
A Textual Study of *The Battle of Otterburn*

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I. Introduction

This study is an attempt to see, by collating several versions, how variously one and the same historical event is related in ballad under one title of *The Battle of Otterburn*, and how some of the variations were brought about. The ballad is based upon a Scottish invasion of England made "about the Lammas tide" of 1388, the twelfth year of Richard II of England—Robert II then reigning over Scotland. James, Earl of Douglas, with his brother Earl of Murray and certain of the leading noblemen of Scotland, invaded Northumberland at the head of three thousand men, while the Earl of Fife and his brother, sons of King Robert, commanding a still more numerous company, laid the northwestern country in waste, took Carlisle castle and marched further southward. But the main body of the ballad is concerned with the exploits of the detachment, the army under Douglas, who penetrated as far as Newcastle and even to Durham.

On his way back he encounters at the former town Henry Percy, or 'Hotspur' of Shakespeare's *King Henry IV*, who lay in garrison there. They fight, Douglas seizes Percy's lance and pennon bearing his coat of arms. He marches north, lodges at Otterburn, about thirty miles NW of Newcastle, and there awaits his antagonist, true to the promise they had made at Newcastle. Percy rallies a powerful army on the Marches, hastens to Otterburn, and makes a night attack upon the Scottish camp. A fierce battle ensues under a clear moon

(C_c version st. 32), and in one of the skirmishes Douglas is slain, struck by the heavy blow of Percy's 'fine Collayne' (C_A 50, 56), while both Henry Percy and his brother Ralph are taken prisoners by Lord Montgomery, Douglas' nephew and the new commander of the Scots. Thus ends this memorable internecine battle, leaving many a widow 'wyth wepyng teyres' (C_A 67).

This story is told in more or less varied forms, according as the sources differ from which the ballads are drawn. The following anthologies are what I have chosen as best serving my purpose of textual collation.

Abbreviation	Anthology
C	Francis J. Child: <i>English and Scottish Popular Ballads</i> , ed. H. C. Sargent and G. L. Kittredge, one-vol. edn. 1905 London (First edn. 1883-98 5 vols.)
E	George W. Edwards: <i>A Book of English Ballads</i> . 1896 New York
G	Francis B. Gummere: <i>Old English Ballads</i> . 1914 Boston (First edn. 1894)
H	David Herd: <i>Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads, Etc.</i> , 2 vols. 1870 Edinburgh, being 'A page for page Reprint of the Edition of 1776' (First edn. 1769, Second edn. 1776)
O	Okakura, Yoshisaburo: <i>Old English Ballads</i> . 1923 Tokyo
P	Thomas Percy: <i>Reliques of Ancient English Poetry</i> . 1856 London (First edn. 1765)
Q	Sir Arthur T. Quiller-Couch: <i>The Oxford Book of Ballads</i> . 1927 Oxford.
R	Joseph Ritson: <i>Ancient Songs and Ballads</i> , 2 vols. 1829 London (First edn. 1790)
S	Sir Walter Scott: <i>Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border</i> , ed. T. F. Henderson, 4 vols. 1902 New York (First edn. 1802 2 vols. Second edn. 1803 3 vols.)

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These may be divided into three groups, as tabulated below, according to the likeness their versions bear to one another in substance, though they differ to some extent in particulars, such as spelling, vocabulary, and part or even whole of the stanzas.

Group	Compiler	Version	First edition	Number of stanzas
I	Percy		1765	70
	Ritson		1790	70
	Child	A	1883	70
	Gummere		1894	70
	Edwards		1896	70
	Okakura		1923	70
	Quiller-Couch		1927	76
II	Herd		1769	14
	Child	B	1883	14
III	Scott		1802	35
	Child	C	1883	40

In each group, comparison is to be made between Professor Child's version and the other version or versions. In group I, modernization of spelling is so universal with Q version that the instances will be left unmentioned in the collation except in a very few cases.

As for the sources of the versions, some compilers state them, while others do not. Thus Professor Child indicates at the head of each of his versions its origin, e.g., **A** version as being founded upon the two MSS., i.e., Cotton MS. and Harleian MS., both in the British Museum, **B** version upon Herd's MS., Herd's *Scottish Songs*, and Scott's *Minstrelsy* "corrected" from Herd, 1776, "by a MS. copy;" and **C** version upon Scotch Ballads, materials for *Border Minstrelsy*..... communicated to Scott, in a letter, by James Hogg.

Percy's version, which is much the same as Child's **A** version,

may be presumed as founded upon the same basis as that of Child's. Only he says in the commentary put before his version, "Luckily we have a very circumstantial narrative of the whole affair from Froissart, a French historian, who appears to be unbiassed. Froissart's relation is prolix; I shall therefore give it, with a few corrections, as abridged by Carte, etc."

Edwards says nothing particular in the way of the source of his version. Gummere, after recommending in the "Notes" of his collection Child's **A** version as "incomparably the best," refers to the two MSS. in the British Museum and Froissart's *Chroniques*, which admits the identity of the origin of his version with that of Child's.

Ritson does not make any reference in his collection to the subject.

Okakura names in the Introduction (xxii) of his edition William Allingham, the editor of *The Ballad Book* (1864), as the basis of his version.

Correspondence of **CA** to Q is as follows ('x' indicates absence of the whole stanza):-

CA stanza (s)	Q stanza (s)
1-7	1-7
8	x
9-18	8-17
	Q 18, ll. 3-4 are from S 16, ll. 3-4
19	x
20-55	19-54
56	x
	Q 55-58 are from S 23-25 and 27.
57	59
58	x Q 60-65 are from S 28 and 30-34
59-68	66-75
69	x
70	76

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Q version is, as seen from the above table and the textual collation which follows, an ingenious conflation of several preceding versions.

In group II, CB version is, as specified at the head of it, based upon Herd's *Scottish Songs Etc.*, with not a few emendations in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Sidney Gilpin, editor of Herd's collection just mentioned, says in his prefatory note appended to it (xii), "The great drawback of Herd's Collection is that it gives no names of authors, no references to the sources from whence its contents were derived, no notes or comments regarding their probable date, nor any other information of a like character. In this respect it is a step or two behind Allan Ramsay's *Tea Table Miscellany*; but otherwise it has stolen a considerable march in advance of that work especially in point of taste and condensation."

In group III, Scotch ballads, which also furnished materials for Scott's *Minstrelsy*, are, as stated at the head of the version, the sources of CC. They are mostly Hogg's two copies, which worked, as shown below, complementarily to make up Child's version.

Hogg's copies: 1st copy, 29 stanzas (1-24 35-38 40)

2nd copy, 11 stanzas (25-34 39)

Scott availed himself of other sources, besides Hogg (with frequent emendations, truncations and interchanges of the order of verses), e. g., Herd (stanzas 21, 25, 26, 30, 31, 33-35), traditional stories (st. 20 etc.), or his own composition (stanzas 30, 32, etc.); cf. "Sir Walter Scott, in editing the *Border Minstrelsy*, was under considerable obligations to a manuscript of Herd's containing many copies of curious old ballads, which he had gathered into the garner and carefully annotated." — Herd: *Scottish Songs*. Introduction viii.

II. Textual Collations

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN

A

a. Cotton MS. Cleopatra, C. iv,
leaf 64, of about 1550. b. Harleian
MS. 293, leaf 52. Both in the British
Museum.

1 Y^T¹ fell² abowght³ the Lamasse⁴ ¹ It-Q ² felle-O, P ³ adout-Q
tyde, ⁴ Lammas-Q ⁵ husbands-Q,
Q1 Whan husbondes⁵ wynnes⁶ ther haye, husbonds-P ⁶ wynne-G, wynn-P
The dowghtye Dowglasse⁷ bowynd⁸ ⁷ Dowglass-P ⁸ bound (him)-S
hym to ryde,
In Ynglond to take a praye.

[⁵husbandmen ⁶Northumberland phrase,
'get in' ⁸prepared (himself)]

2 The yerlle of Fyffe,¹ wythowghten² ²withouten-R
stryffe,
He bowynd³ hym over Sulway;⁴ ³bowyn-G, R
The grete wolde⁵ ever to-gether ryde;
That raysse⁶ they may rewe⁷ ⁶race-P ⁷rue-P
for aye.

[¹The Earl of Fife, Robert Stuart,
second son of K. Robert II

³hied (him) ⁴Solway Firth
⁵(great)power ⁶riding, raid]

For stanza 2, Q has

Q2 He has chosen the Graemes,
and the Lindsayz light,
And the gallant Gordons gay;
And the Earl of Fyfe withouten
strife,
He's bound him over Solway.

3 Over Hoppertope¹ hyll they² cam³in, ¹Ottercap-G, P, Q, R ³came-P
Q3 And so⁴ down⁵ by Rodelyffe⁶ They come in over Ottercap Hill-Q
craige; ⁴So down---Q ⁵dowyn-P, R

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Vpon Grene⁷ Lynton⁸ they lyghted
 down,
 Styrande⁹ many a stage.¹⁰ ⁶Rodeley (Cragge)-Q, Rodelyffe
 cragge-P ⁷Green-Q ⁸Leyton-P, Q
¹⁰stagge-P, Q

[²sc. the Earl of Douglas and his
 party ⁹Stirring ¹⁰stag]

4 And boldely brente¹ Northomberlond,
 And haryed² many a towyn;³ ²harryed-Q ³Bamborowe shire-Q
 They dyd owr Ynglyssh men grete
 wrange,⁴
 To batell⁵ that were not bowyn.⁶ ⁵battell-O, P, R

[¹burnt ²pillaged ⁴wrong, injury
⁶bound, ready]

For stanza 4, Q has

Q4 And they have brent the dales of
 Tyne,
 And haryed Bamborowe shire,
 And the Otter Dale they have brent
 it hale,
 And left it a' on fire.

5 Than¹ spake a berne² vpon the ¹Then-Q
 bent,³

Q5 Of comforte that was not colde,
 And sayd, We haue brente Northomber-
 lond,
 We haue all welth⁴ in holde. ⁴wealth-Q

[²man ³field]

6 Now we haue haryed all Bamborowe
 schyre,

Q6 All the welth in the worlde¹ haue ¹world-O
 wee,
 I rede² we ryde to Newe Castell,³ ³Newcastell-Q
 So styll and stalworthlye.⁴

[²advise ⁴stoutly]

7 Vpon¹ the morowe, when it was ¹Uppon-P ²daye-P
 day,² ³standards-P, Q
 Q7 The standerds³ schone⁴ full⁵ ⁴shone-Q ⁵fulle-O, P
 bryght;

- To the Newe Castell the toke⁶ the
 waye,
 And thether they cam full ryght.
- ⁴cf. So shyneth in his whyte baner
 large-*The Knight's Tale* l.118
- 8 *Syr* Henry Perssy¹ laye at the
 New Castell,
 I tell² yow *wythowtten drede*;³
 He had byn a march-man⁴ all hys
 dayes,
 And kepte Barwyke vpon Twede.
- [³doubt ⁴scourer of the marches]
- 9 To the Newe Castell¹ when they
 cam,
 Q8 The Skottes they² cryde on hyght;³
 'Syr Hary Perssy, and⁴ thou
 byste⁵ *within*,
 Com to the fylde, and fyght.
- ¹To Newcastell-Q
²The Douglas-Q
⁴n-Q
⁵bidest-Q
- [³aloud ⁴if]
- 10 'For we haue brente Northomberlonde,
 Q9 Thy erytage¹ good and ryght,
 And syne² my logeyng I haue take³
Wyth my brande dubbyd many a
 knyght!
- ³taken-Q
- [¹heritage ²since]
- 11 *Syr* Harry Perssy cam to the walles,
 Q10 The Skottyssch oste for to se,¹
 And sayd² And thou hast brente
 Northomberlond,
 Full sore it rewyth me.³
- ¹The Scottish host for to see-Q
²'And sayd' wanting in P
- [³I regret it]
- 12 Yf thou hast haryed all Bamborowe
 schyre,
 Q11 Thow hast done me grete enye;¹
 For the trespasse thow hast me done,
 The tone² of vs schall dye.³
- ³shall die(*et al.*)-Q

[¹injury ²The one]

13 'Where schall I byde the?' said
the Dowglas,

Q12 'Or where wylte thou com to me?'

'At Otterborne, in the hygh way,¹

[T]her mast² thou well logeed be. ²maist -P, mayst-E

[¹the old Watling-street road-Percy]

For st.12, ll. 3-4, Q has

'But gae ye up to Otterbourne,
And wait there dayes three.

These are from S, st.10, ll. 1-2.

14 '[T]he roo¹ full rekeles ther ¹roe-Q
sche rinnes,

Q13 [T]o make the game a[nd] glee;

[T]he fawken² and the fesaunt³

²fawkon-P, falcon-Q ³phesant-Q

both,

Among⁴ the holtes⁵ on hye.⁶

⁴amonge-P ⁶hee-P

[³pheasant ⁵woods cf. Germ. *Holz*]

For the last line, Q has

To fend thy men and thee.

(fend=provide for)

15 'Ther mast¹thow haue thy welth
at wyll,

¹see st.13 above may'st (*et al.*)-Q

Q14 Well looged² ther mast be;

²lodg'd-Q

Yt schall not be long or³ I com

³ere-Q

the⁴ tyll;⁵

⁴thee-Q

Sayd Syr Harry Perssye.⁶

⁶Percye-P

[⁵unto, to]

16 'Ther schall I byde the,' said the
Dowglas,

Q15 'By the fayth of my bodye:'

'Thether schall I com,' said Syr

Harry Perssy,

'My trowth I plyght to the.'¹

¹'My troth I plight to thee'-Q

17 A pype¹ of wyne he gaue them over
the walles,

Q16 For soth as I yow saye;
Ther he mayd the Dowglasse² drynke, ²Douglas-P
And all hys ost³ that daye. ³oste-P

[¹large cask]

For the first two lines, Q has
A pipe of wine over the wall,
He gave them [to their pay],
(to their pay=for their satisfaction)

18 The Dowglas turnyd hym homewarde
agayne,

Q17 For soth *withowghten* naye;¹ ¹stay-Q
He toke² hys logeyng at Oterborne, ²tooke-P
Vpon³ a Wedynsday. ³Uppon-P

For the second and third lines, Q has
And rode withouten stay;
He pyght his standard at Otterbourne
(pyght=pitched)

19 And ther¹ he pyght hys standerd ¹there-P
dowyn,
Hys gettyng² more and lesse,
And syne he warned hys men to goo
To chose³ ther geldynges gresse.⁴ ³And get-E

[²booty ⁴horses' grass]

For stanza 18, Q has
Q18 And syne he warned his men to go
To choose their geldings grass;
[And he that had no man to send]
His own servant he was.

20 A Skottysshe knyght hoked¹ vpon
the bent,

Q19 A wache² I dare well saye; ²At watch-Q
So was he ware³ on the noble
Perssy,
In the dawning⁴ of the daye. ⁴dawnynge-P

[¹hung about, tarried ³aware(of)]

21 He prycked¹ to hys pavyleon-dore,

- Q20 As faste as he myght ronne;
 'Awaken, Dowglas,' cryed the
 knyght,
 'For hys love that syttes in throne?² ²For his sake that sits in
 throne! -Q
 [¹sped ²i. e. for the love of the
 King of Scotland]
- 22 'Awaken, Dowglas,' cryed the
 knyght,
 Q21 'For thow maste¹ waken wyth ¹maiste-P
 wyne;²
 Yender³ haue I spyed the prowde ³yonder-Q
 Perssye,
 And seven stoundardes wyth hym.
- [²joy, delight]
- 23 'Nay¹ by my trowth,' the Dowglas ¹Now(by my troth)-Q
 sayed,
 Q22 'It ys but a fayned² taylle; ²fayned(tale)-Q
 He durst³ not loke on my brede⁴ ³durste-P ⁴bred-P
 banner
 For all Ynglonde so haylle. ⁵ ⁵Were all England in hail! -Q
 [²feigned ⁴outspread, extended
⁵pure, strong]
- 24 'Was I not yesterdaye at the Newe
 Q23 Castell,
 That stondes¹ so fayre on Tyne? ¹stonds-P
 For all the men the Perssy had;² ²hade-P
 He coude³ not garre⁴ me ones ³cowde-P
 to dyne.
- [⁴give me my dinner, my fill, beat
 thoroughly-C; entertain me(at fighting)
 -Q]
- 25 He stepped owt at his pavelyon-dore,
 Q24 To loke and¹ it were lesse;² ¹To look, and it were less-E;
 'Araye yow, lordynges,³ one and ²To look an it were lease-Q
 all, ³lordyngs-P
 For here bygynnes no peysse. ⁴
- [²leas, falsehood ⁴peace]

- 26 'The yerle of Mentaye,¹ thow arte ¹Mentayne-P
Q25 my eme,²
 The fowarde³ I gyve to the:
 The yerlle of Huntlay, cawte⁴ and ⁴caute (and keen)-Q
 kene,
 He schall be wyth the⁵ ⁵He schall wyth the be.-P, R
 He shall with thee be.-E
[¹The Earl of Menteith ²uncle
³van ⁴wary, spirited] Take him to go with thee.-Q
- 27 'The lorde of Bowghan,¹ in armure ¹The Lord of Buchan-Q
bryght,
Q2f On the other hand he schall be;
 Lord Jhonstoune² and Lorde ²Johnstone-Q
 Maxwell,
 They to schall be wyth me.³ ³They two shall go with me.-Q
28. 'Swynton, fayre fylde¹ vpon your ¹Swynton fayre fylde...-P
pryde!
Q27 To batell make yow bowen² Swynton fayre, fylde...-R
 Syr Davy Skotte, *Syr* Water³ fair fall-Q
 Stewarde, ³Walter.-E, P, Q
 Syr Jhon of Agurstone !⁴ ⁴Sir John of Agerstone-Q
- [²ready]
- 29 The Perssy cam byfore hys oste,¹ ¹host-Q
Q28 Wyche was ever² a gentyll knyght; ²ever was-E
 Vpon the Dowglas lowde can he crye,
 'I wyll holde that I haue hyght³
- [³what I have promised]
- 30 'For thou haste brente Northomber-
Q29 londe,
 And done me grete envye;¹
 For thys trespasse thou hast me
 done,
 The tone² of vs schall dye! ²The one-E
- [¹hostility v. st. 12 note]
- 31 The Dowglas answerde hym agayne,
Q30 Wyth grett wurdes vpon hye,¹ ¹With great words upon hie-Q
 And sayd, I haue twenty agaynst grete wurd-P up on hee-E, P, Q

thy one,

Byholde, and thou maste² see. ²v. 13, 22' notes

[¹With haughty words in a loud voice]

32 Wyth that the Perssy was grevyd¹

sore,

Q31 For soth² as I yow saye; ²sothe-P

He lyghted downy vpon his foote;³ ³fote-P

And schoote⁴ hys horsse clene
awaye.⁵ ⁵away-P, Q

[¹vexed ⁴thrust, sent quickly]

33 Euery man sawe that he dyd soo,

Q32 That ryall¹ was euer in rowght;²

Euery man schoote hys horsse

hym froo,

And lyght hym rowynde abowght.

[¹royal ²rout, company, 'a king
among men']

34 Thus *Syr* Hary Perssye toke the
fylde;¹

Q33 For soth as I yow saye;² ²Even thus, as I you say-Q

Jhesu Cryste in hevyn on hyght³ ³on high-E v. 31

Dyd helpe hym well that daye.

[¹opened the campaign]

35 But nyne thowzand, ther was no
moo,

Q34 The cronykle wyll not layne;¹

Forty thowsande of Skottes and

fowre

That day fowght them agayne.²

[¹conceal, deceive ²against them]

36 But when the batell byganne to
ioyne,

Q35 In hast ther cam¹ a knyght; ¹came-P

The letters fayre furth² hath he

tayne;³

And thus he sayd full ryght:

{²fair forth, directly ³taken}

37 'My lorde¹ your father he gretes ¹My lorde, ----P, R
Q36 yow well,
Wyth many a noble knyght;
He desyres yow to byde
That he may see thys fyght.

38 'The Baron of Grastoke¹ ys com ¹Graystoke-Q
out of the west,

Q37 Wyth hym a noble companye;
All they loge at your fathers thys
nyght,
And the batell² fayne³ wolde⁴ ²batel-P ⁴wold-P
they see.

{³fain}

39 'For Jhesus¹ love,' sayd Syr ¹Jesu's-P
Harye Perssy,² ²Percy-E

Q38 'That dyed for yow and me,
Wende to my lorde my father
agayne,
And saye thow sawe me not
wyth yee.'³ ³Say thou saw me not with
thee. -Q ee(i. e. eye)-E

40 'My trowth ys plyght to yonne
Skottysch knyght,

Q39 It nedes me not to layne,¹
That I schulde byde hym vpon
thys bent,
And I haue hys trowth agayne.

{¹break my word v. 35}

41 'And if that I w[e]ynde of thys

Q40 growende,¹ ¹growend-P

For soth, onfoughten² awaye,
He wolde me call but a kowarde
knyght
In hys londe another daye.

{¹go off this ground ²unfought}

42 'Yet had I lever¹ to be rynde ¹liefer-Q
and rente,²

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- Q41 By Mary, that mykkel maye,³ ³that mickle may (*i. e.* mighty-
Then ever my manhood schulde be maid)-Q mykel-P
 reprovyd
 Wyth⁴ a Skotte another day.⁵ ⁵daye-O

 [²riven and rent, flayed and torn
 ⁴By]
- 43 'Wherefore¹ schote, archars, for ¹Wherefore-O
Q42 my sake,
 And let scharpe arowes flee;
 Mynstrells, playe² vp for your ²play-P
 waryson,³
 And well quy⁴t it schall bee.⁵ ⁵be-P

 [³reward ⁴rewarded]
- 44 'Euery man thynke on hys trewe-
 love,¹
- Q43 And marke hym to² the Trenite;³ ³Trinitye-Q
 For to God I make myne avowe
 Thys day wyll I not flee.⁴ ⁴fle-P

 [¹true love of God ²cross himself
 in the name of]
- 45 The bloody harte¹ in the Dowglas
 armes;²
- Q44 Hys standerde stode³ on hye, ³stood-O
 That euery man myght full well
 knowe; ⁴Beside-E Bysyde-R
 By syde⁴ stode starrës⁵ thre. ⁵starres-P stanes-R

 [¹bloody heart ²coat of arms]
- 46 The whyte lyon on the Ynglyssh
 perte;¹ ¹parte-P
- Q45 For soth as I yow sayne;² ²Forsooth as I you sayn (*i. e.*
 The lucettes³ and the cressawntes⁴ say)-Q Forsoth-P ³Lucetts-P
 both; ⁴Cressawnts-P
 The Skottes⁵ favght them agayne.⁵ ⁵Skotts-P

 [³lucis, or pikes (a kind of river fish)
 ⁴crescents ⁶fought against them]
- 47 Vpon Sent¹ Androwe lowde can² ¹Seynt-Q sent-P ²did-E(so

- they crye, also, 56-1, 58-2)
- Q46 And thrysse³ they schowte on
hyght,⁴ ⁴ayght-R
And syne merked⁵ them one⁶ owr ⁵marked-P
Ynglysshe men,
As I haue tolde⁷ yow ryght. ⁷told-P
- [¹Saint Andrew, the guardian saint
of Scotland ³thrice ⁴shouted in
a loud voice ⁶took their aim at
(one=on)]
- 48 Sent George the bryght, owr
ladyes¹ knyght, ¹ladies-P
- Q47 To name they were full fayne;
Owr Ynglyssh² men they cryde on ²Ynglysshe-P
hyght,
And thrysse the³ schowtte agayne. ³they-Q, R
- 49 Wyth that scharpe arowes bygan
to flee,
- Q48 I tell yow in sertayne;
Men of armes byganne to joyne,
Many a dowghty man was ther
slayne.
- 50 The Perssy and the Dowglas mette,
- Q49 That ether¹ of other was fayne; ¹either-Q ather-R either of
They swapped² together whyll³ ²them-E
that the⁴ swette,⁵ ²schapped-P ³whylle-O
Wyth swordes⁶ of fyne collayne:⁷ ⁶swords-P ⁷Collayne-P
- [⁴until they ⁵sweated
⁷Cologne (or Köln)steel]
- 51 Tyll the bloode from ther basson-
- Q50 nettes¹ ranne, ¹bassonnets-P abassonnets-Q
As the roke² doth in the rayne;
'Yelde the³ to me,' sayd the ³Yield thou-Q
Dowglas,
'Or elles⁴ thow schalt be slayne. ⁴els-P
- [¹basinets, helmets ²reek]

52 'For I see by thy bryght bassonet,

Q51 Thow arte sum man of myght;

And so I do by thy burnysshed

brande;

Thow arte an yerle¹ or elles² a ¹earl'-Q ²ells-P
knyght.

53 'By my good faythe' sayd the

Q52 noble Perssye,

'Now haste thow rede¹ full ryght;

Yet wyll I never yelde me to the,

Whyll I may stonde and fyght.

[¹hast thou read, divined]

54 They swapped together, whyll¹ that

Q53 they swette,

Wyth swordës scharpe and long;

Ych on other so faste thee² beette, ²they²-P

Tyll ther helmes cam in peyses ³came in pieces down-Q
downyn.³

[¹v. 50-3 ²they(beat)]

55 The Perssye was a man of
strength,

Q54 I tell yow in thys stounde;¹

He smote the Dowglas at the
swordës² length

That he felle³ to the growynde. ²swordes-O, P

³fell-O

[¹time cf. Germ. *Stunde*]

56 The sworde was scharpe, and sore
can¹ byte,

I tell yow in sertayne;

To the harte he cowde² hym smyte, ²did-E(so also 59-4)

Thus was the Dowglas slayne.

[¹v. 47-1 ²did]

57 The stonderdes¹ stode styll on
eke² a syde,³

¹stonderds-P ²ilke-R

³on eke syde-P on each sile-E

Q59 Wyth many a grevous grone;

Ther the fowght the day,⁴ and all ⁴They fought that day-Q

- the nyght,
 And many a dowghty man was
 slayne.⁵ ⁵slone-E, P, Q
- 58 Ther was no freke¹ that ther wolde
 flye,
 But styffely² in stowre³ can stond, ²styffly-P
 Ychone⁴ hewyng on other whyll ⁴Ych one-R
 they myght drye,⁵
 Wyth many a bayllefull⁶ bronde.⁷
- [¹man, bold man ³tumult, fight
⁵endure ⁶destructive, deadly
⁷brand, sword]
- 59 Ther was slanye vpon the Skottës¹ ¹Skottes-P
 syde,
- Q66 For soth and sertenly,
Syr James a Dowglas ther was
 slayne,
 That day² that he cowde dye. ²daye-P
- 60 The yerlle¹ of Mentaye² he was ¹yerle-P
 slayne, ²Earl of Menteith-Q
- Q67 Gryseley³ groned vpon the growynd;
Syr Davy Skotte, *Syr* Water ⁴Walter Steward-P
 Stewarde,⁴
Syr Jhon of Agurstone⁵ ⁵John of Agurstonne-P
John of Agerstone-Q
- [³grisly, frightfully]
- 61 *Syr* Charlës¹ Morrey² in that place, ¹Charles-P ²Sir Charlës
- Q68 That never a fote³ wold flee; Murray-Q ³foot-Q cf. 32-3
Syr Hewe Maxwell⁴, a lorde⁵ he was, ⁴Hughe Maxwelle-P ⁵lord-P
 Wyth the Dowglas dyd he dye.
- 62 Ther was slayne vpon the Skottës¹ ¹Skottes-P
 syde,
- Q69 For soth² as I yow saye, ²Forsoth-R
 Of fowre and forty³ thowsande ³fifty-Q
 Scottes⁴. ⁴Scotts-P
 Went but eyghtene awaye.

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- 63 Ther was slayne vpon the Ynglysshe
 Q70 syde,
 For soth and sertenlye,
 A gentell knyght, *Syr* Jhon Fechewe,¹ ¹Sir John Fitzhughe-P, Q Fitzhewe-R
 Yt was the more pety² ²petye-P
- 64 *Syr* James Hardbotell¹ ther was ¹Harebotell-P, R
 slayne,
- Q71 For hym ther hartes were sore;
 The gentyll Lovell² ther was slayne, ²Lovelle-P
 That the Perssys³ stander bore. ³Percyes-P Percy' s-Q
- 65 Ther was slayne vpon the Ynglyssh
 perte,¹
- Q72 For soth² as I yow saye, ²Forsoth-R v. 46-2 sooth-Q
 Of nyne thowsand Ynglyssh men
 Fyve hondert³ cam away. ³hundred-Q
- [¹part v. 46-1 ³cf. Germ.
Hundert]
- 66 The other were slayne in the fylde;¹ ¹The others slayne were in the
 Q73 Cryste kepe ther sowles² from ¹field.-Q ²their sowles-P
 wo!
 Seyng³ ther was so fewe⁴ fryndes ³Seeing-Q ⁴few-P fewè-Q
 Agaynst so many a foo.
- 67 Then on¹ the morne they mayde² ¹one-P ²mayd-P
 Q74 them beerys³ ³beeres-P bieres-Q
 Of byrch and haysell graye;
 Many a wydowe, *wyth* wepyng
 teyres,⁴
 Ther makes⁵ they fette⁶ awaye.
- [⁴cf. with weeping tears-As *You*
Like It II. iv. 53 ⁵mates ⁶fetched]
- 68 Thys fraye bygan¹ at Otterborne, ¹was fought-Q
 Q75 Bytwene the nyght² and the day; ²nyghte-P
 Ther the Dowglas lost hys lyffe,³ ³lyfe-P
 And the Perssy was lede awaye.

For the last two lines, Q has
 Earl Douglas was buried at the bracken bush,
 And the Percy led captive away.

- 69 Then was ther a Scottysh¹ prisoner ¹Scottyshe-P

tayne,
Syr Hewe² Montgomery was hys ²Hughe-P
name;
For soth³ as I yow saye, ³Forsoth-R
He borowed⁴ the Perssy home
agayne.

[⁴ransomed]

70 Now let vs all for the Perssy praye
Q76 To *Jhesu*¹ most of myght;² ¹Jesu-P
To bryng hys sowlle³ to the ³sowle-P
blysse of heven,
For he was a gentyll knyght.

[²omnipotent]

For stanzas 55-58, Q has

The Douglas¹ call'd to his little ¹he-S
foot-page,
Q55 And sayd² 'Run speedilye, ²said-S
And fetch my ain dear sister's son,
Sir Hugh Montgomery.

'My nephew good',¹ the Douglas ¹bauld-Hogg
Q56 sayd,
'What recks² the death of ane?'³ ²boots-Hogg ³ane!-S
'Last night I dream'd a dreary
dream,
And I ken the day's thy ain.

'My wound is deep: I am fayn to ¹I fain would sleep;-S
Q57 sleep,¹ ²vanguard-S
Take thou the vaward² of me,³ ³This line is from Herd.
And hide me by⁴ the bracken bush Hogg reads, 'Nae mair I'll
Grows⁵ on yon lilye-lee'.⁶ fighting see'. ⁴Gae lay me in-
Hogg ⁵That grows-S
⁶Hogg omits 'lilye'

He has lifted¹ up that noble lord² ¹He lifted-S ²lord,-S
Q58 With³ the saut tears⁴ in his e'e;⁵ ³Wi'-S ⁴tear-S ⁵ee;-S
He has hidden⁶ him in the bracken ⁶He hid-S ⁷bush,-S
bush⁷ ⁸merrie-men-S
That his merry men⁸ might not ⁹This line is Scott's. Hogg
see.⁹ reads: On yonder lily lee.

These four stanzas are from S,
with a few emendations, stanzas 23,
24, 25 and 27, respectively.

For stanzas 60-65, Q has

The morn¹ was clear, the day
Q60 drew nie,² ¹moon ²near, -Both
— Yet stiffly in stowre they ¹and ², S st. 28, l. 1
stood;
Echone hewing another while they
might drie,
Till aye ran down the blood.

For ll. 2-3, cf. CA st. 58, ll. 2-3.

The Percy and Montgomery¹ met ¹When stout Sir Hugh wi'
Q61 That either of other was² fayn:³ Piercy -Hogg ²were-S, I wat
They swappèd swords, and they he was right-Hogg ³fain;-S
two⁴ met ⁴twa-S, till sair they swat-Hogg
Till⁵ the blood⁶ ran down between. ⁵And aye-S ⁶blude-S

'Now yield thee, yield thee, '¹¹ 'Yield thee, O yield thee,
Q62 Percy,'¹ he said, Percy !' -S
'Or² I vow I'le lay thee low !' ²'Or else-S
'To whom³ shall I yield?'⁴ ³'Whom to-S ⁴yield,' -S
said Earl Percy, ⁵'Now that-S ⁶must-S ⁷so?'-S
'Now⁵ I see it maun⁶ be so.—⁷
The stanza in Hogg reads:-
'O yield thee, Piercy,' said Sir Hugh,
'O yield, or ye shall die;'
'Fain would I yield,' proud Piercy said,
'But neer to loun like thee.'

'Thou shalt not yield to lord¹ nor ¹knave-Hogg ²'yet' is Scott's
Q63 loun, ³bush, The couplet is from
Nor yet² shalt thou to me; Herd.
But yield thee to the bracken bush³ ⁴That grows upon-H, S
Grows on yon lilye-lee'.—⁵ ⁵lilye lee !' -S lilly lie-H

'I winna¹ yield to a bracken² bush, ¹will not-S ²braken-H, S
Q64 Nor yet I will³ to a brere;⁴ ³will I-H, S ⁴yield to a brier;-S
But I would yield to Earl Douglas, ⁵Or Sir Hugh the Montgomery, -S
Or Montgomery⁵ if he was⁶ here' ⁶were-S

As soon as he knew Montgomery,¹ ¹it was Montgomery, -S
 Q65 He stuck his sword's point in
 ground;² ²in the gronde;-S
 The Montgomery³ was a courteous
 knight, ³And the Montgomery-S
 And quickly took him by the hand⁴ ⁴honde. -S

These six stanzas are from S,
 with a few emendations, stanzas
 28, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34.

B

a. Herd's MS., I, 149, II, 30; Herd's
 Scottish Songs, 1776, I, 153. b. Scott's
 Minstrelsy, I, 31, 1802, "corrected" from (Herd: *Scottish Songs*)
 Herd, 1776, "by a MS. copy."

1 IT fell and about the Lammas time,
 When husbandmen do win their
 hay,
 Earl Douglass¹ is to the English ¹DOUGLAS (*et al.*)
 woods,
 And a' with him to fetch a prey.

2 He has chosen the Lindsays¹ light, ¹LINDSAYS
 With them the gallant Gordons² ²GORDONS
 gay,
 And the Earl of Fyfe,³ withouten ³FYFE (without a comma after it)
 strife,
 And Sir Hugh Montgomery⁴ upon ⁴HUGH MONTGOMERY (*et al.*)
 a grey.⁵

[⁵a grey horse]

3 They have¹ taken Northumberland, ¹hae
 And sae hae they the north shire;² ²north-shire
 And the Otter Dale,³ they hae burnt⁴ ³Otter-dale ⁴they burnt
 it hale,⁵
 And set it a' into fire.⁶ ⁶into a fire

[⁵whole, wholly]

4 Out then spake¹ a bonny boy, ¹spack
 That servd² ane o³ Earl Douglass⁴ ²serv'd ³o'. ⁴DOUGLAS'

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- kin;⁵ ⁵kin,
 Methinks I see an English host;⁶ ⁶(without a comma after *host*)
 A-coming branken⁷ us upon.
- [⁷galloping]
- 5 'If¹ this be true, my little boy, ¹(without a quotation mark
 And² it be troth that thou tells³ before *If*)
 me,
- The brawest⁴ bower in Otterburn
 This day shall be thy morning-fee.⁵ ⁵morning fee
- [²If ³tell'st ⁴finest ⁵reward]
- 6 'But¹ if it be fase;² my little boy, ¹(without a quotation mark
 But and³ a lie that thou tells⁴ before *Bu*) ²false
 me,
- On the highest tree that's in
 Otterburn
 With my ain⁵ hands I'll hing ⁵awin
 thee high.⁶ ⁶hie (without a quotation mark
- [³But and=³And also ⁴v. 5-3 note after it)
⁵own]
- 7 The boy's taen out his little
 penknife,
 That hanget low down by his
 gare;¹
- And he gaed² Earl Douglass a ²gae
 deadly wound,
 Alack! a deep wound and a sare.³
- [¹*i. e.* low down by his knee (¹gare
 =¹gore) ²gave ³sore)]
- 8 Earl Douglas said to Sir Hugh
 Montgomery,
 Take¹ thou the vanguard o² ¹Tack ²o'
 the three;³ ³three;
 And bury me at yon braken-bush;⁴ ⁴braken bush
 That stands upon yon lilly lee.
- 9 Then Percy¹ and Montgomery met, ¹PERCY (*et al.*)
 And weel a wot² they warn³ ²wat ³war na
 fain;
- They swaped⁴ swords, and they ⁴swapped
 twa swat;⁵

And ay the blood ran down
between.

[²well I know, assuredly ³were not
⁴smote (with) ⁵they two sweated]

- 10 'O¹ yield thee, yield thee, Percy,' ¹(without a quotation mark
he said, before *O. et al.*)
'Or else I vow I'll lay thee low;' ²low.
'Whom to shall I yield,' ³yield?
Earl Percy; ⁴PERCY;
'Now that I see it maun⁵ be so?'

[⁵must]

- 11 'O yield thee to yon braken-bush,¹ ¹braken bush
That grows upon yon lilly lee;

- 12 'I winna yield to a braken-bush¹ ¹braken bush
Nor yet will I unto a brier;²
But I would³ yield to Earl Douglass, ³wad
Or Sir Hugh Montgomery, if he
was here.'

[²briar]

- 13 As soon as he knew it was
Montgomery,
He stuck his sword's point
in the ground,¹ ¹ground:
And Sir Hugh Montgomery was a
courteous knight,
And he quickly broght² him by ²brought
the hand.

- 14 This deed was done at Otter-
burn,
About the breaking of the day;¹ ¹day.
Earl Douglass was buried at the
braken-bush;² ²braken bush
And Percy led captive away.

C

Scotch Ballads, Materials for Border

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Minstrelsy, No. 132, Abbotsford,
 stanzas 1-24, 35-38, 40; the same,
 No. 5, stanzas 25-34, 39.
 Communicated to Scott, in a letter,
 by James Hogg.

(Scott: *Minstrelsy*)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 IT fell about the Lammas time,¹
 When the muir-men won² their
 hay,
 That³ the doughty Earl⁴ Douglas
 went⁵
 Into England⁶ to catch⁷ a prey.</p> | <p>¹tide
 ²win
 ³(wanting) ⁴(wanting)
 ⁵bound him to ride
 ⁶England, ⁷drive</p> |
| <p>2 He chose the Gordons and the
 Graemes,
 With¹ the Lindsays² light and
 gay;
 But the Jardines wadna³ wi⁴ him
 ride,
 And they rued⁵ it to this day.</p> | <p>¹(from Hogg); With <i>them</i>
 ²Lindsays,
 ³wald not ⁴with
 ⁵rue</p> |
| <p>3 And he has burnt¹ the dales o
 Tine²
 And part of Almonshire,³
 And three good towers on Roxburgh⁴
 fells
 He left them all on fire.</p> | <p>¹burn'd ²Tyne
 ³(from H); Bambrough shire
 (from English version)
 (from Hogg); ⁴Reidswire</p> |
| <p>4 Then he marchd¹ up to Newcastle,
 And rode it round about:²
 'O whae's³ the lord of this castle,
 Or whae's³ the lady o't?'</p> | <p>¹And he march'd
 ²about;
 ³wha's</p> |
| <p>5 But up spake proud Lord Piercy¹
 then,
 And O but he spak² hie!
 I am the lord of this castle,
 And³ my wife's the lady gaye.⁴</p> | <p>¹Percy (<i>et al.</i>)
 ²spake (<i>et al.</i>)
 ³(without <i>And</i>) ⁴gay</p> |
| <p>6 'If you are¹ lord² of this castle,
 Sae weel it pleases me;
 For³ ere I cross the border again⁴
 The ane of us shall die.'</p> | <p>¹thou'rt ²<i>the</i> lord
 ³For,
 ⁴(from Hogg); Border fells
 (fells=wild hills)</p> |
| <p>7 He took a lang speir¹ in his hand,</p> | <p>¹speare</p> |

- Was made of² the metal free,
 And for to meet the Douglas then³
 He rode most furiously:⁴
- 8 But O how pale his lady lookd,¹
 Frae off² the castle wa,³
 When down⁴ before the Scottish
 spear⁵
 She saw brave⁶ Piercy fa!⁷
- 9 How pale and wan his lady lookd,
 Frae off the castle hieght,
 When she beheld her Piercy yield
 To doughy Douglas' might!
- (This stanza, which is virtually
 a repetition of the preceding one,
 is not found in Scott's version.)
- 10 'Had we twa been upon the green,
 S9 And never an eye to see,
 I should have¹ had ye² flesh and
 fell;³
 But your sword shall gae wi me.'
 [³hide]
- 11 'But gae you¹ up to Otterburn,²
 S10 And there wait dayes three,³
 And if I come not ere three days'⁴
 end
 A fause lord⁵ ca⁶ ye me.'
- 12 'The Otterburn's a bonny¹ burn,²
 S11 'T is³ pleasant there to be,⁴
 But there is naught⁵ at Otterburn
 To feed my men and me.
- 13 'The deer rins wild owr¹ hill and
 dale,
 S12 The birds fly wild frae² tree
 to tree,³
 And there is neither bread nor
 kale⁴
 To fend⁵ my men and me.
- ²Shod with
³there
⁴(from Hogg); right furiouslye
- ¹look'd
²aff ³wa'
⁴down,
⁵spear,
⁶proud ⁷fa'
- ¹wad hae ²you,
- ¹ye ²Otterbourne(*et al.*)
³wait there dayis three
⁴dayis
⁵(from Hogg); knight
⁶ca' (*et al.*)
- ¹bonnie(*et al.*) ²burn;
³'Tis ⁴be;
⁵nought
- ¹on
²from
³tree;
⁵feed

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[¹over ⁴broth made of greens,
esp. of kale and rape ⁵support]

14 'But¹ I will stay at Otterburn,
S13 Where you shall welcome be;
And² if ye come not ere three
days' end³
A coward⁴ I'll ca thee.'

¹Yet
²And,
³at three dayis end,
⁴(from Hogg); A fause lord

15 'Then gae your ways to Otterburn,
And there wait dayes three;
And if I come not ere three days'
end
A coward ye 's ca me.'

This stanza is from Hogg. The
corresponding stanz in Scott's
version reads:-

S14 'Thither will I come,' proud
Percy said,
'By the might of Our Ladye !'—
'There will I bide thee,' said the
Douglas,
'My trowth I plight to thee.'

16 They lighted high on Otterburn,
S15 Upon the bent¹ so brown,²
They lighted high on Otterburn,
And threw their pallions³ down.
[¹field, fields covered with bent
grass ³pavilions]

²sae brown;

17 And he that had a bonny boy
S16 Sent his horses¹ to grass,²
And he that had not a bonny boy³
His ain servant he was.

¹Sent out his horse ²grass;
³boy,

18 But up then spak a little page,
S17 Before the peep of the¹dawn;²
'O waken ye, waken ye, my good
lord,
For Piercy's hard at hand !

¹(wanting) ²dawn

19 'Ye lie, ye lie, ye loud liar,¹

¹(from Hogg); liar loud! ²lie:

S18 Sae loud I hear ye lie !² ³For
The³ Piercy hadna⁴ men yestreen⁵ ⁴had not ⁵yestreen,
To dight⁶ my men and me.
(⁶govern, rule; or (compel to) prepare?)]

20 'But I have seen¹ a dreary dream, ¹(from Hogg); hae dream'd
S19 Beyond the isle o² Sky;³ ²of

I saw a dead man won⁴ the fight,
And I think that man was I'

[³Skye, the largest island of the
Hebrides, northwest of Scotland
⁴win, gain]

21 He belted on his good broad-sword¹ ¹guid braid sword
S20 And to the field he ran, ² ²ran;
Where he met wi the proud Piercy,
And a' his goodly train.

The last two lines are from Hogg;
for these Scott has:-

But he forgot the helmet good,
That should have kept his brain.
(Scott apparently wished to introduce
the traditional story. —Henderson)

22 When Piercy wi¹ the Douglas met, ¹wi'
S21 I wat he was right keen;² ²fu' fain !

They swakked³ their swords till
sair they swat,
And the blood ran them between.⁴ ⁴ran down like rain

[³swack=to strike violently sword
against sword]

(This stanza is from Herd, with 'like
rain' for 'between,' etc. —Henderson)

23 But Piercy wi¹ his good broad-
S22 sword,² ¹with
Was made o the metal free,³ ²v. 21-1
Has wounded Douglas on the brow⁴ ³(from Hogg, with 'metal' for
Till backward he did flee.⁵ 'mettle'); That could so sharply
wound ⁴brow,
 ⁵(from Hogg); Till he fell to
the ground.

24. Then he calld¹ on his little page,² ¹call'd ²foot-page ³said—

S23 And said,³ Run⁴ speedily,⁵ ⁴ 'Run(...Montgomery.)' ⁵ speedilie
 And bring⁶ my ain dear sister's ⁶ fetch
 son,
 Sir Hugh Montgomery.

25 { Who, when he saw the Douglas bleed,
 His heart was wonder wae:¹ [¹woeful]
 'Now, by my sword, that haughty lord (This stanza is wanting in Scott's
 Shall rue before he gae.' version.)

26 'My nephew bauld,'¹ the Douglas ¹(from Hogg); good
 S24 said,
 'What boots² the death of ane? ²(foom Hogg); recks
 Last night I dreamd³ a dreary ³dream'd
 dream,
 And I ken the day's thy ain.

27 'I dreamd I saw a battle fought
 Beyond the isle o Sky,
 When lo, a dead man wan the field,
 And I thought that man was I.
 (This stanza is to the same effect
 as 20, and Scott's version lacks it.)

28 'My wound is deep, I fain wad
 S25 sleep,¹ ¹would sleep;
 Nae mair I'll fighting see;² ²(from Hogg)
 Gae lay me in³ the broken bush ³(from Hogg)
 That grows on yonder lee.⁴ ⁴(mainly from Herd)

In Scott's version, ll. 2, 3 and 4 read:-
 Take thou the vanguard of the three,
 And hide me by the braken bush,
 That grows on yonder lilye lee.
 L. 2 is evidently from Herd (st. 8, l. 2),
 who begins l. 3 with 'And bury me at
 yon...', and Hogg drops 'lilye' in l. 4.

29 'But tell na ane of my brave men
 That I lye bleeding wan,¹
 But let the name of Douglas still
 Be shouted in the van.
 [¹pale] Scott lacks this stanza.

30 'And bury me here on this lee,¹ ¹(from Hogg)

S26 Beneath the blooming brier,²
And never let a mortal ken³
A kindly Scot lyes here.⁴

²briar [briə]
³(from Hogg)

¹For l.1. Scott reads (mainly from Herd):-

O bury me by the braken bush,
³Scott opens l.3:- Let never living...
⁴Scott opens l.4 with 'That ere...'

31 He liftit¹ up that noble lord,
S27 Wi² the saut³ tear in his ee,⁴
And⁵ hid him in the breaken⁶ bush,
On yonder lily lee.⁷
[³salt, bitter ⁷Scott reads:-
That his merrie-men might not see.

¹lifted
²wi' ⁴ee;
⁵He ⁶braken (*et al.*)
⁷(from Hogg)

32 The moon was clear, the day drew
S28 near,
The spears in flinters¹ flew,
But mony² gallant Englishman³
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.
[¹splinters, fragments]

¹flinders
²mony à ³Englishman,

33 Sir Hugh Montgomery he rode
Thro all the field in sight,
And loud the name of Douglas still
He urgd wi a' his might.
Scott's version lacks this stanza.

34 The Gordons good, in English blood¹
S29 They steepd² their hose³ and
shoon,⁴
The Lindsays flew like fire about,
Till a'⁵ the fray was doon.]⁶
[³(*or* 'hosen') stockings ⁴shoes]

¹blood,
²steep'd
⁴shoon;
⁵all ⁶done

35 When stout Sir Hugh wi Piercy
met,¹
I wat he was right fain;²
They swakked their swords till
sair they³ swat,
And the blood ran down like rain.

¹(from Hogg)
²(from Hogg)
³(from Hogg)

For this stanza Scott reads:-

S30 The Percy and Montgomery met,

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That either of other were fain;
They swapped swords, and they
twa swat,
And aye⁴ the blude ran down ⁴ ('aye' is Scott's)
between.

36 'O yield thee, Piercy,' said Sir
Hugh,
'O yield, or ye shall die !'
'Fain wad I yield,' proud Piercy
said,

'But neer¹ to loun² like thee.'
[¹never ²a person of low rank;
rogue; often a mere term of general
disparagement]

This stanza is from Hogg; a corre-
sponding stanza in Scott's version
reads:-

S31 'Yield thee, O yield thee, Percy !'
he said,
'Or else I vow I'll lay thee low !'
'Whom to shall I yield,' said Earl
Percy,
'Now that it must be so?'

37 'Thou shalt not yield to knave¹ nor ¹ (from Hogg); lord
loun,

S32 Nor² shalt thou yield to me; ² Nor yet (Scott's)
But yield thee to the braken ³ braken bush, (The couplet is
bush³ from Herd)

That grows on yonder lee.' ⁴ ⁴ upon yon lilye lee !
[³bracken or fern bush]

38 'I will not yield to bush or brier,
Nor will I yield to thee;
But I will yield to Lord Douglas,
Or Sir Hugh Montgomery.'

39 [When Piercy knew it was Sir
Hugh,
He fell low on his knee,
But soon he raisd him up again,
Wi mickle courtesy.]

40 He left not an Englishman on the
field

That he hadna either killd or taen
Ere his heart's blood was cauld.

For the three concluding stanzas,
Stcott has the following, which are
from Herd (stanzas 12-14), with very
slight emendations:-

S33 'I will not yield to a braken bush,
Nor yet will I yield to a brier;
But I would yield to Earl Douglas,
Or Sir Hugh the Montgomery,
if he were here.'

S34 As soon as he knew it was
Montgomery,
He stuck his sword's point in
the gronde;
And the Montgomery was a courteous
knight,
And quickly took him by the honde.

S35 This deed was done at Otterbourne,
About the breaking of the day;
Earl Douglas was buried at the
braken bush,
And the Percy led captive away.

III. Supplementary Notes

1. The Date of the Battle

Agreement and disagreement in this respect are about as follows:-

- i. The Battle of Otterburn was fought on August 19th, 1388. — Child
p. 386
- ii. The date of the battle was August (probably the 19th), 1388. —
Gummere p. 323
- iii. August the 19th, 1388— Okakura p. 390
- iv. The field was fought 15th August, 1388. — Fordun, Froissart,

Holinshed, Godscroft. — Scott vol. I p. 278

v. Fought the 9th of August, 1388. — Ritson p. 94

vi. In the twelfth year of Richard II., 1388; in the beginning of August. —

Percy p. 5

vii. The exact date of the battle is an open question, for the authorities disagree as to this particular; thus Buchanan fixes it on July 21st, and other writers name, respectively, August 5th, 9th, 10th, 15th, and 19th. White thinks that the battle was fought on the evening of Wednesday and morning of Thursday, 19th and 20th of August, immediately before the full moon. In the year 1388 the new moon fell on the 6th of August, and Douglas is not likely to have chosen a period of dark evenings for the expedition. — Percy: *Reliques*, ed. Henry B. Wheatley, 3 vols. 1889 London. vol. 1, pp. 38-9

2. The Strength of the Conflicting Armies

Some of the differing estimations are:-

i. Froissart says the English exceeded the Scots in number three to one. — Percy p. 5, fn.

ii. "And sayd, I (*i. e.*, Dowglas) haue twenty agaynst thy one," — CA 31

v. He probably magnifies his strength to induce him to surrender. —

Percy p. 7, fn.

iii. Froissart speaks of both parties (*i. e.*, of the Scots) as consisting in all of more than 40,000 men — Percy p. 5, fn.

iv. "Of nyne thowsand Ynglyssh men

Fyve hondert cam awaye." — CA 65

v. "Of fowre and forty (*fifty*— Q) thowsande Scottes

Went but eyghtene awaye." — CA 62

cf. "Of fifteen hondrith archars of Ynglonde

went away but seuenti and thre;

Of twenti hondrith spear-men of Skotlonde,

but even five and fifti. — *The Hunting of the Cheviot*, CA 50

vi. The strength of the Scottish detachment under Douglas, fixed at by several writers, according to Henry B. Wheatley. — Percy: *Reliques*, *loc. cit.* (l. vii)

Writer	Strength	Detail
Froissart	5,000-6,000	3,000-4,000 men-at-arms and 2,000 infantry
Wyntown	near 7,000	
Buchanan	2,300 something	300 horse and 2,000 foot, besides servants and attendants
Godscroft	4,000	horsemen
Ridpath	3,000	
Scott	3,000-3,500	300 men-at-arms and 700-1,200 attendants, with 2,000 chosen infantry
White	6,600	400 men-at-arms, 1,200 attendants, 2,000 infantry mounted, and 3,000 attendants

vii. They were commanded by James, Earl of Douglas, and others, and numbered two or three thousand. — Gummere, Notes pp. 323-4

3. The Ages of the Rival Leaders, at the Time of the Battle

- i. James, Earl of Douglas (1358?—1388), 30 years old?
- ii. Sir Henry Percy (1364—1403), 24 years old

4. "The" in *the Douglas* (Q 8, CA 13, *et al.*) or *the Percy* (CA 24, 29, *et al.*).

For this, see OED:— With the surnames of some Irish and Scottish chiefs of clans, as the O'Gorman Mahon, the Chisholm, the MacNab.

5 The Title and Epithet of Percy

Percy is represented in the ballads now as

- i. *Syr Harry Perssy* (e) (CA 11, 15, 16) or *Syr Har(r)y Perssy* (e) (CA 34, 39), now as
- ii. *Earl Percy* (S 31; Q 62), or as
- iii. (Proud) *Lord Percy* (S 5; CC 5), but
 "Hotspur……is called Earl Percy, a title he never enjoyed." — Scott,
 p. 280
 "The celebrated Hotspur, son of the first Earl of Northumberland,

was, in 1385, Governor of Berwick, and Warden of the East Marches; in which last capacity it was his duty to repel the invasion of Douglas." — *ibid.* p. 282

Otherwise, he is merely

- iv. Percy (S 17, 18, 21; CB 9, 14; CC 39; *et al.*) or
- v. *The Percy* (S 30, 35; CA 32, 69, 70; CC 19; Q 75, 76; *et al.*) or
- vi. *Proud Percy* (S 8, 14; CC 36 *et al.*) or
- vii. *The proud Percy* (CA 22) or
- viii. *The noble Percy* (CA 20, 53; Q 52) or
- ix. *Brave Percy* (CC 8)

He had byn a march-man all hys dayes,
And kepte Barwyke vpon Twede. (CA 8)

6. The Fall of Douglas

The cause of his death is given as

- i. Slain by Percy (CA 56; CC 23 *et seqq.*; H 7) or as
- ii. Stabbed from behind with a penknife by his page, who had borne his master a grudge on an event of the day before, (but this does not seem to be taken as well grounded.) (CB 7; H 7) or again as
- iii. Shot by a Northumberland archer (*The Hunting of the Cheviot* CA 36-7, CB 36).

7. The Fate of Percy

After Douglas' death, he himself was

- i. Led away as a captive (CA 68), but afterwards was
- ii. "Borrowed" (*or* ransomed) in exchange for Syr Hewe Montgomery (CA 69),
or
- iii. He (*i. e.*, Sir Hewe Monggomyrry) set vppone the lorde Persë
a dynte that was full soare;

With a suar spear of a myghttē tre

clean thorow the body he the Persë ber (*i. e.*, bore) (CA 42; CB 42)

The historical truth is that he rose with Owen Grendower, the Welsh leader, against King Henry IV and was killed at Shrewsbury fight in 1403, fifteen years after Otterburn.

8 **The Burial-place of Douglas**

'My wound is deep, I fain wad sleep,
Nae mair I'll fighting see;
Gae lay me in the breaken bush
That grows on yonder lee. (CC 28)

'And bury me here on this lee,
Beneath the blooming brier,
And never let a mortal ken
A kindly Scot lyes here.' (CC 30)

He liftit up that noble lord,
Wi the saut tear in his ee,
And hid him in the breaken bush,
On yonder lily lee. (CC 31)

This is most beautiful, most lyrical; it will remind one of the last scene in the story of Robin Hood, in which the hapless hero begs Little John to bury him where his last flown arrow is taken up, but with Douglas this pathetic story of his dying words is not told in any other version than Child C and Scott, and naturally too, as the two versions draw from the same source and the others from other sources.

Be that as it may, the fact seems, as is the case with many of like legends, and ever to our disillusionment, to be that "...neither was Douglas buried on the field of battle, but in Melrose Abbey, where his tomb is still shown." (Scott p. 280)

9. **"They Lighted High on Otterburn"** (CC 16; S 15)

As to "high" of this line, the following commentary of Henderson's will be helpful:-

The castle of Otterbourne, which was besieged by Douglas, with its demesne lands, is now [1815] the property of James Ellis, Esq., who is also proprietor of a neighbouring eminence called Fawdoun hill, on which may yet be discerned the vestiges of the Scottish camp, agreeing with the description of the ballad, 'They lighted high on Otterbourn.' (Scott p. 278)

10. **Otterburn Ballads Cycle**

The ballads on Otterbourne are—

- i. 'The Hunting of the Cheviot,' in the Ashmolean MS. (c. 1510) at Oxford, and first published in Percy's *Reliques*.
- ii. The black-letter versions of this ballad, entitled, 'A Memorable Song on the Unhappy Hunting in Chevy Chase,' etc., reprinted in *Roxburghe Ballads*, ed. Ebsworth (vi. 740-3)
- iii. The English version of 'The Battle of Otterbourn' (c. 1550) preserved in the Cottonian and Harleian MSS. in the British Museum, and first published in Percy's *Reliques*.
- iv. The fragmentary version preserved by David Herd (of which there is also a Sharpe reading), evidently very corrupt and containing a penknife incident, borrowed from other ballads.
- v. The version compiled for Scott by James Hogg, ostensibly from the recitation, partly in prose, of two old persons residing at Ettrick—preserved at Abbotsford, and first published in Child's *Ballads* (iv. 499-502). (Scott p.283)

—Oct. 7, 1971