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THE NORTHUMBRIAN HALF-LONG BAGPIPES

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Introduction

IT IS now over half a century since the last significant contribution to the Society on the subject of Northumbrian bagpipes. Papers were read in 1927 by George V. B. Charlton and in 1931 by Gilbert Askew (FSA Scot), the respective papers being entitled "The Northumbrian Bagpipes" and "The Origins of the Northumbrian Pipes". Both of these contributors mentioned the half-long bagpipes, but in no great detail.

The intention of this paper is to deal with the subject more comprehensively by drawing on other information, some of which was published before the date of the above papers, and some which has become available only within the last fifty years. It is felt that this neglected instrument deserves more attention than it has so far received.

The half-long pipes were widely played during the eighteenth century, but declined in popularity during the nineteenth, suffering a complete break in their tradition in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There was a revival in the 1920s and 1930s, largely sponsored by Charlton and Askew. The pipes used at this time were produced commercially by the firm of James Robertson & Co. of Edinburgh, based on surviving examples, and will be referred to as the "remodelled" pipes. Although it seems that a considerable number of the remodelled pipes were made, this revival came to an end during the 1939-45 war, and interest in the instrument since then has been limited.

It will be shown that many different types of bagpipe have been played in the British Isles, and it is necessary to use some technical terms in describing them. The essential components of all these pipes however are:

1. the bag (normally made of leather)
2. the chanter—a pipe with a number of holes (arranged longitudinally) on which the melody is produced, and
3. the drones (variable in number and in tone, which provide a basic harmonic accompaniment).

The chanter and drones are fitted into short tubes ("Stocks") which are tied into the bag. Air may be supplied to the bag direct from the mouth (as in the case of the Highland pipes) or by bellows, as in the case of the Northumbrian small-pipes.

We can define Northumbrian half-long pipes by saying that they must be bellows-blown and they must involve mounting the drones—usually three—in a single composite stock, rather than in separate stocks. Other characteristics are more debatable and are best discussed in relation to other types of bagpipe.

Half-Long Pipes in relation to other bagpipes

The Northumbrian half-longs are a member of the family of pipes usually called "Border" or "Lowland" pipes. Baines says, "It differs from the Lowland in having the three drones tuned tenor (a), baritone (e) and bass (A), these drones resting on the shoulder for marching, otherwise across the arm".¹ George Charlton said, speaking of the remodelled half-longs in 1927, "The compass of the chanter is similar to that of the Highland and Lowland pipes, but the drone harmony differs ..."² and he contrasts the two tenors (a) and bass (A) of the latter, with the a, e, A system mentioned by Baines. Gilbert Askew (the winner in 1929 of the Northumbrian Pipers Society Cup for half-longs) also said that the half-longs are a variant of the Lowland pipes.³ In view of all these references to Lowland pipes we should now see what has been said about these.

Baines presents a photograph of a set of Lowland pipes⁴ and we see how closely these are related to the remodelled half-longs, the most obvious difference between the two tenor drones instead of a tenor and a baritone. So far, so good, but now the situation becomes more complicated. No less an authority than Wm. Cocks lists several types of Lowland pipes:

1. The commonest form, with two 12" tenor and one 24" bass drone (i.e. as in Baines).
2. Similar to (1) but with one treble, one tenor and one bass drone (i.e. a, a, A).
3. Similar to (1) but with drones tuned as in the remodelled half-longs (i.e. a, e, A).
4. A form of what is now called hybrid Union pipe.

5. Small-pipes, some mouth-blown and some bellows-blown, with open chanters.⁵ So we can see that there is already some scope for confusion, in that there is no one type of bagpipe to which we can apply the definitive description of "Lowland". We also see that what are, to all intents and purposes Northumbrian half-long pipes (No. 3 above) can also be classed as Lowland pipes.

We should also bear in mind that the half-longs may even be confused with other Northumbrian pipes. Charlton said, "There are four kinds of Northumbrian pipes: the small-pipes, the shuttle pipes, the half-longs and another variety known as the great war or gathering pipes, possibly mouth-blown; these latter are mentioned by old writers but up to the present no example of them has been found. They were probably identical with the form in common use in Scotland and several parts of Europe".⁶ However this statement was subsequently challenged by Askew when he said "The large or half-long pipes of Northumberland are, except for one drone being differently tuned, identical with the larger Lowland pipes. The "great Northumbrian raising or gathering pipes" which are referred to by earlier writers, but of which no definite relics remain, are doubtless the same pipes under a more impressive name."⁷

It will now be obvious that, in attempting to research the history of the half-long pipes, one of the major difficulties encountered is the ambiguity in the description of the pipes. In many cases, references to "big" or "great" pipes are found, and—as Askew suggested—we often have to assume that the reference is to half-long pipes (or in a more general sense) to Lowland pipes.

Origins of the Half-Long Pipes

BELLOWS

The earliest illustration of a bellows-blown bagpipe is said to be in a publication (Praetorius' *Syntagma Musicum*) of 1618.⁸ The instrument was one of the type later called *musette*, and was said to be French; this type of instrument has often been said to be that from which the Northumbrian small-pipes are derived, though this theory no longer commands the support it did formerly.

Grattan Flood quotes a reference from Shakespeare's "*Merchant of Venice*" (Act IV, Scene 1) which mentions "*Woollen Bagpipes*". Flood equates "*Woollen*" with "*Uilleann*" or "*Elbow*" pipes and hence, bellows-pipes.⁹ "*Merchant of Venice*" was published about 1594. Flood says that uilleann pipes were in use in Ireland in 1580 and says "I have no hesitation in saying that the Lowland pipes were borrowed from Ireland". He adds, "Certain it is that the bellows was adopted by the Lowlanders in the last years of King James VI ere he ascended the throne of England" (i.e. 1603). He also mentions that Leyden (Dr. John Leyden's "*The Complaynt of Scotland* 1801) gives his opinion that the Lowland pipes came into vogue about the close of the sixteenth century.¹⁰

However, it should be pointed out that Flood's statements have often been found to be prejudiced (towards the Irish) and often made without any reference to the source of, or the evidence for, the statement. His comments are added principally in order to provide a more complete review of earlier published information.

Other, generally more reliable, writers may also be guilty of presenting speculation in too factual a form. For example, Francis Collinson says that ... "the bellows, *almost certainly* introduced from France first into Northumberland, found their way into Ireland for the uilleann or union pipes, and from thence to Lowland Scotland".¹¹ If this theory is correct, it would suggest that the use of bellows in the Northumbrian half-long or Lowland pipes took place in the mid to late seventeenth century. Collinson seems to be supporting Gilbert Askew's ideas, when the latter said "Apparently some of the early sets of Lowland pipes were fitted with a similar chanter to that of the uilleann pipes of Ireland ... It would seem therefore that when the drone-mounting and bellows blowing were imported from Ireland to the Lowlands, some attempt was made at copying the chanter".¹²

There is little real evidence for the theory that Lowland pipes were developed from the Irish uilleann pipes; indeed, it has recently been suggested that development took place in the reverse direction.

Askew says, "The evidence seems to show that the bellows-blown bagpipe was first invented about the middle of the sixteenth century or slightly earlier, but it is unsafe to adduce any definite date for its introduction into this country".¹³

The earliest surviving example of an English bellows-blown pipe has shuttle drones, a plain open chanter and is dated 1695.¹⁴

Until further evidence comes to light, it is felt that both the source of origin and date of introduction of the bellows to the Lowland and half-long pipes must remain open questions.

DRONE SYSTEM

Now let us turn to the second distinctive feature of the half-longs, that is the system of mounting the drones in a common stock. Several earlier writers have mentioned the apparent evolution of the drone system on the modern Northumbrian small-pipes (involving three separate drones in a common stock) from the shuttle drone system. (It should be explained that shuttle drones are based on a short, cylindrical

Arch. Ael. 5, Vol. XII

Plate XII



THE BAG-PIPER

*Reproduced from Sir David Wilkie's painting
by courtesy of The Tate Gallery*

piece of wood drilled longitudinally with a number of holes which are connected internally to provide the length of pipe required for specific notes). So, as in the case of the bellows, we are faced with the question as to whether this feature of the half-longs followed the small-pipe transition (i.e. mid to late 17th century) or pre-dated it.

Askew points out that the common stock system of mounting drones was found in pipes of other countries and he mentions certain types of extinct German bagpipe, the *zampogna* of Italy, the *cornemuse* of France and the Irish *uilleann* pipes. He goes on "It seems highly probable that the drone mounting of our local pipes comes to us from Ireland by way of that of the Lowland pattern, but it does not seem to have done so until the use of the bellows had become familiar through the shuttle pipes".¹⁵ Collinson again supports this theory,¹⁶ which would suggest late 17th century for the introduction of this system.

However, if we accept the full implications of Grattan Flood's statements, i.e. that *uilleann* pipes were in use from 1580, and that Shakespeare's "woollen" equates with *uilleann*, this means that *uilleann* pipes (with the common stock drone system) was familiar in England in the late sixteenth century.

Once again, the evidence is inconclusive on this feature also.

Historical evidence for the existence of Half-Long Pipes

WRITTEN EVIDENCE

Whatever the date of introduction of the two essential features of the half-long pipes, there is plenty of evidence for their (and the related Lowland pipes) use particularly during the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries. On the Scottish side of the border, these pipes were in widespread use by the town or burgh pipers, though this is an area where vague description of the pipes (e.g. "great pipe") often leaves some doubt as to the exact type of pipe used. For example, in 1700, Thomas Beattie the town piper of Hawick was censured for his "night revelling in going upon the fairs, night playing with the great pype through the haill towne in company of some drunken persons ...".¹⁷ The employment of town pipers is also recorded in Alnwick and Newcastle.¹⁸ One writer says "The earliest pipers of the Border, said Scott, were of the tinker family of Allen, born and bred at Yetholm in Roxburghshire. James Allen, who died in 1808 at the advanced age of 80 was piper to the Duke of Northumberland and was, it is said, 'the best performer of his time of the "loud" and "small" bagpipes. That is, presumably, the large and small bellows pipes'".¹⁹

There is a wealth of other references in Lowland Scotland to town pipers, often including a mention of the "great pipes" which we can fairly safely assume to be something other than Highland pipes. There are also certain pictures showing Lowland pipes, such as one of James Livingstone of Haddington, and one of Geordie Syme of Dalkeith. A more artistic piece of evidence is a painting by Sir David Wilkie ("The Bagpiper"). It is believed that this was painted in 1813 and clearly shows the bellows and three drones in one stock, these corresponding in length to the modern half-long pipes.

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Fortunately, quite a number of half-long or Lowland pipes have survived. A recent visit to the Black Gate Museum found 14 sets on display. These include several with a, e, A drone tuning, one of which is said to have belonged to a Scot who settled in County Durham, after participating in the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. There are also sets of Lowland pipes in museums in Edinburgh, Hawick and elsewhere in Scotland. Pipes of the half-long or Lowland type were certainly made in Newcastle and elsewhere in England, but also as far north in Scotland as Aberdeen.

Characteristics of the Instrument

CHANTER

In general, earlier writers agree that the pitch and compass of the Lowland or half-long chanter was the same as that of the Highland pipe chanter. In all cases, the chanters seem to have given the nominal notes A to A, with leading note G. Again, most writers say that the Lowland or half-long chanter is less strident than the Highland chanter, and that this would be expected from the fact that weaker reeds are used. The remodelled half-long pipes have a chanter based on a set given by Col. Reed of Chipchase Castle to John Milburn of Bellingham in 1772, when the pipes were said to be old. However, the chanter is said to be of an "improved pattern" and in fact, it is very similar to a normal Highland pipe chanter.

Correspondence with a current commercial maker of both Highland and Lowland pipes drew the following comment on their Lowland pipe chanter. They decided to pitch the chanter in B flat and ... "to approach the matter along these lines, rather than attempt to copy older chanters because the older chanters we have examined appear to be unplayable in that there seemed to be no kind of scale or balance. We would suspect that the reason for this is due to the fact that an entirely different design of reed to that available today would have been played in earlier years".²⁰

One wonders if Robertsons had a similar experience when testing the "Milburn" chanter, and whether this resulted in their falling back on the Highland chanter as a basis for their remodelled pipes.

The author has seen a chanter made according to the measurements in "The Northumbrian Bagpipes" by Cocks & Bryan,²¹ but has not been successful in reeding it satisfactorily. It is understood that others have had a similarly disappointing experience.

A further aspect concerning the chanter should be mentioned, and this is the scale involved. For those who are unfamiliar with the Highland chanter it must be pointed out that this has a unique scale and to the non-piper, the notes which sound most peculiar are D, which is sharp, and G which is much flatter than, say, a violinist would expect. There are advantages arising from this scale²² but it has also been said that the "half-longs would have had a much better chance of becoming popular in England if the chanter had sounded as truly as does the small-pipe chanter".²³

Some mention should be made of "pinching notes", which was some sort of fingering technique whereby the range of the chanter could be extended upwards. There are various references by earlier writers to pipers who could use this technique,

thereby extending their repertoire to include tunes (e.g. "Soor Plums in Galashiels") which otherwise were beyond the scope of the instrument.²⁴ A book on Highland pipes, published in the early years of the nineteenth century says, "In the Low Countries where they use bellows to their pipes . . . they have enlarged the compass of it by adding pinching notes, for the better imitation of other music. By this, their chanter has the most of the flute compass".²⁵ (At this date the flute was a one-key instrument.) However, other remarks by this author show that he has a poor opinion of the Lowland pipes, in that they have lost the resonance of the Highland pipes so that "the noise of their drones drowns any execution of the chanter".

So far as the author is aware, the modern Robertson half-long chanter cannot produce "pinching notes". Having discussed the subject with reed and pipe makers, the general opinion is that a modified design of chanter would be required to facilitate this.

DRONES

From the many examples of eighteenth and nineteenth century Lowland pipes (both large and small) which remain, there is a clear indication that the a, e, A tuning is by no means exclusively Northumbrian. A number of sets are recorded as having been made by John Naughtan of Aberdeen, having this drone tuning.²⁶ The clear distinction which has been made that this type of drone tuning is Northumbrian, and the a, a, A tuning Scottish is a misleading over-simplification. We must also accept the fact that many Lowland Scots were playing pipes which Northumbrians would call half-long pipes.

Some reference should be made to the position of the pipes when playing. Early references indicate that the drones were often allowed to rest on the upper part of the legs, the player being seated (i.e. the normal playing position of an uilleann piper). A sketch by J. Sands, reproduced in a book of 1901 shows this position.²⁷ The remodelled half-longs of the 1920 revival had the drone stock mounted in the bag so that the drones could be played across the chest or (when on the march, for example) on the shoulder.

This section would be incomplete without some reference to the harmony of the drones with the chanter though this is a complicated subject and can only be dealt with briefly. The drones on the Highland and the classic Lowland pipes sound A (the key-note or tonic) and are said to give tonic harmony. This tonic harmony provides varying degrees of harmony with the notes in a given melody, but "a melody may be constructed so that very seldom and for a very short period at any one time, to require any other harmony than the tonic; and the less such other harmony is required, the more pleasing will be the effect of the melody on the bagpipes".²⁸ The half-long pipes have, in addition to two drones sounding the tonic (A) one drone sounding the dominant (E), thus giving a more satisfying chord, but creating a more complex situation as concerns harmony with the notes in a given melody.

In his tutor for the half-long bagpipe, Cocks starts by saying, "Players upon the Northumberland half-long bagpipe need not trouble themselves with sharps and

flats".²⁹ and all his music is written in three sharps (key of A major). In fact, however, pipe tunes are in different keys, and obviously the harmony produced with the drones is affected. Askew said that the E drone "precludes any use of the key of D . . . and is consequently a restriction on the repertoire of the piper".³⁰ In a letter from Colin Ross, he says "This is why, in my opinion the fifth harmony drone never really caught on with the pipers, as it restricted their repertoire".

The author's experience is that whilst some tunes certainly give more pleasing harmony with the drones than others, none have been found with an unacceptable degree of dissonance. No doubt the situation is influenced by the volume of sound produced by the E drone relative to the A drones, and also by other harmonics produced by the three drones.

MUSIC

To the modern small-pipe player, a range of nine notes would seem very limiting; a "musical straight-jacket" as it has been called.³¹ Yet nine notes is all a Highland piper has, and he has a very extensive repertoire. An index, published some time ago listed 2,430 tunes from 35 published books, representing a selection made from a total of 15,000 tunes in over 100 books!³² However, many of these tunes are relatively modern and we can appreciate that the repertoire of a late eighteenth-century piper would have been much more limited. An indication of such a repertoire is given in a poem "The Northern Minstrel's Budget" by Henry Robson, who was born in 1770 and died 1848. The poem starts with an introduction:

"A minstrel who wandered 'tween Tynedale and Tweedale,
Who well could perform on the bagpipes and fiddle
Who tended at hoppings, at bridals and fairs
And charmed young and old with his lilt and his airs.
The following tunes played correctly and clearly:—"

He then lists about 250 tunes, though we must remember that some of these may have been fiddle tunes, possibly outside the scope of the pipes. This poem was published in the "Northumbrian Minstrelsy", about 100 years ago, and the editor made the following comment. "This production of his muse is inserted principally for the value it possesses to the connoisseur in the lengthy list of song and dance tunes which were popular and common at the commencement of this century, when this poem was first published. Unhappily, several of them are now, we fear, irretrievably lost."³³

We must remember that most of the pipers of this period were professional in the strict sense, who inherited their jobs—and most of their music—from their fathers. Sir Walter Scott gave an account of how his aged uncle, Thomas, while on his death-bed in 1823, got his son to play to him "Soor Plums in Galashiels" to make sure he had the tune correct.³⁴ Little of the music was ever written down (the Highland pipers at this period were learning their much more complex pibrochs by word of mouth) and it is perhaps not surprising that virtually no manuscript books of music for the half-long pipes have survived from this period.

The earliest published collection is, of course, Peacock's, which was printed in the early years of the nineteenth century.³⁵ We must remember that it was Peacock (with

Dunn) who introduced keys on the small-pipe chanter so that up to that time pipers were confined to a one-octave (or nine note, in the case of the half-long) chanter. Most of the tunes in Peacock's collection can be played on such a chanter; surely, many of these were traditional half-long tunes. Many of the tunes in Peacock's collection re-appear in the "Northumbrian Minstrelsy", and again in a tutor and tune-book for the half-longs, produced by Cocks in 1925.³⁶

Finally, mention should be made of the book of Lowland Scots Tunes recently produced for the Lowland Pipers Society.³⁷ Most of these are tunes with a long pedigree, and would have been familiar to eighteenth-century Border pipers.

Technique of Playing

In view of the lapse in the playing tradition, it might be felt that the only approach is simply to speculate. However, we can consider the technicalities involved and see what comments have been made on the subject, before resorting to speculation.

The main difference in technique between the present-day small-pipe player (with closed chanter) and the open chanter player is in the use of grace-notes or "cuttings". A small-pipe player can separate his notes by closing the chanter, producing his notes "like peas in a pod". This cannot be done on an open chanter on which the player is confined to playing in one style only (*legato*), as opposed to the small-pipe player who can play either *legato* or *staccato*. In order to separate notes the open-chanter player must interpose a grace note or a cutting.

The Highland piper developed the use of cutting in a formalized way, through the medium of *piobaireachd* playing. Even in present-day popular Highland pipe music, the grace noting is very formalized and is the main factor in producing the characteristic style of playing. By contrast elaborate use of cuttings in Northumbrian small-pipe playing is regarded as non-traditional and is discouraged by adjudicators in competitions.

It is felt that a major factor in this difference in playing technique is the actual music involved. The Highland piper's music *is* pipe music; that is, it is written specifically for the pipes. If originally it was a song or a fiddle tune, it has been adapted by a piper to conform with piping technique. On the other hand, all the evidence we have suggests that the Northumbrian (and probably Lowland) pipers music was, first and foremost, song or dance music. It has even been said that the perfection of the art amongst Border pipers was to play, sing and dance at the same time.³⁸

The Northumbrian and Border tunes which have survived from the eighteenth century do not, in general, lend themselves to Highland cutting techniques.

Our conclusion is that, from the form in which the music has come down to us, and from the comments made in the literature, the Border pipers did not have a highly developed form of "cutting".

Possible reasons for decline of the Border Pipes

One reason is that the towns and burghs which employed a piper gradually dispensed with their services, as the nineteenth century movement of population from the land grew in pace, and the towns outgrew their origins.

Other social changes also exerted their influence "Houses generally became much better than just shelters, and social life was concentrated in the drawing room rather than on the village green. Loudness was no longer a necessary quality, and so the musical instruments which became popular were those which provided sweetness and delicacy."³⁹ Dancing moved indoors and the Scots dancing masters taught to the music of the fiddle. Soon, accordions and concertinas were introduced and the pipes were literally "left out in the cold". The Scottish Lowland towns adopted the services of players of brass instruments for their processions and ceremonials.

It has been suggested that one of the most important factors affecting the continuance of a musical tradition is patronage. "But the success or failure of an instrument over time need not necessarily be decided by whether it increases its range by the addition of keys or not, and the most successful of the bagpipes has consistently and obstinately turned its face against such adaptations. What injects an instrument or a musical tradition with the energy to survive and to flourish is patronage—particularly moneyed patronage . . ."⁴⁰ We must remember that during the period in question (the mid to late nineteenth century) the Highland pipes were enjoying a period of great popularity. The Queen had her own piper and following her example, many of the aristocracy in Scotland and even the "nouveau riche" had their own piper. Patronage might be said to include the general public interest in the Highland pipes and in pipe bands (which were then a relatively new conception) and also the organization of competitions for Highland pipers (which took place from 1781). Sadly, this sort of support was not given to the Northumbrian half-long or Lowland piper, and it is even possible that the interest in the Highland pipes could have weakened what support for the Border pipes still remained.

Revival

Revival seems to have taken place in the 1920s and is attributed by Askew to George Charlton and a small band of enthusiasts.⁴¹ The manufacture of the remodelled half-long pipes was undertaken by Robertsons of Edinburgh, who were Highland pipe makers. As mentioned earlier, the chanter was based on the pipes belonging at one time to John Milburn and the drones on a set belong to James Hall, one-time piper to the Duke of Northumberland. It is understood that the Robertson pipes were available from 1925, and in 1927 George Charlton said, "Whilst the small-pipes are most admirably suited for indoors, the fireside and the camp-fire, the half-long pipes are better for the open, and it is thought by those interested in piping that the revival of the large pipes will encourage piping generally in Northumberland and that many beginners will take up the more difficult but sweeter small-pipes."⁴²

George Charlton's hopes appeared to be fulfilled for a period and a number of bands based on half-long pipes and drums were formed. The Officers' Training Corps of the Royal Grammar School in Newcastle had a band in 1927–8, which continued—at least to some extent—up to the outbreak of war in 1939. The Medical School at the University of Newcastle also had a band based on half-long bagpipes.

The North of England Musical Tournament included a class for solo performers

on the half-long pipes, and in 1934 there were eight entrants, six being from Morpeth. There was also a class for half-long pipe bands, the winners being 7th Whitley Bay (presumably Boy Scouts) and the runners-up the 7th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers (TA).

The Northumbrian Pipers' Society had some special medals struck for award in these competitions. They were given by members of the aristocracy in Northumberland and some carry the crest or badge of the donor on the obverse.⁴³ The medals for the winners were struck in silver and must have been highly prized by the recipients. We are reminded of the importance of patronage, mentioned earlier.

Both traditional Northumbrian and also Scottish tunes were played and there was some attempt to teach "cuttings" or grace notes. Pipe Major Robertson (of the firm of Robertsons in Edinburgh) used to visit Newcastle regularly, over a period of some years, in order to teach aspiring players. He used the Robertson tutor for the Highland pipes as a basis of his tuition. He taught the Grammar School band.

It seems that a decline in the popularity in the half-long pipes set in before the outbreak of the 1939 war, though no satisfactory explanation for this has been offered by contemporary pipers. The cup for half-long pipes was not awarded by the Northumbrian Pipers' Society from 1939 until 1949.

The Future

A talk given to the Northumbrian Pipers' Society in 1981 presented a glowing prospect for the future of the small-pipes. Musically, they are now much more versatile than at any period in their history, thanks to the technical advances made by the makers particularly as regards their production in pitches other than the traditional F, and their consequent suitability for playing with other instruments. Numerically, there are probably more small-pipes being played than at any time in their history.

When the Northumbrian Pipers' Society was revived in the 1920s, it is said that the players of half-long pipes very much outnumbered the small-pipe players. Yet today, the situation is very much reversed. Why?

Is it the factor mentioned earlier, with regard to the original decline of the instrument, namely lack of patronage? "Patronage" today means something quite different from what it did in the mid-nineteenth century; patronage today comes from television, radio, record companies and the folk clubs. The tremendous growth of interest in folk music in the last 20–30 years has generated a far more sophisticated demand than existed before, with a search for newer and more exciting "sounds". The small-pipes, with their versatility and compatibility with other instruments are well suited to cater for this untraditional demand. "Untraditional" because traditionally, the small-pipe player was an individualist who seldom played with other instrumentalists. The half-long pipes are, by tradition, an outdoor instrument and much less suited for playing with other instruments. Is it this lack of versatility which has caused the decline in interest in the half-longs over the last 50–60 years?

The Northumbrian Pipers' Society—and in particular, members such as Charlton and Askew—provided the patronage which revived the half-long tradition in the 1920s. It provided a cup and organized a competition for half-long pipes in 1928;

it revived the competition in 1977. These efforts had come success in the 1920s; efforts on a similar scale are required now.

We have an instrument which is a traditional Northumbrian instrument, and with a longer tradition than the present-day small-pipe which dates back to the early nineteenth century. Our Society pipers should be playing half-long pipes at all the out-door activities and ceremonies in Northumberland, rather than the totally unsuitable and less traditionally-used small-pipes.

The Northumbrians have allies these days amongst their traditional enemies over the Border, where interest in the Lowland pipes—and an appreciation of their long and honourable tradition—is growing and giving encouragement in the form of the Lowland Pipers Association.

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NOTES

¹ Anthony Baines, *Bagpipes*, Oxford, 1973, p. 118.

² George V. B. Charlton, "The Northumbrian Bagpipes", *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th Series, Vol. VII, p. 139.

³ Gilbert Askew, "The Origins of the Northumbrian Pipes", *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th Series, Vol. IX, p. 78.

⁴ Baines, *op. cit.* Plate 29.

⁵ Wm. Cocks, quoted in Francis Collinson, *The Traditional and National music of Scotland*, London, 1966, p. 169.

⁶ Charlton, *op. cit.* p. 136.

⁷ Askew, *op. cit.* p. 82.

⁸ See Askew, *op. cit.* p. 70.

⁹ W. H. Grattan Flood, *The Story of the Bagpipe*, London, 1911, p. 95.

¹⁰ Flood, *op. cit.* p. 175.

¹¹ Francis Collinson, *The Bagpipe*, London, 1975, p. 122.

¹² Askew, *op. cit.* p. 80.

¹³ Askew, *op. cit.* pp. 71–2.

¹⁴ See Askew, *op. cit.* p. 73.

¹⁵ Askew, *op. cit.* p. 74.

¹⁶ Collinson, *op. cit.* p. 123.

¹⁷ George S. Emmerson, *Rantin' Pipe and Tremblin' String*, London, 1971, pp. 195–6.

¹⁸ R. D. Cannon, *The Bagpipe in Northern England*, p. 133.

¹⁹ Emmerson, *op. cit.* p. 198.

²⁰ Letter from Sir Patrick Grant, Bt., LLB of Grainger and Campbell, Ltd. Glasgow.

²¹ *The Northumbrian Bagpipes* by W. A. Cocks and J. F. Bryan.

²² *Piobaireachd* by S. McNeil, published by the BBC.

²³ Letter from W. J. S. Kirton.

²⁴ Emmerson, *op. cit.* p. 197.

²⁵ Joseph McDonald, *A Compleat theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe*, republished Inverness, 1971, p. 28.

²⁶ Records in the National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh.

²⁷ W. I. Manson, *The Highland Bagpipe*, London, 1901, p. 169.

²⁸ J. Clerevaux Fenwick, "A few remarks

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³³ J. Collingwood Bruce and J. Stokoe, *The Northumbrian Minstrelsy*, Newcastle 1882, pp. 140-43.

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⁴⁰ Hugh Cheape, "The Pipes and Folk Music" in "The Peoples Past", Edinburgh, 1980.

⁴¹ Askew, *op. cit.* p. 78.

⁴² Charlton, *op. cit.* p. 141.

⁴³ Gilbert Askew, "The Medals of the Northumbrian Bagpipes", Gateshead, 1938.

