

lingo

The Scots Word Book, by William Graham (Ramsay Head Press, 1977, 4 lbs 60)

But there are other more complicated possibilities for bird imagery to be discovered in a closer scrutiny of local beliefs and legends about birds in the areas where bird images have appeared in ballads. We know, for example, that the lark is often associated with dalliance in the fields, and that in some amorous songs the girlfriend of the "plowboy" (also no accident) is actually described as a lark rising from the fields. What do we need to know about the figurative use of other birds?

✓ *Structural elements.* Of all the possibilities, the most susceptible to brief comment is the sequence of three actions, already so familiar to folklorists. In "Babylon," three sisters encounter a man who knives them one at a time while the others stand and watch—obviously a series of actions more ritualistic than real: why didn't at least one of them run for help? One could suggest—beyond the obvious: that there would then be no story—that three murders make the story more intense, especially when the dramatic progression leads up to the surprise revelation that the murderer is the victims' brother (rather than revealing it early on, where it would have created quite a different story of intentional sibling murder). The so-called Law of Three does more than just saturate (although that would be a perfectly good function all by itself); it allows for intensification of a key issue. The sequence of three allows for even greater intensity when it is used as the vehicle for suggestive imagery. In one version of "Sir Hugh," for example, the Jew's daughter offers the little boy three traditionally seductive gifts: a mellow apple, a finger ring, and a "cherry as red as blood," in order to entice him in. The association of cherry with virginity (the boy's, no doubt), strengthened by other images which are often associated with sexual enticement, not only underscores the seductive nature of the Jew's daughter's role, but makes more clear that subtle but common suggestion of sexual threat often encountered in association with interracial or interethnic conflict. The progression to "blood," as deliberate as it is (enticement—involvement—loss of virginity?) presages what is indeed in store for Sir Hugh in the ballad story. Similarly, when Lord Barnard asks his page "My castles burnt? My tenants robbed? My lady with baby?" in "Little Musgrave," the listener, who, after all, already knows what is happening in Lord Barnard's home, hears Barnard equate adultery with other losses and cala-

mities while ironically naming (in the pregnant third position) what is actually the case, for in some versions he indeed discovers by angrily dissecting her that she is pregnant with his child. Can it be that such delicate consistency of image with sequence and meaning, such "fit" of connotation and structure, is fortuitous?

Buchan insists, rightly, that the formulas and connotative units in balladry not be abstracted from their contexts. Here, I would like to suggest a preliminary list of what some of these contexts may be.

First, the *ballad text itself* is a poetic context with its own highly focused constellation of dramatic interaction, dialog, and plot. It may be, as Broadwood suggested some years ago, that "The Bold Fisherman" (Laws O 24) is full of Gnostic elements, but surely the continued coherent performance of the ballad by singers who knew nothing about such matters is, as Renwick suggests, due to the fact that the song has an understandable plot and that it presents a well-known, and popular, set of metaphors and structural formulas about returned lovers.⁵ This larger field of reference, from which the particular ballad gets much of its meaning, I will mention below as another important contextual set. Here my point is that within the song itself, the metaphors are much more in keeping with the manifest story of the ballad than with any outside system. Introducing Broadwood's Gnostic parallels—however closely they may have been connected with the ballad's earliest history—simply leads us away from the performative meanings of the ballad in live context in favor of textual connections in the now moribund past or in the active mind of the scholar. Clearly, the performative approach to folklore advocated by Hymes and Bauman⁶ (among others over the past few years) should not encourage us to denigrate or avoid textual studies, or the historic-geographic method, or historical analysis; but it does ask us to look at the dynamic aspects of the folk performance as part of the meaning. One element of ballad performance must

5. Renwick, p. 22, for his reference to Broadwood's thesis; "The Bold Fisherman" is discussed as the central feature of Chapter 1.

6. For example, see Richard Bauman, "Verbal Art as Performance," *American Anthropologist*, 77 (1975): 290-311; Dell Hymes, "Breakthrough into Performance," in *Folklore: Communication and Performance*, ed. Dan Ben-Amos and Kenneth Goldstein (The Hague, 1975), pp. 11-74. Hymes and Bauman have been among the most persistent and influential scholars who have shaped current folkloristic theories on performance.

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Besides clarifying how ballads function in their cultural contexts, whether diachronic or synchronic, tale role analysis may also, by classifying and defining clearly certain areas, provide pointers for further contextual exploration.¹¹

Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's

Response to Buchan

Edward D. Ives

Since I've never been heavy into structuralism, I have nothing very profound to add to David Buchan's analysis, save that I find it perfectly logical, convincing, and even sensible. I would, however, like to pick up on a couple of statements he makes, not so much because I disagree with them in any fundamental way as because they suggest issues I would like to raise before a literary audience.

First, there is David's statement that "Folk literature differs considerably from written literature." That is, of course, true enough. I've recently re-read—after some forty years—several of John Masefield's long narrative poems like "Dauber" and "The Everlasting Mercy." All I needed was a quiet time and place to sit and read, and I've arranged my life to allow for as many such occasions as possible. As I read, I could check back, look ahead for a place to stop, pause where I liked, and so on. In short, I was completely in control of the context in which I experienced the work of art. Not so is it with ballads. One has to be where they are being sung, and then one has to catch them on the fly—no chance at all for reflection or checking back. Different performance contexts alone, then, will account for differing narrative conventions and differing aesthetics, leading us to the not-so-startling conclusion that what is called folk poetry cannot be judged by the same standards that are applied to the poetry of (God save the mark!) high culture. For example, ballads frequently shift point-of-view—from first- to third-person and back again—yet I have never heard either a singer or a member of his audience (the only ones whose aesthetic opinions are relevant) fault a ballad for that reason.¹ Masefield could never have gotten away with it, though.

11. A version of the second part of this essay was delivered as a paper, "Tale Roles, Classification, and the Revenant Ballads," at the annual meeting of the Kommission für Volksdichtung in Dublin, August, 1985.

1. For examples, see my *Joe Scott: The Woodsman Songmaker* (Champaign, Ill., 1978), pp. 123-124, 356, and *Twenty-One Folksongs from Prince Edward Island* (Orono, Maine, 1963), pp. 17-19.

Yet I don't want to dwell on the differences here, because, whatever they may be, they are far less important than the similarities. Both the ballad and the poem are works of art. Once experienced—the one by being read, the other by being heard—they sit there in the dark at the back of the mind as small points of radiance, achieving their major effects in a kind of contemplative afterglow. It is here, sometimes long after the experience itself, that such elements as structure and symbol get their work done. How that happens is probably matter for the psychologist, but that the reverberations do go on cannot be questioned, and at this level it matters little whether the experienced work was ballad heard or poem read. Put it another way: Buchan has shown us how a particular group of ballads work to help a community order that most disorderly and disruptive of human experiences (next, perhaps, to love): death. Dylan Thomas's poems on his father do no more nor less than that for *their* community.

But no art is without context (I say that in spite of my Newcritical young manhood). Every work must be seen as a crystallization at a critical point in a process that runs along a specific continuum of creation/consumption, and it makes no sense to study the crystallization without taking into account the processes within which it occurred, but wherever they occur—within whatever continuum—those crystallizations, those points of radiance, have unity at a deeper level as affecting presences, expressions of Wallace Stevens' "blessed rage for order."² We will better come to terms with our humanity by keeping always in mind that that unity is far more important than any superficial differentiae we may assign to "folk" *vis-à-vis* "high art" poetry.

Yet while the folklorist and the *litterateur* study the processes and products of different continua, they are not so vastly different that I have ever felt comfortable with the term "folk poet" to distinguish the makers of ballads and such from the makers of "thin sheafs" and sonnet sequences. In the three books I have written on makers of songs,³ only in the first does the term "folk poet" appear at all, while in the last, *Joe Scott: The Woodsman Songmaker*, I conclude by imagining Scott and Yeats drinking beer together in Heaven "in quiet and understanding." In the terms I am suggesting, Scott's ballads have absolute equivalence with "The Circus Animals' Desertion" or the Crazy Jane poems, their differences being entirely the products of the differing continua that serve as their contexts. Yeats used his poetry to work out certain problems that plagued him all his life—growing old, time and eternity, life and art, to name a few—and his crystallizations of those problems have lighted the darkness for thousands. So too with Joe Scott. Hurt terribly by an unhappy love as a young man, he used his songs to help him rebuild his shattered world, and, working within the traditions of

2. For some of the ideas here, I am obviously indebted to Michael Owen Jones, *The Hand Made Object and its Maker* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1975).

3. See Larry Gorman: *The Man Who Made the Songs* (1964; rpt. New York, 1977); Lawrence Doyle: *The Farmer-Poet of Prince Edward Island* (Orono, Me., 1971); and *Joe Scott*.

northeastern lumbercamp singing, he created ballads that others clearly found spoke to their needs for order in the welter and confusion of daily life.

Finally, to bring us back at least within shouting distance of the paper which started us off, by using a method quite similar to Buchan's, I was able to show how all Scott's songs on all their varied subjects—violent death, infidelity, sick and miserable suicide, whatever—were workings-out of one of two themes (or both at once): Eden, the loss of innocence and happiness not to be regained this side the grave; and the Primordial Mother, set out from and ultimately returned to. That the ballads Buchan was considering are of no known authorship should not obscure the fact that ultimately they were, like Scott's ballads and the poetry of Yeats and Thomas and Masfield, the artistic products of very individual poets resolving their own problems. That these resolutions spoke to community problems too and were carried forward on the stream of oral tradition should be no more surprising than the fact that Yeats's poetry continues to be printed and read. Once again the deep unity of poetic experience in our culture is suggested. Whether that unity is an expression of some universal human impulse, and whether it extends to all we call "the arts," are questions that lead us too far from David Buchan's paper for this occasion. There are limits even to the bodacious, and it is best I not exceed them further.

Veazie, Maine

Contributors

DAVID BUCHAN is Professor of Folklore at Memorial University in Newfoundland, where he was Department Head from 1979 to 1985. This year he is Honorary Visiting Professor at the University of Aberdeen, where he received his Ph.D. degree in 1965. He has published numerous articles and books, including *The Ballad and the Folk* and *A Scottish Ballad Book*. Vice-President of the Kommission für Volksdichtung and Honorary Member of the Folklore Society, he serves on several editorial boards. His current research includes commentary on the English language folksong manuscripts of the Brothers Grimm for the Bicentenary Edition in 1986 and an edition of the Glenbuchat Ballad manuscripts.

CAROL L. EDWARDS holds a double Ph.D. degree in Folklore and in English from Indiana University. She has taught folklore, literature, women's studies, and writing courses for the Writing Programs, Women's Studies, and English Departments at UCLA and folklore courses for Indiana University. As well as publishing in the *Journal of American Folklore*, she has published in *Fabula* and *Western Folklore*. Along with Kathleen E. B. Manley, she is co-editor of *Narrative Folksong: New Directions (Essays in Appreciation of W. Edson Richmond)* (1985).

EDWARD D. IVES is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Maine, Orono. He has published extensively in folklore and anthropology journals. Among his several books are *Folksongs and Their Makers* (with Henry Glassie and John Swed); *Larry Gorman: The Man Who Made the Songs*; *Lawrence Doyle: The Farmer-Poet of Prince Edward Island*; and *Joe Scott: The Woodsman Songmaker*.

ELEANOR R. LONG is a Research Associate of the Center for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology at the University of California, Los Angeles, and she is Senior Editor at the Oriental Healing Arts Institute in Long Beach. She has taught English and folklore at Santa Clara University, at the University of Saskatchewan, at the University of Idaho, at California State University, Long Beach, and at UCLA. She is the author of *The Maid and the*

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search of a meaning. Crews is certainly correct, considering the difficulties presented by the plot, to look toward the "non-literal" for a point of cohesion; but I should like to suggest as a complement to allegory, and also psychology, further and more thorough use than has been made of the multi-levelled framework of folklore study.³

The symbols of allegory are non-literal because they are not firmly fixed to the constellation of meanings that surround them. Since the symbol in allegory is free to follow an esoteric system of association, its images, but not its meanings, are fluid. In folklore the opposite is the case. The types and motifs of folklore, although they may change through time and from place to place, are rigidly fixed where they have taken shape in traditional, often formulaic patterns. Although perhaps a literal record or view of reality at one time, folklore types and motifs, because they tend to be used for their traditional value, can seem not only "non-literal," but often non-sensical, and sometimes even absurd. Rigid in form and reference, that form may have only the most tenuous relevance to the notion of "meaning" in critical theory.

This is to say that when folklore analogues correlate with elements of structure or character in literature we can assume no more than that their form is such because it is traditional, although we may wish to argue (but certainly this is another kind of activity) a separate contemporary purpose or function for traditional folkloric elements. Considering Hawthorne's own comments to James Fields ten years after "Rappaccini's Daughter" was published—"Upon my honor, I am not quite sure that I entirely comprehend my own meaning in some of these blasted allegories . . ."—

3. Daniel G. Hoffman has traced folklore motifs in Hawthorne in *Form and Fable in American Fiction* (New York, 1961) but presents little that is of use in this tale. At any rate, we may wish to move beyond the relatively "popular" and uncritical use of such general folklore categories as the prince who attempts to rescue his sleeping beauty or the good and evil fairy enchanter, these as naively discussed by Richard Harter Fogle, *Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark* (rev. ed.; Norman, Okla., 1964), p. 102, or Sidney P. Moss, "A Reading of 'Rappaccini's Daughter,'" *Studies in Short Fiction* 2 (1965): 145-156.

Far better examples of inquiry into Hawthorne's literary use of folklore are Daniel R. Barnes, "The Bosom Serpent: A Legend in American Literature and Culture," *Journal of American Folklore* 85 (1972): 111-122, and Harold Schechter, "The Bosom Serpent: Folklore and Popular Art," *Georgia Review* 39 (1985): 93-108. Barre Toelken discovers the kernel story of "Sir Hugh, or, The Jew's Daughter," in a modern legend regarding the castration of a young white boy by a group of Indians, or Mexicans, or blacks (in the three variants he heard). See *The Dynamics of Folklore* (Boston, 1979), pp. 176-179.

There is, of course, a larger body of scholarship on the relationship between folklore and literature. Highlights in the contextual approach to this relationship include Alan Dundes's "The Study of Folklore in Literature and Culture: Identification and Interpretation," *Journal of American Folklore* 78 (1965): 136-142, and Roger D. Abrahams's "Folklore and Literature as Performance," *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 9 (1972): 81-82. The definitive reference tool is Steven Swann Jones, comp., *Folklore and Literature in the United States: An Annotated Bibliography of Studies of Folklore in American Literature* (New York, 1984).

4. In a letter dated April 13. See *The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, vol. X: *Mosses From an Old Manse*, ed. William Charvat, et al. (Columbus, 1974), p. 550 n. 15.

we may feel lucky to be able to assume only the former. But to recognize only that traditional materials are used for their value as cultural archetypes is to consider what, in the final analysis, can be the most powerful of structuring influences. Where ideological, historical or psychological patterning seem to fall short of providing a reasonable basis for interpretation, a more culturally contextual approach may lead in promising directions.

The plot of "Rappaccini's Daughter" is rather simple: a young man becomes aware of a beautiful and enticing woman in a garden, and is attracted to her; he intrudes into her world by throwing flowers into the garden through a window and speaking to her; he is warned against having anything to do with her; he enters the garden nonetheless, and narrowly escapes the mysterious lady's toxic effects. His attempt to reverse her condition results in her death.

A student of the English ballad might recognize the story, several key elements, and even subtle connotations (except for the ending) to be very much like that of the legend of "Sir Hugh, or, The Jew's Daughter" (Child Ballad 155):⁵

D

- 1 A' the boys of merry Linkin
War playing at the ba,
An up it stands him sweet Sir Hugh,
The flower among them a'.
- 2 He keppit the ba than wi his foot,
And catchd it wi his knee,
And even in at the Jew's window
He gart the bonny ba flee.

5. Francis James Child, ed., *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, vol. 3 (New York, 1957), pp. 243-254. American variants are scattered in local collections. Representative of the ballad in America, and of the study of transmission and variation, is Faith Hippensteel's "'Sir Hugh': The Hoosier Contribution to the Ballad," *Indiana Folklore* 2:2 (1969): 75-140. Hippensteel cites eight variations, several that can be traced to the eastern states or England in the early nineteenth century. In many of the American variations the fear of Jewish practices is even more explicit than in the Child variations:

- H-6) 'I can't come in, and I won't come in,
Without my playmates too,
For who goes in Jew's garden bine,
Will ne'er come out alive, alive,
Will ne'er come out alive.'
- H-7) 'I can't go in, I mustn't go in.
For ofttimes this has been said,
When a boy gets into a Jew's garden,
He never gets out till he's dead, dead, dead,
He never gets out till he's dead.'

or

- 3 'Cast out the ba to me, fair maid,
Cast out the ba to me!
'Ah never a bit of it,' she says.
'Till ye come up to me.
- 4 'Come up, sweet Hugh, come up, dear Hugh,
Come up and get the ba!'
'I winna come up, I mayna come [up]
Without my bonny boys a'.'
- 5 'Come up, sweet Hugh, come up, dear Hugh,
Come up and speak to me!
'I mayna come up, I winna come up,
Without my bonny boys three.'
- 6 She's taen her to the Jew's garden,
Where the grass grew lang and green,
She's pu'd an apple reid and white,
To wyle the bonny boy in.
- 7 She's wyl'd him in thro ae chamber,
She's wyl'd him in thro twa,
She's wyl'd him till her ain chamber,
The flower out owr them a'.
- 8 She's laid him on a dressin-board,
Whare she did often dine;
She stack a penknife to his heart,
And dressd him like a swine.
- 9 She rowd him in a cake of lead,
Bade him lie still and sleep;
She threw him i the Jew's draw-well,
'T was fifty fathom deep.
- 10 Whan bells was rung, and mass was sung,
An a' man bound to bed,
Every lady got hame her son,
But sweet Sir Hugh was dead.

Child D is representative of the main elements of the ballad in its shorter version. But variations only slightly different often add interesting details, such as variant F, where the boy is identified as a scholar,

F

- 1 'T was on a summer's morning
Some scholars were playing at ball,
When out came the Jew's daughter
And leand her back against the wall . . .

or I, recorded in 1814, where the connection is made between the Jew's daughter and the vegetative image of the garden:

I

- 1 It rains, it rains in merry Scotland,
It rains both great and small,
And all the children in merry Scotland
Are playing at the ball.
- 2 They toss the ball so high, so high,
They toss the ball so low,
They toss the ball in the Jew's garden,
Where the Jews are sitting in a row.
- 3 Then up came one of the Jew's daughters,
Cloathed all in green:
'Come hither, come hither, my pretty Sir Hugh,
And fetch thy ball again.'
- 4 'I durst not come, I durst not go,
Without my play-fellowes all;
For if my mother should chance to know,
She'd cause my blood to fall' . . .

or K, taken down ca. 1810, where in addition to the apple, the Jew's daughter uses a gold ring and a blood-red cherry to tempt the boy:

K

- 1 It hails, it rains, in Merry-Cock land,
It hails, it rains, both great and small,
And all the little children in Merry-Cock land
They have need to play at ball.
- 2 They tossd the ball so high,
They tossd the ball so low,
Amongst all the Jew's cattle,
And amongst the Jews below.
- 3 Out came one of the Jew's daughters,
Dressed all in green:
'Come, my sweet Saluter,
And fetch the ball again.'
- 4 'I durst not come, I must not come,
Unless all my little playfellows come along:
For if my mother sees me at the gate,
She'll cause my blood to fall.
- 5 'She showd me an apple as green as grass,
She showd me a gay gold ring'
She showd me a cherry as red as blood,
And so she entic'd me in.
- 6 'She took me in the parlor,
She took me in the kitchen,

And there I saw my own dear nurse,
A picking of a chicken.

- 7 'She laid me down to sleep,
With a Bible at my head and a Testament
at my feet;
And if my playfellows come to quere for me,
Tell them I am asleep.'

Child lists eighteen variations of this widely known ballad which achieved and maintained considerable popularity in England, Scotland and America. The ballad, although generally a symptom of centuries of prejudice and fear of Jewish beliefs and practices throughout England and Europe, is based largely on the story of Hugh of Lincoln which appeared in 1255 in the *Annals of Waverly*, in the *Chronica Majora* of Matthew Paris, in the *Annals of Burton*, and elsewhere. Of stories alleging similar cases of Jewish ritual murder and the slaughter of Jews that followed, Child cites over 70 examples from England, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Greece, Russia, etc., "which come readily to hand without much research" in a list covering the twelfth to nineteenth centuries that barely scratches the surface of this widespread prejudice.⁶

Striking elements of the ballad are the intrusion into a walled garden often containing a well, many times through a window, by a boy specifically identified—following the annals—as a scholar or schoolboy in some versions (like the "litel clergeon" in Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale*, likewise based on this ballad); a strangely passive vampire-seductress-murderess rich with vegetative connotations, often "cloathed all in green," who offers the boy an apple, and often other sexually significant gifts. There are also references to people as flowers, the statement that the boy has been warned to stay away from the garden, and references to the Bible and prayer book.

There is, further, an interesting mingling of detail, normal within the context of the ballad form and the nature of ballad variation, that comes very close at times to the open-ended associations in Hawthorne's story. The Jew's daughter, often said to be clothed in green (Child I, K, J, M, N), sometimes is associated with the apple used in the temptation—called "an apple red and green" (Child A), "baith red and green" (Child E), and even "an apple as green as grass"! (Child M)—when she is described as "All dressed in red and green" (Child G) or, as in H, "All dressed in apple-green." And this fused image—the Jew's daughter and the apple—is merged with a third, that of the garden:

6. Child, pp. 240-243. The story that Jews allegedly crucified in 1255 a Lincoln boy named Hugh and a discussion of its relation to the ballad are provided by Child on pp. 235-240. Hippensteel, p. 83, cites an analogue dated 1215 that pre-dates the Hugh of Lincoln incident.

She's gane into the Jew's garden
Where the grass grew lang and green . . . [Child C]

Here it is through the highly formulaic ". . . and green" that the ballad achieves a unified image of woman/apple/garden.

Likewise, the flexible image of the flower achieves some importance. In variant D the boy is "the flower among them a'" and "the flower out owr them a'." This correlation between a person and the flower is underscored in a way still more relevant to "Rappaccini's Daughter" in that among the local titles of American variants has been found the title "The Fatal Flower Garden," which perhaps picks up on the reference in Child M:

They tossed it into the Jew's garden,
Where the flowers all do blow.

These points of comparison lead in two directions, both of which may help us better to understand Hawthorne's story. They provide a clear and deeply rooted traditional structure (however that structure may be explained intrinsically) for the plot and many of its central images, especially those that seem at times ambiguous, and they also bring to the discussion of historical and allegorical interpretations of the plot elements of Jewish history, doctrine, and lore that may have some bearing on the ambiguous resolution of the story.

We may be reasonably certain that Hawthorne knew of "The Jew's Daughter" as well as the context of religious doctrines and prejudices associated with it. The ballad was widespread in America, especially in the eastern states, and so would have been part of that unrecoverable level of culture (that we now call "folklife") known to all regardless of education or social class. Hawthorne certainly saw the ballad in written form in popular anthologies of antiquities, such as Percy's *Reliques*, which he is known to have borrowed.⁸ And versions of the story appear in the popular books on social customs and practices in which Hawthorne was so interested. In William Hone's *Every-Day Book*, for instance (charged by Hawthorne from the Salem library on September 5, 1835 and again on February 22, 1836), there are references to the ballad's motif of Jewish ritual murder in the case of William of Norwich (also a source for the ballad) and descriptions of the persecution of Jews on this account. Hone in other places extensively describes persecution of

7. Tristram Coffin, *The British Traditional Ballad in North America* (Austin, 1977), p. 248.

8. In Volume I, charged out from the Salem Athenaeum on January 3, 1826 and again on August 5, 1837, "The Jew's Daughter" figures prominently, being one of the first ballads in the collection. Marion L. Kesselring, "Hawthorne's Reading, 1828-1850," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 53 (1949), 66, 136. In her general discussion, Kesselring explains Hawthorne's relation to Mary Manning in their use of the Salem library.

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incorporate and reflect these performances. The "road less taken" which Frost refers is redefined by each of us according to the moral and psychological context in which we find ourselves. For some, it is the path to a Heaven of the spirit; for others, the path to psychological Hell.

CAROL L. EDWARDS

University of California,
Los Angeles, California.

Context and Loss in Scottish Ballad Tradition

JOHN D. NILES

Hamish Henderson has recently retold the good story of how one afternoon in the summer of 1953, he first came to the front door of the small cold-water flat at 21 Causewayend, Aberdeen. He was looking for a woman named Jeannie Higgins, or (to go by her maiden name and the name by which she is now remembered) Jeannie Robertson. The trail that led to Robertson had begun the preceding summer in the town of Fyvie, Aberdeenshire, where Henderson was staying while on one of his early collecting expeditions. As Jeannie Robertson's own version of the incident has been published,¹ there may be some interest in hearing Henderson's complementary account of what led to his discovery of one of the world's great folksingers, especially since the discovery led to an eventual recognition of the part her people, the Scottish Travellers, play in English-language culture as conveyors of a wealth of oral lore.²

HH The discovery of Jeannie in the summer of '53 was the culmination of all my hopes. I felt in my bones that in the Northeast, which had given so much balladry to Scotland and the world in the past, there must be somebody there who not only was a great tradition-bearer but probably a great personality as well. I felt this without having any concrete. . . . I mean I'd

1. See Herschel Gower, "Jeannie Robertson: Portrait of a Traditional Singer," *Scottish Studies* 12 (1968): 118-119, and "Analyzing the Revival: The Influence of Jeannie Robertson," in *The Ballad Image: Essays Presented to Bertrand Harris Bronson*, ed. James Porter (Los Angeles, 1983), pp. 131-134.

2. Interview of July 19, 1984 (my tape number 840719-1). The conversation is lightly edited. Fieldwork during the summer of 1984 was funded partly by a grant from the American Philosophical Society. Copies of my tapes will be deposited in the Archive of the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh, and in the Folklore Sound Archive of the University of California, Berkeley.

recorded a number of good singers right enough with [Alan] Lomax, but nobody on the scale of Jeannie. So I was lucky that I eventually got hold of her.

JN How did you do it?

HH It was the fruit of a whole—you know—chains of things coming together, more or less. The immediate chain of development was from 1952 from the recording tour that I did in the region of Echt and Ythanside [Aberdeenshire]. On one occasion I was having lunch in the clubhouse [the community center, with cheap rooms for rent] in Fyvie, when a lad came and had lunch there too. He was a travelling man, a rich travelling man. So I invited him to come and sit beside me when he came into the room. And I loved having a crack [a talk] during a meal, you know? So we were exchanging information. He would ask me what I was doing, and vice versa, and he was quite interested when I said I'd been recording singers and songs. So he said, "Did you ever record in Aberdeen itself?" I said, "Yes, I did, but not very much." "Well," he said, "there's unknown talent lurking there in Aberdeen. You should go to the Castlegate on a market day and," he says, "the folk there in the Castlegate will give you all the information you need."

That was in the autumn of 1952, and I couldn't follow it up immediately because I had so much to do with various people in the area of Fyvie, [and] also because my money was running out. But the following year I made that a priority. It always lodged in my head. "First thing I do when I get to Aberdeen will be to go to the Castlegate." So I did just that. And there in the Castlegate on a market day were all these various stalls, you know—mostly travelling people. Travelling people in the technical sense—they were tinkers, you know?

JN Yes.

HH Anyway, I went from place to place, and when they weren't too occupied I would talk about songs and all that. Eventually I began to get a list of people in a notebook in which I began to make little ticks or crosses beside each new mention of a singer. So it was *Jeannie Higgins*: I began to get one, two, three, four. . . . I was talking about this with—oh, Geordie Hutchinson or whoever. "Oh, you ought to go and hear Jeannie Higgins!" So I began to think, "Well, Jeannie Higgins—let's give it a try!" So at that time I was living in a house in Maberly Street and by great good fortune it wasn't all that far from the address that I got for Jeannie Higgins, which was Causewayend. So after having my evening meal I thought, "Well, to hell with it, I'll see about this Jeannie Higgins." So off I went from Maberly Street to Causewayend and the wee house of Jeannie's, no longer there. And I rang the bell, or knocked on the door,

can't remember which, and there was Jeannie standing there. And she'd been cleaning in the house and had this sort of turban thing and an apron. Quite clearly she wasn't too keen on being disturbed. Her attitude was more or less "Go away, we've got one, come back next month!" [Laughter] So I was arguing sort of frantically against time; I didn't want the door to be shut on me. And I began to sing a verse of *The Battle of Harlaw* that I'd recorded a day or two before. And this amused Jeannie, and a slow smile spread over her face. Right away she invited me in and told me that she would sing me the right way of it. So then she put me down in a chair inside this wee room, in her house on Causewayend, fixed me with her big black eyes, and began singing. And I had a fantastic feeling that was a sort of Nunc Dimittis feeling, you know . . . "Good lord, this is it!" [Laughter] But my God, she was a *wonderful* singer. . . . So I just in a manner of speaking let the tide roll over me. She gave me a cup of tea and I asked her if I could come back. She wasn't too keen on my coming back that night, but I went back that night with a tape recorder and I recorded into the night. That was the first day I met Jeannie Robertson.

Folksong enthusiasts date the modern Scottish folksong revival from that day. This is not to say that Robertson was the first of Scotland's traditional singers to be recorded on tape or disc. James Carpenter had made a field collection in the 1930s while doing research for a Harvard degree.³ Earlier in the 1950s Alan Lomax, Seamus Ennis, and Hamish Henderson had recorded little-known Scottish singers. Robertson, still, was the first singer to emerge almost overnight from anonymity among the Scottish folk to become an international celebrity. Her success was not only due to her voice. Equally impressive was her seemingly fathomless repertory, which encompassed both a number of Child ballads—the El Dorado of ballad hunters, then as in previous decades—and a variety of other narrative and lyric songs, ranging from Irish Come-All-Ye's to Scots dialect songs, with a few American country-western favorites thrown in for good measure. When Hamish Henderson turned away from Jeannie Robertson's flat at the end of the first of his many visits, he knew that he had found what he was looking for: a vigorous singer and an intelligent, articulate woman who, with

3. The Carpenter collection, which includes recordings from the British Isles and North America, has recently been purchased by the Archive of Folk Culture of the Library of Congress.

no formal musical training or literary education, could authoritatively interpret the great Scottish oral tradition of narrative song.

The emergence of Jeannie Robertson into the folksong scene of the 1950s set into prominence the place of the Scottish tinkers, or Travellers (as I shall call them),⁴ in British folk culture. Previous to the 1950s, social barriers had maintained a sharp division between the "tinks" like Jeannie Robertson, as they were pejoratively called, and the settled population, including even the best folksong collectors. Since 1953, a considerable body of lore of many kinds has been collected from the Scottish Travellers, some of it for the sound archives of the BBC and much of it for the Archives of the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh. Although most of this material remains unpublished, enough has appeared in print by now to provide an introduction to the Traveller way of life and repertory.⁵

CHILD'S LONG SHADOW

In most if not all of the publications just cited, the influence of Francis James Child is somewhere to be found. As Hamish Henderson has remarked, speaking of the various folksong-related activities of the School of Scottish Studies, "All our work has been done under his formidable shadow."⁶ At the same time, the work that has been undertaken in the field of folk balladry in Scotland during the past thirty years has gone far beyond Child in its conceptual orientation

4. The term "tinkers," besides lending itself easily to insult, is historically inaccurate in that tinsmithing ceased to be an important Traveller trade with the advent of cheap mass-produced substitutes for tin. The term "Traveller" has the disadvantage of potentially encompassing travelling people of all sorts, including tourists, gypsies, and vagabonds. I shall use this term since it is generally preferred by the Travellers themselves.

5. See, for example, Hamish Henderson and Francis Collinson, "New Child Ballad Variants from Oral Tradition," *Scottish Studies* 9 (1965): 1-33; Peter Hall, "Scottish Tinker Songs," *Folk Music Journal* 3:1 (1975): 41-62, and articles by Tom Munnely, Jim Carroll, and Michael Yates in that same issue of the *Folk Music Journal*; Herschel Gower and James Porter, "Jeannie Robertson: The Child Ballads," *Scottish Studies* 14 (1970): 35-58; "Jeannie Robertson: The 'Other' Ballads," *Scottish Studies* 16 (1972): 139-159, and "Jeannie Robertson: The Lyric Songs," *Scottish Studies* 21 (1977): 55-103; Ailie Munro, "Lizzie Higgins and the Oral Transmission of Ten Child Ballads," *Scottish Studies* 14 (1970): 155-188; Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, *Travellers' Songs From England and Scotland* (London, 1977); and James Porter, "The Turriff Family of Fetterangus: Society, Learning, Creation, and Recreation of Traditional Song," *Folk Life* 16 (1978): 5-26, and "Parody and Satire as Mediators of Change in the Traditional Songs of Belle Stewart," in *Narrative Folksong: New Directions (Essays in Appreciation of W. Edson Richmond)*, ed. Carol L. Edwards and Kathleen E. B. Manley (Boulder, Co., 1985), pp. 303-338. Record albums featuring one or more Traveller singers are too numerous to cite here.

6. Booklet accompanying *The Muckle Sangs: Classic Scots Ballads* (Tangent LP TNGM 119/D), p. 3.

as well as its results. If it has shown anything, it has demonstrated the need—that is to say, the practical necessity—of studying oral literature in its full human context, with relation to the ways of life, beliefs, fears, ideals, loves, and prejudices of the people who sing the songs or tell the stories. In regard to this theme, the work of Child and his immediate successors is incomplete, however magnificently it achieves what it sets out to do. For rarely in the volumes of Child and Bronson⁷ is there more than passing acknowledgment that ballads are the creations of ballad singers. George Lyman Kittredge, as editor of the *Journal of American Folklore*, even excised as irrelevant such contextual information as fieldworkers sent him.⁸ For him the text was the thing, and his attitude contributed toward the sometimes mindless proliferation of texts in earlier twentieth-century publications at the expense of well-nuanced explorations of the meaning of these items within the general culture of people's lives.

In essence, Child wished to gather the flowers from earlier manuscripts and printed collections so as to exhibit them in a magnificent and comprehensive florilegium of song-poetry. He wished to create the equivalent of an English-language national epic consisting of poems in ballad meter on subjects that were suitably heroic, tragic, and archaic. In order to achieve this end, he had to prune a jungle. He discarded most comic songs, and virtually all bawdy songs, as unsuitable. He sorted with evident displeasure through the Roxburghe and Pepys broadside collections, which he called "veritable dunghills" of popular literature,⁹ on the chance that an occasional item might suit his criteria. He had equal disdain for the sensational or sentimental products of the nineteenth-century broadside press. As for North American ballads and ballad variants, he had little interest in them, for they were late and derivative by definition.¹⁰

7. Reference is to *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, ed. Francis James Child, 5 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1882-98), and to Bertrand Harris Bronson, *The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads*, 4 vols. (Princeton, 1959-72).

8. See the remarks of Arthur P. Hudson in *Folksongs of Mississippi and Their Background* (1936; rpt. New York, 1981), p. viii.

9. Letter to Svend Grundvig of August 25, 1872, quoted by Sigurd Hustvedt, *Ballad Books and Ballad Men* (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), p. 254.

10. On the implicit principles underlying Child's work as anthologist, see Thelma G. James, "The English and Scottish Popular Ballads of Francis J. Child," *Journal of American Folklore* 46 (1933): 51-68, and, with some acerbity, Dave Harker, "Francis James Child and the 'Ballad Consensus'," *Folk Music Journal* 4:2 (1981): 146-164.

✓ We now know that many of Child's assumptions were wrong. First of all, Child assumed that the great, creative period of ballad-making began during the Middle Ages and ended before the close of the eighteenth century. And yet in only the vaguest generic sense are the ballads medieval. If ballads were made and sung before the mid-fifteenth century, none has come down to us. Most of the ballad texts that are on display in a late medieval section of the Norton or Oxford anthologies of English literature are literary inventions of the age of Percy, Burns, and Scott. Like the Percy text of *Edward* or the Burns text of *Tam Lin*, they were composed in imitation of traditional songs from which they depart in striking ways;¹¹ or like Scott's poem *The Twa Corbies*, they were composed as parodic renderings of earlier songs.¹² For many poets and editors of this time, there was no greater coup than passing off a freshly composed text as "medieval," and the nineteenth century's success in this enterprise has contributed to a still-current scholarly devaluation of the rough but often vigorous products of genuine oral tradition. In particular, the role of local songwriters in shaping regional oral traditions has not received all the attention it deserves.¹³ Numbers of popular ballads and lyric songs have been composed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by people with little or no literary training but with an ear well tuned to the characteristic diction and structural patterns of songs of their region. Such creative singer-songwriters are not hard to find among the Travellers: Belle Stewart and Duncan Williamson are noteworthy examples.

Second, Child assumed that the bulk of recent oral balladry of his day was corrupted by print, and hence of little value. Yet from

11. See Archer Taylor, "Edward" and "Sven i Rosengard" (Chicago, 1931), and Bertrand Harris Bronson, "'Edward, Edward: A Scottish Ballad' and a Footnote," in his *The Ballad as Song* (Berkeley, 1969), pp. 1-17; also my "A Traditional Ballad and Its Mask: *Tam Lin*," in *Ballads and Ballad Research*, ed. Patricia Conroy (Seattle, 1978), pp. 147-158. ✨

12. At any rate this is my understanding of the origin of the song whose text first appeared in Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh, 1803), and which has subsequently been recorded from oral tradition as sung to various unrelated tunes. Unlike later editors, Child did not accept Scott's text as a popular ballad.

13. An exception is Mary Ellen Brown, "The Street Laureate of Aberdeen: Charles Leslie, alias Musle Mou'd Charlie, 1677-1782," in *Narrative Folksong: New Directions*, ed. Carol L. Edwards and Kathleen E. B. Manley (Boulder, Co., 1985), pp. 362-378. The publications of Edward D. Ives relating to songwriters of Maine and the Maritime Provinces of Canada are another set of exceptions: see his *Larry Gorman: The Man Who Made the Songs* (1964; rpt. New York, 1977), *Laurence Doyle: The Farmer-Poet of Prince Edward Island* (Orono, Me., 1971), *Joe Scott: The Woodsman Songmaker* (Champaign, Ill., 1978), and "Joe Smith: The Poet as Outlaw," in *The Ballad Image*, pp. 148-170.

our earliest records there is evidence that oral tradition and print have interpenetrated in a variety of ways. There is little point in distinguishing an early stage of pure oral tradition in British balladry from a later stage that is sullied by the broadside press when neither the purity of the one nor the blemished character of the other can be taken for granted. The very terms "purity" and "impurity" imply a distinction and an aesthetic hierarchy that upon inspection turn out to be meaningless, for often, as one might expect, the ballads that have been printed most frequently are also the ones that have been found most commonly in oral tradition. To take an example: one enormously popular Child ballad, *Bonny Barbara Allen* (Child 84), has long been the darling of the broadside press. It can be traced in four main textual branches.¹⁴ Two of these have rarely seen print. A third, frequently reprinted since the eighteenth century, has the familiar primavera opening:¹⁵

All in the merry month of May,
When green buds they were swellin' . . .

The other frequently printed branch is Scottish and dates back to the 1740 edition of Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*:

It was in and about the Martinmas time,
When the green leaves were a falling . . .

If the English textual branch is earlier than the Scottish, as seems likely, then the parodic substitution of November for merry May and falling leaves for swelling buds takes on the appearance of a grim set of improvements along the lines of what Sir Walter Scott did to *The Three Ravens*. Whatever the early history of the song may be, there is literary art in this particular bifurcation in the tradition. If this one example may stand for many, I would claim that Child's attempt to establish a canon of essentially oral ballads as opposed to literary or broadside ballads was doomed from the start, for all popular ballads are literary in many different degrees, as we trace

14. See Ed Cray, "'Barbara Allen': Cheap Print and Reprint," in *Folklore International: Essays in Traditional Literature, Belief, and Custom in Honor of Wayland Debs Hand*, ed. D. K. Wilgus (Hatboro, Pa., 1967), pp. 41-50.

15. The following examples are reproduced from Bronson, *The Traditional Tunes*, vol. 2, p. 329 (no. 14) and p. 337 (no. 40). They illustrate Bronson's melodic types A and B, respectively. The first example begins with the usual "Scarlet Town" stanza, which I omit here for the sake of a sharper comparison.

them through their sometimes dauntingly complex changes. For this reason I am among those who question the thesis that it is possible to distinguish three chronological stages in Scottish ballad tradition: the oral-recreative, the transitional, and the memorial.¹⁶ When examined in its full complexity, every stage of ballad tradition, including our own, can be seen to be transitional. The question to be asked is, what are the precise terms of the transitions at a given time and place?

A third assumption that underpinned Child's work is what might be called the degenerative fallacy. According to this theory, individual singers are memorizers who imitate, often imperfectly, what they have heard, so that ballad tradition as a whole is a long downhill process. Although most singers do indeed memorize their ballads, in the special sense that will be discussed in the next section, some also create. This observation is not a theory but a fact that has been frequently verified.¹⁷ To again let one example stand for many: when Jeannie Robertson sang *The Gypsy Laddie* (Child 200), she did not use a tune she inherited. She grafted the words onto the tune of a different Scottish song, "The Roving Ploughboy."¹⁸ John MacDonald had previously composed this song along the lines of popular up-beat bothie songs from the Northeast of Scotland, and he incorporated into it several stanzas reminiscent of *The Gypsy Laddie*, all the while maintaining a "Ploughboy-O" refrain and a jolly tempo. Hamish Henderson had this song on tape, and Jeannie Robertson heard the tape. Then, liking the tune better than the one she had previously known for *The Gypsy Laddie*, she fitted her old words to MacDonald's tune, omitting the bothie-style refrain. Anyone who listens to the two performances will immediately sense

16. This is one of David Buchan's chief theses in *The Ballad and the Folk* (London, 1972). Hamish Henderson's review article, "The Ballad, the Folk and the Oral Tradition," in *The People's Past*, ed. Edward J. Cowan (Edinburgh, 1980), pp. 79-85 and ff., makes the point that the oral-recreative stage in ballad tradition can still be studied today, while Buchan's evidence for the "old oral mode" of composition in eighteenth-century Scotland is questioned by Henderson as well as by Flemming G. Andersen and Thomas Pettitt, "Mrs. Brown of Falkland: A Singer of Tales?" *Journal of American Folklore* 92 (1979): 1-24.

17. See for example John Quincy Wolf, "Folksingers and the Re-Creation of Folksong," *Western Folklore* 26 (1967): 101-111, and Eleanor Long, "Ballad Singers, Ballad Makers, and Ballad Etiology," *Western Folklore* 32 (1973): 225-236. Both Wolf and Long distinguish the different grades of creativity shown by singers of different temperament, from slavish memorizers to those who compose their own songs.

18. *The Muckle Sangs*, side 1, bands 2a and 2b. Hamish Henderson has written on this particular kink in Scottish ballad tradition in "How a Bothy Song Came Into Being," *Scottish Studies* 5 (1961): 212-215.

the force of Jeannie Robertson's artistic presence. Phrase by phrase and note by note, the two tunes are the same. Their "feel" is utterly different. Jeannie Robertson's act of melodic re-creation is no more degenerative than is John MacDonald's incorporation of some old words into a new song. Each singer is a creative artist in his or her chosen style and genre. Jeannie Robertson did not set out to imitate a tune, then fail to do so correctly. Rather, she heard a tune, assimilated it, and used it, simultaneously transforming it in accord with her own aesthetic sensibility. A song does not go mechanically from ear to mouth, as it were. It first enters the soul of the listening singer, and then it is reborn, with personal features.

THE THEORY OF THE RECURRENT THAW

If the concept just outlined is correct, then to a greater or lesser degree, everyone who hears a song and repeats it also recreates it. Each act of transmission of an oral song—each link in the chain that binds singer to singer, generation to generation—is by its nature inherently creative. Let us pursue this point for its possible relevance to the theme of contextuality.

Since the publication of Albert B. Lord's *The Singer of Tales* in 1953, the year of Jeannie Robertson's discovery, there has been some controversy as to the nature of creativity in British and American balladry.¹⁹ Several scholars have argued that ballad singers compose (or, in former years, used to compose) by the oral-formulaic method that is characteristic of the art of epic singers from the Balkans. Others have argued that ballads are memorized. This second view is supported by the testimony of singers themselves, many of whom freely acknowledge that they are memorizers. And yet this acknowledgment leads to an apparent paradox. Over a period of some years, memorization alone would lead to static uniformity in a song tradition except for errors due to lapse of memory. What we find instead, as we follow any ballad through its changes in the pages of Child and Bronson, is a wild and woolly variability in both texts and tunes. How can we reconcile the fact of memorization with the fact of such creative instability?

To resolve this paradox, I have developed a principle that, in a

19. For a vigorous recent review of the question see Albert B. Friedman, "The Oral-Formulaic Theory of Balladry—A Re-Rebuttal," in *The Ballad Image*, pp. 215-240. My remarks are intended to support and supplement Friedman's defense of the Sharp-Gerould theory of communal recreation in balladry.

Northern mood, I have called the "theory of the recurrent thaw." According to this notion, creativity enters the ballad-singing process chiefly during an initial "thawing" stage or formative period when a singer is in the process of learning a song. Once the song is learned well enough to be added to the singer's active repertory, it remains largely "frozen" in a memorized form and will stay relatively fixed, except for lapses of memory, through subsequent performances by this singer.

According to this theory, the life story of a song is not one of slow change or gradual deterioration. On the contrary, the song's long frozen periods of stable memorization are interrupted by periods of thaw during which its constituent elements of formulas, motifs, plot, and tune become partially fluid as a new person learns the song and shapes it to his or her own dialect, experience, and aesthetic values. The process may continue indefinitely, with alternate periods of freezing and thawing, as the song is learned and passed on to others, until eventually the ballad is either forgotten or melts away into an undisciplined set of floating song materials.

What I have outlined is not only an attractive theory; it has the advantage of being largely unverifiable. By definition, one cannot record a song until it has been added to a singer's active repertory. The all-important formative stage is almost impossible to document. Still I have tried to test the theory by study of two sorts of information: records of mother/daughter song transmission, and records of repeated performances of the same song by one singer. What I have found in British and American tradition leads me not to abandon the theory but to qualify it in important respects.

First, a singer may freeze certain song types (or certain individual songs) but not others. The Ozark singer Almeda Riddle, for example, felt free to alter her children's songs with each performance, but she regarded other ballads as "classic" and next to inviolable. Even these ballads she changed on occasion, despite her claim to the contrary.²⁰

Second, just as some people cling to old ways while others are fiercely independent, some singers mind their sources far more faithfully than others do. Maud Long of Hot Springs, North Caro-

20. See Roger D. Abrahams, ed., *A Singer and Her Songs: Almeda Riddle's Book of Ballads* (Baton Rouge, 1970), and compare Wolf, "Folksingers and the Re-Creation of Folksong," pp. 107-108.

lina, is an example of the relatively uncreative singer. In 1946, 1947 and 1948 Long recorded some songs that Maud Karpeles and Cec Sharp had recorded thirty-two years previously from Long's mother Jane Gentry. None of Long's four Child ballads was much changed and she performed two of them almost word for word and note for note as her mother had done.²¹ In the case of these two ballads tradition seems never to have entered a period of thaw; or if the ballads did thaw in the process of being handed down, they froze again in almost identical form. On the other hand, Lizzie Higgins is an example of the strongly independent singer. Although she does not sing *The Gypsy Laddie*, which she regards as her mother's song, she has learned another of Jeannie Robertson's songs on a similar theme. This is *The Jolly Beggar* (Child 279), a favorite in the Traveller repertory, in part (one suspects) because of its sympathetic story of a girl's elopement with a travelling man. Higgins's version of the song departs dramatically from Robertson's.²² The daughter's version is longer, and it can be seen to have greater narrative coherence once one understands that its central part is a kind of flashback to the earlier year when the girl eloped. Lizzie Higgins not only sings with a voice of different timbre from her mother's and with ornamentation that derives from piping rather than from vocal music. She has worked out a somewhat different repertory, and within this repertory she has recomposed her ballads to suit her own aesthetic standards.

Third, creative variation can sometimes be traced among repeated performances by the same singer. While fixed memorization may be the rule, the rule is sometimes broken. For example, a comparison of five performances of the comic ballad *The Farmer's Curst Wife* (Child 278) as sung by the blind Appalachian singer Horton Barker in 1932, 1939, 1940, 1962, and 1966 shows both a firm line of continuity and significant variations in detail.²³ When Barker first

21. See Bronson, vol. 1, pp. 36-37 (Child 3, nos. 6 and 7); vol. 2, p. 9 (Child 54, nos. 17 and 18); vol. 4, pp. 18-19 (Child 248, nos. 6 and 7) and pp. 353-354 (Child 286, nos. 94 and 95).

22. For Higgins's variant see Ailie Munro, "Lizzie Higgins and the Oral Transmission," pp. 164-165. It can be heard on *The Muckle Sangs*, side 2, band 5. For her mother's variant see Bronson, vol. 4, p. 244 (no. 41).

23. For sources of the first four variants see Bronson, vol. 4, p. 192, headnote to no. 33 (a reprint of Barker's 1939 variant). For the 1966 variant see *East Tennessee State University Collection of Folklore: Folksongs*, ed. Thomas G. Burton and Ambrose N. Manning (Johnson City, Tenn., 1967), pp. 36-37.

recorded the song in 1932 it was complete, but he was not content to let it stand. His 1939 version adds a new final stanza and expurgates the fifth stanza, which evidently Barker found unsuitable for public performances because of its off-color phrase "ball the jack." The 1940 version adds two stanzas that Barker picked up from another singer on the folk circuit, Texas Gladden. It also includes a new revision of the "ball the jack" stanza and some minor verbal changes. By this time Barker seems to have become satisfied with his song, for the 1962 and 1966 versions show no significant innovations.

These few examples are instructive. They corroborate the conclusion that oral tradition is multiform and complex and has probably always been so. My "theory of the recurrent thaw" may prove useful, but only as a working suggestion from which research can depart as necessary. For it seems as though creativity can enter the ballad-singing process at practically *any* stage, given a creative singer.

I have made this point concerning the inevitable creativity that is involved in the transmission of traditional song not for its own sake, but because it has a corollary that bears on my main theme, context and loss in Scottish ballad tradition. Why do some song traditions flourish while others change and others disappear entirely? This question can only be answered by attention to what are largely non-literary and non-musical factors; in short, by attention to the people who sing the songs. The current contextual emphasis in folkloric study is not just a fad, like a rage for golden boughs. It is a *sine qua non* if we are to understand the dynamics of oral literature. For at each link in the chain of transmission of oral literature there is a human being, a person who chooses to add only certain materials to his active repertory and who inevitably recreates these materials in accord with his or her own style and character. This person is an individual, and unique. He or she is also a member of a family, with its particular habits and outlook, and the family is part of a larger community. More exactly, thanks to a particular set of kinship ties and personal choices, each individual takes part in a shifting, multi-tiered set of interlocking communities of different kinds centered on particular occupations, neighborhoods, religions, ethnic allegiances, political or fraternal organizations, social clubs, and the like.

Among the Scottish Travellers far more than among the population of Great Britain and North America at large, these disparate interlocking communal connections become subsumed under a single encompassing identity. To be a Traveller is to be one of a group whose members are bound together by ties of kinship, by a set of customary trades and territories, and by a special language and lore, as well as by a more or less forced exclusion from the social life of the majority.

THE TRAVELLERS' WAY OF LIFE

Historically the Travellers are of unknown origin. Often they have been linked to the gypsies by those who do not know them, but the gypsies are relative latecomers to Britain and ethnically they are distinct. Many gypsy words have found their way into Travellers' cant, just as Travellers have adopted some of the gypsies' techniques of camping, but Travellers' cant is not Romany.²⁴

Some Travellers speak of their ancestors as former crofters who were displaced from their land during the Highland Clearances that followed the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. There may be some truth in this assertion. The breakup of the traditional Highland clan system was accompanied by a general movement of population to the south and east. Peddlers, like settled people, had to follow the paths of possible income. One of the striking and depressing sights of the Highlands today is the number of ruined crofts and villages whose inhabitants were forced from the land during the Clearances and during subsequent periods of economic collapse. Some scholars have seen the ancestry of the Travellers as going back beyond the Clearances to an indigenous caste of metalworkers and musicians who were once indispensable to the Scottish aristocracy. Doubtless there is truth in this assertion as well. The social opprobrium that attaches

24. See David Clement, "The Secret Language of the Scottish Travelling People," *Grazer Linguistische Studien* 15 (1981): 17-25. In preparing this section of the essay, I have made particular use of Farnham Rehfish, "Marriage and the Elementary Family Among the Scottish Tinkers," *Scottish Studies* 5 (1961): 121-148, and A. and F. Rehfish, "Scottish Travellers or Tinkers," in *Gypsies, Tinkers, and Other Travellers*, ed. Farnham Rehfish (London, 1975), pp. 271-283. Two useful earlier studies are David MacRitchie, *Scottish Gypsies under the Stewarts* (Edinburgh, 1894), and Andrew McCormick, *The Tinkler-Gypsies* (Edinburgh, 1907). Hugh Gentleman and Susan Swift, *Scotland's Travelling People: Problems and Solutions* (Edinburgh, 1971), is a government-sponsored report that should be used with circumspection.

to Travellers today may in part be a reflex of the days when metalworkers pursued a tainted craft.

Whatever their disparate origins—for some people of any generation find reasons to take to the road—the Travellers in Scotland today are a varied group whose members are identified as such by their kinship with other Travellers. The basic social unit is the extended family. To an outsider a Traveller's network of kinship ties is likely to seem staggeringly complex, and yet Travellers take a keen interest in family relations and know one another's affiliations in detail. Not all Traveller families are on good terms with one another, but they are all united in the distance that separates them from settled society. In recent decades intermarriage with settled people seems to have become more common, but in essence one cannot marry into the Travellers. One can only be born into them, if at least one parent is of Traveller stock and if the parents keep to Traveller ways.

Not all Travellers live on the road, especially at present, but almost all share a knowledge of how to do so. Many are "hoosed up" in winter but still travel during the summer months. Motorized caravans (campers) are now the norm. In former days the journey from place to place was by means of the pony cart or horse cart—that is, if the family could afford a horse. If not, they walked. In summer the tents they pitched were made of canvas or other rain-resistant materials stretched over withies that were cut fresh at each campsite. Friendly families would camp together, and tent could be adjoined to tent to make composite structures grouped around a campfire. During the winter months a family would build a larger tent, which was as spacious as a small house and would hold a central firebox and a chimney improvised from a length of stovepipe.

The dual nature of the Travellers, Highland and Lowland, is suggested by their cant, which exists in two varieties, one based on Gaelic and one on Lowland Scots. The first has suffered a fate parallel to that of its parent tongue and is virtually extinct today. The second incorporates some Gaelic words, some Romany words, and some unique Traveller vocabulary in a standard Lowlands grammatical matrix. Knowledge of cant and how to use it is practically an identifying feature for Travellers.

Several features of Traveller social life stand out as exceptional. Their hospitality, like that of nomads elsewhere, can be extraordinarily generous. Guests in Traveller homes are well advised not to

admire anything or they will be given it, despite all protestations. Also exceptional is the Travellers' leniency toward their children, who can do no wrong. At the same time, children are not coddled into adolescence but are expected to contribute to the family's welfare, and they make themselves useful through suitable tasks. In the eyes of Travellers, a couple can have no greater misfortune than to be childless.

Traditional Traveller occupations have included tinsmithing, which has been supplanted by dealing in scrap metal; horse trading, which has given way to dealing in used cars; door-to-door hawking of small wares or handcrafted items such as baskets, brushes, and paper flowers; and begging, which often goes hand in hand with hawking and is likewise looked upon as an ancient and honorable trade. Whole families work together in the berry fields during harvest time. Men often take part in seasonal farm labor, such as tattie howking (potato harvesting). When free from other concerns, Travellers have tried their hand at fishing for pearl-bearing oysters in one or another of the clear streams that spill down from the central Highlands. Women may earn pocket money telling fortunes. In addition, many Travellers are masterful musicians. The Highland pipes are their pet instrument, and when a son is born his father may look to see if he has the "crukit" finger (the bent little finger) that is the sign of a gifted piper. Travellers are often among the contestants piping for prize money at local Highland Games. Occasionally a Traveller in full Highland dress will be found piping for change at automobile lay-bys in the Glens. Skilled buskers like Davy Stewart and Jimmy MacBeath used to work the cinema queues in Ireland and Scotland.

The Travellers' way of life stands out most distinctively by comparison with what they are not, and what their culture does not pertain to. Travellers have generally opted out of the wage system of the dominant society. The concept of unemployment does not apply to them. Though they have been known to take a welfare check, they tend to regard it as money from heaven, like a pearl found in a riverbed by luck or cunning. They will work on farms, but they avoid the steady, gruelling labor of long-term agricultural employment. They have no interest in the accumulated property of the settled farmers, or "country hantle," as the Travellers refer to them. Like most itinerants they tend to regard property as a burden as much as a benefit.

The Travellers' song repertory can be contrasted not only with that of the settled farmers but with that of the singers of bothie ballads. Many bothie ballads (or "cornkisters," as they are known in the Northeast) are upbeat, randy celebrations of the man who follows the plow. Some are complaints on such topics as the quality of the brose, or oatmeal, at a certain named farm. Although some Travellers delight in the cornkisters, others have continued to sing the old family dramas, including serious and lengthy Child ballads, for the family rather than the bunkhouse has remained their basic social unit.

Likewise the songs of the Travellers can be contrasted with industrial ballads: songs of the weavers or the miners, for example, which often voice dissatisfaction with long hours and slave wages and which generally reflect the view of men working in male environments. The Travellers have no common cause with the "flatties"—their derogatory term for flat dwellers—or with the flatties' industrial disputes. The left-wing songs of labor activists are absent from their repertory. Economically the Travellers are a marginal group of entrepreneurs who have no stake in the large issues of property rights versus labor rights. The settled society looks down on them as deprived, as lacking what they should have in order to be happy. From their own point of view they have things that settled people often lack; namely, independence, warm companionship, and enough leisure time to enjoy their children and to cultivate the gifts of music, stories, and songs.

TRAVELLERS' SONGS AS AN EXPRESSION OF TRAVELLERS' REALITY

For folksong scholars, the chief importance of the Travellers is not their way of life but their songs. To repeat a point, however, the two go together. No body of oral lore can exist apart from its nurturing environment. It can be recorded and fixed on the page, but when exhibited in this way it has only a museum existence that is a pale shadow of its true self. The Travellers have continued to cultivate some of the old family ballads not only because they still like to get together and trade songs, but because these songs still make sense to them. They are their reality. They are not escapist literature, and they are the farthest thing from antiquarian relics. In 1974, when Betsy Whyte finished singing her variant of the intensely romantic murder ballad *Young Johnstone* (Child 88) for two fieldworkers from the School of Scottish Studies, she added: "It was

true . . . it was really a true ballad [. . .]. He was *jealous* o her, you see, he was this type, you would have tae understand the Johnstones to ken that type."²⁵ For her the song is not a "classic" ballad set in some fictive and idealized past. It is a story from life featuring recognizable characters. Betsy Whyte understands the song because she understands the Johnstons, as she should, for she has Johnston blood in her.

Some features of the old ballads that have made these songs increasingly irrelevant to the lives of settled people have spoken directly to the Travellers' condition. The lords and ladies of *Tam Lin* or *The Gypsy Laddie* walk in an aristocratic world that has nothing to do with the urban masses, and that at first sight might seem to have even less relation to the Travellers. But Travellers tend to find themselves more directly at odds with the urban and rural middle class than with the landed gentry. They remember some lords with affection for occasional acts of kindness or for having given them permission to camp on their land with a blind eye to the occasional poaching of a hare or a trout. Through family names like Cameron, MacGregor, or Stewart, some Travellers trace their ancestry back to noblemen of the time before the Clearances.

The Travellers' scorn for the overvaluation of material things makes them especially receptive to the value system implicit in the old ballads. What the Travellers hate, like the ballads, is the valuing of property over the ties of the heart. What they love is style, as is revealed in a frank display of ornaments. Travelling women could easily imagine themselves mirrored, in idealized form, in the ballad singer's lavish portraits:

She has got rings on every finger,
And on one finger she has got three;
With as much gay gold about her middle
As would buy half Northumberland.²⁶

Travellers may display wealth in the form of jewelry, just as they may spend money on customized trim for their motor-driven caravans. At the same time, true to their nomadic origins, they will accumulate little in the way of material things. They have a firm

25. *The Muckle Sangs*, side 3, band 2.

26. A stanza from *Lord Bateman*, alias *Young Beichan* (Child 53), as learned before 1839 by George Cruikshank, Dickens's illustrator, from a London street singer nicknamed "Tripe Skewer" (Bronson, *The Traditional Tunes*, vol. 1, p. 428 [no. 37]).

belief that hoarding invites nemesis. In an interview quoted in the *Odyssey* oral history series, for example, Betsy Whyte speaks of some money her father obtained through a shrewd exchange. He profited from a pearl that had seemed flawed, but that (she says) cleared up after her mother kept it at her breast for three days. He could have kept the profit for himself but preferred to share it: "He maybe felt like [keeping] it but the travelling folk believe that if they do anything like that, they'll get paid back double for it so he shared the money with the man that had found the pearl."²⁷ In the Travellers' view, life is as regular as the classic ballads in seeing that misfortune visits those who hoard good fortune to themselves or otherwise act from motives of greed and self-aggrandizement.

The sense that there are invisible powers and influences all around us, could we but perceive them, is a strong one among the Travellers and is evident in almost all aspects of their lore. Jeannie Robertson's autobiography is studded with visions. In one recording she tells the story (too long to repeat here) of a man who promised to meet her at her house but died before he could do so. The evening before news of his death arrived, Jeannie and her husband heard a moaning at their fireside "as if a body wis aafu bad fur their breath." She concludes: "E couldnae visit me in life but e visit'd me in death." She has no doubt that she possesses the second sight. As she says on the same tape, "There folk born tae see and there folk not born t' see. An I always believe that I was born t' see."²⁸ Betsy Whyte is aware of the burden of having "the gift," as her mother did before her. She considers her powers as more of a curse than a blessing. She believes that a person who uses the gift of clairvoyance to pursue advantage over another person is in danger of having the evil come back on himself, and so she is careful to restrain her temper when provoked. One skilled Traveller singer has fixed ideas about the witchcraft that other Travellers have tried to use on her. Although a belief in the potency of what rationally-inclined people refer to as supernatural powers is common among people of all classes in the Northeast of Scotland, the Travellers' particularly easygoing relationship with the supernatural seems to have made

27. Quoted in Ishbel MacLean, "The Pearl Fishers," in *Odyssey, the Second Collection: Voices from Scotland's Recent Past*, ed. Billy Kay (Edinburgh, 1982), p. 59.

28. School of Scottish Studies tape SA 1972/211, recorded by Hamish Henderson. The School's transcription, pp. 6-7, with several deletions.

them especially receptive to ballads and tales that feature uncanny elements such as revenants, visions, prophetic dreams, devil lore, witchcraft, changelings, and the fairies.

Prominent in the Traveller song repertory are ballads like *The Gypsy Laddie*, *The Jolly Beggar*, and *The Gaberlunzie-Man* that hinge on an incident of elopement or bride-stealing. Jeannie Robertson's version of *The Gypsy Laddie* expresses the Travellers' evident distaste for gypsies, or at least for any gypsies so shameless as to bewitch and steal the wife of one of the landed gentry.²⁹ Songs of the type of *The Jolly Beggar*, on the other hand, celebrate the cleverness of a young couple who manage to elope from under the watchful eyes of the girl's parents and who reappear after a lapse of time, their marriage now blessed with children and riches. This theme strikes home to many Travellers, for whom runaway marriages have been the norm until recent times. Jeannie Robertson eloped with her future husband Donald Higgins when she was nineteen and he twenty, as she relates in her taped autobiography:³⁰

Ah wes jist aboot as fine lookin [a] lassie as what wiz amongst them at that time. Ah wis only nine stone four [130 pounds], an wi skin as white as the driven snaw an cheeks like a perr o roses.

Her family tried to turn her away from Higgins, but to no avail:

An then they focht wi him, ye see. And ordert him awa like a collie dog, ordert him awa frae aboot the camp. [But] instead o't's daein us onie good, eh—we run awa thegither. Aye, we walkit oot and the whole encampment wiz seethin. The very fire was fleein fae thir mouth, Hamish. And we just turnt wir backs upon them and walkit oot and walkit down the road.

The gesture of defiance was not unique, but was part of a pattern in Traveller culture. When I asked Betsy Whyte and her husband Bryce if a young Traveller man might openly court a Traveller girl

29. This moralistic view of the central action of *The Gypsy Laddie* seems to be characteristic of Scottish variants. It contrasts markedly with the romantic view that finds expression in some North American versions, in which the woman finds happiness with her lover, who may or may not be a gypsy. For a fine interpretive study of the patterns of variation in this ballad see Christine W. Cartwright, "Johnny Faa and Black Jack Davy: Cultural Values and Change in Scots and American Balladry," *Journal of American Folklore* 93 (1980): 397-416.

30. School of Scottish Studies tape SA 1964/154, recorded by Hamish Henderson. The School's transcription, pp. 30-31.

and ask her father for permission to marry her, the question inspired hoots of laughter.³¹ Duncan Williamson was equally emphatic. After singing a comic song in cant about a couple who successfully elope, Williamson went on to expatiate on the nature of runaway marriages and the place they have in the Traveller way of life. I will quote at length the four-way conversation that ensued, for I believe it expresses more about the Traveller view of marriage, love, children, and the ethics of sex, as well about Travellers' creativity, good humor, and family pride, than I could hope to communicate in my own prose in equal space. Present before a fire in the sitting room of the Williamsons' farm cottage outside the village of Strathmiglo, Fife, were Duncan Williamson, his wife Linda, myself, and my wife Carole Newlands, as well as three preschool-age children whose contributions to the tape, though frequent and spirited, are beyond my powers of transcription.³²

DW [After his song.] It's a nice story, and it's truly happened, John. That's the way these marriages were made. These marriages was made for life. These runaway marriage's the ones that lasted a life, you know what I mean?

JN I was going to ask about that. Is that still true, that you find a lot of these runaway marriages?

DW [Still musing.] Lasts for ever. . . .

JN Do the young people still do this?

DW My two daughters done it!

JN Oh they have, ah! [Laughter.]

DW Both my daughters, one at fifteen and one at seventeen.

JN Were you mad, were you angry?

DW *Of course* I was angry for a wee while. And then they went away for a while. But once they came back and I saw that the girls was quite happy, now I belove both of the boys and the sun rises and sets on the boys for me, I mean I love them dearly. And I'm quite blessed. But I was angry at the moment.

CN Did you know the lads well beforehand?

DW I knew the lads well beforehand.

LW Of course, they're cousins!

31. Interview of July 23, 1984 at the Whytes' flat in Montrose; my tape number 840723.

32. Recording of July 15, 1984; my tape number 840715-2, lightly edited. It should be noted that the two daughters who are mentioned on the tape are Williamson's by his first marriage. He was a widower when he met American-born Linda; the two are now in a uniquely favored position to interpret aspects of Traveller folklife to the public. On School of Scottish Studies tape SA 1978/35, Duncan Williamson gives other details about runaway marriages and notes that his parents and his grandmother were married in this way.

DW One of them was a cousin to his wife [that is, Williamson's daughter], right. The other was a third cousin.

LW [To JN.] They still do that, first cousins marry.

DW But anyway, once they spend one night with a young woman, that's considered marriage. And woe be to the man who doesn't live up to his expectations if he daes that! You know what I mean? Either the father or the brother. . . . Say you or me took this young girl away and we spent one night with her, and then we said, "Oh, look, I've had my night wi' ye, I don't want nothing more to do wi' ye." Well, you better look out! You better clear out!

JN The family would come after you?

DW Both families! [General laughter.] Both families. Probably your father would be more up against it, if he was a Traveller, than I [that is, the girl's father] would have been.

JN But what about what you might call "trial marriages," you know, where the two . . .

DW We dinnae have any trial marriages. No, nothing like that. No arranged marriages and no trial marriages, no.

LW Gentleman's got that wrong in his report, too.³³ None of them are Travellers. The gypsies do that.

DW You see, Johnnie, we have got no connection in the world tae the gypsies of any description. No way in the world are we connected wi' the gypsies in any way. But the gypsies have arranged marriages. Course they came from India, Pakistan, way back to fourteenth century, they had arranged marriages, but we, the Scottish travelling folk. . . . [Trails off. Pause in the transcription while LW offers coffee.]

JN Well, what was it like when your daughters ran away? How did they do it?

DW I'll tell what happened to me, how my oldest daughter, when she was seventeen past, was old, very old. Well, it was old for a girl tae be staying wi' her parents, she was seventeen. [Laughter.] Ah went away tae a concert in Aberdeen tae sing wi' Peter Hall at Aberdeen Festival, and ah stayed away the night in Aberdeen. And when ah come back she was gone. So ah called up [that is, personally visited] his father and asked him and said, "I'm wanting to see your son. He's run awa wi' my daughter." And his father says to me, "What can ah dae about it? Ah've lost a son and you've lost a daughter; ah've gained a daughter and you've gained a son." So we shook hands and that was it! [Laughter.]

LW It's expected that you're supposed to be upset, but you're really

33. Linda Williamson is here referring to Gentleman and Swift's advisory report (note 24 above).

- happy. It's sort of a show that you get upset, you know what I mean? To show that you care about them.
- DW You see, Johnnie, we depend on the children's intelligence. Because they've been taught all the days of their life from childhood to be able to keep themselves [that is, take care of themselves], and they ought to know what they're doing. But don't you believe that some of them doesnae make a mistake. If they make a mistake, then it's their fault, cause they ought t' hae known better not to make the mistake. But ninety-five percent of these marriages works for a lifetime.
- LW But it's their ultimate purpose in life, to get married and have children, and that's the only thing you're supposed to do as a Traveller. That's what you're meant for, isn't it, Duncan? That's what life is . . .
- DW That's what life's all about to a Traveller. That's what life really means for us.
- CN Are most marriages runaway, then?
- LW Yeah! Well, some of them today are getting . . .
- DW Some of them are changing now.
- LW A wee bit.
- DW A wee bit changing. If two families likes each other and they want to do a great thing for their son and their daughter, oh, they have marriages, aye. They do everything, you know, they go the full length, they go the full score, spend thousands of pounds. But that's just maybe one in a hundred.
- LW That's just copying the country folk.
- DW Just copying what they thought should be done.
- JN How many have that money to spend on it?
- DW Not many, only one in a hundred.
- JN What about songs of runaway marriages?
- DW I was just telling you one now a minute ago. That was a true runaway marriage.
- JN That was a true one?
- DW [Nods assent.]
- LW Who was that [that the song was about], Duncan?
- DW Gailin's grandfather.
- LW [To JN.] That's his second cousin's grandfather.
- DW That song was made about my mother's cousin and his wife, back in 1913.
- JN Who do you think made the song, then?
- DW The Travellers who were at the campsite when they run away.
- LW [Laughter.] The rest of the campers.
- JN You think they did it on the spot?
- DW They did it maybe on the spot when they run away, ye know? Mother would come and say, "Look, my daughter's away!" and father would say, "My son's away!" Well, the rest of the

- people would have a good laugh and a drink and say, "Come on!" They made a song about it.
- LW You see they had nothing when they ran away and got married.
- DW You're not *supposed* to have nothing! Runaway marriages, you have nothing!
- JN When you came back . . .
- LW You get things from your relatives . . .
- DW Yes, when you come back.
- LW Or you beg them [as in the song just sung; explanation of the cant terms regarding begging in the song is omitted here].
- DW But ye never got nothing when ye left. Ye had only love tae leave with. When ye came back, well, father would get the equipment for you, to take care of yourself. It was up to yourself' how you made life after that.

The conversation continued late into the day, interspersed with other songs and tales, but an essay, unlike a summer's evening, cannot go on forever. Not every detail of Duncan Williamson's remarks need be taken as Scripture. The division between gypsies and Travellers is not as absolute as Williamson claims, for example, and who knows if the song that initiated my questioning was really composed on the heels of Duncan's mother's cousin's elopement in 1913? The point that deserves emphasis is that when Travellers sing ballads about runaway couples, they are touching on a subject that enters closely into the lives of all of them.

To repeat my main point: songs are not just handed down, like heirlooms, from one generation to the next. If a song tradition exists, then it is recreative at every stage. Every time a singer learns a song, he or she remakes it to a greater or lesser extent. In a viable song tradition such as we see illustrated among the Scottish Travellers, this process of re-creation will occur because the world presented in the ballads and the worldview of the people who sing them coincide, like two mental templates that are superimposed. For this reason successive generations have learned the songs, have remade them, and have found in them a system of belief and perception by which they can live in the midst of an altered world. The Travellers have preserved a rich body of songs and stories from former times not just because they like to sing and tell tales, nor because their life on the road has given them the occasions for "having a crack," but because their lore is an expression of their reality. The oral lore of the Travellers is sauce for their life, true. It is also

spiritual nourishment. This is why talented Travellers like Jeannie Robertson, Lizzie Higgins, Jimmy MacBeath, Davie Stewart, Belle Stewart and her daughters, Betsy Whyte, and Duncan Williamson have learned their repertory. This is why they have assimilated it as a body assimilates food, transforming it with subtle chemistry until it is absorbed into the blood. Without such acts of spiritual assimilation, repeated again and again among hungry individuals, an oral tradition is lost. And the loss is irremediable, and it is both theirs and everyone's.

*University of California at Berkeley
Berkeley, California*

Response to Niles

Eleanor R. Long

Professor Niles has responded to my initial comments on the paper he presented at the 1984 Modern Language Association meeting in Washington, D.C. with praiseworthy zeal, and I can only admire the present inclusion of a bibliography and discography for the Travellers and their songs, together with tapes of conversations and other substantive materials which greatly enhance his argument that text and context are inseparable. However attractive this revised and expanded version of the original paper may be, though, far too much of its content is still devoted to what seem to have become the favorite pastimes of academe: beating dead horses, tilting at windmills, and re-inventing the wheel.

To begin with, I wonder (as I did in our earlier exchange) how useful it is to continue to flog Frances James Child for his admittedly flawed presumptions. The points made by Professor Niles (that "medieval" and "ballad" are not synonymous, that oral and printed texts have always co-existed and interpenetrated each other, that ballad-singing is not an invariably degenerative tradition) have been demonstrated many times over in the years since Thelma James issued her challenge in 1933;¹ why belabor them still?

1. For evidence of the first, one need look no further than the catalogues compiled by G. Malcolm Laws, *Native American Balladry* (Philadelphia, 1950) and *American Balladry from British Broadwaysides* (Philadelphia, 1957); as to the second and third, perhaps the most thorough studies to date are those of Anne Billings Cohen (*Poor Pearl, Poor Girl! : The Murdered-Girl Stereotype in Ballad and Newspaper* [Austin, Tex., 1973]) and myself ("*The Maid*" and "*The Hangman*": *Myth and Tradition in a Popular Ballad* [Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972]).

I must confess to being particularly displeased with the reference (in note 17) to John Quincy Wolfe's and my having tried "to distinguish the different *grades of creativity* shown by singers of different temperaments, from *slavish memorizers to those who compose their own songs*" (my italics). This is by no means the first time that my article, "Ballad Singers, Ballad Makers, and Ballad Etiology,"² has, with an obtuseness I find it hard to explain, been interpreted as this kind of qualitative judgment on the relative artistry of folk singers.³ But what I was trying to elucidate was precisely the opposite: that folk artists are not all required to be alike in their conceptions of what ought to be done with a song (or story, or other form of expressive behavior), and that to apply to their performances criteria derived from external sources is to ignore the truth that the "memorizers," "star performers," "propagandizers," and "innovators" are *all* valued by their peers and all important for the maintenance and revitalization of folk traditions. It is only the more puzzling to find, in Niles' subsequent discussion of his "freeze and thaw" theory, that our findings regarding recognizable types of folk singers are quite acceptable to him after all, providing that the distinctions be limited to those he makes between the "strongly-" and "fiercely-independent" (and thereby worthy of notice) singer and the "relatively uncreative" (and thereby unworthy of notice) one. I am happy that Niles, too, has discovered that some singers confabulate (Lizzie Higgins), some persevere (Maud Long), and some do both (Almeda Riddle), as others have discovered; I only wish that he were able to disabuse himself of the notion that this constitutes a ranking system based upon levels of "creativity" as he defines it, rather than a descriptive, and emphatically non-judgmental, one.

In his enthusiasm for "creativity" as an absolute good in the expressive behavior of "the folk," Professor Niles describes John MacDonald's "Roving Ploughboy" as "a different Scottish song," altogether independent of the "Gypsy Laddie" tradition. John MacDonald did indeed change his protagonist into a ploughboy and add a refrain-stanza and some verses from "bothie" tradition; but he preserved the narrative theme in key stanzas from "The Gypsy Laddie," and altered the tune only to the same extent that any folk singer will do within the harmonic and modal tradition. (In most cases, I might add, a borrowed refrain brings its own tune with it, although even this does not in itself constitute "a different song.") I quite agree that Niles's examples demonstrate a far from degenerative tradition, but I know of no qualified ballad scholar in the United States who would argue otherwise; and I do not agree that the merit of folk art can be assessed only in terms of utter novelty in composition or exceptional stylishness in performance, to the denigration of the traditional matrix from which they take their being. That matrix is vividly present in the performances of both John MacDonald and Jeannie Robertson,

2. *Western Folklore* 32 (1973): 225-236.

3. See, for instance, James Porter, "Principles of Ballad Classification: A Suggestion for Regional Catalogues of Ballad Style," *Jahrbuch für Volksliedforschung* 25 (1980): 11-26.

and it is an injustice to them as participants in the tradition to praise them only for their supposedly "original" deviations from it.

Addressing what he calls the "paradox" of variation and stability, Professor Niles unveils a "theory of the recurrent thaw," which, as he acknowledges, "has the advantage of being largely unverifiable." As in the false dilemma he poses between "memorizing" and "creativity," "memorial" and "oral-formulaic" performance (any ballad scholar who has studied the wealth of evidence provided by variant texts and tunes knows that these processes cannot be arbitrarily isolated from each other), he postulates a struggle between absolutes that does not exist and never has. There is, in fact, a special case to which the "thaw-freeze" hypothesis does apply, illustrated by his reference to Horton Barker: the multiple recordings of Huddie Ledbetter songs and tapings of rehearsals by Bill Monroe, "Lightning" Hopkins, and other "country" performers also indicate rather clearly that folk performers who, like Barker, are frequently called upon to display their art, do tend to experiment with their materials until they are satisfied with a performance which they then "freeze" for subsequent public appearances. But this is a self-conscious response to demands made upon an artist *qua* artist under (from a "folk" point of view) abnormal circumstances, and has nothing to do with a "learning" process.

But if Niles is actually troubled by this "paradox" after all these years, I earnestly recommend that he familiarize himself with the long geographical-historical tradition in folklore scholarship, particularly as embodied in the studies of Archer Taylor and Walter Anderson.⁴ Ballad scholarship in this mode has demonstrated rather conclusively that Anderson's theory of "multiple transmission," which holds that the bearer of folk tradition is exposed to a given item not once, but a number of times, and not in a single invariable form but in many, is the only way to account for the rich texturing of variation that one finds even in relatively closed communities. To this may be added, of course, the phenomenon of the individual's tendencies to forget, to re-interpret, to localize, to combine, and even to invent in successive recollections; these idiosyncratic alterations, however, occur not in splendid isolation but as a natural function of the ongoing life of what Phillips Barry called "the ballad idea."⁵ To imagine a single, simple, direct, text-to-text, one-person-to-one-person process in which variation can only occur before that text is memorized flies in the face of everything we know about the texts themselves. (It is not irrelevant

4. See especially Archer Taylor's "Precursors of the Finnish Method of Folk-Lore Study," *Modern Philology* 25 (1927-1928): 481-491; "Edward" and "Sven i Rosengard" (Chicago, 1931); and "The Pertinacious Cobold," *Journal of English and German Philology* 31 (1932): 1-9; and Walter Anderson's *Kaiser und Abt* (FFC 42, Helsinki, 1923); *Zu Albert Wesselskis Angriffen auf die finnische folkloristische Forschungsmethode (Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensis (Dorpatensis) B. Humaniora* 38 [1936]); and *Eine neue Arbeit zur experimentellen Volkskunde* (FFC 167, Helsinki, 1956).

5. In "An American Homiletic Ballad," *Modern Language Notes* 28 (1913): 1-5.

to note here that the comparative study of a text furnished by a singer far more often than not belies the singer's own assertions about when and from whom it was learned—that is to say, its sources are usually far more complicated than the singer remembers or cares to acknowledge.)

Ballad geographical-historical scholarship has also tended to validate Walter Anderson's *Umwälzung* phenomenon (periodic dramatic shifts in the pattern or form of an oral narrative which gradually assimilate or are assimilated by the pre-existent tradition). I would call John Anderson's "Ploughboy" such an *Umwälzung*; its tune variation, at least, entered the repertory of Jeannie Robertson, and it may yet become an influential part of the "Gypsy Laddie" corpus. And I would not hesitate to call the composers of such innovative texts "creative," or deny their role in revitalizing the tradition. But neither would I confuse that role with the role of the idiosyncratic dramatizer or that of the single-minded dogmatist, both of whom exploit the tradition for immediate ends without affecting it in any substantive way except to play their part in preserving its essentials. Nor would I denigrate the role of the conservative and humble memorialist. "Creativity" is but one aspect of the powerful workings of tradition.

And, despite Professor Niles's well-documented contention to the contrary, functionality in the immediate sense implied by "context" is but another such aspect—interesting, to be sure, but unproven in the absence of comparative analysis and irrelevant to the question of why the same ballad material has also appealed to other "folk" in other "contexts."

I shall certainly not challenge Professor Niles's description of the Travelers and their life-style; he has fairly answered to my earlier demurrals. I remain unpersuaded, however, that the study of balladry is best carried out with as little reference as possible to the textual and melodic traditions of the ballads themselves. It is not a little ironic, I think, that the "contextualists" of our time,⁶ like the romantic aesthetes of a century ago, find it necessary to lament the demise of "the ballad" because the (not always idyllic) context in which it flourished has disappeared (or is about to), while we "textualists" find continual cause for rejoicing in the evidence which surrounds us that the "ballad" they mourn is not dead at all, but has merely sought fresh woods and pastures new.

*University of California
Los Angeles, California*

6. The most noteworthy exemplar, of course, is David Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk* (London, 1972).

April '86

function of the song clearly contributes an essential level in the native arrangement of repertoire; yet this is not to deny that singers also have opinions about the content and structure of songs.

Few if any traditional performers of "ballads," in any case, employ the word in the sense that scholars understand it, and this fact is true wherever stanzaic narrative songs of this particular Euro-American type are found. Even if they do, they may reasonably be expected to have picked it up from fieldworkers or collectors. Roger Abrahams relates, in his study of Almeda Riddle, how she came to pronounce the word "ballet" like "ballad" even though she had formerly pronounced it "ballet" as others in her community still do.⁴³ "Ballet" or "ballot" has been commonly used by singers in Ireland to refer to a song sheet, the songs printed on it, or perhaps any kind of popular song rather than a specific form or genre of song.⁴⁴ As Maura Murphy describes in her paper on ballad singers in nineteenth-century Ireland, the singer John Corral was arrested at Ahacragh, County Galway, in December 1843 for singing and selling "ballads" of a seditious nature. In his own words, Corral wrote:

From Roscrea I came to Banagher but a month ago, stayed one night there, and commenced ballad singing. I began by singing love songs, which did not take. I then purchased 22 dozen of the ballads I was singing when arrested.⁴⁵

Scholars, excited by the discovery of aesthetically pleasing, rare narrative songs in a living tradition, have inevitably influenced the singer's concepts and terminology. Lizzie Higgins remembered that in her youth,

The singing . . . wasnae pop songs in that days. It was whit we know now as folk songs. But we called them that days, the aal' songs but now we know it's folk song.⁴⁶

43. Abrahams, *A Singer*, p. 3.

44. Cf. Hugh Shields, *Shamrock, Rose & Thistle: Folk Singing in North Derry* (Belfast, 1981), p. 11. See also Georges-Denis Zimmerman, "What Is an Irish Ballad?" *Irish Folk Music Studies* 3 (1981): 5-17.

45. Maura Murphy, "The Ballad Singer and the Role of the Seditious Ballad in Nineteenth Century Ireland: Dublin Castle's View," *Ulster Folklife* 25 (1979): 79-102, esp. 89.

46. Smith, 24.

James Porter

Singers in a traditional community, then, hold conceptions of song type and function that grow out of experience and worldview but which also may be shaped by external factors. Just as readily, they will evolve ideas about the nature of songs. Almeda Riddle remarks at one point that she enjoyed her songs as a child when she sang them "just as ballads. Took them at their worth. Didn't know they had a story behind them."⁴⁷ Here, as in the case of Jeannie Robertson's explication of "Son David," the concept of "story" in relation to ballads and songs demands greater clarification by scholars since the singer's use of "story" may not necessarily refer to the sequence of incidents in the song's plot. We may compare the remark that the Traveller singer Jane Turriff once made when discussing the performance of her songs: "There's a story in every song."⁴⁸ She did not mean by this the plot of particular songs, nor any kind of prose account of a song's narrative, nor the individual history of a song, but an experiential meaning achieved from her praxis of the song as "lived reality."

In the internal, affective world of the song which the singer creates and into which he or she enters, "story" refers to its reality, a reality which has inadequately been termed "symbolic." It is rather that the singer enters into a relationship of identity with his or her meaning system, in which factors of aesthetic norm and contextual constraint are modified by the individual attribution of significance. "Story" in relation to song, or to a particular song, operates on a number of levels that can best be detected through the epistemics of the singer: these levels, the inner psychological, and the outer structural, together might be termed the *cultural plot*,⁴⁹ or *individual and social resonances* of a song, whether it has an explicit narrative or not.

The objection that singers are limited in the amount and quality of information they can provide, therefore, can be easily dismissed. Sufficient examples can be provided, from the English-speaking world and elsewhere, to demonstrate that good singers in particular are also intelligent singers, and that they form and hold distinctive

47. Abrahams, *A Singer*, p. 134.

48. James Porter, "The Turriff Family of Fetterangus: Society, Learning, Creation and Recreation of Traditional Song," *Folk Life* 16 (1978): 5-26, esp. 18.

49. From personal correspondence with Carol Edwards.

Scottish · English

English · Scottish

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ENGLISH — SCOTTISH

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MARY KEAN



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FOREWORD

This glossary is compiled for the visitor and newcomer crossing the Border in either direction. I hope it will serve them well. I hope, too, that it will be evocative for expatriates all over the world.

It does not set out to be an exhaustive (or exhausting) list but rather a selection of those words in common usage. For further information the following dictionaries may be consulted:—

Jamieson: Dictionary of the Scottish Language
Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue
Scottish National Dictionary, etc., etc.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped me to compile this glossary. I could not have done it alone.

If anyone has additional suggestions to make of current Scottish words which have not been included the publishers would be grateful to have them for the second edition.

Forres, November 1972

Mary Kean

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A

SCOTTISH

academy
advocate

airt

Arbroath smokie

ashet
auld lang syne
Auld Reekie
aye

B

baillie
bairn
bannock
bap
bauchle
bawbee
beadle

ENGLISH

high school
barrister (*in Aberdeen only:*
solicitor)

direction/quarter/point of
compass
haddock smoked to a sooty copper
colour

meat plate
days of long ago
Edinburgh
always

magistrate
child
thick oatmeal cake
bread roll
badly worn shoe
half penny
verger

SCOTTISH

bejant**ben****ben the hoose****besom****biggin****birk****birl (v.)****black bun****blate****blether****boiling (n.)****bonny****bonspiel****bothy****bourtree****brae*****bramble****braw**

ENGLISH

1st year undergraduate
(*St. Andrews*)

mountain

in (*in the inner apartment*)

broom/slut

building

birch tree

spin round

spiced fruit loaf eaten at New Year

slow/backward/shy

talk nonsense

boiled sweet

pretty

curling match

farm cottage

elder tree

hill

blackberry

beautiful

SCOTTISH

brig**bubblyjock****burgh****burn****but and ben****buttery****byre***** cairn****canny****cauld (n.)****ceilidh (Gaelic.
Pron. kaylay)****champit tatties****clachan***** clamjamphrie**

ENGLISH

bridge

turkey

borough

brook

two roomed house

type of breakfast roll

cowshed

heap of stones marking particular
spot/path

careful

weir

informal evening of song and story
mashed potatoes

small village

rubbish/rabble

SCOTTISH

clan
clapshot

clarty
clerkess
close
clype
coble

cone
cookie
corbie
coup (v.) (*pron. cowp*)
(n.)

couthy
craik
creeshie
croft
crowdie

ENGLISH

tribe bearing same surname
mixture of boiled mashed turnips
and potatoes

dirty
female clerk/typist
narrow passage between buildings
tell tales/sneak
flat bottomed boat for salmon
fishing

ice-cream cornet
bun
crow
overturn
rubbish tip
cosy
harp on
greasy
small-holding in Highlands
cream cheese

SCOTTISH

cry

cuddie

D

deave
* **ding**
dink
dirk
dirl
doocot
douce
dour
* **dram**, a
dross
drouthy
dunt
dwam (v. and n.)

ENGLISH

call, to be called, e.g. "what do you
cry him?"

horse/nag (*derogatory*)

deafen
hit/deal a blow
neat/trim
Highland dagger
vibrate
dovecote
sweet/gentle
hard/obstinate/grim
a Scotch – drink
coal slack
dry/wanting rain/thirsty
thump/bump
swoon

E

SCOTTISH

elder**ettle** (*v.*)**F****factor****fair****far ben** (*adj.*)**fash** (*n. and v.*)**fern tickles****feu** (*v.*)(*n.*)**feu duty/tack duty****finnock****finnan haddie****firth****fitba'****flesher**

ENGLISH

office bearer in Presbyterian
church

intend/aspire

manager of estate/steward
quite

on very friendly terms

trouble/annoy

freckles

to let in perpetuity

piece of land for which feu duty
is paid

types of ground rent

young sea trout

kind of smoked haddock

estuary/strait

football

rugby (*Border Country*)

butcher

SCOTTISH

flype**foosty****forbye*****forenoon****forfochen****frae****fresher****G****gang****gangin' body****gate/gait****ghillie****gigot****gin****girdle****glaikit****girn**

ENGLISH

to turn partly outside in,
e.g. a sock

mouldy/musty

besides

morning

worn out

from

1st year undergraduate

go

tramp

street (*in proper names*)

sportsman's attendant

leg of mutton

if

griddle

gormless

snarl/whimper/grumble

SCOTTISH

glaur
 gleg
 glen
 gowan
 greet
 grossart
 guid
 *guiser
 gyte



haar
 haud
 haugh
 haver
 hen
 herd
 Highers

ENGLISH

mud
 alert/spry
 valley
 daisy
 cry/weep
 gooseberry
 good
 person in disguise
 daft/crazy

mist off N. Sea, E. coast only
 hold
 water-meadow
 dither/blether
 dear (*person*) (*W. of Scotland*)
 shepherd
 Scottish School Leaving

Certificate

SCOTTISH

Hogmanay
 hoolit
 howff
 howk
 *hurl (*v.*)
 (*n.*)



ilk (*so and so of that*)
 ilka
 inch tape
 interval



jalouse (*v.*)
 jotter

ENGLISH

New Year's Eve
 owl
 haunt/resort
 dig
 wheel along
 ride in car/bus, etc.

of the same name, e.g. Guthrie of
 that ilk/"Guthrie of Guthrie"
 each/every
 tape measure
 school break

guess
 exercise book

SCOTTISH

ENGLISH

K

keek (v.)
 ken (v.)
 kirk
 kist
 kye

look/observe furtively
 know
 church
 chest/coffin
 cows

L

lade
 laigh/laich
 laird
 lang-shankit
 lassie
 links
 loaning
 loch
 loon (N.E. Scotland)
 Lord Lyon
 lug

mill stream
 low
 lord of manor/squire
 long-legged
 girl
 golf course by sea
 field
 lake
 lad
 Chief Herald of Scotland
 ear

SCOTTISH

ENGLISH

lum
 Lyon Court

chimney
 Scottish College of Arms

M

manse
 mask the tea
 *mind (v.)
 moss
 muckle/meikle
 muir
 murky

vicarage
 brew/make the tea
 remember
 moor
 big
 moor
 dark

N

neb
 neep
 Ne'erday
 nicht
 nippit

nose
 turnip
 New Year's Day
 night
 tight-fitting

SCOTTISH

ENGLISH

O**orra**
orraman
oxter**odd**
farm labourer/odd job man
armpit**P****pancake**
partan
pawkies
pawky
peely wally
peevers
pend
period (*punc.*)
pibrochdropped scone
crab
mittens
humorous
pale/wan/out of sorts
hopscotch
vaulted passage
full stop
form of bagpipe music – variations
on a theme**pinky/pinkie**
pirn
poke
pouchlittle finger
reel/bobbin
paper bag
pocket

18

SCOTTISH

ENGLISH

press
provost/Lord Provost
puddockwall cupboard
mayor/Lord Mayor
frog**Q****quaich**
quean (*N.E. Scotland*)shallow drinking cup with two
ears
girl**R****rector**headmaster of academy/
vicar in Episcopal church/
students' elected representative
on university court**reek/reekie**
riever
rone/rhone
roup (*n. and v.*)
(*pron. rowp*)smoke/smoky
sheep/cattle stealer
rainwater gutter

auction

19

S

SCOTTISH

sair
scunner (*n. and v.*)
sept
sett
shack/shoogle
shilpit
shinty

skelp (*n. and v.*)
skelly-eyed
skirl
skreich
* **skreich of day**
slaister
sleekit
slider
smirr
sneck
snib

ENGLISH

sore
nuisance/sicken/disgust
branch of clan
pattern of tartan
shake
weak/timid
game like hockey played
in Highlands

slap
squint-eyed
shriek/sing shrilly, e.g. bagpipes
shriek
day-break/cock-crow
make a mess
sly/cunning/smooth
ice-cream between wafers
fine rain
door catch
bolt/catch on window sash

SCOTTISH

sort (*v.*)
souter
spirtle
stay
stoor
stot (*v.*)
stravaig
strath
syne (*v.*)

T

tapsalteerie
tattie bogle
tattie howker
thirl (*v.*)
thole
thrang

ENGLISH

mend
shoemaker
stick for stirring porridge
live, e.g. "where do you stay?"
dust/dirt
bounce
stroll/saunter
valley/plain beside river
rinse

upside down
scare-crow
potato picker
bind/subject
endure
very busy/crowded

SCOTTISH

thrapple
tolbooth
trauchle (v.)
trauchled (adj.)
tup (n.)
twa

ENGLISH

throat
old town hall (*often with prison*)
trail along
tired and bothered
ram
two

W

wabbit
waur
wean
wee
whaup
when, a
whigmaleerie
whin

exhausted
worse
child
small
curlew
a few/a good many
trinket/knick-knack
gorse

SCOTTISH

writer
wynd

ENGLISH

lawyer/solicitor
lane

Y

yett
yin/ane

gate
one

ENGLISH — SCOTTISH

A

ENGLISH

alert/spry
always
armpit
auction (*n. and v.*)

SCOTTISH

gleg
aye
oxter
roup (*pron. rowp*)

B

bag (*paper*)
bagpipe music (*form of*)
barrister
beautiful
besides
big
bind/subject (*v.*)
birch (*tree*)
blackberry
boat (*flat bottomed,*
salmon fishing)
bolt/catch (*window sash*)
bounce (*v.*)
branch (*clan*)

poke
pibroch
advocate
braw
forbye
muckle/meikle
thirl
birk
bramble
coble
snib
stot
sept

ENGLISH

bread roll
 break (*school play time*)
 brew/make (*tea*)
 bridge
 brook
 broom
 building
 bun
 borough
 busy/crowded
 butcher

C

call, e.g. "what do you
 call him?"

careful
 cheese (*cream*)
 chest/coffin
 Chief Herald of Scotland
 child

SCOTTISH

bap
 interval
 mask
 brig
 burn
 besom
 biggin
 cookie
 burgh
 thrang
 flesher

cry
 canny
 crowdie
 kist
 Lord Lyon
 bairn/wean

ENGLISH

chimney
 church
 clerk/typist (*female*)
 cosy
 cottage (*farm*)
 cows
 cowshed
 crab
 crow
 cry/weep
 cup (*shallow, two-eared*)
 cupboard (*wall*)
 curlew
 curling match

D

daft/crazy
 dagger (*Highland*)
 daisy
 dark

SCOTTISH

lum
 kirk
 clerkess
 couthy
 bothy
 kye
 byre
 partan
 corbie
 greet
 quaich
 press
 whaup
 bonspiel

gyte
 dirk
 gowan
 murky

G

ENGLISH

gate
gentle/sweet
girl

go
golf course (*seaside*)
good
gooseberry
gormless
gorse
greasy
griddle
ground rent (*type*)
guess (*v.*)
gutter (*rainwater*)

H

haddock (*smoked*)
haddock (*smoked to a
sooty copper colour*)

SCOTTISH

yett
douce
lassie
quean (*N.E. Scotland*)
gang
links
guid
grossart
glaikit
whin
creeshie
girdle
feu duty/tack duty
jalouse
rone/rhone

finnan haddie

Arbroath smokie

ENGLISH

half penny
hard/obstinate/grim
harp on
haunt/resort
headmaster (*academy*)
high school
hill
hit/deal a blow
hold (*v.*)
hopscotch
house (*two-roomed*)
horse/nag (*derogatory*)
humorous

I

ice-cream cornet
ice-cream between wafers
if
in (*in inner apartment*)
intend/aspire

SCOTTISH

bawbee
dour
craik
howff
rector
academy
brae
ding
haud
peevers
but and ben
cuddie
pawky

cone
slider
gin
ben the hoose
ettle

K

ENGLISH

know

SCOTTISH

ken

Llabourer (*farm*)/*odd job man*

lad

lake

land (*for which feu duty is paid*)

lane

lawyer/solicitor

let (*in perpetuity*)

little finger

live

long-legged

orraman

loon (*N.E. Scotland*)

loch

feu

wynd

writer (*in Aberdeen only: advocate*)

feu

pinky/pinkie

stay, e.g. "where do you stay?"

lang-shankit

32

M

ENGLISH

look/observe furtively
lord of manor/squire
low

magistrate

make a mess

manager (*estate*)

mayor/Lord Mayor

meadow (*water*)

mend

mist (*off N. Sea, E. coast only*)

mittens

moor

morning

mouldy/musty

mountain

mud

mutton (*leg of*)

SCOTTISH

keek

laird

laigh/laich

baillie

slaister

factor

provost/Lord Provost

haugh

sort

haar

pawkies

moss/muir

forenoon

foosty

ben

glaur

gigot

33

N

ENGLISH

neat/trim
 New Year's Day
 New Year's Eve
 night
 nose
 nuisance/sicken/disgust

O

oatmeal cake (*thick*)
 odd
 office bearer in
 Presbyterian church
 one
 overturn
 owl

P

pale/wan/out of sorts
 passage (*narrow, between
 buildings*)
 passage (*vaulted*)

SCOTTISH

dink
 Ne'erday
 Hogmanay
 nicht
 neb
 scunner (*n. and v.*)

bannock
 orra

elder
 yin/ane
 coup
 hoolit

peely wally

close
 pend

ENGLISH

pattern (*tartan*)
 person (*in disguise*)
 plate (*meat*)
 pocket
 potatoes (*mashed*)
 potato picker
 pretty

Q

quite

R

ram (*n*)
 rain (*fine*)
 reel/bobbin
 remember
 representative (*elected by
 students on university
 court*)

SCOTTISH

sett
 guiser
 ashet
 pouch
 champit tatties
 tattie howker
 bonny

fair

tup
 smirr
 pirn
 mind

rector

ENGLISH

N

neat/trim
 New Year's Day
 New Year's Eve
 night
 nose
 nuisance/sicken/disgust

O

oatmeal cake (*thick*)
 odd
 office bearer in
 Presbyterian church
 one
 overturn
 owl

P

pale/wan/out of sorts
 passage (*narrow, between
 buildings*)
 passage (*vaulted*)

SCOTTISH

dink
 Ne'erday
 Hogmanay
 nicht
 neb
 scunner (*n. and v.*)

bannock
 orra

elder
 yin/ane
 coup
 hoolit

peely wally

close
 pend

ENGLISH

pattern (*tartan*)
 person (*in disguise*)
 plate (*meat*)
 pocket
 potatoes (*mashed*)
 potato picker
 pretty

Q

quite

R

ram (*n*)
 rain (*fine*)
 reel/bobbin
 remember
 representative (*elected by
 students on university
 court*)

SCOTTISH

sett
 guiser
 ashet
 pouch
 champit tatties
 tattie howker
 bonny

fair

tup
 smirr
 pirn
 mind

rector

S

ENGLISH

ride (*n.*) (*car, bus, etc.*)
 rinse (*v.*)
 roll (*breakfast*)
 rubbish/rabble
 rubbish tip
 rugby (*Border Country*)

scare-crow
 School Leaving Certificate
 Scotch, a (*drink*)
 Scottish College of Arms
 shepherd
 shake
 shoe (*badly worn*)
 shoemaker
 shriek
 shriek/sing shrilly,
 e.g. bagpipes
 slack (*coal*)

SCOTTISH

hurl
 syne
 buttery
 clamjamphrie
 coup
 fitba'

tattie bogle
 Highers
 dram, a
 Lyon Court
 herd
 shack/shoogle
 bauchle
 souter
 skreich
 skirl
 dross

ENGLISH

slap
 slow/backward/shy
 slut
 sly/cunning/smooth
 small
 small-holding (*Highlands*)
 smoke/smoky
 snarl/whimper/grumble
 sore
 spin round
 sportsman's attendant
 stealer (*sheep/cattle*)
 steward
 stick (*stirring porridge*)
 stones (*heap marking*
 particular spot/path)
 stream (*mill*)
 street (*in proper names*)
 stroll/saunter

SCOTTISH

skelp
 blate
 besom
 sleekit
 wee
 croft
 reek/reekie
 girn
 sair
 birl
 ghillie
 riever
 factor
 spirtle
 cairn
 lade
 gate/gait
 stravaig

quint-eyed
squirt (*n. and v.*)
sweet (*boiled*)
swoon (*n. and v.*)

skelly-eyed
 scoot
 boiling
 dwam

T

talk nonsense
tape measure
tell tales/sneak
throat
thump/bump
tight-fitting
tired/bothered
townhall (*old, often with*
prison)
trail along
tramp (*n*)
tribe (*bearing same*
surname)

blether
 inch tape
 clype
 thrapple
 dunt
 nippit
 trauchled
 tolbooth
 trauchle
 gangin' body
 clan

trinket/knick-knack
trouble/annoy
trout (*young, sea*)
turkey
turnip
turnips and potatoes
(boiled and mashed together)
turn partly outside in,
e.g. a sock
two

whigmaleerie
 fash
 finnock
 bubblyjock
 neep
 clapshot
 flype
 twa

U

undergraduate (*1st year*)
undergraduate
(1st year St. Andrews)
upside down

fresher
 bejant
 tapsalteerie

ENGLISH

V

valley
valley/plain beside river
verger
vibrate
vicarage
village (*small*)

W

weak/timid
weir
wheel along
worn out
worse

SCOTTISH

glen
strath
beadle
dirl
manse
clachan

shilpit
cauld
hurl
forfochen
waur

IDIOMS

SCOTTISH

bide awee

cauld kail het again

dree yer ain wierd

dinna fash yersel'

haud yer wheesht

he wadna tak tellin'

it's just a when o' blethers

lang may yer lum reek

let the tow gang wi' the bucket

to take something to avizandum

ENGLISH

wait a bit

cold cabbage heated up (used figuratively)

face up to one's destiny

don't bother

shut up

he would not be told/advised

it's just a pack of nonsense

long may your chimney smoke

let things take their course

to consider a matter

NOTES

Highland Dress

Balmoral	flat round bonnet
Glengarry	forage cap with ribbons hanging down behind
Kilt	a pleated skirt
Plaid	a long piece of twilled woollen cloth
Sgian dhu	dirk, dagger worn in stocking
Sporran	ornamental pouch worn in front of kilt
Trews	trousers of tartan cloth

Money

Scottish banks issue their own notes. These are sometimes treated with suspicion in England but may be negotiated at banks there.

Church

The Church of Scotland is Presbyterian. The Episcopal Church is a minority church with its own Primus in full communion with the Church of England.

Law and Education

These are distinct from the English systems. Some legal terms are:—

Court of Session (in Edinburgh)	supreme civil court
High Court of Justiciary (in Edinburgh and circuit towns)	supreme criminal court
Defender	defendant
Procurator Fiscal	public prosecutor
Pursuer	plaintiff
Sheriff Principal/Sheriff	judges of sheriffdom
Sheriff-court	approximates to county court but also has wide criminal jurisdiction
Sheriff-clerk	registrar of sheriff court
Sheriff-officer	bailiff/tipstaff

In the localities of Scotland there are few estate agents. Traditionally solicitors have always dealt with the purchase and sale of houses. A purchase is made by means of a written offer and an acceptance in the form of letters which are called "missives". The term "subject to contract" has no meaning in Scotland as the missives themselves form the contract and there can be no "gazumping". Generally speaking there is little leasehold property in Scotland as most properties are held in feu or are freehold.

Public Holidays

Bank holidays in Scotland do not necessarily coincide with those in England; for example, Good Friday and Boxing Day are not observed. New Year's Day is the only day in the year when no newspapers are printed.

Each town has its own set of public holidays, usually Mondays, and reference must be made to local papers or other sources to find out when these take place.

Quarter Days

Scottish		English	
Candlemas	2nd February	Lady Day	25th March
Whitsunday	15th May	Midsummer Day	24th June
Lammas	1st August	Michaelmas Day	29th September
Martinmas	11th November	Christmas Day	25th December

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The Scots Language, McClure et al,
1980, Ramsay Head Press, Edinburgh

Southern grammar of Standard English). On the level of grammar, where the differences between the dialects are relatively few, Scots could profitably follow the etymologically-based practice of adopting, in a choice between two systems, the one with the greater number of members. For example, the Style Sheet prescription of a distinction between verbal noun and present participle ought to be retained, though it has become rare in the spoken language: as standard Norwegian has a three-gender system in nouns and pronouns, though this has been reduced to a two-gender system in most of the spoken dialects. Similarly, the plural demonstratives *thir* and *thae* should be retained in the standard language, though they have disappeared from North-Eastern speech.

If grammatical differences between the dialects are slight, however, pronunciation differences are extremely numerous. Some of these could be accommodated, as at present, by a generalised spelling. The digraph *ui*, for example, is useful in that, without too much distortion of the normal conventions of sound-symbol relationship of the Roman alphabet, it can be taken as representing any of several different sounds. For *good*, a Glaswegian says "gid," a Black Isle speaker "geed," a North-Easterner "gweed," a Fifer "gade," and a man from Angus or the Eastern Borders "geud," with the vowel of French *deux*; but each could readily associate the spelling *guid* with his own local pronunciation. (After all, consider how widely different are the pronunciations which the written form *go* suggests to an Edinburgh schoolteacher, a BBC newsreader, a retired Cheltenham colonel, and a Cockney bus-driver!). Likewise, the Scots word corresponding to English *hook* (though it

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often has a different meaning in Scots) has the regional pronunciations "hyook," "hyuck" and "heuk" (again with the French-sounding vowel); all of which could be equally well implied by the spelling *heuk*. However, there are clearly some variant pronunciations—"wha" and "whae," "stane" and "steen," "hame" and "hyim," "few" and "fyowe," "whit" and "fit"—which could not be subsumed under the same spelling without grave violence to normal spelling conventions. In many such cases, the procedure which would be universally followed, and which Scots would have no alternative but to adopt, would be to employ an orthography which would represent the more widespread form. *Hame* (or arguably *haem*) and not *hyim* would have to be the spelling adopted in Standard Scots. On the other hand, considerations of etymology might in certain cases take precedence over those of majority usage: for over four hundred years there has been no reason except entrenched habit for the *w* in English *wrong* or the *k* in *knee*; but as long as even a few speakers in Scotland say "vrang" or "k-nee" there would be a case for spelling the words as *vrang* and *knei*. Each instance would have to be debated separately, on its own merits. The standard, too, need not be monolithic: the word *normative* in Haugen's definition need not be taken as implying that only one non-negotiable form is acceptable for each word in the language. Some national languages—Serbo-Croat, for example—exhibit "polycentric standardisation": that is, they allow for a limited and defined number of local variants within the framework of a standard. Such generalised features as the North-Eastern use of initial *f*- where other dialects have *wh*- could be treated in this way: *whit* could be the

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Introduction to a Survey of Scottish
Dialects, Angus Mc Intosh, 1961.
U. of Edinburgh, Linguistic Survey of
Scotland, Monographs No. 1

Chapter 4

THE PHONETIC APPROACH

The study of the pronunciation of the sounds in a dialect and the comparison of the sounds in one dialect with those in another may be regarded as the main task of any phonetician working on dialectology. A discussion of the nature of this task is inevitably somewhat complicated, but it is necessary to consider the matter in some detail.

It is a commonplace that Scots dialects spoken in two different areas will, to a lesser or greater extent, "sound different," and we must now consider what this means and by what process we can analyse the phenomena involved. We shall ignore for the present the kind of dialectal differences falling into this category which might be analysed under such headings as "intonation," "rhythm," "tempo," "pitch," "voice quality," etc., and concentrate on the often more tangible differences which involve specific sounds. Taking this restricted problem as our subject, we shall examine what is meant when we say that the sounds of one Scots dialect differ from those of another. When we have attempted to classify some of the main types of difference, we shall be in a better position to decide how important some particular observed difference between two dialects actually is, and how it is to be interpreted in linguistic and non-linguistic terms.

We might begin by observing that one of the commonest (though perhaps not most frequently observed) kinds of difference between two dialects is where the one uses sounds

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which are not found at all in the other. Two examples may be given. In Northumberland a uvular *r*-sound (generally called "the Northumbrian burr") is in widespread use. In the Scots dialects it is not entirely unknown, but except in a few places adjacent to Northumberland it occurs only as a personal idiosyncrasy and not as a marked regional feature. In the Glasgow area and also in and around most of the larger Scottish towns, a "glottal stop" is in common use, as in the phrase *hot water bottle*, where it occurs three times in swift succession in place of the *t*-sounds.¹ In other areas it is not used at all, except by, or in imitation of, incomers from the places where its use is well-established. Numerous other examples of this kind could be given, but these two are perhaps the most familiar. We may note that differences of this kind, described in the terms that they are above, are differences which could well be investigated by someone without any knowledge of the language; a competent Chinese phonetician unacquainted with Scots could plot the areas where the glottal stop is used and where it is not. His problem can be defined in purely phonetic terms, whereas, as we shall see, the investigation of other, at first sight similar, differences involving sounds can not.

Let us describe one of these as a speaker of some Scots dialect might put it. If he comes from the Lothians and has visited the North-East, he may say when he returns, "In Buchan they pronounce the word *stane* as *steen*."² Now this difference is not of the same order as the other, because the speaker's surprise is not at anything queer

¹ Cp. the Glaswegian who said "My name's Pa'erson, with two *ts*."

² Cp. the Fifer who said to the Aberdonian, "Onywy, we're no the fowk that caas *fush feesh*."

Introduction to a Survey of Scottish Dialects

SURVEY OF SCOTTISH DIALECTS

about the vowel in *steen*, a sound he has in his own dialect. In a case like this, even if the vowel written *ee* is not in fact absolutely identical with a vowel he uses himself (for example, that in *tea*), this will probably escape his attention. What surprises him is that this *ee* vowel or anything like it should be used in this situation, that is, in the word which he feels should really be pronounced *stane*. Now the situations where there is such a difference of vowel between two dialects may not always be identical from an analytical point of view, but we might consider this example a little more closely before we go on to discuss others which are not quite the same.

The difference between *steen* and *stane* is not one which has always existed. In fact, like most other dialectal differences in the Scots areas, it must have arisen in comparatively recent times: if we could go back about six hundred years we should probably find few such regional contrasts in existence at that date. In details of sound, as in vocabulary and other features, the dialects have gradually diverged, though the degree of divergence has now reached and passed its peak, and centralising influences are at work obliterating contrasts which were in evidence a few generations ago. The regional differences in pronunciation between such forms as *steen* and *stane* can be described as divergences from a common prototype, and it is often convenient to classify them on this historical basis. If we do this, we can, in a rather special sense, classify the *ee* and the *a* of *steen* and *stane* as dialectal manifestations of "one and the same sound," though phonetically of course they are as distinct as if the two words in which they occur had no connexion with one another. Such a classification is implied in comparisons

THE PHONETIC APPROACH

of Type 1 (see page 41). In making these, we work on the assumption (for which there is usually some justificatory evidence) that we are dealing with divergent forms of what we have earlier called "one and the same word," and we attempt to define the areas where each form is in regular present-day dialectal use. The more investigations we make of this type, word by word, the more information we shall have about differences in pronunciation between dialects. This will not merely be true in the simple numerical sense that more and more differences, together with their distribution, will be revealed. For various *types* of divergence will show themselves, so that we shall also learn something about the ways in which differences of this kind can come about.

At first sight, the problem might therefore seem to be nothing more than one of accumulating a body of information about a large number of words from a large number of places, but we must now consider some of the complications. I have already noted that when the phrase "differences of sound" is used to describe the kind of opposition we have just been discussing, it has a special and quite restricted sense; the fact that a dialect uses *stane* and not *steen* does not mean that a sound *ee* is not to be found in that dialect. Another example may be given. In the North-East, in the counties of Moray, Banff, Aberdeen, Kincardine and Angus, the interrogative "who" is pronounced *faa*. In most other parts of the country it begins with the sound *hw*¹ as in *when*, *where*, *whaur*, etc. This in itself is an interesting fact of linguistic geography, but it should not lead us to assume that the sound *hw* is

¹ For an explanation of the phonetic symbols used in this book, see p. xii above.

to have an ear bent to his ear.

When amphora means I'll have a jar

Glasgow Herald
30 June '84

GLASGOW GLOSSARY. By Albert Mackie. £2.50: Blackstaff Press.

By **WILLIAM HUNTER**

WHEREAS in the rest of the world, an amphora is a jug with two handles, around Glasgow the word stands for something else.

It expresses choice as in the phrase, Amphora glessna pint. (I shall accept a large whisky and a pint of heavy.) Glasgow has a pub called the Amphora.

It is the happy idea of Albert Mackie, journalist and author, to compile a traveller's phrase book which tells visitors to the tourist city where they have got to and when they are being got at.

Working with the perspective of living in Edinburgh, he adds vigorously to the scholarship made popular by Alex Mitchell and Stanley Baxter.

The lingo is worth another study for its own sake. Any glossary that has in it the word doolander is rich, indeed. (A doolander is a man's cap, flat enough and large enough for a pigeon to alight upon.)

Many other expressions are murmurous with meaning, like moarn's moarn, for tomorrow morning, and:

Assymetry: A burial place such as the Necropolis.

Hingragirra: To maintain the principle of solidarity.

Kerrtit: Taken away in a hearse, Albert Mackie suggests, although the word also does for anybody lifted away because of any kind of wear and tear.

The glossary seeks to render intelligible the mush which Glasgow makes of the language, but it does more. For one thing it gives examples of the good use of that word "but" at the end of a sentence and after a comma as in: Ye should keep yer neb (nose) oot it, but. Gnat (meaning etcetera) also is given its place:

We'll be haeing beer, gnat, an lager, gnat, and whisky, gnat, and mebbies sannitches, gnat.

Albert Mackie is most scholarly. He derives the expression, Ah goat aff ma Elky — off my mark, from Elky Clark, the boxer. Sometimes, though, Glesca scholarship looks a bit in-bred.

The glossary suggests that champ dancer is spooneristic rhyming slang for a damned chancer. Maybe it is, but it was more likely put into the language by the seminal pantomime, the Tintock Cup, which Alex Mitchell 30 years ago wrote with James Bridie for the Citizens' Theatre.

In a sketch about a Romeo at the dancin' Molly Urquhart cried: "Champ dancer? Damn chancer!"

One of Albert Mackie's good gifts is to take an ordinary bit of pavement slush of a word and give it poetry in his definition, as with:

Midden: An untidy place or person: Big Wull wiz that overcome wi the fresh err, they had tae haud um owre a midden tae revive um.

Derken: Cast a shadow over: The funeral proceedings wiz derkent be the news that the Rangers had goat bait.

He misses out the good word clock, meaning to observe, and there are surely brighter meanings of coozlick than the one he gives of a quick wash. Smashing to see (for a pretentious but insignificant person) the word chantyrassler in print, but.

Scotland and the Lowland Tongue,
J. D. McClure, 1983, Aberdeen U. Press

AND TONGUE

which illustrate
voyage Ashore,

collected Plays,
(John Calder)

to her sons Mr
: have access to

tions du Seuil,

ompleted. As I
His death is a
: have on loan

TEN

Glasgow Speech in Recent Scottish Literature

Edwin Morgan

The acceptable emergence of Glasgow speech, both as an object of linguistic study and as a medium for serious writing, is recent and still has much headway to make, but one can say today with some confidence that the long-ingrained attitudes—linguistic, social, aesthetic—which hindered that emergence have lost the almost automatic respectability they once enjoyed. In the 50-page introduction to the first volume of *The Scottish National Dictionary*, virtually nothing is said about the language of Glasgow. After a brief reference to the 'glottal catch', which the editor notes with some irritation ('not by natural development') has spread to other parts of Scotland, the speech of this large conurbation containing half the population of the country is dismissed in one sentence: 'Owing to the influx of Irish and foreign immigrants in the industrial area near Glasgow the dialect has become hopelessly corrupt.' That was written many years ago, and William Grant's refusal to come to grips with the unsavoury and amorphous phenomenon of Glasgow must seem today to be not only improperly moralistic but strangely incurious. But moralising or sceptical attitudes towards Glasgow dialect evidently take much dislodging. In 1974, in an article quoting favourably from Glaswegian prose by Alan Spence and George Friel, J Derrick McClure makes the more general point that what must in the end limit such writers is 'the impoverished and bastardised Scots spoken in present-day Glasgow'.¹ Strong words! Yet surely all language is, if one wants to use the term, bastardised (and that word, half French and half Greek, is a good example of the process); and it is the rural dialects of Scotland which are impoverished, not the thriving and inventive urban speech of Glasgow. McClure's underlying argument is, however, one that would need careful consideration, since his case is that naturalistic recorders of local speech like Friel and Spence cannot draw upon literary, traditional, non-local forms of Scots such as allow (say) Fionn Mac Colla in his prose to 'exploit the full expressive potential of the Scots language'. Obviously this is a possible view, yet one cannot help thinking that it is not entirely divorced from those pro-

rural, anti-urban feelings which have found it so hard to accept the fact that whatever 'Scotland' or 'Scottish tradition' is, it must *include* Glasgow, it cannot cast it out or refuse to come to terms with it or to see its 'case'. Even if we accept the arguments put forward for a modern generalised literary Scots, as against a naturalistic locally-based Scots, such a Scots ought to include a significant admixture of Glaswegian forms and idioms if it is to be true to the linguistic realities of the country.

Reluctance to confer status on urban Scots has in the past excused itself mainly on the ground that slang rather than dialect is involved. That this belief will not pass muster, despite the fact that Glasgow like every large city uses much slang, was argued persuasively by Alexandra J L Agutter and Leslie N Cowan in their article on 'Changes in the Vocabulary of Lowland Scots Dialects'.² But a dislike or fear of slanginess or uncouthness has undoubtedly been an inhibiting factor on writers as well as educators in the first half of the century. J J Bell, author of *Wee Macgregor* and many similar couthy and popular books which sold very widely in the Glasgow area (and elsewhere), wrote in his autobiography, *I Remember* (1932), about the two grandmothers he recalled from the 1870s:

Of fair education, not slipshod in her grammar, she used the vernacular uncompromisingly—and that at a period when a great many Glasgow people were coming to regard the vernacular as 'not very nice'. At the same time, she was down on slang, such as it was in those days . . . Perhaps she was faithful to the old tongue because she had originally come from Paisley. I can remember that her sister used it, but that none of her nephews and nieces did so. She was the only person who made it really familiar to me. My other grandmother might, in a moment of freedom, have uttered the word 'bairns', but she would surely have swooned at hearing the word 'weans' issue from her own lips. Strangely enough, though listening to it daily, I echoed very little of her Lowland Scots; but, more than twenty years later, when attempting the first of a series of Glasgow sketches, the makings ultimately of a certain little book, I looked into my memory and found the old words and phrases I needed. (pp. 74-5)

Bell, in fact, made little distinction between 'Glaswegian' and 'Lowland Scots'; and his fictional dialogue, while liberally sprinkled with Glaswegian features, is an amalgam owing much to the homely humours of late nineteenth-century Kailyard. In his introduction to the New Library Edition of *Wee Macgregor* (1933) Bell wrote:

I am well aware that I have been suspected of eavesdropping on tramway cars and elsewhere, and of furtively lurking in close-mouths, and in sundry other places, in order to gain my knowledge, such as it is, of the Glasgow, or Lowland dialect; but the truth is that, just as I have never deliberately 'studied' a fellow-creature, I had never made any effort to 'learn' the speech of the people of the period. While I was familiar with the older men in my father's factory, who used the vernacular as a matter of course, I feel certain that I acquired little or nothing there. Indeed, I cannot

doubt that from the lips of my paternal grandmother, a lady of the old school, who died when I was seven, fell all the quaint words and phrases—many of them embodied in nursery rhymes—into my memory, there to lie quiet till the years should bring a use for them. (p. 8)

Ironically, at the same time as J J Bell was writing this introduction, Alexander McArthur in Glasgow's Gorbals was putting the finishing touches to his first draft of *No Mean City*, the book eventually published in a collaborative version with the London journalist H Kingsley Long in 1935, and rich in the bad language which Bell (and Bell's grandmother if she had known about it) would never have countenanced. *No Mean City*, crude and melodramatic though it was, had a certain archetypal power about it, reminiscent of effects in Jack London and Frank Norris, which made it not really surprising that it should have sold millions of copies and should seldom be out of print for long, even today. It was also a landmark in the wide currency it gave to Glasgow dialect, even though its London publishers, with an eye on their English readers, put those always irritating, non-accepting inverted commas round words like 'buroo', 'rammy', 'model', 'single-end', 'flyman', 'hairy', and 'sherricking'.

But any dialect breakthrough, in prose fiction, brings problems, and not only those of comprehension. The case against the use of dialect was put succinctly by Allan Massie, in a review of Iain Crichton Smith's novel *A Field Full of Folk* (*The Scotsman*, 8 May 1982), where he praised the dignity and seriousness the book gained by being resolutely non-regional. 'His characters are not insulted by dialect or by phonetic transcription of their speech.' This is clearly a dig (as we shall see) at other recent Scottish novels; but what of the general point? Are the servants in *Wuthering Heights*, the rustics in Hardy, the miners in Lawrence, the farmers in Lewis Grassie Gibbon, the Cockneys and Irishmen in Kipling, the Southerners in Faulkner, all to be regarded as 'insulted by dialect'? The answer is surely that given by Mark Twain in his prefatory note to a great dialectal story, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*: 'In this book a number of dialects are used, to wit: the Missouri negro dialect; the ordinary 'Pike-County' dialect; and four modified varieties of this last. The shadings have not been done in a haphazard fashion, or by guess-work; but painstakingly, and with the trustworthy guidance and support of personal familiarity with these several forms of speech.' In other words, a loving particularity, not a putdown or a relegation. Nevertheless, a problem remains. It is hard to envisage a *Wuthering Heights* written entirely in Yorkshire dialect. Is this a snobbish or merely a realistic scepticism? It is realistic in the sense that a novel by its nature is interested in social gradations and distinctions, and that these, because of the nature of educational systems, often involve striking differences of speech. A dialect which was used into the highest reaches of education would in fact become a language, and would then itself begin to split into new dialects.

In Glasgow novels and short stories one main difficulty has been how to avoid too offputting a disjunction between realistic Glaswegian dialogue and a heavy authorial English in the narrative. Edward Gaitens' *Dance of the Apprentices* (1948) strikes a good balance but in a sense does acknowledge the existence of the problem, as the young shipyard apprentice, Eddy Macdonnell, grows up a great reader—of Dickens and Keats, Swinburne and Wells, pamphlets on socialism, anarchism, and pacifism—and not only loses much of his local language but is given less and less dialogue as the novel progresses; so that at the end we watch him, in prison as a conscientious objector during the First World War, entirely through the language of the author who purports to describe his thoughts, and beyond an occasional 'ach' or 'och' these thoughts are in pure English:

Thank God the long day was almost over. As he walked he avoided looking at the door. If he remembered not to look at it he might not dream of it to-night. Would he sleep till morning? Yes. His nerves had been tranquil to-day and he had thought happily for a long time. Perhaps the draught the doctor had given him had steadied him. (p. 274)

Self-education—political awakening—deglaswegianisation—that is a well-known and often-delineated process. As a father in *Dance of the Apprentices* says of his schoolboy son: 'He's goat tae stick tae his English.' The Glasgow (and Glasgow-Irish) dialogue in Gaitens is lively and adequate, but it is not at the centre of the author's interest, and he shows no sense that anything might be lost if education or upward mobility in society should dilute or destroy the native speech.

In a similar sort of *Bildungsroman* (though set at a later time), *The Dear Green Place* (1966), Archie Hind uses the failure of his working-class hero to fulfil his ambitions as a novelist as an opportunity for expressing more directly negative views of Glasgow speech. Mat Craig probes the reasons for his failure:

Was it in the language he spoke, the gutter patois into which his tongue fell naturally when he was moved by a strong feeling? This gutter patois which had been cast by a mode of life devoid of all hope or tenderness. This self-protective, fobbing off language which was not made to range, or explore, or express; a language cast for sneers and abuse and aggression; a language cast out of the absence of possibility; a language cast out of a certain set of feelings—from poverties, dust, drunkenness, tenements, endurance, hard physical labour; a reductive, cowardly, timid, snivelling language cast out of jeers and violence and diffidence; a language of vulgar keelie scepticism. (p. 226)

This angry English, if we believe Hind as the author, represents the actual thoughts passing through Mat's mind as he walks about the city—'collecting his thoughts', 'taking inventory of himself', 'ticking it all off in his mind'. The language is meant not to be authorial, but Mat's own. And this is not at all impossible, given the self-educating process he has undergone. Yet Hind is

careful to show the persisting substratum, two pages later, when Mat suddenly and unintentionally verbalises his daydreaming in actual speech, his Glaswegian self addressing his anglicised self:

A voice, a shrugging Glesca keelie voice said to him, 'Ye're nut on, laddie. Ye're on tae nothin'.' Mat looked around the empty ferry, but still the voice spoke. 'Ye're nut quoted. A gutless wonder like you, that hasn't got the gumption of a louse.' (p. 228)

These deeply divided feelings about local speech do not prevent Hind from writing a moving and vivid novel, but they do mean that Glaswegian is not positively exploited for its creative potential, and this is where more recent fiction-writers have taken a new course. The seventies was the decade when Glaswegian began to fight back, in fiction, drama, and poetry. The 'gutter patois' of Archie Hind's soured hero became both an area of experiment and a badge of pride. Though certainly not devoid of polemic, this movement has by no means always wanted to show an aggressive face, but it has wanted to claim that if you want to use urban dialect it is first of all necessary to *listen*, and in doing so, to find distinctions and subtleties which the usual (and sometimes mythical) stereotypes writers have drawn on in the past have blunted or overlaid or simply missed. Emphasis on what is actually spoken, rather than on what legend or popular belief or the music-hall may in part have substituted for it, leads to thoughts about spelling, about that 'phonetic transcription of speech' which Allan Massie, in the passage quoted above, congratulated Iain Crichton Smith on having eschewed. The short stories of Alan Spence, James Kelman, and Alex Hamilton have addressed themselves to this controversial issue.

The stories in Spence's *Its Colours They are Fine* (1977) are blessed with very freshly and nicely observed dialogue and an orthography that few would regard as excessive.

He sipped at it, fingering the blackened, brittle toast. He pushed the plate aside and started to retreat.

'Ah canny face the burnt offerin hen.'

'Ye need somethin in yer stomach.'

'Aye, maybe efter. Ah'm no feeling too good.'

'Aye, well hell mend ye, that's aw ah kin say.'

'Noo don't start! Ye gave me enough shirrikin last night. Bloody dog's abuse.'

'And no bloody wonder!' she said. 'God forgive me.' (Slipped in like punctuation as she put down a plate so she could cross herself.)

'Ach be reasonable Mary. Ah mean it wis the boay's last night a freedom before e pits is heid 'n the auld noose.' He yanked an imaginary rope above his head and jerked his neck to the side. But that brought back the nausea, so he sat down before going on.

'We hid tae gie um a wee bit send aff, ye know whit ah mean.'

'Ah know whit ye mean awright, an ah know wherr ah'd send the perry yiz! Noo get ootma road. An will ye go an . . . DO something ABOUT yerself!' ('The Rain Dance', p. 115)

In that extract, the new and pleasing accuracy appears in words like *shirrikin*, which indicates the normal pronunciation (not the one given in SND); *kin* (not in SND, either in itself or under *can*, though it is the regular Glasgow pronunciation); *boay* (not in SND, either in itself or under *boy*, though again it is the standard and distinctive Glasgow pronunciation); and *perry yiz* which looks the most outlandish of the lot but is in fact a good transcription of perfectly ordinary usage.

In a second extract, it may be noted that the language is more Glaswegian than it seems, since the ostensibly English words *team*, *mental*, and *brilliant* all have to be translated or decoded into the lyrical-sinister specifics they have in the city's teenage subculture—specifics which the context of the whole story makes reasonably clear.

Through the doorway the crowds were beginning to spill out. Shuggie's eyes were fixed, watching for the two boys.

'Shouldnae be long noo,' he said.

'This should be good,' said Eddie. 'Didye see that wee guy's face when ah says we wur the Govan Team! Jist about shat is sel. That wis the best laugh. Fuckin tremendous!'

Shuggie laughed and reached into his pocket, feeling the steel comb with the long pointed handle.

'Mental!' he said.

'Brilliant!' said Rab. ('Brilliant', p. 109)

James Kelman's stories are set in London, Manchester, and Jersey, as well as in Glasgow, and most of them are in English, often (as he says) 'with this Glasgow accent'; but two are of special interest on the present occasion as being written wholly in Glaswegian. 'Nice to be Nice' (in his volume of short stories *An Old Pub near the Angel*, 1973) is a first-person narrative by a Glasgow speaker, a device which usefully solves the problems often raised when local dialogue and English narrative are juxtaposed, though obviously courting the limitations imposed by the articulacy and interestingness of the speaker. In this story the narrator is a humorous, shrewd, good-hearted middle-aged man whose wife left him years ago because of his horse-betting. He describes himself as a better listener than talker, which, by an acceptable paradox, implies that he would also be one who would keep his talking for his writing. He lives in a room and kitchen, but is willing to share:

Anyway it wis jist young Tony who'd firgoat his key, wi that wee mate a his in a perr a burds. Christ whit dae ye dae? Invite thim in? Well A did—nice tae be nice—in anyway thir aw right they two; sipposed tae be a perr a terraways bit A ey fun Tony aw right in his mate's his mate. The young yins ir aw right if ye lea thim alane. A've eywis maintained that. Gie thim a chance fir fuck sake! So A made thim it hame although it meant me hivin tae sit oan a widdin cherr kis A selt the couch a couple a months ago kis ay that auld cunt Erchie in his troubles. They four hid perred aff in wir sittin oan the ermcherrs. They hid brung a cerry-oot wae thim so A goat the

glasses oot in it turned oot no a bad wee night, jist chattin away about politics in the hoarses in that. A quite enjoyed it although mine you A wis listenin merr thin A wis talkin bit that's no unusual. Wan i the birds didny say much either in A didny blame her kis she knew me although she didny let oan.

See A used tae work beside her man—aye in she's nae chicken, bit—nice tae be nice—she isny a bad lookin lassie in A didny let oan either. (p. 94)

Although one might not always agree with the spelling—*cerry-oot* would be safer as *kerry-oot* even if this disguises the verb—there is a continuous appeal to the ear to recognise the truth of signalled distinctions, as for example in *that wee mate a his*, *kis ay that auld cunt Erchie*, and *Wan i the burds*, where *a*, *ay*, and *i* all represent English 'of', but with correct contextual variations. Some would say that way madness lies; readers must be allowed to make their own mental variants of unstressed words whose spelling is known to be only conventional in any case. Perhaps. But there is clearly a value in calling attention to the realities of a speech that has never yet been fully described.

In Kelman's other story, 'The Hon' (in *Short Tales from the Night Shift*, 1978), he goes a step farther and uses Glasgow dialect for a straight third-person narrative. The language suits the black humour, which unrolls jerkily like an underground cartoon:

Auld Shug gits oot iv bed. Turns aff the alarm cloak. Gis straight ben the toilet. Sits doon in that oan the lavatri pan. Wee bit iv time gis by. Shug sittin ther, yonin. This Hon. Up it comes oot fri the waste pipe. Stretchin right up. Grabs him by the bolls.

Jesis Christ shouts the Shug filla.

The Hon gis slack in a coupla minits. Up jumps Shug. Straight ben the kitchin hodin onti the pyjama troosirs in that jist about collapsin inti his cher.

Fuck it he says Am no gon. (no page number)

The publisher's blurb to Alex Hamilton's *Gallus, did you say? and other stories* (1982) makes the claim that this collection is 'a landmark in publishing history, representing as it does the first conscious decision to reproduce in extended written prose the sounds of Glasgow English, as faithfully as non-phonetic transcription will allow'. The dubious term 'Glasgow English' makes it hard to know exactly what the claim is, since in fact only two of the stories use Glaswegian throughout, for both narrative and dialogue. The dialogue in all the stories, however, does go nearer than that of other fiction writers to 'faithful non-phonetic transcription'. Its strangeness on the page is immediately reduced if one reads the stories aloud, when the frequent Creole-like *zan* and *zim* and *ziv* and *zoaffice* sort themselves out in the flux. The most interesting technique occurs in 'Moonlighting', a cautionary tale about an unfortunate wealthy couple in Newton Mearns, recounted by a broad-speaking Glaswegian who retails it as he heard it from his presumably equally broad-speaking brother, a handyman working at the detached two-car home. Nice ironies are obtained by reporting the Newton Mearns couple's dialogue as the reporter would himself speak it; high marital comedy with an extra dimension. A car has vanished:

'Aw naw!' e iexplodes. 'Whitdji mean, *sno sittin therr eni merr!* A motir hisnae goat leg zan feet a it sain thitit kin jiss get up n tay ka walk tae itsel whinivir it feels lik a wee daunir doon thi toon! Yi lee vit wherr yi lee vit; yi pit oan thi haunbrake; yi loack thi door—n when yi cum back it's sittin jiss wherr yi walk taway fae it. UmAh right urumAh no right, ih? UmAh right urumAh wrang?' (p. 23)

Without drawing extravagant conclusions, one can perhaps find from such examples how dialect prose fiction is edging its way into new territory, and at the same time is consolidating its own ground by giving—what had never been given before—a truthful account of the spoken tongue. In this, it stands halfway between drama and poetry. In drama, there is in one sense no problem, since a play is all voices and no narrator, so that the most extreme naturalism, however odd it might seem if the play is printed, will be perfectly acceptable on the stage. In poetry, there is for an entirely different reason, and again only in one sense, no problem, in that the 'voice' of a poem, whatever the poet's own voice or accent or dialect may be, is something in itself, re-created through form and structure away from whatever naturalism the poet has started with. Both poet and dramatist, for opposite reasons, are more free than the writer of prose fiction. It would appear therefore that 'more can be done with' local dialect in plays and poems, and especially, because of their natural complexity, in poems. What would be too easy would be to assume that no problems are involved—whether problems of communication or problems of limitations of creative potential.

Since the 1940s, and more particularly since 1970, plays in Glasgow dialect and usually with a Glasgow setting have regularly appeared, proved popular, and built up a tradition. Because of the language, the tradition has been mainly realist and working-class, and often political; strong on humour and pathos, on veracity, on the pleasures of recognition, less strong on imagination, on shock, on analogies and vistas. The succession of plays that would include Ena Lamont Stewart's *Men Should Weep* (1947), George Munro's *Gold in his Boots* (1947), Roddy McMillan's *All in Good Faith* (1954) and *The Bevellers* (1973), Bill Bryden's *Willie Rough* (1972), Hector MacMillan's *The Sash* (1974), Tom McGrath's *The Hard Man* (1977), and John Byrne's trilogy *The Slab Boys* (1978), *The Loveliest Night of the Year* (1979; later re-titled *Cuttin' a Rug*), and *Still Life* (1982), has made a powerful impact, and has employed a wide range of themes: war, politics, unemployment, crime, football, religion, work. Linguistically, of course, there is less to be learned from the printed text of a play than from that of a poem or novel. A play text is a script for performance, and the language indicated by the playwright is filled out and may indeed be transformed by actors and director. Because of the assumption that authentic accents will be available, playwrights have not been so consciously concerned as their recent fellow-writers in fiction and poetry to sharpen orthography. The language in *All in Good Faith* is just as convincing as that in *The Hard Man*, except for greater realism in the use of swear-words in

the later play, and one or two more indicative spellings like *loat* for *lot*, *stoap* for *stop*, and *wahnt* for *want*. What most of the plays do particularly well is to modulate between more-Scottish and more-English according to dramatic occasion and emotion, in ways that actors can manage and the silent reader of a novel cannot. In *The Bevellers*, which deals with the initiation of a new apprentice in the bevelling shop of a Glasgow glass-works, there is a well-marked difference between the wildly racy and inventive fury of Rouger, caught in the act with a girl, and speaking as if he had been brought up on centuries of flytings and Gavin Douglas's 'fowth of langage'—

Ya knee-crept, Jesus-crept, swatchin little fucker, ah'll cut the bliddy scrotum aff ye! Ah'll knacker an' gut ye, ah'll eviscerate ye! Ya hure-spun, bastrified, conscrapulated young prick, ah'll do twenty year fur mincin you. Ye hear me? Ah'll rip ye fae the gullet tae the groin, ah'll incinerate ye! . . . Another minute, ah wid have scored where he's never scored, an' you shanked it, ya parish-eyed, perishin bastart. (pp. 50-1)

—and the quiet, level reminiscence of Bob as he talks to the apprentice and thereby brings the work theme of the play into clear focus—

You might think this is a rough trade and rough folk in it. But that's jist because we havenae broke away fae the oul' days—no a'thegither anyway. Ye cannae wipe oot years o' hard men an' hard graft jist because the machinery changes a wee bit. No that it's a' that different, mind you. The wheels are a wee bit different here an' there, like the carborundum stone. That used to be the ould mill wi the hopper feeder and a sand-drip. That's when boys younger than you really grafted. Cairryin pailfuls o saun an' sievin it in the trough beside the mill. They still use them in wan or two places yet, an' if somethin' had tae go wrang at Peter's end we might have tae use it yet, but it's no likely. As ah said, there wis a lot o Irishmen in this game at wan time. The Rouger's oul' man wis a beveller. You think he's twistit. Ye want tae have seen his oul' man. They worked on piece work, each man seein his job through fae start tae finish, an' they had tae shift. The Rouger's father wis a beaster. He'd collect his ain wages at the end o the week an' take the Rouger's tae. That wis the last they'd see o him tae the pubs shut on Setterday night. They were lucky if he had enough left tae get them pigs' feet fur the rest o the week. (p. 34)

The Hard Man uses a different kind of contrast, which works much better in the theatre than the printed text would lead us to believe. Tom McGrath, writing in collaboration with Jimmy Boyle whose life-story is the basic material of the play, uses a full, broad Glaswegian for the quick succession of scenes presenting the early years of the hardman and his acquaintances, but intersperses these with solo passages directly addressed by Johnny Byrne (= Jimmy Boyle) to the audience; and these speeches, coming from the older Byrne who has done much reading and educated himself, are (as printed) virtually in English. The seeming artificiality of the disjunction disappears in the theatre, where a strong Glasgow voice or accent in the actor transforms the 'English' passages and readily effects continuity.

How far we should be happy with the large gap that may exist between printed and performed texts is another matter, though it is difficult to see what can be done about it. When John Byrne's 'Slab Boys' trilogy was produced at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh in 1982, Simon Berry gave it an enthusiastic review in the *Times Literary Supplement* (23 July 1982) and noted that its 'particular joy' was its 'authentic use of West of Scotland patois'. Put on at the Royal Court Theatre in London later in the year, the trilogy drew an equally sympathetic response from the London critics, with comments on the language ranging from 'the Glaswegian accents are intense' (Victoria Radin) through 'it takes a little time to tune into the dialect' (Robert Hewison) to 'though the language is Glaswegian it is never as impenetrable as legend holds' (Ned Chaillet). However, one could read the printed text of the three plays (published by Salamander Press, Edinburgh, 1982) and be only very intermittently aware that the characters are speaking Glaswegian or West of Scotland patois. This seems a pity, even if the aim is a wider readership. Texts of plays tend to establish themselves, and the result might be with plays of this kind that homogenised and emasculated versions could emerge, as more suited to very English or very American markets. The disgraceful dubbing of the Glasgow voices in the film *Gregory's Girl*, for American export, is a warning.

In the use of Glasgow dialect in fiction or drama, it is difficult to pick out one name as being central to the development; in poetry, such a name does at once offer itself: Tom Leonard. At the beginning of the 1960s, the present writer began using Glasgow speech in a few poems like 'Glasgow Green' and 'Good Friday', but with only a sketchy indication of pronunciation through spelling; the full Glasgow characteristics were meant to be supplied by the reader, preferably reading aloud. The main purpose was to suggest that, as in 'Glasgow Green', the local speech could be employed in poetry in a serious context far removed from the usual music-hall associations. Later, I tried extending this through a range of different Glasgow voices in 'Stobhill' (1971), again with the intention that the poetry, though printed in a book, should also be read aloud, and this time with the spelling brought nearer to pronunciation. Tom Leonard brought out his *Six Glasgow Poems* in 1969, and went on to publish actively and variously during the 1970s. Other poets joined in—Stephen Mulrine, Tom McGrath, Alan Spence, David Neilson—until there was something that in hindsight might be called a movement, although at the time it was ill-defined. The book *Three Glasgow Writers* (1976), which contains prose by Alex Hamilton and James Kelman, and poetry and prose by Tom Leonard, shows the wider links of a 'Glasgow school' which is not confined to poetry.

It is a not unexpected feature of such movements, when a language or dialect is being looked at afresh or given a push in a new direction, that poets will make translations as a test or challenge, to see what the language can do. Alan Spence's versions of haiku by the Japanese poet Issa (1763-1827), included in

his book *Glasgow Zen* (1981), are affectionate reworkings from a poet who himself liked 'voice' and dialect:

wid ye lookit
the state ae it—
me in ma new jaicket!

or

the full moon shinin
on this buncha heidbangers
(me included)

Very different are the rude and reductive versions of Catullus by David Neilson (*XII from Catullus*, 1982), where the Latin poet's persona of 'a drunken, impoverished and acid commentator' interested in the 'rather déclassé activities' of his friends (as the translator's prefatory note describes it—though there is more to Catullus than that) finds no barriers in Glasgow demotic. The translations are very free, pared-down, laconic (the *oculos . . . oculis . . . oculis . . . oculis* of No. 82 become a single *contak lensis*), but comparison with the originals generally shows that points survive, if tone does not—and who can be sure what tone a Catullus poem had for his contemporaries? The more satirical modes work better than the lyrical; but the experiment was well worth doing. Here is No. 83, 'To Lesbia's Husband' ('Lesbia mi praesente viro mala plurima dicit'):

Gaun ye clown
ye canny see
through Lesbia furiver
cursin me

Roar an laff

it's nothin new
thit you'd be better aff
if she effed at you.

The remarkable work of Tom Leonard opens up a new range of possibilities. His Glasgow-language poems, though usually quite short, bring together in highly concentrated form a number of separate interests: 'voice' and sound and the transcription of sound; sociolinguistic and political concern; poetic structure, and especially line-structure; and comedy, from the playful to the ferocious. What he does *not* want, the journalistic and vaudeville stereotyping which in the past has made it so hard for seriously intended writing to emerge in Glasgow, was very clearly spelt out in a cobra-like review of Albert Mackie's pawky vade-mecum *Talking Glasgow* (1978):

It's another of those 'warm-hearted' linguistic racist affairs, where all of 'us' good middle-class or ex-working-class folk can sit back and have a good laugh at how 'they' working-class Glaswegians talk. . . . Not a 'fuck' or a 'cunt' will disturb the pleasant time to be had by the reader. . . . As is usually the case with this sort of production, not listening accurately is the necessary precondition for perpetuating the various cosy myths. . . . But if you don't treat language seriously, you don't treat people seriously. . . . Nowhere will real linguistic aggression or anger show alongside the of-course-always-bowdlerized 'humour'; the natives here are not even allowed the luxury of getting restless. There are very serious linguistic political points to be discussed here in relation to speech registers as a barometer of economic and political power in Britain, but it would be a waste of time discussing them in relation to this book. (*Aquarius*, no. 12, 1980, p. 124).

'If you don't treat language seriously, you don't treat people seriously.' The consequences, for a writer brought up speaking broad Glaswegian, are formidable. The young apprentice in Roddy McMillan's play, *The Bevellers*, had been good at English at school and had written good essays. 'Might no talk it very good, but ah was a' right when it came tae writin it doon' (p. 35). The comedy, or tragedy, depending on how you look at it, is that young Norrie can write but not speak English, and can speak but not write Glaswegian. He will probably never speak English, since he is not bookish or ambitious, and he has been thoroughly brainwashed into believing that it would be wrong to write Glaswegian, so he never will write it. It was not McMillan's concern to develop this point, but if Leonard had written the play it would have become a main theme. In his highly amusing but also very perceptive prose monologue, 'Honest' (in *Three Glasgow Writers*), Leonard presents the classic triple search of a young Glasgow writer for theme, language, and audience. The speaker toys with the idea of writing a story about a fisherman, and decides that with a bit of research and hard thinking he could manage it, but urban scepticism breaks in. The fisherman's life is not really very interesting: 'kinni no day sumhm else wayiz time?'. As for writing about it: 'can a no day sumhm else wi ma time?' And reading about it: 'huv *they* got nuthn behtr ti day wi their time?' As for language, is this not shifting sand?—

But ifyi write down 'doon' wan minute, nwrite doon 'down' thi nixt, people say yir beein inconsistent. But ifyi sayti sumdy, 'Whaira yi afti?' nthey say, 'Whut?' nyou say, 'Where are you off to?' they don't say, 'That's no whutyi said thi furst time.' They'll probably say sumhm like, 'Doon thi road!' anif you say, 'What?' they usually say, 'Down the road!' the second time—though no always. Course, they never *really* say, 'Doon thi road!' or 'Down the road!' at all. Least, they never say it the way it's spelt. Coz it *izny* spelt, when they say it, is it? (p. 47).

But after an abstract discussion on the difficulty of getting others to take your writing seriously, the monologue quickly shifts gear and ends with an anecdote of almost surreal defiance:

'Ahma writur, your only a wurkur,' a said, to thi plumbir.
 'Fux sake Joe stick wan on that kunt,' said the apprentice.
 'Ball an cocks,' said the plumber, 'Ball an cocks. A firgot ma grammur.'
 'Gerrihuppyi,' a said, to thi apprentice.
 'Lissn pal yoor tea'll be up na minit,' said the plumber.
 'Couldny fuckin write a bookie's line ya basturdn illiturate,' a said, ti the plumber.
 'Right. Ootside,' said the plumber. 'Mawn. Ootside.'
 Sorry. That comes later. (p. 49)

Any answer to this agon between the writer and the worker, between the highly literate but regarded-as-illiterate Glaswegian monologist and the illiterate plumber whose language is not rejected but given status by the act of writing, 'comes later'. Leonard's poetry enjoys every kind of dramatic contest and contrast between different voices, accents, registers, social classes, philosophies. One man after assuring him that 'thi langwij a thi guhtr' is all right for funny stuff but no use for emotional or intellectual matters falls down an empty lift-shaft; another speaker argues with him in favour of electronics instead of the parochialities of 'bunnit husslin'; a linguist who regrets she has 'lost her accent' is mocked and asked if she would really 'swear tay swerr'; a glib 'liaison co-ordinator' is attacked for having no real experience of unemployment, alcoholism, or 'hoossyz fawnty bits'; a series of characters like figures in a medieval morality-poem try to tell him that his language is 'disgraceful', and the charge, while not denied, is defied: 'all living language is sacred.' This emphasis on 'living language', however comedic the means may be which are used to talk about it, is important to Leonard because it is related to the realities of power in society, to what we believe or are persuaded to believe is true, and the defence of his concern with what people actually say, as opposed to what they are taught to say, or what they hear others say, or even what they think they themselves are saying, is that to sweep speech under the carpet is to academise, and indeed tarmacadamise, systems of stasis and control that are perpetually in need of re-examination. Not surprisingly in such a slippery subject, irony is one of his favourite weapons, and Glaswegian finds one of its happiest expressions in the transvestite linguistics of 'Unrelated Incidents—3', which is also highly thought-provoking about the matters just discussed:

this is thi
 six a clock
 news thi
 man said n
 thi reason
 a talk wia
 BBC accent
 iz coz yi

widny wahnt
 mi ti talk
 aboot thi
 trooth wia
 voice lik
 wanna yoo
 scruff. if
 a toktaboot
 thi trooth
 lik wanna yoo
 scruff yi
 widny thingk
 it wuz troo.
 jist wanna yoo
 scruff tokn.
 thirza right
 way ti spell
 ana right way
 ti tok it. this
 is me tokn yir
 right way a
 spellin. this
 is ma trooth.
 yooz doant no
 thi trooth
 yirsellz cawz
 yi canny talk
 right. this is
 the six a clock
 nyooz. belt up.

(*Three Glasgow Writers*, p. 36)

NOTES

- 1 'Modern Scots Prose Writing', in *The Scots Language in Education*, Association for Scottish Literary Studies Occasional Papers no. 3, p. 62.
- 2 'Changes in the Vocabulary of Lowland Scots Dialects', in *Scottish Literary Journal*, Supplement no. 14, (Summer 1981), p. 54.

ASSIGNMENT.

vated Strath—the scene of “Bessy Bell, and Mary Gray,” near Perth—fine scenery on the banks of the May—Mrs. Belcher, gawdie, frank, affable, fond of rural sports, hunting, &c.—Lie at Kinross—reflections in a fit of the colic.

Sunday.—Pass through a cold, barren country to Queensferry—dine—cross the ferry and on to Edinburgh.

Burns' Complete Works

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GLOSSARY.

THE *ch* and *gh* have always the guttural sound. The sound of the English diphthong *oo* is commonly called *ou*. The French *u*, a sound which often occurs in the Scottish language, is marked *oo* or *ui*. The *a*, genuine Scottish words, except when forming a diphthong, or followed by an *e* mute after a single consonant, sounds generally like the broad English *a* in *wall*. The Scottish diphthong *ae* always, and *ea* very ten, sound like the French *e* masculine. The Scottish diphthong *ey* sounds like the Latin *ei*.”

A.

a, all.
back, away, aloof, backwards.
beigh, at a shy distance.
Aboon, above, up.
Abread, abroad, in sight, to publish.
Abreed, in breadth.
Ac, one.
Aff, off.
Aff-loof, off-hand, extempore, without premeditation.
Afore, before.
Aft, oft.
Aften, often.
Aglee, off the right line, wrong, awry.
Aiblins, perhaps.
Ain, own.
Airn, iron, a tool of that metal, a mason's chisel.
Airles, earnest money.
Airl-penny, a silver penny given as erles or hiring money.
Airt, quarter of the heaven, point of the compass.
Agee, on one side.
Attour, moreover, beyond, besides.
Aith, an oath.
Aits, oats.
Aiver, an old horse.
Aizle, a hot cinder, an ember of wood.
Alake, alas.
Alane, alone.
Akwart, awkward, athwart.
Amaist, almost.
Amang, among.
An', and, if.
Ance, once.
Ane, one.
Agent, ov'ragainst, concerning, about.
nither, another.
ee, ashes of wood, remains of a hearth fire.
er abroad stirring in a lively manner

Aqueesh, between.
Aught, possession, as “in a' my aught,” in all my possession.
Auld, old.
Auld-farran', auld farrant, sagacious, prudent, cunning.
Ava, at all.
Awa, away, begone.
Awfu', awful.
Auld-shoon, old shoes literally, a discarded lover metaphorically.
Aumos, gift to a beggar.
Aumos-dish, a beggar's dish in which the aumos is received.
Awn, the beard of barley, oats, &c.
Awnie, bearded.
Ayont, beyond.

B.

Ba', ball.
Babie-clouts, child's first clothes.
Backets, ash-boards, as pieces of basket for removing ashes.
Backlins, comin', coming back, returning.
Back-yett, private gate.
Baide, endured, did stay.
Baggie, the belly.
Bairn, a child.
Bairn-time, a family of children, a brood.
Baith, both.
Ballets, ballants, ballads.
Ban, to swear.
Bane, bone.
Bang, to beat, to strive, to excel.
Bannock, flat, round, soft cake.
Bardie, diminutive of bard
Brefit, barefooted.
Barley-bree, barley-broo, blood of barley, malt liquor.
Barmie, of, or like barm, yeasty.
Batch, a crew, a gang.
Batts, botts.
Baukie-bird, the bat.
Baudrons, a cat.

Bauld, bold.
Baws'nt, having a white stripe down the face.
Be, to let be, to give over, to cease.
Beets, boots.
Bear, barley.
Bearded-bear, barley with its bristly head.
Beastie, diminutive of beast.
Beet, beek, to add fuel to a fire, to bask.
Beld, bald.
Belyve, 'by and by, presently, quickly.
Ben, into the spence or parlour.
Benmost-bore, the remotest hole, the innermost recess.
Bethankit, grace after meat.
Beuk, a book.
Bicker, a kind of wooden dish, a short rapid race.
Bickering, careering, hurrying with quarrelsome intent.
Birnie, birnie ground is where thick heath has been burnt, leaving the birns, or unconsumed stalks, standing up sharp and stubbley.
Bie, or *biel*, shelter, a sheltered place, the sunny nook of a wood.
Bien, wealthy, plentiful.
Big, to build.
Biggin, building, a house.
Biggit, built.
Bill, a bull.
Billie, a brother, a young fellow, a companion.
Bing, a heap of grain potatoes, &c.
Birdie-cocks, young cocks, still be longing to the brood.
Birk, birch.
Birkie, a clever, a forward conceited fellow.
Birring, the noise of partridges when they rise.

MENT OF HIS WORKS.

in the premises that I could have done myself before granting hereof, but always with and under the conditions before expressed. And I oblige myself to warrant this disposition and assignation from my own proper fact and deed alienably. Consenting to the registration hereof in the books of Council and Session, or any other Judges books competent, therein to remain for preservation and constitute.

Procurals, &c. In witness whereof I have wrote and signed these presents, consisting of this and the preceding page, on stamped paper, with my own hand, at the Mossiel, the twenty-second day of July, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six years.

(Signed) ROBERT BURNS.

Upon the twenty-fourth day of July, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six years, I William Chalmer, Notary Publick, past to the Mercat Cross of Ayr head Burgh of the Sheriff dome thereof, and thereat I made due and lawful intimation of the foregoing disposition and assignation to his Majesties lieges, that they might not pretend ignorance thereof by reading the same over in presence of a number of people assembled. Whereupon William Crooks, writer, in Ayr, as attorney for the before designee Gilbert Burns, protested that the same was lawfully intimated, and asked and took instruments in my hands. These things were done betwixt the hours of ten and eleven forenoon, before and in presence of William M'Cubbin, and William Eaton, apprentices to the Sheriff Clerk of Ayr, witnesses to the premises.

(Signed) WILLIAM CHALMER, N. P.

WILLIAM M'CUBBIN, Witness.
WILLIAM EATON, Witness.

Birses, bristles.
Bit, crisis, nick of time, place.
Bizz, a bustle, to buzz.
Black's the grin, as black as the ground.
Blustie, a shrivelled dwarf, a term of contempt, full of mischief.
Blasit, blasted.
Blate, bashful, sheepish.
Blather, bladder.
Blaud, a flat piece of anything, to slap.
Blawdin-shower, a heavy driving rain; a blauding signifies a beating.
Blaw, to blow, to boast; "blaw i' my lug," to flatter.
Bleerit, bedimmed, eyes hurt with weeping.
B-er my een, dim my eyes.
Bleezing, bleeze, blazing, flame.
Blum, idle talking fellow.
Blether, to talk idly.
Bleth'in, talking idly.
Blink, a little while, a smiling look, to look kindly, to shine by fits.
Blinker, a term of contempt: it means, too, a lively engaging girl.
Blinkin', smirking, smiling with the eyes, looking lovingly.
Bliert and bleavie, out-burst of grief, with wet eyes.
Blue-gown, one of those beggars who get annually, on the king's birth-day, a blue cloak or gown with a badge.
Bluid, blood.
Blype, a shred, a large piece.
Bobbit, the obeisance made by a lady.
Bock, to vomit, to gush intermittently.
Booked, gushed, vomited.
Bodle, a copper coin of the value of two pennies Scots.
Bogie, a small morass.
Bonnie, or *bonny*, handsome, beautiful.
Bonnock, a kind of thick cake of bread, a small jannock or loaf made of oatmeal. See *Bannock*.
Boord, a board.
Bore, a hole in a wall, a cranny.
Boc-tree, the shrub elder, planted much of old in hedges of barnyards and gardens.
Bocst, behoved, must needs, wilfulness.
Botch, blotch, an angry tumour.
Bouring, drinking, making merry with liquor.
Bowk, body.
Bow-kail, cabbage.
Bow-hought, out-kneed, crooked at the knee joint.
Bowt, bowlt, bended, crooked.
Brackens, fern.
Brae, a declivity, a precipice, the slope of a hill.
Braiv, broad.

Braik, an instrument for rough-dressing flax.
Brainge, to run rashly forward, to churn violently.
Braing't, "the horse braing't," plunged and fretted in the harness.
Brak, broke, became insolvent.
Branks, a kind of wooden curb for horses.
Brankie, gaudy.
Brash, a sudden illness.
Brats, coarse clothes, rags, &c.
Brattle, a short race, hurry, fury.
Braw, fine, handsome.
Braunlys, or *braunlie*, very well, finely, heartily, bravely.
Braxies, diseased sheep.
Breatie, diminutive of breast.
Breastit, did spring up or forward; the act of mounting a horse.
Brechame, a horse-collar.
Breckens, fern.
Breef, an invulnerable or irresistible spell.
Brecks, breeches.
Brent, bright, clear; "a brent brow," a brow high and smooth.
Brewin', brewing, gathering.
Bree, juice, liquid.
Brig, a bridge.
Brunstane, brimstone.
Brieket, the breast, the bosom.
Brither, a brother.
Brook, a badger.
Brogue, a hum, a trick.
Broo, broth, liquid, water.
Broose, broth, a race at country weddings; he who first reaches the bridegroom's house on returning from church wins the broose.
Browst, ale, as much malt liquor as is brewed at a time.
Bruh, a burgh.
Bruisie, a broil, combustion.
Brunt, did burn, burnt.
Brust, to burst, burst.
Buchan-bullers, the boiling of the sea among the rocks on the coast of Buchan.
Buckskin, an inhabitant of Virginia.
Buff our beef, thrash us soundly, give us a beating behind and before.
Buff and blue, the colours of the Whigs.
Buirldy, stout made, broad built.
Bum-clock, the humming beetle that flies in the summer evenings.
Bummin, humming as bees, buzzing.
Bummle, to blunder, a drone, an idle fellow.
Bummler, one whose noise is greater than his work.
Bunker, a window-seat.
Bure, did bear.
Burn, burnie, water, a rivulet, a small stream which is heard as it runs.

Barniewin', burn the wind, the blacksmith.
Burr-thistle, the thistle of Scots land.
Buskit, dressed.
Buskit-nest, an ornamented residence.
Busle, a bustle.
But, bot, without.
But and ben, the country kitchen and parlour.
By himself, luratic, distracted, beside himself.
Byke, a bee-hive, a wild bee-nest.
Byre, a cow-house, a sheep-pen.

C.

Ca', to call, to name, to drive.
Ca'l, called, driven, calved.
Cadger, a carrier.
Cadie, or *caddie*, a person, a young fellow, a public messenger.
Caff, chaff.
Ca'rd, a tinker, a maker of horn spoons and taster of foranes.
Cairn, a loose heap of stones, a rustic monument.
Cal'-ward, a small enclosure for calves.
Calimanco, a certain kind of cotton cloth worn by ladies.
Callan, a boy.
Caller, fresh.
Callet, a loose woman, a follower of a camp.
Cannie, gentle, mild, dexterous.
Cannite, dexterously, gently.
Cantie, or *canty*, cheerful, merry.
Cantraip, a charm, a spell.
Cap-stane, cape-stone, topmost stone of the building.
Car, a rustic cart with or without wheels.
Careerin', moving cheerfully.
Castock, the stalk of a cabbage.
Carl, an old man.
Carl-hemp, the male stalk of hemp, easily known by its superior strength and stature, and being without seed.
Carlin, a stout old woman.
Cartes, cards.
Caudron, a cauldron.
Cauk and keel, chalk and red clay.
Cauld, cold.
Caup, a wooden drinking vessel, a cup.
Cavie, a hen-coop.
Chanter, drone of a bagpipe.
Chap, a person, a fellow.
Chaup, a stroke, a blow.
Cheek for chow, close and united brotherly, side by side.
Cheekin, cheeked.
Cheep, a chirp, to chirp.
Chiel, or *cheal*, a young fellow.
Chimla, or *chimlie*, a fire-grate fire-place.
Chimla-lug, the fire-side.
Chirps, cries of a young bird.
Chittering, shivering, trembling.
Chockin, choking.
Chow, to chew; a quid of tobacco.
Chuckie, a brood-hen.

Chuffie, fat-faced.
Clachan, a small village about a church, a hamlet.
Claise, or *claes*, clothes.
Clait, cloth.
Claiting, clothing.
Clavers and havers, agreeable nonsense, to talk foolishly.
Clapper-claps, the clapper of a mill; it is now silenced.
Clap-clack, clapper of a mill.
Clartie, dirty, filthy.
Clarkit wrote.
Clash, an idle tale.
Clatter, to tell little idle stories, an idle story.
Clawht, snatched at, laid hold of.
Clawt, to clean, to scrape.
Clawted, scraped.
Claw, to scratch.
Cleed, to clothe.
Cleek, hook, snatch.
Cleekin, a brood of chickens, or ducks.
Clegs, the gad flies.
Clinkin', "clinking down," sitting down hastily.
Tinkum-bell, the church bell; he who rings it; a sort of beadie.
Clips, wool-shears.
Clishmaclaver, idle conversation.
Clock, to hatch, a beetle.
Cloekin, hatching.
Cloot, the hoof of a cow, sheep, &c.
Clootie, a familiar name for the devil.
Clour, a bump, or swelling, after a blow.
Cloutin, repairing with cloth.
Cluds, clouds.
Clunk, the sound in setting down an empty bottle.
Toaxin, wheedling.
Coble, a fishing-boat.
Cod, a pillow.
Coft, bought.
Cog, and *coggie*, a wooden dish.
Coila, from Kyle, a district in Ayrshire, so called, saith tradition, from Coil, or Coilus, a Pictish monarch.
Jollie, a general, and sometimes a particular name for country curs.
O'Nie-shangie, a quarrel among dogs, an Irish row.
Oenmann, command.
Convoeyed, accompanied lovingly.
Cool'd in her linens, cool'd in her death-shift.
Cood, the cud.
Cooif, a blockhead, a ninny.
Cookit, appeared and disappeared by fits.
Cooser, a stallion.
Coat, did cast.
Coat, the ankle, a species of water-fowl.
Corbies, blood crows.
Cootie, a wooden dish, rough-legged.
Core, corps party, clan.
Corri fed with oats.

Coster, the inhabitant of a cottage, or cottage.
Couthie, kind, loving.
Cove, a cave.
Cove, to terrify, to keep under, to lop.
Covep, to barter, to tumble over.
Covep the cran, to tumble a full bucket or basket.
Cowpit, tumbled.
Coverin, covering.
Cowte, a colt.
Cosie, snug.
Crabbit, crabbed, fretful.
Creuks, a disease of horses.
Crack, conversation, to converse, to boast.
Crackin', cracked, conversing, conversed.
Craft, or *croft*, a field near a house, in old husbandry.
Craig, craigie, neck.
Craiks, cries or calls incessantly, a bird, the corn-rail.
Crambo-clink, or *crambo-jingle*, rhymes, doggerel verses.
Crank, the noise of an ungreased wheel—metaphorically inharmonious verse.
Crankous, fretful, captious.
Cranreuch, the hoar-frost, called in Nithsdale "frost-rhyme."
Crap, a crop, to crop.
Craw, a crow of a cock, a rook.
Creel, a basket, to have one's wits in a creel, to be crazed, to be fascinated.
Creshie, greasy.
Crood, or *Croud*, to coo as a dove.
Croon, a hollow and continued moan; to make a noise like the low roar of a bull; to hum a tune.
Crooning, humming.
Crouchie, crook-backed.
Crouse, cheerful, courageous.
Croously, cheerfully, courageously.
Crowdie, a composition of oatmeal, boiled water and butter; sometimes made from the broth of beef, mutton, &c. &c.
Crowdie time, breakfast time.
Crowlin, crawling, a deformed creeping thing.
Crummie's nicks, marks on the horns of a cow.
Crummock, *Crummet*, a cow with crooked horns.
Crummock driddle, walk slowly, leaning on a staff with a crooked head.
Crumpp-crumpin, hard and brittle, spoken of bread; frozen snow yielding to the foot.
Crunt, a blow on the head with a cudgel.
Cuddle, to clasp and caress.
Cummock, a short staff, with a crooked head.
Curch, a covering for the head, a kerchief.
Curchie, a cut-throat, female obeisance.
Cur'er, a player at a game on the

ice, practised in Scotland, called curling.
Curle, curled, whose hair falls naturally in ringlets.
Curling, a well-known game on the ice.
Curmurring, murmuring, a slight rumbling noise.
Curpin, the crupper, the rump.
Curple, the rear.
Cushat, the dove, or wood-pigeon.
Cutty, short, a spoon broken in the middle.
Cutty Stool, or *Creepie Chair*, the seat of shame, stool of repentance.

D.

Daddie, a father.
Daffin, merriment, foolishness.
Daft, merry, giddy, foolish; *Da t-buckie*, mad fish.
Daimen, rare, now and then; *Daimen icker*, an ear of corn occasionally.
Dainty, pleasant, good-natured, agreeable, rare.
Dandered, wandered.
Darklins, darkling, without light.
Daud, to thrash, to abuse; *Daudin-showers*, rain urged by wind.
Daur, to dare; *Daurt*, dared.
Daurg, or *Daurk*, a day's labour.
Daur, daurna, dare, dare not.
Davoc, diminutive of Davie, as Davie is of David.
Dard, a large piece.
Davin, dawning of the day.
Davit, *daudet*, fondled, caressed.
Dearies, diminutive of dears sweethearts.
Dearthfu', dear, expensive.
Deave, to deafen.
Deil-ma-care, no matter for all that.
Deleerit, delirious.
Describe, to describe, to perceive.
Denks, ducks.
Dight, to wipe, to clean corn from chaff.
Ding, to worst, to push, to surpass, to excel.
Dink, neat, lady-like.
Dirna, do not.
Dirl, a slight tremulous strike or pain, a tremulous motion.
Distain, stain.
Dizzen, a dozen.
Dochter, daughter.
Doited, stupidified, silly from age.
Dolt, stupidified, crazed; also a fool.
Donsie, unlucky, affectedly neat and trim, pettish.
Doodle, to dandle.
Dool, sorrow, to lament, to mourn.
Doon, doves, pigeons.
Dorty, saucy, nice.
Douse, or *dauce*, sober, wise, prudent.
Doucely, soberly, prudently.
Dought, was or were able.
Doup, backside.
Doup-skelper, one that strikes the tail.

Dear and din, sullen and sallow.
De uer, more pruder.
Dow, am or are able, &c.
Dowf, pitiless, war'ng force.
Dowie, worn with grief, fatigue, &c., half asleep.
Downa, am or are not able, cannot.
Doyle, wearied, exhausted.
Dosen, stupified, the effects of age, to dozen, to benumb.
Drab, a young female beggar; to spot, to stain.
Drap, a drop, to drop.
Drawing, dropping.
Draunting, drawing, speaking with a sectarian tone.
Dreep, to ooze, to drcp.
Dreigh, tedious, long about it, lingering.
Dribble, drizzling, trickling.
Driddle, the motion of one who tries to dance but moves the middle only.
Drift, a drove, a flight of fowls, snow moved by the wind.
Droddum, the breech.
Drone, part of a bagpipe, the chanter.
Droop rump't, that droops at the crupper.
Droukit, wet.
Drouth, thirst, drought.
Drucken, drunken.
Drumly, muddy.
Drummock, or *Drammock*, meal and water mixed, raw.
Drunt, pet, sour humour.
Dub, a small pond, a hollow filled with rain water.
Duds, rags, clothes.
Duddie, ragged.
Dung-dang, worsted, pushed, stricken.
Dunted, throbbed, beaten.
Dush-dunsh, to push, or butt as a ram.
Dusht, overcome with superstitious fear, to drop down suddenly.
Dyvor, bankrupt, or about to become one.

E.

E'e, the eye.
Een, the eyes, the evening.
Eebree, the eyebrow.
Eenin', the evening.
Eerie, frighted, haunted, dreading spirits.
Eild, old age.
Elbuck, the elbow.
Eldritch, ghastly, frightful, elvish.
En', end.
Enbrugh, Edinburgh.
Enough, and *aneuch*, enough.
Especial, especially.
Ether-stone, stone formed by adders, an adder bead.
Etile, to try, attempt, aim.
Eydent, diligent.

F.

Fa', fall, lot, to fall, late.
Fa' that, to enjoy, to be inheritor.

Faddom't, fathomed, measured with the extended arms.
Faes, fues.
Faem, foam of the sea.
Faiket, forgiven or excused, abated, a demand.
Faimes, gladness, overcome with joy.
Fairin', fairing, a present brought from a fair.
Fallow, fellow.
Fand, did find.
Farl, a cake of bread; third part of a cake.
Fash, trouble, care, to trouble, to care for.
Fasheous, troublesome.
Fasht, troubled.
Fasten e'en, Fasten's even.
Faught, fight.
Faugh, a single furrow, out of lea, fallow.
Fauld, and *Fald*, a fold for sheep, to fold.
Faut, fault.
Fausont, decent, seemly.
Feal, loyal, steadfast.
Fearfu', fearful, frightful.
Fear't, affrighted.
Feat, neat, spruce, clever.
Fecht, to fight.
Fechtin', fighting.
Feck and fek, number, quantity.
Fecket, an under-waistcoat.
Feckfu', large, brawny, stout.
Feckless, puny, weak, silly.
Feckly, mostly.
Feg, a fig.
Fegs, faith, an exclamation.
Feide, feud, enmity.
Fell, keen, biting; the flesh immediately under the skin; level moor.
Felly, relentless.
Fend, *Fen*, to make a shift, contrive to live.
Ferlie or *ferley*, to wonder, a wonder, a term of contempt.
Fetch, to pull by fits.
Fetch't, pull'd intermittently.
Fey, strange; one marked for death, predestined.
Fidge, to fidget, fidgeting.
Fidgin-fain, tickled with pleasure.
Fient, fiend, a petty oath.
Fien ma care, the devil may care.
Fier, sound, healthy; a brother, a friend.
Fierrie, bustle, activity.
Fisale, to make a rustling noise, to fidget, bustle, fuss.
Fit, fan.
Fittie-lan, the nearer horse of the hindmost pair in the plough.
Fizz, to make a hissing noise, fuss, disturbance.
Flaffen, the motion of rags in the wind; of wings.
Flainen, flannel.
Flandrekins, foreign generals, soldiers of Flanders.
Flang, threw with violence.

Fleech, to supplicate in a flattering manner.
Fleechin, supplicating.
Fleesh, a fleecce.
Fleg, a kick, a random blow, a fight.
Flether, to decoy by fair words.
Flethrin, *fethers*, flattering — smooth wheedling words.
Fley, to scare, to frighten.
Flichter, *flichtering*, to flutter as young nestlings do when their dam approaches.
Flinders, shreds, broken pieces.
Flingin-tree, a piece of timber hung by way of partition between two horses in a stable; a fail.
Flisk, *flisky*, to fret at the yoke.
Flisket, fretted.
Flitter, to vibrate like the wings of small birds.
Flittering, fluttering, vibrating, moving tremulously from place to place.
Flunkie, a servant in livery.
Flyte, *flyting*, scold; *flyting*, scolding.
Foor, hastened.
Foord, a ford.
Forbears, forefathers.
Forbye, besides.
Forfairn, distressed, worn out, jaded, forlorn, destitute.
Forgather, to meet, to encounter with.
Forgie, to forgive.
Forinaced, worn out.
Forjesket, jaded with fatigue.
Fou', full, drunk.
Foughten, *forfoughten*, troubled, fatigued.
Foul-thief, the devil, the arch-fiend.
Fouth, plenty, enough, or more than enough.
Fow, a measure, a bushel: also a pitchfork.
Frae, from.
Freath, froth, the frothing of ale in the tankard.
Frien', friend.
Frosty-calker, the heels and front of a horse-shoe, turned sharply up for riding on an icy road.
Fu', full.
Fud, the scut or tail of the hare, coney, &c.
Fuff, to blow intermittently.
Fu-hant, full-handed; said of one well to live in the world.
Funnie, full of merriment.
Fur-ahn, the hindmost horse on the right hand when ploughing.
Furder, further, succeed.
Furm, a form, a bench.
Fusionless, spiritless, without sag or soul.
Fyke, trifling cares, to be in a fua about trifles.
Fyte, to soil, to dirty.
Fytl, soiled, dirtied.

G.

Wab, the mouth, to speak boldly or pertly.
Gaberlunzie, wallet-man, or tinker.
Gae, to go; *gaed*, went; *gaen* or *gaen*, gone; *gaun*, going.
Gaet or *gate*, way, manner, road.
Gaize, parts of a lady's gown.
Gang, to go, to walk.
Gangrel, a wandering person.
Gar', to make, to force to; *gar't*, forced to.
Garten, a garter.
Gash, wise, sagacious, talkative, to converse.
Gatry, failing in body.
Gawey jolly, large, plump.
Gaud and gad, a rod or goad.
Gaudeman, one who drives the horses at the plough.
Gaun, going.
Gaunted, yawned, longed.
Gawkie, a thoughtless person, and something weak.
Gaylies, *gyllie*, pretty well.
Gear, riches, goods of any kind.
Geck, to toss the head in wantonness or scorn.
Ged, a pike.
Gentles, great folks.
Genty, elegant.
Geordie, George, a guinea, called Geordie from the head of King George.
Get and geat, a child, a young one.
Ghaist, *ghaistis*, a ghost.
Gie, to give; *gied*, gave; *gien*, given.
Giftie, diminutive of gift.
Gigles, laughing maidens.
Gillie, *gillock*, diminutive of gill.
Gilpey, a half-grown, half-informed boy or girl, a romping lad, a hoyden.
Gimmer, an ewe two years old, a contemptuous term for a woman.
Gin, if, against.
Gipeey, a young girl.
Girdle, a round iron plate on which oat-cake is fired.
Girn, to grin, to twist the features in rage, agony, &c.; grinning.
Gizz, a periwig, the face.
Glaikit, inattentive, foolish.
Glaize, glittering, smooth, like glass.
Glumed, grasped, snatched at eagerly.
Girran, a pouterie girran, a little vigorous animal; a horse rather old, but yet active when heated.
Gled, a hawk.
Gleg, sharp, ready.
Gley, a squirt, to squirt; *a-gley*, off at a side, wrong.
Gleyde, an old horse.
Glib-gabbit, that speaks smoothly and readily.

Glieb o' lan', a portion of ground. The ground belonging to a manse is called "the glieb," or portion.
Glint, *glintin'*, to peep.
Glinted by, went brightly past.
Gloamin, the twilight.
Gloamin-shot, twilight-musing; a shot in the twilight.
Glower, to stare, to look; a stare, a look.
Gloweran, amazed, looking suspiciously, gazing.
Glum, displeased.
Gor-cocks, the red-game, red-cock, or moor-cock.
Gowan, the flower of the daisy, dandelion, hawkweed, &c.
Gowany, covered with daisies.
Goavan, walking as if blind, or without an aim.
Gowd, gold.
Gowl, to howl.
Gowff, a fool; the game of golf, to strike, as the bat does the ball at golf.
Gowk, term of contempt, the cuckoo.
Grane or *grain*, a groan, to groan; *graining*, groaning.
Graip, a pronged instrument for cleaning cowhouses.
Graith, accoutrements, furniture, dress.
Grannie, grandmother.
Grape, to grope; *grapet*, groped.
Great, grit, intimate, familiar.
Gree, to agree; to bear the gree, to be decidedly victor; *gree't*, agreed.
Green-gruff, green grave.
Gruesome, loathsomely, grim.
Greet, to shed tears, to weep; *greetin'*, weeping.
Grey-neck-quill, a quill unfit for a pen.
Griens, longs, desires.
Grieves, stewards.
Grippit, seized.
Groanin-Maut, drink for the cumpers at a lying-in.
Groat, to get the whistle of one's groat; to play a losing game, to feel the consequences of one's folly.
Groset, a gooseberry.
Grumphy, a grunt, to grunt.
Grumphy, *Grumphin*, a sow; the snorting of an angry pig.
Grun', ground.
Grunstone, a grindstone.
Gruntle, the phiz, the snout, a grunting noise.
Grunzie, a mouth which pokes out like that of a pig.
Grushie, thick, of thriving growth.
Gude, *guid*, *guids*, the Supreme Being, good, goods.
Gude auld-has-been, was once excellent.
Guid-mornin', good-morrow.
Guid-e'en, good evening.
Guidfather and *guidmother*, father-in-law, and mother-in-law.

Guidman and *guidwife*, the master and mistress of the house; *young guidman*, a man newly married.
Gully or *Gullie*, a large knife.
Gultrauge, joyous mischief.
Gunlie, muddy.
Gumption, discernment, knowledge, talent.
Gusty, *gustfu'*, tasteful.
Gut-scraper, a siddler.
Gutcher, grandsire.

H.

Ha', hall.
Ha' Bible, the great Bible that lies in the hall.
Haddin', house, home, dwelling place, a possession.
Hae, to have, to accept.
Haen, had (the participle of hae) haven.
Haet, *sient haet*, a petty oath or negation; nothing.
Haffet, the temple, the side of the head.
Haffins, nearly half, partly, not fully grown.
Hag, a gulf in mosses and moors, moss-ground.
Haggis, a kind of pudding, boiled in the stomach of a cow, or sheep.
Hain, to spare, to save, to lay out at interest.
Hain'd, spared; *hain'd gear*, hoarded money.
Hairst, harvest.
Haith, a petty oath.
Haivers, nonsense, speaking without thought.
Hal', or *hald*, an abiding place.
Hale, or *hail*, whole, tight, healthy.
Hallan, a particular partition-wall in a cottage, or more properly a seat of turf at the outside.
Hallowmass, Hallow-eve, 31st October.
Haly, holy; "haly-pool," holy well with healing qualities.
Hame, home.
Hammered, the noise of feet like the din of hammers.
Han's breed, hand's breadth.
Hanks, thread as it comes from the measuring reel, quantities, &c.
Hansel-throne, throne when first occupied by a king.
Hap, an outer garment, mantle, plaid, &c.; to wrap, to cover, to hap.
Harigals, heart, liver, and lights of an animal.
Hap-shackled, when a fore and hind foot of a ram are fastened together to prevent leaping. he is said to be hap-shackled. A wife is called "the kirk" hap-shackle."
Happer, a hopper, the hopper of a mill.

Hopping, hopping.
Hap-step-an'-loup, hop, step, and leap.
Harkit, hearkened.
Harn, a very coarse linen.
Hash, a fellow who knows not how to act with propriety.
Hastit, hastened.
Haud, to hold.
Haugs, low-lying, rich land, valleys.
Haurt, to drag, to pull violently.
Haurtin, tearing off, pulling roughly.
Haver-meal, oatmeal.
Haveril, a half-witted person, half-witted, one who habitually talks in a foolish or incoherent manner.
Hawins, good manners, decorum, good sense.
Hawkie, a cow, properly one with a white face.
Teapit, heaped.
Healsome, healthful, wholesome.
Hearse, hoarse.
Heather, heath.
Hech, oh strange! an exclamation during heavy work.
Hecht, promised, to foretell something that is to be got or given, foretold, the thing foretold, offered.
Heekle, a board in which are fixed a number of sharp steel prongs upright for dressing hemp, flax, &c.
Hee balow, words used to soothe a child.
Heels-ou're-gowdie, topsy-turvy, turned the bottom upwards.
Heeze, to elevate, to rise, to lift.
Hellim, the rudder or helm.
Herd, to tend flocks, one who tends flocks.
Herrin', a herring.
Herry, to plunder; most properly to plunder birds' nests.
Herryment, plundering, devastation.
Hersel-hersel, a flock of sheep, also a herd of cattle of any sort.
Het, hot, heated.
Heugh, a crag, a ravine; *coal-heugh,* a coal-pit; *lowin heugh,* a blazing pit.
Hilch, *hitchin',* to halt, halting.
Hiney, honey.
Hing, to hang.
Hip'-is, to walk crazily, to walk lamely, to creep.
Hwir, dry, chapt, barren.
Hicht, a loop, made a knot.
Hizzie, huzzy, a young girl.
Hoddlin, the motion of a husbandman riding on a cart-horse, humble.
Hoddlin-gray, woollen cloth of a coarse quality, made by mingling one black fleece with a dozen white ones.
Hoygie, a two-year-old sheep.
Hog-scort, a distance line in curl-

ing drawn across the rink.
 When a stone fails to cross it, a cry is raised of "A hog, a hog!" and it is removed.
Hog-shouther, a kind of horse-play by justling with the shoulder; to justle.
Hoodie-craw, a blood crow, corbie.
Hool, outer skin or case, a nutshell, a pea-husk.
Hoolie, slowly, leisurely.
Hoord, a board, to hoard.
Hoordit, hoarded.
Horn, a spoon made of horn.
Hornie, one of the many names of the devil.
Host, or *hoast,* to cough.
Hostin, coughing.
Hotch'd, turned topsy-turvy, blended, ruined, moved.
Houghmagandie, loose behaviour.
Howlet, an owl.
Housie, diminutive of house.
Howe, hoved, to heave, to swell.
Howdie, a midwife.
Howe, hollow, a hollow or dell.
Howebackit, sunk in the back, spoken of a horse.
Howff, a house of resort.
Howk, to dig.
Howkit, digged.
Howkin', digging deep.
Hoy, hoy't, to urge, urged.
Hoysie, a pull upwards. "Hoysie a creel," to raise a basket; hence "hoisting creels."
Hoyte, to amble crazily.
Hughoc, diminutive of Hughie, as Hughie is of Hugh.
Hums and hankers, mumbles and seeks to do what he cannot perform.
Hunkers, kneeling and falling back on the hams.
Hureheon, a hedgehog.
Hurdies, the loins, the crupper.
Hushion, a cushion, also a stocking wanting the foot.
Huchyalled, to move with a bilch.

I.

Icker, an ear of corn.
Ieroe, a great grandchild.
Ik, or ilka, each, every.
Ill-deedie, mischievous.
Ill-willie, ill-natured, malicious, niggardly.
Ingine, genius, ingenuity.
Ingie, fire, fireplace.
Ingie low, light from the fire, flame from the hearth.
I rede ye, I advise ye, I warn ye.
Ise, I shall or will.
Ither, other, one another.

J.

Jad, jade; also a familiar term among country folks for a giddy young girl.
Jauk, to dally, to trifle.
Jaukin', trifling, dallying.
Jawner, talking, and not always to the purpose.

Jaup, a jerk of water; to jerk, to agitated water.
Jaw, coarse raillery, to pour out to shut, to jerk as water.
Jillet, a jilt, a giddy girl.
Jimp, to jump, slender in the waist, handsome.
Jink, to dodge, to turn a corner; a sudden turning, a corner.
Jink an' diddle, moving to music, motion of a fiddler's elbow. Starting here and there with a tremulous movement.
Jinker, that turns quickly, a gay sprightly girl.
Jinkin', dodging, the quick motion of the bow on the fiddle.
Jirt, a jerk, the emission of water, to squirt.
Jocteleg, a kind of knife.
Jouk, to stoop, to bow the head, to conceal.
Jow, to jow, a verb, which includes both the swinging motion and pealing sound of a large bell; also the undulation of water.
Jundie, to justle, a push with the elbow.

K.

Kae, a daw.
Kail, colewort, a kind of broth.
Kairrunt, the stem of colewort.
Kain, fowls, &c., paid as rent by a farmer.
Kebars, rafters.
Kebuck, a cheese.
Keckle, joyous cry; to cackle as a hen.
Keek, a keek, to peep.
Kelpies, a sort of mischievous water-spirit, said to haunt fords and ferries at night, especially in storms.
Ken, to know; *ken'd* or *ken't,* knew.
Kennin, a small matter.
Ket-Ketty, matted, a fleece of wool.
Kiaught, carking, anxiety, to be in a flutter.
Kilt, to truss up the clothes.
Kimmer, a young girl, a gossip.
Kin', kindred.
Kin', kind.
King's-hood, a certain part of the entrails of an ox.
Kintra, kintrie, country.
Kirn, the harvest supper, a churr.
Kirsen, to christen, to baptize.
Kist, chest, a shop-counter.
Kitchen, anything that eats with bread, to serve for soup, gravy.
Kittle, to tickle, ticklish.
Kittling, a young cat. The ace of diamonds is called among rusties the kittlin's e'e.
Knaggie, like knags, or points of rocks.
Knappin-hammer, a hammer for breaking stones; *knapp,* to strike or break.

Knurlin, crooked but strong, Enotty.
Knowe, a small, round hillock, a knoll.
Kuittle, to cuddle; *kuitlin,* cuddling, fondling.
Kye, cows.
Kyle, a district in Ayrshire.
Kyte, the belly.
Kythe, to discover, to show one's self.

L.

Labour, thrash.
Laddie, diminutive of lad.
Laggen, the angle between the side and the bottom of a wooden dish.
Lairg, low.
Lairing, lairie, wading, and sinking in snow, mud, &c., miry.
Laith, loath, impure.
Laithfu', bashful, sheepish, abstemious.
Lallans, Scottish dialect, Lowlands.
Lambie, diminutive of lamb.
Lammas moon, harvest-moon.
Lampit, a kind of shell-fish, a limpet.
Land, land, estate.
Land'-afore, foremost horse in the plough.
Land'-ahin, hindmost horse in the plough.
Lane, lone; *my lane, thy lane, &c.,* myself alone.
Lanely, lonely.
Lang, long; *to think lang,* to long, to weary.
Lap, did leap.
Late and air, late and early.
Lave, the rest, the remainder, the others.
Laverock, the lark.
Lawlan', lowland.
Lay my dead, attribute my death.
Leal, loyal, true, faithful.
Lear, learning, lore.
Lee-lang, live-long.
Loesome luvie, happy, gladsome love.
Leeze me a phrase of congratulation: endearment; I am happy in thee or proud of thee.
Leister, a three-pronged and barbed dart for striking fish.
Lough, did laugh.
Leuk, a look, to look.
Liebbie, astrated.
Lick, ticket, beat, thrashen
Liff, sky, firmament.
Lightly, sneeringly, to sneer at, to undervalue.
Lilt, a ballad, a tune, to sing.
Limmer, a kept mistress, a strumpet.
Limp't, limped, hobbled.
Link, to trip along; *linkin,* tripping along.
Linn, a waterfall, a cascade.
Lint, flax; *lint & the bill* flax in flower.

Lint-ichte, a linnet, flaxen.
Loan, the place of milking.
Loaning, lane.
Loof, the palm of the hand.
Loof, did let.
Looves, the plural of loof.
Loosh man! rustic exclamation modified from Lord man.
Loun, a fellow, a ragamuffin, a woman of easy virtue.
Loup, leap, startled with pain.
Louper-like, lan-louper, a stranger of a suspected character.
Love, a flame.
Lowin', flaming; *lowin-drouth,* burning desire for drink.
Lowrie, abbreviation of Lawrence.
Lowse, to loose.
Lowsed, unbound, loosed.
Lug, the ear.
Lug of the law, at the judgment-seat.
Lugget, having a handle.
Luggie, a small wooden dish, with a handle.
Lum, the chimney; *lum-head,* chimney-top.
Lunch, a large piece of cheese, flesh, &c.
Lunt, a column of smoke, to smoke, to walk quickly.
Lyart, of a mixed colour, gray.

M.

Mae, and *mair,* more.
Maggot's-meat, food for the worms.
Mahoun, Satan.
Maiten, a farm.
Maisit, most, almost.
Maistly, mostly, for the greater part.
Mak', to make; *makin',* making.
Mally, Molly, Mary.
Mang, among.
Manse, the house of the parish minister is called "the Manse."
Manteele, a mantle.
Mark, marks. This and several other nouns which in English require an s to form the plural, are in Scotch, like the words sheep, deer, the same in both numbers.
Mark, merk, a Scottish coin, value thirteen shillings and fourpence.
Marled, party-coloured.
Mar's year, the year 1715. Called Mar's year from the rebellion of Erskine, Earl of Mar.
Martial chuck, the soldier's camp-comrade, female companion.
Mashlum, mixed corn.
Mash, to mash, as malt, &c., to infuse.
Maskin-pat, teapot.
Maukin, a hare.
Mawn, mawna, must, must not.
Mant, malt.
Mavis, the thrush.
Mawc, to mow.

Mawin, mowing; *mawn,* mowed, *maw'd,* mowed.
Mawen, a small basket, without a handle.
Meere, a mare.
Melancholious, mournful.
Melder, a load of corn, &c., sent to the mill to be ground.
Mell, to be intimate, to meddle, also a mallet for pounding barley in a stone trough.
Melvie, to soil with meal.
Men', to mend.
Mense, good manners, decorum.
Menseless, ill-bred, rude, impudent.
Merle, the blackbird.
Messin, a small dog.
Middin, a dunghill.
Middin-creels, dung-baskets, panniers in which horses carry manure.
Middin-hole, a gutter at the bottom of a ditch.
Milkin'-shiel, a place where cows or ewes are brought to be milked.
Mim, prim, affectedly meek.
Mim-mou'd, gentle-mouthed.
Min', to remember.
Minawae, minut.
Mind't, mind it, resolved, intending, remembered.
Minnie, mother, dam.
Mirk, dark.
Misae', to abuse, to call names; *misae'd,* abused.
Mischanter, accident.
Misleard, mischievous, unman-nerly.
Mistek, mistook.
Mither, mother.
Mixtie-maxtie, confusedly mixed, mish-mash.
Moistify, moistified, to moisten, to soak; moistened, soaked.
Mons-meg, a large piece of ordnance, to be seen at the Castle of Edinburgh, composed of iron bars welded together and then hooped.
Moole, earth.
Mony, or *monie,* many.
Moop, to nibble as a sheep.
Moorlan, of or belonging to moon.
Morn, the next day, to-morrow.
Mou, the mouth.
Moudieort, a mole.
Mousie, diminutive of mouse.
Muckle, or *mickle,* great, big, much.
Muses-atank, muses-rill, a stank, slow-flowing water.
Musie, diminutive of muse.
Muslin-kidil, broth, composed simply of water, shelled barley, and greens; thin porridge.
Mutchkin, an English pint.
Myself, myself.

N.

Nd', no, not, nor.
Nae, or *na,* no, not any.

Naethig, or *naithing*, nothing.
Nag, a horse, a nag.
Nane, none.
Nappy, ale, to be tipsy.
Neglekit, neglected.
Neebor, a neighbour.
Nook, nook.
Neist, next.
Nieve, *nief*, the fist.
Nievefu', handful.
Niffer, an exchange, to barter.
Niger, a negro.
Nine-tailed cat, a hangman's whip.
Nit, a nut.
Norland, of or belonging to the north.
Notic't, noticed.
Noute, black cattle.

O.

O, of.
O'ergang, overbearingness, to treat with indignity, literally to tread.
O'erlay, an upper cravat.
Ony, or *onie*, any.
Or, is often used for *ero*, before.
Orra-duddies, superfluous rags, old clothes.
O't, of it.
Ourie, drooping, shivering.
Oursel, *oursels*, ourselves.
Outlers, outliers; cattle unhused.
Over, *ovre*, over.
Ovre-hip, striking with a fore-hammer by bringing it with a swing over the hip.
Owsen, oxen.
Oxered, carried or supported under the arm.

P.

Pack, intimate, familiar: twelve stone of wool.
Paidle, *paidlen*, to walk with difficulty, as if in water.
Painch, paunch.
Patrick, a partridge.
Pang, to cram.
Parle, courtship.
Parishen, parish.
Parrich, oatmeal pudding, a well-known Scotch drink.
Pat, did put, a pot.
Pattle, or *pettle*, a small spade to clean the plough.
Paughty, proud, haughty.
Pauky, cunning, sly.
Pay't, paid, beat.
Peat-reek, the smoke of burning turf, a bitter exhalation, whisky.
Perk, to fetch the breath shortly, as in an asthma.
Pechan, the crop, the stomach.
Pechin, respiring with difficulty.
Pennie, riches.
Pet, a domesticated sheep, &c., a favourite.
Pettle, to cherish.
Philabeg, the kill.
Phraise, fair speeches, flattery, to flatter.

Phraisin, flattering.
Pibroch, a martial air.
Pickle, a small quantity, one grain of corn.
Pigmy-scraper, little fiddler; a term of contempt for a bad player.
Pint-stoup, a two-quart measure.
Pine, pain, uneasiness.
Pingle, a small pan for warming children's sops.
Plack, an old Scotch coin, the third part of an English penny.
Plackless, penniless, without money.

Plaidie, diminutive of plaid.
Platie, diminutive of plate.
Pleu, or *pleugh*, a plough.
Pliskie, a trick.
Plumrose, primrose.
Pock, a meal-bag.
Poidin, to seize on cattle, or take the goods as the laws of Scotland allow, for rent, &c.
Poorteth, poverty.
Posie, a nosegay, a garland.
Pou, *pou'd*, to pull, pulled.
Pouk, to pluck.
Pousseie, a hare or cat.
Pouse, to pluck with the hand.
Pout, a pout, a chick.
Pou't, did pull.
Pouthery, fiery, active.
Powthery, like powder.
Pow, the head, the skull.
Ponnie, a little horse, a pony.
Pouther, or *pouther*, gunpowder.
Preclair, supereminent.
Preen, a pin.
Prent, printing, print.
Prie, to taste; *prie'd*, tasted.
Prief, proof.
Prig, to cheapen, to dispute; *priggin*, cheapening.
Primstie, demure, precise.
Propone, to lay down, to propose.
Pund, *pund o' tow*, pound, pound weight of the refuse of flax.
Pyet, a magpie.
Pyle, a *pyle*, *o' cass*, a single grain of chaff.
Pystle, epistle.

Q.

Quat, quit.
Quak, the cry of a duck.
Queeh, a drinking-cup made of wood with two handles.
Quey, a cow from one to two years old, a heifer.
Quines, queans.
Quakin, quaking.

R.

Ragweed, herb-ragwort.
Raible, to rattle, nonsense.
Rair, to roar.
Raize, to madden, to inflame.
Ramfeeled, fatigued, overpowered.
Rampin', raging.

Ramstam, thoughtless, forward.
Randie, a scolding sturdy beggar a shrew.
Rantin', joyous.
Raploch, properly a coarse cloth but used for coarse.
Rarely, excellently, very well.
Rash, a rush; *rash-bush*, a bush of rushes.
Ratton, a rat.
Raucle, rash, stout, fearless, reckless.
Raught, reached.
Raw, a row.
Rax, to stretch.
Ream, cream, to cream.
Reamin', brimful, frothing.
Reave, take by force.
Rebute, to repulse, rebuke.
Reck, to heed.
Rede, counsel, to counsel, to discourse.

Red-peats, burning turfs.
Red-wat-shod, walking in blood over the shoe-tops.
Red-wud, stark mad.
Ree, half drunk, fuddled; *a ree yaud*, a wild horse.
Reek, smoke.
Reekin', smoking.
Reekit, smoked, smoky.
Reestit, stood restive; stunted, withered.
Remead, remedy.
Requite, requited.
Restricked, restricted.
Reu, to smile, look affectionately, tenderly.

Rickles, shocks of corn, stooks.
Riddle, instrument for purifying corn.
Rief-randies, men who take the property of others, accompanied by violence and rude words.
Rig, a ridge.
Rin, to run, to melt; *rinnin'*, running.
Rink, the course of the stones, a term in curling on ice.
Rip, a handful of unthreshed corn.
Ripples, pains in the back and loins, sounds which usher in death.

Ripplin-kame, instrument for dressing flax.
Riskit, a noise like the tearing of roots.
Rockin', a denomination for a friendly visit. In former times young women met with their distaffs during the winter evenings, to sing, and spin, and be merry; these were called "rockings."

Roke, distaff.
Rood, stands likewise for the plural, roods.
Roon, a shred, the selvage of woolen cloth.
Roose, to praise, to commend.
Roun', round, in the circle of neighbourhood.
Roupet, hoarse, as with a cold.

Row, to roll, to rap, to roll as water.
Row't, rolled, wrapped.
Rowte, to low, to bellow.
Routh, plenty.
Routin', lowering.
Rozet, rosia.
Rumble-gumption, rough common-sense.
Run-dei's, downright devils.
Rung, a cudgel.
Rurit, the stem of colewort or cabbage.
Runkied, wrinkled.
Ruth, a woman's name, the book so called, sorrow.
Ryke, reaca.

S.

Sae, so.
Soft, soft.
Saiz, to serve, a sore; *sairie*, sorrowful.
Sairly, sorely.
Sair't, served.
Sark, a shirt.
Sarkit, provided in shirts.
Saugh, willow.
Saugh-woodies, withies, made of willows, now supplanted by ropes and chains.

Saul, soul.
Staumont, salmon.
Staut, *saut*, *st*, saint; to varnish.
Saut, salt.
Saw, to sow.
Savin', sowing.
Sax, six.
Scald, to scald.
Scald, to scold.
Scaur, apt to be scared; a precipitous bank of earth which the stream has washed red.
Scaul, a scold.
Sceme, a kind of bread.
Scenner, a loathing, to loath.
Seraiach and *Scriegh*, to scream, as a hen or partridge.
Screed, to tear, a rent; *screeding*, tearing.

Serime, *serieven*, to glide softly, gleesomely along.
Serimp, to scant.
Serimpet, scant, scanty.
Seraggie, covered with underwood, bushy.
Souldudrey, fornication.
Seizin', seizing.

Sei', self; *a body's sei'*, one's self alone.
Wif, did sell.
Sen', to send.
Servan', servant.
Settin', settling; *to get a settlin'*, to be frightened into quietness.
Sets, *sets off*, goes away.
Shachlet-feet, ill-shaped.
Shair'd, a shred, a shard.
Shangan, a stick cleft at one end for pulling the tail of a dog, &c., by way of mischief, or to frighten him away.
Shank-it, walk it; *shanks*, legs.
Shaul, shallow.

Shaver, a humorous wag, a barber.
Shavie, to do an ill turn.
Shaw, to show; a small wood in a hollow place.
Sheep-shank, to think one's self nae *sheep-shank*, to be conceited.
Sherra-muir, Sheriff-Muir, the famous battle of, 1715.
Sheugh, a ditch, a trench, a sluice.
Shiel, *shealing*, a shepherd's cottage.
Shill, shrill.
Shog, a shock, a push off at one side.
Shoo, ill to please, ill to fit.
Shool, a shovel.
Shoon, shoes.
Shore, to offer, to threaten.
Shor'd, half offered and threatened.

Shouther, the shoulder.
Shot, one traverse of the shuttle from side to side of the web.
Sic, such.
Sicker, sure, steady.
Sidelins, sideling, slanting.
Silken-smood, a fillet of silk, a token of virginity.
Siller, silver, money, white.
Simmer, summer.
Sin, a son.
Sinayne, since then.
Skaith, to damage, to injure, injury.

Skeigh, proud, nice, saucy, met-tled.
Skeigh, shy, maiden coyness.
Skellum, a noisy reckless fellow.
Skelp, to strike, to slap; to walk with a smart tripping step, a smart stroke.
Skelpi-limmer, a technical term in female scolding.
Skelpin, *skelpit*, striking, walking rapidly, literally striking the ground.

Skinklin, thin, gauzy, scaltery.
Skirling, shrieking, crying.
Skirlt, to cry, to shriek shrilly.
Skirl't, shrieked.
Sklent, slant, to run aslant, to deviate from truth.
Sklentend, ran, or hit, in an oblique direction.
Skouth, vent, free action.
Skreigh, a scream, to scream, the first cry uttered by a child.
Skyte, a worthless fellow, to slide rapidly off.

Skyrin, party-coloured, the checks of the tartan.
Slae, sloe.
Slade, did slide.
Slap, a gate, a breach in a fence.
Slaw, slow.
Slee, *sleest*, sly, slyest.
Sleekit, sleek, sly.
Slidery, slippery.
Slip-shod, smooth shod.
Sloken, quench, slake.
Slyre, to fall over, as a wet furrow from the plough.
Slypet-o'er, fell over with a slow reluctant motion.

Sma', shall.
Sneddum, dust, powder, nettlesense, sagacity.
Smiddy, smithy.
Smirking, good-natured, winking.
Smoor, *smooed*, to smother, smothered.
Smoutie, smutty, obscene; *smoutie phiz*, sooty aspect.
Smytrie, a numerous collection of small individuals.
Snapper, mistake.
Snash, abuse, Billingsgate, impertinence.
Snaw, snow, to snow.
Snaw-broo, melted snow.
Snawie, snowy.
Snop, to lop, to cut off.
Sned-brooms, to cut brooms.
Sneeshin, snuff.
Sneeshin-mill, a snuff-box.
Snell and *snelly*, bitter, biting; *snellet*, bitterest.
Snick-drawing, trick, contriving.
Snick, the latchet of a door.
Snirt, *snirtle*, concealed laughter, to breathe the nostrils in a displeased manner.
Snool, one whose spirit is broken with oppressive slavery; to submit tamely, to sneak.
Snoove, to go smoothly and constantly, to sneak.
Snook, *snookit*, to scent or snuff as a dog, scented, snuffed.
Sodger, a soldier.
Sonnie, having sweet engaging looks, lucky, jolly.
Soom, to swim.
Souk, to suck, to drink long and enduringly.
Souple, flexible, swift.
Soupled, supplied.
Souther, to solder.
Souter, a shoemaker.
Sowens, the fine flour remaining among the seeds of oatmeal made into an agreeable pudding.
Soup, a spoonful, a small quantity of anything liquid.
South, to try over a tune with a low whistle.
Spae, to prophesy, to divine.
Spails, chips, splinters.
Spawl, a limb.
Spairge, to clash, to soil, as with mire.
Spates, sudden floods.
Spariat, having the spavin.
Speat, a sweeping torrent after rain or thaw.
Speel, to climb.
Spence, the parlour of a farmhouse or cottage.
Spier, to ask, to inquire; *spiers*, inquired.
Spinnin-graith, wheel and roke and lint.
Splatter, to splutter, a splutter.
Spleughan, a tobacco-pouch.
Splore, a frolic, noise, riot.
Sprachled, scrambled.
Sprattle, to scramble.

Spreckled, spotted, speckled.
Spring, a quick air in music, a Scottish reel.
Sprit, *spret*, a tough-rooted plant something like rushes, jointed-leaved rush.
Sprittie, full of spirits.
Spunk, fire, mettle, wit, spark.
Spunkie, mettlesome, fiery; will o' the wisp, or ignis fatuus; the devil.
Spartle, a stick used in making oatmeal pudding or porridge, a notable Scottish dish.
Squad, a crew or party, a squadron.
Squatter, to flutter in water, as a wild-duck, &c.
Squattle, to sprawl in the act of hiding.
Squeel, a scream, a screech, to scream.
Stacher, to stagger.
Stack, a rick of corn, hay, peats.
Staggie, a stag.
Stag, a two year-old horse.
Stalwart, stately, strong.
Stang, sting, stung.
Stan't, to stand; *stan't*, did stand.
Stane, stone.
Stank, did stink, a pool of standing water, slow-moving water.
Stap, stop, stave.
Stark, stout, potent.
Startle, to run as cattle stung by the gadfly.
Staukin, stalking, walking disdainfully, walking without an aim.
Staumrel, a blockhead, half-witted.
Staw, did steal, to surfeit.
Steck, to cram the belly.
Steckin, cramming.
Steek, to shut, a stitch.
Steer, to molest, to stir.
Steeve, firm, compacted.
Stell, a still.
Sten, to rear as a horse, to leap suddenly.
Stravagin, wandering without an aim.
Stents, tribute, dues of any kind.
Stey, steep; *styeat*, steepest.
Stibble, stubble; *stibble-rig*, the reaper in harvest who takes the lead.
Stick-an'-stow, totally, altogether.
Stilt-stilts, a crutch; to limp, to halt; poles for crossing a river.
Stimpert, the eighth part of a Winchester bushel.
Stit, a cow or bullock a year old.
Stock, a plant of colewort, cabbages.
stockin', stocking; *throwing the stockin'*, when the bride and bridegroom are put into bed, the former throws a stocking at random among the company, and the person whom it falls on is the next that will be married.

Stook, *stooked*, a shock of corn, made into shocks.
Stot, a young bull or ox.
Stound, sudden pang of the heart.
Stoup, or *stoup*, a kind of high narrow jug or dish with a handle for holding liquids.
Stowre, dust, more particularly dust in motion; *stowrie*, dusty.
Stownlins, by stealth.
Stown, stolen.
Stoyte, the walking of a man.
Strack, did strike.
Strae, straw; *to die a fair strae death*, to die in bed.
Straik, to stroke; *straikeit*, stroked.
Strappen, tall, handsome, vigorous.
Strath, low alluvial land, a holm.
Straight, straight.
Streech, stretched, to stretch.
Striddle, to straddle.
Stroon, to spout, to piss.
Stroup, the spout.
Studdie, the anvil.
Stumpie, diminutive of stump; a grub pen.
Strunt, spirituous liquor of any kind; to walk sturdily, to be affronted.
Stuff, corn or pulse of any kind.
Sturk, trouble; to molest.
Startin, frightened.
Styme, a glimmer.
Sucker, sugar.
Sud, should.
Sugh, the continued rushing noise of wind or water.
Sumph, a pluckless fellow, with little heart or soul.
Suthron, Southern, an old name of the English.
Sward, sword.
Swald, swelled.
Swank, stately, jolly.
Swankie, or *swanker*, a tight strap-ping young fellow or girl.
Swapp, a n.e.c.h. w.g., a barter.
Swarfed, swooned.
Swat, did sweat.
Swatch, a sample.
Swats, drink, good ale, new ale or wort.
Sweer, lazy, averse; *dead-sweer*, extremely averse.
Swoor, swore, did swear.
Swinge, to beat, to whip.
Swinke, to labour hard.
Swirlie, knaggy, full of knots.
Swirl, a curve, an eddying blast or pool, a knot in the wood.
Swith, get away.
Swither, to hesitate in choice, an irresolute wavering in choice.
Syebow, a thick-necked onion.
Syne, since, ago, then.

T.

Tackets, broad-headed nails for the heels of shoes.
Tae, a toe; *three-taed*, having three prongs.
Tak, to take; *takin*, taking.

Tangle, a sea-weed used as salad.
Tap, the top.
Tapelless, heedless, foolish.
Targe, *targe them tightly*, cross question them severely.
Tarrow, to murmur at one's allowance.
Tarry-breeks, a sailor.
Tassie, a small measure for liquor.
Tauld, or *tald*, told.
Taupie, a foolish, thoughtless young person.
Tauted, or *tautie*, matted together (spoken of hair and wool).
Tawie, that allows itself peaceably to be handled (spoken of a cow, horse, &c.)
Teat, a small quantity.
Teethless bawtie, toothless cur.
Teethless gab, a mouth wanting the teeth, an expression of scorn.
Ten-hours-bite, a slight foke to the horse while in the yoke in the forenoon.
Tent, a field pulpit, heed, caution; to take heed.
Tentie, heedful, cautious.
Tentless, heedless, careless.
Tough, tough.
Thack, thatch; *thack an' rape*, clothing and necessaries.
Thae, these.
Thairms, small guts, fiddle-strings.
Thankit, thanked.
Theekit, thatched.
Thegither, together.
Themsel', themselves.
Thick, intimate, familiar.
Thigger, crowding, make a noise; a seeker of alms.
Thir, these.
Thirl, to thrill.
Thirled, thrilled, vibrated.
Thole, to suffer, to endure.
Thone, a thaw, to thaw.
Thonless, slack, lazy.
Thrang, throng, busy, a crowd.
Thrapple, throat, windpipe.
Thraue, to sprain, to twist, to contradict.
Thrawin', twisting, &c.
Thraiver, sprained, twisted, contradicted, contradiction.
Threap, to maintain by dint of assertion.
Threshin', threshing; *threshin'-tree*, a flail.
Threteen, thirteen.
Thristle, thistle.
Through, to go on with, to make out.
Throuther, pell-mell, confusedly (through-ither).
Thruw, sound of a spinning-wheel in motion, the thread remaining at the end of a web.
Thud, to make a loud intermittent noise.
Thummart, fountmart, polecat.
Thumpit, thumped.
Thysel', thyself.
Till't, to it.
Timmer, timber.

Tine, to lose; *tint*, lost.
Tinkler, a tinker.
Tip, a ram.
Tippence, twopence, money.
Tirl, to make a slight noise, to uncover.
Tirlin', *trilet*, uncovering.
Tither, the other.
Titte, to whisper, to prate idly.
Titlin', whispering.
Tocher, marriage portion; *tocher bands*, marriage bonds.
To'd, a fox. "*To'd i' the fauid*," fox in the fold.
Toddle, to totter, like the walk of a child; *todden-dow*, toddling dove.
Too-fa', "*Too fa' o' the nicht*," when twilight darkens into night; a building added, a lean-to.
Toom, empty.
Toomed, emptied.
Top, a ram.
Toss, a twist.
Tosie, warm and ruddy with warmth, good-looking, intoxicating.
Town, a hamlet, a farmhouse.
Tout, the blast of a horn or trumpet, to blow a horn or trumpet.
Touzles, *touzing*, romping, ruffling the clothes.
Tow, a rope.
Towmond, a twelvemonth.
Towzie, rough, shaggy.
Toy, a very old fashion of female head-dress.
Toyte, to totter like old age.
Trams, *barrow-trams*, the handles of a barrow.
Transmigrified, transmigrated, metamorphosed.
Trashtrie, trash, rubbish.
Trickie, full of tricks.
Trig, spruce, neat.
Trimly, cleverly, excellently, in a seemly manner.
Trinkle, *trintle*, the wheel of a barrow, to roll.
Trinklin, trickling.
Troggers, *troggin'*, wandering merchants, goods to truck or dispose of.
Troon, to believe, to trust to.
Trowth, truth, a petty oath.
Trysts, appointments, love meetings, cattle shows.
Tumbler-wheels, the wheels of a kind of low cart.
Tug, raw hide, of which in old time plough-traces were frequently made.
Tug or *tow*, either in leather or rope.
Tulzie, a quarrel, to quarrel, to fight.
Twa, two; *twa-fald*, twofold.
Twa-three, a few.
Twad, it would.
Tweal, twelve; *twealpenie worth*, a small quantity, a pennyworth.—N. B. One penny English is 12d. Scotch.

Twa faul, twofold.
Twin, to part.
Twistle, twisting, the art of making a rope.
Tyke, a dog.
Tysday, Tuesday.

U.

Unback'd filly, a young mare hitherto unsaddled.
Unco, strange, uncouth, very, very great, prodigious.
Unco, news.
Unfauld, unfold.
Unken'd, unknown.
Unicken', uncertain, wavering, insecure.
Unskaited, undamaged, unhurt.
Upo', upon.

V.

Vap'rin vapouring.
Vantie joy is, & light when cannot contain itself.
Vera, very.
Virl, a ring round a column, &c.
Vogie, vain.

W.

Wa', wall; *wa's*, walls.
Wabster, a weaver.
Wad, would, to bet, a bet, a pledge.
Wadna, would not.
Wadset, land on which money is lent, a mortgage.
Wae wae: wae'fu', sorrowful; wailing.
Wae'fu'-woodie, hangman's rope.
Waesucks! *Wae's me!* Alas! O the pity!
Wa' flower, wall-flower.
Waf, woof; the cross thread that goes from the shuttle through the web.
Waifs an' crocks, stray sheep and old ewes past breeding.
Wair, to lay out, to expend.
Wale, choice, to choose.
Wal'd, chose, chosen.
Walie, ample, large, jolly, also an exclamation of distress.
Wame, the belly.
Wame'fu', a bellyful.
Wanchansie, unlucky.
Warrest, *wanrest'fu'*, restless, un-restful.
Wark, work.
Wark-bume, a tool to work with.
Wark's-worm, a miser.
Warle, or *warld*, world.
Warlock, a wizard; *warlock-knowe*, a knoll where warlocks once held trysts.
Warly, worldly, eager in amassing wealth.
Warran', a warrant, to warrant.
Warsle, wrestle.
Warsl'd, or *warsl'ed*, wrestled.
Wastrie, prodigality.
Wat, wet; *I wat—I wot—I know.*

Wat, a man's upper dress; a sort of mantle.
Water-brose, brose made of meal and water simply, without the addition of milk, butter, &c.
Wattle, a twig, a wand.
Wauble, to swing, to reel.
Waukin, waking, watching.
Waukit, thickened as fullers do cloth.
Waukrife, not apt to sleep.
Waur, worse, to worst.
Waur't, worsted.
Wean, a child.
Weary-widdle, toilsome contest of life.
Weason, weasand, windpipe.
Weaven' the stocking, to knit stockings.
Weeder-clips, instrument for removing weeds.
Wee, little; *wee things*, little ones, *wee bits*, a small matter.
Weel, well: *weel'fore*, welfare.
Weel, sin, ethn.; *ret*.
We're, we shall.
Who, who.
Whaize, to wheeze.
Whalpit, whelped.
Whang, a leathern thong, a piece of cheese, bread, &c.
Whare, where; *whare'er*, wherever.
Wheep, to fly nimbly, to jerk. penny-wheep, small-beer.
Whase, *wha's*, whose—who is.
What reck, nevertheless.
Whid, the motion of a hare running, but not frightened—a lie.
Whidden, running as a hare or coney.
Whigmeleeries, whims, fancies, crochets.
Whilk, which.
Whingin', crying, complaining, fretting.
Whirligigums, useless ornaments, trifling appendages.
Whistle, a whistle, to whistle.
Whisht, silence; *to hold on's whist*, to be silent.
Whisk, *whisket*, to sweep, to lash.
Whiskin' beard, a beard like the whiskers of a cat.
Whiskit, lashed, the motion of a horse's tail removing flies.
Whitter, a hearty draught of liquor.
Whittle, a knife.
Whunstone, a whinstone.
Wi', with.
Wick, to strike a stone in an oblique direction, a term in curling.
Widdifin', twisted like a withy, who merits hanging.
Wiel, a small whirlpool.
Wife-wifkie, a diminutive of wife, a learning name for wife.
Wight, stout, enduring.
Willyart-glover, a bewildered dismayed stare.
Wimple-womplet, to meander, wandered, to enfold.
Wimplin', waving, meandering.

Win', to wind, to winnow.
Winnin'-thread, putting thread into hanks.
Win', winded as a bottom of yarn.
Win', wind.
Win, live.
Winna, will not.
Wincock, a window.
Winsome, hearty, vaunted, gay.
Wintle, a staggering motion, to stagger, to reel.
Wiss, to wish.
Withouten, without.
Wizened, hide-bound, dried, shrunk.
Winze, a curse or imprecation.
Wonner, a wonder, a contemptuous appellation.
Woo', wool.
Woo, to court, to make love to.
Widdie, a rope, more properly one of withs or willows.

Woer-bobs, the garter knitted below the knee with a couple of loops.
Wordy, worthy.
Worset, worsted.
Wrack, to tease, to vex.
Wud, wild, mad; *wud-mad*, distracted.
Wumble, a wimble.
Wraith, a spirit, a ghost, an apparition exactly like a living person, whose appearance is said to forbode the person's approaching death; also wrath.
Wrang, wrong, to wrong.
Wreeth, a drifted heap of snow.
Wyliecoat, a flannel vest.
Wyte, blame, to blame.

Y.

Ye, this pronoun is frequently used for *thou*.

Yeans, longs much.
Yealings, born in the same year, coevals.
Year, is used both for singular and plural, years.
Yell, barren, that gives no milk.
Yerk, to lash, to jerk.
Yerket, jerked, lashed.
Yestreen, yesternight.
Yett, a gate.
Yeuk's, itches.
Yill, ale.
Yird, *yirded*, earth, earthed, buried.
Yokin', yoking.
Yont, *ayont*, beyond.
Yirr, lively.
Yowe, an ewe.
Yowie, diminutive of *yowe*.
Yule, Christmas.