

1987

Brief Notice

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl>

 Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(1987) "Brief Notice," *Studies in Scottish Literature*: Vol. 22: Iss. 1.
Available at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol22/iss1/18>

This Brief Notice is brought to you by the Scottish Literature Collections at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Studies in Scottish Literature* by an authorized editor of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact dillarda@mailbox.sc.edu.

Brief Notice



Scottish Ambassador. Ed. E. Brian Wilton. Inaugural Issue, Summer 1986.

It is unusual for *SSL* to review periodicals, but *Scottish Ambassador* should be brought to the attention of readers, scholars and librarians. E. Brian Wilton is publishing this work quarterly out of Comrie in Perthshire. It is a beautifully produced work on glossy paper devoted to most aspects of Scottish life. It is abundantly illustrated in black and white as well as high quality color. The first two issues list the following topics on their covers: History, Heritage, Nature, Sport, Leisure, Food, Drink, Property, Fashion, Literature, Business, Finance, Industry. Most of these topics make for mere “coffee-table” publishing, but so far *Scottish Ambassador* appears to be avoiding this pitfall.

In the first issue, for example, there is a short but informative article “genealogy begins at Home” by Alwyn James. There is a good piece on the Battle of Bannockburn, with a reproduction of as well as a detail from Jim Proudfoot’s incredible painting of that battle. There is also an article on Robert Burns, arguing that Burns was not the “simple” Bard he has been portrayed as; here Ian Grimble is doing Scottish letters a real service in undoing the mischief Henry Mackenzie first perpetrated on Burns’s reputation. There is also short fiction in the magazine.

In the second issue Graeme Cruikshank looks at a little-known battle in Scottish history, the Battle of Nechtansmere which was fought in 685 AD between the Picts and the Northumbrians. Ian A. Fraser writes in the first of what is to be a series on Scottish place-names. Louis Stott

contributes "The Waterfalls of Scotland"—some of them among the most beautiful in Europe, and the subject of numerous eighteenth-century engravings and poems. The surprise of the issue was to find Iain Crichton Smith writing an appreciation of the greatest Gaelic poet of the century, Sorley MacLean. Smith is, of course, himself a native speaker and writes with great sensitivity on the subject.

Scottish Ambassador is off to a good start; we all wish it success.

G.R.R.

Moira Burgess. *The Glasgow Novel: A Survey and Bibliography*. [Glasgow]: Scottish Library Assn. & Glasgow District Libraries. 2nd edn. 1986. 123 pp.

Moira Burgess has given scholars a most useful bibliography of the Glasgow novel which has now gone into a second edition. Professor Edwin Morgan's Preface and the 47-page survey are helpful both to the student and the general public alike, but the most important part of this book consists of the various compilations which constitute the bibliography proper. First there is a Reading List which includes general as well as single author bibliographies, histories and critical studies. The main part of the bibliography contains a listing divided into nine chronological divisions by period covered—thus Scott's *Rob Roy* falls into the period 1700-1799, not the section called "Early Nineteenth Century: 1800-1836" when the novel was written. Since Burgess has added a chronological list of the publication dates of the novels as well as an author index this arrangement does not present a problem for the user.

The chronological arrangement makes the book particularly useful for the user who might be interested in what has been written about a given period. Of the 263 entries, it is interesting to note that only three of them deal with the period to 1699, and another eleven cover the eighteenth century, including Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* where it is admitted that the novel merely "includes Glasgow in its itinerary." *Clinker* should not be considered a Glasgow novel *per se* but Smollett certainly knew Glasgow and its vicinity and could give his mainly English audience a "feel" for the city.

By far the largest group of novels (96) deals with the city in the post-war years, and most of those novelists concentrate on the present, although a few authors like Agnes M.R. Dunlop (who wrote under the pseudonym of Elisabeth Kyle) preferred to set their work in an earlier age. The crest of the city says in part "Let Glasgow flourish," and this book shows that the Glasgow novel has indeed done so.

ALEXANDER FRASER

Jane Millgate, Iain Gordon Brown, and Patrick Cadell. *Sir Walter Scott's Magnum Opus and the Pforzheimer Manuscripts*. Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland. 1986. 28 pp.

This elegant pamphlet, illustrated with portraits and facsimiles, contains three essays "to commemorate the acquisition of two great collections by the National Library of Scotland." The first essay, by Jane Millgate, sets forth the importance of the *Magnum Opus*—the interleaved set of Scott's novels in which Scott, at intervals in the last six or seven years of his life, entered corrections, additions, and extensive notes for the revised edition of 1829-1833. The second essay, by Iain Gordon Brown, presents the history of this interleaved set stored in publisher's files for nearly a century, and hidden away in an American collector's library for nearly fifty years more. The third is a note on the important Scott manuscripts collected by Carl H. Pforzheimer (also virtually inaccessible for decades) and now bought by the National Library of Scotland. They include the holograph manuscripts of *The Lord of the Isles*, *Quentin Durward*, *The Betrothed*, *Chronicles of the Canongate*, three lesser manuscripts, and the corrected proofs of *Tales of My Landlord*, *Fourth Series*.

Professor Millgate's essay is of major interest to all students of Scott. The interleaved set she describes has never before been available for study, and therefore not known to be of importance. Conceding that most of the material was actually printed in the edition of 1829-1833, she points out:

The numerous small differences which occur in every note and on each page of introduction, the sheer mass of material in Scott's hand, the numerous physical evidences of the way in which the editorial apparatus was put together and modified over time—these constitute important data.... The information it offers to scholars is enormous (p. 13).

The pamphlet is thus not just a "commemoration"; it announces an important opening for scholars concerned with Scott's text and methods, and several new incentives to make use of the resources of the National Library of Scotland.

THOMAS DALE

Alan Bell, ed. *Lord Cockburn. A Bicentenary Commemoration*. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press. 1979. vii + 204 pp.

Henry Cockburn (1779-1845) is well known for his reminiscences: *Memorials of His Time*, one of the best books of its kind ever written in Scotland; his *Journal*; and the *Circuit Journeys*. Cockburn was "a great citizen of nineteenth-century Edinburgh," as Sir James Fergusson titles his introductory essay. He had a distinguished career as advocate and judge, was a speaker and pamphleteer on Scottish parliamentary reform, and stood firmly by his Whiggish principles. He was a man of cultivated taste and a keen observer who chronicled a passing age in eager anticipation of what was to come. His pen-portraits and brilliant descriptions vividly reveal to the modern reader an important period in Scotland's cultural and social history. Cockburn was a progressive Scotsman, patriotic but free from provincialism. The essays collected in the present volume discuss essential aspects of Cockburn's life and time. "Cockburn in his Correspondence" by Alan Bell draws our attention to the large collection of manuscript letters held by the National Library of Scotland. Apart from his *Memorials*, it is in his letters that we encounter his "strong sense of period and place." In "Reason and Dream: Cockburn's Practical and Nostalgic Views of Civic Well-being," Bell traces the writer's views on urban layout and amenity, urban and rural setting, and the railway buildings issue in 1837 Edinburgh. "Cockburn and the Church" by Iain F. Macinver refers to Cockburn's involvement as a public man in the affairs of the Church of Scotland, his attitudes towards Moderatism, contemporary Evangelicals and their social ideas, and the poor quality of preaching he sometimes had to endure on circuit. He could not avoid "immersing himself in the workings of an institution so deeply rooted in Scottish nationality and politics." Cockburn's professional life and his achievements as a legal writer are analyzed in "Cockburn and the Law" by John M. Pinkerton. His record as a lawyer is shown to have been an imperfect one, yet his skill as an orator before a jury must have been impressive. Karl Miller, in an essay entitled "Cockburn, Nature and Romance," presents "some afterthoughts" on his *Cockburn's Millenium* (1975), dealing with the neglected subject of Cockburn's critical interest in poetry. In particular, he expands on the "relationship between the literary outlook of Cockburn and his friends...and that of the leading writers of Romanticism, in its early days or dawn." One of his main sources is the anthology of poetry compiled by Cockburn and his friends which is in the James M. and Marie Louise Osborn Collection, Yale University Library. "The making of Cockburn's *Memorials*" by Bell examines the process of redrafting the *Memorials* and stresses the importance of Cockburn's autobiographical writings, "both as history and literature." Cockburn's account of the Friday Club was printed for the first time by his grandson in the *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* in 1910. In 1973 the original manuscript was presented to the National Library of

Scotland. The text is now reliably re-edited with an introductory note by Bell and adds to the vivid picture of the social, political and literary Scotland we gain from these perceptive essays.

HORST W. DRESCHER

John Mactaggart. *The Scottish Gallovidian Encyclopedia*. Ed. with Introduction by L.L. Ardern. Strath Tay, Perthshire: Clunie Press; in association with the E.A. Hornel Trust. 1981. vi + xii + 504 pages. A facsimile of the edition of 1824.

John Mactaggart (1797-1830), the son of a farmer, and one of eleven children, published *The Scottish Gallovidian Encyclopedia* in 1824 and left soon after for London where he failed in an attempt to found a newspaper, *The London Scotchman*. Having learned engineering, he went to Canada in 1826 where he surveyed the route for the Rideau Canal, returning to Scotland in 1828. The result of this experience was chronicled in *Three Years in Canada* (1829). Mactaggart left a long unfinished poem entitled "The Engineer" which has never been published.

His *Encyclopedia* is a peculiarly idiosyncratic work which achieved only a very small circulation because of the entry "Star o' Dungyle" devoted to the daughter of the Laird of Ingleston, Miss H---. In the entry Mactaggart wrote "the good boxer or bruiser were the only persons who could get to speak to her, and she was always fonder of that class...the low and mean were her associates...[she] would lay in barns with them at night, put on beggar weeds, and bade farewell to virtue altogether..." and so on for almost two pages. As a result the author was threatened with an action by the laird unless the book was withdrawn.

In his Introduction Mactaggart states that he has not had recourse to books in gathering the information for his encyclopedia—"the whole is the doing of habit and memory." And so this *omnium-gatherum* is part dictionary of Scotisms (*hirple*: to walk in a lame-like manner); part encyclopedia (*Macdiarmid*: John M'Diarmid...Editor of the *Dumfries and Galloway Courier*...); part compilation of folk belief (*adder-beads*: [here follow three pages about the mythical beads made by seven hairy adders and a white one]); and part pure puffery (*Mactaggart*: this is no less a personage than myself...[here follow over eight pages on the topic]).

Twentieth-century readers have used the *Gallovidian Encyclopedia* to advantage; for example, K. Buthlay of Glasgow University has discovered that Hugh MacDiarmid used a phrase in an early poem ("Moonstruck") which originated in Mactaggart's encyclopedia. Scholars and general readers will find this reprint a useful and fascinating book.

G.R.R.