



PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH

## EDINBURGH AND THE LOWLANDS

THE Lowlands of Scotland possess many attributes and aspects of scenery that are shared, to some extent, by every other district or area in the country. Yet the Lowlands have an atmosphere of their own that is recaptured nowhere else in all Scotland. They are intensely Scottish, in characteristics and personality: they are, indeed, just "a part of Scotland"; but they maintain an individuality of their own, subtle and elusive, that the sensitive visitor is aware of throughout his sojourn.

It is a wide area that we call the Lowlands. Not so wide, nor so extensive, as the northern parts we call the Highlands. But within its narrower boundaries it is compact of beauty,

and rich in historical lore and relic. It is a gentler countryside altogether than the Highlands; yet, in the wilds of Galloway and Upper Clydesdale, it has a Highlands of its own! The Leadhills, west of the prosperous valley village of Crawford, rise to considerable heights, and there, at Daer Water, 1600 feet up, is the little trickling rivulet of water that is the source of the mighty Clyde. It is a land of wide rolling moorlands fringed with hills, of great rivers wending through wild woodlands, of fertile meadowlands and valleys heavy with the scent of clover and wild rose, of magnificent orchards and of smooth, short hillsides smothered in wild flowers, of vantage



points offering incomparable views, and of coastlines of flashing sands and massive cliffs.

So it is that the Lowlands can be called a small or miniature Scotland, being in scenic variety and splendour representative of the whole country. (This happens, too, in the wildest parts of Sutherland and even on a Hebridean island such as Lewis. There one comes upon sylvan dells and dales as sweet and sun-cosy as anything to be discovered in the more sun-favoured Lowlands—or on Surrey or Sussex, for that matter!) Flashes of the same thing are constantly recurring throughout Scotland; but each area succeeds in preserving its own character. Thus, the traveller from England, once north of the Cheviots, has glimpses in those Lowland passes and woodlands and moors of something akin to far-off Inverness-shire, Sutherland, and the farthest Hebrides.

Someone once said that the poetry in Sir Walter Scott's verses was born largely from the music of the place names he so cleverly used. This is true; and he lived his life in magical places that held poetry in their very names. Edinburgh, the Capital, by regal right, and by beauty also, is for Lowland people their "Big Town," their chief shopping

centre, marketing place, and source of supplies. Edinburgh is the vaunted figure-head of all Scotland; it is the Lowlands' own homely capital! Many a humble Lowlander doesn't realise that "Auld Reekie" is famous throughout the world as a jewel among European Capitals. He treats it as his own home town, and so, perhaps, contributes something essential in keeping ancient traditions alive in the age-old heart of the modern city.

Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Melrose, Abbotsford, Jedburgh, Kelso, Galashiels, Berwick, Lanark—all of these names and many more close by them are subtly charged with the atmosphere of heroic days of battles long ago, of golden legends and romance.

But the chief characteristic of the Lowlands, one might say, is a pervading blandness. The climate is equable. Certain towns and villages in the south hold enviable records for sunshine and, throughout the whole area, the weather is the most dependable in all Scotland. Wherever one goes, there is a sense of well-being, of goodness, coming from the rich earth into which man has put his strength for centuries past. History lives not only in monuments and ruined abbeys; it lives in the yearly produce of the soil as well.



EAST BAY,  
NORTH BERWICK

Photo by Valentine, Dundee



THE HARBOUR,  
ST. ABBS



*Photo by Valentine, Dundee*

East Lothian, that serene little corner on the south of the Firth of Forth, with its wonderful seascapes and popular modern resorts, Aberlady, Gullane, and North Berwick, on the shores of the Forth itself, has, like so many places farther south, the double attractions of coastal pleasures and deep rural beauty. Its resorts are dedicated to the pleasant task of entertaining visitors in the summer, while having an authentic all-the-year-round business of their own. Dunbar, with its magnificent views of the North Sea and northern headlands, is a famous holiday centre, dominated by the ruins of its historic castle, and alive with present-day activities, such as swimming pools for adults and children, and facilities for the active sportsman who wants to have his daily round of golf or game of tennis. Dunbar, like its neighbours on that coast, has equal attractions for people who want a quiet, restful holiday; there are delightful interior walks,

and rambles along the coast, with the Bass Rock, famous in history and story, uprising on the seaview, and the Lammermuir hills blue in the summer haze to the south. There are indeed some wonderful pastoral scenes in East Lothian.

The same characteristics are maintained in Berwickshire south of the Lammermuir Hills. The coast line here is of marvellous diversity, with St. Abbs, perhaps, the jewel of the little towns and villages that face out to the North Sea. St. Abbs itself is intensely representative of the whole coast, St. Abbs Head being one of the most spectacular landmarks in the whole neighbourhood. But life there has the rusticity that is to be discovered further inland, in rich farming land, in leafy lanes and open roads of wide prospects, and in the atmosphere of a general well-being. All of which continues in our southward journeyings, to the famous towns of Kelso and Coldstream, to Jedburgh, to Hawick, and



many a delectable little township and village in lovely Roxburghshire. The Cheviot Hills dominate the southern prospect, with Cheviot (2676 feet) eastwards. This is Lowland country, steeped in the sense of the Past, and alive with modern activities. Rivers wend their leisurely way to the sea, through woodland and fair pastures, and over moorlands where little lochs attract the angler throughout the season. All this beautiful district, preserving its essential atmosphere of rural quietude, has constant diversions for the energetic sportsman, the ramblers and

the hikers. Endless roads and by-ways make a fascinating pattern for the traveller through the green and golden land.

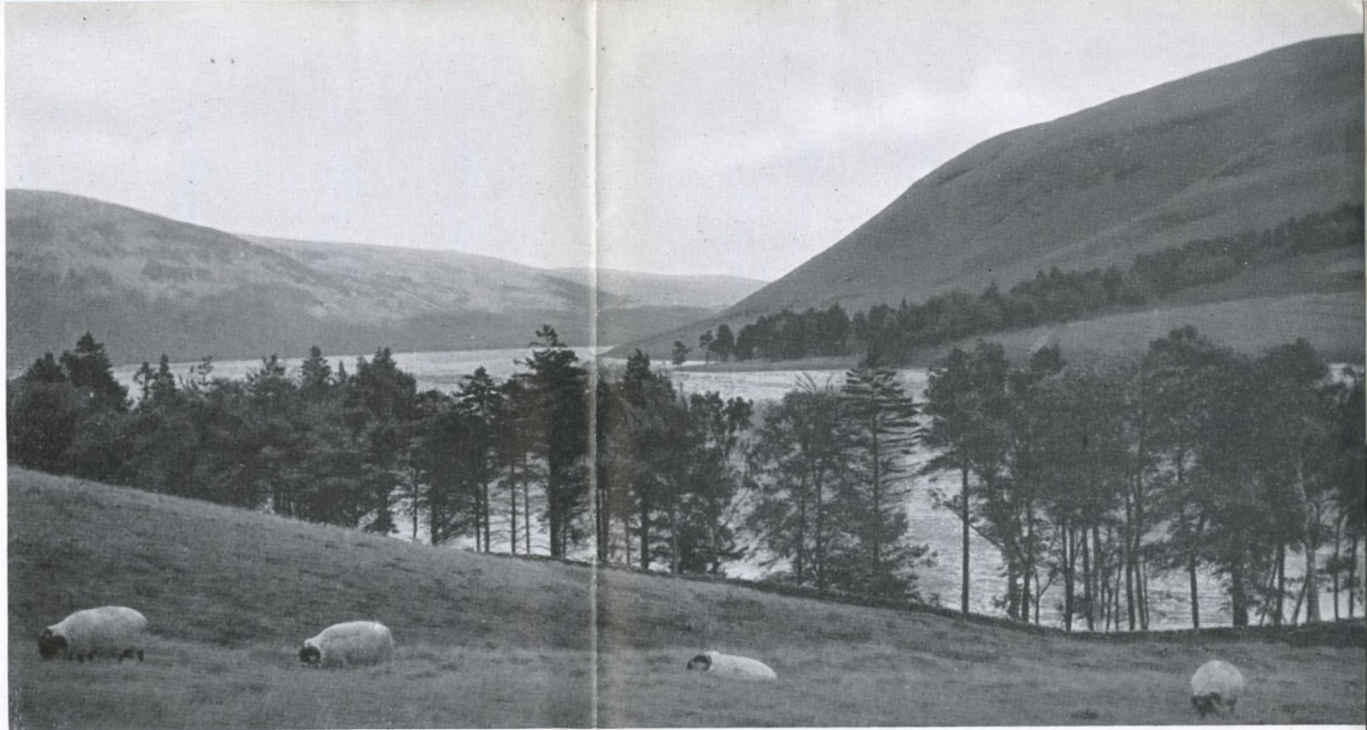
Westward, there are some classic names to be mentioned, in the entrancing shires of Selkirk and Peebles and Dumfries. Here we are far inland, among the relics of olden days that Scott knew so well and made us all familiar with, the lovely ruins of Melrose Abbey, one of the most famous and most beautiful of the Border buildings, of Dryburgh, and Abbotsford. From Galashiels and Melrose, both modern towns with ancient



MELROSE  
ABBEY

Photo by  
Scotsman  
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ST. MARY'S LOCH

Photo by Valentine, Dundee

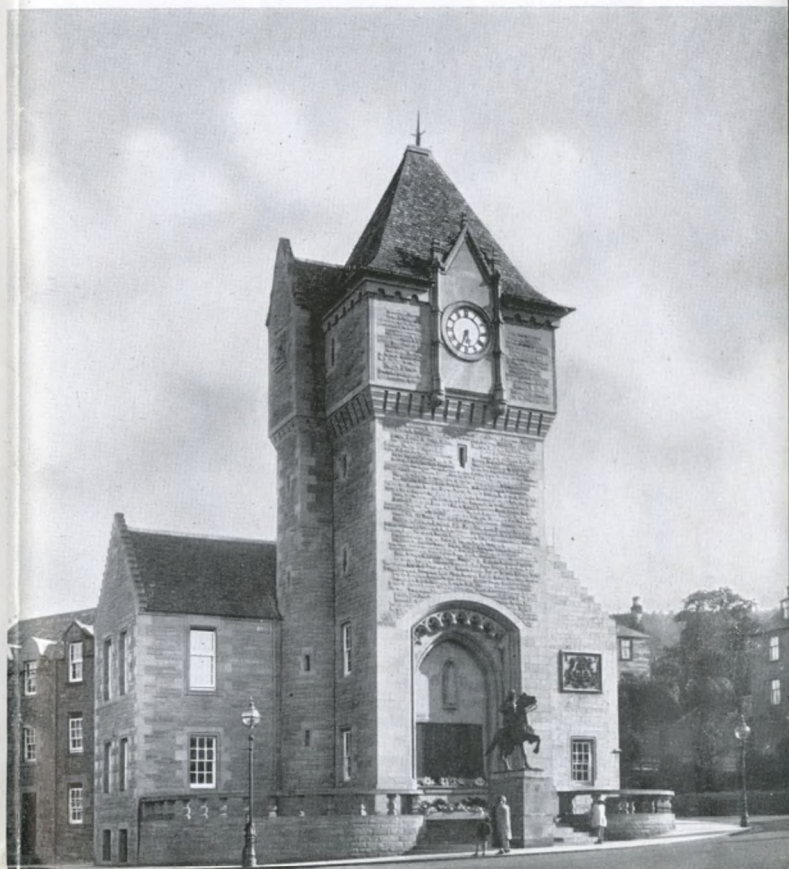
associations, the scenery westwards becomes more intimate. It yet maintains a spaciousness, with distant sky-lines, open vistas and quick changing aspects of the same type of thing. Great woodlands are there, with the mighty Tweed flowing serenely through, and the Yarrow Water, St. Mary's Loch, and many a smaller sheet of water the angler learns of, and tributaries to the major rivers, in open moorland and in fairy dells of birch and beech and hazel.

This whole country, with Peebles and Innerleithen and Selkirk, little stars of towns surrounded by supernal scenery, and in themselves hives of industry and pleasant welcomes for the visitor, with every kind of modern recreation offered, has the real nobility of a finely cultivated land. There is little to touch it in all Scotland. There is nothing artificial in its trimness, nothing sprawling or ungainly in its massivity. It is a beautiful work of Nature's own into which man has succeeded in weaving a slender pattern of his own, with benefit to himself and without hurt to his glorious environment.

All this sylvan district, and south to Moffat and Langholm, on the River Esk, over mountains and down dales, have sunny prospects

#### WAR MEMORIAL, GALASHIELS

Photo by Valentine, Dundee





and a blend of sea and hill airs that invigorate the body and mind. So it is throughout the Lowlands. The same is to be said of Dumfriesshire, with its famous capital, where Robert Burns lies buried; this splendid marketing town, this holiday resort, this little world-on-its-own; the Solway Firth, with its beautiful Kirkcudbright towns and fishing villages, and so across to Wigtown and the first glimpses of the Irish Channel.

These are all little kingdoms on their own, yet all merge into each other to achieve a vast, single pattern of Scottish life and scenery. There are subtle, slow changes in scene, and, it would seem, changes also in the

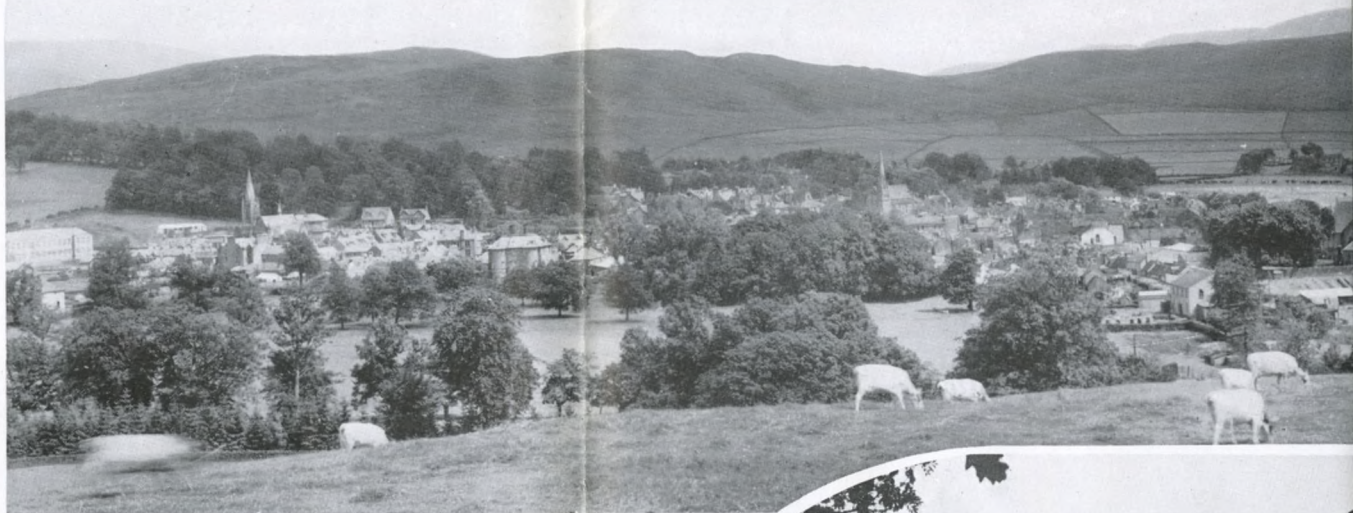
very texture of the wine-sweet air. From the cosy, trim little town of Moffat, for instance, it is not far to the northward heights of the Leadhills. Those twin holiday resorts, Crawford and Abington, shine in open, fertile country, where the river Clyde is making its first fairly prominent appearance. In the hills to the west, at 1600 feet, the Clyde has its inconspicuous source. Here is moorland and graceful hills, preserving the low-lying parts' gentleness of character with a new wealth of wild flowers. Botanists from far countries come here in search of rare plants and marsh and rock flowers, and the whole wide vista of hill and glen, while keeping the

DRYBURGH ABBEY

*Photo by Scotsman Publications Ltd., Edinburgh*





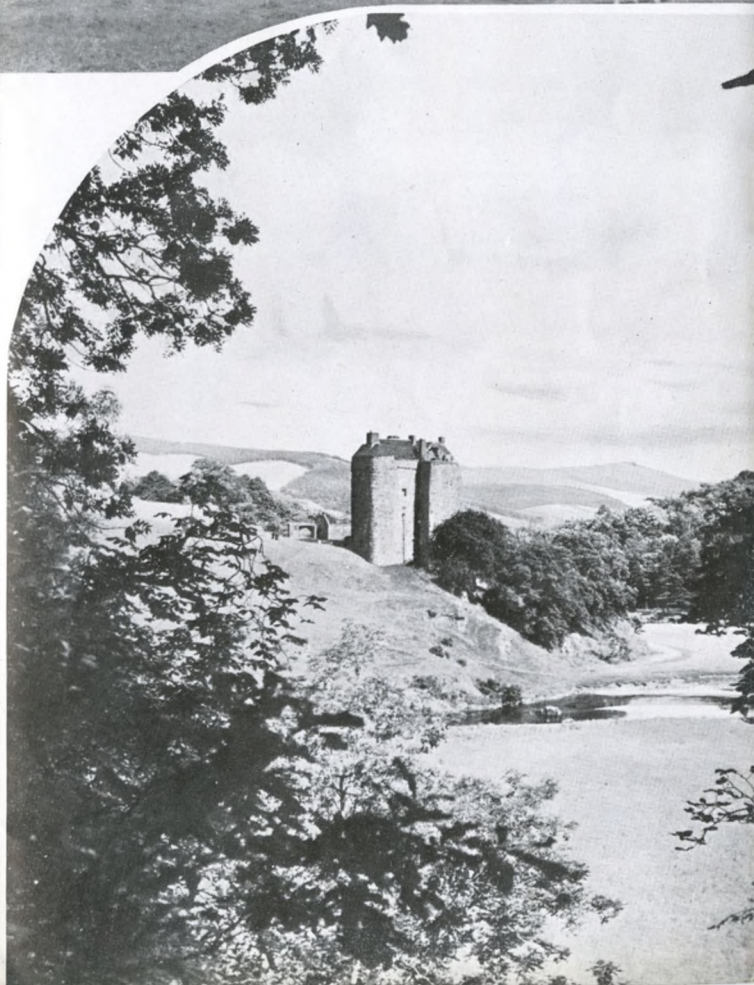


MOFFAT

wild dignity of the mountains, has still the softness and genial warmth of the valleys.

Pleasant days can be spent wandering over these delightful moors and finding heights from where most spectacular views can be gained of the surrounding country and the distant sea. The hills of this part of South Lanarkshire vie with the wilds of the Highlands of Galloway, whose splendid, large curving hill-lines can be seen to the east. And buried among these hills are the famous little mining villages of Leadhills and Wanlockhead. They stand very high, Leadhills being 1300 feet above sea level. Lead, silver and gold are the minerals that have been successfully worked here throughout many generations, and though these activities are not as active to-day as they once were, the olden atmosphere of quiet Scottish husbandry and ancient Scottish hospitality remains.

The whole district, while isolated—that is, perhaps, part of its continuing charm—is instinct with memories of the Past. It is a high country fabled now in Covenanting history, and the many mountain passes, which no visitor should miss, such as the Enterkin Pass,



NEIDPATH CASTLE  
PEEBLES



the Mennock Pass and the Dalveen Pass, have the true grandeur of Scottish mountain glens.

This is the surprising thing of the Lowlands generally to strangers (and even to many Scots), who have always thought of these parts as crowded with woodlands, with sweetly undulating farmland, rich in produce, orchards, and abundance. That, indeed, is the Lowlands; but there is this as well, which testifies to what has been said here, that the Lowlands encompass every phase of Scottish scenery, from the gentlest of pastoral life to the gaunt wildness of mountain passes and the bared cliffs and sandy bays of the lovely east and west coasts.

Nearest neighbours to Leadhills and Wanlockhead, in a community sense, are Crawford and Abington. Lamington and Symington, farther north, claim kinship also. These valley villages are of the most delectable in

all Lanarkshire. The Clyde, gradually gaining impetus from many rivulets and tributaries, en route for its great destiny below Rutherglen and through the heart of Glasgow (which owes all it is to-day to the Clyde), nourishes that lovely valley where these sparkling villages hint always of sunshine and the beatitude of golden summer evenings.

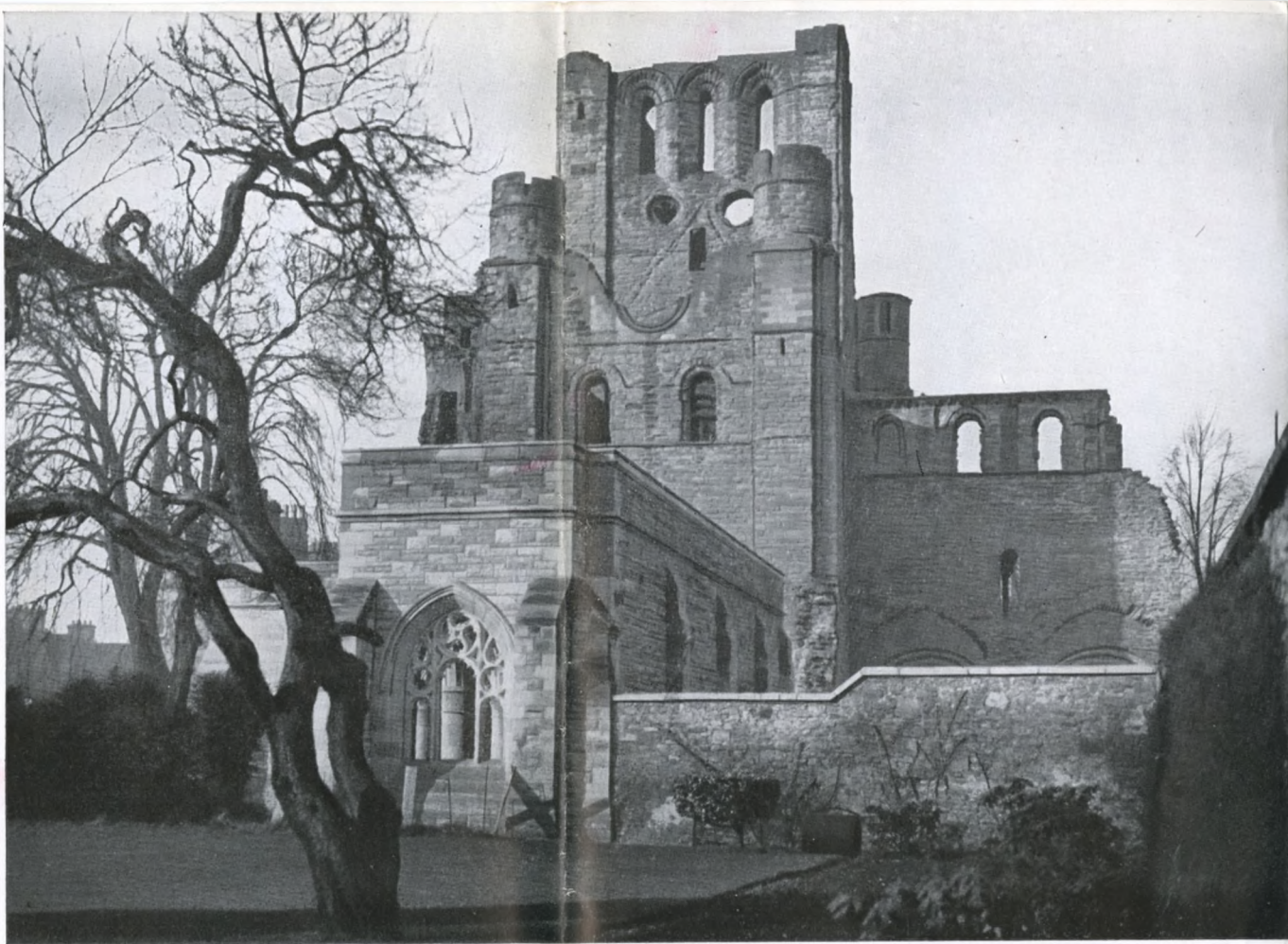
Farther north is another famous Lowland town, Biggar, set between the Clyde and Tweed, with its surrounding country claiming the characteristics of both—the heavily wooded vales and the bright open fields and moorland places. And there is Lanark itself, northwest of Biggar, a busy, thriving, pleasant town, built out of olden Lanarks of the long ago, and surrounded by undulating pasture land and overlooking one of the finest orchard groves in Scotland. This is the chief town of a mighty shire that has both great modern

#### PEEBLES

*Photo by Scotsman Publications Ltd., Edinburgh*







KELSO ABBEY

*Photo by Scotsman Publications Ltd., Edinburgh*

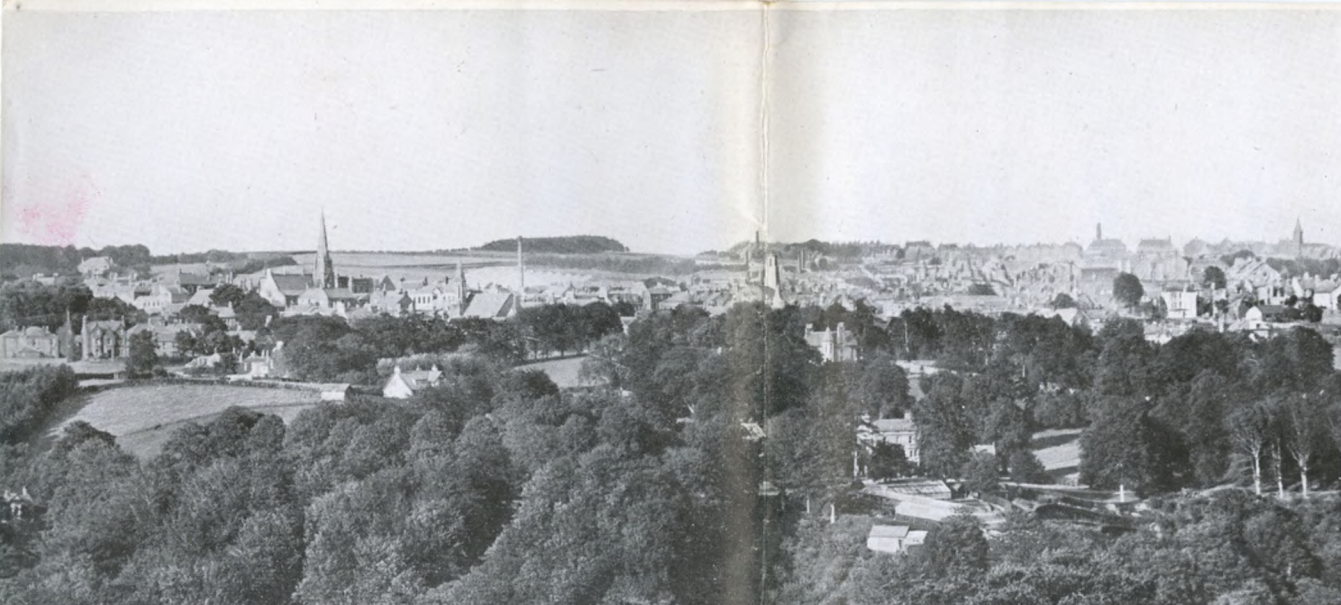
industries and farming communities in their immemorial setting of scented meadowfields and intimate with quiet sylvan passes and endless rural walks. Lanark owns some fealty nowadays to Glasgow, for Glasgow is the industrial magnet of Scotland; but Lanark's real Capital is the Capital itself, Edinburgh, like all the rest of the Lowlands.

This brief survey of Southern Scotland began with a reference to Edinburgh, and it is fitting that it should return there for its conclusion. An American visitor who recently toured the Lowlands said as he was departing: "You have a wonderful Capital; and everyone of the small country towns between it and England that I visited had the same kind of atmosphere. These are but chips off Edinburgh itself, which is never far from your mind."

That was a wonderful compliment to a vital part of Scotland. And it was shrewd, as Scotsmen know.

This, of course, has something to do with the personality of the people whose husbandry and initiative have been maintained throughout the years. The citizens of Edinburgh to-day have as authentic association with the Past as has the beautiful city in which they dwell. The annual Festival of Music and the Arts, which assembles the most distinguished artists from all parts of the world, and vast audiences of people interested in the Arts, shows initiative in present-day Edinburgh that is worthy of the great artistic achievements of the Eighteenth Century. In 1950 the Festival will be held from 20th August until 10th September.





LANARK

A first visit to this "Athens of the North" is both a spiritual and a physical experience. The sheer physical beauty, of situation and contrasting architecture, has to be seen to be believed. Rare pictures and photographs of its every aspect exist in plenty. But they cannot communicate the subtle, all-pervading atmosphere of this wonderful city. That atmosphere—or, as some people prefer to have it, that personality—is a development of the long centuries. The very walls are impregnated with it. The New Town, which would be remarkable by itself in any setting, is finely drawn. But its setting is Edinburgh, and it is therefore unique. The atmosphere of the Ages encompasses it. Princes Street, with its spectacular views of pinnacles and

towers, and dominated by the grey glory of the ancient Castle, has a splendour rarely encountered in the great cities of Europe. The Scott Monument, one of the most photographed and painted of such modern emblems of a Nation's pride, is a powerful presence in the busy thoroughfare and is a superb point for a view of the city.

The Old Town, the whole valley below the King's Park, with Arthur's Seat as a background, the Palace of Holyroodhouse, with the ruins of the fabled Abbey and the graves of early kings and queens of Scotland, the Canongate and the High Street, composing the very heart of the story of Edinburgh in stone and legend, is so intimate, so extensive in detail, that only a personal visit, and leisurely and care-taking at that, can bring its reality to the mind. John Knox's house, the graceful St. Giles Cathedral, the old Scottish Houses of Parliament, and the steep ascent to the Castle itself, are all within comparatively short radius. It is a confined area congested with historic relics and minute details of an age that is gone but still worthy of our tribute and reverence.

And at the Castle, there is a new triumph for Edinburgh, Old and New towns together, the beautiful Shrine which forms the 1914-18 War Memorial, and that, in its almost mystical quietude, links up all that has gone before with what is urgent and vital for us to-day.

LANGHOLM









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