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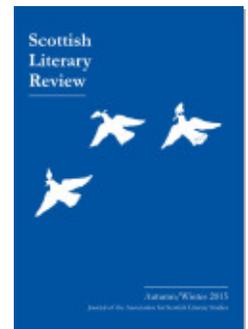
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'A vast o' bits o' stories': Shortreed, Laidlaw and  
Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*

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Scottish Literary Review, Volume 7, Number 2, Autumn/Winter 2015, pp.  
95-117 (Article)

Published by Association for Scottish Literary Studies



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‘A vast o’ bits o’ stories’: Shortreed, Laidlaw and Scott’s  
*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*

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**Abstract**

Editing the ballad collection *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802–3), Scott sought to salvage and preserve the cultural memory of the Border region, rescuing “popular superstitions, and legendary history, which, if not now collected, must soon have been totally forgotten” (Scott, 1802: 1, cix). As much was brought to his attention through his extensive network of contributors as was gleaned from his own antiquarian study and capacious memory. This paper examines the role of Scott’s friendships with Robert Shortreed of Jedburgh (1762–1829) and William Laidlaw of Blackhouse farm, Yarrow (1779–1845). Although the two men are largely unacknowledged within the *Minstrelsy* itself, both Shortreed and Laidlaw provided Scott with significant assistance before and after the publication of the first edition. While Shortreed introduced Scott to the remote corners of Roxburghshire during the so-called “Liddesdale Raids” of the 1790s, Laidlaw was a prolific collector of ballads in Selkirkshire during the early 1800s. The memoirs of the two men, combined with extant correspondence and historical evidence concerning the families, provide fascinating insights into the social networks of the area as well as the cultural contexts surrounding the *Minstrelsy*’s creation. This paper examines what the Shortreed and Laidlaw families can reveal about Border life at the turn of the nineteenth century, and assesses the place of the *Minstrelsy* ballads in the contemporary cultural memory of the region.

Walter Scott was aware of, and understood, the inner workings of oral tradition from a very early age. Through the tales of an ancestral past told by his paternal grandparents at Sandyknowe Farm near Kelso, and by his

mother and maternal great-aunt around the hearth in Edinburgh, Scott became accustomed to a way of life in which remembrance of the past was an everyday feature of the present. From both sides of his family, Scott gained, in the words of John Buchan,

an insight – the unconscious but penetrating insight of a child – into a society which was fast disappearing, the society from which the ballads had sprung. A whole lost world had been reborn in his brain, and the learning of after years was only to supplement the far more potent imaginative construct of childhood.<sup>1</sup>

In compiling, editing and publishing the ballad collection *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802–1803), Scott augmented this rich heritage by turning to those well acquainted with the land and lore of his subject matter: those to whom the world of the ballads was not ‘lost’ but vividly retained in memory. The complete list of people who assisted him in this endeavour is long, but Scott obtained particularly significant help in the 1802 edition from John Leyden of Denholm,<sup>2</sup> and from James Hogg and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe from 1803 onwards. This paper has chosen to focus on two other important characters in this regard: Robert Shortreed of Jedburgh (1762–1829), and William Laidlaw of Blackhouse, Yarrow (1779–1845). Both men became friends with Scott during the 1790s and early 1800s, at which time the bulk of the work on the first and second editions of the *Minstrelsy* was being carried out. Shortreed and Laidlaw remained friends with Scott, and recorded their recollections of their early acquaintance with him later in their lives. Recounted around thirty years after the events described and unpublished during either of the men’s lifetimes, these reminiscences shed light on the places to which Scott travelled and the cultural memories that he drew upon during the preparation of the *Minstrelsy*.

Although the majority of scholars would agree with Herbert Grierson that ‘the real beginning, the tap-root of Scott’s later work as poet and novelist, is the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*’,<sup>3</sup> literary scholars of the past have tended to acknowledge Scott’s first major publishing venture as a transitive text and duly move on to the poetry or later novels. W. F. H. Nicolaisen protested against this tendency, writing that ‘Scott the ballad collector, re-creator, editor, translator and imitator [. . .] is not “serving

time” in the pursuit of preliterate or non-literate folk literature in oral tradition before graduating to the more sophisticated and intellectually more satisfying realms of written art literature.<sup>4</sup> That Scott’s endeavour is worthy of assessment in its own right has been recognised more widely in recent years,<sup>5</sup> and a new critical edition of the *Minstrelsy* is now being prepared for publication by Edinburgh University Press.<sup>6</sup> Seeking to fully engage with the literary and cultural *milieu* in which Scott compiled his seminal collection, this edition will place a renewed focus on Scott’s sources, the mental and physical landscapes he drew upon in creating the collection, and the social and cultural networks in which he operated. The present paper may therefore provide a necessarily brief introduction to a topic which will be greatly augmented and enriched by the forthcoming edition.

Rather than the literary discourse through which Scott filtered his material, this paper seeks to engage with renewed critical interest in the international appeal of the regional (exemplified, for example, by the recent work of Fiona Stafford),<sup>7</sup> as well as manuscript and print sources of travels tours that were embarked upon with the intent of gathering key materials for other literary projects.<sup>8</sup> It will also build upon the work of M. R. Dobie and Michael Robson in further excavating the *Minstrelsy*’s deep roots in vernacular culture.<sup>9</sup> Drawing on the recollections of Laidlaw and Shortreed, it is suggested that these accounts not only provide valuable insights into the creation of the collection, but also give a bird’s eye view of the social and cultural networks of the Border parishes from which Scott drew much of his information and inspiration.

Recent studies on the creation, maintenance and circulation of cultural memory research constantly remind us not only of the selectivity of recollection, but also that the reconstruction of the past is dictated by the conditions of the present, and is therefore a constantly shifting frame of reference.<sup>10</sup> In creating a work that ostensibly delved deep into the cultural memory of the Border region, Scott drew plenty of his material from the area’s local inhabitants, yet few of his sources are named in the *Minstrelsy*. The question of who is remembering, as well as what is being remembered, may therefore be brought to bear on the present investigation, with the added recognition that the acts of recollection under investigation in this instance are themselves selective in their reconstruction of past events.

## ROBERT SHORTREED (1762–1829)

Scott's senior by eleven years, Robert Shortreed acted as Scott's guide around the more remote parts of Roxburghshire between 1792 and 1799, expeditions that Shortreed would subsequently term the 'Liddesdale raids' (MS 8993 f.113v). Born in Jedburgh and baptised on 7 November 1762, he was the son of Thomas Shortreed (1733–1798) and Ann-Maria Kerr (1734–1798). Both the Shortreed and Kerr families had extensive and deep roots within the region. Shortreed's mother Ann-Maria was the daughter of William Kerr, Laird of Abbotrule. It was through her nephew Charles Kerr (1767–1821), Writer to the Signet and a friend of Scott's from their Edinburgh College days,<sup>11</sup> that Scott and Shortreed would be introduced in 1792.

Like Scott, Shortreed entered the legal profession as a young man. Around 1793 or 1794, he was made Sheriff Substitute of Roxburghshire, some five or six years before Scott himself ascended to the post of Sheriff Depute of Selkirkshire in 1799. Shortreed married Margaret Fair in 1795, and according to the Shortreed family tree preserved in the National Library of Scotland,<sup>12</sup> they had nine surviving children: eight boys and one girl. In later years, finding employment for his many sons became one of Shortreed's chief concerns. In an age of expanding empire, five of his seven sons ended up seeking employment overseas. Scott took an active interest in the Shortreed family, providing references, recommendations and occupations for the Shortreed sons,<sup>13</sup> some of whom found employment at Abbotsford during the early 1820s. Thomas, the eldest, was a particular favourite with Scott, and he took Thomas's death in 1826 as a hard blow.<sup>14</sup>

It was the third son, John Elliot Shortreed, who took down his father's recollections of Scott in the summer of 1824, at which time Shortreed would have been sixty-one or sixty-two years old. Throughout the conversation, as it is presented, both father and son situate themselves and their family connections firmly within their own regional setting and emphasise their close connection to Scott, their friend and benefactor who was then at the height of his fame.

Two manuscript copies of this account exist in the National Library of Scotland: MS 921 (ff. 82–97) and MS 8993 (ff. 94–112). Both accounts are dated June 1824; MS 8993 specifies the date of the 25th. It is not instantly clear which is the older of the two copies. Both manuscripts are marked

with corrections and annotations, some in the hand of John Elliot Shortreed, some in the hand of Andrew Shortreed, the sixth son, and some in J. G. Lockhart’s handwriting. On comparison, MS 8993 is the more heavily edited of the two, and is laid out in continuous prose, while MS 921 is laid out in the format of an interview. It is likely the account contained within MS 8993 is a draft copy, and that John Elliot Shortreed sent the account enclosed in MS 921 to J. G. Lockhart after the deaths of both Shortreed and Scott.<sup>15</sup> The account has been published in the *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society* by W. E. Wilson, who appears to have used MS 921.<sup>16</sup> While Wilson’s rendition is largely faithful, there are some minor textual discrepancies and therefore in the following discussion, reference will be made to MS 921 unless stated otherwise. Words underlined in the manuscript are presented in italics, and insertions are indicated by caret marks.

#### THE LIDDESDALE ‘RAIDS’

Following their introduction in 1792, Shortreed assumed the role of Scott’s guide in Liddesdale. A small district in the south-western corner of the county of Roxburgh which extends to approximately twenty-one miles from Peel Fell to the River Esk, Liddesdale has more than its fair share of Border reiving history. As William Montgomerie has observed, it is unlikely that the expeditions described in Shortreed’s account were undertaken with the specific intention of collecting material for the *Minstrelsy*.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Scott’s career ambitions, which culminated in his appointment as Sheriff Depute of Selkirkshire in 1799, may have played no small part in his desire to get to know the Duke of Buccleuch’s extensive estates and his tenants as well as possible.<sup>18</sup> However, Shortreed’s account makes it clear that while these excursions were evidently not ‘field-trips’ in the modern sense, Scott was keenly absorbing information at every stage during his travels. In conversation with his son, Shortreed refers to three *Minstrelsy* ballads: ‘The Fray of Suport’, ‘Dick o’ the Cow’ and ‘Jock o’ the Side’. These are all Border-raid ballads and subsequently found their way into the historical section of the first edition.<sup>19</sup> Although Scott never mentions his friend’s name as a source in the *Minstrelsy*, both Robert Shortreed and his wife Margaret were evidently knowledgeable about local songs and ballads, and it is likely that

Shortreed made a significant impression upon the collection when it was at an early stage.

By his own admission, Scott himself was not musically gifted, but he delighted in ‘the airs of our native country which, imperfect as my musical ear is, make and always have made the most pleasing impression on me’.<sup>20</sup> He was not, therefore, indifferent to the musical dimension of the ballads. During his travels in Liddesdale with Shortreed, the two men evidently went out of their way to hear the tunes as well as the words to the songs. In a letter from Leyden to Richard Heber discussing the projected publication, Leyden states that ‘Scott wishes exceedingly to have the original airs of Liddisdale [*sic*]’.<sup>21</sup> This suggests that Scott may have originally considered including the music alongside the *Minstrelsy* ballad texts, although this never transpired in his lifetime.<sup>22</sup>

Shortreed, for his part, knew the ballads as songs rather than poems. In 1811 and 1816, songs sung by the Shortreed family were sought out by the musician and collector Alexander Campbell, editor of *Albyn’s Anthology* (1816–1818). Campbell had worked as a music tutor in Edinburgh, and had in fact tutored the Scott brothers as children.<sup>23</sup> In *Albyn’s Anthology*, Campbell refers to Shortreed and his eldest son Thomas as sources for ‘Jock o’ the Side’ and ‘Dick o’ the Cow’, noted above, as well as ‘The Twa Corbies’ which was published in the expanded 1803 edition of the *Minstrelsy*.<sup>24</sup> A traditional tune, ‘Will Ye Be Kind Indeed’<sup>25</sup> was taken down by Campbell from the singing of Margaret, Shortreed’s wife. In a footnote to this song, Campbell acknowledges that the Shortreed family provided him with

several original Border melodies – one of which is the present, taken down correctly by the Editor from the singing of Mrs Shortreed (the lady of the gentleman last alluded to), who possesses more of the popular minstrelsy than any one else the Editor met with in his several excursions to that quarter in quest of materials for the present undertaking.<sup>26</sup>

The intervening years between the publication of the first edition of the *Minstrelsy* in 1802 and *Albyn’s Anthology* from 1816–1818 means that it is unrealistic to draw too many conclusions about the songs Shortreed knew at the time of meeting Scott compared those with which he grew acquainted as a result of their friendship. However, Campbell’s notes both

in his *Border Journal* of 1816<sup>27</sup> and in *Albyn's Anthology* suggest that the Shortreed family maintained an active singing tradition. This is also supported by Lockhart's biography. Describing a dinner at Abbotsford following the annual 'Abbotsford Hunt' on 28 October 1820, Lockhart recalls a gathering at which Shortreed and his son Thomas were both invited to sing:

[. . .] every man was knocked down for the song that he sung best, or took most pleasure in singing. Sheriff-Substitute Shortreed (a cheerful hearty little man, with a sparkling eye and a most infectious laugh) gave us Dick o' the Cow, or Now Liddesdale has ridden a Raid; his son Thomas (Sir Walter's assiduous disciple and assistant in Border Heraldry and Genealogy) shone without a rival in *The Douglas Tragedy* and *The Twa Corbies*.<sup>28</sup>

Shortreed was also a key linguistic source for Dr John Jamieson, author of the *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language*. As Susan Rennie has shown, Jamieson had consulted the Shortreeds, possibly on the advice of Scott, about various dialectal words prior to the publication of the dictionary in 1808.<sup>29</sup>

Through Shortreed's memoir, insights may be obtained into the practicalities of travelling in the region towards the end of the eighteenth century. Details are provided concerning the food and drink consumed by the pair, with mutton, duck, porter and brandy all mentioned. The practices of hospitality and accommodation also become clear. The men generally lodged within the homes of Shortreed's acquaintances rather than inns, of which few existed, and conditions were somewhat basic, with Scott and Shortreed frequently having to share a bed on these occasions. Although the county's inhospitable terrain and the rudimentary nature of its infrastructure probably made the expeditions more exciting for Scott as a visitor, they also hampered travel, as Scott wrote to Richard Heber in 1800: 'a jaunt into Liddesdale [. . .] can only be undertaken in Summer on accot. of the Bogs'.<sup>30</sup>

In Liddesdale, Scott heard ballads and historical anecdotes and witnessed country manners, all of which made a deep impression upon him. Key characters mentioned by Shortreed in his account are William Elliot of Millburnholm,<sup>31</sup> upon whom Scott would base the character of Dandie Dinmont in

*Guy Mannering* (1815), John Elliot, styled the ‘Laird of Whithaugh’, another of Shortreed’s cousins, who scraped out tunes to the ballads on his three-stringed fiddle and with whom Scott and Shortreed often lodged for the night, and Thomas Elliot of Twislehope, who welcomed the visitors with whisky punch. Another important character was Dr John Elliot, second son of Robert Elliot of Redheugh. A surgeon and tenant farmer of Cleuchhead and later Newlands Farm,<sup>32</sup> it was Elliot who most frequently provided lodgings for Shortreed and Scott during their early expeditions.

On their first excursion in 1792, Scott and Shortreed set out on horseback from Abbotrue, the family home of Charles Kerr which lies around ten miles east of Hawick. They would have ridden some twenty miles south to their first destination of Millburnholm Farm on the Hermitage Water. As Shortreed recalled to his son:

I had fixed that our headquarters should be at Cleugh-head or Whithaugh, and that we should dine the first day, (in the ingangin’),<sup>33</sup> at Millburnholm. – Accordingly I wrote to Willie (Elliot) o’ Millburn – (his wife Betty was my cousin German) that Mr. Scott *the Advocate* and I, were coming to take potluck wi’ him on such a day.<sup>34</sup>

As well as being a relation of Shortreed’s by marriage, Elliot appears to have been a font of traditional lore and local knowledge of the area. He possessed, according to Shortreed, ‘a vast o’ bits o’ Stories and tales o’ the tradition & manners o’ the Country that he telled, and really vera weel’.<sup>35</sup> In describing John Elliot of Whithaugh, meanwhile, Shortreed refers jointly to his own and Scott’s memories of the time:

Whithaugh ye see wi’ a’ the plainness o’ manner imaginable, had a great deal o’ gentlemanly feeling about him, and was a man o’ great Common Sense and information, and could crack about a great deal o’ things that Sir Walter likit weel to hear. We hae often sitten there till 2 or 3 in the morning making fun and haverin’<sup>36</sup> and talkin’ nonsense and liltin’ and singin’ sangs at nae allowance;<sup>37</sup> and Whithaugh himsel’ bummin’ away on an auld fiddle wi’ only three strings as Sir Walter says (& he’ll be right) atween ilka<sup>38</sup> story he telled, till we war a’ fairly tired, & gaed to our beds – and the neist<sup>39</sup> day again we war at it as hard as ever.<sup>40</sup>

It would appear that he and Scott heard tunes for the songs during the Liddesdale expeditions, although there is no evidence that they were written down. Answering a question from his son about the music of the ballads, Shortreed names the laird of Whithaugh and Thomas Elliot of Twislehope as having provided the tunes to ‘Jock o’ the Side’ and ‘Dick o’ the Cow’. One occasion, for example, saw the two men making a special journey in order to visit Thomas Elliot, Shortreed’s ‘Uncle Thamas’, to hear the tune to ‘Dick o’ the Cow’:

– I mind o’ our ridin away ae forenoon, maybe 6 or 7 mile to auld Thomas o’ Twizelhope’s (pronounced Couzlehope)<sup>41</sup> who was a great hand for musick, for no other reason than to see gin I had the richt *lilt* o’ Dick o’ the Cow, for Whithaugh wasna vera sure about it. Sae away we gaed to uncle Thamas, *Tómas* as he was called, and after finding that I had the genuine lilt o’ the air, we had a gude snaiker<sup>42</sup> o’ whiskey punch wi’ him i’ the forenoon, out o’ a bit stroopit mug<sup>43</sup> that he ca’ad *Wisdom*, and which he had had for mair than 50 year. It *made* only tway or three spoonfuls o’ spirits – I forget which. He used to say that naubody could get drunk out o’ his wisdom, but filled mae fouk fou wi’ it, than any other body i’ the hail parish – for a that. [. . .] I mind that day we visited Penton Linns<sup>44</sup> (we dined that day at Frank Scoons o’ the Whitlayside) we had devilled ducks & London Porter at Cleugh head at 6 i’ the morning – before we set out to Whithaugh to breakfast.<sup>45</sup>

This was evidently another tale which Scott himself enjoyed telling, as John Elliot Shortreed comments ‘I have heard Sir Walter talk o’ that’.<sup>46</sup>

#### THE FRAY OF SUPORT AND THE LANG QUAKER

Shortreed’s account is most detailed concerning the circumstances under which Scott heard the ballad ‘The Fray of Suport’, which recounts, from the English perspective, the rallying of the ‘hot trod’ or call to arms and legal pursuit,<sup>47</sup> in the aftermath of a Scottish raid on the area of Solport, Cumbria. The first verse of this ballad, as Scott published it, runs as follows:

Sleep'ry Sim of the Lamb-hill,  
And snoring Jock of Suport-mill,  
Ye are baith right het and fou';—<sup>48</sup>  
But my wae wakens na you.  
Last night I saw a sorry sight—  
Nought left me, o' four-and-twenty gude ousen<sup>49</sup> and ky,  
My weel-ridden gelding, and a white quey,<sup>50</sup>  
But a toom<sup>51</sup> byre and a wide,  
And the twelve nogs<sup>52</sup> on ilka side.  
*Fy lads! shout a' a' a' a' a'*  
*My gear's a' gane.*<sup>53</sup>

According to Shortreed, this ballad was the only one which Scott took down from recitation during the Liddesdale expeditions. He heard the ballad at Dr Elliot's farm at Newlands from 'auld Jonathan Graham, the lang quaker as he was called'.<sup>54</sup> Shortreed then goes on to describe the encounter with Graham:

He spoke, or rather skraughed,<sup>55</sup> in a loud stentorian voice, which formed the oddest contrast imaginable wi' his worn and emaciated figure. He had been a great repository o' Ballads and traditions in his day, but his memory and other faculties war nearly gane by the time *we* saw him. He could eat little or nane poor creature, *but he drank weel*, – and the Doctor and Sir Wr. filled him exceedingly fou o' brandy – oh he was ill! Faith I thocht he would die i' our hands ance a'thegither, for he fainted clean away – but we got him carried out into the fresh air, and threw water on his auld wizened face, and rubbit him, and wrought on till he came about again, & nae sooner was he better than he set to roaring the outlandish lilt again.<sup>56</sup>

The following day, Graham was sent on his way 'after getting a gratuity from Sir Walter'.<sup>57</sup> From this information, combined with Shortreed's assertion that Graham was sent for with a man and a horse,<sup>58</sup> we gain a clear insight into the hierarchical terms under which Graham had been called to Newlands.

Given the information provided by both Shortreed and Scott concerning Graham's nickname and his profession, it has been possible to identify him

as Jonathan Graham of the Nook, who is described in John B. Penfold's extensive survey *The Clockmakers of Cumberland* (1977). The Nook is a remote part of the Nichol Forest in Cumberland, about half a mile from the Border with Scotland. Penfold also refers to the following anecdote from the autobiography of the engraver Thomas Bewick (1753–1828) which suggests that Bewick encountered the same man on his own travels. In the summer of 1776, in a watchmaker's shop in Carlisle, Bewick met '[a] man – a kind of scamp – of the name of Graham, who asked me what road I was going'.<sup>59</sup> Penfold's notes on Graham also provide evidence for his nickname of the 'lang quaker', as well as his fondness for spirits.<sup>60</sup> By 1781, Graham appears to have moved to Langholm, where he fathered an illegitimate child.<sup>61</sup> If Jonathan Graham had indeed walked to meet Scott and Shortreed at Newlands from Langholm, where he was residing at that time, this would agree with Shortreed's statement that Graham had travelled '15 mile o' gate'<sup>62</sup> on the main road north to Newlands after Scott and Shortreed had sent a man and a horse to collect him (and, presumably, return him home after his strenuous evening).

Apart from being an anecdote in which Scott's over-generous hand with the brandy bottle resulted in the near death of one of the tradition bearers they had come to Elliot's farm expressly to hear, Shortreed's description of Graham has strong echoes of Scott's own description in the introduction to 'The Fray of Suport' in the *Minstrelsy*, where the ballad is described as being 'chaunted in a sort of wild recitative'.<sup>63</sup> As in the case of Whithaugh's fiddle and Thomas Elliot's tankard, above, this was evidently a tale which was told a great deal, probably particularly when Scott and Shortreed met, as Lockhart recalls hearing the tales from Shortreed, above. The florid description of Graham is one of the only instances in which the singing context of the ballads is mentioned in the *Minstrelsy*.

Nine years Scott's senior, Robert Shortreed predeceased Scott, dying suddenly at home on 7 July 1829 at the age of sixty-seven. He was buried in Jedburgh Abbey, where his gravestone still stands. Scott recorded his friend's death in his journal entry of 9 July 1829, harking back to the ballad-hunting expeditions of their youth as well as to Shortreed's talent for singing, as he acknowledged his debt to his friend:

Heard of the death of poor Bob Shortreed, the companion of many a long ride among the hills in quest of old ballads. He was a merry

companion, a good singer and mimic, and full of Scottish drollery. In his company, and under his guidance, I was able to see much of rural society in the mountains which I could not otherwise have attained, and which I have made my use of. He was, in addition, a man of worth and character. I always burdened his hospitality while at Jedburgh on the Circuit, and have been useful to some of his family. [. . .] So glide our friends from us – Haec poena diu viventibus.<sup>64</sup> Many recollections die with him.<sup>65</sup>

As Scott observes above, the death of his friend also symbolised the passing of the memories that Shortreed held, memories of the two men's youth as well as the local knowledge which he had been able to draw on in showing Scott around the Borders. No more Liddesdale 'raids' took place following the publication of the *Minstrelsy*, when Scott became acquainted with William Laidlaw. Continuing his search for ballads as the century turned, Scott would turn his gaze north from Roxburgh to Selkirkshire, where a further trove of traditional material awaited him.

#### WILLIAM LAIDLAW (1779–1845)

William Laidlaw's memoir recalls the first few years of the two men's friendship, reflecting the second period of the making of the *Minstrelsy*, which saw a shift in the collection's focus from Liddesdale to the Ettrick and Yarrow Valleys of Selkirkshire. While Shortreed remembered the years prior to the publication of the *Minstrelsy*, Laidlaw's connection to Scott began soon after the appearance of the first edition of 1802. He was deeply involved in gathering ballad material for the second edition of 1803, and it was through Laidlaw that Scott was introduced to James Hogg (1770–1835) who also made a substantial contribution to the second edition of the *Minstrelsy*. From the information given by Laidlaw, it is possible to understand Scott's accumulation of local knowledge and lore which he reinterpreted in the ballads and the editorial introductions.

Laidlaw was baptised on 28 November 1779, the eldest of three sons born to James Laidlaw, tenant in Blackhouse farm, Yarrow, and his wife Catherine (Kitty) Ballantyne. He was educated at Peebles Grammar School before joining his father in working the farm of Blackhouse. The Laidlaw family evidently prized self-education and had a particular enthusiasm for

literature, which sparked Laidlaw's early interest in poetry. In this he found a kindred spirit in Hogg, who came to Blackhouse to work as herdsman from 1790 until 1800, and was welcomed into the heart of the family. It had been Laidlaw's uncle, Walter Bryden of Crosslee, who had initially come to the aid of Hogg's family in 1776 when they faced destitution following the failure of Robert Hogg's farming business.<sup>66</sup>

In 1803, Laidlaw left Blackhouse Farm and took up the tenancy of Liberton Tower, close to Edinburgh. He married his cousin Janet Ballantyne in 1810, and the pair went on to have four daughters.<sup>67</sup> Around this time, Laidlaw's two brothers George and James moved north to Knockfin, thirty miles south west of Inverness, where they began to farm sheep. While Robert Shortreed's sons sought employment overseas, the Laidlaw brothers' move north to farm sheep on recently cleared land in the Highlands was not atypical during this period either. James Hogg, for example, also considered this possibility, and wrote detailed accounts of his journeys of 1802, 1803 and 1804, although his plans did not end up coming to fruition.<sup>68</sup>

If it had not been for his friendship with Scott, Laidlaw would probably have considered following in his brothers' footsteps while still a relatively young man. During the second decade of the nineteenth century, Laidlaw struggled to make a living at Liberton. Tough market conditions, caused by falling grain prices following the advent of peace between Britain and France in 1814, were exacerbated by the cold temperatures and heavy rains of 1816. These all but destroyed the crop in certain areas and led to this year being remembered by various names such as 'The Poverty Year', 'The Year Without Summer' and 'Eighteen-Hundred-and-Froze-to-Death'.<sup>69</sup> As it was, however, Scott was able to employ Laidlaw as Abbotsford's steward between 1817 and 1826, during which time the Laidlaw family occupied the neighbouring farm of Kaeside. Laidlaw frequently acted as his employer's amanuensis during periods of Scott's ill-health in the years 1818 to 1820.<sup>70</sup> When the extent of Scott's financial troubles became clear in 1825, Scott reluctantly ended Laidlaw's employment, although Laidlaw was able resume his duties at Abbotsford in 1830. After Scott's death in 1832 Laidlaw finally followed his brothers north, where he became factor first to Mrs Stewart Mackenzie of Seaforth in Ross-shire, and then to Sir Charles Lockhart Ross of Balnagowan. He died at his brother James's house at Contin, by Dingwall, on 18 May 1845 aged sixty-five, and is buried in Contin churchyard alongside his wife.

While Robert Shortreed was nine years older than Scott, Laidlaw was nine years younger. When Scott and Leyden first visited Blackhouse Farm in the spring of 1802, Laidlaw would have been twenty-two years old; a budding poet, he was keen to make a good impression upon his guest. As well as collecting material for Scott whilst preparation for the second edition of the *Minstrelsy* was underway, Laidlaw enabled Scott to increase his familiarity with the Yarrow Valley and its inhabitants.

#### LAIDLAW'S 'RECOLLECTIONS OF WALTER SCOTT, 1802–1804'

Unlike Shortreed's dialogue, Laidlaw's 'Recollections of Sir Walter Scott, 1802–1804' take the more conventional form of a memoir. Two manuscripts of Laidlaw's *Recollections*, both in his own hand, have survived. A manuscript copy held in the National Library of Scotland appears to be a draft copy of the one held in Edinburgh University Library as part of the Laing collection.<sup>71</sup> The latter text has also been transcribed by James Sinton and published in the *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society* (1905: 66–74). Although both pieces are undated, Laidlaw refers to the events of 1802 as 'nearly fifty years since', clearly a wry echo *Waverley's* alternative title, and so it is likely that the *Recollections* were written after Scott's death, probably during the latter part of the 1830s or early 1840s (bearing in mind that Laidlaw died in 1845). On comparison with the Laing MS, Sinton's transcription is highly accurate, and it is to this publication I will refer in the following discussion unless stated otherwise.

In contrast to Shortreed's conversations with his son, which reflect the meandering nature of orally communicated memories, Laidlaw arranged his *Recollections* in chronological order. They begin with his first memories of seeing Scott at a meeting of the Selkirk Yeomanry in late December 1799 or early 1800, where Scott was in attendance in his new role as Sheriff Depute, and, despite the title promising an end date of 1804, finish somewhat abruptly with a visit Laidlaw himself made to Scott at Lasswade in August 1803. Few dates are recorded in the *Recollections*, but Laidlaw provides a good deal of descriptive detail about the places to which he and Scott travelled, including the supposed settings for many of the ballads he obtained for Scott such as 'Lament of the Border Widow' and 'The Douglas Tragedy'. As we shall see, extant correspondence between Scott

and Laidlaw, in which the two men discuss the collection of ballad material, also allows Scott’s visits to Ettrick to be charted in a more detailed fashion.

Scott’s first four visits were part of extended trips to Selkirkshire made in fulfilment of his legal duties as Sheriff Depute. The first may be dated to April or early May 1802, when Scott and Leyden called on Laidlaw at Blackhouse Farm.<sup>72</sup> Although this meeting marked the beginning of the long friendship between Laidlaw and Scott, it would be the only time that Laidlaw and Leyden met. As Scott reported to George Ellis following his first visit:

Leyden & I have just concluded an excursion of a week or two thro’ my jurisdiction of Selkirkshire where in defiance of mountains, rivers & peat-Bogs Damp & Dry, we have penetrated the very recesses of Ettricke foreste to which district if I have ever the happiness of wellcoming you [*sic*], you will be convinced that I am truly the Sheriff of the Cairn & the Scaur.<sup>73</sup>

Scott’s second visit probably occurred in late August or early September of the same year.<sup>74</sup> It was on this occasion that he and Laidlaw visited Walter and George Bryden, Laidlaw’s cousins at Ramsaycleuch. Here they were joined for the evening by James Hogg, who had recently returned from the Highlands and had probably already met Scott twice during that summer.<sup>75</sup> The evening at Ramsaycleuch was followed by a visit to Hogg’s parents the next day. According to Hogg’s *Anecdotes of Scott* (1834), it was during this meeting that Scott was reportedly upbraided by Hogg’s mother Margaret Laidlaw concerning the printing of traditional ballads.<sup>76</sup> In a potent reminder of the subjective and selective nature of memoir noted in the introduction, Laidlaw’s account makes no mention of this exchange. We can never know whether the conversation in question actually occurred; what is clear, however, is that while Margaret Laidlaw’s words evidently reflect her son’s views on the *Minstrelsy*, Laidlaw mildly states that Hogg’s mother ‘gave us a very kind welcome’ and writes of the pleasure he himself felt in the knowledge that Scott was ‘delighted with Hogg’.<sup>77</sup>

From Scott’s correspondence with Archibald Constable we know that Scott was in Selkirkshire again from 26 September to 13 October.<sup>78</sup> During this time he probably made the third visit to Blackhouse and rode down to Moffat to view the waterfall known as the Grey Mare’s Tail, in the

company of the Laidlaw, Hogg, and artist James Skene of Rubislaw. A combination of thick fog and boggy ground seems to have made for a memorable excursion, as Skene recorded in his own memoirs, quoted by Lockhart:

One of our earliest expeditions was to visit the wild scenery of the mountainous tract above Moffat, including the cascade of the 'Grey Mare's Tail', and the dark tarn called 'Loch Skene.' In our ascent to the lake we got completely bewildered in the thick fog which generally envelopes [*sic*] the rugged features of that lonely region; and as we were groping through the maze of bogs, the ground gave way, and down went horse and horsemen pell-mell into a slough of peaty mud and black water, out of which, entangled as we were with our plaids and floundering nags, it was no easy manner to get extricated.<sup>79</sup>

Skene's picaresque tone may be seen to mirror Scott's own vivid description of the journey, in which he recounts his experiences whilst hunting for ballads:

I had the merit of making a grand tour in quest of old Ballads in the course of which besides the risque of swamping in bogs & breaking my neck over scaurs I encountered the formidable hardships of sleeping upon peat-stacks & eating mutton slain by no common butcher but deprived of life by the Judgement of God as a Coroners inquest would express themselves. I have however not only escaped safe, *per varios casus per tot discrimina rerum*,<sup>80</sup> but have also returned loaded with the treasures of oral tradition.<sup>81</sup>

The final meeting documented by Laidlaw in his *Recollections* took place at Lasswade in August 1803, where Scott showed his friend around Rosslyn Castle and Chapel.<sup>82</sup>

Laidlaw's introduction to Scott was facilitated through Andrew Mercer of Selkirk (1755–1842). At the turn of the century, Mercer was attempting to establish himself as a painter of miniatures and a man of letters in Edinburgh when he was introduced to Scott by John Leyden. In the spring of 1802, Mercer enlisted Laidlaw's help in collecting ballads for Scott, apparently supplying him with a list of the ballads that Scott was keen to

acquire. Notably, Laidlaw’s initial sources were women; as he recalled in his *Recollections*, ‘I began to enquire, and write down from the repeating of old women, and the singing of the servant girls, everything I could hear of.’<sup>83</sup>

Laidlaw’s avid collecting activities supplied Scott with a substantial amount of fresh material. The ballads collected together in the manuscript, ‘Scotch Ballads, Materials for Border Minstrelsy’ (MS 877, National Library of Scotland), include versions of ballads in Laidlaw’s handwriting which found their way into the *Minstrelsy*’s second edition such as ‘The Gay Goss Hawk’; ‘The Dowie Dens of Yarrow’; the much disputed ‘Auld Maitland’; ‘The Douglas Tragedy’; ‘Graeme and Bewick’ and ‘Hughie the Graeme’.<sup>84</sup> Laidlaw evidently collected several ballads from Hogg and his family, so there is some overlap. The significant amount of material that Hogg made available to Scott, and the former’s subsequent reaction to the collection’s publication, has been previously analysed by Valentina Bold.<sup>85</sup>

Laidlaw’s perspective as a collector is of interest in that he evidently had a firm idea of the sort of material he was looking for, and shared the common contemporary frustration that the oral tradition was being forgotten while printed sources took its place. He was irritated, for example, by the way in which the influence of printed collections such as Ramsay’s *Tea-Table Miscellany* (1723) had become entwined in the memories of his informants, and felt that he was catching the tail end of a tradition that had been more vigorous in the previous generation:

I [. . .] was constantly aroused to vexation at two circumstances, namely, finding how much the constant false taste of Allan Ramsay constantly annoyed me instead of what I wanted, and had superseded the many striking and beautiful old songs and ballads of all kinds that I got traces and remnants of; and again, in discovering how much Mr. Scott had been too late – from the accounts I received of many men and women who had been the bards and depositories of the preceding generation.<sup>86</sup>

Among those from whom Laidlaw collected ballads was Jane Scott, who was probably a retired servant of the Laidlaw family and lived at Ormiston, near Innerleithen. She evidently came close to being one of the ‘depositories’ of tradition Laidlaw refers to above. Another indirect source of ballads was Alex Laidlaw, herdsman at Bowerhope, one of the other farms

held by Laidlaw's father James to the south of St Mary's Loch. Alex Laidlaw took down a version of 'Sir Patrick Spens'<sup>87</sup> from Marion Brown of Helmsburn, Etrick, whom William Laidlaw described as 'an old crazy woman who [. . .] has allowance from the parish and is permitted to go about where she pleases.'<sup>88</sup> Alex Laidlaw also provided William Laidlaw with information about the ballad 'The Border Widow'.<sup>89</sup>

#### CONCLUSIONS

As identified in this article's opening, it appears timely to re-visit the roles of key characters who guided Scott around Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire at this early stage in his literary development. It has been demonstrated that family connections permeated the landscape to which Scott was introduced by both Shortreed and Laidlaw. Shortreed's account may be seen to be concerned both with preserving his own family's connection with Scott, and passing the knowledge on to the next generation in the manner of the oral tradition itself. Laidlaw's extensive network of contributors in Selkirkshire widened the scope of Scott's ballad-hunting.

In leaving behind their recollections of Scott, and their connections to him, Laidlaw and Shortreed contributed to the burgeoning memory culture surrounding Scott, and ensured that their connection to him would survive. As Scott was preparing the first and second editions of the *Minstrelsy* for publication, it is clear that his wide reading of ballad manuscripts, historical texts and chronicles was concurrent with his own explorations of the Border region, and in this he was aided by a local network of colleagues and collaborators. The ballads themselves are closely bound to networks of cultural memories which were drawn on by Scott and his correspondents in not only sourcing, but also interpreting, the material. They also provide key examples of how Scott came to know many of the landmarks and settings that would be memorialised as sites of memory within the *Minstrelsy*. Scott, as so often, is at the centre of the web. Teasing out the nature of these networks of correspondents still has much to offer in terms of the cultural and historical contexts in which the ballad collection *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, a work with strong local attachments, was created.

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## Notes

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- 1 John Buchan, *Sir Walter Scott* (London, Toronto and Sydney: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1946), p. 33.
- 2 Leyden’s involvement in the early stages of the *Minstrelsy* should not be underestimated. However, it is not the intention of the present study to enter into this subject in great detail, as a comprehensive assessment of Leyden’s contribution to the *Minstrelsy* is currently being undertaken by Elaine Reinhard. Reinhard is presently researching a PhD at the Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, as part of the “Walter Scott Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border” project referred to elsewhere in this paper.
- 3 Herbert Grierson, *Sir Walter Scott, Bart. A New Life supplementary to, and corrective of, Lockhart’s Biography* (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1938), p. 73.
- 4 W. F. H. Nicolaisen, ‘Sir Walter Scott: the Folklorist as Novelist’ in *Scott and His Influence: the Papers of the Aberdeen Scott conference, 1982*, ed. by J. H. Alexander and David Hewitt (Aberdeen: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1983), p.169.
- 5 See for example Kenneth McNeil, ‘Ballads and Borders’ in *The Edinburgh Companion to Sir Walter Scott*, ed. by Fiona Robertson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012); Fiona Stafford, *Local Attachments: The Province of Poetry* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010); Penny Fielding, *Scotland and Orality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- 6 See [walterscott.eu](http://walterscott.eu). Having recently completed my PhD on the *Minstrelsy* as a member of this project, I am grateful to Dr Sigrid Rieuwerts (PD), Dr Emily Lyle and Dr Katherine Campbell, all of whom provided invaluable assistance in the doctoral research which has fed into this article.
- 7 Fiona Stafford, *Local Attachments: The Province of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- 8 For example, the on-going research project ‘Curious Travellers: Thomas Pennant and the Scottish Tour (1760–1820)’, which is being carried out jointly between the Universities of Aberystwyth and Glasgow under the direction of Dr Mary-Ann Constantine and Professor Nigel Leask. Other recent publications in this field include Karen McAulay, *Our Ancient National Airs: Scottish Song Collecting from the Enlightenment to the Romantic Era* (London: Ashgate, 2013); Valentina Bold and Suzanne Gilbert, ‘Hogg, Ettrick and Oral Tradition’, *The Edinburgh Companion to James Hogg*, ed. by Ian Duncan and Douglas S Mack (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 10–20; H. B. de Groot, ‘Hogg and the Highlands’, *ibid.*, pp. 46–54.
- 9 Michael Robson, ‘Walter Scott’s Collecting of Ballads in the Borders’, *Transactions of Hawick Archaeological Society* (1974), pp. 3–33; M. R. Dobie, ‘Development of Scott’s *Minstrelsy*: an attempt at a reconstruction’, *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions* (2/1, session 38–39). Accessed online: [ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00089421/00001/78j\\_1/6/15](http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00089421/00001/78j_1/6/15).
- 10 See Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, ‘Collective Memory and Cultural Identity’, *New German Critique, Cultural History | Cultural Studies* (65, Spring–Summer 1995), pp. 125–133; Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Ann Rigney, ‘Plenitude, scarcity and the circulation of cultural memory’, *Journal of European Studies* (35/1, March 2005). Accessed online: [igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/let/2006-1214-212422/rigney.05.plenitude.pdf](http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/let/2006-1214-212422/rigney.05.plenitude.pdf).

- 11 See Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, new edition, 10 vols (Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable for T. C. and E. C. Jack, 1902–1903), I, p. 99; Edgar Johnson, *Sir Walter Scott: The Great Unknown*, 2 vols (New York: Macmillan, 1970), I, p. 90.
- 12 Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland [NLS], MS 8994, f. 1.
- 13 Scott, letter to Robert Shortreed, 26 December 1820, NLS, MS 867, f. 128.
- 14 See Lockhart 1902: 8, 371.
- 15 See J. E. Shortreed, letter to Lockhart, 28 May 1833, NLS, MS 8993, f. 250r.
- 16 ‘Robert Shortreed’s Account of his Visits to Liddesdale with Sir Walter Scott’, ed. by W. E. Wilson, *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society* (1932), pp. 54–63.
- 17 William Montgomerie, ‘Walter Scott as Ballad Editor’, *The Review of English Studies*, *New Series*, 7.26 (April 1956): 158–63 (pp. 159–60).
- 18 Scott dedicated the *Minstrelsy* to Henry Scott, 3rd Duke of Buccleuch (1746–1812), who was one of Scott’s notable supporters in his petition for the position of Sheriff Depute.
- 19 See Sir Walter Scott (ed.), *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, consisting of Historical and Romantic Ballads, Collected in the Southern Counties of Scotland; with a few of Modern Date, founded upon local tradition*, 2 vols (Kelso: Printed by James Ballantyne, for T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, Strand, London; and sold by Manners and Miller, and A. Constable, Edinburgh, 1802), I: pp. 184–93; pp. 137–53; 154–63.
- 20 Scott, *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. W. E. K. Anderson, (Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 1998), pp. 35–36.
- 21 John Leyden, letter to Richard Heber, 24 April 1800, NLS, MS 939, f. 2.
- 22 Music was first included in the posthumous 1833 edition of *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott, bart*, ed. by J. G. Lockhart, vols 1–4 (Edinburgh: Robert Cadell & Whittaker, 1833). The musical notations appear to have been drawn from Scott’s daughter Sophia’s manuscript book, held at Abbotsford. See Ailie Munro, ‘Abbotsford Collection of Border Ballads: Sophia Scott’s Manuscript Book with Airs’, *Emily Lyle: The Persistent Scholar*, ed. by Frances J. Fischer and Sigrid Rieuwerts (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Trier, 2007). The forthcoming critical edition of the *Minstrelsy* will include music for the ballads and songs in the collection wherever this is extant, drawing mainly on contemporary material, especially on that known to Walter Scott from his family and circle of friends.
- 23 Scott protested in his *Memoir* that ‘the incurable defects of my ear soon drove my teacher to despair’ (Lockhart, I, p. 443). Campbell also visited William Laidlaw; his account of his travels in the Borders are held in Edinburgh University Library (La. II. 378) and have been published by James Sinton in *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society* (1904). McAulay has conducted a more detailed survey of Campbell’s collecting activities (see McAulay 2013: 80).
- 24 Sir Walter Scott (ed.), *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, consisting of Historical and Romantic Ballads, Collected in the Southern Counties of Scotland; with a few of Modern Date, founded upon local tradition*, 3 vols (Edinburgh: Printed by James Ballantyne, for Longman and Rees, Pater-Noster Row, London; sold by Manners and Miller and A. Constable, Edinburgh, 1803), III, pp. 239–42.
- 25 The air was used for the newly composed song ‘I’ve Seen Midwinter’s Dreary Hours’, written by James Douglas of Cavers especially for inclusion in *Albyn’s Anthology*. See Alexander Campbell, (ed.), *Albyn’s Anthology: or, a select collection of the melodies & vocal poetry peculiar to Scotland & the Isles, hitherto unpublished*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1816–1818), II, p. 7.

- 26 *ibid.*
- 27 See Alexander Campbell, ‘Notes of my Third Journey to the Borders [in 1816]’, ed. by James Sinton, *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society* (1904): pp. 11–17.
- 28 Lockhart, VI, p. 229.
- 29 Susan Rennie, *Jamieson’s Dictionary of Scots: The Story of the First Historical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 182–85.
- 30 Scott, letter to Richard Heber, 5 Apr 1800, *The Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. by Herbert Grierson, 12 vols (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1932–37), XII, p. 158.
- 31 William Elliot was married to Elizabeth Laidlaw, the daughter of Shortreed’s paternal aunt Jane Shortreed and Robert Laidlaw of Falnash. (See Shortreed family tree, NLS, MS 8994, f.1).
- 32 See Dora Elliott, *The Elliots, the story of a border clan: a genealogical history by the dowager Lady Elliott of Stobs and Sir Arthur Elliott, 11th baronet of Stobs* (London: Seeley, 1974), p. 286.
- 33 *inganging*: beginning. All Scots language definitions in this article have been drawn from the *Dictionary of the Scots Language*, ed. By Susan Rennie (accessed online: [www.dsl.ac.uk](http://www.dsl.ac.uk).)
- 34 NLS, MS 921, ff. 31r–31v.
- 35 NLS, MS 921, f. 82r.
- 36 *haverin’*: chattering.
- 37 *at nae allowances*: without holding back.
- 38 *ilka*: each.
- 39 *neist*: next.
- 40 NLS, MS 921, ff. 88r–88v.
- 41 Footnote in MS: ‘[Coûzlip – as I can testify. AS]’. NLS, MS 921, f. 85r. These initials probably belong to Andrew Shortreed, Robert’s sixth son.
- 42 *snaiker*: a punch or whisky bowl.
- 43 *stroopit mug*: a mug with a spout for pouring.
- 44 Penton Linns is a waterfall near Canonbie, S. E. Dumfriesshire, directly on the Scottish / English Border.
- 45 NLS, MS 921, f. 85r.
- 46 *ibid.*
- 47 See George MacDonald-Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets: The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers* (London: Harper Collins, 1971), pp. 114–21.
- 48 *bet and fou*: warm [comfortable] and replete.
- 49 *ousen*: oxen.
- 50 *quey*: heifer.
- 51 *toom*: empty.
- 52 *nogs*: stakes (for tethering cattle).
- 53 Scott, 1802, I, p. 186.
- 54 NLS, MS 921, f. 83r.
- 55 *skraugbed*: shrieked or screeched.
- 56 NLS, MS 921, f. 83r.
- 57 NLS, MS 921, f. 84r.
- 58 *ibid.*
- 59 Thomas Bewick, *A Memoir of Thomas Bewick, Written by Himself* (Newcastle-on-Tyne: Robert Ward, 1862), p. 83.
- 60 John B. Penfold, *The Clockmakers of Cumberland*, (Ashford: Brant Wright Associates, 1977), p. 203.

- 61 *ibid.*
- 62 MS 921, f. 84r. *O' gate*: by the road.
- 63 Scott, 1802, I, p. 184. Graham was apparently still alive in February 1802 when the first edition of the *Minstrelsy* was published, but a note in the second edition of May 1803 acknowledged that he had died 'since the last publication of this work' (Scott, 1803, I, p. cxxii).
- 64 *Haec poena diu viventibus*: this is the punishment of living a long time.
- 65 Scott, *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. W. E. K. Anderson, (Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 1998), pp. 655–56.
- 66 James Hogg, *Memoir of the author's life and Familiar anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. Douglas S. Mack (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1972), pp. 4–5.
- 67 Laidlaw family papers, NLS, Acc. 9084/9.
- 68 Hogg's account of his travels in the Highlands of 1802, 1803 and 1804 have been brought together in *Highland Journeys*, ed. H. B. de Groot (Münster: Waxman, 2007); see also H. B. de Groot,
- 69 See William K. and Nicholas P. Klingaman, *The Year Without Summer: 1816 and the Volcano That Darkened the World and Changed History* (New York: Macmillan, 2013).
- 70 Scott apparently dictated the end of *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) to Laidlaw, most of *A Legend of Montrose* (1819) and part of *Ivanhoe* (1820). See T. W. Bain and Gillian Hughes, 'Laidlaw, William (bap. 1779, d. 1845)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Accessed online: [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15881](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15881)
- 71 NLS, Dep. 253/16; and Edinburgh University Library, Laing II 281/2.
- 72 James Sinton (ed.), 'Recollections of Sir Walter Scott (1802–1804)', in *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society* (1905), p. 67. See also M. R. Dobie, 'The Development of Scott's Minstrelsy: an attempt at a reconstruction', in *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions*. 2/1. (Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark Ltd, 1940).
- 73 Scott, letter to George Ellis, 10 May 1802, in Grierson (ed.), XII, pp. 217–18.
- 74 Scott, letter to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, 8 September 1802, in Grierson (ed.), I, p. 157.
- 75 See Richard D. Jackson, 'Sir Walter Scott's 'First' Meeting with James Hogg', *Studies in Hogg & his World*, 17, (2006): pp. 5–18.
- 76 James Hogg, *Anecdotes of Scott*, ed. by Douglas S. Mack and Gillian Hughes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), p. 38. See also Valentina Bold, "'Nouther right spell'd nor right setten down'": Scott, Child and the Hogg Family Ballads', *The Ballad in Scottish History*, ed. by Edward J. Cowan (East Linton: Tuckwell Press Ltd, 2000), pp. 116–41.
- 77 Sinton, p. 67.
- 78 See Scott, letter to Archibald Constable, 26 September 1802, in Grierson (ed.), I, p. 159.
- 79 Skene, in Lockhart, II, p. 232.
- 80 *per varios casus per tot discrimina rerum*: through various hazards and events. From *The Aeneid*, book 1, line 284. See *Virgil's Aeneid: Translated by John Dryden*, ed. by Frederick M Keener (London: Penguin Books, 1997), p. 11.
- 81 Scott, letter to Richard Ellis, 17 October 1802, in Grierson (ed.), XII, p. 220.
- 82 Sinton, p. 72.
- 83 Sinton, p. 66.

- 84 See Scott, 1802, II, 6–15; 1803, III, 72–79; 1803, III, 1–41, 1803, III, 243–50; 1803, III, 93–104; 1803, III, 85–92. For the dispute over the provenance of 'Auld Maitland' see Bold, 2000; also William Fitzwilliam Elliot, *Further Essays on Border Ballads* (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1910); Elliot, *The Trustworthiness of Border Ballads as Exemplified by 'Jamie Telfer & the Fair Dodhead' and Other Ballads* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1906); Andrew Lang, *Walter Scott and the Border Minstrelsy* (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1910); Lang, "The Sources of some Ballads in the "Border Minstrelsy"", *Folklore*, 13/2. (1902): pp. 191–97.
- 85 See Bold, 2000.
- 86 Sinton, p. 66.
- 87 Scott, 1803, III, pp. 60–71.
- 88 Laidlaw, letter to Scott (undated), NLS, MS 893, f. 15r.
- 89 Scott, 1803, III, pp. 80–84.

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