

THE STOCK-AND-HORN.

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The stock-and-horn represents a vanished type of eighteenth-century pastoral pipe which appears to have led at most a shadowy existence in the southern half of Scotland, though Burns¹ mentions a specimen he obtained from as far north as the Braes of Athole. It presents a problem to the musicologist in that, while it closely resembled the practice-chanter (*i.e.* the melody pipe of the bagpipe, divested of blowpipe, bag and drones), a surviving specimen is of the utmost rarity and references to it in art and literature are equally rare. The writer issued to the Scottish press in July 1934 a short letter describing the instrument and asking to be informed of any surviving specimens. Although the letter was accorded fairly wide publicity, no specimen was reported.

To understand the instrument, we must first consider its near relative the hornpipe, for the stock-and-horn is a hybrid between the hornpipe and the bagpipe-chanter.

The hornpipe is represented in Britain by the Welsh pibgorn² which appears in a stained-glass window of the Beauchamp Chapel, St Mary's, Warwick, temp. *ca.* 1443,³ and is mentioned at Oxford in 1448,⁴ but became obsolete during the eighteenth century (fig. 1). A cylindrical tube of elder-wood or bone (*e.g.* the tibia of a deer) was hollowed and perforated with six

¹ Burns' *Letters*, 19th November 1794.

² "Some Account of Two Musical Instruments used in Wales," by the Hon. Daines Barrington, in *Archæologia*, vol. iii. (London, 1775), pp. 30-34, and pl. vii.

³ "Notes on the Musical Instruments figured in the Windows of the Beauchamp Chapel, St Mary's, Warwick," by William Bentley, in *Transactions of the Birmingham Archæological Society*, vol. liii. (1928), pp. 167-72.

⁴ In Anstey's *Munimenta Academica* at Oxford—"Inventory of Symon Beryngton, Scholar, 1448, Item-Unum Hornpipe."

finger-holes on top and a thumb-hole below. To the lower end was fitted a "bell" consisting of a piece of horn with serrated edge, and to the upper end, serving as a small air reservoir, a similar piece of horn, but with smooth edge within which the lips were pressed to set in vibration a small cylindrical beating-reed inserted in the upper end of the tube. The total length was about 16 inches, and the scale produced was that of f' major. Only three original pibgorns appear to survive, and of these two are preserved in the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.¹ One bears the date 1701.² The third is in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries, London.

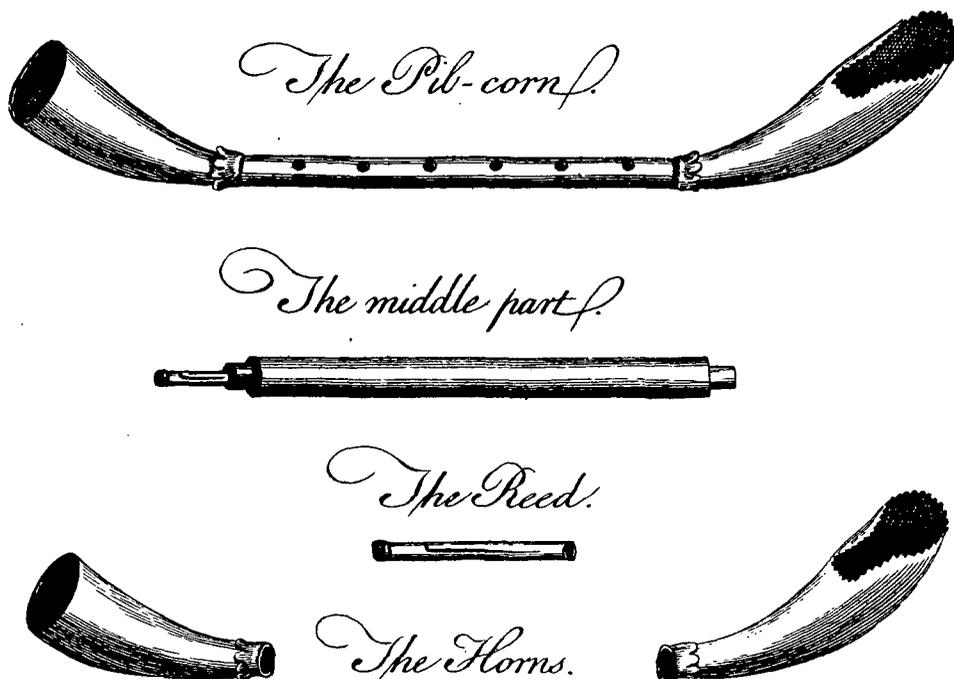


Fig. 1.

[From *Archæologia*, III (1775), pl. 7.]

The stock-and-horn retained the reed, the tube of wood or bone, and the horn bell-mouth of the pibgorn, but in other respects displayed local variations; *e.g.* Burns' specimen from Perthshire had no mouthpiece, the oaten reed being held in the lips. When present, the mouthpiece consisted of an elongated wooden capsule fitted to the upper end of the tube into which the single reed was inserted and was consequently covered—as in the modern bagpipe practice-chanter, in which, however, a double reed is now employed.

¹ "Welsh Musical Instruments," by Dr I. C. Peate, in *Man*, 1947, 17, with illustrations.

² Until the year 1800 Mr Wynn of Penhescedd, Anglesey, gave an annual prize to the best performer on the hornpipe.

So far only two original specimens of the stock-and-horn have been traced, and both are the work of skilled craftsmanship. The first belonged to Charles Keene, the *Punch* artist, and is now preserved in the Library of the Royal College of Music, London. It has a cylindrical tube of wood pierced by seven finger-holes and one thumb-hole. The lower end terminates in a short bell of natural horn. The upper end, into which would be inserted a single reed (not a double reed as shown here), is covered by a wooden capsule like that of the practice-chanter. The total length is 21 inches.

The other and probably unique example is that preserved in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland. It has a narrow "stock" of ebony, a double bore—each bore of $5\frac{1}{2}$ mm. in diameter and 9 inches long—and pierced with seven finger-holes and a thumb-hole so arranged in pairs that each finger and the thumb opens or closes two holes at once. The late Canon F. W. Galpin, the noted English musicologist, has observed that the object of the double bore appears to have been the production of a strong beating tone from mistuned consonances, precisely as in the Egyptian *zummarah* or double reed-pipe of to-day in which single-beating reeds are employed. The scale is from *f'* to *g*", and the total length 22 inches. Both these instruments are decorated with bands of ivory between the finger-holes, and might be the work of the same individual. The reed-cap of the Edinburgh specimen is 7 inches long and is roughly carved with a thistle device and the letters "J.A." The horn "bell" is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches in diameter at the mouth. Nothing is known of its origin beyond the fact that this stock-and-horn was in the collection of Scottish antiquities presented by the Trustees of James Drummond, R.S.A., in 1877. Canon Galpin had a facsimile of the Edinburgh specimen made for his private collection, and he exhibited it, with a facsimile pibgorn, at the International Music Exhibition, 1900, and again at the Music Loan Exhibition, 1904. In 1916 the facsimiles, with his collection of 564 instruments, passed into the possession of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A.¹

It is to the stock-and-horn that Lady Grizel Baillie (1665–1746) probably refers in her pastoral "Absence":²

"Oh, the ewe-buchtin's bonnie, baith e'ening and morn
When our blithe shepherds play on the bog-reed and horn;³
While we're milking, they're liltin', baith pleasant and clear.
But my Heart's like to break when I think on my dear.

¹ *Ancient Musical Instruments*, by N. Bessaraboff, being Catalogue of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A., 1941. The facsimiles are accurately described under Nos. 90 and 89 and depicted in pl. I.

² *Songs of Scotland prior to Burns*, edited by R. Chambers (1862), p. 313.

³ *Bag-reed* occurs as an alternative reading, but, if hyphenated, is meaningless, and *bog-reed* in association with *horn* strongly suggests the reed-blown stock-and-horn.

Oh, the shepherds take pleasure to blow on the horn,
 To raise up their flocks o' sheep soon i' the morn,
 On the bonnie green banks they feed pleasant and free,
 But, alas, my dear heart, all my sighing's for thee!"

Ritson in his *Historical Essay on Scottish Songs* (London, 1794) includes several vignettes, and states¹ that these were executed by David Allan (1744-96). Chambers, in his edition of *The Songs of Scotland prior to Burns* (1862), reproduces several of Allan's vignettes from Ritson's *Essay* and remarks that the early eighteenth century was a time of poetical genius and



Fig. 2.

Vignette by David Allan on title-page of Ritson's *Essay on Scottish Songs* (1794).

of idealisation of the life of the hard-working peasantry, portraying them as "shepherds with pipes and crooks and coy damosels, seated among purling brooks and shady groves."² The frontispiece to each of Ritson's two volumes is the vignette here shown (fig. 2). The four lines below are from Horace.³ Ritson refers his readers to the elegant edition of *The Gentle Shepherd* (1788), in which a stock-and-horn appears under David Allan's engraving of Allan Ramsay (1685-1758) with a mask, a crook and a leaf of music. A similar but only partially visible representation appears above the poet in the frontispiece to the 1808 edition.

The stock-and-horn is thus described in *Notes to Dr Pennecuik's Description of Tweeddale*:⁴

¹ P. cxvii, footnote 120. ² *Songs of Scotland prior to Burns*, p. 338. ³ *Odes*, Book IV, No. xii.

⁴ It should be noted that although Dr Pennecuik's work dates from 1715, the *Notes* are of much later date, being partly by Armstrong in 1775 and partly by Findlater in 1802.

“The common flute is an improvement on the original genuine Scottish pastoral pipe, consisting of a cow’s horn, a bower-tree *stock* from *stoc* (Gaelic) . . . called the Stock-in-Horn, with stops in the middle and an oaten *reed* at the smaller end for the mouthpiece.”

In 1794 Burns wrote to Alexander Cunningham¹ in connection with a seal on which he wished his armorial bearings cut:

“I am a bit of a herald and shall give you *secundum artem* my Arms: ²

On a field azure, a holly bush, seeded, proper, in base; a shepherd’s pipe and crook, Saltierwise, also proper, in chief. On a wreath of the colors, a woodlark perching on a sprig of bay-tree, proper, for crest. . . .

By the shepherd’s pipe and crook, I do not mean the nonsense of Painters of Arcadia: but a Stock-and-Horn and a Club; such as you see at the head of Allan Ramsay in Allan’s quarto edition of the Gentle Shepherd.”

Apparently Burns determined to procure a specimen of the stock-and-horn, and, having done so, he wrote later in 1794 to George Thomson³ in criticism of Allan’s engravings:

“Tell my friend Allan that I much suspect he has, in his plates, mistaken the figure of the stock and horn. I have at last gotten one; but it is a very rude instrument: it is composed of three parts; the stock, which is the hinder thigh-bone of a sheep, such as you see in a mutton-ham; the horn, which is a common Highland cow’s horn, cut off at the smaller end, until the aperture be large enough to admit the stock to be pushed up through the horn, until it be held by the thicker end of the thigh-bone; and lastly, an oaten reed, exactly cut and notched like that which you see every shepherd boy have when the corn stems are green and full-grown. The reed is not made fast in the bone, but is held by the lips and plays loose in the smaller end of the stock, while the stock with the horn hanging on its larger end, is held by the hands in playing. The stock has six or seven ventiges on the upper side, and one back ventige, like the common flute. This of mine was made by a man from the braes of Athole, and is exactly what the shepherds were wont to use in that country. However, either it is not quite properly bored in the holes, or else, we have not the art of blowing it rightly; for we can make little of it. If Mr Allan chooses, I will send him a sight of mine.”

¹ Burns’ *Letters*, 3rd March 1794.

² The armorial bearings invented by Burns were never matriculated by him or his descendants. J. H. Stevenson in his *Heraldry in Scotland* (vol i, p. 5) remarks that Burns’ device appeared on three separate subsequent occasions as part of armorial bearings matriculated at the Lyon Office, but in none are the poet’s mottoes perpetuated, nor is his blazon itself entirely adhered to. His shepherd’s pipe (stock-and-horn) is turned into a bugle-horn. This transformation occurs also in the Centenary Medal of Robert Burns in 1859. Vide *Catalogue of Medals of Scotland* by R. W. Cochran-Patrick (1884), No. 85, p.127.

³ Burns’ *Letters*, 19th November 1794.

In reply,¹ Thomson wrote:

“Allan desires me to thank you for your accurate description of the Stock-and-Horn and for the very gratifying compliment you pay him in considering him worthy of standing in a niche by the side of Burns, in the Scottish Pantheon. He has seen the rude instrument you describe, so does not want you to send it; but wishes to know whether you believe it to have ever been generally used as a musical pipe by the Scottish shepherds, and when, and in what part of the country chiefly. I doubt much if it was capable of anything but routing and roaring. A friend of mine says he remembers to have heard one in his younger days (made of wood instead of your bone), and that the sound was abominable.”

Burns does not appear to have replied to this inquiry.

In *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725), Allan Ramsay wrote:

“When I begin to tune my Stock-and-Horn
 Wi a’ her face she shaws a cauld rife scorn.
 Last night I play’d—ye never heard sic spite!
O’er Bogie was the spring² and her delyte;—
 Yet tauntingly she at her cousin speer’d
 ‘Gif she could tell what tune I play’d?’ and sneer’d.
 Flocks wander where ye like, I dinna care,
 I’ll break my reed and never whistle mair.”

Ramsay owned a stock-and-horn which, with his shepherd’s blue bonnet, became the property of Sir David Wilkie, R.A. (1785-1841), who utilised them in his picture “*The Gentle Shepherd*,” now in the National Gallery of Scotland. The horn and the bonnet passed to Gourlay Steele, R.S.A., and thence to Wm. Moir Bryce, Edinburgh, who lent them to the Scottish Exhibition in Glasgow in 1911 with the original MS. of *The Gentle Shepherd*. Since Mr Bryce’s death in 1919 all trace of these relics has been lost.

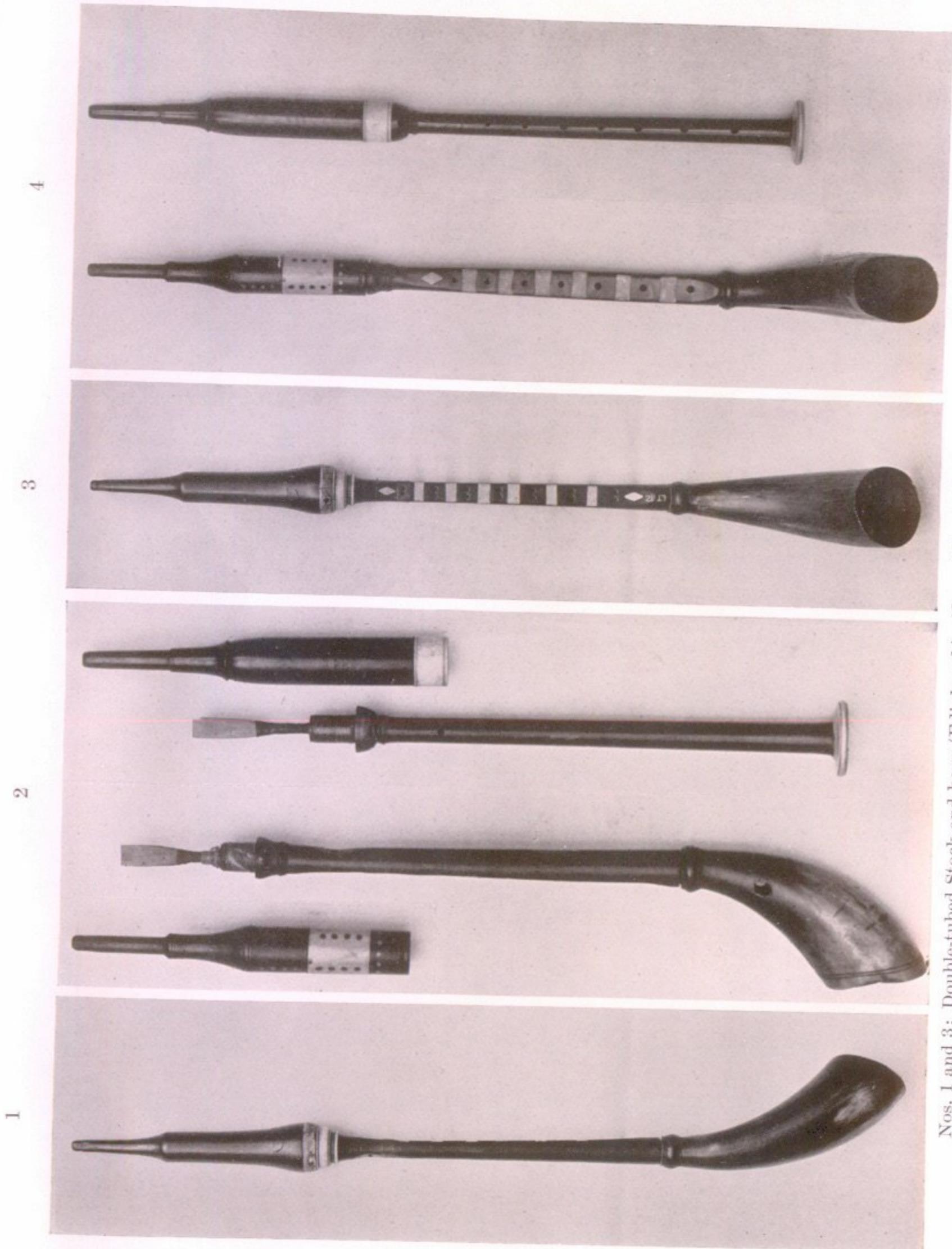
At Newhall, Midlothian, associated with the setting of *The Gentle Shepherd*, there is, to the left of the main door of the mansion house, a carved stone on which appears a wreath, a shepherd’s crook, and a stock-and-horn of the type portrayed by David Allan.

The house, 2 Abercorn Gardens, Edinburgh, once the home of Hugh Miller, the geologist (1802-56), and now Restalrig Manse, contains a stained-glass window in which six Scottish poets are represented—Sir David Lyndsay, Blind Harry, Allan Ramsay, James Thomson, Sir Walter Scott and Thomas Campbell. Beneath Ramsay is a ram with, significantly, a stock-and-horn and bluebells.

The instrument was still occasionally depicted in the nineteenth century—

¹ Burns’ *Letters*, 29th November 1794.

² “*O’er Bogie* was the tune.” It is given in the 1788 edition of *The Gentle Shepherd* with the words of two eight-line stanzas.



Nos. 1 and 3: Double-tubed Stock-and-horn (Edinburgh), side and front views.
No. 2: Single-tubed Stock-and-horn (London), side view, with reed-cap removed, and practice-chanter similarly.
No. 4: The same, front view, and practice-chanter similarly.

e.g. in the frontispiece to *The Caledonian Musical Repository* published in Edinburgh in 1811—and on the cover of James Dewar's *Popular National Melodies* (ca. 1826) a shepherd is shown seated beneath a tree playing a stock-and-horn. With the passage of time, the precise nature of the obsolete instrument was forgotten. Thus, such a noted musicologist as the late A. J. Hipkins¹ errs when he states: "The lowland Scotch shepherd's pipe is made of horn, the cover for the reed being also of horn." As has been shown, the pipe was of bone or wood, and the reed-cover, where present, was of wood.² He has confused the Scottish stock-and-horn with the Welsh pibgorn, which invariably had a reed-cover of horn.

Engel³ depicts a Welsh pibgorn, and describes both it and a stock-and-horn lent by J. Gordon Smith, London. This latter instrument was No. 381 at the Special Exhibition of Ancient Musical Instruments at the South Kensington Museum in 1872, and appears in a photographic plate in the Catalogue published in 1873. At the International Inventions Exhibition, 1885, what appears to be the same stock-and-horn was lent by Charles Keene, who had presumably acquired it from J. Gordon Smith.

Engel suggests that the stock-and-horn is denoted "corne pipe" in an enumeration of instruments played by eight shepherds in the *Complaynt of Scotland* (1548):

"The fyrst had ane drone bagpipe, the next hed ane pipe maid of ane bleddir and of ane reid, the third playit on ane trump, the feyerd on ane corne pipe, the fyfth on ane pipe maid of ane gait horne, the sext playit on ane recorder, the sevent plait on ane fiddil, and the last plait on ane quhissel."

Sir John Dalryell, however, in his comprehensive survey of Scottish musical instruments,⁴ makes no mention of the stock-and-horn.

A distinction must be made between the *stock-and-horn* and the *stockhorn*. Frequently, as in Grove's *Dictionary of Music*,⁵ the terms have been treated as synonymous, but Sir John Skene's description⁶ of the *stockhorn* in use in 1597 shows it to have been a crude type of forester's horn, such as he had seen blown in Switzerland in 1568, and not the reed-blown instrument later known as stock-and-horn.

The late Professor Henry Balfour, Curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, has shown⁷ that these British forms—pibgorn and stock-and-horn—belong to a large family of reed-pipes whose natural and original home is in the East and whose reeds are "single"—of the simplest kind. The late

¹ *Musical Instruments, Historic, Rare and Unique* (Edinburgh, 1888), Introduction.

² It will be noted that the specimen Burns described had no reed-cap.

³ *Catalogue of the Instruments in the South Kensington Museum* (1874), p. 373.

⁴ *Musical Memoirs of Scotland* (1849).

⁵ 4th edition, s.v. *Stockhorn*.

⁶ *De Verborum Significatione*, by John Skene (1597), s.v. *Menetum*.

⁷ "The Old British Pibgorn or Hornpipe and its Affinities," in *Journ. Anthropological Inst.*, vol. xx., 1890.

Canon Galpin found that the Assyrians (*ca.* 900 B.C.) utilised a horn-ended pipe with covered reed. Originally a protection to the delicate reed, the cap or cover was perforated, creating a secondary use for it as a mouthpiece and wind-chamber through which the reed could be sounded. More or less similar types are found in China, India, Persia, Arabia, the Grecian Archipelago, and the Spanish Basque provinces,¹ illustrating a gradual migration westwards. Brought to the British Isles with the Celtic immigration, the type survived for a time in those regions in which Celtic blood has held its own.²