INTRODUCTION

Part I: Language.

> Scott wrote too late in the history of the Scots language to be able to do for Scottish prose what Fergusson and Burns did for Scottish poetry. It was no longer possible to write a novel in Scots prose, which for all sorts of reasons was no longer a viable literary medium. But he did something almost as good. He discovered the possibility of dialogue in the vernacular, and with all the talk of Lallans and all the talk of Scots in literature, it is surprising how little attention has been paid to the superb use of spoken Scots in the dialogue of Scott's novels. In this way he not only mapped out a possibility for generations of late Scottish prose writers, but he also redeemed a dying language and made it possible for us to hear with our inner ear, to read, to savour, kinds of vernacular raciness, which, but for the dialogue in Scott s Scottish novels, would have been permanently lost.
>
> David Daiches 1965. [1]

This research arose from an interest in Scots language in general, and in that used by Sir Walter Scott in his Scottish novels in particular. It may perhaps be seen as a very modest complement indeed to the scholarly study by Dr Graham Tulloch, The Language of Walter Scott, [2] published some fifteen years after David

1. D.Daiches, (1965), in Frazer, op.cit., p.150.

2. G.Tulloch, The Language of Walter Scott, London, 1980.

Daiches delivered his forthright criticism. In addition to this study, in which Dr Tulloch examines both the period language and the Scots used in the novels, he has probed the sources and varieties of Scott's dialogue in Scots in an article entitled 'Scott and the Creation of Dialogue in Scots'.[3] Although there have been several other contributors in this field, notably David Murison[4] and Alexander Welsh,[5] none approaches the in-depth examination of Scott's language undertaken by Dr Tulloch, who correctly asserts,

> The little which has been written about Scott's language approaches it from four angles: firstly, his debts to other writers, notably Shakespeare; secondly, his contribution to the vocabulary of present-day English; thirdly and fourthly, a relatively small amount of work directly on the subject of this book, his period and Scottish language. 6

This study does not seek to duplicate research already completed, and the subject of Scottish grammar, so ably addressed by Dr Tulloch, will not be discussed. The aim is to investigate further the actual nature of Scots, to list, analyse, and categorize the vernacular vocabulary used by Scott, and to evaluate the manner and extent of his use of it, particularly in Waverley, The Antiquary, and The Pirate.

An initial thrust was made by an investigation of the English Dialect Dictionary, which, in the words of its editor, Joseph Wright, in June 1898,

> includes, so far as is possible, the complete vocabulary of all English dialect words which are still in use or are known to have been use at any time during the last two hundred years in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. 7

3. G.Tulloch, 'Scott and the Creation of Dialogue in Scots', in A.Bold (ed.), Sir Walter Scott: The Long-Forgotten Melody, New Jersey, 1983, pp.143-166

4. D.Murison, 'The Two Languages in Scott', in A.Norman Jeffares (ed.), Scott's Mind and Art, Edinburgh, 1969, pp.206-229.

5. A.Welsh, 'Contrast of Styles in the Waverley Novels', Novel, Vol.6, No.3, Spring 1973 218-228.

6. G.Tulloch, The Language of Walter Scott, London, 1980, p.337.

7. Joseph Wright, The English Dialect Dictionary, 6 vols, Oxford, 1898-1905, Preface, p.v.

An examination of the Scott entries revealed them to be an arbitrary collection of those quotations which best illustrate the headwords of primarily Scottish usage that are included in the dictionary, and they cannot be regarded as an accurate indication of the amount of Scots language found in Scott's novels. For example, while EDD lists ninety-two Scots terms for The Pirate, a search of the text revealed over 400. It proved to be a valuable starting point, however, as it lists and illustrates 2,138 headwords which have been used by Scott. These were extrapolated with such information as was considered important, and analyzed as to function, distribution, and provenance. On the subject of provenance, Wright's words on the difficulties of establishing the etymology of a word should be kept in mind,

> It must not be assumed that where no etymology is given there has been no attempt made to find one. The very opposite is the case. It has often happened that dozens of dictionaries, special glossaries, and articles in philological journals have been carefully searched without any satisfactory results. In all such instances I have preferred to give nothing rather than a mere guess. 8

A categorization in terms of function of these headwords is, of necessity, loose, since many of them fulfil more than one grammatical purpose. An effort was made, therefore, to classify them according to the way in which Scott mostly used them, and this method indicates 1181 nouns, 499 verbs, 302 adjectives, sixty-one adverbs, and ninety-five other terms such as pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, interjections and phrases.

EDD considers 788 of the headwords to be of widespread usage in Scotland, Ireland, and England; 568 to be confined to Scotland, Northumberland, and the north and middle English counties; 247 to be in use in Scotland and the lower counties of England; fifty-two to be of Scottish-Irish usage, and sixty-six to be limited to Scotland and Northumberland. Such a fine line exists between Scotland and Northumberland, that it is not surprising to find a proliferation of words common to both, with a drift to and from the northern English counties. In 1873, James Murray wrote,

8. EDD, Preface, p.vi.

> The living tongue of Teviotdale, and the living tongue of Northumberland, would, in accordance with present political geography, be classed, the one as a Scottish, the other as an English dialect: in actual fact, they are the same dialect, spoken, the one on Scottish the other on English territory, but which, before Scottish and English had their political application, was all alike the Anglian territory of Northanhymbra-land. 9

Elements of early Border speech, the sixty-six words of Scottish and Northumberland usage have been listed in Appendix I. Etymological details have been supplemented, showing the following variety of origins - three German/Dutch, four Gaelic, four Latin, five Old Norse, six French, and fourteen Old English, a commensurate distribution of provenance for a language that has its roots in the Old English speech of the Anglo-Saxon settlers in Northumbria in the seventh century.

A total of 365 words are regarded by EDD as being of exclusively Scottish usage, and of these, 140 were deemed obsolete at the time of publication. These words, which are listed in Appendix I, are of significance in the investigation of the preservation and revival of Scots in Scott's works. In his article on lexical loss and lexical survival, Manfred Görlach appeals for caution concerning the death or disappearance of a word, quoting 'the warning of the arch-lexicographer, J.A.H. Murray, a hundred years ago (in N.E.D., 'General Explanations', vol.I, 1888)' in support,

> The death of a word is not an event of which the date can be readily determined. It is a vanishing process, extending over a lengthened period ... there are many words of which it is doubtful whether they are still to be considered as part of the living language; they are alive to some speakers, and dead to others ... 10

The cogency of this reminder was proved when the list of 140 words was referred to The Scottish National Dictionary, which claimed current usage for fifty-three of them. Evidence appears to suggest that on more than one occasion, Scott (and Burns) revived words and kept them alive. Writing in 1874, Charles Mackay (1814-1889), claimed that Scots has always been a greater conserver of language than English,pointing out,

9. James A.H.Murray, The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland, London, 1873, p.5.

10. Manfred Görlach, 'Lexical Loss and Lexical Survival: The Case of Scots and English', Scottish Language, No.6, Autumn 1987, p.18.

> It is interesting to note that in the glossary appended to Mr. Thomas Wright's edition of those ancient and excellent alliterative poems, the "Vision" and "Creed" of *Piers Ploughman*, there occur about two thousand obsolete English or Anglo-Saxon words, many of which are still retained in the Scoto-Saxon of the Scottish Lowlands; and that in the Glossary to Tyrrwhitt's edition of Chaucer, there occur upwards of six thousand words which need explanation to the modern English reader, and full one half of which need no explanation whatever to a Scotsman. 11

EDD had not provided an accurate account of the amount of Scots in the novels, and indeed there was no reason why it should have done so, but it had demonstrated proof of a great many Scots terms in The Heart of Midlothian (345), Saint Ronan's Well (273), The Antiquary (290), Rob Roy (260), Waverley (241), and Guy Mannering (230). As a result three novels were chosen for more intensive study, Waverley, because it was Scott's first attempt to use Scots in a prose work; The Antiquary, since it is set in his own time, and the vernacular, therefore, could be assumed to be most authentic; and The Pirate, because of its known extensive use of Scots terms with a Norn influence, and because of its unique location in the Northern Isles. These three novels span the entire eighteenth century, ranging from around 1700 in The Pirate, through the period of the Forty-Five in Waverley, to the time of Scott around the turn of the eighteenth century in The Antiquary. This gives a broad scope covering three or four generations of speakers in different parts of Scotland, and belonging to different classes of society, albeit mainly the humble, homely plain folk.

An estimation of the true quality and extent of Scott's use of the vernacular now depended on a close reading of the texts to extract obvious and presumed Scots terms for subjection to further dictionary corroboration. Following the advice of Dr Tulloch,

> However, in the end the best commentaries on Scott's language remain The Oxford English Dictionary and The Scottish National Dictionary. It is an indication of the range and variety of his language that no smaller dictionaries will do him full justice. 12

The Scottish National Dictionary was chosen for this purpose.

11. C.Mackay, Lost Beauties of the English Language, London, 1987, Introduction, p.xv.
12. Tulloch, op.cit., p.338.

Of an intrinsically Scottish character, SND, by its own declaration,

> deals with (1) Scottish words in existence since c.1700 (a) in Scottish literature, (b) in public records, (c) in glossaries and dictionaries, (d) in private collections, (e) in special dialect treatises, and (2) Scottish words gathered from the mouths of dialect speakers by competent observers. 13

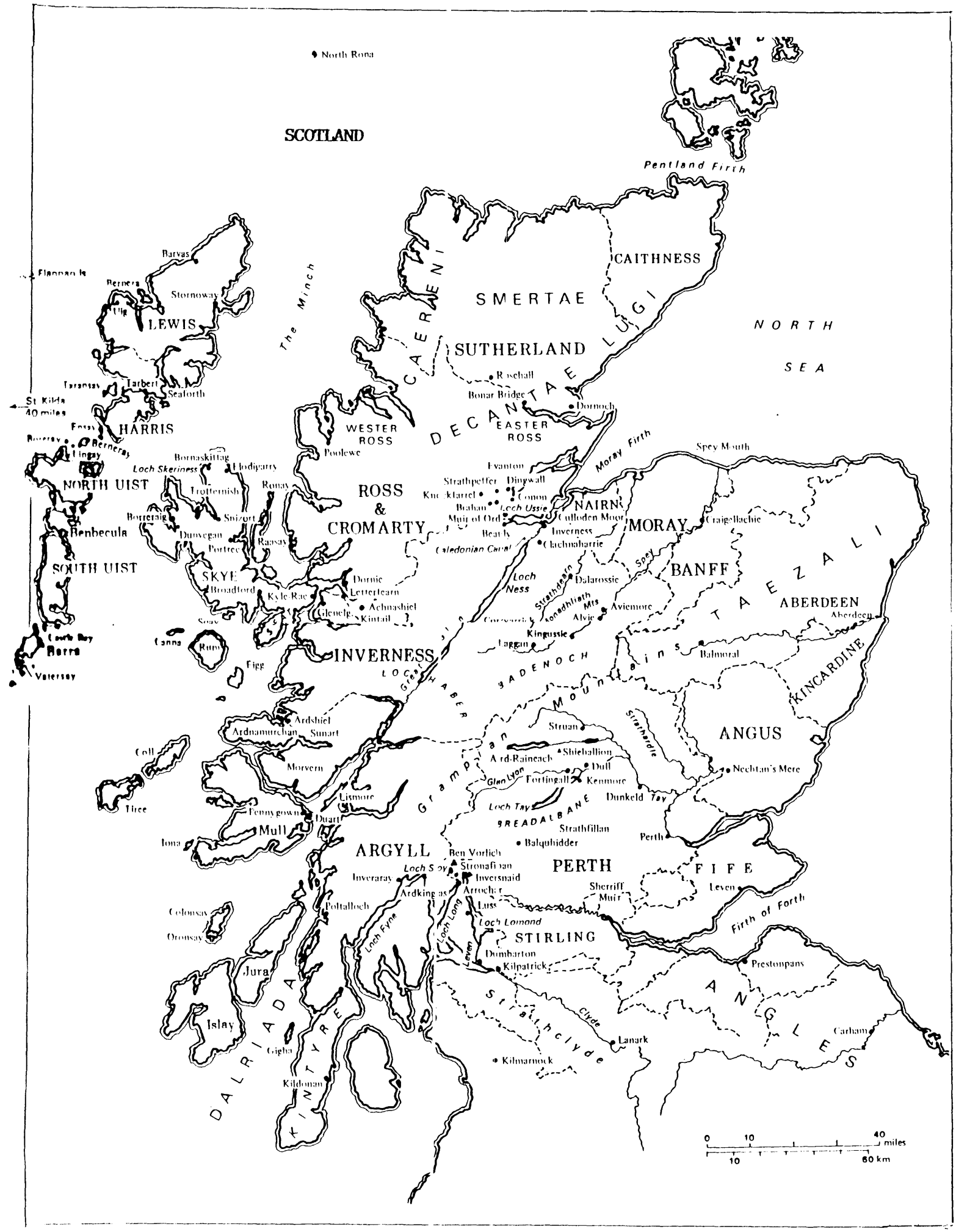
It contains a wealth of valuable information on the Scottish language and its dialects in the comprehensive introduction, including copious notes on dialect districts and phonetic differences. Fundamental characteristics of Scots are made clear, and those disconcerted by Scott's use of multiple spellings may be reassured to learn from such an authoritative source, that Scottish spelling has long been 'chaotic', and that 'in Older Scots most words could be spelled in a variety of ways'.[14] Where warranted, or 'where the development of Scots forms or meanings seems to call for it',[15] the etymological information is extensive.

The method of cross-referencing with SND yielded some 1,204 headwords, eighty-four uniquely Scots phrases, and seventy-nine proverbial expressions used by Scott in the selected novels, and are accompanied by 495 illustrative sentences from Waverley, 607 from The Antiquary, and 444 from The Pirate. These headwords, phrases, and proverbs have been referenced, categorized and listed in Appendix I.

An analysis of the vocabulary of the novels into such categories as Persons and Occupations; Household and Farm; Nature, Birds and Animals; Church and Religion; Supernatural; Weapons and Warfare; Legal Language, etc., is also included. In view of his interest and involvement in country affairs, and the rural locations of the novels, it is little surprise to find the bulk of Scott's vocabulary associated with country society, household and farm, and natural features of the surrounding landscape. This vocabulary flows from the lips of Scott's characters in uninhibited passages of Scots dialogue, in which not only words, but speech patterns, sentiments, and modes of thought of past times are preserved.

13. W.Grant and D.Murison, The Scottish National Dictionary, 10 vols., Edinburgh, 1931-76, Introduction, p.xlv.

14. ibid., p.xiv. 15. ibid., p.xlvi.


SCOTLAND
North Rona
Pentland Firth
CAITHNESS
SMERTAE
SUTHERLAND
CAERMENI
DECANTAE
LUGI
NORTH
SEA
The Minch
Barvas
Flannan Is
Bernera
Stornoway
Uig
LEWIS
Tarbert
Taransay
Scalpay
Seaforth
St Kilda
40 miles
HARRIS
Eriskay
Berneray
Lingay
NORTH UIST
Bornaskitaig
Loch Skeriness
Lodigarry
Trotternish
Ronay
Benbecula
Borreraig
Dunvegan
Portree
Snizort
Ramsay
SOUTH UIST
SKYE
Broadford
Kyle Rae
Dornie
Letterfearn
Glenelg
Achnashiel
Kintail
Loch Boy
Barra
Vatersay
Canna
Rum
Eigg
INVERNESS
Ardshiel
Ardnamurchan
Sunart
Coll
Tiree
Morvern
Lismore
Fennygown
Duart
Mull
Iona
ARGYLL
Inveraray
Loch Awe
Ardkinglas
Poltalloch
Colonsay
Oronsay
Jura
Islay
Gigha
Kildonan
DALRIADA
KINTYRE
Loch Fyne
Loch Long
Ben Vorlich
Stronafian
Inversnaid
Arrochar
Luss
Loch Lomond
STIRLING
Dumbarton
Kilpatrick
Strathclyde
Kilmarnock
Lanark
Poolewe
WESTER ROSS
EASTER ROSS
ROSS & CROMARTY
Evanton
Strathpeffer
Dingwall
Knockfarrel
Conon
Brahan
Loch Ussie
Muir of Ord
Beauly
Inverness
Culloden Moor
NAIRN
Clachnaharrie
Caledonian Canal
Rosehall
Bonar Bridge
Dornoch
Moray Firth
Spey Mouth
MORAY
Craigellachie
Loch Ness
Strathglass
Dalarossie
Spey
BANFF
Corrieyairack
Kingussie
Laggan
Aviemore
Alvie
Monadhliath Mts
ABERDEEN
Aberdeen
Balmoral
Grampian Mountains
BADENOCH
KINCARDINE
Struan
Strathardle
ANGUS
Ard-Raineach
Shiehallion
Duff
Fortingall
Glen Lyon
Kenmore
Dunkeld
Loch Tay
Nechtan's Mere
ALBANE
Strathfillan
Balquhidder
Perth
PERTH
FIFE
Sherriff Muir
Leven
Firth of Forth
Prestonpans
ANGLES
Carham
0 10 40 miles
10 60 km

CHAPTER I

What is Scots?

Chronicles and place names attest the occupation of Scotland during the ninth century by four different racial groups, and the existence of four distinct native tongues. Firstly, there were the Picts, inhabiting the interior and the eastern seaboard as far north as the Firth of Forth, a race whose origin remains a mystery, and whose language has vanished; secondly, there were the Scots, living on the islands and mainland of the west coast to the north of Kintyre, Gaelic speakers who came originally from Ireland; thirdly, there were the Welsh-speaking Britons who occupied the centre and south-eastern region, and fourthly, there were the Anglo-Saxons who had settled in south-eastern Scotland, and who spoke what came to be known as "Inglis". In addition to these four tongues, Norn, closely resembling Old Norse, was spoken in Orkney and Shetland, and in Caithness. 1

Of these forms of speech, it was the Northern English first brought to the south-east of Scotland by the Anglo-Saxon settlers from Northumbria in the seventh century that was eventually to prevail and to give rise to Scots. To do this it had to displace the Norman French which was spoken in the Scottish court from the time of King David I(1124-53), when monks from England and France, and settlers of Anglo-Norman and Flemish origin were encouraged. Northern English gained strength from an influx of English-speaking burgesses from south-east Scotland and England. Through these Northern English spread to Strathclyde in the west, and north along the east coast, emerging as a common form of speech by the thirteenth century, to be adopted by all, including the aristocracy.

1. S. Romaine, 'The English Language in Scotland', in English as a World Language, University of Michigan Press, 1982, p.56.

Until the end of the fifteenth century no one thought of designating the speech used in the Lowlands as "Scotch". The term "Scottish language" was used to refer to Gaelic or Erse, the tongue of the original Irish Scots after whom the country was named. James Murray drew attention to Erse when he wrote,

> In the "Flytirg" between Dunbar and Kennedy, one of the points with which the former poet taunted his rival was his extraction from the Irish Scots of Galloway and Carrick, who still retained their Celtic tongue, whence he styled him "Ersch katherane", "Ersch baird", and his poetry as
>
> Sic eloquence as thay in Erschery use;
>
> proceeding to vaunt:-
>
> I tak on me, ane pair of Lowthiane hippis
> Sall fairer Inglis mak and mair parfyte,
> Than thou can blabbar with thy Carrick lippis.
>
> But though the *Sassunnach* might thus forget or ignore the fact, the Celt was not likely to forget that his own ancient and sonorous tongue was the original "Scots", and the "Lowthiane Inglis" but an intruder in the historic Scotland. In this spirit Kennedy answered Dunbar's taunt of the "Erschery":-
>
> Thou luvis nane Erische, elf, I undirstand,
> But it sowld be all trew Scottismennis leid;
> It was the [fyrst] gud langage of this land,
> And *Scota* it causit to multiply and spreid,
> Quhil Corspatrik, that we of tressoun reid,
> Thy fore fader, maid Ersche and Erschmen thin,
> Throw his tressoun brocht Inglis rumpillis in;
> Sa wald thy self mycht thow to him succeid. 2

The language used by the Lowlanders was called "Inglis", being the same language as that spoken by the Angles living in Lothian and Tweeddale, originally brought to the land beyond the Forth by Anglo-Saxon settlers. This Northern dialect, common to the Scottish subjects living near the Border and to the English subjects living north of the Humber, was used by a number of Scottish writers of the Early Period (1296-c.1470), and for convenience has been called Early Lowland Scotch. Writings of this period include songs about

2. Murray, op.cit., p.44.

the Siege of Berwick (1296), the Battle of Bannockburn (1314), the sad state of the land after the death of Alexander III; early Scottish laws; The Brus by John Barbour (1320?-1395); an extremely archaic portion of prose from The Craft of Deyng, and passages from the Acts of Parliament of James I and James II.

From the end of the fifteenth century to the time of Union of Crowns in 1603 stretched the interval which is classified as the Middle Period. During this time the Northern dialect came to be known as "Scots" instead of "Inglis", and its use extended to all areas except the Highlands and Islands, where Gaelic continued to prevail. Throughout this interval,

> The written language of Scotland became more and more conformed to that type of the Northern speech which was spoken on the shores of the Forth - in Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Stirling, Dunfermline, and St. Andrews, the centre of political and ecclesiastical government, of the education, as well as the commerce of the kingdom; and, as a consequence, it came more and more to assume characteristics of its own, distinct from the Old Northern tongue, which had been common to Southern Scotland and Northern England. 3

Scottish writers of this period were influenced, too, by the close relationship existing between Scotland and France, and a large vocabulary of French terms was introduced into the Scottish language. At the same time, Latin was exercising an appeal to Scottish writers, who incorporated Latin terms into their works to an astonishing degree, and wrote in Latin in an uninhibited and robust manner as well.

Prominent among the writers of the day were Gavin Douglas (1475?-1522), William Dunbar (1460?-1520?), Walter Kennedy (1460?-1508?), Sir David Lindsay (1490-1555), George Buchanan (1506-1582), John Knox (1505-1572), and James VI (1566-1625) who ceased to write in Scots after the Union of Crowns.

It is unfortunate that just when Scots was blossoming and consolidating as a national language several factors combined to

3. Murray, op. cit., p.51

erode it.[4] One of the most decisive influences was the introduction of the English translation of the Bible into Scotland, and the implementation, by a law of 1579, of its widespread use. This literally forced Scottish families to read written English. The Union of Crowns in 1603 furthered the damage begun by the English Bible, creating a change for English in the court itself, an important event noted by Dr. William Grant in his Introduction to The Scottish National Dictionary,

> Before he became King of England, James VI of Scotland wrote several treatises in his native speech. After the Union of Crowns the language of his literary efforts was that of his English subjects. His example was followed by other Scottish writers, like Alexander, Earl of Stirling, and Drummond of Hawthornden, so that when the Union of Parliaments took place in 1707, English had become the recognised medium of expression for Scottish authors - at least in all subjects of serious import. 5

From this time onwards the Scottish gentry spent more time visiting England, and there was more frequent intermarriage between Scots and English; many well-to-do Scottish families sent their sons to school in England. Scott has described an example of social intercourse between English and Scottish landowners in the visit of Edward Waverley to the Baron of Bradwardine. Romaine notes the general effect of this increasing partiality for English culture on the language of Scotland,

> Scotland thus took place in the cultural climate of correctness and propriety that pervaded eighteenth century Britain. Polite literature and social behaviour, including speech, were prescribed according to literate London standards; virtually anything which deviated too far from this norm was likely to be considered vulgar and provincial. These polite ideals were taken up by educated Scots and the upper classes, and there came to be an increasing self-consciousness about the supposed inferiority of Scots speech. 6

4. A.J.Aitken, 'Is Scots a Language?' English Today, ET3, July-Sept., 1985, p.43. 'It was once the full national language of the Scottish nation; and it possesses its own clearly traceable history of rise and decline.'

5. SND., Introduction, p.xiii.

6. Romaine, op.cit., p.62.

Henry Graham, writing of the life and accomplishments of the philosopher, David Hume (1711-1776), recounted his desire to eradicate all traces of Scots from his History of England,

> What pains he took to write good English! How he tried to avoid Scotticisms and solecisms, having "the misfortune to write in the language of the most stupid and factious barbarians in the world!" It is pathetic to see the great Scotsman begging that upstart Mallet to revise his work and correct his vocabulary and his grammar - an appeal the great little man did not deign to answer; at another time asking a worthy linen draper in Bristol to correct his style; and in 1775 submitting the text of a new edition to two Scots lads fresh from an English school. 7

The Scottish poets were far from being unaffected by this vogue for English; generally speaking, Edinburgh copied London. The Anglo-Scottish school of poets of the early eighteenth century, which included William Hamilton (1704-1765), James Thomson (1700-1748), David Mallet (1700-1765), Robert Blair (1699-1746), and the physician, Dr. John Armstrong (1709-1779), was consumed by admiration for its English counterparts, and by a desire to emulate the style and themes of Pope. This was the literary climate of the time when Allan Ramsay (1686-1758) began to write, and while he was able to rekindle interest in Scottish verse, he did not counteract the adulation for English. Ramsay, Alexander Ross (1699-1784), and Robert Fergusson (1750-1774) wrote in English too, but the results were much less satisfying than when they wrote vigorous and inspired poetry in the vernacular. It would be difficult, for example, to find anything in Fergusson's English poetry to match the lift and the lilt of his drinking song, Up in the Air,

> Now the sun's gane out o' sight,
> Beet the ingle, and snuff the light;
> In glens the fairies skip and dance,
> And witches wallop o'er to France;
> Up in the air
> On my bonny grey mare,
> And I see her yet, and I see her yet,
> Up in the air
> On my bonny grey mare,
> And I see her yet, and I see her yet. 8

7. H.G.Graham, Scottish Men of Letters in the Eighteenth Century, London, 1901, pp.44-45.

8. H.Walker, Three Centuries of Scottish Literature, Glasgow, 1893, pp.20-21.

Subsequent poets, from John Wilson (1720-1789) to James Beattie (1735-1803) wrote almost exclusively in English, although the obsession to reproduce Pope abated from the time of William Falconer (1732-1769), to be replaced by what Walker has called a 'groping after romanticism'. It is to James MacPherson (1738-1796), composer of the Ossianic poems, that Walker assigned the position of 'the first in the English language who powerfully and decisively expressed [the coming romantic movement]'. 9

When Robert Burns (1759-1796) began to write in Scots, the resurgence of interest in the vernacular increased. Like his predecessors, Ramsay, Ross, and Fergusson, Burns also wrote in English, but while they changed languages in whimsical fashion, Burns adhered to a system, using Scots for his homely and humorous subjects and English for more elevated topics. 10

Hamish Henderson has made an interesting comment on Scottish poets, declaring that, like Switzerland, Scotland has always been a 'multi-lingual community', and that its poets have long been bilingual. He quotes Stanley Hyman to support his claim,

> The first Scottish poetry has always been bilingual in a curious fashion. Douglas the translator, Dunbar using Latin refrains, Boyd writing in Scottish and Latin, Burns writing in Scottish and English, are all poets for whom Lowland Scots was one of the world's tongues, not the language in which God and Adam held converse. 11

Henderson makes particular mention of George Buchanan, who wrote 'prose in trenchant Scots and elegant English as well as poetry in justly eulogised Latin'. 12

Notwithstanding the fact that they were able to write in English (and in other languages) on occasion, the Scots often did so under difficulties, for it is always easier for a writer to express himself in his native tongue. Burns, the most competent in English of the poets, frankly acknowledged this, while Scott, ever conscious of the constrairts of English, commented on Sir James Melville's Memoirs,

9. Walker, op.cit., p.127.

10. ibid., pp.181-182.

11. S.Hyman quoted by H.Henderson in 'At the Foot o' yon Excellin Brae:The Language of Scots Folksong', in D.McClure (ed.) Scotland and the Lowland Tongue, Aberdeen, 1983, p.101.

12. loc.cit.

> Thomson is superintending a capital edition of Sir James Melville s Memoirs. It is brave to see how he wags his Scots tongue and what a difference there is in the force and firmness of the language compared to the mincing English editior in which he has hitherto been alone known.
> 13

Walker's assessment of the problem of the Scottish writers with English is so perceptive that it is well worth quoting in full,

> When they attempted English, the Scottish poets were not only writing a strange language but trying to think strange thoughts as well. The English canons of taste were different to the Scotch. The poetic tradition of the Scotch impelled almost irresistibly to simplicity and truth, that of the English was such that nothing short of a revolution could suffice to shake off the trammels of convention. Thus the strange incongruity perceptible in the works of the Scottish poets may receive a perfectly natural explanation. So far as mere command of language goes, Fergusson and Ramsay were capable of writing English verse much superior to anything in that language which they have left. When they write English however, not the language only but sentiments and versification also are foreign to them. The time they devote to the English muse is to these men a species of poetic sabbath; for six days of the week they "bask in Nature's smiles"; on the seventh their features must be twisted to express emotions they never felt, and to ape graces they do not possess. And as mere occasional imitators, who must have a precedent for everything lest they transgress they know not what, they are more frigid than the frigid school they followed. In their Scotch poems, on the other hand, they are under no such burden.
> 14

In a most interesting chapter entitled 'The Scoatch Depairtment: The Press and the Vernacular', William Donaldson has demonstrated that the effects of Anglicization may not have been quite so sweeping as is generally accepted, and he lists instances of the survival of Scots language, in some cases until the nineteenth century in law, public administration, church, school, public records, diaries, sermons, and chapbooks to support his view.[15] However, even if this is correct, the importance of the part played by the poets in preserving vernacular tradition up to the time of Burns is deserving of great emphasis.

13. Lockhart, op.cit., p.652.

14. Walker, op.cit., pp. 37-38.

15. W.Donaldson, Popular Literature in Victorian Scotland, Aberdeen, 1986, p.35 ff.

An evaluation of Scott's contribution to the preservation of Scots language might appropriately begin by focussing on the two groups of words contained in Appendix Part I (pp.26-43), - namely those headed Obsolete Words, and Words Common to Scotland and Northumberland.

With regard to the first group, considering the conflict that exists between EDD and SND respecting the obsolescence of many of these words, it seems more suitable to deem them archaic. It has been noted earlier that it is almost impossible to ascertain the time of death of a word.[16] It may well be that by using certain archaic words Scott revived them and prolonged their lives. Indeed, SND cites 'vivers' (used by two elderly men, Triptolemus Yellowley (P 63), and the Baron of Bradwardine (W 384), to indicate food) as being just such an example.Of the 140 archaic words which are listed as appearing in Scott's writing, around fifty-five are used in the three novels studied, - twenty-seven in Waverley, and fourteen each in The Pirate and The Antiquary. There is no doubt that Scott's choice of these words is deliberate; in some cases they fall with apparent ease into dialogue or narrative, and on other occasions he purposefully structures situations for their inclusions.

In Waverley, the presence of the Baron and Bailie Macwheeble, both preoccupied with legalities, affords the opportunity to admit such old law terms as 'exeem' (W 98), 'stouthrief' (W 137), 'wadset' (W 184, 389), 'servitor' (W 593), and 'warrandice' (W 593). By one means or another Scott makes the meanings clear. In the case of 'servitor', he adds the explanation in the text, telling the reader that the bailie is searching for his apprentice, 'or servitor, as he was called Sixty Years Since'. In the case of 'warrandice', an instance of an archaic word still in current use,[17] the bailie makes the meaning clear in his speech to Edward, offering his own person as security for the agreement of Rose and her father, 'Never fear, I'se be caution for them; I'se gie you my personal warrandice (W 593). The term 'wadset' is given additional clarity by its dual use. At the feast at Glennaquoich, Fergus's 'wadsetters' and 'tacksmen' are described as occupying 'portions of his estate as mortgagers or lessees' (W 184),

16. Introduction, p.xiv.

17. Last quotation in SNI is dated 1970.

while at Edinburgh, on the eve of battle, the bailie uses the term 'wadset' as meaning a mortgage or surety (W 389).

Of greater interest to the average reader is the term 'Andrea Ferrara', which Scott uses in Waverley. At Holyrood Palace the Prince presents Edward with his own broadsword, telling him 'the blade is a genuine Andrea Ferrara, - it has been a sort of heirloom in my family' (W 374). Blades that were actually wrought by the sword-maker Andrea dei Ferara were the work of the sixteenth century, so the Prince might well describe his an heirloom by 1745. His mention of 'genuine' is very relevant because many blades in the sixteenth and seventeenth century bore spurious signatures of the Italian sword-maker.[18] By the time that Scott refers to the same type of sword in The Antiquary, it is represented as an antique , when Miss Griselda, urging Monkbarns to arm against the French, offers him 'a Roman falchion of brass with one hand, with the other an Andrea Ferrara without a handle' (A 585).

As Monkbarns and Sir Arthur engage in a long and heated dispute over the Pechts or Picts, whose origins are still the subject of controversy,[19] Scott seizes the opportunity to include some of the names by which they have been known,

> "Why, man, there was once a people called the Piks - "
> "More properly *Picts*, " interrupted the baronet.
> "I say the *Pikar, Pihar, Piochtar, Piaghter*, or *Peughtar*," vociferated Oldbuck; "they spoke a Gothic dialect -" (A 73)

The fervour displayed by the two is entirely in keeping with that shown by defenders of the Celtic and Gaelic camps. In fact, as Lang concludes his note on the matter, it was impossible for Scott to 'exaggerate the fanciful truculence of antiquaries in his day' (W 615).

By diverse methods Scott draws the attention of the reader to a variety of archaic words and subjects, and contemporary readers with an antiquarian bent will find them as absorbing as those of the author's own day. In addition to his more elaborate strategies like those above, he employs the very simple and effective device of allowing archaisms to fall naturally from the lips of his older characters. So, for example, the Baron speaks of wearing 'muils'(W 439); Basil Mertoun refers to an old woman's bonnet as a 'curch' (P 104); Saunders Saunderson explains that Rose was 'flemit' (W 74): Edie

18. D.H.Caldwell, (ed.), Scottish Weapons & Fortifications 1100-1800, Edinburgh, 1981, p.136.

19. See F.T.Wainwright (ed.), The Problem of the Picts, Perth, 1980.

Ochiltree talks of 'travell'd earth' (A 315), and of Lovel's 'unbrizzed banes' (A 103), while Magnus Troil appropriately uses an ancient term of O.N. derivation when he speaks of his cousin being 'unhalsed' (P 326).

Scott uses song and proverb to preserve some archaisms. In this way 'lunyie/lunzie', an O.Fr. form of 'loin' is kept alive in the hunting song bellowed by Balmawhapple (W 91); Bryce Snailsfoot's use of the proverbial expression 'very, very Fifish, as the east-country fisher-folk say' (P 144) prolongs the life of 'Fifish' as an adjective meaning 'odd'; and 'lauch', a very old word for 'custom', is perpetuated by Jenny Rintherout when she quotes the proverb, 'Ilka land has its ain lauch' (A 352).

It is significant, in regard to the group of sixty-six words of Scottish and Northumberland usage, that Scott can be seen here to be drawing on vocabulary existing in this region from the time of its introduction by seventh century Anglo-Saxon settlers. The proportional distribution of loan-words has been noted and it agrees with the assertion by J.A. Sheard that, apart from place-names, the Celtic language had very little effect on the original Anglo-Saxon.[20] It must be mentioned, in connection with this early form of speech, which served English and Scots alike, that MacKay has listed around 2,000 words which he claims were 'lost' from it by the English by 1874, but retained by the Scots. He points out, moreover, that although such terms as 'bairn', 'bonny', 'but and ben', 'canny', 'gloaming', 'ingle', 'thole', 'tocher', 'langsyne' and many others are Anglo-Saxon in origin, they have so long ago passed out of common English usage that they are now popularly regarded as being exclusively Scots.[21] Of this particular group Scott has used, and so preserved, around one hundred words in the three novels being examined, and a list of these is also appended.

It appears as though Scots possesses a natural resilience, and an ability to absorb new words without discarding the old, and that these traits, combined with the earnest endeavours of poets and writers, have helped it to survive despite adverse circumstances.

20. J.A.Sheard, The Words We Use, London, 1954, p.147.

21. MacKay, op.cit., pp.xvi-xvii.

In addition to acknowledging the contribution made by Scots writers,those interested in the Scottish language are indebted to the compilers of the dictionaries - to John Jamieson (1759-1838), who, while a young minister of the Free Kirk in Forfar, responded to the advice and encouragement of George Dempster, and painstakingly categorized the data he had collected to publish An Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language, which ran to four volumes, commenced in 1808 and completed in 1825; to James Murray, who published The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland in 1873; to Joseph Wright, editor of The English Dialect Dictionary, completed in 1905, which includes all English dialect words used in Scotland in the last two hundred years; to William Grant and David Murison, editors of The Scottish National Dictionary, consisting of ten volumes, commenced in 1931 and published in 1976, and to Sir William Craigie, first editor of A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue, publication of which began in 1931, and which consists of five volumes to date. The most recent publication in this area is The Concise Scots Dictionary, an abridgement of the last two mentioned, edited by Mairi Robinson, and published by Aberdeen University in 1985.

Opinions differ as to the status of Scots, with some linguists declaring it no more than a dialect, and others fiercely defending its right to be qualified as a national language. R.de B.Trotter (1901), William Craigie (1912), Douglas Young (1946), Janet Templeton (1972), David Murison (1971, 1977, 1979), William Graham (1977), and J.D.McClure (1980) have spoken in support of the right of Scots to be called a language. Mairi Robinson (1985) classified it as such on account of the following characteristics,

> Its linguistic distinctiveness, its occupation of its own 'dialect island' bounded by the Border, its individual history, its own dialect variation, its varied use in a remarkable literature, the ancient loyalty of the Scottish people to the notion of the Scots language, as well as the fact that since the sixteenth century Scots has adopted the nation's name - all of these are attributes of a language rather than a dialect. 22

22. M.Robinson, (ed. in chief), The Concise Scots Dictionary, Aberdeen, 1985, Introduction, p.xiii.

A.J.Aitken strikes a more cautious note in his assessment of Scots, observing that,

> It is often described as an autonomous 'full national language showing all the signs of a rapidly developing all-purpose speech, as distinct from English as Portugese from Spanish (etc)' (Murison 1979 a, p.9). 'As a spoken and written language [it] stood on a level with English', according to Craigie in 1921. (Craigie 1924, p.4); and many other assertions could be cited. But it could also be said, and indeed has been said in effect by Gordon Donaldson (Donaldson 1961, pp. 287-94) that its autonomy was never quite complete ... In any case, between the Union of Crowns in 1603 and of the Parliaments in 1707, whatever autonomy Scots had possessed disappeared and the situation which essentially is still with us came into existence. 23

In a later article Aitken developed this view further, and concluded by saying, 'I believe what I have written suggests that if Scots is not now a full 'language' it is something more than a mere 'dialect'. A distinguished German scholar once called it a *halbsprache* - a semi-language. 24

In Tulloch's wisely reserved opinion, Scots has diminished to being 'more of a dialect than a separate language',

> Firstly we might consider Scots as being only those elements of lexis, syntax and pronunciation which distinguish English in Scotland from other varieties of English and in particular Standard English. Alternatively it may be defined as any form of English written or spoken in Scotland. The first of these definitions is at times of some practical usefulness but it is generally too narrow. It is the fate of local dialects, and Scots is now more of a dialect than a separate language, to be seen as only existing where they differ from the standard or predominant dialect of the language. 25

After considering the points of view of these modern linguists, it is interesting to read what Walker had to say about Scots in 1893. Writing about the ability of Burns to modify his language to suit his subject, Walker declared,

23. A.J.Aitken, 'The Good Old Scots Tongue: Does Scots have an Identity?'in E.Haugen, J.D.McClure, D.Thomson (eds.), Minority Languages Today, Edinburgh. 1980, pp.73-74.

24. A.J.Aitken, 'Is Scots a Language?' English Today, ET3, July-Sept., 1985, p.44.

25. G.Tulloch, The Language of Sir Walter Scott, London, 1980, pp.168-169.

> He never forgot - or perhaps he never remembered, but native taste silently instructed him -that vernacular Scotch, though a dialect with a literature, was still a dialect. It was therefore in its nature colloquial. The development it had received was mainly such as fitted it to express the feelings, wants, and aspirations of unsophisticated people. Within its own limits it was admirable - strong, expressive, copious; but a literary language has to discharge many functions for which it was quite inadequate. 26

Walker made it clear, however, that Scots was no 'mere' dialect, when he wrote, 'But an English dialect is a mere *patois*; Lowland Scotch with its generations of literary cultivation stands on a different level'. [27] This gives weight to the argument, that if Scots is not a full language, it is certainly more than a dialect. In these circumstances, bearing in mind the definition of the term'Scottish Language' in The Scottish National Dictionary,

> The term "Scottish Language" includes (1) Older Scots, represented in its two main literary phases by Barbour and the "Makars"; (2) the modern literary dialect, emerging about the beginning of the 18th cent.; (3) the modern Scottish regional dialects. 28

it seems both sensible and convenient to refer to Scots or Scottish as a language for the purpose of this study.

By whatever term the old speech is designated, there are many who, like Sir Archibald Geikie (1835-1924),the celebrated Scottish geologist, mourn its passing. Writing in 1904, Geikie lamented,

> A marked and regrettable change has passed and is passing over Lowland Scotland - the decay of the old national language - the Doric of Burns and Scott. The local accents, indeed still remain fairly well-marked. The Aberdonian is probably as distinguishable as ever from a Paisley 'body', and a citizen of Edinburgh from his neighbour in Glasgow. But the old national words have almost all dropped out of the current vocabulary of the towns. Even in the country districts though a good many remain they are fast becoming obsolete and unintelligible

26. Walker, op.cit., p.180.
27. ibid., p.181.
28. SND, Introduction, p.xii.

> to the younger generation. It is sad to find how small a proportion of the sons and daughters of middle-aged parents in Scotland can read Burns without constant reference to the glossary. ... Not only have the old words and phrases disappeared, but there has arisen an affectation of what is supposed to be English pronunciation, which is sometimes irresistibly ludicrous. The broad, open vowels, the rolling r's and the strongly aspirated gutturals, so characteristic of the old tongue, are softened down to a milk and water lingo, which is only a vulgarised and debased English. 29

Sir Archibald would be appreciative of the current movement initiated by Sir William Craigie, David Murison,and Derrick McClure for the restoration and preservation of Scots. Since schools, and parents, have traditionally expected Standard English of their children, and since what remains of good Scots has been infiltrated by other forms of speech, this poses a problem. It is a different proposition to the re-introduction or re-affirmation of Gaelic, which is of a more structured nature, and which, though suppressed, never died out or lost its purity as an oral language.

The initial approach appears to be on a written rather than an oral basis, in the form of Lallans, a magazine which has been in publication since 1973, produced by the Scots Language Society. It differs from Tocher, the journal of the School of Scottish Studies, in that the latter contains much Gaelic material, with many entries originating in oral sources, whereas Lallans is written almost entirely in good Scots.

Acknowledgement must be made also of the work of W.L.Lorimer whose The New Testament in Scots was published in 1983, a significant contribution to present efforts to stem the further decline of Scots.

29. A.Geikie, Scottish Reminiscences, Glasgow, 1906, p368-369.

CHAPTER 2

Scott and Scots.

A natural Scots speaker himself, Scott was well aware that he could express himself better in his mother tongue than in English, and no doubt this was a major factor in his decision to use Scots language in his novels. Critics have eagerly highlighted pedantries and incongruities in Scott's English, particularly in passages of speech. The lines, 'Incomparable Flora!' said Edward, taking her hand, 'how much do I need such a monitor!' (W 247) have attracted much attention. They are in keeping with the tone of the entire conversation between Waverley and Flora on the occasion of her rejection of his suit. Here is another example,

> "Nay, dear Flora trifle with me no longer; you cannot mistake the meaning of those feelings which I have almost involuntarily expressed; and since I have broken the barrier of silence, let me profit by my audacity. Or may I, with your permission, mention to your brother -" (W 247)

It is refreshing to find C.S.Lewis coming to Scott's defence with this statement,

> It was Professor Nichol Smith who first pointed out to me that a love of the polysyllable had been endemic in Scotland ever since the time of Henryson. He said that in this city [Edinburgh he himself had attended, in youth, a debating society where students were always rising 'to homologate the sentiments of the previous speaker.' 2

It was, in short, a period when it was not the fashion to call a spade a spade, but a time when 'the word furthest from the soil is liked best', and Lewis goes on to say,

> In Scott's time this local and national infirmity was only the aggravation of a disease which then held the whole island in its grip. We must not allow a few great, and highly idiosyncratic writers like Lamb, Hazlitt, and Landor, to blind us to the fact that the early nineteenth century found English in a bloated condition. 3

1. J.Buchan, op.cit., p.136. and see also
   G.M.Trevelyan, (1937) in Frazer, op.cit., p.32.
2. C.S.Lewis, (1956) in Frazer, op.cit., p.106.
3. loc.cit.

It would be unfair not to demonstrate that Scott could write simply and succinctly in English when he chose; some of his descriptions are appropriate and detailed and well-expressed. Consider his account of the Highlander, Evan Dhu Maccombich,

> The individual Gael was a stout, dark young man, of low stature, the ample folds of whose plaid added to the appearance of strength which his person exhibited. The short kilt, or petticoat, showed his sinewy and clean-made limbs; the goat-skin purse, flanked by the usual defences, a dirk and steel-wrought pistol, hung before him; his bonnet had a short feather which indicated his claim to be treated as a *duinhé - wassel*, or sort of gentleman; a broadsword dangled by his side, a target hung upon his shoulder, and a long Spanish fowling-piece occupied one of his hands. (W 140)

or the introduction which the reader receives to Jonathan Oldbuck,

> He was a good-looking man of the age of sixty, - perhaps older; but his hale complexion and firm step announced that years had not impaired his strength or health. His countenance was of the true Scottish cast, strongly marked, and rather harsh in features, with a shrewd and penetrating eye, and a countenance in which habitual gravity was enlivened by a cast of ironical humour. His dress was uniform, and of a colour becoming to his age and gravity; a wig, well dressed and powdered, surmounted by a slouched hat, had something of a professional air. He might be a clergyman, yet his appearance was more that of a man of the world than usually belongs to the Kirk of Scotland, and his first ejaculation put the matter beyond question. (A 3)

Even when Scott threw sentence construction to the winds he could convey his meaning clearly, as he did in this very funny passage describing the sheltie which was to carry Mistress Baby to Burgh-Westra,

> Two of these horses were already provided and fully accoutred for the journey. One of them, destined to bear the fair person of Mistress Baby, was decorated with a huge side-saddle of venerable antiquity - a mass, as it were, of cushions and padding, from which depended, on all sides, a housing of ancient tapestry, which, having been originally intended for a horse of ordinary size, covered up the diminutive palfrey over which it was spread, from the ears to the tail, and from the shoulder to the fetlock, leaving nothing visible but its head, which looked fiercely out from these enfoldements, like the heraldic representation of a lion looking out of a bush. (P 168)

David Murison uses the following excerpt from The Antiquary to illustrate how much better Scott writes in Scots than in English, commenting on the 'stilted woodenness' of Oldbuck's speech when compared with the 'vivid and revealing' response of Edie Ochiltree,[4]

> "Lord Glenallan told me himself," answered the Antiquary; "so there is no delation - no breach of trust on your part; and as he wishes me to take her evidence down on some important family matters, I chose to bring you with me, because in her situation, hovering between dotage and consciousness, it is possible that your voice and appearance may awaken trains of recollection which I should otherwise have no means of exciting. The human mind ... is to be treated like a skein of ravelled silk, where you must cautiously secure one free end before you can make any progress in disentangling it."
>
> "I ken naethirg about that," said the gaberlunzie, "but an my auld acquaintance be hersell, or onything like hersell, she may come to wind us a pirn. It's fearsome baith to see and hear her when she wampishes about her arms, and gets to her English, and speaks as if she were a prent book, - let a-be an auld fisher's wife. But, indeed, she had a grand education, and was muckle taen out afore she married an unco bit beneath hersell." (A 517)

Scott continually contrasts Edie's vernacular with the inflated style of Oldbuck. Not only does this device bear witness to Scott's command of the Scots language, it also forces the reader to consider some of the absurdities in the 'bloated' form of English used by Oldbuck. Although this was the kind of English in use in his day, Scott knew that it fell short of Scots in clarity and pithinesss, and there is no doubt that the contrast is a deliberate method of showing this. Consider Oldbuck's explanation of the fact that in Scotland , 'no man can be legally imprisoned for debt', a long and tedious explanation which was intermittently interrupted with pertinent clarifications by Edie, terminating in this interchange,

> "True," replied Monkbarns; "but those whom the law suspects of being unwilling to abide her formal visit, she proceeds with by means of a shorter and more unceremonious call, as dealing with persons on whom patience and favour would be utterly thrown away.'

4. Murison, in Jeffares, op.cit., pp.209-210.

> "Ay," said Ochiltree, "that will be what they ca' the fugie-warrants, - I hae some skeel in them. There's Border-warrants, too, in the south country, - unco rash, uncanny things; I was taen up on ane at St. James's Fair, and keepit in the auld kirk at Kelso the haill day and night, - and a cauld, goustie place it was, I'se assure ye."
> (A 515)

Scott has used many other occasions to juxtapose one language against the other. For example, Magnus Troil's lordly speech when Norna suddenly disappears at Burgh-Westra draws a rapid response from two ladies, both proficient in the vernacular. Mrs. Baby and the Lady Glowrowrum strip the subject of its euphemisms and place it in its right perspective,

> "My friends," he said , with a cheerful countenance, "we have long known my kinswoman, and that her ways are not like those of the ordinary folks of this world. But she means well by Hialtland, and hath the love of a sister for me, and for my house; and no guest of mine needs either to fear evil, or to take offence, at her hand. I have little doubt she will be with us at dinner-time."
> "Now, Heaven forbid!" said Mrs. Baby Yellowley - "for, my gude Leddy Glowrowrum, to tell your leddyship the truth, I likena cummers that can come and gae like a glance of the sun, or the whisk of a whirlwind."
> "Speak lower, speak lower," said the Lady Glowrowrum, "and be thankful that yon carlin hasna ta'en the house-side away wi' her. The like of her have played warse pranks, and so has she hersell, unless she is the sairer lied on."
> (P 338)

Typical too, is the situation in which the baron, 'exalted by wine, wrath, and scorn above all sublunary considerations', interposes in elevated style between Waverley and Balmawhapple, only to be answered in blunt, broad Scots by the latter,

> "I crave you to be hushed, Captain Waverley; you are elsewhere, peradventure, *sui juris* , - forisfamiliated, that is, and entitled, it may be to think and resent for yourself; but in my domain, in this poor Barony of Bradwardine, and under this roof, which is *quasi* mine, being held by tacit relocation by a tenant at will, I am *in loco parentis* to you, and bound to see you scathless. And for you, Mr. Falconer of Balmawhapple, I warn ye, let me see no more aberrations from the paths of good manners."

> "And I tell you, Mr. Cosmo Comyne Bradwardine, of Bradwardine and Tully-Veolan," retorted the sportsman, in huge disdain, "that I'll make a moor-cock of the man that refuses my toast, whether it be a crop-eared English Whig wi' a black ribbon at his lug, or ane wha deserts his ain friends to claw favour wi' the rats of Hanover." (W 92-93)

As well as this bi-lingual type of interchange, there are, naturally, many occasions when the conversation is all in English, or all in Scots. When the latter is the case, Scott's characters really leap to life, engaging in pithy Scots repartee. William Graham commented on this kind of exchange,

> "Nippin and scartin's Scotch folk's wooin," so the saying goes; from which it would seem that we really are a thrawn aggressive lot, even when a-courting. The fact, too, that the Scots tongue contains an inordinate number of words of the nipping and scratching kind does nothing to lessen the impression - at least not until it is remembered that we have a great liking for poking fun at ourselves and others - especially others! There's a marked inclination to cutting down to size, not without a modicum of envy and malice, folk who appear to have grown too big for their boots.
>
> Our literature, too, is famous for its flytings or scoldings, but here again it has to be added that these are delivered more often than not with tongue in cheek and are, like "The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy", more a battle of wits between two very able opponents than anything else. 5

There are many examples of 'flyting' in Scott's writing, and a few are quoted here. Firstly, there is the reply of Jenny Rintherout to the taunting of Maggie Mucklebackit,

> "Ay, ay," answered Luckie Mucklebackit, "I see ye hae gotten a' your braws on, - ye're looking about for Steenie now; but he's no at hame the night. And ye'll no do for Steenie, lass, - a feckless thing like you's no fit to mainteen a man."
>
> "Steenie will no do for me," retorted Jenny, with a toss of her head that might have become a higher-born damsel, - "I maun hae a man that can mainteen his wife." (A 350)

5. W.Graham, 'Nippin and Scartin', in The Scots Magazine, August, 1986, p.471.

Baby's continual scheming and scolding occasionally draws a shrewd sarcasm from her long-suffering brother, as may be seen here,

> "Troth, brother, we maun do something for God's sake, and to make friends; and the lad," added Baby, (for even she was not altogether above the prejudices of her sex in favour of outward form,) "the lad has a fair face of his ain."
>
> "Ye would have let mony a fair face," said Triptolemus, "pass the door pining, if it had not been for the gold chain." (P 72)

Swertha's ready reply to Niel Ronaldson's condescending remarks are in keeping with her nature,

> "Our tacksman here, Maister Mertoun, his wit is sprung in the bowsprit, I doubt - his son is a daft gowk; and I ken few of consequence hereabouts - excepting always myself, and maybe you, Swertha - but what may, in some sense or other, be called fules."
>
> "That may be, Niel Ronaldson," said the dame; "but if you do not hasten the faster to the shore, you will lose tide; and, as I said to my master some short time syne, wha will be the fule then?" (P 395)

While Scott's mix of English and Scots was a true reflection of the Anglicization that he deplored, the alternating use of the two languages served another purpose; it helped to make his novels intelligible to the 'altogether English' members of his reading public. Lady Louisa Stuart, writing to Scott about Old Mortality, reminded him of the need to continue to do this,

> One thing I regret, that like the author of the Antiquary Jedidiah did not add a Glossary; because even I, a mongrel, occasionally paying long visits to Scotland, & hearing Girsy at Bothwell gate & Peggy Macgowan hold forth in the village, even I, thus qualified, have found a great many words absolute Hebrew to me, and I fear the altogether English will find very many more beyond their comprehension or conjecture. But this may be remedied in another edition. 6

By 1882, interest in Scott's writing had expanded far beyond the 'altogether English', and in that year Ludwig Hierthes

6. D.Hewitt, (ed.), Scott on Himself, Edinburgh, 1981, p.108.

published a dictionary of the Scots terms used by Burns and Scott for the benefit of German readers. [7] The proportion of Scots used, and its intelligibility, had to be suited to Scott's English audience, but the vernacular issuing from the lips of the Scottish characters had, at the same time, to be authentic for his Scottish readers. He was alive to all the nuances of the language, from that spoken by Jinker, the horse-couper 'in broad Scotch of the most vulgar description' (W 359), to the 'native language, pure and undiluted', spoken, according to Lockhart, by Scott's aunt, Lady Raeburn, [8] and the 'downright Scotch' that Dean Ramsay recalled hearing spoken by old Mrs. Erskine of Dun,

> It was not, mark me, speaking English with an accent. No; it was downright Scotch. Every tone and syllable was Scotch. For example, I recollect old Mrs. Erskine of Dun, a fine specimen of a real lady, and daughter of an ancient Scottish house. Many people would not now understand her. She was always the lady, notwithstanding her dialect, and to none could the epithet vulgar be less appropriately applied. 9

Scott, too, in Chronicles of the Canongate, wrote of the old Scottish speech used by Mrs. Bethune Balliol,

> It was Scottish, decidedly Scottish, often containing phrases and words little used in the present day. But then her tone and mode of pronunciation were as different from the usual accent of the ordinary Scotch *patois* as the accent of St. James's is from that of Billingsgate. The vowels were not pronounced much broader than in the Italian language, and there was none of the disagreeable drawl which is so offensive to southern ears. In short, it seemed to be the Scottish as spoken by the ancient court of Scotland, to which no idea of vulgarity could be attached; and the lively manner and gestures with which it was accompanied were so completely in accord with the sound of the voice and the style of talking, that I cannot assign them a different origin. 10

7. L.Hierthes, Wörterbuch des Schottischen Dialekts in den Werken von Walter Scott und Burns, 1882, reprinted, Wiesbaden, 1967.

8. Lockhart, op.cit., p.21.

9. E.B.Ramsay, Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character, Edinburgh, 1859, p.66.

10. Chronicles of the Canongate, p.450.

By the time that Scott was writing his novels, anybody with any social aspirations, had learned, albeit uncomfortably, to speak English in some fashion in public, even if he or she reverted to the 'vulgar' tongue in the privacy of home, and this is the situation that Scott reflects. It is pertinent to mention, that there are coarse and vulgar expressions a-plenty in the Scots vernacular, but Scott chooses not to use them. Vulgarity here refers to the pronunciation - the thicker or broader the accent, the more vulgar it was held to be, and it also came to refer to the mere use of the vernacular, which had lost its acceptability since the introduction and emulation of English speech and culture. Scott, writing to Morritt in the November of 1812, made this amused comment on the gloss of refinement attributed to his own young folk after a brief visit to England,

> I trust this will find Mrs. Morritt pretty well and I am glad to find she is better for her little tour. We were delighted with ours except in respect of its short duration and Sophia and Walter hold their heads very high among their untraveld companions from the predominance acquired by their visit to England. You are not perhaps aware of the polish which is supposed to be acquired by the most transitory intercourse with your more refined side of the Tweed. 11

In general, Scott followed a pattern in the use of Scots speech for his characters. Members of the lower class, like the Mucklewraths and Mucklebackits, old Janet Gellatley, Edie Ochiltree, Jacob Caxon, and their Shetland counterparts, Niel Ronaldson, Tronda Dronsdaughter, Bryce Snailsfoot, and Swertha (for Scott sensibly did not attempt to reproduce the dialect of that region), consistently converse in a broad version of the vernacular. Bailie Duncar Macwheeble also uses this speech, but interlaces his conversation so tightly with law terms, that each discourse he makes, becomes, as Davie Gellatley puts it, 'like a charge of horning'. Mistress Baby Yellowley and Mistress Griselda Oldbuck, confined to the house and to domestic matters, speak vigorous Scots, but not with the same intonation or idiom as Maggie Mucklebackit or Maggie Mucklewrath. Triptolemus, despite his 'book

11. Lockhart, op.cit., p.227.

lair', and the fact that he 'knapped Latin at St. Andrews', lapses into Scots, especially when expounding on farming subjects. Oldbuck uses good English, 'his Scottish accent predominating when in anger, though otherwise not particularly remarkable' (A 12). The young people speak English as a result of education. Rose Bradwardine has been taught French and Italian by her father, and has benefited by social intercourse with the Continentally educated young Mac-Ivors. Hector and Mary M'Intyre, too, have been educated to speak good English. At the top of the social scale, Lord Glenallan and Sir Arthur Wardour use English exclusively. This is not absolutely true in the case of Sir Arthur, for it will be remembered that on the night of the storm, 'exhausted by fatigue of body and mind so extreme and unusual', he is moved from his stupor to demand, on seeing his daughter lashed to the makeshift bosun's chair, 'What are ye doing wi' my bairn? What are ye doing ? ' (A 99). The Baron of Bradwardine, accustomed to embellishing his very correct English with Latin quotations, reverts in time of emotion or trouble to the familiar Scots.

It must be emphasised that Scott's treatment of the humble folk with their broad speech does not in any way rob them of their dignity. Edwards has remarked on this, saying, 'Again and again Scott returns to the theme of the right of the poor to their dignity, their privacy and their accessibility to their superiors.'[12] In fact some of the most dignified and elevating sentiments were pronounced by the humblest persons, as John Buchan pointed out,

> No other writer has done quite the same thing for the poor. Many have expounded their pathos and their humours, and some few have made them lovable and significant, but Scott alone has lifted them to the sublime. From their mouths he proclaims his evangel. It is not the kings and captains who most eloquently preach love of country, but Edie Ochiltree the beggar, who has no belongings, but a blue gown and a wallet. [13]

12. O.D.Edwards, 'Scott as a Contemporary Historian', in A.Bold (ed.), Sir Walter Scott: The Long-Forgotten Melody, New Jersey, 1983, p.74.

13. Buchan, op.cit., p.352.

While the Scots of field and farm, and of the Edinburgh of his youth came naturally to Scott, his ear was attuned to the subtleties of the dialectical variations of other regions, as his notes on the peculiar mode of speech of the people near Hexham show,

> The inhabitants of this country speak an odd dialect of the Saxon, approaching nearly that of Chaucer, and have retained some customs peculiar to themselves. They are descendants of the ancient Danes, chased into the fastnesses of Northumberland by the severity of William the Conqueror. 14

He was continually listening for peculiarities of speech in different localities and for the idiosyncratic speech of diverse occupations in order to give his dialogue an authentic ring. For example, the speech of the fishing folk, which he subsequently used in The Antiquary, was observed and recorded while he was in camp with the Yeomanry Corps. Lockhart wrote of the visit of Matthew Gregory Lewis, M.P. for Hindon, and author of The Monk,

> Scott received him in his lodgings, under the roof of an ancient dame, who afforded him much amusement by her daily colloquies with the fisherwomen - the Mucklebackits of the place. His delight in studying the dialect of these people is well remembered by the survivors of the cavalry, and must have astonished the stranger dandy. 15

The Aberdeenshire accent of Francie Macraw was rendered successfully, in the main by the substitution of the initial fricative for 'wh', as in the following reply to Edie Ochiltree,

> "He was like a man awa frae himsell for mony minutes, and then I thought he wad hae swarv,t a'thegither; and fan he cam' to himsell, he asked fae brought the packet, - and fat trow ye I said?" (A 371)

In Waverley Scott managed a fair reproduction of the broken speech of the ordinary Highlander. Although some critics have seen fit to denigrate it, Scott has included enough Gaelic terms and idiosyncratic pronunciation to give the desired effect, as when Edward's guide conveys the information,

> "Ta cove was tree, four mile; but as *duinhé-wasseil* was a wee taiglit, Donald could, tat is, might - would - should send ta *curragh*." (W 148)

14. Lockhart, op.cit., p.53.

15. ibid., p.81.

and when Callum Beg suggests to Edward that he 'provide for' Mr. Ebenezer Cruickshanks,

> "If his honour thought ta auld deevil Whig carle was a bit dangerous, she could easily provide for him, and teil ane ta wiser."
> "How, and in what manner?"
> "Her ain sell," replied Callum, "could wait for him a wee bit frae the toun, and kittle his quarters wi' her *skene-occle*." (W 278)

Much of the action in Waverley takes place in the Highlands where Gaelic would have been the appropriate language, but as Scott readily admitted, he was not born a Highlander, and his Gaelic was poor. The problem was overcome by the use of Gaelic terms and broken speech, and also by the presence in the Highland army of Lowland Scots like Jamie Jinker and Alec Polwarth.

Scott was writing at too late a period to attempt to use Scots prose for the body of his novels, but by permitting some of his characters to express themselves in the vernacular, he freed them, and himself, from the constraints of English, and gave himself the opportunity of describing Scottish scenes , events, manners, lore and local customs in passages of narrative dialogue. A sample of this type of conversation is introduced early in each of the three novels. In Waverley, Alexander Saunderson greets Edward upon his arrival at Tully-Veolan with a lengthy Scots speech, at the conclusion of which Scott comments,

> In the meantime it may be noticed that Waverley learned two things from this colloquy, - that in Scotland a single house was called a "toun", and a natural fool an "innocent". (W 74)

This, of course, was Scott's way of educating his readers in Scottish affairs, and he plays a little game with the 'altogether English' and Edward, making them wait two pages to discover what a 'dark hag' is. Rose explains that it has 'nothing to do either with a black cat or a broomstick, but was simply portion of an oak copse' (W 76).

The Antiquary begins with a spirited clash of typically Scottish nature between Oldbuck and Mrs Macleuchar, and this is soon followed at Mackitchinson's inn by a friendly flyting between host and guest, thickly laced with references to the Scottish legal system,

> "Have a care o' us Monkbarns [distinguishing him by his territorial epithet, always most agreeable to the ear of a Scottish proprietor], is this you? I little thought to have seen your honour here till the summer session was ower."
>
> "Ye donnard auld deevil," answered his guest, his Scottish accent predominating when in anger, though otherwise not particularly remarkable, - "ye donnard auld crippled idiot, what have I to do with the session, or the geese that flock to it, or the hawks that pick their pinions for them?"
>
> "Troth, and that's true," said mine host, who, in fact, only spoke upon a very general recollection of the stranger's original education, yet would have been sorry not to have been supposed accurate as to the station and profession of him, or any other occasional guest,- "and that's very true; but I thought ye had some law affair of your ain to look after. I have ane mysell, - a ganging plea that my father left me, and his father afore left to him; it's about our back-yard. Ye'll maybe hae heard of it in the Parliament-house, - Hutchinson against Mackitchinson. It's a weel-kenn'd plea; it's been four times in afore the fifteen, and deil ony thing the wisest o' them could make o't, but just to send it out again to the outer-house. Oh, it's a beautiful thing to see how lang and how carefully justice is considered in this country!" (W 12-13)

Early in The Pirate there is a brisk interchange between Triptolemus Yellowley and his thrifty sister, Baby, in which the rigorous austerity of Scots economy is illustrated,

> "The wood?" replied Baby - "Were I no to take better care of the wood than you, brother, there would soon be no more wood about the town than the barber's block that's on your own shoulders, Triptolemus. If ye be thinking of the wreck-wood that the callants brought in yesterday, there was six ounces of it gaed to boil your parritch this morning; though, I trow, a carefu' man wad have ta'en drammock, if breakfast he behoved to have, rather than waste baith meltith and fuel in the same morning."
>
> "That is to say, Baby," replied Triptolemus, who was somewhat of a dry joker in his way, "that when we have fire we are not to have food, and when we have food we are not to have fire, these being too great blessings to enjoy both in the same day! Good luck, you do not propose we should starve with hunger *unico contextu*. But, to tell you the truth, I could never away with raw oatmeal, slockened with water, in all my life. Call it drammock, or crowdie, or just what ye list, my vivers must thole fire and water."
>
> "The mair gowk you," said Baby; "can ye not make your brose on the Sunday, and sup them cauld on the Monday, since ye're sae dainty? Mony is the fairer face than yours that has licked the lip after such a cogfu'." (P 63)

In addition, Scott has made the reader sensitive to the reason behind the fact that Baby 'was no willing renderer of the rites of hospitality' (P 64). The awful economy that she has been forced to practise all her life, has so conditioned her that she is unable to view the famous open-handedness of the Zetlanders as anything but an encouragement to 'thigging and sorning'. This is what leads her to make her spirited attack on Norna of Fitful-head and her country,

> "And who are ye, that are sae bauld wi' your blessing and banning in other folk's houses? What kind of country is this that folk cannot sit quiet for an hour, and serve Heaven, and keep their bit gear thegither, without gangrel men and women coming thigging and sorning ane after another, like a string of wild-geese?" (P 76)

It may be observed that the more indignant Baby grows, the faster and thicker fall the apt Scots adjectives, and the alliterative phrases, culminating in a splendid bit of nature imagery in which the 'thiggers and sornars', necks outstretched , flock squawking about their neighbours. It is Baby's colourful and forthright language that goes a long way in endearing this angular, miserly old spinster to the reader.

Scott achieved a balance calculated to suit both English and Scottish readers by alternating passages of narrative in English with passages of dialogue in Scots. But he did not merely *use* Scots - he consistently employed it so that it had the best possible effect. In spite of the fact that Scott claimed that he wrote carelessly, this was not really so. Scots passages like the one above must have been rehearsed in his mind, perhaps tried out aloud as he rode about the countryside, for, like Barrie's Sentimental Tommie, he always sought after, and eventually found, the right word. It would be difficult, as Buchan has declared, to discover words to surpass in dignity and eloquence, those in old Edie Ochiltree's reply to Oldbuck when they are discussing the possibility of a French invasion,

> "I would not have thought you, Edie, had so much to fight for?"
>
> "Me no muckle to fight for, sir? Isna there the country to fight for, and the burnsides that I gang daundering beside, and the hearths o' the gudewives that gie me my bit bread, and the bits o' weans that come toddling to play wi' me when I come about a landward town? Deil!" he continued, grasping his pikestaff with great emphasis, "an I had as gude pith as I hae gude-will and a gude cause, I should gie some o' them a day's kemping." (A 581)

CHAPTER 3

The Humble Folk Speak.

In the advertisement for The Antiquary Scott wrote of his decision to put much of his Scottish speech into the mouths of the humble folk,

> I have in the last two narratives [Guy Mannering and The Antiquary] sought my principal personages in the class of society who are the last to feel the influence of that general polish which assimilates to each other the manners of different nations. Among the same class I have placed some of the scenes, in which I have endeavoured to illustrate the operation of higher and lower passions, both because the lower orders are less restrained by the habit of suppressing their feelings, and because I agree with my friend Wordsworth that they seldom fail to express them in the strongest and most powerful language. This is, I think, peculiarly the case with the peasantry of my own country, - a class with whom I have long been familiar. The antique force and simplicity of their language, often tinctured with the Oriental eloquence of Scripture, in the mouths of those of an elevated understanding, give pathos to their grief and dignity to their resentment. (A vii)

Voluble and forthright, the members of Scott's lower class reflect an independence of thought and spirit which has its origin in antiquity. Rightly declaring that he had 'the advantage of seeing both from outside and inside', which enabled him to 'distinguish between the typical (often from inside, taken for granted), and the specific', Kurt Wittig, in his perceptive chapter on Barbour, commented that in Brus, it was not until the Scots rank and file had been given the opportunity to express their willingness to fight at Bannockburn, that the King made his speech of exhortation. Wittig pointed out the emphasis which Barbour placed on Bruce's democratic behaviour - his concern for the morale of his men, the way in which he mingled with them and cheered them with his talk,

> Amazed, the English see that a yeoman in Scotland counts as much as a knight in England (xix, 165 ff.); on the whole there appears to be much less stratification on the Scottish side. The King lives in close contact with his people and shares their sufferings, even taking the heaviest part .... On the other hand, his people feel *their* share in his responsibility, and spontaneously make his cause their own: the farmer whose initiative conquers Linlithgow (x. 148 ff.); the burgher who develops the plan to take Berwick

> (xvii. 11 ff.); the help from the people that is instrumental in climbing the walls of Roxburgh and Edinburgh (x. 358 ff., 530ff.), or the camp followers joining in the attack at Bannockburn (xii. 225 ff.). 1

This tradition of democratic rather than feudal relationship between king and subject, chief and clan, laird and servant, existed from ancient times and was a characteristic of Scottish life. Scott has made a feature of it in his novels, and it is well illustrated in Waverley by the attitude of Evan Dhu when asked by Edward,

> "And do others beside your master shelter him?"
> "My master? *My* master is in Heaven," answered Evan haughtily; and then, immediately assuming his usual civility of manner, "but you mean my chief: no, he does not shelter Donald Bean lean, nor any that are like him; he only allows him [with a smile] wood and water." (W 165)

Dean Ramsay, referring to 'those peculiarities of intercourse which some years back marked the connection between masters and servants', gave several amusing examples of old retainers, who, having driven their employers to the point of exasperation where their discharge was inevitable, then refused to leave. Ramsay pointed out,

> In many Scottish houses a great familiarity prevailed between members of the family and the domestics. For this many reasons might have been assigned. Indeed, when we consider the simple modes of life which discarded the ideas of ceremony or etiquette, the retired and uniform style of living which afforded few opportunities for break or change in the domestic arrangements, and when we add to these a free, unrestrained, informal, and natural style of intercommunion, which seems rather a national characteristic, we need not be surprised to find in quiet Scottish families a sort of intercourse with old domestics which can hardly be looked for now, when habits are changing so fast. 2

So, in Waverley, Davie Gellatley makes pert comments when he is so inclined, and poor old Janet admonishes the Baron as if he were a child; in The Pirate, Swertha confronts her master, Basil Mertoun,

1. K.Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, Edinburgh and London, 1958, pp.30-32.

2. Ramsay, op.cit., p.49.

while Tronda remonstrates with Mistress Baby, and Eric Scambester forcibly restrains Magnus Troil from rescuing Mordaunt; and in The Antiquary, despite his personal belief in his control over his 'womankind', Jenny Rintherout replies with insouciance to Oldbuck. Scott is portraying them all with validity. Subservience is not a particular trait of the Scot, and in presenting these humble folk as familiar, garrulous, outspoken, often argumentative, sometimes overbearing, he is painting them true to life.

In Waverley, an example of faithful familiarity is found in the relationship between Janet Gellatley and the Baron of Bradwardine. After a lifetime of devoted service it falls to poor old Janet to hide and shelter her master in her hut. In these surroundings of poverty and intimate domesticity she repays the Baron for the protection he has given to her and hers. While careful to address him as 'Your Honour', she mothers and shields him as if he were her bairn, and in his need and dependence he appeals to her, not in his formal style enriched with Latin phrases, but in homely Scots, "But now, Janet, canna ye gie us something for supper?" The reply is immediate and affirmative, "Ou ay, sir; I'll brander the moor-fowl."

In his distress the Baron says to Edward,

> "The bailie's doing what he can to save something out of the wreck for puir Rose; but I doubt, I doubt, I shall never see her again, for I maun lay my banes in some far country."

Janet does not wait for Edward to reply, but interposes at once with encouraging words and a description of the food she has prepared, endeavouring both to cheer and to distract her master,

> "Hout na, your Honour," said old Janet; "ye were just as ill aff in the Feifteen, and got the bonnie barony back, an' a'. And now the eggs is ready, and the moor-cock's brandered, and there's ilk ane a trencher and some saut, and the heel o' the white loaf that cam frae the bailie's; and there's plenty o' brandy in the graybeard that Luckie Maclearie sent down; and winna ye be suppered like princes?" (W 576)

In this case the association is a particularly long one, and Janet's sense of gratitude is very deep, as she explains to Edward, "How can we do eneugh for his Honour, when we and ours have lived on his ground this twa hundred years?" (W 575)

It often happened that servants spoke in a familiar manner to their superiors out of a concern for their well-being or safety. Thus, when the relationship between Edward and Fergus becomes strained, the faithful Alick Polwarth has no hesitation in telling Waverley that he has serious reservations about his Highland companions,

> "The ne'er be in me, sir, if I think you're safe amang thae Highland ranthercuts."
> "What do you mean, Alick?" said Waverley.
> "The Mac-Ivors, sir, hae gotten it into their heads that ye hae affronted their young leddy, Miss Flora; and I hae heard mae than ane say they wadna tak muckle to mak a black-cock o' ye; and ye ken weel eneugh there's mony o' them wadna mind a bawbee the weising a ball through the prince himsell, an the chief gae them the wink, - or whether he did or no, if they thought it a thing that would please him when it was dune." (W 509-510)

In this expressive speech, it may be observed that Alick, the 'stout-hearted Merseman', has made an accurate assumption of the dubious dedication of Fergus's men to the Royal cause. He has also warned Edward very explicitly of the personal danger he faces as a result of his changed attitude to Flora - a subject which many a servant might have considered too delicate to mention.

On occasions of an extraordinary nature, Scott's servants are prone to form themselves into a chorus, whether the event be joyful or calamitous. In his hands this somewhat well-worn literary device is enhanced by typical Scottish flavour and humour. The reader of Waverley is entertained by Edward's encounter with the young washer-women of Tully-Veolan, who, 'each standing in a spacious tub performed with their feet the office of a patent washing-machine' (W 69).

> These did not, however, like the maidens of Armida, remain to greet with their harmony the approaching guest, but, alarmed at the appearance of a handsome stranger on the opposite side, dropped their garments (I should say garment, to be quite correct) over their limbs, which their occupation exposed somewhat too freely, and with a strong exclamation of 'Eh, sirs!" uttered with an accent between modesty and coquetry, sprung off like deer in different directions. (W 69)

Later on during his visit Edward witnesses 'signs of uncommon perturbation in the family' when the milch-cows are stolen. On this

occasion the chorus is initiated by the dairy-maids, as Scott obviously delighted in relating,

> Four bare-legged dairy-maids, with each an empty milk-pail in her hand, ran about with frantic gestures, and uttering loud exclamations of surprise, grief and resentment. From their appearance, a pagan might have conceived them a detachment of the celebrated Belides just come from their baleing penance. As nothing was to be got from this distracted chorus, excepting "Lord guide us!" and "Eh sirs!" ejaculations which threw no light upon the cause of their dismay, Waverley repaired to the forecourt. (W 128)

The arrival of Bailie MacWheeble, 'cantering his white pony down the avenue with all the speed it could muster', of 'half a score of peasants from the village', and of Mr. Saunderson, 'who appeared with a countenance in which dismay was mingled with solemnity', swells the gathering to ostentatious proportions. This assemblage is continually circumnavigated by David Gellatley, 'whose spirits always rose with anything, good or bad, which occasioned tumult', and he alternately frisks, hops, or dances to the accompaniment of his rendition of an old ballad,

> "Our gear's a' gane,"
>
> until, happening to pass too near the bailie, he received an admonitory hint from his horse-whip, which converted his songs into lamentation. (W 129)

It may be observed, that on both occasions the discomposure of the maids is expressed in the ejaculation of the phrase, 'Eh, sirs!' As Tulloch has remarked, this is not an addressive plural, but a 'much shortened form of *(God pre)serve us* with the Scottish loss of *v* in *serve* as in *doo/dove*',[3] and SND lists SER, to preserve, as an archaic verb, 'surviving in exclam. phr. *ser's, sair's, serse, sirs(s), sirce, -se, surce, -se*, short for *God, etc. (pre)serve us*, used in expressions of surprise, pain, weariness, grief, annoyance.'[4] The use of a quaint survival of an archaic form by the distracted maidens has conferred additional humour and interest to two very diverting passages.

3. Tulloch, op.cit., p.24[illegible].

4. SND, SER.

Scott wrote in Waverley of a certain poor man whose last proud, tragic rejoinder deserves to be remembered. Evan Dhu Maccombich, having offered his life, and that of five other Highlanders for the release of Fergus Mac-Ivor, then asserts to the judge at Carlisle,

> "If the Saxon gentlemen are laughing, because a poor man such as me thinks my life, or the life of six of my degree, is worth that of Vich Ian Vohr, it's like enough they may be right; but if they laugh because they think I would not keep my word and come back to redeem him, I can tell them they ken neither the heart of a Hielandman, nor the honour of a gentleman." (W 610)

The judge's expression of compassion, and his offer to petition for grace on Evan's behalf is hurled back in his teeth by the violence of his defiant reply,

> "Grace me nae grace, since you are to shed Vich Ian Vohr's blood, the only favour I would accept from you, is to bid them loose my hands and gie me my claymore, and bide you just a minute sitting where you are!" (W 611)

Of Evan Dhu's proud assertion, Linklater has this to say,

> The notable thing about Evan Dhu's valediction is that Scott wrote it for him. Evan is not altogether an admirable character, nor even wholly likeable; and Scott was certainly not a sentimental victim of Highland charm. But because his genius was of the highest sort he could contrive, for a character of dubious merit, an assertion, at the proper time, of that superior part of his nature which made him able to meet and match the outrage of fortune to which circumstance, and perhaps the frailties of his intellect, had committed him. 5

In The Pirate, the humble folk of the far north are no less forthright and independent than their southern counterparts. Most servants would have been subdued by the strong-minded Mistress Baby, but the Shetland-born Tronda Dronsdaughter has no qualms in telling her how she should treat Norna of Fitful-head,

> "The best in the house - the best in the house - set a' on the board, and a' will be little eneugh - There is auld Norna of Fitful-head, the most fearful woman in all the isles!" (P 75)

5. Linklater, (1953), in Frazer, op.cit., p.92.

When this advice draws a violent reply from Baby, Tronda presses on,

> "The iron was never forged on stithy that would hauld her. She comes - she comes - God's sake speak her fair and canny, or we will have a ravelled hasp on the yarn windles!" (P 75)

and again, in response to Baby's outright attack on Norna,

> "Honest woman!" echoed Baby - "Foul warlock thief! - Aroint ye, ye limmer!" she added, addressing Norna directly; "out of an honest house, or, shame fa' me, but I'll take the bittle to you!"
> Norna cast on her a look of supreme contempt; then, stepping to the window, seemed engaged in deep contemplation of the heavens, while the old maid-servant, Tronda, drawing close to her mistress, implored, for the sake of all that was dear to man or woman, "Do not provoke Norna of Fitful-head! You have no sic woman on the mainland of Scotland - she can ride on one of these clouds as easily as man ever rode on a sheltie." (P 84)

Where Tronda is forthright, Swertha, housekeeper to Basil Mertoun at Jarlshof, is cunning. Prompted by a desire to collect whatever she can from the shipwreck, she tells Mordaunt one thing and his father another. When commanded by Mordaunt to follow him instantly homeward, this is her reaction,

> Swertha hobbled reluctantly after her young master in the same direction, until she lost sight of him on his entering the cleft of the rock; them instantly turned about, muttering to herself,"Haste home, in good sooth? - haste home, and lose the best chance of getting a new rokelay and owerlay that I have had these ten years? by my certie, na - It s seldom sic rich godsends come on our shore - no since the Jenny and James came ashore in King Charlie's time." (P120-121)

Nevertheless, Swertha is genuinely fond of Mordaunt, and when he is missing, she employs this same cunning to force his father to acknowledge the fact. Then, although not a lifetime servant of Mertoun, and although in mortal fear of his temper, 'she confronted her master, and upbraided him with his hard-hearted indifference with a boldness at which she herself was astonished',

> "To be sure it wasna her that suld be fearing for her young maister, Maister Mordaunt, even though he was, as she might weel say, the very sea-calf of her heart; but ony other father, but his honour himsell, wad have had speerings made after the poor lad, and him gane this eight days from Burgh-Westra, and naebody kend when or where he had gane. There wasna a bairn in the howff but was maining for him; for he made all their bits of boats with his knife; there wadna be a dry eye in the parish, if aught worse than weal should befall him, - na, no ane, unless it might be his honour's ain." (P 387)

Although Mertoun 'had been much struck, and even silenced, by the insolent volubility of his insurgent housekeeper', he ultimately recovers himself, and calls her, first, 'a foolish old hag', and then, an 'old fool', causing Swertha to intensify her efforts,

> "O ay, to be sure I am an old fule, - but if Maister Mordaunt should have settled down in the Roost, as mair than ae boat had been lost in that wearifu' squall the other morning - by good luck it was short as it was sharp, or naething could have lived in it - or if he were drowned in a loch coming hame on foot, or if he were killed by miss of footing on a craig - the haill island kend how venturesome he was - who," said Swertha, "will be the auld fule then?" (P 388)

Finally, Swertha's persistence has the desired effect on Mertoun. "Swertha," he said, "you are right in this matter, and I was wrong." (P 389)

The central plot of The Pirate is rooted in the northern belief in the danger of rescuing a drowning man, particularly if he is a stranger.[6] It is the individual common folk who voice the feeling of the whole community in a series of well-known sayings, beginning with Bryce Snailsfoot, the jagger,

> "Are you mad'" said he [to Mordaunt]; "you that have lived sae lang in Zetland, to risk the saving of a drowning man? Wot ye not, if you bring him to life again, he will be sure to do you some capital injury?" (P 113)

6. A theme used to great effect by the contemporary writer, Mollie Hunter, in A Stranger Came Ashore, London, 1975.

Swertha and the Ranzelman, Niel Ronaldson, reiterate and develop the theme,

> "It is best to let saut water take its gate," said Swertha; "luck never came of crossing it."
>
> "In troth," said the Ranzelman, "they are wise folks that let wave and withy haud their ain - luck never came of a half-drowned man, or a half-hanged ane either. Who was't shot Will Paterson off the Noss? - the Dutchman that he saved from sinking, I trow. To fling a drowning man a plank or a tow, may be the part of a Christian; but I say, keep hands aff him, if ye wad live and thrive free frae his danger."
>
> "Ye are a wise man, Ranzelman, and a worthy," echoed Swertha, with a groan, "and ken how and whan to help a neighbour, as well as ony man that ever drew a net."
>
> "In troth, I have seen length of days," answered the Ranzelman, "and I have heard what the auld folk said to each other anent sic matters; and nae man in Zetland shall go farther than I will in any Christian service to a man on firm land; but if he cry 'Help!' out of the saut waves, that's another story." (P 160-161)

Eric Scambester, too, speaks for the common folk of Burgh-Westra, steeped in the belief of the danger of the stranger and of the drowning man. He holds his master, Magnus Troil, fast as he does so in order to prevent him jumping in the voe to rescue Mordaunt,

> "Hout, sir - hout, Captain Cleveland has a grip of Mr. Mordaunt - just let the twa strangers help ilk other, and stand by the upshot. The light of the country is not to be quenched for the like of them. Bide still, sir, I say - Bredness Voe is not a bowl of punch that a man can be fished out of like a toast with a long spoon." (P 267)

In The Antiquary, Saunders Mucklebackit can be seen as speaking for all poor fishermen, when, on the day after Steenie's funeral, Oldbuck finds him mending his boat,

> "I am glad," he said, in a tone of sympathy - "I am glad, Saunders, that you feel yourself able to make this exertion."
>
> "And what would ye have me do," answered the fisher, gruffly, "unless I wanted to see four children starve, because ane is drowned? It's weel wi' you gentles, that can sit in the house wi' handkerchers at your een when ye lose a friend; but the like o' us maun to our work again, if our hearts were beating as hard as my hammer." (A 443)

This passage, perhaps more than any other written by Scott, reveals his empathy with the poor folk, and in the subsequent kindly words and actions of Oldbuck, the reader sees the characteristic reaction of the author himself in such a situation.

There is little question that the best speeches in The Antiquary are made, and the highest sentiments are expressed, by the lowliest person in the novel - Edie Ochiltree, the beggar - humourist, sympathizer, philosopher. It has often been remarked that Jonathan Oldbuck, the Antiquary, allegedly modelled on George Constable, is very like Scott himself. It almost seems that there are two separate, complementary parts of Scott in the novel, one in Oldbuck and one in Ochiltree, and the observations he cannot make as the middle-class collector of antiques, he makes through the beggar. Scott always had the ability to laugh at himself, and when Edie taunts Oldbuck with "Praetorian here, Praetorian there, I mind the bigging o't." (A 43), and with the foolish bargain he made with Johnnie Howie (A 47), that is just what he is doing.

The plea made by Edie to Hector M'Intyre and Lovel, about to participate in a duel, is one of his best passages of dialogue. As Scott tells the reader, Edie's speech is 'as homely as his habit, but as bold and unceremonious as his erect and dignified demeanour',

> "What are ye come here for, young men? Are ye come here amongst the most lovely works of God to break his laws? Have ye left the works of man, the houses and the cities that are but clay and dust, like those that built them, and are ye come here among the peaceful hills, and by the quiet waters, that will last whiles aught earthly shall endure, to destroy each other's lives, that will have but an unco short time by the course of nature, to make up a lang account at the close o't? O sirs! hae ye brothers, sisters, fathers, that hae tended ye, and mothers that hae travailed for ye, friends that hae ca'd ye like a piece o' their ain heart? And is this the way ye tak to make them childless and brotherless and friendless?" (A 264-265)

These are high sentiments indeed from a poor uneducated beggar, but entirely in keeping with the character Scott has created.

Motivated by genuine concern for her happiness, Edie displays the greatest familiarity towards the most socially important young lady in Fairport, Miss Isabella Wardour, in making the following astonishing speech to her,

> "Ye are a bonny young leddy, and a gude ane, and maybe a weel-tochered ane; but dinna ye sneer awa the lad Lovel, as ye did a while sinsyne on the walk beneath the Briery-bank, when I saw ye baith, and heard ye too, though ye saw nae me. Be canny wi' the lad, for he loes ye weel; and it's to him, and no to onything I could have done for you, that Sir Arthur and you wan ower yestreen." (A 151)

Isabella is completely taken aback to find that the secret of her conversation with Lovel is possessed 'by a person of the last class in which a young lady would seek a confidant'. Indeed, the 'total absence of delicacy', which the old man shows 'in the mere freedom of speaking to her upon such a subject', so deprives her of speech that she is quite unable to 'determine upon saying a single word, relative to a subject so delicate, until the beggar was out of sight'. (A 151-152)

The forthright Edie even remains undaunted in his encounter with the stern Lord Glenallan, to whom he gives these pointed replies,

> "A soldier! then you have slain and burnt, and sacked and spoiled?"
>
> "I winna say," replied Edie, "that I have been better than my neighbours, - it's a rough trade; war's sweet to them that never tried it."
>
> "And you are now old and miserable, asking from precarious charity the food which in your youth you tore from the hand of the peasant?"
>
> "I am a beggar, it is true, my lord; but I am nae just sae miserable neither, - for my sins, I hae had grace to repent of them, if I might say sae, and to lay them where they may be better borne than by me; and for my food, naebody grudges an auld man a bit and a drink. Sae I live as I can, and am contented to die when I am ca'd upon." (A 381)

At the conclusion of the interview, notwithstanding his abrupt dismissal by the earl, Edie contrives to have the last word,

> The earl then called his servant: "See this old man safe from the castle; let no one ask him any questions. And you, friend, begone, and forget the road that leads to my house."
>
> "That would be difficult for me," said Edie, looking at the gold which he still held in his hand, - "that would be e'en difficult, since your honour has gien me such gude cause to remember it."

> Lord Glenallan stared, as hardly comprehending the old man's boldness in daring to bandy words with him, and, with his hand, made him another signal of departure, which the mendicant instantly obeyed. (A 382)

When the house of Knockwinnock is saved from ruin (largely by Edie's efforts), the servants of Sir Arthur Wardour are described by Scott as behaving in characteristic Scottish fashion,

> The general confusion of the family not having yet subsided, the domestics, like waves after the fall of a hurricane, had not yet exactly regained their due limits, but were roaming wildly through the house. (W 567)

Emboldened by this confusion, Edie 'stretched his neck into the parlour door', and was brought in and hailed as a hero by Oldbuck. Edie, always ready to correct an injustice, seizes the opportunity to reinstate Sir Arthur's servant, Robert, in his rightful position,

> "Ye owe it a' to puir Robie that drave me, - puir fallow," said the beggar, "he doubts he's in disgrace wi' my leddy and Sir Arthur." (A 568)

Then 'the party sat joyously down to some refreshment', with Edie, at Oldbuck's request, permitted to occupy a great leather chair by the sideboard, partly concealed by a screen.

> "I accede to this the more readily," said Sir Arthur, "because I remember in my father's days that chair was occupied by Ailshie Gourlay, who, for aught I know, was the last privileged fool, or jester, maintained by any family of distinction in Scotland."

His well-bred condescension fails to quiet the irrepressible Edie,

> "Aweel, Sir Arthur," replied the beggar, who never hesitated an instant between his friend and his jest, "mony a wise man sits in a fule's seat, and mony a fule in a wise man's, especially in families o' distinction." (A 569)

It is evident that a very intense relationship had linked old Elspeth Mucklebackit to the house of Glenallan. The strength of her devotion to Lady Glenallan is unnatural and frightening, as this exchange with Lord Glenallan illustrates,

> "Woman you swore upon the gospels to the fact which you now disavow."
> "I did, and I wad hae taen a yet mair holy pledge on it, if there had been ane; I wad not hae spared the blood of my body, or the guilt of my soul, to serve the house of Glenallan." (A 437)

David Brown sees 'old Elspeth and the atrophied Catholic Lord Glenallan' as 'the only decrepit remains of feudal society left in the present', and he makes this additional comment,

> The Glenallan story which links them, for all its futility and its air of anachronism, still carries enough of the atmosphere of Catholic absolutism and feudal loyalty - almost savagery - to make the contrast with the modern world obvious and horrific. 7

A Gothic figure, 'an aged sibyl', living beyond her time, and speaking 'like the dead speaking to the living', Elspeth has nuances of the Scottish ancestral spirit or *glaistig*. The visit of Lord Glenallan is most impressive, as D.W.Jefferson relates,

> The spectacle of the Earl stepping down from his gloomy aristocratic seclusion to the fisherman's cottage to hear the narrative of the past is strangely stirring, if only because, like Elspeth's awakening, it resembles a return from the dead; and the disturbing of the Mucklebackits, who vacate their cottage while the recital takes place, enhances the solemnity of the visit. 8

The visit is terminated when Elspeth asks the Earl for forgiveness,

> "Ask forgiveness of God, and not of man," said the earl, turning away.
> "And how shall I ask of the pure and unstained what is denied to me by a sinner like mysell? If I hae sinned, hae I not suffered? Hae I had a day's peace or an hour's rest since these lang wet locks of hair first lay upon my pillow at Craigburnfoot? Has not my house been burned, wi' my bairn in the cradle? Have not my boats been wrecked, when a' others weathered the gale? Have not a' that were near and dear to me dree'd penance for my sin? Has not the fire

7. D.Brown, Walter Scott and the Historical Imagination, London, 1979, p.58.

8. D.W.Jefferson, 'The Virtuosity of Scott', in Jeffares, op.cit., pp.69-70.

> had its share o' them, - the winds had their part, - the sea had her part? And oh! oh! that the earth would take her part, that's been lang, lang, wearying to be joined to it!" (A 442)

This speech, in epic style, contains all the trials of Elspeth's long, unhappy life, and an acknowledgement is implied that things have gone wrong because she served Lady Glenallan rather than God. Scott has composed it in the 'ubi sunt' form of the O.E. poem, The Ruin, but the mood is of the ancient Highland fragment, Son of Alpin,

> Son of Alpin! the woes of the aged
> are many: their tears are for the past.
> This raised my sorrow, warrior;
> memory awakened my grief.
> Oscur my son was brave;
> but Oscur is now no more.
> Thou hast heard my grief, O son of Alpin;
> forgive the tears of the aged. 9

Reduced by changing fashion and the powder tax to spending much of his time as valet to Oldbuck, kindly old Jacob Caxon, the periwig-maker, remains unperturbed by his master's acidity. On the night of the storm, a typical exchange takes place between them - Caxon timorous, and Oldbuck testy,

> At length a light and modest tap was heard at the parlour-door. "Is that you, Caxon? Come in, come in, man."
>
> The old man opened the door, and, thrusting in his meagre face, thatched with thin grey locks, and one sleeve of his white coat, said, in a subdued and mysterious tone of voice, "I was wanting to speak to you ,sir."
>
> "Come in then, you old fool, and say what you have got to say."
>
> "I'll maybe frighten the ladies," said the ex-friseur.
>
> "Frighten!" answered the Antiquary, "what do you mean? Never mind the ladies. Have you sen another ghaist at the Humlock-knowe?"
>
> "Na, sir, it's no a ghaist this turn," replied Caxon; "but I'm no easy in my mind."
>
> "Did you ever hear of anybody that was?" answered Oldbuck. "What reason has an old battered powder-puff like you to be easy in your mind, more than all the rest of the world besides?" (A 80)

9. J.Macpherson, Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Edinburgh, 1970, pp.69-70.

However, a conversation preceding the funeral of Steenie Mucklebackit reveals that Oldbuck deferred to Caxon's opinion regarding local custom, and discloses also that the old barber can reply to his patron with asperity when it is warranted,

> "I pray of you again, am I expected by these poor people to attend the funeral of their son?"
> "Ou, doubtless, your honour is expected," answered Caxon; "weel I wot ye are expected. Ye ken in this country ilka gentleman is wussed to be sae civil as to see the corpse aff his grounds. Ye needna gang higher than the loan-head, it's no expected your honour suld leave the land; it's just a Kelso convoy, a step and a half ower the door-stane."
> "A Kelso convoy!" echoed the inquisitive Antiquary; "and why a Kelso convoy more than any other?"
> "Dear sir," answered Caxon, "how should I ken? It's just a by-word."
> "Caxon," answered Oldbuck, "thou art a mere periwig-maker; had I asked Ochiltree the question, he would have had a legend ready made to my hand."
> "My business," replied Caxon, with more animation than he commonly displayed, "is with the outside of your honour's head, as ye are accustomed to say." (A 393)

Around the same time, poor Maggie Mucklebackit's 'burst of sorrow and natural affection' at the loss of her beloved Steenie is so simple and eloquent that it brings tears to Oldbuck's eyes. David Brown sees it as 'The most powerful indication of the decline of religious feeling in the modern world of The Antiquary ... when Steenie's parents notably refuse to take religious consolation from the Presbyterian minister .[10] It is, of course, true, that by the time of this novel, the vice-like grip of the kirk had been somewhat loosened, but the basic tenets of faith still existed, and of these 'The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away' is surely the most basic. Maggie accepts that it is her 'duty to submit', and she does not refuse to do this, but her agony of grief and bewilderment forces her to speak the following words, in the 'Why hast Thou forsaken me ?' tone,

> "Yes, sir, yes! Ye're very gude, - ye're very gude. Nae doubt, nae doubt! It's our duty to submit! But oh, dear, my poor Steenie, the pride o' my very heart, that was sae handsome and comely, and a help to his family, and a

10. Brown, op.cit., pp.56-57.

> comfort to us a', and a pleasure to a' that lookit on him! O my bairn, my bairn, my bairn! what for is thou lying there, and eh! what for am I left to greet for ye!" (A 414)

This poor woman's simplistic questioning of the purposes of life and death was the kind of speech that Scott had in mind when he said to Lockhart,

> I have read books enough and have observed and conversed with enough of eminent and splendidly cultivated minds too in my time, but I assure you I have heard higher sentiments from the lips of poor uneducated men and women when exerting the spirit of severe yet gentle heroism under difficulties and afflictions, or when speaking their own simple thoughts as to circumstances in the lot of their friend and neighbours, than I have ever yet met with out of the pages of the Bible. 11

On quite a different note, there is a most amusing scene towards the end of The Antiquary , in which the reader is given the opportunity to observe the unceremonious affinity that existed between employer and servant in a Scottish household. On this occasion, the peace and quiet of Oldbuck's sleeping-chamber is shattered by the intrusion of a veritable chorus-line of his assembled 'womankind', propelled thither by news of a French invasion,

> Our Antiquary, his head wrapped warm in two double night-caps, was quietly enjoying his repose, when it was suddenly broken by the screams of his sister, his niece, and two maid-servants.
>
> "What the devil is the matter?" said he, starting up in his bed, - womankind in my room at this hour of the night! Are ye all mad?"
>
> "The beacon, Uncle!" said Miss M'Intyre.
>
> "The French coming to murder us!" screamed Miss Griselda.
>
> "The beacon, the beacon! - the French, the French! - murder, murder! and waur than murder!" cried the two handmaidens, like the chorus of an opera.
>
> "The French?" said Oldbuck, starting up. "Get out of the room, womankind that you are, till I get my things on. And, hark ye, bring me my sword."

11. Lockhart, op.cit., p.560.

> "Whilk o' them, Monkbarns?" cried his sister, offering a Roman falchion of brass with one hand, with the other an Andrea Ferrara without a handle.
>
> "The langest, the langest," cried Jenny Rintherout, dragging in a two-handed sword of the twelfth century.
>
> "Womankind," said Oldbuck, in great agitation, "be composed, and do not give way to vain terror. Are you sure they are come?" (A 585)

This is the kind of scene with which Scott excelled, writing with an effortless, effervescent hilarity, and combining fast-moving action with the spontaneous dialogue of several inter-acting characters. In this instance, Miss M'Intyre is concerned with the beacon, Miss Griselda with murder by the French, Jenny Rintherout with arming Oldbuck with the 'langest' sword possible, and Oldbuck himself with clearing his room and getting dressed. Scott's hearty appreciation of the ludicrous was never very far below the surface, and it emerges here in the circumstance that any sword available, being part of an antiquarian collection is virtually useless. Any remaining vestiges of class distinction are swept away as Oldbuck, in extreme trepidation, implores mistress and maids alike, 'Womankind, be composed ... Are you sure they are come?'.

* * * *