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DIGITAL RESOURCES FOR SCOTTISH NEO-LATIN LITERATURE

Ralph McLean

Although works in Latin have been produced in Scotland for well over a millennium, in the modern age, as proficiency in the language declined, it became something of a poor relation for literary study, with works in English, Scots, and, Gaelic attracting more attention from scholars. However, in recent years, Latin literature in Scotland has enjoyed something of a Renaissance. Robert Crawford described Scottish literature in Latin as the country's "literary lost continent," but thanks to a range of projects that seek to make available key Latin texts, both in their original language and in accessible translations, what was once lost is now being rediscovered and reclaimed. This short article provides an outline of that recent scholarship and the sources available, primarily in online formats, but also more selectively in print, for those looking to explore this expanding field of study.

Roger Green's *Scottish Latin Authors in Print up to 1700* (2012) is the most comprehensive guide available for Latin texts published by Scots both at home and abroad.¹ It provides bibliographic details on the works of over five hundred authors covering the period c.1480-1700. This catalogue also provides an overview of the wide range of published Latin works, for example: histories, imaginative literature, legal texts, political works, scientific works, and a range of theses relating to medical, philosophical, and theological investigations. One notable omission from this guide is the published work of Scotland's pre-eminent Latin scholar, George Buchanan (1506-1582). However, his absence from this volume is explained by John Durkan's *Bibliography of George Buchanan* (1994), which remains the standard work. Following on from *Latin Authors in Print*, Steven Reid has produced a database of all the currently known published first editions of

¹ R.P.H. Green, P.H. Burton and D.J. Ford, with Gilbert Tournoy eds, *Scottish Latin Authors in Print up to 1700: A short-title list*, Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia XXX (Leuven, 2012)

Latin texts published by Scots between 1480 and 1700 to explore further the extent of Scottish Latin print culture.²

A. THE PHILOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Given Buchanan's stature as an author of Latin works he is one of the most heavily featured writers on the "The Philological Museum" website. Hosted by the Shakespeare Institute at the University of Birmingham under the general editorship of Dana F. Sutton and Martin Wiggins, it produces electronic critical editions of Latin texts and is dedicated to the study of humanistic letters in Britain.³ The website itself is split into two parts, one part comprising a library of humanistic texts, and the other, a bibliography of neo-Latin texts available online. The library contains a significant number of works by Scottish authors, with Buchanan dominating the translations, mostly focusing on his historical, poetical, and political output.

Each of the edited works on the *Philological Museum* website comes with an introductory essay which provides background information on the author and a detailed analysis of key concepts contained in their writings. The introductions also contextualise the works to give readers an understanding of the milieu in which the works were created and why they were written by their authors. The texts themselves can either be read in their original Latin, or in English translation.

The list given below describes the texts by Scottish authors currently on the website. All of the works listed here have been edited by Dana F. Sutton, unless otherwise stated:

Barclay, John, *Poematum Libri Duo* (1625), edited by Mark Riley and Robert Meindl. Barclay who was born in France to a Scottish Catholic father sought to win favour at the Court of James VI, but eventually obtained the patronage of Pope Paul V after moving to Rome in 1615.⁴

Boece, Hector, *Scotorum Historia* (1575 edition). Until this recent edition Boece's *Historia* was mainly available in John Bellenden's translation but owing to his

² Steven J. Reid, "A Latin Renaissance in Reformation Scotland? Print Trends in Scottish Latin Literature, c.1480-1700," *Scottish Historical Review*, 95:1 (2016), 1-29.

³ <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/>.

⁴ David Fleming, "John Barclay: Neo-Latinist at the Jacobean Court," *Renaissance News*, 19 (1966), 228-36

editorial practices of condensing and abridging Boece's work much of the original has never been fully accessible to a lay audience.⁵

Boyd, Andrew, *Carmina* (1633), edited by Jamie Reid Baxter and Dana F. Sutton. Occasioned by Charles I's visit to Scotland for his coronation, Boyd used the opportunity both to offer praise to the monarch and to remind him not to neglect his northern realm now that the Stuart family had relocated to England.

Buchanan, George, *De Caeto Nuper Recepta Carmen* (1558). Buchanan's ode, written in Paris, celebrates the French capture of Calais in January 1558.

_____, *De Iure Regni Apud Scotos Dialogus* (1579). One of Buchanan's best known works, this radical tract argues that rather than being God's representative on earth, the king is in fact created for the people, and that sovereignty resides not in him, but with the people themselves.

_____, *De Maria Scotorum Regina* (1571). In this work Buchanan presented Queen Mary as a tyrant and built a case to justify her imprisonment and subsequent forced abdication as monarch. The main thrust of Buchanan's argument was his belief that Mary had transgressed against both the people of Scotland and Scots law itself, resulting in her legitimate removal.

_____, and Alexander Yule, *Ecphrasis Paraphraseos Georgii Buchanani in Psalmos Davidis* (1620). As Buchanan's verse paraphrases of the psalms were heavily used in schools, a prose paraphrase was required as a study aid. This was provided by Yule, who was both a poet and the headmaster of the Grammar School at Stirling.

_____, *Five Masques*, edited by Dana F. Sutton with the assistance of Elena Semenzato. Among these short works, two focus on Mary's marriage to Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, and the birth of her son the future James VI. Rather than the anti-Marian tone of his later works these pieces are marked by their courtly flattery.

_____, *Psalmorum Davidis Paraphrasis Poetica* (1580 edition). Mostly composed while he was a prisoner in Portugal between 1550 and 1552, these verse paraphrases became a standard school text book for generations of Scottish school children.⁶ Buchanan continued to make alterations and improvements to this work throughout his life.

_____, *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* (1582). As Dana F. Sutton notes in his introduction, this work is highly problematical if taken as a primary source for Scottish history.⁷ However, as a political tract, it offers valuable insight into the development of Scottish, and British, political thought.

⁵ Nicola Royan, "The relationship between the *Scotorum Historia* of Hector Boece and John Bellenden's *Chronicles of Scotland*," in Sally Mapstone, ed., *The Rose and the Thistle: Essays on the Culture of Late Renaissance Scotland* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998), 136-57.

⁶ I. D. MacFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Duckworth, 1981)

⁷ <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/scothist/intro.html#gather>.

____, *Vita ab Ipso Scripta Biennio ante Mortem* (1580). An autobiographical sketch of Buchanan's life, written two years before his death.

Craig, Thomas, *Two Elegies for James Stewart, Earl of Moray and Regent of Scotland* (ob. 1570), edited by Jamie Reid Baxter. As the illegitimate son of James V, James Stewart was installed as regent of Scotland following the abdication of his half-sister Mary. Craig wrote these two elegies for Stewart following his assassination in 1570.

Dempster, Thomas, *Decemviratus Abrogatus* (1613). Although Dempster is mostly remembered as a historian, this historical tragedy dramatizes the story of the corrupt Roman politician Appius and the chaste Virginia.

Dickson, Alexander, *De Umbra Rationis et Iudicii* (1584). Dickson's philosophical dialogue is an investigation into the art of memory and was published a year after the Italian scholar Giordano Bruno had visited England to promote his own studies on the subject.

Dunbar, John, *Epigrammaton Ioannis Dunbari Megalo-Britanni Centuriae Sex, Decades Totidem* (1616), edited by Jamie Reid Baxter and Dana F. Sutton. Epigram writing in Scotland appears to have been more prominent than in England, as Scottish poets were more receptive to continental trends, particularly the influence of the French. The first three books are dedicated to James VI, with the next three dedicated to Charles I.

____, *Daphnaeum Doctorale* (1618). Dunbar composed this poem celebrating his own academic achievement after he received a Doctorate of Medicine from the University of Padua.

Forbes, William, *Poemata Miscellanea* (1642). Identified by Dana F. Sutton as by the Presbyterian minister of Innerwick, the works consists of four poems which are anti-Episcopal in nature.⁸ However, the first poem is a celebration of Sir John Scot of Scotstarvit, one of the editors of the recently published *Delitiae Poetarum Scotorum* (1637).

Hegate, William, *Gallia Victrix* (1598) edited by Jamie Reid Baxter and Dana F. Sutton. This drama, written by Hegate while in France, alludes to the recent signing of the Treaty of Vervins, which brought to an end the war between France and Spain, and the Edict of Nantes, which guaranteed tolerance to the Huguenots.

Hume of Godscroft, David, *Carmina Varia*. Hume, a historian and political theorist, was also a poet of note, and some of his pieces appeared in the *Delitiae*. The *Carmina Varia* was a posthumous collection of Hume's poetic works.

____, *Daphn-Amaryllis* (1605). Following James VI's departure for London in 1603 Hume produced four highly allegorical eclogues which sought to promote the advantage of the new Union between Scotland and England.

⁸ <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/forbes/intro.html>

____, *Lusus Poetici* (1605 and 1639). These are an eclectic mix of poetic works, including epigrams on Hume's own life and elegies dedicated to his former teacher the Reverend Andrew Simson of the Dunbar Grammar school.

____, *Poetry to Commemorate Royal Occasions* (1613 and 1617). The first of these poems focused on the death of James VI's heir Henry in 1612, which is balanced with the marriage celebrations of James's daughter Elizabeth. The second poem commemorates James's first return to Scotland after he departed to ascend the throne of England.

Hume, James, *Pantaleonis Vaticinia Satyra* (1633), edited by Mark Riley. Hume, the son of David Hume, wrote this satire in the style of the Roman author Petronius. The main character Pantaleon is his anti-heroic narrator.

____, *The Richeliad* (1639), edited by Mark Riley and Arthur Williamson. In his search for patronage Hume addressed this short poem, praising the status of Paris, to Cardinal Richelieu.

Johnston, Arthur, *De Loco Suo Natali* edited by Karl Maurer. This short poem by the editor of the *Delitiae Poetarum Scotorum* is on the place of Johnston's birth, Caskieben, which was near Inverurie in Aberdeenshire.

Johnston, Robert, *History of the Reign of James VI of Scotland*. Johnston's history, written in twenty-two books, covers the history, not only of Scotland and England, but also of the countries of Northern Europe from 1572 until 1628.

King, Adam, *Ad Iacobum Sextum Scotorum Regem a Nefaria Fratrum Ruvenorum Coniuratione divinitus servatum SOTERIA* (1601), edited by Jamie Reid Baxter. King's work addresses the events surrounding the Gowrie conspiracy, which still remains something of a mystery, but concerns a supposed plot to either murder or kidnap James VI.

Leech, John, *Anacreontica* (1618 and 1620). These works follow the style of the Greek poet Anacreon, who celebrated earthly delights in direct contrast to Christian morality.

____, *Epigrammatum Libri Quatuor* (1620-23), edited by Jamie Reid Baxter and Dana F. Sutton. Leech's works are another exemplar of the flourishing Scottish epigram tradition.

Maitland, John, *Epigrammata*. Maitland's epigrams, satirising familiar Catholic targets such as the Pope and King Philip of Spain, appeared in the *Delitiae*.

Ramsay, Andrew, *Creationis Rerum Descriptio Poetica* (1633). Ramsay, a minister of Greyfriars in Edinburgh, composed this poem on the Creation in four books.

Rutherford, Samuel, *Four Latin Poems* edited by Jamie Reid Baxter and Matthew Vogan. Rutherford, one of the most prominent theologians of the seventeenth century, is most famous for *Lex Rex* (1644), a work attacking the doctrine of the divine right of kings. Three of the four short works are taken from a manuscript in the National Library of Scotland (Wodrow Quarto LXXXIV).

Wallace, Michael, *The Latin Poetry*, edited by Jamie Reid Baxter and Dana F. Sutton. Wallace was a minister from Kilmarnock. Among his poems are works on the 1605 gunpowder plot.

Wilson (Volusenus), Florence, *De Animi Tranquillitate Dialogus* (1543). Wilson's philosophical work attempts to blend together Graeco-Roman attitudes to moral philosophy with Christian theology.

Yule, Alexander, *Descriptio Horrendi Parricidii* (1606), edited by Jamie Reid Baxter and Dana F. Sutton. Yule's poem recounts the attempt to kill James VI in the gunpowder plot.

A second section of the Birmingham website provides an extensive bibliography of electronic neo-Latin texts that can either be viewed online or downloaded.⁹ This substantial resource contains over 56,000 entries, and again, there is strong Scottish representation among the listed works. For example, John Barclay, the French-born Scots author renowned for his major work *Argenis* (1621), a historical allegory recounting the religious conflicts in France under Henry III and Henry IV, has a significant number of his works listed constituting multiple editions of his publications which are freely available online.¹⁰ However, unlike the works accessible through the humanist library, these editions are only available in Latin, without the critical apparatus and translations provided there for those unfamiliar with the history of a work, or the language in which it was written.

B. BRIDGING THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

Glasgow University's AHRC-funded project *Bridging the Continental Divide*, which ran from 2012 until 2015, provides an online platform more specifically for the study of neo-Latin and its cultural role in Jacobean Scotland.¹¹ Established by Steven Reid and David McOmish, the central aim of the project was to produce an online edition of a selection of the Scottish poets who appeared in the *Delitiae Poetarum Scotorum huius aevi illustrium* (1637). The *Delitiae*, edited by Sir John Scot of Scotstarvit and Arthur Johnston, remains the largest anthology of Scottish neo-Latin poetry ever produced. The website for the project focuses on eleven of the thirty-seven poets who were featured in the anthology, providing facsimile copies of the pages from the *Delitiae*, Latin transcriptions and English translations of the poems, and a scholarly support apparatus which offers insights into the poems and background information on each contributor. The following poets are featured on the website:

⁹ <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/bibliography/index.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/bibliography/ba.html>

¹¹ <http://www.dps.gla.ac.uk/>

Patrick Adamson (1537-1592), Archbishop of St Andrews. Adamson, originally from Perth, was educated at St Andrews and continued his studies on the continent, where he contributed verses to works by the French humanists Denys Lambin and Adrien Turnébe. He wrote a number of biblical paraphrases, as well as a Latin version of the Scots Confession of Faith. His contribution to the *Delitiae* is the *Genethliacum* or birth-poem for James VI.

Henry Anderson (fl. early 17th century), a Perth merchant. Anderson who represented Perth in the Scottish parliament, and was a merchant burghess of the town wrote a number of verses celebrating James VI, three of which appear in the *Delitiae*. His other work, *The Muses' Complaint* is a highly critical piece on what Adamson believed was the anti-Christian nature of the Catholic Church.

Robert Ayton (1570-1638), a courtier at the court of James VI and I. Ayton wrote a number of poems in praise of James VI and was a prolific writer of verse in Latin, Greek, Scots, and English.¹² His panegyrics to James were ultimately successful as he was appointed a groom of the privy chamber in 1608.

William Barclay (c.1570-c.1627), a doctor in England and Scotland. Barclay was banished from Scotland in 1601 for attending mass and moved to Nantes, before returning to Scotland as a doctor. Deeply immersed in the Latin language he wrote a number of works including a critical essay examining the psalm paraphrases of George Buchanan and George Eglisam.

Thomas Craig of Riccarton (1538?-1608), an advocate. Riccarton published an important legal work *Ius Feudale* (1603), as well as a number of Latin verses patriotically celebrating the House of Stuart.¹³ His work *De unione regnorum Britanniae tractus* (1606, but not published until 1909) outlined the possibility of a union of laws between Scotland and England, with a claim that it could be based on the feudal laws of the two countries.¹⁴

James Halkerston (c.1540-c.1615), a soldier and mercenary in Scotland and France. Halkerston has the smallest representation in the *Delitiae*, a handful of epigrams, including one on the flooding of the Tiber, which indicates that he may have been in Rome in 1600 to witness the event.

Adam King (c.1560-c.1625), a professor of philosophy and mathematics at Paris, advocate in Edinburgh. King was something of a polymath whose extensive corpus of Latin work ranges from the religious to the scientific and the mathematical.¹⁵ As David McOmish has pointed out his work on astronomical poetry alone is almost 200,000 words.

¹² See also Charles B. Gullans, ed., *The English and Latin Poems of Sir Robert Ayton* [Scottish Text Society, 4th ser., 1] (Edinburgh, London: Blackwood, 1963).

¹³ Patrick Fraser Tytler, *An Account of the Life and Writings of Sir Thomas Craig of Riccarton* (Edinburgh, 1823).

¹⁴ John W. Cairns, "Thomas Craig," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online*: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6580?docPos=2>.

¹⁵ John Durkan, "Adam King: A Church Papist," *Innes Review*, 52 (2001), 195-99.

Thomas Maitland (c.1548-1572), a courtier and diplomat. Maitland's poetic output is only to be found in the *Delitiae*, where he uses multiple verse forms, such as elegies, sylvae, and epigrams. He is perhaps best known to scholars as the interlocutor in George Buchanan's political tract *De Iure Regni Apud Scotos*.

Andrew Melville (1545-1622), church reformer and university principal. As a key opponent of James VI's efforts to establish an Episcopal Church under royal control Melville is one of the most significant figures in sixteenth-century Scotland.¹⁶ Melville is also one of the biggest contributors to the *Delitiae* with fifty-five separate works, and several of them substantial poems. As the *Delitiae* project has uncovered, Melville's Latin poems demonstrate a deep understanding of the poetry of Virgil.

Hercules Rollock (c.1546-1599), a grammar school master and advocate. Rollock is a minor figure in Scottish history, but a major contributor to the *Delitiae*. He is from the 'middling sort' a class of educated professionals who emerged over the course of the sixteenth century. Rollock's prominence in the *Delitiae* demonstrates that Latin composition was not solely the preserve of university professors, kirk ministers and ruling class intellectuals like the Maitland brothers and John Scot, but was widely practised within Scottish society.¹⁷

John Scot (d. before 1619), a student and kinsman to John Scot of Scotstarvit. Little is known about Scot, other than that he was a cousin to the *Delitiae* editor John Scot. His one work in the volume is a poem on the departure of James VI to London to ascend the English throne.

In addition to the material available on its website, *Bridging the Continental Divide* also generated a substantial collection of essays investigating neo-Latin literature in early modern Scotland. This not only includes discussion of works from the *Delitiae*, but also from *The Muses Welcome* (1618), the volume of poetry celebrating James VI's return to Scotland.¹⁸ Alexander Broadie's chapter in this volume on the classical influence on the seventeenth-century philosophical writings of James Dundas showcases the fruits of another major project, funded by the Leverhulme Trust, "Scottish philosophers in seventeenth-century France." This second project, which also has an online presence, has recently

¹⁶ For recent scholarship on Melville see: Steven J. Reid, *Humanism and Calvinism: Andrew Melville and the Universities of Scotland, 1560-1625* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Steven J. Reid & Roger A. Mason eds. *Andrew Melville (1545-1622): Writings, Reception, and Reputation* (London: Routledge, 2014)

¹⁷ Cf. John Durkan, *Scottish Schools and Schoolmasters 1560-1633*, ed. and revised Jamie Reid-Baxter [Scottish History Society, 5th ser., 19] (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2013), section IV: "Schoolbooks, Grammarians and Schoolmaster Poets."

¹⁸ Steven J. Reid and David McOmish eds., *Neo-Latin Literature and Literary Culture in Early Modern Scotland* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

produced another edited collection of essays, focusing on the educational culture of seventeenth-century Scottish philosophers.¹⁹

Finally a joint-project between the Special Collections Centre of the Sir Duncan Rice Library at the University of Aberdeen and the Herzog August Bibliothek of Wolfenbüttel has made the library of the Aberdonian scholar Duncan Liddel (1561-1613) available online.²⁰ Liddel taught mathematics and medicine at the Protestant university of Helmstedt, the Academia Julia, before returning to Scotland in 1607 and ultimately bequeathing his library to Marischal College. The digitised texts reveal the handwritten annotations that Liddel made while teaching his university courses, including notes on the work of Nicolaus Copernicus.

This short article has merely scratched the surface of the plethora of Latin resources produced by Scottish writers that are now available to modern scholarship. However, the growing online presence of such works, and the scholarly apparatus which underpins them, clearly demonstrates that this is a growing and expanding field with a rich and deep research potential. The works listed here illustrate a range of issues and topics with which Scots engaged in the early modern period, but they also point to a strong continental connection reflected in a diaspora which saw Scottish writers operating at the heart of European culture.

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¹⁹ Alexander Broadie and Mordechai Feingold, eds., *History of Universities*, 29:2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); for the Leverhulme project itself, see: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/humanities/research/historyresearch/researchprojects/scottishphilosophersin17scotlandandfrance/>.

²⁰ <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections/duncan-liddel-232.php>.