

'THE ROAD TO ROBERTON'

The hill road to Roberton; Ale Water at our feet,
And grey hills and blue hills that melt away and meet,
With cotton-flowers that wave to us and lone whaups that call,
And over all the Border mist - the soft mist over all.

When Scotland married England long, long ago,
The winds spun a wedding-veil of moonlight and snow,
A veil of filmy silver that sun and rain had kissed,
And she left it to the Border in a soft grey mist.

And now the dreary distance doth wear it like a bride,
Out beyond the Langhope Burn and over Essenside,
By Borthwick Wa's and Redfordgreen and on to wild Buccleuch.
And up the Ettrick water, till it fades into the blue.

The winding road to Roberton is little marked of wheels,
And lonely past Blawearie runs the track to Borthwickshiels,
Whitslade is slumbering undisturbed and down in Harden Glen
The tall trees murmur in their dreams of Wat's mosstrooping men.

A distant glint of silver, that is Ale's last goodbye,
Then Greatmoor and Windburgh against a purple sky,
The long line of the Carter, Teviotdale flung wide,
And a slight stir in the heather - a wind from the English side.

The hill road to Roberton's a steep road to climb,
But where your foot has crushed it you can smell the scented Thyme.
And if your heart's a Border heart, look down to Harden Glen,
And hear the blue hills ringing with the restless hoofs again.