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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. Research topics have included archaeology and pre-history; demographics; ethnography and ethnology; history; 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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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.

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

Please note that all communication should be addressed by email directly to the editor, Virginia Blankenhorn, at virginia.blankenhorn@ed.ac.uk, using the subject-line 'Scottish Studies'.

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Editor's Note

Readers familiar with the first seventeen volumes of this journal will recall that, in its early days, *Scottish Studies* appeared semi-annually. This year, for reasons that will eventually become clear, we shall briefly return to a two-part publication. Part 1, published here, contains all of the articles submitted to the journal in 2025.

As usual, our authors have covered a lot of territory, both geographical and temporal. Andrew Fleming, whose article on the last of the great auks appeared in volume 40, argues that despite the likelihood that the population of St Kilda suffered a number of 'catastrophes' from the Viking era to the twentieth century, the islanders nonetheless maintained a degree of cultural continuity and stability that reflected both their powers of endurance and their value to other regional powers. Peter Freshwater examines the student song-books compiled at the suggestion of Professor John Stuart Blackie for Scotland's 'ancient' universities, and describes how organised singing remained an important part of student life from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. Hamish Telfer and Jonathan Thomas explore the role of a variety of sports – not just football – in encouraging military enlistment at the approach of the Great War. Shelley Williams writes about Agnes Randolph, famous for her defence of Dunbar Castle in 1338, and asks why she was given the nickname 'Black Agnes'. Grace Wright uses a material culture approach to analyse the symbolism and historical importance of medals awarded by Sheriff William Ivory to police in the Isle of Skye for their involvement in the arrest of land agitators during the Crofters' War of the 1880s. Finally, Donnchadh Sneddon describes his discovery in Edinburgh University Library of a pencil sketch inside the cover of an 1834 edition of the poems of Donnchadh Bàn MacIntyre, and asks: Could this possibly be a portrait of the bard himself?

Works reviewed here include the third volume of Professor Richard Oram's environmental history of Scotland, *Standing on the Edge of Being: Scotland 1850 to COP 26*; Simon McKerrell and Gary West's collection of essays on Scottish traditional music, *Understanding Scotland Musically: Folk, Tradition and Policy*; and *Gun Sireadh, Gun Iarraidh: The Tolmie Collection*, Kenna Campbell and Ainsley Hamill's re-edition of Frances Tolmie's seminal-important collection of Gaelic songs first published in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* in 1911.

VIRGINIA BLANKENHORN
Editor, *Scottish Studies*
February 2026

