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**Our Ancient National Airs:  
Scottish Song Collecting c.1760-1888**

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
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## Abstract

This thesis explores the musical dimension of Scottish song-collecting between the years c.1760 and 1888. The collections under investigation reflect the general cultural influences that bear on their compilers, starting with those associated with what we now call the Scottish Enlightenment, and continuing with those we associated with developing nineteenth-century romanticism. Building upon the work of Harker on the concept of ‘fakesong’, and of Gelbart on the developing idea of ‘folk’ versus ‘art’ music, I suggest that the sub-title of James Johnson’s *Scots Musical Museum*, ‘Our Ancient National Airs’, has implications which can be traced throughout this period.

The nature of the finished collections tells us much about editorial decisions, value-judgements, and intended audiences. The prefaces, other published writings and surviving correspondence have been especially informative.

Parallels can be traced between Joseph and Patrick MacDonald’s *A Collection of Highland Vocal Airs*, and the *Ossian* works of James Macpherson, embodying an urge to record and preserve the heritage of Highland Scotland’s primitive past. The collaborations of Robert Burns with James Johnson and George Thomson, and the English Joseph Ritson’s *Scottish Song*, similarly reflect the antiquarian ‘museum’ mentality. However, the drive to record and codify is tempered by Burns’s and Thomson’s wish simultaneously to improve and polish.

The ‘discovery’ of the Highlands as a tourist destination, and the appeal of its primitive history, prompted a substantial body of literature, and Alexander Campbell’s output particularly exemplifies this, but the sense of place was as much a motivator for private collectors. It can also be demonstrated that later song-collectors, such as Robert Archibald Smith, were as much motivated to create and improve the repertoire, as were James Hogg and his literary peers.

A passion for domestic music-making, and an increased wish to educate and inform, is evidenced in song-collections by George Farquhar Graham, Finlay Dun and John Thomson, but most significantly, this thesis demonstrates a resurgence of cultural nationalism, driven as much by William Chappell's anxiety to define and defend the English repertoire, as by Andrew Wighton's and James Davies' passion for the Scottish, with Graham and Laing caught in the crossfire.

Thus, even if 'Our Ancient National Airs' appeared at different times in different kinds of musical setting, and for differing purposes, it can clearly be demonstrated that published Scottish song-collections of this period can, indeed, be taken to reflect a wider range of contemporary cultural trends than has hitherto been recognised.

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## Introduction

The present thesis takes Scotland as its main focus, and seeks primarily to explore the activities relating to song-collecting, and the publication of those collections. It specifically focuses on song collections with music, rather than collections of words, and considers the motivation of these collectors, and the significant cultural factors which influenced them. The period of this study, 1760-1888, is defined by significant events in the lives of Patrick MacDonald and James Macpherson in 1760, and the death of William Chappell in 1888.

The title of this thesis, 'Our Ancient National Airs', is drawn directly from the title page of James Johnson's *The Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803), where he informed the reader that,

[...] the original simplicity of our Ancient National Airs is retained unincumbered with useless Accompaniments & graces depriving the hearers of the sweet simplicity of their native melodies.

The thesis is centred on the key four words of Johnson's statement. They have, indeed, already been remarked upon in passing, in Fiske's *Scotland in Music*. His monograph is largely devoted to the art tradition, but he alludes to the *Scots Musical Museum* at the start of his chapter about George Thomson's *Original Scottish Airs*. Quoting Johnson, Fiske makes the point that the contents of Johnson's collection were actually neither wholly ancient nor entirely Scottish.

This study differs from Fiske in that it concerns the collecting of Scottish songs between c.1760 and 1888, without privileging any particular era with respect to their origins; and regardless of whether they have subsequently been regarded as 'folk' or 'art song'. (In the present context, it is not particularly helpful to attempt to set up a folk-art binary, since any song supposedly taken from the oral folk tradition and placed into a harmonised setting immediately confronts its compiler with a whole range of aesthetic and artistic considerations, as will soon become abundantly clear.)

I consider Johnson's words to have been more redolent of meaning than has hitherto been realised, and find that the phrase can be used to support the



central premise that collectors during this period were seeking to establish precisely the four concepts that Johnson hinted at.

Thus, the collectors were primarily focused on identifying what they considered to be their ('our') cultural heritage. Establishing the relative antiquity of the ('Ancient') repertoire was of central importance, because the age of a song or source allowed collectors to endow it with a greater sense of authenticity. Equally important was the fact that songs were uniquely identifiable as belonging to the Scottish 'National' tradition (as opposed to the English or even British). Lastly, and recognising the eighteenth-century nomenclature, these collections were uniquely distinguishable by the inclusion of the 'Airs' to the songs - in other words, these collections contained tunes - in whatever kind of setting - as well as the lyrics.

Whilst Scottish song has been considered in the context of the contemporary cultural environment by most leading authorities since Henry Farmer's *A History of Music in Scotland* (1947), the present study differs from them in various respects.

Henry Farmer's monograph was written as an overview of all Scottish music, and certainly treated it in the context of contemporary social history, noting a number of major song collections and writers on music. He noted the early-nineteenth century moves towards music becoming a profession, and indeed, the present study also finds a more learned, academic approach to song collections as the century progressed. (Farmer's speculation that later nineteenth-century Scottish Presbyterians encouraged an interest in national song as a more wholesome alternative to music hall entertainments, has not been pursued here. This may have been true, but the present study found insufficient written evidence to justify pursuing it as a line of enquiry.)<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, whilst later studies of Scottish music have almost invariably contemplated the general influence of the period now regarded as the Scottish Enlightenment, upon music theoreticians, collectors and practitioners alike, the

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<sup>1</sup> Whilst David Hogg made dismissive observations about professionals singing 'doggerel into temporary popularity' in his *The Life of Allan Cunningham* (Dumfries: John Anderson, 1875), he in no sense implied that his views were connected with Presbyterianism.

term was only just coming into usage in the 1940s. Farmer made no allusion even to the concept of an age of ‘Enlightenment’, and his sole characterisation of the era was to highlight the flourishing interest in clubs and concert-going.

Subsequent studies have all, with the exception of Purser’s *Scotland’s Music* (1992, 2007), been limited either by chronological period, length, or specific purpose, with the result that none could devote deep attention to the particular activities and values of the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century song-collectors who form the focus of the present study.

Thus, David Johnson’s *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (1972, 2003) makes a detailed study of all aspects of music in Lowland Scotland, but excludes the Highlands and is limited to one century.

Kenneth Elliott and Frederick Rimmer’s *A History of Scottish Music* (1973) and Cedric Thorpe Davie’s *Scotland’s Music* (1980) both offer brief overviews, which necessarily limit the amount of space that can be devoted to specific topics. Indeed, Elliott and Rimmer specifically avoided the folk song, pipe and fiddle music conventionally associated with Scotland, but made specific mention of songs that could be said to have crossed the divide into art music – those in Allan Ramsay’s earlier *Tea Table Miscellany*,<sup>2</sup> Johnson’s *Scots Musical Museum*, and Thomson’s art collections, with Elliott and Rimmer dismissing the latter as ‘generally disastrous’. Passing reference was made to late eighteenth-century antiquarians.

Davie, similarly limited, again mentioned only the biggest eighteenth-century names, dismissing most nineteenth- and twentieth-century Scottish song collections as part of a ‘flood [...] – good, bad, indifferent or shaming as to presentation and musical arrangements’,<sup>3</sup> but conceding the value of George Farquhar Graham’s *Songs of Scotland* in the mid-nineteenth century.

Dave Harker’s *Fakesong* (1985) and Matthew Gelbart’s *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”: Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner* (2007) each took very different starting-points. Harker examined the whole business of song-

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<sup>2</sup> Allan Ramsay, *The Tea-Table Miscellany* (Edinburgh: printed for the author, 1723).

<sup>3</sup> Cedric Thorpe Davie, *Scotland’s Music* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1980), 16.

collecting from a Marxist perspective, placing the collection of traditional songs in the context of the compiler's social position and attitudes toward their sources, and arguing that they were, in effect, creating their own perception of a tradition. Harker placed more emphasis on the collections as collections of song texts rather than on the music to which they were set. His study is wider than the present dissertation, not only chronologically but also in terms of nationality and emphasis, with the result that our chosen period of study, from 1760 to 1888, corresponds only to the first part of Harker's book. In contrast to Harker, moreover, this study has been limited to collectors of songs with their airs. It can also be demonstrated that issues of cultural nationalism were of at least as much consequence as the questions of class-consciousness which Harker considered paramount. Harker's referencing occasionally lacks a certain scholarly detail, but the biographical cameos of each collector and their primary motivations form an informative and worthwhile addition to the literature.

More recently, Gelbart has thoroughly examined the philosophical and theoretical rationale which began to define the distinction between popular and art music.<sup>4</sup> However, his monograph differs from the present study in two particular respects. Firstly, he compares and contrasts parallel developments in Britain (primarily Scotland) and Germany; and secondly, his focus is more on the thinking behind the music in essays and other contemporary literature.

In the present thesis, the German perspective is only considered where a Scot travelling in Germany made particular reference to Scottish collectors; and in passing where an interesting parallel is flagged up between the Scottish R. A. Smith and the German Anton von Zuccalmaglio with respect to issues of fakery and 'invention', with a view to future research.

This thesis makes a unique contribution to writings on Scottish music in two distinct respects. Firstly, it highlights the cultural importance of travel and the sense of place in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Secondly, it explores the conflict between the antiquarian's quest for authenticity, and

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<sup>4</sup> Matthew Gelbart, 'Scotland and the Emergence of "Folk Music" and "Art Music" in Europe, 1720-1850' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of California at Berkeley, 2002); and subsequent monograph, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music": Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

the creative artist's imaginative impulses. By contrast with Harker's implied suggestion that the collectors betray a subconscious invention of tradition, this thesis finds that some compilers were quite consciously employing their creative powers to this end.

These various threads have necessitated recourse to a wide range of secondary literature. The most generally applicable material is reviewed in this introduction, with the remainder being reviewed in the chapters where it is most pertinent.

In the first instance, nationalism, together with an interest in primitivism and conjectural history, all exert an influence on song-collectors of this period. Fiske, albeit dealing with a different repertoire, deals usefully with some of the issues of nationalism in this period, as does Gelbart. Hobsbawm and Ranger's essay collection, *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) is also informative. Additionally, various collections of writings relating to early tourism in Scotland have provided background to this aspect of the subject.

Macpherson's *Ossian* poetry exerted considerable influence on his musical peers. With a growing interest both in native traditions and in Rousseauesque primitivism, the climate in eighteenth-century Scotland was particularly receptive to a work like Macpherson's, as Malcolm Chapman indicated in his monograph on Scottish culture.<sup>5</sup> Howard Gaskill and Fiona Stafford's commentary and critical edition of *Ossian* have provided important literary background to this aspect of the present study, as has James Porter's analysis of some of the issues.

Subsequent to the publication of these works, the quest for authenticity was all-important. With accurate citation of sources championed initially by the irascible and idiosyncratic Ritson, we find that, by the 1820s, allegations of fakery were enough to condemn utterly the collections of poetry by Allan Cunningham and James Hogg, or songs by R. A. Smith, in the eyes of their more scrupulous peers.

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<sup>5</sup> Malcolm Chapman, *The Gaelic vision in Scottish culture* (London: Croom Helm, 1978).

It became evident early on in the present study that it was conceptually impossible to separate the 'songs' from their 'airs', (even if individual songs and airs were less symbiotically linked than collectors sometimes suggested), and that it was imperative to consider the interconnection between the literature and the music.

In this respect, Donald Lowe's editions of *Critical Essays on Robert Burns* (1975) and *The Scots Musical Museum 1787-1803* (1991) provided an accessible introduction to the issues, and Leith Davis and Janet Sorensen's writings have been informative, offering insight into the place of Scottish song in Scottish and British culture.<sup>6</sup> Equally useful have been Kirsteen McCue's writings on George Thomson and Robert Burns; and her own and Murray Pittock's work on James Hogg.

If the period 1760 to 1888 can be characterised in any brief but meaningful way, it is by recognising the overwhelming interconnection of these collections with their national cultural environment; and the equally significant inter-relationship between the words and the music in the collections themselves. As we progress through this era, we can quite clearly note changes in focus, from the antiquarian drive to collect and conserve - often with the suggestion that a stripped-down, unornamented melody and minimal (if any) accompaniment reflected a song's primitive origins - to the concept of a scholarly edition, with a proficiently-arranged accompaniment and soundly-researched background notes. These categories are not mutually exclusive, of course, and different collections reflect the compiler's differing blends of priorities. (In particular, the decision as to whether a volume was destined for a library shelf or drawing-room music-making had obvious ramifications, not only for the final format, but also for the editorial approach.)

We can furthermore detect in these publications the constant conflict between the quest for authenticity, and allegations of fakery. The whole question of fakery is one which has intrigued writers from various disciplines and with quite

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<sup>6</sup> Leith Davis, 'At "Sang about": Scottish Song and the Challenge to British Culture', in *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism*, ed. by Leith Davis, Ian Duncan and Janet Sorensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Janet Sorensen, 'The Debatable Borders of English and Scottish Song and Ballad Collections', in *Romanticism's Debatable Lands*, ed. by Claire Lamont and Michael Rossington (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 80-91.

different standpoints, including Richard Dorson's concept of *Fakelore* in both historical and contemporary folklore studies; Dave Harker's Marxism-influenced approach in the aforementioned *Fakesong*; or the literary historian's approach as evinced in Susan Stewart's *Crimes of Writing*, Ruthven's *Faking Literature*, or Margaret Russett's *Fictions and Fakes*.

In this respect, Harker's title, *Fakesong*, was aptly chosen, but subsequent writers on Scottish song collecting are ill-advised to adopt the term without first clarifying the context in which it is being used.

Thus, it is necessary, at the outset, for me to clarify my own position regarding my use of the word, 'fakesong'. Whilst I find it both useful and descriptive, and a conveniently concise way of referring to a fairly common practice during the period under discussion, this should by no means be taken to imply that I have also adopted Harker's ideological stance. Neither would I wish to convey the impression that fakesong was ubiquitous, nor - as Harker implies - that the very notion of folksong might be an artificial construct.

Harker is said to have derived his term, without acknowledging the source, from Richard Dorson's earlier 'fakelore'.<sup>7</sup> Dorson introduced the concept in a 1950 issue of an American journal, the *Mercury*, developing it within the context of folklore studies, and the study of folklorism, or (to use the German term), Folklorismus - i.e., the study of the secondary use of folklore, over the next couple of decades. In this way, Dorson was able to differentiate between the deliberate faking of folk-like traditions, songs, etc - an activity for whose perpetrators he articulated the greatest contempt - and what he thought to be genuine, natural folklore.<sup>8</sup>

Of course, Harker's term 'fakesong', would at first glance appear a more precise term than Dorson's overarching 'fakelore', which also encompassed customs,

<sup>7</sup> See D. K. Wilgus, Review of Harker's *Fakesong*, in *Victorian Studies* (1986), 133-34, and James Porter, 'Convergence, Divergence, and Dialectic in Folksong Paradigms: Critical Directions for Transatlantic Scholarship', *The Journal of American Folklore* 106.419 (1993), 61-98, (pp.66-67).

<sup>8</sup> Richard M. Dorson, 'Folklore, Academe, and the Marketplace', in *Folklore and Fakelore: Essays toward a Discipline of Folk Studies* (London: Harvard University Press, 1976), 1-29; and Alan Dundes, 'Nationalistic Inferiority Complexes and the Fabrication of Fakelore: A Reconsideration of Ossian, the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, the *Kalevala*, and Paul Bunyan', *Journal of Folklore Research*, 22.1 (1985), 5-18, (p. 5).

traditions and folktales. However, Harker's approach to 'fakesong' is informed by his own Marxist ideology, and his book focuses on the 'mediators' (mainly upper class or of the professional classes) who seemingly, and according to his own political viewpoint, plundered the folk tradition of the working classes in order to assemble and publish their collections of folksongs. Harker focuses more upon the song texts than on their airs, but explores the editorial decisions of these collectors in some depth. Thus, the 'fake' element of Harker's 'Fakesong' derives not only from any perceived inauthenticity in the songs themselves, but also from his perception that the repertoire in these published collections no longer belonged to the true working-class 'folk', and that any pretence on the part of the mediators that they were themselves the 'folk' was mere posturing.

I find there are various difficulties associated with this approach, though. On a very basic level, it could be argued that a fairly high degree of literacy, not to mention a certain familiarity with the world of publishers and music sellers, was required of those individuals who did collect and publish such compilations, which made it the more likely that they would be of a higher social stratum than those 'folk' to whom some of the songs might originally have belonged. Furthermore, this attempt to view the various collectors and 'mediators' through a modern, Marxist perspective, fails fully to engage with the cultural issues surrounding authenticity and creativity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The purpose of the present study is neither to criticize the contents of the Scottish song collections within its remit, nor to condemn those individuals responsible either in the authorial or mediatorial sense for these collections. Rather, the study begins by seeking to identify what motivated these song collectors, the nature of their editorial policies and decisions, and how this articulates with contemporary thinking about Scottish literature and culture. It recognises from the outset the truism that it is impossible to pin down something which derives from oral tradition without, in some way, either limiting or altering it. It also recognises the likelihood that 'fakesong' or imitation folksong is present to a greater or lesser degree in many eighteenth and nineteenth century collections.

Indeed, other songs may have become accepted as folksong despite their original 'composed' status. In this regard, it would not be inappropriate to regard many folksong collections as a form of folklorism, dished up (to coin Grainger's phrase) for the edification and amusement of another generation, garnished in accordance with contemporary tastes. (In fact, as John Johnson has opined, folklorism can in turn become the next generation's folklore.)<sup>9</sup>

Thus, whilst my approach is informed by Harker's work on 'fakesong' and Dorson's on 'fakelore', it equally bears similarities with the work of Susan Stewart in the ballad field. Like the present study, Stewart's collection of essays, *Crimes of Writing*, addresses questions of 'authorship, authoring, authenticity and authority',<sup>10</sup> with the opening essays examining some examples of literary forgery and other 'scandals of imposture'.

My own stance, like Stewart's, is to endeavour to understand how these collections of folksongs were regarded at the time of publication, and by their near-contemporaries and successors; and in this regard my particular contribution is to extend our understanding of how differing attitudes towards creativity affected the song collections compiled by different individuals at different time during the period under discussion. I would argue that an understanding of these questions of authenticity and creativity in the literary and ballad fields is an absolute imperative in understanding the parallel activities of the song-collectors forming the subject of the present study.

A broadly chronological approach has been taken within this thesis. Within this framework, Chapters 1 and 2 introduce some of the Highland and Lowland collectors respectively, and we consider their urge to collect and preserve their repertoires. Chapter 1 furthermore illustrates the influence of Macpherson's *Ossian* upon the literati of the time. Chapter 2 explores the attempts of Johnson and Burns to create an inclusive 'Museum'; and of Thomson to produce a quality 'art music' collection, comparing both collections with Ritson's solidly antiquarian approach in his *Scottish Songs*.

<sup>9</sup> Folklore Institute at Indiana University, Culture, Tradition, Identity Conference, March 26-28, 1984: Floor Discussion: [Folklore and Folklorismus], from *Journal of Folklore Research*, 21 (1984), 205-10, observation by John Johnson, p.208.

<sup>10</sup> Susan Stewart, 'Scandals of the Ballad', in *Crimes of Writing: Problems in the Containment of Representation* (London: Duke University Press, 1994), 102-31, (p. 7).



Chapter 3 discusses the importance of travel within Scotland to various poets and song-collectors, particularly during the period of the Napoleonic Wars, and makes a special study of Alexander Campbell and his travels in pursuit of repertoire for *Albyn's Anthology*.

With Chapter 4, we address the question of invention and fakery in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. Due reference is made to Hogg and his various song collections, not least because these publications allow us to set the activities of musicians such as Robert Archibald Smith within the broader context of literary forgery and fakery - a subject which has aroused considerable interest in its own right in recent years.

Chapter 5 looks at the illustrations and notes provided by Stenhouse and Hogg for the *Scots Musical Museum* and *Jacobite Relics*. Each endeavoured to provide information about the origins of their songs, but their differing ideologies and starting points affected the annotations made by each compiler. David Laing's involvement in the publication of Stenhouse's *Illustrations*, and the subsequent reception of these works by subsequent Scottish song enthusiasts, conclude this chapter.

With Chapter 6, we look at the mid-nineteenth century collections of Finlay Dun, John Thomson and George Farquhar Graham, which reveal an increasingly scholarly approach allied to an understanding of the popular domestic market for their collections. (This is the growing professionalism to which Farmer alluded.)

One might, perhaps, have expected nationalistic arguments to have lessened as the recollection of the Scottish Union and subsequent uprisings faded, with Sir Walter Scott manipulating public opinion to celebrate the romantic images of Scotland and the Jacobite era, rather than the aggrieved protestations of those with Jacobite sympathies. However, towards the end of the period covered by this thesis, we find heated arguments about what was Scottish, between David Laing, William Chappell, Andrew Wighton and James Davie.

In the musical literature, comparatively little is written about the English Chappell, with Gelbart making only brief references to him. Harker explored his

contribution at greater length; however, his discussion is more of Chappell's contribution as a whole, whilst the present chapter aims to focus specifically on Chappell's stance vis-à-vis the Scottish material in his collections.

Chappell provoked protests that an Englishman could not comment on Scottish songs, but some of the animosity was perhaps unwarranted. (We must also acknowledge that Chappell had his own agenda, in wishing to rebut the argument that England had no music of its own.) Chapter 7 does not seek to vindicate Chappell, but to analyse the process. What exactly was happening, and was Chappell as anti-Scottish as his detractors allege? We glimpse into the future by looking briefly at Wooldridge's later edition of *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, now entitled *Old English Popular Music*, revealing a retrenchment from the whole Scottish issue.

It is perhaps fitting that a poet, rather than a musician, should be given the last word in this introduction, and, ironically enough, these are the words of Allan Cunningham, 'forger' extraordinaire. Like James Macpherson, it took little more than one generation for him to be lauded, not as a forger, but as a poet:-

I have no wish to strip from the minstrel the robes of Percy, and cover him with the rags of Ritson. [...] But before I proceed to draw a farther parallel between the poet and the critic, as I am speaking of imaginary things, and periods of darkness and tradition [...]<sup>11</sup>

In hinting at the distinction between the collector and the creative artist, Cunningham has hit upon the central issue upon which the whole activity of song-collecting was founded during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The question was, had a song seemingly arisen anonymously from the depths of the collective consciousness - in which case it could be collected and codified as emanating from 'antiquity' - or could it be ascribed to a more recent individual? The latter circumstance perturbed antiquarians, because they could no longer boast of its folk origins, whilst Hogg, Cunningham and Smith conversely resented this denial of their creative, Scottish impulses. Every song had a moment of inception, somehow and somewhere. To satisfy both antiquarians and poets, however, that 'somewhere' had to have been Scotland.

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<sup>11</sup> Allan Cunningham, *The Songs of Scotland, Ancient and Modern* (London: printed for John Taylor, 1825) I, 29.

## Acknowledgements

My grateful thanks go to my supervisor, Dr Warwick Edwards, for his constant support and encouragement, and also to the staff and postgraduates of the Music Department for their advice and moral support during the course of my research.

I wish particularly to thank the staff in the Special Collections of Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh University Libraries; the School of Scottish Studies Archive at Edinburgh University, David Kett at Dundee City Library, Sally Garden, formerly Musician in Residence at the Wighton Centre, Dundee City Library, and staff at the National Library of Scotland.

So many individuals have given generously of their time and knowledge that it is difficult to name each and every one. However, special thanks go to Jo Currie, formerly of Edinburgh University Library Special Collections, for her advice on nineteenth century Mull genealogy; to Keith Sanger, Peter Cooke and Lord Northampton for their enthusiastic support of my Maclean-Clephane researches; to Sarah Clemmens Waltz, Assistant Professor of Music History at the Conservatory of Music, University of the Pacific for sharing her chapter about Alexander Campbell's reception in Germany; and to academic staff in the Departments of Scottish Literature and History at the University of Glasgow for allowing me insights into related disciplines.

I am grateful to my employer, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, for kindly granting me study-leave in which to forge ahead with the writing of this thesis, and my special thanks go to all those colleagues who have patiently heard me out over countless coffee-breaks, encouraging me when the going got tough, and enabling me to keep the ultimate goal firmly in mind.

Lastly, none of this would have been written without the loving support of my husband and sons, who have gained more insight into the realities of postgraduate research than many people gain in a lifetime. I owe them an incalculable debt.

## Abbreviations

COPAC	Copac National, Academic, & Specialist Library Catalogue
ECCO	Eighteenth Century Collections Online
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
OED	Oxford English Dictionary

## Chapter 1. ‘Never hitherto published’: preserving the Highland heritage

By pure coincidence, two young Highlanders embarked on journeys in the year of 1760. Both were noted collectors, one of tunes, the other of verses. One, Joseph MacDonald (1739-1763), was leaving Scotland never to return, and his journey to Calcutta marked the end of his collecting expeditions. It fell to his older brother Patrick (1729-1824), an Argyllshire clergyman, later to bring their ‘never hitherto published’ tunes to public attention, as we shall see in due course.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, James Macpherson (1736-1796) set off on the Highland collecting trip that would mark the start of his meteoric rise to both fame and notoriety. Yet both were, in a sense, tradition-bearers. The degree to which each was transmitting tradition, as opposed to creating it, was open to debate, although the intentions of the former were perhaps more honest than those of the latter.

When Joseph MacDonald embarked on a vessel bound for Calcutta, he was about to take up employment with the East India Company. Prior to that, we know that he had been to school in Haddington around 1754 ‘for a few years’, and then lived briefly in Edinburgh, where he continued his musical studies, before returning to Strathnaver in Sutherland.<sup>2</sup> He left his music manuscripts with his sister Florence, but took his bagpipes and a supply of paper with him. Three years later, he died of a tropical fever. The manuscript with which Joseph had busied himself on the journey, the *Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe*, eventually found its way back to his brother Patrick.<sup>3</sup> Donaldson and Cannon believe that there was once a collection of tunes to precede the *Compleat Theory*; however, the three manuscript volumes of ‘Highland Musick’

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Never hitherto published’ derives from the title of Patrick MacDonald, *A Collection of Highland Vocal Airs, never hitherto published. To which are added a few of the most lively. Country Dances or Reels of the Northern Highlands, & Western Isles: and some Specimens of Bagpipe Music, etc.* (Edinburgh : printed for the publisher, [1784]). (Henceforth in this thesis to be referred to as *Highland Vocal Airs*).

<sup>2</sup> Biographical details from his brother Patrick’s preface to the *Highland Vocal Airs*.

<sup>3</sup> *Joseph MacDonald’s Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe (c.1760)*, ed. by Roderick D. Cannon ([Glasgow]: The Piobaireachd Society, 1994), pp. 1–2.

purchased by a James Ashburner are now lost.<sup>4</sup> The *Compleat Theory* was finally published in Inverness, in 1803.

Long before the publication of Joseph's bagpipe tutor, however, his brother Patrick gathered songs from Argyllshire and Perthshire, to augment the collection of Ross and Sutherland airs that Joseph had left at home, and published *A Collection of Highland Vocal Airs, Country Dances or Reels, of the North Highlands and Western Isles* in 1784. The first edition was dedicated 'To the Noblemen and Gentlemen who compose the Highland Society in London', and the subscription list enumerates the 'distinguished persons ... in Scotland and in England' who supported the publication. (It is worth noting that the subscribers were, as we shall see in due course, of a markedly higher position in society than those who would buy the more widely-published Lowland song collections in the mid- to late-nineteenth century.) Divorced from their lyrics, the appeal of these Highland tunes was, quite simply, the fact of their provenance and consequently, a repertoire of hitherto unknown material from what was - as we shall examine more closely later - perceived as a primitive source.

Meanwhile, between August and October 1760, James Macpherson - a would-be collector of a very different kind - undertook a tour to the Outer Hebrides and Skye, in search of ancient Gaelic bardic verse about the legendary hero, Ossian. He had gone to the University of Aberdeen in 1752 - possibly contemporaneously with Joseph's older brother Patrick - returning to Ruthven at the end of his studies. He is then thought to have attended Edinburgh University as a divinity student between 1755-56, and he was certainly establishing a network of Edinburgh contacts by the end of this decade.<sup>5</sup> It was through these contacts that he was embarking on this trip to discover Ossianic verse, having hinted that there was plenty to be recovered.

Macpherson was accompanied on his tour by his kinsman, Lachlan Macpherson of Strathmashie, for part of the trip, and also persuaded Ewan Macpherson, tutor to

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<sup>4</sup> William Donaldson, *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society 1750-1950: Transmission, Change and the Concept of Tradition* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000), p. 28, citing Cannon's edition of the *Compleat Theory*, p. 110 note 28.

<sup>5</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/>> [accessed 9 April 2009].

a Skye family, to accompany him for a short while. The traveller Martin Martin had as far back as 1703 made reference to ‘antient Irish manuscripts’ on Benbecula, so this island was included in their itinerary.<sup>6</sup> Shortly after this, he began publishing English translations of his findings. The first was *Fragments of Ancient Poetry: Collected in the Highlands of Scotland and Translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language* (1760), soon to be followed, after a further trip in 1761 to the Argyllshire coast and to Mull, by *Fingal, an ancient epic poem, in six books : together with several other poems composed by Ossian the son of Fingal, translated from the Galic [sic] language*, in 1762; *Temora*, in 1763; and finally the *Works of Ossian* in 1765.<sup>7</sup>

Apart from the apparent coincidence of Joseph MacDonald and James Macpherson embarking on life-changing journeys in the same year, there would appear at first glance to be little point of contact or even a common thread between them. After all, it is doubtful whether the paths of these two well-educated young men need ever have crossed.

There was, however, an indirect link between MacDonald and Macpherson, in the shape of their near-contemporary, Sir John MacGregor Murray.<sup>8</sup> Sir John was an army officer in the East India Company and Auditor-General in Bengal.<sup>9</sup> Following in MacDonald’s footsteps, he went to India in January 1770, seven years after Joseph’s death. (It is unclear whether this was his first trip there.) It was he who returned Joseph’s manuscript bagpipe tutor to Patrick MacDonald. More importantly, he was to be one of the founder members of the Highland Society of Scotland at Edinburgh, which got its Royal Charter of Incorporation in 1787.<sup>10</sup> His name crops up fleetingly in various contexts, but the extent to which

<sup>6</sup> Martin, Martin. *A description of the Western Islands of Scotland. Containing a full account of their situation, extent, soils, product, harbours, [...]* London, 1703, p.89, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* <<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO?locID=glasuni>> [accessed 9 April 2009].

<sup>7</sup> See James Macpherson, *The poems of Ossian and related works*; ed. by Howard Gaskill, introduction by Fiona Stafford (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> 1745-1822.

<sup>9</sup> See Amelia Georgiana Murray MacGregor, *History of the Clan Gregor* (Edinburgh: Brown, 1898-1901), Introduction; and Ronald I. Black, ‘The Gaelic Academy: the cultural commitment of The Highland Society of Scotland’, *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 14.2 (Winter 1986), 1-38 (pp. 6-7).

<sup>10</sup> The involvement of the Highland Societies of London and Scotland in encouraging the Scottish bagpipe is documented in Iain I. McInnes, *The Highland Bagpipe: the Impact of the Highland Societies of London and Scotland, 1781-1844* (unpublished master’s thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1988).

he was involved in mediating Gaelic culture has perhaps not been fully recognised, for although his role was very much the secondary one, his enthusiastic efforts in facilitating and promoting the work of others certainly bore fruit in subsequent decades.

Leaving aside the common connection with Sir John MacGregor Murray, it can be demonstrated that, as implied by the designation 'collectors', MacDonald and Macpherson actually had more in common than a desire to expand their horizons by travel, and their scholarly achievements are simultaneously the common factor and the outcome of the times in which they lived.

In the grand scheme of things, Joseph MacDonald's intellectual legacy is undeniably smaller: his Highland tune collection and bagpipe tutor, both published posthumously, are highly valued by a relatively limited audience of pipers and scholars of Highland music. James Macpherson's literary output, on the other hand, was to have a lasting impact not only in Scotland but in Europe and beyond, for the Ossian publications that he produced in the half-decade after his Hebridean and Argyllshire tours would give rise to literally thousands of letters, articles, books, musical offerings and countless arguments amongst the literati not only of his own age but for a good century beyond. Indeed, his influence was not limited to the literary sphere, but also provided the spark to ignite a flourishing tourism industry to the Highlands and Western Isles.

Nevertheless, both men were products of their time, influenced by contemporary philosophical, political and cultural trends. The most obvious evidence of this is in their common interest in cultural origins, whether in regional music or poetry.

The mid-eighteenth century was a period that some regard as a golden age for Scotland, on account of the dramatic flourishing of intellectual activity and debate across the whole range of knowledge, whether in science, philosophy, literature, religion or the arts. This is implicit in the coining of the expression, 'the Scottish Enlightenment'. Interestingly enough, although the age of Enlightenment - also known as the Age of Reason - was recognised as a distinctive period within half a century of its passing, the term, 'Scottish Enlightenment' seems only really to have started being used in the past forty or



so years, with Daiches having heard two living historians claim to have made up the term,<sup>11</sup> and Broadie commenting that there are differing interpretations on the range of intellectual and artistic contributions that could be said to constitute the Scottish Enlightenment.<sup>12</sup> Broadie prefers the inclusivist model, which admits a wider range of subject fields, and - most relevant to the present study - includes the fine arts, although he chose to focus on painting and theatre rather than music, in his recent monograph.

Scottish intellectuals were developing their own distinctive theories, not in isolation, but influenced by great thinkers both in England and abroad. Indeed, the 'literati', for so they styled themselves, saw themselves as part of a universal world of letters and meeting of intellects - what Hugh Blair described as the 'republic of letters'.<sup>13</sup> Particularly in the university towns of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, there was a new interest in the intellectual pursuit of knowledge, rationality, and so-called 'scientific' explanations for what was discovered. Literary and philosophical societies were also springing up outwith the universities themselves, and there were ample opportunities for those with an enquiring mind to engage with like-minded thinkers, either in debating societies or in a flourishing periodical press.

Broadie suggests that one circumstance which particularly influenced the Scottish Enlightenment was the coming together of brilliant minds in all disciplines, whereby the total was greater than the sum of the constituent parts.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the sociable interaction between scientists, social scientists, philosophers, writers and historians (to name but a few) sparked off new insights, which were to influence many disciplines.

Perhaps the most far-reaching effect of this interaction was the realisation that history could not be written or assessed without an examination of original

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<sup>11</sup> *The New Companion to Scottish Culture*, ed. by David Daiches (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1993), p. 295.

<sup>12</sup> Alexander Broadie, *The Scottish Enlightenment: the Historical Age of the Historical Nation* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2007), p. xi.

<sup>13</sup> Hugh Blair, *A critical dissertation on the poems of Ossian, the son of Fingal*. The second edition. To which is added, an appendix, containing a variety of undoubted testimonies establishing their authenticity. By Hugh Blair, Appendix, p.148, in *ECCO* [accessed 16 August 2008]

<sup>14</sup> Broadie, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 219.

sources. A good history provided not only a logical narrative, but also explanations as to why things happened the way they did, and going back to origins was of key importance.

The new interest in origins drew upon the idea of a bygone age of innocence. On the international stage, opinions were divided as to whether Jean Jacques Rousseau was right in his insistence that society had become corrupt since his hypothetical primitive idyll - or whether there was more truth in the Englishman Thomas Hobbes' theories that original nature was brutal and cruel, and civilisation was therefore clearly an improvement.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, whichever philosophical stance one found more attractive and feasible, the question of origins and plausible sources remained paramount.

The concept of conjectural history was of paramount importance to philosophers and historians of the time, for it was considered quite acceptable to gather as much documentary evidence as possible, and then to conjecture backwards to earlier times, moving from the strength of what actually was known, to conjecture as to what might have been. This explains the interest in what one might term contemporary primitive societies, because evidence gleaned from these augmented what was known of truly ancient primitive times. Contemporary Highlanders might not constitute 'primitive' to the same extent as native tribes from more far-flung parts, but there was the assumption that their lifestyle was more primitive than that of their more sophisticated countrymen in the Scottish Lowlands and, indeed, in England itself.

In this climate of philosophical discussion, we find James Beattie, a professor of moral philosophy and logic at the University of Aberdeen, producing such works as his essay, 'On Poetry and Music, as they affect The Mind', in which he explores the aesthetics and origins of Scottish song. Although it was not published until 1776, the essay was first written c.1762,<sup>16</sup> when it was delivered to the Philosophical Society in Aberdeen. In it he astounded his audience by suggesting that traditional songs actually originated from 'real' shepherds and shepherdesses, rather than people higher up the social echelons. This was

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<sup>15</sup> These arguments are further explored by Broadie, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, pp. 79-85.

<sup>16</sup> See Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music"*, footnote 76, p.38, and pp. 87-93.

symptomatic of a new interest in the social origins of Scotland's traditional, or 'vernacular' music - and the whole question of oral culture was to cause a certain amount of disquiet amongst the educated collectors. Dave Harker elaborates on this in his monograph, *Fakesong*, highlighting the collectors' attitudes to the origins of their material.<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, the pastoral ideal had been a literary influence in Scotland and beyond, for a couple of centuries already. For example, David Johnson reminds us of a pastoral dream sequence in the 1549 *Complaynt of Scotland*, where shepherds are playing various musical instruments.<sup>18</sup> (John Leyden was to produce a new edition of this work in 1801.) Another well-known but much later Scottish pastoral representation is Allan Ramsay's musical drama, *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725). From south of the Border, John Milton's early pastoral poem, *L'Allegro* (1631), was to prove highly influential; indeed, it was set by Handel in 1740. The second line of Milton's couplet, 'Or sweetest Shakespear [sic], fancies child, Warble his native wood-notes wild' was quoted widely in allusions not only to bird-song, but also folk-song and to the pastoral idyll, with no further reference to Milton himself: William Tytler,<sup>19</sup> Ramsay of Ochertyre<sup>20</sup> and Robert Burns' references to 'wood note[s] wild' come immediately to mind in this context.<sup>21</sup>

Beattie's locating the origins of Scottish song amongst 'real' farm-workers was, however, a new idea. (Indeed, Ramsay's drama might have had a pastoral setting, but it was actually based on the mistaken identity of characters of less humble origins.)

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<sup>17</sup> Dave Harker, *Fakesong : the manufacture of British "folksong" 1700 to the present* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1985), p.58.

<sup>18</sup> David Johnson, *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 2002), pp. 88-89.

<sup>19</sup> See William Tytler, 'Dissertation on the Scottish Music', in *Poetical Remains of James the First, King of Scotland. [A Dissertation on the life and writings of James 1. – [dissertation on the Scottish music by the Editor, W. Tytler]* (Edinburgh: J. and E. Balfour, 1783), p. 222 in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale Group.  
<<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO>>

<sup>20</sup> John Ramsay of Ochertyre, [Dissertation], 'Of the Influence of Poetry and Music upon the Highlanders', in *Highland Vocal Airs*, p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> See *The Complete Letters of Robert Burns*, ed. James A. Mackay, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Ayr: Alloway Publishing, 1990), p.631, letter from Burns to George Thomson, 2 July? 1793.

On a political and also cultural level, as the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745 faded into history, there was a sometimes reluctant but as often a pragmatic acceptance of the Union. Among some feelings of resentment that Scotland had more been absorbed by England, than both countries equally subsumed into a new, larger entity called Britain, there emerged a strong urge to seek out, cultivate and retain that which was distinctively Scottish. Even where it was accepted that political rebellion was futile, there was a gradual realisation that the cultural differences from England - and, indeed, from other European countries - were not only something from which Scots could derive comfort and a sense of their own identity, but were also a kind of cultural currency which was attractive and saleable to the outside world. Much has been written about Scottish national identity both on a political and on a cultural level, and it goes without saying that the topic of Scottish song collecting cannot begin to be addressed without taking this issue into account.

It will be plain, at this juncture, that there were some interesting cross-currents at play. Evidently, the Scottish literati were simultaneously conscious of being part of an international community of letters, and of possessing an unique national heritage within the British Union.

There has always been a certain irony that the image of Scotland beyond its borders has been the image of the wild Highlander, with his skirling bagpipes, rugged mountains and atmospheric lochs, whilst Scots themselves were acutely aware of the differences between the Highlands and the Lowlands.

Notwithstanding the dichotomy between Highland and Lowland Scotland, this emerging sense of a distinctive Gaelic identity was perhaps the primary impetus for the Highland collections both by the MacDonalds and by Macpherson, for each was in pursuit of what he perceived as his hereditary Gaelic culture - a culture that was primarily oral rather than recorded in written or printed form.

Whilst Joseph MacDonald had endeavoured to collect and capture a cultural heritage in song and instrumental music - a collection later augmented and published by his elder brother Patrick, and indeed manifested in a different form in the *Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe* - Macpherson was in pursuit of a corpus of ancient poems by Ossian, an ancient Celtic bard who

narrated the exploits of a supposedly Scottish warrior named Fingal both in the Highlands and, albeit perhaps in slightly different forms, in Ireland.

It is easy to see the significance of the Ossian epics against the backdrop of the Scottish Enlightenment as here understood. Macpherson's proposed project appealed to the Edinburgh literati because the perceived repertoire of Gaelic Ossian poetry represented tales about a primitive state of society, backed up by - or so Macpherson would have the world believe - documented sources, and narrated by the frustratingly shadowy figure of Ossian the bard himself.

James Macpherson published his controversial *Works of Ossian*, in 1765, bringing together the various collections that he had already produced. Far from being in either Gaelic or even Scots, they were in polished English - neither strictly verse nor prose, and very much akin to the Psalms in the King James Bible. (It was only later that the Ossianic verses were translated back into Gaelic for the benefit of native Gaelic speakers.)<sup>22</sup> They were allegedly translated reconstructions of ancient poems, many from the oral tradition, collected from Highlanders during Macpherson's poem-collecting tour. His relative Lachlan Macpherson recalled, later, that Macpherson would sit poring over their transcriptions, commenting that certain passages were not in the true voice of Ossian, with the implication that degradation had inevitably occurred with the passage of time and that the narrator of the verse had imposed his own gloss on the epic. (As we shall see in later chapters, this was to be a common preoccupation with song-collectors for at least the next couple of generations.)

Macpherson claimed to have manuscripts, including some manuscript collections that he had persuaded Highlanders to hand over. What these were, has been much disputed ever since. Certainly, Macpherson left some 'originals' with his publisher Thomas Becket in 1762, for inspection by any interested parties, and he later handed many manuscripts, including what were said at the time to be '*An Duanaireadh Ruadh*, or the Red Rhymer [...]' and '*An Leabhar Dearg*, or The Red Book', to his friend and literary executor John Mackenzie, secretary of the

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<sup>22</sup> The first Gaelic collection was *Sean dana, le Oisian, Orran, Ullann, &c.* = *Ancient poems of Ossian, Orran, Ullin, &c : collected in the western Highlands and isles : being the originals of the translations some time ago published in the Gaelic antiquities*, ed. by John Smith, (Edinburgh: Printed for Charles Elliot; and for C. Elliot, T. Kay and Co., 1787).

Highland Society of London. These were later passed to Henry Mackenzie's Committee of Enquiry after Macpherson's death. Howard Gaskill has explored contemporary records in an attempt to establish the truth about these manuscripts. Various facts emerge, too complex to narrate here; suffice to say that the Red Rhymer has since disappeared; 'The Red Book' may actually have been 'The Little Book'; the manuscripts passed to John Mackenzie may not necessarily have been the 'originals' in Becket the publisher's shop; and these same 'originals' were probably Macpherson's own Gaelic transcriptions, rather than original manuscripts - not surprisingly, since the Ossianic poems purported to come mainly from the oral tradition.<sup>23</sup>

It appears that few people inspected the 'originals' in the shop; moreover, without a sound understanding of Gaelic, it would have been difficult to reach any conclusions from them.<sup>24</sup> Quite apart from the difficulty of producing manuscripts from what was, after all, very much an oral tradition, was the problem that there were few scholars sufficiently well-versed in Gaelic to be qualified to assess the Macphersons' transcriptions. How were they to know whether the Gaelic verses were either authentic to start with, or indeed accurately translated into verse, leaving aside any questions as to what epic narratives might still be in popular memory in the parts of the Highlands that the Macphersons had not reached? Non-Gaelic speakers furthermore mistrusted any Highlanders who actually defended Macpherson, suspecting that national pride had blinded them to any alleged fakery that might have been committed, whilst the Highlanders themselves, anxious to defend their own integrity, were keenly aware that many Lowlanders and English scholars regarded them as naïve and gullible.

As soon as 1765, the Edinburgh professor Hugh Blair - who had been instrumental in getting Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* published in 1760, and had written *A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian, the Son of Fingal* in 1763 - published a second edition of the *Critical Dissertation*, including a list of eminent personages who were completely convinced by the authenticity of the poems, such as Adam Fergusson, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh

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<sup>23</sup> See Howard Gaskill, 'What did James Macpherson really leave on display at his publisher's shop in 1762?', *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, 16 (Winter 1990), 67-89.

<sup>24</sup> Gaskill, *ibid.*

University. However, many literati were unconvinced, and Macpherson soon found that his collections were surrounded by a climate of doubt and derision. Indeed, the suspicion about Ossian and Fingal's exploits was one of the motives for Johnson and Boswell's famous tour to the Western Isles in August to November 1773. When Johnson published his *Journey to the Western Isles* in 1775, he stated that Macpherson 'never could show the original', prompting an immediate riposte by Macpherson's publisher, Becket.<sup>25</sup> Johnson and Boswell were certainly not the only ones to be sceptical.<sup>26</sup>

Interestingly, within a decade of publishing his influential and controversial *Ossian* books, Macpherson moved into politics and thence for a while to America, leaving a legacy which was to occupy scholars and artists in many disciplines and countries for the next hundred years.

Joseph MacDonald might have left the country before Macpherson's epics were published, but his elder brother Patrick would certainly have known about them by the time he came to augment and subsequently publish the *Highland Vocal Airs* in 1784. So, too, did the 'ingenious friend' - almost certainly John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, despite some nineteenth-century confusion, as we shall see in due course - who wrote the 'Dissertation upon Highland poetry and music' which followed the preface of that collection. The dissertation was headed, 'Of the Influence of Poetry and Music upon the Highlanders', and the author began by firmly nailing his colours to the mast where Macpherson's Ossian epics were concerned. He appeared quite convinced by their authenticity, condemning Johnson for his scathing reaction, although conceding that the concept of an oral tradition is hard for a contemporary scholar to take on board:-

The poems of Ossian are a singular phenomenon in the literary world. They prove (what lettered pride is unwilling to believe) that the bards of a people, reputed barbarous, possessed at an early period, talents, and taste, which would do honour to any nation. Their authenticity, it is true, has been roughly questioned, by an eminent critic and traveller [ie Johnson], who seems to regard the translator and his

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<sup>25</sup> Gaskill, 'What did James Macpherson really leave on display at his publisher's shop in 1762?', p. 67.

<sup>26</sup> Both Johnson's and Boswell's journals are published in James Johnson and Samuel Boswell, *Johnson & Boswell: a Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland [and] The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, ed. by R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924).

country, with a liberality not unworthy of him that said, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”

It cannot, however, be disputed, that the remote Highlanders at this day, are as fond of poetry and music, as the Arcadian shepherds of old. In giving some account of this remnant of primeval manners, we shall confine ourselves to compositions that are confessedly modern, in comparison to the age assigned to Ossian. [...] That works of taste and genius, should be preserved without the assistance of letters, may appear somewhat incredible to us, who derive our knowledge chiefly from books [...].<sup>27</sup>

Thus, in a mere two paragraphs, the author of the dissertation alluded to the Ossian controversy; to Samuel Johnson; to an early idyllic pastoral age; and to the novel idea of oral tradition preserving airs from an illiterate people, though he went on to suggest that Highlanders were more likely to have been hunters than shepherds.

After Macpherson’s death in 1796, the Highland Society of Scotland started an enquiry, headed by Henry Mackenzie. The realisation that he had embroidered together genuine snippets into a new product was enough to condemn him in the eyes of many. At the instigation of Mackenzie’s Committee, a whole phalanx of earnest gentlemen with antiquarian pretensions went forth into the Highlands to retrace Macpherson’s steps and corroborate the evidence that he had gleaned from his various sources.

Finally, Henry Mackenzie issued a report for the Highland Society of Scotland in 1805, which collated all these findings, and reproduced affidavits, without necessarily drawing any cohesive conclusions.<sup>28</sup> Walter Scott reviewed the report for *The Edinburgh Review* in July 1805, regretting Mackenzie’s cautious impartiality. Susan Manning suggests that diasparaction and fragmentation were in fact part of Mackenzie’s style, and that fragments and gaps in the narrative are characteristic of writings associated with the nostalgia of past memories – as, indeed, in the Ossian tales themselves – so Mackenzie’s apparent

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<sup>27</sup> John Ramsay, ‘Of the influence of poetry and music upon the Highlanders’, *Highland Vocal Airs*, p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland, Appointed to Enquire into the Nature and Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian*, ed. by Henry Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Constable, 1805).



inconclusiveness might in fact be construed as a 'studied detachment as calculated for rhetorical effect as that of Fingal'.<sup>29</sup>

What was clear, however, was that Macpherson had drawn from established tradition, both oral and written, even if the composition and arrangement of the Ossianic verses into fine English verse was his own work. Porter has eloquently highlighted the liminality in Macpherson's work, which can be seen in many contexts including the Highland-Lowland divide; Scottish-English; oral versus literary tradition; not to mention the wider religious and political issues.<sup>30</sup> Crucially, Porter's paper opens by highlighting the meeting-point of creative artist and antiquarian scholar:-

The significance of Ossian for folklorists today lies not so much in the reception of the poems [...] or in their literary merit [...] but, rather, in the psychological and social forces that impelled Macpherson to undertake the Ossianic project in the first place and subsequently to defend his treatment of traditional Gaelic song and prose material. It is at this point that the conflicting claims of the antiquarian and the artist meet and collide, and in Macpherson they were never entirely resolved even though the poems themselves became widely celebrated.<sup>31</sup>

This is an issue which continued to perplex the literary, even more than the musical world, well into the Romantic era. Allan Cunningham was to hint at this, in his comments contrasting antiquarians like Ritson with poets like himself, as we shall see in Chapter 2 of this thesis. We shall return to examine it in some depth in Chapter 4, when we look in particular at R. A. Smith and his continental counterpart, Zuccalmaglio.

Without examining the surviving archives of the Highland Society of Scotland, it is not possible to determine just how many individuals cooperated in retracing Macpherson's steps; however, many of their attestations were published in

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<sup>29</sup> Susan Manning, 'Henry Mackenzie and *Ossian*, or, The Emotional Value of Asterisks', in *From Gaelic to Romantic*, ed. by Fiona Stafford and Howard Gaskill (Amsterdam: Rodolpi, 1998).

<sup>30</sup> James Porter, "'Bring me the head of James Macpherson': the execution of Ossian and the wellsprings of folkloristic discourse', *Journal of American Folklore*, 114 (Fall 2001), iss. 454, 396-436 (p. 22). For further insight into Macpherson's work, see also Fiona Stafford, *The Sublime Savage: James Macpherson and the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988).

<sup>31</sup> Porter, "'Bring me the head of James Macpherson'", p. 2.

Mackenzie's report. Another report was published by John Sinclair the following year, apparently at the instigation of the Highland Society of London.

At this point it is necessary to explain the involvement of Sir John Macgregor Murray in both the MacDonalds' and James Macpherson's stories, for, as mentioned at the outset, he played no small part in both. Ronald Black's thumbnail sketch of him describes him succinctly if damningly as having a typically ex-patriot interest in the Gaelic culture of his home country, with 'an obsessive and slightly embarrassing interest in rediscovering his Gaelic identity'. The clan biography relates that Sir John was also an accurate and methodical collector of his family's genealogical details.<sup>32</sup>

As an ex-army officer, he had a special interest in piping.<sup>33</sup> It was Sir John who submitted Joseph MacDonald's piping tutor to the Highland Society of London for their consideration, some time after Joseph's death in India in 1763, although it ultimately fell to Joseph's elder brother, the clergyman Patrick, to publish it as the *Compleat Theory*, four decades later. Sir John was the dedicatee. He subscribed to Joseph and Patrick MacDonalds' song collection, and Patrick's second edition of *Highland Vocal Airs* dropped the dedication to the Highland Society of London, replacing it with a dedication to Sir John instead.<sup>34</sup> (Donaldson has pointed out that the second edition of *Highland Vocal Airs* (c.1788) was further altered by the omission of the preface and essay, suggesting that Patrick MacDonald may have had little choice but to include them in the first edition, since sponsorship by the Highland Society of London often came with conditions attached.)

Given Sir John MacGregor Murray's interests, it comes as no surprise that he was also responsible for raising a substantial sum by subscription amongst interested parties in the East Indies in 1784, to enable Macpherson to publish the Ossian tales in the original Gaelic. A law suit was later raised against Macpherson's family when it became apparent that he had not fulfilled his side of the bargain. These facts are rehearsed by Sir John Sinclair, in his *Dissertation on the*

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<sup>32</sup> Amelia Georgiana Murray MacGregor, *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Black, 'The Gaelic Academy', p. 6.

<sup>34</sup> Donaldson, *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society 1750-1950*, p. 58-9.

*Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian*, which he published in 1807 along with the poems in both Gaelic and Latin, alluding to Sir John MacGregor Murray's involvement in the enquiries as to the truth behind Macpherson's publications.<sup>35</sup> A few years later, MacGregor Murray subscribed to another publication of Ossianic poems, *An Original Collection of the Poems of Ossian, Orrann, Ulin, and other Bards* (1816).<sup>36</sup>

Sir John Sinclair's report is corroborated by the English linguist and poet John Leyden, who in the year 1800 was about to go on a tour of the Highlands and Islands with two German gentlemen, to investigate the Ossian question. Leyden and his charges dined at the Duke of Argyle's seat, where they met MacGregor Murray, who was similarly 'going on a tour to the Islands, partly to collect the evidence for the authenticity of Ossian's Poems, and to take the depositions of persons able to recite them or who had heard them recited.'<sup>37</sup>

Whilst Sir John's reports did not feature in Mackenzie's Report for the Highland Society of Scotland, it is thus plain from Sinclair and Leyden's writings that he was involved in contemporary enquiries about Macpherson.

Much later, Alexander Campbell was to turn to Sir John MacGregor Murray - by then an old man of seventy - when planning his own Highland song-gathering expedition in 1815. Clearly Sir John's contacts list would have been most useful to Campbell in determining whom he should visit on his own quest.

Sir John may only occupy a place in the wings of this narrative, but we shall find in due course that there were various minor characters supporting the work of the principal actors. For every collector who published a collection, there were

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<sup>35</sup> See John Sinclair, *Dissertation on the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian*, transl. by Thomas Ross (London: W. Bulmer, 1806). Original from Oxford University, Digitized Aug 2, 2007, 232 pages. Accessed by Google Books. <<http://books.google.com/>> [30 December 2008]. (Sinclair was to republish this Dissertation along with Gaelic translations of the poems, in 1807 as *The poems of Ossian, in the original Gaelic, with a literal translation into Latin, by the late Robert Macfarlan, A.M. Together with a dissertation on the authenticity of the poems, by Sir John Sinclair, Bart., and a translation from the Italian of the Abbé Cesarotti's dissertation on the controversy respecting the authenticity of Ossian, with notes and a supplemental essay, by John Macarthur, LL.D.* (London, 1807)

<sup>36</sup> *An Original Collection of the Poems of Ossian, Orrann, Ulin, and other Bards*, Collected and edited by Hugh and John McCallum (Montrose: McCallum, 1816).

<sup>37</sup> John Leyden, *Journal of a Tour in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland in 1800*, ed. with a bibliography, by James Sinton (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1903), p. 27.

other individuals who provided songs, airs, background information, or an entrée into the communities whose repertoires were being collected. These individuals tend to go unmentioned, seldom appearing anywhere but in general or specialist biographical dictionaries.

Another character with a significant supporting role was John Ramsay of Ochertyre (1736-1814), already mentioned in connection with the Dissertation in Patrick MacDonald's collection. His authorship was posthumously confused by Hew Scott's *Fasti ecclesiae Scoticae* erroneously ascribing the Dissertation to Walter Young,<sup>38</sup> although the confusion should have ended with the subsequent publication of Allardyce's edition of Ramsay's writings in *Scotland and Scotsmen of the Eighteenth Century*, in 1888,<sup>39</sup> since the wording of the Dissertation is almost exactly reproduced there, and is in similar vein to his other writings on what nineteenth-century writers termed 'traditionary lore'. However, Baptie perpetuated the confusion by naming Young as the author of the dissertation in the Supplementary Information at the back of his *Musical Scotland*., and citing Scott as his source.<sup>40</sup> (Of John Ramsay, Baptie makes no mention at all.)

Born near Stirling, and educated at the University of Edinburgh, Ramsay became an advocate, looked after his estate, corresponded widely, and wrote essays on various aspects of eighteenth-century Scotland. Precisely how much he published during his lifetime is unclear; the *Highland Vocal Airs* dissertation was, after all, anonymous. A lengthy pseudonymous letter to 'The Bee, or Literary Weekly Intelligencer' dated 13 April 1791, leads one to wonder whether there might not also be other writings in similar vein. This piece confirms his interest in Scottish song, for he suggested that a proper study should be made of the Scottish Lowland repertoire:-

‘Sir, permit me, through the channel of your miscellany, to suggest the expediency of a short and liberal enquiry into the use and progress of the admired songs that are sung to melodies, peculiar to the Scottish Low-Landers\*. The purpose of the following hints is rather to

<sup>38</sup> Hew Scott, *Fasti ecclesiae Scoticae : the succession of ministers in the parish churches of Scotland from the Reformation, A.D. 1560, to the present time*, 3 vols (Edinburgh : Paterson, 1866-1871), II, 246.

<sup>39</sup> Selections from Ramsay's writings survive in John Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by A. Allardyce, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1888).

<sup>40</sup> David Baptie, *Musical Scotland Past and Present* (Paisley: Parlane, 1894), p. 242.

obtain information than to establish any favourite system of my own. I mean, however, to confine myself to the *words*, the music having been treated of in a learned dissertation published some years ago. [...]

\* For the difference between them and the Highland vocal airs, consult Mr McDonald's collection of the latter, published in the year 1784.<sup>41</sup>

Ramsay went on to pose various questions, asking which was the oldest book of Lowland vocal airs; what Oswald had done to the tunes; which was the oldest source of the songs (ie lyrics); how many tunes seemed originally to have been church anthems; and the whereabouts of Allan Ramsay's and William Thomson's manuscripts.

Ramsay was a patron of Robert Burns, who visited him in 1787, although Burns apparently rejected the 'excellent advice' of the older man.<sup>42</sup> After Burns's death, Ramsay provided James Currie with information for the 'Life of Burns' that Currie published to preface his *The Works of Robert Burns* in 1800.<sup>43</sup> Ramsay was also a friend of Sir Walter Scott, who visited in 1793.

Ramsay was undeniably a dilettante, but was a literary man, and regarded by his contemporaries as an expert in antiquarian lore. His own writings, some of which were collected together by Allardyce,<sup>44</sup> are ample proof of the extent of his reading. Indeed, in less than a dozen pages, Ramsay's *Highland Vocal Airs* dissertation cited various classical authorities; made passing reference to Milton's *L'Allegro* (Ramsay writes about farm labourers 'warbling their native wood-notes wild' at harvest-time); and refers to James Macpherson; Hugh Blair's own *A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian, the Son of Fingal* (1763 and 1765); Martin Martin's *Description of the Isles* (1703); Thomas

<sup>41</sup> John Ramsay, under pseudonym of J. Runcole, 'On Scottish Songs', *The Bee, or Literary Weekly Intelligencer*, April 13 1791, pp. 201-210.

<sup>42</sup> See B. L. H. Horn, 'Ramsay, John, of Ochertyre (1736–1814)', in *ODNB* [accessed 18 Sept. 2008].

<sup>43</sup> Robert Burns and James Currie, *The works of Robert Burns : with an account of his life, and a criticism on his writings. To which are prefixed, some observation on the character and condition of Scottish peasantry* (Liverpool: Printed by J. M'Creery, for T. Cadell, jun., and W. Davies, London; and W. Creech, Edinburgh, 1800).

<sup>44</sup> John Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*.

Pennant's *A Tour in Scotland, and Voyage to the Hebrides* (1772); and Samuel Johnson's *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775).

Taking a rather negative, although perhaps more balanced view than Ramsay's contemporaries were able to do, Donaldson has observed that Ramsay's essay draws heavily on the standard sources cited above, assuming a pessimistic tone based on the Macpherson picture of a decaying Highland culture, and making observations about Highland music based on little more than conjecture. Donaldson furthermore finds Ramsay guilty of inconsistency in his historical narrative.<sup>45</sup>

Whilst Ramsay claimed the Dissertation for himself, he ascribed the Preface to the 'eminent musician', Revd. Walter Young of Erskine (c.1745-1814). (Using the hyperbole characteristic of his era, Scott's *Fasti Ecclesiae* described Young as 'the most splendid private musician of his day'.) Precisely what Young did, with regard either to the Preface or the settings, is unclear today, since Patrick, Joseph and their sister Flora seem all to have been talented musically, and it is not beyond doubt that Patrick might have been capable of doing the settings himself. It has been suggested that both the brothers and their sister Flora may have composed tunes for the poet Rob Donn MacKay's verses,<sup>46</sup> and we also know that Patrick did play the violin. Nonetheless, Patrick turned to Walter Young for technical assistance with the preparation of his collection.<sup>47</sup>

Donaldson recently suggested that Young might have done no more than polish the Preface, which Patrick MacDonald had already written:-

Since the contents of the 'Preface' could only have come from an experienced and subtle Highland musician - which Young was not - it seems probable that the latter may have been responsible, at most, for imparting a final gloss to Patrick's prose.<sup>48</sup>

It is difficult to tell precisely where the truth lies in this respect, though. The similarity of the style and content of Young's 'An Essay on Rythmical Measures'

<sup>45</sup> Donaldson, *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society 1750-1950*, p. 53.

<sup>46</sup> Mary Anne Alburger, "MacDonald, Patrick (1729-1824)", in *ODNB* [Accessed 1 September 2008].

<sup>47</sup> Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century I*, p. 411 n. 1.

<sup>48</sup> Donaldson, *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society 1750-1950*, p.46.

[sic] of 1786 would certainly suggest that he did have some input into MacDonald's Preface.<sup>49</sup>

Patrick MacDonald's enterprise broke with the tradition of earlier eighteenth-century Lowland music collections such as Alexander Stuart's *Musick for Allan Ramsay's Collection of Scots Songs* (1726) and William Thomson's *Orpheus Caledonius* (1725). Both of these were compiled in response to Allan Ramsay's verse collection, the *Tea-Table Miscellany* (1723-7 and 1737), a collection which certainly arose from a profusion of nationalistic sentiment, and was intended to be sung to old Scottish tunes, but which consisted of a mixture of old, new and generously revised verses. David Johnson has characterised it as essentially a massive con-trick:-

Like the earlier collection [*Scots Songs*, 1718] it consisted of new words set to folk-tunes, but this time on a larger scale: the *Tea-Table Miscellany* was nothing less than an attempt to set up, single-handed, a complete new Scottish song repertory. As a piece of brazen effrontery it is unequalled in the cultural history of Scotland, and it is even more remarkable in that it succeeded. Scholars ever since have had great difficulty in forming a picture of Scots folk-song prior to 1723, largely because Ramsay's work obliterated the traces of it.<sup>50</sup>

Nelson<sup>51</sup> follows Johnson in this interpretation, whilst Newman cites Maurice Lindsay's summary of Ramsay as having 'gentilified' Scottish songs, sanitizing them for more polite society.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the ensuing tune collections were secondary to the newly-created repertoire, rather than occupying the leading role themselves. Ramsay might have been creating a repertoire for Lowlanders and English enthusiasts, but the MacDonalds were faithfully recording their existing Highland repertoire for posterity.

We learn from the Preface to *Highland Vocal Airs* that Joseph MacDonald collected airs from Ross and Sutherland, during the two years prior to his

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<sup>49</sup> Walter Young, 'An Essay on Rythmical Measures' [sic], *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, 2 (1790), 55-110 (the paper was read on 18 December 1786).

<sup>50</sup> Johnson, *Music & Society in Lowland Scotland*, p. 134.

<sup>51</sup> Claire Nelson, 'Tea-table miscellanies: the Development of Scotland's Song Culture, 1720-1800', *Early Music* (November 2000), 597-617 (p.598).

<sup>52</sup> Steve Newman, 'The Scots Songs of Allan Ramsay: "Lyrick" Transformation, Popular Culture, and the Boundaries of the Scottish Enlightenment', *Modern Languages Quarterly* 63 (2002), 277-314 (p. 287), citing Maurice Lindsay, *History of Scottish Literature* (London: Hale, 1977), p. 179.

departure for the East Indies. Patrick later made ‘several journeys’ to collect airs from Perthshire and other parts of the Highlands. The brothers were also sent materials from the Hebridean islands.

Joseph and Patrick’s tune-collecting expeditions were certainly amongst the first field-trips for which records survive today. This is corroborated by Captain Simon Fraser, the retired Army man who published his father and grandfather’s Highland tune collection in 1816. Somewhat perversely, he commented that his own collection, *The Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and The Isles*,<sup>53</sup> had been gathered without the need to go beyond his own or his father’s house, unlike ‘a reverend gentleman in Argyllshire’ [ie Patrick MacDonald], who was no more than ‘a mercenary collector’:-

My part [said Fraser] has been solely fitting the Music for the eye of the public, which, so far as I can learn, has never been done further than the attempt of a reverend gentleman in Argyllshire, which has been ill-selected, and worse communicated; nor can a professional man venture to amend such, without a perfect knowledge of the real Air, as well as its adaptation to the original Words, so that it tended only to bring these beautiful Originals into contemptible disrepute; nay, even to infer a doubt of their existence, till now brought forward. For there is a disrelish in the minds of Highlanders, independent of a natural backwardness, to make any communication to a mercenary collector [...]<sup>54</sup>

The inference, with its gibe about a ‘professional man’ being unqualified to present this repertoire, is that Fraser was an insider to the tradition, in a way that the MacDonald brothers had not been. This may or may not have been the case. Fraser was said to be a fine fiddler, and his own musicianship is not in doubt, but Alburger has revealed that his collection was hurriedly published in an attempt to improve his financial situation, and his primary motivation was to secure maximum sales for his own collection. Indeed, Fraser also considered his collection to be in direct competition with Alexander Campbell’s *Albyn’s Anthology* (1816-18), which was, like his own, subsidised by the Highland Society

<sup>53</sup> Also known in the nineteenth century as ‘the Knockie Collection of Highland Music’ – See Preface to the 1874 edition, by William Mackay.

<sup>54</sup> Fraser, Simon, ‘Letter and Prospectus’ in *The Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and The Isles*, 1816. Simon Fraser and his collection have been discussed in detail in a recent PhD thesis: Alburger, Mary Anne, *Making the Fiddle Sing: Captain Simon Fraser of Knockie and his ‘Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles’ [1816]* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2001).



of Scotland. In view of this, his adverse comments about other collections probably do not merit further discussion.<sup>55</sup>

Joseph MacDonald certainly seems to have displayed a keen interest in the music of the Highlands, whether or not he was a tradition-bearer in the same way that Fraser considered himself.

Although Joseph MacDonald left his copy of vocal airs with his sister, he took ‘all his other collections and papers’ with him, and spent his journey to the East Indies arranging his collection. His intention had been to try to interest the young Sir James MacDonald of Sleat in it - or someone of similar standing.<sup>56</sup> With Joseph’s early death in 1763, and James MacDonald’s own early demise in 1766, this did not happen. Sir James would have been a good choice; indeed, his appointment of John MacCodrum, a renowned Highland poet, as his bard, confirms an interest in Gaelic culture.

Nonetheless, Patrick resolved to publish the airs that had been left at home, for the express purpose of preserving ‘the monuments of antiquity’. To this end, the collection was intentionally large. He admitted that some of the pieces were not of the highest quality, but assured the reader that it included popular Highland airs and others that were known to be ‘ancient’. He made no claims that it was a comprehensive collection, and - unlike later collections - provided only the sketchiest annotations, eg ‘A Skye air’, ‘A lament’, ‘An ancient air’ or ‘A bagpipe air’. Titles are mainly Gaelic, only occasionally with an English equivalent, and even more rarely solely in English; and there are no lyrics. Despite originating from vocal airs, the collection is intended purely for instrumental use.

Although Patrick’s Preface may have been ‘ghosted’ to some extent by Young, one can presume that they were in agreement about the content - and, indeed, about the presentation of the tunes themselves. Patrick himself had been reluctant to provide basses for the tunes, but had been persuaded to provide a very simple accompaniment where it was feasible, in order to increase sales and

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<sup>55</sup> Since *Albyn’s* is a major focus of Chapter 3, further discussion of Fraser’s collection will therefore be deferred until then.

<sup>56</sup> *Highland Vocal Airs*, p. 4. (Sir James Macdonald of Sleat lived from 1741-66.)

to facilitate their performance on a harpsichord by less able musicians. Only two years later, as we shall see in the next chapter, James Johnson was likewise to provide just a simple bass-line for the melodies in his own *Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803).

The problem, as Patrick MacDonald and Young found, was that the modes did not lend themselves to normal diatonic harmony. Sometimes the best solution was to give ‘a few octaves founded to the emphatical notes, such as we may suppose were struck upon the harp, in former times’, or a bagpipe-type drone. (Bardic harp-playing was associated with music of the ‘ancient times’, so this was a logical suggestion in the light of what was known.) At other times, they considered it permissible to allow the occasional sharpened seventh to enable the tune to be accompanied by a bass. These suggestions concur with the later judgement of the classically-trained George Farquhar Graham, who will make an appearance at a later stage in this thesis.

It is interesting to read MacDonald’s and Young’s comments regarding the actual transcription and subsequent presentation of the melodies in this collection. Joseph’s transcription methodology is described in some detail, and demonstrates a respect for authenticity well ahead of his times. It appears that Joseph had,

attempted, as nearly as he could, to copy and express the wild irregular manner, in which they are sung: and without regarding the equality of the bars, had written the notes, according to the proportions of time, that came nearest to those, which were used in singing.<sup>57</sup>

Joseph’s notation of the North Highland airs was basically adhered to, but some slow airs were sung in such a ‘wild, artless and irregular’ manner that, despite his efforts, Patrick MacDonald and Young took the editorial decision to reduce the airs to equal bars for publication, to make them more intelligible to the general public. They assured the reader that the notes were absolutely as Joseph had transcribed them; only the rhythms had been regularized, and care had been taken to keep them close to the tunes which Patrick had often heard his brother perform – and, indeed, in some cases had known since childhood. As

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<sup>57</sup> *Highland Vocal Airs*, p.4.

an indicator of their honesty, they listed the numbers of the airs which had thus been editorially altered.

Patrick, as a collector in his own right, chose the ‘set’ of an air that seemed to him ‘the best, and the most genuine’. His transcription method involved playing back the transcription to the performer, presumably on the fiddle. A few grace notes were added, ‘to give some idea of the style and manner in which the airs are performed’.<sup>58</sup> Patrick also transcribed some bagpipe music at the end of the volume, admitting that a piper might have done the job better.

MacDonald, Young and Ramsay’s vocabulary describing their collection is characteristic of the era in which they lived. As befitted the concept of Scotland as a somewhat ‘primitive’ country, with its ‘wild’ scenery and natives, so the music was described in like terms. Thus, to add to the ‘wild, irregular manner’ of performance, MacDonald and Young speak of ‘untutored Highlanders’ and ‘native harpers’, whilst Ramsay alludes to Highland bards, and the ‘native simplicity and nakedness’ of Highland melodies, commenting that,

Peculiar manners, and peculiar music, though a subject of ridicule to the fastidious and illiberal, will be regarded by him as features, by which the Almighty hath distinguished nations (the great families of the earth) from each other.<sup>59</sup>

Similarly, MacDonald and Young’s descriptions of performance practice suggest that, if contemporary skilled musicians (we can infer that this means the classically-trained ‘art’ musicians) tended to use what we would now call rubato for expressive purposes, then this was indicative of a return to nature, and therefore it was not surprising if the ‘untutored Highlander’ - closer to nature - had a similar tendency to dwell on ‘long and pathetic notes’, or to rush other parts, with no determinable regular beat. It was, after all, only natural.

The idea that folk music could deteriorate through time is a recurrent theme through many of these early published collections, and is indicative of an unease with the whole idea of an oral, unwritten tradition. With an unconscious harking back to Rousseau’s concept of a primitive age of innocence becoming corrupted

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<sup>58</sup> *Highland Vocal Airs*, p.4.

<sup>59</sup> *Highland Vocal Airs*, p.13.

through time, MacDonald and Young similarly suggested that their Highland folk tunes had become corrupted through the ages. Writing about harp music, which had now fallen from fashion and was hardly ever heard, they commented that,

[...] those [tunes], which have been preserved by tradition, may naturally be supposed to have been gradually degenerating. To render these airs therefore more regular, especially in their measure, is, in fact, bringing them nearer to their original form.<sup>60</sup>

However, caught between the rock and the hard place, there was also an awareness that classical artifice was also having an effect on the purity of the Celtic tradition: MacDonald and Young remarked that, whilst harp-playing had fallen out of fashion in the Highlands, Irish harp music had suffered a different fate, with a regrettable tendency for foreign musicians to ‘improve’ tunes with variations that made them resemble those written in Italy or France, but compromised the tunes’ original purity.

Gelbart, in *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”*, observes that one can, in fact, detect a clear distinction between the collectors striving for simplicity and preservation (like MacDonald and Young), and those professional musicians whose art generated their income. The traditionalists tended to have an amateur interest in music, but to be professionals in other fields; whereas the professional musicians ‘must have recognized that offering the buying public “authentic” versions of ancient works, in a form that was not usable for home music-making occasions, was not a healthy career choice’.<sup>61</sup>

At this stage in our narrative, however, our focus is primarily on the enthusiastic amateurs intent on preserving their heritage. Keenly aware that their Highland cultural heritage was seemingly fading away before their very eyes, first Joseph and then Patrick MacDonald made an earnest attempt to gather together at least some of the song repertoire, with contextual input from Young and Ramsay. We shall see in the next chapter how this compared with contemporary attempts in the Lowlands and, indeed, south of the Border.

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<sup>60</sup> *Highland Vocal Airs*, p. 6.

<sup>61</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”*, p. 181.

## Chapter 2. 'The aera of Scottish music and Scottish song is now passed': Lowland Song Collecting, c.1780-1800

### Introduction

The late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century collections to be discussed in this chapter are characterised by a spirit of antiquarian zeal. The collectors convey a sense that the songs were rapidly disappearing, and an urge to collect and preserve their national repertoire by committing the repertoire to print. This is most clearly articulated by the English antiquarian, Joseph Ritson (1752-1803) in his *Scottish Song* (1794), with the overarching assumption that an earlier, more innocent pastoral age had now gone:-

The aera [sic] of Scottish music and Scottish song is now passed. The pastoral simplicity and natural genius of former ages no longer exist: a total change of manners has taken place in all parts of the country, and servile imitation usurped the place of original invention. All, therefore, which now remains to be wished, is that industry should exert itself to retrieve and illustrate the reliques of departed genius.<sup>1</sup>

Such sentiments were expressed at least into the second decade of the nineteenth century. The concept of the 'museum' is pervasive, to the extent of being named in the title of James Johnson's magnum opus.

This chapter will focus on three late eighteenth-century collections, two Lowland Scottish and one English. The Scottish collections are those with which Robert Burns was associated, namely James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803); and Thomson's *Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* (1793-1818 and 1841), whilst the English collection is Ritson's aforementioned *Scottish Song* (1794). By examining the background and philosophies behind each collection; how the collections were assembled; the roles of the individuals involved; and more specifically their quest for melodic authenticity and decisions about the nature of the accompaniment, it will be demonstrated that these three Scottish song collections bear some of the trademarks of the Enlightenment, but perhaps also hint at the Romantic movement that was to follow it. Furthermore, we

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Ritson, *Scottish Song in Two Volumes* (London: for J. Johnson & J. Egerton, 1794), pp. cx-cxi.

shall explore and endeavour to justify the premise that these collections give a clear indication as to their intended audiences.

After initially considering some of the cultural influences at play during this period, we shall then examine each collection in turn, before finally discussing some of the issues that divide or unite their compilers.

Table 1, overleaf, gives an overview of the works under discussion in the present chapter, also locating Patrick MacDonald's *Highland Vocal Airs* chronologically.

Place/ Date	Person	Title/ Event
Edinburgh 1779	William Tytler (1711-92)	<i>A Dissertation on the Scottish Musick</i> [sic] (published unattributed, as Appendix no.8 to Hugo Arnot's <i>The History of Edinburgh</i> )
Edin. 1783	Tytler	<i>A Dissertation on the Scottish Music</i> [sic] (published at the end of, <i>Poetical Remains of James the First</i> )
London 1783	Joseph Ritson (1752-1803)	<i>A Select Collection of English Songs</i> (the precursor to his <i>Scottish Songs</i> )
Edin. 1784	Patrick MacDonald (1729-1824) [and Joseph, 1739-63]	<i>A Collection of Highland Vocal Airs</i>
Edin. 1787	James Johnson (c.1755-1811)	<i>The Scots Musical Museum</i> Vol.1
Edin. 1788	Johnson	<i>The Scots Musical Museum</i> Vol.2 (Robert Burns becomes involved)
Edin. 1790	Johnson	<i>The Scots Musical Museum</i> Vol.3
Edin. 1792	Tytler	<i>A Dissertation on the Scottish Music</i> (read & published in first <i>Transactions</i> of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland)
Edin. 1792	Johnson	<i>The Scots Musical Museum</i> Vol.4
Edin. 1792	George Thomson (1757-1851)	Enlisted Burns for contributions to his <i>A Select Collection</i>
Lond. 1793	George Thomson	<i>A Select Collection of Original Scottish</i> [sic] <i>Airs for the Voice</i> . First Set (2 <sup>nd</sup> to 4 <sup>th</sup> Sets followed in 1798, 1799 & 1799) <sup>2</sup>
Lond. 1794	Joseph Ritson	<i>Scottish Song: in Two Volumes</i>
1796	James Macpherson & Robert Burns die	
Edin. 1797	Johnson	<i>The Scots Musical Museum</i> Vol.5
Lond. 1801	Thomson	<i>A Select Collection of Original Scottish</i> [sic] <i>Airs for the Voice</i> . Vols. 1 & 2 (reissues of Sets 1-2 and 3-4 respectively)
Lond. 1802	Thomson	<i>A Select Collection</i> Vol.3 [50 Scottish songs by Haydn]
Edin. 1803	Johnson	<i>The Scots Musical Museum</i> Vol.6
Edin. 1803	Joseph MacDonald	<i>Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe</i> (published by brother Patrick)
Lond. 1805	Thomson	<i>Select Collection</i> Vol.4 [51 songs by Haydn]. (Vols 5-6 later, 1818 & 1841)

Table 1. Antiquarian Interest in Scottish Music, 1783-1805: a Chronology

<sup>2</sup> For the detailed publication history of Thomson's *Select Collection*, see Kirsteen Carrick McCue, 'George Thomson (1757-1851): his collections of national airs in their Scottish cultural context' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1994), 2 vols, II part 1, 284-311

## Background and Philosophies

Let us first set these collections in context by examining the background and philosophies out of which they grew. Although, as has already been suggested, it is impossible to delineate precisely the period now commonly referred to as the Age of Enlightenment, whether in Scotland, Britain or further afield, many scholars do seem to consider that it was coming to an end by the last two decades of the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, so far as the antiquarian interest in national music was concerned, these last two decades witnessed an unprecedented flurry of activity, publishing not only collections of Scottish music, but also significant writings about it.

William Tytler (1711-92) was an Edinburgh lawyer and historian. A founder member of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1780, his *A Dissertation on the Scottish Musick* was, after Beattie's essay, probably the most influential discourse on the history of Scottish music for antiquarians and collectors of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It was first published as an appendix in Hugo Arnot's *The History of Edinburgh*, attributed only to 'a learned and ingenious friend', in 1779.<sup>3</sup> It subsequently appeared towards the end of Tytler's book, *Poetical Remains of James the First*, in 1783;<sup>4</sup> again in a 1788 edition of Arnot; and once more attributed to Tytler, in William Napier's *A Selection of the most favourite Scots songs chiefly pastoral*, in 1790. It was later read at a meeting, and subsequently published in 1792, in the first Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, under Tytler's name.

Tytler's purpose was to track down the origins of the earliest melodies, 'and to trace the history of our music down to modern times.'<sup>5</sup> The opening to his dissertation gives a good idea of late eighteenth-century Scottish antiquarian thinking, not to mention illustrating the close parallels with poetry:-

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<sup>3</sup> Hugo Arnot, *The History of Edinburgh, from the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time* ([Edinburgh], 1779), pp.624-42, Appendix no.8, 'A Dissertation on the Scottish Musick' [sic]

<sup>4</sup> William Tytler, *Dissertation on the Scottish Music* [sic], *Poetical Remains of James the First, King of Scotland*. [A Dissertation on the life and writings of James 1. – [Dissertation on the Scottish Music by the Editor, W. Tytler] (Edinburgh: J. and E. Balfour, 1783).

<sup>5</sup> Tytler, 'A Dissertation on the Scottish Musick', in Arnot, *The History of Edinburgh*, p.624.



The genius of the Scots has, in every age, shone conspicuous in Poetry and Music. Of the first, the Poems of *Ossian*, composed in an age of rude antiquity, are sufficient proof. The peevish doubt entertained by some of their authenticity, appears to be the utmost refinement of scepticism. As genuine remains of *Celtic Poetry*, the Poems of *Ossian* will continue to be admired as long as there shall remain a taste for the *sublime* and *beautiful*.

The Scottish Music does no less honour to the genius of the country. The old Scottish songs have always been admired for the wild pathetic sweetness which distinguishes them from the music of every other country.<sup>6</sup>

The 'sublime and beautiful' phrase, incidentally, is an allusion to the Irish philosopher Edmund Burke's influential *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757); his theory of the beautiful, the sublime and the picturesque can be widely traced in fiction, travel writing and in music commentary until the time of Alexander Campbell, as will become evident in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Tytler's comments were particularly influential upon Johnson, Burns and Ritson. For a start, Tytler's pronouncement about the correct kind of accompaniment for Scottish song in his Dissertation, seems briefly to have become almost a 'gold standard' for antiquarian publishers of song collections:-

The proper accompaniment of a Scottish song is a plain, thin, dropping bass, on the harpsichord or guitar. The fine breathings, those heart felt touches which genius alone can express, in our songs, are lost in a noisy accompaniment of instruments. The full cords of a thorough bass should be used sparingly and with judgment, not to overpower, but to support and strengthen the voice at proper pauses. Where, with a fine voice, is joined some skill and execution on either of those instruments, the air, by way of symphony, or introduction to the song, should always be first played over; and, at the close of every stanza, the last part of the air should be repeated ... the performer may shew his taste and fancy on the instrument, by varying it ad libitum.<sup>7</sup>

We know from Burns' correspondence with Gavin Hamilton in March 1787 (about the forthcoming Edinburgh edition of Burns's *Poems, chiefly in the Scottish dialect*), that Tytler and the poets Drs Beattie and Blacklock were also involved

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<sup>6</sup> 'A Dissertation on the Scottish Musick', p. 624

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, p.640

in the Museum project.<sup>8</sup> Following Tytler's guidance, Johnson and Clarke likewise decided that a thorough bass was the 'proper accompaniment' for their *Scots Musical Museum* settings.

When Ritson published his own *Scotish Songs* in 1794, he prefaced the songs with a substantial 'Historical Essay on Scottish Song', in which he quoted Tytler's prescription about accompanying Scottish songs almost verbatim, although he himself chose to print only the melodic line without accompaniment.

Later that same year, we find Burns quoting Tytler's advice (without specific ascription) in a letter to George Thomson dated 19<sup>th</sup> October 1794. Whilst we do not know whether he had read Tytler's dissertation, Burns had definitely seen Ritson's publication, so this might have been the source of his comments. When Burns wrote this letter, Thomson needed a new arranger for his collection. However, as we shall see in due course, Thomson's collection had an entirely different rationale, so Burns's comments about accompaniment, no less than his recommendation of Johnson's arranger, the worthy-but-dull Clarke, as a suitable arranger, represent a singular error in judgement.

As a point of interest, another member of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries contemplated publishing a history of Scottish music, a couple of years before Tytler's *Dissertation*. We can only conjecture as to why the book was never published - perhaps the would-be author felt that Tytler had said it all already. John Callander of Craigforth, an Advocate, had been elected a Fellow of the Society in April 1781. On 2<sup>nd</sup> October that same year, already 'Principal Secretary to the Foreign Correspondence of the Society', he published a proposal,

'Inscribed to the Right Honourable the Earl of Buchan, President, and the other members of the Society of Antiquaries for Scotland [...] by subscription, in one volume quarto, A general history of Scottish music, from the days of Ossian son of Fingal, in the fourth century, to the beginning of the eighteenth: To which will be prefixed, A

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<sup>8</sup> James Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum 1787-1803*, intro. by Donald A. Low, 2 vols (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1991), I, 7.

dissertation on the musical instruments used by the ancient Scots. Illustrated with plates.’<sup>9</sup>

Music was said to have been Callander’s main interest besides his antiquarian activities, and he played the violin.<sup>10</sup> His other interests extended to travel; another unfulfilled proposal for a dictionary about the ‘Northern Nations’; Biblical translation; etymology; and an annotated edition of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* – said to have been of questionable originality, derivative but without attributing his sources. It is obviously impossible to know whether his proposed music book would have made an original contribution to knowledge. Nonetheless, his involvement in the Society of Antiquaries, his other publications, and a passing reference to the ‘Republic of Letters’ clearly define him as a typical member of the Edinburgh literati.

Beattie and Tytler’s writings were a major influence upon the Lowland collections about to be discussed, and the excerpts quoted above have already indicated the continuing influence of Macpherson’s *Ossian* on literary men. As we have already seen, *Ossian* came on the scene at a time when Scotland, enthused by primitivism and the Rousseauesque interest in origins, was particularly receptive to it. However, by the time Johnson and Burns began collaborating on *The Scots Musical Museum*, Macpherson’s *Ossian* was already twenty years old. Much time and paper had been expended debating its authenticity, and people already had a good idea about the nature of Macpherson’s hand in it. Nonetheless, not all Lowland literati were sceptical about the *Ossian* legends. (For example, writing to George Paton in 1781, Callander had asked to be lent ‘Mr Clerk’s answer to Shaw’s attack upon the Poems of Ossian’, and later pronounced that ‘Shaw is an ignorant blockhead.’)<sup>11</sup> Moreover, whilst one might not expect a Lowlander collector to express as much interest in something of primarily Gaelic, Highland significance, it still was something that both Burns and Ritson commented upon. I shall suggest later that their differing stances had as much to do with their creative or intellectual motivation, as with their living on either side of the Scottish Border.

<sup>9</sup> Bibliographical details from COPAC.

<sup>10</sup> T. F. Henderson, ‘Callender, John’, rev. by Alexander Du Toit, *ODNB*.

<sup>11</sup> *Letters from Thomas Percy [...] John Callander ... David Herd, and others, to George Paton*, ed. by J. Maidment (Edinburgh: Printed for John Stevenson, 1830), p. 146 (Letters dated 29 October and 3 December 1781).

Despite the growing scepticism about Ossian amongst intellectuals, the interest in native traditions was as strong, if not stronger than ever, and the seeds of primitivism were beginning to blossom into full-blown romanticism. Johnson, Burns and Thomson - and even Ritson, to some extent - stepped into this environment. Their emotional response to the cultural climate gave rise, in Johnson's case, to what Burns predicted would be the greatest Scottish song collection of all time, but in Thomson's settings, what Cedric Thorpe Davie described as an 'elephantine *magnum opus*',<sup>12</sup> and David Johnson dismissed as 'a monstrous white elephant'.<sup>13</sup>

## The Scots Musical Museum

Although the *Scots Musical Museum* is given due deference in histories of Scottish music, it goes without saying that there is vastly more scholarly literature on the subject of Robert Burns' song-writing, than there is about the tunes themselves. Indeed, Crawford's *Society and the Lyric* expressly excludes the question of Burns's songs 'as unities of tune and verse',<sup>14</sup> whilst comprehensively dealing with the relationship between song lyrics and eighteenth-century culture. In the present context, however, the difficulty lies in teasing out the studies particularly pertaining to Burns's involvement with James Johnson and George Thomson as publishers of song-collections with music.

Burns collaborated closely and over a prolonged period with both Johnson and Thomson. The discussion that follows is informed by the research of Cedric Thorpe Davie<sup>15</sup> and Catarina Ericson-Roos,<sup>16</sup> inter alia, who have explored the working relationship that he had with each compiler. His relationship with

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<sup>12</sup> Cedric Thorpe Davie, *Scotland's Music* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1980), p. 14

<sup>13</sup> David Johnson, *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland*, p. 146.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Crawford, *Society and The Lyric: a study of the Song Culture of eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1979), vii.

<sup>15</sup> Cedric Thorpe Davie, 'Robert Burns, writer of songs', in *Critical Essays on Robert Burns*, ed. by Donald A. Low (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 157-186.

<sup>16</sup> Catarina Ericson-Roos, *The Songs of Robert Burns: a Study of the Unity of Poetry and Music* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1977).

Johnson is further explored by Donald A. Low,<sup>17</sup> whilst Kirsteen McCue has written extensively about his correspondence with Thomson.<sup>18</sup> Barry Cooper has looked at Thomson's work specifically with Beethoven, but also with his other arrangers and with Burns.<sup>19</sup>

Of all the collectors to be discussed in the present thesis, James Johnson's was quite possibly the most ambitious in terms of the scope of his project, for his ambition was that his *Scots Musical Museum* would be the first affordable, pocket-sized collection of every Scots song extant. (Stenhouse, writing as 'Scotus' in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, later said that Johnson's *Museum* was intended to be affordable to 'every lover of native song').<sup>20</sup>

Johnson had already conceived the notion of the *Museum* before he met Burns, and initially planned only one or two volumes. His announcement of February 1787 indicated that he would include English and Irish as well as Scottish songs. However, by the time the first volume appeared in May 1787,<sup>21</sup> he admitted in his preface that since this scheme had been unpopular with subscribers, the collection would henceforth be purely Scottish, and the inclusion of the other material would be deferred.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Donald A. Low, Introduction, in *Critical Essays on Robert Burns*, ed. by Donald A. Low (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); and Introduction, in James Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum 1787-1803*, ed. by Donald A. Low, 2 vols, (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1991).

<sup>18</sup> Kirsteen Carrick McCue, 'George Thomson (1757-1851): his collections of national airs in their Scottish cultural context'; and Kirsteen Carrick McCue, "The most intricate bibliographical enigma": understanding George Thomson (1757-1851) and his collections of national airs', in *Music Librarianship in the United Kingdom: Fifty Years of the United Kingdom Branch of the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres*, ed. by Richard Turbet (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 99-119.

<sup>19</sup> Barry Cooper, *Beethoven's Folksong Settings: Chronology, Sources, Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

<sup>20</sup> William Stenhouse [alias 'Scotus'], 'Scots Musical Museum', *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine*, (July 1817), pp. 377-81.

<sup>21</sup> The first volume was 'Printed & Sold by James Johnson Music Seller Edinburgh', but was also available from named booksellers in London, Glasgow, '& all the principal Music Sellers'.

<sup>22</sup> James Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum*, I (1787), p. iii, 'To the true lovers of Caledonian Music and Song'. In the Preface to the second volume, in March 1788, Johnson conceded that a couple of non-Scottish items had slipped through the net, but that this would not happen again.

Taking his lead from poetry collections such as David Herd's *Ancient and Modern Scots Songs* (1769)<sup>23</sup> - which included an Advertisement for communications from anyone 'possessed of any Scots songs of merit, not here found', James Johnson clearly had similar aims when he requested that any 'ladies or gentlemen' with worthwhile songs with music 'never hitherto published' should submit them to be considered for inclusion in subsequent volumes. This is the first indication that the collection was intended to preserve unpublished as well as previously published material. Mathison emphasises the collaborative nature of Johnson's project, when he explores what Johnson's opening appeal 'To the true lovers of Caledonian Music and Song',<sup>24</sup> actually meant in terms of 'social music', observing that the *Museum* was effectively 'a radically communal and open project at precisely the same time as it sets out the boundaries of the nation it claims to represent.'<sup>25</sup> If Mathison's description of the project in such modern terms initially takes us by surprise, then a recent article by Sorensen serves to reinforce his theory, for she makes the point that the print culture in eighteenth-century Scotland was both more advanced and more egalitarian than it was in England; furthermore, that there was a tendency in England to 'anachronize' Scots songs and ballads to a much greater extent than there was in Scotland itself. The Scottish view of its own culture was more forward-looking and open to change, than the view of the same repertoire from south of the Border.<sup>26</sup>

Notwithstanding a more egalitarian Scottish society, Johnson nonetheless assumed that 'ladies and gentlemen' would be forthcoming with material, and no mention was made as to where they might have obtained these songs. Indeed, one is immediately forced to confront the dual issues of class and culture, in the first instance in speculating as to which strata of society Johnson and Burns drew their material from - and for whom the collection was intended - and in the second instance, remembering that the distinction between 'folk' and

<sup>23</sup> David Herd, *The Ancient and Modern Scots Songs, Heroic Ballads &c*, (Edinburgh: Martin & Wotherspoon, 1769), p. x. (NB this collection was purely of song texts, not music.)

<sup>24</sup> *Scots Musical Museum* I (1787), p. iii.

<sup>25</sup> Hamish Mathison, 'Robert Burns and National Song', in *Scotland, Ireland, and the Romantic Aesthetic*, ed. by David Duff and Catherine Jones (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007), p. 82.

<sup>26</sup> Janet Sorensen, 'The Debatable Borders of English and Scottish Song and Ballad Collections', in *Romanticism's Debatable Lands*, ed. by Claire Lamont and Michael Rossington (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 80-91 (p. 89).

‘art’ music was still blurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as Gelbart has so ably demonstrated. The findings of the present and subsequent chapters very much bear this out.

By August 1792, Johnson explained in the preface to Vol.4 of the *Scots Musical Museum*, that the collection was proving larger than he at first envisaged, due to his inclusive ambitions, stressing that, ‘To those who object that his publication contains pieces of inferior, or little value, the Editor answers, by referring to his plan [...] all our songs cannot have equal merit’. Johnson’s all-inclusive intentions were obviously impossibly over-ambitious; furthermore, the texts might have been based on old songs, but many of the words to the songs were freshly composed by Burns, and as many of the words had been modified and improved either by Burns, or by Ramsay before him.

Johnson dedicated the first five volumes of the *Scottish Musical Museum* (1787-97) to the Catch Club, but dedicated the sixth volume and subsequent reissues of the entire set to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland<sup>27</sup> - a move that Sorensen interprets as a tribute on Johnson’s part ‘to the value of age’.<sup>28</sup>

With the change in dedication came the addition to the title-page of a subtitle quantifying the extent of the collection - ‘six hundred Scots songs with proper basses for the pianoforte’, and an additional sub-title, offering,

‘the original simplicity of our Ancient National Airs [...] retained unincumbered [sic] with useless Accompaniments & graces depriving the hearers of the sweet simplicity of their native melodies [...].’

Farmer has suggested with some justification that the claim to ‘original simplicity’ was a tilt at Thomson’s *Select Collection*,<sup>29</sup> and we shall see in due course precisely how Johnson interpreted that simplicity. (It will also become apparent that MacDonald, Johnson and Ritson, were starting from a very different point to that of Italian incomers like Corri or Urbani, or Thomson, who

<sup>27</sup> These bodies were founded in 1771 and 1780 respectively.

<sup>28</sup> Sorensen, ‘The Debatable Borders of English and Scottish Song and Ballad Collections’, p. 88.

<sup>29</sup> Henry George Farmer, *The Scots Musical Museum* [offprint], (Hatboro : Folklore Associates, 1962), p. xviii.

were producing collections for a different purpose, and for a musically more educated audience.)

The updated title page and usefully informative, if not extensive prefatory material for Johnson's sixth volume, continued in subsequent re-issues.

Considerably more introductory material was to be added when David Laing republished the *Scots Musical Museum* with Stenhouse's *Illustrations* in 1839, and he added more introductory material in 1853, as we shall see in Chapter 5 of this thesis. However, it is worth noting as an aside here, that some of Sorenson's comments about Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* may have been based on a misunderstanding as to which parts of Laing's 1853 edition were by Laing, and which by Johnson.<sup>30</sup> Some of her comments appear to be based on the false premise that Johnson was the author of the introduction to the *Scots Musical Museum*, whereas in fact the edition she quotes is Laing's 1853 edition, complete with Laing's editorial introduction (largely written for the 1839 edition and augmented for the 1853 one), and Stenhouse's own *Illustrations*. Thus, Johnson is neither the author of the comments about the 'style of national music', nor of the rejection of the link between 'popular airs' and 'nameless shepherds and shepherdesses', though he did write the lines about the desirability of producing a convenient 'pocket companion' for 'admirers of social music'.

The preface in Johnson's first volume boasted that the collection contained 'original music embellished with Thorough Basses by one of the ablest Masters' (Stephen Clarke, the English-born organist at the New Episcopal Chapel, Cowgate in Edinburgh), and 'additional Sets of apposite words to the same tune; adapted to the voice, harpsichord, and piano-forte, &c'. However, although in the mid-eighteenth century, James Oswald (1710-69) had characteristically supplied a figured or unfigured thorough bass in his Scots tune and song settings, the concept was already old-fashioned in musical circles by the time Johnson commenced his *Scot Musical Museum* in 1787. (After all, Mozart was already over thirty, and Haydn in his mid-fifties.)

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<sup>30</sup> *ibid*, p. 89.



Donald Low, modern-day editor of the Scots Musical Museum reprint, notes that David Johnson dismisses Clarke's harmonisations as bland and simplistic; and old-fashioned in merely giving a figured bass, without 'opening and closing symphonies'.<sup>31</sup> However, Low points out that Johnson and Clarke were intentionally following Tytler's dictum, and stripping the tunes back to what they regarded as a simple, unadorned state.<sup>32</sup> The end result is that although completed ten to twenty years later than MacDonald and Young's collection, Clarke's thorough basses are along similar lines. Moreover, although there are very few closing postludes, and even fewer introductions or interludes, there are occasional hints in this direction. For example, the first song in Vol.1, 'The Highland Queen', is endowed with a one-bar instrumental echo before the final line of verse, and a seven-bar instrumental postlude after the verse ends.

Burns's *Commonplace Book* (1785) reveals that as early as 1785 he intended, in Raymond Lamont Brown's words, 'to endeavour to rescue, rehabilitate and recreate Scottish folk song'.<sup>33</sup> Only a generation younger than the MacDonalds, it is significant to note that, whilst enthusiastic about the origins of his Scottish songs - and his letters tell us that he eagerly visited places associated either with the writing of various songs or with the Ossian legends - Burns's enthusiasm for Macpherson's *Ossian* epics were as literature, rather than as a precious legacy of a bardic past. For example, in 1783, he wrote to John Murdoch (his former schoolmaster), that 'my favourite authors are of the sentimental kind ... McPherson's *Ossian*, &c'.<sup>34</sup> Macpherson is unequivocally described as an author. (When we come to discuss Hogg, R. A. Smith and questions of fakery in Chapter 4, we shall see that the poet or composer's approach to creative literary input was very different to that of antiquarians like Ritson.)

Given Burns's interest in Scottish song, it is hardly surprising that his meeting with Johnson was to have such a fruitful outcome. They first met in the spring of 1787, when Johnson had already commenced the first volume, which

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<sup>31</sup> Scots Musical Museum, ed. by Low, I, p. 23, citing Johnson, Music and Society in Lowland Scotland, pp. 148-49.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> *Robert Burns' Common Place Book*, ed. and introduced by Raymond Lamont Brown (Edinburgh: J. Adam, 1872; repr. ; repr. Wakefield: S. R. Publishers, 1969), p. x.

<sup>34</sup> *The Complete Letters of Robert Burns*, ed. by James A. Mackay, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Ayr: Alloway Publishing, 1990), p. 55: Letter from Burns to John Murdoch, 15 January 1783.

consequently contained little of Burns's work. It is evident from surviving correspondence that the two men found themselves in agreement about Johnson's *Museum* project. With Burns' input, the collection ultimately expanded into six volumes, of which he was effectively chief contributor and editor for the second, third and fourth, but he died before the publication of the fifth and sixth.

The primary textual sources for the *Scots Musical Museum* were Ramsay's four-volume *Tea-Table Miscellany* (1723-27 and 1737), and David Herd's *Ancient and modern Scottish songs, heroic ballads* (1769, expanded 1776). However, just as Ramsay essentially re-wrote the repertoire with his *Tea-Table Miscellany*, writing some of his songs himself and modifying many others, so Burns made a similar contribution to the *Scots Musical Museum*. Some songs were his own newly written poems, but he also drew songs from Ramsay and elsewhere, improving, altering, and cutting as he felt appropriate - and then, quite often, suggesting different tunes. On other occasions, Burns would start with the opening lines of an existing song, but the remainder would be of his own composition.

As mentioned above, although Burns wrote bawdy songs elsewhere for use in his all-male drinking circles, the *Scots Musical Museum*, intended for mixed company, reveals contemporary prudishness about the content and language of some of the old poems. For example, writing about 'The mill, mill O', Stenhouse pointed out that Ramsay wrote substitute words (which Thomson adopted for use in the *Orpheus Caledonius*) - and that Ramsay's words were further sanitized by Burns as 'When the wild war's deadly blast'.<sup>35</sup>

With regard to Johnson and Burns' sources for tunes, we know that they drew upon some of the most successful collections of the preceding fifty years, including William Thomson's *Orpheus Caledonius* (1726, written without Ramsey's authorisation, to provide tunes for the *Tea-Table Miscellany*), and collections by Oswald and McGibbon (1742-1772). There were also a number of manuscript sources, but not all of these can now be traced.

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<sup>35</sup> Stenhouse, *Illustrations*, p. 225; *Scots Musical Museum*, no. 242.

There has been some debate about Burns's musicality, but it is clear from original sources that he could both play the fiddle, and read music. There are also a few snippets of tunes known to have been written down in Burns' own hand. He knew enough to be able to tell Stephen Clarke, his musical arranger, how he wanted a tune to go - or to insist to George Thomson (to whom we shall refer in due course), that omitting an upbeat would make for a stronger beginning to a song. However, when he wanted a tune taken down 'viva voce' - in other words, transcribed from a singer's performance - then the inference is that he had someone else (maybe Clarke) do it for him, so his ability to write music was probably limited. What's more, although he sometimes had tunes transcribed (including from his mother's and his wife's singing), he also had sight of various earlier published collections, as has been mentioned above. Whilst Patrick MacDonald gave the impression that the bulk of his collection had been personally collected by either his younger brother or himself, the *Scots Musical Museum*, by contrast, was not even intended as a compilation of tunes personally gathered by Johnson and Burns.

Although James Johnson and Robert Burns were contemporaries, the publication of the *Scots Musical Museum* was not completed until 1803, seven years after Burns' early death.<sup>36</sup> Ironically, Johnson died in poverty in 1811, and his widow died in an Edinburgh workhouse - the publication had plainly not brought any great financial reward. Between 1803 and 1817, the collection went out of print, although, as we shall see in Chapter 5, Stenhouse intended to revive it along with his own *Illustrations*,<sup>37</sup> and Laing actually did so, in 1839 as *The Scottish Musical Museum*, and in 1853 as *The Scots Musical Museum*. By this stage, the *Museum* itself was 50 years old, indicating the respect with which it must still have been held.

## George Thomson

Burns began working with Johnson in 1787. By the autumn of 1792, Burns had also met and was corresponding with George Thomson (1757-1851). The

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<sup>36</sup> The volumes of the *Scots Musical Museum* appeared in 1787, 1788, 1790, 1792, c.1797 (within a year after Burns' death) and 1803.

<sup>37</sup> By 1817, Stenhouse (alias 'Scotus') wrote that the *Scots Musical Museum* had been 'long out of print', but announced that 'a new and improved edition' was well-advanced in preparation.

following year, whilst still involved with the *Scots Musical Museum*, Burns became involved with Thomson's large-scale enterprise, *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice* (1793-1805, and 1818).<sup>38</sup> Although Burns died in 1796, McCue notes that he had given Thomson the copyright for the songs that he had written for the collections, so Thomson was able to continue using them.<sup>39</sup>

It is very clear from surviving correspondence that Burns enjoyed a more congenial relationship, both at a social level and in the working sense, with Johnson than with Thomson. Roy, Davie and Ericson-Roos have explored this in depth.<sup>40</sup> It would also appear that Johnson gave Burns a much freer hand with regard both to texts and choice of tunes for his songs, whereas - as has already been mentioned - Thomson was more controlling in every regard.

Thomson pressurized Burns to write more Anglicised texts, where he felt the old verses were unsatisfactory. Burns's reluctance is preserved for posterity in his correspondence, with such comments as, 'These English songs gravel me to death'<sup>41</sup> - hardly surprising, considering his reputation was founded on his writing in Scots. This question is explored further by Murison, Davie and Sweeney-Turner;<sup>42</sup> indeed, Davie expressed some surprise that Burns acquiesced to Thomson's 'arrogant meddling', but reminds us that only a few songs were actually published by Thomson prior to Burns's death.

Besides his Scottish songs, Thomson also engaged an English poet, Peter Pindar, to write new English songs for his *Select Collection*. Ritson was scathing about this decision, but Thomson wrote his own riposte in the Preface of the 1801 edition of Vol.1; both are quoted herewith:-

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<sup>38</sup> NB that the spelling changed from 'Scotish' in Thomson's Sets of the 1790s, to the modern 'Scottish' in his Volumes from 1801 onwards.

<sup>39</sup> McCue, 'George Thomson (1757-1851): His Collections', p. 151.

<sup>40</sup> See G. Ross Roy, 'Robert Burns: a self-portrait', and Cedric Thorpe Davie, 'Robert Burns, writer of songs', in *Critical essays on Robert Burns*, ed. by Low, pp. 13-38 and pp. 157-85 respectively; and Ericson-Roos, *The songs of Robert Burns*, pp. 1-13.

<sup>41</sup> The Complete Letters of Robert Burns, p. 660.

<sup>42</sup> David Murison, 'The Language of Burns' and Cedric Thorpe Davie, 'Robert Burns, Writer of Songs', both in *Critical Essays on Robert Burns*, op. cit.; and Steve Sweeney-Turner, 'The Political Parlour: Identity and Ideology in Scottish National Song' in *Musical Constructions of Nationalism: Essays on the History and Ideology of European Musical Culture 1800-1845*, op. cit., pp. 212-238.

### Ritson, *Scotish Song* Vol.1, cx-cxi, footnote 111

Those who presume, at present, to direct the public taste, in regard to Scotch music, seem totally insensible of the merit of the original songs, thinking it necessary to engage the prolific (if not prostituted) muse of Peter Pindar, to supply them with new words by contract. They have only, afterward, to hire some Italian fidler [sic], of equal eminence, to furnish them with tunes, and the business will be complete. The practice, however ingenious, is by no means unprecedented.

### Thomson, *Select Collection* Vol.1, p.3, footnote

Mr Ritson, in his historical Essay, prefixed to a Collection of Scotch [sic] Songs, in 12mo, printed in London in 1794, is pleased, in a sarcastic note, to consider the Editor of the present Work as totally insensible of the merit of the original Songs, because of Peter Pindar being engaged to write new Songs for the Work! - and accordingly, the reader of that note will doubtless infer that the original Scottish Songs are all banished, to make room for those of the English Poet. It has been well observed, that he who condemns a work without reading it, is more his own enemy than that of the work. That Mr Ritson, who in this very Essay has investigated his subject with so much diligence and acuteness, should have ventured to censure a Work which he had not at all examined, is somewhat singular. If he had looked into the first book (which was published a year before the appearance of his Essay), he would have found, that the original Songs of real merit, suited to the Airs, are all retained; and that not a single Song is displaced, to make room for one by the English Poet; but that *every first Song*, or the one attached to each Air, whether in the Scottish dialect or English language, is the production of a Scottish Author:- and this (with a solitary exception or two) will be found uniformly the case throughout the Work. With respect to the Songs which the Editor has removed, he claims the merit of rooting out weeds, and of planting the sweetest flowers in their room.<sup>43</sup>

In view of the frequent use of the wild flower metaphor in song collections - as we shall see in subsequent chapters - Thomson's deliberate 'rooting out of weeds' and supplanting with 'the sweetest flowers' might be construed as quite significant, hinting that the wild 'weeds' could usefully be replaced by something better.

One cannot underestimate the importance of Scots song as a means of asserting Scottish identity in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century culture, as is confirmed

<sup>43</sup> George Thomson, *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice* (London : Printed & sold by Preston & Son, [1801]), I, p. 3, footnote †.

by Davis<sup>44</sup> and Sorensen.<sup>45</sup> However, it could be suggested in this instance that Thomson's efforts betray a creeping Anglicisation of Scottish culture, foreshadowing the preference of Lady Caroline Nairne (1766-1845) for English as a 'more civilised' tongue in her own song-writing.<sup>46</sup>

Ritson's suggestion that Thomson needed only an 'Italian fiddler' to finish off the prostitution of the Scottish song repertoire highlights the fact that Thomson's whole Euro-centric ethos was significantly at variance to both Ritson's and Johnson's collections. The enormous difference between his collections and theirs gives a clear indication of their differing motivations and perspectives. Whilst Cooper and McCue both cite correspondence suggesting that Thomson's venture may not have been an overwhelming success commercially,<sup>47</sup> his publications do reveal changes of approach, which became more normal as the nineteenth century progressed.

Thomson still wished to preserve his heritage, but at the same time aspired to quality - not merely of content, but also presentation. Possibly alluding to Johnson's *Museum*, Thomson condemned existing collections which included good and bad specimens alike, and he explained that he had instead set out,

To furnish a Collection of all the fine Airs, both of the plaintive and lively kind, unmixed with trifling and inferior ones; - to obtain the

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<sup>44</sup> Leith Davis, 'At "Sang about": Scottish song and the challenge to British culture', op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> Janet Sorensen, 'The Debatable Borders of English and Scottish Song and Ballad Collections', op. cit.

<sup>46</sup> Whether or not to use the Scottish dialect would be a moot point for Lady Nairne and the rest of the ladies' committee assisting R. A. Smith with his Scottish Minstrel collection. Although her friends did not unanimously agree with her, Charles Rogers later, in his 1869 edition of her songs, related that, whilst Lady Nairne liked the 'energy' of the Scottish dialect, she generally preferred English because, as she observed in a letter, 'there is something so civilised in the English, that I prefer it in common, and I observe our servants and everybody now try to express themselves so as to avoid broad Scotch'. See 'Memoir of Baroness Nairne' in *Life and Songs of the Baroness Nairne: with a Memoir and Poems of Caroline Oliphant the Younger*, ed. by Charles Rogers (London: Charles Griffin, 1869), pp. xlii-xliii.

<sup>47</sup> Cooper, *Beethoven's Folksong Settings*, 42-3, says that Thomson incurred high production costs, and that sales were poor, also citing a letter to Thomson's brother David (1814) admitting to a disinclination to push sales, and a letter to Beethoven (1818) in which he said that despite newspaper advertisements, Beethoven's settings were not selling. Meanwhile, McCue, 'George Thomson (1757-1851): His Collections', I part 1, 48-9, cites a letter to Thomson's papermaker, Cowan (1824) concerning the use of high-quality paper, and observing that 'The letter reveals that sales of the folio volumes left much to be desired and illustrates Thomson's desperation in deciding to issue an octavo edition.'

most suitable and finished Accompaniments [...] and to substitute congenial and interesting Songs, every way worthy of the Music [...]<sup>48</sup>

Making his intentions even plainer, he continued later in the same Preface,

Although it has been [the Editor's] endeavour to include all the Scottish Airs and Songs worth preserving, some may have eluded his search, and he may have omitted others which are not without admirers; at the same time, he conceives that the Collection is extensive enough to satisfy the greatest enthusiast.<sup>49</sup>

With this in mind, between 1793 and 1818 Thomson commissioned dozens of arrangements from eminent European composers - Pleyel, Kozeluch, Haydn, and Beethoven. He supplied them with little more than tunes and an indication of the nature of the song, and the final products were very much in the art-music tradition. (Both McCue and Cooper have explored his interactions with these individuals at length.) Thomson was named as 'Editor and Proprietor' of the volumes, selling them himself in Edinburgh, and - like Johnson - through T. Preston in London. His compilations included Welsh and Irish, as well as Scottish airs.

Thomson's comments about accompaniment demonstrate changing attitudes both to its purpose and its style. He commented that, even though Scottish songs could be performed unaccompanied, an accompaniment helped the singer stay in tune:-

There are many persons who, never having cultivated Music, have little relish for Accompaniments. The Editor well knows, that, when a Scottish Song is sung by a fine voice, and the words distinctly and feelingly expressed, it gives very great pleasure without any Accompaniment, otherwise, that it insensibly falls from the pitch in which it set out.<sup>50</sup>

In support of his argument, Thomson cited a passing comment in an essay on landscape gardening, whose author (Uvedale Price) said that,

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<sup>48</sup> George Thomson, *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*, III (1802), Preface, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

At the same time, the acquired relish for such artful combinations, so far from excluding (except in narrow and pedantic minds) a taste for simple Melodies, heightens the enjoyment of them.<sup>51</sup>

The provision of instrumental parts was not a new idea, settings with violin (and other instrumental) obligatos and continuo having already been published by the likes of Domenico Corri (1746-1825) and Pietro Urbani (1749-1816). Moreover, William Napier (1740-1812) met Haydn in 1791, publishing Scottish songs for voice, violin and continuo in 1792 - the same year as Thomson's first collection - although, significantly, a Breitkopf and Härtel publication of Haydn's Scots songs in 1805 replaced the continuo with piano.<sup>52</sup> Thomson commissioned arrangements for voice with piano trio - the violin and cello were optional - but was anxious that the piano parts should not be too difficult for the 'young maidens' of Edinburgh:-

The Accompaniments are admirably calculated to support the Voice, and to beautify the Airs, without any tendency to overpower the Singer. Instead of a Thorough-bass denoted by *figures*, which very few can play with any propriety, the harmony is plainly expressed in musical Notes, which every young Lady may execute correctly. Here, therefore, the Piano-Forte will alone be found a most satisfactory Accompaniment in Chamber singing. At the same time, when the Violin and Violoncello are joined to the Piano-Forte, they certainly enrich the effect highly.<sup>53</sup>

(In a footnote, Thomson cites Rousseau's *Musical Dictionary* as corroboration of his argument that the figured bass was an unsatisfactory means of accompaniment.)

Thomson boasted that the Symphonies framing each of his airs were 'so characteristic, so elegant, and so delightful [...]'<sup>54</sup> It should be noted that, even if Thomson's piano trio accompaniments did not set a trend, his introductions

<sup>51</sup> George Thomson, *ibid.*, p. 2, footnote cites Uvedale Price, *An Essay on the Picturesque*, as compared with the sublime and the beautiful, and, on the use of studying pictures for the purpose of improving real landscape, (London : printed for J. Robson, 1794), p. 244, accessed via ECCO.

<sup>52</sup> Joseph Haydn, *Alt-Schottische Balladen und Lieder mit Klavierbegleitung nach den alt-schottischen Melodien ausgesetzt ... mit deutscher Nachbildung von J. W. Wagner* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, [c.1805]). See COPAC, documenting a British Library copy. A uniform title connects it with the earlier Napier publication: 'A Selection of Original Scots Songs (Napier)'

<sup>53</sup> George Thomson, *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*, III (1802), Preface, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> George Thomson, *ibid.*



and ritornelli certainly did - though later efforts were usually much less ambitious.

Thomson cited a few key authorities and early collections - the poetic works of Allan Ramsay; the airs from William Thomson's *Orpheus Caledonius*; and the writings of Tytler, Burney and Ritson - to provide historical background to his collections, and he took the trouble to mark in the indices, all songs which were considered to be old in 1724, and any which he understood to be Irish.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, he was quite sanguine about the Irish connection, calmly stating that,

[...] it may have happened, that, by means of the Harpers or Pipers who used to wander through the two countries, some favourite Airs might become so common to both, as to make it questionable which of the two gave them birth.<sup>56</sup>

There are ample contemporary sources to suggest that the link between old Irish and Highland music was generally accepted, going as far back as Martin Martin's *Description of the Western Islands of Scotland* (1703). Ritson alluded in passing to Thomas Campbell's observations in *A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland* (1777),<sup>57</sup> and later writings to address the matter included Alexander Campbell's *Introduction to the History of Poetry* (1798) and William Daune's *Ancient Scottish Melodies* (1838). As we shall see towards the end of this thesis, however, this calm acceptance of the link between the music of the Celtic nations stands in stark contrast to the heated arguments that surfaced in the later nineteenth century with regard to what counted as Scottish rather than English song material.

Thomson chose his source-material carefully, stating that he consulted old and new sources, both printed and manuscript, besides conferring with knowledgeable friends. His own copy of *Orpheus Caledonius* has numerous pencil markings indicating heavy use of this publication,<sup>58</sup> and the *Scots Musical*

<sup>55</sup> George Thomson, *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*, III (1802) Preface, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> Ritson, *Scottish Song I*, p.lxxxvii, referring to Thomas Campbell (1733-1795), a Church of Ireland clergyman.

<sup>58</sup> My thanks to Prof. Marjorie Rycroft, University of Glasgow, for this information.

*Museum* was another major resource.<sup>59</sup> His Preface to the first volume of *Original Scottish Airs*, clearly intended to inform the reader that this is a collection of taste and discernment, tells us that he ‘chose that set or copy of every Air, whether printed or MS, which seemed the most simple and beautiful, freed, he trusts, from vulgar errors on the one hand, and redundant graces on the other.’

There seem to have been subtle differences between the ways in which Thomson sourced his Scottish, Welsh and Irish repertoires. Cooper draws attention to the Welsh links that Thomson forged, highlighting the fact that Thomson had himself made a trip to Wales c.1797 to gather tunes from ‘blind Harpers, Bards and Antiquaries’, also citing correspondence between Thomson and a contact in Cork,<sup>60</sup> finally concluding that the majority of the melodies were,

[...] derived from manuscript sources or taken down by dictation from singers themselves. Indeed, it seems to have been part of [Thomson’s] purpose to preserve melodies and versions that had not previously been printed, as a deliberate contribution to the cultural heritage of the country.<sup>61</sup>

More recent research by McCue and Rycroft has further opened up the question of Thomson’s sources, with McCue demonstrating that, whilst Thomson established links with Welsh poets and sent two collectors to Wales for his Welsh collection - perhaps because he was intrigued by the romantic historical image and quasi-exoticism of a country about which he knew little - he apparently did not go ‘into the field’ for Irish or Scottish materials, and was relatively uninterested in music from the Highlands.<sup>62</sup> (Thomson’s very extensive research, travel and efforts to source material from Welsh poets and musicians have been explored in depth by Rycroft.)<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> See Marjorie Rycroft, ‘Haydn’s Welsh Songs: George Thomson’s Musical and Literary Sources’, *Welsh Studies* 7 (2007), 92-133 (pp.95-6)

<sup>60</sup> Dr J. Latham, Cork

<sup>61</sup> Cooper, *Beethoven’s Folksong Settings*, p. 67. Cooper has also pointed out that not all the songs in Thomson’s collections were true folksongs, but that they had become accepted as such.

<sup>62</sup> McCue, ‘George Thomson (1757-1851): His Collections’, pp. 40-41.

<sup>63</sup> Rycroft, ‘Haydn’s Welsh Songs’, 95-99

However, as regards the Scottish songs, McCue finds that in general, few tunes came from old manuscripts, although there were a few references to anonymous manuscripts in Thomson's own possession, this in a sense providing proof of Scotland's untapped heritage. This analysis somewhat contradicts Cooper's suggestion that Thomson had more access to Scottish than to Welsh or Irish manuscripts, despite his quite understandable assumption to the contrary.

## Joseph Ritson

It will become evident in later chapters of this thesis that, notwithstanding a greater emphasis on words than music, Ritson's insistence on fidelity to sources was to be influential upon later collections, even if Johnson, Burns and Thomson had already commenced their publications by the time Ritson's book appeared. It is also enlightening to compare the views of Ritson, the outsider looking in, with those of collectors actually in Scotland; and to consider his views of those same collectors. It is therefore important that we understand the nature of his contribution, and this chapter affords us the opportunity to place that contribution in perspective from a musicological standpoint.

Whilst Bronson's 1938 biography of Ritson remains a significant authority on his life in general,<sup>64</sup> Ritson's song-collecting contribution has really only attracted the attention of Harker, Nelson,<sup>65</sup> and Gelbart in recent years. Purser's general history of Scottish music does not assess his contribution at all, and curiously, neither does David Johnson's history of eighteenth-century Scottish music.<sup>66</sup>

Ritson's underlying philosophical stance is clearly outlined in the 'Historical Essay on Scotch Song' which prefaces his *Scotch Song*, and this forms a useful and cogent summary of his editorial methodology. His extant correspondence, most particularly from Ritson to George Paton, is also informative,<sup>67</sup> and of

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<sup>64</sup> Bertrand H. Bronson, *Joseph Ritson: Scholar-at-Arms*, 2 vols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938)

<sup>65</sup> Claire Nelson, 'Tea-table miscellanies'.

<sup>66</sup> David Johnson, *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*, 2nd edn, (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 2003); and John Purser, *Scotland's Music: A History of the Traditional and Classical Music of Scotland from Early Times to the Present Day*, New enl. edn (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2007).

<sup>67</sup> *Letters from Joseph Ritson, Esq, to Mr George Paton, to which is added, a Critique by John Pinkerton, Esq, upon Ritson's Scotch Songs*, ed. by James Maidment (Edinburgh: for John

course, as we shall see shortly, Ritson's choice of primary sources also afford us certain insights regarding his attitude to Scottish songs.

Ritson's two-volumed *Scottish Song* followed on from his *Select Collection of English Songs*, written eleven years earlier in 1783, and he had published other regional collections of popular poetry in the intervening period. Bronson and Harker have both identified a change in approach between the English and Scottish collections, with Bronson observing that the earlier English collection is characterised by a 'feigned and mawkish simplicity', compared to a more genuine marked simplicity in the Scottish one.<sup>68</sup> More recently, Harker has mentioned Ritson's efforts to take down or have friends transcribe songs from live performers for the regional collections - although Ritson was often frustrated in his efforts. There is undeniably truth in Harker's suggestion that these endeavours signify a move towards a greater acceptance of oral tradition.<sup>69</sup> However, this analysis is rather simplistic, for Ritson betrays a somewhat schizophrenic attitude towards oral sources, simultaneously expressing appreciation of the live tradition, and yet not fully trusting it.

Despite Ritson's rhetoric about the humble origins of his songs, the sources for many song texts and airs were published collections, and he seems not to have gleaned much - if anything - from the oral peasant tradition. Although Ritson had embraced the idea that traditional songs might emanate from the 'vulgar', he remained suspicious about the accuracy of oral transmission from those same people. In Ritson's opinion, song [texts] were not only disappearing, but those that survived were degenerating. These changes, he considered, could often be detrimental:-

[...] with respect to vulgar poetry, preserved by tradition, it is almost impossible to discriminate the ancient from the modern, the true from the false. Obsolete phrases will be perpetually changing for those better understood; and what the memory loses the invention must supply. So that a performance of genius and merit, as the purest stream becomes polluted by the foulness of its channel, may in

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Stevenson, 1829); and *The Letters of Joseph Ritson, Esq, edited chiefly from originals in the possession of his nephew, To which is prefixed a memoir of the author*, by Sir Harris Nicolas (London: William Pickering, 1833)

<sup>68</sup> Bronson, *Joseph Ritson: Scholar-at-arms*, I, 195.

<sup>69</sup> Harker, p. 30-31.

time be degraded to the vilest jargon. Tradition, in short, is a species of alchemy which converts gold to lead.’<sup>70</sup>

As it happens, Ritson’s stance was diametrically opposite to Thomson’s. Directing his comments at the airs rather than at the song lyrics, Thomson suggested that sometimes tunes were actually improved over the years, and challenged the reader to compare his airs with the same ones in William Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius* of 1733.

Predictably, like Johnson and Burns, Ritson drew texts from the *Tea-Table Miscellany* and Herd’s *Ancient and Modern Scots Songs*, besides songs from Mary, Queen of Scots; James the First; Hart’s *Godlie and Spiritually Songs* of 1621; Forbes’ *Cantus*; and Scotch songs from D’Urfey and others of his acquaintance. One cannot state categorically that none of these songs had the humble origins Ritson so much wished for; but it seems likely that more than a few were from more elevated classes of society.

Betraying a more relaxed attitude to his musical sources with the comment that music ‘does not require, nor perhaps admit, of a strict adherence to any particular copy’,<sup>71</sup> he nonetheless sourced his tunes from standard and reputable publications of his age and slightly earlier: - the second edition of Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius*; Oswald’s *Caledonian Pocket Companion*; McGibbon, Corri and Napier’s collections of Scottish tunes, and Johnson’s *Scots Musical Museum*, along with some original tunes by ‘the equally eminent and amiable’ Shield.<sup>72</sup> (This was his friend William Shield, with whom Ritson had made a grand European tour in the early 1790s.)

It is interesting that Ritson found the Italian Corri’s collection to be of value, considering his own quest for simplicity and authenticity, and MacDonald and Young’s earlier concern about unspecified foreigners’ over-elaboration of national tunes. To a modern eye, both Corri and Urbani’s settings seem far from simple, with an abundance of embellishments, and link passages similar in style

<sup>70</sup> Ritson, *Scotish Song* I, p. lxxxi.

<sup>71</sup> Ritson, *Scotish Song*, I, p. vi.

<sup>72</sup> Ritson *Scotish Song*, I, pp. vi-vii.

to Clementi.<sup>73</sup> The Italians' collections were, nonetheless, very popular in their day; and Simon Fraser was later, paradoxically, to allude to Corri and Urbani's restoration of tunes to 'their characteristic simplicity'.<sup>74</sup>

Despite Ritson's deep interest in Scottish songs and airs, his musical expertise might have been limited. James Hogg - who was generally approving of Ritson - was to comment à propos of his *Jacobite Relics*, that he hoped Stenhouse had made a tune-change to 'The Battle of Sheriffmuir' on better authority than that of Ritson, 'a man who scarcely knew one tune from another, and had to apply to Mr Alexander Campbell to adapt a number of the tunes for him.'<sup>75</sup> Evidently, Ritson's strengths lay more with songs than with their airs.

In terms of presentation, Ritson's collection falls between the model of song collection in which the tunes were simply named but not provided (e.g. Ramsay's *Tea Table Miscellany*, or Hogg's later *Forest Minstrel*), and Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, which gave at least an elementary accompaniment requiring minimal instrumental expertise. Ritson's *Scottish Song* eschewed accompaniments or even bass-lines altogether. Some songs simply had bare staves with room for the new owner to insert the tune, if they managed to source it. (The Glasgow publisher Hugh Hopkins was later to fill some of the lacuna in his 1869 reprint.)

Ritson's decision to publish unaccompanied melodies raises questions as to the intended audience and purpose of his *Scottish Songs*. Leith Davis has commented of the much earlier *Tea Table Miscellany*, (which was initially published without airs), that Ramsay evidently did not intend it for a London market, because of his assumption that the user would already be familiar with the tunes named.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> See, for example, Pietro Urbani, *A selection of Scots songs*, 6 vols, Vols 5-6 [A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs With Select and Characteristic Scotch & English Verses. The most part of which Written by the Celebrated R. Burns: Arranged for the Voice with Introductory & Concluding Symphonies And Accompaniments for the Piano Forte [,] Violin and Violoncello.] (Edinburgh : Printed and sold by Urbani & Liston, no.10 Princes Street, c1804), no.3, 'A rosebud by my early walk'.

<sup>74</sup> Simon Fraser, *The Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles* (Edinburgh: Printed and sold for the Editor, 1816), Appendix, p. 105.

<sup>75</sup> James Hogg, *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland (Second Series)*, ed. by Murray G. H. Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), p. 253.

<sup>76</sup> Davis, Leith, 'At "sang about": Scottish song and the challenge to British culture', p. 190.

By implication, Ritson's provision of melodies implies he made no such assumptions, and his collection was, of course, published south of the Border.

Interestingly, Bronson considered both the *English Songs* and the Scottish collection to have been aimed at genteel readers, 'polite rather than antiquarian'; and he considered Ritson's Scottish selection to have been made on the basis of taste, rather than for antiquarian interest or novelty. However, this argument seems flawed, for might not a well-bred reader, wishing to avail themselves of the melodies provided, have preferred to have had some kind of accompaniment? After all, we have already seen Thomson commenting that, although Scottish song could be sung unaccompanied, an accompaniment did help the singer to stay in tune. Indeed, one might have thought that an accompaniment would be particularly important to English readers, for whom the repertoire was less familiar. (Certainly, as we have seen already, MacDonald and Young believed this, as did Johnson, and George Thomson in turn, although the latter's accompaniments were far from elementary.)

Indeed, one might suggest that *Scotish Song* was surely driven at least as much by antiquarian motives as for amusement and entertainment. Compared to the elaborate compilations by Corri and Urbani, Ritson's *Scotish Song* could not have been further removed from a recreational collection. This conclusion is also reached by Gelbart, who makes the point that music was by now being published without the intention of performance - in other words, to borrow James Johnson's expression, as 'musical museums' - with the tunes being seen as 'a vehicle for the texts rather than a performance tool'.<sup>77</sup>

On the other hand, one cannot take issue with Bronson's suggestion that Ritson endeavoured to show 'that accuracy was not incompatible with elegance'.<sup>78</sup> Ritson assured the reader that much work had gone into the publication, including several journeys to Scotland collecting materials. Furthermore, he had taken pains to spell the Scottish words correctly and to adhere to his printed sources of the song-texts, flagging up any obvious typographical errors.

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<sup>77</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music"*, pp.184-85.

<sup>78</sup> Bronson, *Joseph Ritson: Scholar-at-arms*, I, 195.

Of course, Ritson was not merely presenting a collection of songs, but also providing historical background, and there seems to have been a drive to set the record straight with regard to some of Tytler's assertions. Whilst Ritson admired Tytler's *Dissertation on the Scottish Musick*, he insisted that Tytler had failed to establish the dates of the oldest Scottish tunes, because he had been guided 'rather by fancy and hypothesis than by argument or evidence.'<sup>79</sup> Taking issue with Tytler's certainty about various tunes, he stated that some of Tytler's examples were not in the Scottish idiom. By contrast, Ritson promised that his own essay would aim 'to collect such evidence as can be procured to illustrate the antiquity of the tunes in question',<sup>80</sup> but insisted that they certainly could not be traced as far back as the fourteenth century.

The breadth of Ritson's background reading is very apparent throughout his essay. Indeed, conscious that there might be criticism of him, an Englishman, making this compilation, he emphasised that he felt doubly qualified to do so by dint of his extensive research, and by possessing the impartiality of someone who was not a native of Scotland. We shall see at the very end of this thesis that there is some irony in Ritson's position in this regard, for he was certainly not the last Englishman to court criticism simply by straying into the quicksand of ardent Scottish nationalism.

## Ritson the 'anti-Scot'?

Evaluating Ritson today is complicated by his seemingly ambivalent attitude to Scots. As far back as 1784 he signed himself 'anti-Scot', when he wrote in *The Gentleman's Magazine* that John Pinkerton's *Select Scottish Ballads* (1783) largely consisted of forgeries. In fact, Pinkerton later admitted to his forgeries - but his collection probably spurred Ritson to compile his Scottish collection. (Predictably, Pinkerton got his revenge by an adverse criticism of Ritson's *Scottish Song* in the *Critical Review* of January 1795.) Indeed, Ritson had already become embroiled in literary controversy prior to the Pinkerton episode for, in

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<sup>79</sup> Ritson, *Scottish Songs*, I, p. lxxxiv.

<sup>80</sup> Ritson, *Scottish Songs*, I, p. xci.



his 1783 English collection, he had denounced Bishop Percy for forging or deceptively improving the ballads in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, although it might seem incongruous that an ‘anti-Scot’ should concern himself with collecting Scottish songs, this self-styling was probably at least partially the posturing of an irritated Ritson adopting a deliberately confrontational position. Furthermore, despite his ‘anti-Scot’ pseudonym, and his sarcastic allusions to the over-patriotic defence of Macpherson’s Ossian collections by many Scotsmen, one has to offset against this, his almost pathological obsession with accuracy and honesty. Certainly, in his argument with Pinkerton, it seems to have been more a case of hating the sin, than the sinner. The pseudonym could therefore merely signify Ritson’s distancing himself from dishonesty on the part of both Pinkerton and the Ossian protagonists.

Whilst one cannot deny that, after the Pinkerton dispute, his view of Scotsmen was sometimes jaundiced, there is nonetheless ample evidence of his establishing a good working understanding with Scottish antiquaries. The publication of *Scotish Song* did not mark the end of Ritson’s interest in this repertoire, and there are plenty of instances of his subsequent interactions with others working with similar material.

For example, we have seen that the slightly younger Alexander Campbell had helped Ritson set some of his *Scotish Songs*, and in the next chapter of this thesis we shall find Campbell recalling his late friend’s interest in what would become *Albyn’s Anthology*.

Furthermore, Ritson’s friendship with Sir Walter Scott extended to assisting him with the compilation of *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1800, and it was through Scott that he became acquainted with the linguist and poet John Leyden. Similarly, his acquaintance with the Edinburgh antiquarian George Paton gained him access to the knowledge and collections of David Herd. (Paton himself seems to have been hugely supportive of the research and publications

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<sup>81</sup> Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry: consisting of Old Heroic Ballads, songs, and other pieces of our earlier Poets, (chiefly of the lyric kind.) Together with some few of later date*, 3 vols (London: Dodsley, 1765).

of other antiquarians, as evidenced by posthumously published letters not only from Ritson, but also from Thomas Percy, Herd, John Callander of Craigforth, and others. In this regard he can be regarded as a mediator, in rather the same way as Ramsay of Ochtertyre, or the later David Laing, to whom further reference will be made in later chapters.)<sup>82</sup>

All these associations suggest that Ritson's own reaction to Scots songs was generously positive, and for this reason, I suggest that his 'Anti-Scot' pseudonym can be disregarded in the present context.

Aware that George Paton was acquainted with the song-collector David Herd (whose 1769 collection Ritson had drawn upon),<sup>83</sup> Ritson wrote to him in January 1795, asking if he could obtain some 'fragments of Scottish Songs' from Herd.<sup>84</sup> In May of the same year, he wrote to Paton again, this time asking if he would pass to David Herd, 'a list of Scottish Songs which I have hitherto been unable to meet with, some of which he will probably recollect, and be able to say where they are to be found'.<sup>85</sup>

The list of desiderata was later published in the *Scots Magazine* for January 1802, with an editorial prefix explicitly outlining the reason for Ritson's appeal:-

The editors of the Scots Magazine [...] have the utmost reason to believe, that many, perhaps the majority, of the songs here enumerated, are still preserved by tradition, and float in the occasional recitation of the Scottish Lowlanders; at least it is absolutely certain that many beautiful verses, if not complete songs, have been preserved in this manner. That these should at least be corrected and arranged, must be the ardent wish not only of every Scotsman, but of every person who possesses a taste for nature and simplicity. [...] The editors] invite the communications of every person who can repeat Scottish songs, or who may have an opportunity of transcribing the fleeting records of tradition. An opportunity lost may never again occur; and with these last twenty years, numerous opportunities of recovering beautiful monuments of Scottish song have certainly been lost.'<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup> See Brian Hillyard, 'Paton, George (1721–1807)' in *ODNB* [Accessed 30 August 2008].

<sup>83</sup> David Herd, *The Ancient and Modern Scots Songs, Heroic Ballads &c.*

<sup>84</sup> Letters from Joseph Ritson, Esq. To Mr George Paton, pp. 12-14 (Letter 19 January 1795).

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20 (Letter of 19 May 1795).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26 (Letter of 19 May 1795, contd.); and p.27 (Letter of 21 July 1795).

This is the appeal that Harker noted and recognised as continuing the ‘decisive’ turn to oral sources already evident in Ritson’s *Bishopric Garland* (1784) and *Northumberland Garland* (1793),<sup>87</sup> although it should be remembered that Ritson’s concern was rather more with oral sources of verses, than the tunes with which this thesis is primarily concerned.

It is worth noting that the poet and linguist John Leyden (with whom Ritson had become acquainted through their mutual friend Scott), shared the management of the *Scots Magazine* with Alexander Murray for the first eight months of 1802.<sup>88</sup> David Herd had clearly been in communication with Leyden or Murray prior to the publication of this issue, since his letter was published in the same issue.<sup>89</sup> One can thus conjecture that either Leyden, Herd (or both) had a hand in the editorial appeal prefacing Ritson’s list.

This appeal goes on to make a telling comment about forgery, or ‘literary imposition’:

At the same time, they [the *Scots Magazine* editors] cannot help suggesting the propriety, or rather necessity, that there is for every person pledging his veracity for the accuracy of his communications; while they recollect the obloquy that the national character has incurred from a few instances of literary imposition, which the authors probably intended rather as experiments on the critical taste of the times, than experimental deceptions of the understanding.

Whilst it is only a fine distinction, there is a difference between ‘experiments on critical taste’ and ‘experimental deceptions of the understanding.’ Of course, the distinction has a particular resonance in the light of the whole Ossian controversy, and Macpherson was almost certainly one of the ‘few instances of literary imposition’ to whom the editors were referring.

Whether or not Macpherson had obtained sufficient authentication of his sources, and notwithstanding the dubious authenticity of his finished Ossian tales, the lesson was certainly heeded by Ritson. Countless authorities over the

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<sup>87</sup> Harker, p. 31.

<sup>88</sup> Alexander Murray, *History of the European Languages*. (Edinburgh: Constable, 1823) I, p. lxxv <<http://books.google.com>> [accessed 30 August 2008].

<sup>89</sup> David Herd, ‘Some observations on “The Complaynt of Scotland”’, in *Scots Magazine*, (January 1802), p.51.

years have justifiably described Ritson as pernickety and pedantic - argumentative to a fault, vindictive and vituperative to his literary adversaries. Not for him the creation of an artistic literary work where his own efforts would form part of the imaginative input. Indeed, just three decades later, the poet Allan Cunningham paid Ritson a backhanded compliment in describing him as 'the most suspicious of critics and the most scrupulous of antiquaries'. Cunningham denigrated him as an antiquary and critic with an 'infirmity of taste', complaining that Ritson's type objected to any textual alterations, where more creative artists would have adopted a very different attitude.<sup>90</sup>

Yet, notwithstanding this unfortunate mindset, even before his ultimate descent into insanity, his insistence on the accuracy of the minutest detail, and the citation of his sources, were a new departure for literary antiquarians. For this, and his encyclopaedic knowledge of the verse repertoire, he became a significant authority in the decades that followed, and for this reason, his *Scotish Song* was, at least in the decades immediately after publication, greeted with a certain admiration.

For example, Alexander Campbell would describe him posthumously as 'one of the best literary antiquaries of the eighteenth century'.<sup>91</sup> Campbell was to take Ritson's dictates wholeheartedly on board, endorsed by the Highland Society of Scotland, when he embarked upon his Highlands and Islands song-collecting trip in 1815, as we shall see in Chapter 3.

Ritson was cited by Hogg in his *Jacobite Relics*, and met with the approval of both Robert Burns and Motherwell, and the latter commented that Ritson's *Scotish Song* 'must long remain a text book for the care and accuracy bestowed upon it by its editor.'<sup>92</sup>

If Ritson's authority was beginning to wane by the time Daune published his *Ancient Scotish Melodies* in 1838, this is perhaps not surprising, for scholarship

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<sup>90</sup> Allan Cunningham, *The Songs of Scotland, Ancient and Modern; with an Introduction and Notes, Historical and Critical, and Characters of the Lyric Poets*, 4 vols (London: Printed for John Taylor, 1825), I, 15.

<sup>91</sup> Alexander Campbell, *Albyn's Anthology*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1816-18), I, Preface.

<sup>92</sup> William Motherwell, *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern, with an historical introduction and notes* (Glasgow: John Wylie, 1827), p. lxxvii.

had understandably moved on in the intervening years. Nonetheless, Motherwell's prediction must have been correct, for the collection was republished by the Glasgow publisher, Hugh Hopkins, in 1869 - an era when a number of older editions were republished, as we shall see in Chapters 6 and 7. Motherwell's observation was corroborated more recently by Harker, who summarised that Ritson showed 'the beginnings of a genuinely scholarly approach to mediation, which remained as a standard and a source of editorial guilt for generations.'<sup>93</sup>

Harker's salient observation is a theme to which we shall refer again in later chapters of the present work. For, as we shall see, Ritson's approach may have been a source of editorial guilt for some of his successors, but, conversely, Robert Archibald Smith seems to have indulged in 'experimental deceptions of the understanding' with no qualms whatsoever.

## The Motivation behind these Lowland Collections

Just as with Patrick MacDonald's *Highland Vocal Airs*, the prefaces of these Lowland collections give a clear indication as to what motivated their compilers. Their extensive personal correspondence also affords us further insights.

Whilst in no way aspiring to the proportions of Ritson's 'A Historical Essay on Scottish Song', George Thomson's prefatory material is rather more substantial than Johnson's, and Robert Burns' extant correspondence more than adequately amplifies both Johnson's and Thomson's editorial policies, not to mention his own.<sup>94</sup>

If Burns displayed a romantic reaction to *Ossian*, and to the poetry and music of his native tradition, then Ritson's was more rational and dispassionate, partly due to his own temperament, and partly, because he was an outsider to the tradition. Referring to Macpherson's poetry collections in the 'Historical Essay on Scottish Song' at the start of his *Scottish Song* collection, Ritson was dismissive of the whole *Ossian* controversy, arguing that even Chaucer's poems would have

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<sup>93</sup> Harker, p. 37.

<sup>94</sup> Robert Burns, *The Complete Letters of Robert Burns*.

altered beyond all recognition over the centuries, had they not been committed to print; and that it was thus foolhardy to suggest that anything dating so far back as the alleged *Ossian* epics could bear any resemblance to their original form.

This is not to say that Ritson did not appreciate the aesthetic value of Scottish song, however. An early interest in Scottish literature is evidenced by a walking tour to Edinburgh in 1773, visiting the Advocates' Library and second-hand bookshops as well as sight-seeing. By 1794, it is clear from the 'Historical Essay on Scottish Song' at the beginning of his *Scottish Song*, that he had considerable admiration for Scottish songs, more than once citing the 'pastoral simplicity' of the songs, praising their 'irregular style', and stressing that they 'abound with touches of nature and simplicity not to be paralleled in more laboured or regular productions'.<sup>95</sup> Despite his interest lying predominantly in the songs (ie poetry), it should be noted that he specifically singled out the 'pastoral simplicity, plaintive wildness, and animating hilarity of the Scottish music', contrasting it favourably with 'the more artificial harmony of the Italian or German composer'.<sup>96</sup>

It is also significant that, at the very beginning of his Preface, he observed that 'The words and melody of a Scottish song should be ever inseparable'. Although the songs might have taken priority, he clearly viewed the air as an integral part of the song. Indeed, this sense that the song and air belonged together continued to prevail well into the next century. (However, as we shall see in due course, James Hogg let the cat out of the bag when he commented that 'the old folk' of his own circle had been accustomed to sing a number of ballads to the same few tunes. Therefore, the reality seems to have been a belief that the words of a Scottish song ought to be sung, rather than Ritson's prescriptive ideal of a song inseparably paired with its own air.)

Neither Burns nor Ritson was particularly concerned with the Gaelic tradition for which Macpherson's *Ossian* had been such an eloquent protagonist. Whilst Ritson was appreciative of Highland songs and airs, he made it plain that his

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<sup>95</sup> Ritson, *Scottish Song*, p. lxxx.

<sup>96</sup> *ibid*, p. lxxxii.

*Scotish Song* repertoire was primarily from the Lowlands. Nonetheless, he echoed Beattie's differentiation between the wild, 'warlike' and 'melancholy' Highland airs, vis-à-vis the tender and expressive Lowland music, evoking 'love and tenderness, and other emotions suited to the tranquillity of a pastoral life [...]'<sup>97</sup> He knew Martin Martin's *Description of the Western Isles*, and cited Martin's suggestion that some Skye musicians had claimed Lowland airs as their own, and that there were also links between Highland and Irish music.

## Primitivism and Class Culture

Ritson was profoundly influenced by the writings of Beattie, who had suggested that folk songs actually originated from real shepherds and other working folk, and not just from minstrels and bards of higher social status. Gelbart highlights a fundamental change of philosophy between the earlier *Select Collection of English Songs* and the *Scotish Song*, since Ritson stopped short of attributing the songs to the 'vulgar', or lower classes in the *English Songs*, but by the time he compiled *Scotish Song*, clearly recognised that at least some of the repertoire must have originated amongst the 'country people'.<sup>98</sup> (Gelbart also reminds us that the word 'vulgar' seems to have had different connotations to Ritson in different contexts, ie 'vernacular', 'widespread' or 'lower class'.)

Echoes of Rousseau also resonate further on in Ritson's essay, where he explains that Scottish songs were the simple songs of peasant folk, and such pastoral simplicity should, by implication, be presented unadorned. His juxtaposition of the 'beautiful peasant' (the Scottish songs) as opposed to the 'fine town lady' of English songs has often been quoted by subsequent writers, but merits reproduction in its entirety; the oblique references to the pastoral idyll are clearly influenced by Enlightenment theories about origins, whilst Ritson's theories about the working class origins of such songs elaborate on the ideas first posited by Beattie, and mark the beginnings of the quest for traditional songs amongst the labouring classes:-

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid, p. lxxxix.

<sup>98</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music"*, pp. 84-85.

Though the merit of the Scottish songs is generally allowed, it cannot be pretended that they possess any uniformity of excellence. Such as have been composed by persons of education, conversant with the poetry of other countries, though occasionally superior, will more frequently be found inferior, to English compositions [...]. The truth is, that there is more of art than of nature in the English songs; at all events, they possess very little of that pastoral simplicity for which the Scottish are so much admired; and which will be frequently found to give them the advantages which the beautiful peasant, in her homespun russet, has over the fine town lady, patched, powdered, and dressed out, for the ball or opera, in all the frippery of fashion.

One cannot, however, adduce the performance of scholars and distinguished individuals, as specimens of national song. The genuine and peculiar natural song of Scotland, is to be sought - not in the works of Hamilton, Thomson, Smollett, or even Ramsay; but - in the productions of obscure or anonymous authors, of shepherds and milk maids, who actually felt the sensations they describe; of those, in short, who were destitute of all the advantages of science and education, and perhaps incapable of committing the pure inspirations of nature to writing [...].<sup>99</sup>

In a more immediate, contemporary sense, both Ritson and Burns showed an interest in working class culture - and, indeed, in the Republican cause across the English Channel in France - although their own backgrounds were dissimilar. Ritson, although born in relatively humble circumstances in Stockton-on-Tees, had enjoyed a better education and achieved a higher professional status than Burns: he commenced his working life by being indentured first to a solicitor, and then to a barrister who specialized in conveyancing. Following a contemporary trend for young gentlemen to make a 'grand European tour' in order to increase their cultural awareness, Ritson enjoyed travel in both France and Italy in the early 1790's with his friend William Shield, the Tyneside-born musician and composer who helped him edit both the *Select Collection of English Songs*, and in due course, *Scottish Song*. He returned to Britain declaring himself to be a staunch Republican; these ideals almost certainly had a bearing on his attitudes towards the origins of the traditional songs that he so revered, and to working class culture in general.

Harker, writing from a Marxist perspective, suggests that Ritson's collections were effectively turning working-class song-culture into a bourgeois commodity -

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<sup>99</sup> Ritson, *Scottish Song I*, pp. lxxviii-lxxix.



and, indeed, that he was at risk of ‘faking a culture’ by excluding indelicacies.<sup>100</sup> However, these objections could be levelled at many publishers of song collections, and are no less than one would expect in the context of the times.

Working class culture was, for George Thomson, barely a consideration at all. His aim was still to produce a notable collection of his native traditional songs, but to dress it up in arrangements by the best art musicians that Europe could muster. As we shall see, his collections were aimed at a middle-class, musically-educated audience. This is by no means unique to early nineteenth-century Scotland: Harry White recently described Moore’s *Irish Melodies* (1810) as ‘a product designed for domestic consumption among those sufficiently well-placed to possess both a drawing-room and a pianoforte’ – a fitting description for many such collections.<sup>101</sup>

In Thomson’s case, his correspondence with his arrangers voiced an enduring anxiety that the settings should not be too difficult for the pianistically challenged young ladies of Edinburgh. This became something of a cause-célèbre in his communications with Beethoven, whose expectations far exceeded the level of ability that Thomson imagined his performers to possess.

## The Effect of Primitivism on Musical Presentation

Besides the concern for the preservation of the repertoire, three other significant threads run through the prefatory material in collections of this period: that of authenticity, the question of ornamentation; and the nature of the accompaniment. This whole issue can best be seen in the context of the primitivist movement. As highlighted in the previous chapter, early anthropologists studied contemporary primitive societies in order to conjecture how society began and subsequently developed. Antiquarians, by inference, felt it only fitting that ‘primitive’ folk song retrieved from such societies should be presented in a simple manner.

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<sup>100</sup> Harker, p. 35.

<sup>101</sup> White, Harry, ‘Nationalism, Colonialism and the Cultural Stasis of Music in Ireland’, in *Musical Constructions of Nationalism: Essays on the History and Ideology of European Musical Culture 1800-1845*, ed. by Michael Murphy & Harry White (Cork: Cork University Press, 2001), pp. 257-72.

This was not unique to collections of Scottish songs: Farrell comments in his *Indian Music and the West*, that it was a common preoccupation in early Western collections of Indian songs, too. As an example, he instances Biggs's *Twelve Hindoo Airs with English Words Adapted to them* (1805), in whose preface we read that,

It has been the endeavour of the editor of this collection, to give the melodies with all their simplicity, and not to obscure them by the introduction of extraneous harmonies [...] the inequality of the metre, in some instances, may possibly be objected to, but it was unavoidable, as the melodies were to continue in their original state.<sup>102</sup>

The compilers of the major late eighteenth- and early nineteenth century Scottish song collections likewise stress that they were aiming for authentic versions of the tunes, and simple, uncluttered accompaniments. It will immediately be perceived, from a modern viewpoint, that disentangling the two issues is problematical, because the more 'authentic' a tune is, with the concomitant likelihood of modal inflections, the harder it is to create an artistic and classically acceptable accompaniment. Indeed, we have already touched upon the tricky question of harmonising modal melodies, and the objection on the part of antiquarians to other musicians' over-ornamentation of traditional melodies.

We have already noted that each of the three collections described in this chapter, presents its material in very different ways, from Ritson's bare melodies, through Johnson's bare, figured bass - dated even at that time - to George Thomson's *Select Collection of Original Scotch Airs*, the embodiment of classical style. We thus need to consider, in the first instance, what exactly the compilers meant by authenticity, and secondly, what kind of an accompaniment the compilers were aiming for, and what their criteria were for a suitable accompaniment.

Although Johnson, Thomson and Ritson all aspired to use the 'original' Scottish melodies, it is plain that each struggled with the concept of what was, indeed

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<sup>102</sup> Gerry Farrell, *Indian Music and the West* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 80, citing Biggs's Introduction to his *Twelve Hindoo Airs*. (Farrell dates the collection as c.1800, although library catalogues seem to favour 1805).

original and authentic. The fact that they were trying to pin down an oral tradition was clearly a stumbling block, for in many cases it was clearly impossible to determine what might have been the ‘original’ version. Johnson initially used the term ‘original’ without actually defining what he meant by it.

Nonetheless, his ‘original simplicity’ was plainly intended to denote an unornamented tune close to how it must first have originated. (This concurs with his unrelated namesake Dr Samuel Johnson’s definition of ‘original’ as being ‘primitive, pristine, first’, with ‘an original’ being the ‘fountain, source, [or] that which gives beginning or existence.’)<sup>103</sup>

Meanwhile, even the title of Thomson’s collection highlights his intentions - *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* - and he explains in his Preface that,

The first object was to procure the Airs in their best form. What their precise *original* form may have been, cannot now be ascertained. Although we go back to the earliest printed Collection, it is far from certain that the Airs are there presented to us as they came from the Composers; for they had been preserved, we know not how long, by oral tradition, and thus were liable to changes before being collected [...].<sup>104</sup>

Pedantic and particular, Ritson’s enduring reputation has been for his insistence on accuracy with regard to sources, as we have already seen in connection with the Percy and Pinkerton disputes. Barczewski suggests that Ritson’s training in conveyancing, with its need for meticulous attention to detail, would have stood him in good stead for his future literary and antiquarian endeavours.<sup>105</sup> Indeed, as we have already remarked, his insistence on accurate citation of, and faithful adherence to sources proved influential upon the next generation.

In light of this, it is significant that, whilst Ritson was earnestly propounding the importance of accurately adhering to his textual sources, he was apparently quite prepared to allow William Shield to ‘restore’ or ‘preserve’ the ‘genuine

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<sup>103</sup> Samuel Johnson’s definition of ‘original’ was:- (1) Beginning; first existence; (2) Fountain; source; that which gives beginning or existence; (3) First copy; archetype; (4) Derivation; descent. Adj Primitive; pristine; first, in Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1756), 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 2 vols (London, 1755-56) 2 vols. [accessed in ECCO, 12 April 2009]

<sup>104</sup> George Thomson, *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*, I (1803), Preface, p. 1

<sup>105</sup> Barczewski, Stephanie L. ‘Ritson, Joseph (1752–1803)’, in *ODNB* [accessed 30 June 2008]

simplicity of a corrupted melody',<sup>106</sup> which bears out his own statement that he viewed the music as secondary to the song (words) itself, and more of a medium for the song than a significant entity in its own right.

As already mentioned, in addition to Johnson and Thomson's claims to 'original' melodies, there was evidently the perception that a traditional melody would by definition have originated as something uncomplicated, for both also claimed to eschew unnecessary ornamentation, Johnson decrying 'useless accompaniments and graces', and Thomson assuring his reader that his settings were freed from 'redundant graces'.

Johnson and Burns concurred with Tytler's opinion as to the most suitable way to accompany a tune, whilst Ritson found it unnecessary to provide an accompaniment at all. (One can perhaps detect Rousseau's influence here, since Rousseau believed strongly that melody was of prime importance, and harmony a much more subsidiary function.)

Ritson argued that it 'would have been altogether improper' to have supplied a bass to these Scottish tunes, which were,

[...] pure melody [...] not unfrequently [sic] injured by the bases, which have been set to them by strangers: the only kind of harmony known to the original composers consisting perhaps in the unisonant drone of the bagpipe.<sup>107</sup>

The fact that Ritson considered bagpipes suitable for accompanying song at all is interesting, considering the volume generated by a set of pipes; however, one should not immediately put this down to ignorance, since it is possible that Ritson had in mind the less strident, bellows-operated smallpipes. Not only was Ritson from north-east England, where he might have heard the Northumbrian pipes, but Hugh Cheape is of the opinion that the similar Union pipes were more prevalent in Scotland than the Great Highland bagpipes until the late eighteenth century.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Ritson, *Scottish Song*, I, pp.v-vii.

<sup>107</sup> Ritson, *Scottish Song*, I, p. vii.

<sup>108</sup> Hugh Cheape, 'Raising the Tone: the Bagpipe and the Baroque', *Musica Scotica*, 25 April 2009.

It is not uncommon for reference to be made to the difficulties of harmonizing modal melodies, in the prefaces to collections of Scottish songs both in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Plainly, the more skeletal the accompaniment, the less problematical the modal inflexions were likely to be, and - where all else failed - a simple drone (setting aside the question of which instrument was providing the accompaniment) was, indeed, often the best answer, as suggested by MacDonald and Young, and now again by Ritson.

However, Young's scrupulous, and indeed cautious handling of modal harmonies in 1784 - and Clarke's simple figured basses in the *Museum* - can be directly contrasted with Beethoven's methodology for Thomson's collection some thirty years later, for Beethoven believed that any tune could be accompanied with the right chords:-

Die Schottischen Lieder zeigen also ungezwungen die unordentlichste Melodie vermoge die Harmonie behandelt werden kann.

The Scottish songs show how easily the most messy melody can be treated harmonically.<sup>109</sup>

Beethoven did sometimes overstep the mark, not only in the difficulty of his accompaniments, but also in his harmonisations, though, as Thomson declined some songs as 'too recherché, too bizarre',<sup>110</sup> and there are others with rather incongruous arrangements; e.g., compare 'Johnie Cope', in *Scots Musical Museum*,<sup>111</sup> with Beethoven's setting of the same song.<sup>112</sup>

In this chapter, we have examined in depth the background and motivations behind three key collections of Scottish song from the late eighteenth (and, in Thomson's case, early nineteenth) century. Each springs from the prevailing contemporary preoccupations with somehow 'pinning down the butterfly' - ie,

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<sup>109</sup> Cited in Barry Cooper, *Beethoven's Folksong Settings*, p.157 n.9, quoting from a paper by Maynard Solomon, 'Beethoven's Tagebuch of 1812-1818' in *Beethoven Studies*, ed. Alan Tyson (1982). Cooper translated the comment as "The Scottish songs show how unrestrained the most disorderly melody can be treated through harmony". The above alternative translation was suggested by Katja Riek, language tutor at RSAMD.

<sup>110</sup> Barry Cooper, *ibid*, p.165.

<sup>111</sup> James Johnson, *Scots Musical Museum* III (1790), no.234, 'Johnie Cope' (first line, 'Sir John Cope trode the north right far').

<sup>112</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, 'Sir Johnie Cope', in *Werke* XI.1, Schottische und walisische Lieder (Munich: Henle, 1999), p.150.

recording a repertoire that the collectors felt to be at risk of dying out. As such, it was necessary to seek out perfect specimens, and to present them in the best possible settings.

However, each compiler had a slightly different view as to what that setting ought to be. Johnson, Burns, Thomson and Ritson addressed the questions of authenticity, accuracy and accompaniment in their own ways and on their own terms.

For Johnson, his musical museum was intended to collect ‘everything’, accepting that the songs would not all be of equal quality, and Burns provided the input to provide suitable words, whether or not they were original or simply inspired by an original. Tunes came largely, but not entirely, from respected contemporary printed sources, and accompaniments were elementary.

Ritson, on the other hand, published a collection of Scottish songs for people of ‘taste’ and discernment – so quality was very definitely an issue – but with a concern for meticulous accuracy with regard both to texts and to historical notes, again quoting tunes from respected sources, but allowing Shields to improve some and provide his own compositions for others – and seeing no need for an accompaniment at all. Ritson provided his historical notes alongside the songs themselves, and this pattern was to be replicated in turn by Hogg in his *Jacobite Relics*; by George Farquhar Graham’s *Songs of Scotland*; and William Chappell’s *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, as we shall see in due course.

(It is worth noting here that in 1822, Thomson issued an octavo offprint edition of his *Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*, this time entitled, *The Select Melodies of Scotland*, to the first volume of which he added a new ‘Dissertation on the National Melodies of Scotland’, exploring the question of Scottish modality, and citing many more authorities to demonstrate the extent of his knowledge.)<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> McCue, ‘George Thomson (1757-1851): His Collections’, p. 94. McCue informs us that Thomson’s *Select Melodies* contained songs from Vols. 1-5 of the original series, but in 1825 he added songs from Vol.6, renaming the octavo edition *Thomson’s Collection of the Songs of Burns, Sir Walter Scott* [&c].

However, the difference between Johnson and Burns's *Scots Musical Museum*, Ritson's *Scotish Song*, or Thomson's *Select Collection*, goes far deeper than the scope of the collections; the type of accompaniment; their commitment to 'authenticity'; or even the nature of the commentary: I suggest that Burns's regard for Macpherson as 'an author' betrays a hint of the value that he himself put on the creative input that went into a song collection. Whilst Ritson privileged the importance of accuracy and authenticity, Burns responded to the artist's urge to polish and improve, even to the extent of virtually re-creating what had originally been his raw materials.

So, too, did George Thomson, in his vision for a collection of volumes primarily for performance, and an insistence on a quality musical product which by its very nature catapulted it into the category of 'art' music, and at the same time lost the simple, folk character of the original tunes.

We shall see at a later stage in this thesis, that this premise is corroborated by comments passed by the poet Allan Cunningham, whether contrasting Ritson's solidly antiquarian stance with the creative impulses of Thomas Percy, or admitting to his own elaborate deceptions in Scottish song.

A quotation from Ritson's *Scotish Song* opened this chapter, so it is fitting that he should also - indirectly - have the last word. It will be recalled that in 1802, his appeal for more songs was published in the *Scots Magazine*. The reason for this appeal, said the *Scots Magazine* editors, was 'That these should at least be corrected and arranged'.

In 1829, Maidment - the editor of Ritson's letters to Paton - suggested that the word 'corrected' might have been a misprint for 'collected'.<sup>114</sup> However, there is no reason to believe that this was so. Indeed, it is more likely that the very wording betrays Ritson's (not to mention the *Scots Magazine* editors') concern about recording the best, 'correct' versions of songs - a step beyond Maidment's

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<sup>114</sup> *Letters from Joseph Ritson, Esq., to Mr. George Paton. To which is added, a critique by John Pinkerton, Esq., upon Ritson's Scotish songs*, ed. by James Maidment (Edinburgh: John Stevenson, 1829), Footnote p. 26 .

‘collecting’. Furthermore, it is significant that the songs were to be ‘arranged’; far from referring to musical settings, this implies some kind of classification or arrangement into order. We thus come back to the whole concept of the ‘museum’ once more. As much as a collection of wild flowers or butterflies, these songs had to be gathered, codified, and displayed to their best advantage.

Johnson and Ritson were largely content to draw upon pre-existing collections. Thomson and Burns were perhaps more amenable to admit manuscript or oral versions, though the extent to which they did so is uncertain. However, we shall see in the next chapter how the next generation of collectors took to the highways and byways in pursuit of their own ‘wild’ specimens. Clearly, the search for authenticity was moved onto a higher level if it could be proven that one had ‘pricked down’ the melodies directly from real live people, and their social status or lack of it was indeed almost a secondary consideration.



## Chapter 3. 'To take down a melody': Travel in Pursuit of Song

In this and the next two chapters, we shall examine various trends in song-collecting in the first three decades or so of the nineteenth century, and not least the idea that travel not only broadened the mind, but was also essential if one was to go direct to the musical sources, or seek inspiration from the locality. As we have seen, this was the case with Robert Burns. The strong sense of cultural nationalism that pervaded his writings is also plain to see in the collectors to be considered in the present chapter, both in respect of the nation as a whole, and particular localities in Scotland. The current chapter addresses the growing urge to travel with a view to self-discovery, and makes a specific study of a single collector, Alexander Campbell, and some of the people upon whom he was most dependent.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst Campbell set out with a stated purpose for his travel (as indeed had Burns), one is led to the inescapable conclusion that his travels also fit into the bigger picture of a growing interest in exploring one's own native country. (Together with improvements in the ease of travel, this ultimately contributed significantly to the start of the tourist industry.) Before turning to Campbell, therefore, some consideration must be given to the whole opening up of travel and tourism to the middle classes. We shall then briefly examine Burns's, Leyden's and Hogg's travels some years prior to Campbell's song-collecting missions, before exploring precisely why the lure of the Hebrides was so strong during the early nineteenth century. Only having examined the cultural background can one then set Campbell and his travels - firstly in the Highlands and Islands, and latterly in the Scottish Borders - in their proper context. At appropriate points, we shall consider Campbell's earlier friendships, and some of the people who either facilitated his travels or provided him with materials for his collection.

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<sup>1</sup> 'To take down a melody', the title of this chapter, is drawn from Campbell's *Border's Journal*, published by James Sinton, 'Journal of a Tour in the Scottish Border in 1816 by Alexander Campbell ... with a brief sketch of the Author's life', *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society* (1904), reprint, p. 3.

## Travel and Tourism at the turn of the Nineteenth Century

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, travel became a leisure-pursuit for the middle-classes as well as the landed gentry, and as a result of this, travel writing as a genre literally took off. The level of contemporary interest in travel is evidenced by John Pinkerton's 17-volume travel bibliography, compiled between 1808 and 1814, *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels*.<sup>2</sup>

If we take as our starting point the *OED* definition of tourism as 'travelling for pleasure', one can then identify various motivations for these trips. Those with sufficient means would make trips to Europe to soak up the culture, as did Ritson and his friend William Shield when they visited France and Italy in the early 1790's, or the Hebridean Revd. James Macdonald, who travelled widely as tutor and companion to various sons of the Scottish gentry between 1790 and 1809. Gillies summarises Macdonald, a native of North Uist who had charge of a parish in Fife, as having visited Germany (1796-98 and 1801), Austria, Denmark and Germany again (1804-06); and Denmark and Sweden (1808-09). He also made seven visits back to the Hebrides (1783-1808) and another less precisely documented trip to a number of European countries, possibly including France, which Gillies surmises must have been during or shortly after his student years (i.e. prior to the Napoleonic Wars).<sup>3</sup>

Besides the cultural attractions of the Continent, travellers were also motivated by the desire to find the 'real' and 'authentic' in other cultures, whether overseas or within the United Kingdom. This was allied to a quest to find the primitive 'other' - that which is alien to one's own experience - in an effort to discover oneself. Mention was made in the previous chapter of the growing interest in primitivism, and a particular interest in origins as exemplified by Rousseau's idealised portrayal of innocence in primitive societies. Scotland was especially interesting to Enlightenment philosophers because the Highlands represented a contemporary primitive society, and of course conjectural history

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<sup>2</sup> John Pinkerton, *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels [...]* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1808-14).

<sup>3</sup> See A. Gillies, *A Hebridean in Goethe's Weimar* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), pp.4-5.

depended on such models to enable historians to speculate as to the early origins of human society. Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century texts are littered with the terms ‘wild’ and ‘primitive’, applied fairly indiscriminately to Scottish landscapes, Scottish music, and indeed the Highlanders themselves.

On a purely practical note, the Scottish tourist industry received an indirect boost during the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815), when travel abroad was more difficult. It was, after all, much easier to visit the ‘primitive’ Highlands than to search for primitivism in other countries further afield.

The whole question of early tourism in Scotland is addressed by a number of modern authorities; Marjorie Morgan’s<sup>4</sup> and Katherine Haldane Grenier’s<sup>5</sup> monographs about national identity and tourism in Scotland are informative in the general sense, whilst John Glendening’s *The High Road: Tourism, Scotland, and Literature, 1720-1820* provides food for thought with regard to the influence of tourism and travel upon writers and their creative processes, if not directly upon musicians and song-collectors.<sup>6</sup>

It is also worth pointing out that cultural geography also takes on considerable significance in the Romantic era, and there has in recent years been considerable discussion both about the idea of ‘the north’, and about the culture attached to the boundaries between different countries or regions, whether the boundary between Scotland and England (‘the debatable lands’ of the Scottish Borders), or between the Lowlands and the Highlands.

The idea of the north is something that appeals to writers at least as much, if not even more than it does to musicians, and one has only to scratch the surface to realise that the concept of ‘the north’ - whether in the Scottish Highlands or indeed in Scandinavia and beyond - is almost universally associated with cold, purity, austerity, and authenticity. (These ideas are examined in depth by Peter

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<sup>4</sup> Marjorie Morgan, *National Identities and Travel in Victorian Britain*, Studies in Modern History (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Katherine Haldane Grenier, *Tourism and Identity in Scotland, 1770-1914 : Creating Caledonia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> John Glendening, *The High Road: Romantic Tourism, Scotland and Literature, 1720-1820* (London: Macmillan, 1997).

Davidson, in his *The Idea of the North*, outwardly as travel writing, but with resonances that can easily be traced in a wide range of writings about music.)<sup>7</sup>

Turning to the significance of the Borders during this period, Lamont and Rossington have recently edited *Romanticism's Debatable Lands*, which is a compilation of papers delivered to the 2005 Conference of the British Association for Romantic Studies,<sup>8</sup> and we shall see in due course the importance of the Borders in James Hogg's work, no less than in that of his idol, Sir Walter Scott. That the Borders had their own special appeal can also be seen in the fact that Alexander Campbell was to follow his Highlands tour with a similar trip to the Borders the following year.

## Scottish Writers Touring Scotland

It is not without significance that several of Campbell's near-contemporary song-collectors and literary friends were themselves keen travellers in their native country, covering perhaps more ground than is commonly realised.

We have already, in the previous chapter, noted Robert Burns' romantic attachment to the places connected to Scottish folksongs, either by origin or by subject. Indeed, a current major touring expedition, 'The Paths of Robert Burns' takes particular inspiration from Burns' youthful tour in the summer of 1787 round the northern part of Scotland when, writes Allan Burnett, 'he heard traditional laments, shanties, ditties, chants and love songs recited by people from all over the country and all walks of life'.<sup>9</sup> In fact, Burns made two Highland tours that summer, the first in late June to the western Highlands and as far as Inveraray, and then again in August with his friend William Nicol, recorded in a travel journal later published as *Journal of a Tour in the Highlands Made in the Year 1787 by Robert Burns*.<sup>10</sup> Burns' motivation was not primarily for collecting songs, but to observe scenery, historic sites, farming practice, and

<sup>7</sup> Peter Davidson, *The Idea of North* (London: Reaktion, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> *Romanticism's Debatable Lands*, ed. by Claire Lamont and Michael Rossington (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> Allan Burnett, 'Following in the footsteps of Burns', in *Discover: the magazine of the National Library of Scotland*, 2008 (Winter), p.16.

<sup>10</sup> Burns, Robert, *Journal of a Tour in the Highlands Made in the Year 1787 by Robert Burns*, ed. by James Cameron Ewing (London: Gowans, 1927).

to visit friends. Nonetheless, he did hear traditional music performed, and, as mentioned earlier, his letters do allude to his custom of visiting sites connected with traditional songs. His travels, both in the Highlands and his native Lowlands, provided him with abundant inspiration for the songs and poems that he was to write.

Two Borders writers with whom Alexander Campbell was acquainted, the poet and linguist John Leyden (1775-1811), and James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd (1770-1835) each went on their own Highland tours around the same time, too.

Leyden, who grew up near Hawick in Teviotdale, Roxburghshire, was one of the literary characters with whom Campbell was in correspondence from an early date, as evidenced by an allusion in his *Slight Sketch* to a letter from Leyden dated 27<sup>th</sup> October 1797. Campbell wrote that,

In the year 1797, he [Campbell] set about collecting materials for his intended publication; and for that purpose corresponded with several literary characters on the subject among whom was the late ingenious & truly learned Doctor John Leyden. In one of his letters (dated 27. Oct. 1797) he says, "With respect to the wood notes of Teviotdale, tho an amateur in the literal sense, I have no pretensions whatever to the character of a connoisseur, ignorant of the theory, I only judge of the practice by feeling. I have observed or thought that I observed a local character of these melodies in particular districts. It occurs to me that it may be acceptable to give you a specimen of an excellent old mythological Legend, which expressly describes and delineates the Scottish notion of Fairy. There is only a fragment printed: I have heard the whole, and recollect some detached verses [...]."<sup>11</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Leyden himself went on a Highland tour in the summer of 1800, with 'two young foreigners who had studied at Edinburgh the preceding winter'.<sup>12</sup> Like Burns before him, Leyden's journal described the scenery, especially the appearance of rocks, castles, religious ruins etc, and listed whom he met or visited. He also mentioned music making, dancing, piping, people who knew about Ossianic poems, and clan histories.

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<sup>11</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol. 2.

<sup>12</sup> John Leyden, *Journal of a Tour in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland in 1800*, ed. by James Sinton (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1903), p. 27.

Meanwhile, the 'Ettrick shepherd', James Hogg (who was to write verses for Campbell's *Albyn's Anthology* in due course), similarly made three trips to the Highlands and Western Isles between 1802 and 1804, having made a 'jaunt through the west of Stirlingshire, Monteith, Breadalbane and Glenorchy'<sup>13</sup> about ten years previously.<sup>14</sup>

Hogg's trips, like Burns's, were primarily to observe agricultural practice. (Hogg's particular interest was in sheep farming; one trip was made with a view to buying a sheep-walk on Harris, although this never actually eventuated.) Although his correspondence mentioned musical events - such as when he had enjoyed a musical evening with dancing, or witnessed the singing of waulking songs on Harris - he made no mention of song-collecting. Nonetheless, he was conscious of following in Johnson's and Boswell's footsteps, writing to tell Sir Walter Scott about someone he'd met on Skye who had actually met Johnson; and also recounting his encounters with people familiar with the Gaelic originals of Macpherson's Ossianic legends.<sup>15</sup>

Hogg's immersion in his native Border culture was of paramount importance to him as a writer, and his travels around his own locality were of at least as much importance to him as his Highland tours. However, the Borders appear in general to have been more a source of literary than musical inspiration, as evidenced by published output - particularly of Border ballads - during the era under discussion.

Apart from Hogg's song collections (whose provision of tunes varied from collection to collection, as we shall see in due course), and Campbell's *Albyn's Anthology*, it is hard to identify other specifically Scottish Borders song collections with their airs, although a slightly earlier instrumental collection, Captain Robert Riddell's *A Collection of Scotch, Galwegian and Border Tunes for*

<sup>13</sup> James Hogg, Letter to Sir Walter Scott, (22 July, 1802), in *Highland Tours, with an introduction by Sir Walter Scott*, ed. by William F. Lauchlan (Hawick: Byway Books, 1981), pp. 13-14.

<sup>14</sup> To existing transcriptions of Hogg's Highland tours such as that published by William F. Lauchlan, can now be added the published transcripts of the Pullman notebook copies found in the USA in 2001 by Gillian Hughes:- H. B. de Groot, 'The Unpublished Conclusion of James Hogg's 1802 Highland Journey', *Studies in Hogg and his World*, VI (1995), 55-66; and 'Hogg in the Hebrides in 1803', *Studies in Hogg and His World*, XIII (2002), 143-180. Gillian Hughes, *James Hogg: a Life*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p.305, lists all Hogg's tour correspondence, both published and unpublished.

<sup>15</sup> See H. B. De Groot, 'Hogg in the Hebrides in 1803', *ibid*, pp.152, and 157-8.

*the Violin and Pianoforte, with a Bass for the Violoncello or Harpsichord*, was published posthumously by Johnson in Edinburgh, in 1794.<sup>16</sup> Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* was published without music in 1802-3,<sup>17</sup> but acquired tunes some years later in a posthumous edition by J H Gibson and J G Lockhart.<sup>18</sup>

## The Lure of the Hebrides

In the context of cultural boundaries, however, the Romantic appeal of the Highlands - and particularly the Hebrides - was irresistible, and was considered an attractive alternative, or counterbalance, to the cultural continental tours. (It was also a practical alternative for Britons, particularly during the Napoleonic Wars of 1799-1815, when travel to Europe was difficult.)

Popular attention was first drawn to the attractions of the Hebridean islands by the Skye writer Martin Martin (d.1718), who published two accounts of the Hebrides, *The Late Voyage to St. Kilda* in 1698 and *A Description of the Western Isles of Scotland*, in 1703. The Shropshire naturalist Edward Lluyd (c.1659-1709) visited the Hebrides around the same time, during five years spent travelling in the Celtic regions of Wales, Ireland, Cornwall, Brittany and Scotland between 1696-1701. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Welsh naturalist and travel writer Thomas Pennant (1726-1798) toured Scotland and most particularly the Highlands, in 1772, subsequently publishing his *Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides*. The explorer Joseph Banks brought Pennant's attention to Fingal's Cave on the island of Staffa, and Pennant's account became almost required reading for every Hebridean traveller for the next fifty years. The Swiss Geologist Louis Albert Necker de Saussure visited

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<sup>16</sup> Riddell was a native of Dumfriesshire. After a relatively brief military career, he settled in Friars' Carse, Nithsdale, devoting his time to antiquarian and literary pursuits. His biography in the *ODNB* describes him as an 'enthusiastic amateur musician and composer of some talent', and notes that Johnson might have been responsible for introducing him to Burns, with whom he shared an interest in Scottish song. See James A. Mackay, 'Riddell, Robert, of Glenriddell (bap. 1755, d. 1794)', *ODNB*, 2004 [accessed 19 Jan 2009].

<sup>17</sup> Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border: consisting of Historical and Romantic Ballads, collected in the Southern Counties of Scotland; with a few of modern date, founded upon ancient tradition*. (Kelso; Edinburgh; London: Printed by J. Ballantyne, for T. Cadell, jun. and W. Davies, 1802-1803).

<sup>18</sup> Walter Scott, *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott, Bart*, 12 vols (Edinburgh: R. Cadell, 1834), I-IV, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* [...], ed. by J. H. Gibson and J. G. Lockhart.

Arran and the Hebrides in 1807, introducing his findings to the Wernerian Natural History Society in Edinburgh the following year, and ultimately publishing an influential account first in French in 1821, and then in English in 1822.<sup>19</sup>

Meanwhile, the Scottish section of artist William Daniell's iconic and lavishly illustrated *A Voyage Round Great Britain* (1814-25), took him a full seven years to complete (1815-22), circumnavigating Scotland and the adjacent islands.

Travel writing concerning the Hebrides is almost a genre in itself, and we need not occupy ourselves with it here; useful background can, however, be sourced in Elizabeth Bray's *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883*,<sup>20</sup> and Hugh Cheape's compilation of John Lorne Campbell's writings, *A Very Civil People: Hebridean Folk, History and Tradition*.<sup>21</sup>

We have already noted the trail of experts (cynical or otherwise), who attempted to retrace Macpherson's steps, anxious to get to the bottom of Macpherson's Ossianic extravaganza; Johnson and Boswell were among that number. However, there were many more travellers who were inspired to visit the Hebrides in order to walk the hallowed ground where Ossian and Fingal once strode; to experience an authentically 'primitive' way of life; and to see the recently discovered Fingal's Cave for themselves. Indeed, when Johnson and Boswell embarked upon their Hebridean tour in 1773, Pennant's *Tour* was still hot off the press. Both Campbell and Hogg were keenly aware that they were following in Macpherson's - and Johnson's - footsteps. (Obviously, the most frequently-cited visit by a musician was Mendelssohn's trip to Fingal's Cave in 1827, as recorded by his friend Klingemann.)

Whether experienced first-hand, or read about in a book, there was a new appreciation of landscape, the picturesque and the 'sublime'. Indeed, Burke's concept of the sublime still resonated in the early nineteenth century, and a

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<sup>19</sup> L. A. Necker de Saussure, *A Voyage to the Hebrides, or Western Isles of Scotland; with Observations on the Manners and Customs of the Highlanders* (London: printed for Sir Richard Phillips & Co., 1822)

<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> John Lorne Campbell, *A Very Civil People : Hebridean Folk, History and Tradition*, ed. by Hugh Cheape (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000).



steady stream of travel writers declared themselves enchanted with the romantic wildness of Scotland's rugged scenery.

Alexander Campbell might not have been in a position to make his song-collecting trip until the summer of 1815, but he was by this stage already a seasoned traveller, and had indeed illustrated his own travel guide, *Journey from Edinburgh through parts of North Britain*, in 1802,<sup>22</sup> informing his readers that he had visited the spots that he had chosen to describe and sketch; and furthermore, that he had regularly visited the area over a period of twenty years. His *Slight Sketch* also documents occasions during his song-collecting tour when he felt moved to make a sketch, because a landscape had filled him,

[...] with reverential awe, wonder, & admiration! I had never seen so magnificent an eye-range, so splendidly illumined in the sublime prospect that at the moment riveted me to the spot on which I stood.<sup>23</sup>

Comparatively little seems to have been made by modern scholars of the parallel interest in soundscape at this time. Many travellers, not content with sailing into Uamh-Binn<sup>24</sup> (Fingal's cave) to experience the spectacular, cathedral-like sight, would also take a piper with them, so that they could experience the awe-inspiring echo too. In July 1800, Leyden and his companion stopped at Ulva, 'to take up our piper', before going on to Fingal's Cave. It comes as no surprise to find Leyden, imbued with an appreciation for the sublime, commenting that the 'awful' dashing of the waves, 'has some resemblance to the low hollow tones of a prodigious organ', adding that,

'[...] the sound of the bagpipe, almost drowned by the roaring of the waves and the echo of the cave, exceeded in grandeur and wildness any union of sounds I ever heard.'<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Alexander Campbell, *A Journey from Edinburgh through parts of North Britain*, 2 vols (London: printed by A. Strahan for T. N. Longman & O Rees, and Vernor and Hood, 1802).

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, fol. 61<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Uamn-Binn, spelled phonetically by some early writers as 'An-ua-vine', means 'melodious cave'.

<sup>25</sup> John Leyden, *Journal of a Tour in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland in 1800*, ed. with a bibliography by James Sinton (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1903). The imagery of cathedral and organ is, incidentally, invoked by various writers.

When Alexander Campbell visited the caves by boat, fifteen years later, he was accompanied by Staffa's piper. In similar vein to Leyden, Campbell recorded that,

The resounding tones of the piper commingling with the thundering voice of the Atlantick [sic] dashing into the farther end of the cavern, is, awfully sublime. The performer, (Staffa's piper) played with pathos, The Lament for the Slain on the fatal field of Culloden [...]<sup>26</sup>

À propos of Leyden and Campbell's reaction to the sounds of Fingal's Cave, it is worth noting an interesting contemporary Irish parallel to the Fingal's Cave echo, in the Lake of Killarney echo. In this context, William H. A. Williams has considered the cultural implications of tourists taking a small band into the middle of the lake, so that they could experience the reverberating sound - so much so, that enterprising local musicians were able to command a high price for their services, and, equally, would decline to oblige if the fee offered was too low.<sup>27</sup>

In short, by the time Campbell was to devote three months to collecting tunes in the Highlands and Islands (and, indeed, to make a shorter tour of the Scottish Borders the following year), poets whom he knew whether directly or indirectly, and with a common interest in Scottish culture - whether 'traditionary lore', traditional songs, or both - had already made their own tours of the Highlands and Islands and the Borders, and there was moreover a significant body of writing about various aspects of the Highlands and Islands.

## Who was Alexander Campbell?

Campbell was born in 1764, in Tombea, northwest of Callander. He knew enough Gaelic to have been able to observe that, 'the Skye Gaelic is very fine', and could certainly speak it, although he described himself elsewhere in his *Slight Sketch* as 'a hearer only', and Matheson pointed out that the finer

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<sup>26</sup> Edinburgh University Library, La.III.577, Alexander Campbell, *A Slight Sketch of a Journey made through parts of The Highlands & Hebrides, undertaken to collect materials for Albyn's Anthology, by the Editor: in Autumn 1815*, fol.9<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> William H. A. Williams, 'Blow, bugle, blow: Romantic Tourism and the Echoes of Killarney', in *Travel Essentials: Collected Essays on Travel Writing*, ed. by Santiago Henríquez, (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Chandlon Inn Press, 1998), pp. 133-147.

nuances of Campbell's own Gaelic leave something to be desired.<sup>28</sup> He regarded himself as a Highlander, though his family moved to Edinburgh while he was still a child. Indeed, this must also have been the perception of his acquaintances, for Walter Scott was later to refer to him as 'an enthusiastic good hearted Highlander.'<sup>29</sup>

Campbell trained with the famous Italian singer, Tenducci,<sup>30</sup> before working in Edinburgh as a music teacher (Walter Scott and his brother were amongst his pupils), and Episcopalian organist.<sup>31</sup>

Born just a year before James Macpherson was to publish his controversial *Works of Ossian*, Campbell grew up whilst Ossian fever - and scepticism - was at its peak. Possibly more understanding of Macpherson's intentions than the harsh critics in the Highland Society, his *Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland ... with a Conversation on Scottish Song*, (1798-99), included a whole chapter in Macpherson's defence. Clemmens has recently outlined the reception of Campbell's *Conversation* in Germany and its placing in the Continental response to Ossian and Highland song.<sup>32</sup> (The *Conversation* appeared in partial translation in a German travelogue, annexed to Thomas Garnett's *Journey Through the Scottish Highlands*,<sup>33</sup> which was translated in 1802 by Kosegarten as *Reise durch die schottischen Hochlande*.)<sup>34</sup>

Anxious to preserve his heritage, Campbell's volume was followed in 1802 by his *Journey from Edinburgh through parts of North Britain*. He had already made three excursions before publishing this guidebook, and it is worth noting that he

<sup>28</sup> William Matheson, 'Some Early Collectors of Gaelic Folk-song', in *The Proceedings of the Scottish Anthropological and Folklore Society* 5.2 (1955), 67-82.

<sup>29</sup> Edinburgh University Library MS Gen.1732, as cited in Currie, *Mull*, p.303.

<sup>30</sup> Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci, ca. 1735-1790.

<sup>31</sup> Campbell also studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh but never seems to have practised it; and once made what has been described as 'a financially disastrous venture into farming' – see Francis Watt, rev. John Purser, 'Alexander Campbell', *ODNB*.

<sup>32</sup> Sarah Clemmens, 'The Highland Muse in Romantic German Music' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Yale University, 2007), pp.92-98.

<sup>33</sup> Garnett, Thomas, *Observations on a tour through the Highlands and part of the Western Isles of Scotland, particularly Staffa and Icolmkil* ... 2 vols, (London : Printed for T. Cadell, 1800).

<sup>34</sup> Kosegarten, Ludwig Gotthard, *Reise durch die Schottischen Hochländer und einen Theil der Hebriden:/ aus dem Englischen übersetzt und mit Alexander Campbells Abhandlung über die Dicht- und Tonkunst der Hochländer wie auch über die Aechtheit der dem Ossian zugeschriebnen Gesänge*. 2 vols. (Lubeck, 1802).

had also made two trips to the Borders, before even starting his song-collecting tours.<sup>35</sup> The much-travelled and literary-minded Rev. James Macdonald was asked in 1803 about Campbell's *Journey from Edinburgh* by his friend Böttiger, who already knew of Campbell's writings in German translation, and wanted to know about his latest publication. Macdonald was scathing about Campbell's *Journey*, saying that he was a typical Highlander in his blind defence of Macpherson's *Ossian*; furthermore, Macdonald found his *Journey* profoundly derivative.

Campbell went on to publish a book-length poem entitled *The Grampians Desolate*, in 1804, revealing an awareness of the plights of Highland sheep-farmers and the contemporary practice of 'depopulation'. The book was both a diatribe against the Highland Clearances, and a fund-raiser for his new foundation, The Fund of Aid for Waste Land Cultivators.<sup>36</sup>

Campbell's motivation for all his publications clearly reverberates with the *Zeitgeist*, but when it came to the song-collections, he was not a typical tourist. His trips were made with a distinct purpose in mind. Whilst English travellers visited Scotland and Britons had been in the habit of travelling abroad in search of the primitive 'other', Campbell's *Slight Sketch* and Borders journal were instead documenting his native music. Campbell wrote of tracing the steps of 'our Celtic Homer'<sup>37</sup> - as had James Hogg, just over a decade earlier - and was unsurprised to stumble across tradition bearers quoting snatches of 'Ossianic' verse.

We have already noted that Joseph Ritson made a youthful trip from Stockton-on-Tees to Edinburgh in 1773, visiting second-hand bookshops and the Advocates Library in addition to sightseeing - the same year, indeed, that Johnson and Boswell embarked upon their Hebridean tour. Alexander Campbell was still only a child at this time; however, Ritson was in correspondence with Campbell as early as 1792, two years before he was to publish his own *Scottish Songs*. Their common interest was an appreciation of Scottish music. At the time of writing,

<sup>35</sup> See Alexander Gillies, *A Hebridean in Goethe's Weimar: the Reverend James Macdonald and the Cultural Relations between Scotland and Germany* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969).

<sup>36</sup> Alexander Campbell, *The Grampians Desolate: a poem* (Edinburgh: Manners & Miller, 1804).

<sup>37</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol.7<sup>v</sup>.

Ritson was himself collecting Lowland tunes for his *Scottish Songs*. As we saw in the previous chapter, there is evidence from Hogg to suggest that Campbell actually helped Ritson with the musical settings - perhaps of words to music - which implies more than a slight acquaintance.

According to his *Slight Sketch*, Campbell had written to Ritson about his ambition to make a collection of Highland tunes - a dream that he had nursed since 1790.<sup>38</sup> Ritson had evidently taunted him about his 'great project', and Campbell quoted one of Ritson's letters in the introductory preamble of his *Slight Sketch*: - 'I sincerely wish you would commence the execution of your project: it would be the Pleasures of Imagination realised.'

Ritson was referring to Mark Akenside's long poem,<sup>39</sup> then almost fifty years old, but still popular both in Britain and abroad. Ritson's tongue-in-cheek allusion nonetheless hints at what Campbell wanted to achieve, since the poem dealt with issues of imagination and artistic appreciation, and was so well received that it was published well into the nineteenth century. At the same time, Campbell conceded that his project 'was considered visionary and by many deemed quite impracticable',<sup>40</sup> citing Ritson's comments as but one example of his acquaintances' reaction to the idea.

As mentioned earlier, the antiquarian and linguist Leyden also encouraged Campbell to compile his collection of Scottish songs, although both Ritson and Leyden had died by the time he started in earnest in 1815.

By this time he had secured funding for the enterprise from the Highland Society of Scotland, and viewed their support as tantamount to a commission, describing himself as 'sent on a mission of National importance, and sanctioned by an Association of the first personages of the Community.' This was not, however, quite the view of the Society, as is evident from the reaction of its Secretary, Lewis Forbes, to Campbell's *Slight Sketch* when he reported on it in January 1816:-

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<sup>38</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol.1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> Mark Akenside, *The Pleasures of Imagination: a Poem in Three Books*, (London: printed for R. Dodsley, 1744).

<sup>40</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol.2<sup>r</sup>.

[...] it satisfies [Mr Forbes] that Mr C. has been most zealous in the subject he had in view and as he had good opportunities, so he most probably profited by them fully [...]

In some passages of the Journal it seems to be held out as if the Undertaking was one by the Soc[ie]ty of that it was carried on jointly by them and Mr Campbell; whereas the Socty has always held out and Mr C. should understand distinctly that the work is entirely his own and that they are no further concerned in it than as wishing he may do justice to the subject; and were willing so far to aid him in his undertaking, as the pecuniary assistance given him last year went. But that they do not hold themselves in the slightest degree responsible to the publick for the fidelity or industry or skill with which the Collection has been made.<sup>41</sup>

The Society had, however, taken the precaution of laying down strict conditions of the grant: Campbell's collection should neither duplicate MacDonald's existing collection, nor Simon Fraser's impending collection; he should travel Argyleshire, Inverness-shire and as many islands as possible; he should 'collect unknown tunes and give them without improvement or alienation'; 'record any historical notes connected with the tune'; note the location, informant and instrument upon which a tune was heard; and record the words that went with it.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, since Fraser was seemingly publishing a fairly discreet corpus of tunes inherited or learned from his father and grandfather, then any overlap with Campbell's collection was likely to have been purely coincidental. There is no record of any communication or collaboration between the two; and Fraser's recorded attitude towards Campbell was hardly cordial.

Unlike the vast majority of his song-collecting predecessors, Campbell planned to go on a walking tour to gather his materials directly from contributors. However, his personal circumstances did not allow him to make his trip until the summer of 1815, when, at the age of 51, he set off to spend three months on a walking tour of the Highlands and Western Isles in pursuit of Highland melodies. In his own words, on reaching Stirling, 'I armed, and appareled [sic] myself in the ancient costume of my native mountains.'<sup>43</sup> Later in his tour, we find him

<sup>41</sup> Ingliston Papers, A.i.18, no.15, John Forbes to Lewis Gordon, 1 January, 1816, as cited in Alburger, 'Making the Fiddle Sing', I, 40.

<sup>42</sup> Ingliston Archive: 'Sederunt Books: 1.815-1818'; 'Draught of Minutes', 'Minute of Sub Committee of the Highland Society 28<sup>th</sup> February 1815', as cited by Alburger, *ibid*, p.38.

<sup>43</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol.3<sup>v</sup>

visiting Monkton on Benbecula, again ‘dressed in his tartans, with his sporrán [...], like an old forty-five man’.<sup>44</sup>

Campbell’s Hebridean tour was for the very specific purpose of collecting Highland music, but there is also the strong sense that he was in some way trying to reconnect with his own Highland background and the people of the locality. Changing into Highland dress as he set out on his journey might have been a deliberate effort to fit in with the people whose songs he hoped to collect. (Currie comments that, prior to proscription, it was customary for Hebrideans ‘to make an elaborate change of dress the moment they arrived back in “the Country”’;<sup>45</sup> Campbell’s actions can thus be interpreted on various levels, as traditional, old-fashioned, nostalgic, or politically symbolic. These sentiments are not mutually exclusive.)

The fruits of Campbell’s song collection survive (to some extent, one presumes) as *Albyn’s Anthology*, published in two volumes between 1816 and 1818. (A third volume was promised, but did not appear.) Approximately two-thirds of Campbell’s published *Albyn’s Anthology* collection use Highland melodies, with English translations or ‘imitations’ alongside the Gaelic verses. The remainder are predominantly Border melodies, but with a few from other Lowland sources. (The proportion of Highland to Lowland songs may be connected with the comparative durations of his two song collecting expeditions.) James Hogg and Sir Walter Scott were the main suppliers of the ‘modern Scottish and English verses’ as promised on the title page.

The collection met with a mixed reception from the outset, for reasons, which will become apparent in due course, but this probably explains why Campbell has attracted comparatively little attention over the past century. However, Campbell’s tour is significant not only to students of Scottish musical history, but also as a contribution to our understanding of early nineteenth-century European culture. Campbell was a man of his times. A man with an enquiring mind, reaching maturity just as what is now known as the Scottish Enlightenment was giving way to the Romantic movement, he was indeed a

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<sup>44</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol.21<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> Currie, *Mull*, p.48.

dilettante, but this was at a time when it was perfectly normal, even expected, for a well-educated person to have a wide range of intellectual interests. As has been outlined already, Campbell's particular interests were in his native country: the geography and architecture; poetry, literature, music and art.

Campbell has been described by Alburger as Scotland's first ethnomusicologist, on the strength of his tune-collecting travels;<sup>46</sup> this is something of a generalisation, since it takes no account of the efforts of the MacDonald brothers some decades earlier, nor the activities of other individuals making their own collections. Campbell's trip does, however, seem to have been the first documented long trip specifically for the purpose of gathering tunes, and we are fortunate that the manuscript journals of both his Highland tour and a subsequent abortive trip to the Borders still survive in the University of Edinburgh Library. (The Mull portion of his Highland tour and his Borders diary have both subsequently been published.)<sup>47</sup> Moreover, there exists another bound manuscript in the Laing collection at Edinburgh University Library, La.II.51, which has seemingly attracted very little attention to date except in the piping community, but it is hoped to explore it further at a later date.<sup>48</sup> This volume contains some of Campbell's published works, together with assorted manuscript materials as summarised below. Fols.1-84 are numbered by Campbell, and the top of fol.84 is dated 18<sup>th</sup> June 1814:-

- Campbell, Alexander, *Odes and Miscellaneous Poems by a Student of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: printed for G. Mudie and son, South Bridge; and for J. Johnson, London, 1796) [vi, 61 p.]

<sup>46</sup> Mary Ann Alburger, 'Making the Fiddle Sing: Captain Simon Fraser of Knockie and his 'Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles' [1816]', 2 vols (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2001).

<sup>47</sup> Alexander Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, *ibid*, and Alexander Campbell, *Notes on my Third Journey to the Borders* [1816], Edinburgh University Library La.II.378, a trip to gather materials for the second *Albyn's* volume. (The Mull portion of his Highland diary has been published by Jo Currie, in *Mull: the Island and its People*, whilst the Border diary was published by James Sinton, 'Journal of a Tour in the Scottish Border in 1816 by Alexander Campbell ... with a brief sketch of the Author's life', in *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society*, 1904, reprint.

<sup>48</sup> Edinburgh University Library, MS La.II.51, described only by the first published item, as Alexander Campbell, *The Grampians Desolate, a Poem* (Edinburgh: [n. pub.], 1804. The manuscript portion has yet to be fully indexed. Cannon has drawn the attention of the piping community to the presence of pipe notation at fols. 172-176v: 'Piberach Dhomnuill Duibh, or Cameron's Gathering', transcribed with the note, 'On the following ten pages, is a genuine sett of the Cameron's Gathering ...'. Campbell has taken down the vocables traditionally used by pipers in transmitting repertoire to one another.



- Campbell, Alexander, *The Grampians Desolate: a Poem* (London: printed for John Muir; for Vernor and Hood; and Edinburgh: for Manners and Miller, 1804) [viii p., consisting merely of the Preface and Advertisement]
- Campbell, Alexander, *Anacreontic : Amatory Trifles in Rhyme*. [pp.40-151, in manuscript]
- Songs, music transcripts &c. The pages are varied shapes and sizes. [pp.153-351]

Campbell's own Highland itinerary began on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1815 in Stirling, Perthshire, and involved a combination of walking, riding and sailing. From Stirling, he stopped at Lanrick Castle, the seat of Sir John MacGregor Murray; went westward to the Argyleshire coast, and then described a roughly anti-clockwise circle beginning with Lismore, Mull and Iona, followed by the Uists, Barra and Vatersay.

From here, he headed for the isle of Harris, going by the tiny isle of Killegray on his way to Skye, and taking in Raasay and Scalpay before he headed back for the mainland, taking the mailcoach from Stirling back to Edinburgh on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1815.

He had completed about twelve hundred miles in precisely three months - pretty much the same timescale as the Welsh traveller Thomas Pennant in 1772, and Johnson and Boswell's trip in 1773.

It may be worth noting that Campbell did not go to Lewis. Could there be any significance in the fact that Macpherson himself had not gone there?

Neither did Johnson and Boswell, nor did Campbell's adviser, Sir John Macgregor Murray, on his own tour in search of Macpherson's informants c.1800. It is perhaps unsurprising that Campbell omitted it, since Sir John may have had no contacts there.

## Networking in the Highlands

### Fixers and Informants

In an age when the success of a venture was so dependent on contacts, Campbell was fortunate. One of the members, the influential and knowledgeable Sir John MacGregor Murray, helped arrange his route, securing advance introductions with ministers, teachers and gentlefolk. Campbell furthermore acknowledges Sir John Sinclair's assistance - another highly-placed and eminently suitable advisor, for this Scottish politician, with bases both in London and Edinburgh, had supervised the compilation of the first *Statistical Account of Scotland* (1791-9), and was involved with both the Highland Society of Scotland and the Highland Society of London. Henry Mackenzie's Report of 1805 acknowledged Sinclair as one of the Highland Society of Scotland Committee members who had 'opportunities of affording MSS. and other material of importance'.<sup>49</sup> Sinclair was also the author of a *Dissertation on the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian*, published in London in 1806, and again with an edition of the poems the following year (although Mitchison suggests the dissertation may not have been a particularly well-informed work).<sup>50</sup> Nonetheless, his knowledge of people and places would have been invaluable.

Campbell's informants were from all social classes. He alludes to servants and fieldworkers, boatmen, a weaver, and a cabinet-maker, besides amateur violinists, pipers, gentry and military men. He also secured promises to pass on any further songs or information that came to light, from anyone he thought might be useful to him.<sup>51</sup>

Just as today's traditional musicians set great store by the lineage of the tunes that they perform, we find Campbell doing likewise. For example, he describes

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<sup>49</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland, appointed to inquire into the nature and authenticity of the Poems of Ossian*, (Edinburgh: Printed at the University Press; for Archibald Constable & Co, 1805), pp. iii-iv.

<sup>50</sup> Rosalind Mitchison, 'Sinclair, Sir John, first baronet (1754-1835)' in *ODNB*, describes his dissertation as 'an unfortunate excursion into unfamiliar territory which reveals that he did not fully understand the reasons for the scepticism held by many about the authorship.'

<sup>51</sup> Whilst this thesis is primarily concerned with published song collections, private individuals were also amassing their own manuscript collections with seemingly no view to publication, and some of these collectors will be mentioned in due course.

an old man who was the 22<sup>nd</sup> male representative of the McMhuirich family - formerly the hereditary bards to the family of Clanranald before they were dispossessed during the Clearances. Elsewhere, he collects songs from the grandson of McCodrum ('the celebrated bard of North Uist'); bagpipe music from Captain Niel MacLeod of Gesto (as learned from the MacCrimmons of Skye); and hears brilliant piping by Lieut. Donald MacCrimmon, then aged over 70, whom Campbell records was 'the eleventh in succession of the MacCrummons of Skye'. Campbell engaged in animated discussion with MacCrimmon's pupil about the training of pipers.

Similarly, Campbell took down harp music which came indirectly from Murdoch McDonald, the last Harper to the Laird of Coll, who had died 76 years previously. These had been transcribed and given to an older lady, Mrs MacKenzie,<sup>52</sup> by Margaret Maclean-Clephane of Torloisk, who at this time had recently married the Count of Compton. (If the Coll Harper died so long previously, one might query where the Countess got these tunes from, since she was born in 1791. Sanger has investigated this question in some depth in *Tree of Strings*,<sup>53</sup> and in a paper given to Scoil na Cláirseach in August 2008.)<sup>54</sup>

Campbell observed that harp music could still be heard in the Highlands and Western Isles - indeed, he had heard a Mrs McLean at Quinish<sup>55</sup> playing an 'improved harp' - and expressed the wish that harp music could be revived and the ancient Order of Harpers re-established in Scotland.

The introductions that had been set up for Campbell resulted in prearranged gatherings where he could meet people who would perform for him, or individuals would be sent for in order for him to take down tunes. He attended social events, and listened to people singing as they worked - such as the ferrymen. For his times, he seems to have been remarkably un-class-conscious,

<sup>52</sup> Mary MacKenzie, née Maclean, also known as Christina (c.1740-1826). See Currie, *Mull: the Island and its People*, 457 (Index of Personal Names), and 105-106 (meeting with Johnson and Boswell).

<sup>53</sup> Sanger, Keith, & Alison Kinnaird, *Tree of Strings (Crann nan teud) : a history of the harp in Scotland* (Temple: Kinmor Music, 1992).

<sup>54</sup> Summer School of Early Irish Harp <<http://www.irishharpsschool.com/>> accessed 31 January 2009, and private email correspondence with Keith Sanger, 1 February 2009.

<sup>55</sup> See Currie, *Mull: the Island and its People*, p.303, footnote 21, where Mrs McLean of Quinish is narrowed down to Mrs Catherine Maclean of Coll, or her daughter-in-law Janet.

accepting a 'shakedown' bed of hay in a weaver's house with good grace when no other arrangements could be made.

## Other Collectors

It is evident from Campbell's *Slight Sketch* that he was by no means the only person collecting Gaelic songs in the Hebrides. We can deduce that there were at least five more individuals known to have been collecting songs informally on the island of Mull, whom Campbell either met or heard of whilst he was on that part of his song-collecting tour.

The first of these - whom Campbell narrowly missed meeting - was a young soldier named Lauchlan MacLaine, the natural son of Gillean MacLaine of Scallastle (an Edinburgh-trained lawyer and highly influential in Mull). Raised with his father's subsequent legitimate offspring, but also on visiting terms with his natural mother and her family, Lauchlan joined the army, but was expected to make his own way in the world, and did not reach the rank of his more privileged younger half-brother, John. Lauchlan began collecting Mull melodies and Gaelic songs some time before Campbell reached the island, and continued to collect songs over many years throughout his military retirement, albeit with seemingly no intention of publication and almost certainly with less musical training than possessed either by the MacDonalds or by Campbell.

Campbell had hoped to hear some of Lauchlan's collected songs at the very start of his tour of Mull:-

On 31<sup>st</sup> July [...], we landed safely in Mull, a little to the S.W. of Castle Duart.

I took the road to Ledirckle; the present residence of my much valued friend Mrs McLaine senior of Scalasdale. I had received a letter from her, mentioning that her Step-son Mr Lachlan McLaine had made a Collection of Gaelic Songs, which he had carried with him to the Isle of Wight, where he then was, on his way to join his Regiment. And expecting that his sisters, who sing and perform on the Pianoforte, would gladly communicate the best of the pieces their brother had selected for his Collection, I put their instrument, soon after my arrival, in proper tune. And in the forenoon of next day, I prepared to note down the melodies & words of many beautiful songs. But they were preoccupied, for they heard that day that their brother Major

John McLaine had been wounded severely in the battle of Waterloo. The following day, came word that he had died. I expressed my condolences and slipped away.<sup>56</sup>

A number of Lauchlan's daily journals (in English) and a book (largely in Gaelic) of his song transcriptions survive in Gloucestershire Archives today.<sup>57</sup>

Captain Maclaine's work would certainly merit further investigation by a traditional musician fluent in Gaelic. The song transcriptions book (18 x 12 x 3 cm.) consists of approximately 183 folios of unnumbered pages, with a few loose folded sheets tucked in. The book has been started at either end. Taking Maclaine's bookplate to be at the front, then he continued to a quarter of the way through. The other end has pencilled in the cover, 'Christie's Lodgings, 18 Clyde Street Edin'r' (not one of his known addresses), and the remainder of the book has been filled from that end. The spine outside the book has 'No.4' in ink that appears contemporary with the book. This implies he may have written several such books, and indeed, it is possible that at least one other notebook may still be with a family descendant living in Gloucestershire.

The book consists largely of Gaelic poetry, together with the melodic lines of traditional airs. If any generalisation can be made, it is that there are fewer airs in the front section - which also has some English translations of the songs. Taken as a whole, there are approximately 87 airs on roughly 75% of all pages, with more verses than airs. There are also a few pages devoted to comments on people's or place names.

In general, we find the heading 'Orain Ghaidealach', often followed by 'Oran gaoil' (ie, 'Love song'), then the song title. The unaccompanied air appears first, then the song words. Often the chorus (which may be headed 'Luinneag'), comes before numbered verses.

Lauchlan apparently played the flute and the violin, for he purchased a new flute and violin strings before leaving for the West Indies earlier in 1815.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Campbell, *A Slight Sketch*, fol. 8.

<sup>57</sup> Gloucestershire Archives: the transcriptions are recorded as Ref. D3330, box 17: 'a volume of songs and poetry chiefly in Gaelic with some music, c.1800, with a bookplate of Lauchlan Maclaine'.

<sup>58</sup> Jo Currie, *Mull: the Island and its People* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000), p. 301.

However, his musical grammar was basic, and his rhythmic notation slightly unconventional.<sup>59</sup> He only took down the airs, not attempting to harmonise them. (If he played only melody instruments, this is perhaps understandable.)

One verse (no music) mentions Waterloo, with the title, ‘A mother’s elegy for her son’, and this item has Gaelic and English on facing pages. There is a note at the end: ‘Major [smudged] A John MacLaine of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Reg. Sent Dr Mitchell by my Nephew Lieut. I. Ward(?) to London 13<sup>th</sup> Aug.t 1815.’ John MacLaine was Lauchlan’s younger stepbrother, killed in action in the Battle of Waterloo earlier that month, the news of which had prevented Campbell from having his musical audience with the MacLaine womenfolk.

MacLaine made only a few notes as to a song’s provenance, although, interestingly, he referred to ‘McDonald’s’ [presumably Patrick MacDonald] and Fraser’s collections. If this refers to Simon Fraser, then MacLaine continued collecting beyond Gloucester Archive’s dating of the book as c.1800. He appears not to have attempted to codify them, nor (on the strength of what survives) to have kept particularly detailed background notes.

Miss Breadalbane Maclean, the unmarried daughter of Alexander Maclean of Coll, was another keen collector. Breadalbane (b.1793) was brought up at Quinish. As an adult, she lived in Retreat Cottage, Dervaig when she was in Mull, but lived on an annuity that also allowed her to live in Kensington, London, presumably close to her brother who had moved to London.<sup>60</sup> Campbell visited her in Mull, and was shown a manuscript collection of Highland music. In Vol.2 of *Albyn’s Anthology*, we learn that Campbell transcribed the melody of ‘Oran Talaidh: O hi o ha mo luaigh mo leanamh’ from ‘Miss Breadalbane McLean of Coll’s MS Collection of Highland and Hebridean Airs [...]’. The *Slight Sketch* relates that,

<sup>59</sup> Kenna Campbell, an experienced Gaelic singer, has remarked that Lauchlan’s apparently unorthodox rhythmic notation does reflect the emphases in Gaelic pronunciation.

<sup>60</sup> See Jo Currie, *Macleans: a Biographical Dictionary of Mull People Mainly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Tobermory: Brown & Whittaker, 2002), p. 24. Keith Sanger advised me by email that Breadalbane was ‘born at Musselburgh where her father was stationed with the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the Breadalbane Fencibles of which he was the Colonel’. The Coll estate was sold in the 1850’s; Breadalbane was a beneficiary, at the time living in England. (Information by email, 1 February 2009.)

24<sup>th</sup> August, returned to Belachroy, the Post-town of this district of Mull, the greater portion of which is the property of the Laird of Coll,<sup>61</sup> from whose daughter, Miss Breadalbane McLean,<sup>62</sup> I obtained permission to select, and transcribe from her MS. music book eight original Gaelic airs, one of which is the melody of a favourite St Kilda Song, vide no.5. These eight airs, together with twenty three which I had marked for transcription in her relation's MS Music Book Mrs McKenzie of Dervaig (exclusive of the sixteen formerly specified) makes a sum total gleaned in this quarter of forty-seven original melodies, mostly vocal, with a stanza or two of the original words to each - the plan I uniformly followed - in order to identify the songs, Luineags, Iurums, &c &c to which they are chanted, when transmitted to one according to promise.<sup>63</sup>

The passage above also introduces us to the older Mrs McKenzie of Dervaig (nee Mary, also known as Christina, Maclean) who was a striking young woman when Johnson and Boswell met her on their own Highland tour half a century earlier. Although Campbell relates that she was a relative of Breadalbane's, the relationship may have been tenuous, since Mrs McKenzie was born and bred in Glasgow. Campbell had a letter of recommendation from Sir John Macgregor Murray to Mrs McKenzie, and spent some time with her (17-20 August 1815), availing himself of her musical collections and knowledge:-

17<sup>th</sup>. August, about noon, I put my letter of introduction into the [fol.10<sup>v</sup>] hands of Mrs McKenzie, who received me with that suavity and ease so natural to a person of breeding & understanding. I was now conversing with the identical Miss Maclean, who, (in the words of her admirer Dr Samuel Johnson) - "was born and had been bred in Glasgow, having removed with her father to Mull, added to other qualifications, a great knowledge of the Erse language; which she had not learned in her childhood, but gained it by study"<sup>64</sup> - and he says elsewhere - "she is the most accomplished lady I have found in the highlands. She knows French, musick, drawing, sews neatly, makes shellwork, & can milk a cow; in short she can do everything. She talks sensibly; and is the first I have found who can translate verse poetry literally."<sup>65</sup> And I can bear witness that this sensible & accomplished lady, still, at the advanced age of "three score & ten", nay, upwards, is in perfect possession of her various qualifications, her faculties being quite unimpaired [...]

<sup>61</sup> See Currie, *Mull: the Island and its people*, p. 304 n, and p. 454, on Alexander McLean.

<sup>62</sup> See *Albyn's II*, 92-3, 'Baloo, my boy', from Breadalbane McLean's 'M.S. Collection'.

<sup>63</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol.14.

<sup>64</sup> Asterisk marks Campbell's own footnote to \* vide, Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands. Mull.

<sup>65</sup> Asterisk marks Campbell's own footnote to \* vide, Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides, p.397.

I spent several days at Dervaig examining the MSS. of Gaelic poetry & melodies which the father of this lady (Dr McLean) and she herself had collected. And having marked several pieces for transcription, she is under promise to transmit them to me with all possible dispatch. I have many possessions that she gave me on the spot, viz. a sheet in the hand-writing of the present Countess of Compton, (late Miss Mclean of Torloisk), containing, besides sixteen Highland melodies, three Harp-airs (vide no.3) the same as were played by Murdoch McDonald, Harper to the Laird of Coll. This minstrel was the last of our Hebridean Harpers; and died in anno 1739. Mrs McKenzie, who remembers him perfectly, has promised to furnish me with a few biographical notices regarding him; - and she has likewise engaged to give me some authentic particulars of John McLean, the Bard of Mull; - several of whose pieces are in her MS. Collection.

[fol.11<sup>v</sup>] “The Voice of Harps”, may yet be heard in the Highlands and Western Islands. As a proof, it is well known that the accomplished ladies of Torloisk are admirably skilled in handling the harp. And I myself, while in Mull, was delighted with the tasteful execution on the improved harp, of Mrs McLean at Cuinish.<sup>66</sup> This instrument, as an accompaniment to the voice, is well adapted to support, & and give effect in what is called Musical Expression [...].

It might be considered rather a romantic, if not a wild idea, to suggest the possibility of restoring harp-music; consequently, the re-establishment of the ancient order of Harpers in Scotland and the Isles. And why not encourage Harpers as well as Pipers? Premiums, so as to excite generous emulation, might do great things. But, - of this, hereafter - Having made these arrangements with Mrs McKenzie that are specified in the page preceding, I, on the -

21<sup>st</sup> August, set out early in the morning on an excursion [fol.12<sup>r</sup>] to that district of Mull which belongs to the Duke of Argyle.<sup>67</sup>

The ‘accomplished ladies of Torloisk’ referred to above were the three Maclean-Clephane sisters. Their mother, Marianne Maclean of Torloisk, was a close friend of Sir Walter Scott, and was known to have been musical.<sup>68</sup> She had married William Douglas Clephane of Carslogie in 1790, although he died in 1803, and she remained at Torloisk as a widow, bringing up her daughters Margaret (1791-1830), Anna Jane (born c.1794) and Wilmina (1803-1863) there.<sup>69</sup> They

<sup>66</sup> Quinish, according to Jo Currie, in *Mull: the Island and its People*, p.303, footnote 21.

<sup>67</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fols 10<sup>v</sup> – 12<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>68</sup> The Maclean-Clephane’s friendship with Sir Walter Scott is documented in Florence Al MacCunn, *Sir Walter Scott’s Friends* (Edinburgh: [s.n.]. 1909; repr. [n.p.]: Read Books, 2007).

<sup>69</sup> Marianne Maclean Clephane of Torloisk (1765-1840); daughters Margaret (1791-1830; married Spencer Compton, Marquis of Northampton 24 July 1815); Anna Jane (fl 1794-1838) and Wilmina (1803-1863, married Baron de Norman 28 September 1831.)



were known to have been musical, fluent in Gaelic, knowledgeable in ‘traditionary lore’, enthusiastic collectors of Gaelic songs and Irish harp tunes, proficient at the harp and able both to copy music in a neat hand, and to provide harmonies to their arrangements. (Lauchlan MacLaine knew of the sisters - indeed, his notebook contains a song that came from Anna Jane, whom he particularly admired, although his interest was not reciprocated.) Margaret also wrote poetry, and Compton privately published a book of her poems after her death.

Campbell had been given a song in the handwriting of Margaret (by then the newly-married Countess of Compton) by Mrs McKenzie of Dervaig, and he presents *Oran Gaoil* and *An Cronan Muileach*, in *Albyn's* Vol.2, pp. 60-61, as having come indirectly from Margaret. Although he alluded to their harp-playing prowess being ‘well known’, he does not appear to have met them.

The sisters adopted Sir Walter Scott as their guardian,<sup>70</sup> and visited him and his daughters both in Edinburgh and at Abbotsford, copying tunes from a manuscript of ballad airs and marches that Blaikie gave to his patron in 1824, now known as the Blaikie-Scott manuscript.<sup>71</sup> Warwick Edwards has identified a number of the tunes in this manuscript as having subsequently been copied into one of the Maclean-Clephane manuscripts, a copy of which now resides in the National Library of Scotland.<sup>72</sup> Thus, just as Alexander Campbell drew upon both Borders and Highland songs and airs for his published *Albyn's Anthology*, we find the Maclean-Clephane sisters drawing upon both traditions in their own private compilation of favourite songs - which also, incidentally, included Carolan harp airs and Hindustani melodies,<sup>73</sup> along with Italian music.

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<sup>70</sup> Walter Scott's published correspondence bears witness to a lively correspondence between him, Marianne, Margaret and Anna Jane.

<sup>71</sup> En MS 1578, described in the catalogue as ‘Volume of airs, chiefly of ballads, also of marches, etc, dedicated to Scott by Andrew Blaikie, 1824. Received bound.’ (Information supplied by Warwick Edwards.)

<sup>72</sup> The Maclean-Clephane MS in the National Library of Scotland (En MS 14949(a-c) was called to my attention by Warwick Edwards subsequent to his RMA Colloquium, Music Dept, University of Glasgow, 2004. The MS is a copy of the original which is now in Trinity College Dublin, TCD MS 10615.

<sup>73</sup> See Donal O'Sullivan, *Carolan, The Life and Times and Music of an Irish Harper* (s.l.: Ossian Publications, [2001], Appendix; and Gerry Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 86-7.

Besides the Trinity College Dublin harp manuscript (and its photocopies at the National Library of Scotland), there is also a privately published song collection at the National Library of Scotland. Additionally, photocopies of part of the Trinity College manuscript and other Torloisk song manuscripts survive at the School of Scottish Studies Archive at the University of Edinburgh. Lastly, and perhaps most significantly, there is also the ‘Margaret Compton Manuscript’, seen at Castle Ashby, Northamptonshire by Peter Cooke in July 2000, and now in the personal possession of the Marquess of Northampton. (A summary of all these documents can be found in Appendix 1).

Dr Cooke reported on the Margaret Compton manuscript to the Marquess of Northampton and his then Archivist, describing it as ‘a smart leather-bound manuscript music book, alternating music lined (12 staves) and blank pages about 200 sides in all. 112 sides are used for 109 Gaelic songs, so nearly half of the book is left unused. The tooled leather inscription [...] has simply “MISS MACLEAN CLEPHANE”.’<sup>74</sup> Dr Cooke suggests that, whilst the authorship has yet to be confirmed, it might perhaps have belonged to the unmarried sister, Anna Jane, who spent much time at Castle Ashby and acted as ‘housekeeper’.<sup>75</sup> She also left some of her manuscript books there, containing Italian and other continental music.<sup>76</sup> A collection of 86 manuscripts of Italian music, originally made by Selvaggi of Naples, and later bought by one of the sisters, was gifted by the Marquess to the British Library in 1843.<sup>77</sup>

It is hoped to make a more detailed study - at least of the Gaelic materials - at a later date.

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<sup>74</sup> Description kindly provided by email from Dr Peter Cooke to myself, 22 January 2009.

<sup>75</sup> Dr Cooke’s description, provided with an emailed report dated 31 July 2000, which Dr Cooke forwarded to me.

<sup>76</sup> Emailed report dated 31.07.2000, from Dr Cooke to myself, 22 January 2009.

<sup>77</sup> See *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales* for United Kingdom and Ireland, BL MSS Add.14154-14248, and catalogue Add.14249 (unseen by myself) Since the Maclean-Clephane sisters had no brothers, the RISM entry must be incorrect in citing ‘Mrs’ Maclean-Clephane, sister-in-law to the Marquess.

## How? Campbell's Methodology

Campbell was eclectic in what he gathered, collecting both instrumental and vocal music, and understandably becoming more selective as time went by. Dependent on his contacts, he assembled fiddle music, pipe tunes, harp airs, and tunes played on the piano. He drew on vocal repertoire encompassing Gaelic airs - including *luinneags* (short songs),<sup>78</sup> songs that he categorised as 'ancient love songs', *lorram* (rowing songs),<sup>79</sup> - and *puirt a beul*, (mouth-music), sung in place of instrumental music for dancing. His comments quite explicitly reveal the influence of primitivism on his thinking:-

This effect is droll enough; and gives an idea of what one might conceive to be customary among tribes but little removed from a state of nature ... Thus the men and women sing a bar of the tune alternately; by which they preserve the respiration free; and at the same time, observe the accent & rhythmus quite accurately - the effect is animating: and having words correspondent to the character of the measure - there seems a three-fold species of gratification arising from the union of song & dance - rude, it is confessed - but such as pleases the vulgar; & not unpleasant to one who feels disposed to join in public pleasures, or innocent amusement.<sup>80</sup>

There was also Gaelic poetry; amongst which were allegedly Ossianic fragments.

Campbell's methodology was to transcribe tunes, then repeat them back either to his informants or to his host, in order to 'authenticate' them. (There is no mention of his having an instrument with him.) Within a month of his stay in Mull, he had gleaned 'forty-seven original melodies, mostly vocal, with a stanza or two of the original words to each - the plan I uniformly followed - in order to identify the songs ... to which they are chanted [...]'<sup>81</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the Highland Society of Scotland instructed him to record the sources of his collection; the experience of Macpherson's 'forgeries' clearly

<sup>78</sup> *Luinneags* are defined as short, simple songs or poems, by Colm Ó Baoill, 2002, for the Early Gaelic Harp website, <[http://www.earlygaelicharp.info/Irish\\_Terms/59.htm](http://www.earlygaelicharp.info/Irish_Terms/59.htm)>, accessed 20 Nov. 2007.

<sup>79</sup> Campbell names these in Gaelic as *Jorum*, or *lorram* - definition from *Notes & Queries*, 7<sup>th</sup> Series, X, 20 Sept 1890, p.232, <<http://nq.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/s7-X/247/232-e>>, [accessed 20 November 2007].

<sup>80</sup> Campbell, *A Slight Sketch*, fol.18<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>81</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol.14<sup>v</sup>.

weighed heavily. Campbell was probably also influenced by Ritson's admonitions about accurate reporting.

He knew what he was looking for, and seemed confident that he could spot an authentic Highland melody when he heard it. Writing about Roderick Macquein, a grass-keeper who acted as his guide during his visit to the Uists, he observed:-

His musical ear is pretty good; and I have reason to believe that the melodies to which he chants these ancient songs are genuine; and I have prickt them down carefully: and they may be reckoned musical curiosities at least: one or two of the six airs, however, are melodies [ie instrumental tunes], and certainly bear evident marks of their authenticity.<sup>82</sup>

He also implied that he could discern a difference between a Highland and a Lowland melody:-

[...] I listened to a workman [...] whistling to the cast of his trowel, which seemed to aid him, at least cheer him in his labour. In the course of his accompaniment, he gave a fair specimen of the usual mode of converting a Lowland Air to a highland melody - a mean [sic], by which many a mistake is made regarding the true origin of many of our popular pieces, common to both districts of Scotland.<sup>83</sup>

Campbell did not elaborate as to these differences, and indeed, conceded in the Preface to *Albyn's Anthology* that the melodies of the 'Scoto-Gael' and 'Scoto-Saxons' were not that different:-

The reply is very obvious:- They do not essentially differ; and their shades of difference are really so imperceptible, as frequently to elude discrimination. [...] the present Editor made repeated trials of this fact during his late journey to the Highlands and Western Isles, by singing to the natives several of the Lowland melodies, and some of the Border airs; when these tunes were immediately recognised as old Hebridean and Highland melodies. The same thing has frequently occurred when the Editor made similar experiments, while travelling in the Lowland districts; [...] Hence the general conclusion is, that the tunes of the Scoto-Gael and of the Scoto-Saxons have the same origin with the melodies of our neighbours the Irish and Welsh, and, in all probability, those still extant among our Scandinavian neighbours [...]

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<sup>82</sup> Campbell, *Slight Sketch*, fol.18<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid*, fol.6<sup>r</sup>.

It might be remarked that this is somewhat at variance with Ritson's views, although Ritson's characterisation of Highland melody was essentially no more than a reiteration of the wild and warlike stereotype.

Campbell's settings often seem to break some of the most basic rules by which 'classical' musicians have become accustomed to harmonise melodies. This is probably one of the reasons why his publications received a very mixed reception.

One might query why he felt it necessary to include accompaniments at all, since traditional song would often have been sung unaccompanied. On the other hand, he was far from the only compiler to provide piano accompaniments to make his songs fit for the parlour; moreover, the very gentlefolk that he encountered on his travels were already playing Highland airs with the pianoforte, so in that regard he was simply fulfilling their expectations. Campbell produced what was essentially an 'art-music' collection, but his settings fall between the rather old-fashioned, figured-bass accompaniments of MacDonald/ Young and Johnson/ Clarke, and the more musically competent later settings of Farquhar Graham or Dunn - leaving aside the elaborate settings of Thomson's European masters.

In fact, the nature of Campbell's song collection precisely coincides with an observation passed by Kirsteen McCue with regard to the differences between James Hogg's 1801 and 1831 song collections, and she joins Temperley in attributing this to an explosion of the printing of sheet music for domestic consumption during this time:-

Between the first appearance of Hogg's songs in his *Scottish Pastorals* in 1801 and this final pulling-together of his 'best' songs in 1831 the musical landscape in Britain had changed significantly. The eighteenth-century antiquarian passion for collecting songs and tunes was to be joined, and partly replaced, by the fashion for popular versions of these for domestic purposes [...] It is within this new domestic musical sphere that Hogg's songs begin to appear.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Currie and McCue, 'Editing the Text and Music of James Hogg's *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd* (1831)', p. 60. McCue writes Part 2 of this article concerning the music of *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd*.

In Hogg's case, his *Scottish Pastorals* (1801)<sup>85</sup> are published purely as poems, whilst the later *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd* (1831), although still published without music, are supplied with headnotes directing the reader to the source of the tune.

Meanwhile, with Campbell's *Albyn's Anthology* (1816-18, precisely midway between the poetry/song collections being described by McCue) we have a music collection with pianoforte accompaniment, and certainly more advanced than the thorough bass considered adequate by Patrick MacDonald, Johnson, or even the celebrated Corri. However, Campbell, considering himself a professional musician, evidently did not think it necessary to enlist the assistance of a more 'classically' qualified arranger, and there is a perceptible gap between what he considered acceptable, and what was to become acceptable only a couple of decades later.

The unsophisticated settings do have an advantage in one respect, however: it is likely that the melodies are fairly close to what Campbell heard, and are not as embellished as they might have been in an instrumental collection, although obviously we do not know what nuances may have been lost in the transcription.

## Briefly to the Borders

Notwithstanding Campbell's self-image as a Highlander, his *Albyn's Anthology* was never intended to be a purely Highland collection, and he made a further tour, this time to the Borders, in 1816. It was, in fact, his third visit to the region.<sup>86</sup> This trip was curtailed after three weeks, by gout. However, in that time, he covered a circle roughly defined by the Borders towns of Peebles, Ettrick, Hawick, Jedburgh and Melrose - a diameter of approx. 30 miles - spent five days with James Hogg, and visited Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Hogg, James, *Scottish pastorals, poems, songs, etc., mostly written in the dialect of the south* (Edinburgh: John Taylor, 1801).

<sup>86</sup> Sinton, 'Journal of a Tour in the Scottish Border in 1816 by Alexander Campbell', notes that Campbell had made earlier visits to the Borders in 1796 and 1811.

<sup>87</sup> Campbell spent from 12 to 16 October 1816 with Hogg, collecting songs and making sketches, then visited Sir Walter Scott the following day. See Sinton's transcript, *ibid*.

As mentioned earlier with regard to his Highlands and Islands tour, Campbell was abundantly blessed with highly placed and useful connections. To this list of significant personages, we can now add Campbell's considerable debt to Sir Walter Scott, who seems to have regarded his former music tutor with affectionate respect for his abilities, whilst not oblivious to his weaknesses. Campbell's biography in the ODNB reminds us that Scott placed work Campbell's way when his old tutor fell on hard times, and wrote his obituary for the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, May 1824.<sup>88</sup>

More pertinently, Scott not only provided him with English verses for *Albyn's Anthology* (four for Vol.1, and two for Vol.2), but also secured for him permission to dedicate the collection to George the Prince of Wales, Prince Regent (to become George IV in 1820).<sup>89</sup> Campbell took detailed notes about famous Borders pipers, from Sir Walter Scott's uncle, Mr Thomas Scott,<sup>90</sup> and names one of Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders* informants as having provided him with an air for *Albyn's Anthology*. (It is not unlikely that Scott was also responsible for introducing Campbell to James Hogg, although this is not documented.)

## **'I have given my old airs to a Mr Campbell here': Campbell's association with Hogg**

Campbell was certainly to benefit from acquaintance with Hogg, the 'Ettrick Shepherd' whose Border background was at least as much a part of his cultural identity as being a Highlander was to Campbell. They were already in some way acquainted before Campbell made his Borders song collecting tour, for Hogg sent his own manuscript of '20 ancient Border airs' to Campbell, between 18 January and 8 April 1816, some months before Campbell was to leave Edinburgh for the Borders.

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<sup>88</sup> Francis Watt, 'Campbell, Alexander (1764–1824).', rev.by John Purser, *ODNB*.

<sup>89</sup> Sir Walter Scott's subsequent orchestration of George IV's Edinburgh visit in 1822 is well documented.

<sup>90</sup> See Sinton, 'Journal of a Tour in the Scottish Border in 1816 by Alexander Campbell', p. 3. Campbell's notes from Thomas Scott later appeared in Laing's edition of Stenhouse's *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland*.

Hogg had written to George Thomson in October 1815, putting his song-writing skills at Thomson's service for his 'miscellany' of 'national airs and songs', and mentioning that he had collected the aforementioned Border airs.<sup>91</sup> Hogg still had the manuscript in January 1816, for he told the English musician John Clarke Whitfield that he had,

[...] for several years been engaged in picking up old border airs and chaunts that are just hanging on the verges of oblivion and have not I believe been heard for centuries save at the shepherds' *ingle nook*. Though most of them consist only of one part they are so simply beautiful that even the celebrated *Broom of Cowdenknows* lags behind some of them. What a treasure they would be for a musical miscellany such as yours and if you will swear to me by all the holy trinity to preserve the unaffected simplicity of the melody you shall have a part of them for I have been distressed for a scientific man into whose hands to put them that they might not be ever lost. In that case how happy would I be to write appropriate stanzas for them all.<sup>92</sup>

(Once again, it will be noted, we detect the anxiety that a repertoire was on the verge of extinction and required saving.) However, by April 1816, he had given the manuscript to Campbell, partly as an act of charity, telling Whitfield that,

I have given my old airs to a Mr Campbell here who is making a selection of Scottish ancient music and have likewise furnished him with verses for them he is a poor man and I wished to be of some service to him [...]<sup>93</sup>

The first volume of *Albyn's Anthology* was advertised by the publisher in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* of 18 July 1816, including five of Hogg's songs, of which three were set to 'Border melodies', and one each to a Lowland and a Highland air.

Campbell noted against Hogg's 'The last cradle song', that the Borders melody was 'As sung by Mr Hogg, by whom it was communicated and to whom the Editor is indebted for many more Border Melodies, and fragments of Vocal Poetry.'<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Hogg, *Collected Letters*, I (1800-1819) , pp. 253-55, Hogg to George Thomson, 25 October 1815.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.264, Hogg to John Clarke Whitfield, 18 January 1816.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p.274, Hogg to Whitfield , 8 April 1816.

<sup>94</sup> Campbell, *Albyn's*, I, 30.



Since the verse itself is by James Hogg, one presumes that this alludes to James rather than his less-known relative, Thomas.

James Hogg is again acknowledged for his verse, 'A year o'er young' (O why comes my love), where Campbell quoted a letter from Hogg, stating that he had written the first half of the song, but had got the rest of the words, and the melody 'from a Maniac, and I never heard any body else sing them.'<sup>95</sup> (Based on other observations by Hogg, one cannot be precisely sure as to the truth of this remark, as we shall see in the next chapter. 'A Maniac' is intriguingly vague and impossible to verify.) 'The Liddel Bower' (O will ye walk the wood) is a ballad by Hogg to 'A Border Melody', whilst Hogg's 'Bonny Tweedside' and 'Why should I sit and sigh?' are to named Lowland and Gaelic airs respectively.

Two further songs in *Albyn's* Vol.1 by 'Mr Pringle' were set to 'A Border Melody' ('The Banks of Cayle', and 'I'll bid my heart be still').<sup>96</sup> The first of these might be another of Hogg's collected tunes, but Campbell acknowledges that he transcribed the second air himself, from the singing of 'Mr Hogg and his friend Mr Pringle, author of the pathetic verses to which it is united'. Thomas Pringle was another poet and a literary friend of Hogg's. Born at Blaiklaw farm in Teviotdale, he attended the University of Edinburgh then took up work as a copying clerk in Edinburgh before, like Hogg, abandoning this to become a literary figure.<sup>97</sup>

By November of the same year, Hogg wondered if he had done the right thing in lending assistance to Campbell, having heard poor reports of *Albyn's* Vol.1. He wrote to Whitfield again that this, 'grieves me very much, as I am exerting myself very much for his behoof.'<sup>98</sup> Seven of his song texts were nonetheless included in the second volume of *Albyn's*, the airs for three of which Campbell noted that he had personally transcribed from Mr Hogg, twice here identified as James Hogg's relative Thomas, a tailor in Thirlestane.

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<sup>95</sup> *Albyn's* I, 26.

<sup>96</sup> *Albyn's*, I, 37 and 41.

<sup>97</sup> For biographical notes on Thomas Pringle, see Hogg, *Collected Letters*, I, 466-68.

<sup>98</sup> Hogg, *Collected Letters*, I, 281, Hogg to Whitfield, 11 November 1816.

Despite the mixed reactions to *Albyn's Anthology*, both contemporaneously and in subsequent years, the significance of Campbell's collection today is three-fold. Firstly, he preserved a sizeable corpus of Gaelic songs and Highland melodies, which are still recognised as good raw material by modern traditional musicians.

Secondly, Campbell was an antiquarian who had moved from merely accepting a local heritage of tunes, to going out and actually collecting them in the field - sometimes literally. In this, he went even beyond Ritson's insistence on the imperative of going back to sources, for Campbell went beyond the printed or manuscript page to the oral sources themselves. Although he obeyed the Highland Society of Scotland's strictures about accurately recording the provenance of melodies, it is significant to note that he was eclectic in his selection of sources. Although he sought the music of the Scottish peasantry, he was equally content to transcribe music sung for him by gentlefolk with a piano. What was important was that it was 'home-grown', whatever the performance medium. In this regard, Campbell fits into the earlier picture outlined by Gelbart, insofar as it is evident that in Campbell's mind, 'traditional' and 'art music' were not entirely separate genres.

Finally, from a social history viewpoint, we have a Scotsman travelling in domestic circumstances on a particular quest, in contrast to the grand European tours before and after the Napoleonic Wars, but with the same motivation of seeking authenticity, and deepening his understanding of his own identity. Campbell's activities - the study of Scottish poetry, the travel-guide, the tours, song-collecting and publishing - besides telling us something about the nature of scholarship and antiquarianism, also provide an insight into contemporary Scottish nationalism, and the importance of travel in establishing a sense of national identity. The manuscript and published records of that journey reflect a Highlander's passion for his own country, bearing witness to his efforts to discover and preserve his native music, thereby learning more, not only about himself as a Highlander, but also about the traditions and history of his own country, both Highland and Borders.

Despite the Edinburgh-centric publication patterns in this era, enough has already been discussed to make it amply clear that song-collecting activity

abounded elsewhere, too. In much the same way that Ramsay of Ochtertyre was something of a focal point for antiquarian discussions in the previous century, Sir Walter Scott's influence cannot be underestimated in the early nineteenth century.<sup>99</sup> When one considers the intricate network of collectors involved with Scott, Hogg, and William Motherwell, one begins to form a picture of small-scale collecting taking place over a much wider area of the Lowlands and Borders than one would at first imagine.

As has been mentioned, Walter Scott's interest in balladry was predominantly in the songs rather than the airs, very much like the younger William Motherwell (1797-1835). However, both ballad-collectors shared common acquaintances in James Hogg and Andrew Blaikie (1774-1841), amongst others, who were able to provide them with airs to their ballads.

It is worth noting that Blaikie, born in the Roxburgh farm named Holydean, was known to R. A. Smith, Tannahill and Hogg.<sup>100</sup> Mary Ellen Brown has also suggested that he is likely to have collected tunes in the Borders before moving to Paisley, and contemporary accounts reveal that Blaikie made many visits to the Borders on family business, often visiting Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford.<sup>101</sup> An engraver and copperplate printer to trade, and connected with Paisley Abbey,<sup>102</sup> Blaikie presented a manuscript of songs to Walter Scott in 1824 (the 'Blaikie-Scott MS' alluded to earlier),<sup>103</sup> which, after 28 lyra-viol tunes copied from his seventeenth century original, contains about a hundred traditional tunes which would have been in circulation in the early nineteenth century, arranged as melody and bass by Blaikie himself. He also supplied Motherwell with the tunes for his *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern* (1827),<sup>104</sup> and

<sup>99</sup> Scott's published correspondence bears witness to his extensive contacts and interests.

<sup>100</sup> Biographical information about these and other Renfrewshire poets, highlighting connections between them, are assembled in *The Harp of Renfrewshire: a Collection of Songs and other Poetical Pieces (many of which are original), accompanied with Notes, Explanatory, critical and biographical, and a short essay on The Poets of Renfrewshire*, ed. by William Motherwell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Paisley: Alex. Gardner, 1872).

<sup>101</sup> Information provided by Warwick Edwards and Sheila McCallum, drawing upon two main sources: Blaikie's Obituary notice, appearing in the *Paisley Advertiser* in 1841; and Robert Brown, *Paisley Burns Clubs 1805-1893* (Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1893).

<sup>102</sup> I am indebted to Warwick Edwards for Blaikie's biographical details.

<sup>103</sup> National Library of Scotland, MS.1578.

<sup>104</sup> Motherwell, William, *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern, with an historical introduction and notes*. (Glasgow: John Wylie, 1827).

Motherwell's preface paid tribute to Blaikie's accuracy of transcription and engraving.

Despite publishing *A Selection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes*, and being a 'bass violin' player in the Paisley Philharmonic Society concerts, Blaikie does not appear to have had input into the publication of any other Scottish song collections apart from Motherwell's - which presented the tunes in a discrete section at the back of a volume of song texts, rather than offering the airs alongside the words.

We began this chapter with an examination of the significance of locality and travel to the major tune-collectors (and song-writers) of early nineteenth-century Scotland, gaining some understanding of the context in which they made their journeys and collected their materials. Taking Alexander Campbell as our major focus, we considered his *modus operandi*, value-judgements and editorial decisions in compiling *Albyn's Anthology*, and also formed an impression not only of the intricate network of tune and song-collectors with whom he collaborated, but also of the continued importance of patronage and having the right 'connections', if one was to embark on a project of such a scale.

The more modest but significant activities of the private Mull collectors (Lauchlan Maclaine, Breadalbane Maclean, Mrs Mackenzie and the Maclean-Clephane sisters), and the network of collecting that was taking place by Hogg, Blaikie and others for Sir Walter Scott and later William Motherwell in the Borders and also in Renfrewshire, serve to remind us that although just a few collections actually ended up being published by the collectors themselves, they were probably only the tip of the iceberg as regards the overall picture of tune and song collecting that was taking place on a national scale.

Whilst Campbell was scrupulous about citing his sources, we have observed that a very wide range of people and specimens were considered representative of 'national' music - and a traditional tune was still regarded as traditional even if it was played on the pianoforte in a well-to-do parlour. It can thus be construed as only another slight step to improve upon either words or tunes, or indeed to create new entities 'in the style of' those same traditional tunes. It is precisely

to these activities that we shall turn in the next chapter, with particular reference to James Hogg and Robert Archibald Smith.

## Chapter 4. ‘Leaving the world to find out whether they are old or new’: Invention or Fakery?

As hinted in the previous chapter, the whole issue of song-collecting highlights the fact that, whilst some collectors were advocating a strictly accurate adherence to sources, others with a more flexible approach were creating a tradition based on what were perceived as Scottish, Highland, Lowland or Border characteristics. It can be demonstrated that there was, at times, an almost subconscious division of the collections’ audience into those in their immediate circles who could be admitted into the secret, and those whom the compilers did not consider needed to know the absolute truth.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the same cultural nationalism which prompted Burns, Hogg, Leyden and Campbell to travel widely in pursuit of their heritage of songs and airs, also paradoxically provoked the urge to create Scottish songs (and airs) in a style that would be seen as typical of the locality. Antiquarians and purists, knowing that such offerings neither emanated from the peasantry nor from ‘antiquity’, but were actually manufactured to fit their author’s conception of the folk tradition, inevitably accused their authors of dishonesty if not of downright forgery. Such activities clearly fall under the umbrella of what Dorson has defined, with some disapproval, as ‘fakelore’, or Harker – leaving aside his ideological differences – as ‘fakesong.’

The present chapter will address the question of invention and ‘fakery’. It particularly looks at these issues as they are revealed in musical collections of the second and third decades of the nineteenth century, where there is clear evidence of James Hogg and R. A. Smith not only actively changing songs, but creating fresh ones. James Hogg, who appeared in the last chapter in his secondary role as contributor to Campbell’s endeavours, reappears now in his primary role as creator of his own song collections. Much work has been done recently on Hogg’s poetic output, particularly by Murray Pittock, Kirsteen McCue and Janette Currie, and Gillian H. Hughes, and the first part of the present

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<sup>1</sup> The title phrase derives from a letter written by Hogg to George Thomson, 14 February 1822, as cited by Cooper, *Beethoven’s Folksong Settings*, p. 61.

chapter synthesises some of these findings, focusing primarily on Hogg's interest in song tunes.

Even if this section does not offer many new insights into Hogg's activities in this regard - bearing in mind Pittock's discussions of the theory that many of his published songs were actually his own rather than strictly from the folk 'tradition' - it is absolutely necessary to consider Hogg in his dual role as song collector and author here, because his work exemplifies another aspect of the contemporary vogue for literary and artistic fakery which forms the backdrop for our consideration of the roughly contemporary *Scottish Minstrel* series by R. A. Smith.

The whole question of eighteenth and nineteenth-century fakery, extending beyond literature and folk-song to the visual arts, is a subject which has aroused considerable interest in recent years, and indeed, is a subject of some significance in literary studies. For example, Susan Stewart's essay, 'Scandals of the Ballad',<sup>2</sup> examines some of the reasons for the many imitations of this folk genre in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The essay covers a period slightly earlier, but overlapping, with that of this thesis, for it is bounded in broad terms by Allan Ramsay and Lady Wardlaw at the start, and Sir Walter Scott at the end. However, just as the ballad collections (i.e. collections of texts) were, quite patently, not collections of pure, unadulterated folk material, but rather a nostalgic evocation of a noble, feudal past, seeking to eschew modernisms in a manner which quite simply would not have been characteristic of a constantly evolving oral tradition, so we can detect similarities with the ways in which the collections of 'songs with their airs' strove to record the collectors' perceptions of simple folk melodies, whilst all the time regularising and imposing their own contemporary interpretation on the very material they sought to preserve.

Stewart's observations also serve to reinforce the fact that fakery was not something new in the early nineteenth century; rather, there had been fakery in poetry and literature for a number of decades already. By inference, what had changed in the nineteenth century was not the activity but the attitudes towards

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<sup>2</sup> Susan Stewart, 'Scandals of the Ballad', in *Crimes of Writing: Problems in the Containment of Representation* (London: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 102-31.

it. For example, Stewart highlights Allan Ramsay's frank admission that he and some of his friends wrote new verses for a number of old tunes, and she goes on to observe of Bishop Percy that, 'It is clear that throughout Percy's literary endeavours, authenticity was not a value in itself and was certainly not a consideration equal to that of aesthetic value or taste'.<sup>3</sup> One can contrast this with the rather different attitudes displayed in the 1820s by Allan Cunningham in poetry, or Robert Archibald Smith in his song-writing.

Margaret Russett's recent monograph, *Fictions and Fakes: Forging Romantic Authenticity, 1760-1845*, reveals that arguments as to precisely where creativity becomes fakery were rife in the early nineteenth century, with various literary devices employed to that end.<sup>4</sup> (Moving beyond the scope of the present chapter, one might note that both Russett and Stewart cite several examples of the 'found manuscript' as a literary form - for example, Hogg's own *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* was based on the theme of a 'manuscript' found in a field by a shepherd. Conversely, James Macpherson's manuscripts did exist, but - as we have already seen - some may have been no more than his own transcriptions - whilst the story of Bishop Percy's ballad manuscript, allegedly found on the floor being used for firelighters, was regarded as fraudulent by many, although it eventually emerged that the manuscript did, indeed exist, regardless of what Percy's editorial policies might have been with the contents.)

Furthermore, the question of original-versus-imitation goes beyond literature to the fine arts, for art historians are discussing the same phenomenon in American print culture of the 1830s, too. (For example, *Godey's Lady's Book* of September 1831, advises the artist to make 'an imitation, not a copy; - an exercise of the same process'.)<sup>5</sup> It becomes clear that imitation was seen much more as imaginative art in its own right, than as a tawdry copy intended to deceive.

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<sup>3</sup> Stewart, 'Scandals of the Ballad', 110-12.

<sup>4</sup> Margaret Russett, *Fictions and Fakes: Forging Romantic Authenticity, 1760-1845*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, 64 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Note again that, like Stewart, Russett's study commences as far back as 1760.

<sup>5</sup> The link with American nineteenth century art was pointed out by Meredith Neuman, assistant professor of early and antebellum American literature at Clark University in Worcester, MA.



Mary Ellen Brown devotes a chapter to fakery, in her monograph about the ballad-collector William Motherwell - a figure excluded from the scope of this study because his interest, like Sir Walter Scott's before him, lay primarily in the ballads rather than the music. Nonetheless, Brown's very choice of the single word, 'Play', as her chapter title, is significant. More specifically, her observations about Motherwell's, Scott's and Cunningham's ballad imitations, referring to 'found' manuscripts, and highlighting the fact that success to these authors often meant their inventions not being directly recognised except by those in their immediate circles, provided a launching-point for the present author's investigations into R. A Smith's activities in the sphere of Scottish songs and tunes.<sup>6</sup>

Smith was vilified for his own efforts at creating a tradition, but perhaps did not deserve the condemnation of those immediately following him, nor of William Montgomerie, who in the 1950s, dismissed Smith as 'one of those editors who create false evidence about their material'.<sup>7</sup> Scholarship has moved on since then, and it will become clear as this chapter progresses that Smith's inventive efforts, far from being an isolated phenomenon, were in actual fact part of a wider literary movement. Mary Ellen Brown's observations can be extended by inference to allow the modern reader to view Smith in a kinder light. It is, in fact, a moot point whether Smith's fakery was more extensive than that of his predecessors, or whether it was simply more overt.

Gelbart and Harker continue to inform the general overview of this period, but to their work can be added that of Murray Pittock, both for the historical detail of his *The Invention of Scotland: the Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the present*,<sup>8</sup> and more specifically in his edition of Hogg's *Jacobite Relics*.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Mary Ellen Brown, *William Motherwell's Cultural Politics 1797-1835* (University Press of Kentucky, 2001), Chapter 7, 'Play', 133-144.

<sup>7</sup> William Montgomerie, 'William Motherwell and Robert A. Smith', *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, 9.34 (May, 1958), 152-159 (p. 154).

<sup>8</sup> Murray Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland: the Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the present* (London: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>9</sup> James Hogg, *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland, being the Songs, Airs, and Legends of the Adherents of the House of Stuart*, ed. by Murray Pittock, 2 vols, The Stirling/ South Carolina Research Edition of the Collected Works of James Hogg, 10 and 12 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002).

Donaldson's *The Jacobite Song : Political Myth and National Identity* is equally informative.<sup>10</sup>

The work of Janette Currie and Kirsteen McCue on Hogg's *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd* (1831),<sup>11</sup> and of Gillian H. Hughes in her edition of Hogg's *Letters*<sup>12</sup> provide detailed assessments of Hogg's output and contacts, and, making due acknowledgment of their contribution, the present thesis will endeavour to avoid unnecessary duplication of research already undertaken.

Whilst the *Jacobite Relics* (1819-21) are perhaps Hogg's best-known song collection, his sense of place and history are just as evident in other collections, and note will particularly be made of his early work, *The Forest Minstrel* (1810),<sup>13</sup> and the late *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd* (1831).<sup>14</sup>

Table 2 overleaf summarises the works under discussion, and places Alexander Campbell's and Simon Fraser's collections in context with these significant near-contemporary publications.

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<sup>10</sup> William Donaldson, *The Jacobite Song: Political Myth and National Identity* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988).

<sup>11</sup> Janette Currie and Kirsteen McCue, 'Editing the Text and Music of James Hogg's *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd* (1831)', *Scottish Studies Review* 8.2 (2007), 54-68.

<sup>12</sup> James Hogg, *The Collected Letters of James Hogg*, 3 vols, ed. by Gillian Hughes, The Stirling/South Carolina Research Edition of the Collected Works of James Hogg (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004-8) [(Vol.1: 1800-1819; Vol.2: 1820-1831; Vol.3: 1832-1835].

<sup>13</sup> James Hogg, *The Forest Minstrel*; ed. by P. D. Garside and Richard D. Jackson; musical notation prepared [...] by Peter Horsfall, The Stirling/ South Carolina Research Edition of the Collected Works of James Hogg, 19 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006).

<sup>14</sup> James Hogg, *Songs, by the Ettrick Shepherd : now first collected* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1831) [Modern ed. forthcoming in Stirling/South Carolina edition: *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd*, ed. by Kirsteen McCue; with Janette Currie].

Date	Compiler	Title
1807	James Hogg (1770-1835)	<i>The Mountain Bard</i>
Edinburgh 1810	James Hogg	<i>The Forest Minstrel</i>
Edinburgh 1816-18	Alexander Campbell (1764-1824)	<i>Albyn's Anthology</i> , 2 vols
Edinburgh 1816	Simon Fraser (1773-1852)	<i>The Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles</i>
Edinburgh 1819	James Hogg	<i>Jacobite Lyrics</i>
Edinburgh 1821	James Hogg	<i>Jacobite Lyrics</i> , 'second series'
Edinburgh 1821-24	Robert Archibald Smith (1780-1829)	<i>The Scottish Minstrel: a selection from the vocal melodies of Scotland, ancient and modern.</i> 6 vols in 2.
Edinburgh, 1831	James Hogg	<i>Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd</i>

Table 2. Antiquarian Interest in Scottish Music, 1810-31: a Chronology

Hogg's *Memoir* claims that he first heard of Burns in 1797, the year after Burns's death.<sup>15</sup> It seems likely that, as he progressed in his own career, he perceived himself as carrying on where Burns left off, with regard to Scottish song-writing. (Coincidentally, the publisher Fullarton contemplated asking Hogg to be involved with his planned Burns edition, although William Motherwell was appointed the following year; indeed, Fullarton and Motherwell visited Hogg in connection with the edition in autumn 1835, when Hogg's health was failing.)

If Robert Burns played a central role in establishing a corpus of Scottish song in the late eighteenth century, then Hogg's was similar in the early nineteenth. Both were more involved with the collecting and re-writing of the poetic repertoire, and less with collecting tunes, but each still made observations about their native Scottish airs.

This is reason enough to devote some consideration to Hogg's contribution to Scottish song collecting, whilst recognising that an enormous corpus of detailed

<sup>15</sup> *The Forest Minstrel*, p. xxvii.

work has already been done, and is still ongoing, into his activities as a poet and songwriter.<sup>16</sup>

## Hogg: 'Recovered' Verses and 'Imitation of the Ancients'

Hogg's mother was thoroughly grounded in Borders balladry, so he grew up immersed in the tradition. He became involved with work for Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1801. This arose indirectly, when his friend William Laidlaw, the son of a former employer,<sup>17</sup> put him in touch with Andrew Mercer, who was already collecting for Scott, and Hogg was able to supply information that was needed for items to appear in the first two volumes of *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802.

Having spent some time reading Scott's *Minstrelsy*, Hogg wrote to Scott with his observations on it, on 30 June 1802.<sup>18</sup> He also commented on his mother's and uncle's involvement in the local ballad tradition, and alluded to an earlier idea he had had, of collecting ballad tunes and having them arranged. His 'project' apparently came to nothing, and the reason is of particular interest to our present discussion, for it emerges that 'the old people hereabouts' were accustomed to make whichever tunes they had to hand fit any number of different ballads, so Hogg was unable to find the 'original' airs for the words. (This certainly places the air in a subsidiary relationship to the song itself.)

He visited Scott in Edinburgh prior to setting out on his first Highland tour on 22 July 1802, and wrote him another lengthy letter from Ettrickhouse in September, enclosing some verses that he had 'recovered' and a poem that he himself had written. It appears that Laidlaw subsequently gave Scott Hogg's address, resulting in Scott's visit to Ettrick later that year.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Hogg's works are currently being published in the Stirling/ South Carolina Research Edition of the Collected Works of James Hogg.

<sup>17</sup> James Laidlaw of Blackhouse employed Hogg as a shepherd from 1790-1800.

<sup>18</sup> Hogg, *Collected Letters*, I (1800-1819), pp. 15-20, Hogg to Walter Scott, 30 June [1802]. This is the earliest surviving letter from Hogg to Scott.

<sup>19</sup> These details are documented in Gillian Hughes, *James Hogg: a Life*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 42-43, and also in *Forest Minstrel*, pp. xvii-xx.

It was after this meeting that Scott and Laidlaw visited Hogg's mother to authenticate the 'Auld Maitland' ballad, only to be met with the oft-repeated story about her retort that Scott had spoiled the ballad by printing it, for 'They war made for singing, and no' for reading; and they're nouthier right spelled nor right setten down.' Hughes notes that Hogg's assistance with the third and final volume of Scott's collection was 'considerable', and Scott had a complete set sent to him on publication of the third volume in May 1803.<sup>20</sup>

Apart from his *Jacobite Relics* (which had the melody printed with each song) and *Border Garland* collection (which had proper song settings), most of Hogg's Scottish song publications, like Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, were without music notation. However, it was his intention that the songs should be sung, since he named the tunes that should be used, albeit to a slightly different plan in different publications. Furthermore, his songs were often printed with music by other people, Henry Bishop being one of the most famous names. Hogg frequently passed comment, both in correspondence and in print, on his opinion of these settings and their suitability for the verses.

Like Burns, Hogg played the fiddle. Whilst Burns's sister declared that he could scrape the fiddle, but not well enough for dancing, Hogg was more competent, albeit still self-taught. He had bought a fiddle at the age of 14 (i.e. around 1784), and reportedly practised 'an hour or two every night in going over my favourite old Scottish tunes'.<sup>21</sup> Like Burns, he could read music. Unlike Burns, he certainly did accompany dancing. He had access to some of the most common published collections of his day, since he alluded to tune sources to a greater or lesser degree of specificity. His references to tunes have allowed the modern editors of *The Forest Minstrel* to trace most of the tunes used for the songs there, albeit not necessarily in the precise source that he named; and the editors of *Songs of the Ettrick Shepherd* are able to draw on the more precise

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<sup>20</sup> Hughes, *James Hogg: a Life*, pp. 45-47.

<sup>21</sup> James Hogg, *Altrive Tales: Collected among the Peasantry of Scotland and from Foreign Adventurers* ;[Featuring a 'Memoir of the Author's Life'], ed. by Gillian Hughes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), pp. 14-15.

references in Hogg's headnotes here, with the intention of compiling a companion 'virtual bookshelf' volume.<sup>22</sup>

Hogg's first published song collection was *The Mountain Bard* (1807).<sup>23</sup> This volume begins with the first appearance of his 'Memoir of the Life of James Hogg' (i-xxiii), and contains 21 poems, divided into 'Ballads, in imitation of the Ancients' (a telling remark), and 'Songs adapted to the Times'. Tunes are suggested for six of the ten songs in this section.

*The Forest Minstrel* (1810) has recently been described as 'the first full collection of songs [...] with a number of additional items by other writers associated with him.'<sup>24</sup> Music was not supplied in the original edition, mainly for financial expediency; but also because Hogg said in his Preface that most people had access to the named tunes, citing Gow's collections in particular.<sup>25</sup> He made much of the preference of many people for Scottish music rather than 'Italian tirlie-whirlies', citing the predilections of Edinburgh concert-goers.<sup>26</sup> He himself had recently moved to Edinburgh, marking his move from shepherd to 'literary man', and Garside and Jackson comment that this collection thus marks a crucial period in his life, from his inherited 'folk' tradition to more cultured Edinburgh society.<sup>27</sup>

Hogg's *Jacobite Relics* is the song collection that he is still most famed for, as much on account of the political and historical connotations, as for the tunes themselves. When the Highland Society of London wanted a collection of Jacobite Relics, it was at a time when some of the raw pain felt by patriotic Highlanders was receding into distant memory. They wanted a small collection representing of the bold, noble and patriotic Jacobite Highlanders, and Colonel Stewart of Garth first approached George Thomson. However, Thomson passed the suggestion on to Hogg.

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<sup>22</sup> Currie and McCue, p. 65.

<sup>23</sup> James Hogg, *The Mountain Bard, consisting of Ballads and Songs, founded on Facts and Legendary Tales*. (Edinburgh: Constable, 1807).

<sup>24</sup> *Forest Minstrel*, flyleaf.

<sup>25</sup> Tunes are supplied editorially in this modern edition.

<sup>26</sup> *Forest Minstrel*, p. 6.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*, p. xiii.

Like Burns before him, Hogg was lionised for the astonishing literary talent shown by an unschooled shepherd, and would, on the face of it, have been a good choice for the project. Hogg himself commented that he was better able to tackle it than Sir Walter Scott, who had little confidence in his own musical knowledge or ability. (Despite Sir Walter Scott's protestations that he was unmusical, Ailie Munro convincingly suggests that his family's knowledge of and about tunes gives the lie to anecdotes about his lack of musicality, whilst it appears undeniably to have been the case that he preferred traditional music to more serious or strictly classical repertoire.)<sup>28</sup>

However, the Society had not bargained for the kind of collection that Hogg would assemble, which was more militant, controversial, and indelicate than the picture that they wanted portrayed. Gillian Hughes summarises that 'While satisfying primitivist expectations Hogg alluded to the contemporary Highland Clearances and denied a wish for uncomplicated closure of the past and noble historical sentiment', and he was in fact too faithful 'to an authentic voice of the people'.<sup>29</sup> The crux of the matter was they were the wrong people, and not necessarily the same class as the august members of the Highland Society of London. There were as many nuances of cultural nationalism as there were varieties of political opinion, and Hogg unfortunately seems to have backed the wrong horse.

Only a year after the Second Series of *Relics* was published, Colonel Stewart Garth and Sir Walter Scott coordinated the Royal visit to Edinburgh; at a time of rapprochement between Scotland and England, the *Relics* were arguably an unfortunate reminder of an uncomfortable past.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, coming shortly after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and with the recent memory of the Irish Rebellion (1798) and Act of Union (1800) still causing a certain amount of anxiety to the British authorities, what was needed was certainly an image of

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<sup>28</sup> See Ailie Munro, '“Abbotsford Collection of Border Ballads”: Sophia Scott's Manuscript Book with Airs', *Scottish Studies* 20 (1976), 92-93.

<sup>29</sup> Hughes, *James Hogg: a Life*, p. 156.

<sup>30</sup> The historical and cultural background to the *Relics* is explored in some detail in the editorial introduction to James Hogg, *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland: being the songs, airs, and legends of the adherents of the House of Stuart collected and illustrated by James Hogg*, 2 vols, ed. by Murray G.H. Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002-2003).

the strong Highland soldier, but patriotic to the United Kingdom rather than to the memory of a Catholic, Scottish King.

For Hogg himself, the *Relics* were a financial disaster, because he never received the money expected from the Highland Society of London for the second volume. Pittock has suggested that perhaps there never was the commission that Hogg imagined.<sup>31</sup>

Like Ritson, Hogg included the melodies for each song in this collection, which permitted a wider audience to appreciate the repertoire, since anglicised Scots in London or indeed anywhere ‘south of the Border’ might not otherwise have known the tunes to which they belonged. Pittock remarks that many airs in the *Relics* can be traced in contemporary fiddle tunes.

Additionally, although he had already provided notes to songs in earlier collections, those in the *Jacobite Relics* were much more extensive, as we shall examine more closely in Chapter 5.

In 1819, the same year that Vol.1 of *Jacobite Relics* appeared, Hogg also published the first edition of his *A Border Garland. Containing Nine New Songs*, a genuine vocal score with proper musical arrangements. McCue has noted that several of the tunes were by Hogg himself, and a couple by his friends, as is indeed evidenced by the title-page itself: ‘The music partly old, partly composed by Himself and Friends’. Some of the arrangements themselves were by the English William Heather, but a later edition (*The Border Garland, containing Twelve New Songs*), again with ‘Several of the Airs Composed by Himself & Friends’, had new settings by Edinburgh Episcopalian organist James Dewar.<sup>32</sup>

The differences between the two editions is clear from the titles pages of each:-

- *The Border Garland Containing Nine New Songs by James Hogg. The Music Partly Old Partly Composed by Himself and Friends. & Arranged with Symphonies and Accompaniments for the Piano Forte.* (Edinburgh:

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<sup>31</sup> *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland*, I, p. xvii.

<sup>32</sup> Currie and McCue, *ibid*, p. 62.



Engraved for the Editor by Walker & Anderson & Sold by Nathaniel Gow and Son [...] No.60 Princes Street, c.1819)

- *A Border Garland Containing Twelve New Songs, The Poetry by James Hogg, The Celebrated Ettrick Shepherd, Several of the Airs Composed by Himself & Friends. Arranged with Symphonies & Accompaniments by James Dewar* (Edinburgh: Printed and sold by Robt Purdie [...] 3, Princes Street, c.1829)

Whilst these volumes seem to use some traditional airs, they do not purport to be collected settings of traditional songs and airs, so are outwith the remit of the current discussion. Nonetheless, they do use the ‘Border’ epithet with which Hogg was associated, and their association with the ‘Ettrick Shepherd’ would undoubtedly have increased their saleability.

Hogg’s final compilation, already mentioned above, was his *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd*, of 1831. In this collection, he brought together the songs either that he himself favoured, or that had been favoured by popular opinion. A recent paper, already cited, explores some of the interesting issues arising from this publication.<sup>33</sup> Hogg developed a system of headnotes that were more concise but perhaps of more practical relevance than in his other un-notated collections, ie *The Mountain Bard* or *The Forest Minstrel*. Here we now find details of when he wrote a song, his personal reaction to it, and generally an indication as to where the tune may be found. The following examples, not consecutive in the publication, are illustrative of Hogg’s intent:-

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|---------------------------|--|
| p. 1, Donald Macdonald    | On this occasion, Hogg precedes the song with a headnote, <u>and</u> follows it with anecdotes about it, but notes that the tune is ‘the old air’, ‘Woo’d and married an’ a’.  |
| p. 9, The broom sae green | The full headnote reads, ‘Is my greatest favourite at present - probably because the air is my own, as well as the verses; for I find I have a particular facility in approving of such things. It is beautifully set by Bishop, in Goulding and d’Almaine’s Select Scottish |

<sup>33</sup> The Stirling/ South Carolina Research Edition of the *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd* is currently in preparation by Currie and McCue.

Melodies.’ Note that Hogg composed the air as well as the song.

- p. 22, Farewell to Glen-Shalloch Hogg’s full headnote reads:- ‘This Jacobite song is set to an old Highland melody, by the late Mr. R. A. Smith, to whom the vocal melodies of Scotland are more indebted than to any man that ever existed. The song itself was composed from a scrap of a translation in prose of what Mrs Fraser said was a Gaelic song.’

Garside and Jackson have highlighted the fact that surviving correspondence suggests Hogg to have been perhaps more interested in getting his own songs (ie words) published, than in reproducing old traditional ballads. They cite his letter to Walter Scott offering an ‘Imitation’ for inclusion in his *Minstrelsy*, although as it happens, Scott chose instead to publish his ballad, but included ‘Imitations’ by Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe (considerably higher up the social scale) and Leyden (an established scholar).<sup>34</sup> Indeed, Hogg’s intention is overt in the first section of *The Mountain Bard* (1807), with the first section being headed ‘Ballads, in Imitation of the Ancients.’

Meanwhile, in a quite different context, Cooper caught Hogg quite blatantly discussing his fakery of Jacobite songs with George Thomson, a couple of years after publishing his own *Jacobite Relics*:-

If you therefore adopt the songs, please publish them simply as *Jacobite* songs, leaving the world to find out whether they are old or new. This has a far better effect than saying, “A *Jacobite Song* by *such and such an author*”. The very idea that perhaps they may be of a former day and written by some sennachie of the clan gives them double interest.<sup>35</sup>

It is perhaps unsurprising that contemporary reaction to his *Jacobite Relics*, was to query what proportion of the contents was actually genuine, despite Hogg’s assurance that he had sourced countless old Jacobite songs - to the extent that he was filled with dread when handed yet another collection. Hughes has been unable to trace Hogg himself having made any rural field trips between 1817 and 1821, but he certainly did enlist friends, acquaintances, and the Aberdeenshire

<sup>34</sup> *Forest Minstrel*, p. xx, referring to Hogg’s letter to Scott, of 10 September 1802. See also Hogg, *Collected Letters*, I (1800-1819), pp.28-30.

<sup>35</sup> Hogg to George Thomson, 14 February 1822, as cited by Cooper, *Beethoven’s Folksong Settings*, p. 61.

men Peter Buchan and John Wallace, to search for songs for him.<sup>36</sup> Like Burns, he had become so immersed in his native tradition that, with undeniable literary talent, he was able to reproduce the idiom convincingly. Whilst Sir Walter Scott commented that Hogg had ‘grubbed up a great deal of old poetry’,<sup>37</sup> later critics were less kind, and there has been much debate about the authenticity and sources for many of the songs. The question of oral transmission only compounds the problem. Furthermore, any Gaelic songs would have had first to be translated for him, so they could only have been ‘imitations’ - which brings us back to all the issues surrounding Macpherson’s *Ossian*, over sixty years earlier.

Harker and Donaldson have both suggested that Hogg privileged manuscript over oral sources for the songs (i.e. lyrics) in his *Jacobite Relics*, but was more willing to accept oral sources for the airs.<sup>38</sup> However, this would appear to be something of an over-simplification. Whilst, as has already been noted in passing, Hogg was also not averse to composing an air himself at times, and both the 1819 and 1829 editions of his *Border Garland* similarly included his own tunes, modern editors do nonetheless appear to have traced the majority of the tunes in Hogg’s song collections to contemporary printed sources. It would thus appear that Hogg’s tune repertoire is, in general, not dissimilar in principle to the *Scots Musical Museum*, and any suspected editorial ‘imitation’ was more likely to have been in connection with the text than the music.

## **R. A. Smith’s ‘fine airs produced and saved from oblivion’<sup>39</sup>**

In the intricate network of songwriters and tune collectors that this period encapsulates, it is perhaps not surprising to note that Hogg was also closely involved with the Paisley and Edinburgh musician R. A. Smith (1780-1829),

<sup>36</sup> Hughes, *James Hogg: a Life*, pp. 154-55.

<sup>37</sup> *Jacobite Relics*, I, p. xxiv. An editorial footnote cites H. J. C. Grierson’s *Letters of Sir Walter Scott* (London: Constable, 1932-37).

<sup>38</sup> Harker, pp. 62-63, and Donaldson, *The Jacobite Song*, p. 24.

<sup>39</sup> See Glasgow University Library, GB 0247 MS Robertson 3/13 fols 22<sup>r</sup> -23<sup>r</sup>, Smith’s letter to William Motherwell, 13 October 1823, cited in Brown, *William Motherwell’s Cultural Politics*, p. 20.

supplying him with songs for both the *Scottish Minstrel* and subsequent *Irish Minstrel* (1820-24, and 1825 respectively).

Smith was born in Reading in 1780, but his family returned to Paisley, his father's birthplace, in 1800. Robert had already been apprenticed as a weaver, like his father. However, his musical talent would not be quashed, and by 1807 he was Precentor at Paisley Abbey Church, and a teacher of music. In Paisley, he became friendly with the poet Tannahill, the ballad-collector William Motherwell, and made the acquaintance of James Hogg.

Having improved choral standards in Paisley, Smith moved to St George's Parish Church in Edinburgh, in 1823, but died in 1829 aged just 48.

Besides his settings of Scottish music, he wrote a singing tutor and a number of sacred pieces. He commenced his *Scotish Minstrel* circa 1820, which extended to six volumes by 1824. With his Edinburgh publisher, Robert Purdie, he published the single-volume *Irish Minstrel* circa 1825. Purdie published subsequent editions of both the *Irish* and *Scotish Minstrel*, possibly as late as 1835.<sup>40</sup> Whilst there would undoubtedly be value in a deeper study of both *Minstrels* at a later date, the observations that follow are primarily based on his *Scotish* collections.

On the evidence available to us, travel was perhaps less important to Smith, than to Campbell, Burns or Hogg, whose travels seem to have imparted a wider and more informed national view. However, although we shall not pursue travel as a primary focus in Smith's work, it is worth putting on record that he certainly did enjoy an appreciation of his surroundings and their links with song, as indicated by a letter from Smith to Robert Lang - a manufacturer in Paisley:-

[...] but how could a lover of song remain indifferent even to these little circumstances whilst rambling over such classic ground, where almost every whin-bush carries an interest in it. I have been perambulating the beautiful and romantic "banks and braes o bonnie Doon", and richly do they deserve the immortality bestowed on them by the Bard. I could not help humming the song involuntarily [...] I

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<sup>40</sup> Library catalogues accessed via COPAC date these subsequent editions provisionally as from 1835.

intend to take some sketches before I leave Ayrshire, which perhaps may do for some of Danl. Craig's snuff boxes [...]<sup>41</sup>

Whilst Hogg's involvement with Campbell had extended to the gift of his twenty Borders melodies, as well as a dozen song lyrics, his involvement with Smith was primarily as supplier of lyrics. Gillian Hughes has drawn attention to an interesting question of copyright with regard to the *Irish Minstrel*, for some of Hogg's lyrics had already been used in Moore's *Irish Melodies*, and were re-set in simpler settings by R. A. Smith for the *Irish Minstrel*. Moore or his publisher promptly demanded that the first edition of the *Irish Minstrel* be burnt.<sup>42</sup>

Hughes notes that in Smith's Preface to a subsequent edition of the *Irish Minstrel*,

Smith's denial of any attempt to compete with [Moore's] *Irish Melodies* is more than a little specious, and his arguments display a canny mixture of commercial acumen with national feeling and democratising zeal.<sup>43</sup>

This is a salient point, for it can be demonstrated that Smith's earlier *Scottish Minstrel* in fact displays just the same combination of 'commercial acumen' combined with patriotism, albeit without the added complexity of a copyright charge.

Robert A. Smith wrote the following words to William Motherwell on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1823, when he was asking the latter to write a Preface for the final volume of his *Scottish Minstrel*,<sup>44</sup> published c.1824:-

Do for God's sake make out a Preface[;] we must wind up the matter decently and brag of course of the many fine airs produced and saved from oblivion.

Earlier in the same letter, Smith asked Motherwell to hand over a parcel to the poet William Chalmers, confessing that he had attributed a song to Chalmers,

<sup>41</sup> Robert Tannahill, *The Poems and Songs of Robert Tannahill: with Life, and Notes*, by David Semple, Centenary ed. (Paisley: Alex. Gardner, 1874), p.438

<sup>42</sup> Gillian Hughes, 'Irish Melodies and a Scottish Minstrel' in *Studies in Hogg and his World*, 13 (2002), 36-45.

<sup>43</sup> Hughes, 'Irish Melodies and a Scottish Minstrel', p. 39.

<sup>44</sup> Smith's letter to William Motherwell, 13 October 1823, cited in Brown, *William Motherwell's Cultural Politics*, p. 20.

allegedly transcribed from his singing, which in actual fact Chalmers ‘never saw or heard of before’. Indeed, Smith adds gleefully that,

As this is to be the last Vol[ume]. I have been hoaxing most d[amnabl]y God forgive me ... the fragment of “Heigh ho the green Rowan tree” is mine words and all - o rara - I send it to you as it has just come back from being inspected by the Ladies [i.e. Lady Nairne’s committee] who are wonderfully well pleased with it [...]<sup>45</sup>

It will be evident from Smith’s request to Motherwell for a preface, that the compilers of nineteenth-century songbooks were well-aware of the need to target their audience, and furthermore to use the preface both to entice the reader and convince him of the collection’s value. By looking closely at the collections by R. A Smith and his successors, one begins to identify the driving forces behind these compilations, and the steps that they took to ensure that their books would meet the requirements of their audience.

One is also sharply confronted with the question of ‘fakelore’ - in this case those songs that were not merely ‘mediated’, but quite deliberately invented by their compilers. If we regard the compilers of published Scottish song collections as de facto mediators, making a complex bundle of editorial decisions regarding the presentation of their materials, then it is plain that R. A. Smith had moved beyond mediating to actually creating some of his songs. This is not, however, to suggest that Smith ‘invented’ his entire repertoire, and my use of the term, ‘mediated’ should not be taken to imply any embracing of the ideological bourgeoisie-vis-à-vis-working class arguments with which Harker imbues the term.

Mary Ellen Brown’s use of the term ‘cultural politics’, whilst still taking the politics into ample consideration, is less loaded with her own preconceived notions of ideologies, and thus seems a more balanced approach to adopt. Moreover, as mentioned at the start of the chapter, her observations provided the starting-point for much of what follows here:-

The cognoscenti knew what one another were doing. R. A. Smith told Motherwell what Motherwell already knew, that some of his tunes were not traditional but his own, and he wrote Motherwell of having

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<sup>45</sup> Smith to Motherwell, *ibid.*

seen Allan Cunningham in London and referred to Allan's forgeries as common topic, understood activity (Robertson 1222: 42, 51). Likewise, Peter Buchan admits, in a letter to Motherwell, that his notes for the "Earl of Aboyne" were "imaginary" since the singer had nothing to say about the text (17 Jan. 1826, 25263.19.6F). And the annotations of some of Motherwell's extensive manuscript materials offer evidence of Motherwell's participation in such literary play [...]<sup>46</sup>

As we have already noted, the earlier compilers - Patrick MacDonald, James Johnson, Simon Fraser and Alexander Campbell - made much of the fact that they were preserving their heritage of songs and tunes before they became irretrievably lost. They stressed that they were aiming for 'authentic' versions of the tunes, and simple, uncluttered accompaniments. Similarly, George Thomson's aim (at least in his earlier publications) had been 'to collect all our best melodies and songs', and to create 'accompaniments to them worthy of their merit'. To that end, he 'consulted every Collection, old and new.'<sup>47</sup>

Taken in this context, Hogg's comment to Thomson, and Robert Archibald Smith's to Motherwell, betray a cynicism that is not apparent in earlier collections. At the very least, it is a recognition that the preservation of songs was the prevailing preoccupation amongst antiquarians, and these remarks also demonstrate the significance that was credited to newly discovered songs.

Prefaces appear in the first, fifth and sixth volumes of the *Scotish Minstrel*, and these clearly indicate the concerns of contemporary Scottish music collectors. Thus, the preface to the first volume of his *Scotish Minstrel* assures readers that the music and poetry 'are national, as we have scrupulously avoided the insertion of any airs or verses, however beautiful, that are not of Scottish origin.'<sup>48</sup> Smith acknowledges that the question of what was originally Scottish as opposed to Irish is something of a grey area, but apologises if any Irish songs have been inserted.

Next, he highlights the inclusion of 'hitherto unpublished' songs,<sup>49</sup> and likens folk music to the wild flowers of nature, gathered from 'the peasantry', rather than

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<sup>46</sup> Brown, *William Motherwell's Cultural Politics*, 142.

<sup>47</sup> *Original Scottish Airs I* (1803), p.1.

<sup>48</sup> Robert Archibald Smith, *The Scotish Minstrel*, 6 vols (Edinburgh: Purdie, 1820-24), I, p.i.

<sup>49</sup> *The Scotish Minstrel*, I, p. ii.

being art-songs. This is a common metaphor in writings of this period; for example, Sir Walter Scott had earlier alluded to 'garlands of song' and 'wild-flowers' in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, but took the imagery several steps further by including the land itself in his metaphor:-

Like the natural free gifts of Flora, these poetical garlands can only be successfully sought for where the land is uncultivated; and civilisation and increase of learning are sure to banish them, as the plough of the agriculturalist bears down the mountain daisy.<sup>50</sup>

We shall see in due course that Allan Cunningham used very similar imagery, and indeed, Wiora has remarked upon very similar references on the Continent as well, in connection with his researches into the work of Zuccalmaglio, to which reference will be made later on in this chapter.<sup>51</sup>

Smith tells us that Jacobite songs and airs have also been gathered from local worthies. There is particular reference to one Alister McAlpine of Kilbarchan - although, by the time the fifth volume was published, the reader was advised that 'death has now deprived me of that almost exhaustless fund of song.'<sup>52</sup>

The words, we read, are in some cases 'simple stanzas of olden time',<sup>53</sup> including 'lilts and rants'<sup>54</sup> which are not particularly tasteful, but there are also verses by famous national poets. (Burns, Tannahill and Lady Nairne - the latter going incognito - number amongst them.) However, the reader is assured that the editorial team - for Smith was assisted by a group of ladies as arbiters of good taste - preferred 'dullness to wit, if it bordered on profanity [...ensuring that] our pages [remain] unsullied by any thing likely to offend delicacy or

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<sup>50</sup> Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border: consisting of historical and romantic ballads*, 3 vols (Kelso: Printed by J. Ballantyne, for T. Cadell, jun. and W. Davies, 1802), I, 23-24.

<sup>51</sup> See Walter Wiora, 'Concerning the conception of authentic folk music', *International Folk Music Journal*, 1 (1949), 14-19 (p. 18).

<sup>52</sup> *Scotish Minstrel*, V, p. i. This individual has not yet been identified. As observed earlier in connection with Hogg, a deceased informant is conveniently if rather cynically harder to trace than a living one!

<sup>53</sup> *Scotish Minstrel*, I, p. ii.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, iii.



decorum.’<sup>55</sup> The insistence on propriety strongly reinforces the idea that these collections had to be fit for use by the fairer sex!

At this point, there is a lengthy explanation about modes and which songs might reasonably be considered ‘ancient’ (intriguingly defined by Smith as ‘the early part of the eighteenth century’),<sup>56</sup> and he attempts to date songs from Andrew Blaikie’s two *Viol da Gamba* collections of 1683 and 1692. Smith was one of several contemporary musicians who had seen these (now missing) manuscripts, and this preface dates his sighting prior to 1821.

Lastly, the editors hasten to assure readers that many more tunes have been gathered which will appear in a subsequent volume - and they trust that the collection will be well-received all over the British Isles. It may have been published solely in Edinburgh, but the intention was to sell it throughout Britain.

By the time we reach the ‘Advertisement’ (ie preface) to the fifth volume, the reader is reminded that many of these ‘little airs and fragments of song’ are appearing in print for the first time - ‘in a shape less perishable than that of oral tradition.’<sup>57</sup> Two collectors are thanked individually. We are reminded that,

As to the standard airs in this collection, the Editors have invariably preferred the sets that appeared to them to be the most original and unmixed, and that in no instance have they ventured (*partly*) to compose them, as has been lately done by some, who have had the presumption to give their own garbled sets of well-known Scottish melodies, and thereby to rob the music of those strong traits of national character which constitute its principal charm.<sup>58</sup>

Smith had asked Motherwell to assist with a Preface, in October 1823. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1824, Smith wrote reminding him, and enclosing a preface drafted by ‘the Ladies’, which he had been handed the previous evening.

The end result was an edited version of what Smith had been presented by ‘the Ladies’. Much of the text has been moved around, but the basic points remain

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, iii.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, v.

<sup>57</sup> *Scotish Minstrel*, V, p. i.

<sup>58</sup> *Scotish Minstrel*, V, p. ii.

unaltered. We are reminded that many fragments had been preserved ‘which otherwise might have been suffered to perish,’<sup>59</sup> and thanks are extended to all contributors, particularly James Hogg, William Motherwell of Paisley (this must have been added by Motherwell himself, since it was not in the draft!), Robert Allan of Kilbarchan and the poet Daniel Weir of Greenock.

There are further allusions to the value of these ‘wild flowers gathered from the hills and valleys’, before the Editors take their leave of the reader by stating that they have endeavoured to produce an extensive collection ‘worthy of a place in the library, as well as to appear in the drawing-room’, and trusting that their efforts will find favour amongst ‘those who join a regard to morality and virtuous enjoyment with the desire to encourage the exertions of native genius.’<sup>60</sup>

The letter of 13<sup>th</sup> October 1823, quoted above, is not the only one of Smith’s letters to Motherwell which mentions his hoaxes. In 1958, William Montgomerie highlighted a letter of 8<sup>th</sup> April 1826 in which Smith wrote about a planned ‘Initiatory Book for Singing’, quite blatantly admitting to ‘composing several genuine melodies’, and confiding that he planned to ‘make some notable discoveries of melodies not yet even in *embryo existence*’ for a future publication.<sup>61</sup>

Montgomerie was concerned about two things: firstly, he found it curious that Smith was writing in such terms to Motherwell, whose own editorial practices in the later stages of his *Minstrelsy* had been profoundly influenced by a letter from Sir Walter Scott advocating total honesty and transparency about sources, and in particular advising against conflated versions of ballads. Harker has since suggested, however, that Motherwell was ‘obsessively accurate’ even before receiving Scott’s influential letter.<sup>62</sup> Secondly, Montgomerie was mystified by a

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<sup>59</sup> *Scotish Minstrel*, VI, p. ii.

<sup>60</sup> *Scotish Minstrel*, VI, p. iv.

<sup>61</sup> Montgomerie, 155.

<sup>62</sup> See Harker, p. 74.

subsequent letter in which Smith wrote of Allan Cunningham that ‘these forgers ... really [sic] deserve to be punished a little for their heinous offences [...]’<sup>63</sup>

Our primary concern here is not to establish which tunes were written by Smith, whom his near-contemporaries described as a more than capable musician. Nor do we need to dispute whether Smith’s prefatory assertions are wholly truthful. The significant issues are, in the first instance, Smith’s reiteration of what is important in a collection of national song; and in the second, what contemporary attitudes were to this phenomenon of ‘fakery’, in which Smith, as will be demonstrated, was clearly not the only participant. During the course of this discussion it will become evident that Montgomerie completely missed the point with regard to contemporary literary practice, and as a consequence, did not realise that Smith’s comments were by no means a criticism to be taken seriously.

As mentioned at the outset, Montgomerie dismissed Smith as ‘one of those editors who create false evidence about their material’, and added, ‘To quote accurately a man’s own words [...] and to allow those private words to destroy his reputation for honesty, is not to be guilty of that destruction.’<sup>64</sup> However, this is imposing the censure of a later generation onto something which was not viewed as harshly at that time. We should not, in the present day, indulge in making moral judgements. What is of more interest is the way Smith and activities such as his were seen by his contemporaries and slightly later successors.

Memoirs of Smith can be found in two nineteenth-century collections of Tannahill’s poetry – the first edited by Philip Ramsay (1853), and the other by David Semple (1874).<sup>65</sup> Only Ramsay alludes to Smith’s fabrications, saying that, although the work claims only to give selection of known melodies or those ‘recovered from tradition’, it also,

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<sup>63</sup> Montgomerie, 157, Letter from Smith to Motherwell, 1 June 1827.

<sup>64</sup> Montgomerie, 154.

<sup>65</sup> Robert Tannahill, *The Works of Robert Tannahill, with life of the Author, and a memoir of Robert A. Smith, the musical Composer*, by Philip A. Ramsay (Edinburgh: Fullarton, 1853) and Robert Tannahill, *The Poems and Songs of Robert Tannahill: with Life, and Notes*, by David Semple, Centenary edn (Paisley: Alex. Gardner, 1874).

[...] we assuredly know, contains a great number of original pieces of the editor's own, or dim reminiscences of old tunes, which his ear had treasured up from childhood, and his fancy afterwards educed in more perfect, and more beautiful forms. These, however, he never acknowledged, nor perhaps would it be proper now to point them out.<sup>66</sup>

By the time Baptie compiled *Musical Scotland* in 1894, Ramsay's generous reference to 'dim reminiscences of old tunes' has been dropped, and we are just informed that *Scotish Minstrel* contained 'several of his own songs, frequently anonymous.'<sup>67</sup>

With respect to the issue regarding Motherwell's own changing editorial policies subsequent to Scott's influential letter, this bears little relevance to Smith's correspondence. In the first instance, let us not forget that in Motherwell's earlier days, he had invented ballads of his own. Furthermore, even though Motherwell was apparently becoming more scrupulous, there is no reason why Smith should adopt his friend's new approach, although, as we have seen, he certainly paid lip-service to the idea of reproducing the best single version of a song.

In the second instance, one should remember that some contemporary reactions to the poet Cunningham's actions, far from being critical, were almost indulgent.

Smith's reference to Allan Cunningham alludes to the latter's forged poems in the Yorkshireman Crome's *Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Songs* of 1810. James Hogg was perhaps the first to voice his misgivings in print, in the first volume of his *Jacobite Relics*. As we shall see, William Stenhouse was also sceptical, and Motherwell himself was to allude to the collection in his *Minstrelsy* of 1827, commenting that Crome's *Remains* contain 'not one single ancient ballad within its four corners.'<sup>68</sup> (He was equally dismissive of Cunningham's own *The Songs of Scotland*, of 1826.)

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<sup>66</sup> Ramsay, 'Memoir of Robert A. Smith', *The Works of Robert Tannahill*, *ibid*, p. xlix.

<sup>67</sup> Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 174.

<sup>68</sup> Motherwell, *Minstrelsy*, 1827, lxxviii.

However, a quarter-century later, in 1853, David Laing regarded the deception with almost benign amusement.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, when Cunningham's son Peter published a posthumous edition of his father's ballad poetry in 1847, describing some of his poems as 'imitations of the old ballad', there was an immediate outcry from the reviewer of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. These poems, he opined, should not be called 'imitations' at all. On the contrary, they were genuinely original pieces in their own right:-

They are no more imitations than the finest poems of Burns, or Hogg, or Motherwell. They are, it is true, written in the Scots dialect, and they share, along with the old traditional strains, the charm of a sweet simplicity; but every one of them came direct from the heart of our beloved Allan, and are, in their way, as truly original compositions as any burst that ever yet was uttered by inspired poet under the canopy of heaven. Poor old Cromek, who knew as little about the Scottish ballads as Mr Sheldon, believed them to be ancient, and, we dare say, died in that belief. But every man here [...] saw at once that such poems as 'The Lord's Marie' or 'Bonnie Lady Anne', were neither ancient nor imitated; and accordingly, [...] Allan Cunningham was at once enrolled on the list of the sweet singers of Scotland [...]<sup>70</sup>

The truth of the matter was finally revealed with the publication of David Hogg's *The Life of Allan Cunningham* in 1875, when excerpts from an early letter from Cunningham to his friend George McGhie were quoted:-

The critics are much of the same mind as yourself. Your conjecture is not very far wrong as to my share of the book. Was it the duty of a son to show the nakedness of his own land? No, my dear friend. I went before and made the path straight. I planted here and there a flower - dropped here and there a honeycomb - plucked away the bitter gourd - cast some jewels in the by-paths and in the fields, so that the traveller might find them, and wonder at the richness of the land that produced them! Nor did I drop them in vain. Pardon the confession, and keep it a secret.<sup>71</sup>

Dennis M. Read, in an article on Cunningham and the *Remains of Nithsdale* volume, suggests that Cunningham seems to have considered himself less

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<sup>69</sup> Stenhouse, *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music in Scotland*, 1853, Additional Illustrations, p. 455.

<sup>70</sup> 'Ancient and modern ballad poetry', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 61 (379), May 1847, pp.622-44 [reviewing four different ballad collections] via *Internet Library of Early Journals* <<http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/ilej/>> [Accessed 20 March 2009]

<sup>71</sup> David Hogg, *The Life of Allan Cunningham, with Selections from his Works and Correspondence* (Dumfries: John Anderson, 1875), 124. (One can infer from the context that this letter dates c.1810-11.)

blameworthy than the gullible Cromek who was unable to distinguish between fact and fiction.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, taken in the context of early nineteenth-century literary fakery as a whole, could it not be that R. A. Smith, aware of Motherwell's own changing views on forgers, was simply making a tongue-in-cheek comment?

Further evidence strongly corroborating this theory can be found in Smith's letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 1826, to Motherwell. On this occasion, he was prompting Motherwell to submit a favourable review of Smith's forthcoming *Initiatory Book for Singing*, in the *Paisley Advertiser*:-

Now do not, my dear Friend imagine for a moment that I wish the proposed Review to be inserted from Egotistical motives, Not but a little flattery is as welcome to me as to others, but I do assure you honestly, that, on the present occasion, I wish to get a good story Manufactured more for the joke than any other thing. A little amusement of this kind helps wonderfully to keep up the Spirits in this envious and backbiting world, and I see no harm in now & then sounding ones own trumpet, when it does not injure others.<sup>73</sup>

In short, there can be no doubt that Smith's approach very clearly fits into the concept of mischievous deception which could only be detected by those 'in the know', as opposed to wilful and obstructive forgery, as explored by Mary Ellen Brown in her Motherwell monograph.

Before leaving Hogg, R. A. Smith and the tongue-in-cheek comments of the latter, it is worth noting that some years later, Hogg's own *Jacobite Relics* were themselves the subject of an ironic comment, in *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine* of August 1845. The anonymous author of 'A Letter from London', writing under the pseudonym of 'A Railway Witness' was writing to a fictitious friend in Glasgow or Edinburgh about a London theatrical fashion for plays based on fairy tales or the 17<sup>th</sup> Century *Contes de Fées*. He suggested jokingly that his Scottish friend might write something similar, based on a British fairy tale or 'a few parodies adapted to the most popular airs'. Warming to his theme, he continued,

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<sup>72</sup> See Dennis M. Read, 'Cromek, Cunningham, and *Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song*: a case of literary duplicity', *Studies in Bibliography*, 40 (1987), 171-90 (p.187).

<sup>73</sup> Smith-Motherwell correspondence, Glasgow University Library (GB 0247) MS Robertson 3/33. Letter from Robert Archibald Smith, to William Motherwell, (8th April 1826), Fols. 64<sup>r</sup>-65<sup>r</sup>.

I see a fine field for your ingenuity in the Jacobite relics; they are entwined with our most sacred national recollections, and therefore may be desecrated at will.<sup>74</sup>

Literary references in this letter point almost indubitably to Sir Walter Scott's son-in-law John Gibson Lockhart as the author of this piece, with the strong probability that Hogg's friend John Wilson (or his pseudonym, Christopher North) was the imagined recipient. The comments, slight as they are, indicate a keen awareness of the cultural nationalism, not to mention the sense of Scottish history, bound up in Hogg's *Relics*, whilst also implying that they were already not being taken entirely seriously.

Having examined the possible motives behind Smith's deceptions, and touched upon the earlier and contemporary efforts of Allan Cunningham and James Hogg with regard to their own poetry, it becomes apparent that the phenomenon was more common than one would initially imagine, particularly taken in the context of other literary and artistic 'deceptions' of this era.

(One might point out that a similar, if not exactly parallel situation was to cause a stir in Germany only a couple of decades later. Mention has already been made of the early reception of Scottish folksong collections on the Continent, as has been explored extensively by Gelbart and Clemmens; and the activities of the mid-nineteenth century Zuccalmaglio and Erk have received considerable attention by Wiora and Yeo,<sup>75</sup> to a lesser extent by Dahlhaus<sup>76</sup> and touched on by Monelle.<sup>77</sup> Whilst this is not the place to attempt an in-depth comparison of Zuccalmaglio and Erk's collections with those of R. A. Smith, and perhaps also of Hogg, this is a rich seam to mine at a later date, with the potential for useful

<sup>74</sup> 'A Letter from London' by the pseudonymous 'A Railway Witness', to 'My dear Bogle', in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol.58 (358), August 1845, 173-184, online via *Internet Library of Early Journals*, [Accessed 15 March 2009]. Author's identity conjecturally J. G. Lockhart.

<sup>75</sup> Wiora, 'Concerning the Conception of Authentic Folk Music'; his later *Die rheinisch-bergischen Melodien bei Zuccalmaglio und Brahms* (Bad Godesberg, Voggenreiter Verlag [1953]); and Else Yeo, *Eduard Baumstark und die Bruder von Zuccalmaglio: drei Volksliedsammler* (Köln: Dohr, 1993).

<sup>76</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music* (London: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 108-10.

<sup>77</sup> Raymond Monelle, 'Scottish Music, Real and Spurious', in *Music and Nationalism in 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Great Britain and Finland*, ed. by Tomi Makela (Hamburg: Von Bockel, 1997), pp.87-110. Monelle makes passing reference to Zuccalmaglio as being one of the European imitators of eighteenth-century British 'Scotch' song collections, but does not go on to explore parallels or differences with earlier or contemporary Scottish collections.

insights into the whole area of fakery and mischief as evidenced in music and literature around the second quarter of the nineteenth century.)

In summary, therefore, Scottish song collections from the 1820s onwards demonstrate several salient points. Firstly, we have observed not only the contemporary new interest in 'folk' music, with the proto-scientific approach, but also the compilers' concern for marketability. At the same time, we also observe a divergence of approach with regard to the emphasis on collecting or creativity.

In the first instance, musical standards had moved on. Campbell's harmonisations were barely adequate. Thomson's commissioned settings had gone to the opposite extreme, but were perhaps too challenging for amateurs. Smith's were straightforward and effective, but had no introductions or interludes. As we shall see in a later chapter, the later collections had accompaniments within the capabilities of the average pianist, and introductions which enhanced the settings. In this regard, Hogg's song collections (with the exception of his two editions of the *Border Garland*, with their art-music settings of Hogg's Borders-inspired poems) stand slightly to the side of the music collections which form the main focus of this thesis. Like Ritson in his *Scottish Song*, Hogg generally contented himself with naming the air, or providing just the melody in his *Jacobite Relics*.

Equally importantly, Hogg's literary output, and Smith's correspondence and the ensuing collections provide an interesting vignette of music publishing circa 1820-1824, and useful insights not only into the publishing process, but also into the way in which they engaged with their subject material.

Drawing upon and developing Allan Cunningham's comments about Ritson, one can plot a continuum for our national song-collectors, with the obsessive accuracy of the antiquarian collector at one extreme, as exemplified by Ritson himself, and the creative artist at the other. At the critical point where collecting meets creativity, we find on the one hand, the collector Alexander Campbell, endeavouring to publish an art-music collection, and on the other, Hogg and Smith publishing collections of Scottish and Border repertoire with a generous measure of their own creativity thrown in. That this was a



contemporary cultural issue and not merely limited to Scottish song collectors is evidenced both by the parallels in literature, and by the slightly later work by Zuccalmaglio and his peers in Germany.

The second quarter of the century evidently witnessed the peak of this dialogue, for, as we shall see in Chapters 6 and 7, it gradually waned thereafter.

Before we reach that era, however, we need to look more closely at the serious annotations which were written to enhance the *Scots Musical Museum* and the *Jacobite Relics*, since it is in these commentaries that we find out which musical, aesthetic and other issues were most important to contemporary Scottish song enthusiasts. This question forms the focus of the next chapter.

## Chapter 5, *Illustrations and Notes: Stenhouse's and Hogg's Quest for Origins, c.1820*

In the last three chapters, we have examined some of the major collections of Scottish songs from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with the *Scots Musical Museum* and Hogg's *Jacobite Relics* standing out as particularly extensive and influential. We have paid close attention to the general philosophical influences behind these collections, and their compilers' editorial decisions. We have also remarked upon the differing attitudes towards raw materials, depending on whether the collectors were more concerned with antiquarian preservation, or artistic creativity.

However, the significance of Hogg's collection lies not just in its musical and literary contents, but also in its extensive commentaries on them. His volumes were published in 1819 and 1821. It would seem hardly coincidental that at much the same time (c.1817-1820), Edinburgh accountant and musical antiquarian William Stenhouse was compiling another set of commentaries for the *Scots Musical Museum*. (As we shall see, he had this in hand when he wrote to *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1817,<sup>1</sup> and the plates were printed for all but the introduction, in 1820, although his work would not be published until some twelve years after his death.) It is to these collections of annotations that we now turn our attention.

Whilst their publication histories and indeed the motivations behind them were very different, Stenhouse's and Hogg's commentaries both mark a significant point in the history of the genre; the present chapter will endeavour to define that point, and to make comparisons between the two.

Much has been written about the *Relics* by authorities such as Donaldson, and more recently Pittock in his authoritative annotated edition of the work, and some of the ground has already been briefly surveyed in this thesis.

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<sup>1</sup> William Stenhouse [alias 'Scotus'], 'Johnson's Scots Musical Museum', *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine*, July 1817, pp. 378-79.

On the other hand, comparatively little has been written about Stenhouse, or indeed about David Laing's editorial hand in the subsequent publication of the *Illustrations*, in the last half-century or so. Farmer made passing reference to Stenhouse in his 1947 *A History of Music in Scotland*, attempting to put Glen's earlier criticisms in context,<sup>2</sup> as we shall see later when we consider Stenhouse's reception by later nineteenth-century writers. Collinson's comments in 1966 were, if anything, more incidental than Farmer's, though his observations form a useful starting point:-

William Stenhouse, who was an Edinburgh accountant, was notoriously careless in his statements; but he was not wilfully dishonest as have been certain other commentators on Burns, and there is no reason to disbelieve him when he says, as he does so often, that both the words and tune of a song were contributed by Burns, and that he, Stenhouse, had had the manuscript through his hands.<sup>3</sup>

More recently, a new understanding of Stenhouse's stance and contribution is emerging, and both John Purser and David Johnson have started to redress the balance in their brief biographical entries in the *ODNB* and *Grove Music Online* respectively.

Purser updated Hadden's brief article for the *ODNB* in 2004, asserting that much of the criticism of Stenhouse is 'misplaced', pointing out that Stenhouse did actually break new ground, and drew upon his own Borders background.

David Johnson's entry on Stenhouse for *Grove Music Online*, only a year later than Purser's *ODNB* entry, provides the most information about the publication history of Stenhouse's *Illustrations* (and gives a proper bibliographic description), but recognises the derivative nature of much of Stenhouse's work, citing this and his tendency 'to be over-dogmatic in supplying dates and nationalistic origins to individual tunes'<sup>4</sup>, as the reason for attacks on his work by William Chappell in 1859 and John Glen in 1900.

Taken together, however, these writings hardly constitute more than a recital of the barest facts and a reiteration of some of the controversies that Stenhouse

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<sup>2</sup> Henry George Farmer, *A History of Music in Scotland* (London: Hinrichsen, 1947) p.424.

<sup>3</sup> Collinson, *The Traditional and National Music of Scotland*, p.129.

<sup>4</sup> David Johnson, 'Stenhouse, William', in *Grove Music Online* [accessed February 22, 2009].

provoked. For this reason, a deliberate decision has been made to focus primarily on Stenhouse's *Illustrations* in the discussion that follows, although reference will be made to Hogg's *Relics* at appropriate points, for the purposes of comparison.

One major, purely practical difference between the *Jacobite Relics* and the *Scots Musical Museum* is that Hogg had final responsibility as the compiler of both songs and notes as a single entity, quite apart from his authorial role in the genesis of some of the songs. Burns, on the other hand, never published contextual notes for the collection, although Stenhouse's piece in *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine* confirms that this had been Burns's intention. Cromek's *Reliques* had value to a point, but apart from any intrinsic weaknesses in the commentary, it was not directly linked to Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*. It was another two decades before Stenhouse compiled his *Illustrations* to the *Museum*, and a further two decades before Laing nursed them into print.

Another practical difference is that the Highland Society of London backed Hogg's collection, at least to a certain extent, even if there was dispute as to what had been agreed by all parties concerned.

However the third, and most significant difference between Hogg's and Stenhouse's commentaries is ideological. Leaving aside the fact that Hogg's collection was, significantly, a Lowlander's interpretation of something that had been more prevalent in the Highlands, with English words in 'imitation' rather than translation, of what the Gaelic originals might have been, it has been remarked already that Hogg's collection was devoted to a commemoration of the Jacobite cause, regardless of whether he produced the kind of book that the Highland Society had hoped for. Although he sympathised with the Jacobite cause, he seems to have been careful not to display an unseemly or unequivocal devotion to it. He possessed sufficient tact to ensure that his own stance within a politically-emotive collection was that of the loyal moderate, anxious not to seem disloyal to his living monarch, and he nailed his colours to the mast in the Preface to the *Relics* when he commented on 'honourable' reminiscences being drawn upon, now that 'party feelings [were] at an end.' Indeed, he showed more discretion in this respect than he sometimes did in his use of indelicate language, as we shall see later.

Stenhouse, meanwhile, was providing commentary on a pre-existing collection of Lowland Scots songs, not assembled by himself even if he was acquainted with the compilers. If he commented on a song having Jacobite connections, then it was a matter of fact rather than the reason for the song's inclusion in the first place. (Burns's sympathy for the Jacobite cause is evident from the inclusion of such songs as 'O'er the water to Charlie' and 'Charlie he's my darling' in the *Scots Musical Museum*, but this was not the overriding reason for the collection's initial inspiration and compilation.)

Thus, although both Stenhouse and Hogg were intent on giving historical background, Hogg gives extended historical details about battles, military manoeuvres and communications, military people and significant Jacobite families. Part of his discourse involves an assessment of the accuracy of previous historical narratives, or an attempt to confirm the veracity of his own sources, such as citing the translation of an account in Gaelic by an (unnamed) Highlander, 'who was not only an eye-witness [...] but hotly engaged in it.'<sup>5</sup> Pittock has, however, warned that Sir Walter Scott found certain limitations in Hogg's historical knowledge; and Hogg, as a result of his scanty formal schooling was, moreover, ignorant of what Pittock describes as the 'Scoto-Latin' tradition.<sup>6</sup>

By contrast, the emphasis in Stenhouse's annotations reflects the more generalist nature of the *Museum*, and reiterates Burns's interest in the geographical, historical and personal origins of each individual song.

Both compilers had recourse to a vast network of other antiquarians and song-collectors for additional 'traditional information' and source-materials, not to mention having had a similar corpus of published sources to draw upon, and there would naturally have been some overlap between all of these.

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<sup>5</sup> Hogg, *Jacobite Relics*, I, 157, Song 2, 'The Haughs of Cromdale'.

<sup>6</sup> *Relics*, I, 436.

## From Interleaved Volumes to *Illustrations*

It will be recalled from Chapter 2, that Johnson intended the *Scots Musical Museum* to include ‘every Scots song extant,’ although this was obviously an impossibility. Moreover, at the time of writing, Johnson would have had no idea as to the amount of editorial and indeed authorial input that Burns was to contribute.

### Burns’s and Riddell’s Notes, and Cromek’s *Reliques*

Although no contextual annotations appeared with the songs at the time of publication, Burns was keeping his own notes. His friend Robert Riddell, the Laird of Glenriddell, owned interleaved copies of the first four volumes of the *Museum*, in which he had invited Burns to annotate individual songs, and also made his own notes. (Low provides these notes, taken from an earlier limited edition edited by James C. Dick, as an appendix to his 1991 edition of the *Scots Musical Museum*.)<sup>7</sup> Burns similarly asked Johnson to have Peter Hill the bookseller make him an interleaved copy of the *Museum* bound with blank pages for his own use, with a view to Johnson publishing it at some stage, thus ‘making the Museum a book famous to the end of time, and you renowned for ever.’<sup>8</sup> Blacklock and Tytler, amongst others of Burns’ Edinburgh friends, began passing suitable information to Burns, but the deaths first of Burns himself and then his informants meant that the projected book was not completed.

Burns’s correspondence, Common-Place books, and Riddell’s interleaved volumes of the *Museum*, bear witness to a deep interest in and knowledge of the repertoire. Indeed, Daiches reminds us that in one of Burns’s annotations in the interleaved *Museum*, he declared himself one of the best living authorities on the subject.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> James Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum 1787-1803*, ed. by Donald A. Low (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1991), II, 700: Appendix.

<sup>8</sup> William Stenhouse [alias ‘Scotus’], ‘Johnson’s Scots Musical Museum’, *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine*, July 1817, pp. 378-79.

<sup>9</sup> David Daiches, ‘Robert Burns and Jacobite Song’, p. 137.

Clearly, it was in the public interest that this information should be more widely made known, and an initial attempt was made by the northern English engraver R. H. Cromek (1770-1812) with his *Reliques of Burns, consisting of Original Letters, Poems and Critical Observations on Scottish Songs* in 1808, followed in 1810, by *Select Scottish Songs with critical observations and biographical notices*. This latter drew upon information from the earlier volume, but restricted itself to the subject of Burns's songs.

Cromek's *Reliques* was initially reviewed with cautious approval, but even the *Edinburgh Review*'s report of January 1809 noted that he did not always cite his authorities; conflated quotations or published only extracts; and suppressed indelicate material.<sup>10</sup> Some of his notes were thought to be spurious, although the discovery of a manuscript in Burns's handwriting, in 1922, proved that Cromek had, in fact, had a genuine source for these comments.<sup>11</sup>

Quite apart from any issues about the *Reliques*, however, there were other questions about Cromek's integrity, including the 'theft', or misuse of a Blake engraving; and suspicions about the authenticity of his *Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song*,<sup>12</sup> which he published in the same year as the *Select Scottish Songs*. Allegedly from Nithsdale and Galloway, we have already noted that they were actually composed by Allan Cunningham, who exploited Cromek's naïveté by providing what he thought Cromek and his readers would wish to find.

Hogg commented in the introduction to his *Relics* that Ritson and Cromek had each collected and published a few Jacobite songs, and paid tribute to the beauty and charm of some of Cromek's contributions, but acknowledged that, 'some of these are evidently of modern manufacture; yet have they been copied with avidity into many subsequent collections'.<sup>13</sup> (Since Hogg already knew Allan and his brothers by this time, it is more than likely that he either knew about

<sup>10</sup> 'Reliques of Burns, consisting of Original Letters, Poems, and Critical Observations on Scottish Songs. Collected and published by R. H. Cromek', reviewed by 'ART' in *Edinburgh Review*, January 1809, pp. 249-77.

<sup>11</sup> See *The Burns Encyclopedia Online*, based on Maurice Lindsay, *The Burns Encyclopedia*, 3<sup>rd</sup> revised edition (London: Robert Hale, 1980).  
<<http://www.robertburns.org/encyclopedia/index.shtml>> [accessed 1 March 2009]

<sup>12</sup> R. H. Cromek, *Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway song: with historical and traditional notices relative to the manners and customs of the peasantry* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1810).

<sup>13</sup> Hogg, *Relics*, I, p. vii.

Allan's deception of Cromek, or at least guessed it.)<sup>14</sup> This does, however, acknowledge that such songs were already becoming part of the Jacobite canon, whatever their origins.

Cromek died in 1812. His efforts already under suspicion, the time was clearly ripe for an authoritative volume to accompany the *Museum*, using and augmenting the information known to be by Burns.

### **‘Copious Notes and Illustrations’: William Stenhouse**

Born in Roxburgh, but now working in Edinburgh as an accountant, and with one accountancy book to his name,<sup>15</sup> William Stenhouse (c.1773-1827) was the dependable authority waiting in the wings to perform this task. If the eighteenth-century writings of Tytler and Ritson mark the beginnings of a serious attempt to explore the nature and origins of Scottish songs and their airs, and the mid-nineteenth century (as we shall see in the final chapter of this thesis) marks the maturing of this attempt into something approaching modern standards of scholarship, then William Stenhouse stands with one foot raised to cross the divide.

As we shall see in due course, he was often cited, with varying degrees of approval, throughout much of the nineteenth century, so it is important to establish precisely what his contribution was to the history of Scottish song.

Stenhouse was in fact associated with both the *Scots Musical Museum* and the Second Series of *Jacobite Relics*, for he acted as musical advisor, along with Hogg's own nephew, for the latter.<sup>16</sup> Stenhouse's extensive knowledge of Scottish song, allied to his Borders background, would have made him a valuable collaborator. However, his name is generally only linked in the authorial sense

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<sup>14</sup> Gillian Hughes, *James Hogg: a Life* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 69-70. Allan Cunningham and his elder brother James had sought Hogg out in the autumn of 1806 whilst he was on the hills with his sheep. Hogg was already in correspondence with their brother, Thomas Mounsey Cunningham – indeed, he was to contribute texts to Hogg's *Forest Minstrel* – and Hogg also corresponded with James for years.

<sup>15</sup> William Stenhouse, *Tables of Simple Interest, and of Commission, Brokerage, or Exchange* (Edinburgh: Printed by Alex. Smellie [...], 1806) and issued in London as a second edition in 1808.

<sup>16</sup> Hogg, *Relics*, I, p. xx. Pittock explains that Hogg had musical help, both from his nephew and also from Stenhouse, in connection with the second volume.



to his *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland*, which was first published in a new edition of Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* by David Laing in 1839 with a revised title, *The Scottish Musical Museum*.<sup>17</sup> The bulk of the work consisted of Stenhouse's 'Copious Notes and Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland' named in the subtitle, whilst Laing's input was modestly described as 'some additional illustrations.'

It was published again with further additions by Laing in 1853, in several material arrangements, variously entitled (reverting to the original adjective), *The Scots Musical Museum*,<sup>18</sup> or, as a separate volume, *Illustrations of the lyric poetry and music of Scotland: in six parts*.<sup>19</sup>

The early history of the *Illustrations* can be pieced together from Stenhouse's writings. Stenhouse (alias 'Scotus') wrote to the Editor of Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine in 1817, advising readers that, 'a new and improved edition' of the *Scots Musical Museum* was well-advanced in preparation. He went on to explain that Burns' and Johnson's planned companion volume had never actually been produced, 'in consequence of the death of Mr Tytler, Dr Blacklock, Mr Masterton, Mr Clarke, Mr Burns, and last of all, of the publisher himself'.<sup>20</sup>

Stenhouse reported that Blackwood bought the original plates, and the poetry and music manuscripts, from Johnson's heirs, and that the unfinished companion volume of notes on the songs had been entrusted 'to the charge of a gentleman who was a mutual friend of the late publisher and the bard, and who had, during

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<sup>17</sup> James Johnson, *The Scottish Musical Museum: consisting of upwards of six hundred songs, originally published by James Johnson and now accompanied with copious notes and illustrations of the lyric poetry and music of Scotland, by the late William Stenhouse, with some additional illustrations*, ed. by David Laing, 6 vols (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1839).

<sup>18</sup> James Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum: consisting of upwards of six hundred Songs, with proper basses for the pianoforte: originally published by James Johnson, and now accompanied with copious notes and illustrations of the lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland by ... William Stenhouse; With additional Notes and Illustrations*, ed. by David Laing, 4 vols (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1853).

<sup>19</sup> William Stenhouse, *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland: in six parts* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood, 1853).

<sup>20</sup> William Stenhouse [alias 'Scotus'], 'Johnson's Scots Musical Museum', *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine*, July 1817, pp. 378-79.

their lives, collected a variety of materials for assisting them to complete their work'.<sup>21</sup> Stenhouse himself was that gentleman.

Just as Burns predeceased the final volume of the *Scots Musical Museum*, so history repeated itself with the new edition to be published by Blackwood. Laing remarked in the Preface of the new edition (1839) that Stenhouse completed the *Illustrations* and had the printing done towards the end of 1820, but that there was some delay in writing the preface, which explains why the work was put aside and not published at that juncture. (Hogg commented in November 1820 that Stenhouse had also been assisting him with the music for the Second Series of *Relics*, and this may have been the reason for his not producing the preface in time for the printing that year.) Stenhouse died in 1827, but another twelve years were to pass before the reprint of the *Scots Musical Museum*, which included the *Illustrations*.

### **Stenhouse's Motivations and Methods**

Stenhouse wished not only to amplify and explain the background and sources to the songs in the *Scots Musical Museum*, but also to set the record straight and dismiss a few misconceptions. The *Illustrations* were intended as a companion and close commentary on the *Scots Musical Museum*, drawing upon Burns' interleaved notes, as well as upon the knowledge of Blacklock and Tytler, not to mention Stenhouse's own researches.

Stenhouse provided detailed notes to each of the 600 songs in the *Museum*, providing concordances for earlier versions of both words and music, also alluding to contemporary concordances, to indicate where variants currently existed. His comments on the poems embraced their historical background, as well as the tunes to which they had been set. Thus, where the words of a song came from an older ballad, Stenhouse would go to great lengths to describe earliest or differing versions, tracing the history of the ballad, and/ or the origins of the story that it narrated. Additionally, it was not uncommon for Stenhouse to supply a different poem sometimes sung to the given tune, or a different tune sometimes used for the given words.

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<sup>21</sup> Stenhouse ['Scotus'], *ibid*, p.379, referring to Stenhouse himself.

Stenhouse traced his concordances with a wide sweep extending well beyond the song-book repertoire, for example pointing out the use of a melody in a set of variations (e.g. no.458, 'I'll aye ca' in by yon town', whose tune was used as rondo and variations in a violin concerto by Girolamo Stabellini, and by Butler as piano variations) - or tracing the tunes in operas and other contexts by the likes of the English Gay, Pepusch and Durfey. Stenhouse regarded the latter with disdain, dismissing him as a 'Grub Street' author. As Gelbart has already suggested, it becomes clear that Scottish music was by no means as clearly delineated or categorised as the later distinction into 'folk', as opposed to 'art' music, and indeed the fact that a tune was Scottish seems to have overridden any considerations as to whether it came from the folk or classical tradition.

Stenhouse noted the primary sources of texts, and knew that, like Ramsay, Burns added his own creative input. Stenhouse also observed that Johnson (or Burns) sometimes left out parts of poems or ballads for want of space.<sup>22</sup>

Citing some of the early musical sources for the *Museum*, Stenhouse identified William Thomson's Orpheus Caledonius (1725, written without Ramsay's authorisation, to provide tunes for the *Tea-Table Miscellany*), and collections by Oswald (dating from 1740-69) and McGibbon (dating from 1742-56). Oswald's collections were in turn to be used by Hogg, who referred to him in approving tones as 'the too little celebrated Mr Oswald, to whom Scottish music was so much indebted.'<sup>23</sup>

Stenhouse derived historical and literary commentary from various sources, both English and Scottish. Not surprisingly, he made heavy use of Cromek's *Reliques of Robert Burns*, and *Select Scotch songs, ancient and modern*. He also drew upon key eighteenth-century works such as Bishop Percy's *Reliques* (1765), Ritson's *Ancient Songs* (1790) and the Historical Essay in Ritson's *Scotch songs* (1794), Tytler's *Dissertation on the Scottish Musick* (1779 et seq.), and Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802).

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<sup>22</sup> Stenhouse, *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland: in six parts* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood, 1853), p. 193.

<sup>23</sup> Hogg, *Jacobite Relics*, I, 287 (Song 28, 'O, how shall I venture'.)

As much as Stenhouse drew upon the authority of Burns' own comments about his songs and their derivation, his references to Cromek's *Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway song* were dismissive. For example, Cromek made observations there about the alleged incompleteness of Burns's 'Bannocks o' Bear-Meal', but Stenhouse rubbished his comments, dismissing Cromek's addition as 'trash' - and condemning Cromek's 'Nithsdale friends' (i.e. Allan Cunningham) into the bargain.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, Stenhouse commented that Ritson found Ramsay and Burns similarly to have surreptitiously altered texts.<sup>25</sup>

Another recurring theme is Stenhouse's frequent reference to false Rizzio attributions. William Thomson had attributed music to David Rizzio (c1530-1566), the Italian secretary to Mary Queen of Scots, in the first edition of his *Orpheus Caledonius* (1725), though he dropped the Rizzio attributions from his second edition of 1733. However, James Oswald seems to have used Rizzio's name as a pseudonym, and perhaps with a hint of tongue-in-cheek. His efforts were immortalised in verse by Allan Ramsay's 'An Epistle', in *The Scots Magazine* (October 1741), with the memorable lines,

When wilt thou teach our soft Aeidian fair,  
To languish at a false Sicilian air;  
Or when some tender tune compose again,  
And cheat the town wi' David Rizzio's name?<sup>26</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century, it was common knowledge that there was no truth in the attributions; Stenhouse took the opportunity to reiterate this. Indeed, Laing reproduced 'An Epistle' in his additional illustrations.<sup>27</sup> (As we shall see in the final chapter of this dissertation, however, the arguments were reignited later in the nineteenth century, although this time the focus shifted from Rizzio himself to Oswald's part in the supposed deception.)

<sup>24</sup> '...the trash that Cromek has endeavoured to palm upon the country as the remnant of what he calls a heart-rousing old song', *Illustrations*, pp. 419-20.

<sup>25</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 374.

<sup>26</sup> Allan Ramsay, 'An epistle to James Oswald', *Scots Magazine*, October 1741.

<sup>27</sup> *The Scots Musical Museum*, IV, 406\* - 407\* (1853)

Notable sources of Stenhouse's contemporary song concordances are found amongst the first book of Hogg's *Jacobite Relics of Scotland* (1819), and tune concordances appear in the nineteenth-century Gow collections, amongst others. He also referred to Fraser's 'Gaelic Airs' (i.e., *The airs and melodies peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles*) of 1816 - at times with some scepticism, it might be added - as sources for Gaelic tunes from the Highlands.

Stenhouse's references are often contradictory, and at times vague. Titles are frequently found to vary at each mention, and although he usually gave a date of publication, there are some inconsistencies, and other occasions when it is unclear how many volumes actually comprised a work. (Laing's later list of sources was thus a much-needed improvement.)

Whilst Stenhouse referred to a number of manuscript sources, some can no longer be traced, since they were only identified by the then owners. Other manuscripts belonged to him, and the mere fact of ownership seems to have elevated their status as authorities in his eyes. For example, he frequently referred to 'Mrs Crockat's book', a manuscript of 1709 in his own possession, using it as evidence of the 'original version' of a tune - such as his assertion that Mrs Crockat's version of 'This is no mine ain house' was 'the original air'.<sup>28</sup> Another manuscript in his possession was 'a curious collection which belonged to the late Mr James Sibbald, bookseller in Edinburgh',<sup>29</sup> and he also owned some manuscript books that had belonged first to Bremner and then to his business successor, a Mr Brysson.<sup>30</sup>

Stenhouse's subjective observations about some of the song lyrics, tunes and earlier editorial decisions do afford the modern musicologist some insights into contemporary thinking and values. For example, Stenhouse was at times outspoken in denouncing 'modern' additions either to texts or to the tunes themselves. Thus, he wrote of the 'Gill Morice' (Child Maurice) ballad that some

<sup>28</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 210 (*Scottish Musical Museum* no.216). Mrs Crockat's Book was subsequently owned by C. K. Sharpe and then fell into the possession of the Dukes of Buccleuch, where it has remained ever since

<sup>29</sup> *Illustrations*, pp. 336-37. Sibbald was the compiler of the *Chronicle of Scottish Poetry from the thirteenth Century, to the Union of the Crowns* (1802).

<sup>30</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 257. Like Mrs Crockat's book, these ended up with C. K. Sharpe, and thence to the Library of the Duke of Buccleuch at Boughton House.

parts are ‘obviously spurious modern interpolations ... also very silly, and altogether unnecessary’.<sup>31</sup> As we realised earlier, such observations place Stenhouse on the ‘antiquarian collector’ side of the collector/creative artist continuum.

### ‘Chaste and Masterly’ Melodies

As has already been explained, the editorial decisions concerning choice of layout and musical presentation in the *Scots Musical Museum* were Johnson’s, not Stenhouse’s. However, Stenhouse seems implicitly to have approved of Johnson’s choices. Two decades later than Johnson’s production, both Stenhouse and Hogg still favoured the plain and simple version of a tune, and the older the better. In this we see the reiteration of the earlier antiquarian stance (not to mention their own somewhat romanticised view of a simpler rural age). Each stated their preferences plainly, Hogg in the introduction to the *Relics*, and Stenhouse at various points in the *Illustrations*. However, despite apparently holding similar views, there are also some interesting differences in their commentaries on the music in their collections. Furthermore, although Stenhouse provided musical assistance to Hogg for the second volume of the *Relics*, Hogg did not always agree with Stenhouse’s choices of tune.

Stenhouse’s opinion that the tunes should be presented with simplicity and clarity is stated forthrightly throughout his *Illustrations*. He wrote approvingly of Thomas Fraser, an Edinburgh oboist, whose ‘style of playing the melodies of Scotland is peculiarly chaste and masterly.’<sup>32</sup> Likewise, writing of ‘Young Philander’, we find that Stenhouse preferred Thomson’s ‘fine old air, called the ‘Pier of Leith’, in *Orpheus Caledonius*, to the tune in the *Museum*, where he considered that ‘the additions and alterations have nearly destroyed the simplicity of the original, and rendered it too long and tiresome’.<sup>33</sup> Such observations, just as we observed regarding the song texts, place Stenhouse firmly in the antiquarian camp, requiring simplicity and adherence to the ‘original’ at all costs.

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<sup>31</sup> *Illustrations*, pp. 193-199.

<sup>32</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 214.

Perhaps the clearest statement of his credo appears under his comments on the song, 'The Highland Rover':-

Publishers of national tunes should be scrupulously careful in giving nothing but the original and unsophisticated melody, for every person who knows any thing of the science, can make whatever *extempore* variations he pleases on the simple intervals. The French have been justly censured for this absurd practice by Quantz [...] The Italians, on the other hand, are commended by that eminent musician, for leaving the embellishments and graces entirely to the judgement, taste, and feeling of the performers. In this way, the genuine text of the melody is preserved [...].<sup>34</sup>

(One might point out that Stenhouse was a subscriber to Urbani's *Selection of Scots Songs*, a collection that hardly bears out Quantz's praise of Italian simplicity of settings.)

In the light of these observations, it is hardly surprising that Stenhouse took exception to Simon Fraser's flights of fancy in the presentation of his tunes in *The Airs and Melodies peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles of 1816*, condemning his 'diminuendos, crescendos, expressivos, pauses, swells, shakes &c',<sup>35</sup> and finding 'a variety of notes, graces, and a retardando, not to be found in any of the older sets' to be 'superfluous as well as foreign to the genuine spirit of ancient Gaelic melodies.'<sup>36</sup>

The choice of air itself was a matter of some concern to him, too, and he objected that an alternative tune used by Simon Fraser for one particular 'Oran gaoil' [love song] was virtually unsingable, arguing that it was probably a modern instrumental piece. (John Muir Wood, writing for the first edition of Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* in 1883, was to have similar qualms about the modernity of Fraser's repertoire.)<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 136.

<sup>35</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 98.

<sup>36</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 136.

<sup>37</sup> John Muir Wood, 'Scottish Music' in *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by George Grove, 4 vols & Index (London: Macmillan, 1879-1900), III, 438-52 (p.446).

Hogg stated earnestly in his introduction that he liked to present the melodies ‘in their most naked and primitive style’,<sup>38</sup> and his observation that Scottish audiences preferred their native songs over Italian ‘tirlie whirlies’, as noted in the previous chapter, again implies a preference for simplicity. Likewise, he justified the choice of a particular ‘set’, by comments such as, ‘There are much better sets [...] but I chose this, because it is the most ancient and original one extant.’<sup>39</sup>

Interestingly, however, Hogg - despite claiming to prefer simple, primitive sets of the airs, expressed approval of Simon Fraser’s tasteful choices of melodies - a view quite at variance with Stenhouse’s disapproval of the latter’s over-ornamented presentation. For example, Hogg wrote about Song 48, ‘Maclean’s welcome’, that although he admired the air here published, he found it better set in Fraser’s collection:-

‘... and I cannot help mentioning here, that though that gentleman has many Lowland melodies among his, so different in style from his own native music that the most common ear can distinguish them, yet, whether Highland or Lowland, his are always the best sets I have ever seen or heard.’<sup>40</sup>

Given such a different viewpoint to Stenhouse’s, it is perhaps not surprising that Hogg sometimes took issue with Stenhouse’s suggested tunes for the second volume of *Jacobite Relics*!

Thus, whilst Hogg claimed to have been looking for ‘ancient and original’ airs in all their primitive simplicity, one is forced to concede that at times he was merely paying lip-service to the antiquarian approach that he felt was required of him. Indeed, it will by now already have become apparent that his attitude towards his texts seems to have been somewhat different, and perhaps more honest. In the introductory pages to his *Relics*, he insisted that he was not looking for ‘what reading of each song is the most genuine and original’, but what he thought best, ‘judging, that in ten instances the song loses by the abridgements and interpolations of those who sing it, for once that it is

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<sup>38</sup> *Relics*, I, p. xiii.

<sup>39</sup> *Relics*, I, 157 (Song 2, ‘The Haughs of Cromdale’)

<sup>40</sup> *Relics*, I, 300 (Song 48, ‘Maclean’s Welcome’).



improven.’<sup>41</sup> Once again, as we have detected in earlier collections, there is a hint of mistrust about the oral transmission of traditional songs, despite the fact that the very orality of transmission made them traditional songs in the first instance.

Nonetheless, Hogg went on to explain, for this reason he had not hesitated to select not just the best set of a song, but even the best individual verses, so it is clear that he was not particularly concerned about the transmission of any one particular version. (As a matter of interest, Pittock has suggested that the whole process of assembling the collection and narrating the history and provenance of the songs was more important than the product itself, and the conflation of different versions certainly does tend to bear this out.)<sup>42</sup>

Naturally, both Stenhouse’s and Hogg’s personal observations about their songs and airs often merely reflect the attitudes of the era in which they lived. Thus, Stenhouse drew the reader’s attention to particularly notable melodies – whether they are simply ‘pretty’, or (in the case of ‘Ca’ the yowes’), ‘uncommonly wild and pleasing’.<sup>43</sup> (As indicated earlier, the epithet ‘wild’ is generally taken to refer to a comparatively wide-ranging and angular melody.)

Hogg tended to make similarly qualitative judgments on airs, but he did not always quantify his criticisms, which resulted in rather vague and meaningless observations, e.g. Song 58 apparently had a ‘rather indifferent and common-place’ tune.<sup>44</sup>

The prudishness of the era was, similarly, to influence both the editorial approach and the reception of collections like these. (With a view to domestic circulation, Burns himself had used very different language for his *Scots Musical Museum* repertoire, compared to the kind of verses that he would have circulated in male-only club circles, e.g. the ‘Merry Muses of Caledonia’ material.) Stenhouse often criticised the content and language of some of the original old poems, observing that ‘Whistle o’er the lave o’t’ was ‘formerly

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<sup>41</sup> *Relics*, I, p. xv.

<sup>42</sup> *Relics*, I, p. xviii.

<sup>43</sup> *Illustrations*, pp. 248-9 (*Scots Musical Museum* no.264).

<sup>44</sup> *Relics*, I, 279.

adapted to some witty, but indelicate verses',<sup>45</sup> and commenting that Ramsay's substitute words for 'The mill, mill O' (which Thomson adopted for use in the *Orpheus Caledonius*) - were further sanitized by Burns as 'When the wild war's deadly blast'.<sup>46</sup>

Clearly, with Hogg acting simultaneously as editor, sometimes author, and commentator, the situation was rather different. Furthermore, Hogg's propensity for insufficient 'delicacy' of language was a charge levied at him at various times in his career, as his correspondence bears witness, and this perhaps explains why Blackie felt it necessary to publish a posthumous, sanitized edition of the *Jacobite Relics* after Hogg's death.

### **Arguments about Nationality, Origins and Scottish History**

As we shall see in the final chapter of this thesis, nineteenth century musical commentators apparently became, if anything, more dogmatic about the national origins of their songs than their predecessors. Much of Stenhouse's reception at the hands of his successors can be attributed to his unwittingly provocative remarks in this respect. There are a number of instances where Stenhouse entered into argument as to the national origin of a song - for example, quoting Burns' observation that 'The banks of Tweed' was an Anglo-Scottish imitation, but going on to comment that he considered it a poor one.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, Stenhouse observed that neither the music nor the words of 'Sandie and Jockie' were Scottish, but that the piece was a 'modern *travestie* of part of a *pseudo*-Scottish song'.<sup>48</sup>

Conversely, writing about 'Lass, gin ye loe me', Stenhouse objected to John Stafford Smith's assertion that Scots claimed an English song as their own. In this instance, Stenhouse argued that the tune did not seem English, bore little

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<sup>45</sup> *Illustrations*, p.236; *Scots Musical Museum* no. 249.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, p.225; *Scots Musical Museum* no. 242.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4 (*Scots Musical Museum* no.6).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p. 275 (*Scots Musical Museum* no.283).

similarity to the English one - and concluded by demanding who borrowed the common line from whom.<sup>49</sup>

At other times, however, his patriotism was not so much ruled by his head as by his heart. When he quoted Burns' own words from the *Reliques*, asserting that songs were commonly sung 'in the fire-side circle of our own peasantry'<sup>50</sup> - or paraphrased such observations himself,<sup>51</sup> - it is hard to tell whether their comments were grounded on fact, with regard either to the peasantry or their nationality - or simply indicated, with a touch of early Romantic sentimentality, that a song was in common circulation.

Like Stenhouse, Hogg was keen to flag up tunes that he considered English. At the same time, despite - or, perhaps, because of being a Borderer, he was as prone as Campbell to comment on what he perceived to be typically Highland melodies. Could it be that the very definition of the difference between Highland and Lowland tunes in some sense reinforced his own identity as a Lowlander? Pittock comments that, where Hogg was the author of a song, his own contemporary sense of identity sometimes comes through in the lyrics, resulting, for example, in 'Donald Macgillavry' being a Lowland tradesman rather than a Highlander.

Stenhouse's comments reveal independence of opinion; for example, although he drew heavily on Burns' earlier remarks, Stenhouse did not shirk from stating where he felt the poet to have been wrong. Thus, with 'Logie of Buchan', Stenhouse opined that neither Burns's alterations to the verse, nor the changes to the tune, were necessarily improvements on the original, whilst with 'O, Kenmure's on and awa, Willie', he commented that Burns did not admit to having made any improvements, but that in his opinion they had not improved it in any case.<sup>52</sup>

Similarly, we find Stenhouse disagreeing both with Burns and with other experts on historical questions: significantly, he disagreed with Burns as to the number

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 228 (*Scots Musical Museum* no.244).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p. 8-9.

<sup>51</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 26.

<sup>52</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 336 and pp. 338-39 (*Scots Musical Museum* nos.358 and 359-).

of songs which had Jacobite origins, arguing that ‘there were many songs composed in Scotland at the time, diametrically opposite to Jacobitism’.<sup>53</sup> He also observed that both Samuel Johnson and Ritson assumed that life in Scotland was far more primitive than it actually was,<sup>54</sup> and found Ritson to have been gullible in accepting a particularly ludicrous explanation from one informant in Edinburgh.<sup>55</sup>

Elsewhere, Stenhouse entered into other arguments – for example, insisting that Scottish religious reformers drew on existing secular melodies, rather than vice versa (as earlier commentators had opined) – or arguing that Gaelic songs were not necessarily set to Highland melodies. (His flawed argument here was that, since Highlanders sent their children to the Lowlands for their education, they would have learnt Lowland melodies, which might then have been taken to the Highlands and gained Gaelic words.<sup>56</sup> This is facile, since only well-born Highland sons would have been educated in the Lowlands or England. Lowly-born Highlanders would assuredly have gone no further than the nearest school, if such was even available.)

Stenhouse’s opinions were plainly backed by huge subject-knowledge and considerable reading of contemporary commentaries. This must have been part of the appeal of his *Illustrations*.

Whilst most authorities on the *Scots Musical Museum* are probably aware that Stenhouse’s *Illustrations* remained unpublished until some years after his death, and that the more commonly-available second revised reprint – with or without the *Scots Musical Museum* itself – appeared as late as 1853, it is perhaps less generally known that Hogg’s *Jacobite Relics* were in fact reprinted twice. They were published posthumously in the 1830s, Blackie having removed the aforementioned ‘indelicacies’, and later by the Paisley publisher Alexander Gardner, in 1874. (This was probably connected to the fact that, under the

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

<sup>54</sup> *Illustrations*, p. 384.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p. 459.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, p. 254.

terms of the 1842 Copyright Act, the duration of copyright was for 42 years, after which works entered the public domain.)<sup>57</sup>

**‘No wise man will undertake a literary work on Scotland without taking counsel with Mr. Laing.’<sup>58</sup>**

Just as George Paton (1721-1807), John Ramsay of Ochtertyre (1736-1814) and John MacGregor Murray (1745-1822) each played a significant role in antiquarian circles in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the redoubtable David Laing (1793-1878) emerged as the mediator *par excellence* for a large part of the nineteenth century.<sup>59</sup> Like Paton, Laing initially followed his father’s profession as a bookseller. However, Laing was also secretary to the Bannatyne Club (founded by Walter Scott in 1823); a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland from 1824 onwards; and librarian to the Society of Writers to H. M. Signet from 1837.<sup>60</sup> Laing’s bibliographic skills were unsurpassed amongst his contemporaries, and he was regarded as the ultimate authority with regard to Scottish songs and poetry, as the above heading indicates. The collection of his personal papers at Edinburgh University Library shows that he corresponded widely with individuals having a scholarly or antiquarian interest in topics primarily, but not exclusively, connected with Scottish literature, history, or song. As a mediator, his role was probably more far-reaching than any similar figure preceding, and quite possibly, following him.

Baptie stated that Laing, ‘issued a reprint of W. Stenhouse’s “*Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland*” in 1839’,<sup>61</sup> but this is not quite correct. Laing actually used

<sup>57</sup> Under the terms of the 1842 Copyright Act, a number of works of local interest had become available for reprinting in the 1860-70s. Gardner reprinted Motherwell’s *Minstrelsy* in 1873; and was later to reprint *Memorials of James Hogg* by Hogg’s daughter, Mrs Garden, in 1885, and Hogg’s *Tour in the Highlands* in 1888. Other reprints produced by Gardner around this time included the *Harp of Renfrewshire* in 1872, Tannahill’s *The Soldier’s Return* in 1873, reprints of *Poems of Allan Ramsey* in 1877 and Forbes’s *Cantus* in 1879; and *The Harp of Perthshire* in 1893.

<sup>58</sup> Professor Cosmo Innes, quoted by T. G. Law, ‘Laing, David (1793–1878), Scottish antiquary’, *DNB* (1892).

<sup>59</sup> Laing’s bookseller father was known to Stenhouse, who related that Laing senior had an old manuscript copy of *My love she’s but a lassie yet* tucked into a copy of ‘Macgibbons’ Scots tunes’.

<sup>60</sup> See *ODNB*.

<sup>61</sup> Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 95.

the as yet unpublished plates of Stenhouse's *Illustrations*, after each part of the *Scottish Musical Museum*. (It will be recalled that the 1839 edition is distinguished by this change in title, which was dropped for the subsequent, final 1853 edition.) Laing explained in the 1839 Preface, that 'Mr Stenhouse's notes, it will be observed, remain precisely as they were thrown off nearly 20 years ago.'<sup>62</sup> This is significant, for it is an inescapable fact that scholarly standards had since advanced, not to mention additional sources having come to light which either would not have been known to Stenhouse himself, or which were not yet fully explored, such as the Skene Manuscript (which Stenhouse was aware of, but had not yet been fully transcribed).<sup>63</sup>

Attitudes were also changing, as noted in connection with R. A. Smith's efforts. Thus, whilst Stenhouse was scathing about Cromek's *Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song*, Laing commented merely that Stenhouse had made 'remarks not altogether called for' in connection with Cromek, and set the matter straight in tones barely hinting at reproach:-

Mr Stenhouse might have known, that the volume which is so often the subject of his abuse, consisted, in fact, almost wholly of verses written by Mr Allan Cunningham, who, in a very harmless way, had imposed on Mr Cromek's credibility.<sup>64</sup>

Laing's first edition of the combined *Scots Musical Museum* with Stenhouse's *Illustrations* in 1839 had an introduction in which he detailed a number of published collections. This is described as a chronological list of publications prior to the *Scots Musical Museum*, and does not necessarily imply that each listed publication has any direct connection with the *Scots Musical Museum*; nonetheless, it is a useful catalogue of the materials that were more or less (depending on their rarity) available to contemporary Scottish song enthusiasts. He also added 'some additional illustrations'.<sup>65</sup> These occur after each volume's

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<sup>62</sup> *Scottish Musical Museum* (1839), Preface, pp. xx-xii.

<sup>63</sup> William Daune brought the contents of the Skene to public attention with his *Ancient Scottish Melodies, from a Manuscript of the Reign of King James VI: with an introductory Enquiry illustrative of the History of the Music of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Printing and Publishing Company, 1838)

<sup>64</sup> Johnson, James *The Scots Musical Museum [...] now accompanied with copious notes and illustrations of the lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland by ... William Stenhouse. With additional Notes and Illustrations*, ed. David Laing, 4 vols (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1853), p. 433.

<sup>65</sup> Title pages of 1839 editions of the *Scottish Musical Museum*, in Edinburgh University Library (SC6676-81) and University of London Library STACK M784.441 [Johnson]. The phrase 'with

allocation of Stenhouse's original illustrations. Laing added 'further notes and illustrations' to vols. 1-4, following on from the additional illustrations to vol.4. These are untitled, but are introduced with the comment, 'The delay that has occurred in printing these additional sheets, enables me to present the reader with some further Notes and Illustrations to the first four volumes.'<sup>66</sup> His purpose in all this was to supply additional information 'respecting the history of the less known Song-Writers', and to correct factual errors.<sup>67</sup>

Although Laing made no mention of them, he completed the *Illustrations* with five different indices, in addition to the six indexes to the individual volumes of the *Museum*:

Index of the songs or airs contained in the Musical Museum	i-viii
Index of the musical airs inserted in the Illustrations	ix-x
Index of the first lines of the songs in the Musical Museum	xi-xxi
Index of the first lines of songs or poems, inserted in the Illustrations	xxii-xxvi
General Index to the Illustrations	xxvii-xxxiv

In compiling his additional illustrations and further notes, Laing had access to the Edinburgh antiquarian, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe (1781-1851) and Sir Walter Scott, for information about 'traditionary lore', and to George Farquhar Graham (1789-1867) for specifically musical commentary. Sharpe's numerous contributions are distinguished by his initials. His particular strengths were in balladry and the histories of eminent families. It is impossible to discuss the *Illustrations* without mentioning the input of these individuals, notwithstanding the (often overlooked) fact that Stenhouse's magnum opus was itself a product of the second decade of the nineteenth century.

If both Hogg's *Relics* and Stenhouse's *Illustrations* bear witness to the vast network of connections that each was able to tap into, then Laing's introduction in turn is rather like a portrait gallery of 'the great and the good', since he was either in touch with or had information from so many of the key names of his

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some additional illustrations' in 1839 was changed, in the 1853 edition, to 'with additional notes and illustrations.'

<sup>66</sup> *Illustrations* 4: the 'further notes' follow Laing's 'Additional Illustrations 4', [Laing pagination 393-416].

<sup>67</sup> *Illustrations*, xx-xxi

times, including Pinkerton, Ritson, Motherwell, Blaikie, Alexander Campbell, piper Angus Mackay, cellist John Gunn,<sup>68</sup> Tannahill, R. A. Smith, Dauneay and Dun, amongst others.

Laing commented in the Preface, that although he possessed several of the earlier publications in his chronological list, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe owned ‘by far the greater number of those printed [...]’<sup>69</sup>

Laing and Sharpe were both keen collectors of manuscripts and early printed sources. Laing collected privately, well before his appointment as Librarian of the Signet Library in Edinburgh in 1837. As early as September 1824 - the same year as his election to a fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland - he attended the sale of Alexander Campbell’s effects, acquiring the *Slight Sketch*, the *Borders Journal of a Tour*, and another [now bound] volume containing two of Campbell’s printed pieces (*Odes and Miscellaneous Poems by a Student of Medicine*, and, *The Grampians Desolate: a Poem*), together with assorted manuscript notes, tunes, a transcription of a pipe piobaireachd with vocables and other miscellanea.<sup>70</sup> Notes taken down by Campbell from Thomas Scott in his *Borders Journal* are quoted verbatim in Laing’s notes to Stenhouse’s *Illustrations*.<sup>71</sup>

Stenhouse had not left a will, and, like Campbell, his book collection was sold. However, Laing and Sharpe were both keen collectors of manuscripts and early printed sources. It is not known whether Laing bought any of Stenhouse’s collection, but Sharpe certainly did, acquiring Stenhouse’s Crockat Manuscript, and his Bremner/ Brysson manuscripts (both alluded to in the *Illustrations*),

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<sup>68</sup> Gunn also wrote an influential harp treatise: Gunn, John, *An Historical Enquiry respecting the Performance on the Harp in the Highlands, &c.* (Edinburgh: Ballantyne, 1807), and subsequently corresponded with Margaret Compton (née Maclean-Clephane).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.

<sup>70</sup> Now at Edinburgh University Library, MS La.II.51. Reference was made to this volume in Chapter 3.

<sup>71</sup> See Alexander Campbell, ‘Journal of a Tour in the Scottish Border in 1816’ p. 3. Campbell’s notes are quoted in Laing’s 1853 *Additional Illustrations*, IV, 378, regarding Song 357.



which are now, along with other of Sharpe's manuscripts and printed sources, in the possession of the Duke of Buccleuch at Boughton House.<sup>72</sup>

George Farquhar Graham knew that Sharpe owned the Crockat MS, and Laing probably also knew, although as recently as 1966, Collinson was citing it as lost.<sup>73</sup>

Fourteen years after the 1839 edition, Laing released the *Scottish Musical Museum*, with the *Illustrations*, in a new edition, reverting to the original title, *The Scots Musical Museum*.

The *Museum* was by now 50 years old; and the published *Illustrations* fourteen. Johnson had been dead for 42 years, and Stenhouse for 26. The reissue thus implies considerable respect both for the *Museum* and for Stenhouse's scholarship, and indeed Laing emphasised in his preface that 'the *Musical Museum* still keeps its ground', despite a profusion of more recent song collections.

However, Laing extended the notes still further, in order to embrace more recent research. In fact, he added no more to the additional illustrations that appeared in the 1839 edition, but the Advertisement explained that Laing had added a few extra pages to the introduction to render 'the Catalogue of the older collections of Scottish Music more complete', and acknowledged that details of a number of later works were augmented by extra information from the Dundonian James Wighton, and the antiquary Dr. E. F. Rimbault - the latter particularly with regard to Playford.

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<sup>72</sup> Sharpe's collection, 'an extensive and valuable Library, comprising numerous curious and rare works in antiquities, poetry, facetiae, and general literature, original letter and manuscripts [...] and a portion of the cabinet of pictures ...', extended to 2436 lots, another 181 lots of pictures, and took seven days to auction. See Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, *Catalogue of the extensive and valuable Library [...]. Which will be sold by auction [...] January 23, 1852 [...]*, bound in Glasgow University Library Special Collection Mu32-d.25. This catalogue has a few items relating to Scotland or to music theory, but art music and music manuscripts are conspicuously absent. Oxford Bodleian Library holds four shelves of papers, Ref. MSS. Eng. misc. c. 38-41, described as mainly correspondence and literary pieces, but including about 30 late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century song and ballad-related items, acquired in 1902.

<sup>73</sup> Collinson, *The Traditional and National Music of Scotland*, pp. 123 and 266.

Reading both the new Advertisement to the 1853 ‘New edition in four volumes’, and the Preface reprinted from the 1839 edition, it is plain that a change was also made in the arrangement of the volumes, between the two editions.

The Preface belongs with the first edition of the *Illustrations* (when it appeared combined with the *Scots Musical Museum*), since it is dated 1839.<sup>74</sup> However, the Advertisement belongs with the 1853 ‘new edition’; in it, Laing explains that unlike the first reprint of the SMM in 1839, when the work was kept ‘in its original form as six volumes, or parts, with the Notes at the end of each, the Musical portion is now comprised in three volumes [...] and the Notes and *Illustrations* form the fourth or concluding volume.’<sup>75</sup>

Interestingly, the 1853 edition seems to have appeared in two guises: Glasgow University Library holds two sets of the 1853 *Scots Musical Museum*, one of which consists of three volumes of songs, and a fourth volume containing the *Illustrations*. The other set consists of three volumes containing the *Illustrations* after each of the six parts (two per volume) - and then the fourth volume duplicates the *Illustrations* as a separate volume.

The separately published *Illustrations* of 1853 also appeared in two guises, the more basic version containing no table of contents, no indices, and lacking the additional notes (and the further notes to parts 1-4).<sup>76</sup>

## Reception of the *Illustrations*

Critics of Stenhouse’s *Illustrations* have tended to overlook the fact that they only came to light through the efforts of Laing and Graham, who drew heavily on Stenhouse’s *Illustrations* in his later *Songs of Scotland*. As we shall see in the next chapter, Graham took rigorous steps to correct or update any erroneous statements.

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<sup>74</sup> Preface, *Scots Musical Museum*, 1853, reprinted from the 1839 edition, (p. xxi), from the Signet Library, Edinburgh, signed by David Laing.

<sup>75</sup> Advertisement, p.v-vi, 1853 edition of *Scots Musical Museum*.

<sup>76</sup> See the two four-volume sets of *The Scots Musical Museum* and one single-volume of the *Illustrations*, at Glasgow University library, respectively Case Music N 618 JOH (1-4), Sp Coll N.c.30-33, and Case Music F47:19 STE.

Subsequent to Graham's *Songs of Scotland*, William Chappell was quick to attack Stenhouse in his *Popular Music of the Olden Time* (1855-1859).<sup>77</sup> Three decades later, Baptie's reaction was milder. He provided the briefest of biographical entries for Stenhouse, in his *Musical Scotland* (1894). Not even giving the full title of Stenhouse's work, Baptie noted that it continued into a second edition, and emphasised the contributions of Laing and Sharpe. Following the stance adopted by John Muir Wood in the 1884 edition of Graham's *Songs of Scotland*, Baptie noted that 'Some of [Stenhouse's] statements are now known to be wrong, but were at that time believed by all his contemporaries, and to Mr. Stenhouse's ardent and industrious research we owe much.'<sup>78</sup>

J. C. Hadden's entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1897) similarly alluded to the *Illustrations* without actually citing the title, naming only Johnson's *Musical Museum*. Like Baptie, he alluded to both the 1839 and 1853 editions, acknowledging subsequent widespread use of the notes despite being 'valuable yet inaccurate in many particulars.'<sup>79</sup>

However, since John Glen's assessment of Stenhouse's contribution, in his *Early Scottish Melodies* (1900), little has been written about him. Glen acknowledged the work that went into the *Illustrations*, whilst condemning it as being full of inaccuracies; but his most severe condemnation was of those who depended on Stenhouse's annotations without delving more deeply for themselves:-

[Finally] in 1839 it was presented to the public. The publication was then received as an authority, and is referred to and regarded as such even at the present time by many scribblers who are content to copy it at random and without the least reservation. Whether Stenhouse was prejudiced in any of his remarks, or was misinformed, it is impossible to say, though probably both may be alleged. All this notwithstanding, his work was an onerous one, and may, we think, be regarded as of considerable importance. It contains many errors and worthless assertions, but, nevertheless, we are indebted to his exertions, for the fact remains that his frequent shortcomings and

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<sup>77</sup> William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time: a Collection of Ancient Songs, Ballads, and Dance Tunes, Illustrative of the National Music of England*, airs harmonized by G. A. Macfarren, 2 vols (London: Cramer, Beale & Chappell, [1855-59])

<sup>78</sup> Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 178.

<sup>79</sup> J. C. Hadden, 'Stenhouse, William (1773–1827)', rev. John Purser, *ODNB* [accessed 3 April 2009].

mistakes have furnished an incentive to further enquiry and research.<sup>80</sup>

Glen's aim was to update and correct not only Stenhouse's *Illustrations*, but also to correct errors made by Chappell in his *Popular Music of the Olden Time*.

Farmer later commented that Chappell's opinions of Stenhouse were 'arrogant and mischievous [...] many of which are quite unwarrantable', especially considering that Laing and his associates had rectified some of the glaring mistakes already.<sup>81</sup> However, Chappell's remarks in both *Popular Music of the Olden Times* and in private correspondence, will be reserved until the final chapter of this thesis, when they will be examined in greater depth, in order to identify some of the underlying issues to his arguments.

## Collaborative Commentary and Common Concerns

What, then, can we deduce from a close examination of Stenhouse and Laing's *Illustrations* to the *Scots Musical Museum*, and Hogg's annotated *Relics*? Before even considering the nature of the annotations, two basic points are abundantly clear. In the first instance, it is clear that, in the minds of the antiquarian song-collectors, a Scottish 'song' was an entity consisting of both words and tune. A song collection, by implication, was a collection either for singing, or originating from singing, whether or not the airs were provided in the publication. However, this is not to say that there was only one possible air for a song, as we realise from Hogg's allusion to 'the old people' using a handful of airs for a number of songs. Nonetheless, what might have been the original tune, the correct tune, or indeed the most appropriate setting of a tune, gave rise to frequent arguments amongst antiquarians.

It was perfectly possible to compile a collection of song-texts without being over-concerned about the precise version of the tune that went with it. However, to Burns, Stenhouse, Hogg and those that followed them, it was of vital importance to bring together what they perceived as the best variants of

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<sup>80</sup> John Glen, *Early Scottish Melodies: including Examples from MSS and early Printed Works, along with a Number of Comparative Tunes, Notes on Former Annotators, English and other Claims, and Biographical Notices, etc.* (Edinburgh: Glen, 1900), p. 7.

<sup>81</sup> Farmer, *A History of Music in Scotland*, p.424.

both song and air. This generalisation has, however, to be tempered with the observation that each compiler or commentator had their own views as to what exactly was the best version; whether it was acceptable to conflate differing versions, and whether to privilege the song or the air.

The second point to be emphasised is the sheer amount of collaborative effort that went into these collections. The most cursory glance at the modern editions of Hogg's *Relics* and, indeed, his *Letters*, reveals networking on a scale that scarcely seems credible considering the sheer physical effort of communication almost two hundred years ago. As we have seen, Hogg was acquainted with the Cunningham brothers, Alexander Campbell, the late Niel Gow, junior, not to mention Sir Walter Scott, the Duke of Buccleuch, George Thomson, Byron, and John Thomson (who would later collaborate with Dun on *Vocal Melodies of Scotland*). Hogg turned to Laing, when he was seeking Whig songs for his collection, and also approached him for background information to other songs. Indeed, he even met Chappell in London, when he was visiting London with John Thomson in the spring of 1832.

Equally extensive collaboration took place in Burns's and Johnson's compilation of the *Scots Musical Museum*, and Stenhouse likewise made a painstaking examination of the sources available to him, both printed and manuscript, making frequent references to earlier songbooks and similar sources, and naturally drawing heavily upon the notes made by Burns himself.

However, Stenhouse additionally drew upon the living knowledge not only of fellow antiquarians, but also performing and other informants, although his documentation and citation skills were less sophisticated than his successors.

Collaboration was similarly key to the subsequent efforts of Laing, assisted by Sharpe and Scott, in bringing the *Illustrations* to publication.

### **The Pragmatic Antiquarian – and the Politicised Poet**

Looking at both sets of annotations, one still detects the urge to assemble all the facts that were known about each song, whether this related to the history

of the song or the air, the subject of the song, or person(s) connected with its authorship, or its presence in key early sources.

Stenhouse took a more pragmatic, practical approach to his task than did Campbell, Burns or Hogg. This is hardly surprising, since he was a compiler of historical notes, more concerned with assembling facts than with producing an original, imaginative work.

If Stenhouse had done any travelling in connection with the compilation of his book, this is not explicit. Indeed, it might not have been necessary, since much of his work entailed the collation of information from earlier sources. However, he did make a point of identifying and locating places associated with individual songs, such as Logan Water, Allan Water, Dryhope, or the Ettrick River, acknowledging that the latter was the source of much poetic inspiration.

There are, furthermore, only a couple of fleeting references to texts from Macpherson's Ossian poems; and such allusions as there are to, 'the Poems of Ossian, as translated by Macpherson', or 'the works of the ancient Gaelic bard', are insufficient to tell us whether Stenhouse believed that Macpherson's Ossianic legends were genuine, or simply did not consider the question of their authenticity to merit discursive comment.

Stenhouse's attitudes clearly corroborate Gelbart's observation that the song collections published by antiquarians were quite different to those assembled by musicians, as was remarked earlier. In particular, Stenhouse's own preferences for a plain, unadorned melody concurred with Johnson's and Burns's views. Throughout his *Illustrations*, one senses Stenhouse's feeling that the 'original' version must have been simpler than some of the settings being made by his earlier or near contemporaries. This is completely consistent with the views of earlier antiquarians. However, whilst Hogg ostensibly concurred with the simplistic ideal, his admiration of the Simon Fraser collection does tend to suggest that perhaps his protestations were more a question of paying lip-service to the ideal than a question of principle.

## Origins: a Question of National Pride

We also continue to detect some prejudice to what were perceived as ill-grounded observations by Englishmen such as Samuel Johnson, or Joseph Ritson. At the same time, Stenhouse seems to have been less bothered by ‘Anglo-Scottish’ song inventions than it would appear were Laing, George Farquhar Graham and James Davie in the next generation; indeed, some of Stenhouse’s observations were later to cause grave offence.

However, although both Stenhouse and Hogg would, obviously, make reference to Scotland’s post-Union and post-Rebellion history, the very nature of Hogg’s *Jacobite Relics* made it inevitable that his would be the more politically-charged commentary, and for this reason alone, his collection caused a more immediate reaction - amongst a slightly different subset of the Scottish community.

## A Sign of the Times: the ‘Professional’ Intermediary is born

Laing, the collector and bookseller, was not yet thirty when Stenhouse and Hogg completed their commentaries, but was just beginning to come into his own as an authority. As a collector, and as Librarian of the Signet Library from 1837, Laing was to remain a constant resource, acting as intermediary between the compilers and their songs for most of the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. The very fact that he was moved to publish the *Illustrations* together with his own and his associates’ additional commentaries, and notes on the most reputable published song collections to date, indicates a scholarly drive to bring such information as there was into the public arena; and to set the record straight where more up-to-date information had become available.

The era of the ‘antiquarian’ song-collector was drawing to a close. This is not to say that commentaries would no longer be written, but any ground-breaking or indeed even serious writing would in future appear in the context of a very different kind of song collection. In the later collections of George Farquhar Graham, Finlay Dun and John Thomson, we begin to see a new sense of scholarship, but also the pragmatic realisation that collections of what were,

effectively, art-song settings, would sell in far greater numbers than the bare, antiquarian settings of earlier years.

Furthermore, it is clear from Laing's additional commentaries - and allusions to Allan Cunningham - that questions of fakery were beginning to seem less important by the mid-nineteenth century. So, too, was the idea of conjectural history about some vague, romanticised past.

Arguments about the nationality of certain Scots songs, however, became more rather than less heated, and the involvement of the English William Chappell in the debate certainly added coals to the fire. As Chappell found to his cost, any Englishman venturing into the fray was almost guaranteed to get his fingers burnt. It is to this fresh outburst of cultural nationalism that we shall turn in the final chapters of this thesis.



## Chapter 6: Increasing the knowledge and improving the taste, c.1830-1850<sup>1</sup>

Only a died-in-the-wool antiquarian, and preferably one imbued with Romanticism, would want to gather songs from country workers now.

Dave Harker, *Fakesong*<sup>2</sup>

As we approach the mid-nineteenth century, the most influential song collections - the drawing-room settings of Finlay Dun, John Thomson, and George Farquhar Graham - exemplify a diminishing interest in actively collecting songs directly from singers, and an increasing intellectualisation and commercialisation of the genre.

As Harker suggested in the words quoted above, the heyday of the antiquarian was drawing to a close. Whilst Dun, Thomson and Graham showed no particular urge to muddy their own feet 'in the field' (unlike the MacDonalds, Campbell or, indeed, Burns and Hogg), there was certainly no lack of interest in exploiting the collections that other people had already made.

This change of emphasis in the 1830s is attributable, arguably, to political, economic and cultural climate changes whose significance for our topic have already been highlighted by Harker and Gelbart. The increasing contemporary distinction between traditional and art music, and a greater exchange of ideas between British and European musicians, all predictably affected the nature and contents of published Scottish song collections.

Harker and Gelbart have offered differing perspectives on this matter. In this chapter we shall consider the proposition that the change is even more complex than they suggest, and that there were other factors at play in addition to the influences already outlined.

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<sup>1</sup> Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 70, summarising George Farquhar Graham's contribution:- 'Mr Graham's knowledge of musical theory, of the various schools of composition, and of Scottish music was very great, and his contributions to our musical and literary journals did much to increase the knowledge and improve the taste of that generation.'

<sup>2</sup> Harker, p. 79.

It is interesting to note that, despite the differences in scope between Harker's monograph and the present dissertation, he similarly identifies the 1830's as a 'climate change' in song-collecting terms:-

I hope to have shown that the 1790s and the years around 1830 were not only political watersheds but were also, allowing for the complex relationships between economic, political and cultural change, decisive 'breaks' in the mediation of workers' songs.<sup>3</sup>

Harker's primary interest is in the songs of the 'working class'. It is perhaps for this reason that he makes no mention of G. F. Graham, Finlay Dun or John Thomson, who showed comparatively little interest in Beattie's shepherds and shepherdesses, Ritson's peasantry, or indeed the couthy country-folk with whom Burns and Hogg liked to align themselves; and whose song-accompaniments were more aligned with the classical, or art tradition. (Indeed, some of Dun's work was seemingly commissioned by people of higher social standing than himself, as we shall see in due course.)

However, irrespective of the origins of the songs, what is equally important in our present discussion is the audience for whom the published song collections were intended. Audience expectations were increasing, whether this was attributable to their social class, professional interest or simply their exposure to a greater range of music. As we saw in Chapter 3 of this thesis, the mixed reception of Alexander Campbell's *Albyn's Anthology* was in itself a sign of this, even as early as 1816-18; these expectations were confirmed in Campbell's obituary, written by Sir Walter Scott for the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*. Scott, reflecting his own antiquarian preferences, reported that experts thought Campbell's tunes would have been better unaccompanied:-

Unhappily, Mr Campbell's acquirements, though such as would have eminently distinguished an independent gentleman in private life, did not reach that point of perfection which the public demands of those who expect to derive bread from their practice of the fine arts. Even in music, it was the opinion of competent judges, that [...] "Albyn's Anthology", in which he preserved so many of the beautiful airs of the Highlands and Isles, would have been more favourably received

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<sup>3</sup> Harker, p. xv.

without the basses and symphonies which the editor himself thought essential.<sup>4</sup>

Graham's, Dun's and John Thomson's Scottish collections were not published with subscription lists, but we can get some idea of their target audience by the subscription lists for the English William Chappell's only slightly later history of English popular song, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*,<sup>5</sup> to which we shall make more detailed reference in the next, final chapter. It is not unreasonable to infer that they would have been aimed at a similar audience.

Harker observes that by the late 1850s, Chappell's books were aimed not only at the gentry and nobility, but also at 'professional musical academics and scholars', with a preponderance of 'Esquires, Misses, and a large number of church organists and professional music teachers.'<sup>6</sup> This is borne out by an advertisement for *Popular Music of the Olden Time* in *Notes and Queries* in 1859, promoting it as a book that 'ladies will delight in for its music, and graver readers for its curious learning'.<sup>7</sup>

There was, of course, another difference between these collections and Chappell's *Popular Music*, for the latter was a history generously illustrated with songs, whilst the Scottish collections under discussion are anthologies of songs, with a greater or lesser amount of commentary. Whilst admittedly not the work of a Haydn or a Beethoven, they can best be described as competent, middle-of-the-road settings for a largely middle-class audience. In this regard, it comes as no surprise that Purser's general overview in his monograph, *Scotland's Music*, devotes considerable space to a discussion of John Thomson's 'art' music achievements, but makes only passing reference to his 'lovingly edited' arrangements of 'native airs [...] for the drawing-room voice with pianoforte

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Scott, 'Mr Alexander Campbell', *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, May 1824. Scott's comments were repeated, over a decade later, by John Kay in his *Biographical Sketches*.

<sup>5</sup> William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 2 vols (London: Cramer, Beale & Chappell, 1855-59).

<sup>6</sup> Harker, p. 82.

<sup>7</sup> *Notes and Queries* Vol.8 2<sup>nd</sup> series (184) July 9, 1859, p.39, *Internet Library of Early Journals* <<http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/ilej/>> accessed 20 March 2009.

accompaniment', or indeed to the others by Dun, Graham, and their fellow arrangers.<sup>8</sup>

Dun and Graham not only had a small but significant role in the history of Scottish art-music composition and song-arrangements, but were also influential in connection with their theoretical writings on Scottish folk music, and modality. Gelbart acknowledges Dun's and Graham's legacies in this regard, in his discussion of 'The Invention of folk modality, 1775-1840' and 'Local nation and universal folk'.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, their professional activities clearly articulate with the increasing influence of the European discourse upon art music.

As already demonstrated in Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation, there is plenty of evidence of reciprocal interest between European and Scottish musicians. This went beyond merely reading the literature, particularly now that travel between Britain and Europe was becoming less difficult. The interest shown by literary and musical society in Germany in Scottish popular culture in the early 1800's, as remarked in Chapter 3, showed no sign of diminishing as the century progressed. For example, quite apart from his Hebridean trip, Mendelssohn dined with the Duns in Edinburgh on 28 July 1829, and accompanied him to the triennial highland pipers' competition the next day. He and his wife also met John Thomson that year.

There was also by the 1830s a clearly discernible interest in the wider European art tradition by Scottish musicians. Indeed, the young Margaret Maclean-Clephane studied music with Johann Baptist Cramer on a family visit from Mull to London in 1809, whilst in 1815, Lauchlan MacLaine, the Gaelic song-collector from Mull, sought out Clementi in London when he wanted some songs arranged.

Finlay Dun had played the violin professionally in Italy, and had also taken lessons from the French violinist, Pierre Baillot, before settling down to working life in Edinburgh. George Farquhar Graham travelled to France and Italy in his youth, and Aberdonian musician and publisher James Davie believed that Graham might have had harmony lessons from Beethoven on the Continent at

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<sup>8</sup> John Purser, *Scotland's Music* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2007), pp. 242-45.

<sup>9</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music"*, pp. 138-48 and pp. 231-49.

some point.<sup>10</sup> Graham's own publisher, Wood, was himself a pupil of Czerny, who had similarly been a pupil of Beethoven.

Cultured musical amateurs similarly liked to immerse themselves in European culture on their travels; Margaret Maclean-Clephane was a frequent traveller to Italy after her marriage to Lord Compton, and collected European art-music as enthusiastically as she had Gaelic Hebridean songs at home.<sup>11</sup>

Gelbart identifies the 1830s with an increasing influence of the German discourse upon art music, and in this context specifically highlights George Farquhar Graham's 1838 *Essay* and his 'Music' article in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. In fact, scholarly writing by both Graham and Dun make reference to German, French and other European literature. The notes in Graham's annotated copy of Daune's *Ancient Scottish Melodies*<sup>12</sup> make reference to the *Musikalisches Zeitung* of Leipzig, whilst Dun's own appendix to Daune alludes both to earlier and contemporary European authorities.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, his later *Orain na h-Albain* show him to have been familiar with writings of the eminent contemporary German theorist, Adolf Bernhard Marx, dating from 1841, only seven years earlier than the *Orain* themselves.<sup>14</sup>

### **'Distinguished literary and musical attainments'**<sup>15</sup>

However, if Harker alludes at various points to the social class of both the compilers and consumers of these song collections, and Gelbart places them firmly in the art-music tradition, then what neither authority spells out is the intellectual or educational positioning of the individuals compiling them. Earlier

<sup>10</sup> Dundee Central Library, Wighton Collection, shelfmark pending. Bundle labelled 'Wighton Notebook and thirty letters on musical affairs' (uncatalogued), Letter 21, James Davie to Andrew Wighton, 24 September 1857.

<sup>11</sup> This is evidenced not only by the extant Maclean-Clephane manuscripts, which include Gaelic songs, English theatrical songs, and European art-songs, but also by a significant collection of European music donated to the British Library some years after Margaret's death.

<sup>12</sup> William Daune, *Ancient Scottish Melodies* (Edinburgh: Maitland Club, 1838).

<sup>13</sup> Dun, Finlay, 'Analysis of the structure of the music of Scotland', in Daune, *Ancient Scottish Melodies*, pp. 315-339.

<sup>14</sup> Dun alludes to Adolf Bernhard Marx's 'Kompositionslehre' (probably his *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition*) and *Allgemeine Musiklehre*, both dated 1841.

<sup>15</sup> Daune, p. 209, acknowledging Graham's contribution.

compilers of song-collections were often, as Harker and Gelbart rightly explain, musical amateurs, clergy or other professionals, but a common factor amongst the antiquarian fraternity was that they were not, primarily, professional musicians. Rather, they had reached a point where they had sufficient leisure time to indulge their amateur interest in Scottish songs. On the other hand, publishers of more musically artistic settings, such as those by Corri and Urbani, were professional performing musicians with an interest in what would sell, but rather less interest in the historical background of the songs.

Our mid-nineteenth century compilers, however, combined a historical interest in the raw material with a greater proficiency in the technicalities of harmonising and arranging songs.

To attempt to delineate a crude progression of musical attainments on the strength of a few collections would be naïve. Nonetheless, one can detect certain trends. Alexander Campbell was, as we have seen, something of a dilettante, notwithstanding his efforts to earn a living by music, and his writings on the subject of Scottish song. By contrast, R. A. Smith's adult life was mainly spent pursuing a successful musical career, to the extent that the writer of his obituary was able to describe him as 'a musician of sterling talent', whose compositions were 'of an infinitely more elegant style than the average pieces of that day'.<sup>16</sup> However, Smith did not provide individual annotations to the songs in his *Scottish Minstrel*, any commentary being reserved to the prefaces of his collection.

Graham, Dun and Thomson, on the other hand, showed not only a facility in composition and arrangements of various kinds, but also a more intellectual, theoretical interest in music, as is evidenced by their publications and individual achievements. Gelbart has examined eighteenth- and nineteenth century theoretical discussions concerning the history and modality of Scottish music at some length, and examines Graham's and Dun's writings in this context, also noting the historical dissertation written by Daune in connection with the Skene MS, which appeared in 1838 as *Ancient Scottish Melodies*. Dun and Graham were

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<sup>16</sup> George Hogarth, in the *Edinburgh Courant* of 9 February 1829, as cited by Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 174.

both heavily involved in its preparation, with Graham providing transcriptions, and Dun a theoretical appendix to augment Dauneys historical analysis.

Whilst university music education was not available in their youth, all three made bids to become involved in its inception later on, although Thomson was the only one to attain an academic position - that of the first Reid Chair of Music at the University of Edinburgh. Moreover, their respective activities and attainments shed considerable light on the legacies they left in the sphere of printed Scottish song collections, and their interactions with various key persona in that field, so at this point it is therefore beneficial to pay rather closer attention to their biographies than has been done in earlier studies of this period.

To place the compilers and their collections in context, Table 3 overleaf summarises the collections to be discussed in both the present and the next chapter, together with other significant publications of the period. (There is inevitably a certain amount of overlap due to the later revisions of the principal publications.)

Date	Name	Title	Reissued/ Revised
1815	George Farquhar Graham (1789-1867)	<i>An account of the first Edinburgh musical festival[...] 1815.</i>	
1830	Graham & Finlay Dun (1795-1853)	<i>A Selection of Celtic Melodies [...] Selected and arranged by a Highlander</i>	
1836	Dun & John Thomson (1805-1841)	<i>Vocal Melodies of Scotland</i>	Reissued 1842-53; Reissued post 1853; Revised & re-edited by E. R. Dibdin, 1884
1838	William Dauney (1800-1843)	<i>Ancient Scottish Melodies</i> (including Dun essay and Graham transcription)	
1838	Graham	<i>An essay on the theory and practice of musical composition, including the article 'Music' in the 7th ed. of the Encyclopaedia Britannica</i>	
1838-1840	William Chappell (1809-1888)	<i>A Collection of National English Airs</i>	
1846	Dun	<i>Lays of Strathearn</i> (verses by Lady Carolina Nairne)	New editions c.1860; c.1880; c.1890
1848-1849	Graham, John Muir Wood (1805-1892)	<i>The Songs of Scotland adapted to their appropriate melodies</i> (Mudie, Surene, H. E. Dibdin, Dun also named on title-page). Also known as <i>Wood's Edition of the Songs of Scotland</i>	Rev. as <i>The Popular Songs of Scotland with their appropriate Melodies</i> ; with additional airs and notes (J. Muir Wood & Co, 1887); Rev. with the addition of many airs and notes by J. Muir Wood, notes by Graham and arranged by A. C. Mackenzie [et al] (London: Bayley & Ferguson, 1908)
1848	Dun	<i>Orain na h-Albain</i>	
1855-1859	Chappell	<i>Popular Music of the Olden Time</i>	New edition, <i>Old English Popular Music</i> , edited by Harry Ellis Wooldridge, 1893
1874	Hogg	<i>Jacobite Relics</i>	Reprinted from the original edition, by A. Gardner of Paisley

Table 3. Scottish Songs, 1831- c.1888



George Farquhar Graham (1789-1867) attended the University of Edinburgh, and apparently studied law.<sup>17</sup> A surviving letter to his Dundonian friend Wighton relates that he,

[...] devoted much attention to Music from my boyhood upwards, but always as an amateur only. I served an apprenticeship to the late Harry Davidson, Esq., Writer to the Signet, but in 1817 was ordered abroad by my Medical attendants, to recover my health [...]. I never resumed the legal profession.<sup>18</sup>

Graham's involvement with the music business began whilst he was still a legal apprentice, when he was joint secretary with George Hogarth of the first Edinburgh Musical Festival in 1815. This led to his published account of that event the following year.<sup>19</sup> Gelbart has paid some attention to this, highlighting Graham's regret that Scots tended, as a nation of music-lovers, to prefer their own native airs to music from the art tradition. (This did not deter Graham from taking a close personal interest in national song, leading to his later involvement in Wood's *Songs of Scotland*. It could be argued that this also shows a shrewd alertness to a saleable commodity.)

Between 1816 and 1838, there remain but a few published compositions, a choral singing instructor entitled *Elements of Singing* (1817), and a critique also in 1817 of a new 'music system' by Mr Logier to which Graham objected. His trip to France and Italy that year 'for the purpose of gratifying his musical taste', included a spell living in Florence, when he first heard Paganini. Later on, back in Edinburgh, he became acquainted with Dragonetti and Viotti, both of whom seem to have held him in high regard.<sup>20</sup> A self-taught musician, he

<sup>17</sup> An archivist at the University of Edinburgh confirms that there are two matriculations registered: a George Farquhar Graham (no recorded place of origin) matriculated in 1803 studying Latin & Greek, whilst in 1811 a George Farquhar Graham from Edinburgh was studying law. Unless he also briefly studied Classics in his youth, the latter seems likely to have been our music editor.

<sup>18</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Bundle labelled 'Wighton Notebook and thirty letters on musical affairs' (uncatalogued), Letter 15, George Farquhar Graham to Wighton, 22 January 1856.

<sup>19</sup> George Farquhar Graham, *An account of the first Edinburgh Musical Festival, held between the 30<sup>th</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November, 1815. To which is added An Essay, containing some general observations on music* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1816).

<sup>20</sup> 'The late Mr G. F. Graham', obituary in *The Scotsman*, 17 March 1867.

composed on a relatively small scale, and was reportedly a talented violinist - but did not play the piano.<sup>21</sup>

Graham contributed Scottish musical news to the London journal, *The Harmonicon* between 1823-33, and wrote articles on music for *The Scotsman* and the *Edinburgh Review*.<sup>22</sup> (The latter was the foremost literary institution in Scotland in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, before the newer Tory *Quarterly Review* emerged as a competitor.)<sup>23</sup>

His professional recognition is further evidenced by his involvement in two editions of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, where he significantly contributed the article on music in the seventh edition (1830-2), and an article on the organ in the eighth (1853-60). Indeed, in his will, Graham noted that in the seventh edition, ‘all the articles relative to Music from the article Music (and that included) down to the end of the alphabet, were written by me.’<sup>24</sup> Graham reprinted his Music article in 1838, adding an introduction and an appendix.

1838 must have been a turning point for Graham, when the Maitland Club published William Daune’s *Ancient Scottish Melodies from a Manuscript of the Reign of James VI*. Daune’s publication, bringing the manuscript to public attention for the first time, included Graham’s partial transcription of the Skene MS. The book also included a historical dissertation by Daune, and Graham apparently provided Daune with information which he incorporated without acknowledgment into the ‘Explanation of the Tablature and Mode of Interpretation Employed’ (pp.211-4), as evidenced by a marginal note in Graham’s interleaved and annotated copy of *Ancient Scottish Melodies*, now at

<sup>21</sup> Evidently there were more compositions and writings than are now extant, for in the first part of the twentieth century, Henry George Farmer passed ‘a number of his autograph pianoforte and orchestral compositions ...into the possession of Harold Reeves’ in London, together with Graham’s orchestration of Geikie’s Grand March for military band. Attempts to trace archival material from the now defunct publisher Reeves have, to date, been unsuccessful.

<sup>22</sup> Farmer, *A History of Music in Scotland*, pp. 440-41, and ODNB [accessed 12 October 2004].

<sup>23</sup> See Caroline Franklin, ‘Poetry, Patriotism, and Literary Institutions: the Case of Scott and Byron’, pp. 172-91, *Scotland, Ireland and the Romantic Aesthetic*, ed. David Duff and Catherine Jones (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007).

<sup>24</sup> George Farquhar Graham, died 28 May 1867, residing at Gilmore Place Edinburgh: Will SC70/4/109 proven at Edinburgh Sheriff Court. In *Scotland’s People: the official government source of genealogical data for Scotland* <<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>> [Accessed 2 January 2006].

Glasgow University Library.<sup>25</sup> With what appears to have been characteristic generosity of spirit, Graham encouraged the slightly younger Finlay Dun to write the Appendix to Daune's *Ancient Scottish Melodies*, arguing that it would be good for his career.<sup>26</sup> (The two were evidently close friends, for Graham willed his music collection to Dun, although Dun was to predecease him.)

Daune's book was not the only significant publication to appear in 1838, for William Chappell's *Collection of National English Airs* appeared the same year. Daune alluded to Chappell's *Collection* in a postscript dated 1st November 1838, stating that Chappell had still not convinced him that the English had any national music.

And notwithstanding the laudable industry which Mr Chappell has here evinced, nothing has as yet transpired of a nature to affect the opinions which we have had occasion to express, or the conclusions to which we have come on this subject. We confess that we have never yet been able to comprehend in what the alleged nationality of the English music consists, and this collection has left us as much in the dark on that point as ever.<sup>27</sup>

(As we shall see in due course, the notion that England had no music was quite a commonly held view at this time.)

The following year, Laing first issued Stenhouse's unpublished *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland*. Thus, a considerable amount of information was suddenly brought into the public arena within quite a short space of time.

With his expertise in transcribing the tablature of the Skene mandora lute manuscript, Graham was keen to explore similar manuscripts. He saw the Straloch lute manuscript in 1839, and John Leyden's lyra-viol manuscript in 1843.<sup>28</sup> As early as 1839, Graham recognised that the Skene<sup>29</sup> and Straloch

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<sup>25</sup> William Daune, *Ancient Scottish Melodies*, Glasgow University Library Special Collection A.b.6-7, marginal note, p. 211.

<sup>26</sup> Daune, *ibid*, marginal note, p. 178.

<sup>27</sup> William Daune, *Ancient Scottish Melodies*, 370.

<sup>28</sup> Further details of these manuscripts can be found in Evelyn Florence Stell, *Sources of Scottish instrumental music 1603-1707* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, 1999), 2 vols.

manuscripts were part of Scotland's national heritage, writing to Laing in these terms:-

As the Advocates' Library possesses the Skene MS, I think that the Library of Writers to the Signet ought to get possession of the Gordon MS [ie the Straloch MS] as a curious national MS. It would be a pity if such a MS were thrown away among the English, who have never yet, [since June 1781, when it was given to Dr. Burney] made the least use of it! I doubt if they could interpret it. These two MSS, the Skene and the Gordon, are the only ones, Scotch, of very old date that are now known to exist and that contain Scotch tunes in their primitive forms, although these are instrumental.

Graham was to revert to the theme of preservation at various points in his later *Songs of Scotland*, urging people in possession of significant materials to deposit them in 'public libraries'.

Graham transcribed most of the Straloch MS, and copied out part of the lute tablature in 1839, before returning it to David Laing, who had borrowed it from the owner. By 1845, Graham noted in a letter that it had been sold to an unknown buyer. A note dated the same year in Graham's surviving partial transcription records that his own full transcription had been lent to Dun, who lost it.<sup>30</sup>

Graham made a copy of the tablature pages of the Leyden manuscript before returning it to its owner. Thereafter, the manuscript went missing for over a century. Anxious that such national treasures should not be entirely lost to Scotland, on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1847 Graham presented bound copies of his Leyden transcription and the Straloch tablature copy, to the Advocates Library in Edinburgh, later to become the National Library of Scotland.<sup>31</sup> Both also contain his own prefatory notes.<sup>32</sup> Incidentally, the Leyden manuscript turned up c.1970 in Newcastle University Library

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<sup>29</sup> The Skene manuscript had already been bequeathed to the Faculty of Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, now National Library of Scotland Adv. MS 5.2.15.

<sup>30</sup> Details of the Straloch MS were kindly provided to me by Warwick Edwards, Glasgow University.

<sup>31</sup> See Graham's annotated copy, opposite p. 146.

<sup>32</sup> National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 5.2.19 (Leyden tablature copy) and MS. Adv.5.2.18 (Straloch transcription).

Clearly, the manuscripts that he knew about would have influenced Graham's perception of Scottish music; this would have been a somewhat lop-sided view of Scottish music, with an emphasis on national song, but little more. Besides the Skene, Straloch and Leyden tablature manuscripts, the introduction to *Songs of Scotland*<sup>33</sup> enumerates other known sources, including the Rowallan lute manuscript;<sup>34</sup> the Blaikie manuscripts;<sup>35</sup> Laing's flageolet manuscript;<sup>36</sup> the Guthrie manuscript;<sup>37</sup> the Crockat manuscript (which Graham knew to be in the possession of C. K. Sharpe),<sup>38</sup> and Macfarlane's manuscript of Scots airs and variations.<sup>39</sup>

(Beyond the field of traditional music, Graham's correspondence with Laing also reveals an interest in the sacred repertoire of the Forbes Cantus despite its English content; in early psalmody, not solely Scottish; and in James Oswald.)

With expertise in transcription and knowledge of the contents of the Skene, Leyden and Straloch manuscripts, Graham was regarded as an established expert. His three-volume *pièce de résistance*, *The Songs of Scotland*, was published a decade after Daune's volume, between 1848 and 1849. The publisher was the Edinburgh firm, Wood & Co. Graham was the first of five named arrangers involved in the harmonisations for *Songs of Scotland*, and was also responsible for all of the annotations. In fact, 71% of the arrangements were by T. M. Mudie, an English-born Scot who studied and taught at the Royal Academy of Music, but did for some years teach in Edinburgh; and J. T. Surenne,

<sup>33</sup> *Songs of Scotland* I, pp. iv-v.

<sup>34</sup> In 1842, Laing obtained the Rowallan lute book from James Dennistoun. It is now in Edinburgh University's Laing Collection, MS.La.III.487, and dates c.1605-08 and c.1615-20.

<sup>35</sup> *Songs of Scotland* I, p.v - the Blaikie manuscripts were 2 manuscripts of viola da gamba tablature, one dating from 1692 - the other of 1683, already lost by 1838.

<sup>36</sup> Daune also knew of this manuscript. Graham thought it about 150 years old, which would take it back to c.1700. He described it as being in a form of flageolet notation (a series of dots) which he thought about 150 years old, but said there was nothing in it 'worthy of much attention'. In Edinburgh UL La.IV.17, fol. 3797, Graham to Laing, 11 March 1848, Graham had briefly borrowed and was returning Laing's flageolet manuscript, formerly the property of Motherwell, and said by Motherwell to have been from Moscow (Ayrshire).

<sup>37</sup> A collection of late 17<sup>th</sup> century Scottish tunes in tablature found by Laing c.1837-38 in a book of notes on Guthrie's sermons. In Graham's annotated notes on Daune, he says 'the note to this page will need to be altered in a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition'.

<sup>38</sup> The Crockat manuscript has keyboard pieces at one end, and tunes for a treble instrument at the other. It is now in the Duke of Buccleuch's collection (Boughton House, Music 6).

<sup>39</sup> The Macfarlane manuscript was then in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

who was of French parentage and was born in London, but was raised and subsequently worked in Edinburgh as a music teacher and organist at St. George's Episcopal Chapel. Graham was responsible for only 12% of the remainder. Nonetheless, the annotations alone would have been a considerable undertaking, and Graham was probably the best placed and most knowledgeable to provide these. Not only would the collection have confirmed the extent of his knowledge to fellow antiquarians, but it also found favour with popular opinion, with Farmer commenting in 1947 that it 'became, in its day, the standard one'.<sup>40</sup>

As a point of interest, Graham unsuccessfully applied for the Reid Chair of Music at Edinburgh University at least once, if not twice.<sup>41</sup>

Graham enjoyed a good reputation. Dauney spoke highly of him;<sup>42</sup> and Chappell and Wighton were later to acknowledge in correspondence that with 'Mr G.' by then getting old, there were few others left who could make proper collections of Scotch music or advise on points of factual detail.<sup>43</sup> His obituary, and Baptie's later comments, reinforce the impression of a scholar generous in his assistance to others.<sup>44</sup>

As it happens, Wighton's friend, the Aberdonian music publisher James Davie, was simultaneously in awe of, and also irritated by Graham, as we shall see in the final chapter of this thesis. However, Davie's grumbles betray him as a somewhat irritable and single-minded old gentleman, and do not detract from the impression Graham formed on others.

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<sup>40</sup> Farmer, *A History of Music in Scotland*, p. 357.

<sup>41</sup> According to Farmer, *ibid*, p.391, Graham was amongst the applicants in 1841 when the English Sir Henry Bishop was appointed, John Thomson having died young after only three years in post. However, both editions of the *ODNB* follow Graham's obituary in stating that Graham applied for the post when Bishop retired just two years later. Apart from the annual Reid Concerts, the professorship was not an onerous post, and indeed, received little encouragement and even less money from the University until the 1860s.)

<sup>42</sup> Dauney, p. 1: 'a gentleman whose long experience, and well-known scientific and practical attainments, form a sufficient guarantee for the fidelity, the judgment, and the accuracy, with which that duty has been performed ...'.

<sup>43</sup> See Dundee CL, Wighton Coll. 31669 (William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 1859. Vol.II), Manuscript correspondence bound at back, Wighton's copy of his letter to Chappell, 8 February 1859.

<sup>44</sup> Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 70.

Graham's friend Finlay Dun (1795-1853) was born in Aberdeen, attended grammar school in Perth, studied at Edinburgh University from 1815-16, and spent most of his adult life in Edinburgh. Although Dun grew up in the Highlands, he did not speak Gaelic, and his paternal family may have been of Lowland extraction.<sup>45</sup>

Initially joining his father as a dancing master,<sup>46</sup> Finlay later studied violin in Paris and then in Milan (1820-25), where he also learned counterpoint, composition and singing, and played viola in the royal theatre of San Carlo. Back in Edinburgh, he became leader of the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians' concerts in 1827<sup>47</sup> and worked as a music teacher. Like Graham, Dun applied unsuccessfully for the Reid Chair at Edinburgh University in 1841. His opinion was sought when there was a dispute about the terms of General Reid's legacy to the University.

Amongst other works, Dun's notable output in the field of Scottish music includes involvement in *A Selection of Celtic Melodies* (Edinburgh, 1830), which was dedicated to Lady Ellinor Campbell of Islay;<sup>48</sup> and, a few years later, the collection he published jointly with John Thomson, *Vocal Melodies of Scotland* (1836-38). Dun's appendix in Daune's *Ancient Melodies* also appeared in 1838. He continued to arrange Scottish songs in the 1840s, providing arrangements for *Lays of Strathearn*, a posthumous compilation of Lady Carolina Nairne's songs, commissioned by her friends in 1846.<sup>49</sup> (It will be recalled that, some years

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<sup>45</sup> A genealogical website for the Axford and Bathgate Family Tree reveals that his father Barclay Dun came from Lanark, but married in St Nicholas, Aberdeen in 1795. <<http://www.btinternet.com/~ray.axford/pafg16.htm>> [accessed 28.03.2009].

<sup>46</sup> He is on record as having taught dancing to Elizabeth Grant of Rochemurchus in December 1816.

<sup>47</sup> See Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments 1997 Festival Exhibition website, <<http://www.music.ed.ac.uk/euchmi/udeda.html>> [accessed 13 Feb 06].

<sup>48</sup> *A Selection of Celtic Melodies, consisting of original slow Highland Airs, pipe-reels and Cainteardh*. Never before published. Selected and arranged by a Highlander (Edinburgh: Robert Purdie for the editor, 1830). The dedicatee, Lady Ellinor Campbell (d.1832), was the mother of John Francis Campbell, an influential Gaelic folklorist. The 'Highlander' is unnamed. Dun later cited this volume in the appendix that he wrote for Daune, for its examples of Highland cadences, still without identifying the Highlander. See Daune, p. 322. The preponderance of pipe tunes in this instrumental collection leads one to conjecture that the editor might have been connected with J. F. Campbell's 'kilted nurse', the Islay piper also named John Campbell.

<sup>49</sup> Finlay Dun, *Lays of Strathearn: arranged with symphonies and accompaniments for the piano-forte* (London: R. Addison, 1846). This was reissued in 1890 by Paterson's in Edinburgh – just

earlier, Lady Nairne and her ‘committee’ had assisted Smith with the compilation of his *Scottish Minstrel*.) Graham later wrote to Chappell expressing his regret that Dun had been involved with the *Lays of Strathearn*:-

When my excellent friend the late Finlay Dunn showed me some of the proof-sheets of that book, I told him that the most of the verses were sad trash, and that I was sorry he had been engaged to arrange the airs. He told me that he could not refuse the ladies who had applied to him, as friends of the Baroness Nairne.<sup>50</sup>

Two years later, in 1848, we find some of Dun’s settings included in Wood’s *Songs of Scotland*, the collection in which George Farquhar Graham had played such a key part; however, his more significant output in 1848 was the *Orain na h-Albain*, for which he took full editorial responsibility.<sup>51</sup> It would appear not entirely improbable that he took on this undertaking in a similar spirit to the earlier *Lays of Strathearn*, using Highland songs that an unnamed collector had gathered, possibly some years earlier.

By the mid-nineteenth century, there seems to have been less interest in collecting directly from the oral tradition, as Harker hinted. Graham, Dun and Thomson were aware of key historical sources, both manuscript and published, but appear not to have gone song-collecting in the way that Campbell or Blaikie had done.

Not conversant with Gaelic, Dun chose what he considered the best melodies for *Orain na h-Albain*, and left the ‘sets of the Airs’ intact, believing them to be correctly transcribed. Some notes on the airs were also given by the collector, making reference at one point to a poem published in the 1833 edition of Sir Walter Scott’s *Poetical Works*.<sup>52</sup>

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after it would have come out of copyright - and subsequently arranged for piano by Edward Land in 1899, again published by Paterson’s and this time just a slim selection.

<sup>50</sup> Oxford Bodleian Library, Harding Collection, Uncatalogued Ebsworth notebooks and correspondence (grey box), Graham to Chappell, 3 January 1859. See Appendix **[add number]**.

<sup>51</sup> *Orain na h-Albam: a Collection of Gaelic songs with English and Gaelic words, and an Appendix containing traditional Notes to many of the Songs*, the Pianoforte Accompaniments arranged and revised by Finlay Dun (Edinburgh: Wood, 1848).

<sup>52</sup> *Orain na h-Albam*, Appendix, p. 1, citing *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*, (Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 1833), XI. Scott was very friendly with the Maclean Clephanes, but this does not necessarily signify a close link.



The identity of the collector is intriguing. In John Muir Wood's entry on 'Scottish Music' in the first edition of Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*,<sup>53</sup> it is stated unequivocally that *Orain na h-Albain* was 'an excellent collection of Gaelic airs made by Miss Bell and edited by Finlay Dun'. Matheson reports that the lady was a Miss G. A. Bell of Edinburgh, although Wood's entry does not actually state this. This may have been inferred from the fact that a number of the songs were arranged by 'G.A.B'. Matheson doubted that she was the anonymous collector, because he questioned whether she could be described as a Highlander.<sup>54</sup> Without knowing more about her, it is impossible to surmise.

Still, therefore, looking for a collector, Matheson suggested that the anonymous collector might have been Lauchlan Maclaine - the soldier whom Alexander Campbell missed when he went to Mull, and who retired to his native Mull when he had finished active service. It will be recalled that his surviving notebook shows a keen interest in Gaelic songs and tunes. For various reasons, this seems a little unlikely. In the first instance, although he collected a number of songs, his transcription skills were a little unconventional. Moreover, it has been impossible to pinpoint more than a few Maclaine song texts which in any sense coincide with Dun's *Orain na h-Albain*, and it was impossible to identify any air concordances. Furthermore, there was virtually no evidence of the 'traditionary notes' that Dun's collector provided, though Maclaine did occasionally note where a song came from, or noted that the air could be obtained from a particular person.

There is reference in Maclaine's November 1815 journal - whilst still on active military service - to an audience in London with the Duke of Kent, (then President of the Highland Society), who was interested in his 'Leabhar Riamhach', and then - as mentioned above - leaving it at Clementi's, who was going 'to correct the Music, set basses to it'.<sup>55</sup> The fact that these two quite important personages knew of a book is reason enough to suggest that other people may also have known of Lauchlan's collection, so one cannot entirely rule

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<sup>53</sup> John Muir Wood and T. L. Stillie, 'Scottish Music', in *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (A.D. 1540-1889), ed. by George Grove, 4 vols, Index (London: Macmillan, 1879-1900), III (July 1883), 448.

<sup>54</sup> William Matheson, 'Some Early Collectors of Gaelic Folk-song', *The Proceedings of the Scottish Anthropological and Folklore Society*, 5 (1955), pp. 73-4.

<sup>55</sup> Information by email from Jo Currie, author of *Mull: the Island and its People*.

out Matheson's suggestion. Additionally, he died the year before Dun published *Orain na h-Albain*, which could conceivably point to a book having come into Dun's hands after his demise. Might Lauchlan have had a 'fair copy' book, as well as the notebook in the Gloucester archives? There is reason to believe that a descendent of his family may still possess another music notebook.

Matheson suggested that another possible Highland source for Dun's melodies might have been Miss Breadalbane MacLean, the daughter of Alexander MacLean of Coll, whose collection Alexander Campbell saw in Mull. There is no further evidence to prove or disprove this possibility.

If Miss Bell was not the Highland collector, then I suggest that Matheson has overlooked other possible contenders in the shape of either Margaret or Anna-Jane Maclean-Clephane, also native to Mull, and close friends with Sir Walter Scott and his family. As we saw in Chapter 3, surviving manuscript and printed material shows the sisters to have been more than just musically literate, for they were capable of producing competent harmonisations. Margaret wrote poetry, and they also collected the mythological stories of their native Hebrides, so would quite easily have been able to supply background notes to Dun. However, neither the photocopied manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland and the School of Scottish Studies, nor the Marquess of Northampton's surviving Gaelic song manuscript, have yielded sufficient concordances to confirm this proposition.

There seems to be no pressing reason at present to disbelieve what John Muir Wood stated in good faith in Grove's *Dictionary*, and it would be advantageous to discover the identity of Miss Bell.<sup>56</sup>

Dun's co-editor John Thomson (1805-1841) had, of all the mid-nineteenth century compilers, probably the most successful career, with the Reid Professorship, concert performances and a string of worthy compositions. His short but impressive career has been adequately documented elsewhere.<sup>57</sup> As it

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<sup>56</sup> The meticulous search of the *Edinburgh & Leith 1848-49 Street and Trade Directory* sadly yielded no leads.

<sup>57</sup> See John Purser, 'Thomson, John (1805–1841)', in *ODNB*; and John Purser, *Scotland's Music* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2007), pp. 245-54.

happens, he was indirectly connected with R. A. Smith, for Thomson's father was minister at St George's Parish Church in Edinburgh, where Smith was Choirmaster.

Not everyone who compiled a Scottish song collection had the strong musical background of Graham, Dun and Thomson. Gelbart comes to the nub of the matter in his observation that Robert Chambers' song collections - equally popular in their day, but consisting only of unaccompanied melodies - were those of a traditionalist, whilst G. F. Graham's settings could only be defined as art music.

Similarly, the advocate William Daune (1800-43) - not a compiler of Scottish songs, but responsible for an influential transcription of the Skene manuscript with an authoritative editorial essay - was an antiquarian of the old school, insofar as he held a keen amateur interest in the subject, whilst pursuing a legal and administrative career.

Born in the West Indies,<sup>58</sup> Daune was raised in Scotland, schooled in London and then studied at the University of Edinburgh. He left Scotland c.1838-9, to become Solicitor-General in British Guiana, and died four years later. His *Ancient Scottish Melodies* was essentially his sole legacy in the field of Scottish music, apart from any private correspondence or published observations in the periodical literature of his day.

The 'Preliminary Dissertation' of his book shows a thorough knowledge of previous authorities, but Gelbart also notes significant shifts in his historical commentary compared to earlier writers. Daune's work would not have come to fruition without the involvement of Graham and Dun as outlined above; he also acknowledged Burney, Ritson (whom he praised for his 'minute and accurate antiquarian knowledge'), Scott, Laing, and Blaikie, who lent Daune his transcriptions.

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<sup>58</sup> He was sent back to Scotland, to be raised by friends. See *Notes and Queries* 3<sup>rd</sup> Series .IV, Dec 26, 1868, p.523 (Internet Library of Early Journals), [accessed 29.07.2007].

It should be noted that Dun and Thomson's *Vocal Melodies of Scotland*, Graham's *Songs of Scotland*,<sup>59</sup> Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, and Dun's settings of Lady Carolina Nairne's *Lays of Strathearn* all appeared in subsequent editions while still in copyright - as opposed to the reprinting of Hogg's by then antiquated *Jacobite Relics* when it came out of copyright). This is in itself evidence of the works' popularity during the mid-and late-nineteenth century, and tell us something of their reception history.

## Conventional but not commonplace

Whilst it is easy to dismiss the collections of Graham, Dun and Thomson as conventional, middle-class Victorian art-music compilations, it can be argued that to do so is to overlook the significant scholarship that went into their compilation. They are each noteworthy in their own right, albeit with different emphases.

Thus, the collections associated with Dun - either in his own right, or with Thomson - betray a late flourishing of the romanticism that we detected in turn of the century and earlier nineteenth-century songbooks, not only in the texts used, but also offering tantalising glimpses of early Victorian performance practice.

## Romantic Scotland: Wild Highland and Simple Lowland Song

One has only to look at either the English texts or Dun's preface to *Orain na-h Albain*, to see the Romantic image of the Scottish Highlands being perpetuated, with 'wild winds', 'fierce moaning gales', and themes of unrequited love, death, and exile, not to mention the more visual images of 'silken gown and tartan plaidie'. Meanwhile, Dun continues to characterise Highland music as wild and irregular in much the same terms as had everyone else before him, going so far in his preface as to suggest that rubato and long-sustained pauses would lead to 'a certain wildness of expression' most appropriate to the music of a mountainous country, in which 'long-drawn out sounds seem to be a

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<sup>59</sup> John Muir Wood, the older of the two Wood brothers, was to reissue *Songs of Scotland* with additional notes in 1887, as *The Popular Songs of Scotland*.

characteristic feature, originating, probably, from the physical conditions of such countries being favourable to the production of echoes.’<sup>60</sup> Dun cites Switzerland and the Tyrol, and the singing of the Scandinavian Jenny Lind, as examples.

Dun and Thomson’s *Vocal Melodies of Scotland* (1836-8), the earliest compilation under discussion here, is the only one of comparable size to Graham’s later *Songs of Scotland*. However, it has much less avowedly didactic or historical material. At the same time, the preface presents us with clear evidence that considerable thought went into the planning of this book, since it highlights features which, implicitly if not explicitly, differentiate it from earlier collections of Scottish songs.

Ease of performance was one such feature. Thus, the compilers stress that singable keys had been selected. It will be recalled that this was not always the case in the *Museum*, and, indeed, Campbell’s *Albyn’s Anthology* is more suited to a high than a medium voice. Again, the promise of an appropriate, but not over-challenging accompaniment is probably a tilt at George Thomson’s earlier art-music arrangements. Other selling-points included the underlay of all the words under the melodies - this had certainly not been the case in many earlier works - and the provision of editorial expression marks to help ‘such as were unacquainted with the Scottish style, or had no teacher to guide them where any peculiarity existed.’ All of these advantages are clearly directed at musical amateurs enjoying the collection in a domestic situation.

On the other hand, some of the other features mentioned were hardly unique enough to differentiate them from the competition; for example, so many compilers claimed to have researched ‘genuine versions of the melodies’, that it seems by now almost a standard requirement to pay lip-service to this aim. Similarly, it was commonly accepted that bare, unornamented versions of the melodies were more authentic, so it comes as no surprise to find Dun and Thomson stating that since ‘simplicity is one of the greatest charms of our national music’, and ‘[the] music which speaks the simple language of nature,

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<sup>60</sup> *Orain na-h Albam*, pp. iii-iv.

may set at defiance both fashion and time', they had accordingly preserved that simplicity by avoiding embellishments, cadenzas and modernised versions.

Similar remarks appear in the later *Orain na-h Albain*, where the performer is urged to sing in a simple, natural style, avoiding ornamentation apart from the occasional appoggiatura, whilst the pianist is guided as to the difference between square and grand pianos in performance, with the advice to avoid over-use of the sustaining pedal. The works of Cramer and Hummel are cited as appropriate authorities for grand piano-playing technique.

From a modern vantage point, the arrangements in *Vocal Melodies of Scotland* are not particularly sparse; the accompaniments, introductions etc are very much in the art music tradition; and the vocal melodies are still ornamented. Nonetheless, E. R. Dibdin's later decision 'to avoid unnecessary interference with those admirable settings' in his revised edition, is confirmation of the acceptability of their settings to contemporary taste.<sup>61</sup>

As was remarked above, the most obvious difference between Dun and Thomson's collection, and G. F. Graham's later *Songs of Scotland*, lies in the greater emphasis on performance in the former, and the in-depth commentaries in the latter. Any indications as to the sources of Dun and Thomson's melodies are sketchy, although the writers of the words are more often named. Dun and Thomson attributed 36 songs were attributed to Burns (a few more are attributed to him in Dibdin's 1884 revision), whilst nine are attributed to Delta (David Macbeth Moir, a popular contemporary poet, who also contributed some lyrics to the later *Orain na-h Albain*); four to Allan Ramsay; three to Hector MacNeil (a few more in Dibdin); and two to Sir Walter Scott, with other poets represented by one or two songs each.

Apart from more lyrics by Delta, the authors of the English lyrics in *Orain na-h Albain* were by 'various persons, friends of the collector', which offers little help to the modern researcher. Similarly, traditionary notes provide background to the Gaelic song texts, but there is little more information about the

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<sup>61</sup> Finlay Dun and John Thomson, *The Queen's Edition of the Vocal Melodies of Scotland*, Symphonies and accompaniments by F. Dun and J. Thomson, rev. ed. by Edward Rimbault Dibdin (Edinburgh: Paterson, 1884)

provenance of the air, than the occasional island reference, e.g. ‘A Scarba Air’ or ‘A St Kilda Song’.

Even the preface in the *Vocal Melodies of Scotland*, or the scant commentary in *Orain na-h Albain*, are an improvement on an earlier collection of Gaelic melodies arranged for piano, *A Selection of Celtic Melodies*, with which Dun was associated. This volume, published in 1830, had no preface, and the only commentary is an explanation on p.22 of the terms “Porst a beale” [Puirt a beul] and “Cainntearachd” [Canntaireachd]. The first of these piano arrangements was ‘harmonized by G. F. Graham’ (the only one bearing his name), whilst some others were ‘arranged by Finlay Dun’, and most items were attributed to neither, with no indication of provenance apart from two melodies having been taken from MacDonald’s *Highland Vocal Airs*.<sup>62</sup>

### **‘Illustrated with Historical, Biographical and Critical Notices’<sup>63</sup>**

By contrast with Dun’s *Vocal Melodies of Scotland*, Graham’s *Songs of Scotland*, are perhaps more prosaic, but show solid erudition in the substantial commentaries, an assimilation of the facts known to date, and occasional outbursts where Graham finds it impossible to remain impartial on a particularly controversial point.

It is not clear how much autonomy Graham had either in the basic layout of *Songs of Scotland*, or in the selection of songs. The publisher, John Muir Wood, had personal knowledge of the subject, as is evidenced not only by subsequent editions in 1884 and 1908, but also his contribution of the article on Scottish music in the first edition of Groves’ *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.<sup>64</sup> *Songs of Scotland* was initially issued in thirty parts, subsequently appearing as three volumes which were finally, on completion in 1849, also issued as a single

<sup>62</sup> Some items have a distinctive title, but others are just types, eg ‘pipe reel’, or ‘Strathspey reel’. Those with Gaelic titles also bear a translated title.

<sup>63</sup> George Farquhar Graham’s contribution, as stated on the title-page of *Songs of Scotland* (1848-49).

<sup>64</sup> George Farquhar Graham, *The Popular Songs of Scotland with their appropriate Melodies*, arr. by George Farquhar Graham and others, new ed. rev. with additional airs and notes (Glasgow: J. Muir Wood, 1884), and, *The Popular songs of Scotland with their appropriate Melodies*, arr. by A. C. Mackenzie and others, illustrated by critical and other notices by George Farquhar Graham, rev. with the addition of many airs and notes by J. Muir Wood (London: Bayley & Ferguson, 1908)

volume retaining the original paginations. Graham included variant melodies in his annotations, implying that he may have had some editorial input in the precise versions used by the arrangers; and his commentary seems clearly to express his personal opinions; this is corroborated by prefaces in later revisions.

Graham's annotations, whilst derivative, are nonetheless thorough, erudite and considered. His commentary drew heavily on both Cromeck's publication of Burns' *Reliques* and Stenhouse's information, recognising what was accurate, but also drawing attention to inaccuracies, and highlighting Stenhouse's ignorance of tablature notation. (As mentioned earlier, Graham had himself developed considerable expertise in transcribing tablature.) We also know, from the notes in his own copy of Daune's *Ancient Scottish Melodies*, that Graham read extensively, and paid as much attention to contemporary material such as the *Dublin University Magazine*, and the *Musikalisches Zeitung of Leipzig*, as to older writings. He was, moreover, moving towards the more modern style of scholarship, scrupulously citing titles, publishers, dates and page references to any works mentioned. In this, he shows a marked advance on Stenhouse, whose work was beset by inconsistencies and vague allusions. (Graham's meticulous approach also comes across in scathing references to another book, Logan's *Scottish Gael*, when he observed that Logan had little regard for authenticity and rarely cited his authorities.)<sup>65</sup>

By examining Graham's commentary closely, together with his annotated copy of Daune's *Ancient Scottish Melodies* (now in Glasgow University Library), correspondence between Graham and Laing, and his earlier report of the first Edinburgh Music Festival and his Essay on Music, we can deduce a great deal about his ideas and attitudes towards such matters as transcription, harmonisation, the Scottish nature of the tunes, and the selection of what was considered the best or most authentic version of the tune. These are of particular interest when set against the attitudes and opinions revealed within the later writings of William Chappell, Andrew Wighton and James Davie, all of whom had their own ideas of what constituted 'Scottish music', and were outspoken in their criticisms of one another.

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<sup>65</sup> See Graham's copy of Daune in Glasgow University Library, *ibid*, opposite p. 70.



## Can there be an ‘original’ version of a tune?

Looking back from our modern perspective, it is interesting to note how antiquarians and later compilers persisted in trying to identify ‘the original’ version of a traditional tune. Graham’s transcription of the Skene manuscript for Daune’s *Ancient Scottish Melodies* had obviously given him first-hand knowledge of early versions to many Scottish tunes, and this would have bolstered his argument for a return to simplicity – something to which Dun also alluded, in his Appendix to the same work, when he criticised those who embellished and altered melodies so that their ‘native character’ was obscured.

However, there is a difference between insisting that there must have been one single original version, and accepting that it was clearly impossible to identify such a thing. In this respect, we can detect a change in attitude in some of Graham’s observations. For example, writing in 1845 to Laing about a Playford book of cithren tablature that Graham had borrowed, he commented that,

[...] we are not sure that John Playford had got hold of the very original of the tune, in either case ... and had written & printed them correctly. Here always recurs the question, ‘What was the original tune, really & truly?’ and nobody can answer that question!’<sup>66</sup>

## Transcription challenges

Transcribing tablature was an imprecise science. Graham observed that transcribing time, measure and duration of notes from tablature ‘must be, in a great degree, conjectural, and will task to the utmost the ingenuity of the ablest musician.’<sup>67</sup> In the same letter to Laing about cithren tablature, Graham further commented that very few people can correctly transcribe something that they’ve heard sung or played, and he returned to this theme in *Songs of Scotland* Vol.1, in the context of a melody in the Leyden Manuscript, ‘The lady’s goun’, which he held was the original for the air ‘The Braes of Yarrow’, to which the song ‘Busk ye, busk ye’ was set.

<sup>66</sup> Edinburgh University Library, La.IV.17, fols 3793-94, William Chappell to David Laing, 1 August 1845.

<sup>67</sup> *Songs of Scotland* I, 162.

## Harmonising tunes

Like many compilers before them, Graham and Dun acknowledged that providing harmonies to traditional Scottish tunes is difficult, because of the challenges of reconciling a modal melody with modern harmonic rules. A letter from Graham to Laing in 1839 clearly stated his views on harmonising some of the old tunes in the Straloch MS, when he observed that many of the tunes ‘are not susceptible of anything like a regular and continuous harmony’, and that attempts to do so would ruin them, destroying their ‘true characteristics’. Graham gave a particularly colourful illustration of the impossibility - and incongruity - of attempting to force an ancient air into modern dress:-

Imagine a Scottish Highlander dancing at the competition of Pipers with these adjuncts to his kilted dress:- a cocked hat and feathers, and a pair of topped-boots & spurs, and a reticule instead of a spleuchan, together with a swallow-tailed coat of Bond-Street cut! and a long pig-tail!<sup>68</sup>

Graham referred Laing to the Appendix of his earlier *Essay*, in which he expanded upon his theories that a sparse accompaniment, even leaving some phrases unaccompanied, was preferable.<sup>69</sup> Whilst Graham employed a rather more intellectual turn of phrase, he was obviously echoing the sentiments of MacDonald, Johnson or Campbell, all of whom experienced similar problems. A decade later, writing about ‘Tullochgorum’ in *Songs of Scotland*, Graham returned to the theme when he observed that, ‘Every good musician will at once perceive the difficulty of applying anything like regular modern harmony to such a tune.’<sup>70</sup>

Dun tussled with the same difficulties in his *Orain na-h Albain*, stressing in his preface that he aimed for the harmonisations to be ‘simple and appropriate’, and endeavoured not to disturb the modality. He referred the reader to his own Appendix in Dauney, and to three pieces of writing by Graham: his entry on Tonality in the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; his *Essay on Musical*

<sup>68</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fol. 3787, Graham to Laing, 24 Jan 1839.

<sup>69</sup> George Farquhar Graham, *An essay on the theory and practice of music composition, including the article “Music” in the 7<sup>th</sup> ed. of the Encyclopaedia Britannica ; with an introduction and appendix* (Edinburgh : Adam and Charles Black, 1838.), p. 68.

<sup>70</sup> *Songs of Scotland* I, 52-53.

*Composition*; and the very recently-published *Songs of Scotland*. Interestingly, in his discussion of modes, Dun also referred to Marx's *Kompositionslehre* (Leipzig, 1841) in which he said a similar situation arose with harmonising old chorale tunes. (As mentioned before, Gelbart explores the concept of a 'folk modality' at length in his monograph, noting that Dun moved from linking early Scottish modality to oriental or Greek sources, preferring instead the notion that it stemmed from plainchant. It is not proposed to go over this ground again in the present discussion.)

## A pragmatic approach to Scottish melodic traits

Graham's observations on the distinctively Scottish traits in traditional melodies are, not surprisingly, peppered liberally throughout *Songs of Scotland*. Thus, in Vol.2, we find him commenting on the 'Scotch snap' rhythm in *Whistle o'er the lave o't*, and how this feature of the strathspey and a few slow vocal airs was taken up by Anglo-Scottish imitators and used 'most unsparingly'. Graham added that in Surenne's song setting, the melodic version varies between the vocal version (to make it more singable) and the original version in the piano introduction or prelude.<sup>71</sup> This is not the only instance of the pragmatic alteration of an original tune. For all his erudition, Graham does not come across as a purist.

Other examples of this approach can be found in Graham's own setting of *Why should I, a brisk young lassie*<sup>72</sup>, and Mudie's setting of *My love's in Germany*.<sup>73</sup> In the former, Graham has taken the instrumental tune from the Skene manuscript and 'reduced the extreme instrumental leaps [...] to a vocal condition'. In the latter, Graham explained that the major seventh has been used as it will be more familiar to most people, although the minor seventh 'agrees with the old Scottish tonality.' He concluded, 'We leave every singer to choose his own version according to taste.' Similarly, in *Songs of Scotland* Vol. 3, he pointed out that *The wauking o' the fauld*, 'bears marks of antiquity in its whole

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<sup>71</sup> *Songs of Scotland* II, 32-3.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid* I, 157.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid* I, 160, referring to the song on pp. 28-29.

structure, and especially in the incomplete cadence upon the key-note, by the *minor* seventh of the scale'.<sup>74</sup>

Like Dun, Thomson, and many others before them, Graham was anxious to remove extraneous embellishments acquired over the years. Thus, with Mudie's arrangement of *O, waly, waly*,<sup>75</sup> Graham wrote that 'McGibbon, Oswald, Bremner, and others, have much to answer for in the matter of pseudo-embellishment of our finest airs', whilst in his own setting of *Thro' the wood, laddie*,<sup>76</sup> he simplified 'an affected instrumental flourish'.

## Victorian prudishness

Graham's pragmatism in selectively modifying tunes was also evident in his attitude to the words of songs. Sometimes in the appendices, he quoted alternative or original words, but, reflecting Victorian prudishness, he decisively rejected poems that smacked of impropriety. There are frequent allusions to words 'unsuitable for the more fastidious taste of the present day', 'profane absurdity', or indeed, 'this very trashy song'. Where words were deemed inappropriate, newer verses either by a named lyricist or 'a friend of the publishers' were substituted - or, less drastically, the text was altered rather than replaced. How many of these decisions were publisher John Muir Wood's, and how much was at Graham's instigation, remains unknown.

## Authority: a Winning Formula

As mentioned earlier, the popularity of Dun, Thomson and Graham's collections is evidenced by the considerable lengths of time that they remained in print. (We shall return to the subsequent history of these collections in the next, final chapter of this thesis.)

Plainly, these compilers had accurately assessed the requirements of the domestic market for compilations of popular Scottish songs in accessible

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<sup>74</sup> *Songs of Scotland*, III, 11.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, I, 100-101.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, III, 56-57.

versions, with words that would cause no blushes, and piano accompaniments within the capabilities of the average domestic pianist - neither the old-fashioned melody and bass of Johnson, the somewhat ungainly settings of Campbell, nor the challenging flights of fancy of Thomson's European masters.

Finlay Dun and John Thomson's *Vocal Melodies of Scotland* was, perhaps, the more lavish production, although readers requiring background notes would be more drawn to Graham's *Songs of Scotland*, where they would now find them alongside the music in Graham's collection, rather than in a separate volume (as had been the outcome of David Laing's re-published *Scots Musical Museum* alongside Stenhouse's *Illustrations*). Still making heavy use of Stenhouse, Graham nonetheless corrected where necessary, added his own observations, and was recognised as a trustworthy voice in his field.

In 1885, a reviewer of Wood's revised edition of the *Songs of Scotland* was to refer to Graham, who had died almost two decades earlier in 1867, as 'a musical antiquary of acknowledged authority',<sup>77</sup> and it is on this note that this chapter comes to a close. Notwithstanding all the arguments earlier in the 1820-30s about what was authentic, primitive and original, compared to what was fake or merely a poet or musician's interpretation of a concept, what mattered by the middle of the nineteenth century was that a collection should be comparatively comprehensive, musically competent, and demonstrably 'authoritative'.

There was, however, one further requirement. The compiler of such a collection had also, preferably, to be Scottish. Chappell's inclusion of Scottish songs in his *Popular Music of the Olden Time* - and, more particularly, his observations about the origins of some of them - were to cause such annoyance that he eventually abandoned plans to produce a Scottish song collection of his own, handing his materials to John Muir Wood for a new edition of *Songs of Scotland*.

In the final chapter, therefore, we shall examine the influence of cultural nationalism within the context of Scottish song-collecting in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

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<sup>77</sup> Review (Anon): 'The Popular Songs of Scotland, with Their Appropriate Melodies. New Edition Revised [Glasgow: J. Muir Wood & Co.], *Musical Times*, 1st Jan (1885), p. 35.

## Chapter 7: ‘The Feelings of a Scotsman’<sup>1</sup> and the Illusion of Origins in the Later Nineteenth Century

Questions of national origin became more important than ever to the leading personalities involved in collecting and publishing Scottish songs, in the latter half of the nineteenth century. There continued to be discussions at various levels - both within Scotland and between Scottish and English authorities - regarding what constituted the received published repertory. This is not to suggest that the repertory was static, for subsequent editions of the same collections did not contain exactly the same repertoire. However, the issue to be considered in this chapter is not to do with materials so much as with the arguments among collectors as to where such materials came from.

In the eyes of their contemporaries, the key authorities in the field of Scottish song around 1850 were the erudite David Laing and the musically knowledgeable and technically proficient George Farquhar Graham. When the English William Chappell embarked upon his own equivalent venture on the subject of English popular song, within a few years of Graham’s *Songs of Scotland* (1848-49), it was almost inevitable that he should have turned to Laing and Graham for advice on points of detail where Scottish music was concerned. However, both Graham and Chappell had their detractors, and in both cases the arguments centred on what really counted as Scottish music.

From a modern musicological vantage point, the whole notion of looking for origins in national popular musics is recognised as being loaded with conceptual problems, not least because of the whole question of oral transmission - not to mention the fact that identifiably ‘composed’ pieces consistently found their way into the ostensibly ‘traditional’ music canon. The question of origins, however, was a major preoccupation in the mid-nineteenth century, and nowhere was this more evident than in the attempt to distinguish songs perceived as Scottish from those considered merely ‘Anglo-Scottish’, as Chappell was to learn to his cost.

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<sup>1</sup> Dundee Central Library, Wighton Collection, shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others (unbound; transcribed by Sally Garden), Letter 12, James Davie to Andrew Wighton, 3 July 1852. My thanks to Sally Garden, formerly Historic Musician in Residence at the Wighton Centre, for transcriptions from this source.

Gelbart has commented that even early on in the eighteenth century, if a tune could be assigned to a particular country then it became ‘cultural capital’.<sup>2</sup> However, one might argue that the question of ‘cultural capital’ still held a good deal of weight, one and a half centuries later, although the adversaries were now claiming not just tunes, but also composers, as part of their cultural capital. Prior to the publication of William Chappell’s *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, the arguments are basically contained within Scotland, and I shall suggest that they arose partly out of a failure to appreciate that the concept of authorship had changed between the early eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries. However, matters took a new turn when the English Chappell ventured to express his doubts by suggesting that certain Scottish songs might actually have had English origins.

Much of the debate took place in private correspondence, and it is largely thanks to the surviving letters of Edinburgh librarian David Laing, and those of a Dundonian music bibliophile, Andrew Wighton, that we are able to explore these issues further today.

## **Andrew Wighton: Amateur Musician, Collector, Patron of Art, Benefactor<sup>3</sup>**

Born in 1804, the son of a Perthshire farmer, Wighton became a general merchant and dealer in musical instruments in Dundee, also rebuilding and restoring violins.<sup>4</sup> His great enthusiasm, however, was in collecting printed vocal and instrumental music dating from the mid- to late seventeenth century. He even travelled abroad to pursue this. His collection must already have been extensive by 1851, when one detects a note of pessimism in his close friend the Aberdonian flautist and publisher James Davie’s observation that not much more of importance was turning up.<sup>5</sup> Graham commented to Wighton in 1852 that,

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<sup>2</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> From biographical entry in Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 199.

<sup>4</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 5, George Deuchar (Kirriemuir) to Wighton, 20 November 1850.

<sup>5</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 7, Davie to Wighton, 6 September 1851: ‘You and I have had all Gow’s tunes long’; and Letter 20, Davie to Wighton, 13 November 1854: ‘I now despair of finding anything very interesting now in our line.’

‘You may well pride yourself in having one of the most complete Collections of Scottish Music that has ever been made by any body now living’,<sup>6</sup> and by 1855, Davie guessed that Wighton’s personal collection must be ‘the finest collection of old music in the three kingdoms’.<sup>7</sup>

Showing symptoms of bibliomania, Wighton commented to Staff Sergeant John Blair the following year, that he wished ‘to obtain a copy of all the collections that have ever been published’.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Wighton’s correspondence with the better-known English antiquarian and author of *Popular Music of the Olden Time*,<sup>9</sup> William Chappell, reveals a shared interest in Playford, and the difficulty of obtaining early Playford editions.

Wighton was patriotic, and while his collection was by no means confined to Scottish materials, it will become clear from what follows that his passion was for Scottish music.

At a rough estimate, about half of the collection consists of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Scottish music. Wighton must have been quite active and resourceful in his searches, considering much of this music was published either before his lifetime or certainly before he reached adulthood.

Amongst the Scottish material, we find both well-known and less significant collections, classical as well as popular material, by Scots and adopted Scots, published in Scotland and beyond. Thus, we find a good quantity of music by John Oswald, Thomas, Earl of Kelly, and William McGibbon as well as the more common collections of flute and fiddle tunes.

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<sup>6</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Bundle labelled ‘Wighton Notebook and thirty letters on musical affairs’ (uncatalogued), Letter 4, George Farquhar Graham to Wighton, 7 June 1852.

<sup>7</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 24, Davie to Wighton, 31 December 1855. (The reference to ‘the three kingdoms’ refers of course to England, Ireland and Scotland.)

<sup>8</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 26, Wighton to John Blair, Staff Sergeant (Montrose), 28 October 1856.

<sup>9</sup> William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 2 vols (London: Cramer, Beale & Chappell, 1855-59).



Materials from further afield include popular music from England, Ireland and Wales, not to mention ballad-opera material, Playford editions, classical works from the eighteenth century - and an intriguing number of instrumental tutors.<sup>10</sup>

Some of Wighton's titles are rarities, including a few items unique to the collection. Of the former, one could cite both editions of William Thomson's *Orpheus Caledonius*, to which brief reference will be made in due course; the first edition, of 1725, is particularly rare. Wighton's collection also included materials that he had copied: he had access to a rare copy of Playford's *Original Scotch Tunes* (1700) that Chappell had sold to Laing prior to October 1853; and also made a copy, now untraced, of a seventeenth century viola da gamba MS formerly belonging to Andrew Blaikie (itself now also untraced). He also copied Alexander Stuart's *Musick for the Scots Songs in Allan Ramsay's Tea-Table Miscellany* dating from 1726.<sup>11</sup> Wighton's annotated copy of Laing's additional *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland* (1853) also survives.

Unique to the collection are complete collections of the two sets of Oswald's *Airs for Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter*, to which is added a manuscript copy of *The Airs for Autumn*, by Oswald himself; and a full set of Oswald's *Caledonian Pocket Companion*. Wighton was party to a significant debate about Oswald, as will become apparent shortly.

Wighton died in 1866. His collection, along with assorted correspondence, was given to the City of Dundee, and survives in Dundee Central Library to this day. Not surprisingly, the correspondence is almost all inward. In addition to the inevitable small-talk and the painstaking bibliographical detail of an assiduous collector, its particular value is that it allows us to sample some of the contemporary concerns not only of Wighton and other collectors within Scotland, but also his interaction with the English scholar and publisher, William Chappell.

The Scottish correspondence includes a single letter from David Laing (Librarian of the Signet Library in Edinburgh); a copy of one that Wighton sent to Laing;

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<sup>10</sup> Either Wighton was multi-talented, or these books survived from his trading activities.

<sup>11</sup> See Wighton Collection website <<http://www.wighton.sol.co.uk/index.cfm>>, based on text compiled by Harry M. Willsher. (Willsher observed that Wighton's copy incorporated his corrections to perceived errors in the original publication).

and some 49 further letters, mainly from the Aberdonian music-seller and publisher, James Davie, dating between c.1850 and 1857. There is also an uncatalogued notebook; and a tin containing ‘thirty letters on musical affairs, addressed to Mr A. J. Wighton’. These last are largely dated between 1849 and 1858 and include letters about antiquarian matters from Graham, Laing and Davie, amongst others concerning municipal affairs.<sup>12</sup>

Looking south of the Border, the letters from William Chappell, and a copy of one that Wighton wrote in reply, are bound at the back of Wighton’s copy of *Popular Music*, documenting a correspondence that extended between 1853 and 1859, and seems to have had an impact that endured almost to the end of the nineteenth century.

However, we shall begin by looking in closer detail at the concerns revealed in Davie’s letters to Wighton, for they provide an interesting snapshot of the questions that occupied these two Scottish music enthusiasts, and lead usefully into some of the issues of more widespread significance.

### **James Davie: ‘A man possessed of taste and ability’<sup>13</sup>**

Comparatively little is known of Wighton’s close friend, the Aberdonian music publisher James Davie (1783-1857), and few of his publications remain extant. Baptie informs us that Davie was a flautist in Aberdeen’s theatre orchestra, and describes him as ‘one of the first to introduce classical music in Aberdeen.’<sup>14</sup> Davie’s letters include discussion about Wighton’s collecting interests, lists of music loaned or supplied, and requests for Wighton to verify facts about Scottish music. They also shed light on his own publishing work, and touch upon the contemporary musical life of Aberdeen: for example, we find references to Tenducci, Urbani and Stabilini, and a comment that Davie possessed Francis Peacock’s own viola.

<sup>12</sup> The notebook and tin are labelled with a typed slip, ‘Presented by Miss Hutcheson, Herschel House, B. Ferry’, with the comment, ‘Found after Dr. Millar’s death. These were never shown and must have been given during his term of office.’

<sup>13</sup> Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, 1894, p. 41.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

It is clear from Davie's letters that he was in competition with the Edinburgh and Glasgow publishers, brothers John Muir and George Wood. Indeed, the Woods appear to have opened a music and pianoforte shop in Aberdeen in 1851, although Davie seemed unperturbed by this. His first disparaging mention of the firm comes in a letter dated 3 July 1852, when it appears that Davie had approached Wood, offering to assist with the arrangement of Wood's *The Dance Music of Scotland*, before the commission eventually went to 'Surenne and an Englishman whose ideas can never entirely enter into the feelings of a Scotsman.' Having somehow seen the manuscript of Wood's *Dance Music*,<sup>15</sup> Davie also knew that tunes had been lifted from his own collections without his permission - and was wary of answering queries from the firm, complaining that,

Wood, and even Graham would avail themselves without acknowledgment of what I at any rate have learnt by deep, but pleasant study. Wood wishes to crush every one in business by all means [...] I have been asked questions lately which I found it necessary to decline answering so as it might not go before me.<sup>16</sup>

Davie's irritation with Graham seems to go deeper than simply Graham's involvement with Wood's firm, although this might initially have sparked off Davie's animosity, and hinges on Graham's remarks pertaining to Oswald and his Rizzio ascriptions.

## The Oswald dispute

Davie's regard for Oswald amounted to hero-worship, so it goes without saying that Graham would upset Davie with his denouncement of Oswald as 'an unscrupulous man' who practised 'unpardonable deceptions'. Davie seems to have had a particular obsession with the reputation of James Oswald, whose music, as I indicated, forms part of Wighton's collection. In contrast to his comments about the more mundane practicalities of running a business, Davie's

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<sup>15</sup> Davie unequivocally states that he has seen 'the M.S.' rather than the printer's proofs or finished publication, and does not specify the circumstances. *Dance Music of Scotland* appeared in at least six editions, and is variously dated as 1851 (Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, and James Duff Brown and Stephen Samuel Stratton, *British musical biography* (Birmingham: Stratton, 1897); 1841 (L. M. Middleton, 'Surenne, John Thomas' in old *ODNB* (1898) and c.1830 (Peter Ward Jones, 'John Muir Wood', *Grove Music Online*. This last cannot be correct, for Surenne would have been just sixteen years old.

<sup>16</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 12, Davie to Wighton, 3 July 1852.

frequent allusions to Oswald show him addressing some of the foremost topics of the day. Most pertinently, attempting to pinpoint pieces of music to particular composers raises the whole question of musical origins.

Oswald, as is well known, started his career as a dancing master in Dunfermline, and moved to London in 1741, where among other things he published music. From 1761 until his death in 1769, he was Chamber Composer to King George III. In fact, he published many more Scottish collections than *The Seasons*, his acclaimed set of instrumentally accompanied songs. He was one of Scotland's foremost names during and after his life.

As explained in Chapter 5, it had long been realised that there was no truth in Oswald's ascriptions of pieces to the Italian Rizzio. Indeed, Kenneth Elliott, in his article on Oswald for *Grove Music Online*, remarked that Oswald and Geminiani subscribed to the Rizzio 'legend', but that 'by the 1770s it had been completely discredited.'<sup>17</sup> Since the facts were no secret, it comes as something of a surprise to find Davie defending Oswald almost a century later. He wrote Wighton no less than 22 letters between November 1856 and October 1857, mentioning Oswald in half of them. This time, however, the argument was not really about Rizzio, but about Oswald's intentions and integrity.

It is no understatement to say that George Farquhar Graham is treated very much as the whipping-boy in Davie's correspondence. In 1852, despite the wrinkle over Wood's *Dance Music of Scotland*, Davie was still describing Graham as, 'a scholar; a well-informed man and a Gentleman'.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps he had not yet read Graham's historical notes; in any event, within the next four years, he was less complimentary.

Initially, we find Davie protesting that Oswald had been ill-treated by Graham, who apparently thought that Oswald had 'hoaxed' the public about Rizzio's authorship of certain tunes. Davie, however, wondered if Oswald had been misinformed by people, and alluded to the *Fifty Favourite Scotch Airs* (1762) by Peacock, saying that Peacock 'pays very undeserved homage to Rizzio, and he

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<sup>17</sup> Kenneth Elliott, 'James Oswald', *Grove Music Online*

<sup>18</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 12, Davie to Wighton, 3 July 1852.

should have known better.’<sup>19</sup> (A propos of this remark, Gelbart quotes Peacock’s prefatory observation that it was hard to ‘distinguish [Rizzio’s] compositions from those of his Imitators’, and notes that Peacock was one of the few Scots writing in support of the Rizzio myth by the 1760s, possibly because Peacock was somewhat old-fashioned in his view of the Scottish ‘Mode of Musical Composition’ as being intrinsically pastoral in style.)<sup>20</sup>

Within a year, Davie’s criticisms of Graham were far less guarded, protesting that Graham had, ‘done all in his power to do injury to the memory of a countryman who was an honour to Scotland [...]’.<sup>21</sup> Later the same month, Davie resorted to sarcasm, as he concluded that Oswald’s ‘basses are beautiful and always in melodic motion and contrivance - and he has been able to accomplish all this without having the advantage of a present of Mr. Graham’s essay on harmony in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.’<sup>22</sup>

It is easy to see why Graham’s notes in *Songs of Scotland* were so inflammatory to Davie. When, for instance, Graham wrote about the tune *The Lowlands of Holland*, he pointed out that it appeared in the Skene MS - ‘a fact which at once demolishes Oswald’s claim to the tune, and brings additional proof of his utter untrustworthiness.’<sup>23</sup>

In what was to be Davie’s final year, 1857, he was planning a publication of Scottish music. He hoped to include ‘a few observations’ on Scottish music, and regretted that he hadn’t room to devote 30 or 40 pages to Oswald.<sup>24</sup> Davie’s correspondence reveals that he had been keen to borrow Wighton’s unique copy of *The Seasons*, to establish just how many sets actually comprised Oswald’s

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<sup>19</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 28, Davie to Wighton, 13 November 1856. It will be recalled that Davie owned Peacock’s viola. They would probably have been acquainted, despite Peacock having been 60 years Davie’s senior, for he had been a dancing master in Aberdeen for over 60 of his 84 years. Davie cites Peacock’s ‘Scottish Airs’; the correct title is *Fifty Favourite Scotch Airs: For a Violin, German Flute and Violoncello, With a Thorough Bass for the Harpsichord*.

<sup>20</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”*, p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Ibid, Letter 43, Davie to Wighton, 2 June 1857.

<sup>22</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Ibid, Letter 45, Davie to Wighton, 25 June, 1857.

<sup>23</sup> *Songs of Scotland*, I, 13.

<sup>24</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 27, Davie to Wighton, 1 November 1856, and Letter 46, Davie to Wighton, 11 July 1857.

collection. Considering Davies' references to 'persecuted Oswald', and to the 'false and malicious' remarks of Graham,<sup>25</sup> one can deduce the gist of Davie's unwritten essay.

Indeed, Graham was not the only authority to fall victim to Davie's critical pen. Although Davie initially thought highly of the librarian David Laing, referring to him as 'that gentlemanly kind fellow',<sup>26</sup> within two years his opinion of Laing had markedly changed, too. There must have been some argument about 'The Braes of Ballenden', perhaps arising from Laing's republication of William Stenhouse's *Illustrations*. On 13<sup>th</sup> November 1856, we find Davie affirming vehemently that Oswald composed 'The Braes of Ballenden';<sup>27</sup> then, a couple of weeks later, he comments that 'I certainly believed that Oswald had composed 'The Braes of Ballenden' and regret that Mr Laing has the power to smash [Oswald] so much, but he cuts clean while Graham cuts like a personal enemy.'<sup>28</sup>

### One of the 'Overnational Scotchmen'?<sup>29</sup>

With the publication by instalments of Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, during Davie's last two years of life, the latter found a new authority to criticise. Davie died before Part 11 was published, but the previous part had already caused him anguish, and his letters to Wighton yet again reiterate the much-disputed issue of the authorship of supposedly traditional Scottish melodies, and the wrong that had been done to Oswald's reputation.

The nub of the matter seems to be that, whilst Davie acknowledged Oswald's misuse of Rizzio's name, he took exception to any suggestion that Oswald deliberately misled the public. In his final months, Davie suggested to Wighton that there must have been some mistake with regard to Oswald's Rizzio

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid, Letter 42, Davie to Wighton, 23 April 1857 and Letter 45, Davie to Wighton, 25 June 1857.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, Letter 20, Davie to Wighton, 13 November 1854.

<sup>27</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Ibid, Letter 30, Davie to Wighton, 24 November 1856. As a point of interest, Stenhouse's *Illustrations* state for Song 92, 'The Braes of Ballenden', that although Alexander Campbell ascribed the song to Oswald, Stenhouse could see no grounds for this attribution. Laing's *Additional Illustrations* add no further comment.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, Letter 30, Davie to Wighton, 24 November 1856.

<sup>29</sup> Edinburgh University Library, La.IV.17 fols 1739-1740: phrase used by Chappell in a letter to Laing, 26 October 1858.

ascriptions, and that while some pieces were actually by Oswald, others predated him.

The interesting question in all this, is where precisely did the prejudice lie? Did Graham - himself a Scotsman - make a valid point? Was his objectivity anathema to Davie and Wighton, who were vehemently defending a fellow national? This suggests that the debate has shifted subtly away from the position at the end of the eighteenth century as defined by Gelbart. By the second half of the nineteenth century, we find antiquarians not merely defining what was traditional, but also defending the question of its Scottishness. In this regard, Davie seems to have been unwittingly caught up in the throes of the nationalist movement, objecting that Wood should not have involved an Englishman in harmonising his compilation.<sup>30</sup>

I propose, furthermore, that neither Davie and Wighton, nor Graham, were far enough removed from the changing patterns of attribution to realise that the patterns had changed. Gelbart highlighted the fact that there had been shifts in attitude towards authorship and attribution during the course of the eighteenth century. By the end of that century, there was a stronger sense of authorship - and indeed, ownership, of compositions. This was a change from the earlier use of attribution where the given name might simply have been the person presenting a version of a tune - or even a tribute to a famous name. Whilst Davie and Wighton (and Laing, as we shall see in due course) disputed the Oswald and Rizzio attributions, none seem to have realised that Oswald's claims were perhaps merely symptomatic of an earlier attitude.

## Popular Music of the Olden Time (1855-59)

James Davie, crusty old obsessive or not, was far from the only Scottish voice baying for Chappell's blood, by the time his two-volume *Popular Music of the Olden Time* (1855-59) was published in its entirety.<sup>31</sup> Chappell aroused a furore

<sup>30</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 12, Davie to Wighton, 3 July, 1852.

<sup>31</sup> The two-volume collection which appeared in 1859 has become known by the title given to the individual instalments, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*; however, some copies appeared with the amplified title, *The Ballad Literature and Popular Music of the Olden Time*.

by his suggestion (in Part 15) that certain Scottish tunes were not originally Scottish. Therefore, although it might initially seem perverse to introduce an English song and ballad enthusiast towards the end of a dissertation on Scottish song collectors, it is necessary to gain at least an oversight of William Chappell's work, in order to understand how his views on Scottish song caused so much anger amongst collectors north of the Border.

Chappell (1809-88), an avid antiquarian music collector and publisher, is remembered today principally for *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, although he was also deeply involved in the transcription and collation of ballads.

*Popular Music* was, in fact, a successor to an earlier book on the same subject, *A Collection of National English Airs, consisting of Ancient Song, Ballad, and Dance Tunes*, which he published, similarly in two volumes, between 1838-40. The first volume of the *Collection* contained 'an essay on English minstrelsy', whilst the second contained 245 tunes. Chappell explained at the outset of the essay that he would concentrate more on the music than the poetry, since Percy, Wharton and others had already dealt with the poetry. He emphasised that it was nonetheless unavoidable to make some mention of poetry.

That the *Collection of National Airs* had deficiencies is attested by the original entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which observed that 'only Macfarren's [harmonisations] were adequate, Wade's being too slight, and Crotch's too elaborate.'<sup>32</sup> However, from Chappell's point of view, it was by now twenty years since he'd published the book, and fourteen since the edition was 'exhausted'; moreover, he had acquired a great deal of additional information, particular since he had been able to examine the ballads collected by Pepys, and the Roxburghe Ballads in the British Museum, not to mention having had access to the registers of the Stationers' Company for the years 1577-1799.

The preface of his new book, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, explained that he had re-written 'nearly every line' of the earlier *Collection of National Airs*, and although he had retained about 200 songs, he had added another 200 or so, re-harmonizing the entire collection and attempting to sort the songs into

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<sup>32</sup> Henry Davey, 'Chappell, William (1809–1888), musical antiquary', *Dictionary of National Biography* (1901) via ODNB [accessed 22 April 2009].



chronological order. George Alexander Macfarren (1813-87), still a young man when he assisted with the *Collection of National Airs*, had only just returned to the Royal Academy of Music as a harmony and composition teacher, and was now entrusted with harmonising all of the airs. (Macfarren would later, in old age, assist Wood with harmonisations for his new edition of Graham's *Songs of Scotland* (1887).

Chappell's driving motivation was, as he explained in both the *Collection of National Airs* and *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, to dispel the notion that the English had no national music. It is important to remember this, in the discussion that follows, for Chappell's underlying stance explains many of the observations that he made both in print, and in his private correspondence.

Henry Davey relates that there was a 'shopman of Scottish birth, who frequently boasted of the folk-music of Scotland, and sneered at English folk-music as non-existent or unimportant', at Chappell's family firm in Bond Street prior to 1843; this was apparently an impetus for Chappell's publications.<sup>33</sup>

That England was considered a 'land without music', or 'Land ohne Musik', is explored by Temperley and Zon in recent writings. Temperley cites three typical contemporary statements, one British and the others Belgian and German, to this effect, with the Belgian Fétis's observations being published in English as early as 1829. Temperley cites Chappell's comments of 1859 (i.e. in *Popular Music of the Olden Time*) as illustrating a related idea:-

A subset of this idea was the illusion that the English (as opposed to the Scots, Irish and Welsh) had no 'national' music or folk song.<sup>34</sup>

Indeed, as we have just seen, Chappell's comments of 1859 were actually merely reiterating his view as expressed some twenty years earlier in *Collection of National Airs*:-

*Collection of National English Airs*, I (1838), p.186:-

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<sup>33</sup> Davey, *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Nicholas Temperley, 'Xenophilia in British Musical History', in *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies* I, ed. by Bennett Zon (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), (3-19), 5

[The author hopes that he has demonstrated] ‘that England has not only an abundance of National Music, but that its antiquity is at least as well authenticated as that of any other nation’.

*Collection of National English Airs*, II (1840), Preface, iii:-

The object of the present work is to give practical refutation to the popular fallacy that England has no National Music, - a fallacy arising solely from indolence in collecting [...]

John Muir Wood was later to confirm that this was a common belief, in his ‘Preliminary Note’ to the revised edition of the *Songs of Scotland*:

Mr Stenhouse had besides a notion, not uncommon in the earlier part of the present century, that England possessed little if any true national music; a tune therefore which was current in both countries, he contended must be of Scottish origin, and only imported into England since the “union of the crowns.” This belief was to some extent fostered by the want of any collection of English airs that could be referred to; for Ritson’s is an Anthology of lyric poetry set by learned musicians, rather than a collection of national melodies, though it does contain a small modicum of real folk-music [...].<sup>35</sup>

Indeed, we observed in the previous chapter that Daunev made a similar observation about Chappell’s earlier collection.

It takes little imagination to predict, even at this point, that there was a good chance that Chappell might find it necessary to allude to Scottish music during the course of his narrative, particularly since it was well-known that the composition of ‘Scotch’ music by the likes of D’Urfey had gone on for years, and clearly some of it had become completely assimilated into what Scots considered to be their inheritance.

As in his earlier book, Chappell stated at the outset that, whilst he would be alluding to the work of Percy, Wharton, Ritson and more recent writers on poetry, he aimed ‘to throw a few additional rays of light upon the subject, when contemplated, chiefly, in a musical point of view.’<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> George Farquhar Graham, *The Popular Songs of Scotland*, [revised by J. Muir Wood] (Glasgow: Wood, 1884), p. v.

<sup>36</sup> *Popular Music of the Olden Time*. I, 1.

Chappell's new magnum opus was initially published in 16 or 17 parts over four years, finally appearing as a two-volume work in July 1859.<sup>37</sup> It was to unleash a furore amongst Scottish music enthusiasts, most particularly with the fifteenth part, on Anglo-Scottish song, although as we have just seen, James Davie was already annoyed by the time the tenth part had been issued.

The irritation was not to die down quickly, either. Within seven years of Chappell's death, Henry Davey commented in his *History of English Music* (1895), that 'a distinct animus against everything Scottish is perceptible',<sup>38</sup> whilst in 1900, the Edinburgh music publisher John Glen devoted an entire chapter of his book on early Scottish melodies to Chappell's perceived aberrations, largely because the latter seemed to have appropriated 'a number of undoubtedly Scottish tunes'.<sup>39</sup> Davey's entry on Chappell in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (in 1901) similarly reiterated his earlier statement in the *History of English Music*.

(As it happens, the socialist Davey had his own nationalist agenda with regard to national musics, as Bennett Zon explains in a recent article on Davey's *History of English Music*. It would appear that Davey believed 'Keltic' peoples to be, generally, more musical, but insisted that the English were more likely to produce musical genius.<sup>40</sup> An exploration of Davey's ideologies is, however, beyond the scope of this present thesis.)

Neither Davey nor Glen, nor indeed any subsequent ones, even mentions Chappell's visits to Scotland, or his correspondence with Scottish antiquarians.

<sup>37</sup> On 9 July 1859, *Notes and Queries* announced that, 'By the publication of the 16<sup>th</sup> Part [...], Mr Chappell has brought to a close his great labour of love.' It was advertised as '2 Vols. 8vo.' However, a subsequent issue of 13 October 1859 advertised the work as 'In Two Volumes [...]; or Seventeen Parts. The two-volume set does not identify the individual parts, although it is possible to identify some by descriptions of the subject matter.

<sup>38</sup> Henry Davey, *History of English Music* (London: Curwen, 1895), p. 461.

<sup>39</sup> John Glen, *Early Scottish Melodies* (Edinburgh: J. & R. Glen, 1900). Prior to this publication, John Glen had published *The Glen Collection of Scottish Dance Music* (Edinburgh: John Glen, 1891 and 1895). His criticism of Chappell began in the introduction to that publication, where he asserted, 'According to Mr Chappell, when Scotsmen went to England they had no music of their own, but went to learn; and, when Scottish tunes first happen to appear printed in England, they are claimed by him as English.' The latter might be a fair reflection of Chappell's views, but the former is something of an exaggeration.

<sup>40</sup> Bennett Zon, "'Loathsome London': Ruskin, Morris, and Henry Davey's *History of English Music* (1895), *Victorian Literature and Culture* (2009), 1-17 (p. 9-10), Published online by Cambridge University Press 11 Jun 2009 doi:10.1017/S1060150309090238

Nor do they give any hint of Chappell's intention, declared on several occasions, to write a history of Scottish music. Yet these facts alone testify to a lively interest in Scottish popular music, as becomes clear by an examination of this same unpublished correspondence, which demonstrates the nature of his engagement with Scottish music and the reactions of his contemporaries to some of his ideas about it.

### **'A great deal might be done in Scottish Music'<sup>41</sup>**

Chappell's interest in the topic goes back to his late twenties, when a letter to the recently-appointed Librarian of the Edinburgh Signet Library, David Laing, in 1839, alludes indirectly to his travels in Scotland.<sup>42</sup> Evidently he saw a number of the primary sources of Scottish music, including a lyra-viol manuscript, now untraced, but then in the possession of the Paisley collector Andrew Blaikie. (Indeed, he claimed to have copied most of its contents.)<sup>43</sup>

Correspondence with Laing in the late 1830's and 40's makes clear his continuing interest, even though Chappell was not actually to return to Scotland until 1856. Chappell acquired the only copy then known of Playford's 1700 *Collection of Scotch Songs*,<sup>44</sup> in 1842, and lent it to Laing in 1844. In 1843, Chappell bemoaned the fact that Rimbault had failed in his bid to acquire the Straloch lute-book.<sup>45</sup> Chappell also purchased what we now know as the Rowallan cantus, giving it as a gift to Laing in May 1856.<sup>46</sup>

Chappell had indeed been toying with the idea of writing a book about Scottish music, although he feared that he might not be the right person to do it. In May 1843, he told Laing that,

<sup>41</sup> Edinburgh University Library, La.IV.17, fol. 1706<sup>r</sup>, William Chappell to David Laing, 12 May 1843. The spelling is Chappell's.

<sup>42</sup> David Laing, son of the Edinburgh bookseller William Laing, was elected librarian to the Society of Writers to H. M. Signet on 21 June 1837. See Murray C. T. Simpson, 'Laing, David (1793–1878)', *ODNB* [accessed 22 April 2009].

<sup>43</sup> Edinburgh University Library, La.IV.17, fol.1711<sup>r</sup>, Chappell to Laing, 23 December 1844: 'I copied Mr Blaikie's and other books with the intention' [of writing a book about Scottish music]; see also, more specifically, *Popular Music of the Olden Time* II, 771-2.

<sup>44</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fol.1703<sup>r</sup>, Chappell to Laing, 17 August 1842.

<sup>45</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fol.1704<sup>v</sup>, Chappell to Laing, 24 April 1843.

<sup>46</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fol.1719<sup>r</sup>, Chappell to Laing, 8 May 1856.

A great deal might be done in Scottish Music & I regret there is no one to take it in hand. [...] I should not like to do it unless I felt that I could devote the time to make it a creditable work. I am in doubt whether I shall ever attempt it.<sup>47</sup>

Not long afterwards, he told Laing that he had given up the idea.<sup>48</sup> However, he would revive his plans later.

By the late fifties, when Chappell was writing *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, he brought with him some twenty years of interest in Scottish music. In fact, it would have been impossible to discuss English ballads without alluding to overlapping between the English and Scottish repertoires, particularly because of the significance of the Border ballad repertory.

## Anglo-Scottish arguments

As is well known, publications associated with Thomas D'Urfey and John Playford in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries contain a significant number of 'manufactured' Scottish songs; these were very much in vogue at the time, and Chappell coined the term 'Anglo-Scottish' to describe them. Hence, in order to focus his work on the English repertoire, he reasonably found it necessary to examine a number of tunes whose Scottish origins seemed to be suspect, on the evidence available to him, and his letters see him discussing in minute detail the differences between various editions of the *Dancing Master*, and itemising purchases and desiderata.

For example, on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1853, Chappell wrote to Wighton, 'Some of the tunes of Scottish character in the Dancing Master are probably Northumbrian. For instance 'Cavalilly Man'.<sup>49</sup> And again, on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1857, he wrote, 'It is difficult to find really good tunes of this early date, because there is so little genuine Scotch Music in print - although plenty of Anglo Scottish.'<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fol. 1706<sup>r</sup>, Chappell to Laing, 12 May 1843.

<sup>48</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fol. 1711<sup>r</sup>, Chappell to Laing, 23 December 1844.

<sup>49</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll. 31669 (William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 1859. Vol. II), Manuscript correspondence bound at back, Chappell to Wighton, 26 October 1853

<sup>50</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll. 31669, *ibid*, Chappell to Wighton, 23 December 1857.

In the meantime, on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1855, Chappell wrote to David Laing, telling him about his new publication:

I [...] have to beg your acceptance of a new book upon the old subject. [...] In the pursuit of English I have gained some further information about Scottish, which I know would be more interesting to you, but have not yet turned it to account. [...]<sup>51</sup>

Chappell's suggestions that certain Scottish tunes actually originated in England became more pointed in the opening chapters of the second volume. His later chapter on Anglo-Scottish tunes seemed to establish his reputation for an anti-Scottish attitude. Finally, his closing comments in the chapter, 'Characteristics of National English Airs, and summary', fanned the flames of the controversy.<sup>52</sup> His justification, of course, was that sources of a number of Scottish songs appeared in early English publications.

On 1st October 1857, three months before Chappell wrote to Wighton about his newly-published Part 11, Wighton received the letter from the Aberdonian James Davie to which we have already alluded. Wighton had clearly lent him parts of *Popular Music of the Olden Time*. Whilst Chappell had not yet reached the inauspicious chapter on Anglo-Scottish songs, he had already irritated Davie, who commented that,

The work is certainly a grand idea, and I would hope it would be conducted in a spirit of fairness and liberality, but I suspect this will not be altogether the case. He depends too much upon the dance tunes in the Dancing Master in my opinion.<sup>53</sup>

He went on to cite several songs which Chappell now claimed to be English, predicting that there would be more to come. He concluded,

This gentleman has no occasion to acts of appropriation to make up a very respectable work honestly come by [...] The poets and musicians have made Scotland stand in a position above any country for its music and its simple artless poetry but I am unable to pursue this subject.[...] At present Scotland has little chance of a champion to

<sup>51</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fols 1714-1715, Chappell to Laing, 23 November 1855.

<sup>52</sup> *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, II, 789-797.

<sup>53</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 48, Davie to Wighton, 1 October 1857.

stand up for her. I would fight for her [...], but I want talent, time and everything except the will.<sup>54</sup>

Davie died in Aberdeen seven weeks later, on 19 November 1857.<sup>55</sup> His dark predictions proved prophetic.

Chappell himself was also in regular contact with Wighton. Almost a year after Davie had taken such offence, Chappell wrote to Wighton on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1858, acknowledging receipt of postage stamps for Part 13:

When you have read the article on Anglo Scottish songs I should like your opinion on it. I could fill a volume with Stenhouse's direct lies, but only thought it necessary to touch upon the subject. What a misspent thing that man would make Scottish music to be if we were to take all he says for true!<sup>56</sup>

Chappell's letter to Wighton suggests that he was about to issue his Part 13 that month. Laing read the contentious material a little later than Wighton, having been abroad round about this time. He told the latter that he and Chappell had discussed Anglo-Scottish songs the last time Chappell was in Edinburgh. Laing disputed some of Chappell's late dates, whilst acknowledging that Stenhouse undoubtedly assigned dates too early.<sup>57</sup>

By October 1858, Chappell was curious about the reception of his recent writings. On 26<sup>th</sup> October, he wrote to Laing:-

I hope you are not displeased at my remarks in some of the collections of Scottish music in my last part. Scotland has quite enough exquisite tunes of her own, without borrowing & it is most desirable that they should be sifted fairly; I confess that I fear to displease some overnational Scotchmen by the attempt & wish a Scotchman would do it instead of me. In fact I do not intend to do more than I have, unless it should happen that I am about to print a tune that has been claimed as Scotch, & I think it not so.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 41.

<sup>56</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll. 31669 (William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 1859. Vol.II), Manuscript correspondence bound at back, Chappell to Wighton, 1 September 1858.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, Laing to Wighton, 30 September 1858.

<sup>58</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fols 1739-1740, Chappell to Laing, 26 October 1858.

This was not the first time that Chappell demonstrated his desire for both accuracy and integrity -over a year earlier, he had written to Laing, ‘I wish only to print English tunes & nothing would annoy me more than to have appropriated Scotch [...]’<sup>59</sup>

By November that year, Chappell knew that he had upset Wighton, and wrote to Laing on 5<sup>th</sup> November:-

‘I am sorry Wighton is not pleased but I cannot help it - I have endeavoured to write temperately & to produce the proofs for my assertions.’<sup>60</sup> He went on to assure Laing that he would be only too happy to correct any errors if his critics could prove him wrong; indeed, he reiterated this to Wighton a week later.

Wighton finally wrote back to Chappell on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1859, quoting extensively from his own earlier letter to Laing:-

Admitting that Mr Stenhouse did unfortunately fall into error [...] it does not appear that he did so wilfully, but I do think that Mr Chappell has left Stenhouse in the shade [...] by attempting to prove that some of our best airs are only Anglo-Scottish, amongst which are *My mither’s aye glowrin’ o’er me*, *Corn riggs*, *My Nannie O* etc, etc, and even *Bonnie Dundee*. [...] Mr Chappell is determined to claim all the Tunes with Scotch names or with songs in the Scottish dialect, that have been published by ‘Playford’, ‘D’Urfey’ &c [...]

In London about a year ago [...] he produced as his authority the above works [...] I said that I could not take the circumstance of these appearing there, as an authenticity [...] the Scotch musicians etc were then averse to printed music and that same aversion still exists to a considerable extent [...] I concluded that it would be more easy and satisfactory to prove whether the Tunes were Scotch or English, by their Characteristics, etc [...]’<sup>61</sup>

Wighton’s comments about the aversion to printed music can be largely be understood if taken in the context of the oral tradition and the time-honoured methods of tune transmission between traditional musicians over the centuries.

<sup>59</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fols 1728-1729, Chappell to Laing, 8 August 1857.

<sup>60</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fols 1741-1742, Chappell to Laing, 5 November 1858.

<sup>61</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll. 31669, *ibid*, Wighton’s copy of his letter to Chappell, 8 February 1859.



*Bonnie Dundee*, in Wighton's opinion, was a prime example of a Scottish tune. Finally, Wighton was convinced that Scottish courtiers and music must have predated D'Urfey in London by at least half a century.

Surprisingly, Chappell seems to have maintained a dignified silence with regards to Wighton's outburst; at any event, the next letter preserved by Wighton was dated 25<sup>th</sup> July 1859 - when Chappell wrote of his respect for Wighton, extending an invitation to visit him in London. (Incidentally, Wighton was not alone in objecting to some of Chappell's conclusions. For instance, a Charles Neaves wrote to Laing a full decade later, querying the history of Ye banks and braes.)<sup>62</sup>

### **The abortive Scottish project**

Between 1857-1859, Chappell revived the idea of writing a modest contribution to the history of Scottish music, and further correspondence alluded to a collection of Scots songs, to be harmonized by Macfarren:-

8 August 1857 to Laing:-

[...] if I find my materials accumulate as I expect, [I] may hereafter offer a contribution to the history of Scottish music [...]<sup>63</sup>

26 October 1858 to Laing:-

I am not about to attempt a complete collection of Scottish music for I am not sufficiently versed in the subject to do so, but I think I can find one or two better versions of the tunes than are usually printed.<sup>64</sup>

11 November 1858 to Wighton:-

I do not think I have told you that I am making a collection of Scotch songs & that Macfarren is harmonizing them.

I hear with regret that you are annoyed at my article on Anglo Scottish Songs - now really if I have misstated anything you will do me a great favour by informing me. I can assure you that it was very far from my intention [.]. I consider that unscrupulous men like Stenhouse ought

<sup>62</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.18, fols 395-396, Charles Neaves to Laing, 1 January 1869.

<sup>63</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fols 1728-1729, Chappell to Laing, 8 August 1857.

<sup>64</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fols 1739-1740, Chappell to Laing, 26 October 1858.

to be exposed but by facts & not by strong words - I believe such men to do mischief instead of good to the cause they advocate because we cannot believe them when they may state the truth - I am sure I have not said a word in deprecation of Scottish music - Pray tell me of what you disapprove & especially if I have overstated anything.<sup>65</sup>

28 December 1858 to Laing:-

It is my intention to propose for a collection of Scotch music [...]<sup>66</sup>

4 January 1859 to Laing:-

I mean now to turn my attention to notes upon Scotch songs [...]<sup>67</sup>

Chappell's letters to David Laing made no further mention of these plans after Wighton wrote the angry letter to Chappell in February 1859. Nonetheless, he must have kept his materials intact, for in 1877 he lent two boxes of books and manuscripts to John Muir Wood, for his new edition of *Songs of Scotland*.<sup>68</sup>

Chappell told Laing:-

You probably are acquainted [with] John Muir Wood of Glasgow. I lent him two boxfulls [sic] of music and manuscripts relating to Scotch music (& Anglo-Scottish); to use for his proposed new edition of Wood's *Songs of Scotland*. I hope his health may permit him to complete it, & I feel sure that it will be the best ever issued. I placed in his hands all my memoranda on these subjects, & my transcripts of Andrew Blaikie's, the Skene, and other Scotch MSs. I had also a large collection of my own forming, and he is using some of it now.

The late Robert Chambers urged me to print a collection of Scotch music, but I felt convinced that the Scotch would prefer it from the

<sup>65</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll. 31669, *ibid*, Chappell to Wighton, 11 November 1858.

<sup>66</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fols 1743-1747, Chappell to Laing, 28 December 1858.

<sup>67</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fols 1748-1749, Chappell to Laing, 4 January 1859.

<sup>68</sup> Whilst it is known that Wood's great-grandson, Sir Alan Muir Wood (1921-2009), was given a collection of about 900 of Wood's photographs and negatives by a cousin, which he donated to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in 1985, the whereabouts of the boxes of music and manuscripts is unknown. Warwick Edwards comments that John Muir Wood's descendents do not appear to know how or where the collection was split up. Additionally, Muir Wood's Glasgow music business was taken over by a William Adlington (Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 213), and it is not beyond the bounds of probability that some music materials might have ended up with him.

hands of their fellow countrymen, one of greater ability & of well-known honour.<sup>69</sup>

Three years earlier, in 1874, Chappell had published the first volume of his *History of Music (Art and Science), from the earliest records to the fall of the Roman Empire*. Wighton had died by this time, but - not surprisingly, given the period under discussion - there was nothing in the book to cause concern even to the most ardent Scotsman. Furthermore, Chappell reveals that Volume 2 was to be 'Dr Ginsberg's History of Hebrew Music',<sup>70</sup> that he himself would be writing about the Middle Ages, and his friend Dr Rimbault was planning to write a new history of modern music, 'commencing where I may leave off'. In other words, there was little chance of Chappell going into print at any length on the topics that had so inflamed Messrs Wighton and Davie.

What, then, are the implications of the controversies raised by Chappell's forays into Scottish music in his *Popular Music of the Olden Time*?

Certain facts are inescapable. Firstly, although Stenhouse had made a worthy start with his commentary on the *Scots Musical Museum*, his successors found much of his work flawed. (Indeed, Graham and Laing had already taken steps to correct some of his errors, in the posthumous *Illustrations*, and Graham's subsequent *Songs of Scotland*.) Chappell was outspoken in his criticisms, whilst Wighton was staunchly defensive of Stenhouse, though he conceded that mistakes had been made. Laing was more prepared to adopt a middle position - maybe Davie was right in asserting that 'Laing would not enter into a controversy'.<sup>71</sup>

Secondly, it would appear that David Laing, Andrew Wighton and James Davie made a valid point when they commented that Chappell was over-dependent on the *Dancing Master* and other Playford publications. Chappell's regular references to his collecting activities bear out the fascination that these books held for him.

<sup>69</sup> Edinburgh UL, La.IV.17, fol. 1762, Chappell to Laing, 25 December 1877. My thanks to Katy Cooper of Glasgow University Music Department for this transcription.

<sup>70</sup> William Chappell, *The History of Music (Art and Science)* (London, [1874], I, p.xl.

<sup>71</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 48, Davie to Wighton, 1 October 1857.

Evidently, the Scottish antiquarian community was as anxiously trying to establish a claim on their old Scottish tunes, as Chappell was in insisting that some of them might originally have been English. Even John Glen, whilst roundly condemning Chappell for some of his assertions, conceded that *Popular Music of the Olden Time* 'was written to refute the common assertion that England possessed no national music whatever'.<sup>72</sup>

The purpose of this present discussion is not to prove or disprove Chappell's theories; nor to establish the provenance of the tunes. As it happens, later research proves that Chappell was indeed mistaken in some of his assumptions: for example, the Skene manuscript may have been rather older than Chappell estimated.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, other early manuscripts have since come to light, which Chappell could not have known about. Nonetheless, this examination of contemporary correspondence does highlight the burning issues of the day.

James Davie and Andrew Wighton were probably not alone in believing that Chappell was anti-Scottish, for he appears to have expressed his views quite forcefully in connection with the Roxburghe Ballads, too - as we shall see shortly. Moreover, this view re-emerges with some force soon after his death. I have already cited Henry Davey's *History of English Music* (1895), and to his subsequent entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* in 1901, earlier in this chapter. In both publications, Davey cited *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, as further evidence of an anti-Scottish attitude.

<sup>72</sup> John Glen, *Early Scottish Melodies*, (Edinburgh: Glen, 1900), p. 14.

<sup>73</sup> Daune had dated Part 1 of the Skene MS as 1615-1630, Part 4 as 1632-, and Parts 5 and 7 prior to 1615. (*Ancient Scottish Melodies*, pp. 10-12.) Laing, in his Additional Illustrations to Stenhouse's *Illustrations*, cited Daune, and said that he himself had 'some doubts whether it should not be considered as ten years subsequent in date either to 1615 or 1620.' *Illustrations* (1853), 'Additional Illustrations', p. 395.

In the Appendix of his *Collection of National English Airs* (1838), Chappell stated, p.189, that 'Mr Daune overstates the age of this MS. in asserting it to be of the time of James the First [i.e. 1567-1625]. It is certainly not earlier than the reign of Charles the First [i.e.1625-1649]. Mr David Laing dates it 1630.' Indeed, by 1848, Graham was citing Laing as saying that the MS was written 'about thirty or forty years after the commencement of the seventeenth century' (*Songs of Scotland*, I, iv) - not so different to Chappell's earlier statement.

However, current opinions vary between Evelyn Stell's dating of the MS between 1820-25 (Evelyn Stell, *Melody and Algorithm*, < <http://www.evelynstell.com/>> [accessed 10 June 2009], and *Grove Music's* dating of it as c.1830-33. (Bibliography of 'Scotland' article by Kenneth Elliot, Francis Collinson and Peggy Duesenberry).

However, an examination of the correspondence enables scholars of today to re-evaluate the cross-currents existing within the culture of the time. The study of historiography allows us to trace the evolving thought-processes, and to understand better how we have ended up with our current perceptions and attitudes towards Scotland's musical history.

William Chappell clearly enjoyed a continued interest in Scottish music, and was meticulous in his efforts to set the record straight as he perceived it.

Admittedly, some would argue that his theories might have been misguided. Yet arguably it was not this, so much as the sensitivity of nationalist epistemologies that caused such upset. Nonetheless, a further examination of contemporary sources might well enlighten us as to the views and attitudes of other key nineteenth-century protagonists.

## Signs of Progress

Times were changing. It has already been mentioned that all three major collections of the mid-nineteenth century, Dun and Thomson's *Vocal Melodies of Scotland*, Graham's *Songs of Scotland*, and Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, were reissued and revised until they finally appeared in completely new editions in the last two decades of the century and even beyond. Even Hogg's *Jacobite Relics* were reprinted from the original edition in 1874, by A. Gardner of Paisley - a publisher who specialised in material of local, or generally Scottish interest - when in all probability the work was no more than a literary curiosity, much as had been the fate of the earlier Ossian tales by Macpherson. The Ettrick shepherd himself had to a certain extent become a relic of Scotland's Romantic past, much as his *Jacobite Relics* had been all along.

## New Editions and Reprints

But what of Dun and Thomson's, Graham's, and Chappell's song collections? Although their revisions fall outwith the period with which this thesis has been concerned, it is worthwhile to take note of the directions taken by their subsequent editors.

Dun and Thomson's *Vocal Melodies of Scotland* was reprinted several times. It was completely revised and re-edited by Edward Rimbault Dibdin for a new edition published in 1884.<sup>74</sup> As mentioned earlier, he noted in his preface that he had taken care 'to avoid unnecessary interference with those admirable settings, by the late Finlay Dun and John Thomson'. This is not to say that he did not revise the repertoire, however, replacing less popular songs with his own arrangements of 'standard compositions' - in other words, bringing the contents up to date.

Still adhering to the policy of using 'genuine versions' of both melodies and lyrics, Dibdin continued to avoid 'artificial modes of embellishment', and to provide settings in a style that was not only appropriate, but also straightforward to play.

At the same time, he endeavoured to restore the lyrics to 'the author's original text', except where public taste or a particular musical setting dictated alterations - or, indeed, substitution by new 'more suitable words'. It could be argued that such a policy gave him considerable freedom of choice!

Perhaps realising that the original edition was somewhat light on background information, Dibdin did make more attributions of melodies, although there were still a lot of vague generalisations about 'ancient' airs, or, indeed, 'words and music ancient'. Sometimes tunes are named, and there are passing references to Oswald's *Caledonian Pocket Companion*, William Marshall, and Allan Ramsay. Nonetheless, the collection retained the sense of being a performing edition, as opposed to Graham's erudite attempt to combine a performing collection with a successor to Stenhouse's *Illustrations*.

Dun's settings of the *Lays of Strathearn* similarly appeared in new 'editions' in 1860, 1880 and 1890. (Since the number of pages did not change, these were possibly little more than reprints, although they have not been compared for the purposes of this study.)

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<sup>74</sup> Edward Rimbault Dibdin (1853-1941), was born in Edinburgh, but moved to Liverpool in 1876 (Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 239), where he was curator of the Walker Art Gallery. His father was Londoner Henry Edward Dibdin (1813-1866), and his godfather was Edward Rimbault, a renowned English antiquarian. H. E. Dibdin had settled in Edinburgh at the age of 20, and arranged songs for George Farquhar Graham's *Songs of Scotland*; he might thus have been the 'Englishman' whom Davie said Muir Wood should not have employed for this collection.

However, as mentioned earlier, Graham's *Songs of Scotland* was to be the most enduring Scottish collection of the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Capitalising on a good commercial opportunity, Wood additionally published a book of piano arrangements by Surenne in 1856, drawn from Graham's *Songs of Scotland*: namely, *Wood's Edition of the Melodies of Scotland without Words*.

(Wood and Surenne also, incidentally, worked together on other collections, producing a similar piano collection of Irish music in 1854 - *The Songs of Ireland without Words*. As we have already observed, their other notable collection, *The Dance Music of Scotland*,<sup>75</sup> seems to have made use of tunes from James Davies' sources, much to his chagrin, and he was thereafter deeply suspicious of the Wood firm.)

John Muir Wood (1805-1892) was the elder of the two Wood brothers, who inherited the family music publishing business and were a significant presence on the musical scene for much of the nineteenth century. John ran the Glasgow shop, also organising concerts and researching Scottish musical history.

As mentioned earlier, Chappell, abandoning his own plans for a Scottish collection, had lent John Muir Wood his notes on Scottish music - an irony which would not have been missed by Chappell's earlier Scottish critics. Wood wrote the article on 'Scotish music' for the first edition of Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, in 1883,<sup>76</sup> and reissued *Songs of Scotland* as a 'new edition revised with additional airs and notes' in 1884-87, under the title of *The Popular Songs of Scotland with their Appropriate Melodies*. Even this was not the last edition. John Muir Wood died in 1892, but Bayley & Ferguson *finally issued The Popular Songs of Scotland* in 1908. By this time it had been in print, albeit in three different revisions, for sixty years.

Although George Farquhar Graham was named as solely responsible for the annotations in the original *Songs of Scotland*, Wood augmented these notes for

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<sup>75</sup> Graham wrote to Wighton about these planned volumes, in 1852. Both books were to contain the same list of collections. See Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Bundle labelled 'Wighton Notebook and thirty letters on musical affairs' (uncatalogued), Letter 5, Graham to Wighton, 7 June 1852.

<sup>76</sup> John Muir Wood and T. L. Stillie, 'Scotish Music', in *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians (A.D. 1540-1889*; ed. by George Grove, 4 vols (London: Macmillan, 1879-1900) III (1883), 438-52.

the subsequent editions in 1885 and 1908. The 1885 edition retained the original accompaniments, but new material was harmonised by T. M. Mudie and A. C. Mackenzie. To the coterie of largely Scottish-based arrangers that he had employed for the first edition, Wood now added the English Sir George Alexander Macfarren, the former Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, and his successor, the Scottish-born Alexander Campbell Mackenzie. (Chappell had employed Macfarren as a young man for his 1838-40 *Collection of National Airs*, and had hoped to enlist his services when he was planning the Scottish compilation that never came to fruition.)

With the final 1908 edition (largely a reprint of the 1884-87 edition), the same names are there, but Graham's name no longer takes first place. Additionally, academic affiliations are by now noted on the title-page, and Muir Wood's own name appears in connection with Grove's Dictionary, endorsing his standing:-

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| 1848-9 | Arranged with pianoforte accompaniments by G. F. Graham, T. M. Mudie, J. T. Surenne, H. E. Dibdin, Finlay Dun, &c. Illustrated with historical, biographical, and critical notices by George Farquhar Graham, author of the article 'Music' in the seventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, etc, etc.  |
| 1885   | Arranged by G. F. Graham, A. C. Mackenzie, J. T. Surenne, T. M. Mudie, Finlay Dun, H. E. Dibdin and Sir George A. Macfarren. Illustrated by Critical and other Notices by George Farquhar Graham, author of the article 'Music' in the seventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica; Revised by J. Muir Wood, with additional airs and notes.   |
| 1908   | Arranged by A. C. Mackenzie, Principal Royal Academy of Music, G. Farquhar Graham, T. M. Mudie, Finlay Dun, J. T. Surenne, H. E. Dibdin and Sir George A. Macfarren, late Principal R. A. M. Illustrated by Critical and other Notices by George Farquhar Graham, author of the article 'Music' in the seventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica; Revised with the addition of many airs and notes by J. Muir Wood, author of the article 'Scotish music' in Sir George Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians. |

(The Preface to the 1908 Bayley and Ferguson edition is actually dated 1891, and initialled by Wood.)

In fact, the 1885 edition significantly shows Wood making what was either a deliberate policy change, or an acknowledgment that in some instances it was



futile to try to establish precise national origins. The telling paragraphs appear towards the end of his 'Preliminary Note':-

In the present work, no attempt has been made to eliminate the English airs; they have been retained in some cases for the purpose of pointing out that notwithstanding the Scottish words they are really English; in others - as in 'The Banks of Doon' - because the Scottish poetry has saved the English air from oblivion, which its own words never could have done. In every known instance the English origin of an air has been acknowledged; the numerous additions which have been made to the work will be found, however, to be entirely Scottish; these are mostly modern, but among them are a few worthy relics of the olden time, which have been gathered up after a century of neglect.<sup>77</sup>

A review in the *Musical Times* (1<sup>st</sup> January, 1885) unerringly picked up this move, noting that Wood's most notable contribution was in,

[...] the clearer establishment of the nationality of the airs, some of which have been proved to be certainly English, while others may be considered equally English and Scottish, as they belong to the Border Counties on either side.

The reviewer similarly paraphrased Wood's own comments, in observing that some airs now known to be English were left in the book, since the authors of the lyrics now in use were Scottish:-

[...] on account of the beautiful poetry written for [these tunes] by Scotchmen, and with which they are much more associated than with the original verses, now indeed known only to the antiquary.<sup>78</sup>

This confirms my reading of Wood's unspoken dual message that, in actual fact, these particular songs were Scottish on account of their contemporary Scottish words, and not by their historical ancestry - but that such a distinction was only of consequence to a diehard antiquarian, and not to the general reader. Scottish song had, in modern parlance, gone mainstream.

<sup>77</sup> *The Popular Songs of Scotland*, Revised ... J. Muir Wood (London: Bayley & Ferguson, 1908), p. vi.

<sup>78</sup> John Muir Wood's prefatory remarks, quoted in the unattributed review of *The Popular Songs of Scotland, with their appropriate melodies*. New edition revised [Glasgow: J. Muir Wood & Co.], in *The Musical Times*, 1 January, 1885, 35-6.

## Popular Music of the Olden Time: the English reaction

The subsequent history of Chappell's collection is intriguing, and merits further investigation in its own right. Chappell's own copy of *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, with copious marginal annotations, fell into the possession of John Woodfall Ebsworth (1824-1908), an English cleric and *littérateur* who was a close friend of Chappell's through their shared interest in editing ballads.

If Davie and Wighton thought Chappell, Graham and Laing unfair in their criticisms of Stenhouse's remarks, then they would have been outraged by Ebsworth's remarks in the Ballad Society's *Roxburghe Ballades* volumes, of which he edited the last six volumes. For example, in 1889, we find him remarking that,

There have not existed many more shameless assertors of barefaced falsehoods than William Stenhouse [...] The Francis Semple claim [...] is absurd, and the vague references to an authenticating MS of his Poetical Works as being possible "in the hands of one of his descendants, Mrs Campbell of Paisley", is in harmony with Stenhouse's accustomed lubricity and deceit. Even so accomplished an Editor as G. F. Graham retained the air of "She rose and let me in" [...] in Vol.III p.48, of Wood's excellent Songs of Scotland, first edition.<sup>79</sup>

Sigrid Rieuwerts, writing about the short-lived Ballad Society, has commented that Chappell, who started the *Roxburghe* edition, firmly believed that the Scottish had appropriated English ballads as their own, whilst the later editions (i.e. those by Ebsworth) showed a high degree of 'English nationalism and anti-Scottish sentiment'.<sup>80</sup>

What is one to make of this, in light of the arguments about Chappell already described earlier in this chapter? I suggest that Chappell, sensing that he had touched a raw nerve with the Scottish song fraternity, made a tactical retreat in withdrawing from the fray and lending his materials to John Muir Wood, arguing that such a collection might be deemed more acceptable if edited by a Scot.

<sup>79</sup> *The Roxburghe Ballads*, ed. by J. Woodfall Ebsworth, 9 vols (London: Printed for the Ballad Society, 1871-1897), VI (1889), pp. 198-99.

<sup>80</sup> Sigrid Rieuwerts, 'The Ballad Society: a Forgotten Chapter in the History of English Ballad Studies', in *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-Creation*, ed. by Ian Russell and David Atkinson (Aberdeen: Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, 2004), p36.

Nonetheless, this plainly did not stop Chappell making similar comments in connection with the ballad literature, which falls outwith the scope of the present study.

Equally clearly, Chappell was not alone in his suspicions, and it would appear that Ebsworth's own views were even more hard-line. Furthermore, Wooldridge was in turn to make his own policy decision with regard to the Scottish element in the new edition of *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, as we shall see in the next few pages.

Chappell and Ebsworth enjoyed a close working relationship. In particular, two letters from Chappell to Ebsworth dated 9<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February 1877 make it clear that Chappell regarded him as his natural successor, certainly in the field of balladry:-

9<sup>th</sup> Feb., 1877.

To send you the Pepys & index would be about half a ream of paper. Would it not be better to send me 20 first lines at a time that I may search [...], as to Dr Rimbault's veracity, I have had some reason to doubt it occasionally myself, but I am certain that my own will bear any test - & it has been well tested, especially by F J Furnivall & others already. My Scotch friends would have been delighted to catch me tripping, & one of my own clerks was embarrassed to do so, & confessed it to me when he had tried in vain. My time is over, and I have been only too well pleased to find a more able successor in yourself, therefore I have been ready to offer any information that certain works in my library might afford - on those grounds you should think of me only as

Your hearty well-wisher, Wm Chappell.

PS I will send you 180 Loyal Songs by post.<sup>81</sup>

26<sup>th</sup> Feb., 1877

[...] If you could find me the first line of "Johnny come tye my cravat" from any Scotch Collection, [...] I know they appropriated it. [...]

Come here, & turn over all my remaining papers. I offer you bed, board & a hearty welcome - I will also lend you anything to copy.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Oxford Bodleian Library, Harding Collection, Uncatalogued Ebsworth notebooks and correspondence (grey box), Chappell to Joseph Woodfall Ebsworth, 9 February 1877.

Considering their close friendship, Ebsworth must have found it strange that when Chappell died, his daughter twice wrote to explain that they were unable to invite Ebsworth to the funeral at Kensal Green, since it would be attended solely by close family.<sup>83</sup> Paradoxically, he did eventually read Chappell's burial service.<sup>84</sup>

This was, however, only the start of an intriguing chain of events, for one of Chappell's executors subsequently wrote to Ebsworth requesting the return of their father's *Popular Music of the Olden Time* volumes. Ebsworth was told that, since they were unable to get it republished by McMillan or other publishers, and were not in a position to pay Ebsworth to edit it, they would like to keep it in the family as a keepsake. But why not have it published either by his own former firm (Cramer, Beale and Chappell, the firm with whom he had gone into partnership from 1843 until his retirement in 1861), or the family firm, Chappell itself? For the descendants of a publisher to be unable to find anyone to publish a revised edition seems, on the face of it, incongruous.

There survive in Oxford Bodleian's Harding Collection both volumes of *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, described in the catalogue as Ebsworth's own volumes.<sup>85</sup> Vol.1 is inscribed 'from his Mother', and a torn excerpt from a sales catalogue, (item no.360) is pasted inside:-

Presentation copy, prepared for a new edition and filled with Commendations, additions and notes in the neat handwriting of Mr Ebsworth, partly from Mr. Chappell's own information. Also other notes, A.L.s [sic] etc, loosely inserted, forming a most valuable Collection of this interesting subject.

Besides Ebsworth's own comments, are other notes in his hand, quoting extensively 'from W.C.'s MSS scraps', 'William Chappell's M.S. Note', 'W.C.'s

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<sup>82</sup> Oxford Bodleian Library, Harding Collection, *ibid*, Chappell to Ebsworth, 26 February 1877, on the subject of Pepys ballads.

<sup>83</sup> Oxford Bodleian Library, Harding Collection, *ibid*, Florence Chappell to Ebsworth, 19 and 22 August 1888

<sup>84</sup> A press-cutting was preserved inside Ebsworth's personal copy of *Popular Music of the Olden Time*. The cutting from *The Hertfordshire Mercury*, dated Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> September 1888, reports that 'an interesting memoir of the late William Chappell [...] appeared in last Saturday's *Athenaeum*, from the pen, if we mistake not, of the Rev. J. W. Ebsworth, who read the burial service at his old friend's funeral recently at Kensal Green.'

<sup>85</sup> Oxford Bodleian Library, Harding Collection, Harding C.3658 and C.3659.

notes in MS', or instructions, e.g., 'Also print the melody of the other copy'. Sources of references and page numbers are cited, passages are re-worded, and there are minor corrections of printing errors or improvements. It seems more than likely that, before handing back the Chappell volumes to the family, Ebsworth must have transferred any of Chappell's notes that he considered relevant, to his own personal copies.

Five years later, in 1893, the family firm of Chappell published William Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, under the new title of *Old English Popular Music*.<sup>86</sup> It was simultaneously published in New York by Novello & Ewer, and was described as 'A new edition with a preface and notes, and the earlier examples entirely revised by H. Ellis Wooldridge.' Wooldridge, besides being a musical scholar, was also Slade Professor of Fine Arts at Oxford, 1985-1904. The editorial preface stated at the outset that,

'The basis of the present edition was a copy of the work of 1855, annotated and interleaved by the author, and containing all the information he had collected since that publication.'<sup>87</sup>

Clearly, Chappell's family had allowed Wooldridge to use the copy that they had retrieved from Ebsworth in 1888.

Wooldridge's alterations are fairly well-documented. Sternfeld, in his 1965 edition of *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, itemises five changes:- better manuscript citations; more sources named; Wooldridge's harmonizations substituted for those of Macfarren (although Sternfeld finds these to be only marginally better); a pruning of the literary material; and the omission of songs 'where no source of sufficiently old age was extant.'<sup>88</sup>

Wooldridge himself had explained that,

Most of the marginal annotations and the additionally literary references have been incorporated in the new text, but I have

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<sup>86</sup> William Chappell, *Old English Popular Music*, new edition with a preface and notes and the earlier examples entirely revised by H. Ellis Wooldridge, 2 vols (London: Chappell and Macmillan, 1893).

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, I, pp. vi-vii.

<sup>88</sup> William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, ed. by Frederick W. Sternfeld, 2 vols (New York : Dover, 1965), I, pp. viii-ix.

omitted the complete ballads, only retaining a stanza or two where it was necessary to quote them at all.<sup>89</sup>

The reason for omitting complete ballad lyrics was because Wooldridge felt that the ‘most important element of the work’ was the music itself. This echoes Chappell’s statements at the outset of his *Collection of National English Airs*, and again in Chapter 1 of his *Popular Music of the Olden Time*.

More recent sources summarise these findings; e.g., the entry in Grove Music Online remarks that his edition represented more advanced editorial standards, and that his new piano accompaniments represented an attempt to get back to ‘16<sup>th</sup>-century English style’,<sup>90</sup> whilst the *ODNB* cites the deliberate omission of songs which did not exist in early printed sources, rejecting tunes originating primarily from the oral tradition.<sup>91</sup>

As it happens, both Sternfeld and the entry in *ODNB* are incorrect in stating that Wooldridge replaced all of Macfarren’s harmonizations. The reality is that his main concern was to re-arrange the earlier songs.

However, what is most pertinent to the present thesis, but unmentioned by these modern authorities, is the significant number of Scottish references which were dropped. Where Graham and Chappell earlier used the term ‘Scotified’,<sup>92</sup> then Wooldridge can justifiably be said to have de-Scotified the second edition.

Further research would be required to ascertain how many of these omissions might have been planned by Chappell in his annotated *Popular Music of the Olden Time*; and how many would appear to have been undertaken at Wooldridge’s own initiative. Ebsworth’s copies may survive, but the present author has not attempted to locate the Chappell originals, which appear, from the correspondence, to have been returned by Ebsworth to Chappell’s estate.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid, I, p. vii.

<sup>90</sup> H.C. Colles and Rosemary Williamson. ‘Wooldridge, H.E.’, *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/>> [accessed 1 April 2009].

<sup>91</sup> Robert Bridges, ‘Wooldridge, Harry Ellis (1845–1917),’ rev. Anne Pimlott Baker, *ODNB* [accessed April 1, 2009].

<sup>92</sup> A term defined by the *OED* as ‘having Scottish characteristics’, and used as far back as 1644. Graham uses the spelling, ‘Scotified’ in *Songs of Scotland*, whereas Chappell prefers ‘Scottified’ in *Popular Music of the Olden Time*. *OED* admits either.

This thesis is not the place to undertake a close comparison of Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time* with *Old English Popular Music*, or, indeed, with Ebsworth's copies of *Popular Music*. However, some preliminary findings, resulting from a careful comparison of Chappell's and Wooldridge's editions, are instead placed in Appendix 2. Minor differences have not all been noted, but mention has been made of every instance where a Scottish reference is dropped.

For now, all we can conclude is that someone, whether it was Chappell or Wooldridge, made a conscious decision to remove some of the Scottish bones of contention from the new, revised edition of Chappell's collection. The omissions were made without comment, so one can only guess at the reasons behind this move. Perhaps they had, quite simply, caused Chappell too much grief, and it may have been decided that things would be less complicated without angry Scots declaring that their music had been misrepresented. After all, it will be recalled that Chappell's plans for a book on Scots music had never come to fruition, despite his mentioning the idea in his private correspondence over some twenty years, until he finally lent the two boxes of notes to John Muir Wood in 1877, to use in connection with the new edition of Graham's *Songs of Scotland*, having abandoned any hope of writing a book of his own.

## **Cultural Identity and Eventual Compromise**

What, then, can we deduce from the close examination of correspondence both between Scots enthusiasts, and between Scots and English collectors of Scottish song? I suggest that it informs us about mid- to late-nineteenth century Scottish cultural identity in several distinct but related ways.

In the first instance, we realise from the Wighton correspondence, and most particularly from his friend James Davie's letters, that they were still perhaps too close to the earlier sources, such as the Oswald materials, to be able to understand the different attitudes to attribution in Oswald's day. Oswald's talents as a musician were open to debate, and that in itself was a matter of some importance to Davie and Wighton, with their pride in their nation's music. But, as Gelbart has pointed out in connection with Handel, the whole question of ascription was quite different prior to c.1760, and there is sufficient evidence of composers 'borrowing' and re-using materials, attributing tunes to other

individuals as a form of tribute, or indeed their own works getting into circulation with no name attached, for us to understand now that the concept of proprietary authorship was in no way the same as it was to become in the nineteenth century.<sup>93</sup> Thus, it can be argued that Davie and Wighton were concerned about Oswald's reputation as an author, and his honesty and indeed motivations in terms of the Rizzio ascriptions, in a way that quite simply might not have been part of Oswald's own thinking.

It might be added that Baptie, a few decades later, echoed similar sentiments, albeit more dispassionately, when he stated that,

As an editor, [Oswald] was both careless and unscrupulous, sometimes claiming fine old melodies as his own, at others ascribing them to David Rizzio or others, without the slightest particle of evidence. His known compositions do not rise above mediocrity.<sup>94</sup>

Baptie clearly had no more understanding about early eighteenth-century ascriptions than did Davie or Wighton. Where he differs is that his judgement is apparently not clouded by the same kind of cultural nationalism that caused Davie and Wighton such anguish. (The quality of Oswald's compositions is of no consequence to the present discussion.)

Secondly, we realise from John Muir Wood's subsequent revisions of Graham's *Songs of Scotland* that he was quite happy to include airs known to be English, for the purpose of acknowledging this; or on account of their more famous Scottish words, also including some 'modern' Scottish additions and 'worthy relics'. (The context is ambiguous as to whether these additions are songs, airs or both.) This certainly suggests a more relaxed and pragmatic attitude to 'Scottish song' than some of the earlier song collectors held, and can best be summarised as a general acceptance of nationality 'by repute', allied to a willingness to concede where there was English input. Indeed, it could be held significant that the two most eminent arrangers were the previous and present Principals from the Royal Academy of Music, an Englishman and a Scot respectively. Wood had not gone so far as George Thomson in commissioning European art music from the highest masters, but he had certainly sought

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<sup>93</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk music" and "Art music"*, p. 23.

<sup>94</sup> Baptie, *Musical Scotland*, p. 143.



musicians of high repute from within Great Britain. All of these can be described as sound business decisions which doubtless contributed to the success of his publications.

Finally, with Chappell's loan of his Scottish song materials to Wood, and Wooldridge's later revision of Chappell's *Popular Music*, we see a pragmatic retreat from the issues which had caused so much concern in the first edition. Leaving the Scottish songs to the Scots, and omitting anything contentious regarding nationality, Chappell and Wooldridge probably wisely limited themselves to the English repertoire, with Wooldridge's new conciliatory title flagging up the changes - *Old English Popular Music*. Whether this was an act of wisdom or an admission of defeat is, of course, a matter of opinion. Whatever interpretation one makes of the decision, it is clear that both sides of the Border had, in a sense, taken steps to reach a compromise.

## Conclusion

This thesis has examined the whole phenomenon of song-collecting in Scotland between the years of c.1760 and 1888, taking four words from James Johnson's title page, 'Our Ancient National Airs', as its overriding theme, and seeking to establish both the motivation of the song collectors, and how their activities reflected the cultural environment in which they lived and worked.

It has been clearly demonstrated that the preoccupations of the collectors are often revealed in general terms by related activities as recorded by the individuals themselves and those who knew them, but the evidence lies more specifically in the prefaces to their published collections, other writings and correspondence, and in the editorial decisions taken concerning the nature of the finished published collections themselves.

Johnson's four key words are, in a sense, the umbrella beneath which all these cultural influences are united, for the sense of national ownership and pride is unmistakeable throughout each collection here studied, whether the volume was compiled to commemorate a misty, romantic Highland past or a more couthy Lowland or Border countryside, a gritty, political time of national conflict, or a more general celebration of Scotland's past. A sense of history, and an awareness of a corpus of uniquely Scottish songs and airs pervades each, however that 'Scottishness' might be defined, and notwithstanding the boundary warfare between Scottish and English collectors, or between antiquarians and their more creative literary and musical peers.

The collections themselves, viewed as a chronologically-ordered 'bookshelf', reveal a widespread network of enthusiastic supporters working together to inform those individuals who felt compelled to compile and publish song collections. They also, more significantly, tell a fascinating tale of the cultural influences on musicians and poets during this period, and reflect many influences which have tended not, hitherto, to have been viewed together.

Thus, we observed that Joseph and Patrick MacDonalds' collecting of songs and airs, and James Macpherson's Ossianic quest, reveal them to have been typical of what has become known as the Scottish Age of Enlightenment, in seeking to

establish a 'museum' repertoire of ancient, primitive song. At the same time, their collections served to define something particularly Scottish - and Highland Scottish at that - which reinforced their sense of Scottish identity and heritage, notwithstanding the Union and subsequent Jacobite rebellions. The roughly contemporary collections of James Johnson, Robert Burns, George Thomson and Ritson, similarly betray the fear that the repertoire would be lost, if it were not comprehensively recorded for posterity, although there were widely differing ideas as to the best method of presentation, from Ritson's melodies, through to Thomson's European art settings.

The extensive influence of Macpherson's Ossianic epics, taken together with a new interest in geology (and, specifically, in Fingal's Cave), more widespread recreational travel, and the limiting effect of the Napoleonic Wars on European 'grand tours', all led to a renewed focus on travel to the wilder parts of Scotland and the Hebrides. The concept of 'the sublime' and its enduring effect on contemporary literary writings was also evident in this regard. Whilst Alexander Campbell's was the collection revealing most of these influences, one cannot overlook the lower-key, more domestic activities of private collectors in the Hebrides at this time, and there is certainly a body of Gaelic-language material worthy of deeper investigation.

Another parallel between literature and music, evident throughout this era, is the whole issue of fakery and forgery. Ritson's insistence upon accuracy, authenticity and historical record-keeping, and Burns's efforts to improve the repertoire as he recorded it, mark the beginning of the divide between antiquarian and poet, which became more marked in the next generation of collectors. With Hogg and Smith, we came to the crucial point where antiquarian meets creative artist, as hinted at by Cunningham in his *The Songs of Scotland, Ancient and Modern* essay. The parallels between literary and musical writings are most evident in the notion of the 'found' literary manuscript vis-à-vis the 'recovered' song, and the opportunity this afforded for creating something that would pass as traditionally Scottish to the uninformed eye (or ear).

Well before 1820, we witnessed the urge to record not only the songs and airs, but also the stories behind them. This was fulfilled with the efforts of Stenhouse and Hogg, even if further decades were to elapse before Laing

brought Stenhouse's work into print. Indeed, the drive to educate the connoisseur of Scottish song was to continue throughout the rest of the century, as we saw in the collections overseen by John Muir Wood and George Farquhar Graham, and also in William Chappell's influential *Popular Music of the Olden Time*.

With Alexander Campbell's collection exemplifying an early attempt to produce a home-grown art-music collection of Gaelic and Border songs with fully written-out accompaniment as opposed to an embellished figured bass, the collections from c.1830 onwards bear witness to the great Victorian enthusiasm for domestic music-making. However, they also demonstrate the beginning of a more musically-educated compiler, and Campbell's efforts were soon to be regarded as the work of a dilettante by comparison with the competent song-settings of Finlay Dun, John Thomson, George Farquhar Graham and their peers.

However, as has already been hinted, the collections examined in this thesis all, in one way or another, stem from the impulse to gather together a uniquely Scottish body of material. Throughout the entire period, debates raged as to whether a particular song or air was authentically Scottish or not, and authentically traditional or artistically created. With William Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, many of these arguments were brought into the open. It was not until subsequent editions both of Chappell's book by Wooldridge, and of Graham's *Songs of Scotland* by Wood and his arrangers, that some form of compromise was reached. Wooldridge left the Scottish repertoire to the Scots, and the Scots finally redefined their repertoire to admit 'Scottish by association', and assimilated 'composed' songs as being as much part of their heritage as the anonymous folk song by an unknown Lowland shepherd or Highland hero.

## Appendix 1.

### Known manuscripts and other materials associated with the Maclean-Clephane sisters

Library	Reference	Description
Trinity College Dublin, Archon Repository no. Eire 0630	TCD MS 10615	<p>Library description, supplied by email, 6 February 2009:-</p> <p>‘A collection of Irish and Scots music with English and Italian terminology (e.g. <i>brisk</i>, <i>volti subito</i>) some titles (in English and Irish or Scots Gaelic) of tunes and authors (especially Carolan), and other notes of provenance of tunes; followed on pp 71-99 by various other pieces (a Portuguese song, Purcell, a French song-sheet (printed), Italian songs, Rossini’s <i>Assisa a piè d’un salice</i>, ‘Le Troubadour’ (French and Italian), ‘Canzoncina de lazzarone del basso porto Napoli’; followed by Gaelic airs with English words (pp 100-110) and by ‘Fisherman’s ballad in the Beacon’ and a related hymn (pp 111-113), and by English and (Portuguese?) songs (pp. 115-122) ii, 123 p. (Pp 1-69 were already paginated; pp 79-84, 97-98, 99a, 113-122 are stuck-in). ‘Index’ inside front cover gives titles for pp 1-69 in page order. Monograms of a composer on pp 69, 102, 104, 111, 112.</p> <p>‘Compiled on Mull from the music of travelling Irish pipers ... [information from Sanger, <i>Tree of Strings...</i>]</p> <p>The MS was formerly owned by Captain Alwyn C Farquharson of Invercauld, descendant of the Compton family, who permitted a copy to be made for the NLS in 1976. (NLS 14949b). The monograms noted above seem to belong to Anna Jane Maclean-Clephane, second of the three Maclean-Clephane sisters, born c.1794. She and her elder sister Margaret actively collected tunes prior to 1815, and continued in some fashion after Margaret’s marriage to the Marquis of Compton that year.</p>

Library	Reference	Description
National Library of Scotland, Archon Repository no. GB0233	14949a-c	<p>319 ff. NLS printed catalogue description: 'Copied, with Microfilm MS. 266, by permission of the owner, Capt. Alwyne C. Farquharson of Invercauld, 1976.'</p> <p>(a) Foliated i, 1-23, 26-82. (Index fol. i)  (b) Foliated i, 1-117 (Index fol. i for ff. 1-69). Copy of Trinity Coll. Dublin MS 10615.  (c) Foliated 1-119</p> <p><b>Description:</b></p> <p>(a) Source of many tunes in printed book, <i>Songs collected in the Western Isles of Scotland</i> (See below).  (b) Mainly Irish harp music &amp; another section of 'mostly Irish tunes set for fiddle'. Reported by Peter Cooke to be similar to Northampton MS.  (c) Miscellaneous collection of Scots, Gaelic and Irish songs, operatic airs, etc. Three airs dated 1821-23.</p>
National Library of Scotland	Acc.6658 (Microfilm MS 266)	<p><i>Songs collected in the Western Isles of Scotland</i>, set with accompaniments by Margaret Douglas Maclean Clephane and Anna Jane Douglas Maclean Clephane (Torloisgte: printed but not published, 1808). Microfilm made by permission of Capt. A. C. Farquharson for the NLS in 1976.</p>
Edinburgh Univ. School of Scottish Studies Archive	Misc Music MSS 4	<p>'Maclean Clephane Collection from Torloish MSS', copy. Corresponds to NLS 14949c</p>
SSS Archive	Misc Music MSS 5	<p>'Excerpt from Torloish MSS, copy'. Music corresponds to the texts in Misc MSS 42. 2 sets of photocopies, one A4 and the other B3, landscape. The A4 copies have a pencil note, 'Music MSS copied from photocopy in possession of Wm Matheson, corresponding to part of following words from notebook of Marianne Maclean of Torloisk, Lady Clephane, in the Corr [Cona?] Morison MS.'</p>

Library	Reference	Description
SSS Archive	Misc MSS 42	Also labelled 'Mull MSS', and pencilled note 'Torloisk MS from Morison Coll.' Gaelic song texts (not music) and legends, in English and Gaelic.
Castle Ashby, Northampton	'The Margaret Compton Manuscript'	About 200 sides in all. 112 sides are used for 109 Gaelic songs; as at May 2009, in possession of the Marquess of Northampton, and not in archive at Castle Ashby. Some overlap of repertoire with other Maclean-Clephane MSS.
British Library (GB-Lbl)	Add.14154-14248 Selvaggi Collection	Italian music collected by Signor Gaspare Selvaggi of Naples, acquired by the Comptons, and presented to BL by Marquess of Northampton, 1843.
British Library	Add.14249	Catalogue by 'Mrs Maclean-Clephane', 1843 <sup>1</sup>
Five copies extant in COPAC.	Privately printed; not published	Compton, Margaret, <i>Irene, a poem. Miscellaneous poems by Margaret Compton.</i> London: printed by Mills, Jowett and Mills, 1833. Memorial collection printed for her friends. Four translations of Gaelic songs, three of German, etc, at back of volume, together with a French fairy-tale which provided the inspiration for one of Margaret's poems.  Accessible electronically by Google Books.

<sup>1</sup> Clearly this must have been Miss Anna-Jane Maclean, since her married sister had already died.

## Appendix 2.

### Chappell revised by Wooldridge: From Popular Music of the Olden Time, to Old English Popular Music

The following comments result from a careful comparison of *Popular Music of the Olden Time* with *Old English Popular Music*. Minor differences have not all been noted here, but mention has been made of every instance where a Scottish reference is dropped.

#### **‘Western wynd’ (Chappell I, 57; Wooldridge I, 37-8)**

Wooldridge’s edition does not mention Daune, and omits Chappell’s acid comments about him. There are two possible reasons for this: that antiquarians now doubted Chappell’s dating of the Skene MS; and possibly also that Wooldridge is now eliminating Scottish controversies.

#### **‘We be three poor mariners’ (Chappell I, 77; Wooldridge II, 134)**

Chappell’s entry for the song asserted the MS to be dated ‘about 1630’ (I, 77), but in his Appendix (II, 770), he said that Daune exaggerated the age of the MS when he put it at the time of James I, and pointed out a ‘Country Dance’ that first appeared in 1698 to back up this argument. This implies he believed different parts of MSS were quite different ages.<sup>1</sup> Wooldridge’s edition states that ‘the probable date [of the Skene MS] is late in the seventeenth century’. This is earlier than current opinion (See Chapter 7).

#### **‘John, come kiss me now’ (Chappell I, 148; Wooldridge II, 268)**

Chappell traced this in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, dating from post 1621 (amongst other sources), and also found it in Andro Hart’s *Ane Compendious Booke of Godly and Spiritual Sangs* (1621), writing that the tune had been ‘claimed as Scotch, although it has no Scotch character, nor has hitherto been

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<sup>1</sup> Chappell makes further observation about Daune’s dating of the MSS, and also about the dating of the Blaikie MS, in Vol. II, 613-4.



found in any old Scotch copy'. Wooldridge also mentions these sources, including the Hart parody, but does not mention the Scottish argument. Neither is it mentioned that Chappell later found it in Blaikie's bass viol MS (which Chappell dated as c.1745, arguing with the commonly-accepted date of 1692)<sup>2</sup>.

**'Mall Sims' (Chappell I, 177; Wooldridge I, 261)**

Chappell included the Skene MS amongst his early sources. Wooldridge quotes the tune but omits the annotation, and omits Skene as a source.

**'The Spanish Lady' (Chappell I, 186; Wooldridge II, 84)**

Like Chappell, Wooldridge cites the Skene MS, giving it as the earliest source. Chappell's allusion to discussion about the identity of the lady, in 1846 journals, is omitted.

**'Drive the cold winter away' (Chappell I, 193; Wooldridge I, 172)**

Chappell cited a parody in Hart's *Ane Compendious Booke* - viz, *The wind blawis cald, furious and bald*, tracing it in *Scottish poems of 16<sup>th</sup> Century*, II, 177 (1801). Wooldridge mentions neither Hart nor the Scottish parody.

**'It was a lover and his lass' (Chappell I, 204; Wooldridge I, 114)**

Chappell cited the Leyden MS (1639) as a good early source; however, he evidently traced an earlier source - Morley's *First Booke of Ayres* (1600), so Wooldridge quotes this and omits the Leyden MS. Wooldridge gives no discussion of the song other than to say that it is in 'As you like it.'

**'Peg a Ramsey', or, 'Peggie Ramsey' (Chappell I, 219; Wooldridge I, 248)**

Chappell said, and Wooldridge reiterates, that the tune goes back to Shakespearian times. Chappell's reference to a D'Urfey Scotch song using the same tune ('The Gowlin', in his play *Trick for Treat*) is omitted from the Wooldridge edition.

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<sup>2</sup> Chappell II, 771.

**‘The hunter in his career’ (Chappell I, 198; Wooldridge I, 198)**

Chappell cited the Straloch MS as the earliest source, and Wooldridge retains this. However, Wooldridge omits Chappell’s note that the song is also in the Skene MS.

**‘Love will find out the way’ (Chappell I, 189; Wooldridge I, 189)**

Chappell cited an early source for the words as being F. Cowles’ ballads dating 1620-8, where it is described as ‘A curious Northern ditty’ (Chappell I, 304). This comment reappears in Wooldridge, but the Skene concordance is again dropped.

**‘Stingo, or, Oil of Barley ‘ (Chappell I, 305; Wooldridge I, 298)**

Chappell commented that the title later changed to ‘Cold and Raw’, after D’Urfey’s ‘New Scotch Song’. Wooldridge quotes this part of Chappell’s note exactly. However, he omits Chappell’s lengthy footnote (I, 307) about Ritson’s observations on D’Urfey songs. Chappell had listed 13 songs that Ritson alleged were ‘miserable caricatures’ of Scottish songs, and said that Ritson mentioned others of the same ilk.

Wooldridge also omits Chappell’s observation that the last line of the original words, ‘for the malt-man comes a Monday’ had given origin to a Scotch song, and omits Chappell’s comments about the impropriety of the final stanzas.

**‘What if a day, or a month, or a year?’ (Chappell I, 310; Wooldridge I, 100)**

Wooldridge retains the Skene MS and Forbes Cantus as sources, but drops Chappell’s allusion to Ritson’s belief that the song was English.

**‘The hemp-dresser, or The London Gentlewoman’ (Chappell I, 312; Wooldridge I, 297)**

Wooldridge heads this ‘The London Gentlewoman, or, The Hemp-dresser’, but retains the allusions to D’Urfey’s use of the tune for ‘The sun had loos’d’, and Burns’ use of the tune for ‘The deil’s awa’.

**‘The buff coat has no fellow’ (Chappell I, 342; Wooldridge II, 1)**

Wooldridge retains Chappell’s comment about the popularity of the tune and the claims for both Irish and Scotch [sic] origins (Wooldridge II, 1); however, he drops the comment that it was ‘disclaimed by Mr George Farquhar Graham ... who freely confesses his belief that the air is not of Scottish origin’ (Chappell I, 344).<sup>3</sup>

**‘Remember, O thou man’ (Chappell I, 373; I, 144)**

Wooldridge still gives the same early sources of Ravenscroft’s *Melismata* and the Forbes’ *Cantus*, and Chappell’s belief that it was copied from the former to the latter. He also repeats the supposition that the tune formed the basis of the English national anthem. However, he drops Pinkerton’s comments about the ‘supposed national air’ being ‘a mere transcript of a Scottish anthem’ (Chappell I, 373-4), and also drops Chappell’s description of the nature of the Forbes *Cantus*.

**‘Maying-Time ‘ (Chappell I, 377)**

Dropped from the Wooldridge edition. Chappell had cited the Leyden and Skene MSS, and all editions of Forbes’ *Cantus*, as sources.

**‘Never love thee more’ (or, ‘My dear and only love’, or, in the Wooldridge edition, ‘I’ll never love thee more ‘ (Chappell I, 378; Wooldridge I, 192)**

Wooldridge retains Chappell’s comments about the link with the Marquis of Montrose, and the fact that the song appeared in the Blaikie MS - but omits the fact that that MS was dated 1695.

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<sup>3</sup> James Davie had objected to this assertion, in a letter to Andrew Wighton dated 1 October 1957, but raised no specific objection or justification.

**‘Fair Margaret and Sweet William’ (Chappell I, 382; Wooldridge II, 131)**

Wooldridge omits Chappell’s entire passage about Thomson’s comments in *Orpheus Caledonius*, thereby removing the Scottish allusions. Chappell had said that the latter,

[...] describes it, with his usual inaccuracy, as ‘an old Scotch ballad, with the original Scotch tune’ - ‘old’, although (on the authority of Dr Johnson), it was first printed in Aaron Hill’s *Plain Dealer*, no.36, July 24, 1724, and Thomson’s *Orpheus* was published within six months of that time - viz, on January 5, 1725. The ‘original Scotch tune’ of Thomson is a version of ‘Montrose’s lines’, or ‘Never love thee more’.

**‘When the King enjoys his own again’ (Chappell II, 434; Wooldridge I, 210)**

Wooldridge retains Chappell’s reference to Ritson’s notes, and repeats the ascription to Martin Marker. However, he drops the suggestion that Parker probably wrote his song to the tune *Marry me*, which appeared in the Skene MS. (Another Skene reference has thus been dropped.)

**‘By the Border Side as I did pass’; and ‘My name is old Hewson the cobbler’ (Chappell II, 439 and II, 450 respectively)**

Wooldridge drops both ballads. This could be because they fell into the category of pieces, which Wooldridge in his Preface to Volume 2 describes as resting ‘on no better authority than tradition’. (Wooldridge II, viii). However, could it be more than coincidence that both songs had provoked controversy in Chappell’s first edition? (Davie had commented about both in a letter to Wighton).<sup>4</sup>

**‘I live not where I love’ (Chappell II, 451-2; Wooldridge I, 200)**

Chappell alluded to a reference in the Roxburghe Collection to ‘a Northern tune, called ‘Shall the absence of my mistress’, and to another tune known as ‘A paire of turtle-doves, or a dainty new Scotch Dialogue between a young man and his mistresse’. In Wooldridge’s edition, he adds the Forbes’ *Cantus* as a source, but drops Chappell’s Roxburghe comments.

<sup>4</sup> Dundee CL, Wighton Coll., shelfmark pending. Correspondence with James Davie and others, Letter 48, Davie to Wighton, 1 October 1857

**‘An old woman clothed in grey ‘ (Chappell II, 455; Wooldridge II, 120)**

Wooldridge retains the Blaikie MS as a source of the tune.

**‘The broom, the bonny broom’ (Chappell II, 458-61)**

Chappell cited another song called ‘The lovely Northern lass’, appearing in ‘Mr Halliwell’s Collection’ (a London publication), which was sung ‘To a pleasant Scotch tune, called ‘The broom of Cowden Knowes’’. There followed a long discussion as to why Chappell believed it not to be Scottish. John Glen was later to quote and argue with Chappell’s statements.<sup>5</sup> Wooldridge simply omits the entire song from his edition.

**‘I am a poor shepherd undone’ (Chappell II, 462; Wooldridge II, 14)**

Wooldridge omits Chappell’s paragraph about the three stanzas ‘My father has forty good shillings’ having been ‘appropriated in Collections of Scotch Songs’.

**Chappell’s chapter headed Reigns of Charles II, James II, and William and Mary (II, 467-608)**

Wooldridge, having decided to concentrate on the music of English popular songs, omits Chappell’s entire exposition about changing musical tastes; Charles’ liking for dance music (and hypotheses about its contrast with ‘the austere Presbyterianism of his Scottish subjects’)<sup>6</sup>; the revival of dramatic and instrumental music during the Commonwealth; Pepys’ reaction to Scottish music; and early London publications containing Scotch tunes.

**‘Come open the door, sweet Betty’ (Chappell II, 504-6; Wooldridge II, 147)**

Wooldridge quotes the same ballad opera sources, but the paragraph concerning Burns’ remarks is reduced to a footnote, only quoting the first four (as opposed to 16 lines) of Burns’ recollection.

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<sup>5</sup> John Glen, *Early Scottish Melodies* (Edinburgh: Glen, 1900), 33-5.

<sup>6</sup> Chappell, II, 470.

Similarly, Chappell's paragraph about the Scottish tune, 'Blink over the Burn, sweet Betty', is also relegated to a footnote, but instead of ending, 'evidently taken from the following ballad', and quoting it, Wooldridge ends the note, 'is evidently taken from the English ballad'.<sup>7</sup>

Wooldridge also drops Chappell's footnote about a probably erroneous Shakespearean reference.

**'The fair one let me in' (or, 'the night her blackest sables wore') (Chappell II, 509-12; Wooldridge II, 34)**

Wooldridge retains Chappell's earliest source as D'Urfey's *New Collection* (1683), but reduces Chappell's notes from two sides to one. Although he retains Chappell's sentence about the Scottish claims for this song, he omits the rest of the paragraph, thus dropping mention of:-

- Thomson's *Orpheus Caledonius* II, 14 (1733), containing what Chappell considered to be a corrupt tune;
- Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany* vol.2, where the song was marked 'z', as being old;
- The fact that Ramsay (ibid) included songs of English origin;
- Ritson's claims that it is 'an English song of great merit, which has been scotified by the Scots themselves';
- Stenhouse's disagreement with Ritson, Blackie's reiteration of Stenhouse's view; and George Farquhar Graham's failure to query Stenhouse's position;
- Chappell's views that the words were not Scottish.

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<sup>7</sup> Glen, *ibid*, adds to Stenhouse's notes on 'Blink o'er the burn, sweet Bettie', but is presumably convinced of its Scottish origins, since he makes no reference to Chappell at all.

### **‘The willow tree’ (Chappell II, 520-2)**

Chappell had asserted that this ballad had been transmitted north to the Scottish Borders, possibly using the tune to ‘Come open the door, sweet Betty’; and that as such it had been included in Wood’s *Songs of Scotland*. Wooldridge omits the ballad entirely.

### **‘My lodging it is on the cold ground’ (Chappell II, 525-30; Wooldridge II, 137)**

In Wooldridge, an alternative title is also given, ‘I prethee, love, turn to me’, and Matthew Locke’s original tune is arranged by Wooldridge; the Macfarren arrangement of ‘the popular air, with the words usually sung’, is also retained.<sup>8</sup>

Wooldridge omits the reference to Moore’s Irish collection and Clifton’s Dublin collection, and also drops the reference to Ritson’s *Scottish songs* I, 187 (1794), which Chappell had given as a source for ‘I lo’e na a laddie but ane’, to the tune ‘Happy Dick Dawson’. Chappell said that this tune was a curtailed version of ‘My lodging it is on the cold ground’.

Wooldridge also drops the reference to *Scottish Musical Museum* III (1790) as being the first printed appearance of that song,<sup>9</sup> since Chappell had evidently traced an earlier appearance in *Vocal Music, or the Songster’s Companion* (1775), commenting that ‘it has been a stock-song in print from that time’.<sup>10</sup>

### **‘Roger de Coverley’ (Chappell II, 534; Wooldridge II, 45)**

Wooldridge drops Chappell’s paragraph about the song being known in Scotland as ‘The maltman comes on Monday’, a song in the ‘Tea-Table Miscellany’ ascribed to Ramsay.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Wooldridge, II, 137.

<sup>9</sup> Glen, on the other hand, picked up Chappell’s arguments, took issue with Wood’s belief that the Scottish version was ‘an early form’ of an old English dance tune, and stressed that it was still uncertain whether the ‘curtailed’ Scottish tune or My lodging it is on the cold ground came first.

<sup>10</sup> Wooldridge II, 141.

<sup>11</sup> Glen (ibid, 195) was uncertain about this tune’s nationality but considered it more English than Scottish. Perhaps this change in thinking explains Wooldridge’s dropping of the Scottish references.

### **‘Barbara Allen’ (Chappell II, 538)**

Chappell alluded to two ballads, one English and one Scottish, each with their own tune. Wooldridge omits ‘Barbara Allen’ entirely. Maybe he again considered these to ‘rest on no better authority than tradition’.<sup>12</sup>

### **‘Lilliburlero’ (Chappell II, 568-74; Wooldridge II, 58)**

Wooldridge drops Chappell’s reference to the Shadwell play, *The Sowerers* (1691), clearly because Chappell had traced an earlier source in *The Delightful Companion* (Robert Carr, 1686). There would thus have been no need to allude to Dauneys’s misdating of Shadwell’s play.

### **‘In January last’ (Chappell II, 575-9; Wooldridge II, 30)**

Chappell had first traced the words in D’Urfey’s play, *The fond Husband, or, The Plotting Sisters* (1676), and the words and music in Playford’s *Choice Ayres* II, 46 (1679). Keeping the latter as the earliest musical source, Wooldridge retains Chappell’s paragraph about the words appearing in the Roxburghe Collection, but then severely curtails Chappell’s original commentary. Thus, it omits:

- The paragraph about Ramsay and the *Tea-Table Miscellany*, Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius* (1733) and one of the Leyden MSS c.1700;
- The observation about the popularity of both words and music in Scotland, and its appearance in *Scots Musical Museum* of 1797;
- Chappell’s paragraph about a refinement of manners, and changes in the style of popular poetry;
- Campbell’s *Albyn’s Anthology*, vol. I (1816), and his allusion to the Scottish ‘Jock o’ Hazledean’ being sung to the same tune.

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<sup>12</sup> See earlier comments on ‘By the Border Side’, and ‘My name is old Hewson’



### **‘The dusty miller’ (Chappell II, 166; Wooldridge II, 166)**

Wooldridge retains the earliest source, cites two new sources, but drops all Chappell’s original commentary, thereby leaving out his allusion to ‘Binny’s Jigg’ (to the same tune) in the Blaikie MS.

### **Chappell - the controversial chapter on Anglo-Scottish Songs (II, 609-620).**

In Wooldridge, this became the Appendix (II, 203-212). Some passages were omitted, and two songs were dropped, but most of the essay was reproduced:-

- Quotes verbatim from 609-613;
- Chappell II, 613 - in Wooldridge, the second half of the paragraph quoting from Beattie’s essay, and about ‘The Broom of Cowdenknowes’ is omitted (16 lines); thus the questionable origin of the song, and Chappell’s remarks about ‘the frequent misapplication of the term ‘Scotch’, are dropped;
- Chappell II, 614-5 (from the bottom of page 614 to the top of 615) - in Wooldridge, an allusion to ‘Peggy is over the sea with the soldier’ in the sixth part of the Skene MS is thus dropped. Dauney had believed the sixth to be the oldest part of the MS.
- Chappell II, 615-6 - NB Wooldridge retains Chappell’s diatribe about Stenhouse claiming Scotch tunes, which is repeated verbatim (Wooldridge II, 210-11);
- The songs ‘Fairest Jenny’ (‘Fife and a’ the lands’ in Scottish collections), and ‘Sawney was tall’ are dropped entirely.

**Chappell - Chapter headed Reign of Queen Anne to George II (1702-1745) (II, 621-726)**

As before, Wooldridge drops the introductory historical narrative (621-633), and with it the comments about Tom D'Urfey's background and achievements.

**'The budgeon it is a delicate trade', later known as 'There was a jolly millar' (Chappell II, 666-8; Wooldridge II, 124)**

In Wooldridge, the paragraph about Beethoven's arrangement for George Thomson is omitted.

**'God save the Queen' (Chappell II, 691-707; Wooldridge II, 194)**

The commentary is significantly reduced in Wooldridge, omitting both Chappell's preamble about the international popularity of the song; and his dismissal of Pinkerton's assertion that it derives from a Scottish anthem.

**'I made love to Kate' (Chappell II, 723)**

Chappell had said that there were English and Scottish claims for this song, with the tune known as 'For that's the time of day' in England, and 'Woo'd and married and a'' in Scotland. Wooldridge omits it entirely.

**Chappell - Chapter headed Traditional tunes of uncertain date. (II, 727-758)**

Given Wooldridge's comment that he had omitted pieces 'resting on no better authority than tradition', it is perhaps not surprising that the whole chapter is omitted from Wooldridge. Tunes for which Chappell had made Scottish reference were 'Saw you my Father?' Chappell had alluded to a 'Scottified version of the words, in [Herd's] *Ancient & Modern Scottish Songs*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1776');<sup>13</sup> and 'The blue bell of Scotland' (which he said Ritson had printed in the

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<sup>13</sup> Chappell II, 739.

*North Country Chorister* (1802) as ‘The New Highland lad’. Chappell found the old tune ‘not at all like a Scotch air’,<sup>14</sup> amongst other observations.

**Chappell - Appendix containing Additional remarks, etc, and Characteristics of English National Airs, & Summary (effectively a final appendix) (II, 759-788 and 789-797)**

It should be noted that Wooldridge ends with the Anglo-Scottish songs chapter mentioned earlier (Wooldridge II, 203-212, Anglo-Scottish Songs). After that, there is only the song index. So, what became of Chappell’s Appendix and Summary?

Some songs were shifted from Chappell’s Appendix to elsewhere in the volume:-

- ‘I am the Duke of Norfolk’ (Chappell II, 770, re. I, 117) - provided further remarks relating to Chappell I, 117. In Wooldridge, the song appears in I, 282, and the notes do not include Chappell’s further remarks about ‘John Anderson my Jo’; the Skene MS and Dauney’s dating of it; or Stenhouse’s comments about the Percy MS, and Chappell’s contradiction of same.
- ‘John, come kiss me now’ (Chappell II, 771, re. I, 148) - again, Chappell’s additional comments were not incorporated into the entry for the song in Wooldridge I, 268.
- ‘Crimson velvet’ (Chappell II, 772, re. I, 178) - Chappell had traced the song in the Forbes Cantus and the Straloch MS, with an air entitled ‘Shepherd, saw thou not my fair, lovely Phyllis’? In Wooldridge’s edition, the comment about the Forbes Cantus is incorporated into the main entry, but the Straloch MS is unmentioned.
- ‘The Spanish pavan’ (Chappell II, 776, re. I, 241) - Wooldridge omits Chappell’s Appendix sources of the Skene MS and *Friesche Lust-Hof* (1634);

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid*

- ‘Oh! For a husband’ (Chappell II, 782, re. II, 454) - the tune is omitted from Wooldridge.
- ‘The broom, the bonny broom’ (Chappell II, 783, re. II, 458) - is omitted from Wooldridge.
- ‘The King’s jig’ (Chappell II, 784, re. II, 495) - Chappell’s observation about D’Urfey’s ‘Winchester Wedding’ is included in Wooldridge, but the negative Blaikie concordance is dropped.
- ‘The Northern lass’ (Chappell II, 786, re. II, 559) - any reference to Scotland or ‘Muirland Willie’ is omitted in Wooldridge, apart from mentioning that ‘in *Wright’s Country Dances* it is called ‘Muirland Willie’’.<sup>15</sup> The earliest music source, *Apollo’s Banquet*, 1669, remains the same, and the Walsh source (*24 New Country Dances*, 1713) is included, but there is no mention of Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius*, 1725-6, in Wooldridge’s edition.
- ‘Lovely Nancy’ (Chappell II, 787, re. II, 715) - Wooldridge’s edition gives only one paragraph of commentary (compared to three in Chappell); quotes fewer lines of the original words; and makes no reference to Oswald, his *Caledonian Pocket Companion Book 2* or his *Curious Scots’ tunes for a violin and flute*, nor to George Farquhar Graham’s observations about Oswald’s putting his name to ‘Scotch tunes of which it is impossible that he can have been the author’.<sup>16</sup>

Wooldridge omits Chappell’s Characteristics of English national airs, and summary.

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<sup>15</sup> Wooldridge II, 22.

<sup>16</sup> Chappell II, 787.

## Bibliography

### 1. Online Resources

*Frequently-used online resources are referred to by title in the subsequent section of this bibliography.*

Archives Hub <<http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/>>

Axford and Bathgate Family Tree  
<<http://www.btinternet.com/~ray.axford/pafg16.htm>>

COPAC <<http://www.copac.ac.uk>>

Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments  
1997 Festival Exhibition website,  
<<http://www.music.ed.ac.uk/euchmi/udeda.html>>

Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)  
<<http://galenet.galegroup.com>>

Family Search <<http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/default.asp>>

Google Books <<http://books.google.com/>>

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