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An Archive of Older Scottish Texts for Scanning by Computer

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in the stream of life helps to emphasise her semi-divine character, and the choric function of her reception into Heaven has already been mentioned. The vision of the lion and the eagle remains to be considered. In this vision the spirits show Kilmeny the future up to the point when "all was love and harmony." Thus, by means of the vision, Hogg shows the reader that he has glimpsed something of the nature of the ultimate destiny of man in the love and harmony which Kilmeny's presence creates on her return to earth.

The vision also gives Hogg a chance to show the reader something of the sin and sorrow of the world, but unfortunately he only produces a superficial and somewhat chauvinistic account of the terrors of the French Revolution, and a pageant of the life of Mary Queen of Scots (to whom, it will be remembered, the song of "Kilmeny" is addressed in *The Queen's Wake*). In spite of these wanderings from his theme, however, Hogg does convey in "Kilmeny" something of the ultimate peace and joy which Christianity promises, something of the state of things when, in the words of Saint Paul, "that which is perfect is come." This represents a considerable achievement, especially for a man who reached adult years as a semi-literate shepherd; but the merits of "Kilmeny" will seem less remarkable if we remember that Hogg was the author of what Alexander Scott has called "the most philosophically profound of Scottish novels, that tragedy of Calvinism *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner*."⁵

DOUGLAS S. MACK

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

An Archive of Older Scottish Texts for Scanning by Computer

Scholars working on the Middle Scots texts included in the following archive may wish to consider whether it could be of use to them. It is, for example, comparatively easy to provide a complete concordance to any individual text or group of texts within the archive and this might well save an editor much tedious labour. We hope also that those engaged in editorial or lexicographical work in Older Scots will consider

⁵ Alexander Scott, *William Soutar, 1898-1943, Still Life* (London, 1958), p. 207.

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adding their texts to the present archive both for their own and for general use, instead of preparing a glossary entirely by hand in the traditional way.

We regret that, except for Henryson, where carefully prepared texts were supplied by Professor Denton Fox, we have not found it possible to produce revised critical versions of the texts used. Further, though all texts have of course been proof-read and corrected after punching, some errors have no doubt accrued here also. We believe, nevertheless, that the archive, used with awareness of these imperfections, can be useful both for lexicographers (including those of us engaged in the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*) and for others, including editors and students of individual texts; and it has indeed so proved already.

The texts are on paper tape punched for I.C.T. Atlas Computer; these paper tapes have been copied serially on to a single magnetic tape which is lodged with the Science Research Council's Atlas Computer at Chilton, Didcot, Berkshire.

Three programs (concerning which those technically interested should write to Paul Bratley, English Language Research Project (Syntax), 15 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh 8) are at present available. They are in Atlas Autocode. They may be applied either to any one of the volumes included in the archive or to individual pieces (e.g. a single poem) or groups of pieces (e.g. some or all of the poems attributed to a specified author). They supply:

- (1) alphabetically arranged word-indexes with frequency count,
- (2) excerpts for specified word-forms on 6" x 4" "slips" for dictionary use; each slip contains the key-word, a three-line context, the reference, and some other information, including, where applicable, rhyme-words,
- (3) conventional concordances (without variant- or cross-references). Collation of morphological and spelling variants and the separation of homonyms is left to the user: the computer treats each separate spelling as a single item.

We hope that further programs, for example for retrieval of forms in collocation with other specified forms and for listing sets of rhyming items, may follow.

The texts so far included, choice of which has been dictated in part

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by general literary importance and in part primarily for service to *DOST*, are as follows:

Robert Henryson: *Fables* (Text, with variant readings, based on the Bassandyne print).

Orpheus (Chepman & Myllar text only).

Testament of Cresseid (Text, with variant readings, based on the Charteris print).

The Bannatyne Manuscript (4 vols., S.T.S. Edition).

The Asloan Manuscript (2 vols., S.T.S. Edition).

The Maitland Folio Manuscript (Vol. I, S.T.S. Edition).

The Reidpeth Manuscript (portions included in Vol. II of the S.T.S. *Maitland Folio Manuscript*).

Gilbert of the Haye's Prose Manuscript (2 vols., S.T.S. Edition).

Treatment of manuscript abbreviations and other palaeographic features and of modes of reference are as for *DOST*.

Anyone interested in using, or in supplementing, the archive, should write to The Editor, Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue, 27 George Square, Edinburgh 8.

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The Manuscript of Ramsay's

Gentle Shepherd

In June 1964, Mrs. John Cowie presented to the National Library of Scotland a part of her late husband's collection of manuscripts and printed books. This collection (now National Library of Scotland Acc. 3670 and 3733) is of considerable literary importance, containing, as it does, a number of letters and poems of Robert Burns (1786-91, n.d.), correspondence and papers of Sir Walter Scott (1811-30, n.d.), and letters of other literary figures such as Allan Cunningham and William Motherwell. The collection is also rich in manuscripts of Allan Ramsay, since it includes not only the autograph manuscripts of three of his poems (*Wealth, or the Woody, Mouldy Mowdiwart*, and *Verses ad-*