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Hugh MacDiarmid & Friends

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HUGH MACDIARMID & FRIENDS

an exhibit of twentieth-century Scottish poetry from
The G. Ross Roy Collection of Robert Burns & Scottish Poetry

Thomas Cooper Library
University of South Carolina
December 2006-January 2007
CONTENTS

Preface, by G. Ross Roy

About this exhibition, by Patrick Scott

1: R. B. Cunninghame Graham, John Buchan & Christopher Grieve

2: The Emergence of “Hugh MacDiarmid”: Edwin Muir, Violet Jacob, Helen Cruickshank, & A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle

3: Marion Angus, Lewis Spence, & Valda Trevlyn

4: The 30's: Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Sorley Maclean, Robert Garioch, George Bruce, William Soutar

5: The 40's: Douglas Young, William McLellan, Maurice Lindsay, & Hamish Henderson

6: The 50's: Sydney Goodsir Smith, Alexander Scott, Norman MacCaig

7: Politics & Fine Printing: Tom Scott, K. D. Duval, & the Bodoni Editions of MacDiarmid

8: MacDiarmid, Duncan Glen & Akros

Pendant to the Exhibit: The Benno Schotz Bust & the Kilmarnock Election Poster

Some Previous Scottish Exhibits from the G. Ross Roy Collection and Related Collections
Preface

I have been fortunate in knowing several of the poets who appear in this exhibition, and three of them, Maurice Lindsay, Alexander Scott and Douglas Young, have visited the campus.

When *Studies in Scottish Literature* was in its planning stage I wrote to Hugh MacDiarmid telling him that I wanted to found a scholarly journal which would be devoted to all aspects of Scottish literature, and asking if he would be willing to serve on the Editorial Board. By return of post, I had a most encouraging letter from him saying that he would be pleased to serve, and applauding the idea.

By the time that the first issue of *Studies in Scottish Literature* appeared the battle over the use of Scots in poetry had been decided among the practising poets, but it was not universally accepted that Lallans had a place in Scottish writing. The Lallans Society, which counted some of the poets in this exhibition among its members, did signal work in convincing Scots that their Lowland dialect was still capable of producing memorable verse. Sydney Goodsir Smith (who features prominently in this exhibition) wrote an important defense of Scottish literature entitled "Trahison des Clercs, or the Anti-Scottish Lobby in Scottish Letters" (*Studies in Scottish Literature*, II:4, October 1964), which argued forcefully for the vernacular.

But all of the poets represented in this exhibition revolve around Hugh MacDiarmid whose genius towers over the twentieth century. He not only made Scottish vernacular poetry acceptable, he made it great.

G. Ross Roy

December 2006
About this exhibition

Thomas Cooper Library’s G. Ross Roy Collection of Robert Burns & Scottish Poetry covers the whole range of Scottish poetry from the sixteenth century to the present day. Among its strengths is an outstanding collection of the writings of the founder of the modern Scottish literary renaissance, “Hugh MacDiarmid” (Dr. Christopher Murray Grieve, 1892-1978), whom Dr. Roy knew and who served on the board of Dr. Roy’s journal *Studies in Scottish Literature*.

MacDiarmid is best-known for his championing of vernacular Scots as a modern poetic medium, especially in his early volume *Sangschaw* (1925) and his groundbreaking longer work *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* (1926). His career as a professional writer spanned sixty years, and the Roy Collection includes over 300 MacDiarmid titles, as well as comprehensive collections of the many Scottish poets whom his work liberated to write in Scots.

This exhibition, the first from the Roy Collection’s MacDiarmid holdings since 1992, charts MacDiarmid’s influence from the 1920’s through to the 1960’s, by juxtaposing a selection of his own works with representative items from other Scottish writers whom he knew. In addition to MacDiarmid himself, the exhibit has works by John Buchan, R. B. Cunninghame Graham, Violet Jacob, Helen Cruickshank, Lewis Spence, Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Edwin Muir, Sorley Maclean, Douglas Young, George Bruce, Robert Garioch, Hamish Henderson, Sydney Goodsmir Smith, Alexander Scott, Norman MacCaig, and Tom Scott. Interspersed with the books are photographs of MacDiarmid with the writers displayed, reproduced unless otherwise indicated from Gordon Wright’s *MacDiarmid, An Illustrated Biography* (1977).

Special features of the exhibit include copies of MacDiarmid’s early books inscribed to Dr. Roy, and a 1941 bust of MacDiarmid by the Scottish sculptor Benno Schotz, long believed lost in the Blitz, and now in Dr. Roy’s personal collection. Other notable items are the fine editions of MacDiarmid’s work printed at the Officina Bodoni (including one recently donated through the Treasures Acquisitions Program), and the proof and inscribed first copy of the very first MacDiarmid item printed by Duncan Glen, before he started Akros Publications.

Professor Roy had the original concept for this exhibit, and I am grateful to him for advice on items for inclusion and background information as the exhibit was developed.

Patrick Scott
*Director of Special Collections*

December 8, 2006
CASE 1: R. B. Cunninghame Graham, John Buchan & Christopher Grieve

MacDiarmid and Friends
Alexander Moffatt, Poets Pub (1960)
National Gallery of Scotland.
This painting shows MacDiarmid with several of the other poets from this exhibit: from right to left, Norman MacCaig, Alan Bold (bottom left in hat), MacDiarmid, Sorley Maclean (top back, with moustache), Iain Crichton Smith, George Mackay Brown, Sydney Goodsir Smith, Edwin Morgan, and Robert Garioch.

R. B. Cunninghame Graham
As this photo shows, Cunninghame Graham (1852-1936) was from an earlier generation than MacDiarmid. Long resident in the Argentine, he is now best-known for his travel writings and short stories. A Scottish Liberal M.P. in the 1880's, and first President of the Scottish Labour Party (1888), he joined with MacDiarmid, Compton Mackenzie and others in 1928 to found the National Party of Scotland. Shown here is his pamphlet Economic Evolution, 3rd ed. (Turiff: Deveron, 1902).

Charles Murray
Murray (1864-1941) exemplifies the state of Scottish vernacular poetry before MacDiarmid. Like Cunninghame Graham, Murray lived much of his life outside Scotland, as an engineer in South Africa. Shown here is his first major collection of poems, Hamewith (1900), written in the dialect of rural Aberdeenshire.

John Buchan and The Northern Muse
John Buchan (1875-1940), a son of the manse from the Scottish borders, combined a directorship of the Scottish publisher Thomas Nelson with a career in politics (South African administration, member of Parliament for the Scottish Universities, Director of Information during World War I, and from 1935 Governor-General of Canada), but nonetheless wrote over 50 books, including the spy novels The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915) and Greenmantle (1916). Despite Buchan's disclaimer in the letter shown here, his frequently-reprinted anthology of Scottish poetry, The Northern Muse (1924), included one of the first public recognitions of "C. M. Grieve" as a new poetic voice, before he took the pen name MacDiarmid. Two copies are shown, one inscribed by Buchan to Grieve, and the other open at Grieve's early lyric in Scots, "The Bonnie Broukit Bairn."

Christopher Grieve's Northern Numbers (1920-1922)
Grieve returned from service in World War I (in the medical corps) to work as a journalist in the small town of Montrose, in the east of Scotland. His first literary ventures included
these anthologies of modern Scottish poetry. Shown here are all three volumes, the first two published by the Edinburgh firm of T. N. Foulis, the third self-published in wrappers. Also shown is Foulis’s combined issue of the first two volumes, open at some of Grieve’s own early poetry.

CASE 2: The Emergence of “Hugh MacDiarmid”: Edwin Muir, Violet Jacob, Helen Cruickshank, & A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle

Edwin Muir
The Orkney-born poet Edwin Muir (1887-1959) would later be considered one of the leading rivals to Grieve/MacDiarmid’s Scots vernacular revival. This photo from the 1920’s shows Muir (on left) and MacDiarmid, together with the composer F. G. Scott, who had taught MacDiarmid in elementary school. Muir’s volume of critical essays, Latitudes (1924) is open at his comments on the Scottish border ballads.

Violet Jacob and Helen Cruickshank
Grieve/MacDiarmid’s allies in the early 1920’s included two women poets who wrote in the dialect of Angus, the region round Montrose, where Grieve was living. Violet Jacob (1863-1946), from a local aristocratic family, had lived in India; shown here are her Songs of Angus (1915). Helen Cruickshank (1886-1975) was nearer to Grieve’s own generation. After work in the civil service in London, she returned to Edinburgh in 1912, and her home became a centre for Scottish writers; MacDiarmid later described her as the “catalyst” of the Scottish literary renaissance. Shown here are a photo of Cruickshank with MacDiarmid in Princes Street gardens in the 1920’s, and Cruickshank’s Up the Noran Water and other Scots Poems (1928), signed by her.

Christopher Grieve’s Annals of the Five Senses (1923)
Grieve/MacDiarmid’s first book, a mixture of prose and poetry in standard English, was self-published in the small town of Montrose. Like his earlier anthologies Northern Numbers, it still carries his birth name. This copy is inscribed to the author’s second wife, Valda Trevlyn.

The First Books by “Hugh MacDiarmid”
Hugh MacDiarmid, Sangschaw (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1925).
Hugh MacDiarmid, Penny Wheep (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1926).
Grieve’s adoption of the pen name “Hugh MacDiarmid” signalled his commitment in the mid-1920's of a new poetic crusade, to establish vernacular Scots as a modern poetic medium, not simply as the nostalgic echo of earlier writing. The lyrics in Sangschaw, his first collection as MacDiarmid, were immediately recognized as beginning a new era in
Scottish poetry. One copy is open to show MacDiarmid’s inscription to G. Ross Roy, with a six-line poem.

**Hugh MacDiarmid’s *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* (1926)**
The character of MacDiarmid’s ambition is shown in this landmark work of Scottish literary modernism, published in Edinburgh just four years after Eliot’s *Waste Land* and Joyce’s *Ulysses*. This substantial meditation on the state of Scotland, and its place in world culture, runs to 2685 lines and juxtaposes a variety of metres and poetic forms, but always within a flexible vernacular (“synthetic Scots”) that draws on spoken Scots from across the nation, not just on the dialect of one locality. Displayed here are:
* two copies of the first edition, in different bindings;
* four successive reprint editions:
  - Caledonian Press, 1953, inscribed to Sydney Goodsir Smith;
  - two differently-sized impressions from Castle Wynd Printers in 1956;
  - and the 200 Burns Club edition from 1962, inscribed to Lucie Roy, and described by MacDiarmid to Dr. Roy as the most authoritative edition
* the first scholarly edition, with annotations by John C. Weston, published by the University of Massachusetts Press in 1971.

**CASE 3: Marion Angus, Lewis Spence, & Valda Trevlyn**

**MacDiarmid as Critic, I**
Hugh MacDiarmid, *Contemporary Scottish Studies* (London: Parsons, 1926). This volume of MacDiarmid’s collected essays and articles is scathing in its assessment of most Scottish literature, as in the opening of the essay shown here; among the few contemporary poets he praises in it are Marion Angus and Lewis Spence.

**MacDiarmid as Critic, II**
Hugh MacDiarmid, *Albyn; or Scotland and the Future* (London: Kegan Paul, 1927). MacDiarmid became well known for his polemics as well as his poetry. *Albyn* swingeingly asserts the harmful influence of Robert Burns on Scots poetry under the slogan “Not Burns, but Dunbar.”

**Marion Angus, Lewis Spence, William Montgomerie**
The Aberdonian Marion Angus (1866-1946) published several influential volumes in the 1920’s from the Porpoise Press in Edinburgh: shown here is her book *The Singin’ Lass* (Porpoise, 1929), inscribed by the poet Charles Murray to W. Ormiston Roy, Dr. Roy’s grandfather. The journalist and anthropologist Lewis Spence (1874-1955) also published several collections in Scots with Porpoise Press in the 1920’s, and was an ally of
MacDiarmid’s in the founding of the National Party of Scotland; shown here is his pamphlet *Freedom for Scotland* (Scottish Reform Movement, 1926). The Glaswegian poet William Montgomerie (1904-1994), who lived much of his life abroad, is best-known for his collections of traditional Scots children’s rhymes; shown here is his early collection of original poetry, *Via* (1933), with the bookplate of Maurice Lindsay.

**MacDiarmid and “Social Credit”**
C. M. Grieve, “Neo-Gaelic Economics, Part II,” *Scots Independent* (February, 1928). Like Ezra Pound, Grieve was attracted in the late 1920’s to the Social Credit theories of Major Douglas as a way of linking post-Great War economic issues with cultural issues.

*To Circumjack Cencrastus* (1930)
MacDiarmid’s second long poem about Scotland, *To Circumjack Cencrastus: or the Curly Snake*, published by Blackwood, champions an “internationalist nationalism” and encompasses an extraordinary range of cultural debate and allusion (like Eliot’s *Waste Land*, it comes with its own notes). MacDiarmid dedicated it to Compton Mackenzie, Oliver St. John Gogarty, and Willlia and Edwin Muir.

**MacDiarmid and limited edition Marxism, I**
In the 1930’s, MacDiarmid was increasingly drawn to Marxism. Two copies are shown here of his *First Hymn to Lenin* (Unicorn Press, 1931), curiously unMarxist in the form of its publication: the first is one of fifty printed on fine paper, and the second from the regular issue inscribed to “my friend Professor G. Ross Roy, in appreciation of his services to Scottish literature.” In 1934, after being expelled by the Nationalist Party for communism, he joined the Communist Party of Great Britain, though he renewed ties with the nationalists in the 1940’s.

**MacDiarmid and Valda Trevlyn**
After the break-up of his first marriage, MacDiarmid met the redheaded Cornish poet Valda Trevlyn, who became his second wife. During most of the 1930’s they lived on the island of Whalsay in the Shetlands, with their son Michael, while MacDiarmid supported them through his books, journalism, and occasional radio work in Aberdeen and Edinburgh.

**MacDiarmid and limited edition Marxism, II: Valda as Publisher**
Valda published MacDiarmid’s *Second Hymn to Lenin* when they were still living in a Sussex village, shortly after they first met. Shown here is the original wrappered limited edition (Thakeham, Sussex: Valda Trevlyn, 1932), number 56 of 100 copies, inscribed by MacDiarmid to George Scott Moncrieff with four lines of verse, together with the later trade edition (London: Nott, 1935), in jacket.
**Scots Unbound and Stony Limits**
And: Hugh MacDiarmid, *Stony Limits and other poems* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1934). The differing imprints of these two volumes from the 1930's, later republished together, shows MacDiarmid's continuing dual links to Scottish nationalism and the British left.

**CASE 4: The 30's: Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Sorley Maclean, Robert Garioch, George Bruce, William Soutar**

**Lewis Grassic Gibbon**
The novelist James Leslie Mitchell (1901-1935) wrote his major work under the name Lewis Grassic Gibbon. His trilogy *A Scots Quair*, is widely regarded as the greatest work of Scottish fiction of the twentieth century. Shown here are the first and third volumes in the trilogy, *Sunset Song* (1932) and *Grey Granite* (1934, inscribed to J. B. Priestley), the book of cultural commentary Gibbon co-authored with MacDiarmid, *Scottish Scene* (1935), and a typescript about Gibbon and the Mearns region of Scotland by the poet Helen B. Cruickshank.

**Sorley Maclean**
The Gaelic poet Sorley Maclean ("Somhairle MacGill-Eain," 1911-1996), was born on the island of Raasay, off Skye, and spent most of his career there as a primary school teacher. He first met MacDiarmid in 1934. Maclean did for Gaelic poetry what MacDiarmid did for the lowland Scots vernacular, in making it a modern poetic medium. Shown here are Maclean's first book, *17 Poems for 6d in Gaelic, Scots and English* (1940, signed by Maclean; published jointly with Robert Garioch); translations of poems by Maclean, from Douglas Young's *Auntran Ballads* (1943), and a photo of Maclean with MacDiarmid in the 1970's.

**Robert Garioch**
The Edinburgh poet Robert Garioch Sutherland (1909-1981), who wrote as Robert Garioch, combined a career as primary school teacher ("A dominie wi' darnit socks") with a distinguished career as poet and verse translator. In both kinds of writing he used a distinct colloquial Scots, translating for instance the Italian dialect poet Giovanni Belli into Scots. Shown here are the pamphlet *Albannach* (1938) in which he appeared with MacDiarmid, Maclean, Soutar, and Bruce, and his verse translation from Latin of the Biblical dramas *Jepthah and Baptistes* (1959), by the best-known Renaissance Scottish poet George Buchanan (1506-1582), whose quincentenary falls this year.
George Bruce
Shown here is *Sea Talk* (1944), the first book by the Aberdonian poet George Bruce (1909-2002), together with the selection of his verse published in 1947 by the Saltire Society, which had been founded in 1936 to foster a sense of Scottish cultural identity.

William Soutar
During service in the Royal Navy during World War I, William Soutar (1898-1943) contracted spondylitis, a progressive spinal disease; by the 1930’s, his increasing disability made him bedridden. His journals from this period were later edited by Alexander Scott as *Diaries of a Dying Man* (1954). Shown here are his first book, *Gleanings of an Undergraduate* (Edinburgh, 1923), and two of his major books of the 1930’s, *Seeds in the Wind: poems in Scots for children* (1933), and *Poems in Scots* (Edinburgh, 1935, signed by the author).

CASE 5: The 40's: Douglas Young, William McLellan, Maurice Lindsay, & Hamish Henderson

Douglas Young
The Greek scholar, poet and translator Douglas Young (1913-1973) combined a career teaching classics at Aberdeen University, Dundee, St. Andrews, McMaster, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with political and cultural activism. During World War II he went to prison rather than accept the right of the English parliament to conscript Scots. Shown here are his two major collections of poetry, *Auntran Ballads* (1943, with a preface by Hugh MacDiarmid) and *A Braird o’ Thistles* (1947), his influential anthology of Scottish verse (1951), and a photo of him with MacDiarmid during the 1951 election. Also influential have been his translations of Aristophanes into broad Scots, *The Puddocks* (1957) and *The Burdies* (1959).

William McLellan (or MacLellan or Maclellan)
The major Scottish publisher of Scottish poetry in the 1940's and 1950's was William McLellan of Glasgow. Particularly influential was this series of anthologies *Poetry Scotland*, edited by Maurice Lindsay for the first three volumes (1943, 1945, 1946), and by Hugh MacDiarmid as guest editor for the fourth (1949, from a different publisher). Lindsay clearly modeled the series on another wartime series, *Poetry London* (1939-1951), sharing its internationalist aims, and dedicating the first number of *Poetry Scotland* to its editor Tambimuttu, but McLellan’s publishing focus was strongly Scottish. The variant spellings of McLellan’s name in his later publications were allegedly an attempt to befuddle his creditors, but his instantly-recognizable volumes interested a new
generation in the MacDiarmid-inspired Scottish literary renaissance and are increasingly difficult to find in decent condition.

Maurice Lindsay
As this photo of Lindsay (on right) with MacDiarmid and Douglas Young shows, Maurice Lindsay was significantly younger than those previously influential in the MacDiarmid circle. Born in 1918, he published his first volume of poetry in 1940 (in the Roy Collection, but not displayed) and in 2006 is still writing. Shown here are his wartime poems *The Enemies of Love* (McLellan, 1946) and his influential anthology of the Scottish renaissance, *Modern Scottish Poetry* (Faber, 1946). Prominent subsequently in Scotland as a reviewer and drama critic, in and on television, in arts administration, Lindsay also compiled a well-known *Burns Encyclopaedia* (1959, etc.) and a *History of Scottish Literature* (1977).

Hamish Henderson
The folk-song scholar Hamish Henderson (1919-2002), born in Perthshire but educated at Cambridge, served with the 51st Highland Division in the Western Desert, Sicily and Italy. Work with the partisans in Northern Italy led to his later translation into English of Gramsci’s *Prison Letters* (1975), but his major influence on Scottish culture was increasingly as a collector of traditional folk culture. Shown here are pages from his manuscript draft for his major poem about the Desert War, *Elegies for the Dead in Cyrenaica* (1948), Sorley Maclean’s manuscript draft for his introduction to the second edition of the *Elegies* (1977), and a first edition of the *Elegies* in wrappers inscribed to the Roys. Shown open at Henderson’s modern ballad “The Highland Division’s Farewell to Sicily” is his collection *Ballads of World War II* (Glasgow: for the Lili Marleen Club, 1948, with an inscription explaining that the Lili Marleen Club was a ruse suggested by Hugh MacDiarmid to let Henderson publish soldiers songs unexpurgated). The photo shows Henderson in 1951 with MacDiarmid and Wendy Wood, later the first Scottish National Party M.P. A fuller exhibit, drawn from the Roy Collection, and covering Henderson’s whole career, was mounted in 1977.

CASE 6: The 50’s: Sydney Goodsir Smith, Alexander Scott, Norman MacCaig

Sydney Goodsir Smith
Perhaps closest to MacDiarmid among the younger post-War Scottish poets was Sydney Goodsir Smith (1915-1975), the New Zealand-born son of an Edinburgh medical professor. Shown here are:
* MacDiarmid's essay on Smith, and Smith's sketch of MacDiarmid, from the memorial volume *For Sydney Goodsir Smith* (1975);
* Smith's poem defending writing in Scots, from his first volume *Skail Wind* (1941);
* his major volume of poems, *The Deevil's Waltz*, in McLellan's *Poetry Scotland Series* (1946);
* the first edition of his Joycean comic novel *Carotid Cornucopius* (1947), inscribed by Smith as "Auk";
* the first, limited edition of his longer poem-sequence *Under the Eildon Tree* (1948), open to show the portrait of Smith by Denis Peploe; no. 6 of 350 copies, signed by the author and artist, with the bookplate of Maurice Lindsay;
* a photo of Smith and MacDiarmid together in the Abbotsford Bar, in Edinburgh's New Town;
* and the typescript of a verse *jeu d'esprit* satirizing one of his father's Edinburgh medical colleagues.

**MacDiarmid and Friends, 1948**
Photo of Sorley Maclean, Alexander Scott, Sydney Goodsir Smith, and Hugh MacDiarmid, on North St. David Street, Edinburgh, February 10, 1948, after a poetry reading at the BBC studios on Queen Street.

**Alexander Scott**
The poet and dramatist Alex Scott (1920-1989) was born in Aberdeen. His education at Aberdeen University was interrupted by war service with the Gordon Highlanders (during which he won an M.C.); after graduation he taught briefly at Edinburgh, and then for most of his career at Glasgow University, founding Scotland's first Department of Scottish Literature. Shown here are his first publication *Prometheus 48* (Aberdeen: Students Representative Council, 1948, in wrappers); his *Selected Poems* (Saltire Society, 1949); his prize-winning play *Untrue Thomas* (1952); and his most influential collection of poetry in Scots, *Mouth Music* (1954).

**Norman MacCaig**
Like Maclean and Garioch, the Edinburgh poet Norman MacCaig (1910-1996), educated as a classicist, was a conscientious objector in World War II, and (perhaps in consequence) spent most of his career as a primary school teacher, before retiring to be first Writer in Residence at Edinburgh University, and then Reader in Scottish Poetry at Stirling. His early poetry, represented here by *The Inward Eye* (1946), belonged to the neo-Romantic 1940's school of the New Apocalypse, but his prize-winning volume *Riding Lights* (1955) revealed his distinctive dry mature style, Scottish in ironic inflection rather than in the more overt linguistic features favoured by his fellow Scottish poets.
Also shown is his 1959 anthology of new Scottish poetry, *Honour'd Shade*, and a photo of MacCaig with MacDiarmid from the same year.

**CASE 7: Politics & Fine Printing: Tom Scott, K. D. Duval, & the Bodoni Editions of MacDiarmid**

**Tom Scott**
While the poet Tom Scott (1918-1995) began writing poetry before the war, he first came to critical attention in the 1950’s while a mature student at Edinburgh University. His reputation as a verse translator was established with his *Seeven poems o Maister Francis Villon: made owre intil scots* (1953), and his credentials as a critic in the MacDiarmid tradition with his PhD thesis on Dunbar (Oliver and Boyd, 1966); both are in the Roy Collection, though not displayed. Shown here, with a photo of MacDiarmid and Tom Scott at a Burns supper in 1960, are:

* a long early typescript from 1960 for Scott’s poem “The Ship,” using the Titanic tragedy as a political allegory;  
* a first edition of Scott’s *The Ship and ither poems* (Oxford UP, 1963), with a much-shortened version of the title poem;  
* Scott’s anonymous satire, *A Possible Solution to the Scotch Problem, Being a reply by a modern Englishman (and proud of it) to Union compleat: an humble proposal by M.* (1963), “an attempt to see things in their proper perspective and find a solution of the admittedly serious problem raised by the continued survival of the Scotch and their foreign and obsolete ways”;
* the first edition of Scott’s *At the Shrine o the Unkent Sodger* (Akros, 1968), one of two variant issues in the Roy Collection.

**MacDiarmid and Scott in the David Morrison Collection**
Among several literary archives in the Roy Collection is a collection of correspondence and photographs from David Morrison, editor of the magazines *Scottish International*, *Scotia*, and *Scotia Review*. Shown here from the Morrison Collection are:

* a letter from MacDiarmid to Morrison, commenting on a recent article by Tom Scott in *Scottish International*, and promising to contribute one himself;  
* a photo of Tom Scott seated reading, in the 1970’s

**An Inscribed Broadside Portrait**
Rosalie Loveday: Pen and ink portrait of Hugh MacDiarmid, with his poem “Separatism” reproduced in facsimile (1968), inscribed by MacDiarmid to G. Ross Roy.
Giovanni Mardersteig, Kulgin Duval, and the Bodoni MacDiarmids
Among the finest handpress editions of MacDiarmid’s work are the three printed for the
Scottish bookdealer Kulgin Duval by Dr. Giovanni Mardersteig (1892-1977) in Verona at
the Officina Bodoni. Shown here are:
* Hugh MacDiarmid, Selected Lyrics (Verona: Officina Bodoni for Kulgin D. Duval and
* Hugh MacDiarmid, The kind of poetry I want (Edinburgh: K. D. Duval, 1961), no. 119
of 300 copies, signed on the colophon by MacDiarmid, and also inscribed by him to G.
Ross Roy.
* Hugh MacDiarmid, A drunk man looks at the thistle; illustrated with eight woodcuts by
copies, signed by MacDiarmid, Mardersteig and Masreel. Acquired for the Roy
Collection with a donation from Fred and Betsy Miller through the Treasures
The accompanying photograph shows Mardersteig and MacDiarmid together in 1970;
Duval is third from the left (looking down), and Hamilton is second from the right.

CASE 8: MacDiarmid, Duncan Glen & Akros

Hugh MacDiarmid and Duncan Glen
Even before he founded Akros, for many years the most influential publisher of Scottish
poetry, the printer, graphic designer, and poet Duncan Glen had begun research on
MacDiarmid’s early periodical publications, and Glen’s interest was reciprocated by the
MacDiarmid’s interest in Glen’s printing and publishing projects. From the early 1960’s
till MacDiarmid’s death in 1978, Glen published an extraordinary range of material by
and about MacDiarmid and other poets featured in this exhibit. Shown here are four of
these projects:
* Glen’s corrected proof, and his own copy of the final text inscribed to G. Ross Roy, for
his very first MacDiarmid printing project, The Blaward and the Skelly (1962, 10 copies
only, on brown wrapping paper);
* one of 50 special copies of his commemorative volume for MacDiarmid’s 80th birthday,
Poems for Hugh MacDiarmid (Akros, 1972), Sydney Goodsir Smith’s copy, signed by
Glen as editor, the artist Leonard Penrice, the printer Thomas Rae, and all the
contributors, including many featured elsewhere in this exhibit: Helen Cruickshank,
George Bruce, Maurice Lindsay, Hamish Henderson, Sydney Goodsir Smith, Alexander
Scott, Norman MacCaig, Iain Crichton Smith, and Edwin Morgan;
* the transcript of Glen’s 1968 interview with MacDiarmid, and one of the suite of contact prints, from his An Afternoon with Hugh MacDiarmid (privately issued, 1969), one of 55 copies signed by all participants and further inscribed by Glen to G. Ross Roy;
* Glen’s pioneering biographical and bibliographical study, Hugh MacDiarmid (Christopher Murray Grieve) and the Scottish Renaissance (Edinburgh: Chambers, 1964), with the publicity leaflet carrying a facsimile of MacDiarmid’s letter of endorsement;
* and the catalogue of Thomas Cooper Library’s Akros exhibition (2004), with Glen’s own most recent retrospective Akros catalogue showing the Thomas Cooper exhibit on its back cover. The Roy Collection now includes well over 200 separate titles published by Glen from Akros or under other imprints, not counting variant issues or Duncan Glen publications issued under other imprints, making the Roy Collection one of the largest collections of Glen’s publications anywhere outside Scotland.

Pendant to the Exhibit: The Benno Schotz Bust & the Kilmarnock Election Poster

A Newly-Recovered Bust of Hugh MacDiarmid
Benno Schotz, 1891-1984,
Hugh MacDiarmid
Bronzed plaster head, 1941. Loaned from the personal collection of G. Ross Roy.
The Estonian-born sculptor Benno Schotz originally came to Glasgow in 1912 to study engineering, but took classes also at the Glasgow School of Art, first exhibiting his work in 1917. Schotz sculpted MacDiarmid at least three times. Shown here is the earliest of his bust, done in plaster in 1941, exhibited in London in 1943, and not heard of since till Dr. Roy recently purchased it at auction. In 1958, Schotz was commissioned by BBC Scotland to produce another bust of MacDiarmid, done in 23 minutes during a live television broadcast on “The Scottish Face,” hosted by George Bruce and Maurice Lindsay; MacDiarmid stayed with the Schotzes that night, and Schotz did a third bust the following morning. Casts from the second and third versions are well known, but this first earlier version has been unknown to MacDiarmid or Schotz scholars for over sixty years.

C. M. Grieve as Candidate for Parliament
Grieve ran as an Independent Scottish Nationalist, polling 639 votes to come fourth (of four candidates) in a traditionally-Conservative constituency. Grieve argued that “I belong to no political party, but believe that in Scotland the Scottish cause should come first, and foremost, all the time. . . . I want a Scottish Parliament.” Nearly fifty years later, in July 1999, the Queen opened the first session of a Scottish Parliament since 1707.
Some Previous Scottish Exhibits
from the G. Ross Roy Collection and Related Collections

* Balladeers and Courtly Poets: Scottish Verse 1300-1800 (1990)
* Hugh MacDiarmid: the thorn on Scotland's rose (1992)
Robert Burns: Selected items from the G. Ross Roy Collection (USC-Sumter, 1997)
Hamish Henderson, the Desert War and Italy (1997)
* Scottish Poetry of the Great War, from the Roy Collection (1997)
+ David Hume, introducing the James Willard Oliver Collection (1997)
James Macpherson and Ossian: from the G. Ross Roy Collection (1997)
Some Books about Ulster, from the Roy Collection (USC Sumter, 1997)
Scottish Literature: an exhibit celebrating 10 years of the G. Ross Roy Collection (1999)
Robert Burns & America (Robert W. Woodruff Library, Emory University, 2001)
* Duncan Glen & Akros: Forty Years of a Scottish Press (2002)
Robert Burns & 'Tam o' Shanter' (2003)
Robert Burns (USC-Sumter and Sumter County Museum, 2005)

* indicates that a catalogue was issued
+ indicates that exhibit text is available at http://www.sc.edu/library/spcoll/rarebook.html.
All exhibits were at Thomas Cooper Library unless otherwise indicated.