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# Preface to SSL 47.2

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# PREFACE TO *SSL* 47:2

Author-based scholarship, and the detailed research by which it is carried forward, often seems walled in from general teaching in the field, and even more separate from how an author is known or half-remembered in the wider culture or public perception. At their best, centenaries and their celebration, and the opportunities for public engagement that they present, remind researchers of this wider culture, as well as increasing public awareness of new research or changed perspectives.

In place of the symposium of shorter papers with which SSL issues usually open, this issue marks the 250th anniversary of Walter's Scott's birth with two substantial articles on Scott from leading Scott scholars: first, an overview of Scott at 250, by Alison Lumsden and Kirsty Archer-Thompson, surveying research and critical developments since the landmark celebrations for Scott's centenary and bicentenary, and discussing public engagement at Abbotsford and elsewhere; and, second, new research from Peter Garside interrogating the evidence for Scott's famous dying words as reported by John Gibson Lockhart ("be virtuous—be religious—be a good man"), to explore Scott's religous beliefs and family interactions during his last years.

The articles that follow are also research-heavy: Nigel Leask and Peadar Ó Muircheartaigh's essay on, and edition and translation of, "*Co-ainm na taca seo an-uiridh*," a Gaelic lament written in the Caribbean by the Argyll-born poet Dugald MacNicol (1791-1844); and Thomas Keith's essay on, and annotated bibliography of, plays about Robert Burns, following up his standard Burns discography in *SSL* 33-34 (2004). The issue is rounded out by Simon Keith's review of a new research-based biography of the Scottish-South African poet Thomas Pringle (1789-1834).

As previously announced, *SSL* 48.1 will be a special issue on Scottish Cosmopolitanisms, guest-edited by Matthew Creasy and Michael Shaw, and *SSL* 48.2 will open with selected papers from this year's Medieval and Renaissance Scottish Literature conference at the University of Alabama,

guest-edited by Tricia McElroy and David Parkinson. It will also include a full-length article by Jamie Reid Baxter on Esther Inglis (c.1570-1624), with an edition of her *Octonaries upon the Vanitie and Inconstancie of the World*, and an article on the library of Robert Burns by Patrick Scott, both unavoidably held over after originally being scheduled for this issue.

Plans beyond that will maintain the mixture of general issues and special-topic issues. We welcome research-based articles and shorter notes or documentary items on all periods of Scottish literature, and on comparative or interdisciplinary topics where a significant focus and one of the disciplines is Scottish literature. For contact information, preferred length, and other guidelines, see links from the journal's home page.[1]

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[1] See "Aims and Scope": https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/aimsandscope.html; and "Rights," etc. : https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/rights_permissions.html.