twenty-three titles are listed, all of which *are* in Sophia's Manuscript but not in the *Minstrely*.

The exact determination of the music handwritings is more difficult, chiefly because there is no musical equivalent to a person's signature which settles the identity of the writer. The music-writing of the final three pages matches closely the word-writing by Charlotte—the same nib appears to be used, the style of both music and words is similar, and the title is by the same hand. We may make a very fair guess that the remaining music-hands are those of Sophia, of Anna, and of either Wilimina or Mrs Clephane.

I should like now to look at some of the musical 'finds' in Sophia's Manuscript, and have chosen two groups for consideration: (a) five tunes originally derived from

Mrs Anna Brown (see below), versions of which appear in Child v ('Ballad Airs from MS.') as from the source 'Abbotsford MS., "Scottish Songs" '; these five tunes have all re-appeared in Sophia's Manuscript, but in considerably changed and more singable forms. (b) Tunes for five Child ballads (one an appendix to a Child ballad) for which Bronson has no tunes at all.³

(a) *Five tunes derived from Mrs Brown*

These tunes are for *The Cruel Sister*, *Clerk Colvin*, *Brown Robin*, *John the Scott* and *Lady Elspat*.

David C. Fowler (1968:294-331), William Montgomerie (1969:60-75) and David Buchan (1972:62-73) have all given accounts of the three principal manuscripts which contain the ballads of Mrs Anna Gordon Brown (1747-1810). The only one of the three which includes tunes as well as words is the second, *i.e.* the fifteen ballads in William Tytler's Brown Manuscript of 1783, which was lent to Scott in 1795 and in 1800, *i.e.* before his *Minstrelsy* was published (Buchan 1972:70). (Later this manuscript was lost, but fortunately Joseph Ritson had copied it, including the music; this copy, which is at Harvard, was used by Bronson. The original manuscript was later found and is now at Aldourie.) It would seem that Scott himself copied at least some of the ballads from Wm. Tytler's Manuscript, 'with changes' (Montgomerie 1969:71), and seven of these, plus tunes, are in the Abbotsford Library as 'Scottish Songs', no. 3 (Child 1965:iv. 387 n).


Eight pieces are missing, torn out or not copied . . . That the seven ballads copied were from Wm. Tytler's Brown MS. is confirmed by the accompanying airs. . . . In *Willie of Douglasdale* . . . lines have been ruled for music, but no music has been copied. In *Lady Maiserie* . . . the leaf with music has been torn out. In the case of *Lady Elspat* . . . Scott copied by mistake the air of *King Henry*, the next ballad in the MS. copy. No ballads are included in both WS II [the Abbotsford MS.] and the *Minstrelsy*. Scott probably tore out . . . the ballads he intended to print (Montgomerie 1969:71-2).

It is from this source that Child obtained the five tunes referred to, fresh versions of which are in Sophia's Manuscript, and it seems likely that Sophia's only source of Mrs Brown tunes was also this mutilated Abbotsford Manuscript.⁴

The word-pages for these five ballads are all in Sophia's handwriting; in the music-pages the words under the vocal line (and almost certainly the music too) are in the first Clephane hand, but the titles are written by Sophia.

Before comparing these versions of the tunes it is worth pointing out two facts concerning the Abbotsford Manuscript: firstly, the tunes in the original Wm. Tytler's Brown Manuscript had been noted down by Bob Scott, Mrs Brown's nephew, 'then a very young boy and *a mere novice in musick* . . . and he and I set to work but found the business so crabbed that in order to abridge our labours a little we selected what we thought the best of the Ballads whose tunes being added *in the best manner we could* were sent to your father . . .' (Buchan 1972:69-70; my italics). Secondly, a note in Sir

Erlington



Erlington had a fair daughter that the wind bore in great pain

The Outlaw Murray



Whisker's a fair youth but it grows sunny a little too thin but a bird that's in

The Laidley Worm



The King is gone from Bamborough castle along may the King's mourn long may she

PLATE II Title and first line of three songs from Sophia Scott's Manuscript, showing the three principal handwritings: *Erlington*, Sophia Scott's writing; *The Outlaw Murray*, probably Anna Jane Douglas MacLean Clephane's; *The Laidley Worm*, possibly either Mrs MacLean Clephane's or Wilimina MacLean Clephane's.

Brown Robin.

The king but and his nobles a were drinking at the wine. The king but and his
nobles a, were drinking at the wine And he and has same but his a laugh.
to To wait on them at dinner

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the song "Brown Robin". It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The first system contains the lyrics "The king but and his nobles a were drinking at the wine. The king but and his". The second system contains "nobles a, were drinking at the wine And he and has same but his a laugh.". The third system contains "to To wait on them at dinner". The musical notation includes treble clefs, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The handwriting is in ink on aged paper.

PLATE III *Brown Robin*. Part of a page from Sophia Scott's Manuscript (reduced). The title is written in her hand, and the words and music are probably in that of Anna Jane Clephane.

Walter's own hand, on folio 11 of the Abbotsford Manuscript, which includes this sentence: 'The Music is copied as exactly as possible but as I do not know the value of a single note I am no judge of its merit, which however I suspect is not great' (Montgomerie 1969:72).

One has only to glance at the five airs in Child v (pp. 411-24) to see that the 'mere novice' has produced five quite unsatisfactory tunes: they were probably beyond his powers of transcription. Two of them—Child 10 and Child 97A—are poor tunes in themselves; Child 99A and Child 247A are awkward rhythmically, and only Child 42A is acceptable as it stands. But not one of these five airs fits the words they accompany, including Child 247A which is really the tune for *King Henry* (Child 32) but which does not fit these words either. Montgomerie, in the article just quoted, also says, 'as a ballad and song MS . . . [it] can be classified only as an imperfect transcript of WT-B [Wm Tytler's Brown], incomplete and inaccurate'.

Let us now look at these five tunes as they appear in Sophia's Manuscript (Plate III and Figs. 1-4). All are unmistakably versions of those given in Child v (pp. 411-24) as from the Abbotsford Manuscript, but deftly transformed into pleasant, singable melodies all of which fit the words. The first three (figs. 1, 2; Plate III) change the time from 3/4 to 4/4 (common time is usually easier for ballad metres). In *The Cruel Sister*, Child 10, (fig. 1) the alignment of the words is not perfect in the last four bars of refrain but the intention is clear, and the grace-note above 'upon' is probably intended for the first syllable of that word. *Clerk Colvin*, Child 42A (Fig. 2) simply ignores the original repeat marks and so has no need of Bronson's conjecturally-added refrain; my only criticism of this tune is that the last note of bar 2, the quaver on G (for "they"), would have been better on the D below, thus matching the up-beat which opens the tune. *Brown Robin*, Child 97A, (Plate III) is little short of brilliant in its transformation, keeping the essential downward leaps of bars 6 and 11, and giving a credible time-structure to the whole.

There lived twa sisters in a bower Edinbro' Edinbro' There lived twa sisters in a bower

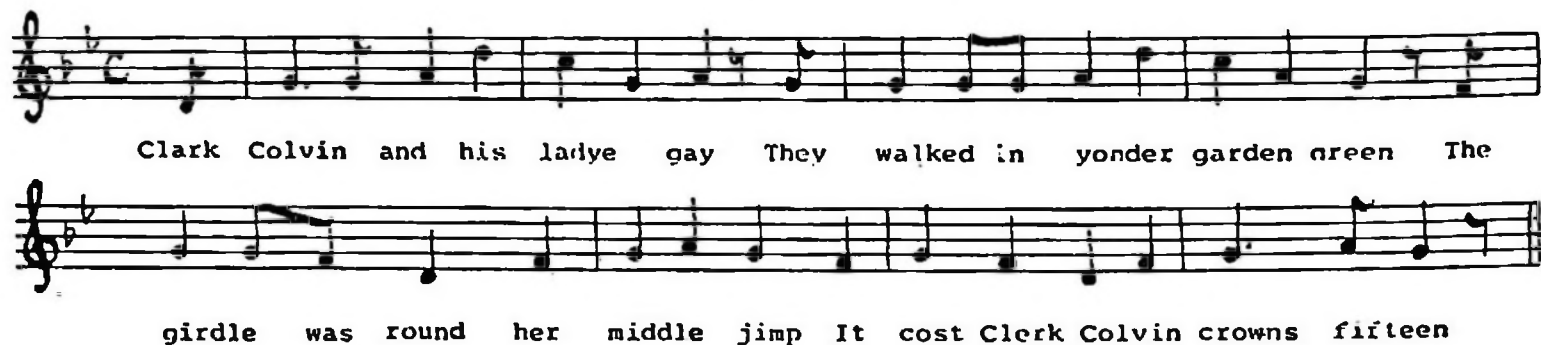
Stirling for aye There lived twa sisters in a bower There came a knight to be their wooer

Bonnie Saint Johnstone's stands upon Tay.

FIG. 1 *The Cruel Sister*

John the Scott, Child 99A, (Fig. 3) stays in 3/4 time but adds some dotted rhythms which lend a somewhat mazurka-like flavour, and the awkward emphasis on the

sharp 7th note of the scale is avoided by a simple downward leap of an octave from the 6th of the scale (bar 3), which contrasts nicely with the preceding two bars of rising melody. For *Lady Elspat*, Child 247A, Sophia's Manuscript (Fig. 4) keeps the tune—albeit the wrong tune—but does infinitely better than Spalding's 'revised version' which follows in Child v. Spalding's clumsy attempt to fit in the words calls to mind the questions in certain Grades of Associated Board music-theory examinations today,



Clark Colvin and his ladye gay They walked in yonder garden green The
girdle was round her middle jimp It cost Clerk Colvin crowns fifteen

FIG. 2 *Clerk Colvin*


John the Scott was as brave a knight as ever shook a spear And
he's awa' to fair England The King's braid banner to bear..

FIG. 3 *John the Scott*


How brent is your brow my Lady Elspat How gowden yellow is your hair ^{2nd Of Verse}
a' the maidens in fair Scotland There's none like Laay Elspat fair. Per-
form your vows my sweet William she said The vows ye hae sworn unto me And
at the back o' my mother's castle This night I will surely meet wi' thee.

FIG. 4 *Lady Elspat*

which start 'What is wrong with the setting of these words?' It certainly shows 'violent handling' of the words, as Bronson points out in his notes to Child 32.

But now, Sophia's Manuscript has taken this same 'wrong' tune, doubled the note-lengths so that it accommodates four lines of words instead of only two, paid attention to speech-rhythms chiefly by giving the accented notes to those syllables which would be accented when the words are *spoken*, and improved the melodic shape by substituting the 2nd instead of the (minor) 3rd of the scale in bars 2, 6 and 7—and, hey presto, we have a perfectly good tune! And it fits the words.

It is interesting to note that Bronson's 'conjectural readings' for the first three ballads above (Child 10C(79), 42A and 97A) are all quite difficult to sing—in particular his Child 10 bars 1–2 and 5–6. His was of course a scholar's approach: in some ways he has treated the original Abbotsford Manuscript tunes (which as we have seen were unsatisfactory) with more respect than Sophia's Manuscript versions have—but a song after all is for singing. Sophia and her friends were not scholars but they were Scottish singers with an intimate knowledge of the traditional Scottish idiom: this makes all the difference to their treatment of the tunes.

(b) *Five entirely new tunes*

Perhaps the most exciting discovery in this manuscript, however, has been airs for five Child ballads for which Bronson has no tune: *Erlington*, *Hobbie Noble*, *Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead*, *The Outlaw Murray* and *The Laidley Worm* (Figs. 5–9). They may not necessarily be new tunes *per se*, but they have not hitherto been found in association with these words.⁵ Three of these texts are in Sophia's hand, and the others are respectively in the two Clephane hands: this applies to both word-pages and music-pages, and the music is almost certainly by the same hand as the words.

Erlington had a fair daughter I wot ne weird her in great sin For
 he has biggit a bigly bower And a' to put that ladye in.

FIG. 5 *Erlington*

Erlington (Child 8A) first appeared in the *Minstrelsy*—with text formed 'from the collation of two copies obtained by recitation', says Child in his notes on it. Sophia's Manuscript version (see Fig. 5 and Plate II) is almost identical with that in the *Minstrelsy* (where verse 17 has only two lines), but omits verses 2, 6, 7, 9, 15 and the last verse 18. Several changes have again been made in the words: e.g. verse 12 (*Minstrelsy*) has for line 2 'People wad think I war gane mad', while in Sophia's we find 'The folk wad

think I were gane mad'—which fits the tune more amicably. Similarly with 'biggit' instead of 'built' in verse 1. Since this first verse—which is written under the tune—starts on an accented word, the upbeat in other verses might be the two quavers given (B flat and C) for the first word, 'For', of line 3: these two quavers in fact open the piano accompaniment and lead straight into 'Erlington' as shown. It is a single strain tune, form ABAC; the time-signature is omitted but it is a pleasant, straightforward common-time melody in the Ionian mode (plagal).

Foul fa' the breast first treason bred in That Liddisdale may weel now say For
there there was baith meat and drink And corn unto our steeds so gay. Hey uiddly ding dw diddle.

FIG. 6 *Hobbie Noble*

It fell about the Martinmas tide When our bodersteeds get corn and hay The captain o' Bewcastle is
down to ride And he's o'er to Eviotdale to drive a prey And when they came to the fair Dodhead Right
hastily they clamb the peal They losed the kye out ane & a' And ranshakled the house right weel.

FIG. 7 *Jamie Telfer*

Ettrick forest's a fair forest In it grows many a æemlie tree There's hart & hind And
dae & rae And of all wild beastis great plentie. Word is gane to our noble king In
Edinborow where he lay That there's an outlaw in Ettrick forest counted him nought nor his countrie gay.

FIG. 8 *The Outlaw Murray*

FIG. 9a *The Laidley Worm* (from Stokoe and Reay)

The king is gone from Banborough castle Long may the Princess mourn Long may she stand on the
castle wall, Looking for his return. She has knotted the keys upon a string And
with her she has them ta'en She has cast them ower her left shoulder And to the gate she is gone,

FIG. 9b *The Laidley Worm* (Sophia Scott's MS)

Since I hope it may be possible to publish a selection of the most interesting and unique items in this manuscript at some time in the future, I shall leave until then a more detailed analysis of the other four new tunes and state only the main points here.

Hobbie Noble (Fig. 6) is Child 189, the only version known, one source of which (Caw's 'Poetical Museum') Child states was 'undoubtedly Scott's source for his *Minstrely*'; the tune is again single-strain and the dotted rhythm suggests a strathspey kinship.

Child 190 gives only one version for *Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead*, and it is again from the *Minstrely*, as is Sophia's version (see Fig. 7). Among those verses left out here are verses 26-7, which Willie Scott of Hawick recorded to a tune quite different from this in the recent 'Muckle Sangs' disc (Scottish Tradition 1975), and too late for inclusion in Bronson's volume IV *Addenda*. Sophia's note after the music states: 'The first part forms the whole of the ancient strain the second part added by Miss M. C.' (i.e. Anna MacLean Clephane). The first strain is hexatonic, the seventh note of the scale appearing only in the second strain.

The Outlaw Murray (Child 305A, also in the *Minstrely*) is in the first Clephane hand (see Plate II and Fig. 8). The time is 6/8, and although a two-strain melody, it is so clearly a dance-tune that the second strain may at some time have been added by an instrumentalist in order to fit the length of a dance form (it may belong to the *Keel Row* tune family). One feels the tempo must have been at least partly slowed down in order to accommodate the words, but a good singer could produce a wonderfully rousing

performance from this almost obsessively repetitive tune of limited range and small intervallic steps.

The last example, *The Laidley Worm* (see Plate II and Fig. 9b) is in the second Clephane hand, the most graceful and decorative of the five. The full title should be *The Laidley Worm of Spindleston Heughs*, and it is not in the *Minstrelsy*; it is given by Child as an Appendix to no 34, *Kemp Owyne*, which is in the *Minstrelsy*. Bronson gives one tune for Child 34 (from Mrs Brown) but none for this Appendix ballad; however a tune (Fig. 9a) for a similar version of the verbal text may be found in John Stokoe's collection (Stokoe 1893: 180), and I have placed Sophia's tune underneath for comparison, and as an interesting example of variation and enlargement. The single-strain tune is almost certainly the older. If the two halves of this tune are called A and B, then Sophia's tune consists of A¹ C A¹¹ B¹ 6,—which means that instead of simply adding a second strain to the first, the new material is added in the middle section and flanked by more familiar material on either side. The variant elements are intriguing: the sharp third (which does not recur later in the tune) in bars 1–2 provides an exhilarating start; the upward leap of a fifth in bar 3, repeated a half-beat earlier in bar 11, is more dramatic than the relatively step-wise ascent in the older tune's bar 3. It could also be held that the 'feminine ending' of bars 4 and 12 is less so, and that there is a kind of stark power in the plainness of the first tune, with its three-fold repetitions of the tonic and dominant notes (the A and the E).

Whoever may have been responsible for the transformation of this tune which we find in Sophia's Manuscript, it is in my view a skilful and musical transformation. This musical sensitivity is a hallmark of the whole collection.

Appendix

List of Contents of Sophia Scott's Manuscript

(First part)

A weary lot is thine	Burd Ellen
Adam o' Gordon	Busk ye, busk ye
Alice Brand	
Allan-a-dale	Clerk Colvin
Annan Water	Count Albert & fair Rosalie
Archie o' Ca'field	
Armstrong's goodnight	Dick o' the Cow
Auld Maitland	
	Earl Bothwell's wife
Barbara Allan	Earl Richard
Blow, blow thou northern wind	Eh, quo' the Tod
Brignal Banks	Erlington
Brown Adam	
Brown Robin	Fause Foodrage
	Fair Helen of Kirkconnell

Gill Morice Gilderoy	Roderigh mhic Alpain dubh Rosabelle
Hie away Hobbie Noble Hughie the Graeme	Saw ye my father She sat her down below a thorn Sir Patrick Spens
Jamie Telfer Jock o' Hazeldean Jock o' the Side John the little Scott Johnie Armstrong Johnie Faa' Johnie o' Breadislee	Tamlane The Baron of Brackley The battle of Bothwell brigg The Battle of Otterbourne The bonnie Earl of Murray The bonnie house of Airlic The bonnie wee crowdin' dow The Broomfield hill The burning of Fren draught The Cavalier The cruel sister The Douglas Tragedy The dowie dens o' Yarrow The gallant Graemes The gay goss-hawk The Jew's daughter The Lass of Lochroyan The Lochmaben Harper The Lord Maxwell's goodnight The outlaw Murray The twa Corbics The welcome of the lily flower The wife of Usher's well There was a ladye lived in the west There were three knights True Thomas
Killiecrankie Kinmont Willie	
Lady Alice Lady Elspat [Lady Frennet] Lady Maiserey Lady Mary Anne Lay of the imprisoned huntsman Lochinvar Lord Ingram Lord Ronald Lord Ronald's coronach Lord Thomas & fair Annie Lord Thomas & fair Annet	
Montrose's lines	
O tell me how to woo thee	Waly waly We were sisters and we were seven William's ghost
Parley a dixi a dominie	
Raid of the Reidswire Rob Roy	Young Beauchamp Young Waters

(Second part)

Allan-bane's Song An old Factor's new Garland Archie of Ca'field	Bonnie Dundee County Guy, from Quentin Durward
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Glee for 3 voices, from Redgauntlet	The Fisherman's Second Song in the Beacon
Lammikin	The Gallant Graemes
Leczie Lindsay	The Harlaw, from the Antiquary
May Colvin	The King's visit
Mournful Melpomene	The Laidley Worm
My jo Janet	The Lifting of the Banner
Queen Elcanor	The Mermaiden
Rattling Roaring Willie	The Pirate's Farewell
Shoul, shoul	The Queen's Maries
Song, from Waverley	The Snow Ballad
The Death of Jane Seymour	The Tennis balls (English Ballad)
The Duke of Gordon had three daughters	The Welcome
The Fisherman's Ballad,	The widow of Wycombe
in Mrs. Baillie's play of the Beacon	Touch not the nettle
	What's a' the Steer, Kimmer?
	Young Essex

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NOTES

- 1 But see Zug, C., 1973: Scott's 'Jock of Hazeldeane', in *Journal of American Folklore* 86:152-60.
- 2 A single-strain tune fits the usual four-line ballad stanza; if a second strain is added, the next four lines are sung to this new part of the tune, instead of repeating the first strain. The result is a tune which is repeated for every eight lines of the ballad (or song).
- 3 There are many other items of interest, both verbal and musical, for future consideration, including a further twenty new tunes, *i.e.* different from any given by Bronson; and what appears to be a new

version of *Rare Willie Drowned in Yarrow* to the tune—and title—*Rattling Roaring Willie*, which twice includes the lines

‘And drink will be dear to Willie
When Sweet Milk gars him die’.

There is also a Glee for three voices from *Redgauntlet*, with music by Miss Clephane (see Scott 1906: 102; Scott's footnote to page 102 ends, 'The catch in the text has happily been set to music'—a reference no doubt to this setting).

- 4 None of the verbal texts is in the *Minstrelsy*, except for a somewhat different version of *The Cruel Sister* which has another refrain altogether (Scott 1902: III. 352). All the verbal texts show the numerous slight changes—and others not so slight—referred to earlier. Of the fifteen ballads in Wm. Tytler's Brown MS., and hence originally in the Abbotsford MS., five are not in Sophia's MS (Ch. 6, 32, 34—though 34 *Appendix, The Laidley Worm of Spindleston Heughs*, is present—101 and 103). Ten are in Sophia's: one can be discounted for present purposes since its air is by Lady Compton, and four (Ch. 5, 53—with 2 versions plus 2 tunes—65 and 98) all have tunes quite different from the Mrs Brown tunes which Bronson assigns them, from the Ritson-Tytler-Brown MS. That leaves only the five dealt with in some detail here (Ch. 10, 42, 97, 99 and 247). Sophia's tune for *Lady Maiserie* (Ch. 65) is quite different from Bronson's Mrs Brown air—presumably because this music page was torn out of the Abbotsford MS.
- 5 These tunes have not as yet been found in the Greig-Duncan manuscripts, which Patrick Shuldham-Shaw is editing for publication. During the early part of this century, Gavin Greig and J. B. Duncan collected some thousands of folksongs in the Aberdeenshire area: so far only a few, mainly ballads of the Child canon, have been published. These manuscripts, normally kept in Aberdeen University Library, are temporarily in Edinburgh University Library while they are being edited.
- 6 A^I denotes one variant of A, and A^{II} another variant of A.

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