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JOHN FORBES'S SONGS *AND FANCIES* AND ITS LITERARY LEGACY

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of
the Degree of Master of Philosophy

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Introduction ☞

Songs and Fancies was printed by John Forbes in Aberdeen in three editions: 1662, 1666 and 1682. This text is remarkable as the earliest collection of secular songs printed in Scotland. It also represents an example of early printed notation, cherished because nine of the sixty-two songs of *Songs and Fancies* are unique to this publication and their melodies may otherwise have been lost to history. Despite this, the text has not truly permeated Scottish cultural consciousness and its very existence poses questions into the nature of its contents and their suitability for publication in a century remembered for its religious instability. Who was its intended audience? Was it a risky publication? Why are so few of its songs remembered and why has it been so frequently dismissed by historical as well as modern editors and scholars? Its relative invisibility supports the need for reevaluating its position as a contemporary seventeenth century publication and to establish what influence it had on early eighteenth-century editors and publishers of Scottish song and poetry. This study, therefore, is primarily an historiographical assessment of *Songs and Fancies* the aim of which is to clarify some of these mirkier elements that surround the text, and, for the first time, to track its impact on the eighteenth century which is generally regarded as the ‘zenith’ of song collecting and publication in Scotland.

Songs and Fancies has received some perfunctory attention in early musical scholarship of the nineteenth century by John Leyden, William Stenhouse and William Daune^y.¹ Daune^y in

¹ *The Complaynt of Scotland*, ed. by John Leyden (Edinburgh, 1801), p. 273; William Stenhouse, *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1839), pp. 139–40; William Daune^y, *Ancient Scottish Melodies, from a Manuscript of the Reign of King James VI* (Edinburgh: Smith, Elder & Co., 1838).

particular disregards the contents of *Songs and Fancies* as “heavy and monotonous” and claims that the text does not contain any songs of a Scottish origin.² Charles Sanford Terry’s 1936 article for *The Musical Quarterly* provides the sources for nineteen songs contained within *Songs and Fancies* which have a Scottish origin. Despite this reassessment, some modern interpretations still do not value *Songs and Fancies* as a source for Scottish tunes. Matthew Spring, for example, writes: “The collection is disappointing” as “very few songs of Scots origin are included.”³ Terry’s article makes value judgements on several songs calling them “musically worthless.”⁴ This assessment of *Songs and Fancies* was reviewed shortly after Terry’s article, with some scholars noting its distinctiveness as the earliest example of printed secular songs with notation to be published in Scotland. It has thus been used throughout the twentieth century by musical historians in their various commentaries of the seventeenth-century musical landscape.⁵ Kenneth Elliott and Helena Mennie Shire reconstructed performance editions of its contents within their *Musica Britannica* volume *Music of Scotland 1500–1700*, first published in 1957. However, it is not until the twenty-first century that *Songs and Fancies* receives further dedicated study. Kathryn Lavinia Cooper’s unpublished Masters thesis provides particularly detailed and easy-to-use appendices presenting known copies, sources, and concordances of the tunes, and Ann Dhu McLucas’s chapter in *Defining Strains* (2007) revises Terry’s original sources and notes on many of the songs. Although McLucas provides a thorough historical background for *Songs and Fancies*, the article concludes that the text “stands out as a monument to the dogged determination of Aberdonians to cultivate the music of old.”⁶ This dissertation seeks to reshape the view that *Songs and Fancies* is purely a self-indulgent or nostalgic text and considers if and how it impacts later song and

² Daune, p. 29.

³ Matthew Spring, *The Lute in Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 459.

⁴ Charles Sanford Terry, ‘John Forbes’s “Songs and Fancies”’, *The Musical Quarterly*, 22.4 (1936), 402–19, 402.

⁵ H. G. Farmer, *A History of Music in Scotland* (London: Hinrichsen Edition, 1947), pp. 193–95, 228–31; Kenneth Elliott and Frederick Rimmer, *A History of Scottish Music* (British Broadcasting Corporation, 1973); John Purser, *Scotland’s Music: A History of the Traditional and Classical Music of Scotland from Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Mainstream Publishing in conjunction with BBC Scotland, 1992); Helena Mennie Shire, *Song, Dance and Poetry of the Court of Scotland under King James VI* (Cambridge University Press, 1969).

⁶ Ann Dhu McLucas, ‘Forbes “Cantus, Songs and Fancies” Revisited’, in *Defining Strains: The Musical Life of Scots in the Seventeenth Century* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 269–97, 297.

poetry collections of the eighteenth century. The thesis therefore involves working with blended contemporary approaches from the study of Scottish book history and textual editing to historical musicology and literary studies more broadly. The experimental nature of these combined methods pushes some of the boundaries of traditional scholarship addressed at undergraduate level, though a lack of comprehensive secondary material twinned with time constraints means it proved not possible fully to explore some aspects of this dissertation. All sections of this dissertation will use print histories of the consulted texts including their paratextual material. Gérard Genette, pioneer of the study of the paratext, writes: “a text is rarely presented in an unadorned state.”⁷ By consulting the textual apparatus of these collections, meanings become clearer and occasionally change the original interpretation of the body of the text. This study will therefore investigate title pages, prefaces, epigraphs, and notes. These peripheral textual devices contain crucial information and offer new readings for each text considered.

Chapter one will challenge the assessment that *Songs and Fancies* is archaic and outmoded by the time it was first published in 1662, while chapter two evaluates its impact on eighteenth-century song collections, primarily focussing on the pivotal collections of James Watson (1664?–1772) and Allan Ramsay (1684–1758). Chapter three traces the impact of *Songs and Fancies* on eighteenth-century collections of song through three case studies which focus on songs representing different aspects of Forbes’ collection: Elizabeth Melville’s ‘Away vaine world’ represents a work that became neglected as a piece of music but was widely known as a poem by a misattributed author; ‘Lyk as the dum solsequium’ is a piece that also loses its status as a song and is printed in collections of poetry by editors who intend to reclaim the Scots language at a time when anglicisation was viewed as a threat to Scottish culture; and ‘The gowans are gay’, a song that is included in collections of Scottish song and becomes known as a ballad. The case studies will contextualise the pieces, analyse their music and lyrics, then trace the language, tone

⁷ Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 10.

and presentation of different versions across a range of editions to better comprehend the variety and complexity of the songs at the hands of different editors.

This study hopes to convey that, despite claims of the collection's irrelevancy and monotony, modern musical scholarship can benefit from looking in-depth at the contents, print history and legacy of *Songs and Fancies* and how it was obliquely or overtly used and disseminated through the eighteenth century, a time when song collection and publication accelerated in Scotland. It is hoped that this study will encourage future studies into other collections of song, music and literature using a blended approach. Doing so will offer a better understanding of the relationship between literary and musical culture and provide a better insight into an existing parallel Scottish musical culture thereby posing a challenge to the established Scottish musical canon.



Chapter 1: *Songs and Fancies* in the seventeenth century ♡

This chapter will consider the reception of *Songs and Fancies* in its own time by considering Aberdeen's relationship with expanding print culture in the seventeenth century as well as the cultural milieu of its song school, before examining the print history of *Songs and Fancies* as a physical text and a cultural phenomenon. Doing so will reevaluate the perception of the text as backwards-looking and “nostalgic”, instead reviewing its position as a contemporary and relevant publication to be produced in Aberdeen in the middle of the seventeenth century.

A History of printing in Aberdeen

Aberdeen's official printing history began in the 1620s when Edward Raban (d. 1658), formerly a printer in the city of Edinburgh and to the University of St Andrews, was appointed as Aberdeen's authorised printer. Raban's printing business serviced the town, the kirk, businesses,



Figure 1: Townes Arms, *Songs and Fancies*, 2nd edition (1666)

private individuals, the university colleges and the schools by printing everything from single page official notices and small pamphlets to essential educational grammar texts and popular books. He also founded the *Aberdeen almanac* which became a widespread publication within and beyond the city of Aberdeen.⁸ Raban's printer's device was the 'Townes Armes' (figure 1) which continued to signify Aberdeen's town printer for more than a century.⁹ It represents the insignia of the city of Aberdeen which has been used since at least the fifteenth century and emphasises its alternative name of the city of 'Bon Accord' or 'Good Agreement'.¹⁰ On Raban's retirement in 1649, the business and its effects were sold to James Brown (d. 1661). Brown continued to print annual Almanacs and took on other jobbing work for the town but, otherwise, very little is known about him.¹¹ On his death in 1661, John Forbes was appointed as Brown's successor.¹²

An issue that has caused scholars much confusion is the fact that two John Forbeses were major figures in Aberdeen's printing history. John Forbes, elder, was an established stationer (meaning 'bookseller') in Aberdeen from the early 1650s and was, in 1665, authorised to sell "ane weekly diurnall to be sellit for the wse of the inhabitants",¹³ establishing the earliest known newspaper in Aberdeen. His son, John Forbes, younger, was recognised by the Council Register as official printer to the town in 1662. Uncertainty remains as to which Forbes was responsible for the creation of *Songs and Fancies*. Edmond's *Aberdeen Printers* states that "we attribute the authorship and conception of the work to the elder Forbes, and consider that the only share his son had in it was as a partner in the printing business."¹⁴ More recent scholarship agrees that a partnership was formed between the two Forbeses, but that the elder Forbes took the role of

⁸ Adam Fox, *The Press and the People: Cheap Print and Society in Scotland 1500–1785* (Oxford University Press, 2020), p. 136; J. P. Edmond, *The Aberdeen Printers: Edward Raban to James Nicol, 1620–1736* (Aberdeen: J. & J.P. Edmond & Spark, 1886), p. xi–xv.

⁹ Edmond, p. xiv.

¹⁰ John Marquis of Bute, *The Arms of the Royal and Parliamentary Burghs of Scotland* (William Blackwood and Sons, 1897), p. 11.

¹¹ Edmond, p. xxxiii.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ John Stuart, *Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1643–1747* (Edinburgh: Scottish Burgh Records Society, 1872), pp. 165–66.

¹⁴ Edmond, p. xxxviii.

binder and seller of the books that were produced by the younger.¹⁵ An authority on the history of Scottish printing, Alastair Mann, states unequivocally that Forbes, elder, was “succeeded in 1675 by his son John, the younger” while the elder Forbes “edited and reissued his famous musical collection *Cantus, songs and fancies*.”¹⁶ Mann’s reading implies that Forbes, elder, was the printer to the town from 1661 until his death in 1675. Adam Fox, however, names John Forbes junior as successor to James Brown, the former printer to the town, in 1661.¹⁷ According to Edmond’s records, the first text to specify his post-nominal ‘John Forbes, younger’ is John Menzies’s *Papismus Lucifugus* (1668). The younger Forbes may have decided to use his post-nominal title ‘younger’ to distinguish his output from his father’s. Regardless of the role each man took in the business, their successful partnership of bookseller and printer was one that initiated a dynasty of family printers that lasted well into the 1700s and who increased Aberdeen’s reputation as a centre of print, not just in the northeast, but all over Scotland. Their large and varied catalogue of texts from the inception of their partnership included medical writings, philosophical debates, religious pamphlets, books of verse, advertisements for local businesses and announcements for the town council.¹⁸

Aberdeen’s printers were highly skilled and well-funded, as evidenced by their publications. For example, Edward Raban printed texts with Greek lettering such as Leslie William’s *Propositiones & Problemata Philosophica* in 1625 while James Brown printed a Greek-titled book by John Row in 1660. Forbes also printed in Greek and this suggests the type was inherited from printer to printer. Greek type was rare and required considerable skill from the printer to handle correctly, therefore the extensive catalogue of texts in Greek coming from

¹⁵ Alastair J. Mann, ‘The Lives of Scottish Book Traders, 1500 to 1800’, in *Scottish Life and Society: The Working Life of Scots and Society*, ed. by Mark Mulhern, John Beech, and Elaine Thompson (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2008), p. 6.

¹⁶ Mann, ‘The Lives of Scottish Book Traders, 1500 to 1800’, p. 6.

¹⁷ Fox, *The Press and the People: Cheap Print and Society in Scotland 1500–1785*, p. 141.

¹⁸ For example, *The General Demands of the reverend Doctors of Divinitie concerning the late Covenant* (1663); *The Vertues of, and way how to use the Minerall and Medicinall-Water at Peterhead* (1668); ‘New book of Rates and Customs on Stockings and Plaidings’ (1670); and George Buchanan’s *Buchanani Psalmi* (1672).

Aberdeen's printing house infers a well stocked library of movable type and implies the superior capabilities of the printers.

Like Greek type, musical notation was not straightforward to print. As observed by Pettegree: "the publication of books with musical type required considerable skill, as well as the investment to procure the necessary special fonts for the printing of musical notation."¹⁹ For incunabula, or printed books of the earlier period, music had been handwritten over a printed stave, the five lines on which musical notes are arranged. The method used for *Songs and Fancies* combined the required note itself combined with a short section of the stave into one piece of movable type. The many combinations of the pitch and length of a note on a stave, not to mention rests, sharps, flats, repetition marks, bar lines and other musical symbols, were vast. This printing method, though innovative, resulted in slightly broken-looking lines; however despite the somewhat untidy format, the legibility of the score was reliable (see figure 2). While plate engraving, the method widely used in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, could duplicate whole pages of notation,²⁰ meticulous care had to be applied to each piece of movable type in the printing of *Songs and Fancies*. The accuracy depended on the printer's skill and attention to detail²¹ and still, after several centuries, the legibility and performance potential of the songs proves that the Forbes family were committed to their task and produced high quality performance editions.

¹⁹ Andrew Pettegree, 'The Legion of the Lost. Recovering the Lost Books of Early Modern Europe', in *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe*, ed. by Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (Leiden: Brill, 2016), p. 20.

²⁰ H. Edmund Poole, *Music Printing and Publishing* (New York: Norton, 1980), pp. 40–54.

²¹ Sarah Werner, *Studying Early Printed Books 1450–1800: A Practical Guide* (Wiley Blackwell, 2019), p. 91.

Like the Greek fonts, it is likely that the Forbes business inherited their set of musical type. Edward Raban had printed a metrical psalter in 1625 which, Edmond claims, was the first psalm book in Scotland to include harmonised tunes alongside printed text.²² The Forbeses having obtained the workshop inventory of Raban's successor, James Broun,²³ perhaps inherited Raban's set of notation, allowing them to circumvent the large initiation costs of purchasing bespoke musical type. Unfortunately, a direct comparison of Raban's type with *Songs and Fancies* is not available as any known copies of Raban's edition of the Psalms with harmonisation are said to be missing or have all been destroyed.²⁴

As Aberdeen University was the intellectual leader of Scotland in the seventeenth

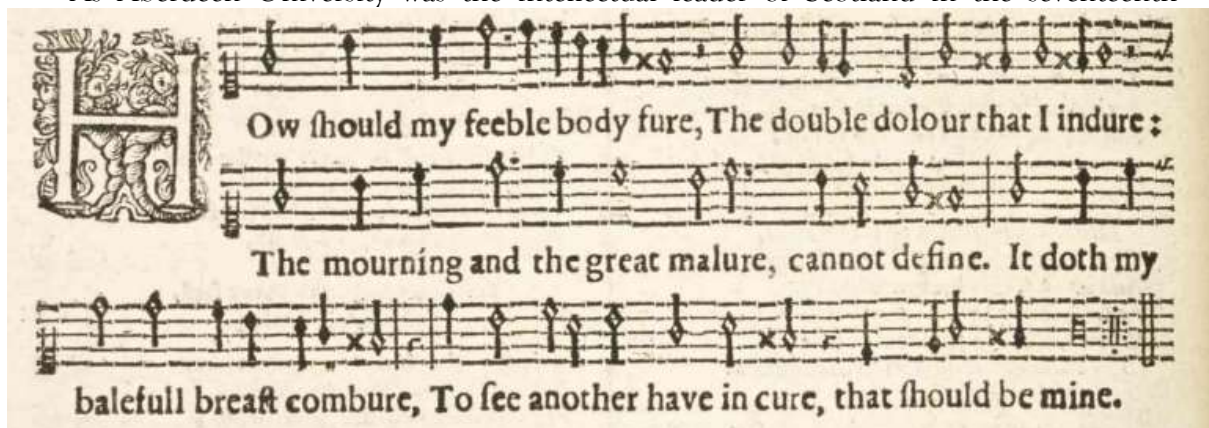


Figure 2: 'How should my feeble body fure', *Songs and Fancies*, 3rd edition (1682)

century, it was important that its cultural output, and that of the town, reflected the scholarly discussions of the day.²⁵ However, the Forbeses inherited not only the significant materials left by their predecessors, but also "a substantial legacy of producing for the mass market."²⁶ The Aberdeen Almanac, an annual publication providing information on celestial movements (including the sun's rising and setting times and tidal changes), crop planting schedules and other information relevant to the calendar year, was established by Raban in the 1630s and became the Forbeses' most lucrative commodity. Forbes, younger, claimed that an average of 50,000

²² Edmond, pp. 190–193.

²³ Aberdeen Council Register, Vol. LIV., 1662 quoted in Edmond, p. xxxvii.

²⁴ Edmond, pp. xxxviii; 107.

²⁵ Rosalind Mitchison, *A History of Scotland*, 3rd edn (Routledge, 2002), p. 141.

²⁶ Fox, *The Press and the People: Cheap Print and Society in Scotland 1500–1785*, p. 141.

copies of the Almanac were sold annually.²⁷ Although that figure may be an exaggeration exploited by Forbes for marketing purposes, the comparative number of print runs for essential texts in England (such as bibles and ABCs) were between 30,000–40,000.²⁸ Now, only single copies of a handful of titles and editions remain of Forbes's almanacs.²⁹ The print run figure of the first edition of *Songs and Fancies* is unknown, but scholars have so far concluded that the fact that only one copy now survives (held in the Huntingdon Library, California), evidences that the original print run was low. However, a recent study by Andrew Pettegree completely overturns this theory: "although [musical texts] were expensive books, rates of survival are very low: not unusually for books which have been heavily used."³⁰ This suggests that the first edition of *Songs and Fancies* was, arguably, the most popular and the most heavily used in comparison to the second or third editions, of which many more copies survive. This changes the notion that the first edition was not widely accessed in comparison to following editions.³¹

The Forbeses became embroiled in several separate legal disputes concerning the copyright of the Aberdeen Almanac. The Almanac, as an essential provider of information relevant to astronomers, farmers, sailors, as well as members of the public, was a highly profitable publication and, according to Mann, "the jealousy from Edinburgh was considerable."³² The holder of the royal licence, Andrew Anderson (c.1635–1676), attacked the rights of Forbes's press in an attempt to halt production of the Aberdeen almanac. The burgh council offered Forbes substantial legal protection and "were outraged at this attack on their independence and right to licence within their own environs."³³ When, in 1684, Forbes complained to the Privy Council that his Aberdeen almanac had been pirated by Agnes Campbell (1637–1716), the king's printer in Edinburgh, and Robert Saunders (d. 1730), printer in Glasgow, the town

²⁷ Edmond, p. li.

²⁸ James Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade, 1450–1850* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 92–93.

²⁹ *The mariner's everlasting almanac* (1681, 1683) and *Aberdeen's true almanac* (1685).

³⁰ Pettegree, p. 20.

³¹ Farmer, p. 75.

³² Mann, 'The Lives of Scottish Book Traders, 1500 to 1800', p. 16.

³³ Mann, 'The Lives of Scottish Book Traders, 1500 to 1800', p. 17.

officials defended his claim and were even willing “to start a book trade war with Edinburgh.”³⁴ These examples demonstrate the strength of the connection between Aberdeen’s town council and their official printer. As well as enjoying significant financial success on the mass market, printing displayed the proud city’s cultural, medical, and scholarly accomplishments to a wider audience. Their response to Anderson’s attempt to regulate *their* printer and print output reveals great pride in their scholarly and popular output, as well as displaying their understanding of the power of print at this time.

The town council held a significant authority over Forbes’s press, decreeing in 1668 “he must print no pamphlets or books without the magistrates and counsells authoritie therto, and inspection takin therof.”³⁵ Despite the town council’s discrimination, the amount of subversive literature that passed through the press is alarming. For example, the dissenting religious group, the Quakers, used Forbes’s press to print at least 11 religious pamphlets.³⁶ The Quakers were loathed in this period due to their dissenting religious and social practices.³⁷ It is surprising, therefore, that a press partially funded and obliquely censored by a beady-eyed council would allow Quaker literature to pass through unchallenged. However, as Mann writes, “commerce took priority over politics,”³⁸ and, seemingly, religion.

Lucas argues that key points in Aberdeen’s history, such as the stormy Covenanting rebellions and the plague of 1647, left the city financially bereft.³⁹ This, she writes, is the reason for the backwards-looking contents of *Songs and Fancies* whose compiler, aligned with the views of the Town Council, wished to restore “the age of James VI”⁴⁰ which represented an era of

³⁴ Ibid, Mann, p. 16.

³⁵ Aberdeen Council Register, Vol. LVI (1668), quoted in Alastair J. Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade 1500-1720* (Tuckwell Press, 2000), p. 23.

³⁶ Edmond, pp. 101–153. For example, Keith George, *Immediate Revelation* (1668); Robert Barclay, *Truth Cleared of Calumnies* (1670); and *Warning to the Inhabitants of Aberdene* (1672).

³⁷ See Roslyn Potter, ‘Lilias Skene: Quaker Poet and Social Activist in Seventeenth-Century Aberdeen’, *[X]Position*, 5 (2020) <<https://www.talkaboutx.net/xpositionvolume/5/Roslyn-Potter>> [Accessed 21/09/21].

³⁸ Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade 1500–1720*, p. 12.

³⁹ McLucas, p. 273.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 297.

greater cultural and financial prosperity for the city. However, Mann counters this by pointing out that “the last years of the Cromwellian period were not so devastating to Scotland’s economic prosperity as witnessed by the economic recovery of Aberdeen and Glasgow before the Restoration.”⁴¹ The interregnum was actually a significant phase in the development of Scotland’s literary and print culture. This period saw “publishing initiatives [and] the expansion of burgh education point to a late 1650s watershed – the start of an historical ‘gear change’ where book culture and literacy expanded at a rapid and accelerating speed.”⁴² Forbes and his funders, the town council, used this momentum to publish their didactic text for use in Aberdeen’s music school and *Songs and Fancies* appeared on the scene in 1662, two years after the Restoration of Charles II to the throne.



Song Schools

The inception of Aberdeen’s ‘sang schule’ can be traced to Richard Boyle’s engagement as music master in 1483.⁴³ Due to the abolition of the Mass after the Reformation of 1560, musical education in Scotland was promptly terminated.⁴⁴ In 1579 an act was passed by James VI which called to remedy the decline of musical culture in Scotland: the art of musik & singing [...] is almaist decayit and sall shortly decay without tymous remeid be prouidit.⁴⁵ Aberdeen, along

⁴¹ *The Scottish Book Trade 1500-1720*, p. 31. Also see T. M. Devine, ‘The Cromwellian Union and the Scottish Burghs: The Case of Aberdeen and Glasgow, 1652-60’, in *Scottish Themes: Essays in Honour of S. G. E. Lythe*, ed. by John Butt and J. T. Ward (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1976), pp. 1-16.

⁴² Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade 1500-1720*, p. 33.

⁴³ *Extracts from the Commonplace Book of Andrew Melville*, ed. by William Walker (Aberdeen, 1899), p. xvii.

⁴⁴ John Durkan, *Scottish Schools and Schoolmasters 1560-1633*, ed. by Jamie Reid-Baxter, 5 (Scottish History Society, 2013), XIX, p. 204.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Gordon Munro, “‘Sang Schwylls’ and ‘Music Schools’: Music Education in Scotland, 1560-1650”, in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Susan Forscher Weiss, Cynthia J. Cyrus, and Russel E. Murray, Jr. (Indiana University Press, 2010), pp. 65-83, 78.

with Glasgow, Dundee, and Perth, was one of the Burghs which benefitted from James VI's parliamentary Act of 'tymous remeid.'⁴⁶ The king's tolerance for non-religious music allowed the burgh councils, rather than collegial churches, to take charge of musical education in Scotland. The sang-scule in Aberdeen had flourished in pre-Reformation times under high-calibre musicians and composers such as John Fethy (d. 1568) and, despite the challenges of the Reformation, maintained a good reputation under schoolmasters of distinction: Patrick Davidson, (fl. 1601–1636), Andro Melville (fl. 1636–1640), Thomas Davidson (fl. 1640–1675) and Louis de France (fl. 1675–1682).⁴⁷ Thomas Davidson is the only named contributor (other than Forbes) who could be associated with the compilation *Songs and Fancies*. It can be inferred, due to his association with the Aberdeen song school, that Louis de France had an impact on the third edition of *Songs and Fancies* which includes on its title page notice of the addition of "severall of the choisest Italian Songs." The Davidsons and Louis de France had continental musical educations which contributed to the trans-national contents of *Songs and Fancies*. This continental influence is evident in the contents of the early editions of the 1660s which features adapted French chansons and continental dance forms.

While the New Aberdeen School taught reading, writing and mathematics, pupils of the music school were taught "music, manners, and virtue."⁴⁸ This curriculum of 'improvement' endorses the Town Council's aim to develop social and moral conduct of Aberdeen's inhabitants from at least the 1650s, making a case for pre-Enlightenment era projects of improvement.⁴⁹ *Songs and Fancies* can be read as a crucial part of this project. Prior to its publication, there were no printed musical textbooks of Scottish origin and schoolmasters relied on instructional books

⁴⁶ Gordon Munro, "Sang Schwylls" and "Music Schools": Music Education in Scotland, 1560-1650', in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Susan Forscher Weiss, Cynthia J. Cyrus, and Russel E. Murray, Jr. (Indiana University Press, 2010), pp. 65–83, 79, n.6.

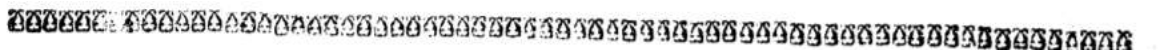
⁴⁷ McLucas, p. 276.

⁴⁸ Shona Vance, 'Schooling the People', in *Aberdeen before 1800: A New History*, ed. by E. Patricia Dennison, David Ditchburn, and Michael Lynch (Tuckwell Press, 2002), pp. 309–26, 325.

⁴⁹ See *Cultures of Improvement in Scottish Romanticism, 1707–1840*, ed. by Alex Benchimol and Gerard Lee McKeever (Routledge, 2018), especially pp. 5–6; 14–15.

from England or Europe.⁵⁰ The creation of a native instructional book, therefore, held several interconnected advantages, benefitting the Town Council, the printers and the reputation of the city of Aberdeen. Even its advertisement on the title page announcing that the pieces found within are “both apt for Voices and Viols” indicate the music school’s distinction, since only high-status music schools offered instrumental music tuition.⁵¹

Musical education was not exclusive to children of wealthy parents, but the fees were significantly higher for a comprehensive education consisting of “singing, reading, and writing” – in the middle of the seventeenth century tuition of this kind cost 26s 8d per quarter, while only “reading” cost 6s 8d.⁵² Gordon Munro explains that “children of the landed gentry (“landward bairns”) were required to pay higher fees, often twice as much as burgh children.”⁵³ While Aberdeen’s town council also subsidised school books, it was not realistic that every burgh child would receive a musical education, but possible that many less privileged pupils would benefit from this system.



⁵⁰ For example, Thomas Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts* (London, 1610); Charles Butler, *The Principles of Musik* (London, 1636). Both books are listed in Shire’s catalogue of Andro Melville’s personal music library (see Cooper, p. 27).

⁵¹ Munro, p. 75.

⁵² Munro, p. 68.

⁵³ Munro, p. 70.



Songs and Fancies



Figure 3: Title page, *Songs and Fancies*, 1st edition (1662)

Songs and Fancies was printed in three editions in 1662, 1666, with the final edition presented in 1682. The first edition was printed shortly after the Forbeses took over the role of town printers in 1661, making this one of their first major publications. All three editions open with a dedicatory epistle to Aberdeen's town council, a panegyric to the reigning monarch of the time and an introduction to contemporary musical theory. The contents vary slightly through each edition but in general they contain approximately sixty-two songs with corresponding lyrics,

around one third of which are agreed to be of Scottish origin and seven being unique to *Songs and Fancies* with no concordances elsewhere.⁵⁴

Title page and frontispiece

The misnomer “Forbes’ *Cantus*” was established by earlier scholars, but as Charles Sandford Terry has pointed out in his essay ‘John Forbes’s “*Songs and Fancies*”’ the correct reference to the title is simply *Songs and Fancies*.⁵⁵ ‘Cantus’, the Latin for ‘song’, was the term used to indicate the highest vocal part in choral music. The word ‘Cantus’ therefore refers to the main melodic part contained within the book rather than forming part of the title, therefore its correct title is *Songs and Fancies*. A subtitle makes reference to further musical parts (“To Thre, Foure, or Five Partes, both apt for Voices and Viols”) but these have never materialised. The notional existence of these instrumental parts indicates the prosperity of Aberdeen’s music school, whose curriculum included the possibility for instrumental tuition.⁵⁶ It also suggests the possibility of domestic or public performances of these songs. Conceivably, the sale of the ‘cantus’ (vocal) part did not generate enough profit to pay for further arrangements, however it is also possible that the supplementary parts *did* exist in print, only to be issued to musicians separately. If these parts did exist, they may have never been bound and degenerated over time due to being regularly handled. Andrew Pettegree writes that “For the convenience of the singers the separate parts were printed in separate books.”⁵⁷ The indication of these extra parts shows the performative context of the pieces as having several harmonising voices, despite their lack of inclusion in *Songs and Fancies*. Forbes clearly recognised a demand for further parts if he was advertising them. His

⁵⁴ Kathryn Lavinia Cooper, ‘Cantus, Songs and Fancies: Context, Influence and Importance’ (unpublished M.Mus, University of Glasgow, 2003), p. 30. ‘When chyle cold afe shall sease upon thy blod’; ‘I love gret God above’; ‘Where art thou, hope’; ‘When may is in her pryne’; ‘The time of youth sore I repent’ ‘Ye gods of love’; ‘There is a thing that much is used’

⁵⁵ Terry, p. 404.

⁵⁶ Munro, p. 66.

⁵⁷ Pettegree, p. 20.

advertisement also reveals the viol as at least one of the instruments played in an educational music-school environment or as entertainment in a private social setting.

The frontispiece (Figure 3) remains the same across the three editions with only the title text changing. A roman font is used exclusively in the first and second editions while the third edition introduces a blackletter font for the title (Figure 4). Where printed, the word ‘Aberdeen’ is fully capitalised. The presentation of the text’s origin is of importance to both the printers and the funders since, as argued below, this collection was an attempt to convey Aberdeen’s prestigious musical heritage and contemporary relevancy to a wider audience. The third edition presents a new title page, in addition to the frontispiece, introducing potential buyers and users of the text to the “Exactly Corrected and Enlarged” version of *Songs and Fancies*.

The prominent figures of two contemporarily dressed musicians flank the central text: a

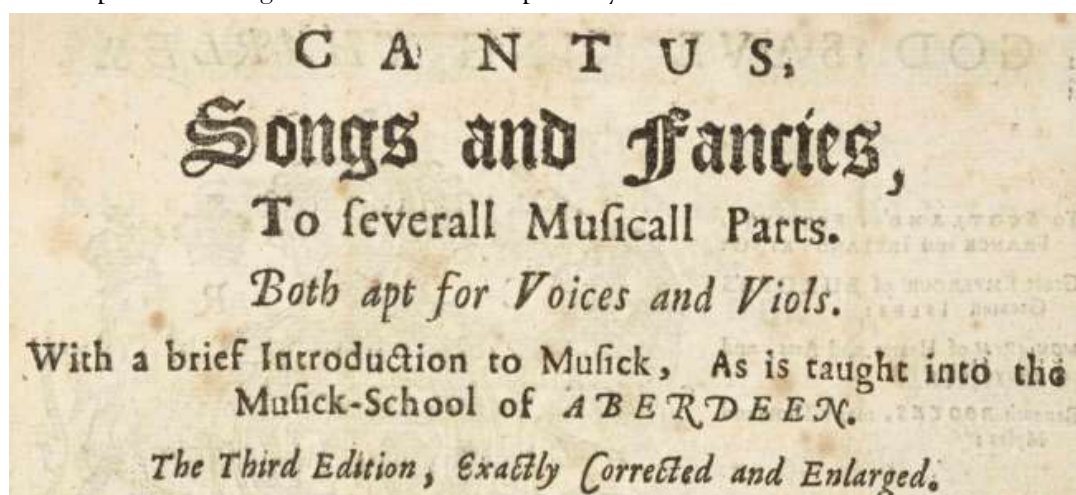


Figure 3: Title page, *Songs and Fancies*, 3rd edition (1682)

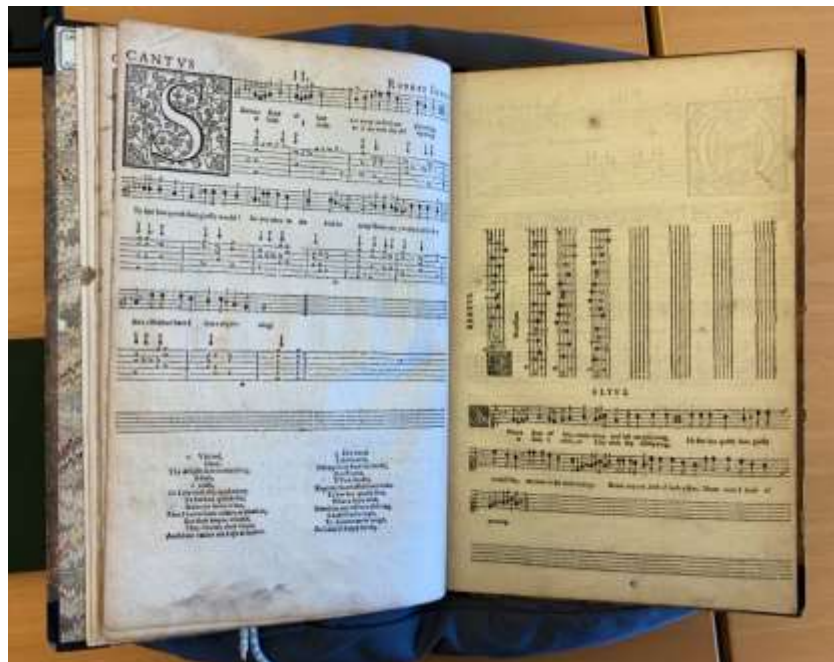
woman playing a lute on the left and a man on the right reading from what Terry identifies as an “open part book”⁵⁸ while Farmer recognises specifically a “psalm book.”⁵⁹ It could be inferred that he is reading from a copy of the text the frontispiece itself is advertising, but it is not known

⁵⁸ Terry, p. 403.

⁵⁹ Farmer, p. 67.

whether this woodcut was created for the sole use of *Songs and Fancies* or if it is a stock design.⁶⁰ The adult musicians portrayed within the frontispiece can be interpreted as an appeal to the target adult purchaser. Primarily created to be a musical textbook for schools, *Songs and Fancies* was a publication which attempted to balance its audience between the pupils of the music school and its theoretical adult purchasers which would ensure profit for further editions.

The title page cites the initials “T. D.” as “Master of Musick” at Aberdeen’s music school. “T. D.” can be easily identified as Thomas Davidson, music master at the song school between 1640 and 1675. He is the probable principal advisor to John Forbes in the compilation and setting of the pieces in *Songs and Fancies*. It is clear from the frontispiece, and the nod to Davidson and the music school, that it is an instructional manual of music. This unusually small quarto measures just 15 x 18 cm. Its oblong orientation contrasts with other seventeenth-century printed musical texts, such as *A musicall dreame* by Robert Jones published in 1609 (see figure 5). A



musicall dreame has been printed vertically with plenty of additional space for the music, the lyrics, and lute tablature. On the facing page, alto (‘altus’) and bass (‘bassus’) parts have been added,

Figure 4: 'Sweet Kate' from *A musicall dreame*, Robert Jones (1609)

⁶⁰ Of the English musical texts consulted for this study it was not possible to find an identical frontispiece. However, it is known that Forbes had European connections, especially in the Netherlands. A thorough survey of contemporary musical texts printed abroad is necessary to discover if this image has been used elsewhere.

printed in different orientations to comfortably accommodate three extra voices. This use of space makes it easy to imagine the positions of the singers based on the placement of the printed music, surrounding the book as it is laid flat on a table or other surface. Multiple singers and players could gather around the same text, producing a dynamic, harmonic group of instruments and voices. In comparison to a typical English book of ayres, *Songs and Fancies* is very small and, as discussed above, contains only the main melody line to be sung by the highest vocal part. The reason for this choice of sizing could have been due to matters of economy, since musical printing was expensive, or to maximise profits by selling small, individual copies. It could also be because the text was initially designed for small hands, being originally an instructional guide for pupils at the “Musick-Schole” of Aberdeen.

‘The Epistle Dedicatory’

Forbes’s dedication immediately following the front matter is a lengthy panegyric, becoming longer in each subsequent edition, that extolls the virtues of the town council and their efforts to restore the city of Aberdeen to its former status as a “famous Ornament of Vocall and Instrumentall Musick.”⁶¹ As well as praising the efforts of the council to restore Aberdeen’s reputation as a musical centre, Forbes praises the reigning monarch, Charles II, newly restored to the throne in 1660 as “Our Dread SOVERAIGNE, CHARLES By the Grace of GOD, KING of Great BRITTAINE, FRANCE, and IRELAND.”⁶² The contents of *Songs and Fancies* reflect, in part, the nations under Charles II’s rule and contributes to the trans-nationality of the text. It therefore prefigures the idea of national song collection/presentation as explored by editors of the eighteenth century.

⁶¹ John Forbes, *Songs and Fancies* (Aberdeen, 1662), ‘Epistle Dedicatory’.

⁶² Ibid.

Across the three editions of *Songs and Fancies*, Forbes uses an extended metaphor of plants and flowers to capture the town council's efforts to widen its influence despite its relative isolation and small size:

so little a place of Ground, hath yielded many Plants of renowne, who
hath flowrished as Trees of delight, both in Church and State,
through out all the corners of great Brittain.⁶³

This statement reflects the wider agenda of the town council (via Forbes) to (re)claim Aberdeen's position as musically influential across the country. The metaphorical nurturing of young plants to flourish reflects the ambition of Forbes and the town council to use *Songs and Fancies* as a critical part of instructing young people in music, thereby creating a new generation of musically able performers. Forbes also declares that his ambition with this musical textbook is to alleviate

the paines of your children, in attaining the first elements of Musick
may be learned, and the Scarr-craw of difficultie taken off the Hinges of
the School-doore.⁶⁴

This statement directly addresses parents who will be encouraged by these promises of accessibility to a pain-free musical education for their children. The expression of the dedicatory epistle assures that *Songs and Fancies* is accessible and easy-to-use for potentially apprehensive adult learners or those wishing to develop their musical skills. Hannah Salmi uses corpus-based data to explore the language of accessibility in early modern texts, the results of which visibly parallel Forbes's comments to the reader in his opening prologue.⁶⁵ For example, his flourishing 'ornaments' of language were recognisable by a general readership whose education included basic Rhetoric.⁶⁶ For example, Forbes describes his contribution in ornate language, mixing metaphors and allegories:

I who hath made it my resolute purpose, and constant resolution, to saile all
winds, and serve up the weak partes, which GOD and Nature hath bestowed

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Hanna Salmi, "I Write Not to Expert Practitioners, but to Learners." Perceptions of Reader-Friendliness in Early Modern Printed Books', in *The Dynamics of Text and Framing Phenomena: Historical Approaches to Paratext and Metadiscourse in English*, ed. by Matti Peikola and Birte Bös (John Benjamins, 2020), pp. 187–207, 188.

⁶⁶ Salmi, p. 194.

on me: that so, at least with the Ephesian-Bee, I might contribute my little Wax,
and sillie Bumb, to the Hyve of BON-ACCORD Commen-well.⁶⁷

Primarily, the reference to the 'Ephesian bee' connects Aberdeen to Ephesus, the ancient Greek city, which used a bee emblem on its coinage as well as on its hoplite soldiers' shields. Forbes's use of this symbol implies that his individual contribution (as a 'sillie Bumb') amounts to very little but as part of a larger whole (the 'hive'), *Songs and Fancies* will contribute to Aberdeen's musical legacy. Ephesus is also known for once housing the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. By association, Forbes suggests the potential for Aberdeen to stand as an equal to Ephesus, a classical and early Christian centre of the ancient world. Additionally, Aberdeen, which buzzes with activity as a mercantile burgh town, is described as a location for the study of the "divine science" that is music. By employing a modesty topos, Forbes is underplaying his own capabilities as a contributor to knowledge, but he is in fact demonstrating his wisdom and skill. By employing the rhetorical device *meiosis*, deliberately exhibiting his contribution as 'smaller' or 'lesser', he is, according to Salmi's study, promoting the 'reader-friendliness' of his text, which encourages hesitant customers to make a purchase.

Forbes's praises are multi-faceted; across three pages, he praises the King and the newly restored Commonwealth, Aberdeen's town council, and the city of 'Bon Accord' itself labelling it a "Sanctuary of Sciences, the Manse of the Muses, and Nurserie of all Artes." This statement, in combination with the rhetorical declarations above, further emphasises the wide cultural agenda Forbes and his funders, the town council, had for Aberdeen.

Contents of *Songs and Fancies*

Although the authors and composers of *Songs and Fancies*' contents are nameless across the three editions, the majority of them have been identified by prior scholars.⁶⁸ The contents represent

⁶⁷ Forbes, 'Dedicatory Epistle'.

⁶⁸ See Terry pp. 414–417; McLucas, pp. 335–347.

music the has its origins in a variety of sources from English ayres to French chanson and Scottish ballads.⁶⁹ Arguably, Forbes and his continentally educated collaborator Thomas Davidson, are carefully selecting a mixture of lesser- and well-known melodies that will appeal to their audience of potential buyers, as well as including a material that will instruct the pupils of the song school in the art of music, particularly singing. In its third edition, a selection of Italian canzonets are introduced and are prominently advertised on the book's title page. Their inclusion is likely due to the influence of Louis de France, the continental music master of the school during its compilation and subsequent publishing. As discussed above, the contents of the first two editions reflect the nations of the "Common-weel" under the leadership of Charles II. This suggests the formation of a trans-national collection that will benefit not only Aberdeen's reputation within the Common-weel, but also expand the commercial market for musical textbooks printed in Scotland.

The second edition includes three additional, unnumbered pieces of music: 'Pleugh-Song', 'All Sones of Adam' and 'Trip and go, hey'. Terry criticises these songs calling them "musically worthless;"⁷⁰ however, successful performances have been reconstructed, analysed and performed by Kenneth Elliott and John Purser respectively, and articles dedicated to the 'Pleugh-Sang' and 'Trip and go, hey' have been active in reconsidering the value of these once-dismissed pieces.⁷¹ Their insertion can be interpreted as a further strategic marketing technique in Forbes's claim of novelty of this edition, but equally, his preface has echoes of a later trope in printed song collections: plundering the repertoire of 'the ancients'. Forbes sets this up in his preface by expressing his personal disappointment with the first edition of *Songs and Fancies*:

⁶⁹ The case studies, 'Away vaine world', 'Lyk as the dum solsequium' and 'The gowans are gay' respectively, have been chosen in part to reflect these thematic contents.

⁷⁰ Terry, p. 406.

⁷¹ See *Eight Early Scottish Carols: For Three or Four Voices*, ed. by Kenneth Elliott (Glasgow: Musica Scotica Trust, 2006), Purser; Alexander Fenton, 'The Plough-Song: A Scottish Source for Medieval Plough History', *Tools and Tillage*, 1 (1970), 175-91; Kenneth Elliott, 'Trip and Goe, Hey: "A Truly Scottish Song"', in *Stewart Style, 1513-1542*, ed. by Janet Hadley Williams (East Linton, 1996), pp. 153-78.

I may confess ingenuously, when I looked deliberately on this my first Mephibosheth,⁷² I offered the same as an object of pity, being so mank and maim in its chiefest parts.⁷³

To remedy this dissatisfaction, Forbes employed a “Tymous Council of the most Expert in this place” who “diligently turning over their old Records, and rifling the labors of their Ancestors.”⁷⁴ This ‘council’ found these pieces to save the edition from the “noxious humours that were preying on its vitals.”⁷⁵ This statement prefigures the eighteenth-century mission of looking towards the past for song material. By pronouncing this edition superior to the previous, Forbes was also utilising an established sales technique to encourage new custom from owners of the previous edition of the updated and, therefore, more reliable quality of the text.⁷⁶ By the publication of the third edition, of 1682 however, these additional songs were excluded. Louis de France was music master at the music school by this time and the title page for this edition advertises additional pieces of Italian origin, emphasising the continental connection between Aberdeen and Europe.

For musicologists and music historians, the lack of the corresponding treble and bass parts means the sought-after evidence for early harmonic structure means *S&F* is not as useful for creating historically reconstructed performances of early song as other fully harmonised part-books, such as Thomas Wode’s *Psalter* (c. 1564). Likewise, value judgements have been placed on the cultural output of the seventeenth century as the court’s disappearance south and the effects of the Reformation left Scotland’s cultural landscape “a wilderness on barren soil.”⁷⁷ *Songs and Fancies* is remembered in the early days of musical scholarship as “heavy and monotonous”⁷⁸ and as not containing “a single Scottish melody.”⁷⁹ This view prevailed until 1936 when Terry’s

⁷² According to 2 Samuel 4:4, Mephibosheth suffered from paraplegia and was unable to walk.

⁷³ Forbes, *Songs and Fancies*, p. 3.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Jonathan R. Olson, “‘Newly Amended and Much Enlarged’: Claims of Novelty and Enlargement on the Title Pages of Reprints in the Early Modern English Book Trade”, *History of European Ideas*, 42.5 (2016), 618–28, 620.

⁷⁷ Henry George Farmer, *A History of Music in Scotland* (Hinrichsen, 1947), p. 171.

⁷⁸ William Daune, *The Ancient melodies of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1838), p. 29.

⁷⁹ Hans Hecht, *Songs from David Herd’s Manuscripts* (Edinburgh: William J. Hay, 1904), p. 75.

article for *The Musical Quarterly* provided the sources of nineteen songs found elsewhere in Scottish manuscripts created prior to Forbes's first edition, without apparent English associations.⁸⁰ Despite Terry's thorough groundwork and the later meticulous efforts of Kenneth Elliott and Helena Mennie Shire from the 1960s onwards to make available sources and arrangements, recent scholarship continues to discount the value of *Songs and Fancies* to the study of early Scottish music: "The collection is disappointing as only the Cantus part-book was issued, and very few songs of Scots origin are included."⁸¹ The more recent works of Katherine Lavinia Cooper and Ann Dhu McLucas have attempted to amend this view.⁸² The inclusion of so many songs of English origin by celebrated composers such as Thomas Morley (1557–1602) and John Dowland (1563–1626) has also made many scholars discount *Songs and Fancies* because it lacks the purity of a 'national collection' as sought after by editors and antiquarians of the eighteenth-century. However, as pointed out by Mann:

The relationship between Scotland and England was patently intellectual as well as commercial. Clear parallels can be drawn between English and Scottish reading tastes.⁸³

It is evident that this statement likewise pertains to musical tastes, and the inclusion of English songs informs a modern reader about the relationship between readers of Scots and English. The case study discussing 'Away vaine world' will consider this in more detail.

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⁸⁰ Terry, p. 410.

⁸¹ Spring, p. 459.

⁸² McLucas; Cooper.

⁸³ Alastair J. Mann, 'The Anatomy of the Printed Book in Early Modern Scotland', *The Scottish Historical Review*, LXXX, 2.210 (2001), 181–200, 194.

The introductory instructional material directly preceding the main body of songs in *Songs and Fancies* is directly plagiarised from *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke* by Thomas Morley, first printed in 1579. As the frontispiece alludes, this is the methodology used by the music master at Aberdeen's song school, consequently indicating the quality of the educational matter of the text and therefore the attractiveness to the buyer. Forbes was never legally reprimanded for the unacknowledged duplication of Morley's text as the legal copyright of books was not yet formalised.⁸⁴ This replication, however, has been read as legitimate deception by later critics and, as a result, the authority and validity of the text as a whole is sometimes discounted or questioned.⁸⁵ The repetition of Morley's instructional material within *Songs and Fancies* at the time of its publication would not have been considered as fraudulent or dishonest by the purchasers. In pre-modern times, it was common practice for manuscript scribes to copy texts without hesitation. It is likely that Morley's *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke* was the key musical text used by the music school and its inclusion made *Songs and Fancies* a more comprehensive and legitimate source for musical instruction for the school pupils as well as adult learners.

The seventeenth-century book market

Andrew Pettegree writes that music books had "a rather narrow and more circumscribed market, defined by high initiation costs and expensive both from the producer and consumer point of view."⁸⁶ As this was possibly the first publication of its kind in Scotland, the success of a secular song book for amateur adult musicians would have been a gamble for the Forbeses, without any guarantee of success. From this perspective, as a theoretical venture, *Songs and Fancies* would not have made financial sense for the Forbeses. *Songs and Fancies* does not contain a subscription list, a practice that became much more prevalent during the eighteenth century whereby prospective

⁸⁴ See Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade 1500–1720*.

⁸⁵ See Dauney, p. 22 and Terry, p. 403.

⁸⁶ Pettegree, p. 20.

purchasers registered their interest through payment prior to a book's printing. Subscribers' names would then be included within the finished publication on a 'subscribers list' as acknowledgement of their financial support prior to its publication.⁸⁷ While *Songs and Fancies* lacked this prospective paying audience, the dedication to the "Honourable Councell of the City of Aberdene" suggests that it was wholly financed by the Town Council. The 1662 edition of *Songs and Fancies*, being a musical textbook, would have meant the Forbes' printing house benefitted financially from their partnership with the Town Council and printing for schools, and vice versa. This extract from the Aberdeen Council Register of 1622 establishes the crucial financial relationship between the council, the schools and the printer:

it is thocht expedient that during the counsallis Will everie schollar at the Grammar schole musick and Inglishe schools sall give aucht pennyes to the printer, and to the effect the counsall may be certifieth of the ease forsaide in the pryces of their bairnes books⁸⁸

As well as a worthwhile financial venture, the Town Council saw an opportunity to develop musical education in Aberdeen which, in turn, would increase the status of a musical centre it had enjoyed in the past as alluded to in the 'Epistle Dedicatory'. The aim of increasing musical education resonates with the established idea of improvement which has traditionally been recognised as an eighteenth-century phenomenon.⁸⁹

As well as an educational effort, *Songs and Fancies* was also a product of commercial opportunism. At the time of publishing the first edition of *Songs and Fancies*, Aberdeen's song school had music teacher Thomas Davidson in its employ whose father, Patrick Davidson, had been taught in Italy. The Davidsons brought a continental approach to the music taught in the song school. As mentioned above, the formal musical landscape depended on English and continental musical teaching aids for song school education. For this reason, the musical teaching market was primed

⁸⁷ See Sarah L. C. Clapp, 'The Beginnings of Subscription Publication in the Seventeenth Century', *Modern Philology*, 29.2 (1931), pp. 199–224.

⁸⁸ Aberdeen Council Register, Vol. LI., 1622 quoted in Edmond, p. xiv.

⁸⁹ See *Cultures of Improvement in Scottish Romanticism, 1707–1840*, ed. by Alex Benchimol and Gerard Lee McKeever (Routledge, 2018) for a discussion of improvement in the later period. An exploration of this concept will form part of a later, separate study.



Figure 5: Title page, *Songs and Fancies*, 2nd edition (1666)

for a pedagogic music book originating in Scotland that contained Scottish secular pieces situated alongside English, French and Italian popular music. This also encourages the notion of transnationality that a text like *Songs and Fancies* promotes. Another market could be the ‘venture schools’ for girls. Music was sometimes taught to girls as evidenced by Christian Cleland’s curriculum at her school in Edinburgh.⁹⁰ Having a comprehensive musical ‘textbook’ such as *Songs and Fancies* would make the general teaching of singing more accessible beyond Aberdeen’s song school. Confirmed by the title page of the second edition, copies of *Songs and Fancies* were sold outside of Aberdeen, by David Trench in Edinburgh. Terry suggests that there was also a market for this type of text among adults who also wished to learn or improve their singing or

⁹⁰ *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh 1655–1665*, ed. by Marguerite Wood (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1940), pp. 220, 296.

how to read music more proficiently. The dedicatory epistle speaks more towards an adult audience rather than the song school's pupils. Although the small size of the first edition of *Songs and Fancies* suggests it was for the sole purpose of small hands, it is clear from the second and third editions that were advertised as "corrected and enlarged" (Figure 6) that Forbes perceived that his market was widening. The rise of the practice of browsing for books has been noted in English book histories and, since the title page of a book was often the most opportune place to advertise itself, the practice of "correcting and enlarging" texts was a sales tactic practiced by many printers.⁹¹ Terry notes "from the typographical standpoint the edition is inferior to its predecessor."⁹² Although the music is enlarged to accommodate a wider margin, the text is somewhat clustered and less legible than the previous edition. As performance editions it can easily be argued that the subsequent texts are of a lower standard than the 1662 edition.

Conclusion

This chapter has situated *Songs and Fancies* in its own time by considering its contents, its publication and print history, and its location in Aberdeen's cultural and educational landscape. Most importantly it has attempted to reassess the negative criticism it has received, from both early and modern scholars. Evaluating its significance using a combination of methodologies reveals that *Songs and Fancies* is a document whose contents and history can revitalise our present-day understanding of seventeenth-century song culture and reassess the notion that that century was musically and culturally stagnant. Chapter two will pick up the narrative of *Songs and Fancies* from the beginning of the eighteenth century and assess its impact on early collections of song and poetry that began to shape the idea of a homogenous 'Scottish' music.



⁹¹ H.S Bennett, *English Books & Readers, 1558–1603: Being a Study of the History of the Book Trade in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 263.

⁹² Terry, p. 406.

Chapter 2: Songs and Fancies in the eighteenth century ♡



Figure 6: 'In a garden so green', *Songs and Fancies*, 2nd edition (1666)

The previous chapter has established that *Songs and Fancies* was produced within a lively, musical environment where its creation and printing was endorsed and supported by Aberdeen's town council, demonstrating the necessity and the market for such a text in the second half of the seventeenth century. Chapter two will consider *Songs and Fancies*' afterlife; firstly, by giving a brief overview of the collections in which the songs appear, followed by a detailed study of two early eighteenth-century editors: James Watson (1664?-1722) and Allan Ramsay (1684-1758). These editors included in their collections several popular lyrics also found in *Songs and Fancies* and their editorial methods are crucial to connect *Songs and Fancies* to the national song collecting projects of the later eighteenth century. This chapter will consider how their editorial practice represented, and misrepresented, the previous century in which *Songs and Fancies* was printed. Song collections of the first half of the eighteenth century will be investigated by considering their contents, publishing histories, audience and paratextual material. This chapter will also highlight how the inclusion of these songs shifted the perception of earlier music and its connection to the creation of a 'national music'. It challenges later critics' perceptions of *Songs and Fancies* as 'inauthentic' and seeks to reevaluate its loss in the nation-building projects of the eighteenth century, and therefore in the wider Scottish canon. As Judith Pollman observes,

National identities do not grow organically out of a common past. The opposite is true: the past [...] has been widely used to create and sustain national identities.⁹³

The links between language, poetry, music and their perceived national characteristics constitute the threads of narrative provided by the societal understanding of national development. The role of *Songs and Fancies* and how its contents fed into earlier song and poetry collections of the eighteenth century will be considered.

To assess the above, this chapter will utilise several methodologies. Firstly, the editors, their collections and the songs must be situated within their own historical contexts; this will include considering contemporary musical and poetry collections published throughout the eighteenth century and will touch on Enlightenment philosophies. Secondly, paratextual material including title pages, prologues and epigraphs will allow for further contextualisation and provide clues as to the editors' motives, as well as how they communicated with and shaped their audiences. By doing so, it will be possible to discern "why new meanings emerge and old ones get discarded, why some memories are contested, and others seem to be passed on or forgotten without further ado."⁹⁴ Finally, the role of language will be considered and explored in depth through the case studies in chapter three. Although anglicisation of written Scots was an observable reality throughout the seventeenth century, its intensity increased into the eighteenth century. Following the Union of the Parliaments in 1707, a number of prominent Scottish critics felt the need to purge 'Scotticisms' from their vocabulary.⁹⁵ The song collections considered below have

⁹³ Judith Pollman, *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800* (Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 11.

⁹⁴ Pollman, p. 11.

⁹⁵ For further discussion see James G. Basker, 'Scotticisms and the Problem of Cultural Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in John Dwyer and Richard B. Sher (eds.), *Sociability and Society in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Mercat Press, 1993), pp. 81–95; Steve Newman, *Ballad Collection, Lyric and the Canon: The Call of the Popular from the Restoration to the New Criticism* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); Rhona Brown, 'Self-Curation, Self-Editing and Audience Construction by Eighteenth-Century Scots Vernacular Poets', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 42.2 (2019), 157–74.

been championed by later critics as “politically partisan ventures”⁹⁶ that provided a reading public with works, new and old, in their native language. Kinghorn links Ramsay’s work to Watson’s, noting that they both had a similar motive:

Ramsay was a man with a mission, fired by his own patriotic desire to rescue the [Scots] language, once a rival to Chaucer’s, from its debasement in the face of anglicization and encouraged by the example of James Watson’s *Choice Collection*.⁹⁷

Evaluating the orthographical and paratextual choices of eighteenth-century editors is essential to this study as it reflects a wider cultural milieu as perceived through the eyes of editors who were hoping for commercial, creative and cultural success with their publications.⁹⁸

The rise in popularity of Scots song collections

Throughout the eighteenth century, collections of printed Scots poetry and song underwent a rapid and complex development. Historians and critics of the period often cite James Watson’s *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems* (1706) as “one of the most influential works published in the history of Scottish poetry”⁹⁹ and many praise its impact as a direct and active response to the Acts of Union (1707) as well as the “increasing Edinburgh tendency to accept Anglicization.”¹⁰⁰ Shortly after Watson’s death, Allan Ramsay produced the first volume of *The Tea Table Miscellany* (1723), a collection of Scots songs dedicated “to Ilka lovely British Lass”¹⁰¹ that catered to more wealthy patrons. Ramsay’s next edited collection closely followed, bearing the much-discussed title *The Ever Green, Being a collection of Scots Poems, Written by the Ingenious*

⁹⁶ David J. Parkinson, ‘Dreams in the Clear Light of Day: Older Scots Poetry in Modern Scotland’, in *Literature, Letters and the Canonical in Early Modern Scotland*, ed. by Theo van Heijnsbergen and Nicola Royan (Tuckwell Press, 2002), pp. 138–50, 150.

⁹⁷ A. M. Kinghorn, ‘Old Bones Disinterred Once Again: Ramsay’s Pastoral and Its Legacy for the Literati’, *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 35.1 (2007), 382–90, 383.

⁹⁸ This methodology is employed by Steve Newman, ‘The Scots Songs of Allan Ramsay: “Lyrick” Transformation, Popular Culture, and the Boundaries of the Scottish Enlightenment’, 63.3 (2002), 277–314; and Brown (2019).

⁹⁹ *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems*, ed. by Harriet Harvey Wood, 2 vols (Scottish Text Society, 1977), II, p. ix.

¹⁰⁰ Maurice Lindsay, *History of Scottish Literature*, 2nd edn (Hale, 1992), pp. 170–71; Also see Murray Pittock, *Scottish and Irish Romanticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 46–47; Cairns Craig, ‘The Study of Scottish Literature’, in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature*, ed. by Susan Manning, 3 vols, 2007.

¹⁰¹ Allan Ramsay, *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, 1st edn (Edinburgh, 1723), p. ii.

Before 1600 (1724). Although Ramsay includes poems found in Watson's *Choice Collection*, he used the Bannatyne manuscript (1565–68), a collection of Scots poetry from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as his main source and base text. *The Ever Green*, however, was not nearly as popular as *The Tea Table Miscellany* (henceforth *TTM*). The enthusiastic approval of *TTM* meant that three further volumes under the same title, totalling over 400 pages, were produced between 1723 and 1737, and at least fifteen official editions, as well as numerous pirated copies, were printed in the 1700s alone.



reworking these ballads and songs that represented the “simplicity and authenticity”¹⁰² of their perceived origins, in field, wood and glen. Collectors and editors such as David Herd (1732–1810), John Pinkerton (1758–1826) and Joseph Ritson (1752–1803) printed their antiquarian collections of Scots poem and song with the support and approval of Scottish Enlightenment figures such as James Beattie (1735–1803). The main concern of Enlightenment thinkers and antiquarian editors was that complying with European musical standards would prohibit “real growth and development of Scotland’s native musical forms.”¹⁰³ They believed that the practice of modernisation threatened the existence of Scotland’s inherent musical culture. Antiquarian editors of the second half of the eighteenth century presented their collections with additional scholarly apparatus such as preliminary dissertations, voluminous notes and many sources to add to the ongoing discussion of songs and poems with ‘genuine’ Scots origins.

A turning point in the development of national song and poetry collections was the publication of James Macpherson’s *Fragments of Ancient Poetry: Collected in the Highlands of Scotland and Translated from the Galic or Erse Language* (1759), more commonly known as his ‘Ossian’ poems. This collection had a major influence on Scotland’s cultural milieu. Building on the earlier work of Allan Ramsay, discussed below, and Enlightenment stadial philosophy, it reinforced a sense of Scotland’s oral culture as being equivalent to the musical culture of ancient Greece and related to Homeric poetry in its perceived spontaneity and presence of characteristic features of oral poetry.¹⁰⁴ The image of the ‘blind poet’, a feature also applied to Homer, was a visual reference point for artists, writers and composers who portrayed the bard. Macpherson’s work “built on and in turn reinforced the bittersweet self consciousness of the time by invoking

¹⁰² Claire Nelson, ‘Tea Table Miscellanies: The Development of Scotland’s Song Culture, 1720–1800’, *Early Music*, 28.4 (2000), 596–618, 597.

¹⁰³ Nelson, p. 598.

¹⁰⁴ Nigel Wilson, *Encyclopaedia of Ancient Greece* (Routledge, 2013), p. 366.

nature in its new role as distant and irrecoverable purity.”¹⁰⁵ The possibility of reconciliation with the past through nature was appealing to a fast-growing, polite urban society.

Matthew Gelbart and others have described the accelerated popularity of printed collections of Scots song and poetry, particularly in London,¹⁰⁶ after the publication of Macpherson’s Ossian poems as ‘post-boom’, ‘pre-boom’ being the period prior to the publications. For example, Bishop Thomas Percy’s (1729–1811) *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* (1765) was created as a “straightforward response”¹⁰⁷ to Macpherson’s work and emphasised the ‘Gothic’ roots of English national verse, as opposed to Scotland’s ‘Celtic’ roots. Despite claims that the poems were inauthentic forgeries penned by Macpherson himself, enthusiasm for Ossianic culture inspired an image of Scotland’s straightforward sentimentality originating in the “bardic ideal”¹⁰⁸ which was Europe-wide. It prompted an international appreciation for, and recognition of, Scotland’s deeply-rooted musical, literary and oral culture which, in turn, created a thriving market for collections of song and poetry with titles and sub-titles emphasising their ‘ancient’ origins, such as David Herd’s *Ancient and Modern Scots Songs* (1769).

The subject of the ‘national character’ in music and poetry was promulgated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his *Essai sur l'origine des langues* (c.1760). In this work he proposes that

uncomplicated harmony, melodic expression and rhythmic association of words and music all contribute to the association of ancient melodic styles with specific nations through their linguistic characteristics.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of ‘Folk Music’ and ‘Art Music’: Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 62.

¹⁰⁶ Nelson, p. 603.

¹⁰⁷ Nick Groom, ‘Celts, Goths, and the Nature of the Literary Source’, in *Tradition in Transition: Women Writers, Marginal Texts, and the Eighteenth-Century Canon*, ed. by A. Ribeiro and J. G. Basker (Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 275–96, 275.

¹⁰⁸ Nelson, p. 601.; for further discussion on the complex issue of the Ossian debate see Fiona J. Stafford, *The Sublime Savage: A Study of James Macpherson and the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh University Press, 1988).

¹⁰⁹ R. Wokler, *Social Thought of J. J. Rousseau on Societ, Politics, Music and Language, an Historical Interpretation of His Early Writings* (Taylor & Francis, 1987), p. 85.

Rousseau's reasoning that music is reliant on language assured Scottish thinkers and literati that emphasis should be placed on nurturing the simplicity and sentimentality of Scots song rather than conforming to European standards in style and notated arrangement. The latter had been attempted by publishers such as Oswald, Thomson and Napier whose expensive editions of Scots songs and ballads incorporated elaborate arrangements on chamber instruments such as harpsichord and violin. Contemporary antiquarians, meanwhile, believed that native Scottish music as, for example, presented by Ramsay in *TTM*, corresponded to Rousseau's criteria for ancient music, and therefore created a bridge between Homeric/Ossianic musical origins and the pastoral song still performed in rural Scotland in the eighteenth century.¹¹⁰

The main threads of the argument towards the creation of a 'national' music as represented by eighteenth-century antiquarians and thinkers, therefore, emphasise purity of language and authenticity of melody as perceived through philosophical and antiquarian ideas and values. Due to these theories, the music of the church and the court was not considered to be of significance as they lacked the spontaneity and artlessness of pastoral song. As the seventeenth century was considered to be complicated and muddled by courtly disruption and religious dissension, products of this time were often overlooked as overly formal by antiquarians. As discussed in chapter one, *Songs and Fancies* was a post-Interregnum publication funded by Aberdeen's town council, and was arranged to promote its inclusion within the popular song culture of Scotland, England and, in its third edition, Europe. It may be argued that, due to the time of its publication, its connection to court music, as well as its transnational sources, *Songs and Fancies* does not fulfil the criteria as conceived by Rousseau in either language or musical style.

¹¹⁰ While these antiquarians may have intellectually objected to the output of musical publishers like Oswald and Napier, it is likely that they nonetheless enjoyed the style of the performances.

The next section of this thesis focusses on the pivotal work of Watson and Ramsay, tracking their engagement with *Songs and Fancies* as part of the beginnings of the eighteenth-century Scottish song project.



James Watson (1664?-1722)

James Watson was born circa 1664, possibly in Aberdeen. His father, a merchant, moved the family to Edinburgh where Watson spent the majority of his life and career, operating his printing and bookselling businesses from a variety of locations including the famous Luckenbooths, whose location, opposite St Giles' Cathedral, was a central location for Edinburgh's book trade.¹¹¹ Watson printed a substantial amount of titles across his career – more than 500 in total – including books, pamphlets and broadsides. He was also principal printer for early newspapers such as the *Edinburgh Gazette* and the *Edinburgh Courant*.¹¹² He is best known, however, for his *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems* which was printed in three parts between 1706 and 1711, with a second edition published in 1713. In this second edition, Watson made changes to spelling, capitalisation and punctuation signalling the subtle change in his editorial treatment of the collection.¹¹³ A reprint of all three parts of the first edition appeared in 1869, with a run of 165 copies, and a facsimile of this edition was printed by the Scottish Text

¹¹¹ Adam Fox, “‘Little Story Books’ and ‘Small Pamphlets’ in Edinburgh, 1680–1760: The Making of the Scottish Chapbook”, *Scottish Historical Review*, XCII.2 (2013), 207–30, 221.

¹¹² Richard Ovenden, ‘Watson, James (1664?–1722), Printer and Bookseller’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28839>> [accessed 3 July 2021].

¹¹³ Due to COVID-19 restrictions it has not been possible to consult this volume to analyse Watson's editorial process and updated methodology.

Society in 1977, edited by Harriet Harvey Wood, who calls it “one of the most influential works published in the history of Scottish poetry.”¹¹⁴

Undeniably, the political events surrounding the publication of Watson’s *Collection* are significant to its conception. Watson witnessed the ‘seven ill years’ of pestilence and famine, as well as the failure of the Darien experiment which, as Harvey Wood puts it, “was a national disaster [and] Watson seems to have shared fully in the general bitterness and indignation.”¹¹⁵ In 1700, Watson faced a period of imprisonment in Edinburgh’s Tolbooth for printing a pamphlet entitled ‘The People of Scotland’s Groans and Lamentable Complaints, Pour’d out before the High court of Parliament’ which was considered by authorities to be treasonous. Shortly after his imprisonment, he was freed by a group of protesters “on a wave of popular rioting”¹¹⁶ that, as Harvey Wood suggests, prefigures the Porteous riots of 1736. These acts of community justice implies a period of mistrust in London authority, and provide a political or national motive for the creation of Watson’s *Choice Collection*. David Daiches and Maurice Lindsay both assert that Watson’s motive is predominantly patriotic, while A. M. Kinghorn suggests his *Collection* is “less of a political statement than a hopeful commercial venture” with a ready-made audience of Scots readers following the Treaty of Union (1705–06).¹¹⁷

Despite its acknowledged importance, the *Collection* has been heavily criticised, mainly for its “haphazard arrangement”¹¹⁸ and “editorial insufficiency.”¹¹⁹ Harvey Wood, Kinghorn and others acknowledge that many of Watson’s sources are anonymous broadsides and that he “appears to have printed whatever versions he found most conveniently to hand and there is little evidence that he made any effort to discriminate between the various sources available to

¹¹⁴ Harvey Wood, p. ix.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. xiv.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ A. M. Kinghorn, ‘Watson’s Choice, Ramsay’s Voice and a Flash of Fergusson’, *Scottish Literary Journal*, 19.2 (1992), 5–23, 6; Craig; Lindsay.

¹¹⁸ Harvey Wood, p. xx.

¹¹⁹ Kinghorn, ‘Watson’s Choice, Ramsay’s Voice and a Flash of Fergusson’, p. 7.

him.”¹²⁰ Although Watson may have had access to libraries through his circle of noteworthy friends such as printer, editor and librarian of the Advocates’ Library Thomas Ruddiman (1674–1757), Harvey Wood insists he could not have been aware of the poems in the Bannatyne manuscript due to many “worthy omissions.”¹²¹ As a result of these factors, his editorial work is often considered ancillary to his printing legacy.

However, Leith Davis’s assessment of the *miscellany* genre prominent in England and France in the seventeenth century provides a new perspective on the apparent ‘haphazardness’ in Watson’s choices and arrangement. Davis’s research uncovers Watson’s use of French printed miscellanies as a foundation for his *Collection*, drawing particularly on a text entitled *Recueil des plus belles pièces des poètes françois, tant anciens que modernes*.¹²² The circulation of seventeenth-century French miscellanies and song collections implies wider cultural parameters than previously supposed at this time, giving new precedence to the idea of transnational cultural exchange. For example, as discussed in chapter one, *Songs and Fancies* includes a large number of English pieces alongside songs of a Scottish origin, or Scots refashioning of songs with English origins, also called *contrafacta*.¹²³ By incorporating a wide variety of sources, both with ‘ancient’ and ‘modern’ Scottish origins, Watson was “using the genre of miscellany to appeal to and therefore to unite differently minded readers under the common rubric of the nation.”¹²⁴

Watson’s text is presented as a collection of poetry, not song, and he “shows no awareness of the strong and integral connection between the words and music of many of the poems he published.”¹²⁵ This is discussed in more detail in ‘The Solsequium’ case study.

¹²⁰ Harvey Wood, p. viii.

¹²¹ Ibid, p. xxiii.

¹²² *Collection of the most beautiful pieces by French poets, both ancient and modern* – translated by Paul Malgrati.

¹²³ Robert Falck and Martin Picker, ‘Contrafactum’, *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001) <<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000006361>> [accessed 13 April 2021].

¹²⁴ Leith Davis, ‘Imagining the Miscellaneous Nation: James Watson’s Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 35.3 (2011), 60–80, 63.

¹²⁵ Harvey Wood, p. xxiv.

Paratexts

Title Page

Watson's title page is not overly decorated; there are no illustrations, but Watson's device (figure 8) appears below the titular information. This sophisticated device displays two symmetrical J capitals bordering an uppercase W in a winding arabesque pattern. The device is the largest figure on the page and reveals Watson's established name as a printer to inform, encourage or reassure potential buyers of its contents based on Watson's reputation. Several types are being used; both blackletter and roman styles are on display. Notably, 'Scots Poems' is the only text on the page in blackletter type, which emphasises the "ancient" contents rather than the "modern".



Figure 8: Printer's device of James Watson

The title page displays a Latin epigraph reading

*Quicquid agunt Homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas, Gaudia, discursis, nostri est
farrago Libelli.*¹²⁶

The phrase is from Juvenal's *Satires* (l.i.85)¹²⁷ and translates as 'all the acts of employments of humankind shall be the subject of this publication.' This was a regular feature of publications of the period, acting as a maxim for publishers. John Dryden's translation of *The satires of Juvenalis* also offers this epigraph on its title page, demonstrating the quote's popularity and longevity. Its inclusion presents Watson as a respectable member of the contemporary growing print business.

¹²⁶ *A Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems, Ancient and Modern, by Several Hands*, ed. by James Watson (Edinburgh: James Watson, 1706), PART 1, p. Title page.

¹²⁷ See Juvenal, *The Satires*, trans. by Niall Rudd (Oxford University Press, 1996).

Preface

Watson's short preface, written in standard English, utilises several contemporary conventions including a plea to the reader to "give some Charitable Grains of Allowance, if the Performance come not up to such a Point of Exactness as may please an over nice Palate."¹²⁸ The second part of this appeal, however, aims to steer his audience away from making an instinctive negative assessment of the native material within the book, or even the physical quality of the book itself, which is admitted by Kinghorn to be of a poor standard.¹²⁹ Harvey Wood describes Watson as being "interested in the maintenance of high standards in his profession"¹³⁰ and his later publication *The History of the Art of Printing* (1713) details the importance of learning and implementing European materials and methods of printing, which he later laid out in his *Rules & Directions to be Observed in Printing Houses* (1721). This conveys Watson's dedication to the art of printing and improvement in that area.

Watson's preface also introduces the text to the reader as "the first of its Nature which has been publish'd in our own Native Scots Dialect."¹³¹ Watson has been accused of "misleading"¹³² his readers with this statement. Undeniably, the majority of the works are printed with an anglicised orthography, with few 'native' words. Of the 72 works included across the three parts of *A Choice Collection*, only 13 are of the 'native Scots dialect'.¹³³ Rather than viewing this as a criticism, however, Davis reads the collection as an accessible one:

¹²⁸ *A Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems, Ancient and Modern, by Several Hands*, ed. by James Watson (Edinburgh: James Watson, 1706), PART 1, no pagination.

¹²⁹ Kinghorn, 'Watson's Choice, Ramsay's Voice and a Flash of Fergusson', p. 4. Indeed, several copies consulted for this study were missing titlepages, possibly due to poor binding or paper quality.

¹³⁰ Harvey Wood, p. xvii.

¹³¹ Watson, no pagination.

¹³² Kinghorn, 'Watson's Choice, Ramsay's Voice and a Flash of Fergusson', p. 7.

¹³³ Harvey Wood, p. xviii.

Watson uses the imaginative space of the miscellany to bring readers of different tastes and interests together to promote the cause of Scotland at a time during which the nation's very existence was under threat."¹³⁴

By managing the expectations of his readers in his preface, he is likely to reach a larger audience, thus promoting the 'Native Scots Dialect' as featured in his work.

For centuries, his *Collection* has left readers divided on its quality and value as it is nearly always considered against other texts that directly contributed to the 'canonising' project.¹³⁵ However, Watson was operating at a pivotal moment for Scottish print, and its significance as a literary document that represents the politics and print of the early eighteenth century is undeniable. Watson's primary aim may have been to sell many copies of his *Collection* but even in doing so he would be participating in the act of promoting Scottish culture and language to as wide an audience as possible.

Watson's prologue ends with a short quotation: "Pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli"¹³⁶ which translates as 'According to the capabilities of the reader, books have their destiny.' This reference suggests Watson's engagement with his own collection and is provoking readers to do more with the book than simply consume it and is a testimony to the lasting legacy of his *Collection*.

¹³⁴ Davis, 'Imagining the Miscellaneous Nation: James Watson's Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems', p. 61.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Watson, PART 1, no pagination.



Allan Ramsay (1684–1758)

Allan Ramsay was born in 1684 in Leadhills, Lanarkshire and was educated at the local parish school. His captivation with the “folklore, poetry, and popular history of the Scottish past”¹³⁷ would lay the foundations for the two works in which he is primarily remembered as an editor: *The Tea Table Miscellany* (4 volumes, 1723–1737) and *The Ever Green* (2 volumes, 1724). Both were printed by Thomas Ruddiman (1674–1757),¹³⁸ who, as discussed later in this chapter, was also an editor, most famously of Gavin Douglas’s *Eneados* (1710), an Older Scots translation of Virgil’s *Aeneid* (1513).

Ramsay’s literary career was born out of his involvement with the Easy Club, one of Edinburgh’s many social clubs which placed its emphasis especially on “improvement”¹³⁹ as well as literary and philosophical concerns. Murray Pittock and Jeremy Smith have proved Ramsay’s ideological Jacobite sympathies through his involvement with the Easy Club, his coded poetry and the establishment of a Jacobite ‘community of practice’ with, among others, Thomas Ruddiman.¹⁴⁰ Arguably, these ideological leanings underpin the majority of Ramsay’s motivations and actions as a vernacular poet as well as an editor of vernacular works. His dedications, prefaces, epigraphs and other apparatus provide insight into his wider social, political and creative concerns, and reveals the foundations that would “bear considerable

¹³⁷ Murray Pittock, ‘Ramsay, Allan (1684–1758), Poet.’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-23072>> [accessed 10 April 2021].

¹³⁸ Burns Martin, ‘A Bibliography of the Writings of Allan Ramsay’, *Records of the Glasgow Bibliographical Society*, X (1931).

¹³⁹ Martyn J. Powell, ‘Inventing the Public Sphere’, in *Association and Enlightenment: Scottish Clubs and Societies, 1700–1830*, ed. by Mark C. Wallace and Jane Rendall (Bucknell University Press, 2018), pp. 161–87, 176.

¹⁴⁰ For further discussion see Murray Pittock, ‘Were the Easy Club Jacobites?’, *Scottish Literary Journal*, 17:1 (1990), pp. 91–94; and Jeremy J. Smith, ‘Recuperating Older Scots in the Early 18th Century’, in *The Dynamics of Text and Framing Phenomena: Historical Approaches to Paratext and Metadiscourse in English*, ed. by Birte Bös and Matti Peikola (John Benjamins, 2020), pp. 276–97.

cultural fruit later in the century”¹⁴¹ through the work of textual antiquarians Pinkerton, Herd, Percy and, afterwards, Walter Scott.

The Tea Table Miscellany (1723–37)

Allan Ramsay’s *The Tea Table-Miscellany* (1723) was the poet’s very successful endeavour to build a collection of Scottish songs that would appeal to, as is stated in his preface, “ilka lovely British

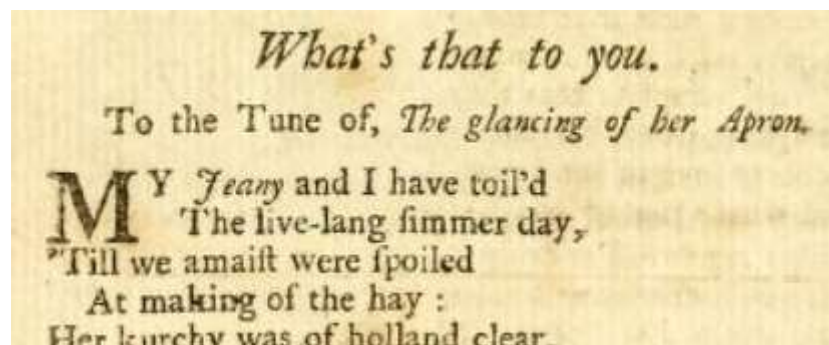


Figure 9: 'What's that to you', *TTM* (1727), p. 156

lass.”¹⁴² His intended audience, it can be read, is the polite, upper-class woman. To further emphasise this, Ramsay writes “In my compositions and collections, I have kept out all smut and ribaldry, that the modest voice and ear of the fair singer might meet with no affront.”¹⁴³ Rhona Brown has expressed that Ramsay would “court his female audiences, for whom publications such as the *Tea Table Miscellany* would be deemed, by contemporary standards, to be suitable reading.”¹⁴⁴ The *TTM* does not contain printed notation, instrumentation, or arrangements but rather indicates the tune to which a piece should be sung (see Figure 9) or simply prints the title for more well known pieces. By doing this, Ramsay assumes that his audience already knows the tunes to which the texts are set. This highlights the cultural-social relevance and ‘living’ quality

¹⁴¹ Jeremy J. Smith, ‘Recuperating Older Scots in the Early 18th Century’, pp. 285–86.

¹⁴² Ramsay, *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, p. ii.

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. vii.

¹⁴⁴ Brown, p. 159.

of many of these songs, including ‘The gowans are gay’ which features in all three editions of *Songs and Fancies*. In 1726, Alexander Stuart’s *Musick for Allan Ramsay’s Collection of Scots Songs* was printed, and was the first collection of notated arrangements to many of the songs from the *TTM*.¹⁴⁵ As Nelson writes, “for at least the three years that passed between the publication of the *Miscellany* and the airs, the upper-class performers of his songs were familiar enough with their native airs to manage without the aid of musical notation.”¹⁴⁶ Ramsay’s emphasis on promoting orality amongst the upper classes relied on his polite, female audience’s domestic society to propagate and preserve Scottish song culture. However, Ramsay chose to include works by known Jacobite supporters such as Hamilton of Bangour alongside traditional airs and songs, creating a subversive element in his text which was marketed to members of polite society.

David McGuinness writes that “the success of *The Tea Table Miscellany* made it clear that there could be a market for printed music to accompany the song texts” and from there, the domestic music market began to grow.¹⁴⁷ Consequently, this started a fork in the road for Scottish song collections: the growing enthusiasm for rural and pastoral songs devalued a collection such as *Songs and Fancies* which was marketed primarily as an instructional book of musical performance and song, rather than a proto-national anthology. Although it contains unique lyrics of Scots origin, their musical features, such as melody and rhythm, were unrecognisable in comparison to the type of Scots pastoral song found in *TTM*.¹⁴⁸ An exception to this appears in the form of ‘The gowans are gay’ which was printed in both *Songs and Fancies* and *TTM*. Its recognisable ballad form shall be discussed in more detail in case study 3.

In 1725, William Thomson published *Orpheus Caledonius* from London, to great success. The subscribers list includes many notable patrons, including members of the nobility. Although

¹⁴⁵ Alexander Stuart, *Music for Allan Ramsay’s Collection of 71 Scots Songs*, ed. by Kirsteen McCue (University of Carolina Libraries, 2017), p. vii.

¹⁴⁶ Nelson, p. 597.

¹⁴⁷ David McGuinness and Aaron McGregor, ‘Ramsay’s Musical Sources: Reconstructing a Poet’s Musical Memory’, *Scottish Literary Review*, 10.1 (2018), 49–71, 50.

¹⁴⁸ See comparison of ‘Lyk as the dum solsequium’ case study.

Thomson reprinted many of Ramsay's original and collected songs, he did so without the author's permission. Despite a public reprieve in the preface of subsequent editions of *TTM*, Ramsay was not compensated for Thomson's plagiarism, and the success of *Orpheus Caledonius* outstripped Stuart's *Musick for Allan Ramsay's Collection of Scots Songs* in popularity and longevity.

Steve Newman reasons that the songs written and collected by Ramsay set in motion "the Scottish Enlightenment's imperative to be social."¹⁴⁹ Indeed, many post-*TTM* musical texts display frontispieces depicting upper-class players within their domestic environment, utilising the very text contained within the image, the implication being that to perform these songs is a social pastime, and contributes to the requisite improvement motivations of that era. Similarly, the frontispiece of *Songs and Fancies* portrays a woodcut of two musicians, a man and a woman, with a lute and an open song book. Although not as detailed as later engravings or etchings, the images are of parallel significance, and indicate advertising techniques reflecting communal pastimes and portrayals of polite sociability.

As well as inspiring musical texts, *TTM* was an important influence for later antiquarians who wished to return to the "simplicity and authenticity"¹⁵⁰ of Ramsay's text. The numerous collections of Scots songs by editors such as Herd, Pinkerton and Ritson were presented "as modes which could be enjoyed in a purely literary or readerly form, even though they often gave the titles of traditional melodies or tunes to the texts, thus indicating a possible oral, traditional or demotic root."¹⁵¹

Preface and dedication

As discussed above, Ramsay, from the very first edition, dedicates his *TTM* to "Ilka lovely British lass" including 'Ladys' of the upper classes as well as "bonny singing Bess, / Wha dances barefoot

¹⁴⁹ Newman, *Ballad Collection, Lyric and the Canon: The Call of the Popular from the Restoration to the New Criticism*, p. 53.

¹⁵⁰ Nelson, p. 597.

¹⁵¹ Kirsteen McCue, 'The Culture of Song', in *The Oxford Handbook of British Romanticism* (Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 643–60, 645.

on the Green.” Ramsay connects the ‘upper’ and the ‘lower’ classes here which persuades his reader of the authenticity and simplicity of his sources, as well as giving them an air of refined merriment. From at least the 1729 edition of *TTM*, Ramsay included a preface stating that Scots tunes [...] have an agreeable gaiety and natural sweetness, that make them acceptable wherever they are known, not only among ourselves, but in other countries.

He is placing Scots song on par with the “fine flourishes of new musick from Italy and elsewhere.” The emphasis on pastoral simplicity as the songs are “for the most part so chearful, that on hearing them well play’d or sung, we find a difficulty to keep ourselves from dancing.” Dancing as a country pastime became associated with pastoral manners and associated with



Figure 10: David Allan's *A Highland Dance* (1780), Scottish National Gallery.

national character,¹⁵² which in turn became integrated with classical motifs in works of art such as David Allan's painting *A Highland Dance* (figure 10). Ramsay's praise of their “antiquity” further connects the Enlightenment ideals of Scotland as a pastoral nation, with not classical origins of Greece and Rome but a related ideal that insinuates origins as respectable and ancient as those refined states. He underlines the connection later in the preface when he directly addresses his own volumes: “Happy volumes! you are to live too as long as the song of Homer in Greek and English, and mix your ashes only with the odes of

¹⁵² For further discussion on dance as expression of national characteristics see Anne McKee Stapleton, *Pointed Encounters: Dance in Post-Culloden Scottish Literature* (Rodopi, 2014).

Horace.”¹⁵³ Ramsay also inserts his own personal legacy into the preface, stressing again the importance of the cultural relationship he is involved in fostering that stretches back into the past and out towards the future:

Were it but my fate, when old and ruffled, like you to be again reprinted, what a curious figure would I appear on the utmost limits of time, after a thousand editions? Happy volumes! you are secure, but I must yield; please the ladies, and take care of my fame.¹⁵⁴

He also acknowledges, in his preface, Thomson’s plagiarism of *TTM* with politeness and dignity:

From this and the following volume, Mr. Thomson (who is allowed by all, to be a good teacher and singer of Scots songs) cull’d his Orpheus Caledonius, the music for both the voice and flute, and the words of the songs finely engraven in a folio book, for the use of persons of the highest quality in Britain, and dedicated to the late Queen. This, by the by, I thought proper to intimate, and do myself that justice which the publisher neglected; since he ought to have acquainted his illustrious list of subscribers, that most of the songs were mine, the music abstracted.¹⁵⁵

It is easy to imagine that Ramsay, as a bookseller, was not just nettled by his rival’s imitation, but also the prosperity of Thomson’s market. By addressing a mainstream British reading public in his preface to *TTM*, Ramsay hoped to widen his audience beyond Edinburgh. Thomson’s edition with printed music and illustrious subscribers outstripped Ramsay’s versions in popularity. It is likely that news of this rival volume sparked the inventive for Ramsay to create *Musick for Allan Ramsay’s Collection of Scots Songs* (1724–27), a collaborative effort with musician Alexander Stuart.

¹⁵³ Ramsay, *The Tea Table Miscellany*, p. vii.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p. ix.

Epigraph

Included at the beginning of *TTM* are six lines of a poem by Edmund Waller (1606–1687), English poet and politician.

Behold and listen, while the fair
Breaks in sweet sounds the willing air;
And with her own breath fans the fire
Which her bright eyes do first inspire:
What reason can that love control
Which more than one way courts the soul?¹⁵⁶

The six-line stanza selected by Ramsay is from the first half of a sonnet dedicated to ‘Mrs Arden’ who, according to Waller’s nineteenth-century editor, was “a maid of honour, or a gentlewoman of the bed-chamber to King Charles the First’s Queen.”¹⁵⁷ The writer, Edmund Waller, was a controversial figure who was exiled from England (to France and Switzerland) after participating in a plot to secure the throne of Charles I in London prior to his execution.¹⁵⁸ Although pardoned by Oliver Cromwell in 1652, Waller’s earlier poems, mainly dedicated to the Stuart court, continued to circulate in print throughout the second half of the seventeenth century.¹⁵⁹ Ramsay has potentially included Waller to begin his collection as a signal to perceptive readers with Jacobite sympathies. Without context, the poem reads as innocuous lines of inspiration for a user of the collection to create ‘sweet sounds’ and indicates the power of the voice to ‘court the soul’. As mentioned above, Ramsay created a rebellious undertone by including works of openly Jacobite poets in *TTM*, a text that was intended for an upper class and polite audience. The inclusion of this epigraph points to similarly deliberate rebellious tendencies on Ramsay’s part.

¹⁵⁶ Ramsay, *The Tea Table Miscellany*, Title page.

¹⁵⁷ *The Poetical Works of Edmund Waller and Sir John Denham*, ed. by George Gilfillan (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1857), p. 45.

¹⁵⁸ Warren Chernaik, ‘Waller, Edmund (1606–1687)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.

¹⁵⁹ Thomas Ward, ‘Effacing the Music in Edmund Waller’s Poems’, *Renaissance Studies*, 31.5 (2016), 735–54, 735.

The Ever Green (1724)

The Ever Green, Being a collection of Scots Poems, Written by the Ingenious Before 1600 was printed just several months after *TTM* and was Ramsay's endeavour to publish Middle Scots poets for an eighteenth-century audience. Across his two volumes, he prints works by poets associated with the court such as Robert Henryson (fl.1460–1490), William Dunbar (c.1460–1513) and Alexander Montgomerie (c.1550–1598). Unlike *TTM*, Ramsay presents these volumes as purely verse, although several works directly corresponded to music; one example of this is 'The Solsequium', also printed as a poem by Watson. Previous critics have made links between Watson's *Choice Collection* and Ramsay's edited corpora. For example, A. M. Kinghorn believes that "Ramsay may have encountered *A Choice Collection* as early as 1706";¹⁶⁰ however, there is little evidence to support this claim and Watson's editor has confirmed that Ramsay never mentioned Watson's work in writing as a direct source.¹⁶¹ While 'Christ's Kirk on the Green' is the first poem printed in both Watson's *Collection* and Ramsay's *The Ever Green*, it is likely because it was a popular poem circulating in chapbook and broadside form, and not due to any nod or homage Ramsay may have been making to Watson. Regardless, it is not implausible that Ramsay was encouraged by Watson's *Choice Collection*. That they knew each other personally is verified as Watson sold one of Ramsay's early broadsheets *A Scheme and Type of the Great and Terrible Eclipse of the Sun* in 1715.¹⁶²

Preface and dedication

In his preface to the text, Ramsay emphasises that the Middle Scots poets featured in his collection were writing at a time when

¹⁶⁰ Kinghorn, 'Watson's Choice, Ramsay's Voice and a Flash of Fergusson', p. 8.

¹⁶¹ Harvey Wood, II, p. xx.

¹⁶² Pittock, 'Ramsay, Allan (1684–1758), Poet.'

we had yet made use of imported Trimming upon our Cloaths, nor of foreign
Embroidery in our fittings. Their Poetry is the Product of their own Country,
not pilfered and spoiled.¹⁶³

This sartorial metaphor clearly demonstrates Ramsay's awareness of and contempt for the 'foreign' encroachment on Scottish culture. Later in the preface, he mentions the landscapes of Greece and Italy. Jeff Strabone writes that "Europeans had, for centuries, looked to ancient Greece and Rome for their cultural and historic origins."¹⁶⁴ Instead of focussing on the beauty of classical and contemporary Greece and Italy, Ramsay encourages his readership to look more closely at poetry "of which his own country is the scene."¹⁶⁵ Here, the landscape represents the Scots language. Ramsay is able, through his fluency with the acceptable polite language of his audience, to guide his readership to an appreciation of native Scots poetry and thereby establish the beginnings of a substantial national culture for his readers to draw inspiration and national pride, rather than conceding to foreign influence. Ramsay does not directly mention English as the specific foreign dominance but this implication is clarified through his textual apparatus for *The Ever Green*. In an extensive footnote on the first page of *The Ever Green*, Ramsay lays out the "rules" of "old Orthography"¹⁶⁶ to educate his readers in the differences between the Older Scots used in the poems and polite English framing of the text. Moreover, in drawing attention to these differences, as well as outlining the metaphorical value of the Scottish landscape/language in his preface and linking this to native Scots poets, Ramsay is sensitively distinguishing the inherent 'polite' value of Scots rather than its associations with the rural or 'rude.' However, Ramsay's expression "shows him to be acutely and astutely aware of the new opportunities presented by a post-Union, British reading public"¹⁶⁷ and his choice in paratextually framing *The*

¹⁶³ Allan Ramsay, *The Ever Green, Being a Collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600* (Edinburgh: Allan Ramsay, 1724), p. vi.

¹⁶⁴ Jeff Strabone, *Poetry and British Nationalisms in the Bardic Eighteenth Century: Imagined Antiquities* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 3.

¹⁶⁵ Ramsay, *The Ever Green, Being a Collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600*, p. viii.

¹⁶⁶ Ramsay, *The Ever Green*, p. 1.

¹⁶⁷ Brown, p. 159.

Ever Green in polite English encourages buyers to be open minded towards Scots while not entirely dismissing or insulting champions of the English language.

Conversely, *The Ever Green* is dedicated to the Royal Company of Archers who Murray Pittock describes as “a nest of closet Jacobites.”¹⁶⁸ Ramsay furtively links the volume to a subversive cause of which he is an advocate. By hiding-in-plain-sight he is able to see *The Ever Green* in print locally and nationally, reaching a wider audience than if it was overtly seen to champion Jacobitism. He similarly pursues his Jacobite objectives in his *TTM* using a similar mixture of paratextual tone and contexts.

Ramsay's editorial method

Like Watson, Ramsay's editorial approach has been criticised. Instead of being ‘haphazard’, however, Ramsay is criticised for being too ‘creative.’ For example, he adds verses to Dunbar's ‘Lament for the Makaris’ to boldly include his own name.¹⁶⁹ From his sources, he makes substantial textual modifications in order to standardise or ‘neaten’ his texts in line with his own developing understanding of Older and Middle Scots. In “an age generally obsessed with correct grammar”¹⁷⁰ it is plausible that Ramsay did not have a choice but to create a seamless Scots orthography for his harsher critics, including his associate, notable scholar and grammarian Ruddiman. Ramsay provides an orthographic outline at the beginning of *The Ever Green* that shapes the majority of his editorial methodology but, as asserted by Jeremy Smith, he is “developing his sensitivity to Scots orthography as he worked on the edition.”¹⁷¹ Ramsay is portraying the Scots language as living and organic yet connected to a literary past on which to found modern values and ideas of nation. Regardless of the linguistic ‘correctness’ Ramsay expresses in his footnote and methodology for the wider content of *The Ever Green*, he is developing a new framework for presenting Older and Middle Scots poets that diverges

¹⁶⁸ Pittock, ‘Ramsay, Allan (1684–1758), Poet.’

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Carol Percy, ‘Early Editorial Practice vs. Later Linguistic Precept: Some Eighteenth-Century Illustrations’, *English Language Notes*, 34.3 (1997), 23–39, 24.

¹⁷¹ Jeremy J. Smith, ‘Recuperating Older Scots in the Early 18th Century’, p. 275.

significantly from prior edited collections, such as *Choice Collection* and *Songs and Fancies*, whose creators used more conveniently available editions as their base texts.¹⁷² This is discussed in more detail in the ‘Solsequium’ case study.

Ramsay neglects to mention in his preface the courtly pedigree of his poets, preferring to represent them as “rugged, native, freedom-loving bards.”¹⁷³ Having established the writers in this way, readers are able to assign similar qualities to their poems as to the anonymous verse and song of the peasantry, but with natural style and sophistication associated with polite and mannered Scots. Although Strabone’s labels are convincing and concise, Ramsay’s preface makes parallels between the poets’ Scottish backdrop and the landscape of Greece and Rome. He directly calls the poets “Hymners of the Spring” and “Makers of pastorals”¹⁷⁴ further signalling a direct classical link, which somewhat contradicts Strabone’s reading of ‘rugged, native bards’.

Epigraph

Ramsay’s chosen epigraph for *The Ever Green* is four lines from Alexander Pope’s *An Essay on Criticism* (1711):

Still green with Bays each ancient Altar stands,
Above the Reach of sacrilegious Hands,
Secure from Flames, from Envys fiercer Rage,
Destructive War, and all devouring Age.

Pope’s *Essay on Criticism*, written in verse form, was a popular contemporary work and it ran to 17 editions by his death in 1744. Douglas Duncan writes: “The vernacular poet, for as long as neoclassicism ruled, was quite beyond the pale of respectability.”¹⁷⁵ Although this is a fairly outmoded view, it facilitates Ramsay’s intention of including this quotation. By invoking Pope in *The Ever Green*’s title-page, Ramsay channels the ‘respectability’ usually reserved for Pope and

¹⁷² This is not a criticism; this practice predates the development of scholarly editorial practice that would not be formally outlined until at least the nineteenth century.

¹⁷³ Strabone, p. 88.

¹⁷⁴ Ramsay, *The Ever Green, Being a Collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600*, p. viii.

¹⁷⁵ Douglas Duncan, *Thomas Ruddiman: A Study in Scottish Scholarship of the Early Eighteenth Century* (Oliver and Boyd, 1965), p. 154.

other Augustan poets into the ‘bards’ from Scottish literary history, many of whose work, until that time, remained unpublished.

Examining the quarto chosen by Ramsay as separate from Pope’s full work, ‘Bay’ makes reference to poets laureate, or ‘makars’ (the term was revived by Ramsay in *The Ever Green*) whose ‘ancient altar’ remains out of reach of those who would destroy them or, in this case, their works and language. Its wider coded meaning, then, points to the desecration of the Scots language as a result of anglicisation.

Transnationality and song

Ramsay’s nation-building narrative shaped through his edited collections sparked an interest for textual antiquarians and musical publishers to re-imagine and compile material that had a twin association with the pastoral and the ‘ancient’, thereby negating the usefulness of sources such as *Songs and Fancies*. As a printed source from an urban milieu, *Songs and Fancies* did not carry the cultural significance impressed by Ramsay and his successors in its perceived sources, its language or its musical features. For Ramsay’s Jacobite sympathies, *Songs and Fancies*’ irregular and anonymised contents may have ruled it out for him as a legitimate source of Scottish song. However, as established in chapter 1, *Songs and Fancies* was a product of trans-nationality which included songs from across the ‘Common-weel’, including those of Scottish origin.

Due to their very close publication dates (1723 and 1724), Ramsay must have been working on both the *TTM* and *The Ever Green* simultaneously, providing him with a clear overview of his material. As mentioned in chapter one, the labels ‘art’ song and ‘folk’ song were not yet in existence and the function of a song was more important than its origin. Ramsay is deliberately cataloguing his source material into the curation of two separate collections which primarily focus on presentation of the origin and ‘authenticity’ of the pieces. He does this through his paratextual frames and curatorial creativity, specifically his linguistic additions and emendations. Watson’s *Collection* did not utilise a creative editorial approach like Ramsay and

instead he has been criticised for his ‘haphazard’ methodology. However, his method was very deliberate and borrowed from the popular miscellany genre. Watson applied this to his *Collection* which includes a diversity of works. His intention was to appeal to a large readership, keeping in mind their different preferences. As he limits his source material to include only native poets, he is, like Ramsay, participating in an early canon building project. Both editors had similar aims of communicating older and surviving Scottish culture into the eighteenth century. In relation to *Songs and Fancies* Forbes, Watson and Ramsay used overlapping sources but their cultural and critical reception is very different. By paralleling all three editors, similarities in agenda become clearer: while *Songs and Fancies* emphasises transnationality, it shares similarities to Watson’s miscellany agenda, appealing to a wide readership. Arguably, *Songs and Fancies*, like Ramsay’s *TTM*, was created for a polite readership who wished to share songs in a domestic setting for enjoyment, while also improving their musical proficiency. It also prefigures Ramsay’s nation-building project, but rather than including contents of a purely Scottish origin, *Songs and Fancies* presents music that represents the British ‘Common-weel’ under Charles II’s rule at that time. Instead of initiating the story of nation-building projects at the beginning of the eighteenth century, it is valuable to look back to the seventeenth century to discover parallels and similarities. Doing so reassesses the relationship between the alleged ‘modern’ and ‘pre-modern’ periods.

Chapter 3: Case Studies ❷

By presenting case studies of three of the songs included by Forbes, the last section of this thesis will investigate more closely how *Songs and Fancies* impacted on Watson, Ramsay and selected song editors who followed in their footsteps, examining their rationale and the reasons for inclusion or increasingly exclusion of pieces from *Songs and Fancies*. Why were later eighteenth-century song editors and publishers less and less interested in Forbes's collection?

1. 'Away, vain world'

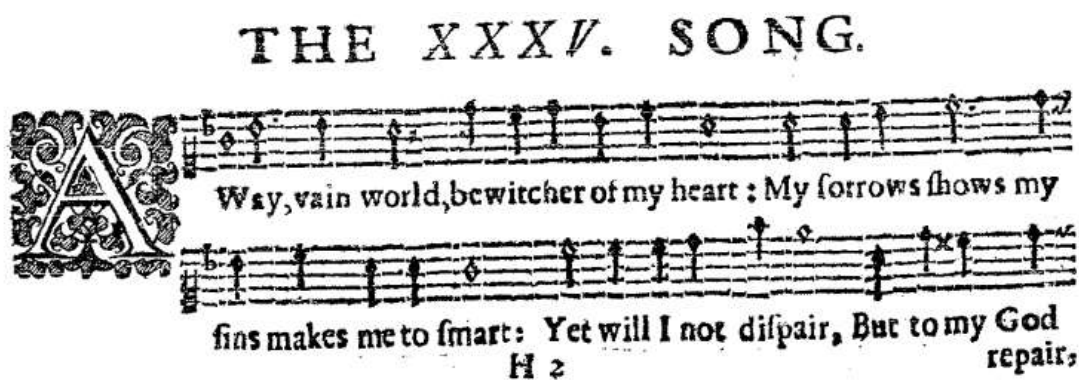


Figure 11: 'Away vaine world', *Songs and Fancies*, 3rd edition (1682)

'Away, vain world', the thirty-fifth song, is printed in all three editions of *Songs and Fancies*. This case study will explore its print history and how it was lost as a song and became known as a poem, misattributed to the wrong author for more than a century. Interrogating this song in depth provides vital evidence about the afterlife of *Songs and Fancies*, namely in relation to the separation of lyrics and melody. This setting, since it provides both words and music, indicates that the version printed in *Songs and Fancies* was not used by Melville's later editors and its musical association was lost.

Context

‘A comfortabill Song, To the tune of *Sall I let her go*’, alternatively titled ‘Away, vain world’, appears as a final text to conclude the longer work *Ane Godlie Dreame* (1603) by Elizabeth Melville, also known as Lady Culross (c.1578–c.1640). Many editions of Melville’s *Ane Godlie Dreame*, including Aberdeen printer Edward Raban’s 1644 edition, print this song as a postliminary with



Figure 12: Elizabeth Melville, 'A comfortabill song' in *Ane Godlie Dreame* (Edinburgh, 1603)

the title ‘A comfortabill song’ or variants thereof. It is thought to be an apparent relief from the long religious poem that precedes it. ‘Away vaine world’ is included in all three editions of *Songs and Fancies* and, like the other songs, is unattributed. Many well-known secular songs experienced a sacred *contrafactum* (“a substitution of one text for another without substantial change to the music”¹⁷⁶) in post-Reformation Scotland, undergoing “editorial revision and kirk-ordained censorship.”¹⁷⁷ The Reformers cleverly incorporated religious lyrics into popular secular melodies which were published in *The Gude and Godlie Ballads*, first printed in Dundee in 1565. This text was intended as a songbook for the newly reformed population.¹⁷⁸ In Melville’s case, ‘Away vaine world’ is a sacred rewriting of the secular song by Robert Jones’s ‘Farewell dear love’. The original

¹⁷⁶ Falck and Picker [Accessed 12/06/21].

¹⁷⁷ *The Gude and Godlie Ballads*, ed. by Alasdair A. MacDonald, Scottish Text Society, 5 (Boydell and Brewer, 2015), p. 60.

¹⁷⁸ See MacDonald, pp. 59–60.

was printed for solo voice with lute accompaniment in Jones's *First Booke of Songes or Ayres* in 1600; the version that appears in *Songs and Fancies* is the only example of Melville's words being paired to this music in print or manuscript. Scotland's cities and townships had a productive book trade with London and songbooks were widely circulated, especially due to the relative lack of printed musical materials in Scotland at this time.¹⁷⁹ It is evident that the melody of this song was well known enough that the average reader of *Ane Godlie Dreame* would be able to enjoy some light, musical relief after Melville's lengthy, spiritual dream vision. While Melville's choice of literary form, textual motifs and language look 'back' in time, the song, having been written in 1600, was a contemporary and fashionable choice of music.¹⁸⁰ The original melody is typical of the period: it is composed in a minor key, originally for lute and voice(s), and it has a mixture of homophonic and contrapuntal melodies which signals its adaptability as both a performance and didactic piece. For the compilers of *Songs and Fancies*, 'Away vaine world' was a useful piece to include; for pupils of the music school its melody is not too demanding, but the appearance of several accidentals present a moderate challenge to the inexperienced singer. The evident popularity of *Ane Godlie Dreame* also suggests that offering a printed musical illustration of its postliminary lyric would make *Songs and Fancies* a desirable purchase. Although its initial lyrics are of an amorous subject matter, Melville's rewriting of this song demonstrates an aspect of her deep spirituality as well as her contemporary cultural awareness.

Authorship and analysis

Melville's *contrafactum* was, until fairly recently, misattributed to Alexander Montgomerie due to an unverified claim by David Laing in his scholarly edition of *Ane Godlie Dreame* 1828.¹⁸¹ However, the song it is based on, Robert Jones's 'Farewell dear love' from *The First Booke of Songes*

¹⁷⁹ Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade 1500–1720*, p. 57; Raven, p. 165.

¹⁸⁰ The list of publications containing secular madrigals and airs from this time is extensive; see Edward F. Rimbault, *Bibliotheca Madrigaliana: A Bibliographical Account of the Musical and Poetical Works Published in England during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (John Russell Smith, 1847).

¹⁸¹ Jamie Reid Baxter, 'Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross: New Light from Fife', *The Innes Review*, 68.1 (2017), 38–77, 41, n.8.

& Ayres, was printed by Peter Short in 1600, two years after Montgomerie's death.¹⁸² Melville's authorship of 'Away vaine world' was contested by R. D. S. Jack who wrote that printers would frequently affix a postliminary shorter work, not necessarily penned by the same author, that complemented the main text thematically.¹⁸³

The case for Melville's authorship is made up of the direct tonal and thematic connections between *Ane Godlie Dreame* and 'Away vaine world' as well as the employment of a twin narrative voice. Thematically, both works explore navigating the temporal and the spiritual realms through difficult and sorrowful introspection. *Ane Godlie Dreame* opens with lines filled with brooding despondency: "Upon ane day as I did mourne full soir, / With sindrie things quhairwith my saull was greifit" (ll. 1-2). The song opens: "Away vaine world, bewitcher of my heart, / my sorrow shawes my sinnes maks me to smart" (ll. 1-2). Sin and sorrows are the emphasis of both sets of opening lines. The third stanza of *Dreame* features more explicitly comparable language to the final verse of 'Away vaine world': "earthlie joyes did still increas my wo:" (l. 18) contrasting with "these earthlie toyes shall turne in Heavenlie joyes" (l. 27). Sarah Dunnigan establishes the identity of the narrator of *Ane Godlie Dreame* "to be both the generalised dreamer of medieval and Renaissance visions but also the 'intimate' or confessed vision of Melville herself."¹⁸⁴ The "I" of 'Away vaine world' allows Melville to assume the role of experienced narrator and preacher who holds answers for an audience grappling with similar issues of inherent sin and suffering but also shields her from being identified as an active participant in any 'worldlie lusts.'

The concluding fifth verse compounds the song's implicit point by asking several frank questions: "Quhat shall I do: ar all my pleasures past? / Shall worldlie lusts now take their leave at last?" (ll. 25-26). Melville also asks questions of her audience in *Ane Godlie Dreame*: "Quhat

¹⁸² John Durkan, 'The Date of Alexander Montgomerie's Death', *The Innes Review*, 34 (1983), p. 35.

¹⁸³ R. D. S. Jack, *Alexander Montgomerie* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1985), p. 35.

¹⁸⁴ Sarah M. Dunnigan, 'Sacred Afterlives: Mary, Queen of Scots, Elizabeth Melville and the Politics of Sanctity', *Women's Writing*, 10.3 (2003), 401-24, 415.

can wee do? Wee cloggit ar with sin” (l. 57). While the length of *Dreame* allows space and time to explore questions such as these, ‘Away vaine world’ moves in a quick dialogue format and, using “the language of bridal mysticism”,¹⁸⁵ concludes “I will love Christ allone, I feare not” (l. 30). *Dreame* uses comparable language: “I am thy spous that bring thee store of grace” (l. 130). Sarah Dunnigan, as well as Sarah Ross and Jamie Reid Baxter, have established Melville’s self-awareness and ability to create narrative personae through which her religious and political messages are developed and deployed. The similarities of both works are enough that authorship should be attributed to Melville.

The versions

‘Farewell dear love’ is a nonspiritual love song which laments the sorrow of a conflicted lover with a choice to make: “Shall I bid her go? / What and if I do?”¹⁸⁶ Jones is demonstrating a common ailment of a broken-hearted but conflicted individual and the question of “shall I let her go?” arises multiple times. The lyrics printed alongside the musical notation found in *Songs and Fancies* are taken from the anglicised version, originally printed in 1604.¹⁸⁷ “He hes mercie ay, theirfoir will I pray” becomes “He hath mercy ay therefore will I pray” (l. 4) and “too lang

¹⁸⁵ Dunnigan, ‘Sacred Afterlives: Mary, Queen of Scots, Elizabeth Melville and the Politics of Sanctity’, p. 416.

¹⁸⁶ Robert Jones, *The First Booke of Songs & Ayres Of Foure Parts With Tableture For the Lute* (London, 1600), XI.

¹⁸⁷ Sarah C. E. Ross, ‘Peripatetic Poems: Sites of Production and Routes of Exchange in Elizabeth Melville’s Scotland’, *Women’s Writing*, 26.1 (2019), 50–70, 53.

thow hes me snared” becomes “too long thou hast me snar’d” (l. 8). The original five verses have been edited by the *Songs and Fancies*’ compiler, who chooses to present the first three verses only.

This gives the impression that the editorial process was not entirely thought through. In a performance context, the final verse scans much more easily and musically than the third verse

THE XXXV. SONG.

Away, vain world, bewitcher of my heart ; My sorrows shew my
 fins makes me to smart: Yet will I not dispair, But to my God
 H 2 repair,

repair. He hath mercy ay, therefore will I pray : He hath mercy ay, and love,
 me, Though by his humbling hand he proves me.

Avay, avay, too long thou hast me snar'd :
 I will not spend more time : I am prepar'd.
 Thy subtil slights so slye, they have deceived me :
 Though they sweetly smile, slyely they beguile :
 Though they sweetly smile, forget them :
 The simple lilly soul rejects them.

Once more, avay, though loath the world to leave,
 Biddeth oft avay vvith that hellish slave.
 Loath am I to forgo, that sweet alluring fo.
 Though thy vvays be vain, shal I thee retain
 Though thy vvays be vain, I quite thee :
 Thy pleasure shal no more delite me.
 F I N I S.

Figure 13: 'Away vaine world', *Songs and Fancies*, 3rd edition (1682)

included in *Songs and Fancies*, which places awkward stress on the words to fit the tune. It appears that an issue of space was not the reason for cutting out the two extra verses since many songs take up more page space than 'Away vaine world.' The following song 'When may is in her

pryme', for example, takes up two-and-a-half pages as opposed to the one-and-a-quarter of 'Away vaine warld'. Robert Jones's biographer writes that "his harmonic technique was limited [...] but he had a flair for the simple, tuneful lute air."¹⁸⁸ Perhaps the presentation of the tune was what the compiler felt took priority, and the choice of words came from the nearest version of the text to hand.¹⁸⁹

The anglicised version of *Ane Godlie Dreame* remained in publication into the eighteenth century, until 1738.¹⁹⁰ David Laing published a scholarly edition in 1828, using the 1603 version as his base text. Of the many versions of *Ane Godlie Dreame*, only four (the Edinburgh editions) include 'Away vaine warld.'¹⁹¹ Jones's original piece with secular lyrics has maintained its popularity for singers and choral groups possibly due to its connection with Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*¹⁹² while Melville's *contrafactum* was not included in eighteenth century collections of song and poetry representing Scotland's past. The piece, for eighteenth century editors, was not obviously Scottish in origin since the lyrics chosen by the *Songs and Fancies* compilers are taken from the anglicised version of 1604. It is also one of the few religious pieces found in *Songs and Fancies* and therefore, for William Daune, "the songs and melodies, of which we are in search, did not suit the austere sentiments and deportment of the Puritans."¹⁹³ The "new quest for origins"¹⁹⁴ by the Enlightenment era editor means that 'Away vaine warld' does not fit the parameters for providing 'original' or 'national music'. Since its origins are English, and the

¹⁸⁸ David Brown, 'Jones, Robert (fl. 1579–1615)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹⁸⁹ The compilation of *Songs and Fancies* is, in reference to its pedagogic purposes, are outlined by Lucas (pp. 290–92).

¹⁹⁰ Jamie Reid Baxter, 'Presbytery, Politics and Poetry: Maister Robert Bruce, John Burel and Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross', *Scottish Church History*, 34.1 (2004), 6–27, 18.

¹⁹¹ Karen Rae Keck, 'Elizabeth Melville's *Ane Godlie Dreame*: A Critical Edition' (unpublished PhD Thesis, Texas Tech University, 2004), p. 46.

¹⁹² Jones's opening line "Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone" is spoken by Sir Toby Belch in Act II, scene 3. Terry, p. 417; William Daune, *Ancient Scottish Melodies, from a Manuscript of the Reign of King James VI* (Edinburgh: Smith, Elder & Co., 1838), p. 29.

¹⁹³ Daune, p. 24.

¹⁹⁴ Gelbart, *The Invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music': Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner*, p. 153.

seventeenth century became known as the era when Scottish music and culture declined, it did not satisfy the desire for original, 'national' music.

2. 'Lyk as the dum solsequium'



Figure 14: 'Lyk as the dum solsequium', *Songs and Fancies*, 2nd Edition (1666)

'Lyk as the dum solsequium', is titled 'The Eighteenth Song' in the first edition of *Songs and Fancies* and in subsequent editions as 'The XVIII Song'. It is one of three songs confirmed to be written by Alexander Montgomerie (c.1550–1598) that are included across all three editions of *Songs and Fancies*.¹⁹⁵ Although all of Montgomerie's songs are good examples of "his varying practice in the art of wedding words and music"¹⁹⁶ this case study will focus on one lyric that was praised by later editors in their collections of 'ancient' Scottish poetry.

Context

According to Helena Mennie Shire "the study of song-writing at the court of Renaissance Scotland centres on the work of Alexander Montgomerie."¹⁹⁷ He was appointed as 'master poet' at the court of King James VI and held a central role as mentor to the young king, whose emphasis on the power of poetry as a political tool is evident from his *Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Arte of Poesie* (1584). Montgomerie's work features in James's text as the archetype of contemporary

¹⁹⁵ The others are 'When as the Greeks doth enterprise' (5) and 'Even Death behold as I breath' (24).

¹⁹⁶ Shire, *Song, Dance and Poetry of the Court of Scotland under King James VI*, p. 141.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 139.

poetic composition. Quite dramatically, Montgomerie's status as 'master poet' was withdrawn and he was exiled from James's court due to the poet's Catholicism in a time when anti-Catholic attitudes were gaining particular traction in Scotland. Until the publication of Shire's seminal text *Song, Dance and Poetry of the Court of Scotland under James VI* (1969), Montgomerie and his poetry were considered by many critics as "the last and least of the Middle Scots makars."¹⁹⁸ Shire highlights his dynamic style and virtuosic handling a wide variety of thematic material as well as outlining how he was "at home with music and musicians."¹⁹⁹ Although it is unlikely Montgomerie had a formal musical education, his ability to marry words and music is evident through his numerous musical endeavours, and the enduring popularity of his shorter lyrics. Many song manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provide evidence of his appeal outside of the court "in castle, in college and song-school."²⁰⁰ The surviving text for 'Solsequium' exists in the Bannatyne manuscript (1568), Margaret Ker's manuscript (1606)²⁰¹ and twice in Robert Edwards' Commonplace Book (1630–35). The musical sources cited by Elliott and Shire in *Music of Scotland 1500–1700* (1958) are John Skene of Hallyards' lute-book (c. 1625), Thomas Wode's part books (1562–c.1592), William Mure of Rowallan's cantus part book (c.1627–37), Robert Edwards Commonplace Book (1630–64) and *Songs and Fancies* (1662, 1666 and 1682). Without music, 'Solsequium' was often printed as an accompaniment to Montgomerie's long poem *The Cherrie and the Slae*, notably by Edward Raban (1645), Robert Sanders (1668 and 1698) and John Reid (1691).²⁰² As discussed below, it is also one of the lyrics to feature in the early editorial projects of James Watson (1706) and Allan Ramsay (1724).

¹⁹⁸ R. D. S. Jack, 'Montgomerie, Alexander (Early 1550s–1598)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19052>> [accessed 9 July 2021].

¹⁹⁹ Shire, *Song, Dance and Poetry of the Court of Scotland under King James VI*, p. 61.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

²⁰¹ Also known as the Drummond manuscript.

²⁰² Due to limited access to libraries and archives, and the lack of digitised editions of these texts, I have been unable to consult these printed versions to provide detailed notes tracing the orthographic changes.

It is a strophic song, meaning “the music is repeated for each successive stanza of the setting of a poem, in the manner of folk-song.”²⁰³ Elliott’s notes on his arrangement of this lyric in *Musica Britannica* XV imply that the music is built around the words since it has “much structural and rhythmic variety”²⁰⁴ however, the tune has French origins. The poem was set to an existing *chanson* by Nicolas de La Grotte (1530–c.1600) with lyrics by Jean-Antoine de Baïf (1532–1589) entitled ‘Or voy-je bien qu’il faut vivre en servage.’²⁰⁵ De Baïf was a prominent member of the French *Pléiade*, a group of sixteenth-century French poets who wrote with the belief that vernacular French, rather than Latin or Greek, was a language suitable for literary expression, in part motivated by the sophistication and success of Dante’s *Divine Comedy* (1320) written in vernacular Italian. Shire states that this *chanson* itself was popular in France, having been reissued five times within an untitled songbook between 1569 and 1580.²⁰⁶ Montgomerie significantly adapted the tune to fit his new words, but its French origins meaningfully tied him, and therefore James’s court, to the vernacular lyrics of the *Pléiade* and to the political power of poetry and song.

The influence of the *Pléiade* was instilled in the young king by Esmé Stuart, seigneur d'Aubigny (1542–1583). R. D. S. Jack and Rod Lyall have written that the ‘Castalian Band’ mirrors the powerful, cultural, and, significantly, ‘national’ output that James was hoping to achieve at his own court. Music was central to this aim, as Jack writes “the movement was defined primarily in musical terms, with a heavy emphasis placed on lyricism and the ability to range over a wide variety of stanzaic forms.”²⁰⁷

²⁰³ ‘Strophic’, ed. by Joyce Kennedy, Michael Kennedy, and Tim Rutherford-Johnson, *The Oxford Dictionary of Music* (Oxford University Press, 2012) <<https://www.oxfordreference-com.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/view/10.1093/acref/9780199578108.001.0001/acref-9780199578108-e-8786>> [accessed 9 July 2021].

²⁰⁴ *Music of Scotland 1500–1700*, ed. by Kenneth Elliott and Helena Mennie Shire, *Musica Britannica*, 3rd edn (Royal Music Association, 1975), XV, p. 220.

²⁰⁵ ‘Yet I see well that one must live in bondage’, translated by Paul Magrati (2021).

²⁰⁶ Shire, *Song, Dance and Poetry of the Court of Scotland under King James VI*, p. 144.

²⁰⁷ Jack, R. D. S., ‘Montgomerie, Alexander (Early 1550s–1598)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19052>> [accessed 9 July 2021]

Although this influence can be seen through James's *Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Arte of Poesie* of 1584, specifically the *Reulis and Cautelis to be Observit and Eschewit in Scottis Poesie*, Pracilla Bawcutt has challenged the existence of such a 'band' and dubs it as simply retroactively applied shorthand for the "court poetry of James VI's reign"²⁰⁸ when in fact, the literary and intellectual players of James's court changed substantially across his reign.

Analysis

The premise of 'Solsequium' stems from a myth in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* whereby the Oceanid, or water nymph, Clytie is abandoned by her lover Helios, embodiment of the sun. In her grief she did not move, "she only gazed / Upon her god's bright face as he rode by / And turned her head to watch him cross the sky."²⁰⁹ As a result of this stasis, she is transformed into a heliotrope, the purple flower whose name derives from the Latin translation of the poem's text. The DSL's definition of 'solsequium' is the marigold²¹⁰, while Ramsay explicitly translates the title of the lyric as referring to the sunflower in his version in *The Ever Green*.²¹¹ All of these flowers share the characteristic of heliotropism, in which parts of the plant move in response to the direction of the sun. The constancy of the singer or speaker's longing responds to the diurnal rhythms of the sun's daily rising and setting. Thematically, comparing an object of desire to a flower is a traditional literary convention, and even the sun, as a provider of light and life, is a powerful and often used symbol of one who emits and spreads love.

While Jack believes that "Montgomerie's lyrics are set firmly within the courtly tradition [and] he is in that sense the natural successor to Dunbar, Lindsay and Alexander Scott,"²¹² Lyall's analysis of Montgomerie portrays him as "an innovative artist whose language and imagery are

²⁰⁸ Pricilla Bawcutt, 'James VI's Castalian Band: A Modern Myth', *Scottish Historical Review*, 80.210 (2001), 251–59 (p. 259).

²⁰⁹ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. by A. D. Melville (Oxford World Classics, 1986), p. 86.

²¹⁰ 'Solsequium n.', *Dictionary of the Scots Language*, 2004 <<https://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/solsequium>> [accessed 2 June 2021].

²¹¹ Ramsay, *The Ever Green, Being a Collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600*, p. 212.

²¹² R. D. S. Jack, *Alexander Montgomerie* (Scottish Academic Press, 1985), p. 39.

pressing beyond the boundaries of conventional discourse, moving him in the same direction as some of the most radical of his Continental, and English, contemporaries.”²¹³ ‘Solsequium’ is an example of Montgomerie’s ability to deploy subtle literary techniques to provide multiple layers of meaning in a text that at first appears straightforward. It demonstrates the chaotic regularity of emotion on encountering a lover whose attentions consistently waver then return. David Parkinson suggests it may also have an instructive quality: “As existence loses meaning in its recurrence, so does experience. The lyric heightens longing for some better life than such loss.”²¹⁴ Lyall praises this lyric for its “intricacy of the metrical form which separates his lyric from dozens of Italian and French sonnets on the same theme.”²¹⁵

The recurring classical figures in the lyric are all associated with the sun: Phaeton, Phoebus, Apollo and Titan. Apollo, as a primary Olympian deity, is also associated with poetry and music,²¹⁶ and is a fitting symbol for King James as being central to the courtly project of poetic output – James’s own poetry features the figure of Apollo quite frequently. As the provider of a platform, an audience, and finances, James can be considered as supplying sun-like sustenance for his courtiers who revolve around him.

For the singer, the lyrics offer an opportunity to express the melody with clarity and expressive emotion, particularly the melody of the final quatrain of each stanza. This acrobatic melodic jump of a perfect fifth coerces the singer to interpret the joy of “Titian myne upone me schyne” or the lilting sadness of “I due, I dwyne, play does me pyne” placing different emphasis on the same melody to convey opposing emotions. As Sally Sanford writes

²¹³ Roderick J. Lyall, *Alexander Montgomerie: Poetry, Politics, and Cultural Change in Jacobean Scotland*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies (Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), CCXCVIII, pp. 267–68.

²¹⁴ David J. Parkinson, ‘Dreams in the Clear Light of Day: Older Scots Poetry in Modern Scotland’, in *Literature, Letters and the Canonical in Early Modern Scotland*, ed. by Theo van Heijnsbergen and Nicola Royan (Tuckwell Press, 2002), pp. 138–50, 143–44.

²¹⁵ Lyall, CCXCVIII, pp. 267–68.

²¹⁶ Robert E. Bell, ‘Apollo’, *Dictionary of Classical Mythology: Symbols, Attributes, & Associations* (Oxford: Clio Press, 1982), p. 55.

The singer's art was closely aligned with the orator's during the Baroque period. The clear and expressive delivery of a text involved not only proper diction and pronunciation, but also an understanding of the rhetorical structure of the text and an ability to communicate the passion and meaning of the words.²¹⁷

The popularity of 'Solsequium' has endured past its status as a song but the subject matter, the words and the melody in tandem reveal this lyric to be a deceptively simple but extremely successful work by James's 'master poet'.

The versions

'Lyk as the dum solsequium' was chosen by both James Watson and Allan Ramsay in their respective collections. Significantly, Watson's printed version is most similar to the Anglicised version found across all three editions of *Songs and Fancies*. Harriet Harvey-Wood writes that most of Watson's sources for the *Collection* "derived mainly from manuscript sources, since for most of them Watson has produced the earliest known printed text."²¹⁸ However, it is likely, since Watson himself grew up in Aberdeen, that he had owned or at least seen a copy of *Songs and Fancies* even though Harvey Wood contests the possibility that Watson used this version as his base text and describes John Reid's version from 1691 to be Watson's most likely source. Only a small number of works in his *Choice Collection* include any reference to authorship and Watson does not name Montgomerie as the author of the lyric. It is titled 'The SOLSEQUIUM' and includes no printed embellishments; Watson's printing methods appear to maximise the economy of space with multiple poems being printed directly after one another.

Ramsay chooses to print 'The Solsequium' in *The Ever Green* making a series of editorial decisions in line with the other texts in the collection. His base text is likely to be the Bannatyne and Ker/Drummond manuscripts, as his printed version retains much of the Older Scots

²¹⁷ Sally Sanford, 'National Singing Styles', in *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth Century Music* (Indiana University Press, 2012), pp. 3–30, 5.

²¹⁸ Harvey Wood, p. xxi.

orthography, however, Ramsay has creatively edited the work, making substantial changes to the text. He prints the title ‘The Solsequium’ but also provides the reader with a parsed subtitle of his own creation: “or the Lover comparing himself to the Sun-Flowir.” The imitation of Older Scots in his spelling connects the reader to an authentic reading experience, uninterrupted by a glossary or footnotes, while allowing those unfamiliar with an archaic noun like ‘solsequium’ to be invited into a full understanding of a hitherto unknown text. He chooses not to present the text as a song. This is understandable due to the complicated strophic melody that follows the stanzaic lyric pattern. Unlike in his work of the same year, *The Tea Table Miscellany*, there is no presentation of a recognisable ‘tune’ to follow. Presenting the text in such a way neatly packages the texts within *The Ever Green* as poetic works to read and consider in a recognisably scholarly manner, while allowing Ramsay the creative freedom to augment and adjust as he sees fit. For Ramsay, the inclusion of this lyric aligns with his statement in *The Ever Green*’s preface:

The Man, whose Inclinations are turned to Mirth, will be pleased to know how the good Fellow of a former Age told his jovial Tale [...] I hope also the Reader, when he dips into these Poems, will not be displeased with this Reflection, That he is stepping back into the Times that are past, and that exist no more.²¹⁹

Ramsay’s portrayal of ‘Solsequium’ is for an audience in expectation of polite amusement. It is a considerably shorter work than many others that have been included, such as the longer poems by Dunbar and Henryson, and allows the reader to ‘dip into’ a ‘time that is past’. One of Ramsay’s achievements with *The Ever Green* is the shaping of the ‘polite’ value of Scots by presenting the earlier vernacular as not simply vulgar or rural.

Although Ramsay is emphasising vernacular Scots by occasional exaggeration of archaic spelling practices, he is careful to include conventionally and up-to-date spelling of the classical references, perhaps in part due to his relationship with his printer and classicist Thomas Ruddiman. Both Watson and Ramsay italicise the classical words in ‘Solsequium’, as per the

²¹⁹ Ramsay, *The Ever Green, Being a Collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600*, p. ix.

convention of the day; italicising “*Phaeton*”, “*Phoebus*”, “*Apollo*” and “*Zodiak*” are examples of the emphasis placed on classical scholarly accuracy within their respective collections. Watson chooses to include a borrowed umlaut in his spelling of “*Phaëton*” which presumably is indicative of pronunciation for a reader, but it may also be a passing convention of the early eighteenth century.

Comparing the versions using several features of historical pragmatics, the methods and motives of each editor as discussed in Chapter 2 become clear. Firstly, the anglicised variations are evident: both *Songs and Fancies* and *Choice Collection* print “doth,” rather than “dois” found in the Bannatyne version. Watson keeps the anglicised forms *head*, *dead* and *spread* for the internal rhymes, rather than Bannatyne’s *heid*, *deid* and *spreid*. Removal of the plural ending *-is* in Bannatyne’s original *Birdis* creates the conventional English spelling *birds* in Watson’s version. The text of *Songs and Fancies* uses the plural suffix *-es*. One of the most obvious examples of anglicisation is the removal of <ch> in replacement of <gh> from words such as *licht* and *nicht* becoming *light* and *night*. Many examples can be seen of the anglicisation of formal spelling in this song across the one hundred and fifty years of textual history between Bannatyne’s manuscript form, *Songs and Fancies* and Watson’s printed collection. The reasons for this, outlined in chapter 2, indicate a variety of socio-political and linguistic factors.

With *The Ever Green*, Ramsay is attempting “the ‘reinvention’ of Scots, the linguistic variety that had become gradually occluded during the previous century.”²²⁰ ‘Solsequium’, however, is only lightly edited by Ramsay in comparison to other works in *The Ever Green*. When compared to his source, the Bannatyne manuscript, he glosses only several words. As mentioned above, this lyric was printed frequently across the seventeenth century and it is possible that Ramsay was also consulting Reid’s and Watson’s version for some kind of methodical transparency. He removes the thorn (þ) and yogh (ȝ) from the fourth stanza either because these

²²⁰ Jeremy J. Smith, ‘Recuperating Older Scots in the Early 18th Century’, p. 299.

characters are so unfamiliar to an eighteenth-century audience that the text risks ridicule, or the relevant print characters are unavailable.²²¹ A significant editorial choice Ramsay makes for ‘Solsequium’ is to replace <w> with <u> in the third stanza for the series of *-out* rhyming words:

“I spring, I sprout, my Leivs ly out”

This opposes Bannatyne’s

“I spring I sprowt / my leivis lyis owt”

From this short line, it is evident that Ramsay is making changes to benefit his audience’s understanding of the text but still provide the Middle Scots colouring. Despite the negative criticism he received from later editors such as John Pinkerton, Ramsay’s belief in the value of this work twinned with his acute awareness to polite society created a watershed moment for the presentation of Older Scots literature as well as a ‘reinvention’ of Scots. In circular fashion, like the originators of the song, the *Pléiade*, Ramsay is emphasising the worthiness of vernacular Scots in literature.

One of the reasons why ‘Solsequium’ was not picked up by later editors for inclusion in Scottish song books is that its subject matter, form and imagery does align with the post-boom song collections’ portrayal of Scotland as a pastoral and shepherding society. Within later song collections, there are often oblique references to stadial theory through frontispieces and engravings, and Scotland is frequently presented as rural and unspoiled. The intercultural and transnational music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well as the frequent classical references are factors that pose complications to the eighteenth century stadial theory of chronological societal improvement. Also, its origins as an art song from the court of James VI negates the romanticism building up around oral song collection. *Songs and Fancies* suffered from this for several centuries as a result as not being viewed as an ‘authentic’ representation of Scottish music from an earlier period. The following case study will consider how one song

²²¹ This is unlikely since Thomas Ruddiman, Ramsay’s publisher, printed his version of Douglas’s *Aenid* in 1710 using type characters such as the thorn (þ) and yogh (ȝ).

printed in *Songs and Fancies* was occasionally printed in eighteenth-century song books as representative of Scotland's oral culture.

3. 'The gowans are gay'



Figure 15: 'The gowans are gay', *Songs and Fancies*, 2nd edition (1666)

'The gowans are gay' is included across all three editions of *Songs and Fancies* as 'the Nyneteenth Song' in the first edition or 'Song IXX' in subsequent editions. It is the song from *Songs and Fancies* that appears most often in later edited collections of Scottish song up to the twentieth century (see Appendix, p.106).

Context

One of its written sources, as suggested by Cooper, is the Straloch manuscript (1627–29), a handwritten collection of lute tablature and lyrics by Robert Gordon of Straloch (1580–1661).²²² Unfortunately, the original manuscript has been lost and the nineteenth century copy provides only titles for many of the tunes, including 'Gowans.' It is highly likely, however, that the original manuscript contains both the lyrics and the tune as it is acknowledged as a 'lute book'. It was also copied into the Squyer manuscript (1696–1701), with seventeen other pieces from *Songs and Fancies*. Cooper suggests that John Squyer, the manuscript's compiler, copied directly from the

²²² Cooper, p. 74.

third edition of *Songs and Fancies*, but notes some differences and emendations in his copy.²²³ Of its origin prior to Straloch, Kenneth Elliot writes

It is impossible to tell how old this music is, [...] in theme and in form it looks back to the middle ages.²²⁴

Formally, its strophic ABAB structure and its alternating couplets of tetrameter and trimeter makes it comply to the form of a traditional sung ballad than as a spoken poem. The repetition of lines 2 and 4 (“the gowans are gay” and “the first morning of may”) throughout “is a potent aid to memorisation”²²⁵ which also points towards its origin as a popular ballad from an oral tradition.²²⁶ This contrasts Farmer’s suggestion that “there does not appear to be an item which could be counted as being from the songs of the people.”²²⁷ William Dauney, when commenting on the redundancy of *Songs and Fancies* as a source for Scottish national myth, wrote “the songs and melodies, of which we are in search, did not suit the austere sentiments and deportment of the Puritans.”²²⁸ The opposite can be said for ‘Gowans’ which, as discussed below, has playful, sexually suggestive, and ultimately ‘folkloric’ overtones.

Analysis

The lyrics to ‘Gowans’ evoke the floral vibrancy of a spring morning, the word ‘gowans’ being daisies.²²⁹ In medieval Scots poetry, May is a month associated with fertility.²³⁰ The form of the lyric shares some of the characteristics of a *pastourelle*, whereby the narrator attempts to woo a “proper lass” after a spontaneous encounter while roaming the fields on a May morning. The

²²³ See Cooper pp. 30–35.

²²⁴ Elliott and Shire, XV. p. 208.

²²⁵ James Porter, ‘Transmission’, in *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Traditional Literatures*, ed. by Sarah Dunnigan (Edinburgh University Press, 2013), pp. 35–41, 38.

²²⁶ McLucas, p. 292.

²²⁷ Farmer, p. 194.

²²⁸ Dauney, p. 24.

²²⁹ ‘Gowan(e n.’, *Dictionary of the Scots Language*, 2004 <<https://dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/gowane>> [accessed 3 June 2021].

²³⁰ See “In Mayis moneth / Quhen luiffaris dois thair daylie obseruance / To Venus Quene”, Robert Sempill, ‘The Treasson of Dumbarton’, *Satirical Poems of the Time of the Reformation* ed. by James Cranstoun (Scottish Text Society, 1891), p. 170; “Awalk, 3e luvaris, O, this May”, by William Dunbar, *The Poems of William Dunbar in Two Volumes* (Glasgow: ASLS, 1998).

lady is “gathring the dew” to “wash [her] Ladie clean,” an act associated with folkloric traditions of youth, beauty and fertility. The narrator makes an intimate proposition: “I asked farther at her syne / [...] To my will she would incline.” As an adverb, “syne” means ‘next’ but as a noun it refers to the breast, or the ‘seat of emotions.’²³¹ The lady refuses and the narrator is left “in the garth my lane” to “play.” We learn that the action takes place at the “hour of Prime”, meaning sunrise, furthering the association with folk ritual.

The lady’s ripostes present the reader or singer with a distinctive character:

O Ladie fair, what do you here?
the Gowans are gay:
Gathring the dew, what neid ye spear?
the first morning of May.

[...]

She said her erand was not there,
the Gowans are gay:
Her maiden-head on me to ware,
the first morning of May.

Deconstructing the lady’s dialogue, she is clearly irked by the propositions and her responses are impatient and direct, yet the song retains a mildly comic overtone. The form, melody, natural setting, and folkloric subtext places this lyric’s origin in the past and, arguably, in a space between ‘art’ and ‘folk’. As discussed in chapter two, the mingling of song of a “high” or “low” origin in a repertoire or song collection was common practice in the early modern period; what really mattered was its function. For the compilers of *Songs and Fancies*, Gowans was clearly a suitable song for musically instructive purposes due to its simplicity and worthy of inclusion due to, presumably, its popularity. Pedagogically, the melody alone does not present a singer with much of a challenge. It contains only four notes and straightforward intervals with repetitive metrical

²³¹ There are several ambiguous words in the lyrics, all contributing to the mild eroticism of the song.

form in simple time (see figure). In comparison to other songs like ‘Solsequium’, whose form dictates the rhythm, ‘Gowans’ is a song with a rigidly fixed form:

In its printed form in *Songs and Fancies*, this tune is presented with minimal nuance and no performance notes (as is customary with early printed notation) which strips the tune of much



Figure 16: 'The gowans are gay', *Songs and Fancies*, 2nd edition (1666)

of its playful character. However, its ease and flexibility provides performers with an opportunity to interpret the song in multiple ways, by, for example, adding simple, improvised harmonies. This would prove difficult with a more challenging and serious chanson like ‘Solsequium’ which lends itself to a solo voice and accompaniment due to the nature of its composition.

The versions

As with the other case studies, the text of ‘Gowans’ is unaltered between successive editions of *Songs and Fancies*. Although the printed notation has been ‘corrected and enlarged’ in the second and third editions, the text has been condensed into one page across three columns, as opposed to two in the first edition, negatively affecting the piece’s clarity for a performer. Although it has been suggested that the Straloch manuscript may have been a source for the music and text of ‘Gowans’, the original manuscript has been lost and its transcriptions confirm the inclusion of ‘The gowans sae gay’ by title only so a side-by-side comparison of the lyrics for this study are not possible. Elliott confirms, though, that the text presented by *Songs and Fancies* “is certainly a

modernized version of a much earlier lyric, one probably already current before the Reformation”²³² so it can be understood that, like ‘Away, vane world’ and ‘Solsequium,’ the text has developed over time to the more anglicised version found in *Songs and Fancies*.

‘Gowans’ appears in several other eighteenth-century publications; in the fourth volume of Allan Ramsay’s *Tea Table Miscellany* (1737) as well as David Herd’s *Ancient and modern Scottish songs, heroic ballads, etc.* (1769). In both instances, the lyrics are presented without notation or an indication of the tune. It can be presumed that knowledge of this melody was widespread enough

for the editors to not supply an indicative tune. It is unconfirmed if Ramsay used *Songs and Fancies* as his base text or if this song remained in circulation from its ballad roots, or a combination of both. The similarity between the *Songs and Fancies* version and Ramsay’s is striking, but nuanced differences between the two versions have been creatively inserted. For example, Ramsay exchanges *make* in the *Songs and Fancies* version for *gar* (l.3), a Scots word with entries in the DSL going back to the fourteenth century.²³³

An insertion of the word *gif* (l.23) corresponds to Ramsay’s note on “Old Orthography” found in *The Ever Green*.²³⁴ Ramsay also makes a one-word

substitution to the repeating second line ‘There gowans are gay’ in the seventh stanza, changing *there* to *where*:

22 BALLADS AND SONGS.
The head was ta'en frae young Waters,
And mony tears for him shed ;
But mair did mourn for fair Margaret,
As raving, she lyes mad.

The Gowans sae Gay.

Fair lady Isabel sits in her bower sewing,
Aye as the gowans grow gay ;
There she heard an elf-knight blawing his horn,
The first morning in May.

If I had yon horn that I hear blawing.
Aye as the gowans grow gay ;
And yon elf-knight to sleep in my bosom,
The first morning in May.

Its a very strange matter, fair maiden, said he,
Aye as the gowans grow gay,
I canna' blaw my horn, but ye call on me,
The first morning in May.

Figure 16: 'The Gowans sae Gay' from Peter Buchan's *Ballads and Songs* (1828)

²³² Elliott and Shire, XV, p. 245.

²³³ 'Gar v.', *Dictionary of the Scots Language*, 2004 <https://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/gar_v> [accessed 20 August 2021].

²³⁴ Ramsay, *The Ever Green*, p. 1.

She said, her errand was not there,
Where gowans are gay

This minor substitution indicates a very deliberate poetic choice on Ramsay's part because it piques the interest of a performer or listener halfway through the song, the refrains of which are repetitive. These minor insertions indicate Ramsay's creative editorial practice, whereby subtle changes in spelling and presentation change the meaning and interpretive power of a piece. For a performer, this is valuable because it provides opportunities for delicate inflections giving colour to music that may otherwise be repetitive and slightly staid.

Ramsay makes another small amendment which significantly alters part of the song. In the *Songs and Fancies* version, after the narrator is rejected by the lady he takes his leave:

Thus left I her, and past my way
Into a garden me to play (S&F, ll.30–33)

In the *TTM*, the lady is the one who leaves:

Then like an arrow frae a bow,
She skift away out o'er the know (*TTM*, ll.30–33)

On the surface it is perhaps an innocuous difference but considering Ramsay's dedication to "Ilka bonnie lass" and his promise of the "removal of smut and ribaldry" from the text, the narrator's ambiguous reference to 'play' could be interpreted as "sexual indulgence."²³⁵ This is a substantial editorial emendation that signals a shift in core morals between the publication of *Songs and Fancies* and *TTM*. Herd's printed version is an exact replication of Ramsay's *TTM*, despite Herd's confirmation in his notes that he has consulted the third edition of *Songs and Fancies*.

The song takes on substantial textual changes in later printed sources and without its transcription in *Songs and Fancies* there is the possibility that the version of the tune "current before the Reformation"²³⁶ would be lost. Despite being titled as 'The Gowans sae Gay' in Peter

²³⁵ 'Play n.3', DSL <<https://dsl.ac.uk/entry/snd/play>> [accessed 20 August 2021].

²³⁶ Elliott and Shire, XV, p. 245.

Buchan's *Ballads of the North of Scotland hitherto Unpublished* (1828), the lyrics are substantially different:

FAIR lady Isabel sits in her bower sewing,
Aye as the gowans grow gay
There she heard an elf-knight blawing his horn.
The first morning in May²³⁷

Child lists 'May Colven' as another version of this song. Herd prints this song in *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs*:

FALSE Sir John a wooing came
To a maid of beauty fair;
May Colven was this lady's name,
Her father's only heir.²³⁸

Although both sets of lyrics are different, only 'May Colven' can be sung to the tune of 'Gowans' as transcribed in *Songs and Fancies* while the meter of Buchan's ballad does not fit the original melody-line.

The repetitive ABAB rhyme scheme and use of ballad meter makes 'Gowans' a flexible foundation on which to form new words, rhyme patterns and melodies and James Francis Child provides further variants of this song under the title 'Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight' (Child #4). Its history of oral transmission outlined by Child's study proves the tune's popularity and traces its development. The significant alteration of the 'Gowans' lyrics from *Songs and Fancies* also indicates a shift in societal taste. The supernatural version of 'Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight' has 921 concordances on the online Roud Broadside Index, while a search for 'Gowans are gay' returns only nine results.²³⁹ For a Romantic audience, the supernatural ballad narrative is presumably more compelling and dramatic than the pastourelle encounter in *Songs and Fancies*. The near-identical version to the *Songs and Fancies* version in Herd's collection alongside 'May

²³⁷ Peter Buchan, *Ancient Ballads and Songs of the North of Scotland Hitherto Unpublished* (Edinburgh: W. & D. Laing, 1828), p. 22.

²³⁸ David Herd, *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads, Etc.*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (James Dickson and Charles Elliot, 1776), p. 93.

²³⁹ 'Roud Broadside Index' (Vaughan Williams Memorial Library)
<<https://www.vwml.org/search?advq=0|rn|21&collectionfilter=RoudFS;RoudBS&is=1>> [accessed 2 May 2021].

Colven', has not been included in Child's anthology. It can therefore be understood that *Songs and Fancies* was often treated as an invalid source for later Scottish song collectors primarily due to the fact it is a printed source and lacks the 'authenticity' of songs collected from the oral tradition.



Conclusion 🍀

As discussed in chapter 1, *Songs and Fancies* was a transnational document that, through its own paratextual material and contents, emphasised Scotland's British allegiance, a union ideologically opposed by Watson and Ramsay through their aspects of their collections. Watson's methodology for his collection, as investigated by Davis, is inclusive of a strategic variety of material to appeal to all tastes and, therefore, promote new and older Scottish culture. His preface guides his audience towards appreciating the material within the book, rather than being overly critical of its contents of a Scottish origin at a time when, as many felt, Scotland's national culture was in danger of disappearing through anglicisation. Ramsay's two collections communicate, through their dedications, prefaces, notes and epigraphs, his strong desire to shape early ideas of the 'Scottish nation' as independent in its music, literary and linguistic background. Experimentation with and assertion of Older Scots orthography through his editorial method and explanatory notes confirm Ramsay's conviction of his own creative methodologies. Yet Ramsay's appeal to 'Ilka British lass' in his *TTM* preface and his use of polite English to transmit his ideas of how his texts should be used and appreciated underlines the wider British connection that Ramsay uses as a commercial and cultural enterprise.

Forbes's *Songs and Fancies*, Watson's *Choice Collection*, and Ramsay's *Ever Green* and *Tea-Table Miscellany* certainly share sources but for later editors, *Songs and Fancies* does not embody the powerful emblem of an 'idealised pastoral Scotland.' Because of its function as an instructional, musical text Watson did not make full use of it for his primarily literary *Collection*

and Ramsay found it less authoritative than other sources available to him, such as the Bannatyne manuscript and his own experience of song collection through broadsides and oral culture. Due to the success of his *Tea Table Miscellany*, which sparked national and international enthusiasm for pastoral Scottish songs and culture, there was less of a requirement for later editors to consult *Songs and Fancies*, a collection that came to represent an awkward limbo between literature and song. Its contents were not immediately recognisable as Scots due to its anglicised lyrics, its courtly associations and its perceived archaic musicality. This meant that, for the majority of later editors, song collectors, antiquarians and musical publishers, *Songs and Fancies* ceased to be of interest as a direct source for Scottish music. The studies of Herd, Pinkerton and Ritson, who did consult *Songs and Fancies* in the second half of the eighteenth-century, present the songs as relics of the past rather than the fashionable and ‘current’ songs that contemporary audiences might have imagined to be sung by barefoot shepherdesses in field and glen.

To conclude, the early editors active in the eighteenth century were on their own missions to save Scottish culture from impending Anglocentrism/British homogeneity. Their collections of poetry and song invited their contemporary readers to consume Scottish material from a variety of sources. However, *Songs and Fancies* lost its relevancy in the decades between its final edition of 1682 and the beginning of the demand for eighteenth-century song collections. Despite this lack of attention from later editors, *Songs and Fancies* prefigured the (trans)national song collections that became so prevalent throughout the eighteenth century. Those involved in the creation of *Songs and Fancies* had a mixture of agendas: the town council wished to promote Aberdeen’s cultural centrality and reclaim the town’s British and European relevancy; Thomas Davidson wanted to exhibit pedagogic clarity for young learners; the Forbes business wished to see a successful commercial enterprise. The resulting document is a valuable fusing together of sources, influences and functions. Although this fusion contributed to its fading immediate relevancy to later song collectors, *Songs and Fancies* is a unique collection that provides valuable perspectives on Scotland’s musical, print and wider cultural heritage which incorporated many

influences, at home and abroad. Its very existence proves the vibrancy, variety and sophistication of the oft-criticised seventeenth century in which it was created. In fact, the qualities of promoting regionality as part of a national agenda; improving musical skills and engaging with performance; and selling copies far and wide for commercial success were also valued by eighteenth-century Scottish song collectors and editors. Consequently, *Songs and Fancies* as played a key role in the very early steps of what became some of the most viable cultural and commercial publishing projects of the eighteenth century. For many readers, singers, and performers, the hidden legacy of *Songs and Fancies* lives on, and remains a crucial text in the understanding of early Scottish music, song, and poetry.

Appendix

Preface, *Tea Table Miscellany*, Allan Ramsay (1737).

*TO Ilka lovely British Lass,
Frae Ladys Charlote, Anne, and Jean,
Down to ilk bony singing Bess,
Wha dances barefoot on the Green.*

DEAR LASSES,
Your most humble Slave,
Wha ne'er serve ye shall decline;
Kneeling wad your Acceptance crave,
When he presents this sma' Propine.

Then take it kindly to your Care,
Revive it with your tunefu' Notes;
Beauties will look sweet and fair,
Arising saftly through your Throats

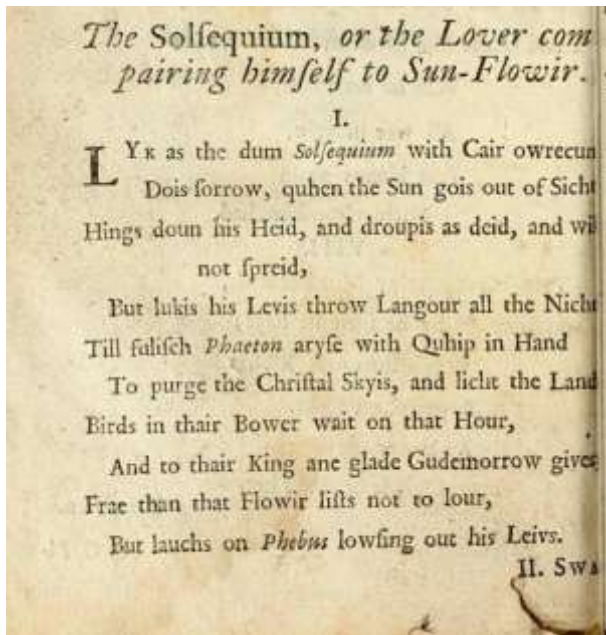
The Wanton wee Thing will rejoice,
When tented by a sparkling Eye,
The Spinnet tinkling with her Voice,
It lying on her lovely Knee.

While Kettles dringe on Ingles dure,
Or Clathes stays the lazy Lass,
Thir Sangs may ward you frae the fowr,
And gayly vacant Minutes pass.

E'ev while the Tea's fill'd reeking round,
Rather than plot a tender Tongue,
Treat a' the circling Lugs wi' Sound,
Syn e safely sip when ye have sung.

May Happiness had up your Hearts,
And warm ye lang with loving Fires,
May Powers propitious play their Parts
In matching you to your Desires.

‘The Solsequium, or the Lover comparing himself to Sun-Flowir.’ in *The Ever Green*, Allan Ramsay (1724) pp. 212–214.



The Solsequium, or the Lover comparing himself to Sun-Flowir.

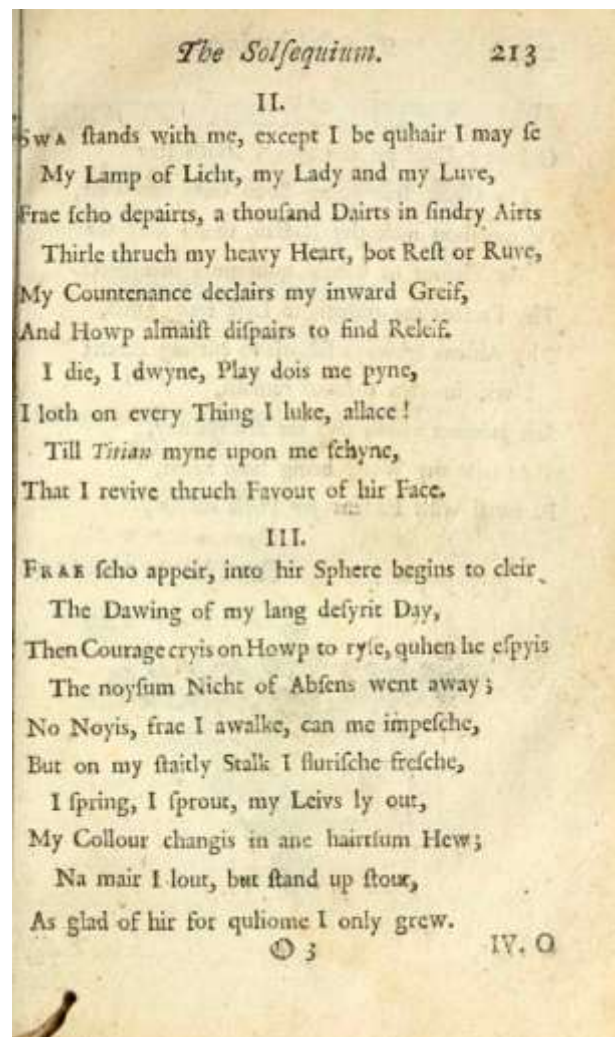
LYK as the dum *Solsequium* with Cair owrecum
Dois sorrow, quhen the Sun gois out of Sicht
Hings down his Heid, and droupis as deid, and will not
spreid,
But Lukis his Levis throw Langour all the Nicht
Till fulisch *Phaeton* aryse with Quhip in Hand
To purge the Christal Skyis, and licht the Land
Birds in thair Bower wait on that Hour,
And to thair King ane glade Gudemorrow gives
Frae than that Flowir lists not to lour,
But lauchs on *Phebus* lowsing out his Leivs.

II.

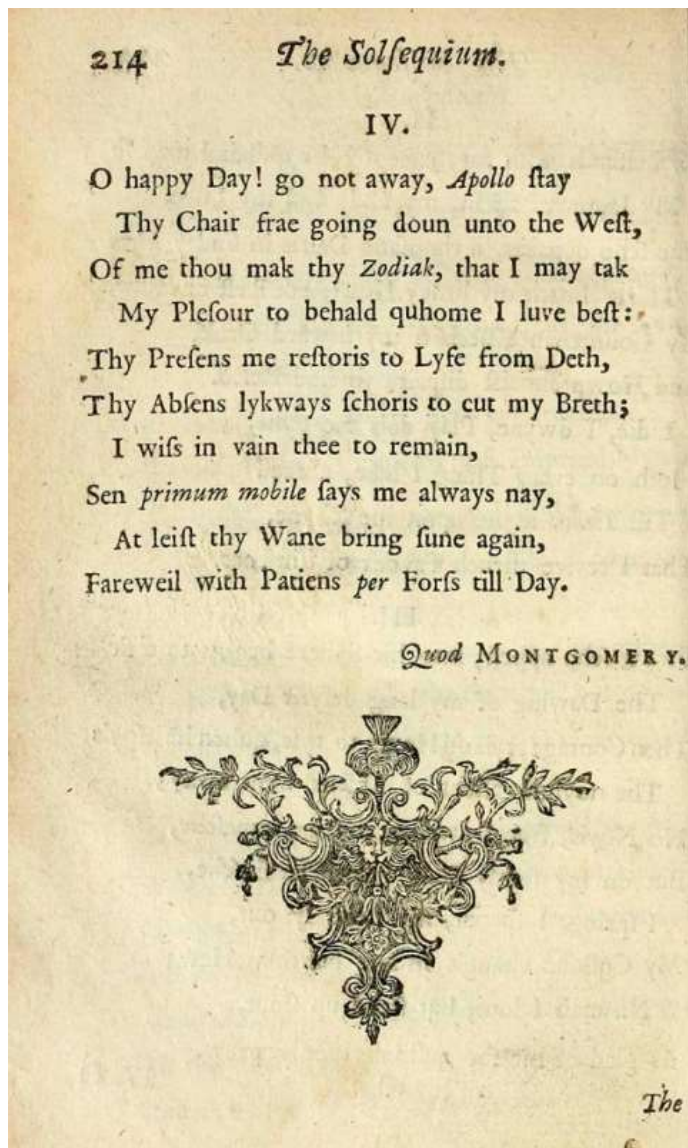
SWA stands with me, except I be quhair I may se
My Lanp of Licht, my Lady and my Luve,
Frae scho depairts, a thousand Dairts in sindry
Airts
Thirle thruch my heavy Heart, bot Rest or
Ruve,
My Countenance declairs my inward Greif,
And Howp almaist dispairs to find Relief.
I die, I dwyne, Play dois me pyne,
I loth on every Thing I luke, allace !
Till Titian myne upon me fchyne,
That I revive thruch Favour of hir Face.

III.

FRAE scho appeir, into hir Sphere begins to cleir
The Dawing of my lang defyrit Day,
Then Courage cryis on Howp to ryse, quhen he
espyis
The noysum Nicht of Absens went away;
No Noyis, frae I awalke, can me impesche,
But on my staitly Stalk I flurische fresche,
I spring, I sprout, my Leivs ly out,
My Collour changis in ane hairtsum Hew;



Na mair I lout, but stand up stout,
As glad of hir for quhome I only grew.



IV.

O happy Day! go not away, Apollo stay
Thy Chair frae going doun unto the West,
Of me thou mak thy Zodiak, that I may tak
My Plesour to behald quhome I luve best:
Thy Presens me restores to Lyfe from
Deth,
Thy Absens lykways schoris to cut my
Breth;
I wiss in vain thee to remain,
Sen *primum mobile* says me always nay,
At leist thy Wane bring sune again,
Fareweil with Patiens per Forss till Day.

Quod MONTGOMERY.

'The SOLSEQUIUM' from James Watson, Choice Collection, Part 1

Like as the dum *Solsequium*, with Care o'ercome,
Doth forrow when the Sun goes out of ficht;
Hangs down her head, and droops as dead, and will not fspread:
But lurks her Leaves through langour all the Night,
Till foolish *Phaëton* arife with Whip in hand,
To clear the Chrifal Skies, and light the Land;
Birds in their Bow'r waits on that hour,
And to their King a glad Good-morrow gives:
From thence that Flow'r likes not to lowr,
But laugh on *Phæbus* op'ning out her Leaves.

So stands't with me, except I be, where I may fee
 My Lamp of Light, my Lady, and my Love:
 When she departs, ten thousand Darts, in sundry Airts,
 Thirle through my heavy Heart, but reft or roove.
 My Countenance declares my inward Grief,
 And Hope almost defpairs to find relief:
 I die, I dwine, pain doth me pine,
 I loathe on ev'ry thing I look, alas!
 While *Titan* mine, upon me shine,
 That I revive through favour of her Grace,

Fra she appear, into her sphere, begins to clear
 The dawning of my long desired Day,
 When *Curage* cries on *Hope* to rife, fra she espies
 The noifome Night of absence went away:
 No wo can me awake, nor yet impefh,
 But on thy ftately Stalk I Flowrith fresfh:
 I Spring, I Sprout, my Leaves break out,
 My Colour changes in an heartfome hew;
 No more I Lout, but stand up Stout,
 As glad of her on whom I only Grew,

O happy Day go not away, *Apollo* ftay
 The Cart from going down into the Weft,
 Of me thou makes thy *Zodiack*, that I may take
 My pleafure to behold whom I love beft,
 Her prefence me reftores from Death to rife,
 Her abfsence alfo fhores to cut my Breath,
 I wifh in vain thee to remain,
 Since *Primum Mobile* doth fay me nay;
 At leaft thy Wain, haft fo again,
 Farewell with patience perforce till Day.

Ker MS

Lyk as the dum
 Solsequium
 With cair ou'rcum
 And sorou when the sun goes out of sight
 Hings down his head
 And droups as dead
 And will not spread
 Bot lous his leavis throu langour of the night
 Till folish Phaeton ryse With vhip in hand,
 To cleir the cristall skyis And light the Land,
 Birds in thair bour
 Luiks for that hour
 And to thair Prince ane glaid good-morou givis.
 Fra thyn that flour
 List not to lour

Bot laughis on Pheobus, lousing out his leivis.

Sa fairis with me
Except I be
Vhair I may se
My lamp of licht, my Lady and my Love.
Fra sho depairts Ten thousand dairts
In syndrie airts
Thirlis throu my hevy hart but rest or rove.
My Countenance declairs My inward grief.
Good hope almaist dispairs To find relief.
I die, I duyn,
Play does my pyn,
I loth on euiry thing I look, alace
Till Titan myne
Vpon me shyne
That I revive throu favour of hir face.

Fra she appeir
Into hir spheir
Begins to cleir
The dauing of my long desyrit day,
Then Curage cryis
Fra he espyis
My noysome nicht of Absence worne auay.
No wo vhen I aualk May me impish
Bot on my staitly stalk I flourish fresh.
I spring, I sprout,
My leivis ly out,
My color changes in ane hartsum heu.
No more I lout
Bot stands vp stour
As glade of hir for vhom I only greu.

O happie day
Go not auay.
Apollo stay
Thy Chair from going down into the West.
Of me thou mak
Thy 3odiak
That I may tak
My plesur to behold vhom I love best.
Thy presence me restores To lyf from death
Thy Absence also shores To cut my breath.
I wish in vane
Thee to remane
Sen Primum mobile sayis aluayis nay.
At leist thy wane

Turn soon agane.
Fareweill with patience perforce till day.

Bannatyne manuscript, p. 52.

Lyik as the dum / solsequium / with cair overcum /
Dois sorrow quhen the sone gois owt of sicht
Hingis doun his heid / And drowpis as deid / Nor will not spreid
Bot lowkis his levis throw langour all the nicht
Till fuliche phetone ryifs / with quhip in hand
To purge the cristall skyifs / and licht the land
Birdis in thair boure / watis on that oure /
and to thair king ane glad gudmorrow geivis
ffra than that floure / list not till loure /
Bot lawchis on phebus lowsing owt his leivis

Swa sandis wth me / except I be / q^r I may se /
my lamp of licht my lady and my luv
ffra scho depairts / ane thowsand dairtis / In sindry airtis /
Thirlis thruch my havy hart but rest or ruve
My countenance declairis / my Invward greif
And howp almaist dispairis / To find relief
I dee I dwyne / play dois me pyne /
I loth on every thing I luik allace
Till titan mune / vpoun me schyne /
That I reveif thruch favour of hir face

ffra scho appeir / in to hir spheir Begynnis to cleir
the dawning of my lang desyrit day
Than curage cryis / on howp to ryifs / quhen he aspyis
The noysum nicht of absens went away
No noyis fra I awalk / can me Impesche
Bot on my staitly stalk I flurich fresche
I spring I sprowt / my levis lyis owt
my collour changis in ane Hairtsum hew
No moir I lowt / bot standis vp stowt /
As glaid of hir for quhome I only grew

O happy day / go not away / Apollo stay /
thy chair frome going doun wnto þe west
Off me thow mak / thy 3odiak / That I may tak /
My plesour to behald quhome I luv best
Thy presens me restoris / to lyfe from deth
Thy absens lykwayis schoris / To cutt My breth
I wifs in vane / the to remane /
Sen PRIMUM MOBILE Sayis me alwayis Nay
At leist thy wane / bring sone Agane /
ffairweill with patience perforfs till day

'Lyk as the dumb Solsequium' in *Songs and Fancies* (1662).

THE EIGHTEENTH SONG.

LYk as the dumb *Solsequium* with care overcome doth sorrow when
the Sun goes out of sight, hangs down her head, & drops as dead,
and will not spread but lurkes her leaves through longer of the night till foolish
Pheton rise with whip in hand, to cleare the cristall Skies & light the land, Birdes in
their Dour waite for that hour & to their king a glade good morrow gives from

H Thence

I asked farder at her syne,
There gowans are gay,
Gif to my will she wad incline?
The first morning of May.

I Had a heart, but now I heartleis gae;
I had a mind, but daily was opprest;
I had a friend that's now become my fae;
I had a will that now has freedom loit;

She What

"THERE gowans are gay, my joy' in *Tea Table Miscellany*, vol. 4, pp. 404-05.

THERE gowans are gay, my joy,
There gowans are gay;
Thy gar me wake when I shou'd sleep,
The first morning of May.

About the fields as I did pass,
There gowans are gay;

I chanc'd to meet a proper lass,
The first morning of May.

Right busy was that bonny maid,
There gowans are gay;
I halst her, syne to her I said,
The first morning of May.

O mistress fair, what do you here,
There gowans are gay;
Gathering the dew, what neid ye speir?
The first morning of May.

The dew, quoth I, what can that mean?
There gowans are gay;
Quoth she; To wash my mistress clean,
The first morning of May.

I asked farder at her fyne,
There gowans are gay;
Gif to my will she wad incline?
The first morning of May.

She said, her errand was not there,
Where gowans are gay;
Her maidenhood on me to ware,
The first morning of May.

Then like an arrow frae a bow,
There gowans are gay;

She skift away out o'er the know,
The first morning of May.

And left me in the garth my lane,
There gowans are gay;
And in my heart a twang of pain,
The first morning of May.

The little birds they sang full sweet,
There gowans are gay;
Unto my comfort was right meet,
The first morning of May.

And thereabout I past my time,
There gowans are gay;
Until it was the hour of prime,
The first morning of May.

And then returned hame bedeen,
There gowans are gay;
Pansand what maiden that had been
The first morning of May.

'The Gowans are gay, my jo' in *Songs and Fancies* (1682).

And I thereafter to her I

THE XIX. SONG.

He Gowans are gay, my jo; the Gowans are gay: They make me
wake when I should sleep, the first morning of May.

About the fields as I did pass, the Gowans are gay: I chanc'd to meet a proper Lass, the first morning of May. Right busie was that bony Maid, the Gowans are gay: And I thereafter to her said, the first morning of May. O Ladie fair, what do you here? the Gowans are gay: (spear) Gathring the dew, what needs you the first morning of May. The dew, quoth I, what can that mean; the Gowans are gay:	She said, To wash my Ladie clean, the first morning of May. I asked farther at her syne, the Gowans are gay: To my will if she vould incline, the first morning of May. She said her erand vvas not there, the Gowans are gay: Her maiden-head on me to vware, the first morning of May. Thus left I her, and past my vway, the Gowans are gay: Into a garden me to play, the first morning of May.	(sweet, Where there were birds singing full the Gowans are gay: Unto me comfort was full meet, the first morning of May. And thereabout I past my time, the Gowans are gay: While that it was the hour of Prime, the first morning of May. And then returned home again, the Gowans are gay: Pansing what Maiden that had been, the first morning of May. F I N I S. THE
--	--	--

said,
the first morning of May.

O Ladie fair, what do you
here?
the Gowans are gay:
Gathring the dew, what
neid ye spear?
the first morning of May.

The Gowans are gay, my
jo;
the Gowans are gay:
Thy make me wake when I
should sleep,
the first morning of May.

About the fields as I did
pass,
the Gowans are gay:
I chanc'd to meet a proper
Lass,
the first morning of May.

Right busie was that bony
Maid,
the Gowans are gay:

The dew, quoth I, what
can that mean?
the Gowans are gay:
She said; To wash my
Ladie clean,
the first morning of May.

I asked farther at her syne,
the Gowans are gay:
To my will if she vould
incline,
the first morning of May.

She said her erand vvas
not there,
the Gowans are gay:
Her maiden-head on me
to vware,
the first morning of May.

Thus left I her, and past

my vway,
the Gowans are gay:
Into a garden me to play,
the first morning of May.

had been,
the first morning of May

And left me in the garth
my lane,
the Gowans are gay:
And in my heart a twang
of pain,
the first morning of May.

Where there were birds
singing full sweet,
the Gowans are gay:
Unto me comfort was
right meet,
the first morning of May.

And thereabout I past my
time,
the Gowans are gay:
VWhile that it was the
hour of Prime,
the first morning of May.

And then returned home
again,
the Gowans are gay:
Pansing what Maiden that

List of Songs

First edition

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|----|--|
| 1 | Give care doth Cause men to cry | 13 | If floods of tears could change my follies
past | 27 | The lowest trees have tops, the ant her
gall |
| 2 | O lusty May, with Flora Queen | 14 | Come, love, lets walk in yonder springs | 28 | Where art though, hope, that promised
me releise |
| 3 | Intill a mirthfull May morning | 15 | How should my feeble body fure | 29 | Woe worth the time and eke the place |
| 4 | In a garden so green | 16 | No wonder is suppose my weeping eye | 30 | Who doeth behold my mistress face |
| 5 | When as the Greeks did Enterprise | 17 | What if a day, or a month, or a year | 31 | Through your strangesse frets my heart |
| 6 | You lovers all that love would prove | 18 | Lyk as the dum solsequium | 32 | Come, sweet love, let sorrow cease |
| 7 | The thoughts of men do daily change | 19 | The gowans are gay, my jo | 33 | Sweet Kate of late ran away and left me
plaining |
| 8 | When chyle cold afe shall sease unop thy
blod | 20 | Sleep, wayward thoughts, and rest you
with my love | 34 | Joy to the person of my love |
| 9 | Remember, O thou man. | 21 | When Father Adam first did flee | 35 | Away vaine world, bewitcher of my heart |
| 10 | Now is the month of mayin | 22 | My bailful breist in blood all bruist | 36 | When May is in her pryme, then may
each heart rejoice |
| 11 | Let not, me say the sluggish sleep | 23 | Awake sweet love, thou art returned | 37 | The time of youth sore I repent |
| 12 | Sathan, my foe, full of iniquity | 24 | Wven death behol I breath | 38 | Brave Mars begins to rouse |
| | | 25 | Lyke as the lark within marleom's fool | 39 | Jurie came to Jubusalem |
| | | 26 | I love gret God above | | |

40 White as lilies was her face
41 Begone sweet night, and I shall call thee
kinde
42 Ye gods of love looke down in pity
43 There is a thing that much is used
44 My complaining is but faingin
45 With my love my life was nested
46 Behold a wonder here
47 Now, o now, I needs must part

48 Over the mountains and under the caves
49 When from my love I look's for love
50 Remember me, my dear, I humbly you
require
51 How now, shepherd, what means that?
52 Will said to his mammi
53 Care away goe thou from me
54 There was a time when sillie bees did
speak

55 Martine said to his man
56 A shepherd in a shade his playing made
57 Shepherd, saw thou not my faire lovely
Phillis
58 Faine wold I wed a faire young maid
59 You minor beauties of the night
60 Come again, sweet love doth thee invite
61 Flow my tears, fall from your springes

Second edition additions

1. Pleugh-Song
2. All sones of Adam, rise up with me
3. Trip and go hey

Third Edition additions

She that loves me for myself
Wert thou yet fairer than thou art
Bring back my comfort and return
Phillis, why should we delay
Stay that heart I vow 'tis mine
O sovereign of my joy
How happy art thou and I
Now we are met lets merry meryy be
I wish no more thou should'st love me
Hail happy day, now Dorus sit thee down
Gather you rosebuds while you may
Here's a health unto his Majesty
From the fair Lavenian shore

Song	Collection title	Page	Editor	Printer	Date	Shelfmark	Link
Remember, O thou man (F. Song 9, 3 editions)	<i>Popular music of the olden time (2 volumes)</i>	373	W. Chappell	London: Cramer, Beale and & Chappell	1855-1859	Vol 1: Ing.111-118 Vol 2: Ing.111-126	https://digital.nls.uk/94700568
Joy to the person of my love (F. Song 35)	<i>Ancient Scottish melodies from a manuscript of the reign of King James VI</i>	241	William Daune	Edinburgh Printing and Publishing Company London: Smith, Elder and Co.	1838	Ing. 110	https://digital.nls.uk/94690120
Love will find out the way	<i>Early Scottish Melodies</i>	109	John Glen	Edinburgh: J. & R. Glen	1900	Ing.99(1) Glen.258	https://digital.nls.uk/dcn23/9134/91347584.23.pdf
How now shepherd	<i>The Vocal Magazine vol. 3.</i>	127	C. Stewart	Edinburgh: C. Stewart & Co.	1779	Ing.72(1)	https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/archive/94734713
Into a Mirthful May Morning	<i>The Vocal Magazine vol. 3.</i>	151	C. Stewart	Edinburgh: C. Stewart & Co.	1779	Ing.72(1)	https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/archive/94735001
There Gowans are Gay	<i>The ancient and modern Scots songs, heroic ballads, &c</i>	299	David Herd	Edinburgh: Martin & Wotherspoon	1769	Glen.87	https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/archive/90288227
There Gowans are Gay	<i>Antient and modern Scottish songs (vol. 1)</i>	213	David Herd?	Edinburgh: For Lawrie and Symington and Thomas Brown	1791	Glen.131	https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/archive/90288227

							music/archive/91308569
Lustie May	<i>Ancient and modern Scottish songs, heroic ballads, etc. Vol. 2, 2nd edition.</i>	212	David Herd	Edinburgh: John Wotherspoon	1776	Glen.122a	https://digital.nls.uk/87805579
Lustie May	<i>Select Scottish ballads</i>	106	John Pinkerton	London: printed by and for J. Nichols	1783	[Ail.5/1.10]	https://archive.org/details/selectscotishbal02pinkiala/page/106/mode/2up
There Gowans are gay	<i>The Tea-Table Miscellany Vol. 4</i>	139-141	Allan Ramsay	Edinburgh: Thomas Ruddiman	c.1739		https://digital.nls.uk/antiquarian-books-of-scotland/archive/106697299#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=380&xywh=-232%2C0%2C2758%2C2044
Elore lo!	<i>The ancient and modern Scots songs, heroic ballads, &c. Collected from memory, tradition, and ancient authors. The second edition.</i>	308-309	David Herd	<i>Edinburgh: Printed by John Wotherspoon, for James Dickson and Charles Elliot</i>	1776	Glen.122-122a	https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/archive/87809383
Wo worth the time, &c.	<i>The ancient and modern Scots songs, heroic ballads, &c. Collected from memory, tradition, and ancient authors. The second edition.</i>	309-310	David Herd	Edinburgh: Printed by John Wotherspoon, for James Dickson and Charles Elliot	1776	Glen.122-122a	https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/archive/87809395
There gowans are gay, oh joy	<i>Folk-Songs du Midi des Etats-Unis</i>	163-164	Josiah H. Combs	West Virginia, Walkersville	1925		

Poem	Collection title	Page	Editor	Printer	Date	Shelfmark	Link
The SOLSEQUIUM	<i>A choice collection of comic and serious Scots poems</i>	n.p.	James Watson	James Watson	1706	RB.s.820(2-3)	https://search.nls.uk/permalink/f/19q5vbt/44NLS_ALMA21546888200004341
Solsequium, or The lover comparing himself to sun- flowir	<i>The Ever Green</i>	212	Allan Ramsay	Thomas Ruddiman	1724	Glen.67	https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/archive/87696876

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