DIGITAL HUMANITIES INITIATIVES IN SCOTTISH STUDIES

EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION TO THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES SPECIAL SECTION

To mark the inauguration of the new Digitization Centre in the University of Guelph’s McLaughlin Library, funded by the Scottish Studies Foundation, the journal has commissioned this special feature in order to highlight some of the current digital humanities projects being developed in the field of Scottish Studies. *IRSS* invited the scholars involved in four separate projects, one at Guelph, and three further afield, to contribute short articles describing their research.

One of the goals of the new digitization centre is to make the resources of the Guelph Scottish Studies Collection accessible to a world-wide community. History professor Kevin James at the University of Guelph, along with Melissa McAfee, Special Collections Librarian, involved undergraduate students in a project to digitize the collection of travel ephemera, primarily postcards, in the Guelph Scottish Studies Collection. The article highlights the value of such sources and demonstrates how students can be involved in creating digital resources.

The following three articles discuss exciting initiatives in Scottish Studies research being carried out beyond Guelph. Two focus on the digitization of specific sources. Dr. James Ambuske describes the Scottish Court of Session Digital Project, a collaboration between the University of Virginia Law Library and colleagues at the University of Edinburgh. This project provides access to eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century papers from Scotland’s supreme civil court, and facilitates new research into everyday life in Scotland, Britain, and North America. Dr. Lucy Hinnie explains her
project to create a digital edition of the Bannatyne Manuscript, one of the most important sources of medieval and early modern Scottish poetry, and places issues of digitization in the broader context of editorial practice in general. Finally, Drs. Michelle Brock and Chris Langley discuss *Mapping the Scottish Reformation*, a new digital humanities project that will bring together information from a diverse range of ecclesiastical history sources. This project will provide new insights into the first few generations of Protestant ministers and their families, 1560–1689, and provide researchers with powerful mapping tools to carry out their own research into clerical careers in this period.

The projects described in this special feature are only a few of the digital humanities initiatives being carried out in Scottish Studies internationally. *IRSS* looks forward to publishing research based on such projects in the years to come.

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