

VOLUME 40

SCOTTISH  
STUDIES



SCHOOL OF SCOTTISH STUDIES

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SCOTTISH STUDIES 40



# Scottish Studies

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## About the journal

First published in 1957, *Scottish Studies* has striven to reflect the mission of the University of Edinburgh's School of Scottish Studies, founded in 1951 to preserve and explore Scotland's rich and diverse cultural and linguistic heritage. For over six decades, contributors to the journal have enriched our knowledge of Scotland and its peoples from Galloway to Shetland, from Stonehaven to St Kilda, and from Scotland to Gaelic Canada. Research topics have included archaeology and pre-history; demographics; ethnography and ethnology; history (especially the impact of significant events on ordinary people); land use and distribution; fishing and seafaring; material culture; onomastics; oral culture and traditions; and spiritual beliefs, customs and observances. Today, in addition to these topics, we welcome research centering on Scotland's evolving landscapes, physical and social, and the peoples who call Scotland home in the twenty-first century.

## Publication

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*Scottish Studies* is published online at [journals.ed.ac.uk/ScottishStudies](http://journals.ed.ac.uk/ScottishStudies).

## Editorial Staff

<i>Editor</i>	Virginia Blankenhorn
<i>Editorial Board</i>	Katherine Campbell Emily Lyle John Shaw

## Submissions

*Scottish Studies* encourages submissions of original research, in English or Gaelic, from affiliated and independent scholars worldwide. Prior to submitting, researchers should contact the editor directly to request the Author Guidelines. Following initial editorial scrutiny, articles are subject to double-blind peer review.

Please note that all submissions and other communication should be sent by email directly to the editor, Virginia Blankenhorn, at [virginia.blankenhorn@ed.ac.uk](mailto:virginia.blankenhorn@ed.ac.uk), using the subject-line 'Scottish Studies'.

## Reviews

Reviews are normally commissioned, but we welcome readers' suggestions of works that they would like to see reviewed.

If you have published a work that you think should be reviewed in *Scottish Studies*, or if you would like to suggest a work suitable for review, please contact the Editor by email at [virginia.blankenhorn@ed.ac.uk](mailto:virginia.blankenhorn@ed.ac.uk), using the subject-line 'Scottish Studies'.

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## Editor's Note

With this volume of *Scottish Studies*, long-time readers will see some changes. The cover has turned blue. The journal is under new editorship. Most important, *Scottish Studies* has at last fully embraced the need – driven mostly by financial exigencies – to publish solely in an online format.

We understand that many people will regret the lack of a proper 'book'. So do we! But the financial and logistical cost of managing all this paper – printing the volumes, corresponding with subscribers, sending invoices, posting copies to subscribers worldwide, and accommodating excess stock – eventually became too much for what has become, in the past number of years, an entirely volunteer operation. Readers who would prefer a paperbound volume will find it easy to download the full volume in PDF format and have it printed to their specifications by a printer near them.

In addition to saving trees, there are considerable advantages to online publication which we believe more than compensate for the lack of a printed volume. First and foremost, reduced costs will make it possible to publish more frequently – at least once every eighteen months to start with. Second, digital publication will allow easy access from the content of an article to other online resources. An author writing about song, for example, will be able to supply hyperlinks to sung performances available online, thereby allowing readers to hear the songs themselves – a gift to readers unable to read musical notation, and an added benefit to those who do, but who understand how much information such notation typically leaves out. Finally – and, as editor, I deeply appreciate this feature – digital publication will allow errors to be easily and silently corrected as soon as eagle-eyed readers point them out.

Volume 40 contains a wide selection of articles by a diverse group of scholars. Katherine Campbell and Emily Lyle, both long associated with the School of Scottish Studies at Edinburgh University, have added to their recent study of Robert Burns' traditional song sources; we very much hope to publish a review of their 2020 book, *Robert Burns and the Discovery and Re-Creation of Scottish Song*, in an upcoming volume of this journal. Gaelic poetry and song are topics for two contributors: writing in Gaelic, Iain Howieson reassesses the literary and social importance of *bàrdachd baile* – the poetry of local 'village bards' in Gaelic-speaking areas; and Frances Wilkins examines the social context of the spiritual songs, singing and musical life associated with twentieth-century religious 'awakenings' in the Hebrides. Andrew Fleming explores the nineteenth-century stories concerning the extinction of the great auk, the last of which was reportedly killed in St Kilda in the 1840s; and Jane Pettegree's article on the emergence of brass bands in nineteenth-century Caithness affords a fascinating glimpse into the social and political life of communities in Scotland's far north, and shows how their association with the Volunteer militia movement helped foster a sense of 'British' identity and patriotism in the decades preceding the First World War. Lastly, we've appropriated a feature common to other sorts of journalism – the interview. As editor, I was delighted to talk with three scholars about very different projects that nonetheless share an important common feature: they all use computing not just to expand knowledge in our field, but to transform how we engage with and benefit from it. Finally, we have assembled a bumper crop of book reviews.

It gives me great pleasure to invite you to explore volume 40 of *Scottish Studies*, and to let us know what you think.

VIRGINIA BLANKENHORN  
Editor, *Scottish Studies*  
4 January 2024

