Hugh MacDiarmid: The Thorn on Scotland's Rose

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Hugh MacDiarmid

The Thorn on Scotland's Rose

Spring 1992-Fall 1993
An Exhibition at the Thomas Cooper Library
The University of South Carolina
SANGSCHAW

by

HUGH M'DIARMID

MACBAIN'S FIRST VIRGIL

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
1933

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INTRODUCTION
The G. Ross Roy Collection of Scottish Literature is one of the University of South Carolina's richest research resources. Its multi-faceted aspects extend from the vernacular verse of the 16th century to the poetry and fiction of the present day. The centerpiece of the collection is, of course, the superb collection of Robert Burns, founded by Ross's grandfather, W. Ormiston Roy, and brought to magnificent fruition by his grandson.

The portion of the collection which consists of works by and about the poet Hugh MacDiarmid [C.M. Grieve] is an excellent example of the thoroughness with which the Roy Collection has been created. It contains virtually the whole of the MacDiarmid canon, with significant variant issues of major works, and two important series of presentation inscriptions of books presented by MacDiarmid to his wife, Valda Trevlyn, and to Ross and Lucie Roy.

The University of South Carolina Libraries regards its ongoing relationship with Ross Roy as being of the greatest importance to the formation and definition of its research collections. We wish to dedicate this catalogue as an expression of our gratitude to Ross and to his wife Lucie for their continuing generosity, and we look forward to our continued cooperation with Ross and to the ongoing development and expansion of the Collection.

Roger Mortimer
Head, Special Collections
PREFACE

Collecting the works of Christopher Murray Grieve (or Hugh MacDiarmid, to use his pseudonym) is made particularly difficult because there is no bibliography, or even checklist, of his complete works. Dr. W. R. Aitken has produced a useful list of books by or edited by MacDiarmid, but much of his work is to be found only in the periodicals and books to which he contributed. Because of his many enthusiasms these contributions appeared in publications spread over a very wide subject area. The items listed in this catalogue were almost all taken from the G. Ross Roy Collection of the University of South Carolina’s Special Libraries Division, and were displayed in an exhibition mounted by the division to commemorate the centenary of the poet’s birth on August 11, 1892. While particular attention was paid to works entirely by MacDiarmid in the selection of works to be displayed, the Roy Collection is rich also in works edited by MacDiarmid, or to which he wrote introductions or contributed essays or poems.

Roger Mortimer, Head of Special Collections, and I collaborated on the selection of items to be included, but the descriptions of the works and comments upon them are the work of Mr. Mortimer. I wish to thank Dr. George D. Terry, Vice-Provost and Dean of Libraries and Collections; Dr. Allen H. Stokes and his Division of Special Libraries and Collections, which has generously underwritten the costs of printing this catalogue; Professor Patrick Scott, Department of English, for his ongoing assistance, and Professor John J. Winberry and the Thomas Cooper Society for their sponsorship of the opening reception for this exhibition.

G. Ross Roy
HUGH MACDIARMID: THE THORN ON SCOTLAND'S ROSE


The three-volume Scottish verse anthology Northern numbers (1920-1922) launched the Scottish Literary Renaissance. MacDiarmid's foreword states that the collection: "does not pretend to be in any sense an anthology of contemporary Scottish poetry. It merely consists of representative selections from the mainly current work of certain Scottish poets of today and of tomorrow!" This copy of the first two series was formerly owned by the poet and critic Maurice Lindsay. Roy, personal collection.


The last issue of Northern numbers moves from the established poets, to whom volume one had been dedicated "in affection and pride", to lesser-known writers. The most distinctive contributor is Grieve himself, soon to adopt the pseudonym "Hugh MacDiarmid". 400 copies were printed, and were published by Grieve. Roy collection.


MacDiarmid's first book consists of six poems and six prose studies. The poems are in standard English, in contrast to the composite Scots that MacDiarmid was soon to adopt. Inscribed by MacDiarmid to his second wife: "To Valda with love from Christopher Grieve". Roy, personal collection.


The first book published under the pseudonym "Hugh MacDiarmid". Its publication was a pivotal to the revitalization of Scots poetry. The Glasgow Evening Times's reviewer accurately assessed the situation, stating that MacDiarmid had "revivified the body of Scots poetry, and put the spark of hope in its almost moribund heart".

Three copies are displayed: copy 1 inscribed by MacDiarmid to G. Ross Roy in August 1966 (the inscription, incorporating a six-line poem, is reproduced on the inside front cover of this catalogue); copy 2 in the primary, gold-stamped, dark blue cloth binding; copy 3 in a secondary, light blue composite binding. Sangschaw, like several early works by MacDiarmid, remained in print for many years and was issued in various binding styles. Copy 1: Roy collection; copy 2: Roy, personal collection.
5. Penny wheep. Edinburgh, Blackwood, 1926. The critic Norman MacCaig observed: “when he [MacDiarmid] got hold of a copy of Jamieson’s Dictionary of the older Scottish tongue C.M. Grieve dived in at one end and Hugh MacDiarmid swam ashore at the other”. MacDiarmid applied himself to a task described by John Buchan in the preface to Sangschaw as: “at once reactionary and revolutionary. .... He would treat Scots as a living language and apply to it matters which have been foreign to it since the sixteenth century. Since there is no canon of the vernacular, he makes his own, as Burns did. ... It is a proof that a new spirit is today abroad in the North”. Roy collection.

6. A drunk man looks at the thistle. Edinburgh, Blackwood, 1926. MacDiarmid’s most sustained creative endeavour established him as leader of the Scottish Literary Renaissance. It is widely regarded as his masterpiece. This long poem is to Scottish literature of the twentieth century what Eliot’s Waste land is to English literature. The poem was, in fact, admired by Eliot. Embedded in the protagonist’s ramblings are translations, or more accurately, adaptations (from Alexander Blok, for example). There are also stand-alone poems to be found in Drunk man - see, for example, “O wha’s been here afore me lass”, also displayed in this exhibition. Although he said “Not Burns - Dunbar!” MacDiarmid never denied the greatness of Burns; the Drunk man contains several complimentary references to him, and his influence can be seen on MacDiarmid’s poem. Roy collection.

7. Francis George Scott. An essay on his seventy-fifth birthday. Edinburgh, M. Macdonald, 1955. Francis George Scott taught MacDiarmid at Langholm Academy and played an important role in inspiring A drunk man looks at the thistle. Many years later MacDiarmid wrote: Scott said to me casually one day, when we were talking about poetry, “write a poem about a drunk man looking at a thistle”, and the idea stuck in my head. Scott helped edit the work, though his increasingly elaborate accounts probably inflate his role: “We spent until daybreak ... Christopher arranging them [sections of the poem] on the table like a pack of cards in the order that I indicated as likely to give the best sequences, climaxes, etc. My plans necessitated a pianissimo close ... and I’m pretty certain I supplied the last two lines”. Roy collection.

In Contemporary Scottish studies (1926) MacDiarmid wrote: “The position of Scottish literature compared with that of any other European country is deplorable enough: but that of Scottish music is infinitely worse”. He described Scott as: “the only Scottish composer who has yet... tackled the task of creating a distinctively Scottish idiom - a bridge-over from folk-song to art-form”. In the introduction to this volume Neil Mackay qualifies MacDiarmid’s enthusiasm: “Scott’s work was variable in character, and his finest music probably lies in the MacDiarmid settings of the 1920’s and early 1930’s”. Roy collection.

9. Contemporary Scottish studies. London, Parsons, [1926]. Essays on varied aspects of modern Scots culture. MacDiarmid’s acid appraisal of sacred cows of the Scottish cultural scene inevitably roused strong reaction. Neil Munro’s verses are unceremoniously dismissed: “rhetorical, windy, empty for the most part and bear a curious impression of having been translated”. G.J. Nathan, quoted on J.M. Barrie, defines Barrie’s work: “the triumph of sugar over diabetes”. Marjory Kennedy Fraser’s Songs of the Hebrides, popular harmonic settings of traditional Hebridean songs, are: “definitely 'dated' - they belong to the 90’s and have the appropriate artificiality and decadence” - Kennedy Fraser is “a Rip Van Winkle of Scottish musical development”. The volume contains much of MacDiarmid’s finest polemical work. Roy collection.


11. Albyn; or Scotland and the future, by C.M. Grieve. London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1927. Albyn is vital to the understanding of MacDiarmid’s work. On the revival of the Scots dialect, he states: “English is incapable of affording means of expression for certain of the chief elements of Scottish psychology”. He writes of Burns: “The effect of Burns’ work on Scots poetry is well-known. It has reduced it to a level that is beneath contempt”. Rather, he advocates William Dunbar, “the head of Scottish poetry... the most modern, as he is the most varied, of Scottish poets”, uttering the famous slogan “Not Burns - Dunbar!”
The mouthpiece of the Scots National League. This copy of volume II, formerly MacDiarmid's, contains several of his pieces, notably "Neo-Gaelic economics", extensively revised and corrected in his hand. An undated autograph letter to the Glasgow Herald is loosely inserted. It is a characteristic response to a published attack: "There was nothing in my letters to suggest that I was speaking on behalf of the National Party of Scotland. That idea could only have arisen in Mr. Boyd's own imagination or malicious invention". Roy, personal collection.

13. To circumjack cencrastus: or, the curly snake. Edinburgh, Blackwood, 1930.
By 1930, MacDiarmid's literary and political opinions were firmly defined. The polemical nature of To circumjack cencrastus ensured notoriety for a book which attacks many established institutions. The Glasgow Daily Record published parallel reviews by the paper's literary editor, William Power, and by Lauchlan Maclean Watt, Minister of Glasgow Cathedral. Power, earlier described by MacDiarmid as "practically the only critic in Scotland who has recognized the true inwardness of the post-war phenomena in Scottish arts and letters", was predictably enthusiastic: "It gives us the rich fermentation and much of the pure wine of the most vital mind in present-day Scotland". Watt, by contrast, had been skewered by MacDiarmid ("his work is a wholly nondescript welter .... he has no intuitions of value of either a critical or creative character"). His style tends to confirm MacDiarmid's opinion: "Nothing ... can ever have been written like this, except by M'Gonigle [William McGonagall, 1830-1902; MacDiarmid's "Ossian of the ineffably absurd"]. It sounds like Homer after he had swallowed his false teeth .... there are things in it that an imaginative washerwomen would be ashamed of".

Christmas greeting, printed by the Blue Moon Press. The exhibit includes two copies of the published state of the card (100 copies signed by MacDiarmid) and a proof copy on thinner paper, lacking the limitation statement. First published in A drunk man looks at the thistle (1926). Copy 2: Roy collection; proof copy: Roy, personal collection.

First hymn to Lenin announced MacDiarmid's communist sympathies. His subsequent career is marked by the contrasting attractions of Communism and
Scots Nationalism. Each party was to expel him for his sympathy with the other, and he stood for Parliament both as a Scottish Nationalist (1945) and as a Communist (1964). Inscribed to Ross Roy: "Signed for my friend Professor G. Ross Roy, in appreciation of his services to Scottish Literature, and with best wishes for the continuance thereof". An autograph letter from MacDiarmid to Roy, May 1975, is displayed with the book. Roy collection.

In 1931 MacDiarmid was named a director of the Unicorn Press. The partnership was short-lived - in 1932 he was dismissed from the firm. First hymn to Lenin is a fruit of the brief collaboration. This copy, one of 50 on large paper, is inscribed to a fellow director: "To my good friend J.F. Moore, with my best wishes. Hugh MacDiarmid, Christmas, 1931". Roy collection.

17. **Second hymn to Lenin, and other poems.** London, Nott, 1935.
Second hymn to Lenin was published by MacDiarmid's second wife, Valda Trevlyn, in 1932. MacDiarmid met Trevlyn during the traumatic divorce from his first wife. Her opinions - a commitment to Communism and to Cornish home-rule - were sympathetic to him and the close relationship which developed lasted until his death. The trade edition of the Second hymn was published in 1935.

First collected edition of Three hymns to Lenin, inscribed: "To my good friend Professor Ross Roy with warmest regards and best wishes". Roy collection.

MacDiarmid strongly espoused Douglas's Social Credit theory. The views of Douglas, who held that the public's purchasing power was unnecessarily limited by the banks' control of credit (not in itself an eccentric proposition), apparently appealed to the poetic mind - Ezra Pound was also a strong supporter. MacDiarmid was agent for translations and American editions of Douglas's work. Warning democracy, addresses and articles prepared between 1920 and 1931, was published under his personal imprint. Roy collection.

20. **Scots unbound and other poems.** Stirling, Mackay, 1932.
First hymn to Lenin was conceived as a segment of Clann Albann, MacDiarmid's
great nationalist work-in-progress, whose name derives from that of a short-lived nationalist secret society formed by MacDiarmid and Compton MacKenzie. In the preface to this volume MacDiarmid explains that its contents are “separable items from the first volume” of Clann Albann. The Clann Albann project effectively ended with MacDiarmid’s return to Scotland in August 1932. Scots unbound is the product of the eventful twelve months of MacDiarmid’s divorce, the flowering of his friendship with Valda Trevlyn, and the birth of their son Michael.


Much of Stony limits was composed on the Shetland island of Whalsay, whose stark nature is reflected in the verse. MacDiarmid defined the work’s purpose as being to bring out “the underlying unity of the Scots and Gaelic elements of Scotland and rebut the sedulously cultivated idea of an irreconcilable division between them”. Most of the poems are in standard English, rather than in the “synthetic Scots” of the 1920’s. Roy collection.

\[22. \textbf{At the sign of the thistle; a collection of essays.} \] London, Nott, 1934.
“\textit{The case for synthetic Scots}”, “\textit{The present position of the Scottish Nationalist Movement}”, and “\textit{English ascendancy in British literature}” are predictable topics, dear to MacDiarmid’s heart. At the sign of the thistle also contains “\textit{The Burns cult}”, a fictitious account of the identification of the last surviving out-house seat graced by the poet’s haunches. This copy is inscribed to MacDiarmid’s former wife: “\text{To Peggy with love from Chris. “Hugh MacDiarmid”. London, June, 1934”}”. MacDiarmid had encountered Peggy two months earlier and had realized, despite the extent of their alienation, that he was still greatly attracted to her. Roy, personal collection.

\[23. \textbf{Lewis Grassic Gibbon [James Leslie Mitchell], 1901-1935; \& Hugh MacDiarmid: Scottish scene, or the intelligent man’s guide to Albyn.} \] London, Jarrolds, 1934.
An anthology of poems, short stories, essays and sketches by MacDiarmid and Gibbon. Both were socialists with a passionate love of Scotland. Beyond this their views diverged: Gibbon saw industrial society as an evil which had destroyed an earlier, more primitive, Celtic Golden Age; MacDiarmid looked to the bright future heralded by Douglas’s Social Credit theories. The polemical aspects of the
collaboration are dated, but the creative contributions, Gibbon's short stories and MacDiarmid's sketches and verses, are of lasting value. Roy collection.

Twelve essays, whose subjects range from the literary figures, James Macpherson and James Hogg, through Lord Monboddo, friend of Johnson and Boswell, once ridiculed for his belief that man and orangutan spring from common stock, to William McGonagall, “Ossian of the ineffably absurd”. The deer-headed figure on the dust-wrapper, the Royal stag of the dedicatory poem, was the design of MacDiarmid's own book-plate. Roy collection.

The voice of Scotland, edited by MacDiarmid, was launched to provide a platform for “Scottish Republicanism and the Leninist line in regard to Scotland”.


27. The islands of Scotland; Hebrides, Orkneys and Shetlands.
London, Batsford, 1939.
Based as much on MacDiarmid's reading as on direct observation and travel, this work incorporates a substantial polemical factor. Inscribed to MacDiarmid's mother-in-law, “From Valda and “Hugh MacDiarmid” with love to Mother and all at 28 King St, Bude. Whalsay. Shetland Islands. July, 1939”. Roy, personal collection.

The anthology includes MacDiarmid's Scottish arts and letters; the present position and post-war prospects. MacDiarmid concludes: “The war may .. have acted as a forcing-bed, bringing to somewhat speedier development what was already securely rooted in the circumstances of our nation: and in this sense it may, perhaps, be said later that: ‘The Scottish renaissance was conceived in the First World War, and leapt into lusty life in the Second World War’”. Roy, personal collection.
29. Lucky poet, a self-study in literature and political ideas, being the autobiography of Hugh MacDiarmid. London, Methuen, 1943.

Alan Bold terms Lucky poet: "a prolonged and lively advertisement for the poet himself. A belligerent book that pulls no punches .... MacDiarmid's finest prose work".

In a preliminary note MacDiarmid observes: "My function in Scotland ... has been that of the cat-fish that vitalizes the other torpid denizens of the aquarium". After publication Edgell Rickworth threatened legal action over a remark in the book. The offending section (pp. 171-72) was excised from unsold copies and replaced by a cancel. Three copies are displayed. Copy 1 (1st issue) is inscribed by the author to Walter Perrie; copies 2 & 3 show p. 172 in uncancelled and cancelled states. Copy 2: Roy collection.


Poetry Scotland was a first bloom of the Scottish renaissance proclaimed in The new Scotland (item 28). Its volumes contain verse by virtually every significant Scots poet of the period, each influenced to some degree by MacDiarmid's verse and by his literary or political theory. Issue II was dedicated "to Christopher Murray Grieve, a very great Scot", and MacDiarmid acted as guest editor of the final volume. In the introduction to that issue Maurice Lindsay wrote: "We have no hesitation in proclaiming our nationalist bias. Poetry Scotland is an organ of the Scottish Renaissance Movement, and the Scottish Renaissance aims at reviving and restoring the Scots and Gaelic cultures, and adapting them to modern needs". David Morrison collection.


In the July 1945 parliamentary election, MacDiarmid stood as a Scottish Nationalist candidate. He lost by a massive majority. This striking portrait was prepared as an election poster. Among the most remarkable representations of MacDiarmid's distinctive features, it is reproduced on the upper cover of this catalogue. Roy, personal collection.

32. A kist of whistles. Glasgow, Maclellan, [1947].

Much of A kist of Whistles comes from the Cornish heroic song sequence, commenced before the war. It is the tenth in the Poetry Scotland series, works of poets of the Scottish Renaissance published by William Maclellan. Roy collection.
33. **Prospectus for the second edition of A drunk man looks at the thistle.** Glasgow, Caledonian Press, [1953].


MacDiarmid contributed "A coronation dream", a reflection on the coronation of Elizabeth II, to the July 1952 Scottish journal. In light of MacDiarmid's Socialism and Nationalism - his prime intellectual motivations - and his deep-rooted aversion to the absentee "English" monarchy, the tone of this rather wistful ode is extremely subdued. Copies from the Roy & David Morrison collections.

35. **In memoriam James Joyce, from a vision in world language.**


In memoriam James Joyce received mixed response. A number of MacDiarmid’s colleagues considered it a deviation from the norms of Scottish National verse. Maurice Lindsay reviewed the book savagely: “... it marks a decline in its author’s poetic stature. It is little short of tragic that he who, twenty-five years ago, gave us the imperishable richness of A drunk man looks at the thistle ... should end his career with regurgitations of whatever reading matter he happens to come by”.


A response to Roy Campbell's Flowering rifle; a poem from the battlefield of Spain (1939): Campbell's pro-fascist verse angered MacDiarmid, who responded in strong, polemic tones. Termed by one critic "an abysmally poor volume", The battle continues remained unpublished for almost twenty years. Presentation copy: "To G. Ross Roy, with gratitude and best wishes, from Hugh MacDiarmid". Roy collection.

37. **Burns today and tomorrow.** Edinburgh, Castle Wynd Printers, [1959].

Burns today and tomorrow, prepared for the 1959 Burns bicentenary, is, in the words of MacDiarmid's biographer Alan Bold, "a *r*sum* of his persistent attacks on Burns, seeing him as a great songwriter and inferior poet". Of the perceived debased
state of contemporary Celtic culture MacDiarmid writes: “Burns led directly to this sorry pass through his anti-intellectualism and his xenophobia”. He continues: “All that Burns wanted, however, was “ae spark o’ Nature’s fire / That’s a’ the learning I desire.” Well, it is not enough and less so today than ever ... and it has been largely responsible for landing the Scottish Muse in the horrible mess it has occupied since”. Roy collection.


MacDiarmid’s ambivalent attitude towards Burns is clear elsewhere in this exhibition; it is not apparent in the introduction to Selected poems: “The cleavage between poetry and the people is one of the crucial problems of literature ... and it is very significant that ... every significant poet in Scotland today has followed Burns in reverting from English to Scots”. Presentation copy from MacDiarmid to his wife Valda, May, 1950. Roy collection.

39. To have the opposite effect surely. [Glasgow, Citizen’s Theatre, 1962].

Written for the Citizens’ Theatre, Glasgow, on the occasion of its production of Brecht’s Good wife of Szechuan. The Citizens’, founded in 1943, has been described by Duncan Glenn as “the most important theatre in the history of Scottish drama”. Roy, personal collection.


A 1,000 line section from the ongoing, never-completed work-in-progress Cornish heroic song. Inscribed by the author to G. Ross Roy. A letter from the publisher to G. Ross Roy, lamenting the vagaries of acquiring the inscription, is described in the next entry. Roy collection.

42. Typed letter signed, K.D. Duval to G. Ross Roy. [Edinburgh, New Year’s Day, 1962].
Letter to G. Ross Roy from the Edinburgh antiquarian bookseller Kulgin Duval, who had recently published The kind of poetry I want and had arranged for MacDiarmid to inscribe the Roy copy. Unfortunately, Duval notes, "Christopher is here but alas too too drunk to sign your book, but he'll do it, he says so, you'll get it soon, so thank you". Two months later MacDiarmid was capable of inscribing the book. The final paragraph of Duval's letter expresses MacDiarmid's willingness to contribute to Studies in Scottish literature, edited by Roy. Roy, personal collection.

The kind of poetry I want is termed "the most attractive book in the [Glasgow University collection]". The book was printed at the Officina Bodoni, Verona, by Giovanni Mardersteig, praised by British printer Will Carter as: "probably the finest pressman the world has ever seen or is likely to see". Roy collection.

The preliminary note to Collected poems explains: "This volume does not contain all the poems I have written, but all I think worth including in a definitive edition". Unbeknownst to MacDiarmid, Macmillan omitted many poems selected for inclusion, but failed to modify or delete the statement. A copy of the scarce British issue of this edition, published by Oliver & Boyd, is also displayed. Roy collection.

These eight poems are fragments of the longer Mature art. Johnson, retired principal of the Camberwell School of Art, had supplied the frontispiece to Second hymn to Lenin. Presentation copy from MacDiarmid to his wife. Roy, personal collection.

46. Parliament with a difference: with communist M.P.s.
Election flyer supporting MacDiarmid, who ran against Sir Alec Douglas-Home as a Communist candidate in the 1964 general election. MacDiarmid savaged Home in this pamphlet and in the Daily Worker, where he described him as: "a zombie, personifying the obsolescent traditions of an aristocratic and big landlord order, of which Thomas Carlyle said no country had been oppressed by a worse gang of hyenas than Scotland".

MacDiarmid's second autobiographical work. "Lucky poet, while a very personal book, was little concerned with what most people regard as a life-story ... being almost wholly concerned with the course of my intellectual and aesthetic development ... I am not disposed to be any more forthcoming in the present book with regard to intimate personal matters."


14 previously uncollected poems, published on the occasion of MacDiarmid's 75th birthday. In the preface, MacDiarmid remarks ambiguously: "I had quite forgotten having written many of these poems", but continues: "The present book contains some of my best poems in English and in Scots."

In 1966 MacDiarmid was invited to speak at the New York Poetry Center. In The company I've kept, he wrote: "my wife was opposed to my going. She was afraid I'd 'do a Dylan Thomas' on her. Certainly I'd be likely to take full advantage of American hospitality, but as a Communist poet I might have too exciting a time altogether". The visit, his first to the US, was delayed by the question of his Communist Party membership, but in May 1967 he was permitted to proceed to New York. This broadside edition of The Eemis stane (from Sangschaw, 1925) was printed in honour of the visit by the distinguished artist and printer Leonard Baskin. The woodcut portrait was drawn by Baskin and cut by Takeshi Takehara. An announcement of the broadside's publication is also displayed. Roy collection.
First printing of the Penguin Selected poems. "This book aims to make available a comprehensive selection from the work of a poet who exacts attention on the same level as the accepted masters of modern poetry." The upper cover reproduces Westwater's striking portrait, commissioned as a gift on the poet's 75th birthday. Roy collection.

Collected edition of the Direadh poems, printed at the Officina Bodoni, Verona. Direadh is a Gaelic word for the act of surmounting. MacDiarmid explains that the poems "express stages in my endeavour to 'see Scotland whole', or ... 'to think not in bits and pieces, but all round the circle'". Roy collection.

54. **Portrait of Hugh MacDiarmid.** Ca. 1975

Extracts from a conversation between MacDiarmid & Walter Perrie, September, 1974. One of 25 copies signed by MacDiarmid.

These pieces were composed shortly after MacDiarmid's first meeting with his second wife. The poems, which emphasize the Celtic-ness of his wife's native Cornwall, are here collected for the first time. Signed on the front free endpaper by Hugh MacDiarmid and Valda Trevlyn. Roy collection.

Complete poems 1920-1976 was published on November 30, 1978, seven weeks after MacDiarmid's death (September 9). Just before his death he signed unbound
sheets of 65 copies for issue in limited format; these are the only copies signed by him. This copy also contains a presentation inscription to G. Ross Roy from the editors, Michael Grieve and W.R. Aitken. Roy, personal collection.

The trade edition of Complete poems, 1920-1976. The prefatory note quotes the introduction to Lap of honour (1967): “I... cannot therefore promise that there will be any substantial further additions to the corpus of my poetry”, and acknowledges that MacDiarmid has abandoned his poetic work. Roy, personal collection.

59. Hugh MacDiarmid; a memorial sculpture in the muckle toon o’ the Langholm. [Scottish Sculpture Trust, Inverkeithing, ca. 1980].
Pamphlet soliciting contributions to the projected Langholm MacDiarmid memorial. The text incorporates sections of A drunk man looks at the thistle and the Second hymn to Lenin. Roy, personal collection.

60. Drongair a’ sealltainn air cluaran. [Insch, Roderick MacDonald (Ruairidh MacDomhnaill), 1991].
First translation into Gaelic of portions of A drunk man looks at the thistle. Inscribed by the translator to G. Ross Roy. A supplementary inscription reads: “For Prof. R[oss] R[oy] to mark 100 years since the Bard was born”. Roy, personal collection.

A sea girl’s cry is a reflection on Trevlyn’s lost youth and on her native Cornwall. The poem, which evidences a deep affection for her birthplace, was published in an edition of 100 copies. Roy, personal collection.

62. Valda Trevlyn


*Published under the auspices of the Thomas Cooper Society.

Front cover: Portrait of MacDiarmid prepared as an election poster in July 1945 when MacDiarmid stood as a Scottish Nationalist candidate for Parliament.

Inside front cover: Inscription to Ross Roy from MacDiarmid in a copy of Sangshaw, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1925. [See entry #4].

This publication was designed and produced by University Publications, the University of South Carolina, Fall 1993.