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**Follow the Band: Community Brass Bands in the  
Scottish Borders**

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**Doctor of Philosophy**

**University of Edinburgh**

**2014**

## **Abstract**

This thesis presents research into the history and contemporary context of brass bands in the Scottish Borders. It discusses how the survival of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders can be accounted for over the last 150 years, in particular with regard to the continuity of their interaction with the community which has enabled them to overcome cultural, social and demographic changes. The textile industry which provided a stimulus for the formation of the brass bands in the nineteenth century has largely disappeared, but the traditional role of the bands has been carried forward to the present day.

Previous study of the social and cultural history of the brass band movement has concentrated on the history of brass banding in the North of England. Although research into the history of brass bands has been carried out in other areas of Britain such as the South of England this is the first in-depth study of these bands in a region of Scotland. This research follows previous studies of amateur music-making in specific locations by studying in detail the brass bands that exist in seven towns and one village of the Scottish Borders where the bands can date their formation to the mid-nineteenth century.

Historical and archival research has provided most of the data relating to the first hundred years, including the use of individual band archives, local newspaper archives and museum records. Ethnographic methods, including interviews and participant observation, have provided the data for more recent times. Details of brass band repertoires have been extracted from various sources including musical examples taken from individual band libraries.

A central research finding is the strong relationship of the brass bands with their local communities, particularly the support given to the bands by local people and the way in which the bands support their communities by providing music for civic and community events. The close relationship of the brass bands with their local communities has been fundamental in providing the means by which the bands have been sustained over time. There is a strong Scottish Borders identity that links the towns, especially through family ties, and this is also found in a musical repertoire with songs that are specifically connected to the region and to individual

towns. By playing this music for civic and community events, especially at the time for the Common Ridings which are annual events unique to the Scottish Borders, the brass bands have provided a service to the community which has ensured their survival.

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to thank my supervisors, Dr Katie Overy (Reid School of Music) and Dr Katherine Campbell (School of Celtic and Scottish Studies) for their advice, guidance and support throughout my research.

This research would not have been possible without help and encouragement from many members of the Scottish Borders brass bands, in particular the late Martin Innes (St. Boswells Concert Band) to whom I will always be grateful for encouraging me to take up banding, and Keith Belleville (St. Ronan's Silver Band) who was always willing to help and answer my many questions. I wish to thank all the brass bands in the Scottish Borders for allowing access to their archives.

Finally, my thanks go to my family and friends for supporting and encouraging me during my studies, especially to my husband for his patience and without whose support this thesis would not have been completed.

## **Conferences attended, papers presented and publications**

### **Conferences attended**

The 27<sup>th</sup> European Seminar in Ethnomusicology

“Taking part”

15-19 September 2011

Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen.

### **Papers presented**

“Brass Bands in the Scottish Borders Common Ridings”

The 27<sup>th</sup> European Seminar in Ethnomusicology.

Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen.

16 September 2011

“Follow the Band: Scottish Borders Brass Bands and the Common Ridings”

Music Research Seminar

University of Edinburgh

22 March 2012

### **Publications**

French, G. & Belleville, K. (2010) *On, St. Ronan's, On!: Celebrating 200 years of Scotland's Oldest Band*. Selkirk: Bordersprint Ltd.

ISBN: 978-0-9561075-2-7

French, G. (2013). Follow the Band: The Role and Function of Community Brass Bands in the Scottish Borders Common Ridings. In *Taking Part in Music: Case Studies in Ethnomusicology*. Elphinstone Institute Occasional Publications 9 (Aberdeen: Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, in association with the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology, 2013), pp. 235-253.

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## List of Interviewees

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Place of interview</b>	<b>Archive Ref.</b>
Brian Bonsor	28/08/2007	Hawick	Private recording
David Young	11/10/2007	Galashiels	SA2007.045
Martin Innes	16/10/2007	Melrose	SA2007.046
Hugh Johnstone	19/04/2008	Dalmellington	SA2008.028
John Windrum	22/01/2009	Galashiels	SA2009.013
Chalmers Stillie	09/03/2010	Selkirk	SA2010.28
Colin Crozier	20/03/2010	Newtown St. Boswells	SA 2010.31
Colin Kemp	06/04/2010	Selkirk	SA2010.32
Alan Fernie	28/04/2010	Selkirk	SA2010.33
Keith Belleville	29/04/2010	Innerleithen	SA2010.34
Iain Wilson	10/05/2010	Newtown St. Boswells	SA2010.37
George Burt	07/09/2010	Jedburgh	SA2010.58
Alan Edmond	16/11/2010	Galashiels	SA2010.59
Stuart Black	21/11/2012	Newtown St. Boswells	SA2012.028

Archive references are for the School of Scottish Studies Sound Archive, University of Edinburgh. Fieldworker Gillian French.

## Introduction

The Scottish Borders is a geographical and administrative area in the South East of Scotland along the border with England. The region is largely comprised of the basin river Tweed and its tributaries and the surrounding hills. Originally consisting of the three counties of Berwickshire, Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire it became the administrative area of the Scottish Borders Council in 1978. It is a rural and primarily agricultural area with the towns well-spaced out along the river valleys.

On moving to the Scottish Borders in 2000 it fairly quickly became obvious to me that there was a large amount of amateur musical activity in the area. Several things stood out; firstly, the music provided by brass bands at the annual festivals, known as common ridings, which take place in the summer months. Secondly, the annual amateur operatic societies who perform in each town during the months of February and March, with the performances in each town taking place in the same week each year in strict rotation. Also, pipe bands were in evidence in many towns and although bagpipes are a Scottish Highland tradition, there was an earlier tradition of lowland Border pipes. Many small choirs and community choirs existed, rather than the large choral societies that are found in larger cities such as Edinburgh. There were various instrumental groups, such as flute groups and the Yetholm Symphony Orchestra, and a very strong folk music scene with several accordion bands and singers.

Coming from the South of England where I taught music in a variety of schools for around forty years as well as teaching piano, playing organ and oboe and singing in many choirs, with ready access to the rich musical life of London, I became interested in the vibrant musical scene of this rural area. I became involved by joining choirs, going to many concerts run by musical societies in several different towns, as well as through teaching piano at a local preparatory school. Attending the common ridings as an onlooker I realised the important place of music in these ceremonies.

Having previously studied with the Open University, gaining a BA (Hons) in 1998 and an MA in Music in 2005, I wanted to research the musical life of the Borders. Originally wanting to examine the music in the Scottish Borders as a

totality, it quickly became apparent that this was too big an undertaking for this thesis, and, as I had begun enquiries with several brass bands, my research became focussed on them. Having never played a brass instrument I felt at a disadvantage in talking to people in the bands so decided to learn to play myself and was quickly drawn into the brass band scene in the Borders.

This thesis focuses on the eight brass bands which make up the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association, namely the Galashiels Town Band, Hawick Saxhorn Band, Jedforest Instrumental Band, Langholm Town Band, Peebles Burgh Silver Band, Selkirk Silver Band, St. Boswells Concert Band and St. Ronan's Silver Band. The research aims to explore how these brass bands have been supported by the community and have performed for the benefit of the community for the past 150 years.

The first aim of the thesis was to research the history of brass bands in the Scottish Borders and to describe how this was linked to the culture and geography of the area. A second aim was to examine how all these bands have survived the huge cultural, social and demographic changes that have taken place in the Scottish Borders throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The close interaction between the brass bands and the communities in which they exist provided the third line of enquiry.

A general review of the relevant literature on brass bands and community (Chapter 1) is followed by a description of the research methods used in this thesis (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 introduces the Scottish Borders as a distinct region of Scotland including the geography, history, musical culture and industrial heritage. Chapter 4 discusses in detail how the community brass bands in the Scottish Borders were formed, set up and financed, in the nineteenth century, and how this was similar to or different from the formation of bands in other areas. The chapter surveys the influence of developments in brass instrument design on the formation of early bands.

“Contesting” is an activity central to the world of brass banding and Chapter 5 discusses the history of contesting in the Scottish Borders. This chapter is also concerned with community aspects of the brass bands, that is, the community that exists within the bands themselves and between bands, and the relationship of the

brass bands with the wider communities in which they exist. The following chapter (Chapter 6) discusses the types of band repertoire used in the Scottish Borders brass bands and how it has changed over the period being studied and it looks at the influence of local composers both in the nineteenth century and today.

In all of the Scottish Borders towns one of the principal community and civic events of the year are the Common Ridings which are unique to the area. Since these festivals were formalised in the nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries the brass bands have played a central role in providing music for them. Chapter 7 will examine the role of the brass bands in the Common Ridings and festivals and discuss how different styles of brass band music are used to enhance these ceremonies. Some of the content of this chapter was presented as a paper at the 27th European Seminar in Ethnomusicology, entitled 'Taking Part', held at the Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, 15-19 September 2011. In Chapter 8 other ways in which the brass bands provide music for the community, especially in modern times, are examined. These include traditions that the bands take part in, such as the Melrose Masons' Walk and New Year's Day marches, as well as providing concerts and entertainment for the community. The final chapter weaves together all the different strands suggesting that the principal reason for the survival and continuing existence of brass bands in the Scottish Borders towns is the strong link between the bands and the community. This is especially evident at the time of the annual common riding festivals but is equally important during the rest of the year.

## **1. Literature Review**

This chapter will undertake a survey of research undertaken on the brass band movement. Although there has been extensive research into the history of brass bands, particularly in the north of England, which provides insights into the Scottish context, surprisingly little has been researched about brass bands in Scotland or the Scottish Borders. Although there are general similarities between the development of brass bands in England and Scotland, development in Scotland was somewhat different.

The chapter will also consider the literature on community, since a key theme arising from this thesis is the role of brass bands in the communities of the Scottish Borders and their emphasis on a sense of place. The literature will also discuss the inner community of interest found within the brass band world which is a further theme discussed in this thesis. Lastly, a survey is made of the literature on playing in groups which highlights the importance of the social interactions that occur as part of belonging to a musical group.

### **1.1. Research on Brass Bands**

Much of the research on the brass band movement in Great Britain focuses on the nineteenth century since this is when brass bands as we know them came into being, with their high point taking place in the latter part of the century. The brass band movement in Britain began in the mid-nineteenth century, but there were bands of various sorts before this which used brass instruments, particularly village bands, military bands and church bands (Herbert 2000:4; Newsome 1998:1). The early bands left a legacy of “literate instrumental ensemble music-making outside the professional, middle- and upper-class enclaves in which such activity had been centred”, and upon which the burgeoning brass band movement could build (Herbert 2000:18).

It was principally in the rapidly expanding industrial towns and villages of the North of England that brass banding became a mass leisure activity of working

men<sup>1</sup>. Collective leisure activities such as brass banding and choral societies were encouraged by the middle classes in the nineteenth century because they were perceived as helping to maintain public order in the new industrial society. It was feared that “left to their own devices, and freed from the pressures of poverty...ordinary workers would choose pleasure before toil” (Borsay 2006:62). Engaging in regulated sport such as football or musical activities such as playing in a band were thought to be ‘rational recreation’ that “conceived of leisure as a vehicle for character building and self-improvement” (Borsay 2006:90). Music itself was thought to have properties which could:

soften and purify the mind...the cultivation of musical taste furnishes for the rich a refined and intellectual pursuit...[and for the working classes] a relaxation from toil more attractive than the haunts of intemperance. (George Hogarth 1846, quoted in Herbert 2000:32)

The brass band and choral society movements had much in common including, “an overlap in repertoire and audience, many joint performance opportunities, strong family ties within their member-organizations, and each having some input from the middle classes at organizational level” (Newsome 1998:21). However, a significant difference between the two movements was the link between choral societies and the orchestra which:

attracted compositions from mainstream composers much earlier than did brass bands, with a consequent greater recognition by the musical hierarchy, helping to foster the perception of the brass band as isolated from the rest of the musical world...Socially this may have been true, but the music played by brass bands early in their history was very much a reflection of the music of the times. (Newsome 1998:21).

Developments in brass instrument design and manufacture and the establishment of a commercial infrastructure which produced cheaper instruments were further

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<sup>1</sup> It was not until the mid-twentieth century that women were permitted to play alongside men; there are a few top English brass bands, such as the Grimethorpe Colliery Band, which have remained a male preserve into the twenty-first century.

important factors in the development of the brass band movement (Herbert 1999:108). Prior to the 1830s military and town bands traditionally used both woodwind and brass instruments with the reed instruments as the principal melody instruments (often termed ‘brass and reed bands’); however, with the introduction of cornets to Britain in the late 1820s all-brass groups began to be possible (Myers 2000:155). Before this the only three types of brass instruments existed, namely the horn, the trumpet and the trombone (Herbert 2000:12). Various inventions such as the slide trumpet and the keyed bugle in the early years of the nineteenth century tried to overcome the inability of brass instruments to play chromatically, something that had previously been limited to the trombone (Herbert 2000: 26). It was the invention of the piston valve by the Parisian maker Périnet in 1839 (Myers 2000:166) that eventually superseded other designs and it was found that just three pistons, used singly or in combinations, were sufficient to provide the full chromatic scale (Elliot 1936:886). The cornet in the brass band “was to become the equivalent of the violin in the orchestra” (Newsome 1998:24). Older keyed brass instruments did not immediately die out and many early bands continued to use them with the ophicleide, a bass instrument with a conical bore and keywork similar to the saxophone patented in 1821 by Halary in Paris, surviving until quite late in the nineteenth century (Myers 2000:159).

It was the development in the 1840s of a family of brass instruments known as saxhorns by Adolphe Sax (1814-1894), a Belgian-born inventor, which was probably the most important development in brass instruments and which led to the development of the British brass band because, “they possessed capabilities never before available on brass instruments” (Herbert 1998:105) being “capable of better intonation, with better overall sound quality and able to blend more satisfactorily with other members of their family” (Newsome 1998:27). Trevor Herbert maintains that these “changes to the design and technology of brass instruments in the nineteenth century were among the most important in the history of music” (Herbert 1997:193)<sup>2</sup>.

The new family of saxhorn instruments, which all bore a strong family likeness, were responsible for producing the “authentic” sound associated with brass

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<sup>2</sup> For detailed accounts of the development of brass instruments see Baines 1976; Herbert 7 Wallace 1997; Myers 2000.

bands. These brass instruments were easy to play using only the three most dextrous fingers of the right hand and furthermore all the instruments had a similar finger technique.

Saxhorns made their appearance at the Great Exhibition of 1851 at the Crystal Palace, London, where they were demonstrated by the Distins. The Distin family brass quintet had first appeared at the Adelphi Theatre, Edinburgh in 1837 using a variety of brass instruments; originally being booked for a one-night stand, they were so successful they were booked for six weeks (Newsome 1998:36 Note 13). The Distins visited Paris in 1844 where they commissioned a set of the new saxhorns from Sax who also gave them tuition, and the Distins went on to become the British agents for the new instruments, manufacturing them in London from 1850 (Wallace 1997:241). The saxhorn instruments were quickly adopted by brass bands in Britain with the Mossley Temperance Band winning first prize at the Belle Vue contest, Manchester in 1853 using a complete set of saxhorns. The new instruments rapidly spread to Scotland, with the Hawick Saxhorn Band (as it is still called today) in the Scottish Borders purchasing a set of saxhorns at the time of its formation in 1855. In brass bands the highest saxhorns were later replaced with cornets, but modern brass band instruments with upward pointing bells, tenor horns, baritones, euphoniums and basses, are all derived from saxhorn instruments.

Instrument makers proliferated in the nineteenth century and this rapid spread was fuelled by the ease of manufacture using mass production methods that made it possible to produce cheaper piston-valved instruments in a range of qualities to suit the different finances of the bands (Myers 2000:176-177). Manufacturers promoted their instruments by giving them as prizes at contests. Standardisation of instrumentation for brass bands was not achieved until later in the nineteenth century when a combination of factors led to standardisation (Herbert 2000:7).

The instrumentation of the British brass band has remained relatively unchanged since the late nineteenth century mainly because of the introduction of rules for band contests which made bands compete in increasingly standardised ways (Herbert 2000:7). As contests became more organised set pieces were introduced for the different sections rather than the 'own choice' pieces which had been the norm earlier, thereby encouraging standardisation. Standardisation has given British brass

bands a distinctive sound with the instrumentation consisting of one soprano cornet in E flat, eight or nine cornets in B flat, one flugel horn in B flat, three tenor horns in E flat, two euphoniums and two baritones in B flat, two tenor trombones and one bass trombone, two basses in E flat and two in B flat (Herbert 2000:4).

Increased leisure time among the working classes was another factor which contributed to the success of the brass band movement. Leisure time gradually improved in the nineteenth century with statutory time off from work: however, there were constraints on the type of activity in which the working-classes could partake due to low incomes and poverty (Borsay 2006:86). Brass banding was an activity in which the working man could participate because it required little spare cash as instruments and uniforms were provided by the band. Key to the movement from its early days was the idea of contesting, linking with the notion that in the nineteenth century, “Working-class society was deeply competitive”<sup>3</sup> both in sport and leisure pursuits such as brass banding. From their early days brass bands engaged in local contests and from the 1850s brass band contests themselves became commercialised which further contributed to the expansion of the brass band movement (Herbert 1999:110). It has been said that “contesting is central to the brass band movement” (Herbert 2000:5), and contesting has further been described as “the sport of our movement” and the “barometer of the brass band world”<sup>4</sup>. The concentrated rehearsal time needed to compete in contests is seen as a useful tool to help bands improve their standard of playing<sup>5</sup>. Brass band contests are discussed further in chapter 5.

The development of printing techniques which resulted in the increasing availability of cheap sheet music was also vital to the development of the brass band movement in the mid-nineteenth century. Vic and Sheila Gammon have emphasised the importance of the growth of text-based musical literacy in the mid-nineteenth century of which the principal instrument of change was the brass band (Gammon 2000:131). This subject was expanded upon in Odell’s unpublished PhD thesis, *Re-Contextualizing Music: Emergent Community and Values in the Brass Band*

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<sup>3</sup> Johnes, M. (2002). *Soccer and Society: South Wales 1900-1939*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press p.130. Quoted in Borsay 2006:87.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Iwan Fox. <[www.4barsrest.com/articles/2001/art003.sap](http://www.4barsrest.com/articles/2001/art003.sap)>

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Alan Fernie. 28/04/2010. SA2010.33

*Movement of Nineteenth-Century England* (Odell 2005), which examines the social context in which brass bands were formed and the importance of print media in providing a system of musical practices, band procedure and contest organisation that led to the consolidation of the brass band community and contributed to the formation of brass banding as a movement (Odell 2005:150).

From the 1870s specialist publishers of brass band music came into existence and the price of printed music dropped dramatically, enabling bands to purchase cheap copies (Russell 1987 [1997]:175). Particularly important were the various brass band journals, particularly the *Liverpool Journal* published by Wright & Round, which supplied “hundreds of ‘lightweight’ pieces suitable for performance at local functions”, and which could be played by “bands of average or less than average ability” (Newsome 1998:101). These journals discussed issues of interest to bandsmen, such as hints on playing and how bands should be organised, and they gave announcement of contests, the results, and often the judges’ remarks (Odell 2005:48). This helped bandsmen in remoter areas such as the Scottish Borders to feel part of the brass band movement.

The repertoire played by brass bands has often been the source for criticism by “serious” musicians for several reasons especially the arrangements of art music which were popular in the nineteenth century and the ‘light’ nature of much of the popular music played. In an article entitled *The All-Brass Ensemble* (1931), J.H. Elliot challenged the attitudes of “serious musicians” of that time who saw the “popularisation” of music by brass bands as a threat to the seriousness of their art. He countered their arguments by admitting that although there had been “ill-considered” arrangements in the past, until Percy Fletcher wrote his tone poem *Labour and Love* (1913), which was the first composition by a ‘serious’ composer specifically for brass band, band repertoire had mostly relied on arrangements and compositions written by people within the brass band movement; however, by the 1930s works were being written specifically for brass bands by eminent composers, for example Holst’s *A Moorland Suite* (1928), Elgar’s *Severn Suite* (1930) and Ireland’s *A Downland Suite* (1932). These composers demonstrated the possibilities of brass bands (Elliot 1931:30-34) but even so few original compositions by ‘serious’ composers were written for the genre until after the Second World War. A recent

attempt at documenting the history of the brass band movement and its repertoire (Taylor 2011) includes catalogues of music played in the period 1860-1930 which has been extracted from archives of some local brass bands in the North of England and from the Salvation Army. The repertoire played specifically by brass bands in the Scottish Borders over the last 150 years will be discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

From its beginnings in the North of England in the mid-nineteenth century, the brass band movement rapidly spread not only throughout the rest of Britain but also overseas, particularly in the countries of the then British Empire such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Duncan Blythell has identified how this transplantation of British popular culture coincided exactly with large-scale emigration from Britain to these areas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Blythell 2000:217-244). However, because the industrial districts of the North of England are considered to be the “home” of brass banding, they have been studied in greater detail than many other areas and in-depth studies have looked at history and development of brass bands there (Scott 1970; Russell 1980; Newsome 1999). One early study of brass bands and their repertoire was S. L. Scott’s unpublished PhD thesis, *The Evolution of the Brass Band and its Repertoire in Northern England* (1970), and because it specifically concentrates on brass bands as opposed to other types of amateur music-making, it has formed the foundation for much of the later writing and research on brass bands. A further study, which also includes other types of amateur musical societies in the Yorkshire textile district, was undertaken by Dave Russell in his thesis, *The Popular Musical Societies of the Yorkshire Textile District, 1850-1914: A Study of the Relationship between Music and Society* (1980). Both Scott and Russell cover only the historical period up to the early twentieth century as does Newsome’s more recent unpublished PhD thesis, *The 19th century brass band in Northern England: Musical and social factors in the development of major amateur musical medium* (1999). Newsome’s thesis is important because he briefly outlines how the brass band movement spread from northern England to Scotland through links between the textile industries in both areas. He mentions some of the early brass bands in the Borders and shows some of the links between brass banding and the textile industry in both regions, particularly

with regard to the movement of bandmen from Northern England to the Scottish Borders. The spread of brass banding to other parts of the Britain such as the South of England has been the subject of research by Lomas (1990) and Gammon (1985) and study has also been made of the spread of banding to other parts of the world, particularly the ex-British colonies (Herbert & Sarkissian (1997); Blythell (2000)).

Most modern brass band literature is concerned not just with the history of the brass band movement, but also with their wider social and cultural history. Until the 1980s little research was carried out on the history of brass bands, exceptions being Hind (1934), Russell (1936), and Scott's thesis, *The Evolution of the Brass Band and its repertoire in Northern England* (1970). Increasing interest in research into brass bands has coincided with the development of courses in brass band studies at universities including Salford, Huddersfield and, more recently, Durham and the Birmingham Conservatoire (Jones 2007:8). There has been a growing amount of literature devoted to the social and musical histories of brass bands since that time, particularly by Taylor (1979), Newsome (1998, 2006) and Herbert (1991, 2000).

As previously stated, very little research has been undertaken on brass banding in Scotland. Most accounts of the history of the British brass band movement do not treat Scotland as separate or distinct from the brass band movement in England. Herbert's comprehensive survey of the history of the brass band movement, *The British Brass Band* (Herbert (ed.) 2000), whilst acknowledging that the "stereotype of brass bands as exclusively northern and working-class is not entirely authentic" because their "geographical distribution is much wider" (Herbert 2000:2), hardly mentions Scottish bands although a whole chapter is devoted to the spread of brass banding in the Antipodes (Blythell 2000:217-244). Gammon apologises for writing only about English bands stating that "the social, historical and musical processes which took place in Wales, Scotland and Ireland were so entirely different from England that it is impossible to propose an account which fits them all" (Gammon 2000:123. Footnote 3).

The general historical survey of music in Scotland written by Marr (1889) includes a chapter on early band contests that took place in Glasgow and Edinburgh in the 1860s; the participating bands, some of which were brass and reed bands<sup>6</sup>, are

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<sup>6</sup> Brass and reed bands included both brass and woodwind instruments.

named, thus providing a good indication of which were the important early Scottish bands and these included the bands from Hawick and Galashiels in the Scottish Borders (Marr 1889). Individual band histories also exist, usually compiled for significant anniversaries of a band, for example, *Seven Score Years* (Connelly 1995) written for the 140th anniversary of the Hawick Saxhorn Band in 1995, or *On! St. Ronan's, On* (French & Belleville 2010) written for the bi-centenary of the St. Ronan's Silver Band in Innerleithen. Hugh Johnstone of Dalmellington Band in Ayrshire began compiling material for a history of Scottish banding for the Scottish Brass Band Association in 1995, but it was never published<sup>7</sup>.

The highest concentration of bands in Scotland is in the Central Belt which was the home of the heavy industries of mining, coal and steel and where the population of the country is mainly concentrated. There are no brass bands in a large part of the Highlands where pipe bands predominate. In the more scattered towns of Scottish Borders, textiles were the principal industry; historically, however, none of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders were directly sponsored by the owners of the textile mills as they were in some cases in England.

There are many similarities between each of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders but there are also individual differences. The need to undertake research on individual bands because of their diversity is emphasised by Herbert:

Not all bands are the same. They had different functions, values and styles. These differences are reflected in the variety of circumstances in which they existed. The greatest disservice that historians can do to them is to treat them as a single type, so that the only element that distinguishes one from another is its geographical location. (Herbert 1997:194)

## **1.2. Community**

The brass bands of the Scottish Borders are very closely linked to their local communities. Two concepts that arose while researching the brass bands were “community of place” and “community of interest”. ‘Community’ is a word that is

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<sup>7</sup> Hugh Johnstone generously provided a copy of his notes on the history of some of the Scottish bands, including a few of the bands in the Scottish Borders. In the author's possession.

used freely but is difficult to define. It can suggest a “moral tie that binds us to others beyond our most personal relationships” (Feintuch 2001:157). Feintuch sees continuity and obligation as key elements of community and describes it as a “web of connectedness to others that continues beyond special events” (Feintuch 2001:149). But it also suggests both similarity and difference; similarity in what the group has in common, whilst at the same time emphasising their differences from other groups (Cohen 1987:14). A dictionary definition of community is given as “the people living in one particular area or people who are considered as a unit because of their common interests, social group or nationality”<sup>8</sup>. In relation to this thesis, community of place is relevant firstly to describe the people living in the Scottish Borders which is a definable region within Scotland, and secondly, to describe the community existing within the individual towns of that region. The individual brass bands within those towns can be considered communities of interest. These two layers of community and how people identify themselves within those communities are important to the study of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders.

### 1.2.1. Community of Place

Peter Borsay states that “location is one of the key means of establishing personal identity” (Borsay 2006:145). The Scottish Borders is a well-defined region of lowland Scotland, the history of the area being well documented in *The Borders: A History of the Borders from Earliest Times* (Moffat 2002). The inhabitants of the Scottish Borders region live an area that has changed hands many times between England and Scotland with a history of cross-border raids and inter-family feuds from the late 13th century until the end of the 16th century (Fraser 1971, Moffat 2002). This history has created a strong sense of community among Borderers which can be defined in the traditional sense of “a collectivity of people living together in a specific area bound together by interpersonal ties or a sense of belonging together” (Finnegan 1989:300). “Interpersonal ties” are particularly strong in the Scottish Borders area with strong family ties, both within and between towns, reinforcing the sense of belonging to the area. The importance of family ties is noted by Moffat:

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<sup>8</sup> Cambridge Dictionary Online. Accessed 01/10/2010  
<<http://dictionary.cambridge.org.dictionaty/british/community>>

Names were important to Borderers (they still are) because they stood obviously for family, the binding agent amongst all the disorder and chaos visited upon and created by the reivers<sup>9</sup>. Loyalty to family was expected to be absolute. (Moffat 2002:249)

Schoupe has shown that identification to place is very strong in Scotland (Shoupe 2001:127), and this is especially so in the Scottish Borders towns. Identity is an important element of belonging to a community and in the Scottish Borders local people identify strongly with the place they were born in; they are proud to claim, “I’m a Borderer”. It is noticeable to anyone travelling through the region that within a very short distance each side of the border between England and Scotland there is an abrupt change from English to Scots in the way people speak (Moffat 2002:295). Three collective identities, ‘community’, ‘family’ and ‘club’<sup>10</sup> (Borsay 2006:107-108) are important to Borderers and central to studying the brass bands in the area. The language used by local people has its own words and phrases and the Borders folk have a strong local dialect; it is thought that the very distinctive Hawick accent is probably left over from the agricultural past when people moved from the countryside to the towns as the textile industry became industrialised (Moffat 2007:476). The Hawick dialect can be difficult for outsiders to understand; one interviewee, Brian Bonsor, stated that he “was born here so I understood the accent from birth, although I didn’t use it at home I hasten to add. However, I was, like most kids, sort of bi-lingual, one for the playground and one for home”<sup>11</sup>. It can be difficult for incomers to understand the local accent, and sometimes local people have to interpret local words with their English equivalent when used in conversation with an English person, thus emphasising the difference between themselves and incomers.

As well as their pride in being Scottish Borderers, local people identify strongly with their own town and this is demonstrated most clearly during the annual community festivals known as the common ridings which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7. The common ridings and festivals “define something of what it means

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<sup>9</sup> The word ‘reive’ means to rob or plunder.

<sup>10</sup> A club in this sense is an association of people with a common interest.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Brian Bonsor at his house in Hawick. 28/08/2007. Private recording by the author.

to come from, say, Hawick, Coldstream, Duns or Langholm” (Moffat 2002:364). Borderers are proud to use names that identify themselves as coming from a particular town, including ‘souters’<sup>12</sup> for those from Selkirk, ‘teris’ for those from Hawick and ‘galaleans’ from Galashiels. These terms are used to identify those whose families are natives of the towns, but they are not used of ‘incomers’, people who have moved there from other countries, especially England, or even from other regions and towns of Scotland. Therefore whilst identification with place is something that unites people, it is not just about inclusion but also about exclusion (Anico & Peralta 2009:1).

The sense of ‘community’ within each town is demonstrated most clearly at the time of the common ridings and festivals. The week, or more, of events, which are unique to each town, is the time when the feeling of ‘belonging together’ is strongest and family, social and cultural bonds are strengthened annually. Schoupe has identified how through events such as the common riding a strong sense of community identity is fostered, “which results both from the attachment to place and to its historical continuity” (Shoupe 2001:130). Those who leave, for work or further education, can be perceived as threatening community life (Honko 1988:18), so ‘exiles’ who return to their towns for the common ridings are especially welcomed back into their community.

The songs and music of each of the Borders towns are often unique to that town and the local people know and identify strongly with the words of the songs. Research into the psychology of music has shown that, “Music is a powerful means of creating a sense of belonging, either to a particular ethnic group or to a place” (Gregory 1997:131). Visitors and incomers to the town will not know the songs thus emphasising their sense of being outsiders.

The sense of local and regional community is currently reinforced by the two local newspapers, *The Border Telegraph* and the *Southern Reporter*. In the past most of the Border towns had their own local papers mainly delivering local news about things of interest within the town, including information about their brass bands, but as travel and communications have improved the newspapers have become regionalised. At the time of the common ridings each year several pages of both

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<sup>12</sup> ‘Souter’ means shoemaker as that was the principal occupation of Selkirk inhabitants in times past.

papers are given up to detailed reports together with whole page spreads of photographs covering the events. This allows people to identify with their own town's common riding and at the same time to feel part of the wider Borders community. Through promoting the heritage of the area the newspapers help to convey the identity of being a Borderer and provide a "narrative of belonging" (Anico & Peralta 2009:1).

### 1.2.2. Community of Interest

There is a rich diversity of musical groups in the Border towns making up musical 'worlds' similar to those in Milton Keynes described by Ruth Finnegan in *The Hidden Musicians* (Finnegan 1989). Brass band players often speak of banding being "a world on its own" and in studying the brass bands in Milton Keynes as one of her 'musical worlds', (basing these on the 'art worlds' of Howard Becker (1982)), she found that of all the musical spheres in Milton Keynes "it was the brass bands and their players that most emphatically made up a self-conscious 'world' with its own specific and separate traditions" (Finnegan 1989 [2007]:47).

The internal 'world' of one of the most successful brass bands in England, the Brighouse and Rastrick Brass Band, was studied by Richard Jones in his thesis "*Banding Together*": *Power, Identity and Interaction within the Concert and Contest Performance contexts of the Brighouse and Rastrick Brass Band* (Jones 2007). However, this research concentrated exclusively on the Brighouse and Rastrick Band, an English championship section band<sup>13</sup>, in the very specific context of their performance at contests and concerts. This is a very different context from that of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders, which are more akin to the type of bands studied by Finnegan in Milton Keynes. Whilst some of the Borders bands are contesting bands they are generally lower section bands and principally exist to provide entertainment for their communities. Some of the Borders brass players belong to more than one musical 'world'. They join with members of other musical 'worlds' to provide orchestral players for the operatic society productions or in orchestras for choral concerts thereby overlapping communities of interest within the overall

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<sup>13</sup> The highest section of the championships.

musical scene in the Borders. However, the focus of this thesis is on the brass bands themselves rather than participation in other musical groups.

The bands in the Borders often co-operate with each other, lending players when they are needed, lending music, and joining together in Scottish Borders Brass Band Association events. This forms a wider community of interest embracing all the brass bands within the Borders who have a joint interest in maintaining the future of the brass bands and supporting the weaker bands to prevent them from closing. In the words of Burt Feintuch, there is “responsibility, integration and obligation” between the bands (Feintuch 2001:150).

Parallels can also be drawn between this study of brass bands and studies of other musical and dance groups (Feintuch 2001; Shoupe 2001). In describing his study of Northumbrian pipers, Feintuch describes the musicians’ relationships to one another, to the music, to their sense of place and notion of the past in terms of a “moral community” (Feintuch 2001:151). Within any brass band there is a striving to make music together of the highest possible standard possible within a non-competitive environment, but at the same time there is a mutual respect for all abilities similar to that found by Feintuch with the Northumbrian pipers where all the musicians were tolerant of the “markedly varied levels of expertise” (Feintuch 2001:153). This results in a felt reality of community that is experienced by people when they get together in a common purpose for music or dance (Feintuch 2001:158/159; Shoupe 2001:126), for example, in a brass band.

As Borsay noted the new industrial communities of the nineteenth century were “fertile territory for team-based pastimes such as choral singing, brass bands, soccer and rugby (Borsay 2006:146). These pastimes engendered competition, especially in sport, but also in brass band contests. Co-operation exists between the Borders bands for community events in the present day with competition between them reserved for contests, both local and national. Rivalry is especially strong in local contests run by the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association when each town band competes against the bands from other Borders towns. The members of each brass band bond closely together on these occasions and *communitas* (Turner 1969) (an experience of intense community spirit) is created within each band as it plays together and competes against its local rivals. Turner suggested that *communitas* is

not just comradeship but is also “a transformative experience that goes to the root of each person’s being and finds in that root something profoundly communal and shared” (Turner 1969:138).

As in the nineteenth century the brass bands are closely related to existing community structures “whose appeal and influence derived directly from their roots in a particular locality” (Borsay 2006:137). Brass bands in the Scottish Borders are still strongly supported by their own communities; therefore, this provides an ideal area for studying brass bands and how they have existed in and for their communities for over 150 years.

### **1.3. Music and Community**

It goes almost without saying that music exists in a social context. The many and varied ways in which people create, perform, perceive, and react to musical sounds are vitally dependent on the particular situations in which they do so. This includes the specific places, times, and other people present in those situations, as well as the broader historical and cultural context of musical behaviour (Hargreaves & North 1997:Preface). The brass bands in the Borders maintain close links with their own town communities through marking the annual calendar of community events; for example, as Ruth Finnegan suggests, “Remembrance Day has to have its brass band” (Finnegan 1989 [2007]:335). It is the music that sets such rituals apart from everyday life and it is through participating in the civic life of the town in such rituals that further links with the community are fostered.

Gregory has suggested some of the many different ways in which music interacts with community are through providing music for ceremonies and festivals, religious events and as a means of creating a sense of group identity (Gregory 1997:129-137). Many of these aspects of music and community can be exemplified in role of brass bands. There is an important distinction between ‘music communities’ of which the internal world of brass banding is an example, and ‘music in the community’ where the brass bands interact with the wider community in the towns where they are situated. The function of each brass band in the Scottish Borders is linked very strongly to its own town community especially at the time of the annual Border festivals known as the common ridings when the individual band

members contribute to the communal activity of making music together for the benefit of the whole community.

### 1.3.1. Musical community within a band

A musical ensemble can be viewed as a musical community of like-minded people who get together in order to make music (Pitts 2005:103), exemplified in this study by playing brass instruments in a band. For the majority of brass band players this takes place in their leisure time and is often an activity that they pursue for a large part of their lifetime, starting in youth bands and continuing to play well into older age. Stephanie Pitts has suggested that, “The membership of a performing society...contributes to the development of participants’ identities, providing a particular context where their behaviour and social relations may flourish in ways that are distinctive from other aspects of their lives (Pitts 2005:30). Simon Frith has pointed out that musical activities, such as playing in a band, can help to define how people understand who they are both individually and collectively and be central to providing people with an understanding of who they are and give meaning to their lives (Frith 2003:100; see also Roy 2010:187). Frith has pointed out that music making is largely about enjoying being together in groups (Frith 2003:100). Pitts found that the “collective sharing of enthusiasms and a common sense of purpose” is important as a “release from the pressures of everyday life” (Pitts 2005:71). Furthermore Ruth Finnegan has argued that attending a band practice is not just “time allocated to the pursuit of music: it is also a social occasion” and becomes a pathway through life (Finnegan 1989 [2007]:328).

The members of brass bands spend “a great deal of time on music in a highly visible way with clearly established conventions and ideology” (Finnegan 2007:188). In this respect they are similar to what Howard Becker has called ‘art worlds’, where the members engage in a collective activity leading to the production of a piece of art work (Becker 1982:12). In the case of a brass band this collective activity leads to a musical performance. Blacking described how the production of a piece of music by a musical group is the result not of individual effort, but of collective effort by the individuals working within the group (Blacking 1973:106). The members of brass bands have individually chosen to play and perform together in a particular genre.

Stephanie Pitts has identified how the members of any musical performing group need to abide by the rules governing that group if the outcome is going to be successful, and this means members of a musical group have to give time to individual practice as well as to the group rehearsals; this may place demands on the individual but can also contribute to the pleasure of a successful performance (Pitts 2005:70). At the same time individual members of a band need a sense of belonging, of ‘affiliation’, which membership of a performing group provides in order for it to function and survive (Pitts 2005:117; Davidson 1997:209).

### 1.3.2. Community and competition between brass bands

Competition between bands in the form of brass band contests is an important element of the brass band movement. Ruth Finnegan found in her study of brass bands in Milton Keynes that some bands did not compete, “but the tradition of competitiveness was still a powerful one even for currently non-contesting bands, coupled with an awareness of the distinctiveness and pride of each separate band (Finnegan 1989 [2007]:51). The sense of “distinctiveness” is strong in the Scottish Borders brass bands and, as Stephanie Pitts found in her study of participants at the Music in the Round festival in Sheffield (Pitts 2005:111), this strong local awareness invokes a sense of belonging together that invites favourable comparison with bands in other towns and in other areas.

The Scottish Borders Brass Band Association, to which all the bands in the Borders belong, is in turn affiliated to the national association, thus giving individual players the sense of belonging to the wider brass band world. Playing in the national championships enables band members to feel they belong to the wider brass band community in Scotland as bands come from all over the country to take part. Success in a section then enables the band to compete in an even wider banding community against bands from all over Britain in the British Championships for which the Scottish Championships are a qualifier.

The audiences for band concerts throughout the year are largely drawn from the residents of the respective Border towns. In this way the audiences are similar to the “well-established audience” with its strong local connections found by Stephanie

Pitts for the Music in the Round festival in Sheffield that “featured a string quartet who were active in the local community” (Pitts 2005:111). As Pitts found among the residents of Sheffield who proudly supported their festival, there is a “collective pride of the community” (Pitts 2005:111) among the residents of the Border towns in supporting their own band. Brass banding has been a feature of Border towns since the nineteenth century, and as each town has just one brass band they are each seen to represent their community and this is especially important when the bands compete in the Scottish Championships.

### 1.3.3. Playing music in a group

In any discussion of an amateur musical group such as a brass band it is necessary to understand how belonging to the group influences the actions and social interaction of the individual players. Amateur music-making in general is a leisure activity in which the people choose to actively participate. This has been studied particularly by Finnegan (1989) in her ethnographic study of amateur music-making in Milton Keynes in the 1980s, and by Pitts (2005). Pitts has shown how participating in a musical group can be important in achieving personal goals and fulfilment, although the role that music plays in people’s lives can differ for each person (Pitts 2005:42). She discusses how, through rehearsing and performing in a group with others, “making music with friends assumes great significance in participants’ lives” (Pitts 2005:53); she found that although the participants showed a strong personal motivation to develop their own musical skills, they preferred to develop these within a group environment (Pitts 2005:8).

Making music with others was shown to affirm a sense of belonging and like-minded endeavour, so sustaining commitment and offering a shared experience that fostered memories and friendship among a diverse group of people. (Pitts 2005:51)

Thus, as already mentioned, group music-making, such as playing in a brass band, has been shown to be not only a vital element in participants’ lives through which they establish pathways through life, but is also an important social occasion

(Finnegan 1989 [2007]:328). Music therefore became inseparable from the participants' social lives, and belonging to a musical group or society was found to assume great importance for social interaction as well as music-making (Pitts 2005:51).

Music is also a means of stimulating different emotions that can unite and define social groups (Molnar-Szakacs & Overy 2006:235). The type of music that people choose to play in a group identifies them as part of the group, at the same time setting one group apart from other groups (Roy 2010:190). By performing in an amateur music group such as a brass band the participants agree to adhere to a set of conventions such as the type of instruments played, the type of repertoire performed and rules of the group such as the wearing of uniform, thereby accepting the group identity.

It is not only in the final performance that people make music together. In amateur music groups more time is generally spent in rehearsal than in actual performance with practice generally seen as the necessary preparation for a performance (Roy 2010:186). Ruth Finnegan found that playing together in rehearsal provided an enjoyable experience in itself through developing personal musical skills and just playing for the pleasure of it. In group music-making situations she found that practices and rehearsals themselves could become a kind of performing through which satisfaction could be derived from "participating in the musical blend" quite apart from the aim of preparing for a performance (Finnegan 1989 [2007]:154). At the same time a great deal of time and commitment is needed in belonging to an amateur musical group; for example, most brass bands practise once or twice a week with extra rehearsals before an important contest or concert. In addition individual practice is expected in order to learn the music and participate fully in the group. Stephanie Pitts has suggested that "participants make connections between their group musical activities and their individual musical lives, establishing a network of experiences that build or reinforce their sense of being musically active and engaged" (Pitts 2005:71).

Emotional response to listening is another aspect of music which can contribute towards group identity, whether this listening takes place as part of an audience at a concert, in the confines of the home or as part of a crowd at an outdoor

event such as the common ridings. One of the main reasons people give for listening to music is to experience or modulate their emotional state (Sloboda & O'Neill 2001; Molnar-Szakacs & Overy 2006:238). The varied music played by the brass bands at the common ridings can elicit many different emotions in the crowds, from joyously following the band as it plays a march to deep emotion at more solemn moments in the ceremonies. In this way the music provides “communion—an intimately shared experience between listener and listener and between listener and performer” (McGuinness & Overy 2011:245).

#### **1.4. Summary**

This survey of literature has found that whilst the history and development of brass bands in the north of England and elsewhere has been well researched, little has been written about the history of brass bands in Scotland and no research has looked specifically at the brass bands of the Scottish Borders region.

Many factors have been shown to have contributed to the development of the brass band movement in the nineteenth century such as improvements in the design and production of brass instruments. This was aided by increased leisure time for workers enabling them to take up hobbies such as playing in a band, together with an expansion of the printing of brass band music by specialist publishers. Brass band contests appealed to the competitive nature of working-class society and became central to the development of the brass band movement.

Two concepts of community, those of place and of interest, have been shown to be of particular importance in researching brass bands in the Scottish Borders. The turbulent history of the region in the past has developed strong communities, together with individuals who have a strong sense of personal identity in being a Borderer. This is expressed in the music and songs associated with the different towns that are sung particularly at the common ridings, annual community events unique to the Scottish Borders that are based around the history of the towns and the area. The integral role of the brass bands in these common riding events has not been studied in detail before but is discussed in detail in chapter 7. The thesis will therefore examine the relationship of the brass bands with their communities, especially with reference

to the common ridings, and enquire how the bands support the community throughout the year and how they are supported by the communities.

This thesis will trace the origins and history of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders over the past 150 years identifying links to the wider history of brass banding in Scotland and identifying differences from the growth of the brass band movement in England. The thesis will also question how we can account for the survival of brass bands in the towns of a predominantly rural area such as the Scottish Borders.

## 2. Methodology

This chapter will outline the various methods that have been used in this thesis to research the brass bands in the Scottish Borders. Eight bands were studied including seven town bands, Galashiels Town Band, Hawick Saxhorn Band, Jedforest Instrumental Band, Langholm Town Band, Peebles Burgh Silver Band, Selkirk Silver Band, Galashiels Town Band and one village band, the St. Boswells Concert Band. Because of the long time span covered by this thesis, from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day, it has been necessary to employ different approaches including archival research and fieldwork. Three research questions have guided this thesis, namely:

1. What are the origins and history of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders?
2. How can we account for the survival of the brass bands over the last 160 years?
3. What is the relationship between the brass bands and the communities in which they exist?

Archival research has formed the basis of the research in order to explore the history of the bands and to examine reasons for their survival. However, the time period examined in the thesis goes up to the present day, so from the 1930s onwards, the period within living memory, ethnomusicological methods, particularly interviews and observation, have supplemented the archival research and been used exclusively for the more recent past. This chapter explores these methods, looking firstly at archival research, namely material held within individual band archives and wider archives within the Scottish Borders and then at fieldwork, namely observation, participant observation and interviewing.

It is often the case in ethnomusicological research that a wide range of methods needs to be employed in order to understand a tradition and although ethnomusicology is more generally used to research traditional music the methods used are equally applicable to researching all living musical traditions including brass bands. The results obtained from this type of research also help in interpreting the more distant past and in identifying continuity and change over time. As Richard Widdess has described:

Ethnomusicology is often represented as a discipline concerned mainly, or even exclusively, with the present – with the performances of living musicians and the roles of such performances in present-day societies. Yet each music, as each society, is the temporary result of continuing historical processes. Processes that may or may not be important to the performer, but are arguably important to the outside observer. These processes can be observed in both the recent and the more remote past, and include profound changes and significant continuities; the evidence includes early sound recordings, oral history, written documents and organological, iconographical ... data. (Widdess 1992:219)

The research methods that have been employed in this thesis are designed to provide information about the historical past of the tradition of brass banding in the Scottish Borders and to reflect continuity and change that has occurred over time to create the present. The methods used have also been chosen to study the communities that exist in the Scottish Borders and the place of the brass bands within those communities.

## **2.1. Archival Research**

This study of brass bands in the Scottish Borders has been carried out within a historical context and primary source materials have been engaged with throughout this research. The archival sources used in this thesis include documentary evidence from band archives such as minute books, newspaper articles, photographs, sound recordings and artefacts in the form of old instruments. As it is often at a distance from the past being investigated, the data obtained from archival research is factual but open to interpretation (Stone 2008:13). Because not all archival materials have been preserved the information derived from surviving documents is limited and it is often necessary to infer what might have taken place (Stone 2008:186). However, all archival material has to be approached critically in relation to the past in which it was created, but at the same time offers a direct “degree of intimacy with the past” (Widdess 1992:220).

Archival research is intended to contribute to our understanding of historical events through the interpretation of primary sources, but surviving sources from the

past can be interpreted only in the light of the present, and Ron Wegman has identified the problems that can exist with any historical inquiry:

Scholars have argued ever more vigorously that the pursuit of music history is driven—and its results contaminated—by the values, creative impulses, dreams, illusions and neuroses of our time, [and] we pick and choose, select and combine, whatever evidence we need to fill out the patterns we wish to perceive (Wegman 2003:136).

True objectivity in interpreting data from the past is therefore difficult to achieve, but historical research is a way of understanding and providing a context for the present (Stone 2008: 180). When evaluating historical sources Gilbert J. Garraghan has identified six criteria which should be applied to a source:

When was it produced?  
Where was the source produced?  
Who produced the source?  
Did the source come from pre-existing sources?  
What was the original form of the source?  
What is the credibility of the contents of the source?  
(Garraghan quoted in Stone 2008:177)

These questions, which are designed to establish the authority and credibility of source material, are applicable to this type of inquiry and have been applied to all original source material in researching this thesis.

#### 2.1.1. Public archives consulted

In the course of researching this thesis public archives in the Scottish Borders have been consulted; these include the Hawick Museum and Old Gala House Museum in Galashiels and the Heritage Hub in Hawick. The Heritage Hub houses the Scottish Borders Archive Centre and the Scottish Borders Newspaper Archive where copies of many of the newspapers that have been printed in the Border towns since the early nineteenth century are held on microfilm and can be easily accessed. The Archive Centre also holds a large collection of historical documents relating to the Borders, including all the documents relating to the Kelso Silver Band. Several libraries in the

Scottish Borders have also been consulted for old books and paper copies of old newspapers. The National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, was also visited for books that are unavailable elsewhere and for copies of brass band journals.

### 2.1.2. Individual Brass Band Archives in the Scottish Borders

Archive material including minute books, old photographs, old instruments, manuscript music and other historical documents were found in varying amounts in the possession of all the bands. This primary source material is original material that has been produced within the bands and kept by them and is in its original form. The minute books (up to the 1980s) that have been consulted record minutes of committee and band meetings and are hand-written, being produced before the days of personal computers; the entries are usually dated, as are many of the photographs and music, therefore these are reliable records.

The research began by making enquiries at each of the Scottish Borders brass bands as to whether they held any archival documents within the band and to what period of the band's history they related. It was found that the survival of archival material within the brass bands of the Scottish Borders is uneven and has been influenced by the chance survival of records. Factors in the past such as frequent changes of rehearsal room or changes of band secretary have influenced the loss of records. Other factors have also influenced whether records have survived, for example, in Langholm the band's records were stored under a hall stage and eaten by rats, and many of St. Ronan's Silver Band's records were lost in the Second World War.

Three of the Scottish Borders bands, Jedforest Instrumental Band, St. Boswells Concert Band and Hawick Saxhorn Band, were found to have original nineteenth-century written documents still held within their band archives. The Jedforest Instrumental Band have a Cash and Sederunt<sup>14</sup> Book dating back to the formation of the band in 1854 that gives a unique insight into the formation and running of a brass band in the Scottish Borders in the mid-nineteenth century. The same band also has minute books dating throughout the nineteenth century and up to

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<sup>14</sup> Sederunt is a Latin work meaning "they were sitting" referring to those present at a meeting. In this case the book contains the minutes of meetings of the Jedforest Instrumental Band.

1964. Because these records cover such a long period of the band's history they are an important resource, and, being hand-written records of committee meetings that actually took place and in their original form, they comply with Garraghan's criteria as a totally creditable source.

St. Boswells Concert Band (formerly St. Boswells Brass Band<sup>15</sup>) have minute books dating from when the band was re-formed in 1896; these provide a comparison with the earlier records at the Jedforest Instrumental Band showing how the brass band movement had developed and commercialised during the nineteenth century, and also providing a comparison between a town band and a village band. The third surviving nineteenth-century documentary material is a book of newspaper cuttings collected by Walter Atkinson who was the conductor of the Hawick Saxhorn Band at the end of the nineteenth century. This unique collection of cuttings not only relates to the activities of the Hawick Saxhorn Band during the 1890s, particularly in relation to brass band contests<sup>16</sup> in which the band took part, but it also includes many newspaper cuttings about contests held in other places in Scotland, mainly through cuttings from the *Alloa Journal*, thus giving a wider picture of contesting in Scotland at that time.

Archival material found within the bands, particularly minute books, which are accurately dated and record actual events, are a reliable source of information about particular bands. Until the general use of personal computers, minute books were hand-written and are often signed as being an accurate record of the discussions that took place at annual general meetings and committee meetings, thereby providing information on matters such as band finances, contests entered and the results, concerts and other events undertaken. However, they also reveal problems such as lack of discipline and general conduct within the band or financial difficulties. References to contests entered gives the details of places where contests were held and any results recorded reveal the standard of the band at that time. One example is the Hawick Saxhorn Band minute book for the period from September 1938 to June 1966 which covers the period of the Second World War when this band, unlike many other bands, managed to keep going. The minutes

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<sup>15</sup> The name changed in the 1980s when woodwind instruments were introduced into the band; it has since reverted to an all-brass band again but the name has not been revised.

<sup>16</sup> Competitions between brass bands.

covering the post-war period shows how quickly this band was able to begin competing successfully again in spite of the difficulties of financing a band at that time and the post-war rationing of petrol. It covers a very successful period for the band in contests leading to it becoming Scottish Champions in 1961.

Minute books can also chart continuity and change within a band over time. The minute book for the Galashiels Town Band from July 1977 to August 1994 shows that the band was successfully competing in 1979 when it won the 4th section of the Scottish Championships and qualified for the the British Championships in London gaining 6th place, but by November 1980 the bandmaster had resigned because he felt that he “no longer had 100% support from the band”<sup>17</sup>. Without a permanent conductor the band declined and by the 1983 Annual General Meeting the Chairman closed his remarks giving as his reasons for the Band’s present state as “insufficient commitment by players and a negative attitude towards rehearsals”<sup>18</sup>. In a conversation with the then Chairman he confirmed that one of the reasons for a lot of players leaving at that time was that they did not live in the town<sup>19</sup>. The minute book clearly shows that throughout the 1980s lack of players in the band was a problem and the band could fulfil engagements only with the help of players brought in from other bands; there were several changes of bandmaster and by the end of the decade the minutes report that, “at present nine people were attending rehearsals on a good night, and that those who were attending were not fully enjoying it due to the lack of players making the music sound bare”<sup>20</sup>. When I joined the band in 2008 there were usually only five or six players at rehearsals and this band continued on the verge of extinction due to lack of players until 2010 when a new permanent conductor was appointed who started a junior band which could feed into the senior band.

Although some band minute books have been consulted covering the period since the Second World War up to the 1980s, research for this timeframe has been supplemented by fieldwork, particularly interviewing, as this period is within living memory.

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<sup>17</sup> Galashiels Town Band minute book 6 July 1977 to 14 August 1994. Minutes of a meeting at the Band Hall. 5 November 1980.

<sup>18</sup> Minutes of Annual General Meeting of the Galashiels Town Band. 14 August 1983.

<sup>19</sup> Conversation on 22 November 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Minutes of Annual General Meeting of the Galashiels Town Band. 25 October 1989.

### 2.1.3. Local newspaper archives

Wherever possible the information extracted from individual band archives was checked against other sources such as local newspaper reports. In the nineteenth century most of the Border towns supported their own local newspaper which was aimed at the inhabitants of that town and most of the news was about events in the town. However, the papers usually included a selection of news from other Border towns and a section on national news as well so that people could keep up with what was happening in other Border towns as well as nationally and internationally in the days before radio.

Different local newspapers have been published at various times in the Scottish Borders over the past 150 years. Those that have been consulted include *The St. Ronan's Standard* (Innerleithen), *Peeblesshire Herald and Peeblesshire Advertiser* (Peebles), *Hawick Advertiser and Hawick News and Hawick Express* (Hawick), *Teviotdale Record* (Jedburgh), *Kelso Chronicle* (Kelso), *Southern Reporter* (Selkirk and the Borders), *Border Advertiser* and the *Border Telegraph*. These local newspapers constitute an important source of information and are sometimes the only data available (Franzosi 1987:6). It is possible to date events precisely from the newspaper articles, and for local events and information on the town's brass bands and for this type of information Franzosi has pointed out that there is no reason to believe that this data is less reliable than other sources (Franzosi 1987:7).

Particularly in the nineteenth century, there was often a strong element of bias in local newspapers in favour of the local town especially when reporting competitive events such as sport or brass band contests against other Border towns. The accuracy of the results reported would not be affected by this bias and it gives an insight into rivalry that may have existed between the Border towns and attitudes prevailing at the time.

Brass band performances were not only reported on in local newspapers, but they were sometimes advertised in advance so that people could attend them, and this was especially important in the nineteenth century when live musical performances

were the only music people would have heard in the days before recording and broadcasting. At the end of the nineteenth century the local newspaper in Innerleithen, *The St. Ronan's Standard*, regularly reported when the town's band was going to play that week and what the programme was to be, for example:

On Saturday evening the members of St Ronan's Brass Band had a march out, Mr Cockburn conducting. Halting at the top of Miller Street, a short selection was discoursed which was listened to by a large concourse of people. On Tuesday evening (weather permitting) at 7.15 the band will play the following programme of music at the Green;-

QUICKSTEP	The Forest Fiend	Fred Hanney
WALTZ	Hearts of Gold	W. Roche
SELECTION	Zampa	Herold
QUADRILLE	Land O' Burns	J. Ord Hume
EUPHONIUM SOLO	The Amateur	J. Jubb
SCHOTTISCHE	Sunny Hours	J. Cupit
FINAL	God save the Queen	Dr. Bull

(*St. Ronan's Standard* 3 August 1898)

These reports provide a record of the repertoire being performed at that time by the St. Ronan's Brass Band as the details would have been supplied to the newspaper by the band itself. This repertoire is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Most nineteenth-century newspapers printed in the Scottish Borders towns are held on microfilm at the Heritage Hub, Hawick, and some hard copies are found in local libraries in the Borders, for example, bound copies of the *Border Advertiser* from 1848-1906 are stored in Galashiels Public Library. An especially important newspaper archive is found at Robert Smail's Printing Works, Innerleithen, which is a fully operational letterpress printers first established in 1866 and has working printing presses dating back as far as the 1870s. The works have belonged to the National Trust for Scotland since 1986 when Cowan Smail, the third generation of the family who had owned the firm for 120 years, retired. Smail's continues to be used for printing jobs today.

Smail's Printing Works carried out print jobs for the whole community, both locally in Innerleithen and throughout the Borders. For nearly a century they kept a copy of every job which they printed; these were dated and the number of copies

produced pencilled in the corner and they were then pasted into what are known as 'guardbooks'. There are 50 of these guardbooks most of which I was allowed to research, but some of them in a very fragile state and I was not permitted to look at them. From 1893-1916 Smail's printed the local weekly paper in Innerleithen, *The St. Ronan's Standard and Effective Advertiser* which also provided a source of information about the town's band and the repertoire that was played. Copies of these newspapers are not only found in the guardbooks but are also bound into volumes containing all the copies for each year that it was printed. A leaflet produced about Robert Smail's Printing Works entitled *2008: Year of the Printed Word* explains that nothing was ever thrown away in the office at Smail's and job dockets, invoices, wages books and ledgers dating back to the start of the business are to be found. In the late nineteenth century Smail's also acted as shipping agents for the Red Star and White Star Lines; these lines ran ships to Canada, New Zealand, Australia and other countries. At this time when many local people were emigrating due to the depression in the textile industry and lack of trade in the mills, they bought tickets in Smail's shop. The local newspapers therefore provide evidence of the social and economic conditions prevailing in the Scottish Borders in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Before setting up the printing of *The St. Ronan's Standard* in 1893, Robert Smail personally collected a book of newspaper cuttings from the *Peeblesshire Herald*, from 1879 onwards, about events in Innerleithen. One of the things that appears to have interested him and for which he collected cuttings was the St. Ronan's Brass Band. This is an important archive and much of the history of the band can be traced for nearly 40 years from these two newspapers alone. This is an important source of information as the band itself has no records from the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries.

As well as showing information on repertoire as mentioned above, several other important strands of information about the St. Ronan's band can be gained from the newspapers and guardbooks at Robert Smail's Printing Works. The annual balance sheet was published in the newspaper for many years, giving details about the organisation of the band including its finances, the names of committee members

elected at the annual general meetings, the cost of instruments and general items of income and expenditure during that period.

#### 2.1.4. Local and national public archives

There are several important local archives in the Scottish Borders which have provided primary source material to the public. The Scottish Borders Archive and Local History Centre at the Heritage Hub, Hawick, houses not only the Borders Newspaper Archive but also but also an extensive collection of many other documents relating to the Scottish Borders. Included in these are the complete records and minute books of the Kelso Silver Band which existed for only a short period from 1948-1957.

The Hawick Museum at Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick, houses a permanent display relating to the history of the textile industry in the Scottish Borders. This museum also has an archive of local historical material and old photographs of the Hawick Saxhorn Band and the Hawick Salvation Army Band in the nineteenth century have been found in their collections.

As the brass band movement grew in the late nineteenth century, brass band journals became an important means of disseminating news of bands and contests (Odell 2005). Copies of some of these journals were consulted in the National Library of Scotland. Although primarily giving news of English bands, especially the top prize-winning bands, and including articles of general interest such as hints on running a band, they also included a few details about Scottish brass bands particularly with regard to advertising forthcoming contests and giving contest results. However, it was found that few references were made to the bands in the Scottish Borders.

#### 2.1.5. Iconography

Musical iconography is the study of pictorial documentation relating to music (Seebass 1992: 238). Nearly all the bands in the Scottish Borders have some old photographs hanging in their band halls dating from the nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries and this iconographic evidence provides information on the type of instruments in use at the time, the numbers of players in the band, the type of uniforms that were worn, the occasions on which the band was playing and sometimes the date it was taken. These formal elements deal with the factual elements of the photograph, however, photographs are often not just of the band but also depict cultural elements and social details of the time (Seebass 1992:238).

Sometimes the photographs are dated, or bear an inscription which enables the occasion on which they were taken to be identified and subsequently dated. Some photographs can be dated only through word of mouth passed down by generations of members of the band. Sometimes the style of uniform being worn by the band members can give an estimate of the date it was taken by comparing them with the type of uniforms worn in other photographs which are dated. In some cases the event recorded has been passed down through the band by word of mouth and has become part of the oral history of the band, thereby helping to date the event.



Fig 2.1. Selkirk Common Riding 1903 (Robert D Clapperton Photographic Trust)

Another important source of local historical photographs in the Borders is the Robert D. Clapperton Photographic Trust in Selkirk. Founded in 1867, Robert Clapperton's Daylight Photographic Studio traded for three generations, taking not only studio portraits but also pictures of people and events in Selkirk and around the Scottish Borders. The photograph above is taken from the archives of the Robert D. Clapperton Photographic Trust showing the Casting of the Colours ceremony at the Selkirk Common Riding in 1903 (Fig. 2.1). The photograph clearly shows the Selkirk Silver Band playing for the ceremony, the flags of the town guilds waiting to be 'cast' and the dress of the local people at that time. It provides an example of continuity as this ceremony is enacted in exactly the same way today with the band standing by the stage as the second photograph below shows (Fig. 2.2).



Fig 2.2. Selkirk Common Riding 2012 (Grant Kinghorn)

This picture was taken by one of the local professional photographers in the Borders who take photographs of many of the common ridings and other local events and publish them on their websites. These photographs remain on their websites for several years and form an archive of many recent community events in the Borders including the common ridings and are available to be purchased by the general public. Unless otherwise stated the photographs in this thesis were taken by the author. A few photographs of the common ridings were generously donated for use

in this thesis by Grant Kinghorn<sup>21</sup> and have been acknowledged. Further discussion of the common ridings will be found in Chapter 7 together with further photographs in Appendices K and L.

Another extensive archive is held by the Old Gala Club in Galashiels with objects and photographs relating particularly to that town and the surrounding area. The club holds old photographs of the Galashiels Braw Lads Day, the festival day held in Galashiels each year begun in 1930, and some of the Galashiels Town Band.

Photographic material taken by myself and other photographers at public events in the present day provides an up to date archive of the Scottish Borders brass bands playing at these events, particularly the common ridings. As the common ridings are public events, and local professional photographers publish all their photographs on websites for sale to the public, it was not thought necessary, or indeed possible, to request any permission for the use of my own photographs and recordings of these events in this thesis; however, material taken from photographic archives and photographs taken by modern professional photographers have been acknowledged.

#### 2.1.6. Old instruments at St. Boswells Concert Band

The study of musical instruments, termed ‘organology’, is a field of investigation in its own right and beyond the scope of this thesis, but St Boswells Concert Band has a collection of old brass instruments, many of them dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which give an insight into the type of instruments used by Scottish Borders bands during this period. The band has had its own band room in the village hall since the 1950s and the instruments have been stored in a cupboard. A list of these instruments with dating supplied by Dr Arnold Myers of the University of Edinburgh is given in Appendix B. Three of the instruments are inscribed “1902 St Boswells Brass Band”. There are two possible reasons for the date appearing on the instruments; 1902 was the coronation year of Edward VII and may be one reason for the date being shown on the instruments, or it could be because these instruments were bought as a result of a Grand Bazaar held jointly

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<sup>21</sup> <[www.grantkinghornpics.co.uk](http://www.grantkinghornpics.co.uk)>

with the St. Boswells Golf Club as shown by the photograph below of a surviving ticket for the associated Prize Draw (Fig. 2.4). The Minute Book of the Prize Drawing Committee detailing the prizes and listing the people who received books of tickets and money received is still in the band's own archives.



Fig 2.3. Inscription on the bell of a Besson euphonium showing the name of St. Boswells Brass Band and the date 1902

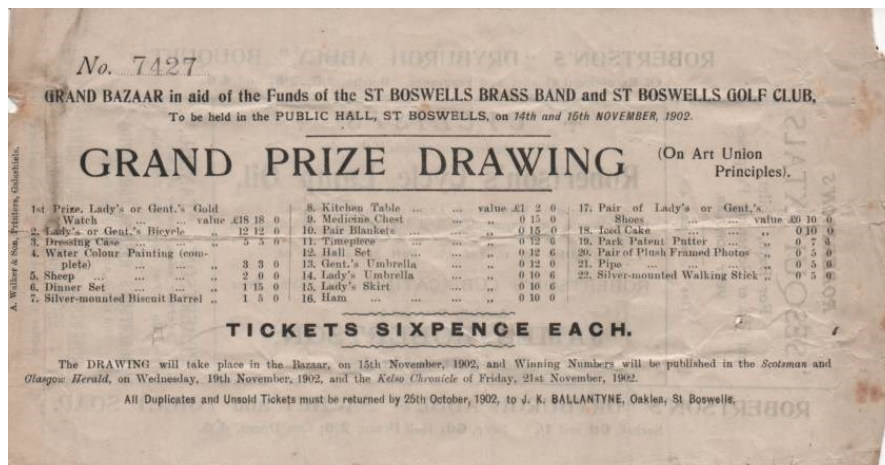


Fig 2.4. Surviving ticket from the St. Boswells Brass Band Grand Bazaar 1902

All the old instruments are of narrow bore as wider bore instruments were adopted by brass bands only in the 1970s (Herbert 2000:185) and some of them have been altered for the lower pitch which came in at around that time (Herbert 2000:183). These changes fundamentally altered the sound of a brass band, making it louder and the sound less bright (Myers 2000:183). Many instruments were adapted to the new pitch by having extensions inserted to the tubing to lower the sound so that they could go on being used. This would have been a cheaper option for a village band such as the St. Boswells band which would find it difficult to afford a completely new set of instruments. Most of the instruments are still playable except for the ones indicated as unplayable in the list in the Appendix B.

The St. Boswells band still has their bass drum dating from 1897 soon after the band was restarted (Fig. 2.5). It was bought from R. de Lacy, London, for £4.10s.



Fig. 2.5. St Boswells Brass Band drum dated 1897.

This was an important instrument for the band and as such they had it decorated with a painting of nearby Dryburgh Abbey which was executed by G. H. Brown, a local

artist who was not paid for doing it<sup>22</sup>. The lettering and stripes on the drum were done by "John Fairbairn, letter-cutter, Melrose, who of course received a fee for his work"<sup>23</sup>. This type of drum is no longer used as is too heavy for use when marching. Hanging in the band hall there is a picture of the band with their instruments, taken in 1902 giving the names of the players underneath. Together with the entries regarding their purchase recorded in the band minute book, these are good examples of different types of source material validating each other.

Galashiels Town Band also possesses some older style instruments including some basses which have been adapted to lower pitch and which are still in use. The only older recording that has been found of a Borders band that would have used these older style instruments is of the Galashiels Town Band playing the town song *Braw, braw lads* in 1966 (CD Track 12).

#### 2.1.7. Music manuscripts

Hand-written music, often arranged for the resources of a particular band by the bandmaster, is considered to be a more important primary source than printed music as it shows what bands actually played. Because it is written for a particular band hand-written music gives a good indication of the standard of playing that the band was capable of at the time as bandmasters would not have arranged music beyond the capabilities of their players (Herbert 2000:282). No manuscript music from the nineteenth century was found in any of the band archives, but in the course of research a box of music was discovered at St. Ronan's Silver Band, Innerleithen, containing hand-written parts and printed music dating from the early twentieth century that was composed by the then bandmaster, Lawrence Cockburn. The band parts were all jumbled up, but once sorted it was found that there were several marches and a longer piece entitled *Scottish Border Melodies* and that very few of the parts were missing. Two of the pieces were in both handwritten and printed form including the march *My Ain Dear Nell* (Fig. 2.5). In addition to the band music the

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<sup>22</sup> St. Boswells Brass Band Minute Book 1896-1899. p.27.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

box also contained other music by Lawrence Cockburn<sup>24</sup>. This manuscript music for the band is an important resource for showing the style of music played at that time by the St. Ronan's Brass Band and is probably representative of music played by the other Borders bands.

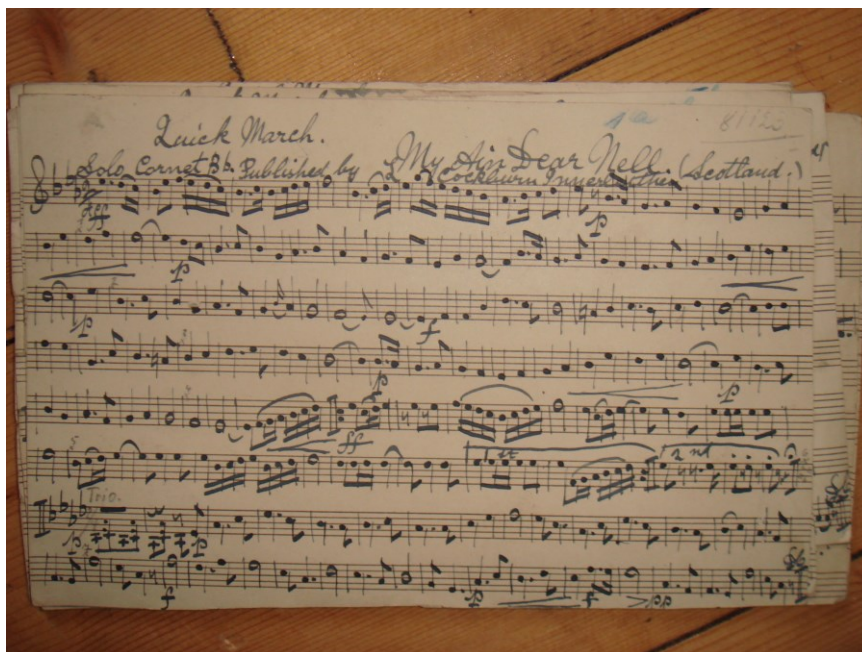


Fig. 2.6. Manuscript of solo cornet part of 'My Ain Dear Nell' by Lawrence Cockburn.

Two handwritten marches also by Lawrence Cockburn were later discovered at the Galashiels Town Band where he had played before moving to the Innerleithen band. A more detailed discussion of the music of Lawrence Cockburn will be found in Chapter 6.

#### 2.1.8. Recordings

Although recordings of brass bands were made before World War II it has not been possible to find any for the bands in the Scottish Borders. In 1979 the Langholm Town Band made a vinyl long playing record which included many local melodies

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<sup>24</sup> It included a song called *Bonnie Scotland* published in America in 1914 and a schottische, *Elibank*, written for piano and published in London by Dolart & Co of Oxford Street in 1921 which is listed in the British Library catalogue (British Library Shelfmark: Music Collections h.3830.o.(5.))

played by the band at the Langholm Common Riding<sup>25</sup>, a copy of which was given to the author. This has been used as a source for local songs played by the band (CD Tracks 10 and 11).

An earlier record dating from 1966 of the Galashiels Town Band that was digitally transferred onto CD in 2001<sup>26</sup> includes live recordings from the 1965 Braw Lads Investiture Concert and also recordings of the Galashiels Town Band and Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band playing music traditionally performed on Braw Lads Day, the festival day in Galashiels. This gives the impression that the Galashiels band was very proficient at that time (CD Track 12 is of the band playing the Galashiels town song in 1966).

Since the 1990s several of the bands in the Scottish Borders have produced their own CDs which were sold by the bands to raise funds. Where it is possible to compare these later recordings with the earlier ones it gives some indication of changes in the standard and style of playing and repertoire although both old and new recordings by the same band are not available. CDs made by St. Ronan's Silver Band have been used in this thesis as sources for marches and other music composed by local composers. These are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Digital video recordings which were made by me of brass bands playing in a variety of locations in the Scottish Borders and have been used as source documents, particularly when observing or taking part in the common ridings.

#### 2.1.9. Unpublished private research

In the course of researching the Borders bands it was found that there were people within the band community who had conducted some previous research into the history of their own band and they generously made their research available to the author. This secondary source material which is carefully researched and referenced is reliable and helpful in identifying additional sources. Douglas Mackie, a long-serving member of Peebles Burgh Band, has gathered extensive unpublished research

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<sup>25</sup> *Melodies from the Muckle Toon*. 1979. Langholm Town Band with Langholm Parish Church Choir. Musical Director and Choirmaster A. D. McBay. LP record. LAKE C2017.

<sup>26</sup> *Braw lads Gathering in Songs and Music*. 2001. Galashiels Town Band conductor William J. Grey and Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band, Pipe Major Andrew Ness, Drum Major Dan Brown. CD. Gala-Online 2001.

into the history of the Peebles Burgh Band which he has extracted from local newspapers and other sources for his own interest over a number of years. Other sources in Peebles such as old council minutes and minutes of Masonic meetings which may not otherwise have been available to me are carefully referenced and dated and can be considered reliable, although it has not been possible to check them. The local newspapers from which extracts are taken are not always stated by Douglas Mackie but where possible they have been followed up and checked.

George Burt, a member of Jedforest Instrumental Band and President of the Scottish Brass Band Association (SBBA)<sup>27</sup>, has begun researching from the band's own archives and from nineteenth-century Jedburgh newspapers and this has provided useful pointers to events which the band played for in the nineteenth century. Where it has been used in this thesis this unpublished research has been followed up and checked in both the band's archives and the local newspaper archive.

Hugh Johnstone MBE of the Dalmellington Band in Ayrshire researched the history of Scottish bands for SBBA in the 1990s but his research, entitled *Origin of Brass Bands in Scotland and the History of the Scottish Amateur Brass Band Association Founded 1895* was never published. Whilst the largest part of this research is devoted to the history of SBBA he travelled around Scotland, including the Borders, visiting each band and making brief notes on the origins of each band. It was thought that this research was lost, but during an interview with Hugh Johnstone it was discovered that he had given a copy of his notes to Dr Roy Newsome (1930-2011) when he was writing his PhD thesis, *The 19th century brass band in Northern England: Musical and social factors in the development of a major amateur musical medium* for his doctorate at Salford University in 1999, and the author was able to obtain them from him before he died. Hugh Johnstone's notes, together with an interview which was conducted with him<sup>28</sup>, have been invaluable in providing background information on the history of brass banding in Scotland.

Raymond Thomson played for the Scottish Co-Op Band (now known as the Co-operative Funeralcare Band), based in Glasgow, and gave me a copy of his unpublished research, *The Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society Brass Band: The*

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<sup>27</sup> <[www.sbba.org.uk](http://www.sbba.org.uk)>

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Hugh Johnstone. 19/04/2008. SA2008.028

*First Twenty Years*. The first part of the research includes background information on the history of brass banding in Scotland particularly in the Glasgow area, together with the history of this very successful band, the 2012 Scottish (Championship section) champions. This has also been invaluable for information about banding in another part of Scotland.

This unpublished research, undertaken by people who are members of the bands they have studied or the work of individuals who have specialist knowledge of brass banding in Scotland, is mostly fully referenced and can therefore be verified as reliable from other sources.

## **2.2. Fieldwork**

Fieldwork has been defined as the “observation of people in situ’...and reporting it in ways not harmful to those observed” (Hughes 1960: p.v.; Quoted in Myers 1992:23). Myers continues by saying, “All fieldwork includes performances, both musical performances and cultural performances (rituals and ceremonies of traditional life), as well as performances staged especially for the scholar (informal conversations, interviews and recording sessions” (Myers 1992:23).

The field of research for this thesis is situated in my own community and this made observation easier because I live in the area, but as Nettle has pointed out it is more difficult to be objective about the people I know and with whom I come into contact regularly (Nettl 2008:vi). Whereas archival research is factual, the information gathered through fieldwork is more subjective and open to interpretation.

### **2.2.1. Interviews**

Interviews were carried out in order to gain details of brass banding in the Scottish Borders over the last 60 years. It was found that some of the older players in the bands had wide knowledge of brass banding in the Scottish Borders from their own experience of playing in Borders bands and these people were identified as potential interviewees. Most of the interviews were recorded and archived in the School of Scottish Studies Sound Archive situated in the department of Celtic and Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh and the reference numbers ascribed to them,

beginning with the letters SA, have been used throughout the thesis. Interviewees were chosen to give a broad picture of brass banding in the Scottish Borders with interviewees being chosen from as many different bands as possible. Other local people with specialist knowledge of brass banding in the Borders, from perspectives such as education or musical composition, were also interviewed. These included a retired musical advisor for the region and a well-known brass band composer and they were able to give a wider perspective on banding in the area in the last 60 years. Several other people with more general knowledge of banding in Scotland were also interviewed. A total of 14 people were interviewed for this thesis.

Different styles of interview were used in the research, including both semi-structured and informal interviews and private conversations. It was felt that formal structured interviews, where there was no deviation from the questions, were not appropriate as the majority of the interviews took place in informal settings, such as the homes of the interviewees, and the data collected would not be used for comparison purposes. Semi-structured interviews, where similar questions were put to each interviewee, were used as these allowed for deviation from the script where the interviewee introduced an interesting topic or line of discussion which could then be followed up. A sample copy of the semi-structured questionnaire used is in Appendix C. However, as different topics became more important with some interviewees than others, not all the questions were put to all the interviewees.

In all the interviews which were conducted for this research the following ethical considerations were taken into account:

- All the interviewees were made aware of the purpose of the interview and the field of research was discussed beforehand.
- Written consent was given by the interviewees for interviews to be recorded and archived in School of Celtic and Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh.
- None of the interviewees imposed any restrictions on the use of the interview material.
- Private conversations and informal interviews were treated as confidential and the subjects' identity kept anonymous unless they subsequently agreed to being identified.

The first interview was conducted with Brian Bonsor (1926-2011), who was born and lived in Hawick<sup>29</sup>. He was a teacher of music at Hawick High School and later became County Music Advisor for Roxburghshire and subsequently Regional Music Advisor for the Scottish Borders Council. He was also a composer of note, especially of music for the recorder. Because of these connections his knowledge of music education and other musical activities in the Scottish Borders was very broad. In his capacity as Music Advisor he was interested in promoting brass teaching in schools and he organized brass workshops for children learning brass instruments during the 1960s and 1970s. He also had considerable knowledge of the brass bands in the area so he was able to link the teaching of brass in schools at that time with the brass bands. His obituary in *The Scotsman* in 2011 recorded that, “it was his contribution to music in the Borders that singled him out as a musician of particular note and, indeed, gave him a special pleasure”<sup>30</sup>.

Most of the subsequent interviewees were members of brass bands in the Scottish Borders who were chosen because of their long association with the Borders bands and who could provide first-hand knowledge for the period from the Second World War up to the present; consequently they tended to be the older members of the bands. One of these interviewees could remember back to the 1930s<sup>31</sup>. Two interviews were conducted with bandsmen from outside the Scottish Borders; these were Hugh Johnstone from the Dalmellington band in Ayrshire who had researched some of the history of brass bands in Scotland for the Scottish Brass Band Association during the 1990s and Alan Edmond who was appointed the first Scottish Brass Band Association Development Officer in 2005. Alan Edmond’s role was the promotion of brass banding and the development of new bands, particularly youth bands, in Scotland in order to try and halt the decline in banding. Hugh Johnstone and Alan Edmond were interviewed for their knowledge of brass banding in Scotland

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<sup>29</sup> Private recording by the author of an interview with Brian Bonsor on 28 August 2007 at his house in Hawick.

<sup>30</sup> Alasdair Steven (2 March 2011) “Obituary: Brian Bonsor MBE, music teacher and composer”. <[http:// the Scotsman.scotsman.com/obituaries/Obituary-Brian\\_Bonsor-MBE-music.6726773.jp](http://the Scotsman.scotsman.com/obituaries/Obituary-Brian_Bonsor-MBE-music.6726773.jp)>. Link downloaded from <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian\\_Bonsor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_Bonsor)> 2109/2012.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with David Young. 11/10/2007. Sa2007.045

rather than just in the Borders region in order to set the research into a wider context. All interviews were subsequently transcribed for research and analysis.

Informal discussions took place with members of many bands as the research progressed and as I became more involved in brass banding in the Scottish Borders. These conversations were not recorded but field notes were subsequently made of any interesting points raised.

### 2.2.2. Observation to Participant Observation

My personal involvement in brass bands began through observing the band performances in many different types of public events in the various Scottish Borders towns such as the common ridings and concerts. This provided the opportunity to observe not only the bands and players, but also, as Stone has pointed out, the audience reaction to the performance (Stone 2008:140).

Living in the area provided opportunities to attend some of the common ridings and observe them for myself. However, being an incomer to the area meant that my participation was possible only as an outside observer at these community events because they have important links to the history of the towns and the identity of those who live there. Later playing in bands at some of the common riding events enabled me to experience taking part for myself and observe the common ridings from a participant perspective. Observation of civic events such as Remembrance Sunday parades also began as an observer and progressed to the role of a participant when I began to play in the bands.

Within a few months of beginning the research I felt it necessary to understand how to play a brass instrument myself, and to participate in the internal 'world' of brass banding, in order to communicate better with players in the bands. Having decided to learn to play a brass instrument in order to experience playing in a band at first hand, my role as an observer of brass bands in the area changed. I became a participant observer, making it possible to study the bands as a player in the context of concerts, contests and the part they play in local community events. This helped me to understand the conventions and customs of the brass band world, but, as Cottrell has shown, it was necessary to be aware that the possible downside

was that I might begin to take these for granted rather than questioning them (Cottrell 2004:16). Playing in the bands in Galashiels and St. Boswells gradually led to wider participation in brass banding in the Scottish Borders and beyond. This provided the opportunity to meet potential interviewees who had first-hand knowledge of the history of the brass bands in Scotland and the Borders. It then became important to interview a cross-section of the people involved in brass banding rather than, as Cottrell has suggested, just choosing those who it was easiest to contact (Cottrell 2004:17).

Richard Jones has discussed how the fieldworker and informant boundaries become blurred “as the fieldworker has become subsumed completely in the [band] activities” (Jones 2007:11). Jones has also discussed the difficulties of transition from being a participant to a participant observer, from personal experience as both a player and a researcher in a brass band situation, and the transition of the researcher from ‘outsider’ to ‘insider’ within the band. My role as a fieldworker therefore began as an outside observer and progressed to become a participant observer and an insider when I later played in the bands.

Speaking to a member of the St. Boswells Concert Band about my research and saying I would like to try and play a brass instrument for myself, he suggested that I should have some lessons with the bandmaster of the St. Boswells band. Pitts has shown how “personal development and social interaction are closely connected in musical experience” (Pitts 2005:33) and how it is necessary to seek a personal balance between these two aspects when playing in a musical group. St. Boswells Concert Band is a small, non-contesting band whose members play for pleasure and they were pleased to welcome a new member and sympathetic to my problems as a beginner which helped my personal development as a player. As my horn playing improved other players respected my determination to learn as an adult and play in the local band; in many ways this was a similar experience to the one observed by Richard Jones when he joined the Brighouse and Rastrick Band as a new player, although his was an entirely different context in joining one of the ‘top’ English bands (Jones 2007:13).

As a member of the St. Boswells Concert Band I began to play for community events, including the band’s concerts which are held in the village hall

and for other local events, especially during the St. Boswells Village Week and for the Melrose Festival. My first introduction to a common riding event was playing for the presentation night of the Melrose Festival when the principal rider, the Melrosian, is announced earlier in the year. Through this I became aware of the importance of tradition, ritual and set music in the common riding ceremonies. During the Melrose Festival the band leads a parade around the town which introduced me to marching with a band, a traditional activity for brass bands.

Playing in the band quickly improved my playing and a few months later the same bandsman who had introduced me to the St. Boswells band suggested that I might like to go along to Galashiels Town Band. This band was run down at that time with only a few players and there was regular talk about the possible ways to revive the band's fortunes, a situation that continued until 2010 when a young bandmaster was appointed who started to turn the band around. Five band members did some workshops at local primary schools, and following the excellent response to these workshops the Galashiels Youth Band was formed. Since then the senior band has expanded as new players have joined and some players who had left some years before have come back; being the most experienced horn player I now play solo horn which gives me the opportunity to play solo passages. After further workshops in local schools about nine months later a Galashiels Junior Band was also formed.

Whilst the members of both bands that I played in were aware that I was researching for a PhD, it was important that they treated me the same as any other player so I never took notes during rehearsals, preferring to make any notes afterwards (Cottrell 2004:17; Jones 2007:15). At first the other band members were curious about my motives for joining the band, but at the same time they were appreciative that I wanted to know how to play a brass instrument for myself and to join the band. As time went on and I became fully accepted as a member of the bands my role as a researcher was generally forgotten and I was careful not to mention it unless asked (Cottrell 2004:18). Occasionally someone would ask me how it was going; this was usually one of the two other horn players in the St. Boswells band with both of whom I formed a close friendship.

I was invited to play for the Penicuik Silver Band at the 2012 Scottish Championships. Although this band is in Midlothian, just outside the Scottish

Borders, it gave me an insight into the world of brass band contests which was important as I had not played for a contesting band before. Unlike the community bands I play for in St. Boswells and Galashiels which only practise once a week, the Penicuik band practises twice a week with extra sectional and full rehearsals just before a contest. I was welcomed into the band to fill a vacancy in the horn section, but this time treated as an equal, experienced player, not as a beginner, and I was expected to contribute fully to the performances of the band thus adding to the pressure to perform well. My role as a researcher was not known to the majority of the band.

Personal development has been an important factor in my horn playing and I have taken private lessons with two experienced players in order to improve my playing both for personal satisfaction and to contribute more fully to the bands where I play. In order to measure my personal progress on the tenor horn I took some Associated Board (ABRSM) examinations passing grade 5 in 2012.

### **2.3. Summary**

The long history of brass bands in the Scottish Borders that resulted in the extended time span in this study meant that it was necessary to employ many different methods in the research. With historical enquiry it is important to engage with primary source material and the six criteria listed by Garrachan (Stone 2008:177), quoted in the introduction to this chapter, are designed to establish the authority and credibility of source material. These criteria have been applied when evaluating each type of source material in this thesis. Primary source material found in individual band archives including minute books, photographs, music manuscripts and concert programmes which were produced within the band, are authoritative and credible source material as they are in their original form. Recordings in the form of long-playing records and CDs, usually made by individual bands for the purposes of promoting the band and raising money, indicate some of the repertoire of the band and the standard of playing at that time, but may have been edited. Sound and video recordings taken by me of local events for the purpose of research are an authentic record of actual events that took place and were witnessed personally.

Newspaper articles used as source material can accurately date the events referred to; however, the informant may have been a reporter who may or may not have been present at the event, or reports of brass band events could have been supplied by a member of the band itself. In the nineteenth century, when local newspapers were printed in every town and were read mainly by the inhabitants of that town, the reports in the local newspapers often contained an element of bias in favour of their own town and this has had to be taken into consideration in evaluating the information. In modern times local newspapers are more regionalized and reporters cover a much wider area reporting on events, such as the common ridings for several different towns, so bias is less likely but it cannot be entirely ruled out. Historical information about some bands has been researched by individual members of the bands and where this is referenced and verifiable from other pre-existing sources such as newspaper reports this can be taken as reliable.

Ethnomusicological methods have been used in researching the recent past. In particular, interviews have been used to gain information on the Borders brass bands and events within living memory. They were also used to gain an understanding of the experiences of the interviewees of taking part in local events, particularly the common ridings. The relationship of the bands with the community is a key topic in this thesis so questions were designed to draw out the informants' views on how the bands serve the community and how the community supports the bands. Questions put to those interviewees who had experience of playing in bands for a many years were designed to indicate their personal experiences of change and continuity over time.

Coming to the research as an outsider with little previous knowledge of either the brass band movement or the Scottish Borders meant that it was possible to approach the research with fewer preconceptions, but also meant that it was necessary to study the background of both the area and brass bands in greater detail to put the research in context. Living in the region for twelve years and attending local events broadened my understanding of the Borders and the local traditions. My personal involvement with the brass bands in the area started as an outsider when I began the research, but I became an insider and a participant in the band 'world' (Finnegan 2007 [1989]) when I began to learn a brass instrument and to play in a

band. Later I was able to understand more fully the internal world of the brass banding by playing in contests. Playing in the bands has enabled me to understand the importance of the role of bands in the annual calendar of events undertaken by the brass bands in the Scottish Borders for their communities, especially the common ridings which are unique to the area.

### **3. The geography, history and culture of the Scottish Borders**

#### **'The Soft Lowland Tongue of the Borders'<sup>32</sup>**

The Scottish Borders is a distinct geographical area of Scotland. Traditionally an agricultural area, it became industrialized in the nineteenth century with the introduction of a mechanized textile industry in the towns (Gulvin 1973, 1979, 1984). This chapter will discuss the topography, culture, industrial heritage and changing demography of the region and how this produced the historical conditions which favoured the formation of brass bands. The history of the Scottish Borders brass bands is inextricably linked to the history and culture of the region.

The social and economic history of Scotland has changed enormously over the past two hundred years and this is reflected in the history of the Borders region (Devine & Mitchison 1998; Fraser & Morris 1990; Dickson & Treble 1992). During this time the region has attracted many incomers from other parts of Scotland and England who have been assimilated into the population, but this has not diminished the strong sense of identity of those born and bred in the Borders. Borderers have positive feelings for the area for its natural attractions and for cultural elements associated with it and, as Honko found in his study in Sweden, this leads to an active learning of local legends, local history and culture (Honko 1988:95).

#### **3.1. Geographical and Historical Context**

The term Scottish Borders is usually taken to mean the area north of the Anglo-Saxon border between Scotland and England and it is a marginal area between Scotland's Central Belt to the north and the North-East of England to the south. (See inset map in Fig. 3.1) This border area between England and Scotland was originally known as the Marches and the old shires of Berwick, Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles were traditionally the Eastern and Middle Marches in Scotland. These shires were

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<sup>32</sup> A song written and composed by W. Sanderson, poet and author, who for many years edited the *Border Magazine*. The song is sung at many of the Common Ridings.

amalgamated into a single regional council in 1975. One of the earliest uses of the term ‘Scottish Borders’ was by Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)<sup>33</sup> in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders* and the region is sometimes referred to as ‘Scott country’ because of this association and because his house, Abbotsford, is situated just outside Galashiels.

Until the seventeenth century when James VI of Scotland became James I of England in 1603 and united the two crowns, the area was the subject of great controversy between the two nations. Raiding parties, known as ‘reivers’, from both sides caused the area to be unsettled for over three hundred years. These forays became a fact of life for the people of the Borders and formed the basis of a rich legacy of songs, ballads and stories. The general insecurity of life resulting from the proximity of the frontier with England and the general lawlessness of life encouraged a strong sense of community in the Borders towns to withstand these outside threats and this has survived to the present day.

Many people are descended from these reiving families resulting in a strong sense of identity among Borderers with family names such as Armstrong, Elliot, Kerr and Turnbull found throughout the region. There remain many links between the towns resulting from these strong family ties. As Moffat has shown, “Names were important to Borderers (they still are) because they stood obviously for family, the binding agent amongst all the disorder and chaos visited upon them and created by the reivers” (Moffat 2002:249).

Geographically the region consists of the basin of the river Tweed and its principal tributaries and these are surrounded by high hills forming a natural boundary. The area is predominantly agricultural with sheep rearing dominating on the surrounding hills with some arable farming in the valleys. The hardy black-faced sheep are able to live in the higher heather-clad hills where for generations shepherds looked after them with the assistance of their working Border collie dogs (Spence 1994:8).

In 1994 the area had a population of 103,000 inhabitants, but this was only 2% of the Scottish total, and even these were concentrated in the few towns situated along the valleys of the river Tweed and its tributaries (Spence 1994:5). Within this

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<sup>33</sup> Sir Walter Scott was a Scottish novelist, poet and playwright who was very popular through the nineteenth century.

rural area the population is scattered with the towns well spaced out from each other and because of this the towns are all very individual in character and the native inhabitants fiercely loyal to their own town. Gwen Kennedy Neville has defined how a town “stands for order, “community”, belonging and loyalty to home, kin and country” (Neville 1994:65) attributes that are to be found in the towns of the Scottish Borders.

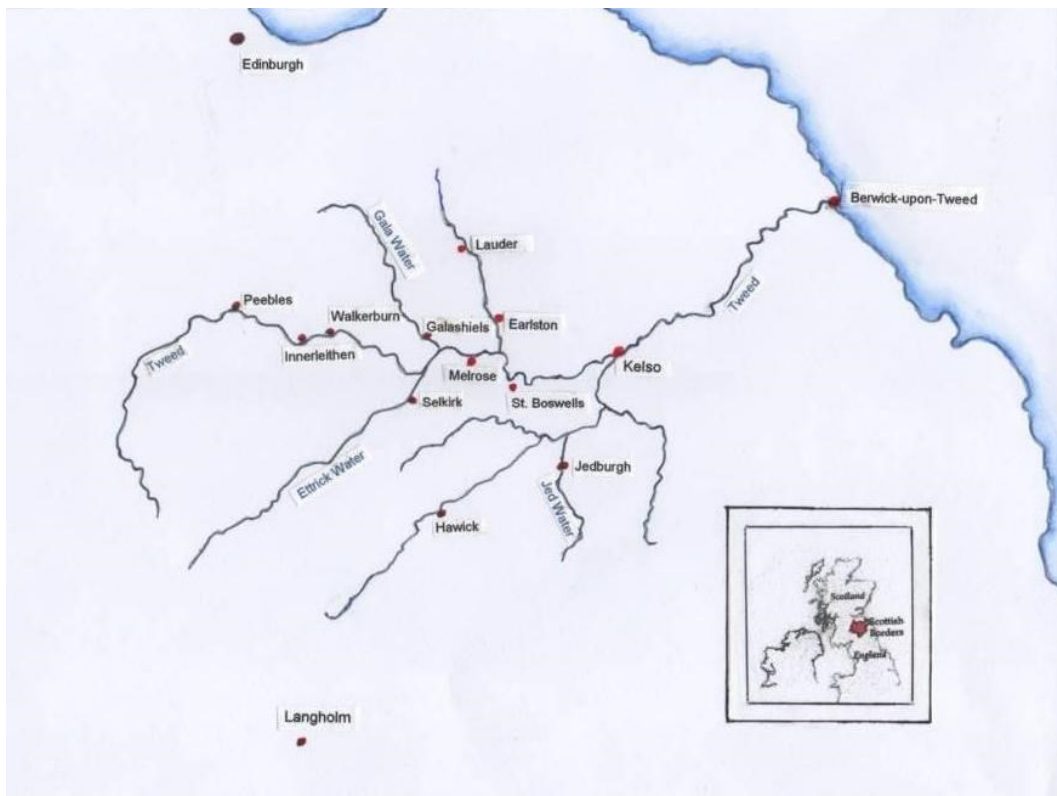


Fig 3.1. Map of the Scottish Borders area showing the principal rivers and towns

Different historical reasons exist for the situation of most of the towns and villages in the region. The village of St. Boswells was at an important east-west crossing of the old Roman road called Dere Street which was the main north-south route through the region to England until the seventeenth century, and Jedburgh was also sited near this road. Peebles and Selkirk were sited near to king’s castles which were the administrative centres of those shires, and Kelso and Melrose were set up to serve the needs of nearby abbeys. Galashiels was sited on the lower, fast-flowing, reaches of Gala Water, a tributary of the river Tweed, where the river could power the weaving mills (Omand 1995:161).

### 3.1.1. Riding the Marches

Until the seventeenth century the burgesses of the Scottish Border towns regularly rode the boundaries of the common lands to defend them against encroachment by neighbouring lairds (lords) (Morris 1990:92). This continued until an Act of Parliament in 1695 formalised these land grabs and communities slowly lost their common land (Moffat 2002:284). Common land was important not only for grazing but also for providing wood and peat for fires, timber and thatch for houses, and wood for equipment and utensils (Bogle 2004:59). Riding the boundaries provided the inhabitants with a mental map of their lands before the days of written surveys. The earliest record of Riding the Marches in Selkirk was in 1509, Hawick in 1640 and Peebles in 1556 (Bogle 2004:57). Many other towns in Scotland rode the marches but these have largely died out. Musselburgh officially rides the marches only every 21 years but the town has also instituted a festival week that is similar to the common ridings. Two others are Lanark Lanimer Day and Linlithgow Marches Day, but the “home of the ridings is the Scottish Borders” (Bogle 2004:11).

In Berwick-upon-Tweed, just on the English side of the Scotland-England border, they Ride the Bounds every 1st May<sup>34</sup>. The custom dates back to 1438 when local officials were deciding where Scotland ended and England began; Berwick changed hands between Scotland and England many times and Berwick shares this historical boundary riding with the Scottish Borders towns. A somewhat similar event taking place elsewhere in England and is known as Beating the Bounds (Bogle 2004:9) however, these events are organised by the churches usually taking place at Rogationtide, immediately preceding Ascension Day, when the bounds of the parish are perambulated providing the parish with a map of the boundaries.

The festivals that are now held annually in the Scottish Borders towns are known collectively as common ridings, and are loosely based on the custom of marking the boundaries of the town’s common land (Omand 1995:162). The one essential element is an emphasis on horses and horsemanship and the common ridings “form the core of Border cultural identity” (Moffat 2002:244). These festivals

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<sup>34</sup> < <http://berwickbounds.webs.com/historyoftheride.htm> >. Downloaded 01/05/2013.

look back to the past history of the Borders and are discussed more fully in chapter 7 where the integral link between these community celebrations and the brass bands, a strong bond which is central to the argument in this thesis, is described in greater detail.

Royal Burgh status, whereby the King gave the use of his land to the burghs for grazing and woodland, was given to Jedburgh, Peebles, Selkirk and Lauder in the twelfth century. Corporate identity was reinforced by possession of a burgh seal and by the year 1400 at least two-thirds of Scottish burghs had seals (Bogle 2004:58). Some landowners set up Burghs of Barony that had a Royal Charter; examples of these are Hawick, set up by Douglas of Drumlanrig in 1511, and Galashiels (Omand 1995:163). Burghs of Barony had the right to weekly markets and yearly fairs. In those days the focus of burgh life was the market place and facing this was the townhouse or tollbooth which was the centre of civic authority (Bogle 2004:58). Most ancient ridings probably began at the market cross, and today the market squares and market crosses are still a focus of the modern-day common riding festivals.

With the regionalisation of local government in the 1960s the formal post of Provost (the Scottish equivalent of a mayor) in each town was done away with, but it is still retained as an honorary post at the common ridings.

### 3.1.2. The Flodden tradition

September 2013 marked the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Flodden which took place just on the English side of the Scotland-England border. The battle was a disastrous defeat for the Scots by the English in which about 10,000 men were killed including the king, James IV of Scotland. Whilst this anniversary went almost unrecognised in most of Scotland it was commemorated with ceremonies, plays and exhibitions in the Borders towns all of which lost many men in the battle. It is unusual that such a defeat should be commemorated, but it has become closely linked with the common ridings especially through acts of remembrance held to honour those men from the Borders that fell at Flodden and in all subsequent wars. The battle is felt to epitomise “some important chivalric ideals, honour, bravery,

truthfulness, self-sacrifice and loyalty to one's superiors, even when it led to disaster" (Bogle 2004:132). As Michael Moore<sup>35</sup> wrote:

The ballads and verses of the region tell the stories of these years, passed on through the generations to this day. Every town has its tales, its memories, its pride. The dangers and challenges of the years after Flodden created an independence of mind, a resilience and a set of community values that resonate to this day (*Sunday Herald* 8 September 2013)

### **3.2. Industrial Heritage**

In many ways the Scottish Borders was an unlikely place for the development of woollen manufacturing as it was isolated, both geographically and psychologically, and it had poor communications with the rest of the country until it was opened up by the advent of the railways in the 1840s. Originally coal had to be transported in horse carts over very poor roads from the Lothians because there is no local coal in the Borders, although the coming of the railways improved the situation (Gulvin 1973:46-47). The abundant water supply from the Tweed and its tributaries, the most important of which are the Teviot and the Slitrig in Hawick, the Ettrick Water in Selkirk and the Gala Water in Galashiels that helped in establishing the woollen industry where water was necessary for washing fleeces and powering the mills. Large quantities of local wool from the sheep kept on the hills surrounding the Tweed and Teviot valleys together with labour that was localised in the towns fostered the growth of the textile industry in Borders towns during the nineteenth century. 'Tweed' cloth was founded on locally produced wool, but this production was gradually overtaken by textiles and knitwear with much of the raw materials later being imported.

The movement of population from the country to the Border towns in the nineteenth century, which Melodee Beals has argued was in fact a form of *clearance* from the land (Beals 2011:28), was partly caused by the increasing commercialism of

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<sup>35</sup> Michael Moore is Member of Parliament at Westminster for the constituency of Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk.

farming by the large landowners. Whilst this may be one factor as to why a large part of the population moved from the land to the towns, another was the attraction of regular employment and higher wages in the textile mills. Census figures supplied by the Scottish Borders Council help to demonstrate this change; in 1801 the population of Hawick was 4,105 and Galashiels only 1,080, but by 1891 their populations were 20,556 and 11,607 respectively, indicating their rapid growth due to the textile industry. However, by 1981 the respective populations of these two towns had declined to 16,910 and 8,324 as the woollen industry contracted and many of the mills closed. In 2008 the population in Hawick had further contracted to just 13,787 but had risen to 12,229 in Galashiels probably due to new housing and job opportunities arising from the town being within commuting distance of Edinburgh<sup>36</sup>.

The census figures quoted above show that the population of Hawick almost quadrupled in the first half of the nineteenth century, and in the boom years of the third quarter of the century, people left the land in droves and came into the towns throughout the Borders. It is thought that the distinctive Hawick accent is probably left over from the agricultural past, and Moffat describes how the textile workers in the towns looked down on those who had stayed in the countryside believing they were missing out on the busy social life in the towns, especially the pub culture (Moffat 2007:476).

Gulvin has made an in depth study of the history of the hosiery and textile industry in the Scottish Borders (Gulvin 1973, 1979, 1984). Hawick, the largest town in the Borders, has long been a centre for the wool trade with England, originally doing yarn-spinning for English manufacturers in the late eighteenth century and subsequently becoming a centre for hosiery production before turning to knitted garments, particularly in cashmere (Gulvin 1973:39). The second largest town, Galashiels, is where woven goods, particularly tweed cloth, were originally produced. Jedburgh and Kelso had a reputation for blankets and imitation Welsh flannel, although in the early nineteenth century Jedburgh had concentrated on hosiery production like Hawick. The North British Rayon factory was constructed in

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<sup>36</sup> Source of Census figures: 2008 Mid-year Estimates GRO(S).

Estimates are based on best-fit to Data Zones, as devised for Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics – see [www.sns.gov.uk](http://www.sns.gov.uk). Downloaded 10/10/2012 from Scottish Borders in Figures 2010. It is not known whether boundary changes which occurred have affected the various census figures quoted.

Jedburgh in 1929 but closed in 1956, putting 70% of Jedburgh's working population out of work. Kelso was always more agricultural than manufacturing because the Duke of Roxburghe, whose house, Floors Castle, is on the edge of the town, prevented the building of mills in the town. In the early nineteenth century Selkirk, Innerleithen and Peebles only had one mill each and the upper Tweed valley was a remote area off the main routes from Edinburgh to England. Langholm began industrialisation with cotton and thread industries but these were displaced by wool later (Gulvin 1973:42).

There was an in-migration of English hosiery workers to Hawick searching for jobs in the 1840s (Moffat 2007:473), and during the nineteenth century Hawick was considered to be the place to migrate to as the expected level of earnings in the town was relatively high (Gulvin 1984:48). Wages were generally good in the Borders region and, as it was an area of low population density with little opportunities for employment outside textiles, migrants were attracted into the area from other parts of Scotland as well as the north of England (Beals 2004:120). Close links have always existed between the woollen and hosiery industries in England and Scotland, key workers often being recruited from Yorkshire, although in the Scottish Borders the textile industry became synonymous with quality rather than mass production as in Yorkshire. The links between these two textile areas brought workers to the Borders who had played in or conducted brass bands in the north of England, whereas this link would not have existed in other areas of Scotland where textiles were not the main industry.

The fact that most of the mills were run by water, not coal, this limited the amount of machinery that could be operated. Although the coming of the railway in 1849 halved the price of coal it was only after 1860 that steam power was used for the powered weaving of fancy goods. In the early nineteenth century some people had spoken of Galashiels or Hawick becoming the "Leeds of Scotland", but it never happened as the use of water power limited growth (Gulvin 1973:96-97). In many ways the area was slow to develop and until the 1920s it was only the mills in Selkirk that had electric power; there was no electricity in the town itself (Gilbert 1985:165).

In the 30 years prior to the First World War the textile industry in the Borders slowed and showed signs of decline. The 'Great Depression' lasted from 1873 to the

mid-1890s and was a time of low prices and falling demand. In the 1890s protectionist tariffs against the import of textiles from the Borders threw thousands out of work in Galashiels. Throughout the period the local newspapers regularly reported on the state of trade, the following article being typical of the period:

#### SOUTH OF SCOTLAND WOOLLEN TRADE.

There is no change to report on the state of trade in this district. Orders for winter are coming in very slowly, and it looks as if this season will be a very short one. There are still many mills on short time. In few of the factories the looms are all in work. Repeat orders for spring and summer goods are not coming in at all well, and it is thought that these orders, which are so much depended upon to keep the looms going at this time of year, cannot now be expected to come to hand in any quantity. (*St. Ronan's Standard* 28 February 1894)

As a result of the fluctuation in trade, in the late nineteenth century many people in the Scottish Borders were unable to find work and there was a steady stream of emigration, especially to Canada, the USA and Australia, resulting in a fall in the population. Robert Smail's Printing Works in Innerleithen<sup>37</sup> were agents for the Red Star and White Star Lines and the names and destinations of the ships leaving were advertised in the local paper printed by them. The following article gives a typical report of people leaving Innerleithen due to the difficulty of finding employment:

EMIGRATION – Over a dozen persons left the railway stations here on Monday morning for the colonies, mostly for Queensland, and others are preparing to leave this district for the United States, Canada and Australia... The house-building business is nearly suspended and outdoor employment is scarce, while factory labour is not quite so readily reached as we have lately experienced. (*St. Ronan's Standard* 31 March 1883)

The textile trade began to pick up in the early twentieth century and recovery was boosted by government contract work for service uniforms during the First World War; however, wages in the Borders remained over ten per cent lower than those in

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<sup>37</sup> Robert Smail's Printing Works are now owned by The National Trust for Scotland and display examples of tickets sold by them to émigrés.

central Scotland throughout the twentieth century (Dickson & Treble 1992:212). The war had boosted trade for woollen outerwear, and knitted fabrics became more popular for garments which had previously been made from woven cloth (Gulvin 1984:87). Production therefore shifted towards fashion garments for both adults and children, with the stocking trade dying away. In the 1920s work in the textile trade was again in short supply with the local paper showing that more than 50% of people employed in the tweed trade were on short time, with the hosiery and underwear trade in the same position (*Peeblesshire Standard* 22nd December 1920). By the following year it was reported that there was no improvement of the state of the tweed industry with “fewer looms being employed every week” (*Peeblesshire Standard* 6 April 1921).

During the Second World War manufacture was confined to underwear and outerwear for the military and ‘Utility’ products for the home market. In the 1930s cashmere had become the distinguishing product from Hawick and after the war recovery was rapid, although fashion caused short runs and fluctuations in trade; cashmere products were aimed at the higher end of the market so they were not as affected by the depression of the 1930s as the rest of the trade.

Production was again halted by the Korean War which led to a steep rise in the price of imported wool and another general recession in the textile industry followed (Gulvin 1984:122). The industry then stagnated with no real expansion until the 1970s, when, having failed to keep abreast of inflation, the industry experienced a real decline which resulted in a large reduction in the workforce. During the 1960s many people from the Borders again emigrated, this time taking advantage of the £10 fares that were offered to people to emigrate principally to Australia and New Zealand<sup>38</sup>.

The decline and depopulation in the Borders, which has continued to the present day, was made worse by the closure of the railways in 1969 which once again made Hawick and other Border towns isolated and unattractive for would-be migrants due to their remote geographical position. The woollen trade controlled most of the income-earning abilities of a large proportion of the population in the

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with Colin Crozier. 20/03/2010. SA2010.31. He emigrated to New Zealand in 1962 on a £10 ticket, met his wife in New Zealand and stayed there for 30 years before returning to his home town of Hawick.

Borders, and there was little alternative employment for men and also a chronic shortage of female labour, many of whom were part-time (Gulvin 1984:129-130). The fact that the Borders work force produced a relatively low level of quality goods per employee, rather than the cheaper mass-produced goods that were produced in other areas such as Yorkshire, together with growing competition from abroad, particularly in the Far East where similar goods could be produced much cheaper, eventually caused the closure of all but a few of the mills today. At times all these factors would have impacted on the brass bands as people left the area to find employment elsewhere.

The introduction of an electronics industry to the area in the late twentieth century helped to stabilise the population although many of these firms later failed as well. Chalmers Stillie, a resident of Selkirk, explained how incomers have been absorbed into the town:

In the last 50 years if it wasn't for incomers the town would be finished because the textile industry is went to bits. The electronic industry was here for a while...I don't like to use that term 'incomers', but I suppose it's a term... I'd say that a lot of the people who come in here are very quickly part of the system – part of the enthusiasm.<sup>39</sup>

In the Borders an 'incomer' is a newcomer, someone who has moved into the area from England or abroad or even from another part of Scotland, someone who is not a native of the area and who has not been born and brought up there. This is further evidence of the close community feel in the Border towns. In this way there are similarities between the Borders many other more isolated communities; for example, the island community on Walsay in Shetland, where Cohen found there is a "densely knit web of kinship and a powerful sense of historically founded discreteness" (Cohen 1987:24) arising from the historical remoteness of the area. However, at the beginning of the 21st century many people have moved into the Borders who now commute to Edinburgh and the Lothians for work as employment prospects in the area are poor; these incomers have helped to stem the depopulation of the region. The Borders has also become a popular area for retirees and this has

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<sup>39</sup> Interview with Chalmers Stillie. 09/03/2010. SA2010.28

brought to the area a considerable number of older people who now form a high proportion of the population. These people often have increased leisure time to take part in amateur musical groups such as brass bands, flute groups or operatic societies.

### **3.3. Communications**

Until the early nineteenth century there were few roads linking the towns in the Scottish Borders and a road from Galashiels to Selkirk, a distance of just six miles, was not built until 1832. The building of a railway through the Borders in the mid-nineteenth century enabled contact with the rest of Scotland and Northern England for the previously isolated Borders communities. The line from Edinburgh to Galashiels opened in 1849 and subsequently, the Waverley Line as it was named after Walter Scott's novels, ran through to Hawick and Carlisle by 1862. The railways had a big impact on the development of the textile trade in the Scottish Borders. For example, Gilbert has described how, within the period 1830-1900, Selkirk moved from being an isolated place which had communication only with its near neighbours to being a major exporting centre of the textile trade sending goods all over the world (Gilbert 1985:145).

By the late nineteenth century there was an extensive network of branch lines serving most of the towns and many of the villages in the Scottish Borders. This network of railways provided cheap travel and enabled the inhabitants to travel to Edinburgh, Carlisle and beyond. Peebles was served by two lines, one from Edinburgh and another down the Tweed valley through Innerleithen to Galashiels. The coming of the North British Railway from Edinburgh to Peebles in 1853 was considered of such importance that the presence of two bands from neighbouring towns, one from Innerleithen and one from Penicuik, were recorded at the cutting of the first turf for Peebles station on 9 August 1853. The event is recorded in Buchan's *A History of Peeblesshire* (1925:118) and in the minutes of the Gutterbluid Club<sup>40</sup>:

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<sup>40</sup> The Gutterbluid Club was founded in 1823 and is unique to Peebles. Gutterbluid is a word used to describe one who was born in Peebles, often into a family who have lived in the town for several generations. "The formation of such a club...may have reflected a certain feeling of insecurity in the members that was engendered by the numbers of incomers as a result of the changes that were increasingly taking place during the nineteenth century". (Brown & Lawson 1990:283). The extract from the club minutes comes from the private research of Douglas Mackie a copy of which is in my possession.

The mills at Innerleithen were stopped and the villagers marched en-masse enlivened by the strains of their band, and had just reached the town before the Penicuik band soon appeared fifteen strong playing “Garb of Old Gaul”. Peebles had no band this year.

The importance of the coming of the railway is indicated by the fact that the mills were stopped and people from the other towns went to the opening of the station. The distance from Innerleithen to Peebles is approximately six and a half miles and the extract suggests that villagers marched the whole way, which would have been necessary as a railway line from Innerleithen to Peebles was not opened until 1866. People were used to walking long distances in those days and presumably the villagers from Innerleithen walked home again after the opening ceremony.

Excursion trains became popular for working people and during the second half of the nineteenth century the amount of free time from work and spare cash available to ordinary working class people increased as wages rose during this period enabling them to take advantage of these excursions (Walvin 1978:20). Excursion trains often ran between Borders towns and further afield for mill outings or special events such as brass band contests.

People born and bred in the Border towns who have left are regarded as ‘exiles’, especially those “who live overseas after having forsaken the town to emigrate to the world beyond” (Neville 1994: 29). Cheap rail travel in the nineteenth century enabled many ‘exiles’ to return to their home towns for the annual common riding celebrations. As part of their festival duties, the pipe band in Langholm still marches to the site of the former railway station to welcome the ‘exiles’ home even though the station closed over fifty years ago. A feature of the Scottish Borders common ridings today is the welcoming back of the ‘exiles’ to the town and the part played by ‘exiles’ in the common ridings are discussed further in chapter 7.

The railways had brought prosperity to the Scottish Borders and it was a severe blow to this rural area when the Waverley line and all the branch lines were closed in 1969 as part of the cuts made by the then transport minister, Dr. Richard Beeching. However, by this time travel in the area was better served by roads and local people were able to travel by buses and cars. There is now a plan to reintroduce

a railway from Edinburgh to the Borders which is due to open in 2015, but it will terminate at Tweedbank, near Galashiels. Unlike the old lines the new line will not have a branch line network serving all the Border towns nor will it go through to Carlisle linking the area with the North of England so it will continue to leave large parts of the area still relatively isolated.

### **3.4. Changing social fabric**

A large proportion of the land in the Scottish Borders was, and it still is, in the hands of the aristocracy giving them power (Beals 2004:28). Ownership of land in the area has always been dominated by titled landowners such as the Dukes of Roxburghe, Buccleuch and Sutherland and the Marquis of Lothian. The Duke of Buccleuch is the second largest landowner in Scotland after the Forestry Commission, and the largest private landowner in Britain (Moffatt 2007:498). These landowners have also been engaged in local and national politics, with either the Duke of Buccleuch or the Duke of Roxburghe being convenor of the Roxburghshire County Council for forty-three of the years between 1900 and 1975. In parliamentary politics Sir Alec Douglas Home of Coldstream (formerly the Earl of Home), the present Marquis of Lothian, and the 9th Duke of Buccleuch have all been Members of Parliament at Westminster.

The growth of the textile industry in the nineteenth century resulted in the rise of many newly rich mill owners who built themselves large houses on the outskirts of the town or in the surrounding countryside where their houses are still much in evidence today. There was a huge gulf between the mill owners, the gentry and the workers in the mills. Alistair Moffat explains that even “in comparatively small towns such as Gala [Galashiels], Selkirk and Hawick these sharp contrasts were daily evident. There existed great rivalry between the mill-owning families and they expressed it...in the splendour of their houses” (Moffat 2007:478). The workers would have had to pass the villas of the mill owners on their way to work, but a spirit of deference appears to have prevailed. In Hawick the mill owners did not build themselves such large house as were found in other Borders towns because they preferred to spend their money on holidays in the South of France (Moffat 2007:478). This situation continued until the changes in society brought about by the two World Wars and the economic depression of the 1930s. In chapter 4 the

importance of patronage of the brass bands in the Borders by the gentry and the new middle classes will be discussed further as it was a factor in the development of the bands in the area in the nineteenth century. Patronage provided funding through donations and subscriptions which helped to develop and sustain the bands.

### **3.5. Musical Culture of the area**

The Scottish Borders has a strong musical heritage, particularly in song, with John Ruskin describing it as “the singing country” (Moffat 2007:453). Old Scottish Border ballads and songs describing the folklore and turbulent history of the area are a feature of this cultural heritage. Throughout the nineteenth century, a period of “profound economic and social change...old songs were still sung and as a new identity for the emerging towns was created, these were adapted and new ones written” (Moffat 2007:453). This part of the musical heritage is most clearly demonstrated during the common ridings when songs that are specific to the various towns, many of which are very old and recall historical events such as the Battle of Flodden, are proudly sung by the inhabitants. (This will be discussed further in relation to the common ridings in Chapter 7).

There is a whole group of ancient songs known as ‘Border ballads’; these were traditionally sung unaccompanied and were part of an oral tradition. Walter Scott, with the help of others, collected many of these ballads into his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders* in 1802-3 (Moffat 2007:329). They tell stories of raids and battles in the border lands between England and Scotland, of family feuding, as well as stories of the supernatural such as the tales of Thomas the Rhymer. Many of the stories refer to real people and real events, to battles lost and won. These songs were considered important and would have been lost if they had not been passed down by women who sang them to each other and “who had become the memory of that culture”, and it was they who helped Scott to collect and record the ballads (Moffat 2007:329). Local town songs are often derived from these old Border ballads.

There was a tradition of women singing at work in the mills<sup>41</sup>, and in the mid-nineteenth century the singing tradition was reinforced by the formation of many

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<sup>41</sup> This was told to the author by several women who had worked in the mills in Hawick and Galashiels.

choral societies in the Borders. Many of these choral societies were formed as a result of singing classes held by Mainzer and the rival “Wilhem’s method” of Hullah; for example, sixty singers enrolled for a course of singing lessons in Selkirk in 1847 and this eventually led to the formation of the “Wilhem Choral Society in the town (Marr, 1889:xcvii). This society later became the Selkirk Choral Society in 1856 (*The Southern Reporter* 5 April 1856). By the end of the nineteenth century most of the Border towns boasted choral societies, however, none of these large choral societies now exists although there are number of smaller amateur choirs. In 1932 a male voice choir was started in Hawick known as the PSA choir, the initials standing for Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, and this choir is still in existence. Many of the towns have at one time boasted their own orchestras and more recently the Scottish Borders Community Orchestra drew players from across the region, but this orchestra ceased to function in 2009.

Today most of the towns have their own amateur operatic societies that were started in the early twentieth century, for example, the Galashiels Operatic Society celebrated its centenary in 2007, and the Melrose Operatic Society has been performing nothing but Gilbert and Sullivan operas since it started in 1935. Each Border town takes it in turn to perform for a week annually during February and March with rehearsals during the six months previously. The operas, or usually musicals, take place in a strict order in different towns on consecutive weeks so that they do not compete with each other for audience and many people attend several different operas. The orchestras for these operas are mainly made up of local players with the brass players often being drawn from the local brass bands.

The Borders has a long piping tradition with the now extinct Border pipes of the eighteenth century. These were similar to the Northumbrian pipes and both being inflated with bellows under the arm rather than blown as in Highland pipes (Johnson 1972:99). Although pipe bands are generally associated with the Highlands of Scotland they are also popular throughout the Lowlands and several of the Scottish Border towns have pipe bands.

There is also a strong folk music tradition in the Scottish Borders with several fiddle and accordion bands. Many of the towns have musical societies which organize concerts, usually during the winter months, often bringing in well-known

performers. Together all these activities give rise to a particularly rich musical scene of which the brass bands are just one element, but combined together they mean that over a long period of time many of the inhabitants of the Border towns have taken part in some form of amateur musical activity. There exists a strong need for amateur music-making in the towns of the Scottish Borders because they are relatively small tightly-knit communities within a rural area where travel in the winter is often difficult creating a need for community entertainment. This means that there is a ready audience for performances by local amateur musicians and visiting professional musicians alike whether singers or instrumentalists. The diverse musical heritage of the Borders and the strong musical scene that developed during the nineteenth century, together with the need for local entertainment in the isolated rural towns, helped to provide the musical background into which brass bands were easily assimilated.

### **3.6. The Scottish Borders today**

The Borders today is still a largely agricultural region. Local government reorganisation in 1975 swept away the old county and burgh councils and created a new Scottish Borders Regional Council. However, many local people prefer to keep their traditional county allegiance and still use the old county names such as Roxburghshire in their postal addresses rather than identifying with the region as a whole by using the term ‘Scottish Borders’. With the decline of the textile industry in the late twentieth century many of the large houses built by prosperous mill owners in the nineteenth century have been bought by incomers to the area or converted into flats.

Today the woollen industry has declined almost to the point of virtual extinction leaving many examples of redundant buildings once associated with the industry in the Border towns. Many of the mill buildings have been demolished with others converted into housing or used for other commercial purposes. In July 2008 the well-known knitwear firm, Pringle of Scotland, closed its factory in Hawick leaving only a few small woollen firms in the town, and in June 2010 one of remaining firms, Peter Scott & Son, went into receivership.

The effects of the decline and closure of the mills as people have left to find work elsewhere was described by a local person, Brian Bonsor, and it gives a graphic description of how the economic situation has changed in the town of Hawick in the last sixty years:

Hawick now is more or less a dead town; just at the moment, it is dying on its feet and people are leaving in droves. It used to have a population of, what, seventeen and a half thousand and it's about fourteen thousand now. And for the youngsters there is nowhere for them to go except out [of the town]. And all the hosiery factories, with the single exception of one or two very tiny ones have just folded. The tweed trade is totally dead. There is only one tweed workshop and that is a tiny little one, not one of the great big, huge buildings. And so people are voting with their feet and just going. It's very sad because after the war Hawick was a boom town. Money just poured into the town and some of the people in charge of the hosiery factories thought Hawick would always have a premium position in knitwear.<sup>42</sup>

Brian Bonsor went on to explain that one reason for the demise of the woollen industry in the Borders had been because goods could be produced far more cheaply in countries in the Far East.

Because the area was always dependent on one industry, cycles of depression in the textile trade during the nineteenth century and twentieth centuries forced many people to emigrate from the Borders, either to other areas of Great Britain or abroad, a feature which has continued to the present day. Lynn Jamieson's study of young people in the Scottish Borders discusses how these changes have affected the choices young people have to make, whether to stay in the region or to migrate (Jamieson 2000). Jamieson has shown that leaving or staying is not a straightforward choice for many young people who can have strong attachments to their family ties and their local community. This is an important issue not only for the demography of the area but also for participation in leisure pursuits and today bowls clubs, choirs, brass bands and many other leisure organisations have an aging and declining membership and have to develop new strategies to encourage new members.

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<sup>42</sup> Interview with Brian Bonsor. 28/08/2007. Private recording by author.

There is only one small university campus in the area, the Borders Textile College in Galashiels, now part of Heriot-Watt University, which was originally set up for the study of textiles and textile design. Because of the lack of further education or training many young people have to leave the area once they leave school. As Stuart Black, a young person who returned to the Borders after university explained:

At the minute there are not that many opportunities here to be honest. A lot of people find more opportunities from your Edinburgh's or your Glasgow's or further afield. Some go to Cardiff, Manchester...London, because the opportunities are there to further themselves in what they do.<sup>43</sup>

Out of a group of Stuart's school friends who went away to university he was the only one who returned to the Scottish Borders. Stuart studied brass banding at university and has returned to conduct bands in the Borders, to teach brass playing and to work for the Scottish Brass Band Association in developing youth bands.

### **3.7. Summary**

In many ways the geography, history and culture of the Scottish Borders has made the area somewhat inward looking and conservative. This chapter has shown that boundaries are especially important, with the region enclosed by a natural boundary of hills with few roads crossing it even today. The rural and predominantly agricultural nature of the region has meant that the isolated towns have developed strong individual identities over the centuries.

The turbulent past history of the Scottish Borders made for strong communities able to withstand outside threats as demonstrated in the need to protect the town's common lands which led to the riding of the boundaries. The strong Borders identity is exhibited most strongly in the common riding festivals which, together with the Flodden tradition, look back to significant historical events that are remembered annually and widely attended by large numbers of people.

Nineteenth century industrialisation brought people living and working together in close proximity in rapidly growing towns which further strengthened community

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Stuart Black. 21/11/2012. SA 2012.028

ties. It was only later improvements in roads and the coming of the railways in the mid-nineteenth century that opened up the area and gave access to the rest of Scotland and to England, establishing close links through the textile trade between the Scottish Borders and the home of brass banding in the North of England. However, the closure of the railways has to some extent isolated the area again although this has been offset by increased car travel.

Cycles of depression and the eventual demise of the textile industry have created problems for the region and caused depopulation that has had a big impact on the area. Today the need for young people to leave the Borders for further education or work has caused further depopulation and helped to increase an aging population as few of the young people return to the area for work. This impacts on the brass bands due to loss of players and results in a constant need to train replacements.

Due to its relative isolation the Scottish Borders can perhaps be considered to be confidently backward looking, eager to preserve traditions and the rich cultural heritage. The thriving musical heritage of the Borders in singing and instrumental music, together with the need for local amateur entertainment in a rural area, provided the musical background into which brass bands were able to be assimilated in the nineteenth century. These have also been important factors contributing to the survival of the brass bands into the twenty-first century.

The Scottish Borders region has been the subject of decline and depopulation making it inward looking which is reflected in the Hawick saying that “a day out of Hawick is a day wasted”. In the following chapters the unique character of the Borders area and its relative isolation that has led to the preservation of a strong Borders identity, will be shown to have impacted on the development and sustaining of brass bands in the area.

## **4. The Creation and Development of brass bands in the Scottish Borders**

### **‘True and Trusty’<sup>44</sup>**

This chapter will discuss the history and development of brass bands in the Scottish Borders and the factors that influenced their formation and the development of the brass band movement. The various types of instrumental band that were the precursors of brass bands in the Scottish Borders towns will be outlined. The chapter will discuss how the development of brass bands in the Scottish Borders was similar to and different from other areas of Scotland and England.

Most of the brass bands in the Borders were set up in the mid-nineteenth century with the aid of community involvement. This situation was similar to the hundreds of village bands in other places that were maintained by the men themselves, often aided by a committee and without the direct patronage of the mill owners (Marr 1889:134). It will be shown how the later development of brass bands in the Scottish Borders was influenced by the Volunteer Movement in the 1860s. The temperance movement was strong in the Borders in the nineteenth century and brass bands connected to this, including Salvation Army bands, existed outside the brass band movement. Only one brass band was set up in the twentieth century

Brass bands are traditionally associated with heavy industry and in the industrial Scottish Central Belt many brass bands were formed in communities where there was one employer or one industry, such as mining or steel. In the nineteenth century Scottish brass banding was inextricably linked with industry thereby exhibiting some parallels with the development of the movement in northern England (Newsome 1999:34).

### **4.1. Waits**

Waits were originally town watchmen who sounded the watch several times a night in the towns and cities on a variety of wind instruments in order to let the inhabitants

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<sup>44</sup> March by J. A. Greenwood. Published by F. Richardson Ltd in *The “Cornet” Brass (& Military) Band Journal*.

know the time. By the thirteenth century they became official town bands and comprised professional musicians, who performed for many ceremonial, social and political events for the town. Waits continued into the eighteenth century and Lyndsay Langwill mentions Jedburgh as one of the Scottish Border towns that had waits in 1764 (Langwill 1952:181). Waits were finally abolished by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 and changes in administrative infrastructure, although most of them had already been disbanded by this date (Herbert 2000:14). David Johnson has suggested that the classical form of waits were “rare in Scotland” and found only in Edinburgh (Johnson 1972:97). Galashiels had a town piper in the 1740s<sup>45</sup> and there were town pipers and drummers in Kelso and in Jedburgh up to the 1790s, so it is possible that these were the Jedburgh waits listed by Langwill (Johnson 1972:96). These examples give an indication that there were various sorts of town musicians in the Scottish Borders during the eighteenth century.

It is now generally accepted that brass bands were not directly descended from the waits and Trevor Herbert believes any direct link between waits and the later brass band movement is erroneous (Herbert 2000:15). However, Ian Jones thinks that waits may have been part of the precursors of brass bands in York (Jones 1995: 4-5). Michael Lomas explains that in Norwich waits may have later become part of the amateur civilian wind bands (Lomas 1992:79). A similar situation appears to have existed in the Scottish Borders and it will be shown that the waits in the Border towns may well have contributed to later militia and town bands that became the precursors of the brass bands.

The custom of playing in the streets during Advent and Christmas survived the abolition of the waits (Langwill 1952:180). Although the use of the term ‘waits’ in the present day usually refers to carol singers, most brass bands still perform this function today by playing carols in the streets at Christmas.

## **4.2. Early Instrumental Bands in the Scottish Borders**

Fife and drum bands<sup>46</sup> are known to have existed in Border towns as early as the sixteenth century (Bogle 2004:5). The Selkirk Flute Band celebrated its 150th

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<sup>45</sup> The Waits Website. <[www.townwaits.org.uk/HistoryIndex/Snippets](http://www.townwaits.org.uk/HistoryIndex/Snippets)> Downloaded 03/01/2013.

<sup>46</sup> Fifes are woodwind instruments like small transverse flutes.

anniversary in 2009, flute, or fife, players having been associated with the town for many years before that. In other places flute and drum bands have strong sectarian connections; however, this does not seem to be the case in the Borders although they might have originally have been symbols of Protestantism and the British military (Bogle 2000:32). In 1803 the drums and fifes of the Hawick volunteers were given the role of leading the Cornet's procession on Common Riding Day, a tradition that still survives (Bogle 2004:91). The fifes and drums play the tune *Dumbarton's Drums* which was originally the regimental tune of the Royal Scots<sup>47</sup>, the oldest regiment of the British Army, showing their original links to the military<sup>48</sup>.

'Bands of music' were in existence from the late eighteenth century, but these were not necessarily brass bands (Russell 1987:194). However, they were precursors of later brass bands with early town bands in the Scottish Borders being formed at about the same time as those in England (Newsome 1999:35). In the Borders it is most likely that many of these bands were fife and drum bands, or bands of mixed wind instruments, that were associated with the local militia volunteers boasted by many communities in those days of uncertain national security. Bands belonging to local militia are now considered to be an important strand in leading to the early formation of brass bands (Herbert 2000:15). They were aided by musicians returning home from the Napoleonic Wars and Waterloo who joined their town bands (Taylor 1979:17).

Langholm, the 'Muckle Toon'<sup>49</sup> as it is known locally, has long claimed to have the oldest band in Scotland. This tradition is founded on the story that when the Scots Greys<sup>50</sup> were returning from the Battle of Waterloo they passed through Langholm in 1815, where they were accorded a heroes' welcome by the townsfolk and greeted by a 'band of music'. The Scots Greys' commanding officer was so impressed with the band that he presented them with a brass buckle from his horse's harness and this still exists and is kept in Langholm town hall (Beattie 1950:149). The Langholm band at this time was probably a band connected with the local militia.

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<sup>47</sup> The Royal Scots was the oldest regiment in the British Army formed in 1633.

<sup>48</sup> Kennedy, John W., 1915, 'Our Common Riding Airs', *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society*, p.7.

<sup>49</sup> Muckle is a local dialect word meaning great.

<sup>50</sup> The Scots Greys were a cavalry regiment in the British Army from 1707-1971.

Being able to claim a long history is a matter of pride and importance for a band, and St. Ronan's Silver Band in Innerleithen now claims to be older than the Langholm band and has incorporated the date 1810 into the band's badge, with the band celebrating its bi-centenary in 2010. This was also most likely originally to have been a fife and drum band, or to have consisted of mixed wind instruments, connected with the local militia and not a true brass band (French & Belleville 2010:5). There does not seem to be any firm documentary evidence for this claim, but a letter to the local newspaper in 1907 from Carter Moffat stated that, "St. Ronan's Brass Band has existed for at least one hundred years without any break" and that his own memory of the band went back over sixty years (*St. Ronan's Standard* 11 December 1907). Whilst these rival claims as to which is the oldest band cannot be verified, they serve to confirm that bands of musicians existed in many of the Borders towns in the early years of the nineteenth century and that there would have been a pool of musically literate instrumental players which was important for the eventual development of the brass band movement. As Trevor Herbert has pointed out, "These early bands were the first to create a tradition of literate instrumental ensemble music making outside of the professional, middle- and upper-class enclaves in which such activity had previously been centred" (Herbert 200:18).

### **4.3. Early town bands**

There are examples of many Border towns having bands in the early nineteenth century, showing further evidence of musicians in the area. Newsome suggests that these early town bands were similar to their English counterparts (Newsome 1999:35). Mainly described as 'instrumental' bands, this implies that they consisted of mixed brass and woodwind instruments. In 1834 subscriptions were collected in Peebles for the formation of a town band. The Council was applied to for a donation but they delayed consideration and it is not known whether this was carried out (Buchan 1925:145). This band was unusual because on 27 December 1834, St. John's Day, twelve members of the new band were accepted into the craft of Freemasonry, four further members of the band already being members of the Lodge;

it then became the band to the Lodge<sup>51</sup>. This newly-formed band appears to have been successful because on 24 August 1835 it led a Liberal political procession of approximately 2,000 people around the town (Brown & Lawson 1990:288). It also attended the laying of the foundation stone of St. Peter's Episcopal Church dressed "in handsome Hussars uniform", another reference to the military nature of these early bands (*Edinburgh Evening Courant* 7 April 1836). The minutes of the Gutterbluids Club<sup>52</sup> for 5 September 1843 record that the Peebles Band of Music led the Masonic procession for the laying of the foundation stone of the new County Hall. The Peebles Instrumental Band accompanied a Masonic procession for St. John's Day in 1853 when they marched in procession to the Masons' Lodge (*Border Advertiser* 30 December 1853). Possibly because of the close association of this band with the local Masonic Lodge, it was not until 1865 that money for a new set of brass instruments was raised by public subscription and it officially became the Peebles Burgh Brass Band.

An early instrumental band in Hawick also played an important part in political rallies of the day. On one occasion in 1842 it was reported that the band had split into rival factions when marching in the High Street and that when they eventually met at the Crown Inn, neither would give way, with the result that "damage was done to bodies and instruments" (Connelly 1995:Prelude). This early band had 24 players, each of whom had to buy his instrument and uniform, the latter described as "rather splendid, consisting a flat crowned blue bonnet, trimmed with scarlet braid and adorned with a scarlet tassel. The jacket was also blue with red facings and the trousers were made of white doe skin with a scarlet stripe on the side" (Connelly 1995: Prelude). This description indicates that this was probably another early town band with military origins.

A history of the Galashiels Town Band states that the band was formed in 1834 by Mr Mack and other enthusiasts who met in an old quarry at Wyllie's Brae. Not long after that a hall was secured at Damside and within six months Mr Mack

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<sup>51</sup> Minutes of Peebles Masonic Lodge. From the private research into the history of the Peebles Burgh Band by Douglas Mackie, a long-standing member of the band.

<sup>52</sup> The Gutterbluids Club was started in 1823. The word 'gutterblood' (Scot.) means 'a low born person', while the term 'gutterbluid', regarded by some as unique to Peebles, is used to describe one who was born in Peebles, often from a family whose forebears were in Peebles for several generations.

<<http://onlineborders.org.uk/community/gutterbluids>>. Downloaded 26/01/2013.

was conducting a full band with a sound financial position (*Border Telegraph* 23 May 1933). In 1840 Mr Mack retired and Mr Anley took over. The date of 1834 is confirmed as the starting date for the Galashiels band in a fuller description of the early band given in Hall's *History of Galashiels* (1898):

The first brass band in the town, of which there is any record, originated in 1834. The instruments were procured second-hand, at a cost of £30, which was defrayed by public subscription, raised principally through the exertions of Mr Oliver, landlord of the "Tod Inn". The teacher was an English weaver named Abraham Ackroyd, and the practice room was an old unoccupied dwelling-house in Damside.

On the occasion of their first public appearance they marched from the Mill Brig up Bank Street, crossing to the old Peebles road at Waulkmillhead Mill, then up the south side of the mill lade to Botany Mill, where they halted at the door of Henry Sanderson, manufacturer, who had been the most liberal subscriber to their funds. After a few tunes had been played, Mr and Mrs Sanderson made their appearance at the door, and thanked them; and, in accordance with the hospitality common in those days, the servant girl handed round refreshments consisting of whisky and shortbread.

The instruments used at that time consisted of four clarionets [sic], one piccolo, two bugles, one trombone, one serpent, one bassoon, one trumpet, one French horn and a big drum. (Hall 1898:524)

This description is drawn from local knowledge and written within living memory of the events, so it is likely to be reasonably accurate. Galashiels Town Band still recognises 1834 as the date for its inception by incorporating the date in its badge again showing the band's pride in being able to trace a long history. The above description confirms that the Galashiels band at this time was a brass and reed band, although it does not explain whether the Galashiels band was originally of military origin, however, the players may have learned to play in a local militia band as it mentions "two bugles". The article gives a lot of information about the early formation of bands especially that the cost was raised in the community by public subscription, but that one of the principal mill owners in the town also helped considerably towards the cost showing a degree of patronage. The first teacher was

an Englishman, described as a weaver, who probably came from the North of England to work in Galashiels.

Indications suggesting the existence of an early nineteenth-century town band in Jedburgh come from the first minutes of the Jedforest Instrumental Band, formed in 1854, which mention a “former band” in the town from which some instruments were obtained<sup>53</sup>. The instruments handed down to the newly-formed Jedforest Instrumental Band included flutes, clarinets and ophicleides confirming that the earlier town band was probably a mixed wind band of a military type.

Several other early town bands are mentioned in the local newspapers of the 1850s. A report stating that music was provided for the Langholm Common Riding in 1852 by the “Langholm New Band.—who made their first public appearance that day” (*Border Advertiser* 6 August 1852). In December of the same year the Melrose Masons’ Walk was “preceded by the splendid brass band from Selkirk” (*Border Advertiser* 31 December 1852). The Lauder Instrumental Band gave a concert in February 1853 (*Border Advertiser* 4 February 1853) and the Hawick Instrumental Band gave their annual concert in March of the same year; “the proceeds of the concert were to be devoted to the purchase of music and instruments, and, this efficient and skilful band have always proved themselves worthy of public support and patronage” (*Border Advertiser* 18 March 1853).

The instrumentation of these town bands was probably mixed as they were mostly described as “instrumental” bands, the exception being the Selkirk band that was described as a “brass band” although this may indicate only that it was predominantly brass. In 1856 the instrumentation of the newly-formed Jedforest Instrumental Band is listed as five cornopeans (the early name for cornets), a tenor saxhorn, two trombones (one tenor and one bass), two ophicleides and a small bass drum, together with a clarinet and two piccolos, although these were marked “unfit for use”. By December 1857 the list of instruments shows that the clarinet had been sold to Lessunden Band (the first name of St. Boswells Brass Band) and a ‘leading saxhorn’ and a second saxhorn had been added to the band’s instrumentation thus effectively becoming an all-brass band<sup>54</sup>. The instruments then in use in the band are listed as three saxhorns, six cornopeans, four trombones (one unfit for use) and an

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<sup>53</sup> The Cash and Sederunt Book of the Jedforest Instrumental Band 1854-86.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

ophicleide. By December 1857 a ‘leading saxhorn’ and a second saxhorn had been added to the band’s instrumentation<sup>55</sup>. (This band has retained the title of an instrumental band to the present day).

Both the Jedforest Instrumental Band and the St. Boswells Band had ophicleides in their instrumentation at this time. The use of ophicleides is evidence of the continuing use of an older, key-based technology for brass instruments that in some places continued in use in brass bands throughout the nineteenth century (Herbert 2000:27).

#### 4.3.1. St. Boswells Brass Band – Case study of an early village band.

Even small communities such as the village of St. Boswells had a band, and some of the difficulties of obtaining accurate information about early bands in the Scottish Borders can be demonstrated in the case of the St. Boswells Brass Band. This was originally called the Lessunden Band after the name of a part of the present village of St. Boswells. The 1851 census showed that St. Boswells had a population of 884 which rose to around 1,200 inhabitants by the late nineteenth century; however, it has always remained a village whereas most Border towns expanded with the growing textile trade, but there were no mills in St. Boswells. Other factors account for the importance of the village which lies on an important route from England northwards and, from the 1840s, a railway junction at nearby Newtown St. Boswells, about a mile away. St. Boswells also held an ancient horse fair every year which used to rival the famous one in Appleby, Cumbria and nowadays, although horses are not sold here any longer, the gypsies and travellers still congregate on the village green every July. Within living memory there was still a large horse fair and horses were raced up and down the main street, at these times the St. Boswells Brass Band played for dancing in the evenings in the village hall<sup>56</sup>.

Pasha Peake, a local resident, wrote a history of St. Boswells (Peake 1961). Writing about the band he states:

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Information from Martin Innes a member of St. Boswells Band who remembers playing for the dances.

The first band was formed about 1858 and made its debut at a Burns centenary supper in Earlston in 1859. The players were mostly drawn from boys still at school, so when they grew up and had to leave the village in search of employment the band ceased to exist in 1865. (Peake 1961:98)

That the band was made up of boys from the local school implies that it may have been through someone connected with the school that the band was started, but there is no proof of this and it does not tell us where the instruments came from. It is interesting to note that even in those days young people had to leave the village to find employment elsewhere. Peake give the starting date for the band as 1858, however, my research in the Scottish Borders newspaper archives has shown that the first band was actually formed in St. Boswells in 1856, two years earlier than previously thought. The local newspaper gives the following account of the new band:

A Brass Band has lately been got up by subscription in this village. All the instruments, eight in number, arrived on Friday last, with a splendid drum. On Saturday evening their first performance took place. The band played several tunes through the village, walking in procession amidst a large crowd of old and young, who listened with great delight to the various tunes. During the procession a good many of the houses were illuminated, and altogether the village had a splendid appearance. (*Kelso Chronicle* 12 September 1856)

This article informs us that the band was organised by public subscription in the village and that these paid for some instruments. In order to perform the very next evening the players must have had some previous experience suggesting that they may have played in a previous band that was not a brass band. The article gives no information about the players or what instruments they played, and although the article states that this was a “brass band” this does not necessarily mean an all-brass band. The Jedforest Instrumental Brass Band sold an old clarinet to the Lessunden Band on 3 September 1857 which further confirms the existence of a band in St. Boswells at that time, but throws doubt on whether it was an all-brass band<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup> Jedforest Instrumental Band Accounts, 3 September 1857

The date of 1856 for the formation of the band is substantiated in another local newspaper which reported that:

“On Saturday last the Jedburgh Instrumental Band, dressed in their gay attire, left here in the afternoon on a coach to visit Lessunden where a band has just been started. Among the concourse drawn together to listen to the enlivening strains of the two bands was Lord Polworth...The Lessunden Band, consisting of ten players, have only been about a month (October 1856).

The band played in the village for the New Year of 1857 (*Kelso Chronicle* 2 January 1857) and by the end of the following year a report of their annual concert in aid of funds stated that the large audience showed that they were “getting popular, and deservedly so” (*Kelso Chronicle* 24 December 1858). The same article gives an insight into the type music played by the early band, stating: “if we were to particularize the band music we would instance “The Last Rose of Summer” “Auld Lang Syne” and the “Original Polka’s” Nos. 1 and 2, in which the parts tell beautifully and the execution of which was quite a masterpiece”. *The Last Rose of Summer* was a very popular early nineteenth-century song by the Irish composer Thomas Moore<sup>58</sup>, and *Auld Lang Syne* was set to a traditional tune by Robert Burns in 1788, but it is unclear where the “Original Polkas” were taken from.

In April 1858 the St. Boswells Band made a return visit to Jedburgh and the Jedforest accounts show that they paid for refreshments for the St. Boswells players<sup>59</sup>. A report of the St. Boswells Fair in 1858 states that, “in the evening the St. Boswells Instrumental Band turned out upon the Green, and delighted the crowds who thronged the ground with a number of popular tunes” (*Kelso Chronicle* 23 July 1858). The following year another local paper reported that:

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<sup>58</sup> Thomas Moore (born May 28, 1779, Dublin, Ireland — died Feb. 25, 1852, Wiltshire, England) Irish poet, satirist, composer, and singer. Moore graduated from Trinity College, Dublin and studied law in London, where he became a close friend of Byron and Shelley. His collections *Irish Melodies* and *National Airs* (1807 – 34) consist of 130 original poems set to folk melodies, included "The Minstrel Boy," and "The Last Rose of Summer." Downloaded from Britannica Concise Encyclopaedia. <[http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/391580/Thomas Moore](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/391580/Thomas%20Moore)> Accessed 9/8/2010.

<sup>59</sup> Jedforest Instrumental Band accounts. 14 April 1858.

“The St. Boswells Instrumental Band paid a return visit here [Earlston] on the evening of Saturday last. Both bands perambulated the town, and, by relieving each other at intervals, kept up a continual strain of spirit-stirring sounds, to the no small satisfaction of the numerous auditory” (*Southern Reporter* 6 June 1859).

It is not known when or why this band ceased, but Peake gives dates for a second band in St. Boswells as 1867-1872 but these dates are also cast into doubt by newspaper reports. Peake states that it played for the first time at the unveiling of a little fountain erected by Lord Polworth in 1868, but no other record of this has been found from the local papers (Peake 1961:98). Lord Polworth had been a supporter of the band from the beginning as the earlier newspaper reports showed, demonstrating early patronage by a member of the gentry for a local village band.

The photograph of the St. Boswells Brass Band shown below was taken around 1870 and still hangs in the band hall. It confirms that at that time it was a mixed wind band of ten players, the names of whom are recorded beneath the picture. This iconographic evidence shows that the band included two clarinets, a flute and a drum as well as an ophicleide, cornets and a trombone.



Fig. 4.1. St. Boswells Brass Band c.1870

Peake Pasha believed that this band came to an end in 1872 although the cause was not known (Peake 1961:98). It was in existence in 1872 as the St. Boswells Sabbath School Trip went for a picnic to Smailholm Tower and “on their return they were met by the St. Boswells Instrumental Band, who headed the procession through the village playing a few stirring and lively tunes to the great delight of the children and others” (*Kelso Chronicle* 19 July 1872). However, the date for the start of this band is thrown into question by following newspaper report suggesting that it had only been restarted during the previous year (1871):

#### ST. BOSWELLS GYMNASTIC GAMES

For several years past the Kelso Brass Band has officiated on these occasions, but during the past year a village band has been organised and brought into such an efficient state that they were able to render their services this year with much credit to themselves and pleasure to their audience; and on a rustic stand, which was erected for them, played a varied selection of airs, national and foreign, suitable for the occasion. (*Kelso Chronicle* 16 August 1872)

Presumably band from Kelso would not have been engaged for the games in previous years if St. Boswells had its own band as suggested by Peake. Without any further available evidence it is not possible to be accurate about the dates of the early bands in St. Boswells village, and the conflicting dates given by Peake, the minutes of the Jedforest Instrumental Band and the newspaper reports demonstrate the difficulty of this type of archival research.

#### **4.4. Early town bands in the Scottish Borders that did not survive**

The following report of a concert in Innerleithen<sup>60</sup> in October 1853 indicates that early instrumental bands could often be short-lived:

CONCERT.—On Friday evening...a concert of vocal and instrumental music given by members of our new band...We confidently hope that our instrumental band...will not, like too many others, drop into unworthy oblivion, but that it will

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<sup>60</sup> In early reports Innerleithen was often referred to as St. Ronan’s, the name of the patron saint.

long continue to animate and cheer, by its enlivening strains, the villagers of St. Ronan's. (*Border Advertiser* 7 October 1853)

Newspaper reports indicate that there were bands in several other Scottish Borders towns in the mid-nineteenth century that do not appear to have survived for any length of time. One example was the Lauder Instrumental Band that was mentioned previously, a concert by the Lauder band being reported in 1853 (*Border Advertiser* 4 February 1853). A Bill of Results posted in Jedburgh after the Border Games of 1854 describes the Lauder Instrumental Band "in their beautiful uniforms of blue with facings of red and yellow" when they played for the Games that year<sup>61</sup>, again confirming the probability that this band had military origins. The band also played at the consecration of St. Peter's Church, Galashiels in 1854, "the Lauder Instrumental band was in attendance and played a number of excellent tunes" (*Border Advertiser* 28 April 1854); the latter report is interesting because the Galashiels Town Band was in existence at that time and it could have been expected to play for an event in its own town. These are the only references found to this band and whereas most early instrumental town bands in the Borders later became brass bands, Lauder does not appear to have had a brass band.

One or two references have been found to support the existence of a band Earlston in the 1850s. There is a reference to "our instrumental band" playing for a Masonic picnic in the village of Stow in 1859 (*Kelso Chronicle* 7 July 1859), but this town does not appear to have had a band at any other time. Being described as an instrumental band probably confirms that it was a mixed wind band.

The Innerleithen and Traquair Brass Band, begun in 1853 under the leadership of Neil Mackay, did well for a few years but then lack of funds caused it to close. However, it was not long before this band was revived in 1860 as a band for the 3rd Peeblesshire Rifle Volunteers. From this the St. Ronan's Brass Band was formed then in 1873 by a number of men who retired from the Volunteers after a dispute with the commanding officer (French 2010:7). The importance of the Volunteer Movement for the Borders bands is discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

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<sup>61</sup> <<http://www.jedburgh-border-games.com>> Accessed 12/07/2010

Between 1858 and 1876 there are numerous references in *The Kelso Chronicle* to The Duke of Roxburghe's Band in Kelso. However, enquiries at the Roxburghe Estate office were unable to confirm anything about this band and no evidence has been found in estate records held at the Scottish Records Office, but like other bands in the Borders, it appears to have been started in the mid-1850s. It may have been this band that is referred to above as the Kelso Brass Band which played for the St. Boswells Games in 1872. Newspaper reports show that the Duke of Roxburghe's Band entertained the people of Kelso regularly in the town in the summer months for several years. Its title suggests that it may have been made up of estate workers, or it could have been a town band using the title as Floors Castle, the home of the Duke of Roxburghe is just outside the town.

The Duke of Roxburghe's Band may have acted in the role of a town band in Kelso as the town did not have a brass band until 1949. The newspaper report of the public meeting in 1949 to set up a new brass band in Kelso mentions that four of the instruments they were using to start the band had belonged to the old Duke of Roxburghe's Band, and "must be seventy years' old if they are a day" (*Kelso Chronicle* 6 May 1949). This suggests the Duke of Roxburghe's Band ceased in the sometime in the 1870s.

There could be many reasons why these early town bands did not survive to become brass bands, lack of funding being one; however, lack of interest by the community or a shortage of players may also have contributed.

#### **4.5. The Development of the Brass Band Movement**

From the 1850s many factors came together which prompted the development of the brass band movement that began in the north of England and from where it spread rapidly throughout the British Isles. Trevor Herbert has detailed five "critical conditions" which fuelled the growth of brass bands at that time:

First, evidence of amateur instrumental performance: second, a performance convention that was primarily literate and text-based as opposed to aural and improvisatory; third, the

witness of that activity by ‘audiences’ who were the peer groups of the performers; fourth, some evidence of supporting services for music (shops, instrument repairers, teachers and arrangers); and fifth, some evidence of cultural cross-over between art/middle-class music and the lower orders. Herbert 1991:13)

These factors were found in the towns of the Scottish Borders and aided the development of the brass bands. It has been shown that there is evidence of music-making from waits and militia bands to the early town bands of the Scottish Borders and that these were musically literate performers. In the newly industrialised towns of the Scottish Borders audiences for brass bands were primarily from the working classes, the same class as the players themselves. One of the principal factors that contributed to the emergence of the brass band movement was the technical advances made in brass instrument manufacture that were discussed in chapter 1. From the middle of the nineteenth-century the number of manufacturers and retailers of brass instruments increased to serve the needs of the increasing number of bands. It has been shown that brass band teachers in the Borders often came from the north of England and were employed in the textile industry. The repertoire played by bands in the Borders will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6 and this will show evidence of the cultural cross-over between the musical taste of the middle and lower classes.

New working communities were forming as industrialisation spread with places such as the textile towns of the Borders seeing a rapid increase in population in the mid-nineteenth century. All these factors combined in the formation of brass bands, the number of which grew rapidly from the 1850s and “which generated the brass band movement that was widely based and primarily involved working-class people” (Herbert 1991:23).

As the nineteenth century progressed other factors further aided the development of the brass band movement including the expansion of brass band contests that are discussed in chapter 5.

#### 4.6. Brass Bands in Scotland

The largest concentration of brass bands in Scotland has always been clustered in the Central Belt<sup>62</sup>, in the areas formerly associated with heavy industry, particularly around Glasgow, across Renfrewshire and in Ayrshire. These correspond to the West of Scotland coal deposits in towns such as Cumnock and the attendant iron and steel works, such as Glengarnock. In the East brass bands tend to be on the South bank of the River Forth and in Fife with a cluster around the mining towns of Alva and Alloa. In Fife there were nearly forty brass bands at one time but with the demise of heavy industry, particularly coal mining, many bands closed or amalgamated so in the twenty-first century only seven senior bands remain<sup>63</sup>. Russell's assertion that, "Perhaps the real importance of the workplace was that it provided the initial focus for the friendships and discussion that led to the formation of Bands" (Russell 1997:212) seems to be true in Scotland as very few Scottish bands, none in the Scottish Borders, were directly sponsored by firms or industrialists. Often brass bands in the Central Belt took the name of a colliery or works, but this was probably because all the men worked in the same place rather than being due to any direct sponsorship. This contrasts with the situation in northern England where the owners of large firms sometimes took a personal interest in their band's success and provided instruments and rehearsal facilities, engaged the best teachers and provided work for useful players (Herbert 1991:24), although more often they simply acted as guarantors for loans for instruments. This is confirmed by a nineteenth-century account:

The members are generally working under one employer, or if not, in the same trade under the same conditions. They remain there for years...The employers encourage the bands, knowing that a good bandsman must be a steady man, and that he has only a harmless hobby. (*The British Musician* March 1895 p.70)

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<sup>62</sup> The area commonly referred to as Scotland's Central Belt lies between the Highlands to the north and the southern Uplands to the south. It is the area of highest population density and the most industrialised area of Scotland.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010. SA2010.59

The members of the brass bands were perceived to be true and trusty employees as they indulged in an “innocuous activity” for a hobby rather than engaging in radical politics (Brand 1979:12). Music was seen by the higher classes of society as a force for moral good among working people and playing in a band viewed as “rational recreation” with nineteenth-century reformers believing that "leisure activities should be controlled, ordered, and improving" (Cunningham 1980:90). Leisure activities that had an element of self-improvement such as playing in a band were to be encouraged.

Smaller communities of between 3,000 and 15, 000, such as those of the Scottish Border towns, have been identified as being crucial to the establishment of popular music-making and the places that enjoyed the most flourishing musical life (Russell 1997:208). However, the smaller size of the Borders towns and their relative isolation meant that their brass bands have always been prone to variations in membership resulting from the fluctuations in the textile trade and the consequent need to find work elsewhere that were described in Chapter 3.

#### **4.7. Setting up Brass Bands in the Scottish Borders in the Nineteenth Century**

In the nineteenth century the whole community was involved in setting up a brass band in the Borders. The men who sat on the band committees were generally those of the middle class who had standing in the town or skilled workmen. They would need to draw up the rules for the conduct of the band and organise the collection of funds from the local community.

By the mid-1850s many of the former town bands had become full brass bands. The Innerleithen and Traquair Brass Band (forerunner of the St. Ronan’s Brass Band) dates from 1853 and was formed by local mill workers at a time when the town was expanding fast with the growth of textile manufacturing (French & Belleville 2010:5). Galashiels had a brass band by 1854 (*Hawick Advertiser* 1 September 1855) with the Jedforest Instrumental Band<sup>64</sup> instituted the same year and the Hawick Saxhorn Band (*Hawick Advertiser* 10 November 1855) the following

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<sup>64</sup> Jedforest Instrumental Band Cash and Sederunt Book. 1854-1886. p.9-11

year. The Langholm Town Band also began around this time. Two other brass bands were formed in the 1860s, Peebles Burgh Band in 1865 (*Peeblesshire Advertiser* 9 September 1865) and a Volunteer band in Selkirk in 1861<sup>65</sup> which later became the Selkirk Brass Band in 1874.

From newspaper reports it appears that railway excursions from one Border town to another in the early days of the railways may have aided the spread of brass banding and particularly the formation of the Hawick Saxhorn Band. The report of one early excursion train from Hawick to Galashiels in 1855 is important because it shows that Hawick had no brass band at the time:

CHEAP EXCURSION.—As we anticipated last week the excursion train to Melrose and Galashiels on Saturday last was by far the largest that ever left this Station. So much for cheap fares...At last the signal was given and the monster train, consisting of 36 carriages, with eleven hundred people in them moved off amidst the cheers of the spectators...The reception of the Hawick folks at Melrose and Galashiels was very enthusiastic—at Galashiels, in particular, great kindness was shown. The Galashiels Instrumental Band met the excursionists at the station and escorted the procession through the town, playing some beautiful airs. The band turned out again when the people departed. (*Hawick Advertiser* 1 September 1855)

The civic pride in having a town brass band was important in the nineteenth century and this is demonstrated in a letter, written to the Hawick newspaper from “A Lover of Music”, urging the inhabitants of Hawick to set up a Brass Sax-horn Band to rival the one in Galashiels. The reason he gave was the embarrassment caused on a recent trip to Galashiels to the “gallant sons of Teri Oden”, a reference to the chorus of the Hawick Common Riding song *Teribus*<sup>66</sup>:

Teribus ye Teriodin,  
Sons of heroes slain at Flodden.  
Imitating Border bowmen,  
Aye defend your rights and Common.

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<sup>65</sup> Jack Harper, informal conversation in Selkirk, March 2007. A photocopy of his forward to *The Music of Selkirk Common Riding*, a book of Selkirk Common Riding songs published in 1983 in the author’s possession.

<sup>66</sup> The words and music of the song are supposed to be of great antiquity. The song was published about 1819 by James Hogg and has been sung at the Hawick Common Riding ever since.

The 'Lover of Music' continued, "All the music we had on that occasion were a few instruments playing one part, and he continues "We are, I understand, to be visited tomorrow, by our neighbours from Galashiels, who will, no doubt, be accompanied by their band, and sorry am I to think we shall not be able to give them such a reception they gave us." (*Hawick Advertiser* 1 September 1855). The 'Lover of Music' goes on to propose that a band be raised in Hawick by public subscription, but that its management should be vested in the Town Council who should look after the instruments and examine them every six months "so that they may see that the public property is not abused" (*Hawick Advertiser* 1 September 1855).

A public meeting was called in October 1855. The petition was signed mainly



Fig. 4.2. Poster advertising the public meeting to set up the Hawick Saxhorn Band (Hawick Museum Ref. PR31)

by the tradesmen of the town and at the meeting the Hawick Saxhorn Band was formally set up under a committee. It was estimated that £60 needed to be raised to fund the new band and at the public meeting the Chairman referred to “an excerpt from the minutes of a Council meeting, in which it resolved to contribute £10, if the other £50 were raised by subscription” (*Hawick Advertiser* 10 November 1855). The Council therefore helped the community to see that the new band was properly set up and was prepared to take responsibility for the care of the instruments on behalf of the community. A band committee consisting of “two from the Town Council, two from the band when formed, Messrs George Fraser, Alexander Lennie and John Scott, were appointed at the meeting to act for the inhabitants” (*Hawick Advertiser* 10 November 1855).

The involvement of the Town Councils in setting up the bands in Peebles, Hawick and other Border towns would have given the bands added status within the community.

#### 4.7.1. Band Rules

Trevor Herbert has suggested that, “The primary reason why nineteenth-century bands were so well organized is that they had to be in order to survive” (Herbert 1991:35). The discipline required at work in the factories permeated through to the workers’ recreations (Walvin 1978:8), evidence of which is found in the strict rules for the behaviour of the players that bands drew up. Examples of band rules, which are probably typical of many, if not most, bands in the nineteenth century, were drawn up for the Jedforest Instrumental Band on its foundation in 1855 and by the St. Boswells Brass Band forty years later on its re-formation in 1896. Both the St. Boswells and Jedburgh band rules demonstrate that setting up bands in the Borders towns was primarily a community-led initiative and public subscriptions were the normal way of financing the new bands.

Jedforest Band Rules and Regulations. 5th September 1856

1. That the Society shall be denominated the Jed-Forest Instrumental Band.

2. That the business of the Society shall be conducted by a committee of six persons and by a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, three of the performing members of the society, to be elected annually.
3. That the President shall have the casting vote in addition to his original vote in case of equality.
4. That the society shall consist of two types of members, Honorary and Ordinary. Honorary Members shall be entitled to attend the practice on the first Friday of every month. Weekly subscriptions of one penny to be paid by performing members, and five shillings annually for honorary members, payable in advance.
5. That the entry money for ordinary members shall be one shilling on admission, and no candidate shall be considered a member till the same be paid. [This rule has a cross through it, presumably the rule was deleted at a later date].
6. That a Conductor shall be appointed and have the sole management of the Band during practice and determine the pieces to be played as well as the part each shall play, his decision being final, power also being given to him to appoint a Sub-conductor during his absence.
7. That no instrument shall be played at any Band Meeting nor when the Band is out for the purpose of playing, except required by the conductor, and every member breaking this Rule will be fined one penny for every such offence.
8. That candidates for admission as ordinary members shall be proposed at any ordinary meeting (in his absence) and shall be admitted by a majority of votes, if on examination as to his musical abilities, approved by the Conductor.
9. In no case shall any member of the Band under the influence of intoxicating liquor be permitted to be present at any meeting of the Band, and that it shall be the duty of the Office Bearers specially to enforce this rule, and that any member infringing this Rule will be fined for the first offence three pence, for the second six pence, for the third one shilling, and for every succeeding offence one shilling.
10. That any member by neglecting to attend regular practice, or leaving the Band at any time when their services are necessary, except sufficient reason be given to the conductor, will be fined three pence for every such offence.
11. That the property of the instruments shall be vested in a Committee of six individuals, three of whom to be appointed from the Band, and three from the public (one at least being a Magistrate of the Burgh).
12. The instruments being the property of the town cannot be alienated, disposed of, or taken away without the consent of the Trustees. [Trustees is crossed out and Committee inserted later].

13. It shall be the duty of the conductor to examine the instruments, at least once every three months and see that proper care be taken of them.

14. Should any member of the Band through carelessness, lose or damage his instrument the Trustees [Committee inserted] shall cause the same to be replaced or repaired at the expense of the party so losing or damaging the instrument.

15. That two meetings shall be held weekly on Monday and Friday evenings at a half past eight o'clock and to conclude at ten o'clock.

16. That the above rules may be amended at a General Meeting summoned for the purpose.

(Jedforest Instrumental Band Cash and Sederunt Book. 1854-1886. p.9-11)

All the instruments in Jedburgh were stated to be the property of the town, as they were in many of the Border towns, with a special committee which included a Burgh magistrate to look after them. The local inhabitants who subscribed to the purchase of the instruments, often the working class themselves, would have had expectations that they would be looked after. Geoffrey Best has pointed out the mid-Victorian period stands out because it saw alcohol consumption rise to an all-time peak about 1875 (Best 1971:240) and this may have been one reason the strict rules about ownership and care of the instruments were drawn up because it would have been tempting for a working man to pawn his instrument to pay for drink. Musical instruments were expensive items that most working men would not have had access to before this time and it would have been important for them to understand their responsibility to care for them.

Forty years after the Jedforest rules were drawn up, the newly re-formed St. Boswells Brass Band drew up a similar set of rules for their band in 1896. By this time the entry fee had risen from one shilling to two shillings and six pence indicating a rise in the real wages of workers.

St Boswells Brass Band Rules. December 1896

Rules for the observance of the Committee and Band Members.

1. That this band shall be called, and known, by the name of "The St. Boswells Brass Band".

2. That the ownership of the whole of the instruments, music, stands, and any other property belonging to this band shall be vested in the hands of the Committee, appointed at the Public Meeting.
3. That no member of the Band shall have any ownership in any part of the Band property, beyond what his vote as a member entitles him to, and on leaving the Band, must give up all property to the bandmaster.
4. That the committee do not hold office more than twelve months without re-election, but should one or more resign, the places may be filled at once, by the remaining members of the Committee.
5. That the Band accounts be audited once a year, and the balance sheet forwarded to all subscribers.
6. That each member shall pay the sum of two shillings and six pence (2/6) as entrance fee; and the same amount, as a subscription, every twelve months afterwards – from the date of becoming a member. (the portion of this rule after the semi-colon is deleted and marked ‘subject to alteration’)
7. That the Band meet twice weekly for practice, the list of attendances to be read over by the Secretary every quarter.
8. That the following fines shall be imposed by the committee;—for being absent from practice three times in succession, without satisfactory excuse, 6d, and 6d for each successive absence; for being late, three times in succession, half an hour beyond the usual time of meeting, 3d and 3d for each successive case of unpunctuality; without a satisfactory excuse.
9. The Committee may expel any member, for being in arrears with contributions; for systematic non-attendance (six times in succession to be the limit) for showing such stubbornness to learn that the Bandmaster consider him not musically gifted enough to become a good player; for any misconduct in the way of using profane or abusive language, indulging in intoxicating liquors, either at practice of public performance.
10. That no member play in another band without the consent of the Committee.
11. That the Bandmaster, or, in his absence, the leader shall have complete control over the band at all practices and performances; and any member who shall refuse to obey the person in charge, shall be fined the sum of 3d for each offence.
12. That any member leaving the band, or being expelled, shall return all property belonging to the band in such a condition as shall satisfy the Committee; if the property be damaged, he shall make good; of if awanting he shall be held

responsible for the value thereof, as the committee may determine.

13. That the band shall not be broken up so long as there are five members opposed to that course.

14. That every member shall have a copy of these rules, on being admitted and shall sign a duplicate to be kept by the secretary.—

Agreement,—I, James Morrison, joiner, St. Boswells, do hereby agree to the above rules; and do all in my power to further the interests of; as a member of The St. Boswells Brass Band. As, witness by hand this 5th day of December, 1896. James Morrison.

In the St. Boswells minute book each member of the band then signed their agreement to the rules<sup>67</sup>. Many of these band rules are very similar to the Jedburgh ones, especially with regard to fees and fines and the care of instruments and drunkenness, but the instruments now belonged to the band. Both sets of band rules show that the Bandmaster, or conductor, had ultimate authority about the musical running of the band. Misbehaviour and failing to attend practice were fined and hurting the working man in his pocket by imposing fines was an obvious way of ensuring discipline at a time when wages were low. However, by the late nineteenth century a stricter attitude to band finances is implied as the St. Boswells accounts have to be audited annually. Bands were well organised, as these sets of band rules demonstrate. Herbert has explained that band committees had to exercise strict control of their finances (Herbert 2000:47) and both sets of rules exhibit a concern for the correct handling of money. The St. Boswells rules also show a strict attitude about members not playing in other bands that may be accounted for by regulations that had been brought in by this date regarding players only performing in one band at contests.

#### 4.7.2. Financing a band

There were several major expenses in setting up a new band in the nineteenth century; the cost of instruments, the salary of a teacher or conductor, the hire of a hall, heating and lighting and music were basic requirements. In the Scottish Borders

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<sup>67</sup> St. Boswells Brass Band Minute Book 1896-1899. pp. 16-19.

it was the local community that had to raise the money for these as the bands were not sponsored by industrialists. In a nineteenth century handbook for brass instrumentalists called *Talks with Bandsmen* (Rose 1895) it states:

The first thing the secretary has to do is to get together all the names he can of likely subscribers. He should persuade every member of the band to help him in this matter. If all work with a will, what with his written application, and visits to the neighbours, subscriptions should begin to flow in to the treasurer. (Rose 1895:322)

Rose goes on to say that the mission in life for a treasurer is “firstly, to get money; and secondly, not to part with it without good cause” (Rose 1895:323). This shows that the primary determining factor in whether a band was going to be a viable proposition was the financial support that it was likely to get from its local community.

An entry in the first Minute Book of the Jedforest Instrumental Band in 1854 confirms that it was seen as important for the band to be established on a strong financial footing and money was raised by public subscription:

A feeling having been expressed by a number of the inhabitants of Jedburgh favourable to the formation of an Instrumental Band, a few individuals have furnished themselves with instruments, with which, a few belonging to the Town, they have been practising for a few months under the tuition of Mr Lockwood, who for a trifling remuneration had attended them to this time; to enable them to continue his attendance and purchase a few though much wanted instruments they have engaged to solicit a Public Subscription. (Jedforest Instrumental Band Cash and Sederunt Book, 1854-1886, p.1)

The extract shows that this band came into existence because some members of a former town band, and other players who owned their own instruments, had got together to play, an example of the initiative to form a band coming from the players themselves. However, it was only when sufficient money had been promised to a new band that it could actually be formed. The first minutes of the re-formed St. Boswells Brass Band in 1896 also illustrates this:

A number of the inhabitants of St. Boswells, who were of musical inclinations having considered that the Brass Band which once existed, was deserving at least of a trial-of resuscitation, they made inquiries of a number of personages in the village and neighbourhood, what financial support was likely to be given towards the formation of a Band...the sum of £26.10s having been promised, and that form a small proportion of the community...the meeting unanimously approved of the proposal to raise a Band. (St. Boswells Band Minute Book, 1896-1899, p.2.)

A similar situation existed in 1865 when a band was set up in Peebles as this extract from the local paper shows:

BRASS BAND. We are happy to hear that upwards of £40 have now been subscribed for the new Brass Band but a considerable sum is still required before the scheme can be effectively carried into operation. It is to be hoped that the required amount will soon be in the hands of the Committee, one and all who have been energetic in their endeavours to raise subscriptions. (*Peeblesshire Standard* 2 September 1865)

Forty pounds was a considerable sum in 1865, but the following week the newspaper reiterated the need for continued support from the public saying that, “It must not be supposed however that the Committee have yet seen the end of their labours, the fact being, that a considerable sum is still required before the thing can be said to be established on anything like a permanent basis” (*Peeblesshire Standard* 9 September 1865).

The Peebles Town Council took an active role in supporting the Peebles Brass Band with the local newspaper suggesting that because “the instruments are to be vested in the hands of the Town Council, that body might be expected to subscribe something to the funds” (*Peeblesshire Standard* 2 September 1865). Some discussion had obviously gone on prior to this report about the Council taking responsibility for the instruments on behalf of the town, a similar arrangement to that

in Hawick and Galashiels<sup>68</sup>, but in Peebles the band purchased the instruments themselves and then went back to the Town Council to hand them over. At the meeting of the Peebles Town Council on 12 September 1866 a letter from J D Bathgate (probably the Secretary of the Band) was read out:

Gentlemen,

I am desired by the Committee which was appointed some time ago to raise funds for a Brass Band to beg the Council will accept in trust for the town the accompanying instruments, twelve in number, with the addition of a Bass Drum. If the Council will accept this offer it would be proper for them to commit the charge of the instruments to a Bandmaster who would be responsible to your honours for the safe custody, and would return them in the event of the Band at any time being dissolved. Although the Committee have been fortunate in raising funds sufficient to pay for the instruments still a few pounds will be required for the payment of a Teacher for a month or two, and, if your honours feel disposed to make an donation towards the funds from public money, it will be gratefully accepted. I have the honour to be –

Your faithful servant,

J D Bathgate

(Peebles Town Council Minute 1540. 12 September 1866)

The Council agreed to receive the instruments in Trust and then voted £5 towards the funds of the band, appointing Mr. Andrew Green the Bandmaster to have charge of the instruments. The Clerk was further instructed to enquire the probable expense of engraving the Burgh Arms on the instruments, demonstrating again the pride towns took in their bands. The donation from the Peebles Town Council became an annual subscription which the band could rely on and it signified a strong relationship between the town and the band.

The cost of buying a set of instruments for a band has always been a considerable expense. In the nineteenth century when public subscriptions were the principal way of raising money for new instruments they were frequently displayed in a local shop window to show the community what they had subscribed towards:

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<sup>68</sup> Galashiels Town Band still officially has a member of the Scottish Borders Council sitting on the Committee.

GALASHIELS BRASS BAND.—A complete set of new brass instruments for this band has just been purchased from Besson, at a cost of £175. They have been on show in the shop window of Mr. R.F. McNish, hatter, High Street, and have attracted much attention. (*Border Advertiser* 24 April 1895)

#### 4.7.3. Subscriptions

There were various sources of subscriptions by which the Borders bands were supported in the nineteenth century. Trevor Herbert has suggested that many bands survived only due to financial support from wealthier people (Herbert 1991: 47). Certainly this was an important source of income for bands in the Scottish Borders where there existed two types of “wealthier people”, the inherited wealth of the aristocracy and landed gentry, and the new wealthy middle classes formed by the rapid expansion of the textile industry. Band records show that both these groups of people contributed to band funds.

During the 1880s the accounts of the Jedforest Instrumental Band show annual donations from members of the local aristocracy included Lord Lothian, the Earl of Minto, and the Earl of Home. Whilst brass bands are generally thought of as a working man’s leisure pursuit the upper classes took a paternalistic interest in the bands. In the late nineteenth century the use of leisure time by the working classes for activities such as sports clubs and brass bands was thought by the middle and upper classes to be both desirable and self-improving, and, as can be seen from surviving band rules discussed above, bands had by that time become disciplined and institutionalised (Jones 1995:21). Therefore, the aristocracy often generously supported bands financially without actually being involved with them. One example was the gift of a new baritone to the Jedforest Instrumental Band by Lord Lothian in 1885, “a gift which was most heartily received” (*Jedburgh Gazette* 5 July 1912). However, the gentry were not always perceived by the bands or the public as supporting them as well as they thought they should, as shown by this report of a concert given by the Galashiels Town Band:

Of the performance of the band we scarcely require to say a word, as we have had occasion repeatedly to recommend

them, and to notice with pleasure the rapid advances they have made to the higher and more difficult concerted pieces...We regret to see that the upper classes, to use the expression, are still not very great patrons of so deserving a public band. (*Kelso Chronicle* 3 October 1856)

The rapid expansion of the textile industry in the Scottish Borders during the nineteenth century resulted in a large number of newly wealthy members of the middle class, particularly the mill owners. Their names appeared in the lists of subscribers to the bands and were often followed by the name of their house with the amount of their donation. As the accounts were made public, often being published in the local papers, these men could be seen publicly to be supporting the working classes. The first accounts for the Jedforest Instrumental Band in 1856 list 17 annual subscribers with their occupations that are typical of the middle classes in a mid-nineteenth century town:

George Rutherford	Sheriff Clerk
William Elliot	Solicitor
John Mair Grainger	Bank agent
John Grainger	Harestanes
George Oliver	Innkeeper, Kelso
Dr Anderson	Abbey Green
John Usher Somner	Brewer
A. W. Mein	of Hunthill
John Turnbull	Merchant
William Everitt	Supt. of Police
W.T. Ormiston	of Glenburnhall
J.M. Craigie	Sheriff substitute
Rev. A.C. Tarbutt	St. John's Rectory
James S. E. Fair	of Langlee
Rev. George Ritchie	The Manse
H.J. Thomson	of Allerley
John S.E. Fair	Gilliestongues

From 1895 to 1912 the accounts for the St. Ronan's Brass Band, were published in full in the *St. Ronan's Standard*. These give an insight into how the band's finances changed over that period of time. In 1895 the band was almost totally reliant on subscriptions from the local 'great and good', but by 1912 the band obtained more of their income from the working classes themselves.

The bandmen, themselves largely from the working class, provided a substantial proportion of the band's income. The players had to pay subscriptions and it can be assumed therefore that the men who played in the nineteenth-century bands were able to afford to pay these subscriptions and were the more 'respectable', usually skilled, members of the working class; for example, the players in St. Boswells Brass Band in 1896 included a watchmaker, shoemaker, tailor, mason and joiner together with several of their apprentices<sup>69</sup>.

In the Scottish Borders towns the players would have been mainly mill workers and it was to their fellow workers that they looked for support, and here it seems to have been normal from early in the history of the brass bands for subscriptions to be collected from workers in the mills. In Galashiels the local newspaper recommended that the committee should "set on foot a monthly penny subscription, and a person who has the work at heart could be appointed to go through the respective workshops" (*Southern Reporter* 2 August 1856). The later accounts of the St. Ronan's Brass Band, between 1895 and 1909, show that money was collected annually in all the mills in Innerleithen. The amounts collected by this method were often quite small, ranging from a few shillings to a few pounds. The workers would not have had much money to give to the collections as the minimum wage for a local mill worker in 1894 was sixteen to eighteen shillings a week (80-90 pence in today's money) and an outdoor worker would get over twenty shillings (£1) for a nine-hour day (*St. Ronan's Standard* 15 August 1894). The St. Ronan's band accounts show that there were also street collections in Innerleithen which raised similar amounts to the collections in the mills and such door-to-door collections would have been made in most towns.

#### **4.8. The Importance of the Volunteer Movement on brass bands in the Scottish Borders**

As the nineteenth century progressed other factors aided the development of the brass band movement especially the Volunteer movement in the 1860s. During the 1850s there was a threat of invasion from France as Franco-British tensions were heightened by the foreign policy of Napoleon III, and a large proportion of the armed

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<sup>69</sup> St Boswells Brass Band Minute Book 1896-1899, p.7

forces were overseas protecting and enlarging the British Empire (Herbert 2000:36). On 12 May 1859, Jonathan Peel, Secretary of State for War, sent a circular letter to the Lord Lieutenants of all counties instructing them to form a force of volunteers who could be called upon in the event of an invasion. These men would be under military law, but this was not to be such as to make the service unattractive to potential volunteers. Bands were seen as desirable to accompany drill and to give an air of military authenticity to the corps, as well as promoting patriotism and good relations with the local communities (Herbert 2000:37).

Volunteering provided a sense of comradeship between band members and between members of different bands that helped to foster the growth of the brass band movement (Herbert 2000:40). The Volunteer Movement was important in helping to sustain brass bands and Herbert maintains that it helped to keep some bands from extinction in the second half of the century (Herbert 2000:43). This was the case with the brass band in Innerleithen, which had been formed in 1853 as the Innerleithen and Traquair Brass Band. Although it did well for a few years it eventually closed due to lack of funds but was revived in 1860 by the Volunteers as the 3rd Peeblesshire Rifle Volunteer Band (French & Belleville 2010:6).

The 1861 Regulations for the Volunteer Force stated that, “Enrolled members are classified as effective and non-effective, and to be counted effective, a member must have taken the oath of allegiance and attended, properly equipped, the prescribed number of drills” (Grierson 1909:46). Volunteering was seen as ‘rational recreation’, important in Victorian thinking, and the patriotic element of Volunteering gave the men added status (Herbert 2000:38).

	1861	1871
England	0.629	0.655
Wales	0.655	0.620
Scotland	1.119	1.316 <sup>70</sup>

Fig 4.3. Table showing the percentage of Volunteers in 1861 and 1871 in England, Wales and Scotland

<sup>70</sup> Grierson, J. M. (1909). *Records of the Scottish Volunteer Force 1859-1908*. Edinburgh, London: William Blackwood & Sons. p.57

Scotland was better at providing recruits than England in proportion to the population and the Volunteer Movement was particularly strong in the Scottish Borders (Beckett 1982:85). In 1861 the proportion of Volunteers in Scotland was nearly, and by 1871 was more than, twice as great as in England and Wales as the data above shows.

#### 4.8.1. Volunteer bands in the Borders

Brass bands were necessary to the Volunteers to accompany drill and parades. The lower middle class provided the majority of Volunteers, and in rural areas such as the Scottish Borders tradesmen and shopkeepers formed the backbone of the Force (Beckett 1982: 84).

NAME	DATE FORMED	TOWN
SELKIRKSHIRE		
1st Border Rifles (Gala Forest Rifles)	27 March 1860	Galashiels
2nd Border Rifles (Ettrick Forest Rifles)	15 June 1860	Selkirk
ROXBURGHSHIRE		
1st Roxburghshire	15 September 1859	Jedburgh
2nd Roxburghshire	29 March 1860	Kelso
3rd Roxburghshire	15 July 1860	Melrose
4th Roxburghshire	11 June 1860	Hawick – Upper Teviotdale
5th Roxburghshire	15 January 1861 (disbanded 1867)	Hawick
PEEBLESSHIRE		
1st Peeblesshire	31 August 1860	Peebles
2nd Peeblesshire	31 August 1860	Innerleithen

Fig. 4.4. Table showing the formation dates of the Volunteer Force corps in the Scottish Borders<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Taken from J. M Grierson's *Records of the Scottish Volunteer Force 1859-1909*.

In the Scottish Borders towns responded quickly to the original letter from Jonathan Peel and within fifteen months all the Border towns had their own corps as the table above shows. The 2nd Selkirkshire (Ettrick Forest) Rifle Volunteer Corps enrolment book for 1860-1904 lists the names and occupations of all the recruits, and, as would be expected in a textile town, the majority of the recruits are described as millworkers together with associated occupations such as dyers and weavers<sup>72</sup>. Among other trades listed are those that could be expected in a thriving town at this period, including tailors, cabinet makers, printers, teachers, shoemakers, blacksmiths and masons and similar occupations can be assumed in the other Borders towns. The Jedburgh Volunteer corps was probably the first to be formed in the Borders on 15 September 1859. In November 1860 the Jedforest Instrumental Band, some sixteen in number, all became members of the 1st Roxburghshire Rifle Corps in Jedburgh (*Teviotdale Record* 17 November 1860).

Poor roads and the difficulties of travel in those days meant that things did not always go smoothly for bands when attending on Volunteer duty as the following quotation shows:

But for the kindness of Mr Scott, Timpendean, the proceedings would not have been so enlivening as the Jedburgh Band, when proceeding past the Cleikim Inn, in a bus, stuck fast in the snow. Being in a fix, Mr Scott kindly lent them two of his horses for the rest of their journey, and with this extra assistance they were speedily conveyed to their destination.<sup>73</sup>

In Galashiels sixty men enrolled immediately after the initial public meeting and formed the 1st Selkirk (Gala Forest) Rifle Volunteers in November 1859 (Hall 1898: 531). Shortly after the Galashiels Town Band offered their services to the Volunteers on condition that they were provided with a uniform at the expense of the Company<sup>74</sup>. Presumably they saw this as a convenient way of getting new band uniforms without having to raise the money by public subscription as they would

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<sup>72</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Selkirkshire ( Ettrick Forest) Rifle Volunteer Corps enrolment book for 1860-1904. Located at Scottish Borders Archive and Local History Centre. Ref. SC/S/12/36.

<sup>73</sup> *Teviotdale Record* quoted in the *Southern Reporter*, Jan 1861.

<sup>74</sup> Information from Murray Dickson, President of the Old Gala Club, Galashiels.

normally need to do for the town band. The whole of the Galashiels Town Band were sworn in as Volunteers:

GALASHIELS – THE VOLUNTEERS – The Galashiels Brass Band has been incorporated with the company of Volunteers, and on Wednesday night the ceremony of swearing-in took place in the Corn Exchange, the oath being administered by the chief magistrate, Mr Bathgate. The corps are now in a very healthy and efficient state, the roll containing about a hundred members. Drill is regularly carried on night and morning. (*Peeblesshire Advertiser* 7 June 1862)

The Galashiels Town Band gave their services to the Volunteers until 1866 when they asked the Company for an annual subscription of £15 towards the band funds. This request was denied and the band withdrew their services. Although bands were considered a necessary ingredient of Volunteer life, the Government never considered bands to come within the provisions of the necessary expenses covered by the capitation grant, and individual corps frequently had to enter into costly contracts with civilian bands (Beckett 1982:116). By requesting an annual subscription it was this sort of arrangement that the Galashiels band was hoping to enter into, but in this case it backfired against them as they were soon replaced by a flute and drum band in connection with the Volunteer Corps, although a few years later another brass band was organised by the Volunteers themselves (Hall 1898:535).

In Peebles a meeting to re-organise the town band in connection with the Volunteer Company was reported in 1871:

It was agreed to petition the Town Council to transfer the instruments of the Peebles Town Band to the 1st Peeblesshire Volunteers. The chairman stated that although the Band be formed in connection with the Volunteers, it would be available when the services of an Instrumental band were required on any occasion by the Town, as formerly.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> From the unpublished research by Douglas Mackie of the history of the Peebles Burgh Band. The date 16 September 1871 is given but not the name of the newspaper.

The Peebles Volunteer Band were allowed to continue to function as the town band alongside their Volunteering duties and this seems to have been the pattern of several Volunteer bands in the Scottish Borders. On 12 July 1873 a local newspaper in Peebles carried the following advertisement for new members for the band that confirms Beckett's statement that bands were often paid for from the capitation grant:

1st Peeblesshire Rifle Volunteers—Wanted to join the Band a number of men to fill vacancies, either as learners or men who have been in Bands elsewhere. All expenses in connection with the maintenance of the Band are paid for from the funds of the Corps, and applicants must be willing to become efficient members and prepared to give a cheerful compliance with the discipline of the Service. The Officers readily allow the Band to take engagements for hire, subject to their approval, and likewise offer an annual premium for proficiency in music.<sup>76</sup>

The fact that the Officers of the Peebles Volunteers stated they were willing to allow the band members to undertake engagements for hire and offered a financial reward for extra proficiency in music shows that the men could expect to make some extra money on the side through their membership of the band and this would have provided an additional incentive to join.

Although the main purpose of the Volunteers was a serious one, other incentives to join included the social and recreational activities open to corps members. A shooting match was held amongst the members of the Volunteer band in Innerleithen:

VOLUNTEER BAND MATCH – On Saturday afternoon a shooting match took place amongst the members of the Volunteer Brass Band on the Innerleithen range when players of the air were pitted against those who manipulate the bass instruments.

'Air' is used here to mean melody instruments whose players competed against the players of the lower-pitched bass instruments. As bands were not officially supported

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

by the Volunteer Movement it is understandable that the corps would have to give up them up if finances were in a poor state (Grierson 1909:89). Many corps amassed debts for the construction of drill-halls, headquarters and so forth, and the public were often required to hold bazaars and public subscriptions in their attempts to clear the debts.

The Peebles Band ceased to be attached to the Volunteers in January 1888 when the local corps decided to replace the brass band with a pipe and drum band. When a public meeting was held in Peebles in March 1889 to form an entirely new town band supported by public subscriptions, the decision led to protracted negotiations lasting several months between the Town Council and the Volunteers about the ownership of the instruments. The Volunteers offered the instruments to the town for £20, but the Secretary of the proposed band wrote angrily to the local newspaper because originally the instruments had been given to the Volunteers.

As the instruments or a set of instruments were handed to the Volunteers by the town – free, the parties now trying to raise a band for the town, think it is very hard of the Volunteers, instead of handing the instruments back when they had no more use for them and thus benefit the town, will not part with them unless they receive such a substantial return, even though many of the instruments were raised by public subscription. Since they were handed over in the first place, we can not see how the Volunteers can expect the public to support their annual call for funds, when they act as they have done in this matter...the Committee consider the sum (£20) asked by the volunteers exorbitant as they have been out of use for a long time, and many are only third class and of various makes.

The Committee are aware that to buy new instruments would cost a great deal of money, but they are also aware that there are as few things of as little value as second hand brass instruments. (*Peebleshire Advertiser* 7 September 1889)

This shows that relationship between the town bands and the Volunteers was not always amicable although in some towns they existed side by side

#### 4.8.2. Town bands and Volunteer bands in the same town.

Most Volunteer bands had been town bands before joining the Volunteer corps, but a minority had their origins in the Volunteer movement itself (Herbert 1991:25). When the Galashiels Town Band withdrew its support from the Volunteers, a separate Galashiels Rifle Volunteer Band was later formed. Both bands existed alongside each other and often competed against each other in contests into the twentieth century. At one time they were both conducted by Mr Tom Moore such as at a contest at Innerleithen in 1891 (*Border Advertiser* 6 May 1891). At a contest in Portobello the same year the Galashiels R. V. Band played the appropriately named piece *Always Ready* (*Alloa Journal* 25 July 1891). A contest in Galashiels in 1892, attended by about 5,000 people, included 'Open' (English bands were allowed to enter) and 'Closed' (Scottish bands only) contests. (At this time the 'Closed' section was effectively seen as the Scottish championship). The test piece was *Joan of Arc* (published by Wright and Round) and the Galashiels R.V. Band were placed third in this contest showing that they had reached a high standard at this time (*Alloa Journal* 20 August 1892). William Borthwick had taken over from Tom Moore as conductor and remained with the band through to the early twentieth century (*Dumfries Courier & Herald* 9 August 1896).

A separate Volunteer band also existed in Hawick alongside the Hawick Saxhorn Band. An article appeared in the *Brass Band News* of January 1904 (p.8) announced the retirement of Frank Gray from the post of bandmaster of the Border Rifle Volunteers in Hawick, a position which he had held since December 1860 (Newsome 1998:66 Note 5). Newsome gives some details of Gray's life; he was born at Yeadon, near Leeds, in 1839 and had been a handloom weaver like his father. At the age of 14 he had joined Yeadon Young Band, playing 2nd cornet, and later 2nd soprano cornet and a year later he became bandmaster of Yeadon Old Band, the band with which he attended the 1860 Crystal Palace contest. As a handloom weaver he would have readily found employment in Hawick.

The Hawick R. V. Band regularly took part in contests causing the local Councillor C. J. Wilson remark on their absence from a local contest in Hawick in August 1891 that was judged by the famous John Gladney (*Border Advertiser* 26

August 1891). The Hawick Saxhorn Band and the Hawick R. V. Band both played at the opening of the new bandstand in Hawick in 1894 (*Hawick News* 25 May 1894). Volunteering was an important part of Borders life in the second half of the nineteenth century and the use of a brass band to accompany drill and parades was an integral part of this. After the 1880s many bands that had joined the Volunteers began to revert to town bands with the Volunteer corps in some towns preferring to use pipe bands. It has not been possible to ascertain exactly when the Rifle Volunteer Bands in Galashiels and Hawick ceased, but although they are known to have continued into the twentieth century there is no record of them having continued after the First World War. By this time the Volunteer Movement had been reorganised as the Territorial Army.

#### **4.9. Salvation Army bands in the Scottish Borders**

Other organisations formed brass bands during the nineteenth century. The Oddfellows Lodge in Kelso had a band in the 1850s, but this was probably a mixed wind band as the newspaper states that “it reminds us of the performances of a full military band” (*Kelso Chronicle* 4 September 1857).

Drink was the scourge of the working classes in the nineteenth century and it is worth mentioning that the Temperance Movement<sup>77</sup> began in Scotland in 1819, well before the rest of Britain (Moffat 2007:479). The only designated temperance brass band which has existed in the Borders was the Liddesdale Temperance Band at Newcastleton that existed until the 1970s, although as one local bandsman remarked, “by that time they were not known for their temperance affiliations”. Many temperance organisations, such as the Salvation Army and the Band of Hope, were active in Borders towns demonstrating the local concern over drunkenness in the nineteenth century. The programme for the Borders Brass Band League contest in 1903 (Appendix G) also demonstrates this concern as it states that only “Temperance Refreshments” were available.

The most important temperance organisation was the Salvation Army with brass bands becoming “one of the features that characterized it” (Herbert 1991:47). In 1880 William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, had issued an order

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<sup>77</sup> A social movement to prohibit the use of alcohol.

urging corps to form bands of “anything that will make a pleasant sound for the Lord”<sup>78</sup>. There have been several Salvation Army bands in the Scottish Borders, including Selkirk and Galashiels (both now closed) and Hawick (still in operation).

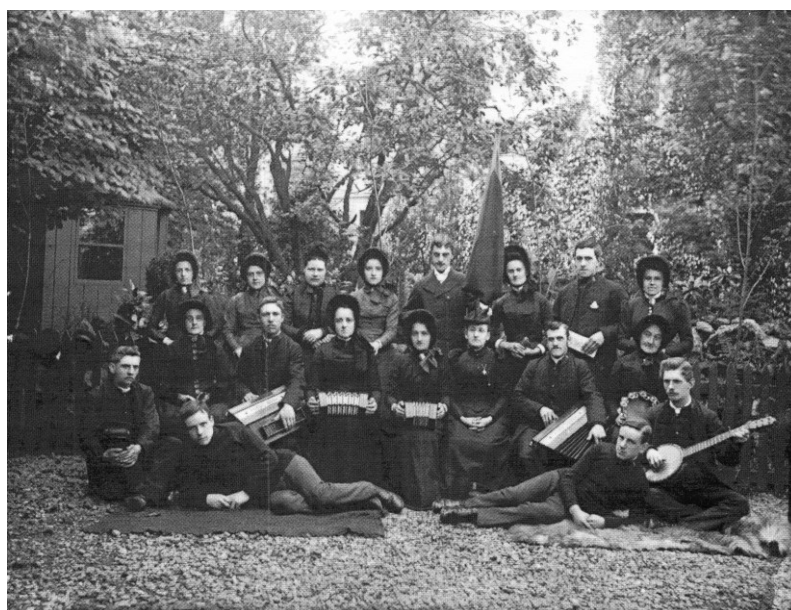


Fig. 4.5. Hawick Salvation Army Corps 1891 (Hawick Museum Ref. P4105)

The Hawick Salvation Army Corps was formed in the 1880s<sup>79</sup>, an early photograph of the corps, taken in 1891, showing 19 members, 8 men and 11 women (Fig 4.4). They are pictured with their flag and various instruments including two concertinas, two accordions, a banjo and a tambourine but no brass instruments. By 1909 the Hawick corps history book states that there were four bandsmen although their instruments are not named, however in 1911 they were removed from the corps roll and it was several more years before a proper brass band was formed. Brass instruments were chosen because they enhanced the idea of an army of Salvation (Herbert 2000:192). Trevor Herbert suggests that early Salvation Army members may have previously been members of brass or Volunteer bands before joining the Salvation Army. Brass band music was loud and vibrant for outdoor meetings and Booth favoured brass bands as it was a feature of the popular culture of the time which he could use for getting the message across. However, Booth had worked as a

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<sup>78</sup> Boon *Play the Music, Play* Ch 19 quoted in Herbert 2000:192.

<sup>79</sup> Grateful thanks go to Captain Steven J Turner, Corps Officer of the Hawick Salvation Army, Hawick Corps, for his help and assistance in allowing me to search the Hawick Corps history books.

Methodist minister in Brighouse, West Yorkshire, where there was a famous brass band, and he was well aware of the dangers of music to distract from his message. This raised the possibility of men joining just for the music-making. There had been a similar problem with bands in the volunteer force (Herbert 2000:193).

On 19 September 1913 the first Salvation Army Songsters were formed in Hawick and a “baby band” on 11 October the same year. The inspiration for this had probably come from visits by the Gorgie Corps Band from Edinburgh in October 1912 and the Clydebank Corps Band on 24 July 1913. By January 1915 a “small band” is mentioned in the Hawick corps history book and on 25 September that year the corps band had made sufficient progress to go and play in Galashiels. Salvation Army regulations specifically prohibited committees in connection with any band<sup>80</sup>. The bands were therefore supported by the band leagues, groups of band supporters who provided funds by subscription for the purchase of instruments and music. The first Hawick band league tea was held on 8 November 1915 when 83 people attended. It is interesting that the Hawick corps band was formed during the First World War when many men would have been away at the front, and this is probably the reason that in April 1916 the corps records show that the band included four bandswomen. In 1880 William Booth had issued an order stating that “we do here express our desire that as many of our officers and soldiers generally, *male and female*, who have the ability for so doing shall learn to play on some suitable instrument”<sup>81</sup>. This was different from other brass bands where social attitudes at that time meant there would have been few, if any, women players.

After the First World War the Hawick Salvation Army corps band appears to have gone from strength to strength. The corps history book records that in the early days of the Salvation Army members were often subjected to verbal and physical abuse, however, by 1923 the Hawick corps band was playing in the public park indicating that by this time attitudes were changing and the Salvation Army was being accepted in the town. In 1924 the Hawick corps history book includes a newspaper cutting showing the photograph below of the band with their new instruments. (The newspaper and date are not shown). The cost of the ten new instruments had been raised as a result of a ‘mile of pennies’ scheme. The band,

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<sup>80</sup> Announcement by Bramwell Booth in the *War Cry*, 24 February 1881.

<sup>81</sup> *War Cry* (27 March 1880). Quoted in Herbert 2000:197.

numbering 24 men, is shown in full uniform and it is obvious from the photograph below that many of them are young men and boys as would be expected in the early years after the First World War. There were 24 players in a standard brass band so it can be seen from the photograph (Fig. 4.5) that the corps band was at full strength at that time. The local paper announced the hand over of the new instruments with the following article:

THE SALVATION ARMY.—The presentation of new instruments to the local band of the Salvation Army will take place to-morrow (Saturday) night, at eight o'clock, by Robert Hunter, Esq., who takes a great interest in the band. The officers of the corps desire to make known to the people of Hawick that every penny raised for the New Instrument scheme has been spent for that purpose, as there are ideas abroad that a part of the sum realised was sent away to headquarters. These ideas are totally incorrect. The instruments have been purchased by the Commanding Officer, and are Class A instruments. It is interesting to note that Lieut. Colonel and Mrs Bax (Divisional Commanders of the East of Scotland) will also be present, and will throughout the weekend conduct anniversary meetings. The Colonel, who has been a Missionary Officer for many years, has travelled much, and has a rich and wide experience of Salvation Army warfare. (*Hawick Express and Advertiser* 12 December 1924)



Fig. 4.6. Hawick Salvation Army Band 1924 (Hawick Corps History Book)

The newspaper article implies that in spite of the band being generally accepted and able to play in the public park there were still people in the town who were prepared to spread rumours against the Salvation Army about the use of money that had been raised.

In 1928 a Young Persons Band was also formed in the Hawick corps indicating that the number of young players was still growing. Band-Inspector Saywell visited the corps in 1929 and it is recorded as an “exceptionally splendid weekend”. Edward Saywell was a well-known Band Inspector based at headquarters in London and band inspections were held regularly for the purposes of training and “evaluating the musical and spiritual strength of the corps” (Holtz 2006:129). Inspections were part of the tight control and centralisation which the Salvation Army exerted over the bands.

In 1930 the band was presented with a ‘Triumphonic Monstre Bass Bb’, the value of which is recorded as £54 14s 3d, a considerable sum in those days. Triumphonic was a trade mark used on Salvation Army instruments. From early on the Salvation Army produced its own instruments and printed its own music, and it was not until the 1992 that non-Salvation Army bands were allowed to purchase and perform Army music. All their music had to have some spiritual content, often being based on a hymn tune or referring to a text which evoked the spirit of salvation. Having their own music publishing department and instrument factory enabled rigid control of all aspects of Salvation Army music.

On 28 June 1931 the Hawick Senior Band played in the Bandstand in Wilton Lodge Park “this service being greatly appreciated by the people of the town”<sup>82</sup>, once again indicating that the band had a popular following by this time. David Young joined the Hawick Salvation Army Band in 1932 and he explained in an interview that in those days you were not allowed to belong to secular band as well. He went to join the Hawick Saxhorn Band because the bandmaster at that time was a good musician, George Guy, under whom he wished to play. When his mother told the corps officer that David would be at the Salvation Army band as usual on Sunday she

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<sup>82</sup> Hawick Salvation Army Corps History Book.

was told that he would no longer be welcome<sup>83</sup>. The present Corps Officer, Captain Steven Turner, explained to me that there were two reasons for this attitude; firstly, the practical one that there could be a conflict of interests for the players, and secondly, that there was the spiritual reason because corps members are expected to give all their talents to the service of God<sup>84</sup>. Nowadays attitudes are more relaxed and some members of the present corps band also play in the Hawick Saxhorn Band.

On 4 June 1942 the corps history book records that in the Second World War many of the bandsmen “left for the Forces during the period and have been greatly missed. We were fortunate in having half a dozen sisters to take their places in the band”, so again women helped to keep the band functioning during wartime.

Other towns in the Borders once had Salvation Army bands, particularly Galashiels and Selkirk. Both of these corps are now closed and it is difficult to obtain any information about their bands<sup>85</sup>. A newspaper report suggests that at one time that there was also a Salvation Army bands in corps in Peebles. “On Saturday and Sunday the local corps was considerably augmented by a contingent from Peebles, including the brass band. On Saturday they marched in torch light through the principal streets, attracting a considerable amount of attention” (*St. Ronan’s Standard* 22 December 1897).

#### **4.10. New Twentieth Century Bands**

Most brass bands in the Scottish Borders were formed in the nineteenth century with only one new senior band has been started in the twentieth century, in Kelso in 1948<sup>86</sup>; however, as already mentioned, there are newspaper reports of various bands that had existed in Kelso in the 19th century. The first Chairman of the Kelso Silver Band wrote that the initiative for a new band had come from the local inhabitants:

During the past 20 years the question has often been asked:  
“Why has Kelso not got a Brass Band?”—and at Civic Week

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<sup>83</sup> Interview with David Young. 11/10/2007. SA 2007.045

<sup>84</sup> Informal conversation with Captain Steven J Turner of the Hawick Salvation Army corps. November 2008.

<sup>85</sup> The corps record books for Galashiels and Selkirk are now stored at the Salvation Army headquarters in London.

<sup>86</sup> All the records for this band are in the Borders Archives in the Heritage Hub, Hawick, Ref. SBA/239 and a photograph Ref. SBA/335. The band only existed until 1957 when it was wound up.

when music has to be provided by Bands outwith the Burgh, there is a pretty strong expression of public opinion on this unsatisfactory state of affairs.<sup>87</sup>

The method of setting up a town band had changed little from those that were started in the nineteenth century. Funding for the Kelso band had to be in place before it could be stated. A public meeting was held on 8 October 1948 when a committee was elected and it was decided to send each householder in the town an envelope asking for donations and this raised £244-4s-3d<sup>88</sup>. This does not seem a large amount from a town the size of Kelso, but it must be remembered this was not long after WW2 when wages were still low and money was still short for many households. Perhaps the main difference to earlier door-to-door collections was that this was undertaken by lady volunteers. The initial public meeting also decided to hold a large function for fund-raising, “a bazaar for choice” to be held on 15 April 1949 and this eventually raised the sum of £342-17s-4d<sup>89</sup>. Like nineteenth-century bands the Kelso Silver Band considered approaching the Town Council for a grant from the rates, which was permitted by the 1948 Town Councils Act, but there is no record of whether they actually did so. Door-to-door collections in the town replaced what had been termed earlier the collection of subscriptions, but this was in effect the same thing.

The Kelso Silver Band started in 1948 was very short-lived and was wound up in the 1960s. A possible reason for this may have been given to me in an informal conversation with one of the Kelso ex-band members who said that he had left the band after a short period to go and play in a dance band. In the 1950s and 1960s dance bands were very popular in Britain and all the big-name dance bands, for example, Johnny Dankworth, Kenny Ball and George Melly, used to come through the Borders on their way to the big dance halls in Edinburgh. They would do one night stands in the Border towns and some of the local dance bands would be supporting acts.

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<sup>87</sup> Printed leaflet entitled ‘Kelso Brass Band’ in Heritage Hub, Hawick records of the band.

<sup>88</sup> Kelso Silver Band Minute Book. Public meeting 8 October 1948; Committee meeting 19 November 1948. Records in the Heritage Hub, Hawick.

<sup>89</sup> All the records of the bazaar are with the band records in the Heritage Hub, Hawick.

In more recent times the Scottish Borders has been at the forefront of starting new junior bands. St. Ronan's Silver Band and Jedforest Instrumental Band both had junior bands in the 1990s, but since then all the Borders bands, except St. Boswells Concert Band, have formed junior bands. These are seen as vital for the future of banding in the area and this initiative will be discussed in chapter 5.

#### **4.11. Summary**

This chapter has shown that there was a strong instrumental tradition in the Scottish Borders before the introduction of all-brass bands in the mid-nineteenth century. It has been shown that in the Scottish Borders evidence suggests that, unusually, there was a direct line of continuity providing a literate and text-based musical tradition from waits, through militia and early instrumental town bands, that provided the basis for the formation of brass bands and the later development of the brass band movement. The brass bands in the Borders look back to this long history taking pride in the past and its traditions through incorporating the dates from which they can trace their history in their badges, displaying old photographs in their band halls and, in some cases, publishing band histories.

There was no standard instrumentation in the earlier militia and town bands and the change to all-brass bands varied according to the circumstances of the different bands. The involvement of the whole community was an important factor. It was the working men of the Borders towns who, in the mid-nineteenth century, made up the players in the bands with the local gentry and middle classes patronising the bands from a distance. It was the middle class who sat on band committees and helped with the organization of the bands.

Very strong local support for the Volunteer Movement of the 1860s helped to stimulate the brass bands in the Borders. Later in the nineteenth century other organizations such as the Band of Hope and the Salvation Army had their own bands, but these were largely connected with the Temperance Movement and separate from the town brass bands. All members of brass bands in the Scottish Borders were men until the 1960s when women began to be admitted, although the Salvation Army had encouraged women to play instruments from the beginning.

Historically funding for bands was mostly, if not exclusively, local. In the nineteenth century subscriptions from the working class were supported by generous donations from the middle and upper classes. It is the local community support for the brass bands that has always been vital for the survival of the bands in the Scottish Borders and today these close links continue. In 2013 the street collections of the past have been largely replaced by fund-raising schemes such as 100 Clubs and patrons schemes, but through these the bands still rely on the generosity of local people. The cost of new instruments has always been one of the biggest expenses of a band and in the present day (2013) the cost of buying instruments is too great for most community bands so funding needs to be obtained from elsewhere. St. Ronan's Silver Band purchased a new set of instruments in 2012 at a cost of £70,000 with £10,000 raised by the band and the rest coming from The Jubilee People's Millions Big Lottery. Even so, the band's contribution was a considerable sum to be raised by the band in the small community of Innerleithen (population approximately 3000).

Town bands were an important symbol of growing civic pride as the Borders towns expanded rapidly due to industrialisation. Strict rules were laid down about members' behaviour especially with regard to the use and care of instruments belonging to the bands because drunkenness was a problem in industrial towns; for this reason the responsibility for the instruments was sometimes vested in the Town Councils. In the past most town bands in the Borders were supported, sometimes quite generously, by the town councils and in some cases this continued after local government reorganisation; for example, at one time the Galashiels Town Band received about £2000 a year from the town council, other bands more or less<sup>90</sup>. More recently, fixed grants for operational support were ended to make way for grants by application through Awards for All (small Lottery funding) for specific projects, but these are in competition for funds with other causes and are not guaranteed. Some of the links between the bands and the local councils have continued to the present day; for example, a member of the Scottish Borders Council is still entitled to sit on the committee and attend the meetings of the Galashiels Town. It is these strong links with the community that have assisted the town bands that were formed in the nineteenth century to survive into the twenty-first century.

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<sup>90</sup> Information supplied by Neal Wade, Bandmaster and Secretary, Galashiels Town Band.

## 5. Banding: contesting, learning, rehearsing

### ‘Fraternity’<sup>91</sup>

My father’s side of the family was very much attached to them, and he played in the local colliery band...I loved brass bands and still do – they bring me to tears in about four bars of anything! It’s a glorious noise, and I love the community of it, the way it bonds people together. It’s almost a sport, too, because they compete very seriously, band against band. Quoted in “John Tams: England’s Song Maker...and More” by C. Nickson in *Sing Out: The Folk Song Magazine* 50:2 (Summer 2006:53).

The above quotation outlines the two main themes of this chapter, firstly, contesting which Trevor Herbert has stated is central to the brass band movement and “the shape and character of the brass band movement has been defined by processes, rules, values, spheres of influence, power structures, and performance practices which emanate from contesting” (Herbert 2000:5) and, secondly, the internal community of the brass band ‘world’ (Finnegan 2007:47). In Chapter 1 it was discussed how playing in a musical group such as a brass band is a leisure activity that involves commitment to the group and where performances are the result of collective endeavour through practising together. This internal ‘world’ of brass bands is largely hidden from the wider community who see the band only on ceremonial occasions or at concerts; they are not aware of the everyday practice and rehearsal that goes into achieving those performances.

Speaking on television about the rock band U2, Alan Yentob said that, “when people form a band they form what anthropologists would call a clan. They have some responsibility for each other...a clan sees itself as distinctive from everyone else around, bound by some kind of loyalty”<sup>92</sup>. Although he was speaking about a rock band Alan Yentob’s remarks apply equally well to brass bands. To belong to a community such as a band implies that the members have concern for the well-being of each other (Feintuch 2001:150).

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<sup>91</sup> March by J.A. Greenwood. Published in *The “Cornet” Brass (& Military) Band Journal*.

<sup>92</sup> Alan Yentob speaking on BBC 1 television programme *From the Sky* 9 October 2011. 10.25 pm.

Contests place extra demands on the individual players in order for the band as a whole to perform to the highest possible standard and for which extra rehearsals and practices are required. The individuality of each band is displayed through their distinctively coloured uniform jackets and is seen most clearly when bands get together to participate in brass band contests.

This chapter will begin by discussing brass band contests where bands can compete and compare themselves against other bands of similar standard. Other aspects of the internal world of brass banding, including the different ways in which people learn to play brass instruments so that they can play in a band, and how rehearsing together creates a community of interest will then be discussed. Finally, the influence that the Scottish Borders has had on brass banding in Scotland and beyond in the twenty-first century is examined.

## **5.1. Contests**

Colin Kemp, bandmaster of the Selkirk Silver Band, explained the reason he sees for contesting is that it “brings the standard up because you are rehearsing so much; often the standard just gets better and better so you get to a nice high as you get towards a competition”<sup>93</sup>.

In the nineteenth century members of the local community attended contests both for their sporting nature and to hear live music, but today few people outside the brass band ‘world’ attend contests and these are mostly friends and family supporters. The successes of the bands have always been conveyed to the wider community through the local newspapers and these are an invaluable source of information about nineteenth-century contests. Today, when bands do well in contests the newspaper articles are sometimes accompanied by a photograph which helps to identify the band to the wider community.

Contests became part of the expanding Victorian leisure industry (Borsay 2006:87). In the mid- to late-nineteenth century leisure time increased and sport and leisure activities became increasingly regulated. The rapid growth and popularity of brass band contests in the nineteenth-century, both local and national, has been

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<sup>93</sup> Interview with Colin Kemp. 06/08/2010. SA2010.32

compared to the growth of professional football<sup>94</sup> with both became increasingly competitive and organised. Later, as national associations were formed to organise contests, sections were introduced into brass band championships; these sections are very similar to football divisions where, at the end of the season, the top and bottom teams are promoted or relegated according to their results. This system is designed so that bands compete against others of similar standard and the test pieces chosen are to be appropriate for the technical capability of the bands in each section (Newsome 1998:8). However, there were no sections in early contests.

It is generally accepted that the first brass band contest probably took place in England at Burton Constable, near Hull, in 1844 and was won by the Besses o' th' Barn band playing the National Anthem (Herbert 2000:6). Contests gave bandmen the opportunity of visiting other towns to compete with the possibility of winning cups, presentation batons and new instruments which would bring them acclaim back in their own communities (Newsome 1998:35). The result was a rapid expansion in the number of contests that were held. At early contests the size of the bands taking part varied from 10 to 18 players and there was no standardisation of instrumentation (Newsome 1998:33), this being achieved only by the twentieth century when it became possible for all the competing bands to play a set 'test piece' (Herbert 2000:8).

In England two contests became major national events and were heavily sponsored. The Belle Vue contests started in 1853, later becoming the British Open Championships; contests at the Crystal Palace were begun in 1860 and later became the National Championships of Great Britain. Both contests have continued to the present day. Herbert has noted that both the Belle Vue and Crystal Palace contests "have attracted a variety of sponsors and been run by imaginative and far-thinking organizers" (Herbert 2000:7). As Frank Renton explained:

Well over 100 years ago, people began organising competitions for profit. The great John Henry Iles owned both the National Championships and the Open and ran them as a business – and ran them well. Over the years, ownership of the National has passed through several hands, whilst that of the Open has come to reside in the hands of the Mortimer

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<sup>94</sup> The Football League was started in 1888 (Borsay 2006:15).

family. There have been some quibbles about repertoire and judging over the years, but by and large the competitions have been well organised, and bands have been happy to participate. (*British Bandsman* 5 January 2013)

Because there was no similar highly commercial organisation of contests in Scotland this may have led to Newsome's comment that, "although the earliest amateur bands in Scotland seem to have been formed about the same time as of those in England...their later development was somewhat slower" (Newsome 1999:35). Before the Scottish Brass Band Association was set up in the late nineteenth century contests in Scotland were generally organised by individual bands as there was no central organisation.

#### 5.1.1. Some early contests in Scotland

In the previous chapter it was shown that by the late 1850s most of the Border towns had brass bands. As early as 1858 a proposal was put forward by the Galashiels Town Band in the *Border Advertiser* newspaper for a contest to be held in the Borders:

PROPOSAL FOR A GRAND BRASS BAND CONTEST.—  
Now that our band is reorganised and working with more harmony than ever, and as the season of cheap trips is at hand, a proposition has been suggested by means of a placard which the band have handed to us. The bill is a programme of the Grand Brass Band Contest which came off at Newhall Gardens, Sheffield, on the 14th of this month. At this unique musical contest there were twenty-four bands present from various parts of the middle and North of England, and prizes were awarded to the most successful performers. Could we not have a similar competition on the Borders to be called the Border Brass Band contest? The speculation is worth thinking about, and if the secretaries and members of the committee of the bands in different places—say south from Dalkeith—think the matter worthy of a trial, we shall be glad to give publicity and encouragement to the scheme. Shedden Park at Kelso has been suggested as the most fitted, from its central situation, and we have no doubt it would be cheerfully granted for such an interesting and novel combat of music talent.—*Border Advertiser*. (*Kelso Chronicle*, 2 July 1858)

It has not been possible to ascertain whether the contest ever took place, but the extract shows that bands in the Scottish Borders were aware of contests taking place elsewhere, including England, and wanted to be part of the contesting scene with the lure of prizes to be won. The idea of the contest being considered a kind of sporting event is generated through the use of the term ‘combat’, and the word ‘novel’ implies that no contesting had taken place in the Borders up to this date. The expanding railway network, which facilitated easy and “cheap trips”, is recognised in the article as being an important element in the successful organisation of such an event.

It has been suggested that possibly the first recorded brass band contest in Scotland took place at Wemyss Castle Estate, near Kirkcaldy, Fife in July 1885<sup>95</sup>. The first prize at this contest was £40 and a travel grant of £10 was given to the competing bands and this was enough to lure English as well as Scottish bands to the contest. Besses o’ th’ Barn, at that time the champion band of England, won both the main contest and the march contest with Scottish bands taking the next two places, Alloa Burgh Band gaining second place, and Kirkcaldy Trades Band, third.

However, there is considerable evidence that band contests had been taking place in Scotland well before this date. H. D. Douglas, a musical instrument maker in Glasgow<sup>96</sup>, organised contests in connection with the Volunteer Movement in 1862, 1864 and 1865 to promote the “efficiency of the Volunteer and other bands in Scotland” (Marr 1889:134). This was very much a Scottish competition with no bands from England competing, but it was not strictly a brass band contest as both brass bands and reed bands (probably brass and reed bands) took part. The list of competitors given by Marr for the 1864 contest provides a snapshot of which were the probably best bands in Scotland at that time as all the best bands would have wanted to take part in such an important contest. It is interesting to note that seven of the first nine places were taken by Rifle Volunteer bands, which again attests to the importance of the Volunteer Movement, discussed in the previous chapter, in promoting brass bands at that time. Most of the bands in the 1864 contest came from the Central Belt of Scotland with only three bands from the Borders, from Galashiels,

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<sup>95</sup> Johnstone, H., Simpson, G., & McLaren, A. Scottish Brass Band Association. <<http://www.sbba.org.uk/history>> Downloaded 10/08/2007.

<sup>96</sup> Old cornet by this maker listed as still in possession of St. Boswells Concert Band, Appendix B.

Hawick and Langholm. The “Hawick Brass Band” was placed fifth and this must have been the Hawick Saxhorn Band as the Hawick Rifle Volunteer Band was listed separately amongst the other competitors. Only one of the bands taking part, Omoa Iron Works Brass Band, was shown to be a works band, although bands such as both of the Hawick bands would have been composed of workers in the same occupation, wool and textiles, as that was the predominant industry in the town. As was mentioned previously, the Galashiels and Langholm bands were both Volunteer bands at this date. Marr (1989:135) lists the results as follows:

City of Edinburgh Rifle Brass Band  
19th Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers, Glasgow  
7th Dumfriesshire, Langholm, Rifle Volunteers Band  
Dunbartonshire Rifle Volunteers, Bonhill  
Hawick Brass Band  
1st Renfrew Rifle Volunteers, Greenock, Brass Band  
25th Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers, Glasgow  
Auchtermuchty Brass Band  
2nd Administrative Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers, Glasgow

Other competitors taking part were:  
Airdrie Old Union Brass Band  
Bo’ness 2nd Linlithgow Rifle Volunteers Reed Band  
Camelon Brass Band  
Crofthead Brass Band  
Dunblane Brass Band  
Elderslie Reed Band  
Galashiels 1st Selkirk Rifle Brass Band  
Gartsherrie Thistle Reed Band  
Glengarnock Reed Band  
Kilbarchan Reed Band  
Kinnaird Instrumental Band  
1st Linlithgow Rifle Brass Band  
Newmains Reed Band  
Omoa Iron Works Brass Band  
4th Roxburgh Hawick Rifle Brass Band  
Shettleston Reed Band

At the end of the contest a “Grand Contest March” was written for the occasion by M. W. Perry, and played by the massed bands (Marr 1998:135).

Raymond Thomson has suggested that English bands did not compete in Scotland until a contest in Waverley Market, Edinburgh on 16 April 1877 when they

took the first four places in that contest (Thomson 1996:25). The date of this contest considerably pre-dates the 1885 date suggested for the Wemyss Castle contest. Among the Border bands that competed in the contest were the Langholm Band and the Jedforest Band<sup>97</sup> although they were unplaced. The winning band on that occasion was Linthwaite Band (Yorkshire) conducted by Edwin Swift, the next three bands were all conducted by John Gladney<sup>98</sup>. The judge was Charles Godfrey, bandmaster of the Royal Horse Guards.

However, evidence suggests the above contest was not the first in which English bands took part in Scotland. As the railway network expanded, contests in the Scottish Borders were drawing bands from a very wide area of Scotland and Northern England. Pre-dating the above contest by two years was one organised by the Hawick Saxhorn Band on 24 July 1875. The Hawick band was present and played for dancing although they did not actually compete in the contest. Newspaper reports of the contest indicate that the Jedforest Instrumental Band was the only Borders band to actually take part because the Selkirk band, which was supposed to have competed, did not turn up. The remaining seven bands were a mixture of Scottish and English bands. Two reports of this contest are available in local newspapers, the shorter one reporting that:

AN INSTRUMENTAL BAND CONTEST took place on Saturday afternoon in Dovemount Park, on the north side of the Edinburgh turnpike, a short distance from the town. The weather was remarkably fine, and the crowd, which could not be under 6000, included nearly most of the gentry and clergy in the neighbourhood. Upwards of £100 was given in prizes and ten bands were entered for the competition; only eight, however, came to the scratch, namely—Jed Forest Instrumental Band, Workington Sax-horn Band, Felling Brass Band, Greenock Rifle Band, 1st Durham Engineers' Band, Whitburn Instrumental Band, West Hartlepool Operatic Band and Cornholme Brass Band. At the conclusion of the contest, the judge decided that the performances of the Cornholme Brass Band and the West Hartlepool Operatic Band were equally good, and they were requested to repeat

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<sup>97</sup> Information from <<http://www.harrogate.co.uk/harrogate-band/misc17.htm>> Downloaded 06/02/2007.

<sup>98</sup> Three professional conductors, Edwin Swift, John Gladney and Alexander Owen, became known as "The Great Triumvirate" and they dominated the brass band scene in the late nineteenth-century, frequently conducting several bands in the same contest (Newsome 1998:48).

their pieces, after which the former were awarded the first and the latter second prize. Workington Sax-horn Band was third, with Felling Brass Band fourth. For the cornet solos, N.P. Lungreen, Gateshead, carried off the first prize and Thomas Kirkup, Felling, the second; and for the euphonium solos, E Harris, Gateshead, was first, and J. Scott, Hawick, second. Dancing was engaged in and largely patronised during the solo playing. (*Southern Reporter* 29 July 1875)

This article conveys the popularity of band contests with the general public and demonstrates that support was given to these events not only by the community, but that they were also patronised by the gentry and clergy.

A much longer and very detailed description of this contest “by our special commissioner” appeared in the Jedburgh newspaper, *The Teviotdale Record*, on the 31 July 1875. (This account is reprinted in full in Appendix D). The “special commissioner” appears to be quite knowledgeable about band contests and brass playing, but it is a very partisan account being from the local newspaper printed in Jedburgh, so the report is biased in favour of the Jedforest Instrumental Band. It was the custom at the time for bands to stand in a circle or square (Newsome 1998:48); however, the article suggests that in this case the bands mounted a stand to perform. The article gives a vivid account of a type of bad behaviour indulged in by bands in early contests. Protests were made against two of the bands, Felling and Workington Sax-Horn Bands, at the start of the contest alleging that they had members of other bands playing in them. This shows that rules were already in place at that time regarding the conduct of contests and players had to be *bona fide* members of the band they were playing in; however, it also shows that the rules were often flouted and in this case the committee in charge were unable to control the situation. The longer newspaper article also exhibits the local pride which was felt in holding such a prestigious event which included English bands and the financial gain to the Hawick band who promoted it:

Notwithstanding the great depression supposed to exist in consequence of the financial crisis, Hawick was able, for this occasion at least, to hide all signs of distress, and to demonstrate to its full extent that Scotch pride which is implied by the phrase “keeping up appearances,” the result being a great pecuniary gain to the promoters of the scheme,

and a rare musical treat to the million. (*Teviotdale Record* 31 July 1875)

The music played at the 1875 contest was an ‘own choice’ piece and all the bands chose various operatic arrangements, this being the most popular type of music at this period as will be discussed in Chapter 6. The total prize money of over £100 (£200 in the longer report) was worth competing for, and this made it worthwhile for bands to travel some distance from northern England and other parts of Scotland to take part in the contest. The first prize was £25 and an instrument worth fifteen guineas<sup>99</sup>. At this time instruments were often given away as prizes and the *Teviotdale Record* correspondent mentions that one of the competing soloists, “Hogg of Gateshead”, had already won sixteen cornets. It was noted by the “special commissioner” that, apart from winning a prize in the euphonium solo contest where J. Scott of Hawick came second, all the prizes went to English bands.

Great community support was shown on this occasion by the crowds from Jedburgh who travelled with their band to Hawick on the train. It has been said that “contests linked bands to their local community” (Herbert 2000:92) and this close relationship was demonstrated at this contest where the audience was made up of “thousands” of local Border people. Audiences numbering thousands were not unusual for band contests at that time which were always held out of doors. At the end of the report the “special correspondent” again calls for contests to be held exclusively between Border bands, noting how popular the contests were with local people and that they “pay exceedingly well”, presumably not only for the prize-winning bands but also for the local businesses in the towns where they were held due to the large crowds attending the contests.

In the nineteenth century it was less common for Scottish bands to travel to contests in England. In 1877 the Langholm Town Band entered a contest in Workington entering “the second and third sections, in both of which they took prizes, gaining fourth prize in the second section and first prize in the third section. . . The bandmaster was the late Mr. William Calvert, and the test pieces were *Masnadiere* (Verdi) and an own choice of a Quadrille, Quickstep or March” (Beattie

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<sup>99</sup> Information from Malcolm Bull’s *Calderdale Companion*. Downloaded 03/03/2011. <<http://freepages.hisotry.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~calderdalecompanion/c.html>>.

1950:148). The *Eskdale and Liddesdale Advertiser* for 22 June 1927 reported that at this contest the Langholm Brass Band “had the distinction of being the first Scottish band to take a prize in England” (Beattie 1950:148). It was unusual for the band to be able to enter two sections, and as contests became more organised, bands were allowed to compete in only one section.

#### 5.1.2. Later nineteenth-century contests

Brass band contests proliferated in Scotland during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Galashiels Town Band competed very successfully in many contests under their conductor, Thomas Moore, who conducted not only this band but also the Galashiels R.V. Band and the Portobello Band, conducting all three at a contest in Innerleithen in May 1891 where only four bands took part, the fourth being the St. Ronan’s Band, conducted by J. Teasdale. The poor entry was due to the neighbouring band in Selkirk organising a contest on the same day that drew more support.

The Galashiels Town Band took part in a contest held at the Edinburgh Exhibition in 1890 that was open only to Scottish bands and they were placed fifth. This excerpt is from a long account in the local newspaper:

Far from being a success, either in the arrangements made for it, the attendance of the public, or the awards...That bands composed almost wholly of hard-working artisans whose leisure is limited should be able to produce such results as they did on Saturday was in the highest degree creditable to them, and says a good deal for the extent to which instrumental music is cultivated throughout the country...A good few of the stand occupants were from Galashiels, most having journeyed by the Hawick excursion train, and the bulk of them seemed to be present as music lovers or critics and not as mere spectators, judging from the intense interest they showed in the affair...Many who had no connection with Galashiels or the Galashiels band were heard declaring that the latter should have been placed second, among them – to our knowledge – several competent music teachers from other towns...The news of the result created as much surprise and dissatisfaction at Galashiels when it was sent to Mr Moore’s shop by telegram...Those who have always

entertained the certainly worthy idea that the band should devote itself rather to entertaining the inhabitants of the town with its music rather than to attending contests elsewhere, were heard reiterating their views all round". (*Border Advertiser* 11 June 1890)

This article gives an insight into several important attitudes to contests in the late nineteenth century. Firstly, that many of the spectators were knowledgeable about music, including music teachers, and that they did not always agree with the judge's result. Secondly, that the community in Galashiels could not wait for their band to return to know the result which had to be sent back to the town by telegram to Mr Moore's shop, probably the same Mr Moore who conducted the band. Thirdly, as the band had obviously not done as well as expected it was cause for some disgruntled comments from people in Galashiels who thought that the band should take part in fewer contests and entertain the local people more often. This view, expressed at the Galashiels Town Band annual general meeting in 1893, indicated that the "general feeling was that people were not giving because the band were not winning contests...[and] it was pointed out that the band was for 'a taste in music for the town' not just for contests"(*Border Advertiser* October 1893).

It was reported that 5,000 people attended a contest held in Galashiels in 1892, and it was stated that this "was probably the largest crowd of people met at one time in Galashiels", adding that they were "orderly and well behaved" and only two or three were drunk (*Alloa Journal* 20 August 1892)<sup>100</sup>. There were two separate contests held on that day and the test piece for both contests was *Joan of Arc* (Wright). In the Open Contest four English bands took part, the Hawick Saxhorn Band being the only Borders band entered in the Open section, but they were unplaced. The contest was dominated by the English bands conducted by Alexander Owen and won by Besses o' th' Barn (Owen), with Tanfield Lee Silver Model Band (Owen) placed second, Irwell Bank (Owen) third and Wyke Temperance Band (Swift) fourth. The Closed Contest, restricted to Scottish Bands, included three Borders bands, St Ronan's Brass Band (J. Teasdale), Galashiels Rifle Volunteer Band (T. Moore) and the Hawick Saxhorn Band (W. Atkinson). The Borders bands

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<sup>100</sup> Many cuttings from the *Alloa Journal* are found in the book of newspaper cuttings compiled by Walter Atkinson, bandmaster of the Hawick Saxhorn Band, during the 1880s and 1890s. This book is in the possession of the Hawick Saxhorn Band.

did well in the Closed Contest with the Hawick band tying for first place with the band from Alloa, and the Galashiels R.V. Band being placed third.

Before contests in Scotland became organised by the Scottish Brass Band Association in 1895, the criteria for claiming which was the champion band of Scotland at that time are unclear. A report of a contest in Selkirk in 1891 stated that the Alloa band which had held the championship of Scotland for the past three years was only 3rd and “lost the championship of Scotland” (*Southern Reporter* 7 May 1891). In 1892 the Hawick Saxhorn Band ran a contest, with Edwin Swift as the judge, which was open to bands from Scotland and the North of England, but as no English bands turned up, “the contest was eventually centred on the deciding of the somewhat vexed question of which band is entitled to assume to itself the title of ‘Champion Band of Scotland’” (*Alloa Journal* 17 September 1892). In the same year as the above contest, at the Annual General Meeting of the Hawick Saxhorn Band it was suggested that, whilst the band had not been as successful in contests as the previous year, they still stood fourth among Scottish bands and had been practising almost five nights a week (*Hawick News* 7 October 1892) implying that there was some sort of recognised way of determining the rankings.

Contests held in Kirkcaldy were generally recognised as the principal band contests in Scotland by 1895. It was reported that at the contest that year there were 30,000 people present and the test piece was *Tam o’ Shanter* by Round. The first four places again went to English bands, the contest being won by Besses o’ the Barn, with Wyke Temperance Band second and Irewell Bank Band third. The highest placed Scottish band was Bo’ness and Carriden who were fourth with the Galashiels Town Band were placed eighth (*The British Musician* Sept 1895:215).

Contests measure the ability of a band against others of similar standard and success in contests has always been important to bands. News of success heightens a band’s status in the community and improves its fund-raising ability as well as marking the achievement of attaining a certain standard of performance. This is demonstrated in a report of the Galashiels Town Band’s Annual General Meeting in October 1893 which stated that the general feeling at the meeting was that people were not giving money towards it because the band were not winning contests (*Border Advertiser*).

When the Scottish Amateur Brass Band Association was formed in 1895 there was no similar national association currently existing in either England or Wales, and national associations in other European countries were not formed until much later, so it is understood that the Scottish Association is the oldest established national brass band association in Europe. The Association drew up rules for the conduct and organisation of contests for the Scottish Championships and they became formalised. The first Committee was headed by Mr. Peter Black, Town Chamberlain of Alloa Burgh and Chairman of Alloa Burgh Band as President, Mr. Robert Baillie, Carron Iron Works Band as Treasurer and Mr. James Bryce of Cambusbarron Band, Secretary. They were assisted by five delegates from East based Bands and five from the West to oversee the affairs of the Association (Alexander 1928:5).

Twenty-two bands took part in the first championships, held in Waverley Market, Edinburgh on 19 October 1895, and they were divided into two sections. The first Scottish Champions were the Bo'ness & Carriden Band playing the test piece *Eureka*, published by Wright & Round. The winning conductor was John Gladney who also directed the Kelty & Blairadam band to success in the Second Section playing *Lucrezia Borgia* (Donizetti), possibly in Gladney's own arrangement from 1869 (Newsome 1998:85). Messrs Besson & Company, the brass instrument manufacturers, presented two Championship Challenge Cups to be competed for by the winners (valued at thirty and twenty guineas respectively). Two Borders bands, Galashiels and Hawick, took part in the First Class Contest but were not placed (Alexander 1928:7).

Over 8,000 followers of the bands attended the first championships but conditions were primitive as there was no seating, the bands performed standing in the ring used by the cattle auctioneers with spectators on the stepped terraces. The major advantage of the venue was its proximity to Edinburgh's main line railway station as most bands and their supporters made their way to the Championships by train. The number of Scottish bands taking part in the championships increased steadily each year and a third section was introduced in 1905 and a fourth section added in 1925. The Hawick Saxhorn Band gained some success in the early years being second in the Championship section in 1899 and third in 1897 and 1900.

### 5.1.3. The early twentieth century.

Several calls had been made during the nineteenth century for contests to be held between Borders bands and these eventually came to fruition in 1903 with the formation of the Scottish Borders Brass Band League. In its first year the League held three contests, in Hawick, Innerleithen and Galashiels. Special excursion trains ran to take the local supporters to the contests and enthusiasm was whipped up by the local press in the weeks beforehand with comments such as:

St. Ronan's Brass Band will be among the competitors, and we trust it will be among the prize winners, but should that not be, the members have to be congratulated on the success they have already attained in improved playing. (*St. Ronan's Standard* 20 May 1903)

The judge of the Hawick contest in 1903 was Tom Moore, the popular former conductor of the Galashiels Town Band and the Galashiels R.V. Band, who would therefore be well known to both the competitors and the attending crowds. However, it was the Galashiels contest in September 1903 which produced the greatest local interest, especially in Innerleithen, as the test piece, *Scottish Border Melodies* was written by the St. Ronan's Brass Band conductor, Lawrence Cockburn. It is typical of selections or medleys played at that time and it will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 6. (See also CD Tracks 1-6).

Unfortunately the Borders Brass Band League continued only for three years. Several attempts have been made to start a brass band association in the Borders since then. In the 1930s there was a Borders and Lothians Brass Band League that organised annual contests, and again a Borders league was started in the 1950s. Eventually revived again in 1997 after a lapse of over ten years, the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association it has been in existence ever since, now holding regular contests, training days for junior bands and annual band weeks when each band puts on a concert in its own town.

#### 5.1.4. Contests 1918-1945

The First World War very drastically reduced the number of bands and those that survived struggled for numbers. Some bands loaned their instruments to the military, for example the St. Ronan's Silver Band loaned their instruments to the 2/9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots (known as the "Dandy Ninth") (*St. Ronan's Standard* 18 August 1915). After the war many bands were not contesting, but still regularly took part in the Scottish Championships, though with little success (Alexander 1928). Banding in Scotland appears to have been somewhat disorganised after the First World War with the Scottish correspondent of the *British Bandsman* claiming that the best Scottish bands were considerably below the standard of lower grade bands for England and Wales (*British Bandsman* 10 January 1920). It was claimed that when English bands did venture into Scotland they "of course, brought the money back" (*British Bandsman* 12 July 1919).

The Scottish Brass Band Association kept strong control of contesting in Scotland during the 1930s overseeing the Edinburgh, Glasgow and Fife Charities events as well as the Scottish Championships (Newsome 2006:116). Several Borders bands entered the Scottish Championships before World War II although the full contest records show that the bands from the industrialised Central Belt of Scotland dominated the prizes at that time (Alexander 1928). Selkirk Silver Band were placed third in the second section in 1910 followed by fourth and then first places in the third section in 1936 and 1937 respectively. Peebles Silver Band achieved some successes and was placed in the top four of the third or fourth sections on six occasions between 1907 and 1936<sup>101</sup>.

It has been difficult to find information about local contests in the Borders during this time as the local newspapers concentrated on other forms of public entertainment and stopped printing reports of contests that local bands took part in as they had done earlier. Brass band contests were generally suspended during the Second World War although many bands again struggled on with just a few members who were too young or too old to join the forces.

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<sup>101</sup> Contest results from Alexander, J. (1928). *Short History of the Scottish Amateur Band Association* (2nd ed.). Musselburgh: Mailer & Marr.

#### 5.1.5. Contests 1945 – 1990

After World War II the Scottish Championships were transferred from the Waverley Market to the better venue of the Usher Hall, Edinburgh. There were now five sections in the competition, a championship section and four further sections. In 1945 the *Daily Herald* newspaper, took over the running of the National Championships of Great Britain, introducing qualifying regional heats with Scotland as one of the eight area qualifying regions. For a number of years these were staged separately from the Scottish Championships causing confusion and difficulty for the bands and a degree of acrimony between the Scottish Brass Band Association and the *Daily Herald*. The problem was eventually resolved in 1958 when the dates of the Scottish Championships were altered and it was agreed that the Scottish Championship would then also serve as the qualifying event for the British Championship finals. The dual status of this event continues today, but is often overlooked or misunderstood by those outside of Scotland; however, and for Scottish bands the status of their own national championship title remains undiminished. Scottish bands, their players and supporters will never be heard referring to the “Scottish Regional” or the “Scottish Area” contest because for everyone in Scottish banding the event is always simply referred to as the Scottish Championships. The *Daily Herald* ceased publication in 1964 and this was followed by a brief sponsorship of the championships by *The People*. Galashiels Town Band was successful in the *Daily Herald* regional competition on two occasions. In 1949 they won the Scottish Area Challenge Cup and £30 (the certificate does not indicate which section they were in) and in 1956 they won the Scottish Area Challenge Cup for Third Section bands. The certificates for these still remain with the Galashiels Town Band (Fig. 5.1).

Several significant changes took place after World War II. The maximum number of players allowed in contesting bands until this time was 24 and Eric Ball (1903-1989)<sup>102</sup>, the eminent brass band composer and conductor, tried to have this

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<sup>102</sup> Eric Ball began his musical career in the Salvation Army rising to the rank of Major. Consequently much of his music has a spiritual quality. In 1945 he left the Salvation Army after becoming interested in spiritualism, continuing as a composer and conductor in the brass band movement.

increased to 26 with the addition of an extra front row cornet and another tenor horn and possibly excluding a baritone. However, his views failed to convince the administrators of the movement and a compromise was reached allowing one extra cornet, thus bringing the maximum contest playing number up to 25 which it remains today.



#### 5.1. 'Daily Herald' certificates awarded to Galashiels Town Band in 1949 and 1956

One of the most successful contesting bands in the Scottish Borders during the second half of the twentieth century was the Hawick Saxhorn Band. Conducted by James Amos, in 1953 they won the second section of the Scottish Championships and qualified to go to the British finals in London. This success was followed a few years later in 1961 when they won first place the Championship Section, the highest section, of the Scottish Championships, playing *Judges of the Secret Court*, thereby becoming Scottish Champions<sup>103</sup>. They raised money to attend the national finals in London representing Scotland in the British Championships at the Albert Hall that year. Speaking of this achievement Alan Fernie, Chairman of the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association, said that he thought that it would never be repeated because bands in the Borders had other priorities as community bands<sup>104</sup>.

<sup>103</sup> Information from Colin Crozier who played in the band when it won the Scottish Championship in 1961 and played in the British Championship finals in the Albert Hall, London.

<sup>104</sup> Interview with Alan Fernie. 28/04/2010. SA2010.33

Generally throughout Scotland the number of brass bands declined greatly after the Second World War, due in part to the demise of heavy industry, especially the mining and steel communities in the Central Belt. However, George Burt has suggested that the decline in industry doesn't account for the number of brass bands failing. He cited other causes, in particular the popularity of dance bands and other types of entertainment such as television and the fact that more people were able to go on foreign holidays<sup>105</sup>. This period also saw a fall in interest for band contests by the wider public. As Trevor Herbert has pointed out, this was "a further significant indicator of brass bands marginalization within popular musical culture" (Herbert 2000: 93).

In the 1960s the rise of urban 'pop' music culture would also have had some impact on the youth of the Scottish Borders, but whilst young people in the Borders could buy records, they would have had to travel to Glasgow or Edinburgh to hear bands such as 'The Beatles' live in concert. It has been difficult to ascertain at this distance in time the impact of 'Beat Groups' on the membership of brass bands in the Scottish Borders, but several Border bandsmen have stated in conversation that generally they felt that 1960s 'Beat Groups' had little impact on the brass bands; one person gave as an example a young player who bought a guitar and played in a 'Beat Group' but continued to play cornet in the brass band as well. This perceived lack of influence by the 1960s 'Beat Groups' on the Borders brass bands again emphasises the community orientated and somewhat inward-looking nature of the Scottish Borders.

Apart from the social changes, momentous changes in musical instrument design had a huge impact on brass bands in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1964 the instrument makers Boosey & Hawkes advised bands that the previous higher pitched instruments used by British brass bands would be discontinued and, with effect from 1 January 1970, only low pitch instruments would be available. This change caused great concern throughout the band movement with bands needing to purchase complete new sets of instruments or to have their instruments altered to the new pitch. It was also unpopular with some bandsmen because they felt the traditional sound of the brass band was altered by the lower pitch, losing its brilliance (Myers

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<sup>105</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

2000:183). This change was followed by the introduction of wider bore instruments in the 1970s making them capable of greater power; however, as Arnold Myers has remarked:

It is ironic that brass bands should have adopted the instruments originally designed to allow symphony orchestras to fill concert halls seating thousands, some fifty or sixty years after the time when bands could themselves attract audiences of thousands to their concerts. (Myers 2000:185)

Although composers had been adding percussion parts to brass band music for some time, percussion was not allowed in contests until the late 1960s. It was first introduced at the Belle Vue contest in 1969, the test piece for the event being Gilbert Vinter's *Spectrum* (Myers 2000:185). Since that date, the use of percussion has grown to become an integral part of brass band music both for concerts and contests.

## **5.2. The principal contests entered by Scottish Borders brass bands today**

At the beginning of the twenty-first century there is an annual calendar of contests in which Scottish Borders brass bands take part. Some are organised by the Scottish Brass Band Association and others by the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association, the latter including both closed contests for Borders bands only and contests which are open to all bands. Spring and autumn are the main times for bands to take part in contests as during the summer months they are involved in many community events.

### **5.2.1. The Scottish Championships**

The first important contest in each calendar year is the Scottish Championships in early March and bands will be practising hard for these during the winter with extra rehearsals and section practices. Preparation for these contests will vary from one band to another with the intensity of preparation being greater for bands in higher sections who want to do well and maintain or better their rankings. For the Scottish Championships players can be registered with only one band and must change

registration if they wish to compete in a different band the following year. Registration cards perform a similar function to passports used when travelling abroad and deter player replacement or cheating such as that which occurred in the nineteenth century that was discussed earlier. These cards must be presented to the officials and stamped just before the band go on stage to compete. Richard Jones (2007) has discussed in detail what happens before, during and after a contest in the context of the Brighouse and Rastrick Band, one of the Championship section bands in England, but exactly the same procedures take place right down to the bands in the 4th section.

At the present time (2013) two bands in the Borders, the Galashiels Town Band and St. Boswells Concert Band do not contest. The Galashiels Town Band, which competed regularly until the 1980s will probably do so again when the number of players in the band permits, but the St. Boswells band does not compete at all. Scottish Borders bands normally attend three or four contests a year whereas some of the top bands in Scotland, principally from the Central Belt, go to anything up to ten contests a year and do little else. However, the conductor and composer, Alan Fernie, has explained that Borders bands have to strike a balance between community involvement and contesting<sup>106</sup>, and, as George Burt of the Jedforest Instrumental Band put it, “Some bands live for contesting – we do not”<sup>107</sup>.

Scottish Borders bands are generally ranked in the second, third or fourth sections and tend to move up and down between these sections with a band occasionally reaching the first section before falling back. In recent times several bands in the Borders have successfully won various sections in the Scottish Championships. For example, St. Ronan’s Silver Band progressed through the sections of the Scottish Championships from the fourth section in 1997 to the first section in 2007 before falling back a little before winning the third section again in 2013.

Whilst promotion and relegation between sections depends on a band’s results in the Scottish Championships, other contest results from qualifying events contribute towards the Band of the Year award for each section from the Scottish

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with Alan Fernie. 28/04/2010. SA2010.33

<sup>107</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

Brass Band Association<sup>108</sup>. This runs through the year (1 October-31 September) and reflects the performances in all Scottish contests and also in major national and international contests. Points are awarded on the following basis:

Each band receives 2 points for taking part, an additional 2 points for each band they defeat and with a 2 point bonus for being the winning band. To demonstrate how this operates, a band winning a section of 10 bands in the Scottish Championships would receive 2 points for taking part, 18 points for having finished higher than 9 other bands and a 2 point bonus for winning the contest, being a total of 22 points. The band finishing in fifth place in the same contest would receive 2 points for taking part and 10 points for having finished higher than 5 other bands, being a total of 12 points.<sup>109</sup>

As bands in the Scottish Borders enter only a limited number of contests a year, they are less likely to win the Band of the Year for their section — unless they perform particularly well when they do enter — than are bands from other areas which compete in more contests. However, on the basis of their contesting performances, the Jedforest Instrumental Band was declared Band of the Year for their section by the Scottish Brass Band Association in 2004 and 2012 and the St. Ronan's Silver Band was Scottish 3<sup>rd</sup> Section Band of the Year in 2013, a great achievement for Borders bands.

It was mentioned earlier that since the late nineteenth century it has been common for bands to bring in an outside conductor for contests. Alan Fernie, a professional conductor, remarked that whilst the job of the regular bandmaster is “absolutely vital” to the success of a band, “bringing in an outside conductor now and again is good for a band”<sup>110</sup>. Alan also commented that as a young player with the Newtongrange Band, a championship section band, he used to look forward

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<sup>108</sup> Qualifying contests in Scotland include the Scottish Championships, Edinburgh Charities, Fife Charities, Northern Counties, West of Scotland, and Carnegie. Land o' Burns, Borders Entertainment, Whitburn and West Lothian Festival. Major national and international qualifying contests include the National Championship Finals, British Open, Grand Shield, Senior Cup, Senior Trophy, European Championships, Scottish Open, International Masters, Brass in Concert and Pontins.

<sup>109</sup> <<http://www.sbba.org.uk/band-of-the-year>> Downloaded 27/08/2012.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Alan Fernie. 28/04/2010. SA2010.33

tremendously to an English professional conductor coming along now and again as it was “exciting”<sup>111</sup>.

### 5.2.2. National Brass Band Finals

The Scottish Championships, held in the spring, serve as the area qualifying event for the National Championships which are held in England in the autumn. The winners of each section of the Scottish Championships are able to go forward to the National Championships of Great Britain finals. For example, in 2012 the Jedforest Instrumental Band won the 3rd Section of the Scottish Championships and were eligible to go to the finals in Cheltenham for the weekend of 22/23 September 2012 where the finals of Sections 1 to 4 were held. To enable the band to be able to afford the cost of travel to Cheltenham extra fund-raising events were held by the band with vital community support.

The set work for the final was a new work called *Three Ancient Customs* by R Huw Cole a talented composer and conductor who has worked in and around Wales and the West of England over the past decade. The work celebrates the traditions and customs of the hinterland of the Welsh borders including *Cwrw Bach* (‘Small Beer’) *Mari Lwyd* and *Wassail*. Playing first out of the eighteen bands in the section was not a good draw, but the band’s final position was 5<sup>th</sup>, the highest placing of any Scottish Band in the 2012 Championships and the best result in the band’s history. The Jedforest Instrumental Band’s flugel horn player, Stuart Black, won the best instrumentalist award for the whole section and this was a great coup for the band, the Borders, and for Scottish banding.

### 5.2.3. The Borders Entertainment Contest

In early November the Borders Brass Band Association organises an Entertainment Contest which is open to bands from other areas as well and in 2013 twenty senior bands entered including two from England. The junior section is now held in January as the number of bands entering has grown too big for it to be held on the same day.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

As the title suggests the emphasis is on entertainment and this is one of the few contests where there is a theme each year but bands are able to choose their own programme of music. In 2011 the theme was a tribute to the passing of the brass band composer Goff Richards and each band had to include a piece by him in their programme.

An innovation at the 2011 contest was the piloting of a new departure in adjudication. The contest was pre-drawn so that the playing order was known in advance and the two music adjudicators were sitting in the open and not in the usual box, but they were separate and non-conferring. In addition, whilst one wrote traditional remarks the other recorded his thoughts directly onto a CD along with a recording of the band's performance as it occurred. This format had previously been used in wind band contests and was successfully tried before at a solo contest organized by one of the Borders bands in Selkirk in 2010. A third judge looked solely at the entertainment quality of the performances.

In 2011 there were five bands in their own junior contest which was judged by a different adjudicator. The Scottish Borders Youth Band, at that time Scottish Youth Champions at senior level, a band which includes players from all the Borders youth bands, played a short programme before the adjudication.

#### 5.2.4. Scottish Youth Band Championships

The Scottish Youth Band Championships in November have become an increasingly important event in the year for younger players with over 1,000 players taking part in 2011. In 2010 there were 36 bands competing, up from 31 the previous year<sup>112</sup>. Arranged in five sections according to age and ability the championships take place in the Perth Concert Hall. The Preparatory Section is for bands with players under 12 years old and the Novice Section for slightly older players. This is followed by the Development, Senior and Premier Sections for more experienced bands with Gold, Silver or Bronze certificates awarded to all the bands competing in all the sections, and a section winner is also declared. In 2011 youth bands in the Borders did well in this contest the Galashiels Youth Band which had been in existence for less than a

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<sup>112</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010. SA2010.59

year, with some players in the band for only six months, gained a Silver award in the Preparatory Section with the more experienced Abbey Brass (Jedforest Instrumental Band's youth band) gaining a Gold award. The Hawick Saxhorn Youth Band gained Gold in the Novice section and the Peebles Junior Band a Silver award in the Development Section. The best result was gained by the Scottish Borders Youth Band, conducted by Alan Fernie, which won the senior section. This band has players drawn from all the Borders bands and so it was a particularly important victory for the young players.

### **5.3. Playing in a Band**

Unlike top bands such as Brighouse and Rastrick where experienced players are auditioned to fill vacancies (see Jones 2007), Borders bands welcome anyone and there are no auditions. As was discussed in Chapter 1, playing in a brass band is a leisure activity that involves teamwork and practice to produce the best possible standard of performance for concerts and contests<sup>113</sup>. To achieve this end the band needs to function as a close community requiring loyalty from the members so that they do not let down the other members of the group. This loyalty is demonstrated through regular attendance at practices with each player making sure they know their part in the music. As Stephanie Pitts has noted:

Membership of a performing society requires each individual to work within a complex social structure; shaping, responding to or challenging agreed conventions and behaviours, and balancing the desire for personal fulfilment with a broader responsibility to the group. Finding a valued role within a musical society can fulfil the diverse needs of the members from a variety of social circumstances. (Pitts 2005:54)

In his study of the Brighouse and Rastrick Band Richard Jones (2007) showed how bonds and friendships are made within a band as everyone strives together to produce the best possible performance. Whereas in the nineteenth century brass bands consisted mainly of men from the working class, today members of community brass

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<sup>113</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010. SA2010.59

bands such as those in the Scottish Borders are of both sexes and all ages and occupations, forming a cross-section of that community. The brass bands of the Scottish Borders have a wide age range amongst their players and there are many band members who have played for upwards of fifty years, often in the same band, balancing the competing and often changing demands of work and family to regularly attend band practices throughout that time. The age range in the Galashiels Town Band in January 2013 was from 10 to 77 years old, with younger players from age 7 in the Youth and Junior bands. In the St. Boswells Concert Band the age range was from 17 to 85 year old. Similarly large age spans occur in most of the community bands in the Borders with loyalty to their town band a strong feature. Many players have played with the same band for 40 or 50 years having originally learned to play in the same band<sup>114</sup>. In a rural area such as the Borders this continuity is an important factor in the sustainability and survival of the bands.

Alan Fernie has suggested that:

There is absolutely no doubt that the community involvement in every band here is more so than it is in every band in the Central Belt...There's greater loyalty to your band too, probably because there's loyalty to your town...I know people who play in Selkirk band who will never, never play in any other band in their life and that's an admirable thing. In all the Border towns you very rarely get a player moving from one band to another.<sup>115</sup>

From my personal experience of speaking to many band members it became clear that most players learn when they are young. In both the St. Boswells and Galashiels bands in the present day (2013) there are also retired people who have returned to playing an instrument that they learned when they were younger, together with older people who are beginners having taken up learning an instrument in their retirement. Even today (2013), when players are drawn from a wider cross-section of society than in the nineteenth century, bands still provide instruments and uniforms for their players, although some players prefer to own their instruments. This enables people, especially young people, to engage in music-making without any cost and it is

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<sup>114</sup> Interview with John Windrum. 22/01/2009. SA2009.013

<sup>115</sup> Interview with Alan Fernie. 28/04/2010. SA2010.33

therefore all-inclusive. This is important in a rural area such as the Borders where opportunities for music-making within the local community are more limited than in cities.

### 5.3.1. Learning to play

The method of learning to play a brass instrument in order to play in a band has changed over time. Finnegan has suggested that in the past the perception of the general public was that players were either self-taught, learnt from family members or in the band (Finnegan 1989:48). Today there are still some young players who learn from a parent who plays in a band with family involvement strong in many Borders bands. In the Borders several generations of the same family often play in the same band, exemplifying the close internal community that exists within the bands. For example, in Galashiels Town Band in 2013 there is a father and his two daughters in the band, another father and daughter, and my son, grand-daughter and I all play in the band with my grandson in the junior band. One interviewee, Alan Edmond, confirmed how important families are to bands as he and his sister played in a band, he met his wife through playing in a band and his own children also play in bands<sup>116</sup>.

Today most of the Borders bands have junior bands where children can learn a brass instrument and learn to play together, generally from about the age of eight years old and they can then progress to the senior bands as they become proficient. Many children in the junior bands also have the opportunity to learn at school and there are peripatetic brass teachers employed by the local education department of the Scottish Borders Council. In the Borders some of the peripatetic school brass teachers are themselves musical directors of a band and they encourage the young people that they teach to join their local band.

#### 5.3.1.1. Learning within a band

There are many different reasons people join a band. Peer pressure was mentioned by some people as a reason for joining saying they had gone along to the band

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<sup>116</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11 2010. SA2010.59

because their friends had joined<sup>117</sup>. The opportunity to take part in community events was another reason suggested by Alan Fernie who said he “knew for a fact that here, in Selkirk, lots of young people join the band because they want to take part in the Common Riding”<sup>118</sup>. Other people explained that they joined a band because family members already played in it.

In 1896 when the St. Boswells Brass Band was revived after a gap of many years, the then conductor of the Hawick Saxhorn Band, Mr. Walter Atkinson, gave “the first instructions, in music and playing the instruments; for a small fee and travelling expenses”<sup>119</sup>. Mr Atkinson proved too expensive for the new band so Mr Frank Gray, the conductor of the very successful Border Rifle Volunteer Band in Hawick was asked to instruct the St Boswells band at a fee of 10/- (50p) per lesson and train fares paid. It was one stop on the railway from St. Boswells to Hawick costing 1/- (5p) on Saturdays and 2/- (10p) on week nights. The whole band were involved in the appointment, the minutes recording that “the members of the band had approved Mr. Gray’s method of instruction”<sup>120</sup>. Today (2013) when new bandmasters are appointed the band members are still involved in the decision.

Some older players in the Scottish Borders bands today recalled how they were taught to play by sitting next to an experienced player in the band and just picked up how to play as they went along. In interviews that were conducted during the research several players said that they had learnt by going to a band and being taught by the bandmaster or another member of the band<sup>121</sup>, and many people still learn this way.

Not all beginners are young people as my own personal experience demonstrates. I decided to play tenor horn in a band as part of my research and was taught in the traditional way with lessons from the bandmaster of the St. Boswells Concert Band. The lessons took place for half an hour each week before band rehearsals for several months. This band does not have a junior band, but at the time that I was learning (2007) there was another adult and her daughter learning as well.

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<sup>117</sup> Interviews with Martin Innes. 16/10/2007.SA2007.046; Keith Belleville. 29/04/2010. SA2010.34.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with Alan Fernie. 28/04/2010. SA2010.33

<sup>119</sup> St. Boswells Brass Band Minute Book 1896-1899. p.7. Property of the band.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. p.10.

<sup>121</sup> Interviews with Martin Innes. 16/10/2007. SA2007.046; John Windrum. 22/01/2009. SA2009.013; Colin Crozier. 20/03/2010. SA2010.31; Keith Belleville. 29/04/2010. SA2010.34.

When the bandmaster thought I could cope, I was then encouraged to play in the band sitting next to an experienced player. Even as an experienced musician playing 2nd horn in the band was an un-nerving experience at first as I could not play quickly enough and so I often got behind in the music and had to rely on the very experienced horn player next to me for help in finding my place in the music. Stephanie Pitts has observed that learning as an adult is more difficult and demands greater effort and determination than learning as a young person (Pitts 2005:35). My own experiences bear this out as, although I was a retired music teacher, it was still necessary to find time to practice between family and other commitments as the technique, which was different from instruments I had played previously, proved challenging.

#### 5.3.1.2. Instrumental instruction in schools.

Since the 1960s young players in the Scottish Borders have had opportunities to learn at school; through this a link was established between the school communities and the bands and young players fed through into their local bands<sup>122</sup>. The difficulty of getting the initiative for instrumental lessons in schools started is recorded in the minutes of the Hawick Saxhorn Band. On 14 April 1960 it is recorded that a request was made by the band to the local education authority for brass classes in schools and this was followed up on the 7 October 1960 when Eric Whitehead, the then Music Advisor, was to be asked how best to get brass classes for children in schools. Four years later a meeting was held with Eric Whitehead and Brian Bonsor regarding brass teaching in local schools, and the Hawick band's minute book records that in August 1965 an enquiry was sent to the County Clerk for Roxburghshire asking why a project to spend £1,000 on instruments for school players had been shelved. Brass teaching in Border schools was eventually started and flourished as Brian Bonsor, former Regional Music Advisor for Roxburghshire and later for the Scottish Borders Council, explained in an interview<sup>123</sup>. He described how in the 1960s and 1970s he ran a brass band course for a week each year in the Easter holidays where all the children learning in the schools, and any others who were not part of the scheme,

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<sup>122</sup> Interview with Chalmers Stille. 09/03/2010. SA2010.28

<sup>123</sup> Interview with Brian Bonsor. 28/08 2007. Private recording by the author.

could come and play together. He confirmed that about 120 to 140 children attended each year and they ran three bands with over 40 in the top level band. Brian Bonsor said he believed “it was once the authority started providing brass instruction [in schools] that saved some of the bands”<sup>124</sup>.

In recent years there have been cutbacks in instrumental music teaching in schools due to pressure on council budgets. This has been described as a “postcode lottery for music education”<sup>125</sup> as the opportunities available to learn an instrument in school depend on where you live. In spite of the cutbacks, the Borders is fortunate in still having instrumental brass teaching in many schools; all the secondary schools and many of the primary schools having brass teaching in the Scottish Borders today (2013). Colin Crozier, conductor of the St. Boswells Concert Band, believes that when brass education in schools was introduced it made a big difference to the future of the bands in the Borders and he commented that nowadays this has led to more young people playing brass instruments than when he was young<sup>126</sup>.

#### 5.3.1.3. Youth Bands

In 2013 all except one of the Scottish Borders brass bands have at least one junior band. In this predominantly rural area where young people leave the area for work or further education there is a need to train a constant supply of youngsters to take their place. The situation was described by Stuart Black, aged twenty-four, a member of the Jedforest Instrumental Band:

In the couple of years before I left to go to uni there were half a dozen [players] that were all good enough to really build the band up, and out of this group I was the only one who came back...so it has a huge impact because you have to start from square one again.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010. SA2010.59

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Colin Crozier. 20/03/2010.SA2010.31

<sup>127</sup> Interview with Stuart Black. SA2012.028

Not only is the loss of younger players a problem, but another is the lack of population from which to draw potential players as George Burt, President of the Jedforest Instrumental Band explained:

I think it should make a difference that our pool of potential players is quite limited. The population of Jedburgh is just over 4,000. If we take in Kelso and the villages we have a potential population of perhaps 10,000 and we struggle to keep numbers up.<sup>128</sup>

The recruitment of young people into the Borders bands is seen as a key element for the survival of the bands in the twenty-first century. George Burt explained how the Jedforest Instrumental Band had declined in numbers during the 1990s and was left with mostly older players “mainly because it had not recruited young players for many years”<sup>129</sup>. This was the state of several of the Borders bands at different times during the last decades of the twentieth century, and it was realised that in order for the bands to continue it was essential that they encourage younger players.

In establishing youth bands the formation of links with the local community through the schools, and by getting the parents involved as well as the youngsters, is most important. In 2010 Galashiels Town Band decided to start a youth band, so some band members, including myself, did workshops in some of the local primary schools where there was no brass teaching. At these a small group of players from the band performed popular TV theme tunes such as *Scooby Doo*, the Bees Gees song *Tragedy*<sup>130</sup>, and other tunes the children would be familiar with. The Development Officer for the Scottish Brass Band Association, Alan Edmond, together with Stuart Black, the bandmaster of the Galashiels band, led the workshops at which a few children were able to try out instruments for themselves, although many more of them wanted to try. This generated a lot of interest and was followed up with an open evening in the band hall where anyone interested could come with their parents to try the instruments again. From this nucleus a youth band was started in Galashiels and within a short time sixteen young players had joined. They gave their first public performance on 27 May 2011 as part of a concert given by the

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<sup>128</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> *Tragedy* by songwriters Maurice Gibb, Robin Gibb and Barry Gibb

Galashiels Town Band, having only been playing together for less than six months. They performed two simple arrangements, the *Top Gun* theme and *Tango for Brass*, both arranged by Cameron Mabon, musical director of the Jedforest Instrumental Band whose compositions are discussed further in chapter 6.

This demonstrates that in order to start new bands in the twenty-first century it is necessary to go outside the normal confines of the band ‘world’ and make the bands more visible within their local communities by doing workshops in local schools. It also shows that there are a lot of young people in the community who would not normally think of joining a band but, given the opportunity to hear that brass bands can play music they can relate to encourages them to want to make music together. In 2012 a second junior band was formed in Galashiels as the players in the first one were by then too advanced for new players to join them and after further workshops in local schools over forty youngsters joined this second band.

Teaching a group of beginners on different brass instruments together in a band is traditional in the brass bands. It has been described as ‘learning by osmosis’ (Dudgeon 1997:199). This was the method used when the St. Boswells Brass Band was reformed in 1896, the players consisting of:

John Millar	Watchmaker	Solo cornet
Charles Peebles	Apprentice grocer	Solo cornet
Alexander Jeffrey	Apprentice joiner	2nd cornet
Wm. Russell Nichol	Apprentice mason	3rd cornet
William Quarry	Shoemaker	1 <sup>st</sup> tenor horn
Thomas Richardson	Tailor	2 <sup>nd</sup> tenor horn
John Rutherford	Mason	Baritone
James Morrison	Joiner	Euphonium
William Robertson	Apprentice mason	Eb bombardon
Alexander Somerville	Charlesfield	Eb bombardon <sup>131</sup>

These men were all taught together in a group. Teaching groups of different instruments together in this way is made a little easier because music written for all the brass band instruments, except the bass trombone, is written in the treble clef and all the valved instruments use the same fingering. All band instruments are transposing instruments either in Bb or Eb, so, although they play the same written

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<sup>131</sup> St. Boswells Brass Band Minute Book. 1896-1899 p.7.

notes, they will produce sounds at a different pitch. This method is still used today in teaching new bands such as the Galashiels Youth Band where a group of young beginners playing different instruments were taught together.

Learning in a band is free and is “about giving kids the opportunity they might not otherwise get”<sup>132</sup>; therefore setting up funding for new junior bands needs to be sustainable. The costs of starting a youth band are considerable, including the cost of instruments and paying the conductor, so bands have to look for sponsorship from outside sources, which, together with regular money-raising events, are funding these initiatives. Speaking at the Scottish Youth Brass Band Championships in 2012, the Scottish Culture Minister, Fiona Hislop, showed that she sees brass bands as one of the core elements in the Scottish national culture and is prepared to guarantee funding for youth development:

Brass bands are part of our nation’s musical heritage but have suffered a significant reduction since the 1960s with the decline in traditional industries. Brass band playing in Scotland is now thriving, thanks to the excellent work of the Scottish Brass Band Association’s (SBBA) world-leading Youth Development Programme, which is funded by the Youth Music Initiative (YMI). The YMI is all about creating opportunities for young people to get involved in music – and the SBBA has given an additional 1,700 young brass and percussion players the opportunity to play regularly in ensembles, in every corner of Scotland. Today’s national network of brass bands also means these young musicians can continue to play throughout their lives...It is due to successes like this that I have protected funding for the Youth Music Initiative at £10 million a year.  
(*British Bandsman* 1 December 2012)

Funding to set up the Galashiels Youth Band came from the Youth Music Initiative who initially funded the conductor for a year. The band then got a follow-on grant for two years to a) start a Junior Band and b) to fund sectional rehearsals for the Youth Band, and in the end the band received around £10,000 from them. However, in order to sustain both the Galashiels Youth and Junior Bands in the future fund-raising and sponsorship schemes have been set up.

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<sup>132</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010. SA2010.59

#### 5.3.1.4. Other learning opportunities

Although many players initially learn in a band, where their parents can afford it, some will have individual lessons with an experienced player or brass teacher as well as playing in a youth band. This may lead young people into taking graded examinations such as those of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) or Trinity College of Music, London. Many older learners and less experienced players also have private lessons and some of these also take graded examinations to mark their progress.

For a few more advanced teenage players there is the possibility of attending Saturday classes at the Royal Scottish Conservatoire, formerly the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, in Glasgow, or at St. Mary's Music School, Edinburgh. A few members of the Borders Youth Band attend these classes and this is a huge commitment as travel from the Borders to Glasgow is a distance of 60-70 miles depending on where in the Borders they live.

The National Youth Brass Band of Scotland (NYBBS) runs residential courses every August for players under 21. This band has a high reputation for commissioning original works. The residential training courses for young players bring together young brass players aged under 21 from all over Scotland, and further afield, together to play in several bands which are graded according to ability. Competition to get into the main band is tough but in addition there are also a Reserve Band and a Children's Band. In the Scottish Borders support for younger members of the bands to attend NYBBS is very high.

### **5.4. Rehearsing**

Stephanie Pitts has discussed how making music in a group helps to create a "sense of belonging and like-minded endeavour" which can sustain individual motivation (Pitts 2005:53). My personal experience as an adult beginner playing in a band of experienced players meant that I felt I was letting the band down when I could not keep up, and I was aware that due to the many other demands on my time including work and a family, I was not able to do as much individual practice at home as I would have liked. However, because I was playing in a very friendly, non-contesting

band, the other band members often gave me help and hints on playing, tolerated my mistakes and encouraged me as I improved, thereby providing a safe, supportive environment in which to learn and sustain my commitment. My experiences confirmed that friendship and support are “generated through shared enthusiasms and a sense of common purpose” (Pitts 2005:33).

Band rehearsals usually last two hours and whilst non-contesting bands may only rehearse once a week, most contesting bands will rehearse twice a week with extra practices and sectional rehearsals before a contest. In her study of the Sherwood Choral Society, Finnegan found differing attitudes to rehearsals with participants having slightly different emphases between the social and musical aspects of rehearsals, “on the one hand to get on with the rehearsal, on the other to exchange news with their neighbour” (Finnegan 1989[2007]:242). My experience of rehearsing and playing with three different bands bears this out (see Appendix A). Two are non-contesting bands, and in one there is a short half-time break when members can talk amongst themselves and socialise, and in the other non-contesting band the rehearsal is continuous but still takes place in a relaxed atmosphere. The third band is a contesting band and so aims to achieve a higher standard than the other two, with two rehearsals a week that are more focussed, and with extra practices scheduled before contests and concerts this results in more pressure to try to attend the practices. Pitts has described how “The social rules enforced within performing groups can be every bit as constraining as those in other spheres of life, since participants must meet the schedules and demands of rehearsing together if the end performance is to be successful (Pitts 2005:70). Pitts found with the Gilbert and Sullivan groups at the Buxton Festival that they aim to achieve a good standard in their performances, and there was “clearly a sense of pride attached to maintaining standards and reputations within the performing group” (Pitts 2005:58). This applies strongly to all the bands I have played with who aim to achieve the best possible standard when they perform.

Bandmasters will usually check to see who is absent from rehearsals and expect to know the reason. Poor attendance at rehearsals is sometimes a problem in bands as members are all amateurs and have other calls on their time, particularly with regard to work and family. This is not a new thing as demonstrated in the

minutes of the Hawick Saxhorn Band in the 1960s which reported that the factories were very busy at that time with overtime and shift working blamed for lack of interest in playing in the band<sup>133</sup>. The situation then was made worse because many of the brass players at that time preferred to play for money in dance bands and playing in the Saxhorn Band didn't interest them<sup>134</sup>.

As with learning any musical instrument and playing in a group, only members of the bands and their families know how much personal commitment is required play in a band, an example of how the everyday work of the bands is hidden from the community at large.

#### 5.4.1. Somewhere to practice

All bands require somewhere to meet and practice and it is an advantage if this is a place where instruments and music can be stored and left out between rehearsals. Several of the Scottish Borders bands including the Selkirk Silver Band and St. Ronan's Silver Band have their own band halls; other bands, such as the Galashiels Town Band and St. Boswells Concert Band, rent their band halls from the local council and this is a heavy drain on the band funds. When Borders bands have had to move venue in the past this has resulted in loss of music and historical records. Whilst people within the band community know where the band halls are situated in each town, many inhabitants are not aware of them and as one interviewee stated they "don't know where we live"<sup>135</sup>.

It is a distinct advantage to a band if it owns its own band hall. For many years until the 1930s the St. Ronan's Silver Band had practised in an old hut which, "from a weatherproof point of view, left something to be desired" (*Peeblesshire Advertiser* 27 February 1931). Published accounts for the band show that in the nineteenth century this hut was heated by a coal burning stove and oil lamps and candles provided lighting. (*St Ronan's Standard* 25 December 1895, 26 January 1898). In 1931 the band held a Grand Bazaar and although it was the time of the great depression and money for such things was scarce, that raised £386.00 enabling them

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<sup>133</sup> Hawick Saxhorn Band minutes for 1 October 1965 and 15 April 1966.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. 20 May 1966.

<sup>135</sup> Interview with Colin Kemp. 06/04/2010. SA2010.32

to buy the new hall outright at a cost of £346.00. This was achieved as the band were strongly supported by the local community and also by the local council which imposed a voluntary 1d in the pound on the rates, however as times were hard only £33.00 was raised this way. As all the funds raised by the bazaar had been used to build the new band hall, in order to help the band to keep going the bandmaster personally took a 25% cut in salary (*Peeblesshire Advertiser* 27 February 1931). This hall is still being used by the band today, although it did not have any toilet facilities or kitchen until 1994 when a small extension was built (French & Belleville 2010:47).

### **5.5. Bandmasters**

The term bandmaster is often considered old fashioned in the twenty-first century and is usually replaced with the term ‘musical director’. However, the term bandmaster was used historically to designate the person who normally conducts the band and is used in this sense throughout this thesis. The bandmaster is responsible for the musical running of the band including choosing the music to be played, taking rehearsals and conducting at concerts and contests and he has a great deal of authority within the band. As Finnegan has pointed out, band practices are hierarchically directed sessions with the bandmaster in complete control in a “highly disciplined setting” (Finnegan 1989 [2007]:51). Bandmasters are paid by the bands, one of the principal expenses of running a band.

A good bandmaster is crucial to the success of a band and needs to be someone who is committed and a good leader who will bring out the best in people. It is essential that players have confidence in the ability of the bandmaster to direct the band and as, Richard Jones has noted, a bandmaster or conductor must instil self-belief in the players in order for them to perform well (Jones 2007:232). A good bandmaster is the reason why people go to band practices week after week and feel a strong obligation to attend, with poor or intermittent attendance often resulting from a lack of leadership. The bandmaster has to set an example by being prompt and ready to begin rehearsals on time, but, as Finnegan noted about the Sherwood Choral Society, this does not always filter down to the members with some people regularly

arriving late (Finnegan 1989[2007]:242). Highlighting and resolving such problems is the responsibility of the bandmaster aided by the band committee.

A good bandmaster or conductor can turn around the fortunes of a band; for example, in the mid-80s St. Ronan's Silver Band was struggling for members and had very few players. The band in the nearby town of Peebles was a contesting band at this time and about five people played with both bands from around 1985-95.

Keith Belleville, the St. Ronan's band secretary, explained:

During this period, we started to think about how we could re-build St. Ronan's band. There had been no regular conductor from around 1985-1990. We employed a conductor, giving rehearsals a focus, got more engagements, built the band to full strength, started doing local concerts then started competing in 1995.

Since that time St. Ronan's Silver Band has become one of the most successful bands in the Borders. Helping each other out when they are struggling for members is a feature of the co-operation that exists between the community bands in the Borders. In the 1960s when both St. Boswells Brass Band and Kelso Silver Band each had few members they rehearsed together<sup>136</sup>.

#### 5.5.1. Some influential bandmasters of Scottish Borders bands.

Scottish Borders bands have been fortunate to secure the services of some very good bandmasters over the years and this has usually coincided with the band attaining good contest results. Many have brought experience of brass banding from outside the Borders, particularly from the 'home' of brass bands in the north of England thereby helping to raise the standard of the bands. Many of these bandmasters conducted the bands for long periods giving the bands stability and continuity.

There was a period in the 1890s when several Borders bands had bandmasters who were important in the history of their bands. Thomas Moore, who conducted both the Galashiels Town Band and the Galashiels Rifle Volunteer Band in the 1890s, was an experienced conductor who began as the teacher of Tanfield Lea Band, Durham, again confirming the strong connections between the brass band

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<sup>136</sup> Interview with Martin Innes. 16/10/2007. SA2007.046

movement in the North East of England and southern Scotland. It is recorded that during Tom Moore's time with the Galashiels Town Band they attended 30 contests winning over £200 in prize money (*Border Telegraph* 23 May 1933). Owing to the depression in the textile trade in 1898 the Galashiels Town Band was unable to retain the services of Mr Tom Moore as they were unable to pay him, "to the regret of the whole community" (*Border Telegraph* 23 May 1923). In 1897 Tom Moore also conducted the Peebles Burgh Band but he stayed only a short time as, like the Galashiels band, the band was unable to afford his services.

At the same time another bandmaster from the North of England, Walter Atkinson, came to conduct the Hawick Saxhorn Band in the late nineteenth century and was there for thirteen years before his death in 1904 (Connelly 1995:1). He had started playing cornet at the age of twelve and by fifteen was conducting his first band, the Hartshead Band in Yorkshire. Under his leadership the Hawick band took part in no fewer than twenty-nine contests where they won placings<sup>137</sup> or prizes (Connelly 1995:1). Following his death in 1904, Robert Rimmer of Southport, North-West England, brother of the very famous brass band composer William Rimmer, was appointed to the Hawick band (Connelly 1995:2).

In the same period the bandmaster in Selkirk from 1883 to 1916 was Chris Reekie. He came from a very musical family. His first association with the band was in 1874 when the then bandmaster tried to revive an earlier band; Reekie was one of eighteen players who joined on that occasion (Harper 1983). In the 1890s Reekie compiled and arranged all the music that is still played today in certain places along the route of the procession in the Selkirk Common Riding. Some of the marches that were arranged by him are played only in Selkirk. Under Reekie's guidance the band competed in the second section of the Scottish Championships in 1910-1912. The music arranged by Chris Reekie for the Selkirk Common Riding is described in more detail in Chapter 7.

Lawrence Cockburn was bandmaster of the St. Ronan's band in Innerleithen from 1897-1904. As well as conducting he wrote a considerable quantity of music for the band and his work will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

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<sup>137</sup> Usually the top three places in a contest, but sometimes more, win prize money.

As mentioned previously, Frank Grey conducted the Hawick R. V. Band from 1860 until his death in 1904. Like many of the other bandmasters at this time he came from the north of England being born at Yeadon, near Leeds, in 1839. He was a handloom weaver like his father and would have readily found employment in Hawick. At the age of 14 he had joined Yeadon Young Band, playing 2nd cornet, and later 2nd soprano cornet and a year later he became bandmaster of Yeadon Old Band, the band with which he attended the 1860 Crystal Palace contest. (Newsome 1998:66 Note 5).

A long-serving bandmaster at St. Ronan's Silver Band was Edward McGlasson who conducted the band from 1911 to 1949. Another bandmaster with wide banding experience, he had been in charge of the County Band, Durham and the Kerse Band in Ayrshire before joining the Innerleithen band (French & Belleville 2010:31). The McGlassons became a family of bandmasters as both his sons followed in their father's footsteps. Cuthbert (Cubby) McGlasson conducted the band in 1954-55. His brother, Frank McGlasson, was appointed as bandmaster in 1962 having played in the band since he was a boy. He continued until 1971 and returned for a second time from 1977-1980.

Another well-known band conductor, George E. Guy, took over the Hawick Saxhorn Band in 1932 and continued as bandmaster until the closing stages of World War II. Unusually "he was provided with a free house in Duke Street, probably the first time that such a prerequisite had been included in a Hawick Band leader's conditions of employment" (Connelly 1995:29). This was probably very unusual although employment locally was more often included on their appointment as bandmaster. George E. Guy was bandmaster of the Langholm Town Band for many years making many of the musical arrangements of the Langholm Common Riding music which they still play. He was also bandmaster of the Peebles Burgh Band from 1933 to 1939.

From the 1949 to the early 1960s James Amos conducted several Border bands gaining places in various sections of the Scottish Championships with both the Galashiels Town Band and the Peebles Burgh Band. His greatest achievement was conducting the Hawick Saxhorn Band for thirteen years taking the band to its

greatest success in becoming Champions of Scotland in 1961 and later that year conducted them in the National finals in London.

David Young was a very successful conductor of Border bands from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s taking Border bands to success in the third and fourth sections of the Scottish Championships, first with Jedforest Instrumental Band and then with Selkirk Silver Band. He also conducted the Hawick Saxhorn Band for twelve years. David was a legend in his own lifetime in the Borders; born in Hawick, he began playing in the Salvation Army band but transferred to the Hawick Saxhorn Band under George E. Guy after a couple of years because he wanted to play with this famous bandmaster<sup>138</sup>. David was a prize-winning soloist on flugel horn, cornet and horn and won many contests playing in small groups such as quartettes and octets. He brought wide musical experience to the Borders. During his service in the Royal Navy he made several dance band records for HMV and continued that interest throughout his life, and he played in the Borders Big Band until his death in 2007<sup>139</sup>.

These outstanding bandmasters from the past are remembered with pride by the bands. In the Borders today (2013) there are still excellent bandmasters who have conducted the bands for many years and who are able to maintain this strong tradition. Several of these bandmasters also compose and arrange music for their bands, and they are discussed in Chapter 6.

## **5.6. Scottish banding today**

Brass Banding in Scotland is organised by the Scottish Brass Band Association (SBBA) whose President, George Burt, lives in Jedburgh and plays in the Jedforest Instrumental Band. He was born in Jedburgh and played in the town band until his early twenties when he moved away to London for work, returning to Jedburgh in the late 1980s. In 2002 the Scottish Brass Band Association (SBBA), led by George Burt, identified a need to stem the decline of brass banding in Scotland and a working group was formed “to investigate effective strategies for future

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<sup>138</sup> Interview with David Young. 11/10/2007. SA2007.045

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

development”<sup>140</sup>. In 2013 George Burt had been President of SBBA for six years and Vice-President for two years before that. Asked in 2010 to describe his role as President he replied that it was to bring “brass bands into the twentieth century, and I say that knowing it is the twenty-first century”<sup>141</sup>. Asked to enlarge on this statement he replied:

Particularly in Scotland, I have to say, where the organisation of brass bands and the brass bands themselves had stagnated for many years. When I first became involved in SBBA I started doing some research; just looking at the number of bands over the years – of the previous 30 years. You could see a decline and there had to be a reason for that. Part of the reason was just organisation which had ossified and not moved with the times. We had archaic rules for registration of players for competitions and so on. SBBA had one function, to organise the Scottish Championships once a year and that’s all it did. It didn’t do any promotion work. It didn’t do any development work, didn’t have any strategic thinking or anything like that, and bands, to my mind and a number of people that play, are still not fully in the twenty-first century in terms of organisation and musical practices.<sup>142</sup>

The highest density of brass bands in Scotland is in the Central Belt. As George Burt explained:

That’s the highest density if you look at the number of dots on a map, but in terms of population we’ve got eight bands in the Borders for a population of 100,000. The population of the Central Belt is probably 3 million so there should be 240 bands in terms of population. I would say [there are] about 40.<sup>143</sup>

Having identified that youth development was the future, George Burt explained, “because the people running the bands are all volunteers, we all have other jobs to do...it’s important to have a development worker”<sup>144</sup>. Alan Edmond was appointed

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<sup>140</sup> From a leaflet produced by SBBA, “Traditional values, fresh aspirations: A new platform for banding in the 21<sup>st</sup> century”.

<sup>141</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

Development Officer in 2006. George Burt explained how SBBA achieved support for this when they:

Went to the Scottish government, MPs and MSPs<sup>145</sup>, and the Arts Council and it took two or three years for the politicians and the arts establishment in the form of the Arts Council to take it seriously. Brass bands are not held in high esteem by the arts establishment despite the fact that 99.9% of all the top players in the orchestras in the world started in a brass band. However, it took some persuading. I have to say the support from the Scottish Arts Council over the past few years has been very good through the Youth Music initiative.<sup>146</sup>

Further, Alan Edmond explained that having “convinced the Scottish Government that brass bands are part of the heritage of Scotland so that’s why we’ve got a development officer...[it’s part of] life-long learning”<sup>147</sup>.

Earlier in this chapter the importance of youth bands to train young people in the Borders was discussed and in twenty-first century Scotland the development of youth bands is thought to be a priority by the Scottish Brass Band Association<sup>148</sup>. In an interview in 2010, Alan Edmond explained how there are many more things competing for young people’s time now, but that adults need to provide a “safe, secure, educational and fun structure...[and] if you give them that they will come”<sup>149</sup>. He explained that not every young person will stay, but as long as they think it is “enjoyable, fun and ‘cool’”, it can fight against the attraction of modern things like television and electronic games. Alan Edmond suggested that within a brass band young people learn “huge social attributes [that] these kids will use for the rest of their life”<sup>150</sup> such as teamwork, communication skills, discipline and respect for the conductor.

Below the national association there are regional associations, the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association being the smallest with only eight bands, whereas in

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<sup>145</sup> Members of Parliament in Westminster and Members of the Scottish Parliament.

<sup>146</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

<sup>147</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010. SA2010.59

<sup>148</sup> Interviews with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58; Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010.SA2010.59

<sup>149</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010. SA201059

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

the West of Scotland area there are 27 bands. The Borders Association was re-started in 1997, after a lapse of over ten years, by George Burt, together with Neal Wade from Galashiels Town Band, Keith Belleville from St. Ronan's Silver Band and others. Their aim was specifically to address the development of bands, especially the younger element, where, in a rural area such as the Borders, many of the younger players leave the area to go and work elsewhere necessitating constant development and regeneration.

The initiative by the Borders Association was such a success, that on his appointment as Development Officer, Alan Edmond decided to start his development work there. Alan Edmond explained, "They were ahead of the queue because there wasn't a Borders Association until relatively recently – 10 years ago... They got up and running and basically left the rest of Scotland behind"<sup>151</sup>. Alan Edmond then held up the Borders development programme as a model for a nationwide scheme in the rest of Scotland. He identified two factors that have helped the Borders bands survive, firstly that bands are part of the social fabric and there is a strong sense of community and were used to helping each other, and secondly, that people tend to stay in the Borders and stay together<sup>152</sup>.

Following Alan Edmonds' departure in 2011, SBBA appointed Andrew Duncan as Development Manager with a new structure of regional development officers to oversee development in each area. Stuart Black was appointed in the Scottish Borders and he explained in an interview that:

"The Borders Association ...seems to be a well-oiled machine that is on the ball. It's trying new ideas, it's giving opportunity to mainstream bands and youth bands as well so you get that happy mix within the area... We do have an area association that wants to drive the movement on and support it and maybe change things to make it better... It's the same all round the Borders... they've all got proud heritages of their common ridings and it's a big thing. And to get the kids involved with that and to give them the opportunity to be a part of not just that but other things as well, can then help out movement continue for 10 or 15 years to come."<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Interview with Alan Edmond. 16/11/2010. SA2010.59

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Interview with Stuart Black. 21/11/2012. SA2012.028

This new structure has meant that each area is more responsible for its own development programme but is still under the overall control of the Scottish Brass Band Association. Recently this association has also taken over the responsibility for the running the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland from the Scottish Musical Association which had been organising it since it started in the 1950s. As 99% of the members of the National Youth Brass Band were brass band players<sup>154</sup>, it was a logical move for the Scottish Brass Band Association to take it over.

The success of the Borders development programme for Youth and Junior bands has now become an example, not only for brass banding in the rest of Scotland, but also further afield. As George Burt described:

The development work that we [SBBA] now do in Scotland, that's now held up as an example throughout the UK [United Kingdom] of how to reverse the decline of brass bands in the UK. Everywhere we go in England, to competitions or meetings, people say we should be doing what Scotland are doing<sup>155</sup>.

This is an enormous achievement stemming from a small rural brass band association and is due to the inspirational leadership of George Burt who stated that "Scotland is the envy of the world for what we have been able to achieve" (*British Bandsman* 1 December 2012). The importance of Scottish banding is demonstrated by the fact that the Scottish Brass Band Association has managed to attract the 2014 European Brass Band Championships, the largest such event in the world, to Perth, Scotland for the second time in a few years.

## 5.7. Summary

Contesting is a central facet of brass banding and one of the things that sets it apart from many other types of music making. In the nineteenth century the railway companies ran excursion trains to contests and many thousands of spectators attended them, so contests were profitable both for the organising band and the local economy. It was only with the formation of national and local brass band

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<sup>154</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

associations to oversee the organisation and rules governing contests that formal structure was given to them through the introduction of different sections whereby bands could compete on the same level as each other, with the possibility of promotion or relegation. However, in the nineteenth century there was always tension between those who thought the principal duty of the band should be to provide local entertainment and those who felt the band should take part in contests and represent the town outside the local community and Borders bands have always had to strike a balance between the two. In the twenty-first century the general public are probably much less aware of brass band contests, these being mainly supported only by enthusiasts, families and friends of the players and not by many outside the band 'world'. This underlines the differences that have come about in public awareness and interest in band contests in the past 150 years especially as other forms of entertainment have become popular.

A long-serving member of the Selkirk Silver Band, who had played in it for around 50 years, explained, "Brass banding – you have to be dedicated to play in a brass band...brass banding is a way of life"<sup>156</sup>. In the nineteenth century brass banding strengthened community ties and this is still very strong in Scottish Borders bands today although the ease of car travel to get to rehearsals has meant that, even in the Borders, players no longer necessarily all come from the same town. However, it was shown that co-operation between the community bands in the Borders has helped them to survive during periods when their membership has been low.

This chapter has shown that although the Scottish Borders is a rural area with a small brass band association, during the last 150 years it has been fortunate to attract some influential people both as bandmasters and organisers. In the nineteenth century there was a strong link between the textile areas of the North of England and the Scottish Borders which brought experienced bandmasters and conductors to lead the Borders bands. Throughout the twentieth century there continued to be inspired bandmasters who have led the bands to success in contests and have often provided continuity for the bands over long periods.

It was suggested that the huge social changes of the 1960s, particularly urban youth culture, probably had less impact on brass bands in the Borders than in other

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<sup>156</sup> Interview with Hugh Johnstone. 19/04/2008. SA2010.28

areas. This was the decade when brass playing was being developed in the Borders schools attracting many young players. Inspiration for playing in a brass band at this time may have come from one of the finest achievements of any Borders band when the Hawick Saxhorn Band won the Scottish Championship in 1961. In spite of the social changes of the 1960s the strong links existing between the brass bands and the community sustained the Borders bands during this period, especially the importance of their role in playing for the annual common ridings (see chapter 7). In the 1960s significant changes occurred to the specification and manufacture of brass instruments with the introduction of lower-pitched and wider-bored instruments; this, together with the introduction of percussion into contest pieces, had a profound effect on brass bands, their sound and their repertoire that will be discussed in the next chapter.

It is a significant achievement for the Borders that the President of the Scottish Brass Band Association, George Burt, comes from this small, rural brass band area. There is little doubt that under his influential leadership brass banding in Scotland in the twenty-first century has been turned around in terms of the number of bands and the number of players and that this has been due to the emphasis placed on youth development. The promotion of youth development in the Scottish Borders area was seen to be so successful that it was used as a model for the Scottish Brass Band Association to promote the regeneration of banding across the rest of Scotland. This model has now spread to England and elsewhere and attests to the success of this traditional community approach that originated in the Scottish Borders.

## 6. Repertoire: A tradition of local composers

### **'Scottish Border Melodies'**<sup>157</sup>

“A brass band can play anything!” (Andrew Stille, Selkirk Silver Band)

This chapter will discuss the different types of repertoire that have been played by brass bands in the Scottish Borders during the last 150 years, with particular reference to music composed specifically for Borders bands by local bandmasters and composers working in the nineteenth century and today. The above quotation was an answer given by Andrew Stille, a long-serving bandsman in the Selkirk Silver Band, in reply to a question about what type of music brass bands play.

As the chapter will show the repertory played reflects the functions of the band (Herbert 1997:193). For brass bands such as those in the Scottish Border towns their principal function is, and has always been, to entertain the community and their repertoire principally reflects this function. The performance venue will often determine the type of music played; in the nineteenth century most performances were out of doors, but as the twentieth century progressed contest and concert performances were increasingly took place indoors.

The chapter explains the following issues, namely, the sources of information that are available about what repertoire has been played by the brass bands and the importance of different types of source. Continuity and change in the repertoire over the past 150 years will be discussed looking at programmes played by bands over the course of time emphasising the importance of repertoire written especially for Borders bands by local composers. A case study comparing the music of two composers, one from the beginning of the twentieth century and one a hundred years later will show how the style of music played and the standard of playing has changed.

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<sup>157</sup> *Scottish Border Melodies* by Lawrence Cockburn. 1903. Printed in Leipzig by Oscar Brandstetter.

## 6.1. Sources of information on Repertoire played by brass bands in the Scottish Borders.

### 6.1.1. Different types of Sources

In Chapter 2 it was shown that there are several different archival sources available from which it is possible to extract evidence of the repertoire played by brass bands in the Scottish Borders during the last 150 years; these include music found in individual band libraries, hand-written manuscripts, newspaper reports of music played in band performances, and actual concert programmes. All the bands in the Scottish Borders have their own music libraries, and, because the bands have been established for a long time, these usually include music stretching back into the nineteenth century; however, this old music is seldom or never played today.

In the nineteenth century many local newspapers, for example *The St. Ronan's Standard*, regularly reported on programmes played by the town's band, sometimes advertising the programmes in advance so that people could attend. This is an important source of information about nineteenth-century repertoire as it indicates what was actually played, whereas the music in a band library may have been bought but never played.

Programmes played by the brass bands in the Scottish Borders now are very rarely published in the newspapers, but for the later twentieth century evidence of repertoire can be gained from concert programmes collected by bands and individuals and these provide evidence of changing styles in the music performed.

### 6.1.2. Manuscript Music in Band Libraries

As stated earlier, hand-written music is considered of primary importance as a source of information about what nineteenth-century bands were playing and the standard achieved by the bands for whom it was written (Herbert 2000:280). There are important early English sources of hand-written music include the Goose Eye band books at Keighley Yorkshire<sup>158</sup> and the Black Dyke Mills band books at Queensbury,

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<sup>158</sup> See Scott 1970:215.

Yorkshire (Newsome 1998:72-75). The Cyfarthfa Band, a very early band established in Merthyr Tydfil in Wales by the wealthy industrialist Robert Crawshay in 1838, was a band of exceptionally talented virtuoso players and the repertoire played by this band has been studied extensively by Trevor Herbert (Herbert 1990, 1997, 1999). However, these bands were very different from the community bands in the Borders and nothing of comparable importance has been found.

In the past many ordinary town bands would have had some hand-written music in their band libraries, arranged by bandmasters for their own bands, but it is unusual to find any today as it has often been discarded when it was no longer used. However, as stated in Chapter 2 (Section 2.1.7.) both the Galashiels Town Band and St. Ronan's Silver Band still have some manuscript copies of music written by Lawrence Cockburn dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (A discussion of this music is included later in this chapter).

Today several of the bandmasters in the Scottish Borders still compose and arrange music for local bands and also publish some of their music. Many of these composers use computer programs for writing and arranging music; however, Alan Fernie, the well-known composer and arranger of brass band music who lives in the Borders town of Selkirk, explained that he still prefers to write in manuscript first and to transfer it to a computer programme afterwards<sup>159</sup>. Where music of this type is then printed from the computer for use by a particular band and remains unpublished, it is the modern equivalent to earlier hand-written music coming directly from the composer to the band.

### 6.1.3. Band Journals

In the nineteenth century band journals produced inexpensive publications aimed at the average brass band, with instrumentation that could be adapted to the differing resources of the bands. The St. Ronan's Brass Band accounts, which were published annually in the local newspaper, *The St. Ronan's Standard*, from 1895 to 1911, indicate that the band bought music from various journal publishers during this period including T. A. Haigh, J. Frost & Sons, R. Smith & Co, and Wright and

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<sup>159</sup> Informal conversation with author, 7 April 2011.

Round. The cost of journals was a regular expense for the bands. The accounts for St. Ronan's Brass Band for the year ended 21 January 1899 (*St Ronan's Standard* 1 February 1899) show "Band Journal £1 6s 0d" and for the year ended 31 December 1901 and "Wright & Round Band Journal £1 7s 3d" (15 January 1902). In 1907 the cost of Wright & Round's Journal had risen to £1 9s.0d (*St. Ronan's Standard* 11 March 1908). Wright & Round established their *Liverpool Brass Band (& Military) Journal* in 1875 and it quickly became the leading publisher of music for brass bands (Newsome 1998:101). By 1881 they also published another journal the *Brass Band News*.

Roy Newsome has indicated that these publications were directed at the "growing number of bands of average or less than average ability, their publications comprising hundreds of 'lightweight' pieces suitable for performance at local functions attended by the bands" (Newsome 1998:101). It can be seen from the composers listed in the music played by the St. Ronan's band for the period 1897-1914 (Appendix E.2) that a large proportion of the pieces played by the band during this period probably came from journals. Many were composed by Round or Wright, thus confirming Newsome's comment above that these pieces were most suitable for local performances. Occasionally programmes performed by other Borders bands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were published in the local press and these also showed evidence of journal-based repertoire, especially pieces by Round.

Henry Round (1839-1905) was the principal musician in the partnership and probably the most prolific brass band writer of the nineteenth century and Thomas H. Wright (1836-1914) was the businessman, but he also wrote music and his compositions are also mentioned frequently in band programmes (Newsome 1998:136-143). Most of the music published by Wright & Round comprised selections and medleys or popular dance music of the period such as waltzes and quadrilles. Individual band libraries throughout the Borders still contain much of this music which is seldom played. Wright & Round also published test pieces which catered for the increasing number of brass band contests in the late nineteenth century. Newsome argues that the explosion in the number of contests at that time was partly the result of Wright & Round's publications (Newsome 1998:101).

Wright & Round's contest pieces helped to establish the standard brass band instrumentation.

From the works and composers listed in their programmes it appears that the St. Ronan's Brass Band obtained music from other publishers as well. (Appendix E.2). Two other publishers of brass band music from the 1870s were T. A. Haigh and J. Frost & Sons in Manchester. St. Ronan's band also bought music from these publishers, such as the schottische *Olivia* (J. Frost) that appears in the programme for 28 August 1879, and the quadrille *Desideratum* (T.A. Haigh) listed for 21 November 1879. T. A. Haigh published music by other important composers for brass band including J. Ord Hume, William Rimmer, George Allan and Edwin Swift.

R. Smith & Co., one of the oldest and most important publishers of band music, was originally established in Hull in 1857, later moved to London in 1878, and the company still exists in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. Arrangements by Richard Smith appeared regularly in the programmes played by the St. Ronan's band in the late nineteenth century. For example, on 29 August 1879 four out of the eight pieces played by the band were by Richard Smith, with two pieces by Edward Newton who was also a prolific composer of band music and probably the principal contributor to Smith's '*Champion*' *Brass & Reed Band Journal* although he also contributed to other publishers as well (Newsome 1998:108). In 1887 R. Smith & Co. began publishing a second newspaper, *The British Bandsman*, which is still one of the leading brass band journals today (2013). In the nineteenth century this company used major contests as a promotional tool to publicise the company and to promote *The British Bandsman* (Russell 2000:91). During the 1880s and 1890s there were many new publishers of band music so that by the end of the century Newsome states that there were about 20 publishers, many of whom published journals providing bands with a ready source of repertoire (Newsome 1998:107)<sup>160</sup>.

Although bands may have purchased music published by the specialist brass band journals they may not have actually played it, possibly because they did not like it after trying it out or it did not suit the resources of the band, therefore local newspaper reports of band performances are a more important resource than the music stored in band libraries because they indicate what was actually played.

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<sup>160</sup> A comprehensive account of the history and importance of brass band journals can be found in *Brass Roots: A hundred years of brass bands and their music* by Roy Newsome (1998). pp. 93-113.

Herbert suggests that the frequency with which pieces were played may have reflected how much the band liked playing them rather than because audiences liked hearing them (Herbert 2000:59). However, if pieces were regularly performed in programmes it must also suggest that local audiences appreciated hearing those pieces or they would not have been repeated so frequently.

## 6.2. Repertoire

### 6.2.1. Repertoire in the nineteenth century

Nineteenth-century brass band repertoire consisted of three main categories: transcriptions of art music especially opera, dance music, and functional pieces including marches, hymns and miscellaneous pieces (Herbert 2000:282). Dave Russell prefers to divide the repertoire into ‘sacred’, ‘art’ and ‘light’ music (Russell 1997:228), but both classifications indicate that the repertoire of all brass bands was very varied.

Transcriptions of music from operas and sacred music remained popular throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century. These transcriptions were often the only form of art music that many working-class people would have heard before the days of recordings and brass bands were a means of disseminating classical music to them. Operatic transcriptions were so popular that at the early contest held in Hawick on the 24 July 1875 that was discussed in the previous chapter (*Teviotdale Record* 31 July 1875), all the competing bands chose to play arrangements from various operas<sup>161</sup>.

Programmes show that it was dance music that now provided much of the repertory played by band, for example the St. Ronan’s Brass Band, with newspaper reports often stating that dancing was engaged in when the band played, for example, “Last night the band performed in the public park to a large audience who also engaged in a dance” (*St. Ronan’s Standard* 14 August 1885). Live music such as that provided by the band would have been the only opportunity for people to dance. The programmes illustrate that the popular dances of the time included polkas, lancers, quadrilles, schottisches, waltzes and quicksteps. Marches, hymn tunes and

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<sup>161</sup> A full account of this contest is given in Appendix D and the section on Contests in Chapter 5.

descriptive pieces were almost always also included in band performances in the nineteenth century.

Arrangements of popular songs of the day were often played, as shown in the earliest newspaper report found of a band concert in the Borders in 1853. This was a concert by the Hawick Instrumental Band, the forerunner of the Hawick Saxhorn Band. The pieces played included two traditional songs, *Jessie the Flower of Dunblane* (words by Robert Tannahill and music by R. A. Smith), and *The Meeting of the Waters* (words by Thomas Moore to an old Irish tune) together with one of the most popular Victorian songs, *The Death of Nelson* (John Braham) (*Border Advertiser* 18 March 1853).

Nineteenth-century brass band repertoire reflected aspects of working-class culture, firstly with regard to the type of music played and secondly, in the gradual change from a mixed instrumentation to a more standard brass band line-up (Herbert 200:282). Whilst the members of brass bands in the nineteenth century were predominantly skilled working class, the band could also reach out to entertain other social classes through its performances (Russell 1997:215). Evidence of this was the frequency with which it was reported that Borders bands were invited to entertain the gentry at their houses. In 1897, the first year after the St. Boswells Brass Band was restarted, they played at local houses on no fewer than twenty-two occasions during the summer months. A typical entry in the minute book was on 3 September 1897 when “The Band played a lengthy programme of music at Eildon Hall, the residence of the Earl and Countess of Dalkeith. Afterwards, the members fared sumptuously in the Servant’s Hall”<sup>162</sup>. As well as the band playing to different social classes, the gentry displayed their patronage of the bands on many of these occasions when the band were given refreshments and donations towards the band funds.

### 6.2.2. Music in the Scottish Borders in the 1860s

Evidence about the repertoire played by brass bands in the Scottish Borders prior to the 1870s is quite rare and comes from reports of performances published in local newspapers. It has been suggested that it is difficult to know exactly what style of

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<sup>162</sup> St. Boswells Brass Band Minute Book 1896-1899. p.39.

music early bands played as most of the music at that time was hand-written and most of it has been lost or destroyed when bands have changed venues or because later librarians have destroyed it when needing space for new music (Newsome 1998:96). However, looking at the titles of works from local newspaper reports can provide some evidence of the repertoire played and the popular taste in music of the time.

#### 6.2.2.1. Examples of programmes in the 1860s

The earliest full newspaper report of a brass band performance that was found during the research was of a performance by the Jedforest Instrumental Band in 1864:

Instrumental Performance – We have been requested to intimate to the public that the Jedforest Instrumental Band will give a performance in the Market Place this afternoon at five o'clock, the programme to consist of the following pieces:-

Quickstep	Ban Bolt	M.S.
Quadrille	Martha	Flotow
Polka	Rockvilla	D'Albert
Selection	Desert Flower	V. Wallace
Chorus	Vesper Hymn	Bortinanski [sic]
Quadrille	Paris	D'Albert
Quickstep	Anne Lisle	M.S.
Selection	National Airs	

Including the “Danish National Hymn”, “God Bless the Prince of Wales”, and “God Save the Queen”.

The members of the Band will feel obliged if parties will prevent children from disturbing the performance.  
(*Teviotdale Record* 15 October 1864)

This programme gives the original composers of the music rather than the arranger, but includes two items marked “M.S.” possibly meaning that they were manuscript copies and may have been arranged by the then bandmaster, Mr George Maclean, who took over the band in 1862. Although the titles are not quite correct, the two

quicksteps could be arrangements of popular American songs, *Ban Bolt*<sup>163</sup> and *Annie Lisle* first published in 1857<sup>164</sup>. Much of the music played in the 1860s by the Jedforest Instrumental Band would have been hand-written arrangements made by George Maclean who was obviously an accomplished arranger as an account of the history of the band states that he arranged a selection for the band to play for the visit of Queen Victoria to Jedburgh on 23 August 1867 (*Jedburgh Gazette* 5 July 1912). The piece was entitled *The Scottish Garland*, “which afterwards became quite popular, being regularly played by many of the first-class bands throughout the country, including the celebrated band which at that time travelled with the world-renowned Wombwell’s menagerie”<sup>165</sup>.

Wombwell’s Menagerie and Circus was probably the most famous travelling show, visiting fairs throughout the country and the Menagerie band was responsible for helping to disseminate popular music to a wide audience (Herbert 2000:22). This band has been called “the foundation of the good English brass band” (*The British Musician* December 1895:270). The members of Wombwells band would copy out and sell band parts to the bands in the towns that they visited, this being “the only way a village band could obtain any music”<sup>166</sup>. It seems that Wombwell’s band also collected arrangements, such as those by George Maclean, from town bands as they travelled around the country and then disseminated them to a wider audience (*Jedburgh Gazette* 5 July 1912).

To get music from “Wombwells” was the great object which every band sought to obtain; but such a luxury had to be paid for. Ten shillings and seven pence and sixpence for a single score had to be disbursed. Money in those days was scarce, consequently new music was pretty much like the proverbial “angels’ visits”, “few and far between”. The loan of a score was a privilege that could very seldom be obtained. Scores were the “stock in trade” of the leaders of the bands “on the road”, and many...used to work at copying on the

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<sup>163</sup> Lyrics by Thomas Dunn English (1819-1902), music by Nelson Kneass (1823-68) <<http://www.victorianweb.org/mt/parlorsongs/18.html>> (Downloaded 22/04/2013).

<sup>164</sup> By Boston, Massachusetts composer H.S. Thompson, first published by Moulton & Clark of Newburyport, Massachusetts. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annie\\_Lisle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annie_Lisle)> (Downloaded 22/04/2013).

<sup>165</sup> *Jedburgh Gazette* 5 July 1912. An account of the history of the band, *Jedforest Instrumental band: Historical Notes and Incidents* by T. S. Smail.

<sup>166</sup> *The British Bandsman* February 1899. J. Ord Hume article *A Chat about Amateur Bands*. Quoted in Newsome 1998:71

stage, even between the “tunes”. (*The British Musician* December 1895:170)

Before the publishing of brass band music through journals, this would have been a great help to bandmasters by providing copies of popular new music and saving them the task of arranging it themselves (Newsome 1998:71). However, the quotation above shows that the cost of a score was high and it would not have been possible for village bands to buy many of these scores so arrangements by their own bandmasters were important.

The 1864 programme for the Jedforest Instrumental Band shown above mainly consisted of arrangements of art music. Working class taste was influenced by the middle class preference for opera and selections from operas were part of the staple repertoire of brass bands at this period. The selection from *Martha*, an opera composed in 1847 by the German composer Friedrich von Flotow (1812-1883) was included in two of the programmes. Arrangements of other opera arias are also included in the programmes, including the very popular tenor song, *The Death of Nelson* by John Braham (1774-1854) from his opera *The Americans* that was included in all three of the programmes, the last time being included “by desire”, probably indicating it had been requested. The composer referred to as d’Albert was probably Charles d’Albert, the German-born father of the more famous composer Eugene d’Albert (1864-1932), who was a pianist and music arranger living in Glasgow at that time. *Desert Flower* (1863) was a popular opera by the Irish composer William Vincent Wallace (1812-1865) while *Vesper Hymn* was by the Russian composer Dimitry Bortniansky (1751-1825) who was known for his liturgical works. This programme shows an international range of composers and demonstrates how widely art music was disseminated to a small town such as Jedburgh in the 1860s<sup>167</sup>. Many programmes in the nineteenth century are reported to end with the *God Save the Queen* or *Auld Lang Syne*, but this one is unusual in concluding with an arrangement of national tunes that included the *Danish National Hymn* and *God Bless the Prince of Wales* as well as *God Save the Queen*. No composer is cited so this could also have been an arrangement by George Maclean.

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<sup>167</sup> The population of Jedburgh in the 1861 Census was 5,263. Jedburgh had good communications with England and Scotland being situated on one of the main North-South routes through the Borders (see Chapter 3).

Band performances were out of doors at this time and the problem of children causing a nuisance during performances was remarked on in the newspaper report, the problem provoking the Jedforest band members to write to the editor:

Sir – The Jedforest Instrumental Band wish to complain through the medium of your paper of the annoyance which they experience from the frolicking and noise of children, while giving their outdoor performances. In other towns which they have visited such conduct is not allowed; for on Kelso square, at the Forester's Fete, a few weeks since, while they played to a large and attentive audience not a sound was heard except those of the band, but last Saturday week the men could scarcely hear each other, and were forced to shorten their programme. Now this could easily be obviated if the audience would make every boy and girl stand still while the band is playing, they would then have the chance of enjoying the music, but it is impossible with the noise and racing of children that the band can play or the audience can listen. The Jedburgh children are not worse than others, but they have got into the unchecked practice of assembling whenever the band is out, which makes the performances a nuisance instead of an enjoyment. With the hope that the public will in future help the men to make their performances more enjoyable, we beg to subscribe ourselves – your most obedient servants. The Members of the Jedforest Instrumental Band. (*Teviotdale Record* 4 September 1869)

The music played by the Jedforest band is probably typical of the kind of music that was played by other bands in the Scottish Borders in the 1860s, the programmes indicating that the music mainly consisted of arrangements of popular songs and dances of the time. Operatic arias continued to feature in all three programmes given by the Jedforest Instrumental Band in 1866 (Listed in Appendix F). These programmes included *Sweet spirit hear my prayer* from the opera *Lurline* by William Vincent Wallace (1812-1865) and the song, *The White Squall* by Barker<sup>168</sup>. *As the moments roll* was originally a glee written for men's voices by Samuel Webbe. It is not entirely clear what the 'chorus' or 'grand chorus' *To Thee O Lord* is, but as these performances were in August and September 1866 which was harvest time, it may

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<sup>168</sup> *The White Squall* words by Captain Johns of the Marines with music by George A Barker. <<http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk/familiar-songs/familiar-songs%20-%200215.htm>> Accessed 11/01/2011.

well have been an arrangement of the harvest hymn, “To Thee O Lord our hearts we raise”, the words of which were written in 1861 by William Dix<sup>169</sup>. The inclusion of hymns was particularly popular in Victorian times reflecting the religious fervour of the time especially in protestant Scotland.

The photograph of the Jedforest Instrumental Band below (Fig. 6.1), taken in 1866, hangs in their band hall, this being the band that played the programmes listed in Appendix F. The photograph, which appears to have been taken in winter as there is snow on the roof, shows a large age range in the band with young boys playing the drums. The band does not seem to have uniforms, everyone appearing to be dressed in their best clothes with the bandmaster wearing a top hat.



Fig. 6.1. Jedforest Instrumental Band 1866

### 6.2.3. Examples of programmes 1879-1918

Programmes played by the St. Ronan’s Brass Band have been extracted from the local newspaper, the *St. Ronan’s Standard*, for the period from 1879 to 1914 (Appendix E). These show that transcriptions and arrangements were still popular

<sup>169</sup> Number 484 in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (Revised 1950).

and included in most of their programmes in the period 1879-1883 (Appendix E.1) under their conductor John Simpson, but rather than arrangements of individual operatic arias they now included operatic selections such as *Norma* by Bellini (24 July 1880), selections of art music by one composer, for example, *Gems of Mozart* (25 March 1882) or selections of lighter music such as *Scottish Airs* by E. Newton (29 August 1881). Sacred works in the form of anthems or hymns still continued to appear regularly in the programmes, for example, the anthems, *I will lift up mine eyes* (1 August 1879), and *Jerusalem, my Glorious Home* by L. Mason (30 April 1881), *Angels from the Realms of Glory* by E. Newton 6 May 1882) and the hymns *Angelic voices* and *Sound the Trumpet* both by E. Newton (30 December 1882).

The St. Ronan's Brass Band repertoire between 1897 and 1914 (Appendix E) continued to include miscellaneous pieces including popular songs, local songs, and national Scottish music as well as marches. Marches have always been a standard part of the repertoire of brass bands, which perhaps relates back to their early origins as military bands, and they were often used as rousing pieces at the beginning of a performance as can be seen from the programmes played by St. Ronan's Brass Band. These programmes contrast with the music played in the 1860s by the Jedforest Instrumental Band when most of the music consisted of transcriptions of opera.

Duncan Blythell has pointed out that there were shortcomings in nineteenth-century brass band repertoire with bands being criticised for whatever type of music they played:

Whilst bands could rightly claim that they represented 'the classics' to a popular audience, they were condemned for doing so only in unauthentic arrangements or ruthlessly butchered selections...At the other extreme, bands were criticised for playing 'trash' – marches, dances, show-piece solos and inane descriptive numbers – written specially for them by largely self-taught composers who were the product of the movement itself and were unrecognised outside it. (Blythell 1997:152)

However, community bands like the St. Ronan's band continued to play what is described in the quotation as 'trash' for the entertainment of the local people and this was obviously the type of music the Innerleithen community enjoyed listening to.

Numerous nineteenth-century bandmasters wrote and arranged marches, dances and light music for their local audiences (Newsome 1998:135). The bandmasters of the St. Ronan's Brass Band were probably typical of many bandmasters of their time who arranged and composed for their own band, and the work of two of them is discussed below.

#### 6.2.3.1. John Simpson. Composer. St. Ronan's Bandmaster 1879-1883.

John Simpson, junior, was a cornet player who became leader of the St. Ronan's Brass Band (*Peeblesshire Herald* 7 July 1883). His father was probably also a member of the band as he is referred to as John Simpson, senior, when he performed at a band concert (*St. Ronan's Standard* 12 December 1879). At this period the principal cornet player usually also acted as the conductor; scores were not generally available, the bandmaster conducting and often playing from the solo cornet part which would have had other parts cued in. It was still common for bandmasters to arrange music for the particular instrumentation available in their band even though printed music was becoming more widely available through the band journals.

John Simpson mainly wrote and arranged marches for the St Ronan's Brass, many having local place-names and connections,

TYPE OF PIECE	TITLE	DATE PERFORMED <i>Peeblesshire Herald</i>
March	Auld Robin Gray	21 November 1879
March	The Cameron Man	2 July 1881
March	Braw, Braw Lads	30 July 1881
March	Scotland Yet	30 July 1881
March	The Rose of Allendale	10 September 1881
March	The Bush aboon Traquair	10 September 1881
March	Jessie's Dream	30 December 1882
Quadrille	St. Ronan's Well	30 December 1882
March	The Emigrant	30 December 1882
March	Huntingtower	21 April 1883
March	The Lass o' Ballochmyle	21 April 1883

Fig.6.2 Table of compositions by John Simpson

St. Ronan's Well is a spa in the town of Innerleithen and *The Bush aboon Traquair* refers to Traquair House, the oldest inhabited house in Scotland on the opposite bank of the river Tweed to Innerleithen. Other pieces are arrangements of well-known Scottish and local Border melodies such as *Braw, Braw Lads* the town song from nearby Galashiels, and these would have had popular appeal to the audiences in Innerleithen. John Simpson's leadership of the St Ronan's Brass Band was much appreciated by his local community as the following article shows, "The Innerleithen band is an old band, and takes pleasure in scientific practice, so that its powers of execution are above the average of provincial bands...The labour Mr. John Simpson has bestowed upon it for years resounds to his credit now" (*Peeblesshire Herald* 30 June 1883). John Simpson left Innerleithen in 1883 to go and work in Hawick, the largest town in the Borders, where wages were probably higher. It has not been possible to find any evidence of him playing with the Hawick Saxhorn Band after he moved. He was well-liked by the members of the St. Ronan's band as the following newspaper report about his departure shows:

We regret to learn that the leader, Mr John Simpson, jnr., is leaving the band, as he has found an improved position in Hawick. He has been the soul of the band for years, his compositions, selections and arrangements have stamped him a master of musical art, and but for his modesty, he might have enjoyed a higher eminence. (*Peeblesshire Herald* 7 July 1883)

Unfortunately, none of John Simpson's manuscripts have survived as they would have provided an insight into his arrangements, the ability of the band which was so highly praised in the local newspaper and the number of players in it at that time.

#### 6.2.3.2. Lawrence Cockburn (1860-1933) Composer. St. Ronan's Bandmaster 1897-1904

Lawrence Cockburn took up his duties as bandmaster of St. Ronan's Brass Band fourteen years after John Simpson had left Innerleithen. Cockburn composed a number of pieces for the band and many of his manuscripts have survived. Whilst he

principally arranged and composed for brass band he also composed other music, including songs and a piano piece, giving him a wider reputation than just as a bandmaster in Innerleithen.

It is possible to trace his life and musical training. Lawrence Cockburn was born on 22 April 1860 at Buckle, Berwickshire, near the Borders town of Duns, being the son of a ploughman and one of four children. After his father died, the 1881 the census shows that the family had moved to Galashiels and Lawrence had married. The 1891 census indicates that Lawrence and his wife were both working in the mills in Galashiels and by then had four children. The following article written about him indicates that he was playing in the Galashiels Town Band at this time and must have shown some talent for writing band music as he had received some training:

It was in the land of the “Sour Plums”<sup>170</sup> that “Larry” as he is still styled, learned first the rudiments and then the intricacies of band music. His first connection with instrumentalists was made as a member of Galashiels Volunteer Band, then under the leadership of Mr George Donaldson. After four years playing, Mr Cockburn transferred himself to the Galashiels Town’s Brass Band. Mr Johnstone was at that time conductor, but after a brief spell “The little man called Moore”—to use the words of a local ditty—assumed command, and the band awoke to find itself famous over Scotland. Mr Cockburn during his sixteen years membership, took part in all the band contests, and contributed his share to the fame of the bandsmen. (*St. Ronan’s Standard*, 8 April 1903)

Lawrence Cockburn played trombone and was named amongst the players of the Galashiels Town Band that took part in a contest held in 1891 in Innerleithen where he was later to become bandmaster (*The Border Advertiser* 6 May 1891). The Galashiels Town Band still has manuscript copies of two marches based on traditional Borders tunes that Cockburn wrote for that band, *Bonnie wee thing* and *Cowdenknowes*. These are dated 1923, but it is unclear whether this is an original date for the compositions or if it has been added later, possibly for a performance. It

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<sup>170</sup> The land of “Sour Plums” is a reference to Galashiels. The town coat-of-arms bears a plum tree commemorating that in 1337 men of the town defeated some English soldiers who had stopped to eat the sour plums.

is most probable that they are early works and that Cockburn wrote them during the time that he was playing with the band in the 1890s. Lawrence Cockburn moved to Innerleithen taking up his duties as bandmaster of the St. Ronan's Brass Band in April 1897 where he continued until the summer of 1904. Cockburn would therefore have been the bandmaster at the time of the inauguration of the St. Ronan's Festival in 1901.

As has already been mentioned, an important archive consisting of jumbled-up band parts of music that Cockburn composed and arranged for the St. Ronan's Brass Band was discovered in the band hall in 2008 having been forgotten about for many years. From the titles of the pieces given below, it can be seen that, like the earlier arrangements by John Simpson, they are mainly hand-written arrangements of local and Scottish traditional tunes:

Scottish Border Melodies (several sets of printed copies)  
 My ain dear Nell (both printed and hand-written copies)  
 Gloomy winter's now awa  
 Bonnie wee thing  
 O' A' the Airs (by Burns)  
 Auld Robin Gray  
 I canna leave the auld folk  
 Bonny Mary Hay  
 Rothesay Bay  
 Jessie's Dream

There are some other pieces by Cockburn mentioned in newspaper reports of performances given by the band but for which no music has been found:

TYPE OF MUSIC	TITLE	DATE PERFORMED
		<i>St. Ronan's Standard</i>
Quick March	Dinna cross the burn	15 June 1898
March	The Adventurer	29 June 1904
Fantasia	St. Ronan's	29 June 1904

Fig 6.3. Table of compositions by Lawrence Cockburn

A comparison with the list of marches composed by John Simpson given earlier shows that Cockburn wrote some new arrangements for the band of two of the same traditional tunes, *Auld Robin Grey* and *Jessie's Dream*.

Most of Cockburn's music is in manuscript form although two of his pieces, *My ain dear Nell* and *Scottish Border Melodies*, were also engraved and printed in Leipzig by Oscar Brandstetter. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the latter work was written as the test piece for a local contest held by the Border Brass Band League on 12 September 1903 in Galashiels.

*Scottish Border Melodies* is, as the title suggests, a medley of local Border tunes. (A copy of the solo cornet part together with a list of the different tunes is in Appendix H with excerpts recorded by St. Ronan's Silver Band on CD Tracks 1-6). These tunes would have been well-known in the community and this would have generated much local interest in the music. Cockburn gave the following description of it in the contest programme:

The Selection opens with an original solo for Basses. Next movement (Larghetto) is made up of snatches of various Border songs, treated in Fantasia form. Next movement (Allegro Marcato), "The Souters o' Selkirk," for full band, finishing with Euphonium Cadenza, which leads into (Andante) "The Flowers o' the Forest," treated as Euphonium solo—a gem of Borders song which requires no comment here. Next movement (Allegretto), "The Braes o' Yarrow," and old Border ballad arranged here for full band. Next movement (Andante), "Ettrick Banks"

On Ettrick bands, ae simmer nicht,

At Gloamin' when the sheep cam' hame," &c.

The first strain is given to Baritones and Trombones, joined by Cornets in the second strain, finishing with Cornet cadenza, leading into Adagio con anima, Cornet solo—

"Braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes,

Ye wander through the blooming heather" &c.

Next movement (Allegro 6-8), a spritely movement for full band, followed by Andantino, Horn solo, which is the pathetic old ballad "Lucy's Flittin'."

"'Twas when the wan leaf frae birk tree was fa'in',

And Martinmas dowie had wound up the year."

Next movement (allegro), "Muirland Willie," a gay and dashing movement, which is followed by Trombone cadenza, leading into Trombone solo, "The bush aboon Traquair."

"Hear me, ye nymphs and every swain,

I'll tell how Peggy grieves me," &c.

Next movement (Andante Affetuoso), “Bonny Tweedside.”

“O sweet are thy banks, bonnie Tweed,  
But sweeter the mays that there bide;  
But sweetest of a’ is the Lass  
Wha hauds fast my heart on Tweedside.”

Which is followed by that rousing old Border air, “Blue Bonnets,” arranged for full band, finishing with Cornet cadenza, which followed by Cornet solo, “The Broom o’ the Cowdenknowes.” Next movement (Moderato) is a massive arrangement of “Jock o’ Hazeldean”

“She’s ower the Border and awa’  
Wi’ Jock o’ Hazeldean.”

Last movement (Allegro) is a spirited original movement working up to grand Vivace—Finale.

Classical harmony is used throughout and it is thickly scored in the style of music at that time, with only the solo cornet part having any sizable rests. Unusually, *Scottish Border Melodies* begins quietly with a bass solo which is taken up loudly by the cornets. The part-writing is typical of the time with the solo instruments in each section taking the most prominent parts and playing the tune at some point. The solo cornets have the bulk of the work with the 2nd and 3rd cornets simply adding to the harmony. There is no separate part for flugel horn, this part would have played the repiano cornet<sup>171</sup> supporting the tune. At that time the solo euphonium was considered the most important player in the band after the solo cornet and the instrument is given a lot of work playing the tune, counter melodies and a cadenza. Neither the solo horn nor the bass instruments have any cadenza but they do have some solo writing. The first and second trombone parts are written in the tenor clef which is unusual as normally they would be written in the treble clef. The bass trombone part is written in the bass clef and it is the only instrument in a brass band to use this clef; even the E flat and B flat basses use the treble clef. The published parts include percussion parts for side drum, bass drum and cymbals although percussion was not allowed to be used in contests at this date.

The themes used by Cockburn are traditional Border songs and tunes. All the Border towns have their own songs which are sung particularly at the time of the

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<sup>171</sup> The repiano cornet is not a different instrument; it is a normal cornet playing a special part. The function of the repiano cornet is diverse, as it frequently doubles with the flugelhorn or the solo cornets but also has solo passages that are completely different from what the rest of the cornets are playing.

annual common ridings and as music so strongly associated with many of the Border towns is represented in the piece it would have had great interest and appeal to the “music-loving, though critical Borderers” (*St. Ronan’s Standard* 8 April 1903). *Scottish Border Melodies* takes approximately 18 minutes to perform and had not been played for about a hundred years until the St Ronan’s Silver Band recorded excerpts from it for this research in 2009 [CD Tracks 1-6]. Although the players found the standard of music in *Scottish Border Melodies* was much easier to play than modern contest music, the compositional style is very different from what they are used to playing including several long cadenzas for the principal solo instruments, two for the solo cornet and one for euphonium. Unfortunately the band was unable to play the cadenzas on the recording. The “original” final section is fairly straightforward consisting of runs and a fanfare-like final flourish.

Not everyone at the time thought *Scottish Border Melodies* was a successful arrangement:

The Selection contains such well known Border Airs and one would have thought that a piece containing such beautiful melodies as these could not have failed to give pleasure. The Selection however failed to do so and bandsmen and many people in the audience expressed the opinion that the Selection could have been much better arranged. As it was, it was apparent that the conductors of some of the bands had tried their hands at improving the piece – the Hawick band certainly did not play what the Innerleithen band played. For a society which asks for public support, good music should be a matter of greater concern than mere originality and we feel the League officials will take Saturday’s lesson to heart and in the future not fix up a selection that they never heard. (*The Scottish Border Reader* 18 September 1903)

The St. Ronan’s band was unplaced in the 1903 contest even though it was conducted by the composer. Notwithstanding the above criticism, *Scottish Border Melodies* appears to have remained popular with the local community in Innerleithen for many years being included in programmes played in town for up to ten years under their later conductor, Edward McGlasson (*St. Ronan’s Standard* 28 January 1914).

Lawrence Cockburn was a versatile composer and after leaving the band in 1904 due to ill-health, he continued to write music including the words of a song, *Bonnie Scotland*, published in America<sup>172</sup>, a copy of which still exists although in a poor state. The local newspaper wrote the following account of the piece:

"Bonnie Scotland" was specially written by Mr L Cockburn, Innerleithen, to be sung at a Scotch concert in Philadelphia, where it was received with great enthusiasm by the audience, which largely composed of people from the Borders of Scotland. There was such a great demand for copies that it was decided to have it published in America. It was sent to the H. Kirkus Dugdale Co. of Washington, where it was immediately accepted and an agreement entered into to have it published. The music is by Don Loring, a noted American composer. (*St. Ronan's Standard* 19 August 1914)

The "noted American composer", Don Loring, worked for the publishers, H. Kirkus Dugdale Company, Inc., New York, which was one of the first song-poem music factories. The company began in 1908 and quickly rose to prominence within the industry and by 1911 dominated it. In 1913 the officers were indicted for mail fraud and in 1915 they filed for bankruptcy; however, in 1913 they had had the largest music publishing building in America in Washington dedicated to "publishing and promoting throughout the entire world the work of unknown song writers and composers". H. Kirkus Dugdale's promotional literature stated, "We have always made it our special aim to assist the amateur as well as the professional. We have been looking more for merit in the work we published than for past experience and reputation. It has been our purpose to encourage unknown beginners to write music and song poems"<sup>173</sup>. Don Loring was one of Kirkus Dugdale's most successful song writers and it is interesting to speculate why Cockburn should have turned to them instead of writing the music for the song himself, the cover of the printed copy indicating that Cockburn provided only the words (Fig. 6.4).

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<sup>172</sup> *St. Ronan's Standard* 28 January 1914

<sup>173</sup> <<http://www.songpoemmusic.com/dugdale.htm> p.6>

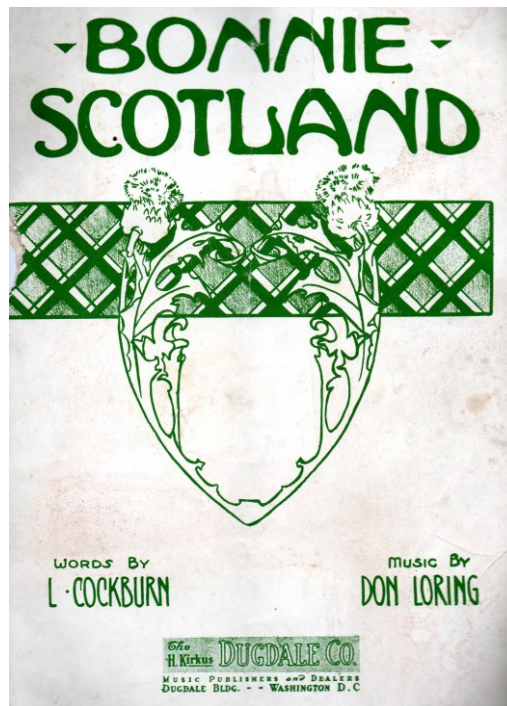


Fig 6.4. Cover of the song 'Bonny Scotland' by Lawrence Cockburn

#### BONNIE SCOTLAND

Tho' I'm far frae bonnie Scotland,  
In a land far o'er the sea;  
'Mong my native hills and valleys.  
Will my heart forever be.  
O how often when I'm lonely,  
When the gloaming shadows fa',  
I will muse on bonnie Scotland,  
Bonnie Scotland far awa'.

#### CHORUS

Back to scenes of youth and childhood,  
Oft my tho'ts will fondly stray;  
Mem'ries dear still fondly cherished  
Ever haunt me night and day.  
How my heart would leap wi' gladness  
Could I meet the loved ones a',  
Just once more in bonnie Scotland,  
Bonnie Scotland far awa'.

The audience in Philadelphia would have included a large number of émigrés from the Borders, the newspaper article above indicating that they found this sentimental song appealing.

Lawrence Cockburn is known to have composed a song for the St. Ronan's Games Centenary in Innerleithen in 1927, but the music for this has disappeared. He wrote a schottische, *Elibank*, for piano which was published in London by Dolart & Co of Oxford Street in 1921 and there are still copies of this in the band hall; it is listed in the British Library catalogue<sup>174</sup>. Two manuscript books of tunes written by Cockburn, one for cornet and one for violin, that he may have used as teaching material, were also found in the band hall. Cockburn died on 21 January 1933. His son, Jock Cockburn, went on to play in the St Ronan's band and Jock's grandson, Mark, currently plays in the band and is the Treasurer, so there is a continuing family connection to the St. Ronan's Band.

#### 6.2.4. Repertoire 1919-1950

All bands lost many players due to the two World Wars, and the economic depression in the inter-war period put pressures on the bands. In the Scottish Borders the textile industry felt the effects of the depression very deeply and many band players left to find work elsewhere. Also, during this period brass bands were increasingly competing for audiences with new forms of entertainment including the gramophone, the cinema and radio, and with new styles of music including jazz. It is noticeable that references to the activities of brass bands in the local papers in the Borders became much rarer and increasingly space was given to previewing the films being shown at local cinemas.

Selections from opera were still popular, as is shown by the programmes played by the Hawick Saxhorn Band and Galashiels Town Band in 1924 (Appendix H). The programmes played by St. Ronan's Silver Band in the 1930s introduced new styles of music such as comedy songs and an overture, and new popular dances. New composers of a "lighter" style of band music such as William Rimmer and Sidney Trenchard appear, although some traditional band favourites remained in the St.

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<sup>174</sup> British Library shelf mark: Music Collections h.3830.o.(5.)

Ronan's programmes as well, including opera selections from Verdi's *Il Trovatore* and the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan, *HMS Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. *The Fantasia of Minstrel Songs* (*St Ronan's Standard* 8 May 1931) shows how band music was following popular taste of the time and it is evidence of the retention of historic repertoire being played by Borders bands as minstrel songs had been at the height of their popularity in the nineteenth century (Appendix H).

The period between the two wars has been described as the "Golden Age" of brass band music (Newsome 1992:10) because this was the period when some well-known English composers, including Gustav Holst, Granville Bantock, John Ireland and Edward Elgar were persuaded to write for the genre. They wrote test pieces for the top contesting bands and it is unlikely that their music would have had much influence on the music played by the Borders bands at the time. The earliest of these new compositions, written just prior to the First World War was Percy Fletcher's tone poem *Labour and Love* used as the test piece for the Championship Section of the 1913 Crystal Palace contest. This piece introduced a new style of writing for brass band. Although the musical content of the work is original, in many ways it still looks back to an earlier style of writing similar to the operatic arrangements of the nineteenth century by including cadenzas for the principal solo instruments, however, it was transitional to a new style because the various sections were thematically linked. It has a storyline which sets out to tell the conflict between good and evil making it the first example of 'programme music'<sup>175</sup> composed for brass band. (Newsome 2006:120). Originally written as a championship section test piece it still remains a popular piece for contests, being the set work for the 3rd Section of the British Championships in 2010. This illustrates the improvement in the standard of playing by brass bands over the course of the twentieth century. Apart from *Labour and Love* the number of other original works written for brass band until after World War II was small (Newsome 2006:120). In the 1920s dance fashion changed and new types of dances including the two-step appeared in the St. Ronan's band programmes (*St. Ronan's Standard* 7 May 1919).

Eric Ball was a prolific composer for brass band who emerged during this period. His influence is still felt today and his music continues to be included in the

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<sup>175</sup> Music which tells a story or picture in sound.

repertoire of many Borders bands, his march *Star Lake* being included in Galashiels Town Band's spring concert in May 2013 (Appendix O). Originally a full-time Salvation Army officer during the 1930s and 1940s, he resigned from his Salvationist work in 1944 when he became interested in spiritualism and from then on he composed for the wider brass band world. His compositions include concert and contest pieces, and many 'lighter' works, often for lower section bands, and they all have some kind of spiritual message (Newsome 1992:17). The enduring quality and popularity of his compositions was demonstrated in 2011 when *Resurgam*, originally written for the 1950 Belle Vue contest, was included in the top 300 tunes voted for by the listeners to the Classic FM radio station. Eric Ball's *Devon Fantasy* was set for the 4th Section of the Scottish Championships in 2013.

#### 6.2.5. Repertoire 1950-2010

Newsome suggests that brass band music was fairly stagnant during the 1950s with bands playing the same type of repertoire that they had played for several decades (Newsome 1992:17). Up to this point many of the original compositions for brass band had been written as test pieces for contests; however, from the 1960s there was a trend towards commissioning works for concert performance (Newsome 1992:19). Works by composers and arrangers from this period are still found regularly in the concert programmes of bands in the Scottish Borders, once again confirming the popularity and retention of older repertoire.

In the 1950 and 1960s the dance band craze spread to the Scottish Borders and many bandsmen left their bands to go and play in dance bands. The minutes of the Hawick Saxhorn Band record that at that time some players preferred to play in dance bands where they got paid, so playing in the Saxhorn Band did not interest them<sup>176</sup>. This trend led to a decline in numbers in many bands. Martin Innes, who played in the St. Boswells Concert Band from 1947 to 2011, explained that well-known dance bands from London would travel up on Fridays to play at the weekends in Edinburgh. They would stop in the Borders to play on the Friday nights with local

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<sup>176</sup> Hawick Saxhorn Band Minute Book 28/09/1939-26/06/1966. Minute dated 20/05/1966.

dance bands playing the first half and the well-known bands performing the second half<sup>177</sup>.

Another big change in the 1960s was the introduction of ladies into the brass bands. Very few ladies had played in brass bands before this period although ladies had been allowed to play during the war while the men were away on active service, but as soon as they returned the ladies often had to bow out. However, by the 1960s attitudes were changing and in 1965 the minutes of the Hawick Saxhorn Band record a discussion at a committee meeting as to whether girls should be allowed into the band and it was agreed “it could be tried out”<sup>178</sup>. Most of the other Border bands also began allowing ladies into the bands in the 1960s. The provision of brass tuition in the local schools discussed in chapter 5 contributed to this change with the rise of junior and school brass bands.

As mentioned earlier (Section 5.1.6), the 1960s was a time of dramatic changes in the manufacture of brass instruments with the introduction of lower pitched and wider bored instruments. This changed the sound of brass bands, but perhaps the most important change for the band repertory itself in the last quarter of the twentieth century was the introduction of percussion on a much wider scale from the 1970s. From 1975 all bands entering the National Championships were required to include percussion (Newsome 2006:64) although bands had included percussion in music played for concerts before this. This meant that composers were now free to include more percussion parts in their test pieces and percussion sections became an integral part of brass bands.

Towards the end of the twentieth century test pieces became increasingly specialised and often too difficult for local audiences to appreciate and were therefore seldom played in band concerts for the local community. It was also in the later twentieth century that band repertoire in general became increasingly split between popular music and contest pieces. Whilst bands still included music from previous decades in their concerts, increasingly composers began to write accessible music for bands to perform for entertainment, including arrangements of television themes and film music. Examples of this type of music by the Borders composer Alan Fernie include *Mission Impossible* (Alan Fernie) and arrangements of popular

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<sup>177</sup> Interview with Martin Innes. 16/10/2007. SA2007.046

<sup>178</sup> Hawick Saxhorn Band Minute Book 28/09/1939-26/06/1966. Minute dated 13/08/1965.

songs such as *Yesterday* (Lennon/McCartney arr. Fernie). The arrangement of popular music for brass band shows continuity with the nineteenth century when popular songs of the day were performed, but the modern style of arrangement is very different with all the instruments given interesting parts and not just filling in the harmony.

The music collections of most bands today (2013) still contain “art music, popular pieces, and what can loosely be described as functional tunes such as national anthems, Christmas carols, and works which are idiosyncratic to particular localities” (Newsome 2006:56-57). In the Scottish Borders the latter category includes Scottish national tunes and local Borders songs that are important to the community and played annually at the common ridings. (This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7).

Andrew Stille, a member of Selkirk Silver Band for many years, summed up how he thought the repertoire played by that band had changed during the time (nearly 50 years) that he had been playing in the band:

In the early days it would be hymns, waltzes, marches and music from stage shows, etc. As time went on playing methods improved and players became more versatile, more and more arrangers came to the fore. Operatic and ballet music, specially arranged pieces and specially written pieces became the order of the day. At the present time it’s unbelievable what the top bands can play and even at local level it’s doubtful if a band of sixty, seventy or eighty years ago would even have attempted to play this music.<sup>179</sup>

#### 6.2.5.1. John Hewie, Composer. Bandmaster of Jedforest Instrumental Band.

At least one bandmaster in the Borders carried on the tradition of writing for their band during the post-Second World War period. John Hewie was the respected conductor of the Jedforest Instrumental Band. He wrote and arranged much of the music for the band to play at the common riding festival in Jedburgh which was

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<sup>179</sup> Letter about Selkirk Silver Band sent to the author by Andrew Stille, a member of the band, in February 2007.

begun in 1947, including some of the marches and the music for the town song *Jethart's Here* which begins:

The cry's gane thro' the Borderland,  
The beacons bleeze on Dunion tap;  
For English knaves fra' Cumberland  
Ha' crost the Fell by Carter slap.

Chorus

Dear Borderland! Blench na' nor fear!  
Our Borderland, nae foe comes near!  
Stand firm and sure! For Jethart's Here!  
Stand firm and sure! For Jethart's Here!

John Hewie was so well respected by the band that when he died in 1964 the band gave him the honour of erecting his gravestone in the graveyard of the Episcopal Church in Jedburgh<sup>180</sup>. The Jedforest Instrumental Band is trying to resurrect some of his tunes and incorporate them into new pieces of music<sup>181</sup>.



Fig.6.5. John Hewie's gravestone

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<sup>180</sup> John Hewie was not the first conductor of the Jedforest Instrumental Band to have a memorial erected by the band. In 1899 the band erected a memorial in Jedburgh Abbey churchyard to Robert Hope, who had been a member of the band since its institution in 1854 and the conductor for over 20 years.

<sup>181</sup> Interview with George Burt, 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

## 6.2.6. Into the 21st Century

Bands in the Scottish Borders are fortunate as there are several bandmasters today who carry on the tradition of composing and arranging music for their bands in the twenty-first century. In addition the well-known composer and arranger, Alan Fernie, who lives in Selkirk, has composed music specifically for many of the Borders bands.

### 6.2.6.1. David Robb (1962-). Composer. Musical director of St. Ronan's Silver Band 1995-2002 and 2007 to the present

One of David Robb's compositions for the St. Ronan's band is a march called *Traquair*. As already mentioned (Footnote 152), Traquair House is the oldest inhabited house in Scotland on the opposite side of the River Tweed from Innerleithen, and it is where the band performs at a Tattoo each summer. Keith Belleville, the Band's secretary, wrote<sup>182</sup>:

I had the idea in my head for years and asked Dave to do a march arrangement of the lover's trysting song "The Bush Aboon Traquair" by John Campbell Shairp for one of our Tattoos at Traquair House (2000). This worked well and I then had the idea of putting the tune for St. Ronan A.D. 737 into the trio section. Dave devised a bass solo which links the march together and we decided to call it simply, "Traquair." Dave wrote this as a gift to the Band and it has been woven into the musical score of Games Week<sup>183</sup>.

David Robb's march incorporates two well-known local tunes, *Will ye gang wi' me and fare* and *To the Bush Aboon Traquair* and was recorded by the band in 2003. (The second of these tunes had previously been arranged as a march for the same band in 1881 by the then bandmaster John Simpson). The liner notes accompanying the recording of *Traquair* explain:

The Bush Aboon Traquair, a lover's tryst in the ancient parish of Traquair, has fascinated local historians for many,

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<sup>182</sup> Email from Keith Belleville to the author. 08/08/2011.

<sup>183</sup> St. Ronan's Games and Cleikum Ceremonies is the name of the Innerleithen common riding.

many years and its actual location is even a point of debate. Traditionally the theme of this Border love song concerned the courtship of a son of Murray of Philiphaugh and a daughter of the House of Traquair. Some local historians are, however, more cautious. They go no further than to state that the Bush was the spot where a young man, after walking across Minchmoor, used to meet his sweetheart. The most up to date words to the ballad were written by John Campbell Shairp, Principal of St. Andrews University and published in 1864, while the tune is much, much older – the original words having been lost long ago.

*Doon where Leithen gurgled bricht,  
Centuries awa',  
Cam' St. Ronan wi' his licht,  
Crook and cross and a';  
He shed it on us a',  
Oor forebears yin and a',  
By symbols rude and precepts good,  
He kept the de'il in awe!*

The trio section of the march contains the tune to the song that depicts the legend of St. Ronan, Patron Saint of Innerleithen. The words were written by George Hope Tait while the tune was penned by James A.L. Mercer, a local musician who gave outstanding service to the local community. The march was commissioned to mark the centenary of his birth<sup>184</sup>.

In 2010, to mark the St. Ronan's Silver Band's bicentenary, David Robb wrote another traditional style march, *St. Ronan's MMX* (CD Track 9) using two other local tunes, *Leaving Leithenside* (Spiers) and *Raise High the Banner* (Yorkston).

It is interesting to note the importance of local tunes in the compositions of all three of the St Ronan's Band bandmasters who have been discussed and who have composed for the band over the course of 130 years, John Simpson in the 1880s, Lawrence Cockburn in the early twentieth century, and David Robb a hundred years later. David Robb demonstrates how this is a continuing tradition amongst Border bandmasters.

In 2013 David Robb composed a new march for the Galashiels Town Band called *The Gathering*. This was first performed at the band's annual picnic and presentation of annual band awards held in the local park on 9 June 2013. The march

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<sup>184</sup> *From Leithenside*. 2003. St Ronan's Silver Band conducted by David McLeod. CD STR02

is based on two tunes from the Galashiels festival, the Braw Lads Gathering; *The soft Lowland Tongue of the Borders* is used in the first section although the rhythm has been changed from waltz time (3 beats in a bar) to a march rhythm in 2/4 time. The Trio section is based on a Galashiels town song *Braw Lasses* and they are linked by an original bass section.

#### 6.2.6.2. Cameron Mabon (1977-). Composer. Musical director of Jedforest Instrumental Band

Cameron Mabon, the current bandmaster of the Jedforest Instrumental Band in 2013, is a music teacher and another bandmaster who composes and arranges music for his band. As a professional arranger “he has published music especially for youth bands which are extensively played throughout the world”<sup>185</sup>. His arrangements of popular songs such as the Robbie Williams song *She’s the One* and arrangements of film themes, for example his *Two Movie Themes*<sup>186</sup> that includes *The Eye of the Tiger* (Theme from “Rocky III” by James Peterik and Frank Sullivan) and the main theme to “Jurassic Park” (John Williams), are especially important in encouraging young people to play in the bands as well as providing entertaining music for the band to play at concerts when entertaining the community. Cameron Mabon also writes music for the Jedforest senior band which the band encourages him to publish<sup>187</sup>.

#### 6.2.6.3. Alan Fernie (1960-) composer.

Alan Fernie is a trombone player, brass teacher, prolific composer and arranger of brass band music, a band conductor and adjudicator of brass band contests. He has a national and international reputation, and lives and works in Selkirk in the Scottish Borders. He is currently (2013) musical director of the Hawick Saxhorn Band. Since 2000 he has written several commissioned works for various Borders bands as well as having conducted several of the Scottish Borders bands. Two bands have commissioned him to write pieces based on their town’s common riding music; the

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<sup>185</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

<sup>186</sup> Published by Obrasso - Verlag AG, CH – 4537 Wiedlisbach, Switzerland

<sup>187</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

first was for the Selkirk Silver Band based on a selection of Selkirk Common Riding songs called *The Souters* (1995), followed by an arrangement of Jedburgh Callents Festival airs, *A Jedburgh Overture* (2000), for the Jedforest Instrumental Band. As a result of the commission by the Jedforest band he became their conductor for seven years.

Alan has a strong association with and is an honorary member of St. Ronan's Silver Band for whom he has written several commissioned pieces:

March	The Granites (2000)
Meditation	Written in memory of John Wilson (2000)
Arrangement	Leaving Leithenside (2001)
Original piece	Echoes O'er Leithen (2009)

The first three of these works were included on a CD produced by the band in 2003 *From Leithenside*<sup>188</sup>. The accompanying sleeve notes states that:

The Granites was commissioned by the band to mark the Millennium. Alan imaginatively included the tune that Robert Burns used for *A Man's A Man For A' That* in the trio section, this tune having been sung at the re-convention of the Scottish Parliament in 1999”.

In an informal discussion with the composer<sup>189</sup>, Alan Fernie explained that *The Granites* is written in the traditional style of an old Border march, in Minuet and Trio form, with thick instrumentation including lots of unisons and it begins with a flourishing 8-bar introduction. Leithen Water is the river that flows through Innerleithen, the name of which features in the titles of two of Fernie's compositions for the St. Ronan's Silver Band. His latest piece for the band, *Echoes o'er Leithen*, (Appendix J shows the first page of the score) was written for the band's bi-centenary celebrated in 2010, but has not yet been recorded. *Leaving Leithenside*, is an arrangement of a song by the folk musician Kenny Spiers who wrote this beautiful fiddle tune. Kenny sent a copy to the band suggesting it as an addition to the Band's repertoire, and it was arranged for the band by Alan Fernie. The CD notes say that, “The Band dedicates this superb transcription of Kenny's song to all the many exiles

<sup>188</sup> St. Ronan's Silver Band. Conductor David McLeod. Recording by Tony Kime. SRTD2.

<sup>189</sup> 7 April 2011.

of the town spread across the world today”<sup>190</sup>. *Meditation* was written in memory of a member of the St. Ronan’s band who had played in it all his life.

Alan Fernie has also composed many pieces in a popular style, one of his most popular tunes being *African Funk*<sup>191</sup> written for Brass Band Aid in 2005 and influenced by the music of The Brazz Brothers<sup>192</sup>. Among his many varied compositions are such different pieces as a 5-movement suite entitled *Anglian Dances*<sup>193</sup> and an arrangement of the song *Baggy Trousers*<sup>194</sup> by the pop group Madness from their 1980 album *Absolutely*. His music appears regularly in the concert programmes given by most of the bands in the Borders, for example, the programmes listed in Appendices N and O. His piece *Three Spanish Impressions* has been chosen as the 4<sup>th</sup> Section test piece for the British Brass Band Regional Championships in 2014.

Alan Fernie has also been Chairman of the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association for eight years, 2005-2013, steering the Borders through the youth development programme outlined in the previous chapter. To have such a high-profile person living and working in the Borders and leading the Borders bands through the period of change has been an immense asset to the area.

### **6.3. Case study to show how repertoire styles have changed over the last 100 years.**

A short comparison of music written 100 years ago for the St. Ronan’s Silver Band by Lawrence Cockburn with music written for the same band in the early twenty-first century by Alan Fernie will demonstrate the changing styles of music played and also the difference in the playing ability of the band. In an interview Alan Fernie summed up what he saw as the main differences:

In the olden days you used to get selections from operas, musicals and orchestral pieces. Pieces like ‘Excerpts from

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<sup>190</sup> Liner note to *From Leithenside*. 2003. CD. St. Ronan’s Silver Band conducted by David McLeod. Recording by Tony Kime. SRTD2.

<sup>191</sup> Brass Band Aid 2005 <[www.brassbandaid.com](http://www.brassbandaid.com)>

<sup>192</sup> The Brazz Brothers are a Norwegian jazz group particularly known for their improvisations and use of folk music from around the world.

<sup>193</sup> 1999, revised 2005. Kirklees Music. <[www.kirkleesmusic.co.uk](http://www.kirkleesmusic.co.uk)>

<sup>194</sup> Published 2009 by Obrasso-Verlag AG (Switzerland)

Beethoven's 5th symphony'...nowadays arrangers will just arrange the whole symphony. Just do the whole thing.<sup>195</sup>

He went on to explain what he sees as the principal differences between modern arrangements and older ones:

The principal players were always featured in old arrangements and you could get away with a band of five very good soloists and a band of background accompaniment. Nowadays arrangers write for the whole band. They give everybody the tune. I like to give everybody a bit of the tune at some point.<sup>196</sup>

These different styles of composition are illustrated by comparing two different types of pieces, marches and medleys, by Cockburn and Fernie.

The first comparison is between two marches, *My ain dear Nell* by Lawrence Cockburn (CD Track 7), written sometime between 1897 and 1904 when he was bandmaster at Innerleithen, and Alan Fernie's march *The Granites* (CD Track 8), written in 2000 for the same band. They are both written for almost the same instrumentation except that *The Granites* includes separate parts for flugel horn and percussion. If there was a flugel horn at St. Ronan's band in the 1890s it would have doubled the repiano cornet part, but as the band accounts show that they purchased a flugel horn in 1903 they probably did not have one when *My ain dear Nell* was written. At that time the only percussion would have been a bass drum and this would also be normal today when a band is playing whilst marching or out of doors, but the score for *The Granites* also includes percussion parts for side drum, cymbals, triangle and glockenspiel that would be included for a concert performance.

*My ain dear Nell* (Figs. 2.5 and 6.6) is a traditional Border march from a song originally written by Alexander Hume (1811-1859). It has many traditional march features being in traditional march tempo of 2/4 time and beginning with a traditional eight-bar introduction. It is in ternary form with a Trio section in the middle, the first

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<sup>195</sup> Interview with Alan Fernie. 28/04/2010. SA2010.33

Arrangements of complete symphonies may not be such a totally new thing as Alan Fernie suggests because Trevor Herbert's investigations into the repertory of the Cyfarthfa Band in South Wales showed that, unusually, the band had arrangements of whole symphonies in their repertory in the nineteenth century (Herbert 1990:119).

<sup>196</sup> Interview with Alan Fernie. 28/04/2010. SA2010.33

section then played again as a *da capo* repeat. Like many traditional military-style marches it begins in a major key, modulating to the subdominant key for the Trio section. In *My ain dear Nell* all the instruments play continuously throughout and, as in many old marches, the solo cornet plays the tune in the first section with the euphonium providing a counter-melody.



Fig. 6.6. Printed solo cornet part of ‘My ain Dear Nell’ by Lawrence Cockburn

The solo horn and trombones provide some harmony, but the inner instruments play little except off-beat quavers usually within a limited range of notes. The development section of older marches, that is the 16-bar repeated section immediately before the Trio; this is traditionally a bass solo taken by the euphoniums and basses and is usually indicated to be played very loudly against all the other instruments. In the Trio section the melody reverts to the cornets with accompaniment by the other instruments, the melody being from another traditional Border march *Morag’s Faery Glen*.

Alan Fernie wrote *The Granites* in the style of a traditional Border march, but although it has some traditional features it is also different in several respects. Written in 3/4 time it begins with a traditional 8-bar introduction but begins in a minor key. The main tune in the opening section is a cornet solo with

accompaniment for 16 bars which are then repeated. Here Fernie has used lots of unisons and thick instrumentation with many of the accompanying instruments playing off-beats as in a traditional march. The solo cornet and baritones have the tune for the next 8 bars and these are followed by a short Cantabile<sup>197</sup> section before the development. There is a traditional 16-bar development section for unison lower instruments with simple accompaniment by the other instruments that is marked to be played very loudly and this is then repeated. The Trio section begins in the relative major key taking as its melody the Robert Burns' song written in 1795, *A Man's A Man For A' That*, which Alan Fernie does not believe to have been used in a march before<sup>198</sup>. After an 8-bar introduction the first half of the melody is given to the baritones and euphoniums, with rests for the cornets with the other instruments playing off-beat quavers. In the second half of the Trio the tune is given to the cornets and a counter-melody in the euphoniums with a quieter ending before the 'da capo' repeat.

Whilst the two marches have many similarities, there is more variety of texture in *The Granites* with instruments other than the solo cornets and euphoniums having the tune at various times. The ternary structure is the same but the time-signatures and keys are different. This brief comparison demonstrates the many similarities and continuity of style in the composition of the two Borders marches, but highlights the differences in the style of writing.

Comparison of two other pieces, *Scottish Border Melodies* by Lawrence Cockburn (1903) (extracts on CD Tracks 1-6 and a copy of the solo cornet part together with a list of songs in Appendix G) and *Echoes O'er Leithen* (2009) by Alan Fernie also show some similar characteristics, but demonstrate further differences in writing style. (Copy of the first page of the score in Appendix J. *Echoes O'er Leithen* has not yet been recorded by St. Ronan's band). The Cockburn piece, which was discussed in detail earlier in this chapter (Section 6.2.3.2.), is very thickly scored with few rests for any of the instruments most of which play continuously throughout. *Scottish Border Melodies* is in distinct sections which was the nature of a nineteenth-century selection/medley piece, each section being based on a different

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<sup>197</sup> Cantabile means 'in a singing style'.

<sup>198</sup> Informal conversation with Alan Fernie. 07/04/2011

Border tune. This piece uses classical harmony throughout and begins quietly which is unusual, gradually building up to a big finish.

*Echoes O'er Leithen* was a commission by the St. Ronan's Silver Band and Alan Fernie explained that his remit was to write a piece based on the Border tune *Jock o' Hazeldean*, but that his work is an interpretation of that tune which, unlike the Border melodies quoted in the Cockburn piece, is not stated as such<sup>199</sup>. It is in three linked sections, fast-slow-fast, the whole piece being linked thematically and not in distinct sections as in the Cockburn piece. Written in 3/4 time, whereas the original tune of *Jock o' Hazeldean* is a band march in 2/4 time, it is used here with completely different harmonies. Fernie uses the band instruments in varying combinations to give different colours to the music. All the instruments have an important part to play with the tunes spread around the band including two quartet sections, one for three horns and a bass and another for three trombones and flugel horn, which it would have been unusual to do in Cockburn's day. There are no cadenzas as they have largely died out in modern brass band writing. Another difference is that the Cockburn piece only includes percussion parts for bass drum and cymbals, whereas Fernie includes parts for timpani and a full percussion section which is normal in the twenty-first century.

This brief comparison of some of the features of these two works, separated by one hundred years, demonstrates that while there are some similarities, the styles of composition have altered greatly. As Alan Fernie put it "They are from different eras of band music"<sup>200</sup>. In 1903 there was little other chance for people to hear music other than local bands and live performers and there were no jazz rhythms or other more modern idioms that are often included in modern compositions. However, Alan Fernie's pieces show the continuing tradition of including local Border songs in works written for Borders bands.

#### **6.4. Summary**

This chapter has shown how the repertoire played by the brass bands in the Scottish Borders has changed through time; however, it has also shown that there has been

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<sup>199</sup> Informal conversation with Alan Fernie. 07/04/2011

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

continuity particularly in the use of local Border tunes and the use of local place names for the titles of compositions. The repertoire of the St. Ronan's Silver Band has been used extensively throughout the chapter as more information has been available for this band, but their repertoire is probably typical of most other bands in the Scottish Borders when performing for their communities. The only difference would be that the repertoire of bands that competed regularly would also have included test pieces for contests. A limited amount of historic repertoire dating from the mid-twentieth century is still in use today, but the comparison section showed that the standard of playing in the bands has improved over the past 100 years and with bands now playing a much greater variety of styles of music. However, functional music, such as marches and hymns, still play an important part in the repertoire especially their use in the common ridings which will be discussed in the next chapter.

In the Scottish Borders there is a strong tradition, begun during the nineteenth century, of bandmasters arranging and composing music for their own bands and this continues today. Compositions by local composers have always been well received by audiences in the Scottish Border towns and they are an important element of band programmes both now and in the past. In the nineteenth century bandmasters mainly composed for their own bands, although Lawrence Cockburn appears to have enjoyed a wider reputation, but in the present day their compositions are also frequently published providing access to them by a much wider audience. Today, having an internationally renowned composer, Alan Fernie, living and working in the Borders is an inspiration to the local bands and to other composers in the area, with his music featuring frequently in local concert programmes.

## 7. Brass Bands in the Common Ridings.

### 'Hail, Smiling Morn'<sup>201</sup>

The importance of the common ridings to the history and culture of the Scottish Borders has been a theme throughout this thesis<sup>202</sup>. The common ridings are the most important annual community events in the Border towns and playing for them is the most important function of the brass bands. This chapter will outline the history of the common ridings and show how music is integral to the role and function of the brass bands in leading the community celebrations and in helping to choreograph the events, a role that has not been studied in detail before. It will also examine the eclectic mix of music that is played during the common ridings.

The chapter will begin by outlining how the early town bands played at the Border Games in the nineteenth century. These were important in many towns and sports and games are still incorporated into many common riding weeks. As it is not possible to discuss all the common ridings in detail, a case study of one festival, the Galashiels Braw Lads Gathering, has been included.

The generic heading of “common ridings” includes both the ancient common ridings and the more modern festivals that take place in the Scottish Borders every summer. The history of the common ridings has been well documented (Bogle 1996, 2004) and their civic ritual and symbolism discussed and interpreted, especially with regard to the Selkirk Common Riding (Neville 1989:1994). Gwen Kennedy Neville likens the common ridings to “an elaborate performance—a drama, a “street opera”—that has been composed by the people of the town” (Neville 1994: 6). They are rehearsed and performed in unchanging annual rituals, but they are, “not something sterile to be walked through or ‘enacted’. They are genuinely of, by and for the people” (Moffat 2002:364).

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<sup>201</sup> Originally a glee composed in 1810 by Reginald Spofforth (1769-1827). This is the first tune played on the morning of Selkirk Common Riding Day.

<sup>202</sup> Some of the content of this chapter was presented as a paper at The 27<sup>th</sup> European Seminar in Ethnomusicology, Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, 15-19 September 2011. It has subsequently been published in:

French, G. (2013). Follow the Band: The Role and Function of Community Brass Bands in the Scottish Borders Common Ridings. In *Taking Part in Music: Case Studies in Ethnomusicology*. Elphinstone Institute Occasional Publications 9 (Aberdeen: Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, in association with the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology, 2013), pp. 235-253.

The common ridings are performances, carefully staged ceremonies and rituals that are, for the most part, accompanied by music. They include roles for fife and drum bands, pipe bands and brass bands although only the role of the brass bands will be discussed in this chapter. Music has such an integral part in the ceremonies that many towns publish a booklet annually in which the words of the town songs are printed together with a timetable of the week's events and personal details and photographs of the principals who lead the proceedings. Some towns, such as Hawick, Selkirk and Galashiels, have published official town song books which give the words and music of all the town songs for visitors. By playing these local town songs the brass bands, in their distinctively coloured uniform jackets, help to reinforce community identity.

As an incomer from England, I can attend all the common ridings as an observer but I am able to take part in common riding events only through playing in a band. Identity and belonging to a town are important elements of the common ridings and when I attended the Selkirk Common Riding ceremonies as an observer it was obvious to me that I do not have "entry into the mysteries and meanings that the ceremonies hold for the 'true Souter'" (Neville 1994:46). Watching events unfold on Selkirk Common Riding morning my impression as an outside observer was that it was difficult not to get caught up in the excitement and euphoria of the day, but at the same time I also sensed being an outsider to the full historical significance and symbolism that the events had for the many local people around me who were born and bred in the town. Neville holds that incomers cause an ambiguous situation as "the death of the town is always threatened in the persons of incomers", but at the same time "the life of the town relies on them for its economic health (Neville 1994:47).

### **7.1. The Border Games and the Brass Bands**

Games Weeks existed in many Border towns long before the common riding festivals as they are known today and sports events may have taken place at the end of the early ridings (Bogle 2004:70). Games and sports still exist as part of the festival weeks in many of the Borders towns although in Earlston the Border Games and the festival week are still held at different times.

The St. Ronan's Games in Innerleithen were instituted in 1827, earlier than the Jedburgh Games, under the guidance of the poet and novelist, James Hogg (also known as The Ettrick Shepherd), "for the purpose of reviving the old Border spirit and to encourage the practice of athletic sports" (Bogle 2004:145). These Games have been run continuously ever since the only exceptions being one year during the Crimean War and during both World Wars. Originally only for amateur sportsmen, they admitted professionals in 1921. The festival week in Innerleithen is still referred to as Games Week but since 1901 the games have been incorporated into the annual St. Ronan's Festival and Cleikum Ceremonies. Newspaper reports show that the St. Ronan's Brass Band played for the Games in the nineteenth century and, in 1893, when the band got into financial difficulties over paying for their new instruments, the St. Ronan's Games Committee laid on an extra games event in September of that year with all the proceeds going to the Band to help pay off their debts (*St. Ronan's Standard* 13 September 1893). This provides an example of the local community helping the band out when in difficulty.

The Jedburgh Border Games, "for the Exhibition and Trial of agility, strength and science in the Border District", were begun in 1853 in honour of the Marquis of Lothian's birthday and the early sports consisted of running, jumping and wrestling events<sup>203</sup>. Monteviot, the family seat of the Marquis of Lothian, is near Jedburgh. From earliest times town bands became associated with providing music at the Border Games and it is reported that in 1854 the Lauder Instrumental Band played for the Games in Jedburgh. "The Lauder Instrumental band, in their beautiful uniforms of blue with facings of red laced with yellow, were seated on a platform, and lent a pleasing feature to the picture, discoursing at intervals sweet music, which tended greatly to enliven the proceedings of the day"<sup>204</sup>. The following year, 1855, music was provided by the newly formed Jedforest Instrumental Band, the band records showing that they were paid three guineas for attending, a considerable sum in those days, and the local newspaper reporting that "the Jedburgh band of music struck up a lively air" (*Teviotdale Record* 15 August 1855). It was reported that during the Games in 1856, the Jedburgh band paraded the streets of the burgh

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<sup>203</sup> <<http://www.jedburgh-border-games.com>> Accessed 12/07/2010

<sup>204</sup> This is a bill of results of the Jedburgh Border Games posted around the town in 1854. <<http://www.jedburgh-border-games.com/poster.htm>> Accessed 06/03/2010

“accompanied by flags and banners...[and] playing lively tunes” (*Teviotdale Record* 13 August 1856).



Fig. 7.1. Jedforest Instrumental Band leading the procession around the town for the Border Games c.1925<sup>205</sup>

The traditions of carrying of flags and banners, together with brass bands to lead the crowds of people in processions as shown in the photograph above, have continued to the present time, this being an essential element common to all Borders festivals. In the nineteenth century, before the days when everyone had clocks, the brass bands provided a service to the community by parading the towns at an early hour to rouse the inhabitants for important events such as the Games, common ridings or mill excursions. An early report of the Jedburgh Games states that the Jedforest Instrumental Band marched around the streets of the town to proclaim the commencement of the Games Day at six o’clock in the morning; it continues by reporting that the band:

Struck up a stirring air, and paraded the streets to the immense delight and satisfaction of a whole host of small

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<sup>205</sup> <<http://www.jedburgh-border-games.com/1919.htm>> Downloaded 05/04/2013.

boys, prematurely hurried from their beds for the occasion. At half past nine o'clock... the Trades of the Burgh and others carrying banners emblematic of their craft assembled upon the Rampart, and forming a procession, marched soon after, accompanied and followed by an immense concourse of excited and enthusiastic people. (*Teviotdale Record* 12 August 1857).

The band then assembled in the Market Place before marching to Lothian Park to take their place in a specially erected bandstand where they would entertain the spectators while the sports events got underway. The Games Week in Jedburgh appears to have served the function in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of being the principal civic event of the year in a similar way as the common ridings in other Borders towns.

Most festivals still incorporate a sports day, or sports events, such as a bicycle race in Melrose where the St. Boswells Concert Band play to entertain the onlookers as the riders of all ages return. Chalmers Stillie described how the Games in Selkirk, which still remain as the last event in the Common Riding week, are rounded off with the Selkirk Silver Band playing all the Selkirk Common Ridings songs for the crowd to sing to, and “hundreds go there just for the singsong”<sup>206</sup>.

## 7.2. The Common Ridings

A description of some of the main features of the common ridings follows in order to explain the role and function of the brass bands in the events. The common ridings of the Scottish Borders towns have no exact counterpart in any other area of Scotland, or indeed Britain, and they are the most important annual civic and social events in all the Border towns. The Border towns “believe themselves to be passionately and sometimes irreconcilably different” (Moffat 2002: 364) with each believing their common riding or festival to be unique. An outsider would probably notice little difference between the essential characteristics of each of the common ridings, but “the natives of each town believe them to be utterly different, unique to that place, heart-piercingly moving, and almost inexplicable” (Moffat 2002:364).

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<sup>206</sup> Interview with Chalmers Stillie. 09/03/2010. SA2010.28

There are two types of common riding festival. Firstly, those of ancient origin found in the towns of Hawick, Selkirk, Langholm and Lauder that are often referred to as the only ‘true’ common ridings. Selkirk and Hawick can trace their ridings back to the early sixteenth century (Bogle 2002:11) being based on the ancient necessity to protect the town’s common lands. Secondly, there are more modern festivals begun in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Border towns that did not own any common land. The format of the newer festivals bears many similarities to the ancient ridings upon which they are based<sup>207</sup>.

The common ridings can be viewed as “spectacle[s] of music and drama staged through the studied and dedicated work of a cast and production team, calling on a particular inventory of cultural symbols and materials to tell a story” (Neville 1994:5). The format for many of the festivals was fixed in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, a time when there was a vogue for large outdoor pageants (Carlson 1996 [2004]:97). During the Victorian and Edwardian periods it was considered essential for such communal and civic events to be dignified by music (Russell 1997:1)

It has been suggested that it was the coming of the railways to the Borders that helped “to fix the common ridings in Victorian aspic” by bringing many ‘exiles’, former residents of the towns, home each year and allowing in visitors to the region (Moffat 2002:363). This helps to explain why the expectation of the inhabitants and crowds that attend the common ridings is that they remain largely unchanged from year to year with the ceremonies repeated in the exactly the same way and with the same music played at the same point in the proceedings every year. Many of the songs originated in the nineteenth century when the common riding ceremonies were first formalized, so their traditional place in the celebrations has been “frozen in time” (Moffat 2002:363). In Selkirk all the common riding music was arranged by Chris Reekie, the bandmaster of the Selkirk Silver Band from 1880-1916, and has remained almost unchanged ever since. Reekie included two popular songs from the nineteenth century, *When You and I were young*, *Maggie* and *Her Bright Smile* that may well have been forgotten had they not been played in Selkirk ever since.

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<sup>207</sup> To avoid confusion the generic term ‘common ridings’ includes all the festivals and will be spelt with lower case letters whereas the ancient ridings in Hawick, Selkirk, Lauder and Langholm will have upper case letters.

A principal rider, elected by each town's respective common riding committee, leads the event and carries the town flag. He, for the standard bearer is always a man, will be given the honour only once. The election process varies somewhat in each town, but the principals must have been born in the town and they need to be competent horse riders<sup>208</sup>. In addition the principal rider will usually have attendants who ride with him. The young men and women chosen for the honour become role models for the young people in the community.

Being elected as a principal "is genuinely egalitarian. This is not the preserve of the local gentry" (Forsyth 2009:564). Role reversal is an important part of such rites and ceremonies (Turner 1969:169) and Bogle points out that the essential point is "role inversion, where a young and otherwise insignificant person becomes the symbolic leader of a community for a limited period", this tradition possibly stemming from the sixteenth century when 'mock kings' were featured in many ancient Scottish folk festivals and blended with the cult of Robin Hood (Bogle 2002:61). Neville suggests that the "common riding's ritual and liturgical form, clearly anti-aristocracy, calls on images drawn from its antithesis: the mounted cavalcade of riders dressed in the attire of the hunt, the imagery of the military parade and the "tattoo", and the references to the local principals as "royalty" in some towns, and, in others, in terms otherwise reserved for gentry and nobility" (Neville 1994:33). For example, in Melrose and Peebles a young girl is chosen to hold "court" on the main festival day and she is referred to as the "Queen" and her assistants as her "courtiers". This also has links to carnival where normal life is suspended (Carlson 1996[2004]:23) and, as Neville explains, "through the magic of transformative ritual, all the world is turned upside down for one day" (Neville1994:106).

The special clothing and regalia worn by the principals is "one of the most important visual stage-props in the ridings" dating back to the eighteenth century (Bogle 2002:97). Other symbols in use today, such as the different coloured ribbons and rosettes worn by all the principals and also by many local people in the crowds, are used as expressions of group loyalty, marking people as belonging to a particular town and displaying their loyalty to it (Bogle 2002:99). Most towns have their own

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<sup>208</sup> The principal rider in the 2012 Galashiels Braw Lads Gathering, Ryan Mania, was a jockey who went on to ride the winner in the famous Grand National race at Aintree in 2013.

colours, for example, in Galashiels, which was famous for its tweed fabric, decorations and rosettes are in black and white check, the colour of the Border or Shepherd's tartan made originally from the undyed fleeces of black and white sheep.

Neville notes that there are similarities between some aspects of the common ridings and Masonic symbolism. Freemasonry has been well established in the Borders for a long time, with the Melrose Lodge reputed to be one of the oldest Masonic Lodges in Scotland dating from at least 1136<sup>209</sup>. The St. Ronan's Festival and Cleikum Ceremonies in Innerleithen still includes a Masonic procession. masonic symbolism is most noticeable in the use of sashes and regalia for the principals, the carrying of flags and in "the symbolism of death and renewal of life" (Neville 1994: 32). Gwen Kennedy Neville has argued that emigration threatens the survival of a town in the same way as war and that when 'exiles' return they represent a temporary victory over the potential death of the town (Neville 1994:29), their "mother town" being the most important place in the world for them (Neville 1989:111).

As previously mentioned, horse-riding is an essential element of the festivals with the Scottish Borders having one of the highest populations of horses and participation rates in horsemanship in the United Kingdom (Forsyth 2009:563). The Selkirk Common Riding is one of the biggest equestrian events in the world with 300-400 riders of all ages taking part annually. Most participants and riders in the cavalcade need to rent horses for the occasion and this is expensive; in 2011 it cost around £75 to hire a horse for an evening ride-out and £150 for a common riding day. The principals are often given financial assistance towards the cost of hiring horses, especially when representing their town at another town's events<sup>210</sup>. Bogle suggests that the emphasis on horses and horse riding has links to chivalry (Bogle 2004:132), and Neville writes of, "the gallant and godlike figure that emerges when a human being mounts a horse, made spectacular by the processing of hundreds of mounted riders over the hills and across treeless moorlands" (Neville 1994:73).

The common riding celebrations last for at least a week in each town with the main festival day usually held on a Friday or Saturday, but ride-outs and other events are held in the weeks prior to the main festival. Ride-outs are practice rides led by the

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<sup>209</sup> The history of the Melrose Lodge can be found on <http://www.lbis.co.uk/ourhistory.html>. The historic Masons' Walk in Melrose will be discussed in Chapter 8.

<sup>210</sup> Galashiels Braw Lads' Gathering official booklet 2010, p.15

principal and his mounted followers, often visiting some place of local historical significance; however, they can be spectacles in their own right and some require a high degree of horsemanship as in the twenty-four mile Hawick ride to Moss paul over difficult terrain. The riders returning from Moss paul are always led back into the town by the Hawick Saxhorn Band amid many cheering onlookers and they are given special badges to signify their achievement.

Originally the common ridings and festivals were not on fixed days, but now they take place in a strict order during the months of June, July and August each year. This allows the principals to represent their town at each other's events. There are common features to all the common riding festivals including:

- A young man to spearhead the festivities, who is referred to by different names in different towns, such as, 'Cornet' or 'Callent'.
- The bearing of the town's flag, by him on horseback, over a set route of several miles with at least one spectacular and potentially dangerous gallop and often including the fording of a river. He is often followed on this ride out by several hundred local riders.
- The 'bussing' of the burgh flag, that is, the adornment of it with ribbons attached by a woman who also pronounces the traditional blessing of 'Safe oot, Safe In', thus emphasising the dangerous nature of the rides

The main festival week includes dinners, balls and concerts with many 'exiles' returning for the celebrations, often coming from abroad especially for the event (Omand 1995:223). Thus the emphasis on place is not just about what one has left behind to go out into the wider world, but also provides a place where one always belongs and can return to, and it says something about who one is, one's identity (Shoupe 2001:129). References to the returning exiles are found in many of the common riding songs; typical are these lines from the Innerleithen festival song *Raise High the Banner*, "The exiles that lang ower the world hae been roamin', Are a' comin' back to their ain native glen"<sup>211</sup>. This strong sense of belonging to a

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<sup>211</sup> The exiles that long ower the world have been roaming, Are coming back to their own native valley.

particular town or place in the Borders by birth was described by Colin Crozier who was born and brought up in Hawick and learnt to play cornet in the Hawick Saxhorn Band as a boy. Colin emigrated to New Zealand for 30 years, later returning to his native town, and he says that even whilst he was abroad his thoughts had always returned to Hawick at Common Riding time<sup>212</sup>.

The annual order of the common ridings in each of the Border towns is fixed and is given in the table below with the title given to the principal rider whose responsibility it is to carry the burgh flag (Fig 7.2.).

Hawick Common Riding	Thursday, Friday and Saturday after the first Monday in June	The Cornet
Selkirk Common Riding	Friday after the second Monday in June	The Royal Burgh Standard Bearer
Melrose The Melrose Festival	Third full week in June	The Melrosian
Peebles Beltane Festival	Third full week in June	The Cornet
Galashiels Braw Lads Gathering	End of June, sometimes ending the first week in July	The Braw Lad
Jedburgh Callents Festival	Ends second Sunday in July	The Jethart Callent
Duns Reivers Week	First full week in July	The Duns Reiver
Kelso Civic Week	Middle of July	The Kelso Laddie
Langholm Common Riding	Last Friday in July	The Cornet
Lauder Common Riding	Ends first Saturday in August	The Cornet
Coldstream Civic Week	First full week in August	The Coldstreamer

Fig 7.2 Table showing the annual order of the common ridings

<sup>212</sup> Interview with Colin Crozier. 20/03/2010. SA 2010.31

Community pride in the individuality of each town is fierce throughout the Borders with inter-town rivalry still sometimes exhibited openly at the time of the annual common ridings, as it is on the local rugby pitches; however, at the same time friendship is observed between towns with the principals visiting each other's celebrations. The burgh or town flags have a central role in the proceedings and are treated with great reverence, generally being stored in the burgh chambers during the rest of the year. 'Safe oot, safe in' is the traditional cry when these flags, carried by the principals on horseback and followed by hundreds of riders, leave the town on the common riding day. This cry is given as these rides often involve fording a river or a steep chase uphill and accidents have happened in the past. As the riders pass through the crowds at common riding events they shout "Hoorah" to each other.

The common ridings are traditionally male-dominated events. In Selkirk dinners are held by the various guilds at which rowdy choruses are sung by those present (Neville 1994:34) and in Hawick the men meet in a hut outside the town to drink and sing songs. Although women are now allowed to take part in the ride-outs in Hawick this has caused controversy in the past.

The participation of women in the Common Riding became an issue in 1988 when Mrs Myra Turnbull...became Hawick's first female provost...[and] her official role in some Common Riding events created problems, as these events were traditionally for men only. In particular, the provost was expected to chair a gathering in the St. Leonard's Hut, a barn outside of Hawick where riders gather at the Common Riding to sing songs and drink together. Those involved say it is the highlight of the day, although like a rugby club dinner, 'it is no place for a lady'. As one man put it in 1990: 'Everybody likes Myra, but the Hut is not the place for her. There has never been a woman in there. No way is there ever going to be. It has aye been like that'. Thus despite her position, Mrs Turnbull was forced to wait outside the building until the men had finished. (Bogle 2002: 510)

The controversy raged on for several years, with traditionalist women as much opposed to women riding as the men themselves. Eventually, in 1996, agreement was reached that women could join the ride-outs in Hawick during the festival week but they were not allowed to follow the Cornet on Common Riding Friday, the main event of the week in Hawick and the singing of songs and speeches in St. Leonard's

Hut would remain a male preserve, conditions that remain to this day. As Bogle has remarked, “The dispute shows that the traditional customs like the ridings, which originated in the days when sex roles were more strictly defined than today, do not always fit comfortably with the standards of modern liberal society” (Bogle 2002:54). Strongly-felt divisions can arise within the close Borders communities over any proposed changes to these highly traditional events.

The local newspapers keep the wider Borders community in touch with all the events each week during the common riding season. They produce special supplements for each of the common riding weeks. Interviews with the principals proclaim that it is the greatest week of their lives. The out-going Standard bearer in Innerleithen in 2012 said, “I’ve enjoyed it – the best week of my life...I was thrilled to be asked. I always said if I was asked, no matter what was going on in my life, I couldn’t refuse” (*Southern Reporter* 26 July 2012).



Fig. 7.3. A selection of Common Riding souvenir pages from the ‘Border Telegraph’ newspaper<sup>213</sup>

<sup>213</sup> *Border Telegraph*. 27 June 2012; 4 July 2012; 22 June 2011; 8 August 2012; 3 August 2011.

### 7.2.1. The ancient ridings

The four ancient or ‘real’ common ridings, held in the towns of Hawick, Selkirk, Langholm and Lauder, can trace their origins dating back to at least the sixteenth century and probably earlier (Bogle 2004:9). In chapter 3 it was discussed how, until the seventeenth century, the burgesses of the Border towns had to defend their huge common land with its associated grazing against encroachment by neighbouring lairds (or landowners). Whereas Hawick and Selkirk have unbroken common riding traditions, the tradition in Lauder was broken but subsequently revived in 1911 for the coronation of King George V after a gap of 80 years (Bogle 2004:11). Seven men from Selkirk were responsible for arranging the new ceremonies in Lauder, and as Lauder has no brass band, the Selkirk Silver Band plays for this event, playing many of the same tunes that are played for the Selkirk Common Riding<sup>214</sup>.

In its present form the Common Riding in Langholm dates from 1759 when it began after a legal dispute about land ownership on the outskirts of the town, although the riding of the boundaries on horseback was not carried out until 1816. It has been described as “the most idiosyncratic and eccentric of the Scottish Ridings” (Bogle 2004:161). It begins early on the last Friday in July each year, and the Langholm Fair, which predates the Common Riding, has been incorporated into it, and is still proclaimed by a crier standing on the back of a horse. In his study of Scotland’s Common Ridings, Bogle (2004) believes that the Langholm Common Riding has much more in common with medieval fairs and the original style of common riding than those in other Border towns. The procession in Langholm includes the carrying of four unique emblems:

- The Barley Bannock and Salted Herring. A signifier of the Duke of Buccleuch’s rights in the mills and fisheries.
- A Spade. Used for cutting turf during the ceremonies to mark the boundaries.
- A Gigantic Thistle. Possibly a symbol of Scotland or a prickly warning to potential troublemakers.
- A floral crown. Possibly a symbol of royalty. (Bogle 2004: 161)

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<sup>214</sup> Interview with Chalmers Stille. 09/03/2010. SA2010.28

In the nineteenth century the mill owners in the Border towns helped to institutionalise the common riding celebrations by setting aside holiday for their workers on common riding days (Moffat 2002: 484). This would have provided a welcome break from the hard reality of everyday life. Time off from work would have been rare in the nineteenth century and the fairs and horse racing associated with common riding days enabled the working classes to engage in these activities. Today travelling fairgrounds still visit each of the Border towns in turn during the festival weeks. Horse racing has also long been part of the common riding festivities. In Peebles there was horse racing at the Beltane fair in the seventeenth century (Bogle 2004:70) and in Hawick and Selkirk special horse racing events are still included as part of the common ridings. In the early years of the Braw Lads Gathering (in the 1930s) there was also horse racing in Galashiels. Race meetings were social as well as sporting occasions, with side-shows, music and dancing. Today there is still a culture of eating and drinking with friends, relations and those who have returned for the common ridings. Drunkenness has always been feature, with the pubs opening early and staying open until late. Today the shops close and children are given a day off school as normal life is suspended for a day, “inverting the orderly everyday burgh life into a world of carnival-like excesses of drama and feasting” (Neville1994:73).

#### 7.2.2. The more modern festivals

The more modern festivals are held in towns which had no common land. These more modern Border festivals appear old by being based on the same formula as the ancient ridings and deliberately referring to historic events in the town’s past. Their format is similar to the older festivals and includes ride-outs, the formal election of principals and a week of events culminating in a festival day. Once instituted these more modern festivals have changed very little and this continuity and tradition makes them feel older than they really are. A visitor to the Borders would find it hard to distinguish between the ancient and more modern ridings as they retain many of the same features, and they engender the same loyalty and civic pride as do the older festivals.

Two of these modern festivals, the Beltane Festival in Peebles and the St Ronan's Border Games and Cleikum Ceremonies in Innerleithen, date from the period between 1870 and 1914 which Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) describe as a time of 'invented traditions'. In fact both of these drew on earlier festivals. In the sixteenth century Peebles Beltane Fair was an important social event that even attracted royal visitors, but the riding of the Marches there died out in the late eighteenth century. When the new Beltane Festival was instituted in 1897 for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee new ride-outs to Neidpath castle and other local places were included. The festival revived the ancient medieval summer fair by giving important roles in the main ceremony to local children, with the Beltane Queen holding 'court'.

The role of children in some of the more modern festivals was mentioned above, although these festivals still include adults as principals to carry the town flag and lead the ride-outs. The St. Ronan's Border Games and Cleikum Ceremonies in Innerleithen, was started in 1901 and merged with the older Games Week. Festival day includes the Cleikum Ceremony that was designed to familiarise the youth of the town with the legend of St. Ronan, the patron saint of Innerleithen, and the principal role in the ceremony is given to the dux boy of the local primary school<sup>215</sup>. This festival has some unusual features including a Masonic procession as already mentioned, and it concludes with the burning of an effigy of the Devil on a nearby hill in the evening. The Melrose Festival also involves local children with a festival queen and her attendants chosen from the local primary school; she is 'crowned' at the principal ceremony of the week which takes place in Melrose Abbey.

During the period between the two World Wars three more festivals were instituted, of which the most important was in Galashiels, the second largest town in the Borders. This will be discussed in detail as a case study later in this chapter. Kelso created its Civic Week in 1937, and Melrose instituted the Summer Festival in 1938 although here ride-outs were not included until the 1960s. These festivals include ride-outs to historic local places such as Floors Castle, the home of the Duke of Roxburgh near Kelso, and to Trimontium, the site of a Roman fort near Melrose.

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<sup>215</sup> A title given to the top student in academic and sporting achievement.

Almost all the common ridings and festivals ceased during the Second World War and were reinstated in 1946. Selkirk was the exception with the Common Riding continuing on a much reduced scale throughout the war. Jedburgh Callents Festival, begun in 1947, “was intended to be more community orientated than the [ancient] common ridings. For example it doesn’t ride the Marches, its rides visit places and events which are important to Jedburgh”<sup>216</sup>. After the War even more festivals were begun; the Duns Reiver’s Week started in 1949 and Coldstream Civic Week in 1952.

### **7.3. Brass Bands and the Common Riding Music**

It is believed that musicians, probably flute and drum bands, took part in the early ridings of the sixteenth century as it is known that this type of band existed in the Borders at that time (Bogle 2004:65). In the nineteenth century brass and pipe bands were introduced with the common ridings and festivals including integral roles for all three different types of musical group. In Hawick the Drum and Fife Band wakes the citizens early for the day’s festivities, whilst in Selkirk the Flute Band performs the same function. Nowadays each type of band has its own carefully orchestrated part to play in the ceremonies. Playing for the common riding events means that the brass bands are always playing out of doors, in all weathers, and it involves a lot of marching, therefore the necessary music is contained in the band’s march books which are carried on the instruments.

The brass bands have many functions in the common ridings. Principally they add suitable music to the ceremonies, much of it being individual and distinctive to each town, and, as already mentioned, they help to choreograph the whole event by leading the principals and crowds around the town from one “scene” to the next, thereby linking the various scenes of the “street opera” together (Neville 1994:6). The photograph below (Fig. 7.4) shows the Jedforest Instrumental Band leading the principals and riders in the Jedburgh festival with the crowds of onlookers. This is a typical marching role for the bands. DeNora has shown that the concept of *affordance*, that is music’s properties such as the tempo, rhythm and structure, lead to forms of being and doing (DeNora 2000:170) therefore it is easier to march to a

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<sup>216</sup> Interview with George Burt. 07/09/2010. SA2010.58

brass band playing a march than another style of music; music with a strong beat can determine the movement of crowds, the pace at which they move and where they go. This synchronization of movement is important in shared affective musical experiences (Overy & Molnar-Szakacs 2009) such as in the movement of the large crowds that attend the common ridings where people fall in behind the brass bands. As most of the celebrations are out of doors, brass instruments and bagpipes are the most effective groups of instruments to lead the events because they are loud enough to be heard above the noise of large crowds. Most of the players are residents of the towns so the bands comprise interest groups within their local communities that are easily recognisable through their uniforms (Neville 1994:90).



Fig. 7.4. Jedforest Instrumental Band leading the principals, riders and crowds at the 2012 Jedburgh Callents Festival (Grant Kinghorn)

Whilst the brass bands in the Borders are frequently described as ‘community bands’ whose primary function is to provide music for the community, they are probably only visible to the majority of inhabitants at common riding time. As community bands they have a strong sense of responsibility to serve their local communities, especially by playing for the common ridings and festivals. Colin Kemp, bandmaster

of the Selkirk Silver Band explained: “It is very important to play at the Common Riding. To play traditional marches at specific times... We *have* to play these marches every year. It’s expected”<sup>217</sup>. The bands get paid well for taking part in the common ridings, an important source of income for them.

The songs and music played by the bands are often unique to each town so they help to reinforce the identity of the town which stirs up strong emotions in the listeners. Colin Crozier described how strong these emotions are to someone born in Hawick saying, “It’s in your blood, you never lose it”<sup>218</sup>. He described how during the Common Riding ceremonies he thinks back to the history of the events of Flodden and Hornshole which are commemorated in the Hawick Common Riding. Colin also felt that his feelings when he plays in the Hawick Saxhorn Band for the Hawick Common Riding are more significant because he is a Teri<sup>219</sup>.

A feeling of immense pride is extended by the community to their brass band by the inhabitants of all the Border towns at festival time. Part of the euphoria of the festivals and common ridings is generated by the music and songs that are uniquely associated with each town, so that as well as adding suitable music to the ceremonies the bands interact with the local people by accompanying community singing of the town songs. As one interviewee stated, “The towns in the Borders have their own songs which have been written for all the band to perform throughout their common riding at various points...there’s words to them all and most people know them if they’re from that town, so you get people singing along”<sup>220</sup>. The following comment by Jack Harper, a resident of Selkirk, suggests how he thinks the brass band is perceived when playing for the Selkirk Common Riding:

It is often said in jest that Selkirk Brass Band is the best band in the world on common riding morning! Moreover, there are some that would swear that this is perfectly true. Certainly the atmosphere dispensed by the music has to be experienced to be believed. (Harper 1978:3)

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<sup>217</sup> Interview with Colin Kemp. 06/04/2010. SA2010.32

<sup>218</sup> Interview with Colin Crozier. 20/03/2010. SA 2010.31

<sup>219</sup> A native of Hawick.

<sup>220</sup> Interview with Stuart Black. 21/11/2012. SA2012.028

In reality the band probably plays less well than usual but in the euphoria of the common riding day people are not listening in detail to the playing and therefore the perception is that the band are playing superbly well. The bands are marching a lot on a common riding day and will be standing, playing or leading the crowds for several hours, so, as one interviewee explained, “it’s good enough playing, but they are not interested if you’re a wee bit long on a crotchet or quaver so it’s more relaxed”<sup>221</sup> This contrasts to playing on the contest platform or in a concert where accuracy is of paramount importance. Alcohol is readily available on common riding days and this may also affect both the standard of playing and the perception of the people listening.

#### **7.4. The music of the common ridings**

The role of music in enhancing and framing public ceremonies is illustrated in the following quotation:

Publicly celebrated events, in one sense or another of the term, have somehow to be set apart as belonging not to everyday practice but to some special enhanced sphere. Among these various markers music seems to take not the sole but perhaps the leading part. It is almost as if a celebration cannot be classed as such without the framing of music (Finnegan 1989 [2007]: 334)

The music played at the common ridings is an eclectic mix drawn from many different sources including old Scottish Border ballads, traditional Scottish and English songs, local march tunes, songs by Robert Burns, and arrangements of more modern popular songs. These will be very familiar to those who live in the towns or have played in the bands for many years. Whilst each town has its own songs that are particularly associated with that town and are often unknown outside it, there are also items common to many of the ridings. The lyrics of the songs extol the towns, their history and the beautiful countryside, with titles such as *Bonny Tweedside*<sup>222</sup> and *The*

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<sup>221</sup> Interview with Chalmers Stille. 09/03/2010. SA2010.28

<sup>222</sup> A Selkirk song with words by James Hogg (1770-1835) a Border poet also known as The Ettrick Shepherd.

*Soft Lowland Tongue of the Border*<sup>223</sup>. This last song, with a lovely lilt in waltz-time, is played at many of the common ridings and describes the ‘exiles’ longing for their Border homeland. The words are written in the local dialect.

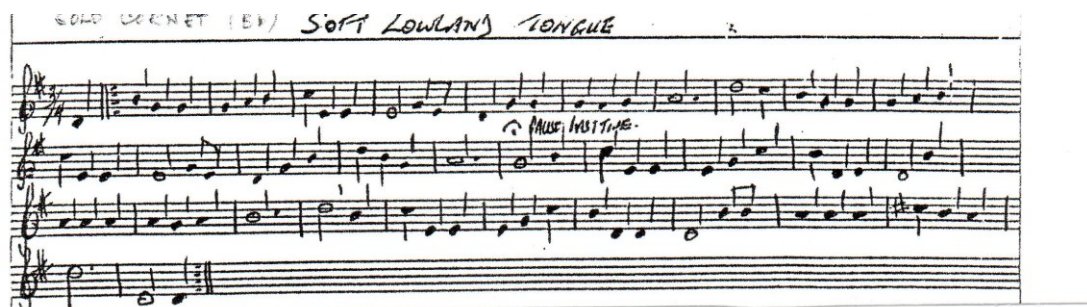


Fig. 7.5. Solo cornet part of ‘The Soft Lowland Tongue of the Border’ taken from the Galashiels Town Band march book

O blythe is the lilt o’ his ain mother tongue  
 To the exile that’s lang been aroaming;  
 It aye brings to mind the auld sangs that were sung  
 Round is faither’s fireside at the gloamin’.  
 It brings back the scent o’ the heathery braes,  
 The sound o’ the wee burnie’s wimple  
 The laughin’ and daffin o’ youth’s happy days  
 When his cheek’s deepest line was a dimple.

Chorus:

What tho’ in the ha’s o’ the great we may meet  
 Wi’ men o’ high rank and braw order?  
 Oor herts sigh for hame and nae music’s sae sweet  
 As the soft lowland tongue o’ the Border.

However, the local songs can also help to underline the differences between the Border towns. One example is the Selkirk song *Auld Selkirk* that begins:

The wee toons on the Borders  
 Are bonnie toons to see,  
 There’s Gala, Hawick and Melrose,  
 To mention only three.  
 There’s one that stands upon a hill  
 Looks down on all the rest;

<sup>223</sup> Music and words by William Sanderson (1853-1945) also known as the Tweedside Laddie, a poet and editor of the *The Border Magazine*.

And that's oor ain dear Selkirk—  
The toon we lo'e the best.<sup>224</sup>

Some common riding airs are very old, for example, the Hawick song *Teribus* (Fig. 7.6). The Hawick slogan, “Teribus ye Teriodin”, comes from the chorus of this song and the war-like tramp of the music and its simple formation are said to be evidence of its antiquity<sup>225</sup>.

**Teribus**

Words by  
**JAMES HOGG**  
(1750-1898)

MUSIC  
TRADITIONAL

♩ Risoluto

1. Sco - tia felt thine ire, O O - din; On the blood-y Field of Flod-den;  
2. 'Twas then Drum-lan-rig, gen'-rous don-or, Gave, (im-mor-tal be his ho - nour)

There our fa - thers fell with hon - our, Round their King and Coun - try's ban - ner.  
What might soothe Hawick's dire dis - as - ter, ' Land for til - lage, peats and pas - ture.

CHORUS

Ter - i - bus ye Te - ri - o - din, Sons of he - roes slain at Flod - den,  
Hawick was ev - er in - de - pen - dent! Hawick was ev - er in - de - pen - dent!

basso marcato

Im - i - ta - ting Bor - der bow - men, Aye de - fend your rights and Com - mon.  
Down to lat - est a - ges send it, - Hawick was ev - er in - de - pen - dent!

D<sup>8</sup>

The "Hawick Song Collection"

Fig. 7.6. Hawick Common Riding Song ‘Teribus’<sup>226</sup>

<sup>224</sup> Words and melody by J. T. Stoddart. From Souter, J. 1990. *Selkirk Common Riding Songs*. Selkirk: Walter Thomson.

<sup>225</sup> John W. Kennedy. *Our Common-Riding Airs*. Hawick Archaeological Society Transactions. 1915. p.5-7. This article states that the slogan “is really a prayer to Tyr, the war god, and Odin, the father god of the Scandinavian mythology, and in Icelandic the purest form of the Northern tongue reads as follows:

“Tyr hjalp osss  
Boedi Tyr ok odinn”

(Tyr help us, both Tyr and Odin.) Bus is clearly a corruption and it can easily be understood the people repeating for generations words of which they know not the meaning would run them together.”

<sup>226</sup> From *The Hawick Songs* 1957, arranged by Adam L Inglis, sponsored by the Hawick Callents Club.

Another popular old Hawick song, *Pawkie Paiterson's Auld Grey Yaud*<sup>227</sup>, is unusual as it is about a talking horse on its way to the slaughterhouse. The common riding songs are taught in the schools and homes of the Border towns so that when the celebrations come round each year they are well-known, and they are sung with enthusiasm by old and young.

For the benefit of visitors the words of the songs are printed in the annual common riding booklets that are produced in many of the towns. Some brass bands have produced recordings of their town's common riding music, for example, in 2005 Selkirk Silver Band produced a CD of all the music they play on the Selkirk Common Riding day<sup>228</sup>.

Playing in the brass band for the common riding festivals is perceived by the members of the band as very different from playing in the band for other events. Graham Fraser, a member of the Jedforest Instrumental Band, described how he felt about playing for the Jedburgh Callents Festival:

Playing for the festival is a quite different experience from playing for concerts and contests. It is in the open air. It involves marching, in all conditions. The band is often augmented by younger and older players, and others who are around for the festival...The music we play is more 'popular' including numbers with the pipe band which are extremely unchallenging for the brass band. Some drinking is involved. There is also a real feeling of playing for the community to which you belong.<sup>229</sup>

He went on to say that taking part in the festival is an integral part of being in the band which allows him, as an incomer, to be much more involved with the community than he would otherwise be on a purely social basis. Graham still sees himself as an incomer in Jedburgh although he is Scottish by birth and has lived there for many years and he and his family play in the town band. Graham's comments

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<sup>227</sup> John Ballentyne (lyrics) and Adam Grant 1859-1938 (composer)

<sup>228</sup> *The Souters: A Common Riding Celebration*. Selkirk. Silver Band conducted by Richard Duff. 2005 Big Sky Studios. Compact Disc. BIG SKY 120.

<sup>229</sup> A written answer to me from Graham Fraser, 24 July 2009, in response to a question about playing in the Jedburgh common riding.

also show how the band is augmented at this time by those who have left the town but have returned for the festival and they are able to take part and play in the band.

#### 7.4.1. Some Selkirk Common Riding Music

Selkirk is probably the most famous of the ancient common ridings. Some of the music is very old and the Selkirk Silver Band has an important role in the event. The evening before Selkirk Common Riding day, known locally as ‘the Nicht afore the Morn’, two processions leave from the market square and march around the streets marking the boundary of the oldest part of the town. First the flute band leads the assembled crowd around the streets and when they return to the market place the brass band then leads the crowds around the same route again. (Photograph in Appendix K). Everyone joins in, falling in behind the bands, linking arms and singing the songs which include the Robert Burns’ song *Auld Lang Syne* (often translated as ‘for old time’s sake’). Also sung is *The Nicht Afore the Morn*, the tune of which was played by the band on its march round the town long before the words, adapted from a poem by David Mackie entitled ‘Selkirk Common Riding’, were added. Neville has discussed how the marking of boundaries, whether of the old town or of the old common lands, is an important element of Selkirk Common Riding (Neville 1994:4).

Early on the Common Riding morning the brass band again marches around the boundary of the old town this time playing the tune *Hail Smiling Morn* (CD Track 13). Originally a glee composed in 1810 by Reginald Spofforth (1769-1827) and often sung at New Year in Yorkshire and Northumberland, this song has become particularly associated with the Selkirk Common Riding and it is eminently suited to the early morning fervour on Common Riding Day. Once the burgh flag has been ceremonially handed to the Burgh Standard Bearer the civic dignitaries and the crowds assemble in the market place with up to 400 riders at the rear. The procession is led to the River Ettrick at the edge of the town by the Selkirk Silver Band playing *O’ a’ the airts* (meaning ‘of all the directions the wind can blow’) over and over again. The words of this song were composed by Robert Burns in 1788 for his wife when they were on honeymoon, with music added by William Marshall. The

hundreds of riders following behind the procession are led by the Selkirk Pipe Band. From here the riders set out to symbolically ‘ride the Marches’ (the boundaries of the old common land), the bands and crowds returning to the town centre.

Later in the morning the crowds reassemble in the market place to be led by the brass band to Shawburn Toll where the band plays and leads community singing of the town songs while the crowds of onlookers await the re-entry of the riders. A spectacular charge is then made by the riders up the hill into the town led by the Burgh Standard Bearer. Following the arrival of the horses, the brass band leads the crowds uphill, back into the town square, for the main ceremony of the day playing *Stirling Brig*<sup>230</sup> and *Scots Wha hae*<sup>231</sup>.

As the band leads the procession back into the heart of the old town the mood changes and *The Flowers of the Forest*, an old Selkirk lament that relates to the Flodden tradition, is played (CD Track 10). The origins of this song are obscure (Harper 1978:3). In his study of Border ballads Fitzwilliam Elliot argued that although *The Flowers of the Forest* is supposedly ancient and relates to the battle of Flodden, “no such ballad is heard of for more than one hundred years after the battle of Flodden in 1513, the earliest known version appearing in the Skene manuscript, one of the most important early collections of Scottish music, compiled between 1615 and 1620” (Elliot 1906:156). However, “The lines of the [Skene] manuscript do not correspond to the lines in staff notation...but represent the strings of the instrument which in this case was probably a ‘mandora’ – a small lute having four strings” (Harper 1974:14). According to the official book of Selkirk Common Riding Songs:

The words of this song were written by Miss Alison Rutherford of Fernilee, who was born in 1710 and was married to Patrick Cockburn in 1731. The musical setting is based on the ancient air and variations published in 1759 by James Oswald in Edinburgh. It is a lament for Flodden, although the name of the battle does not appear.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> This song was written by William Sinclair to a marching tune composed by J. Marquis Chisholm.

<sup>231</sup> A patriotic Scottish song with lyrics by Robert Burns to a traditional tune.

<sup>232</sup> Souter, J. (1990). *Selkirk Common Riding Songs*. Selkirk: Walter Thomson. This was first published in 1910 but the edition consulted was published in 1990.

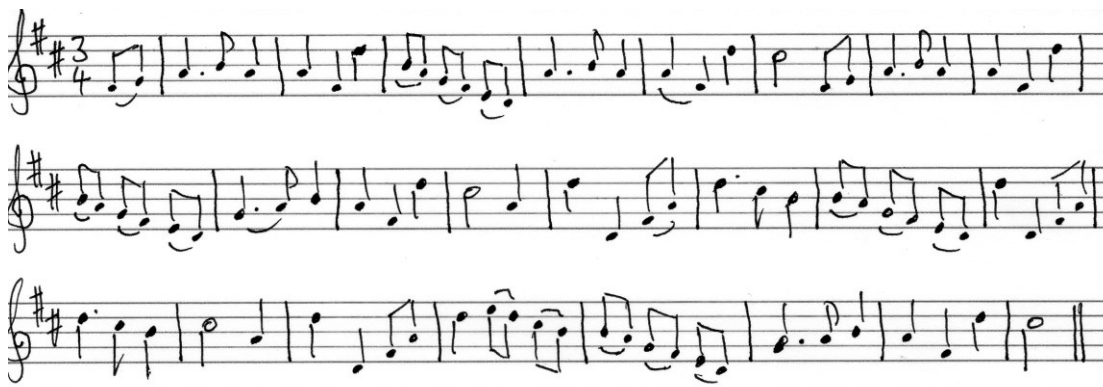
Elliot believes that the verses by Alison Rutherford, and those by Jane Elliot, daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, known as *The Liltin'*, were based by both women on a few lines they could remember of a much older ballad. *The Liltin'* is played later in the Selkirk ceremonies. The subject of Jane Elliot's poem, published in 1755, was Flodden and both poems became linked with the battle (Elliot 1906:157). The last line of both songs is "The flo'ers o' the forest are a' wede away" that when sung at the Common Riding becomes a poignant reminder of all the young men of the town who have died in battle. Jack Harper, a Selkirk resident, described how the playing of *The Flowers of the Forest* at the Selkirk Common Riding makes local people feel:

The Souter listens to the music, visibly moved, turning the words of the ballad in his mind mingling the music with his own thoughts. It is a moment of deep emotion verging on the religious, a sweet sadness that is very personal yet liberally shared with fellow Souters around him. (Harper 1978:3)

To him it is deeply moving both as a very personal experience and one shared by the whole town community.

In the Selkirk market square a raised platform is erected for the 'Casting the Colours' ceremony, a ritual that is unique to Selkirk and the culmination of the Selkirk Common Riding ceremonies. The photographs in chapter 2 (Figs. 2.1. and 2.2.) show the Selkirk Silver Band playing for the 'Casting of the Colours' ceremony, both historically and in the modern day. The powerful Selkirk legend upon which the ceremony is based is that only one young man survived to return to Selkirk from the Battle of Flodden in 1513 in which many men from the Borders were defeated and slain in a disastrous battle fighting the English. He was bearing a captured English banner, but being too weak to speak he could only indicate that the men had been defeated by casting the flag about him. Exactly why Flodden traditions have become so closely linked with the Common Ridings is not clear (Bogle 2004:85) although Bogle suggests that the battle is felt to epitomise "some important chivalric ideals, honour, bravery, truthfulness, self-sacrifice and loyalty to one's superiors, even when it led to disaster" (Bogle 2004:132).

The flags ‘cast’ in the ceremony are the Burgh flag and those of the town’s craft guilds of the Hammermen, Weavers and Fleshers, the Colonial Society representing the town’s ‘exiles’, the Merchant Company and finally the Selkirk Ex-Servicemen’s flag. During the colour casting ceremony the traditional air, *Up wi’ the Souters of Selkirk* is played the words of which are unattributed.



It's up wi' the Souters o' Selkirk  
 An' doon wi' the Earl of Hume,  
 An' here's tae a' the braw laddies  
 That wear the single-sol'd shoon.  
 It's up wi' the Souters o' Selkirk  
 For they are baith trusty an' leal,  
 An' up wi' the lads o' the Forest  
 An' doon wi' the Merse tae the deil.

There is hardly a dry eye in the crowd as the last flag is dipped and followed by two minutes silence as an act of remembrance. The silence is finally broken by the band playing *The Liltin'* (CD Track 14). This ceremony is an example of a profoundly deep and communally shared experience for all those present<sup>233</sup>.

From this brief description of the Selkirk Common Riding it can be seen that the Selkirk Silver Band has two main functions; firstly, the music played helps to lead the crowds from one point to another around the town and secondly, it provides music for community singing. The music was chosen to enhance the mood at different places in the celebrations.

<sup>233</sup> See Katie Overy and Istvan Molnar-Szakacs, 'Being Together in Time: Musical Experience and the Mirror Neuron System', *Music Perception*, 26:5 (2009), 489-504.

#### 7.4.2. Case Study – A Band Perspective of the Galashiels Braw Lads Gathering.

All the common riding festivals are different and it has not been possible to study them all in depth; therefore, in order to demonstrate the diversity of the music used and to expand on the role and function of the brass band in a festival, there follows a description of the Braw Lads Gathering in Galashiels. The bandmaster of the Galashiels Town Band explained that “this is the most high profile week of the year for the band”<sup>234</sup>. It is seen as vital that the local community are kept aware of their own band if it is to survive because, as has been discussed elsewhere, Galashiels Town Band has had few members for some time. The Galashiels Town Band does manage to put out enough players for many of the events in Braw Lads Week, sometimes by borrowing members from other Border bands, although the St. Ronan’s Silver Band plays on the main festival day when a large band is needed to be heard above the noise of the crowds.

The Braw Lads Gathering is the title of the common riding held in Galashiels and, as noted earlier, it is one of the more modern Border festivals. Created by John Hayward, the then Provost, in 1930 to rival the common ridings in Selkirk and Hawick, it was modelled on the ceremonies of the ancient common ridings and has many similarities with them. The Braw Lads Gathering takes its name from Robert Burns’ poem, *Braw Lads o’ Gala Water* that is about a girl who doesn’t think men from other Border towns are a match for her lad from Galashiels. The town is often referred to locally just as ‘Gala’ because of the Gala Water, a tributary of the River Tweed, which runs through the town.

The town song, *Braw, Braw Lads*, was written by Robert Burns in 1793, but based on a much older version of the same song<sup>235</sup>. The tune was played as a march in the town long before the Braw Lads Gathering was begun in 1930. As the principal town song it is played many times during the Braw Lads Gathering week either as a march or a song (CD Track 12). When the song is played for singing only the tune of the song between the two crosses marked on the solo cornet part (Fig. 7.7) is played. The Trio of the march, which begins at the change of key in the fourth

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<sup>234</sup> Conversation took place in June 2009.

<sup>235</sup> Braw Lads’ Gathering official booklet for 2010 p.78

line, is the tune *When You and I were Young, Maggie*, which is why 'Maggie' is written at the top of the page.



Fig. 7.7. Solo cornet part of the 'Braw Lads March' from the Galashiels Town Band march book

Because the town of Galashiels did not possess any common land, the festival ceremonies were based on significant events in the town's history. Like all the other Border towns, preparations for the common riding week begin much earlier in the year. In April a declaration night is held when the Braw Lad and Braw Lass are announced from the balcony of the Burgh Chambers. Significantly the Braw Lass has always been appointed in her own right and not simply as an attendant to the Braw Lad, a move away from the traditional supporting role of women in the older common ridings. The method of electing the principals for the year varies from town to town in the Borders. In Galashiels, until 1962, each of the five wards of the burgh elected candidates and the Braw Lads' Gathering Executive Council, who organize the event, chose the Braw Lad and Braw Lass from these and the remaining candidates became attendants<sup>236</sup>. After this date candidates put their own names forward. Following the declaration the principals join with representatives from each

<sup>236</sup> Interview with John Windrum. 22/01/2009. SA2009.013.

of the primary schools in the town to dance the *Dashing White Sergeant*, a Scottish dance, in the street.

During May preliminary ride-outs are held. The first, known as Spurs Night, is when the Braw Lad and Braw Lass meet the Selkirk Standard Bearer and escort him into the town before attending a dinner where the Braw Lad is presented with his spurs. Traditionally the Selkirk Standard Bearer and his supporters arrive by fording the River Tweed across from Abbotsford, the home of Sir Walter Scott. The town's brass band plays a short programme to welcome the riders back into the town. A few weeks later the Galashiels principals meet up with the Lauder principals in a field known as Threepwood situated at a crossroads about halfway between the two towns. Hundreds of riders follow the principals on this first major ride-out of the year. The Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band leads the two sets of riders onto the field in turn. The Galashiels Town Band provides music for the occasion by playing a selection of traditional marches from their march books to entertain the crowd of onlookers until the riders arrive. When the principals and officials have made their speeches and exchanged presents on the temporary stage set up in the field, the town band plays for the singing of the two town songs, *Braw Lads* for Galashiels and *Jeannie's Black E'e* (CD Track 11) for Lauder.

#### 7.4.2.1. The Festival Week

Like many festivals, the main events begin on the Sunday at the beginning of the festival week with a church service attended by the principals; this is known as the solemn ritual of 'kirking' the young man and his followers which Neville suggests is a symbolic "blessing" (Neville 1994:113). In the afternoon the Braw Lads' Sports are held. Originally the 'Sports' included horse racing, but now the emphasis is on children's entertainment and includes school children's running races, food outlets and other entertainment. Music is provided in turn by the Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band and the Galashiels Town Band, with some items played together. This is the beginning of a busy week for the town's bands. On the Tuesday evening the Town Band is again in action playing for the final rehearsal of the main ceremony of Braw Lad's Day held the following Saturday.

On the Wednesday evening of Braw Lads Week an important ride-out takes place to Torwoodlee. In this ceremony at the ruined Old Tower at Torwoodlee, on the outskirts of the town, the Braw Lad symbolically digs up a turf and the Braw Lass receives a stone from the Tower commemorating the gift by James IV to his wife Margaret Tudor of the lands of Ettrick Forest. “Sasine is the act of giving legal possession of feudal property in Scotland and in those days it was effected by the symbolic delivery of earth and stone”<sup>237</sup>, one of the witnesses to this being William Hoppringle of Torwoodlee. The turf and stone are stored in the burgh chambers until they are used in the ceremonies on the following Saturday, Braw Lads Day. The Galashiels Town Band plays a selection of marches at Torwoodlee as people assemble and then plays for the local songs *The bonny woods of Torwoodlee*, *Braw Lads* and *Braw Lasses*<sup>238</sup> during the ceremony (Fig. 7.8). On the same evening the Fancy Dress competition takes place in the town and the St Ronan’s Silver Band and the Galashiels Ex-Servicemen’s Pipe Band play for this while the Galashiels Town Band is playing at Torwoodlee. There are many competitors as this is a popular event.



Fig. 7.8. Solo cornet part of ‘Braw Lasses’ taken from the Galashiels Town Band march book

When both events have finished the St. Ronan’s Silver Band and the Galashiels Town Band meet up and join together, but remain identifiable by the different colours of their jackets, to lead the riders from Torwoodlee through the town, playing the march *Torwoodlee* (Fig. 7.9). This local tune was arranged for the band by a previous bandmaster, James Amos, after the Second World War. (It is played from letters A-C when played as a song as in the ceremony at Torwoodlee).

<sup>237</sup> Braw Lads Gathering 2010 official booklet, page 57.

<sup>238</sup> Composed by Graham Howlieson, a local composer.



Fig. 7.9. Solo cornet part of the march 'Torwoodlee' taken from the Galashiels Town Band march book

The Pipe Band leads the fancy dress competitors as they parade through the town and this event has a carnival atmosphere with large crowds lining the streets. In the middle of the main street the pipe band halts and waits for the brass bands file between the lines of the Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band to play together the pipe tune, *MacHoedown*<sup>239</sup>. Whilst most of the music has been played traditionally for many years, this is a fairly recent addition to the music. The pipe band marches off and the brass bands end the parade by escorting the principals back to the Burgh Chambers playing *Braw Lads* as a march.

The thrill of playing in the brass band for the festival and marching down a street lined with cheering crowds the first time is not easily forgotten as I

<sup>239</sup> The Pipe Major Drew Ness of the Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band gave the following reply to an enquiry about the origins of the piece:

For many years I've been trying to find who wrote MacHoedown but with no success. I first heard the tune when Ian Brown our current Drum Major sent us a Video of the Adelaide Tattoo in Australia (circa late 1990's). At the time Ian was Drum Major of the 1st Battalion Kings Own Scottish Borderers who were participating in the event. One of the tunes on the video was MacHoedown played by massed pipes and drums and military bands. I liked the tune and thought it would be a good one to do with the local brass bands so I contacted my great friend Dave Young who did the brass arrangements for parts 2, 3 & 4 - He didn't think there was any brass playing in part. We played it that way up to 4 years ago at which point I had arranged brass parts for the 1st part and have since played it that way.

experienced when playing for this event in 2010. The pavements are lined with crowds who are cheering and clapping and it seems as if the whole community is out supporting the festival.

On the Thursday evening is the Overseas Reception where visitors ('exiles') are welcomed back for the festival. There is entertainment during the evening in which the Galashiels Town Band took part for the first time in 2013. The investiture of the Braw Lad and Braw Lass takes place on the Friday evening when they receive their sashes which will be worn the next day.

#### 7.4.2.2. Braw Lads' Day

Saturday is Braw Lads' Day and one of the principal roles of the brass band is to lead the crowds from one scene in the performance to the next and help to choreograph the event in a similar way to the Selkirk Common Riding described earlier. (Photographs of Braw Lads Day can be found in Appendix L). The Braw Lads Day begins at 8.00 am when the burgh flag is handed to the Braw Lad, and both the pipe band and brass band, playing alternate tunes, lead the principals, and following crowds, to an area known as Netherdale near the river Tweed for the first ceremony of the day. The Town Band's first march is always *Braw Lads*. Situated in Netherdale is the Raid Stane (stone) that commemorates the defeat of an English raiding party in 1337 by men of the town when the English soldiers were found hiding in a grove eating 'sour plums'. In the ceremony sprigs of plum tree are ceremonially pinned to the principal men by their 'lasses'. At the end of the ceremony as the Braw Lad, Lass and their Attendants walk back to their horses from the Raid Stane ready for the main ride of the day the brass band plays *Braw Lads* as a song.

There follows a ride-out led by the Braw Lad and Lass and their attendants together with hundreds of mounted followers. This ride includes fording the river Tweed to visit Abbotsford, the home of Sir Walter Scott, commemorating the close relations that existed between Sir Walter Scott and the Burgh of Galashiels (Fig. 7.10). The river is then forded again before a strenuous ride out over the hills back to the town for the main ceremony of the day, the Ceremony of the Roses, at the old town cross.



Fig. 7.10. Riders fording the River Tweed at Abbotsford 2012 (Grant Kinghorn)

The ceremony commemorates the marriage of James IV of Scotland to Margaret Tudor of England that is known as the marriage of the Thistle and the Rose<sup>240</sup>. The Pipe Band and St. Ronan's Silver Band, who have led the crowds back into the town, play a short programme together on arrival at the town cross, the music of which varies. The carefully crafted principal ceremony of the day takes place on a specially erected dais in front of the old town cross which is elaborately decorated with flowers for the event. During the ceremony, which takes place in slow motion, the Braw Lass mixes red and white roses, representing Lancaster and York and places them in a bed of thistles while the Town Band plays *The Lass of Richmond Hill* over and over again during the poignant ceremony. *The Lass of Richmond Hill* is example of a well-known English song which has been incorporated into the festival music of a Border town. The tune was written by James Hook (1746-1827) and the words, by Leonard McNally are in honour of a lady in Richmond, Yorkshire. It was probably chosen to be played at this point in the ceremony as it extols the virtues of a 'lass' and the Braw Lass has the central role. In the last part of the ceremony the charter

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<sup>240</sup> Their marriage led directly to the Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland in 1603.

creating Galashiels as a Burgh of Barony is read out. This title was granted to a local landowner giving him the right to hold weekly markets in the town.

Marching away from Auld Toon Cross to Scott Park Gates, the Silver Band plays *The Happy Wanderer*<sup>241</sup> as a march. John Windrum, who played in the Galashiels Town Band for over 60 years, explained that at first there was no set tune at this point, but one year this tune was played and it stuck<sup>242</sup>. On arrival at Scott Park gates the brass band and pipe band play again entertain the crowds with a short programme of music, usually including *Braw Lasses* and *The Soft Lowland Tongue of the Border*. Meanwhile, all the riders who took part in the earlier ride-out have assembled in the near-by park and, led by the Braw Lad and Braw Lass and their attendants, they charge out of the park gates and through the streets of the town, including a spectacular charge up a hill.

Once all the riders have departed the band marches away from Scott Park gates down St. John's Street to Albert Place playing the local march *Torwoodlee* (Fig.7.9). The band are followed by the Braw Lad's Gathering officials and the onlookers who make their way linking arms and following the band to the town's war memorial for an act of homage, the final ceremony of the day.

At the town's war memorial The Braw Lad, alone, on horseback, dips the town flag at the War Memorial while a piper plays a lament. Two verses of the hymn 'O God of Bethel', to the tune *Salzburg*, are played before two minutes silence is observed in remembrance of all those from the town who have died in battle. Following the *National Anthem* the Braw Lad returns the flag to the burgh chambers and the band marches off to *Braw Lads*.

The Braw Lads Gathering week ends on the Sunday with a short service at Gala Aisle, the site of the ancient parish church of the town, and here the Braw Lad and Braw Lass are presented with Bibles. The church services at the beginning and end of the week underline the chivalric ideals which are ascribed to the principals and they in turn are reminded of the example they give to the young people of the community.

From this description of the Galashiels Braw Lads Gathering it can be seen that music plays an integral part of the ceremonies. As in many Border towns the brass

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<sup>241</sup> This is a popular song by Freidrich-Wilhelm Möller written shortly after World War II.

<sup>242</sup> Interview with John Windrum. 22/01/2009. SA2009.013

band not only provides music for the events but on the festival day it helps to lead the crowds from one part of the town to the next.

## 7.5. Summary

The common ridings commemorate significant events in each Border town's historical past and historical continuity is of paramount importance with the music and ceremonies changing little since their inception. The same songs and music are played at the same point in the ceremonies every year and this retention of historic musical repertoire in the common ridings, with only the minimum of later additions, demonstrates how they have become 'frozen in time'. The expectation of the community that they will remain unchanged is a trait of isolated areas even in the internet age.

As the Lauder Cornet (principal) wrote in the 2010, "no community can thrive on divided interests, and our Common Riding unites us and reminds us all of our shared inheritance"<sup>243</sup>. All the common ridings in the Scottish Borders exhibit the strong sense of community and civic pride that exists within each Border town, binding the community together in a collective reminder of its history and identity.

This chapter has illustrated the integral role and function which the bands play in providing music for these unique community events. Alan P. Merriam (Merriam 1964) described the different functions of music and the descriptions given of the Selkirk and Galashiels common ridings provides evidence of many of these functions. One of these functions is to channel crowd behaviour (Merriam 1964:224) exemplified in the festivals by the bands playing marches in order to lead the principals and crowds of followers from scene to scene as the 'street drama' unfolds, thereby playing a part in giving structure and continuity to these cultural events (Merriam 1964:225)

Merriam has described how the text of a song can "communicate direct information to those who understand the language in which it is couched" (Merriam 1964:223), and the case studies have shown how the common ridings songs were carefully chosen to help set the mood of each "scene". Merriam has shown how another function of the music is to help to heighten emotions at the climax of events

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<sup>243</sup> Lauder Common Riding booklet 2010:5.

(Merriam 1964:225-226) which is also evidenced in the music used in the common riding ceremonies. When the crowds of onlookers have to wait for the next part of the ceremonies to begin, an important function of the bands is to provide entertainment (Merriam 1964:223). Whether for the singing of the town songs or at the religious rituals associated with the common ridings, the brass bands lead the community singing.

Each town band, dressed in its own distinctive uniform and playing the town songs, is a symbol of town pride. Playing for the common ridings is the most important part of the annual calendar of events for each of the brass bands in the Borders towns, not just during the festival weeks but also for the many preliminary events in the two or three months beforehand. The importance of the festivals sometimes involves co-operation between bands, for example, in Galashiels where the St. Ronan's Silver Band plays because the town band at present is not big enough to be heard above the crowds. Some brass bands play not only for their own town but also for towns which have no band, for example, the St Boswells Concert Band plays for the Melrose festival.

Whilst many of the inhabitants of the Border towns may not be aware of the brass bands for most of the year, the bands become highly visible to the community during the festivals, especially when everyone falls in behind the band as it leads them around the town. There is a strong bond between the bands and the community and the bands see it as part of their responsibility to the community to play for the common ridings. The important role and function of the brass bands in providing music at the festivals has been an important element in their survival in the past and will continue to be to ensure their future survival because brass band music is perceived by local people to be an integral part of the common ridings and festivals of the Scottish Border towns. One bandsman, speaking from his own experience of playing at many Hawick Common Ridings, explained, "That's all they live for year to year. The Common Riding couldn't do without the band and the band couldn't do without the Common Riding. It works both ways"<sup>244</sup>.

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<sup>244</sup> Interview with Colin Crozier. 20/03/2010. SA2010.31

## 8. Serving and Entertaining the Local Community

### 'Round the Town'<sup>245</sup>.

This chapter will explore some of the other ways in which the brass bands engage with their communities throughout the year and play their part in the calendar of local events apart from the common ridings. Many types of event are common to all the towns and the bands, but with some variations from one town to another. Not only this, but they almost never move outside the boundaries of their respective towns or village, except to attend contests, so the title of this chapter is doubly significant.

Ruth Finnegan has described how music is one of the prime signals which sets community events apart and provides “an essential framework for their validation and true celebration” (Finnegan 2007 [1989]: 335) and this is especially true in the context of the Borders as this chapter will demonstrate.

It has been said that:

By the end of the 1890s, there could have been few towns or villages, whether in the remoter parts of the British Isles or even the most far flung corners of the white dominions, where some kind of brass band did not add its distinctive tones to the annual cycle of formal and informal events which made up their community's social calendar. (Blythell 1997:151-163)

This is as true today as it was in the 1890s and this chapter will discuss events at which the brass bands play for the community both outdoors and indoors. This includes playing music for processions and parades, both in the nineteenth century and in modern times and the chapter will show how the bands have carried on certain traditions since the nineteenth century to the present day. These traditions include playing for the Masons' Walk, an event unique to Melrose, and playing around the towns on New Year's Day. Providing entertainment for their local communities is an important part of the annual calendar of events for all the bands and they play

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<sup>245</sup> March by J. A. Greenwood. Published by F. Richardson Ltd. This is in the march books of the St. Boswells Concert Band.

outdoors at all times of the year especially at Christmas and in the summer. Indoor concerts provide entertainment for the community at other times during the year. The annual calendar of events also includes playing for the “ceremony and ritual of public communal life” (Herbert 2000: 89) such as for sacred events like Christmas carol services, Remembrance Sunday and Easter services (for which the bands often receive payment). Whilst the principal aim of the Borders brass bands is service to the community, many of these events also help to provide the financial support from the community without which the bands could not survive.

Much of the information has come from my personal experience of living in the Borders for 12 years and playing in brass bands there for six years in addition to informal conversations with community members. This has given me the opportunity to see the brass bands in action, to partake in events and to discuss with members of other bands the events which they play for.

All the bands are involved in supporting their respective local community events and many types of event are common to all the towns and the bands, but with some variations from one town to another. The brass bands engage with the community throughout the year and mark times in the community calendar. Not only this, they almost never move outside the boundaries of their respective towns or village, except to attend contests, so the title of this chapter is doubly significant.

Dave Russell has identified three different types of listener that brass bands played to in the nineteenth century. These included people who just happened to be present when the band played, for example, at a flower show, secondly, those who could come and go during the performance in the street or a public park, and thirdly, those who choose to go to a concert or contest (Russell 1997:214). It will be shown how Russell’s three categories of listeners still apply to band performances in the local community at the present time (2013).

Most of the chapter is concerned with the present day, but it begins with a backward glance at a tradition in which the brass bands played an important part until recently.

## 8.1. Brass bands in the Melrose Masons' Walk up to 1986

The Masons' Walk in Melrose is an historical event unique to the Scottish Borders which takes place annually in Melrose on St. John's Day, the 27th December, and, as the title suggests this is a procession by the local Masons from their lodge through the town to Melrose Abbey for a ceremony each year. Until 1986 the music for this event was provided by one of the brass bands from the Scottish Border towns, principally the Galashiels Town Band. A list of the brass bands which played each year from 1870 to 1986 has been extracted from the minute books of the Melrose Lodge of Freemasons by the Secretary and can be found in Appendix M.

The Melrose Lodge is very ancient, and there is a wooden plaque in the Lodge bearing the Masons' coat-of-arms bearing the date 1156, the date of the founding of the abbey. The Walk is of very long standing, the earliest reference to it being contained in a Melrose Lodge minute dated 27 December 1745 when it was agreed that all members should attend the Grand Master on St. John's Day "to walk in procession from their meeting place to their Generall place of Randevouz" (sic)<sup>246</sup>. 2012 was therefore the 268th consecutively recorded Walk, but it is known in the Lodge that it took place before records were kept. The Lodge minutes are intact from 1674 to the present day, with the earliest minute book covering the period from 1674 to 1792. The Melrose Lodge was the last independent Lodge to join the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1891<sup>247</sup>.

In the nineteenth century the Masons' Walks were highly visible events enjoyed by the whole community with the processions led through the streets by a brass band, and in the days before electricity the torchlight procession and fireworks must have been an amazing spectacle. There are some similarities to the Common Ridings in that this is a moving procession in which the function of the band is to provide music for walking or marching. It is a public event and the onlookers are encouraged to fall in behind the Masons in a similar way to following the principals in the Common Riding processions.

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<sup>246</sup> From 'A Historical Sketch' by Bro. W. A. Drummond, December 1986. This is on the Lodge website at <[www.lbis.co.uk](http://www.lbis.co.uk)>

<sup>247</sup> Information from <[www.melrose.border-net.co.uk](http://www.melrose.border-net.co.uk)>

Whilst the Melrose Lodge records show which bands have played for the Masons' Walk since 1870, local newspaper reports indicate that brass bands played for this event before that date; the earliest record that it has been possible to find actually naming a brass band to lead the procession was in 1852 when the when the Masons' Walk was "preceded by the splendid brass band from Selkirk" (*Border Advertiser* 31 December 1852).

The St. Boswells Brass Band minutes for 27 December 1898 record:

The band attended the Freemasons ceremony at Melrose, for which they were engaged at £3-15s-0d, after paying expenses the members each got 3/3<sup>248</sup>. The weather being unfavourable owing to wind and rain the playing was rather indifferent, at night, but the Freemasons expressed themselves as pleased with the Band's performance.

The reason for the Walk now being led by a pipe band rather than a brass band is not clear, but speaking at the event in 2009, one of the Melrose Masons claimed that they would rather have a brass band to lead the procession, but that none of the brass bands would do it now. This view was supported in subsequent conversations with several brass band members who had played for it in the past, and they confirmed that they are not keen to play as it is often very cold and it can be "slippy" under foot; certainly there was snow on the ground for the Masons' Walk in 2009 and in recent years. Since 1986 it has become established for a pipe band to lead the procession. The Melrose Pipe Band which was formed in 2000 now leads the procession and as it is the local town band it would probably be difficult to reverse this now.

The two accounts of the Masons' Walk which follow demonstrate the different attitudes of the local community to the event 150 years apart.

#### 8.1.1. The Melrose Masons' Walk in the nineteenth century.

The following newspaper article gives a description of the Mason's Walk in 1858:

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<sup>248</sup> <<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/results.asp#mid>> calculates that £0 3s 3d in 1900 would have the spending worth of £9.27 in 2005.

MASONIC PROCESSION.—The united Band of Brothers of St John's Lodge of Free Masons, Melrose, assembled on St John's day (Monday the 27th) for business, but more particularly to make their annual demonstration by an outdoor promenade in processional order. The first day-light turn-out commenced between the hours of 4 or 5, when the brothers marched up to the Market Place, accompanied by a brass band from Galashiels, playing the tune "Merry Masons". After three circuits around the structure sustaining the arms of Scotland in the Market Place, the company proceeded round Abbey Street, along Buccleuch Street, and up Main Street to the Lodge, where the leader, attired in red coat and cocked hat, and brandishing a sword of huge dimensions, turned around and walked down the centre of the procession, apparently cutting asunder as if by magic spell, the link that bound brother to brother, and when arrived at the farther extremity of the procession, the last came following up first, with heads uncovered; and when the scarlet hero advanced, the advancing couplets moved forward up the centre of the procession, each in rotation forming that clasp of the arm which appears to be one of the characteristics of the order. Between the hours of six and seven the torchlight procession moved off from the George Inn Assembly room, and was undoubtedly the best part of the demonstration, the glaring torches exhibiting in beautiful style the dark dress of the brethren, with the gracefully contrasted colouring of the blue sash, white apron, and blue ribbons. But the most glorious sight of all was the appearance of the Abbey by torch light, lit up as it was all around by the rays of light reflected from between 200 and 300 torches. The effect was most transporting, outvieing in splendour even the best view on a moonlight night. Even the torches were eclipsed by the red, white, blue and purple lights that were kindled at each end of the Abbey. The light burning at the High Altar exhibited most clearly and distinctly that fine rich carving all over the last or Apprentices' Window, and even on the high arched roof those exquisite pieces of workmanship could be seen as clearly as in summer noon day. The band struck up "God Save the Queen" in the centre of the Abbey, and the echo of the music had a very solemn effect amid these decayed ruins, while the appearance of the sable form clothed in scarlet coat and cocked hat reminded one very forcibly of the appearance of his Popish Majesty marshalling his holy train of saints to some grand carnival in his own special sanctum—the abbey. The hero only needed the scarlet slippers to be a complete representation of the Bishop of Rome. A sumptuous dinner was prepared by Mr Menzies of the George Hotel, and between 100 and 200 sat down,

probably feeling ready to exclaim with the Frenchman, *Donnez moi de la viande*. In the course of the evening a ball was commenced, which was continued until well on next morning. (*Kelso Chronicle* 31 December 1858)

In 1891 the Melrose Masons' Walk was again led "through the streets of the town and round the ancient market cross" by the Galashiels Town Band playing the *Merry Masons* and other airs. On this occasion "there was a brilliant display of fireworks. Before leaving the ruin [of Melrose Abbey] a halt was made, while the band played "Scots wha hae" and other airs over the place where the heart of Bruce is buried<sup>249</sup>. The weather was very fine, and there was a large crowd of spectators" (*Border Advertiser* 30 December 1891).

Both the above accounts demonstrate the high visibility and popularity of the Masons' Walk in the nineteenth century and its importance to the local community which can be contrasted with the Masons' Walk that was personally witnessed in 2009. Still a highly visible public spectacle, the only community involvement was the presence of the town's pipe band and only a very small number of spectators.

#### 8.1.2. Melrose Masons' Walk in 2009

This year the Masons' Walk took place on Saturday 26 December 2009 as St. John the Evangelist's Day fell on a Sunday and they are not allowed to hold the Walk on a Sunday. The evening was cold and there was snow on the ground. Twenty-nine Brethren, carrying flaming torches, assembled outside the George and Abbotsford Hotel after their Annual Installation of office-bearers, to make the walk to the Melrose Abbey. The Walk began at 6.30 pm, and was led by the Tyler, (a Tyler guards the outer door of the Lodge), bearing a sword and followed by the "Last Laid Stane" (newest Lodge member) carrying the Lodge gavel. A Bible-bearer normally follows but was absent in 2009. The Masons were followed by the Melrose Pipe Band playing the tune *The Merry Masons*. The rest of the Masons, wearing their Masonic regalia, including sashes and aprons, over warm clothing, followed the band

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<sup>249</sup> The heart of Robert the Bruce is buried in Melrose Abbey and appears to have significance for the Masons' Walk which takes place in the Abbey.

in procession, walking in pairs and carrying flaming torches. The normal order of the procession (starting from the front) is as follows:

Tyler  
Last Laid Stane  
Bible-bearer (absent in 2009)  
Junior Deacon    Senior Deacon  
Visiting Brethren (Youngest Lodge to the front, oldest Lodge  
to the rear)  
Inner Guard  
Melrose Brethren  
Melrose Past Masters  
Provincial Grand Lodge  
Grand Lodge  
Senior Warden    Right Worshipful Master    Junior  
Warden<sup>250</sup>

At the rear of the procession the Grand Master was escorted by the two Wardens, each holding his hands which they continued to do throughout the Walk. They made their way up the High Street to the market cross where the pipe band stood to one side and continued to play whilst the Masons slowly circled the market cross three times in a clockwise direction (Fig. 8.1). This is also known as the ‘sunwise’ direction, and circling the cross three times comes from a pagan tradition connected with market crosses. In the past market crosses were held in reverence and were supposed to be endowed with curative powers<sup>251</sup>. There have been moves by the Masons to stop walking round the market cross, but these have never been successful<sup>252</sup>.

(In an echo of this Masonic ceremony, on the presentation evening of the Melrose festival principals that takes place several weeks before the actual festival, at the end of the ceremony the Melrosian is carried shoulder high three times around the Melrose market cross by his attendants while St. Boswells Concert Band play *Congratulations*).

The procession then reformed and followed the Melrose Pipe Band to the magnificent ruins of Melrose Abbey, with the few onlookers falling in behind the

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<sup>250</sup> Information provided by Alistair Little, Melrose Lodge Secretary, in an email to the author dated 9 January 2010.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Interview recorded in 2007 with the Grand Master, on a DVD *In Search of Ancient Britain*. Filmed, written and narrated by Kenneth Erik Moffat. Not Even a Shoestring Productions, Hendersons Knowe, Teviothead, Hawick, Roxburghshire, Scotland, TD9 0LF.

Masons. The pipe band stopped at the abbey gates and the foot procession went on towards the abbey through the churchyard, over the snow-covered ground carrying their torches.



Fig. 8.1. Masons circling the Melrose market cross during the Masons' Walk 2009

As the procession entered the building, the abbey bell was tolled. The Masons slowly circled three times round the inside of the abbey in a clockwise direction, lit only by the flickering light of the torches and accompanied by a lone piper. Forming a line across in front of the chancel there followed a prayer and an oration given by a Mason from the Provincial Grand Lodge. Each year, the Master invites either a Melrose Lodge member or a Mason from another Lodge to deliver the oration, which can be on any Masonic related subject he wishes. In 2009 the oration outlined the history of the abbey, from when it was first built in 1156 to the present day, emphasising the importance of the part played by masons in erecting such a magnificent building.

Following the oration a lone Mason sang *Scots wha hae* unaccompanied, his voice echoing around the fine acoustics of the Abbey ruins. The Masons, joined by all those present, then sang *Auld Lang Syne* and the *National Anthem*. Leaving the Abbey they again formed up behind the Melrose Pipe Band and paraded back around the oldest part of the town and proceeded to circle the market cross once more before

halting outside their Lodge, where they formed two lines facing each other with an arch at the end formed by two marshals with their rods. The Grand Master and his attendants at the back of the procession, still joining hands, were escorted between the lines of Masons, who were holding their torches aloft allowing the new Master and the Wardens to be the first to re-enter the Masonic Hall. They were followed in turn by each pair of Masons from the back to the front, each dousing their torches at the Lodge door. Following this they made their way across the street to the George and Abbotsford Hotel for a dinner to celebrate the Festival of St. John.

One of the Masons who had acted as a marshal in 2009 confirmed that many Masons come from other Lodges, even from overseas, just to take part in this ancient Walk. He also confirmed that within his memory there had been fireworks, but he was glad that there were none nowadays as they used to get thrown at the Masons by youngsters<sup>253</sup>. Melrose now has a large firework display on New Year's Eve only a few days later than St. John's Day and this may have superseded the fireworks at the Masons' Walk. In 2009 there were fewer than 20 onlookers at the historic event of the Masons' Walk, whereas nineteenth-century newspaper reports mention crowds of hundreds watching the procession. This was explained away by one Mason by saying that some people may have been put off because it was on Boxing Day that year and the weather was very cold. However, later conversations with local people confirmed that many of them had never heard of the Masons' Walk and generally it does not seem to be very well known about in modern times. It is not advertised in local event calendars and no articles now appear in the local papers. It would seem that this historic event has become invisible to local people, whereas in the past it was a highly visible event enjoyed by the whole community and leading it was regarded as a prestigious event for the local brass bands.

The newspaper reports from the nineteenth century and observations of the event in 2009 confirm that the music played, and the ceremony itself, have remained largely unchanged for at least 150 years. The music provided by a band, whether a brass band or pipe band, encourages the Masons and onlookers to fall in behind it in a similar way to the music for the common riding processions, this being a physical

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<sup>253</sup> Conversation between the author and one of the Masons at the Masons' Walk in 2009.

response to the music (Merriam 1964:224). Following the band becomes a shared affective experience<sup>254</sup>.

### 8.1.3. Other nineteenth-century Masonic processions

Similar Masonic processions took place in other Border towns in the nineteenth century and were accompanied by the town's brass bands. For example, the following report of a procession in Jedburgh:

Torchlight Procession – Last night the members of the Jedburgh Society of Free Masons celebrated their annual festival by marching through the streets of the town by torchlight, accompanied by the Jed-Forest Instrumental Band, but the effect was somewhat marred by the gusts of wind occasionally blowing out the torches. The Abbey was also visited by the members forming the procession, in the centre of which they stood till the “Old Hundred” and the “Land of the Leal” were performed by the band, which had a very pleasant effect, both in aspect given the fine old building by the glare of the torches, and in the reverberation of the music through the lofty arches. Entering the Manse garden by the Norman Door, several tunes were then executed in good style...The streets were thronged with spectators during the time of the procession, as also the Abbey and graveyard during the visit. (*Teviotdale Record* 26 December 1863)

During these processions the brass bands were an important and highly visible part of the ceremonies in a similar way to their role in the common ridings today.

## 8.2. New Year's Day – Round the Town

One of the few other occasions today that bands march around the Border towns is on New Year's Day. In other places in Scotland, such as Whalsay in Shetland, it is fiddlers who traditionally play music around the houses on New Year's morning

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<sup>254</sup> How music can control the movement of crowds, the pace at which they move and where they go, has been studied by Tia DeNora; see DeNora, T. (2003). Music sociology: getting the music into the action. *B. J. Music Ed.*, 20(2), 165-177. Music as a Shared Affective Motion Experience (SAME) whereby actions are synchronized to music is being studied by Katie Overy, University of Edinburgh; see Overy, K., & Molner-Szakacs, I. (2009). Being Together in Time: Musical Experience and the Mirror Neuron System. *Music Perception*, 26(5), 489-504.

(Cooke 1986:89). The celebration of New Year has traditionally been important in Scotland and parading the streets is a long-standing tradition contributing, as Merriam has pointed out, to the continuity and stability of the local culture (Merriam 1964:225). It is recorded that as early as 1856 the Galashiels Band paraded the streets of Jedburgh on New Year's Day playing some of their favourite tunes (*Teviotdale Record* 15 January 1856). It has been said that "All tradition is at its best when it is placed within a local framework and so contributes to shape local culture" (Honko 1998:156).

Today most of brass bands in the Scottish Borders do little marching apart from during the Common Ridings and festivals but the Jedforest Instrumental Band March still march around the town of Jedburgh on New Year's Day. They begin playing at 9.00 am with refreshments being provided at intervals around the town by families and friends and it ends around 2.30 pm when refreshments are provided by the Jedburgh British Legion. The music played is Scottish marches and popular pieces and as alcohol is on offer for the band to toast in the New Year if they want to, the standard of playing is not important.

St. Ronan's Silver Band also plays around the streets of Innerleithen on New Year's Day. This is also a long-standing tradition in the town, the local newspaper recording that in 1906, "The Band played 'A guid New Year' around the town on New Year's morning" (St. Ronan's Standard 3 January 1906). The band's secretary, Keith Belleville, described how this is done in modern times:

We meet at the Band Hall at 9.00am and march around the town with various stops along the way at different people's houses. We generally play Scottish marches and when we stop marching we play "A Guid New Year" at every stop. This goes on until around 12.30pm when we arrive back on the High Street. We then play in one pub and the town's three social clubs. This takes the form of around 4/5 pieces (marches, slow pieces, On, St. Ronan's! and A Guid New Year). We finish between 3-4pm. (When New Year's Day lands on a Sunday, we go into the Church and play a couple of pieces as we are usually passing at the same time as the service is on).<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Email to the author from Keith Belleville. 1 December 2012.

Given that this is New Year's morning with an expected late night from Hogmanay, we can see that the band starting a 9.00 am clearly has the function of waking up members of the community, a similar purpose to their function on the morning of the Common Riding festival.

The schedule for St. Ronan's Silver Band for New Year's Day 2013 (Fig. 8.2) shows that the band marches around many of the roads in this small town and they are provided with refreshments at various places along the way. The schedule is given to each member of the band in advance of the ceremony. *On, St Ronan's!* is the Innerleithen town song, which is sung primarily during the festival week in the summer, and the march, *A Guid New Year*, is played for marching around the town.

	PLACE	MUSIC AT THE HALT	REFRESHMENTS
March from	Hall Street	A Guid New Year	
Stop	Mercer Court	A Guid New Year	
Walk to	Traquair Road		
March to	Miller Street (J. Laidlaw)	A Guid New Year	Yes
March to	St Ronan's House	2 Scottish marches and A Guid New Year	Yes
March to	Nursery Park (R. Bean)	A Guid New Year	Yes
March to	Queen Street	A Guid New Year	
March to	St. Ronan's Road		
Walk to	Plora Terrace	A Guid New Year	
March to	Montgomery Street	A Guid New Year	
March to	Princes Street	A Guid New Year	
March to	Chambers Street (John Scott)	A Guid New Year	Yes
March to	Waverley Road end	A Guid New Year	
Walk to	St. Ronan's Hotel (12.30)	4 pieces to be selected plus: Guid New Year (whole march); On! St. Ronan's (to trio)	Yes
March to	Union Club	As above	
March to	Vale Club	As above	
March to	856 Club	As above	

Fig. 8.2. New Year's Day schedule for St. Ronan's Silver Band 2013

This is one of the only times that the band marches other than in the festival week. The repertoire here includes a tune specific to New Year as well as the town song. The sheer number of times that *A Guid New Year* is played reflects the fact that the community will be expecting to hear this tune, whether or not they are aware of this title. Stopping at every street to play the tune means that everyone in the community has the chance to hear it. Additionally, the tune is played indoors to assembled crowds at the social clubs – most likely with a largely male audience – in the town. In the past more brass bands in the Scottish Borders took part in this tradition; Galashiels Town Band paraded the streets of Galashiels on New Year's Day up until the 1980s and other bands probably contributed to the New Year festivities in the same way.

### **8.3. Playing outdoors**

Playing outdoors is the time when bands are most visible to the community. Apart from playing at organised events for the Scottish Borders festivals and for traditions such as the Masons' Walk and New Year parades, the bands are seen playing outdoors for the community principally at Christmas and during the summer months. These are further times of high visibility for the bands when the loudness of the instruments and their distinctive uniforms attract attention (Finnegan 2007:47). In Chapter 6 it was discussed how St. Ronan's Brass Band paraded the streets and played around the town of Innerleithen on summer evenings in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries. This was a common event as many newspaper articles from that time attest, but the tradition still continues today.

#### **8.3.1. Bandstands**

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries bandstands were built in many of the Borders towns, usually in the public parks, so that the town bands could perform to entertain the inhabitants who often sat in chairs around the bandstand. The provision of bandstands in the public parks provides evidence not only of the band providing entertainment for the community and the visibility of the band within the

town, but also local council support for the band as they usually provided the land and funding for a bandstand. The opening of the bandstand in Hawick in 1894 was an important civic and community event with several brass bands present:

There was an immense crowd, variously estimated at from 5000 to 8000, including a number of the present and past members of the corporation and many other prominent citizens. On arrival of the special train from Galashiels at 3.15 p.m., the five bands who took part in the demonstration—Hawick Saxhorn, Hawick Volunteer, Galashiels, Selkirk and the Border Troupe of Pipers—played through the principal streets to the Public Park. (*Hawick News* 25 May 1894)

Local people remember that as children they played on a bandstand in the Galashiels public park until the early 1960s when it was demolished, and it is shown on early twentieth-century Ordnance Survey maps. The photograph below shows the Galashiels Town Band at the bandstand in the 1950s (Fig 8.3).



Fig. 8.3. Galashiels Town Band in front of the town bandstand in the 1950s

The advent of radio and recorded music heralded the demise of listening to a band in a park, although the tradition continues in some towns especially at the seaside. The following article shows that in the early days of the gramophone they were sometimes used together in bands:

During the next week—The Trades Holidays—Peebles Silver Band will render three programmes of dance music at the Bandstand, Tweedside, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. Variety will be given to the band programmes by selection being played on a large hornless gramophone. The bandstand will be lit by torchlight. (*Peeblesshire Advertiser* 19 June 1919)

The bandstand in Peebles must have been demolished at some point as in 1949 there was a move to raise funds for the erection of a combined Bandstand, Roller and Ice Skating Rink in Hay Lodge Park (*Peeblesshire Advertiser* 7 January 1949). It took several years to raise funds for the new bandstand which was eventually paid for jointly by the Peebles Burgh Silver Band and the Town Council and opened in May 1955 (*Peeblesshire Advertiser* 13 May 1955).

Most bandstands in the Borders became unused and many were demolished.



Fig. 8.4. Bandstand erected by Jedforest Instrumental Band in 2005

However, in 2004 Jedforest Instrumental Band began a reversal of the trend and constructed a new bandstand and park to commemorate the band's 150th anniversary. This was opened in 2005 by HRH The Princess Anne. (Fig. 8.4). The bandstand was erected with the help of funding from the Scottish Executive, the Scottish Borders Council, Forward Scotland and the European Union and it demonstrates the Jedforest Instrumental Band's commitment to support their local community.

More recently there has been a move to reinstate the bandstand in Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick<sup>256</sup>. This decision followed a survey of residents who responded that they wished to see the land used for community events such as staging music and sporting events, children's activities, family days and fireworks displays.

### 8.3.2. Christmas Celebrations

The playing of carols is a traditional way in which brass bands help the community to celebrate Christmas. Christmas was not celebrated as a holiday in Scotland in the nineteenth century and the St. Boswells Brass Band minutes dated 25 December 1897 records that, "This [Saturday] afternoon a programme of music suitable for Christmas was played in different parts of the village...Afterwards a splendid practice of some new music"<sup>257</sup>. Until the middle of the twentieth century Christmas Day was a normal working day in Scotland, but as Christmas Day in 1897 fell on a Saturday which was normally a half day, the St Boswells band were able to play around the village in the afternoon.

Nowadays, the brass bands play Christmas carols and Christmas music, in advance of the day itself, in the local supermarkets, garden centres and around the streets of the towns (in a similar way to the Waits discussed in Chapter 4) and this is a good source of funds for the band as well as entertainment for Christmas shoppers. There is much competition between the bands from Galashiels, Selkirk and Jedburgh to be allocated a time to play in the large supermarkets in Galashiels as these attract shoppers from all over the Scottish Borders. Traditionally the bands also support

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<sup>256</sup> <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-16681209>> Accessed 24 January 2012.

<sup>257</sup> St Boswells Brass Band Minute Book for October 1896-December 1988, p. 51.

their communities annually at Christmas by visiting old folk's homes to play carols in the run-up to Christmas<sup>258</sup>; they also play for the old folks at other times of the year especially at common riding time.

The busy schedule of engagements for the Galashiels Town Band in the pre-Christmas period is given below (Fig. 8.5) as distributed by email to the band members. Some players in the Galashiels band also play with other bands and they have to fit in the other band's engagements as well, so in the run-up to Christmas they can be out playing almost every day which, as Finnegan remarked about the brass bands in Milton Keynes, is a heavy commitment at this time of year (Finnegan 2007:52).

DATE	EVENT	PLACE	TIME
Saturday 15 December	Christmas carols at Tesco	Tesco	1 – 2:30 pm
Sunday 16 December	Christmas carols and bag packing at Asda	Asda	12 noon – 4 pm
	Carol Service at St. John's Church, Langlee	.St John's Church, Langlee	Set up from 5:45 pm Meet at 6 pm and be seated by 6:15 pm
Tuesday 18 December	Band Christmas party	Band Hall	Starts 6:30 pm
Friday 21 December	Christmas carols at Asda	Asda	6 – 8 pm
Sunday 23 December	Play at Old folks Homes	Gala Nursing Home Etc.	PM (TBA)

Fig. 8.5. Galashiels Town Band engagements Christmas 2012 as distributed to band members.

Community carol singing accompanied by the brass bands takes place around the Christmas trees in many of the Borders towns. This is usually organized by the local

<sup>258</sup> Interview with Colin Crozier. 20/03/2010. SA 2010.31.

Community Council or other local body such as the Rotary Club and often takes place on Christmas Eve. In Galashiels the Rotary Club organise a big event around the Christmas tree in the middle of the town where the town band play and large crowds attend to sing carols whatever the weather. This is in contrast to the St. Boswells Concert band which plays at the village of Newtown St. Boswells where there is a much smaller gathering of about 20-30 people around the Christmas tree, and this is organized by the local church. As these outdoor Christmas events take place regardless of the weather the bands dress in warm clothes rather than band uniform.

The St. Boswells Concert Band plays for the lighting up of the Christmas tree in Newtown St. Boswells at the beginning of December, an event organised by the village Community Council. A piper and a Father Christmas lead the procession from the garden centre at one end, through the village to the Christmas tree for the lighting ceremony at 6.00pm where there is community singing led by the band; the music includes the carol *Silent Night*, *Rudolf the Red-nosed Reindeer* and *We wish you a Merry Christmas*. Father Christmas distributes a few sweets to the children, after which a few popular carols are then played in the community hall while everyone enjoys food and a warm drink. In 2012 one lady present made a point of explaining afterwards that she knew the band could always be relied upon to turn out to support village events. This band also plays in the Melrose town square during late shopping nights just before Christmas and other bands in the Borders will play for similar events before Christmas. In summary, the bands entertain the community at organised events during the festive season and for this they are usually given a donation rather than collecting money themselves as they do when playing in the street or supermarkets.

### 8.3.3. Summer Events

During the summer months the Scottish Borders is a destination for holiday makers and the brass bands perform to entertain the visitors. In 2012 the Melrose Community Council organized performances by various groups on Saturday afternoons in the town square. The St. Boswells Concert Band were joined with the

Melrose Pipe Band for the first and last of these outdoor performances. Each band took it in turns to play and then joined together for several pieces including the popular tune *Highland Cathedral*,<sup>259</sup> a piece originally written for bagpipes although it is often played by brass bands and pipe bands together in Scotland. On both the afternoons in Melrose the sun shone and crowds of people, many being visitors to the historic town, sat or stood around listening to the bands. The band was given a donation from the Melrose Community Council for playing and this was a welcome addition to the band's funds.

Continuing the tradition begun in the nineteenth century, brass bands will often be called upon to support the community by playing at fêtes and other local events during the summer months. They may also be called upon in the summer months to play for private events such as wedding receptions or funerals.

#### **8.4. Playing Indoors**

Until the twentieth century all band performances took place out of doors, hence the caveat "weather permitting" was added to many programmes published in advance in the local newspapers. Trevor Herbert cites the 1920s as the time when bands began to move indoors and the number of concerts performed inevitably became fewer, were more organized and were mainly attended by brass band followers (Herbert 2000:88). Whilst it is theoretically possible for everyone in the community to experience the playing of brass bands out of doors, the playing of music indoors restricts the audience to friends, relatives, members of other bands and brass band enthusiasts in the main. In these contexts the bands are clearly less visible to the wider community.

One of the main indoor events for the bands is the Christmas concert. These attract large audiences and are often light-hearted events at which the bands dress up and perform seasonal music including carols and songs for audience participation. Many of the pieces of music played at these concerts are composite arrangements of well-known Christmas tunes; for example, at their Christmas concert in 2012 the St. Boswells Concert Band played *Christmas at Last* by Ray Woodfield and *Christmas*

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<sup>259</sup> This melody was composed by German musicians Ulrich Roever and Michael Korb in 1982 for a Highland games held in Germany. Wikipedia. Downloaded 5/12/2012.



Fig. 8.6. Jedforest Instrumental Band Christmas Concert 2011

*Swingalong* arranged by Derek Ashmore<sup>260</sup>. The march *Christmas Joy* by Erik Leidzén is always popular as is *Schneewaltzer*, a traditional tune arranged by Goff Richards<sup>261</sup>. Along with these the St. Boswells Concert Band included two arrangements, *When a child is born* and *Joy*, by the local arranger Alan Fernie whose work was discussed in chapter 6. At Christmas the outdoor repertoire is restricted to carols and popular Christmas tunes such as *Rudolf, the red-nosed reindeer* and *We wish you a Merry Christmas* which are contained in the carol books held on a lyre attached to the instrument; this is because the bands are standing to play. At the indoor events the bands sit in formation with music stands so repertoire music can be played as opposed to just carols.

Apart from the Christmas concerts, each band will hold at least two other concerts during the year usually in the spring and autumn. Great support is given to the concerts held by each of the Borders bands for their own town. As a Selkirk bandsman, Chalmers Stillie, explained:

When I was playing in my younger days we used to have a concert on a Sunday night. They'd be sitting in rows – 20 or 30 people there. Now the hall's full, it's an organised thing.

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<sup>260</sup> Both published by Hallamshire Music.

<sup>261</sup> Published in 1987 by Studio Music Company.

There's a bar and there's tables, so it's just a night out. But the people still have to turn up and they turn up in their droves to be honest with you, and it's excellent, but they wouldn't if they didn't enjoy themselves.<sup>262</sup>

The Christmas concerts of the brass bands are very popular and nearly always sold out but this has not always been the case as the above comment shows and it refers back to when the bands were in decline in the 1980s. Since then the growth of junior bands has reinvigorated banding in the Scottish Borders and audience numbers are swelled by the parents of junior band members.

From the middle of September to the middle of October the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association organise the Borders Festival of Brass.

Sunday 21 September	Hawick Saxhorn Band	Hawick High School	7.30pm
Saturday 22 September	Selkirk Silver Band	Selkirk Victoria Hall	7.30pm
Friday 28 September	Peebles Burgh Silver Band	Peebles Burgh Hall	7.30pm
Saturday 29 September	St. Ronan's Silver Band	Innerleithen Memorial Hall	7.30pm
Monday 1 October	St. Boswells Concert Band	St. Boswells Village Hall	7.30pm
Tuesday 2 October	Langholm Junior Band	Buccleuch Centre Langholm	7.00pm
Saturday 6 October	Galashiels Town, Youth and Junior Bands and Scottish Borders Youth Band	Trinity Church Galashiels	7.30pm
Saturday 20 October	Jedforest Instrumental Band	Jedburgh Town Hall	7.30pm

Fig. 8.7. Borders Festival of Brass concerts 2012

In 2012, the thirteenth year of the Festival, this ran between 16th September and 20th October; the Association Chairman, Alan Fernie, commented:

<sup>262</sup> Interview with Chalmers Stillie. 09/03/2010. SA2010.28

Everyone knows the vital contribution our bands here in the Borders make to the annual Summer Festivals, but of course we play all the year round too! Indeed, the brass bands in the Borders are very lucky in the amount of support and help they receive from their respective communities, and this festival both celebrates and acknowledges the breadth of musical activity throughout the region, in particular, we are keen to highlight the youth aspect of our bands, which is considerable. The SBBBA [Scottish Borders Brass Band Association] is held up as an example of good practice throughout the greater brass band world, and we'd like everyone here in the Borders to know about it.<sup>263</sup>

Here again Alan Fernie is stressing how the small Scottish Borders Association has become important in the twenty-first century as an example of good practice throughout the brass band world as was discussed in Chapter 5. During the 2012 Festival each of the Borders brass bands held a concert in its own town as shown in the table above (Fig. 8.7). The concerts are largely supported by the local inhabitants augmented by the families and friends of band members. Most of the concerts feature the junior bands alongside the senior bands, which, as well as giving younger players an opportunity to perform, encourages their parents to support the concerts. A typical concert programme played by St. Ronan's Silver band at a Borders Festival of Brass concert in September 2009 is included in Appendix N.

As well as providing entertainment for the local community these concerts are important fund-raising events for the bands they run raffles to bring in further funds. All bands provide refreshments at their concerts with several bands running bars where licensing is allowed, for example, at St. Ronan's Silver Band concerts as shown in the poster below (Fig 8.8). The seating at concerts is often informal with chairs arranged around tables in the hall cabaret-style so that people can socialize and drink during the performance in the manner of a club<sup>264</sup>. Stuart Black, a member of the Jedforest Instrumental Band, described the reasons the event is attractive to concert-goers:

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<sup>263</sup> A list of events can be found at <http://www.sbbba.org.uk/scottish-borders-bba>. The press release for the 2012 Festival giving Alan Fernie's comment and the programme of events was downloaded on 20/08/2012.

<sup>264</sup> Interview with Stuart Black 21/11/2012. SA2012.028

It's a nice way to get in an audience. Let's be honest - unless you have a link with brass bands, if you walked up to somebody in the street and said, "do you want to watch a brass band next Saturday night?" they would probably tell you you were daft – whereas if there is that element of a relaxed cabaret-style and you play music they can relate to, and the band's having fun, they're going to come back...I think there's a mix [ of people]...people who play for other brass bands or they've got relatives that play or things like that, and you've also got people in the town who want to support the band and again we are referring back to the community aspect of it where they've come along to support the band.<sup>265</sup>

In other venues where this style of concert is not possible refreshments are provided in the interval. Through these concerts the band can reach out to the wider community. It is what Pitts has described as a "participant audience" as great interest is taken in the music which is appreciated and listened to attentively (Pitts 2005:95). Many of the audience attend all the concerts given by their own town's band, and often attend the concerts of other Borders bands as well, so they are knowledgeable about the music and the standard of performance. The concerts are extremely popular and, where the number attending has to be limited, tickets are sold in advance and many concerts are sold out.

Taking Jedburgh, for example, being a member of the band and have been for quite a number of years, our last concert in the town hall we had about 250 people there...it's not often you see that sort of attendance packed into the town hall I think there were only one or two seats left.<sup>266</sup>

Most band concerts feature their youth and/or junior bands but guest soloists are sometimes invited or concerts may be given jointly with other bands or musical groups as the poster below (Fig. 8.8) demonstrates. In 2012 St. Ronan's Silver Band and the Galashiels Town Band both featured their junior bands in the Borders Festival of Brass concerts and the Jedforest Instrumental Band featured Simone Rebello, a professional percussionist, as a guest soloist at their concert. Some other events take place as part of the Festival including teaching workshops for youth band

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<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

members, and a Slow Melody Contest which has classes for children and adults showcasing some of the best players in the Borders.



Fig. 8.8. Poster for the St. Ronan's Silver Band concert in the Border Festival of Brass 2007

Band concerts at other times of the year may be themed, for example, the programme played by St. Ronan's Silver Band in May 2006 was based on themes from movies. (A copy of the programme is given at Appendix N). The music includes several arrangements by local composers and arrangers from the Borders including Cameron Mabon and Alan Fernie (see Chapter 6). This concert was also a fund-raising event to enable the band to send some of their younger players to the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland courses in August.

Occasionally performances by non-brass groups are included in the concert programme; for example, St. Boswells Concert Band combined with a local ladies' barbershop group for a concert in 2010 and the band sometimes holds a combined

concert with local choirs, both school choirs and community choirs. Joint concerts that include other bands or performers potentially increase the size of the audience; it also adds a variety of musical styles to the programme that potentially attracts different types of audience.

The programmes played at these concerts are usually popular in character and are designed to entertain; therefore, music played is generally some that the audience can relate to. Modern contest pieces which tend to be more specialised are rarely included. Featuring pieces by local composers and arrangers such as Cameron Mabon, David Robb and especially Alan Fernie composers whose work was discussed in chapter 6, adds further local interest. Stuart Black, a member of the Jedforest Instrumental Band, explained that that “they are not only fantastic arrangers but also have a knack of writing music an audience can relate to, and it’s enjoyable for them [the bands] to play”<sup>267</sup>.

The members of brass bands sometimes take part in performances with other groups in their towns, especially the operatic societies. For example, in March 2013 some members of the Galashiels Town and Youth Bands took part in the Galashiels Operatic Society’s production of *Guys and Dolls* when they provided the on-stage band as the members of the Save-a-Soul Mission.

### **8.5. Sacred music – outdoors and indoors**

Brass bands are well known for playing hymns (see Chapter 5) especially at outdoor religious events as their sound carries and they can lead community hymn singing. All the Scottish Borders brass bands are involved with civic and religious ceremonies for Remembrance Sunday. For example, in Galashiels where a large crowd gathers at the town’s impressive war memorial, there is a parade through the town by many local organisations including the British Legion, civic leaders, Cadet units, Boys’ Brigade, and Scouts and Guides, which is led by the Galashiels Ex- Service Pipe Band. The Galashiels Town Band does not march but they stand near the war memorial and play the hymns and the *National Anthem* during the service and then the *March from Scipio* by Handel at the end when the parade moves off. Many wreaths are laid during the service including one from the Galashiels Town Band.

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<sup>267</sup> Interview with Stuart Black. 20/11/2012. SA2012.028.

In contrast, the St. Boswells Concert Band plays for two village Remembrance services conducted by the local Minister. The first is at the St. Boswells war memorial where the congregation come from the church after morning service and are joined by the local branch of the British Legion and the village Guide company who lay wreaths. The band plays only the *National Anthem* and the hymn, *The Supreme Sacrifice*, and in the absence of a bugler the principal cornet of the band plays *The Last Post* and *Reveille*. Later the band plays the same music in Newtown St. Boswells at the war memorial for a small gathering of villagers. In the band it is seen as a very important part of their service to the community that they attend these services at small village war memorials as well as playing for the bigger Remembrance Sunday parades.

Playing for other sacred events will vary from one town to another and from band to band. For example, engagements for the St. Boswells Concert Band include two annual engagements at the nearby ruins of Dryburgh Abbey; an ecumenical service is held at 7.00 am on Easter morning and in June the annual Founder's Day service of the Royal British Legion Scotland commemorating the life of Earl Haig, the founder of the British Legion who is buried in Dryburgh Abbey. These are both outdoor services which take place in the abbey ruins at which the St Boswells Concert Band plays hymns chosen by the organisers and suitably solemn music. The bands occasionally play indoors for services in local churches. The Galashiels Town Band plays for an annual Carol Service in a Church of Scotland church and has also played for morning service at the local Roman Catholic Church. If the New Year's Day march in Innerleithen by the St. Ronan's Silver Band falls on a Sunday the band goes into the church and plays a couple of pieces as they are usually passing at the same time as the morning service is on. Whilst most of the services that bands in the Scottish Borders attend will be Church of Scotland, this demonstrates that they also cross denominations.

## **8.6. Summary**

This chapter has looked at ways in which brass bands play around the towns of the Scottish Borders to entertain and support their communities. Whilst the common ridings make up most of the band engagements during the months of June, July and

August, there is an annual cycle of community events at which the bands perform during the rest of the year, often playing traditional seasonal music. It was found that the town bands in the Scottish Borders provide music within their own town and only rarely go outside of it to play except when they attend brass band contests. The only exception to this is where a town has no band of its own and relies on a band from another town to play for events. This is important in Melrose where bands from other towns have had to provide the music for the Masons' Walk in the past, and the St Boswells Concert Band performs the role of town band in Melrose today for the Melrose Festival week and providing outdoor entertainment in the summer and at Christmastime.

The role of the Scottish Borders bands within the community was summed up by a band member as follows:

The Borders has a very proud heritage that the band is a part of the community, part of the yearly calendar of events that goes on in the various towns; so it's out there to support – although it has its concert commitments and official commitments – it does get out there and support events within the community.<sup>268</sup>

All the bands give concerts in their own towns several times a year and these are aimed at providing entertainment for the local community thereby helping to integrate the band within the town. The brass bands help to mark traditional festive celebrations at Christmas and New Year and often have a heavy schedule of events at this time of year, and they also play for more solemn occasions such as Remembrance Sunday parades. In addition they are always willing to turn out to support any other community events that may arise such as village fêtes.

The repertoire played at Christmas is usually traditional, carols and festive arrangements of seasonal music, as this would be the expectation of the audience. For the rest of the year the music played at concerts, both indoors and outdoors, is often in a lighter style which can be easily enjoyed by non-specialist listeners and designed to entertain in a relaxed atmosphere. Whereas outdoor entertainment is open to all who want to stop and listen, indoor concerts are more often attended by

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<sup>268</sup> Interview with Stuart Black. 20/11/2012. SA2012.028

brass band followers. This close integration of the bands with the annual calendar of events raises their profile in the community, helping to ensure their survival.

## 9. Conclusions

This thesis has looked at the origins and history of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day. The thesis has focussed on the relationship between the brass bands and the community since this is central to understanding their role within the local area. The specific research questions that were addressed in this thesis are:

1. What are the origins and history of the brass bands in the Scottish Borders?
2. How can we account for the survival of the brass bands over the last 160 years?
3. What is the relationship between the brass bands and the communities in which they exist?

Living and working in the area under investigation gave me some advantages in conducting the research, especially having close proximity to the brass bands, the relevant archives and the opportunity to hear about and attend many local events. It also provided the opportunity for informal discussions with many local people.

Learning to play a brass instrument and playing in two of the Borders brass bands, St. Boswells Concert Band and Galashiels Town Band, has further enabled me to understand the world of brass banding from a player's point of view. Whilst other players were initially curious about my research and my motives for wanting to join the bands, I was quickly accepted when it became apparent to them that I wanted to become a full playing member of the band.

In Chapter 1 the existing literature on brass bands was discussed with particular reference to the history and the development of the brass band movement. It was found that most research had been carried out into the origins and history of the movement in the north of England in the nineteenth century, especially in the work of Roy Newsome and Trevor Herbert, but little work had previously been undertaken into the history of brass bands in Scotland including the Borders area. In tracing their history in the Scottish Borders this research has begun that process; however, it should be noted that this represents only a small part of the history of brass banding in Scotland which differed in several ways from that in England. Bands in Scotland are largely community bands founded by working men themselves

and few of them have had direct sponsorship from industry. The large-scale sponsored contests that are found in England, such as the British Open and National contests, are not found in Scotland, contesting being organised by the Scottish Brass Band Association, the area associations or the bands themselves.

Community is a theme that is central to the thesis and one of the findings is the difference between the external, public face of the bands within their local communities and the internal community within the brass band 'world' which is only known to those within the bands. This distinction links to two types of community, identified in the literature, of 'place' and 'interest', which are especially important concepts throughout the discussion of brass bands in the Scottish Borders. Borderers identify strongly with place and strong ties to the town where an individual was born are important, as are local family names and the local dialect; this was found to be similar to Cohen's findings in the isolated Shetland community on Whalsay (Cohen 1987). Community of place is demonstrated most strongly in the Scottish Borders annual festivals known as the common ridings and is reinforced by the local Border songs which are often unique to each town.

In his study of Northumbrian pipers Feintuch (2001) identified how a community of interest exists in musical groups whose members rehearse and play together. A similar community of interest exists within the brass bands of the Scottish Borders. This internal brass band 'world' is often described as being isolated from those outside, however, in the Scottish Borders the brass bands maintain strong links to the outside community through providing music for civic and religious events within the community throughout the year. In turn the bands are supported by their communities and this thesis has shown that this strong bond has been instrumental in helping to ensure the survival of the bands for the past 150 years.

The methods used in this research study were discussed in Chapter 2. Primary sources were used wherever possible including material from individual band archives such as minute books, photographs, old instruments and manuscript music. Local newspaper archives supplemented this and were an invaluable source of information up to the Second World War, especially on band repertoire and performance contexts. From the 1930s onwards, the period within living memory, archival research was supplemented by ethnomusicological methods including oral

history interviews. Insights into current brass band practices and their community roles were gained through fieldwork observation and an important aspect of this study was the use of participant observation to gain an insiders view of brass bands in the Borders in the twenty-first century.

An appreciation of the geography, history and cultural heritage of the Scottish Borders (Chapter 3) has been shown to be important in understanding the communities in which the brass bands originated and exist today. Physical boundaries that kept the area isolated in the past; with few major roads crossing it from north to south today, the Borders still remains largely separate from the industrialised Central Belt of Scotland to the north and northern England to the south. The small towns of the Scottish Borders are well spread out in this predominantly rural area and historically life was very hard. This has led to individuality, strong civic pride and some friendly rivalry between the towns especially in rugby and brass band contests as discussed in Chapter 2. Moreover, the individual identity of towns in the Borders is directly reflected in the brass bands themselves, which serve only their local respective town in the main in terms of function, parading and marking points in the calendar, factors that have contributed to the continuing existence of brass bands in the Scottish Borders. It was shown how the rapid industrialisation of the textile industry in the nineteenth century and its subsequent decline in the twentieth century resulted in demographic changes that have impinged on the brass bands and the communities in which they exist, particularly with regard to the loss of young people.

Chapter 3 builds on the work of Finnegan (1989) in terms of highlighting the richness of amateur music-making within a specific community. However, whilst Finnegan studied the diversity of amateur music-making in the town of Milton Keynes, this thesis has shown that brass bands are one part of a strong culture of amateur music-making in the rural Borders area. As well as the amateur operatic societies that exist in all the towns, mention was made of the pipe bands and flute groups which, like the brass bands, have a traditional role in the common ridings, and there is traditional music played in fiddle and accordion groups. Music lovers who do not play instruments or sing themselves are catered for in several music societies that invite professional musicians to perform at concerts in the area. Moreover,

comparing the brass bands with one another, such as in repertoire reflecting their own town's songs, has shown that every band has unique aspects relating to their town history and different ability as demonstrated in their participating or not in the Scottish Championship rankings.

The formation and history of the brass bands in the Borders was investigated in chapter 4. It was found that there was a tradition of musically literate groups from waits to militia bands and town bands in the Borders prior to the setting up of all-brass bands and the development of the brass band movement from the mid-nineteenth century. Later in the nineteenth century the Volunteer Movement, which was very strong in the Borders, was an important factor in further helping to ensure the survival of the brass bands. As well as discussing the internal setting up and functioning of the bands, chapter 4 also showed their reliance on all sections of the community for financial support.

Chapter 5 looked at the internal world of the brass bands in the Borders. A major theme within the brass band context is that of contesting which is fundamental to the brass band movement, although it should be noted that two of the bands in the Borders opt out here again reflecting the individual nature of each band. It was shown that whereas contesting was highly visible in the nineteenth century, taking place in the open air and being almost a spectator sport with huge crowds watching, it is now an activity taking place indoors that is supported largely by the participants and their followers and families. Additionally, it was found that in the Scottish Borders today the majority of band personnel play in and are loyal only to their own town's band, although players in non-contesting bands do sometimes play in other bands for the purposes of a contest. This was unlike bands in other areas such as the Central Belt of Scotland where players might travel some distance to get to rehearsal and were more likely to change bands to play in a better band<sup>269</sup>. This again shows the close links that exist between the brass bands and their communities in the Scottish Borders.

The external, visible role of the brass bands in their communities exists in contrast to the inner 'world'. A central topic in chapter 5 is learning to play a brass instrument and band rehearsals take place in band halls in each town and, as was

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<sup>269</sup> Interview with Alan Edmund. 16/11/2010. SA2010.59

found in the work of Ruth Finnegan (1989) and her concept of the “hidden musicians”, this is part of the internal world of brass banding that is largely hidden from the majority of the inhabitants of the communities in which they exist. The high level of collective effort needed to produce a group performance, as noted by Blacking (1973) and Pitts (2005), was a characteristic of the bands studied here. Within this community of interest it was shown that close bonds form within bands as the members practice and perform together as a group and playing in a band is important not only for personal musical fulfilment, but also acts as a social occasion.

An important finding in chapter 5 was that the small Scottish Borders Brass Band Association was instrumental in creating a youth development programme for the regeneration of Borders brass bands that then became a model for the Scottish Brass Band Association to promote a development programme across the rest of Scotland. This traditional community approach, begun in the Scottish Borders, is now held up as a model that is emulated in England and elsewhere.

Through investigating some of the repertoire played by the bands (Chapter 6) it has been possible to show how the style of music played to entertain the local community has changed with musical fashion. It also demonstrated how the standard of performance has improved over time as contest pieces that were previously written for higher sections are now used as test pieces for lower sections. However, it was noted that repertoire played in concerts for local audiences often includes older repertoire, such as Minstrel songs in programmes in the 1930s (Appendix H) or traditional marches such as Eric Ball’s *Star Lake* (1937) in the Galashiels Town Band concert in May 2013 (Appendix O). In programmes this older repertoire is usually mixed with more contemporary repertoire.

The brass bands in the Borders have been fortunate in attracting many good bandmasters or musical directors to lead the bands during the course of the last 150 years. Often these men have led the bands for many years providing stability and continuity. Some of these bandmasters have also been composers and arrangers of brass band music and many of these men have enjoyed reputations that have spread beyond the Borders. A comparison was given between the style of music written by Lawrence Cockburn at the turn of the twentieth century and Alan Fernie in the present day. This showed that whilst the style of traditional marches that are played

by the bands, both for marching to and in a concert context, have remained relatively unchanged, the style of other music played has changed over time. Arrangements of operatic pieces were popular in the nineteenth century together with dances and medleys, but as the twentieth century progressed styles changed and band repertoire was increasingly influenced by jazz and popular music as demonstrated in the concert programme given by St Ronan's silver band in September 2009 (Appendix N).

Playing for the annual community events that are unique to the Scottish Borders known as the common ridings was found to be a major part of the brass band calendar (Chapter 7). The strong community identity felt by the inhabitants of the Border towns is exhibited most overtly at the time common ridings with the symbolic marking of their town boundaries and visits to local places of historical importance. The role of the brass bands here is very much concerned with representing their respective towns and with helping to demarcate boundaries. The Scottish Borders common ridings are different from town festivals in other places because of their historical significance and emphasis on horses and horsemanship. They enable people born in the Borders to identify strongly with their town, with incomers excluded from being principals in the events as they were not born there.

The brass bands play an important role in helping to preserve the identity of Border towns by playing music that is unique to each town at the common ridings. As was noted earlier, songs which are specific and often unique to each town are sung accompanied by the brass bands during the festivals; they also play traditional marches to help the movement of people from one part of the town to another for the next part of the ceremonies. This is a distinctive role of Borders bands in terms of the variety of linkages to different parts of the towns that are used during the course of the common riding festivals. Probably more than any other factor, the need for the brass bands to provide music at these unique community events has been the principal reason for the survival of the Borders brass bands in the past and remains so for the present day.

The band repertoire here is prescribed in the sense of having to play the tunes which are emblematic of each town; for example, *Braw Lads* in the case of Galashiels. It is the expectation of the people that these traditional ceremonies,

together with the music played in them and the important role of the brass bands in providing the music, will remain unaltered from year to year and in that sense they have become 'frozen in time'. This retention of historic repertoire, and the expectation that it will remain unaltered in the future, can be seen as a trait of isolated areas such as the Scottish Borders even in the twenty-first century.

Chapter 8 discussed some other ways in which the brass bands serve their communities during the rest of the year. Some of these were, and are, public events such as the ceremonial Masons' Walk in Melrose which was led historically by a brass band until the 1980s. Today the bands are still highly visible when they fulfil the traditional role of playing in the streets at Christmas and New Year or for Remembrance Sunday parades. However, in a similar way to audiences for contests, when band concerts take place indoors within their own communities they are now largely supported only by brass band enthusiasts, together with families and friends of band members. This contrasts with the high visibility of the brass bands at common riding events or when playing outdoors to entertain the community in the nineteenth century.

The nineteenth century was the most important time for brass bands, a time when thousands of people followed the bands to listen to them in the streets or at contests. In this thesis it has been shown that during the twentieth century there were many challenges to the bands in the Scottish Borders through loss of personnel in two World Wars, through cycles of economic depression in the dominant textile industry of the area, or from new forms of entertainment making brass bands less popular. In many other places these challenges were too great to sustain the brass bands and many of them closed, but in the Borders all the bands were able to survive these changes due to strong community support and, in many cases, to the dedication of a few bandsmen who kept them going against all the odds when numbers were very low.

Throughout this thesis the importance of individuals, whether local people, bandmasters or composers has been shown to have been of significance in the history of the brass bands in the Borders. In addition, the emergence of strong leadership of the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association since the 1990s by figures such as George Burt and Alan Fernie has revived and strengthened banding in the region.

The emergence and development of youth bands has played a further deciding role in the revival of brass bands in the Scottish Borders in the twenty-first century. Many of the bands reached a low point in the late twentieth century, partly due to the fact that the Borders is a relatively isolated area with few employment or further education prospects for young people. However, the promotion of youth development, begun by the Scottish Borders Brass Band Association at the beginning of the twenty-first century and subsequently taken up by the Scottish Brass Band Association, has ensured that most of the Borders bands now have at least one youth band and this is helping to provide new band members who will help to ensure the continuation of the bands in the future. In a remarkable turn-around this traditional community-based approach, started in the small rural area of the Scottish Borders, has proved so successful in rejuvenating brass bands there that it has now been copied, not only in other parts of Scotland, but is held up as a model in England and other countries.

This study of the history of brass bands in the Scottish Borders is only one aspect of the brass band movement in Scotland and there is clearly a need for future research here. A comparison between the history and development of brass bands in the rural area of the Scottish Borders and those of the more industrial areas of Fife or the Central Belt of Scotland could usefully be undertaken. Additionally, brass bands are one part of a thriving amateur music-making scene in the Borders and there are many other musical groups, including operatic societies and pipe bands, which could be studied applying similar methodologies. The internal workings of these groups and their roles in the community could usefully be explored, and the findings compared and contrasted with those of this thesis.

Overall this thesis has highlighted the importance of studying community music making through amateur bands, in contrast with other studies, such as those of Roy Newsome (1998, 1999) and Jones (2007), which principally focussed on the “top” bands who win prizes in national championships. In doing so it has elucidated the richness and relevance of this tradition to the communities of the Scottish Borders.

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## **Appendix A. The Author's Brass Band Playing Experience**

### St. Boswells Concert Band

Weekly lessons with bandmaster September – December 2007

Member of the band from January 2008 playing 2<sup>nd</sup> Horn

Attended rehearsals once a week from 2008-2013

Band concerts in St. Boswells three times a year 2009-2012

Played for Melrose Festival events 2008-2012

Played for St. Boswells Week events 2008-2012

Played for Easter services and British Legion (Scotland) services in Dryburgh Abbey 2008-1012

Remembrance Sunday parades at St. Boswells and Newtown St. Boswells War Memorials 2008-2012

Christmas carols in Newtown St. Boswells village 2008-2012

Played for occasional events including a wedding and a funeral

### Galashiels Town Band

Member of the band from September 2008 playing 1<sup>st</sup> Horn then Solo Horn

Attended rehearsals once a week from 2008-2013

Band concerts once a year in Galashiels 2010-2013

Played for Braw Lads Gathering events 2009-2012

Remembrance Sunday parades in Galashiels 2009-2012

Christmas carols in Galashiels 2010-2012

Workshops in local primary schools 2010-2012

### Penicuik Silver Band

Played 2<sup>nd</sup> Horn with the band for Scottish Championships (4<sup>th</sup> Section) 2012

Played 1<sup>st</sup> Horn with the band for Scottish Championships (4<sup>th</sup> Section) 2013

Played with the band for 2 concerts in Penicuik in 2011 and 2012

## **Appendix B. Old instruments belonging to St. Boswells Concert Band**

All the estimates for date of manufacture have been provided by Professor Arnold Myers, Professor of Organology, The University of Edinburgh and Director of the Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments.

### Besson & Co. Class A Prototype

E flat bass. Serial number 14403. Inscribed '1902 St Boswells Brass Band' on bell.

Date – Mid 1873

E flat bass. Serial number 70765. Inscribed '1902 St. Boswells Brass Band' on bell.

Date – Estimated 1900

BB flat bass. Serial number 75443. Inscribed '1902 St. Boswells Brass Band' on bell.

Date – Estimated 1902

BB flat bass. Serial number 115387. No inscription.

Date – Estimated 1921

G trombone (with extending handle) Serial number 13926. No inscription. Class A New Standard.

Date – Estimated 1934

Tenor horn. Serial number 55608. No inscription.

Valves nos 7-9.

Date – Numbered before 12 Jan 1895

Flugel Horn. (not in playable condition)

Paris manufacture for Besson, London. Service class.

Serial number probably 11296. Valves 55-57.

Date – Imported in 1950s.

Boosey & Co. Imperial model. ‘Solbron’

BB flat bass. Serial number on bell 118385. (There is also another number on the instrument 91591)

Date – 1923.

Boosey & Hawkes.

French horn. Serial number 147056. Marked ‘Lotone’ (or ‘Sotone’).

This instrument has a presentation inscription which has been scored out.

Number on valve casing 113613.

Date - 1936

Small bass. Regent model. Serial number 649851

Date - 1980

Trombone. Imperial model. Serial number 240723. Has interesting weight of a globe with a semiquaver above which was the trademark at the time.

Date – Early 1957

Douglas & Son, Brunswick Street, Glasgow

Cornet. Orchestral model. No serial number but valve numbers 46-48.

Antoine Courtois & Mille

Agent - S. Arthur Chappell, New Bond Street.

Tenor trombone. Serial number 5474. Inscribed ‘St. Boswells Brass Band’ on bell. Manufacturers medals recorded up to 1889.

Date – Probably late 1890s

Tenor trombone. Serial number 5546. Inscribed 'St Boswells Brass Band' on bell. Manufacturers' medals recorded up to 1900.

Date – Probably 1901

Salvation Army Manufactured

Flugel Horn. The Triumph. Class A. Serial number 16746 with a 4 underneath. Valves 31-33.

Date – Probably early-mid 1920s.

## **Appendix C. Sample Interview Questionnaire**

Please state your name and age (optional)

Occupation (if retired, former occupation)

### Personal playing experience

1. Can you tell me which band do you currently play with? What instrument do you play and what influenced you to start playing a brass instrument?
2. How were you taught to play a brass instrument?
3. At what age did you start to play in a band?
4. Do you have any family connections with brass bands? Can you tell me about these?
5. Have you played with any other bands? If so, what differences do you notice between the different bands?
6. Describe how you see the relationship between the various Border bands.

### Your band

1. Tell me about playing in your band. How many practices does the band have each week? Does this vary?
2. Do you think the band uniform is important? Why?
3. Does your band take part in contests? If so, which ones?
4. Tell me how you personally feel about taking part in contests?
5. What results has the band had in contests during your time with it?
6. When were ladies first allowed to play in the band?
7. If your band has a junior or training band has this always been the case?
8. During your time with the band has it always had the full number of players?
9. How do you think different bandmasters have influenced the band?
10. Does anyone in your band arrange music for it or have they done so in the past?
11. Has the band commissioned any music, either recently or in the past?
12. Does your band meet socially outside practices?

### Playing for the Common Ridings

1. Which Common Ridings and festivals have you played for?
2. Do you think it is important for the band to play for the Common Riding? Why?
3. Can you describe the format of a Common Riding day from the point of view of someone who plays in the band.
4. How do you think the local people view the band's role in the Common Riding?
5. How do you personally feel about playing for the Common Riding?
6. Do you view playing for the Common Riding or festivals differently to playing for a concert or contest?
7. Do you see it as just another event to play at? (or a service to the community)
8. Is it different if it is the Common Riding for your own town or if you are playing for another town?

### Other Local Events

1. What other community events during the year does your band play for? E.g. Remembrance Sunday, Carols at Christmas
2. How important do you think it is for the band to take part in these?
3. What sort of profile do you think the band has within the town?
4. Do you think most local people know about the band? How do they support it?
5. Do the local community support your concerts in the town? Is it always the same people who support it?
6. What repertoire does the band play for concerts and is it different to other occasions?

### Change over Time

1. What are the main changes you have noticed during the time you have played with the band?
2. Have you noticed any change in the type of people who play in brass bands?
3. Can you tell me any ways that the band is funded which have changed during the time you have played with it?

4. Can you tell me about any changes you have noticed during your time in the band with regard to the following:
  - Repertoire and styles of music
  - Technique
  - Band numbers
  - Young players
5. Why do you think the band has survived? What has helped it to survive?
6. Is community a key element?
7. What do you think is the future of the brass bands in the Borders?

Is there anything I haven't asked you that you would like to tell me about?

## **Appendix D. Copy of the Report of a Band Contest at Hawick in 1875. (*The Teviotdale Record* 31 July 1875)**

### BAND CONTEST AT HAWICK

[BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER]

Some few weeks ago, the announcement that there was to be a Grand National Brass Band Contest and Border Gathering at Hawick caused no small sensation of pleasure in all musical circles within easy distance of that great Border hive of hose and “independence!” and the event itself was realized on Saturday last, and, notwithstanding the great depression supposed to exist in consequence of the financial crisis, Hawick was able, for this occasion at least, to hide all signs of distress, and to demonstrate to its full extent that Scotch pride which is implied by the phrase “keeping up appearances,” the result being a great pecuniary gain to the promoters of the scheme, and a rare musical treat to the million.

When the tidings of the contest were first conveyed to Jedburgh, the Jedforest Band was in the unenviable position of being six or seven members short of its ordinary complement, which when full (by the way) is not heavy enough to come against the general strength of operatic bands in competition. Nevertheless, it goes against the Jethart grain to “give in” without a trial, and hence it turned out that the first entry registered at Hawick was that of the “Jedforest Instrumental Band,” and the earliest names down for solo competition those of Thomas Armstrong (cornet) and Robert Hope (euphonium) both of Jedburgh. Of course it was felt from the beginning that there was but little chance of success with a band crippled as I have stated, against the talent which £100 in prizes would be likely to bring to the contest, and that feeling became a foregone conclusion when the extent and nature of the actual entry were known. Still, on the other hand, it was deemed by our men a duty to contribute, so far as lay in their power, to the support of the sister town in making the gathering as much as possible a “Border” one, and it is only to be regretted that other bands were not actuated by the like laudable purpose, so as to bring about the desiderated result in greater degree.

It was known that some of the English bands entered were of the very first rank—and it was no less a secret that some of the English soloists, in both sections, were able to display prize instruments by tens, but both these momentous facts did not seem in the least to prey on the spirits of the Jedforest team as they started last Saturday morning (still short of their customary strength, and double that number fewer than the muster of any band they were pitted against), the reason being that they were going more for the purpose of learning than with the expectation of winning.

It must not, however, be imagined that they were going to Hawick unprepared, or to show that they had everything to learn. Mr Maclean is too able and too prudent a conductor to permit any such display. On the contrary, they went there with two beautiful selections, either of which they could render in a style as nearly perfect as their numbers and parts would permit of; or, at all events, in such a manner as to reflect credit on themselves and on the town represented by them.

The morning broke auspiciously, and the hope of being able to enjoy a pleasant day's jaunt was at least one that could be entertained. Nor was it doomed to disappointment, for only once during the proceedings did the atmosphere get heavy, and that only for a short period. The band, as usual, played from the town to the station, where they were received, on special terms by the company, and conveyed, after the usual "waits" to their destination. The tediousness of the journey was beguiled by the usual amount of *jeu d'esprit*, relating chiefly to the issue of the contest, and by the time Hawick was reached, it had been fully determined how the prizes were to be disposed of, and everybody was in good humour. It may be stated that a goodly number of townspeople accompanied the band, and later in the day, after the arrival of the excursion train, a great many familiar Jethart faces were present in the field.

Outside the station the band formed into processional order, and marched off, playing as a quickstep the ever-new air "O Nannie, wilt thou gang wi' me?" and it is gratifying to note that here, as at Langholm, the reception accorded our band was of the most friendly and hearty description. The band which immediately preceded them (Whitburn) seemed to attract out little notice, notwithstanding their somewhat conspicuous uniform, but the moment our men were recognized, the Jethart slogan

resounded along the deep lines of the crowd with an enthusiasm that was as surprising as it was pleasing.

The contest took place in the Dovemount Park at Wilton Dean, “kindly granted” to the Committee for the occasion by Mr T. Laidlaw, for the merely nominal acknowledgement of £15! This field is an easy walk from the Station, but by no means a good one for the purpose, its form and position being very faulty as regards the principle of acoustics. Most of the bands were already on the ground, some of them busy “tuning,” and the crowds of spectators fast flowing in. The ring was tastefully arranged, and the profuse display of bunting, including the flags of the hosiery and other trades of the town, combined with the light holiday colours worn by the onlookers, gave a very lively and cheerful aspect to the scene.

Promptly at 12.30 the conductors were summoned to the stand to draw for the order of competition, and as it had been whispered abroad that protests were to be lodged against two of the bands, an eager crowd immediately closed in to hear the discussion. Nor had they long to wait, for the leader of the Durham engineers at once took exception to the Felling Band, on the very sensible ground that it had no fewer than seven men with it who did not belong to it, but were members of other bands which Mr Woods, the conductor, had the tuition. The protester urged that as these men were not *bona fide* members of the Felling band, and some of them professional, they could not compete in accordance with the rules, whereupon Mr Woods became very impertinent, and said there was the more credit due to *him* for having so many bands up to the mark. Being asked whether his was a military band, he replied, “Partly!” “Is it a works band?” “Partly!” “Is it an amateur band?” “Partly!” it was, in short, partly anything that it could be supposed. Having parried to this extent, Mr Woods turned round to some of his men, who were standing below, as if in derision of the Committee and the protest, and enquired kindly after their health—“How are you Jack?” and so on—receiving such replies as “Goa in mee boey!” “We will dow it!” &c. Being thus encouraged, their leader intimated, in effect, that he would play in spite of everything and everybody. The other protest was against the Workington Sax-Horn Band, it being affirmed by several parties from Whitehaven that this band, when at home, could hardly make itself presentable on the streets; but that, when reinforced, as on the present occasion, by the two Radcliffes from Stalybridge Old

Band, and by two men from the Whitehaven Town Band, it was able to do wonders at contests. The leading protester was in this case confronted with the question—“To what band do you belong?” and answering that he belonged to no band at all, he was told that he had no right to protest. Of course, it was plain to all who knew anything about the rules that this was perfect nonsense, but the Secretary was not supported by his Committee, and being alone, was helpless to settle the dispute. This being the case, the protests were defeated, and eight of the ten bands entered were drawn for. The absentees were the Derwent Tin-Plate Works Band, not present as a consequence of a break down at their works, and the Selkirk band, whose absence was accounted for. The following was the order of competition (Jedburgh, as usual, being unfortunate in falling to play last), together with the selections they played:—

1. Felling Brass Band.—Attila, by Verdi.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> Durham Engineers.—Semiramide, by Rossini.
3. West Hartlepool.—Reminiscences of Mozart.
4. Whitburn.—La Fille du Regimento, by Donizetto.
5. Greenock Rifles. —Zanberflote [sic], Mozart.
6. Cornholm.—Oberon, by Weber.
7. Workington Sax-Horn.—La Sonnambula, Bellini.
8. Jedforest.—Evening Camp, Reinholt.

The Felling Band—or rather the team under Mr Woods—accordingly first mounted the stand, despite the unpopularity the “scene” above-described had gained for them, their brilliant execution from Verdi speedily enraptured all attentive listeners. There is a variety in the piece which gives the greatest scope to cornets and horns, and all the passages were sustained with a taste and unison so marked as to leave the feeling that it would take a superb band to come in before them. The Durham Engineers followed, and though this was in truth a fine band, it was at the same time clear that there was ample room for three or four other to fill the gap between it and the first. Then came the far-famed West Hartlepool Band, led by the celebrated Hogg, and its performances raised the first doubt as to the issue. The instrumentation was indeed magnificent, but still many were inclined to give the preference to the band that played first. Whitburn came next, and though “The Daughter of the Regiment” did not come up to any of the previous pieces, it must still be admitted that, in point of

time and tone, its rendering was highly creditable to the performers. Then followed Greenock, with Mozart's "Zanberflote," [sic] but it was proved in this case that the "Magic Flute" was rather beyond the manipulative capacity of the Western team. But the band of the day had to come. Cornholm next ascended the stand, and when one looked upon the veteran aspect of some of the players (led by one, and including among their number other three of those Lords who made the Bacup Band what it once was), it was felt that the backbone of a band was there. And so the event proved. The piece was from Weber's "Oberon"—beautiful melody, gorgeous harmony, and happy movements as could be conceived—and it was rendered almost to perfection. The tone was gorgeous, the tune perfection itself, the expression a complete interpretation, and the execution such as could only be given by thorough musicians practised together. There were, indeed, all the stops of a magnificent organ in this band, and it was with great surprise that the announcement was heard at the close that it had to play again with West Hartlepool. However, it did get its proper place. Workington was the 7<sup>th</sup> band to play, and thought there was very good execution in their rendering of Bellini's masterpiece, the tone of some of their instruments was far from being what could be desired, and their time, in almost every moment, very indifferent. At the event, very few musicians on the ground, beside Mr Habicht, would have awarded them a place before Felling, if a place at all. For my part, I should have expected Durham to come before them. Last, and I am safe to say, not least, came the Jedforest Band. They formed by far the least imposing group, in numbers and appearance, that had yet been on the stand, and still there was an expression about them that said, "Jethart's here" as plain as words could say it. Of their two pieces "Ernani" and the "Evening Camp" they chose the latter, and their performance was really a happy surprise to us Jethart folks who had lost all remembrance of what our own band could do while listening to the noble strains of the strangers. The piece is not one of great difficulty, its effect being produced by a fine Handel-like prelude (most of the other pieces played opened crescendo) followed by varied renderings of fine andante and allegretto movements, and culminating in a brilliant syncopated finish. The time was excellent, and though the volume of tone, characteristic of other bands was wanting, the instruments were all thoroughly in tune, and all the part bound together with a precision that would have

done credit to the contest, even had our band taken a high place. By this time the audience numbered thousands, and the hearty cheering and applause that followed the effort of our men went home to all our hearts. It was then stated by those able to judge that with a good soprano cornet and a BB bass, both of which were absent, our band would be able to take a place in any contest.

As already stated Cornholm and West Hartlepool Bands were ordered to play a second time, and while this was being done many were the conjectures as to what could be the intention, it being the opinion of many—indeed the majority—that Cornholm was an undoubted “first” and Felling as surely second. The main competition over, Mr Habicht, the judge, came on the stand, and the bands united played “God Save the Queen,” the cornets in C. the results were then announced as follows:—

- 1<sup>st</sup> Cornholm Brass Band
- 2<sup>nd</sup> West Hartlepool Operative Band
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Workington Sax-Horn Band
- 4<sup>th</sup> Felling Brass Band

The best band being undoubtedly in its proper place, and the two next best on the prize list, though not in their proper order, it may be said that the awards in this section gave general satisfaction. At this stage, however, another attempt was made to raise the protests against Felling and Workington, but the Secretary (Mr Maxwell) intimated that the Committee were unable to entertain them, and so the matter was dropped.

The drawing of the order for the Cornet Solo Contest then took place. In this section there were twelve entries, including all the noted players of the North of England, and it was felt that our local men, good as some of them are, had little chance against such professionals as Lundgren of Gateshead and Hogg of Hartlepool, the latter of whom is able, I am told, to display not fewer than 16 prize cornets won by himself. He was, on this occasion, beat by his not unworthy rival Lundgren, as by the second prizeman, Kirkup of Felling; but the latter did not in anybody’s estimation deserve his place, his tone in the “Carnival de Venice” being about as poor as could be imagined, while his tonguing was anything but precise. Tom Armstrong of Jedburgh played a very pretty piece—the theme being “Tyrolean” from the opera

“Guillaume Tell”[sic]—and rendered it in good style, but a very unfortunate incident spoiled him at the outset. A party of dancers had been organizing themselves outside the ring, and just as Armstrong struck the first notes of his solo, the drums and horns of the Hawick band broke in a Scotch reel, and completely drowned him. Of course the row was promptly stopped, but the player’s nerves had been discomposed, and he did not come up to his usual form. Lundgren took the first prize with a cavatina solo, and his performance was remarkable for the clear and easy way in which he brought out the low notes with which it abounded.

Then followed the Euphonium Solo Contest, in which 13 soloists took part. By the time this commenced, however, the afternoon was pretty far advanced, the assemblage in the park was thinning fast, and there was an evident haste in the proceedings. R. Hope, Jedburgh, played the “Assault Musicale” a piece specially written for a contest between Henderson of Felling and Smith of Gateshead (the former of whom was also a competitor on this occasion) but it must be admitted that Hope failed to come up to his usual style on Saturday, his nerves evidently giving way in this his first trial. Harris of Gateshead was the fortunate winner of the first prize, and he certainly showed merit enough to deserve it, his execution being as rapid, and articulation as clear as if the instrument had been a cornet instead of a baritone. The placing of Scott of Hawick second, however, to the exclusion of such men as Henderson of Felling, and three or four others hardly inferior, is a burlesque on the face of it, but luck invariably carries something to Hawick, and it is needless remarking further on the subject except to point out that with this solitary exception, all the prizes went to the southern side of the Border.

At the close of this contest the judge came onto the stand, accompanied by Mr Pringle of Wilton Lodge, who, after a few appropriate sentences, presented the trophies to their various winners, and the assemblage dispersed amid enthusiastic cheers for the Judge, Committee, and Competitors, successful and unsuccessful.

The members of the Jedforest Band, finding themselves in the blessed state of those who, expecting nothing, are not disappointed when nothing comes, marched merrily to the Railway Station playing “Home Again” and, while waiting for the train, continued discoursing sweet music, to the delight of the large crowd that gathered round them. Home was reached about 11 o’clock, and if there be “certainty”

in regard to the whole contest, it is that, if a prize had been given to the most orderly band, that prize would have come to Jedburgh.

Before taking leave of the subject, I would like to make one suggestion with respect to the name "Border Gathering." From the above notes it will be apparent that the gathering was a "Border" one alone in regard to the audience, our own being the only strictly Border band on the ground, and I am convinced that so long as contests are regulated as at present, the lion's share will invariably be taken by English "scratch" bands, who have a capital organization, and not lack of opportunity for indulging their money-grabbing proclivities. Honour has no place in their aims, else they would not stoop to dishonourable means of obtaining prizes; and the only way of defeating their mercenary motives would be the clubbing together of Border bands, and the imposition of restrictions which would be effectual in preventing and exposing such deceptions as were successfully practised on Saturday. With that object in view I would suggest to the Jedforest Band that they should at once project a Grand band Festival at Jedburgh, and invite all the bands in the three Border Counties to be present. I have not the slightest doubt that, with the aid of the Railway Company, such a field would be obtained as would not only pay the expenses, but also go a considerable way in helping them to procure a double bass horn and a soprano cornet, both of which they should have ere going to another contest, but which cannot be got for less than £30. These festivals are very popular in England, pay extremely well, and it is by means of them alone that so many of the English bands are able to act like one in the matter of coming north to a contest.

I trust this hint will be taken, and that our band will next summer be able to go to a contest provided with the required metal, and also with all their available middle parts efficiently filled up.

## Appendix E. St. Ronan's Brass Band Repertoire

### 1. 1879-1883

#### 1 August 1879 (*The Peeblesshire Herald and Tweedside Journal*)

Programme played at the Innerleithen and Traquair Horticultural Society exhibition.

MARCH	Mountain Echo	J. Brophy
QUADRILLE	Old Ireland	Metcalf
SELECTION	London Echoes	R. Smith
POLKA	Mountain Sylph	Lyons
ANTHEM	I will lift up mine eyes	Dr Clark
DESCRIPTIVE		
FANTASIA	Pride of Scotland	H. Round
QUADRILLE	Anna Spray	Masson
SELECTION	La valle des roses	Demain
VALSE	Lelia	Ettling
MAZURKA	Rose Queen	Mallet
MARCH	Primrose Path	R. Smith
FINALE	God Save the Queen	

#### 29 August 1879 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

MARCH	Little Blue Eyes, sweet and true	R. Smith
FANTASIA	Caprice	R. Smith
SELECTION	Scottish Airs	E. Newton
WALTZ	Royal Scotch	R. de Lacy
FANTASIA	London Echoes	R. Smith
QUADRILLE	Varis Amies	E. Newton
SCHOTTISCHE	Olivia	J. Frost
MARCH	Little Jessie	R. Smith

#### 21 November 1879 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

MARCH	Auld Robin Gray, by the leader of St. Ronan's Brass Band	J. Simpson
SCHOTTISCHE	Wisbourne Grove	M. Sieman
QUADRILLE	Desideratum	T. A. Haigh
POLKA	The Pic-Nic	F. Otto
GRAND FANTASIA	Napoleon (in memory of the Prince Imperial)	R. de Lacy
MARCH	The Standard-Bearer	E. Newton

#### 12 December 1879 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

The annual band concert was held in the Volunteer Hall. Among the vocal items were several instrumental ones including:

Grand Fantasia	Napoleon	Band
Cornet Duet	Hark the Goddess Diana	Messes Simpson & Johnston
Quartett	The Village Chimes	Messrs Simpson, Hope, Johnston & Crosbie
Humorous Reading		Mr J. Simpson Snr.

24 April 1880 (*Peeblesshire Advertiser*)

Saturday “weather permitting”

Musical promenade.

March	Auld Robin Gray	J. Simpson
Polka (cornet solo)	Imperial	H. Round
Grand Selection	Norma	Bellini
Anthem	Gratitude	Fawcett
Quadrille	Invincible	C. Leonte
Grand Selection	Pride of Scotland	H. Round
Finale	Auld Lang Syne	

24 July 1880 (*Peeblesshire Advertiser*)

Programme to be played in the High Street on Saturday at 5 o’clock “weather permitting”.

March	Les Hugenots	Meyerbeer
Fantasia	Millitaire	L. Bosquire
Selection	Don Caesar De Bazan	Wallace
Valse	The Queen of May	R. V. Schoels
Fantasia	Napoleon	R. de Lacy
Selection	Norma	Bellina (sic)
Polka	The Pic-Nic	F. Otto
Quadrille	Flowers of Edinburgh	E. Newton
Finale	God Save the Queen	Dr. Bull

25 December 1880 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

SATURDAY EVENING ENTERTAINMENT. The fifth of the series of Saturday evening entertainments under the auspices of the St. Ronan’s Lodge, I.O.G.T., [International Order of Good Templars] took place on Saturday evening in the Town Hall. A novel feature in Saturday night’s programme was the attendance of members of St. Ronan’s Brass Band, who played in their usual efficient manner a number of overtures and selections.

16 April 1881 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

The St. Ronan’s Brass Band tastefully played the following selection in the High street on Saturday afternoon:

March	The Reveller	E. Marie
Overture	Confidence	F Hemmele

Grand selection	Emria	E. Escudie
Valse	Rustic Queen	R. Smith
Fantasia	Les Chevaliers	E. Mullet
Grand Selection	Norma	Bellina (sic)
Quadrille	On the banks of the Thames	R. Smith
Finale	God Save the Queen	Dr. Bull

30 April 1881 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

Quick March	Selina	J. Keelir
Overture	The Fair Maid of Perth	J. Widdel
Valse	Jessamine	J. Robertson
Quick March	Old Towler	T.A. Haig
Fantasia	Golden Rose	J. Robertson
Anthem	Jerusalem, my glorious home	L. Mason
Polka	The Water Lily	A. Monks
Quick March	Rose, Shamrock and Thistle	T. H. Wright

21 May 1881 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

ST. RONAN'S BRASS BAND. The St. Ronan's Brass Band played the following programme at the west end of High Street on Saturday evening last;-

March	Over the garden wall	E. Newton
Overture	Confidence	J. Hemmerle
Fantasia	Millitaire	L. Bosquier
Grand Selection	Pirates of Penzance	A. Sullivan
Polka	Joyous	M. Morgan
Fantasia	Amitie	J. Hemmerle
Grand Selection	Scotch Airs	E. Newton
Valse	Dorinda	R. Smith
March	La-di-da	R. Smith
Finale	Auld Lang Syne	

2 July 1881 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

MUSICAL PROMENADE. The St. Ronan's band played the following programme in the High Street on Wednesday evening:-

March	The Cameron Men	J. Simpson
Overture	Confidence	J. Hemmerle
Valse	The Rustic Queen	R. Smith
Selection	Bonnie Scotland	H. Metcalfe
Polka (cornet solo)	The cornet	J. Levy
Quadrille	Olivitte	A. Sullivan

30 July 1881 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

MUSICAL. The St. Ronan's Brass Band played the following selections at the east end of High Street in the usual excellent style on Wednesday evening:-

March	Braw, braw lads	J. Simpson
Overture	The Fair Maid of Perth	J. Widdel
Selection	The Pirates of Penzance	A. Sullivan

Schottische	The Signal	M. Seaman
Quadrille	Olivette	Audran
Selection	Norma	Bellina (sic)
March	Scotland Yet	J. Simpson
Finale	Auld Langsyne	

10 September 1881 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

ST. RONAN'S BRASS BAND. This band played the following selection on Saturday afternoon in the High Street:-

March	The Rose of Allendale	J. Simpson
Overture	Confidence	J. Himmerle
Grand Selection	The Pirates of Penzance	A Sullivan
Polka	The Signal	M. Seaman
Quadrille	Banks of the Thames	R. Smith
Selection	Scotch Airs	Metcalf
March	The Bush Aboon Traquair	J. Simpson
Finale	God Save the Queen	

25 March 1882 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

LITERARY ENTERTAINMENT. On Friday evening, Walter Bentley, the well-known elocutionist and tragedian, gave a series of readings in the Volunteer Hall to a very good audience... The members of the St. Ronan's brass band were in attendance, and their music, which showed considerable improvement from their winter's practice, added greatly to the pleasure of the entertainment... they played the following selections:-

March	A Friend in Need	R. Smith
Selection	The Pirates of Penzance	A Sullivan
Quadrille	The Lights of London	R. Smith
Anthem	Angels from the realms of glory	E. Newton
Selection	Gems of Mozart	T. Wright
Finale	God Save the Queen	

6 May 1882 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

MUSICAL PROMENADE. The St. Ronan's Brass Band played the following programme in the High Street on Saturday at six o'clock:-

March	Wild Monarch	E. Marle
Overture	La Recreation Musicale	J. Hemmerle
Valse	Cordelia	R. Smith
Grand Selection	Emira	E. Escudie
Anthem	Angels from the Realms of Glory	E. Newton
Fantasia	La Boquetere	L. Bosquier
Lancers	Lights o' London	R. Smith
Finale	God Save the Queen	

20 May 1882 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

MUSICAL PROMENADE. The St. Ronan's Brass Band played the following programme at the east end of High Street on Saturday at six o'clock:-

March	The Rose of Allendale	J. Simpson
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Overture	Confidence	J. Hemmerle
Valse	Rustic Queen	R. Smith
Schottische	Corisande	R. Schoels
Grand Selection	Norma	Bellina (sic)
Mazurka (concertante)	Myrtha	E. Marie
Fantasia	Bonnie Scotland	H. Metclafe
March	Jacobite	R. de Lacy
Finale	Auld Langsyne	

30 December 1882 (Peeblesshire Herald)

MUSICAL PROMENADE. The St Ronan's Brass Band, under the leadership of Mr John Simpson, played the following Christmas programme in the High Street on Saturday evening:-

March	Jessie's Dream	J. Simpson
Polka	Welcome Home	E. Newton
Anthem	What is man	Fawcett
Valse	Golden Love	M. Seaman
Quadrille	St. Ronan's Well	J. Simpson
Hymn	Angelic Voices	E. Newton
Hymn	Sound the Trumpet	E. Newton
March	The Emigrant	J. Simpson
	Auld Langsyne	

7 April 1883 (Peeblesshire Herald)

ST. RONAN'S BRASS BAND. The band had their first musical promenade of the season on Saturday, and under the leadership of John Simpson, played several selections in fine style, and greatly to the delight of the inhabitants.

21 April 1883 (Peeblesshire Herald)

MUSICAL PROMENADE. The members of St. Ronan's Brass Band under the leadership of Mr John Simpson, assembled on the High Street on Thursday evening and gave the second of a series of entertainment which they intend giving weekly during the summer months in addition to their Saturday afternoon performances. There was a large turn-out of people, who listened to the following programme with the greatest attention and with every evidence of appreciation:-

MARCH	Huntingtower	J. Simpson
POLKA	Welcome Home	E. Newton
FANTASIA	String of Pearls	Lavilledieu
GRAND SELECTION	Gems of Mozart	T. Wright
QUADRILLE	St. Ronan's Well	J. Simpson
VALSE	Golden Love	M. Seaman
MARCH	The Lass of Ballochmyle	J. Simpson
	God Save the Queen	

30 June 1883 (Peeblesshire Herald)

ST. RONAN'S BAND. This pleasing combination of musical talent has been favouring the citizens with out-door performances for some weeks past. The

Innerleithen band is an old band, and takes pleasure in scientific practice, so that its powers of execution are above the average of provincial bands. One night we have it in the streets, another “up the strip”, and again on the Pirn Craig; and wherever the band appears its fine pieces and execution are much appreciated. The labour Mr. John Simpson has bestowed upon it for years resounds to his credit now.

7 July 1883 (*Peeblesshire Herald*)

OUTDOOR CONCERTS. The St. Ronan’s band of this town gave a concert in the streets on Saturday night. They put up their stands on the High Street, and for nearly a couple of hours played a variety of musical compositions from the old masters as well as some from modern composers.

## 2. 1897-1914.

During this period Lawrence Cockburn was the bandmaster from 1897-1904.

### 16 June 1897 (St. Ronan's Standard)

QUICKSTEP	Black Dyke	J. Jubb
QUADRILLE	Desideratum	T.A. Haigh
SELECTION	Gems of Scotia	H. Round
Euphonium solo	The Village Blacksmith	Weiss
WALTZ	Fallen Leaves	Keller
QUICKSTEP	Scotia's Pride	J. Robinson

### 21 July 1897 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Programme at West End. 8.30. 'weather permitting'.

Euphonium solo	O' a' the airts	Maddock
	The Village Blacksmith	Weiss
	Yeoman	Frost
	Gems of Scotia	Round
	Fallen Leaves	Keller
	God Save the Queen	

### 15 June 1898 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Programme at Leithen Crescent

QUICK MARCH	Defiance	J. Jubb
WALTZ	Hearts of Gold	Wilton Roche
SELECTION	Scotland	J. Ord Hume
SCHOTTISCHE	Fun and Frolic	Adrian Rolfe
LANCERS	Shamrock leaves	Geo. A. Frose
ANTHEM	Raise the Songs of Jubilee	J. Frose
QUICK MARCH	Dinna cross the Burn	L. Cockburn

### 20 July 1898 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Programme at West End on Tuesday first, at 7.30 p.m. (weather permitting)

MARCH	Brunswick	J. Jubb
WALTZ	Hearts of Gold	Wilton Roche
SELECTION	Scotland	J. Ord Hume
POLKA	La Reine	Adrian Rolfe
ANTHEM	Wake the Song of Jubilee	J. Frose
QUADRILLE	Kith and Kin	W. Rimmer
	GOD SAVE THE QUEEN	

### 3 August 1898 (St. Ronan's Standard)

On Saturday evening the members of St Ronan's Brass Band had a march out, Mr Cockburn conducting. Halting at the top of Miller Street, a short selection was

discoursed which was listened to by a large concourse of people. On Tuesday evening (weather permitting) at 7.15 the band will play the following programme of music at the Green;-

QUICKSTEP	The Forest Fiend	Fred Hanney
WALTZ	Hearts of Gold	W. Roche
SELECTION	Zampa	Herold
QUADRILLE	Land O' Burns	J. Ord Hume
EUPHONIUM SOLO	The Amateur	J. Jubb
SCHOTTISCHE	Sunny Hours	J. Cupit
FINAL	God save the Queen	Dr. Bull

6 September 1898 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Programme at West End. The attendance was large, and the performance was highly appreciated. Mr Cockburn wielded the baton.

QUICKSTEP	Mary Blane (or Blanc)	E. Newton
SELECTION	Caledonia	H. Round
WALTZ	Hearts of Gold	Wilton Roche
EUPHONIUM SOLO	The Village Blacksmith	Weiss
FANTASIA	Friendship	R. Nippin
POLKA	La Reine	Adrian Wolfe
	God Save the Queen	

25 July 1900 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Programme at Leithen Crescent at 8 p.m. on Tuesday (weather permitting)

QUICKSTEP	The battle and the breeze	T. Wadson
TROOP	Meet me by moonlight	Herzer
SELECTION	Zampa	Herold
SCHOTTISCHE	Fun and Frolic	Rolfe
CHORUS	To Thee, O Lord	Wolverson
QUADRILLE	Inspiration	R. Smith
WALTZ	Sommer Regen	Keller
	God Save the Queen	

8 August 1900 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Last Saturday the band played an excellent programme at West End. The following programme will be played at Miller Street on Saturday:

MARCH	Her bright smile	Wrighton
CORNET POLKA	Athea	G. Frost
SELECTION	Zampa	Herold
WALTZ	Kathleen	G. Frost
SELECTION	Caledonia	Round
QUADRILLE	Kith and Kin	Rimmer
TROOP	Meet me by moonlight	Herzer
	God save the Queen	

12 August 1903 (St. Ronan's Standard)

On Saturday afternoon the band, under the leadership of Mr Cockburn, gave a select programme at Traquair Road. The band will play a select programme tonight (weather permitting) at Princes Street from 7 to 8.30 p.m. and will play the following programme on Saturday at Walkerburn Post Office from 3.15 to 5 pm:

MARCH	Capiscolus	Petee
WALTZ	La Belle Espagnole	P. Fitzgerald
SELECTION	Mercadante	H. Round
SCHOTTISCHE	Sweet Lilac	C. Albert
SELECTION	Scottish Border Melodies	L. Cockburn
MARCH	Bonnie Mary of Argyle	T. H. Wright
SELECTION	Songs of England	H. Round
	God Save the Queen	

19 August 1903 (St. Ronan's Standard)

On Wednesday the town's band played a splendid selection of music to an appreciative audience in Princes Street. Owing to the rain the band were unable to fulfil its engagement at Walkerburn on Saturday afternoon. On Monday night they gave a programme by request of the Rev. J. G. Ferguson, in front of Pirn House. At the Games on Saturday the following programme will be given:

MARCH	Capiscolus	Petee
WALTZ	Green isle	H. Round
SELECTION	Mercadante	H. Round
SCHOTTISCHE	Sweet Lilac	C. Albert
SELECTION	Border Melodies	L. Cockburn
QUADRILLE	The Arena	H. Round
WALTZ	Star of Love	H. Round
SELECTION	Songs of England	H. Round
POLKA	Brillante	W. Sedden
MARCH	Bonnie Mary of Argyle	T. H. Wright
VALSE	La Belle Espagnole	P. Fitzgerald
POLKA	Tulip	J. A. Greenwood
	God save the King	

26 August 1903 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Programme at the Drill hall on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August. Mr. L. Cockburn, conductor. From 2.30 till 4 p.m.

MARCH	Capiscolus	Petee
WALTZ	Green Isle	H. Round
SELECTION	Border Melodies	L. Cockburn
POLKA	Tulip	J. A. Greenwood
WALTZ	Star of Love	H. Round
SELECTION	Mercadante	H. Round
	God save the King	

From 5.30 to 7 p.m.

MARCH	Capiscolus	Pettee
POLKA	Brilliante	W. Sedden
SELECTION	Border Melodies	L. Cockburn
VALSE	La Belle Espagnole	P. Fitzgerald
QUADRILLE	The Arena	H. Round
SELECTION	Songs of England	H. Round
MARCH	Bonnie Mary of Argyle	T. H. Wright
	God save the King	

29 June 1904 (St. Ronan's Standard)

The following programme will be discoursed on Saturday first in the Public Park by the Galashiels Town's Band (leader, Mr G. Hogg) and St. Ronan's Band (leader, Mr L. Cockburn). The programme will commence at 6 o'clock and be followed by an hour's dancing:

GALA TOWN'S BAND

MARCH	The Adventurer	L. Cockburn
WALTZ		
CHORUS	Hallelujah	Handel
SELECTION	Maritana	Wallace
OVERTURE	Poet and Peasant	Round
SELECTION	Songs of Ireland	Round

ST. RONAN'S BAND

MARCH	Thou art so near	Reichardt
WALTZ	Thine and Mine	Round
SELECTION	Songs of Scotland	Round
BARN DANCE	Darktown Jamboree	
FANTASIA	St. Ronan's	L. Cockburn

On 6 July 1904 the paper reported that the collection at the combined concert had amounted to £1 11s 8d. Dancing was abandoned due to the wet conditions.

26 June 1912 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Programme at the High Street under Mr McGlasson on Saturday at 7.30:

MARCH	Privateer	H. Field
SELECTION	Rob Roy	H. Round
WALTZ	Golden Sunset	T. H. Wright
SELECTION	A Banquet of Ballads	E. Newton
COON DANCE	Buster Brown's Birthday	E. A. Wheeler
FANTASIA	Scottish Beauties	J. A. Greenwood
WALTZ	Echoes of Killarney	H. Round

MARCH	The Old Folks God save the King	W. Maddock
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28 January 1914 (St. Ronan's Standard)

Programme in the Territorial Hall under Mr. McGlasson:

MARCH	Collingwood	Pettie
FANTASIA	Country Life	F. le Duc
SCHOTTISCHE	Dancing merrily	H. E. Kroll
SELECTION	Scottish Border Melodies	L. Cockburn
WALTZ	Will o' the Wisp	T. D. Clements
FANTASIA	Sons of the Sea ( <i>By request</i> )	W. Rimmer
POLKA	Fairy Frolics	S. Carter
CHORUS	Comrades in Arms	Adolphe Adams
MARCH	Heroes of Liberty God save the King	W. Rimmer

1 July 1914 (St. Ronan's Standard)

MUSICAL.—The members of St. Ronan's Band under the leadership of Mr McGlasson, discoursed a programme of music at the top of Leithen Crescent on Wednesday evening. There was a large gathering of townsfolk, who greatly appreciated the splendid music. On Saturday evening the Band also gave a programme in front of the George Hotel, Walkerburn. The Band will play the following programme at Sandridge Terrace to-night, commencing at 7.45:-

March	Jeannie's Black E'e	
Selection	Melodies of the Past	W. Rimmer
Waltz	Will o' the Wisp	F. D. Clements
Fantasia	Sons of the Sea	W. Rimmer
Coon Dance	Sambo's Wedding	F. Ranger
Selection	Memories of the Opera	W. Rimmer
Veleta	Yours Truly	D. Pecorini
	GOD SAVE THE KING	

## **Appendix F. Programmes given by Jedforest Instrumental Band in 1866 extracted from the *Teviotdale Record*.**

### 30 June 1866

Jed-Forest Band will play the following programme on Saturday evening in the Market Place at 8 o'clock.

Galop	Glorioso
Scena	Death of Nelson
Ballad	Sweet Spirit hear my prayer
Lancers	Somebody's luggage
Serenade	Come Gentil
Galop	The Roulette

### 25 August 1866

Jed-Forest Instrumental Band—band will perform the following in the Market Place this Saturday evening, weather permitting, at six o'clock:

Quadrille	Martha
Glee	As the Moments Roll
Valse	L'Innocence
Grand Chorus	To Thee, O Lord
Scena	Death of Nelson

### 15 September 1866

Jed-Forest Instrumental Band will give their last daylight performance in the market place the (Saturday) afternoon at 6 o'clock, weather permitting, when the following pieces will be performed:

Selection	Martha	Flotow
Grand Scena	White Squall	Barker
Chorus	To Thee, O Lord	
Grand Scena	Nelson (by desire)	Braham
Glee	As the Moments Roll	

# Appendix G. 'Scottish Border Melodies' by Lawrence Cockburn

2 SELECTION. "SCOTTISH BORDER MELODIES" Arrd by L. COCKBURN.  
 Published by L. COCKBURN, Innerleithen. (Scotland). Engaved & Printed at Leipzig by CisarBrandstetter.

**SOLO CORNET B $\flat$ .**

Andante. (♩=84.) ①

A

B *rall.* ② *Larghetto.* (♩=66.) *Flugel Bar.* *Bass.*

*ff* *pp*

*rall.* *ff* C *Allegretto.* (♩=88.) *Allegro.* (♩=120.) *Andante.* (♩=66.)

D *dim.* ③ *Allegro marcato.* (♩=66.) *ff*

*Bass.* *rall.* *Euph. Cad. ad lib.* *rall.*

Andante. (♩=72.) ④

*ff* *dim.* *p* *Euph.*

F *Euph.* *mf*

*dim.* ⑤ *Allegretto.* (♩=78.) *dim.* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

*ff* *Allegretto.* (♩=72.) *rall.*

⑥ *Andante.* (♩=68.) *Baritones.* *p* *1<sup>st</sup>* *ff* *2<sup>nd</sup>*

*Cad. ad lib.* ⑦ *Adagio con anima.* (♩=88.) *p* *Solo.*

*rall.* ⑧ *Allegro.* (♩=116.) *f*

H *rall.* *Horn.* *Bass.*

L.C.1



## **Titles of Tunes in 'Scottish Border Melodies'**

1. Original Opening
2. Snatches of various Border melodies
3. The Souters of Selkirk
4. The Flowers of the Forest
5. The Braes o' Yarrow
6. Ettrick Banks
7. Braw, braw lads
8. Bide ye yet
9. Lucy Flittin'
10. Muirland Willie
11. The Bush aboon Traquair
12. Bonny Tweedside
13. Blue Bonnets
14. The Broom o' Cowdenknowes
15. Jock o' Hazeldean
16. Original ending

## **Sections recorded on CD Tracks 1-6**

1. Nos. 1-3 excluding euphonium cadenza
2. No. 5
3. No. 8
4. No. 10
5. Nos 12-13 excluding the cornet cadenza
6. Nos. 14-end

# Border Brass Band League.

President—JOHN SCOTT, Esq. of Gala.  
Vice-President—T. CRAIG-BROWN, Esq., Selkirk.

## THE LAST Band Contest



OF THE SEASON  
WILL TAKE PLACE

Within the Gala Policies **At GALASHIELS**

Kindly granted by John Scott, Esq. of Gala  
(Entrance by BALMORAL PLACE only),

### On Saturday, Sept. 12, 1903.

THE FOLLOWING BANDS WILL TAKE PART—

Hawick Saxhorn.	St Ronan's (Innerleithen).	Gala Town.
Selkirk.	Peebles.	Gala R.V.

**Adjudicator—Frank Meller, Esq., Alva.**

Quickstep, - Own Choice.

### Selection: Test Piece, Border Melodies.

Specially arranged for this Contest by MR LAURENCE COCKBURN,  
Conductor of Innerleithen Band.

**Four Handsome Medals, presented by Provost RIDDLE, Galashiels, to be given to Band with Best Section of Bass.**

Bands will play from the MARKET SQUARE at 2.45. DRAW for Order of Playing at Three o'clock, immediately after which the Quickstep Contest will begin.

### Admission to the Field, Sixpence.

**TEMPERANCE REFRESHMENTS on the Ground.**

THOS. McDONALD, Secretary,  
99 Wood Street, Galashiels.

Craighead Bros., Galashiels.

Original programme of Borders Brass Band League contest 1903

## Appendix H. Examples of repertoire played by Borders Bands 1924-1931

### 1. Hawick Saxhorn Band

11 July 1924 (*Hawick Express*)

The Hawick Saxhorn Band will play the following programme in Wilton Lodge Park on Sunday first, 13 July, commencing at 3 o'clock, weather permitting.

MARCH	Constellation	Clarke
SELECTION	Recollections of England	Rimmer
(a) Serenade	Stanchen	
(b) Andante	Adieu	Schubert
SELECTION	Il Trovatore	Verdi
CORNET SOLO	Alas, Those Chimes	Wallace
FANTASIA	Sabbath Chimes	Round
PATROL	Jamie	Dacre
	God Save the King	

1 August 1924 (*Hawick Express*)

Favoured with good weather, Hawick Saxhorn Band played a delightful programme of music in Galashiels Public park on Sunday afternoon, when there was a very large and appreciative gathering.

GRAND ALLEGRO	The Conqueror	Moorhouse
SELECTION	Recollections of England	W. Rimmer
(a) "Andante" (Schubert); (b) "Serenade" (Schubert)		
SELECTION	Faust	Gounod
EUPHONIUM SOLO	Nazareth	Gounod
FANTASIA	Il Trovatore	Verdi
CORNET SOLO	Alas! Those Chimes	Wallace
PATROL	Jamie	Dacre
	God Save the King	

### 2. Galashiels Town Band

11 July 1924 (*Hawick Express*)

VISIT OF GALA BAND.—On Sunday afternoon the Galashiels town's band, accompanied by Ballie Miller and Councillor J. K. Brown, visited Hawick in a charabanc, under the conductorship of Mr Goerge Hogg. A delightful programme was greatly enjoyed by a large audience. The various selections were:

MARCH	Old Hundred	
	Marmion	Deane

FANTASIA	For King and Country	W. Rimmer
TROMBONE SOLO	The Trumpeter	A. Dix
SELECTION	William Tell	Rossini
HYMNS	(a) Sun of my Soul	
	(b) Lead Kindly Light	
SELECTION	Crispino	Ricci
IDYLL	My Syrian Maid	W. Rimmer
Border selection	Songs and Ballads	arr. Ord Hume
	God Save the King	

### 3. St Ronan's Silver Band

20 June 1930 (Peeblesshire Advertiser)

Programme in Station Road last Thursday evening.

MARCH	The Cycle Parade
FANTASIA	The New Century
VALSE	The Gipsy Queen
PETITE OVERTURE	Fedora
COMEDY SONG	Bunky Doodle-I-doh
SELECTION	HMS Pinafore
FANTASIA	A Scottish Garland
FOX-TROT	Down on Jollity Farm

On Sunday afternoon in the Victoria Park.

Mr R. P. Thomson of Peebles, the well-known baritone, sang a number of solos accompanied by the band

HYMN	Stella
ANTHEM	Jerusalem, My Glorious Home
SELECTION	Veronica
VOCAL SOLO	Asleep in the Deep
FANTASIA	Anniversary
SACRED FANTASIA	Adoration
SOLO	Dream o' Home
SELECTION	Kenilworth
HYMN	Holly

18 June 1930 (Peeblesshire Advertiser)

Played at Wells Brae on Thursday evening.

Three D. G's  
 Minstrel Gems  
 Village Blacksmith  
 Hampton Court  
 Gipsy Queen  
 Bonnie Scotland

The Battle of Stirling Brig  
Bunkey Doodle-I-Doh  
Jollity Farm  
Old Memories  
He's a Jolly Good Fellow  
National Anthem

22 August 1930 (Peeblesshire Advertiser)

Played at Broughton Flower Show on Saturday.

Cycle Parade  
Scottish Garland  
Minstrel Gems  
Bunkey Doodle-I-Doh  
Gipsy Queen  
Songs of Scotland  
Amy  
Pirates of Penzance  
Happy Days are here again  
Bonnie Scotland  
Betty  
Saucy Sue  
Old folks  
Village Blacksmith  
National Anthem

Sunday afternoon in Victoria Park.

Jesus, Lover of my Soul  
Holy  
Sandringham  
Saxonhurst  
To Thee, O Lord  
The Earth is the Lord's  
Sun of my Soul  
Pirates of Penzance  
National Anthem

8 May 1931 (Peeblesshire Advertiser)

Programme given on the Green to a large and appreciative audience.

MARCH	Pathfinder	J.A. Greenwood
FANTASIA	Minstrel songs	W. Raymond
FOX-TROT	The Oriental Belle	J. Ord Hume
POT POURRI SELECTION	Musical memories	Sidney Trenchard
FOX-TROT	Bric-a-Brac	Sidney Trenchard
HUMORESQUE	Who Killed Cock Robin?	Sidney Trenchard
MARCH	Death or Glory	R.B. Hall

12 June 1931 (Peeblesshire Advertiser)

St. Ronan's Silver band, under Conductor E. McGlasson, rendered an excellent programme of music on Thursday evening, at the east end of the High Street. Despite the inclement weather, quite a large number of visitors and local people gathered to hear the music, and, judging by the applause at the conclusion of each item, the efforts of the bandsmen were greatly appreciated.

MARCH	Fascination
MARCH	Carlisle St. Stephen's
SELECTION	Musical Memories
SELECTION	Minstrel Songs
FOXTROT	Belle of the Ball
WALTZ	Joyous Greeting
MARCH	Ocean Star

# Appendix J. Copy of the score 'Echoes O'er Leithen' (page 1)

**Echoes O'er Leithen**  
Alan Fernie

**Risoluto, Sempre marcato**

The score is arranged for the following instruments:

- Soprano Cornet
- Solo Cornet 1&2
- Solo Cornet 3&4
- Repiano Cornet
- 2nd Cornet
- 3rd Cornet
- Flugel
- Solo Horn
- 1st Horn
- 2nd Horn
- 1st Baritone
- 2nd Baritone
- 1st Trombone
- 2nd Trombone
- Bass Trombone
- Euphonium
- E♭ Bass
- B♭ Bass
- Timpani
- Percussion

The score includes dynamic markings such as *f marcato*, *f*, and *mp*. The percussion part includes markings for *mp* S.D. and *f* C.

## Appendix K. Photographs of Selkirk Common Riding



1. Selkirk Flute Band on “The Nicht afore the Morn”



2. Marching round the old town boundaries



3. Procession on Common Riding morning.

## Appendix L. Pictures of the Galashiels Braw Lads Gathering



1. Braw lad with Burgh flag



2. Ride-out over Gala Hill



3. Brass and Pipe bands playing together



4. Ceremony of the Roses



5. Entertaining crowds at the park gates



6. The charge uphill in the town



7. At the War Memorial



8. The St. Ronan's Silver Band marching off

Photographs Nos. 3,4,5,7,8 by the author  
Photographs Nos. 1,2,6 by kind permission of Grant Kinghorn

## Appendix M. List of Bands playing for the Melrose Masons' Walk 1870-1992

This list was kindly extracted from the minute books of the Melrose Masonic Lodge by the Lodge Secretary.

YEAR	BAND	COMMENTS
1870	Jedburgh Band	Clerk instructed to write to the bands of Galashiels and Jedburgh to ascertain upon what terms these could be had.
1871	Jedforest Band	
1872	Jedforest Band	Terms – Jedburgh 17 players £5 plus Dinner; Galashiels 17 players at 8/- each; St. Boswells 11 players at 4/- each.
1873	Hawick Band	
1874	Hawick Instrumental Band	
1875	Hawick Band	
1876	Hawick Band	
1877	Hawick Volunteer Band	
1878	Selkirk Instrumental Band	
1879	Hawick Instrumental Band	
1880	Band of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Roxburgh R.V. Band	
1881	Band of the Border Rifles, Hawick	
1882	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1883	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1884	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1885	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1886	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1887	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1888	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1889	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1890	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1891	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1892	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1893	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1894	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1895	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1896	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1897	Galashiels Instrumental Band	
1898	St. Boswells Brass Band	Cost £3. 15/-
1899	Hawick R.V. Band	

1900	Border R.V. Band, Hawick	
1901	Hawick R. V. Band	
1902	Hawick R.V. Band	
1903	Hawick R.V. Band	
1904	St Boswells Brass Band	
1905	Galashiels R.V. Band	
1906	Galashiels R.V. Band	Galashiels R.V. Band £4 10/-; Galashiels Town Band £5.
1907	Galashiels Town Band	
1908	Galashiels K.O.S.B. Territorial Band	
1909	Galashiels K.S.O.B. Territorial Band	
1910	St. Boswells Brass Band	
1911	St. Boswells Brass Band	
1912	Galashiels Town's Band	
1913	Galashiels Town's Band	
1914	Galashiels Ex-Soldiers Pipe Band	
1915		No band
1916		No band
1917		No band
1918		No band
1919	Galashiels Town's Band	
1920	Selkirk Brass Band	Cost £5. 5/- and £1. 16/- travelling expenses.
1921	Galashiels Town's Band	Cost £8.
1922	Galashiels Town's Band	
1923	Galashiels Town's Band	
1924	Galashiels Town's Band	
1925	Galashiels Town's Band	
1926	Galashiels Town's Band	
1927	Galashiels Town's Band	
1928	Galashiels Town's Band	
1929		No band
1930	Galashiels Town's Band	
1931	Galashiels Town's Band	
1932	Galashiels Town's Band	
1933	Galashiels Town's Band	
1934	Galashiels Town's Band	
1935	Galashiels Town's Band	
1936	Galashiels Town's Band	
1937	Galashiels Town's Band	
1938	Galashiels Town's Band	
1939		No band
1940		No band
1941		No band

1942		No band
1943		No band
1944		No band
1945		No band
1946	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1947	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1948	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1949	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1950	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1951	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1952	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1953	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1954	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1955	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1956	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1957	Galashiels Burgh Band	
1958	Jedforest Instrumental Band	
1959	Galashiels Town's Band	Cost £15 for 24 members
1960	Galashiels Town's Band	
1961		Three pipers
1962	Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band	
1963	Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band	
1964	Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band	
1965	Galashiels Town's Band	
1966	Galashiels Town's Band	
1967	Galashiels Town's Band	
1968	Galashiels Town's Band	
1969	Galashiels Town's Band	
1970	Galashiels Town's Band	
1971	Galashiels Town's Band	
1972	Galashiels Town's Band	
1973	Galashiels Town's Band	
1974	Galashiels Town's Band	
1975	Galashiels Town's Band	
1976	Galashiels Town's Band	
1977	Galashiels Town's Band	
1978	Galashiels Town's Band	
1979	Jedburgh Town Band	
1980	Jedburgh Instrumental Band	
1981	Galashiels Town's Band	
1982	Peebles Silver Band	
1983	Peebles Silver Band	Cost £70.
1984	Peebles Silver Band	
1985	Peebles Silver Band	
1986	Peebles Silver Band	
1987	Innerleithen Pipe Band	

1988	Innerleithen Pipe Band	
1899	Innerleithen Pipe Band	
1990	Innerleithen Pipe Band	
1991	Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band	
1992	Galashiels Ex-Service Pipe Band	

From 1987 onwards the music has always been provided by a pipe band.

**Appendix N. Programme of concert given by St. Ronan's Silver Band in September 2009**

<i>ST. RONAN'S AT THE MOVIES</i>	<i>Conducted by:</i>	<i>David McLeod</i>	<i>ST. RONAN'S AT THE MOVIES</i>
<b>The New Colonial March</b>	R.B. Hall	<b>St. Ronan's Future Band:</b> <i>Conducted by David Robb</i>	
<b>Born Free</b>	Arr. Catherall	<b>Eye of the Tiger</b>	Arr. Mabon
<b>There You'll Be</b>	Arr. Sykes	<b>Jurassic Park</b>	Arr. Mabon
<b>Theme from Schindler's List</b>	Arr. Bernaerts	<b>One Moment in Time</b>	Arr. Fernie
<b>A Groovy Kind of Love</b>	Arr. Fernie	<b>Scooby Doo</b>	Arr. Robb
<b>Going Home</b>	Arr. Fernie	<b>Raiders of the Lost Ark</b>	Arr. Sykes
<b>Beauty and the Beast</b>	Arr. Bernaerts	<b>Theme from Moulin Rouge</b>	Arr. van Kraeydonck
<b>March from The Great Escape</b>	Arr. Ellerby	<b>Gonna Fly Now</b>	Arr. Drover
		<b>Pirates of the Caribbean</b>	Arr. Fraser
		<b>New York, New York</b>	Arr. van der Velde

**INTERVAL**

There will be a retiring collection in aid of our young player's participation in the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland courses in August.

**Appendix O. Copy of Programme given by the Galashiels  
Town Band on 25 May 2013.**

## **Programme**

### *Senior Band*

Star Lake .....	<i>Ball</i>
Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club .....	<i>Hume</i>
The Last Rose of Summer.....	<i>Kingston</i>
Czardas .....	<i>Corry</i>
He Wipes the Tear from Every Eye .....	<i>Sykes</i>
Baggy Trousers .....	<i>Fernie</i>
Rule the World.....	<i>Hume</i>

### *Junior Band*

We Will Rock You .....	<i>Fernie</i>
Pop Star.....	<i>Fernie</i>
Love Me Tender.....	<i>Fernie</i>
Gospel Rock.....	<i>Mckenzie</i>

### *Youth Band*

Eye of the Tiger .....	<i>Mabon</i>
Can You Feel The Love Tonight .....	<i>Fernie</i>
Sing .....	<i>Barlow/Loyd-Webber</i>
Ghostbusters .....	<i>Hume</i>

### *Interval*

### *Senior Band*

Hymn for Africa .....	<i>Meechan</i>
Ejala.....	<i>Jan Magne Forde</i>
Baltic Dance .....	<i>Rock</i>
The Prayer.....	<i>Vertomen</i>
Hora Staccato.....	<i>Wainwright</i>
Water is Wide .....	<i>Ness</i>
Loch Lomond.....	<i>Duncan</i>

### *Encore*

African Funk .....	<i>Fernie</i> <i>(all 3 bands together)</i>
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