JOHN BUCHAN -
BORDERER

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For Ian, Fiona and Iain
whose patience and trust
have made this work possible.
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Since there is no standard edition of Buchan's works and first editions are not always easily obtainable I have made use of whatever edition I was able to buy from second-hand dealers. These are the ones given here to which the page references apply.

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Aitken (1973); Hanna Aitken, A Forgotten Heritage, SAP (1973)
Baird (1924); Rev. A. Baird, The Annals of a Tweeddale Parish, Smith (1924)
C; John Buchan, Oliver Cromwell, Hodder & Stoughton (Oct 1934)
CG; John Buchan, Castle Gay, Hodder & Stoughton (Oct 1930)
CH; (ed.) Susan Buchan (Tweedsmuir), The Clearing House Hodder & Stoughton (1946)
CC; John Buchan, Canadian Occasions, Hodder & Stoughton (1940)
DP; David Daniell, The Interpreter's House, Nelson (1975)
DF; John Buchan, The Dancing Floor, Hodder & Stoughton (Oct. 1927)
EA; The English Association
18th CB; John Buchan, Some Eighteenth Century Byways Blackwood (1908)
FP; John Buchan, The Free Fishers, Nelson (Sept 1936)


G; John Buchan, *Greenmantle*, Nelson (Apr. 1922)

GH; The Glasgow Herald

GM; The Gentleman's Magazine

Gr; The Graphic


GUM; Glasgow University Magazine

GW; John Buchan, *Grey Weather*, Lane (1899)

H; John Buchan, *Huntingtower*, Nelson (n.d.)

H & R; John Buchan, *Homilies & Recreations*, Nelson (1926)


IH (1936); John Buchan, *The Interpreter's House*, (1936)

JAS; Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, Hart-Davis (1965)

JB of B; John Buchan, *John Burnet of Barne*, Pan (1962)

Karoo; L. G. Green, *Karoo*, Timmins (1975)

L; Unpublished letter.

L. in the W; John Buchan, *A Lodge in the Wilderness*, Blackwood (1907)

Lord Ardwall; John Buchan, Andrew Jameson, Lord Ardwall Blackwood (1913)

LS; John Buchan, *The Last Secrets*, Nelson (Nov. 1923)

LT; John Buchan, *The Long Traverse*, Hodder & Stoughton (Sept. 1941)


MAD; John Buchan, *Men and Deeds*, Davies (1935)

Magaz; Blackwood's Magazine


NHD ; John Buchan, Memory Hold-the-Door, Hodder & Stoughton (Nov. 1940)

MM ; Macmillan's Magazine

Mr.G.; John Buchan, Mr. Standfast, Nelson (Classic) (1961)

Nat.Geog.; The National Geographic Magazine

NLS; The National Library of Scotland.


PJ ; John Buchan, Prester John, Nelson (1910)

P. of K ; John Buchan, The Path of the King, Nelson (1/6 Novels) (n.d.)

PP ; John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress, Nelson (n.d.)

PSE ; John Buchan, Poems, Scots and English, Jack (1917)

Hal. (1897) ; John Buchan, Sir Walter Ralegh, Blackwell (1897)

Rev JB ; Anna Buchan etc., John Buchan 1847-1911, Smyth (1912)

SG ; John Buchan, Scholar Gypsies, Lane (1937)

SHR ; John Buchan, Sick Heart River, Hodder & Stoughton (July 1944)

Sir Q ; John Buchan, Sir Quixote of the Moors, Unwin (1895)

Spec ; The Spectator

Sp. Ex. ; The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, Image Books (1964)

SR ; The Scottish Review

Sto A ; John Buchan, Salute to Adventurers, Nelson (n.d.)

TE & MM ; Rev. John Buchan, Tweedside Echoes and Moorland Musings, MacLaren (1881)

39 S ; John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, Longmans (17th impression 1965)

3 H ; John Buchan, The Three Hostages (The Four Adventures of Richard Hannay, Hodder & Stoughton (Jan. 1933))
UU; Anna Buchan, Unforgettable, Unforgotten, Hodder & Stoughton (Feb. 1948)

W; John Buchan, Nelson's History of the War, 24 Vol. ed. (1914 - 1919)

W by the T; John Buchan, The Watcher by the Threshold, Nelson (1949)

WF; John Buchan by His Wife and Friends, Hodder & Stoughton (1947)

WB; John Buchan, Sir Walter Scott, Cassell (May 1932)

WW; John Buchan, Witch Wood, Hodder & Stoughton, (July 1927)

YB; The Yellow Book.
Chapter One

The Scottish Borders

John Buchan always regarded the Scottish Border Country as his "proper home", even though he was born in Perth and brought up in Kirkcaldy and Glasgow. The "Border hills were my own possession", he claimed, "a countryside in which my roots went deep". Throughout his life he retained a remarkable ability to recall these "shining morning-lands of the spirit" and memories of the hills around Broughton "haunted - and cheered" him through an intense and varied career. This was the reference topography against which all others were to be assessed, the real world, the touchstone of his later experience, and the proving ground of his literary creativity. Yet it was only through his grandparents in Peebles and Broughton that John Buchan could justly lay claim to a threshold in the Borders.

1 MHID 34
2 " 27
3 " 276
4 " 29
I Bank House, Peebles

John's great-grandfather was born in Stirling, but the family must have moved to Peebles during his lifetime because it was there that he was buried in 1866. His son (John's grandfather) became one of the burgh's most respected citizens as writer and bank-manager. This John Buchan married Violet Henderson and had four sons John, William, Alex Stuart, and Thomas Henderson and two daughters Jane and Kate. When the eldest son John became a minister and William joined his father in business, Jane and Kate took over the running of Bank House.

Anna relished the thought of the good food that her aunts had always provided there when she wrote her memoirs.

In that house only the best butter was used for cooking, and lashings of cream. Sweetmeats there were in abundance, opulent chocolates and boxes of Edinburgh rock. In these days of margarine and national bread, spam and dried eggs, it is almost painful to remember the breakfasts - "rizzered haddies" kidneys and bacon, poached eggs and fried tomatoes on toast, new-made baps, farm butter and home-made marmalade.

It is little wonder that the Borders were referred to as the Promised Land by both John and Anna.

Situated at "the heid o' the street", the house was strategically positioned beside a natural community crossroads. Here Mr. Buchan recalled "the auld worthies" had long been accustomed to meet to hear "the crack o' the auld burgh toun". For Anna, the snatches of conversation that drifted in through

1 WU 95
2 TSC "The South Countrie", cf WU 25
3 TBSN "The Auld Burgh Town"
the windows, which opened directly on to the street in summer, emphasized the key position that her family held within this vigorous Peebles community, which was to become the Priorsford of her novels.

By the time that John and Anna were visiting it, Bank House was dominated by the genial figure of Uncle Willie. Anna draws an appealing pen-sketch of him in Unforgettable Unforgotten.

Uncle Willie, who liked to describe himself in Sir Walter Scott's phrase as "a just-leevin man for a country writer", was one of the most delightful people I have ever known. As a small child I wondered if he could be a relation of the parrot. They both had hooked noses and rather tight eyes, and when Uncle Willie stood before the parrot's cage, dancing and singing:

"Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
And merrily danced the Quaker..."

and the parrot imitated him, the likeness to me seemed quite absurd. My father was fair and blue-eyed, but with his pale face and dark eyes and small black beard, Uncle Willie looked almost like a foreigner. "Equable, alert and gay" no-one enjoyed the good things of life better than he.

Uncle Willie probably served as a partial model for Duncan Dott in The Free Fishers. Like William Buchan this gentleman of somewhat incongruous appearance was not only a Scots writer but also the Town Clerk of an ancient and royal burgh. William Buchan was Town Clerk of Peebles from 1880 to 1906, when he was succeeded by his nephew James Walter Buchan. The battles over land use that Dott describes fighting in Waucht correspond well to the changes noted at Peebles in Tweedside Echoes and Moorland Musings. Dott's deep devotion to obtaining the necessary "scarf of a pen" which signalled the completion of his job and

1 96
2 53, 57
3 54
4 374 etc
his right to return to the comfort of home, may well be both a phrase and an attitude to business borrowed from his uncle. Certainly Mr. Dott's command for a breakfast of "fresh haddocks, eggs and a branded callow to follow", as well as his constant references to good food and comfort are consistent with Uncle Willie's reputation as a bon vivant.

Uncle Willie was also a literary gourmet. He kept an up-to-date library, subscribing to a number of magazines like The Speaker and Longmans. He was particularly well informed with regard to French literature and history. Anna traces the family interest in books to her grandmother at Bank House, Violet Henderson. The active use of a family library may well account for the way that all the Buchans quote so freely without bothering to specify their sources in much the same way as television material is appropriated today.

Intellectual stimulus was certainly not lacking in this part of the Borders. Peebles was the home of William and Robert Chambers, Professor James Nicol, Professor Henry Calderwood and Professor John Veitch. Professor J.C. Shairp was a frequent visitor and hill-walking companion of John Veitch. The philologist James Augustus Henry Murray is also likely to have been to Peebles because his interest in Border lore took him to many Border literary and archaeological societies. Andrew Lang, who like William Buchan had a particular interest in French culture, must surely have been friendly with the family, although

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1 *Fe* 71
2 *JAS* 36
3 *Wi* 96
4 *Rev JEB* 4, cf *JAS* 15
5 *SR* 1 Mar (1906) 245 "The Prince of Dictionary Makers"
John does not seem to have met him until he was at Oxford. Of this older generation of Border scholars the two who were to influence young John Buchan most were Professor John Veitch and Andrew Lang. Buchan may also have known local historian Robert Renwick, and the writer of "The Saft Lowland Tongue of the Borders", William Sanderson. He certainly knew Dr. Clement B. Gunn the ecclesiastical historian and author of a modern text of *Pebble to the Play*, and his daughter Winifred. With such models of intellectual enterprise in the vicinity of Bank House it is little wonder that John Buchan felt literature and philosophy to be an integral part of Border life.

Uncle Willie's influence was not confined to introducing his nephews and niece to literature and philosophy. He actively encouraged them to travel. He took Anna on a visit to Paris, with Aunt Kate as chaperone, and it was the encouraging wave of Uncle Willie's handkerchief that was the last thing John could make out on the quayside as he sailed for South Africa.

Yet cosmopolitan and expansive as Uncle Willie was he must have seemed stability itself compared with his brother Thomas. Uncle Tom was something of a romantic black-sheep figure amongst the Bank House family, according to Janet Adam Smith. After a religious conversion in later life he is said to have given up heavy drinking. This may indicate that he had some of William's traits in excess as a young man. In this case the family legend that Tom had killed a man and was forced to leave the country as a result may have its origins in some drunken scrum which caused a

1 UU 185
2 Letter 17 Sep (1901) mf 1, 67
3 JAS 41
local scandal. John's father indicates that he and his brothers were all inclined to enjoy a good fight when the occasion allowed.

I wonder if the laddies noo
He'e fechts as we had then,
When snow-ba' riots filled the toun
Wi' strife frae en' to en'

Memories of such behaviour may well explain the tolerance of the Reverend John Buchan for his own children's pranks. Although there may be some exaggeration of their wildness by both Anna and John it seems likely that Anna is quite accurate when she says that whilst they themselves looked forward to their holidays in the Borders others were more apprehensive about the arrival of "Thae little deils o' Buchans".

His "sailor" Uncle Tom was also a potent figure of romance for John on yet another score. In his travels he had visited Robert Louis Stevenson at Samoa. The two men probably discussed Peebles there because local tradition has it that Stevenson

...often visited Peebles, when living at Swanston, and he indicated at one time his intention to write a book about the burgh, or weave a romance about its delectable countryside, but nothing came of the idea.

Whether or not Uncle Alex was of the same ebullient temperament as his brothers at Bank House is not clear. The only mention that I have found of him is in the family tree, which indicates that he was born in 1852 and died in 1901.

For young John Buchan the most powerful influence at Bank House however came from his father. For to his father can be traced the origins of John's

1 Bygone Days
2 26
3 Jubilee Book of the Peebles Beltane Festival, Introduction (1949)
4 Family tree kindly shown to me by Mrs. Kate Love
relephantless search for personal integrity and social usefulness. To him also he owed his attitudes to Scottish history, to Border landscape, poetry, story and traditions, his concern with nature and the primitive, his eclectic habits of mind, his assurance of tone, and his conviction of the centrality of moral decision in human existence. John also shared with his father the pleasures of writing verse and a positive genius for telling a gripping story.

However dreamy his father may have become, like his son, he was reputed to have shown an early capacity for influencing others as the "ring-leader in all mischief". His pioneering spirit later found expression in evangelism, which took him out into the streets to preach when people did not come into his Church. His life was marked by a unifying vision. His memorial stone says that "He set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem" but Anna puts it in even more immediate and personal terms when she says of him that "the one great fact in his life was Christ". Like him, John held the firm belief that the present world was good, but that it was primarily a place of pilgrimage. The goal of life lay in a mystery beyond itself. Human success or failure was ultimately to be judged, then, for both men in terms of this transcendent purpose.

Although John would certainly have approved of the description "a right good pilgrim" for his father he also saw plainly what this had cost him in human terms as he did the "King's work through the unfeated years". Fatigue, monotony and aesthetic self-denial

1 Rev JB 4
2 PP 323
3 18
4 PP 307
5 Rev JB "In Peebles Churchyard"
marked this man who was called to do battle in a frontier zone at the edge of mystery. It is interesting to notice that John’s heroes all fear self-pity more than any other emotion. Certainly there seems to have been no trace of this in his father.

John’s father was so successful in “imbuing his children with something of his own passionate love for his native Scotland” that an English cousin was snubbed by the Buchan children on her visit to Peebles. Mr. Buchan’s account was frankly prejudiced towards Nationalist and Free Church positions. Not unnaturally then, patriotism was considered a laudable virtue for the John Buchan who once sat on the rug at his father’s feet in the red-curtained study and listened to the stories “of Bruce and Wallace, of John Knox ... Mary of Scotland, the Covenanters, and the old unhappy far-off things”. Three other features of John’s attitudes to historical writing probably stem from this same source, the sense of the importance of continuous traditions in history, of individuals to the making of history, and of the role of the historian as interpreter as well as chronicler.

Mr. Buchan was, himself, an individualist to a high degree. Anna says that “he often stood alone in the Presbytery; indeed nothing astonished him more than to find himself in the majority”. John confirms this in Memory Hold-the-Door. Independence of mind was almost a religious principle for him since he claimed, “Minorities had been right ... since the days of Noah”. It is not surprising, therefore, that when he published his book The First Things he did so merely because, he

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1 Rev JB 18
2 " 13, 4
3 Rev JB 16
4 " 13
5 MHD 248
said, "I have ventured to think for myself". 1 The journalist in his son was equally happy to write about a variety of subjects with the same confidence in the educated man's right to speak on subjects that concerned him. Also, although John chose to stand as a Unionist, his political position was actually staunchly independent when he eventually entered Parliament in 1927 as the member for the Scottish Universities.

John's father found in Tweeddale the perfect formative playground in his youth, just as his son was to do thirty years later. There were, for both of them, "The Tweed and Cuddy at the very door, woods in plenty for bird-nesting, hills to climb, and walks of infinite variety". 2 Anna says that her father learned his love of nature during the summer holidays at Stell knewe near Leadburn 3 but in his verse he says that it was "the silver Tweed" that "First taught me Nature's still, small voice to heed". 4

The emphasis on the necessity of a feeling for Nature in Mr. Buchan's verses owes much to Wordsworth. Professor Veitch went so far as to claim that such a feeling originated in Scotland and was transferred into England through the work of Border poet James Thomson. It was, therefore, simply returning to its source through the influence of William Wordsworth. 5 Buchan was to reject this theory in the notes to The Northern Muse. The influence of Wordsworth is however clearly demonstrable in the works of Veitch and the Buchans.

Like Mr. Buchan John Veitch believed that he had

1 The First Things. 5
2 Rev JE 5
3 " 4
4 TEAM "The Tweed"
5 The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry (1888)

'Twas here, O spirit of the mountain lone
That lives and feels, yet knows no narrow bound
Of rounding space or local consciousness—
Thou first spake to my heart, and first became
To me a new divine creative power.

Buchan dismissed Veitch's poetic efforts as
"essentially uninspired". Yet he was himself in
sympathy with what he called the "mild pantheism" of
Wordsworth which he saw as particularly well suited to
the Border landscape. Indeed Wordsworth was for him
"the authentic voice of my own Borderland". When
Buchan came to write his own account of the Literature
of Tweeddale he too spoke of "some emanation from the
changeless hills and waters, laying its spell upon the
generations".

If Wordsworth was an important influence on the
Reverend John Buchan and his eldest son, Sir Walter
Scott was a "presence" throughout their lives. A
passage in the 1932 biography of Scott shows just how
well Scott fulfilled the function of interpreter and
prophet for both men in their attitude to the land.

He has left us not only the products of his fancy
but almost his bodily presence, a personality
which to his lovers is as real as if in the flesh
he still moved among us ... He saved his land
from the narrow rootless gentility and the barren
utilitarianism of the illuminates; he gave her
confidence by reopening to her the past; and he
blended into one living tradition many things
which the shallow had despised and the dull had
forgotten. Gently he led her back to nature
and the old simplicities. His mission was that
of Hosea the prophet:— "Behold, I will allure
her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak
comfortably to her. And I will give her

1 J. Veitch, *The Tweed* (1875), 15
2 MAR 340
3 MHD 116
4 MAR 353
vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth."

Grandeur of scenery and venerable ruins impressed Scott most in his Border environment. He himself traces his consciousness of landscape to the period he spent at Kelso, near the confluence of the Teviot and the Tweed. Here he felt a sense of harmony between land and history. This was something that Buchan was also to recognise for he described upper Tweeddale as "a land which alike in history and configuration, unites and harmonizes opposites". There is good reason for this according to John's father, for the earth is

... the vestibule of heaven, its skies
Are written o'er with shadows of the true

Consequently, Mr. Buchan preached that the regenerated earth would retain its present features though in a glorified condition. In his schema, then, the land was integrated into eternal history.

The Buchans also reflected the general trends in changing attitudes towards Scottish scenery shown so well in the recent exhibition The Discovery of Scotland at the National Gallery in Edinburgh.

In the Reverend John Buchan's verse, descriptions of scenery tend to be conventional, as in the ballads and songs and there is little picturesque or accurate detail in the pre-Raphaelite manner. Yet his son says that he was a keen field botanist. In this he was also following a well established Border tradition

1 WS 372,3
2 Scott quoted WS 36
3 H&J 353
4 TEAMM "A Summer Eve"
5 FT 264
6 James Holloway and Lindsay Errington, The Discovery of Scotland (1978)
7 cf Painting of Border Widow by Bell Scott
8 UN 246
of scientific investigation. Hutton's studies of the unconformities near Jedburgh and at Siccar Point published in his *Theory of the Earth* in 1795 had helped to lay the foundations of scientific geology. Following him, Peebles-born James Nicol, who became Professor of Natural Philosophy at Aberdeen, was to discover graptolites in the Lower Palaeozoic shales of the district in the 1840's. This work was then continued by Charles Lapworth who whilst teaching at Galashiels made further analyses of the Lower Palaeozoic rocks which he eventually published in 1870. His hypothesis remained unchallenged until the recent phase of research began in the 1950's. One of the earliest studies of the phenomenon of the raised beach also came from the Borders. This was *Ancient Sea-Margins* by Robert Chambers, published in 1848.

Mr. Buchan's interests are more inclined to reflect contemporary concern with evolutionary theory. This too had its natural place in the Peebles cultural environment. Robert Chambers had published *The Vestiges of Creation* in 1844, fifteen years before Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859). Henry Calderwood had also entered the controversy with his *Evolution and Man's Place in Nature* in 1893. Mr. Buchan was to express his views on the subject in *The First Things* in terms of microcosm and macrocosm.

Man stands beneath the sky a microcosm, a little thought-world within him, while outside him is the great fact-world needing to be subdued.

Man masters nature by interpreting it, says Mr. Buchan, acknowledging his debt for this notion to Bacon. Interpretation is possible because nature has in it a prophetic meaning for man.

2 FT 234
3 190
In making matter, God stamped upon it, for us to see and interpret, something of His mind: it becomes to us a prophecy which truly, though faintly, foreshadows what is set down with such clearness in revelation that he who runs may read.

The younger John Buchan did not follow his father entirely either in his field interests or in his metaphysical explanation of landscape phenomena. He is affected however by both. In his early essays he is inclined to catalogue the phenomena "that fill up the landscape" as Veitch was to see as a characteristic common to Burns, Leyden, Scott and Hogg.

It was the present Lord Tweedsmuir who showed a more scientific naturalist's approach to the world about him. His ornithological knowledge was to be the model for Peter John's in the novel *The Island of Sheep* (1936).

Probably the most important attitude to nature, characteristic of the Buchan family, is that of sport. In *Always a Countryman* the present Lord Tweedsmuir says that he inherited from his Peebles grandfather "the finest greenheart trout rod that I have ever seen". He goes on to explain that the "sporting tradition of this side of the family was one of fishing and, for generations, each of the men of the family had been noted catchers of trout". All Buchan heroes seem to have keen sporting instincts and to be adept with both rod and gun when necessary. Such sport does not rely so much on the equipment but on personal ingenuity, agility and strength, just as it probably did for the Buchans in Tweeddale.

Under the influence of his father and John Veitch, John saw himself as belonging to a very definite
Border literary tradition which he was to describe as a retrospective pageant procession.

As I look back upon the long record I seem to see some power at work, some emanation from the changeless hills and waters, laying its spell upon the generations. I see the procession of its lovers, gentle and simple; Stevenson roaming the moors as an eager child; John Veitch, as I remember him, striding up Cademuir in an autumn gale; the bards of the burgh town set to their glées at their winter suppers of kippered salmon and strong ale; Sir Walter Scott on his pony riding from Megget to Manor, and Hogg with his gusty voice ruling the St. Ronan's games; the simple old Georgian world which paced on horseback along the rough roads, and sat by the fire in the village change-house, and travelled with beasts from Falkirk Tryst to Northumberland, and slumbered peacefully of a Sabbath through the two hours sermon in the little whitewashed kirks; Dr. Penneucik jogging about the shire with physic in one pocket and a note-book in the other; Yester with his love-songs; the minstrel of a summer night at the shieling door repeating the tale of Otterburne; the Master of St. Leonard's hospice in his scriptorium inditing his dull moralities; James, poet and king, hunting in Shielshope, and halting his horse in Peebles street to admire the humours of the Beltane Fair; a hundred forgotten pipers and violers, playing lîlts for the folk to dance to, and sending children quaking to bed with tales of warlocks and fairies; True Thomas listening in the greenwood for the bridle bells of the Queen of Elphame; the hungry face of the boy Michael Scott setting out to pursue strange knowledge overseas; and at the end Arthur marshalling his men in some glade of the Wood of Caledon, and Merlin singing his wild songs in the morning of the world.

Through his father most of all, John was directly linked to the rich and complex traditions of Border story-telling. This aspect of his inheritance has such importance from a literary standpoint that it is worth considering in some detail.

\[ \text{MAR 353, 4} \]
Firstly there were the fairy-stories and fireside tales that were common in the Borders, of which Mr. Buchan was such a gifted teller.

When he came to nursery tea, fairies spoke out of the tea-pot, and the fearsome Red Tin of Ireland and cunning Whippitie Stoorie joined hands with English Alice to make a Wonderland. 1

A version of Whippitie Stoorie is to be found in Robert Chambers's *Popular Rhymes of Scotland* and is reprinted in Hannah Aitken's *A Forgotten Heritage.* 2 It is a Scottish form of the Rumpelstiltskin type. "Little people" in the Borders are more closely associated with the brownie, dwarf tradition than with the nymph of classical mythology. Scott's version of "Gilpin Horner," 3 *The Black Dwarf* and Hogg's brownies lurk behind the children's tales. The element of danger is obvious in tales like that of "Habetroc," 3 and insecurity in the changeling tales such as "Tibbie's Bairn." 4 Yet it was wonder and excitement that the Buchan children derived from these tales rather than fear. Fear was reserved for Lewis Carroll's *Alice* and the loss of identity involved in her metamorphoses. 5

Other tales were handed down which apparently belonged to the popular local and oral traditions.

Many a time on winter evenings he gathered his children round him, and told them his mother's stories, old tales never printed, but handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation.

Neither Anna nor John is explicit about any of these tales. The only one that is mentioned by Anna is "Jock and his mither" told to the eager youngsters in his Gorbals parish. 7

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1 Rev JB 16
2 *Scottish Academic Press* (1973)
3 Aitken (1973) 65
4 9
5 JAS 15
6 Rev JB 4
7 " 10
Hogg, Chambers, Lang and Buchan all show the continuity of such Border story-telling traditions up to this time. John felt strongly that he, personally, had inherited this function from his father.

I suppose I was a natural story-teller, the kind of man who for the sake of his yarns would in prehistoric days have been given a seat by the fire and a special chunk of mammoth. I was always telling myself stories when I had nothing else to do - or rather, being told stories, for they seemed to work themselves out independently.

One of the most appropriate of all the honorary titles Buchan was given whilst Governor General of Canada was that of Indian Chief Teller of Tales.²

The Border tradition of tales also includes a number of saints tales and John's father mentions a legend of St. Kentigern in a sonnet on "Tweedsmuir". In the case of the Buchans the monastic saints stories are replaced by the Calvinist Worthies and in particular the Covenanters. Anna says that her father wrote "a long romance about the Covenanters, which appeared serially in a religious weekly".³ This has not been traced as yet but it is perhaps significant that one of John's first published literary efforts was also on the Covenanters.⁴ John did not indulge in popular hagiography but his biographies of Cromwell, Montrose and Gordon, as well as Augustus and Julius Caesar, have some relationship to this genre of hero-worship and model creation.

The Reverend John Buchan saw religious history in epic terms. Bunyan's Holy War was favourite reading. Epic tales like The Battle of Brunanburgh in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (937) and Scott's description of Flodden in Marmion, Canto VI, tend to be told in verse

1 MHD 193
2 JAS 390
3 WU 94
4 " 18
form in the Borders however. Perhaps the closest that the younger John came to this genre, though written in prose, was in his description of the battle of Erzerum in Greenmantle.

The romance epic, on the other hand, of the Arthurian cycle, was felt to belong especially to Upper Tweeddale. The Reverend John Buchan alludes to it in his poem on "The Tweed". The connection was discussed in detail by Professor Veitch in his History and Poetry of the Scottish Border ¹ and by Buchan in "The Literature of Tweeddale". The sources for the Arthurian legend in relation to the Borders are listed by Veitch as the Four Ancient Books of Wales; the Historia of Gildas; and the Historia Britonum of Nennius. Thus Veitch accepts that Arthur was likely to have lived in the "first half of the sixth century" at the "critical period of the Cymric race in Britain"² when the Romanized Britons were struggling for power with the resurgent tribal groupings. It is Nennius who speaks of the twelve great battles fought by Arthur, the seventh of which was in Silva Caledonis (Coit Caledon). Veitch is adamant that this term could well apply to Tweeddale.

The phrase Silva Caledonis, or Caledonian Forest, has come popularly to be restricted to a district north of the Forth. But there is no historical warrant for this limitation. The wood of Caledon, the Nemus Caledoni of Geoffrey at Monmouth, in the eleventh century included Upper Tweeddale; and Fordun, still later, uses it in exactly the same application.³

Following a carefully reconstructed sequence of Arthur's movements after the sixth battle beside the Caron, Veitch sites the seventh battle on Cademuir

¹ I Chap. 5
² Chap I, 117
³ Chap I, 124
which he says was originally called Cadmore, or the great battle. It is not surprising that John has such a clear memory of the Glasgow professor striding up this hill in search of the first major event of local history.  

The death of Arthur fighting against his nephew Modred was not accepted by those who had hoped for social salvation from him, according to Veitch. Thus the Welsh bard wrote "A mystery to the world is the grave of Arthur". Veitch goes on to say "the baffled aspirations of the Cymric people, amid their later misfortunes, came to represent him as still living ... he and his companions in battle reposed in the dreamy halls of the Triple Eildons by the Tweed, waiting ... the brave bugle-call which should restore them to earthly life". This local legend is not mentioned by Alcock.

For the Buchan children, who found even the Eildon Hills rather too remote from this part of the glen, a resting place was created for their heroes in "a hollow in a near-by hill" which was really an old disused quarry. This was thought to be the "entrance to King Arthur's sleeping place" and thus became for them the anteroom of history and myth.

Merlin also appears in a sonnet written by John's father called "Tweedsmuir".

According to Skene Merlin was defeated by the

1 Leslie Alcock in Arthur's Britain
A.D. 367-534 (Allen Lane (1971) follows Jackson (M. Phil. 43 (1945) br-57) who confirms that in the "Welsh tradition Coit Celidon ... lay not far north of Carlisle, most probably in the Southern Uplands". Alcock also accepts that the battles of Camlann, Bregonin and Glein may well belong to this region (Map 2) but does not argue for any precise locations.

2 Quoted by Skene; Four Ancient Books of Wales I. 59.

3 REAP I, 129, 130

4 MHD 23

5 Celtic Scotland I, 157
Christian army under St. Kentigern. He is thus seen to have lived much later than Arthur. In this respect Border tradition is more historical than romantic.\(^1\) Having fled with a few followers to Etrick forest he was eventually killed by local shepherds. His body was mutilated and thrown into the Tweed from which it was eventually recovered to be buried at Drumelzier. The early religious conflicts which are epitomized in the struggle between Merlin and Kentigern are not, however, what caught the imagination of Borderers at this time. Both John Veitch and Sir George Douglas\(^2\) quote a paper by Arthur Grant on "The Scottish Origin of the Merlin Myth", *Scottish Review* Oct. 1892, in which Merlin is seen to represent "the old British type of the poetical or intellectual temperament in conflict with a rude age" (the latter no doubt typified by the local shepherds, not St. Kentigern!). The sense of a secret, primitive past hidden in the landscape was used by John in an early story submitted to *Blackwood's Magazine* called "No Man's Land" and reprinted, subsequently, in *The Watcher by the Threshold*.\(^3\)

With a payment of £4.40 for his first contribution to *Maga* and the place of honour in the January number of 1899, Buchan could have been well satisfied with this early literary use of Tweedside lore.

Another local association with Merlin was also to prove a remarkable feature for Buchan's future work.

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1 cf. Malory
2 *History of Selkirkshire*
3 Accepting it, William Blackwood calls it a "striking story" ([NLS Acc 5643, f. 30]) "powerful and 'creepy'". He is quick to detect echoes of Crockett's *Grey Man* and calls for changes in "details to obviate this as far as may be possible". Although Crockett spent some time in Peebles John did not meet him until he was at College and cycled over to Penicuik with Charles Dick (UW 188).
This was a rather unimposing stone set in the dyke near Alterstone farm where the Buchans spent some of their holidays when they grew up but which must have been known to them from childhood. This was supposed to be the place of Merlin's conversion in local legend. It must certainly have been the focus of speculations about sacrificial rites for the Buchan children. As John grew older and his knowledge of other cultures increased, his attitudes towards this type of symbol became more complex. It was nevertheless the prototype of the altar stone in Witch Wood.

Two main sources of "outland tales" in the district were important for John Buchan; the Drovers and the gypsies (allied in the twentieth century to the pedlars, tinkers and other itinerant tradesmen). If drovers were only encountered occasionally on the way from Falkirk tryst the presence of the old drove roads was a constant reminder of these important itinerant members of the community. John was to describe one of these green ribbons "running from Falkirk through the shire of Linlithgow, skirting the county of Lanark, passing over the head of Tweeddale into Yarrow, and thence on through the Ettrick and Liddesdale moorlands to the English border", in an article published in Macmillan's Magazine. 1 The Michaelmas tryst had been transferred from Crieff to Falkirk in 1770. It was at this market that cattle and sheep were brought in from the Highlands to be sold to the southern, often English, buyers before the winter. John describes the movement of stock as he had heard of it probably from his father and uncles.

For days, maybe, the Brig of Peebles would be all but blocked, and little boys coming home from school would be sadly delayed and go dinnerless.

1 LXVII (1895) 449-453
2 MM (1895) 452, "The Drove Road"
The drover's life was precarious and yet highly responsible. They are depicted as men of extraordinary strength and stamina like the one nicknamed "Streams of Water from the South", hard drinking like Duncan Stewart in "A Journey of Little Profit" and in constant danger of being murdered for the money they carried on the return journey after the sale. The risk of violence and death which is the key to Scott's "The Two Drovers" and Hogg's "Adam Scott," is also the theme of a short story inserted into "The Drove Road" which Buchan admits "borders on the gruesome".

John seems to have been particularly impressed by at least one drover in his youth.

We have one before our eyes as we write, a tall, oldish man, something between a groom and a grazier, profoundly learned in the ways of horses and dogs, one who had seen something of the world and had tried many trades. His figure was well-known as with his plaid wrapped round his shoulders and his peaked cap pulled over his brow, he drove his flocks into the village in the short autumn twilight. When once these had found shelter in the stock-yard of some hospitable farmer, he would seek the public-house, and hold forth to his admirers. To the villagers, before the days of railroads and the penny postage, he was a link of connection with the outer world, a strenuous element in their sleepy lives. Year after year the man would come with his stories, till his step was not so firm, nor his eyes so clear to watch his charge. Then his journeys would cease, and the drover, would retire to end his days in the back streets of the city.

John uses the wanderer figure in the later novels to demonstrate clashes of values and to provide detached criticism of society. Ringan and Shalah in Salute to Adventurers have this outland function as do the band

1 Grey Weather (1899)
2 YB April (1896)
3 " " A51
4 " " 450 "The Drove Road"
of pirates in *The Free Fishers* though in a lesser degree. The wanderer is clearly another form of pilgrim, for on the drove road Buchan remarks that we are drawn onwards "to see for ourselves what lies over yon ridge or round yonder clump of trees. So we go on and ever on, heedless of meals and the passing of time; which is a fact alike in Tweedside topography and the conduct of life; for is not half our action prompted by a restless desire to scan the horizon and look over hill-tops?" 1

The "Kings and Earls of Little Egypt" as they styled themselves had their capital at Kirk Yetholm. One of the informants of an early historian of the Faas, W. Brodie, when collecting material for his book *The Gypsies of Yetholm* 2 published in 1884 was a Mr. James Buchan of New York. There is no evidence that this former Borderer was connected with the Buchan family at Bank House in Peebles, however. Nevertheless, John Buchan was conscious of both literary and practical concern with regard to the local gypsies. Scott had shown an interest in the gypsies since he heard his grandfather at Smailholm tell of their exploits. He contributed to *Blackwood's* "Notices concerning the Scottish Gypsies" in 1817 and created Meg Merilees and Wandering Willie in *Guy Mannering* and *Ragdauntlet*. William Chambers had also written of the Exploits, Curious Anecdotes and Sketches of the most remarkable Scottish Gypsies in 1823. John did not need to rely on literary sources for his knowledge of Border Gypsies however. He was eight when the last Gypsy Queen, Esther Faas Blyth, was buried in 1883 and he could not have failed to hear the talk of the royal funeral at

1 YB April (1896) 453 "The Drove Road"
2 To avoid confusion the spelling of gypsy has been standardized in this text.
Yetholm that year when he visited Peebles.

Outside the normal legal and social systems of the country, the gypsies always allied themselves as best they could to the dominant power of the times. Thus they are found associated with many of the landed families. W. S. Crockett points out that Scott and Mrs. Carlyle were proud to claim gypsy blood in their ancestry, just as Andrew Lang was also to do. In Mrs. Carlyle's case he asks mischievously "Does not a cross between John Knox and a gypsy explain many things".  

It was this kind of combination that fascinated John Buchan in such early essays as "Scholar Gypsies" 2 and "Gentlemen of Leisure". 3

The mutual attractions of the most stable members of society and the most "free" are also the theme of the ballad "The Gypsy Laddie" and of Buchan's "The Gypsy's Song to the Lady Cassilis". 4 Buchan heads his poem with a quotation which he claims is from the Chap-book of the Raid of Cassilis, which appears to be a prose version of the story. It is not clear if Buchan is being serious about this source or creating an illusion of sound scholarship in the way that he does in Witch Wood or Midwinter. Child does not mention such a source but there is no reason to suppose that one did not exist or that Buchan should not have had access to such a source. Peebles museum has photographs of a local pedlar, whose bag is on display in the museum. Walter Laidlaw's Jethart Worthies also makes mention of "Jock-the-Kecken" who was a conveyor of gaberlunzie tales. 5

1 W.S. Crockett, The Scott Originals 106
2 WW July (1894) 200-214
3 ♦ Jan (1894) 198-203
4 GU M 16 Feb (1898)
5 W. Laidlaw Poetry and Prose (1908) facing p. 45
James Ballantine's collection of tales in *The Gaberlunzie's Wallet* is based on the mixed chap-book and oral tradition in which the Borders shared. Alasdair Stewart, some of whose tales have been recorded by members of the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh, is proof that this tradition is still alive.

The earlier counterparts of these gaberlunzies and cadgers were probably the gypsy fiddlers, or pipers, who were able to amuse the crowds at fairs with stories as well as to accompany the dance. One of the most famous of these in real life was James Stuart who was reputed to be 115 when he died. For the Buchans it is the gypsy piper who provides the focus for the concept of the "glamour" of the free out-of-doors world and the realms of imaginative creativity. It seems likely that behind this, is also the association of the gypsy piper with the father who sat and played his penny whistle on John's bed as he convalesced after a fall from a carriage in Kirkcaldy. The picture of Andrew Amos in *Mr. Standfast* bringing the evening to a close with "very sweet and true renderings of old Border melodies" on his flute is surely based on John's recollections of his father at this time.

I feel asleep with a vision of Amos, his face all puckered up at the mouth and a wandering sentiment in his eyes, recapturing in his dingy world the emotions of a boy.

Anna makes her Jock the Piper, or Heather Jock in *Farewell to Priorsford* a thoroughly Scots figure. This piper is the symbol of the imagination that can create adventure from the commonplace. He is also a forerunner,

1 (1874) 3rd ed.
2 There is an engraving of him reproduced in White, *The Scottish Border and Northumberland* (1973) 204
3 Mr. 8 64
a nodromos leading them, as their father hoped to do, to the Buchan children, not to a Never-Never-Land, but "To the Land of Ought-to-be", a perfected earth.

"Pan playing on his siten reed" had been acclimatized to the Tweedsie topography by Nicol Burne, and Allan Ramsay in The Gentle Shepherd, had given Tweeddale "the aura of a classical convention" according to Buchan. A half-goat figure appeared on the cover of the original edition of Scholar-Gypsiess. Yet there is little resemblance between the Buchans' piper and the musician of, what Janet Adam Smith calls, the "modish literary paganism" of Kenneth Grahame, Maurice Hewlett, Arthur Machen and early E. M. Forster.

There is no doubt that Buchan was an admirer of Grahame, but his piper was far removed from that "convenient symbol into which writers could pour their own anarchic urges". Buchan's piper, associated with the Border tradition and especially with his father, is at once more homely, more virile and more purposeful.

Learn before you die to follow the Piper's son, and though your old bones bleach among grey rocks, what matter, if you have had your bellyful of life and come to the Land of Heart's Desire?

The "tune of 'Over the hills' which the Piper's son plays for ever in the ear of those who love the moorlands" is as attractive and irresistible as the proverbial gypsy "glamourie".

Scott's Wandering Willie in Redgauntlet can also be associated with this blind musician story-teller figure who has a knowledge of things beyond what is good for

1 Hebrews vi.20
2 H.R. 327
3 JAS. 93
4 Green, quoted by JAS. 94
5 MM Jul (1897) "The Song of the Moor"
6 Peebles. Mk. of Jul. 182
him, as was the case with the classical blind seer Tiresias. Meg Merrilees in Guy Mannering, who according to W. S. Crockett in The Scott Originals was Jean Gordon, is the prototype of another spinner of prophecies. Buchan describes this classic seer-wife as,

The greatest figure that Scott has drawn from the back-world and the underworld of Scotland. Half-crazy, wild as a hawk, savage yet with nobility in her savagery. When she appears the sery light of romance falls on the scene. Wherever we meet her - like some wise-woman of the Sagas by the ruins of Derncleugh laying her curse upon the house of Ellangowan, or speaking riddles in Tib Mump's hostelry, or in the wonderful scene with Dominie Sampson at the Kaim of Derncleugh, or in the sea-cave when Dirk Hatteraick's bullet finds her breast - she is the fate that presides over the action, and embodied destiny working her secret purpose, a reminder in the midst of comedy of the mystery of life.

Buchan claims that in this novel Scott was drawing on Border lore. Coleman Parsons has also shown how Meg became imaginatively linked with the Border prophetic tradition associated in particular with Michael Scott and Thomas Rhymer. Her anathema on Ellangowan he says is "antithetical and rhetorical, with the authentic ring of prophecies immemorially circulated on the Border". The nearest equivalent in Buchan's own fiction to this kind of unusual perception and insight, allied to hypnotic power is in Medina's mother in The Three Hostages. Although, in this case, the immediate associative reference is to a mixture of West Highland second sight and Eastern techniques of meditation (at that time more of an exotic novelty than they are today), the original inspiration may well have been in the

1 WS 14:1 2
2 14:3
3 C. Parsons Witchcraft and Demonology in Scott's Fiction (1959) 81
The gift of prophecy is associated with Michael Scott and Thomas Rhymer in Border traditions. In his survey of the literature of the county, like Veitch, was to claim Michael Scott for the Border family of Scotts who lived in upper Tweeddale in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. He rejected outright the counter-claim that he might have been a Scott of Balweary in Fife. Michael Scott is seen by Buchan as the prototype of the Borderer with an apparently insatiable thirst for fresh worlds of knowledge to explore and conquer. "No son of Tweeddale, it may be fairly said, voyaged alone over stranger seas of thought" says Buchan of Michael Scott. This independently-minded Borderer "was one of the greatest of medieval polymaths, theologian, legalist, mathematician, chemist, physiologist, logician, and linguist".1 The idea of the complete man was also an attractive one to John Buchan whose list of professions is equally varied: novelist, journalist, historian, politician, barrister, administrator, royal representative. Michael’s Scott’s reputation paid the penalty of being eccentric to the normal pattern of the life of his contemporaries and the historical person was soon lost in the accretions of the legend that grew up round his name. Thus "auld Michael", whose secular knowledge seemed to challenge orthodox faith, "became a figure of pure faery" of the recurring daemonic variety in Border lore according to Coleman Parsons. Unlike the more sinister Soulis, however, he does not operate through the medium of a powerful familiar spirit but directly through his own genius. He has thus more in common with the Shakespearian Prospero and the Celtic Finn Maccoll.

1 H&R 308
Such a giant can "be credited with every ancient or incredible work, from cleaving the Middons to the riddling of Sandyhill-neuk, where from the stones may still be seen in Biggar Moss". In addition to providing an explanation for the seemingly inexplicable in the environment he can also be a focus for dreams and fantasies like those of frustrated gourmets since he is able to entertain "his friends with dishes brought from the King of Spain's kitchen".

Michael Scott reappeared in classic Border literature in The Lay of the Last Minstrel. John Buchan was not to use "auld Michael" directly but it is not difficult to see in the scholar who appears in Dante's Inferno "with his head screwed round over his shoulder" the ancestor of brilliant but misguided characters like Dominic Medina in The Three Hostages and Lumley in The Power-House. Lew is also described as having his mind "screwed round" in Sick Heart River.

Although John's father was such a rich source of the tales of the Borders neither he nor his son make mention of the work that T. Henderson was to claim could be found at the end of the 19th century, along with The Bible, Burns and The Scots Worthies in "every country cottage". This was Wilson's Historical, Traditionary and Imaginative Tales of the Borders of which the first had appeared on Saturday, November 8th, 1834. Yet the collection, at least for the first eleven months whilst Wilson himself was editor indicates something of the richness of the tradition of tales on which the Buchans could draw. During the 48 weeks when the stories appeared 73 tales and romances "descriptive of the

1 Har 309

2 Iâ€”tr. Henderson edition Tales of B. (1934)
traditions, manners, and domestic life of the inhabitants of the Borders indicate that historical, epic, mystery, horror, homely, humorous, edifying, philosophical and burlesque tales abounded. The stock of stories was obviously not exhausted when Wilson died. Alexander Leighton, the Dundee man who had arrived on the Edinburgh literary scene by way of medicine and law had no roots in the Anglo-Scottish Border tradition and in order to keep up with the publishing demands of a popular weekly he was obliged to use any material that came to hand in Edinburgh. Thus he made use of writers like Hugh Miller and widened the scope of the tales to cover the whole of Scotland. Thomas Gillespie who was Professor of Humanities at St. Andrews was able to come closest to the original intention of the collection by contributing covenanting tales from his native Dumfriesshire.

John and Jean Lang followed Wilson's example with their popular collection of Stories of the Border Marches and Sir George Douglas also tried to produce a volume called The New Border Tales. John's own Grey Heather was described as "Moorland tales of my own people". It dealt with one type of story mainly. It's style is much more polished than the rhetorical and melodramatic style of Wilson who had been so impressed by the acting of Sarah Siddons in London. The ability to translate the folk-tale into a literary tradition is rare and only a few of the tales by any of these writers can be as successful in a written form as they obviously were in an oral version where the basic material could easily be adapted to the listeners.

Many of the most popular stories in the Borders have been formalized as ballads. The most widely known of these must surely be "Thomas the Rhymer". True Thomas, like Michael Scott and Merlin, was considered...
to be something of a wizard and a prophet.

The historical character of Thomas of Erildoun (Earlston on Leader Water for Veitch and Buchan), may have had unusual gifts of foresight but the prophecies that have become associated with his name are so many and varied as to be a mixture of historical transposition, conjecture and pure fancy. The Rhymer, no doubt became a convenient peg on which to hang later controversial political speculation.

The ability to speculate accurately carries with it an aura of mystery for which a supernatural explanation like that given in the ballad, is felt to be wholly consistent. Whether or not this part of the ballad originated in the Borders or not does not concern either Veitch or Buchan. That it has become an integral part of Border lore is incontrovertible. The ballad element of the young man who is awakened to a realization of his own power and of the "secret" of life by the arrival of a beautiful "Queen of Faery" was to remain the image for sexual attraction throughout Buchan's writing. Criticism of its obvious inadequacies as a complete statement of human sexuality have perhaps obscured its value. Against literary fashion Buchan reaffirms the earlier European traditions of spring-time love, by which the mind and the emotions open up to a new vibrant consciousness making possible entry into the closest of personal relationships. The ballad tradition is far from naive and in "Thomas the Rhymer", particularly in the romance version there is an acute sense of the fragility of personal relationships, the insistence on loyalty of the most radical kind, and the excitement of inherent danger. Whereas the Roman de la Rose controls

1 cf. D. Buchan The Ballad and the Folk
2 cf. T.S. Eliot "Trufrock"
3 Child, I, 326 et seq.
the environment of love in an enclosed garden, the northern ballad takes the couple on a prolonged journey through the physical world before they enter the enchanted ground of faery. The link here with Pilgrim's Progress and Arthurian Quest themes indicate a convergence of ideas (probably again under paternal influence) which Buchan was to use effectively in his fiction. Through the recitals of his father the ballads were known to John in the context of a living verbal and oral tradition.¹

In Memory Hold-the-Door² John says that his father "could repeat every Border ballad that was ever printed and many still unpublished". The Reverend John Buchan apparently saw no contradiction between his faith and the romance of life celebrated in the ballads, or even, with the heroic mode of the reivers. Seen out of context, the Reiver ballads in particular are the antithesis of Christianity; brutal, bombastic and simplistic. In historical context, however, it is possible to see them as celebrations of true heroism; the heroism of survival against normally intolerable odds. Caught between the two great warring factions the Borderers were forced to develop an internal system of support, deviations from which usually carried the death penalty. The development of a heroic code of behaviour was encouraged and informed by a heroic mode of poetry.

It is possible to see parallels between the ballads that appear in Scott's Minstrelsy and the heroic mode of European epic as formulated by C. M. Bowra in Heroic

¹ The distinction here is that adopted by D. Buchan The Ballad and the Folk, "verbal" = literate spoken "oral" = recreative comp. on basic framework.

² 245
"The Fray of Support" is an initiatory war-chant in which ordinary people are urged to adopt the role of reiver hero. "Jamie Telfer" shows an ordinary man raised to the status of a hero in action. "The Raid of the Reidswire" demonstrates the conflict of the codes against which the Reiver hero has to be judged. Two ballads illustrate the ironic and successful anti-heroic stance, namely "The Lochmaben Harper" and "Dick o' The Cow". Three escape ballads form the most clearly defined of all the groups; "Himmont Willie", "Jock o' the Side" and "Archie Caffield". The common element in all these is the triumph over retributive justice. There is also another group of ballads which demonstrate the triumph of Nemesis however. In this case the hero is expected to maintain his assumed role through death. These are "Johnnie Armstrong", "Hobie Noble", "Armstrong's Goodnight" and "Lord Maxwell's Goodnight". In the last and least successful ballad in this group, "Rookhope Ryde", there is some attempt to Christianize the code. By transferring the responsibility for action to God, however, "heroism" becomes impossible and the ballad atmosphere degenerates into self-pity and an unfulfilled longing for revenge rather than the demonstration of an equalizing retribution in action. Formal elements like the speeches before battle also link the Reiver ballads with the epic mode. John was to use his own version of the heroic mode in his thrillers (including the specific statements of their intentions and motivations by the heroes which are the equivalents of epic pre-battle speeches).

Richard Hannay, Edward Leithen and Dickson McCunn emphasize their prosaic ordinariness when called upon

1 (1952)
to adopt the romantic heroic role. This takes place within the strict confines of predetermined conventions. Although they are important as individuals they, too, need to operate in conjunction with others to accomplish their raids into enemy territory. They are all called to get out of their rut and "ride" over the borders of social normality and the emphasis in a Buchan adventure is always on the skill of the actors rather than the sensational horror of pain, death or destruction which is so often a concomitant of such forays. Death is usually a form of retributive justice that comes eventually from factors outside the control of the hero. Hannay actually tries to save Medina from his final fall into the abyss. Only in *Sick Heart River* does he face the problems of the heroic confrontation with death itself in the way that the "Goodnight" ballads do.

David Buchan expands Housman's definition of the ideal territory for the production and flourishing of ballads, but both agree that this is characteristically a border region. Although Dr. Buchan is anxious to substantiate the claim of the North East as a breeding ground of the Scottish ballad his basic arguments on the social context of balladry apply most directly and obviously to the Anglo-Scottish Border region. The close-knit interdependent communities which Dr. Buchan sees as providing the "occasions for ballad performance" were here grouped along the river valleys and the fiery-cross was carried up and down the water to rally the community in the Reiver ballads. It was also partially nucleated in relation to the peel towers of the local protectors under the blackmail system. The Border glen was still the social unit that concerned the younger John Buchan when he began writing.

In an early story "The Riding of Ninemileburn" John writes a direct reiver story in prose form. In this case

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1 *M* (1912)
he does not allow the heroic mode to remain unchallenged. By juxtaposing the "generous illusions" of the starving farmer with the realism of the squalour and suffering in his family which is the product of this devastating social context he approaches tragic irony. The same technique is used in "A Captain of Salvation" to produce acute discord between the two modes of perceiving social conditions. Both these stories belie the idea that Buchan indulged a superiority complex under the guise of proposing heroism as the normal human vocation. John McNab translates the Reiver conventions into more modern terms. Here the poaching, (a pastime which seems to have been a common Border "sport"), becomes a kind of honourable game led by the new lords of society. These leaders descend, for the space of an adventure, from the peel towers of social prestige and put their lives and reputations at risk simply for the pleasure of answering a predetermined challenge. The other form of the survival of the reiver contest in the Borders celebrated by Buchan is in electioneering. In "Politics and the May Fly"¹ the Conservative farmer outwits the Whig ploughman by playing on his passion for fishing and so deprives him of his vote. The spirit is that of "The Lochmaben Harper" and "Dick o' the Cow".

In discussing the authorship of the ballads John concludes¹ as Veitch had done² that there has always been a popular tradition of minstrelsy among the Borderers and that this had produced the variety, complexity and unevenness of composition which are to be found in the ballads as we now have them in written form. Both Veitch and Buchan refuse to make too rigid a distinction between literary genres in this context particularly

¹ [Ref] 317
² [Ref] I, 72
between ballad and song. The occasion of gatherings in the "ale-house and cottage and castle hall... the clippings and the autumn 'kirns', and the rendezvous at the noontide meal, as described in the Complayant of Scotland, when shepherds gathered to dine off cakes and curds and cheese, and pass an hour with singing and playing... the dances out of doors in "the summer-time... shielings" have all produced social poetry of different types.

The habit of enshrining news and personally relevant history in a memorable form was so popular that Barbour was able to excuse himself from including an account of the victory of Schyr John the Soullis over Schyr Andrew Hardcaly in his Bruce because they were already so well known in popular song:

I will nocht rehere the maner,  
For wha sa likes thai may her  
Young women guhen thai will play,  
Syng it amang thaim ilk day.

David Buchan noted the importance of women in more modern times in handing down the ballad traditions. Anna says that it was her grandmother Violet Henderson who gave her son "his passion for poetry, especially old ballads; his genius for story-telling". He was in turn to pass it on to his children.

The Reverend John Buchan was also a great collector and reciter of Border Rhymes, some of which appear in his son's novels. A verse from one of these caught the fancy of John and Anna in particular. Aiken Drum, in his version, performed an amazing progressive balancing feat for "He rade upon a razor".

This is surely the imaginative concept behind "the razor-edge of life" and "the edge of risk" on which the

1 Quoted HAR 319  
2 Quoted BH&P II, 80; HAR, 318  
3 Rev J.B. 4  
4 UU 11
Budhan adventure novel is based. The popularity of Border rhymes was attested by Chamber's collection and by an article which appeared in The Scotsman. 1

The traditions of verse composition that John inherited through his father are strongly affected by the formal literary conventions and expectations of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century poets like James Nicol, Thomas Smibert, Allan Cunningham and Henry Scott Riddell. It remained essentially a popular, rather than a professionally literary art.

John's father wrote in both Scots and English. John also tried both forms. Both men were conspicuously more at home within the poetic conventions of vernacular Border Scots. Like their immediate predecessors their technique is inclined to be conservative and derivative. Yet in Scots they both manage to incorporate a freshness and sharpness that help the form to match the content reasonably well. John was also appreciative of the Scots verse of some of his contemporaries and did his best to promote it.

For Nelsons in 1924 he edited and compiled The Northern Muse in which he discussed the problems produced by the modern tendency to level out language differences. He was able to look back to the days when "thirty years ago I learned in the Tweedside glens to talk a Scots, which was then the speech of a people secluded from the modern world". The change in the twenties is such that he thought "Today if I spoke it at a Tweeddale clipping I should find only a few old men to understand me". Because it is no longer a living language Buchan welcomes any attempt to preserve it even as a "book-tongue" for "if, in the mill of a standardized education, it should ever be crushed out, we shall lose

1 6 Jan (1905) 6 a-c
the power of appreciating not only the 'makars', but the
best of the Ballads, Burns, and Sir Walter Scott - that
part of our literary heritage which is most intimately
and triumphantly our own". Thus he makes a plea for a
written form of Scots which would give standardized
English a northern colouring. This he feels would have
the advantage of being a vehicle for the "expression of
the racial temperament" but also, of being widely
understood, so that "no limits would be set to its range
and appeal".

Buchan was to write a commendatory preface to Violet
Jacob's Songs of Angus and to review the same book with
lavish praise in The Spectator. In this article he
classes her with Charles Murray as "a true 'maker' to
whom Scots is a living speech”. Charles Murray had
been previously given a special review by Buchan in
1910 when Hemewith had been published. He is praised
in it for writing in "the old rich Doric" of Aberdeen-
shire, but Buchan makes the point that this is probably
only possible because of the retention of these older
forms in the colonial situation. He doubted even in
1910 "whether as good Scots is spoken today in the
Howe of Alford".

A border poet in a colonial situation who showed some
confusion of linguistic conventions was Will Ogilvie.
Of Rainbow and Witches Buchan was to complain of "an
excess of fluency”. Linguistically Ogilvie has lost his
Border terseness and substituted "a pretty vein of
sentiment, though not always under perfect control" in
Fair Gods and Gray Horses. His attempt to write "a new
Border ballad" in the Whaup o' the Rede is labelled as

1  (1915)
2  Spec 27 Mar (1915) 444,5
3  "  29 Jan (1910) 167
4  "  2 Feb (1907) 179
5  "  18 May (1907) 798
"creditable". Buchan recognizes the "ballad swing" and "many descriptive passages of great delicacy and beauty" and places the work in line with Hogg rather than Scott which he means as "high praise for a modern" but he is unhappy about Ogilvie's language, which is not surprising when this speech of Wat Harden's is compared with that of the "authentic" reiver ballads.

"Take him and keep him!" Wat Harden cried,
"Blood must be spilt when the raiders ride.
What peace would there be on the Border line
If I left to the English their lifted kine?
As long as they ravish my Ettrick herds
So long shall I meet them with pikes - not words;"

It is not surprising that Buchan is happiest when Ogilvie eventually separated the dual traditions in which he was working in 1913 and wrote Australian Bush ballads and Border lyrics in The Overlander. Here Buchan had no linguistic preconceptions and he could be wholeheartedly appreciative of what he saw as "all the rush and gallop and vivid local colour which we associate with Australian verse".

If Buchan was uncomfortable in the presence of Will Ogilvie's early attempts to use Border poetic conventions without using vigorous Border Scots he shows real excitement in his preface to Christopher Grieve's Songshaw in 1925 (the year after his own anthology had been published which had included Macdiarmid's "The Bonnie Broukit Bairn"). He appreciated that his fellow Borderer had set himself a task which was "at once reactionary and revolutionary" since Grieve dared once again to "treat Scots as a living language and apply it to matters which have been foreign to it since the sixteenth century". Buchan also recognized that this entailed, in some measure, the creation of a new form of Scots which

1 Spec 20 Dec (1913)
selected what was useful for the purposes of the poem from many different dialects. Such creativity however in this case is simply proof of renewed vigour and the beginnings, in Buchan's opinion, of a Scottish Renaissance.

It is proof that a new spirit is today abroad in the North, which, as I have said is both conservative and radical - a determination to keep Scotland in the main march of the world's interests, and at the same time to forego no part of her ancient heritage.

In his complexity of character MacDiarmid promised to be a new Buchan hero, MacDiarmid was, however, to emphasize the radical change necessary to reinvigorate Scotland whilst Buchan was to become increasingly convinced of the value of keying the present into the past, if there was to be any real progress into the future. Three Buchan poems appeared in *Northern Numbers* in 1920 and MacDiarmid dedicated *Annals of the Five Senses* to Buchan. The two men show a remarkable respect for each other. Their ways inevitably parted as John became more involved in established government and MacDiarmid was obliged to follow a path of increasing isolation. Both men were conscious of their common Border heritage but they were to use it in differing proportions and with differing emphases. Buchan sought universality of appeal and was highly selective about what he presented for public consumption. MacDiarmid asserted his right to include all experience in his literature and so arrive at the radical commonality of humanity. Both men showed indomitable courage and energy in their own way, but these proved to be fundamentally very different.

In conclusion then it is plain that the small burgh of Peebles was not a limited environment for John Buchan but the key, through the literary interests and activities of his father and family, to the most
progressive and challenging thought and activity of the past and the continuing present. John's father, the major prophet for him in their Peebles home encouraged his desire and ability to interpret and respond to that world of thought and action. He was the man for young John

Whose ardour lit the world, and seemed a part
Of this song-haunted ground.

1 Rev JB "In Peebles Churchyard"
The Green at Broughton - A Garden on the edge of wilderness.

The Green, at Broughton, was the home of John's Mastedon grandparents. It is described by both Anna and John in idyllic terms. Even the journey there by train from Peebles was full of the pleasures of eager anticipation, according to Anna. For John and Anna, Broughton was the centre of their imaginative universe, and the Green was the axis on which that universe turned. It was the archetypal home full of order, security and sensuous satisfaction.

The house itself is described by Anna, John and their mother in minute detail.

Broughton is still noted for its beautiful gardens. Glove-gilly flowers are mentioned in Witch Wood and Helen Buchan talks of "flower-thick roadsides". The cultivated garden of the Green is described as being "on the brink of the heather". It was possible to catch "a glimpse ... of running water" beyond the garden. The course of Broughton Burn had been altered during John's lifetime, a feature which he deplores in Witch Wood; a concrete bridge being built over it to carry the road not far from The Green.

Inside, the impression was of a delightfully "queer uneven house". Even the relative positions of items of furniture like the bureau, sofa and piano are detailed by Mrs. Buchan along with anecdotes about the incidents associated with them by which they became extensions of the family rather than mere functional objects or impersonal pieces of household decor. Beyond the dining-room was the kitchen with its "flagged, uneven

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1 "U1 25.6
2 "U1 166, Anna & her Mother, 18, "M12 29
3 "(17)
4 Anna & her Mother 19
5 "M12 27
6 ": 29
7 Prologue
8 Pink Sugar 18
floor". This must have been the source of all the good food that is mentioned in association with the Green. The house had once been an Inn. Perhaps it is to be identified with the one that Jean Watson described in *By-Gone Days of Our Village* which had been noted for its "home-brewed" and "the racy wit of its landlord". It is probably also to be identified with Lucky Weir's ale-house in *Witch Wood* situated just below the Kirkton whose gable-end rises conspicuously above the low cottages of the clachan. Some of the rooms were still numbered when John and Anna spent their holidays there. No. 8 was the children's room. The play-room was known as "Jenny Berry" though no-one knew why. John made up a gruesome story of a murdered highwayman to gloss the name of the attics, which were called "Frizzel's end". The name Frizzel was to be used again for the two metis brothers who acted as guides to Leithen in *Sick Heart River*.

The windows, which had blinds making the rooms "cool and dark" in the summer, also opened on to the varied sights, sounds and smells which characterized a vital countryside. Mrs. Buchan remembered,

... a hen clucking sleepily, the hum of bees among flowers in the old garden, the clink-clink from the smiddy at the burnside ... And the smell of it! New-mown grass drying in the sun, indescribably sweet-scents from the flower-thick roadsides, the smiddy smell of hot-iron sizzling on big hoofs, wafts from the roses in the garden ...

1 Ann & her Mother 35
2 Quoted Baird, *Annals of a Tweeddale Parish* (29)
3 Derived from Fraser
4 Ann & her Mother 20
5 Ann. & her Mother 19
6 Ann. & her Mother 18,9
John's description in *Memory Hold-the-Door* is almost identical to his mother's with the addition of the sound of sheep fording the burn. It is not surprising, therefore, to notice that these are the sounds and smells that impress David Sempill on his arrival at Woodilee Manse and which combine to produce "the soothing hum of a moorland noontide".

The windows offered a variety of enticing prospects. From his bedroom window John remembered a vivid picture of "the sky blue as deep-sea water and against it the bare green top of a hill". This may have been Trehenna which rises behind Broughton Place. When he shared the upper sitting-room with Anna in 1919 Buchan chose to write at a desk which faced this hill. It is possible that this was also the hill which gave both the picturesque view and the imaginative vision of Woodilee in *Witch Wood* though there is a hill behind the old kirk which could also have answered the description of this location.

If the house can be associated with the combined coaching inn and farmhouse of Jean Watson's description then it could possibly have been an extension of an even older inn. For horse-transport, Broughton was roughly a half-way stage between Edinburgh and Dumfries, a fact that James VI was to use in 1617 when he demanded that his retinue on their way south should be housed and supplied with fresh horses by the local residents, under penalty of a £20 fine or imprisonment. There is another coaching inn further up the glen called The Crook Inn, yet even when the roads were improved after the Turnpike

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1 (28)
2 **W** 17
3 **W** 28
4 **W** 163
5 Rev. A. Baird: *Annals of a Tweeddale Parish*
Road Act of 1751, Broughton would still have been a convenient staging post. An old Tollhouse is marked on the O.S.1: 25,000 scale map, roughly 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) kilometres up the glen from the Green. The steadings on the opposite side of the road from the house also served as the venue for the dances at penny-weddings in the village according to Jean Watson. Anna records that her mother remembered other festivities that were celebrated there in her childhood like "Ord's Circus in the stackyard, peep-shows in the barn, and Hallowe'en held in the stone-flagged kitchen with all its rites". Another local holiday mentioned in the Reverend Andrew Baird's account of the parish was the St. Maurice Day fair on the 4th October (22nd September old style) when early in the day "tents were erected and stalls placed on the street - overloaded with tempting wares of many kinds, the produce of Clydesdale orchards and home-made goods, hanks of yarn and webs of cloth". There were also side-shows, droves of cattle and horse and foot races. Other occasions for athletic sports were the St. Ronan's games, Harvest Home, Hallowe'en and New Year's Day.

Although John is appreciative of the house itself what interested him most was its situation "at the mouth of a shallow glen bounded by high-green hills". A pass is the place of decisive action in a number of novels. In *Greenmantle* for instance, a small hill "in the throat of the pass" in Hanney's recurring dream on the road to Erzerum is the sanctuary to which he must strain when closely pursued by his enemies. It becomes the natural fortress of the heroes and the burial place of the mysterious Hilda von Einem in the final battle.

1 [UU 26](http://example.com)
2 [Baird (1924)](http://example.com)
3 [MHD 22](http://example.com)
4 [G 279](http://example.com)
5 [354](http://example.com)
6 [cf. Merlin's grave at Drummelziker](http://example.com).
In Salute to Adventurers the critical message linking the present with the past is received in Clearwater Gap. The Massacre of Glencoe was a historical study of the trap-like qualities of such a strategic position. A "green glen" recurs in Buchan's writings from "the green upland vale" of John Burnet of Barne "linked with memories of boyish fantasies" through the short story called "The Green Glen" published in The Moon Endureth to the ominously luxurious valley of Sick Heart River.

Broughton is at the intersection of two major natural routeways, one north-south by Broughton Burn, up the head-waters of the Tweed and down into Annandale and the other West-East, since the Bigger-Broughton Gap makes access easy between the upper Clyde Valley (not navigable however as this is above the Falls) and the main eastward section of the Tweed. The misfit stream in the Biggar Gap and the right-angled bend in the Tweed at this point indicate the action of river-capture on the formation of these route-ways. Biggar has developed as a larger gap town - perhaps because of its closer proximity to the coalfields and industrial centres of the West and the A74 Glasgow-Carlisle road by Beattock.

This area also shows evidence of the interaction of a number of different cultural elements, (a vital function of a Border region for Buchan). Roman incursions are evidenced by both the camp at Lyne and a stretch of Roman road. Arthur's possible exploits at Cademuir indicate that the area shared in the struggles between the Romanized Britons of Strathclyde and the Anglo-Saxons of Bernicia. "Merlin's grave" is a reminder of the conflict between British and Scottish influences.

1 See 1912
in the area since Merlin is said to have been attacked by St. Kentigern or Mungo (even the double-name for the saint is indicative of the cultural confusion at this time). Place-name evidence seems to corroborate the semi-historical myths. Trahenna and Dreva show Pictish-Cumbrian influences, Kilbucho indicates Gaelic speakers, Dawyck demonstrates an Anglian presence, Culter Fell shows that Norse influence was also present. A number of hill-forts in the area like the two on Langlaw hill above Broughton Old Kirk and also at Helm End and on Dreva and Rachan hills seem to confirm the strategic importance of the area during this early period of conflict and consolidation.

Changes in ecclesiastical structure and organization also show similar shifts of power and influence.

Ian B. Cowan says, for example, that "a case can be mounted for ... Stobo" as an early episcopal centre associated with the Kingdom of Strathclyde, which seems to have lost power when Columban monasticism began to return north-westwards from Northumbria up the Tweed, at least as far as Old Melrose. Later monasticism brought more direct continental influences and contacts as did the growth of trade through Berwick though neither of these made much impact in the upper reaches of the Tweed.

The conflicts with England in the 13th and 14th centuries are marked by the line of Towers within sight of each other all the way up the Tweed, in particular (in this context of the Upper Tweed), Stobo, Dawyck, Lour, Dreva, Tinnies, Drummelzier, Wrae, Mossfennan, Stanhope, Kingledors, Polmood, Oliver, Hawkshaw and

1 "tref", dwelling, village. W.F.H. Nicolaisan An His. At. of Sc. 4
2 "cill", cell. W.F.H. Nicol. op. cit. 5
3 "wic", minor settlement, mainly agricultural, W.F.H. Nicol. op. cit. 7
4 Ian B. Cowan: "Early Ecclesiastical Foundations". An His. At. of Sc. 17
Their bale-fires could transmit the message of an invasion the length of the Tweed as effectively as a telephone system. Buchan’s interest in the Anglo-Scottish conflict is acknowledged in the preface to Barron’s *The Wars of Independence*.

The aftermath of the Anglo-Scottish conflicts in the 16th Century was exemplified locally by the Tweedies of Drummelzier whose motto “Thole and think” was in such ludicrous contrast to their reiving natures. The inter-family feuds that resulted from conflicts of rivalry, in particular between the Tweedies and the Veitches of Dawyclk, formed the background to *John Burnet of Barns*.

John recognized that in his own day the pastoral security of the area was threatened by industrial expansion in the West. The Westlanders with a different set of values were, however, considered as “incomers” and did not radically challenge the way of the Uplanders at this time except perhaps by modifying the distinctive Tweeddale dialect.

Topographically Broughton was also seen by Buchan as being “at the meeting-place of the plateau of the Scottish midlands and the main range of the southern hills which run from the Cheviots to Galloway”. It is not only the physical structure which produces a sense of being at an environmental border but also the land-use patterns, for to the north he saw the “dambrod pattern” of cultivated lands whilst to the south and east, beyond the “trench of the Tweed” was an area of high wilderness, knotted peaks and “heathy mountains”, “rolling towards the fastnesses of Etterick and Moffatdale”. This is the territory that offers in close proximity both the “desert and the sown”. It is that most fascinating of all topographic zones for Buchan “a garden on the edge of wilderness”.

1 Moffatdale
John Burnet was appreciative of this quality for he recognized that "there is a grace, a wild loveliness in Tweedside, like a flower garden on the edge of a moorland, which is wholly its own". 1 This garden-wilderness relationship was to be an essential ingredient of Buchan’s chosen home at Elsfield, which he saw as being very similar to the Green. "Both houses", notes Janet Adam Smith, "were solidly planted in their village, opening straight on to the road; yet on the farther side of each was a certain wildness, and a long prospect". 2 An area of forest close by was called, significantly, Wychwood.

The family who lived in The Green were dominated by the powerful figure of Mrs. Masterton, John’s grandmother. According to John she "ruled her household like a grenadier" with a "hawk nose" and a "bright commanding eye". 3 Anna remembers her as being "rather aloof and unapproachable". 4 Her praise was seldom given but much appreciated. 5 Yet her strictness seems to have been mixed with a firm belief in youthful freedom. She is quoted as having for one of her favourite adages "Never daunton youth" and for another "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger lest they be discouraged". 6 The habit of speaking in "overcomes" was common to all the family. 7 Her influence was awesome but not, it seems, oppressive for Anna experienced a sense of loss rather than freedom at Broughton after her death in 1901 and John was able to write from South Africa, "Since ever I was a little boy I have liked Broughton better than any other place in the world and she was always the chief
part of Broughton". 1

Her husband John Masterton (1816-1891) was a frail, mild man. An asthmatic, he kept control of his farm by regular inspections from "a basket" pulled by "a fat white pony". 2 If Mrs. Masterton was aloof her husband enjoyed a "crack" with all and sundry. 2 He was strict about religious observances however, banning the reading of secular books on Saturday and Monday as well as Sunday, with the comment "Though there's naething in the Bible about it, I hold that the Lord's Day shall aye get plenty of room to steer in". 3 Yet, John remembers his grandfather presiding at family prayers on Sunday evening at Broughton, without any sense of repression.

It seemed to us children a benediction on the enforced leisure of the day and a promise of a new and glorious week of wind and sun.

The children of these complimentary parents were equally varied. "Antaggie" Robb was called "our kind and gentle aunt" by Anna 5 for she "had a wonderful gift for seeing the best in us". 6 Fruit picking in the garden "or seated at the piano, singing in a small sweet voice Tam Glen or Robin Adair", 7 she appears in the family memoirs as a happy, selfless daughter who remained at home "as long as her parents needed her". 6 and thus postponed her own marriage. Even when Gala Lodge became her home she gave it up to her nephew and his young family on at least one occasion for the long summer holidays.

1 Letter (1901) quoted JAS 20
2 See 29
3 JAS 19
4 MED 29
5 IU 27
6 28
7 W 28
John was especially friendly with the three Maberton Uncles, James, John and Ebeneezer. Anna says that he always "enjoyed a talk with the three brothers, and wasindebtedto them for many a good story and expressive Scots idiom".¹

When Susan first met them she found their speech "three parts incomprehensible" for "they talked the broadest Border Scots at the fullest pitch of their lungs".² Helen Buchan became conscious of her own Scots idiom when on a visit to London she felt as alien as "a cow in a fremit loaming".³

Uncles Jim and John acquired Bamflat (on the way to Biggar from Broughton). Strict traditionalists in their habits, "nothing would have induced them to buy a car, they held that everything had gone wrong since the internal combustion engine had been invented",¹ they were skilled farmers and "among the best judges of stock in the Borders".² Frugality in their personal habits (they received The Scotsman a day late from "Antaggie") was matched by a generosity towards others and especially towards the Church.

The youngest brother Ebem married and was most progressive in outlook and activity. He was only six years older than John and when John went to the Transvaal he also thought of emigrating there and had to be discouraged by his nephew. The nominal reason for this was the radical differences that John saw between conditions of farming in the Transvaal and those in the Borders. Ebem's popularity and sociability ("no one could sing a Scots song better than he" says Anna) were matched in him by the spirit of adventurous

1 170
2 37
3 quoted JAS 164
enterprise that John saw as a characteristic of his Border shepherds.

Border shepherds, modelled on his uncles and the other relatives, who were "dotted" all over the countryside, are John's ideal men. They are the natural giants of the countryside "men of the long stride and the clear eye"; men whose breadth of vision was rarely affected by the "narrower kinds of fanaticism". For the "man of the hills" who is constantly subject to the challenges of hill-farming, is "full of spirit and dash", in sharp contrast to the incomers from the West with "the manners and values of settled, industrious but unimaginative existence", or the "ploughman and farm labourer" who is seen as being devoid of "mind or enterprise in his composition". The formative aspect of human activity in relationship to the natural world is also applied to physical development. Thus the shepherd of Redeswirehead is able to say to his town bred companion in "A Night on the Heather", "I could mak' three o' ye, any day, and I was brocht up in a room sae wee that I couldna get my coat on without stappin' my airm up the lum". The vale of the Upper Tweed was described by John as "an epitome of landscape" and "the finest school in the world for natural man", who is above all here the hill-shepherd.

James Hogg was such a shepherd. Veitch says he was the most "complete type of a man of power nourished by the Border glens and streams, haughs and hills, story, ballad and tradition". He appealed to John more for the complexity of his character, however, since he "combined

1 MHD 21
2 n 23
4 OM (1894) "Rivuli Montani"
6 NH Sept (1895)
7 NHAP 285
several different beings in his burly person". The Brownie of Bodasheack was not surprisingly John's favourite Hogg story since it was a "classic of that wild triangle of hill between Tweed, Ettrick and Megget". John tried unsuccessfully to get Nelson's to republish it.

As an undergraduate John himself drove a hundred ewes from Peebles to Bamflat. He also "walked the hills" with his uncle so that his Arcadian idealism is tempered with some practical knowledge of the life-style of a Border shepherd, though he makes no mention of the problems of winter feeding, ewe-smothering drifts, or the lambing.

John says that the shepherd was both a reader and a thinker but the household at Broughton was far from literary in the way that Bank House was. The Spectator, The British Weekly and The Scotsman are mentioned and the two major topics of conversation, apart from the practicalities of farming, were politics and religion.

The most important topic of conversation at Broughton was the subject of religion. In this Helen Masterton was the epitome of her family. Public affairs only mattered to her in so far as they affected her kirk. "Her world was the Church, or rather a little section of the Church", says John of his mother. Her "fierce" maternalism and intense practical energy found a double outlet in her home-management and her diplomatic activities amongst her husband's congregations. The "incessant activity" that she "radiated" in the home beginning at five o'clock

1 HAR 334
2 JAS 42
3 WE 37
4 MHD 251
5 250
in the morning, made her intolerant of incompetent housewives whom she dismissed as "fustionless" or "through-hither", but she seems to have had endless patience with other human weaknesses. "No tramp was ever turned away from her door, and her tenderness towards bores was the despair of the family", says John. For her, religion was a question of practice and of practical witness which meant that she talked about it often (unlike her husband who rarely spoke of it outside his Church). "The Church to her was like a secular profession, and field for administrative talent, not a mystic brotherhood". The most important event for her in Scottish history had been the Disruption. It was an event in which Broughton felt intimately involved as the minister of Broughton Free Kirk explained.

The Rev. Professor David Welsh was son of a Tweedsmuir laird and farmer. A relative of his, William Welsh was the first minister of Broughton.

Dr. Chalmers at the opening of the new Church remarked that he liked "these quiet hills, these sober uplands". Amongst the congregation that day was Dr. John Brown (1810-82) of Bigger. The author of Rab and his Friends and numerous other canine anecdotes remained closely associated with Tweeddale, according to John, all his life. "It was at a farm at Kirklawhill ... that the small boy preached that memorable sermon on Jacob's dog - 'Some say that Jacob had a black dog, and some say that Jacob had a white dog, but I say that Jacob had a brown dog, and a brown dog it shall be!'".
The dog-fight episode in chapter ten of *The Island of Sheep* near Laverlaw may owe something to Brown. What appealed most to John, however, in Brown was his enjoyment of hill-walking in the area so that it is not surprising that he prefers Brown's *Horae Subsecivae*, which are "full of Tweeddale memories", to all his other writings.

William Welsh remained minister at Broughton until 1885 so that Helen and the other Mastertons grew up feeling very closely involved in this calculated exodus into the wilderness. The serious calm dignity with which the action had been taken, the proof of spiritual values being rated more highly than material advantages, the sense of revival that accompanied the move impressed even those like Norman MacLeod, who remained in the Established Church.

Anna is not altogether convinced however, of the geniality and mercy of these gentlemen.

The leaders of this tremendous adventure must have been made of stern stuff. As a child I used to look at their photographs in my mother's album. Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Guthrie, Dr. Begg and others - disinherit ing countenances some of them had.

When John's father took charge of the parish of Broughton during the winter of 1873-4 in Mr. Welsh's absence he would have found a parish already accustomed to concerted effort and generosity. Marshall Forrester praises "their generosity, their enterprise, their staunchness - for example many had to cross the Tweed by wading or on stilts, for bridges were not between Peebles and Tweedsmuir - their self-adjustment to new conditions - these are features of their history". Their "liberality

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1 1936
2 189
3 Quoted in H. Watt, Thos Chalmers and the Disruption (1943)
4 190
5 Baird, (1924)
of heart and hand" covered not only the Sustentation Fund, but Church works at home and abroad, as well as the building of a school, teacher's house and manse and extensions to the church buildings. What young Rev. John Buchan was able to contribute to the community was a new warmth in their worship. His brief ministry co-incided with the Moody & Sankey revival in Scotland and "the young minister introduced their hymns to Broughton and held evangelical meetings night after night in the little church, to which people walked and drove from miles around". It is hardly surprising that sixteen year old Helen should have fallen in love with this visiting evangelist. They became engaged that summer and were married in December.

The parish also had reminders of other religious struggles. Glenholm Common had been the scene of the preaching of Donald Carghill, six weeks before he was taken to Edinburgh and executed. "Bible in one hand, sword in the other, ready to defend life and liberty" this covenanter had also drawn his illustrations from the hills that encircled the congregation, Cordon, Culter Fell and Chapelgill. All the members of the Biggar Presbytery had resigned and meetings were held "in the hills of Dunyre". Many local gentry remained attached to Montrose and the King including Sir David Murray, Gideon Murray, John Weir and John Lauder of Broughton.

After Philiphaugh John traces Montrose's route up Yarrow and then from Broadmeadows (home of the Langs, later rented by John) over the drove-road across Minchmoor to Tweeddale. When Traquair refused access

1 JAS 13
2 Baird (1924)
to the fugitive, John claims that he "did not cross Tweed at the bridge of Peebles, but rode up the right bank by the Sware to Manor, and thus to Stobo by the Glack. Thence the Company pushed on to Biggar in Clydesdale, where they spent the night". Montrose must then have passed through Broughton. Amongst the men of Tweedsdale serving with Montrose John mentions some burgesses of Peebles, Tait of the Pira, Porteous of Hawkshaw, Veitch of Dasyck, and Murray of Elibank. He claims that the county furnished the prototype of Sir William Worthy in Allan Ramsey's Gentle Shepherd.

The district had not been entirely free from the obsessive witch-hunts in the sixteenth century. At Glenholm, Gilbert Robison, Isobel Cuthbertson, Lilias Bertram and Jake MacWatt were charged with telling people to take their sick-children to a south-running stream. There is also a local tradition according to Baird that "a noted witch in Broughton, after being tried by the Commission of the Privy Council, was burnt in a ravine near Kirklawhill". (John's readings in this period also included the accounts of the sadistic witch-pricker John Kincaid which he used in Witch Wood but I have not found any evidence for Kincaid having been in the Broughton area).²

Perhaps the most important historical person who can be claimed as both a neighbour and a key figure in Scottish history is the enigmatic John Murray who is variously known as Mr. "Secretary" Murray and Mr. "Evidence" Murray. John wrote an article on him when the Memorials of John Murray of Broughton were published by the Scottish History Society.³ He is also a chief

1 M (1928) 290, 1
2 WW 264
3 repb. Eighteenth Century Byways 1908
character in the novel *A Lost Lady of Old Years* which this publication seems to have inspired.

When in 1738 Murray was able to buy back the family home at Broughton Place he was already the recognized channel by which the Scottish Jacobites communicated with the King in Rome. He "finally emerged with the landing in Moidart in 1745 as Secretary to Prince Charles and counsellor-general to the army". An able and subtle negotiator he appears to have had no stomach for physical combat, though he is bitter about the "stay-at-home Jacobites, who fought Drumosie over the tea-table". Traquair he hopes, will, for shame, "hide his dirty head from all intercourse with the world amongst his Hills in Tweedail". When it came to the time for him to try to escape, Murray actually returned to Broughton.

There was a garrison at Boghall according to Baird. The result was that Murray was taken first to Edinburgh and then to London where he turned King's evidence. Buchan says that Murray's account is not altogether corroborated by the "persistent tradition" in Broughton that he was concealed for some time in Broughton "in a cave in the garden of his farm-steward Bertram, at the head of the village" and in an old vault in the churchyard. The fact that Murray apparently put his head so deliberately into the noose seems to argue that he had already worked out a plan even before leaving the Highlands which would save his neck. The first Mrs. Murray emerges as a much more noble figure and John defends what is said to be her infidelity to her husband on the grounds that "though we may apologize now and then for the Secretary, we cannot think him much

1 18th CB 59
2 64
of a man". Through Murray, John would also have felt that Broughton was connected with yet another mixed world of romance, intrigue, drama and silliness in the London theatre as, by his second marriage, John Murray became father of the actor Charles Murray.

Broughton Place was burned in 1773 but in 1780 the estates were sold to yet another eminent and highly controversial figure in Scottish affairs Robert MacQueen, Lord Braxfield, the original "Weir of Hermiston". He had been raised to the bench in 1776 and became Lord Justice Clerk in 1788 which he remained until his death in 1799. Baird quotes a number of anecdotes connected with him which account for his mixed reputation as "terror" and "giant" of the Bench. His proposal to his wife indicates his approach to living. This letter ran, Baird says, "I am looking out for a wife and I thought you just the person that would suit me. Let me have your answer, off or on, the morn, and nae mair aboot it".

Servants seem to have had problems coping with the sharp tongues and tempers of both master and mistress and Baird quotes some interesting repartee between servant and master. Prisoners in the dock were at a greater disadvantage however, since Braxfield always had the last fatal word as in the case of a man accused of sheep-stealing who had defended his own case ably only to be told "Ay, ay, ye're a gay clever chiel, but ye'll be nane the waur o' a hangin!'".

Braxfield was an ardent traditionalist, the last judge on the Bench who spoke Scots, even exaggerating it and being scathing about his fellow Scots attempts to adopt the speech of the English courts. Of Lord Jeffrey he is supposed to have said "He had tint his Scots and

1 18th CB 68
fand nae English”.

Political attitudes and traditions in the Borders, according to Buchan, are closely linked to religious traditions.

To a Free Churchman, especially, it came as natural as Toryism to a Highland laird. There was in it something of the ancient Scots jealousy of England, the rich and, by repute, conservative neighbour; a wholesome dislike of snobbery; a partiality for plain folk, for Scotland is probably the most truly democratic country on earth; some suspicion of denationalised lairds with Episcopalian proclivities; a distrust of exotic cleverness (Mr. Disraeli); a traditional love of oratory, especially when it smacked of the pulpit (Mr. Gladstone); and a traditional love of public economy and cautious finance.

All these feelings were combined in the Free Churchman with memories of the '43, which in some subtle way was regarded as a demonstration of Liberalism. It was a loyalty rather than a principle, a point of view rather than a creed.

In this passage John seems to be analyzing the mental framework of the Masterton household. They adhered firmly to Gladstonian liberalism, which may have been partly due to Mrs. Masterton's kinship with that politician.

John was able to delight in the contradictions inherent in this situation. Uncle John's traditionalism in practice and his Liberalism in politics may have been amusing to John and Anna but the staunch liberal stand of his family (with the exception of his father) cannot have helped John when he returned to canvas votes as Unionist candidate for Peebles and Selkirk in 1911. Happily good humour and family loyalties seem to have been able to surmount political divisions and John remained all his life an ardent admirer of his Masterton uncles.

1 Lord Ardwell 81,2
John's exploration and evaluation of his border heritage and experience was a progressive one as was his knowledge of the physical countryside in which he saw three clearly-defined stages.

first the miniature world of nooks and playgrounds; then the middle distance, the adjacent hills and the neighbouring glens; and last, as we grew older and stronger, the high places, adventures and explorations.

At each stage he singles out a number of significant topographic features that appear frequently in his imaginative writings as the stage for action as they were for make-believe in his childhood. In the miniature world he says there was a place "where a half-moon of hill-turf fringed a pool occupied by a big trout", "a hollow in a near-by hill" which was really an old disused and overgrown quarry and a "fire-wood ... with a long prospect of the valley". Perhaps this is to be associated with "some ancient twisted trees" which Anna describes beside a well near the old churchyard which John claimed to be a remnant of the Old Caledonian forest. Veitch associated the name of "the Shaws" at the head of Tweeddale with the Silva Caledononis and argues for its existence in Upper Tweeddale. The Caledonian Forest was mixed woodland and the interplay of light described by Veitch is an important part of the zoning of the Witch Wood. Thus whilst in the thickest parts of the wood the sun's rays could not pierce, in the birch and alder section the leaves "quivering in the light", showered a "dappled splendour" on the grass beneath.

1 MHD 25
2 MHD 22
3 MHD 23

6 Veitch: The Tweed, 4 cf WW 92
The middle distance in this Border experience is occupied by the hills that he came to know in the company of his shepherd relatives. As a result they became in his mind imbued with "a whole lost world of pastoral".\(^1\)

As the horizons of maturity extended so did the "arenas" of exploration both vertically and horizontally. The hills (which he says were so much his "own possession") were known to stretch "for fifty miles to the English border"\(^2\) but the ridges constantly beckoned him, upwards and onwards "in the hope of surprising a new world." Success was not guaranteed, however, "Alas the Tweeddale hills are not a sharp 'divide', and there were hours of weary tramping over bent and bog before we got our prospect ... Sometimes we were rewarded with a vision, though it meant a desperate journey back".\(^3\) The road, like the hills, "was an avenue for us into the unknown. It was the Great South Road from the Scottish capital to England ... a link with the outer world ... beyond the divide".\(^5\) Its destination lay somewhere in the "enormous half-mythical England".\(^6\) The Drove Road, the road to the End of Days, the Pilgrim's Way all seem to combine in Buchan's concept of the Road. Early excursions took the children about a mile along a highway which was marked by "the White Yett" and "the Black Yett".\(^2\) The desire to follow the road into the sunset or to follow the light did not mean that the Buchans considered England as the goal of their longings.

It was in Tweedside that Buchan experienced those "moments when life was in utter harmony and sense and

\(^{1}\text{Meth 24}\)
\(^{2}\text{25}\)
\(^{3}\text{26}\)
\(^{5}\text{26,7}\)
\(^{6}\text{27}\)
spirit perfectly attuned". This country "rich in contradictions" is acknowledged by both John and Anna to have been their idea of Paradise. When Anna visited John as Governor-General in Canada he reminded her, she recalled, of the "time he had taken me, when I had first learned to ride a bicycle, to Broughton. We had divided the journey into three parts. The coal-mining places were Hades; the Clyde Valley we called (most unjustly) Purgatory; when we left the red roads of Lanarkshire and got on to the grey roads and among the green hills of Tweeddale we were in Paradise". This is also the import of "The South Countrie".

Whaur sail I enter the Promised Land,
Ower the Sutra or doun the Lyne,
Up the side o' the water o' Clyde
Or cross the muirs at the heid o' Tyne,
Or staucherin' on by Crawfordjohn
Yon' to the glens whaur Tweed rins wee? —
It's matter sma' whaur your road may fa'
Gin it land ye safe in the South Countrie.

John was to make his home at Elsfield and to be buried there. He probably recognized that his particular concept of Paradise, though rooted in the Peebles/Broughton region, was primarily a state of mind rather than a physical dependence in a specific region. The particular vision had grown out of a specific context however. For "there is that in the situation and history of Tweeddale", as Buchan chose to see it, something which marks it out from other Scottish shires.

It is of the Borders, but the nearest point of the Borders to midland and metropolitan Scotland. It was on a highroad, but not the chief highroad to England, and therefore, though always in the main march of Scottish history, it was saved from the worst devastation of the medieval wars, and permitted to cultivate its soul in peace. It

1 MHD 28
2 MM (1895) "Men of the Hills"
3 PS&U 214
4 PSAR (1916)
lies in the very heart of the great hill system which stretches from Galloway to the Lammermoors ... Hence, though it has been in the centre of National life ... it could always withdraw itself securely into its hills ...

It is a land which, alike in history and configuration, unites and harmonizes opposites, and it is perhaps not fantastic to see this bold harmony reflected in the character of the men it bred and the literature it inspired.

Thus Buchan saw himself as coming from Border stock. Yet as a minister their father was called to serve in the Free Kirks of Perth, Pathhead (Kirkcaldy), and Glasgow. For John and Anna these social and spiritual commitments did not attain the degree of cohesion and solidarity that they experienced among their extended family in the Borders. Perhaps because he saw himself as an exiled Borderer John began to distinguish other frontiers, limits and horizons in his childhood experience even outside the Borders.

1 *Har 352,3*
III Perth: The Highland Boundary

It was in Perth that John Buchan was born in 1875. So strong is his sense of identity with life on a frontier, however, that when he was given the freedom of the city of his birth in 1933, it was Perth's strategic position as "the gateway between North and South", the meeting-place of the Highlands and Lowlands" that he chose to emphasize in his speech. The importance of the Highland boundary line "from the lower Clyde through Stonehaven and on to Nairn" in the course of Scottish History was underlined again by Andrew H. Dawson. He describes it as marking "the greatest single contrast within Scotland's topography, economy and culture". Along this line Perth occupies a unique position for it has grown at the point where major north-south and east-west land routes intersect the path of sea traffic at the lowest fording point of the Tay. Even today the town's function as a major route centre poses problems for motorway architects.

John Buchan, then, considered that his birthplace was on a Border - a factor which he claims is a considerable advantage since "wherever there is a border there is vigorous life, for it is the point where different traditions meet, either to clash or to mingle". In this respect Perth typified Scotland for Buchan, and was "the key point in her story and a microcosm of her national development". At the height of her influence Perth was not only the central market place for the country but also the guardian of what Professor Barrow has called "the innermost Sacrosanct mystery among the insignia of Scottish Monarchy", the Stone of Destiny. The frequent deprivation of such tangible symbols of

1 An Historical Atlas of Scotland (1975)
2 The Geographical Setting.
3 Freedom of Perth Speech (1932)
4 op.cit
5 Robert Bruce (1976)
national identity and unity resulted, Buchan felt, in the development of less obvious and, therefore, less vulnerable foci for Scottishness, producing what he calls "the accent of our minds".¹

Thus when discussing Scottish characteristics with the Vernacular Club in London in 1922 he did not lay great stress on the importance of such common social and cultural features as the identifiably Scottish institutions (church and legal system), mores (tartan-wearing, haggis-eating, bag-pipe playing), or even languages. There are he argues "at least three great race-stocks - Saxon, Norse and Celtic", a number of differing religious positions and a multiplicity of economic interests in Scotland. The Scots have been dispersed throughout the world, so that it is not territorial boundaries that constitute them as a people. The tradition and mental outlook which characterizes Scots is above all the product of a history of radical cultural conflict.²

As a nation the Scots have traditionally clashed with the English, but this is not the only struggle which has produced the typical Borderer mentality in the Scot. There have been recurring internal wars which have resulted in Scotland being perpetually "emptied from vessel to vessel".³

Perth is the epitome of Scotland because all "Scotland is in this sense on a border".⁴ For some reason which he does not attempt to define this "discipline" of constant flux has not produced mental and social anarchy in the Scots nor has it resulted in rigidity. On the contrary it has made the Scots "enterprising and adventurous" for "dwellers on a

¹ Scottish Tongue (1924) "Scottish Characteristics
² cf. Dalziel's The Paradox of Scottish Culture (1964) Gregory Smith: Scottish Literature (1919)
³ Scottish Tongue (1924) "Scottish Characteristics"
⁴ op.cit
border are proverbially a bold race". Later he was to recognize this as a universal vocation, however, when as Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh he declared that "we are all frontiersmen." Just as Tweeddale's literature and life-style could be considered "in a modest way an epitome of Scottish literature and life", so Scottish history and life is a key to understanding universal history, (that is, the basic human conditions in time). This is not a chauvinist position, rather it is the stance of a man seeking to understand himself and his world in some form of integrated context.

1 [1936]
2 [1936]
IV Kirkcaldy: The Shoreline

Only the first three months of his life were spent in Perth. Most of John's formative years were passed on the shores of the Forth at Kirkcaldy. This shoreline situation was to be a vital topographic feature in his early imaginative landscape. For it was along this elemental axis, where land and water vied rhythmically for supremacy, that he had a heightened sense of the divide between alternating zones of experience, namely the ordered duty-filled world of everyday living and the freer world of imaginative creativity. It was here also that Buchan became aware of the essential ambiguity of the frontier station, for it is of the nature of a borderline simultaneously to separate and to join two disparate topographic units.

In winter he saw the Forth as a separating barrier, "a fog-filled trench" between himself and his own "South Countrie". It was also for him at this season an ominous divide "a yeasty desert of white-caps from which came stories of wrecked fishing boats". This was the dangerous, unsociable frontier to which he ran on the occasion when he played truant from school. Here, deliriously defiant, he confronted not only the rigid demands of social conformity but also, "buffeted by rain and drenched by spray", he faced up to the uncompromising forces of the natural world. It was an experience which he seems to have found exhilarating, for in an exuberant undergraduate poem he asks that he should be allowed to face death with "The wind in my teeth and the rain in my face!".

Yet in early summer this broad estuary (which was nothing less that the sea for the Buchan children)

1 MHD 19
2 PSAE "The South Countrie"
3 GUM 17 Nov (1897) "The Strong Man Armed"
became "an absorbing thing" and a lure for the adventurous. For as the days lengthened and the weather improved it was possible to range beyond the polluted beaches near the town to the "mile or two of clean coast" that was "part of the demesne of Dysart House". This strand could only be reached by scrambling over rocks and scaling a wall. Because of its relative inaccessibility this part of the shore was regarded by the Buchans as their "special preserve". In this secret place, shut off from the house by "a sea-wood of battered elders" and "great thickets of rhododendrons" there were "a succession of low reefs" which "enclosed little sandy creeks". 1

These same features of rock, wall and shrub barriers in the demesne of a big house are transferred and magnified to suit an adult adventure on the Greek island of Plakos in The Dancing Floor. Yet Buchan also adds a curious detail that seems to be borrowed directly from his childish escapades. Confronted by the crumbling masonry of the boundary wall the leading London lawyer, Sir Edward Leithen, says; "I took off by boots and flung them over the wall, by way of a gage of battle, and then I started to make the traverse". 2 The shoreline of Plakos like that of Dysart was a place where the champion was called to do battle unceremoniously with a number of obstacles in his quest for adventure.

In "The Far Islands" a small imaginative boy called Colin sees visions and dreams on a secluded beach in the West of Scotland. An off-shore island lies across the visionary road that seems to stretch from him over the sea to some unknown land beyond the horizon just as Inchkeith lay between the child on Dysart shore and the

1 MHD 19
2 DF 228
view of Edinburgh castle which was "an object of romance ... as a milestone on the way to the Borders". 1 Colin builds great sand castles "to the shape of Acharra old tower" which he peoples in his imagination "with preposterous knights and ladies". Ravenscraig was associated with Scott’s "Rosabelle" for John.

The activities of the boy John Buchan at Dysart are used most directly in the opening of Prester John. Here, however, a boyish adventure quickly turns into a more serious confrontation, for on Kirkcaple shore two opposing cultures and religious systems engage each other in a prelude to the decisive crisis on the edge of a subterranean cataract in the heart of the African continent.

It was whilst he was in Kirkcaldy that John Buchan first learned the fascination of foreign places and alien cultures. As he himself put it he "became aware of the largeness of the globe", 2 through conversations with the retired sea-captains who were members of his father’s congregation.

Dysart is the spring-board for the tales of The Free Fishers and the east coastal waters provide the route to action. The vulnerable fringe settlements of the Virginia coast in Salute to Adventurers are the imaginative counterparts of the string of ports along the coast of Fife. Like those ports in The Free Fishers the survival of the Virginia settlements is dependent not only on the highly respectable law-abiding land lubber who is obliged to take to the high seas for their defence but also on an outlawed brotherhood of seamen who operate just beyond the pale of regular justice. The worlds of settled values and those of the

1  MHD 19
2  MHD 20
more precarious bonds of romance were as distinct for the young Buchans as the sea is from the land. They could interact but they did not safely mix.

Although the Firth of Forth offered "short prospects for the eye and very long prospects for the fancy", Buchan said he "never attempted to harmonize the two worlds".

The only shoreline that he uses which was not an invitation to "pilgrimage" was that of the Solway sands in "The Outgoing of the Tide". Here Buchan demonstrates the confusion of the elements which produce the treacherous and indeterminate shoreline of quicksands and fast seeping tides, which result in tragedy (a genre which Buchan normally eschews).

Under classical influence there is some use of the shoreline as the image of the final transition from life to be found in the story of "The Levanian". In this case "the shining pathway of the sea" is seen as "the Great Uniter" and death as a form of "bridal". It is, therefore, particularly appropriate that the hero should be found in death "on the very lip of the sea" for it seemed that "he had been fighting his way to the water, and had been overtaken by death as his feet reached the edge".

The neighbourhood of Kirkcaldy offered another distinct topographic zone that was to have an even more enduring significance for his later works. This was the woods. In retrospect Buchan realized "that the woodlands dominated and coloured" his "childish outlook". If the shoreline offered the possibility of imaginative extension and the prospects of ever wider horizons, the woods were above all the place of inner penetration, moral and spiritual exploration and pilgrimage.

1 MID 19
2 " 21
3 " 20
4 The Moon Endureth (1912)
5 MID 15
To enter any woodland is to experience a marked change of atmosphere. The intensity of the change will depend to a great extent on the relative size and density of the trees. Physical reactions to physical conditions were also, in the case of the Buchan children modified and conditioned by the mental associations of their woods with those of the folk and fairy tales that Buchan tells us were so much a feature of his childish experience. Thus, whilst to the adult John Buchan the woods of Kirkcaldy were merely "a slender copse", to his childish imagination they had been the "illimitable forests" of early Europe. Sanctuary and magic den these woods had all the qualities of a "temenos" where sub-conscious pressures took ritual shape and the vital struggles to attain human identity and integrity were played out within a controlled situation.

This was possible because each element within the woodland was vested with significance. The "scarlet toadstools" were "believed to be the work of Lapland witches", "Norns and Valkyries got into the gales that blew up the Forth, and blasting from a distant quarry was the thud of Thor's hammer". The "'dens' of the two streams" were "the White Woods, for they had sunlight and open spaces; but that beyond the highway was the Black Wood, to enter which was an adventure". The woods also served as the theatre for acting out The Pilgrim's Progress.

There was the Wicket-gate at the back of the colliery, where one entered them; the Hill Difficulty - more than one; the Slough of Despond - various specimens; the Plain called Ease; Doubting Castle - a disused gravel-pit; the Enchanted Land - a bog full of orchises; the Land of Beulah - a pleasant grassy place where tinkers made their fires.

The story of Pilgrim's Progress is presented as a series of transitions from one situation or state to another.
This is also the essence of the adventure story in the Buchan convention. It is particularly on the threshold of transformation, when prior and subsequent states can be apprehended simultaneously that the dramatic thrill is felt most keenly.

Buchan delighted in the necessary limitations of set, rôle and function which are as much of the nature of theatre as of child's play. He uses theatrical conventions frequently in the novels. On occasion he verges on the stereotyping of melodrama. The doubling-up that takes place in child's play when the cast is small and the action great and fast is also transferred to the novels. Kirkcaldy, then, offered numerous physical and psychological boundaries to the young John Buchan which were to become an integral part of his literary technique and his thematic stock-in-trade.
V  Glasgow: The City

The move to Glasgow brought Buchan within the confines of a great city for the first time. What he later chose to remember about it principally was its function for him as a "Porta Miserum". A narrow gate it seems to have been for him though, for he describes his school years as "a period of enforced repression which ended daily at four in the afternoon". There is undoubtedly an element of literary pose in this statement but it is also evident that school was not the place from which Buchan derived much imaginative stimulus. Both John and his father found the restrictions associated with life in the town oppressive.

The Buchan's home in Queen Mary Avenue was outside the most constricted area of narrow streets, tenements and docks which feature in his story for the Yellow Book called "A Captain of Salvation". These have been transferred to London but are modelled on his Glasgow experience. It also had a garden which Anna remembered as a place of refreshment and relief for her father. This garden was something of an oasis for young John for he describes it as providing a feeling of "romance in the very citadel of the unromantic". This is because for him it hints at that other world, beyond the city, of "sun and green woodlands". Wherever John saw life he was aware of at least one of the factors which he associates with the Borders, Wood, Hill or Water. The city has little place in Buchan's work as an imaginative concept whether as "Vanity Fair" or the "Celestial City".

1 SQ "Urban Greenery"
VI Conclusion

To be a Borderer then in Buchan's sense is to belong to a complex geographical, historical, and literary entity which emphasizes certain habits of mind and produces a characteristic way of life. In this ordered, harmonious, and integrated vision there is nothing static because of the constant presence of challenge.

From his own limited experience of life on the Borders John Buchan felt that he had learned a fundamental truth about human existence, a universal factor common to all men. This was that all men are historically and psychologically Borderers. Differences and distinctions in all aspects of life, intellectual, social, physical, psychological and spiritual are not therefore to be smoothed over but to be clarified if there is to be understanding. Confrontation is, then, an essential element in existence, something with which all men have to come to terms.
Buchan's construct of man as a Borderer, though based on his childhood experiences, coloured all his responses in later life. It also produced in his works a recurring interest in the multiple aspects of positive confrontation. In this way the concept of Borderer was expanded, tested and modified until it became the basis of his personal philosophy of life and literature. This can be demonstrated by analysing one aspect of confrontation systematically.

Since man is both a social being and a part of his natural environment he experiences within himself contradictory tendencies which must be constantly adjusted to each other by him. Man's survival depends on his ability to adapt to the pluralities of his life, not by eliminating opposition, but by sustaining forces within and around him in a state of equipoise.

Four major experiences in Buchan's own life serve to focus and illustrate the four dominant areas of tension between the demands of civilization and those of the wild as they are explored in his writing. Firstly there is the holiday environment of upper Tweeddale, secondly the South African experience of alien immensities, thirdly the wasteland experience of the 1914-1918 War, and finally the re-creative experience of the Canadian North.
From "early summer until some date in September"¹ the Borders were home for the Buchan children. The break with the ordered daily life of Fife or Glasgow was complete, Buchan says. Indeed so far were they removed from ordinary life that the children considered the Borders to be "a holy land which it would have been sacrilege to try to join to our common life". In a Graphic article called "Leisure Misused"² in 1930, Buchan insists, "All my life I have taken too many holidays ... I have a shameful capacity for utter idleness". Nowhere does the latter statement receive any corroboration from independent witness. Indeed most people are astonished by his constant capacity for intense activity. Yet it is certain that he always felt that holidays were extremely important to his well-being, but as Janet Adam Smith pointed out,³ they were "not a matter of rest, but of alternative activity, usually physical".

Walking in the hills, often (from the age of nine onwards) in search of good fishing waters, was always a principle source of recreation. As an undergraduate at Oxford he undertook a series of longer walking tours in spring with one or other of his friends covering much of the area north of the Border and south of the Forth–Clyde valleys as well as excursions into Appin and Moidart.⁴ In the long summer vacations he would once again bury himself in the moorlands.⁵ His bicycle provided him with the means of ranging widely even beyond the reaches of the upper Tweed.

It is this holiday experience which provided John

1 tweed.
with his primary response to nature for it was undoubtedly here that he knew first the "adventurous joy which comes from the outside world", a response that was to remain with Buchan all his life. Holidays, in the open air in particular, were for him truly re-creational and clearly refreshing. There is a neat counterpointing of the notions of what constitutes a desert for the civilized man in his description in a Spectator review of "those holidayings and enterprises which lie like oases in the desert of a busy man's life". Buchan was in such sympathy with Gathorne-Hardy's description of a politician in the book Autumn's in Argyll, that he used it at least twice more when he re-worked some of the ideas expressed in this review. Although at that time Buchan was not himself a member of Parliament, as a young lawyer and journalist he knew something akin to the experience of "the heat and dust of a September session in London with the thermometer at 85° and the drone of voices in the House". It is certainly no surprise to him that the honourable member's mind was "absent, plodding along the well-known bank, the whistle of the curlew and the plover sounding in my ear". To the man immured in civilization the call of the wild is the call to breathe again that "fresh air which is intoxicating in its strength", It is a call to a tonic form of freedom. The "miracle" of the journey from London, he said, "never staled". For it was always a delight to exchange, "the aimless streets and smell of dust and petrol and overcrowded humanity for wide spaces blown over by winds from hill and sea".

1 MM Oct (1894) 449, "Sentimental Travelling"
2 Spec 17 Nov (1900) 715, "Autumn's in Argyll"
3 Book of Jubilee (1901) 182, Great Hours in Sport (1921) 227
4 Gr 20 Sep (1930) 443 "Paradox Beyond the Tweed"
For Buchan the call of the curlew was not simply an evocative memory, it was the "true voice of the wilderness". It invited him to listen to the music of the earth itself which he interpreted as a call to freedom and adventure.

"Come forth", it cried, "the sky is wide and it is a far cry to the world's end. The fire crackles fine o' nights below the fires and the smell of roasting meat and woodsmoke is dear to the heart of man. Fine too, is the sting of salt and the risp of the north-wind in the sheets. Come forth, one and all, to the great lands overseas and the strange tongues and the fremit peoples! Learn before you die to follow the Piper's son, and though your old bones bleach among grey rocks, what matter, if you have had your bellyful of life and come to the land of Heart's Desire?" ... this was the first part of the Moor-Song, the Song of the Open Road, the Lilt of the Adventurer, which shall be now and ever and to the end of days.

The spring cry of the curlew was ideally suited to the moors, for whilst it was "eerie, fantastic, untamable ... it had none of the savagery of the buzzard's mew or the raven's croak. It was the voice of a habitable wilderness not wholly inimical to man". It is, of course in the spring, when Buchan is most aware of Natura Benigna for this is the season when the barren desert of winter begins to blossom again. It is in Scotland that he feels the return of life to the landscape most acutely. "I feel the release from winter", he says in "A Rhapsody on Fishing", "more on the Highland river than by an English stream, because there is more sound and movement, more proof of an irresistible resurgence of life".

Tweeddale is potentially a "habitable wilderness"

1 [MHD 298]
2 [JUL 1897 219 "The Song of the Moor"
3 [M 2 May (1931) 180]
containing "both the desert and the sown". This, Buchan considered to be one of the striking features of Scotland as a whole for "Scotland is a small country and most parts of it are within hail of the wilds". Even in the heart of the industrial and urban centres you are within reach of the wilderness. In Edinburgh you sense that the Pentlands are just outside the city, and "from many a slummy Glasgow street you can get a glimpse of faraway Highland hills". What Buchan is emphasizing is the importance of a regional perception by which the two elements of civilization and wilderness can be contained within the same context. This feature is common to Broughton, Elsfield and Musuru.

The moor-birds' cries speak to Buchan of the "caller" upland air. This fresh air is, at once, an acutely remembered physical sensation, a symbol of achievement and of that breadth of prospect associated with arrival at the summit of a ridge, or the watershed in a pass.

There was a fresh clean wind blowing, which put life into my bones, and I stood on the edge and looked down thousands of feet over the little hill-tops to the great forest and to the horizon, which was all red and gold ... I realised that the great thing in the world is to reach the proper vantage ground.

Even when visibility is for some reason limited the feel of this fresh air on the skin signals that achievement. Thus when the adventurers reach the watershed of Clearwater Gap in *Salute to Adventurers* they felt "that gust of freer air which means the top of the pass" and when Andrew and Shalah cannot even raise their heads as they worm their way up a slope it is "the cooler air blowing on top of my prostrate skull" that tells Andrew...

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1 MHD 22 of J B of B 49
2 8-20 Sep (1950) 453 "Paradox beyond the Tweed"
3 op. cit.
4 GH Oct (1894) 369 "Rivuli Montani"
5 L in the W 34
6 Stoa 275
that he is "approaching the scarp of the ridge". The tonic air of the upland morning can put vigour into the blood of even the most carefully protected specimen of urbanity, Mr. Craw in Castle Gay, when given the chance.

The spirit of physical adventure which Buchan first learned as a part of the holiday enterprises in which he tested his own limits in freedom never left him. Later in life he was to point out that the mechanics had changed but the spirit was the same. "At twenty I thought it an adventure to take a bicycle over certain Highland hillroads; at sixty I was flying across the pack-ice in the Arctic".

The roots of his attitudes towards all sports are to be found in these early Tweeddale holidays. His preference is for activities like hill walking, mountaineering, fishing and hunting since these offer a specific challenge to the individual. Sport was defined by him in 1921 as being distinct from games because it was "a contest with wild Nature in some one of her forms, a contest in which there is commonly some risk". In games the challenge comes within man-made rules and though skill may be required the contest remains man-made and therefore is reasonably predictable.

Not all experiences of nature here were simply exhilarating and liberating. There was, even in Tweeddale the possibility of stumbling upon Nature Maligna. Buchan relates this experience to Huxley's descriptions of a nature "where the Wordsworthian Philosophy means nothing", places like a tropical forest where one is aware of a "cruel, obscene superabundance". It seems that Buchan himself knew something of this feeling of excessive and oppressive

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1 StoA 294
2 CC 161
3 MB 278
4 Great Hours of Sport (1921) Preface v
lushness in nature.

Greenness, utter, absolute greenness, has all my life seemed to me uncanny, and the places which in my memory are infested with a certain awe are the green places. Take the Devil's Beef Tub, the green pit in the hills on the road from Tweed to the head of Annan. Rudyard Kipling once told me that, far as he had wandered, and much as he had seen, this uncanny hollow seemed more than any other spot to be consecrated to the old gods ... There was a song popular on the Border called The wild glen sap green. It was in such green 'hopes', as we called them, that sometimes I came to the edge of fear. If there were sheep in sight I was never afraid. But if there were no sheep about, and a shoulder of hill shut out the world, I became conscious that I was alone in an enclosed place without the company of bird or beast. Then the terror of solitude laid hold of me, and I fled incontinent until I reached a herd's cottage.

There were a number of features in the Tweedmuir landscape that represented sanctuary and defence from the natural world of the malevolent forces that threaten society, the most obvious being the sheepfold and the border keep. Andrew Garvald, hopelessly lost on the moors, pitches head-first into a sheepfold when the banks give way. It turns out, however, to be the opposite of the sanctuary for which he was seeking. The sheepfold image, with all its Biblical associations, is interwoven throughout the novel The Island of Sheep. The dog-wolf image is used here however ambiguously since it represents both a threat to society and primitive power.

Barns, Huntingtower, Hungrygrain and Castle Gay are keeps in the actual, as well as the figurative sense. Barns, in John Burnet of Barns, was the original home.

1 MHD 299.300

cf. account of panic in the Bavarian Wettersteingberg in 1910, (MHD 135.6) and the impression of malevolence at the Mackenzie Delta (MHD 116; "Down North" TS)
of the Burnets and to be defended as the symbol of family and tradition. Huntingtower, in the novel of the same name, "Standin' cauld and lanely and steekit" its garden "rank and wild" was "since the cheeriest dwellin' in a' Carrick". In its deserted state "it stood like a harsh memento mori of human hopes". It became both the arena of conflict and the guardian of romance. Hungrygrain, in The Free Fishers, "lies at the back end of the moor-land glen called Yonderdale and there's no road but a drove road within five miles". It is in the heart of the wilderness but a wilderness that has become infected by man's cruelty. "Mr. Dott had been wont to look on a pastoral upland as a thing homely and kindly, but this place had a horrid savagery, a chill sharper than the April rain". In this "God-forgotten spot" the local minister was simply "a voice crying in the wilderness". Here the systematic and faithful lawyer, the English country gentleman and the learned professor of logic, find that they are lost in a world which takes no account of the codes and definitions by which they have hitherto lived. "Never before" had Mr. Dott "encountered naked savagery. His world was disrupted, he had lost his bearings and it was necessary that he should find again the points of his mental compass". Sir Turner "felt himself to be too far north for the manners of civilization". Indeed "in this howling wilderness ... what code of manners could obtain in such a desert? ... He might even be in danger of becoming ridiculous". Prof. Lemmas (Nanty) "was conscious of being in a new world, a world which he had always revered and dreaded, where his duty was not with books and papers, but with primitive hazards and crude
human passions. It was a professor of logic who was thus pitchforked into the primeval".¹ There is obvious enjoyment here in placing the pillars of society in a position where all the normal supports for their dignity are suddenly, and without warning, removed. Buchan does not deny the value of these social edifices and indeed all his characters revert to their positions at the end of the story with increased dignity, but it is in these test situations that their human value, unsupported by symbols of their social prestige, is allowed to show itself.

Castle Gay is used as the most complete symbol of our human tendency to seek security. It is also the most direct statement in novel form of the necessity of civilized man to recognize the unpredictable and untamable forces with which he has always to deal however much he may attempt to defend himself within a circle of codes and physical barriers. In Buchan-manner, however, the subject is treated with humour and not with cynical brutality. Mr. Craw, like Sir Turner, has simply made himself ridiculous, with the aid of a gullible public and a sycophantic staff by constructing for himself a marvellous system of shock absorbers against life. The novel is the story of his exposure to the basic elements of physical existence and also of a social structure which is outside his control.

There is an interesting contrast between Carey in A Lodge in the Wilderness and Craw in Castle Gay. Both men have reached the "pinnacle" of financial success and are able to construct their worlds and mould society to their own ends. Both believe they are thereby serving the cause of civilization. One does so by providing

¹ FF 177
the environment in which others can come to terms with the world, a temporary retreat, for a better and more effective return into society. The other has withdrawn into seclusion to avoid challenge, in self-protection. Thus, whilst the African Lodge is totally open to the wilds, and indeed favours several excursions into them, the newspaper magnate operates in his Fleet Street flat behind "a barbed-wire entanglement of secretaries"1 or in lonely Castle Gay fortified against all intrusions. Carey tries to bring others into relationships with each other and society. Craw speaks through his newspaper from his ivory tower urbi et orbi unsullied by contact with the mundane world.

Businessmen, politicians, lawyers, journalists, preachers, academics are all, in Buchan's view, in constant danger of constructing these protected areas from within whose carefully defended precincts they are able to dogmatize about "life". The more successfully men construct their worlds the greater the danger of losing touch with life and the only answer for this, according to Buchan, is a constant return to life on "the edge of risk".

The theory of social and psychological health as involving the interspersing of routine with periods of insecurity and risk in pursuit of some socially desirable goal is related to Buchan's ideas about the inter-relationships between the ascetic and aesthetic qualities in life.

The necessity for a certain asceticism "the dash of bitters" that makes the cup "palatable"2 in living is at the heart of Buchan's ethical stance with regard to civilization. The most familiar image that he uses

1 CR 35
2 IM the W 22
for decadence is that of "Moab settled on her lees".

Thus when he first went to Oxford he wrote

the place seems, like Moab, to be settled on its lees. As compared with the Scots Universities, it is materially like the land of Canaan to the Desert of Sin. There are no cheerless walks on sharp winter mornings, no shivering on bare benches in windy class rooms, no scribbling in dark lecture halls at rickety desks. Nor is there the pinching, the scraping for an education, the battling against want and ill-health, which makes a Scots college such a noble nursery of the heroic.

Poverty and suffering are not to be sought or condoned in themselves in Buchan's theory and he has no time for the character who through his own fault becomes uncivilized. Buchan cannot maintain his Diehards in the Gorbals for more than one novel and there is nothing but disgust and rejection for characters like the slovenly Drover in Huntingtower who lack self-respect.

One of the things that impressed Buchan most about the story of Thermopylae was that the Spartans carefully combed their hair before going into battle. So Heritage is made to wash and change his shirt in preparation for what he believes will be his death struggle in Huntingtower.

Another image that Buchan uses for the decay that sets in when life becomes oversecure is that of middle-age which is usually "spiritual" rather than physical. Thus in London he believed that he had "acquired a passion for snugness", the habit and mind of a suburbanite. As a result he had "slipped into a sort of spiritual middle age".

It is not only individuals that are prone to this

1. "MHD" 91
2. "96"
degeneration. Nations can also become self-satisfied and so stagnate. Although Buchan was appreciative of much that he saw on the other side of the Atlantic he also saw that the U.S.A., too, in "some of its most famous parts is pockety, snug and cosy, a sanctuary rather than a watch tower." Such "ardent domesticity" he saw as having "its bad effects on American literature, inducing a sentimentality which makes too crude a frontal attack on the emotions, and which has produced as a reaction a not less sentimental 'toughness'." It is not only the States that are subject to this kind of introverted sentimentality with its co-relative of bitter satire. What Buchan describes as the "cockney" mentality in literature can appear wherever the frames of reference are too circumscribed. The writer or thinker who is completely absorbed in his own theories "lives in a little world of artistic and literary trifling, and he has consequently no perspective" and most of all he "has not the imagination to conceive a new model." Fresh inspiration comes from exposure to the outdoor world beyond the safe limits set by egotistical securities.

The outdoor world of fresh experience and challenge is closely associated with Buchan's theory of Romance. Romance was defined by him as a hiatus in the routine of life and was also related to the "sense of space", that Buchan was to define as idealistic Imperialism. Dickson McCunn in Huntingtower setting out on his walking holiday suddenly found that the "rut in which he had travelled so long had given place to open country".

1 MHD 263
2 268
3 Mage Jul (1909) 1-16 "The Cockney, by an Outlander"
4 L in the W 80
5 FF 16
6 L in the W 93
7 H' 19,20
in more than just the physical sense. A feeling of
unlimited possibility is of the essence of a Buchan
adventure. Romance is for Buchan a literary form of
theological hope.

Romanticism in this sense is also an instinctive
protest against undue simplification. For, according
to Buchan, simplification is yet another form of
isolation, rigidity and rejection of our nature, in
this case, of our human nature. For we are "all a
strange compound, and we shall never reach our full
stature by starving certain parts of our nature of
their due". To pretend that we are thus limiting
our world to the "real" world of "hard" facts is then
a denial of that essential "holiday" mode of operation
in our natures which results in imaginative and
intellectual creativity. The "keeps" that we construct
are necessary, according to this theory of art and life,
but they must be places of intermittent sanctuary and
not a heritage for continuous habitation.

To go out from self is then to live. Buchan's
belief in the value of risking self in romantic
adventure stems from his early holiday experience of the
outdoor world. This had proved to him that the "caller"
air was good, invigorating and challenging, enlarging his
mental horizons but never totally demoralizing him by its
vastness, power or indifference. The experience of
wilderness in Tweeddale, indeed, produced in Buchan "that
joy of being alive that is a kind of earnest immortality".

1 L in the W 272
II South Africa: "Alien immensities"

The situation in South Africa when Buchan arrived in 1901 was far from stable. Although President Kruger was in Europe by this time other Boer leaders, most notably De Wet, and De la Rey were still successfully harassing the British. His work of civil administration was hampered at first by the war situation but this was only one factor in the complex web of difficulties which faced him. However, it is clear that he was exhilarated by the challenges that faced him. "Not many young men with an academic past", he acknowledged in his memoirs, "are given such a chance of grappling with the raw facts of life".¹

What made the situation so rewarding was the sense of being one of the roadmakers of humanity. Milner had, Buchan believed, within a "year or two ... rebuilt the land from its foundations and given it the apparatus of civilisation".² The speed with which southern and central Africa was coming under British influence was perhaps most strikingly illustrated by the meeting of the British Association which took place at the Victoria Falls in 1905 when the remarkable bridge over the Zambesi was opened. Buchan pointed out in The Spectator³ that it was only thirty years before this that David Livingstone, the discoverer of the falls, had died. At that time the area had still been, for Europeans, virtually an unknown wilderness.

Although Buchan had no official government status, indeed he refused such office when it was offered,⁴ his work effectively combined a number of the functions of government. Not only did he collect data for Milner

1 MHD 108
2 100
3 *Spec 25 Aug (1905) 281,2 "Geography and Empire"
   *Spec 16 Sep (1905) 380,1 "The Bridging of the Zambesi"
4 L. 2 Aug (1902)
on the most difficult of all the problems that faced the Transvaal, namely repatriation and resettlement of the land which had been cleared during the war, but he actually formulated policies, drafted the necessary laws and actively participated in putting them into operation. Few young men indeed are entrusted with the power to achieve so much in two years. Milner, under whose name all these things were officially sanctioned, was later criticized for his autocratic handling of the situation. It was politically expedient for the Liberal Party in 1905 to decry Milner but it must have been obvious to them that before, during and immediately after the Anglo-Boer War in South Africa it was personalities and not parties which dominated the political arena. Rhodes and Kruger were equally autocratic leaders of mixed motives and abilities who were able to unite heterogeneous sections of the population behind them and initiate equally great demographic and topographic changes.

The highly competent group of young Oxford men who worked under Milner's leadership to shape their brave new world in the Transvaal were motivated by the twin ideals of the "New Imperialism" as John Marlowe has pointed out in Milner, Apostle of Empire.¹ These he defines as beneficence and profitability. The superiority of their culture, its civilizing effect on others and their right, therefore, to impose it on others in the wake of conquest seems to have been accepted by them as axiomatic. This does not mean however that their action was arbitrary or unreflective. One of the reasons that Buchan wrote A Lodge in the Wilderness was to analyze and discuss the motives and methods behind his own attempts to shape and form a

¹ Hamilton (1976)
landscape and a people, to "civilize" the "wild".

The imaginative idea of a country house retreat in the heart of Africa, where the Imperial politician could reflect on his policies and generally restore proportion and health to both mind and body and prepare for further effective action, is the culmination of a series of experiences. Of these, perhaps the primary one in time was the house that he shared with Hugh Wyndham, Craig Sellar and Basil Blackwood about two and a half miles out of Johannesburg. Here he could shake off the dust of the city, produce his own basic food supply and look out over the plains for about thirty miles to the Magaliesburg Mountains.

More important however in imaginative impact was his visit to Wood Bush in North Eastern Transvaal. Janet Adam Smith quotes the letter that John wrote to Anna describing his visit in January 1903. The terminology with which he tries to depict the place could hardly be more sublime. It is an "earthly paradise", "Eden", "a kind of celestial Scotland". Later he was to describe it as "a temenos, a place enchanted and consecrate". Here he says he is "very keen to have a bit biggin of my ain", "a kind of African country-house". The cost of such a house, however, would have been prohibitive for all but a millionaire, so that when Buchan first proposed such an idea in public through an article in The Spectator on January 16th 1904, he says that the "man who attempts such a country house must be very rich" and when he writes his book A Lodge in the Wilderness he describes the owner of Musuru, Carey, as being "an intelligent millionaire".

1 JAS 130
2 MID 120
3 L 4 Jan 1903, quoted JAS 130
4 Spec 16 Jan (1904) 80,1
The reading of Sir Harry Johnston's book *The Nile Quest*, which Buchan had reviewed in the same issue of *The Spectator* renewed his enthusiasm for the idea of such a property. The descriptions in this book of Ruwenzori and the Mountains of the Moon extended, for him, the concepts of Wood Bush. Buchan sees Johnston as looking forward to the day when the highlands whether of Abyssinia or Uganda, will be the home of the white race, who will use them as a vantage ground from which to control the development of the native races of the Upper Nile Valley. This is indeed, the problem of all our tropical African possessions. The vantage-ground must exist before the white masters can extend their civilisation.

By the time he wrote his book called *A Lodge in the Wilderness* in 1907 it was to be not only a vantage ground for the potential ruling caste but a place where that minority could reflect on the very foundations of their authority.

The ideal house at Musuru is distinguished by a number of features that were common to Buchan's perception of Johannesburg, Wood Bush and Ruwenzori. The house is situated on a ridge, the climate is invigorating and there is a long prospect from its windows. Some features of the landscape are familiar and are thought to be like the Borders or other parts of Scotland, or like a European park-land or garden. When he describes Wood Bush in *The African Colony* he says it appeared to be "an endless park laid out as if by a landscape gardener". This he sees as particularly remarkable because nature herself seems to have forestalled man's efforts to civilize the landscape. "For surely a park is properly man's work, a flower of civilization, which

1 *Jan 16
2 AG 117
nature aids but rarely contrives. Yet when she does contrive how far is the result beyond our human skill!" 1

When Buchan describes the "broad gate" to the North between the Zoetpansberg and the Blaauwberg he describes the illusion of parkland in the bush veld.

You are always coming to the House and never arriving. At every turn you expect a lawn, a gleam of water, a grey wall; soon, surely, the edges will be clipped, the sand will cease, the dull green will give place to the tender green of watered grass. But the House remains to be found, though I fancy that it may exist on a spur of Ruwenzori.

This section is dated August 1903, four months before The Spectator article which actually places A Lodge in the Wilderness on Ruwenzori where the intelligent millionaire is to create a park for himself at Musuru.

Now the road turns west, and the indefinable something creeps into the atmosphere which tells the traveller that he is approaching the rim of the world. Suddenly he comes upon a gate, with a thatched lodge, which might be in Scotland. Entering he finds a park dotted with shapely copses and full of the same endless singing streams.

In both cases what makes for interest is the sharp contrast between the expectations of the observer and the empirical experience. In a letter written in October 1901 he stresses the "comic" inversion in this experience of the African landscape for him.

You have glorious flowers without scent, birds without song, rivers without water, and the rainy season in summer. It is very odd to go pulling up for weeds in the garden begonias and great scarlet geraniums and planting simple little European flowers. There is a bird called the widow bird with a tail so long that when it comes to rain it is over weighted.

1 AC 117
2 in 151
3 L. in the W 11,2
and lies helplessly on the ground.¹

David Crawfurd in Prester John also finds when he arrives at Blauwildebeestfontein that he has, like Christian and Hopeful in The Pilgrim's Progress reached "the Delectable Mountains, from which they had a prospect of Canaan". The sight of mountains is essential in this idealised landscape because they provide the possibility of exploratory climbing and also because they remind man of the more contemplative side of his nature. The conflict between action and contemplation seem indeed to be resolved in this ideal situation because man's creation has been simplified and is recognised as being in harmony with nature. Thus at Musuru

Luxury has been carried to that extreme of art where it becomes a delicate simplicity. It is a place to work, to talk, to think, but not to idle in - a strenuous and stimulating habitation. For on every side seems to stretch an unknown world, calling upon the adventurous mind to take possession.²

The actual description of the house corresponds closely with the proposed "country-house" in The African Colony at Wood Bush.³ In this situation it becomes possible for civilised man to regain a "sense of space". Lady Flora says that she had never before realised what space meant because even though she had climbed mountains and "camped in the desert for a week" and been "several times on the high seas" she had always seemed to carry her own atmosphere with her. Here she says, "everything indoors and commonplace and conventional is a million miles behind".⁴ Hugh warns her that in his view "lives are like a lot of separate circles scattered about in

¹ Buchan's perception of and delight in the sense of the foreign is closely allied to Koestler's definition of comedy in The Act of Creation as "bisociation", Arthur Koestler: The Act of Creation, Picador, 35.

² In the W. 14

³ AG 119,120

⁴ In the W. 93
"space" and that you can't make your circle "any bigger by changing its site". The only thing to do, he says, "is to draw a larger circle with a wider radius". He recognises that this is not always possible and that "those who do that often fail to complete it, and leave only a broken arc to show how vast their design was". Later Marjory talks of the horizons of possibility widening for the Northerner when he comes into the southern hemisphere. This is because it is here that he can "live in touch with the great elementary things". Astbury had referred previously to a sense of Nirvana or what he called "a vast bovine contentment, which I suppose is a kind of condensed and stored vitality". The Tropics are for him therefore the "only really restful places in the world, for you feel that your life is such a speck on the great wheel of things". Travelling through the karoo on his way to Johannesburg Euchan had his first experience of this sensation of peace.

All day we travelled through the same beautiful broken desert country. I went out and sat at the end of the train, and have never felt such absolute Sabbatical stillness as in that great desert.

Hugh had previously used the Platonic image of the emergence from a cave to a new vision of the meaning of life to express the radical modification in outlook that comes with fresh idealism. The small tribe here is not of Africans but of any narrow-minded men and women.

What we are going to talk about is the whole scheme of life which a new horizon and a new civic ideal bring with them. It affects the graces as closely as the business of life.
art and literature as well as economics and administration. Suppose a small tribe lived in a cave and never saw the daylight. One day the barriers at the door fell down, and they look out on a blue sky and meadows and a river, and are free to go out to them. It wouldn't be only the modes of tribal government that would be altered by the illumination.

In A Lodge in the Wilderness, however, it is the release from the idols of comfortable convention and the more positive intensification of awareness that is stressed in the widening of horizons that takes place for the Northerner "southwards o' the line". A passion is released which is closely related to religious experience in these verses quoted by Marjory.

In the ancient orderly places, with a blank and orderly mind,
We sit in our green walled gardens and our corn and our wine increase;
Sunset nor dawn can wake us, for the face of the heavens is kind;
We light our taper at even and call our comfort peace.
I will arise and get me beyond this country of dreams,
Where all is ancient and ordered and hoar with the frost of years,
To the land where loftier mountains cradle their wilder streams,
And the fruitful earth is blessed with more bountiful smiles and tears —
There is the home of the lightnings, where the fear of the Lord is set free,
Where the thunderous midnights fade to the turquoise magic of morn
The days of man are a vapour, blown from the shoreless sea,
A little cloud before sunrise, a cry in the void forlorn —
I am weary of men and cities and the service of little things,
Where the flamelike glories of life are shrunk to a candle's ray,
Smite me, my God, with Thy presence, blind my eyes with Thy wings,
In the heart of Thy virgin earth show me Thy secret way!

1 L. in the W 44
Buchan's dry thought mode and Kiplingesque resonance and rhetoric are rather unhappily allied here but there is an underlying sincerity which shows through in spite of the diction.

There is for Buchan a sense of permanence and durability in the wildness of the South African veld, whether it be the high-veld or the bush veld. In the article "In the Tracks of the War" he claimed that "the bush-veld has an ineradicable air of barbarism" and that the "veld and the mountains continue for ever, austerely impartial to their human occupants: it is for the newcomer to prove his right to endure by the qualities which nature has marked for endurance". In "Evening on the Veld" he had also remarked that though for Europeans the veld had considerable significance and history the land itself unlike his own Border country had "no memory of it".

Man then, in Buchan's opinion must learn from his environment here how to live. This is a very different proposition from the kind of imperialism which sought to domesticate the wilds. It is mainly a question of scale it seems which saves South Africa from the changes that have so modified the landscape of Britain.

The face of England has altered materially in two centuries, because England is on a human scale - a parterre land, without intrinsic wilderness. But cultivation on the veld will always be superimposed; it will remain, like Egypt, ageless and inimitable - one of the primeval types of the created world.

This, of course, is not something to be regretted. If nature resists man's attempts to reduce her to the dimensions of his own mind, then it can only be to his

1 Maga Dec 1902
2 May 1902
3 Spec 1 Sep (1906) 290, 1
4 Maga May (1902) 592 "Evening on the Veld"
advantage, for he must widen his mental horizons to approximate the dimensions of nature. "Garden soil is good", quotes Buchan from Turgeniev on the title-page of A Lodge in the Wilderness "but cloudberry will not grow on it".

This natural landscape is also a classic one, for Musurum is on the Mountains of the Moon. Buchan in an article published in Blackwood's Magazine in January 1909 and republished in The Last Secrets in 1923 under the title "The Mountains of the Moon", following Johnston,1 relates these accounts to the mention of the "Mountain of silver from which the Nile flowed" by Aristotle and the even earlier line of Aeschylus which described Egypt as being "nurtured by the snow".2

It is Stanley's account however that really caught his imagination. In both The Spectator3 and Blackwood's4 articles he quotes a passage in The Nile Quest5 the account of his experience on May 28th, 1888.

While looking to the southeast and meditating upon the events of the last month, my eyes were directed by a boy to a mountain said to be covered with salt, and I saw a peculiar shaped cloud of a most beautiful silver colour, which assumed the proportions and appearance of a vast mountain covered with snow. Following its form downward, I became struck with the deep blue-black colour of its base, and wondered if it portended another Tornado; then as the sight descended to the gap between the eastern and western plateaux I became for the first time conscious that what I gazed upon was not the image or semblance of a vast mountain, but the solid substance of a real one, with its summit covered with snow ... It now dawned upon me that this must be the Ruwenzori, which was said to be covered with a white metal

1 The Nile Quest 23,28
2 The Last Secrets 105
3 *Spec 12 Jan (1907) 46
4 Jan (1909)
5 260, 1
or substance, believed to be a rock, as reported by Kawai's two slaves.

A photograph facing page 23 in The Nile Quest shows the mountains rising steeply behind what seems to be a tropical rain forest. Johnston had estimated from his position 14,828 feet up Kyanja in 1900 that the highest altitude in the range was not under 20,000. Buchan who praises Wollaston's insistence on "the romance of Central Africa" is almost disappointed when the Italian expedition finally solves the "riddle of the equatorial snows" and puts the height of the twin peaks of Margherita and Alexandra respectively at 16,810 and 16,744 feet, lower, as he points out, than Mts. Kenya and Kilimanjaro. In the account of the expedition in The Spectator he says however, "No English mountaineer need regret that a mountain within the Empire has been conquered by one whom all Englishmen whole-heartedly admire, and who has shown himself so appreciative of the work of a race 'whose tenacity of will', to quote his Rome address, 'and humanity of purpose have carried the light of civilisation everywhere, even to the foot of Ruwenzori itself'". In the full account which was finally published with illustrations in The Last Secrets he expands the idea that though the Ruwenzori range may be disappointing to English mountaineers because they are lower than expected and because they didn't reach the top first it is still worth exploring because it provides a remarkable sequence of climax community

John says in journalistic fashion that "Every one remembers this famous passage" but it seems clear that he is quoting (with exactly the same omissions) not from an original source but from Johnston. The only change he makes is to give the opening word "While" a capital letter "W" although Johnston prints a small "w".

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2 Spec 31 Oct (1906) "Ruwenzori"
3 12 Jan (1907)
4 Buchan persists in using English at this time, rather than British, in articles, as was customary.
vegetations the description of which he repeats in some detail.

The series of terraces on which flora and fauna progress in sharply differentiated stages from the Alpine to the sub-tropical appear again in A Lodge in the Wilderness. The possibility of passing from one climatic zone to another in rapid succession gives Buchan the opportunity to discuss the relationship between man and his environment particularly in his response to the problems of administrative ability in tropical areas. It is not the men, however, who respond to the richness and variety of this vegetation in the sub-tropical zone but the women. Mr. Westbury finds the situation overpowering and the prospect of the return climb daunting. The Tropics for him are "a purgatory". The vigorous and athletic Astbury admits that "At Muzuru I am always thinking about reforming the world, while down in this place the world can go to pieces for all I care". But for Marjory the hot sun gets "the creases" out of her soul and she is able to say "today one really believes that veins of fire run through the earth, and that nothing is dead, not even the rocks. One feels the world so much bigger and fuller and richer and more mysterious". In "The Mountains of the Moon" as republished in The Last Secrets this strangeness of the flora is seen to cross time zones as well as climatic stages for many of the plants belong to "that strange world which is embalmed in our coal seams" and can therefore be regarded by modern man as being "primeval".

Even though the "truth" of these mountains "is prosaic beside these imaginings" they are still in

1 A Lodge in the Wilderness
2 The Last Secrets
Buchan's view unique because they "are extravagances of Nature, moulded, (as much of the African landscape was for Buchan), "without regard to human needs". "The common mountain top lifts a man above the tumult of the lowlands". Most of the other known mountain ranges can be described as "barriers between the settlements of man" but these mountains in their strangeness "seem to carry" man "beyond the tumult of the world" altogether and are thus aptly named The Mountains of the Moon.¹

The strange richness which can make man less self-interested is also curiously related to the effect of the desert, which for Buchan at this time seems to have meant the dry open spaces of the high veld. One odd feature of the dry-veld landscape was to be put to good use later in Greenmantle, that was the hill with a "castrol or saucepan on its head" which he describes having seen in the Eastern Transvaal.² Yet another link with this novel is to be found in the assessment of the cult of the "desert spirit" which was described in a book called In the Desert by L. March Phillipps that Buchan had reviewed in *The Spectator* on 16th December, 1905.

"Mohammedanism", says Buchan, "is the desert spirit which stops short of all complete achievement and enduring civilisation". He then goes on to quote March Phillipps in a passage which is echoed by Sandy Arbuthnott in Greenmantle who equates desert with any austere but open space.

1 The Last Secrets 123-5
2 AC 143,4
And then comes a new revelation and a great simplifying. They want to live face to face with God without a screen of ritual and images and priestcraft. They want to prune life of its foolish fringes and get back to the noble bareness of the desert. Remember, it is always the empty desert and the empty sky that cast their spell over them — these, and the hot, strong, antiseptic sunlight which burns up all rot and decay.

Greenmantle himself is the prophet of this great simplicity and as Buchan had noted as early as 16th January, 1904, in relationship to the Somaliland Campaign ... "the great Moslem population ... is capable of being roused at any moment from its attitude of placid indifference to politics by the advent of a prophet". Buchan foresaw the possibility of this happening in Africa with dire consequences for British administration, which he clearly equates with civilisation.

In a little while the lethargic people are transformed into a crusading army, controlled and organised by a religious brotherhood.

He believes that such a crusade must be crushed at once if the "hardly won land" is not "to relapse into primeval savagery".

Yet the "interpreting class" of British imperialists must also experience the isolation and detachment of the desert. A temporary sojourn in the wilderness is essential to a just appreciation of civilization. In sharp contrast with the surroundings the essential values and distinctions of the symbol of civilization are brought into focus. Janet Adam Smith points out that John had begun to write a novel in 1905 called The Mountain in which he had placed such a symposium in a country-house in the Borders. He apparently abandoned

1 O 263
2 Spec 16 Jan (1904) "The Somaliland Campaign"
3 MHD 184
4 JAS 135
this effort in favour of *A Lodge in the Wilderness.* Dr. Adam Smith thinks that this was probably because he found the novel form too restricting. It seems likely also that he found that his primary Border territory was inadequate for the breadth of the imperialist debate in which he wished to indulge. The meeting of the British Association in August of that year at the Victoria Falls provided him with the imaginative stimulus for the change of setting.¹

Whether the symbol of besieged and definable civilization is the garden in the wilderness, or the lodge on the Ruwenzori it is also a symbol of unexpected survival against opposition. This is also one of the basic concepts behind the complex notion of Prester John.

The first mention of Prester John in Buchan's published works is in the opening story of the collection *Grey Weather.* He is described as the man "who in the wilderness, where no man travels and few may live, dwelled in all good reason and kindness". In the story the lone survivor of civilization is a Border shepherd in a remote glen. In 1900 Buchan had occasion to praise the author of *The Making of a Frontier*² for just these same qualities. For this man who was Warden of the Marches of North Kashmir was able to complete his work although "he was constantly left alone for months on end, the outer world shut off from him, and with no ally but his own wits". At this time Buchan seems to have seen this as a distinguishing trait of the British colonialist. Mrs. Loman in *The Half-Hearted* also has that trick of dominating her surroundings which English ladies seem to bear to the uttermost ends of the Globe. There in that land of snows and rock, with savage

¹ *Spec 25 Aug (1905)*
² *Spec 17 Mar (1900) 388*
tribesmen not thirty miles away, and the British frontier line something less than fifty, she gave them tea and talked the small talk of society with the ease and gusto of an English country home.

In a letter home on October 21st, 1901, Buchan explains "we dress for dinner and sit in the drawing room afterwards as if we were in England. Out there, little fragments of civilization are dear, for, though the wild life is fine, the half-civilized life of the colonial hotels is abominable". The civilized man must remind himself of his social position constantly and cultural loyalty must be preserved if there is to be healthy interaction between cultures.

Henrique, in Prester John, "whose skin spoke of the tar-brush" is a man without loyalties to either side and described by Buchan as "that double-dyed traitor to his race." He is eventually destroyed by the natural strength of Laputa when he has proved himself incapable of making use of the superior fire power of the European gun. Throughout the novel he is referred to as the "Portuguese", a foolish man whose betrayal of the cultural values of both black and white races bears in itself the seeds of self destruction. His lack of social integration also allows him to indulge in merciless exploitation in the service of self-interest.

David Crawfurd (the lineal descendent of David Balfour in literary genealogy) is the honest young Scot forced to take full responsibility for his life at an early age. Social and economic pressures in Britain are counter-balanced for him by the wider horizons of South Africa. Here his acumen and enterprise can be exercised effectively. Initially, he proves his
industry and ability as a trader in the remarkable way that a number of men were able to do in these circumstances. Douglas Haig probably told Buchan about fellow-borderer James D. Logan of Matjesfontein who, at the age of twenty, shipwrecked near Simon's Bay, had begun his career in South Africa with only "the clothes he was wearing and an abundant supply of self-confidence" and ended up owning virtually the whole of Matjesfontein. Logan's favourite farm was called "Tweedside" and his house "Tweedside Lodge". According to Lawrence G. Green, Logan built up Matjesfontein from a tiny village, a wayside station at "the gateway to the Great Karoo" to a thriving metropolis.

Matjesfontein was designed and built by Jimmy Logan. He imported London lamp-posts for street lighting, and they are still there. The village was the first in South Africa to have water-borne sewerage, and the first to be lit by electricity. Logan spent a thousand pounds tracing a water course on one of his farms. He discovered a supply that yielded eleven thousand gallons a day, a great find in the Karoo, piped the water to Matjesfontein and sold water rights to the railways at a handsome profit. The shipwrecked youth was firmly on his feet.

Matjesfontein acted like a magnet for the tourist and holiday-maker. Lord Randolph Churchill picked bluebells on the kopjes there in 1891 and other guests included the Duke of Hamilton, and the Sultan of Zanzibar. Olive Schreiner stayed there often and wrote her Thoughts on South Africa there. Logan built the Hotel Milner to house his distinguished tourists. He also took over the catering for the railway and served two breakfasts "one at three shillings and sixpence, where travellers

1 L.G. Green: Karoo (1975) 58
2 op. cit Karoo 58
3 " " 59
4 Karoo 60
went for 'quiet and high-toned society', and a half-crown breakfast for other customers'. Buchan makes no mention of which he chose. The South African War only increased Logan's wealth because Matjesfontein became headquarters of the Cape Command "with twelve thousand troops camped around the village". It was here "down a side-street in the former laundry that ... Major Douglas Haig presided over a small mess". Haig joined Buchan on the train here and travelled with him to Johannesburg. "Private Edgar Wallace of the R.A.M.C. unloaded medical stores at Matjesfontein railway platform. French, Ironside Roberts all marched down that main street". Like some feudal Laird, Logan even "raised his own mounted corps for service in the field and equipped it at his own expense". Such traders undoubtedly formed a powerful, if idiosyncratic, commercial autocracy which no government could afford to ignore. If entrepreneurial skill is to be equated with a civilizing force then it is certain that, for some men, it must have been a very satisfying power.

David Crawfurd in Presster John finds treasure and adventure only incidentally in the course of his normal responsibilities. He feels the overwhelming passion of greed and lust for wealth especially in the underground cavern when he realises that he has almost fabulous wealth within his grasp. However, like Aladdin, he is not allowed to take possession of the treasure until he has recognized it as a supererogatory asset and not an essential support of life. As a result, wealth and personal power sit lightly on him. The reader is

1 Karoo 61
2 62
3 the model according to Janet Adam Smith, for Richard Hannay. JAS 253,4
left to imagine for himself how the returned colonial uses his wealth in Scotland. Aitken demonstrates what Buchan felt the resident exploiter of the country ought to do with his profits. He reinvests them in the education of "the native races".  

Buchan believed that the basis of western civilization was wealth. Gold (conveniently mined in the Transvaal) because it was "a suitable standard of value and a convenient medium of exchange" was the pillar of our society. 2 Without it Buchan felt life would be reduced to its "rude elements" and become "highly ascetic, highly difficult and extremely dull". 3 It is clear though that wealth carried with it for Buchan, the responsibilities and obligations of improving society, and making the "benefits" of civilisation available to the less privileged.

The possibilities of further mineral resources being discovered depended on a small group of men who were willing to endure the hardships and insecurities of prospecting. It is interesting to notice that amongst the prospectors that Buchan mentions meeting on his journeys around the Transvaal were "three huge Canadians" 4 who were the advance guard of civilization who have "their eyes steadfastly to the wilds". 5 Thirty-two years later Buchan was to rejoin these Canadian frontiersmen in their own territory.

Richard Hannay, an adequately wealthy colonial from Bulawayo, who returns to Britain demonstrates another problem for the frontiersman; that of re-integration into the parent civilization. At the beginning of The Thirty-

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1 BL 373
2 "Spec 14, Nov (1903) 802, 3 "The Material Pillar of Society"
3 op. cit
4 AC 166
5 " 167
Nine Steps Hannay is shown to have that sense of restlessness, frustration and partial alienation that Buchan himself felt on his return to London. I think Sandison slightly overstates this alienation in The Wheel of Empire but readjustment can hardly have been easy. The sense of being an "outlander" in both communities does not, for Buchan, erase the awareness of the essential relationship between the colony and the parent country. A colony he says is "a sapling, bound by the laws of nature to follow the parent tree". Conflicts he recognized were bound to arise both socially and psychologically between the two. Yet a healthy colony shares the same "moral complexion" as the motherland, "politically it may be a rival, spiritually it remains a daughter". The utopian dream of a spiritual family was, at this stage of his life the prime motivating force of Buchan's activity. The notion of South African federation under the Crown became for him a paradigm of imperial federation and indeed of universal federation.

I dreamed of a world-wide brotherhood with the background of a common race and creed, consecrated to the service of peace; Britain enriching the rest out of her culture and traditions, and the spirit of the Dominions like a strong wind freshening the stuffiness of the old lands. I saw in the Empire a means of giving the congested masses at home open country instead of a blind alley. I saw hope for a new afflatus in art and literature and thought. Our creed was not based on antagonism to any other people. It was humanitarian and international; we believed that we were laying the basis of a federation of the world.

Alan Sandison is, I believe, well justified in seeing in Buchan's attitudes towards imperialism an

\begin{align*}
1 & \quad 200 \\
2 & \quad AC 30 \\
3 & \quad MHD 125
\end{align*}
"ecclesiastic significance". 1

The ziggurat structure of Buchan's cultural model is closely related to his image of the Lodge on the plateau whose terraces connect the upper realms with the steaming "fever plains" below. It contains all the inadequacies of such a static model for society and it is appropriate that for such an intellectual abstraction it should be placed on the Mountains of the Moon. Its basic premise of the paramountcy of British civilization seems highly questionable on both ideological and empirical grounds, but Buchan himself was not a pure idealist. Nevertheless he saw the value of abstract structures of reference even though they could not be regarded as absolutes in themselves. Against the laissez-faire anti-imperialists he could have levelled the comments that he was to make in The Graphic on November 15th, 1930. "It is all very well for the Almighty to show infinite tolerance, but I question whether it is the province of fallible man ... some dogmas, some definitions, we must have if the work of the world is to go on". 2

Buchan's experience in South Africa also gave him the opportunity to challenge his own stratified model. His imaginative sympathy with many different kinds of people led him to make two of his most enduring and admirable heroes from those whom his cultural theory rejects as being only semi-civilized.

The Boers do not figure in any major way in Prester John. The Anglo-Boer conflict has apparently been resolved and the Dutch are simply back-veld farmers. They have, of course, left their mark upon the countryside in the place names and their fighting tactics are

1 Wheel of Empire 149
2 298
emulated in the placing of the guns on the Wolkberg, but they are not allowed an active role in the fighting. It is when the British came into conflict with the Germans that Peter Pienaar was allowed to emerge and with him much of Buchan's admiration for his old "enemies".

Before he left for South Africa he wrote in The Spectator that he agreed with E. T. Cook's analysis that there were three basic conflicts involved in the South African War; a conflict of ideals, of race and of ambitions. The Boer ideal is characterized as the desire for "freedom from restraint for an exclusive and tribal body for the family of the elect" who are recognisably separate from the British because of their distinctive "civilization". They challenge the British will to dominate a federation and seek to create in the Transvaal, a "Dutch state which will eventually dominate South Africa". Buchan also agreed with Cook that the South African Dutch population were not all equally anti-British, Schreiner's position differing markedly from that of Reitz. In another article in The Spectator at this time he said categorically that if a colony was not to be "a wilderness where fortune-hunters may find gold, but a civilized and united nation" the Dutch must be integrated into that nation. "The one race", he declares "is necessary to the other".

If Buchan could be reasonably dispassionate and judicial in his remarks about the war in London he did not find it so easy to remain detached when he arrived. To Lady Mary Murray he wrote at the beginning of 1902, that he had "spent some time" when he had first arrived "going thoroughly into the history of the war ... It

1 Spec 20 Jul (1901) 191,2
2 Spec 26 Jan (1901) 131,2
seemed to me a case of competing equities and ours was rather the better". He was obviously not totally happy about the case but he could believe, he says in the same letter, that "we are overwhelmingly in the right in our reconstruction". This means he says that the policy is "to amalgamate, not to destroy, and it is a childish solution of the problem which consists in removing the chief factor".

Buchan’s work in the refugee camps and in land settlement brought him into contact with many different kinds of Afrikaners. He learned Afrikaans and sometimes whilst Botha, De lay Rey and De Wet were still fighting he admitted "one almost wishes one could change sides - it must be such a glorious thing to fight a losing battle for what is after all a noble object. They are not fighting for Kruger and his gang now, but for the country, and it is the irony of fate that we must stamp out the resistance". Buchan came under attack from "some of the rabid loyalists" when he tried to set up a fund privately to help the destitute Boers who refused to turn to the British for aid to restock their farms and so were literally starving to death, but he said "I pay no attention". Imperial politics are obviously subordinated in his mind to the suffering of individual people.

Buchan also admired in these people their self-sacrifice for the sake of integrity to principles. This kind of moral nobility is one of the factors which transcend the class and race model in Buchan’s mind.

1 L.16th Jan (1902)
2 " 9th Dec (1901) The confusion of feeling amongst the British was shown in 1900 when General Joubert died, Lord Roberts sent a telegram of sympathy and British officers who were prisoners at the time sent wreaths for his coffin,
3 L.2 Aug (1902)
Amongst the individual Boers whom Buchan met and admired was "a typical back-veld Boer - a great hunter, friendly, without any sort of dignity, a true frontierrman, to whom politics mean nothing and his next meal everything".¹

All Boers have for Buchan certain characteristics of the Borderer, the result, he believed, of the centrality of the memory of The Great Trek to their cultural identity.

The thought of a national exodus comes easily to the Aryan mind - an inheritance from primeval Asian wanderings. And in itself, it is something peculiarly bold and romantic, requiring a renunciation of old ties and sentiments impossible to an over-domesticated race. It requires courage of a high order and a confident faith in destiny.

The stolid Dutch were given new vitality by intermarriage with the French Huguenots, "scions of good families exiled for the most heroic of causes".² Amongst the names that Buchan mentioned as being modified and given an Afrikaans form was Pinards which became Pienaar. This French element produced, he analyses, an élan and high-spirit.³

Yet Buchan is able to see that some of the less desirable Border characteristics also developed from the defensive position that the Eastern-Boers occupied as they held their lands and culture against incursions from neighbouring African tribes. They may have thereby become "a hardy border race, keeping their own by dint of a strong arm" but they also became, in Buchan's judgement, socially and culturally introverted.

¹ AC 154
² AC 34
³ AC 35
⁴ Inferred, therefore, in his use of the name Peter Pienaar.
taciturn, ungraceful, profoundly attached to certain sombre dogmas, impatient of argument or restraint, bad citizens for any modern State, but not without a gnarled magnificence of their own. They were out of line with the whole world, far nearer in kinship to an Old Testament patriarch than to the townsfolk with whom they shared the country. All angles and corners, they presented an admirable front to savage nature, but they were hard to dovetail into a complex modern society.

Like the Anglo-Scottish Borderers they developed "their own staunch loyalties, their own strict code of honour"\(^1\) which was impatient of slow-moving and distant imperial government\(^2\) especially when that government appeared to support the rights of the peoples who harassed them.\(^3\) Buchan says that it was above all the sense of unnecessary restriction on the Eastern border that caused most friction because the Dutch farmer saw a barred door. No more "brising yont" for him on the eastern border. Expansion, space, were as the breath of his nostrils, and if he could not have them in the old colony he would seek them in the untravelled northern wilds.\(^3\)

Buchan's account of the Trek is full of admiration, for it was an expedition after his own heart full of heroism and "an exhilarating element of sport".\(^4\) He concentrates inevitably on the story as it affects the part of the country that he knew best and the official conflict between Mosilikatse\(^5\) and Potgieter. Of Potgieter and his men he says they "were indeed rather exceptional specimens of their race, and they were strung to the highest pitch of Christian faith and the unchristian passion of revenge".\(^6\)

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1 AC 37
2 " 38
3 " 41
4 " 42
5 Buchan's most usual spelling is followed for the names of African chiefs quoted, except in quotations from modern authors.
6 AC 45
Buchan sums up his complex feelings of admiration and aversion to the Great Trek in terms of a people's reactions to both the civilization and the wild. His analysis deals not with all the South African Dutch settlers but only those whose civilization has become introverted and stultified through living in a Border situation where the forces are unequally matched. This is why they are referred to as "a half-savage people". The centrality of the family and farm to the life of this people may mean that they have little time for what Buchan calls "the finer graces of life" but they share that mixture of restlessness and contentment of their trekking inheritance which Buchan relates to his earlier appreciation of the gypsy life.

He makes a final claim in *The African Colony* for this conquered people whom he finds admirable in so many ways.

Britain in her day has won many strange peoples to her Empire, but none, I think, more curious or more hopeful than the stubborn children of Uys and Potgieter.

and later

If the Boer is once won to our side we shall have secured one of the greatest colonising forces in the world. We can ask for no better dwellers upon a frontier ... Other races send forth casual pioneers, who return and report and then go elsewhere; but the Boer takes his wife and family and all his belongings, and in a decade is part of the soil. In the midst of any savagery he will plant his rude domesticity, and the land is won. With all her colonising activity, Britain can ill afford to lose from her flag a force so masterful, persistent, and sure.

It is from these people, though from the hunter

1 AC 46,7
2 " 48
3 75,6
rather than farmer stock, that Peter Piensar was derived.

The other character who emerges from Buchan's South African experience of the confrontations of civilization and the wild is John Laputa. Here Buchan's Albinism, whether inherited directly from Carlyle's Past and Present or indirectly through Kipling (most likely through both), comes into conflict with that other attraction which he felt for primitivism and also with that value conferred on a people by their history.

The name Laputa is, as Dr. Daniell has noted, also the name of an aerial kingdom of intellectuals in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Dr. Daniell refers to the existence there of "a luminous cave" (with its Platonic implications) of "precious stones and elevation, and its curious twisted beliefs, not to mention the voyage and the Dutch pirates" which he sees as "a not inappropriate association".

There are, I believe, a number of other good reasons why Buchan should have chosen the name of this floating kingdom ruling the lower realms from a safe height. It is an idealist Utopia. Utopianism was one of the characteristics of Ethiopianism at the turn of the century. Its régime is founded on a diamond 200 yards thick. The Kingdom to which Gulliver is lowered when he leaves it is Balnibarbi (pun on the "barbarous" place, from the point of view of the monarch above). Most of all, the derivation of the name is given by the inhabitants as a modification of "lapuntuh", a compound of "Lap" meaning high, and "untuh" meaning governor. Laputa is the earthly representative of the Umkulunkulu of the Zulus, "The great high-power" whose sacred kingship is symbolised by the snake, "the Isembiso sami" (which Buchan glosses as "the very sacred thing"), "the collar

1 DD 117
2 Scott Edition Vol XII
3 G. Travels 219
Buchan had shown an intense interest in African history and lore and mentions a number of authors whose work he has read including H.A. Junod, Emile Jacottet, G. McCall Theal, Henry Lichtenstein, Henry Callaway, Eugene Cassalis, Dudley Kidd, G. W. Stow, H. Johnstone and F. C. Selous. He also admits to being influenced in his imaginative approach to his subject by Rider Haggard. There is however nothing in his approach at this stage that can give his view any kinship with the horror of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The African interior, for Buchan, has a rich and varied history and its "darkness" is only its density and incomprehensibility to the Europeanised mind. Its origins are grounded in one of the great founding myths of civilization, Prester John.

Buchan allows Arcoll and Wardlaw to tell David Crawfurd the semi-historical story of the King of Abyssinia whose Kingdom was so vast that it included not only Ethiopia and the horn of Africa but "extended ... away down to the Great Lakes". Buchan, like so many other men in southern Africa was fascinated by the mystery posed by the Zimbabwe ruins. He favoured the hypothesis of Phoenecian influence after reading "Mr. Bent's 'Ruined Cities of Mashonaland', Dr. Schlichter's papers in the 'Geographical Journal', Professor Keane's 'Gold of Ophir', and Dr. Karl Peters' 'El dorado of the Ancients'". In the same note in The African Colony he also refers to "Mr. Wilmot's 'Monomotapa' and 'The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia' by Messrs. Hall and Neal". From this he concludes that the Makalanga, the Children of the Sun of whom the Mashonas are the present
representatives "were in the line of succession from the Pheonicians." Buchan then draws his conclusion, "if this hypothesis be true, we are presented with a survival of the oldest of civilizations in the heart of modern barbarism".

The snake symbol associates Laputa not only with tribal totemism but specifically with Tchaka Zulu and also with the beginnings of the disturbances in 1905 and with which associated Preseter John. Alice Werner's Myths and Legends of the Bantu, often associated with ancestral spirits. Tchaka himself was, after death, reputed to inhabit a boa constrictor. Captain Arcoll speaks of Tchaka's fetish and associates it with some fetish which "had descended from Preseter John by way of the Mazimba and Angoni and Makaranga".

Alice Werner also tells the story which may in some way have reminded Buchan of this snake symbol around 1905. The legend of Kolelo was of a huge serpent living in a cave in the mountains which Werner describes as messenger of the High God. He espouses a woman of the Wazaramo tribe, thereby signalling their election as propagandists of a new, regenerated earth. Thus began a cult which was reputed to have been at the root of the Majimaji Rising in German East Africa in 1905. Even after the rising was suppressed it seems that the cult continued. Two men guard the entrance to the cave and a medium in residence in the cave interprets the Kolelo's oracles which, says Werner, are "given in the

1. AC 10
2. 11
5. 97
7. 244, 6
same way as those of the Nguni spirit, by a rushing noise in the depth of the cavern, perhaps caused by an underground river".\(^1\) Whilst I am unable to offer direct evidence that Buchan knew of this particular legend it seems likely that he could have associated it with the report in the *Monthly Review* of which he writes in *The Spectator* on 14 July, 1906, that Dinizulu had sent to Majaji to consult her about the possibilities of a rising. Within a week he is writing of the Bambaata incidents in Natal again which had concerned him in articles in February\(^2\) and April\(^3\) of the same year. Shula Marks\(^4\) points to the association of the various uprisings at this time by Europeans and the generalized fears of the white population that there might be a concerted uprising.

Majaji’s territory is described by Buchan\(^5\) as being "situated in the Northern Transvaal, in the wild tangle of mountains which extend from Pietersburg towards the Portuguese frontier and which in their various ranges are known as the Zoutpansberg, the Spelonken, and the Wood Bush". This is, of course, the territory in which he places Prester John.

Majaji’s tribe held its ground, says Buchan, against the Boer commando and though dwindling numerically still claimed a considerable reputation for its chieftainess "for it is a rule founded not upon material power, but upon occult tradition". The chieftainess "acquires the sanctity of her predecessors" and is "a true Sibyl" and "a rainmaker". This is a countryside said Buchan that disposes the mind to believe in such possibilities.

"The Spelonken" with their caves and their curious

\(^1\) Reluctant Rebellion (1970) 155,6
\(^2\) *Spec* 17 Feb (1906) 246,7
\(^3\) *Spec* 21 Apr (1906) 604,5
\(^4\) Reluctant Rebellion (1970) 155,6
\(^5\) *Spec* 14 Jul (1906) 52
contorted hills are like the scenery in a fairy-tale. This he decided was "an appropriate dwelling" for Majaji, whose "magic" was a fascinating "relic from the past over which an impenetrable veil has descended". Buchan recognised that Majaji was probably dependent on a group of medicine-men who supported her reputation, and who had done their job well because of the popular reports of the "legend of the centuries-old priestess". He then cited a fact which is of particular significance in relationship to the association of these ideas with Prester John.

One old man of the writer's acquaintance had a string of beads which might have come out of some Egyptian tomb, and which not even the offer of a waggon would induce him to sell. He had also knowledge of certain springs, which he used daily, and no amount of watching could discover his secret. It is possible that Majaji may have had ... some strange ancestral cult, carried down through the Bantu immigrations, of which they were the guardians. In the movement from the north they may have brought with them rites and customs borrowed from Arab or Phoenician sources, which would be the joy of the scholar.

Surely the association of these ideas of the snake, the necklace, the cave, the underground river and the consultation of ancestral oracles by a chief hoping to initiate a rising in the Zulu tradition were the source of Buchan's novel.

There are other factors which also seem to indicate that this was the period in which these ideas were coalescing. In February 1906\(^2\) he says

In South Africa, therefore, south of the Zambesi the natives may be taken as outnumbering the whites by five to one. If there should arise a leader among this vast people, or if some

\(^1\) Spec 14 Jul (1906) 52
\(^2\) " 17 Feb " 247
common grievance against their white masters should coerce them into unity, it is hard to see what could save South African civilization except a long and terrible war and the extermination of the malcontents.

In July he defends the treatment of the Bambaata's rising because there was "every ground for believing that a movement was beginning all over the sub-continent which only needed organisation to become a menace to white civilization". It was not Bambaata himself that Buchan feared as the leader of this pan-African uprising. Indeed, he did not originally feel "that too much importance should be attached to the present native trouble in Natal". His real fears were roused when less than a month later he heard that the unrest had spread into Zululand, because of the unifying and inspiring myth of Tchaka.

The small tribe which was raised by Tchaka into an empire held its power solely as a military autocracy. It was their fighting discipline which kept the impis together under Dingaan and Panda and Cetawayo, and with the fall of the last monarch that discipline disappeared.

In this article, too, is the association of the powerful military leadership of Tchaka amongst the Zulus and the spiritual and intellectual leadership of Moshesh.

Moshesh is the second most powerful figure who contributes to the composite character of John Laputa. "The Chief of the Mountain" Buchan says "showed the intellect of the trained statesman, and a tireless patience". He was founder and moulder of the Basuto people whose influence Buchan felt was the chief cause of their retaining a measure of independence under British rule.

1 *Spec 21 Jul (1906) 85
2 * 17 Feb " 246
3 * 21 Apr " 604,5
4 AC 16
Three more factors are seen as provoking the danger of a general uprising in South Africa at this time. One was the effects of the Boer War in which the Africans were "spectators" whilst their conquerors fought each other. As the white population destroyed much of their land and assets, natives became "wealthy" on military pay. The other element of disintegration for the civilizing agent and strengthening for the conquered natives he saw as contained in the changes in social structure and mental outlook which had resulted from the contact of the natives with civilization. The break-down of old tribal loyalties and the cross-tribal grouping were facilitated by ease of communication, and the fraternities of the Johannesburg compounds. Here all were united in working for the same masters and in conditions which bore no resemblance to their former social expectations, and education. This he concluded, for the African "tends to break down his tribal prejudices, while it does not weaken those of his class and colour". David Crawfurd is amazed to find so many old tribal enemies paying homage to Laputa in the Cave of the Rooirand during the coronation/ordination ceremony.

The other danger to which Buchan points is Ethiopianism. Whilst giving the African "a share in a higher civilization" and "fitting him to take his place in our social fabric" (which stops short, nevertheless, of political franchise "at present") it is also necessary to protect him from the influences of other systems.

At the same time we must protect him against exploitation by doubtful fanatics, whether

1 *Spec 21 Apr (1906) 605
2 * * 17 Feb " 247
3 RJ 193
under the guise of "Ethiopianism", or any such creed. The decaying tribes will not be united by a military genius, but they may come together for a dangerous moment under the influence of some crazy faith.

It is obvious who is really being protected by this type of action but Buchan is basically sceptical of the superficiality of the effects of Europeanization on the African who is mostly labouring under a "smattering of education and a nominal profession of Christianity". Laputa in his speech is able to put this even more powerfully

"What have ye gained from the white man?" he cried "A bastard civilization which has sapped your manhood; a false religion which would rivet on you the chains of the slave".

Laputa, speaking in phrases and terminology that Crawfurd feels his hearers would have heard with little understanding in the mission schools, is able to fit "the key to the cipher" so that the meaning not only becomes clear but is transfused as "God's message to His own". Laputa concludes with a vision of a new "golden age which should dawn for the oppressed. Another Ethiopian empire should arise, so majestic that the white man everywhere would dread its name, so righteous that all men under it would live in ease and peace". This is the Ethiopianism spoken of by Arcoll which combines a doctrine of "Africa for the Africans" with a sense of past greatness and the promise of future glory.

Although Buchan is fascinated by the naked dignity of the African leader he makes no plea for primitive simplicity. Indeed he says

* It is an error, doubtless to assume that the primitive nature is always simple; it is often

1 *Spec 17 Feb (1906) 247  
2 * 190, 1  
3 191  
4 131
bewilderingly complex. An elaborate civilization may produce a type which can be analysed under a dozen categories; while the savage or the backwoodsman may show a network of curiously interlaced motives.

Buchan normally emphasizes the radical difference between the thought modes of Africans and Europeans. He has, he feels, no framework of reference against which he can judge the responses of the African mind. His view is limited by his own experiences and prejudices but it is, as Gertrude Himmelfarb has pointed out marked by its "candour" and its own form of optimistic utopianism.

Whatever Buchan may have said about "niggers", he obviously admired Laputa as a daemonic force and as a symbol of the enduring vitality of a people as old as human history and with a capacity to dream of a kingdom of universal brotherhood, peace and beneficent power equal to that of any white race.

There is much melodrama in Prester John but there is no attempt to capitalize on the brutalities of Tchaka and produce a sensational novel which would appeal to the carnivorous appetites of his "civilized" readers. It was elemental power that Buchan sought to demonstrate in Laputa. David Crawfurd tends to pale beside such a monumental force.

In front of the great hall of the college a statue stands, the figure of a black man shading his eyes with his hands and looking far over the plains to the Rodirand. On the pedestal it is lettered "Prester John", but the face is the face of Laputa. So the last of the kings of Africa does not lack his monument.

Buchan believed in the collapse of the older culture under the impact of British rule but not without

1 AG 65
2 "John Buchan, An Untimely Appreciation", Encounter XV Sep (1960) repr. in British Imperialism (1963)
3 PV 374
admiration and regret for the past.

In South Africa, Buchan's horizons widened enormously. Physical space and elemental power as experienced on the Karoo and the Veldt changed the scale, though not the quality, of his vision of the wild. In South Africa, too, his notion of civilization reached its most idealistic stage, with the formulation of the ziggurat model for world-society, with British paramountcy. This, however, was modified by a temporal model which recognized the possibility (and indeed the likelihood) of the survival of basic human values and so-called "primitive" power beyond the superficial changes of imposed civilizations on the land. The British value system may be paramount but his identification with the Scottish Border agricultural society gave him real sympathies with the Boer farmers. His memories of Scottish history probably also gave him the sympathy he obviously felt for the suppressed cultures of the Africans. Buchan's attitudes towards the wild and towards civilization are complex here. As far as Africans are concerned he is baffled by many aspects of their culture and can see no way of reconciling them to the British system without a long process of re-education. Yet already he seems to be having some doubts about the feasibility of such re-education and recognizing that socially imposed cultures or civilizations will always be fragile, require constant vigilance and the tacit will of the peoples involved if they are to survive. "Civilization", in this sense, will always border with "alien immensities".¹

¹ MHD 182
III 1914-18 War: No-man's-land

In the discussions between Leithen and Lumley in *The Power House* John Buchan formulated, in 1913 just prior to the declaration of War, his view of civilization as a willing but highly vulnerable "conspiracy". ¹

Lumley describes the social contract in mechanistic terms, Leithen chooses organic imagery, but both agree that its continuation depends entirely on the faith and goodwill of the people who make this undefined pact. "Did you ever reflect, Mr. Leithen", he makes Lumley say:

> how precarious is the tenure of the civilization we boast about? ... the foundations are sand.

You think that a wall as solid as the earth separates civilization from barbarism. I tell you the division is a thread, a sheet of glass. A touch here, a push there, and you bring back the reign of Saturn.

The opening chapter of the first volume of Buchan's *History of the War* ³ is, appropriately, called "The Breaking of the Barriers". German Imperialism, which thus came into open conflict with British and French colonial interests ⁴ let loose forces which not only destroyed the ground of all European Imperialism but, with "savage irony" ⁵ what had previously been accepted as European civilization. When the guns began firing across European frontiers in August 1914 Buchan says simply "the old life passed away in a night". ⁶

Belgium quickly became a symbol of that old life which was swept so unceremoniously aside. The landscape which, before, had shown so many signs of "a civilization rich, warm, compact and continuous" ⁷ was deliberately devastated by the occupying troops intent apparently on "terrorising" the conquered Belgians. ⁸

¹ Pn 146
² Pn 146
³ 24 vol. edition
⁴ W I 27; XIII 114,5
⁵ MHD 181
⁶ " " 139
⁷ W II 189
⁸ " " 193
Buchan can only see such deliberate vandalism as a monstrous inversion of civilization. Barbarous armies like "Timour's or Attila's" which committed such acts could not be accused of atrocities in this sense for they were "elementary beings, savages inflamed and maddened by conquest".¹ Germany in refusing to be bound by "those elementary human conventions which are observed by many savages and by all who claim the title of civilized"² reverted in Buchan's view to a grotesque second-childhood³.

A power which chooses to set its own self-interest above all other human considerations and relies on superior force will, inevitably, indulge in sub-human brutality because of the megalomania which desensitizes the complex web of social awareness which is the mark of the mature civilized man.⁴

Buchan saw the German absorption with efficiency and her unimaginative antagonising of neutral nations in her treatment of Belgium in the early stage of the war as a mixture of misplaced idealism and national neurosis.⁵ He recognised, generously, "that when men like Haeckel and Wundt, Harnack and Eucken, declared that this was a war for civilization, they did sincerely believe that something noble and worthy was in danger."⁶ German Kultur they may have felt was threatened by the "Slav barbarians"⁶ but this was no justification for the kind of bullying triumphalism that Germany displayed in Belgium.

Over-simplification, and dependence on technical superiority and physical force seemed, at this stage, to characterize the German psyche. Buchan believed that a misapplication of Nietzsche's philosophy was particu-
early responsible for this. "We taught" said Buchan, "that for the truly great, the Superman, power is the only quest, and to attain it all things are permissible". The first duty of man - to conquer was the primary tenet of this "religion of valour" which, when joined to "the materialism of men like Haeckel and Mach" degenerated into "naked self-seeking" which then was graced with "the name of Culture". Buchan's assessment of German aspirations in the early part of 1914 is demonstrated in his analysis of Stumm and his colleagues in Greenmantle. Their simplicity is not that of the desert. Germany's simplicity is that of the neurotic, not the primitive ... She wants to destroy and simplify; but it isn't the simplicity of the ascetic, which is of the spirit, but the simplicity of the madman that grinds down all the contrivances of civilization to a featureless monotony. The prophet wants to save the souls of his people; Germany wants to rule the inanimate corpse of the world. But you can get the same language to cover both.

The "Black Stone" and the name "Medina" indicate that it was not only in Greenmantle that Buchan was fascinated by effects of combining the Islamic "desert" mentality with Germanic superman power. As the war progressed a man-made desert began to appear. The universe seemed to shrink, Buchan says, into a "grey hollow". Men found themselves flung into a kind of "trough" (which was often enough a mixture of trench and slough) where life "seemed to stand uneasily still, and in no direction was there any prospect". Trench warfare was not chosen by the Allies but undertaken as the only form of resistance in a situation of technological inferiority. The Belgians were, for Buchan, the
symbol of the spirit of human resistance to force and the rest of the Allies literally dug into their defences until, eventually, their bureauocratic and technological machinery became adequate to the struggle.

Soon even for a man whose faith in civilization had seemed to transcend all obstacles this destruction presented a nightmare of disintegration.

All of us in the last War had moments when we felt the stable universe dissolving about us. We were like pilgrims who, journeying on a road to an assured and desirable goal, suddenly found themselves on the edge of a precipice with nothing beyond but a great void. The common way of describing such moods was to say that our civilization had become insecure and was in danger of perishing. We defined civilization as something more than the cushioned life made possible by science. It was not a mechanical apparatus but a spirit. So most of us came to define civilization as the free development of the personality. That involved physical conditions of life lifted above the primitive man's struggle for bread. It involved an ordered society and the rule of law. But, since these things are negative only, it involved also a soul to develop, a mind which could rejoice in the things of the mind, an impulse towards spiritual perfection.

The War certainly made the insecurity of the foundations of civilization more apparent but forced Buchan himself to define his own system of values more clearly. This was no longer a matter of dilettante speculation but a necessity for survival in a world where all the normal social sign-posts were being destroyed.

The machine is man's creation, once it takes over from him he is reduced to slavery. Thus he could see the Russian revolution in its primary impetus as a
reassertion of human values over materialism.

A civilization bemused by an opulent materialism has been met by a rude challenge. The free peoples have been challenged by the serfs. That the revolution was to be founded on yet another form of materialism and undue simplification, this time on class lines, meant however that, as Buchan foresaw, it would replace one form of tyranny with another. Russia also "retired into the wastes both of the earth and of the spirit". Or in another more hopeful, if painful, image Buchan says "Russia had to go into the furnace to be cast anew". In the meantime the "idealism which set out to make a new heaven and a new earth had succeeded in creating a new hell".

Few descriptions of an imaginary hell could equal the accounts of the conditions of trench warfare. Buchan makes no sensational capital out of such descriptions, indeed in all his writing about the war he conspicuously underplays the horrors of the situation. The reason is not hard to find. Faced by such conditions constantly, without any release of tension in actual combat, indeed with a duty only to see and record, some means of distancing had to be found. The odd descriptions which are allowed into the narrative however, show how intensely Buchan felt the attack on his psyche. He speaks, in Memory Hold-the-Poor, of "the festering odour of the front line, made up of incinerators, latrines and mud" to which he was even more sensitive because of the sickness produced by a stomach ulcer. In Sick Heart River Leithen momentarily recalls "men shot in the stomach and withering in no-man's-land; scarecrows that once were human crucified on the barbed wire and bleached by wind and sun; the shambles surely used here in its
original sense) of a casualty clearing station after a battle. Actually in the battlefield the effects were of some incredible "fevered nightmare" or a "a limbo outside mortal experience and almost beyond human imagining". A "zone of death" is produced in the midst of the land of the living. Whole towns, like Ypres, died in battle. Remnants of people and their activities and hopes remained and an oppressive silence descended on the skeletons, "utter silence, a silence which seemed to hush and blanket the eternal shelling". The horror seemed to freeze the mind as it did the bodies of the soldiers in the no-man's land area during the struggles for Verdun.

That night it was bitter frost, and the wounded left out were corpses in the morning. Looking from the parapets in the faint light, both sides saw dark figures apparently crawling in the white no-man’s-land between the lines. At first they suspected a night attack, but soon they saw it was an army of the dead.

The most complete sense of the dislocation of all the normal boundaries of reality was felt by soldiers "going over the top". Buchan did not physically take part in one of these advances but it is clear from his poem "The Kirk Bell" that he sympathetically shared in the terror of such a move. Many a man must have wished he had "ne'er been born" as he thus "staunchered into the war".

Once over the parapets at the Third Battle of Ypres Buchan says,

They entered at once upon a world like the nether pit - poisonous with gas fumes, twisted and riven out of all character, a maze of quarried stone, moving earth, splintered

1 SHR 277
2 W II 99,100
3 W XIV 203
4 W VII 50-3; W XIX 37
5 W XIII 151
6 P S E 59
concrete, broken wire, and horrible fragments of humanity.
The silent land of Picardy too became, during the battle for the Somme, a "hell" in which "it seemed no human thing could live".

The advance of armies of destruction on such a massive scale yard after yard rather than mile on mile, meant that the land itself became unrecognisable. No-man's-land was soon behind as well as in front of the battle-lines. After the first advance at the Somme Buchan said:

We have pushed the enemy right up to the edge of habitable and undevastated country, but we pay for our success in having behind us a strip of sheer desolation.

After the Third Battle of Ypres again Buchan describes this man-made desert.

The battlefield at the old Salient was now as featureless as the Sahara or the Mid-Atlantic. All land marks had been obliterated; the very ridges and streams had changed their character. The names which still crowded the map had no longer any geographical counterpart. They were no more than measurements on a plane, as abstract as the points of the mathematician. It was war bared to the bluff, stripped of any of the tattered romance which has clung to older fields. And yet in its very grossness it was war sublimated, for the material appanages had vanished. The quaint Flemish names belonged not now to the solid homely earth; they seemed rather points on a spiritual map, marking advance and retreat in the gigantic striving of the souls of peoples.

For Buchan what was amazing was that men could go beyond terror and not only survive but advance. Even in the desolation he notices small signs of the possibility of natural regeneration, the bird trying to...
reconstruct its damaged nest amid the ruins of a garden at Ypres, "The scent of hawthorn and lilac battling with the stink of poison gas, and the bird-song in the coverts heard in the pauses of the great-guns". A new world may emerge from the old but so many of those who found themselves "at the point of contact of a world vanishing and a world arriving" had been crushed in the collision that it was hard to see who was left to build it. Those who remained "suddenly found the world of time strangely empty and eternity strangely thronged".

To continue writing the *History of the War* against physical, business and personal pressures was surely a massive and heroic contribution to make to the war effort. No personal profit came from it and it has not received recognition as one of the major records of the war, so there was little personal glory to be gained. Yet it was undertaken and carried out with unassuming patience and is interspersed with some of the finest passages to be found anywhere in Buchan’s writings, all the more telling because of the simple directness of the narrative in relationship to the enormity of the events. By the time the end of the twenty-fourth volume is reached it is easy to see why Buchan should have felt great relief but little elation. The cost had been too great to indulge in any cheap extravaganza in celebration of triumph. Even at the end of his life he found it hard to look back at this time without remembering his "bitter detestation of war, less for its horrors than for its boredom and futility, and a contempt for its panache. To speak of glory seemed a horrid impiety". Leithen, aware that Europe was about to enter into yet another War in 1939, remembered especially the "waste, futile waste, and death,
illimitable futile death ..."1

Buchan had seen the war throughout primarily as a battle for the survival of the human spirit against all forms of reduction and obsessive simplification.

His severest criticism therefore is for those who in "the interpreting class plumed themselves wearily on being hollow men living in a waste land".2 Here he felt was the lasting danger to civilization for intellectual scepticism was an ever-open door to de-civilization. "They would admit no absolute values, being by profession atomisers, engaged in reducing the laborious structure of civilized life to a whirling nebula".2

Buchan makes a sharp distinction between honest barbarism which is a chaos full of potential, "civilization submerged or not yet born", and the chaos produced by man or de-civilization, "which is civilization gone rotten.3 He defines civilization as "man's defiance of an impersonal universe".4 It was the essence of humanity that he felt was under attack in the 1914-18 war situation. It was basic human values that survived through and beyond death and it is these qualities that he chose to emphasize therefore as being of lasting significance.

Even in the trenches he noted when not under attack men achieved some comfort and normality "cultivating little gardens and ornamenting their burrows".5 "There were trench newspapers, which contained as much authentic news as the journals at home". The Germans had gone even further where they felt that their fortresses would last like the ones near Montauban.6

During the course of the war Buchan learned to admire "the elasticity of spirit" which made Germany able

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1 SHR 284  2 MHD 184  3  4 MHR 285  5 W VIII 69  6 W XVI 45
to revise her plans in the face of failure, and to carry out the new as methodically and vigorously as the old".¹ This was something he could not have foreseen in 1915. Germany, too, he saw had those qualities that Buchan felt were essential for reconstruction. Germany's "hubris" may have ended in squalor² but she had shown the qualities of ingenuity in which she could take real pride.

John's books themselves helped to bring both normality and adventure into the nightmare world of the war. A copy of John Burnet of Barne on loan to the recent exhibition at the University of Edinburgh carried this typed inscription.

This book was found on a Belgium Farm house, which had been used as a German billet, near the town of Elvenghem. After a sharp encounter between the British Artillery and part of the retreating German Army, in which the farm was destroyed, the book was discovered among the debris, and carried through the rest of the campaign.

Oct. 1918

A. H. Swanson

The mystery of how the book got into the farmhouse will probably never be solved but the value of the book to the Border soldier who found it and carried it for the rest of the War was obviously immense.

Ingenuity, resistance, valour (particularly in the air), prosaic realism are the human qualities that Buchan saw as triumphing eventually over the machine. Humour was very often the release mechanism for these qualities. Terrifying things were made acceptable by giving them incongruous names and putting up notices in the trenches "like that which read, 'Casualty Corner. Do not pass this Board, but if you have to, for God's sake hustle'".³ Sometimes to a modern reader there is

¹ W XXIV 114.5
² W " 78
³ W IX 62
much unconscious humour in the mixture of old-fashioned and more modern forms of war-fare. In a war that saw the introduction of the submarine, aeroplane, tank, gas and flame-thrower, it is odd to see Buchan writing about a battle in which "his own cavalry and cyclists were harrassing the enemy rout". Buchan could see this kind of incongruity in the East African campaign which "was a blending of the hoar-ancient and the ultra-modern; airplanes, barbed wire, and machine guns, with the staked pit which had been the device of neolithic man". Here engagements between the enemies could be "disorganized by impartial attacks of rhinos against both sides". The "ancient inorganic barbarism of the land" was an asset and a liability in such modern warfare.

Eventually Buchan sees victory as the winning through of those qualities that he believes are most important in humanity as demonstrated by the French victory at Amiens.

The stirring republican doctrine of the worth of the average man triumphed over the bureaucratic theory of disciplined serfs and privileged superiors. The ancient civilized conception of individuality and variety were more potent than the barbaric dogma of the mechanical and featureless mass.

In his final conclusions in the last volume of the History of the War Buchan reverts to the Germanic legends. On Ludendorff, he says, "and on the old world the Twilight of the Gods was falling". This was, Buchan felt, appropriate. The Romans never penetrated to Northern Germany and the North thus became for him a symbol of a darker older world prior to "that strong civilization

1 W XXIV 70 4 W XIX 97
2 W XXI 163 5 W XXIV 39
3 W 164
which is the fibre of the Western world". A symbol of that part of Germany which "remained a thing incalculable and unreclaimed" whose "ancient deities might sleep, but did not die"\(^1\). Lumley had warned Leithen in 1913 of the fragility of the protective shields of civilization. The war proved just how devastating it could be when those shields were penetrated. For this had been a war that unloosed unparalleled destruction.

During its few years it depleted the world of life and wealth to a far greater degree than a century of the old Barbarian invasions. More than eight million men died in battle, and the casualties on all fronts were over thirty million. If we add deaths from disease and famine it cannot have cost the population of the globe less than twenty million dead, and as many more maimed and weakened for life. At least forty thousand millions sterling of money were spent by the nations in the direct business of war. The losses in property were incalculable, over fifteen million tons of the world's shipping had been destroyed, and the appurtenances of civilized life over millions of square miles of the globe's surface. And let it be remembered that this devastation has been wrought not in the loose and embryonic society of an elder world, but in one where each state was a highly-developed organism, where the economic fabric was intricate and far-extending, and where myriads of human souls depended for their existence on the mechanism of civilization performing its functions smoothly and in security.

Man had created through his overweening civilization a wilderness that threatened his existence.  

\(^{1}\) \(\text{W XXIV 105}\)  \(^{2}\) \(\text{W " 107}\)
Buchan's expectations of the North are coloured by his reading of accounts of Arctic explorations. The search for the North-West passage to the Far East and expeditions to the North Pole had produced expectations of suffering and unpredictability which were likely to be cathartic in Buchan's mind. Pytheas in 330 BC first recorded details of Thule but it was not until 6th April 1909 AD that Peary, Henson and four Eskimos planted the American flag at the North Pole. It was not Peary, however, who seems to have caught Buchan's imagination but the Norwegians. It is Fridtjof Nansen who is quoted in The Last Secrets as best defining the attractions of the Arctic for Northerners. For it is he claims, "a single mighty manifestation of the power of the Unknown over the mind of man".¹ In Nansen's book In the Northern Mists he refers to a Norse chronicle called The King's Mirror in which the motivations for exploration are listed as the desire for fame, for knowledge and for riches. It is the second of these that is dominant for Buchan.

Other expeditions through Greenland had interested Buchan particularly those by Ejnar Mikkelsen. The one that he seems to have drawn on in Sick Heart River was the search in 1909-12 to find the bodies of Mylius Ericksen and a companion who had gone missing in the 1906 Danmarks Expedition which was reported in "Lost in the Arctic".² For two years Mikkelsen and Iversen are described as living "in a sort of hyperborean hell".³ At one stage Mikkelsen, like Leithen, "became so ill that he lost all power in his limbs, and had to ride on the sledge".³ The description of the return to base

¹ Quoted LS 101
² Rev. Spec 3 May (1913) 758,9
³ 759
is also similar to that of Galliard’s arrival at Leithen’s tent. "At last, famished, ill, dog-tired and half-crazy, they crawled into Danmark’s Havn and found food and shelter." Buchan also wrote admiringly of the work of Mikkelsen in 1909 and of Vilhjalmur Stefansson in 1914. This latter, by participating in the life of the Eskimos was able to give a "singularly intimate revelation ... of the primitive life of the North". For Buchan, the Eskimos are seen in Kipling’s terms as the

... People of the Elder Ice, beyond the white man’s ken -

Their spears are made of the narwhal-horn, and they are the last of Men.

These are the survivors of the North who face the most appalling conditions and thrive because of their respect for and adaptation to their environment. It is civilized men like Franklin and his party who perish because they have become over-dependent on specific modes of behaviour and the superficial apparatus of their culture.

It is ironic, of course, that the contact with Europeans also brought the killer diseases of tuberculosis, polio, typhoid and diphtheria which drastically reduced the Eskimo population particularly between 1946 to 1950, although it is only fair to notice that this coincided with the beginning of the great drive to improve health in the North by the Ottawa authorities so that reliable figures are not available before this time. By 1956 nearly a sixth of the Canadian Eskimo population was under treatment for tuberculosis. It is T.B. that Leithen has in common

1 759 2 *Spec 27 Mar (1909) 502 3 *Spec 7 Mar (1914) 391
with the Hare Indians in *Sick Heart River*. In this case it is the European who succumbs to the disease and the Indians who, as a result of Leithen's self-sacrifice, recover.

Other factors also combined to create new problems for the Eskimos and Indians of the North on contact with the European settlements. The ecological balance was upset by the introduction of the infra-structures of civilization, for example, but such considerations do not concern Buchan deeply in *Sick Heart River* or *The Long Traverse*. For him the outposts of civilization are represented by the missionaries and fur-traders who spear-head the advance, whose effect is still minimal against the North.

Buchan's attitudes towards the North are also coloured by his knowledge of Norse mythology. The result is that he is able to make use of the "North" both as an image of primeval chaos, the indifferent ground in which human creativity can operate and as a malevolent force of terrifying dimensions. The "book of Norse mythology" that Buchan had found in the library at Kirkcaldy\(^1\) as a small boy had been supplemented by an attempt to learn Icelandic in order to read the Sagas in the original.\(^2\) In 1936 Buchan had to admit to his audience at Gimli, Manitoba that he had "forgotten what little of the language I knew"\(^2\) but that he identified himself so much with Norse culture that he claimed his own family was "Norse in origin".\(^2\) In 1936 Buchan also says that he had been impressed not only by the Sagas which he believed to be "among the chief works of the human genius"\(^3\) but also by the temper and way of life of the Icelanders which is marked by "simple hardihood".
and manly independence" and by a deep respect for law, which is learned also from the sagas. This respect for the "law of the community" which has supremacy "over individual passions and interests" is complimented by "the belief that truth and righteousness must be followed for their own sake, quite independent of material rewards".

The natural world described in the Eddas is dominated by both ice and fire. The yawning gap, or void which represents the primeval state of creation is bounded to the South by Muspelheim, (the Realm of Fire) and to the North by Niflheim (the Realm of icy mists). Norse-saga cosmology appears to be rather complex but certainly involves a number of clearly defined realms and, as the introduction to the Elder Edda by Peter H. Salus and Paul B. Taylor3 points out, that the drama of the poems depends on movement across the frontiers between these various realms4 and particularly descents from one plane to another in search of wisdom. The notion of the North also appears to have a suggestion of depth, for this is the land of the dead and of man's enemies. The various quests in these stories into the secret, normally-closed world of the dead link them as Salus & Taylor also point out5 with Gilgamesh, Ulysses and Aeneas. Buchan would have easily connected the classical and northern mythologies.

Buchan had expected a wide open antiseptic land in the North like an enormous sanatorium.6 His eldest son had found that an intestinal amoeba picked up in Saroti which threatened his health seriously "could only be laid by the full rigours of an open-air life in the sub-zero

1 CO 27
2 28
3 Transl. from Icelandic by Paul B. Taylor and W.H. Auden, Faber & Faber (1969)
4 31
5 32
6 SHR 86
world.\textsuperscript{1} For him this drastic form of exposure to the rigours of the Canadian Arctic was life-saving. For Leithen, however, this could not be. Leithen is, nevertheless, made to experience the full rigours of the winter of which Buchan must have learned from his son. In such a climate where the intense cold and darkness seem to lock and imprison everything that moves in icy immobility\textsuperscript{2} Leithen naturally speaks of "the cruel North"\textsuperscript{3} and the "infernal North".\textsuperscript{4} Buchan himself even goes so far as to label the North as "a cruel bloody-minded old bitch".\textsuperscript{5}

Malevolent greenness at the Mackenzie delta was like "an immeasurable abscess of decay", "utterly silent", colourless except for "sickly greens and drabs" with "a superfluity of obscene insect life". This was the grotesque "no-man's-land" which seemed to have been "created in some campaign of demons, pitted and pocked with shell-holes from some infernal artillery". Like Niflheim the low-hills which edged it were "cloaked in a light fog".

From another point of view, looking from the seashore "far into the North" the landscape seemed formless and irrational "simply water filling a void" like the "Ginnungagap". It was however more like the waters which surround the "Midgard" in Norse mythology because it appeared as a "treacherous deathly waste, pale like a snake's belly, a thing beyond humanity and beyond time". The snake seems to be an implied reference to the "Midgardsormur" or world-encircling serpent.

This is the world of elemental struggles where it seems only the giant spirits can survive. The "aboriginal darkness" and frost that settled "like a black concrete"

\textsuperscript{1} Tweedsmuir: \textit{Always a Countryman} 233
\textsuperscript{2} 202, 3
\textsuperscript{3} 203
\textsuperscript{4} 294
\textsuperscript{5} Quoted JAS 465
on everything\(^1\) and the silence which was only broken by the sound of trees splitting in the frost,\(^2\) threatened to turn Sick Heart River into the home of the dead.\(^3\) Yet it is from "Ymir" the great frost giant that the world was made and even in this land of the dead Leithen is able to see through the open tent door the Dancers of the Aurora\(^4\) though he is unable to respond at this point.

The valley of the Sick Heart is a highly ambiguous location. It may have associations with the Venom Valley of the Song of the Sybil in which runs the River Gruesome, and Darkdale which is the home of Everfrost, or Dead Man's Shore whose "doors face northwards" and to whose waters "no sunlight reaches",\(^5\) but it is also associated with the stories of the Rivière de l'Enfer, the South Nahanni, the Valleys of Humiliation and of the Shadow of Death in Pilgrim's Progress, Tempe, the Valley of Achor and possibly of the Valley of Dry Bones, as well as idyllic valleys like the Happy Valley of Rasselas.

The waters of the river, too, are associated with the Styx, Lethe, Waters of life and Atonement and the Waters of Death. All these associations, however, have in common the notion of man at the frontiers of moral experience at a critical point of self-awareness and transforming response to environment at a level which is altogether deeper than that of the more superficial confrontation of civilization and the wild, and will be dealt with in the final chapter.

Clairefontaine, that transferred and extended corrie sanctuary that he had seen when flying over the Whitesail

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1 SHR 163
2 164
3 Nifelheim, though associated this time with a picture of Die Toten Insel. SHR 170,1 JAS 465
4 SHR 171
5 Edda 149
Mountains\(^1\) is significantly placed on the continental divide. The watershed here is also that between the North and the more familiar habitable world.

Looking south, the hills opened to show Le Fleuve, the great river of Canada, like a pool of colourless light. North were higher mountains, which seemed to draw together with a purpose, huddling to shepherd the streams towards a new goal. They were sending the waters, not to the familiar St. Lawrence, but to untrdden Arctic wastes. That was the magic of the place. It was a frontier between the desert and the Sown. To Leithen it was something more. He felt again the spell which had captured him here in his distant youth. It was the borderline between the prosaic world where things went by rule and vote and were all fitted to the human scale, and the world as God first made it out of chaos, which had no care for humanity.

Clairefontaine becomes, appropriately, Leithen’s final lodging-place in the wilderness.

The missionaries who so impressed Buchan on his visits to the north and whom Leithen is able to help so effectively are types of those frontiersmen who like The Pilgrim Fathers in Buchan’s poem of 1898 set out in "The Adventurous Spirit of the North". Previously the North American frontier had been to the West now it was in the North.

North America was still the brave new world, to be carved out of the wilderness by men of courage and true nobility. It what Frederick Jackson Turner was to call "the crucible of the frontier"\(^3\) civilization was to be built up from scratch. By the time Buchan was writing Sick Heart River an American like Taverner had to go north to Canada to find such pioneering wilderness. Yet wilderness civilized man must experience. Like

1 Nat. Geog. 468
2 CH 65
3 "The Significance of the Frontier in American History", 1893 in Frontier and Section, Billington 1961
Thoreau, Taverner obviously believed that
... in wildness is the preservation of the
World. Every tree sends its fibres forth
in search of the Wild. The cities import
it at any price. Men plow and sail for it.
From the forest and wilderness come the
tonics and barks which brace mankind ...
We need the tonic of wildness ... We must be
refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible
vigour ...
We need to witness our own limits transgressed,
and some life pasturing freely where we never
wander.

Buchan quotes another fine passage from Walden\(^1\) which he had been reading along with Whitman and Emerson
at the time of writing Sick Heart River for a reappraisal
of the value of "nature" to man. The quotation deals
with man's confrontation with reality, the basic reality
of life and death. Joseph Wood Krutch is emphatic
that Thoreau's experiments at Walden were not a rejection
of all civilization and a glorification of the savage.\(^2\)
Like Buchan, Thoreau was concerned with man's intellectual
and spiritual nature whose operation both men saw as
requiring a certain freedom from material necessities.
In a wild environment a man was able to reassess his
scale of priorities and values and restore peace and
"silence" to his personality and society. Neither,
what Boas calls "hard primitivism" (return to absolute
basics, a belief in the supremacy of animal life) nor
"soft primitivism" (a desire for life without toil),
could have had much appeal for Buchan. Primitive
subordination of the human spirit to natural forces is
quite unacceptable to him. The disappearance of the
Hottentots in South Africa and the warnings of the

1 Walden quoted in Krutch "In Wildness is the
preservation of the Wild"
2 SHR 59
3 J. W. Krutch: Henry David Thoreau (1949)
effects of "the inroads of civilization" on the peoples of the North American wilderness by writers like Fenimore Cooper gave Buchan clear precedents for his literary use of the plight of the Hare Indians. Compared with the Inuit who challenge the North and survive by their adaptation, the Hares needed help from the intruding peoples if they were to survive both physically and culturally.

Lew and Johnny who, (as Grey Owl claimed to be), were métis, sons of Indian and Scottish parents. They were frontiersmen with one foot in either world. Based on two idiosyncratic Irish/Indian brothers these men gave Buchan an opportunity to explore the strengths and weaknesses of such an alliance between civilization and the wild. Its illusions and false assumptions, its loneliness (Lew understands both worlds but belongs wholly to neither), lead to an independence of spirit. Eventually Lew becomes a partial interpreter for Leithen. It is Lew who in the first instance has been chasing a totally illusory paradise on earth. Grey Owl's self-deception may be implied here.

Galliard combines two European cultures in a New World situation and the conflict within him is, as a result, even more complex and interesting. Having left his paradisal home he has been a party to its rape and desecration by the intrusion of a pulp-mill into the valley through whose activities "all this loveliness had been butchered to enable some shoddy newspaper to debauch the public soul". He must restore his civilization by a kind of personal chronological primitivism through a kind of northern version of the Minoan labyrinth. He appears to be threatened with self-destruction having

1 Intro. Last of the Mohicans
2 Tweedsmuir: Always a Countryman 244
3 SHR 62
reached the heart of the maze by the primitive forces which he is still unable to master. The forging of community relationships gradually bring him to personal, psychological unity. In neither, chronological, nor cultural primitivism is the total answer for Buchan to the needs of civilized man if he is to rediscover his human dignity and social effectiveness in the complexities of modern civilization.

Looking for death "in the cold cathedral of the North" Leithen finds that the apparent indifference of nature is more than matched by human nature even at its humblest. Leithen has always been a pillar of society, a man amongst men and a key figure in the civilized world. At the extreme edge of that civilization, amongst people who, according to society's usual norms are insignificant, Leithen finds at last the full expression of his humanity in the world. Lonely integrity gives way to integration in communion. The "gate of the North" thus becomes for him "the gate of the world". The resolution of the dilemma of the apparent conflict between civilization and the wild is found in a full recognition of human nature in conscious and willing communion with all aspects of the surrounding world.

1 SHR 310
2 SHR 317
Chapter Three

The horizons of the mind

There is one way, in Buchan's estimation, that all men will always be Borderers, that is intellectually. In his inaugural address as Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh in 1938 John Buchan made his most explicit statement of his tenet that all men are intellectual frontiersmen. Few geographical frontiers may have remained to be crossed by the explorer in 1938 but that, in Buchan's opinion, did not exempt men from exploration for...

...there are the spiritual frontiers, the horizons of the mind. We are still frontier-men in a true sense, for we are domiciled on the edge of mystery, and have to face novelties more startling than any which confronted the old pioneers.

Buchan's passion for such intellectual reconnaissance was, I believe, one of the primary motivations of his colossal literary output. Buchan produced no philosophic system, he preferred to present his ideas in action rather than in abstraction, through visual illustration rather than in logical demonstration and it is therefore, I believe, appropriate to use certain of Buchan's own experiences (as in the previous chapter), to focus the major groups of ideas which underlie his concept of man as an intellectual Borderer.
I  The Benchi: Research - Mental exploration

The first of these experiences is that of his own education.

The primary and most important educational influence in Buchan's life, as was demonstrated in chapter one, was to be found within Buchan's own family. This produced a notion of the Borderer as someone of radically independent mind, yet staunchly conservative in respect of tradition. One who could set out from a definite point of reference and range eagerly in ever-extending arcs of experimental investigation motivated by an intellectual curiosity that appeared as an irresistible response to the imperative challenge of the environment.

Buchan must have recognized early that he himself was the most important driving force behind his own educational achievement. He taught himself to read for example. The external world, both socially and physically, acted as a challenge and a stimulant to this intrinsic curiosity. Discipline in method and the socialization of the learning process came through school though he does not seem to have fitted easily into a pre-determined educational mould. Although he says on the same page of his memoirs "I seem to have enjoyed my schools enormously" and school was merely "a period of enforced repression which ended daily at four in the afternoon", it is probable that both are true in that his adjustment to the demands of institutional education involved both achievement and discipline.

Anna gives an account of Buchan's technique, even as a young child, in acquiring knowledge about his current centre of interest.

Everything interested him and he tried to get

1 17
2 31
information from everyone he met. At one time it was fowls, and he sat for hours with a specialist on the subject, returning home with pictures of prize cocks, which he insisted on pinning round the nursery walls. For a long time it was ships, and he spent most of his time with a retired sea-captain. Next it was precious stones, and he accosted every lady, known to him or not, and asked her about the stones she was wearing.

Fearless research was not just an abstract principle of education it was a completely natural mode of operation for this intrepid intellectual explorer.

It was in his last year at Hutcheson’s that Buchan met the first teacher to awaken his interest in a particular discipline. This was James Cadell who introduced Buchan not only to Greek and Latin literatures but to a concept of western culture for which these studies were seen as the essential foundation. Through Cadell’s influence, reinforced and extended later by Gilbert Murray, Buchan began to formulate a theory of classical culture and a classical value system that he was to restate on several occasions later in life.

The spirit of Greece stands for the things of the mind above material possessions, for fearless inquiry, for wisdom, which is the union of intellect and heart. It is the sense of proportion, adjustment, and organic unity. In action it is the foe of all fanaticism, and at the same time it stands for public spirit, citizenship, devotion to the common good.

"Mental askeasia" and the "synoptic view" are the keys to this form of education according to Buchan. The capacity for achieving order and system that was recognized in the undergraduate John Buchan by his contemporary Alexander MacCallum Scott was, therefore,

1 \text{nnu} 17
2 *Spec 30 Jan (1904) 177 "A Classical Education"
3 Quoted JAS 35
not a product of a timid intellect but of what Buchan considered to be a "classical" spirit.

Another important aspect of Buchan's schooldays at Hutcheson's was the valuable friendships that he made. The three friends who went with Buchan to Glasgow University, Joe Menzies, Charles Dick and John Edgar were the nucleus of a group of friends who were to interact, support and challenge each other for many years beyond their university association. They were an extraordinarily mixed group from very varied social backgrounds¹ bound together in "this noble democracy of learning"² by the will to learn.

The value placed on a University education throughout Scotland for anyone who had ability whatever his social status is something that Buchan was able to reflect on in contrast to his experiences at Oxford. For neither staff nor students could Glasgow University at this time have been a soft retreat from life. Here Buchan knew the stimulus of belonging to a community where knowledge was seen as "no elegant privilege, but an imperious necessity, and to strive after it by the light of a farthing candle in a garret was the plain path of duty".³

The notion of striving after truth corresponded to a basic religious precept for Buchan. It also satisfied his demanding intellectual energy.

At Glasgow University the main influences on Buchan were John Veitch, Gilbert Murray, A. C. Bradley and Henry Jones.

In Gilbert Murray, Dr. Adam Smith points out, Buchan found that there could be no sharp divisions between literature, research and politics. This probably helped

¹ cf. G.O. 170 "The Double Life"
² Spec 25 May (1901) 758 "Mr. Carnegie's Gift to the Scottish Universities"
³ op. cit. 758
to colour Buchan's outlook on the unity of all knowledge and the purpose of a university. In 1923, for example, he declared that a university "is pledged in the first instance to the quest for scholarship and not utility".1 Thus it could not be its function to produce specialists but "to provide that stable foundation of mental and spiritual training on which alone specialism can be built".1 At the University of Toronto in 1936 he returned to the same theme with the modification that though a University cannot provide a creed it must produce "an outlook, an attitude towards life".2 This he defines as one of "practical humanism".2 In 1936 he felt this to involve not only the study of the humanities (ie. Greek and Latin) but also a recognition of the mental and moral infrastructures of Judaeo-Christianity. Practical humanism was by this time defined as Christian humanism.

Henry Jones’ enthusiasm for his subject fired both Buchan's rational intellect and his imagination though he could not accept Jones' "semi-religious Hegelianism".3 Buchan tells us that he read widely "owed allegiance to no school"4 and admitted that what fascinated him most was "the study of the patterns which different thinkers made out of the universe".5 Positive influences he remembers as Descartes, "my first love"4 and Plato who provided "a climate of opinion, the atmosphere in which my thoughts moved".6 It was at this time too he was busy editing Bacon’s essays for the publisher Walter Scott.

The move to Brasenose College Oxford in 1895 required a sharp revision of Buchan’s first notions of

1 Maga Oct (1923) "Thoughts on a Distant Prospect of Oxford" repr. HR
2 CO 127
3 MHD 37, Cf JAS 32.
4 " 37
5 " 38
6 " 38,39
the function of a university as a "noble nursery of the heroic".\footnote{1} Buchan points to the long tradition of openness in the University of Oxford which, only in "the 'eighties of last century ... had become a middle and upper-class preserve to an extent unknown in her past".\footnote{2} It is thus, to the view of an earlier Oxford that Buchan feels his greatest allegiance, a view which he can recapture from "the crown" of a ridge of hills "above the village of Old Marston". "To a dweller on this ridge", says Buchan, "the city is not seen as an unrelated vision at the end of a railway journey, but in the natural setting which first gave it significance".\footnote{3}

In these early educational experiences, then, it is possible to find illustrations of the major distinguishing features of Buchan's basic world-model through which he can conceive of man as an intellectual frontiersman striving to reach and extend the "horizons of the mind".\footnote{4}

The most important feature of the model is that it is a dynamic and progressive structure rather than a static one. No viewpoint once reached can be seen as the ultimate one, although it may be quite valid in its limited context. Our experiences of life, like those of the drove road on Tweedsmuir, draw us on and on so that having reached one ridge we are intrigued to know what is to be seen from the next one. In intellectual terms one insight opens up the exciting possibilities of further insights.\footnote{5}

The Green at Broughton and the scholar's bench represent that vitally necessary base or relatively fixed point of reference which makes investigation possible and which provides a fulcrum for balanced judgement.

\footnote{1}{GH 19 Oct (1895) 4 "Oxford and her Influence"}
\footnote{2}{HR 375}
\footnote{3}{op.cit. 357}
\footnote{4}{HR 38}
\footnote{5}{cf. Lonergan, B.; *Insight* - not known to Buchan but putting forward the same theory of progressive insights.}
There must be some axis on which any frame of reference can revolve. This must involve, but not necessarily be identifiable with, the knowing subject. Buchan has no time for the "rootless marginal" mind nor for the man who must constantly have himself in the limelight. Both these kinds of mentality are incapable of creative thinking because they recognize no objective point of departure and return for their schemes. One of the reasons that Buchan himself was able to show such lucid detachment and fearlessly sympathetic analysis to his subjects in his reviews and discussions in The Spectator was that he felt no need to look to philosophy for a creed and, therefore, adherence to a particular system could not be, for him, a matter of faith. Because his security lay in a faith outside, but not unrelated to metaphysical speculation his position was detached but not "rootless".

Buchan illustrates the dangers of seeking "religious" certainty from philosophical speculations and systems in a short story called "Space," written apparently at a time when he was himself deeply involved in a critical review of a number of works dealing with space-time concepts. It is tempting to see in this "erratic genius", this Cambridge scholar with a phenomenally athletic mind searching through the "corridors of space" for the ultimate truth, the young Bertrand Russell but this would be inconsistent with Buchan's usual method of constructing a hero from a number of prototypes.

The link between mountaineering and philosophic investigation is, of course, a deliberate one. Holland is eventually killed whilst trying to make an impossible traverse, the symbol of his attempts to cross regions of thought where the human mind could find no holds. The heroic mountaineer climbing into the rarified atmosphere
must maintain physical contact with the mountain even though his grip may be precarious. Holland attempts the impossible, allows himself to become isolated from society and wholly detached from life in his mental activities. Leithen in his final assessment of Holland sounds a further warning which is not merely meant to create the frisson of the atmosphere of a ghost story but to indicate an unavoidable principle in the limitations of human cognition. Holland is seen to have been not only plucked from his moorings in this world by his speculations but to have "seen something more, the little bit too much" which made him unfit for life in a "fleshy envelope" but ready for some kind of wider vision. Thus Leithen can see that his end may not have been an entirely destructive one for Holland's psyche. Leithen carefully defers judgement on the suicide and simply prays for him.

Buchan obviously knew that sense of radical insecurity which is a concomitant of any serious philosophical enquiry in which fundamental norms are questioned and new ways of looking at reality are opened up. This heightened feeling akin to terror is raised, for the purposes of the story, to a critical pitch in the "tension of pure spirit". The terror felt by H. G. Wells's Time- Traveller, as he hurtles forward through time has physical as well as mental causes. Holland's terror has only a slight physical component from the sense of pressure in this hyperfilled space.

Human beings have an inbuilt defense mechanism which normally operates. Nature "after a point ceases to be adaptable, and there is a conscious return to a beneficent obscurantism". There is something in us that naturally revolts against excess and recognizes

1 The Time Machine
2 SR 20 Aug (1908) "The Coming Cave-Men"
that life "is built up on compromises, on stopping short of something. Justice if carried too far becomes barbarity, gentleness cowardice, generosity folly".¹

Often the safety valve against excess is to be seen in man's capacity to laugh at any superfluity which reaches grotesque proportions, becomes incongruous to the commonly-accepted norm, or merely inflexible. Buchan was appreciative of Bergson's analysis of the comic although he recognized that this dealt with only one kind of laughter, "the favourite French type - sharp, satiric, a little harsh".² Thus he agrees that "rigidity in the midst of the flux of life" will make us laugh but points out also that "what moves us to laughter is just as often the inconsequent in the midst of life's orderliness".³

Such a possibility of conflicting frames of reference requires sharp differentiation of those frames. It is this which makes such exercises as literary parody possible. Buchan, as we shall see, is adamant about the appropriateness of style to content and occasion in the writer and can be himself a very deliberate craftsman. Thus when he amuses himself writing a version of "O! Mistress Mine" in "the debased speech of a Hollywood film" in 1937 he is able to bring two markedly different approaches to the same subject matter into ludicrous collision.

Hih! Sweetie, where you gettin' to?
Your big boy's here and pettin' you.
And he's the guy that rings the bell.
Say, kid, quit hikin' and sit nice,
For shakin' feet don't cut no ice,
The goofiest mutt can tell.

1 *Spec* 21 Nov (1903) 862
2 *"* 13 Jan (1912) 61 "M. Bergson and a Critic"
3 op. cit.
4 60 239 "Return to Masterpieces"
The fragments of this kind of satiric parody are amongst some of Buchan's happiest poetic efforts because he can play clearly distinguishable standards off one against the other. This is not to be confused with what he called "frivolous clowning" or that "trashiness of soul which makes the world a pantomime and goes out of life with an imbecile laugh". The world is neither all grave nor all light-hearted, both positions if held incessantly become affected poses. High-seriousness is necessary to high-comedy just as much as laughter and a sense of humour are necessary to a powerful heroic personality. As usual Buchan can accept a wide range of possible positions and view-points so long as they are kept "within limits".

Such limitations must not be imposed out of fear and conservatism however. Part of man's function in life is to distinguish what are genuine "natural limits". In a sub-leader in The Spectator in 1903 Buchan castigates the misuse of the terms "natural limits" saying that the type of conservative mentality which uses such phrases frequently reduces the world to "a series of hurdles, imposed by Providence, up to which the human experimentalist may skirmish, but no further". He cites as an example of such an incongruous use of the terms that in 1697 four shillings in the pound was laid down as the 'natural limit' of the land-tax, whilst Henry Petty as Chancellor of the Exchequer was later to declare that with regard to incomes, two shillings in the pound was "the natural limit of the tax". Such a concept of nature is, Buchan says, the product of "a combination of fatalism and ignorance". Life is reduced to

1 Spec 3 Feb (1900) 165 "The National 'Malaise'"
2 op.cit.
3 *Spec 21 Nov (1903) 861, 2 "Natural limits"
ludicrous proportions.

The hidden ways, the vast and complex network of forces which make up physical and intellectual life, are reduced to a vague something, which imposes laws like a County Council, and has drawn a circle of fences around human endeavour. The many real limitations in life, instead of being self-imposed or inherent in the modes of our activity, tend to be regarded as barriers in whose creation we have no share, and so in the long run make freedom and hope impossible for man.

Almost any party or vested interest is inclined to use the notion of natural limit to describe its own operative boundaries. Rousseau and his school, Buchan claims, used Nature "to justify anarchy" and English Whig administrators (who are left unnamed in the article) used it as an argument for political compromise between the natural claims of the state and the individual. Conventional limits are also interpreted as natural limits in such questions as the extension of the franchise and the functions of the State with regard to the welfare of the Nation. In these cases natural limits are made to describe the threshold at which a particular security or interest becomes threatened.

The only justifiable use of the terms, according to Buchan, is "in cases where our knowledge of 'nature'", (which he interprets as "the conditions of the problem"), "can be said to be, for all practical purposes, complete". He uses as an example the knowledge of the action of gravitation which "imposes a natural limit to man's capacity of walking down a precipice". The truth of this limitation, is dependent on the truth of the body of experimental knowledge which underlies the statement of the processes described and which makes it possible to predict accurately the specific consequences of transgression of these "laws". The so-called law is,
however, only truly "natural" in relation to the body of data behind it and can be said to be precisely as true as that data foundation is.

Buchan also exorcises the notion of nature as an anarchic force opposed to humanly conceived laws which is thought by the timid to be released by any suggestion of change. These people resort to the "thin-edge of the wedge" cry which also distorts life or nature into a vague hostile force, in this case occupied in upsetting human safety barriers. The ambiguities of our descriptions of nature as both a law-maker and a law-breaker are probably the result of the deeply-rooted confusions of the inherent limitations in man which may be analysed but which do not always correspond to the experienced limitations of his existence, and perhaps also in man's excessive presumptions about his own capacities to know what is real and true.

This raises the important question of validation in the quest for truth. Buchan's notion of a home or base from which his pioneering could be done whilst it has nothing to do with petty conservatism has much to do with validation. The problem seems to have been posed most acutely by the claims of scientific investigation which Buchan recognised had been much modified by such analysts as Boutroux and Poincaré.1 These men no longer claimed that "scientific intelligibility" was "the only kind, or the most perfect kind of intelligibility" nor that science was capable of revealing "the only reality, or any kind of reality". Buchan understands Boutroux as saying that "scientific explanation implies neither the knowledge of the intrinsic nature of things nor of their origin or value". It is the function of

1 Spec 13 Jun (1914) 997, 8 "The Meaning of Natural Laws"
science, then, to demonstrate "a series of relations" which can be verified by being "reduced to some other relation or relations already known and recognized" (by which he seems to mean formulae). Thus scientific laws are not to be equated with natural law because they are imposed \textit{a priori} upon reality, and serve their purpose in marshalling reality for human uses, but they by no means correspond to those subtle and concrete harmonies which are inherent in reality, and to discover which is the aim of the philosopher.

Buchan is fully aware of the inductive method of scientific investigation but sees the original hypothesis as a net by which a portion of reality is isolated to make such an activity possible. All science, like all knowledge, may be considered as ultimately one, but investigation can only be successfully carried out on clinically isolated areas of that knowledge following precisely adapted methods. It follows, therefore, that scientific "laws" which are formulated by such methods are strictly speaking only applicable within those given terms of reference. Verification and validation according to those laws, norms or models are really a matter of internal consistency and experimental testing. Natural law in these circumstances whether viewed as inherent in or imposed by a specific context of information cannot be identified with that bed-rock which is the touchstone of Buchan's intellectual frontiersman.

Buchan also investigates the idea of a fixed reference in his analysis of social organization. Discussing the value of constitutional monarchy in \textit{The Graphic} in 1931\textsuperscript{2} Buchan remembers that when "the Romans made their empire they realised the importance of a

\begin{tabular}{l}
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1 997 \\
2 Gr. 23 May (1931) 306 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
**punctum immobile**, a focus of unity; so they had their emperors".

Leaving aside the historical validity of his argument about the evolution of autocratic power in the state it becomes possible to see the social model that Buchan is postulating as a cosmic one, that of the revolving sphere. For he says that each stable society requires a similar "visible symbol of its enduring personality". In Britain the monarchy represents for him the "supreme point of national self-consciousness". This is not because it is vested with mystical significance in itself but because it symbolizes the essential continuity of an identifiable tradition.

Buchan has little time for absolute monarchy or for autocratic power wielded outside its proper sphere, as he makes clear in his attack on the nineteenth century Papal claims (possibly again following Lord Acton). Such a symbol must not become a substitute for the living social identity of a group any more than an ideal should be petrified and pedestalled to become an idol. Yet the "point of the turning world" must remain "still" and the Roman "punctum" must be "immobile" if each is to function properly. The way in which this fixed reference can remain in vital relation to the dynamic movement of which it is in some way the origin is not explained.

The symbol may not necessarily be contained in a single individual. In the United States the Senate is seen as performing much the same function, for it is

The fixed star among the planets of the Constitution, a restriction upon eccentric legislation and an admirable bureau for

1 *Spec 15 Jun (1901) 881 "The Papacy in the Nineteenth Century"
foreign affairs. It is an equipoise to the empire of mere numbers which prevails in the lower House.

The House of Lords in Britain cannot fulfill the same function since it is not a mere extension of the monarchy. Its function with regard to the Commons is to provide a "checking apparatus". It may offer a "judgement of reflection" to the lower House but it may not, to protect its own interests, usurp the power of the Commons as it apparently wished to do in 1907 when Buchan retorted,

If the House of Lords is to have leave to dictate the contents of the Government's Bills then democratic government is dead. There remains but to bury the corpse of the House of Commons.

The family is also seen as a crucial unit in society. By comparing modern society with that of the later Roman Empire, Buchan analyses the value of the family unit to the community as the requisite nursery of the state. Without it "the citizen of the future will be a very ineffective being. He will attempt in vain to move the world, for he will have no fulcrum ..."

Once again Buchan seems to assert that a man's true centre of gravity has been discovered in his own house in early childhood, and without this basic security he will neither be an integrated person nor an effective person in society. The fact that this experience of security and "belonging" is, in the main, not capable of analysis and should not be simply equated with the actual conditions of that childhood nor with childish modes of apprehension means that it is a difficult concept to discuss. Nevertheless this

1 Spec 29 Dec (1900) 960 "The Treaty-Making Power"
2 SR 14 Mar (1907) 294 "Mr. Churchill's Second Chamber"
3 op.cit
4 SR 22 Aug (1907) 143 "The Position of the House of Lords"
security of an identity which is related and meaningful is something that is essential to all men. Certainly the would-be social reformer is urged by Buchan to follow Emerson's dictum if he wishes to be truly effective and be always "To his native centre fast ...".1

Such a centre may also be a distillation of experience or an intuitive focus. Lord Cromer was quoted by Buchan as saying that there is "always some centre of gravity in every confused problem ... and it is the business of the reformer to concentrate on that".2

Holding fast to some central principle, once it has been deciphered from experience, is a necessary form of intellectual integrity. The principles may only be "honest prejudices".3 but these are preferable to the pose of total objectivity which Buchan sees as a singular prerogative of the Almighty. For Buchan there can be no question of such "infinite tolerance" for the human mind and, therefore what we call truth or reality can best be described as a construction and not a datum.

Not that he is totally unsympathetic to the opposite point of view which he sees as a common characteristic of both Henri Bergson and William James whose philosophy he reviews at length for The Spectator between 1910 and 1914.

Both are apostles of the plain man and the ordinary consciousness; both are in revolt against abstract idealism, and advocates of what we might call personal idealism; both are convinced that conceptualism has made the world of thought barren; both believe that reality is a datum and not a construction, and that the so-called rational construction is only the substitution of a kind of symbolical shorthand for the rich and full-bodied language of life.

1 SR 31 Oct (1907) 399 "A Roman Parallel"
2 18 Apr " 435 "The Maker of Modern Egypt"
3 *Spec 24 Aug (1901) 254 "Lady Louisa Stuart"
4 * 24 Sep (1910) 465 "Professor Bergson on Free Will"
Neither of these men can be associated with Mr. Arnold Layden the charlatan philosopher of "A Reputation" who, catching on to a "particular word which pleases his generation" rejects his previous catchwords of "real and ideal" for a new concept on which he lectures to the public, "The Real Thing". In a London letter in The Scottish Review of June 27th, 1907, Buchan seems to indicate who the prototype of Layden had been.

"Personally", he says, "I greatly distrust all systems of philosophy which begin by declaring that they want to keep a grip on life. Their votaries are apt to end like Dr. Emil Reich, in delivering shallow lectures to idle ladies at fashionable restaurants. They may begin with Plato, but they end with Martin Tupper".

Reich is one of the few writers on philosophy whom Buchan reviews with a sharp scalpel and sometimes, even, a sledge-hammer, "For the author talks much of Plato and much of life, but shows not the faintest perception of what a problem means". The quotations from Reich, especially the one about maternal love producing heroes) show that Buchan's dismissal of Reich's work as "nauseous humbug" is well justified.

Heroes are men who have been loved by their mothers, kissed by them to any extent. It is not enough for some to have a kiss now and again, they should be kissed all day, five hundred, five thousand kisses; and on the battlefield he will kill five thousand of his enemies.

What is interesting in the present context is that it shows that Buchan expects philosophic investigation to reach the "cruces of thought and conduct", by means of a constructive argument presented in a lucid style.

1 MM Feb (1898) 294-300
2 666
3 *Spec 7 Jul (1906) 15,16 "Dr. Emil Reich and Plato"
4 Reich, M.: Plato as an Introduction to Modern Criticism of Life, 119
This he finds in both Bergson and James. In Bergson in particular Buchan agrees with Caldwell that there is some "foreshadowing of a constructive philosophy which shall derive both from Pragmatism and Idealism".¹

At a practical level he finds truth even more problematical especially in the matter of communication as did Thomas the Rhymer in the ballad

In the witness-box we solemnly swear to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth", and in so doing we pledge ourselves to attain the unattainable.

Our deficiencies are the result of the inadequacy of our knowledge, of our inability to communicate our knowledge, and also, the inadequacies of the receiver. Buchan quotes from The Dolly Dialogues to corroborate this last statement "to speak the truth to those who are certain to misunderstand you is simply to propagate falsehood".²

The intellectual pioneer then, like the scientist, must proceed from the data of experience to generalizations "which he admits as provisional". These he uses "to structuralise experience" but once these models "cease to explain phenomena simply and economically, he scraps them".³

Freedom of thought and integrity of mind are essential but "there is no exact liaison between the external fact and the inner perception" and accuracy is even more difficult to achieve than truth. In history for example Buchan felt that it was possible to reach "an understanding of large movements and processes - but that you cannot arrive at anything like accuracy about details"³

¹ *Spec 27 Dec (1913) 1122,3 "Pragmatism and Its Affiliations"
² § 23 Jan (1932) "The Hardest Thing in Life"
³ ¶ 15 Nov (1930) 294 "The New Modesty"
What keeps all these structures and dogmas in proportion, for Buchan, is man's ability to reach a vantage ground where he can take a synoptic view before continuing on his journey. It is this which singles out the leader from his fellows.

"In every profession", says Buchan, "the man who can take a synoptic view is the master of the man who stumbles along by rule of thumb". The man who keeps his eyes constantly on the ground immediately ahead of him is unlikely to make much overall sense of his perception of progress, the man on the hill-top may get a view which is closer to an overall vision. Buchan uses the phrase from de J'Isle Adam "Sans illusion tout périt" a number of times. "Illusion" he seems to interpret as this kind of vision. It is akin to his notion of the validity of the fairy tale approach as opposed to the realistic approach to the novel.

The intellectual adventurer must explore the landscape properly and test his vision which will probably then be modified, which is what Buchan expected of Marxist theory when it became a political reality.

As soon as he [the Marxist] descends from the plateaux of transcendental economics and begins to ask himself what practical steps he must take to realize his ideal, then his ideal stands a chance of alteration. Confronted with the world of positive facts, it is bound to change.

All idealism then must be tested and proved. It would be fair I think to describe Buchan's position as one of critical idealism which recognizes the necessity both to construct ideals and to keep them vital. "For an ideal is only an ideal, a principle only a principle,

1 *Spec 10 Aug (1901) 183 "The Glamour of the Old Universities"
2 SR 5 Sep (1907) 184 "National and International Socialism"
when it is intellectually apprehended. This intellectual life can only be attained by a constant critical effort, otherwise the ideal becomes merely "a catchword or a pious opinion ... [and] degenerates into dead encumbrances".¹

From his educational experience Buchan's concept of the intellectual frontiersman derived its main outlines. The intellectual Borderer is motivated by intrinsic curiosity and the challenges of the world about him. He recognizes that there is no simple equation between his mental perceptions and objective reality but accepts the validity of both. His apprehension and understanding require frameworks, each with a centre of gravity, accepted as models rather than absolute laws. Therefore he frequently finds himself in the debatable ground where frames of reference intersect. Intellectual integrity demands that he recognize and accept this position without trying to over-simplify it by the rejection of an area of experience. In order to get the complexities of his situation into perspective and therefore to be able to see them in proper proportion he must occasionally withdraw and climb to the ridge which will provide him with an overview of his mental territory. In this way he will be able to see where the frontiers between the tensions of his spirit actually lie and so re-enter the fray in that personal Border zone.

¹ BR 18 Jun (1908) "Machine-Made Opinion"
II The Bar: Equipoise

In 1900 Buchan began his legal training with a firm of solicitors in Bedford Row and was soon writing enthusiastically to Charles Dick, "Nothing has ever impressed me more with a sense of profound intellectual force than the decisions and pleadings of some of our great lawyers". Under J. A. Hamilton and later Sir Sydney Rowlatt, Buchan learned "to look always for principles, and if necessary to search far back in legal history". In so doing he found that he particularly admired the 18th Century Lord Chief Justice Mansfield and almost at once began to write a biography. He says in his Memoirs that he still possessed "three stout volumes" in which he had "analysed and classified every one of his decisions" but only one article on Mansfield appeared in Blackwood's Magazine. In this Buchan says that Mansfield "introduced a new spirit into English law" by doing away "with forms which hampered justice" striving for "simplicity and common-sense, interpreting the letter of the law with a freedom and fairness uncommon among his contemporaries". Buchan sees the function of a lawyer in this article as "being rather an interpreter than a leader" which requires a certain "equipoise of character". This he describes as "mediocrity, if you like, but of the aurea mediocritas stamp". He was to return to this theme of "The Modern Man" in a speech at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario on the 7th November, 1936. After dismissing a number of false notions of moderation Buchan defines his own use of the term as follows

1 quoted JAS 79
2 MHD 89
3 rep. in Some 18th Century Byways
4 85
5 86
6 98
7 CO 173
In the first place it involves a certain critical standpoint, a certain degree of honest scepticism. The critically constructive mind, the constructively critical mind, is needed today in a special degree, and it should be found particularly among those who, like you, have access to the treasures of the world's literature and thought. We need intellectual courage, the courage to ask questions and insist upon an answer.

Such a man, placed uncomfortably on a critical divide looks distinctly like the Aiken Drum who "rave upon a razor". To be able to succeed the moderate man must remain highly sensitive to his environment for, says Buchan

> Every lawyer knows that the wisest law will not succeed unless it is in tune with the spirit of a people. If it is too far ahead of that spirit it will be a dead letter.

The moderate man also becomes an agent of peace, for social peace is the product of well-tempered minds so that to "create and maintain that temper is the first duty of civilized men".

Buchan points to one of the major sources of difficulty in the system of law in relation to society in that legislation is formulated by politicians and must be interpreted by judges. Thus a judge must seek to be true to the meaning behind the formula rather than the formula itself. His mind must have "great subtlety" because in order "to decide on the meaning a dozen cross-bearings ... must be found from other uses in the same statute or elsewhere". The same elasticity of mind is required in the application of punishment for all theories of punishment have only a speculative interest, serving to explain the judicial temper, which is a personal

1 CO 178
2 W 183
3 "The Judicial Temperament" HR 218
matter, composed of, but not entirely created by, many theories. Such a temper has of course its calculus of penalties, which is roughly the prevailing one, but its supreme merit is that it can use such a calculus intelligently and liberally, in as much as it is bound down to no one-sided dogma.

Another anomaly in the system is that judges are chosen from amongst advocates whose success depends on non-judicial powers of persuasion. The wit and skill which has been developed to plead a case must be used quite differently to judge it.

The judge's function is described by Buchan as the codifying, interpreting and also the extending of the law, which he describes as the "elastic tissue which clothes a growing body" of the State. This garment must be made and adjusted so that it fits the social body exactly because if it is too tight it will inhibit growth and movement, but if it is too slack it will simply get in the way and trip us up.

Buchan's interest in critical judgement and judicial temper is shown in his use of the most reflective of his fictional heroes Sir Edward Leithen. This man above all demonstrates that Buchan's interest in decision-making was far from pedantic and legalistic. His assessment of his position and function in Sick Heart River sums up Buchan's "final judgement" of man's condition. The adventure of life consists in working out that judgement in practice.

The ability to make decisions involves the power of discrimination and constructive criticism which is applicable in many different areas of life including politics, sociology and literature. Categorization

1 *Spec 22 Dec (1900) 937 "Sir Edward Fry's Studies"
2 HR 222
3 op. cit.
was not an end product of this activity merely the means which made judgement and decision operative. To be able to label a type of person or a literary genre does not demonstrate understanding but it elucidates choice and provides a framework or standard of reference, and a possibility, therefore of interpretation.

Philosophical notions of dualism seem to have found their way into almost every aspect of life. Plato and Descartes in proposing body and soul or mind and matter divisions did what many religions have done and presented life in the form of a battle between differing forces. In all these cases the dualism implies antagonism, a struggle for domination, a dualism. Bunyan's *Holy War* did not have quite the same impact on Buchan as *The Pilgrim's Progress* perhaps because he had difficulties in believing in a personalized devil with the same conviction as he had of the being of God.

Buchan is able to define his position with regard to dualism in the Calvinist tradition with precision in the 1928 version of *Montrose*. Destructive dualism Buchan saw as a product of Puritanism which was less a creed and more an attitude and a mood. By a progressive narrowing of focus in both faith and practice (from the original Calvin/Knox construction) Buchan says the Puritan became a destructive force in his society whose creed might have been that of Milton in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*.

By this divorcing command the world first rose out of chaos; nor can be renewed again out of confusion but by the separating of unmeet consorts.

The results of simplifying issues like the prerogatives of monarchy and the prerogatives of a

1 28
2 Quoted *Montrose* (1928) 27
theocracy (towards which the Scottish Kirk was tending according to Buchan) and vesting the power struggle with religious significance resulted in the two real evils, he assessed, of "intolerance" and "neurotic supernaturalism".

Toleration is not a passive virtue for Buchan. It is a highly active form of respect for he says "true toleration ... is based not on indifference but on spiritual humility". He goes on to say, "The nursing-ground of intolerance is a complete dogmatic certainty about the ordering of the world". This false security, this "cosmic assurance" became a trap for the Kirk in the seventeenth century. It produced a view of the world as a closed system, purpose built by God for man so that he could make his "journey heaven-ward or hell-ward".

Such a cosmos was both intimate and simple, made according to man's scale and for his uses; it was without blurred lines or shadowy corners, and the mind which accepted it was ready to pronounce upon its problems as upon matters of ascertained fact.

Intellectual and spiritual arrogance Buchan saw as the progenitors of intolerance and tyranny which were not confined to any one Kirk, group of individual.

A number of dualisms appear in Montrose, conflicting interests arising from differing viewpoints on social, political and religious matters. In Scotland Buchan says the situation was aggravated because there was "no middle-class to act as a force of social persistence" and society tended to polarize, as a result, more easily.

In the Church bishops were "impossible as mediators" because they were out of touch with the temper of their countrymen so that whilst they "might be intellectually

1 Montrose (1928) 58
2 op.cit. 58
3 58
4 68
tolerant like their leader (Spottiswoode) ... they were ecclesiastically dogmatic. Montrose is seen in his youth as an intellectual trying to come to terms with the ambiguities of the situation and who eventually formulates a theory of balance of powers in political life on which he is willing to stake his life. Buchan put much of himself in Montrose and it is likely that this crucial theory of tensions is the one that he found corresponded most readily to his notion of toleration. Buchan seems to have had in mind, though he does not use it the analogy of the balance of cosmic forces which (from one point of view) can be seen as the source of both the mobility and the stability of the solar system. Such a view of a harmony of balanced powers in motion has little to do with an immoral refusal of commitment. Thus Buchan rejects a political opportunist like Herod in Augustus who "attempted to ride two horses and failed with both", in order to preserve his own position.

Moderation is also to be distinguished from mediocrity.

The false moderate is that dreary type of being who, when confronted with a problem, always tries to halve the difference. His notion is to keep in the centre of the road. But this mechanical, mathematical calculation is useless in the real world. Practical life is not a narrow ridge where a pedestrian naturally keeps as near the centre as possible. It is much more like a difficult estuary of a river, where there are shoals in the centre as well as at the sides. The false moderate keeps in the middle of the channel, and presently is on the sandbank. The true moderate, with a chart of the course, and using all the knowledge and wits God has given him may steer one hour close to one bank, and the next hour close to the other. His business is not to keep in the mathematical centre, but to find deep water.

1 69 3 CO 174,5
2 (1937) 190
The moderate man is still the man of courage and perseverance not only at critical times but also when his life's work proceeds "at a foot's pace". For the youthful idealist who is the Buchan hero "the hardest task of all is to walk the prosaic roads of life and not faint".¹

Montrose is described as "a waverer" who finds "an issue of his perplexities"² not by accepting one element of a contradiction and rejecting the other but by seeing the necessity of both and finding the ability to hold both in tolerant tension to the extent of the sacrifice of property, prestige and life. The result is that he himself is able to act as a necessary median or nexus factor in society and ensures the continuity of its tradition and social identity.

Controversy is seen by Buchan as natural to any vital intellectual activity. The processes of judgement and decision making appear to involve the separation of factors and a discrimination in favour of one element at the expense of the other. Yet in Buchan's ideal system they must also ensure progress without destruction and communion without absorption. The judge is not the divisive member of society but the mediator of tradition.

The Hegelian dialectic is given a new direction by Buchan in this. For the moderate man who inhabits the buffer zone of intellectual and ideological tensions acts as a mediator of thought not by producing a synthesis but simply by maintaining his balance.

¹ CO 180
² CO 168
III Man of Letters: The Interpreter

Buchan's professional involvement in literature had begun in earnest when he was still an undergraduate. Whilst some of his fellow students helped to pay for their studies by working in the fields or as gillies Buchan wrote his way through University. Essays, stories and poems, in the style of Lang and Stevenson appeared in The Gentleman's Magazine from 1893, Macmillan's Magazine from 1894 and Glasgow University Magazine in the same year. In 1894 Buchan edited Bacon's Essays and Apotheosis for the Walter Scott Library and the following year saw his first "romance" in print Sir Quixote of the Moors. This is really an extended short story and it was not until 1897 that Buchan's first full-length novel John Burnet of Barns appeared. In the meantime however he had been reading for John Lane, producing reviews for The Academy and writing more complex stories for The Yellow Book, producing an anthology of fishing verse called Musa Piscatoria of his own choice and a collection of his own essays and stories in a volume called Scholar-Gipsies.

Even before he left Oxford he had established a reputation as a writer which was to grow rapidly after his return from Africa. At the end of 1899 he had begun a serious apprenticeship to journalism (concurrently with his apprenticeship in Law) on the staff of The Spectator to which he had been introduced by Dr. Butler of Oriel. 1

Until he joined Milner in South Africa in 1901 Buchan continued his practical apprenticeship. He contributed at least seventy-seven major articles and reviews to The Spectator during this period, in addition

1 L. D. J. Butler to J. B. NLS MS 34
to dealing with what he calls "the base mechanical details of editing" like proof-correcting. The subjects that he dealt with were enormously varied including major social and political issues, church matters, philosophy and "outdoor books" and, later, poetry. These often involved a heavy load of reading as well as writing. His ability to sift through large quantities of new material and arrive at a clear personal conclusion probably influenced Milner's decision to invite Buchan to join him as Political Private Secretary in the Transvaal.¹

On his return to Britain in 1903 he concentrated on work at The Spectator. Whether or not Buchan enjoyed his next year's almost total immersion in journalism he was certainly remembered by his successor J. B. Atkins to have had a phenomenal capacity for work which nevertheless produced no signs of tension or strain in his personal relationships. Atkins says that he sometimes suspected that his "brilliant and baffling predecessor" worked in his sleep.² It is this period that accounts for 300 entries on the check-list, produced by C. A. Seaton librarian at The Spectator.

In 1907 when John Buchan was offered a post as literary adviser to Nelson's he relinquished his hopes of editorship on The Spectator, but he did not stop writing for the paper. Until 1914 he contributed regular reviews and occasional leading articles and in 1913 his contributions were almost as heavy as in 1906. As his health deteriorated and his war duties increased there was a drastic cut in this activity and from 1915 onwards there are only sporadic articles which bear his name.

The correspondence in the Edinburgh University

¹ JAS 107
² Spec 3 Nov (1928) "Spectator Memories"
Library between Buchan in the London office of Nelson's at Paternoster Row and G. M. Brown at the Parkside works in Edinburgh show the pressures that were involved in working in the highly-competitive world of the popular book market. Reading through the correspondence one has the impression of a man working full time (and indeed over-time) to make Nelson's a financial, literary and educational success. It requires an effort to realize that this was only one of Buchan's many literary interests. Buchan could never have been described as a literary dilettante. If he and his firm were financially successful they were so through a mixture of imaginative planning, thorough and competent production, persistent marketing and phenomenal industry. Writing, for Buchan, was an intensely professional matter, an art form which could rarely afford to be self-indulgent but which had to be honestly produced and honestly marketed. A. R. Candlish in his monograph on *John Buchan and Nelsons of Edinburgh* (which received the Martha Hamilton Award at Edinburgh University in 1978) has shown that even when Buchan became an M.P. in 1927 he still managed to write and retain his loyalties to Nelson's until he eventually resigned his directorship in November 1929.

Buchan's departure from Nelson's only intensified the volume of literary and historical writing that he published. More substantial works like the biographies of *Scott*, *Montrose* and *Augustus* became possible, though again these seem to have been written in the chinks of time that were left by a very busy social and political life. Buchan's literary efforts show a surprising mixture of energy and self-effacement.

Buchan would probably have disapproved of the term a "media-man" but it was as a mediator and interpreter that he saw his role as a writer and communicator.
In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the Interpreter functions as the wise demonstrator who shows Christian "excellent things" that will be "profitable" to the pilgrim. As a theory of presentation there are a number of interesting features in this episode of the book. Christian is already "some distance from the gate" when he reaches the house of the Interpreter. The presenter only responds to insistent demands from Christian who has to knock "over and over" before anyone comes to the door. The master himself does not open the door and only appears after "a little time". He uses "his man" to "light the candle" and to "open the door" by which Christian is able to see the images and dramatic representations of moral life. Christian must prove himself an insistent seeker of information before the Interpreter operates. At first the Interpreter draws the direct parallels between the vision and its meaning for Christian but by the time the method has been applied four times Christian successfully interprets for himself the struggle of the man to gain entry into the Kingdom by applying a similar analogical method. Once this stage has been reached he is not allowed to rest assured in his own capacity, but is led to question the actors in a number of dramas to explain their roles for themselves.

The function of this formative system is not to gratify Christian's sense of prowess in speculation but to serve, as the Interpreter explains to his willing pupil, as "a goad in thy sides" to spur him on the way he must go. From the Interpreter's House the pilgrim sets out on his essentially personal route, keeping these examples and principles in mind and thus he is able to take a direct route to Calvary where the essential action takes place. The models presented to Christian represent life but are not substitutes for life.
The images of fiction similarly are extracted from life and are essentially true but not at the level of their specific and incidental natures.

Literary art, for Buchan, is partly a process of simplification, that is of the recognition and representation of a portion of reality in some identifiable form. The danger of misinterpretation is great, but the duty of the presenter remains that of bringing the reader to exercise his own ability to assess his view of experience and to question the experience of others in a way that is meaningful, i.e. "profitable", to him.

Over-simplification (in whatever cause) leads, according to Buchan, to disaster. To combat this, a cross-frame of reference is required. For example against the reality of the subjective individual perspective Buchan places that of the social organism, and literary tradition. It is interesting to notice Buchan's attack on individualism which he sees as the besetting sin both of his society and of contemporary literature.

"I am rather weary", he was to write in 1930 of being asked to interest myself in the loquacious polygamists who ramble about inconsequently in certain modern novels. They seem to me to be several moves from reality.

He dismissed much contemporary writing as mere "palimpsests of sensations and emotions and passions". He also rejected the notion that an author was a passive "medium through which the real world speaks in all its crudeness and confusion". The novelist for Buchan is a mediator not a medium, an interpreter who produces a work of art.

1 SR 7 Nov (1907) 427, "The True Danger of Socialism"
2 Gr 15 Nov (1930) 294
3 BA "Novel & F.T." 4
4 op. cit. 5
The business of art is to present life, the real point of life, and for that selection is necessary, since a great deal of life is off the point. It must clear away the surplusage of the irrelevant, the inessential, the inorganic. It must provide the only true kind of picture, which is an interpretation.

The function of all art for Buchan is to "separate what is apprehensible from the environment" to "refine" and "focus" it. Sometimes art can work in reverse though and "confer tangibility to airy nothings".

He defends the Victorian novelists against the charge that they were lacking in realism and criticises the restricted use of the term in contemporary criticism to mean the sordid.

The real objection of these critics is, I think, that the Victorians were not ugly enough. They did not believe that the pathological was the most important thing in the world and that the most characteristic thing about a house was the adjacent dust-heap. Realism in this sense is a disproportionate emphasis on the negative accidentals of life and has nothing in common with Buchan's aims of writing about "things that are close to the tap-root of humanity". He aligns himself with these Victorian novelists and with the more basic and enduring traditions of storytelling, the more elemental realism of the fairy and folk tales.

There is one serious difference between the fictional and the real world. The fictional world can make action conclusive. Because it sets its own limits it can examine all possibilities, make improbabilities happen and so bring satisfaction and definition to people deeply involved in the ill-defined complexities and
subtleties of actual living. If Buchan's adventure stories can be called escape literature it is because they use the same basic framework of experience that is common to most of the readers but clarify it, define it and so make it subject to control. The subtlety of this fictional control lies in the fact that it appears to be inherent in the system itself. Destiny, Fate, Kismet are the apparent manipulators not the author or the reader. It is only in retrospect that it becomes clear that the frontiers and the lines of action, indeed all the topography and timing of the action have been as deliberately positioned as a game of chess in which a player tries to outwit himself. Novel writing, for Buchan, seems to have had an element of intellectual sport.

In *The Three Hostages* Dr. Greenslade is made to explain a technique of writing that may have been related to Buchan's own, as Janet Adam Smith suggests.

The doctor picked up a detective novel I had been reading, and glanced at the title page...
"The author writes the story inductively and the reader follows deductively. Do you see what I mean?"
"Not a bit", I replied.
"Look here. I want to write a shocker, so I begin by fixing on one or two facts which have no sort of obvious connections."
"For example?"
"Well imagine anything you like. Let us take three things a long way apart" - He paused for a second - "say, an old blind woman spinning in the Western Highlands, a barn in a Norwegian saeter, and a little curiosity shop in North London kept by a Jew with a dyed beard. Not much connection - simple enough if you have any imagination, and you weave all three into the yarn".
The same sporting element appears when Buchan defines his "shocker" in the dedication of *The Thirty-Nine Steps* as a "romance where the incidents defy the probabilities, and march just inside the borders of the possible".

The function of the Press in Society is also interpretative and educative in Buchan's opinion. A journalist, therefore, needs to be in close touch with his society and also to have a good knowledge of social and political systems, their operations and history.

The Press, as disseminator of news, is the chief creator of opinion, and in the second place, the opinions which it expresses very largely govern the form which popular opinion is to take ... the Press both shapes and reflects national policy. It cannot create opinion from the void, but it can provide the material for it and it can determine its form, 1

It is no function of the Press to level out society or to blur distinctions. The efforts of the gossip writers to expose the private lives of public figures for example was not only distasteful to Buchan but it violated a basic principle of necessary distinction and differentiation in society.

Cheap newspapers attempt to throw down the barriers between public and private life, and in the sacred name of democracy to compel everyone to live in the shop window. 2

Levelling in society had led to the destruction of much vitality in Scotland, which Buchan saw as being steadily flattened out "under the steam-roller of time". 3 The function of the interpreter is to distinguish and clarify and as Buchan was to write in *The Graphic* in 1930, "If you would 'maximize' two contraries you must keep them apart". 4 Journalistic rhetoric however must clarify and not exaggerate the interpretative statement. Correct

1 *Spec* 19 Dec (1903) "The Press and Political Personalities"
2 SR 31 Oct (1907) 399 "A Roman Parallel"
3 The Kirk in Scotland 237,8
4 Gr24 May (1930) 400 "The London Summer"
style is "simply the exact and adequate expression in words of a writer's meaning". Buchan follows this uncompromising demand with an even more demanding statement of what the journalist is aiming for.

The business of a writer is to get the full content of his mind across the barrier of personality to the mind of his reader.

Buchan went on, in this speech given at the School of Journalism in King's College, London, May 19, 1925, to elaborate this theory of the exact and adequate expression by which the journalist could achieve such communication. The two major qualities must be lucidity and appropriateness of style to content. Lawrence was to speak of Buchan's books as being "like athletes racing: so clean-lined, speedy, breathless". This was certainly Buchan's aim in his prose, in which he could not tolerate any "adipose tissue of style". He did not always achieve his aim, probably because of the quantity and pressures of his output. The flexibility of both mind and style which can come to terms with disparate areas of experience that is a characteristic of the professional journalist is, of course, a necessary quality of the media-man and interpreter.

Yet Buchan must have recognized that his ideal of precise and perfect communication could not be in any specific case, completely achieved. In some respects the writer can only provide a basis or give a few indicators to this audience of the ground. The audience is an equally active participant in the process of literary appreciation. Henry Newbolt in the preface to A History of English Literature that Buchan edited for Nelson's in 1923 stated this principle clearly. He

1 H & R (1926) 235 "Style and Journalism"
2 Quoted JAS 280
speaks of the study of literature as a "literary pilgrimage" and the history in this volume as "a conspectus or map of the long course of literature as it flows through the English landscape". The reader will know nothing at the end of it unless he develops through his reading his "natural hunger for the books themselves".

Literature for Newbolt and for Buchan is never without "a philosophical aspect". Newbolt quotes (without specifying the source) a French author as claiming that "Tout génie a deux faces: l'une tournée vers le temps, l'autre vers l'éternité". This is certainly Buchan's own attitude towards literature. His apparently superficial escape literature is as much in this category as his more serious reflective prose. T. S. Lawrence recognized this and wrote to Edward Garnett in 1933 about Buchan's novels,

For our age they mean nothing: they are sport only; but will a century hence disinter them and proclaim him the great romancer of our blind and undeserving generation?  

Romancer, in the sense that Lawrence is using it is linked with that vital interpretative vision or "illusion" without which there is disintegration.

The synoptic view which is so necessary to interpretation is also connected with the deliberately closed contexts of Buchan's fictional worlds, though these are always brought into contact with another frame of reference.

Buchan's choice of the isolated context of the Club, the shooting-lodge and the week-end country-house party are always set against an outside world which is in sharp contrast to this polite and protected society. In John MacNab for example, urban man is pitted against

1 Quoted JAS 280
the open Scottish moorland, wild game and also the wit and cunning of the local powers, the country lairds. In the Runagates Club there is "strangeness flowering from the commonplace", whilst in The Gap in the Curtain it is possible to glimpse, through sharpened perception, into the future by the "metaphysics and poetry of the soul". Yet another device is to isolate the hero in a foreign environment as David Crawfurd was in Central Africa and Richard Hannay in one of the most interesting of frontier regions between Europe and Asia - Turkey. The minister David Semple finds himself in the back-world of witch and faery. Physical locations like groves and woods serve the same function of providing clearly differentiated areas for action. Contrasts of light and darkness can also isolate characters (a device used throughout The Dancing Floor) and make the passage from one spiritual location to another as clear as the movement from one area of light to another. The Interpreters of society act as communicators and mediators of experience for that society. To function properly, therefore, they must remain vitally linked both to their subject matter and their society. The border-line between subjective and objective reality cuts right through the interpreter in interaction with the content and context of his presentation.
IV Historian: Janus

For Buchan a sense of history was an entirely natural inheritance. Listening to his father's account of Bruce, Wallace, Mary Queen of Scots, the Covenanters and Jacobites he imbibed a history in which people functioned as the challengers and shapers of society not by their introduction of some radically new element but by their loyalty to a principle or cause, loyalty often to death. Revolutionaries were of little concern to Buchan. The fact that his heroes did, like Cromwell, in some measure cause social revolutions was less because they were innovators and more because they were loyal traditionalists. Listening to the stories current in the Border countryside and to his family's accounts of the Disruption he also learned in early childhood that sense of continuity and relevance by which folk-memory touches social history.

Formal historical studies for Buchan were closely allied to literature and law for him at Oxford. Although the Regius Chair at Oxford had been created in 1720 it appears to have been academically rather ineffective until the appointment of William Stubbs in 1866. According to Arthur Marwick the tradition of rigorous textual scholarship and research that Stubbs attempted to introduce into historical studies at Oxford received little encouragement there. Indeed the influential Jowett of Balliol is said to have treated the whole idea of research with contempt. Buchan defends textual scholarship but attacks the concept that this is the sum total of historical endeavour. In the debate between history as a science and history as an art form

1 Marwick 34
2 " 46
3 The Nature of History (1970)
he accepts that history is only partially "scientific" as will be seen. It is soon obvious, however, that he is using "scientific" in a very limited fashion to mean concern with strictly verifiable and qualifiable data.

When Stubbs retired in 1884 he was succeeded by E. A. Freeman whose view of history as a purely political study could not have appealed very much to Buchan with his more personally and socially relevant attitudes towards community history.

York Powell, whose work on Icelandic literature Buchan greatly admired did not present this particular undergraduate at Oxford with a theory of history to which he felt naturally drawn. Buchan quotes Powell as saying that "the proper view is to treat history as an accumulation or assemblage of facts respecting humanity en masse, and not respecting single individuals". Buchan felt that Powell's alignment with Rankean theory was singularly out of character in a man of such proven literary sensitivity.

York Powell nevertheless was an important influence on Buchan who describes him as for ever "scouting the frontiers of knowledge; an advance-guard of scholarship rather than a labourer in the trenches". He was seen less as a figure for admiration than as "the midwife of thought ... the cause of scholarship in others ...".

S. R. Gardiner's work did receive Buchan's wholehearted respect. In "The Muse of History" Buchan selects Gardiner as the epitome of a good modern historian, even classifying him above his other two most admired historical writers at this time, Gibbon

1 *Spec 2 Feb (1907) 170 "History of Life"
2 of Marwick 37, 8
3 *Spec 12 Jan (1905) 55 "Frederick York Powell"
4 H & R (1926) 93-108
and Mommsen. Gardiner, according to Buchan

Selected one of the most intricate and controversial epochs in our history, where passion and prejudice had run riot, and for forty years he laboured to set the truth patiently before the world. His industry was unwearied... He had his clear canons of political and moral worth, but he has no bias... His psychological insight was infallible... In the fullest sense he is a philosopher historian, for he not only chronicles but explains. Nor does he lack the gift of drama... His style is simple, homely, and effective, but it exactly clothes his thought... His fault, it seems to me, is rather that he is careless of background... so that his masterful figures... seem at times to be only of two dimensions, and to be warring in an unfeatural desert.

The claim of infallibility for Gardiner's psychological insight, to a certain extent, spoils the critical worth of this passage and shows Buchan subject to the same excesses as Trevelyan, by whose "Clio" essay this work was undoubtedly inspired.

C. H. Firth, who succeeded to the Regius Chair at Oxford in 1904, is quoted appreciatively by Buchan in The Spectator as saying in his inaugural lecture that by a "process of selection and arrangement he [the historian] endeavours to reproduce the effect which the whole of the evidence has produced upon his mind".

Buchan concludes from this that such a "work of combination, construction and re-creation is essentially artistic rather than scientific in its nature".

One of the most influential figures at Oxford Buchan felt to have been the Balliol tutor Thomas Hill Green of whom Edward Caird had been a pupil and who had a profound influence on Milner and Asquith. This Green does not however seem to have been a relative of John

1 op.cit. "The Muse of History"
2 Spec 7 Jan (1905) 9 "Psychology and History"
Richard Green (in spite of the near co-incidence of their dates of birth and death), who, as a graduate from Oxford of the Freeman school is seen by Buchan as a "link between the orthodox, academic, philosophic and scientific school of historians and the school which conceived of history first and foremost as an art".  

At Oxford, Buchan was not content to speculate about historical narrative but quickly set himself the task of attempting to write it. With his second attempt he won the Stanhope Historical Essay Prize in 1897 with a study of Ralegh. In the preamble to this extended essay he makes it clear that he aims to deal with a popular national hero but to re-evaluate him in the critical light of the historical sources. He worked for this essay in the Bodleian and deals mainly with primary written sources. He is already critically aware of the limitations of a short essay as opposed to a biography, a distinction which he was to raise later in the differences between a memoir and a full-length life. A biography is the work he says of the "psychological historian" who "should attempt to build up from the multitudinous records of the time the vigorous, complex character of the man". In the compass of this shorter work Buchan says he can only hope "to sketch his [Ralegh's] character roughly and crudely". His aim is to find in Ralegh's life recognizably consistent characteristics "to trace that war of motive which at all times beset him; to find, in short, in his temper and talents some explanation of the cruel circumstances of his fate". From Ralegh, he says, we have "the legacy of a great example".

At Oxford, Arthur Warwick also explains, historical

1 Hist. Eng. Lit. 515
2 Ral (1897) 4
3 Ral (1897) 5
4 Ral (1897) 78
5 Warwick
studies were closely related to legal training. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that when Buchan went into Law he should set himself the task of writing about the lives of Lords Monboddo and Mansfield.¹ W. Knight's study of Monboddo came out in 1900 so that Buchan's work was never used (as far as I know) and his essay on Mansfield was never extended into a full-scale biography in the way that Raleigh's life was for Nelson's. Whether this was a matter of personal preference or public lack of interest, Buchan's work in this field was not developed.

The most important academic influence on Buchan's attitudes towards historical studies did not, however, come from Oxford at all, but from Lord Acton and the Cambridge School of history. This latter he described in 1907 as "a great, perhaps the greatest school of historical writing".² The strong ethical bias of Acton appealed greatly to Buchan as did his view that history was "the elucidation of past ages".

The historian's business is to reproduce the past and to elucidate it, and can only be done by means of a kind of imagination which involves some portion of the literary graces, and the exercise of a judgement which must be partly ethical.

Buchan could not, he says, accept the Hegelian thesis that the "judgement of history is the judgement of Heaven".⁴ The success of Divine Providence could not, for him, be so easily equated with the mechanics of human history particularly when Hegel could conclude that "the stately process of the Absolute Will, found its final expression - up to date - in the Germany before 1840 ..."⁵ Rigid inevitability was no part of the

¹ Blackwood's Corresp.
² *Spec 2 Feb. (1907) 169 "History and Life"
³ * " " " " 170 " " " "
⁴ Quoted op. cit.
⁵ "Muse of Hist" 99
Calvinist doctrine that Buchan seems to have inherited. Providence is not inactive in Buchan's religious scheme but if man was to have a genuine choice he must not be seen as a mere tool of an inexorable power outside himself however beneficent this may appear. Similarly no truly transcendent Godhead could be reduced to a process of his creation. For Buchan man was responsible for his own history and that history was, therefore, subject to human judgement and evaluation (within its own limitations). What is necessary for the historian then is perspective, a knowledge of human nature and an honest recognition of his own personal prejudices and also of his own historical context.

The other Cambridge historian who became a personal friend was George Macaulay Trevelyan. Buchan warmed to Trevelyan's enthusiasm for his subject and his sense of the relevance of history to people. He also found in Trevelyan a fellow feeling for his own countryside, though in this case on the other side of the Border.

From Trevelyan's revised edition of "Clio, a Muse" Buchan extracts the notion of history as an art form and an educative force. The scientific dimension lies in accumulating and sifting data. It is imaginative because it reconstructs and generalizes. It is literary because it puts its findings into "a worthy narrative".

Buchan probably also subscribed to Trevelyan's notion of "imaginative guesses" on the part of the historian though as we have seen his position tended to be that insight and intuition were a distillation of experience which became a vision in which that experience

1 cf. *The Causal and Casual in History* and Dickson McCunn on Providential intervention in the accidental and apparently insignificant in the course of history.

2 Spec 29 Nov (1913) "Mr. George Trevelyan's Essays"

3 (1913)

4 cf. Marwick 57
could be seen in an inter-related framework as a landscape from a hill-top rather than as an innate personal quality. Buchan was to become increasingly fascinated, however, by a more than mental reconstruction of the past, a truly hereditary modification of character which appeared in a later generation, even after a lapse. How Buchan became interested in atavism I do not yet know. It is certainly an underlying concept in The Path of the King which was one of Trevelyan's favourite Buchan novels.

Atavism is defined in 1912 in Nelson's Encyclopaedia (in whose production Buchan was so intimately involved) as

the inheritance from a more or less remote ancestor of any bodily or mental quality which has failed to show itself in intervening generations. In sociological writings the term is commonly employed by Lambroso and other criminologists of the Italian and French schools to denote reversion to a more primitive type, as an explanation of criminal instincts and other pathological observances.

The Path of the King is concerned, more optimistically as far as evolution is concerned, with the transmission of a characteristic of leadership (kingship) within a family and is in some ways, as Janet Adam Smith has pointed out, closely related to the fairy-tale theme of royalty becoming apparent in a person in spite of the counterinfluence of environment. This is the kind of tale that Shakespeare used (via Pandosto) in The Winter's Tale so effectively but Buchan extends it over many generations using it as the link motif for a series of otherwise quite unrelated historical episodes.

The article on heredity in Nelson's Encyclopaedia lists a number of writers whose works would have been known to Buchan like S. Butler's curious work Life and
Habit\textsuperscript{1} which touches on "the memory theory of heredity". This may have been discussed at Peebles in relation to evolutionary theory.\textsuperscript{2}

Whilst I am not able, at present, to trace the precise genesis of Buchan's interest in atavism and the mechanisms which cause a resurgence of a dormant characteristic it is possible to analyse how he uses the theory in his historical novels, although here only those areas relevant to the thesis can be pursued. At the basis of all Buchan's notions of memory and atavism and their relationship to history is the premise of the "organic continuity of history" (which was something that Buchan praised in Gibbon's approach).

The philosophical influence of Kant and Bergson seems to have been strong here, for Buchan's concept of continuity includes notions of teleology and creative evolution.\textsuperscript{3} Buchan said that he had wrestled with "Kant's difficult doctrine of 'Reflective Judgement'" or "the self-mediation of immediate experience".\textsuperscript{4} It affected his notion of the function of memory, which is one of the richest of all Buchan's concepts and a recurring theme throughout his writings. For Buchan man stands as a Janus figure in time simultaneously facing forwards and backwards, capable of mediating to himself his past experiences. He is actually constructed from his past and able to project his knowledge of that past into the future.

In \textit{The Long Traverse}\textsuperscript{5} Negog explains

"Time is like this river here. You see the waters for an instant, but you cannot see whence they come or whither they go. But to some of our fathers Time at certain moments

1 (1878)
2 cf. Ch. I
3 *Spec. 11 Jan (1913) 62, 3 "A New View of Kant"
4 op. cit. 62
5 (1941) 28, 9
was a lake which could be scanned from end to end. To them all Time was one.
Father Laflamme laughed.
"That is what philosophers are now saying. But if Time is one, you can see the future as well as the past."

There is a hint that Buchan suspected some value in psychic intuition as far as prophecy was concerned as well as simple prognostication of probabilities in a given situation. The present then becomes merely that vital axial line which goes through a man at any given moment dividing the known past from the potential future. In one sense the present has no extension at all and in the other it can be seen as encompassing all time. It is not only the personal present but also the social present. In this more mystic interpretation of man's consciousness of time and history Buchan moves from formal history closer to metaphysics (to which he finds most studies tend). With this kind of interest it is not surprising that he reacted to Henri Bergson so enthusiastically even if not uncritically in the immediate pre-war period.

From the point of view of the notion of the unity of time and the vital function of the memory, Buchan's article in *The Spectator*, 4th November (1911) 734, is particularly important. In 1910 Buchan had already noted that Bergson had dealt effectively with "a previous confusion of duration with extensity, of succession with simultaneity, of quality with quantity". In the 1911 London lectures Bergson is quoted as claiming that "the soul is not a 'thing' (and therefore neither multiple nor one), but a movement, and therefore both at once". Buchan

1 cf. A Gap in the Curtain
2 L. in the W
3 *Spec 13 Jan (1912) 61 "M. Bergson and a Critic"
naturally sees the relationship between Bergson's theory of existence and that of Heraclitus.

This new Heraclitus points out that movement is universal and that immobility is an infinitely more complicated thing than movement. Immobility is a relation between movements, like two trains running side by side when the people in one train think that the other is standing still. Movement is simple and movement is indivisible; our inner life is pure change, sheer continuity, no more a succession of states than a melody is a succession of notes.

Buchan recognized that Bergson "leans heavily on the staff of metaphor" in presenting his philosophical ideas which made him difficult to pin down in a philosophical tradition though sometimes "he suggests Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists; sometimes he seems to assent to Fechner's notion of a universe alive alike in mind and matter".¹ (Bergson's description of memory as the "continuity of introspective experience"² and Plotinus as "continuity of the self-consciousness" are both mentioned in the articles of these two philosophers in the History of Ideas Vol. IV.)

As regards the relationship between the brain and memory Buchan chooses a particularly important image in the context of this present thesis to describe its action "It is the edge that cuts into reality".

His own view is that there are in the brain sensori-motor regions, with whose activity our psychical life is somehow allied. The totality of the past is potentially present to the consciousness, but if it were actively present action would be impossible. The brain is "the instrument of oblivion", which closes the sluices. It directs the memory and orientates the mind towards action. It is not the same thing as the mind, but stands to it as the point of the knife to the knife itself. It is the edge that cuts into reality. It forces the mind to concentrate on life. It limits the soul, but by limiting it makes

¹ 735 ² (1899)
Conservatism for Buchan was a vital commitment to a recognized continuity. After the war in particular Buchan was conscious of the wrong kind of independence, the "ivory-tower" mentality rather than the "keep" mentality. This isolated introspection tended to "reduce the great to a drab level of mediocrity because intellectual life (symbolized again for Buchan by Oxford) shut itself in, placing a "most of deep country between its mind and the outer world". Thus Buchan himself strove to "recover the sense of continuity". In such an exercise Buchan found not only identity and integrity at a personal and social level but also an intensification of experience, a greater pleasure in living, a rejuvenation.

We live our lives under the twin categories of space and time, when the two come into conflict we get the great moment. Whether failure or success is the result, life is sharpened, intensified, idealised.

Space, in this context of history, was no abstract notion for Buchan but identifiable with place. Certain places in particular had evocative power and the drama of history is seen as the interaction of person and place in time. Place, indeed, can be described as the tangible representation of historical continuity. Specific locations acted for Buchan like the milestones on the road in an early essay called "Milestones" as "spacial and temporal dividers", representatives of "the parochial division of space", "Mementoes of finitude" and "fingerposts ... to measure the infinite". These are the original memorials of history, reminders which set up vital links by mental association. Buchan must have been particularly

1 MHD 188
2 M 196
3 cf. MHD 219
4 MHD 194
pleased when Tweedsmuir Park was named after him because he had said as early as 1901 in relation to the National Trust and the setting up of such parks.

We do not think that a finer public monument could be found than some country acres linked to the name of the deceased and dedicated to the perpetual use of the people. Marble and bronze are tawdry and meaningless in comparison.  

Buchan says that he "felt the clamour of certain places for an interpreter". If there was no known "historical moment which best interpreted the ethos of a particular countryside", he was, as a fiction writer quite happy "to devise the appropriate legend". Buchan was fully aware when he was operating as a writer of historical fiction and could delight in leaving the reader in a state of questioning ambiguity about his "sources" in the opening of Midwinter and Witch Wood. Apparent historical authenticity and reliability were part of his stock in trade as a writer of historical fiction. Yet Buchan never seems to have been wholly convinced of the strict differentiation between history and story any more than enquiry and construction appeared to him as totally distinct functions within the act of cognition. The bardic tradition of the loyal preservation and communication of the lore and culture of a society lies behind his view of his function as a historical writer. His admitted aim in his re-creation of the past was to reach historical truth which he saw as being sometimes distinct from historical accuracy.  

A sense of his history was both a fundamental right of every man and a necessity. Without it or without "any suspicion that his world has a long ancestry, [he] lives in a cave, and any sudden crisis upturns the

1 Spec 3 Aug (1901) 151 "A National Gallery of Natural Pictures"
2 LND 196
3 "The New Modesty" Gr 15 Nov (1930)
foundations of his belief". To his sense of the right of the community to have access to their own traditions can be attributed Buchan's praise for the contemporary "vulgarizers" of history and thought. Thus he saw much value in those "brilliant specimens of synoptic history" which dealt with "a long track of time" like Fisher's Europe, Trevelyan's England and Morrison's United States. These had, for his own time made history available to people just as philosophic thought had been shown to have immediacy and relevance to reflective men through the writings and lectures of Bergson, Croce, James and Santayana. It is, I think, important to notice that for Buchan this was only the first process in social education not an end in itself. The responsibility for understanding, integration and further enquiry into that historical and philosophical tradition still lay with the individual. These studies could only "furnish the principles of interpretation". Every man had to set out on his quest for himself so that coming to terms with his past he, could responsibly make his future. The same principle applied, of course, to society as a whole by extension.

The policy of the Present is conditioned at every point by the evolution of the Past, and history is the best commentary on current 1 politics.

If the historian is to be an adequate mediator of tradition he must be particularly careful to retain his own sense of proportion and integrity with regard to his subject.

The historian must guard himself carefully from effective exaggeration, though the times seem to adapt themselves to it, he must be scrupulous in his use of authorities and chary of accepting

1 Spec 14 Sep (1901) 356 "A Philosophy of Politics"
2 MHD 204
traditional views of character and policy. Above all, he must refrain from insisting upon obvious morals, and let the far more telling facts point the morals for themselves.  

Buchan felt that these were some of Carlyle's weaknesses as a historian for he "had no detachment, and persisted in reading the past in the light of the present, seeking always a moral".  

Civilization for Buchan as has been demonstrated in Chapter Two was seen as a "conspiracy" and intellectual life is a "construction" rather than a datum. Both personal and social edifices are dependent on this sense of vital continuity. Without a sense of history both a person and a society become disintegrated. Memory is a kind of tether by which we keep our hold on conscious life. Sandison's interpretation of the conversation in The Courts of the Morning about the hill-top view of life, becomes, in the light of these arguments, inadequate. For he says

Reality, that is, is self-created, with no external validity or justification - an illusion of the mind. Aware of this, though not pushing his awareness any further, Buchan saw, like Conrad, the need for working within the framework of illusion.

Illusion was not for Buchan self-created without external validity or justification it was that informed insight which is the result of an inter-relationship of factors which have been experienced separately and sequentially. It is what Buchan meant by the re-creative activity of the intelligence, the memory, which could produce the synoptic view of time.

It is in this vital sense of the importance of memory in society that all Buchan's efforts to write and raise memorials to what he considered to be of value in

1 "Spec 10 Aug (1901) 187 "The Character of Charles II"
2 Hist. of Eng. Lit. (1923) 516
3 Sandison, A. Wheel of Empire
his lifetime should be seen. The memoirs and speeches of commemoration that he seems to have made so loyally and indefatigably were not a form of morbid nostalgia they were felt to be entirely functional. Thus for example in a speech he made at the unveiling of the War Memorial at Broughton on 5th September 1920 he is reported to have said,

The only true memorial to the dead was the completion of their work. Such a memorial as this should not be regarded merely as a commemoration of a great historical event, or a source of natural and racial pride. It should be a perpetual incentive to that true memorial which every man and woman must build in their own hearts.

I have not yet come across any direct association of this commemoration with the Christian notion of the sacramental memorial of the last supper, and it is unlikely that one will be found. Buchan seems to have avoided such controversial theological areas but his view of living memory and active memorial comes close to this religious understanding. The Greek notion of Mnemosyne is also relevant in this respect for she is the product of the union of heaven and earth (Uranus and Gea) and the mother of all the Muses (i.e. the creative imagination). Memory is the integrating faculty that brings such creativity into relevance with its origins (both spiritual and physical).

Memory (history, tradition mediated) is for Buchan what it was for Shakespeare in Macbeth, "the warden of the brain" both for the person and for the society in which our past for good or ill is "rooted". Unlike Freud is popularly thought to have done, Buchan does not see the screening activities of the brain as wholly

1 Baird (1924), 190
2 I vii, 65
3 V iii, 20
vitiating for the personality. It is indeed by carefully selecting and reinforcing positive experiences from the past that a healthy future can be constructed. Negative experiences must be faced and lived through but not dwelt on. Thus though the war had to be recognized with its horrors, injustice and waste, its commemoration Buchan felt should evoke gratitude, admiration and emulation of the generosity and heroism of those who took part. It is on such positive qualities that peace can be built for, like civilization, this is an active human construct and a willing conspiracy not a mere cessation of hostility.

Men must know their past and in particular the best of their past if they are to construct their future. Donald's father in The Long Traverse shows his concern for his son's lack of knowledge of his own Canadian history.

"If you don't know where you come from" he had said, "you will never know where you are, or where you are going". And then he had added something which had stuck in the boy's memory. "You are a fisherman. Well, you know that if your back cast is not good your forward cast will be a mess".

The past he feels "borders so nearly on the present" and within this finite world our end may be found in our beginning. Yet in accepting this situation we are not thereby shut in on a closed, internally sufficient universe but brought "within hailing distance of the infinite". The key to this metaphysical apprehension comes for Buchan in the child-like vision of the fairy-tale, in the romance of the unexpected and the unpredicted, in a recognition of an otherness which is not alien. It

1 LT (1941) 15, 6
2 "The Drove Road"
3 L in the W 213-4
was Plotinus who, according to A. H. Armstrong,¹ originated the conception of a "real universe of interpenetrating minds". His notion that "we can choose whether to stay shut up in our particularism or to think and be the All upon which choice our lives depend" is important to Buchan's analysis of man's moral responsibilities. This is what makes him a hero.

Buchan used the notion of intersecting circles to explain the inter-relationship of human experiences.² In the matter of the inter-relationship between finite and infinite, spirit and matter Buchan would I think have agreed with Augustine in *De Beata Vita.*³ Man is not poised between the world of matter and spirit as a third thing between them, but rather, having a share in both worlds, he is situated on their borderline. He is a being in whom the two worlds overlap.

Memory, like Janus, holds open the door to that inner world of experience by which man can look back on life in order to go forwards "singing on his pilgrimage".

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1 Quoted by R. A. Markus in *Cambr. Hist.* (1967) 359
2 In the W. 91
3 *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (1967) 248
Chapter Four

The Buchan Hero - The Borderer

"Gift me guerdon and grant me grace,"
Said the Lord of the North,
Nothing I ask thee of gear and place,
Ere I get me forth,
Gift me guerdon to mine and me,
For the shade and the sheen."

"Ask and it shall be given unto thee",
Said Mary the Queen.

In 1897 when the Buchan hero stepped on to the literary stage he was dedicated in the rôle of Christian knight. It was a dedication to which he was to remain faithful to death in *Sick Heart River*. The hero as "Lord of the North" is queen's champion and asks for her favour. Characteristically he asks for the grace that he may "never falter" whatever the odds against him but steadfastly "stand in the gate". The Buchan hero, then, will always be found at that point of maximum insecurity where the forces of potential destruction are concentrated, holding the frontier-post. (He might almost be described indeed as a chivalric version of a Queen's Own Scottish Borderer). He is always ready to do battle for freedom in the narrow lists as Bruce did at Glentrool and Wallace at Stirling Bridge (not to mention the classical heroes). Like Janus he is active custodian of his universe, an interpretative mediator because, from his position, he is able to see both inwards and outwards. Like Goodwill at the wicket-gate in *Pilgrim's Progress* he must be ready at all times to assist those in need.

1 GUM 17 Nov (1897) 41 "The Strong Man Armed"
His position cannot be regarded as purely static, however, The image of the narrow gate is easily extended into that of the strait road. This, in Buchan's imaginative world, is both the legendary "road to the end of days" and the Christian "path of salvation". The Christian Knight only holds to this road through progressive struggles. He is the lone pilgrim-adventurer who must follow the route of the "passover" in his quest of eternal life. Yet, because of the organic unity of mankind he is, like his model Christ, a forerunner of his people who leads not by dominating others but by drawing them after him. It is impossible to see the Buchan hero in purely profane terms since the adventure of which he writes is fundamentally a moral one, and for Buchan morality was inextricably bound to religion. Like Sætre, Buchan saw choice as central to life, but for Buchan it actually constituted both personal identity and social cohesion. As a Christian he believed that man had been created with, and restored to, a capacity to make the necessary choices. To see the Buchan hero only in terms of social status or imperialist norms is to miss the axial concern of his Creator with integrity and integration. The constant references to the Bible and to The Pilgrim's Progress are not merely decorative allusions, they are keys to the essentially moral adventure which underlies the surface drama.

It is possible, however, to distinguish four different aspects of this Buchan hero. He is "the Half-Hearted", "Mr. Standfast", "The Pilgrim-Adventurer", and the "Forerunner".
I The Half-Hearted

John Buchan wrote of T.E. Lawrence, "It is simplest to say that he was a mixture of contradictories which never were – perhaps never could be – harmonized. His qualities lacked integration." Yet Buchan is quick to confess, "I am not a very tractable person or much of a hero-worshipper, but I could have followed Lawrence over the edge of the world."

Many of Buchan's pen portraits of contemporary and historical figures are alive with a similar kind of warring self-identity. A few examples from one source, Memory Hold-the-Door, illustrate this. Hilaire Belloc is called "a man of gnarled wisdom and also a youthfulness younger than ours". Raymond Asquith endowed with so many "diverse talents" was also a foil for Buchan himself. He is the original "scholar-gypsy" who found that "in the mingled bondage and freedom of active service he was in his proper element". Basil Blackwood's manner "was full of a quiet cheerfulness, with a suggestion of devilment in the background as if he were only playing at decorum". Richard Haldane is both a metaphysician and a man with "a genius for practical work, for construction and administration". Thomas Arthur Nelson combined "abounding zest" and "a rather grave, reflecting mind". Auberon Thomas Herbert (Bron Luces) was the Cabinet Minister who was also a "whole-hearted, hard-bitten nomad" and "not quite of this world; or rather, he was of an earlier, fairer world that our civilisation has overlaid".

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Fellow-borderer Frederick Scott Oliver's "mind had two sides - one strictly logical, delighting in close and compact argument, and the other imaginative and intuitive". It would almost seem that Buchan's interest in people can be measured by the complexity of their character.

In Lawrence's case the "fissure in his nature" is described as being "eternal war between what might be called the Desert and the Sown". This divided self-image is not seen as a pathological weakness but as being of the very essence of genius and leadership, since it is a demonstration of the dynamic tensions inherent in decision and choice. For Buchan integrity is not a self-protective orderliness of conduct it is rather an ability to live with and to balance contradictory tendencies within one's own nature through the operations of judgement and choice.

Buchan's use of the term half-hearted has little to do with lukewarm mediocrity as can be seen from the following passage referring to some of Shakespeare's heroes.

The great portraits of his gallery, which take our breath by their unearthly understanding, are of the half-hearted - the men like Hamlet and Richard II and Macbeth, who see all sides and all arguments, and are the prey of their imaginations.

Buchan is clearly using the term to denote the divided self.

Heart here is used in the Biblical sense to denote the seat of personality, the self which includes the personal intellect, emotions and will.

1 MHD 209
2 cf. D. Daiches; The Paradox of Scottish Culture (1964); G. Smith; Scottish Literature (1919)
3 MHD 213
4 SR 16 May (1907) 5:7 "Shakespeare and Raleigh"
5 cf. I Sam. xvi, 7; Act xiii, 22
It is at this level that a man is capable of "conversion", he may be given "a new heart"\(^1\) which usually seems to mean that a person becomes open to experience and capable of a free response. The opposite state is usually described in terms of "stone", limited, locked in itself, static. This humanizing process (made possible in Old Testament theology by a recognition of the transcendence of God and the openness to interaction between creation and its Creator) is the conversion that is dealt with in *Sick Heart River*. When the heart is troubled\(^2\) then the foundations of confidence are shaken, when the heart is sick\(^3\) then it is the person's fundamental orientation in life which is threatened. It is in this sense that Augustine used the term in the *Confessions* Bk. 1 ch. 1, "Fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te." This is also the sense in which Catholicism speaks of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary although popular devotions have tended to weaken the concept and artistic presentations produce a revulsion against the term. Sentimental love, whether of the so-called sacred or the so-called sexual variety, has nothing whatsoever to do with the concept of heart as the core of self-hood that makes a person to their utmost capacity, a living person capable of relationship.

It is perhaps as well at this point to deal with Buchan's limited treatment of sexual experience. Post-Freudian psychology has tended, in so far as it has filtered into popular literature, to stress the centrality of sexual experience to all forms of psychological inter-action. This was obviously not Buchan's point of view. As a son of the Reverend John Buchan and Helen Masterton he saw the central experience

\(^1\) cf. I Sam. x, 9; Mt xiii, 15; Ez xviii, 31
\(^2\) Jn. xiv, 17
\(^3\) Prov xiii, 12
of man as one of relationship with God. Relationship with man (which of course included sexual experiences) was seen as subordinate to this vital intercourse.

There can be little doubt that for Buchan with his religious background "the real point of life" could only be expressed in terms of that first proposition of The Shorter Catechism which is so closely related to Psalm 8.

Conversion of heart, for Buchan, is a matter of renewal and rejuvenation. In the amusing dialogue that he invented between himself and "Theophilus" and "Septimus" he sees experimentation and innovation as being, in particular, the province of youth, and traditionalism as being a quality of maturity. There appears to be an element of patronizing superiority in this attitude until it is realized that it is related to Buchan's insight into the essential unity of life across time.

Life is a process in which we slowly and painfully discover the quality of our fathers. We must discover it for ourselves, and not take it docilely from their lips, but discover it, if we are honest, we certainly shall. There is uncommonly little that is new under the sun in the greater matters of life. We may alter our material environment beyond recognition, but we make no change in the human heart. The eternal dramas are the same; young love is the same, whether it is Nausicaa in Phaeacia, or Juliet in Verona, or Lucy Desborough in Surrey; courage against odds does not change from Hector in Troy to Bussy d'Amboise in Paris; a wild journey of rescue has the same thrill if the rescuer be a horseman clattering along the French roads or a pilot in an aeroplane; and in the inner warfare of the soul, Phaedra is not less subtle than a creation of M. Marcel Proust. The ideals and the canons of art remain the same, infinitely elastic yet inexorably binding, from Homer to Mr. Thomas Hardy; and generous youth, which begins in revolt, ends with acquiescence, simply because anarchy is not a creed in which a man can abide. 1

1 "The Old & New in Literature" 28 Jan (1925) repr. H & R. (1926)
Before one places Buchan too firmly on the side of the father looking condescending on youth it is as well to remember that he saw "spiritual middle-age" as the greatest danger to life and the youthfulness which runs through his fiction he saw in terms of that "joy of being alive that is a kind of earnest of immortality". Buchan's heroes are perpetually regaining this youthfulness which takes them out of their rut and into the critical battle of life. Self-complacency for Buchan is not the same thing as security. In society it means decadence ("Moab settled on her lees"). In the person it means the cockney mentality.

Youth and age in literature, as symbolized by Theophilus and Septimus, are not really antagonists. Rather Buchan says, "Their dogmas are what philosophers call 'antinomies', opposites but not necessarily contradictories". Buchan does not seek a resolution of the question, indeed he admits that a "victory of either side would be disastrous". Nevertheless he tends to agree with Septimus that both innovation and tradition ultimately achieve the same result for "the only true originality [is] that which springs from the re-birth of historic tradition in a man's soul". The reason for this he says is that

We human beings are what many generations have made us, and even if we want to we cannot divest ourselves of the past and march naked into a new world.

Arrested development he sees as a refusal to accept the interaction between the natural antinomies (rather than the antagonists) of this internal psychical division and usually ends by producing a grotesque caricature of vitality, as in the case of the excesses

1 cf. *DF* 305
2 "The Old & New in Literature" (1925) 69
3 op. cit. 106
of the aesthetes of his own youth with their "un scholarly pagan is m , " t h e i r flamboyant naughtiness" and "the i r painful search for the inapposite word". 1

The modern writers for whom Buchan had respect like Henry James and Virginia Woolf he saw as forming and shaping their material almost in spite of themselves into something of significant beauty. It is at this level, for Buchan, that their works become literature and this harmony is the only kind of resolution that he feels is proper to the co-existence of plurality and unity. Once again in literary theory Buchan asserts a need for a resolution in communion rather than by amalgamation or absorption of one element by another.

To recognize that man is half-hearted is then to recognize that he is capable of self-communion. Natural duality is not the same as pathological schizophrenia.

Masao Miyoshi has shown in his study The Divided Self 2 how widespread was the concern with duality in Victorian fiction. Buchan in the 90's was very much involved with the same literary pre-occupations. They underly an early story called Angling in Still Waters which was written in a school exercise book 3 still in the possession of the present Lord Tweedsmuir. Set in upper Tweeddale, for the most part, this is the story of Gideon Scott, the landlord of the Crook Inn who comes into conflict with a powerful border shepherd known only by the name of Yeddie until the dénouement when he is revealed to be the last of the Tweedies of Drumelzier. Consciously literary, the story is constructed in three acts or episodes with a prologue. Each episode is set in a specific season, at an appropriate time of day and with its own specific weather conditions prevailing.

1 op. cit. 110
2 ULP 1969
3 Xerox copy NLS Acc 6482
These do not so much reflect the mood of the characters as mirror the action. Thus, in part one, winter and spring are seen in conflict, with winter temporarily gaining the upper hand. Inside the Crook Inn the light of day is being superseded by the "more cheerful light of the fire". One border shepherd described as being "by far the most striking looking of the company", "considerably over six feet high" with a natural "nobility" in his "clear-cut features and proud bearing" called Yeddie, sets out, in spite of Gideon's attempts to dissuade him, intending to cross the river, which is in spate, in order to reach his home in Talla before nightfall. Gideon follows with a search party and rescues the unconscious Yeddie on the brink of the "Black Linn".

Part two is set in the late evening of one of those "long hot days of summer". Gideon, returning from business in Edinburgh, is chased by a wild group of highwaymen. Just at the moment of his capture, however, the group are called off by their leader, who is recognized (though not acknowledged by Gideon) to be Yeddie.

The final episode takes place on a paradoxically spring-like day in autumn (October) when Gideon discovers that his pursuers are now being pursued by the dragoons. He rides through Yeddie's trap without knowing it. Yeddie closes his trap on the dragoons thinking they are drovers and is shot. Wounded and dying he escapes to where Gideon is watching from the hill above. Gideon's attempt to save Yeddie is unsuccessful but before he dies Yeddie is able to disclose his true identity as a Tweedie and his hopes for the restoration of the family name and fortune which are now lost since he has no heir.

Even in this early story which may prove to be Buchan's first complete short story he is dealing with
the psychological and metaphysical dilemmas of identity and identification, integrity and social interdependence. Protagonist and deutertagonist are both powerful men and closely balanced. Yeddie is no simple negative force against Gideon's positive goodness. He is a survivor from a former age, a natural man of the hills compared with the modern inn-keeper compromised by his own obligations under the law. Gideon recognizes his own spontaneous and instinctive reaction as a Borderer towards the social rebel to "defend any breaker of the law at the risk of his own neck". Although Gideon belongs primarily to the inside world of the valley inn and Yeddie belongs to the outside world of the hills, moors and open road, each has a desire for elements in the other's world which make them complementary parts of the same Border personality.

In January 1894 Buchan began a series of essays that explored these contradictory tendencies in a number of different ways. "Gentlemen of Leisure" deals with the ways of life and aspirations of the Minister and the Tramp. This is the simplest statement of duality that Buchan was to make. It is a caricature of both positions and there is no reason to believe that the undergraduate Buchan was not fully aware of this.

In the essay "Scholar-Gipsy", also published in Macmillan's Magazine in July that same year, he produced a hyphenated solution to the dilemma of the counter-attractions of extension and intensity in human vocation. Even in this early essay Buchan claims that the union and integration without the blurring of distinctions, in these two aspects of a man's nature is the "very secret of life". It provides the passport for entry into a "fair, divine kingdom" where man experiences "completeness".

1 MM Jan (1894)
In "Sentimental Travelling" he tried another variation on the theme of gentleman, scholar and tramp. This time he presents a story of a gentleman who has temporarily assumed the role of tramp (including his clothing, habits and even speech, although all these fit him ill) and who then joins up with a real tramp for a journey from Drumelzier to Moffat. The idiosyncratic contrast is here used with lively good humour for he admits a "more oddly matched pair never set out to take the world together on a morning in summer". The real wanderer is also a story-teller, the master of local dialect and a consummate actor when necessary. The stand-in feels himself, by contrast, "utterly incapable of acting my part".

In "A Night on the Heather" Buchan brings a gentleman of leisure, walking in the hills for pleasure, into confrontation with a purposeful giant who belongs there, the shepherd of the Redeswirehead, but does not advance his exploration of dualism further.

Buchan's first attempt to write a romance Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895) is described as "an episode in the life of Sieur de Ronane". This is yet another variant on the theme of a man whose loyalties and social references belong to one society, introduced into the Border situation in this case at a period of intense religious controversy. A number of other personality shifts are explored in relationship to their social and historical context however. Quentin Kennedy whom Sieur Jean had previously met in France turns out to be quite a different character on his home ground. The minister of Lindean is also seen to have a dual personality. "Indeed, I discerned two natures in the man - one hard, saturnine, frantically religious; the
other genial kindly, like that of any other gentleman of family". Henry Semple, the farmer of Clachlands is semi-betrothed to the minister's daughter Anne but forced by his religious convictions to take to the hills and moors with the old minister. Under the pressures of his changed circumstances his personality traits become grotesquely distorted so that his faith becomes obsessive and his love for Anne masochistic devotion. Jean, who has been left to look after Anne is now faced by a further dilemma. Anne begins to identify herself with Jean's value judgements and cultural world. She feels the attractions of France and Jean himself is aware that he has "already begun to separate the girl from the rest of the folk of the place" and "all but come to look upon her as a country woman of his own". Predestination may be the explanation of his attachment to Anne but if it is then it is in conflict with his notion of honour for "I was bound to him [Semple] by the strongest of all the bonds - my plighted word". Thus Jean can see no resolution for his inner conflict "I groaned inwardly as I shut the house-door behind me and entered into the arena of my struggle". Buchan is using the physical correlative of the environment to describe this battle with self. Thus it is into his inner sanctuary that he now retreats, "the door of my bedroom I locked behind me, and I was alone in the darkened room to fight out my battles with myself". Even after sleep and reflection he is not able to recover his sense of resolution in identity. "My self-respect was gone like a ragged cloak. All the old dear life was shut out from me by a huge barrier". Buchan uses the same clothing image to denote character and role symbols when
Jean finally decides to return to France and not usurp Henry Semple as Anne's lover. "I had come to the house a beggar scarce two months before ... My old ragged garments, which I had discarded on the day after my arrival, lay on a chair ... It behoved me to take no more away than that which I had brought".

"A Captain of Salvation" marked Buchan's entry into the Yellow Book world. Published in January 1896 this story deals with a man battling with his personality and his environment to maintain a religious conversion. Under stress he very nearly breaks down but manages to keep going, though apparently without much joy or hope, as "he stumbled on, clutching the flag".

"A Journey of Little Profit", Buchan's second contribution to the Yellow Book was published in April 1896. It is an account of how Duncan Stewart from Rannoch Moor met his own alter ego (a highly attractive "devil") on the Lanark Road.

In his first full-length novel John Burnet of Barns, serialized in thirty-five episodes in Chambers's Journal beginning December 4th 1897 Buchan was able to develop the struggle between two inter-related personalities more fully. The novel is about the dilemma which faces the cousins John and Gilbert Burnet who belong to the same family and share many interests but are in conflict on so many different levels that John eventually reaches the conclusion that there is just not enough room in the world for the two of them. Nicol Plenderleith is the natural wanderer and adventurer who facilitates the triumph of John over Gilbert whilst Marjory Veitch is the fulcrum on which the balance of forces pivot. Conflicts between the cousins include those of religious and property rights and loyalties but basically the difference which becomes crucial is over what constitutes human satisfaction and fulfilment. Marjory

1 Sir Q 182
as the mark of this attainment is wanted by Gilbert as a possession, a symbol of his prestige and power. John loves Marjory for herself but is afraid that marriage would limit him.

When Gilbert and John do come into an open fight John recognizes Gilbert as his own mirror image and therefore knows that the destruction of Gilbert will be a destruction of part of himself.

As for the fight on the morrow, I did not know whether to await it with joy or shrinking. As I have said already, I longed to bring matters between the two of us to a head. There was much about him that I liked; he had many commendable virtues; and especially he belonged to my own house. But it seemed decreed that he should ever come across my path, and already there was more than one score laid up against him in my heart. I felt a strange foreboding of the man, as if he were my antithesis, which certain monkish philosophers believed to accompany everyone in the world. He was so utterly different from me in all things; my vices he lacked and my virtues; his excellencies I wanted, and also, I trust, his faults. I felt as if the same place could not contain us.

John insists twice more that the earth "is not wide enough" to hold both men, yet he cannot altogether overcome his attraction for him. It is left for a mysterious third party to intervene to settle the issue. John is just about to strike when "from behind" him a shot is fired which kills Gilbert. Immediately his inhibitions are gone and he sets off in pursuit of the intruder for this "man had dared to come between us; this man had dared to slay one of my house." The intruder leaps to his own death over the Lynn so that John is finally able to claim Marjory "guiltlessly" and retire with her to their border keep. The resolution of the story is partly conventional and escapist as far as the issue of

1 JB of B II ch. V
2 III ch. VI
psychological dualism is concerned but the novel is a conscious attempt to deal with the notion of the alter ego in fiction form.

In *The Half-Hearted* the conflict is interiorized. This novel, which first appeared in *Good Words* in 1899 was so well adapted to its market as to be almost unreadable in parts today. Without the strong historical background of traditional feud and religious controversy that makes *John Burnet of Barra* more palatable, *The Half-Hearted* deals with a young man's attempts to come to terms with himself, a heterosexual attraction and a call to the heroic service of his "nation" in what seem now inflated and melodramatic adventures. However, it is probably reasonably true to its time, and the crises of adolescence for each generation are often painfully exaggerated. Haystoun, in conflict with the steady, reliable Mr. Stocks for the affections of Alice and the votes of the local constituents proves himself on both counts to be inadequate in crisis. It is Mr. Stocks who in spite of his poor capacity as a swimmer plunges into the "great black cauldron of clear water" to save the drowning Alice whilst Lewis Haystoun remains on the bank "irresolute and wondering". Instead of impressing Alice and the constituency by his mental agility and brilliance Haystoun's inarticulate speech merely confirms Mr. Stocks view of him as a "wandering dilettante ... the worst type of the pseudo-culture of our universities". Alice concludes that for Haystoun "light-hearted was half-hearted".

For once a Buchan hero is radically pessimistic about his own capacity to act. He tells his aunt, Lady Manorwater that he is "cut all the wrong way".

1 ch. X
2 ch. XII
He had previously decided that his problem lay in the fact that his "feelings pulled him hither and thither" and he is adept at such escapist tricks as when he decides "to let things drift - to take his chance"\(^1\) and "in the easy way of the half-hearted found in bodily fatigue a drug for a mind but little in need of it".\(^2\) Self-analysis gave Haystoun no peace. After his failure he believed that "like the King in the old fable he has lost his soul".\(^3\)

An international crisis faces Haystoun who is called to a post on the Cashmir frontier at a time of extreme danger. Wratislaw reasons with Haystoun, who characteristically hesitates, that it is not "by thinking about it" but by getting on and doing the things that have to be done that he will find his manhood. What is more, in his theory, it is not a satisfactory outcome of action that achieves their integration but the commitment to duty itself "you strive to strive and not to attain".\(^4\) (An interesting coincidence shows just how relevant this episode was for Buchan. The episode describing Haystoun's farewell to his border glen and departure for imperial service was followed in *Good Words* by an article on "The Cape in Time of War" which featured a photograph of Sir Alfred Milner. Milner was, of course, to present Buchan himself with just such an option for service within a few months. Buchan does not seem to have experienced any of Haystoun's hesitation however). Haystoun is soon caught up in an action which carries him along by its own impetus. Perhaps one is meant to conclude that Imperialism is a stronger force than love. His past weakness and guilt are "wiped out behind him" when at last "alone in a very strange place, cut off by a

\(^1\) ch. XVIII  
\(^2\) ch. XII  
\(^3\) ch. XIII  
\(^4\) ch. XVIII
great gulf from youth and home and pleasure" he prepares to die defending his world from his key position in the "throat of a pass". His divided self becomes united in self-sacrifice. It is a theme to which Buchan was to return at greater depth in his last novel *Sick Heart River*.

Between *The Half-Hearted* and *Sick Heart River* Buchan did not forget the theme of dualism and pluralism in the human psyche, its drives and motivations. *Sick Heart River* sums up a great many variations on this theme, however, and therefore makes a more conclusive contrast with Buchan's attempts forty years earlier.

The psychological disturbances that become apparent in Lew Frizel and Galliard, and the mental and emotional paralysis that prevents Leithen from making a fully human and Christian response to both life and death are defined in their relationship to the valley of the *Sick Heart river*. Leithen enters the valley in search of the completion of the task which he has set himself. His is a more mature but still stoical version of Wratislaw's Creed of devotion to duty. Galliard, haunted by the guilt of betrayal of his culture and country in which are the roots of his identity seeks the valley as a way of atonement (both in terms of penance and reconciliation, an at-one-ment). Lew Frizel has no memory of a lost paradise to haunt him but is motivated by an illusion of a Utopia ahead of him.

Lew Frizel is a métis of Indian and Scottish parentage. He is also the dominant brother of a closely interdependent partnership. His Canadian and British loyalties are also temporarily in conflict when the war presents him with the possibility of going to Europe to fight. Galliard's position is culturally even more complex. He is an Americanized French Canadian. To find himself he follows the technique of retracing his
past as in psycho-analytic therapy. Leithen, the Anglicized Scot in Canada, is undertaking his final retreat so as to reconcile the ultimate dualism, life and death, in himself.

Lew's delusions are shattered by the reality. His dreams, though they have become obsessive and made him fanatically insensitive to the needs of his companion, are nevertheless fairly superficial and readjustment is therefore swift and decisive. His mind had been "screwed right round"¹ but not uprooted.

Galliard's psychological uprooting reduces him to sub-human animality without any of the animal's resources for survival. He returns to a pre-cognitive state of dependence and his personality is gradually rebuilt in relation to his companions and his country. Thus by a process of re-education he is restored to psychological health and becomes capable of re-entering society.

It is, however, Leithen's condition that is most fully explored, and it is in Leithen that integrity and integration are finally achieved. Fr. Paradis at Clairefontaine suggests that Leithen is in retreat.² He too, it seems, must pass through a period of reflection to "make his soul" before death.³

In Leithen the tensions between interiority and exteriority, intensity and extensity and what have been described as the vertical and the horizontal planes of consciousness present themselves acutely. Haystoun had placed "competence" as the virtue that he prized above all others. Leithen knows himself to have been this to a high degree, but wonders if his success is not after all a delusion indeed a failure. Thinking about Felicity Galliard's affection for her husband

¹ SHR 142
² " 71
³ " 295
Leithen wonders if "he had not led a starved life? A misfit like Galliard had succeeded in gaining something which he, with all his social adaptability, had missed". On the "edge of self-pity" Leithen diverts his thoughts but does not resolve the dilemma.

Finding the Sick Heart River he believes that he has "won a kind of success as he was nearing the brink of death". He will have fame posthumously as its "discoverer". His previous lack of ambition he can even attribute to a vague faith in Providence "His friends had told him that if he had only pushed himself he might have been Prime Minister, Foolish! These things were ordained". He recognizes that, in any case, "his castles had been tumbled down". There is no self-pity in this recognition of the limitations of temporal ambitions for he says "Pleasant things they had been, even if made of paste-board; in his heart he had always known that they were paste-board". Leithen realizes that he is in a depression of numbness. What characterized the Sick Heart Valley is that there was "no place for life in it - there could not be - but neither was there room for death". The essential dualism in man could not be settled by stoic apathy.

Paradoxically Leithen ultimately finds himself by losing himself. In service of his fellow men (racial differences being subordinate to common humanity), consciously undertaken in "thankfulness" he finds his identity by identification with "an eternal plan". Since this plan involves God, humanity and the natural creation the integration that Leithen experiences is, at last, totally satisfying.

1 SHR 79
2 " 162
3 " 173
4 SHR 184
5 " 294
6 " 295
The communion attained in death is seen as the final triumph over the dichotomies of temporality and eternity, finitude and infinitude, man and God. It expresses itself in a radiant faith in life: "he knew that he would die; but he knew also that we would live".\(^1\) One can only assume that for Buchan this meant some form of continuing, though transformed, experience of intercourse and interaction, an eternal adventure.
II Mr. Standfast

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 1

When Mr. Standfast is first encountered in The Pilgrim's Progress he is on the borders of the Enchanted Ground, on his knees, fighting off the temptations offered by Madam Bubble. This buxom lady belies her smiling manner for she actually "makes variance betwixt neighbour and neighbour, betwixt a man and his wife, betwixt a man and himself, betwixt the flesh and the Spirit". 2 This divisive "witch" is a mixture of Morgan le Fay, Jezebel and the Apocalyptic Scarlet Woman. Mr. Standfast can also be seen to be both the man described in chapter six of the letter to the Ephesians and Sir Gawain resisting the temptress, only with even more complete success. A mixture of antecedent traditions is also to be found in Mr. Valiant-for-truth's hymn.

Who would true valour see,
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Some wind, some weather ...

The opponents of Valiant's constancy are not only climatic, they are the lions, giants, hobgoblins and foul fiends of northern myth and legend. The blending of the codes of Roman military discipline, Teutonic and Icelandic myth and Christianity were part of the complex ingredients that produced the literature of romantic chivalry. One of the reasons for the lasting success of The Pilgrim's Progress must surely be that its spiritual teaching is so well served by this literary tradition which combined courtly and popular elements. Such a blend of classical and Hebraic culture acclimatized to the North was particularly appealing

1 Eph vi,13
2 PP 310
to John Buchan's imagination. It is, I believe, one of the reasons why Buchan uses Bunyan's characters and landscapes so often to gloss his own.

Bunyan's most important "perfect" knights are Christian, Great-heart, Mr. Valiant-for-truth and Mr. Standfast. For Buchan the latter dominated as Arthur presided over the Round Table. Christian receives his armour in the Palace Beautiful at the top of the Hill Difficulty, before he descends into the Valley of Humiliation to fight with Apollyon. Great-heart, one of the Interpreter's servants, is given his sword, helmet and shield so as to be able to defend Christiana and the other women and children. He is the giant-killer who defeats Giants Grim, Maul, Slaygood and Despair as well as fighting with a monster in Vanity Fair and demolishing Doubting Castle. The crusader, Valiant, is found with his "sword drawn and his face all over with blood". The most militant of the knights he is remarkable for being able to fight against "great odds, three against one". He wields a "Jerusalem blade", a great cleaver of flesh and bones, and soul and spirit, and all" for his sword's "edge will never blunt". This sword too is reminiscent of the two-edged sword of divine judgement, Excalibur and a masterpiece of Wayland. He is willing to acknowledge his ancestry in "Dark-land" so that it is not too surprising to find that he defines his enemies as bogles.

Both Mr. Valiant and Madam Bubble are divisive forces in the world. Their techniques and purposes are, however, diametrically opposed. Valiant brings judgement. He acts as a kind of Nemesis avenging

1 PP 297,8
2 Katherine Biggs remarks in A Dictionary of Fairies (1976) that it was Bunyan and the Puritans who were responsible for the transference of the hobgoblin from the realm of the friendly to that of the unfriendly spirits.
wrong. Madam Bubble creates division by concentrating her victim on his own desires and passions and cutting him off thereby from the rest of humanity. Buchan quotes St. Augustine's remarks a number of times which begin securus judicat orbis terrarum and go on to declare that "those men cannot be good who, in any part of the world, cut themselves off from the rest of the world". Madam Bubble offers Standfast "her body, her purse and her bed", hoping thus to make him dependent on her in the way that Chaucer's Wife of Bath recommends. She only gives up after Standfast has acknowledged his dependence on God for his integrity and perseverance. Heedless and Too-bold both come to grief on The Enchanted Ground because they forgot this basic truth.

In the league of literary seductresses Madam Bubble must surely rank as one of the least attractive. When Buchan created the mysterious Hilda von Einem he returned to older and more powerful traditions than Bunyan was willing to mediate. Hannay when talking to her sees her in terms of Pallas Athena or Artemis.

As she spoke I seemed to get a vision of a figure, like one of the old gods looking down on human nature from a great height, a figure disdainful and passionless, but with its own magnificence.

With the help of drugs she attempts to hypnotize Hannay in the manner of Circe to the companions of Odysseus.

Yet Hilda von Einem is not only a creature from classical mythology. At another point Hannay says that "she looked like some destroying fury of a Norse legend" and Sandy describes her as a "she-devil".

Her most frequent associate is, however, the Queen of Elfland of the Thomas Rhymer ballad. Thus when

\[ 1 \text{G 257} \quad 2 \text{W 248} \quad 3 \text{G 258} \quad 4 \text{W 321} \]
Hannay first meets her she sweeps him into her car and carries him off to her house. He has the same sense of discomfort in this situation as Thomas had, and he feels that she is mocking him. It is on a "milk-white horse" that she plans to ride triumphantly into Jerusalem. When pleading with Sandy, whose relationship is one of identification with her personal nobility (though he never betrays his own social loyalties), she wears a green skirt and riding gear and is bejewelled by rime frost.

When rejected she is filled with implacable hatred and becomes more like Morgan le Fay. She throws her riding gauntlet at Sandy as a challenge to battle. In the tradition of heroic chivalry she is killed by a shot which may have been fired accidentally or treacherously. More significantly however in so far as she is related to the Earth Mother theme she is returned to the earth and the debris of battle hides her grave.

Sandy, Hannay and Blenkiron react differently to Hilda von Einem. All manage to remain faithful to their code of honour, yet all find her disturbing and fascinating. Sandy, the Sir Galahad or Gawain of the story is under such tension to resist her pleas that his "expression was like a death-mask, his brows drawn tight in a little frown and his jaw rigid". His defence is to admit his commitment as a British officer. When faced with the offer of a singularly high destiny, he pleads solidarity with his companions at arms.

Finally Sandy makes his liberating profession of loyalty. "You can offer me nothing that I desire", he said. "I am the servant of my country, and her enemies are mine".

Such an over-riding passion for patriotism, like its counterpart of imperialism now seem over-stated and unreal. Yet this is the code on which the decision—
making process is based and it is therefore against this code that Sandy's constant valour must be measured.

In *The Dancing Floor* Buchan tried to use the woman-figure of the regeneration themes, the Earth Mother, and relate them to the code of romantic chivalry. The parallels are sometimes awkward, particularly in the relationship of Catholic theology and Dionysian rites are concerned. However, what Buchan is trying to do in creating Kore Arabin is clearly stated.

"The Greeks had only the one goddess", he went on, "though she had many names. Later they invented the Olympians - that noisy, middle-class family party - and the priests made a great work with their male gods, Apollo and the like. But the woman came first, and the woman remained. You may call her Demeter, or Aphrodite, or Hera, but she is the same, the Virgin and the Mother, the 'mistress of wild things', the priestess of the new birth of spring. Semele is more than Dionysos, and even to sophisticated Athens the Mailed Virgin of the Acropolis was more than all the pantheon ... Don't imagine it was only a pretty fancy. The thing had all the beauty of nature, and all the terror too".

Vernon Milburne, haunted by a premonition of the future and Kore, pure, but bearing the guilt of her father, are united in a ritual purification of the kind experienced by the "noble" lovers of *The Magic Flute*. The testing follows the Dionysian initiation rites with its races and trials. The ambiguity of natural forces that provoke wonder and terror is shown throughout the novel. Light and darkness images are often used to create this heightened ambiguity as in this passage

At first I saw only the near fringes of the people - upturned faces in the uncanny light of the fire. But as I looked, the unfeatured darkness beyond changed also into faces - faces

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1 Vernon, for example, implies that Mary is considered as a manifestation of the divine (DF 43)

2 DF 43
spectral in the soft moonshine. I seemed to be standing between two worlds, one crimson with terror and the other golden with a stranger spell, but both far removed from the kindly works of men.

Leithen, Vernon and Kore are all called upon to inhabit this indefinite in-between world where purification and "redemption" are transformed into potential regeneration. Vernon, like Orpheus, descends into hell to bring back his Eurydice. His normal protection is abandoned, he races stark naked until having proved his courage and love he wears the white garments of his rôle as mediator of the epiphany.

Leithen too in the rôle of the protector Greatheart is called on to abandon his armour. His "one bridge with a sane world was broken" and having "come to the edge of things" he felt that he would "presently be required to go over the brink". Revolting against "futility" he recognizes that his only answer to that sense of inadequacy is to become "primitive man again".

He partially accepts the spell that the Dancing Floor places over him. This enchanted ground then becomes

no more the Valley of the Shadow of Life, but life itself - a surge of daemonic energy out of the deeps of the past. It was wild and yet ordered, savage and yet sacramental, the home of ancient knowledge which shattered for me the modern world and left me gasping like a cave-man before his mysteries. The magic smote on my brain, though I struggled against it. The passionless moonlight and the passionate torches - that, I think, was the final miracle - a marrying of the eternal cycle of nature with the fantasies of man.

Leithen does not altogether succumb to the enchantments; however, He recognizes a faith in him deeper than "the pagan" and like Standfast he prays and clings to the security he has discovered in an image of the crucified Christ which "stood for all the broken

1 DF 303
2 206
3 209, 210
lights which were in me as against this ancient charmed
darkness".1

Nevertheless The Dancing Floor is mainly a celebration
of "youth rejoicing to run its race, that youth which is
the security of this world's continuance and the earnest
of Paradise".2 Vernon and Kore, for the space of the
novel, become symbols of the uncompromised idealism of
adolescence. The faith of Standfast to which Leithen
remains linked by the shabby "foreign" but significant
sacramentals of a church preparing to celebrate the
Easter mysteries is, Leithen claims, "the belief in the
ultimate omnipotence of purity and meekness".3 The
Dancing Floor was first published in 1926 when Buchan
was fifty-one. Such a creed which celebrates youth,
idealism and humility was not, therefore, the product
of an immature mind however idealistically it may be
expressed.

Buchan had created his first major hero, Sieur Jean
de Rohane, in terms of the knight errant who, when
tested, must remain faithful to his professed loyalties
whatever the cost to himself. It was a theme he used
constantly until Leithen goes through the final testing
of faithfulness to death in Sick Heart River. Abandoning
the protective armour of stoicism he holds on to his
basic tenet of faith in humanity as destined both to
serve and to enjoy God.

Amongst the knightly figures of Buchan's historical
works Montrose stands supreme.

Few careers have more romantic unity than
his. In one aspect he is the complete paladin,
full of grace and courtesy, winning fights
against odds, and scribbling immortal songs
in his leisure, and in the end dying like some
antique hero with the lights burning low in the
skies and the stage darkened ... in that gross
and turbid time he lit the lamp of pure duty
and pure reason ... Montrose was armed and mailed
Reason, Philosophy with its sword unsheathed ...
He went out joyfully to do battle for his creed,
with the unquenchable faith of a strong soul. 1

In the 1913 edition Buchan was willing to say "his cause
is pure, and has nothing selfish in it". 2 This is
modified in the 1928 edition but the impression of the
"happy warrior" remains. He is a candidate for
immortality because his "qualities in the retrospect
seem to be drawn to a fine edge of burning light". 3

Montrose, with his theory of balance and tolerance
becomes the epitome of the Buchan knight. He "knew no cleavage
between thought and deeds". 4 He is the passionate
moderate. 5

It is Bernard of Clairvaux who is quoted as supplying
the creed of the modern knight errant of society. For in
answer to the self-posed question "Who will achieve
universal peace?" he supplies the answer "The disciplined,
the dedicated, the pure in heart and the gentle in
spirit". 6

Buchan's definition of knighthood in the sense of
nobility and aristocracy is to be found in yet another
address, this time at McMaster University, Hamilton,
Ontario in 1937. "Of the aristocrat I know only one
adequate definition. He is the man who gives to the
world more than he takes from it". 7 The free man is
not he "who is permitted to do as he likes" ... "he is
one who is permitted to develop that free complex of
tastes, interests and ideas which we call personality". 8
This is the conclusion that Buchan presented at Toronto
in 1935. Conditioning or "discipline" according to a
code was not to be regretted unless it became obsessive.
What makes a man rich is the recognition that he is
"endowed with a multitude of cherished traditions". 9

1 M (1913) 291, 2 5 M (1928) 389
2 " 292 6 CO 183
3 " (1928) 396 7 " 191
4 " 386 8 " 158
He is not enslaved to these traditions because his mind remains inquiring and critical. The notion of integrity of spirit is for Buchan universal and of critical importance.

In the Middle Ages in a thousand stories, from the great tale of Faust down to the humblest folk lore of the North, you will find men and women confronted with the choice of pleasure and prosperity and ease upon the one side, and on the other the preservation of their integrity of spirit. The choice was regarded as momentous, a matter of life and death. And so it was. And so it still is. The personality must remain a virgin fortress, of which even the remotest outworks are jealously guarded. Man must continue to be the captain of his soul.

Buchan's version of the superman is not that of Nietzsche's "will to power and self-overcoming" in Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Buchan's heroes combine the grand manner and what he calls "loving kindness". Grandeur and greatness are qualities for Buchan, pomp and show are not. Thus though his heroes may be Attorney-Generals, Military Generals, successful businessmen, all wear their laurels lightly and exhibit little overt pride in their position and prestige. Their nonchalance has been attractive to many readers who feel they have been on easy terms with a greatness that is normally remote or, bureaucratically mummified. The continuity of the groups of Hannay, Leithen and McCunn novels and their inter-action soon build up an imaginary social circle that is brilliant but not awe-inspiring. It is not quite a "courtly" world but it is undoubtedly against a background of social distinction that the knightly adventures must take place.

Dickson McCunn, in some respects the most romantic of Buchan's knights, and the most incongruously human, enjoys the same fantasies. He can afford to buy a
Border keep but what pleases him most is his connection with the traditions of the Prince-over-the-Water. Jacobitism is nostalgic for the loyalties and nobility of a past age of chivalry in Scotland. The weaknesses and grotesquely unknightly quality of the human symbol of the Stewart King are forgotten in the need for a focus on lost ideals and national identity.

The great man who is not only creature but creator of his world would seem to owe much to Carlyle's Sartor Resartus and On Heroes and Hero Worship.

Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the history of the Great Men who have worked here ... all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwell in the Great Men sent into the world. 1

Men are the bearers of God's revelation. This is their supreme greatness. For Buchan, to be loyal, to be steadfast, man must be pure in the sense of being transparent to that divine reality. It is a purity that requires all the armoury recommended to the early Christians of Ephesus.

One Borderer, whose biography Buchan wrote, supremely deserves to be given the title of perfect knight and moderate man. He is Sir Walter Scott. Scott was "a man of the centre", "there were no fissures in his character ... This is not because he was inadequate in character or experience but because there "was a clearing-house in his soul where all impulses were ordered and adjusted, and this repose gave him happiness". The resulting balance of soul produced "stability and depth", "pity and tenderness". 2 Scott may have been captain of his soul but in his nobility he retained his humanity and love of his fellow men.

1 Carlyle H&HW 239
2 WS 37/1
It is a quality that Buchan is to demand of Leithen, his Mr. Standfast, before he is allowed to pass over Jordan. Scott then demonstrates that kindly affection for every cranny of human nature ... a charity which finds nothing common or unclean, a power of looking at life with such clear and compassionate eyes that it can find in its ironies both mirth and pity - the quality which, I think, is best described by that noble word "loving-kindness".

Scott is not seen as a weakling in this. His tenacity and courage are summed up, according to Buchan in his definition of himself "I was born a Scotsman but a bare one. Therefore I was born to fight my way in the world - with my left hand if my right hand fail me, and with my teeth if both were cut off". The Border-Knight then must "put a stout heart to a stey brae" and not be afraid of opposition. Indeed says Buchan

Our motto might be that of my Border town [Peebles] which carries in its Coat-of-arms three salmon, two of them with their heads turned upstream, and the motto; Contra nando incrementum - "by swimming against the current we increase".
III Pilgrim-Adventurer

A teleological view of history and an interest in the inter-relationships of time and landscapes easily produce an image of life as a quest or pilgrimage. The search may be seen as retrospective, for a lost paradise or an idyllic childhood. It may be described as a voyage to find hidden treasure in some distant land beyond the horizon, of which tales have been heard and for which a rudimentary map may exist. Whether retrospective or prospective the search is for something of supreme value and requires a continuous impetus and a progressive adaptation of the pilgrim to combat both active opposition and passive resistance if integrity of purpose is to be maintained.

Allied to this main theme are a number of subsidiary ones enriching the central idea for Buchan without radically changing it. The open road, the wanderer, the gipsy, the tramp, the outlander, the Great Trek, all suggested restlessness and extension prompted by intrinsic curiosity, the challenge of the environment or non-conformity. When seen as only temporary excursions, such forays are easily associated with Border raids, ridings and fairy rades. Raids are a reminder that a quest is a form of hunt. The theme of the hunt or the chase blends easily into that of the race.

The classic versions of the search theme on which Buchan's imagination could draw, are sometimes associated with a journey into another world and a return as in the case of Thomas Rhymer's excursion into Elfland. Such a journey often takes the form of a descent and re-ascent on the model of the Orpheus and Eurydice legend. At other times it is seen as a traverse across a clearly-marked boundary line, a ridge of mountains or a river
like the Alps for Hannibal or the Rubicon for Julius Caesar. The movement of the epic voyage of Odysseus is that of a closed-traverse survey. Nearly all these stories and ideas involve a loss of life, or a particular form of life, and a restoration with a suggestion of transformation. As in the closed-traverse the point at which the survey ends does not exactly co-incide with the starting-point.

The passage theme is central to Christianity also. The supreme exemplar, the preparatory model, in the Old Testament had been the Exodus of the people of God from Egypt, through the Red Sea, the Desert, across the Jordan and into the Promised Land. Christ himself is seen to fulfill all aspects of this model completely. His death and resurrection in particular, his "hour" are shown by John the Evangelist to follow the pattern of a leave-taking, a journey, a transformation and a return, often referred to as the Pasch. The movement does not end here however, because the Resurrection was followed by a further leave-taking at the Ascension, a return at Pentecost in the person of the Holy Spirit whose work is to guide the people of God once more towards that final meeting, which is also described in terms of a return. Thus the Christian notion of the passage theme is more like pulsating waves of interaction with a central focus in the person of Christ. This divine-human union in Christ means that creation is seen as coming from God and going to God through Christ.

For the Christian, the movement of life is retrospective, in so far as it is concerned with identification in Christ who took an active part in human history at a particular point in time, and prospective in so far as the final return of Christ is concerned. Lastly for the Christian even the prospective view is finally retrospective since Christ
is both first and last principle of creation. "I am before all and at the end of all and I live".\(^1\) Whatever view is taken such a passage involves an effort to purify, to widen and to deepen human experience. Its goal is the meeting place of the human and the divine.

Passage and quest themes are not unique to Christianity. The Dionysian rites provide an obvious parallel in Greek religious thinking. What seems to characterize such religious journeys however when followed by the faithful are the four phases of withdrawal, initiation, proving and reward or punishment. All of which imply a measuring of standards and an election (which may be on the part of the deity or the seeker or both).

Buchan saw the Christian pilgrimage theme through the works of John Bunyan as well as directly from the Bible. Acted out physically in childhood, this crucial theme becomes infused with the vigour and freshness of boyish adventure. Yet from being a healthy young man in search of life in The Thirty-Nine Steps for instance, the Buchan hero develops into the pilgrim-adventurer of Sick Heart River who ultimately achieves that fine-point of consciousness where the secular and the sacred touch, at the "razor-edge of life".

Buchan associated pilgrimage and adventure for the first time in the preface to the poem The Pilgrim Fathers.\(^2\) The impetus and origin of the "adventurous spirit of the North" are to be found, he says, in a response to the natural elements, the sea-winds, the spray, the stars and the spring. The goal is less important than the quest itself.

\(^1\) Rev i, 17
\(^2\) Newdigate Prize Poem (1898)
To fail and not to faint
To strive and not to attain,
To follow the Path to the end of days
Is the burden of my strain.
Daughter of hope and tears,
Mother, thou of the free,
As it was in the beginning of years
And evermore shall be.

This then is the eternal song of the earth herself as defined in "The Moor Song". It's insistent call to the young man is to "come forth", like Lazarus from the tomb, and face life.

The Pilgrim Fathers, having reached their Promised Land, are questioned about their motivations and reactions. "What came ye out to seek?", they are asked. The question is that posed to the men and women who went out into the desert to see John the Baptist. The pilgrims are asked if they sought a primeval paradise, a "sleep-lulled valley", an Eden. They reply that, on the contrary they are cut off from their past, from childhood securities and satisfactions for

Long leagues of ocean whitening to the sky
Sever our path from lands of infancy.

What motivates them is not to be found in their past but in their future, and in that their faith is firm.

No faltering shakes their steadfastness whose ways Lie on the King's Path to the end of days.

Of life they expect only struggle, for they believe that God has said to them "Not peace I bring, not comfort, but a sword". (This is the theme that Chesterton was to stress in "The Ballad of the White Horse" and which Churchill was to quote during the last war to encourage endurance under stress.)

The question is posed a second time. Was their expectation to find a wilderness "Untilled, untouched" waiting for man to bring it into life? The pilgrims recognize the benefits of an agrarian life which, when

1 GW (1899)
all goes well, seems "an easy pilgrimage". Yet they see an equal need for endurance and hope when the "frost" comes to thwart their efforts.

The final questioning refers to a reaction rather than a motivation and an expectation. The pilgrims are asked if they have indulged in "self-pity" and nostalgic regret in their displacement. They answer that they accept suffering along with the rest of creation and are content to count their blessings. Dangers and difficulties do not "perplex the sabbath" of their souls, they claim, because they believe that

Life is not meat nor drink nor raiment fine
But a man's courage and the fire divine.

Like the Israelites they expect to find treasure in the desert and the sacred at the heart of the secular. The relationship of past, present and future in them is expressed in terms of a series of paradoxes.

So we, lone outlaws in these evening lands,
Yet to the past hold forth unfaltering hands,
And bear old faiths in vanguard of our wars
And set our eyes upon the ancient stars.

The ambiguities of youth and age, life and death are the subjects of the final stanza and are explored in terms of sunrise and sunset. To the young the dawn is an incentive to reach full consciousness, yet for the old the evening of life is merely a time to

Watch and pray
Till the brief dark that fadeth into day.

In "The Far Islands" (1899) Buchan deals with the great West theme. He chooses the story of "Bran the Blessed" who "followed the white bird on the Last Questing, knowing that return was not for him". A modern descendent playing by the sea-shore fancies he sees the sea before him like "a solid pathway ... his own white road ran away down into the west, till suddenly it stopped and he saw no further".1

1 W by the T 94
Not unnaturally he "wondered what country lay beyond". Throughout his boyhood he day-dreams about this "vision" and at Oxford he eventually finds "a rift in the mist" beyond which is a shore-line "of sand ringed with snow white foam". He eventually finds literary connections with stories of a paradise in the West, the "Isle of Apple-trees" which he finds in Geoffrey of Monmouth and which he equates with the "Greek Hesperides, the British Avillion". Colin becomes obsessed by his fantasies living a "divided life" between his search to get beyond the Rim of the Mist and the reality of war-time combat. Momentarily he feels "the gulf of separation between his two worlds".

It is in death (shot by an enemy bullet) that Colin finds his paradise and brings his fantasy boat to land.

He turned, every limb alert with a strange new life, crying out words which had shaped themselves on his lips and which an echo seemed to catch and answer. There were the green forests before him, the hills of peace, the cold white waters. With a passionate joy he leaped on the beach, his arms outstretched to this new earth, this light of the world, this old desire of the years - youth, rapture, immortality.

In Salute to Adventurers (1915) Buchan returned to this same theme in more complex form. The road west is that of commercial enterprise, the pioneer's path the way of vision, the highway of romance and spiritual regeneration and the road of destiny to an inheritance for both Elspeth and Shahal. Scottish religious mania, Indian mysticism, the hunt, all propose themselves as paths to wisdom, satisfaction and power. Muckle John Gibb's dreams of transcendent grandeur prove to be
abortive because they merely lead back to his own sick humanity. Shalah and Andrew Garvald recognize that they share a common desire to search for a spiritual wisdom that transcends the person and will prove the "salvation" of their people. Shalah recognizes however that his movement westwards will eventually be overtaken by that of the white man who not only progresses but appears to consolidate his grip on the territory over which he has passed.

Your way is the way of the white man. You conquer slowly, but the line of your conquest goes not back. Slowly it eats its way through the forest, and fields and manors appear in the waste places.

Andrew Garvald is a man of the border plantation, a pioneer who leads "the tide of settlement to the edge of the hills".\(^1\) Shalah is a child of the West Wind, free of encumbrances and able to travel far ahead of the white man yet destined as a result (according to Shalah himself) "to perish before the stranger".\(^2\) Shalah can only inherit wisdom in the West, Elspeth and her kind, it seems, are destined to inherit the land.

In The Path of the King (1921) the pilgrim-traveller in search of the New World is seen as a genetic characteristic of nobility, struggling across generations and continents until, it reaches its regenerative culmination in Abraham Lincoln. Yet even Lincoln's death is not the end of the road. This specific quality once returned to the earth becomes available again universally. In dying Lincoln becomes the father of his people, at once "the last of the Kings"\(^3\) and "the first American".\(^4\)

The sanctuary in Witch Wood at which the sacred and the secular meet is a highly ambiguous place of pilgrimage. It is a shrine where light and darkness, past and present, religion and witchcraft are in collision.
The outcome of the contest is also suitably ambiguous. David Sempill the young minister descends into the nightmarish world beneath the surface of normality, respectability and religion in his parish. Yet in his Hades he finds his Eurydice (Katrine), only to lose her again to death before their love is consummated. Unable to accommodate his new knowledge to his old world, and rejected by both, he is "spirited" away from his "waesome land" through the help of a mysterious traveller (Montrose) and introduced to a new life of action.

Towards the end of his own life Buchan again became explicit about his concern with the theme of adventurous spiritual pilgrimage. He actually made such a journey personally "Down North". His last three literary works are all variations on the pilgrimage theme. He described his memoirs as "a diary of a pilgrimage, a record of the effect upon one mind of the mutations of life". The title of the American edition became indeed The Pilgrim's Way. His novel for boys dealing with Canadian history was called The Long Traverse.

Sick Heart River, his last and most important novel, is above all about a quest which involves the passage of three "pilgrim-adventurers" through a transforming and regenerative experience. In all three of these works the view of time and progress is retrospective and reconstructive. For all three of the pilgrims in Sick Heart River their experience involves a radical withdrawal, a retreat.

Lew must confront his childhood fantasy with hard reality in order to free himself for progress. Galliard retraces his steps and re-makes his life. Leithen is explicitly described as being in "retreat" by Fr. Paradis.

The Catholic notion of a retreat was likely to be
a familiar one to John Buchan. Asceticism and purification associated with withdrawal into the desert, especially in preparation for crises is common to all Christian traditions (and indeed to many other religions). The primary model for the Christian is, of course, Christ himself who spent forty days in the desert preparing for his ministry and also withdrew to Gethsemane to watch and pray before his trial. Jesus Christ also recommended the practice to his disciples who themselves made a nine-day preparation in the Cenacle before the coming of the Holy Spirit. In the Catholic tradition to which Fr. Paradis is referring a retreat has come to mean "a prolonged and intensified engagement in spiritual exercises in a setting secluded from the ordinary affairs of secular life". Based on the gospel traditions it has been modified by the ascetic practices of the Desert Fathers and also by the gentler Benedictine notions of refreshment and re-orientation. It was, however, Ignatius Loyola who gave the retreat the particular form which is of interest here.

John Buchan is likely to have heard at least something of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises from Fr. Martin d'Arcy. Fr. Vincent Turner at Campion Hall confirms that particularly after 1927 when Martin d'Arcy was in Campion Hall and Buchan was at Oxford "they saw each other not infrequently". Fr. d'Arcy also visited Buchan in Canada according to Janet Adam Smith. The part played by Jesuit missionaries was likely to have caught Buchan's imagination when reading the history of

1 Peter F. Anson The Call of the Desert SPCK (1964) 1
2 Mt iv, 1 3 " xxvi, 36 4 Mk vi, 31
5 Acts i, 12-14 6 New Catholic Dictionary
7 Letter 16 May 1979 to Fr. Hugh Barrett, S.J.
in reply to my request for information.
8 JAS 469
the opening up of Canada. Catholic missionaries like Oblates impressed him deeply on his journey "Down North." Fr. Turner also points out that the members of Milner's kindergarten would have "had an interest in Jesuit motivations" because Cecil Rhodes "held up the Jesuits as examplars, suitably secularized, for his Rhodes scholars." It is hard to imagine that Buchan could have failed to have looked at the Exercises and discussed some of the key ideas with Fr. d'Arcy since they are such an essential part of Jesuit training.

The schema of the Exercises seems to have been associated in Buchan's mind with those "experiences" of which he speaks in Montrose. These he says were "laid down as the necessary and universal progress towards salvation" by some divines of the seventeenth century Scottish Kirk. They involved, he says, a "rigid curriculum of experiences - 'exercise', 'law-work', 'discovery of interest', 'damps', 'challenge', 'outgate', 'assurance'." Such a schedule would appear to have grown out of what Buchan describes in Cromwell as "the grim Calvinist schedule" that is "conviction of sin, repentance, hope of election, assurance of salvation." Buchan uses the word "grim" here in the sense of tough not oppressive, since he says that this is "the experience which theology calls 'conversion', and which, in some form of other, is the destiny of every thinking man."

The Ignatian Exercises were the product of study and meditation on the life of Christ by Ignatius during a period of enforced withdrawal and on pilgrimage to the Holy Land via Montserrat and Manresa. Here Ignatius was delayed for eleven months and using his own personal "encounter" experience on the pilgrim's way formulated the bulk of the Exercises. Ignatius:

1 cf. Anna UU 202 3 M (1928) 62
2 letter cited 4 p 67
military background colours the scheme but it was quickly found to have universal application when wisely directed and the Exercises became a powerful tool of renewal in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Catholic Church and have remained so to the present. One group of women in Brittany under the leadership of Claude Therese de Kerminé in the seventeenth century were formed simply for the purpose of providing a place where lay-people and clergy could follow these Exercises. They are still in existence today with houses in Europe, West Africa and South America, and called quite simply Religious of La Retraite. In the nineteenth century the Religious of the Cenacle were also formed to provide the same facilities. Today there is again much emphasis on the need for disciplined renewal and the Exercises are still a popular means of approach.

The scheme of the Exercises is described by R.W. Gleason in the introduction to the Image Book edition, as having four key meditations "contemplation of the Kingdom of God, the Two Standards ... The Three Classes of Men, and The Three Modes of Humility". The culmination of the Exercises is the Contemplation to obtain love, "which synthesizes the total effort of the four weeks, so that the retreatant resolves to live a life exclusively for God in joyous service". Buchan avoids the technical terminology of the Exercises and uses, instead, the more familiar terminology of The Pilgrim's Progress but the phasing and development of Leithen's retreat is nevertheless closely allied to that of the Ignatian exercises.

The Canadian North provides the necessary sanctuary for the pilgrim retreatant. An American business man, Taverner, says explicitly that for men like himself tired of the "bogus deities" of their world and the "noise" in their minds "Canada is becoming ... like a medieval monastery to which we can retreat when things

1 SHR 83
2 SHR 82
get past bearing". For him the silence, space and air are refreshing and re-integrating forces in themselves. For the retreatant this is a necessary condition.

The one making the retreat should sever himself from ordinary occupations and pre-occupations allowing himself to be absorbed by Christ, to live in the atmosphere of Christ's life. Silencing the memory, the imagination, the impulses of the heart, where these do not help the work of absorption in Christ, is a primary necessity. Such a silence frees the soul.

In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, The Valley of Humiliation provides just such a location. Here the shepherd-boy wears the herb "heart's-ease". Here too "a man shall be free from the noise, and from the hurryings of life. All states are full of noise and confusion, only the Valley of Humiliation is that empty and solitary place". Here the pilgrim is not hindered from "contemplation" (though he may have to fight Apollyon briefly to achieve this state). Here Mercy says, "one may, without much molestation be thinking what he is, whence he came, what he has done, and to what the King has called him".

The programme for Bunyan's pilgrim here is that of the "Second Week" of the *Exercises*.

The Valley of the Sick Heart functions at least partially as The Valley of Humiliation for Leithen. Here Leithen contemplates God's power and greatness and silences his feelings in a kind of frigid stoicism which matches his environment. Lew functions as Apollyan here, firing at Leithen so that, like Christian, he "began to despair of life".

The search for "indifference" at the beginning of the *Exercises* is the concomitant of the statement of the First Principle and Foundation of the purpose of

1 SHR 83  
2 Introduction 31  
3 PP 244  
4 " 245  
5 PP 245, 6  
6 SHR 173, 184  
7 PP 63, SHR 176
creation. "Man is created to praise, reverence and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul." He does this by making proper use of creation. Leithen is later to distinguish between stoicism and the indifference of true humility and indeed to call his original state "the pride of defiance, keeping a stiff neck under the blows of fate." He relates it to the sickness of the Hare Indians that "accidie" or hopeless apathy which Fr. Duplessis describes as a deadly sin. Leithen's recovery begins here in the Valley of Humiliation (which is extended dangerously into the Valley of the Shadow of Death). It is in the valley of the Sick Heart that he has a "vision of the beauty which might be concealed in the desert." It is thus through revelation rather than his own efforts that spiritual recovery is possible. At first Leithen is unable to recognize a response in himself.

Leithen's real conversion of heart begins in his contemplation of the incongruous inter-relationship of the three sick men. "The irony of it induced in Leithen a flicker of affection ... His numb stoicism was shot with a momentary warmth and colour." It is humour that breaks up the frigidity of the sick heart. The second stage of regeneration comes in the snow-pit when "there suddenly broke in on him like a sunrise a sense of God's mercy - deeper than the fore-ordination of things, like a great mercifulness." Law, inevitability, "the coercion of power" are seen as subordinate to a greater force in the world, mercy. This recognition at last makes possible Leithen's affective response.

1 cf. First Proposition of The Shorter Catechism.
2 SHR 293
3 PP 244 - 283
4 SHR 293, 4
5 PP 195
6 PP 203
The thought induced in Leithen a tenderness to which he had been long a stranger. He had put life away from him, and it had come back to him in a final reconciliation.

With affective relations again possible Leithen is also able to face his past and memories no longer threaten his security. He is able to recognize that his mission to look for Galliard had been "selfish," an attempt to escape from his own inner crisis of faith. Leithen sees that the knowledge of God's mercy in his creation is the ground of his "hope", a quality most needed by the community of Hare Indians. Hopelessness is named in Proverbs as the cause of the sick heart.

In the Exercises the purpose of the meditation on Sin is not to leave the retreatant in a state of morbid depression but to bring him to a recognition of the mercy of God, since it leads directly into the contemplation of Christ's presence among men in history.

Hope in the mercy of God is followed for Leithen by thankfulness,

Then, that evening in the snow-pit had come the realisation of the tenderness behind the iron front of Nature, and after that had come thankfulness for plain human affection. The North had not frozen him, but had melted the ice in his heart. God was not only all-mighty but all-loving. His old happiness seemed to link in with his new mood of thankfulness.

The "Contemplation to Attain Divine Love" in The Spiritual Exercises begins with a consideration of God's presence and action in creation, tracing all that is to its ultimate source. The retreatant is asked to "ponder with great affection how much God our Lord has done" so that he "may be filled with gratitude for them." God's action in creation is recognized by Leithen and his own

1 SHR 204 of 240 5 Proverbs xiii, 12
2 SHR 217 6 SHR 294
3 " 225 7 PEs. Ex. 103
4 " 283

- 245 -
stoic resistance of nature becomes irrelevant. Once
that faith is re-established Galliard recognizes that
Leithen has "an undivided mind" and Leithen himself
feels that he is "founded solidly like an oak". Leithen
reaches that necessary "assurance" of the
Calvinist conversion process as delineated in Montrose and Cromwell.

The stream of life which had flowed so
pleasantly had eternity in its waters. He
felt himself safe in the hands of a power
that was both God and friend.

Leithen in this state of confidence is able to
respond as the retreatant is expected to do at the end
of the Exercises with a gift of self in service.

Leithen is confronted by a choice of extending his
physical life and ignoring the needs of the Hare Indians
and the pleas from Fr. Duplessis to take over their
leadership or losing his physical life in service. He
has to make an "election" in Ignatian terminology. To
do this effectively he must decide what is the main
purpose of his existence and therefore what are his
priorities. Leithen decides that he must spend his
"stock of vigour" in service. He must join the work of
service. Whether or not Buchan recognized the chivalric
significance of making Leithen enter the spiritual lists
with the Oblates of Mary Immaculate is not certain. It
may be merely a co-incidence that the Buchan hero is in
the role of Queen's champion both in his appearance and
at his exit from the literary stage, but it may well be
a deliberate choice.

Leithen "in making his soul" in dedicated service
reaches that point of completion in both Calvinist and

1 SHR 263 6 SHR 295 cf. "Contemplation
to Attain Divine Love",
2 M 267 7 SHR 274 etc.
3 M (1928) 62 "Take O Lord and receive"
4 C 67
5 SHR 294 8 Sp. Ex. 82 - 87
6 SHR 302
10 M 295
Catholic schemes of spiritual experience when the conversion or renewal (metanoia) is complete. Pilgrimage gives way to communion. Leithen reflects on this privilege.

Most men had their lives taken from them. It was his privilege to give his, to offer it freely and joyfully in one last effort of manhood.

The promise of the reward of getting his priorities right made Leithen conclude that in "making his own soul he would ... win the world too, for now the great, shining, mystic universe above him was no longer a foe but a friend".¹

Galliard recognizes that Leithen's pilgrimage did not end in death but in life² for as Fr. Duplessis says Leithen "had come to love his kind, indeed, to love everything that God had made".³ The Path to the End of Days is still the King's Path here in Sick-Heart River only it goes beyond the frontiers of Death. The end of life is seen as the beginning of a new relationship in love, as it was in The Pilgrim's Progress.

When Mr. Standfast had thus set things in order, and the time being come for him to haste him away, he also went down to the river. ⁴

¹ SHR 295
² " 318
³ " 310
⁴ PP 318
He had been inhuman, Leithen told himself, with the dreary fortitude of the sick animal. Now whatever befell him he was once again in love with his fellows. The cold infernal North magnified instead of dwarfing humanity. What a marvel was this clot of vivified dust! ... The universe spread itself before him in immense distances lit and dominated by a divine spark which was man. An inconsiderable planet, a speck in the infinite stellar spaces; most of it salt water; the bulk of the land rock and desert and austral and boreal ice; inter-spersed mud, the detritus of aeons, with a thin coverlet of grass and trees that vegetable world on which every living thing was in the last resort a parasite! Man, precariously perched on this rotating scrap-heap, yet so much master of it that he could mould it to his transient uses, and while struggling to live, could entertain thoughts and dreams beyond the bounds of time and space! Man so weak and yet so great, the chief handiwork of the Power that had hung the stars in the firmament.

This passage in *Sick Heart River* is the most complete description of the Buchan hero in all his precarious greatness and universality. The fundamental position of Buchan's "Everyman" is that of the Borderer. He lives out his life in a narrow zone on the surface of the earth, entirely dependent on the delicate balance of the earth's ecological system. Yet he also neighbours with infinity and in true Border fashion he raids this territory from time to time in his "thoughts and dreams". Man is seen at the apex of creation because of his unique capacity to wonder and to share, freely and consciously, in the continuing work of creativity. He is a born leader.

1 SHR 294, 5
All of us, however modest our station are called now and then to be leaders. We must make decisions which affect not only ourselves, but a greater or lesser number of our fellow mortals. We must face situations in public and private life where we have to choose between two roads, one hard and one easy; one, it may be right and the other wrong. We have to take risks, to gamble in life, and we have to persuade other people to follow us in our decision and to trust us. The matter may be of small moment, or it may be of first importance, but the nature of the decision is the same. We have to act as leaders, and therefore we have to act alone.

Since men are created "wildly unequal" some men are leaders "in a far more difficult form, on a grander scale, and for more momentous issues".1 (A capacity for the generous admiration of the qualities of others is a hall-mark of Buchan's writings). For Buchan the model par excellence of this kind of leader was Montrose.2 Montrose rises above other leaders, like Cromwell, because his integrity is lucid, open and humble. Montrose leads by example which transcends defeat and death. Cromwell and other romantic revolutionaries lead by their simplified vision of life which fuses "fact and dream into an irresistible purpose".3

All true leaders in Buchan terms have a keen sense of the infinite possibilities of life. Such a view is not destroyed by the findings of science for, on the contrary, "science has given to the world what is, for all practical purposes, an infinite expectation of life. It has created for it an ancestry far beyond the four thousand years or so of its old cosmogony, and it has stretched the horizon of its future into distant aeons".4 Some men were the Pioneers and the prospectors for mankind in the physical, territorial sense. These Buchan also

1 M&B "Montrose & Leadership" 263
2 op.cit. 264
3 SR 16 May (1907) 547 "Shakespeare and Raleigh"
4 SR 6 Sep (1930) 375 "Leisure Misused"
saw as the forerunners of humanity.

In the Transvaal Buchan met Canadian prospectors who had "one of the hardest and most thankless tasks on earth". For the "prospector skirmishes ahead of civilization". When they eventually inspan he says,

I took off my hat in spirit to the advance-guard of our people, the men who know much and fear little, who are always a little ahead of everybody else in the waste places of the earth. You can readily whistle them back to the defence of some portion of the Empire or gather them for the maintenance of some single frontier, but when the work is done they retire again to their own places, with their eyes steadfastly to the wilds but their ears always open for the whistle to call them back once more.

Colonial development offered to young men the capacity to break new ground and "a perpetual possibility of new things". The pioneer adventurer who spearheads the territorial advance of his culture senses that "on every side seems to stretch an unknown world, calling upon the adventurous mind to take possession". This is the spirit of romance, that sense of "space" and potential success, that is so necessary for the pioneer. "The emigrant has romance in his life, for he knows there is a chance of the unforeseen, and this chance puts enterprise and ambition into men who before were fibreless bond-slaves".

Such an expectancy is essentially optimistic. Buchan talks about scepticism being the natural "dissolvent" which upsets pomposity and rigidity but this could never be, for him, the destructive cynicism which he castigated in the post-war intellectuals who became professional "atomisers ... engaged in reducing

1 AC 166
2 FR 14 Nov (1931) 249 "Thirty Years Since Cecil Rhodes"
3 L in the W 19
4 SR 24 Oct (1907) 372 "Mr. Kipling on Emigration"
5 FR 15 Nov (1930) 294 "The New Modesty"
the laborious structure of civilised life to a whirling nebula.¹ In all Buchan's colossal literary output I have only come across one attempt to make a statement of final negation and that is in an early story in the Yellow Book published in January 1897 called "At the Article of Death". A border shepherd faces death alone in his cottage, the Lonely Field. Stripped of all physical, mental or spiritual consolations his death is accepted as a total abnegation of life.

His religion had been swept from him like a rotten garment. His mind was vagrant of memories, for all were driven forth by purging terror. Only some relic of manliness ... was with him to the uttermost. With blank thoughts, without hope or vision, with nought save an aimless resolution and a causeless bravery, he passed into the short anguish which is death.

This is the empty stoicism that Leithen is to recognize as the opposite of human greatness. He sees it eventually as human defiance of his created human nature. Buchan's heroes after this may come, through fatigue, to the edge of despair but never go over that edge.

The major dissolvent for excessive grandeur, for Buchan, is what he calls the "prosaic". The Scots mind in particular he feels is capable of counteracting its own extravagant romanticism with bubble-pricking humour. Dickson McCunn's function at the end of Castle Gay illustrates this. When the library has been invaded by "something savage and primordial" and the lives of all hang by a most slender thread, McCunn, descending from his own brush with historical romance breaks the spell and enters. His mere presence brings the "wholesome human world" into "the Den" so that "Mastrovin and his friends were no longer dangerous, for they had become comic". ²

1 MHD 184
2 CE 309
Public figures like Lord Minto may have to walk on a razor-edge\(^1\) or as in the case of Woodrow Wilson "on the tight-rope of legality with perfect balance"\(^2\) to fulfil their obligations, but their function is not to command, nor to instil virtue into others. Their leadership must be charismatic. Their greatness lies not in their personally possessed qualities but in their capacity for renewal, in their openness of spirit which evokes that same spirit in others. "The task of leadership is not to put greatness into humanity, but to elicit it, for the greatness is already there". This refreshing expectancy in the frontiersman acts on those who follow like the music of the Piper for after all we are a gipsy race, and our true national singer is the redoubtable Piper's Son, who had one song only, but a choice good one.\(^3\) Such a leader is the one with whom "to ride the ford",\(^4\) because he does not draw men to himself, or even to a particular ideal, but simply asserts his faith in the infinite possibilities open to man and the rightness of his creation. He reminds his fellows that of their very nature they border with infinite potentiality.

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1 Lord Minto
2 W IV rep. CH 80
3 FAD 278
4 NW Oct (1894) "Sentimental Travelling"
5 Spec 15 Dec (1900) "Count von Bulow's Speech"
Throughout his works Buchan developed this concept of man as a Borderer. Its origins are to be found in his desire to establish his own sense of identity as a Scottish Borderer in Upper Tweeddale. Over the years the concept gradually deepened and was enriched by wider personal experience in South Africa, in London and Oxford, in France and in Canada. The concept became universalized. It was extended from a model of self-identity to an insight into the human condition. Eventually it became powerful enough to carry his hero, man, over the edge of the world.
The aim of all bibliographical work done in connection with this thesis has been to extend the base on which the critical theory rested not to produce a meticulously accurate and comprehensive bibliography. Within these limitations of time, space and purpose the following selection of bibliographical data is offered.

I Resources Available, 1979

A full bibliography is now in preparation through the John Buchan Society and will be published gradually through the Society's Journal. In the meantime, there are three specialized bibliographies of the works by, and about, John Buchan and one checklist of a special collection of his works and papers.

1) James D. Mack, John Buchan: A Bibliography (1952)

Although this bibliography was never actually published it remains in typescript at Lehigh University and there is a copy on microfilm in the National Library of Scotland (vol.2, 12). There are 89 pages of typescript preceded by a table of contents and 5 pages of preface and one page of dedication. Mack's purpose in compiling the list was, he says, "edification". His bias towards biographical criticism in the notes which precede each section he justifies by quoting Sir Walter A. Raleigh's dictum that "the lives men live express themselves in the books they write". The limitations of Mack's bibliography are, however, mainly a consequence of the sources available to him. These he lists as his own collections and the collections and lists to be found in the National Library of Scotland, Glasgow University Library, the Library of Congress, the Library of the University of Pennsylvania, the New York Public Library, the British Museum, the Bodleian Library, and the Brasenose
College Library. His personal contacts were with Lady Susan Tweedsmuir (whose library was still intact at Elsfield at this time), Stair Gillon and G. N. Clark.

The bibliography is organised according to what Mack considers to be Buchan's six major phases in life: 1) Bairn and Student (1875-1899), 2) The Graduate (1900-1913), 3) The Soldier (1914-1918), 4) The Scholar (1919-1926), 5) The Candidate (1927-1934), 6) The Statesman (1935-1940). The whole work is completed by an alphabetical index. Mack's painstaking, if adulatory, work was overtaken, before publication however, by the appearance of the Hanna bibliography the following year.

2) Archibald Hanna, John Buchan: A Bibliography
Hamden, Connecticut, Shoe String Press (1953)

In his preface Hanna also establishes his dual purpose in publishing a bibliography which he hopes will "provide a guide for the collector" and also "illustrate the extraordinary variety of interests of an uncommon man". Although his work is based primarily on his own collection, Hanna makes some attempt to "cover all editions and all translations". To do this he has been obliged to rely on trade lists, the accuracy of which he was not in a position to check. The apparent comprehensiveness of this bibliography is deceptive and until the present it has remained the standard bibliography of Buchan's works. Robert F. Metzdorf recognised in his preface that this is only "a first essay in a large and complicated field" yet 26 years later it has not been replaced.

The organization of this bibliography is also chronological but the divisions are by literary genres rather than by life phases. Thus section A lists 115 Books and Pamphlets, subsequent editions being listed after the first edition whose date governs the place of the item in the catalogue. Section B has 63 entries
under the heading John Buchan’s Contribution to Books. In this case only the first editions are listed. 285 entries (and two later additions out of sequence) are listed as John Buchan’s Contributions to Periodicals and there are 40 entries in section D Writings about John Buchan. The bibliography is concluded by an alphabetical list of names and titles.

Archibald Hanna has also written about the Beinecke Collection in the Yale University Library Gazette, 37 (1962) under the title 'A Buchan Collection'.


This is a full but not complete list of critical and biographical material arranged in alphabetical order by title or name of the section within a periodical or even the name of the periodical. Because of the arrangement of the items this is not an easy bibliography to use. There is comment, some of which is simply descriptive but most of which is biased in favour of those critics who are enthusiastic about Buchan. Cox’s collaborator criticizes the checklist at Kingston for "a tendency to give inaccurate citations". "Names of periodicals and dates are often incorrect", says a note from one of the contributors who signs himself (ACK). Such a criticism fails to take into account the nature of the Kingston checklist. Also within a few entries of this comment the Cox compilers themselves allow Lake of Gold (The Long Traverse published in 1941) to be listed as being published in 1914.

4) B. C. Wilmot, A Checklist of works by and about John Buchan in the John Buchan Collection, Douglas Library, Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario (1958). (A revised augmented and indexed edition was published in 1961 by G. K. Hall & Co.)

This checklist does not include the items in the
General Library Collection of MS letters which the library holds. These are to be found listed separately. A Xerox copy of this list is available in the National Library where there is also another copy on Reel One of the Kingston Archives microfilm.

The checklist itself is divided into two major sections which are further subdivided as follows:-

1) **Works by John Buchan**
   1) Manuscripts and typescripts (33 and 2 not intended for publication)
   2) Selections, anthologies and extracts (1)
   3) Fiction (51)
   4) Major prose other than fiction (37)
   5) Minor prose
      a) Collections (13)
      b) Separate works (32)
   6) Poetry (4)
   7) Works compiled/edited by Buchan
      a) Collections (7)
      b) Individual authors (5)
   8) Works with minor contributions by Buchan (9)

2) **Works about Buchan**
   1) Bibliographies (2)
   2) Periodicals, Societies, Collections (275)
   3) Autobiographical (2)
   4) Biography and criticism (4)
   5) Dedicated to Buchan (10)

After this first list had been completed new material was received in the library and these are listed in the addenda as 14 Mss and Tss, 2 minor prose works and 1 work with a minor contribution by Buchan. The checklist is enlivened by two photographs, one by Karsch and one taken during the official visit of President Roosevelt to Canada.

The three most useful short lists of Buchan's works
are to be found in *John Buchan*, by Janet Adam Smith (whose notes on each chapter are the most valuable aid to John Buchan studies yet published), *The Interpreter's House*, by David Daniell and the entry in *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* 4 (1972) cols. 540-544. These are all selective lists but are extremely useful.

The only thesis directly dealing with Buchan is:-

*The Biographical Writing of John Buchan*, Newport (1961) (DIS AB XXii, 2797)

Another thesis has a substantial section on John Buchan. That is

*The Imperial Idea in English Fiction* Cambridge Peterhouse (ASLIB 14). This latter has since been published as *The Wheel of Empire* by A. G. Sandison.

A number of indexes to newspapers include Buchan items.

1) *The Glasgow Herald*

The earliest entries 1893-1960 are handwritten and in the offices of the newspaper in Glasgow. They are not comprehensive and further work is needed before this source can be used fully. The index from 1906-1942 has a number of entries but most are about, rather than by, Buchan. Many are reports of speeches Buchan made and help to identify some of the speeches that are to be found at Kingston.

2) *The Scotsman*

The index for this newspaper is all in handwritten form in the library of the North Bridge offices. A list of explicit and possible entries was made by me and the references traced as far as possible by Dr. J. Sait. Many have proved to be reports of speeches and addresses.

3) *The Spectator*

It is from *The Spectator* that the most substantial new contribution has come towards listing some of Buchan's journalistic work. C. A. Seaton, the present librarian
at The Spectator has searched through the files which identify the contributors and has been able to list over 800 major articles and reviews by Buchan. These I have now traced and detailed.


For the possibility of doing this research in Edinburgh my thanks are especially due to the work of the librarians of the National Library of Scotland, particularly S. M. Simpson and the Edinburgh University Library, especially C. P. Finlayson. Through the offices of these two libraries all the major Buchan archives are now available in Scotland.

The National Library’s holdings consist of at least one copy of almost all the printed works of John Buchan listed in the J. Adam Smith and D. Daniell lists but in addition to this there are extensive manuscript, microfilm and other documentary materials.

The most important of these acquisitions is microfilm copy of the Queen’s University Archives which includes manuscripts, typescripts, letters, speeches etc., that were deposited in the Douglas Library. (ACC 7214)

The National Library also has many items either as original Mss or Xerox Copies including:-

MS 3072: f 89 Ms “He the Merry Masons”, 1933
Acc 6468 Photocopies of records of Hutcheson’s
Acc 6475 Photocopies of Ms Poem “The Semitic Spirit Speaks”
Acc 6482  
Phocopies "Angling in Still Waters" (Story)  "Coriolanus"  "Other Gods"

Acc 6504  
Correspondence L. S. Amery and J. B.

Acc 6542 (1)  
Xerox copy of Ms  
Greenmantle  Three Hostages  Memory Hold-the-Door  Commonplace Books and notebooks  Sir Walter Scott  Montrose

(iii)  
Original Ms of Witchwood

MS 9865  
Letters of and to J. B. 1915-16 Haldane.

MS 5912 f 134; 5913 f 22  
Letters J. B. 1928-35. Haldane

MS 6033 f 12; 6037 f 88; 6038 f 33  
Four volumes of 20th century authors presented to the NLS by Buchan, each containing a letter J. B. 1930-1.

MSS 812, 813, 814, 815  
Photocopies of extracts from notebooks of Alexander MacCallum Scott concerning Buchan at Glasgow University.

Acc 6351  
Lord Macmillan Papers. Twenty three Buchan letters 1925-40

Acc 4684  
Papers 1894-1940 including literary notebooks, ms, ts, a diary, over 600 letters from among others, Viscounts Haldane, Milner and the Earl of Roseberry, papers 1908-65, of Susan, Baroness Tweedsmuir.

Acc 7006  
31 letters 1918-1935 of J. B. to Lord Beaverbrook mostly on political matters and his own literary work. (These are the letters that are listed in Christopher Cook's Sources of Political History 1900-1951 as being in the library of the
University of New Brunswick. Their return to this country is due to the generosity of the Buchan Family).

The Edinburgh University Library has the Nelson Papers. Just under 5,000 letters and papers have been fully catalogued by Mr. Finlayson. They begin in 1909 when Buchan had already been working for two years with Nelson's and therefore do not cover the period when he was running the Scottish Review. The result is that at the moment it is not possible to know more about Buchan's work on this paper than Forbes Gray tells us in his introduction to Comments and Characters. It seems highly unlikely that the selections made by Forbes Gray account for more than a fraction of Buchan's actual contribution to the Review but at present there is no external evidence which will clarify this matter. There are also a few letters by and to J. B. which are not included in these papers but are listed separately in the catalogue.

Edinburgh University Library are increasing their Buchan holdings of printed books and Ms material at present.

The Peebles Area Library has some illuminated addresses which were presented to Buchan in various towns in Canada.

The Douglas Library, Queen's University, Kingston, retains the original collection of the Buchan papers and also the volumes which made up Buchan's own library. This means that there is some material which cannot be made available on microfilm in this country, the annotations in books for example.

The Oxford Libraries have not been able to supply any list of their John Buchan holdings at present because of the shortages of library staff. It is likely, however, that there are some documents that are relevant in both the Bodleian and the Brasenose College Libraries but these I have not been able to check personally.
The Canadian Public Archives list two letters from Lord Tweedsmuir to Henry Haskell, journalist touching on literature and politics.

The South African Archives at Pretoria have two items CT 288 JL 55, the correspondence relative to the appointment of John Buchan in 1901 and CS 48 6460/01 relative to a memo about the relief of British Refugees in November 1901 that Buchan had written. There are likely to be more papers in the Transvaal Archives but these would require a physical search since there is no index.

There are also a number of articles and criticisms relative to Buchan which appeared in the South African papers during his term of office. These have not yet been traced. The British Library have no printed nor manuscript holdings that are of any interest to John Buchan studies in their catalogues.

The BBC Archives at Caversham contain sound recordings and transcripts of a speech made when he was Governor General, a talk on Sir Walter Scott and a book review in 'World of Books'. These are available for consultation but there are the usual restrictions about copyright.

The British Film Institute has two brief news shots in which Buchan appears and a copy of the 1935 version of The Thirty-Nine Steps. I have not been able to trace a copy of the silent film version of Huntingtower which starred Harry Lauder as McCunn.

There are a number of other minor sources of information and correspondence to which I am indebted. These include the Conservative Party Research Department, Ashridge College, Messrs. W. & R. Chambers etc. In attempting to build up a complete bibliography I have also received much willing help from Mrs. E. Simpson at Glasgow University Library, Fife Regional Council, Kirkcaldy District Council, Messrs. Nelson & Macmillan, The Bodley Head, A. P. Watt, and many others.
II Additional Works by John Buchan

For the great majority of items on this list I am indebted to C. A. Seaton. The list is selective in relation to the thesis and not in any way comprehensive.

Abbreviations used:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>Article</td>
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<td>GM</td>
<td>The Gentleman's Magazine</td>
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<td>(L)</td>
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"British Advance at Loos" (A)  "Future of War" (Sp)
"The Landmarks of the War"(A)  "The Value of War Photography" (Sp)
"The Call to Arms" (A)  "The Contemptibles" (A)
"The New Armies: Loos" (A)  "The Somme" (A)
"Arras, Third Ypres, and Cambrai" (A)
"The Darkest Hour" (A)  "The Dawn" (A)
"Outland Campaigns" (A)  "The Scots in Arms" (A)
"Freedom of Peebles" (Sp)  "Stewart's College War Memorial" (Sp)
"On Parliamentarians" (Sp)  "The Adventure of Living" (A)
"This Freedom"  "Lecture on Literature of Tweedale" (Sp)
"A Book of the Moment: Louis Botha" (R)
"A Translation of Catullus" (R)  "Anima Naturaliter Americana" (R)
"On Moderation in Politics" (Sp)
"A Regiment's Birthday. The 21st Foot. An Epitome of the Lowlands" (A)
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"The Scottish Borderers in the War" (R)
"Leisure Misused" (A)  "An English Idealist" (R)
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"Modern Scotland" (R)  "Scott's Juvenilia" (R)
"The Making of an Idealist" (R)
"The Endless Adventure" (A)
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The dates given here are for the first edition in book form.

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* Confusions in the spelling of this title are common. For example the Bodley Head Library Edition (1937) which I have has *Scholar Gypsies* on the dust cover and title pages, but *Scholar Gipsies* on the hard cover and spine and *Scholar-Gipsies* as the title of the opening essay which has a prefatory title page in the same format which appears to refer to the title of the volume as well as the essay.