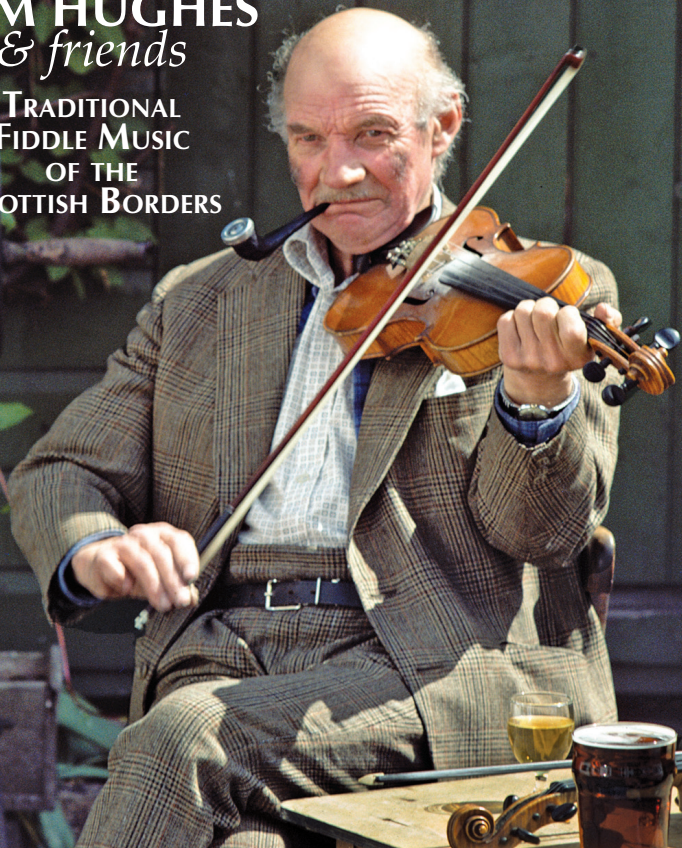


TOM HUGHES & friends

TRADITIONAL
FIDDLE MUSIC
OF THE
SCOTTISH BORDERS



1: REDESDALE HORNPIPE/ GALLOWAY HORN-PIPE **3.08**

Four fiddles, Tin whistle Jack, Guitar Brian
Hornpipes have long been popular in the Borders and these two are particularly well liked. No apologies for putting this track first – it was recorded at the climax of a great session and the ‘lift’ is infectious.

2: BRAES O MAR (Strathspey) **1.38**
Two fiddles Tom & Wattie

This favourite strathspey was old when first published in Bremner’s collection in the 1750s. Tom and Wattie play it as a duet in an old traditional style learnt by Tom from playing the tune with his father.

3: TAM’S OLD LOVE SONG/ BANKS OF KALE WATER (Slow air & Reel) **1.26**
Two fiddles Tom & Wattie

Tom never had titles to these tunes. The beautiful slow air gained its name after many requests for Tom to play ‘that old love song’. The reel is named after the area where Tom was first fee’d after he married.

4: TAM’S VICTORIA WALTZ (solo) **1.58**

The Victoria Waltz was a popular old time dance in Victoria’s reign but Tom did not remember it continuing beyond the 1920s. Tom had no other name for the tune.

5: MARQUIS OF LORNE’S HORNPIPE **2.04**
(solo)

Tom’s distinctive version of this widely known

tune comes from family tradition.

6: COWIE’S HORNPIPE/ ST PATRICK’S DAY OR TELL HER I AM/ TURKEY IN THE STRAW
(Hornpipe, Jig and Reel) (solo) **2.40**

Played as a set – hornpipe, jig and reel, the first tune, known by Tom and Wattie as Cowie’s Hornpipe, is in O’Neill’s as Slievenamon. The second, which Tom referred to, probably in error, as St Patrick’s Day is in O’Neill’s as Tell Her I Am. The third tune, Turkey in the Straw is an American tune widely played in Scotland as in North America for the longways dance the Virginia Reel.

7: LADY MARY RAMSAY/ ORANGE AND BLUE
(Strathpeys) (solo) **1.41**

Lady Mary Ramsay was first published in Niel Gow’s fourth collection in 1800, claimed as his brother Nathaniel’s tune. Played by Tom as a schottische, Orange and Blue is an old tune known throughout Scotland and in North America and used in the Scottish Borders for the country dance of the same name.

8: HENRY HUGHES’ FAVOURITE (Spanish Waltz) *Two fiddles* Tom & Wattie **2.40**

This was a favourite old waltz when Tom and his father played for dances in the 1920s. The tune came from Tom’s grandfather Henry.

9: THE FROST IS ALL OVER/ JACKSON’S MORN-ING BRUSH/ IRISH WASHERWOMAN **2.31**
(Irish Jigs) (solo)

Tom includes his characteristic use of double

stops and ringing strings in the playing of a favourite set of Irish jigs.

10: SIDLAW HILLS/ THE WIFE SHE BREWED IT
(Marches) (solo) **1.23**

Jim Watson of Blairgowrie composed the first tune. The second is an old traditional favourite of Tom's. The set is first played solo by Tom and then played by Tom and Wattie with guitar accompaniment.

11: SIDLAW HILLS/ THE WIFE SHE BREWED IT
2.33

Two fiddles Tom & Wattie, Guitar Sid

12: THE HUNTSMAN'S CHORUS **1.27**
(Folk Dance) (solo)

A longways dance for 4 to 6 couples, The Huntsman's Chorus was popular in the Borders in Tom's youth. The music started life as a chorus in the 1821 opera *Der Freischütz* (The Marksman) by Carl Maria von Weber, later finding its way into many fiddlers' tune books in the 19th century.

13: THE HIGH ROAD TO LINTON **1.26**
(Reel) (solo)

Tom remembers working out this, his first tune, on his new fiddle at the age of seven. Usually played as a reel, Tom sometimes played the first part at a slower speed. Double stops and ringing strings are features of Tom's version particularly in the variations.

14: BARREN ROCKS OF ADEN/ NUT BROWN MAIDEN (Marches) (solo) **2.02**

Two pipe marches played with long bow strokes and ringing strings.

15: CHAMPAGNE CHARLIE
(Song air) (solo) **1.23**

Played as a polka, Champagne Charlie started life as a music hall song premiered in August 1866 at the Princess Concert Hall in Leeds.

16: AULD ROBIN GREY (Song air) **2.47**
Two fiddles Tom and Wattie

In Tom's family this tune was often jokingly referred to as 'the fiddler's headache'. Wattie plays seconds to Tom's complex melody.

17: FAUDENSIDE POLKA (solo) **2.04**

When Tom first started playing for dances in Yetholm with his father in the early 1920s, the folk from the nearby farm at Faudenside were always asking for a polka. The first two parts of the tune are similar to a tune entitled Hawk's Polka attributed to James Hill who, though born in Dundee, lived many years at The Hawk, a pub in Gateshead. The third part of the tune may have been composed by Tom's father.

**18: THE ROCK AND A WEE PUCKLE TOW/
TEVIOT BRIG/ THE STOOL OF REPENTANCE**
(Jigs) **3.03**

Four fiddles with Guitar Brian
Three jigs popular in the Borders played as a set. The first, The Rock and a Wee Puckle Tow, is an ancient tune that has long been

popular in Scotland and Northumberland. The second tune, Teviot Brig, is by Alexander Givan (1752-1803) of Kelso where the Teviot Bridge is located. The third tune is named after the Cuttie Stool of the Presbyterian Church where a sinner was required to sit and repent before the congregation.

19: COCK YER LEG UP 1.17
(Varsoviene) (solo)

Known by a confusing range of names including Shoe the Donkey and Cock Your Leg Up, the Varsoviene evolved in the 1850s from the Mazurka, a Polish dance introduced from Europe in the 1830s.

20: FLOWERS O EDINBURGH/ EAST NEUK O FIFE (Country Dance) 2.09

Two fiddles Tom & Wattie, *Guitar* Sid
These two grand old tunes provide a set for the country dance Flowers of Edinburgh and were played as such by Tom and his father in the 1920s. They are both in Oswald's Caldonian Pocket Companion published in the 1750s and are of a type known as the 'Scotch Measure' used for longways country dances since the 1600s.

21: LADY MARY RAMSAY/ ORANGE AND BLUE (Strathspeys) *Two fiddles* Tom & Wattie, *Guitar* Sid 2.48

Tom and Wattie play Lady Mary Ramsay in the old style Tom learnt from his family, making liberal use of double stops and ringing strings. The second tune is widespread in tra-

dition and probably very old.

22: LILLIESLEAF POLKA (solo) 1.15

This rather fine old-style polka from Tom's family is named after the small village of Lilliesleaf near Denholm. Tom uses a range of snap bowings, Scotch snaps, double stops and ringing strings.

23: FAREWELL TO WHISKY/ ROXBURGH CASTLE 2.42

(Country Dance: Roxburgh Castle) *Two fiddles* Tom & Wattie, *Guitar* Sid
Farewell to Whisky was composed by Niel Gow as a lament around 1800. The two tunes form a set for the country dance Roxburgh Castle, still popular in the Borders in the 1920s.

24: MILLICENT'S FAVOURITE/ TAM'S UNTITLED HORNPIPE (Hornpipes) (solo) 1.45

The popular hornpipe Millicent's Favourite, known in Ireland as The Royal Belfast, is followed by an untitled hornpipe from Tom's family repertoire.

25: GREENCASTLE HORNPIPE/ OFF TO CALIFORNIA/ THE DUNDEE HORNPIPE 2.07

(Hornpipes) (solo)
Tom had no names for the individual tunes in this set, but merely referred to them as Irish Hornpipes. All three are in O'Neill's Music of Ireland. While they may be tunes of Irish origin, Tom's versions have a distinct Scottish Borders flavour. The third tune is known

in Scotland and Northumberland as The Dundee Hornpipe and may well be of Scottish origin but is named The Kildare Fancy in O'Neill's.

26: BOYS OF BLUE HILL/ THE HARVEST'S LONG IN COMING (*Hornpipes*) (solo) **1.28**

A great tune for tin whistle as well as fiddle, Boys of Blue Hill is one of the most widely known and popularly played hornpipes, as well known in Scotland as in England or Ireland or in North America. Although Tom was happy to refer to the second tune by its widely known name of Harvest Home, he preferred The Harvest's Long In Coming – the old name by which the tune was known in the Borders and by his family.

27: MORPETH RANT **1.19**
(*Country Dance: Morpeth Rant*) (solo)

Tom: "This wis a very popular dance up the Kale Water an the Bowmont, at weddings an kirns mostly – at Hownham, Pennymuir, Mowhaugh, Auld Graden, Caverton an Primside. It's never danced now."

28: MORPETH RANT **2.27**
Two fiddles Tom & Wattie, *Guitar* Sid

29: KELSO HIRING FAIR (*Old Time Dance: Victoria Waltz*) (solo) **2.05**

Tom picked up this unusual tune from an old street fiddler at the hiring fair in Kelso in 1928. It is in Köhler's Repository (1882) under the title Victoria Waltz, but the dance

seems to have died out by the 1920s.

30: LADY MARY RAMSAY/ SOLDIER'S JOY
(*Strathspey & Reel*) (solo) **1.21**

One of Tom's favourite strathspey tunes here played in a set with the reel Soldier's Joy – what is perhaps the most popular and widely known of all fiddle tunes from Shetland to Cornwall and throughout North America.

31: THE TRIUMPH **1.00**
(*Country Dance*) (solo)

When Tom first started playing fiddle with the family band in the 1920s The Triumph was often the first dance of the night at village hall and kirk dances. A longways set dance, it became a popular country dance throughout the country in the 1800s after being introduced to the London ballrooms near the end of the 18th century.

32: THE OLD RUSTIC BRIDGE (*Slow air & March*) *Two fiddles* Tom & Wattie **2.19**

An old Victorian ballad long popular with fiddlers as a fireside tune.

33: AULD GRADEN KIRN **1.30**
(*St Bernard's Waltz*) (solo)

When Tom and his father played for dances this was the common tune for the St Bernard's Waltz. Tom had no title to the tune but the kirk at Old Graden near Yetholm was always a great gathering.

34: LIBERTON PIPE BAND (*Polka*) **1.57**
Two fiddles Tom & Wattie

A fine polka made famous by Jimmy Shand in the 1950s. The tune belongs to a large family of related tunes known throughout the British Isles and North America dating back at least to the 1840s and appears to have gained its name from the Liberton Boys Pipe Band formed in 1883 at Dr Guthrie's Ragged School in Liberton, Edinburgh. The opening bars are clearly related to Tom's older tune – Faudenside Polka.

35: REDESIDE HORNPIPE 2.32

Four fiddles with Guitar Brian

Composed quite recently by champion 'moothie' player Willie Atkinson of Alnwick, this tune has become popular throughout the Borders – played here by Tom along with three other fiddle players – Bob Hobkirk, Wattie Robson and Tom Scott along with Brian Miller on guitar.

Recordings were made between July 1978 and May 1980 in the village hall at Bedrule just up the road from Denholm where an afternoon or evening would start (and often finish) with a session in the bar of the Fox and Hounds. Recordings were made using a pair of microphones and a Revox A77 reel to reel machine run at 15ips. Many thanks to Tom and Tib of the Fox and Hounds for hosting the sessions, to all the musicians who gave their talents and enthusiasm (including Neil Barron and Roger Dobson who are not on the final recordings). Many thanks also to Alistair

Anderson, Tom Anderson, Jim Crawford, Angus Grant, Peter Kennedy and Jimmy Shand for advice on tune titles and Robert Innes of Stirling University for videotaping Tom and Wattie. Photographs were taken in the yard of the Fox and Hounds in Denholm.

A selection of the Border Fiddle recordings was compiled in 1981 and issued as an LP: *Tom Hughes and his Border Fiddle* (Springthyme SPR 1005) together with a booklet of 24 tune transcriptions. In October 2012 Springthyme Music came to an agreement with Taigh na Teud of Skye to publish the Tom Hughes Collection of Traditional Fiddle Music. The original recordings of Tom Hughes, Wattie Robson and other Border musicians comprised over a hundred sets of tunes. The recordings have been reassessed, over 60 tunes have been newly transcribed and the collection is available as a companion to this CD collection: Shepheard, Peter. *Traditional Fiddle Music of the Scottish Borders from the Playing of Tom Hughes of Jedburgh* published by Taigh na Teud/ Springthyme Music (2015) ISBN 978-1-906804-01.

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TOM HUGHES – or Tam as he was often known – was born into a farmworking family in the Scottish Borders in 1908. The family were all talented musicians – his grandfather Henry Hughes, father Thomas Hughes and two uncles Henry jnr. and Bob played together in a family band – two or three fiddles, melodeon and tambourine – and his father also played pipes and tin whistle.

As was the custom in those days, farm workers were fee'd to a farm for six months or a year at a time and in the spring usually went to the local hiring fair in search of a farmer who would offer better wages and conditions. Tom's family were no exception and they followed this insecure lifestyle, regularly moving from farm to farm. Tom was seven years old when he was presented with his first (half size) fiddle made by his grandfather and he quickly taught himself the rudiments.

By the time Tom left school in 1921, the family were at The Orchard near Hawick and Tom was playing fiddle with his father, travelling by bicycle to play at all the important rural events in the area, at harvest kirns, village hall dances, hiring fair dances and country weddings firstly around Hawick and later around Jedburgh, Morebattle and Kelso. Tom spent his working life as a ploughman on farms in the Border countryside around Jedburgh. In the 1930s Tom formed a band of his own – the Kalewater Band. The traditional music revival of the 1970s gave Tom's playing a new lease of life and, when he met fiddler Wattie Robson of Denholm, they were soon playing in their distinctive style at festivals, clubs and competitions throughout Scotland and south of the Border – at Gretna, Alnwick, Rothbury, Newcastleton, Kinross and Keith.

Like many traditional musicians in days gone by, Tom learned his music by ear within the family circle and Tom's style and many of his tunes were learnt from family tradition. Although Tom's fiddle style includes many characteristic Scottish elements, it is quite different from any mainstream fiddle style such as that of Scotland's North East or that of the West Highlands. Through Tom's playing we are able to gain an insight into an old, traditional, fiddle style that stretches back through his family well into the 1800s and that may well have evolved from or retain much older elements.



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