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Prelims, Prefatory Note to SSL 37, Preface to Robert Burns & Friends

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**STUDIES
IN
SCOTTISH
LITERATURE**



Volume 37

Robert Burns & Friends

Essays by W. Ormiston Roy Fellows

in honor of G. Ross Roy

Edited by

Patrick Scott & Kenneth Simpson

Series Editors

Patrick Scott & Tony Jarrells

University of South Carolina Libraries
2013

This volume was originally issued as a separate publication in August 2012, for presentation on Ross Roy's 88th birthday, under the title *Robert Burns & Friends*.

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**Prefatory Note to
*Studies in Scottish Literature, 37***

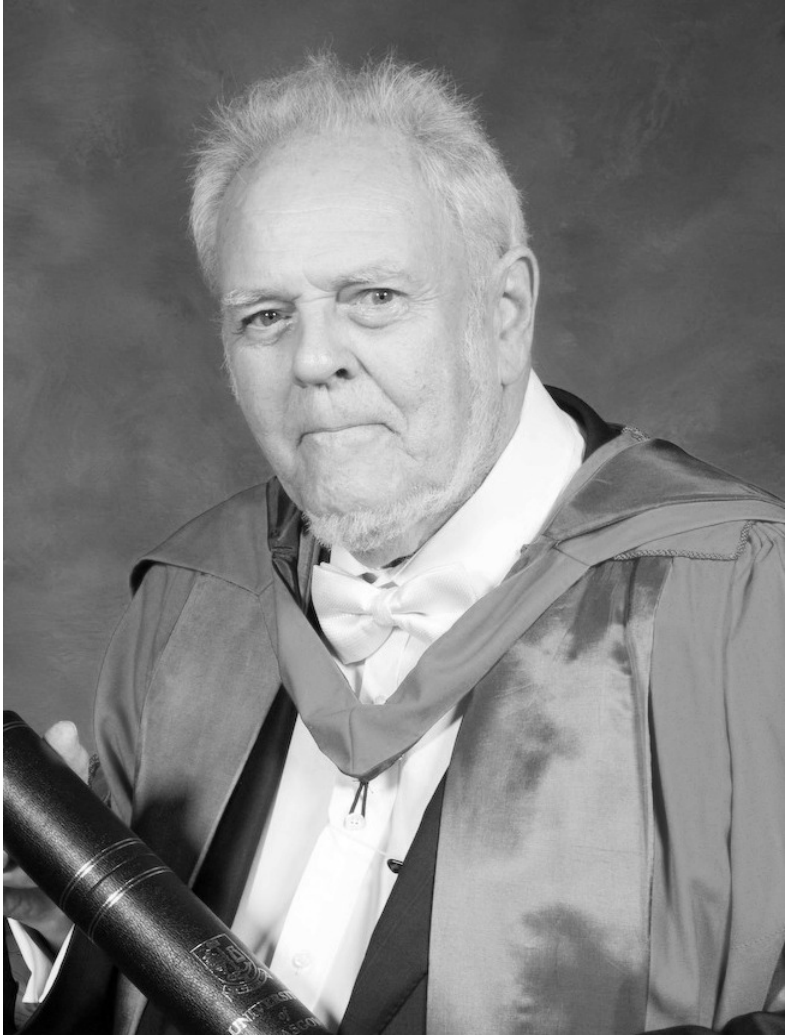
This volume, with essays about Robert Burns, his contemporaries, and his influence, was originally issued separately, under the title *Robert Burns & Friends*, as a *festschrift* honouring G. Ross Roy (1924-2013), founder and for nearly fifty years editor of this journal. He died early this year, so that what originated as a tribute is now reissued as a memorial.

When Professor Roy transferred *SSL* to the University Libraries, he asked that the new series should start with volume 38, as he planned that volume 37 should be a cumulative index to the years of his editorship. While much work had been done on the index volume, when he died it was not ready for immediate publication.

This volume restores continuity of volume numbering between the original series of *Studies in Scottish Literature* (volumes 1-36, 1963-2008), edited by Professor Roy, and the first volume of the new series (volume 38, 2012). It is hoped also that inclusion in the main *SSL* series will bring essays in the Roy *festschrift* to a wider readership. Like other recent volumes, *SSL 37* is available both in traditional print format and in open-access digital form, from <http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/>.

Patrick Scott
Tony Jarrells

April, 2013



G. Ross Roy
as Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*,
University of Glasgow, June 17, 2009
“The rank is but the guinea’s stamp, ...”

Preface **to *Robert Burns and Friends***

This volume pays tribute to the Burns scholar and editor G. Ross Roy, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of English & Comparative Literature at the University of South Carolina, and friend and mentor to successive generations of Burnsians and Burns scholars. For more than fifty years, Ross Roy has been one of the most active and respected scholars in Scottish literary studies, both for his own research on Burns and other writers, and for the pioneering and influential journal he founded and edited, *Studies in Scottish Literature*. Arguably it is that journal, as much as any other factor, that first brought the scholarly study of Scottish literature its now-established academic credibility and recognition.

The volume departs from the conventions of the *festschrift* in several ways: its contributors are neither the honoree's distinguished contemporaries nor his former students, the topics of the essays in no way represent the full range of the honoree's scholarly research and interests, and the volume champions no single methodology or perspective. In planning the volume, we were aware that many of the contributions to the splendid double-volume of *Studies in Scottish Literature* (2008) with which Dr. Roy concluded his editorship had already pre-empted a *festschrift* on traditional lines.

Instead, this volume focuses on a single author and theme (broadly interpreted, it is true), and the contributors represent a special subset of the many scholars who would wish to honour Ross Roy. The central thread through Dr. Roy's own work has been Robert Burns, and the volume's title also celebrates his own gift for friendship. The participants are scholars from both sides of the Atlantic who have visited the University of South Carolina as W. Ormiston Roy Fellows to conduct research in the G. Ross Collection of Robert Burns & Scottish Poetry. Their essays explore aspects of Burns's relationships with his poetic predecessors and the cultural community of his youth, with his contemporaries, and

with correspondents; his songs and song-editing; and his remarkable and very personal impact on subsequent generations. Three essays, still Burns-related, tie in with other threads in Ross Roy's career: his interest in the literature of his native Canada, in literary translation, and in book collecting. Beginning with a biographical tribute to Ross Roy by one editor, the volume concludes with a checklist of Ross Roy's published work by the other.

Thanks are due in the first instance to the contributors. Patrick Scott owes thanks to Tom McNally, Dean of Libraries at the University of South Carolina, and to his colleagues in Rare Books, for freeing time to work on the volume, and to the South Carolina Honors College for supporting Justin Mellette's and Mark Taylor's assistance with this and other Burns projects. Ken Simpson acknowledges with gratitude the help of Ronnie Young and David Simpson with some technical issues. Thanks are also due to the good friends who funded publication of the volume through a donation to the Library Fund. The frontispiece portrait has been kindly shared by the University of Glasgow.

Above all, the volume owes its existence to the respect that so many of us have for Ross Roy and Lucie Roy, true friends, and it is dedicated to them, with gratitude and affection.

Patrick Scott & Kenneth Simpson

July, 2012

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used throughout the volume, for parenthetical references given in the text:

Kinsley, with volume and page number: James Kinsley, ed. *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1968.

Roy, with volume and page number: G. Ross Roy, and J. De Lancey Ferguson, eds. *The Letters of Robert Burns*. 2nd ed. revised. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1985.