Love and Marriage in Scottish Ballads: Real World / Ballad World. Three Case Studies of Ballad Marriages and their Historical Realities

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1. Introduction

In his article 'History and Harlaw', David Buchan comments that the ballad 'provides us with a fair insight into the ways in which the folk imagination reacted to, molded (*sic*) and used for its own emotional purposes, the raw material of historical event.'[1] In his introductory essay to *The Ballad in Scottish History,* (2000), Cowan poses the question 'how valuable are the ballads for the recovery of the social history of pre-industrial Scotland?'[2] This thesis shifts the focus to consider how the ballad-makers took documented, historical marriages, those people and events which 'occasionally provided spicy nuggets of scandal' to create their own versions of social history.[3] Quite apart from any historical realities their compositions may have conveyed, ballad composers had their own agendas; yet this slippery little 'maverick of literary forms'[4] occupies a unique space in Scottish literary and historical sensibilities whilst cutting across those same literary and historical considerations. Although the terms 'real world' / 'ballad world' do suggest differing realities, they are by no means mutually exclusive. There has always existed a cross-fertilisation of the 'real' and 'ballad' worlds, what Cowan and Gifford refer to as 'the uneasy relationship between Scottish history and Scottish literature' – a literature that includes prose, poetry, and drama, to which must be added song and ballad.[5]

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how certain ballads that deal specifically with love and marriage reshape historical events of the 'real world' and create their own 'ballad world'. As there is no clearly defined research on this topic already in print, this original investigation has no established theories to prove or disprove. Rather, it aims to take a historicist approach to present a comparative study of ballad marriage with the historical realities of the relationships discussed. This approach is one which holds that cultural and social phenomena – in this case historically-based poems and ballads and editorial practices, cannot be

[1] David Buchan, 'History and Harlaw' in *Journal of the Folklore Institute* Vol. 5:1 (1968), pp.58-67, p.65.
[2] Edward J Cowan, 'Introduction: The Hunting of the Ballad' in *The Ballad in Scottish History* E. Cowan (ed.), *(East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 2000),* p.1.
[3] Cowan, 'Introduction', *The Ballad in Scottish History* p.13.
[4] David Buchan, *A Scottish Ballad Book (1973),* (London and New York, Routledge Press, 2015), p.1
[5] Edward Cowan and Douglas Gifford, (eds.), *The Polar Twins* (Edinburgh, John Donald, 1999), p.1. Scottish songs and ballads are generally subsumed into the 'poetry' genre in Scottish literary histories; given their oral beginnings, particularly those of the ballads, they merit discreet consideration.

properly understood without taking account of their historical context. It lends itself to an examination of the relationship between literature and history over time and must necessarily take account of earlier examples of this interaction in order to provide a contextual background to demonstrate how history, literature, ballad, song and poetry interacted and were utilised to convey social and cultural concerns. It is worth noting at the outset that history and its literary counterparts are subject to 'organising principles which manipulate their material to suit author and audience.'[6] Such an organising principle is evident throughout the whole corpus of ballads that are based on historical events: this is particularly evident in the three ballads that form the case studies central to this thesis. A secondary feature of a historicist approach allows for a complementary, but equally important, discussion of the phenomena of ballad collecting. From the anonymous scribe who committed *The Gododdin* to parchment pre-ninth century, to George Bannatyne in 1568, the plethora of collectors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and Gavin Greig and Rev. James Duncan in the twentieth century – all ballad editors and collectors had roles in addressing the cultural, social and political concerns of the time. The 'organising principle', noted above, informed not only authors of the ballads, but also those who collected them for posterity.

Because of the investigative nature of this thesis and the flexible approach it demands, this study utilises, where appropriate, history, social and community history, state legislation and legal pronouncements. It also engages with the considerable body of work that exists on Scottish song and ballad for, while not necessarily addressing the topic directly, it provides a wealth of information, knowledge and understanding of the ballads that will support this work. Many of the volumes dealing with Scottish literature generally, have a chapter on balladry and give a broad brush-stroke introduction to Scottish balladry.[7] More specifically, the literature as history / history as literature paradigm is the focus of several essays in Ted Cowan's *The Ballad in Scottish History* (2000). Apart from his role as editor, Cowan's own contributions, his introductory essay, 'The

[6] Cowan and Gifford, *The Polar Twins,* p.11.

[7] Mary Ellen Brown, 'Balladry: A Vernacular Resource' in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: From Columba to the Union (1707),* Ian Brown (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P. 2006), pp.263-272. Hamish Henderson, 'The Ballad and Popular Tradition to 1600' in *The History of Scottish Literature,* Vol. 1 R.D.S. Jack (ed.), (Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press, 1988), pp.263-281. Douglas Gifford, Sarah Dunnigan and Alan MacGillivray (eds.), *Scottish Literature in English and Scots* (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2002), pp.67-82. Adam Fox, *The Press and the People: Cheap Print and Society in Scotland, 1500-1785* (Oxford O.U.P., 2020), pp.306-348.

Hunting of the Ballad' and later essay 'Sex and Violence in the Scottish Ballads', give a historian's assessment of the value of ballads and their relationship to social and cultural values of their time. Other essays in this volume include Ian Olsen's 'Just How Was the Bonnie Earl o Moray Killed?'[8] and Kaye McAlpine's essay on Border reivers 'Proud Armstrongs and Border Rogues', ballads that 'have some of the strongest links with recorded incidents and people'.[9]

David Buchan's hugely influential *The Ballad and the Folk* (1972) focuses for the greater part on the ballads of Anna Gordon, Mrs Brown of Falkland and the structure or form of the ballads to demonstrate how ballads work, as he seeks to 'unriddle the enigma' of ballad 'authorship, definition, terminology and classification,'[10] while his article 'History and Harlaw' is an exemplary essay on how a ballad may be re-imagined, or re-created, to reflect social, cultural and political shifts through time. Willa Muir, one of the early female critics writing about ballads, gives a more personal appreciation of the ballad world. Her *Living With Ballads* (1965) begins with 'Children's Singing Games' and moves into a more critical mode that explores her own ballad inheritance.[11] Critical writing on non-historically based ballads[12] that deal with love, relationships and marriage tends to explore their usefulness in supporting a particular writer's chosen theory or topic: for example David Atkinson's article ' "the wit of a woman it comes in handy,/At time in an hour of need"; Some Comic Ballads of Married Life' focuses on Child's comic ballads of married life that deal with the witty confrontation between the two main characters and 'the interplay of gender relations.'[13] Humour is also the topic of W. F. H. Nicolaisen's article 'Humour in Traditional Ballads (Mainly Scottish)'.[14] In 'Ballads and the

[8] Cowan, *Ballad in Scottish History*. pp.36-53.
[9] *Ibid* pp.73-94, p.73. See also: Edward D. Ives, *The Bonny Earl of Murray: The Man, The Murder, The Ballad* (East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 1997).
[10] David Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk* (1972), (East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 1997), p.1.
[11] Willa Muir, *Living With Ballads* (London, The Hogarth Press, 1965).
[12] That is, ballads with no discernible, historical underpinnings; those that lack a historical provenance. I am reluctant to designate such ballads as unhistorical or fictional as they may have their origins in real-life events or experiences that do not feature in any historical record.
[13] David Atkinson, ' "the wit of a woman it comes in handy / At time in an hour of need"; Some Comic Ballads of Married Life.' in *Western Folklore* Vol. 58:1 (1999), pp.57-84, p.60.
[14] W. F. H. Nicolaisen, 'Humour in Traditional Ballads (Mainly Scottish)' in *Folklore* Vol. 103 (1992), pp.27-39.

Supernatural', Sheila Douglas discusses motifs and symbols that feature in the supernatural ballads collected by F. J. Child,[15] while incest is the focus of Ruth Perry's 'Brother Trouble' article.[16]

The emergence of feminism and feminist agenda(s), has provided academics with a new tool with which to re-evaluate, and, at times, dismantle, ballad narratives. Polly Stewart, for example, cherry-picks her way through the Child ballads to support her theory that 'the women characters in Child ballads are caught in the bind that has been made evident through the feminist critique of patriarchy'[17] She uses a complicated, and at times confusing, four-part paradigm by which she categorises the women in her chosen ballads in terms of their *Cultural* and / or *Personal Success* or *Failure* in dealing with Scottish patriarchal culture. She equates the norm for cultural success with 'marriage and procreation'[18] which, on the evidence of her chosen ballads, 'is likely to be met at the extreme sexual and social oppression of women,'[19] whereas female personal failure belongs to those women who end up 'dead or damned.'[20] Stewart's approach is not entirely successful, particularly so when she defeats her own argument by getting the ballad narrative wrong. As an example of personal and cultural failure she cites 'Fair Janet' (Child 64) and states that 'Willie chooses another woman to be his wife.'[21] But in the ballad, Willie loves Janet who has just given birth to his child. Her father announces she is soon to be married to a French lord. At the wedding feast Janet refuses to dance with her new husband choosing her love Willie as her partner instead, but

> She hadnae turned her throw the dance
> Throw the dance but thrice
> When she fell doun at Willie's feet
> And up did never rise. (st.28)

and, fulfilling ballad narrative demands, Willie dies shortly after. In dying, Janet suffers personal failure, but in giving birth to a son, she is culturally successful. In concluding his survey of selected ballads, Cowan comes to

[15] Sheila Douglas, 'Ballads and the Supernatural: Spells, Charms, Curses and Enchantments' in *Studies in Scottish Literature* Vol. 33:1 (2004), pp.349-365.
[16] Ruth Perry, 'Brother Trouble: Incest Ballads of the British Isles' in *The Eighteenth Century* Vol. 47:2/3 (Texas Tech University Press, 2006), pp.289-307.
[17] Polly Stewart, 'Wishful Wily Women: Lessons for Female Success in the Child Ballads' in *Feminist Messages: Coding in Women's Folk Culture* Joan Newlon Radnor (ed.), (University of Illinois Press, 1993), pp.54-73, p.55.
[18] *Ibid* pp.57, 60 and 63.
[19] *Ibid* p.66.
[20] *Ibid* p.57.
[21] *Ibid* p.58.

the opposing view stating that 'ballad evidence departs at every critical juncture from the standard view of the submissive female enduring the patriarchal system.'[22] Katie Barclay also has a feminist approach in her 2010 article, 'Composing the Self: Gender, Subjectivity and Scottish Balladry' in which she seeks to trace the 'distinctly gendered repertoires' of individual singers of the songs collected by William Motherwell c.1820. She attempts to trace the particular concerns and subjectivities of singers, both male and female, in their choice of ballad or variant thereof concluding that 'men and women managed to create unique and original texts from the same material'. This, she says, allowed women in particular, to claim a space within a society that often failed to hear their voices.[23] Barclay's later chapter on 'Balladry and Early Modern Understandings of Marriage' (2016) has a similar agenda as she discusses in general terms the way in which ballads may be interrogated to demonstrate how 'The centrality of marriage and gender relationships to most people's lives was reflected within ballads'[24] in the period 1650-1750. She discusses courtship, love, male and female agency within marriage, parental approval and financial considerations and how ballads were gendered to reflect the concerns of the singer – male and female. Her conclusion is that a patriarchal framework of marriage does not lend itself to the teasing out of complex gender relationships in marriage.[25] Lynn Wollstadt has a similar feminist agenda in her article 'Controlling Women "Reading Gender in the Ballads Scottish Women Sang." She

[22] Cowan, 'Sex and Violence in the Child Ballads' in *The Ballad in Scottish Histor*y pp.95-115, p.112

[23] Katie Barclay, 'Composing the Self: Gender, Subjectivity and Scottish Balladry' in *Cultural and Social History* Vol. 7:3 (2010), pp.337-353.

[24] Katie Barclay, " 'And Four Years Space, being Man and Wife, they Lovingly Agreed': Balladry and Early Modern Understandings of Marriage' in *Finding The Family in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland* Ewan and Nugent (eds.), (London, Routledge, 2016), pp.23-33, p.27.

[25] Katie Barclay's most recent work is in the field of history of emotion studies. It is an ever-expanding research discipline that encompasses a very broad range of academic interests – psychology, history and linguistics, to mention a few, and includes Barclay's own work within the area of Scottish cultural studies. Although an 'emotional studies' reading would afford a very interesting perspective on historically-based balladry, the focus of this thesis are the historical realities and their adaptation by ballad-makers to create a social, cultural comment from those realities. In the epigraph to his chapter 'Sex and Violence in the Scottish Ballads' (Cowan, *The Ballad in Scottish History* p.95 and p113, note 1.), Cowan quotes T.M Lindsay: 'If State papers reveal the designs of the politicians, the ballads tell what the people thought about things.' In this thesis, 'emotion' is regarded in straightforward terms as reflecting such thoughts and what Motherwell refers to as the 'feelings and passions' (p.30 this thesis) of the ballad-maker and audience.
For 'Emotion Studies' see Katie Barclay, Sharon Crozier-De Rosa and Peter N. Stearns (eds.), *Sources for the History of Emotion Studies: A Guide* (London and New York, Routledge, 2020), Katie Barclay, 'State of the Field' in *History* Vol.106:317 (2021), pp.456-466, Rob Boddice, *The History of Emotions* (2016) (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2nd Edition 2023), Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015).

utilises Polly Stewart's paradigm and ideas of both male and female agency, or lack of agency, as she works her way through a selection of ballads that were recorded in the field by The School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Her focus is on how twentieth century women singers construct both male and female roles in their ballad repertoires and, like Stewart, she considers how gender roles and their respective power struggles are dealt with.[26] Her conclusion seems to equate the desire of women in the ballad world to exercise a level of authority, with a similar desire in women who later sang those ballads.[27]

In the case of these articles by Stewart, Barclay and Wollstadt, non-historically based ballads are taken at face value as representative of how relationships were actually conducted. A large range of ballads on the theme of gender relationships are taken for the express purpose of interrogating them to discover common factors, or denominators, that support a specific theory. But they do not take into account actual marriage practices and real-life expectations of both men and women in partnership agreements. As a result, the handling of their chosen material is descriptive rather than critically analytical. Neither do they take into consideration the different types of marriage – regular and irregular which, until the 1939 Marriage (Scotland) Act, were available in Scotland. Because of these omissions the ballads lose their historical function as socially relevant documents, skewing an appreciation of ballad content. And any purely feminist reading of ballads dealing with gender relationships is troublesome, but neatly addressed by Ted Cowan when discussing gender roles in the ballads: 'It is very doubtful if it is possible or legitimate to distinguish 'female topics' in the ballads since to do so would be to burden the past with the cultural values of the present.'[28]

This thesis takes an entirely different approach to those authors offering a feminist critique of balladry in that three individual, historical relationships, two marriages and a courtship, are interrogated to understand how ballad makers organised and digested these historical events to create ballads that reflected the social, cultural and emotional concerns of their communities. The marriage of 63-year-old Alexander Irvine, 'The Laird o Drum' to 16-year-old Peggy Coutts in 1681 or 1682, is examined against the marriage protocols of the day

[26] Lynn Wollstadt, 'Controlling Women: "Reading Gender in the Ballads Scottish Women Sang" in *Western Folklore* Vol. 61:3/4 (2002), pp.295-317.
[27] *Ibid* p.313.
[28] Cowan, ''Sex and Violence in the Child Ballads' in *The Ballad in Scottish in Scottish History* p.109.

and the earlier historical background of the Covenanters, Cromwell's Commonwealth and the restoration of Charles II to the British throne. The well documented escape by John Wemyss, 'The Laird o Logie', from imprisonment in Dalkeith Palace, took place in 1592 in the reign of King James VI. The troubles caused by Francis, the Earl of Bothwell are the background to the ballad. Finally, the ballad 'Jamie Douglas' concerns Douglas's marriage and subsequent separation from his wife, Barbara Erskine.

These ballads represent a historicist continuity of literature as history, but a literature which holds its own validity as a para-historical record alongside any official historical documentation. Their continued relevance sustained them in the oral tradition of their communities before being gathered into manuscripts and published by those wishing to preserve not just the ballads, but their cultural, social and historical underpinnings together with the sense of identity that inhered in them.

2. History as Literature and Literature as History: Setting the Scene

History as an academic discipline is a monumental subject that embodies all within its temporal and spatial frames of reference and the history as literature / literature as history dynamic is as old as written history allows. From chronicles recording the sweeping rise and fall of empires over the course of centuries to the intimate recollections of a diarist writing perhaps of a daughter's marriage, all have a place in history's tapestry. Because of the breadth and depth of historical record, examples of the symbiotic relationship of history and literature, other than that of ballads and ballad collectors discussed here, needs to be within manageable parameters focusing on examples that cover a range of times and subject concerns.

The five-volume publication *The Oxford History of Historical Writing* is an extensive collection of critical essays on writing from the earliest days to present times and from countries around the world that allows an insight into how different cultures understood their own historical legacies.[29]

Reckoning with History: Essays on Uses of the Past is a miscellaneous collection of eleven essays that examine contemporary reporting from early modern Britian, a time of social and political change and challenge. Topics diverse as the reign of Mary I of England to the discovery of thallium are discussed while other essays look at historical works from more modern times from around the globe.[30]

History and literature come together in a much more personal way in ' 'War Memoirs of the Dead': Writing and Remembrance on the First World War'.[31] This article by Victoria Stewart focuses on two memoirs written about soldiers who died in World War One.[32] Such written accounts she says, 'can shed light on memorial and, specifically auto/biographical practices of the first word War' and how such memoirs can glorify 'those who died […] without glorifying the war itself.'[33] Based on recollections of family, friends and other third parties, the war letters and other ephemera of the deceased, the written word provides a historical

[29] Alex Schneider, D.R. Woolf *et al* (eds.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing* (Oxford, O.U.P., 2011-2012).
[30] K.J. Kesselring and Matthew Neufeld (eds.), *Reckoning with History: Essays on Uses of the Past* (Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2024). https://www.mqup.ca/Books/R/Reckoning-with-History2 (Accessed February 2026).
[31] Victoria Stewart, ' 'War Memoirs of the Dead': Writing and Remembrance on the First World War' in *Literature and History* Vol. 14:2 (2006), pp.37-52.
[32] These memoirs are, *Raymond, or Life and Death* by Oliver Lodge, (London, Methuen, 1916) and *Boy of My Heart* by Marie Leighton, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1916).
[33] Stewart, 'War Memories' p.38.

retrospective on two lives, and gives a voice to those left behind. Much the same can be said of historically-based ballads that recall incidents and people in ways that reflect the social and cultural concerns of their communities and the sentiments that occasioned their composition.

Before going on to consider the phenomenon of ballad collecting that began in earnest in Scotland at the beginning of the eighteenth century and the three ballads chosen for discussion, it is appropriate to provide a contextual background to establish how earlier examples of history, literature, song and ballad interacted in the interests and understandings of early Scottish lowland societies. Three early examples demonstrate a thread of continuity that can be traced in historically-based ballads that have come down to us over the centuries, in the way in which history is manipulated and utilised to present the authors' / ballad-makers' own social and cultural priorities, and political agendas.

Despite Cowan and Gifford's assertion that 'Literature is as elusive as history during the first millennium or so of the Scottish past' they do acknowledge 'that much must have circulated in the oral traditions of the early people' that is now lost.[34] There is however, at least one notable written survivor. Setting aside the debate as to whether it is or is not the oldest Scottish poem, *The Gododdin,* by Aneirin, is one of the earliest examples of Celtic poetry and song as a literary, historical record.[35] Written in Welsh – or more accurately Cumbric or North British/Brittonic, its locus is the Gododdin lands of the Lothians centred on Din Eidyn – Edinburgh. It is a commemorative 'praise-song' to the three hundred young Gododdin warriors, drawn from the Gododdin and other British lands, who set out with their ruler, Mynyddawg, in an attempt to halt English, or Anglo-Saxon, expansion north. Dated to the fifth century, the battle of Catraeth (Catterick) resulted in the deaths of all but a few of those who set out.[36] The poem records battle incidents, it celebrates in general the heroism of the war-bands, it praises and eulogises individual warriors – their past deeds and their valour at Catreath; it is also a 'bitter reflection on the folly of the campaign and the feasting that preceded it.'[37]

[34] Cowan and Gifford, *The Polar Twins,* p.2.
[35] Thomas Owen Clancy, (ed.), *The Triumph Tree* (Edinburgh, Canongate Books, 1998), pp.46-67, Jenny Rowland, 'Aneirin, the *Gododdin'* in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature* Vol.1. Ian Brown (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2006), pp.72-76.
[36] Clancy, *The Triumph Tree* pp.52-53, stanza 21. For a discussion of the Catreath/Catterick issue see, Alexander Falileyev, 'Three Notes on the Gododdin' in *Studia Celtica* Vol. 54/1 (2020), pp.89-94.
[37] Clancy, *The Triumph Tree* p.47.

Several stanzas also reference songs that honour war bands whose 'talu medd' (payment in mead) debt was discharged through unwavering loyalty, bravery and death in battle:[38]

60. Song befitting as war-band is found:
Soldiers were embroiled around Catreath…

61. Song befitting a noble war-band:
Roar of fire and thunder of war tide…

62. Song befitting glittering battle-bands:

70. I sang a splendid song of your dwelling's ruin
And the hall that once was there…

Like many of the later Scottish ballads collected in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *The Gododdin* had a long oral history before being written down, certainly before the ninth century.[39] The eighty-three stanzas that make up the poem have no metrical rhythm, rhyme scheme or length; each has its own identity, suggesting that different elements have been spliced into the whole. As such, there may be an argument for saying a number of those would have been chanted or sung as well as recited, especially if the songs referred to above were also sung as part of a personal memorial.

In ancient Celtic society it was the responsibility of the peoples' bards to compose, record, memorise and pass on their inheritance of racial memories, songs, tales, history and genealogy of their 'clans' and in *The Gododdin*', Aneirin succeeds in this. His manipulation of the raw material of events before, during and after the Battle of Catreath fulfils his society's cultural need to record the course of events for posterity and to name and memorialise for his race, for his audience and for the families, the deeds of those who died.

The second example, composed in the mid-1370s, John Barbour's *The Bruce,* is the oldest surviving literary / historical work written in Older Scots vernacular and is a literary construct of a historical life. Barbour's intention is 'To put in wryt a suthfast story', but it is a 'true story' wrapped up in the chivalric,

[38] Clancy, *The Triumph Tree* p.62, stanzas 60-64, p.64, stanza 70.
See also, P. L. Henry's 'Beowulf Cruces' in *Zeitschrift fur Vergleichende Sprachforschung* 77.Bd., 1./2.H (1961). pp.154-156 for a brief summary of the importance of mead in 'The Gododdin' as a symbol of the bond and obligations between warrior(s) and their sovereign lord. Brian Wallace, 'Warriors and Warfare: Ideal and Reality in Early Insular Texts*',* Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (The University of Edinburgh, 2011), pp.217-220 for mead as a literary metaphor. https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/6434 (Accessed January, 2023).

[39] Clancy, *The Triumph Tree* p.46 where reference is made to a ninth-century document which itself references Aneirin 'as one of five outstanding poets of the sixth century.'

romance ideals of contemporary medieval literature. As such, it is a document of its time composed to serve the purposes of both the author and the needs of his audience and Barbour selects his material accordingly.[40] *The Bruce* was written over the course of the early 1370s and compiled in 1375 for the court of Robert Bruce's grandson, Robert II. Barbour's 'romanys' is a biographical, yet selective, rehearsal of Robert I's tenacity and chivalric defence of Scotland's independence and his defiance in the face of English aggression that threatened to subsume it. In his poem, Barbour demonstrates the individual and collective resolve of the community of the realm – the court aristocracy and free men, who fought with Robert Bruce in the Wars of Independence and uses this as an example and as an appeal to the current crop of aristocrats, urging them to show the same qualitative resolve in the face of renewed English pretensions as their predecessors did. Like *The Gododdin*, Barbour's poem would have been recited, perhaps sung, in part or in whole, at court gatherings and answered Barbour's 'intent' for his audience to be reminded of their subordinate role in court politics and of their duties and obligations to Robert II. It was also a reminder to the king of his duty to protect both his people and the emergent Scottish nation. Barbour's poem became the seminal source of information on Robert Bruce and the Battle of Bannockburn, to the extent that Royan and Broun can state that 'Even today *The Bruce* is a major source for Robert I's life and kingship'.[41] Barbour's sources however, are not so readily pinned down. Compiled between 1370 and 1375, some five and a half decades after the events, Barbour would have relied heavily on oral recollections of those who took part, their descendants, contemporary court and family records together with the popular tales and songs of ordinary people whose recollections held just as much validity as official accounts. There is in *The Bruce* but one small verse that mentions song. Recounting the defeat and capture of Sir Andrew Harclay by Sir John Soulis, Barbour writes:

> I will nocht rehers the maner
> For quha-sa like thai may her
> Young wemen quhen thai will play
> Syngit amang thaim ilk day. [42]

[40] John Barbour, *The Bruce* A.A.M. Duncan (ed.), (Edinburgh, Canongate Classics No.78, 1997), p.47, Book 1: line 13.
[41] Nicola Royan and Dauvit Broun, 'Versions of Scottish Nationhood, c.850—1707' in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature* Vol. 1 Ian Brown (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2006), pp.168-183 p.175.
[42] Barbour, *The Bruce,* p.607, Book 16, lines 527-530.

If this small, although not insignificant incident merited translation into song it is not beyond the bounds of supposition that other battle exploits will have been subject to the balladeer's skill, but which are now sadly lost to us. The verse is also an early signifier of the important role women played in the preservation and transmission of popular song.[43] Like Aneirin before him and historical ballad-makers after him, Barbour selected and deselected material and so shaped historical realities to his own political, cultural and social purposes to the extent that Royan and Broun can also, conversely, comment: 'The Bruce and the Wallace are no more to be trusted as accurate representations of events'[44] than depictions of earlier Scottish kings. Barrow, on the other hand, comments 'We accept (Barbour's) judgement or abandon any attempt at a detailed account.'[45]

The third and final example was compiled by John Wedderburn and published in Paris c.1550, not long after the Battle of Pinkie Cleugh (1547) and in the wake of the English 'Rough Wooing' of the 1540s. *The Complaynt of Scotland* was 'written to combat a massive English propaganda campaign demanding union, with threats.'[46] Aggressive English claims of suzerainty coupled with emergent religious and political differences in Scotland were having a destabilising effect on the country: *The Complaynt* is equally a harangue and a rallying call to the three estates to stop the bickering, set aside differences and unite against persistent English aspirations and double dealing. The majority of *The Complaynt* is taken up with these issues and Wedderburn's proposals for their redress. But of more interest to the present thesis is Chapter VI, 'Actor'.[47] Here, the reader is invited to join with 'scheiphirdis, ther vyuis and saruadis' in a work-break 'recreatione': as 'the eldest scheiphirdis began, and al the laif followit, ane be ane in ther auen place' they each tell their tales and sing their songs.[48] What follows is a short catalogue of tales, songs, dances and musical instruments these rustic

[43] See, for example, Lucie Duggan, 'The Chief Preservers of Ballad Poetry: Revisiting the Ballad Tradition of Scottish Women' in *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* Vol. 44:1 (2024), pp23-46, Sigrid Rieuwerts, 'Women as the Chief Preservers of Traditional Ballad Poetry' in *Acta Ethnographica Hungerica* Vol. 47:1-2 (2002), pp.149-159.
[44] Royan and Broun, 'Versions of Scottish Nationhood' p.175.
[45] Geoffrey S.S. Barrow, *Robert Bruce & The Community of The Realm of Scotland* (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 1988), p.228.
[46] Robert Wedderburn, *The Complaynt of Scotland,* Introduction by A. M. Stewart (Edinburgh, Scottish Text Society, 1979), p.xxxiv.
[47] Wedderburn, *Complaynt* pp.49-53. (folios 50r-52r).
[48] *Ibid*. pp.49-50. (folio 50r).

folk are, incongruously, charged with performing.[49] Like their Classical and Arcadian counterparts of Renaissance literature, these Scottish shepherds are accorded an astonishing erudition that allowed Wedderburn a pastoral foray into Scottish cultural mores of the day.[50] Although only titles are given, the range and diversity of material is impressive: 'the taylis of cantirberrye', tales from Ovid, Greek myth and legend, Norse and Arthurian legend and a number of folk tales. Scottish works also feature – 'vallace', the 'bruce', 'the goldin targe', 'the paleis of honour' and 'raif collzear'.[51] Two of these tales are of particular interest. Designated here as a tale, 'the tail quhou the hyng of est mure land mariet the hyngis dochtir of vest mure land' may have been a long lost relative of the ballad that was mentioned in, but torn from, Percy's original 'Folio'.[52] This ballad, later restored, apparently from similar extant stanzas, edited and supplemented by Percy, featured in his *Reliques* and was adopted by F. J. Child into his *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* as 'King Estmere'.[53] Of 'the tayl of the zong tamlane [and of the bald braband]' (my parenthesis), quoting Emily Lyle, Stewart comments this was " 'probably some story 'not now known' rather than Tam Lin.' "[54] 'Thom of Lyn' appears in the catalogue of dances rather than as a song, as does 'Jonny Armstrong's Dance'.

When the tales are told, the shepherds 'and thar vyuis began to sing sueit melodius sangis of natural music of the *antiquite*.' (my italics),[55] which suggests that even in the first half of the sixteenth century they were well established. But although many of these songs did not go the distance in oral tradition, as Cowan notes, 'If a recognisable ballad appears in a compilation such as *The Complaynt of Scotland* it surely indicates,

[49] A. M. Stewart, 'The Complaynt of Scotland: A Critical Edition' Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 3 Volumes, (The University of Edinburgh, 1973). Vol. 3 pp.85-123 lists 48 tales,37 songs, 29 dances and 8 musical instruments. *https*://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/17660 (Accessed February/March, 2023).

[50] Helen Cooper, *Pastoral: Medieval into Renaissance* (Ipswich, D.S. Brewer, 1977), Introduction pp.1-7, Nandini Das, 'Placing Arcadia' in *Medieval into Renaissance: Essays for Helen Cooper* Andrew King and Matthew Woodcock (eds.), (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp.143-162, discusses Arcadia as a literary conceit.

[51] Wedderburn, *Complaint* p.50. (folios 50v-51r).

[52] Bishop Thomas Percy (1729-1811) was an English ballad collector whose best-known work is the three-volume *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London, 1765) which included material from an old folio manuscript he had acquired.

[53] F.J. Child, (ed.), *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* 5 Volumes (New York and Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1882-1898), No.60. (Hereafter, for example, Child 60).

[54] Stewart, *Complaynt: A Critical Edition* pp.85-123, p.101.
See also – Child 39 for 'Tam Lin' and Sir Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,* Vol. 1 2nd Edition, (Edinburgh, James Ballantyne, 1803), pp. 174-261 for 'The Young Tamlane'.

[55] Wedderburn, *Complaynt* p.50. (folio 51r).

at the very least, that some version was then extant even though it cannot now be recovered.'[56] A number of such songs referenced in the *Complaynt* are indeed recognisable. The ballad based on 'the battil of hayrlau' has come down through the oral tradition, has been adapted and changed over time to reflect shifting political circumstances and survives in a number of variants.[57] The ballad, 'the hunttis of the cheuet' is from an English perspective while 'The Battle of Otterbourne' (not listed in *The Complaynt),* is its Scottish equivalent. An incident from this battle, which is listed as 'the perssee & mongumrye met', is tacked on at the end of Sir Walter Scott's edition of 'Otterbourne'.[58] *The Complaynt* also catalogues the song 'brume brume on hill': tae gang doon tae the brume was a common euphemism for sexual congress and a number of songs and ballads have come down the oral route that feature this euphemism. Following his sister's suicide and her killing of their baby, the prince in the royal incest ballad 'Sheath and Knife' (Child 16) then buries 'his sister wi her babe at her feet' lamenting 'Noo we'll never gyang doon tae the broom ony mair'. The same euphemism can be found in another incest ballad, 'Leesome Brand' (Child 15), as can the metaphor 'sheath and knife' to denote mother and child. In Scott's 'The Original Ballad of the Broom of The Cowdenknowes' the young woman is seduced by a passing stranger while the woman in his ballad 'The Broomfield Hill', manages, by devious means, to remain *virgo intacta*.[59] John Wedderburn was an active supporter of Protestantism and in the popular songs and ballads of Scotland he had a ready source of material which he parodied, or 'godlified', for inclusion in the 1567 edition of *Gude and Godlie Ballates.* A number of the original songs are listed in *The Complaynt.*[60]

The importance of this small section of *The Complaynt* lies in its function as a bridge between the past lives of the ballads mentioned therein, their appearance in *The Complaynt* as well-known, 'antique' material, their survival and revival in subsequent collections, and their continuing presence in present-day performance.

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[56] Cowan, 'Introduction' *The Ballad in Scottish History* p.13.

[57] Child 163; Gavin Greig and Rev. James Bruce Duncan, *The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection,* 8 volumes, Emily Lyle, General Editor (Aberdeen, A.U.P., 1981-2002), Vol. 1 No.112 (Hereafter, for example, G-D 1:112) provides 16 variants and 11 separate music notations for *Harlaw.* For a discussion on the historicity of the ballad, see Buchan 'History and Harlaw'.

[58] Child 162 for 'The Hunting of the Cheviot', Sir Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,* Vol. 1, 2nd edition (1803), pp.27-41 for 'The Battle of Otterbourne', Stewart, *Complaynt: A Critical Edition,* pp.113-115.

[59] Child 16 'A' 'Sheath and Knife', No.15 'B' 'Leesome Brand'. Scott, *Minstrelsy* Vol. 3, 2nd Edition, (1803), pp.280 and 269 respectively.
For a discussion of the final song in the catalogue, see Priscilla Bawcut, 'A Song from *The Complaynt of Scotland*: 'My Hart is Leiuit on the Land' in *Notes and Queries* Vol. 49:2, (2002), pp.193-197.

[60] Stewart, *Complaynt: A Critical Edition* pp. 111-115 lists Nos.63, 68, 73, 77 and 84.

In the space between 'then' of their antiquity and present day 'now' of performance, is an astonishing story of the ballads' survival against the odds demonstrating that, if not how or why, ballads go through re-creation and re-imagining and survive despite language shifts, political, historical and social upheavals. But I would suggest that their retention, transmission and survival is down to the tenacity and ingenuity of people down the generations to hold on to their own history, cultural identity and sense of self.

In the context of this thesis, the *Gododdin* is important for two main reasons; firstly, it provides a historicist starting point for literature / song and ballad as historical record and secondly, it is one of the earliest examples of a collected work that addresses the social and cultural issues of an early Scottish lowland society. But a third point may be added: from it can be traced the first documented account of physical resistance to English / Anglo Saxon expansionism which was also the motivation behind Barbour's *The Bruce* and the rhetoric of *The Complaynte.* The three texts demonstrate the transition of history into literature and how literature could be used by respective authors to shape and present historical events for their own nationalist, cultural and social purposes.

One other collection that has had a hugely important role in the preservation of Scottish literary culture is that of George Bannatyne (1545-1608). The Bannatyne Manuscript was completed in three months in 1568 when the plague made its appearance in Edinburgh where Bannatyne was living and working at the time.[61] Isolated during this sixteenth century 'lock-down', Bannatyne had set himself the task of compiling 'ane ballat *buik'* from manuscript 'copies awld mankit and mvtillait' and various printed books which indicates that other, smaller collections of which we now have no knowledge, were available to him.[62] The content range is impressive containing as it does sections on religious, moral and humorous topics, love lyrics, fables and a comprehensive range of poetry from earlier fifteenth and early sixteenth century poets which, taken

[61] T. C. Smout, *A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830* (1969), (Glasgow, William Collins, 1981), pp.151-152.
[62] George Bannatyne, *The Bannatyne Manuscript,* (London, Scolar Press, 1980), p.ix. This is a facsimile copy of the original manuscript held by the National Library of Scotland. See the introductory 'Description of the Bannatyne Manuscript' by Denton Fox and William A. Ringler for composition dates.

with the 'Actor' chapter in Wedderburn's *Complaynt,* indicates the range and depth of Scottish cultural appreciation of the time.[63]

The four texts just discussed provide the contextual background for the three ballads examined in the latter part of the thesis and show how such poetry, song and ballad was an integral part of the fabric of life in Scottish communities. The eulogistic 'praise song' that is *'The Gododdin* commemorates the fallen warriors and gives to their communities, families and loved ones a lasting memoir of their collective and individual deeds. It anchors their place in history and gives those left behind a share in the communal ownership of the songs and verses that celebrate them. *The Bruce* was written for a different kind of community, that of the realm of Scotland, and gives that community a historical example against which to measure themselves. But tucked away in this work is a casual reference to women singing 'ilk day' of John de Soulis and in a brief four lines we get a glimpse of song/ballad as part of everyday life, part of a shared communal inheritance and how history was orally disseminated through song. The poems, songs and ballads that feature in *The Bannatyne Manuscript* and Wedderburn's *Complaynt* further consolidate the importance and social function of such as literary, historical artifacts that not only survived but flourished in the communities that preserved them.

Ballads that turn on historical events most usually deal with battles or larger than life historical figures, such as those just mentioned but there are a select few, such as the three ballads discussed in this thesis, that dwell on more familial, domestic concerns. The three eponymous aristocratic figures – 'The Laird o Drum', 'The Laird o Logie' and 'Jamie Douglas', were all significant characters in their own right, but became the subject of ballad-makers because their marriages each provided that 'spicy nugget of scandal' of which Cowan

[63] There seems to be a dearth of in-depth commentaries on the manuscript contents. A number of commentators have written on specific themes or items from the manuscript, for example, Evelyn S. Newlyn, ' 'The Wrytter to the Reidaris': Editing Practices and Politics in the Bannatyne Manuscript' in *Studies in Scottish Literature* Vol.3:11 (1999), pp14-30, Jamie Reid-Baxter, 'Metrical Psalmody and the Bannatyne Manuscript: Robert Pont's Psalm 83' in *Renaissance and Reformation* Vol. 30:4 (2006), pp.41-62. For a more detailed consideration of the manuscript contents and sources see, J. T. T. Brown, 'The Bannatyne Manuscript: A Sixteenth Century Poetical Miscellany' in *The Scottish Historical Review* Vol. 1:2 (1904), pp.136-158, Denton Fox, 'Manuscripts and Prints of Scots Poetry in the Sixteenth Century' in *Bards and Makers* A.J. Aitken, M.P. McDiarmid and D.S. Thomson (eds.), (Glasgow, University of Glasgow Press, 1977), pp.156-171. A great deal of ancillary information but little textual commentary can be found in W. Tod Ritchie, *The Bannatyne Manuscript writtin in tyme of pest, 1568* 4 Volumes (Edinburgh, Blackwood,1929-1934). There is perhaps a need for an up-to-date critical edition of the Manuscript.

writes.[64] Although anchored in 'real world' history, the ballads do not betray an overt concern with that history, but they present a localised facet of it as a literary record, shaped by their authors' own cultural and social purposes; in doing so, they pick up the thread of continuity that began with *The Gododdin*.

[64] Cowan, 'Introduction' *The Ballad in Scottish History* p.13.

3. History as Literature and Literature as History: The Role of the Editor / Collector

The challenge for this thesis was to identify ballads that would fulfil the 'love and marriage' rubric and because of the sheer volume of material available, it became clear that a systematic approach was needed: the numerous collections of songs and ballads that blossomed over the course of the next four hundred years was an obvious starting point. Thus, the following chronological survey of key song and ballad collectors and their work fulfils two main functions for this study. Firstly, it shows where particular collectors are situated in the literature as history / history as literature matrix for, like the texts of *The Gododdin, The Bruce* and other historical documents,[65] the introductory remarks of the collectors are a historicist, literary comment on the political and cultural climate of their own times. Secondly, it highlights which of those collectors and their collections proved the most useful in the selection of ballads for critical case studies presented later in this thesis.

Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century

Following the 1707 Union with England, the emphasis shifted from using literature to counter English physical territorial encroachment to countering the Anglicisation of Scottish cultural identity especially that which inhered in poetry, song and ballads and the Scots language. As Campbell and McCue have noted, 'Editorial policies are marked by time and place, by the cultural politics of their moment'[66] and for the early collectors their moment was marked by the Union and heralded a patriotic impulse to promote this aspect of literary cultural nationalism, and to use and preserve the Scots language 'to encourage readers to recognise the uniqueness of Scottish identity' in the face of encroaching English cultural hegemony:[67] as Smith observes

[65] Gordon Donaldson, *Scottish Historical Documents* (London and Edinburgh, Scottish Academic Press, 1974), 'The Declaration of Arbroath' (1320), pp.55-58, 'Treaty of Edinburgh, 1328', pp.61-62, 'The National Covenant' (1638), pp.194-201.

[66] Katherine Campbell and Kirsteen McCue, 'Lowland Song Culture in the Eighteenth Century' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Traditional Literatures* Sarah Dunnigan (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2013), pp.94-104, p.104.

[67] Leith Davis, 'Imagining the Miscellaneous Nation: James Watson's *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Poems'* in *Eighteenth Century Life* Vol. 35:3 (Duke University Press, 2011), pp.60-80, p.65.
See also: Leith Davis, 'At "sang about": Scottish song and the challenge to British Culture' in *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism* Leith Davis *et al* (eds.), (Cambridge, C.U.P., 2004), pp.188-203., Leith Davis, *Acts of Union: Scotland and the Literary Negotiation of the British Nation* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1998), Christopher Whatley, *The Scots and the Union: Then and Now* (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2014), Ross, I.S. and Scobie, S.A.C., 'Patriotic Publishing as a Response to the Union' in *The Union of 1707: Its Impact on Scotland* (Glasgow, Blackie and Son, 1974), pp.94-119. For a biased and rather patronising English assessment of Scottish Literature, see 'The Union and

'England was always the big neighbour and there was a continuing cultural gravity-effect that could not be ignored.'[68] Thus the overarching consideration for early poetry, song and ballad collectors was the defence of Scotland's historical and cultural literary heritage and to secure its political relevance in a British context.

The first two collections discussed, those of James Watson and Allan Ramsay, did not provide ballad variants that are central to this thesis, but there are important aspects of their work which should be noted here. Being published in the febrile, post-Union atmosphere of the early 1700s, their collections addressed the historical and political moment: neither Watson nor Ramsay operated in a social vacuum, their introductions, prefaces and editorial practices reflected the historical and 'cultural politics' in which they worked and, as such, are themselves a valuable part of the historicist chain of literature as history and literature as history.

Language

In his discussion of Scottish poetry, Corey E. Andrews remarks that 'poems in the Scots register are often perceived as conveying a national means of address, whereby Scots language usage is regarded as key marker of Scottish identity.'[69] Both Watson and Ramsay emphasised the importance of both these aspects of the Scots language as bearers of Scottish cultural identity in their written works. Tulloch notes, however, that 'In 1700, Scots had a very diminished role in writing compared to, for instance, the earlier sixteenth century'[70] when the *Bannatyne Manuscript* was compiled, and this is reflected in the mix of Scots and English language used by Watson and Ramsay in their collections. Spoken Scots, the language of the ballad orality, was a different matter. Because the Scots language did not develop as a fixed, educational written norm with a settled orthography as did the English language south of the border, in the broadest of terms, the consequence

Scottish Literature' in *The National Observer,* July 15, 1893. https://archive.org/details/sim_the-national-observer-and-british-review-of-politics_1893-07-15_10_243/page/220/mode/2up (Accessed August 2023).

[68] Jeremy Smith, *Older Scots A Linguistic Reader* (Edinburgh, The Scottish Text Society, 2012), p.9.

[69] Corey E. Andrews, 'Poems in the Scots Register 1650-1800' in *The International Companion to Scottish Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century* Leith Davis and Janet Sorenson (eds.), (Glasgow, A.S.L.S. 2021), pp.41-55, p.42.

[70] Graham Tulloch, 'Older Scots Lexis' in *The Edinburgh History of the Scots Language* (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 1997), pp.378-432, p.380.

was the gradual adoption of English as the written medium, while Scots remained the spoken norm; as Anneli Meurman-Solin remarks, 'The later anglicisation process was chiefly realised in written Scots […]'.[71]

James Watson (1664-1722)

Published only months before the 1707 Union with England when Scottish cultural identity, religious, political and economic survival were at stake, Watson's Scottish poetry miscellany[72] was the first major collection to confront the threat of cultural displacement. In his preface 'TO THE READER', Watson nails his patriotic colours to the mast anchoring his own 'miscellaneous collection' alongside the Miscellanies of *'our Neighbouring Kingdoms and States.'* By styling his own miscellany on those of England and, particularly France, Watson was making both a political and cultural statement in defence of independent, Scottish literary values. But unlike those other miscellanies, whose contents were an eclectic 'bundling together of writings from diverse sources,[73] Watson sourced and edited his own *Choice Collection* solely from Scottish material: his ad-mix of the old and the new was designed, as Leith Davis points out, 'to create a sense of the common Scottish denominator in the nation: "Scots" culture – a culture that, as Watson presents it, is wide-ranging and diverse.'[74] Despite many of the poems being in the Standard English of the time rather than *'publifh'd in our own Native* Scots *Dialect*', Watson claimed a place for Scotland, her language and literature within a European context as opposed to a 'British' one. Where the earliest ballads of Scotland are embedded in the political manifesto that is Wedderburn's *Complaynt,* Watson's 'mixed bag' of poetry, broadside and manuscript material, is a different kind of political manifesto: one that draws on Scotland's literary past in order to help shape a cultural and political future in which the Scots language, literature, and therefore Scots identity, remained secure.

[71] Anneli Meurman-Solin, 'Differentiation and Standardisation in Early Scots' in *The Edinburgh History of the Scots Language* (Edinburgh, E. U. P., 1997), pp.3-23, p.4.

[72] James Watson, *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems Both Ancient and Modern* (Edinburgh, 1706, 1709 and 1711).

[73] Adam Smyth, 'Printed Miscellanies in England 1640-1682: "store house[s] of wit" ' in *Criticism,* (Detroit, Wayne State University Press) Vol. 42:2 (2002), pp.151-184, p.152. For a broader appreciation of Miscellanies, see also, Jonson Davison, 'Confected Miscellanies in Early Modern England: Gascoigne, Davison, Jonson' in *Huntington Library Quarterly* Vol. 85:4 (2002), pp.663-682, Adam Smyth, *'Profit and Delight, Printed Miscellanies in England 1640-1682'* (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 2004).

[74] Leith Davis, 'Imagining the Miscellaneous Nation' p.68.

Allan Ramsay (1686-1758)

Allan Ramsay was of a similar political and cultural mindset as Watson, but his approach to the situation was rather different. The *Bannatyne Manuscript* was the source for the majority of material in Ramsay's, *The Ever Green, Being a Collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600* (1724).[75] In the Preface to his edition, Ramsay establishes the antiquity of the original works, their Scottish provenance – 'Their Poetry is the Product of their own Country […] their Images are native, and their Landskips domestick' and he chastises the 'affected class of fops' who would disdain Scots as a 'barbarous' language.[76] But however worthy of republication the poetry from these 'good old Bards' may have been, Ramsay also points out that they 'have the Air and Charm of Novelty'; they are as a 'Reflection' of times gone by and the reader will find 'that he is stepping back into the Times that are past and that exist no more.' As editor, Ramsay establishes himself and *The Ever Green* as a link between the 'times that are past' and the future which is now firmly domiciled in the Union. He shapes the reader's mindset, 'makes the readers view the materials through the editor's framework.'[77] Unlike Watson, who looked to the literary past to help shape a literary future, Ramsay, the political pragmatist, with a backward glance at the past, contextualises the future through the present cultural and political realities of the Union. Such realities included the annexation of the 'Scotch song' rubric of London publishers who provided 'somewhat debased popular songs of allegedly Scottish origins, some with fake tunes, all with fake words.'[78] Such songs purveyed an image of Scotland as a rustic, pastoral society, or, as Leith Davis says, ' a distinctive but harmless Scottish or "Highland humour"'[79] which pandered to a metropolitan drawing room culture on both sides of the border.[80] For what is probably his best-known collection[81] Ramsay borrowed from 'English collections […] as well as London broadsides on Scottish

[75] Allan Ramsay, *The Ever Green Being a Collection of Scots Poems Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600.* (Edinburgh, Thomas Ruddiman, 1724).
[76] *Ibid* pp.vii -xii.
[77] Leith Davis, 'Imagining the Miscellaneous Nation' p.75.
[78] David Johnson, *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* 2nd Edition (Edinburgh, Mercat Press, 2003), p.130.
[79] Leith Davis, 'At "sang about" ' p.189.
[80] *ibid*
[81] Allan Ramsay, *Tea Table Miscellany* (1723, 1726, 1727, 1737*).*

subjects'.[82] These he pooled with 'both contemporary and older songs in Scots and traditional ballads' and his own compositions which, while being patriotic in terms of register and acceptable to the musical literati of Edinburgh, also had to appeal to a viable, commercial market south of the border.[83] By hitching his wagon to the English 'Scotch song' phenomena, Ramsay set out to recalibrate the relationship between these English imitations of Scotch songs by creating his own versions of Scottish song to establish a National music culture of Scotland that would both compete with, and be acceptable to, polite society across this new, United Kingdom.[84]

This pastoral idyll that came to be associated with an idealised Scotland of the Scotch song world in both England and Scotland was at complete odds with the 'real world' experienced by ordinary Scots in the eighteenth century: 'There was, however, another Scotland, not elite, less literate, not inclined to politeness in the eighteenth-century sense of polish […]'[85] T.C. Smout writes of the very basic housing of tenant farmers and those eking out a living in the rural Lowlands, their living conditions, what they ate and wore and their prospects for improvement, while Willa Muir reflects on 'mediaeval' living conditions and the feudal power the lairds still held over their tenants: 'The rural tenants thus had, apparently, few, if any, rights, hard duties and a notable lack of comforts.'[86] She adds: 'To us it seems that the rural populace led a bleak existence, and that they had nothing to sing about. Yet sing they did, and what they sang were ballads. Ballads were part of their inheritance, an inheritance they took for granted'[87] as was the language in which they were recited and sung.

[82] Allan Ramsay, *The Tea Table Miscellany,* Murray Pittock and Brianna Robertson-Kirkland (eds.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2023), Murray Pittock, 'Introduction' pp.1-31, p.18.
[83] *Ibid*, Prof. Rhona Brown, 'Biography' pp.xvii-xxi. p.xix.
[84] See Matthew Gelbart, 'Allan Ramsay, The Idea of 'Scottish Music' and the Beginnings of 'National Music' in Europe' in *Eighteenth-Century Music* Vol. 9:1 (Cambridge, C.U.P., 2012), pp.81-108.
[85] T.C. Smout, 'The Historical Background, 1707-1918' in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: (Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707-1918)* Susan Manning and Ian Brown (eds.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2012), pp.1-11, p.5.
[86] T.C. Smout *A History of the Scottish People* pp.282-302.
Muir, *Living With Ballads* pp.78-81.
[87] Muir, *Living With Ballads* p.*79.*

Thomas Crawford addresses such language issues in the 'Introduction' to his study of Burns' poems and songs.[88] Here, he makes the distinction in spoken language between a 'General Scots' of the educated, upper classes and a 'General Scots' of everyone else that includes any number of Lowland Scots regional vernaculars from the Borders, the North East, South West, Fife, and so on, as well as the *patois* of various professions and occupations. William Motherwell puts this point quite succinctly 'Language […] is ever varying, suffers no material changes nor corruptions among the lower and uneducated classes of society, by whom it is spoken as their mother tongue.'[89] F. J. Child cites a note written by Sir Walter Scott regarding material sent to him from the North-East of Scotland for his 'Scottish Songs': 'These ballads are all in the Northern dialect […]'[90] by which we may understand that the Doric of the North-East of Scotland not only had hard currency as a spoken language, different to the vernacular of Scott's native borderlands, but also as a local, phonetical, written language which Scott had to translate as he goes on to say, 'Such variations can excite no reasonable surprise in any species of composition which owes preservation to oral tradition only.'[91] David Herd also remarks on the difference in language usage in a letter to his friend George Paton written in July, 1778 when he complains that an, unnamed, ballad forwarded to him 'has been confoundedly modernised in the taking down.'[92] The language usage that Andrews refers to was, as Motherwell says, the mother tongue of the Scottish people and the ballads that they sung: it was a 'key marker' of their identity.

Through their collections, Watson and Ramsay addressed the cultural crisis occasioned by the 1707 Union. Their collections realigned their Scottish literary heritage to challenge the very real threat from anglicisation and both editors, in their own way, set out to emphasise the singularity of the Scots language, song and ballad culture and secure its place in this new, United Kingdom. But they emphasised the social and cultural value of the collective rather than the individual songs and ballads that made up their publications: the full potential of the individual song and ballad narratives was not always understood to be historically

[88] Thomas Crawford, *Burns: A Study of His Poems and Songs'* (Edinburgh, Canongate Academic, 1994). 'Introduction' pp.ix-xix.
[89] William Motherwell, *Minstrelsy: Ancient and Modern* (Glasgow, John Wylie, 1827). Introduction pp.iii and iv.
[90] See, Child 247 'Lady Elspat'.
[91] *Ibid.*
[92] David Herd, *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads etc.* (1769 and 1776) Sidney Gilpin (ed.), (Edinburgh, William Paterson, 1870), p.ix.

important. Later song and ballad collectors, Motherwell, Herd, Scott and others, were aware of this potential and sought to save these fragments of cultural history in their own endeavours to save that part of oral / literary heritage.

William Motherwell (1797-1835)

The early song and ballad collector-editors relied to a great extent on their material coming to them by a number of routes: their own personal recollections, family, friends, the local community and importantly, through the efforts of middlemen and women, those who undertook collecting on behalf of a collector.[93] Correspondence, sharing and exchange with others who had an interest in traditional ballad preservation also played a considerable role. For example, David Herd gave freely of his ballad manuscript material to those who requested it, amongst whom were Bishop Percy (1729-1811), Joseph Ritson (1752-1803), Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns (1759-1796). Robert Jamieson (1772-1844) supplied Scott with several ballads from the oral repertoire of Mrs Brown of Falkland (1747-1810) that he had acquired from her nephew, Professor Scott of Aberdeen University,[94] in return for which, Scott gave Jamieson three items Scott had gleaned from Herd's manuscript.[95] As McCarthy points out, generally, collectors 'did not go out into the highways and byways' to orally source for themselves the ballads that found their way into their manuscripts and printed collections.[96] While William Motherwell also availed himself of these fruitful collecting methods, he broke the mould when he actively began hunting out oral sources in his home county of Renfrewshire and beyond collecting around two hundred texts of the two hundred and seventy in his manuscripts, from both male and female singers.[97] McCarthy traces Motherwell's development as a field collector to show how his increasingly systematic

[93] William B. McCarthy, 'William Motherwell as Field Collector' in *Folk Music Journal* Vol. 5:3 (1987), pp.295-316, pp.297-298.
[94] Robert Jamieson, *Popular Ballads and Songs* (Edinburgh, 1806), pp.iii-ix.
[95] Hans Hecht, (ed), *Songs From David Herd's Manuscript* (Edinburgh. William Hay, 1904), p.61.
[96] *Ibid p.4.*
[97] Mary Ellen Brown lists seventy-six contributors and two hundred and twenty-two songs/ballads, some of which are duplicates and includes nine variants of the ballad 'Jamie Douglas'. See Mary Ellen Brown, *William Motherwell's Cultural Politics* (University Press of Kentucky, 2001), pp.163-170.

collecting methodology changed him 'from a haphazard collector of popular songs to a serious student of traditional ballad repertoires.'[98] This in turn, partly dictated his policies on authenticity and editing.

Another major influence was the developing socio-political conditions of the time. The political and historical environment of the 1820s when Motherwell was out treading the 'highways and byways' was one of transition and uncertainty. Britain was on the cusp of social and economic change; industrialisation, agricultural improvements and mechanisation in the broad sense meant a gradual population shift in Scotland from a rural to an urban setting. But additionally for Scotland, there were worrying interventions by the London parliament into Scottish institutions whose operations had been ring-fenced under the terms of the 1707 Union agreement. The Scottish banking system, her universities and her legal system were under threat of assimilation to the corresponding English models.[99] The political and social unrest that these changes occasioned gave rise to a feeling that time was at a premium for the communities that supported the ballad culture of Scotland and 'The belief that what had been common in Scottish life was verging on oblivion drove ballad, song and tale collection.'[100] Motherwell addresses these debilitating effects on the oral culture of the ballad and its preservation at the end of his lengthy Introduction:

> The changes which, within this half century, the manners and habits of our peasantry and labouring classes, with whom this song has been cherished, have undergone, are inimical to its further preservation. They have departed from the stern simplicity of their fathers, and have learned with the paltry philosophers, political quacks, and illuminated dreamers on Economick and Moral science, to laugh at the prejudices, beliefs, and superstitions of elder times. […] The stream of innovation is flooding far and wide, and ancient land-marks are fast disappearing.[101]

The Introduction to his 1827 collection *Minstrelsy: Ancient and Modern* may be considered a concluding statement of Motherwell's experiences of working with tradition-bearers from whom he gathered his ballads and his response to what he considered to be 'fast disappearing' aspects of Scottish culture and traditions.

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[98] McCarthy, 'Motherwell as Field Collector' p.305.
[99] Paul Scott, 'The Last Purely Scotch Age' in *The History of Scottish Literature* Vol. 3, Douglas Gifford (ed.), (Aberdeen, A.U.P., 1989), pp.13-21, p.17.
[100] Suzanne Gilbert, 'Tradition and Scottish Romanticism' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Traditional Literatures* Sarah Dunnigan (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2013), pp.105-113, p.108.
[101] William Motherwell, *Minstrelsy: Ancient and Modern* (Glasgow, John Wylie, 1827), Introduction, p.cii.

Two of the ballads that feature in this thesis may be found in Motherwell's collection. 'The Laird o Logie' was taken from Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*(1802-1803), but with the addition of one stanza, the third, which Motherwell 'obtained from recitation.'[102] Over the course of his collecting career, Motherwell tracked down nine variants – whole and partial - of 'Jamie Douglas', eight of which feature in F. J. Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads.*[103] Found in the 'Appendix' of *Minstrelsy,* Motherwell's own printed version is a one-hundred-and -forty line recitation extracted from these collected variants. There are no stanza breaks and it contains a considerable number of 'floating' or 'common-place' stanzas that can be found in 'Waly Waly'[104] – another song which has associations with 'Jamie Douglas', and a popular broadside ballad, 'Arthur's Seat Shall Be My Bed'.[105] Motherwell's does not give his readers any reason for creating such an *ad hoc* compilation.

Motherwell wanted to future-proof the ballad corpus by collecting and preserving all variants of the same ballad as they 'orally exist' for each variant had a social and cultural value for the singer from whom it was gathered, therefore each was regarded as an important historical record. The importance of verbatim transcription for Motherwell was key to his editorial stance. He had at one time followed the convention of splicing ballad variants to create one ballad narrative, but came to realise that this 'pernicious and disingenuous' re-working, re-moulding and purging a ballad of 'impurities' to make it fit for publication would excise not only the inherent authenticity of an oral ballad, but that part of Scottish history and national culture that ballads represent would also be lost.[106] Motherwell talks of the ballads embodying 'the feelings and the passions' of the people as part of their 'Universal mind',[107] a sentiment that echoes Herd's ideas on Scottish

[102] *Ibid* p.56.

[103] Child 204 'Jamie Douglas', variants 'F', 'G', 'H', 'I', 'J' and 'K' are from Motherwell's manuscript; 'O' and 'N' are from the 'Appendix' of *Minstrelsy* - these are 3-stanza and 1-stanza fragments respectively.

[104] 'Waly Waly' features as prefix to Child's 'Jamie Douglas'.

[105] 'Arthur's Seat' can be found at https://digital.nls.uk/broadsides/view/?id=14523 (Accessed February 2024) and G-D 6:1167.

[106] McCarthy, 'Motherwell as Field Collector' pp.301-302. In a letter dated 28th April 1825 to Sir Walter Scott, Motherwell requests Scott's help in tracking down variant copies of 'Gil Morice' or 'Child Morice' which 'may possibly supply preferable', or additional readings, to his own, orally collected, version of the ballad. In Scott's reply of 3rd May 1825, he cautions Motherwell against collation of variants and writes of his own regret at having done so for his own *Minstrelsy.* It seems likely that this advice, together with his own experience as oral ballad collector guided Motherwell's editorial hand.

[107] Motherwell, *Ancient and Modern* p.v..

song and music creating a sense of national affiliation. For both Motherwell and Herd ballad culture and language were integral parts of the Scottish psyche – if these were lost, then what makes Scottish identity unique is compromised.

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)

A century after James Watson addressed Scottish national political, cultural and identity concerns in the Preface to his *Choice Collection*, Sir Walter Scott was addressing similar concerns, commenting at the end of his lengthy Introduction to *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border:*

> By my own efforts, feeble as they are, I may contribute somewhat to the history of my native country, the peculiar features of whose manners and character are daily melting and dissolving into those of her sister and ally.[108]

Such 'melting and dissolving' is discussed in Scott's *Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* (1826) wherein Scott looks back over the past twenty years during which time he was continually exercised by the London government's attempts to bring the practices of Scottish institutions into line with those of England.[109] Scotland, he stated, was 'one distinct and component part of the United Kingdon' and he argued eloquently for it to remain so.[110] The *Minstrelsy* became part of that argument. Scott's lengthy introductory notes to the historically-based ballads in his collection were important for two principal reasons: firstly, they anchored the ballads in a historical setting which gave them a place in a Scottish historicist continuum of literature as history, and secondly, they legitimated his editorial decisions of splicing together ballad variants that drew together aspects of history which 'we either know actually have taken place, or […] to have some foundation in history'[111] which, in time, became regarded as a literary, if not a literal, record of the events described.

One of Scott's initial ambitions to collect and edit a small volume of Border riding, or raiding, ballads, developed into his three-volume *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-3). Scott's abiding interest in ballads

[108] Sir Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* Vol. 1, 2nd Edition. (1803), p.cxxxii.
[109] Sir Walter Scott, *Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* (Edinburgh, 1826), p.4. These three letters were first published separately in the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal* in February / March 1826 and subsequently as a pamphlet. https://archive.org/details/lettertoeditorof00scotrich/mode/2up (accessed December 2024/January 2025).
[110] *ibid* p.48.
[111] Scott, *Minstrelsy,* Vol. 1, 2nd Edition. pp.cxxii-cxxiii.

and history began as a boy during his sojourns with his grandparents at Sandyknowe and it was 'Collecting and preserving the past (that) informed Scott's task as editor of the *Minstrelsy'.*[112] The sources of Scott's ballads remain in debate for although Scott asserts that he was obliged to 'draw his materials chiefly from oral tradition(s)' of 'shepherds' and 'aged persons, in the recesses of the border mountains',[113] William Montgomerie concludes that 'Scott was editor rather than collector'[114] relying heavily on friends and acquaintance who supplied him with manuscripts and other printed matter: material from the *Glenriddell Manuscripts,* Thomas Wilkie, Dr. Elliot of Cleugh-head and the ballads of Mrs Brown of Falkland. David Herd, whose collection[115] Scott refers to as 'the first classical collection of Scottish songs and ballads,'[116] was an important source for Scott containing as it did nearly sixty 'heroic ballads' many of which were 'recovered from tradition or old MSS. and never before appeared in print'[117] and around three hundred miscellaneous songs. Herd does not place his ballads in a historical context nor does he engage with anglicising tendencies and issues of the Scots language – he simply allows the ballads and their 'musical airs' to speak both for themselves and for him. For Herd, it is the ballads and songs themselves that create a sense of social and national affiliation[118] and make their unique contribution to the cultural and literary biography of Scotland, and Scott happily took advantage of so rich a source of material. The collections of David Herd, Thomas Wilkie, Mrs Brown of Falkland, Robert Jamieson, the *Glenriddell Manuscripts* together with the songs of the mother of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, were all utilised by Scott in the *Minstrelsy.* He used this wealth of source material 'to make the best possible set of an ancient ballad out of several copies obtained from different quarters […]',[119] an editorial practice that both recorded history, and invented it. An instance of Scott's

[112] Kenneth McNeil, 'Ballads and Borders' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Sir Walter Scott* Fiona Robertson (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 2012), pp.22-34, p.24.
[113] Scott, *Minstrelsy,* Vol. 1, 2nd Edition (1803), pp.cxxi-cxxiii
[114] William Montgomery, 'Sir Walter Scott as Ballad Editor' in *The Review of English Studies* Vol. 7:26 (1956), pp.158-163, p.160.
[115] David Herd, *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads, etc.* (Edinburgh, John Wotherspoon, 1769, 1776).
[116] Scott, *Minstrelsy* Vol.1, 2nd Edition (1803), p.cxxiv.
[117] Herd, *Ancient and Modern* Vol. 1, 2nd Edition (Edinburgh, John Wotherspoon, 1776). p.viii.
[118] Janet Sorensen, 'Alternative Antiquarianisms of Scotland and the North' in *Modern Language Quarterly* Vol. 70:4 (2009), pp.422-427, p.426.
[119] From Scott's letter dated 3d May 1825, to William Motherwell, quoted in William B. McCarthy 'William Motherwell as Field Collector' p.303.

reordering and editing is the ballad 'Sir Patrick Spens'.[120] Repatriated from Bishop Percy's *Reliques of English Poetry,* Scott reshaped and extended Percy's compact eleven-stanza ballad into a twenty-six-stanza ballad narrative, the additional stanzas being taken from 'manuscript copies supplied by John Leyden and William Laidlaw and […] from the recitation of Robert Hamilton.'[121] Scott admits he finds no trace of Spens's voyage in Scottish history, but since he also finds no 'conclusive argument against the truth of (the) tradition'[122] of Spens's journey, he establishes a historical context for it by repurposing the historical reality of the Maid of Norway's voyage to Scotland in 1290 to provide a reason for Spens's disastrous passage and to anchor it in history.[123]

With 'Spens', Scott plays with oral tradition, history and ballad literature to create his ideal version of the ballad, but with 'The Laird of Logie',[124] one of the ballads featured in this study, he demonstrates the relationship between history as literature and literature as history that he was so keen to foreground and, in this instance, coincidentally reconciles the 'uneasy relationship between Scottish history and Scottish literature' that Cowan and Gifford address, as quoted at the beginning of this thesis. For the second edition of the first volume of *Minstrelsy,* Scott replaced 'The Laird of Ochiltree', a variant of the ballad that he had taken from a Herd manuscript, and replaced it with 'The Laird of Logie', an oral variant 'as recited by a gentleman residing near Biggar.'[125] Scottish history directly informed Scott's decision to jettison 'Ochiltree' in favour of 'Logie' as the latter referenced Carmichael as 'keeper o' the keys' and reflected more accurately the reporting of the incident in Spottiswood's *History of King James the Sext':* a clear case of history informing literature and literature illustrating history. Scott came to see Scotland's ballad inheritance as a unique historical source and the ballads as a means of preserving that history as a distinct marker of Scottish cultural heritage and identity, separate from that of her 'sister and ally.'

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[120] Scott, *Minstrelsy,* Vol. 3, 2nd Edition (1803), pp.60-71. Child 58, G-D 1:17.
[121] Charles G. Zug 111, 'The Ballad and History: The Case For Scott' in *Folklore* Vol. 89:2 (1978), pp.229-242, p.230.
[122] Scott *Minstrelsy,* Vol. 3, 2nd Edition (1803), p.62.
[123] Ranald Nicholson, *Scotland: The Later Middle Ages,* The Edinburgh History of Scotland*,* Vol. 2 (Edinburgh, The Mercat Press, 1974), pp.29-35 deals with the political upheavals and consequences of the untimely death of Alexander III grandfather of the Maid who became his successor to the Scottish throne. See also, Cowan, 'Introduction' in *The Ballad In Scottish History* for a general round-up of collectors and pp.6-7 for Scott in particular.
[124] Scott, *Minstrelsy* Vol. 1, 2nd Edition (1803), pp.243-249, Child 182, G-D 2:247.
[125] *Ibid,* Scott p.243.

Late Nineteenth / Early Twentieth-Century Collectors

If the three key ballads which form the case studies of this thesis rely to an extent on eighteenth-century collectors, they also consider and refer to variants sourced from major collections compiled later in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As discussed, the earlier Scottish ballad collectors were compelled by nationalist concerns and the potential slippage of national identity to gather up the ballads of the people that provided an insight into the unique cultural, social and historical mores that inhered in them: they were acutely aware that if this aspect of inheritance was not preserved as a written literature then it would indeed vanish.[126] Individually and collectively they contributed to the literary history of Scotland's past. But, as Hall points out, 'Written texts are representations of culture, but they are ultimately *selective* representations […]'[127] (my italics). Such was the practice of many earlier ballad collectors - only one variant of a ballad, selected by, and often compiled by the editor from the variants available, would appear in a printed collection and, over time, this would come to be regarded as the 'correct' version. Later collectors were not so constrained in their own editorial practices as the emphasis shifted from rescuing ballads from almost certain oblivion to consolidation of material presented in as many variants as were available. This was certainly the editorial aims of F. J. Child and Gavin Greig and Rev. James Duncan, whose collections, discussed in the following sections, may be taken as an end point in the thread of historicist continuity of recording the aspects of social and cultural history for posterity that began with *The Gododdin.*

Francis James Child (1825-1896)

It was the stated aim of F. J. Child to have at his command 'every valuable copy of every known ballad'[128] a crusade upon which he embarked with an enthusiastic dedication. The result was the 5-volume *English and*

[126] Scottish collectors were not the only ones to appreciate this. Bishop Percy makes the same point in a letter of Feb. 9 1769 to Herd's collaborator, George Paton, in which Percy thanks Paton for a copy of *Ancient and Modern*, although regrets the absence of notes. He calls for 'any allusions to the old manners, customs, opinions or idioms of the ancient Scotch nation: these are wearing out so fast that, if not preserved in such publications as these, they will be utterly unknown to posterity.' Quoted in Hecht, *Songs,* pp12-13.

[127] Stefan Thomas Hall, *The Role of Medieval Scottish Poetry in Creating Scottish Identity "textual nationalism"* (New York, The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), p.55.

[128] Child, 'Advertisement' to Part 1, Vol. 1 pp.vii-ix. p.vii.

Scottish Popular Ballads (1882-1899), a collection of some 305 ballads and their numerous variants, which has become the most widely accepted source for academic study and research into ballad lore. As an American, Child's editorial practices owed nothing to nationalist concerns or political circumstances in Scotland, but to a personal ambition initially influenced by Bishop Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), and later, the Hales and Furnival publication of *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript* (1867-68).[129] But his editorial stance also owes a great deal to the Danish folklorist Svend Grundtvig (1824-1883) Child's friend and correspondent. Grundtvig helped Child with the identification of genuine, traditional ballads from later, 'popular and artificial poetical productions'[130] and provided Child with a template on 'scope and arrangement' of material.[131] He was also the person who alerted Child to the Motherwell / Scott correspondence of April / May 1825 and who wrote to Child urging him to adopt Scott's views on the importance of maintaining the integrity of each ballad variant. William Montgomerie remarks that Child took this advice and credits Scott with having 'defined (Child's) own position as editor of the *English and Scottish Popular Ballads'.*[132]

As an American academic, collector and publisher on the other side of the Atlantic Child may have been unable to personally source the primary materials he sought, but his small army of correspondents in Scotland and England provided him with the book collections, folio manuscripts and transcripts he needed to progress his work. Through the efforts of his Scottish correspondents Child secured a considerable number of manuscripts and collections including David Herd's *Ancient and Modern Scots Songs, Heroic Ballads &c.,*(1769), Peter Buchan's *Ballads of the North of Scotland (1828),* George Kinloch's *Ancient Scottish Ballads* (1827), Robert Jamieson's *Popular Ballads and Songs* (1806) and William Motherwell's *Minstrelsy: Ancient and Modern* (1827). Motherwell's considerable collection of songs and ballads Child believed to be 'much the most

[129] For critical assessments of Percy and his *Reliques,* see, for example, Nick Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques,* (Oxford, O.U.P., 1999), John Regan, 'Ambiguous Progress and its Poetic Correlations: Percy's *Reliques* and Stadial History' in *E.H.L.* Vol. 81:2 (John Hopkins University Press, 2014), pp.615-634, Frank Ferguson and Danni Glover, 'My Name is Death/But be na' fley'd: Bishop Percy and the Ghosting of Robert Burns' in *Burns Chronicle* Vol. 132:2 (Edinburgh, E.U.P. 2023), pp.187-203.

[130] Sigrid Rieuwerts,' "The Genuine Ballads of the People"; F.J. Child and the Ballad Cause' in *Journal of Folklore Research* Vol. 31:1/3 (1994), pp.1-34, p.19.

[131] *Ibid* p.22.

[132] William Montgomerie 'A Bibliography of the Scottish Ballad Manuscripts 1730-1825 Part 1' in *Studies in Scottish Literature* Vol. 4:1 (1966), pp.3-28, pp.27-28.

important'. Child also drew heavily on Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-3) and later, William MacMath's efforts on Child's behalf secured him transcripts of Scott's folio manuscripts in 1890-92, which Child favoured above the *Minstrelsy*, those ballads standing a step closer to oral tradition.[133] McMath also supplied Child with transcripts of the collected works of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe.[134] Above all these however, Child comments that 'No Scottish ballads are superior in kind to those recited in the last century by Mrs Brown, of Falkland' and he includes 33 of her folio ballads in his volumes.[135] David Buchan comments, 'For Child, these ballads provided a touchstone of quality' and Buchan's appreciative analysis of Mrs Brown's material provides a reason for his own, and most probably Child's, enthusiasm for them: 'They exemplify the traditional mode of oral composition by which ballads were once created and transmitted.'[136] The ballads of Anna Gordon, Mrs Brown of Falkland, came to her directly from the oral tradition - 'I never saw one of them in print or manuscript; but I learned them all when a child by hearing them sung […].' And until 2011 when the recoverable manuscripts of her songs were sourced, collated and edited by Sigrid Rieuwerts, Mrs Brown's repertoire had remained domiciled in a number of locations: Brown 'B' and 'C' manuscripts are in the National Library of Scotland, manuscripts 'A' and 'D' now reside in Edinburgh University Library and 'E' ballads can be found in Robert Jamieson's *The Popular Ballads* (1806).[137] The oral provenance of these ballads no doubt accounts for Child's personal value judgement in designating her songs as 'superior' to all others sent to him by his correspondents.[138]

Child does not provide a 'clear statement of editorial policy' and he is not above textual collation, emendation or giving readings that are at odds with his source materials,[139] but he does meticulously identify points of divergence in the variants and accompanies each ballad and its variants with detailed notes of

[133] 'Scotch Ballads, Materials for Border Minstrelsy'. The manuscript collection is now held by The National Library of Scotland, Reference MS.877. (Hereafter MFBM).
[134] Child, Advertisement to Part 9. Vol. 5.1.
[135] *ibid.* p.vii
[136] David Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk* p.62.
[137] Rieuwerts, Sigrid, (ed.), *The Ballad Repertoire of Anna Gordon, Mrs Brown of Falkland* (Edinburgh, Scottish Text Society, 2011), p.xii.
[138] *ibid* p.61.
[139] David Atkinson, 'Editing the Child Ballads: Agency, Intention and the Problem of Version' in *Variants: The Journal of the European Society for Textual Scholarship* Issue 6 (January 2007), pp.123-162, p.133.

provenance and sources. What Child gave his readers that Scottish collectors did not was the opportunity to appreciate the ballads *and* their variants. In a shift in editing and publishing practice he expanded the parameters from a sole, 'selective representation' of Scottish social, cultural and historical mores to more nuanced localised accounts of events. Of the three ballads dealt with in this thesis, Child gives: 'The Laird o Drum' – 6 variants; 'The Laird o Logie' – 5 variants and 'Jamie Douglas' - 15 variants. Although Child arranges the ballads alphabetically giving his own preferred variant precedence as 'A', there is no strictly defined 'correct' version of a ballad as all variants had equal validity and their own integrity as literature as history.

Gavin Greig (1856-1914) and Rev. James Duncan (1848-1917)

In his address on 'Folk-Song in Buchan' given to the Buchan Field Club on 15 December, 1905, Gavin Greig voiced the concern that native folk songs 'are fast passing into the limbo of forgotten things' and that 'a certain element of urgency' was needed to round them up before they disappeared forever.[140] In this, he echoes James Watson, Allan Ramsay, William Motherwell, Sir Walter Scott and other collectors who came before him. The impetus for collecting the songs and ballads in the North-East of Scotland came from a suggestion of the New Spalding Club and Greig took up the challenge. Over the course of three and a half years, from December 1907 to June 1911, Greig had published in the Peterhead-based *Buchan Observer,* 180 articles covering some 600 songs and ballads. His weekly articles and invitations to the general public for songs, their variants and *ad hoc* information, ensured a constant flow of material which, together with Greig's erudite comments, creates a fascinating insight into a still thriving ballad world. In 1963, Greig's collected articles were brought together and published, together with a long essay by Greig entitled 'Folk-Song in Buchan', in which he gives a comprehensive survey of his subject matter.[141]

Publication of the Buchan Observer articles may have stopped in June 1911, but not so Greig and his song-collecting collaborator Rev. James Duncan who, over the course of the first two decades of the twentieth century, between them collected some 1,933 songs and their variants – some 3,500 manuscript texts and 3000

[140] Gavin Greig, *Folk Song in Buchan and Folk Song of the North-east* (Hatboro, Folklore Associates, 1963), p.2.
[141] Greig, *Folk-Song in Buchan* These articles were originally brought together and published as a two-volume, limited edition of 42 bound books in 1909-1914.

tunes in all. Over the last two decades of the twentieth century, the 'ninety-odd volumes of Greig's collectanea and papers'[142] were sifted, sorted, collated and edited into the extraordinary 8-volume publication, *The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection* (1981-2002). Coming after F. J. Child, they were aware of his 5-volume canon of ballads and, making their own selection from their contributors, Greig and Duncan pulled together a set of 108 ballads that corresponded to those of Child.[143] Of the 1,933 core texts in the Greig-Duncan collection only 126 have correlatives in Child, the rest is an extremely robust gleaning from a geographically small area in a relatively small country.[144] The songs and ballads in this, the single most important modern collection of its kind in Scotland, range from nautical life and military encounters to daily life and love in the ferm touns of Aberdeenshire that offer a window into a past long gone. Three volumes, 5, 6 and 7, deal with love and marriage in all its various guises: of lairds, loons and lovers, of love lost, won and betrayed.[145] Songs and ballads about soldiers, sailors, tinkers, earls, fair fa'ud mays and bonnie ploo-boy laddies – the whole gamut of people that range across the centuries and their emotional underpinnings are on display. As history as literature and literature as history, the Greig-Duncan collection is perhaps unequalled as a reflection of, and witness to, a history of how people lived and loved in a society now gone, but remains available and relevant to everyone through the collective memory of Greig and Duncan and their collaborators.

This very brief survey gives an insight into the importance of the individual collectors and their efforts to establish, maintain and promote an aspect of Scottish culture that was under threat of disappearing and, from it, four collections were selected to provide the primary material for this study into how the historical reality of love and marriage can be reshaped to reflect the social and cultural purposes of the ballad-makers to create their own 'ballad world' reality. These were: F. J. Child, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads (*1882-

[142] *Ibid* 'Foreword' by Kenneth S. Goldstein and Arthur Argo, p.[II]

[143] Gavin Greig and Rev. James Duncan, *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads and Ballad Airs,* Alexander Keith (ed.), (Aberdeen, The Buchan Club, 1925). (Child was not a source.)

[144] Gavin Greig and the Rev. James Bruce Duncan, *The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection,* 8 volumes, Emily Lyle, General Editor (Aberdeen, A.U.P., 1981-2002).

[145] 'ferm-touns' ((British) English, farm-towns), were self-contained social units each accommodating up to eight joint-tenant farmers who each held an area of land from the land-owner – usually a laird or similar. They comprised the family farmhouses and associated farm building – barn, byre, stables etc., and living quarters for the resident farm labourers. See Ian Olsen, 'Bothy Ballads and Song' in *Scottish Life and Society* (Edinburgh, John Donald, 2007), pp.322-359, David Kerr Cameron, *The Ballad and the Plough* (London, Victor Gollancz, 1987), pp.322-359, David Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk* pp.18-19.

1898*);* Gavin Greig and Rev. James Duncan, *The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection* (1981-2002)*;* Sir Walter Scott, *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-1803) and Sigrid Rieuwerts *The Ballad Repertoire of Anna Gordon, Mrs Brown of Falkland* (2011).

Ever since the publication of Child's five-volume collection of some 305 ballads and their numerous variants, it has become the most widely accepted for academic study and research into ballad lore and the many writers of essays and articles tend to take their primary material solely from this source. But I have cast a wider net to include three native, Scottish collectors whose work is relatively neglected when it comes to academic consideration of ballad sources; it is important that these are fairly represented here.

4. Ballad Selection

One of the biggest challenges in narrowing down the search for key ballads about 'love and marriage' for discussion in this study was to identify a method of reviewing and cross-referencing the large number of ballads on this topic from these four collections. Arising from this pragmatic need to collate the primary source material into an accurate, manageable format, a data base was constructed using Child's 305 ballads as a core base. It became apparent early on that such a reference document was needed as across the four collections, at times, collectors had different titles for the same song, for example, the following were identified as the same song:

Child No.10. – 'The Twa Sisters'
G–D 2:213 'Binorie'
Sir Walter Scott – 'The Cruel Sister'
Anna Brown – 'The Twa Sisters, or, The Cruel Sister'

Such differentiation in song titles meant that matching title against title in the different collections was a redundant exercise and necessitated going through each collection song by song to ensure an accurate collation. (See Appendix)

Having completed the database, the next step was to filter out the ballads that were based on real-life historical events that dealt with aspects of relationships, love and marriage: fifteen songs and ballads were identified and these were then interrogated to find those that would best fit the purpose of the thesis.

Four songs which, although historical, had little or no historical apparatus with which to work were discounted:

1. 'Drumalochie' (G-D 5:1043) – a song based on the true story of Peter Watt.
2. 'The Cantie Carl' (G-D 3:618) - song based on the marriage of James Glennie and Isobel Grant in 1767.
3. 'Logie o' Buchan' (G-D 4:828) Jamie of the song is Jamie Robertson, a gardener at Logie mansion.[146]
4. 'Mally Leigh' (G-D 4:720) – a straightforward celebration of the eponymous lady's beauty. She married Alexander Brodie, Lord Lyon King of Arms in 1725.[147]

A further three ballads found to be historically insecure were also discounted:

5. 'Geordie' (Child 209, G-D 2:249, Scott MFBM No.13.) David Buchan rates this as historical, but he does not provide further information to support this.[148] The song is supposedly based on an

[146] Gavin Greig *Logie o Buchan* (1899) (Aberdeen, James G. Bisset, 1985) is a novel based on the adventures of schoolmaster and Jacobite, George Halket who is credited with writing the song c. 1736.
[147] Allan Ramsay, *The Poems 1721 & 1728* Rhona Brown (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P. 2023), 'An Ode 'On the Marriage of Alex. Brodie to Miss Mary Sleigh' pp.312-314.
[148] David Buchan, 'The Historical Ballads of the Northeast of Scotland' in *Lares* Vol. 51:4 (1985), pp.443-451.

incident in 1557 when George Gordon of Huntly incurred the Queen Regent's wrath and was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle under sentence of death. His wife raises enough money to secure his release.

6. 'Glenlogie' (G-D 5:973, Child 238, Scott MFBM No.17) Very difficult to pin down the historical provenance of this song. Buchan does not provide one, but Ord attests to its historicity and places the incident in 1562 during Queen Mary's progress through Aberdeenshire. Other variants place it during a 'king's' reign.[149]

7. 'Lang a-Growin' (G-D 7:1222) Buchan suggests the 'story is probably founded on the marriage of John Urquhart of Craigston to Elizabeth Innes and his early death in 1643.'[150] But it is difficult to unpick the genealogy of the Urquharts and the ages do not match with those in the ballad.

Of the remaining eight ballads based on verifiable, historical marriages, three have been the subjects of critical attention which, because of this were also discounted:

8. The Laird of Wariston (Child 194).
9. The Mill o Tifty's Annie / Andrew Lammie / The Trumpeter of Fyvie (Child 233, G-D, 5:1018 -1019).
10. Rosie Anderson (G-D 7:1462).[151]

Two others were considered, but in each case the historical background details are sketchy:

11. The Earl of Errol (Child 231, G-D 7:1366). Gilbert Hay, the 10th Earl, married Lady Catherine Carnegy in January, 1658. The ballad is based on the Countess's charge that her husband was impotent and consequently wasn't worth the tocher her father was holding for her.

12. Richie Story (Child 232, G-D 5:1051, Scott MFBM Nos. 65 and 76). Lady Lilias Fleming, second daughter of John, 3rd Earl of Wigton, married a servant in her father's service and had a child by him. In 1673, she renounced all the rights that came to her by virtue of her birth.

As such, those above did not fulfil the requirements of the investigation as aptly as did the remaining three which are:

13. The Laird o Drum **(**Child 236, G-D 4:835).
14. The Laird o Logie (Child 182, G-D 2:247; Scott 1 (1803) 243).
15. Jamie Douglas (Child 204).

The remainder of this thesis is a case study of these last three ballads. They were chosen because the historical apparatus was sufficient to provide the background to support a critical analysis and comparative study of the historical realities of the relationships discussed in tandem with the ballad-makers' counterparts. A historicist approach to these studies shows how ballad makers manipulated and shifted the focus of reported 'real world'

[149] *Ibid* Buchan, p.447. John Ord, *Bothy Songs and Ballads* (1930), (Edinburgh, John Donald, 1990), p.415.
[150] Buchan, *A Scottish Ballad Book* p.123, note No.40 for 'The Young Laird of Craigstoun'.
[151] See below for article reviews of 'Wariston', Tifty's Annie and 'Rosie Anderson'.

history to create their own ‘ballad world’ accounts of that history as outlined in the Introduction to this thesis, and illustrate ballad literature as history and history as literature.

5. Love and Marriage in Scottish Ballads – Three Historical Case Studies

Introduction

Marriage in Scotland

Until the enactment of the Marriage (Scotland) Act of 1939, Scots had several options on how to 'tie the knot' – regular marriage in church with banns having been proclaimed, and three types of irregular, or clandestine, marriage, all of which were regarded by ecclesiastical and civil authorities as just as valid as a church wedding. These were a simple exchange of consent to become husband and wife, with or without witnesses, promise of marriage at a future date, followed by sex, and, by 'habit and repute'.[152] Despite the popularity of irregular marriage in the 'lower orders', such espousals very rarely warranted a place in the history books or a ballad 'celebration'. Notwithstanding their legal status, if one or other of the couple wanted to argue that an irregular marriage had not in fact taken place, it could be contested in the Commissary Court by a partner seeking either, a Declarator of Marriage - usually the woman, or a Declarator of Freedom – usually the man.[153] Such proceedings could take months or even years. In the case of breakdown of a regular marriage an application for legal separation or divorce by husband or wife was no easy matter, and again, could take years for a legal decision, as will be seen in the case of Thomas Hay Marshall.

Ballad marriages are usually signalled by phrases like 'this couple they are married noo'[154] and the assumption is a regular marriage *in facie ecclesiae* with consent being given in the present tense. But this may not always be the case, for example, Isobel Pagan's 'Ca' The Yowes' (G-D 5:1014) reflects the irregular form of marriage *promissio subsequento copula* – sex on promise of marriage. 'Glenlogie' (G-D 5:973) demonstrates marriage in the ballad world wherein Lord John Gordon can overturn a relationship with a woman to whom he has been 'promised awa' and succumb to Jeannie o Bethelney's deathbed overtures when in fact being

[152] R.A. Houston, *Bride Ales and Penny Weddings* Chapter 5, 'Recreations, Religion, and Brides in Post-Reformation Scotland.' (Oxford, O.U.P. 2013), pp.66-76. Leah Leneman,'Marriage North of the Border' in *History Today* Vol. 50:4 (2000), pp.20-25 Only the latter, 'habit and repute' form of marriage was retained by the 1939 Act, but was discontinued after May, 2006.

[153] Leah Leneman, '"No Unsuitable Match": Defining Rank in Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century Scotland' in *Journal of Social History* Vol. 33:2 (Oxford, O.U.P., 2000). Leah Leneman, *Promises, Promises: Marriage Litigation in Scotland 1689-1830* (Edinburgh, National Museums of Scotland Enterprises Limited, 2003).

[154] See, for example, G-D 5:1037 'The Dark-eyed Sailor', 5:1041 'The Bleacher Lass o Kelvinhaugh' and 5:1054 'The Rigs o Rye'.

'promised awa' was, for one of his standing, a preliminary step to marriage. A great deal has been written on the laws and legal formation of marriage and on gender relationships prior to the 1939 Act.[155] There is also a considerable body of work on Scottish ballads, but there does not seem to have been anything written on how the legal realities are, or are not, reflected in the ballads.

Ballads that focus on historical relationships and marriage have generally escaped academic attention, but Keith Brown, Amanda MacLean and Sheila Douglas all utilise such ballads in published articles. 'The Laird of Wariston' (Child 194) is based on the murder of John Kincaid of Wariston (c.1570-1600). Although instigated by his twenty-one-year-old wife, Jean Livingston, and two of her women servants, the murder was carried out by Robert Weir, a one-time servant of her father. Jean and her women were found guilty of the murder and executed on Edinburgh's Canongate on 5th July, 1600. Robert Weir escaped, but was later caught and suffered a brutal execution. Historian Keith Brown's interest in the ballad is in how it relates to 'sixteenth-century attitudes towards marriage, women and justice'.[156] In his article the ballad is utilised as a support and backdrop to his analysis of Livingston family history and Jean's fate as they relate to his article's objectives rather than looking at the ballad as an item of historical literature in its own right.

The ballad 'The Mill o Tifty's Annie' (Child 233, G-D 5:1018 and 1019) concerns Annie, the daughter of the miller of the ferm-toun of Fyvie in Aberdeenshire. She fell in love with Andrew Lammie, trumpeter to Lord Fyvie, but such was the family's opposition to her choice of partner that the violence meted out to her by her father and brother resulted in Annie's death when 'her brother broke her back / and beat her sides' (Child 'A' st.16). In her article on the ballad, Amanda MacLean speculates that the Annie of the ballad is Agnes Smith whose grave lies in Fyvie kirkyard.[157] The historical evidence that MacLean presents is enough to convince her

[155] On law, see for example, William Hay, *Hays Lectures on Marriage* (1535) John C. Barry (ed.), (Edinburgh, Stair Society, 1967), Normand, *An Introduction to Scottish Legal History,* Introduction by Lord Normand (Edinburgh, The Stair Society, 1958), E.M. Clive, *The Law of Husband and Wife in Scotland* (1974), 4th Edition, (W. Green, Edinburgh, 1997), Elizabeth M. Craik (ed.), *Marriage and Property* (Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press, 1984).
For Gender relationships, see for example, Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland 1650-1850* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011), Keith Brown, '*Noble Society in Scotland*' (Edinburgh, E.U.P. 2003), Section 2, pp.124-191.

[156] Keith M. Brown, 'The Laird, his Daughter, her Husband and the Minister' in *People and Power in Scotland*, (Edinburgh, John Donald, 1992), pp.104-125, p.104. See also William Roughend, *Twelve Scots Trials* (Edinburgh and London, William Green and Sons, 1913), pp.16-40.

[157] Amanda MacLean, 'The Sad Fate and Splendid Career of the Trumpeter of Fyvie' in *Folk Music Journal* Vol.10:1, (2011), pp.89-101.

of the truth of the matter, but apart from the date on the gravestone, January 19th 1673, there is no other historical reference to Agnes Smith other than that apparently contained in the ballad. The rest of the article deals with the Andrew Lammie, whose historical presence as the trumpeter of the ballad is also discussed. A further article by the same author focuses on a word discrepancy in the recorded variants of the ballad whereby Annie's back is broken 'ower the temple stane (o Fyvie)', as sung by members of the travelling community, as opposed to 'in the ha' door.' (Child, 'C' st.38).[158] MacLean does not interrogate the ballad in any way, her interest is in establishing the historical personages of the Smith family and Andrew Lammie and tying them into the ballad.

In 1792, at the age of sixteen, the eponymous 'Rosie Anderson' (G-D 7:1462) was married to Perth merchant Thomas Hay Marshall. In May 1796, Marshall raised letters of inhibition against his wife and filed for divorce on the grounds of her adultery with Thomas Bruce, seventh Earl of Elgin, and others. The divorce was granted in 1803. Like Brown and MacLean, Douglas's short article concentrates on the history behind the ballad, the history of the Marshall family fortunes and their role in the physical improvements of Perth.[159] In all three instances the authors use the ballads as a backdrop to their explorations of the history of the people and events behind the songs with selected references from the songs being used to reinforce particular historical details.

Rather than focusing on the ballad as a supportive resource in a historical discussion of people and events as Brown, MacLean and Douglas have undertaken, the three following ballad studies reverse the emphasis to focus on the ballads and their historical context. They will demonstrate how the ballad-makers extracted events from history, in this case aristocratic relationships and marriages, and created versions of social history not found in official accounts, but which satisfied the social, cultural and emotional purposes of the ballad-makers and their audiences. This is not to say that history will be relegated to a supporting role, for a historical ballad has a symbiotic relationship with the history from which it arose and cannot be understood

[158] Amanda MacLean, 'Dropping Stones and Opening Doors on to 'Mill o' Tifty's Annie' in *Folk Music Journal* Vol. 12:3 (2023), pp.80-87.

[159] Sheila Douglas, 'The Life and Times of Rosie Anderson' in *The Flowering Thorn; International Ballad Studies* (Utah State University Press, 2003), pp.175-181.

without reference to that history. In this respect there is a historicist continuity with the earliest of the texts mentioned previously in this thesis – *The Gododdin* and *The Bruce,* in that the ballad-makers have taken and shaped historical events for their own purposes. But unlike those earlier texts, there is no nationalist or political agenda, just a focus on one particular incident that 'the folk imagination reacted to, molded (sic) and used' to create a ballad that foregrounded the social and 'emotional concerns' of the author and his/her community.'[160] The power of the historical ballad lies in its ability to describe an incident or occurrence that prompts feelings of satisfaction, empathy, sympathy, pride or any other such emotion; it can reflect, reveal and give a voice to those feelings that are not evident in the reading of 'real world' historical documents.

[160] Buchan, 'History and Harlaw' p.65.

6. Three Ballad Case Studies

The three historically based ballads selected represent three aspects of love and marriage: love and courtship, marriage, and the breakdown of marriage. 'The Young Laird o Logie' is set against the background of James VI's troubles with Lord Bothwell in which John Wemyss the younger is rescued from jail through the ingenuity of his lover. Alexander Irvine, 'The Laird o Drum' scandalised his family by marrying a young girl well below his station in life while the wife of 'Jamie Douglas' eventually separated from the man whose factor and right-hand man had poisoned him against her. A similar approach to each of the three ballad investigations will be followed with sections covering an Introduction, Sources, Historical Background, Ballad Analysis, Dating and finally a Conclusion that places the ballad in the historicist context of literature as history / history as literature.

Two of these ballads feature 'Lairds' in their title. John Wemyss, 'The Young Laird o Logie', was not a laird in his own right, but held the designation 'John Wemyss younger of Logie' by virtue of his father, Andrew Wemyss of Myrecarnie and Logie. John Wemyss was a valet and confidant of James VI until his involvement and support of Francis Stewart, 5th Earl of Bothwell. Alexander Irvine, 'The Laird of Drum', was a Laird in his own right, his predecessors having held the lands of Drum in Aberdeenshire since the time of Robert the Bruce.

Lairds, in general, get a bad press in the ballad world where they are frequently found exercising an inherent sense of priapic entitlement to the young women of their demesne. 'The Laird o the Windywa's' (G-D 4:778 'A') is straightforward in his intent: 'O lat me in this ae nicht / And I'll ne'er come back again O'. The young lass eventually lets him in, and, post-seduction and true to his word, he declares 'Sae fare ye weel this ae nicht / And I'll ne'er come back again O'. Not all the ballad Lairds are as mercenary as Windywa's. The name of the Laird that features in the many variants of 'The Broom of the Cowdenknowes' (Child 217, G-D 4:818, Scott Vol.3 2nd Edition, p.280) depends on that particular variant and it is interesting to speculate that they may be literary avatars of real-life Lairds. In each case, the young girl is seduced by a passing 'gentleman' who then leaves only to return an appropriate number of months later declaring himself as the Laird of (…) and claim the girl as his wife. The 'Laird o the Dainty Doonbye' (G-D 7:1488) follows a similar narrative line, but only when he assures himself that the lass is pregnant does he '(Pit) all the keys into her right hand / Made her lady o the dauntie doon-byes.' Real-world, historical Lairds are no better. Charles Napier Gordon, the 'Laird

of Esselmont', (b.1811), (G-D 6:1266) offers a young girl and her father a lift home in his horse-drawn gig. He contrives to get the father out of the carriage and then attempts to 'ravish' the girl, but 'A weaver fra Kinharachie / just chanced to come by', and the lass, 'She flew jist like the craw' down the road to safety. None of these Lairds, in the ballad or real world, however, could match 'Red' Sir Andrew Lesley, 3rd Laird of Balquhaine (d.1420) for sheer profligacy. 'It is said he had seventy children. But most of them were unlawfully begotten. It is reported that in one night he begot seven children in sundry places.' His wife seems to have been a rare breed of woman who not only resigned herself to her husband's philandering but empathised with the seven mothers of these children to whom she sent ' half boll of meal, half a boll of malt, a wedder and five shillings of money.'[161] The reputation of these several Lairds, real and imaginary, probably lies behind Peggy Coutts's retort to the Laird of Drum, 'And your miss I would scorn tae be O.' or, more graphically, 'And your whore I would scorn to be.'[162]

[161] Walter MacFarlane, *Genealogical Collections* 2 Volumes, James T Clark (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P. 1900), Vol. 2 p2.
[162] G-D 4:835 'A' st.3, Child 236 'E' st.3 respectively.

'The Laird o Logie': Courtship[163]

Introduction

The ballad 'The Laird o Logie' is based on an incident that occurred over the course of a few days in August 1592. John Wemyss the younger of Logie escaped from Dalkeith Palace having been incarcerated there by King James VI for his part in a conspiracy to assist the rebel, Francis Stewart, 5th Earl of Bothwell, to gain entry into the Palace. Ostensibly, the purpose was to seek an audience with the King,[164] but in reality, that the King 'should have been taken'.[165] Logie was arrested by the Duke of Lennox on Tuesday, 8th August, the day after the attempted entry, and taken back to Dalkeith where he confessed to his part, not only in the Dalkeith plot, but also to having had knowledge of three previous attempts at the King's capture.[166] Perhaps Logie was looking to the King for a lenient judgement to his confession based on his age – he was then about 22 years old, and his close relationship with James VI as a 'gentleman of the King's chamber and in especial favour and trust with the King': a closeness that can be seen in the King's insistence that Logie accompany him to a wedding 'wearing identical apparel' as for a Venetian masque.[167] If his relationship with the king was indeed a consideration, then Logie badly miscalculated for the King's paranoia and fear of Bothwell, coupled with his affront at the ill-considered bravado of the young Laird's confession of betrayal, led to John Wemyss being 'ordeanit to be tried be ane affyfe and execut to the dead.'[168]

[163] Child 182, G-D 2:247, Scott, Vol. 1 2nd Edition, pp.243-249.

[164] David Calderwood (1575-1650), *The History of the Kirk of Scotland* Vol. 5 Thomas Thomson (ed.), (Edinburgh, 1844), p.173 gives 'Moonday (*sic*) the 7th of August' as the date of the attempted entry to the Palace. https://electricscotland.com/bible/historyofkirkofscotland05.pdf (Accessed May 2023).

[165] Bowes to Burghley, 10th August 1592, in W. K. Boyd and H.W. Meikle (eds.), *Calendar of State Papers, 1547-1603* Vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), p.750ff. (Hereafter, *CSP).*

[166] *Ibid* pp. 750/1

[167] *Ibid* p.750. Jemma Field, *Anna of Denmark: The Material and Visual Culture of the Stuart Courts* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2020), p.135. The wedding was that of Lilias Murray and John Grant in 1591. https://academic.oup.com/manchester-scholarship-online/book/38507?login=true (Accessed May 2023).

[168] Bowes to Burghley, 10th August *CSP* Vol. 10 p.750 ff. David Moysie, *Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland, 1577-1603,* James Dennistoun (ed.), (Edinburgh, The Bannatyne Club, 1830), p.95 gives Logie's date of arrest as the 9th of August. https://digital.nls.uk/publications-by-scottish-clubs/archive/80520319?mode=gallery_grid&sn=1 (Accessed May 2023).

Sources

The *Calendar of State Papers for Scotland* volumes 10 (1589-1593) and 11 (1593-1595) are the main primary sources for the complex personal and political relationships that form the backdrop to this ballad.[169] The Bowes-Burghley correspondence is coeval with the events they relate, thus providing a first-hand account of the historical circumstances that contextualise 'The Laird o Logie'.[170] David Moysie's *Memoirs* and *The Historie and Life of King James the Sext,*[171] both published by the Bannatyne Club in Edinburgh, are also contemporaneous accounts that relate Margaret Vinstar's involvement in Logie's escape.

The ballad appears in three of the four collections used here. The G-D 2:247 'A' text, is an eighteen-stanza variant entitled 'The Gallant Laird o' Young Logie', the 'B' text 'The Young Laird o' Logie' comprises eleven stanzas and 'C', is a one-stanza fragment entitled 'Young Logie'. Sir Walter Scott's variant in his *'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border'* is a ballad of seventeen stanzas entitled 'The Laird o' Logie'. Child's No.182, 'A' text was taken from the 1833 edition of Scott's *'Minstrelsy'* and bears the same title as Scott's. Child's 'B' text – 'The Laird of Ochiltree', from Herd's 1769 edition of *The Ancient and Modern Scots Songs,* is the 17-stanza variant which Scott, in his Introduction to 'The Laird o' Logie', regards as disagreeing in name, circumstance and 'real fact' with his own variant of the ballad. Child's 'C' text is a stall copy of 20 stanzas, the 'D' text of 20 stanzas is from a rendition by a Mrs Harris and 'E' is a one-stanza fragment from Motherwell's *Minstrelsy.*[172]

Background

Apart from his own questionable behaviour, behind all Logie's troubles with King James, his eventual exile from Scotland and his execution at Middelburg in the Netherlands, stands Francis Stewart, 5th Earl of Bothwell (1562-

[169] *Calendar of State Papers Relating to Scotland and Mary Queen of Scots 1547-1603,* 13 Volumes. (Edinburgh, H.M. Stationery Office). (*CSP)*

[170] Sir Robert Bowes (c.1535-1597) was the English Ambassador to the Scottish court and William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, was Chief Advisor to Elizabeth 1 of England.

[171] T. Thomson (ed.), *The Historie and Life of King James the Sext 1566-1596* (Edinburgh, The Bannatyne Club, 1825). Compiled from miscellaneous manuscripts and other papers.

[172] Child notes that his 'D' variant is 'a stall copy printed by M. Randal, Stirling. The same in Motherwell's MS, p.504 and in Maidment's *Scotish (sic) Ballads and Songs*, p.8.' So it looks as though this variant was adapted from Motherwell / Maidment, commercially produced and sold as a broadside or chapbook edition, for a post-1603 market as it refers to Anna as 'The Queen of England' thus taking the incident out of context.

1612). Bothwell has been described variously as 'the bane of James's life', one who had a 'sinister influence on contemporary politics', as 'unstable', and, according to the Kirk in the early 1590s, he was a 'pretty unsavoury character'.[173] But it was not always thus. Confirmed as the 5th Earl and Lord High Admiral Scotland in the late 1570s, Bothwell became one of the most powerful and influential Border Earls. He had at one time been named as James's successor and in 1589/90, together with the Duke of Lennox, 'was given a large part of the responsibility for governing the kingdom during the king's absence in Denmark' fetching his young bride, Anne of Denmark home to Scotland.[174] But, as grandson to James V and cousin to James VI, his Stewart bloodline and consequent sense of his own importance led him to betray nobility's customary 'auncient privileges for their free access to the King's person' in a quite spectacular and treasonous fashion.[175] There had been numerous incidents of Bothwell behaving badly over the course of the 1580s, but James's tolerance of his erratic cousin seemed to have held, for Bothwell and the Scottish Kirk had a mutually supportive understanding and James was ever conscious of having to keep the Kirk's political aspirations at bay whilst holding in check the catholic Earls of Huntly, Errol and Angus and the ever-present threat of Catholic recusancy. Bothwell's escape from Edinburgh Castle where he was being held on charges of witchcraft, and James's growing paranoia with Bothwell's on-going attempts on his royal person, had James traversing the country in one unsuccessful pursuit after another in an attempt to capture the elusive Earl.[176] Similarly, James's pursuits had Bothwell scuttling all over Scotland as he attempted to evade them.[177] Cowan refers to this bizarre interlude as 'the comedy of the cousins'.[178] Eventually exiled from Scotland mid-1595, Bothwell died in poverty in Naples in November 1612.

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[173] P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, *Satan's Conspiracy: Magic and Witchcraft in Sixteenth Century Scotland* (East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 2001), p.145, Rosalind Mitcheson, *A History of Scotland* (3rd Edition), (London and New York, Routledge, 2002), p.151.

[174] Keith M. Brown, *Bloodfeud in Scotland 1573-1625* (Edinburgh, John Donald Press, 1986), p.20.

[175] Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch, 'James VI: Universal King?' in *The Reign of James VI* Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (eds.), (East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 2000), p.19.

[176] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 10 October 19th 1591 p.578 and November 10th 1591 p.584.

[177] 'The State of Scotland' August 1593 in Annie I. Cameron, (ed), *Calendar of State Papers, 1593-1595* Vol. 11 (H.M. Stationery Office, 1936), p.164.

[178] Edward J Cowan, 'The Darker Vision of the Scottish Renaissance: The Devil and Francis Stewart' in *The Renaissance and Reformation in Scotland* Ian B. Cowan and Ducan Shaw (eds.), (Edinburgh, Scottish Academic Press, 1983), pp.125-140, p132.

Anna of Denmark (Dec. 1574-1619) arrived in Scotland in 1590 as the fifteen-year-old bride of James VI. As a princess of the Danish Royal family, she had her parents as political and intellectual role models, particularly her mother who had her own battles with court politics when her husband died.[179] Young as she was, Anna came to Scotland well versed in royal protocols and with a powerful sense of self as a Royal Princess and Queen in her own right and as one who had at least some appreciation of court intrigues. Yet early twentieth-century historians have accorded her several demeaning character assessments – 'shallow', 'frivolous', 'largely anonymous' are a few cited by Meikle.[180] Meikle's entitles her own profile of Anna, 'A Meddlesome Princess', but such a description is itself misleading for any involvement in political matters were usually in defence of her own rights or those of others. Lee is particularly scathing in his assessment of her: 'She had no particular distinction of mind or spirit', 'Her political role was confined to forwarding the careers of her favourites and hampering those she disliked. She was not conspicuously successful in either direction.'[181] But in both the 'real world' and the 'ballad world', Anna's influence is somewhat at odds with Lee's assessment of her.

When Anna arrived in Scotland in May 1590, one of the large party of nobles that welcomed her was the Earl of Bothwell and shortly thereafter 'an interesting friendship between her and the rebellious earl' was established.[182] According to Williams, Anna had a very different appreciation of Bothwell than did her husband whose intense dislike of him is well documented.[183] 'She had a lurking admiration for his swashbuckling bravado, his witty tongue and pleasant manners. (He) was gifted, dynamic and endowed with the Stewart charm. He treated the Queen with deference and consideration'.[184] Meikle and Payne support this assessment:

[179] Leeds Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England: A Cultural Biography* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), p.16. As Queen dowager, she demanded the right to govern Denmark and Norway, then part of the Danish dominions, during the minority of her son, the future King Christian IV. The regency government refused.

[180] Maureen Meikle, 'A Meddlesome Princess: Anna of Denmark and Scottish Court Politics 1589-1603' in *The Reign of James VI* Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (eds.), pp.126-140, pp.126-7.

[181] Maurice Lee, *John Maitland of Thirlestane and the Foundations of the Stewart Despotism in Scotland* (Princeton University Press, 1959), p.204.

[182] Meilke, 'A Meddlesome Princess' p.130.

[183] The Bowes-Burghley and other *CSP* correspondence is peppered with references to Bothwell, his escapades and James's dealings with him.

[184] Ethel Carleton Williams, *Anne of Denmark* (Harlow, Longman, 1970), p.40.

'Bothwell intrigued Anne […] from her very first landing in Scotland.'[185] Such attentions must have been flattering for the fifteen-year-old Queen and Bothwell was no doubt aware that it would do him no harm to have the Queen of Scots onside – nor was Anna lacking in political acumen in enlisting Bothwell in her own political manoeuvrings. The role the ballad-maker has Anna play in the ballad reflects her involvement in court politics and in her defence of Logie, obliquely references her support of the charismatic Bothwell.

Ballad Analysis

The focus of the ballad is the escape of John Wemyss the younger of Logie from Dalkeith prison to which the ballad-maker's imagination has provided the embellishments that pares the Dalkeith incident to a ballad-drama of love winning out against the odds. In none of the variants is there anything to suggest Logie's involvement with Bothwell's attempt to gain entry into the Palace or Logie's betrayal of the King's trust that led to his being taken in the first place. Neither is there anything in the ballad variants to suggest that Logie is anything other than a maltreated young man who just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and in this respect, 'real world' and 'ballad world' part company. The ballad-makers' empathy for Logie is evident: Logie is a 'poor prisoner', he is variously a 'wanton' laird, a 'rantin' young laird or the 'gallant' young laird o Logie, unjustly accused of a minor infringement of court convention. This makes King James's death sentence all the more unjustifiable, the actions of the queen and Margaret all the more understandable and Logie's escape most satisfactory. The ballad narrative does not touch on the reality that Logie was in fact guilty of the treasonous behaviour of which he stood accused. Such an admission would have defeated the ballad-maker's social and 'emotional purpose' of the ballad which is to celebrate Margaret Vinstar's love for the young laird and her role in defeating the king's justice and to allow the general populace to share the romance of the moment .

[185] M Meikle and H Payne, *Anne [Anna of Denmark]* Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. https://www-oxforddnb-com.ezproxy1.lib.gla.ac.uk/search?q=Anna+of+Denmark&searchBtn=Search&isQuickSearch=true (Accessed June 2023).

On Thursday, 10th August, Logie's escape was effected by Margaret Vinstar, one of Queen Anna's Danish ladies-in-waiting and Logie's love interest. Knowing her to be 'the principal Maid in the Chamber', the prison guards apparently needed little persuading that the Queen had requested Logie's presence in the royal chambers.[186] The guards escorting young Wemyss were persuaded by Margaret to remain outside the doors of the royal apartments while she took him through the royal couple's bedchamber to a window from where he lowered himself to the ground by means of a rope. Thus, by Margaret's 'guid cheritable help he happelie escapit be the subteltie of loove.'[187]

Despite the ballad's eponymous title, Logie himself is a passive character in the ballad narrative: he is rescued, he is provided with money, pistols and a horse – his only action is to fire off the pistols to signal his freedom from the Castle's confines. The main players here are Queen Anna, King James and Margaret Vinstar. The Scott / Child 'A' text, along with Child 'B' and 'C', give no reason for Logie's imprisonment while other variants provide a more romantic back story: the King was angry that Logie had won Lady Margaret's favour, (G-D 'A' and 'B') or, that he had 'stown a kiss frae the queen's marie' (Child 'D'). Excluding the one-stanza fragments, of the six ballad variants, four do not give a location for Logie's imprisonment while the Scott / Child 'A' locus is moved from Dalkeith to the, possibly, more romantic setting of Edinburgh chapel (Castle?) where 'Carmichael's the keeper o' the keys'.[188]

The structure of the ballad variants agree in principle with the order of events leading up to Logie gaining his freedom, differing only in the details: Logie is imprisoned under penalty of death and depending on the variant, Margaret Vinstar is found 'lamenting sair' or threatening suicide. She approaches the Queen, they discuss the situation and then either Margaret, or the Queen herself, approaches the King on bended knee seeking the boon of Logie's life. The king is adamant that 'a the gowd in fair Scotland / shall not save the life of young Logie.' Employing a parody on the 'broken token' motif, Logie is released from his cell either upon

[186] John Spottiswood, *History of the Church of Scotland* (1655) Volume 2, Mark Napier (ed.), (Edinburgh, 1851), p.423. https://digital.nls.uk/publications-by-scottish-clubs/archive/79632076 (Accessed May 2023)
[187] T. Thomson (ed.), *King James the Sext* pp.253-4.
[188] There is a note in Henderson's 1931 edition of the *Minstrelsy* that 'Sir John Carmichael […] was appointed captain of the king's guard in 1588, and usually had the keeping of state criminals of rank.' which may be a nod by the ballad-makers, not perhaps to Logie's relatively low rank, but to the nature and severity of his crime.

the presentation of stolen royal tokens which will identify the royal owner to the prison guards, or by means of purloined prison keys, either of which will 'let young Logie free.'[189]

In several of the variants (Child 'B', 'C' and 'D' and G-D 'A' and 'B'), it is Queen Anna who, by means of various deceptions, is responsible for the freeing of young Logie from Dalkeith Palace prison. Only that of Sir Walter Scott / Child's 'A' text is Margaret Vinstar credited with the deed. In the other variants referenced here, the ballad-maker has relegated her to a bit player in the drama where she displays a fine Petrarchan[190] angst at her lover's incarceration and pending execution:

> Lady Margaret she's torn oot her bonnie yellow hair
> And she has torn't locks three by three
> Says, "Hand me a knife and I'll kill myself
> And I'll go to the grave as soon as he." (G-D 'A' sts. 3 and 8, Child 'B' st. 8)
>
> She has put off her goon of silk
> And so has she her gay clothing:
> 'Go fetch me a knife, and I'll kill myself
> Since the laird of Logie is not mine' (Child 'C' st. 9)

In these two ballad stanzas Lady Margaret is so upset she seems incapable of rational thought and action whereas the 'real world' Margaret must have acted with a remarkable cool-headedness in effecting Logie's release from prison and escape through a window in the royal bedchamber. Her duplicity in dealing with the guards is reflected in the Scott / Child 'A' text:

> But she has stown the king's redding-kaim,
> Likewise the queen her wedding knife'
> And sent the tokens to Carmichael,
> To cause Young Logie get his life. (st.8)

[189] In 'broken token' ballads, a long absent lover returns to his lady who recognises him only when he produces one half of a ring or other lover's token given at their parting. G-D 5 Nos. 1037, 'The Dark Eyed Sailor' (ring), 1038, 'A Single Sailor' / 'A Lady in Her Garden Walking' / The Broken Token' (ring), and 1044 'Donald's Return to Glencoe' (glove).

[190] Francis Petrarch (1304-1374) was an Italian poet and writer who was at the forefront of the Italian Humanist movement. His works became extremely influential in Renaissance literary culture throughout Europe. His most important work in this respect was *'Il Conzoniere'* or *'Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta'* ('Book of Songs' or 'Fragments of Vernacular Matters'), a collection of some 366 sonnets and verse to 'Laura', a married woman with whom he fell hopelessly in love. The sonnets are an expression of his anguished, unrequited love for this lady. See, Albert Russell Ascoli and Unn Falkeid, *The Cambridge Companion to Petrarch* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015), especially 'Introduction' pp.1-9 and 'Female Petrarchists' pp.201-209. Leonard Forster, *The Icy Fire: Five Studies in European Petrarchism,* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp.1-23.

She then provides him with 'a purse o the red gowd / Another o the white monie' along with a pair of pistols to fire off to let her know he is free. When she is then challenged by Carmichael as to Logie's whereabouts:

> May Margaret turnd her round about,
> I wot a loud laugh laughed she:
> 'The egg is chipped, the bird is flown,
> Ye'll see nae mair of Young Logie.' (st.16)

The King, needless to say, is furious and takes his wrath out on those responsible for Logie's keeping. To Carmichael he declares:

> The morn the Justice Court's to stand
> And Logie's place ye maun supplie.' (Scott / Child 'A' st.14.)

and, to others whom he deems culpable of negligence:

> 'Call to me a' my gaolours,
> Call thaim by thirtie and by thrie
> Wheirfoir the morn, at twelve a clock,
> It's hangit schall the ilk ane be' (Child 'B' st.14, 'C' st.18, G-D 'A' st.16)

It seems however, that Margaret Vinstar was responsible for more than young John Wemyss's flight from Dalkeith Palace. Bowes' report to Burghley of 10th August, which relates details of Logie's confession, ties her in to the failed Dalkeith attempt on King James in that 'Logie, by means of his mistress […] should have gotten the key of the back gate of the Castle of Dalkeith and therein received Bothwell and his company in the night' and Bowes acknowledges that as Vinstar is 'in great grace with the Queen much labour will be made to save (Logie's) life.'[191] Whether that 'labour' included the Queen helping Logie get out of jail free or just a plea to the King for clemency, as the ballads variously suggest, is not known. In view of Vinstar's treasonous behaviour, it is hardly surprising that James VI demanded her removal from court, but Queen Anna refused, declaring she 'will rather go to Denmark than part with mistress Margaret.'[192] It is this refusal and her support for Margaret that leads Fraser to conclude, ' her majesty may therefore be accounted an abettor, if not a conniver, in the plot of the lovers.'[193] Willliams goes further, remarking that 'James was convinced that she (Anna) knew about

[191] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 10 10th August 1592, p.750ff.
[192] 'News from Scotland' [Aug] *CSP* Vol. 10 p.754.
[193] Sir William Fraser, *Memorials of The Family of Wemyss of Wemyss* (Edinburgh, 1888), p.64

the plot,' to free Logie, but provides neither source nor reference for this, basing her opinion rather on the fact of the King's insistence on Margaret's removal to Denmark and Anna's complete unwillingness to comply.[194]

One other controversial figure who helps to contextualise the ballad is James's chancellor, John Maitland of Thirlestane (1537-1595). Maitland came from 'an old family of no particular distinction', but had fostered a strong friendship with the young James, then in his minority, to rise on the back of that friendship to become Chancellor in 1587. By 1592 the nobility had been agitating to get rid of Maitland for several years. The sticking point was Maitland's pre-eminence in Scottish political affairs and his influence on James who, according to Lee, he 'led by the nose'.[195] Such unlimited sway with the monarch stuck in the craw of Scottish nobility who considered themselves to be the King's natural advisors; they resented James's reliance on one whose familial credentials were of a lower status than their own.[196]

Both Francis Bothwell and Anna of Denmark had reason to curb Maitland's power. In respect of the allegations of witchcraft laid against him Bothwell was in no doubt as to the author of that mischief, laying the blame squarely on the shoulders of James's Chancellor, John Maitland of Thirlestane. In a splendid piece of apologist propaganda, Bothwell tells how 'Chancellor Maitland with his accomplices, "caused feade" a process of witchcraft against me.'[197] But John Maitland had been a thorn in Bothwell's flesh for several years prior to the witchcraft allegations. The original and main point of contention was the position of Commendator of Coldingham Priory. Neither would give up their claims on this fairly substantial living.[198] Even when Bothwell eventually regained Coldingham in 1587 his hatred of Maitland continued as a few months later, only a timely warning saved Maitland's life from an attempt by Bothwell.[199] But it was not only Bothwell who had a deep mistrust and loathing of Maitland.

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[194] Williams, *Anne of Denmark,* p.43.
[195] Lee, *Maitland,* p.5.
[196] Lee, *Maitland* p.21, Rosalind Mitchison, *A History of Scotland* p.151, Goodare and Lynch, *The Reign of James VI* p.39.
[197] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 11 21st February 1593, pp.61-64. (Bothwell's Answer to Calumnies).
[198] Maurice Lee, *John Maitland of Thirlestane* pp.60-61, p.28 and p.28 n.21. In 1567 Maitland became Commendator of Coldingham Priory as the result of a swap with an unwitting 5-year-old Francis Stewart who in turn became Commendator of Kelso. The exchange was effected by Francis's uncle, James Hepburn 4th Earl of Bothwell and Mary Queen of Scots' favourite. Why Hepburn made this exchange on Francis's behalf is unclear: Francis had no say in the matter hence his desire to get Coldingham Priory back.
[199] Lord Hundson to (Walsingham) in William K. Boyd, (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers for Scotland, 1586-1588,* Vol. 9 25th November 1587, p.507.

Like Bothwell, Anna had issues with him over property rights. Her two-and-a-half-year battle with Maitland over her dower rights to Dunfermline Abbey and its associated lordship of Musselburgh, Lee calls a 'grudge' against the Chancellor. But the tenacity and righteous indignation with which she successfully pursued James's dower gift to her, ignoring pleas from her husband and Elizabeth of England to exercise restraint, shows a woman of steely determination. Throughout, Anna had remained implacable against Maitland and by mid-1592 he had left the court at James's suggestion until, 'the Chancellor shall in humble wise submit and make suit to the Queen for her favour and good countenance.'[200] It was Anna to whom James looked as the arbiter of Maitland's political fate and return to court and her tenacity in this matter gives the lie to Lee's assessment of her as an impotent political operator. Eventually, Maitland conceded the argument and the livings, and the Parliament of July, 1593, ratified Dunfermline and Musselburgh to Anne.[201] Even with the settlement, Maitland did not return to the King until late in the year, but shorn of much of his power and influence, thanks in large part to Anna's political nous. The ballad mentions none of this, but it demonstrates the stark factionalism that was Scottish court politics of the time and the caution with which James had to exercise in dealing with his nobles - and his wife.

With Bothwell's tacit support on one hand and a group of disaffected nobles on the other, Anna's presumption to ally herself with James's factional opponents against the Chancellor set the royal couple at odds with each other and the Dunfermline Abbey affair gives an indication of the tensions in the marital relationship.[202] In the exchanges between the couple in 'The Laird o Logie', the ballad-maker allows the audience a further glimpse of this relationship as in all the variants of the ballad Anna intervenes with James for Logie's life:

> Since ye have made me your wedded wife
> Will you grant a pardon for young Logie? (Child 'C' st.5)

only to get James's angry refusal:

> The morrow before it is twelve o' clock

[200] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 10 10th October 1592, p.778.
[201] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 11 20th July 1593, p.127.
[202] Leeds Barroll, 'The Court of the First Stuart Queen' in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* Linda Levy Peck (ed.), (Cambridge, C.U.P., 1991), pp.191-208, pp.195-6.

O hangd shall the Laird o Logie be (st.6)

Anna's arguing on behalf of someone she thought too harshly dealt with by her husband had precedent, for example, in April 1591 she was one of those who successfully pled for the Duke of Lennox's return to court having been banished in January for attacking the Laird of Logie in the King's presence.[203] She was also instrumental in securing the King's agreement to the repatriation of the Duke of Buccleuch, exiled for having 'converse' with Bothwell.[204] In all such personal interventions Anna showed a keen mind, diplomatic acumen and was conspicuously successful in helping those in trouble.[205] She was not so successful, however, when it came to pleading Bothwell's case: 'Anne was sympathetic to Bothwell and she strongly disapproved of James's implacable attitude towards him[…]'[206] In July 1591 following his escape from Edinburgh Castle where he was being held on allegations of witchcraft, Bothwell was declared traitor and forfeited, but the King reacted in such a way when Anna argued in Bothwell's favour that 'she let it fall with his good contentment.' This was a pleading that she did not, nor ever would, win.[207]

Despite her various 'interferences' in court politics, both Anna and James held to the marriage protocols of the time, James protected his wife's honour, and, Meikle states, that Anna 'often acted to protect (her husband's) interests', and proof comes in a letter of March 1592 from Anna to Robert Murray of Abercairney, requesting his help 'to protect her beloved husband the king from the chancellor.'[208] Meikle goes further saying that Anna's interest in Scottish court politics 'did not in any way undermine her deference to James as her husband',[209] but when the personal and political met, Anna found herself walking a very fine line indeed as the ballad suggests in her obeisance to James when pleading for Logie's life:

She's gone in before the king
And bowed she low down in her knee (G-D 'A' st.5, Child 'B' st.5)

[203] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 10 January 13th 1591, p.450 and April 27th 1591 p.507.
[204] Hudson to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 10 31st December 1591, p.610. Bowes to Burghley *CSP* Vol.10 16th November 1592, p.814.
[205] Meikle, 'A Meddlesome Princess' pp.130-131. Lee *Maitland,* p.204.
[206] Lee, *Maitland* p.237.
[207] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 10 14th July 1591, p.543.
[208] Meikle, 'A Meddlesome Princess' p.132. (footnote cites National Archives of Scotland ref.GD24/5/59/1.)
[209] *Ibid* p.131.

The history behind the ballad allows for a much better understanding of the ballad narrative. The Queen's plea to her husband on Logie's behalf sits neatly with her predilection for speaking up for those she considered to be harshly dealt with by James. James's fury at Logie's escape is backgrounded by three things: firstly, Logie was gentleman of his royal chamber *and* a confederate of Bothwell, thus making Logie's a double-edged betrayal, secondly, the involvement of the Queen's lady-in-waiting in both the entry into Dalkeith Palace and the escape and lastly, his need to be ever mindful of court factions and the slippery alliances of nobles who at times may, and then may not, be supportive of him. James's declaration that 'it was his destiny "to dye in himself" meaning by the means of those who are nearest and dearest to him and most trusted', describes a very real and present danger.[210]

There is no historical record of the Queen's involvement in the escape and it is dry speculation to suggest the four-way association of Anna / Bothwell / Logie / Vinstar may have allowed her to wink at Logie's rescue, yet in several of the variants, she is not only made responsible, but confesses to it.

> The queen sche slippit up the stair
> And sche gaid up richt privatlie
> And sche has stoun the prison-keys
> And gane and set Ochiltree frie.[211] (Child 'B' 10)

When James announces that the jailers will hang, Anna responds:

> And iff ye're gaun to hang thaim a'
> Indeed ye maun begin wi me. (Child 'B' 16, 'C' 19, G-D 'A' 17 and 'B' 11)

In another variant the Queen presents the King's wedding ring (Child 'C'), in another she counterfeits the 'king's hand-write' and steals 'his richt hand gloe' (Child 'D') as tokens of identification, but in a neat reversal in one variant, following the Queen's confession, James inexplicably allows:

> '…my gracious queen
> a hearty pardon we will gie
> An for her sake we'll free the loon
> The rantin young laird o Logie'. (Child 'D' 13)

[210] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 10 12th August 1592, p.754. Calderwood, *History* p.173-4.

[211] The substitution of 'Ochiltree' for 'Logie', Child puts down to a confusion between the two men as both were Bothwell's conspirators. At a Privy Council meeting on 2nd May 1594, Andro, Lord Stewart of Uchiltree was 'denounced rebel' and on May 8th, Logie was cautioned to the sum of 300 merks. David Mason (ed.), *Records of the Privy Council of Scotland* Series 1 Vol. 5 (Ontario, Tanner Ritchie Publishing, 2000), p.144.

Logie was twice pardoned by James for his associating with Bothwell and his plots against the king. According to all ballad variants, in the aftermath of their recent trials, the young couple escape together, shipping out, one 'at the pier of Leith / the tother at the Queen's Ferrie.' No doubt the ballad-maker succumbing to a narrative imperative in giving them a happy-ever-after ending, but one that has no historical validity.[212]

The story of the young Laird and Margaret Vinstar continues beyond the bounds of balladry. Following his escape in September 1592, Logie was 'denounced rebel' by the Privy Council. Margaret meanwhile, as a compromise to the King's demands for her removal to Denmark, was quickly given sanctuary by David Wemyss, a relative of Logie's, at Wemyss Castle, a kindness for which he was later favoured with a letter dated 9th November 1592, signed by Queen Anna, in which she expresses her gratitude 'To our right trusty and well belovit The Laird of Wemis' for his hospitality to Margaret.[213] In November of that year, despite his associations with Bothwell, James pardoned Logie and later the young Laird married Margaret, the lady for whom he 'bure great honest affectioun, tending to the godlie band of mariage; the whilk was honestlie requytit be the said gentilwoman.'[214] There is no date for the marriage, but Jemma Field notes that 'on 26 October 1593, she (Margaret) was presented with a bed as a wedding present' by the Queen.[215] The 'Warrender Papers' notes that Sir Peter Young paid 'young Logy's tocher with Margaret Winchestern now his wyf', but no date is given.[216] What kind of marriage the young couple had is difficult to say but they did not have long together for in April, 1594 the King was after Logie once more for his dealings with Bothwell. Arrested and incarcerated in Edinburgh Castle in September of that year and again facing a death sentence 'for Bothwell's cause', it was only 'by the Queen' means' that he was banished from the kingdom rather than executed.[217] By the 28th of September he

[212] The 'happy-ever-after' trope is not uncommon in Scottish songs and ballads. For example, 'The Rigs o Rye' (G-D 5:1054), 'The Kitchie Boy' (Child 252, G-D 5:1048, Mrs Brown of Falkland No.27) 'The Gay Goshawk' (Child 96, Scott, Vol. 2. (2nd Edition) p.6. Mrs Brown of Falkland, No.26).

[213] Sir William Fraser, *Facsimiles of Scottish Charters and Letters* Facsimile No.193. http://collections.shca.ed.ac.uk/items/show/195 (Accessed May, 2023).

[214] Bowes to Burghley, *CSP* Vol. 10 30th November 1592, p.818. Thomson (ed.), *Historie and Life of King James the Sext* p.253.

[215] Field, *Anna of Denmark,* p.135.

[216] Annie I. Cameron (ed.), *Warrender Papers* Vol. 2. (Edinburgh 1932), p.53.

[217] Mr John Colville to Sir Tobert Cecil, *CSP* Vol. 11 16th September 1594, pp.451-2. For reports of Logie's associations with Bothwell see, for example, Bowes to Sir Robert Cecil, *CSP* Vol. 11 13th April 1594, p.308-9. Bowes to Burghley, *ibid*, 27th August 1594, p.420.

is reported as heading for the Low Countries via London and in June 1595 Logie is in Middelburg. Lady Logie returned from a visit to Denmark in July 1595[218] when her husband was in Middelburg, but there is no report of them meeting. Logie is later arrested for plotting to blow up the defence fortification at Veere in the Netherlands and on 6th January 1597, Robert Cecil in a laconic aside, reports that 'Loggy is beheaded at Middleburg.'[219] It seems that young John Wemyss put Bothwell's cause before his marriage to Margaret Vinstar and any chance of reconciliation with his King, to whom last word goes: 'Logie himself had so deeply offended him (the King) in Bothwell's treason and died banished for that offence.'[220]

Dating

Here, as with the majority of Scottish historically based songs and ballads, it is not possible to give a date of composition, but naming of Queen Anna as the main instigator of the escape may reflect on the dating of this ballad. It is not *im*possible for the queen to have had at least an inkling of Margaret Vinstar's intentions, and perhaps it is this 'inkling' that the ballad-maker has picked up at a point where ballad evolution and historical distancing allowed Queen Anna to be named as the one who engineered Logie's escape. There was also, undoubtedly, leakage of court gossip above and below stairs, where the embarrassment of the jailers at having been so duped and 'the manner of the escape ministered great occasion of laughter.'[221] Such gossip and court factionalism may very well have given momentum to rumour and inuendo about the Queen and these variants were the result. On the other hand, the ballad variants all remain true to the historical narrative of Logie's escape and none of the contemporaneous historical accounts - Calderwood, Moysie, Spottiswoode or Melville, nor the Bowes-Burghley correspondence, even imply that the Queen had knowledge of Vinstar's plan. Two incongruous stanzas in the stall copy (Child 'C' sts.4 and 5) refer to Anna as the 'queen of England' which indicates these verses are later post-1603 additions. The other variants therefore may well be closer to the event they represent; as Cowan points out 'It is quite perverse to continue to argue that the more obviously

[218] Roger Aston to Robert Bowes, *CSP* Vol. 11 15th July 1595, p.642 and 15th August, p.682.
[219] Cecil to Robert Bowes, in *CSP,* Vol. 12 (1595-1597) M.S. Giuseppi (ed.), (Edinburgh 1952), 6th January 1595, p.419. Thomas Birch, *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* Vol.2. (London, 1754), pp216-7. For Logie's involvement in the plot https://wellcomecollection.org/works/ykjh8yvv (Accessed 2 June 2023).
[220] 'Answers of King James VI to the Propositions Submitted to Him by Sir William Bowes' in *CSP* Vol. 13 Part 1. J.D. Mackie (ed.), (Edinburgh Stationery Office 1969) 31st May 1599, p.490.
[221] Spottiswood, *History* p.424.

historical ballads are somehow not contemporary with the events they describe.'[222] Where this leaves Queen Anna remains a moot point.

Apart from 'The Young Laird of Ochiltree' (Child 'B') the language of the ballads as presented by Child, provides few clues as to date of composition. With the exception of the stall copy (Child 'C') in which the phrasing and language have an English cast (The queen is unto the king's chamber gone / She has kneeld low down on her knee), the use of language in the other variants anchors them firmly in Scotland - *tain / ither*, *taen, sair, maun, maun', gowd, frae, my sell, hae gane*, the king's *richt hand gloe*, vocabulary which has retained a common currency. Herd's 'Laird of Ochiltree' demonstrates use of Late Middle Scots words and phrasing that date from approximately 1550-1700, and therefore contemporary with the event.[223] '*The queen **sche** trippit up the stair / and lowlie knielt upon **hir** knie'*: *hir* and *sche* are Older Scots third-person singular, but *sche* seems to inhabit a middle ground between the Older Scots *scho* and Modern Scots 'she' - although Smith notes the use of *sche* in an early fifteenth century text of the *Canterbury Tales.*[224] *Tripp**it,*** demonstrates the Older Scots inflectional ending (also *shipp**it,*** *luik**it**),* while *low**lie*** is an Older Scots adverbial suffix – others here are *privat**lie*** and *mournful**lie,*** and *thaim* is third-person plural. Child has anglicised other Older Scots words from Herd's original text: the *quh* prefix in *quhat, quhen, quhairfor* become what, when and whairfoir (*sic)*; ***z**our **z**oung* and ***z**e* become your, young and ye and the modern 's' replaces the long *'ſ'* as in *ſche, ſaid* and *caſtels.*[225] Given the inclusion of Older Middle Scots in Herd's variant and Cowan's ringing declaration, it is not improbable that the ballad's production is coeval with the event it describes and that Herd's use of language reflects the Scots vernacular usage taken either from a written copy or from an oral performance of a ballad.

A final point of interest is the last stanza in the Child 'A' / Scott variant. Here, the ballad maker remarks:

> And she's gotten a father to her bairn, / The wanton laird of Young Logie.

[222] Cowan, 'Introduction' in *The Ballad in Scottish History* p14.
[223] Jeremy Smith, *Older Scots* p.6. Smith divides Older (Middle) Scots language into 'Early Middle' – 1450-1550 and 'Late Middle' – 1550-1700. 'The Laird o Logie' falls neatly into this latter linguistic time-frame.
[224] *Ibid*, p.49. For a detailed discussion of this topic see Smith, Chapter 3, 'Grammar and Lexicon', pp.37-50.
[225] David Herd, *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads, Etc.* (Edinburgh, William Paterson, 1870), pp.21-24.

Fraser relates: 'John Wemyss, younger of Logie, died about 1599, before his father, leaving a son John, who […] was retoured heir-general of Andrew Wemyss of Myrecairnie, his grandfather.'[226] Fraser later qualifies this statement saying he was '*apparently* the son of John Wemyss of Logie.'[227] (my italics).

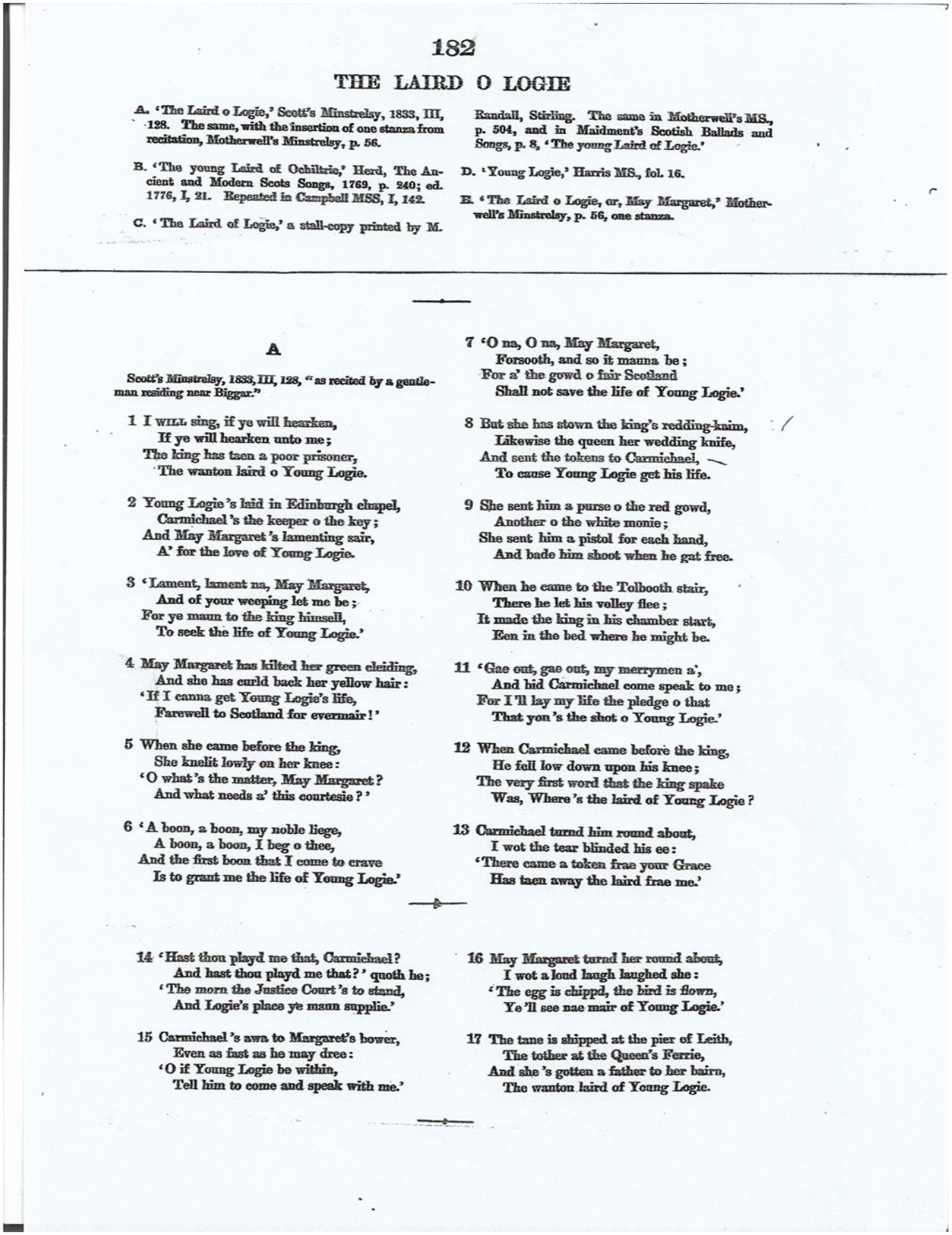
Conclusion

In the case of 'The Laird o Logie', the historical reality of his involvement with Lord Bothwell and their treasonous activities against James VI that led to Logie's arrest and imprisonment is sidelined to focus solely on the romance of his escape. Margaret Vinstar's daring captured not only the imagination of the ballad-maker, but also contemporary historians. The priority of the ballad-maker was to reshape the event in such a way that satisfied the feelings and emotional priorities which allowed singers and the ordinary folk of the community to share in the drama, humour and delight of Logie's successful escape. Unlike 'Drum', official recorded history not only includes the fact of the of matter, but, takes a certain delight in doing so.[228] As history as literature, the ballad gives an alternative reading of one incident among several in which John Wemyss, the young 'Laird o Logie' featured as a co-conspirator of Lord Bothwell. As literature as history, it exemplifies the way in which history can be manipulated, or even ignored, to produce a literary account of an aspect of that history that, on this occasion for Logie, has a happy ending.

[226] Fraser, *Memorials of the Family Wemyss,* p.64.

[227] *Ibid*. p.210. (This same John is referred to as Sir John Wemyss, knight, who was believed to have been murdered by servants of the Bishop of Clogher whilst serving in County Fermanagh as high sheriff. There is a letter from Charles I dated 17th January 1627 requesting an investigation into the Bishop's innocence, or not, in the murder, so the killing took place sometime before the end of 1626. Charles also writes about the widow's income from an Irish property, but at no time is this supposed son's inheritance to Myrecarnie mentioned. I am not convinced the two Johns are one and the same. However, if it can be established that Margaret Vinstar had a child at some point and find the age at which the high sheriff died, it may be possible to tie the two together and find credence for the final stanza in Child/Scott.)

[228] Thomson, *Jamie the Sext* p.253-4, Spottiswood *History* p.424.



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THE LAIRD O LOGIE

A. 'The Laird o Logie,' Scott's Minstrelsy, 1833, III, 128. The same, with the insertion of one stanza from recitation, Motherwell's Minstrelsy, p. 56.

B. 'The young Laird of Ochiltrie,' Herd, The Ancient and Modern Scots Songs, 1769, p. 240; ed. 1776, I, 21. Repeated in Campbell MSS, I, 142.

C. 'The Laird of Logie,' a stall-copy printed by M. Randall, Stirling. The same in Motherwell's MS., p. 504, and in Maidment's Scotish Ballads and Songs, p. 8, 'The young Laird of Logie.'

D. 'Young Logie,' Harris MS., fol. 16.

E. 'The Laird o Logie, or, May Margaret,' Motherwell's Minstrelsy, p. 56, one stanza.

A

Scott's Minstrelsy, 1833, III, 128, "as recited by a gentleman residing near Biggar."

1 I WILL sing, if ye will hearken,
If ye will hearken unto me;
The king has taen a poor prisoner,
The wanton laird o Young Logie.

2 Young Logie 's laid in Edinburgh chapel,
Carmichael 's the keeper o the key;
And May Margaret 's lamenting sair,
A' for the love of Young Logie.

3 'Lament, lament na, May Margaret,
And of your weeping let me be;
For ye maun to the king himsell,
To seek the life of Young Logie.'

4 May Margaret has kilted her green cleiding,
And she has curld back her yellow hair:
'If I canna get Young Logie's life,
Farewell to Scotland for evermair!'

5 When she came before the king,
She knelit lowly on her knee:
'O what 's the matter, May Margaret?
And what needs a' this courtesie?'

6 'A boon, a boon, my noble liege,
A boon, a boon, I beg o thee,
And the first boon that I come to crave
Is to grant me the life of Young Logie.'

7 'O na, O na, May Margaret,
Forsooth, and so it mauna be;
For a' the gowd o fair Scotland
Shall not save the life of Young Logie.'

8 But she has stown the king's redding-kaim,
Likewise the queen her wedding knife,
And sent the tokens to Carmichael,
To cause Young Logie get his life.

9 She sent him a purse o the red gowd,
Another o the white monie;
She sent him a pistol for each hand,
And bade him shoot when he gat free.

10 When he came to the Tolbooth stair,
There he let his volley flee;
It made the king in his chamber start,
Een in the bed where he might be.

11 'Gae out, gae out, my merrymen a',
And bid Carmichael come speak to me;
For I 'll lay my life the pledge o that
That yon 's the shot o Young Logie.'

12 When Carmichael came before the king,
He fell low down upon his knee;
The very first word that the king spake
Was, Where 's the laird of Young Logie?

13 Carmichael turnd him round about,
I wot the tear blinded his ee:
'There came a token frae your Grace
Has taen away the laird frae me.'

14 'Hast thou playd me that, Carmichael?
And hast thou playd me that?' quoth he;
'The morn the Justice Court 's to stand,
And Logie's place ye maun supplie.'

15 Carmichael 's awa to Margaret's bower,
Even as fast as he may dree:
'O if Young Logie be within,
Tell him to come and speak with me.'

16 May Margaret turnd her round about,
I wot a loud laugh laughed she:
'The egg is chippd, the bird is flown,
Ye 'll see nae mair of Young Logie.'

17 The tane is shipped at the pier of Leith,
The tother at the Queen's Ferrie,
And she 's gotten a father to her bairn,
The wanton laird of Young Logie.

Figure 1. 'The Laird o Logiie' from F. J. Child *English and Scottish Popular Ballads,* Vol. 3:182.

'The Laird o Drum': Marriage [229]

Introduction

In 1681 or 1682, Sir Alexander Irvine, the eponymous 'The Laird o Drum', at the age of 63 married his second wife, 16 year-old Margaret (Peggy) Coutts – the 'shepherd lassie' of the ballad.[230] His first wife was Lady Mary Gordon, (b.1610) daughter of the 2nd Marquis of Huntly, George Gordon and a niece of the Marquis of Argyll.[231] She was one of ten siblings, the fourth of five daughters and died in 1674 at the age of 64. Such are the bare historical facts. The ballad-maker/s have taken the salient points of this one episode in the lives of Peggy Coutts and Alexander Irvine and created a ballad narrative that reflects the matters they consider worthy of note. To the 'emotional purpose' of which Buchan writes must be added the 'strong unequivocal feeling there must be at the heart of a ballad' that Muir regards essential.[232] In the case of 'Drum', for the ballad-maker, history provided both: they are found in the cultural and social significance of Peggy Coutts breaching the rigid social structures of seventeenth-century Scotland to become the Lady of one of the most prominent Houses in Aberdeenshire. It also gives a ballad-maker's eye-view of society and social mores of the day dealing as it does with social status, marrying above and below one's station in life, wedding conventions, patriarchy, a woman's place and expectations and education as a status marker.

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[229] Child 236, G-D 4:835.
In a reprint of C. K. Sharpe 'A Ballad Book' (1823) David Laing (ed.), (London and Edinburgh, William Blackwood and Son, 1880) the editor has included 'notes and ballads from the unpublished mss. of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, esq., and Sir Walter Scott, bart.' Included, is an undated memorandum by Scott in which he writes 'NOTES on the WRITTEN BALLADS beginning with SKENE'S' of which there are 26. At No.13 'The Laird o' Drum and the Shepherd's Daughter' Scott comments, 'Drum is quite new to me.'
However, Child's 'C' text is noted as a 'M.S. copy formerly in the possession of Sir Walter Scott; communicated by the Rev. W. Forbes-Leith through Mr Macmath.' Which suggests that it was a late, post-1803 addition to Scott's canon. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark:/13960/t12n6hp0p&seq=191 (Accessed March 2025).

[230] Lieutenant-Colonel Jonathan Forbes Leslie, *The Irvines of Drum and Collateral Branches* (Aberdeen, 1909), p.129-130.

[231] John Spalding, *Memorialls of the Trubles in Scotland and England AD 1624-AD 1645*, 2 Volumes, Dr. John Stuart (ed.), (Aberdeen, for the Spalding Club, 1850), Vol. 2 p.17.
His chronicles were first published in Aberdeen in 1792 and re-edited in 1829. The 1850 edition is regarded as the most accurate. See also the article by David Stevenson, 'The Inappropriate Fate of John Spalding' in *The Scottish Historical Review* Volume LXXVI: No.199 (April 1996), pp.98-100, Leslie, *Irvines* p.107 note 1.

144. Willa Muir, *Living With Ballads* p.86.

Sources

Apart from the Drum family papers held by The National Trust for Scotland in the Drum Castle Archives, three secondary works provide most of the historical information used to contextualise this ballad: the two-volume 1850 edition of John Spalding's *Memorialls of the Trubles in Scotland and England AD1624-AD1645, The Irvines of Drum and Collateral Branches* and *A Short Account of the Family of Irvine*.[233]. The first of these covers only a twenty-one-year period, but Spalding, a seventeenth-century historian from Aberdeen, was contemporaneous with the events he describes and as such, provides a considerable amount of information on young Alexander Irvine's early involvement in post-1643 Royalist activities. It is unfortunate that his chronicle covers such a short period as the 'trubles' of which he writes continued for another year and we lose sight of young Drum's activities. There are few mentions of Lady Mary in Spalding's chronicle and the reader is left with only glimpses and impressions of her relationship with her young husband and her involvement in affairs of the time. J. F. Leslie's account of the Irvines of Drum utilises Spalding quite freely, but his extensive use of other sources provides a more comprehensive account of the 11th Laird after 1645 and especially following his assumption of the Lairdship in 1658. The emphasis of Wimberley's volume again follows Spalding but then deals with legal matters relating to Drum's estate and provisions of his will.

Child provides six variants (A-F); two other ballads, neither of which mention either Drum or Peggy Coutts, feature in an appendix along with two, three-stanza fragments. Greig-Duncan provides 26 variants (A-Z) with notes on dates of collection on pp.552-553 of Volume 4.[234] 'Drum' also features in Gavin Greig's *Folk-Song of the North-East* along with further notes on the ballad.[235]

Background

The Lairds of Drum were men of considerable standing. A hereditary line of minor aristocrats whose pedigree as landed gentry stretched back to the time of King Robert Bruce who, by charter dated 4th October 1323, erected 'Drom into a free barony' and confirmed his 1322 grant of Drum Royal Forest in Aberdeenshire to

[233] Captain Douglas Wimberley, *A Short Account of the Family of Irvine* (Inverness, 1893).
[234] It should be noted that of Greig-Duncan's 26 variants, 10 are full-length ballads, 5 are three to nine stanza fragments and 11 are one stanza only with musical notation.
[235] Gavin Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East* No.XLVI.

William de Irwin for services rendered as secretary and armour-bearer during Bruce's battles for Scottish Independence.[236] Evidence is sketchy in parts, but successive Lairds of Drum seem to have retained a close relationship with their respective monarchs. Apart from the original grant of part of Drum Forest he inherited, around 1411/12, Alexander Irwyne, the fourth Laird, then acquired the territory of Forglen from the Abbot of Aberbrothoc (Arbroath). Along with the property came the guardianship of the 'Bracbenoch' (*sic*), the consecrated banner of St Columba, the protection of which had been vouchsafed to the Abbey by the Abbey's founder, King William the Lion, in 1178. Considerable kudos must have resulted from this 'inheritance', but along with the Bracbannoch came the duty and financial obligation to raise both the banner and the vassals of Forglen on behalf of the monarchy in defence and support of King and country when called upon to do so.[237] The Irvines retained this landholding until 1624, but the raising of Forglen was abolished shortly after the Reformation – the Brecbannoch has been lost to posterity.[238] This same 4th Laird was one of the Scottish Commissioners employed on the embassy to England to negotiate for the release and ransom of King James I and who was knighted by the King in 1424 for his loyal service.[239] His father, the third Laird, had been knighted in 1410 whilst fighting in France under the leadership of the Earl of Mar, but died at the Battle of Harlaw in 1411.[240] His demise is remarked on in two stanzas in a variant of the ballad of the same name that have a resemblance to the 'praise-song' verses in the previously discussed *The Gododdin* in that both are eulogistic verses that celebrate a fallen warrior's personal attributes and martial prowess in battle .[241]

<u>Gododdin</u>
Ceredig, beloved leader,
Ferocious champion in battle,
Battlefield's gold-fretted shield,
Spears broken to bits, splintered,
Sword-stroke furious, not feeble,
Like a man he'd hold the spearmen's post.
Before earth's grief, befor suffering,
Firm in purpose he'd stand his ground.

<u>The Battle of Harlaw</u>
Gude Sir Alexander Irving,
The much renounit laird o' Drum:
Nane in his days were better sene,
When they were semblit all and sum.
To praise him we suld na be dumm
For valour wit and worthiness;
To end his days he there did cum
Quhois ransom is remeidiless.

[236] Leslie, *Irvines* pp.18-21, pp.17-18, Note 4. and p.20 for reproduction of the Charter.
[237] *Ibid* pp.38-42.
[238] The Brecbannoch was at one time associated with the Monymusk Reliquary, now held by the National Museum of Scotland.
[239] Wimberley, *A Short Account* p.4.
[240] Wimberley, *A Short Account* p.2, Leslie, *Irvines,* pp.32 and 34.
[241] Wimberley, *A Short Account* p.3, Leslie, *Irvines* p.38, Clancy, *The Triumph Tree* p.54.

These close ties of service and support to the monarchy are demonstrated in a later letter dated 29th June 1612 at Greenwich, directed under the Privy Seal, superscribed and sent by King James VI 'To our trusty and well beloved Laird of Drum' bestowing gracious thanks for an unmentioned 'piece of service' done in Scotland.[242] Successive generations of Irvines inherited the royal lands of Drum, acquired further land-holdings and by the mid-1600s held extensive estates notably in Aberdeenshire, Banff, Kincardine and Forfarshire.[243] Wimberley relates 'an old saying that the Laird of Drum could ride his own lands from Drum to Dundee' while the status and importance of the Drum estate in Aberdeenshire is indicated by its naming and position on the c.1590 map of Lower Deeside by Timothy Pont, the only estate to be so identified.[244]

The Lairds of Drum and their siblings had always married well with the majority of spouses coming from landed or aristocratic families, for example, in 1590 the 9th Laird, married Lady Marion Douglas, the daughter of Robert, 4th Earl of Buchan and sister of James V. The five daughters of this marriage all married into titled households.[245] The first son, Alexander Irvine, the 10th Laird, in 1617 married Magdalen, eldest daughter of Sir John Scrimgeour of Dudhope and they had five sons and six daughters. The first of those daughters, Marion, married in 1642, James, the first Viscount Frendraught, son of James Crichton, the Laird of Frendraught who was implicated in the burning of Frendraught Tower in 1630.[246] Margaret, the youngest daughter married Charles, 1st Earl of Aboyne. This marriage became the subject of the ballad 'The Earl of Aboyne' in which the Earl mourns the death of Peggy Irvine who, according to the ballad, died of a broken heart brought on by the Earl's callous treatment of her.[247] No date is given for this marriage but Margaret Irvine died in 1662 and the daughter of this union, Lady Anne Gordon, was 'served heir of Lady Margaret Irvine […] her mother' in June 1665. Stuart Handley's 2014 entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography for

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[242] Wimberley, *A Short Account* p.15.

[243] Wimberley, *A Short Account* p.15. See Leslie, *Irvines* p.96 footnote for list of properties held by Drum c.1650.

[244] Wimberley, *A Short Account* p.15, E.P Dennison, D Ditchburn and M Lynch (eds.), *Aberdeen Before 1800, A New History* (East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 2002), Plate No.25.

[245] Wimberley, *A Short Account* pp.9-10. Leslie, *Irvines,* p.77.

[246] Spalding, *Trubles* Vol. 2. p.97.
Leslie, *Irvines* pp.93-4 and note 1. p.94. For commentaries on, and variants of, the ballad 'The Fire of Frendraught' see: William Stenhouse, *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland* (Edinburgh and London, William Blackwood and Sons, 1853), pp.276-280, Willa Muir, *Living With Ballads* pp.82-94. Child 196, G-D 2:232.

[247] Wimberley, *A Short Account* pp.18-20, Leslie, *Irvines* pp.125-126, Charles Gordon, XI Marquis of Huntly, Earl of Aboyne (ed.), *The Records of Aboyne, MCCXXX-MDCLXXI* (Aberdeen, The Spalding Club.1894), p.552. Child 235, G-D 6:1159. There is nothing in historical records to support the story related in the ballad.

the 1st Earl of Aboyne states that 'Bonnie Peggy Irvine died childless', but this is contradicted by Charles, 11th Marquis of Huntly whose *The Records of Aboyne, MCCXXX-MDCLXXXI*, clearly state that there was a daughter who was 'served heir' as stated above.[248] This considerable catalogue of historical status and renown reflects the standing of the Irvine family over four and a half centuries which makes the 11th Laird's marriage all the more unusual.

Ballad Analysis

The ballad begins with the commonplace of Drum riding out 'All in a morning early' and spying a 'weel faure'd maid' to whom he proposes marriage. But Margaret (Peggy) Coutts, knowing both her place in the social pecking order and the reputation of lairds, responds 'I'm owre low to be Leddy o Drum / And your miss I would scorn to be O.' Nevertheless, her father is consulted, he approves the match and because Peggy is 'always at (her father's) will' they are duly married. Because of its subversion of status and marriage conventions, the ballad-maker's focus is on the 11th Laird's marriage to Peggy Coutts. But there are two marriages in this ballad and although there are only two stanzas that refer directly to Lady Mary Gordon, they give a very skewed version of the couple's marital relationship. The ballad is almost dismissive of Lady Mary Gordon as one whose only interest is in maintaining her status at the expense of her husband's dignity as he is made to remark to his brother:

> The first an wife that I did wed
> She was far above my degree O
> I durstna gang in the room she wis in
> But my hat low by my knee O.
>
> For the first wife that I did wed
> She look'et doon on me O
> She widna walk to the gates of Drum
> But the pearlins abune her bree O. (G-D 'A' sts.18 and 19)

In contriving to show the Laird's obeisance in his wife's presence, the ballad-maker makes him complicit in the maintenance of an established social hierarchy in which he is at one remove down the social ladder from Lady Mary. But the historical facts give a very different profile of the 11th Laird and his Lady.

[248] Charles Gordon, *The Records of Aboyne* pp.552-553. Stuart Handley does not give a specific reference for this.

Their marriage contract having been signed on 8th November 1643, at the age of around twenty-five, 'Vpone Thuirsday, 7th December, the young Laird Drum forsaid wes mariet to the foirsaid Lady Marie Gordoun with gryte solempnitie, and mirth and myrriness aneuch in the Bog at their brydell.'[249] The ballad's emphasis on her status and perceived attachment to worldly goods and gear, betrays Lady Mary's role as young Alexander Irvine's wife. Vows, given and taken in a regular marriage ceremony such as theirs undoubtedly was, were quite straightforward: the woman promised 'to him subjection and obedience' while the man promised 'to keep her to love and entreate her in all things according to the duty of a faithful husband.'[250] The promises made during the marriage ceremony, being fairly non-specific, were open to a degree of interpretation, thus allowing room for manoeuvre and negotiation.[251] But, at the same time, the couple were constrained by inherited marital custom and practices and, although there was no statutory definition of wifely obedience or husbandly duty, institutional commentators of the time did expand on the subject. James Dalrymple, Viscount of Stair, states quite categorically that 'By the custom of Scotland the wife is in the power of the husband' and, given the patriarchal nature of marriage, refers to 'the conjugal power of the husband over the wife, her person and goods.'[252] Dalrymple also reminds his readers of the duty incumbent on the husband: 'Besides the obligations of the married persons who are naturally in the minds and affections of each other […] the obligation of the husband (is) to aliment and provide for the wife in all necessaries for her life, health and ornament, according to their means and quality.'[253] The husband is, by definition, head of his household and its financial management, but the wife held 'superintendence of the domestic economy' which was held to be "her natural and proper province" - this she did on her husband's behalf.[254] It was further incumbent on the wife not to undermine her husband's authority over his household and undermine his masculinity for any misdemeanours or unwise behaviour on her part reflected badly on him, showing him as

[249] Spalding, *Trubles* Vol.2 p.172.
[250] Thomas McLaughlan (ed.), *The Book of Common Order (John Knox's Liturgy*) (1556) (Edinburgh, Edmonston and Dougal, 1873), pp.150-1.
[251] Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power* pp.45-47.
[252] James Dalrymple, Viscount of Stair, *The Institutions of the Law of Scotland* (1681, 2nd Edition 1693), D. Walker (ed.), (Edinburgh, E.U.P., 1981), p.112, p.110.
[253] Dalrymple, *Institutions* p.111.
[254] G. C. H. Paton, 'Husband and Wife' in *An Introduction to Scottish Legal History* (Edinburgh, The Stair Society, 1958), pp.99-115, p106.

being unable to maintain control over her and the household. The relative obligations of a married couple, the checks and balances of the husband's duty and responsibility and the wife's duty of obedience, 'was meaningful to Scots of the period, as it reflected their understanding of married life' and provided a workable framework for living together.[255] Given the sensibilities and social understanding of marriage in the seventeenth century, embarking on a married life, Lady Mary Gordon would have known exactly what was required of her as wife and helpmeet and the ballad-maker's profile of her is entirely at odds with this undermining, as it does, marriage realities of the day. She would never have expected her husband to bow a hatless head in salute to her as he entered her presence, nor would young Drum ever have considered according her such obeisance, irrespective of any perceived difference in their relative status. The ballad-maker would have known this, but it emphasises the ideas of status that are trailed throughout the ballad.

Their wedding took place in 1643, the same year in which the Solemn League and Covenant was drawn up and signed by the Scottish Covenanters and the English Parliamentarians. This was an agreement, or bond, by which the Protestant Covenanting movement in Scotland would assist the English Parliamentarians in their struggle against the Royalists of Charles I in England. In return for this military aid, the Scots Covenanters sought the establishment of a Presbyterian system of church government and worship that would free the Scottish Kirk from King Charles's interference and extirpate the episcopal system in England which was promoted by Charles. The aim was to create a unified, Presbyterian Church across the two countries.[256]

The young Laird was an active opponent of the Solemn League and Covenant and the Covenanters and by his enmity made 'himself so obnoxious to (the Covenanting authorities) by his opposition and violence'[257] that a price of 18,000 merks was offered for his capture 'quick or dead'.[258] In April 1644 young Drum was excommunicated for his refusal to accept the Covenant and bearing arms in support of the royal

[255] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power* p.47.
[256] J. H. S. Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland* (Oxford, O.U.P., 1960), pp.224-5.
[257] Leslie, *Irvines* p.95.
[258] Leslie, *Irvines* p.109.

cause.[259] Two months later he and his brother Robert were captured trying to escape Covenanting forces and were confined to the Tolbooth in Edinburgh, Alexander under sentence of death.[260]

The activities of young Drum and his fellow Royalists brought retaliatory actions that had severe consequences for the whole family. At the beginning of May, around four months after young Alexander Irvine's wedding, the Marquis of Argyll, the Earl Marischal and a regiment of 500 Irishmen marched on Drum Castle. Neither Sir Alexander Irvine nor his eldest son were present and despite Lady Magdalen and Lady Mary extending the courtesy and welcome required of them in those days, Argyll, in short order 'removit the tua ladies and set thame out of yettis perforce (albeit the young ladie wes his awin sister dochter) with tua gray plaidis abou their heidis […] the ladies cam in vpone tua wark naiges in pitifull maner to New Abirdein.'[261] There, they found lodgings with friends. Unceremoniously evicted from her home, mounted on an old work horse, wearing a 'gray pladie' rather than 'pearlins abune her bree' as the ballad would later have it, Lady Mary's 'pitifull' state gave the lie to her aristocratic status. The civil war was no respecter of status or family connections as the treatment of Lady Mary and her mother-in-law by the Covenanting forces shows and once again the picture presented by the ballad runs counter to that of Spalding's real-life reporting.

Even from the scant historical sources available, Lady Mary Gordon seems to have been a woman of character and considerable resource. She remained in Edinburgh during her husband's year-long imprisonment and, although she had no reason to have faith in the Covenanting authorities that had treated the Irvine family so badly, she did not baulk at personally petitioning the Covenanting Parliament to get access to her husband during his incarceration in Edinburgh Castle. This was granted in order 'that she may provide all things necessary for her husband's health', but only 'in the presens of ane ballie'[262] Drum had been moved to Edinburgh Castle as conditions in the Tolbooth put his life at risk – it was her clear duty that she do everything in her power to alleviate her husband's suffering. She was not at all divorced from the realities of life and one who suffered the consequences of a civil war and its aftermath.

[259] Leslie, *Irvines* pp.105, 127. Spalding, *Trubles* Vol. 2 p.343.
[260] Spalding *Trubles* Vol. 2 pp. 379-380. Wimberley, *A Short Account*, p.23.
[261] Spalding, *Trubles* Vol. 2 p355.
[262] *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland* 6th February, 1645.

After the restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, Alexander Irvine, now Laird of Drum in his own right, petitioned Charles II for 'reparation out of the estates of those who had received his fines and detained his rents'.[263] In this he was unsuccessful. The Laird was a wealthy man in terms of land ownership, but because of debts incurred during the civil war, and, no doubt the cost of restoring the Drum estates, the 11th Laird was forced to sell the Barony of Kelly in 1679, from which he realised the sum of £11,000 sterling (c. £132,000 Scots). His other Forfarshire landholdings followed suit.[264] It is not likely therefore that the Laird would have had the financial wherewithal before Lady Mary's death in 1674, to replenish or replace the 'trunk full of siluer plait, goldsmith work, jewellis, chaynes, rings' and other valuables estimated at 'above 20,000 pundis' the plundering Irish troops 'fand yirdit in the yaird of Drum' in 1644.[265] His ability to provide his wife with 'ornament according to (his) means and quality' would have been severely compromised.

The ballad makes no mention of young Drum's involvement in the Covenanting 'trubles', but in all instances he proved himself to be entirely his own man, subject to his own lights, beliefs and convictions, as he later proved in his unconventional marriage to the 'shepherd's daughter' some twenty years after the 'trubles' ended. This characteristic is given further credence in the ballad by his refusal to be deflected from his decision despite his family's furious opposition to the marriage, his patent desire to wed Peggy and the delight he shows in the stanzas that welcome her to Drum castle. (G-D 'A' sts. 13-14; 22-23).

The Laird's first marriage to Lady Mary is used as contrast to the uniqueness of his wedding to Margaret Coutts. Lady Mary is the daughter of a Marquis whereas Peggy is the 'sheepherds daughter',[266] Lady Mary is a spendthrift and, apparently, jewel-bedecked at every turn, Peggy says that home-spun suits her just fine, Lady Mary would have had the benefit of an education as befitted her status while Peggy 'can neither read nor write', learning only what was needed to be useful on her father's farm. The ballad-maker's character

[263] Leslie, *Irvines* p.128. 'Rents were not just monies paid, but the produce of the estate; farm animals, grain, dairy produce, poultry and so on. It was this that the Covenanting occupiers of Drum lived on and distributed to others.
[264] *Ibid* p.129.
[265] Spalding, *Trubles* p.354-5, Leslie, *Irvines,* p.106.
[266] Ewan W.M. Balfour-Melville (ed.), *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* Vol. 15 (1690) (Edinburgh, 1967). Peggy Coutts was still being referred to in this disparaging way during the acrimonious debate about the tenancy of Drum Hall that followed the Laird's death in October 1687. By this time, 1690, she was married to Robert Irvine of Cults, a fellow trustee of Drum estate.

portrayal of Peggy Coutts is finely drawn. She is a 16-year-old who has been brought up to fulfil the work obligations inherent in her status as a daughter of the farm and whose expectations would probably have been to marry into a similar farming family, or, to take these skills into service, and these are what her father suggests would fit her for Drum's household retinue:

> Bit weel can she milk baith cous and ewes
> For I lairned the lassie mysel' O
>
> She'll work in yer barn she'll winnie yer corn
> She'll gang to mull or kill O
> In time o' need she'll saddle yer steed
> And draw yer boots herself O. (G-D 'A', sts. 8/9)

The fact that she can 'neither read nor write' further disqualifies her from a move up the social ladder. Peggy's lowly status is further remarked on by the behaviour of the 'four and twenty knights' whose refusal to lift their hats in welcome of the new Lady of Drum was a huge slight of conventional etiquette.

Lynn Wollstadt detects in Drum a level of remorse at his choice of bride, asserting that 'Drum puts himself in a situation he cannot control when he insists on marrying a girl who is socially beneath him' while 'The woman […] is married against her will to a social superior who may regret his decision.' She bases this interpretation on Peggy's initial rejection of the Laird because she think she is 'ower low', Drum's questioning as to 'Fa will bake my bridal breed / Or fa will brew my ale O'[267] and his statement that, had they been of equal degree, 'We micht hae baith gane doon the street / Mang the best of compan'ye O'.[268] But this reading does not take account of the cultural intent behind the ballad as both Peggy and the ballad-maker celebrate Peggy's elevation in status and how her marriage breached social and cultural barriers to make her the social equal of her husband. That Peggy's father handed her 'to the laird like the piece of property she would have legally been' puts a feminist spin on a situation that takes no account of marital circumstances pertaining in the seventeenth century and 'burden(s) the past with the cultural values of the present.'[269] Women were indeed subject to a level of parental control and no doubt Drum's first wife, Lady Mary Gordon, was subject to even

[267] This is a ballad commonplace – see, for example, 'Fair Annie' Child 62 'A' stanzas 2-3, G-D 6:1161.
[268] Lynn Wollstadt, 'Controlling Women' p.312.
[269] Cowan, *The Ballad in Scottish History* p.109.

tighter constrictions given she was of the aristocracy. But, any contracting of the marriage bond had to have the **consent** of both partners - 'the one thing sufficient and indispensable to its completion.'[270] Had Peggy Coutts not consented to the marriage, no marriage would have taken place despite any demands by her father, since 'The Chief restriction upon the father's powers lay in his inability to force a child to marry against his or her will and to prevent his children entering into a valid marriage without his consent.'[271] So, there is nothing to suggest she was 'married against her will'. Also, considering the Laird of Drum's character, his steadfast opposition to, and his refusal to comply with, Covenanting demands, it is entirely unlikely that he would have been unable to control his own marital matters.

The ballad-maker channels the Irvine family's horror at the Laird's marriage to Peggy Coutts through 'his ae brother' / 'brother John':

> Then up and spak his ae brother
> Ye've deen us mickle wrang O
> Ye've marrit a wife 'neath your degree
> A disgrace to a' were kin O. (G-D 'A' st.15.)

In an age when 'Priority in wealth, reputation, age and status was seen as an important criterion when selecting a marriage partner', Drum had offended in every respect.[272] Both Drum and Peggy Coutts breached 'the most basic social division' between those who owned the land – the nobility and the lairds, and those who occupied it.[273] A woman's status was defined by her relationship to a male relative or employer.[274] As a shepherd's daughter, a similar social criterion would have applied to her as it did to the upper echelons of society and, in ordinary circumstances, she would have been expected to marry within her own kind. In the ballad Peggy has an acute awareness of her own lowly standing in the social pecking order. She initially rejects Drum's marriage proposal - 'For I'm far owre low to be Leddy o the Drum' and likewise his 'gowns of silk':

> I canna wear yer gowns o silk,
> They would harrel at my heel O;

[270] Ronald Ireland, 'Post-Reformation Canon Law of Marriage' in *An Introduction to Scottish Legal History* (Edinburgh, Stair Society, 1958), pp.82-89.
[271] A.E. Anton, 'Parent and Child' in *An Introduction to Scottish Legal History* (Edinburgh, Stair Society, 1958), pp.116-124, p.119.
[272] Ian D. Whyte, *Scotland's Society and Economy in Transition 1500-1760* (Basingstoke, MacMillan Press, 1997), p.59.
[273] R.A. Houston, *Scottish Literacy and Scottish Identity* (Cambridge, C.U.P., 1985), p.30.
[274] Whyte, *Scotland's Society* p.59. See also Leah Leneman ' "No Unsuitable Match": Defining Rank in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Scotland' in *Journal of Social History* Vol. 33:2 (Oxford, O.U.P., 2000), pp.665-682.

But wel can I wear the colour o the ewe,
It becomes my body well O. (G-D 'A', st.6)

Her innocence of literacy is not surprising since such literary ability was 'firmly related to factors such as social class, economic need and the sort of environment in which people lived and worked.'[275] That the Laird intended to 'learn the lassie to read an write / (and) put her to the school, O' shows that the Laird, and the ballad-maker, are both very aware of the necessity of education as a status marker and that reading and writing are skills which would enable her to undertake her household duties as a married lady of rank.[276] Drum is also aware that in marrying Peggy he is raising her above her station and the ballad emphasises his reassurances that she is indeed the Lady of Drum. (G-D 'A' sts.13,14, 22 and 23).

With 'The Laird of Drum' the ballad world finds itself rubbing shoulders with the real world. Lady Mary wears 'the pearlins abune her bree', was 'adored but for her gold' (G-D 'A' sts.19-20) and lived in Drum castle as the ballad world would have her. Drum himself is described as 'big and gaucy' (G-D 'A' st.16) and as 'a wealthy laddie'. (Child 'A' st.9). Descriptions such as these are in keeping with ballad-world narrative imperatives, and the ballads, as Muir notes, were part of the inheritance of ordinary folks' cultural inheritance.[277] Into these songs the ballad-makers projected the common peoples' ideas of how their aristocratic overlords lived: they inhabited castles and towers, servants looked after their 'milk-white steeds' that were stabled with 'the black, the black' and 'the brown, the brown' – horses that were 'silver shod before / wi beaten gold behind.'[278] Men were handsome and maids were 'weel-faur'd', well dressed in silks, satins and in the case of 'Lady Maisry', she wore 'gowns of silk sae fine / Her coats stood up wi bolts o gold'.[279] All were richly endowed with land, jewels, rings and other trappings of aristocratic wealth and entitlement. The ballad world of nobility was a closed world, outwith the ken of rural folk – a world where lords and ladies 'eat the guid white bread / and drink the claret wine' while those who sang about them dined on oatmeal and

[275] Houston, *Scottish Literacy and Scottish Identity* p.34.
[276] *Ibid* Houston notes that women of nobility and gentry '[…] would have had better access to education in schools and at home and, in the case of landowners, can be seen taking a close interest in household and estate management from an early date' p.59. (This is supported by the letters featured in the next case study, 'Jamie Douglas').
[277] Willa Muir, *Living With Ballads* p.79.
[278] 'Child Maurice' – Child 83, G-D 2:214, 'The Lass of Roch Royal' - Child 76, G-D 6:1226, Mrs Brown No.12.
[279] 'Thomas o Yonderdale' Child 253.

whatever else the land could provide that did not go to landlords as rental payment in kind.[280] But 'The Laird o Drum' and his Lady wife lived in the real world the ballad does not enter – a world in the aftermath of a civil war, loss of home and many of the trappings of an aristocratic lifestyle, and the Irvine family's on-going battle to pay the debts and fines incurred during that civil war.

The 'strong unequivocal feeling' that Muir says is so important to ballads is demonstrated in the ballad through both Drum's delight at having such a 'beauty' as Peggy Coutts for a 'bonnie bride', his pragmatic decision to have 'marrit a wife to work and win' and Peggy's own fierce satisfaction at having got such a husband. And it is the ballad-maker and Peggy who have the last words in an egalitarian sentiment that predates Burns' 'A Man's A Man For A' That'[281] by almost a century:

> I tell's ye weel ere we were wed
> Ye wis far too high for me O
> But noo I'm wed an in your bed laid
> An I'm jist as guid as ye O
>
> When I am deid an you are deid
> An baith in one grave laid O
> They wid need to look wi very clear een
> To ken yere mould by mine O. [282] (G-D 'A' sts.28-29)

Dating

One of the main problems with ballads such as this one is dating. Studies have shown that ballads go through processes of creation and re-creation whereby stanzas are added, variants evolve and the story gets 'padded out' or 'thinned down' depending on the performer's inclinations. Granted, in the case of 'Drum', the 'oldest version that has been recovered was written down in 1802' (Child 'B') and although Emily Lyle points out that 'The ballad is not known before the nineteenth century'[283] Cowan makes the point that some ballads 'were

[280] 'The Kitchie-boy' Child 252, The Kitchie Boy G-D 5:1048, 'The Bonnie Foot-Boy' Mrs Brown No.27.

[281] Ian McIntyre, *A Life of Robert Burns* (London, Flamingo, 1996), pp.375-376: the song shows 'Burns's savage contempt for rank […]. See also Thomas Crawford, *Burns: A Study of the Poems and Songs* (1960), (Edinburgh, Cannongate, 1994), pp.237-256 where he discusses Burns as a 'poet of democracy'.

[282] A similar sentiment is more gruesomely expressed in 'Lamkin' (Child 93 'A' sts.21-22). When Lamkin asks the nurse to get a basin to catch Lady Wearie's blood because she is 'come of noble kin' she retorts: 'There's need nae basin Lamkin / Let it run through the floor / What's better is the heart's blood / O the rich than o the poor.'

[283] Emily Lyle (ed.), *Scottish Ballads* (Edinburgh, Canongate Press, 1994), pp.277-8.

transmitted by means of the oral tradition over a fairly lengthy period of time.'[284] This certainly seems to be the case with 'Drum' given the ballad's popularity and the number of variants it has, especially in the North-East. And Cowan's remark that the aristocracy occasionally 'provided spicy nuggets of scandal which were promptly balladised', certainly applies to the 11th Laird o Drum.[285] It is important to anchor the songs and ballads in as accurate a social and historical setting as possible and one marker from 'The Laird o Drum' comes from the inclusion that something Peggy Coutts *cannot* do: 'Your china cups I canna wash / Nor mak a cup o' tea O'. Since tea is reputed to have only been introduced into Scotland in 1680 by Mary of Modena, the Italian consort of King James VII, when she served up the first cup in Edinburgh Castle, the reference to china cups and cups o' tea is clearly outwith the historical parameters of the event.[286] It suggests that either the ballad was written somewhat later than the event or, more likely, that this was a later addition to the ballad, added at a time when it would have cultural relevance as further status marker. Tea was a very expensive beverage until well into the eighteenth century and even then not generally available to the lower classes. Of Child's seven variants only 'E' mentions china cups and tea while nine of Greig-Duncan's variants have a stanza that mentions the beverage which suggests that they may be later variants than the ones that do not or, are later additions to existing variants.

History does not tell us why the elderly Laird married the youthful Margaret Coutts. Leslie relates that she 'had been an attendant on Lady Mary Irvine', but Lady Mary died in 1674 when Peggy Coutts was just eight or nine years old, so this is unlikely to have been the case.[287] Leslie also states that Peggy's 'youth, beauty and ability' were enough in themselves to account for the Laird's second marriage.[288] Even so, there must have been more to Peggy Coutts than that which met the eye for the Laird to have assigned her, under the terms and conditions of his will, as 'principle trustee of his property and of his heir, his son of his first marriage.'[289]

[284] Child 'B' variant is from 'Skene MS p.78 taken down from recitation in the north of Scotland, 1802-3'. Cowan, 'Introduction' in *The Ballad in Scottish History,* p.13.
[285] *Ibid* Cowan, p.13.
[286] https://www.bostonteapartyship.com/tea-blog/the-first-tea-in-scotland (Accessed January / February 2022)
[287] Leslie, *Irvines* p.129-130.
[288] *Ibid.*
[289] *Ibid* p.130.

In his discussion of the relationship between the ballad and history, Cowan remarks that there was little to choose between living conditions c.1450 and c.1750 – 'shelter, diet, clothing and environment' were much the same and that 'the vast majority of the population still lived on the land.'[290] Here, they led their 'bleak existence', 'eking out a living' and there is considerable irony in the ballad when the laird is made to declare 'I've marrit a wife tae work and win' – the ballad-maker's not-so-oblique reference perhaps to Drum's own on-going problems of 'eking out a living', relatively speaking, given the debts incurred during his Royalist activities during the 'trubles'.[291] Further, in view of the earlier discussion of Lairds' attitudes towards the females of their demesne, there is a certain piquancy in the social nicety of having Drum asking for 'Janet's' (Peggy's) father's 'guidwill' and permission to marry her; in this instance, taking the ballad out of the 'ballad world' and into the reality of everyday life of the ordinary folk.

Conclusion

Despite the historical circumstances of the time, the ballad does not reflect in any way the political or religious tension or on-going Scottish struggles against English predations. With 'The Laird o Drum', the ballad-maker has taken the historical reality of the marriage of Peggy Coutts and Alexander Irvine and created a ballad that celebrates a wedding that breached social barriers and flouted marriage orthodoxies of the time. Society in the seventeenth century was so structured as to ensure that people married within the bounds of their own social classes and that the Laird of Drum did not was the cause of both consternation in his family and a celebration in ballad form. The ballad-maker both reflects history and manipulates it to present Drum's wedding as a reflection of the thoughts and feelings of the community to what they regarded as a particularly satisfying mis-match. In presenting his, or her, own social and cultural priorities 'Drum' stands as a para-historical literary record that lies outwith official recorded history and as such, is part of the historicist continuity that began with *The Gododdin.*

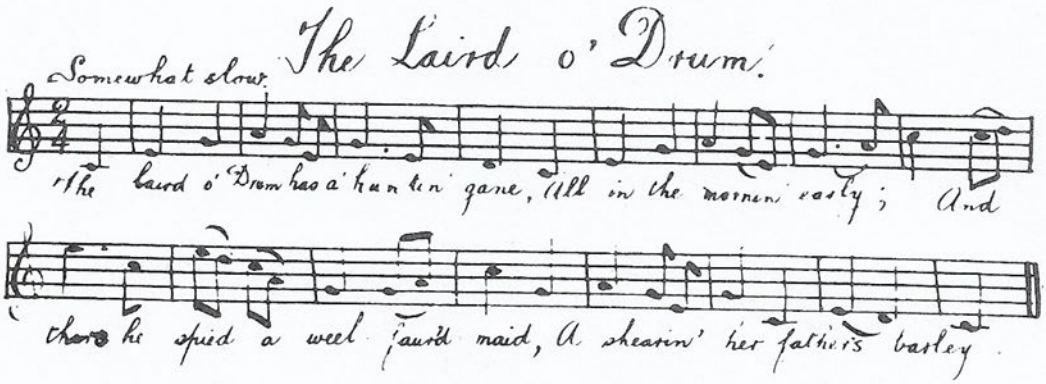
[290] Cowan, 'Introduction' in *The Ballad in Scottish History* p.12.

[291] On 26th March 1677 and again on 21st June 1677, Drum applied to the Privy Council for protection against his creditors who were threatening legal action against him, as he was 'unable as yet to satisfy them.' One of those creditors was his brother, Francis Irvine. *Register of the Privy Council* Series 3 Vol. 5 1676-1678, pp.43 and 175 respectively.

835

THE LAIRD O' DRUM

A



1 The Laird o' Drum's a huntin gane,
All in a mornin early;
And there he spied a weel-faure'd maid
A-shearin her father's barley.

2 Oh will ye fancy me fair maid
Or will ye marry me O,
And gang and be the Leddy o' Drum
And lat your shearin be O.

3 O I mauna fancy you, kind sir
Nor lat my shearin be, O,
For I'm owre low to be Leddy o' Drum
And your miss I would scorn to be O.

4 My father he's an auld shepherd man
Keeps hoggs on yonder hill O, [yearling sheep
And ilka thing he bids me do
I'm always at his will O.

5 But ye'll pit aff the gowns o' grey
Pit on the silk an' scarlet
And come an' be the Leddy o' Drum
And you'l neither be miss nor harlot.

6 I canna wear yer gowns o silk,
They wid harrel at my heel O;
But wel can I wear the colour o the ewe,
It becomes my body well O.

7 Now he has to her father gane,
Keeping hoggs on yonder hill, O,
I'm come to marry your a'e dachter
If ye'll gi'e your good will, O.

8 My dachter can neither read nor write
She was never taught at school O,
Bit weel can she milk baith cous an ewes
For I lairned the lassie mysel' O.

9 She'll work in yer barn, she'll winnie yer corn
She'l gang to mull or kill O.
In time o' need she'l saddle yer steed
And draw yer boots hersel O.

10 I'll learn the lassie to read an write,
I'll put her to the school, O,
And she'll never need to saddle my steed
Nor draw my boots hersel' O.

11 But fa will bake my bridal breed
Or fa will brue my ale O
An fa will welcome the Leddy o' Drum
Is mair than I can tell O.

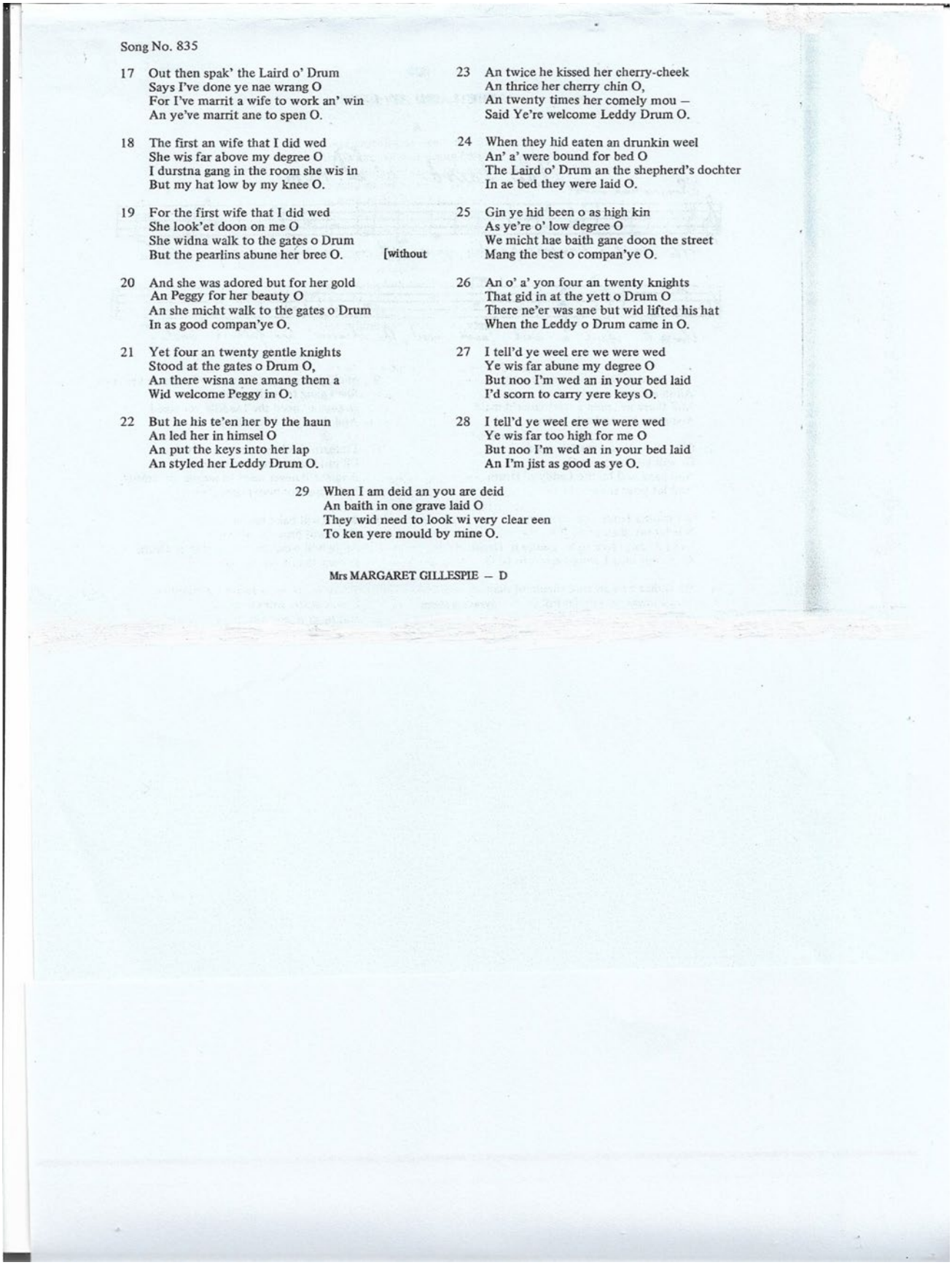
12 There wis four an twenty gentlemen
Stood at the gates o' Drum O
But ne'er a' ane put his hand tull his hat
When the Leddy o' Drum came in O.

13 But he his te'en her by the hand
And led her but an ben, O
Says, You're welcome hame, my Leddy Drum
For this is a' yere ain O.

14 An he has ta'en her by the hand
An led her through the ha', O
Says You're welcome hame my Leddy Drum
To youre bowers ane an' a', O.

15 Then up an spak' his ae brother
Ye've deen us mickle wrang O
Ye've marrit a wife 'neath your degree
A disgrace to a' were kin O.

16 Peggy Couts is a bonnie bride
And Drum is big and gaucey [plump; handsome
But he micht hae chosen a higher match
Than jist a shepherd's lassie.



Song No. 835

17 Out then spak' the Laird o' Drum
Says I've done ye nae wrang O
For I've marrit a wife to work an' win
An ye've marrit ane to spen O.

18 The first an wife that I did wed
She wis far above my degree O
I durstna gang in the room she wis in
But my hat low by my knee O.

19 For the first wife that I did wed
She look'et doon on me O
She widna walk to the gates o Drum
But the pearlins abune her bree O. [without

20 And she was adored but for her gold
An Peggy for her beauty O
An she micht walk to the gates o Drum
In as good compan'ye O.

21 Yet four an twenty gentle knights
Stood at the gates o Drum O,
An there wisna ane amang them a
Wid welcome Peggy in O.

22 But he his te'en her by the haun
An led her in himsel O
An put the keys into her lap
An styled her Leddy Drum O.

23 An twice he kissed her cherry-cheek
An thrice her cherry chin O,
An twenty times her comely mou –
Said Ye're welcome Leddy Drum O.

24 When they hid eaten an drunkin weel
An' a' were bound for bed O
The Laird o' Drum an the shepherd's dochter
In ae bed they were laid O.

25 Gin ye hid been o as high kin
As ye're o' low degree O
We micht hae baith gane doon the street
Mang the best o compan'ye O.

26 An o' a' yon four an twenty knights
That gid in at the yett o Drum O
There ne'er was ane but wid lifted his hat
When the Leddy o Drum came in O.

27 I tell'd ye weel ere we were wed
Ye wis far abune my degree O
But noo I'm wed an in your bed laid
I'd scorn to carry yere keys O.

28 I tell'd ye weel ere we were wed
Ye wis far too high for me O
But noo I'm wed an in your bed laid
An I'm jist as good as ye O.

29 When I am deid an you are deid
An baith in one grave laid O
They wid need to look wi very clear een
To ken yere mould by mine O.

Mrs MARGARET GILLESPIE – D

Figure 2. 'The Laird o Drum' from *The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection,* Volume 4:835.

'Jamie Douglas': Break-up of Marriage[292]

Introduction

The eponymous subject of the ballad 'Jamie Douglas' was born c. 1646, the son of Archibald, Earl of Angus and his first wife, Lady Anna Stewart. Archibald died in 1655 when James was but a boy. Upon his father's death, James inherited the courtesy title Earl of Angus and in 1660 upon the death of his grandfather, William Douglas, the first Marquis, the 14-year-old James succeeded to the family estates and titles as the second Marquis of Douglas.[293] Ten years later in 1670, he married Barbara, the eldest daughter of John, fourth Earl of Mar, but the marriage did not last long. By 1676 the Privy Council was involved in their domestic issues and a meeting of the Council in Edinburgh on 22nd February 1677, the Lords, considering a complaint by 'the "Ladey Marques" of Dowglas against the "Lord Marques"[…] ordain the Marquis to pay to Earl of Marr, 2000 merks on a six days' charge'.[294] This was an interim payment made to Barbara Erskine through the offices of her brother Charles, now the Earl of Mar, until such times as Douglas, himself a member of the Council, could attend Council and deal with the matter. Finally, in February 1681, a formal contract of separation was agreed whereby Barbara Erskine 'was to receive an aliment of three thousand merks yearly, and live apart.'[295] Fraser notes that Douglas 'seems to have been averse to the separation' and had it not been for the continued baleful influence on Douglas by his chamberlain, William Lawrie, they may indeed have worked through their differences.[296] The ballad is a first person narration from the perspective of Lady Barbara and it is evident that the ballad-maker's sympathies lie entirely with the Lady as she laments the breakdown of her marriage, castigating William Lawrie for his false dealings with her and her husband.

Sources

Apart from the family papers relating to the Douglas family held by the National Records of Scotland in Edinburgh, the best source is the four-volume *The Douglas Book* by William Fraser which draws on the archived

[292] Child 204.
[293] William Fraser, *The Douglas Book* 4 Volumes (Edinburgh, 1885), Vol. 2 pp.445-460, p445.
[294] P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* Series 3, Vol. 5 (1676-1678), p.122.
[295] Fraser, *Douglas* Vol. 2 p.450.
[296] James Maidment, *Scottish Ballads and Songs* (Edinburgh, William Paterson, 1868), pp.262-273, p.262

records.[297] Sir Herbert Maxwell's *A History of the House of Douglas* is itself mostly reliant on the Fraser volumes, particularly volume 4, 'Correspondence', but Maxwell does not add much to the account of the 2nd Marquis. In July 1671, at the age of twenty-five, Douglas became a member of the Privy Council of Scotland.[298] There are many records of his attendance at, and participation in, Council business including pursuit of his own business interests, but there is only one mention of his marital difficulties. Child's is the only collection of those used in this thesis to feature this ballad, but he records fifteen variants from the following sources:

1. Kinloch Manuscripts – variants A – E
2. Motherwell Manuscripts – variants F – K
3. Finlay's 'Scottish Ballads' Vol. 2 – variant L (a compilation of three copies)
4. Herd's Manuscripts and Herd's 'Scottish Songs' (1776) – variant M (five random stanzas).
5. Motherwell's 'Minstrelsy' – variants O and N, which are three, and one, stanza fragments respectively.

Background

The breakdown of the marriage is attributed to the Marquis's chamberlain and factor, William Lawrie, also known as the Tutor, or Laird, of Blackwood, whose falsehoods about Barbara's infidelity led to her husband disavowing her. Why Blackwood would go to such extents to break up the couple's marriage has never been fully established. There appears to have been some speculation that 'The Laird of Blackwood and the Marquis were rivals in the affections of a lovely and amiable young lady, who, preferring the latter, became his wife' and this was the reason for Blackwood's later slander.[299] But Lady Barbara was only around twenty years of age when she married Douglas in 1670[300] and William Lawrie had been married to Marion Weir of Blackwood since 1645,[301] five years before Barbara Erskine was born. A more prosaic reason may have been Lawrie's fear of loss of influence over Douglas to his wife and her family's interference in Douglas estate affairs.

[297] William Fraser *The Douglas Book* 4 Volumes (Edinburgh, 1885).
[298] *R. P. C.* Series 3 Vol. 3 (1669-1672), p.346.
[299] G. R. Kinloch (ed.), *Ancient Scottish Ballads* (London, Longman, 1827), pp.58-64. Kinloch refers to this in the Introduction to his variant of the ballad entitled 'The Laird of Blackwood', Child's 'E' variant.
[300] Sir James Balfour Paul, *The Scots Peerage* Vol. 5 (Edinburgh, David Douglas,1908), p.626. Barbara Erskine was the third child born to John, 4th Earl of Mar and his second wife, Lady Jean Mackenzie whom he married towards the end of 1647. (Contract dated 8th October 1647). Barbara, therefore, could be no younger than 20.
[301] Alexander Du Toit, 'Lawrie, William' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.* (Accessed December 2022)

It appears that Lawrie was not well liked or trusted by anyone other than his employer; tenants, dependants and family found him 'hypocritical and double dealing'.[302] Douglas's sister, the Lady Margaret Douglas, certainly had no illusions about Blackwood's capabilities and character for, in July 1674, she wrote him a long letter in which she castigates him for his handling of family affairs and his pernicious influence over her brother, ending her letter, 'yow have putt disensione among near friends by lyes and unjust designs, and quhatever evill shall befall my brother abroad, yow have a hand in it […]'[303] Sir John Lauder of Fountainhall, recorder of Council and Session decisions, in January, 1683, wrote of Lawrie as 'late chamberlain to the Marquis of Douglas and bad instrument between him and his Lady in their differences' and, with reference to Lawrie's treasonous involvement with the Covenanters at the Battle of Bothwell Bridge, his subsequent trial and death sentence,[304] Lauder notes 'though the interlocutor is of a most dangerous consequence, yet it could not have happened to any that was less regarded or worse beloved than Blackwood'.[305] Kirkton relates Lawrie as being 'a man of but an indifferent character.'[306]

Fraser characterises Jamie Douglas as 'morose and peevish, and incapable of managing his own affairs'.[307] The particular skill of mis-management Douglas seems to have inherited from his father, Archibald, whose own profligacy with the family silver left the Douglas estates in a parlous condition, leaving Jamie Doulgas, according to Fraser, less than £1000 Scots annually to 'maintain himself and household and meet the expenses of necessary law pleas.'[308] Jamie Douglas then, inherited an estate facing financial ruin only for the situation to 'become greatly complicated under bad management; and the chief record of (Jamie Douglas's)

[302] Fraser, *Douglas* Vol. 2 p.451.
[303] Fraser, *Douglas* Vol. 4 pp.273-6.
[304] The sentence was not carried out due to Dougla's intervention of the grounds that Lawrie was needed to manage his estate.
[305] Sir John Lauder, *The Decisions of the Lords of Council and Session 1678-1712* (Edinburgh, 1759), p.196, p.214. *R.P.C.* Vol. 7 (1681-1683), pp. 593-594 for the charges of treason brought against Lawrie. For an account of Lawrie's journey through courts on the charge of treason and Douglas's petitions on his behalf, see *R.P.C.* Vol. 8 (1683-1684). *Passim.*
[306] James Kirkton, *History of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh, Ballantyne, 1817), p.239.
[307] Fraser, *Douglas* Vol. 2 p.451.
[308] *Ibid* p.446. Here, Fraser also provides details of the considerable debts and cautions left by James's father, Archibald Douglas. A note on Scots Money: 1 merk = 2/3rds of £1.00 Scots and 13d in £ Sterling. 18 merks Scots = £12.00 Scots which was worth £1.00 sterling.

life is the struggles on the part of his friends and advisors to ward off impending ruin.'[309] This 'bad management' was entirely the result of Jamie Douglas's indifference and William Lawrie's complete inability to manage the Douglas estate. Blackwood became Douglas's factor and chamberlain in 1670, the year in which he married Barbara Erskine, and in doing so he supplanted a much more able chamberlain, William Sommerville, whose intention it had been to clear the Douglas estates of 200,000 merks worth of debt within seven years.[310] But Jamie Douglas's own inability to accept any fault in Blackwood's character and refusal to listen to any who criticised him, resulted in Blackwood being in charge of a failing estate for 23 years until Douglas was, at last, persuaded of his execrable management skills. In August 1698, management of the Douglas estate was charged to a body of twelve commissioners drawn from the great and good of Scottish nobility and headed by the Duke of Queensberry whose first order of business was to sack Blackwood.[311] In a letter to the Duke of Queensberry in March 1699, Douglas somewhat disingenuously writes of Blackwood: 'he had most undutifully, unworthily and egregiously malevered and kept matters so close from me, till, to my great disappointment, all is gone to confusion.'[312]

Ballad Analysis

Child's variants follow a similar format and reflect the historical record of the couple's estrangement: they are happily married with a son, but their happiness does not seem to last long as Blackwood contrives to part the couple by lying about Barbara's involvement with another man. As a result of this, Douglas rejects both her, and her overtures of reconciliation. When history fails, ballad imagination takes over; her father sends a company of soldiers to escort her back to her 'ain countrie' and in all variants apart from 'A', 'B' and the fragments 'O' and 'N', her father suggests pursuing a bill of divorce which Barbara rejects on the grounds that she still loves her husband.

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[309] 'The Douglases' *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* Vol.141 Issue 857 (Edinburgh, 1887), pp.335-351, pp.347-8.

[310] Fraser, *Douglas* Vol. 2 p.455. What Fraser does not mention is that Somerville had, at some time before December 1669, been convicted and sentenced to death for the manslaughter of one Bessie Rentoun. Both Somerville and Douglas appealed successfully for postponement of the sentence to allow time for matters concerning the Douglas estate to be settled. Charles II commuted the death sentence to banishment in October 1670 and, on appeal, the banishment order was quashed by Charles II in July 1674. *R. P. C.* Volumes 3 (1669-1672) and 4 (1673-1676).

[311] *Ibid* p.456.

[312] *Ibid* p.457.

If the first few stanzas in 'A' are anything to go by, theirs was a conventional, aristocratic marriage between two apparently well-matched young people. Jamie Douglas was 25 years old and Lady Barbara Erskine, was a few years younger at around 20. They were contracted in September 1670, married a few months later and:

> Whan that my auld son was born,
> And set upon the nurse's knee,
> I was as happy a woman as eer was born
> And my gude lord he loved me. ('A' st.4)

Their only child, James, was born in 1671[313] and the early part of the marriage appears successful. None of the other Child texts begin on this positive note, but immediately following, 'A' turns to Blackwood's involvement:

> There cam a man into this house,
> And Jamie Lockhart was his name,
> And it was told to my gude lord
> That I was in the bed wi him. ('A' st.6)

and further, that:

> He put Jamie's shoon below my bed-stock
> And bade my gude lord come and see. ('A' st.7).

Other variants ('D', 'E' and 'L') begin with Barbara's illness:

> I fell sick and very, very sick
> And I was bad and like to dee;
>
> A friend o mine cam to visit me
> And Blackwood whispered in my lord's ear
> That he was oure lang in chamber wi me.

There is a reference to her being 'very sick' in a letter from Douglas to William Lawrie in July 1676. Such an illness may very well have been used by the ballad-maker as a pretext for a male visitor to be in her bedroom and Blackwood's subsequent 'whisperings'.[314] In reality, such a visit would be an entirely unlikely event as any woman of standing would undoubtedly have had a maid or two to accompany her, if indeed a man would be

[313] Sir James Balfour Paul, *The Scots Peerage* Vol. 1 (Edinburgh, David Douglas,1904), p.208. All Child's variants credit her with three children, but this is, no doubt, for purposes of rhyme and / or scansion.
[314] Fraser, *The Douglas Book* Vol. 4 p.276. Letter dated 3rd July 1676.

allowed into her bedroom, or 'chamber', in the first place. Protocol would surely have dictated that a ladies maid was present or that any male visitor was received in a common room.

Whatever the particularities that occasioned Blackwood's deception, Barbara Erskine refers to this deceit in a submissive letter to Jamie Douglas in December 1676, and, most likely, in the other 'several letters' she had written to him which he ignored. Despite the Privy Council's involvement in the couple's marital difficulties and Barbara's appeals for aliment, her continued attempts at reconciliation are clearly seen in this letter:

> 'If I heaw offended yow in word or deed, I am readie, in the most humbll and submiss manier yow can prescryve, to crave pardon […] its but a hell wpon earth dayllie […] when yow cannot looke upone me but with avertion, if not contempt […] and to think of absance from yow and our dear chyld is a terror nixtt unto death.'[315]

History and ballad converge as, in the ballad, the attempt at reconciliation takes the form of an invitation to Douglas to dine /drink with her – one which he declines in no uncertain terms and the ballad's first-person dialogue provides an immediacy and a voyeur's appreciation of the emotional distance between them:

> 'O fare thee well, my once lovely maid!
> O fare thee well, once dear to me!
> O fare thee well, my once lovely maid !
> For wi me again ye sall never be,'
>
> 'Sit doun, sit doun, Jamie Douglas,
> Sit doun and dine wi me,
> And I'll set thee on a chair of gold
> And a silver towel on thy knee.'
>
> 'When cockle shells turn silver bells.
> And mussels they bud on a tree,
> Whan frost and fire turns fire to burn,
> Then I'll sit down and dine wi thee.' ('A' sts. 10-12)

With minor differences this last stanza features in twelve of the fifteen variants and conveys the idea that hell would freeze over before Douglas would contemplate a reconciliation.

In both letter and ballad Barbara shows deference to her husband, but only in her correspondence does she make it conditional: 'This only I most complen of that yow suld retain those in your service or

[315] Fraser, *The Douglas Book* Vol. 4 pp.277-8. Letter dated December, 1676.

company who taks the liberty of talking so much to the preiudice of your honour and myn oun,' and, protesting, continues, ' […] God, who knows my hart, knows my inosance, and the melless of thoss who wounds ws boath by such base calumnies […]'[316] This protestation of innocence provides a clear indication of the slanderous claims Blackwood is making about her and that, in believing Blackwood's lies, Douglas is also being slandered – something he chose to ignore. These are echoed in the ballad, but the ballad-maker also draws attention to Jamie Douglas's own questionable fidelity:

'You take every one to be like yourself,
You take every one that comes unto thee;
But I could swear by the heavens high
That I never knew another man but thee' ('C' 9, 'G' 10, 'I' 9 and 'L' 9).

William Lawrie is called out for his part in the couple's troubles:

O wae be unto thee, Blackwood,
And ae an ill death may ye dee!
For ye was the first and foremost man
That parted my gude lord and me. (All variants apart from 'D', 'J' and 'N')

The formal contract of separation of 1681 was agreed between Jamie Douglas and Barbara's brother, Charles, Earl of Mar, on her behalf. It was a mutual document that imputed blame on neither party but recognised and regretted the "great animosities, mistakes and differences betwixt the said Marquis and his lady, which have arisen to a great height, so as neither of them are satisfied longer to continue together."[317] In the ballad, Barbara's father suggests a way out of this unhappy marriage by offering to obtain a bill of divorce for his daughter:

'Na mair o this, my dochter dear
And of your mourning let abee;
For a bill of divorce I'll gar write for him,
A mair better lord I'll get for thee.' ('E' st.5).[318]

It is an artful move by the ballad-maker who would undoubtably have been aware of the circumstances under which a divorce could be legally considered, but it allows him/her the opportunity of taking Barbara's earlier attempts at reconciliation and forming her response:

[316] *Ibid*
[317] Fraser, *The Douglas Book* Vol. 2 p.450. Quote from the Contract of Separation held in the Douglas Charter Chest.
[318] Similar stanzas are found in nine other variants,

''Na mair o this, my father dear,
And of your folly let abee;
For I wad na gie ae look o my lord's face
For aw the lords in the haill cuntree. ('E' st.6)

At the time, only two circumstances could act as triggers for divorce proceedings to be started – desertion for a period of four years or proven adultery. The former would not have been a consideration and that the latter was not pursued by Jamie Douglas suggests that he did not believe Blackwood's lies about his wife's infidelity and that she had no case to answer. Likewise, even if the ballad contains an element of truth about Douglas's own extra-marital interests, his wife was not persuaded to that course of action either.

In essence, for Barbara, the terms and result of the separation – 'an aliment of 3000 merks yearly, and live apart', were not dissimilar to a limited divorce *a mensa et thoro* which 'dispensed the parties from continued cohabitation while the marriage contract remained undissolved' so allowing for a potential reconciliation: a hope that is evident from Barbara's letters and is echoed in the ballad.[319] Such instances of separation in noble or aristocratic households were rare, but not unknown and Brown suggests there may have been 'a world of collusion between spouses who knew they could no longer live together' but could work out an agreeable solution between themselves since teasing apart complicated marriage contracts was fraught with difficulties.[320]

Legally, separation *a mensa et thoro* was awarded in cases of physical cruelty that resulted in personal injury, but there was no legal redress for mental cruelty since 'the sufferings of the mind come not within the cognizance of any earthly tribunal.'[321] Jamie Douglas's attitude to his wife may be summed up in his July 3rd, 1676 letter to William Lawrie in which he interrupts a discussion on the relative merits of cloth and clothing to comment in an aside, 'My lady hear is somthing unwell; she sayes herselfe that she is verie sicke. Whither it be so or not I doe not know.'[322] It may be inferred that such studied indifference and disdain on Douglas's

[319] Lord Norman, *An Introduction to Scottish Legal History* p.95.
[320] Keith Brown, *Noble Society in Scotland* p.153. Marriage contracts and arrangements between members of the aristocracy were long and complex in detail. See Heather Parker "In gudly haste": The Formation of Marriage in Scotland 1350-1600', Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Guelph University, Ontario, Canada, 2012). https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/items/f1c4be98-a591-4f64-a402-9dc3421147b3 (Accessed May 2022).
[321] Lord Normand, *An Introduction to Scottish Legal History* p.97.
[322] Fraser, *The Douglas Book* Vol. 4 p.276.

part did indeed affect Barbara Erskine's mental wellbeing and her anguish is reflected in her letter of December 1676 quoted above. Following Barbara's funeral in 1690, her mother, Lady Jane MacKenzie, writes to Douglas in a similar vein when she refers to 'all the wnkyndness my davghter mett with att hir lastt' whilst praying that her grandson 'may be as happie as hir lyf was wnfortvnatt.'[323]

Dating

Of the three ballads under discussion, 'Jamie Douglas' is the one most likely to be coeval with its subject matter. Four of Child's variants are dated, with provenance:

- 'A' – is from Kinloch's manuscript No. I, 'from the recitation of Mary Barr, Lesmahago, Lanarkshire, May, 1827, and learned by her from about sixty years before from an old dey at Douglas Castle.'

  The information on this provenance is given by William Aytoun in the Introduction to his variant of the ballad entitled 'The Marchioness of Douglas'. Both ballad 'together with an explanatory note on the ballad' were given to him by George Kinloch.[324]

- 'E' – is also from a Kinloch manuscript, VII 127, 24 April 1826, 'from the recitation of Jenny Watson, Lanark, aged 73, who had it from her grandmother.' This is the variant that appears in Kinloch's 1827 Collection.[325]

- 'F' – From Motherwell's manuscript, p.507. From 'old Mrs Brown' of Lochwinnoch, September 1826.

- 'J' – Also from Motherwell's manuscript p.299, 'from the recitation of Rebecca Dunse of Galloway, 4 May 1825. "A song of her mother's, an old woman."

If the ages of the singers are taken into consideration, this adds further credence to this suggestion. For example, 'A' was collected in 1827, was learned by the singer, Mary Barr, sixty years previously, that is c.1767, and given that the song predates the 'old dey', or dairy maid, from whom she learned it, this may well take the song back to the very early 1700s. What these dates do indicate is that the ballad was composed in very short order following either the break-up of the couple's marriage becoming common knowledge or the death of one or other of the protagonists[326] for Kinloch's note to Aytoun on the ballad continues:

> "The ballad was a great favourite of Archibald, Duke of Douglas, (1694-1761) the son of the Marquess, by his second wife, Lady Mary Kerr, daughter of the Marquess of Lothian. The Duke used often to get the old dairy-maid […] to sing it to him; while he wheeled round the room in a gilded chair (the 'golden chair' of the ballad 'A', st.11), and muttered

[323] *Ibid* p.285.
[324] William E. Aytoun, *The Ballads of Scotland* Vol. 1 (Edinburgh and London, William Blackwood and Sons, 1858), pp.133-138.
[325] George R. Kinloch, (ed.), *Ancient Scottish Ballads* (London, Longman, 1827), pp.58-64.
[326] Barbara Erskine died in 1690; Jamie Douglas in 1700.

anathemas against Lowrie."[327]

In all cases the dates and the location of the singers – 'A' Castle Douglas (1827), 'E' Lanark (1826), 'J' Galloway (1825) and 'F' Lochwinnoch (1826) suggests a popular and well-travelled song in the oral tradition that had its beginnings in the late 1690s or early 1700s.

Conclusion

The central theme of 'Jamie Douglas' – Blackwood's deceit and Douglas's capacity for self-deception, reflects the basic historical facts and is closer to its background reality than either 'Drum' and 'Logie'. As with 'Drum' and 'Logie', the ballad-maker of 'Jamie Douglas' uses the historical facts in such a way as to respond to Barbara Erskine's unenviable situation. He/she invites singer and audience to share in sympathy for Barbara Erskine and to condemn the insensitive treatment of a husband who has betrayed his marriage vows; a man who cared more for William Lawrie's opinions than his wife's welfare and happiness, things which, 'according to the duty of a faithful husband',[328] he should have given priority. The character of William Lawrie as depicted in the ballad echoes historical assessments of him as an untrustworthy, unlikeable man and he too is deserving of the ballad's censure. Through her correspondence Barbara Erskine has a voice in historical literary record, but the ballad and its many variants articulate her grievances as a record of the sentiments, thoughts and feelings of non-literate folk whose empathy is entirely with her.

[327] Aytoun, *Ballads* p.134.
[328] McLaughlan, *The Book of Common Order* pp.150-151.

JAMIE DOUGLAS

A. 'Lord Douglas,' or, 'The Laird of Blackwood,' Kinloch MSS, I, 93.

B. 'Jamie Douglas,' Kinloch MSS, V, 387.

C. 'Lady Douglas and Blackwood,' Kinloch MSS, V, 207, I, 103.

D. 'Jamie Douglas,' Kinloch MSS, I, 107.

E. 'The Laird o Blackwood,' Kinloch MSS, VII, 127; Kinloch's Ancient Scottish Ballads, p. 58.

F. 'Jamie Douglas,' Motherwell's MS., p. 507.

G. 'Lord Jamie Douglas,' Motherwell's MS., p. 345.

H. 'Jamie Douglas,' Motherwell's MS., p. 297.

I. 'Jamie Douglas,' Motherwell's MS., p. 500.

J. 'Jamie Douglas,' Motherwell's MS., p. 299.

K. 'Jamie Douglas,' Motherwell's MS., p. 302.

L. 'Jamie Douglas,' Finlay's Scottish Ballads, II, 4.

M. Herd's MSS, I, 54; Herd's Scottish Songs, 1776, I, 144.

O. 'Lord Jamie Douglas,' Motherwell's Minstrelsy, Appendix, p. v, the last three stanzas.

N. 'Jamie Douglas,' Motherwell's Minstrelsy, Appendix, p. xvii, IX, one stanza.

A

Kinloch MSS, I, 93; from the recitation of Mary Barr, Lesmahago, Lanarkshire, May, 1827, and learned by her about sixty years before from an old dey at Douglas Castle.

1 I was a lady of high renown
As lived in the north countrie;
I was a lady of high renown
Whan Earl Douglas loved me.

2 Whan we came through Glasgow toun,
We war a comely sight to see;
My gude lord in velvet green,
And I mysel in cramasie.

3 Whan we cam to Douglas toun,
We war a fine sight to behold;
My gude lord in cramasie,
And I myself in shining gold.

4 Whan that my auld son was born,
And set upon the nurse's knee,
I was as happy a woman as eer was born,
And my gude lord he loved me.

5 But oh, an my young son was born,
And set upon the nurse's knee,
And I mysel war dead and gane,
For a maid again I 'll never be!

6 There cam a man into this house,
And Jamie Lockhart was his name,
And it was told to my gude lord
That I was in the bed wi him.

7 There cam anither to this house,
And a bad friend he was to me;
He put Jamie's shoon below my bed-stock,
And bade my gude lord come and see.

8 O wae be unto thee, Blackwood,
And ae an ill death may ye dee!
For ye was the first and the foremost man
That parted my gude lord and me.

9 Whan my gude lord cam in my room,
This grit falsehood for to see,
He turnd about, and, wi a gloom,
He straucht did tak farewell o me.

10 'O fare thee well, my once lovely maid!
O fare thee well, once dear to me!
O fare thee well, my once lovely maid!
For wi me again ye sall never be.'

11 'Sit doun, sit doun, Jamie Douglas,
Sit thee doun and dine wi me,
And Ill set thee on a chair of gold,
And a silver towel on thy knee.'

12 'Whan cockle-shells turn silver bells,
And mussels they bud on a tree,
Whan frost and snaw turns fire to burn,
Then I 'll sit down and dine wi thee.'

13 O wae be unto thee, Blackwood,
And ae an ill death may ye dee!
Ye war the first and the foremost man
That parted my gude lord and me.

14 Whan my father he heard word
That my gude lord had forsaken me,
He sent fifty o his brisk dragoons
To fesh me hame to my ain countrie.

15 That morning before I did go,
My bonny palace for to leave,
I went into my gude lord's room,
But alas! he wad na speak to me.

16 'Fare thee well, Jamie Douglas!
Fare thee well, my ever dear to me!
Fare thee well, Jamie Douglas!
Be kind to the three babes I 've born to thee.'

Figure 3. 'Jamie Douglas' from F. J. Child English and Scottish Popular Ballads, Volume 4:204

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to examine certain historically-based ballads that dealt specifically with love and marriage and to compare the ballad versions with the historical reality from which they came. Several strands informed the critical analysis in the three case studies: the historicist background of 're-shaped' or' re-purposed' history and the complementary concept of history as literature and literature as history. This approach enabled an examination of authors', ballad-makers' and editors' cultural, social and nationalist responses to particular historical events.

As the introductory section of this thesis shows, the reshaping of the 'raw materials' of historical events to produce a literary version of social history that satisfied the societal and cultural needs of both ballad-makers and their audiences, is a long-established practice in Scotland that goes back to at least the sixth century. A review of the earliest writings was valuable as it provided the historicist background to how the three ballads used in the case studies fitted into the history as literature / literature as history continuum.

Both *The Gododdin*, composed by Aneirin and Barbour's *The Bruce* demonstrate how history was re-ordered in such a way as to fulfil the authors' purpose to present a literary version of history that fulfilled a social, cultural and political function that had meaning for communities they addressed. The former, a 'praise song', is probably the earliest example of literature as history, the purpose of which was to present both a personal and cultural memorial of defeat, loss and remembrance which reflected both sorrow for, and pride in, the fallen warriors. *The Bruce* was written by Barbour as a recollection of Scottish success in securing independence from the English and powerful reminder to his audience of their obligations to king and country. From these earliest writers can be traced a historicist thread of continuity in the writings of poets and ballad makers who used and manipulated history to communicate their own, and their audiences', cultural, social and political concerns. Furthermore, ballad narratives show similar emotive responses to historical events that are evident in these early works: the three ballads that are the subject of this thesis are personal responses to historical events, 'balladised' to become a valuable addition to the social and cultural property of their communities. The naming of ballads and songs based on historical events in the 'Actor' section of *The*

Complaynt of Scotland shows how the ballads played a historicist role: it indicates how people held on to what was important to them and helped shape an understanding of themselves as a community. They generated an oral currency that was later translated into literary accounts in manuscript and published collections. The same criteria apply to 'The Laird o Drum', The Laird o Logie' and 'Jamie Douglas' as they first became part of the oral tradition before being gathered up by the nineteenth-century collectors into their own literary accounts of events. The thoughts and sentiments of these various collectors is evident in the introductions to their collected works as they address the 'moment' in history when Scottish social and cultural identity was, in the words of Sir Walter Scott, in danger of 'melting and dissolving' into those of England.

The three ballads represent a continuation of historicist principles, as each ballad maker takes a historically-recorded event in history which is repurposed to create a 'ballad world' account that cuts across bigger historical realities. Unlike the earlier accounts of *The Gododdin* and *The Bruce,* that dealt with bigger, national issues, these ballads may seem relatively unimportant. But their place as historical artefacts is assured because the singular nature of the events they record recommended themselves to the ballad-makers. The focus on the marriage of 'The Laird o Drum' is a celebration of a marriage of un-equals somewhat unique in is breaching of social protocols. There is no mention of the historical circumstances that shaped Alexander Irvine and gave him the gall to overturn his hereditary background and marriage conventions of the time to marry a girl well below his status. Likewise, in the tale of escape from Dalkeith Palace, 'The Laird o Logie' comes without the historical apparatus that occasioned his imprisonment in the first place, to focus on the romance of Margaret Vinstar's daring in helping him to freedom. Of the three ballads, 'Jamie Douglas' is the one with a narrative which most closely reflects the broader historical circumstances. But the manner in which it does is a clear, social condemnatory comment on the treatment of Barbara Erskine by her husband and his factor, William Lawrie.

Summarising the relationship between history and historical ballads is not straightforward, but it is well worthwhile quoting David Buchan's closing remarks to his article 'History and Harlaw'. Of the historical ballads, he says,

> ‘The historical ballads, we would all agree, are no “documents”, but the evidence just presented would indicate that they can be much nearer the truth than is normally realized. They can contain factual truths that are not found in the often scanty records and they can contain emotional truths, the attitudes and reactions of the ballad-singing folk to the world around them.’[329]

It may very well be that historical ballads are not documents in any formal sense, but nonetheless they are an important social record of alternative perspectives on historical events. Their composers were adept at creating an emotive reaction to such events and, as the many variants and fragments of each ballad shows, when a ballad became community property, others added their own voices, feelings and emotions. This continual reinvention was the nature of the oral inheritance which collectors gathered up, recognising each variant as an important interpretation of an event in history.

Within the wider reportage of national history, the historically-based ballads such as the three highlighted here, occupy a special place. In each of the ballads discussed, the ballad-maker plays around with history, circumvents it, maps it in a different way that satisfies the social perspective of ballad-maker and his community; it shifts the perspective that becomes part of the historical narrative. In doing so, the ballad creator, cements the relationship between ballad history as literature and the ballad as a historicist, literary account that retains its integrity as a part of Scottish cultural history.

[329] Buchan, ‘History and Harlaw’, p.66.

Appendix

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
VOL.1.1			
1. RIDDLES WISELY EXPOUNDED			
2. THE ELFI N KNIGHT	2/329 THE ELFIN KNIGHT		
3. THE FAUSE KNIGHT UPON THE ROAD			
4. LADY ISABEL AND THE ELF-KNIGHT	2/225 MAY COLVIN		
5. GIL BRENTON		2 (1802) 117 COSPATRICK	16A CHIL BRENTON; 16B GIL BRENTON
6. WILLIE'S LADY	2/346 SIMON'S LADY		15A SWEET WILLIE; 15B WILLY'S LADY
7. EARL BRAND	2/220 LORD DOUGLAS[1]	3 (1803) 246 THE DOUGLAS TRAGEDY	
8. ERLINTON		3 (1802) 235 ERLINTON 3 (1803) 235	
9. THE FAIR FLOWER OF NORTHUMBERLAND	6/1149 THE FAIR FLOOER O NORTHUMBERLAND		
10. THE TWA SISTERS	2/213 BINORIE	2 (1802) 143 THE CRUEL SISTER	18A THE TWA SISTERS; 18B THE CRUEL SISTER
11. THE CRUEL BROTHER			28 CRUEL BROTHER; THE BRIDE'S TESTAMENT
12. LORD RANDAL	2/209 LORD RONALD	3 (1803) 392 LORD RANDAL	
13. EDWARD			
14. BABYLON; OR, THE BONNIE BANKS OF FORDIE	2/199 THE BONNIE BANKS O AIRDRIE		
15. LEESOME BRAND	2/335 LISHEN BRAND		
16. SHEATH AND KNIFE			
17. HIND HORN	5/1022 HYND HORN		
18. SIR LIONEL			
19. KING ORFEO			
20. THE CRUEL MOTHER	2/193 THE CRUEL MOTHER 2/194 LADY ANNE	3 (1803) 259 LADY ANNE (THE CRUEL MOTHER)[2]	
21. THE MAID AND THE PALMER (THE SAMARITAN WOMAN)			
22. ST. STEPHEN AND HEROD			
23. JUDAS			
24. BONNIE ANNIE	6/1225 BONNIE ANNIE		
25. WILLIE'S LYKE-WAKE	4/843 AMONG THE BLUE FLOWERS AND THE YELLOW		
26. THE THREE RAVENS		3 (1803) 239 THE TWA CORBIES	
27. THE WHUMMIL BORE			
28. BURD ELLEN AND YOUNG TAMLANE			

[1] Also in Greig-Duncan at Volume 5/1026 as 'The Child of Elly'.
[2] 'Lady Anne' appears as an appendix in Child.

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
VOLUME 1:2			
29. THE BOY AND THE MANTLE			
30. KING ARTHUR AND KING CORNWALL			
31. THE MARRIAGE OF SIR GAWAIN			
32. KING HENRY		2 (1802) 132 KING HENRIE	14 KING HENRY
33. KEMPY KAY	7/1505 KEMPY KAY		
34. KEMP OWYNE		2 (1802) 93 KEMPION	13 A / B KEMPION
35. ALLISON GROSS			19A ALLISON GROSS
36. THE LAILY WORM AND THE MACHREL OF THE SEA			
37. THOMAS RHYMER		2 (1802) 251 THOMAS THE RHYMER	22 THOMAS RHYMER AND QUEEN OF ELFLAND
38. THE WEE WEE MAN		2 (1802) 234 THE WEE WEE MAN[1]	
39. TAM LIN	2/330 TRUE TAMMAS	2 (1802) 228 THE YOUNG TAMLANE	
40. THE QUEEN OF ELFAN'S NOURICE	2/328 THE QUEEN O' ELFAN'S NOURICE		
41. HIND ETIN	2/331 YOUNG AIKEN		
42. CLERK COLVILL			21B CLARK COLVEN
43. THE BROOMFIELD HILL	2/322 THE BONNIE BROOM FIELDS	3 (1803) 271 THE BROOKFIELD HILL	
44. THE TWA MAGICIANS	2/334 THE TWA MAGICIANS		
45. KING JOHN AND THE BISHOP	2/281 THE JOLLY ABBOT		
46. CAPTAIN WEDDERBURN'S COURTSHIP	4/842 CAPTAIN WEDDERBURN'S COURTSHIP		
47. PROUD LADY MARGARET	2/336 PROUD LADY MARGARET	3 (1803) 275 PROUD LADY MARGARET	
48. YOUNG ANDREW			
49. THE TWA BROTHERS			
50. TH E BONNY HIND		2 (1802 298 THE BONNY HYND (NO TEXT)	
51. LIZIE WAN			
52. THE KING'S DOCHTER LADY JEAN	7/1395 FAIR ROSIE ANN		
53. YOUNG BEICHAN	5/1023 YOUNG BRECHIN		5A YOUNG BICHAM; 4A YOUNG BEKIE
VOLUME 2:1			
54. THE CHERRY-TREE CAROL	2/327 THE CHERRY TREE CAROL		
55. THE CARNAL AND THE CRANE			
56. DIVES AND LAZARUS			
57. BROWN ROBYN'S CONFESSION			
58. SIR PATRICK SPENS	1/17 SIR PATRICK SPENS	3 (1803) 64 SIR PATRICK SPENS	
59. SIR ALDINGAR		3 (1803) 51 SIR HUGH LE BLOND	
60. KING ESTMERE			
61. SIR COLIN			

[1] Child extracted this variant of 'The Wee Wee Man' as his 'C' text from Scott's 'The Young Tamlane', (stanzas 31-38, pp.234-236 of Volume 2 (1802)). It is not indexed in any edition of *Minnsrelsy* as a distinct item, but for the purposes of this exercise it has been included here.

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
62. FAIR ANNIE	6/1161 FAIR ANNIE	2 (1802) 102 LORD THOMAS AND FAIR ANNIE	9 LADY JANE
63. CHILD WATERS	6/1229 FAIR ELLEN		10A BURD ELLEN; 10C LORD HOHN AND BIRD ELLEN
64. FAIR JANET	6/1100 LOVE WILLIE		
65. LADY MAISRY			11A LADY MAISRY; 11B LADY MAISERY
66. LORD INGRAM AND CHIEL WYET			
67. GLASGERION			
68. YOUNG HUNTING		2 (1802) 42 EARL RICHARD; 3 (1803) LORD WILLIAM	
69. CLERK SAUNDERS		2 (1802) 33 CLERK SAUNDERS (NO TEXT)	
70. WILLIE AND LADY MAISRY			
71. THE BENT SAE BROWN	2/219 THE BENTS AND BROOM		
72. THE CLERK'S TWA SONS O OWSENFORD	8/1931 DO WEEL MY SONS		
73. LORD THOMAS AND FAIR ANNET	2/212 SWEET WILLIE AND FAIR ANNIE		
74. FAIR MARGARET AND SWEET WILLIAM	2/337 WILLIAM AND MARGARET		
75. LORD LOVEL	6/1232 LORD LOVEL		
76. THE LASS OF ROCH ROYAL	6/1226 THE LASS OF ROCH ROYAL	2 (1802) 49 LASS OF LOCH ROYAN (NO TEXT)	12A FAIR ANNIE; 12C LOVE GREGOR
77. SWEET WILLIAM'S GHOST			
78. THE UNQUIET GRAVE			
79. THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL		2 (1802) 111 THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL	
80. OLD ROBIN OF PORTINGALE			
81. LITTLE MUSGRAVE AND LADY BARNARD			
82. THE BONNY BIRDY			20 THE BONNY BIRDY
VOLUME 2:2			
83. CHILD MAURICE	2/214 GILL MORICE		
84. BONNY BARBARA ALLAN	6/1193 BARBARA ALLAN		
85. LADY ALICE			
86. YOUNG BENJIE		3 (1803) 251 YOUNG BENJIE	
87. PRINCE ROBERT		2 (1802 124 PRINCE ROBERT	
88. YOUNG JOHNSTONE	8/1929 OH DID YOU SEE A BLODY KNIGHT		
89. FAUSE FOODRAGE	8/1930 TAK YE MY LAD	2 (1802) 73 FAUSE FOODRAGE (NO TEXT)	23C FA'SE FOODRAGE
90. JELLON GRAME	2/198 JELLON GRAEME	2 (1802) 20 JELLON GRAME	24C JELLON GRAME AND LILLIE FLOWER
91. FAIR MARY OF WALLINGTON			25C THE BONNY EARL OF LIVINGSTON
92. BONNY BEE HOM			25C BONNY BEE HO'M
93. LAMKIN	2/187 LAMBKIN		34E LAMKIN
94. YOUNG WATERS			
95. THE MAID FREED FROM THE GALLOW	2/248 THE MAID FREED FROM THE GALOWS		
96. THE GAY GOSHAWK		2 (1802) 7 THE GAY GOSS-HAWK	26 THE GAY GOSS HAWK
97. BROWN ROBIN	8/1932 BROWN ROBIN		17 BROWN ROBIN
98. BROWN ADAM	5/994 BROWN EDOM	2 (1802) 16 BROWN ADAM (NO TEXT)	7 BROWN ADAM

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
99. JOHNIE SCOT	5/1013 LOVE JOHNNIE		2 JACK THE LITTLE SCOT
100. WILLIE O WINSBURY	5/999 LORD THOMAS OF WINCHBURY		
101. WILLIE O DOUGLAS DALE	5/1010 WILLIE OF DOUGLASDALE		3 WILLIE O DOUGLASS-DALE
102. WILLIE AND EARL RICHARD'S DAUGHTER			35 THE BIRTH OF ROBIN HOOD
103. ROSE THE RED AND WHITE LILY	1/162 ROSE THE RED AND THE WHITE LILY	2 (1802) 60 ROSE THE RED AND WHITE LILY (NO TEXT)	1 ROSE THE RED AND WHITE LILLY
104. PRINCE HEATHEN	7/1497 PRINCE HEATHEN		
105. THE BAILIFF'S DAUGHTER OF ISLINGTON	1/168 THE BALIFF'S DAUGHTER OF ISLINGTON		
106. THE FAMOUS FLOWER OF SERVING-MEN	1/163 THE FAMOUS FLOWER OF THE SERVING MEN	3 (1803) 83 LAMENT OF THE BORDER WIDOW	
107. WILL STEWART AND JOHN			
108. CHRISTOPHER WHITE			
109. TOM POTTS			
110. THE KNIGHT AND SHEPHERD'S DAUGHTER	7/1465 EARL RICHARD		
111. CROW AND PIE			
112. THE BAFFLED KNIGHT	2/301 THE SHEPHERD'S SON		
113. THE GREAT SILKIE OF SULE SKERRY			

VOLUME 3:1

Apart from the following five ballads, Volume 3:1 comprises a further thirty-seven 'Robin Hood' ballads which have no equivalences in the Greig-Duncan, Scott or Mrs Brown of Falkland collections.

114. JOHNIE COCK	2/250 JOHNNIE O BRAIDISLEYS	1 (1802) 59 JOHNIE OF BRAIDISLEE	
134. ROBIN HOOD AND THE BEGGAR, II.	2/264 ROBIN HOOD AND THE BEGGAR		
138. ROBIN HOOD AND ALLEN A DALE	2/727 ALLEN-A-DALE		
140. ROBIN HOOD RESCUING THREE SQUIRES	2/243 ROBIN HOOD AND THE SQUIRES		
155. SIR HUGH, OR, THE JEW'S DAUGHTER			33 HUGH OF LINCOLN

VOLUME 3:2

156. QUEEN ELEANOR'S CONFESSION	2/208 QUEEN ELEANOR		
157. GUDE WALLACE			
158. HUGH SPENCER'S FEATS IN FRANCE			
159. DURHAM FIELD			
160. THE KNIGHT OF LIDDESDALE			
161. THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN		1 (1802) 31 THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN	
162. THE HUNTING OF THE CHEVIOT			
163. THE BATTLE OF HARLAW	1/112 THE BATTLE OF HARLAW		
164. KING HENRY FIFTH'S CONQUEST OF FRANCE			
165. SIR JOHN BUTLER			
166. THE ROSE OF ENGLAND			
167. SIR ANDREW BARTON			
168. FLODDEN FIELD			

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
169. JOHNIE ARMSTRONG		1 (1802) 49 JOHNIE ARMSTRONG (NO TEXT)	
170. THE DEATH OF QUEEN JANE	3/693 QUEEN JEAN		
171. THOMAS CROMWELL			
172. MUSSELBURGH FIELD			
173. MARY HAMILTON	2/195 THE FOUR MARIES	2 (1802) 154 LAMENT OF THE QUEEN'S MARIE [1]	
174. EARL BOTHWELL			
175. THE RISING IN THE NORTH			
176. NORTHUMBERLAND BETRAYED BY DOUGLAS			
177. THE EARL OF WESTMORELAND			
178. CAPTAIN CAR, OR, EDOM O GORDON	2/231 EDOM O' GORDON		
179. ROOKHOPE RYDE		ROOKHOPE RYDE (NO TEXT)[2]	
180. KING JAMES AND BROWN			
181. THE BONNY EARL OF MURRAY			
182. THE LAIRD O LOGIE	2/247 THE YOUNG LAIRD O LOGIE	1 (1803) 243 THE LAIRD OF LOGIE	
183. WILLIE MACINTOSH			
184. THE LADS OF WAMPHRAY		1 (1802) 208 THE LADS OF O WAMPHREY (NO TEXT)	
185. DICK O THE COW		1 (1802) 137 DICK O THE COW (NO TEXT)	
186. KINMONT WILLI E		1 (1802 111 KINMONT WILLIE	
187. JOCK O THE SIDE		1 (1802) 154 JOCK O THE SIDE (NO TEXT)	
188. ARCHIE O CAWFIELD	2/244 JOHNNIE FA	1 (1802) 177 ARCHIE OF CA'FIELD	
VOLUME 4:1			
189. HOBIE NOBLE		1 (1802) 164 HOBBIE NOBLE (NO TEXT)	
190. JAMIE TELFER OF THE FAIR DODHEAD		1(1802) 80 JAMIE TELFER OF THE FAIR DODJEAD	
191. HUGHIE GRAME	2/271 SIR HUGH THE GRAEME	3 (1803) 85 HUGHIE THE GRAEME	
192. THE LOCHMABEN HARPER	2/270 THE HARPIN MANNIE	1 (1802) 65 THE LOCHMABEN HARPER	
193. THE DEATH OF PARCY REED			
194. THE LAIRD OF WARISTON			
195. LORD MAXWELL'S LAST GOODNIGHT		1 (1802) 194 LORD MAXWELL'S GOODNIGHT	
196. THE FIRE OF FRENDRAUGHT	2/232 THE FIRE O FRENDRAUGHT		
197. JAMES GRANT			
198. BONNY JOHN SETON			
199. THE BONNIE HOUSE O AIRLIE	2/233 THE BONNIE HOOSE O' AIRLIE		
200. THE GYPSY LADDIE	2/278 THE GYPSY LADDIE		
201. BESSY BELL AND MARY GRAY	6/1256 BESSIE BELL I LOED YESTREEN 6/1257 BESSIE BELL AND MARY GRAY		

[1] This first edition of volume 2 (1802) entry is a three-stanza fragment. The second edition of volume 2 (1803) pp.163-173, provides a 26 stanza variant titled 'The Queen's Marie'.

[2] This ryding (raiding) ballad does not appear in the original volumes 1-3 of 1802-1803. The ballad dates from 1596, four years after the raid took place in Tynedale in England and was first published in 1784 by Joseph Ritson whose nephew, a Mr Frank, passed it on to Scott. It is included in the American 1833 edition of Scott's work and in subsequent editions of 'Minstrelsy'. See *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* Vol.2, T.F. Henderson (ed), (Edinburgh, William Blackwood and Sons, 1902). pp.130-141.

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
202. THE BATTLE OF PHILIPHAUGH		3(1803) 153 THE BATTLE OF PHILIPHAUGH	
203. THE BARON OF BRACKLEY	2/234 THE BARON O' BRAIKLEY		30 THE BARON OF BRAIKLY
204. JAMIE DOUGLAS			
205. LOUDON HILL, OR, DRUMCLOG		3 (1803) 188 THE BATTLE OF LOUDON HILL	
206. BOTHWELL BRIDGE		3 (1803) 209 THE BATTLE OF BOTHWELL-BRIDGE	
207. LORD DELAMERE			
208. LORD DERWENTWATER			
209. GEORDIE	2/249 GIGHT'S LADY	MFBM NOS. 13, 38 and 64 GEORDIE[1]	
210. BONNIE JAMES CAMPBELL			
211. BEWICK AND GRAHAM		3 (1803) 93 GRAEME AND BEWICK	
212. THE DUKE OF ATHOLE'S NURSE	1/160 THE DUKE OF ATHOLL'S NURSE		
213. SIR JAMES THE ROSE	2/235 SIR JAMES THE ROSE		
214. THE BRAES O YARROW	2/215 THE DOWIE DENS O YARROW	3(1803) 72 THE DOWIE DENS O YARROW	
215. RARE WILLIE DROWNED IN YARROW, OR, THE WATER O GAMRIE	6/1227 WILLIE'S LOST AT GAMERY 6/1230 WILLIE'S DROWNED IN YARROW	2/(1802) 138 ANNAN WATER (APPENDIXED)	
216. THE MOTHER'S MALISON OR, CLYDE'S WATER	6/1231_CLYDE'S WATERS		32 WILLIE AND MAY MARGARET
217. THE BROOM OF COWDENKNOWS	4/838 THE COWDENKNOWES	3 (1803) 280 THE BROOM OF COWDENKNOWS	
218. THE FALSE LOVER WON BACK	5/974 THE FALSE LOVER WON BACK		
219. THE GARDENER	4/840 THE GARDENER		
220. THE BONNY LASS OF ANGLESEY			
221. KATHARINE JAFFRAY	5/1024 KATHERINE JAFFRAY	1 (1802) 216 and MFBM NO.3 THE LAIRD OF LAMINTON (KATHERINE JAMPHRAY) MFBM NO.30 KATHERINE JANFARIE	
222. BONNY BABY LIVINGSTONE	6/1264 BAWBIE LIVINGSTON		29 BONNY BABY LIVINGSTON
223. EPPIE MORRIE			
224. THE LADY OF ARNGOSK			
225. ROB ROY		MFBM NO.147 ROB ROY	
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226. LIZIE LINDSAY	4/854 LIZZIE LINDSAY		
227. BONNY LIZIE BAILLIE			
228. GLASGOW PEGGIE	4/850 GLASGOW PEGGY	MFBM NO.116 GLASGOW PEGGIE[2]	
229. EARL CRAWFORD			
230. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE LAIRD OF MELLERSTAIN		THE SLAUGHTER OF THE LORD OF MELLERSTAIN[3]	

[1] Scott's manuscript *'Scotch Ballads: Materials For Border Minstrelsy'* (MFBM) now held in the National Library of Scotland. Ref. MS. 877.
[2] Child's 'b' text of two stanzas only.
[3] This fragment comprises six incomplete stanzas from a 'Miscellaneous' folio at Abbotsford. It does not appear to have been included in any edition of *Minstrelsy* and Child has no other source references.

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
231. THE EARL OF ERROL	7/1366 ERROL ON THE GREEN		
232. RICHIE STORY	5/1051 RICHIE STORY	MFBM NOS. 65 AND 76 RICHIE STORY	
233. ANDREW LAMMIE	5/1018 TIFTY 'S ANNIE 5/1019 THE DEATH OF MILL O' TIFTY'S ANNIE		
234. CHARLIE MACPHERSON			
235. THE EARL OF ABOYNE	6/1159 THE EARL O' ABOYNE	MFBM NO.17 THE EARL O' BOYN	
236. THE LAIRD O DRUM	4/835 THE LAIRD O' DRUM		
237. THE DUKE OF GORDON'S DAUGHTER	6/1099 THE DUKE O' GORDON'S THREE DAUGHTERS		
238. GLENLOGIE, OR, JEAN O BETHELNIE	5/973 GLENLOGIE	MFBM NO.77 THE LAIRD O' LOGIE (GLENLOGIE)	
239. LORD SALTOUN AND AUCHANACHIE	5/1021 LORD SALTOUN AND AUCHENENACHIE		
240. THE RANTIN LADDIE	5/976 THE RANTIN LADDIE		
241. THE BARON O LEYS	7/1491 THE BARON O' LEYS		
242. THE COBLE O CARGILL			
243. JAMES HARRIS (THE DAEMON LOVER)	2/332 JAMES HARRIS		
244. JAMES HATLEY		MFBM NOS.35, 39 AND 79 JAMES HATELY	
245. YOUNG ALLAN	2/326 YOUNG ALLAN		
246. REDESDALE AND WISE WILLIAM			
247. LADY ELSPAT			8 LADY ESLPAT
248. THE GREY COCK, OR, SAW YOU MY FATHER?			
249. AULD MATRONS			
250. HENRY MARTYN			
251. LANG JOHNNY MORE	2/246 LANG JOHNNIE MORE		
252. THE KITCHIE-BOY	5/1048 THE KITCHIE BOY		27 THE BONNY FOOT-BOY
253. THOMAS O YONDERDALE			
254. LORD WILLIAM, OR, LORD LUNDY			
255. WILLIE'S FATAL VISIT			
256. ALISON AND WILLIE			
257. BURD ISABEL AND EARL PATRICK			
258. BROUGHTY WA' S			
259. LORD THOMAS STUART	6/1233 LORD THOMAS STUART		
260. LORD THOMAS AND LADY MARGARET			
261. LADY ISABEL			
262. LORD LIVINGSTON			
263. THE NEW-SLAIN KNIGHT	5/1049 THE NEW-SLAIN KNIGHT		
264. THE WHITE FISHER	2/197 THE WHITE FISHER		
265. THE KNIGHT'S GHOST			

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266. JOHN THOMSON AND THE TURK			
267. THE HEIR OF LINNE	2/273 THE HEIR O' LINNE		

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
268. THE TWA KNIGHTS			
269. LADY DIAMOND	6/1224 LADY DUSIE		
270. THE EARL OF MAR'S DAUGHTER			
271. THE LORD OF LORN AND THE FALSE STEWARD			
272. THE SUFFOLK MIRACLE			
273. KING EDWARD THE FOURTH AND A TANNER OF TAMWORTH			
274. OUR GOODMAN	7/1460 OUR GUDEMAN		
275. GET UP AND BAR THE DOOR	2/321 THE BARRIN' O THE DOOR		
276. THE FRIAR IN THE WELL			
277. THE WIFE WRAPT IN WETHER'S SKIN	7/1282 THE WIFE IN THE WETHER'S SKIN		
278. THE FARMER'S CURST WIFE	2/320 KELLYBURN BRAES		
279. THE JOLLY BEGGAR[1]	2/274 THE JOLLY BEGGAR 2/275 THE GABERLUNZIE MAN 2/276 THE LAIRD O' GRANT OR THE BEGGAR MAN		
280. THE BEGGAR-LADDIE	2/277 THE BEGGAR'S DAWTIE		
281. THE KEACH I THE CREEL	2/317 THE WEE TOON CLERK		
282. JOCK THE LEG AND THE MERRY MERCHANT	2/263 JOCK THE LEG AND THE MERRY MERCHANT		
283. THE CRAFTY FARMER	2/267 THE FARMER AND THE ROBBER		
284. JOHN DORY			
285. THE GEORGE ALOE AND THE SWEEPSTAKE			
286. THE SWEET TRINITY (THE GOLDEN VANITY)	1/37 THE GOLDEN VANITY		
287. CAPTAIN WARD AND THE RAINBOW	1/39 CAPTAIN WARD AND THE RAINBOW		
288. THE YOUNG EARL OF ESSEX'S VICTORY OVER THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY	1/36 YOUNG ESSEX		
289. THE MERMAID	1/27 THE MERMAID		
290. THE WYLIE WIFE OF THE HIE TOUN HIE	7/1499 THE SLY WIFE	MFBM 72 MY LADY YE SHALL BE	
291. CHILD OWLET			
292. THE WEST-COUNTRY DAMOSEL'S COMPLAINT			
293. JOHN OF HAZELGREEN	5/1029 JOCK O' HAZEL GREEN		
294. DUGALL QUIN	6/1267 LIZZIE MENZIES		
295. THE BROWN GIRL	6/1139 THE RUE AND THE THYME		
296. WALTER LESLY			
297. EARL ROTHES			
298. YOUNG PEGGY			
299. TROOPER AND MAID	7/1470 THE TROOPER AND THE FAIR MAID		
300. BLANCHEFLOUR AND JELLYFLORICE			
301. THE QUEEN OF SCOTLAND			

[1] Child inserts 'The Gaberlunyie-Man' as an Appendix.

CHILD NO./TITLE	GREIG-DUNCAN VOLUME / NO. and TITLE	SCOTT VOLUME / DATE / PAGE	MRS BROWN OF FALKLAND NO./TITLE
302. YOUNG BEARWELL			
303. THE HOLY NUNNERY			
304. YOUNG RONALD			
305. THE OUTLAW MURRAY		1 (1803) 1; MFBM NO.31 THE SANG OF THE OUTLAW MURRAY	

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