

Interviewee: Billy Young (BY)	Interviewer: Mhari Telford-Jammeh (M T-J)
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MT-J: Today's the Third of March Twenty thirteen, and my name's Mhairi Telford-Jammeh, I'm here in Langholm and today I'm gonna speak to Mr Billy Friel...

BY: No you're not!

MT-J: Billy Young! I do apologise, we'll start again. I'm gonna speak to Mr Billy Young, and the kinna topic that we're gonna discuss today is Langholm Common Riding. So, could you maybe just tell us your name and your age if you don't mind?

BY: My name's Billy Young, I'm fifty four years old, and I live in Langholm, I've got a shop in the High Street, The Paper Shop. And I'm heavily involved in the community.

MT-J: I'm gonna really talk to you today Billy about the common riding in Langholm...maybe come back another time and talk about some other things?

BY: Sure, yeah.

MT-J: I think I'm gonna start this evening just to ask you what your earliest memory of the common riding is?

BY: The earliest recollection that I have is something which has sadly died out now but as well as the proper common riding we had boys' common ridings there was boys' common ridings throughout the town, which were miniature versions of the real thing, and I can remember going up the Terrace Brae from Caroline Street to Eskdale Street on the back of Eileen Irvine, she was my horse, and I was the rider, and I canny remember when that was but that's the earliest recollection I have.

MT-J: And what else, what did the other boys do? Did they a' have horses?

BY: Oh yes, yes. Well, the older girl or boy was the horse and the younger one was the rider, so you went about on piggy back as it were, but all the various elements o' the common riding were represented we had emblems, we had a boys' common riding flag, we had a cornet, and it was done very very well and the tradition was adhered to and it was a great time for the kids in the town because there was...different areas o' town had their own common riding.

MT-J: Can you describe...you mentioned emblems, can you describe what the emblems are of the common riding?

BY: Well there are four emblems carried in procession on the common riding day, five if you count the flag itself, but the four are...the spade, which is used to cut the sods which mark the boundaries o' the common land. The barley banna' and the saut herring, which is a very unique and obscure emblem, the floral crown and the gigantic Scots thistle.

MT-J: And would you have these as boys, would you have something that resembled those

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emblems?

BY: We had miniature versions. I mean the thistle was quite easily got...out o' somebody's garden. We had a boys' common riding flag that the late Matt Ewart made in about Nineteen fifty something, which was a smaller replica the real thing. And the other emblems were made, by parents I suppose. So every tradition, every element was adhered to properly.

MT-J: And can you remember that with great excitement?

BY: Oh yes, yes. I mean that's the only recollection I've got now of being...you know going up the Terrace Brae on Eileen Irvine's back...she later became a policewoman! She lives in the town now at Townfoot, but I can't remember very much else about it but, a few years ago...oh it could be even ten years ago, the kids in Caroline Street had a common riding a boys' common riding, and they came to my door and asked if I'd go down and cry the fair for them, which I did...standing on a bucket in somebody's garden! Which was great fun.

MT-J: Can you remember when you were young, the sort of anticipation...the build up to the common riding? What was that like?

BY: The biggest thrill for me as a boy and I suppose it would be for a' the kids, was to see the shows arriving on the Kiln Green, because I mean that was a big part of our common riding. Carrying the heather besoms in the procession and going to the shows. So you know we were all very very excited when the shows arrived in the town, and of course we went to the Kiln Green and watched them being built.

MT-J: Can you describe then what happens on the actual common riding day in Langholm?

BY: Well on common riding day, it starts with a hound trail, which is quite a unique thing for any Border common riding. The hound trail takes place at Collins' Turn on the side o' Whita Hill, and they run a ten mile course, and once the hound trail has been run, the people walk back to the town...they follow the flute band back to the town, for a quick breakfast and then the riders get mounted and assemble in the market place. Then the cornet and the right and left hand men, these are the cornets o' two previous years, arrive, and the cornet is presented with the borough standard by the officiating magistrate. They then process through the town to the square pump, outside the Buccleuch Centre, and then bock over the bridge, down to the bottom of the town, down to the south end 'o' the town and then back to the market place for the first fair crying. And once that's done comes one o' the most spectacular parts o' the common riding and that is the gallop, from the market place up the Kirk Wynd to Whita. And the riders'll follow the cornet, up to the Castle Craigs which is the furthestmost point on the common land, where they're served whiskey, and barley banna' and saut herring, and the fair is cried again. In fact this is the second fair that we talk about, or the Langholm Fair proper is cried firstly by the Castle Craig's fair crier at the Castle Craigs. Then they go up to the monument, thrice round the monument and down the front o' the hill, and by then, the people in the town'll have went to the town foot to collect all the emblems, and the children and all the emblems wait on the Kirk Wynd for the horsemen to return. Then, process up to the Kiln Green, back down through the town and back into the market place where the second fair or the Langholm Fair proper is cried...by the fair crier standing on the back of a horse. Once that's done, the riders...that more or less signifies the end of the common riding proper. The riders ride up the Kirk Wynd, along Drove Road, down the Bar Brae to the Kiln Green, where a sod's cut, and then across the river Ewes onto the Castleholm, where a further two sods

are cut. And then, after a while there's the cornets chase, which is basically a gallop round the racecourse. The cornet goes first with

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the flag and then after a short spell all the other riders follow him. And then after that is the afternoon sports and games, things like Cumberland wrestling, which is very traditional here, Highland dancing, foot running, high jumping, horse racing what we call flapping, which is horse racing that is not under Jockey Club rules. And that takes up the whole afternoon and then at night, there's an open air dance on the cricket pitch at the Castleholm, with the town band supplying the music for the dancing, and at about quarter to nine, the front three (that's the cornet and the two previous cornets), mount up their horses and they lead the procession back down into the town, and this contain somewhere in the region of four to five thousand people. The procession stops at the Kiln Green where the people dance the traditional polka. They then go down to The Crown Hotel where another polka's danced, and then down to the town foot, to the site of The Buccleuch Hotel or The Salutation Inn, where another polka's danced, and then back into the square where the cornet hands the flag back to the officiating magistrate.

MT-J: Can you tell me...do you think Billy that the same way that the common riding is now has it changed over the years or do you think it's more or less been the same?

BY: It's incredibly traditional, there is no commercial side to the common riding...to Langholm common riding. Dare I say there's not the cheap trappings that some Border festivals have. There's no bungee jumps there's no fancy dress parades anything like that it's extremely traditional. It has changed slightly, but only because it's become so massive. For instance, they used to ride round [?] which was Ashley Bank Lodge, that disappeared when they built Ashley Bank Lodge so that boundary of Langholm common disappeared. But people are very very determined to keep it the way it's always been...it's ay been, so if anything was suggested which would break with this tradition it would meet with a very violent response from the people of Langholm.

MT-J: You've told me about the common riding day itself, but building up to the common riding are there other events or other things that happen? Can you tell us a wee bit about some o' the other things that go on?

BY: Well the common riding itself is at the end of a period of two weeks build up. There are five provisional ride-outs before the common riding day itself which are organised by the Castle Craig's Club. These are basically just where the local riders both men and women follow the cornet in a route round the countryside in and around Langholm. We have various what you would call 'smokers' and dinners. One o' the strangest and the most unique is the banna' testing, the banna testing is a smoker that's organised by the cornet's father on the Monday night before the common riding, and this dates back to the tradition where the cornet and his right and left hand men and his close friends went to to Jeannie Dunbar's house in John Street to test the bannas that she had baked for the common riding day, they went to check that they were of a sufficient standard and of course obviously eventually toasts would be made to the cornet, and this has developed into this massive smoker that is held on the Monday night before the common riding which is...to be invited to the banna testing is a great honour. It's an all male affair, needless to say! And there can be upwards of eighteen different speeches. But the quality of the speaking at the banna testing is probably second to none anywhere in the Borders.

MT-J: Very good! That's an interesting one, are there any other...I know I've heard of strange little

rituals that go on like the...something about the whiskey, something about the spade?

BY: The spade, that's right. The spade is anointed with whiskey, the spade's dressed with the common riding ribbons, which are in the colours of the common riding each year...each year the colours are dictated by the winner of the Epsom Derby, so all the rosettes and all the leather wear of

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the horses, the front three's horses, are decorated with ribbons in the colours of the winning horse o' the Derby, and the spade itself is dressed...it's dressed with these ribbons and it's also anointed with whiskey. It's a very select ceremony and I've only ever been once, but what happens is the spade carrier invites a few friends to his house, and they put the very tip o' the spade in your mouth and they pour whiskey down the blade!

MT-J: *[laughs]*

BY: But there's also the nailing on o' the banna, when they actually crucify...well the barley banna is the scone that was part of the feudal dues to the Baron...the local Baron, and they crucify a fish, a herring, a sauted herring, onto that banna using a twall penny nail, and that's done at this very selective ceremony before the common riding. And also the floral crown which is made from Sweet William or Rambler Rose blossoms is built over the common riding week, and that takes a hell of a lot of work, because there can be thousands of blooms or blossoms involved in making that. And the thistle is inspected on the summer fair night, and the floral crown...the complete floral crown is inspected on the summer fair night, which is the night before the common riding, and that is traditionally a time of...when old friends return to the town for the common riding and they meet old friends in the town, and particularly in the market place. And on the summer fair night, the flute band which only plays twice in the entire year, on the summer fair night the flute band processes down to the site o' the old station to meet the last train into the town. It used to bring the last of the ex [?] back to Langholm and there was thousands and thousands of people would gather at the station when the train was still running, and they would be played up the street, by the flute band. And even the cornet's horse at one point was brought on the train into the town the night before.

MT-J: I know last year I remember waking up...probably about six-thirty in the morning and the banna testing must have been held in the British Legion because all I could hear was played on a beautiful cornet was Auld Lang Syne.

BY: That's right, uh huh.

MT-J: At half past six in the morning.

BY: At half past six.

MT-J: So the banna testing obviously goes on all night?

BY: Yes. It starts at nine o'clock. If the chairman can get it finished by twelve he's doing very very well, because there are eighteen speeches and of course there are singers as well. But it doesn't end there it's an all night vigil and there's you know, singing and drinking and a lot of the people that are invited stay up all night to see the cornet practice his gallop at the Kirk Wynd early the

next morning.

MT-J: So he gets to have a practice?

BY: Yes, he gets to have two practices at least. One on the Monday morning and one on the Tuesday morning after the banna testing. And he's sent home early from the banna testing he's sent home to bed, to make sure he gets some sleep because it's an incredibly busy time for the cornet.

MT-J: You've been a cornet yourself Billy, can you tell me about how that came about, and what age you were?

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BY: Well I was cornet in Nineteen eighty four, and I was twenty six then...my father was cornet in Nineteen fifty, and my nephew, Andrew Elliot was cornet last year in Two thousand and twelve so my mother has actually seen a husband, a son and a grandson all being cornet which is quite a unique thing. It's the greatest honour that Langholm can bestow any of its sons now because at one point it could honour somebody by making them a freeman of the borough. Of course the old town council disappeared and Langholm as a borough it doesn't exist now so that honour can't be bestowed on anybody so this is the highest honour that they can bestow on anybody is to make them cornet, and the way the cornet is elected is it's a public ballot. It's been a public ballot for, Oh...well over a hundred years, but in Nineteen twenty they had the first official ballot...proper ballot. Up until then people would hold their hands up, you'd elect the cornet by a show of hands, but people started to put both hands up. So they introduced a formal ballot system.

MT-J: Like an election, like a proper election?

BY: That's right. And that is done on the night that they have what we call 'the public meeting' in May, and as the public meeting is taking place, the ballot papers are being counted, through the back in the Buccleuch Centre, and somebody comes onto the stage and announces who the cornet is, so it's a complete surprise to everybody, and the left and right hand men, the two previous cornets then run from there to the cornets house. So he doesn't know he's cornet until he sees these two guys running up his path.

MT-J: Can you remember what that felt like yourself when that happened to you?

BY: Well obviously it was euphoria, it was great great excitement. I can't remember a great deal about it I can remember vividly last year when my nephew was elected cornet because he lives at Burnfoot Farm up Ewes and he asked if he could have his base that night in our house in Caroline Street, so he had all his friends around and all his family were there, in the hope that he would be elected cornet and of course the door burst open and in ran the right and left hand men and that was the start of it and it was great great excitement and great celebration.

MT-J: Mm hmm. When you became a cornet, what can you remember about that?

BY: There are certain things I can remember, it's such an incredibly busy and wonderful time I mean there's just so many things that whizz through your mind, I can remember...before Langholm Common Riding I can remember going to Hawick Common Riding, and you know I was a bit of a singer so I did have a very powerful voice, so I got the reputation o' being a singer, and everybody

wanted to hear me sing. But I can remember carrying the Hawick cornet, who has since become a great great friend, all the way along Hawick High Street and up the stairs into the town hall in Hawick, and round and round the hall, and everything was going swimmingly well until he leaned forward to speak to somebody, and they both ended up in a heap on the floor.

MT-J: *[laughs]*

BY: But I can remember...on the common riding day itself, I can remember being in the Buck Hotel, and in those days it was Mr and Mrs Barrow's private rooms at the back of the...at the back of the bar, the downstairs bar, and we went there for our breakfast but of course nobody ate anything because they were so uptight, and being plied with drink you know to steady our nerves. And of course the flag horse was there a beautiful beautiful horse called Solway, from Cumberland, which was only four years old...it had only been broken.

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MT-J: So this was your horse for the day.

BY: That was my horse that was the flag horse. And I can remember...there are certain things I can remember I can remember the panic of getting my spurs off in the market place before we went up the Kirk Wynd, because the groom realised that I still had my spurs on, I shouldn't have the spurs on, to go up the Kirk Wynd and there was a bit of a panic to get them off before the gallop started.

MT-J: Do you think it's such an intense experience that you sort of remember strange things, you know?

BY: Yes yes, I mean I can remember one thing that stuck in my mind was...at night, which is incredibly emotional it's...the experience of coming round the corner into the high street, and seeing three/four/five thousand people in front of you, and knowing that that was it, that was the end of it, it was as if somebody had punched me in the stomach, really really hard, you know it just hit me, and I remember being down at the town foot, wi' the polka rings dancing...you know the people dancing the polka rings and the nuns from the local nunnery were dancing as well and I just thought well that seems to sum up the common riding because it belongs to everybody and it doesn't matter how old you are, what colour you are or what religion you are it's everybody's common riding and it just struck a chord in me you know to see them all there and everybody being so happy and everybody being so united and you know...

MT-J: As the cornet you know you're the centre of attention...well from May till the common riding and then after the common riding till the next cornet is elected really. There are certain things I know that are...even I that have lived in Langholm all my life might not know that much about, but I know that you get presented with some material, is that right, to make some trousers...?

BY: That's right.

MT-J: Can you say something about that and other things like I know you get spurs as well and...can you say something about some o' these little things that are kind of...?

BY: Well, the rig-out that the cornet wears on the common riding day is very traditional. We wear

breeches...black and white chequered breeches, that are bespoke, they're made for you and a black hacking jacket which is again made for you, and the material's given to the cornet each year by Reid and Taylor's Mill. We wear boots and leggings instead of riding boots, and that's totally unique to Langholm, these leggings...these old fashioned leggings that would be worn throughout the country by country workers. Now we can't...these can't be made now, it's impossible to get them so...we have a stock of them in the town and they're passed from one cornet to the next. The spurs that the cornet wears on the common riding day are presented to him by his friends at a...again another smoker called the 'Spur do', which is an all night drinking session! His friends'll club together and buy him his spurs. And the sash that the cornet wears, again, is his, it belongs to him it's made for him, and you know it's his to keep. But there's nothing, there's no badge, there's no medallion or anything, to symbolise that he's been cornet. I mean there's the bowler hat, which is a riding bowler which means it has a fibreglass cap to it you know for protection. But there's nothing else, there's nothing apart from the sash and his rig-out...his jacket and his breeches and his boots and spurs. I mean other places present their cornets with...as I say badges of office but we don't. And the flag of course is only the borough standard which is undoubtedly the biggest borough standard in the Borders without a shadow of a doubt it's massive, is only seen on the common riding day, it's never paraded other than the common riding. The only exception to that recently was in March 1972 when Neil Armstrong came to Langholm to be made a freeman of the borough, and they managed to

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persuade the common riding committee to produce the flag for Neil Armstrong. A few years ago there was a big...well actually it was...twenty five years this year, there was a terrible controversy erupted in the town, because a gentleman called Alderman Sir Christopher Collett, who was the Lord Mayor of London at the time and who had a cottage in Langholm and came up a lot to fish, invited Langholm to be part of the Lord Mayor's procession. Now this was a great honour, because normally to take part in it you have to be balloted, but this was a personal invitation from the Lord Mayor himself, and he wanted the cornet and he wanted the flag, and it divided the town. Because there were those that felt it was a great honour which undoubtedly it was, and there was those that felt the flag should not leave the town.

MT-J: Oh my goodness.

BY: And it didn't.

MT-J: It didn't leave the town?

BY: No. And it never has. I mean there's been events in Edinburgh, and Melrose when the Queen visited Melrose and all the Border principles took their flags up to Melrose, but...it wouldn't happen in Langholm.

MT-J: No. You mentioned a few times there about other common ridings, you mentioned Hawick. Can you tell us which common ridings the cornet from Langholm goes to and what's that like, you know?

BY: Well traditionally, Langholm always goes to Hawick and Selkirk, and they used to go to Annan, which is a neighbouring town, and the Annan cornet and the Langholm cornets used to leave the procession and ride to Williamwood, to visit Sir Hector Munro, who was a Langholm man (well he was a [Benty] man), and they'd be entertained there, but they've started to go to other common

ridings we go to Galashiels, to the Braw Lads Gathering and to Lauder. I mean there are four true common ridings Langholm Hawick Selkirk and Lauder, but I mean the cornet can basically go wherever he wants, but there are certain ones which which you have to go to.

MT-J: And do you get, when you go to these other common ridings, how are you treated?

BY: You're treated extremely well. Yes, I mean I would say in Hawick you're treated as something special, because there's a great affinity between Langholm and Hawick, and I can remember the colour bussing which is a big ceremony on the night before the common riding at Hawick, the 'nicht afore the morn' as they talk about, and all the visiting principles are in the gallery in the town hall, and the Langholm cornets were always late, and the gala braw lads were slap bang in the middle in the front row, and they were thrown out for the Langholm [lads]!

MT-J: *[laughs]* Very good!

BY: But there's a great camaraderie and you know you meet people that are friends for life.

MT-J: Yeah. What does it meant to you...I mean wha'dyou think it means to you, the common riding?

BY: Well I think it is undoubtedly the greatest day of Langholm's year and undoubtedly it is the jewel in the crown, and the measure of the year, without a shadow of a doubt. I mean people talk  
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about events that happened before the common riding or after the common riding so it seems to set the year...it is the measure of the year without a shadow of a doubt and it just grips the whole population...it is incredibly traditional, it's never been allowed to become anything else than pure twenty-four carat gold tradition. So it's a very very loved tradition in town and it's looked upon, I suppose, by quite a lot o' people you know with a great reverence.

MT-J: Does it stir emotions in you?

BY: Oh yes, yes.

MT-J: So it's quite an emotional experience every year?

BY: It's very emotional, it is. Because you tend to...your mind tends to flood back to people who are no longer here you know, and it's a very very moving ceremony.

MT-J: And as a family you know...you said your dad was a cornet, and your nephew's been the cornet last year, and you know the whole family. Do you have wee sort of family traditions, associated with the common riding? Are there things that you as a family might do?

BY: Well we...not really because you know it's such a busy time, we're not really with each other for that much of the time.

MT-J: No, right!

BY: I mean we always go to Bar Bank which is my mother's house, and there's always a lot of



people...visitors go to Bar Bank, you know from different Border towns that we've met and we always lunch at Bar Bank. And it's a wonderful place to watch the procession coming down the Bar Brae and to watch the cornets chase, so yes it's become a tradition and it's become a tradition that people always appear, you know they just know to come. And a lot of people do have traditions that are adhered to every year, you know about where they stand and who they stand with, where they are in the procession, what they eat and what they drink, you know?

MT-J: Now you're an ex-cornet, and I just wondered you know...I know you're very musical Billy, do you have a particular role now in the common riding?

BY: Well I am one of the Castle Craig's fair criers, there's two of us there's me and David Poole...ex-cornet David Poole, so we take it in turns to cry the fair. I do a lot of after dinner speaking at smokers and dinners at the common riding, and I sing obviously. Last year I was actually president o' the Castle Craig's Club I've been president twice of the Castle Craig's Club and president twice of the ex-cornets association.

MT-J: Can you say something about the Castle Craig's Club?

BY: The Castle Craig's Club is a...it's a club that was formed in Nineteen thirty five, by the late ex-cornet Watt Robinson to foster the common riding spirit and support everything appertaining to the common riding. It's a male-only club, but basically it's there to support the common riding and to encourage the young boys to ride well...to learn to ride horses well, and they, as I said before, they organise all the pre-common riding ride-outs. The big day for the Castle Craig's Club is the Castle Craig's ride-out which is on the Saturday...what they ca' 'the Seturday afore', the Saturday before the common riding. And anybody that wants to join the Castle Craig's Club has to ride the Castle

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Craig's ride-out. And once they've done that, they go to the dinner at night and they get presented with their badge of office and their tie by the cornet. And it's quite a riotous occasion. One of the highlights is when the town band comes in, to play the common riding airs and the place just erupts, it just takes off. But it's done a lot of good over the years the Castle Craig's Club, it's supported a lot of local charities...it was the single largest donator of money to build the Buccleuch Hall, and it raised a lot of money to convert the Castle Holm back to the base for the common riding after it was a wartime camp.

MT-J: So one of the things that you said there that you do cry the fair, at the Castle Craig's. On the common riding day in the market place, somebody has to stand on the back of a horse do you have to stand on the back of a horse at the Castle Craig's, to do that?

BY: That's right, yes, yes.

MT-J: How does that feel?

BY: It's...it can be a bit hairy! In the past, there used to be a...there was a stream of very good fair crying horses that stayed in the town, and they were very very reliable there was one at the [?] farm called 'Old Faithful', and it was used to cry the fair for years and years and years, and then ex-cornet Alan Currie had a white that they used to cry the fair off for years, but recently, they seemed to change the fair crier's horse each year. And it means that you're never very sure how its

gonna stand. Last year, for instance, the fair crier's horse wouldn't stand...it wouldn't stand in the market place for the first fair and it wouldn't stand at the Castle Craig's, and it kind of threw me last year a wee bit because I couldn't get onto its back. So what David and I do is to climb up onto the cairn, and cry the fair from the cairn, but unfortunately the fair crier himself doesn't have that luxury.

MT-J: No. Do you think at the end of this you could maybe cry the fair for us?

BY: Mm hmm, yes.

MT-J: Just a couple of questions really that I wanted to ask you about...the common riding in the future, there's probably a lot of things that we could cover again you know we've covered some things to do with the common riding but we'll maybe do another session another night?

BY: yes, certainly.

MT-J: How do you think the common riding...do you think it'll survive in the future, I mean do you think it's...you know it's a very traditional thing, and do you think there's enough feeling amongst the young folk and everything to keep it going?

BY: Most definitely, most definitely. It's never...it's only getting bigger and bigger, and by that I mean the number of people that turn up, which has its plusses it also has its minuses, but as far as the passion for the common riding's concerned it's never diminished. The only downside at the minute is the fact that because we've lost the stable industries of textiles, quite a number of the youngsters in the town are leaving to find jobs elsewhere...to go to college or university and then they're finding employment outwith the town, but they always come back for the common riding, the common riding is without a doubt is the day of the year, and it's when the exiles come home from all over the world.

MT-J: And is that a lot of people that come home?

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BY: Oh yes, yes, I mean the population of Langholm will double or triple even on the common riding day. There's no doubt the passion is there and the passion is there from 'womb to tomb' as we talk about you know, from the kids wi' their heather besoms...you know the nippers the little toddlers, you know to the very end o' your life...it's a passion that never leaves you. So...there's no fear that apathy'll ever destroy Langholm Common Riding, it won't.

MT-J: Hugh MacDiarmid in some of his poems he made some sort of references to the common riding didn't he? And he came regularly to the common riding?

BY: He did, he did. He wrote his master work...his 'Tam O'Shanter' was 'A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle', and it was full of imagery associated with Langholm Common Riding, particularly the thistle, 'The mony branched candelabra' as he called it, and he came back every year to the common riding, and he said that on Langholm Common Riding...Langholm and common riding day was world enough for him, and he was, towards the end of his life he was very...you know he was very famous, and of course his head was so characteristic, was so unique that you would often see him in the procession or in the street. He found a lot of inspiration from the common riding, and he always said that Langholm was the bonniest place that he knew in the whole wide world, and

that it was his touchstone, it remained his touchstone in all creative matters, so he found his inspiration from Langholm in everything that he did.

MT-J: Well, I think we'll maybe finish off with a rendition of the fair crying, is that all right Billy that you do that? And I'm sure there's a lot of things as I say that we could touch on again or come back to?

BY: Yes.

MT-J: To do with the common riding, but if you could give us a rendition of the fair cry I think that would be fantastic.

*[Billy prepares himself]*

BY: Gentlemen! Oh gentlemen, we have gaun roon our hill, so now I think it right we had a fill against strang punch, t'would mak us a' to sing. Because this day we have done a guid thing, for gaunning roon our hill we think nae shame, because frae it oor peats and flaks come hame, so now I will conclude and say nae mair, but [?] yer a' pleased, I'll cry the Langholm Fair. Oy's yes! That's yin time, Oy's yes! That's twee times. Oy's yes! That's the third and the last time. This is to gie notice that there's a muckle fair to be hadden in the muckle toon o' the Langholm, on the Fifteenth day of July I'll auld style upon His Grace The Duke of Buccleuch's merk land for the [ ? ] days and upwards, and a' land-louper and dub-scouper and gae by the gate swingers that come here to breed hurdums or durdums, huliments or buliments, hagglements or bragglements, or come here to molest this public fair, they shall be ta'en by order o' the Baillie and the Toon cooncil and their lugs shall be nailed to the Tron wi' a twallpenny nail, and they shall get doon on their bare knies and pray, seeven times to the King, and thrice to the muckle Laird o' Ralton, and pee a groat tae my, Jamie ferguson Baillie o' the aforesaid manor. So now we'll awa hame, and hae a barley bannock and a saut herring to me denner, be the way o' auld style!

END 00:44:26