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A CONTEXTUAL STUDY OF SINGING

IN THE FISHER FAMILY

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Ph.D. Thesis Submitted to the University of Edinburgh

April 1988



The research described herein is entirely my own work, and this thesis has been composed by myself.

Stephanie Deborah Ladd Smith

Edinburgh, April 1988

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ABSTRACT

This ethnographic study of a Scottish singing family, the Fishers of Glasgow, is based largely on fieldwork conducted over a period of three years. The Fishers were chosen because of their early involvement in, and their enormous influence on, the Scottish folk revival, which dates from the 1950s. Three members of the Fisher Family, Archie, Ray, and Cilla, sing professionally, and perform both traditional folksongs and contemporary material. This study focuses on them, although commentary about and from other family members is also included.

In Chapter 2, I present a biography of the family, which is a patchwork of oral accounts by family members. Their biography leads us back to the islands of Vatersay and Barra, and the island traditions have obviously shaped the family ethos, even though they are an urban family.

Chapter 3 is in part an oral history of the folk revival in Scotland, and the emergence of Archie and Ray Fisher as performers in the revival, as well as an analysis of important musical personalities and currents which had an impact on the revival, and particularly on Archie and Ray Fisher. Chapter 4 examines the professional careers of Archie, Ray, and Cilla, as well as the involvement of sisters Joyce, Cindy, and Audrey in the revival.

The repertoire of the Fishers is examined in Chapter 5, with reference to the patterns of repertoire in the Scottish folk revival, and traditional sources. The way in which Archie, Ray, and Cilla categorize their songs is considered. Their categories, such as "heavy songs" and "light songs" tend to reflect the

emotive impact of a song in performance, rather than structure. The problem of song "ownership" and repertoire within a family is also dealt with here.

Chapter 6 focuses on the "aesthetic systems" of Archie, Ray, and Cilla, considering the following components: attraction to and selection of songs for learning; relative importance of tune and text; preferred song content; degree of emotional identification with songs; suitability of voice for a particular song; singing style; vocal range; the choice to accompany or not; the desired impact of the singer on the audience; the performing venue; and self-imposed expectations. The Fishers' aesthetic systems are also compared with those of other singers, both traditional and revival.

In Chapter 7, I discuss the functions of songs in the Fishers' public performances, and analyse transcribed performance extracts of Archie, Ray, and Cilla (performing with her husband Artie). The spoken portion of the performances is seen as a significant and integral part of the performance as a communicative event. Analysis focuses on the structure of the performance, how the performance reflects the individual aesthetic system, and what levels of meaning may be derived from the performance. In Chapter 8, I conclude with a brief summary, and assess the place of the Fishers in the Scottish folk revival. Other data on the Fisher family, such as repertoire lists, a discography, and transcribed performance extracts may be found in the Appendices.

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My friendship with Ray Fisher dates back to a coincidental meeting on a northbound train in 1973, and it provided a basis on which to begin interviewing members of the Fisher Family. Ray has consistently and enthusiastically facilitated this study in many ways, as have the other family members interviewed: Archie, Cilla, Morag, Audrey, Joyce, Cindy, Mary Mackinnon, and Artie Trezise. A trip to Barra and Vatersay with Ray and Margaret Bennett in July, 1987, was an unforgettable experience, which gave me an additional perspective on the Fishers' Hebridean background; we visited Ray's mother's cousin, Mairi Iain a'Chaolais several times while there. Hamish Henderson and the extended Fisher Family have my sincerest and heartfelt thanks for making this undertaking one of the most exciting and rewarding periods of my life.

In the course of three years, I spoke to and interviewed many other people besides the Fishers, all involved in some way with the "folk scene". All

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Preliminary Remarks

Alan P. Merriam wrote in 1964, in his classic *The Anthropology of Music*

...Music is a product of man and has structure, but its structure cannot have an existence of its own divorced from the behavior which produces it... Music is a uniquely human phenomenon which exists only in terms of social interaction; that is, it is made by people for other people, and it is learned behavior (Merriam 1964:7, 27).

It was with the intent to examine singing and performing as human behaviour that this study of the Scottish Fisher family was initially undertaken. Many past studies of singers and songs have focused on the songs, particularly songs as products, mainly as texts, sometimes as tunes, and more recently as indivisible entities of text and tune. Merriam considers text (as "linguistic behavior") and tune (as "music sound") to be only one aspect of the study of music as behaviour, and posits that music should be studied on the following three analytic levels:

1. conceptualization about music
2. behaviour in relation to music
3. music sound (1964:32).

Underlying music sound is the physical, social, and verbal behaviour which affects and produces it; without behaviour "there can be no sound" (33). The various types of behaviour are in turn affected by the individual's conceptualization about music, which are of course shaped by both cultural and

personal values.

The listener also plays a role in Merriam's model. At a musical event or performance, the listener "judges both the competence of the performer and the correctness of his performance in terms of conceptual values" (33). What Merriam advocates is thus a more holistic approach to music which draws from many disciplines in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, and considers the music sound and text, the musician and his behaviour, the listeners or audience and their behaviour, and the cultural and psychological contexts in which a musical event occurs.

While folklore as a discipline derives some of its theoretical models from anthropology, few folklorists refer to Merriam's work, to which much of the current literature on performance theory, contextual studies, and singer/musician studies owes an ideological debt. On the other hand, folklore often concerns itself with individuals more than does anthropology, and my work reflects this folkloristic approach.

This thesis examines individual musicians, in this case primarily singers, in the context of their family background, their involvement in the musical subculture or community of the Scottish folk revival, their participation or non-participation in public performances, their "conceptualization about music" or "aesthetic systems" as I call them, their repertoires, their performance styles, and their performances as communicative and interactive phenomena. It is an attempt to bring together singer and song, text and context, sound and sense, external and internal meanings, performer and audience, ideology and praxis, and tradition and innovation in one aspect of Scottish culture. I should first like to show how this singer study draws from and is a logical progression from earlier studies and research, and then to comment on studies in other

areas and disciplines which have influenced this work.

Singer Studies in British and American Scholarship

As Edward K. Miller has pointed out in his recent study: "With few exceptions, the focus of British folksong studies remains on collection and comparison" (1981:1). While Scotland has produced a notable number of eminent folksong collectors and scholars, from Allan Ramsay, Robert Burns, Walter Scott, and William Motherwell in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for example, to Gavin Greig and the Rev. J.B. Duncan in the present century, it must be lamented that so little biographical and other personal information was obtained from the singers that these men collected from.

One can think of Mrs. Hogg, the mother of poet James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, who was an informant of Sir Walter Scott, and from whom very vital biographical and social information might have been gleaned had Scott taken the opportunity. Herschel Gower points out that her "comments about the songs - her own analyses of them - would undoubtedly have revealed a great deal about the cultural life and attitudes of the older peasants on the Scottish Border" (1973:2). Gower has also remarked on Gavin Greig's failure to note personal information from one of his main informants, Bell Robertson, who might have "shed considerable light on the total folksong complex in Aberdeenshire" (2).

The Concept of the Text

The focus on text in most areas or genres of oral folklore has continued into this century. Elizabeth C. Fine's recent book, *The Folklore Text: From Performance to Print*, traces the development of the concept of the text in American folkloristics, although her excellent review is international in scope. She states:

In general, developments in textmaking reflect the differing analytical perspectives of four orientations within American folkloristics: 1) anthropological, 2) literary, 3) a fusion of anthropological and literary interests, and 4) the performance approach (Fine 1984:16).

Fine draws most heavily on the performance approach in her transcription of a narrative (or "verbal art") text. Her review of text-related literature is so thorough that it makes such a review redundant here, and I refer the reader to it. I shall confine this discussion to studies which have crucial reference to folksong, and to the few works which have not been mentioned by Fine.

Phillips Barry, Roger D. Abrahams, Herschel Gower, Henry Glassie, James Porter, David Buchan, and Robin Morton are among those who have expressed the need for folksong studies to move away from "The text is the thing" attitude which has dominated them in the past.¹ In 1972, the prominent folksong scholar D. K. Wilgus, then President of the American Folklore Society, was moved to give a presidential address at the AFS annual meeting warning the "behavioralists" and "contextualists" from going overboard in their move away from "the text," prompted by the publication of a special issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* the previous year, entitled "Toward New Perspectives in Folklore."² Wilgus expressed his sympathy with many of the "new perspectives," but stated, "Text' is rapidly becoming a dirty word, and "thing-oriented" a favorite pejorative expression" (1972:243- 44).

One of the most frequently quoted *New Perspectives* essays, Ben-Amos's "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context", is perhaps the most controversial and radical in a historical perspective. Ben-Amos attacks several sacred cows in folklore theory, and proposes new ways of regarding concepts such as tradition. For example, he remarks that "In its cultural context, folklore is not an aggregate of things, but a process--a communicative process, to be exact" (1972:9). He adds that

...the ever increasing emphasis on the situational background of tales, songs, and proverbs that developed from Malinowski's functionalism into Hymes' "ethnography of speaking", enables us not only to study but to define folklore in its context. And in this framework, which is the real habitat of all folklore forms, there is no dichotomy between processes and products. The telling is the tale; therefore, the narrator, his story, and his audience are all related to each other as components of a single continuum, which is the communicative event (10).

Examined from the vantage point of the 1980s, these ideas do not seem as radical as they did in the early 1970s, and Wilgus would no doubt agree now that the *New Perspectives* essays did much to encourage new thinking in folklore. Like Wilgus, other older folklorists were more than a little ruffled by these challenges to traditional theory and approaches in folklore.

The text-context controversy has surfaced periodically, and some of the publications which have appeared supporting either text-centred or context-centred studies are clouded by defensive thinking, and a degree of academic rivalry and point scoring.³ Some scholars, such as Judith Levin and Michael Pickering, have moved on from what seems like an unconstructive theoretical debate, and make valid and interesting suggestions for approaches to folklore studies.

Levin examines the ways in which oral and written texts have been regarded in the disciplines of folklore and literary criticism, and refers specifically to the contribution of *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore*

remarking that "At the very least, [New Perspectives] made it clear that we can not assume we know what a text means to our informants without knowing a great deal more about them than we could extract from a transcript of the text" (1982:51).

One of the most articulate contextualists in Britain is Pickering, whose studies (1982, 1984, 1986) have made a valuable contribution to British folksong scholarship. Pickering is particularly concerned with social and historical contexts of song, and feels that his approach goes beyond the "concentration on communicative processes" advocated by the *New Perspectives* folklorists, as it "implies a broader cultural and social analysis" (1986:79). Pickering thinks that the song researcher should "oscillate between the study of texts and the study of particular social contexts", which he calls the "text-context dialectic" (84). It is worth remarking that Pickering and some of his British colleagues such as Ian Watson and Dave Harker utilize a marxist approach to song with varying degrees of radicalism, while their North American counterparts are less concerned with socio-political dimensions such as class consciousness and modes of production.

Roger DeV. Renwick has addressed the issue of textual interpretation and assignation of meaning in "folk poetry" in his 1980 and 1985 studies, giving special consideration to context. His analyses of English folksongs in the larger 1980 work are intriguing, and afford one approach to textual analysis which attempts not only to pinpoint themes and paradigms in songs, but to explain why songs are meaningful to a particular culture, and how they reflect cultural beliefs.

The essays in an excellent special issue of *Western Folklore*, entitled "The Ballad in Context: Paradigms of Meaning," published in 1986, provide

examples of applied context theory. In her introduction, Carol L. Edwards remarks:

Folklore is performed in a variety of situations – on different occasions and for different audiences – that affect its text and presentation as well as the message it communicates. That message is, of course, equally determined by performer and audience, or sender and receiver. I would argue that specific contexts or locales influence and color these texts, and thus the texts' meanings (1986:77).

Here Edwards is stating more succinctly what many contextualists had already said previously. The four essays included in the issue focus on different aspects of context, and interestingly enough, three of the four authors use specifically Scottish contexts, some historical and some contemporary, in which to make their points. James Porter's essay, "Ballad Explanations, Ballad Reality, and the Singer's Epistemics", is one of the most recent statement of Porter's ideas and concepts which represent a sensible synthesis of contextual and textual approaches, and which have significantly influenced the present study. Prior to discussing Porter's work, however, we should make note of earlier singer studies which have influenced Porter, myself, and others, and given us models on which to build future studies.

Recent Singer Studies

British folklorists have lagged behind their American counterparts in the realm of singer studies, although some British folklorists such as Porter who work in the United States have made major contributions on British (in this case, Scottish) singers. Edward D. Ives at the University of Maine was one of the first American scholars to publish studies of singers, although his subjects were also composers of songs as well as carriers of traditional ones (1964, 1970, 1971, 1978). The shorter studies by Ives, Henry Glassie, and John

F. Szwed in the volume *Folksongs and Their Makers* (1970) broke new ground in their examination of folksong creation, and directly confronted the problem of new songs being created by an individual in the idiom of traditional song, and their absorption or failure to be absorbed into the local oral tradition.

In 1970, the book *A Singer and Her Songs: Almeda Riddle's Book of Ballads* appeared, a singer's account of her life and songs, skillfully edited by Roger D. Abrahams. It is generally seen as a watershed publication in singer studies. As much of the book is in Almeda Riddle's own words, we are not "seeing" her solely as interpreted through the eyes of a folklorist. Her remarks clearly show that a wealth of personal feeling and significance lies behind her songs and her decision to sing them at a particular time or in a particular context. Abrahams' comments at the end give us the "external" point of view, and also address the sensitive issue of interaction between folklorist and informant, and how the folklorist influences the behavior of an informant.

In 1968, Vanderbilt University English professor Herschel Gower began a series of articles on the great Scottish traditional singer, Jeannie Robertson, which appeared in *Scottish Studies*, the journal of the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh (1968, 1970, 1972, 1977). James Porter co-authored these articles, Gower examining the biographical material and song texts, and Porter focusing on musical analysis. Gower's most recent publication on Jeannie Robertson, analysing her role in the Scottish folk revival, can be found in a *festschrift* for Bertrand Bronson, edited by Porter (1983). This study mentions the personal and repertoire influence that this singer had on Ray Fisher, Jean Redpath, and Andy Hunter, so is obviously relevant to the present research.

In 1970, Ailie Munro of the School of Scottish Studies published an

article in *Scottish Studies* on Jeannie Robertson's daughter, Lizzie Higgins, and focused on ten Child ballads sung by the singer. This too contained significant biographical material, but Munro concentrated mainly on singing style, and the texts and tunes of her ballads. My own study of Lizzie Higgins (1975), undertaken as an MLitt thesis in the School of Scottish Studies, was an attempt to balance the focus between the singer's biography and personal details, and a study of repertoire and texts. I included many comments from the singer about her life, her repertoire, her performing in the folk clubs, and her songs and what they meant to her. Detailed musical analysis such as that done by Porter and Munro on the songs and singing of Jeannie Robertson and Lizzie Higgins lay outside the scope of my abilities and interest, since it was the behavioural and contextual aspect of singing I was interested in then, and am even more so now.

One of the main points of departure for repertoire studies came with Kenneth S. Goldstein's 1971 article "On the Application of the Concepts of Active and Inactive Traditions to the Study of Repertory", first published in the "New Perspectives" issue of the *Journal of American Folklore*. His concept (derived from von Sydow) of active and passive categories of repertoire, and the movement of songs between these two categories as affected by the personal life of the singer, is important, and has stimulated others to research repertoire. Ian Russell's recent article about Yorkshire singer Arthur Howard (1986b) utilizes Goldstein's concept as a basis for his analysis of Howard's various repertoires.

Shortly after the publication of Goldstein's article, another very important and interesting repertoire study appeared in the journal *Ethnomusicology*, written by George J. Casey, Neil V. Rosenberg, and Wilfred W. Wareham, and entitled "Repertoire Categorization and Performer-Audience

Relationships: Some Newfoundland Folksong Examples." The article focuses on the performer-audience relationship and its effect on the way in which the singer categorizes his or her repertoire. Personal history also influences the performer-audience relationship. This study may be regarded as one of the earlier studies of performance, although no specific performance was analysed.

Gerald L. Pocius's 1976 article on a Newfoundland husband and wife followed in a logical progression from Goldstein and Casey *et al*, highlighting several important issues in the study of singers' repertoires. In this particular case, sex roles and the ascribed (as opposed to "achieved") status of singers played a major part in determining who was encouraged to sing in the community. The article shows quite graphically how a singer's repertoire and his/her performance of songs may be affected by rules of relationship and behaviour in the community.

James Porter, a Scot working at the University of California, Los Angeles, has been one of the chief contributors to Scottish singer studies. His earlier work with Herschel Gower on Jeannie Robertson led, in 1976, to a "conceptual performance model" of one of Jeannie's most interesting ballads, "Son David", a variant of "Edward". His model is both diachronic and synchronic in nature. As he remarks in his conclusion:

...In general, it presents a synthesis of significant entities within the song by working from all available evidence, treating problems both of structure and semantics, and interpreting performance data as the primary source of our knowledge about the song (1976:26).

This article is significant and interesting as a theoretical model of the performance of one particular song, but the model does not lend itself on a practical level to use by other scholars to analyse other songs. Perhaps most significantly, the article establishes Porter as an important scholar in the field of singer studies, and his concepts about performance, and the singer's

"epistemics", are stated more concisely and in greater detail in later publications.

Porter's emphasis shifted slightly in his 1978 study of the Turriff Family of Fetterangus, Aberdeenshire, in that it is more biographical, and utilizes less musical analysis, to focus on Jane and Cameron Turriff, their aesthetic systems, and the creation and re-creation of songs. He comments:

The question of the extent to which these [the Turriffs'] songs can be considered "re-creations" must be raised, for recent studies using the term have interpreted it from a literary point of view. The literary scholar's picture of folk song, indeed, should be challenged anew as being exclusively directed towards analysis of a text (verbal material) as it appears on the printed page. This is a position which is clearly external to the realities of performance and the singer's aesthetic, and therefore can fairly be characterized as an approach which treats the part as if it were the whole (Porter 1978:19).

Porter's study, although brief, is insightful and absorbing, and again raises the cry for "more studies which detail the singer's feelings about specific songs" and "a methodology treating musical events, the individual performer(s), and the item(s)" (22).

Porter's sensitive and insightful repertoire study of Belle Stewart (1985a) was originally presented at the International Folk Ballad Conference three years earlier. His article "Parody and Satire as Mediators of Change in the Traditional Songs of Belle Stewart" (1985b) also appeared in the same year, the articles together constituting a coherent study of a very important Scottish traditional singer.

In the latter article, Porter considers the concept of tradition in a local context, new performance contexts outside the local context, semiotics in traditional song, and Belle Stewart's use of parody and satire in her own song composition to bridge the gap or "mediate" between "tradition and innovation". As he says, the satire she employs in her compositions (which are based on

the structure and tunes of traditional songs), "functions as a device for accelerating social and artistic change yet, paradoxically, provides a mechanism for the renewal of traditional forms and styles" (1985b:328). This concept of mediation between the traditional and the innovative is quite an important one, and will be utilized in this study as it applies to the performances of the Fishers.

Porter's most recent publications (1986a and 1986b) address the issue of the singer's "epistemics", a term which refers

...not just to the function that the singer perceives a specific song to have in the context of performance but also, just as crucially, to the complex of meanings that the singer brings to the song in the context of "undifferentiated daily life" (1986a:120-21).

Porter amplifies points raised in his earlier study of the Turriffs concerning the singer's "meaning system" and his/her songs, and asserts the necessity for scholars to understand the singer's terminology and schemata for songs. I am responding to Porter's call to "focus on the epistemic concepts of the singer in relation to specific songs" in this performance-centred study of the Fishers.

Linda Jane Williamson's doctoral thesis, completed in 1985, focuses on strophic variation in ballad singing among the Scots travellers, also considering the functions and meanings of singing in performance. The performance contexts in Williamson's study are generally informal family gatherings, although many of her informants have become prominent public performers at Scottish folk festivals. This important study draws on Porter's work, and is truly a rich account of the traveller singing tradition.

Ginette Dunn is the author of an English singer study, *The Fellowship of Song: Popular Singing Traditions in East Suffolk* (1980). Dunn examines the pub singing tradition of two small communities as a "subversive activity" which in

"its practice and continuance is an affirmation of community..." (1980:13). In her Preface, Dunn comments:

My main concerns have been to present a synchronic account which is contextual and descriptive, rather than a time-worn account which would be textual and prescriptive; to describe the historical background and social setting of the communities in order to give them their context, temporal as well as spatial; to regard performance in this context, informed also by recordings of the complete repertoires of each singer. The theoretical bias is therefore one of synchronicity [sic], contextuality and oral literary criticism, in which the singing events and practices, and the singers and their audience, provide a model for local life and values, and live out these values in their singing activities (15).

Her study is fresh, perceptive, and sensitive, and represents, along with Porter's work, a more context-centred and humanistic approach to singers and their personal and community aesthetic systems.

Edward Miller's work, like Porter's and Dunn's, is closely related to my own research. Miller focuses on "the socially situated meaning of song and singing within a Scottish family and illustrates the ways in which family members use and relate to the songs they sing" (1981:1). Much of his study concentrates on one of the younger Weatherston family members, Janet, and her involvement in the folk revival, and to a lesser extent, that of her brother Jock. Neither singer, however, was involved in the Scottish revival in the earlier days as were Archie and Ray Fisher, nor have they made more than a relatively local impact upon singing in the folk clubs. Miller's intent is to get away from what he terms the "somewhat misleading, albeit understandable, theme of folksong study in Britain", that of "an overconcentration upon outstanding individual performers..." and "relate the song genre of folklore to a social base among a relatively normal and non-famous group of people" (2-3).

Miller presents a very interesting, perceptive study of singing as "expressive behavior". Because he chose to work with "non-famous people", he did not analyse the wider public performance context of the Scottish folk

revival, which I propose to do, using Miller's work as a partial model for my own. I will expand on the aesthetics of public performance in the folk revival through an analysis of the performances of Archie, Ray, and Cilla Fisher. Part of my objective is simply to document repertoire and performance in the folk clubs and festivals as musical behaviour occurring in the 1980s, and in the case of two of the Fishers, Archie and Ray, to make comparisons with performances recorded in the 1960s. Private contexts for singing in the Fisher Family will be examined as well.

Performance Studies

Porter's and Miller's contributions are centrally involved with the concept of performance, but other writers such as Dell Hymes, Henry Glassie, Richard Bauman, and Erving Goffman, working in areas other than folksong, have informed my approach here. Hymes, in his work on the ethnography of communication from the sociolinguistic standpoint, has given much to folklore studies, and his influence can be seen (and is acknowledged) in Fine (1984), Glassie's massive study of oral and material culture in an Ulster village (1982) and Bauman's *Verbal Art as Performance* (1977). Bauman's study of verbal art sheds considerable light on the performance of folksong.

The excellent *Folklore: Performance and Communication* volume, edited by Ben-Amos and Goldstein, includes one of Hymes' longer essays, "Breakthrough into Performance", in which he states:

...folklore makes a distinctive contribution to the study of communicative events, by focusing attention on the stylized content and conduct within them. Here folklore enhances its concern with the aesthetic and evaluative dimensions of life. One might even hope that folklore would take the lead in showing

how appreciation and interpretation of performances as unique events can be united with analysis of the underlying rules and regularities which make performances possible and intelligible... (1975:11).

Hymes' study of Wishram Indian narrative, while far removed from Scottish song, makes several widely applicable points relating to the content and function of performance.

Goffman, the well-known sociologist who seems to be ignored by many folklorists, has influenced most of the writers in the Ben-Amos and Goldstein volume, who are contextualists. His concepts of "performance", "region behaviour", "communication out of character", and "impression management", to name a few, are useful as a way of looking at human social interaction. It seems little known outside sociological circles that Goffman did much of his field work for *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) in Shetland, hence many of his observations come from Scottish culture. Goffman's later work, *Frame Analysis* (1974), has influenced Bauman in particular, and I have found the concept of "frame" very useful.

Miller (1976) and Goldstein (1976), two performance-based studies of the British humorous monologue tradition, provide insights into the Fishers' use of narrative between their songs in performance. They both illustrate how meanings emerge from monologues in performance, and what devices are used to create meaning. Similarly, Caraveli's two studies of song in a Greek community (1982, 1985) reveal quite dramatically how both traditional and new meanings are brought forth in performance, reinforcing community, and creating what she calls "the symbolic village".

My own ideas of performance and my methodology as well have been influenced by all of the above, but also by the 1987 doctoral thesis of a fellow student, Jan Fairley. Entitled "Karaxú!: The Music of the Chilean Resistance. A

Study of Composition and Performance", Fairley's study examines the carefully constructed and highly symbolic, cathartic performances of a group of political exiles from Chile. The discovery of our mutual interests led to a sympathetic, creative and lively dialectic between us, which hopefully has provided this study with further and greater insights.

Fairley led me to the work of Edmund Leach, a social anthropologist whose views on communication enabled me to examine the concept of performance in an entirely different light. Using Leach's concepts, performance can be seen as a form of symbolic ritual, in which physical and psychological boundaries between the performer and the audience can be manipulated or set by the performer, in the cultural context of which the performance is part. Leach's ideas led me to the writings of other anthropologists such as Mary Douglas, Raymond Firth, and Victor Turner, who are concerned with symbols and the communication of meaning through symbolic behaviour. Turner's concept of "communitas", which he has developed in his work (1969, 1974, 1986), has informed my approach to the Fisher's performances.

The Problem of Tradition and the Folk Revival

Because the focus of this study is an urban family, with members who currently perform, the problem of the concept of "tradition" must be articulated here.⁴ The Fishers sing many traditional songs, but also other material, some of which may already be part of a modern oral tradition, or enter an oral tradition at a later time. The Fishers are not what we would call "traditional singers", and they themselves would be the first to admit this. They do, however, sing many traditional songs. Many folklorists would avoid them as

informants because they are not "traditional", but to my notion, this is indicative of the failure of such people to come to terms with the whole issue of traditionality, and the natural progression of tradition in a mass-media society.

It is too easy to draw a dividing line between the older singers who have learned their songs in an oral family tradition, and the younger singers who have learned their songs from records, field recordings, radio, and other modern sources other than their families and friends. Many of the younger singers including the Fishers have in fact sought out the older traditional singers to learn their songs. It is instructive to find out why singers of a younger mass-media generation choose to sing traditional songs, as well as contemporary ones.

It is probably unlikely that folklorists will continue to "discover" Jeannie Robertsons and others like her whose primary repertoires have been learned almost exclusively orally, with little influence from the mass media. Indeed, we have the instance of Jane Turriff, a traditional singer who sings ballads learned orally in her family and Jimmie Rodgers yodelling songs learned off the radio or records, side by side. Clearly, the distinctions made in repertoires between traditional and non-traditional material are made by folklorists, not by the singers themselves.

Ben-Amos, in fact, concluded in 1972 that "the traditional character of folklore is an analytical construct" (1972:130). In a 1984 article, Ben-Amos explores the multiple meanings and usages of the word "tradition" in American folklore studies, remarking that "It has been a fundamental theoretical concept indispensable in the analysis of texts, cultures, and societies" (1984:98). The earlier article is more provocative, while the later one reveals a synthesizing,

more holistic approach to the concept of tradition. This study of the Fisher Family is an attempt to confront and explore some of the problems and issues raised by the concept of traditionality, drawing partly on Ben-Amos's example.

Some of the more recent publications on the folk revival have helped to dispel outmoded notions of what is traditional folk music and what is not. Ailie Munro's 1984 study has gone a long way toward documenting the Scottish folk music revival and its changing repertoire, and showing the relationship between the traditional singers and the emerging revival singers. Hamish Henderson, whose excellent work has not yet been incorporated into a single collection, is one of the most articulate speakers on the subject of tradition and change. In a 1987 film on the songs of Robert Burns, "The Tree of Liberty", he remarks:

Tradition is never but never the mere survival of the old, coming into the present. It's always the constant renewal of the old, transforming itself so that for a new generation, it does mean something.

Essays by Henderson, McNaughtan, Buchan, and Barrow in *The People's Past* volume also express the notion of a continuum of tradition, rather than a black and white "Here is where tradition begins and ends" sort of attitude, which is largely an ideological heritage left to us by earlier scholars such as Child, Sharp, and Kittredge.

Theory Versus Practice

The work of Georgina Boyes on the English folk revival has done much to address this very problem, and she sees Sharp's ideas as having had the broadest influence on attitudes held in the most recent revival of interest in folksong, from the 1950's to the present. Her recent brief examination of the

English revival (1985b) is significant and insightful; she is currently preparing a book on the subject.

I will discuss "folk revival" as a term more thoroughly in Chapter 3, but it is of value to articulate a few key issues here. Boyes' contribution is her identification of the problem of confusion between theory of folksong and its performance. As Boyes sees it, the theory we have been burdened with has come to us from Sharp, who "defined folksongs as products of the past, surviving solely by oral transmission in the knowledge of a few very elderly villagers, uncontaminated by 'the infection of modern ideas'" (1985:44). Both she and Dave Harker (1985) note the failure of A. L. Lloyd, author of a major work on English folksong (1967), to challenge Sharp's views.

The practice of "adoption of 'traditional' singers as models and the call for 'authenticity' of performance" which has been common since the 1960's, Boyes says, "had the most striking effect on repertoire, style and the subsequent development of the Revival as a whole" (1985:50). She sums up the theory-performance dichotomy in the following way:

...the basis of Sharp's limiting theories have never been systematically challenged within the Revival. Singers and musicians frustrated by the absence of area for growth, development and change started to broaden their repertoires and treat "folksong" as a product of style and approach rather than item. This has, by the mid-1980's, produced an implicit discontinuity between theory and practice which affects singers' attitudes to their roles, their repertoire and that of other performers (51).

Although Boyes refers specifically to the folk revival in England, the issues she raises apply equally in Scotland.

I would add to her remarks that the confusion between theory and practice is shared by performers and scholars alike, and has led to sometimes acrimonious debates on the floors of folk clubs and in the pages of folklore

journals. The theory and practice problem can also be seen as another manifestation or facet of the text-context controversy and the issue of traditionality, mentioned earlier. I hope to shed some light on these issues through my examination of the Fishers' aesthetics and their performances.

In addition to Munro (1984) and the essays in Cowan (1980), other literature of the revival which has helped to fill certain gaps falls into the category of what one would call ephemera: the numerous folk magazines, newsletters, festival programmes, and newspaper articles and reviews which often contain very valuable information, but they are often difficult or impossible to obtain. The materials that are available can provide reviews of performances, record albums, and indicate what views were held by folkmusic enthusiasts at that particular point in time.

Oral History and Folklore Studies

The area of oral history has already been referred to, but I would like to enlarge on its particular influence in this study. It has long been my feeling that, until recently, there have been relatively few biographical studies in the area of folklore which allow the subject to speak in his or her own words; rather, the subject's life and ideas are paraphrased and interpreted by another person. The increased general interest in oral history in the 1970s and 1980s is obvious, and has been instructive to folklorists and other social science researchers.

Almeda Riddle's book, edited by Abrahams, has already been mentioned previously as a corrective to this approach, and other excellent efforts have

appeared such as Bob Copper's *A Song for Every Season* (1971), about his own singing family in Sussex, and Robin Morton's edited account of Ulster singer, John Maguire, *Come Day Go Day God Send Sunday* (1973). Thomas G. Burton produced a significant study of five Appalachian mountain women and their ballads in 1978 (reprinted 1981). He places them in their cultural perspective, and incorporates their comments about their lives and their songs. Glassie (1982) draws extensively from his informants' comments as well as presenting their narratives in context in his Ulster study.

Radio series have done very well in the area of oral history, if one considers the "Radio Ballads" of Charles Parker and Ewan MacColl in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and much more recently Billy Kay's "Odyssey" series on BBC Scotland. The medium lends itself to letting people speak for themselves. In this study, I have made use of oral history/biography radio programmes, as well as my own field tapes.

As much as possible, I wish to present the views, anecdotes, stories, and songs of the Fishers in their own words. In doing the oral research or field work for this thesis, however, I not only talked to the Fishers but to many of their acquaintances, fellow performers, and people who have been in one way or another participants in the folk revival in Scotland. My chapters on the folk revival are the ones which employ oral history to the greatest extent, because I feel the revival lends itself to an oral history. There are quite a few published historical accounts, however sketchy, of parts of the revival, but they do not convey the feeling of it adequately. Over and over again, I was struck by the number of times my informants mentioned the "energy" and "vitality" of the early days of the revival, and it is only possible to capture this flavour by using their words and not mine.

One problem that emerged in talking to a number of people about the revival is that memories did not always agree chronologically. Where possible, I have employed printed sources such as newspapers to ascertain dates when informants cannot remember or disagree with each other. The fact that I ran into this problem made me aware that it is important to document what was going on in the revival before these memories become even more remote. Moreover, many key personalities involved have already passed away unexpectedly or prematurely, such as Morris Blythman, Josh Macrae, Matt McGinn, and most recently, Alex Campbell. My objective is to bring together reminiscences, anecdotes, and assessments of the Scottish folk revival gathered from the Fishers and other participants in the revival, to create a collage of impressions which may tell us more about the revival than a "straight" history compiled by one person.

Methodology

This research was not carried out with a carefully pre-constructed methodology, but rather with an intuitive, adaptable approach. I take much comfort in Georges' compilation of stories of famous anthropologists (1980), showing how often their significant discoveries were haphazard, or came about through the abandonment or alteration of their original research plans. As he points out by illustration, working with people requires flexibility and a willingness to change course if necessary, rather than trying to abide by a strict hypothesis and methodology which may not prove feasible with one's informants for a variety of reasons.

After obtaining the Fishers' agreement to let me work with them, I

began recording the family member I knew best, Ray Fisher. It was a case of renewing a friendship begun in the 1970's, when I was working on my study of Lizzie Higgins. Ray's warmth, humour, and willingness to respond to my first tentative interview questions drew me into the "world" of the Fishers, and I deliberately followed her down the paths she was taking me, rather than entering into our discussions with preconceived ideas.

The first interviews with Ray took place in March, 1985. In April 1985 I attended the (English) National Folk Music Festival at Sutton Bonington with her and 88 year old Willie Scott, a well known Scottish traditional singer, and observed but did not record. In September Ray and I had another session, and I also interviewed her sister Cilla for the first time later that month. I began to compare and contrast Ray's and Cilla's views on singing, repertoire, and performance, and resolved to talk to other performing singers in the revival, to get a basis for comparison outside the family. A talk with performer Jean Redpath reinforced my hunch that I should talk to other singers, and provided a point of inspiration for future interviews with other revival singers.

Interviews with Ray, Cilla, and later Archie, as well as with other performers and Fisher family members continued through 1987. While I am including information in this study from and about the non-performing members of the family (Morag Fisher, Mary Mackinnon, and Jean, Joyce, Cindy, and Audrey Fisher), my focus is on the three professional performers: Archie, Ray, and Cilla.

The interviews conducted with other performers and people involved with the folk revival were extremely useful and necessary. An inspiring interview with Norman Buchan, M.P. in January of 1986 gave me a much better sense of the *milieu* in which the Fishers emerged as performers in the 1950's.

Others who willingly gave me their time (in random order) were Anne Neilson, Andy Hunter, Adam McNaughtan, Peter Hall, Alastair Clark, Bobby Campbell, Hamish Henderson, Hamish Imlach, Allan Taylor, Marian Blythman, Ed Miller, Peter Shephard, Jimmie Macgregor, Sheila Douglas, Sara Grey, Ellie Ellis, Artie Trezise, Maggie Cruickshank, Liz Cruickshank Barkess, Billy Kay, James Lloyd, Tom Paley, and Fiona Ritchie.

In the course of my fieldwork, it became apparent to me that a transcription of part of a performance from each performer would reveal far more than analyses of specific songs out of context. I also began to see how integral the "patter" or narrative between songs in a performance was to the songs and the whole performance event. Reading Fairley (1987) strongly reinforced this idea, and aided me in devising an approach to performance analysis.

The place to begin is with the Fishers themselves. In the next chapter, I present a biography of the family, which is a patchwork of oral accounts by family members. The portrait of a remarkable family emerges.

Notes for Chapter 1

1. The statement "The text is the thing" is attributed to the literary ballad scholar George Lyman Kittredge, when defending the exclusion of an intended introduction by Arthur Palmer Hudson to a collection of ballads and songs being published in a 1927 issue of the *Journal of American Folklore*. Wilgus used the quotation as the title of his 1973 article in order to be "deliberately provocative", although he explains that he uses the term text "in a wider sense than that of the quotation from Kittredge" (Wilgus 1973:241). Wilgus's article is one of many in the parry and thrust interchange between the "textualists" and "contextualists". See also Note 3.
2. The special issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* in which these essays appeared was the first issue of Volume 84, 1971, No. 331. The issue was later published in book form in 1972, edited by Americo Paredes and Richard Bauman, and has the same pagination as the *Journal of American Folklore* volume. All references will be to the book, for simplicity.
3. See particularly Jones (1979) and Zan (1982) as examples of academic superciliousness in the textualist camp. Georges (1980) responds to Jones, and is an attempt to reduce the gap between textualists and contextualists, while Young (1985) is careful to point out the pitfalls in both camps.
4. Much has been written on the theoretical concept of tradition, such as Shils (1981), for example. An excellent discussion of tradition, folklore, and identity can be found in a special issue of the *Journal of Folklore Research*, Volume 21 (May-December 1984).

CHAPTER 2

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF THE FISHER FAMILY

The Glasgow Fishers trace their roots back to the Isle of Barra and its "little island", the Isle of Vatersay, but also have Border ancestry. The name "Fisher", however, originates from Germany.

This study focuses on a generation of seven Fishers born between 1938 and 1952, to Morag (Marion) and John Fisher. The Fishers are an urban family, now scattered in different parts of Scotland and the Northeast of England, but it is important to examine their island background, about which quite a lot is known, because the ethos of that culture is evident in the urban generation. Morag Fisher's heritage is important to her children, and although they do not choose to sing songs from the family oral tradition, there is still an interest in it and a respect for it.

John Fisher and his Family

John Fisher was born in 1891 in Glasgow, the son of William Fisher, a police constable, and Jane Galbraith, a Barra woman. William Fisher was the son of George Fisher, described as a "general labourer" in official records, and Rachel Blyth. In the family oral tradition, a German miner from the Ruhr Valley named "Fischer" came to work in the mines at Shotts in Lanark, and his

decendents dropped the "c" out of the name. This immigrant miner was possibly George Fisher's father.

John Fisher's mother, Jane Galbraith, was born circa 1859, and came from Borge on the Isle of Barra. Like many island girls, she went to Glasgow to find employment as a domestic servant. Her father was John Galbraith, a master shoemaker, and her mother Isabella McKinnon. The Galbraiths were part of the Chron clan, and there are some still living in the vicinity of Borge.

Little is known about John Fisher's family, as he died in 1957. He had two sisters, Belle and Rachel, the latter having been named for Rachel Blyth, John's paternal grandmother. Rachel or "Ray", for whom Ray Fisher was in fact named, is still living. There are also more distant family relatives in the Galbraith family living in Borge on Barra, with whom the Fishers have lost touch, although Ray, who owns a house on Barra, hopes to renew contact with them. Morag Fisher speaks of family members who emigrated to Canada, America, and South Africa, so that the Fishers are quite dispersed. These emigrants have not maintained contact with the family in Scotland.

John Fisher was forty six, and a police inspector at the time of his marriage to Morag Fisher in 1938, twenty six years her senior. When he died in 1957 of cancer, his youngest child, Priscilla, was only five, thus it is the older children who remember their father more fully.

Morag Macdonald Fisher: Childhood in Vatersay

Far more is known about the Macdonald side of the Fisher family, as Morag Fisher and her eldest sister Mary were both able to supply considerable

information about it. This side of the family is predominantly Hebridean, although the Grieves who belong to the family originated from the Borders.

Morag Macdonald was born in Glasgow in 1917, the fourth child of eight born to Archibald Macdonald (Gilleasbaig Alasdair) and Nicolina Boyd ("Neacaidh" in Gaelic, but pronounced, and hereafter spelled in English, "Neckie"). Those born prior to her were Mary, William (Willie), and Alec. After Morag came Nan, followed by another sister who died as an infant of measles, and her brothers Calum and Donald.

Archibald Macdonald worked in Glasgow with the grain elevators, after being a seaman for a time, and Nicolina stayed in Glasgow with him in the early days of their marriage. Her parents were in Vatersay, but there were no available crofts for them on the small island at the time that they married.

Morag relates the sequence of events at this early stage of her life:

...when they got a chance of a house in the little island of Barra, I went back with, with my mother and the rest of us, because her mother and her father stayed there... we had no croft or anything at that time, we were just staying on a sort of bit of open land... we were staying next to my Grannie's, in this little house, this little thatched house with stones and an earth floor and all this sort of thing. And it was really comfortable enough, and we had our own food, we had our own cows and hens and ducks and all this sort of thing, we had plenty of food. But then after that, of course, we got a croft, my father got a croft, and we went on to a bigger bit of land...

And my mother, of course, she was taking on the, you know, the work on...the croft when my father was in Glasgow, because we needed the money that he used to send... Every Friday we used to wait on the postman coming, for this registered letter on a Friday. And this was our life out there. But we, then we got a bigger house, a lovely thatched cottage and we had five cows there. And we had quite a good bit of land. (SA 1986/153/A)

Morag's father's work in Glasgow was not the only source of income for the family. Nicolina worked at the herring gutting, which could last from summertime until December. As Morag explains,

...she used to go to the gutting...the herring fishing, she used to

go to Lowestoft, Lerwick, and Yarmouth, South Shields. She used to...follow the fishing fleet around and in Barra, of course...she had another lot of stations in Barra, about twenty or thirty stations in Barra when I was young. And the fishing fleet used to come in there, five or six hundred drifters came in there from every...where, you know, and the fish was cured in Barra and they lifted it...the big boats came for it and took it away. Even the Russian boats came in. (SA 1986/153/A)

Obviously, with their mother gone seasonally, and often overnight when she was at the gutting at Castlebay in Barra, and their father working in Glasgow, the Macdonald children were on their own frequently. This is where the network of neighbour and kin took over:

...all the neighbours looked after you, you know, if your mother was working, if she was away, they were there to look after you and see...that nothing would go wrong. (SA 1986/153/A)

Not only did the community look after all its members, but it operated on a barter system, obviating the need for cash in an economy which saw very little money. Clearly, Morag does not feel her childhood was clouded by economic hardship. As she explains,

...we had plenty of food, we were never hungry. But we never...had any shoes on our feet, we all ran about in our bare feet, summer, winter, and anytime, you know..., we always ran about in our bare feet till, till you sort of earned your own shoes you didn't have shoes!...

We were all in the same standard, you know, and if your neighbour didn't have milk, you gave them milk and when your cows were dry, they gave you milk, you know? And this is the way it went on...eggs and everything were shared out. Everybody sort of shared what they had, you know? When they had it. Because we had a big family. I think we were about the biggest family that was actually on the island. (SA 1986/153/A)

Thus Morag's early life was a very community-oriented one, in which the necessity of sharing was obvious for survival. Her remarks about shoes reveal her down-to-earth philosophy towards life, a quality which is also apparent in her children.

Morag attended the two-classroom school in Vatersay township some distance from Caolas, where there were approximately seventy pupils, from

what she remembers. The lessons were taught in English only, by a Mr. Campbell who was local, and his Irish wife. This meant that there was a dichotomy between the language of school and the language of home; the home language was, of course, Gaelic. Morag, unlike her sister Mary, never learned to read and write Gaelic, but it is her first spoken language. She still speaks it with her sister Mary when they chat on the telephone, indicating that Gaelic is a preferred mode of oral communication with immediate family.¹

Morag's formal schooling came to an end when she left school to work on the mainland just before turning fourteen. Children that went on to secondary school at this time had to go either to Stornoway in Lewis, or to Fort William on the mainland, so that it meant leaving home. Very few children did in fact go to secondary school, usually for economic reasons. As Morag remarks of the island girls,

...the only thing that was open to them [was] to leave the island and go into service. In hotels, hotel service or private service, or nurses. (SA 1986/161/A)

Boys usually went to sea, as did Morag's brothers, two of whom, Willie and Calum, were lost at sea during the Second World War. Despite the fact that the island economy made it nearly impossible for young people to stay, a Vatersay childhood appears to have been a very happy time. Morag's recollections of her home and social life in the township of Caolas are vivid and full of anecdotes.

Morag's Parents and Maternal Grandparents

Morag's mother Nicolina Boyd was a vital member of the Vatersay community, and highly regarded as a "figurehead", according to Morag (see Plate 1). Nicolina, or Neckie as she was known, was named for an Aunt Neckie

Grieve, who in turn had been named after a minister (not a priest), Nicol Grieve. Neckie filled two crucial roles on the island, that of midwife, and that of someone who "laid out" bodies for funerals. Morag relates:

Well, whenever there was anybody having a child, it was Neckie that was there...she was always there, you know...[if] the bairn was born before, before the doctor arrived, or if there was a storm, the doctor couldna come. So...she was the one that was really there. And there's a lot of them still alive that she brought into this world, you know?

She just learned by, learned by doing it... Strange enough it...was her that was there... Nobody seemed to bother whether the doctor came or not, you know, they were quite confident that she was capable of doing it...

...She was the one that did all the, you know, for the funerals and laid out the corpse and made the, got the shroud, the linen, the linen thing and dressed them all up with bows and things... (SA 1986/161/A)

The regard for Neckie is reflected in the way her children and grandchildren are also well regarded, as members of Clann Neckie. Because of the Gaelic patronymic system of appellation, references to families usually follow the paternal line of kin.² However, as Judith Ennew notes:

Where a mother is a strong personality or has brought up children on her own, her name can be used rather than that of her husband. It is she who is remembered in the genealogy, as she was the important social personality (1980:78).

Neckie's husband Archibald was not at home much until the later years of their marriage, so she was the significant parent for the young children, raising them with the help of neighbours. The use of her name for the family is thus not surprising.

Archibald Macdonald may not have been a primary influence on his younger children, but Morag's sister Mary, the eldest of the family, remembers what a knowledgeable man he was:

Oh, my father was a very well-versed man, he really was. And you know, Donald took after Dad. My brother Donald. And that's where he took it from. My father could talk to anybody... Even the priest's students, when they would come home, they used to

go to him for him to sort, you know, answer questions... That's how he had education none of the rest of them had. When he came school age, in Vatersay, it was his mother's uncle that was priest in Borge, a Father John Macdonald from Uist. And my father was brought up there. (SS 30-11-86)

Thus, each in their own way, Morag's parents were very capable people, who had between them both "book-learned" and traditional knowledge.

Neckie outlived her husband by many years, and died only recently, in 1982, so that her grandchildren and great-grandchildren knew her. Her granddaughter Ray's purchase of a house on Barra in 1979 was expedited by the blood tie to Clan Neckie. More will be said about this development at the end of the chapter.

Morag was named for Neckie's mother, Marion Campbell (Morag in Gaelic = Marion in English). Marion Campbell was the daughter of a Margaret Grieve, whose family originated from the Borders, and had worked for the Lovat family in Strathglass, in the Beaully area.

Morag Macdonald stayed with her grandmother Marion sometimes and learned her skills:

...my mother's mother, she was, she was a great one, she was a great one for baking and doing. She made the butter and the cheese, she used to make the cheese in the block and put it outside, press it outside, and put big stones on the top of it and, you know, she used to show me how to do it, you know, because she was, she was totally blind. And she did all that herself, yes, that was my mother's mother, but I never saw my father's mother or my father's father. They were all, they had all died before I was born. (SA 1986/153/A)

Morag's father's side of the family, the Macdonalds, had originally come from Uist, Benbecula, and other islands, and were already established on Vatersay at the time of the Vatersay Raids, which occurred between 1900 and 1909.

One interesting family story concerning Nicolina, Marion Campbell and their suitors was told to Ray Fisher in 1981 by the late Nan Mackinnon or Nan

Eachainn Fhionnlaigh, of Vatersay. This was part of the conversation, as recorded by Ray:

- NM: ...Archie, your grandfather, was a seaman. He was at sea, you know, and he always came home for his holidays and that. But took no part whatsoever in the looking after cattle or sheep or anything like that.
- RF: Yes. Can you recall when he met and married my grandmother [Nicolina]?
- NM: Your grandmother was very young when she married him. He was much older.
- RF: How old was she?
- NM: Oh, she'd be in her early twenties or so. But he was older than that. And they got married, and they were staying in Glasgow for the first few years.
- RF: Why do you think there was such a difference in the age?
- NM: Well, I'll tell you that, I might as well be honest about it. Your grandfather was after your great-grandmother [Marion]. He wanted to marry her. But William Boyd was in her life as well, your great-grandfather. And when she got married, she told your father [NM confuses the generations here, should be grandfather], "Ach well", she says, "you'll get my first daughter, first daughter I've got". And so it happened. (From "Fisher Folk" broadcast, 28-12-86, BBC Radio Scotland)

Uilleam Baoid and the Vatersay Raiders

One of the most fascinating and colourful characters in Fisher family tradition is Morag's maternal grandfather, William Boyd, or as he was always known, Uilleam Baoid, Marion's husband. He was one of the Vatersay Raiders, who came from both Castlebay in Barra and nearby Mingulay to Vatersay, which was owned by Lady Cathcart, to obtain croft land for their livelihood.

In 1903, the recently created Congested Districts Board had purchased sixty acres of land on Vatersay to help relieve the chronic shortage of land for Barra crofters. An attempt was made to purchase additional land after a potato crop failure on Vatersay, but the asking price of Lady Cathcart was more than the Board was willing to pay. However, the crofters made it clear they were

prepared to seize the land regardless, so the Board managed to rent an additional twenty acres in 1906. One wave of raiders came from Mingulay, among them Uilleam Baoid, and essentially "squatted" on two acres of Lady Cathcart's land. She took legal measures against the perpetrators, and they were imprisoned for a short time first in Lochmaddy, and then for about three months in Edinburgh. Oral and written accounts of the successive raids vary, as is hardly surprising. (See Hunter 1976:184-191 for a recent historical account.) There is also a Gaelic song which was composed by bard Michael Buchanan or Micheal Nill Bhain, of Barra, commemorating the 1906 raid, and naming Uilleam Baoid and others who participated (Mackinnon 1983).

One interesting fact is that both sides of Morag's family were involved in this historic event. She gives her account of what occurred:

He [Uilleam Baoid] did six weeks in prison. My grandpa. In Lochmaddy. For taking over the island. They came from Mingulay, and they had to go over the island, aye, they took over the island. And strange to say, Domhnall Bhatarsaigh, that's what they called the fellow that had the great big house on the island. My father worked for him. This was before my mother and him got married. My father and my uncles and them, they would, they had a place, they were working for the laird. And then my other, my grandfather, he came and raided the blooming place, you know! (SA 1986/161/B)

Mary Macdonald Mackinnon, Morag's eldest sister, is a veritable repository of Barra and Vatersay history, traditions, and stories, although she, like Morag, left the island to go into service at an early age. She recounts the story of Uilleam Baoid and the Vatersay Raiders:

William Boyd - he was really one of the leading, you know, hands. What happened was, you see, the people of Castlebay, they had nothing to live on. They came over and just took possession of the land there [on Vatersay], and started planting potatoes. Well, they didn't start anything in the way of corn or anything, just produce for themselves...

You see, my grandparents, on the paternal side, were in Vatersay then. Not my grandfather, he was dead. But my granny, and my Uncle Alasdair, they were in Caolas at that time, when the Vatersay Raiders started, you know. Donald MacDonald

was the landlord. He was in the big house, over in the village. And it was my uncle that was more or less managing with him, you know? Running the place, looking after sheep, and cattle. And there was a family MacCuish there, from North Uist. They were there. And that was the two, like, male workers that Donald Macdonald had.

He [Uilleam Baoid] was one of the ringleaders himself, and a Duncan Campbell... There was, it was eleven, wasn't there eleven of them?... There were some from Mingulay..., about half a dozen from Mingulay... The local priest, he was oh, dead against them, a Father Mackenzie. He meets my grandmother, and they [the raiders] were getting two pound ten a week, which was a lot of money in these days. While they were in jail. And he says to my granny, he heard there's a rumour, you see, that they were coming, getting released, and he says to Granny in, of course, in Gaelic, "I hear", he says, "your old man is gettin' released shortly". She says, "Well", she says, "the worst news I ever heard", she says, "I don't care although they kept them in", she says, "for life as long as they got the two pound ten!" (SS 30-11-86, "Fisher Folk" broadcast)

This anecdotal account is one of many illustrations of the dry sense of humour in the Boyd and Macdonald families. Mary Mackinnon sings a full version in Gaelic of the song about the Vatersay Raiders (SS 30-11-86). Nan Mackinnon's text, recorded in 1958 by James Ross, along with her account of the Raiders, was recently published in Gaelic and English (Mackinnon 1983:32-35).

Ray Fisher is very interested in the family history, and has talked to relatives and family acquaintances on Barra and Vatersay about her great-grandfather. She was talking to her mother, in the presence of her sister Cilla, about Uilleam Baoid in November 1986. This is part of their exchange:

- R: ...there's some great stories about Uilleam Baoid, I got loads of stories about Uilleam Baoid.
M: Yes.
R: He had, did you know, did you ever hear them tell about him having second sight?
M: Oh no, no, no.
R: To see into the future.
M: No, no.
R: Oh. You don't know anything about the story when he heard the buckets falling out of the sky?
M: No, no, I've never heard that.
R: You didn't hear the story of the falling buckets?'Cause I was talking

- to Eil, you know, Eil?...
- M: Neil McNeil, aye.
- R: Well he said, Uilleam Baoid stood one day at the door of the house in Caolas, and shouted to some people, "Who's dropping the buckets out of the sky?" And...he pointed to the, up over the hill. Almost straight, not straight across, to the right, near to where the, between the jetty and the top of the hill, in the direction of the point, you know where the jetty is now?
- M: Yes, yes!
- R: And he said, "There's someone dropping buckets out of the sky!"
- M: Oh, he must have been drunk, right enough!
- C: Must have been in the buckets himself!
- R: That's what they all said to him... and he said, "You come with me". And they walked across round the bay, up the hill, and he pointed, and he said it was down there, he said, there was all this clattering.
- M: All these buckets!
- R: With the buckets falling from the sky... It was the very spot where the Sunderland went down twenty years after!
- M: Is that so?
- R: Twenty years, to the spot! The Sunderland, a Sunderland flying boat crashed on the hillside, and Uilleam Baoid heard it. (SA 1986/161/B)

Plate 2 shows Ray sitting next to the wreckage of the flying boat on Vatersay, not far from Vatersay township, in July 1987.

Ray also recounted another story concerning Uilleam Baoid's second sight, in which he was able to see a yellow "vehicle" driving up the road from the ferry. The only car he was familiar with in these days was the doctor's black car in Barra. The Western Isles Council vans now used for council business are yellow. Ray's friend Eil, referred to above, works for the council.

Ray relates:

The first time Eil went across [to Vatersay], he went on the ferry, and they'd taken the council van over before he went over. And he stood at the bottom, and he saw this yellow vehicle go up the road that Uilleam Baoid saw, years and years and years before. He said, "I'm not going in that van", he said, "I'm not putting my foot in it!" And he wouldn't go in the van. (SA 1986/161/B)

Quite obviously Uilleam Baoid was a multi-faceted character, who enjoys a vigorous life in the local oral tradition. Morag does not seem to give much credence to the stories about his second sight, but her sister Mary tells many stories about second sight incidents on Vatersay and Barra, revealing a

very matter-of-fact level of belief. The personalities and dispositions of the two sisters are noticeably different, although both share the droll family sense of humour. One might say that Ray, through her contact with Barra residents, is the most interested in the "mystical" side of her mother's island background, as well as the practical historical details.

Music in the Macdonald Family

There is a strong musical tradition in the Macdonald family, particularly for singing and playing the pipes and melodeon. When Ray Fisher spoke to the late Nan Mackinnon about the family in a 1981 visit to Vatersay, she asked if there was "any music" in grandfather Archibald Macdonald's family, Nan replied with great vigour:

Of course there was! And your great-grandmother Bean Alasdair a'Chaolais, she knew all the songs that were composed in Uist. And in those days, in my mother's time, and in your great-grandmother's time, the waulking songs were a must, you know? Everyone sang his own piece when they were waulking the cloth, and the songs, "*Mo nighean donn à Còrnaig*", my mother knew that one from end to end, but she hadn't a clue whatsoever where it was composed... But it was your great-grandmother that told her that it was a Uist song. (From "Fisher Folk" broadcast)

Morag Macdonald's generation clearly carried on the musical traditions. When I asked her if any of her family were singers, she replied:

Well, my sister Mary was a great singer. She was a, she used to do Gaelic songs...we used to have ceilidhs and things there, in the island, you know, and dances, and there was always somebody playing the melodeon, you know... My brother used to play that. Well, he used to play the melodeon at the dances. And he used to play the bagpipes at the dances as well...he was good. He was always the one that, if there's going to be a dance, Willie's going to play...and Auntie Mary [refers to her sister], she used to sing the songs...when they had the ceilidh...and then there was quite a lot of other people that were good Gaelic singers, and my mother's father, he was a good

singer. He used to sing when he was carrying the hay in and when he was in the house he used to be singing all the time... (SA 1986/153/A)

Morag sings Gaelic songs herself, but as she does not sing in public, she does not consider herself a singer.

Music not only played a part in everyday life and at the island dances, but was also an important feature at wakes, when someone on the island died. Ray Fisher asked her mother what the wakes were like on Vatersay, and she replied:

...it wasn't a sad thing, you know, it was always, always folk just like they were singing, they were folksinging, you know? Aye, and playing melodeons, and playing pipes and everything, you know? And the body would be laid out on the bed, you know, it was on the bed...I can't remember any of the songs at all. No. Sort of farewell songs, suppose, you know, they'd have for that...and the pibroch and all this sort of thing. (SA 1986/161/A)

Thus music was very important in the life of Vatersay people, and in both the maternal and paternal lines of Morag's family, as well as in her own generation. It is worth remarking that the instrumental tradition in Barra and Vatersay was thriving in part because these islands, being Catholic, did not experience the cultural ravages that most Protestant areas experienced during the Reformation and later.

Morag: Work, Marriage, and Children

Morag Macdonald left Vatersay in 1931, first going to a school in Edinburgh to train to be a telephonist, and then went to work in hotels in the Edinburgh area, and at one point in Fort William. Plate 3 shows Morag in her teens, when she was working on the mainland, but prior to her marriage.

Morag eventually came to work in Glasgow. One of her posts was with a Jewish family in Pollokshields. Although some Highland and Island girls did not like working for Jewish employers because of "the funny food" and their rumoured reluctance to part with money, according to Morag, she liked the family she worked for very much, and named her own daughter Cynthia after one of the daughters in the family.

At this time in Glasgow, there were large numbers of Highland and Island people working. They retained a social identity in the city through forming various associations, such as the Uist and Barra Association, and more informal networks of young people. Morag recalls going with other girls to meet Highland and Irish boys under Jamaica Bridge. She also used to attend dances and other functions sponsored by the Uist and Barra Association. She describes how she met her husband, John Fisher:

I met Mr. Fisher in Glasgow, yes, yes, I met him there...used to have Uist and Barra dances, you know, there was associations that they have, they've still got them...Uist and Barra Associations, and the Lewis and Harris Associations, and you know, of course, all the Highland girls went to, to these dances and whist drives and that. And I met John at one of these whist drives in Glasgow, in the Grand Hotel in Glasgow I met him first. Of course his mother came from Barra as well...and of course she was quite pleased when she knew that John and I were going to get married because, you know, she was...from Barra as well. (SA 1986/153/A)

John Fisher was an inspector in the Glasgow police force, and as he was a bachelor, he had to hire someone to keep house and take care of his mother. Morag came to work in the Fisher household, and was quite fond of John's mother, with whom she was able to converse in Gaelic and reminisce about Barra.

Morag married John Fisher in 1938. They lived at 26 Havelock Street, in Partick, for the duration of their marriage (see Plate 4). They had seven children, and because of their Barra connections and family naming traditions,

called several of their children after relatives. Each child had either Galbraith or Macdonald as a middle name. Jean Galbraith, born in 1938, was named after her paternal grandmother, Jane. Archibald (Archie) Macdonald, named for his maternal grandfather, was born in 1939. Ray Galbraith, born in 1940, was named for a paternal aunt. Joyce Galbraith was born in 1942, Cynthia (Cindy) Macdonald in 1943, and Audrey Macdonald in 1947. Priscilla (Cilla) Galbraith, was born in 1952. Plate 5 shows Morag Fisher and all the children except Cilla, circa 1950.

Ray Fisher, in describing her perceptions of her parents' marriage and family, remarks:

...It was a big family anyway, in Glasgow terms. For a Protestant family, I think it was regarded as quite big. Now that is pertinent in a way, because my mother in marrying my father married out of the church. Which was regarded by the islanders and by the rest of our family or some of our family as not the right thing to do. Because she was a Catholic, and had been brought up a Catholic, and my father was Protestant. (SA 1985/196)

The largeness of the family commented upon by Ray, seems to be very much a reflection of Morag Fisher's personal feelings about children and family, rather than religious beliefs. As Morag remarks:

...children to me are something wonderful, I love children. I always liked children, you know...they're a part of a family, that, you know, that you've got to have, you know? (SA 1986/154/A)

The Fisher Children: Growing Up in Glasgow

The Havelock Street house was the first home that the Fisher children knew. Their father was, by that time, an inspector in the Marine Division of the Glasgow Police, but actually worked in the Partick office.

Jean, the eldest child in the Fisher family, is the only one of the seven children for whom singing was not important in some way. Jean left school at the age of fifteen and, following her mother's footsteps, went into service. She has lived and worked in Newcastle for many years.

The rest of the children grew up in successive "pairs", so to speak, a pattern which later was manifested in singing performances. Archie and Ray, just a year apart in age, naturally spent a lot of time together in their youth. Joyce and Cynthia were the next dyad, followed by Audrey and Priscilla. They all attended the Dowanhill Primary School, but different secondary schools.

Ray's memories of childhood, her parents, and their house are quite vivid. About their home in Havelock Street, which was a typical flat in a sandstone Glasgow tenement, she remarks:

...there wasn't much room in our house, you see, once there were seven children and my mother and father in a small house, I mean, by normal standards it would be vastly over-crowded. Because it was, it was just a big sitting room, one bedroom, and a kitchen, a hallway, and a bathroom. And that was the entire house...I don't think it was cause we were poor, cause we weren't really poor, cause my father had a car...in fact, it was the only car in the street. When we were young...and my father used to take us out quite a lot, but like I said, my relations used to come and go, and this is where I realized fairly early on that we were very very fortunate cause we had these very colourful sort of relations who spoke in this lovely lilty Gaelic twang, you know. (SS 26-3-85)

In post-war Glasgow, there was a severe housing shortage, so that by all accounts, the Fishers were more fortunate than many families. The so-called "single end" and "room and kitchen" were generally considered standard housing at the time, so that a flat which had several rooms and a bathroom was quite special. When Ray, Joyce, Cynthia, and Cilla chatted recently about their childhood, they discussed the smallness of the house for the size of their family. Cynthia and Joyce made the following exchange, which touches on a significant feature of the Fisher family:

- C: ...we always wanted a house where we could have a room of our own instead of six of us in a room, you know.
- J: Yes. Possibly that's why we all got on so well with each other, because we were close together, and we had to at the time. (SA 1987/24/A)

This seems to be an echo of their mother's practical and gregarious nature. Clearly, the children did not feel that they were under hardship, even though it might have been nicer to be in a bigger house.

Gaelic in the Family

The household functioned almost exclusively in English, although Morag Fisher's native language was Gaelic, and John Fisher's mother was a native Gaelic speaker as well. Morag remarks of her husband,

...he didn't fancy the Gaelic, you know... it was funny. His mother spoke the Gaelic, but in the family, I never spoke the Gaelic to the kids... A few words, maybe, you know, "Be quiet!" and this sort of thing, but the attitude that John took was, he says, "a dead language"... it was a strange attitude because his mother...spoke, his mother and I spoke Gaelic most of the time. (SA 1986/154/A)

Ray's recollections seem to indicate that the children were spoken to in Gaelic fairly often, although this may merely reflect a different perspective on the matter. She relates:

...occasionally my father used to lapse into phrases, and my mother always told us off in Gaelic... the only Gaelic we knew, really, was to count from one to ten, and to be told off or some sort, or remonstrance, is, I think, the word. Like "Don't do that!", "Stop it!", "Come here!"... And it was all, all these Gaelic words... I used to say it at school and the kids used to look at me as if I was odd, you know, what's she saying all this gibberish for. But it seemed pretty straightforward to me. (SS 26-3-85)

Ray and Cilla discussed this aspect of their upbringing and their impressions of this bilingual situation in the family as young children. Here is part of their conversation:

- R: ...I know when Auntie Nan used to come about the house, her and

- Mother used to talk Gaelic. And Nan used to come about when Father was out or away somewhere. I remember they used to talk in Gaelic, and and wee Uncle John Mackinnon came a few times.
- C: I remember him. I only remember them talking with her and Donald [Morag's youngest brother], over in Govan, when we went to see Granny [MacDonald]. That was the only time she ever really spoke that I remember. And I hated that, anyway, sitting there and [makes nonsense sounds in imitation of Gaelic], Flora, [nonsense sounds], Flora, you know?
- R: That's right. And they used to come out with things like "Sauchiehall Street", because there was no Gaelic word for that...! (SA 1986/163/A)

From this, we can see that Gaelic was the language of Morag's closest relatives, and it was mainly in visiting situations as described above that extended conversations occurred in Gaelic. The children, like their father, did not understand Gaelic, and associated it in part with relative visiting, which most children do not enjoy but often have to endure.

Having been exposed to Gaelic, however, some of the children were interested in doing it as a subject in secondary school. Only certain schools taught Gaelic, and Hyndland Secondary School, which was where children in the Fishers' part of Partick went, did not have Gaelic in its curriculum. Archie wanted to take Gaelic, and relates his confrontation with his father over the matter:

...my father didn't take to Gaelic, thought it was a terrible language... when I was at school, he said I had a choice between French and Latin. And I said I wanted to take French...and Gaelic, 'cause Woodside School, I'd have to go to Woodside instead of Hyndland, which was supposedly an upper crust sort of, slightly posher school. And I filled in a form that I was given, saying I wanted to learn Gaelic and French. And he refused to let me go there, and said I had to go to Hyndland, and learn Latin and French because Gaelic was a dead language!

And I never quite worked that one out, at the time. As a consequence, didn't even take Latin, just took French, and never learned Gaelic. Because my mother had sisters that visited her, and they spoke in Gaelic... and I could hear it, ^{at} times I can almost subliminally understand it in a way. And because I had a musical association, I was interested in it, and I would like to have understood songs as well. (SS 13-5-86/A)

Cilla was the only one of Morag's children who actually took Gaelic at school.

She attended Woodside School, and did two years of Gaelic, but left school when she was fifteen. At this point, in 1967, the elder children had left home, and Audrey and Cilla were the only ones still with their mother. The family moved to the Tyneside area for several years to be near Ray and Jean who were married and living there, and Cilla dropped her interest in Gaelic.

Music in the Fisher Family

The children's Aunt Mary, Morag's sister, remembers that her nieces and nephew were musical at an early age. In a conversation with Ray and Archie, she recalled:

I can remember coming out from Barra after the war, and calling at your father's house. And your dad was playing the piano, and there'd be about four of you, making a ring-a-roses on the floor singing, you know, you were singing and he was playing the piano to you. (From "Fisher Folk" broadcast)

Ray recalls her father's singing, and family gatherings around the piano in great detail. She remarks:

...when I think of it, we used to sing, I remember us singing, not consciously singing, I don't think, you know, saying "We will now sing". But my father, on certain occasions, would open up the piano. Now this was actually quite an event, because the piano was locked. You see, it was locked... It was quite ritualistic, it was Christmas and special do's, birthdays sometimes, when we would go into the sitting room and actually have a birthday, a party, or a get-together of some kind, with the whole family...

My father...used to sing, and vamp chords on the piano. Like "boom boom", this. I mean I latterly found out he was vamping chords but as far as I was concerned he was playing the piano. And he used to sing arias, and songs from Count John McCormack... I mean I could sing all these funny songs, I didn't know what they meant, but he sang it in this great big voice because he was, at one time had been a soloist with the City of Glasgow Police Choir, you see, so - but he had this sort of classical music thing, you know. And he sounded like Caruso, you know, and he used to really embarrass us no end, you know, if you'd be sitting, he'd be shaving, and if the doors were open

all the neighbours could hear this thunderous voice coming through the house. But he was quite a good singer, he had a very good powerful voice. (SS 26-3-85)

According to Morag Fisher, it was Ray who seemed to enjoy the singing sessions at the piano with her father the most. She remarks:

They all used to sing roundabout the piano along with him. And, you know, he sort of encouraged, I think, everybody, especially Ray, she was the one who used to dance and jump about when he was playing, you know?

He used to say, "Well, if you're going to be so determined when you grow up, I'll be very proud of you if you'd be a singer. But he never saw that day. (From "Fisher Folk" broadcast)

Ray was sixteen when her father died in 1957, Archie seventeen, and both were soon to perform on the early "platforms" of the folk revival in Glasgow.

John Fisher was fond of music hall as well as other varieties of music. As a soloist with the City of Glasgow Police Choir, his repertoire was a mixture of light classical and popular music, but as a policeman "on the beat" in his earlier days, he would sometimes stand at the back of music halls and listen. Ray and Archie had a lengthy conversation about the material in their father's repertoire in late 1986, part of which follows here:

- R: I remember Father talking about one man who sang on the music hall stage, and he had this preamble, and then he sang these songs. And my father did the bit of the preamble as well... [recites] "The sprockets are not running parallel to the differential, and they're causing a short circuit in the gearbox, I don't think".
- A: Short circulation in the gearbox.
- R: Something. And all this... and then he used to say, this same man stood up and said, "I am a sophisticated rhetorician and inebriated with the exuberance of my own verbosity, and carried away with egotistical imagination, I don't think". Now what that meant, I've no idea. When I was little, I was about ten, I could say this. No idea what it meant, subsequently discovered it just meant he talked a lot, which was quite accurate, actually!
- A: That was a quote, that was a parliamentary quote.
- R: Was it?
- A: Yeh. Somebody said it in Parliament. Or the House of Lords.
- R: Well this - and my father used to sing songs like eh - and they were all music hall, "She was there, she was there", and "and I now looked below the bed, and dum dum dum dum dum..."
- A: Of course he'd picked them up on the beat in Glasgow. Used to go into the back and stand at the theatre, back of the theatre.

- R: In the theatre, yeh. Well I imagine, he obviously had got them from the source cause he talked about the music hall, just these people who sang at the music hall.
- A: But as well as that, I mean he sang as a tenor in the police choir...
- R: Yes.
- A: ...he broadcast on radio, on BBC radio when it was called 2LO, and came from a building off Queen Street, in Edinburgh, he broadcast with part of the Glasgow choir... And the other thing is that in, the Glasgow Police Choir just didn't do choral things, they did kind of musical reviews and Gilbert and Sullivan and that kind of things as well.
- R: Mm hm.
- A: So he must have had a, a repertoire inside the choir too. And of course there was lots of functions in these days that eh the people did party pieces at, involved with, not just the Freemasons and other things that eh, that he probably did turns at, and that's... and he was a performer...
- R: Maybe he was a frustrated performer.
- A: I think he was... And he played concertina, he had a concertina when he was younger. And there was something else he played as well. Ukelele. He played ukelele. And these were very much music hall type instruments in that time.
- R: Yes. But all, I remember Father's singing when he was shaving, "Where My Caravan is Rested", Father Sidney McEwan songs.
- A: Yeh, that's right. He knew Father Sidney McEwan, of course.
- R: Yeh. And he used to sing, used to sing all these big, we used to get really quite embarrassed, cause when we went camping, he used to do it, and he used to have the mirror hanging at the end of the tent when he was doing his shaving and he was singing away at the top of his voice, and we always, we used to hide round the back of the tent...
- A: I never got embarrassed, I thought he was a great singer.
- R: Oh no, I used to get embarrassed. Because he used to sing, and they were very loud, it was very loud, and he sounded, he was a great Caruso type admirer. I think that's where we get all the noise from, is from Father, when we sing loud! (SA 1986/167/A)

This particular transcription reveals the different perceptions that Ray and Archie have about their father and his influence on the family singing tradition. Clearly, John Fisher enjoyed indulging the side of him that was an entertainer, a side which has obviously surfaced in his children. This also appears to have been his lighter, more frivolous side, because various remarks from Archie, Ray, and Cilla indicate that he had a sterner side as well.

Morag Fisher does not claim to be a singer, and instead gives that designation to her sister Mary, as mentioned previously. However, her family often heard her singing to herself, especially Gaelic songs. Ray remarks:

My mother used to sing, but she sort of sang very quietly and eh, in a sort of croony lilty Highland sort of plaintive sort of sound. Eh, almost the other end of the spectrum completely to what my father did, so I suppose we weren't really – it wasn't a musical house you know in that we weren't, we weren't consciously... the music was there, you know, it was sort of roundabout. (SS 26-3-85)

Ray makes the point here that she and her siblings did not start singing with a consciousness of continuing in the family tradition, but the sound of singing was there, with both parents. Cilla, who remembers hearing her mother sing as a child, and also hears her sing now as they live in the same small village, comments:

...my mother sings too, but she never sang like professionally. I mean my father didn't sing professionally, but he was in the choir, and he did radio broadcasting and things. But em, my mother sings too, all the time. When she's potting about. We've tried to get her to sing in public and she's done it once or twice. But Archie always recommended that we should install a sink in a building, and she washed things. She always used to sing away when she was washing the dishes, you see... And people would say, "Oh, we'd love to get your mum in, up to sing, you know", and he [Archie] said, "Well, if you get a sink here, with some dishes, she'll be alright! And then she'll come up and sing for you!"

...She comes away with some things. I mean quite a few of the sort of recognized songs already, I mean like em, "Fear a'Bhàta" and all these sort of standard kind of ones that most of Gaelic singers would do. 'Cause she comes away with wee bits of tunes and things, that obviously have just come back to her from, I mean, either her childhood or something. (SA 1985/210)

One of Ray and Archie's oldest friends, and a fellow performer, Hamish Imlach, recalls being in the Fisher house, and hearing Mrs. Fisher singing if she thought no one was listening. Singing in any context apart from the private one has clearly always been perceived by Morag as a deviation from her own self-concept, which is that of a person who does not sing. "Singing" to her means singing *in public*, and her private singing does not fall into this category.

The children did learn some Gaelic songs, but not directly from their

mother. Ray and her sister Audrey discuss some of the Gaelic songs learned in school:

- R: We got them in school. We got them initially at school. Those ones. There was a book, and we had a couple of books of Marjorie Kennedy Fraser's that I, I don't know where they had come from. And we used to do "Air Falalalo".
- A: "Air Falalalo", some of them might have been from school, some of them.
- R: Yeh. But Mother used to sing the tunes, you see. Mother knew the Gaelic words, I don't think she consciously knew them but she would - I remember us doing, do you remember us singing, just for fun [sings], "Fhear a'bhàta, 's no ho ro aida". Now that was the chorus, and they taught us that at the school, and the words they taught us at school, we came home and sang it, and my mother said, "Oh no, that's not right, that's terrible!" She said, "What's this 'bata' bit", she said, "it's not 'bata' and it's not 'fe-hear a'bata'", she says, "it's"...
- A: Fe-hear a bata!
- R: And she had different pronunciation altogether. And the last line was "Oh faræthee well, love, where e'er thou be" or something. And she never sang that. She sang it in Gaelic and she said, "Now that's the way you're supposed to sing it". So I went back to school. And I'm singing "Mo shoraidh slàn leat 's gach àit am téid thu" or something, which was the words my mother said, and the teacher says, "You're singing the wrong words!" [laughs] And she says, "Sing, sing the same words as everybody else". But that was, you see, Mother knew the tune, and she knew, she might not have known the whole songs, but she certainly knew the tunes. So that when we started singing them in English, we certainly had the right tunes taken from the book, cause I'm sure there was a book of tunes from the Western Isles or something like that... (SA 1986/114/A)

This transcription reveals a not uncommon irony found in Scotland, that genuine family traditions or ways of doing things are in opposition to what the schools teach, and that conformity is far more important in the education process than the validity of the family tradition. Given the type of occurrence that Ray describes above, it is not surprising that the Fisher children regard their Gaelic heritage with some ambivalence. This point, with particular reference to song repertoire, will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The Glasgow schools have always been rich repositories of children's street songs and singing games. Archie remarks that Dowanhill Primary, where all the Fishers went, was a particularly good school for this. He adds,

...Of course Cilla, when she was at school, when she started

going to school, she was in a very healthy playground music set-up, cause they were still skipping and playing ball games... It was quite a common occurrence in the morning to, for the boys to all line up and listen to the girls do their ring games and skipping games...through the railings... (SP 13-5-86A)

The playground singing games seem to have had the most influence on Cilla's repertoire, and she has tapped this early source of material for use in the programme she and her husband Artie present for children, "The Singing Kettle", about which more will be said in Chapter 4.

It should be quite evident that the Fisher children were exposed to music, especially singing, in many different contexts in their childhood. They seem to have equated singing with pleasure and family togetherness from very early in their lives, and both parents contributed to their notion that singing is a natural activity to participate in. We now need to briefly fill in a few more biographical details of family members, and of Archie, Ray, and Cilla in particular, before closing this chapter with a discussion of Ray's involvement with the Isle of Barra.

The Fisher Children: Later School Years and Adulthood

Archie and Ray attended Hyndland Senior Secondary School at the same time, although they were in different classes. Ray proved to be the most fastidious student in the family, staying on for Sixth Year, and then attending the Jordanhill College of Education for three years, from 1958-1961.

In 1962, Ray married fellow musician Colin Ross whom she met in a Newcastle folk club while performing, and has lived in the Northeast of England since then, in Whitley Bay. Colin, formerly a teacher, now makes Northumbrian

pipes as well as playing fiddle and pipes professionally with the High Level Ranters and other groups. Ray has performed as a solo singer on the folk club and festival circuit since she and Archie stopped performing as a duo in the mid-1960s. The stages of her career are discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. Ray and Colin have two sons and a daughter in their twenties, none of whom seem to have an interest in their parents' music at present.

Archie had a desire to go to sea, and at the age of sixteen, he left Hyndland to join the Merchant Navy, and was away for fifteen months. He returned home after this stint, and held a variety of jobs over the next few years, ranging from working at a turkey farm and the Ayrshire Milk Marketing Board to the Hoover Vacuum Cleaner Company. He worked in London for almost a year at Collet's Chinese Bookshop in the early 1960s, and became acquainted with the London musical scene at this time. He later taught guitar in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Fife. He lived in Edinburgh, St. Andrews, and later Falkland in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Archie married a Shetland schoolteacher in 1967. They had one daughter, and were later divorced. In 1976, he married a noted Borders classical musician. They had a daughter who is, not surprisingly, musical. In his wife's native area he developed a passionate love for the Borders country, and acquired skill in making reproduction early instruments. Archie still spends much of his time in the Borders, although the marriage did not endure.

In Chapters 3 and 4, we follow Archie's musical career from the early days of the Scottish folk revival. In recent years, his work as a freelance broadcasting researcher and consultant, and also as a presenter for BBC Radio Scotland, has taken up an increasing proportion of his time, and as a result, he performs much less frequently than he did in the 1960s and 1970s. He began

presenting a weekly folkmusic programme on BBC Radio Scotland in 1983, and "Travelling Folk" continues to be one of the mainstays of folkmusic on Scottish radio.

Joyce and Cindy Fisher attended folk clubs in Edinburgh and Glasgow in the 1960s, where they met their husbands. Joyce's husband, Ron Clark, and Cynthia's ex-husband, the writer Carl McDougall, were both active as singers in the 1960s, and in fact were responsible for writing the humorous bawdy song, "Cod Liver Oil and the Orange Juice", otherwise known as "Hairy Mary".³

Joyce and Ron Clark now live in Clarkston, outside central Glasgow. Cindy lives with her daughter in Glasgow. Both Joyce and Cindy are occasionally coaxed into singing when around other Fisher family members, and still enjoy folk evenings when their family responsibilities do not conflict.

Audrey Fisher, who went to the Tyneside area with her mother and younger sister Cilla in 1968, got a job soon after the move. She and Cilla attended quite a few of the folk clubs in the Tyneside area, and performed together. She met her husband George Bullock in a folk club, and they married in 1971. They emigrated to Australia for six years, and decided to return to Newcastle in 1977, where they still live. They have two children, a son and a daughter. Audrey occasionally performs with her sisters Ray and Cilla in the Tyneside area, and also sings with her husband George accompanying on guitar. Of all the non-professional Fishers, she is the one who most wishes that it were possible for her to perform professionally like Ray, Cilla, and Archie.

Cilla was sixteen when she, Audrey, and her mother moved to Tyneside. She and Audrey sang in local folk clubs, which gave them an opportunity to perform publicly. She met and married Artie Trezise in 1971, when Cilla was



eighteen (see Plate 6). They lived in Glasgow, West Lothian, and later moved to Fife, where they finally settled in Kingskettle. The incidents which led to their establishment as a prominent performing duo are related in Chapter 4. Cilla and Artie have a daughter in her teens, and a young son. Morag Fisher lives close by, and often looks after her grandson when Cilla and Artie are touring.

Full Circle: Return to Barra

One of the most fascinating developments in the Fisher family in recent years has been Ray's growing involvement with the island of Barra. This involvement began in 1974, when her Aunt Mary, her mother's sister, contacted Morag at a time when their cousin Mairi (known as Mairi Clait or Mairi Iain a'Chaolais within the family to distinguish her from Mary Macdonald), who had a croft at Clait on Barra, was thinking of giving up her croft, because of her advancing age. (Mairi Iain a'Chaolais was born in 1910.) Ray explains what thoughts she had when she heard about this, and what she did:

...Now Mairi Iain a'Chaolais, which was Mairi Clait, was going to give up her croft altogether. And there was a rumour that she was going to leave it to the church, because nobody was interested in coming back to the island. Now it wasn't so much an interest in getting the croft, because...nobody in the family wanted actually to go and work a croft in the Outer Hebrides. But the idea that the last connection with the island, immediate connection with the island was in fact going to be broken if she gave up the croft and went to live in one of the sheltered houses, it was quite frightening. Well, I mean it suddenly struck me, that I said, "Is there no one else on the island...related?" "Oh", she said, "yes", my mother said, "there's loads of relations". But not this first, sort of like first, you know, going from cousins and then it became second cousins and way out... It becomes even more complicated when we work out that Jane Galbraith who is my paternal grandmother, her family came from another district on the island of Barra. She came from Borve. So there were relations on that side, but not first, first rate, as I would say,

relations...

When we heard that...Mairi Clait was getting quite old, and she was finding it difficult looking after the croft...I wrote a letter to her and I explained who I was, and said we'd be interested in coming to visit... So, I went across, Colin, myself, and the children, we went across, and discovered this amazing place, which was just a totally different world from the city, and from Newcastle, where we live... a whole sort of set up of traditions and social patterns that were totally different from the mainland. (SA 1985/196)

Ray's family went to stay with Mairi several times over a period of years, each time helping repair or fix things in her house, and doing other chores for her on the croft that were no longer easy for her to do. Ray fell in love with Barra, and since Mairi was managing at the house which had now been somewhat fixed up, Ray discovered another house that she could buy.

She relates:

I bought this house very cheaply, from a woman who lives now in the South of England, and who had planned to go back, but didn't manage to get back to the island. And she knew my mother, and had gone to school, I think, with her at one time, or they'd been of the same age. So that when she discovered who it was that was interested in buying it, she said "Certainly, there's no problem". Having refused to sell it to some English people who had come just several weeks previously and offered her four or five times as much as I paid for it. So this again is a bit of the insight into being an islander. And the connection, it's incredibly powerful, I mean it really is quite powerful. And the fact that I had connections with the island was, to this particular woman, much much more valid than how much money I had. (SA 1985/196)

The fact that Ray was able to purchase the house (see Plate 7) with money that she herself had earned through her singing has considerable personal and symbolic significance for her. It is also meaningful to her that the local people recognize her as one of "their own":

...People come up and they say, "And how long are you home for?" And I stop and think a minute, and although I was born and bred in Glasgow, the Isle of Barra is my home. (From "Fisher Folk Broadcast")

Ray and Archie both recollect being in Barra and Vatersay as small children, when the family went to visit Morag's mother. Neckie was still living

in the house at Caolas, overlooking Corraig Bay. Ray reminisces:

I remember the long bench down the side of the house, I remember a cousin doing a Highland fling, and I remember someone called Auntie Kate, and recollections of being told off very severely for having trodden on a chicken. When I [years later] walked up the pathway to Number 6 Caolas, that's where Granny's house was, I had this very strange *déja vu* as if I knew exactly where I was going, and had been there before. And the house was standing there, completely empty, nobody in it, but I could recall the dancing and the singing and with us all sleeping in behind this curtain in a bed, the children kept away from the *ceilidh* that was going on in the rest of the house. (From "Fisher Folk" broadcast)

Ray enjoys going over to Vatersay when she is in Barra, although she finds that along with its peacefulness is an air of sadness, since so many of the croft houses are now empty and deserted, including her grandparents' house, which has passed out of the family ownership, and is uninhabited. Peering through the windows of the house, one can see hay stored in the former sitting room.

Ray's passion for Barra has not only given her a new sense of belonging and identity, but she has conveyed it to other members of the family, some of whom have gone out to visit Barra and stay in Ray's house. It is paradoxical in some ways that the contact with this Gaelic island culture, which Ray realizes she can never fully be part of because of not being an island native, has given her such a feeling of connection with the islands and a reinforced family and personal identity. The interaction with her mother's cousin Mairi Iain a'Chaolais, who needs little coaxing to sing songs in Gaelic, provides an integral link with the island family musical heritage in its original context. Ray appreciates this, and has acquired a new self-assurance from her ties with Barra and Vatersay which, from my own observation, I think has influenced her singing and performances.

The sense of humour so evident in the Fishers and Morag's side of the

family is characteristic of island humour, which is droll, dry, and often wickedly pointed. There are many narratives in the Fisher family which illustrate it, but one of the most repeated ones is a story involving Mairi Iain a'Chaolais and Mary Macdonald Mackinnon (see Plates 8 and 9). It seems appropriate to give it here. Having heard the story on a previous occasion, I asked Ray to tell to a friend who was with me the story of "the stockings", and she proceeded as follows:

The stockings. Right. Now my mother belongs to a family that were, originated from the Western Isles, and a bit of the background sort of, to see the significance of of this particular little tale is that, in the Western Isles, they were sort of deprived of quite a lot of things that, during the war and whatnot, being cut off and things. And there used to be food parcels from the mainland; a few had come from the island were working in the town, used to send, you know, packets of tea and all things, and things used to go across...clothes used to go as well, because sometimes it was very hard. And if you were in service, which meant you were working with a family, or in a home, if the lady of the house or some member of the family were throwing something out, before they would actually give it away or throw it in the bin, they would offer it to the staff and the people who worked. And some of the the the Western Isles who were in service had some really beautiful clothes that had been given to them by the lady, you know, and whatnot. And some of them were excellent quality, so that there would be packages of coats and things going across. And this, it kept on in - not quite as much emphasis as times got better, you see? In the Western Isles. But it was, it was like, it was a tradition.

So my Auntie Mary, that I'll call Mary Morden, 'cause she's now, she was in Durham, at that time she was in Peebles with with Lord Eildon and his family. And she was housekeeping for them, and she's always worked, you know, with the..."haristocracy", you see? And, "My Lady", and "his Lordship" and everything she talked about, and "Master Simon" and "Master This", you see, and...this used to be hilarious. And I enjoyed, I enjoyed her talking... about them.

And...Lady Eildon had passed on, some years previously, and she was still at that time working for Lord Eildon who was still alive. And there had been a mass clear-out, and the house was being reorganized, and they came across...in a cupboard...this box of silk stockings, beautiful, I mean they were immaculate, they had been used, they'd been worn obviously, the Lady had worn them quite a bit. And during a conversation, which happened quite often, my Auntie Mary Peebles would, my Auntie Mairi Cliait in Barra would contact her, and ring up, and you know, they would keep in touch by telephone. And during one of the

telephone conversations from my auntie in Clait, Auntie Mary in Peebles, of the Eildon House, said, "Oh Mairi, I've just come...across a load of stockings that belonged to her Ladyship, and I'm sure they'll be doing you fine. Excellent...silk stockings..." And she said, "Oh that's very good, very good indeed". Now she said [Mary], "I've just taken them and I've put them in the wash, and they're washing at the moment, I've washed them, and they're hanging there", you see. And "As soon as I get organized, you see, I'll get you the stockings".

Well, it must have been something, oh between either three to six months after this, I'm in Barra, and I'm in the house of my Auntie Mairi Clait. And she's saying, "And how's your mother getting on, she's keeping well?" Oh, and here she was, talking away. All the little bits. "Oh, and by the way", she said, "how about Auntie Mary down in Peebles?", you see. And I said, "Oh, she's, she's very very busy, you know, cause blah blah...", and then rattling on about this. And she [Mairi] said, "I wonder if you could deliver a message to your Auntie Mary in Peebles. And she'll know exactly what I'm meaning. Would you ask her if the stockings are dry yet?!"

This is like six months afterwards! And it had obviously slipped my auntie's mind and the stockings hadn't been sent, you know, but Mairi had remembered. "Ask her", and this is, this is her nice polite way of saying, you know, "Ask her if the stockings are dry yet!", you see. And I didn't find out the the background story until I got back down to Peebles, and said to Auntie Mary, "I've to ask you if the stockings are dry yet." And she said, "Oh, the old besom!", you know, she said! Oh, she said she forgot all about it. (SA 1987/93/A)

This story occupies a firm place in the family oral tradition, and whenever family members, particularly Ray and her mother want to have a laugh, one need only say "Are the stockings dry yet?"

This illustrative family anecdote concludes this biographical chapter, and we move on to a discussion of the Scottish folk revival, and the role of Archie and Ray Fisher in the revival, in Chapter 3.

Notes for Chapter 2

1. See Ennew (1980), pp. 75-76, 109, and 120, for a discussion of bilingualism on the Isle of Lewis, and the problems created by the dichotomy between the contexts for Gaelic and English. See also Savile-Troike (1982).
2. Ennew notes that there are "roughly five different modes of address" in Gaelic-speaking areas, and that "a patronymic is the most common" (1980:78). She explains: "Thus *Dhomhnuill Allen* is Donald son of Alan. *Mac* and *Nic* are often omitted. Nicknames are occasionally included in patronymics alongside proper names" (78).
3. See *Chapbook 2*, no. 5(1966[?]):20-21.



Plate 1: Neckie and two grandchildren at the croft in Caolas



Plate 2: Ray Fisher sitting beside flying boat wreckage in Watersay



Plate 3: Morag Macdonald in her teens



Plate 4: Morag and John Fisher (at rear of photo), with Mary Macdonald Mackinnon (front left) holding Jean Fisher, and Olive Bell (Rachel Fisher's daughter), circa 1939



Plate 5: Morag Fisher with (left to right) Audrey, Joyce, Ray, Jean, Cindy, and Archie, circa 1950



Plate 6: Morag Fisher (front), with Cilla (centre), Ray (right), and Cilla's husband Artie Trezise (left), early 1970s



Plate 7: Ray Fisher's house at Horve, Isle of Barra



Plate 8: Ray Fisher with her mother's cousin, Mairi Iain a'Chaolais, at Mairi's croft at Cliait, Isle of Barra



Plate 9: Archie and Ray Fisher with their aunt, Mary Macdonald Mackinnon, during taping for the "Fisher Folk" radio programme, 29th November 1986

CHAPTER 3

THE FOLK REVIVAL IN SCOTLAND AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE FISHERS

The origins and history of the folk revival in Britain are complex, and this is also true when we examine the revival in Scotland in particular. There is not enough space in this study to present a full historical account of the musical, political, and social factors and influences behind the revival, but I refer the reader to Munro (1984), Cowan (1980), Boyes (1985, 1986), Gower (1983), Laing *et al* (1975), Watson (1983), and Woods (1979) for these details. What is of greatest importance here is to highlight aspects of the Scottish revival, particularly as it occurred in Glasgow, as the context in which the Fishers emerged as participants and performers. First, however, we must consider the term "revival" and its usage.

Preliminary Definitions

The term "revival" is a curiosity in itself as used in the context of traditional music and song. The word has often been used and interpreted in its meaning of restoration to life or resuscitation. This is probably owing, at least in part, to the views put forth by Cecil Sharp in particular, but also other collectors who preceded or were contemporary with him. Sharp placed emphasis on the concept that folksong was an almost miraculous survival from

the past, and that the singing of folksongs was a traditional art soon to become extinct unless revived, which in his terms meant teaching folksong in schools to children, as well as teaching interested adults. It also meant arranging these folksongs in a format more palatable to a largely middle class audience.

Part of the problem with the use of the term "revival" is the confusion between what we call "traditional music" and its performance, and those who perform "traditional music", or a confusion between the qualities of the material performed, and the status and qualities of the person(s) performing the material. Many folklorists and musicologists seem to get caught in a semantic web spun from the confusion of the performer and the performed.

What, indeed, is "traditional music", and who performs it? Ailie Munro observes:

The idea of folk music as a separate category, distinct from other kinds of music, does not exist in many parts of the world: it is a concept found chiefly in Europe and America. And whether we call it folk or traditional it's a very difficult kind of music to define (1984:12).

Two American writers, Sandberg and Weissman, present a very informal, straightforward discussion of traditional music:

"Traditional" music, in the very strictest definition of the term, is a music that is transmitted within a continuous musical culture without the use of written or recorded media. It's often a very "natural" music in the sense that it's not studied. A young singer learns a lengthy ballad not by rote memory, but by having heard the song sung frequently over the years within his family or community... Music is rarely learned this way anymore. Traditional social continuity has been disrupted; the effects of the media and of the star system, of the commercial necessity for fad and fashion, and of the professional necessity for cultivated technique and showmanship have all brought changes... That change has occurred is indisputable, and it is time to rework the folklorists' old definition of traditional music so that we can deal with its course of development in the media age (1976:99).

In some ways, this definition is simplistic, but its main point is that the manner

in which music is learned has evolved from a family and community-orientated activity to an activity influenced by the media, commercialism, professionalism, and public taste. This definition does not deal with finer points, and in fact raises some issues which will be dealt with elsewhere in this chapter, and subsequent chapters, such as methods of learning songs, and the effects of the media and professionalism on musicians within the context of the folk revival.

Sandberg and Weissman concisely define the term "folk music revival" as "the phenomenon of younger singers and players from outside a traditional culture perpetuating its music" (99). Thus they distinguish the performers from the performed material. This definition provides one workable framework in which to discuss the musicians involved in the recent Scottish folk revival.

It is now becoming more fashionable to view the recent folk revival not as the first such revival, but as the successor of previous revivals, or the later phase of an earlier revival. However, can it actually be said that traditional songs and music were in fact revived at these points in time? The evidence would indicate that it was not in fact the songs and music which died out, but rather an awareness of their existence by scholars and collectors which did; thus the different revivals can be viewed as revivals of awareness of folksongs and music in traditional culture.

Adam McNaughtan calls the phase of collecting by literary scholars such as Herd, Ramsay, Scott, and Motherwell in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries "the antiquarians' revival" (1980:192). The literary tradition of song collecting was a strong one in Scotland, indicating both the intensity of interest in the "old songs" and the fact that the material was there to be found. The songs, however, were regarded more as quaint curiosities of a bygone era (even then!) or as examples of rustic poetic artifacts, rather than examples of

a living Scottish oral tradition.

McNaughtan, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, proposes to call the collecting, researching, and publishing activities at the turn of the century as "the religious revival," as he says, "not just because so many of the collectors (Baring-Gould, J. B. Duncan) were clergymen but because there was something of the crusader about their attitude to the songs" (1980:192). Georgina Boyes describes Cecil Sharp as a "crusader" for certain of his beliefs, which suggests an almost religious zeal, and he is certainly one of the dominant figures in this phase.

In Scotland, the important figures at this time (early 1900's) were Gavin Greig and his assistant, the Rev. J. B. Duncan, mentioned above. Their collecting in Aberdeenshire turned up a rich body of song, and Greig's newspaper articles in the *Buchan Observer* show not only his interest but the interest of the local people in his collecting activities and the bringing to light of songs buried in peoples' memories. Greig regarded his contemporary Sharp as the "greatest dynamic in the folk-song world" (Karpeles 1967:66-67). It must be said that there is more than a hint of Sharp's elegiac tone in the title of Greig's posthumous publication of ballads, *Last Leaves*

Boyes' recent work on the English folk revival is most welcome, and it sheds considerable light on the Scottish revival. She divides the English revival into two phases, the first from the 1890's until the 1940's, and the second from the 1950's up to the present. She sees the work and ideology of Cecil Sharp as the dominant factor in the first phase, particularly in his use of "folksong" as a "generic term", his "concept of folksong which set it apart from other forms of music", and "the way he made 'folksong', a working class art form, acceptable to a wide middle class audience" (Boyes 1985b:44-45). In his

nationalistic campaign to teach, and thus revive, folksongs (and folk dances as well) to schoolchildren and adult middle class enthusiasts, Sharp in effect created "a sub-culture devoted to re-performance" (46). This "sub-culture" has heavily influenced both phases of the English folk revival, and in it resides this conflict between the material performed, and the theory of how it should be performed, and by whom.

Boyes sees the more "systematic approaches to folksong" in North America by collectors and fieldworkers, often government funded, as generating "interest and expertise...which were the indirect cause of the many developments in the second stage of the English Folksong Revival" (Boyes 1985:47). This second stage is characterized by:

1. a strong influence and popularity of American music in Britain in the 1950's
2. a radical and egalitarian socio-political economic climate in post-war Britain
3. a changing repertoire reflecting the changing socio-political climate
4. the discovery of "new" traditional singers on whom singing styles and repertoires could be modeled
5. dissemination of songs and information about these traditional singers via the mass media, particularly the radio
6. the creation of folk clubs in the 1950's as a venue for folksongs
7. further modification and refinement of the earlier revival "sub-culture" (Boyes 1985b).

As we will see in this chapter, these characteristics apply equally to the Scottish folk revival, and will be discussed in detail as they relate to the experiences of the Fishers in the revival.

Sharp's ideological legacy has affected the revival in Britain as a whole, without question, but the revival in Scotland was not dominated by Sharp's ideas, and had other significant ideological influences. Clearly, the influence and

stimulus of American folksong and music was felt throughout Britain and the rest of Europe in fact, but the aesthetic, artistic, and performance-centred synthesis of this influence was to take slightly different forms in Scotland.

Prior to the invasion of Britain, as it were, of American folk and protest music which occurred in the 1950's and early 1960's, other events and personalities in earlier decades marked a sort of preparatory consciousness of folk heritage in Scotland and other parts of Britain. The story of the recent folk revival is very much one of key personalities whose lives and influences were closely and often providentially linked across countries, continents, and oceans.

The experiences of the Fishers in the Scottish folk revival are, in a sense, a representative microcosm of the Scottish revival, or as Hamish Henderson has remarked to me, that in focusing on the Fishers, one can see the Scottish folk revival "in a nutshell". They are intimately linked with the major personalities and musical currents of the revival in Scotland, thus providing an ideal context for examining the Scottish revival. In order to give as rounded a picture as possible, I will be drawing on accounts from the Fishers, their fellow performers and acquaintances, the "mentors" of the Scottish revival such as Norman Buchan and Hamish Henderson, folk publications from the relevant time, newspapers, and other published commentary.

Beginnings: Skiffle Music and Musical Experimentation

Archie and Ray Fisher are typical among revival performers, in that their involvement with folkmusic came about through their initial interest in skiffle

music. Rarely defined outright in written commentary, skiffle music is essentially music derived from American folkmusic, particularly black blues and jazz, adapted and performed by British musicians. Not only was it performed by professional musicians in Britain, but its main attraction was that it was easy to play, so that anyone could try it. Guitars, washboards, and tea-chest basses were the common instruments of skiffle music. Despite the direct links between American folkmusic, jazz, and skiffle in Britain, the term "skiffle" is not in usage in North America.

In Scotland, skiffle was heard in the jazz clubs of Glasgow and Edinburgh, venues which were quite popular in the 1950s. Adam McNaughtan, who grew up in Glasgow, comments, "you got into skiffle because you went to jazz clubs, basically, and the jazz clubs were really as far as we were concerned, the source of the skiffle thing" (SA 1986/26/A). Alastair Clark, a journalist for *The Scotsman* since 1960, and a reviewer of folkmusic, played trumpet in jazz bands in the 1950s and 1960s, and was very aware of the emergence of skiffle. He remarks:

...we, as a band in the Fifties, played in Glasgow a lot because...there was a tremendous following for traditional jazz in Glasgow... Skiffle was something that, for example, during the interval, a skiffle group would come on, and so we as rather superior musicians tended to look down on it, but it was the first indication of playable music that kids could sit and listen to and think..."I could play that". And could actually walk out the next day and buy something to play it on and start playing. And there's no doubt that that was tremendously important, I mean, a lot of good musicians came out of it. (SA 1986/118/A)

In 1954, Glaswegian Lonnie Donegan was a member of the Chris Barber Jazz Band, playing the banjo in their arrangements of traditional New Orleans jazz. The band let Donegan play his own skiffle arrangements of American folksongs and blues during performance intervals, and two of these arrangements were recorded on an album, "New Orleans Joys", that the Barber Band released in 1954. Eighteen months later, Decca Records released the two

songs, "Rock Island Line", and "John Henry", as a "novelty single" (Laing *et al* 1975:141). "Rock Island Line" was a song popularized by the American black blues singer and ex-convict, Huddie Ledbetter or "Leadbelly" as he was known. Robin Denselow comments on the impact of the Decca single:

The reaction was quite extraordinary. All Donegan did on "Rock Island Line" was to lay down a rhythmic acoustic shuffle, with guitars, bass and drums, and over it to drawl and then sing the story of the train driver fooling the man on the toll gate outside New Orleans... It started slowly, and built up to a break-neck climax with Donegan whooping and hollering as the train gathers speed. The sheer vitality and earthy simplicity knocked British kids sideways...

"Rock Island Line" sold well over a million copies and became the first British pop record to get into the American top ten. Donegan went on to notch up an incredible twenty-six hits in the next six years, and spawned an army of imitators across the country (Laing *et al* 1975:141).

The popularity of Donegan's recording of the Leadbelly song can be seen as the major commercial event marking the beginning of the skiffle era, although music of this type had been played in London clubs prior to this time. Denselow credits jazzman Ken Colyer as the person who actually "invented" skiffle, as he had a group prior to Barber's which had both Donegan and Barber in it, as well as bluesman Alexis Korner.

Archie Fisher was at sea in the Merchant Navy when the Donegan record came out. It made an impression on him musically, although he was somewhat sceptical about the longevity of skiffle, as he remarks:

...the first time I heard anything that could be loosely described as commercial folkmusic was on a jukebox in New Jersey when they played Lonnie Donegan. "The Rock Island Line". What I'd heard was that the skiffle thing was sweeping Britain and I listened to that and thought, oh, it'll never catch on! Compared to the early rock and roll that was going on in America, which we were still lagging behind a bit. 'Cause [Elvis] Presley, of course, probably about the same time, and Chuck Berry, and all these people, were coming through - Little Richard. (SS 13-5-86/A)

Not only was Archie hearing "commercial" folkmusic in port, but he had started playing the guitar on ship, as another seaman had one. He explains:

...there was a guitar-playing seaman on ship as well, so I started to play guitar with him. Borrowed his guitar. And it was a very good guitar because in these days there wasn't a popular set of manufacturers of cheap, what people now call pram shop guitars, you know, you buy them for fifteen quid... (SS 13-5-86/A)

...And that was the first guitar I ever laid hands on. And he was a country-western freak. 'Cause country music had, Hank Williams had preceded Donegan in Scotland... (SA 1986/167/A)

The media clearly played a role in exposing people to new forms of popular music, and the decade of the 1950s was a time when American popular music was infiltrating radio airwaves across the world. American music had been popular in Britain even earlier, as typified by the popularity of Alastair Cooke's radio programme series in the late 1930s, "I Heard America Singing", in which he played folksongs of working groups like the railroad workers, lumberjacks, and prison work gangs. Hamish Henderson remarks that these programmes "were of intense interest to everybody", and were "of tremendous importance" (1973:2).

The gradual involvement of Archie and Ray in skiffle music came about in part through musical experimentation at home and with their acquaintances, who were equally fascinated by the skiffle craze. One particularly influential friend was Bobby Campbell, who had gone to school with Archie and Ray at Dowanhill Primary School, moved away from this area for about four years, then returned to Havelock Street at this musically crucial time. Archie relates an anecdote about the skiffle group formed with Bobby and another friend in Havelock Street:

Bobby was a childhood friend who was very popular in the street because he had lots of cowboy guns!...and he went to violin lessons in Dowanhill...

But what happened in that was a sort of little setup in the street, the school Dowanhill, and Bobby stayed in number 19 right opposite the school. And another family called Mackinnons lived across the road. And Pete [Mackinnon] was an electrician, and he was also a drummer, so he, Pete Mackinnon, he came in and played snare drum a bit, and washboard and things. We

also, he tried once to make an electric banjo-mandolin for me, working on the principle that if you connect two wires to the strings, and put an electric current through a transformer, you will get an electric sound coming off it. So we converted an electric mandolin into an electric fire, because the strings got hot!

...Pete joined in the skiffle group for a wee while, and [it] had a very short-lived kind of, just a quick up and down... And really the mainstream of the repertoire was a mixture of country-western and what was going on in skiffle... the, if you like, the songs that we sang at home hadn't percolated through...we sang things that were recognizable, Johnny Duncan, Ken Colyer skiffle group, that sort of song was popular. (SS 13-5-86/A)

Ray sees this whole period of experimentation with American music forms and learning new instruments and styles as a process or a stage that everyone had to go through. Ray's interests lay with vocals, so she was more interested in songs and their words from the beginning. Having a boyfriend in a jazz band was an added encouragement for her to experiment with jazz songs. She encapsulates the skiffle period in the early days of the revival neatly here:

...the whole development came, believe it or not, with the onset of skiffle music in Britain here, which was this strange concoction...the one who sort of hit the high spots was Lonnie Donegan. Coupled with a whole group of others like Nancy Whiskey who was Scottish, who sang, she used to sing "Greenback Dollar" with a Glasgow accent, [sings] "I don't want your greenback dol-lair", you know... we didn't even know what a greenback dollar looked like, you know! But we sang it with such conviction and it was this "ching-chi" [rhythm], you know...

...I remember being asked to define what skiffle was. It was a whole mixture of, there was country music, rockabilly, and there was bits of blues in it as well. And you could play harmonicas and sort of anything that was...everything but British, I mean it was totally removed. But it was very easy to sing, and very easy to accompany. And people could join in very quickly. So when Lonnie Donegan and this strange music appeared it was fairly, it was almost immediately grasped because you learned it very quickly and you could sing along with it. And then there was a spate of guitars and things came about...

...Archie and I got interested in singing, and we were all sort of singing, everybody that came along, and Archie got a guitar, and we were all singing away, and Bobby Campbell, who was a friend of ours, school friend, lived along the street...he played a fiddle...

And then he was playing tunes, you know...and if you had a fiddler in your skiffle group, you were pretty good, you see, cause it was usually just guitars and a bass. Tea-chest bass and a washboard, which is very odd, that combination. But that was it... (SS 26-3-85)

Archie was very interested in playing the guitar as well as singing, and his mother had given him a guitar for his birthday when he was seventeen. He tells the following anecdote about the new instrument:

...I got my first guitar which had stenciled on it "Palm Beach" with a big palm tree on the side!... It was purple, sort of purple plywood. And I knew enough about guitars to know this, even when it was in tune, when I played a chord and it wasn't right. So I took it back to the shop and said that the frets were all in the wrong place, it was out of tune, and the guy looked at me as if I was an idiot and moved the bridge! And of course it became perfectly in tune. But it played a bit like a barbed wire fence, it was really hard, you couldn't get up the dusty end, you stayed down at the bottom. (SS 13-5-86/A)

So essentially Archie was working on both songs and the guitar, and Ray was working on songs, inspired largely by the American-influenced skiffle music and the Scottish jazz repertoire being heard in the popular jazz clubs of Glasgow and elsewhere. This was a period of introduction, when Archie and Ray were experimenting with this material, seeing what effects could be produced with minimal instrumental accompaniment to vocals. One of the first significant musical breakthroughs as Archie sees it, was the discovery of the music of the American group, the Weavers.

The American Influence: The Weavers and Beyond

It is unthinkable to discuss the Scottish folk revival without mentioning the influence of the Weavers, and one of their members who also performed solo, Pete Seeger. The Weavers were probably the most significant and influential performing and recording group in American folkmusic in the 1950s.

They began performing as a group in late 1948, the original members being Pete Seeger (5 string banjo, vocals), Lee Hays (vocals), Fred Hellerman (guitar, vocals), and Ronnie Gilbert (vocals). They had a hit record with the Leadbelly song "Goodnight Irene" in 1950, which is now a well-known song worldwide. They sang material from different countries as well as traditional and contemporary American material, but their repertoire became increasingly political, particularly on the subject of the Spanish Civil War. Their popularity as a group coincided with the time when the United States government became gripped with paranoia about left-wing politics and communism, the so-called "McCarthy Era", when the House Committee on Un-American Activities was formed in Congress. The Weavers were blacklisted, as were other performers, writers, and media people during this cultural witch hunt, and they split up to pursue their separate lives and careers in 1953.

In December of 1955, the Weavers were persuaded to give a reunion concert at Carnegie Hall in New York, which was recorded. Eventually Vanguard Records released an album from this recording, entitled "The Weavers at Carnegie Hall" (Vanguard VRS 9010). As Irwin Silber comments, it is "an LP which has its own special niche in the history of the folksong revival" (1963:13). This LP, and a second volume released later as well as other Weavers recordings, were a seminal influence on many young musicians in Scotland, including Archie and Ray Fisher. Norman Buchan comments:

The two records of that concert had an enormous fertilising effect on the Revival here -- helping to create a natural alliance between protest and folk song. It also helped to sanctify the use of the guitar. It was the instrument of the young; it was portable; it followed rather than controlled the feel of a song (1980:181).

The Weavers continued to perform after the successful reunion concert, and Pete Seeger left them in 1958 to pursue a solo career, being replaced by Erik Darling, another excellent banjo player. The group had several reunion

concerts at Carnegie Hall, the last being in 1980. This last appearance is the subject of an excellent 1982 documentary film, "The Weavers: Wasn't That A Time", completed shortly before Lee Hays' death, and which has recently been shown on British television.

Archie considers the acquisition of the Weavers' Carnegie Hall LP a turning point for him. He relates:

...I was working in an office somewhere, and we were building up repertoire for the skiffle group. And on some, I think it was Jack Jackson's radio programme, which used to be, oh just compulsive wireless thing, he got lots of American stuff, there was Burl Ives, and the Weavers and people like that... He played the song "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine", and I reckoned it would be a good song for... the skiffle group.

So I went down to the only record shop that was on Byres Road at that time and asked them if they had it... They said no, but Frankie Vaughan was going to release it next week, 'cause the crossover had already started...and I thought, "God, he's got there first!" And...I ordered the Weavers' version of it, and waited until the next payday or when it came in, and then on the way home from work at lunchtime (I got paid in the morning), took the album and got an old Dansette and put it on, and through lunchtime, the kids home from school, my father was dead at this time, played it about five times and that was it. I didn't go back to work that afternoon...it's like going, something creating lightning, it's a quick realization. 'Cause it's still a fantastic album, that one, the Weavers at Carnegie Hall, in terms of what happened on it, and the things they moved through... (SS 13-5-86/A).

Ray vividly recalls the appearance of the Weavers record in the house, and its effect on Archie and herself. She sees the influence of this record as having turned them towards more serious material, as she explains here:

...Archie turned up one day, now whether he bought it himself - it was an LP of the Weavers at Carnegie Hall, and it was a live concert that had taken place obviously at Carnegie Hall, in what, New York? And it was a live performance of the Weavers. Now this was different from skiffle...it was much deeper, it was less superficial, and there wasn't all this ching-ching-chingi along with it, although there was a long-necked banjo and there was all the rest of it. But there seemed to be, as if it was a bit meatier, you know, a bit meatier, this stuff that they were singing about. And then from that moved on to, through the Weavers and through the knowledge of Pete Seeger, and his repertoire, on to Woody Guthrie. (SS 26-3-85)

It was the Weavers' instrumental arrangements that intrigued Archie the most, particularly Pete Seeger's banjo playing, while Ray was fascinated by the songs, and in particular by Ronnie Gilbert's singing. Ray says, "She had this great big voice...and oh I loved this big loud voice..." (SS 26-3-85). The attraction felt by Archie and Ray for this music was given an added dimension when the Weavers and other American performers toured Scotland in the late 1950s.

Archie was working in Ayrshire for the Milk Marketing Board when the Weavers first came to Scotland to perform, probably in 1958. He relates:

...I came back [to Glasgow] once...and the Weavers were playing in the St. Andrews Halls, not with Pete Seeger, with Erik Darling. Went backstage then. I'd started playing banjo then, by that time. And guitar. And that was the live performance of the Weavers...made sort of a decline in that employment as well, I just didn't go back. (SA 1986/167/A)

Because all of the mysteries that, you know, you can hear a thing on a record and you say, "How the hell did he do that?" And you've got the guitar, you've got the banjo. But when you see it being done, the connection's made... 'Cause I didn't really have any musical training, at all. Once I'd made these connections between what I could hear and then what I could see in physical action, what they were doing, it clicked.

And then, continuing in that way, the next connection I made was with a guy called Ralph Rinzier, and he came up to back Ewan MacColl, and of course he was one of the nicest banjo player-guitar pickers ever to appear in Scotland at that time... And I had brought a banjo. And he took me up the stairs at the interval, I think...and he showed me how to pick it... (SS 13-5-86/A)

Ralph Rinzier was an American banjo player, who later went to work as a folklorist at the American Folklife Center in Washington, D.C. One of Archie's school and musical friends, Hamish Imlach, recalls meeting Rinzier with Archie, and says, "...we were able to watch him, and he was very very nice to us, and patient. And showed Archie quite a few things" (SA 1986/28/A). Learning from records was therefore supplemented by personal contacts with many of the performers whose records Archie, Ray, and their friends like Hamish and Bobby were listening to.

The musical learning was given another boost by the fact that it was not being done in isolation by individuals, but usually with friends. When one person learned something or figured out a complicated accompaniment from a record, he or she would show it to friends.

Hamish Imlach, like Bobby Campbell, was a good musical friend, and had been at Hyndland in the same class as Archie. Hamish remained in school longer, but he and Archie retained contact. Archie describes Hamish's house as a "musical cell" where people would gather:

...Hamish Imlach had a...self-contained flat, his mum had gone back to Australia, you could sit there and drink beer, and nobody was going to bother you. And that became the sort of meeting point. And Hamish was like a blotting paper, he just soaked everything up. And if you had, if you learned a new guitar lick, that was you. He seemed to work on a kind of currency that if people came in with new material and new songs, he went out and bought a bottle of whiskey, by the time the bottle was finished, he knew it all! He sort of traded whiskey for music. (SA 1986/167/A)

Hamish was fascinated by American music, and was one of the chief record buyers among his musical friends, so he influenced them by making imported records available to them. He ordered records from the American Riverside and Folkways catalogues, sampling recordings of traditional banjo players like Aunt Samantha Baumgartner, Cousin Emmy, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, and Buell Kazee, who were sources of material and inspiration for younger performers like Pete Seeger in America.

Woody Guthrie

In a discussion of the influence of American music on the folk revival in Britain, the importance of singer/songwriter Woody Guthrie cannot be overestimated. Unlike many of his contemporaries and fellow performers, he

did not tour Britain in the Fifties, as he had become chronically ill by then.

Woodrow Wilson Guthrie, or Woody as he was always known, is now the stuff of myth. He is a solid link in a vast chain, connecting many different personalities and political and social movements within the world of American folkmusic. Born in Oklahoma in 1912, Woody experienced life in an oil-boom town, knowing poverty like the characters of John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, first published in 1939. His rambling, which took him all over the country, and his involvement with union politics and the American Left, were to supply much of the content for his songs. He sang and performed himself, and also with Cisco Houston, Rambling Jack Elliott, Pete Seeger, Lee Hays, Millard Lampbell, and Peter Hawes, the latter four names and Guthrie constituting one lineup of the group the Almanac Singers, a precursor of the Weavers, who were active from late 1940 until 1942. Guthrie became less active in the Fifties, and the last twelve years of his life he was in a hospital with the incurable and degenerative hereditary disease, Huntington's Chores, which had killed his mother. He died in 1967.

As former *New York Times* critic Robert Shelton comments: "It is not just his radical humanism, but his artistic poetry that makes Woody live on. His recordings and writing should be studied by all who would understand what the American folk movement is about" (Laing *et al* 1975:13). His better known songs include "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You," "This Land is Your Land," "Pastures of Plenty," "The 1913 Massacre," and "Pretty Boy Floyd," among many others. It is not unusual to hear his songs in British folk clubs in the 1980's, proving their longevity, relevance, and appeal. In an insightful essay, "Folk and Protest," Norman Buchan remarks on Woody Guthrie's contributions to the revival in Scotland as he sees them:

The marvellous thing about Woody was that he could say to

people: "Look, that thing you're doing you can sing about. That dam you're building is worth singing about; that boat you're sailing in is worth singing about; that union you belong to is worth singing about." Nothing very new about that; it's what the folk tradition exists of. Woody just did it - and showed it still worked. So he was a tremendous catalyst in song, not just in deceptive simplicity but in hocking back into song a whole colossal range of material (1980:180).

Guthrie's writing was a catalyst for Archie Fisher, who began writing songs in his teens:

I started writing songs in Havelock Street... they were an attempt in a way to localize the same kind of political approach that the American songs had, I mean Woody Guthrie made a great impression on most of us because he didn't have anything in his guitar style that seemed unobtainable. All he had was this life that he'd lived that he could translate into the content of his songs, and his simplicity.

And everybody read Steinbeck at the time too and made that connection... we were dealing in words and sounds, we weren't dealing in pictures, we didn't know much about it, it wasn't like film or television... But when you get a visual impression...that superimposes on to the thing, *Grapes of Wrath* was so strongly done with film that...that gave the visual trigger for everything else that Guthrie did or American singers did.

And so there was a scenario that you could see these songs fitting in to, that the visual stimulus of the film coalesced, everything else just ran, I suppose, in a sequel in our heads, if you like. And Josh MacRae and Hamish [Imlach] and all the rest of us were very involved in that. Not in an overt political way...it was just suddenly a consciousness that we didn't have any issues...of our own that could relate directly...we didn't have the problems that the Dust Bowl people had, for example, not in Glasgow. But...in a way we were borrowing another culture...we didn't have anything to sublimate it with. But as soon as something arrived, I can remember quite regularly reading the newspapers to see if there was something to write about in it, which was kind of forcing it! (SS 13-5-86/A)

Many of Guthrie's songs were taken up in the early stages of the Scottish revival by people like Ray and Archie, as well as inspiring young musicians to try their hand at songwriting. Because Guthrie did not perform in Britain in the Fifties, however, it was performers such as Pete Seeger, Rambling Jack Elliott, and Cisco Houston who personally presented these songs to Scottish audiences.

The Wayfarers

The beginnings of the group the Wayfarers, comprised of Archie, Ray, and Bobby Campbell, started informally when the Fishers still lived in Havelock Street. The family moved to Easterhouse in 1958, and it was here that Archie, Ray, and Bobby began consciously rehearsing as a group. In 1959, and again in 1961, the Wayfarers were a supporting act for Pete Seeger performances, indicative of their relatively quick apprenticeship as true amateurs, although the concept of folk musicians as professionals was still to come in Scotland, as opposed to London.

In the period 1958-1962, when the Wayfarers were performing, they came in contact with a considerable number of people who were to influence them musically. One extremely important personal influence on young Glasgow musicians in the late 1950s and early 1960s was Norman Buchan, who at that time taught English at Rutherglen Academy. More will be said about the role of Norman and his wife Janey Buchan in the Scottish folk revival shortly, but while discussing the beginnings of the group the Wayfarers, it is highly appropriate to relate Norman Buchan's story about first meeting up with Archie, Bobby, and later Ray:

Well, it's quite an interesting story actually. I had been doing work in this field [of folkmusic]...at my own school, as a schoolteacher, secondary school. I had started a ballads club, and we went out and did occasional what you now call gigs at various organizations and associations and music clubs, in which I talked about folk material and the children sang. "Children" were ages, what, thirteen up to about seventeen, I suppose... And I went to a school called Hyndland, in Glasgow, where they had a music club. And I spoke about the material and people sang. If I remember right, it was still at the time of skiffle, and I think we had a skiffle group with us too, in fact I'm certain we did have, cause I spent part of my teaching period in that time making tea-chest double basses and things.

So we had skiffle and folk material and unaccompanied singing, mainly Scottish material but also a lot of American material. But

a couple of nights after that, there's a knock at the door, and two young chaps were standing there. They turned out later on to be called Archie Fisher and Bobby Campbell, who more or less said, "Where did you get this stuff from?" And I said, "Well, what do you mean?" And they said, "Well, we were listening to you talking at Hyndland two nights ago and we would like to get some of this stuff". And I said, "Well, come in", and they came in, and I let them hear, or at least I showed them what tapes we had, and showed them what few books I had at that time. This must have been late fifties, late 1950s I would think... And they taped, and I can't remember how or why because there weren't a lot of tape recorders floating around at that time, but they did tape some material I had because I explained that I couldn't give the stuff out, but they could come any time they liked to the house and copy, either from the books or whatever that they wanted to have.

So they went away, and they came back about three weeks later and, a ring at the bell, ring at the door, same two guys, said, "Mr. Buchan, we'd like ye to hear a tape". And I said, "Well, so would I, come in, and let's hear this tape". I heard this tape, there was the two of them on the tape, guitar I think, probably one guitar, maybe two, and in amongst them both in these voices was a marvellous female voice as well. And when it finished I said, "Well, you two are on it, that's fine and smashing, but who was the girl?" "Oh", they said, said Archie, "We couldnae get a female singer, so I just had to use my sister!" And I said, "But she's marvellous". And this was Ray. And already, I suppose they'd be about seventeen or eighteen at that time, they were singing so well. Very keen on...singing together as a group. And American stuff but of course going almost immediately on to doing Scottish things as well. Bobby, which I didn't know at the time, was a violinist becoming a fiddler, in the sense that he was trained classically at school...but absolutely first class musician. Archie, all this concealed talent within him for instruments, and performing, and the big voice from Ray. (SA 1986/22/A)

The use of the tape recorder, as Buchan suggests, was in its infancy in Scotland, yet the Fishers had an early model Grundig recorder. The children taped themselves singing, and doing skits that they had made up. Therefore, it was also possible for them to listen to material obtained from Norman Buchan on tape, which was to have a direct impact on their repertoire.

The Wayfarers started with Archie and Bobby, who were working out interesting arrangements of American, Scottish, and skiffle material that they liked. Bobby describes his passion for playing music, and his recollections of

how Ray ended up joining him and Archie:

...I was using every waking free moment to play music. If it hadn't been Archie it would have been somebody else... I don't regret that at all... Ray would have been around all that time, and I think once she saw something serious and worthwhile developing through the stuff that Archie and I and others were putting together, it obviously stimulated ambition to be part of this thing. And so she started singing, but the group, I suppose, coalesced sometime around 1959... (SA 1986/120/A)

Ray continues:

...We called ourselves the Wayfarers after a Burl Ives [song], "Oh I'm a Poor Wayfarin' Stranger". Oh, it's a lovely song, lovely song. And at that time there was all, there was the Haymakers...and the Three Bar Skiffle Group (or the Three Chord Skiffle Group would have been closer to it!). And there was the Blue Star Skiffle Group. I was in that one for a wee while with some other lads...and the Joe Gordon Folk Four. So that was actually quite a revelation too because Joe Gordon had been doing skiffly type things but bringing in Scottish stuff as well. Likewise Robin Hall with Jimmie Macgregor. Widened the whole scope, and it became sort of not just skiffle but a sort of folk with skiffle incorporated. It was like as if skiffle was acknowledged as a part of a folk culture of some kind. (SS 26-3-85)

The Wayfarers, following the lead of other groups, incorporated Scottish traditional material in their repertoire.

Bobby Campbell describes the repertoire of the Wayfarers:

...there were some fiddle tunes that I played obviously, some of which I still play, stuff like "Soldier's Joy". I had a great sense of achievement learning "Cripple Creek" which we played together, and the songs...there would have been lots of songs that - the song that I remember from that group probably because it was a slight departure and slightly new as far as the revival was concerned is the song called "Kismul's Galley", which comes from the sort of Hebridean tradition. We may have done it as a three-part harmony...

...things like "Dark is the Colour of My True Love's Hair", which I always thought was a terrific song... There would have been Weavers' stuff in it, Pete Seeger's stuff in it, Woody Guthrie maybe, yeh probably Woody Guthrie. You know, the sort of things like "This Land is Your Land" and like those kind of songs. (SA 1986/120/A)

The instrumental side of the Wayfarers' repertoire clearly interested and affected Bobby the most, as he played the lead instrument on American and

other fiddle tunes. It is worth noting that Archie is the only one of the seven Fishers who seems to have played instrumental music apart from accompaniment, but his real interest lies in the accompaniment of songs, rather than instrumentals.

For Ray, the American repertoire of the Weavers, Seeger, and Guthrie material represented a stage beyond skiffle, which ultimately led her and others to their native Scottish traditional songs. She remarks:

...The strange thing about Woody Guthrie was that Archie got a record called "Bound for Glory", which was all Woody Guthrie songs, and suddenly it was, it wasn't thin and superficial anymore because the songs apparently had a bit more...meat to them. But the strange thing was that in doing this, and then finding the really serious songs of America, or songs that were really quite heavy in America, reflected...on our serious music. Music that I'd never listened to in Scotland before because it was so ordinary, at least it was regarded as just, just ordinary!...but because skiffle and the American thing was another place it was different, it was exciting, it was a whole lot of different things we were singing about...but strangely enough it was Woody Guthrie and his songwriting that led me to listen more closely to the Scottish traditional songs. (SS 26-3-85)

The experience Ray describes above was shared by many young Glasgow musicians, because of the close contact they had with each other at house parties, new folk clubs, and concerts.

One of the major public appearances that the Wayfarers made as a group was at a Pete Seeger concert on November 5, 1961 at the St. Andrews Halls in Glasgow. Bobby Campbell recalls his feelings about the concert:

...As far as I was concerned, I could die as soon as I walked off the stage because it was just...the biggest thing that had ever happened, and I was beside myself...the place was electric because Seeger, you know, had become such a big name... The American State apparatus...or American imperialism, to use the left jargon, was seen very keenly as a...general threat, and Seeger represented, you know, the forces of light in that situation...

...One of the interesting things that Seeger was doing at that time was a work song, in which he actually chopped a real log with a real axe on stage, you know, I mean it was one of those great kind of extrovert Seeger things...knocking chips out of this

block. And it was a log...about sort of three feet long, people in the front row sort of ducking bits of it. No, it was a wonderful evening. It...was the high point of my time as a performer. It was certainly the high point of the Wayfarers performing phase. (SA 1986/120/A, B)

The sight of Pete Seeger chopping a log in the St. Andrews Halls is vividly recalled by many people who attended the concert. The experience of performing in the same evening with Pete Seeger represented a certain pinnacle of achievement and recognition for Archie, Ray, and Bobby, which they still reflect upon as a milestone in their careers.

The three young performers were influenced directly and indirectly in the late 1950s and early 1960s by schoolteacher Norman Buchan as mentioned previously, but also by another schoolteacher, Morris Blythman. Both men brought together the young singers and musicians in Glasgow through house parties and school folk clubs. The interests and influences of these revival mentors must be considered in depth.

Morris Blythman and Norman Buchan: House Parties, Schools, and Folk Club Beginnings

House parties were an important feature of Glasgow life up to and including the 1940s and 1950s, according to several of my informants. Folksinger and broadcaster Jimmie Macgregor talks about the house parties in his family:

...I grew up in a working class family here in Glasgow, and at that time, house parties were very much a kind of tradition of working class people. And although there wasn't one trained musician in my family, and it was a big family, you know, not my own immediate family, there were five of us children and Mum and Dad, but...I had cousins and second cousins and third cousins, and I only had the vaguest notion of who half of them were... Nearly all of us could play the piano by ear, a wee bit, you

know, really badly. And we all sung, and these house parties, which happened just about every week, and for some reason, our house became the focal point of a lot of these house parties. And there was always a lot of singing and a lot of music. Now I wouldn't say it had much to do with folkmusic, although later on I realized that some of the songs that we sung, in among all the heather and haggis Scottish sentimental rubbish, were in fact folksongs. But to us they were just, they were just part of the repertoire of the house parties. (SA 1986/129/A)

One can see similarities between this description of family "sing-songs" and the descriptions made by Ray and Archie of their family gatherings around the piano in the previous chapter. Clearly house parties and gatherings were family-orientated in such circumstances.

During the early days of the folk revival, the 1950s, several Glasgow houses became centres for house parties or ceilidhs, involving not family but local and visiting singers and musicians, a natural outgrowth of the family house parties. One such "ceilidh house" was that of Morris and Marion Blythman, who lived in Springburn.

Morris Blythman

The late Morris Blythman (1919-1981) was a multi-faceted man: a teacher, poet, political songwriter and sloganmaker, C.N.D. rally leader, and Scottish nationalist. Blythman taught at Allan Glen's School in Glasgow in the 1950s, and later at Hyndland Secondary School in the 1960s, before he and his wife moved to Edinburgh. He started the Ballads and Blues Club at Allen Glen's School, which was then emulated by Norman Buchan, a friend of Blythman's, at Rutherglen Academy. The Blythmans' Springburn house became one of the most important musical centres in the folk revival. Marion Blythman describes their "house ceilidhs", which involved not family but local and visiting singers and musicians:

...In our house in Springburn, there were very very often, if there was any reason at all for it, or at particular times, there would be held what we would call a ceilidh. And people would actually come, and they would sit and sing right through the night. Now these were particularly formative, I think, for the younger singers. That's where people like Ray and Archie, not always in our house, in different people's houses, that was where I think they first learned to sing to an audience. It was in these ceilidhs which were run in peoples' houses.

I remember once, for example, Lonnie Donegan was appearing at the Empire Theatre in Glasgow, and he came to a ceilidh in our house, which was absolutely fabulous. I mean they sang till five, six, seven, eight in the morning. So that was another thing. It was sort of in the tradition, to have a party, have this kind of ceilidh-type party.

Jimmie Macgregor first came to these ceilidhs in the houses. Norman and Janey [Buchan] would have them. The one we went to where we heard Ewan MacColl sing all night, which was a tremendously powerful influence, was a similar kind of house party that was held after a theatre show, where people sat and sang all night... I don't know whether they were unique, but they were certainly a feature of the whole scene. And disappeared a bit after the whole scene became a bit more institutionalized, it didn't seem that they happened so regularly. I remember, for example, Cisco Houston coming... (SA 1986/169/A)

Marion Blythman's point about the house ceilidhs becoming less frequent after the revival became more "institutionalized" is an interesting one. The folksong clubs started by Morris Blythman at Allen Glen's and Norman Buchan at Rutherglen were, along with these house parties or ceilidhs, precursors of the folk clubs which started opening in Glasgow and elsewhere in Scotland about 1958.

The Ballads and Blues Club

Morris Blythman began teaching French at Allen Glen's School in 1953. In the following year, a young singer named Andrew (Andy) Hunter came to Allen Glen's and discovered Blythman's Ballads and Blues Club. Andy Hunter recalls:

The school had a number of societies run by teachers in their spare time, but this one was quite different from the rest, it was a musical affair, it was a folksong club. And it was known as the Ballads and Blues Club. The reason for that I was very soon to find out, that we were exposed to material from all over, native Glasgow material, Irish Orange and Republican [songs]...then it was easy to sing songs from both of these camps. A lot of American songs. And indeed some English songs. But we were imbued with the idea that folksong was an international phenomenon. And although there was Scottish material, there was no specific stress put on that...

...Jeannie Robertson came to Allan Glen's School, and sang to us. Because we also had a tradition of putting on concerts for the rest of the school, which included the school jazz band, the folksingers, and all the rest of it, but it was very much, an alternative music in concert... Anyway, he brought Jeannie down not in the context of one of these concerts, if I remember rightly, but to give us a special concert... And I mean I was absolutely amazed at this woman who had, you know, she was very heavily made up, very brightly made up, luridly made up, you know, almost, very powerful woman speaking a dialect, I mean I had no experience of Aberdeenshire dialect up until then. And to hear her singing one of two of the songs which I had started to learn, and was singing myself, was also a revelation. And these songs, of course, had come from her. They had come via recordings that Hamish [Henderson] had allowed Morris to have, and he, Morris had a Ferrograph tape recorder in his house, so he was able to use tapes, Hamish's field tapes...

[Morris] really was a guru, you know, he really was someone who was having a fantastic influence on us... He also had an open house in Springburn, he was very good at organizing evenings, inviting people...

...Morris took a group of us to Norman's school, where we were supposed to give a demonstration of the kind of songs and music we were producing to a group of youngsters there who were also going to set up a folk club. Which would have been really the second folk club in Glasgow, in as far as the schools were concerned. And that was at Rutherglen Academy. And I remember very well singing the, "The Twa Corbies", because Morris had put the Breton tune "Al Alarc'h" to this, to these words "The Twa Corbies", and had taught it to me, and it was my, one of my songs... Archie Fisher was very much taken with it. And that became part of his repertoire. And that was the way it was meant to go, you know, that was the, what we were there to do. (SA 1986/24/A)

Morris Blythman circulated songs in his club which he had printed himself by hand. Many of the traditional songs were from recordings made by

Hamish Henderson, who in a sense was "feeding" the revival by making tapes of traditional singers available to people like Morris who then disseminated the songs. Henderson had discovered Jeannie Robertson, the dynamic traveller singer whom Andy describes above, in Aberdeen in 1953, and she was one of several traditional singers who then performed at concerts and ceilidhs in Glasgow and Edinburgh in the mid to late 1950s.

When the Blythmans went to Turkey for a year from 1957-1958, Andy and other boys at Allan Glen's felt a real loss. By the time they returned, Andy Hunter was at university in Aberdeen, and Morris Blythman began teaching at Hyndland.

The ideological stance which Blythman took was undeniably a politically motivated one. His wife comments:

Morris was interested in changing the world, and changing society. And he was interested in writing political songs, he was interested in changing the...sort of mental climate of Scotland, that was his obsession, really. (SA 1986/169/A)

Blythman wrote poetry and songs under the name "Thurso Berwick", but the folk revival understandably remembers him best for his songs. In his Ballads and Blues Club, as Andy Hunter mentions, he gave the boys a wide range of song material, including some of his own songs. He was, however, essentially more interested in political songs than in traditional material. Marion Blythman expands on the issue of traditional songs:

...he appreciated the strength of the tradition, but I wouldn't have said he was particularly interested in the long mediaeval ballads, for example. He could be very scathing about the pregnancy ballads... No, Morris wasn't interested in...that sort of long heroic, you know, sort of heroic tradition. He was very interested in the ones which really were sharp and poetic. It was Morris who took the Breton tune and put it to "The Twa Corbies", and you now hear everybody singing it, as if it was a Scottish song [tune]...

Now he loved that sort of thing. Something which was sharp and strong. But as I say, the long long ballads, no. I think he

had a period when he liked them, but he basically wasn't interested in them. He was much, always much more interested in the political song message. Changing...the mental climate through getting the message into people's heads. (SA 1986/169/B)

Blythman became very involved with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (C.N.D.) with the increasing American military presence in Scotland toward the end of the 1950s, and the arrival of the Polaris missile-carrying submarines in the Holy Loch in 1961. Like the events of the removal of the Stone of Destiny from Westminster Abbey in 1950, and Queen Elizabeth's accession in 1951, the arrival of Polaris stimulated Blythman to write new political protest songs, and gather groups of young folksingers to sing at protest rallies and demonstrations. His emphasis on political songs alienated some of the folk revivalists, who preferred to sing traditional material. The impact of the political situation of the late 1950s and early 1960s on the revival, and Morris Blythman's role in this period, is discussed later in this chapter.

Norman Buchan

Norman Buchan, a Labour M.P. since 1964, was an English teacher in the 1950s at Rutherglen Academy. He became interested in traditional music through the experience of attending a concert, the now legendary People's Festival Ceilidh in Edinburgh, on August 31, 1951. The ceilidh was part of a Labour-sponsored Edinburgh People's Festival, which was conceived of as an alternative to the world famous Edinburgh Festival, started in 1947 and thought by many to be too elitist. Norman Buchan was one of the general organizers, but Hamish Henderson was in charge of the ceilidh. Buchan had met Henderson in 1948, at a John Maclean Memorial meeting.

Buchan's recollections of the ceilidh are still vivid, as it profoundly affected his life and teaching. He relates:

...I came through on the Friday night to hear the night of Scottish song. And as I came in late, for all I could hear was the drumming of feet. And I went in, there was a packed hall, lot of young people, and the atmosphere was electric. And I couldn't quite see why it was electric because on the stage there was singers sitting, people sitting there. And a little old wizened guy with a face like a turtle, chanting out a song, and the song was "You may talk about the First Royal Scottish Fusiliers/ The Aberdeen Militia and your gallant volunteers./ But oh gae bring tae me the tartan o' the gallant Forty Twa." And in between verses, people were joining in the chorus and as the people joined the chorus, this little fellow with the wizened turtle neck would do a little swagger march of one or two steps away from the microphone, and then come back. It was Jimmy MacBeath. And I thought this was most astonishing and great.

The next thing that was introduced, and I shall never ever forget it, was Jessie Murray, a little woman, old, she was about seventy or seventy one, dressed in black, fishwife... And she stood up to the microphone. Was there a microphone? I can't remember if we had a microphone. I imagine her standing up to one, but all I can see is this little figure in black, and she sang "Skipping Barfit Through the Heather". The most beautiful tune I'd ever heard. Was so fragile, frail, and I'd never heard anything like this. And this was followed by John Strachan. Doing a ballad. I'd taught ballads as poems, God help me, I taught ballads as poems. They were frozen on the page. And he sang..."Johnny o'Breadislea". All forty verses of it. I didn't know people still sang these things, I didn't know they were songs, really. I think that was the first time I knew that ballads were really songs. Just turned all my ideas, this was living, these were real people, still singing it. And the consequence of this I think I knew almost within ten minutes, I knew the significance of this, or sensed the significance of this. And totally bowled over by it. (SA 1986/22/A)

The following day, Buchan saw Ewan MacColl's play "Uranium 235", and in a ceilidh at the St. Columba Church Hall that Saturday evening, heard MacColl sing the ballad "Eppie Morrie", as Buchan says, "like a galloping horse, just belting it out, just amazing" (SA 1986/22/A). The American folksong collector, Alan Lomax, who had been at the previous night's ceilidh recording, was also at this ceilidh, and sang an American work song. The Gaelic singer Flora MacNeill of Barra was also present. Buchan sums up the impact of the experiences of these two days:

In that twenty four hours I think that that whole number of things transformed my view of it. First of all, that this material existed, it was marvellous in quality, it was goodness, people, the ordinary people could produce this. This was just great and obvious, but staggering to me. Secondly, that it was still being made. That young voices like Ewan who could see this in theatre, for dramatic purposes. And thirdly, the politics of it, and I won't forget that I was and am politically involved, always, gelled with the whole cultural importance of it... (SA 1986/22/A)

The People's Festival Ceilidh of 1951 brought together many of the key figures in what was to be the Scottish folk revival, and was a seminal event not only for Norman Buchan but for many others as well. Traditional singers, collectors, singers and musicians in the making, schoolteachers like Buchan and Blythman, and interested people mingled at it. The People's Festival Ceilidhs ran for four more years, featuring, as they had in 1951, traditional singers, perhaps, as Adam McNaughtan believes, the starting point of the Scottish folk revival (1980:194).

After the transforming experience of the People's Ceilidh, Norman Buchan continued to absorb knowledge about traditional song from personal contacts with people like Hamish Henderson, and listened to growing numbers of traditional singers whom Hamish and others had found in their collecting forays. He was greatly interested in Morris Blythman's Scots poetry and songwriting in the 1950s, and admired Blythman for starting the Ballads and Blues Club at Allan Glen's. He remarks:

...As well as doing that political balladry and writing, helping to produce the *Rebels' Ceilidh Song Book* and so on, he also started a club at his school. Which I never had the nerve to do, cause I don't sing, I can't sing very well and I'm always very shy and embarrassed. I take the kids in the corner and say, "This is how it goes". But he started it...

...I didn't start until about a year or so after that he did it, and I went along to one of his concerts, actually. Invited me along to, they put on a Christmas concert, and I thought this was great stuff, and could see its potential, but I was always too nervous to start it myself. It wasn't until skiffle came along that I started it at school. And I said, "Skiffle, this is what the kids understand, and can do and will respond [to]"... Here was an easy method of

three chords and you could accompany yourself on a song. And the songs were good. They were good American songs. It meant easy music making, easy amateur music making, you didn't need to be able to read music...

...so I put up a notice on the school notice board...and I think I called it "Ballads Club". Ballads Club. "If you'd like to learn American and Scottish songs, come along, Room 16, at 4 on Monday night". And there were about thirty kids sitting there at four o'clock, mainly from my own English classes... And I had duplicated two or three songs. One was "Rothesay O", a song I knew I could sing, and the other was an American song, I think it was "Skip to My Lou"... (SA 1986/22/B)

Anne Neilson was one of Norman Buchan's pupils, and she vividly recalls her impressions of him as a teacher and the beginnings of the Ballads Club at Rutherglen. Just as Andy Hunter feels about Morris Blythman's influence on him, so Anne Neilson regards Norman Buchan as having had a significant impact on her attitudes towards singing and traditional music. She relates:

Well, I think first of all, when we went up to the secondary school at the age of twelve, we were put into a room and told our English teacher would be along. And this little character came, not sidling into the room, but kind of pattering into the room, and I thought, oh gosh, oh how unimpressive, I don't think I'm going to like him! And I think that lasted for all of twenty minutes, and after that I was thoroughly hooked. I thought that Norman was amazing...

Once he came into the class, and he announced..., "This is not a poem in a book, this is a song". And he sang us "The Dowie Dens of Yarrow", and I remember being embarrassed out of sight, because I was afraid people were laughing at him. It was totally alien to me in any case, and I found it strange. And I didn't know why he'd done it, and nobody knew what it was meant to be, and it had a strange tune. And that was the first time I ever heard a folksong.

Well, he didn't repeat that, he let that be. But when we got into second year, and we had him again, he announced one week that anybody interested in learning some songs...could come along to Room 16 on Tuesday at 4 o'clock. And I don't know why I didn't go, I think it was some kind of perversity on my part, that I didn't want...to be let down or embarrassed or something. But I didn't go. And all the rest of my friends went, and came back raving about it. "It's marvellous, it's wonderful, it's this, it's that, it's everything". And they spoke about it almost through the whole of the succeeding week, so the following Tuesday I had to go. And I never missed another one from then until I left the school at sixth year. And it just became, I think, probably the most important thing that had happened, and the most significant

thing, I would say, in my life. It was a thing I discovered that I could do, and although I didn't at that stage feel that I could do it justice, but I enjoyed doing it...

...He printed song sheets with two or three songs each week. He dished them out, and he must have sung them. Now I really don't remember, it's astonishing, because the first time I heard him sing I found it so excruciating. That I don't remember him singing these other things, but he had to have done, because that was how we learned them.

...We also were given lunchtimes, with a huge tape recorder, which was the size of a transatlantic suitcase, an immense thing... He gave us tapes. Now quite where he got them, I didn't understand at the time, but they were tapes of people like Lucy Stewart, Jeannie [Robertson], Jimmy MacBeath... He brought us in American records, and we had the Weavers from an early stage. And there was even one group when we were in about our fourth or fifth year, four people who took off these Weavers records and were doing Weavers arrangements of Weavers songs, you know? And that was all quite acceptable. (SA 1987/91/A)

Anne Neilson is now a member of the Glasgow group Stramash, and sings her songs unaccompanied, as she usually did in the Rutherglen Ballads Club. When she performs with Stramash, she sometimes refers to Norman Buchan in her introductions to songs, indicating the great regard she holds for him and her feeling of gratitude for his encouragement.

The Ballads Club was a phenomenal success, and Norman not only brought in songs, tapes, and records, but encouraged the students to learn to play guitar, ukelele, teacheest bass, or whatever instrument they fancied if they so desired. Later, Archie Fisher was brought in as an occasional guitar instructor, as were other new revival performers who had mastered instrumental accompanying techniques. Norman Buchan remained in charge of the club until he was elected to Parliament in 1964, when it was taken over by Adam McNaughtan and Ian Davison. The enthusiasm and songs from the Ballads Club percolated through the young musicians of Glasgow at large, not just those who attended Rutherglen Academy.

Besides starting the Ballads Club, Buchan was involved in the revival in other ways. His wife, Janey, now a European M.P., was as enthusiastic as her husband about folkmusic, and with him played host to many house parties and ceilidhs. She also helped to organize concerts with performers such as Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, and others in Glasgow. Janey Buchan was a link to young folk musicians at the Glasgow Art College, where her brother, Enoch Kent, was a student, along with Jimmie Macgregor and Josh MacRae. Buchan began doing occasional lectures on folksong at the art college and in schools, first using taped examples, but his brother-in-law Enoch, Jimmie, and Josh volunteered to sing the examples for him. This pre-dated the beginning of the Ballads Club in 1957.

Like the Blythman house, the Buchan's household was a social centre for musicians and writers. Talking about the importance of the two gathering places, Jimmie Macgregor remarks:

...Norman made a tremendous contribution... if we weren't in Morris's place, we were at Norman's. And both of them very consciously, I mean we weren't aware of this at the time, but they were consciously feeding us ideas and information and repertoire all the time, 'cause they were that bit older, and they knew what they were doing. They were making conscious cultural and political moves, if you like... we just wanted to sing songs. And the whole thing really sort of developed from those two little gatherings, I would say...these sort of folk soirees. (SA 1986/129/A)

Andy Hunter feels similarly to Jimmie Macgregor, commenting, "Norman did a tremendous job providing...a ceilidh house for all of us" (SA 1986/24/A). The Buchans, through contact with Morris and Hamish Henderson, also frequently had traditional singers like Jeannie Robertson and Jimmy MacBeath in their house, which had a considerable impact on the younger singers visiting the house, and is an important aspect of the Scottish, and particularly Glasgow, revival.

Concerts and Folk Clubs

Bobby Campbell refers to Norman and Janey Buchan as the first "entrepreneurs of the folk scene", as he explains,

...in the sense that...they never made a penny out of it, but they were always organizing things, they were always organizing concerts, they were always putting together shows either purely for folk purposes or as fund-raising events for...political causes and stuff like that... In those years, the late Fifties, early Sixties, possibly later than that...they were largely the Scottish organizational end of any largish folk tour that was going on. So they would always have people staying with them. I mean their house was to some extent like the Fisher house, in that the amount of throughput, human throughputs was quite startling. And yes, one would meet people like Jeannie [Robertson] and Jimmy MacBeath, and those people, and one would also meet Cisco Houston and Pete Seeger... Somebody should write a book about the folk revival and just call it "72 Peel Street", you know? A bit like *84 Charing Cross Road*¹, you know! (SA 1986/120/B)

Buchan, besides organizing concerts, was additionally involved in the beginnings of the Glasgow Folk Song Club, which met in the Trongate, in the Cornerhouse Cafeteria, on Sunday evenings.

The following year, 1959, the Glasgow University Folk Club began, of which which Adam McNaughtan was one of the founder members. He comments:

...the links were there and it meant that we could share guests with [the Glasgow Folk Song Club]. They met on the Sunday, and the university club met on the Wednesday. So quite often, for example, Jeannie Robertson would come down and stay two or three days while people like Norman Buchan were recording her...and would just come along on the Wednesday to the Glasgow [University] Club. Jimmy MacBeath, the same. (SA 1986/26/A)

There were obviously frequent opportunities for young singers and musicians in Glasgow to meet up, regardless of where they lived or what school they went to. This proliferating number of venues, public and private, where people could listen to or perform folkmusic, contributed significantly to the excitement of the period, as well as providing contexts in which amateur musicians could

learn the skills of the professional musician.

One of the most significant characteristics of the early period of the Scottish folk revival was the accessibility of performers to their audience, so that a substantial amount of learning musical skills came from informal contacts in concert or club performance situations. Hamish Imlach remarked on this phenomenon when I spoke with him, saying:

...we were fairly lucky, because people who were, well, stars, if you like, were fairly accessible, and we were able to sort of visit with them at the folk club. First of all America's Jack Elliott, and Derroll Adams, and meet them, and watch, 'cause we hadn't a clue about capos and things. (SA 1986/28/A)

...it was a good time to learn because you could toddle up to the person who was on the stage and say, "Excuse me please, what's that? Could you show me please?" And it was nice, you know. It seemed bizarre because...[the Americans] were all frantically trying to sing "Greensleeves" and ignore American music, and we were all frantically trying to learn Woody Guthrie songs and sound like Leadbelly over here! (SA 1986/28/B)

As far as the Fishers are concerned, one of the most profound events to influence Ray occurred in this period of the late 1950s. Ray and Archie, Bobby Campbell, Hamish Imlach, and Josh MacRae were among the singers involved with the Glasgow Folk Song Club, and attending concerts organized by the Buchans. As Ray explains:

...Folksong Workshop² ...was based on the same idea as Theatre Workshop, being a place where you could come, not only to be entertained, but to find out things yourself and...you would get people visiting the town or people that were here for concerts or whatever, and you could talk to them, and you could find things out. And through Folksong Workshop, there was quite a few people actually came to Glasgow, came to the folk place, and in time...at various events that started to take place in Glasgow, met up with Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, Ralph Rinzler came over. I met Cisco Houston,...Jack Elliott. And all the other singers. And then via that to the singers that...people like Norman Buchan and Hamish Henderson brought down to the Central Area, that's Edinburgh, Glasgow area. Like Jeannie Robertson, and Willie Scott, Jimmy MacBeath, and the Stewarts, and the performing traditional singers who by this time had been put on record, had actually been collected and recorded were now being shown, well, taken to the rest of the country to let people actually see them singing live.

...It was exciting enough hearing the tape recordings of the singers. But to actually see them perform is, I mean there is just no comparison whatsoever. The quality of the voice is still there but oh, you can see why in fact certain singers within communities like Jeannie Robertson was, within her community when she was travelling, as a singer – you could see how, how she communicated without any bother at all, she just, she had the knack, she had the skill to do it.

...And this happened actually in Norman Buchan's house. Because there had been a concert on in Glasgow, and it, I'm sure it was, I think it was Jimmy MacBeath. Norman had organized it, yes, it was Jimmy MacBeath, Dominic Behan, and Jeannie Robertson was there, and there was somebody else... But they came to...Janey and Norman Buchan's house. And we were invited to come back. Archie, Bobby, and various other people who were interested in the music. And we were asked, Norman asked everybody to do a turn, you know? The younger singers to do a turn for the traditional people, to let them hear, see? And I did, stupidly, I did one of Jeannie's songs which, I didn't realize at the time it was Jeannie's song. And she said to me, "Naw naw, lassie, naw naw!" And she was shaking her head while I was singing it and I thought, "Oh dear me, I'm making a right mess of this!" And I mean, I've said this so many times to people, it's in that article ³, that's why it suddenly dawned on me. But she told me I wasn't "takin' it oot richt", you know, "takin' it oot richt". So she sang it and she did all the emphasis and all the different things, you know. And from then on, it was a totally different, what do you say, bag o' nails or kettle of fish or whatever it was. Because suddenly there I was in the position, oddly enough, in a position that Jeannie would have been in, having to listen to other people... (SS 26-3-85).

Jeannie was fond of young singers, and invited Ray to come visit her in Aberdeen, which she did for six weeks in 1959. This personal contact with Jeannie, and also with Jeannie's daughter Lizzie Higgins, was to have a profound effect on Ray's repertoire, singing style, and attitudes towards singing, a subject which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 5 and 6. Jeannie had a considerable impact on other young female singers at the time, notably Jean Redpath and Anne Neilson.

Hamish Henderson, Alan Lomax, and Ewan MacColl: Ideologies of the Revival and Repertoire

In the foregoing discussion of the Scottish revival, the names of Hamish Henderson, Alan Lomax, and Ewan MacColl have been mentioned in several contexts. It is necessary to examine more closely the effects each man had on the revival, and on singers' repertoires, styles, and ideology.

Hamish Henderson and Alan Lomax

For many, Hamish Henderson is the "father" of the Scottish revival. Based in Edinburgh for most of his working life, his influence has radiated outward geographically, and has been of great importance to the revival. His talents and expertise are considerable, as a poet, writer, academic, collector, singer, songwriter, and mentor. In a recent article, Adam McNaughtan sums up Henderson's qualities as a "folk hero":

The extension of the language of song has been one part of the contribution Hamish Henderson has made to the Scottish Folksong Revival. Add to that over thirty years' work at the School of Scottish Studies, resulting in an unequalled collection of tape recordings; the bringing together of city folksingers and traditional singers; his teaching, formal and informal, in the School and at all sorts of gatherings outside; his spreading of songs; his approachability; his informed and entertaining writing on the subject of folksong, of which we hope there is much more to come; his championing of the cause of folksong and the Folksong Revival against all comers. These things would make him a major figure in the cultural life of Scotland even without his contributions to poetry and politics (1985:29).

Hamish Henderson's personal philosophy has evolved over what can only be considered a remarkable lifetime. He was born in Perthshire in 1919, coincidentally the year Pete Seeger was born. His mother was a singer of both Gaelic and Lowland Scots songs, and was a considerable influence on him. His study of modern languages at Cambridge University was interrupted by the

growing conflict in Europe and Africa, and he served in the army from 1940–1945. He returned to Cambridge after the war to complete his studies.

The experience of war, both as an observer in the case of the Spanish Civil War, and a participant, in the case of the Second World War, has had a profound influence on Henderson's views and writing. He wrote many songs and poems during his military career as an intelligence officer with the 1st South African Infantry Division at El Alamein, and later the 51st Highland Division in Libya, Tunisia, and Sicily. One of the best songs of the folksong revival, "Banks o' Sicily", was written by him to commemorate the departure of his division, the 51st, from Sicily, and the pipe tune he chose to set the words to was James Robertson's "Farewell to the Creeks".

Henderson continued his practice of utilizing pipe tunes for his songs, writing the well known "John Maclean March" in 1948, specifically for the John Maclean Memorial Meeting in Glasgow, in November of that year. Both Norman Buchan and Morris Blythman were present at that meeting. Henderson had known Blythman previously, having met him at the poet Hugh Macdiarmid's house in Glasgow. The year 1948 also saw the publication of his war poems, *Elegies for the Dead in Cyrenaica*, which won the Somerset Maugham Award in 1950.

In reflecting on the literary and socio-political activities of the late 1940s, Henderson remarks:

...the idea of a folk revival, I would say, really goes right back to that period, you know... I'd been doing some collecting here and there. I published the little book of World War Two songs in 1947, and this, you know, encountered a fair amount of interest. And my own collecting here and there which I'd done in various parts, Perthshire and the Northeast particularly...

My song "The John Maclean March" was sung in 1948, in the St. Andrews Halls [in Glasgow], the big John Maclean Memorial Meeting, and it began to take off very soon after that. So...these

things were sort of flowing, both in Edinburgh and Glasgow, right the way from the Forties. (SA 1986/128/A)

Marion Blythman's chronology of the beginnings of the folk revival starts with the meeting of Hamish Henderson and Morris Blythman in Hugh Macdiarmid's house. She recalls hearing "Banks o' Sicily", and sees that period as seminal:

...he [Hamish Henderson] had written it by then, and he was singing it to us. So Hamish was already seeing the song, song as a way of conveying a message. They had done...the tribute to John Maclean, and Hamish had written the "John Maclean March", but Morris by that time hadn't written any songs, he was still writing poems. And then the Stone of Destiny was stolen...and that was the thing that started people writing the political songs. So that was one whole thread. (SA 1986/169/A)

During this same period, Morris Blythman and Hamish Henderson met Ewan MacColl, then working with his first wife Joan Littlewood on radical and experimental theatre projects. Theatre Workshop, as it was called, presented a ballad opera, MacColl's first play for the company, entitled "Johnny Noble" in Glasgow, and afterward at a party, Marion Blythman recalls, they heard Ewan MacColl sing "all night". MacColl helped to facilitate the collaboration between the American folksong collector, Alan Lomax, and Hamish Henderson.

Henderson relates the story of this now historic collaboration:

Now Alan Lomax knew of me through my little book, *Ballads of World War II*. It was amazing the speed with which it got disseminated... Anyway, I'd been in Italy for eight months, roughly. When I got home, I went to see friends in Cambridge where I'd left some books and things, and a letter was waiting for me from Ewan MacColl, telling me that Alan Lomax had arrived, and was wanting to see me... And I then went to London, and Ewan spoke to me about his [Lomax's] project for these Columbia records [the Columbia World Albums of Folk and Primitive Song], of which Scotland was to be Volume 6, and asked me to help him, which I agreed to do. And he also recorded me, singing "Banks of Sicily" and various other things... so that was how I first got to know him...

He then was in Ireland for quite a bit, Seamus Ennis helped him there. And then he turned up in Scotland in June '51. And it's in June '51 that I went with him to the Northeast.

Before they set off on their collecting tour, however, Henderson had investigated possible contacts that might prove helpful. He also visited the Blythmans with Alan Lomax, to see if they knew of any potential contacts.

Marion Blythman has an interesting perspective on Lomax's role in this story. She recalls:

...Alan Lomax, interestingly enough, knew more at that stage about the Scottish folksong tradition than we knew. Because he had looked at it, I suppose, academically, and we'd all been brought up in cities and knew nothing about, we really knew nothing about it... We were brought up with street songs, and vaudeville songs, you know, popular music of that time, but not folksongs.

Alan Lomax came, and Hamish got a job showing Alan Lomax round the Highlands, and trying to find out how Alan Lomax would get a lead into the people who really knew what was going on. Now, interestingly enough, we were at university at that time, and...were working our way through college as you might say, and we both got jobs with the government social survey, which had taken us to Aberdeen, and to a place called Turriff... And as part of this activity with the government social survey, we came across a ploughman called Hector Barlow...

Now Hamish came to see us with Alan Lomax, and said, do you know any of the, in Aberdeen, how can we get a lead into this. And the only person we knew that would talk to us, that we'd met as a part of the survey, was this ploughman called Hector Barlow. And we sent Hamish to Hector Barlow. Hector Barlow sent him to Arthur Argo⁴. Cause Hector Barlow, I think...had worked on Arthur Argo's father's farm, and he knew that, and that was Hamish's first lead. Then of course it was like a sort of network, he just went from one to the other. These were all of the circumstances, all these different sort of things all happening at the same time, you know, the Songs of the Stone, Ewan MacColl, Alan Lomax coming, Hamish going round to look at all these ballads, all happening in and around the same two or three years... (SA 1986/169/A)

Henderson remarks about the tour, and Alan, "He was a wonderful collector. I mean the only trouble was that his time was limited, and he was a bit ruthless" (SA 1986/22/B). Henderson's own collecting technique was different, but his collecting also had the advantage of being less pressured. Lomax was only four years older than Henderson, so it was his extensive experience of collecting folksongs with his father John A. Lomax in America which made him

"senior" to Henderson.

Alan Lomax's first impressions of Hamish Henderson and their tour are interesting. In a 1986 interview with Danny Kyle, broadcast on the "Travelling Folk" radio programme, Lomax comments:

...Hamish Henderson and I travelled for a couple of weeks together on that first trip, I think it was a couple of weeks, and it was a fantastic experience, because instead of going along the road and talking about ballad theory, I went along the road and he sang every inch of the way! And as we went, the songs got bawdier and bawdier, and frankly, you know, I'm from a kind of a strict Protestant background, and I'll admit I was shocked. I'd never heard "The Ball of Kirriemuir" before, you know! And Hamish knew, I think, every single verse of it. And there were a few that he didn't put in, looking at me sidewise to see whether I could take it like the man also looked at me when I took that Scotch whiskey. Now you had to be able to drink, and you had to be able to enjoy bawdy things, and you had to be a real intellectual in order to survive...

We first went to see John Strachan, and although I met other people in the Northeast, he was the Northeast, John Strachan. I think one of the most remarkable individuals of his day. A man who had the whole of his folklore, who had the total cultivation of Aberdeen in his heart, and was the most generous, the most jolly, the most outgoing person. I fell in love with Scotland with John Strachan... We took about ten ballads in the first two hours, and I'd heard, I felt when I heard him, the very finest of Scots balladry. ("Travelling Folk", 6-3-86)

Jimmy MacBeath and Jessie Murray were other singers Henderson and Lomax were directed to in their travels. Both were to appear at the first People's Festival Ceilidh in 1951, which so deeply influenced Norman Buchan.

Henderson acknowledges the profound impact on his career that the Alan Lomax tour had, and it is possible to see through this story how the revival gained much momentum from the network of people who gradually became involved. The sheer quantity and quality of material recorded by Lomax and Henderson in this tour is in itself remarkable, and copies of this material were among the first tapes to be placed in the School of Scottish Studies Archives. Because Columbia Records was paying Lomax well for the collecting

project, he was able to act as a financial facilitator for this seminal fieldwork in Scotland.

Munro (1984) gives the early history of the School of Scottish Studies, in which Hamish Henderson was a key figure, so there is no need to recount it here. Henderson and Raasayman Calum Maclean, brother of poet Sorley, were among those first employed by the School as collectors. Henderson's collecting activities for the institution are only short of legendary; the discovery of Jeannie Robertson in 1953, his liaison with Maurice Fleming in discovering the Stewart Family of Blairgowrie in 1955, and his recordings in the "berryfields of Blair" in the following year are among his finest achievements. However, he did not stop at collecting material from these traditional singers, but arranged for them to perform at ceildhigs and concerts in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and made recordings of songs available to the younger generation of singers who were suddenly discovering the wealth of Scottish traditional song.

Henderson compares the activities of the folk revival in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and remarks on what he calls the "fortunate historical-cultural conjunctures" of events and personalities in the revival:

...I was certainly based in Edinburgh but I went through to Glasgow quite a lot, so I saw both scenes. I think the Glasgow scene in a sense antecedes the Edinburgh scene as a sort of operative thing, you know, very largely because of the personalities of Morris and Norman, and the fact that the folk revival was being carried into the most important place of all, namely among the kids and into the schools. The Edinburgh folk revival, of course, had started in a sense way back in the early Fifties with the People's Festivals, with the bringing down of singers from the Northeast and from the Gaelic world, and wedding them, so to speak, with the local talent. And this did continue in Edinburgh on a desultory sort of basis, you know, with various events being held like, well, the People's Festivals themselves, in spite of the banning by the Labour Party, continued off and on until, well really there is no absolute disjunction there between what was happening with the People's Festivals and various events which began to gather steam in the late Fifties and in the early Sixties. The folk club, the Edinburgh University Folk Club, started in 1958, in April 1958. And the

pattern was very similar in early meetings...

...I think that really, in many ways, [what] gave the thing its most decisive shove was the schools thing with Morris Blythman and with Norman Buchan. Then it meant that all that we had been doing up to that point was being connected...with the most important plugs, you might say. So, to a certain extent I think, the Fishers were fortunate there, they came at exactly the right minute. They were young, they were enthusiastic, they were tremendously talented, and through Norman, and through Morris, and through myself, they then had access to this, by that time, fairly large archive. So that what had been collected was disseminated, broadcast as we could... And it meant in fact that some of our finest and most, you know, influential recordings were circulating among these kids, only weeks after they were made.

And the Fishers, as I say, were definitely beneficiaries of this, and they picked up a tremendous amount from tapes. And from the personal contacts that were made. I mean Ray, of course, went up to stay with Jeannie Robertson. And got it all from the horse's mouth... Oh, they got on fine. I mean it was very much, I mean Andy Hunter and Ray were the people who really sort of got stuff from Jeannie immediately from the, from immediate contact, as you might say like, by just going up and staying with her... Ray was very, very close to Jeannie in many ways, and benefited directly through this. So, as I say, I think that the Fishers are a beautiful example of...talent arriving just at the right minute. And there was no holding them after that. They proceeded to make their mark and are still making it. (SA 1986/128/A)

Hamish Henderson's impact on the repertoire of the revival has thus been considerable, through his tireless efforts to discover and collect songs from the traditional singers of Scotland, and to in turn make it possible for younger musicians as well as others to hear the traditional singers, both on tape and in person. His personal influence was felt by many of the young singers, such as Jean Redpath, who remarks:

He obviously was in the business of fostering interest, of fostering anybody who could carry a tune in a paper bag, who had an interest in traditional music, and he certainly had fertile ground with me, I couldn't get enough of it. (SA 1985/214)

Henderson's songwriting has influenced the revival repertoire as well. One of his more recent songs, "The Freedom Come All Ye", written prior to, but dedicated to the Glasgow peace marchers in May, 1960, and set to the pipe

tune "The Bloody Fields of Flanders", is regarded by many as his finest song, and like "Banks of Sicily", is performed frequently by different singers.

Alan Lomax can be seen as an academic catalyst and an enabler in the Scottish revival, who through his collecting and collaboration with Hamish Henderson, made many people much more aware of the rich living Scottish song tradition. His broadcasts of some of the Scottish material collected by himself and Hamish, in a 1957 radio series entitled "A Ballad Hunter Looks at Britain", probably did much to acquaint listeners from all over Britain of the vital Scottish song tradition. His personal influence was perhaps more keenly felt in London, where he worked with Ewan MacColl and A. L. Lloyd as a performer and broadcaster. Hamish Henderson's influence on the Scottish revival has been more direct and personal, as well as scholarly, through his work as a collector, teacher, writer and singer.

Ewan MacColl

Hamish Henderson's influence on the revival as a disseminator of song material is unquestionable, and also reflects his own strong belief that "the essence of the whole revival is oral" (Henderson 1973:13). Another figure who influenced the revival repertoire considerably through his ideology and practice was Ewan MacColl, who has been mentioned several times above. As there are numerous publications and a radio series⁵ discussing his life and influences on British folk and working class culture, I will not attempt to give more than a few relevant details of his biography here.

Ewan MacColl was born Jimmy Miller in 1915 in Scotland, of Scottish parents. The family moved almost immediately to Salford. His father worked

in the iron foundry there, and was an ardent trades unionist. Ewan became involved with the trades union movement and street theatre at an early age, and has always been a vociferous spokesman for working people. Through experimental theatre work with his wife Joan Littlewood, his presentation of Scottish traditional songs, songwriting, radio broadcasts, and later his founding of the Singers' Club and the Critics' Group in London, and his performances and recordings with third wife Peggy Seeger (half-sister of Pete), his influence on the folk revival in Britain has been enormous and extremely visible. His influence on the Scottish revival has been more of an ideological nature than a personal one, as he has lived in the Manchester and London areas for the majority of his life. He performed in Scotland fairly frequently in the 1950s and 1960s, but less so in later years.

Ewan MacColl collaborated on projects with many of the significant figures of the revival in the early 1950s. In Scotland, he already knew Hamish Henderson, Morris Blythman, and Norman Buchan. Alan Lomax introduced MacColl and the noted English folklorist, A. L. (Bert) Lloyd. In 1951, the same year of the first People's Festival Ceilidh, MacColl worked with Lomax and Lloyd on a series of radio programmes called "Ballads and Blues". They were designed to show the close links between jazz and folkmusic, and between American and British versions of songs. Only two years later, MacColl started a folk club in High Holborn in London, known as the Ballads and Blues Club. The club scene in London pre-dated that in Scotland, without question.

In 1956, MacColl and Lloyd formed a skiffle group of sorts with a young protegee of MacColl's, Shirley Collins, and the newly arrived Peggy Seeger, whom Alan Lomax had contacted in Holland. Lomax was working on some television programmes at this time, and required an American banjo player, among other musicians. The group was thus formed for this purpose, and was

short-lived, but it affected MacColl's future views on repertoire. Although politically and culturally an internationalist, he began to resent the pervasiveness of the American repertoire and the guitar in the British revival, and started formulating his well-known ideology of repertoire, that one should sing from one's own tradition and not from other traditions. This ideology, which he preached vigorously wherever he spoke and performed, had an enormous impact on people involved in the revival.

Jimmie Macgregor, who feels his own career in folkmusic owes a lot to the experience of a Ewan MacColl concert in Glasgow in 1954, comments about MacColl's stance on repertoire:

...Ewan began at some point to take a very entrenched position, about what was right in folkmusic, and what was wrong about it. And he...began to run the Singers' Workshop, and so on, to teach people how to sing in a traditional way. Which slightly, always slightly worried me... But I think what he felt was that you had to hang on to something at the core of the whole thing. Because it was becoming so popular, and people were on television, were jollying things up, and he felt that maybe the centre would become soft, you know, and that the real basis of what it was all about could be lost...

...Ewan was definitely resisting the American influence. And in fact, once we had all benefited from it, I think that that was quite legitimate that we should then resist it... Once we realized that okay, that American music is all very nice, and it's very interesting, and some marvellous instrumentalists in those days and so on... that was what brought us back to our own music, and I think from that point of view, Ewan was quite justified... And there was all kinds of wee groups being the Weavers, you know, imitating the Weavers...which wasn't all that difficult to do... His idea, I think, was, why should we try to be like them, we've got all this marvellous stuff of our own, let's work on that. Let's get to know that, let's become familiar with it and understand it, and know how to perform it... But what he was doing was he was taking a deliberate stand to achieve a deliberate, a certain goal. (SA 1986/130/A)

Some young singers were more influenced than others by this idea of using only repertoire from one's own tradition. Ewan MacColl, however, was not only trying to get this idea across, but became disturbed by the commercializing and popularizing tendencies within the revival, and set out to

remedy the situation by setting an example in his Singers' Club. In 1961, MacColl explained in *Sing* magazine why he was opening the Singers' Club:

It is necessary to rescue a large number of young people, all of whom have the right instincts, from those influences that have appeared on the folk scene during the past two or three years--influences that are doing their best to debase the meaning of folk song... the folk song revival can get so far away from its traditional basis that in the end it is impossible to distinguish it from pop music and cabaret... We are determined to give top traditional singers a platform where they will be protected from the ravages of the commercial machine. Finally, we need standards. Already the race for the quick pound note is on in the folk song world. "Quaint" songs, risqué songs, poor instrumentation, and no-better-than-average voices--coupled with a lack of respect for the material: against these we will fight (1961:65).

Archie and Ray Fisher, and indeed Joyce and Cindy as well, were more than a little sceptical of the way Ewan MacColl's views were implemented by his fans and some of the new folk clubs in Glasgow. Archie sums up his feelings about MacColl and his ideology:

...MacColl was trying to focus on to a kind of nationalism, saying that people should only play their own songs, which may have been a good ideology in preserving ethnic, people's own ethnic music, but he created a kind of caste system that if you sang American songs, you were an outcast, you wouldn't get on to his platform... as soon as MacColl had cultified certain things, they opened the door to what [Dick Gaughan] calls the "hobbyist", the "antiquarians", that said, "Oh, I can sing this song just for the sake, because it's an old, it's an antique", you know, they made the music precious. There was no subjective interest in the content of it really... people were actually scoring points off each other by the longest and oldest ballads they could find. I mean that did happen.

And it opened, it opens a floodgate for mediocrity in terms of performance. And as soon as you didn't need a guitar to make an impressive performance, the people were going to, you know, you didn't have to have any other musical skill other than a good memory for twenty six verses, all kinds of things happened. It became bloody boring for a start, lots of the time...and these people...broke away from clubs and started their own clubs. So that segregated...singers who accompanied themselves, especially with an American instrument. I mean the guitar was smeared at that time too. (SS 13-5-86/A)

MacColl just went by me. It was nothing, I mean everybody was saying that this was the person we should all be listening to, but I wasn't very convinced, and I've remained unconvinced in

many ways. I mean I can objectively see his qualities, but it was a, I had a gut suspicion of what he was doing...that I've never really been a political singer. And also I had a slight gut suspicion about the motives he had for what he was doing. I mean although I was involved in a kind of socialist movement at the time, it didn't ring true. His style of singing seemed to me like an interpretive phony style, it was, if you like, reproduction of something, rather than something that was authentic. And so I became more interested in the authentic, his sources were more interesting to me than his interpretation. (SA 1987/98/B)

The issue of MacColl's singing style which Archie raises here is not without its ironies, either. MacColl was and is essentially an English Scot, and has always lived in England, although frequently visiting Scotland. One might well be disposed to ask what his proper "tradition" is. He has been singing and making recordings of many of the classic Scots ballads for many years, among other songs. Indeed, Hamish Henderson remarks:

...Ewan MacColl is really part of the English revival. Only naturally, because I mean he was brought up in Salford, you know. I mean his parents were Scots, right enough, I mean old Betsy is a very good singer. But Ewan's, you know, very idiosyncratic, sort of synthetic Scots accent, it just gradually got better and better and better, maybe with listening to tapes, you know, and listening to the real singers. But I mean, the time that he was first recorded by Alan Lomax,...to a very large extent I mean his pronunciation of Scots was very eccentric, to put it mildly... (SA 1986/22/A)

This may help to explain why Ewan MacColl's singing did not "ring true" to Archie. Ray recalls having heard recordings of McColl prior to seeing him perform, and remarks: "I remember my first impression was he sounds sort of old. But in fact he wasn't really that old" (SA 1986/116/B). The staged quality of MacColl's performing style, in which he would always sit on a chair that faced backwards, and cupped his hand over his ear while singing, has persisted up to the present. Some of MacColl's mannerisms and singing style have been imitated by the younger revival singers, thinking that it gives them an additional credibility.

Ewan MacColl's ideas were valued by revival mentors Norman Buchan

and Morris Blythman, but they did not attempt to proselytize in the very deliberate and "purist" way that MacColl was doing. Bobby Campbell comments about Norman Buchan:

...Norman was immensely influential...and Norman in his own way, in his own soft way, was doing what Ewan MacColl in a much harsher way did some few years later, and that was trying to get the message across to our generation that, you know, the American songs were fine but, you know, this, this whole body of repertoire here that you didn't need to put on a phony accent to sing, you know, it was your stuff, you know, here it is, you know, listen to this, here's Jeannie, here's Jimmy... he just opened windows all the time. That was his great influence. (SA 1986/120/B)

Ray, as we have already seen, was enormously influenced by Norman Buchan, who did not insist, as MacColl began doing, that one should sing only from one's own tradition. Buchan, through introducing the young singers to the Scottish traditional singers in person and on tape and record, let them draw their own conclusions. Ray's response to this was:

...I thought, this is dead easy, because you just sing Scottish, you don't have to sound as if you came from Mississippi or Virginia or wherever it is. You'd probably get the accent wrong anyway. But, and I remember Norman Buchan saying this, that it was a bit...more honest, you know! (SS 26-3-85)

Ewan MacColl's formation of the Critics' Group in the 1960s was a development in the revival which carried his ideology even further. Its purpose was to provide a platform where singers could present the songs they wished to sing and be criticized after their performance by the rest of the group. Thus performance, style, and material was scrutinized critically and with deliberation. This group epitomized MacColl's very conscious, theatrical, and critical approach to singing and performing, and the Critics' Group approach was taken up by some of the more traditional repertoire-oriented folk clubs in Britain, including the Glasgow Ballads Club, also known as the Grand Hotel Club where it was for the most active years of its existence in the mid-1960s.

The Radio Ballads

Ewan MacColl's influence on the ideology of repertoire in the revival was considerable, although what might be regarded by some as his highly analytical and doctrinaire approach to repertoire was both liked and disliked by young singers. MacColl exerted a major influence on the revival through his songwriting, but also through the media. His very innovative radio projects, culminating in the series he is best known for, the "Radio Ballads", featured mostly his own songs. The "Radio Ballads" were commissioned by the B.B.C. between 1957 and 1964, created and produced by the teamwork of Charles Parker, Ewan MacColl, and Peggy Seeger. The eight programmes focused on special and wide-ranging topics, such as the travelling people, miners of the Northeast of England, herring fishing, polio patients, and the building of the M1 Motorway.

The significant departure from previous radio programming techniques lay in the extensive use of fieldwork tapes, what one could call oral history material, of the people who were the focus of the particular programme. Rather than using actors following scripts based on taped material, the producers saw that it was far more effective to utilize material from the field tapes, letting the main participants speak for themselves. Ewan wrote songs for the programmes, based on the field material, and Peggy Seeger arranged the music. Many of the songs written for the programmes are "classics", and can be heard in folk clubs fairly frequently, such as "The Moving-On Song", "Shoals of Herring", "The Thirty Foot Trailer", and "Schoolday's Over".

One of the most significant aspects of this radio series, besides the fact that it represented a new technique in radio programming, is that Scottish material and musicians figured in many of the programmes. Ray and Archie

Fisher, Bobby Campbell, Gordon McCulloch, and Enoch Kent are among those who were involved with the "Radio Ballads" as singers. The way in which the programmes were constructed is described by Bobby Campbell:

...all the recorded material was sorted out and the peoples' key statements were placed in the programme, what they said was used to write the songs. The songs were written...different songs for different moods, and themes would be strung out through the programme so there'd be a key verse here, and a key verse there... A young singer would take...a moderate signpost verse, but people like MacColl and Bert Lloyd would sing the kind of clinching verse to a particular theme in the programme, and there was always a chorus... (SA 1986/121/A)

There is no doubt that the "Radio Ballads" represent a considerable achievement in broadcasting, and influenced future radio series like "Landmarks", which the Fishers and Bobby Campbell were involved in. The series also introduced new songs based on the traditional idiom, written by Ewan, some of which have already become part of the oral tradition.

Politics, Polaris, and Protest: A New Direction

Having briefly examined the roles of Hamish Henderson, Alan Lomax, and Ewan MacColl in the Scottish revival, and their direct or indirect impact on the Fishers, we must now consider one of the most significant aspects of the Glasgow folk scene of the late 1950s and early 1960s, that of the anti-nuclear movement, coupled with a growing nationalism in Scotland. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (C.N.D.) was active throughout Britain, but the personalities involved in the Glasgow folk scene, and the city's relative close proximity to the Holy Loch, where the American submarines were to be housed, gave the Glasgow protest movement a flavour all of its own. Norman Buchan is of the opinion that "the heart of protest in Scotland was Glasgow", as

exemplified by the Red Clyde, the Glasgow Independent Labour Party MP's sent to the House of Commons, the anti-Polaris movement, and the Upper Clyde Shipyards struggle (SA 1986/23/A).

The importance of protest song did not begin in the late 1950s. The tradition of sung protest in Scotland is an old one; as Hamish Henderson remarked to Archie Fisher in a 1985 radio documentary, "I suppose it would start from the Reformation, if you've got patience to go all that way back" (From "Parade: As I Walked on the Road", broadcast 17-12-85, BBC Radio Scotland). Henderson also points to the Jacobite songs as protest material. Buchan (1980) traces the historical thread of protest in folksong from the seventeenth century up to the present.

The beginnings of the Scottish revival coincide with the "reiving of the Stane", when the Stone of Destiny was removed from Westminster Abbey in 1950 and returned in secret to Scotland, sparking off a spate of songwriting by Morris Blythman and others, mentioned briefly earlier in this chapter. Witty songs like "The Wee Magic Stane" by Johnny McEvoy, "Noo Sherlock Holmes", and "The Stane's Awa" were set to well-known folksong tunes, in the case of these three, respectively, "Villikins and his Dinah", "Barbara Allen", and "The Deil's Awa wi' the Exciseman". This simplified the process of songwriting, and made the songs easier to learn.

The next event in the 1950s to inspire Scottish nationalist sentiments and another bout of songwriting was the death of George VI, and the accession of his daughter Elizabeth in June 1951 as EIIIR. This infuriated many nationalists such as Blythman, who felt that since the first Elizabeth was Queen of England and not of the United Kingdom, this was a slight on Scotland to call the new queen "the second". Blythman's response was to write "Coronation

Coronach", also known as "The Scottish Breakaway". He used the Orange tune "The Sash My Father Wore", a practice he was fond of. As Marion Blythman comments:

He felt that if you had a good tune, didn't matter where it came from, in fact he often used to say the Orangemen had all the best tunes, and he used a lot of Orange tunes to carry political songs. (SA 1986/169/A).

The "Coronation Coronach" was popular in the latter part of the 1950s as well, although it had earlier provoked strong reactions from staunch royalists. The anti-Royalist sentiment had taken a more violent expression when EIRR pillar boxes were being blown up in Scotland, although Blythman's song "Sky High Joe" set to "The Overgate" tune was designed to portray the perpetrator humorously as a folk hero.

In the "Parade" documentary already mentioned, Archie Fisher traces the various political and cultural sources of protest song. In it he discusses the political situation which gave rise to the anti-nuclear movement in Britain with defense expert Jim Wylie. Wylie comments:

Scotland became very important in terms of nuclear strategy to the West, and to the U.K. in particular, in the late 1950s and early 1960s. From 1955, Britain had been deploying its V-Bomber force, as an independent nuclear deterrent. By 1960, it was clearly obvious that the penetration capabilities of the V-Bombers were open to doubt. That being the case, a new delivery system was required. Britain found it could not procure its own missile...and it looked to the Americans, to Washington, to provide a delivery system. Though, in return, we agreed that the Americans could base some of their nuclear submarines in the West of Scotland, at Holy Loch, as we know. And that was from around 1961, '62. Now the Holy Loch and the whole Clyde Estuary is vitally important strategically, because it's quite a busy shipping lane, much less busy now than it was in the early Sixties, Scotland was very important as regards the European based elements of the American submarine-born nuclear deterrent. (From "Parade: As I Walked on the Road")

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was founded in 1958, and had started the famous Aldermaston ban-the-bomb marches that year. The

novelist J. B. Priestly and philosopher Bertrand Russell were among the intellectuals who lent their support to C.N.D. Between three and four thousand people emerged at Aldermaston at the end of the march this first year (Seeger 1960:14). In 1959, the numbers grew, and an organized effort was made to coordinate the musical part of the march. As Peter Seeger wrote:

It became a musical parade: choruses, jazz bands, bagpipers, steel bands. Folkdancers adapted their figures to the line of march. Thousands of songsheets passed from hand to hand till everyone knew by heart "The H-Bomb's Thunder" and other songs. The line of marchers (this time from Aldermaston to London) stretched for miles. 5,000 started. Four days later 25,000 entered Trafalgar Square.

Several new songs caught on in 1959. Again one used an American tune, "Buddy, Won't You Roll Down the Line," with new words by Ewan MacColl and Denise Keir (1960:15).

Some Scots were involved in the early marches, but the numbers grew when Scotland became directly involved as the site for the Polaris missiles. The American submarine Proteus arrived in the Holy Loch in the Spring of 1961, which was marked by many demonstrations and rallies. The energy of the protest movement dwindled in 1963 with the signing of the Test Ban Treaty.

Morris Blythman returned from a year in Turkey in 1958, when the revival in Glasgow was beginning to gain momentum. The anti-nuclear debate began to figure in local and Scottish politics, and gave Morris a new cause to write songs for. In 1968, Blythman wrote of the anti-nuclear songwriting campaign:

One of the most unusual features of this whole movement was the way in which many of the songs were born. Workshop techniques were employed and as a result, many of the songs had a communal authorship. In at least one song as many as 20 people contributed to the final production... I have always believed in mass creation.

...[The] songs almost immediately spilled over into folk-song clubs throughout the country as many of the main anti-Polaris singers toured as guests. Josh MacRae, Bobby Campbell, Nigel Denver, Gordon McCulloch, Ray Fisher, Hamish Imlach, Jackie O'Connor, were just a few who contributed to the process of dissemination... (1968:16).

The anti-nuclear songs in Scotland owed much to the American songs of protest and performers, which was freely acknowledged by Blythman and others involved with the song movement. Marion Blythman explains her husband's motivations and the influences he drew on:

...now people like the Weavers had a tremendously strong influence on the kind of singing that was done, the use of these ballads for a political purpose, and ones which were subsequently written, were written in the sort of style of the Weavers.

Morris always used to say his songs were really sort of musicalized versions of political slogans, and he was always looking for...a total marriage between the words and the music, so that the slogan actually got into people's heads. You know, "Ban Polaris, hallelujah! Ban Polaris, hallelujah!" All that kind of thing. So that when it was really thundered out, it was always like a slogan, and that was a deliberate sort of choice, and that was the way to write it. (SA 1986/169/B)

It was with conscious irony that some American tunes were used to carry the anti-Polaris songs, the target of which was American, a point noted by Munro (1984). "Ban Polaris - Hallelujah!" was set to "John Brown's Body", and "Paper Hankies" was set to "Yankee Doodle Dandy".

The anti-Polaris songs were published in several editions as a booklet entitled *Ding Dong Dollar* by the Glasgow Song Guild, which was, in fact, Morris Blythman. The booklets were sold for 6d. and were widely distributed at demonstrations and rallies. The American record company Folkways recorded an LP in 1962 of the "Ding Dong Dollar" songs (FD 5444), which is still available today, accompanied by the song lyrics and anonymously written notes, which are in fact Morris Blythman's work.

The humour, as well as the biting irony, of many of the songs is

inescapable. One of the most comic songs, "The Glesca Eskimoes", was written after demonstrators attempted to board the submarine depot ship *Proteus* in May, 1961, using canoes. Captain Laning of the *Proteus* gave the songwriters fodder when he

...fulminated against the C.N.D. demonstrators who paddled round his vessel in their canoes as "a bunch of eskimoes" [and] Morris seized on the word "eskimo" as a link with the Glasgow street song which includes:

"Up amang the Eskimoes,
Playing a game o dominoes,...

(McNaughtan 1982:32).

Part of the humour came from knowing what the "song behind the song" was, which was true of "The Glesca Eskimoes" and many of the other songs. Marion Blythman gives another example:

...there's a famous Forties song which is called "You'll No Shit Here!", you may have heard it. And that was taken right over and became "You'll No Sit Here", because the protesters all sat down, you know? "Doon at Ardnadam, sittin at the pier,/ When I heard the polis shout -- "Ye'll no sit here!" That just brought the house down because people, everybody knew it as a child's song, "Ye'll No Shit Here", so you didna have to say it... and that is really quite within the Scottish tradition, that sort of, as Janey [Buchan] says, that sort of dancing up with irony, not being offensive, but still saying in a definite way, you know, shucks to you kind of thing. So they were really songs, or protest songs of defiance, songs, like Woody Guthrie said, they weren't songs that put a man down. A lot of the English C.N.D. songs would have put you down, cause they were all sort of mournful, you know? "Have You Heard the H-Bomb Thunder". Where people up here were singing..."Ban Polaris Hallelujah!" (SA 1986/169/B)

Adam McNaughtan echoes Marion Blythman's sentiments about the differences between the other C.N.D. songs and the Glasgow anti-Polaris songs, observing that the latter "differed from British C.N.D. songs in being concrete, down-to-earth and comic" (1982:32).

Those involved had different impressions as young singers of the anti-Polaris demonstration era, the height of which was probably 1960-1962.

Ray Fisher comments:

I used to sing "The Misguided Missile and the Misguided Miss" with great enthusiasm, and oh I was...up in the forefront at the Holy Loch and I was singing at marches and things... I admit to not having a political understanding of what was going on. I didn't understand the political side of it at all. I was made to understand it...eventually in the process. But the music was used as a weapon...but I didn't realize at that time...that was what they were doing...

And at that time there were those who were writing the songs, there were those who were saying to you, explaining to you what it was all about, and then you sang the songs! You were the singer. It was almost like an assembly line, and "Oh, here's another one, we've got another song here, right, here's one, we'll do this one, "Oh Ye Can't Sit Here". [Sings] "Ah but I will sit here/ Oh but ye'll no sit here/ Ah but I will..." That was when they moved the wall and carried them all off and they were all physically removed from the...gates of the place where the subs were, and the poor sailors standing there...trying to keep their faces straight as possible. And watching Nigel Denver prancing around going "Ah but I will sit here" and these blokes trying to be on duty, you know, and be serious there. And singing things, "Oh Ye Cannae Spend a Dollar When You're Deid" into these blokes' ears and they're trying...not to be affected by what was happening... I thought it was very funny at the time. I thought, "Poor soul!", really... I was never ever physically shifted, myself. We became quite law-abiding after the eskimo carry-on, where they went out with the canoes, you know?... They [the demonstrators] sent in canoes in an effort to... well, our sub had surfaced and I think there was some people went out in canoes. How they got there I'm not quite sure, but...out of that came a song called "The Glasgow Eskimoes".

...Archie used to be there too. Yes, he used to sing, we used to sing. He played guitar and...see the thing about it was...we had one person would sing it, the main verses and things and everybody joined in the chorus... Josh [MacRae] would be in there, and Josh would be singing a lead in one thing and we'd all join in. And you felt if somebody forgot a verse somebody would come in with another verse. Or whoever remembered it, and it was...more identified as a group of protesting singers, that's what it was, it wasn't Ray and Archie Fisher, and it wasn't Josh MacRae, and it wasn't anybody. It was a group of Glaswegians who were singing songs of protest, with regard to the, having the American subs in out River Clyde. And the people who were...politically aware, were the ones who were saying to us, "We're not very good singers but we'd like you to sing these songs for us"... I would not sing songs that I had an aversion to...just for the sake of being a singer... I was somewhat manipulated and guided and heuched along and said "Do this", "Sing this", and "Do that". (SA 1986/116/A)

On another occasion, Ray commented on the humour of the anti-Polaris songs.

She remarks:

...I remember Janey Buchan at one point say...you couch what you want to say in humorous terms, and people will remember it. Because they will associate this element of humour which meant, we think it's serious, but we're not going to let people make us miserable over the seriousness of this... Like for example, when they did all the Ding Dong Dollar songs.... That was a very serious issue. But...at that time, the feeling was, do we stand there with out, like they do with the coffins nowadays, and draped in this and that, and the symbols and everything which says horror. Granted. The degree of horror at that time wasn't totally realized. So what you said was, it's too bad, but along with it you said "Ding dong dollar, everybody holler!/ Ye cannae spend a dollar when you're deid!" But when you actually listen to that and you suddenly realize, no, you cannae spend a dollar when you're deid. Now at that time people thought, oh just silly, singy-songy songs, but memorable! (SA 1986/113/B)

Archie felt differently about the demonstration singing and the anti-Polaris songs than Ray, and was less involved in the movement altogether.

He remarks about Morris Blythman's songwriting activities:

...he wrote very good slogan-y songs, catch-slang songs. Influenced as much by probably the early television jingle as anything else. And they were sloganistic, they weren't works of art, they were slanderous, and insulting and unfair and prejudiced, but very effective, because if once you start ridiculing something, you never think about it in the same way... he took all these sacred cows, and slaughtered them... I wasn't directly involved in anything to do with C.N.D. or the Holy Loch, apart from concerts that were based in the city to raise funds... Morris and Norman inevitably steered people, in a way, used them, used their political naivety and, in conjunction with their profession or their performing talents... but he [Morris] had his own little group, and so we were sort of blended in with that, and it became a movement in the first phase. Until probably C.N.D. and U.C.S. [Upper Clyde Shipyards] were the two main catalytic things that got people writing songs about our own personal issues, it wasn't until then that personal issue songs started to come out, about things that were directly related to us. (SS 13-5-86/A)

Clearly, Archie felt that the anti-Polaris movement was manipulating young singers and musicians, and chose not to be as involved as Ray, although she too sometimes questioned the motives of the organizers.

Bobby Campbell was in an entirely different situation from Ray and Archie, as he explains:

I went into John Brown's Shipyard in 1958. I was there till '64. Throughout the whole period of the anti-Polaris upsurge, that's

where I was, and like a lot of other young apprentices on the Upper Clyde, we were being politicized by various forces. Including the presence of the Polaris base. And I suppose what tended to affect me musically as well as politically. At the weekends, we were going to demonstrations in the West of Scotland, and at the Holy Loch. Meanwhile, during the week I was on one of the first of Britain's...nuclear missile-carrying destroyers. And it certainly set up a conflict within me, and gave rise to conflict between myself and a lot of my fellow workers, who weren't particularly interested in demonstrating about that issue. And many was the long row with lots of abuse... It first indicated to me the possible conflict between the high ideals of youth, and realism as seen by mature working people. (From "Parade: As I Walked on the Road")

Bobby's position of having left school to start working in the shipyards, and his growing involvement with union politics, the anti-Polaris movement, and some Labour and Communist Party activities, created an understandable but growing rift between himself and Archie, particularly as Archie did not see himself as a political singer. The Wayfarers were still doing some concerts in 1962, some of which were for Arnold Wesker's Centre 42, in which Wesker was trying to promote trades union sponsorship of the arts. Archie's view of the Centre 42 concerts is similar to his view of the demonstration singing. He says:

That was the last kind of political rush-around that anybody got. We all split away from it after that, cause we were really ripped off. We were used... We were more musically committed than politically committed... And the reason I backed off it was that I saw the whole...music thing that was exploited... that was dragging me off in one direction, which I couldn't really believe, cause I hadn't come to these conclusions myself...but people were saying, "Here's a singer that sings this song so he believes that and we should all believe it as well". And I was still singing things like "Spanish is a Loving Tongue" 'cause I liked the guitar chords! (SS 13-5-86/A)

Archie's friend Hamish Imlach, was a bit more like Ray in his attitude towards the demonstration singing. He remarks:

...I have to confess to being a dilettante, I sort of went along because my pals did! And I liked the songs, I liked the crack. I was at the first big demonstration at Dunoon, and singing away in the choruses, but I think Archie wasn't involved because he went to London then, just about the time that the anti-Polaris thing was going on. (SA 1986/28/A)

...At the first demonstration, the singers, there were ten of us,

with a banner, two guitars and a banjo, we thought we would have to go to Sandbank Pier. And after thirty, forty minutes, we were feeling pretty lonely, but the Americans were buying five, six, and ten copies of Morris's book, as souvenirs. Morris probably paid the price of printing that book because of the numbers the Americans bought. (From "Parade: As I Walked on the Road")

Archie was in fact in London for over a year about 1960–61, but it is clear from his own assessment of the anti-Polaris movement that this is not the primary reason for his lack of involvement. It is probable that many of the other young singers went along to the demonstrations for the same reason Hamish Imlach did; thus it was singers like Archie who, resisting the pressure to sing anti-Polaris songs, became conspicuous by their absence.

Anne Neilson was slightly younger than the Fishers, and she has yet another perspective on the anti-Polaris movement. She relates:

I did join C.N.D. and I went on a couple of marches...but I was not part of Morris's thing, I mean I saw them on the backs of lorries, as they performed during a march, and you know, they were the kind of things that we learned and learned very quickly ... There used to be little books called *Rebels Ceilidh Song Books*, and we had those while we were still at school. We got them elsewhere... there was a...political bookshop somewhere. And I remember asking Norman [Buchan], were there any books, and that was the kind of question that pushed him into putting out his own *101 Scottish Songs*, but people asked were there books, and could we get the words of other things and so on. And he had said that there were records and books in this shop, which I think was somewhere near Charing Cross. And I remember going and getting these *Ceilidh Song Books* in this place, and you sometimes got them on sale at concerts. And we learned all these Scottish republican things, you know, and we fairly enjoyed those. We used to go into Norman's room every lunchtime and just have a sing-along in there, and we were just trusted to do it... and we tended to sing things like that that we didn't know if he would accept, when he wasn't there, you see, we would sing these things like "The Scottish Breakaway" and so on, with great vigour. And incredible noise, no doubt...

The next kind of follow-up to that, there were two of those *Ceilidh Song Books* and some of them began to have anti-Polaris songs in them. And then there was the *Ding Dong Dollar Song Book* which came out, and that had much more of Morris's stuff in it. And the very first song on the first page was "Roch the Wind" ["The Freedom Come All Ye"]. Hamish's song. Which, you know, a whole lot of us learned then. And just, you know,

regarded as the song. I mean the other ones were just for singing and making a noise with, but that was the song that had the message. And although there were a lot of American type tunes, and American style songs, if you like, that was the one that counted, and I think everybody knew that even then. That the others were – they made a point in a quite different way, but they were ephemeral, you know, they were not going to last, and this was the one that was all, everything was pinned on this song, saying for all of us what we wanted to say. But that was a different group of people, you know, the ones who did this singing on the lorries and at the rallies... That was their job, if you like, to purvey these songs...

But when you saw people like Ray and Hamish [Imlach] singing at these C.N.D. types of things, and we all joined in just as lustily as they did, I think possibly some of the attraction was just the sheer pleasure in making a lot of loud and rhythmic noise, and being part of a very large group, that was all supporting this music. With harmonies and all the rest of it. Because, you know, I mean Morris's songs were always very very singable. And they had great tunes, I mean they were often Orange tunes, but they were great tunes, and they had great choruses. And folk really belted them. And I would think that, you know, if somebody like Ray or Hamish looks back now and can separate out the strands, it may well be that they feel that yes, I was singing it just because I enjoyed singing it, and it was another place to go and sing. And okay, you only sang those songs at that place, but it was still singing, and singing was what you liked to do. And I think there was some of that. I don't think there were an awful lot of people who were the singers who were politically very alert... (SA 1987/92/A)

Anne Neilson's views of the protest songs and the demonstration singing are closest to Ray's, and reflect more than a little of Norman Buchan's attitudes, which is hardly surprising. She makes the point, as do Ray and Hamish Imlach, that regardless of personal political views, the enjoyment of singing the songs was an important motivation for being part of the marches and demonstrations. The *Rebels Ceilidh Song Book* which she mentions was published, like the Ding Dong Dollar Songs, in various editions, but in this case by the Bo'ness Rebels Literary Society, which was closely linked with the Scottish National Party.

Anne Neilson teamed up with Ian Davison and his wife Karen in the 1960s to perform as a group, but in the height of the anti-Polaris era, Davison

was heavily involved with C.N.D. His perception of Morris Blythman and the demonstration singing brings in yet another perspective:

...I think the nationalist element was new, it was certainly new to me. I'd been brought up in a socialist family, and the idea of nationalism as a positive political influence was strange to me. I resented it a bit at first, it seemed to me that Morris and the anti-Polaris singers were in fact exploiting C.N.D. about which I was very serious-minded. And still am. It seemed to me they were exploiting it for a sectarian and nationalist cause. But I gradually came to see that it was quite legitimate to harness a feeling of local pride against the imposition of a foreign military base. (From "Parade: As I Walked on the Road")

There were singers who stayed outside the anti-Polaris movement altogether, like Andy Hunter, who by this time was at university in Aberdeen. He and Morris Blythman had an amicable parting of the ways over his refusal to participate in the political singing. Adam McNaughtan was another singer who, at that time, stayed clear of the protest activities and singing. He comments:

...Basically Andy and I would have described ourselves as apolitical, I think. But, I mean, I wrote "Ye Cannae Ban Polaris when it's Raining" and such ditties, but I mean they were just laughing at something that happened, which is what I still do. But, I mean Morris's influence on everybody was marked. Whether you were on his side or not. Because he, I mean he encouraged everybody to write or sing, you know, one or the other. (SA 1986/26/A)

In many ways the most significant musical consequence of the anti-Polaris protest era in Glasgow was to make young singers and musicians decide what their musical priorities were. The musicians who were among the chief participants in the demonstration singing with Morris Blythman, such as Josh MacRae, Nigel Denver, Bobby Campbell, Gordon McCulloch, and Alastair MacDonald, have in intervening years tended towards a repertoire of political songs, having been politicized by the anti-Polaris movement. The political focus changed in the 1960s, turning to Scottish nationalism and trades union issues, and ultimately to the Vietnam War, so the song repertoire changed accordingly. Nuclear warfare has re-emerged as a dominant socio-political

concern worldwide in recent years, and some of the anti-Polaris songs are being heard in updated form.

The singers orientated towards traditional material, like Ray, Archie, Adam, Andy, and Anne, considered singing the most important priority, and while they could not fully appreciate this at the time, that in itself was a political stance of sorts. The differences in priorities held by the young musicians inevitably contributed to estrangement between them, as in the case of Bobby Campbell and Archie. Regardless of the political views that young folk revivalists held at the time, there is no doubt that the anti-Polaris movement had a unique influence on the Scottish folk revival which distinguished it from the English revival. The impact of the Scottish protest movement on repertoire, songwriting, and performance techniques is indisputable.

The "folk scene" gradually evolved into a community, or what Boyes sees as a sub-culture with its own vocabulary, "distinctive dress", and "preferred styles and content of music, instrumentation, song and dance" in the 1960s and 1970s (1985:50). The foundations of this community or sub-culture certainly lie in the developments we have discussed in this chapter. A re-examination of the characteristics of the English folk revival as seen by Boyes, given at the beginning of this chapter, reveals that they are by no means exclusive to the English revival, but in fact apply equally to the Scottish revival. The character and texture of the Scottish revival, however, was different in many ways, largely due to the dynamic influence of three men: Norman Buchan, Morris Blythman, and Hamish Henderson, who inspired the young revival singers like Ray and Archie Fisher in the late 1950s and 1960s, who in turn influenced the younger generation of revival singers in the 1970s, and continue to influence singers in the 1980s.

Replying to a letter I had written to him, Pete Seeger succinctly summed up his impressions of the Scottish folk scene from his early performances in the country, with which I would like to conclude this chapter. He wrote:

I sang in Glasgow in 1959 and two years later again in several cities of Scotland and first got to know of the work of Ray and Archie... What I was impressed with was the strength and liveliness of the feel of Scottish "folk singing". It seemed to me that the ancient strength gave it not only a strong traditional base but showed how it could participate in contemporary affairs. The nearest thing I could compare it to would be some of the African traditions, which share these qualities, although they are very different kinds of music.

Whereas some parts of the world have strong traditional bases but don't have the ability to relate to modern times, other parts of the world have strong traditions of relating music to modern times but very little sense of history to go along with it.

Musicians in Scotland are lucky people. Poets too.

Notes for Chapter 3

1. Bobby Campbell refers to Helene Hanff's popular book, *84 Charing Cross Road*, first published in 1973.
2. Folksong Workshop was started up as a "traditional" offshoot of the Glasgow Folk Song Club in 1961, according to Norman Buchan, but none of my informants were able to place the different Glasgow folk clubs in a precise chronological order. Ray may possibly be conflating two clubs in her memory, as Cisco Houston, the American folksinger she mentions as visiting Glasgow, toured Scotland in 1960, shortly before his untimely death from cancer.
3. Ray Fisher, "A Tremendous Sort of Feeling: An Interview with Howard Glasser, October 3, 1973", *Sing Out!* 22(January-February): 2-8.
4. The late Arthur Argo was grandson of the great Aberdeenshire song collector, Gavin Greig. As Greig was and is very much one of Hamish Henderson's heroes, it was highly propitious that he should find Greig's descendant in this way.
5. The radio series is entitled "Parsley, Sage and Politics: The Lives and Music of Peggy Seeger and Ewan MacColl", produced by Mary Orr and Michael O'Rourke for National Public Radio [U.S.A.], 1985. It consists of 9 parts on three cassettes, and is available in Britain from Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger.

CHAPTER 4

THE FOLK REVIVAL IN SCOTLAND 2: THE FISHERS AND THE "FOLK SCENE" FROM THE 1960S UP TO THE PRESENT

In the previous chapter, we considered the characteristics of and key influences on the Scottish folk revival in the 1950s and early 1960s, and how Archie and Ray Fisher emerged as representative revival singers of the time. In this chapter, we examine how Archie and Ray developed their performing careers during this period.

We will also examine the involvement of Joyce, Cindy, Audrey, and Cilla Fisher in the revival, and see how Cilla, the youngest of the family, became a professional performer, and ultimately an important figure in the revival. In the previous chapter, many developments in the revival overlap, and it is difficult to discuss them in a strict chronological order for this reason, so I have chosen again to group topics in what I hope is a logical order.

The Folk Revival and the Media

It is necessary to go back to 1958 to discuss a very important development in the revival which was to have a significant impact on Ray and Archie Fisher, the introduction of folkmusic as a regular part of television programming. In the late 1950s, the commercial Scottish Television channel

was starting up. When a producer decided they needed some folkmusic for a programme, he contacted Norman Buchan. Buchan agreed to find some singers and bring them to the station for an audition. He rounded up Josh MacRae, Moyna Flanagan, Rena Swankie, and his own brother-in-law Enoch Kent. Buchan relates:

They were all solo singers. We didn't believe in group singing. They were just four of the folk who came around the house. So went and did this audition, and the bloke didn't like it, just too authentic! But there was another guy had come in to listen to the audition...who was about to do a different programme called "Jigtime". A programme of Scottish country dance and music, not unlike the "White Heather Club", but not nearly so formal... Then they said they'd want them [the singers] on as from next week, whenever it was. And I said, "Well who do you want?"... They said, "All four". And I said, "You mean singing four songs?" "No, no". What we did was to let them all sing solo. And then we did a group song together at the end, which was a mistake, and they liked the group song. The group song just consisted of people just taking an individual solo verse and everybody joining in the chorus, I think somebody had a harmony, and that was about it, but it was by no means an arranged group.

And they were stuck as a group!... They'd never been on stage, let alone being on television or anything like that. Now at one point on this country dance thing they had bales of straw and an imitation barn, you see? And the two girls were sitting on the bale of hay, and then they wanted the two boys, Enoch and Josh..., they were to come over the bale of straw and sit beside them. And in the middle of the rehearsal, the caption writers suddenly came streaming down and said, "What's the name of the group?" And I said, "We haven't got a name". They said, "But you must have a name!"... And I said, "Reivers". And I don't know yet where I got the name from, but it was an inspired name, the Reivers. So the Reivers we were. Just like that... the Reivers, I think, was an echo of the Weavers on the one hand, but also the idea about raiding, raiding for songs. So we went on doing that programme for about a year. I didn't like it. I became employed as folkmusic advisor to STV for a year, and I advised them, and they ignored me. And the group were never too happy, it never took off, really. (SA 1986/22/B)

It becomes immediately evident from Buchan's story that television producers were quite willing to make folkmusic fit a somewhat contrived format, rather than seeing how songs could be used in a straightforward performance context. This tendency is not exclusive to televised folkmusic, but it has persisted through both British and American television programmes utilising or

featuring folkmusic, and can be seen in current productions. Broadcaster and folksinger Jimmie Macgregor feels that some television programming of folkmusic reflected and still reflects the failure of the producers to understand "the medium of the folksinger" (SA 1986/130/B).

The appearance of the Reivers on STV's "Jigtime" was not without benefit to the folk revival, as the singers themselves were talented, and the television acted as a channel of dissemination of folksongs to people who were unaware of the folk revival. Archie Fisher played as a backup guitarist with the Reivers several times as a replacement when Moyna Flanagan left, and also stood in for Rena Swankie. He sums up his impression of the Reivers' television performances:

...I used to think they were simplistic, and that what they were doing was fairly, you know, boring. But because it was television, and because it was presented as this sort of Humpty Dumpty type [material], everything was two minutes long... (SA 1986/167/B)

Ray felt more in awe of the Reivers, as she says, "they were in a different league because they were recording, they'd made records" (SA 1986/167/B). However, it was not long before Ray and Archie were appearing as a duo on various STV and BBC television programmes. STV auditioned singers for their magazine programme "Here and Now", and Ray and Archie were selected. They performed on this programme for about a year in 1960-61, while Ray was attending Jordanhill College of Education (see Plate 10).

Archie recalls the effects the television work had on them:

What it did was, it gave us the incentive to adopt and change song, and well, we had to manicure the songs for the medium, that was the phrase that was used by one critic, I think, which was probably Norman... They didn't know how long this magazine programme would run, and when it came to the out, which was our bit, or they may have had a video piece or a piece they could do that they knew the timing of, and...we were told at very short notice sometimes to cut a verse. Or stretch it, by adding another chorus, and so we'd give them the full text for camera script, and

then just before, the floor manager would say, "Cut that verse, and cut that verse" or "Cut this, and do that".

It gave us a repertoire. I remember once writing it all out, and we had about twenty six songs. The rest of them were songs that we were asked to repeat... sometimes we did two songs. (SA 1986/167/B)

Ray recalls:

...At that time, they were doing "Tonight" down in London, on the television... So that the Glasgow one ["Here and Now"]... had taken the lead, I think, initially from the London "Tonight" programme. And that was Robin Hall and Jimmie Macgregor and the McEwans... (SA 1986/167/B)

Ray and Archie's work on "Here and Now" led to other television and radio work, particularly for the producer Ben Lyons at the BBC in Glasgow. They did the radio programmes "Heather Mixtures" and "Come Thursday". One of the programmes they are best remembered for was the "Hoot'nanny" television series produced by W. Gordon Smith which ran about 1963-64.

Ray and Archie recently discussed their early television work and the problems it raised:

- R: ...Norman [Buchan] said to me, I remember him saying to me very seriously and absolutely sincerely, "Ray, you'll do well on radio, but you're not televisable!"
- A: Because of your glasses.
- R: 'Cause of the glasses, that...I'd do well on radio, but because of my glasses I wouldn't do well on television...
- A: You did some shows without glasses, I remember.
- R: ...Oh, that was murder, 'cause it, they kept telling me to look at the light, they'd say, "Now, you've got to look at the camera with the light", and when I took my glasses off, it was a mass of lights in the studio, all wee lights here and there, and...they would say, "Hold it, hold it, Ray! Look to your right, please!" And then I heard someone say in the overtalk, "Give her back her glasses, for crying out loud", you know, "so's that we can do it", and they let me put my glasses on.
- A: ...We weren't rehearsing, some days we would turn up at the studio, we knew which songs we were going to do, and we'd rehearse it during the lineup and all the rest of it for cameras.
- R: And by the time we'd done it three times, we knew it very well!
- A: But the other thing was, that sometimes we didn't know it very well, and as I explained, the first night Ray developed a rubato, because we used to look into each other's eyes and lip read...
- R: I think if we hadn't sung it very often... I had to keep watching him and phrasing it...

- A: And that was alright 'cause...Ray was singing lead, and I was singing harmony, you could sort of anticipate the beat, and Ray would know the first word just like a fraction of a second, but because we used to look into each other's eyes, people used to think we were a very affectionate pair, and that we were married!... It was an ordeal of fire!
- R: But what it did was that you tended to have to think of extending the repertoire, because potentially if you wanted to do this sort of thing, you had to, it was a motivation sometimes for extending the repertoire.
- A: But we got cabaret gigs out of it as well, remember, we were always invited to...sort of dinners and business dos. Didn't do a lot of them but we did several of them. (SA 1986/167/B)

Clearly, the singing techniques required for television were different from those used in ceilidhs and folk clubs, and the television producers "manicured" the songs. The experience of singing for television was nonetheless important for Ray and Archie in the development of their performing personalities and manner of presentation, a subject which will be examined more closely in Chapters 6 and 7.

One of the legacies of the various early television programmes using folkmusic is that some performers like the Scottish group the Corries, tailored their songs and performances to suit the medium as a sort of venue, which created what could be regarded as another genre of folkmusic, the ingredients of which were, in Archie's words, "nothing more than three minutes, uptempo, bright smile, real nice clothes" (SS 13-5-86/B). Jean Redpath comments:

Television has made the Corries... The Corries are in a peculiar position because they have managed to project the rougher-hewn image, very slick, but rougher hewn. In other words, they're put across a "non-kilted" variety of Scottish music which doesn't fall into the "tartan treasure bag" that I abhor. It's just a different tradition, but they've almost created a tradition of their own, as traditional music which has...some of the rough edges knocked off for public consumption on television, thereby satisfying the broader spectrum of producers, who you know probably would never have the guts to put on a Lizzie Higgins half-hour. (SA 1985/214)

It is interesting to note that Redpath distinguishes between the Corries' smoother versions of traditional material, and the sentimental, Kailyardish school of Scottish music, or "tartan treasure bag" as she calls it, which was yet

another style of televised and broadcasted music that gained popularity in the 1950s and 1960s. The Corries are still doing television programmes very reminiscent of the 1960s, in which they perform a fair number of lusty chorus songs and moody love songs, dressed in old-fashioned shirts and leather jerkins.

Another facet of televised folkmusic was the fact that it brought songs from within the folk revival to a far larger audience, as mentioned already. Jimmie Macgregor, who worked with fellow Glaswegian Robin Hall on television for a number of years as well as performing in concerts, comments:

...We worked on a programme called the "Tonight" programme from '60 to '64... It had nine million viewers in the summer, and about eleven million in the winter. Now I don't know if there was any other programme that had more than that,...and we took a lot of flak from some of the "folkies" who...in those days they thought anyway if you appeared on television or radio, you had automatically sold out...but we were singing the same songs. The only difference was we were singing them to nine million people instead of, you know, twenty eight in a folk club... Some people will argue that it damaged folkmusic, for whatever reasons, but it certainly brought a different kind of song to a mass audience. SA 1986/129/B

It is interesting that people who remember Ray and Archie Fisher appearing on the various television and radio programmes do not feel that the Fishers had compromised their material. Ray and Archie appear to have been perceived as sincere and committed singers from the start of their media exposure.

The Folk Revival Outside Glasgow: Edinburgh and Beyond

At the end of the 1950s, the revival had firmly established itself in Scotland, particularly in the urban centres, since the cities were where the venues for folkmusic were, apart from people's homes. Aberdeen, Edinburgh,

and Glasgow were the most visible centres of the revival, but in the 1960s, folk clubs began to spring up in many more places. The increased number of venues for folkmusic accelerated its professionalization, and created a "folk circuit". Ray and Archie developed and refined their performing techniques as they began singing not only in Glasgow but in other folkmusic venues.

In Edinburgh, the founding of the Edinburgh University Folk Song Society in 1958 had created a new venue for folkmusic, but as Hamish Henderson remarks, "there were house parties in Edinburgh too" (SA 1987/22/A). Jean Redpath, who was a student at Edinburgh University in the late 1950s, recalls the folk events of the time:

...Hamish, of course, was pretty well the hub of that particular wheel in Edinburgh. And through him I met Ella Ward...at whose house we had so many of the late ceilidhs. And I think it was very shortly thereafter than the Howff started up..., the thing that Roy Guest got going. And about then I suppose that I was exposed to - makes it sound like flu! - that I was exposed to the Glasgow contingent... Ray and Archie... (SA 1985/214)

The Howff was a folk club in the High Street across from St. Giles Cathedral which had started out as an Edinburgh Festival venue for folkmusic called the Sporranslitters in 1959. The Howff is remembered by many Edinburgh folkmusic enthusiasts like journalist Alastair Clark, and singing sisters Maggie and Liz Cruickshank, as the place where they "discovered" folkmusic.

Archie Fisher recalls that the Howff was his first "out-of-Glasgow experience"

...with Ray and Bobby. In fact, we had such a short repertoire we did about an hour set, and then they ran on so we had to sing half the songs again. And nobody seemed to worry! There was a great mixer-maxter of Weavers and Woody Guthrie, and Scottish and street songs and things. And Len [Partridge] was involved in that. He was a bit like me... he was more interested in guitar. And the voice was a secondary thing. (SS 13-5-86/B)

Hamish Henderson and Norman Buchan were among the revival mentors who went to the Howff during its existence. Norman sometimes transported several of the young Glasgow singers to Edinburgh for the evening, as Ray recalls. He remembers an incident when Ray was singing at the Howff, which to him demonstrated her powerful ability to communicate through her singing even at this early stage in her career:

I remember in Edinburgh, at a thing we called the Howff, late night during the Edinburgh Festival...and three guys came in off the street, it was in the High Street, and I said, "Oh God, there's trouble here", because they were clearly looking for something very different than what they got. And Ray started singing a Leadbelly song, "It's a Bourgeois Town", you know, "Washington is a Bourgeois Town". And the leader of these three guys, they're all standing at the back, and Janey, my wife was helping and was saying, "Look, I think there's going to be trouble from these three". When she [Ray] finished, this bloke turned to the other two and said, "That is the best singer I've ever heard!" It was absolute statement like that. (SA 1986/22/A)

Like other folk clubs in unlicensed premises, the Howff did not serve alcohol, although it permitted people to bring in their own. The Cruickshanks recall that some of the audience would go to the nearest pub in the interval. By this time, the Forrest Hill Bar on Forrest Road, known to all folk enthusiasts as "Sandy Bell's", had become a pub where musicians and singers gathered, starting a tradition of "session" folkmusic in pubs in Edinburgh, which continues to flourish in the present at pubs such as The Fiddlers Arms in the Grassmarket, and the Royal Oak in Infirmary Street. (A change in the ownership of Sandy Bell's in 1986, accompanied by the addition of a jukebox and electronic game machines has now made it a less suitable pub for "sessions".)

When the Howff ceased to operate in 1961, two other folkmusic venues in Edinburgh soon came into being, the Waverley Bar on St. Mary's Street, and the Crown Inn on Lothian Street. Ray and Archie, Gaelic singer Dolina

Maclennan, Robin Gray, and Bill Hill were among the paid performers at the Waverley. Maggie Cruickshank and her sister Liz Cruickshank Barkess reminisce about the Waverley:

- LB: Now we immediately moved from the Howff down to the Waverley Bar after the Howff.
- MC: 'Cause Archie used to sing there, initially.
- LB: Was that the reason we went down? And it was fantastic then. The place hasn't changed, the decor is still exactly the same as it was. But we used to really listen, it wasn't a club, but everybody, it was just an unspoken law - it was quiet, you did not speak.
- MC: But all that, it was like a club though... If you wanted to talk, you went to the downstairs bar.
- LB: Mm hm. There was no stage, they've now got a stage and a microphone, there was none of this, you just stood by the fireplace and went 'round the room... (SA 1986/156/B)

While Archie was living in Edinburgh, he joined together with some other singers and musicians to start another club, the Crown Inn on Lothian Street, not to be confused with the the Edinburgh University club which later merged with it, taking the name "The Crown". Archie and Davy Graham's sister, Jill Doyle, were the chief organizers, as Archie explains:

We used a pool of singers in Edinburgh at the time. It was mainly me, Ray wasn't involved too much in that. It was Jill and I, and Jill's brother Davy Graham, who was up for awhile. And we had Robin [Williamson] and we booked our guests. We started off actually at the Festival, as a Festival club, in the Camera Obscura. (SA 1987/98/A)

Bert Jansch and Owen Hand were other resident performers. Archie sees that as a direct result of the Crown, "the musical standards in Edinburgh accelerated" (SA 1986/167/B).

In 1961, singer and songwriter John Watt started the Howff club in Dunfermline, which became a very popular traditional music club, along with the Kirkcaldy Folk Club, held in the "Elbow Room", formed in 1962. The St. Andrews Folk Club was also founded in 1962, although this date is disputed as the folk club grew out of a jazz club and a guitar club which already existed in 1961 and earlier. Fife thus became an important part of the folk club circuit in

the early 1960s, since it boasted three venues. The folk clubs were not paying performers much at this point, but there was more paid work in the early 1960s than there had been in the late 1950s.

The Fishers: Early Recordings

In the early 1960s, Ray and Archie Fisher were not only actively performing as a duo on television and in the folk clubs, but they also released their first record, a Topic Records EP, in 1961. Entitled "Far Over the Forth" (TOP 67), the EP had four songs on it, "The Twa Corbies", "Kilbogie", "The Night Visiting Song", all accompanied by Archie's crisp guitar work, and the title track, "Far Over the Forth", sung unaccompanied by Ray. The choice of material reflected their increasing focus on Scottish traditional songs, although they were both still performing American material as well.

Eric Winter's review of the EP which appeared in the December 1961 issue of *Sing* was less than kind, and his criticisms were not only unjustified, but in fact quite ludicrous. He wrote:

Ray and Archie Fisher, of the Glasgow folk song club should perhaps have thought again before rushing on to wax.

For instance, the title song is a big ballad song in stature, and Ray Fisher is no Jeannie Robertson. She does not have the maturity to sing it. The result is monotonous and shallow.

The Twa Corbies set to an old Breton tune is spoiled by bad diction-- a great pity when the words are so moving.

Kilbogie and The Night Visiting Song are both spoiled by tarted-up accompaniment and Kilbogie by a weird vocal arrangement which, again, seems monotonous. In both these songs, the guitar is used inappropriately (Winter 1961:39).

Hamish Imlach recalls the effect the review had on Ray and Archie:

"That had a big effect on them playing as a duo, because it really put Ray off" (SA 1986/28/B). He personally felt the record "was lovely", and that the reviewer was "looking for some record made by someone who wasn't a personal friend of his to slag" (SA 1986/28/B).

A listening to the record confirms that Winter made groundless criticisms, which according to Hamish Imlach, Winter later regretted with embarrassment. The guitar accompaniment is always tasteful, the harmonies pleasing, and the diction on "The Twa Corbies" is quite clear, indicating perhaps that Winter had difficulty understanding Scots words in the song. One can hear echoes of Jeannie Robertson in Ray's rendition of "Far Over the Forth", but her youth and immaturity do not make it "monotonous and shallow". The recording captures a transitional phase Ray went through as she synthesized what she had learned from Jeannie Robertson into her own distinct singing style, a subject which will be discussed in greater depth in Chapters 5 and 6. Winter's critical review of the EP was an unfortunate start to the recording career of Ray and Archie, but the record documents their style and repertoire of that era and affords a point of comparison with their singing styles in the present.

Ray and Archie were also recorded during their performances at the Edinburgh Folk Festival in 1964, which Decca Records later released on two volumes of various festival performers (Decca LK 4546, 4547). Waverley Records released two albums, "The Hoot'nanny Show Vols. 1 and 2" (ZLP 2025, 2032), in 1964 which included recordings of Ray and Archie Fisher from their appearances on the "Hoot'nanny" television programme.

The Fishers recorded a family record in 1965, which was released by Topic Records in 1966. "The Fisher Family" LP (Topic 12T137) included Archie,

Ray, Joyce, Cindy, Audrey, and Cilla, and featured different combinations of the family members singing both traditional and contemporary songs. The LP documents the family repertoire of the mid-1960s, and the singing styles of the individual Fishers.

Arthur Argo, who reviewed "The Fisher Family" for the Scottish folk magazine *Chapbook*, recommended the record but criticized the inclusion of three MacColl Radio Ballad songs "excellent though they may be" and a "hackneyed piece like 'Joy of My Heart'" (Argo 1966[?]:24). He remarks:

I suspect many people would have valued this record even more had the Fishers sung other traditional material as well as they do "The Rigs O' Rye", "What's Poor Mary Weeping For", "Bonny Lassie O", "The Birken Tree", and "Eence Upon a Time"... The criticisms are made because any family setting as high as the Fishers must be judged at an equally high level... (24).

Argo's criticisms were of a friendly nature, having known Archie, Ray, and other members of the family for some time, nor did his remarks affect the Fishers to the point of discarding repertoire. The implications of Argo's review, however, were that the Fishers should sing only traditional material, thus expressing Argo's critical bias.

The Career of Archie Fisher

Instrumental Influences

American instrumentalists such as Big Bill Broonzy, Erik Darling, Pete Seeger, and Ralph Rinzler were among those first emulated by Archie Fisher, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Hamish Imlach remarks that "Archie took it

very seriously, and worked hard" increasing his competence on both instruments (SA 1986/28/A). He adds that Archie "doesn't play banjo now at all... Once other people took it up, he dropped it!" (SA 1986/28/A). In the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, Archie was working on both guitar and banjo as accompanying instruments. In the winter of 1959-1960, he was working at the Citizens' Theatre in Glasgow, playing guitar for a production. He relates:

...I was doing background music for a play called "One More River", which had a calypso singer in the cast and he would just mime the guitar, and I would play the guitar from the pits. And I had a script that said "Sound Effects" on the top of it. And the next play, there was somebody played a banjo in a sort of punt...one of these sort of Victorian things, and I had to play the banjo from the pits. There were about two plays running side by side, that meant I was getting, being used as a musician, so they needed an assistant stage manager, so I became that as well... I used to get into a taxi at the end of the show...on Saturday night...and wheech up to Hamish's [Imlach] - with a carryout, and the session was always on a Saturday night. (SA 1986/167/A)

It was at Hamish Imlach's house that Archie met up with Martin Carthy, then an assistant stage manager at the Alhambra in Glasgow, and later to become one of the finest English revival singers and guitarists. Hamish Imlach remembers that Martin had recently taken some guitar lessons with Peggy Seeger: "At that time we hadn't heard of Peggy Seeger, so Martin was our first introduction to Peggy Seeger" (SA 1986/28/B).

Not long after this meeting, Archie went to work in London, moving to Edinburgh after his return to Scotland. This move was to bring him into contact with guitarists who later became relatively famous: Davy Graham, the blues guitarist, and Bert Jansch, later of the group Pentangle, in particular. Journalist and music critic Alastair Clark remarks of Davy Graham's influence:

He was...the living embodiment of everything I'd been trying to say, that jazz and folkmusic and pop music could live together happily...that you could take traditional folksongs and blues and play jazz, and make it all sound as if it was coming from the same person, and it all hung together... He was a tremendous influence on the instrumental side, because he was so good on

guitar, and he had found so many things to do on guitar that he soon attracted the attention of some of the young budding guitarists, Bert Jansch is one obvious name in that connection. And at the same time in Edinburgh and Glasgow, Archie Fisher was having a big influence on the singing side. Davy Graham wasn't much of a singer, but that's where Archie's presence was felt, I think... (SA 1986/118/B)

At one point, Archie shared a flat with Robin Williamson, who later went on to form the seminal group The Incredible String Band with Clive Palmer and Mike Heron. Archie played with both Robin Williamson and Mike Heron individually, as well as performing with Ray and occasionally Hamish Imlach during this period.

The Irish Experience

One of the most profound influences on Archie's repertoire and style from the 1960s on has been that of Irish singers, some of whom lived in or visited Glasgow frequently, like Joe Heaney, Dominic Behan, and Paddy Tunney.

Archie relates:

Joe Heaney was in Glasgow, and he was a great source of material for the slightly more traditional orientated people, but nobody had attempted to use his style... The first *fleadh ceol* [Irish music festival] I went to, Kilrush, that would've been early Sixties as well. It was an exodus of Scots who had heard about this Irish festival. And there was no real festivals in Scotland.

...The Irish [experience] is very very important because we saw for the first time as club revivalist urban singers, a national and rural culture, especially in the competitions, and a spontaneous pub culture, because the Corries, the Dubliners, and the Clancys for the first time came together at that festival. Now the Dubliners were not quite a band yet in Dublin, they were indigenous Irish musicians. The Corries had become television-orientated, and very popular Scottish - this was when there were three of them, still with [Paddy] Bell. And the Clancys had made their name in America as emigre Irish musicians, with Tommy Makem from the North...

And in that [festival] was me, there was Luke Kelly, and bits and

pieces of singers from all over the place that had all suddenly come together in one place. And we sang our hearts out all weekend, and we sang our stuff to them, and they sang their stuff to us, and the irony of it was that I sang Joe Heaney songs to them that they'd never heard before. Because...I'd really thought he was one of the finest singers, still is one of the finest singers I've ever heard in my life. And I was singing to the Dubliners, and to the Clancys, and to the Corries, who hadn't had any connection with the Irish thing in Scotland. I was singing them the English songs of Joe Heaney in his style, the family style of singing there, which was another strange kind of cross-fertilization that happened.

And at that time I think Liam [Clancy]...was gathering the songs 'cause he'd been working with a collector, think he worked with Hamish [Henderson] in Barra as well... about '63, '62, '63. And so there was this, I mean I remember for months afterwards, I could still hear the jigs and reels entirely, ringing at the back of my head, it had gone in that deeply. It was saturation. Absolute wall-to-wall music. Of a very high standard to what we were used to. And it was free. It wasn't anything that was marketed, or anything private, it was just bursting like a mushroom. And that was before the *fleadhs* got too sort of mobbed out and messy. And it was very rose-coloured spectacles, I'm sure, because I'm sure they were mobbed and messy as well. And I was with an Irish girl at the time, who was a musician too and had a tape recorder, she had one of the early Uhers, and managed to take a lot of it back, including a lot of sessions...with a load of songs that nobody had ever heard of before, which gave me, if you like, something to work from in terms of material... But that was the best, the biggest transfusion of anything that I'd had to date since, probably since the Weavers. That started it off.

Paddy Tunney was in Glasgow then. And that was another thing. We had a great combination of Paddy Tunney and Joe Heaney... well, he [Paddy] was a regular visitor to Glasgow at least, 'cause he used to perform. I was astonished that somebody with such a bad voice was such a good singer! (SS 13-5-86/B)

It is immediately apparent from Archie's words that the Irish traditional singers, and the experience of attending the *fleadh*, affected him tremendously. His acquaintance with Liam Clancy, dating from this period, ultimately led to his later work with the Clancys in the late 1970s as well.

English singer, collector, and founder member of the St. Andrews Folk Club, Peter (Pete) Shephard, who has lived mainly in Fife since 1960, feels that the Irish influence on Scottish folkmusic is largely ignored in commentary on

the revival. Like Archie, Pete Shephard went to some of the Irish *fleadhs* or festivals in the 1960s, and was inspired to find "ordinary people...just performing what was part of their culture" (SA 1986/171/A). Shephard comments:

...There was a great influence from Ireland into Scottish music...because the Clancy Brothers, for example, much frowned upon by the purists, were very influential in the early Sixties in Scotland. It was they that started the Corries, undoubtedly, and the Corries...have been influential, although again, not liked by the purists... Certainly when I started singing at the St. Andrews Folk Club in '62 or '63, whenever it was, we sang some Clancy Brothers songs, but we kind of didn't like the way they did it. But I mean, we knew they had some great songs. And we also went on to meet, when they came across to Edinburgh for one of the festivals, various people like Luke Kelly and Barney McKenna, the great banjo player, who went on, both of them, to form the Dubliners. And Luke is an absolute superb singer.

And we also met, living in Glasgow at the time, Joe Heaney, the great Irish traditional singer. And people who know of him through England and Ireland and the States don't seem to realize that he lived in Scotland in Glasgow for most of the Sixties, or at least the early part of the Sixties. And he was very influential in the Scottish folk scene... he came, you know, as a guest at St. Andrews and Dundee and various other clubs. And a lot of people including myself copied his style of singing at that time, you know, learned his songs and in doing so, sang with that kind of Irish, West of Ireland nasal style that he had. And I would say Archie probably copied some of his style as well. (SA 1986/171/A)

Seeing how the Irish festivals operated ultimately sparked Shephard to help organize the 1966 Blairgowrie Festival, which brought together traditional singers like the Stewart Family of Blairgowrie, and revival singers like Archie Fisher. The Blairgowrie Festival led to the formation of the Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland (T.M.S.A.), which continues to sponsor similar festivals in different parts of Scotland.

Development as a Solo Performer

Archie was a frequent and popular performer both on his own and with

Ray in the three Fife folk clubs, as well as in the Edinburgh clubs in the early Sixties. He comments:

...That was a very ambient situation to be in, there was a lot of things happening in Fife. John Watt, of course, he'd been running the Dunfermline club [the Howff]. So you had Kirkcaldy [The Elbow Room], Dunfermline, St. Andrews, was a nice triad of places like three days a week, that you could actually have platform, or sometimes bookings. And then there was Falkirk, which was a good-going club at the time. And Edinburgh, which was the Waverley Bar, which Ray and I used to play in, which was the other venue which we pursued... There were a few other things in between there, but that was the most consistent line of income. In fact, Ray and I got booked fortnightly at the Howff in Dunfermline for about three months... Our main income came from that and playing in the Waverley Bar once a week. So we were sort of living off seven pound ten a week, between us! Then we started the Crown. (SA 1987/98/A)

Because Archie led a more peripatetic existence than Ray, spending time in London, Edinburgh, and Fife after leaving Glasgow, it was a natural outcome that he should develop his talents as a solo performer as well as performing with Ray and other musicians. Hamish Imlach analyses Archie's development as a professional musician:

...I don't think he realized at the time that he could make a living performing between teaching guitar and running a club, and doing this, that, and the other... None of us thought there was a living to be made out of it, it was something to do for fun and beer money... Archie was...certainly the first professional folksinger in Scotland... I went professional because I didn't have anything else to do, and I was surprised that people would pay me a few pounds to do what I'd do anyway, on licensed premises! Archie set out to make it his profession earlier. And we were the only ones in the middle Sixties who were sort of devoting full-time to it. And you'd tend to get the clubs booking me as a sort of cabaret, the follies, and then getting Archie to put across the serious stuff.

The first couple of years Archie was quite self-conscious about his singing... And he's got such a distinctive, nice - that beautiful voice, but when he started out he didn't rate himself as a singer, as an instrumentalist. (SA 1986/28/B)

Having decided to earn his living as a musician in the 1960s, Archie became involved not only in performing, but teaching, and later broadcasting.

In the autumn of 1962, Archie began teaching guitar in Fife, invited by the headmaster of Templehall School, Jack Stewart, who was one of the founder members of the Kirkcaldy Folk Club. Archie comments, "He patronized me in the nicest possible way, and got me involved in education, and running the guitar classes in two schools, Templehall and St. Andrews High" (SA 1987/98/A). Archie's base moved from Edinburgh to Fife gradually, and he remained in this area until the mid-1970s, when he moved to the Borders.

Ray's marriage in 1962 did not end the performing partnership between Archie and Ray, but it inevitably cut down on the amount of time they could spend rehearsing and performing together. He explains:

When Ray went down to Newcastle, and married Colin [Ross], I sort of moved around playing with other people here and there, and really had to fall back on being a full-time performer, there was nothing else going for me at that time... I was more interested, really, in guitar, all the way through that... I mean in terms of the songs that I sang up till then, I hadn't really a repertoire. I had Ray's repertoire that I backed and harmonized to. I had written a few bits and pieces of songs. And it's always been a funny thing that I would find songs and then give them to other people that could sing them. And sometimes it was Ray, and sometimes it was even Bobby [Campbell]... And Hamish Imlach was the main absorber. (SS 13-5-86/B)

...Ray was...the performer, I wasn't really a singer, I was more or less the guitar player, and any challenge that Ray gave in terms of accompaniment or arrangement or harmony, simple as they were, was what I was concerned with,...that was my job. That's what I was doing best... I wasn't really performing as a...solo singer, I was complementing Ray's performance, because she was a very widely recognized singer as well. But she had not the strongest accompanying techniques, and so [my playing] was more of a complement than anything else. (SA 1987/98/B)

Ray's departure for England was an undoubted impetus for Archie to work on his song repertoire for solo performing, moving away from the complementarity of his performances with Ray towards self-sufficiency, in a sense, as a musician and singer, requiring an entirely different approach.

The Experience of India

At the end of 1965, Archie went to India as a photographer on a expedition led by naturalist Peter Scott. The experience, though short, was to have a lasting effect on him. He relates:

...I was living probably in Aberdour then...and that would be what, 1965-66 I went to India, 'cause it was over Christmas and New Year. I spent New Year's Eve in an elephant compound in Lake Periyar, camping inside an elephant compound... I was involved with a guy...who was a sitaree in Bombay, sitar teacher. I used to sing tunes to play, and he gave me sitar lessons, and one of his pupils...coached me for about a month and a half. And [I] brought a sitar back... it's very easy to be involved in Indian music in India.

But I...remember I came back on St. Patrick's Day in London. I went to a pub that was full of Irish singers, and it was like somebody hitting you on the head with a hammer! Listening to all these bang! bang! bang! songs... (SA 1987/98/B)

The time Archie spent in India gave him an opportunity to reflect on his music and songwriting, and he later used the sitar on his first solo LP, "Archie Fisher" (XTRA 1070), made in 1968.

Broadcasting Experiences

Archie Fisher's broadcasting experiences have been an integral part of his musical career, in terms of singing, songwriting, and the composition of music. In 1963-64, B.B.C. producer Charles Parker, and performers Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, were working on a radio series modelled on the "Radio Ballads", entitled "Landmarks: From the Cradle to the Grave". Archie Fisher, Bobby Campbell, Norman and Janey Buchan, and Audrey and Cilla Fisher were among those involved in the series. Bobby Campbell describes the radio project:

[Ewan MacColl] decided that it would be a good idea to try and

give my generation, the then younger generation in the folk revival, an opportunity to have a stab at doing a sort of small scale version of the "Radio Ballads"... so he got the agreement of the B.B.C. and Charles Parker's collaboration to produce six half hour programmes which were literally from the cradle to the grave, and it was about birth, and school, and work, and a couple of other things, and death. I'm glad I wasn't involved in the birth and death ones, cause they must have been absolute nightmares to try and do!... The school programme was done in Glasgow, it was largely organized by Norman Buchan. It was finally recorded and transmitted in about April 1964. (SA 1986/121/B)

For the "Landmarks" programme on school leavers, Archie, Bobby Campbell, and Norman Buchan collaborated on a song, "The Shipyard Apprentice" or the other name by which it is known, "The Fairfield Apprentice". The content of the song, written by Archie and Norman, dealt with the experiences of an apprentice in a Clydebank shipyard, and the tune was written by Bobby Campbell who was at that time a fitter in John Brown's Shipyard. Verses of the song were sandwiched in between the recorded "actualities", so that the song was not heard as a single entity. Some of the verses written specifically for the radio programme to fill in information have dropped out of the song as it is now heard and sung. "The Shipyard Apprentice" was first recorded as a song by Ray Fisher on a 1971 Trailer LP, "The Bonny Birdy" (LER 2038), but both she and Archie sing and perform it, and it is one of the more popular contemporary songs in the revival. This is the song as sung by Archie at the Star Folk Club, Glasgow, on December 19th, 1985.

THE SHIPYARD APPRENTICE

And I was born in the shadow of a Fairfield crane,
And the blast of a freighter's horn,
Was the very first sound to reached my ears,
On the morning I was born.
I lay and I listened to the shipyard sounds,
Coming out of the great unknown,
And was sung to sleep by the mother tongue,
That was to be my own.

But before I grew to one year old,
I heard the sirens scream,
As a city watched in the blacked-out night,
A wandering searchlight beam.
And then at last I awoke and rose,
To my first day of peace,
But I'd learned that the battle to stay alive,
Was never going to cease.

For I've sat and I've listened to me father tell,
Of the days that he once knew,
When you either sweated for a measly wage,
Or ye joined the parish queue.
As times grew harder day by day,
Along the riverside,
I oftimes heard my mother say,
It was tears that made the Clyde.

And I've sat in the school frae nine tae four,
And I've dreamed o' the world outside,
Where the riveter and the plater watch
Their ships slip tae the Clyde.
And I served my time behind shipyard gates,
And I sometimes mourn my lot,
But if any man tries to mess me about
I will fight as my father fought.

(From "Travelling Folk", 26-12-85)

The "Landmarks" programme on school featured children's street songs and the sounds of playground ball games. Cilla, then going on twelve years old, and Audrey, fifteen, sang and played ball games on the programme.

In subsequent years, Archie did additional broadcasting work. He comments:

Went back for a little while to teaching, and I got involved in educational broadcasting with Norman McCandlish, B.B.C. Radio Scotland, the schools, and I hacked for awhile where he'd ask, just phone up and say... write a song about this, that. And I ended up doing presentation of schools programmes as well, for Radio Scotland. In the...late Sixties. (SA 1987/98/B)

Archie did various radio programmes in the 1970s, teaming up with people like Arthur Argo and the poet Liz Lochhead, and also doing a series on his own called "A Sound Odyssey". He adds:

...I did a ballad opera which was based on Edinburgh songs...

And later on, in the early Eighties, Billy Kay asked me if he could use the Odyssey part [the name] for his own series, which he'd managed to sell [to B.B.C. Radio Scotland]. And I...think I did four out of the first eight or nine or so in the first series [of "Odyssey"]. That was my other involvement in radio documentary. And all the time running alongside that, I'd been performing in England, and the Continent...

...In the early Eighties, I applied for work in B.B.C., didn't get it, went freelance, decided to give it about three or four years. I think it was '83 I took over the radio show "Travelling Folk", and I've been doing that ever since. Subsequent documentaries...I've been mainly involved with have been to some degree musical, but in most ways through community interaction. And eventually, family interaction, with the last series I did, "Generations", about families. And the main theme of anything I've done with folkmusic has been folkmusic in the context of a community, or in the context of the nation. (SA 1987/98/B)

Archie has consistently been involved in broadcasting work from the mid-1960s through to the present, while performing as a solo musician and also as a backup musician with other people. Some of his finest songs have been written for radio or television programmes, such as "Men o' Worth", which was written at very short notice for a "Nationwide" television programme on North Sea oil.

Recording Career

In 1968, Archie's LP "Archie Fisher" was released (XTRA Records 1070). He was accompanied on it by John Mackinnon, a fiddle and mandolin player, and John Doonan, the Tyneside whistle and piccolo virtuoso. Archie played guitar, sitar, dulcimer and concertina on it, demonstrating his exceptional instrumental competence. The material on the album is traditional, apart from the Ewan MacColl "Radio Ballad" song, "The Terror Time". It is a noteworthy LP in that it still sounds fresh to listeners of the 1980s, and it was re-released by Celtic Music in 1982 (CM 007), further evidence of its appeal and popularity.

The following year, Archie collaborated with Fife singer Barbara Dickson and John MacKinnon on a Trailer LP of Jacobite songs, "The Fate o' Charlie" (LER 3002). This LP had a similar style of accompaniment on it to that on Archie's first LP, and gave further evidence to his ability in the interpretation of traditional and historical songs.

In 1970, Archie made his second solo recording, "Orfeo" (Decca SKL 5057), re-released in 1985 by Celtic Music (CM 028). Only four of the eleven tracks on this LP are traditional; the others are contemporary songs written by Archie and other songwriters. There were several backing musicians on the LP as well, including Rab Noakes and Barbara Dickson, with whom Archie performed on a sporadic, casual basis.

The album is less successful as an artistic entity than Archie's first, but it documents a phase of Archie's performing and songwriting career. The themes of the songs revolve primarily around love and being "on the road" as a performer, which reflects the types of material popular in the musical "charts" of the time: songs from North American singer-songwriters like Bob Dylan, James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon, and Gordon Lightfoot, for example. The record's string arrangements on the contemporary songs are typical of records produced in the late 1960s and early 1970s, now sounding rather over-orchestrated for present tastes. The traditional songs on "Orfeo" sound more natural and fresh, among them Archie's arrangement of the ballad "The Great Silkie of Sule Skerry". The title track "Orfeo" is noteworthy in that it is a traditional Shetland fragment which Archie built into a full ballad, with musical interludes and a drone which give the work a fascinating texture, clearly flavoured by Archie's interest in Indian music.

Archie continued to work with Rab Noakes and Barbara Dickson, both of

whom were living in Fife in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and who were involved with a loose-knit group of musicians called "The Great Fife Road Show". In 1970, the same year "Orfeo" was released, Decca Records also issued the LP "Thro' The Recent Years, The Folk Experiences of Archie Fisher and Barbara Dickson" (SKL 5041; reissued Celtic Music CM 031, 1987). It features solely contemporary songs penned by Archie and by Rab Noakes, although the reissue does not indicate who wrote what. The feel of the LP is very similar to that of "Orfeo", and features many of the same backing musicians.

Archie now reflects on the songs on "Orfeo" and "Thro' the Recent Years" with humour:

These are very stylized, and they were very chord orientated, and very much built 'round guitar tunes and things...like jazz guitar, and "torch music" is the thing they called it! It's often referred to as my "Andy Williams period"!... I don't know who coined that, but I think it's true. (SA 1987/98/B)

Barbara Dickson released her own solo LP, "From the Beggar's Mantle" in 1971 (Decca SKL 5116; reissued Celtic Music 029), which included three of Archie Fisher's songs, "Witch of the Westmorelands", "If I Never Ever Saw You Again", and "The Climb". Her singing on this album, it might be remarked, contained noticeable hints of Archie's singing style.

In the early 1970s, Archie was performing frequently in folk clubs and festivals, often accompanied by Allan Barty, a fiddler and mandola player from Dundee. Archie remarks:

...Allan was a great complementary instrumentalist on fiddle and mandola, and mandolin... he sings with his instruments, he uses instruments like a voice and a counterpoint... And that led me to develop a kind of duet thing with a guitar rather than just an accompanying thing with guitar. But the guitar speaks and sings with you, and that you actually use as a harmonizing device as well...

...I started to work without him [Allan Barty] 'cause he had a full-time job. I had to eventually add to my guitar accompaniment part of his arrangement... 'cause I used to play fairly clean, open guitar with Allan, and let him fill in the spaces. (SS 13-5-86/B)

It was during the years 1972-1975 when I first heard Archie perform, mostly with Allan Barty accompanying him, and I can recall my feeling that the two seemed to play instinctively, intuitively, and effectively together.

In 1976, Archie's Topic LP "Will Ye Gang, Love" (12TS277) appeared. Just as "Orfeo" marked a shift towards contemporary and his own material, this LP reflected a return to traditional material. Of his own songs, "Lindsay" and "Men o' Worth" appear on the record.

The sound of the album "Will Ye Gang, Love" reminds the listener of Archie's earlier traditional LP, but the instrumental accompaniments to the songs are subtler and more sophisticated. On this LP, Allan Barty played fiddle and mandola, and John Tams the melodeon, meshing nicely with the distinctive guitar arrangements played by Archie. The record is very representative of his singing and guitar-accompanying style, and he still performs much of the material on this album, perhaps most notably "The Broom of the Cowdenknowes", "Mally Lee", "Will Ye Gang, Love", and "Men o' Worth".

The same year, Archie toured the U.S. and Canada, and he made a record with the American record company Folk-Legacy, "The Man With a Rhyme" (FSS-61). There is no overlap of material between the Folk-Legacy and Topic LPs. "The Man With a Rhyme" features four contemporary songs, three of which were written by Archie and one by Stuart Macgregor, and ten traditional songs. The additional accompaniment was provided by several American musicians. Like "Will Ye Gang, Love", this album also represents Archie's talents at their best, as a singer, guitarist, and songwriter. His songs "Dark

Eyed Molly" (also known as "Dear Dark Eyes"), "Western Island", and "The Witch of the West-Mer-Lands" are among his best. The Topic and Folk-Legacy albums are still in print, a sign that they have worn well musically in a time when recordings go out of print quickly.

For several years, Archie devoted his energies to broadcasting and his work as a backup musician and record producer with Liam Clancy and Tommy Makem in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1985, Archie toured the U.S. and Canada with Canadian singer and fiddler Garnet Rogers, brother of the late Stan Rogers. During the tour, they recorded an LP, which was released in 1986 by Snow Goose Songs (SGS-1112), a Canadian record label. Archie had not released a record since the 1976 Topic and Folk-Legacy albums, although one was recorded in 1979, but not released, by an Irish company.

"Archie Fisher and Garnet Rogers: Off the Map" is largely representative of the material Archie has been performing in recent years. It is a live recording as well, thus his humorous and evocative introductions to the songs are included, which adds an additional dimension to the recording. "Off the Map" is an even mixture of traditional and contemporary songs, including his own popular song "Final Trawl", and his tune settings for two Borders poems. He does not consider the LP his finest work, but his 1976 albums set a high standard.

Archie has not recorded as many records as other revival musicians of his calibre, a fact which is lamented and puzzled over by many folkmusic fans. He has taken the time to pursue his various career interests and hobbies, and has not been willing to build his career according to the expectations of others. He has, however, through his commitment to his music, earned the respect and admiration of his fellow performers and his audience.

Work with Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy

In the latter part of the 1970s, Archie temporarily gave up his solo performing career to work with Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy. The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem had been popular performers in the 1960s, but had disappeared from the performing circuit in the early 1970s. Archie explains how this development in his career came about:

...In '76 I was in New York, and I met up with Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, who had reformed as a duo, come over to Ireland, had done some pub gigs in a sort of resurrection tour, had found it hard going, and decided they had to have an album... '75, '76 was the same year as the Eric Bogle song "Waltzing Matilda" ["And the Band Played 'Waltzing Matilda'"] had broken through June Tabor. And I sang it at Philadelphia [Folk Festival] in the post-Vietnam period, and it really rang true to them for some reason... When I sang it in New York, Liam Clancy thought he'd like to learn it. I had no intentions of ever recording it, 'cause I could see...(a bit like *The Lord of the Rings*), it had a power that could overtake you, and you'd end up having to sing it all the time. So it was like you had to pass it on.

...I'd learned so much from Liam...at Irish *fleadh ceols* and things that I'd visited, that it was like returning something. So when we went to Canada to Calgary, I gave him the words of the song, accompanied it, and did some arrangements, and ended up producing the album. And I came back home, thinking that was the end of the association. Got a phone call from New York inviting me over for a concert in the city hall in New York, and telling me that the single they had done with the band with "Waltzing Matilda" was number one in Ireland. And that it had brought them straight in at the top floor. And that was what they'd wanted to do.

So I did some gigs, they flew me over to New York, I did some gigs with them - which was more or less me just stuck on to the end. In the following year, '77, they had booked the Empire Theatre in Dublin for a great comeback. And they'd heard my recordings with Allan Barty. I was at this time married to Lucy Cowan, and they wanted...some accompaniments for the sets. And they wanted to do a live album, they took a mobile [unit] from Radio Edinburgh over...and what we simply did was graft on Lucy on viola and fiddle, and Allan on mandolin, to what they were doing. So it was a very easy thing, in a way, we just used our styles to what they were doing. We rehearsed for a week, got the arrangements up...and did a week show which sold out. The live album was a double album eventually, which I mixed down in Edinburgh, and it's still selling.¹ It was a remarkably good album for its time. And absolutely captured what they

were about. And I followed that through with several other albums, becoming more and more expensive, and more and more studio orientated. And also toured [with Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy], I don't think there's a crossroads in Ireland I haven't been through, we toured about fifty three weeks on the trot once.

...Late Seventies...it had reached the point we...had done about four albums, they had this repertoire they had become known for, and what usually happens with a band like that is they...don't really have any incentive to expand their repertoire, they've come to that saturation repertoire point, and...this new element in the programme gets less and less. As the repertoire built up, and it became real boring to do, and...I'd seemed to have served my purpose, so we parted quite genially. And in fact, I went back in '83 to do a week with them in the Opera House, because I was doing nothing, the Opera House in Belfast...

...That's my association with them, mainly record production... It was a great experience. Not an expanding experience. Expanding only in the sense that I became more familiar with studio work...and I learned all the tricks of the trade. But in a way, it froze me out of the scene, because...I wasn't working, and I wasn't developing, and I wasn't learning, and I wasn't writing. All I was doing was being a journeyman musician, and in a way, that was what probably I needed because I had become quite road weary touring as a soloist. (SA 1987/98/B)

The work with Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy clearly affected Archie's career in several different ways, but after several years, he was ready to perform on his own again, and spend more time on broadcasting. He presently hopes to start performing more frequently than he has in the past few years, and is already more visible again on the folk club and festival circuit.

Archie Fisher is highly regarded as a singer and instrumentalist by scholars and his fellow musicians alike. Aberdeen schoolteacher, singer, collector, and co-editor of *The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection*, Volume 3, Peter Hall feels that "there wouldn't be many singers who have had a bigger general impact" on the revival than Archie (SA 1986/25/A). Ed Miller, Scottish

singer and folklorist, sums up what for him is special about Archie Fisher:

I think the strong point about Archie is that he's a total master of the understatement, all he does. If you listen to his radio programme, he says about fifteen words between records and they're all exact and precise. He could talk for an hour if he wanted, but what he says is fine. It's the same with his performance style, everything - his guitar playing, his singing - is so well organized, almost understated, you can feel the strength that's behind it. He's just a great performer. (SS 12-9-85)

Alastair Clark considers his own debt to Archie:

I was very fortunate in that my "gurus" were Archie and Hamish Henderson. And I just learned so much from them. If that kind of education could be available to other people...it would make such a difference, if people who've just had a whiff of folkmusic could meet people like that...there'd be a lot more understanding of what's going on... (SA 1986/118/A)

Ray Fisher: Marriage and the Development of a Solo Career

In September of 1962, Ray Fisher married fellow musician Colin Ross, and moved to Whitley Bay in the Northeast of England. Even when they started a family, this did not end Ray's singing partnership with her brother, but inevitably she was not able to do as many performances with him as she had been doing previously. She travelled to Scotland to do some television programmes, occasional club and festival performances, and a few Fisher family appearances as "the Fisher Folk". When I asked Ray how marriage affected her singing career, she responded with the following analysis:

Marriage. Yes..., actually, it didn't really affect it terribly much... What it did do, it set me off on a solo career, I suppose... I had the children very quickly one after the other... (I married Colin Ross who was a musician, you see, so there was an empathy, or a sympathy with what I was doing.)

And I was singing away, even after we got married, up until I couldn't breathe properly anymore, being "great with child"! And I

was still doing things with Archie. Finishing off, sort of tying off the loose ends with Archie.

And the last, among the last gigs I did with Archie was for some television programmes in Scotland, and they shot me from my shoulders up 'cause I had a "preggie bump"... That was at the folk club in Kirkcaldy, where they used to do the television programmes... I think that was "Folk on Focus" was what it was at that time. It sort of came after "Hoot'nanny" shows...

...And occasionally...if Archie and I came together after I got married, it was usually quite well paying things so that it meant it was worth my while coming from Northumberland. And some things...we used to rehearse over the telephone and it was really ridiculous. He used to get on the phone and he'd go, "Oh, I've got this song, Ray. Can you get the tune of this?" And he would sing [sings]: "My faither giens a horse/ My mither giens a coo./ My brither giens a boar,/ And my sister giens a soo./ And it's a' the same to me..." Right, so he sings it on the phone. "Okay. Right. I'll send you the words, they'll be in the post the next couple of days".

Down they come, boom boom boom. "What you have to do is if you've got the tune in your head, ring me back up and tell me what key you sing it in". So...next week we're walking to the BBC at Edinburgh, Queen Street, never having sung the song together, and walk in, and he sings his harmony, and I sing my melody, and we look at each other and think, "Oh, that was quite good!" And we'd never sung it before. We'd maybe sing it once, just before we actually "laid it on" Ben Lyons, 'cause that was him that used to produce the radio thing...

And we did this on several occasions, Archie would sing, send me a song, and he would sing it and he'd say, "Have you got the tune, sing it back to me", and I would sing the tune. Sometimes it didn't work and some notes I didn't get right and things, and we used to have to do a bit of rehearsing on it. But that, for the nerves, was not good. Because it's a bit, it was an added strain in the fact that you were going to be recorded, and whatnot. So there was a lot of hit and miss-y stuff...and it became not really practical, practicable... From that point of view...it wasn't so much that I was married but that I was down in the North of England. That was what dictated things.

Because the fact I did have children, and the children were born one after the other fairly quickly, it didn't really halt my singing at the time. There was this sort of, up until I couldn't breathe quite right, then after five, six, eight weeks or whatever after the wee ones were born, I had this dreadful urge to want to go out and sing again... And I continued to sing, all the way through, when the children were small. I had a very good mother-in-law, who lived nearby. She didn't rate me very highly as a housekeeper and someone to look after houses, but she used to say in a lovely Geordie way, "Well, you can't be good at everything, you know! You go ahead and sing, because you

won't be doing this singing very long, you know, it's just a flash in the pan thing, you go and do the singing while the chance is there. You go and do it!" [I am] Still doing it! (SA 1986/116/B)

Ray acknowledges the supportive help she received from her mother and mother-in-law when the children were small, enabling her to get away for performances. Ray also points out, "There was quite a good working relationship I had with Colin because he was also playing". He went off on tours with a group of morris dancers, and also played in a group called the High Level Ranters, only recently disbanded. Ray says, "We had this sort of, Okay, you do your thing and I'll do mine" (SA 1986/116/B). She admits that it was psychologically important to her to keep working and singing.

It seems only natural to wonder if this musical marriage led to any collaboration in performance. Ray explains why she and Colin have maintained separate careers, for the most part:

...The folk club was running in Newcastle at the Bridge Hotel, [and] he was a resident there and so was I, and we went every week on a Thursday... As time went on, he knew virtually all the songs that I sang 'cause he heard me sing them at one time or another. And he would come in with a fiddle, and he would play 'cause he'd know the key I was singing in, 'cause a lot of the stuff I would sing unaccompanied. He would find a key and he'd play fiddle. And once or twice, I thought it a rather nice idea, we used to do things with the small pipes, and he would play the pipes...

...There was one club in Birmingham that was run by Charles Parker. Because Colin knew Charles from Colin's involvement with one...of the Radio Ballads, and I knew Charles through the Radio Ballad that I did with him, and Ewan and Peggy's connection with him... Charles would ask the organizer to book Colin and I, and we used to go down and do it, but it was very hard 'cause Colin said he didn't like playing fiddle by himself. And he used to play selections of tunes, you know, and then he would play a selection on the pipes, and then he would play some melodeon tunes, and then he would play the tin whistle, and do his little musical galaxy of all the different instruments. And I would sing two or three songs in between each with the instrumental thing. But we didn't actually do things together... we were never advertised as "Ray and Colin Ross". Never, ever. It was always Ray Fisher and Colin Ross. And it was essentially Ray the singer, Colin the musician, and not as a duo. Unless

Colin just volunteered to come in on things.

And that was all. Because we had post mortems on the journey back home every time, you see, and it was always, "Well, you could've, you played that a bit fast and there was quite a few bum notes in that!" or "You shouldn't have done that, that was a bit...", you know. And we were too close, you see, we didn't want to criticize each other because the day after, I was making his dinner, you know, and I was washing his clothes... I can make my own judgements when he's playing along with a band, and along with all the other lads... And I thought, well no, we'll just keep it apart so that we can come together, and we can talk about the kids and the family and the house, and the music will be him talking about what he's been doing, and me talking about what I've been doing. (SA 1986/116/B)

Thus, while Ray and Colin have pursued their musical careers separately, they respect each other's music and both understand the joys and frustrations of being performers. Also, Ray has collaborated with Colin in another capacity; she has called for dancing with Colin's band, The High Level Ranters.

Recording Career

Up until the mid-1960s, Ray was performing mainly with Archie and with other family members, but after this she began performing more frequently on her own in clubs and festivals, accompanying her songs with a nylon-string guitar or singing unaccompanied. Her last child was born in 1966, so that by the early 1970s, she had seen her children through infancy. The 1970s saw Ray develop further as a solo performer, and she was able to accommodate her family's needs with her personal need to sing and perform.

She recorded a solo LP, "The Bonny Birdy", in 1971 for Trailer Records, accompanied on it by her husband Colin (Northumbrian pipes and fiddle), Bobby Campbell (fiddle), Martin Carthy (guitar), and several other well known folk musicians. Seven of the eight tracks were traditional, and the other was "The Shipyard Apprentice". This LP is a solid representation of Ray's singing and

repertoire, and it is clear from listening to it that her rapport with her accompanists is excellent, and adds to the energy of the arrangements. Her own straightforward guitar accompaniments are heard on one track, "The Great Silkie of Sul Skerry".

Ray did not record another solo album until 1982, but a French company recorded her singing "The Baron of Brackley" at the Vesdun Traditional Music Festival in August, 1972 (Prodisc PS 3738). While on her sixth tour of the United States, Ray recorded "Willie's Lady" for the American company Folk-Legacy Records. Like her prior LP, this one featured traditional material apart from one contemporary song written by Graeme Miles. It includes the classic song "I Am A Miller Tae My Trade" from the repertoire of Lucy Stewart, which Ray had heard on a tape recording at Norman Buchan's house and subsequently learned, teaching it to her sisters. She developed a rhythmic accompaniment for the song by tapping her hand and elbow on the back surface of her guitar, to simulate the sound of the millwheel.

The only accompaniment on "Willie's Lady" apart from her soft and simple guitar work is Scottish fiddler Johnny Cunningham's fiddle on the title track, a Child ballad, which Ray tackles with intensity and sensitivity. The songs on this LP are, for the most part, ones which she still performs frequently in her folk club appearances, and which are arranged in the way she normally performs them, and as such, the LP is highly representative of her solo performing repertoire and style. It is now the only solo album of Ray Fisher that is in print, and she is pleased with it as a document of her work.

Work with Willie Scott

Ray has always enjoyed her contacts with traditional singers in her work. Having stayed with Jeannie Robertson in 1959, she had known Jeannie's husband Donald Higgins and her daughter Lizzie, and Ray retained contact with the family through the years. Many of the early festivals in the 1960s, such as the Blairgowrie festivals (1966-1969), and the Keele (later Loughborough) festivals in England, sought to bring traditional and revival singers together. Willie Scott, a Borders shepherd who had recorded an LP for the American Folkways Record Company in 1953, and who had appeared in Edinburgh ceilidhs organized by Hamish Henderson, was living in Fife in the Autumn of 1961 when the Dunfermline Howff club opened. He and his son Sandy sang at the Howff fairly frequently.

Ray reminisces:

I'd known Willie way back in the very early days... there was a scene going in Edinburgh, and we used to visit Edinburgh... And the Howff Club started in Fife... Willie Scott was there, and Willie's son lived in Kirkcaldy as well, and Willie used to come to the folk club, and I think that was the first time I came across Willie... And Willie would come down and do Hamish's [Henderson's] *ceilidhs* in Edinburgh [which] were amazing... 'cause he pulled together all the traditional sources... Hamish brought them all together and presented this - it was really a who's who of the traditional singers at that time...

Anyway, these people, at that time we regarded them as very quaint, really quite quaint and a bit sort of not very polished, and they would just stand up and they wouldn't say a lot on the stage, they would just sing their songs. And they tended to be guided by people like Hamish and Norman [Buchan] as to what to sing, you know, what songs were good...because the stage, the platform situation was quite strange to them. But always I felt there was a refined dignity about Willie Scott. I don't know what it was that made him essentially different from the other singers. I recall him with his plus fours, you know,...that came just below his knee, and his woollen socks, and it seemed as if his craft, or his profession as a shepherd, although it wasn't very well paid,...it was hard work but it was single work, it was by himself, and he had this sort of serenity which must have come from the fact he was out on the hill a lot by himself and whatever. Unlike Jimmy

MacBeath and the other bothy type singers who were essentially gregarious characters...

[He] always struck me as...just really a serene, regal-type character who was proud of what he was doing, and loved the Border area...and sang songs with great verve...and retained a lot of the local language and phraseology and used it without any embarrassment, yet you know sometimes the traditional singers used to have to try very hard...to get in tune with the town people... And when they spoke in the dialect...it was very confusing to the town people. But somehow Willie managed to surpass it, he got over this...

So later on, you know, he's made so many trips, and he's travelled so much himself. And then recently he had this sort of spell when he wasn't very well...and I suddenly realized each time I saw him...he was walking slower and things, with great difficulty, but he still had retained this great singing ability... And I felt well, it's difficult enough for him to get about, it had never been difficult for him, he always found a way to get places, and he...went to Australia,...and went to the States...and Jean Redpath used to look after him and she used to take him about [there]... So... people...realized that Jean went out of her way to make sure that he got where he was going...and I suddenly realized that although there was lesser distances involved in Britain, it was going to start to become tricky for Willie.

...A few years years ago, a lad called Rollie Brown in Newbury was running a little weekend, homely sort of festival, it wasn't a big affair. And he said, "I would like to get Willie Scott to come down, do you think you could get Willie to come down?" And I got in touch with Willie, and Willie said yes, he would go down... I don't know how the word got out, but suddenly we were inundated with, "Well, if you're coming down...on the Thursday, do you think you could come at the beginning of the week, and come do our club, and then go across to there...?" And we ended up with about four or five things. And it was the Willie Scott - Ray Fisher Road Show, you see! And we ended up down at the Empress of Russia [club] in London... and it was amazing, a tremendous night... And after that we...did a club at Brighton, and then we came up from Brighton to Newbury,...and then on the way back we went to Birmingham.

By that time, I'd worked out that working along with Willie was a very good idea in a way, because it meant Willie didn't have to extend himself too much, because he would get a wee bit short of breath about about three songs, and he would want to sit down. So that that worked out ideally, and it meant that I could do two or three songs, and Willie could get his breath back... I have a little joke about the whole thing and...to the club in Birmingham I said, "Now ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to introduce an up and coming singer, who's trying to make his way in the folk movement". And Willie would just crease, he just thought this was hilarious... And I said, "Give this young man a chance!"...at that time it was his eighty-fifth birthday, you know!...

He would pass remarks to me, and he would whistle at me and call me a Scottish blackface and things like this, and there was a little interaction going about. And he would get his stick and...give me a prod, hook me with this stick and things. And it was very...good because no way was I trying to upstage Willie at all... The things we were doing were so different, and the combination was ideal, because it meant that...maybe people came to hear me, not knowing what Willie Scott sounded like... And they couldn't fail to be impressed by the man, and his humour and just his presence. He's just got an air about him, you know? And if he forgot his words, he had a good excuse because he was eighty-five, but if I forgot my words, he would say, "Oh come on, woman!", you know, "you've got a long way to go", and things like this. Very good interaction.

And I suddenly realized...that I knew all Willie's songs, I mean not that I knew the words pat, I didn't know all of them. And...when he got stuck...I didn't know what came next. It was just a foregone conclusion that Willie would stand up and sing the song. And I think maybe I'll learn some of his songs now,...not only to help him if I work with him...but I suddenly realized I haven't any of Willie's songs in my repertoire, which is quite amazing! And although I know all the choruses, I don't actually sing any of Willie's songs in my repertoire... I'll learn the songs so as that at a future date, I'll say, "Well, this is one of the songs Willie Scott used to do". You see, Willie does them so well that you don't need to try and reinterpret them or try to make them any different. Willie's doing a good job at the moment, so just let him do it for as long as he can. (SA 1985/209)

This occasional "duo" have appeared at the [English] National Folk Festival at Sutton Bonington (1985), the Whitby Folk Festival (1985, 1986), and other festivals and folk clubs in England. Willie Scott likes performing with Ray, and remarks: "She keeps the ball rolling, you know!" (SA 1986/133/B). In September 1986, I accompanied them on a tour of three Greater London folk clubs, and participated in a videotaping session with Willie and Ray which lasted almost eleven hours (see Plate 11). The interaction and dynamics between Willie Scott and Ray in their shared performances is remarkable, and brings out Ray's humour and warmth perhaps even more than in her solo performances (see Plate 12). This friendship and professional relationship is tangible evidence of her deep interest in the traditional singers, and has enriched her performing career.

Ray Fisher has had a profound impact on the folk revival in England as well as Scotland, because she lives in the Tyneside area and performs frequently in English folk clubs, certainly more so than her brother Archie. She is aware that she is at times the "token Scot" in a festival programme, but through her warm, sincere, and entertaining performances, she works this situation to her advantage. She is admired and loved on both sides of the border. Martin Carthy, a longtime friend, remarks:

Ray is probably the singer, the woman singer in Scotland that I would say most young singers owe something to, apart from people like Jeannie Robertson, Lizzie Higgins, and...Jane Turriff... Of the quote unquote revival singers, I don't think anybody has had more influence than Ray. (SA 1985/165/B)

Alastair Clark comments:

It must have been a marvellous thing for Ray to get that kind of exposure with Jeannie [Robertson], and use that as the foundation of her own singing. And once you've got that foundation, I think, you're never going to sing badly, because you've always got that truth in your voice somewhere. And Archie has it, Dick Gaughan has it, Ray Fisher has it, but...it's very hard to think of outstanding revival singers. (SA 1986/118/B)

Few would argue that Ray and her brother Archie are among the small number of "outstanding revival singers".

Joyce and Cindy Fisher

Joyce and Cindy Fisher are not now professionally singing, but enjoyed a brief period of semi-professional performing. They had always enjoyed singing in the family, but it was not until the skiffle movement and the popularity of American folksongs that they became conscious of "folksong" within the family. Cindy remarks:

We sang songs at home... I mean, until somebody came and told me that it was a folksong, right, or that Dad used to sing

ballads and things, I didnae know they were ballads or whatever, I mean it was just songs that we sang at home. (SA 1987/24/B)

Joyce and Cindy, just a year apart in age, began attending Glasgow folk clubs in the late 1950s, following on the heels of their sister Ray and brother Archie. They also went to Edinburgh when the Howff was running. At this time, Archie was avidly practising the guitar and banjo, and Cindy took up both instruments too, using them for accompanying songs. Joyce took up the guitar, but remarks:

Plonked about with it, but I'd never say I play. I even do it now, you know, at home, but only for my own amusement and entertainment. It's a kind of diversion, you know, away from all the other things that I do. It's something that I wouldn't have minded having been able to have done properly, you know, because it's great being able to play an instrument... Both my children play, you know, it's a great joy to me, that... (SA 1987/24/B)

Cindy and Joyce began singing together in the clubs in the early 1960s, Cindy playing the guitar or banjo for accompaniment, and singing the melody of a song, and Joyce usually harmonized. Joyce remembers singing "quite a lot of Irish songs that I quite liked...and just anything that was sort of female type songs" (SA 1987/24/A). She and Cindy also sang with Ray, doing unaccompanied material.

Cindy and Joyce started singing at the Cornerhouse club, and then when Ray, Archie, Hamish Imlach and other singers started up Folksong Workshop in 1961 in a room at the St. Andrews Halls, they moved there. From the Glasgow Folk Song Club which had started at the Cornerhouse and moved, there developed two offshoots, Andrew (Drew) Moyes' Glasgow Folk Centre, and the more traditional-orientated Folk Song and Ballads Club which changed venues several times, but was at the Grand Hotel in Charing Cross during its heyday, from 1965-1968. Joyce and Cindy became resident singers at the

Grand Hotel club, which experimented with some of Ewan MacColl's Critics Group practices, such as performing a song, complete with introduction, and being critiqued by those in the audience. Cindy and Joyce saw Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger perform several times in Glasgow in the mid-1960s, and were perhaps exposed more to MacColl's ideology than were Ray and Archie.

The Grand Hotel club was a platform for traditional singing, and many fine performers appeared there, such as Louis Killen, MacColl and Seeger, A. L. Lloyd, and Irish singers Joe Heaney and Kevin Mitchell. The Glaswegian folk comedian Billy Connolly, now based in London, was also a frequent performer there with the group the Humblebums. Ron Clark, who later married Joyce, and Carl MacDougall, Cindy's former husband, were both singers at the club as well.

Joyce and Cindy sang at the first Fisher Family appearance at the McLellan Galleries in 1962, and appeared in several folk club performances with Ray and Archie in 1963 as the Fisher Folk, including the Edinburgh Folk Festival in January, and the St. Andrews Folk Club later in the year. They also performed at folk clubs as a duo in the mid-1960s, as mentioned before. Cindy explains why they stopped performing:

Well, we were both holding down full-time jobs at the time, and...it would be physically impossible if you had a gig...even in Dundee or something like that,...or remember being stuck in Aberdeen, and we had to get an early morning train, and I had to go straight from there, straight into work... It became impractical to do it, if you were working to hold down a job. I mean it's great... We could get like more in one night than I got in a whole week's wages, and I thought there's something wrong here! And it was...the icing on the cake for me, 'cause you had the best of both worlds. But maybe...I'm different in some respects. I like to...know that I...[can] pay my mortgage at the end of the day. I mean I don't think I was a rotten singer or anything, I felt we could have made it, if we had worked really hard...I miss it. I sing whenever I get a chance, but I wouldn't do it for cash money, not any more. (SA 1987/25/A)

Joyce adds:

I never thought of it as...a job, you know, it was more like a kind of half-time thing. Although we always had music of some sort around, even with my mother, you know, she was always singing, since we were tiny, singing around the house in Gaelic and all sorts of things, you know. Every time she went to the sink. I do it myself now... I sing about the house all the time. I'd hate to think that I couldn't sing, you know, but the actual professional thing, I don't miss it much at all. (SA 1987/25/A)

Ray, Archie, and Cilla, because they became and remained professional performers as well as maintaining home lives, tend to feel that marriage may also have affected the decision of Joyce and Cindy to quit performing. There is no doubt, however, that they enjoy singing with their family when they are together. At a 1987 performance in the Washington Street Arts Centre in Glasgow, Ray called up Joyce and Cindy from the audience to join her. Joyce's delicate voice, higher-pitched than the others', and Cindy's powerful voice blend nicely as a duo and with their sisters and brother.

Audrey and Cilla Fisher

Audrey Fisher recalls attending concerts and folk clubs in Glasgow with her sisters Joyce and Cindy in the early 1960s. She did not immediately sing or perform on her own, but enjoyed joining in on choruses in folk clubs, or singing with the family. She recalls:

The only thing I can remember from sort of like singing at a club, an organized club, was that one that Joyce and Ronnie [Clark] used to do, 'cause I used to go with my girlfriend from school at the time. I used to sing with a girl I used to go with at school. Before I started singing with Cilla, because I mean there's four years between me and Cilla... It was really Ray and Archie, and my other sisters Cindy and Joyce that used to sing. 'Cause they were sort of like in their later teens. And we were just the bairns then.

...But the first time I ever sang at anything with me and Cilla as

a duo, it was really more when we came down here [Tyneside] to live... [Cilla] must have been about fifteen... Think we came down here in '67...I must have been about nineteen or twenty when I came down here... And that was when we started singing around, we used to go along to things that Ray was performing at as well. And Ray was doing clubs. (SA 1986/114/A)

Although she did not begin performing with regularity until she moved to Newcastle with her mother and her sister Cilla, Audrey had begun absorbing repertoire from her family and from singers in Glasgow in the late 1950s and early 1960s. With her school friend, she sang

...Peter, Paul & Mary kind of stuff... she didn't really know the sort of depths of this sort of folk things..., sort of Scottish songs and more sort of traditional songs that people in the family really sang most of the time. (SA 1986/114/A)

Audrey clearly draws a distinction between popularized folkmusic such as that recorded by the American group Peter, Paul & Mary in the 1960s, and the traditional Scottish songs which her sisters and brother were singing. The family members were also singing American spirituals and chorus songs, such as "Follow the Drinking Gourd" and "Children Go Where I Send Thee", which invited harmonised chorus singing, at which the Fishers excelled.

Ray had left Glasgow for Whitley Bay by the time Audrey was becoming a more regular folk club and concert attender, but Ray was coming to Scotland to perform with Archie on occasion, and to do television and radio work. At this time, Archie was no longer living at home, but was around often enough to be an influence in terms of repertoire. Audrey comments:

...When Archie used to come in, he used to say, "Oh, here's a new song that I've just learned" and sing it to me and Cilla, and we'd maybe put it on the tape or something like that. So if you were actually picking up with him singing, you know, he would maybe be practising the song before he was going to sing it, and you could always maybe have it taped or listen to it afterwards, but usually you picked it up, just hearing him practise it through. That was when we lived in Maryhill, in Glasgow. (SA 1986/114/A)

Audrey and Cilla went to folk clubs and concerts on occasion with their

sisters Joyce and Cindy, and they were involved with the "Landmarks" radio series, as already mentioned, singing street songs and ball game songs. It was from visiting the clubs that Audrey and Cilla also picked up some songs from Louis Killen, the Newcastle singer who toured in Scotland fairly frequently in the 1960s. In fact, it was two of Killen's songs that they sang when the family performed at a concert in the MacLellan Galleries in 1962, "Poor Old Horse" and "Where Are Ye Gannin, Says Billy to Bob".

Audrey became involved with the folk revival in Glasgow at a time when it was established, and there were several venues at which one could hear and perform folkmusic. Her experiences, like those of Joyce, Cindy, and later Cilla, were quite different from those of Ray and Archie who had been involved in the beginnings of the Glasgow folk scene. It is very evident from her own words that Audrey drew much of her inspiration from her family, rather than from the folk scene. Norman Buchan, who had influenced Ray so much in particular, had departed for Parliament in 1964, and was therefore no longer available to act as a catalyst and facilitator for folkmusic in Glasgow.

Cilla's awareness of folksongs, like Audrey's, was generated inside the family. Born in 1952, she was a small child when Ray and Archie were becoming involved with the revival in the late 1950s. She comments on her first conscious memories of folkmusic being sung by Ray and Archie:

I knew that my brother and sister, Ray and Archie, sang... I just presumed they just sang Scottish songs, I didn't know what it was, it just was Scottish songs, and I think I was probably about seven. The other thing that I was aware of, that they were stars, really, 'cause they were on television. And I thought that was quite amazing. Because I'd seen Frank Sinatra on the telly as well, and I thought he must have been at the same place as they were. (SA 1985/210)

Cilla is the youngest of the Fishers to have performed publicly. She reminisces:

I think the first time that I performed, when I must have been about nine, that we actually did a kind of Fisher Family performance thing. And I sang, in fact, a Tyneside song, that I'd learned from somebody, I think it was Louis Killen sang it, and I thought it was a kind of funny, humorous type song. And my sister Audrey and I sang that together, and that was the first time that I was kind of aware of it being a kind of different music, not a popular music, not American... (SA 1985/210)

The concert was at the McLellan Galleries in Glasgow, and featured the musical Belfast family, the McPeakes. Cilla continues:

It was [Archie] and Ray that were really booked, and I think Alex Campbell, Josh [McRae], the McPeake Family, and we were all going, "Look at this McPeake Family, all five of them on stage, there look at that, that's great!" And Archie went, "Wait a minute, there's Ray, there's Joyce, there's Cindy, there's Audrey, and there's Priscilla, that makes six of us!", so we all got on together. (From "Fisher Folk" broadcast)

Hamish Imlach recalls the concert, and the fact that Morag Fisher got up on the stage at one point as well. He comments, "It was a lovely moment, Mrs. Fisher and all the girls...and Archie. Singing 'Don't Sell Daddy Any More Whiskey!'" (SA 1986/28/B). Cilla remembers receiving "ten bob" from the television producer Ben Lyons, her first earnings for singing.

The family moved from Easterhouse to Maryhill around 1961. Cilla attended Woodside School, where she took up Gaelic, and was able to have clarsach lessons. She explains:

I was a member of Govan Gaelic Choir for about two years, and I did Gaelic at school. 'Cause there was a choice of German, French, or Gaelic, and I thought well, I'll never go to France or Germany, so I better take Gaelic... Because I was tied in with a Gaelic class, then came the tuition with the Celtic harp... And I played harp for a year or so, and then thought, who...wants to listen to harp and teuchter songs, so I gave it all up, I just forgot about it. I know a wee bit of Gaelic, I don't understand a lot of it. (SA 1986/155/B)

Her brother Archie tells an anecdote about Cilla's participation in the 1965 Largs Gaelic National Mod, which had competitions in singing and instrument playing, among other categories:

...[Cilla] came in one morning and...before she went to school,

she asked my mother for some money, 'cause she was going to Largs. My mother said, "What are you doing in Largs?", and she said, "I'm singing at the Mod". And that was the first my mother knew of it! So my mother went, "Oh, what are you doing?" [Cilla] said, "I'm singing Gaelic songs in the solo singing competition"... And she sang...very sweet, high...that kind of thin voice,...for Cilla it was thin, it was very falsetto. She went onstage, started the first line, and then dropped a gear, down to the voice that she has now, out of nervousness. And I think the adjudication was "an interesting tone of voice". And she never went up a gear again, she stayed down there. 'Cause she discovered that she was acting when she was doing that [high] voice, and there was no real expression, so she pulled back. (SS 13-5-86/B)

Cilla adds,

I played the clarsach as well at the Mod. Oh, it was terrible, I played it really badly, I think I came about forty ninth or something! I think I came third in the singing...and I was also in Govan gaelic Choir, so...I think we got a first in one of the chorus things we did. (SA 1986/155/B)

The experiences of singing Gaelic songs, playing the clarsach, and competing at the National Mod clearly did not hold a lasting fascination for Cilla. In 1968, the family moved south to Tyneside. Cilla relates:

My mother and Audrey and I left Glasgow. We were the last of the family, and they were demolishing our house in Glasgow. So, we weren't sure we wanted to go. And Ray was down there, and my...older sister Jean was there too, so we got a house just very close to my sister Jean... And that was when I left school. I was sixteen. And Audrey was working, I wasn't. I was unemployed for about a year after I left school... So that was when I decided I'd do a bit of singing, and I managed to get some money from that, and then I did get a job. (SA 1985/210)

Audrey's distance from the experiences of Archie and Ray in the earlier days of the revival is evident in her explanation of the type of material that she and Cilla performed in Tyneside folk clubs:

...when we used to sing around in folk clubs in the area, we didn't have a guitar...so we relied on our voices... We didn't really stick to, you know, really just traditional stuff at times though it really depended on where you were playing or where you were singing. You just had to sort of try and suit wherever you were. And then we got influenced by other people, we'd maybe be singing their songs or whatever was popular at the time. But I found really through learning about other, you know, people like you said, Jeannie Robertson, that was like when I went to some

of the festivals like Blairgowrie and places like that. I didn't really know about a lot of the people, you know...where the sort of roots were. I mean I knew odd songs, Ray would say, "Well, you know this, Jeannie Robertson used to sing this" and things like that. But it wasn't really always significant to you who that person was. Or, you know, what sort of family that she was from, and...how important they really were. (SA 1986/114/A)

Cilla felt even more remote from singers like Jeannie Robertson than Audrey did. While discussing the type of material she and her sister sang in the Tyneside clubs, she discovered a self-irony, causing her to laugh at herself:

Because we were from Scotland, we kind of consciously tried to sing Scottish material and things, to sort of fit in with our background... It was then that I was suddenly aware that I was from Scotland, and that I wanted people to hear the music of Scotland, and things that we chose to do... Although previous to that...I had been involved in it when Ray and Archie were singing and performing, but didn't really like it! I mean I heard Jeannie Robertson, and I thought it was really boring, you know, some woman singing unaccompanied, and big long songs for ages and ages, and I never listened to it. I thought,...she doesn't even play the guitar or anything! It's really terrible, you know! [laughs]... The people I liked were like the Dubliners, and Makem and Clancy. We went to see them...in concerts in Glasgow. And the Spinners, and they played guitars, and music, and let you sing along and clap. But Jeannie didn't do anything like that, I mean that was really boring as far as I was concerned... From the age of about fourteen till I left school, I wasn't really interested at all, I didn't follow anything of it really,... I didn't go to folk clubs or anything...

And it was only...when I left school, and we moved to Tyneside that I went round to some clubs. And we actually sang, Audrey and I sang as a duo, which is really funny because we both sang unaccompanied, in unison. No harmonies, never played guitars or anything. And there I was, something that I'd gone, "That's absolutely boring and ridiculous and stupid", I found myself doing it, and I found that people liked it... I've never actually really thought about it till this very minute, and now I'm seeing it! [laughs]... That's really ridiculous, isn't it, having said that at one point I couldn't stand that [singing unaccompanied],...that was the way...I started in folkmusic, by singing exactly the same way as I'd already criticized. Incredible! (SA 1985/210)

The duo of Audrey and Cilla lasted until 1971, the year both of them married. Audrey married George Bullock in the winter, and they immediately emigrated to Australia. Cilla married Artie Trezise in the autumn of 1971, and moved back to Glasgow, where Artie had a teaching job at the time.

Audrey was in Australia until 1977, when she and her husband decided to return to Tyneside. In Australia, Audrey found that there were fewer opportunities to be involved with folkmusic. She relates:

We just never managed to find anything really happening... I mean I did continue to sing, but it was through going to peoples' houses....and if...somebody saw that you had a guitar, "Oh, bring your guitar along", and it was us really entertaining other people when we went to other peoples' houses... It was mostly sort of contemporary stuff that we tended to sing then, really... The music that we tended to carry on was just records getting sent out from home, as regards what was popular, or what was being released at the time... But it tended to go more sort of...away from the traditional music to contemporary music they tended to sing out there, and play out there... (SA 1986/114/B)

George accompanied Audrey's singing with his guitar when they performed at friends' houses. In 1975, they returned to Britain for a holiday, experiencing "culture shock" at finding so much more folkmusic available in clubs and festivals than there had been in Australia. Audrey comments that it was partly this experience which influenced their move back to Tyneside two years later. She did notice changes in the British folk scene, having been away for most of the 1970s, remarking:

...There seemed to be a lot of changes as regards...a lot more people trying to get their living from folkmusic or doing it full-time... There was more people playing instruments, there was a lot...more bands than there ever used to be. (SA 1986/114/B)

Audrey found herself in somewhat of a dilemma when she and her family returned to Tyneside, as she still wanted to sing publically, but felt at a disadvantage in terms of repertoire and in having been absent from the British folk scene for several years. She explains:

...When we first came back from Australia, we were thinking of trying maybe...[to] start going around to clubs, but I mean there seemed to be so many people, sort of competition, really... [You] have to be quite dedicated, should really spend quite a bit of time, you know, getting material together... What sort of act would you try and put [on], I sort of thought... because it was like my sister [Ray] there, she was doing her bit, there was Archie, he was on his own...and then there was Cilla and Artie who were pretty well established. So I mean what would you sort of do,

you know, try and do some other band or something?.. We...a couple of times tried to get something together and we used to go and have practices...but then again you sort of thought, well, what sort of format did you want to be?... The rest of the Fishers had cornered the market. What could we do to be different?..

...When we first came back from Australia, there was people of course that knew you, and knew you had been to Australia. But there was other...people in the folk clubs who didn't know you, in that last five or six years...and you used to have to say, "I'm Audrey Fisher", you know, as I tried to assert my authority! [laughs] "I was here before you were", and... "Do you not see the resemblance?" [laughs] And you had to sort of build yourself back up again...and I used to be boiling up inside sometimes wanting to talk to some people... 'cause they must have known the rest of the family, you see?... There was new people running the clubs, whereas before you just used to walk in, I mean you just used to know everybody! (SA 1986/114/B)

Audrey clearly realizes that being a performer requires time and hard work, which she is at the present unable to manage because of her family responsibilities, but she would obviously like to have more opportunities to perform. She and her family annually attend some of the summer folk festivals, such as the Newcastleon Traditional Music Festival in the Scottish Borders, and the Auchtermuchty Festival in Fife. She remarks:

The only time I usually sing now is in the house or at odd festivals...in singarounds in the rooms... I think for [folkmusic] to keep growing, you've got to try and influence the younger ones to be interested in it. I mean, I have always tried to do...it through my own children, but then again, whether or not they were wanting to do it when the time comes, whether or not they would want to go and sing or be involved in folksongs...you don't know. (SA 1986/114/B)

On occasion, she has appeared with her sisters and brother in Fisher Family performances, such as one with Ray and Cilla in the Bridge Folk Club in Newcastle in July 1986. When the time comes that her family's needs place less demand on her time, one can imagine that she might possibly seek out more opportunities to sing on her own or with the other Fishers.

Cilla's experiences have been quite different from Audrey's since they parted as a duo in 1971. As well as singing with Audrey during the period

1968–1971, Cilla had done some work with the Great Fife Road Show as a replacement for Barbara Dickson. It was at one of the Road Show concerts that she actually first met Artie Trezise, but it was at a Stealer's Wheel concert in Edinburgh that they became better acquainted, and they married five months later in 1971.

Artie Trezise, born and raised in Cupar, Fife, had been involved with the Great Fife Road Show and other folk groups in Fife and Glasgow in the latter half of the 1960s and early 1970s. When he and Cilla met in 1971, he was working with former Road Show singers Brian Miller and Davey Stewart in a group called "Down and Out", and Cilla was soon incorporated into the group. After their marriage in September, 1971, Cilla and Artie were living near Edinburgh where Artie was doing a teacher-training course, and Miller and Stewart lived in Glasgow, making it difficult from a logistical standpoint for the four to do performances together, so the group ceased to exist. Eventually Brian Miller went on to form a duo with fiddler Charlie Soane in 1976, and is a well-regarded revival singer. He has worked with Cilla and Artie on recordings through the years.

Artie recollects his impressions of Cilla:

...She would just sing all the time. Not professionally, I think she was ambitious to sing professionally, but she just sang all the time... I can remember...really enjoying sitting 'round the house singing, because she was a marvellous person to sing with, Cilla. Really good, I mean, and she's solid to sing against... And it's great to sing with her because it's like having a platform to perform from. If she's singing with you, it seems to give you a basis for doing things. (SA 1987/102/A)

Cilla explains how she and Artie came to sing together professionally as a duo:

...We went to a local folk club in Linlithgow, and...sang a couple of songs that...both of us kind of knew... And [the organizer] gave us a booking, said, "We'd like to give you a booking for the club".

And we said, "Well, we don't do bookings; we just sing occasionally, you know!" I mean Nora [Devine] knew Archie and Ray...and she said, "Well, I'm going to give you a booking for two months from now, so you'll have to get enough songs to come and do it!" And that was that. She booked us for four pounds at Linlithgow Folk Club.

And we went back home and said, "We're going to get four pounds, we'd better learn a few more songs", so we did. But that was a whole cross-section of things, I mean there was American stuff, we did Gerry Rafferty songs, we sang some Scottish things, we just did any songs we liked. And it was good fun, and we got our four pound... From there on, we got really blasé and went into Edinburgh [laughs], and sang a few more places! But it really was Nora giving us that first gig at Linlithgow Club that put us on our way.

Artie taught for a couple of years after that, I mean we didn't go full-time right away. Taught for about two or three years. And Jane was born, and...I think she was about a year and four months or something when we went on the road. (SA 1985/210)

Cilla and Artie started performing professionally as a duo in 1973, and they were touring around the Scottish folk clubs on a part-time basis. Their daughter Jane was born in April 1973, which, along with the fact that Artie was teaching school at this time, made it impossible for them go too far from home. In 1975, Artie stopped teaching, and they devoted full-time to their performing. With a small child to raise, this might have proven impossible were it not for the help of Morag Fisher. Artie remarks:

We certainly wouldn't have been able to do it without her. She's quite an exceptional woman, in that sense, in that she's seventy now and still can look after two kids, which she's done since she was in her early twenties... That takes a lot of staying power, and I don't think there's many people could do it. And certainly we wouldn't be on the road was it not for her. (SA 1987/102/A)

Cilla's experience of working with her husband has obviously been different from that of her sister Ray, who found that she needed to keep her musical career separate from that of her husband, Colin Ross. Artie comments:

Most people seem to say to us, it's amazing that you can carry on domestically and work together as well. In other words, you

know, you're seeing a lot of each other, don't you drive each other mad, or how do you stand each other that many hours in the day!... Doesn't seem to bother us at all. (SA 1987/102/A)

Initially, Artie did most of the guitar accompaniment for their songs, but Cilla did play guitar on occasion. She recollects getting a guitar from Archie for her fifteenth birthday, but "he kept it for two years and used it on his album!" (SA 1985/212) She adds: "I'm the lazy one... I haven't learned any more than the first six chords that I was first taught... The songs were always the first thing" (SA 1985/211,212).

Cilla and Artie sang a mixture of contemporary material from British and North American songwriters and Scottish traditional material when they first started performing. Their vocal ranges enabled them to harmonize with each other, whoever took the melody, so that their singing has always been fairly flexible in terms of arrangement.

Recording Career

Cilla and Artie recorded their first LP in Germany while touring the continent in 1975. It was released on Autogram Records in 1976, slightly pre-dating their second LP "Balcanquhal", for Trailer Records (LER 2100) later that year. Both albums featured traditional material, much of it from Fife and Dundee. The German LP did not include any additional backing musicians, whereas additional accompaniment on the Trailer album was provided by Archie on guitar, Allan Barty on fiddle and mandola, and Pete Shepheard on melodeon.

In 1979, Topic Records released the LP "Cilla & Artie" (12TS405), which

was produced and recorded by Robin Morton, formerly a member of the well known folk group, The Boys of the Lough. Cilla and Artie were this time accompanied by a large number of respected revival musicians in the studio. Artie Trezise played guitar and lap organ. The material on the LP was predominantly traditional, but also included two songs with which Cilla and Artie have become strongly associated: Matt Armour's "Generations of Change", and "Norland Wind", a poem of Angus writer Violet Jacob set to a tune by singer Jim Reid of Dundee. The arrangements on the album are subtle and attractive. The popular music weekly *Melody Maker* named it the "Folk LP of the Year" for 1979.

Cilla and Artie toured the U.S. in 1978, and had recorded an album for Folk-Legacy Records the same year. Entitled "For Foul Day and Fair" (FSS-69), it featured mainly traditional material, and is the only LP they have made without additional musicians. They wanted to make the American-produced album available on a British record label, which ultimately led them to start their own company, Kettle Records. Cilla explains:

We made the record for Folk-Legacy. They gave us the tapes, and we came home with them and decided to release them on our own label. And that was all we were going to do, really, we just started the label here instead of importing records from Folk-Legacy. And then we were approached by Iain Mackintosh, he said he would be interested, 'cause he hadn't had an album out, and then Hamish Imlach, and Hans Theesink, and then local interest from our fiddle orchestra here...and various other artists. And...we just went from there. We didn't intend to have a record company, you know! So we've got it now. (SA 1985/210)

Artie adds his perspective:

...We'd always felt that no matter who we were...recording for, that we were the best customers of the company, so why shouldn't we just do it ourselves, and supply ourselves, and therefore we would eventually make more money from it. And I think anybody who's making their living at this, they have to...be economically secure or semi-secure in order to be able to create, or to work on your music, otherwise you just spend all your time chasing gigs,...and it's not a nice role to take on...

So the company [Kettle Records] kind of built round that release, and now I think we've just recorded our seventeenth album... I never really thought it would get up to that number. They've all been great to do, I've enjoyed it, and I enjoy doing the producing of them. (SS 25-2-86)

Kettle Records is an enterprise which Cilla and Artie run from their home, and provides a not insignificant proportion of their income from folkmusic. The venture also permits Artie to be involved in the production side of records, as he mentions above.

In 1985 and 1986, Cilla and Artie recorded songs for an LP that was eventually released on Kettle Records at the end of 1986, "Reaching Out" (KOP-17). Robin Morton co-produced it with Artie Trezise, and the LP marked a departure into more contemporary material for Cilla and Artie. They were joined on the LP by several noted musicians, and by Gary Coupland, a young accordionist and keyboards player who started performing with Cilla and Artie in 1985, and has become an integral part of their folk and children's performances. The LP presents a well-chosen selection of predominantly recent songs, although most of them have a traditional "feel" to them, such as Adam McNaughtan's "Yellow on the Broom", for example.

Cilla: Solo Recording

Cilla recorded a solo album in 1983 called "Songs of the Fishing" on Kettle Records (KOP-11). Cilla and Artie had talked to someone at the Anstruther Fishing Museum, who had asked them if they would be able to put some fishing songs on a tape to be played in the museum. The idea grew into thoughts of an album, and they contacted the Scottish Tourist Board, who at that time were promoting "The Fishing Heritage Trail". The Tourist Board agreed to sponsor the cost of the record sleeve in return for a mention of their

Fishing Heritage Trail on it.

Cilla remarks:

...It's been good, actually, it's sold quite well... We've been pleased with that, with it being a theme. See, that was the other thing I panicked about... I thought nobody's going to want to listen to a whole record of me! That's what I feel about solo things, too... that concert the other night [Cilla did a solo concert during the Edinburgh Festival, August 1985], I mean I never thought consciously that anybody could sit for an hour and a quarter and just listen to me singing - on my own, without Artie having a harmony or him singing the next song. So it surprised me! So it surprised me as well [the record] sold..., because I kept thinking...they might get bored with just listening to me, but it has worked out quite well... Artie kind of oversaw the whole thing by doing the production side of it... It was nice fun... (SA 1985/211)

Although she has done a few solo performances, Cilla does not visualize herself as a solo performer, and prefers to perform with Artie, her sister Ray, or the Fisher Family.

The Singing Kettle

In the early 1980s, Cilla and Artie began evolving their arrangements of children's material into a format suitable for recording, and later developed a live show based on this material, both called "The Singing Kettle". Cilla explains:

...We always sang. We sing in the house all the time, we sing all kind of things. And Jane sang with us, and when you're in the car, you sing things, you know. And it was really Jane's idea, I mean, she said, "You should make a tape of all these things". And I mean basically, I was thinking even for her, just so that she could sit and listen to things, herself. And she kind of inspired us, so we thought, yeh, why not? There hasn't been any kids' (especially Scottish) things recently... Robin Hall and Jimmie Macgregor did a lot of things in the early Sixties, sort of Scottish type songs. I mean, we all know ones [like] "Three Crows"...some of the ones we've done actually again. And there's been a few other things, but not...a lot. When we brought out the record, I mean it was just so successful...it's outsold anything that we've ever done before... I mean it's outsold our whole [Kettle Records]

catalogue... It just rocketed, we couldn't believe it..

...[In 1983], Theatre Workshop in Edinburgh asked us to come and do some show of the songs and things, and we said, well, we hadn't really thought about it, you know? And they said, well, you know, you should. Went and talked about it to them, and they said, "We'll help you with props or whatever you need for backdrops" and that was what we did. We kind of came home and thought about all the songs and what visuals we could add to them. And they helped us out with a lot of the props...and they talked about lighting, 'cause we said...we'd never done a kind of theatre-type thing...with lights and things like that. So they kind of started us on it, and then it kind of went from there... A few people that were there were teachers, said "Would you be interested in coming to the school to do it?" And...since then it's just gone, we've done it all over the world now! We did a couple of shows in Australia when we were there, we've done a couple of things in...the States... We did a spot in Canada,...Hong Kong we did it. It was great. (SA 1985/210)

Cilla and Artie brought out the first "Singing Kettle" record in 1982 (KOP-10). They were accompanied by several other musicians forming the "Caper-Ceilidh Band", and their daughter Jane and other local children sang choruses on the LP as "The Kettle Kids". The record was so successful that in 1984 they produced "The Singing Kettle 2" (KOP-15). The second LP utilized more electric instruments in the arrangements, but the format and content was essentially the same as it had been in the first LP. The two recordings continue to be popular, and in 1987, "The Singing Kettle 3" was released (KOP-19). Their children's show, The Singing Kettle, is continually updated, and they present it on an occasional basis in concert halls and in special venues at folk festivals.

In the spring of 1985, Cilla and Artie had a son. This event had a direct effect on their performances, as Cilla was unable to perform during the weeks shortly before and after the baby was born. They were, however, receiving many requests to perform in folk clubs, and to present the Singing Kettle Show around Scotland, particularly in schools. The circumstances made it necessary for Cilla to be at home for some months, so she and Artie did not take on folk

club engagements during that time. However, the 'baby's arrival created another context for Cilla's singing, and she began making up songs to sing to him, having written some earlier for the Singing Kettle Show. Also, with Cilla at home more, Artie decided to try a modified version of the Singing Kettle Show without her, and used a backing accordionist for a short tour. This worked well, and they decided to employ a musician on a permanent basis who could do the modified show for schools with Artie, as well as playing with Cilla and Artie in the Singing Kettle Show.

Through the *The Scotsman* advertisements, they found Gary Coupland, a young professional musician who plays accordion, piano and electronic keyboard, and trombone. The musical rapport between the three was excellent, and in a few months' time, Gary was not only accompanying Artie in the modified school show, but Cilla and Artie in their Singing Kettle Show and folk club performances. When Cilla needed to be at home with the baby, Artie and Gary could do school tours. Gary has also backed Cilla on occasional solo performances. When Cilla and Artie decided to publish books of their "Singing Kettle" songs, Gary transcribed the music.

The addition of Gary to the duo of Cilla and Artie has necessitated the distinction between their different shows or performances. The Kettle Show is designated as a show for schools, featuring Artie and Gary. The Singing Kettle Show and the Cilla Fisher & Artie Trezise performances now feature Cilla, Artie, and Gary.

In the summer of 1986, the three of them worked with the Stirling District Council to devise and direct a musical show to be performed by groups of children in three different communities, entitled "Scotch Broth: A Soup Opera for Children". Cilla wrote the songs for the opera, and the children worked on

the dialogue, based on the core story set out by Cilla and Artie, and made their own props and costumes. The venture was so successful that the council subsidized the production of a recording of "Scotch Broth" (Kettle KOP-18), utilizing Cilla as a narrator, and with Gary and Artie accompanying the children selected to make the recording.

The addition of Gary Coupland to Cilla and Artie's various performances has represented "another dimension", in Cilla's words (SA 1985/211). She explains:

[Neither] of us are instrumentalists, you see? And now that we have Gary, you can put in little breaks, and it gives you a chance to have a breath... I've always been very aware of filling a whole song vocally... I mean we haven't ever been able to, you know, sort of have an instrumental break. Maybe a few chord changes and things, you know, a run or something, but I've never been able to finish something and play a tune at the end of it... With Gary being there, we can play an instrumental or just have...a longer arrangement or something that would have normally been over in two and a half minutes with a guitar or something. (SA 1985/211)

Cilla and Artie have done radio broadcasts and television programmes through the years, as well as their folk club and children's performances. Cilla, following in the steps of her brother Archie, has also done some broadcasting work as an announcer, such as filling in for Jimmie Macgregor on his weekday programme "Macgregor's Gathering" when he was away, and other occasional work.

In 1987, Cilla and her sister Ray began doing an occasional two-woman show, affording an opportunity for them both to perform material that they would not otherwise use in their individual performances. Although they do not consider themselves "feminists", their show as a duo permits them to bring together songs which represent a woman's point of view, some of which are parodies of popular classics, such as Peggy Lee's "I'm A Woman", which

Ray has rewritten in humorous Scots. Ray and Cilla bill themselves as the "Decibelles", and this lineup permits them, in a sense, to indulge their undoubted flair for the comic and the theatrical.

Critic Alastair Clark considers Cilla "one of the outstanding singers" in the revival (SA 1986/118/B). He also feels that the Singing Kettle Show has made a major contribution:

I've seen that in action in a primary school down at South Queensferry and I was just almost moved to tears by it, it was so utterly lovely, what was happening there. The response of the kids was fantastic. And...it did strike me that if Cilla and Artie could go around schools like that for the rest of their days...the folk tradition would stay alive because there's always going to be somebody in a group like that who's going to perk his or her ears up and say, "Well look, this is interesting, let's look into it a bit more deeply". The fact that kids aren't basically allowed to hear folkmusic because it's virtually banned on popular radio means that they're never going to be exposed to it, unless there's another big boom of some sort and television and radio companies start putting on folk musicians again. (SA 1986/118/B)

It is apparent from Cilla's biography that she has branched out in many directions as a performer, developing her innate talents, and will undoubtedly continue to do so. Her sister Ray and brother Archie, who were early performing role models for Cilla, still play a significant role in her life as fellow performers, and she has a high regard for their talents, aware that they have made the name "Fisher" well known in the folk revival.

The Fishers have obviously played very important roles in the Scottish folk revival, as we have seen. Their considerable impact continues to be felt, not only on a national level but an international one. Archie, Ray, and Cilla have developed into very different performers, but all exhibit the same

carefulness and precision as performers which has become a Fisher trademark.

Considering the involvement of the Fishers in the folk revival, Jimmie Macgregor remarks:

...I think if you take Ray, and Archie, and Cilla, to me in a way they represent what was best about the folkmusic revival, because none of them are bigoted or narrow-minded or over-academic about what they do. They know what they're doing, and they understand what they're doing, and they know about the tradition. I mean if you go and talk to them about traditional singers, they know what they're talking about... A lot of folksingers really worry me, actually. They worry me either because they're too slick in their instruments and become obsessed at how clever they are, and they're playing for themselves and nobody actually cares whether you can get, you know, all those notes into...eight bars or not... People who are self-consciously...struggling to sound traditional, that worries me. The kind of slick guys in the Lurex shirts... The Fishers to me seem to have got it right. They've taken what is best from the tradition, but they're always quite happy to use any other influences that they think are true and valid. (SA 1986/130/A)

Hamish Henderson says of the Fishers:

...I met...gradually all the members of the family, I would say, going back to the early Sixties. And it became obvious that they were very gifted, formidable, and bright people. "Beings of bright genius", I referred to them as, on one occasion. And all of them have got the spark of the divine fire, within one way or another, right on to most recent members of the clan...

There's a definite family personality, so to speak, that one can sense a good deal of family togetherness. But really they are distinct and individual performers. That is at any rate how they have developed... What you've got there is an obvious sort of common fund of feeling and musical interest, which has developed into its own separate channels with the individual performers. (SA 1986/128/A,B)

In the next chapters, we will see how the Fishers' repertoire and performances reflect this "family personality" of which Henderson speaks, as well as their individual personalities, aesthetic systems, and biography.

Note for Chapter 4

1. "The Makem & Clancy Concert", Blackbird Records BLB 1002, 1977.



Plate 10: Ray and Archie Fisher performing for "Here and Now" at Scottish Television Studios, Glasgow, circa 1960



Plate 11: Ray Fisher and Willie Scott in London,
28th September 1986



Plate 12: Ray Fisher and Willie Scott at the School of
Scottish Studies Ceilidh, 4th February 1988

CHAPTER 5

THE REPERTOIRE OF THE FISHERS

Having examined the involvement of the Fisher Family in the Scottish folk revival, and the professional careers of Archie, Ray, and Cilla Fisher, it is appropriate to focus on the repertoires of the Fishers, and how these repertoires have changed through time. It would be impossible in the present work to discuss every song individually that has been sung by the Fishers, but a general comparison between early and more recent repertoire is instructive. In addition, we examine the sources of traditional and contemporary repertoire in the Scottish folk revival, and how Ray and Archie Fisher became, at a fairly early stage, models upon which other revival singers patterned their repertoire on. Also considered is how the Fishers categorize and learn their songs, and how they perceive song ownership within the family and within the folk scene. The following discussion will be largely confined to the repertoires of Archie, Ray, and Cilla, although comments from and about the other Fishers will be incorporated where they illuminate a point.

Pre-Revival Repertoire in the Fisher Family

In Chapter 2, I mentioned some of the types of songs that the Fishers heard and learned within the family, particularly from their father, John Fisher.

Archie recalls of his father:

He had quite a few snippets of what...was like comic verse that were out of ballads. One from – it's a tune I hadn't heard before by anybody else, "The Beggar Man", it was [sings]: "I'll bow my back and I'll bend my knee/ And I'll put a black patch on my ee/ And then for a beggar he'll tak me/ And awa' wi' you I'll gang,/ Lassie to me tow-row-ray". [It's] got elements of all the other versions in it, but it's got a lovely sort of steep ride up at the end. And that's all he knew of that, he didn't know what came before or what came after...which leads me to think there may have been a music hall version of it that had been condensed, because that's where he'd have picked it up. Most of his music hall stuff was very funny and very sort of slapsticky, and we...all used to adopt parts and I'd pick up one or two of them, and Ray did the other ones... And on certain occasions we'd all just sit around and say, "Sing them again". (SS 13-5-86/A)

Archie feels that his impulse to sing was generated within the family, as "there was a lot of music inside the family, and we all sang and performed together in party situations, on holiday – we'd always sung together as a group" (SA 1987/98/A).

Although Morag Fisher sang Gaelic songs in the house, her children did not pick up these songs from her, but learned songs such as "Fear a'Bhàta" at school, as Ray describes in Chapter 2. It is possible that John Fisher's attitude toward the Gaelic language may have contributed to the fact that his children did not learn Gaelic songs from their mother. At a later point in time, they did learn some songs from Hugh Robertson's songbook, such as "Air Falalalo" and "Joy of My Heart" (see Robertson [1950]:16-19). These songs were written in English and then translated into Gaelic, rather than being English translations of traditional Gaelic songs, but the subject matter was Hebridean. Both these songs appeared on the 1966 Fisher Family LP, and are still sung when the family performs together (Cassette 1). Also Archie has reincorporated "Joy of My Heart" into his recent folk club performances. The attitudes of Archie, Ray, and Cilla towards adding Gaelic songs to their present repertoires will be touched on later in this chapter.

Repertoire in the Early Days of the Revival

As has been pointed out in Chapter 3, American songs and music, and also international "ethnic" material presented by American performers, were a major influence on the Scottish revival repertoire in the mid to late 1950s. The songs of the Weavers, Pete Seeger, and Woody Guthrie were among the most significant non-native influences on repertoire in the Scottish revival prior to 1960. Chorus songs were popular in the Glasgow Folk Song Club which started up in 1958, and Adam McNaughtan sees this as a direct result of Pete Seeger's visits. He remarks:

"The ideal song [was] one that was all chorus, because audience participation was very much part of the Seeger ethos, really, these sort of lining-out type American spirituals... The Glasgow club would start off both halves with a whole crowd of the regular singers, getting up to lead choruses... It would be Archie, Josh [MacRae], Hamish [Imlach], Jackie O'Connor, Ray, you know, there'd be about five or six of them would get up and lead the whole club in singing chorus songs, for maybe a quarter of an hour... The one that sticks is "I'm Gonna Walk and Talk With Jesus"! (SA 1986/26/A)

McNaughtan also remembers hearing Ray Fisher sing, "Where Could I Go But to the Lord".

Glancing at David Dunaway's exhaustive discography of Pete Seeger's solo and group recordings yields many song titles, both traditional and contemporary, made popular by Seeger which were taken up by singers in the Scottish revival: "Follow the Drinking Gourd", "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine", "Michael Row the Boat Ashore", "We Shall Overcome", "Johnny Comes Down to Hilo", "Cindy", "Skip to My Lou", "Go Where I Send Thee", "Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream", "I'm Going to Walk and Talk With Jesus", "This Land is Your Land", "Black is the Colour", "Spanish is the Loving Tongue", "Farewell, Little Fishes", "Bourgeois Town", "Where Have All the Flowers Gone", and "Little Boxes", for example.

It was difficult for Archie and Ray, as well as Bobby Campbell, to remember titles of songs they were singing in their earliest performing days, although in Chapter 3, Bobby reports several. Ray visited Jeannie Robertson in 1959, after having met Jeannie at Norman Buchan's house, but she had already learned one song, "Jeannie, My Dear, Will You Marry Me?", from a recording of Jeannie she had heard at the Buchan house. Ray was also interested in jazz music in the late 1950s, and recalls doing a spot at Glasgow's Kelvinhall with the No Mean City Jazzmen, singing "Ace in the Hole" and "Make Me A Pallet on the Floor". Archie regarded Ray's jazz repertoire as hers, and not something that they shared as a duo.

When the Wayfarers got underway as a group, Archie, Ray, and Bobby had to establish a common repertoire. Archie comments:

Ray's repertoire was absorbed into what we did. In terms of repertoire, I was the one that was looking out the music and finding the songs, so the dominant side of the input to the repertoire came from me. Mainly American, to start off with, with bits of Scottish, very simple Scottish things... We were picking stuff up from disc, and sometimes sheet music... (SA 1987/98/A)

While Ray was the one doing most of the lead singing, Archie clearly played a significant role in determining the early repertoire of the Wayfarers and the family duo.

As noted in Chapter 3, Ray participated in the anti-Polaris demonstration singing to a greater degree than did Archie, hence the various anti-Polaris and Scottish Nationalist songs such as "The Misguided Missile and the Misguided Miss", "Ye Cannae Spend a Dollar When You're Deid", and "The Scottish Breakaway" were part of Ray's repertoire. Ray only performed them during the height of the anti-Polaris era, at the demonstrations and rallies, so that these songs did not remain part of her active repertoire after the early 1960s.

It is significant that these topical songs were, for the most part, in Scots. This was a deliberate political and cultural statement by their creators, Morris Blythman, Hamish Henderson, Jim Maclean, and others. Many of the traditional songs being learned by revival singers at this time were also in Scots, and we have seen in Chapter 3 how Norman Buchan and others put across the idea that singing in one's own accent was more honest than singing with a put-on American accent. The importance of the language of the revival repertoire will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter.

When Ray and Archie began performing more and more as a duo rather than as the Wayfarers with Bobby Campbell, their repertoire grew, and the way they presented their songs in a performance was dictated by whose song it was. Ray explains:

...When we did a set of songs, I would include a song by myself in the set, and he would do songs by himself in the set. And then we would have the "starters" and "finishers" that we did together. We'd do a couple songs each...in the middle of the set, and then finishers together. And the songs that he was doing then was like "The Shipyard Apprentice", he used to sing it by himself... At that time, the songs that he associated with himself were songs that either he had got himself, you know, in conjunction with me or he'd heard somewhere, or he'd written himself, and occasionally I would meet up with someone and I would learn a song and I would...sing that one by myself. And then he might say, "Well, I'll play guitar for you, you sing it". And it became almost as if it was my song, but he was playing guitar, and he was part of it. And if he had got the song, it was his song in the repertoire... We just took it for granted that when a song was found by somebody else, that it was regarded as their song, and if it became very popular, then other people outside the family would tend to sing it, more so than the members of the family, which was quite interesting.

...When I had been down here to Tyneside a few times, I came across songs and I came back up to Glasgow and said to Archie, "Listen to this 'Blackleg Miners', this is a great song". But that was Louis Killen that was singing it, and that was, as far as I was concerned, it was Louis Killen's song. But when I was in Scotland it didn't make any difference if I went back up there and I was singing there, people in Scotland hadn't heard it... In the early days, it seemed very strange now I think about it, but we...wanted to sing songs that weren't identified specifically with other people that we knew, that we deliberately avoided the

songs that Robin Hall and Jimmie Macgregor were singing together, or we would avoid a song that Josh [MacRae] did... I think the only reason you would ever sing a song that was associated with someone else would be if you honestly felt that you did it better than they did, or they didn't do the song justice, or whatever. (SA 1986/116/A)

Other revival singers were thus a source of repertoire for the Fishers, but not unless it was sung outside the "owner's" territory, as in the case of Louis Killen's "Blackleg Miners", or unless Ray and Archie felt they could do it better than the source they heard it from. An example of the latter is "The Night Visiting Song", which appeared on the 1961 EP recorded by Ray and Archie. Ray elaborates:

...The fact that it was Archie and I, a boy and a girl singing together, was quite unusual in Glasgow, around that time... The two voice harmony thing was quite unusual... I think there is a built-in need to be different from someone [else], although there are lots and lots of singers who are content to be...derivative in what they...draw from other people who have done the groundwork...

But you see, there was nothing really to draw on, there was no other duo of male and female, that you drew on as being derivative, as who you sounded like, you know? Because even when Dolina Maclennan and Robin Gray were singing in Edinburgh about the same time, somehow that was different, the textures of their voices were different, their repertoire was different, yet Archie and I ended up singing "The Night Visiting Song" which we first heard Dolina Maclennan and Robin Gray singing. And I think in that instance, we decided it was such a lovely song - the melody was good, and the harmonies were so - not necessarily obvious, but you could see the potential for harmonies in it, that we felt we could maybe do a better job, you know! And I think that was the motivation for doing it, although I suppose at the time it was always extending the repertoire..., and if you could do that then you...widened your own repertoire but at the same time, you felt that maybe...your interpretation of it may have been more to liking than somebody else. (SA 1986/116/A)

We return to the important subject of song "ownership" later in this chapter.

Besides developing their repertoire for folk club and concert performances, Ray and Archie had an additional impetus to extend their repertoire when they began working on television and radio programmes. This

required that they both actively seek out new repertoire in order not to repeat material too frequently. Ray's marriage and departure to Whitley Bay meant that Archie and Ray had to scout for new songs independently, and not surprisingly, Ray found some Northumbrian songs like Killen's "Blackleg Miners" (Cassette 1), entered their repertoire and were also picked up by other family members. Louis Killen, it might be added, was involved with the running of the Newcastle Folk Song and Ballad Club in the late 1950s and the 1960s, and was a source of repertoire for the younger Fishers, Joyce, Cindy, Audrey, and Cilla.

Traditional Singers and the Scottish Revival Repertoire

The most significant factor in the development of a native repertoire by the revival singers was the accessibility to traditional singers either in person or in recordings. I have already discussed the roles played by Morris Blythman, Norman Buchan, and Hamish Henderson in helping to bring the traditional and revival singers together in Glasgow and Edinburgh. It is essential now to focus on the individuals who were such a tremendous influence on the revival repertoire, and particularly on that of the Fishers: Jeannie Robertson, Jimmy MacBeath, Lucy Stewart, Jane Turriff, Davie Stewart, the Irish singer Joe Heaney, Belle Stewart, and Willie Scott.

The impact of Jeannie Robertson on the revival as a whole is incalculable. Gower (1983) states:

It is no more possible to take a yardstick and measure Burns's stature as a popular poet than to take a tape measure and determine Jeannie's breadth of influence as a singer. Not only did she receive and interpret a great legacy of traditional song that had shifted to the Travellers from the population at large, she presented what she had inherited in such a way that even before [Hamish] Henderson arrived she had earned, like her

mother and grandmother, the approval of 'her ain folk'...

...In the course of the twenty years that marked her life as a public singer, Jeannie mothered a whole generation of revivalists who were searching for a strong leader and a solid traditional base... In performances she shared what she had received; she passed the songs on by teaching them to a new generation face-to-face; she inspired her 'bairns' to use their own talents to revitalize and reshape the Scots tradition of song. During a period of Revival, she was the chief cornerstone (Gower 1983:132).

Jeannie Robertson's repertoire was vast and diverse, but quickly caught the fascinated interest of foreign scholars like Bertrand Bronson with its large proportion of Child ballads. The types of songs Jeannie Robertson sang ranged from "the big ballads", as she called them, such as the powerful "Son David", to bothy ballads, lyrical love songs, and other material, even an occasional American song. The words of many of her songs were in the rich Doric Scots of the Northeast. For more details on the repertoire of Jeannie Robertson, one should consult Gower (1968), and Gower and Porter (1970, 1972, 1977). Jeannie's daughter Lizzie Higgins, who began performing publicly in 1967, and thereafter intermittently up to the present, naturally sings many of her mother's songs, but with a different style and approach. Lizzie Higgins has been a more recent influence on the repertoire of the Scottish revival, and will be mentioned again later in this chapter. A study of the repertoire of Lizzie Higgins appears in Smith (1975) and Munro (1970).

The impact of Jeannie Robertson on the Fishers and other revival singers was not only in terms of her rich repertoire, but in terms of her performance style, which was very much a reflection of her ebullient, dramatic, personality. She performed at ceilidhs, formal and informal, in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and elsewhere in the 1950s and 1960s, so her songs had a fairly wide exposure. She also did some radio and television programmes. There are few Scottish revival singers who did not meet her at some folk

occasion, or at least hear her singing. She had a stroke in 1971 which curtailed her singing, but she entertained visitors, of which there were many through the years, until her death in 1975.

Jimmy MacBeath, from Portsoy, Banffshire, was a frequent visitor to ceilidhs in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen in the 1950s and 1960s. He was one of the featured singers at the First People's Festival Ceilidh organized by Hamish Henderson in Edinburgh in 1952, and had been discovered by Henderson in a preliminary scouting trip to the Northeast prior to his collecting trip with Alan Lomax.

Adam McNaughtan comments:

...Jimmy in person..., he was a different kettle of fish from Jimmy on record, you know... He was just larger than life, basically... The whole sort of comic spirit that went right through him..., well, I mean you always suspected he was trying to kid you... And he was a street singer without any question..., his techniques are those of the person who's used to singing outside, rather than as a sort of parlour folk performer, you know?... The whole sort of persona was something you couldn't get on a record...

...The first thing that hit you after the American thing was the bothy ballad thing, so to have a real bothy ballad singer there made a big difference, although we had all learned "Barnyards o' Delgaty" before we saw Jimmy. To have him come down and sing bothy ballads was a revelation because the person I'd heard before was John Mearns, who is twenty six removes from - I mean he is very much the broadcaster bothy ballad singer, that he was the B.B.C.'s bothy ballad singer in other words, whereas Jimmy was by no means a B.B.C. singer... I'd never heard anything like Jimmy before.

...I can't sing a Jimmy MacBeath song without doing a Jimmy MacBeath imitation, that is, when I sing "The Gallant Forty Twa", I mean it's a Jimmy MacBeath imitation I do, it's not just my usual singing a song, really. And I think that's probably true of most things I heard Jimmy sing. If I sang them, I wouldn't sing them in my normal sort of standard Scottish folk accent that I have.
(SA 1986/26/B)

Jimmy MacBeath had an enormous influence on the Scottish revival repertoire, as he was one of the main source singers of bothy ballads in the 1950s and

1960s, along with the farmer John Strachan of Fyvie (see Henderson 1973c).

Hamish Henderson describes the context and content of "bothy ballads":

It was the "bothy" system on North-East farms which served as a sort of folksong incubator in late-Victorian and Edwardian days. The unmarried farm labourers were accommodated in stone-built outhouses called bothies, and they spent a lot of time making their own music - playing the fiddle and melodeon, and swapping such songs as took their fancy. The farm scene itself often provided good material for satire or comic invective, and new songs were composed commemorating the trials and tribulations of poetically gifted both chieftains at farms like Castles of Auchry, Drumdelgie, and the Barnyards o' Delgaty. These often contained stanzas warning other farm servants against falling for the blandishments of skinflint farmers... Farms in which working conditions were bad were likewise blacklisted in mordant satirical stanzas. This type of song can thus be said to have fulfilled a useful practical function (1971).

Within the bothy community, any song sung by the farmworkers was considered a bothy ballad, not just those depicting farm life and employment grievances, as Henderson points out.

Until his death in early 1972, Jimmy MacBeath's personal appearances at ceilidhs and folk clubs and his recordings did much to promote the popularity of bothy ballads within the revival. One only has to listen to a recording of him to realize that he was a genuine character, and descriptions of his performing style by McNaughtan, Buchan, and others make it easy to understand how engaging he was to watch. Small wonder that McNaughtan finds he cannot do a Jimmy MacBeath song without the accompanying mannerisms.

There is a liberal sprinkling of bothy ballads in the repertoires of Archie, Ray, and Cilla Fisher. Archie and Ray saw Jimmy MacBeath perform many times, and one Fisher Folk evening in St. Andrews included Jimmy as a special guest, so that he is clearly a song source for the Fishers. Among the songs most associated with Jimmy MacBeath are: "Sleepytoon", "The Barnyards o'

Delgaty", "Tramps and Hawkers", "Johnny MacIldoo", "He Widna Wint His Gruel", "The Gallant Forty Twa", and "The Mucking o' Geordie's Byre".

Two Buchan traveller singers were an important source of repertoire for the Scottish revival, Lucy Stewart and Jane Turriff. Folklorist Kenneth Goldstein spent a year collecting in this part of Aberdeenshire, and worked with both singers. Like Jeannie Robertson, their repertoires contained Child ballads, lyric songs, bothy ballads, local songs, and the occasional American song, especially in the case of Jane Turriff who still has a great fondness for the yodelling American recording star of the 1930s, Jimmy Rodgers. Although Lucy Stewart died in 1982, she is still frequently mentioned as a source for songs sung in folk clubs and concerts. Jane Turriff, now living in Mintlaw, still makes occasional appearances, and is a continuing source of repertoire for revival singers.

Within the Fisher Family, the best known Lucy Stewart song is sung by Ray, "I Am A Miller Tae My Trade". Ray never fails to mention Lucy Stewart's name when she sings the song, explaining that the woman made a rhythmic accompanying sound by using her hands and elbow on a table top; Ray reproduces the sound by using her hands and elbow on the back surface of her guitar.

Jane Turriff is well known for her version of the Child ballad "Mill o' Tifty's Annie" or "The Trumpeter of Fyvie" as it is also known, and several revival singers have taken it up, including Ray Fisher. Porter (1978) deals with the repertoire of Jane Turriff and her late husband Cameron. She learned many of her songs from her mother Tina Stewart, who was the sister of Davie Stewart, another traditional singer who appeared with great frequency in Glasgow. Davie Stewart influenced the revival repertoire with a mixture of

Child ballads, bothy ballads, and comic material (see Henderson 1974). His performance techniques were also very much those of a street singer, according to McNaughtan.

Anne Neilson, who encountered all the traditional singers mentioned above through Norman Buchan, discusses their impact on her:

...if Norman [Buchan] said, "Listen to that, it's good", well, I would be prepared to listen to it because I trusted his judgement that much... But I think maybe the one sticking point was Davie Stewart, because he was so weird! I mean Jeannie was so musical, she was so incredibly musical and commanding in her whole appearance and performance... We heard Jane Turriff on tape, with this wheezy old harmonium going in the background. But that was later on, and we were more used to the style of singing...

Jimmy MacBeath was something else, you know, because he was a real performer. He was quite different musically, obviously, from Jeannie. But Davie Stewart was just so odd..., this terrible old melodeon and him singing "The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow", and I mean it was a song I, by then, was singing. And not only did he seem at times to mangle the words and the story, but he battered it away on this melodeon in a most peculiar way, and some verses had only three lines in them and it was odd, at least that was my memory of it. And it took me awhile, that was a learning experience to see what there was in that, compared with what there very obviously was in something like Jeannie, or somebody like Lucy Stewart, whose songs were so marvellous... Lucy Stewart's songs...were so instantly appealing, but with Davie Stewart...that was a time where you had to think well, this is what the folk tradition is in some instances...and you had to start working things out... (SA 1987/91/B)

Anne Neilson's experiences demonstrate how first exposures to some of the traditional singers did not immediately impress some of the young revival singers, that the appreciation of the source singers was sometimes an acquired taste, while in other instances, as with Jeannie Robertson, the appeal was instant. Neilson undoubtedly voices feelings shared by other revival singers. The Fishers certainly saw Davie Stewart perform in Glasgow, but Archie was the one who drew from his repertoire. Archie's first solo LP included two songs, "The Beggar Wench" and "Bogie's Bonnie Belle", which were learned

from Davie Stewart, whom Archie described then as "the most outrageous musical character I have ever met".

Another singer who had a considerable impact on revival repertoire was the Irishman Joe Heaney, mentioned in Chapter 4, who spent the early 1960s in Glasgow before emigrating to America where he died recently. Pete Shepheard comments:

...he was a superb singer in Gaelic, of course, Irish, that is...but that isn't what he sang mostly in Scotland. What he sang mostly in Scotland were his English songs... What people were interested in listening to were his songs in English, of which he had an awful lot. (SA 1986/171/A)

Jimmie Macgregor comments: "Joe Heaney was a strange one, because he was quite a shy, quiet man from rural Ireland, but when he got up to sing, he was the king" (SA 1986/129/B).

Joe Heaney was an important figure in bringing the Irish singing tradition to Scotland, along with Paddy Tunney, who also passed through Glasgow intermittently in the 1960s. Gradually, through Heaney, Tunney, Dominic Behan, the popular Clancy Brothers, and the Ulster singer Kevin Mitchell who came to work in Glasgow, Scottish awareness of and interest in Irish songs, from both the South and the North, expanded. Sarah Makem of Belfast and Paddy Tunney's sister Brigid became sources of repertoire for Scottish singers, including the Fishers. It is important to note the fact that these Irish singers not only made the native Irish material more widely known, but also Irish versions of songs that existed in the Scottish tradition, such as "Banks of Red Roses", thereby making people realize that the Irish and Scots shared much of their song tradition.

Joe Heaney's influence was most directly felt by Archie Fisher, although songs sung by both Ray and Archie in the 1960s came from him, such as the

haunting "Anach Cuain" or "Annach Doon" by Anthony Raftery, translated into English from the Irish. Heaney's distinctive, lyrical singing style was emulated to a certain extent by Archie. Heaney appeared with the Fisher Folk as a special guest at the St. Andrews Folk Club in 1963, and a recording from that time has captured Heaney singing "Anach Cuain" in Irish, followed by Archie singing it in English (Cassette 1).

A singer whose influence on the Scottish folk revival repertoire has been enormous, but began to be felt a bit later in the 1960s, is Belle Stewart, matriarch of the Stewart Family of Blairgowrie. The Stewarts, a travelling family related to Jeannie Robertson, had been collected from in the 1950s by Maurice Fleming and Hamish Henderson, but from the accounts of performers appearing in Glasgow that I have collected, I gather that they were not making as many public appearances then as they did in later years. Belle Stewart and her daughters Cathy and Sheila are the singers in the family, and Belle's late husband Alec was a piper. The repertoire of Belle Stewart overlaps that of Jeannie Robertson, including Child ballads and many lyric songs, but she also has a penchant for bothy ballads, comic songs, and bawdy material. Her repertoire is discussed in Porter (1985a and 1985b) and MacColl and Seeger (1986).

Not surprisingly, Ray Fisher has been the one to draw most from the song repertoire of Belle Stewart, although Archie has recorded Belle's well known version of "The Queen Among the Heather". The influence of Belle Stewart is still keenly felt because at the age of eighty odd, she is still performing, and has in recent years toured the United States several times. Her singing and performing style and that of her daughters is quite different from that of Jeannie Robertson.

Willie Scott, a retired Borders shepherd, has been a popular figure in the Scottish folk scene since his appearances at Hamish Henderson's ceilidhs in the 1950s, and the revival has been enriched by his repertoire of rural songs, Border ballads, and comic songs (see Henderson 1977). He has performed all over the world, and clearly enjoys attending and performing at folk clubs and festivals. His soft-spoken Border dialect is difficult for those whose ears are not attuned, but his communication abilities when performing are quite obvious. He has known Archie and Ray since the days of the Howff Club in Dunfermline in the early 1960s, and Archie recorded one of Willie's best-known songs, "The Kielder Hunt", on his first solo LP. Ray's recent work with Willie Scott has been mentioned in Chapter 4. Cilla and her husband Artie Trezise have recorded one of Willie's own songs, "Heilan' Whiskey" on their German Autogram LP.

It should be pointed out that the traditional singers mentioned above all sang unaccompanied, although Jane Turriff and her uncle Davie Stewart also accompanied some of their songs. Their artistry made singing without accompaniment acceptable to a broader audience, and encouraged younger singers used to accompaniment to try singing unaccompanied. Pete Seeger wrote a brief but ecstatic commentary, "The Joy of Singing Unaccompanied", for the American folk magazine *Sing Out!*, after returning from a 1961 tour of Britain. He says:

Another truth I was reminded of in Britain last fall was how much fun, and how right it is to sing many folk songs without any accompaniment whatsoever. For many singers this is a shocking idea; accustomed to that comforting strummed support, they would as soon walk out upon a stage naked. Nevertheless, as any sculptor can tell you, the undraped torso, however scrawny, is often more interesting than if wrapped or overwrapped in the best our culture can offer (Seeger 1962:54).

To the traditional singers, unaccompanied singing was and is a totally

natural activity. These singers enabled many of the revival singers to view singing from an entirely different perspective, and showed what power and versatility the human voice had without the constraints of accompaniment. The sense that one was free to sing with or without accompaniment had an influence on the revival repertoire, in that much of the American repertoire which was at first popular was inextricably linked with instrumental accompaniment, such as skiffle and blues songs; the fact that the traditional Scottish songs (and Irish and English songs too) could be sung unaccompanied was a freeing factor for many singers whose instrumental abilities were limited or undeveloped. Some singers like Peter Hall of Aberdeen came to feel that "accompaniment usually gets in the way, and doesn't add very much anyway" (SA 1986/25/A).

The Language of the Songs

It is also worth noting that the repertoire of the traditional singers mentioned above, apart from the Irish singers, was Scottish, and therefore many of the songs were in Scots. With the surge of interest in Scottish nationalism and the Scots language in the 1950s and 1960s, fueled in part by people such as Morris Blythman, Hugh MacDiarmid, and Hamish Henderson, singing Scottish songs was a way in which a sense of Scottish identity could be established and affirmed. Additionally, there was the thought that if one were Scottish, singing Scottish songs was a logical repertoire choice, an idea put across by Norman Buchan to the young singers he knew.

In his book *Scots: The Mither Tongue*, Billy Kay discusses the history of the Scots language and the social and political aspects of its usage in the past and present. He sees that the use of Scots in speech and in song are viewed

differently, and that these usages carry a different emotional impact, as he explained to me:

...Because of the increased anglicization of Scottish society, it tends to be the working class that speaks Scots. That's a broad generalization, because when you get into areas like the Borders, the whole thing of class...begins to shade and be variegated rather than clear-cut... But Scots is associated with the working class, therefore the last thing the local middle class or upper class wants to identify with is the working class, and language, the Scots language, is stigmatized as being a working class patois...

But song doesn't have that [stigma]. And again, that may be a romantic thing. Song is associated with maybe a rural way of life, so it's part of...that romantic view of rural society and traditional society. But...it expresses urban Scottish life, like Glasgow socialist songs, there's even a romantic element in the appreciation of that, say the Red Clydeside thing, there's a definitely romantic working class element there that's just as romantic as say the middle class view of the rural past that makes the middle class respond to it, to songs in Scots that are reflecting that. Romance is associated with singing, with songs...and ultimately, I...think the response evoked by Scots song is very emotional, it's the emotive impact of Scottish song I just find phenomenal. And therefore it's not unnatural that people respond in a romantic way to the songs... (SA 1986/168/A)

Many of the songs sung by the traditional singers who were discovered during the early years of the folk revival were Scots songs about a rural way of life, and there is no doubt that many of the young revival singers felt romantically drawn to these songs. For some, however, like Ray Fisher, these singers were singing the way they spoke, which was an important issue in itself. This was a central issue in Ewan MacColl's ideology that one should only sing songs from one's tradition.

Traditional Repertoire, Style, and the Revival

Writing about the role of traditional singers in the English folk revival, Georgina Boyes states:

It was...the adoption of "traditional" singers as models and the call for "authenticity" of performance associated with left-wing ideology which from the mid-1960's had the most striking effect on repertoire, style and the subsequent development of the Revival as a whole. The "construction" of certain individuals as "tradition bearers" had had innumerable resonances within all aspects of the Revival. In stylistic terms, the presentation of "traditional" singers as models for Folk Club performers produced some marked artistic gains. Uncritical employment of "authenticity" however, led to slavish copying of a particular singer's accent and mannerisms, however idiosyncratic... More significantly, however, the search for "authenticity", especially when combined with the need to develop a personal "traditional" repertoire, led singers to research the background of folksong and its collection (Boyes 1985:50).

Her remarks hold true for the Scottish revival, but it must be posited that the relationship between the traditional and revival singers in Scotland was perhaps less forced, more natural, and also that there were a great many more traditional singers performing publicly to whom the revival singers had access. We will return to this point shortly, but first we should consider the problems relating to traditional singers and their repertoire, raised above by Boyes.

The dilemma which presents itself to singers who wish to learn and sing a traditional song that they have either heard in person from a traditional singer, or heard on a recording, is by no means simple. The natural tendency, particularly in the early days of the folk revival, would be to imitate the traditional singer, which was sometimes carried to extremes, as Boyes notes above. The problem was in part a confusion between the traditional folksong, as sung by a traditional singer, and the style in which it was sung.

Jimmie Macgregor observes that some revival singers slavishly copied their traditional source, including phrasing and breathing patterns. As many of the traditional singers were older people, the phrasing of their songs was sometimes a result of old age and not singing style. Macgregor elaborates:

...As an illustration of what I'm talking about, this song, an English version of a song, "The Oak and the Ash", and the chorus is "And it's home, dear, home,/ Home I'd like to be"; except that

all the English folk groups always used to sing: "And it's home [pause created by breathing in], dear home". And that became so much a part of it, that it used to get audiences going, you know, in the gap. They'd go: "It's home [clap, clap], dear home,/ Home I'd like to be". And if you go back to the original performer, I think it was Sam Lerner, I'm not absolutely sure, it may have been Harry Cox. But it was Douglas Kennedy...who first recorded him. And I remember once being in the English Folk Dance and Song Society, and I heard the original tape. And what it actually was, was the old geezer, he was recorded when he was an old man, and he's singing: "And it's 'ome [gasps for breath], dear 'ome" - he just couldn't breathe! But that becomes the definitive version. And those are the kind of nonsenses that go on, people become so intense about it...

...I think probably Willie Scott and Jeannie [Robertson] sung the songs quite differently from the people from whom they learned them. The thing didn't start on a certain date, and it won't finish on a certain date. We tend to think that the..."tradition bearers", to use that corny phrase, or the source singers, to use another equally corny phrase, although I don't know what else you could call them, come to think about it. You tend to think that they've got some kind of definitive version, but the fact is they learned it from somebody else, and they probably...have made their changes, as have the younger, and indeed some of us older revival performers. We've made our own changes and that process will just go on... As long as whatever it is that we think is at the core of traditional music that makes it more important than other kinds of more "plastic" music, as long as that survives, the treatments will change and they probably don't matter so much. (SA 1986/130/B)

Macgregor's anecdote about "The Oak and the Ash" amusingly illustrates the point Boyes makes about "slavish copying" from recordings by revival singers. Although this is a phenomenon which occurred in the Scottish and American revivals as well as the English revival, I would venture to say that it was not as widespread an occurrence in Scotland, in that, as I said above, there were ample opportunities for revival singers to see traditional singers perform and to interact with them. To carry this point a step further, I would also propose that, for example, seeing Jeannie Robertson perform at a ceilidh at Norman Buchan's house would enable a revival singer like Ray Fisher to hear traditional and non-traditional songs alike performed in a more natural context, whereas a tape recording conveys little about context and visual aspects of performance style. Also, a recording becomes more comprehensible and useful if one has

seen the singer perform before.

Adam McNaughtan raises a related point on the issue of traditional material and its performance. He comments that "the folk scene as such has never known whether it's culture or entertainment" (SA 1986/27/B). This relates to the perceived function of a traditional song. Revival singers had to consider whether by singing a traditional song, they were in a sense perpetuating the folk culture, or whether they were entertaining, or both. The entertainment function of song has always been significant, but many revival interpretations of traditional songs first heard from traditional singers seemed to ignore this very important aspect of singing.

Another aspect of the confusion of material, function, and style by revival singers concerns the qualities with which a traditional song may be invested by a would-be performer of the song. Folk club performer and songwriter Allan Taylor, an Englishman who feels that Scottish life is "closer to the tradition than English life is to the tradition", elaborates on the mystique of the traditional song:

...The traditional singing in England is a bit archaic, a bit museum-like... it's certainly been due to some [folk club] organizers, and the whole "traditional clique" have been responsible for keeping it that way, keeping it, in quotes, "pure". But it never was pure...

...It comes down to the thing that a singer of limited talent can buy fifteen, twenty albums, learn a song off each, and sing them unaccompanied, in a traditional-type atmosphere, and do passably well. Whereas if you're a songwriter, it's a whole different thing. You see if you're taking traditional material as it's existed, you've got credibility to start off with, the material's got credibility, right? So all you have to do is sing them passably well, and you can get a gig.

Now, if you're a songwriter, the songs have to get credibility first, you've got to get the songs credibility and yourself, so the struggle is that much harder... And I think that's been the problem with traditional singing, there's been too many people who've just learned the words, and recited the song, which is not at all what it's about, you know. There's many people who sing

traditional music – I don't believe them. And for the period that song has gone along, I want to believe the story, or the emotion. And I've had to sit through too many people with ridiculous mannerisms, acquired mannerisms, either in their voice or in their guitar work or fiddle work or whatever. They've acquired these mannerisms because they think it's part and parcel of performing. And the whole song is being lost, and the whole exercise, as far as I'm concerned, is a waste of time. (SA 1986/117/B)

Taylor's point that a traditional song is immediately invested with credibility by some performers and audiences, no matter how badly it is performed by a revival singer, is well taken. He also takes issue with those singers who would attempt to give themselves "traditional credibility" by adopting ludicrous mannerisms. Taylor clearly feels that the performer should respect the material he or she sings, and believe in the emotion it conveys, thereby entertaining the audience through a sincere performance of the material.

The Traditional Repertoire: Ray and Archie

The use of the older traditional singers in Scotland as sources of repertoire and models of singing style was a natural stage in the development of the Scottish revival, but for revival singers like the Fishers, it was only a phase which had to be experienced, absorbed, then discarded as they discovered their own individual ways of performing the newly learned traditional repertoire. As Ray Fisher comments in a 1974 interview:

Although my cultural background, relatively speaking, was different to that of Jeannie Robertson, *I had an affinity for the music she was singing and the way she was singing it* – so I took to singing Jeannie's songs. People who had heard Jeannie's singing would say, "Yes, that's one of Jeannie's songs, and I recognize it not only because I know Jeannie sings it, but by the way you are singing it. You have learned it from Jeannie Robertson". Yes, of course, *you mimic because you admire*, as any student will take guidelines from the master (Fisher 1974:2). [Italics mine]

Ray makes a crucial point about "affinity" here, which in a sense addresses the problems raised by Allan Taylor above. The repertoire Ray learned from Jeannie Robertson was not invested with magic qualities for Ray because it was traditional material from a traditional singer, but because she felt an affinity for the Scottish material and the style in which it was sung. It is this affinity which Taylor finds lacking in so many English revival performers singing traditional material.

Alastair Clark heard Ray perform while she was still in the transitional phase of mimicking Jeannie Robertson, and learning the songs and the style. He recalls his feelings at the time:

I heard her in the Crown Folk Club, and at that time she was deeply influenced by Jeannie Robertson and some of the other...traditional singers she'd heard. And it didn't sound right to me, I remember thinking why is this young slip of a girl standing up there and trying to sound as if she's sixty-five! Because she had adopted all of the mannerisms of the older singers, and well, it didn't ring true to me. But that was a very early point in her singing where she was just completely involved in getting hold of that style, and absorbing it completely. And that phase passed away,...eventually she became her own singer. Her own distinctive style developed... I only objected to it in the sense that it didn't sound authentic somehow, but I appreciated that it was a very intensive effort to reproduce that sound, and I think it was important. I mean if other singers had done the same, if other singers had gone right down to the fundamental base root and worked up from there, I think Scots music would have been a lot healthier than it is... A lot of these singers haven't made that effort, and their singing is lacking because of it. (SA 1986/118/B)

Ray adds:

Over the years I have managed, somehow, to keep the basis on which I built my performances, but put a mark of my own on it. You adapt and find a bit of yourself instead of just a reproduction of the original. I cannot forget Jeannie's singing, but I sing the songs my way now. Jeannie was such a proficient artist that she communicated the material, the sensitivity and the understanding she had. I would like to think that I retained some of this in my singing (Fisher 1974:2-3).

Ray Fisher and Andy Hunter are two revival singers who were fortunate

to spend considerable time with Jeannie Robertson in her home, thus hearing and seeing the songs performed in what was a natural context. The foundation of Ray's performing repertoire can be said to date from 1959 when she stayed with Jeannie, and although it was several years before the American songs dropped out of her repertoire, the traditional songs of the Northeast may be said to be the bedrock on which her repertoire rests. Her affinity for these songs is such that she is still learning, or almost re-learning songs that she heard many years earlier but did not then incorporate into her performing repertoire, as well as rearranging and adapting traditional songs she heard from Jeannie and more recently from Jeannie's daughter Lizzie Higgins.

Archie's development in terms of his performing repertoire is not as straightforward, although he did clearly pattern some of his style after that of Joe Heaney, and showed an inclination toward the lyric Irish and Scottish material. His performing repertoire in the early 1960s contained many Irish songs, as one can see in Appendix 1.

Because Archie was also very involved in the instrumental side of the revival from the aspect of accompaniment, his interests in repertoire tended to be more diverse than Ray's. He certainly gained an appreciation for traditional Scottish songs through exposure to the different traditional singers he encountered, and was led to scout for repertoire in printed collections, such as John Ord's *Bothy Ballads*, the reprinted edition of Gavin Greig's *Folk Song of the North East*, Robert Ford's *Vagabond Songs and Ballads of Scotland*, and others. Archie comments: "There was a definite time I remember going to the Mitchell Library [in Glasgow], and just pouring over all these books" (SA 1986/167/B). Norman Buchan's *101 Scottish Songs* was published in 1962, making available in print the words of many of the songs sung by traditional singers who had performed in Glasgow. McNaughtan (1980) mentions several

other printed sources which revival singers drew on for repertoire.

Ray and Archie Fisher as Models in the Revival

Ray and Archie both became, relatively quickly, models on which other revival singers patterned their repertoire and style, because their interpretations of traditional material were highly respected. While they were in the process of discovering songs from the traditional singers they heard, and were incorporating them into their own performing repertoires, singers hearing Ray and Archie at folk club appearances and on television were inspired to learn these same songs.

English revival singer Frankie Armstrong relates how much she admired the voices of Jeannie Robertson, Lucy Stewart, and Ray Fisher in the early 1960s, an admiration which led to imitation, and then the discovery of, she says, "a whole different area in my voice" (Armstrong 1973:8). The appropriateness of Ray's voice qualities for the material she sang has been remarked upon by several singers and observers of the early revival. Marion Blythman recalls her reaction to Ray's voice:

...That sharp cutting edge that she had to her singing...made the blood run... You would feel...the hair beginning to crawl up the back of your neck, because Ray had passion in her singing... Ray in her younger days was...one of the most passionate singers I have ever heard in my life. I mean she could raise a note that had a clean cutting edge that would go right through, you know, get right through into your consciousness. It was beautiful, extremely beautiful, not pretty, you know, not sweet, just absolutely beautiful... She could express a passion and commitment that was hard to beat. Ray singing some of the old ballads sang them differently to Jeannie, but she brought a quality to them that I think was quite superb... It was never a question of Ray putting herself before the song, Ray was the interpreter of the song. So that when you heard Ray sing, you would say, "What a magnificent song!" (SA 1986/170/A)

Norman Buchan comments about Ray and Archie:

I don't think either of them set themselves to be consciously pioneers, consciously road-making for instructing others, they sang because they liked it, and they got gigs. And they managed to live by it, which they liked... They didn't popularize in the sense that the Spinners did. They treated this material with respect, and if anything I think people may have got from me was this, when I said, "You're not entitled to sell out on this material. If you don't like it as it is, don't touch it, but don't sell out on it. This matters!" I think Archie and Ray had that sense of responsibility, duty towards the material...and that is why they're so good. (SA 1986/23/A)

Pete Shephard describes how, as young singers at the St. Andrews Folk Club, he and his friends would record Archie singing a song one week, learn the song, and perform it themselves at the club the following week (SA 1986/172/B). Shephard regards Archie as "the best singer in the revival in the early Sixties", and adds:

He liked good songs, and he...was always on the lookout for good new songs, and most of the songs that he sang at that time were good traditional songs, from wherever they were from, England, Ireland, or Scotland. And he was fairly indiscriminate in that sense as to where they came from. And he also liked, I knew from talking to him, good traditional singers... (SA 1986/172/B)

Fife-born revival singer Jean Redpath comments:

I probably have learned more songs from Archie than any other single revival singer, and that I think because I find his voice very sympathetic to listen to, but also because for whatsoever he does with it, and I refuse to analyse, he rings the right bells in my head. (SA 1985/214)

To illustrate her point, she mentioned learning "The Great Silkie of Sule Skerry" after hearing Archie's version, "The Norway Maid". Archie was possibly the first revival singer to use and record the only known traditional tune collected in Orkney in 1938 (see Bronson II (1962):564), rather than a contemporary tune popularized by the American singer Joan Baez.

Another aspect of the way in which Ray and Archie became models in the revival is that a reverse process began occurring, whereby people listening

to their interpretations of traditional material became interested in going back to the original sources, the traditional singers. Hamish Imlach recounts an example of this from his own experience:

I listened to Joe Heaney for the first time and it was just a sound like the Moslem's last mambo, I mean it was totally alien. I hadn't any idea what he was saying, he sounded like a Bengali... And you get someone like Archie singing "The Rocks of Bawn", not as well as Joe, but...something you could communicate with and identify with, and then you could go back and listen to Joe. (SA 1986/28/B)

Ray's singing likewise inspired other singers to listen to Jeannie Robertson.

Contemporary Songs and the Revival

Ray and Archie became repertoire models at a fairly early stage in their careers, as their selections and interpretations of traditional material were well-liked. Their repertoires did not remain static, however, and they moved into contemporary material. Archie's fascination with the songs of Woody Guthrie later led him to examine songs by songwriters Ewan MacColl and the American Bob Dylan. He remarks about the 1960s: "The Radio Ballads were running, and that began to spill songs into the repertoire of people as well... it was coming at us from all directions, really..." (SA 1986/167/B). "The Shipyard Apprentice", written by Archie, Bobby Campbell, and Norman Buchan for the "Landmarks" radio series, was clearly similar in approach to MacColl's Radio Ballad songs. Three songs from the Radio Ballads, "Come All Ye Fisher Lassies", "Schoolday's Over", and "I Am a Freeborn Man" appeared on the 1966 Fisher Family LP. Ray included MacColl's "The Moving On Song" in her repertoire.

Archie's interest in both traditional and contemporary material has always been demonstrated by his performing repertoire, and by his own songs,

many of which are cast in a traditional framework. Archie comments:

My repertoire has been aimed more at the expression of what I find and think is important, what I think is, well, my own personal traits of humour, politics, romance (I'm an incurable romantic), and also in some ways the bizarre, too!" (SA 1987/99/A).

There is not enough space in this relatively brief discussion of the Scottish revival repertoire to recount the history of contemporary songwriting of the 1960s and after, but it is perhaps fair to say that there were waves of both American and British songwriters who influenced both subsequent songwriting, and the selection of repertoire by revival singers. Part of the reason for the growing interest in contemporary song was that it expressed personal, and in some cases societal, feelings and experiences; for some singers, the traditional songs spoke of a bygone era and had no relevance to their lives in the second half of the twentieth century. To a certain extent, the folkmusic scene became divided into contemporary and traditional camps, although the division has lessened in recent years.

Alastair Clark considers that songwriting was, like skiffle, a major development and influence in the folk revival, and provides an anecdote on how it touched Archie Fisher:

...Obviously Bob Dylan and figures like that were important, and the Beatles... James Taylor [an American singer-songwriter] was another singer in that category, and he had a big effect on people like Archie Fisher at an early stage in his songwriting. I can recall the time when Archie was very much influenced by him...and he [Archie] appeared at the Usher Hall as a support for some other big folk act that was on. And he had just a short sort of twenty minute spot. And I was reviewing the concert in *The Scotsman*.. I think it was perhaps more a sort of pop concert...than a folk concert, and I think [Archie] tried to gear his performance to this young audience that was more accustomed to hearing pop music. And he sang, I think, a James Taylor song and another contemporary style thing, and I wrote very enthusiastically about it in *The Scotsman*. And a few months later, I interviewed him on radio, and I said, "You're now singing all these contemporary songs. When did all that start?" He said, "When I read your review in *The Scotsman*!" (SA 1986/118/B)

Archie's "Orfeo" LP from 1970 reflects his interest in contemporary songwriting, and many of his own songs on the record are cast in the late 1960s love song mould. As mentioned in Chapter 4, he now views these songs as a phase he went through, and subsequent songwriting work in the 1970s had a greater emotional depth as well as a wider range of content. Archie's fellow songwriter Allan Taylor comments:

..."Witch of the Westmorland", "Orfeo"... I think those are fine songs. And then...there's his kind of, how would you describe it, Seventies singer-songwriting stuff, which was technically very good but never moved me as much as the more traditional work that he took on, like "Orfeo". But I think he has a gift there, ...that's where his strength lies, either in the interpretation of traditional [material], or writing from the tradition, like taking a ballad, an obscure ballad perhaps, and finishing it off or translating it or remodelling it. And conceiving the musical arrangement and so on. I think he makes traditional music very very interesting then... (SA 1986/117/B)

If one looks at Archie's performing repertoire in the examples at the end of this chapter, one can see that the repertoire has always been a mixture of traditional and contemporary material. Alastair Clark thinks that Archie's contact and involvement with the contemporary songs has had a major impact on the way in which he presents all his material:

[Archie] had a very good way of tackling a traditional Scots song, and a rather unusual way, in that...at a time when the projection of a Scottish song meant that it had to be...full of muscle... (It's difficult to express this) - the difference, say, was between a singer like Ronnie Brown of the Corries, and James Taylor even. Scots folkmusic at that time had to be vigorous, and tremendously overplayed in the performance. Archie came along with some of the same songs that they were singing, and turned them into something else. I think...his connections with the contemporary side enabled him to put these across in a much more thoughtful and meaningful way, and much more sensitive way. Maybe he was the first man who crooned traditional folksong in Scotland!... The approach was so much more delicate and musicianly in a way that...was quite different from the norm. I mean there's no connection between, say, a bothy ballad singer and Archie Fisher, in my view. They're different...but at the same time, Archie could sing a bothy ballad in his way and give it a different and rather refreshing character

of its own.

...While I'm maybe overstressing the connection with contemporary music, contemporary songwriting, it's simply that I think this did have an influence on the way he sang. And he did inspire a lot of others to follow that line of the songwriting. (SA 1986/118/B)

Thus Clark sees that contemporary songwriting, with its emphasis on the personal, influenced revival interpretations of traditional material.

Ed Miller sees Archie as an innovator and trend-setter in the revival repertoire:

...There are certain trends in the "hit parades" of the folk revival, there are certain songs that become popular. They may have existed for a long long time, even be traditional songs, but somehow it always seems to be Archie that sings them first, and then they become a fad. He's kind of on the "cutting edge" of the folk scene, he always seems to be a step or two ahead of other people... Either he creates trends in the folk revival or he is aware of them earlier than other people. (SS 12-9-85)

Peter Hall, like Miller, feels that Archie has had a marked impact on repertoire and repertoire trends in the revival,

...from the point of view of his choice of repertoire, his kind of style of guitar accompaniment, his introduction of contemporary songs into repertoire, all these had...quite important influences in the revival, at different times. I think early on, his choice of specific songs was important. Then, later than that, that would be during the Sixties...when people had got past strumming their guitars, the question of what you did with an accompanying instrument became more important, and he had an influence then. And I think maybe after that, the sort of choice of contemporary songs which have flowed into the revival repertoire, he'd had that influence. (SA 1986/25/A)

From the time Ray and Archie stopped singing together on a regular basis in the mid-Sixties, their repertoires diverged, with Archie, as we have seen, becoming more and more interested in performing contemporary songs written either by himself or other songwriters. Ray remarks:

The difference between his [Archie's] repertoire and mine subsequently was that I tended to sing mainly traditional songs, songs that I'd got from older singers, or songs that I'd taken out of books and put tunes to, or collated from other versions, or

something like this, and tended to be a bit closer to traditional than Archie was. SA 1985/207)

However, Ray's repertoire has in recent years incorporated more and more contemporary songs, which is evident from the examples provided in Appendix 1. Her brother Archie has had an unmistakable influence on her appreciation of contemporary song. In a 1984 interview, she considered how some contemporary songs speak beyond the moment of their creation:

There are some good songs coming out. Whether it's the political arena or the social arena or any other arena, you get the song for the minute, but sometimes a song lasts longer: there's something about it that gives it an identification with an incident. And that is the essence of traditional music; it has this lasting quality, whether it's in the words, in the poetry, or just the sheer power to communicate with people where they can understand what's going on, and sympathize with it. If people can keep writing that way, then I should be working another twenty years (Fisher 1984a:14).

One genre of contemporary song which Ray can enjoy listening to but does not like to sing is what she calls "clever wordwork" (SA 1986/113/A). She explains:

...There aren't too many humorous songs on the go at the moment... The clever ones I find it's too much for me to absorb and get them all right, get the timing right, remember all the lines and everything. I mean Adam's [McNaughtan] "Hamlet" thing has got me completely flummoxed. I'm still at about the fourth chapter of it, you know... I think it's very clever indeed...

...I would sing a humorous song if someone wrote one and I thought it was really funny, I would. I would sing it. To date, I haven't, I find the...old humour...still can cause a smile. (SA 1986/113/B)

She recalls performing Archie's comic song about car rally drivers, "The Ballad of Minnie Cooper", in earlier years, but finds generally that the traditional songs she sings like "Sleepytoon" contain humorous elements within, and that this is how she puts across humour. She does occasionally do a humorous rendition of "Bunch of Thyme", personalizing it by adding her husband's name.

Ray's favourite songs range from the traditional to the contemporary.

She remarks: .

There are some songs which I don't sing very often, and...it has to be the right place and the right time, and I have to be in the right mood. "Tifty's Annie" is one of them, I find it very hard to sing it sometimes...

There's another song which I remember absolutely staggered me when I first heard it, and it was Bert [A. L.] Lloyd sang it. And it's an unaccompanied broadside he used to sing called "Fanny Blair", which I sing on occasion because I think it's such a striking song, about a young girl who's eleven years old who gives evidence at a trial of a young man who's supposed to have had dealings with her... And it's one of a kind. I think that's what it is, the special songs are one of a kind... Currently, Gaughan's "A Different Kind of Love Song" is the song that...to me is very special at the moment. (SA 1986/116/B)

One area of song which Ray eschews is Gaelic song. Because of her involvement with Barra through owning a house on the island, and the fact that her mother Morag, her Aunt Mary, and mother's cousin Mairi all sing Gaelic songs and are accessible to her, might cause one to wonder if she might regard learning Gaelic songs as a legitimate aspect of continuing a family tradition. However, she remarks:

I think it would be slightly insulting for us to take up singing Gaelic songs... because I've never felt at home with the Gaelic tradition at all. I've never felt as if it's been part of my heritage at all. (SA 1986/163/A)

Ray speaks and understands a few words and phrases in Gaelic, and continues to learn more during her visits to Barra, but feels that it would be artificial for her to learn Gaelic songs. Because she did not learn any songs from her mother in childhood, the opportunity for a natural context in which to learn Gaelic songs has gone, in Ray's view.

Anne Neilson, a teacher and part-time performer, expresses her own similar dilemma, having grown up in Glasgow, and also having learned many of her songs from the Aberdeenshire repertoire of Jeannie Robertson, like Ray:

I think sometimes I feel that I do not have a tradition of my own, because I sometimes feel as if I'm the only person in

Glasgow that doesnae have Irish antecedents, you know. If you go to the Star Club [a popular folk club in Glasgow] or you go elsewhere, and they will all get up and they will sing such and such that my grampa used to sing, or, you know, when my granny came across from Ulster or something. And as far as I know, we've never had any Irish background at all. And I used to think well, you know, they seem to think this is such a big deal. And although my mother's father came from one of the Outer Isles, and although I very much enjoy Gaelic singing, I don't feel that...I've got to go and scabble for my roots in there. I feel that I live where I am, and my background is where I live, and you know, it's my family. And, you know, my music has just had to come from where I wanted it to come from, and most of it seems to have come from there [Aberdeenshire]. And I sometimes think, you're a fool, you know, what is she up to singing all these songs, you know? Has she got nothing else she can sing?... I think the sum total of songs that I have learned from my parents would be "Wee chooky birdy, tol-lol-lo/ Laid an egg in a windowsill", together with "Help, murder, polis! Three stairs up/ The wifie in the middle door hit me with a cup!/My heid's all broken and my face is all cut/ Help, murder, polis! Three stairs up." That's it! Because, you know, we were not a musical family. (SA 1987/92/B)

In many respects, the Ewan MacColl ideological precept of singing only from one's own tradition created a problem of identity for many emerging revival singers in the 1960s such as Anne Neilson, who felt they could not draw on their own local or family traditions. The traditions within Scotland alone were and are very diverse. However, in Ray's case, it would appear that again, it is affinity for particular songs which defines her repertoire, and she clearly does not feel an affinity with Gaelic material.

The Repertoire of Cilla Fisher

Cilla learned her songs at first primarily in the family, as we have seen in Chapter 4. When she sang with her sister Audrey, they sang mainly Scottish songs, unaccompanied and in unison. Since the early 1970s, her tastes in songs have become quite broad, and of the three performing Fishers, she has

perhaps the most diverse repertoire and style.

Cilla describes how the repertoire she shares and performs with her husband Artie has evolved over the years:

[The repertoire] changed, when Artie and I got together, because of guitar accompaniment... We sang a mixture of things, right across the board: American singer-songwriter stuff, Scottish, anything that we both knew really. And we carried that right on to when we became professionals, we used to sing anything that we liked, and it usually went quite well...

[Then] we kind of began to really go for the Scottish thing, and that meant doing all kind of things from both songs right through to contemporary Scottish songs. And that's basically the way we've held it. I must admit there are a couple of exceptions. I've done some Stan Rogers things, and I've done some Irish songs, but it's basically all Scottish material now... We started off with a guitar, then Artie started playing the Appalachian dulcimer, we used that awhile, for a year or two. Then he brought in a...French instrument called a lap organ... Then Artie brought in the pipes, the small pipes when Colin [Ross] made that first set, and let Artie try them...

I like singing contemporary songs, I find them much easier to sing than traditional songs. I can't really say why, I still don't know why. They just seem easier physically to sing, and there's a lot of nice songs about that I wanted to try doing, so I've done that with Gary [Coupland]. I don't know if I would want to do it all the time... I'm not sort of planning to go solo or anything, 'cause I think it still works better as "Cilla and Artie". (SA 1985/211)

Cilla explains that the reason she and Artie initially made the decision to perform mainly Scottish material was, in a sense, to establish an identity for their duo. Their performing repertoire has also been influenced by the introduction of new instruments into the musical arrangements of their songs, as indicated above.

Ray is very aware of the initial repertoire dilemma that Cilla and Artie faced when they began performing as a duo. She elaborates:

...It was very difficult for Cilla and Artie to find songs which weren't already identified with someone else, you see... But what happened was that Cilla and Artie developed their own duo combination, a totally different repertoire. Or different versions of songs that maybe Archie and I had known earlier... they [the

songs] were localized in Fife... [Cilla and Artie] got...songs from Eck Harley and people in that area. And with my not living in Scotland anymore, having moved, [I] didn't have as much contact with what was going on in the scene in Scotland... I don't know whether they consciously made a point of not doing songs that Archie and I had done in order to give themselves a bit of an identity...but they certainly had a repertoire of songs that I didn't do, didn't sing. (SA 1985/207)

Cilla was not as directly and personally influenced by the traditional singers as were Ray and Archie, although her repertoire has always contained songs learned from the singing of traditional singers. She admires the singing of Lizzie Higgins, the daughter of Jeannie Robertson, and has sung several of Lizzie's songs through the years, such "The Laird o' the Dainty Doonby" and "Lady Mary Ann". Like her sister Ray, Cilla admires women singers with big voices. She relates:

I love Lizzie Higgins because to me she's a real honest performer, I mean she just sings things the way she thinks they should be, and the way that she does it seems very natural... Actually, I like quite a lot of American women singers too, 'cause they're powerful... I like powerful women singers. And in Scotland here, I like Heather Heywood, she's a nice singer, a very good singer... Without being biased, I don't like all that many English women singers, in that I think the accent gets to me too much eventually...

I like my sister a lot, I really like Ray... I hope as I mature I will develop in the way that she has! I think she's great...and I think I've taken a lot from her that I didn't realize I did, at the time... But I think more and more that I kind of borrow things from her... (SA 1985/212)

It would hardly be surprising to find that Ray's attitudes towards repertoire and singing had filtered through to Cilla, and it is evident that Ray has had a considerable influence on Cilla's choice of material.

Cilla and Artie are now the most active performers, compared with Ray and Archie, and as such their need for introducing new material into their repertoire is constant. Cilla feels that Artie finds most of their songs, and explains where some of their repertoire comes from:

Some people give us songs, which is quite nice. Or you hear things. Actually the best way to come upon material in the last year for us has been at clubs, other floor singers singing things. Now Artie's got an ear for that, for hearing people sing things that he can pick up on, as well as Archie...

...I mean songs that people think, "Oh, I've heard that one hundreds of times", performed by somebody else can sound like a whole new song... I'm sort of rehashing quite a few old ones like "Logie o' Buchan", which is quite a well-known song, really, and quite a few people have performed it... We're getting some new stuff. Matt Armour's been a great source for us as well. (SA 1985/211)

"Hunted on the Hillside", a contemporary song by Bobby Tulloch about pressganging in Shetland, is an example of a song which Artie heard sung at a recent Orkney Folk Festival, and has now been incorporated into Cilla and Artie's performing repertoire. It appears, as does "Logie o' Buchan", on their most recent album, "Reaching Out". Matt Armour, a Fife songwriter now living in England, wrote "Generations of Change", which is one of the songs most strongly associated with Cilla and Artie.

Cilla has favourite songs in her repertoire. She comments:

One of the ones that I really enjoy more than anything I've ever done is "Norland Wind", and the strange thing is that although it's a poem and it's set to music, when we found the song basically, Artie sang it. See, he decided that he was going to use that one, so he did it. And then when we came to record the album ["Cilla & Artie"], it wasn't working somehow, I don't know, something was going wrong, but he said, "Well, why don't you try singing it?" And I think I've sung that song more than anything. And yet I've done other songs, the Stan Rogers "Jeannie C" song that I've sung a lot as well, and it was a favourite, but...I've lost enthusiasm for it. (SA 1985/212)

Although she does not sing "Norland Wind" at every performance, it is still in her active repertoire, and has been for at least ten years. Recently, the Stan Rogers song, "The Field Behind the Plow" has become a favourite (Cassette 2). The intensity with which she performs it and "Norland Wind" is unmistakable, and is an indicator of the status each song has in her repertoire.

More so than Archie and Ray, Cilla and Artie sing comic material in their

folk club and concert performances, as well as in their children's shows. When they were performing together in Down and Out, they once sang a Carter Family song which had been sung in the Fisher Family, "I Heard the Bluebird Sing", doing a duet with a line apiece, and the audience laughed. This inadvertent discovery that they could make people laugh by singing American country songs, playing on the husband and wife relationships depicted in the songs, led to further experimentation in this area of repertoire, doing songs like "Perfect Match". Cilla and her sisters had enjoyed singing some of the country-western songs popular in Scotland in the 1960s, so this development was, in a sense, a logical progression from that. Both Cilla and Artie could adopt an American country twang which was quite convincing in the songs, with tight harmonies that slid up and down to a final note. Having seen Cilla and Artie perform in 1974 and 1975, this American material left strong impressions on me, because it was quite well executed for comic effect.

In recent years, they have tended to use Scottish comic songs in their performances. She observes:

Funny songs, of course, fade quite quickly, but we always use one kind of send-up thing..., the "Glens" thing, and we've done "Loch Lomond" and all them. And although they wear thin, they seem to last even better because the reaction's always so different. You know, people pick up on different things, so some of the funny things stay with me...

Cilla refers to the practice of some performers, in recent years, to introduce a serious song in an extended, comical introduction, which sometimes damages the audience's reception of the song. This performance strategy will be discussed on in Chapter 7.

Cilla and Artie have recorded several songs on their various albums which have never become part of their performing repertoire, for various reasons. Cilla finds that some songs drop out of her repertoire without her

realizing it. She elaborates:

There's a couple of things on, I think, the "Foul Day and Fair" record that I don't think I've ever sung in public... I don't think I've ever sung "What Can A Young Lassie" which is on the "Cilla and Artie" record, I don't think I've ever sung that in public, in a performance...

I think the "Balcanquhal" album, I've done most of them, "Leaboy's Lassie" and all that, don't think as much of that we didn't use. I think that was from our real working repertoire, we used a lot of things. But you tend to want to put on [record] things that you haven't done, you know, that are sort of new to people, as well as...things that people want to hear anyway...

...I think you go through phases, as well. I mean we used to do the "Jute Mill Song"...and "The Aragon Mill" together, back-to-back thing. And I mean they used to go a storm, and why we dropped that I don't know... You forget, I mean things just go out of your head, and you forget them. (SA 1985/213)

Cilla also finds that her relationship with some songs changes over time, causing her to drop a song:

I've done "Susie Clelland", we first started doing the ballad with the pipes. And it was exciting for me 'cause I think it was the first real thing that we'd worked on with pipes. Apart from "The Banks of Sicily", which is a real sort of well-known thing anyway. And then in the last year it became like a dirge to me, I just thought it was boring, maybe it was because I'd lost enthusiasm for the song, 'cause it does take quite a lot of singing,... although the response to it was still quite good... And I left it for awhile, and then we went down to the South Bank, and I'd performed it there the year before...and it had gone a storm then, and then went back a year later to do basically the same thing, and everybody went, "You didn't do the one with pipes! We were all waiting for that one!" (SA 1985/213)

Despite this reaction from people in the audience wanting to hear "Bonnie Susie Clelland", Cilla has not started singing it publicly again, but she is sensitive to audience reactions and sometimes they influence her decision to start singing a song again. She clearly weighs audience response against her own aesthetic relationship with the song, a subject which will be discussed more in the next chapter.

One problem Cilla has found with traditional material in recent years is the way women are treated in many traditional songs. She has considered

rewriting some of these songs to make them more compatible with the contemporary social and political climate. She elaborates, as often, with humour:

I think that's what's gotten to me mostly in songs recently, how sexist things are. I mean I'm not an out and out "femi[nist]" by any means, but I go: What's she doing, she's bowing down to him, and "I'm here for your convenience/ John Anderson, my jo". That's why I didn't do **the full version** of [that song]... I think even Artie's more aware of things... I thought we could redo "The Laird o' the Dainty Doonby", and he's [the Laird] going..."Look at her..., oh look, aren't you really lucky that I'm actually who I am, and that I've married your daughter, and I mean I could have been anybody, I might have been a street-sweeper or...a bin-man, but look, I'm the Laird of the Dainty D, isn't she lucky!" Oh, what a cheek! I can't sing it now... So I've been thinking like you could rewrite a lot of them, and then I wouldn't feel so bad about them. (SA 1987/26/A)

The issue of sexism in traditional songs is a vast one, and also brings one to the point of needing to discuss the levels of meaning in a song, and the levels of meaning assigned to a song by the singer. This topic will be examined more closely in the following chapter, as it is closely linked with the singer's aesthetics.

Like her sister Ray, Cilla does not now sing Gaelic songs, although some years ago she learned two for a television programme. She relates:

I went to see Dolina MacIennan, when she lived in Edinburgh, and I learned two songs from her. I mean she...sang them and I wrote it down phonetically, you know, ones like "Brown-Headed Lad", she translated it, and the other one was a song about a soldier, kind of a mouth music type thing. And they never asked me to do them [for the television programme]! So I used the Gaelic one for a couple of times. And when we went to the States, I sang "The Brown-Haired Lad" one a couple of times... (SA 1986/155/B)

...But I don't ever really use them [now], because when I did them in America, I just got bombarded with people who wanted to know about the Gaelic language and everything... (SA 1986/163/A)

Cilla likes the two songs she learned, more or less by rote methods, from Dolina MacIennan; it was her feelings of inadequacy with her inability to

explain cultural and contextual details about the songs to audiences that led her to stop singing them publically. Thus Cilla had an affinity for the material, but the responses it elicited in performance put her in what she felt was an untenable situation.

Categorization of Repertoire

Folksong scholars have long argued the merits of various terms with which to designate different types of songs, but no global consensus has been reached. Porter (1986a, 1986b) discusses the problems surrounding the use of the term "ballad" in folksong studies, noting that many scholars besides himself feel that agreement on this and other terminology is a futile goal, particularly because there is often no correspondence between scholars' terminology and that of the singers whose repertoires they study. He posits that it is more important to find out how singers label or categorize their songs, if indeed they do, and what the songs mean to the singers. Porter finds that the way in which a singer classifies his songs, and the levels of meaning he assigns to a song, are indeed linked.

Singers are sometimes affected by scholars with whom they have contact, and adopt the terminology of the scholar for their songs. It is still important to try to reach beyond the adopted terminology to find the singer's own terminology. Citing examples of this point from existing studies of singers (Abrahams 1972; Smith 1975; Porter 1978), Porter believes that "singers do formulate arrangements of songs into type according to various criteria" and feels "it is the scholar's task to uncover these criteria and to reconcile them with his own" (191-192).

There has been and continues to be a high level of interaction between academics studying folksong, and traditional and revival singers in Britain, particularly in Scotland. Hamish Henderson is one of the people largely responsible for this, as he has always fostered gatherings of singers, academics, and the general public. One finds that the song classification systems of some traditional and revival singers in Scotland sometimes exist on two levels, one for public contexts comprised of scholarly classifications, and one for private contexts, comprised of the singer's own terms. Because of this, an investigator soon realizes that the singer's personal scheme of categorizing songs is much more interesting and illuminating than the scheme produced for the investigator in scholarly terminology.

A 1972 study by Casey, Rosenberg and Wareham, a 1980 study by Dunn, and most recently a study by Fairley (1987) have considerable bearing on this discussion of repertoire classification. The first examines seven levels of repertoire classification by singers, drawing on examples from two Newfoundland outport communities. The first level of classification is based on "a clear-cut dichotomy" between Newfoundland and non-Newfoundland songs, or local and non-local songs (Casey *et al* 1972:398). Additional levels of classification reference "form, content or style", the singer's audience, individuals in an audience, and the singer's personal details.

This is a brief but seminal study, particularly in that it links the classification of repertoire closely with the singer's audience. It provides one example of ways of examining what Porter terms "native generic concepts of songs" (1986a:116).

Dunn's recent study of the pub-singing tradition in the East Suffolk villages of Blaxhall and Snape has much to offer in terms of insight into

singers' perceptions of their repertoires. She considers the primary aesthetic of singers to be performance. Dunn elaborates:

The recognition of performers as good, by nature of their performing, is the primary critical standard in the local tradition but secondary standards are important too, and indicate the concerns of singers and audience. These critical standards are prescriptive as well as descriptive, and serve to maintain the *status quo* of singing style and choice... Songs serve social and personal needs, and delivery should be appropriate to the emotions contained in the songs... (1980:207).

While choice of repertoire is not the main issue discussed above, I wish to stress Dunn's emphasis on performance as the most important level of the singer's aesthetics, as one finds, I believe, that performance is the dominant factor in determining how revival singers in the folk scene perceive and therefore classify their repertoire.

Looking further afield, Fairley's work with the Chilean exile musicians in the group *¡Karaxú!* clearly shows that they "define music according to performance context" (1987:261). Caraveli (1982) indicates that the performance context plays a significant role in traditional Greek "folk aesthetics"; content and genre are of less importance in categorization. These two studies lend credence to the supposition that singers from cultures outside Britain have similar aesthetic considerations.

I have found with the Fishers that performance is, as in Dunn's and Fairley's case, the primary aesthetic consideration, and classification of repertoire is based on performance situations. Classification of repertoire is in terms of how it functions in a performance programme, and tends to be expressed by a dichotomy, such as "traditional" or "contemporary", "up-tempo" or "down-tempo", for example.

Many revival singers use the simple dichotomy of traditional and contemporary songs to distinguish between items in their repertoires. Singers

introducing songs in a folk club performance will frequently make no finer distinction. This categorization is frequently made by Archie, Ray, and Cilla and Artie in their respective performances. As they have all been in frequent contact with academics, media personnel, other professional singers, and traditional singers, they are all aware of how songs are perceived within these different groups of people. They are all familiar with the scholarly terms used to classify traditional songs, such as Child ballad, bothy ballad, and lyric, but these are not the terms they generally utilize in their performances, because their audiences are not academics; it is considered pedantic in some folk clubs for performers (whether guests or floor singers) to introduce their songs using such terminology. Since audience response is important to the Fishers, they utilize more general terms that will not distance or annoy their audiences.

Archie, Ray, and Cilla also draw and verify repertoire from many of the major collections, some of which they own: *Child's English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, Gavin Greig's *Folk Songs of the North-East*, Ord's *Bothy Ballads*, Ford's *Vagabond Songs and Ballads of Scotland*, for example. Thus they are knowledgeable about many of the standard sources for folksong scholars studying Scottish material, and are conversant with the jargon and vocabulary used by these scholars. As a researcher, I have tried to avoid putting words in their mouths in asking my questions, but one begins to realize how difficult it is to leave personal conceptions behind in an interview situation, and how to phrase questions in such a way that one does not prefigure the answer.

Archie's classification of songs is clearly based on the act of performance. He has recorded some of the Child ballads, Jacobite songs, and other specific song types for radio programmes dealing with those subjects, but these designations are not how he conceptualizes his own repertoire. He comments:

I don't think in terms of shapes or lengths of songs, I think in terms of placing songs in the context of a set. That if you think of the performer who does twenty songs a night, you think you have twelve or ten songs a half, and they're all separate, it's intrusive thought if you string them all together. In the majority of cases...when I programme, I programme in twos and threes. So in one set, there may only be actually four or five moods, or four or five shapes or cameos, that maybe have two or three songs in them. Sometimes more than that, sometimes four songs. I do suites of songs rather than a series of individual songs, and inside these suites are release and tension, in regard to say the theatre of it. There are songs that are light, and there are songs that are deep, and there are songs that are narrative, and there are songs that are just good fun. They don't have to be anything more than that. And that also gives you the continuity of linking, too, that...in many cases you can shuffle the songs about in different orders, they don't always have to be done in the same order. I do that with the "Borders Suite", the songs I sing, I do it with songs about the sea, songs about horses, and so on. Love, romance. (SA 1987/98/B)

Thus Archie categorizes his songs for a performance by themes and by the moods they create for him and what he hopes they will create for the audience. This is similar to the way in which the Chilean group ìKaraxú! perceive each of their songs and pieces to have a particular *ambiente* or atmosphere (Fairley 1987:262). "Deep", "light", and "narrative" are the broad song categories Archie names here, and presumably the songs which "are just good fun" are also "light". The metaphor of weight, as in "light" and "heavy", is used by the three Fishers and many other singers in classifying their songs. Archie here uses "deep" as the opposite of "light".

Archie also groups his songs in performance by themes and topics, creating what he calls "suites" of songs. The "Borders Suite" he refers to above includes the songs "Borderland", "The Mosstrooper's Lament", "Ettrick", and "Broom o' the Cowdenknowes". A suite of sea songs might include "The Final Trawl", "The Sailors' Rest", "Make-and-Break Harbour", and "Rolling Home". He sings two songs about the Hebrides, "The Cuillins of Skye" and "Joy of My Heart" together, going from the first right into the second without a break. The family song "Air Falalalo", also Hebridean, is often sung before or after these

songs if Archie is performing with Ray and Cilla and Artie. "The Roving Ploughboy" and "The Last Clydesdales", both about farming life and people, are sometimes paired in performance. These suites are not fixed, but provide a framework in which a performance can be structured, and as Archie says, the songs do not have to be in a particular order.

Archie is so theme-orientated that in song introductions, he does not always distinguish between traditional and contemporary material, but simply explains the topic of the song. This appears to be part of his modest, low-key style in introducing songs, in which he does not always explain that he is the writer of the song he is about to sing. One result of this is that many people not familiar with Archie's repertoire are led to think that he is singing a traditional song, which is given added credibility by his singing style and the style of his songwriting. The nationality or original source of a song sometimes functions as a classifying scheme for Archie, but usually as a sub-category of traditional songs.

Archie also refers to chorus songs as a generic category of songs. He feels that "chorus songs are an essential part of any entertainment set", but does not write songs himself in this particular category. This designation is based on the performance function of the song, which is, in Archie's words, "to reach out to the audience to sort of say, you're going to play part of it with me" (SA 1987/99/A). "Rolling Home", "Joy of My Heart" and "Sailors All" are examples of what Archie would call chorus songs, and may be either traditional or contemporary.

Ray, in discussing the early days of the folk revival in Scotland, divides the repertoire of that time into American and Scottish songs. She has always had a fondness for narrative song, perhaps more so than anyone else in her

family. As such, she does speak of ballads, as they are a distinct category of traditional songs to her, but her remarks on repertoire usually relate in some way to the performance situation. She comments:

...I couldn't sing unaccompanied ballads very often in the Ray and Archie context, you see, because it was a...very solo thing, doing ballads, you see?... So when I became solo, it was so much better, that you get a variation by singing a couple of what would be regarded as "heavy" sort of songs in the course of a night, you know? And it was so much easier for me to do that, and I loved these songs, I mean I just love telling stories, you know, I like stories, so that it was quite easy for me to do that... The ballads tend to go not too badly when I do them, you know, I enjoy that, so that I would tend to go towards singing ballads and more traditional songs that I could explain to people about, or songs that had a certain effect on me when I sang them. And then, but you see there's all the new ones as well, that move you in some sort of way, that you want to...let people hear them...
(SA 1985/209)

Ray perhaps uses the term "ballad" more than either Archie or Cilla in introductions to songs in performance, and also in normal conversation, so it clearly represents a particular type of narrative song to her. Although she owns the Dover paperback edition of Child's collection, she rarely uses the phrase "Child ballad", and also includes non-Child ballads in her usage of the term "ballad", such as "The Laird of the Dainty Doonby" and "The College Boy".

Ray uses the term "bothy song" frequently in both conversation and performance to describe songs in her repertoire. Within this category would fall Scottish songs such as "The Forfar Sodger", "Sleepytoon", and "Moneymusk Lads". "Bothy song" or "bothy ballad" are terms used by scholars of Scottish song as well, as they are songs composed by men working in the bothies of Northeast and Central Scotland, generally about the hardships suffered by these farm labourers, or about their adventures in the big city while on a "spree". Many of them are humorous, and within the context of a performance set, Ray would categorize them as "up-tempo" songs. She also employs the terms "heavy" and "light", "up" and "down" to refer to songs in a performance context,

using the metaphors of weight and vertical placement. The songs Ray designates as ballads such as "Willie's Lady", "Tifty's Annie", "Anach Cuain", and "The Cruel Mother", as well as contemporary songs which have a serious message, such as "A Different Kind of Love Song", "Hope and Glory", "Over Yonder Banks", and "Lost At Sea", would all be considered "heavy" and "down". These songs are in general more of a challenge to sing than the "light" songs.

Many of the songs Ray learned from the singing of Jeannie Robertson, Jane Turriff, Lucy Stewart, and Belle Stewart fall into the "light" and "up" category, such as "The Bonnie Wee Lassie Who Never Said No", "An Auld Man Come Coortin' Me", "High Jeannie High", "I Am A Miller Tae My Trade", and "Betsy Bell". Therefore, Ray appears to classify songs roughly by her definition of the song genre, i.e. "ballad" or "bothy song", but also by the mood of the song in a performance context, i.e. "heavy" and "light". These classifying schemes can exist independently, or in a merged scheme, depending on the context in which they are employed.

Cilla, like Archie, tends to place her songs in broad categories based on themes, and also uses the terms "light" and "heavy" to indicate the relative mood of the song within a performance context. She is somewhat wary of singing too many songs in a set connected with one subject. She remarks humorously:

It's always fish with me, that's all, or the sea, you know, "The Jeannie C", a boat that went down, then "The Eyemouth Disaster" is a boat that went down. And then I'm doing "The Final Trawl", which is about fishing and the sea, and then...the "bonnie lass, fisher lass, sittin' by the sea"! And you've got the sea half of the...programme, if you're not in it, you're on it! (SA 1986/155/A)

Thus her concept of themes leads her to try to disperse songs on the same subject through a performance set, unlike her brother Archie who groups them together. She speaks also of "uppers" and "downers", a variation on "light" and

"heavy". "Uppers" can include anything from the comic songs "Glens" and "Loch Lomond Parody" to the bothy ballad "Sleepytoon" and "The Wark o' the Weavers", thus inclusive of both traditional and contemporary material. Much of the Fife and Dundee material that Cilla and Artie perform, such as "The Wheel of Fortune", "Hash o' Benagoak", and "Love and Freedom" falls into the "upper" category.

"Downers" include more serious or thoughtful songs, and longer narrative songs, such as "Generations of Change", "The Field Behind the Plow", "The Tale of '81", "The Pair Roving Lass", and "The Eyemouth Disaster". This category is now predominated by contemporary material, although in the 1970s, it included more traditional songs such as "The Gypsy Laddies". There appears to be a direct correlation between these broad categories of song and the ease with which they are sung, that is, in general, "downers" are harder to sing than "uppers".

Like Archie, Cilla uses the category of "chorus songs", which may overlap with another category, particularly "uppers". Many of the bothy ballads she and Artie have performed through the years have short choruses. They used to sing more chorus songs in their early days as performers deliberately in order to elicit audience response, but find their need for such songs has diminished through time as they have become more experienced performers and their tastes in songs have changed.

The metaphor of weight is a common categorizing device not just for the Fishers, but for many other singers, both traditional and revival, as well. Lizzie Higgins of Aberdeen, like her mother, the late Jeannie Robertson, references her songs in terms of weight and size. Both Jeannie and Lizzie have spoken of the "heavy" or "big" ballads to distinguish them from other

songs in their repertoires (see Gower and Porter 1970, 1977; Smith 1975). Margaret Bennett has commented to me that Scottish Gaelic singers refer to "*òrain mhòra*" or "big songs".

Similarly, revival singer Jean Redpath distinguishes between "the heavyweights" and "the lyric weights" (SA 1985/215). Most ballads would fall into the category of "heavyweights". Jean gives as examples "Susie Clelland", "Annachie Gordon", and "Sheath and Knife", but also some songs written or collected by Robert Burns

...because they're difficult to sing and they're difficult to listen to. It's the emotional *weight* I'm talking about, it's not just the length... [Italics mine] (SA 1985/215).

Weight is clearly a metaphor for emotion and mood in Jean's repertoire categorization system.

Revival singer Anne Neilson's repertoire categories are based more on content and form, although her categories reflect a difference in emotional weight:

I have three lists! One is a list of what I would call ballads, and it would include things that are not ballads by a scholar's definition, because I would put in it something like Adam's song "Annie Broon", about the old woman who was found dead, and nobody missed her. And I would put into it "The Fairfield Crane" song, and I would count them in there because...they're basically narrative, but they're talking to a larger issue than just the narrative content. But then there's a category which is more lyrical, and it would be things like "Plooman Laddie" and "I Am A Miller Tae My Trade" and things like that. And then there's another category which is more frivolous, or, you know, kind of comic songs or whatever. And I suppose the middle one isn't even lyrical, it's kind of lyrical and rural. So something like "Pitgair", you know, a bothy ballad, it would get into that kind of category. 'Tis a system of my own, and I don't know whether it works, but I think about them in those kind of groupings. (SA 1987/92/A)

Anne's classification of her repertoire is probably the most developed one I encountered when talking to various singers, which may reflect a personal need for organization of her songs into a structured framework. Some singers keep

actual as well as mental lists of songs in their various categories.

For Sheena Wellington, a revival singer living in Fife, repertoire categorization is strongly based on performance:

I don't know that I make a distinction, probably I do if I'm programming a set, you know, I won't sing three ballads, three Child ballads straight off. It's hard work for the audience, and it's even harder work for the singer... I don't really make distinctions between songs. I like all the songs that I sing. I don't mentally categorize the songs terribly much, although I think there's an automatic balance that you put into a programme... I throw a lively or a funny one in, just because I would find it terribly difficult to sing a whole spread of sad songs all the time. It's very depressing, and there's an awful lot of the ballad repertoire is incredibly depressing, sad, tragic... (SA 1986/160/A)

Clearly Sheena's distinctions are based roughly on content, in terms of their emotive effect in a performance.

With regard to Archie, Ray, and Cilla, the manner in which the three Fishers categorize their repertoires suggests that thematic content, and the mood or emotional weight created by a song in performance, are the two most important criteria for classifying songs. Categories also overlap, such as bothy song - chorus song - "up" song, or Scottish song - contemporary song - "heavy" song. Most of the categories designated by the Fishers have reference to the performance context, just as Dunn finds performance to be the primary aesthetic with her East Suffolk singers. This appears also to be the case with some Scottish traditional singers like Jeannie Robertson and Lizzie Higgins, indicating that there is perhaps less difference between the ways in which traditional singers and professional revival singers categorize their repertoires than previously thought.

The Learning and Possession of Songs in the Fisher Family

It is natural to assume that if one member of a large family learns a song, the others in the family may learn it too, or else avoid it. In some families, if one member sings a song, the other family members may be reticent about learning and singing it, a phenomenon which was noted in the relationship between Lizzie Higgins and her mother Jeannie Robertson by Smith (1975). We should consider how songs are learned in the Fisher family, and if there is any system of ownership at work within the family.

Archie comments:

...Inside the family there was a feeder system in terms of songs, in terms of passing them down, which was quite important... They [Joyce, Cindy, Audrey, and Cilla] were static, and Ray and I, if you like, were mobile... (SS 13-5-86/B)

Archie feels that the way six of the seven children grew up in three tiers of pairs enhanced the learning of songs within the family. He elaborates:

...Although we could swap [songs], and the repertoires would move down or across between them, it gave each of these three subdivisions a distinct repertoire eventually, and a distinct sound, too - that we all had our areas, and we all had things that we overlapped on that we could all come together on too. 'Cause we even had five of them singing together, the Deci-Belles they're called, I think! I mean they all got married and they all sang at each other's weddings and the sessions and things afterwards... By the time Cilla got married, there was a lot of songs going!

...We're not a family working off songbook songs... Like Cilla sings a lot of songs that I wouldn't sing, or can't sing, but I've taught her. At the same time, we both sing the same songs differently, perform them differently. But everybody was drawing their material from different sources, especially Ray who's now probably one of the strongest in that she's learning more. (SS 13-5-86/B)

Sometimes when a song was introduced into the family, it was learned by all, and retained in the way it had first been sung by the family member who had introduced it. Commenting on this, Ray remarks:

I think that's the proximity of us when we were at home... The songs were established and whoever it was that first sang that song, established that particular phrasing and the rest adhered to it straightaway. (SA 1986/115/B)

Songs which fall into this rough category of "family" songs include "Follow the Drinking Gourd", "The Birken Tree", "The Pretoria", "I Am A Miller Tae My Trade", "Fisher Lasses", "Joy of My Heart", "Air Falalalo", and "Johnny Sangster". Some of these are performed when Archie, Ray, and Cilla and Artie do Fisher Family appearances, or when the extended family gather informally.

Ray recalls that on some songs like the American gospel hymn, "Children Go Where I Send Thee", each of her sisters sang alternating lines or verses, with the result that none of them knew the entire song. This performing pattern was also present in each of the three singing pairs. Cilla observes with humour:

...When Audrey and I used to do the "Deep Mill Dams of Binnorie", a verse apiece, and I could never sing the whole thing...because suddenly she's alive one verse, next minute she was deid! We didn't know how she'd drowned! (SA 1986/24/B)

In a somewhat similar vein, Joyce recalls singing mainly harmonies with the family and in the duo with Cindy, such that her husband used to remark that she "never knew a melody to a song" (SA 1987/24/B).

Archie, Ray, and Cilla all have a good individual facility for learning new songs. This ability in Archie and Ray was certainly put to a severe test when Ray had moved to Whitley Bay, and they could not practice songs together (except over the telephone), especially for their appearances on "Here and Now" and later television shows. In the early days of the revival, Archie and Ray as well as other members of the family were using a tape recorder to listen to themselves, which must have helped as a learning tool. Archie later learned to read music, though "not fluently", as he says, but adds: "I can pick up tunes from music" (SA 1987/99/A). This skill has helped him in learning songs from

printed collections.

As part of Archie's repertoire consists of his own songs, he is intimately familiar with them by the time they are presented in performance. He does, however, enjoy performing his newly written songs.

As already mentioned, Archie found that his repertoire suffered during the years he worked with the Clancy Brothers because he was not performing, apart from backing them as a musician. He has performed on a sporadic basis in the 1980s, because his broadcasting work claims much of his time. He comments:

I don't sing as much as I used to so I don't learn songs. I haven't learned half a dozen songs in the last year [1985-86]. 'Cause I find more so now that if I learn one song it cancels out another one in a way, in terms of just performing repertoire. Now working with Garnet [Rogers] in America last year, which was the first time I'd done intensive singing for about ten years..., I had to look to my repertoire again... I went up to Barra to do it, and discovered a whole seam of stuff that I'd left behind a long time before. And I sat down and learned ten that week, about ten songs, easily. Yes, because they'd all been just below the surface, and I hadn't gone through the actual physical motion of saying, "These are the words, how am I going to arrange them?" 'Cause the more complicated you approach a song, the more complicated way you perform, the harder it is to bring a song, a new song, up to that standard... (SS 13-5-86/B)

Archie's words suggest that learning songs must at some point include a conscious and physically-rooted effort to make them part of active, rather than passive, repertoire. Dunn concludes in her examination of song learning and ownership that "the act of performing a song for the first time is a conscious decision to take on a song and make it one's own" (Dunn 1980:202).

Ray finds that one of her best memory aids in learning or remembering a song is a significant line or phrase:

There's something, whether it's a performance or it's just a song - a line, something that comes to you that's retained in your memory, and that particular thing is the thing that holds it. (SA 1986/113/A)

Ray sometimes uses the piano to go over tunes. She can read staff notation slowly, but prefers using sol-fa, and has written tunes for songs in sol-fa.

Ray recently remarked: "As I'm getting older I find it harder to keep things in my mind; I find it difficult to learn new things" (SA 1986/113/A). She has been bringing more contemporary songs into her repertoire in the past few years, but she does not push herself to learn as many songs as she did in her teens and twenties. Several songwriters send her cassettes of their work, which she works through and picks the songs that she is interested in learning. The newly-learned song is not used in a performance until she feels ready to use it, thus affirming Dunn's remark above.

Cilla has never found learning songs difficult, and has a formidable memory. She comments:

The quickest way for me to learn a song if it's been recorded or something, you know, I can just take the words down. And if I actually write them down, and then sing it through, I could probably sing it almost from that... I can learn in about five minutes. If I sang it through twice or three times, I'd probably know it.

I like learning songs, it's really [a] little mental exercise... Some of them don't always go in, though... There's one song on the "Fishing" record, "The Isle of May"... I never sing the verses in the same order, I don't know what it is, it's really weird... I don't know why I get kind of mental blanks and things. The worst thing, actually, I think for learning is if...there's like two lines that are always the same, you know, like: "Hear the puffins calling/ Off the Isle of May". Or if it's...a song with a sort of AB part where there's two lines and then it's a...repeated line, I think that's what confuses me... You know, if it's not like the man meets the girl, and they go out, and they make love, and then she gets pregnant, and he goes in the army, and he dies, and that's it, you know, that kind of story line! But if it's...not a real story line, I think that's where I fall down in my learning, but everything else just seems to go in, even things that I don't want to have! (SA 1985/213)

Cilla can recall learning five songs by the late Glasgow songwriter Matt McGinn for a special memorial concert, while travelling from the South of England to the concert in the car.

In the 1970s and 1980s, it has become fairly common practice for record sleeves to include the words to songs. Many people learn songs from records, and when the words are not given on the sleeve, it is of course possible for the listener to mishear words. This can occur in a situation where one singer learns a song from another, but the listener is one stage further removed from the source when learning a song off a record. Cilla feels strongly that putting the words on the record sleeve is a good practice, and remarks:

I personally like to get an album [with the words on it], 'cause if somebody's diction isn't very good, it infuriates me... So when the words have been there, I thought oh, that's great, and I don't mind at all. I think it's a real asset...

...I think nine times out of ten at any booking, nearly one or two people will come up and ask about the words of something... And I go, "It's on the record, there it is!" (SA 1987/26/A)

The three Folk-Legacy records of Archie, Ray, and Cilla and Artie include booklets with the words, and also personal remarks about the songs by the respective singers. The subsequent albums which Cilla and Artie have put out on their own Kettle label include words, and in the case of their Singing Kettle records, they have published accompanying books with words and musical arrangements. Archie's most recent LP also includes words. The Fishers are in this way aiding the learning process for others who may wish to learn the songs they sing.

Cilla does not read music, so that she is reliant on aural sources for tunes. She has written quite a few songs for the "Singing Kettle Show" and for "Scotch Broth", both for children, but she utilizes a tape recorder for songwriting, first composing, then recording, and finally learning.

Because she sings in a duo with her husband Artie, Cilla has more opportunity to sing harmony than either Archie or Ray. However, all the singing Fishers appear to have an innate ability to harmonize with melodies.

Cilla comments that her harmonizing "just happens":

I don't know what it is, either, I've never worked at it... I don't know how you explain them either. I mean somebody just sings a line, you just sing a harmony with it. I mean it's like people saying, "How can you sing?" "Just open my mouth, and it comes out", you know? (SA 1985/212)

Thus for Cilla, as with the other Fishers, there is no learning process for harmonies, but rather an experimental and intuitive process.

Song Ownership Within the Fisher Family and the Folk Scene

The "ownership" of songs has never seemed to be a problem in the Fisher Family. Many songs, as we have seen, are shared by family members, and are, in a sense, symbolic of family solidarity and rapport. The fact, however, that three of the Fishers are public performers, potentially places them in competition for repertoire, and places pressure on them to work up unique presentations of songs to set them apart from each other. Archie, Ray, and Cilla have evolved as individualistic performers whose talents are complementary, and therefore not in competition. This is a mark of their sensitivity to each other, as well as their own artistry.

Ray and Cilla discussed with me the way songs move between family members:

R: ...We never actually said it to each other, but if somebody was working on a song, or if they were looking at something and presenting it their way, and had worked on it, that was part of their repertoire, and you tended not to touch it...

C: Yeh, oh aye.

R: ...You'd say, oh well. And then people used to come up to me and they'd say, "You know that one that Cilla does"...and this is just in recent years that people have said to me, "Do you do 'Generations of Change'?" or whatever, and I say, "No, Cilla does that one". And I learned it, because people kept asking me to do it, and I kept saying I don't do it... They're some songs which I wouldn't even attempt to sing..., some that Archie does.

C: Well, I'd like to sing some of them, but I cannae work out the

chords!... There's very little crossover. I think in the beginning obviously when we started, I took a lot from what you did. But we tried very hard then, when we did our first record, to get our own sort of stuff, when we did "Balcanquhal"... Eck Harley gave us a lot of stuff.

S: Yeh, you drew so much from the Fife tradition.

C: Mm hm, yeh, Pete Shepheard actually was great to us... He gave, you know, "The Wheel of Fortune", and "Magdalen Green" and "Reres Hill" and "The Glasgow Lassie" and...a couple of the bothy ones, "Ring Dum Day", I do "Sleepytoon", I got that from you [Ray], though...

R: ...It was quite interesting because there was me down where I was in the North of England, and there was Archie doing his "wandering minstrel" all over the shot, and Cilla and Artie up here [in Fife]. And I'd come up and hear, "Have a listen to this, this is what I've got", and "This is what I've found" and "This is great" and "Hear this!" And then, if there were some songs that I couldn't sing, or I didn't feel happy singing, I thought oh, maybe Cilla might like to do that, or Archie could do that or whatever. But I think I tended to feel...if I had a song that I couldn't do, give it to one of the family, rather than anyone else, you know? And I think this still works, too... At least if Archie said, "I've got a good song", then you'd know that it was a good song, and that at least there was something of merit in it... And nine times out of ten with Archie, it's got a good tune. Archie's got a very good ear for tunes, so that when he evolves tunes of his own, that he puts everything in that's got all the little gems, little wee phrases and things that come from somewhere else, you know, and you say, oh, that's great! (SA 1986/163/B)

Echoing some of Ray's words, Cilla comments:

I suppose I could sing along with Ray on most of her songs, or even Archie, on the majority of stuff that he does. And their old songs. But I would never...perform them in public... Sometimes [people will] say, "Do you do...Archie's 'Men of Worth'?" or something, which I've done on a few occasions. And there's some that I try not to learn so that I can't ever do them, you know, I mean like Ray's songs, 'cause people do say, "Oh, do you do that one that Ray does?" and I go "No". And they go, "Oh, you must know that". And I go, "No, I don't know, I really don't know it at all". (SA 1985/213)

Cilla and her husband Artie also manage to work out who of the two is going to sing a particular song, or at least sing the lead part; she remarks: "We haven't actually fought over a song" (SA 1985/212). The one who does not sing lead then usually sings a harmony, so that the arrangement is a cooperative effort, regardless of who is the perceived "owner" of the song. Ownership is sometimes determined by arrangement, in that they work out

how the song sounds best to them, with Cilla singing lead or Artie singing lead.

When songs closely associated with a family member, such as "Generations of Change" with Cilla and Artie, and "Men of Worth" with Archie, are taken up by another family member, it involves several issues. In the instance of "Generations of Change", Ray learned it because of continued audience expectation, but foremost in her mind was the fact that it is Cilla and Artie's song. However, her manner of arranging songs is different enough from that of Cilla and Artie that she felt she could learn it and perform it without detracting from or damaging the song's association with Cilla and Artie in the wider folk scene. Moreover, Ray acknowledges this association when she performs it, by mentioning Cilla and Artie, just as she would mention Lizzie Higgins or Jeannie Robertson if performing one of their songs.

Ray elaborates on the practice of acknowledgement of source within the folk scene:

...If you've just worked on a song, and you're...getting into it and you're beginning to feel it, and people take it away and...change it, it's almost like as if it becomes public domain, really, there's nothing you can do about it as soon as you've sung publically. Anyone can sing it if they want to. But...I feel quite strongly about people not acknowledging that: where they've got it. Not that I want people to say that every single time they sing it that they got it from me or a recording or heard me singing it somewhere. But I feel that way towards the traditional singers. I feel that, you know, this particular song was given to me, you know, from this person, like Lizzie [Higgins], for example. [I] never fail to tell people that that's where it came from. And what happens is that I think nowadays there's a much bigger turnover in songs because people are always looking [for songs], even if they're just going to their folk club each week, they want to have another song, or they want to hear some new things. And they're always listening, and they're always taking from sources all over the place. If they would just identify where they got them, it'd be like a sort of acknowledgement that somebody was responsible for presenting this particular song in this particular way. (SA 1985/207)

Ray appreciates other singers acknowledging her as a source, and clearly she

feels it is highly important when a traditional singer is involved, but acknowledgement is in all situations a form of courtesy to the source and to the listener.

Similarly, Dunn remarks of the East Suffolk singers she studied:

Singers may sing another's song after acknowledging the true ownership of the song in public, or requesting permission from the owner before a performance at which he will not be present. Singers thus have ways in which they can perform the songs of other people without disobeying the rules of song ownership (1980:202).

In both the Fisher family and the larger community of the folk scene or performance circuit, acknowledgement of source, and by implication, ownership, is the way in which the "rules of song ownership" are satisfied when material from another family member or other performer is used.

Another example of how song ownership and performing rights are worked out in the family involves a recent contemporary song, "Land of Hope and Glory" by Andy Victor, an English songwriter. The song was initially discovered by Archie, who sang it with Cilla in a Radio Tweed production; Audrey requested the words from Cilla, and Ray heard the song from Audrey, and got the words from her. Both Cilla and Ray have made their own modifications to the song lyrics to make its point clearer; Ray has written an additional verse for her version and altered the tune slightly, while Cilla has changed words in places for hers. Thus the song has been shared by family members, but Cilla and Ray have each fashioned their own version and arrangement, and each perform it in their different interpretations, which can be heard on Cassette 1.

What does not occur in the family are violations of song ownership rules, rules which by the above accounts seem to be unspoken and intuitively felt. Dunn lists the ways in which these rules are breached in small Suffolk

communities:

What is not allowed is for a song to be taken. The taking of a song involves the performance of a song learnt aurally and with no giving involved, where no owner is acknowledged even if he is present and about to sing, and where no apologies are made. This is the ultimate transgression against the laws of song ownership. Other complaints are about specific faults, such as a bad performance of a co-owned song, the breaking of a personal agreement not to sing when the giver of the song is present, and disputes over ownership of co-owned songs (1980:203).

Again, such transgressions do not crop up in the Fisher family or in the performing community, because in performance they acknowledge existing ownership if it is involved. This was true in the case of "The Night Visiting Song", mentioned earlier in the chapter; Ray and Archie additionally felt that they could do the song better than the source they learned it from, but the acknowledgement of source sanctioned their use of the song. Another more recent example is Ray's learning of the song "Lost At Sea" by Clive Gregson, which is strongly associated with the Wilson Family of Teeside, who recorded it for a charity famine relief fund. Every time Ray performs the song, she mentions the Wilsons.

Rule infractions of song ownership do occur in folk clubs and concerts, and when they do, it is usually through insensitivity on the part of the rule-breaker. The rules are not articulated, but one should somehow know that it is not acceptable or considerate for one singer to sing a song associated with or owned by another in the presence of that person without asking his permission. Because this sometimes involves a young floor singer and an established performer, violations of this kind are generally not taken very seriously by the audience members and are put down to bad manners or youthful ignorance. The situation where this is not taken so lightly is when it involves only professional performers, in which case the infraction can make both the song owner and the audience feel uncomfortable, or even outraged.

Dunn sees song ownership "as a means whereby songs may be learned and transmitted in a controlled manner" (1980:202). This could be seen as true to a degree in both the Fisher family and in the folk scene. In the earliest days of the folk revival, song ownership was not yet firmly established as most young singers were finding their repertoire on records and from other singers simultaneously. Once the folk revival was established in the 1960s and onward, song ownership became much more of a factor in determining repertoire of revival performers, in that it laid an emphasis on finding and developing one's own repertoire, rather than singing what other people were singing.

In this sense, song ownership has functioned as a control, preventing the emergence of revival performers with identical repertoires, which would be reinforced by the fact that an audience would expect different songs from different performers. Ownership fails to function as a control when the rules concerning it are breached, either with or without intent, and it is quite possible that the growth of the folkmusic recording industry and the increased number of inexpensive cassette tape recorders have aided and abetted the breaking of implicit rules by making it easy to obtain songs. In the Fisher family, song ownership is not a strict form of control, but the overlap between family members' repertoires is negotiated with sensitivity and respect.

Examples of Performance Repertoire

One of the easiest ways to acquaint oneself with a singer's performing repertoire is to examine chronological lists of songs performed or recorded privately or commercially on different occasions. This type of information is often difficult to obtain, as most performers do not keep performance lists, and

recorded material is often in the hands of unknown individuals. I am fortunate in having tapes of various Fisher performances at the St. Andrews Folk Club from 1963, which were loaned to me by Pete Shephard, and a tape of a 1963 Edinburgh Folk Festival performance recorded by Edgar Ashton. David Potter provided me with a recording he made of the Fisher Family performing at the Sidmouth Folk Festival in 1985. Cilla and Artie loaned me three tapes of their performances in 1977, 1979, and 1981. From lists compiled using these items, lists compiled from recent performances I attended, and the commercial recordings which the Fishers have made through the years, it is possible to document repertoires from different stages of their performing careers (See Appendices I and II). I have listed examples for Archie performing solo and with Ray; Ray performing solo; Cilla and Artie; and the Fishers performing as a family.

It can be seen from a close perusal of these examples that the repertoires of Archie, Ray, and Cilla Fisher have undergone changes through the years as would be expected, although there are examples of repertoire conservation. For example, songs which were sung in the family from the earliest days of the folk revival have been retained, such as "Air Falalalo" and "Joy of My Heart", and have become in performance situations like Fisher Family "theme songs".

The topical and contemporary songs learned by Ray and Archie in the late 1950s and early 1960s do not appear in the 1970s and 1980s performances and recordings. Such songs enjoyed popularity in the revival while they were current, but many of them are now dated, and are seldom heard; however, a few of the anti-Polaris songs are being revived and even rewritten during the present resurgence of the C.N.D. movement in the 1980s.

The most noticeable overall change in the repertoires of the three performing Fishers is the increased proportion of contemporary songs in recent years, although all of them still perform traditional material. This trend is most marked in Ray's repertoire, but relative to Archie and Cilla, she still sings more traditional songs from her older repertoire in performances, such as "I Am A Miller Tae My Trade", "Jock Hawk's Adventures in Glasgow Toon", and "An Auld Man Come Coortin' Me". Both Ray's and Cilla's traditional repertoires are almost exclusively Scottish, and include a substantial number of bothy ballads; this has not changed through the years. However, Archie has been singing songs from the Scottish, Irish, English, and North American traditions since the early days of the revival. For example, the Ulster song "Red is the Rose", set to the well-known tune of "The Bonnie Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond", has been in his repertoire since the 1970s, and is still used in his performances relatively frequently.

The ever-growing and changing repertoires of the respective Fishers reflect not only their individual tastes in songs, but their sensitivity to the taste of their "public" as well, and the need to bring in fresh material to their performances. All three particularly seem to enjoy finding and singing songs by British and North American songwriters which they feel should be heard by a wider audience. Archie, of course, performs his own songs as well, and the ones he uses in his present performances are generally either recently written ones, or songs written in the mid and late 1970s. "The Fairfield Apprentice" is an exception, dating from 1964, and sung by both Archie and Ray in their performances with great regularity.

It should be noted that Cilla and Artie sing some of Cilla's material in their children's shows, "The Singing Kettle" and "Scotch Broth". The first "Singing Kettle" recordings contain mainly traditional childrens' songs, while the

most recent (Number 3) features songs written by Cilla and others as well as traditional songs. The songs for "Scotch Broth" are all written by Cilla. Having a small child to sing to has given her a natural context in which to compose and try out her own material; this is also an example of the overlap between the public and private contexts for singing.

Ginette Dunn remarks:

Repertoire reflects the stages of a singer's life, and the emotional environments in which he has found himself, and the consonance of repertoire derives from the consonance of the individual's life (1980:220).

Thus it is understandable how repertoires change with changes in a singer's life, and how songs reflect patterns of permanence, transience, intermittence, and postponement in a repertoire as Goldstein (1972) suggests.

It is impossible to discuss more fully the implications of Dunn's statement without first moving into the closely related area of the aesthetics of singing and performance. Repertoire is the end-product of the singer's aesthetic system, and as such, many aspects of repertoire not touched on here will be dealt with in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

THE AESTHETICS OF SINGING AND PERFORMING

In the previous chapter, we examined the close relationship between repertoire categorization and what Dunn calls "the primary aesthetic", performance. We must now consider the differing roles of singer and audience, the aesthetic factors involved in singing songs and performing them for an audience, the potential meanings and functions of the songs for singer and audience, and how these meanings and functions affect the singer in particular.

In order to understand more fully why singers sing what they do, why they choose to publically perform particular songs, and what role the singer's audience plays in the singer's choice of repertoire, we must closely examine what singers say about their songs; how they classify them; how they select them for inclusion in their repertoire; how they perceive them in a personal meaning system; and what levels of meaning can exist in one particular song for a singer. The relative importance of the song content and tune to the singer, the technical aspects of the song such as its range and difficulty, and the suitability of the song for a particular voice are important aesthetic factors in the singer's selection of a song to learn. The physical environment in which the singer performs his or her songs must also be taken into consideration, as it may influence the singer's choice of songs and performance style.

All the factors which govern the classification, selection, singing, and

public performance of songs by a singer I choose to call the singer's "aesthetic system". With this term, I am incorporating Porter's concept of the singer's "epistemics", the individual singer's scheme of categorizing his songs and placing them into a personal framework according to the perceived social function of the song in a performance, and also according to the "complex of meanings that the singer brings to the song in the context of undifferentiated daily life" (Porter 1986b:190). However, my notion of "aesthetic system" has also evolved from my observations of the Fishers and other singers, as well as drawing from theoretical and practical studies, most importantly Dunn (1982), Merriam (1964), Riddle (1972), Burton (1978), Fairley (1987), Porter (1977, 1985a, 1985b, 1986a), Russell (1986b) and Miller (1981).

The Fishers' classification of their repertoire has already been discussed in the previous chapter, so I begin here by considering the relationship between the singer, the song, and the audience. I then focus on the aesthetic systems of Archie, Ray, and Cilla, making comparisons with those of other singers.

Performance: Singer, Song, and Audience

"Performance" is a word with multiple meanings and usages, and it is essential to define here how it is being used in this chapter. Many folklorists use the term to signify any event, regardless of context, in which an item of folklore such as a song, riddle, story, or joke is sung or told; thus, it could be a public or private event, with or without an audience of one or more people. (See the discussion of performance definitions in Herndon and McLeod 1980:26-30.) I wish to employ "performance" in this sense, but also in a more

specific sense to mean a public performance with an audience, since this is the main context from which the aesthetic systems of the Fishers emerge. Additionally, I see a public performance as an occasion or event, which, as Bauman says, "represents an interpretative frame" (1977:9), drawing on the concept of "frame" as developed first by Gregory Bateson and enlarged upon by Erving Goffman (1974). To avoid confusion between the two usages, I will refer to public performances as performance events.

It is useful to return to Merriam's model for ethnomusicological research, mentioned in Chapter 1 (see Pegg, 1986:58-59, for a slightly revised version). It will be recalled that Merriam proposes that music should be studied on three levels, conceptualization about music, behaviour in relation to music, and the musical sound itself. The second level, behaviour, is subdivided into physical, social, and verbal behaviour (1964:32-33). The listener (the terms listener and audience are hereafter used interchangeably) is a vital part of Merriam's model; members of an audience have individual conceptualizations about music, and social behaviour in the second level not only includes "the behaviour required because he is a musician", but "the behaviour required of an individual non-musician at a given musical event" (33). Merriam adds that the musical sound or product

has an effect upon the listener, who judges both the competence of the performer and the correctness of his performance in terms of conceptual values. Thus if both the listener and the performer judge the product to be successful in terms of the cultural criteria for music, the concepts about music are reinforced, reapplied to behavior, and emerge as sound. If the judgement is negative, however, concepts must be changed in order to alter the behavior and produce different sound which the performer hopes will accord more closely with judgements of what is considered proper to music in the culture. Thus there is a constant feedback from the product to the concepts about music, and this is what accounts both for change and stability in a music system. The feedback, of course, represents the learning process both for the musician and for the non-musician, and it is continual (33).

It is somewhat unfortunate that Merriam uses the term "non-musician" here, as audiences often contain musicians, whose conceptualizations about music may be different from those who do not produce music vocally or instrumentally. I assume that Merriam means to differentiate between the person(s) performing and the person(s) listening. The essential point is that musician, musical product, and audience exist in an interactive relationship, and are parts of one context or frame, the musical performance.

Referring to the singing tradition in the villages of Blaxhall and Snape in East Suffolk, Dunn states:

Singer, song and audience are central to a discussion of the tradition and its aesthetics, since not only are they the context of the tradition but also the tangible tradition itself (1982:205).

She goes on to assert that "Traditional music exhibits a closer link between audience and performer than do popular or serious music" (205). I think this is additionally true of the music which is heard in folk clubs, festivals, and concerts. I will discuss the physical manifestations of this close link later in the chapter, but wish to point out here that in folk clubs especially, members of the audience tend to exhibit a high level of involvement with a performance because they are encouraged to perform themselves; the focus is not entirely on the guest musician. Folk club members and folk concert members generally have access to the guest performer(s) to ask about songs and even converse, as guest artists do not generally isolate themselves from audience members but become part of the audience when they are not performing. There is little perceived difference in socio-economic status between performers and audience; the main distinction may be one of professional expertise.

In talking to the Fishers, I became aware of an important subtlety in the singer/song/audience relationship. Performing and listening are two very distinct activities for singers, in that they are employing different perceptual

and cognitive faculties. Because of the fact that many singers, both professional and amateur, learn their songs from the performances of other singers, there is an ongoing process of the listener becoming the singer, and the singer becoming the listener. Both roles have the potential to be active or passive; one can sing a song mechanically, without being involved in the content, just as one can hear a song without listening to the words. The level of involvement in either role may affect the potential meanings which may be derived from the song. This point is illustrated through remarks made by the Fishers and other singers.

The idea of song "texts" becomes more complex when we are discussing performance events in which singers sing songs and audiences listen to them. Textual studies are generally dependent on the printed text, which can be referred to at will. A person listening to a song being performed can be seen as a unique aural event, and only if the song is recorded by the listener can it be re-examined after the event; no written text is present at the performance, unless the singer performs from texts, which is highly unusual in a folksong performance. (The singing and performance of "art" music from sheet music is an entirely different situation.)

Studies such as Renwick (1980, 1985) and Buchan (1985, 1986) are interesting and enrich our knowledge of possible approaches to song texts, but it is difficult to apply the techniques used in these studies to songs which are being sung at a performance event. I certainly do not think about "signifiers", contrasting "domains" and "tale-roles" in songs as I listen to them being performed. Moreover, the tune is an integral part of the performed song, and its contribution to meaning cannot be ignored.

When listeners hear a song for the first time, it is highly unlikely that

they will hear every word; rather, each person constructs an intellectual and/or emotional impression around the words that they do hear clearly, and the tune. The listener's brain "organises" the vocal and musical sounds so that they make sense (see Davies 1978 and Deutsch 1982 for physiological explanations). The song make take on new meanings and significance to the listener when it is heard again, either sung by another singer or by the same singer at a future performance. In my own experience, having heard the Fishers sing various songs several times in performances and also on record, I was often very interested when I undertook to transcribe songs from recordings, finding the verbal texts full of linguistic subtleties I had missed in performances.

The singer plays an important role in creating meaning in the song for the audience through spoken introductions to the song, thereby drawing attention to what he or she considers important in the song. A song is capable of acquiring what Toelken calls a "constellation of meanings" in the performance context (1986:136) for both the singer and the audience, but these meanings may not all be present in one performance event. The accumulation of meanings for both singer and audience occurs in a diachronic process, and the number of potential meanings is infinite.

Song Content and Tune: The Singer as Listener

One of the most intriguing areas of singer studies is the discovery of what attracts a singer to a particular song. The differing responses by the Fishers and other singers to this question indicates the individuality of each singer's aesthetic system. Moreover, the singer's response to the text and tune of a song represents a response as a listener, and not as a singer.

Archie is often initially attracted by tunes, which interact with the words of a song to capture his interest in a song on first hearing. He gives the example of an English song, "I Wandered By a Brookside", as performed by the English group Whippersnapper. He had recently played this song on his radio programme "Travelling Folk", and he found himself attracted by the "really lovely air". He explains:

...The words are quite "fol the diddle di do" in a way. "I wandered by a brookside, I wandered by a meadow"... It's only three short verses, and "But the beating of my own heart was the only sound I heard" - now that was just a line, it was lovely, just a great hook line. But this simple sort of quiet, boyish tune, which is nothing at all like my voice, it made it a very engaging song for me. It was very well exploited musically by Whippersnapper. (SA 1987/99/A)

This is an interesting example of a song which has a strong, noticeable tune that draws in the listener, rather than the words, which Archie points out as fairly ordinary. He does so by making reference to "fol the diddle di do", a common refrain line in English folksongs.

Four months after Archie told me about the song, he performed it at an Edinburgh concert, commenting in his introduction to the song:

This is a song I learned from Whippersnapper. It's a lovely little rustic English ditty... The hero, or the love-lorn lad is rather wimpish, but the tune is lovely! (SA 1987/113/A)

From this it is quite evident that Archie is slightly apologetic for the content of the song, and bases his relationship with this particular song on the tune. (He also subtly implies that Scottish song lyrics tend not to be "wimpish"; many Scottish performers either hint or state directly their preference for Scottish over English songs.)

Archie comments further on his attraction to songs and the way in which they are initially presented to him:

Some of the best songs I've heard of late I would never learn, because they're just so good in the way they're performed and

the way they're interpreted either by the person who's singing them or by the writer who's singing them... I don't think about the words or the tune during the first impression of it... For example, I was listening to Martyn Wyndham-Read last week. Now Martyn has got a really even voice. He sings most of his songs the same, the voice is a constant. Guitar accompaniment's very very simple, just there and no more, nothing obtrusive, just the right chords, most of the time. But every one of the songs he sang just filled my head with pictures, there was just a whole series of pictures... [I] decided that the first thing that...good music does, is [it] makes you forget where you are, you're relocated, you're transported, you forget your environment. And I've seldom heard a more visual singer than Martin Wyndham-Read. I mean some of his songs are quite long, narrative. I would never have learned them, if I'd just seen them in print, but once I'd heard his interpretation, I'd see the pictures and that. So what I tend to do is get the impression, take the picture away, and then find the words that recreate the picture. (SA 1987/99/A)

Thus it appears that good presentation of a song on first hearing, both words and tune, is important in making Archie want to learn it. His comments on the "visual" quality of Martyn Wyndham-Read's singing imply that words are certainly very important in a song, but that the "pictures" are created by the synthesis of words and tune in a good presentation.

Ray's feelings about the relative importance of text and tune to her when first hearing a song differ from Archie's. When I first asked her what in particular drew her to a song, she replied:

First and foremost would be the content, what it was saying, or if it was telling a story, just how interesting the story is... The idea that things at the end don't turn out as you think... Like in ballads, I think it's essentially what happens, the combination of all the different things... But I think it's essentially the words, it always has to be the words and what the song says... If in fact there is a tune to it, or if I sometimes evolve tunes which are similar to other ones, I may do something with the tune that makes it a bit different... If it's in a book, just take it straight out the book, and then mould it, without taking too much away from it...because usually there are some priceless lines that say concisely and perfectly what you want to say. So that's how I initially have a think on songs.

There are one or two things that even in the lighter songs that I've been hearing lately, is that one or two lines will just jump out and you think, that's very good, that's excellent, and that will be easy to sing or that makes sense immediately, that has

immediate impact. Just effective use of words, that's all. (SA 1985/208)

In a later conversation, Ray spoke of her concept of the "memorable line", mentioned in Chapter 5 in the context of learning new songs. This concept is clearly part of her perception that the content of the song is most important to her:

I heard someone sing at one time, and all I got of it..., all I could remember was, "I'm working life oot tae keep life in". [sings the line] Which is incredible! Just in one line... That's obviously somebody that's either oppressed or whatever, or they're working for somebody and they're on the bread line now, what's that about? And I eventually found the text of that particular song. Now that is one line, you see! (SA 1986/113/A)

Tunes of songs are not without importance to Ray. She expresses an acute awareness of the "essence" of tunes:

The thing that intrigues me is the intervals [of a tune]. There's classic effects that you get with pipe tunes, just with pipe tunes,...these intervals they use, and they use them extensively... It's like finding out what it is that says this is an Irish tune, or that is a Scottish tune, why is it a Scottish tune? Why is this like a minuet-y thing? Why does it sound French, or why does this sound something or other? And just...getting the essence of it, and then enlarging on the essence. (SA 1986/163/B)

Ray has a good sense of tune "shapes" as she describes them, and has occasionally composed her own tunes for ballad texts. Since her husband Colin plays Northumbrian and Scottish small pipes as well as fiddle, she constantly hears tunes. (It is quite common to hear pipe tunes during all hours of the day in her house, because Colin makes pipes in his workshop at home, and needs to test the new chanters as they are made.) Some of Ray's awareness of tunes and intervals may, therefore, be on a subconscious level.

Like Ray, Cilla is text and content orientated, although the tune is usually what first makes her notice a song. The tune engages her attention, causing her to listen to the words, which then become the most important part of the song to her.

The presentation of a song when she first hears it is a very important factor in the way Cilla singles out songs that she likes, as is the case with Archie. She comments:

See, if somebody isn't a very good singer, I cannae listen, I don't take in what they're doing...and sort of turn a deaf ear to it. Whereas Archie and Artie hear things... (SA 1985/211)

Therefore it is difficult for Cilla to separate the song from the singer and way in which it is performed; these components exist in an affective, holistic relationship for Cilla, much more than they do for Archie and Ray, who can more easily isolate a song from the singer and the presentation.

Other revival singers whom I asked about the relative importance of text and tune had very different and interesting answers, corroborating the evidence that singers' aesthetic systems are diverse. Jean Redpath said without hesitation that the tune was initially most important in drawing her to a song:

There are a couple of ballads that I know in the past I have been very very taken with, the story line of the ballad, and haven't been able to pick it up... It never stuck until I've heard another tune, and I think a case in point was "The Selkie". Yeh, obviously I'm fascinated by, you know, the selkie stories, but "The Grey Selkie" [hums tune used by Joan Baez] leaves me cold. I just have no desire whatsoever to sing that tune. And it's very widespread in the States, it's the one that most people know, and there was nothing attracted me to that at all. And oddly enough, it was Archie, I think, who sang "The Norway Maid" [hums traditional tune collected in Orkney]... And of course I flipped over that one, and that was it, took off on the ballad. So that there's a very very emotional tie to the tune first - that, certainly, with traditional material, I think possibly with contemporary. I can work my way around melodies I like less because there's something in the words that I want to have access to. First the tune, but generally speaking, it's a package deal, because time and time again I will hear a song and I'll think, how have I missed that along the way, I really must learn it... (SA 1985/215)

Thus the tune functions as the primary "hook" for Jean, but ultimately tune and text are "a package deal", much as they seem to be to Archie.

Revival singer Sheila Douglas finds a song's text is the most important:

I've always thought words matter a lot. I mean it's nice if

there's a nice tune, but sometimes even with a poor tune, you know, a song can be good because the words are good and because it's sung with feeling. (SA 1985/206)

Sheila's sentiments are closer to Ray's and Cilla's than to Archie's on this point. It is evident from the examples of the Fishers and others above that revival singers focus on different aspects of songs as listeners. This is also true of traditional singers; for example, singers like Lizzie Higgins and Jane Turriff might speak of "the bonnie air" that a song has, whereas Willie Scott finds words very significant.

The Selection of Songs

As with the categorization of repertoire, the selection of songs to sing by Archie, Ray, and Cilla Fisher is governed not only by the consideration of the performance context, but also by their personal aesthetic systems. In attempting to examine the relationship between performance and singers' aesthetic systems, we must consider the multiple levels of meanings in songs for the singer. There is more to contemplate than the fact that a singer likes both songs, or that he likes the story told by a song. What, indeed, bonds the singer to the song?

In Archie's case, part of the answer to this question can be found in his remarks about his own songwriting:

It's only recently that I've started to write much more personal songs. Even songs like "Her Dear Dark Eyes" aren't that personal, they're hypothetical. They take an idea that this is what this person would feel in this situation.

But, for example, I've lately written a song about the farm I used to live on, which I was very much involved with, I loved it. Called Eastfield. And in fact, last weekend I wrote a song about the Super Marine S-5 that crashed, (that's the seaplane that won

the Schneider trophy [in 1927]) last May. And I...saw this in *The Times* newspaper, the photographs of it falling out of the air, and the photograph of the old guy who was with this plane in the background. And it took me till last weekend to read it, because I knew as soon as I read it, that I would have to do something about it... I mean, I really loved the aircraft, it was a beautiful plane. And so I started to jot down just lines that rhymed...and I thought, this is doggerel, but I've got to keep putting it down while it's there. And eventually it came out as four verses that are, if you read them you'd think, well, it rhymes, but what's in it? But what actually happened was that it's one of the nicest songs I've written, because the tune and the accompaniment are - it's all three totally separate things that come together to make one thing, rather than saying, "Write a song about a seaplane that crashed". It's taking...three intuitive things, the intuitive feeling that I have for the aircraft with the guitar sounds, the cryptic source which is a half-column newspaper report, and the visual stimulus and my own involvement with the whole spirit of the Schneider trophy race. And this guy, about sixty, who was born the year that this aircraft had won it, had taken all these years to restore it and fly it. And then fell out of the sky with it. I mean...if he'd survived it, he'd have been really disappointed not to have the aircraft! But there's actually much more of me in that song than there is in other things I've written. (SA 1987/98/B)

I first heard the song about the seaplane performed during the Edinburgh Festival in August, 1987, and again at an Edinburgh ceilidh in December. Had I not been aware of Archie's personal feelings about the song, I might not have guessed the emotional depths beyond the text of the song.

In introducing the song at the ceilidh, Archie explained the circumstances of how it was written (also on Cassette 1):

...I would like to have been born in the (or sort of been active) in the Twenties and Thirties. For two reasons, old motorcars and old aircraft. And the era I really love is the development of early aircraft, and there's a race called the Schneider Trophy Race, which was originated by the Germans, who believed that the seaplane was going to be the answer to all the world's transport problems. And for many years, the Italians and the British fought it out, winning it alternately. And this year in May, an old guy called Bill Hosie, who lives in Cornwall, found a Super Marine S-5, which was...a prototype for the Spitfire. Won the Schneider Trophy Race in 1927. Restored it lovingly, but he got it wrong. This is a song for him, Bill Hosie. (SA 1987/113/A)

SONG FOR BILL HOSIE

Bill Hosie built a plane,
A survivor from the Schneider Trophy Race.
He seemed like a nice old guy,
With his baseball cap and his sun-slit eyes.
Took the air-frame, motor, and wings,
And restored all the fabric, the floats, and the struts and things.
And the shark on banana skis
Was heard to roar once more over Cornwall's seas.

In the '27 Schneider Race,
It was a Super Marine that took first place,
The year Bill Hosie was born,
When there were still tall ships sailing 'round Cape Horn,
But the S-5 Super Marine
Was the fastest seaplane the world had ever seen.
Nearly three hundred miles an hour,
With a Napier Lion engine to give her power.

Her daughters flew in World War II,
And the pilots were known as the first of the few,
When the Battle of Britain raged,
The Spitfire blazed across a history page.
But Bill Hosie built a dream,
To haunt the skies with the ghost of the Super Marine.
And she rose on the step again,
In the spirit of a Schneider Trophy Racing plane.

She took to the cool spring air,
With Bill Hosie sittin' in the pilot's chair.
She banked along the Cornwall shore,
The tail broke away, and she flew no more.
She fell from her flight of grace,
The year they revived the Schneider Trophy Race.
And the Super Marine S-5
Was the plane that made Bill Hosie feel alive.
(SA 1987/113/A)

Because of Archie's low-key introduction to this song in performance, his emotional involvement with the song was not obvious. Thus one could say that the verbal text of the song exists on a basic narrative level, and its literal meaning becomes reasonably clear to the audience on the first listening. It can also be viewed as a poetic interpretation of a true event. The emotional feelings which Archie has about the seaplane and the man who crashed in it add an additional level of meaning for him and any listener who is privileged to

have this information.

The reverse situation to this may be found with "Dear Dark Eyes", the love song Archie mentions above (Cassette 1). Because it is couched in emotional language, telling the story of a man recalling the beauty of his lost sweetheart, the text seems to convey an emotional involvement on the part of the singer. Archie speaks of the song's content as "hypothetical" rather than "personal", so that he is singing about someone's experience, but not his. Yet an audience hearing this song might perceive it as a more personal one than the song about the seaplane. Archie retains a degree of privacy as a public figure through not revealing the more personal information about his songs in a performance, letting the audience form their own opinions and meanings, which may be very different from his.

Many of the songs Archie sings are about issues or places which he cares about deeply. The central themes of the songs are very meaningful, such as the killing of whales ("The Last Leviathan", "The Wounded Whale"), the passing of old ways of life and work ("The Last Clydesdales", "The Final Trawl", "Make-Or-Break Harbour"), fulfilling "pipedreams" ("Western Island"), lost love ("Will Ye Gang, Love", "Coshieville", "Lassie of the Morning"), and the Borders ("Ettrick", "Borderlands", "Mosstroopers' Lament"). The reasons for choosing to sing a particular song include: an identification with the sentiments of the text, an appreciation of a well-written text, an emotional association with the person the song was learned from, a good tune, and satisfaction in singing his own compositions. These reasons are all capable of enhancing the personal meaning Archie derives from singing the song.

Additionally, I became aware while transcribing Archie's performances that the songs he likes tend to be word dense, that is, many words per song

line. This is interesting when contrasted with Ray's difficulty with what she calls "clever wordwork" (see Chapter 5). Ray prefers songs that are less word dense than Archie. Cilla is perhaps closer to Archie in this matter, as she enjoys songs which use words in a clever way, such as "Old Simplicity" and "The Field Behind the Plow".

Ray discusses the importance of song content to her and how it influences her choice to sing a song:

...there is something within that song that is said and done in such a way that...no one else has said it that sort of way. And this happens even in recently written songs, this is how the selection comes out on that... Like the ballads, to me, that way they say certain things, they're so precise, concise, down to the absolute minimum, and leaves your imagination to run off...

...A lot of the songs that I've sung that are recently written, I feel personally involved in them, feel as if I'm part of it. Or if it's someone saying something like objecting to, like the unemployment or whatever it might be, that although it's not absolutely within my experience, I do have two...sons who are now in their early twenties, who are part of this problem which is either emerging or it will come to them... (SA 1986/113/A)

Thus an ability to empathize with the content in a song is important to Ray.

Much of the joy of singing for Ray comes from the process of responding as a listener to a song, deriving her own meaning from it, and interpreting this meaning outward to the audience in performance. She did this recently with one of her special songs, revival singer Dick Gaughan's "A Different Kind of Love Song". The song was written by Gaughan as a response to audiences asking him to sing some love songs instead of the large amount of topical, political songs he has favoured in recent years. His point was that his political songs were a sort of love song. Ray relates the story of the time she performed the song with Dick Gaughan in the audience:

I enjoy singing that [song], you see. And the words are simple and straightforward. And Gaughan was in the audience when I sang it, and he said, "I didn't write that song. That wasn't how I wrote it". But that's the way I heard it. And he said, "...It's my

song, yes, yes. But...there's something you've done, you've done something to it". And I think that's what happens. I think what you do is you...hear something and it strikes you, there are memorable bits in it that you hold on to, and then what you do is, I find a slot within a performance to come to terms with this. (SA 1986/113/A)

Ray finds that some songs hold a deeply emotional significance for her, in which both the song content and its associations are meaningful. She relates:

[One] song which moves me every time I sing it is an Irish song called "Anach Cuain", which I do sing on occasion... I learned that from Archie, and when he used to sing it...(this is the hairs on the back of the neck routine), and - it evokes the same feeling in me when I'm singing it that it was when I used to hear him sing it... (SA 1986/116/B)

The song is about a wedding party which was drowned crossing a lake in a boat. The boat was carrying a ewe, which put its foot through the bottom of the boat.¹ It is a haunting and powerful song, and the added association of remembering Archie singing it makes it special to Ray. A 1963 recording of the song may be heard on Cassette 1.

Personal associations with songs are common in the Fisher family. On one occasion when Ray, Audrey, and I were talking about the songs the family used to sing, Audrey began singing "Matt Hyland", which she had learned from hearing Archie sing it (SA 1986/115/B). She was unable to finish the song, partly through a memory lapse, and partly through the strong evocation of feeling it brought to the surface for her. It was clear that the song, which is a love ballad with a happy ending, contained both literal and emotional meaning for Audrey.

Cilla's repertoire has experienced considerable turnover since she first started singing professionally with Artie, so that the songs with personal associations tend to be the older ones in her repertoire, which may not be

sung very frequently. She enjoys singing songs with her sisters like "The Birken Tree" and "Fisher Lassies", but these songs are not ones she would tend to perform currently.

One of her favourite contemporary songs, "The Jeannie C", evokes the memory of first hearing it performed by the author, Stan Rogers, at a folk festival in Virginia. Both Cilla and Artie were moved by the song, and obtained the words from Rogers. Tragically, he was later killed in an airplane crash, which intensified the personal associations Cilla and Artie already felt with the song.

Cilla's relationship with a song is based on how comfortable she feels with it. She says of Stan Rogers' songs:

I like his stuff because...I feel very comfortable with it... it's nothing to do with my lifestyle or anything like it...but I mean neither has bothies, and yet I still feel comfortable singing about Sleepytoon... (SA 1986/164/A)

The process through which Cilla becomes comfortable with a song takes time. She remarks:

Nine times out of ten I start singing a song, and I...just sing the words. 'Cause that's what you're learning initially is the words, but it takes a wee while longer to sing the song, tell the story properly. 'Cause it's just even in the way a phrase in the line can change the whole content of it, and not make it undertandable to people, you know? So...I get a comfy feeling eventually with songs once I start to sing the song, and I don't have to think about words anymore... I can learn the words very quickly, but to me to perform the song takes a wee bit longer. I can work and it takes a week or so. (SA 1987/26/A)

Thus Cilla draws a distinction between learning, singing, and performing a song as different stages of her relationship with the song. Her views are similar to those of North Carolina singer Lena Harmon, who remarks: "Anybody can sing a song, but to sing it and think it over, each person in it, and think on it and get the meaning out of it is another thing" (Burton 1981:36).

It is also interesting to note that Cilla, like Ray, perceives that a song's meaning for both audience and singer can change with the singer's interpretation of it. An example of this can be found in her comments about the song "Old Simplicity":

I think it was about last week or something when Artie and I went down, we were doing the Halifax area, and I sang it. And suddenly, like, in the second verse - I think I sang it slightly slower or something...but it all kind of went into place, suddenly in the second verse. 'Cause I've been singing it a long time, and I think it takes that for people listening to it. I think they sort of get the idea of the two old guys talking about the past and all that when I go through it, and I think it was to do with the way I sang it, I sang it slightly slower, and I think I changed my phrasing a wee bit. And suddenly a line that had meant really nothing to me suddenly fell into place, and I thought ah! I see what he's saying now! ...But it does take a lot of...understanding in that song, really. (SA 1987/26/A)

Even after many performances of a particular song, a new meaning can emerge.

Truth in Songs

One aspect of the aesthetic systems of many traditional singers is the preference for song content which is believed to be "true". Earlier this century, folklorist Herbert Halpert (1939) showed that this could be a variable in singers' selection of songs. The concept of truth among Scottish singers ranges from a very literal interpretation to a metaphorical one.

Borders singer Willie Scott exemplifies the singer who finds literal truths in his songs, and does not like to sing songs which he considers fanciful. He believes the characters in his serious songs are real, such as in his favourite "Callieburn", in which a man is forced to emigrate from his Kintyre home:

I don't know, but I've got a feeling he wasnae able to come back, couldna afford to come back... it's a sad thing, but if you put it across kind of half decent at a', it's a good song. (SA 1986/135/B)

As part of his concept of truth in songs, Willie Scott firmly believes that "you've got to put the words across as it's written", adding that "there are an awful lot of folk puts words in that shouldn't be in at a" (SA 1986/133/B).

The types of songs Willie sings tend to be about the rural life, shepherding, marriage, and home life; supernatural stories and songs are outside the realm of belief, and he does not like them, particularly when they are told as if they were true, as when a storyteller remarks that the story events actually occurred to family or acquaintances (SA 1986/138/B). Ray Fisher pursued this topic with Willie, asking him if he was not able to enjoy a good story even if he knew it was not true, but he clearly indicated that he considers fanciful stories equivalent to lies, and therefore not worthy of being regarded as entertainment (SA 1986/138/B, SA 1986/139/A). He does, however, like comic songs like "Loch Lomond Parody", and recites humorous monologues in his performances, none of which he would consider literally true.

When Lizzie Higgins performs in a folk club or concert, she frequently introduces her songs by talking about the characters in them as historical personages. Clearly the characters in some of the Scottish ballads were actual people, although in many cases the stories attached to them have been romanticized. In hand-written notes to her songs that she provided Lismor Records when recording an LP, Lizzie comments about the ballad "Allison Cross":

...Poor old Allison was one of the Cleverest Witches in the World, she lived in the 15th Century she was ah very Plain looking Woman and she fell in love with this Handsome young Man. Allison lived up here in the Grampian-Region, well she offered him every thing in Magic but he refused to be her Lemon, so he angered her then, she showed him no Mercy. its ah Beautiful Ballad full of Magic. but one day on ah Fairy Rade, the Queen and King of the Fairies saw him, and turned him back to his proper shape.²

It is very clear here and in her introductions to the ballad in performance events that she considers Allison Cross to be a real person.

North Carolina singer Hattie Presnell told Thomas Burton how she feels about the old mountain ballads:

The stories, they're more, I think they'd be more different than the new ones; and I believe they're more true. I believe they came just really from the true things that happened (1981:27).

It is interesting to note that she compares the older songs which she considers "true", to the newer songs which she sees perhaps not as untrue but as exhibiting gradations of truth.

Archie, Ray, and Cilla do not confine themselves to a literal concept of truth in songs. The concept of truth is usually a figurative one with revival singers; they may not believe or need to believe that the characters or the incidents in a song are true or real, but rather perceive that truths of human nature and life emerge from the song.

Referring to contemporary and traditional song content, Archie remarks:

You've got to say something that affects people. That's why some of the traditional songs, although the issues are beyond recall in terms of nobody can do anything about them, but you can still get the essence of what maybe should have been done about them at the time. Or a complete understanding of the personal experience, and you can retrospectively identify. (SA 1987/99/A)

In talking about bothy songs, Ray comments:

[A] song like "The Forfar Sodger" would be sung in the bothy or roundabout in a social group where they would relate all the different happenings mythical or otherwise; they would create them. Within the farming context, there is a lot of truths that emerge couched in humorous terms. But they are truths because they are the way it was, that they say: "A pal ca'ed Brown got fined a crown for tummelling owre his cairts". Now that is quite amusing...but at the end of the day, he lost a crown of his wages because of this... (SA 1986/113/B)

Ray's examples illustrate Archie's point. Ray sees that many of the bothy songs

she sings reveal social and historical realities, although the characters in the song may be fictitious.

Sheila Douglas compares traditional songs with contemporary songs written by songwriters about their own experiences:

There were a lot of people who aspired to be singer/songwriters in the early days of the revival...who hadn't appreciated that while a lot of the older songs are written about specific, you know, people and their personal situation, it was because the song really helped you to see the universal nature of that situation that the songs appealed to other people, and it wasn't just a matter of singing about your own private troubles, as if they were going to be so very interested in you. (SA 1985/206)

Sheila's comments mirror those of Archie and Ray. One of the major reasons that singers such as Ray choose to sing mainly traditional material is the "universal nature" of situations in the traditional songs. Literal truth in songs is obviously not a factor in the Fishers' selection of songs, while the universality of a song's sentiment is; identification with a song's sentiments is a figurative form of "truth".

Changing Songs

Many singers change words in songs they have learned, and for a multitude of reasons. Some traditional singers, Willie Scott for example, feel that this should not be done; he in particular seems to be a singer for whom a printed text has a sacred quality. The Scottish oral tradition has always been widely influenced by printed texts, however, or characterized by what Alan Lomax referred to as a "bookishness" (Henderson, 1971), so that this aesthetic position is not out of keeping with the tradition.

The song "Land of Hope and Glory" is an example of a song sung by several Fisher family members. Ray and Cilla both chose to change a few words in order to make the content more clear (compare their versions on Cassette 1). Ray added two verses to it to clarify the mention of "the war of '81", which many listeners took to mean an actual war rather than the ongoing war against unemployment. Thus Ray's addition was made in response to questions raised by audiences.

The augmentation or reconstruction of song fragments is an aspect of song changing found in the Fisher family. Archie began his songwriting career doing just this, as in the example of the song "Orfeo", constructed from the barest of fragments and a wealth of tales. Archie relates:

[I] started off as a restorer, that I'd find fragments, and pieces without music, or pieces with music that needed augmented, and did it that way, so it was like a craftsman learning how to make a fiddle by repairing a fiddle, rather than just being give a big chunk of wood and say, take away all the bits that aren't a fiddle. (SA 1987/98/B)

Ray once took the three verses that Jeannie Robertson sang of "Ainst Upon a Time" and added five more of her own. The resulting song appears in Buchan and Hall (1973:63; see also Gower and Porter 1977:63-64). To Ray, writing additional verses is a "filling-in of the picture" which is already present in the three verses (SA 1986/113/A), and reveals another aspect of her creative talent.

Ray has subtly changed the tunes and a few of the words of songs which she learned from Jeannie Robertson and Jeannie's daughter Lizzie Higgins, such as "An Auld Man Come Coortin' Me" and "Lady Mary Ann". This appears to be a result of the process of making the song her own, of using her vocal style, her interpretation of the words, and musical phrasing to create her own version of the song. These alterations are expressions of Ray's

individuality as a singer, and may also reflect unconscious preferences for certain sequences of musical notes.

This type of unconscious alteration to tunes is not uncommon among revival singers. Sheena Wellington relates an example of a change to a tune that she did not consciously make:

...The first few times I...heard the version that I sing of "Sheath and Knife", I found it quite difficult. You know, I wasn't sure that I wanted to learn the song, and it took me quite some time to get it learned. And I realised afterwards, after someone pointed out to me, that I had altered the tune, that the reason that I found "Sheath and Knife" so difficult is it's a song that deals with a child's death, and I find them particularly difficult to sing. (I can't sing any variant of "The Cruel Mother", not even "Fine Flowers in the Valley"...). And I had changed the tune, because the tune is so sombre, and the content is so sombre, that I had to slightly [alter] the tune so that I could sing it myself. Which I think singers do quite a lot. I'm not sure that it's a deliberate thing with most of us. I think we all tend to change the song in some way to suit our own interpretation of it...because the song might say a different thing. You know, in something like "Sheath and Knife", the crux of the story, or the important part of the story might differ from singer to singer... (SA 1986/160/A)

Sheena's remarks also indicate how content and tune are inextricably linked.

Clarification is Cilla's main motivation for changing a song. She relates two examples of changing words:

I changed Stan Rogers' song..."The Field Behind the Plow" [a recording of which is on Cassette 2], where he says..."feel a trickle in your clothes, blow the dust cake from your nose". Now, that wouldn't make a lot of sense to people here, so I just said, "feel a tingle in your bones", like he's plowing this field and...that's all I could think of that would sort of fit... But what, he's talking about his sweat, and really he's working very hard, so he's sweating, perspiring under his clothes, really, but it doesn't sound very nice actually! "Feel a trickle in your clothes", like it's sort of oozing out or something! And "blow the dust cake from your nose", I thought, that isn't gonna make [sense], so I just said, "blow the dust out of your nose", 'cause people don't talk about dust cake here, you see. And I do that quite often, I mean I change things... I wouldn't do anything desperate to things, I hope not, anyway, but just to make it more understandable.

We've done it with Scottish songs, I mean the classic is "John Grumlie"... The man and wife thing, you know, I can do better than you sort of thing. But there's an amazing verse about the

crummie. Now I bet you most folk in Scotland don't know what a crummie is, which is a cow with a crookit horn! So...you have to explain it all, and I can't be bothered doing that these days, so I just said, "John forgot to milk the coo, and churn the butter tae". What it had been was, ..."He couldna work the crummie, and he couldna do..." something. Nobody would have understood it, and I can't be bothered with that. If you just make it slightly clearer...it's not going to change the song drastically. (SA 1987/26/A)

Cilla clearly feels that if words or phrases of a song do not express their meaning clearly to her audience, they should be changed for clarification. Her change of phrasing in "The Field Behind the Plow" reveals a facet of Cilla's creativity and undoubted sensitivity to the potential effects of words and phrasing in songs. Ray, on the other hand, likes people to listen to the language of the Scots songs, so would therefore be more likely to leave in a word like "crummie", and take the time to explain it in her introduction to the song at a performance event.

Like revival singers, traditional singers exhibit a range of attitudes about changing words. Porter's study of the Turriff family revealed Jane Turriff to be highly creative, "re-creating songs through her personal yet paradoxically traditional style, but also adding her own compositions based on familiar themes and formulas" (1977:18). It is totally within Jane's aesthetic system to change words in a traditional song to suit herself, and this is probably linked to the fact that she composes songs based on the traditional idiom.

Other singers permit small changes, but feel that major changes involve putting too much of oneself into song. Arkansas singer Almeda (Granny) Riddle told Roger Abrahams:

I wouldn't consciously change the words of a song, and I'd be *very* careful not to change the meaning. But now I might sing you "Barbara Allen" today one way, and I have at least six or eight versions of that, so tomorrow some of this version of that might creep in. I wouldn't let it change the actual meaning of a song, and I like to try to get the text of the song as I originally heard it, but some of these others might creep in there...

...If some song doesn't make sense, I probably won't learn it or, if I like it, I'll change it so that it makes sense. Or I'll look for a version that makes sense. But that's about the only way I'll put myself into a song. (Riddle 1972:120, 122)

It is interesting to note that Almeda Riddle is most concerned about the integrity of a song's meaning; no changes will be made which are perceived to violate this integrity. She does, however, select songs which make sense or which she can modify so that they do. She differs in her outlook from Jane Turriff, in that she feels she should not project her personality into a song.

Ray's and Cilla's alterations and additions to songs can be regarded as manifestations of a creative impulse. The changes seem to be generated by a desire to clarify meaning. By adding their own verses to an incomplete song core, Archie and Ray enhance and complete the literal level of meaning of the song.

Discrepancy in Points of View: Singer and Song

Related to the issues of truth in songs, and changing songs to suit one's taste and style, is the problem of song content which is antithetical to the singer's beliefs or emotions. The problem emerges for many revival singers who perform traditional material, much of which reflects cultural attitudes and biases of previous generations. Sexism in traditional songs has already been mentioned as an example of this.

Archie sings many of his own songs, which generally reflect his point of view, so there is no discrepancy. In public performance, he does sing some traditional songs in which the female character is mistreated or emerges the loser, but he addresses the potential imbalance by singing other songs, both traditional and contemporary, which present the woman's point of view, such

as "The Baffled Knight" and "The Presence". He also utilizes song introductions as a means of distinguishing between the song's point of view and his own, often with subtle wit and humour.

Ray talks at length about the singer's identification or lack of identification with views expressed in a song:

I think most times I would have to agree with what was in the song before I could really sing it with commitment, but you see there are some parts in the song that says things which I don't agree with, but at the end of the song you resolve that... If you say in the words of one of the characters in the song, this person is a whatever, and say it in the character in the song, you mightn't agree with what they're saying...and whatever you do in the song, you do get your point of view put through... The singer is the selector. You make the selections yourself. And if for whatever reason you choose not to sing a particular song, that's up to yourself.

There's a whole series of anti-Irish songs written in Britain here, you know, like "No Irish Need Apply" was one of the songs. And that song, although the content is vicious and it's nasty, and the conditions were very bad, it says, now this is what was happening... It says, at the end of the day, this was the social attitude to the Irish people, and this is what we were fighting against, and this is what we could still fight against. It needn't be Irishmen, it can be West Indians, it could be Pakistanis, it could be any individuals who are being victimized, but it's a social record.

...I can't identify totally with the women's movement. I don't agree with every aspect of it that it seems to encompass, so therefore what I do is I will wave the flag for whatever particular things I feel strongly about... I do find men occasionally quite useful and things like this, which makes light of the whole thing... If a song was totally against what I believed in, certainly I wouldn't sing it... [A song] is a story...and if you want to relate the story, you relate the story. If you don't like the story, you don't tell it. (SA 1985/208)

The story of a song is of tantamount importance to Ray, and as she says, "the singer is the selector". Ray perceives traditional songs reflecting themes such as poor treatment of women or an ethnic group, for example, as social records of previously existing conditions. In performance events, she often introduces a song of this type in such a way that she makes her own point of view clear.

Cilla is less comfortable with the problem of sexism in traditional songs.

In 1985, she remarked:

I don't know where to draw the line, really... I mean I have my personal beliefs and things, and sometimes I sing things that I find...objectionable, I don't know, I mean I sing it because it's got a good chorus or something really... Nine times out of ten you sing it and people don't really listen to it. They just kinda sing along and kind of quite like it. But you only need one audience with a few feminists or whatever to pick on things...and you suddenly become very aware of it. And I'm fighting it just now, I'm not sure what direction I'm going in it, but I look at songs and I think, "Oh, I'm just gonna sing it", you know...but sometimes I just sing things because I need a...three minute song with a good chorus, you know! (SA 1985/211)

In a 1986 conversation with Ray, Cilla was talking about making changes to traditional songs to make them more in keeping with contemporary social views or simply to, in a sense, even up the score:

You suddenly realize what you're singing and you go, I'm gonna change that!... And I thought, I'm gonna change...this to the woman's point of view. And why not, there are hundreds of songs there that could actually be done, that would put a whole new light on it! "The Shearing's No For You"... I mean I changed that from her being seduced by him to him being seduced by her, and her leaving him. "Do you mind the Banks o' Ayr/ When I caught ye in my snare?/ But I've left you in despair..." So I thought I'll change that, I'm going to have her winning this time instead of her being lumbered there... (SA 1986/164/A)

Cilla has moved from a position of not being bothered by singing traditional songs with sexist elements in them to a more selective ethos, and monitors material more carefully. She does not sing Burns' *Merry Muses* version of "John Anderson", for example, in order to avoid what she sees as chauvinist content. Like Ray and Archie, the other way in which she deals with the discrepancy in points of view in performance events is to poke fun at the song content in her introductions, thereby making her own point of view known through humour. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

Feeling and Conviction

Most singers think that it is essential to sing with feeling and conviction, which is different from believing the content in the song; it has more to do with the way the singer perceives the activity of singing, the song as an artistic entity, and the ability of the performed song to evoke some response in the audience or listener. Ray says, "You really have to feel what you're singing" (SA 1986/113/A). For Cilla, singing a song with conviction endows the song with power. For the Fishers and many other singers, singing a song with conviction involves some projection of self into the song.

For many singers, the issue of singing with feeling creates problems and conflicts in aesthetics. Miller (1981) found that Janet Weatherston, a Scottish singer, was afraid of "wearing her heart upon her sleeve" in certain performance situations. When singing in front of audiences that knew her, she found it almost impossible to sing a serious, emotional song, because she did not want to reveal herself as an emotional person. Because of this, or because of audience expectation, she would sing a comic song instead, covering up her feelings. Her avoidance of serious songs in this situation shows, however, that she believes that feeling is conveyed through songs, and consequently that self and personality are revealed.

American singer Sara Grey, who lives and performs widely in Britain, thinks that singers should project personality and self into their songs:

Music is an extension of you, you know, you don't separate your music out from you as a person or your personality. It's definitely a part of you. So if you're not putting yourself forth, and your own sense of humour or your own whatever, well, what's the point? (SA 1986/152/B)

This aesthetic point of view is not only held by revival singers. Traditional singer Lizzie Higgins remarks:

I can g'up an' sing...one o' ma father's pipin' songs... Ah'll greet an' sing that song - I winnae show my tears but - Ah'm greetin' inwardly - 'cause it pits me in mind o' him. Or Ah'll go up an' Ah'll sing a song, one o' Jeannie's ballads she's learned me... Ah'll see Jeannie an' me a wee bairn, long afore 'e war... Ah dinnae go up an' sing wi' nae feelin' wi' nane o' this two stuff, Ah feel, an' everything I sing, 'as aye got a picture in front of my memory (Smith 1975:54).

These remarks bring to mind the concepts of "the *conniach*" among the Scottish travellers (Porter 1985:21; Henderson 1987:7), and "the *duende*" among the Spanish Andalusians, which Hamish Henderson considers to be exactly corresponding terms (1987:7). The *conniach* is "the knowledge and power of the Highland bard to move the audience through the direct communication of feeling" (Porter 1985:21). Henderson links *conniach* with the Gaelic word *caoineadh* or weeping (7). *Duende* is "the mysterious indefinable power in a singer or artist without which even the greatest technical prowess is of no avail" (7). Thus the ideal of communicating feeling through singing, irrespective of technical skill, is rooted in more than one traditional culture. The existence of these terms indicates that singing with feeling is a philosophical issue which singers in different cultures contemplate.

The outward manifestation of the singer's involvement with a song appears to vary greatly among revival and traditional singers. Ray and Cilla, for example, sing with a dynamic and emotional intensity which suggests a high level of involvement with their songs; Archie generally has a less emotional singing style which seems to belie the feeling which underpins the songs he sings. Can we rely on appearances to tell us the extent to which a singer is involved with a song?

Several ballad studies suggest that the traditional ballad singing style is almost always an impersonal and unemotional one. My own view, however, is closer to that of Robert Bethke (1976). Bethke's study probes beneath surface

appearances, and draws some interesting conclusions. His informant, a resident of Northern New York State, was found to perform "in a dramatically stark or otherwise subdued manner", in keeping with "the presentational austerity which often characterizes white performance of ballads" (141). Bethke adds: "The singing style conveys dispassionate removal of artist from story" (141).

However, Bethke continues:

The norm belies the interior involvement of singer in song. As Americo Paredes reminds us, what may pass as intense "impersonality" in a traditional singer's mannerisms is often anything but detachment; submersion of self is a sign of "supreme involvement", not aloofness. The real drama of a narrative folksong unfolds neither in its words nor in its performance per se, but in story as transmuted during performance into mental imagery, and from imagery into meaning and emotion. Dramatic folksong, like drama on the stage, is ultimately a kind of theater of the mind. It is a theater of high involvement of self. And that theater is as immediate and accessible to singers as to their audiences (142).

Bethke's remarks convince me that one must be very careful about drawing conclusions from a singer's presentation. Archie's story about his "Song for Bill Hosie" bears out the truth of Bethke's position; his subdued performance style cannot be taken definitely to signify a lack of involvement in his songs. Most traditional and revival singers feel that it is extremely important to put across the song in a public performance, that self and personality is secondary; yet the manner in which singers express how they feel about the song they are singing is quite varied, just as their personalities are. We have seen how differently Archie, Ray, and Cilla view songs, singing, and performing, and they are members of one family. It is all the more imperative that studies of singers explore the issue of what it means to sing with feeling, in order to gain a greater understanding of a singer's selection and performance of songs.

In the foregoing discussion, I have been concerned with cognitive,

perceptual, intellectual, and emotional components of the Fishers' aesthetic systems. In the rest of the chapter, we move on to a consideration of the singer's voice, use of accompaniment, and finally, the performing venue.

Technical and Physiological Factors in Song Selection

Technical and physiological factors can often determine whether a singer will select a particular song to sing, either in private or performance contexts. The singer's vocal range, style, and standard singing keys, for example, may affect the singer's decision to sing or not sing a song. Accompaniment and other performance considerations may also play a role in this decision.

The aesthetic systems of the East Suffolk singers studied by Dunn allowed a "high tolerance of bad performance", particularly from the technical standpoint. Dunn comments that "There is no concern for the artistic criteria of correct phrasing, descriptive ability, imagery, key control, organic form and originality" (1980:206). In the case of many of the Snape and Blaxhall singers, old age and physical decline was a major reason for poor technical performance, and villagers would comment that a particular person was "getting past singing" (216).

In her study of the singing tradition of the Scottish travellers, Linda Williamson points out: "There is no consensus among travellers on the criteria of good singing. Standards of excellence are not delimited" (1985:20). Dunn's and Williamson's studies suggest that the aesthetics of traditional singers

concerning technical singing ability are quite varied.

The Fishers' personal criteria for good singing are derived from their individual expectations of their singing. Because Archie, Ray, and Cilla are professional revival performers, they know that their audiences will not tolerate a technically bad performance, so they are acutely conscious of the vocal sounds they are producing. Folk audiences have different performance expectations of traditional singers.

Voice: Range and Style

Archie describes his voice as "a light baritone", and adds that he is "not really a dynamic singer" (SA 1987/99/A). Of the three performing Fishers, his voice is clearly the quietest, smoothest, and subtlest. Ray, Cilla, Audrey, Joyce, and Cindy Fisher share certain vocal characteristics which cannot be detected in Archie's voice; his has a very different timbre and quality. Jean Redpath comments that "his whole singing style is really quite unlike anybody else in Scotland" (SA 1985/214). The keys he sings in vary considerably, and are partially dictated by his guitar accompaniments. His repertoire includes songs in the keys of B flat, B, C, D, E, F, G, and A, which suggests that he has a very wide vocal range. Neither Ray nor Cilla sing in as many different keys as Archie.

Archie's diction is very clear, although because his voice is very quiet already, when he sings more softly for dynamic effect, particularly on low notes, the words are sometimes difficult to hear. Because of the subtleties in his singing, it is advantageous for him to use a PA system, which picks up his softer notes. His accent is not noticeably a Glasgow one; curiously, he does

not sound like his sisters, who all have detectable Glaswegian intonations.

Ray's voice is very low for a female singer, and she does not have a wide range. She frequently jokes about the fact that she was moved from the girls' soprano section to the boys' side of classroom in school singing practice (see Appendix 3B). Ray most frequently pitches songs in A below middle C. She has to choose her songs carefully, to match and compliment her low register and the "gutsy" timbre of her voice. She does not have what one could call a gentle or sweet voice; it is a full-bodied, highly expressive voice with a small trace of vibrato. Ray elaborates on the strengths and limitations of her style and voice:

My style is based, I think, on the traditional singers like Jeannie Robertson, and Belle Stewart to a lesser extent... The way I sing, maybe it's not as decorative as some. My voice isn't flexible... I don't decorate a lot, my voice doesn't wander about like the Gaelic singer that was singing last night [at a radio programme taping], oh, she went hoodle de do and she went away 'round corners and things, you see?... I love listening to people singing, but as soon as I try to do that, I don't know, I think it's something to do just with the timbre of my voice, it's just the makeup of my voice, it's a fairly rigid voice... It has a level, I can sing soft, I can sing quite loudly, but I think what I try to do is I sing out, I sing quite out and I push... The style I find is quite difficult. I can't work out what style is...

...There are some lovely songs that...in my personal judgement to do them justice, I haven't got the range that covers it. There's maybe a note outside, so the limitation would rest certainly with the vocal range that I've got. Along with that, there are certain...intervals, note intervals, that I love singing..., the Scottish bagpipe intervals I love...and the decoration, if any comes within the bagpipe scope, tends to be characteristically Scottish decoration. I find it very difficult to extend to this two notes up, three notes down, one back up again system, where you get this around a note... If in fact there are opportunities to do acrobatics, to do a vocal, I mean certain effects at times, sometimes I do "effect" things, which I enjoy doing. (SA 1986/113/B)

Many contemporary songs sung by Cilla have fairly large vocal ranges, and favour a voice which is flexible. Ray clearly understands the physiological and technical limitations she has, and works to select material which maximizes her strengths.

Another feature of Ray's vocal style worth noting is a *rubato* effect which is used to varying degrees. Archie traces this element in Ray's style back to the time when he and Ray were performing songs for television programmes like "Here and Now":

...We'd sit in the dressing room before we went on, and the guy would say, "Do a rehearsal", and he'd say, "Lose a minute of that." So we'd have to cut verses, which we hadn't completely learned anyway. And so we'd come to the end of the chorus and we'd sort of look at each other and I'd see the first syllable forming of the next verse, and I'd know what she was going to sing. Then when I was singing lead and Ray was singing harmony, she would do that too, you know. She would hang back and she developed this form of *rubato* that she uses, where she's actually a bit behind all the time, she's hanging... Also it's a great device if she doesn't know the chords, she just leaves the old one in suspension until she comes to the one that she knows. (SS 13-5-86/B)

This *rubato*, which developed out of the practical need to pause and remember words or guitar chords only just learned, grew into a permanent feature of Ray's singing style, although it is not always employed. It is most apparent when she sings with her guitar. Munro (1984) describes a 1973 performance of "The Fairfield Apprentice":

Ray Fisher accompanies herself here on guitar and achieves some interesting shifts of rhythm by pausing vocally on certain notes, thus lagging temporarily behind the stricter rhythm of her instrumental backing (159).

Ray's diction is excellent, and it is a rare occurrence when words are not clear in her singing. She takes care to speak more slowly and sing clearly when she is performing in England, for the benefit of those who may find a Scots accent and dialect in songs difficult to understand. She is a naturally fast speaker, and is aware that she needs to slow down her speech when talking to non-Scottish audiences. Her speaking and singing accent is very much a Glasgow one, even though she has been living in Whitley Bay since 1962. Cilla remarks:

...You see, when you don't live in Scotland, you get awful

Scottish!... You suddenly have to explain everything in Scottish, this is Scottish, this is about a tumshee, and in Scotland that is a turnip, you know. And you suddenly become a sort of salesman for Scotland. And I think that's why Ray's accent is stronger. And...I suppose her songs, too, have been a lot heavier dialect-type songs than I've worked on in the last couple of years... I mean doing contemporary songs...you tend to sort of smooth it all off a bit. (SA 1986/155/B)

Hamish Henderson sees Ray's personality as shaped by her birthplace:

Ray displays a tremendous amount of the Glasgow qualities, right enough, I mean this sardonic humour which she can call on, you know, and this gallus feeling that exists in so much of her singing is undoubtedly Glasgow roots... Nothing would subvert Ray's Glaswegian core, nothing... I mean there's no Scots patriot like an exile... [People are] conscious in exile of their own identity as against the other people. (SA 1986/128/B)

Cilla probably has the most powerful voice in the family, and like Ray, has a relatively low voice for a woman. She sings songs in A, but also in the keys of B, B flat (when singing with the Scottish small pipes), and C. Her vocal range enables her to sing songs with a larger note range than Ray, but she is quite careful to avoid songs which make her strain for notes. She remarks about a song she recorded on "For Foul Day and Fair", "The Soldier Laddie":

...I learned it basically for the recording, and I never sang it again, I don't know why, I still don't know why I don't do it. I think the range in it's too much or something, or I found that...when I did sing it the first time...maybe the room wasn't good for me or something, I couldn't reach it or something like that. That frightens me, I'm terrible about screeching, you know, I hate not to be able to reach notes... (SA 1985/213)

One external factor which has affected Cilla's voice, her dynamics, and possibly style is the gradual introduction of public address systems into folk clubs and concert venues. She elaborates:

If you go through the [folk] clubs here doing your apprenticeship, when you're just off, nobody ever had PA's..., so everything was belted out at full tilt. You just, you know, throttled and just let go so that you filled the whole room, 'cause I've always had the feeling I want the guy at the back to be getting as much as the guy in the front seat there...and I used to oversing dreadfully. I know I did, just everything at full power...

But going to the States, I couldn't believe it, that these people could sit and whisper out with this PA, and make this wonderful sound. And it was really from going to the States that I learned kind of microphone technique, and just no oversinging... My voice stands out much better now, and...I can do, you know, twenty nights really with no problem. I never have throat trouble now... And I think what was once described to me as shading, vocal shading - sounds rather good! - I mean presumably it means peaking here and dulling here. But I have changed slightly. I rely much more now on the sound system for projection... (SA 1985/213)

Cilla is careful with her voice, and although she once smoked, quit many years ago because it affected her singing. Performing without a public address system in smoky pubs and folk clubs, as she did in her early days of performing with Artie, taxed the physical limits of her voice. She remarks,

I've suddenly realized that...it's my instrument, it's the only thing that I use. And you have to take care of it, so I'm being rather careful now. (SA 1985/213)

Cilla also has a more variable singing style than Ray and Archie, which is largely dependent on the type of material being sung. While most of the Fishers appear to have a talent for mimicry, Cilla's ear for accents and vocal styles is particularly acute, and she is capable of reproducing different singing styles. Her voice has a smoother quality than Ray's, but she is capable of making it sound either very muscular and gutsy like Ray's, or very smooth. She likes to experiment with different styles and sounds, and as already mentioned, can affect an American country-western accent and style in singing with singular skill. Her sisters in particular share this rather playful delight in using different voices, but Cilla has utilized this skill in a serious way to develop different styles for different songs, associating certain styles or approaches to songs with the moods, atmospheres, and meanings she wishes to create with a particular song.

Artie Trezise compares the way he and Cilla sang in the early years of performing, and more recently:

...We were evolving, I particularly was evolving, a way of singing that I'm a lot happier with now than I was then... It suddenly dawned on us one day...that what's the point in singing American songs when Americans can do them so much better than you can, you know? But nobody in the world can sing Scots songs as well as the Scots person can... There's no point in singing American songs for us really. We can do it now 'cause we've evolved a kind of way of singing that's Scots, we have a kind of Scots technique now, and I think we could handle any material. But then we were kind of switching between being an Aberdeen bothy chiel and somebody fae Vermont or something, you know?... It's nice to feel...a bit more comfortable about our own style. (SA 1987/102/A)

Artie's vocal style is less variable than Cilla's, but is highly complementary to hers in performances. It is interesting to note his concept of a "Scots technique", which he views as the approach that he and Cilla have evolved with their material. He feels that they can now utilize this Scots technique with material from outside Scotland, such as the Stan Rogers songs they sing.

Peter Hall considers the matter of vocal styles in the Scottish folk revival:

...It seems to me that there's a female vocal style that has evolved in the revival which is much more interesting than the male vocal style...which I think is very stereotyped. The female vocal style is much more interesting, people like Gordeanna McCulloch and Cilla Fisher and...Marjorie Sinclair. Now whether it's just that the way Scots women speak and use their voices is going to end them in singing in that way, with that particular tone and that style of delivery, I don't know, or whether it was because Ray, who was one of the first [revival] singers...had an influence upon them all, and therefore they sang in that way, I don't know... There was a kind of style there that doesn't seem to me to be there before the revival, or before Ray was on the scene, and yet is an identifiable style with lots and lots of female singers. (SA 1986/25/B)

In keeping with Cilla's careful approach to voice control and style, her diction, like Archie's and Ray's, is very clear. Her accent is basically Glaswegian, but she has acquired some Fife intonations, having lived there for many years.

Cilla explains her feelings about diction and singing:

I'm not sure what kind of accent I've got, but I know in Scotland I tend to just speak like I'm speaking just now, pretty badly and slurred and...not too clearly... I tend to get carried away, if I'm in Glasgow, I get even more Glasgow...

If we're south of the border, you tend to speak slower... I mean I do it consciously, we both do it. Gary doesn't get to speak! You have to speak slower, and you do refine things, because...ten minutes later you're going to sing something that they're not going to understand one bloody word of. You know, I'm going to sing "The Laird of the Dainty Doonby" or something: "...[A lassie was] milking her faither's kye/ Gentleman on horseback, he cam..." And they've...lost it already, they don't even know what a kye is to start with, far less a gentleman in Scotland! So I mean you lose them there, so you have to kind of refine it slightly. So I'd say that I have a sort of mid-Atlantic Scots talking voice. Singing, I've always tried to have clear diction, I mean consciously, very consciously, in that I find it painful sometimes! Singing something which because of the way that I pronounce things, I...do get pains in my jaws, and I'm sure it's just with singing some things. But I hate listening to records or people that I don't understand.

...Because I feel that I've got a low voice, compared with most women I have got a low voice, if I'm singing a song like when we did "Norland Wind". I mean it starts here, and it goes higher, and then it goes solo. I'm terrified that people don't know what I'm saying...by the time I get down to what to me is a rumbling, a very low voice. I mean Artie says, "No, I can hear what you're saying", and I don't think they can, so I think I work even harder at it. Especially if I'm singing low. But of course...with PA's and everything, it helps a lot more now, I mean I feel a lot more confident about singing things that are low...if it's got a big range in it and I'm going to have to really grumble the last few lines or something. (SA 1986/155/B)

Both Ray and Cilla can adopt different singing accents and styles, although Ray seldom does this in a performance; it is usually when in a more private context with her sisters that she tends to do this. As we have said, Cilla consciously uses different styles and less frequently, accents, in performance where she senses that a particular style is most suited to a song. Adam McNaughtan raises a point about traditional singers, and pronunciation and style:

...Jeannie's [Robertson] accent on the songs, at times, is very correct English, you know, in the ballads, I mean. She's got a very posh accent, pronunciation of certain words, which is what hit me, you know, early on. But...I know that's true actually of a lot of ballad singers, now when they sing the ballads, it's a

different accent they have than when they sing the "wee songs".
(SA 1986/26/B)

Thus Jeannie Robertson, a traditional singer, was quite deliberately utilising accent, pronunciation, and as a result, style, to distinguish between types of songs.

Hamish Henderson comments on the language of the ballads:

...the nature of the ballad-Scots - the flexible formulaic language of the older Scottish folk song - ...grazes ballad-English along the whole of its length, and yet is clearly identifiable as a distinct folk-literary lingo... Ballad-Scots merges into ballad-English, for the simple reason that England and Scots-speaking Scotland - and indeed English-speaking Ireland - really form one single great ballad-zone... The ballads moved around with astonishing ease, and breached dialect and language boundaries like an underground army (1980:82).

In this historical context, then, Scots and English were mixed in the ballads and other folksongs without distinction. The Scots, however, have as a people exhibited a linguistic biculturalism for several centuries, which Kay (1986) has elaborated on. The ease with which Scottish singers can move between Scots dialect and English can be seen in the Fishers and Jeannie Robertson. The adoption of a particular accent seems to be more of a conscious choice on the part of the singer.

It could be argued that Jeannie Robertson acquired mannerisms once she had had contact with the folk revival and was more conscious of her audience, and this is to a certain extent true; however, this view is based on the assumption that people in a traditional culture do not exhibit consciously imitative and innovative behaviour, which would be difficult, if not impossible, to prove. Jeannie's personality and her aesthetic system had a major role in determining her own approach to songs.

Pete Shephard points out:

There's a tremendous range of traditional styles, and I think it's

very difficult to say the one particular style's the style, in fact it would be ridiculous to say so. (SA 1986/172/A)

McNaughtan's and Shepherd's observations would suggest that Cilla's approach to style is not unique to her, or to revival singers, but that it clearly falls within the realm of traditional singing aesthetics.

Another interesting point of comparison between revival and traditional singers emerges in Shepherd's assessment of the Fishers' singing style:

They [the Fishers] nearly all have the same style, within...reasonable bounds. They've got this very hard voice, no vibrato, that carries the words very well, very clear diction. Which is a sign of most traditional singers. Most traditional singers have a very clear diction, in fact, most people in the folk scene have fairly clear diction, I should say. I don't know why, but most trained singers have very poor diction, because of course they're trained to concentrate, I suppose,...on the voice production, and as a result, they have to open their mouths too much and so are unable to pronounce the words properly. That's what I always assumed to be the case... it makes me laugh sometimes to listen to an opera, and not a single word can you hear! It's just ridiculous, and... people like Archie have a lovely voice, and you know, every word you can hear. (SA 1986/173/A)

Shepherd makes an interesting point here about the clarity of diction of both traditional and revival singers, as compared with "trained" singers. The Fishers undoubtedly exemplify this. Their diction is particularly outstanding among revival singers.

Accompaniment

Suitable and sensitive accompaniment is a major component of Archie's aesthetic system, and the arrangement of a song is very important to him: "What I tend to do is...lean quite heavily on the instrumentation and the binding and the interweaving of, the entwining of the instrumentation and the song" (SA 1987/99/A). The way he plays the guitar affects his arrangements of songs. He explains:

I've become an open tuning guitarist for a variety of reasons, but a lot of people play in open D, which is probably the...tuning I play in most. But in the tuning of open D, I play in A and G as well, which gives the guitar a different characteristic. And in the tuning of open G, I play in C and D too, which gives another characteristic to the open tuning you have to learn. You basically are using the same fingerings, but for the...chords you're using with the...two or three open inversions, you get a very different effect. The nicest one of all is to play...A in open D, it's very nice, strong, very driving kind of accompaniment, which softens on the G if it's a modal tune, and gives you a great harp[like] D at the end. You know, if you need something that's Dorian, for example, like "The Belle of Star Isle", that one fits in very well with it. When you finish on the D, you start off with A-G-A, A-G-A, A-Em-G, A-G-D, and this big last chord... And some of the Scottish tunes which aren't slow are very good in that tuning as well. So that's the shapes in tunes I use, and I generally don't sing much higher than F. Between D and F. Or between A and C. (SA 1987/99/A)

Playing in open tuning is a style of playing the guitar which has evolved in Britain in recent years, influenced greatly by revival musicians Martin Carthy, Allan Taylor, Nic Jones, Dick Gaughan, and Archie himself. The guitar is not tuned E-A-D-G-B-E (from bottom string to top) as is conventional, but is tuned, for example, D-A-D-G-A-D, or D-G-D-G-B-D. The sound of chords played in these alternative tunings is very different, as Archie says above. Open tunings have given guitarists a wider choice of sounds and effects to choose from in accompanying songs, but create limitations within which the guitarist must work.

Archie's style of guitar accompaniment has always been influenced by playing with other musicians. When Allan Barty accompanies him, Archie's playing is fairly "open", as he describes it, to allow Allan to fill in the space with his fiddle or mandolin. His tours with Garnet Rogers in Canada and the United States have also created the need for Archie to use sparser guitar arrangements, allowing Garnet to fill them with the fiddle. When Archie performs by himself, he feels that his guitar arrangements need a fuller sound, and has to incorporate some of the notes provided by Allan or Garnet.

Although he has occasionally performed songs unaccompanied, Archie almost invariably accompanies himself with a guitar in folk performances. Cilla has remarked that the "rowan shield" in Archie's song, "The Witch of the West-Mer-Land", symbolises his guitar, so that the guitar is seen almost as a protective element (SA 1987/102/B).

Ray uses a nylon-strung classical guitar to accompany herself in her performances. She uses a straightforward fingerpicking and strumming technique, which provides a soft, non-distracting accompaniment for her songs. Unlike Archie, she was never much intrigued with instrumentation for its own sake, so that she has never aspired, nor perhaps had the time, to learn a more complex accompanying technique. In the section on voice and style, it was noted that her vocal *rubato* was partly influenced by her accompaniment style.

Ray also sings unaccompanied songs in her performances. She often begins beating out a rhythm for the song with her hand hitting her knee, or by tapping her feet. The absence of the guitar accompaniment appears to make her singing freer rhythmically, and the vocal *rubato* is less evident.

Cilla used to play simple guitar accompaniments when she and Artie first started performing together. She observes:

I think singing is the easiest form of music, for me. And I think for...most of the people in my family. I mean I don't really have to practice at singing, I don't really. I mean we practice songs obviously, but I don't sort of consciously think about the way I perform things or sing them. I don't practice things through and listen to myself performing. But I think I couldn't do it with an instrument, I'm not very good at that. I can't sit down and sort of work out things, if it doesn't just come like this to me [snaps fingers]. And the reason I do sing songs is that I can learn songs very quickly. Now I can't learn barr chords very quickly! I've been trying for about ten years to learn barr chords, and it doesn't come to me quickly, so I just won't do it. I think it's just a laziness or something. (SA 1985/212)

Cilla also mentions the fact that when she became actively involved with the

revival in the early 1970s, men tended to play the instruments for backing, and women usually just sang. If a woman played a guitar well, people might remark: "Isn't she a good guitarist for a woman!" (SA 1986/212). Cilla says this attitude still exists in performance circles, and it "riles" her.

Cilla's husband Artie has perfected his instrumental accompanying techniques, and has learned several other instruments besides the guitar: Scottish lowland pipes, lap organ, and Appalachian dulcimer. His interest and expertise in accompanying enables Cilla to concentrate on singing. The addition of Gary Coupland as an accompanist on keyboards and accordion has also freed Cilla from the need to play an instrument.

The Performing Venue

The physical qualities of the place in which a singer performs affect the singer's performance to varying degrees. The venue may influence the singer's choice and presentation of material, and the presentation of the performing self or persona; in this respect, the performing venue can be regarded as a situational component of the singer's aesthetic system.

Folk performances tend to take place in folk clubs, concert halls, and sometimes specially erected venues such as large tents at folk festivals. Folk clubs meet in a variety of rooms and halls; hotel function rooms and pub rooms are among the most common. As such, bars are frequently in the same room, or else the audience may go to the public bar in another room. In any venue where refreshment is available, there is a potential for noise that can disrupt a performance, such as clinking glasses, crackling crisp packet

wrappers, the sound of electronic tills, and slamming doors as people come in and go out.

Folk concerts are often held in village halls, theatres, and concert halls. These venues tend to be less informal than the folk club venues. Few modern concert halls allow drink or food inside, and only sell such items in a designated area at the interval. This practice reduces the potential for interruptive noise in a performance considerably. Village halls more frequently allow people to bring drinks into the hall, and set up a bar to sell them during the entire concert.

Folk festivals make use of many kinds of venues, including pub rooms, hotel function rooms, village halls, cinemas, university or other educational institution halls, and concert halls. Large festivals such as the Cambridge Folk Festival put up tents on a large outdoor site, and create venues in this way. The level of formality depends on the rules of the particular venue.

Some performers prefer to sing in an informal venue, where the audience tends to be seated closer to the performer. The ultimate in closeness between singer and listener is an example found in Williamson's study of the Scots travellers, in which the singer and listener embrace each other (Williamson 1985:99-100). Clearly, in this more private singing context, physical separation is kept to the minimum. In a public performance context, of course, some physical separation is necessary from a practical standpoint.

Many performers like to feel distinctly separate from the audience, as is more often the case in a concert hall where the stage is several feet above the seating level. Lighting can vary enormously, from natural light in a tent or normal overhead lights in a function room to theatre lighting facilities with different coloured spotlights, for example. Public address systems are routinely

provided in most larger venues, and many folk clubs now use them. Many folk artists own a public address system, however, and prefer to use their own. Some of the smaller folk clubs do not have PA systems, but permit artists to bring their own.

Another consideration is how the performer dresses for the performance event. It is a manifestation of personality and performance style, to a certain extent, but also the functions of the performance, about which more will be said in Chapter 7.

Archie does not feel that he prefers any particular type of venue for performing. He comments:

I think if you take the same attitude, whether it's a concert hall or a club, you can actually make a club into a concert hall, or a concert hall into a club. I mean if you approach it the way that some of the better performers do... (SA 1987/99/A)

Archie therefore sees the performer as being able to alter the audience's perception of the physical venue through his or her performance.

Although Archie used to stand up throughout his performances, he now prefers to sit down:

I liberated myself, I threw my guitar strap away...and because it's much more comfortable and also it allows me to enclose the guitar... I can actually physically feel what's happening inside the guitar, and it becomes like a piper, who breathes into the instrument. And I'm much happier performing like that. Whereas some performers work better standing up, where they can move and actually go to their audience, and put on some kind of spectacle. (SA 1987/99/A)

Archie is a very quiet, self-contained performer in that he sits on a chair or stool to perform, and does not move very much (see Plate 13). He does not make much direct eye contact with the audience in performances, although he conveys the impression of speaking and singing more or less directly to the audience. He remarks:

I don't really look at the audience as individuals. I've got a middle distance that I focus on, I always have had, that I don't look into people's faces directly, because that's distracting. So you develop a middle distance thing, which is a general thing. (SA 1987/99/A)

Thus Archie focuses on a middle space between himself and his audience, perceiving the audience as a group and not as individuals, but creating a certain intimacy all the same through his music and spoken introductions.

Archie does not dress specially for his performances, but performs in the clothing he wears every day, usually jeans or corduroy trousers and a shirt. This casual dress adds to his very understated, informal, warm presence as a performer. He impresses audiences through his undoubted musical competence, and not through dress or manipulation of physical space.

Like Archie, Ray feels that it is up to the performer to make the most of the performance venue. She explains:

If I'm singing to a group of people, I like them fairly close..., I don't like it to be too scattered... And if it's a big room, just concentrate the people in a group, so it's like as if you were sitting talking... No, it's not terribly important, I haven't thought too much about it. Sometimes it might dictate your choice of material, maybe... If something's a sort of humorous element, I'm putting little asides in and things, [and] in a little group of people it's a lot easier to communicate, and you say it very quickly, whereas something might get totally missed at the back of a hall or whatever. (SA 1987/93/A)

Ray likes to be able to see people in the audience whenever possible, and for them to see her clearly:

The visual thing I think is important, I think people should see you. And I would sit up on top of a table rather than sit on a chair so that I could see peoples' faces..., making, you know, a sort of focal point...

...I think the fact that you see someone's face is very important, yes... I do this deliberately sometimes, pinpoint on people. Not with a view like Jeannie [Robertson] used to do, to almost embarrassing you...because she used to do that. I don't do that, sometimes I catch peoples' eyes while I'm singing, and somebody will wink at you... (SA 1987/93/A)

Ray clearly prefers more direct eye interaction with the audience than does Archie.

Ray is very forthright on the issue of lighting, preferring undramatic lighting in the performance venue:

My personal feeling about it is that [if] you want to change atmosphere, you want to change feeling, whatever, you do it with the songs you sing. And regardless of whether you've got lighting coming from down below, up from behind, or dramatic or otherwise, I'm not in favour of the sad song - blue light, you know. It's like saying, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, this is a sad song!" Before you've said a word...

I mean I have been in the circumstances where about three or four bars into a song, from being a very bright, glaring light, we get this subdued blue thing, and I feel as if I've got to start swimming or something... And suddenly, I can't see anybody, or faces... the theatre, the effect, comes from what you do, what you sing. You change the atmosphere without having to tell people or buy any visual aid, that that's what you're doing. (SA 1987/93/A)

All Ray's comments are consistent with her preferred approach to performance: "I sing like I'm just singing in my front room" (SA 1987/93/A). She is aware that some people may think her performing style is "a fraction laid back", but thinks the roles in a performance event are clearly defined:

...I think the physical separation from you and an audience is saying that this is this little gap between you and me, that says that I am doing this, and you are listening. (SA 1987/93/B)

Because Ray performs more unaccompanied songs than either Archie or Cilla, and does not always use a PA system, she is possibly more aware of a venue's acoustic qualities. She remarks:

...Some nights, the acoustics in places are wonderful, and you can hear your voice, and then suddenly you're enamoured of your own voice, not that you think it's great, but you get this amazing sort of cathedral effect coming back, and ooooh! you're away, and you're hoping that everyone else is getting this same sort of effect. And other nights..., there's a couple of clubs that are so well-carpeted...that you don't think you can get any further than about a couple of yards in front of your face, and your voice, it's like as if you've got a paper bag on your head of something... (SA 1987/93/B)

I personally have experienced the feeling of elation in singing which Ray alludes to when the acoustics create the "cathedral effect", and know of other singers who have remarked upon it.

Ray generally sits in a chair when she performs, unless she is singing with the other Fishers in a Fisher Family performance, or singing with Cilla as the Decibelles (see Plates 14-16). She does not use a guitar strap, so she must be seated to play the guitar. She does not stand to sing an unaccompanied song, as some singers do. She is verbally and physically interactive with her audience, looking at people in the audience more, and using a lot of gestures as she talks. When singing a "heavy" or difficult song, she tends to be more like Archie, focusing on a "middle distance", or drawing more into herself in concentration (see Plate 17).

Generally, Ray performs in clothing she would wear every day. She favours clothes like colourful track suits, cordoroy trousers, and sometimes a skirt and blouse. Occasionally she wears something fancy or outrageous, like a sequined jacket or tartan tights. She elaborates:

I'm, I think, maybe in a way a bit of a split personality, you see. Well, let's say being a wife, mother, and ratepayer in Whitley Bay..., I wear the same things, really, at home that I wear when I go away. And I wear the same sort of clothes on stage... If I'm doing a concert, I do make a point of changing into something else than what I've been wearing during the day, and this general sort of thing... It's a bit like saying to your audience, I've done this for you. You know, it's like dusting the furniture before your mother-in-law comes, you know, as a sort of token gesture... The actual clothes aren't really important. I think that your clothes maybe do reflect you, in a way. But what the spangled jacket does is that - there's one little facet of my character which I recognised quite a long time ago, this impulsive streak I have about certain things, and sometimes I do things, either for devilment or just...because it appeals to me. I want, not necessarily to shock somebody, but I want to just say, well, very good, she sings these very serious traditional songs and she's talking very seriously about the music she's doing, but actually the woman is thruppence short of a shilling occasionally, you see... I have this poser element which I rather enjoy doing, you know... 'cause I'm an extrovert person. (SA 1987/93/B)

She relates an incident at the Pontardawe Folk Festival once, when all artists were asked to wear "national dress". She found an apron with a waistcoat, kilt, and sporran pictured on it, borrowed a Wimpey hardhat, devised earrings out of plastic cups, wore pink fluorescent socks and pink shoes, and went on stage in this comical national dress. This is certainly a manifestation of her "poser element". Plate 18 shows Ray and Archie taking part in a Christmas pantomime, recorded for her brother Archie's weekly radio programme, "Travelling Folk". Ray's undoubted flair for ridiculous costumes is quite evident here.

Ray and Cilla make use of quick costume changes in their "Decibelles" programme, which adds to the hilarity of their performance. While singing Ray's "version" of "I'm a Woman", they change clothes for each verse, reflecting the type of woman that is being talked about in the verse. They dress up as housewives, horsey bluebloods, glamour girls, and career women. This is a straightforward example of a performance which employs special clothing to enhance the humour of the songs (see Plate 16). They also perform a short skit in which they pose as airplane stewardesses in tartan tammies and sunglasses.

Cilla is possibly the most extroverted of the Fishers in ordinary performance, and is more theatrical in her whole approach to performance. The theatrical approach has evolved partly through the use of actual theatres for the Singing Kettle Show, which requires a stage, props, and lighting, and Cilla and Artie have used some of their Singing Kettle techniques in their folk performances. Cilla likes singing in concert halls, and adds:

I like it quite dark... I like playing to nobody, in a way, because then I can just imagine them. I love it black, a black audience, you know... like out there in the limelight doing your bit... I mean sometimes in clubs, you know, it's full, and there's no way you could do anything with lighting anyway. And you're staring at

everyone, and...that's alright in situations too. But we started using lighting because we've done these theatre shows recently... And that's another thing... Although you might not notice it particularly, or even an audience, I bet you an audience don't notice it half the time, light changes and things. The last tour we did, the Holland tour, we used lights, 'cause it was all theatres we did, right? And it's great! It's just another wee added thing that just makes for that special kind of feel to things. Okay, I'm going to sing on my own, so the stage dims slightly and I'm left with a spotlight... You're working in a theatre, so why not use it, because it's been proven that it works well. I mean with our music, as long as you're performing it in a way that's sort of suitable, as long as you're not having strobe lighting in the middle of "Bonnie Udeny" or something, you know! Although you never know, it might be what's needed! But I think it can all be used, as long as it's done tastefully... Why shouldn't folkmusic have lighting?... If it's there, use it, as long as you're using it, as far as we're concerned, sensibly, and to enhance a performance. (SA 1987/27/B)

Cilla feels that lighting effects should be exploited when they are available, as in a theatre venue.

Interestingly, Cilla appears to like both situations: at times set apart from an audience, for example, on a concert hall stage, with the audience in the dark; at times close to an audience as one would be in a folk club, creating an atmosphere of intimacy:

I like people real close to you... People set the table six foot away from you. For us, I mean, have them right under your nose, I don't mind that, I mean you really have to have it, because if you've got that space, it can kill you. I mean even with an audience that are really enjoying it, it can still kill it, you know, because there's just that physical barrier as well... (SA 1987/26/B)

There is an apparent ambivalence in Cilla's attitude about the closeness of the audience, but it may not be ambivalence so much as indicating the fact that she enjoys the two very different performance situations.

Cilla and Artie make full use of their performing space, whether in a folk club or in a hall. They both stand, and their accompaniest Gary Coupland generally sits toward the back of or the side of the stage or performing area, playing accordion and electronic keyboard. Artie usually plays a guitar, but also

uses the Scottish smallpipes for accompaniment (see Plate 19). Cilla used to play the guitar, but no longer plays an instrument in their performances, so she is freer to move around the performing area. She sometimes takes the microphone from the stand and walks around with it in her hand, and their present PA system has cordless mikes, making such movement even easier. Cilla and Artie usually do one unaccompanied song together in a performance, and stand side-by-side with their arms over each other's shoulder. They are about the same height, and Cilla often kicks off her high heels when they sing together like this (see Plate 20). They sometimes do a song from their children's show and use props, such as in "The Train to Glasgow", where Artie rushes to put on different hats for a particular part of the song. Their performances are full of physical movement, which distinguishes them from Archie's and Ray's performances in which they both remain seated.

Cilla makes a clear distinction between her everyday clothes and her performing clothes. Her ideas about performing clothing for folk clubs and concerts have been influenced by the Singing Kettle shows that she and Artie have devised. She elaborates:

Oh, I'm dead vain, me!... I have to feel good. I remember the first time I ever really dressed up... I borrowed something off of Ray, which was a kind of smock...dress with a big skirt..., real "folky", you know, it was a Laura Ashley type thing, you know the idea when you had long hair and you plaited it back like this, and you wore all these long things... I remember putting that on... It was a club actually, although it was being recorded by the radio...and for the first time, when I walked in, everybody knew I was the artist, right?... Because if you go just the way you are, I mean whatever you've got on, you know, you could be anybody. In fact, I've been asked at the door to pay, because people didn't know who I was...

I like to look tidy... I mean people are looking at you, and they're looking at you a long time, so you want to look reasonable, and you want to have nice shoes on and look reasonably dressed. Although there was an era..., an "old jeans time", I mean we did that... The folk scene is no place for, you know, like the glitter suits...but yet if you do dress up a bit, if you change for your performance even, people go "Oh!". Wonder why

makes any difference, maybe it does... I like to change... I think doing the kids' thing has made it even more important, kind of going on stage now that we wear...red and yellow for the kids' shows always now. And Artie and Gary use yellow and these pink trousers... I change into these bright clothes..., shocking bright yellow trousers...and I've got a red sweatshirt or a red silk shirt that I wear now, and I wear white trainer-type shoes, and ankle socks. And I get my hair nice and curly or something, or I put a bow in... And it's 'cause you want to look really bright on the stage for kids. And when you go out there, people think you've a lot younger than you are, because they see you in the lights and it looks quite good. But I mean years ago, I would never have thought of doing as much as that, but now that I've done that, I don't mind, I mean I quite like to change my clothes... I wouldn't go onto the stage with...jeans... Occasionally I do wear dresses or skirts. (SA 1987/26/B)

Considerable thought has gone into the way Cilla and Artie present themselves in their Singing Kettle performances (see Plate 21), and to a lesser degree in their folk club and concert performances. The clothing worn in performance events is most important to Cilla, and the least important to Archie.

The way each of the Fishers dresses for performances is a manifestation of how they wish to be perceived by the audience. Clothing is one way in which the distinction between audience and performer can be heightened or lessened. Cilla likes people to know that she is the guest performer, rather than a member of the audience, when she walks in, and her clothes are a means of signifying this. Archie and Ray tend to view the performance itself as the way in which a performer distinguishes himself or herself from the audience. Ray, however, does employ clothing to reveal a more frivolous side to her personality, her "poser element", and in this she is more like her sister Cilla.

Summary

In this chapter, I have attempted to define and discuss my concept of the singer's aesthetic system, and examine the aesthetic systems of the Fishers. I have compared the Fishers' views with those of traditional and revival singers in Scotland and elsewhere, in order to place the Fishers' aesthetic systems in a broader context. The aesthetic system is not only affected by the singer's perceptions, but by the singer's audience, other singers, the singer's technical ability and limitations, the way in which the song is being presented (accompanied or unaccompanied), the context of singing, and the venue for singing.

I have also examined some ways in which meaning in songs is derived by the Fishers and their audiences, and have indicated that multiple and fuller meanings often emerge in a historical or diachronic perspective of song performance. It is this perspective that enables us to perceive what Anna Caraveli calls "the song beyond the song" (1982), what could in fact be called "the songs beyond the song".

The aesthetic systems of the Fishers are revealed in practice at the performance event, and it is to this context that we turn in the next chapter.

Notes for Chapter 6

1. I am indebted to Breandán Ó Madagáin for giving me additional information on the song "Anach Cuain" or "Annach Doon" as it is given by Douglas Hyde (1903). The drowning actually took place in 1828 at Loch Corrib in County Galway, and Anthony Raftery composed the song about 1838. Irish and English texts appear in Hyde's *Abhráin atá leagtha ar an Reachtúire: or, Songs Ascribed to Raftery* (142-153). In a 1985 article, Ó Madagáin comments: "...a hundred years after Raftery had first sung 'Anach Cuain', not only was the song still sung, but when another drowning tragedy occurred at An Cladach Dubh in Connemara, Raftery's song was adapted to the details of the local situation" (186).
2. I have quoted *verbatim* from a photocopy of Lizzie Higgins' handwritten note to the song "Allison Cross". Copies of all Lizzie's notes were given to me by Hamish Henderson when he asked me to write the sleeve notes for her Lismor record, "What A Voice".



Plate 13: Archie Fisher at the Edinburgh Folk Club,
28th January 1987

Plate 15: Fisher Family performance, Dundee, 1987
(left to right) Archie, Allan Parky, Ray, Gillie, Artie Brown,
and Gary Goughland



Plate 14: Fisher Family performance, Dumfries, 31st May 1987
(Left to right) Archie, Allan Barty, Ray, Cilla, Artie Trezise,
and Gary Coupland



Plate 15: Fisher Family performance, Dumfries, 31st May 1987
(Left to right) Archie, Allan Barty, Ray, Cilla, Artie Trezise,
and Gary Coupland



Plate 16: Ray and Cilla Fisher as the Decibelles, Dumfries,
31st May 1987



Plate 17: Ray Fisher at the Edinburgh Folk Club, 1st April 1987

Plate 18: Ray and Annie Fisher at the meeting of the "Travelling Folk" Christmas Dinner, Glasgow, 12th December 1985



Plate 18: Ray and Archie Fisher at the taping of the "Travelling Folk" Christmas Pantomime, Glasgow, 19th December 1985



Plate 19: Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise at the Edinburgh Folk Club, 6th January 1987 - Artie accompanying Cilla with the Scottish small pipes

Plate 20: CILLA AND ARTIE SINGING & PLAYING SCOTTISH



Plate 20: Cilla and Artie singing a song together

AN ANALYSIS OF SINGING
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Plate 21: Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise in "The Singing Kettle Show", accompanied by Gary Coupland (rear of photo), Leith Town Hall, 21st October 1987

CHAPTER 7

AN ANALYSIS OF SINGING IN THE PUBLIC PERFORMANCE CONTEXT

Having discussed the aesthetic systems of the Fishers, it is now possible to examine their songs in the context of the performance event, and to see precisely how their aesthetic systems function in praxis. First, I consider the uses and functions of the Fishers' songs in performance, using Merriam (1964), Ó Madagáin (1985), and Turner (1969, 1974) as theoretical reference points. I then focus on the ways in which the Fishers programme and structure their performances. The spoken song introductions are seen as connecting links which reveal aspects of their aesthetic systems, and establish certain meanings in the songs for the audience. Finally, I analyse illustrative extracts of transcriptions from representative public performances of Archie, Ray, and Cilla and Artie, to see precisely how the sung and spoken segments mesh to produce a meaningful aesthetic experience for performer and audience.

Uses and Functions of Song and Performance

Merriam (1964) distinguishes between the uses and functions of a music:

Music is *used* in certain situations and becomes a part of them,

but it may or may not also have a deeper *function*.. "Use" then, refers to the situation in which music is employed in human action; "function" concerns the reasons for its employment and particularly the broader purpose which it serves (210).

Merriam proposes ten major functions of music: emotional expression; aesthetic enjoyment; entertainment; communication; symbolic representation; physical response; enforcement of conformity to social norms; validation of social institutions and religious rituals; contribution to the continuity and stability of culture; and contribution to the integration of society (219-226).

Breandán Ó Madagáin (1985) employs Merriam's ten functions as a basis for examining and illustrating "the purpose and meaning of song in Irish society" in the nineteenth century (137). He discusses specific songs as examples of these functions, but cautions that

the singing of a song never has a single function, but several simultaneously (usually including the aesthetic). And there is danger of distortion in abstracting function from usage and context, as there is also in isolating song from the other elements of folk culture (214-215).

The caveats Ó Madagáin pinpoints are equally applicable to textually-based studies of song meaning.

The songs the Fishers use in performance events exhibit various functions, but for audiences, the primary function of the performance event is entertainment through performance; entertainment can also be seen as "the encompassing frame", after Turner and Turner (1986:141-143). Within the perceived function or frame of the performance event, the songs have individual functions, and represent different frames or modes of communication, such as humour, social comment, narrative, and integration through participation, to give some examples. Ó Madagáin succinctly expresses this point as it relates to nineteenth century Ireland:

...Even when entertainment was the primary purpose, however, the songs had other important effects also: as well as having an

aesthetic function they belonged to the culture of this particular society, expressed its values, had a role in the moulding and perpetuation of the culture, and enhanced the sense of belonging of both singer and audience (1985:172).

It is useful at this point to consider Victor Turner's concept of "communitas", a state which is often the desired outcome of a rite of passage, either sacred or secular. Turner defines communitas as "social anti-structure (since it is 'a bond uniting...people over and above any formal social bonds,' that is, 'positive' structure)..." (1974:45). Turner draws on the work of Arnold van Gennep:

...Van Gennep himself defined *rites de passage* as "rites which accompany every change of place, state, social position and age... Van Gennep has shown that all rites of passage or "transition" are marked by three phases: separation, margin (or *limen*, signifying "threshold" in Latin), and aggregation (Turner 1969:94)...

...We are presented, in such rites, with a "moment in and out of time," and in and out of secular social structure, which reveals, however fleetingly, some recognition (in symbol if not always in language) of a generalized social bond that has ceased to be and has simultaneously yet to be fragmented into a multiplicity of structural ties... I prefer the Latin term "communitas" to "community," to distinguish this modality of social relationship from an "area of common living" (96).

Turner distinguishes between what he calls "cultural" or "institutionalized" communitas, and "spontaneous" communitas. He frequently uses the example of the 1960s American "hippie" culture with its concept of "a happening" to illustrate spontaneous communitas. Turner remarks:

The kind of communitas desired by tribesmen in their rites and by hippies in their "happenings" is not the pleasurable and effortless comradeship that can arise between friends, coworkers, or professional colleagues any day. What they seek is a transformative experience that goes to the root of each person's being and finds in that root something profoundly communal and shared (1969:138).

It is possible to use Turner's ideas to perceive performance as a secular rite of passage, or a transitional experience. Songs function as symbolic

communication within this transitional experience, and are ordered in such a way as to bring about *communitas*, as I will demonstrate later in the chapter.

Archie does not view his public performances as entertainment so much as a form of communication with the audience. His ideas about the functions of his music are rooted in the concept of spontaneous *communitas*:

...All you do is fill a bit of time and space with music, but the music comes from a live, living human being, and it's listened to by another live, living set of human beings. So you're communicating, and you're communicating with your eyes shut a lot of the time, you're not looking at your audience. The performer's a focal point collectively, and collectively the people are sharing that experience too. So you change a crowd of people into...an audience, which is a collective thing, which is, you enjoy the experience together. And there's something, there's some psychic linkup in that, and you can feel it, it's a physical thing...

...What you do is you create a space first of all by the performance, because you're doing something they're not doing. You're doing something they're listening to, they've subjected themselves sometimes financially by paying at the door to share this experience. So they've come and said, okay, what's it all about? So what you've got to do is make them feel what they are, or what one should do, or what should happen is that they feel that they are participating, and that really you're all on the same plane, because they are intake of what you're doing. It makes the whole entity exist. Without them, you may as well just sit in your own room. You're sharing this whole thing. And this is the nearest...as the Folksinger with the capital "F" nowadays, can get to what the probable purpose of folksong was, it was a collective activity. Although it was performed by one person, or performed by a bard, it was a collective experience, and that you were part of a holistic thing. You were part of a whole, that just happens to be the one that's telling the story at the time, but you're actually sharing something, that it is a common fund. (SA 1987/99/A)

Thus Archie sees that the performance event has an overall communicative and integrative function.

In Chapter 5, Archie's system of categorizing his songs in terms of the moods they create in performance was discussed. Thus, within the context of the holistic experience of the performance event which he describes above, his songs communicate both heavy and light moods, or tension and release, and

function individually as pieces for aesthetic enjoyment, entertainment, and communication of specific topical concerns.

Ray comments about songs in her performances:

I find, not that every single song should be significant, socially or whatever, but *each song has to fulfill a function*, whether it be a love song, or the social comment, the story, or whatever. I mean even the littlest, tiniest little song can say something, you know... [Italics mine] (SA 1986/113/A)

Ray's songs in performance are multi-functional, but the expression of emotion is a primary function with most. She explains:

...What I enjoy is moving people in some way. Whether it's to hostility or whether it's to "I agree with you entirely" or something, to make some sort of response. (SA 1986/113/A)

...I think the function of the singers nowadays is to just ask people to listen...and listen to what is said, and to make their own decision about it. Just to listen and to say, well, if it makes you think, then I've fulfilled the function, I think. If it makes you forget about your troubles, that's good...or if it makes you feel, or makes you think about something which you haven't thought about before, it's...just some sort of enrichment, whether it be in experience or just in making you think a bit more about something... That's my sort of function. Because a lot of the time...your own personal powers of communication are being tested... If it makes someone angry, that's good. If someone gets angry...that's good, because it stimulated them to actually think about it... (SA 1985/208)

Even though she perceives that people come to folk clubs and concerts for listening entertainment, and recognizes that entertainment is one of the functions of her songs, Ray does not consider herself an entertainer. More precisely, she thinks of herself as a communicator

...who hopes that the bulk of the time you're entertaining at the same time... I don't write so many songs, so all I do, I'm an interpreter of the writers, so that in fact what I do is I try to get through what the other people have written, see, and it wouldn't be totally entertaining. If in the process of communicating I entertain, that's the way I see myself. I don't see myself as a song carrier... In fact that may well be what I am, but I don't see it as...the main purpose of singing, because it's not, I'm not standing here saying...I will learn this song and that song...for fear they're forgotten... (SA 1986/113/B)

Thus, for Ray, song is a form of personal communication that hopefully has some emotive effect on the audience. In some cases, she is communicating an appreciation of a song as a aesthetic experience which she wishes to share with others.

Cilla feels very strongly that her songs should entertain, and considers herself an entertainer, therefore the entertainment function is uppermost in her aesthetic system. She remarks:

I want people to have a good night. Yeh, I do, I just want people to go out and say it was good, they'd enjoyed it. Not even just me, not going "I enjoyed her", I just want folk to think it was a good night's entertainment. (SA 1987/26/B)

Comic songs and other "light" songs are an important part of Cilla and Artie's performance programmes, although they do not predominate. Cilla explains:

I quite enjoy doing them, 'cause I've suddenly realized in the last couple of years I like to make people laugh with me... The Scots are very good at laughing at themselves... I like people to laugh and enjoy themselves and have folkmusic as entertainment, 'cause I think it's an awful thing to get people into folk clubs... We've had content [in our songs] but we've always presented it in a kind of light way so that it makes it easy listening for people... (SA 1985/212)

...I've got to have a wee giggle now and again. And I think most people like that too, so a night out should be a night out of entertainment... (SA 1986/155/A)

Songs like "Loch Lomond Parody", "Oor Glens", and "Tatties for Your Breakfast" have the function of entertainment through their humour. They fall into a category of humorous songs designated by Ó Madagáin as "the embodiment of fun *par excellence*, that being virtually its entire function" (1985:192). He echoes Cilla's comment above, remarking: "The height of humour would seem to be the ability to laugh at one's self..." (193).

Cilla's aesthetic differs from Ray's in that she sees the entertainment

function as the primary one, and uses the entertaining aspects of the performance event (comic songs and humorous introductions) to persuade the audience to listen to more thoughtful, serious songs which fall into Cilla's "downer" or "heavy" category. Not that the songs in this category are actually depressing, but she realizes that they demand more of the audience in listening than the lighter songs. Many of the songs Cilla and Artie sing in public performances are, as with Ray, songs which they wish to share with the audience, as if to ask, "Isn't this a great song?"

Singers clearly do not agree on the issue of whether or not a singer is or should be an entertainer. The entertainment function and context of music has always existed, although it has in many cultures gradually changed from being a private to a public form of entertainment. In the case of Willie Scott, who worked as a shepherd, the occasions for singing tended to be gatherings in homes, and "herd suppers", so that clearly entertainment was one of the functions of singing. Somewhat romantically, many people imagine Willie singing while herding sheep, but in fact, the work context was not one in which he sang. His repertoire, full of comic songs and also humorous monologues, is very much geared to the entertainment function of song and story.

Sheena Wellington, a revival singer who likes the longer narrative songs and singing unaccompanied, remarks:

I think it's very difficult to be a singer who gets up in public without being an entertainer, because that's the whole purpose of music. Well, alright, it's not the whole purpose of music... Ninety percent of the purpose of music is to entertain, to enliven, to uplift the spirit. Ten percent of it carries a message, but the post office does that better... Song has illuminated history at times for me, but I don't think I ever actually learned anything historical from a song. I don't think I've learnt very much of morality from song because some of the morality of the Child ballads is quite dreadful, you know! I don't just mean the sexual morality, but I mean some of the punishments that were handed out...

If people are not enjoying what I'm doing...they won't listen. And I think that's true for all types of music. If people are not enjoying it, they won't listen, so you must be first and foremost an entertainer. (SA 1986/160/B)

Sheena's viewpoint is very similar to Cilla's, although Sheena performs more of what Cilla would term "heavy" material.

It is interesting to compare the viewpoints of the Fishers and Sheena Wellington with that of Almeda Riddle, who remarks:

I'm not an entertainer and never have been. Entertainers have to put too much of themselves into a song. If what I do entertains you, then I'm glad, but I never put out any effort to entertain anyone, except a few to children so I can get them to stay with me while I'm singing and the mothers are gone. Now maybe my songs entertain, but I'm not an entertainer... I don't perform, you see.

The ballads I do, you're not supposed to perform them... A ballad, or any kind of traditional song, (especially one of that I call the classics) you have to put yourself *behind* the song. By that I mean get out of the way of it. *Present* your story, don't *perform* it... The difference between our most popular "folksingers" and me, they do perform and put too much of themselves into it. I just get behind it. I don't want any of Almeda Riddle there... If your ballad is good enough, it'll hold them without anything that you do... Now, if you want to perform on something like "The Three Nights Drunk" or "The Black Mustache" or something like that, if the song is an entertaining song, that's all right. Go right ahead (Riddle 1970:122-123).

Almeda Riddle clearly equates "performing" with "entertaining", and with injecting a song with one's own personality. She feels it is inappropriate to sing a ballad like "The Four Marys" in an entertaining style, although she finds it acceptable with a song whose function is entertainment. Because of Ray's view of herself as being a "communicator" rather than an "entertainer", she might be the most sympathetic of the Fishers to this traditional perspective on performing; however, there is no mistaking the fact that Ray's exuberant personality and humour are communicated in her singing, which makes her a very entertaining performer.

One point on which most revival singers agree is that a singer should

not over-emphasize the educational function of performance. A singer who performs as if he or she were in a classroom is likely to get a poor audience reception, because the entertainment function is being violated. Ray particularly dislikes being asked to perform by certain groups who regard her function as one of introducing them to Scottish folkmusic in a vaguely educational context:

I don't much like the sort of: "Let's have an evening recital of Scottish folksongs", you know, "Miss Fisher has studied these", you know, "and I'm told she's very good, you know". And I've done so many of these things where the people come along to be informed of the "lesser musics" within the country, you see... Nine times out of ten, it's the twee audiences, absolutely. I mean they've no idea what a bothy looks like, and they've never even heard of one... But sometimes that particular audience..., I'm not very nice to them... I tend to talk down, oddly enough, 'cause I keep thinking they're here for the wrong reasons, or they're here for reasons other than the ones that I prefer to think that they would come to listen to the songs, or what I had to say...and not for it to be quaint... (SA 1987/93/A)

Ray finds that these "twee audiences" tend to be from arts groups, who, as she sees it, are "just giving a nodding acknowledgement to the existence of this [folkmusic], but don't see it as part of the real cultural activities of an area or a place" (SA 1987/93/A). She is not prepared to see her performances as educational exercises, although she recognizes that some audiences are more informed than others about folksongs. As we will see in examples from Ray's song introductions, she does impart a lot of information about the material she sings, but that is not her main purpose in performance, nor is the information delivered in a pedantic or didactic manner. The same could be said of Archie and Cilla.

Artie Trezise has an interesting perspective on what could be called the "teaching function" of performance. His teaching experience has clearly contributed to the design and structure of The Singing Kettle Show, which is for child audiences. He explains:

...Teaching's the opposite of entertaining, you know, in a way. You've got to entertain as a teacher, but as an entertainer, you can't be a teacher, *you can't be seen to be teaching, even although you are*. You musn't be seen to be. Otherwise people...really kind of bristle up, it's a different sort of relationship because you really want them to be your best pal. And as a teacher, you don't want that because three weeks later they will crucify you. You've got to have a kind of professional distance as a teacher. As an entertainer, you have a distance, but it's a different type of distance, and you can really be their pal for however long you're there. But control is the common factor. You've got to be able to control an audience, and as a teacher you have to control as well... I find myself now, say, working for kids, and saying right, now I'm going from this point to this point, what am I trying to do, how am I trying to do it, and what particular story am I telling here, you know? (SA 1987/102/A) [Italics mine]

Cilla and Artie perceive that the overall function of both their children's and adult's performances is entertainment, but the two different audiences require different structures and material. Although cleverly disguised, the teaching function is most evident in "The Singing Kettle Show".

The Fishers' songs have many functions within the broader function or context of entertainment. In the next section, we consider how their performances are structured, reflecting a balance of functions.

Structuring and Programming Performance Events

In private entertainment contexts, a singer's selection of songs to sing may be very random or spontaneous, or dependent on the type of occasion and the people present. Public or what Bauman (1977) calls "cultural" performances are more formal, although folk performances have varying levels of formality which usually depend on the venue and the type of audience which patronises the venue. Thus folk club nights might be seen as informal occasions, and folk concerts taking place in a theatre might be relatively more

formal occasions.

Folk performers vary greatly in their approaches to programming a performance event. Fairley (1987) considers the concert programme or structure as a constructed narrative, which is given focus through spoken introductions, or what she calls "the voice" of performance, more of which will be said shortly (427). Her model is based on the Chilean group ¡Karaxú!, who structure performances "according to qualities of *ambiente*" or atmosphere:

The different *ambientes* are spoken of loosely as contrasting between *alegría* (happiness), *de effervescencia* (effervescent), *épico* (epic), more *intimista* (intimate). They are linked by a *hilo* (thread) which forms *una línea dramática* (a dramatic line)... The musicians speak of this line having a *tensión* (tension) which changes in response to the changing *estados de ánimo* (states of spirit) and *ambientes* (atmosphere)... But the whole arises from a clear notion of wishing to *manejar/conducir* (drive), to be in control of the concert programme... (1987:262-263).

While the performances of ¡Karaxú! have a very different function from those of the Fishers, that of communicating a deeply personal political message to the audience, there are parallels in the ways ¡Karaxú! and the Fishers view their songs and place them in a ordered programme.

Fairley noted that ¡Karaxú! balanced their contemporary songs, expressing considerable political and emotional tension (*nueva canción* or "new song"), with traditional Andean dance music and song (*música andina*). These two categories were always linked in the programme by a third category of "folkloric" Chilean and Latin American dance and vocal music, *música folklórica*. The three categories "on one level are paradigms for the essential identity of both Latin American and Chilean people" (31). Thus the concert programme was carefully worked out to move between tension and release, avoiding concentrations of either, the "voice" clarifying the symbolic meanings of each category of music in performance. The Fishers are not attempting to put across an overt and structured political message in their performances, but

meanings and atmospheres emerge from a particular order of songs, as with ÌKaraxú!'s programmes.

The ideal structure of a folk performance for the Fishers, as for ÌKaraxú!, appears to be one which reflects "balance"; it is a word mentioned frequently by Archie, Ray, and Cilla, and many other singers whom I talked to. Ray comments:

I don't do a pre-selected programme. I don't work out the programme I'm going to do before I start. A lot of it has to do with what sort of response you get for various things... I usually do what I like to think is a balanced programme... You just vary your pace (like you would, I suppose, in conversation), on a programme of song... It goes up and it comes down, peak and it goes down... I usually start with establishing straight away that the songs I sing, the majority of them, are Scottish. (SA 1986/113/A)

Cilla sees the flow of the programme as "...two up, one down, one down, and then sort of a kind of chorus thing as well..." (SA 1986/155/A). Thus the programme reflects a balance of repertoire categories, such as "light" and "heavy" or "uppers" and "downers". Similarly, Archie's programmes feature groupings of songs in which there is a balance of "tension" and "release".

The careful placement of a "heavy" or serious song in a performance programme is an aspect of this principle of balance. The transition must also be made in mood between "heavy" and "light" songs. Ray comments:

One of the things I that I used to find quite tricky was to change from something which...I'd sung in a certain way, or sung and felt very strongly when I sang it, to get the transition from that to another song. And that is to me...is an art... So what I do is I do a countdown, and I just slow it up, and then speed it up again, and then come to something else. But not too far removed from what I've done before... (SA 1987/93/B)

Ray feels that the songs must be placed in a "complementary" order to make a good transition.

Cilla remarks on the potential of an inappropriately placed "heavy" song

to destroy the balance in a programme:

...Sometimes it can sort of spoil things in a way, in a set, if you've got a...too powerful song... It can just blow everything else that you've done... "The Generations [of Change]" was like that, people used to just go phew!... "Norland Wind", "Generations of Change", and..."The Jeannie C"..., you couldn't do anything after them. I mean you had to finish with it in the first half or the second half or something, because there wasn't anything that could follow it, you know?... They can stand out too much and disrupt things in a way, sometimes...if you stick it in the middle, it can take a lot to get people's attention back to what you're doing now. (SA 1986/155/A)

Cilla also feels that good traditional and revival singers alike intuitively understand this principle of balancing "heavy" and "light" categories of repertoire in a performance. She remarks:

...You never go up and sing five ballads. Nobody would do that, not even Jeannie [Robertson]. I mean Jeannie would do one or two things, then she would do a wee...throwaway thing...to lighten it all... I mean there's nobody does that, not...if they're getting up to entertain. If they're getting up to preach, then they can do what they like... (SA 1986/164/A)

What the performer says about the song influences how it is received by the audience. The programme balance and smoothness of transition from song to song in a programme can also be aided by the spoken portions of the performance, more of which will be said shortly.

The Flexibility and Spontaneity of Performance

The fact that the Fishers' programmes reflect "balance" does not mean that they do not regard their programmes as flexible at the time of performance. Many personal and situational factors contribute to the selection of a song for a particular point in performance, although balance is the underlying principle.

The freedom to establish and alter her own programme is very important to Ray. Classical music performances are different from folk performances in that the programme is put together in advance and is adhered to. Ray finds that some organizers who wish to feature folk music in a performance do not understand this flexible programming aspect:

What they don't understand is that you don't have a pre-arranged programme, that they'll say to you, "Could we have a list of what you're going to be doing?", you know. Like you do if you're going to do a classic recital of pieces... And a lot of the time it totally rests with what sort of frame of mind you're in, and what sort of reaction you get from an audience, so that you don't have a prepared programme. So that I usually say, "Well, I just wander down the glens and lochs and have a wee look here and there and sing a ditty thereof", you know! I've often thought I'd like to do a programme of "a wee trochle through Aiberdeen"... "I will rove from Dundee to Aberdeen and sing a song about each town that I go through", you see, or something like this. That to me is a bit contrived, but...that I sometimes think is what they want... (SA 1987/93/A)

Ray here satirizes the classical recital approach to Scottish folksongs.

Ray provided a concrete example of the classical music audience approach to folk music from the 1960s, which additionally illustrates this issue. Among her mementos, she has a programme from the "Ledlanet Nights" (Fife) Spring Season, 1964; The Tregullion, and Ray and Archie Fisher were featured in "an evening of folk song". The programme reads exactly as follows:

TRUE FOLK SINGERS do not like to commit themselves to a definite programme in advance, but the reputation of these renowned Scottish artists stretches far beyond their native land. RAY and ARCHIE FISHER are well-known to *Hootn'anny* [sic] viewers, and THE TREGULLION, coming from Fife, have performed at the Edinburgh Festival. All the singers are recording artists, the Fishers with Waverley Records, and the Tregullion with Decca.

The programme implies an apology to the Ledlanet public, because "true folk singers" will not provide the usual pre-arranged programme, as with the Schubert *lieder* featured on another evening..

Cilla explains how she and Artie approach performance programming:

We usually decide by looking at the audience, or what's gone before. We kind of have a plan, we usually kind of write a programme before we go, but when you get there, there's always going to be changes. Either if they're a kind of "lefty" club, then you stick in, you know, "Land of Hope and Glory", or you know, "Hunted on the Hillside" or something. Or, you know, if it's real punters, then you've just got to do punters' joy... My entertainer comes out in me and I go..."These people are here for a night out, I'm not going to bore them"... It's not fair to sort of say, "Well, this is folkmusic, folks, and this is all you're getting!" 'Cause it's so wide and there's such a variety of material you can choose from, I think it can suit anybody. And if you present it properly, and can make them smile and give them a good night, that's what it's about.

So you have an idea, but if you get there and you find, oh, we've got to do more this kind of song, and you do, you might change, you might decide to do something while you're actually up there on stage... (SA 1986/155/A)

Thus, Cilla and Artie make up a list of songs for each set in a performance event, but do not feel obliged to adhere to it if audience feedback or the atmosphere indicates that another song might be more appropriate.

In folk clubs, a guest performer usually does a thirty to forty minute set in each half of the evening, and is preceded by "floor" singers and musicians from the club or visiting from elsewhere. This means that an audience mood may be established by the time the guest artist performs, and it is up to the guest to alter the mood if necessary. Cilla comments:

I do find clubs harder and harder, because you just need two or three people getting up singing the "dowie dowies" and you're back to where you started, you know, 'cause folk are falling off their seats sleeping, and you've got to go back on... The other night, we went and did something, and...we'd left them and it was great, the atmosphere was lovely and everybody was all chatting and all, and then they put on three or four folk doing "dowie dowie" stuff... And by the time we were getting up...they were all ready to cut their wrists and everything!... So we went on and did "The Wark o' the Weavers", which we don't always do in a set... If it looks like they want to sing...we stick in "The Wark o' the Weavers", and it works a treat, always goes. And then it changed, like, just in a minute... (SA 1987/26/B)

This is a clear example of how the choice of a particular song, in this case a chorus song, which was not in the original programme list, can change the

atmosphere in a performance event. Changing audience mood is more difficult in a folk club in which the guest is only part of the evening's programme, whereas a performer has more control over the atmosphere of a performance when doing a concert which includes no other performers. Cilla sees programming generally as based on a notion of "lifting" and "dropping", terminology which, interestingly, corresponds nicely with her repertoire terms "light" or "uppers" and "heavy" or "downers".

The mood of both the audience and the performer may influence the choice of songs in the performance. Ray comments:

...It would come down to, maybe, on the day, how I was feeling, you know, if I've had a really rough journey on the way there or I've been battling with traffic or I've been on the motorway or whatever, and I may have had some confrontation with someone...and I suddenly think, I'm going to say my peace on this, and I'll sing a song which may be slightly aggressive or, it just depends. (SA 1986/113/A)

If Ray is feeling tired, she also might be more inclined to sing her older songs that she is most comfortable with, rather than newly learned ones. Most people who have ever sung in public or in a small private gathering have experienced a loss of memory or made mistakes in their accompaniment through feeling nervous or tense.

A recent festival at which Ray and Willie Scott performed was poorly attended because of bad publicity. Ray describes her personal reaction to this situation, and what she perceives as the obligation of the performer:

...Some nights...I'm anything but feeling like singing a jaunty song or whatever... The last festival I did..., I was totally depressed by the atmosphere. ...I bet in the room we were in there were six people when we got there, for the start of the concert... So on that particular occasion, I sang just really very low-key stuff...

...You do a club, and the audience expect a performance, and they expect you to be on the ball, you know, just like that. You agree to do that, and that's...what you've got to learn to be able to do, and it's not easy, it really isn't easy... (SA 1986/164/A)

Cilla similarly finds that the presence and energy of an audience influences her ability to perform with complete involvement: "You can only give what you're getting" (SA 1986/164/A). Personal moods and feelings can make it difficult for her to sing songs which are technically demanding at a certain point in the programme, but her professional commitment may require that she do it:

Some songs to me are very difficult to sing, physically sing, not just the fact of the sort of song or anything about it, or where it comes. But even in a set, you know, I'll go, "Oh my God, I really couldn't sing it just now". But I mean we just write down a set, and we do it now. (SA 1986/164/A)

Cilla concedes that it is through work and practice that she is able to sing a difficult song as programmed, even if she does not feel like singing it. This could be regarded as a special aesthetic consideration of the professional performer.

Jean Redpath's views on programming flexibility provide another revival perspective:

...Basically what I'm doing is working with that group of people, on that night, in that temperature, in that hall, in that order. And my contention is that you could take all of these people out of the hall and bring them back and put them in different seats, and you'd have a different animal. So the notion of getting up with a planned programme is anathema, you know, it kills spontaneity, and also it would present me with a repetition factor that would probably bore me to tears in three months. And it has to be a more spontaneous performance, if I'm flying by the seat of my pants or by my antennae, picking up whatever is in the hall. Presumably what I do is throw out three songs and what the response is... I usually know what the first one's going to be, so that I don't get up there and go "Uh". But I have changed my mind between walking onto the stage and hitting the mike. That's fine too... It really is instinctive, I've never really analysed it to death, and I think that's a good thing. (SA 1985/215)

Jean also comments that she is less able to be flexible about singing a ballad in a concert: "I can't sort of toss it in because...that's the colour we need right now in a programme, or that's the weight or that's the mood I've established" (SA 1985/215).

The willingness and flexibility of the Fishers to change a programme spontaneously during the event illustrates what Bauman terms the "emergent" quality of performance. He adds:

...all performances are not the same, and one wants to be able to appreciate the individuality of each, as well as the community-wide patterning of the overall domain.

The emergent quality of performance resides in the interplay between communicative resources, individual competence, and the goals of the participants, within the context of particular situations. We consider as resources all those aspects of the communication system available to the members of a community for the conduct of performance. Relevant here are the keys to performance, genres, acts, events, and ground rules for the conduct of performance that make up the structured system of conventionalized performance for the community. The goals of the participants include those that are intrinsic to performance – the display of competence, the focusing of attention on oneself as performer, the enhancement of experience – as well as the other desired ends toward which performance is brought to bear; these latter will be highly culture- and situation-specific. Relative competence, finally, has to do with relative degrees of proficiency in the conduct of performance (1977:37–38).

Bauman finds that the emergent quality of performance manifests itself in text structure, event structure, and social structure; event structure is probably the most significant emergent component of the Fishers' performances, although I will consider social structure in the analysis of performance extracts later in the chapter. Emergent performance is one way in which professional performers reveal their creativity and sensitivity, as well as their assimilation of traditional values in artistic expression.

Song Introductions as Integrative Communication

The talking which a performer does between songs is a very crucial part of the whole performance event, for it is in this spoken narrative that information about the songs and the performer emerges, and, to a large extent, that rapport with the audience is established. Little scholarly attention has been given to this part of public performance, much to the detriment of our understanding of the performer, his or her aesthetic system, and the performed item.

As mentioned previously, Fairley (1987) describes the significance of spoken narrative in the performances of ¡Karaxú!, calling it "the voice":

...It is this voice that plays a key part in focusing the "constellation" of meaning (to use Toelken's term again) for each piece. It has three functions. Firstly,...it integrates the musicians and their audience... Secondly, it communicates information, some of it literal, but more through the transmission of *una imagen* (an image). For ¡Karaxú! information conveyed in this way is in essence the *raison d'être* of the complete text, it explains their attitude to its subject. By this means they communicate to their audience that it is not only the words and music of the song that are significant but what the song references for ¡Karaxú! within this concert programme, why the song has been included. Thirdly, the spoken introduction provides a means of transition between one piece of music and another in performance, with it they can move from one *contexto* to another... (264-265).

These three functions can be clearly seen in the Fishers' introductions to their songs.

Additionally, the spoken narrative contains within it forms of "metacommunication", as defined by Barbara A. Babcock:

Metacommunication in narrative performance may be described as any element of communication which calls attention to the speech event at a performance and to the relationship which obtains between the narrator and his audience vis-à-vis the narrative message. By focusing our attention on the act or process of communicating, such devices lead us away from and then back to the message by supplying a "frame," an interpretative context or alternative point of view within which

the content of the story is to be understood and judged. When, for example, the blues singer says in the middle of his song, "hear me singing to you,"...we are reminded that a special mode of speaking pertains and that a special person is creating this communication (1977:66).

Much of what the Fishers say in their narratives pertains to the relationship between the performers and audience, and an awareness of performance. Metacommunicative devices in the Fishers' narrative frequently supply "an interpretative context" in which the meaning of the performance of a song is "to be understood and judged". Examples of these devices will be considered later in the chapter.

The Fishers did not automatically begin employing spoken narratives in their performances; it was an acquired and learned behaviour, partly based on what other performers did, and also on perceived expectations of an audience. Archie remarks on an aspect of the television performances that he and Ray did in the early 1960s which was to affect his outlook on the importance of the spoken portion of performances:

...What happened to our repertoire was that it began to become tighter in a way, you know, we had to get nice guitar intros, and nice harmonies, and develop our performance technique, our presentation technique. It's interesting, throughout that time, we were never allowed to talk to camera, it was always sort of voice off, or somebody who introduced us and you just started and sang, there was never any voice communication with the audience. It was very strange. So as such you were just a singing image. But when you worked in a club, and you had to change capo position or link songs, the most important thing about building a rapport was what you said between the songs and what you said when you came onto the stage. The song was a cutaway, I mean you could talk lightheartedly and this, the most popular technique was to almost send the song up, the more serious it was... And then, there was people ultra-sincere about what they were doing, and their songs were sincere, so...you couldn't see the join... And Ray and I, when we performed as a duet we always interacted, we always had shared bits of repartee, and bits of things going, not totally rehearsed, more spontaneous than anything else. (SS 13-5-86/B)

Archie views the spoken portion of performance as a vital "link" between songs, and a means of establishing rapport with the audience.

When he started performing by himself, he had to develop his own song introduction style. Before, when he had to tune or move his capo on the guitar, Ray could talk about the next song, but as a solo performer, he had to talk while he was doing these other things.

Archie describes the talking he now does in a performance event:

It's not word-rehearsed. A lot of the time you're... making sure you're in tune or trying to suss out by the odd line what the temperament of your audience is... (SA 1987/99/A)

He additionally sees the space between songs as a time when the performer can assert "the confidence of presentation" with what he says (SA 1987/99/A). This could be considered metacommunication, as defined earlier, as it reflects a consciousness of performance, and the performer's relationship with the audience.

Ray sees the spoken portion of performance as an opportunity to tell the audience about the background of a song, in order to enhance their appreciation of it. She relates:

When someone questions me or asks me subsequently about the song, or some background to it, I like to know something about what it was that motivated the creation of this song, or the social context that it was sung in. And that to me heightens my personal experience of the event, and also makes the audience feel that...you've not got this little secret experience, that you're wanting them to share that as well. So from that, you give them a context, like, for example, I find myself doing more nowadays is I play the chords to a song, and I'm introducing it, and I say this is a song that I learned from blah blah, and...then go into the song. I find myself almost, sometimes after I start singing a song, I say..."I should really have told you that in fact the background to this was [this]", and then I pick up the song again, and it's like as if I'd said, "Oh right, the big picture starts here", and they go into it...not having to work out what the song's about... (SA 1986/113/A)

Ray sees song introductions as a sharing of contextual information about songs, which functions in the performance as a means of integrating performer and audience.

Because they are a duo, Cilla and Artie share the responsibility for the introductions to their songs. Their narrative style has evolved through years of performing:

...Artie basically acts as a straight man, and I come in with the side quips and ad libs and things. Some of them, of course, are rehearsed things, but I mean a lot of things are just off the cuff, and that's a good night, if it runs like that. Some nights Artie does the most intros, and sometimes I do it... (SA 1985/212)

Cilla and Artie use their married relationship as a framing or metacommunicative device for much of their repartee in performances. They often perform songs involving a husband and wife, such as "John Grumlie", or when they enact a scenario between a husband and wife in their song introductions.

I have mentioned briefly in previous chapters the performance strategy of using comic introductions to serious songs which, in effect, make fun of them or soften their impact. Archie expands on the strategy of using comic narrative between songs:

The serious singer is funny in his links. You may have noticed that with quite a few people, like Vin Garbutt [a revival singer-songwriter from Teeside], for example, when he sings "straight" songs...he sends himself up. And the person that started doing that that didn't sing comic songs was Nic Jones [an English revival singer]. I mean he used to really send up his songs before he performed them to some degree. But in a very quiet, sophisticated way. It's been carried a bit further by people like Vin Garbutt. The performer in general is someone who wants to let the audience know who they are by giving that impression of their taste, their feelings, their sensibilities, and their humour... The song itself, even if you've written it, is still a static thing, it's not flexible. So what you do in the link, in the balance between the link and the content of the song is offset what you think is either missing from the song, or is too overpowering in the song, to soften it... (SA 1987/98/B)

Archie perceives that a sense of balance must be attained between the spoken and sung portions of the performance.

One drawback of juxtaposing a comic introduction with a serious song

is that the song may become an object of ridicule through a lack of balance.

Reiterating some of Archie's remarks, Cilla observes:

We've seen a lot of people..get up and they do serious songs, but yet they can make people laugh as well. But the way they do it is by almost taking the mickey out of the song, and it's awful hard not to do that... One of the song intros I do, I mean "John Anderson"'s a lovely song that I do, and yet I do almost take the mickey out of it by saying that she's in love with him, and you know, she loves him even though he's getting old, but she only does when it's dark... It's like an escape thing, it's almost a nervous thing, I suppose, too, to make the audience feel relaxed too, make them laugh and everything. But I've been trying desperately to work on funny intros that aren't taking the mickey out of good songs, and it's quite hard... (SA 1985/212)

Thus Cilla finds that part of the dilemma of structuring a performance rests on this all-important balance between creating audience rapport through comic narrative and getting people to laugh, and creating an enhanced listening experience for the audience with a song. She perceives that it is possible, through a lack of control, to sacrifice song meaning through an over-emphasis on humour in the song introductions.

Another problem with this introduction strategy is that the comic "patter" becomes an end rather than a means to an end, and the performer sometimes talks more than he sings. Vin Garbutt, whom Archie mentions, has been criticized for this, because much of his song material is of a very serious nature, and the contrast between his talk and his singing is difficult for an audience to assimilate. Some performers, like the highly successful Glaswegian Billy Connolly, have evolved into comedians, and no longer perform as folksingers.

The Fishers utilize comic narrative in their song introductions, but successfully maintain a balance with their songs. The style of comic narrative used in-between songs by the Fishers and many other performers is undoubtedly influenced by the music hall, and by the British monologue

tradition discussed by both Goldstein (1976) and Miller (1976). Miller compares jokes and humorous monologues:

A joke, then, is a play on form in that one accepted pattern is confronted by another, hierarchy and sense are attacked, and the social structure is temporarily suspended. Similarly, monologues can be seen as deviations from institutionalized meaning-structures, traditional logic, traditional meanings, and from the meaning of socio-cultural and political life at large.

Clearly, then, such monologues represent momentary escapes from normally structured reality to differently structured and poetically expressed fantasy situations which are enjoyable to audiences who are aware of the social structure with which the performer is playing (1976:40).

The monologue technique of "restructuring reality" is one utilized to great effect by Archie, and to a lesser extent by Ray and Cilla, in spoken introductions to songs, as we will see shortly.

The Fishers' narratives between songs can be seen to function in the same three ways as Fairley's "voice" of performance; the narratives integrate, inform, and provide transition. They additionally reveal how the Fishers perceive their singing and their songs, and the concept of balance in a performance programme; aspects of the Fishers' aesthetic systems are revealed both explicitly and implicitly in the narratives between songs. The Fishers also employ metacommunicative or framing devices within their narratives, which focus on the performance and their relationship with the audience.

The Performance Extracts

The rest of this chapter is devoted to an analysis of transcriptions of performance extracts of Archie, Ray, and Cilla and Artie, to see more precisely how the narratives and songs function together in a performance. The

transcriptions of the performance extracts appear in Appendix 3. Recordings of the extracts are contained on Cassette 2.

The extracts of Archie and Ray were recorded at the Edinburgh Folk Club, and the extract of Cilla and Artie was recorded at the Police Folk Club, Edinburgh. I have selected representative extracts, as the lack of space did not permit the reproduction of transcripts of entire performances. The extracts chosen were selected for their representation of the performer's style, range of songs performed, and narrative clarity.

A few contextual details about the actual performances and the venues are necessary. The Edinburgh Folk Club is held weekly in the dining room of the Osbourne Hotel, York Place. The club has a small core of members who attend regularly, regardless of the guest performer, and is patronized by other members and non-members who attend irregularly. The night Archie Fisher performed, the 28th of January 1987, the room filled to capacity (100 people), and latecomers were turned away. Many people had come specifically to see Archie, who performs relatively infrequently, and many of them were personal acquaintances of Archie. The audience contained many people who liked to sing choruses, a fact which Archie was quick to realize. Because the room was quite full, many people were standing beside the bar, creating a certain buzz of conversation in the background which generally hushed when Archie sang. A public address system was used, monitored by Johnny Ramsay.

Ray performed in the same room on the 1st April, 1987. The attendance was above average, roughly sixty people. Ray attracted a number of people who would not normally attend the folk club, as did Archie. Again, people were in the mood for singing choruses. Maggie Cruickshank and her sister Liz Barkess (mentioned in Chapter 4) were in attendance on both occasions, and

both Archie and Ray addressed remarks to them during the performance. Quite a few of the people present were acquaintances of Ray. A public address system belonging to the Scottish group the McCalmans was used, and Ian McCalman, an old friend of Ray's, monitored the sound.

The Police Folk Club is held on a less regular basis in premises on York Place in Edinburgh. One of its organisers is also a committee member of the Edinburgh Folk Club. While the club is run by and for police personnel, others may purchase tickets to attend. The room in which the club is held is larger than the dining room at the Osbourne, with a bar at the back of the room, and seating with tables on the sides and in the middle. The night Cilla and Artie performed, it was a double bill; blues and ragtime guitarist Eddie Walker also performed. The two acts alternated. Some of the people present were personal acquaintances of either Eddie Walker or Cilla and Artie, and included some regular attenders of the Edinburgh Folk Club like Maggie Cruickshank and myself. ^{Because} the room was fairly large, the ambience was less intimate than that at the Edinburgh Folk Club. The audience was not typical of a folk club, and initially, fewer people seemed to want to sing choruses. There were also several people who talked to the performers while on stage, a mild form of heckling. The general mood of the crowd was quite exuberant and good-natured, however, but different from that usually experienced at the Edinburgh Folk Club.

Analysis of Performance: Archie

All references in this analysis are to Appendix 3A and Cassette 1. The performance extract starts at the beginning of Archie's first set of the evening at the Edinburgh Folk Club. He accompanies his songs with the guitar throughout the extract.

Archie establishes at the beginning of the set that he was born in Glasgow, but now identifies strongly with the Borders country. He makes a connection between the poet Roger Quinn and himself, as Quinn also lived in Glasgow and the Borders. Archie makes the interesting point that Quinn used his poems and songs as "currency" to pay for lodging and drink, adding with some amusement that Quinn's poems have been found mostly in Border inns. He cues the audience for the mood of the song with the word "eulogy", and with this spare commentary, goes right into the song "Borderland". This is a Quinn poem set to music by Archie, although modestly he does not mention that fact.

This short narrative tells us quite a lot about Archie's sense of place, and his feeling of identity with the Borders. The song has meanings for Archie which may be very private, but those who know that he divides his time between Glasgow, Edinburgh, and the Borders would understand how the poem's contrast of city and country life would resonate with Archie.

After the song is over, Archie picks up the thread of narrative where he left it, telling us more about his own activities in the Borders, in this case, riding horses. He then embarks on a lengthier descriptive and anecdotal account of a traditional Borders custom, riding the marches. He focuses on the Hawick Common Riding, remarking that women are not allowed to participate.

He humorously provides a partial explanation for this chauvinism, by describing the Mosstroopers' ride from Hawick to Moss-paul. The ability to hold drink and to eliminate it without getting off the horse is valued by the participants. His unexpected comparison of the Mosstroopers with the Texas Rangers is a typical anecdotal device used by Archie, and is possibly a passing reference to his world travels.

Archie establishes his national identity and sympathies clearly with his brief witticism on the Act of Union: "a good euphemism for what happened to Scotland". It is a remark that would not be received well in English venues, whereas in Scottish venues, it functions as an integrating device. We then learn that Archie is a member of the Mosstroopers, and he finishes his narrative on a comic note, going into "The Mosstrooper's Lament". This song has a chorus which is well known, as it appears in other songs such as "The Beggar Man". Despite its jaunty rhythm, the song is a lament for a lost way of life which became redundant after England and Scotland were united, although it has a jaunty feel to it.

At the end of the song, the narrative resumes where it left off. Archie compares the Battle of Flodden to an "away game", commenting that the battle was the subject of one of the "greatest lament songs". His narrative is broken momentarily by Archie's request to the sound person to turn up the guitar microphone, and a remark from the organizer. He rapidly picks up the thread by continuing his discussion of "The Flooers o' the Forest". He tells us that it "a very broad lament", and informs us that there are Borders laments which are more specific.

Archie tells us that the Vale of Ettrick is extremely beautiful, but brings us back to the contemporary by remarking that David Steel, the leader of the

Liberal Party, lives there, which is "the only thing wrong with it". He turns Judy Steel's comment to him into a joke. The narrative is again interrupted by Archie's question to the audience, "Is that better?", in reference to the guitar microphone, and some repartee with the organizer. He then goes immediately into the song "Ettrick", which, like "Borderland", is elegiac in tone. The song is deeply moving, although we do not learn of the specific circumstances that separated the two people ("we") in the song. Interestingly, however, the song depicts the joy of riding horses in a beautiful place, which is an activity Archie enjoys himself.

Archie informs us that we have been listening to a suite of Borders songs when he resumes talking, making explicit the fact that this order of songs is not a random choice. He proposes to finish with one of the "best known Border ballads". He sets us geographically in the town of Earlston, remarking on its renown for two incongruous things, Thomas the Rhymer, a legendary Borders figure, and a terrible transport cafe. In modern terms, Earlston is seen as "maybe three pubs and a radar trap". Suddenly, from the contemporaneity of this description, we are taken back in time to the farm of Cowdenknowes, "near a vitrified fort".

Next, Archie switches the conversational mode to a discussion of motifs in songs, peppered with his sense of humour. He compares Irish, English, and Scottish versions of songs in which "the young man falls in love with the boss's daughter", mentioning "Matt Hyland" as an Irish example. His vision of the Scottish version as a sort of "redundancy ballad" is very comical.

He then informs us that "broom" is mentioned in many songs, with the additional erudite and funny piece of information that it is hallucigenic when thrown on a fire. He gently satirizes the scholarly approach to folklore by his

remark about the chorus: "This was traceable in folklore by people who sang 'Wow, the broom, the bonnie bonnie broom!'" As Archie undoubtedly knows, the word "wow", which many people take to be a modern word, appears in older songs and broadsides. He has constructed a very clever joke around this semantic folklore, and his audience laughs appreciatively. Before starting the song, he addresses the audience directly by saying, "I'll be waiting for you", inviting them to join in on the chorus. Most audiences need no invitation, since this song is very strongly associated with Archie Fisher, and has been for many years.

The content of the song is concerned with loss of love and employment, and has an extremely emotive tune. Like "The Mosstrooper's Lament", it is poignant, and yet the overall aesthetic effect is of that of lifting, particularly through the vehicle of the chorus which is shared by audience and performer.

When he finishes, Archie immediately addresses the audience by complimenting them on their singing. The narrative then shifts to the next song, although as is typical, Archie does not explicitly tell us that he is the writer of the song; he implies it with the phrase "This song's inspired by..." We are told about the sight of the two trawlers, washed up on the beach shortly before they were supposed to be scrapped. Anecdotally, he tells us about the graffiti which appeared on the side of one, and turns around a stock phrase: "The names have been changed to protect the guilty". He subtly invites the audience to sing with him by saying "It's got a couple of tag lines in it".

This song moves us out of the Borders suite, but is linked to the previous song by being a song which can be joined in by the audience. This particular audience clearly enjoyed singing, so Archie responded to this. The

song is patterned on sea shanties. Like other songs concerned with occupations or a way of life, it is a farewell to that way of life, and it contains a reference to "Fiddlers Green", the mythical place where dead seamen go, commemorated in a contemporary song called "Fiddlers' Green". Again, like many other songs Archie sings, "The Final Trawl" touches the listener with sadness, and yet the overall impression of the song is lighter, partly through the mechanism of the repeated lines sung by the audience.

This transcription of a short performance extract demonstrates how Archie programmes his songs in suites, and how he moves from a suite into another song. The narrative in between the songs is very economical, at times understated, yet focused, telling us something about each song and providing clues as to the song's significance to Archie, but allowing ample space for the listener to decide what meanings the song will take on for him.

Archie punctuates his narrative with strums on the guitar, checking to see if all the strings are in tune; the punctuation is often at a point when it is appropriate for the audience to laugh, thus there is a rhythm to the narrative. Archie's narrative moves through many frames: personal experience, jocular communication, direct communication with the audience, and exchanges with the sound person and the organizer.

Archie moves us to laughter with his comic view of sometimes tragic situations, "restructuring reality" as the humorous monologist does, often juxtaposing incongruous concepts or objects, or by giving a historical context a modern viewpoint. As Miller comments:

The performer...can bring about brief moments of "communitas" and "flow", and can induce his audience to enjoy the mixture of real and unreal, of sense and nonsense, that is the essence of the humorous monologue. Everyday aspects of mundane, local life are used interchangeably with the more revered symbols of religious, folk or historical tales so that the local audience can

experience a brief exciting feeling of being at the center of the universe (1976:56).

Archie brings together, and mediates between, many opposing qualities and themes in his performances. His songs and his spoken narratives, sometimes comic and sometimes serious, continually reflect a thematic tension, between the traditional and the innovative, the pastoral and the urban, the local and the national, the specific and the universal, the mundane and the unusual, the historic and the contemporary, Scottishness and Englishness. This thematic tension represents what Renwick calls "paradigms in opposition", which create meanings in "folk poetry" (1985).

The information Archie gives us in his narrative is entirely in keeping with his aesthetic system, and exemplifies it. He comments:

I think that a lot of folk performance is best put over as understatement. Not totally self-effacing understatement, or quasi-sincere understatement, but to leave enough of the song spare for the audience or the listener to take. It's like any interpretive form, you know, if you've completely filled the frame, there's nothing for the audience to do or the listener to do or the viewer to do but just look or listen. Whereas if you give them an area of participation, there's more involvement, and it's actually a more subjective experience. (SA 1987/99/A)

It must be said that this commentary was volunteered and not elicited directly by me, and it is very interesting to note the vocabulary that Archie uses, particularly "understatement" and "frame". He sees his function in performing as communicating with and integrating himself with the audience, without destroying their "subjective experience" by giving them too much information in his song introductions, or by putting across too much of his own viewpoint.

It would appear that Archie employs songs as a symbolic form of communication, using song as a means of conveying feelings and issues which are not so easily discussed in a normal conversational mode. His somewhat detached and understated performing style belies what I interpret as intense

involvement in the song; the song, and the competence of his musicianship, are the message. The often comic narratives in-between the songs balance and offset the power of Archie's musical communication, preventing them from overwhelming the audience, but also protecting his private emotion from exposure.

Archie's overall objective of performance, that of "community born in performance", to use Caraveli's phrase (1985), is achieved, although the community is of a temporary, experiential nature, and does not continue to exist beyond the performance; in traditional societies, such as that studied by Caraveli, the "symbolic village" created by song exists in a historical and cultural dimension.

Analysis of Performance: Ray

All references are to the extract in Appendix 3B and Cassette 2. Ray sometimes uses her guitar to accompany the songs in the extract.

The performance extract of Ray begins with the second song in the first set of the evening. She informs us that her next song was most likely heard first from Jane Turriff, but that she and other young singers began singing it about the same time. This portion of the spoken narrative thus acknowledges the repertoire source, which is seen as very important by Ray.

Ray mentions that the song belongs to a genre of "songs about young women marrying old men". She parodies herself by remarking that she sings the song "with total conviction". The self-parody is extended and made more

personal with the reference to her husband, Colin Ross. In actual fact, there is little difference in their ages, which is part of the joke, and is realized by some audience members present; many folkmusic enthusiasts know of Colin Ross through his performances with the High Level Ranters. She employs a typical Glaswegian humorous device of saying the opposite of what is meant, which camouflages the warmth she feels for Colin.

The audience is told several times that the song has a chorus. Speaking the first line of the chorus, Ray focuses on the word "high", and gently mocks educational jargon by moving her hand up as a "visual aid". She then speaks the full chorus, which is very like a proverb. Scolding the audience in mock indignation, Ray tells them not to laugh because the song is "serious". She draws a comparison between the pithy wisdom of the chorus and the silk purse, sow's ear proverb with which most people are familiar. She elaborates that it signifies that old men are not very useful except for money, but then disclaims her remarks in case the audience take her too seriously.

Encouraging the audience to join in the chorus, she again employs self-parody to comment on her low voice, by relating an anecdotal account of her school singing career. The singing teacher heard someone "groaning" among the sopranos, and when it was discovered to be Ray, she was put with the boys for singing practice. After this fairly lengthy introduction to "High Jeannie High", in which she acknowledges that she talks too much, she begins slapping her hand against her knee for a rhythmic accompaniment. She does not play her guitar for this song.

After Ray has sung one verse and chorus, she pauses to tell the audience not to sing out, but oot, thereby drawing attention to the language of

the song, which is Scots. This break in the singing does not interrupt the flow of communication from Ray; she moves easily between singing, speaking, and back to singing. The song is a highly comic one, cataloguing the ways in which the old man can be disposed of. It is what Ray would term an "up tempo" song. The audience clearly enjoys singing and harmonising with the chorus, which has a jaunty feel.

At the end of the song, before there is time for applause, she compliments the audience on their singing. Because they are responsive, she adds, "It's gonna make life easier". Many Scottish revival and traditional singers enjoy having an audience who are keen to sing, and Ray derives an obvious pleasure from participatory chorus singing.

Ray informs us that she has been singing her next song for a long time. She adds comically that she has been "beating the daylights" out of her guitar for a long time too, which is why it is "constantly out of tune". Here again, she employs self-parody to reveal an aspect of her performances which troubles her: the fact that she finds her guitar difficult to tune at times. She is painfully aware of this problem, particularly as she has a brother who is regarded as one of Scotland's finest guitarists as well as singers. She ameliorates this perceived shortcoming by making fun of herself.

Next, Ray places the guitar face downwards on her lap, and continues her narrative. She uses a tone of mock seriousness to comment that "it lifts the whole class of your repertoire...if you can say things like 'From the singing of'". It is a means of restating, with humour, her personal belief that it is important to acknowledge the source of one's songs, without sounding pedantic. She tells us that she learned the song from the singing of Lucy Stewart, adding that this surname is "synonymous with some of the best

music". She distinguishes between Andy Stewart, the well-known "Stage Scotch" entertainer whose emphasis is on tartan, haggis, heather, and Hogmanay songs, and Andy M. Stewart, the young singer-songwriter who performs traditional and his own material with the Scottish revival group, Silly Wizard.

Ray returns from her brief digression to tell us that her next song is called "Miller Tae My Trade". Jokingly, she discusses the attributes of the miller figure in traditional song, many of which she implies, quite correctly, are of a sexual nature. She coyly hints at this, employing the song's metaphor to explain her point: "they go around sort of grinding ladies' corn and things". She pretends to have breached the taboo of sexual frankness, using the proverbial phrase, "We're getting closer to the Sabbath by the minute".

Before starting the song, Ray explains how she simulates the sound of a water mill wheel. She explains that Lucy Stewart simulated the sound by beating out "the rhythm on the table". Ray begins rhythmically beating the back of the guitar with her elbow and hand, quipping: "It's early Scottish reggae"... The rhythmic tapping is extremely effective as a backdrop for the song. "I Am a Miller Tae My Trade" is strongly associated with Ray by folk audiences, as she has been singing it since the early 1960s.

Renwick (1980) groups songs of "sexual liaison" into three categories "according to their rhetoric of sex": the symbolic, the euphemistic, and the metaphorical (55). This song would be designated as a sub-type of the metaphorical songs by Renwick; he comments that "the metaphors' vehicles...are drawn principally from the realm of occupations" (90).

On this occasion, the audience joined in on the last verse, which is also the first. It is not a chorus song, but people clearly respond to it. Again, Ray

compliments those who join in with a "very good".

Ray returns to the subject of her guitar by remarking that the tapping may have put it back in tune. She states with self-irony that she sings loudly so that people cannot hear the guitar.

She proceeds to tell us how she acquired her next song through the post, from a Scottish songwriter living in the South of England. She mentions that there is a chorus to join in. Her explanation of this song is a more straightforward narrative, and she gives us clues about the significance of the song for her: "The nice thing about this one..." She broadens her focus to contemporary songs: "That's what's nice about songs..., bring attention to what the problems are, and offer a solution if you've got one". She describes it as a "wee gentle song" before she begins singing.

Ray has moved from her comic narrative vein to a more serious tone of voice in this introduction, preparing the audience for a change in mood. Like the previous two songs, this contemporary song is in Scots. It is a very effective and moving song, written from the point of view of an elderly person sent to a high rise building to live, with "a' its mod-cons" but sterile atmosphere, devoid of human feeling. The speaker's sense of isolation, frustration, and alienation from family and neighbours are summed up in the repeated line, "On the upstairs fast goin' doon". Ray shows that she hopes the audience will share her opinion of the song by rhetorically asking "Good song, yeh?" when she finishes.

Ray makes a smooth transition between this song of social comment and a more jocular narrative tone by telling us that Bill Eddy, who sent her the song, wants to know how people responded to it in Edinburgh. She thus directly involves the audience. Next, she parodies herself by describing herself

as an evangelist, a representative of the "Glasgow Missionary [sic] to the Afflicted" who has "defected" to the Northeast of England to "spread the gospel of Scottish song" in Whitley Bay. While it is a comic view of herself, there is a strong element of truth in what she says, as she is a representative for Scottish song in English folk clubs and festivals.

Ray jokes about her husband Colin Ross belonging to a "cowboy group" called "The Split Level Ranchers", a take-off on "The High Level Ranters". This is a well-worn anecdote which she uses frequently in performance, which she acknowledges in her narrative. She engages in repartee with members of the McCalmans, and says in mock horror that "the sound is goin' down" because Ian McCalman is controlling the sound level.

Here Ray's narrative becomes more informal, as if she were sitting in her own living room playing to a small group of people. She uses what Bauman would term "conventionalized metacommunication" to "key" or announce the impending performance frame (1977:16). In this instance, the metacommunicative device is a "disclaimer of performance", which "may amount to a surface denial of any real competence at all" (22). Bauman elaborates:

Such disclaimers are not, of course, incompatible with taking responsibility for a display of competence, but are, rather, concessions to standards of etiquette and decorum, where self-assertiveness is disvalued. In such situations, a disclaimer of performance serves both as a moral gesture, to counterbalance the power of performance to focus heightened attention on the performer, and a key to performance itself (22).

Disclaimers of performance are used by traditional singers as well. Revival singer Anne Neilson recalls watching Jeannie Robertson perform at Norman Buchan's house:

...Jeannie stood in front of the fireplace... She was standing there, resplendent, with her cardigan fastened, and kind of

bulging at the buttons. And she apologized because, "Oh, my voice is...", you know, she always did that, you know... She often started off by saying, "I'll have to see, you know, it's not what it should be. I've been drinking hot honey and lemon all day, and this is just a wee toddy, but it's for my voice!" And she said all of this, she had her wee toddy, and she started. (SA 1987/91/A)

Ray employs disclaimers of performance elsewhere in her narrative implicitly, when she talks about her guitar being out of tune, but in her introduction to "The Weary Cutters", the communication is more explicit: "I don't know if I can do this one very well". She proceeds to locate the two chords she needs for the song, as if to underline the message, and give the performance a feeling of rehearsal, which de-formalizes the atmosphere.

She sings the chorus to the audience, telling them, "That's your bit". Returning to her narrative, she humorously instructs the audience what to do next: "go to the seventh at that point". She refers to the "seventh" chord on the guitar (in this case E seventh), which is being played at the end of the chorus. Ray then explains that she will sing "something in Geordie, of course". The song is in fact a Tyneside song which she learned from Louis Killen. Ray encourages the audience to join in on the chorus, moving on to explain the content of the song, which is quite serious: pressganging. She compares the methods used by English and Scottish pressers, playing on the stereotype of the thrifty Scot: "Scotland had a better tack altogether. You didna waste money on booze, just hit them on the heid, took them away..." Ray utilizes the fact that, as Cilla puts it, the Scots love to laugh at themselves, which is a form of achieving a symbolic and participatory identity or ethnicity.

Before beginning to sing again, Ray relates an anecdote about the song which is actually drawn from an experience with an American fan, who had asked her to sing "The Laundry Song". This person had derived this comical misnomer from the phrase, "He was pressed and sent to sea". The audience

enjoy the joke.

The song is seen from the point of view of a young woman whose "laddie" has been pressed to serve in Nelson's navy; it is a plaintive cry of anguish, punctuated repeatedly by the chorus.

"The Weary Cutters" is sung in the key of A, and upon returning to her narrative, Ray confides in the audience that it "was a fraction high" for her voice, joking that the guitar capo was "on my throat". She announces that her next song is a bothy song, adding that it is out of John Ord's *Bothy Ballads* "if he said it's a bothy ballad, then I think it must be". Although used humorously, this reference is an authenticating device similar to saying "this song is from the singing of", as well as an acknowledgement of source.

Ray's narrative becomes informative, telling us about the content of bothy ballads, and how they functioned as a "jungle telegraph" in the bothy workers' community. She makes the interesting point that a few of the songs "actually name names" and would now be considered libellous. She says that she has two songs in her "heid, head" at the moment, indicating a typical example of Scottish linguistic bi-culturalism.

She tells us that she likes "singing this one", that it is one of her favourites. She comically describes the song as being about "a wee man" with "a sort of snottery nose", comparing this, "virtually the punchline" in the song, to a cartoon drawn by Gerald Scarfe, whose work is well known. She makes another pithy reference to her present home "that's like 'wee Scotland'... It's the people that couldnae afford their fare home after their holidays, ye see!" She speaks the first line of the song before moving into the performance frame.

The song "Sleepytoon" has been a favourite in the Fisher Family for a

long time, and the performance extract of Cilla and Artie also contains it. Ray sings it unaccompanied, tapping her foot to create a rhythm to sing against. The audience joins in the chorus enthusiastically, and Ray sometimes stops singing in the chorus, letting the audience carry it. She praises the audience's chorus singing by saying "Good" at the end of the song.

Throughout the performance narrative from this extract, Ray employs devices to make her points through humour: parody, irony, anecdotes based on personal experience. Her humour often makes light of a serious subject, but in such a way that we get a balanced perspective; we do not feel that she is making fun of the songs she sings, because her performance of them is so powerful and intense, and her feeling for the songs is evident. More often, her humour is self-directed.

She asks us to think about social issues in "On the Upstairs Fast Goin' Doon", which touches on the sadness in life, but balances this with her racy, witty narrative elsewhere. This contemporary song contrasts with the traditional songs depicting the hardships of life in the nineteenth and earlier twentieth century, but Ray makes us realize that these older songs have a certain contemporaneity and relevance to the present too. In this way, Ray mediates between the historic and contemporary contexts.

Ray's narrative is much more chatty than that of her brother Archie, but this reflects differences in personality and style. Ray reveals more of her own personality in her narrative, a personality which has been called "gallus" by both Cilla and Hamish Henderson. She creates "communitas" through her warm and humorous personality, the use of chorus songs, and the intensity of her singing; she makes the audience want to listen to her songs, which is her performance objective.

This sample of Ray's repertoire in performance reveals her fondness for songs dealing with the domestic and occupational worlds. She is similar to Willie Scott in this respect, although she, unlike Willie, does like to sing songs of the supernatural, such as "Willie's Lady", which she does not undertake to perform as frequently because it is a long and a difficult song to sing. Her songs and narratives both essentially reflect the human condition, in both comic and serious manifestations.

Analysis of Performance: Cilla and Artie

The performance extract in Appendix 3C and on Cassette 2 begins at the start of Cilla and Artie's first set of the evening at the Police Club. In this performance, Artie uses guitar accompaniment, and Gary Coupland plays both accordion and electronic keyboard. Cilla does not play an instrument.

Cilla talks only briefly, encouraging the audience to join in the choruses of the two bothy songs they plan to sing. They frequently begin their performances with a short or no introduction, preferring to establish mood immediately with a fast-moving, "light" song, generally a chorus song, as here with "Sleepytoon". Cilla's voice is featured on the song, although they both sing the chorus.

After the audience applaud, they move into "The Hash o' Benagoak". After singing the first verse and chorus, Artie tells the audience, "Dinnae hold back!", saying the lines of the chorus for them. He adopts a gently teasing tone of voice to encourage audience participation in the singing, saying, "You

may as well enjoy yourselves!" He and Cilla then continue to sing the song, repeating the chorus first with nicely blending harmonies. The song is a collage of comic verses about the characters working on the farm, the Hash of Benagoak: Robbie, Robbie's brother, Robbie's sister, the "kitchie deem" (kitchen dame, i.e. maid), and the foreman. Artie sings the verses expressively and with humour. At the end they sing the chorus twice.

Cilla then thanks the audience for their applause, adding that there will be additional chorus songs in the evening's programme. This particular audience contains a few people (possibly who have already had a lot of alcoholic beverages) who make comments to the performers, especially one individual who persists, thus prompting Cilla to respond. Cilla approaches this problem by jokingly acknowledging that someone is talking: "Have I offended somebody? Is it because I'm wearing black?" The banter continues, and Cilla seeks to maintain control of the situation by telling the person, who has become disruptive, to "Shut up!"; however, she still uses a joking tone of voice. She announces that the next song is a love song, and again addresses the talker: "That's alright, I like a heckler".

Cilla moves into her song introduction, repeating that it is a love song. She gets as far as saying "A young woman falls in love with a man", and someone says clearly, "That makes a change!" She refuses to be distracted by this banter, and continues her synopsis of the song, called "The Pair Rovin' Lass". She ends her short narrative with the humorous comments: "It's not a personal story! Just close!"

In this particular introduction, Cilla has dealt effectively with a difficult problem. Noisy and talkative audience members break the flow of the performer's narrative and spoil the enjoyment of other people in the audience.

In this instance, the banter was not ill-tempered, but it was certainly disruptive.

Cilla remarks of the incident:

...the other night [at the Police Club], that guy started heckling me... I was going to get started on him, and he [Artie] said, "No, don't", 'cause I mean...that can throw the whole night, actually... It could develop into something very funny or it could just get in the way. Because he's [the heckler] seeking attention, ye know, once you've started kind of some repartee with him, he's not going to give up until he wins. Ye know, sometimes it's better just to be sort of submissive, and say, "Alright, you win"... So I kind of did that actually the other night... (SA 1986/155/A)

Cilla enjoys audience response, and sometimes tries to draw it out, but she does not like a sustained interruption of concentration. Her remarks reveal how the handling of such a situation can create a genuine dilemma for the performer.

"The Pair Rovin' Lass" changes the mood to a more reflective one, as it involves the separation of two sweethearts. The chorus is taken up by the audience, helping to bring back the feeling of integration between performers and audience after the previous disturbance. Cilla sings the song solo, with Artie and Gary backing her on guitar and keyboard. It is not one of the songs she considers difficult to sing, therefore it is performed at a point when she can collect herself after being distracted by the "heckler". She ends the song with a "thank you" to the audience.

The audience have now settled down, and Cilla and Artie do the next song introduction together in a manner which is typical: Artie as the "straight man", and Cilla providing short comments and repartee. Artie announces that the next song, "The Fisher Lass", was written especially for them by Matt Armour. Because the title contains Cilla's last name, Artie jokes that Armour "tried in vain to get Trezise into the title". Because Cilla and Artie sing so many songs about fishing, puns on her name are frequent. Traditional singers take a similar delight in singing songs which contain their name; Porter (1985)

comments that Belle Stewart likes to sing songs such as "My Name is Betsy Bell" and "Bogie's Bonny Belle". He adds:

What I am suggesting here is that Belle's view of herself, and of her name as representing her persona, supplies a reason for giving these songs a prominent place in her repertoire; Jeannie Robertson was prone to do the same kind of thing with items like 'O Jeannie My Dear Would Ye Marry Me?', or 'Cruel Fate' (to Burns' words) (Porter 1985:19).

These name puns clearly receive more attention in public performance, and it is obvious that Cilla enjoys them.

Artie retains his light tone by calling upon the audience to "imagine Cilla sitting down at the banks of the River Forth for this one", providing in a humorous way a local context for the song. Cilla simply remarks "Fishin'!", which virtually functions as a synecdoche for the complex of songs she sings about fish and fishing, and continues the punning on her name. Artie invites the audience to sing the chorus, which he speaks line by line. He jokingly adds that the last line "dreamin' by the sea" was thought to be "steaming by the Dee" when performed to an Aberdeen audience. Cilla quips back, "Although it was at the time!" In this light mood created by the repartee, they begin the song.

"The Fisher Lass" is one of several songs about couples, both married and unmarried, which Cilla and Artie sing. It has already been mentioned that use their own actual relationship as a means of reflecting or drawing attention to a relationship between a man and a woman in a song. They sing this song back and forth to each other, as a dialogue, and both sing the chorus, as do the audience. Armour structures his song on traditional "broken token" songs, in which an absent lover returns in disguise to his sweetheart, testing her loyalty to him by trying to persuade her to marry him as a stranger. Here, he offers both emotional and material enticements, which are met with polite

rejection, proof of her loyalty to Davy. She even says she will join him "Doon in the waters blue" if he has drowned. Davy then reveals his identity, and the listener is led to expect the typical ending, in which the girl is surprised but delighted by the revelation, and they live "happily ever after". However, in a wry and contemporary twist of the traditional ending, Armour has made the fisher lass the intellectual match of her lover. She reveals that she has known it was him all along, thus having tested him as well. The song is aesthetically satisfying, and lifts the mood again with its happy tune and ending.

Artie picks up the narrative, giving the audience an indirect compliment by saying, "You're getting to work very hard tonight", referring to the chorus singing. He moves into a more personal mode of communication by saying that the next song appeals to him because of his upbringing as a greengrocer's son. He says that he had an unusual diet, at which point Cilla breaks in and says "Daffodils!" Artie continues unabashed, working up to his main point, which is that potatoes or "tatties" were a steady part of his diet. He tells the audience to "give the chorus a try", and sings it once through.

Before beginning the song, Artie explains that because he and Cilla do "a lot of children's shows", they find "it's gettin' very hard to sing a song without doing actions to it". Cilla says, "Uncle Artie and Auntie Cilla!", and Artie tells the audience to "watch Auntie Cilla" to be reminded of the words. This is a humorous and inobtrusive way of mentioning their other performances as "The Singing Kettle".

"Tatties for Your Breakfast" is a comic tongue-twister, which Cilla and Artie use to lift the mood of a performance. Cilla, as promised, mimes some of the phrases in the song, such as wringing the "muckle sappy English" potatoes, and joins Artie in the chorus. Artie begins one verse out of sequence, stops

and begins the correct one without any awkwardness, and Gary makes the necessary adjustment on the accordion, thus indicating their musical competence in coping with an error. Like all the previous songs, this one is in Scots, but uses more dialect words than the earlier songs. The clever usage of Scots and internal rhymes enhance the humour of the song, and the audience enjoy watching Artie deftly work his way through the catalogue of potato names and methods of cooking them. At the end, they repeat the chorus at a faster speed for effect.

The mood of the performance up to this point has been mostly upbeat, and energetic, apart from the reflective interval of "The Pair Rovin' Lass". Cilla picks up the narrative at this point, immediately signalling a change of atmosphere with a serious tone of voice. She comments on how many songs have been written about unemployment, and "how hellish it is trying to just get on with your life when you've got no job". She introduces the next song by describing how it reflects the problems of someone who has "too much work". She gives us a succinct summary of the farmer's situation in the song: "he's working all the hours God sends, and just seems to be going 'round in circles". We learn that the song was written by the late Stan Rogers, and is called "The Field Behind the Plow". With this very simple and straightforward introduction, Cilla and Artie begin the song. Cilla sings it solo, with Artie and Gary accompanying.

As mentioned elsewhere, this is one of Cilla's favourite songs, and this special relationship is revealed in the way she approaches it. The words have been carefully crafted by Rogers, and Cilla takes great care with her diction so that we hear them clearly. She has told us enough about the song to make it immediately meaningful. The first verse is repeated, which drives home the poignance of the song. The song could not have been performed earlier in the

set, because the audience would not have been ready to listen. It is a powerfully moving contemporary song, which has been carefully placed in the programme for maximum attention. It is also the only song in the five examined that is in English rather than Scots.

The character of the narrative used by Cilla and Artie between their songs is very informal, moving easily between jocular, informational, and serious communicative modes. Their introductions are at times more economical than Archie's, exemplifying understatement. Their humour is often grounded in the way they talk back and forth as husband and wife, and is an earthy, unsubtle humour as compared with Archie's constant use of inversion and the juxtaposition of incongruous items or concepts. Their performance style is in keeping with what Cilla sees as the main function of their performances: that of giving the audience "a good night".

They control the generally light atmosphere of the performance through their choice of songs, and provide enough commentary to clarify the songs for the audience. They have brought about "communitas" through their utilisation of four chorus songs, which involves the audience and also helps recover some momentum lost when the heckler is talking.

In the preceding three performance analyses, I have attempted to show how the Fishers' patterns of performance, their personal qualities, their Scottish identity, and aesthetic systems are revealed in both the sung and spoken portions of the event. Although their performance styles are clearly very different, they all create a sense of communitas for their audiences in their binding of narrative and song. The Fishers' performances illustrate what

Bauman (1977) sees as the emergent quality of performance, as manifested in both event structure (discussed earlier in the chapter) and social structure.

Bauman comments:

There is...a distinctive potential in performance by its very nature which has implications for the creation of social structure in performance. It is part of the essence of performance that it offers to the participants a special enhancement of experience, bringing with it a heightened intensity of communicative interaction which binds the audience to the performer in a way that is specific to performance as a mode of communication. Through his performance, the performer elicits the participative attention and energy of his audience, and to the extent that they value his performance, they will allow themselves to be caught up in it. When this happens, the performer gains a measure of prestige and control over the audience – prestige because of the demonstrated competence he has displayed, control because the determination of the flow of the interaction is in his hands... When the performer gains control in this way, the potential for transformation of the social structure may become available to him as well... (1977:43-44).

It is not the aspect of control that I wish to draw attention to, but the "potential for transformation of the social structure". This is the very essence of *communitas*: emergent social structure. The musician, through his or her performance, transforms the event into an extraordinary event. The people who come to the performance event, and are moved in some way by the performance, leave the event having had an enhanced artistic experience that has been shared with other members of the audience.

The Fishers have this transformative power. It comes from an equally intuitive and studied reflection of aesthetic balance in their individual performances. The synthesis of song and narrative, Scots and English vocabulary and language, humour and seriousness, and explicit and implicit communication creates meaning and "an enhancement of experience" for the audience.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the preceding chapters, I have attempted to present a well-rounded portrait of the Fishers, linking their biography with their approaches to singing and songs. I have also attempted to show, through the inclusion of comments from the Fishers and other singers, why Archie, Ray, and Cilla, and indeed, the entire family, are regarded in many quarters as emblematic of the Scottish folk revival.

Most Fisher Family members like to sing in private contexts, either to themselves or with other family members. The obvious enjoyment and exuberance radiating from an informal family singing session at which I was present provides one obvious answer to the question of why three of the Fishers chose to sing professionally: they simply like to sing.

Singing, for Archie, Ray, and Cilla, whether in a family group or in a folk club, creates a spirit of *communitas* which is shared by singers and audience. The Fishers' choice of repertoire, and their performances of songs, reflect a central Scottish identity, perception, and humour which is unmistakable in all three.

It is hoped that this study has illuminated aspects of the contextualities and aesthetics of singing, through the close examination of singers from one family. My study is far from exhaustive, as there are many points which could not be considered here for lack of space. Part of my purpose has been descriptive, because apart from Miller's work with the Weatherston Family, no extended ethnography of Scottish folk revival singing and singers has been done, and more studies should be done in this area.

The folk revival has seen the dissemination and transmission of traditional songs, stories, and music from an older generation of tradition bearers to a younger generation, mainly urban-based. It is this younger generation which will pass both traditional and contemporary material on to another generation, a process which has been occurring and will continue to occur, via personal contact and via the media. The Fishers are an integral part of this process: singing their songs in different public performance contexts; writing new songs in the traditional idiom; taking folksongs directly into schools with the "Singing Kettle Show", not only in Scotland but elsewhere in the United Kingdom. The Fishers are among the most emulated and admired singers in the Scottish folk revival. Archie, Ray, and Cilla have all had contact with the older tradition bearers, and their singing reflects this contact, albeit in different ways.

Many folklorists avoid revival and professional performers as subjects of ethnographies, but I feel that this is a fruitless point of view. It represents a failure to document musical behaviour occurring in the present, which cannot be documented in the future. Documentation of the folksinging tradition as it is happening now can tell us much about how this tradition incorporates change, and can provide insights for future research.

It is also well to consider that there is a vast difference between professional musicians in the popular and classical music field, and those involved in folkmusic. British folk musicians do not earn high salaries; many perform on a part-time basis like Ray Fisher. Financial incentive and fame are not generally factors in the decision of a folk musician to perform professionally. Professional folk musicians must therefore want to do what they do. There have to be some internal motivations to sing songs or play an instrument night after night, and derive pleasure and meaning from it. Part of

the purpose of this study has been to reveal what some of these internal motivations are in the case of the Fishers.

In their public performances, the Fishers are mediating between the traditional and the contemporary, and contextualizing many of the traditional songs to make them more meaningful to a modern audience. Folkmusic is a form of music enjoyed by people of all ages, which is one of its integrating qualities; it is not a "youth culture" music as are other forms of contemporary popular music such as "punk". It is also a participatory music, in which an audience is often encouraged to sing choruses, or individuals in a audience perform along with professional musicians. The integrating qualities of folkmusic are reasons for its continued appeal and relevance to people today.

In the past two centuries, much has been written about the impending death of traditional song, a theme which I have elaborated on in Chapter 3. Cecil Sharp was, in this century, particularly responsible for the preservationist approach to folksong that has dominated British scholarship. The Fishers and other singers in Scotland, I think, prove that the folksong tradition is alive and well, and is constantly undergoing revitalization and reinterpretation to make it relevant to the times, as well as absorbing new songs which may be considered traditional some years from now. As Peter Hall so aptly observes:

The process of life...contains within it the process of dying, I mean life goes on, because certain organisms die. If you take a biological point of view, that's inevitable, and I'm sure that's the case... There are all sorts of songs that aren't in *Last Leaves* that one could go out into Aberdeenshire [now] and collect... And Gavin Greig didn't collect them, and I don't know why, possibly they weren't there, or they weren't very common, and then suddenly a song comes into bloom... So I think that indicates that songs tend to go in abeyance, and then will come back into fashion for some reason, and certain songs will go totally out of date and die, and that's what should happen. And hanging onto them as museum pieces, well, if you put them into books it's quite interesting, but in terms of song, they're not perhaps viable, and we shouldn't mourn the fact that they're not, because there'll be new songs coming along to replace them. As far as I can

see, that's happening, that's going on, and I don't see any sign that folksong will die. (SA 1986/25/A)

The Fishers are clearly part of the process that Hall describes. They are part of the tradition, transmitting it, reinterpreting it, making it meaningful in new contexts, changing it, and creating it anew. Underlying their part in this process is the fact that singing and songs are important to them. Hall could be speaking of the Fishers when he comments:

I think there are certainly a lot of people who couldn't stop singing even if they tried, it would be so much of a part of your life that you can't put it behind you. (SA 1986/25/A)

APPENDICES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX 1

A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SELECTED FISHER PERFORMANCES

Note: Where possible, I have noted given dates and places of performance and order of items performed. In the case of the St. Andrews material, some of this information was not available. I have also indicated which songs were sung unaccompanied with (U). If more than one Fisher is singing, I have indicated the singer in parentheses (). For contemporary songs, I have given the name of the songwriter in brackets [] where known. Special notes appear as needed.

Order of List

1. Archie Fisher
2. Ray Fisher
3. Ray and Archie
4. Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise
5. The Fisher Family

1. Archie Fisher

St. Andrews Folk Club, March 1963[?], Tape courtesy of Pete Shepheard

My Husband's Got No Courage in Him
The Miller and the Maid
Sally Free and Easy [C. Tawney]
Ban the Bomb
The Wind and the Rain
Collier Laddie
All Around My Hat
Whiskey You're the Devil
Brennan on the Moor
We're Bound for South Australia
Breaking of the Waves Over Me
John Riley
It's All Because of You
Jack and Jill
The British Submarine
Soldiers Joy (tune on banjo)
Come All You Gallant Drivers
The Leaving of Liverpool
When I Was a Gay Spark in My Youth

Performances of Archie Fisher, continued

St. Andrews Folk Club, 1963, Tape courtesy of Pete Shephard

The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face [E. MacColl]
Mrs. McGraw
Kirk o' Birniebouzle
Bear Chase (banjo tune)
Blackwaterside
The Wild Rover
The Unquiet Grave
The Birken Tree
The Silkie [to Joan Baez tune]
Candy Man (guitar solo)
Roving Journeyman
Young Lochinvar
We Shall Overcome
Kerry Recruit
Johnny's Gone to Hilo
Fare Thee Well, Polly My Dear

St. Andrews Day of Folk, 26th October 1986 (Celebration of the Club's
25th Year) (SA 1986/158-159)

Afternoon:

The Sailors' Rest [S. Rogers]
The Laird o' Udney's Wa's
Mally Leigh
The Broom o' the Cowdenknowes
Ettrick [poem: Lady M. Scott; tune: A. Fisher]
Mosstrooper's Lament

Evening:

Borderland [poem: R. Quinn; tune: A. Fisher]
For Real [B. Franke]
The Outside Track [A. Fisher]
Will Ye Gang, Love
The Final Trawl [A. Fisher]
The Cuillins of Skye [G. Bok]/Joy of My Heart [H. Robertson]
Sailors All [M. Silver]

Studio Set for "Travelling Folk", 13th September 1986

Borderland [R. Quinn and A. Fisher]
Broom o' the Cowdenknowes
Over Yonder Banks [G. Miles]/Fairfield Apprentice [A. Fisher, B. Campbell,
and N. Buchan]
Dear Dark Eyes [A. Fisher]
The Presence [S. Macgregor]
1950s Blues [A. Fisher]
Merry England [A. Fisher]
For Real [B. Franke]
When These Shoes Were New [M. Marra]

Performances of Archie Fisher, continued

Edinburgh Folk Club, 28th January 1987 (SA 1987/20-21)

Borderlands [R. Quinn and A. Fisher]
Mosstrooper's Lament
Ettrick [Lady M. Scott and A. Fisher]
The Broom o' the Cowdenknowes
The Final Trawl [A. Fisher]
The Sailors' Rest [S. Rogers]
Mally Leigh
Dear Dark Eyes [A. Fisher]
The Coal Town Road
Denbrae (The Last Clydesdales) [A. Webster]
Lassie o' the Morning [J. Foley]
The Presence [S. Macgregor]
Pretty Peggy
The Cuillins of Skye [G. Bok]/Joy of My Heart [H. Robertson]
For Real [B. Franke]
Will Ye Gang, Love
Make-or-Break Harbour [S. Rogers]
Rolling Home
The Outside Track [A. Fisher]
Red is the Rose
The Parting Glass [J. Goodenough]

Acoustic Music Centre, Edinburgh, 10th August 1987, from personal attendance

The Baron o' Brackley
Over Yonder Banks [G. Miles]/Fairfield Apprentice [A. Fisher, B. Campbell,
and N. Buchan]
Pretty Peggy-O
Lassie o' the Morning [J. Foley]
The Presence [S. MacGregor]
Jock Stewart
1950s Blues [A. Fisher]
Merry England [A. Fisher]
The Band Broke Up When the Van Broke Down [A. Fisher]
The Cuillins of Skye [G. Bok]/Joy of My Heart [H. Robertson]
Borderland [R. Quinn and A. Fisher]
Mosstrooper's Lament
Ettrick [Lady M. Scott and A. Fisher]
Sailor's Rest [S. Rogers]
Song for Bill Hosie [A. Fisher]
Broom o' the Cowdenknowes
For Real [B. Franke]
All That You Ask Me [K. Goss]
The Great North Road [A. Fisher]
Red is the Rose
The Parting Glass [J. Goodenough]

2. Ray Fisher

Arthur Argo recording of Ray Fisher, School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh,
31st August 1960 (SA 1960/245)

Lord Lovel
A Brisk Young Maid
Mountain Dew
Billy Graham [T. Berwick]
Scottish Breakaway [T. Berwick]
Pawn Shop Door/I've a Laddie in America
I Lost My Love and I Carena
Barroom Mountaineers (U)
Oyster Girl
Mi Caballo Blanco
Prickly Bush
Betsy Bell
Billy Grimes
Deportee [W. Guthrie]

Ceilidh for "Stampede", Heriot-Watt University Students' Union, Edinburgh,
18th February 1971 (SA 1971/13/A)

A Blacksmith Coorted Me
Jock Hawk's Adventure in Glasgow Toon
The Moving-On Song [E. MacColl]
Oh, Are Ye Sleeping Maggie

Kinross Traditional Music Festival, September 1973 (SA 1973/109/A)

Hey Ca' Through
The Fairfield Apprentice [A. Fisher, B. Campbell, and N. Buchan]

Performances of Ray Fisher, continued

Cellar Folk Club, London, 27th September 1986, with Willie Scott
(SA 1986/131-132)

Yellow Haired Laddie (Willie)
Loch Lomond Parody (Willie)
Farewell to Whiskey (Ray)
I Am A Miller Tae My Trade (Ray)
The Tinkler's Wedding (Willie)
McAllister (Story) (Willie)
Night Visiting Song (Ray)
An Auld Man Come Coorting Me (Ray, U)
There's Bound to Be a Row (Willie)
When I Was Noo But Sweet Sixteen (Ray)
Calliburn (Willie)
Boys, Oh Boys (Willie)
Oh, Are Ye Sleeping Maggie (Ray)
Over Yonder Banks [G. Miles] (Ray)
Heiland Whiskey (Willie)
The Drouthie Driver [Story] (Willie)
Generations of Change [M. Armour] (Ray)
The Bonnie Wee Lassie That Never Said No (Ray)
The Kielder Hunt (Willie)
Maternity Benefit Story (Willie)

Glasgow Arts Centre, 28th February 1987, from personal attendance

The Pressers [M. Brooksbank]
High Jeannie High (U)
I Am a Miller Tae My Trade
Over Yonder Banks [G. Miles]
The Cruel Mother (U)
Sleepytoon (U)
On the Up Stairs Fast Coming Doon [A. Watts]
They're Tearing Doon the Buildings [A. McNaughtan]
Farewell To Whiskey
Fisher Lassies [E. MacColl] (with Joyce and Cindy, U)
Children Go Where I Send Thee (with Joyce and Cindy, U)

Performances of Ray Fisher, continued

Edinburgh Folk Club, 1st April 1987 (SA 1987/89-90)

The Pressers [M. Brooksbank]
High Jeannie High (U)
I Am A Miller Tae My Trade
On the Up Stairs Fast Going Doon [A. Watts]
The Weary Cutters
Sleepytoon (U)
Moneymusk Lads (U)
Farewell to Whiskey
Lost at Sea
Betsy Bell
The Fairfield Apprentice [A. Fisher, B. Campbell and N. Buchan]
Jock Hawk's Adventure in Glasgow Toon
Over Yonder Banks [G. Miles]
I'm A Woman [R. Fisher] (U)
The Cruel Mother (U)
Bunch of Thyme
When Fortune Turns the Wheel

3. Ray and Archie Fisher

Red Lion Folk Club, Trimdon, Co. Durham, 28th November 1986
(SA 1986/165-166)

The Rovin' Ploughboy (Archie)
The Last Clydesdales (Archie)
Mally Leigh (Archie)
Dear Dark Eyes [A. Fisher] (Archie)
The Sailors' Rest [S. Rogers] (Archie)
Jock Stewart (Archie)
When I Was Noo But Sweet Sixteen (Ray)
Auld Maid in a Garret (Ray)
The Pride of Glencoe (Ray)
Land of Hope and Glory [A. Victor] (Ray)
The Boatie Rows (Archie)
The Last Leviathan [A. Barnes] (Archie)
Moneymusk Lads (Ray, U)
I Am A Miller Tae My Trade (Ray)
Lassie o' the Morning [J. Foley] (Archie)
Sailors All [M. Silver] (Archie)
The Norway Maid (Archie)
Air Falalalo (Archie and Ray)
A Different Kind of Love Song [D. Gaughan] (Ray)
Rolling Home (Archie)
The Cuillins of Skye [G. Bok]/Joy of My Heart [H. Robertson] (Archie and Ray)

4. Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise

Chelmsford Folk Club, 1977, Tape courtesy of Cilla Fisher

The Spinners Wedding
Binnorie
Tae the Begging
The Glasgow Lassie (U)
Maggie MacAdoo
Tattie Jock
A Maid Gaed Tae the Mill/Forfar Sodger/Sunny Side of Life (U)
Lady Mary Ann
Magdalen Green
Kiss Me Quick
Jock Stewart
I Heard the Bluebird Sing (U)

Pinewoods Folk Music Club, Massachusetts, U.S.A., March 1979
Tape courtesy of Cilla Fisher

Tramps and Hawkers
The First Time [A. Fisher]
Betsy Bell
The Wicked Wife
The Gypsy Laddies
Maggie Lauder (U)
Norland Wind [poem: V. Jacob; tune: J. Reid]
Billy Taylor
Leaboy's Lassie
Generations of Change [M. Armour]
The Maid Gaed Tae the Mill (U)

Chelmsford Folk Club, 1981, Tape courtesy of Cilla Fisher

The Gypsy Laddies
Generations of Change [M. Armour]
The Beggarman (U)
The Tinkerman's Daughter [M. McConnell]
Loch Lomond Parody (U)
The King's Shilling [I. Sinclair]
Norland Wind [V. Jacob and J. Reid]
Billy Taylor
Blue Bleezin Blind Drunk
Poem
Fisher Lass [M. Armour]
The Jeannie C [S. Rogers]
The Laundrette Song [J. Kirkpatrick]

Performances of Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise, continued

Durham Folk Festival, 8th August 1985, from personal attendance

Yellow on the Broom [A. McNaughtan]
Caller Herrin [Lady Nairn]
Isle of May [M. Armour]
Oor Glens [B. Hardie and G. Donald]
Norland Wind [V. Jacob and J. Reid]
Hunted on the Hillside [B. Tulloch]
Fisher Lass [M. Armour]
The Train to Glasgow [poem: W. Horsbrugh; tune: C. Fisher]
Loch Lomond Parody (U)
And There Were Roses [T. Sands]
Fisher Lasses [E. MacColl]
Tatties for Your Breakfast (The Humble Tattie) [I. Middleton]
Generations of Change [M. Armour]

Police Folk Club, Edinburgh, 9th October 1986 (SA 1986/145-146)

Sleepytoon
The Pair Roving Lass
Fisher Lass [M. Armour]
Tatties for Your Breakfast [I. Middleton]
The Field Behind the Plow [S. Rogers]
Doon the Clyde [poem: W. Horsbrugh; tune: C. Fisher]
Hunted on the Hillside [B. Tulloch]
The Wark o' the Weavers
The Isle of May [M. Armour]
Hush-a-ba Ma Bairnie
Tunes (Gary Coupland)
Some Hae Meat [I. Walker]
Oor Glens [B. Hardie and G. Donald]
Don't Call Me Early in the Morning [K. Halpin]

Edinburgh Folk Club, 6th January 1987 (SA 1987/18-19)

As I Cam in by Fisherrow
The Fisher Lass [M. Armour]
Tale of '81 [A. Victor]
Tatties for Your Breakfast [I. Middleton]
Whaur Will We Gang [A. Mitchell]
The Silver Darlings [B. MacNeill]
Some Hae Meat [I. Walker]
Scarborough Settler's Lament
Doon the Clyde [W. Horsbrugh and C. Fisher]
Maggie Lauder
Hush-a-ba Ma Bairnie
Tunes (Gary Coupland)
The Field Behind the Plow [S. Rogers]
Hunted on the Hillside [B. Tulloch]
Don't Call Me Early in the Morning [K. Halpin]

5. The Fisher Family

Edinburgh Folk Festival, January 1963, Tape courtesy of Edgar Ashton

Leave Her Johnny, Leave Her (Ray and Archie)
I Once Loved A Lad (Ray and Archie)
Poor Bill (Ray and Archie)
The Merchant's Son (Joyce and Cindy)
The Birken Tree (Joyce and Cindy, U)
Stormalong (Ray, Joyce, and Cindy, U)
Banjo tunes (Archie)
Willie Macintosh (Archie)
All Around My Hat (Archie)
Sally Free and Easy [C. Tawney] (Archie)
Motherless Children Have a Hard Time (Archie)
Children, Go Where I Send Thee (Ray, Joyce, and Cindy, U)

St. Andrews Folk Club, 1963 (as Fisher Folk), Tape courtesy of Pete Shephard

Whiskey in the Jar (Ray and Archie)
Blackleg Miners (Ray and Archie)
Queen Mary Medley (Ray and Archie)
My Johnny is a Shoemaker (Ray and Archie)
A Brisk Young Lass (Joyce and Cindy)
Tae the Beggan (Joyce and Cindy, U)
Johnny Sangster (Joyce and Cindy, U)
Johnny's Gone to Fight (Joyce)
Headmaster (Audrey and Cilla, U)
I've Got A Laddie in America (Audrey and Cilla, U)
Pawn Shop Door (Audrey and Cilla, U)
Street Song (Audrey and Cilla, U)
The Boozer (Audrey and Cilla, U)
The Spinners' Wedding (Ray and Archie)
All Around My Hat (Ray and Archie)
Stormalong (Joyce and Cindy, U)

Performances of the Fisher Family, continued

Sidmouth Folk Festival, August 1985, Tape courtesy of David Potter

Sleepytoon (Archie, Ray, Cilla, and Artie)
Denbrae [A. Webster] (Archie)
Plooman Laddies (Cilla)
High Jeannie High (Ray, U)
The Pride of Coll [I. MacDonald] (Ray)
Mosstrooper's Lament (Archie)
Jock Stewart (Archie)
The Tinkerman's Daughter [M. McConnell] (Cilla and Artie)
Generations of Change [M. Armour] (Cilla and Artie)
I Am A Miller Tae My Trade (Ray)
1950s Blues [A. Fisher] (Archie)
The Band Broke Up When the Van Broke Down [A. Fisher] (Cilla and Artie)
Games People Play [J. South] (Ray)
Yellow on the Broom [A. McNaughtan] (Cilla and Artie)
The Shearing's No For You (Cilla and Artie)

The Dome (Edinburgh Festival Concert), 27th August 1986 (SS 27-8-86)

The Wark o' the Weavers (All)
The Rovin' Ploughboy (Archie)
Sleepytoon (Ray and Cilla)
Borderland [R. Quinn and A. Fisher] (Archie)
The Broom o' the Cowdenknowes (Archie)
High Jeannie High (Ray, U)
When I Was Noo But Sweet Sixteen (Ray)
Hush-A-Ba Ma Bairnie (Cilla and Artie)
The Eyemouth Disaster [J. Watt] (Cilla and Artie)
Johnny Sangster (Ray and Cilla, U)
Sailors All [M. Silver] (Archie)
Lost At Sea [C. Gregson] (Ray and Cilla, U)
Some Hae Meat [I. Walker] (Cilla and Artie)
Tunes (Gary Coupland)
Sailors' Rest [S. Rogers] (Archie)
The Old Boys Are Out Again Tonight [C. Kaldore] (Cilla)
Oor Glens [B. Hardie and G. Donald] (Cilla and Artie)
Joy of My Heart [H. Robertson] (All)
Air Falalalo (All)
Rolling Home (All)

Performances of the Fisher Family, continued

Theatre Royal, Dumfries, 31st May 1987 (SA 1987/94-95)

The Wark o' the Weavers (All)
The Roving Ploughboy (Archie)
Denbrae [A. Webster] (Archie)
On the Up Stairs Fast Going Doon [A. Watts] (Ray)
Johnny Sangster (Ray and Cilla)
Some Hae Meat [I. Walker] (Cilla and Artie)
Tatties for Your Breakfast [I. Middleton] (Cilla and Artie)
Tunes (Allan Barty: fiddle, Archie: guitar)
The Boatie Rows (Archie)
The Band Broke Up When the Van Broke Down [A. Fisher] (Cilla and Artie)
Sleepytoon (Archie, Ray, Cilla, and Artie)
Hunted on the Hillside [B. Tulloch] (Cilla and Artie)
Leaboy's Lassie (Cilla and Artie)
Will Ye Gang, Love (Archie)
Dear Dark Eyes [A. Fisher] (Archie)
I Am A Miller Tae My Trade (Ray and Cilla)
Lost at Sea [C. Gregson] (Ray and Cilla, U)
Tunes (Gary Coupland: accordion)
Skit (Ray and Cilla as "The Decibelles")
Sisters [R. Fisher] (The Decibelles)
Red is the Rose (Archie)
Air Falalalo (All)

Cairndale Hotel, Dumfries, 31st May 1987 (SA 1987/96-97)

Old Simplicity [K. Halpin] (Cilla and Artie)
Yellow on the Broom [A. McNaughtan] (Cilla and Artie)
John Anderson, My Jo (Cilla and Artie)
Hush-a-ba Ma Bairnie (Cilla and Artie)
Men o' Worth [A. Fisher] (Archie and Allan Barty)
Broom o' the Cowdenknowes (Archie and Allan)
Now That I'm Older [A. Fisher] (Archie and Allan)
The Great North Road [A. Fisher] (Archie and Allan)
Rolling Home (Archie and Allan)
The Kye Have Come Hame [J. Handle] (Ray)
High Jeannie High (Ray, U)
I'm a Woman [R. Fisher] (Ray and Cilla as The Decibelles)
The Band Broke Up When the Van Broke Down [A. Fisher] (All)
The Generations of Change [M. Armour] (All)
Skit (Ray and Cilla as The Decibelles)
Sisters [R. Fisher] (The Decibelles)
Two Sisters Out of Key (The Decibelles)
Don't Call Me Early in the Morning [K. Halpin] (All)
Will Ye No Come Back Again (All)

APPENDIX 2

A DISCOGRAPHY OF THE FISHERS

Note: The names of songwriters and sources are given where known in square brackets []. Where it is necessary to indicate the singer, this is done in parentheses ().

Order of Discography:

1. Ray and Archie Fisher
2. Archie Fisher
3. Ray Fisher
4. Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise
5. The Fisher Family

1. **Ray and Archie Fisher**

"Far Over the Forth" (1961), Topic 67

The Night Visiting Song
Far Over the Forth
The Twa Corbies
Kilbogie

"The Hoot'Nanny Show, Vol. 2" (1964), Waverley ZLP 2032

Johnny I Hardly Knew Ye
The Blackleg Miner
Johnny McEldoo

"Edinburgh Folk Festival, Vol. 1" (1964), Decca LK 4546

Highland Laddie (Archie)
Whisky in the Jar (Ray and Archie)
Queen Mary, Queen Mary/It's a Life/O' Hara (Ray and Archie)
My Johnny is a Shoemaker (Ray and Archie)
My Donald (Ray)

"Edinburgh Folk Festival, Vol. 2" (1964), Decca LK 4547

When I Was Noo But Sweet Sixteen (Ray)
I Loved a Lass (Archie)
Kismul's Galley (Ray and Archie)

Discography of Ray and Archie Fisher, continued

"Bonny Lass Come O'er the Burn" (1965), Topic 12T128
[LP of material drawn from three Topic EP's of Ray and Archie Fisher,
Dolina MacLennan and Robin Gray, and Enoch Kent]
The Twa Corbies
Kilbogie
The Night Visiting Song
Far Over the Forth

2. Archie Fisher

"Archie Fisher" (1968, 1982), XTRA Records 1070; Celtic Music CM 007
Open the Door Softly
Reynardine
The Terror Time [E. MacColl]
The Three Gipsies
The Kielder Hunt [from Willie Scott]
The Trooper and the Maid
The Child on the Road [from Ted Furey]
The Beggar Wench [from Davie Stewart]
Bogie's Bonnie Belle [from Davie Stewart]
Matt Highland [from Al O'Donnell]
Farewell She [from Cyril Tawney]
The Snows [from Cathy Bainbridge]

"The Fate o' Charlie" (1969), Trailer LER 3002
Archie Fisher, Barbara Dickson, & John Mackinnon sing songs of the
Jacobite Rebellions
Cam Ye Y'er Frae France (Archie)
The Three Healths (Archie, Barbara, and John)
Wha Wadna Fight for Charlie (Archie)
The White Cockade (Barbara)
My Bonny Hieland Laddie (John)
The Highland Widow's Lament (Barbara)
Prestonpans
The Battle of Prestonpans/Killicrankie (Archie)
O'er the Water to Charlie (Barbara)
Prince Charlie
Highland Harry (Barbara)
The Fate o' Charlie (John)
The Highlander's Lament (Archie)
O'er the Water
The Flowers o' the Forest (Barbara)

Discography of Archie Fisher, continued

"Orfeo" (1970, 1985), Decca SKL 5057; Celtic Music CM 028

Orfeo

To Joan Eardley [Morgan and A. Fisher]

Silver Tassie [R. Burns]

The Mountain Rain [A. Fisher]

Just in Passing (Archie Fisher)

From a City Balcony [Morgan and Fisher]

The Norway Maid

Take the Road

Sadness Salesman [A. Fisher]

The Last Time I Saw Esau Shaw [A. Fisher and R. Noakes]

Whatever Happened to Me [A. Fisher]

"The Folk Experiences of Archie Fisher & Barbara Dickson: Thro' the Recent Years" (1970, 1987), Decca SKL 5041; Celtic Music CM 031

The January Man [D. Goulder]

You Like the Sun

Morning

Tears of Rage

Friends and Lovers

Somebody Counts on Me

The Frolicsome Alcoholic Mermaid

If I'd Stayed Around

Lullaby for Father

I Am the Great Sun

First of the Few

Fiddler's Green

Together Forever

Thro' the Recent Years [A. Fisher]

"Will Ye Gang, Love" (1976), Topic 12TS277

O Charlie, O Charlie

Lindsay [A. Fisher]

Broom o' the Cowdenknowes

Mally Lee [Leigh]

Will Ye Gang, Love

The Flower of France and England, O

The Laird o' Windy Wa's

Men o' Worth [A. Fisher]

Looly, Looly

Dreg Song

Adam Cameron

Blackbirds and Thrushes [Text from M. Fleming; Tune: A. Fisher]

The Gallant Ninety Two

The Rovin' Ploughboy [from John Macdonald]

Discography of Archie Fisher, continued

"The Man With A Rhyme" (1976), Folk-Legacy FSS-61

Twa Bonnie Maidens
Welcome Royal Charlie
Dark Eyed Molly [A. Fisher; song also known as Dear Dark Eyes]
Queen Among the Heather [from Belle Stewart]
Jock Stewart [from Jeannie Robertson]
The Witch of the West-Mer-Lands [A. Fisher]
The Echo Mocks the Corncrake
Western Island [A. Fisher]
Upstairs and Downstairs
Mount and Go
The Wounded Whale
The Cruel Brother
Coshieville [S. MacGregor]
South Wind

"Off the Map" (1986), Archie Fisher and Garnet Rogers, Snow Goose SGS-1112

Borderland [Poem: R. Quinn; Tune: A. Fisher]
The Mosstrooper's Lament
The Long and Lonely Winter [D. Goulder]
The Winter It Is Past
The Laird of Udney
Lassie o' the Morning [J. Foley]
Joy of My Heart [H. Robertson]
Ettrick (Poem: Lady M. Scott; Tune: A. Fisher)
Mallie Leigh
The Final Trawl [A. Fisher]
The Boatie Rows
The Last Leviathan [A. Barnes]
Rolling Home

3. Ray Fisher

"The Bonny Birdy" (1972), Trailer LER 2038

Johnny Sangster
Mill o' Tifty's Annie
Bonny at Morn
Forfar Sodger
Pride of Glencoe
Silkie of Sule Skerry
Shipyard Apprentice [A. Fisher, B. Campbell, and N. Buchan]
Bonny Birdy

"Festival de Musique Traditionelle a Vesdun" (1972), Prodisc PS 3738

The Baron of Brackley

Discography of Ray Fisher, continued

"Willie's Lady" (1982), Folk-Legacy FSS-91

The Pressers [M. Brooksbank]
The Bonnie Wee Lassie That Never Said No [from Jeannie Robertson]
The Red-Haired Man's Wife [from Kevin Mitchell]
The Kye Have Come Hame
Willie's Lady
Are Ye Sleepin', Maggie
Miller Tae My Trade [from Lucy Stewart]
The Weary Cutters [M. Brooksbank]
Betsy Bell [from Jeannie Robertson]
Over Yonder Banks [G. Miles]
When Fortune Turns the Wheel

4. Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise

"Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise" (1976), Autogram ALLP-206

Heiland Whisky [from Willie Scott]
The Guagers
Hirslin Kate
Baron o' Brackley
The Guise o' Tough
Bunch o' Thyme
The Wark o' the Weavers
Burnie [sic] Bouzle
Tae the Beggin'
Jamie Raeburn
Maid Gaed Tae the Mill
The Good Lookin' Widow [L. Cheyne]
The Keech in the Creel

"Balcanquhal" (1976), Trailer LER 2100

Hash o' Benagoak [from Charlie Murray]
Leaboy's Lassie [Tune: A. Fisher]
Wheel of Fortune [from Eck Harley]
Miller o' Dron [from Eck Harley]
Nancy Bell [from George Wishart]
Jock Stewart
Love and Freedom [Mary Brooksbank]
Magdalene Green [from Eck Harley]
Spinner's Wedding [Mary Brooksbank]
Rares [Reres] Hill [from Eck Harley]
Aikey Brae

Discography of Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise, continued

"For Foul Day & Fair" (1978, 1979), Folk-Legacy FSS-69; Kettle KAC-1

Sodger Laddie
Rhynie [from A. Fisher]
Feein Time [from Eck Harley]
The Bothy Lads [from Charlie Murray]
The Jolly Beggar [from Pete Shepheard recording of Willy Stewart]
Billy Taylor [from Jane and Cameron Turriff, via Vic and Christine Smith]
Laird o' the Dainty Doonby [after Lizzie Higgins]
The First Time [A. Fisher]
The Shepherd Lad [from Sarah Makem]
Twa Recruitin' Sergeants
False Lover Won Back [from Jimmy Hutchison]
The Miller [Tune: Cilla Fisher]
The Maid Gaed Tae the Mill [from Peter Hall]
The Final Trawl [A. Fisher]

"Cilla & Artie" (1979), Topic 12TS405

Norland Wind [poem: V. Jacob; tune: J. Reid]
The Beggar Man [from recording of Maggie and Sarah Chambers]
What Can A Young Lassie [from Jane Turriff via Ray]
Fisher Lassies [E. MacColl]
Generations of Change [M. Armour]
Fair Maid of London Town [from Stanley Robertson]
The Wicked Wife [from Eck Harley]
The Gypsy Laddies [from Jessie McDonald]
Blue Bleezin' Blind Drunk [from Sheila Stewart Macgregor]
John Grumlie
The Jeannie C [S. Rogers]

"Cilla Fisher: Songs of the Fishing" (1983), Kettle KOP-11

Fisherman's Wife/The East Neuk of Fife
Whaur Will We Gang [A. Mitchell]
Tatties and Herrin'/Da Brig
Eyemouth Disaster [J. Watt]
Shetland Tunes
Hush-A-Ba Ma Bairnie
The Prosperity [A. Mitchell]/The Sailor's Hornpipe
The Boatie Rows
The Isle of May [M. Armour]
Dreg Song/The Keel Row
Fisher Row
Dance Tae Yer Daddie/The Fisherman's Wife/Finnan Haddies
Caller Herrin' [Lady Nairn]
Final Trawl [A. Fisher]

Discography of Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise, continued

"The Singing Kettle" (1982), Kettle KOP-10

Ye Cannae Shove Yer Granny Aff a Bus
The Herrin's Heid
Lulu Had a Baby
The Chip Shop
I've a Laddie in America
Wee Willie Winkie
One Fine Day
Nobody Loves Me
Where Have Ye Been a' the Day?
Worms
Three Kings Cam' a Riding
The Mulberry Bush
Apples and Bananas
Ma Banty Hen
Hen's March Tae the Middens
I Left My Luggage
The Train to Glasgow [poem: W. Horsbrugh; tune: C. Fisher]
Tattie Soup
Early of Errol
Says She Tae Me
Ma Hands on Masel'
Kafoozalum
Katie Bairdie
The Ale is Dear
I Went Tae the Pictures
Aiken Drum

"The Singing Kettle 2" (1984), Kettle KOP-15

Green Grass Grew/Bonnie Dundee
The Big Ship
The Eely Ally O
Fuzzy Wuzzy
Down the Clyde [W. Horsbrugh]/Rothesay O
Sister, Sister/Queenie Caroline/Roses Are Red
The World Must Be Coming to an End/Soldier's Joy
A Dark and Stormy Night
Eye, Nose, Head and Shoulders
Doodle All the Day
Jelly Belly
Send for the Doctor
Coulter's Candy
Buy Me a Banana/The Barren Rocks of Aden
The Thunder Roared
If I Had a Hen
If-Iky I-Iky
Three Crows
Tell Me a Story
Leap Frog
That's All I Know

Discography of Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise, continued

"Reaching Out" (1986), Kettle KOP-17

The Tinkerman's Daughter [M. McConnell]
The Old Simplicity [K. Halpin]
Yellow on the Broom [A. McNaughtan]
A Miner's Lullaby [M. McGinn]
Some Hae Meat [I. Walker]
John Anderson [R. Burns]
The Fisher Lass [M. Armour]
Tale of '81 [A. Victor]
Hunted on the Hillside [B. Tulloch]
Logie o' Buchan [from Ray]

"Scotch Broth" (1986), Kettle KOP-18

[All songs written by Cilla Fisher]

Welcome to Glen Tattie
On the Move
Major Artichoke
Angus McTattie
Waulking the Tweed
Sante
The Highland Blend
On the Move
Lick, Stick, Stamp
Prawn Crackers, Lip Smackers
Rot Your Teeth Away
The Howling Gaels
Rovers & Cowboys
The Ceilidh Dance
Granny Smith's Recipe
Farewell to the Glen

"The Singing Kettle 3" (1987), Kettle KOP-19

No Pyjamas On [E. McVicar]/Brochan Lom
Algie
The Bear in the Woods
You Remind Me of a Man
The Wild Man From Kettle-O
Ma Granny Went to Sea [E. McVicar]
1 2 3 O'Leary
Musical Alphabet
On a Dark, Dark Night
Dundee Ghost [M. McGinn]
The Lion [J. Copeland]/Cock o' the North
Terry Erry Ram Tam
Up and Doon the Hoose
Bunny Fou Fou
Sausage Rhymes
Five Fat Sausages [C. Fisher]
Music Man and Woman
I'm Goin' On a Train
Today is Hogmanay
Skyscaper Wean (Jelly Piece Song) [A. McNaughtan]

5. The Fisher Family

"The Fisher Family" (1966), Topic 12T137
Come All Ye Fisher Lassies [E. MacColl]
Schooldays Over [E. MacColl]
The Rigs o' Rye
Donal Ogue
For Our Lang Biding Here
Joy of My Heart [H. Robertson]
Hey Ca' Through
What's Poor Mary Weeping For/Bonnie Lassie O
I Am A Miller Tae My Trade
I Am A Free-born Man [E. MacColl]
The Birken Tree
Aince Upon a Time

APPENDIX 3A

A PERFORMANCE EXTRACT OF ARCHIE FISHER

Archie Fisher at the Edinburgh Folk Club, 28th January 1987
(transcribed from SA 1987/20/A)

My new chosen home, being born a Glaswegian and proud of it, is the Borderland. That bit over Soutra that you can't get to when the snow falls, and the English can't get up to when Carter Bar is blocked. And there was a poet who used to ramble 'round the Borders at the turn of the century called Roger Quinn. And he too lived and worked in Glasgow, and he used to make his way 'round the Borders by writing poetry and singing songs and uh, one of the hardest things about collecting his work was he used to use the poetry as a kind of currency for bed and breakfast, or for drink. So most of his poems have been collected in old Border inns. And this is his eulogy for the Borders.

BORDERLAND [R. Quinn/A. Fisher]

From the moorlands and the meadows
To this city of the shadows
Where I wander old and lonely
Comes a call I understand.
In clear soft notes enthralling
It is calling ever calling
'Tis the spirit of the open
From the dear old Borderland.
For this grim huge city daunts me,
Its wage of sorrow haunts me
A nameless figure tossed amidst
The human surf that beats.
Forever and forever in a frenzy of endeavour
All along the cruel barriers
Of its never ending streets.

But I'll leave it in the morning,
Slip away without a warning
Save a handclasp from the friend
That knows the the call that leads me on.
In the city's clang and clatter,
One old man the less won't matter
And no one here will say me nay
Or care that I am gone.
By Caddonfoot I'll linger
It has charms to stay the singer

And from the bridge a painter's dream
Of beauty there I'll see.
But I'll leave it all behind me
When the purple evening shadows find me
Past the vines of Clovenford
To haunted Torwoodlee.

Fair Dryburgh and Melrose,
Touched by the wizard's spell arose
And Bernerside and Leaderfoot
And Elwyn's fairy dene
With the Tweed serenely gliding,
Clearly seen then shyly hiding
Where Eildons raise their triple crest
To sentinel the scene.
But alas the dream is over,
I awake now to discover
The city's rush, the bustling crowd,
And the din on every hand
But on my ear a-softly falling
I can hear the curlews calling
And I know that soon I'll see them
In the dear old Borderland.

[Applause]

The nicest thing about living in that part of Scotland is that you can be a cowboy for half of the year, because uh, you're nobody if you don't ride a horse down there. And in the early spring, right through to early summer, there's the sequence of riding the marches, which is a kind of territorial pursuit in Borders life, Borders life. They usually get very drunk, get up at five o'clock in the morning, or if they don't go to bed, just swing to saddle, ride 'round uh maybe a thirty, twenty-five to thirty mile course, fall off at the end into a pub. It's a very simple day.

But the Hawick Common Riding is the most chauvinistic, no women are allowed to ride on it, for some reason or other. And uh, the most, the strongest male preserve is the mosstrooper's ride to Moss Paul from Hawick, and I can see the point in it in a way, because they drink even more heavily. And you have to develop a sidesaddle technique after you've had six pints of beer, because you're not allowed to stop and dismount! So if you see a guy throw his leg over the front of his saddle, you go upwind of him. Now the Mosstroopers were probably the nearest thing we had to the Scottish Texas Rangers, they uh protected the Borders for many years, and in doing so went as far south as Derby and York, brought back a few cows. And after the Act of Union between Scotland and England, which is a good euphemism for what happened to Scotland, they uh disbanded the regiment, but it was really quite a placebo, because I joined them two years ago. So when the fiery cross goes out, and the beacon's light on, I'm supposed to swing to saddle and ride on York! On the horse I had, it would probably get there in half a day. "Mosstrooper's Lament".

THE MOSSTROOPER'S LAMENT

O all the gallant borders,
Of water, moss and fell,
O all ye well kent nooks and crooks
Forever oh farewell.

Chorus:
For we'll gang nae mair a-roving,
A-roving through the night,
We'll gang nae mair a-roving
Let the moon shine e'er sae bright.

For when the harvest moon shone clear
What blythe times did we see,
On wanton nags with splent and spauld
We rade sae merrily.

Chorus

Oh the king is o'er the Border gane
In London for tae dwell,
And friends we maun wi' England be,
Since he bides there himsel'.

Chorus

Must I be tethered tae the land
On Yarrow's banks abide
That yince as far as Trent and Humber
Scoured the southron countryside.

Chorus

And must I follow now
A droning plough horse tail
How shall I break my bonnie brown
To harness, like a snail.

Chorus

Oh when all the gallant Borders
Hae lost their riders gay
The Scots will miss their hardy lads
And cry 'alas the day'.

Chorus (twice)

[Applause]

The outcome of all this warfare ended up at the battle of uh Flodden, I think we lost that away game. And uh, out of that came also one of the greatest lament songs of all time. [Aside to sound man: Guitar up, about there!] [Club organizer makes remark about the voice microphone which cannot be understood.]

Well the greatest lament probably of all time, "The Floo'ers o' the Forest" song. Uh, that's a very broad lament, there's a few more Borders songs that are more specific. This is one of them.

The Vale of Ettrick is probably the most beautiful part of the Borders. The only thing wrong with it is David Steel lives there. And his wife Judy told me that uh she would like this poem which has been set to music recited over his grave, as soon as possible! Is that better? [Speaks to organizer: Frank? Come and tune it for me!]

ETTRICK [Lady M. Scott/A. Fisher]

When we first rade doon Ettrick
Our bridles were ringing, our hearts were dancing,
The waters were singing, the sun was glancing,
And blythely our voices rang out together
As we brushed the dew frae the blooming heather
When we first rade doon Ettrick.

When we next rade doon Ettrick
The day was dying, and the wild birds calling,
The wind was sighing, and the leaves were falling,
And tired and weary but closer thegither
We urged our steeds through the faded heather
When we next rade doon Ettrick.

When I last rade doon Ettrick,
The wind was shifting, the storm was waking,
The snows were drifting, my heart was breaking,
But never again would we ride thegither,
In sun or storm on the mountain heather,
When I last rade doon Ettrick.

[Applause]

Well, I'll kind of finish this Borders suite with probably one of the best known Border ballads. If you go down the A68 [road] you'll come to a town called Earlston, renowned for Thomas the Rhymer, the worst transport cafe in that part of the world. And it's not got much, maybe three pubs and a radar trap is the best way to describe it. But high on the hill, to the Northeast, near a vitrified fort, is the farm of Cowdenknowes.

This motif appears in English and Irish ballads as well, that of the young man who falls in love with the boss's daughter. In Irish ballads like "Matt Hyland", they marry and live happily ever after, eh, although that's not the

Cruickshanks' definition of happiness. [Note: this comment is directed at a song sung by Maggie and Liz Cruickshank prior to Archie's performance.] In the English versions, her seven brothers usually leap out and stab him to death. In Scotland, he just gets the sack, it's a kind of redundancy ballad [the rest of the sentence obscured by noise] The broom's mentioned uh in lots of Scottish songs. I found out recently that broom was never brought into the house in Scotland because if the dried flowers were thrown on the fire, they produced a smoke that was hallucigenic. So that's if any of you are interested! So uh this was traceable in folklore by people who sang "Wow, the broom, the bonnie bonnie broom"! Instead of "Oh, the broom, the bonnie broom". I'll be waiting for you.

THE BROOM O' THE COWDENKNOWES

How blythe was I each morn tae see,
My lass come owre the hill.
She skipped the burn and ran tae me,
I met her wi'oot will.

Chorus:
Oh, the broom, the bonnie bonnie broom,
The broom o' the Cowdenknowes.
Fain would I be in my ain country
Herdin' her faither's yowes.

For we neither wanted yowes nor lambs
While the flock near us lay,
She herded in the sheep aye nicht,
And she cheered me a' the day.

Chorus

Hard fate that I should banished be,
Gang wearily and mourn,
Because I lo'ed the fairest lass,
That e'er yet was born.

Chorus

Adieu ye Cowdenknowes, adieu.
Fareweel all pleasures there.
To wander by her side again,
Is all I crave or care.

Oh the broom, the bonnie bonnie broom,
The broom o' the Cowdenknowes.
Fain would I be in my ain country,
Herdin' her faither's yowes.

[Applause]

Lovely singing! This uh song's inspired by a sight uh off Scrabster, near Thurso. A good few folk festivals ago. When two old rusty trawlers were washed up on the shoals just outside the harbour, a week before they were due to be scrapped. It's a terrible coincidence, really. And somebody painted "Bugger Lloyds" along the side of one of them. The names have been changed to protect the guilty! It's got a couple of tag lines in it.

THE FINAL TRAWL [A. Fisher]

Now it's three long years since we made her pay,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.
And the owners say that she's had her day,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.

So heave away for the final trawl,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.
It's an easy pull for the catch is small,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.

Then stow your gear, lads, and batten down
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.
And I'll take the wheel, lads, and I'll turn
her 'round,
And sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.

And we'll join the Venture and the Morning Star,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.
Riding high and empty towards the bar,
And sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.

For I'd rather beach her on Skerry Rock,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.
Than to see her torched in the breakers dock,
And sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.

And when I die, you can stow me down,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.
In her rusty hold, where the breakers pound,
And sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.

Then I'd make the haven of Fiddlers Green,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.
Where the rum is good, and the bunks are clean,
And sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.

For I've fished a lifetime, boy and man,
Sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.
And the final trawl scarcely makes a cran,
And sing "Haul away", my laddie-o.

[Applause]

APPENDIX 3B

A PERFORMANCE EXTRACT OF RAY FISHER

Ray Fisher at the Edinburgh Folk Club, 1st April 1987
(transcribed from SA 1987/89/A, B)

Anyway, this one, I think I first heard Jane Turriff do this one, and a few other eh younger singers at the same time. I think they got it from her at the same time as I did. Em, it's got a chorus, one of em a group of songs that there are about young women marrying old men. Now you're bound to have come across one or two of these, and I sing this one with total conviction! If you've seen Colin Ross. I mean, have you seen Colin Ross? Oh, I've just, I've - well, anyway, he is slightly older than me, em, and he just married - I didn't marry him for the money [laughs], gosh, I'm trying to work out why I did, but nevertheless.

Em, it's got a chorus, it's got a chorus: "Sing high Jeannie high" - when I do that [gestures up with hand], that's a visual aid! "High, Jeannie, high, and sing low, Jeannie, low/ Ye can never mak a singin' bird oot of a hoodie crow". Now see this is thought for the week, thought for the week. You can - Stop laughing! It's a serious song. You can never make a singing bird out of a hoodie crow. Silk purse oot o' a sow's ear, something like that. The implication is, of course, that the old man is pretty good for not a lot! Right? Em, his money is about the only attraction, you see? That's not really true, it's not really true. I withdraw the statement.

Em, so you can join in the chorus. I usually find, though, that the men join in much better than the women do, 'cause the pitch of their voice is about the same as mine. 'Cause I spent my entire singing school, school singing career along wi' the boys! On the boys' side of the classroom. Because I was sitting in among these sopranos one day, in the class, and the teacher said to me, well, he said, "There is somebody groaning!" Ye see? And if you'da seen him wi' his bum sticking up there listening to everybody. And I was promptly put from the girls' side of the class to the boys' side. Oh I had a great time there, it was great! That's why I'm so advanced in my musical career, you see? Very advanced, I learnt a few - anyway, here we go. [Starts hitting hand on knee to create rhythmic beat] I'll sing this song. Absolutely true, I talk too much.

HIGH, JEANNIE, HIGH

My faither was a gentleman,
And a gentleman was he.
But he has wed me tae an auld man,
O' three scores years and three.

Chorus:
And sing high, Jeannie, high
And sing low, Jeannie, low.
Ye can never mak a singin bird
Oot o' a hoodie crow.

[Spoken: Not out, I'll have no out of a hoodie crow! Oot!]

For before I'd hae an auld man,
Wi' thirty ploods and land,
I'd rather hae a young man
Wi' only hat in hand.

Chorus

For when we gang tae bed at een
He turns tae the wa',
And ne'er a hand he lays on me
Till morning licht might daw.

Chorus

My neighbours hae advised me
Tae droon him in a well.
Some ithers hae advised me
For to grind him in a mill!

Chorus

But I hae taen my ain advice,
I've born him tae a plain,
And I've tied him tae a whinnelstrae
And he'll ne'er come back again!

Chorus

For my faither was a gentleman,
A gentleman was he,
And he has wed me tae an auld man
O' three score years and three.

Chorus

Great chorus! Great!

[Applause]

Right. Excellent. It's gonna make life easier. Uh, I'll do this one. I've been singing this song for a long time, a very long time. I've been beating the daylight out of this guitar for years. That's why it's constantly out of tune. Just hold a sec. [Place guitar across her lap, front facing downwards.] This is a song, again, from the singing of.. It makes, it lifts the whole class of your repertoire, you see, if you can say things like, "From the singing of", you see?! Makes it all.. This is actually Lucy Stewart, one of the the great ladies of traditional song in Scotland. Of course the name Stewart is synonymous with some of the best music, but like all families, there are the occasional aberrations like Andy, that spoils the whole thing for everybody! But, oh no! I did not say Andy M., I said Andy. Which is a slightly different, slightly different kettle of fish.

This is a song called "Miller Tae My Trade". And needless to say, it's about a miller. Em, and if you know about traditional music, the millers are a somewhat um suspect lot. Uh, they go around sort of grinding ladies' corn and things like this. Uninvited, and various other things. I think I'll maybe just sing the song! We're getting closer to the Sabbath by the minute.

[Taps guitar] Here we go. Right. I'm going to make the same sound as, simulate the sound of a water mill wheel going round, 'cause when Lucy sang the song, she beat out the rhythm on the table, of a water mill wheel going round. And this isn't exactly the way Lucy did it, but it's, when ye, when ye look at her she was doing something slightly different, but the sound at the end of the day is pretty much the same. [taps guitar] So it went like this. [Begins rhythmic tapping] It's early Scottish reggae, I think this is!

I AM A MILLER TAE MY TRADE

I am a miller tae my trade
And that sae weel ye ken O.
I am a miller tae my trade
And that sae weel ye ken O.
Oh, I am a miller tae my trade,
And mony a sack o' meal I've made,
Aye, and mony a lassie I hae laid
At the back o' the sacks o' meal O.

As merrily as the wheel gaes roond,
The rate sae weel ye ken O.
As merrily as the wheel gaes roond,
The rate sae weel ye ken O.
Oh, as merrily as the wheel gaes roond,
Wi' grindin' peas and corn O,
A better job was never foond
Since ever I been born O.

For it happened ae nicht in June,
When I was in mysel' O.
It happened ae nicht in June,
When I was in mysel' O.
Oh, the lassie cam trippin' doon the lane,
Said, "I hear your mill a-clatterin' in,
Aye, and I thocht that I would just look in,
For tae see if you're in yoursel' O."

"Well, you're welcome here my bonnie lass,
You're welcome here for aye O.
You're welcome here my bonnie lass,
Welcome here for aye O.
Oh, you're welcome here my bonnie lass,
And whit's the news that I maun hear?
Will ye consent tae bide wi' me, aye,
And bide wi' me for aye O?"

Well, the lauchin' lassie gied a smile,
Said she couldnae tell O.
The lauchin' lassie gied a smile,
Said she couldnae tell O.
Oh, the lauchin' lassie gied a smile,
She said, "Young man, ye'll wait awhile.
When I hear your mill a-clatterin' in,
Then ye'll hae me tae yersel' O."

I am a miller tae my trade,
And that sae weel ye ken O.
I am a miller tae my trade,
And that sae weel ye ken O.
Oh, I am a miller tae my trade,
And mony a sack o' meal I've made,
Aye, and mony a lassie I hae laid
At the back o' the sacks o' meal O.

Very good!

[Applause]

I think it actually put the guitar in tune that time, that was very good. Great. I just put these nylon strings on day before yesterday. See I think this is mainly why I sing so loud, you see. So's that you don't hear the guitar. Nevertheless, this is a song that came through the post about a fortnight ago, eh, from a lad in Southampton called Bill Eddy. And it was written by a lad called Alec Watts, a Scot who was somewhat reluctantly domiciled, I think, in Southampton. So it's a new wee kind of, a new song, I think, relatively, I don't know if anyone else is singing it. But it's got a kind of chorus that you can join in. It's about a time that I am fast approaching, when I'm going to collect my pension, and eh retire. This, the man in the song gets sent to a high rise, which they're not doing these days so much now, if you've got enough money, they'll build ye a nice little house for yourself. Em, this one tells of the

drawbacks of being put into a high rise, when you become sort of on your own. The nice thing about this one is that he's complaining and he's saying what's wrong with it, but he decides what he's going to do about it. And that's what's nice about songs, it's okay, bring attention to what's the problems are, and offer a solution if you've got one. Em, this one has, it's not exactly a solution but it's a reaction. Wee gentle song.

ON THE UPSTAIRS FAST GOING DOON [A. Watts]

They've sent me tae high rise,
It's oot the way,
Whaur I can't hear the traffic,
Or watch children play.
And they say it's much better
For old folk by far,
Tae be left here in peace, quiet and comfort.

For the flat that they gied me,
It's neat and it's small.
But wi' a' its mod-cons,
Hardly needs work at a',
But what can I do
Wi' mysel' through the day,
As I sit here in peace, quiet and comfort.

Chorus:

So I'll hae a wee dram,
And let the band play on,
I don't care what they think,
I'm no sittin' alone,
Oot o' sight, oot o' mind,
In a cold lonely room,
On the upstairs fast goin' doon,
On the upstairs fast goin' doon.

Now the neighbours, they're quieter
Than mice, as a rule.
Their nods non-committal,
And their guid mornins cool.
But I wonder if they hurt
The way that I do,
Since they cam here tae peace, quiet and comfort.

Now they're social, they're respectful,
And I'm sure they are kind.
But how can they know
What goes on in my mind?
That I talk tae mysel'
Till I think I goin' daft,
While I sit here in peace, quiet and comfort.

Chorus

I hae children, of course,
But they've lives of their own.
Their own dreams tae dream,
And their own roads tae roam,
And the visits they make
Are too short and too few,
And I greet every time that they go.

But I'll smoke and I'll swear,
Aye, I'll drink heavy beer.
And if I'm a nuisance,
Then what do I care?
They can mock, disapprove,
But I'll no disappear,
For I'm alive, and I'll mak sure ye know it!

Chorus

Good song, yeh?

[Applause]

[Now Bill Eddy said, "Write me a note, and tell me what they think of it - 'cause that was Edinburgh". He wants to know how Glasgow responds as well. Very nice. I think maybe, since I defected a few years ago, in fact it's quite a few years ago, to the Northeast of England, I was sent there by the Glasgow Missionary to the Afflicted,]* down there, to spread the gospel of the Scottish song, and I landed in among some nut cases. Married a musician who's a member of a cowboy group down there. Split Level Ranchers, they're called! I've been using that one for a few years, yes, I know. I could see the nods at the back. You're the biggest bunch of cowboys. Well maybe not the biggest! The sound is goin' down! Only joking, only joking. Yes. [Aside to someone, jokingly: Please, don't do that!] There it is. I don't know if I can do this one very well. [Plays runs on guitar, hums] Oh that's the two it goes, it goes there and there. Shoulda remembered that fae the last time, 'stead of going [strums, hums].

Oh, the weary cutters, they've taen my laddie from me.

[Spoken: That's your bit]

Oh, the weary cutters, they've taen my laddie from me.

You go to the seventh at that point, right? And then I sing, I sing something in between. La leedle oh [makes nonsense noises], in Geordie, of course. La la la la. This is another pressgang song, but you've got the gist of it. Just whenever ye hear "The weary cutters", comin' in, just you come and join them. These ships used tae come in, ye see, uséd to come up the Tyne, and used to pour drink into all these poor fellas, lying in the pubs and that, and then when they woke up, they were on the high seas. Now they had to be Olympic swimmers tae get home, ye see? Now Scotland had a better tack altogether. You didna waste money on booze, just hit them on the heid, took them away. Right. They were, now, if anybody says to you, sing me the laundry song, they're talking about, "He was pressed and sent away"! This,

actually it was a.. right, we'll sing "The Weary Cutters".

THE WEARY CUTTERS

Oh, the weary cutters, they've taen my laddie from me.
Oh, the weary cutters, they've taen my laddie from me.

They've pressed him far away foreign
Wi' Nelson ayont the salt sea.
They've pressed him far away foreign,
And taen my laddie from me.

Chorus

They always come in the neet,
They never come in the day.
They always come in the neet,
To steal wir laddies away.

Chorus

When I looked to the nor'ard,
I looked wi' a watery eye,
But when I looked to the south'ard,
I seen my laddie go by.

Chorus

I'll gie the cutters a guinea,
I can't gie the cutters no more.
I'll gie the cutters a guinea,
Tae steal my laddie ashore.

Chorus

They've pressed him far away foreign
Wi' Nelson ayont the salt sea.
They've pressed him far away foreign,
And taen my laddie from me.

That's it!

[Applause]

That, that was a fraction high. The capo was on my throat that time. Right. We'll see if you'll join in a chorus. This is a, this is a bothy song. Well, it's a song out of the the - Ord's *Bothy Ballads*, and I think Mr. Ord, if he said it's a bothy ballad, then I think it must be. So anyway.

Usually in the bothy ballads, they tell you that you've not to go and

work for Willie MacFadyen, 'cause he gets you up at two o'clock in the morning, and he makes you go and dig turnips, and and he's got a rotten-looking cook, and the beds all smell, and all the rest of it, ye see. And ye, and they sing all these songs, and spread the gospel according to the bothy ballad, ye see? Which means that you don't go and work at these farms or for these farmers, and it's a sort of, it's like a sort of jungle telegraph, ye see? So you go down to the fair, and you sing your head off, and everybody knows not to go and work for Willie MacFadyen. Now I hope there's nobody around here called Willie MacFadyen, who has a bothy or a farm or anything like it! No.

There are a couple of songs who actually name names, and nowadays, ye see, it would be amazing, it would be defamation of character, actually. I might do, I'll do this one first, I've got two in my heid, head, at the moment, that you can join in. We'll try. Yes, this is one of my favourites, I like singing this one. Em, I'll do this one first. It's the same principle, really, but it's talking about a wee man, and it was a shame, 'cause he couldnae really help it, 'cause he had a, a sort of snottery nose, ye see? Ye see. I mean if you had one, you wouldn't laugh like that. I'm sure you wouldn't. Anyway, it goes into the song, it's like a Scarfe cartoon, ye know, take out the eh the most obvious feature, and enlarge upon it, so it's referred to in the song, em, on only one occasion, but virtually the punchline. Here we go. [Starts tapping foot for rhythm] And I don't need to tell you what the first line is.

It's very good, when I come over the Border, 'cause I live in Whitley Bay, you know [stops tapping foot]. That's like "wee Scotland". You know, down there. It's people that couldnae afford their fare home after their holidays, ye see! [Begins tapping foot again] You think I'm joking! You think.. Right. "It fell about last Whitsuntide, I tired o' my place", that's the opening.

SLEEPYTOON

It fell about last Whitsuntide,
I tired o' my place.
So I gaed doon tae Insch tae fee
My fortune for tae chase.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.
[Spoken: And again!]
Sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

Well I met in wi' Adam Mitchell
And wi' him I did presume.
He's a fairmer up Kinnethmont way,
At a place ca'ed Sleepytoon.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

Well, if you'll agree tae work for me,
I think the place'll suit.
Indeed, quo I, although I think
Ye are an ugly brute.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

Well, if you'll agree tae work for me,
I'll see you get fair play.
I never gar my servants work
Mair than ten hours a day.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

So, early the next morning,
We gaed oot tae Sleepytoon.
And he ranked us in good order
Tae lay his tumshies doon.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

Now the orders was tae bed at nine,
And never leave the toon.
For ilka time you left it
Ye'd be fined half a croon.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

But we took little heed of him,
And ofttimes took the pass.
Sometimes tae buy tobaccy,
And sometimes tae coort a lass.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

We gied Adam Mitchell mony a croon,
But never did lose heart.
A pal called Broon got fined a croon,
For tummeling ower his cairt.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

Now that term time is 'roon again,
Our wages we hae won.
So we'll awa' tae Rhynie Muir
Tae raise us up some fun.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

And we'll awa' tae Alford and
We'll gar the glass gae 'roond.
And we'll tell them o' the usage
That we got at Sleepytoon.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

And I'll maybe see old Adam there
A-suppin' at his brose.
And I'll gie him a lend o' my hankie
For tae dicht his snotty nose.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

Good.

[Applause]

* This portion of the transcript was supplied from a cassette recording made simultaneously with the reel-to-reel recording, as the reel had to be turned over at this point in the performance. The cassette portion is included on the accompanying Cassette 2.

APPENDIX 3C

A PERFORMANCE EXTRACT OF CILLA FISHER AND ARTIE TREZISE

Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise, Police Folk Club, Edinburgh, 9th October 1986
(transcribed from SA 1986/145/A)

CF: Better be good now, eh? A couple of choruses to try... a couple of bothy songs from the Northeast. The first one's called "Sleepytoon".

SLEEPYTOON

It happened at last Whitsuntide,
I tired o' my place.
So I gaed up tae Inch tae fee
My fortune for to chase.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

I met in wi' Adam Mitchell,
Tae fee we did presume.
He's a fairmer up Kinethmont way
At a place ca'ed Sleepytoon,
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

If ye'll agree tae work for me,
I'm sure the place will suit.
Indeed, quo I, although I think
Ye are an ugly brute.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

So early the next morning
I gaed oot tae Sleepytoon.
He ranked us in good order,
Tae lay his turnips doon.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

The order was tae bed at nine,
And never leave the toon.
But every time ye left it
Ye'd be fined half a croon.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

Oh but we never did tak heed o' this,
We often took the pass.
Sometimes tae buy tobacco,
Sometimes tae coort a lass.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

But noo the term is over,
Oor wages we hae won.
So we'll away tae Rhynie Muir
And raise us up some fun.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

We'll awa' to Alford,
And we'll gar the glass go 'roond.
And we'll tell them o' the usage
We had at Sleepytoon.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

And perhaps I'll see old Adam there,
Suppin' at his brose.
I'll gie him a lend o' my hankie
Tae dicht his snottory nose.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

Well, it happened at last Whitsuntide,
I tired o' my place.
So I gaed up tae Insch tae fee,
My fortune for tae chase.
And sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an,
Sing airrie erritie adie,
And sing airrie erritie an.

[Applause]

The Hash o' Benagoak

It's six months come Martinmas,
I've fee'd in Turra toon.
They said I was the brawest chiel
In a' the country 'roon.

Chorus:

Wi' a ring dum day, a ring dum day,
Wi' a ring dum a diddle come a dandy o.

AT: Dinnae hold back! A ring dum a day, a ring dum a day, A ring dum a
diddle come a dandy o. There's nae slander involved in it, just let go.
We've got your money, you may as well as enjoy yourselves!

Wi' a ring dum day, a ring dum day,
Wi' a ring dum a diddle come a dandy.

Robbie in the morning,
He gies the door a bash,
Looks oot aneath his pickie saying
I think we'll hae a thrash.

Chorus

The second bailey, that's mysel'
I caught a pair o' broons
Raising ragnails on the foreman's heels
I fairly kept my ronds.

Chorus

Robbie has a brother
Wha's wrang amang the feet.
To see him nippin' roond the close
Would fairly mak ye greet.

Chorus

Syne he has a sister,
She's perjink and neat.
But aye she keeps the kitchie billies
Unco scant o' meat.

Chorus

Then we have a kitchie deem
Her name is Bessie Broon,
It wad fairly tak a saiddle girth
Her middle tae gang roond.

Chorus

Oor foreman's like a constable
He never slacks a theat.
And up and doon the lang rigs
He never counts his beat.

Chorus

That's the end of my song,
I won't sing onymore.
And if you're not content
Then you can tak the door.

Chorus

The author o' my conter
If ye want him tae be known
Ye'll find him in a herrin' boat
At the pier o' Fogie Loan.

Chorus (twice)

CF: Thank you very much. There'll be a chance to do plenty of choruses, I mean, if you really want to join in, feel free. Alright? [Someone in audience makes remarks] He talks to me. Have I offended somebody? Is it because I'm wearing black? It's the lady in black! [More remarks from person in audience] Shut up! What's going on with these boys? Right. Love song. That's alright, I like a heckler. [more audience comments and laughter]. A love song now, okay. A young woman falls in love with a man. [Someone in audience comments: That maks a change!] And her parents disapprove of him, and they banish him, to somewhere in the hills, I'm not very sure, it doesn't say. The song's called "The Pair Rovin' Lass". It's not a personal story! Just close!

THE PAIR ROVIN' LASS

I'm a pair rovin' lass, and my fortune's been bad.
Since I fell in love wi' a bonnie young lad.
I was coorted richt early by night and by day,
But the lad I loo dearly lies a distance away.

Chorus:

And I look tae yon high hills, but my laddie's no there,
I look tae yon high hills, it maks my hairt sair.
When I look tae yon high hills, and a tear blins my ee,
For the lad I loo dearly lies a distance frae me.

You see my freends and relations, they a' joined in one,
To part me from my true love, they've done a' they can.
To part me from my true love, they've done a' they know.
But the lad I loo dearly will love me more so.

Chorus

And a bunch of blue ribbons tae my love I'll prepare,
And all the lang summer, these ribbons he'll wear.
And when he returns to me, ne'er to part more,
I will kiss the sweet lips o' the lad I adore.

Chorus

I'm a pair rovin' lass, and my fortune's been bad.
Since I fell in love wi' a bonnie young lad.
I was coorted richt early, by night and by day,
But the lad I loo dearly lies a distance away.

CF: Thank you.

[Applause]

AT: The next song was written especially for us, it's called "The Fisher Lass".
Eh, written by a friend of ours called Matt Armour, who tried in vain to
get Trezise into the title of the song! Cannae understand why he failed.
You can imagine Cilla sitting down at the banks of the River Forth for this
one, and it'll help put you in the mood.

CF: Fishin'!

AT: Eh, would you like to try the chorus with me, it goes, "Young lass, bonnie
lass, sittin' by the waterside/ Fine lass, ma fisher lass, dreamin' by the
sea." Not as they thought it was in Aberdeen, "steaming by the Dee!"
[laughter]

CF: Although it was at the time!

FISHER LASS [M. Armour]

Young lass, bonnie lass,
Sitting by the waterside.
Fine lass, ma fisher lass,
Dreamin' by the sea.

[sung to audience: That's all you have to sing, give it a try!]

Repeat of Chorus

I would gie ye happiness,
And I would ease your loneliness,
If you'd rise and take ma hand,
And come awa' wi' me.

Ah, but my Davy's he's a fisherman,
To distant waters he has gone.
He asked that I should wait for him,
And stay forever true.
So thank you for your offer, sir,
But from here I canna stir.
So I canna tak yer hand
I canna go wi' ye.

Chorus

I would buy you a hoose and land,
Twenty servants at your command,
If you'd rise and take ma hand
And come awa' wi' me.

Ah, but my Davy's cottage by the shore
Has fishin' nets beside the door.
Walls o' fine white harlin'
And blue slates on the roof.
The rocks, the sand, and the Northern Sea,
They're fairer than your lands to me.
So I will not take yer hand
Nor will I go wi' ye.

Chorus

I would buy you a silken goon,
Gowden rings and siller shoon.
If you'd rise and take ma hand
And come awa' wi' me.

Ah, but sir, I wear a linen shift,
Around my neck a red kerchief,
And on my back a knitted shawl,
Made of the fisher's blue.
My wooden shoes and woollen hose,
They're softer than your finest clothes.
So I will not take yer hand
Nor will I go wi' ye.

Chorus

If your Davy should be gane,
Never tae come hame again,
Would you rise and take ma hand,
And come awa' wi' me?

Well, if my Davy should be taen,
Never tae come back again,
I would go and join him
Doon in the waters blue.
I would sail the stormy tide,
And I'd lay my bones doon by his side,
But I'd never tak yer hand
Nor would I go wi' ye.

Chorus

Turn your heid and look at me,
Do ye no remember me?
Noo will ye rise and take ma hand,
And come awa' wi' me?

But there's nae need, my Davy dear,
To turn my heid to ken ye're near.
Never for one minute
Have I been fooled by you.
For your voice, your touch, and your gentle ee,
They're dearer than my life tae me.m1
Noo I'll rise, tak yer hand
And noo I'll go wi' ye.

Chorus

[Applause]

AT: You're getting to work very hard tonight. Here's a song that I really took to instantly 'cause I was, I'm the son of a greengrocer in Cupar in Fife. And eh, it made for an interesting diet when I was a youngster. Got a week-long diet of kind of...

CF: Daffodils!

AT: ...mushy tomatoes, and a week long of apples, and then another week of apples if it was really bad. And we seemed to get, for some reason or another, an awfae lot of tatties, uh, served up at every single meal. And eh, so you can imagine why I took to this song. Eh, give give the chorus a try.

[Sings]:

Tattie for your breakfast, your dinner or your tea,
There's nothing wrang wi' tatties at any time o' day.
The working man's caviar steamin' fae the pot,
Of a' the veg a-growin', well the tattie beats the lot.

AT: Em, you may know that we do a lot of children's shows nowadays, "The Singing Kettle".

CF: Uncle Artie and Auntie Cilla!

AT: Em, so it's gettin' very hard to sing a song without doing actions to it, you know? So if any you are struggling for the words in this, just watch Auntie Cilla and you'll [inaudible].

TATTIES FOR YOUR BREAKFAST [I. Middleton]

Tatties for your breakfast, your dinner or your tea,
There's nothing wrang wi' tatties at any time o' day.
The working man's caviar steamin' fae the pot,
Of a' the veg a-growin', the tattie beats the lot.

Some nights when you're idle and you've nothing else tae dae,
Ponder on the tattie and its versatility.
It's been a staple diet through a history book o' wars,
And it has more combinations than a chokit chest o' drawers.
There's lang lads, round lads, kidney-shaped as weel,
Other lads turning green fae stickin' oot the dreel,
Canary anes and hairy anes and some that's black wi' blight,
And every yin sae ugly as to ruin yer appetite.

Chorus

Noo there's battered anes, buttered anes, biled and barbecued,
Chipped anes, chappit anes, though I've never had them
stewed,
Stovies and the shepherd's pie tae gar yer belly sag,
And even in a pokie wi' a wee blue bag.
There's fried anes, frittered anes, some that hae a bane,
Guy ill-pared anes, wi' half a dozen een,
Cakit lads and bakit lads and some wi' jackets tae,
An' if you're feelin' hungry, well there's tatties through the bree.

Chorus

There's pink anes, yellow anes, red, white and blue,
But whiles ye get a mongrel wi' a questionable hue.
Fresh yins, frozen yins, tatties big and sma',
And some that when ye haul them, there's nothing there but
shaw.
There's mealy lads, soapy lads, some that's in a-tween,
Late lads for liftin', when the early lads are deen,
Auld wizened sprouted yins tae gie the soo a feed.
And all the little totems that are keepit back for seed.

Chorus

There's Golden Wonder, Craig Neil, as weel as Sharp's Express,
Powdered yins ca'ed Smash that ye eat in outer space,
Thin-skinned Cyprus ones to get you through the Spring,
And muckle sappy English ones ye nearly have to wring.
There's Kerr's Pink, British Queen, as well as Duke o' York,
Other brands for makin' piggies into pork.
And noo great British anes the market for tae catch,
And others that are champion for soup tae keep ye swack.

Chorus (twice)

[Applause]

CF: [We were talking recently about eh, how many songs have been written about unemployment. And I mean]* they all say, as we all know, what a struggle it is and how hellish it is trying to just get on with your life when you've got no job. This song is almost the opposite of that. This guy is struggling to get on with his life because he's got too much work.

Em, he's got a small farm and he's working all the hours God sends, and eh just seems to be going 'round in circles, really. Definitely struggling. Eh, the song's written by the late Stan Rogers, it's called "The Field Behind the Plow".

THE FIELD BEHIND THE PLOW

Watch the field behind your plow
Turn to straight dark rows.
Feel a tingle in your bones,
Blow the dust out of your nose.
Hear the tractor's steady roar,
You can't stop now.
For there's a quarter section
More or less to go.

And he reckons that the rain
Takes her own sweet time.
And you can watch it come for miles
But you guess you've got a while.
So ease your throttle out a hair,
Every rod's a gain,
There's victory in every quarter mile.

Poor old Kusyk down the road,
Heartache, hail and 'hoppers brought him down.
He gave it up and went to town.
And Emmett Pierce the other day,
He took a heart attack
And he died at forty two.
You could see it coming on,
'Cause he worked as hard as you.

But in an hour maybe more,
Well you'll be wet clear through.
But the air is cooler now,
So bring your hat brim farther down.
Just watch the field behind your plow,
Turn to straight dark rows.
Put another season's promise
In the ground.

And if your harvest's any good,
The money might just pay off all you owe.
For you've mortgaged all you own.
And buy your kids a winter coat,
And take your wife back east
For Christmas if you can.
All summer she hangs on,
When you're so tied to the land.

But the good times come and go,
But at least there's rain.
This won't be barren ground
When September rolls around.
So watch the field behind your plow,
Turn to straight dark rows,
Put another season's promise
In the ground.

Just put another season's promise
In the ground.

CF: Thank you!

[Applause]

* This portion of the transcript was supplied from a cassette recording made simultaneously with the reel-to-reel recording, as the reel had to be turned over at this point in the performance. This portion is not on the accompanying Cassette 2.

APPENDIX 4

TAPE RECORDINGS CONSULTED

1. Recordings made by Stephanie Smith

Tape Ref. No.	Content
SS 26-3-85	Transcript of interview with Ray Fisher, 26-3-85, Monkseaton, Tyne & Wear, tape recorded over accidentally
SA 1985/196	Interview with Ray Fisher, 26-3-85, Monkseaton [Stereo]
SA 1985/205-206	Interview with Sheila Douglas [Perth], 23-7-85, Edinburgh [Stereo]
SS 12-9-85	Interview with Ed Miller and Margaret Bennett, Edinburgh, 12-9-85, recorded on Miller's cassette recorder
SA 1985/207	Interview with Ray Fisher, 19-9-85, Monkseaton [Stereo]
SA 1985/208-209	Interview with Ray Fisher, 20-9-85, Monkseaton [Stereo]
SA 1985/210-211	Interview with Cilla Fisher, 27-9-85, Kingskettle, Fife [Stereo]
SA 1985/214-215	Interview with Jean Redpath, 13-12-85, Leven, Fife
SA 1986/22-23	Interview with Norman Buchan, M.P., 9-1-86, Partick, Glasgow
SA 1986/24	Interview with Andrew Hunter 24-1-86, Edinburgh
SA 1986/25	Interview with Peter Hall [Aberdeen], 6-2-86, Edinburgh
SA 1986/26-27	Interview with Adam McNaughtan [Glasgow], 22-2-86, Edinburgh
SS 25-2-86	Interview with Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise, 25-2-86, Kingskettle, recorded on UHER cassette recorder
SA 1986/28	Interview with Hamish Imlach [Motherwell], 11-4-86, Glenfarg Folk Festival
SA 1986/113	Interview with Ray Fisher 20-4-86, Edinburgh
SA 1986/114-115	Interview with Audrey Fisher Bullock and Ray Fisher, 1-5-86, Newcastle
SA 1986/116	Interview with Ray Fisher 2-5-86, Monkseaton
SS 13-5-86	Interview with Archie Fisher and Margaret Bennett, 13-5-86, Edinburgh, recorded on SONY TCM-6 cassette recorder
SS 9-6-86	Interview with Tom Paley [London], 9-6-86, Molnbacka, Sweden, recorded on SONY TCM-6 cassette recorder
SA 1986/117	Interview with Allan Taylor [Leeds], 17-7-86, Edinburgh
SA 1986/118-119	Interview with Alastair Clark, 6-8-86, Edinburgh
SA 1986/120-121	Interview with Bobby Campbell, 7-8-86, Edinburgh

SA 1986/122-123 Recording of "Generations of Change", Edinburgh Festival presentation at the Aal Centre, 17-8-86, with Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise, and Jimmie Macgregor

SA 1986/124-125 Recording of "A Gathering of Scots", Edinburgh Festival presentation at the Aal Centre, 17-8-86, with Jimmie Macgregor, and Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise

SS 27-8-86 Recording of Fisher Family Concert at the Dome, Edinburgh, 27-8-86, recorded on SONY TCM-6 cassette recorder

SA 1986/128 Interview with Hamish Henderson, 5-9-86, Edinburgh

SA 1986/129-130 Interview with Jimmie Macgregor, 24-9-86, Glasgow

SS 25-9-86 Recording of Ray Fisher, Willie Scott, at the Bridge Folk Club, Newcastle, 25-9-86, recorded on SONY TCM-6 cassette recorder

SS 26-9-86 Recording of Ray Fisher and Willie Scott at the Hand & Spear Folk Club, Weybridge, Surrey, 26-9-86, recorded on SONY TCM-6 cassette recorder

SA 1986/131-132 Recording of Ray Fisher and Willie Scott performing at the Cellar Folk Club, The Black Horse, London, 27-9-86

SA 1986/133-140 Recording of Willie Scott in conversation with Ray Fisher and Doc Rowe, Walthamstow, London [Note: Doc Rowe was videotaping this simultaneously]

SA 1986/141-142 The same, also taped 29-9-86

SA 1986/143-144 Recording of Ray Fisher and Willie Scott performing at the Herga Folk Club, Wealdstone, Bucks., 29-9-86

SA 1986/145-146 Recording of Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise at the Police [Folk] Club, Edinburgh, 9-10-86

SA 1986/152 Interview with Sara Grey and Ellie Ellis [U.S.A.], 12-10-86, St. Andrews

SA 1986/153-154/A Interview with Morag Macdonald Fisher, 16-10-86, Kingskettle, Fife

SA 1986/154/B-155 Interview with Cilla Fisher, 16-10-86, Kingskettle

SA 1986/156-157 Interview with Maggie Cruickshank and Liz Cruickshank Barkess, 21-10-86, Edinburgh

SA 1986/158-159 Recording of Archie Fisher, performing with Allan Barty, St. Andrews Day of Folk, 26-10-86

SA 1986/160 Interview with Sheena Wellington, 27-10-87, St. Andrews

SA 1986/161-162 Interview with Morag, Ray, and Cilla Fisher, 13-11-86, Kingskettle

SA 1986/163-164 Interview with Ray and Cilla Fisher, 13-11-86, Kingskettle

SA 1986/165-166 Recording of Archie and Ray Fisher performing at the Red Lion Folk Club, Trimdon, Co. Durham, 28-11-86

SS 29-11-86 Interview with Mary Macdonald Mackinnon, 29-11-86, Sunderland, recorded on SONY Walkman Professional

SA 1986/167 Interview with Archie and Ray Fisher, 30-11-86, Monkseaton

SA 1986/168 Interview with Billy Kay, 4-12-86, Edinburgh

SA 1986/169-170 Interview with Marion Blythman, 15-12-86, Edinburgh

SA 1986/171-172 Interview with Pete Shepheard, 16-12-86, Balmalcolm, Fife

SA 1986/174 Interview with Fiona Ritchie [Cumbernauld, also Charlotte, North Carolina], 30-12-86, Edinburgh

SA 1987/18-19	Recording of Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise performing at the Edinburgh Folk Club, Osbourne Hotel, 7-1-87
SA 1987/20-21	Recording of Archie Fisher performing at the Edinburgh Folk Club, Osbourne Hotel, 28-1-87
SA 1987/22-23	Interview with Hamish Henderson, 22-2-87, Edinburgh
SA 1987/24-25	Interview with Ray, Joyce, Cindy, and Cilla Fisher, 28-2-87, Glasgow
SA 1987/89-90	Recording of Ray Fisher performing at the Edinburgh Folk Club, Osbourne Hotel, 1-4-87
SF 1987/1	Interview with Jim Lloyd [London], 14-4-87, Edinburgh Folk Festival
SA 1987/91-92	Interview with Anne Neilson [Glasgow], 16-4-87, Edinburgh Folk Festival
SA 1987/93	Interview with Ray Fisher, 15-5-87, Monkseaton
SA 1987/94-95	Recording of Fisher Family Concert, Theatre Royal, Dumfries, 31-5-87
SA 1987/96-97	Recording of Fisher Family Evening, Cairndale Hotel, Dumfries, 31-5-87
SA 1987/98-99	Interview with Archie Fisher, 3-7-87, Edinburgh
SA 1987/100-101	Recording of "The Singing Kettle", Portobello Town Hall, 21-10-87
SA 1987/101/A	Interview with Artie Trezise, 30-10-87, Kingskettle
SA 1987/101/B	Interview with Cilla Fisher, 30-10-87, Kingskettle
SA 1987/113	Recording of Archie Fisher performing at a TMSA concert at the Osbourne Hotel, Edinburgh, 12-12-87

2. Recordings made by other fieldworkers

Tape Ref. No.	Content and Fieldworker
SA 1960/245	Ray Fisher singing songs, recorded by Arthur Argo
SA 1971/13	Ceilidh at Heriot-Watt University Students' Union, Edinburgh, 18-2-71, recorded by Ailie Munro
SA 1973/109/A	Ray Fisher performing at the Kinross Traditional Music Festival, September 1973, recorded by Peter Cooke
SA 1985/165	Martin Carthy performing at the Inverness Folk Club, 12-10-85, and interview with Martin Carthy, recorded by Margaret Bennett
SA 1985/166/A	Archie Fisher performing at the Inverness Folk Club, 12-10-85, recorded by Margaret Bennett

Note: Tape reference numbers prefixed by SA and SF designate recordings made for and deposited in the School of Scottish Studies Sound Archives. SA denotes Scottish material and/or informants; SF denotes non-Scottish material and/or informants. All these recordings were made on a Uher 4000 tape recorder. SS tape reference numbers represent my own numbering scheme for recordings made by me on equipment other than a Uher 4000, and are in my possession.

APPENDIX 5

LIST OF RADIO BROADCASTS CONSULTED

Date Broadcast Title and Presenter of Programme

[unknown]	"Odyssey: 'Clan Neil of Barra'", Billy Kay
26-12-85	"Travelling Folk: Christmas Pantomime, 'Jack and the Broadsheet', Archie Fisher
17-12-85	"Parade: 'As I Walked on the Road'", Archie Fisher
6-3-86	"Travelling Folk: Danny Kyle Interview with Alan Lomax", Archie Fisher
1-5-86	"Travelling Folk: Interview with Dick Gaughan", Archie Fisher
28-12-86	"Generations: 'Fisher Folk'", Archie Fisher
26-2-87	"Travelling Folk: Feature on Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise", Archie Fisher

Note: All programmes listed were broadcast on BBC Radio Scotland

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