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Books Noted and Received

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BOOKS NOTED AND RECEIVED

This list covers books received or noted since publication of the last issue, *SSL* 42:2, in November 2016; further titles from this date range will be noted in the fall issue. Inclusion in this list need not preclude possible fuller discussion of a book in a subsequent review or review essay.

Kirstie Blair, ed. *Poets of the People's Journal: Newspaper Poetry in Victorian Scotland* [ASLS Annual Volume No. 45]. Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2016. Pp. xxx + 225. Hardback, £14.95 ISBN 9781906841287.

—One of the major recent developments in Scottish literary studies has been increased interest in mid- and late 19th-century poetry, and a willingness to look outside the traditional focus on Thomson, Stevenson, and Davidson, to such rediscovered Scottish newspaper poets as Marion Bernstein. Everyone knew the material was there, but many libraries had little more than *Whistle-Binkie* (in five series, 1832-1846) or at best the 16 volumes of David Edwards's *Modern Scottish Poems* (Brechin, 1880-1897), but not much else. The rediscovery remains patchy, because of the sheer scale of the material, its relative inaccessibility either in locally-printed book-form or in the original newspapers, and its very variable quality. Victorian newspaper poetry poses an almost impossible task for whoever takes on the relevant chapter in a modern literary history. Kirstie Blair's collection gathers 104 poems from a single source, *The People's Journal*, published in Dundee from 1858, and a further 14 from its stable-mate *The People's Friend*. The journal printed at last two poems a week, making some 4,000 published over the next fifty years in that newspaper alone, so this book gives perhaps 2% of the whole. As one might expect from Professor Blair's earlier edited collection, *Class and the Canon: Constructing Labouring-Class Poetry and Poetics, 1750-1900* (2013), her focus in selecting what to reprint is primarily thematic, on the poems as reflections of working-class life and culture; by contrast with William Donaldson's *Popular Literature in Victorian Scotland* (1986) and his

related anthology *The Language of the People* (1989), focused on the linguistic strengths of newspaper fiction, Blair provides relatively little critical discussion. The selection includes poems both in Scots and English, bringing out well the element of dialogue or debate that could develop in newspaper poetry. The increased availability of open-access digitized newspapers will undoubtedly facilitate further studies or anthologies based on other papers or communities, and even on individual newspaper poets. Meantime, This anthology provides an attractive, and not I think unrepresentative, selection, introducing a new generation of students to the possibilities of newspaper research, and putting this kind of Scottish writing firmly back on the critical agenda.

Ian Brown, David Clark and Rubén Jarazo-Álvarez, eds. *Taking Liberties: Scottish Literature and Expressions of Freedom* [ASLS Occasional Papers series No. 21]. Glasgow: Scottish Literature International, an imprint of the Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2016. Pp. x + 240. Paperback, £12.95, €17.95, \$19.95. ISBN 9781908980212.

—Fully justifying the series imprint, this collection, edited from Kingston University, the University of Corunna, and the Balearic Islands, makes available fourteen essays, almost all by scholars at universities in France or Spain. Only the rather catch-all title betrays its origins in a conference titled “Freedom Come All Ye,” held at Corunna in 2012 by ASLS and the Société française d’études écossaises, and it has the virtues as well as limitations of the genre. Chapters on earlier literature include one on the younger Allan Ramsay, one on Hume, two on Mary Brunton, and one on Stevenson, but the collection focuses more heavily on the twentieth century, in Alan Riach’s introductory lecture and in essays on 20th century drama, Hugh MacDiarmid, Alastair Gray, Lewis Grassie Gibbon, Muriel Spark, Iain Crichton Smith, and Henry Adams. A comparative perspective is introduced in Pilar Somacarrera’s essay on Alice Munro and Ann-Marie MacDonald, and José-Miguel Alonso-Giráldez’s essay on the Glaswegian-Irish-Spanish poet Pearse Hutchinson (1927-2012).

Edward H. Burtt, Jr., ed. *Alexander Wilson: Enlightened Naturalist* [Series: *Aperçus: Histories Texts Cultures*]. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2016. Pp. xxx + 170. Paperback – ISBN 9781611487961.

--In America, Alexander Wilson (1766-1813), who emigrated in 1795, settling in Pennsylvania, is known primarily as an ornithologist, but in his early life in Scotland he had a distinctive reputation as a poet, following his older contemporary Robert Burns in highly effective use of the vernacular. Indeed his best-known verse tale *Watty and Meg* was often misattributed to Burns. The five essays in this book constitute a memorial volume to its instigator, Jed Burtt, professor of zoology at Ohio Wesleyan University,

who died age 68 while it was in the final stages of production. The volume complements the 2013 biography, *Alexander Wilson, the Scot who Founded American Ornithology*, that Burt co-authored with William E. Davis, Jr. The biography was relatively tentative in its assessment of Wilson as a poet, as of his Scottish years, and the new book contains two essays that redress the balance. In Ch. 1, Gerard Carruthers offers the first recent critical reassessment of Wilson as a Scots poet, with copious extracts quotations (for which Professor Carruthers also made recordings, linked directly in the eBook version and also from the publisher's site at: <http://www.bucknell.edu/universitypress/alexanderwilson>). In Ch. 2, an Americanist, Irving Rothman, offers the fullest discussion to date of the poetry Wilson wrote in America, including political poems, his long narrative poem *The Foresters* (published serially 1809-1810), and some shorter poems he included in his *American Ornithology* (9 vols., 1808-1814). The volume also includes a tribute to Jed Burt, a brief biography of Wilson, and three ornithological chapters.

Gerard Carruthers and Don Martin, eds., *Thomas Muir of Huntershill: Essays for the Twenty-First Century*. Edinburgh: Humming Earth, an imprint of Zeticula, 2016. Pp. 364. Paper, £19.95, \$30.00. ISBN 978-1-84622-051-7.

—Thomas Muir of Huntershill (1765-1799) has long attained an almost mythic status, as a founding figure both of Scottish democracy and, more debatably, of Scottish nationalism. A young lawyer, he was the most prominent of the political reformers, Friends of the People, tried for sedition in Scottish courts during the crack-down of 1793-1795; at his widely-reported trial, he represented himself, memorably but unsuccessfully. Exiled to Botany Bay, Australia, he escaped with American help, and in due course joined the British exiles in France, where he died, aged 34. Nonetheless, as the Friends of Thomas Muir, coinstigators of this volume, have been arguing, he is imperfectly understood even by his admirers. The fourteen essays in this volume constitute the fullest reassessment to date, with new research on the complexity of Muir's early populism and his anti-Enlightenment agitation, both over church patronage and at Glasgow University. Contributors include both Alex Salmond and Tom Devine; the two editors; and Rhona Brown, Tom Dowds, Satinder Kaur, Thomas Lemoine, David McVey, Gordon Pentland, Beverley Sherry, Alex Watson, Jimmy Watson, and Ronnie Young.

Gerard Carruthers and Colin Kidd, eds., *The International Companion to John Galt* [International Companions to Scottish Literature]. Glasgow: Scottish Literature International, an imprint of the Association for Scottish

Literary Studies, 2017. Pp. xii + 180. Paperback, £14.95, €22.95, \$24.95. ISBN 9781908980274.

—Galt's fiction has never been wholly neglected, but it is now certainly receiving renewed scholarly attention. Following soon after Regina Hewitt's *John Galt: Observations and Conjectures* (2012: reviewed in *SSL*, 40: 228-235), this new collection is both accessible and reasonably comprehensive as an introduction, while also including much that those who have cherished Galt for a long time will find stimulating.¹ The essayists certainly include literary scholars and critical assessment, but the volume is especially strong in the discussion of Galt's socio-economic concerns and historical context. Contributors include the editors (Professor Kidd on religion and satire in Ayrshire and Paisley, Professor Carruthers on Galt's tales), Andrew O'Hagan, Craig Lamont (on Galt and Glasgow), Angela Esterhammer (on Galt and financial speculation), Ian McGhee (on Galt and Canada), Alison Lumsden (on Galt and the Covenanters), Christopher Whatley (improvement, urbanization and revolution), Gordon Millar (on the political novels), and Tony Jarrells (also on the tales).

Mary-Ann Constantine and Nigel Leask, eds., *Enlightenment Travel and British Identities: Thomas Pennant's Tours in Scotland and Wales* [Anthem Studies in Travel]. London: Anthem Press, 2017. Pp. xxiv + 261. Hardback, £70, \$115. ISBN: 978-1-78308-653-5. Also available as an e-book.

—Thomas Pennant (1726-1798) is now known as a naturalist, especially in ornithology and botany, but in his own time he was more widely known for the accounts he published of his travels through his native Wales and through Scotland. This essay collection, stressing the significance of Pennant's observations for the later 18th century emergence or creation of "Britishness," stems from a collaborative project to reassess Pennant's travel writings, under the general title "Curious Travellers," based at Aberystwyth and Glasgow.² Several of the essays here focus particularly on his Scottish tours, notably those by Tom Furniss on Pennant's geological observations, and Allison Ksiazkiewicz on Pennant and the Isle

¹ I have one minor cavil on series format: references are given in endnotes, not footnotes, but without any running head on the note pages to indicate which chapter is being referenced on which page; in a chiefly critical volume, it might not matter, but in a volume like this, with some essays heavily referenced, it can be frustrating to locate the correct endnote.

² Cf. also Alex Deans and Nigel Leask, "Curious Travellers: Thomas Pennant and the Welsh and Scottish Tour (1760-1820)," *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 42:2 (Fall 2016): 164–172, at: <http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol42/iss2/4/>.

of Staffa. and Staffa, and by Ailsa Hutton and Nigel Leask on the interleaved copies of Tennant's Scottish tours annotated by the amateur antiquarian Robert Riddell, of Friar's Carse, who introduced Robert Burns to another curious traveler, Francis Grose.

Eileen Dunlop, *Sir Walter Scott: A Life in Story*. Edinburgh: National Museums Scotland/NMS Enterprises-Publishing, 2016. Pp. 256. Paper £9.99. ISBN 978-1-905267-93-4.

—a readable, agreeably astringent, biography, aimed at the general reader, with only brief discussion of individual Scott novels.

Scott Lyall, ed. *The International Companion to Lewis Grassie Gibbon* [International Companions to Scottish Literature]. Glasgow: Scottish Literature International, an imprint of the Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2015. Pp. 192. Paperback, £14.95, €22.95, \$24.95. ISBN 9781908980137.

—This volume escaped notice by SSL on its first appearance, and its publication deserves recording. The shift of the well-established Companions series from Edinburgh U.P. to A.S.L.S. has also involved a deliberate effort to shake the series up a bit, with more international, and sometimes younger, contributors. Lewis Grassie Gibbon is perhaps one of the frequently-taught Scottish writers who will benefit most from the change. [Entry left incomplete through editing error: corrected entry to be given in SSL 43:2].

Kirsteen McCue, ed., with Janette Currie and Megan Coyer. *Contributions to Musical Collections and Miscellaneous Songs* [Stirling/South Carolina Research Edition of the Collected Works of James Hogg, vol. 29]. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015. Pp. 832. Hardback, £120. ISBN 978-0-7486-3935-9.

--Last year, in reviewing Professor McCue's text-only *Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd* (S/SC edition vol. 28), I commented that it was intended to be used alongside this parallel volume of music facsimiles and musical annotation, and that "Researchers (and libraries) will need both volumes to get the most out of each" (SSL 42:1, 132). This massive volume is in fact much more substantial in content and research than that brief description might indicate. The sheer variety of sources that it draws on, and of facsimiles it provides, makes it much more than a companion. The major sources such as *Albyn's Anthology*, George Thomson's *Select Collection* and other series, Robert Adam Smith's *The Scottish (and Irish) Minstrel*, and several others, follow a standard pattern, giving an introduction about

the source, the Hogg song-texts, and then the same songs in musical facsimile. Following these major sources (which take the volume up to p. 492), a second section gives text and facsimile for a number of items that appeared in separate sheet music. A thirty-page appendix (pp. 631-660) includes, most notably the Hogg items from Beethoven's *Schottische Lieder* (1822). Textual emendations and annotation for all the songs are gathered separately at the end of the volume, followed by the glossary standard to this series. While the reproductions catch the eye, the new editorial material is substantial: a twenty-four page general introduction, and over a hundred pages of editorial annotations, plus the section introductions to individual major sources, constitute a substantial monograph on Hogg's musical settings at a depth not previously attempted. To match other volumes in the Hogg series, and normal library shelving expectations, the music has for the most part to be reproduced at a smaller page-size than in the original, but it seems to be clearly printed, so that individual pages could be scanned and enlarged for performance. This volume is an important addition to the long-running James Hogg edition, but it also offers much in its own right and should be purchased for specialist music libraries as well as major university collections.

Kirsteen McCue, intro., *Musick for Allan Ramsay's Collection of 71 Scots Songs, set by Alexander Stuart* [Scottish Poetry Reprints, no. 11] (Columbia, SC: Scottish Poetry Reprints, 2017). Pp. xxiv + 166. Paperback, \$24. ISBN 978-1543049381.

—Allan Ramsay's *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, (1724) provided only the texts to its songs, not their tunes. The little book reproduced here was designed to fill that gap. With settings by the Edinburgh musician Alexander Stuart, and engraved by one of the best Edinburgh engravers Robert Cooper, the book was published in six parts, probably in 1725, and complete sets are rare. This reprint is taken from the Roy Collection copy at the University of South Carolina. Kirsteen McCue's specially-commissioned introduction traces the publication history and its connection to Ramsay and to the aristocratic Scottish women patrons to whom each part is dedicated. A new appendix provides cross-references between the music in this volume and the song-texts in *The Tea-Table Miscellany*. Scottish Poetry Reprints, originally produced in limited handprinted editions, are now print-on-demand paperbacks, and are obtainable through Amazon or CreateSpace, not from the series publisher.

Ralph McLean, Ronnie Young and Kenneth Simpson, eds. *The Scottish Enlightenment and Literary Culture* [Studies in 18th Century Scotland] Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2016. Pp. xiv + 299. Hardback \$95.00. ISBN 9781611488005. Also available in eBook.

—This volume, the latest publication from the Eighteenth-Century Scottish Studies Society, argues that studies of the Scottish Enlightenment has usually focused on its connections with philosophy, government, religion, law, and universities, rather than with literature. The volume, planned before Kenneth Simpson's death in 2013, is now in part a memorial to his own critical exploration of Scottish Enlightenment literature. Along with other more general contributions, and an interesting, wide-ranging introduction, there are substantial essays here on Smollett (Catherine Jones), Balladry (Ruth Perry), drama (Ronnie Young on Home and Baillie) Ossian (Deidre Dawson on Ossian's French connections), Blair (Ralph McLean), Burns (Colin Kidd on the Kirk satires), and Scott, but also on periodicals (Corey Andrews on Mackenzie's *Mirror*) and publishing history (Sandro Jung on Morison of Perth). Andrew Hook, in a notable shorter paper, looking back at his *Scotland and America* (1975), and usefully suggesting that in assessing transnational influence cultural historians need to apply both strict and loose definitions of the Scottish Enlightenment, seeing the bigger picture as well as specific connections.

Dafydd Moore, ed. *The International Companion to James Macpherson and The Poems of Ossian* [International Companions to Scottish Literature]. Glasgow: Scottish Literature International, an imprint of the Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2017. Pp. x + 187. Paperback, £14.95, €22.95, \$24.95. ISBN 9781908980199.

—The past twenty years or so have seen a remarkable growth in the breadth of scholarship on Macpherson's Ossian, and because of Macpherson's international influence, and his relevance to translation theory, this collection might seem particularly appropriate for this retitled series. The contributors

Silke Stroh. *Gaelic Scotland in the Colonial Imagination: Anglophone Writing from 1600 to 1900*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2017. Pp. 344. Hardback, \$99.95; paper \$39.95. ISBN: 978-0810134034, 978-0810134058 .

--This new book, complementing the same author's *Uneasy Settlements: Postcolonialism and Scottish Gaelic Poetry* (2011), "offers a general introduction to the emerging field of postcolonial Scottish studies" and discusses how the changing "image of Scotland's Gaelic margins" was entwined with two wider developments, "the emergence of the modern nation-state and the rise of overseas colonialism." (*To be reviewed more fully in SSL 43: 2*).