

PATHE GAZETTE: 42/53. (DUBLIN)

SELKIRK COMMON RIDING

One of the oldest annual festivals in Scotland the Selkirk Common Riding. The Lady Provost ties on the ribbons of the standard known as the Button of the royal birth flag. The standard is handed over to the standard bearer by the Provost who charges him to carry it worthily and well. The tradition is that one of the men of Selkirk, who formed a ring around the Scottish King of Soden in 1513, returned bearing a captured English flag and cast it in the ancient market place of Selkirk. The standard bearer and his followers are crossing the River Epsen. The town possesses extensive common lands and the custom of riding has been carried on in unbroken sequence annually for over 400 years. The horsemen are proceeding to ride the bounds. Headed by the standard bearer the riders gallop along to the Bailiff. Though the weather is et, nothing can dampen the enthusiasm of the big crowd that has come to witness this ancient ceremony. The procession of civic fathers and craftsmen escorts the riders to the market place for the final ceremony of casting the colours. The standard bearer casts the flag around his head several times, a feat requiring skill and training. As the flag is lowered there is silence for the fallen. His duty completed, the flag is returned to the Provost who congratulates the bearer on bringing it back unsullied and untarnished, and one more ceremony is added to the long line of events in Selkirk's history.