INTRODUCTION

The Scottish vernacular of Roxburghshire is a lineal descendant of the speech brought in by the Anglian invaders who, from the latter half of the fifth century A.D., settled in the east of northern England and southern Scotland. Its subsequent history is practically that of the Scottish tongue, sharing in its absorption of the French and Flemish elements, as well as in acquiring considerable accessions from Southern English. But whereas it has absorbed fewer Gaelic words than have more northerly dialects, the loan-words (frequently of Scandinavian origin) borrowed from northern English dialects are appreciably more numerous—a fact due not only to proximity, but doubtless in some degree to English occupation of much of the shire during the fourteenth century. Moreover, for almost three centuries special local characteristics have increasingly appeared in its steadily-growing dialect literature; while a distinctive feature is its absorption in recent times of various Romany expressions (see Appendix II), and Yorkshire operatives have brought some accessions to the vocabulary of manufacturing towns.

The vernacular of this shire is the dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland—a dialectal area (Ellis's D. 33) which includes Annandale, Eskdale, Liddesdale*, Teviotdale, and Ettrick Forest. From the fact that this variety of speech is distinguished by a proneness to develop diphthongs out of vowels originally simple in Anglo-Saxon (and still so in other Scottish dialects), together with the fact that it has retained a series of grammatical distinctions characteristic of the old north Anglian tongue which the other Scottish dialects have dropped, the late Sir James Murray concluded that "the Teutonic speech has in this district come less into peaceful contact with pre-existent languages, and thus yielded less to their influence than the same dialect further west and north; and that having been longer established on the soil, it has, in its system of sounds, received a fuller phonetic development here than elsewhere" (Dialect, pp. 83–84). Yet if, as some authorities hold, the ranking of the warriors of Teviotdale with the men of Cumbria (or Strathclyde) in the same division at the battle of the Standard in 1138 was due to the fact that even at that late date the former also still spoke Kymric†, these features to which Murray refers may be attributable to some other cause.

* From this dialectal district Murray excluded Liddesdale. But the late Dr Ellis (English Pronunciation, v. 721–3) concluded that Liddesdale possessed phonetic features characterising the other parts of this area. The inhabitants themselves, indeed, emphatically disclaim near affinity of speech with the neighbouring counties of England.

† The detail of Roxburghshire places in the Inquisition of Glasgow (1116), and the early inclusion of Teviotdale in that See, seem to lend support to this view. See further, Hawick Archaeological Society's Transactions, 1907, pp. 22–3.

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Although Leyden, writing in the Scots Magazine for July 1802, contended that “the Border and western dialects of Scotland are almost purely [Anglo-]Saxon in their peculiar vocables,” and later authorities regard the vernacular of Roxburghshire as one of the least altered dialects (a fact due to its far removed from Celtic and Southern or literary English influence), yet the system of vowel-change had made almost unchecked progress until the latter half of the eighteenth century. When visiting Hawick in 1796, as she records in her Useful Guide to the Beauties of Scotland (1799, p. 107), the Hon. Mrs Murray endeavoured to converse with some of the youths, “but their language, to me, was as Arabic.”

As is unfortunately the case in every other Scottish district, this dialect has long had a struggle against officious prejudice and narrow-minded pedantry. Writing in 1791, the Rev. T. Somerville said—“The common people in the neighbourhood of Jedburgh still make use of the old Scottish dialect” (Stat. Acc. i. 15). In 1834 the Rev. J. Purves likewise recorded—“The Scottish dialect is spoken throughout the parish [of Jedburgh], with a few local peculiarities. It is gradually losing ground” (New Stat. Acc. iii. 15). In the same year the Rev. D. Stevenson, minister of Wilton, wrote—“The language generally spoken by the lower orders, throughout the district, contains many provincialisms, but these are becoming gradually obsolete” (Ibid. 78). He remarks upon certain distinctive local pronunciations, as does also the Rev. A. Craig of Bedrule, who adds—“These peculiarities of dialect are, of course, generally confined to the lower ranks of the people—although, such is the effect of habit and imitation, you hear sometimes people, from whose education and rank you might augur differently, utter the same harsh and barbarous sounds” (Ibid. 297). Yet immediately before, when referring to the diphthongs peculiar to the district, he had admitted: “All these sounds are rather pleasant to the ear.”

By none was the decline in this vernacular more observed than by the late Sir James Murray, who thus wrote in 1873—“The local dialects are passing away:...even where not utterly trampled under foot by the encroaching language of literature and education, they are corrupted and arrested by its all-pervading influence” (Dialect S.C. Scotland, p. v). To this decay reference has been made by other writers; most sympathetically of all by the late Rev. James Oliver (H.A.S.T. 1902, p. 12), thus:—“During my lifetime I have observed a marked change in the dialect and speech of the people. In my opinion it has been a change not for the better. There were a number of fine old forcible and pathetic expressions, as well as a number of soft and beautiful words untranslatable into any other language, which are now never heard. Old people invariably talked of Monaday,...also of Wodnesday, and Thursday. They spoke of westlin and eastlin winds, loaning for lane, yestreen in the gloaming [etc.].”
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To this vernacular of the Southern Counties is due the preservation of those Border Ballads which are the pride of our national literature; and its copious wealth of expression has enriched *Guy Mannering* and others of Scott’s Waverley Novels. Hence it has come about that many of our local terms have now a currency in literary English, especially of the pseudo-historic type, because, since used by the great novelist, they were caught up by various of his imitators. The dialect of Roxburghshire alone claims a considerable body of literature, of which I have read nearly all for word-lore contained in this volume, as follows:

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Roxburghshire constitutes but part of the area in which the dialect of the Southern Counties is spoken. Yet in this county are three sub-varieties of dialect—Tweedside, Teviotdale, and Liddesdale (north, central, and south Roxburgh respectively). The first is stamped with Merse and Lothian affinity; the last shows evidence of Dumfries and Cumberland influence. The following scheme broadly illustrates the main differences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tweedside</th>
<th>Teviotdale</th>
<th>Liddesdale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>alang (along)</td>
<td>alang</td>
<td>alang, alang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A’m (I’m)</td>
<td>A’se</td>
<td>A’se</td>
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<tr>
<td>bane (bone)</td>
<td>bane</td>
<td>beein</td>
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<tr>
<td>stane (stone)</td>
<td>stane</td>
<td>stein</td>
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<tr>
<td>tairm (term)</td>
<td>tairm</td>
<td>teirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tae (toe)</td>
<td>tae</td>
<td>tei, tee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whae (who)</td>
<td>whae</td>
<td>wheel, whee</td>
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<tr>
<td>me</td>
<td>mei</td>
<td>mei, mei</td>
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<tr>
<td>tea</td>
<td>tei</td>
<td>tea, tae</td>
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<td>see</td>
<td>sei</td>
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<td>we, oo</td>
<td>oo, wei</td>
<td>weel, we</td>
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<td>hiz (us)</td>
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<td>cow</td>
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<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>yow</td>
<td>yow, you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to these three main divisions, more minute differences are heard, as in the speech of Hawick compared with Jedburgh, Bowden compared with Midlem, upper compared with lower Liddesdale. Jedburgh pronunciation is the index of the district of which it is the market-town; and so with other centres.

Especially interesting are the vowel-differences between this dialect and Standard English as spoken in the south of England. The sounds here represented are particularly those of my native Jedwater dialect (except where otherwise indicated), and frequently represent pronunciations banned by instructors of the rising generation. Given centrally, the symbols used are those adopted by the International Phonetic Association, being more fully explained in Mr W. Grant’s Pronunciation of English in Scotland (1913) and the Manual of Modern Scots (1921). I have compared my results with the collected evidence of Sir James Murray, and of Dr Ellis (Early English Pronunciation). Based as it was on the pronunciation of an aged native of Catcleugh (Northumberland), Ellis’s evidence (v. 721–3) for
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Liddesdale is not very trustworthy, and contains many forms which my Liddesdale authorities repudiate.

Sometimes two (if not more) pronunciations of the same word are here given, due not only to a difference of district, but also occasionally to older and newer usages in the same locality. Thus in Teviotdale one may hear the same word pronounced dochter, douter, dafter, and also approximately to English daughter. To show the relative prevalency of the forms is not always possible. My purpose in the following tabulations is to set forth the differences between the Roxburghshire vernacular and Standard English, taking the latter as the basis of comparison. It must not be presumed that in every case the words thus compared have the same origin, or that either one or the other has assumed an erroneous form.

An initial capital denotes (apart from some proper names, etc.) that the word is entered and defined in the Vocabulary.

I. THE CONSONANTS

Except when otherwise stated, the consonants are used with the powers recognised in English. They are arranged as follows:—

§ 1. Plosives; 7–10 Nasals; 11–12 Laterals; 13 Trill; and 14–29 Fricatives.

§ 1. p

(a) p is developed in Ramps, Strumps. (b) p corresponds to E. (or Sc.) b in juype, Noop sb.4, Peysent a., Skipe, §swap Rxb., N (= swab), Touchspale; cf. § 2 c. (c) p corresponds to t in peesweep (peewit), Snipe. (d) theid corresponds to cl, kl, in Snorple, Splice.

§ 2. b

(a) b is not usually heard (as it is in English) between m-l, m-r (being frequently represented by unsounded m), as in bramle, †humble, rumble, thumle, trimble (tremble), †wumle (a wimple), etc.; †chammer, clammer, †nummer w, †noomer w-s (number), †slummer w, †Timmer, etc.—in some instances agreeing with m or mn of Germanic cognates. (b) b (symbol) is not employed in kaim, caim (comb), clim, thoom (A.S. píma thumb), waim (womb). (c) b is misheard for _dropdown in barley (call for respite in boys' games), Belt v., †quib (A. Scott1 65), §coob v. ne; for v in Go-be-the-wund, Ogilvie (written Ogilvie). Cf. § 1 b.

§ 3. t

(a) Developed t appears in bracen, bracen-faced, Clierts, Cloyd, †cropt (crop) [1663–4 in Stitchill Records 27, 32], duffet ne, †eddert (adder) [Riddell Psalm lviii. 4, cxl. 3], †Gammonts, Grossert, Hurchint, †Huron, leibelt w (libel), meistert (miser), †Pethirt, Pipe-stoppli, Scotchbolt, †Stäivel (?), suddent c-s, Turbleent w,
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†Turneep. (b) Retained t occurs in “the tane...the tother” (the one...the other), “the tea [= one] half,” etc.: see these words. (c) t is unadopted in ṭormonan s (Old F. ṭormoran cormorant), ṭeeze (hoist), ṭoise, ṭphaisan (Old F. ṭhaisan pheasant), ṭarran, ṭTyran. (d) ṭ is omitted in cundy (conduit), cushion (“cushat”), ech’ (days, etc.) [= eight], warran’, Whuss’nday (Whitsunday); it is usually dropped from -c (and in writing is replaced by ’ or k) as ac’, collec’, respek, stric’, etc.; also after ṭ, as in attemp’, corrup’, emp’y, temp’, etc. (e) ṭ is lost between s-l, s-n, s-t in various words (as in E.); also in bease (beasts), dursna (dared not), wurstet (worsted); lichnin’ (lightning), Forfeuchen, tichen (tighten). (f) Intervocalic ṭ or ṭt with l, r, or n, in the following syllable has (in the towns) become a mere glottal catch (?), as in battle, better, bitter, butter, British, kettle, nettle, Setterday, waiter (water), written. (g) ṭ replaces d in many verbal -ed endings, as crabbit, dozen’t, wonder’t (crabbled, dozed, wondered), etc., etc.; similarly in fremt (Frend), stuipit (stupid), wurset (worsted), sell’t, tell’t (sold, told). (h) ṭ frequently replaces final d in -ld, -rd, as in cubbert (cupboard), donnart (Sc. donnar’d stupefied), feart n (Sc. feard afraid), guisarts (Sc. guisárd muimers), Jethart (earlier “Jedword”), lubbart (lubbarb), orchard [so also on Pont’s map (c. 1600) for Orchard, near Hawick], standart (so also in 1687 [Wilson 25]), towrt (toward), worlt (world). Cf. § 4 H. (i) ṭn frequently replaces E. nd, as in ahint (behind), ayont (beyond), ṭdymont w-s (diamond), eerrant, yirrant (errand), eident (med. E. ythand diligent), fiert! n, Heelint, honest, saicont (second), thosant, wullant (med. E. willand willing). (j) ṭ corresponds to E. th (θ) in fowrt, fift (fifth, fifth), etc.; Hoggart. Cf. § 16 I.

§ 4 D.

(A) d is developed in ṭbeind (bean) [1670 in Report of Trial 51], ṭBrand (see Brawn 1), foondral (funeral), freind (rein) [Murray 146]. Cf. Pander v., Streind v. (B) Original ṭ is retained in awnd (owing), ṭVeand, ṭwulland (willing) [Murray 121]. (c) ṭ is dropped: Finally—(a) in chiel (Sc. chield fellow), ṭMiles (Milds), ṭskebel (Skybald), ṭWill-corn (Rxb.), ṭwull-cat c-w; Frem; har’ (before d or t; = heard), Hunder (hundred), ṭ Lair (lard), neegir (niggard), Slugger, tanker [also 1676 Jedburgh Records]; cf. Worlin’; (b) from -nd, as in -in’ present ppl. (= A.S. and med. Sc. -and), an’, bun’ (bound), len’, pen’ n (= Pend), vaigbun’ (also vagbone [1696 in Jedburgh Records]), likewise ban’, Bin’ v., gran’, grun’, wan’, wun’; these were formerly current, but now rare, in N-w,—yet are common in Liddesdale, as are also han’, lan’, san’, soon’ (sound), etc.; (c) from medial -nd-, -nd-r, etc., as, canne, dinne (to tingle), dwinne w. w, ṭfunlin’ (foundling) [Murray 121], gainer w (gander), hannel, kinne, Rannel-tree, spinkle, trinlle (trundle); [but retained in Hunder,
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Shunder, under, wander, yonder, banster, benbox (bandbox), Hainberry, hinnam (hindmost), stannin' [but stand v. is usual in Teviotdale]; (d) from breath (breathth). (p) d is unadopted in †Aller, †Earn-mail, Eller, thunner (A.S. þunor). (e) d replaces g (g) in dervie (see Gervie sb. 2), Dod (= God!). Cf. § 6 c. (e) d replaces j or g (j) in duist (just adv.), Geordie (George). (c) d is misheard for r in †cuditer ne (heritor), †Scuddievag, †"widdy (or worry) bag” [rhyme in Jam. s.v. Hornizholes], †Woodie-carl. Cf. § 13 d. (h) d replaces t in 'd (occasionally for it), Dishilagie, Haet, hundie-gowk w (hunt-the-gowk); also †boddum (bottom). Cf. § 3 h. (i) d or dd replaces E. th (th) in ferdin’ (farting), †wordie ne, w (worthy); †boddler w-s, †faddum sb. and v. ne, w, smiddy, stiddy, Suddrenwud, wuddy (witty, halter). Cf. § 17 c.

§ 5.

—the consonantal sound that is twice heard in E. cook—is represented graphically by c, ck, or k. (A) It was pronounced in words with kn- until within living memory. Murray (p. 122) heard this usage only "by old people” in Teviotdale; but sixty years previously A. Scott (pp. 57, 78) wrote nisfe, denoting that the k-sound in such had dropped out of north Roxb. use before 1805. (b) Symbol k is preferred to E. c in cae (caw), kail (cole), kaim (comb), keckle (cackle), kirsen (to christen), kye (A.S. cy’ cows), skuil (school). (c) k is dropped from (or heard in) Assle, Milsie, mista’en, neist n, w (next), owsen (oxen), sowesen-bow Td. (cow’s wooden collar), Owsmaw (Oxnam), ta’en; c from charter (character); ck from Banna, Hadda, Humlo, Hummie, Wylie (?). (b) c is preferred to ck (tf) in Caif, †cauk N (chalk), Sic, Siccan. (e) c or k is preferred to t in Beck v. Duck, Coachell, Cooslip (Twislehope in Liddesdale), Eemake, Gemlacky, Rambus, Stane-chacker (E. dialect stone-chatter), etc. Cf. Quinter (= Twinter). (f) ck corresponds to E. g in flack (= Flag), †hack (a hag) [Hogg 83], Hackberry, †jock-trot, jockey-parkery (jiggy-pockey). (g) ck, c’, or c obtains where E. has ct; see § 3 d. (h) ck corresponds to E. ch, tch (tf) in muckle (much). (i) k is preferred to E. ch (tf) in many words of doublet form, as †Kaisart, Keeselip, kincough, kirk, kirm, kist (church, churn, chest); bank (bench), beseek v. w, birk, Breeks, †ilk (each), †pick ne (pitch), skreek (scrreech), †whulk (which). (j) k represents E. tck in dike (wall: cf. E. ditch), Flake (fetch), sike (E. dialect stick ditch), steek (stitch), thack, threek (thatch), yook (itch). (k) k represents †qu (kw) in Kitt, †koa (co’), †qu’ (quoth), markiss, venterlokist (ventriloquist).

§ 6.

—the consonant heard in E. gig. (A) It is developed in †baygonet, Prignicketie. (b) g is preferred to c (k) in †Gavel ne (Calville apple), Gom-up (?), Gonshein, gravat, vaigands (see Vacance); to ck in †nig-nag, Td. (a knick-knack), Slitrig (for earlier Sitterick, etc.).
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Cf. Sneg. (c) g replaces d in wheele w (to wheel or cajole). Cf. § 4 E. (b) g is preferred to E. -dge in brig, rig, Segg.

§ 7. m

(a) m is developed in †Rambaskious, †Rambusk (robust). (b) m is lost in Bantie, C’way. (c) m replaces earlier n in Beam v., Bramlin’, Leggin (a leggin’ = legging), †Scringer (?), Turmeet (a turnip). Cf. § 8 F. (b) m replaces ng in Mem’nd.

§ 8. n

(a) n is unadopted in Brander, drucken (Old N. druhn drunken), i’ (med. E. i, in), kye (kine; A.S. cy), vae [day, etc.] (A.S. a one). (b) n is omitted in Canniget (= Canongate, Jedburgh; “Cannogate” in Retours, 14 Dec. 1603), Mairtimas, †Orpie, Saicy, †Shucken; asteed, isteed (instead); Eer sb., †Est, Ettle-earnest, Eave, Yave (nave). Cf. Covoy, †Cuddie sb.² (c) Added n appears in bleck’nin’ (blackening), cannet? c–w (cannot?). Megginstie, Mennen, meenint n–w (a minute of time), Ramperrn, Sennen. See Noration. (d) Radical n is retained in †Brunstane, Een, Hollin (holly), †miln, muhn (A.S. mylen mill), †Monanday, Ratten, Shuine, Stern sb. (e) n corresponds to E. l in flanne, Melvin (written Melville), troun. Cf. § 11 F. (f) n corresponds to m in †albeen w (album), †Fearn (= Therm), Yern (cf. Yerm). Cf. § 7 C. (g) n corresponds to E. ng (ŋ) in all endings of verbal nouns, pple. adjs., and present pple., also in nouns ending similarly, as Ferdin’ (farthing), Fleein’ (personal name), hafflin’ (stripiling), herrin’, loanin’ (lane between fields), etc. Cf. § 10 D. (h) n replaces ng before th (θ) in length, strenth (en). (i) n corresponds to r in Bountree (Sc. bourtree elder), gairten (garter). See Brandon, Cannon-nail. Cf. § 13 F. (j) ni is developed in †ballant (ballad), Mennent, Sennent.

§ 9.

—The voiced back nasal usually represented by ng, but also by n before back consonants, as in Bink, Kink v., etc. (a) It corresponds to E. ng (ŋ) in anger, dangle, England, finger, hunger, mingle, monger, single, etc. (b) It is dropped in Hanlawlie, Loanie; developed in ungshin, ungshineer (auction, -eer), Hangmanay. (c) It replaces E. gn (n) in †bening, †conding, †maling (w). (d) It corresponds to n in Bingwed, ingin (onion), Spang, spang-new, Ringan (N’man). Cf. § 8 G. It is not certain whether †gowping [1686 in Wilson¹ 8q] (= Sc. goupen the fill of both hands held bowl-wise) denotes an actual former pronunciation, or is a mere scribal variant.

§ 10.

—Voiced front nasal—the “liquid n’” heard in F. signé, was long preserved in a few words in this county. Murray gave evidence to Ellis [E. E. Pronunciation, i. 298 note] of cuinzie (coin), gaburhunzie (wallet). †Lunyie (loin) was still current about 1840; cf. also Cunyie.