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Notes and Documents



*Allan Ramsay:
Edinburgh University's Recent Acquisitions*

Edinburgh University Library has recently made two interesting purchases to add to its collection of Allan Ramsay's works. The first is of volumes of the Subscribers' editions of 1721 and 1728 which differ in some ways from the volumes described at Nos. 98 and 98a in Burns Martin's valuable *Bibliography of Allan Ramsay, Records of the Glasgow Bibliographical Society*, 10 (1931), and illustrate the vagaries of Ramsay's publishing methods. The second is a holograph of the poem published from a transcript in the Scottish Text Society's edition of Ramsay where it is given the title "A Prayer."

The two Subscribers' edition volumes, in fine Edinburgh bindings of the period, were presented by the poet to James Home, Writer to the Signet, with a holograph dedication inserted and dated. The first of the two volumes is, in fact, the well-known Subscribers' edition of 1721, and the bibliographical description is generally the same as that of Martin 57. The

points on which the Edinburgh University copy differs from Martin 57 are: (1) The size is very slightly different, 9.8" x 7.6", whereas Martin gives 9.5" x 7.5", but this is unimportant and probably reflects a difference in cutting and binding; (2) The portrait of Ramsay is by W. Aikman, engraved by G. White, not, as in Martin 57 by John Smibert.

The second volume is, with the exception of the dedication page inserted at the back, exactly as described by Martin under 98a, except that it has a puzzle picture inserted after p. 420, size 15" x 10" (folded).

Martin in his description of the 1728 volumes (98) noted that the first volume "is merely the quarto of 1721 with change of title-page," the changes being the addition to the title-page of "Volume I" and the date "M.DCC.XXVIII." The sources for his information are copies in Yale and a private collection in Newcastle-on-Tyne. But the new Edinburgh University acquisitions do not conform to this description, since the first volume is merely the 1721 volume of *Poems* with no alterations to the title-page. And in this they are not alone, for the University already has two volumes conforming to the above description, (JA. 1004), "Presented to the Library 30 June 1744," and the National Library of Scotland also has a similar set (L.C. 1149). Martin's 98 could well be altered to read: "Vol. I is merely the quarto of 1721, but some copies have a change of title-page, with the words 'Volume I' and, as date, 'M.DCCXXVIII' added."

Nor is this all, for there are differences in the portraits engraved for the various volumes. Martin knew about this for in footnote 4 to his 98a he wrote: "There is some variation in the frontispieces. That in [*Newcastle*] shows Ramsay in a turban and was engraved by Cooper; *Yale* and *Harvard* have the Smibert-Vertue portrait of *Poems* (1721). *British Museum* lacks a frontispiece." To this information we can now add that the NLS copy (L.C. 1149) has the Smibert-Vertue portrait, the Edinburgh University (JA. 1004) has Smibert, engraved by Vercruffe, and the recently acquired volume has the portrait by William Aikman, engraved by G. White. The existence of the Smibert portrait in any of its engraved versions, is not surprising, for it was probably painted in 1720 (perhaps to make up for the rather unflattering painting Smibert did of Ramsay in 1717, which was later reproduced engraved by Carse, in the 1808 edition of *The*

Gentle Shepherd). But the Aikman portrait was painted in 1723, just before the painter left to live in London, and the engraving must have been specially inserted in the volume presented to James Home. It is large, 15.8" x 10", and has to be folded to fit the book. Martin's footnote 4 to his 98a description should be amended to take account both of the Aikman portrait and the engravers Vercuiffe and White.

The verses inserted into the 1721 volume now in the University are as follows:

* * *

Holograph verses to Mr. James Home, W.S.

Sir

These two volumes come to prove
 Your Poets gratitude and love
 to you whose taste and friendly Spirit
 encourage the least mints at merit
 impartially without regard
 whither in Shepherd Lord or Laird
 for which and many an other favour
 that bind me to my best behaviour
 I from this honest Heart of mine
 beg you t'accept this small propine
 tho' scant the value, yet believe
 it is the best that I can give
 and the most proper, you'll allow
 for me to give to such as you

Then with a friendly smile admit
 Me 'mongst your Laughing friends of wit
 Shoot yont your Milton & your pope
 that chant sublime from the Hill top
 make me a Birth wher that I may
 Cram in with Butler Matt & gay
 that when the Spleen or ought that's sour
 Attacks you in a drumbly Hour
 with these let Allan come before ye
 and to your gayity restore ye
 if I in this can recomend

My Muse to you I've gain'd my end
 and if you own that I can sowff
 a Song or Tale nor dull nor dowf
 at some with no small pride I'll sneer
 whase nodles are not quite so clear
 and never tent their spitefull grumble
 while you stand by your

Servant humble

Allan Ramsay

from my closet in Ed^r

Agust 10th

1730

This poem was published in the Scottish Text Society's edition of Ramsay (Vol. III, p. 246) and a note on p. 152 of Vol. VI of the same edition explained that it had been taken from *Blackwood's Magazine* of 1818. *Blackwood's* had got it from a correspondent who had copied it down from the very two-volume edition that is now in Edinburgh University. The volumes then had been purchased at the sale of the library of Mr. Stewart of Spoutwells. The original letter to *Blackwood's Magazine* and the transcript are now in the National Library of Scotland (MS. 4003 f. 197). The version given above differs in a few minor details from that in STS III: there is no punctuation except for commas in lines 11 and 13, the use of capitals can only be described as wayward, and the word "spitefull," omitted from line 31 of the transcript, has been here restored as Ramsay wrote it.

We know a little about James Home. According to the records of the Society of Writers to the Signet, he was the second son of Sir John Home of Blackadder, Bart. After apprenticeship to Robert Hepburn, he was admitted to the Society on 20 June 1726. He married Catherine, daughter of George Livingstone, Deputy Clerk of Session, and succeeded to the baronetcy in April, 1737. He died 25 March 1755. Ramsay, we know, supplied him with books in 1725 and 1726: the account and receipt are detailed in STS IV, p. 181 and STS, VI, pp. 152, 178. Ramsay also gave him a receipt for payment for a picture of Miss Katy Hall by Allan Ramsay, Junior, as noted in Alastair Smart's *Life and Art of Allan Ramsay* (London, 1952, p. 14).

The present writer believes that the date of the verses

addressed to Home should be 10th August 1730, though the *Blackwood's* transcript and Sotheby's recent catalogue give 1738. 1738 is unlikely since Home had become Sir James in 1737, and it is just inconceivable that Ramsay was not aware of this in 1738. In that rank-conscious age he was very well aware of rank. The figuring is admittedly not clear, and what the present writer interprets as an "o" with a tail to it might appear to another person as an "8." But even if 1730 is accepted as the date, there remains the problem of why these volumes were not presented in 1728, when Volume II was published, for which Home was a subscriber. The solution might be that since he had not subscribed for Volume I in 1721—he may have been away from Edinburgh at the time, or just beginning his career—Ramsay sent him one to accompany Volume II, and inserted the dedication in the presentation volume. There may also have been a delay in having the two volumes specially and elegantly bound.

As regards the Puzzle-Picture letter inserted in Volume Two, another copy of the same puzzle is to be found in the Clerk of Penicuik papers in the Scottish Record Office (No. 4360. Box 143). It has as title "Nonsense methodiz'd by Couper the painter and Allan Ramsay." This refers to Richard Cooper, who was associated with Ramsay in the short-lived Academy of St. Luke in Edinburgh, a school established in 1729 for the teaching of drawing and painting. The puzzle letter has been reproduced as a frontispiece to the Scottish Text Society's volume IV. It is still very much a puzzle, and the present writer can make only a tentative stab at its meaning, and it is in the hope that some reader of *SSL* may be able to decipher it that he gives here a few of the words he has made out:

A letter from a man in the Cowgate to a . . . Dear . . . since the spring . . . and Captain of our Dragoons (?) is come, there is noe in Britain aims better to hammer out of his fancy any handsome . . . that in epistolary . . . worship can contribute to their . . . About the time of the Music Bells at the Netherbow I saw a plouky nos'd bully and a starving rake . . . with each other . . . the combat begun about a lady that for half a crown will help one to . . . death. Rebukes on the stool of repentance to them are . . . their hearts leapt to their lips when the Kirk Treasurer's

Man appeared that as a . . . pursues such gamecocks and
 causey hens be he . . . none for in a trice they whipped
 down a narrow wynd and a hundred at their tails. In the
 fray a butcher bites the leg of a fishwife and she calls him
 more . . . than a . . . and like a fury drove her nails in his
 face and he . . . off . . . Come to all . . . Fraser our fiddler
 when off time gave him a hearty . . . and a pipe of
 tobacco. I prognosticate he'll be a . . . till next . . . honest
 drummer farewell

Alexander . . .

Those familiar with Edinburgh will recall that the Cowgate is parallel to the Royal Mile and south of it, and that the Netherbow was the gate that marked the boundary of the burghs of Edinburgh and Canongate. The Kirk Treasurer and his man were responsible for apprehending those who broke the moral laws and for punishing them, sometimes by making them appear in church on the stool of repentance.

The other purchase by the University Library is a holograph poem: the verses have no title, but Martin, who discovered them (as described below) suggested "A Prayer."

Father & friend of Humane race
 thou greatest first and best
 Fountain of Light of life and grace
 Supremely good & blest

5 Whose hand unseen conducts us still
 Unseen moves all below
 Whose power and goodness most we feel
 Whose nature least we know

10 Each year moneth Day may they begin
 & rule their course by thee
 Whose voice their courses taught to run
 and bade all nature be

15 Thee teach me thro' thy ways to trace
 in they works to explore
 in nature to see nature's cause
 and that first Cause adore

- Save me from vanity & vice
 teach me thy self to know
 point out the path to real bliss
 20 and guide me where I go.
- Bestow the clear well judging head
 on me and heart humane
 That let no prejudice mislead
 in this no passion reign.
- 25 Inspire my Breast from envy free
 with Social warmth to glow
 to Joy when others blest I see
 and to grieve at their woe.
- 30 Teach me to drop the friendly tear
 to heave the gentle groan
 that I may ne'er shut heart or ear
 against the injurd's groan.
- let not my love in narrow bound
 be to a sect confind
 35 but Stretch its wide embrace arround
 all creators and mankind
- O send contentment health & peace
 ought els if thou ordain
 may I with chearfulness embrace
 40 and never vex in vain
- bless may I thankfully recieive
 distressed thy hand adore
 rejoyce in what thou art pleasd to give
 nor envy who hath more
- 45 Riches thou knowest if best or not
 be that to thee resign'd
 let ease & virtue be my lot
 and bless me with a friend

50 Then grant when life's short scene is o'er
 in peace I may ly down
 Conscious of Innocence secure
 I'll dare the life to come

 my prayer, when fit thou hear'st, allow
 not fit, unheard may't be
 55 My will to thine still let it bow
 and own thy wise decree

 Great Soul of all this mighty frame
 may loud thy praise resound
 let all Creation sing the same
 60 the universe arround.

The text of this poem in STS III, p. 279, was taken from a transcript made by Burns Martin from this MS. when it was in the Brick Row Bookshop, New York, in 1929. Apart from a few punctuation and capitalization differences, there are some matters which a study of the original has revealed:

(1) *l.* 25. STS has "Breath" and the MS. "Breast"; the MS. is more appropriate.

(2) *l.* 32. The MS. has "groan" repeated as the rhyming word, an error of Ramsay's. Burns Martin probably silently emended the word to "moan."

(3) *l.* 41. The MS. has either "bless" or "blest." By inserting a comma and using "blest," Martin suggests a parallel to "distress'd" in the following line, which certainly approaches an understandable meaning, but the lines in both versions are ungrammatical.

At the end of the MS. there is a note in another hand—probably that of Allan Ramsay, Junior—which says: "This prayer is in the hand writing of Mr. Allan Ramsay and found amongst his papers after his death. A.R." The title suggested by Burns Martin, "A Prayer," is therefore a fitting one. The verses, incidentally, go perfectly to the tunes of the old *Scottish Psalter* of 1635, with the Common Metre emphasis on the importance of the last line, tunes like *York, Martyrs*, and *French* with which Scots people have been familiar for generations, and which

Ramsay must often have heard as he sat in his seat in the Tron Kirk.

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*In Search of the Real Robert Jamieson:
Some Biographical Emendations*

The career of Robert Jamieson, the Scottish antiquary and ballad collector who became a protégé of Sir Walter Scott, has long been known in its basic outlines. The *Dictionary of National Biography* article on Jamieson, which holds up surprisingly well in light of more recent scholarship, is enough to suggest his importance to modern students not only of English and Scottish literature, but also of history and folklore. Born in obscure circumstances in northern Scotland towards the end of the eighteenth century, Jamieson followed an innate bent for antiquarian studies first in Scots oral poetry and later in the relationship between Scottish and Scandinavian or "northern" balladry. It is on the latter, the discovery that even at the turn of the century there remained traces of a vital link between the ballads of southern Scotland and the turbulent years of the Viking invasions, that Jamieson's reputation as a pioneer folklorist especially rests.

In the novels of Scott, of course, the glimpse of a remote and primitive past, and of a folk culture still vitally present beneath the frail cover of a more modern civilization, would be transformed into something resembling a cultural myth. To Jamieson's more pedestrian imagination, the same glimpse could suggest only an object of antiquarian study, and yet we must, I believe, posit a deeper imaginative sympathy between the two men to explain how their relationship, so otherwise unlikely on the face of it, came to pass. The ostensible reason for their earliest meeting—Scott's discovery, when at work on what was to become *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, that a young Scottish classics teacher was also at work collecting ballads—can scarcely explain why the great writer would for so many years then interest himself in the career of an obscure and partly self-

taught antiquary.

A fine informative account of the Scott-Jamieson relationship has been given by Harriet Harvey Wood in an article published in *Studies in Scottish Literature* several years ago which drew extensively on new research in the Thorkelin collection at the University of Edinburgh;¹ Wood provides, especially, additional information on Jamieson's almost four-year stay in Riga, capital of the present Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, and significant details on the later contretemps over the Keepership of the Advocates' Library which was to bring about an unfortunate break in the friendship between Jamieson and Scott. In what follows I should like to present a few addenda to her account that have turned up in my own researches into Jamieson's background, in particular new evidence as to his birthplace and the discovery of a "ghost" Robert Jamieson whose presence in a baptismal register has done much to muddy the waters of biographical speculation about Jamieson's antecedents.

The matter of Jamieson's birthplace has remained uncertain almost from the beginning. In 1877, for example, we find David Laing, the noted Edinburgh antiquary and Keeper of the Signet Library, writing to an acquaintance Robert Adam, a City Chambers official of Edinburgh:

I do hope that we shall be able to fix the place of Jamieson's birth.—When I have a forenoon to spare I'll go across to the New Register House and with such materials as I have (as to dates, etc.). I shall,—by the kindness of some friends in the Register General's Department, —perhaps find some entry.²

The mistaken notion that Jamieson was a native of Elgin may in turn be traced to Thomas Constable's *Archibald Constable and his Literary Correspondents* (1873),³ which retained enough credibility that Harriet Harvey Wood, in the doctoral dissertation from which her article on Scott and Jamieson emerged, still lists it as a possibility.

Jamieson was not, however, a native of Elgin. As his *Dictionary of National Biography* entry states, he was born in Morayshire, and the specific location of his birthplace within the county now emerges in a preface he added to "Jhone and Elspat,"

a ballad in his *Popular Songs and Ballads* (1806): "The scene is laid near the abbey of Kingloss, in Morayshire; within four miles of which, on the border of Spindle Muir, the editor was born—if that were of any consequence to the reader."⁴

The ruins of the Abbey of Kinloss still exist. Spindle Muir, although still traceable on any modern topographical map, has practically disappeared as it existed in the early eighteenth-centuries. Significantly, the moor facing Kinloss southwest also borders east on Westfield where Jamieson's mother was still living in 1808 (see Jamieson's letter to Archibald Constable of 7th June 1808), strongly suggesting that Robert Jamieson was born on the Spindle Muir and Westfield border, an area about four to six miles from Kinloss (as we shall see, Jamieson's parents at the time of their son's baptism resided in Westfield).

The question of Jamieson's date of birth has been similarly perplexed, although not to such a degree as that of his birthplace, paradoxically because precise information was long thought to be available. Clearly hoping to improve on Constable's few facts, a parish historian named Robert Young set out in the nineteenth century to discover the official records of Jamieson's birth. In the *Annals of the Parish and Burgh of Elgin* (1879) he announced that he had discovered an appropriate Robert Jamieson in the old Parochial Register of Scotland: "he was actually born at Westfield, in the parish of Spynie, on the 20th of April, 1781, his father being Andrew Jamieson, a residenter there, and his mother Isabella Flyter, a name then not uncommon in the parish."⁵ The information was repeated by Robert Douglas as late as 1929 in the *Elgin Courant and Courier*: "About 150 years ago there lived at Westfield one Andrew Jamieson with his wife, Isabella Flyter. They had a son Robert Jamieson, born there on 20th April, 1781."⁶ This was then the first of a series of biographical sketches of local men of note which was later reprinted in book form by the same newspaper under the title *Sons of Moray*.

This was, however, the wrong Robert Jamieson. Young had no doubt been misled by Constable's conjectural date (listed with a question mark in the *Dictionary of National Biography* entry on Jamieson) of 1780, and his "discovery" had the unfortunate effect of reinforcing the conjecture. As Wood has subsequently shown, the actual date of Jamieson's birth can be inferred on internal grounds from two letters, one written by Robert Jamieson to Sir

Walter Scott in which Jamieson laments "having been driven about in the world from the age of 15, at which I left my native cottage in Morayshire, till the age of 32,"⁷ and the other to G.J. Thorkelin, the Scandinavian scholar, that represents Jamieson as writing "at the age of 34."⁸ These quotes yield, then, a probable birthdate of 1772. More recently David Buchan, apparently unaware of Wood's work and drawing his own inferences from Robert Anderson's letter to Bishop Percy, observes that "Anderson refers to Jamieson as 'about 30 years of age,' which would set his birthdate back to ca. 1770."⁹

My own investigation of Jamieson's birth, then proceeded on the assumption that the 1772 date yielded by the letters to Scott and Thorkelin was probably correct, and so it turned out to be. The Old Parochial Register for the Parish of (New) Spynie contains, under 1772, the following baptismal entry: "Robert, lawful son to John Jameson and Elisabeth Simpson in Westfield was born April 2nd and baptised April 5th (1772) Robert Dick, Janet Jameson in Westfield and Margaret Johnson in Unthank witnesses."¹⁰ Since the spellings "Jameson" and "Jamieson" were interchangeable in eighteenth-century Scotland, and since there are no other Jameson or Jamieson baptismal entries between 1727 and 1832 (except for the "false" Robert Jamieson already mentioned), we may assume, I think, that this is Robert Jamieson the ballad collector.

I would like to comment, last of all, on one final bit of biographical misinformation corrected by Wood in her earlier *SSL* article—namely, the date of Jamieson's return from Riga to Great Britain, which had earlier been set in 1808 but which Wood, citing a September 15th 1809 letter from Jamieson to Thomas Thompson, corrects to the following year. It was doubtless, she suggests in an explanatory footnote, the fact that war had broken out between Sweden and Russia that prevented Jamieson's earlier return.

This is unlikely, I think, to have been the case, since Jamieson when he did return travelled by land "over Sweden" rather than retracing the route by which he had arrived, by boat to Memel and then overland to Riga. The explanation, I suggest, is that Jamieson between the fall of 1808 and spring of 1809 was virtually icebound in Riga which, unlike Ventspils and Liepaja on the west coast of Latvia, is not an ice-free port and which thus sees a total suspension of shipping during the winter

months. The severity and unpredictability of Baltic weather is caught, for instance, in a letter to Scott from Jamieson in Riga: "about the middle of October, one morning when I opened my shutters I found 3 inches of snow on the ground, & long icicles hanging from the eaves This weather continued upwards of a fortnight, like a Scots xmas frost, & 300 ships were frozen in the Duna."¹¹

It is precisely the odd conjunction of circumstances which carried Jamieson from England to Riga, I think, that gives him his current significance for folklorists and literary historians. For the accident that was to transform Jamieson into a pioneer researcher in "northern antiquities," and thus into an instrument for bringing Anglo-Saxon culture once again into contact with its Scandinavian roots, belongs to the larger story of an obscure Scottish schoolmaster dwelling amidst an early nineteenth-century international community on the wintry shores of the Baltic. It is the outlines of that larger story that I hope eventually to trace in greater detail.

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NOTES

Most of the research for this article was done when I was an Honorary Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh, Scotland. I wish to express my appreciation to the Institute for granting me this opportunity. I also wish to thank Mrs. M. Fletcher, Publications Secretary of the Moray Field Club, Scotland; Mr. M. Seton, Principal Librarian of the Elgin Public Library; and Professor W. Dowling, University of New Mexico, for their very valuable advice and assistance.

¹Harriet Harvey Wood, "Scott and Jamieson: The Relationship Between Two Ballad-Collectors," *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 9 (1971-72), pp. 71-96.

²Letter from Robert Adam to David Laing of 7th February 1877, Edinburgh Univ. Library, MS. La IV, fol. 17.

³Thomas Constable, *Archibald Constable and his Literary Correspondents*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1873), I, 505-517.

⁴Robert Jamieson, *Popular Ballads and Songs*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1806), I, 283. Over the centuries there have been many spellings of Kinloss, thus an added "g" by Jamieson gives just another variation of the same name.

⁵Robert Young, "Schools and Learned Men," *Annals of the Parish and Burgh of Elgin* (Elgin, 1879), p. 509.

⁶Robert Douglas, "Robert Jamieson 1781-1844," *Elgin Courant and Courier*, Sept. 13, 1929, pp. 3-8. The latter is the reprint of the article originally appearing in the same newspaper on p. 5.

⁷Letter from Robert Jamieson to Sir Walter Scott of 19th October 1804, NLS, MS. 3875, fol. 21.

⁸Letter from Robert Jamieson to G.J. Thorkelin of 1st June 1806, EUL, MS. 471a, p. 3.

⁹David Buchan, "Jamieson's Ballad Collecting: New Letters," *The Bibliothek*, 7, No. 1 (1974), p. 18.

¹⁰Old Parochial Registers of Scotland, County Elgin and Parish New Spynie, Vol I; years covered 1711-1819. The original baptismal entry is on microfilm in the New Register House, Edinburgh; a copy of the microfilm is also located in the Public Library of Elgin. Both the 1772 and 1781 entries are Episcopal.

¹¹Letter from Robert Jamieson to Sir Walter Scott of 10th November 1805, NLS, MS. 3875, fol. 117.

*Other Prose Writings of James Hogg
in Relation to A Justified Sinner*

One controversy surrounding James Hogg's *A Justified Sinner* is the extent to which the antithetical attitudes of the two narrators reflect the attitude of the author himself. A review of other works in which Hogg develops the theme of duality against a similar theological background may help to clarify this position.

The Brownie of Bodsbeck, a novel published in 1818 (six years before *A Justified Sinner*), is set in 1685, when Royalist forces led by Claverhouse attempted to impose episcopacy in the Scottish lowlands. The protagonist, Walter Laidlaw, is a moderate who risks his life giving aid to a fugitive band of extreme Presbyterians. He disapproves of their "lang-winded stories,"¹ and tells them, "I dinna gie a bawbee about your leagues, and Covenants, and associations, for I think aye there's a good deal o' faction and dourness in them; but or I'll desert a fellow-creature that's oppressed, if he's an honest man, and lippens to me, od, I'll gie them the last drap o' my heart's bluid."² Near the end of the story, Walter learns that his daughter, like himself, has secretly been aiding the Covenanters. He exclaims, "Deil care what side they war on, Kate!" and says that she has "taen the side o' human nature; the suffering and the humble side, an' the side o' feeling."³

Like Gil-Martin in *A Justified Sinner*, Claverhouse is frequently depicted as a demon, even though his religion and politics are the very opposite of Gil-Martin's. The narrator of *The Brownie of Bodsbeck* speculates that "Claverhouse must indeed have been one of the infernals,"⁴ because the hoofmarks of his horse have remained in the soil for two generations.

The cruelty of the Royalists, in this novel, is at least partly responsible for the equal extremism of the dissenters. When an old servant is about to be tortured and maimed for having once attended a Covenanter's church-service, he cries out to Claverhouse, "Gude sooth, lad, but ye'll mak mae whigs wherever ye show your face, than a' the hill preachers o' Scotland put thegither."⁵ Hogg's purpose throughout *The Brownie of Bodsbeck* is clearly to contrast moderation and humanitarian feelings with the extremism of *both* opposing factions.

In 1832 Hogg published a short story called "Sound Morality:

Or, Practical Religion as distinguished from Theoretical Religion." The main part of this tale is a shepherd's parable about a destitute woman who asks for food at an inn. The local minister refuses to help her, in spite of being "a strenuous preacher-up of good works."⁶ The confused inn-keeper, Bessie, then discusses with a friend the implications of the situation;

"Ye dinna expect that your gude warks are to tak ye till heavin, then, do ye?"

"If we had nae ither grip, I fear you an' I wad hae baith but a poor chance, Bessie."

"Aye, like enough. But d'ye think our minister's are sure enough to tak him there?"

"Our minister's! O I couldna say about that, for it is the first time ever I heard tell o' them."

"Aye, ye've a way, Kirstie! But there's nae fun i' my mind; for I hae a poor dying widow lady i' my house, an' the minister winna help me wi' ony thing but a cart to take yer away. in."

"She maun be ill-looking, I fear. An' in that case the parson's resolution is quite orthodox—because ye ken, Bessie, gude warks shouldna be extendit to aught that's no beautifu' in itself—Eh?"⁷

The shepherd-narrator, Michael, continually points out the difficult of separating moral action from the expectation of reward. Bessie pretends to give charity to the woman, but is secretly reimbursed by a mysterious highlander, who in turn obtains the money by extortion. She also receives gifts from wealthy neighbors in response to her apparent magnanimity. Michael draws the moral: "I never yet knew a grand declaimer on the principles of sound morality, who ever was an upright, charitable, and amiable character; and I hardly ever knew a man of humility, who placed his hopes on the works of another who had stood in his stead, that was not a model of what the other inculcated."⁸

Michael's emphasis on the figure of Christ, as opposed to abstract or theoretical religion, is a sharp contrast to the attitudes of the two narrators in *A Justified Sinner*. It differs from the editor's Deistic conception of God as the "Supreme Being"⁹ and the "controller of Nature,"¹⁰ and from Robert Wringham's belief

in an amoral and cruel God.

Although the editor does not declare himself to be a Deist, his use of eighteenth-century Deistic terminology and his veneration for "nature, utility, and common sense"¹¹ suggest that, like Robert, his religion has congealed into a system of abstract theories. In his *Series of Lay Sermons*, Hogg expressed his aversion for the two contraries of rationalism and superstition in religion:

I deem it more contemptible to be a deist, than the slave of superstition. Ridicule is the instrument of their persecution; and as they stop at no manner of blasphemy, I have often found it difficult to contain my countenance, and refrain from tears, at hearing the profligacy of the sentiments of learned men. But as the terror of death should never make me a bigot, neither can all the arguments of philosophy or force of ridicule I have ever heard convert me to deism.¹²

The central antithesis of *A Justified Sinner* is most clearly adumbrated in a short story called, "On the Separate Existence of the Soul." Here Hogg presents a self-sufficient and rationalistic laird, who speaks of "the goings-on of nature and providence,"¹³ and his pious shepherd, who condemns the laird's "unprofitable jargon"¹⁴ as "blasphemy"¹⁵ and considers him as "polluted dust."¹⁶ The two men die on the same evening, but when their souls arrive at heaven, they are refused admittance. In order to teach piety to the laird, and charity to the shepherd, each is condemned to return to earth in the body of his antagonist. Thus the soul which had denied "the gospel, the immortality of the soul, and the existence of the devil,"¹⁷ is made to change places with the soul of a rigid believer too proud to acknowledge his affinity with a skeptic.

"On the Separate Existence of the Soul" is narrated by the Ettrick Shepherd, Hogg's familiar *persona*. Again, the narrator's statement of principle emphasizes his moderation in contrast with the two extremes of abstract philosophy and dogmatic religion: "I am no moral philosopher; indeed, I am the farthest from it that any man can be, as I disapprove of the whole science, conceiving it to be dangerous to simple and vital religion, and to a firm reliance on the truth of revelation."¹⁸

Although *A Justified Sinner* remains a problematical novel, Hogg's other prose does provide some insight into his probable attitude towards the two narrators. Throughout his writings he tried to present an ideal of Christian moderation, and to distinguish it equally from rationalism and from dogmatism. It seems misleading, then, to associate James Hogg with either the editor or Robert Wringhim. John Carey may be correct when he says that "The balance of the work requires that the editor's prejudices should be, in their way, as warping as Wringhim's."¹⁹

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NOTES

¹James Hogg, *The Brownie of Bodsbeck*, ed. Douglas Mack (Edinburgh, 1976), p. 22

²*Ibid.*, p. 23

³*Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁶In *The Tales of James Hogg, The Ettrick Shepherd* (London & Glasgow, 1884), I, 285.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 283.

⁹James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, ed. John Carey (London, 1969), p. 16.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹²James Hogg, *A Series of Lay Sermons on Good Principles and Good Breeding, by the Ettrick Shepherd* (London, 1834), p. 298.

¹³James Hogg, "On the Separate Existence of the Soul" *Fraser's Magazine*, IV, (December 1831), p. 533.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 533.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 531.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 534.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 530.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 529.

¹⁹John Carey, "Introduction" to *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, p. xiv.