In Memoriam

William Stanford Reid, Emeritus Professor of History, University of Guelph, and founder of the Scottish Studies Programme, died in December 1996 in Guelph after a long and courageous battle with cancer. A scholar to the end, he was writing until a few days before his death. He is survived by his wife Priscilla (Lee) Reid, life-long partner in his work.

Stanford’s life and career reflected his two main interests, history and theology. He received his BA in History and English from McGill University in 1934 and his MA in History in 1935. He then studied at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia where he took Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Theology. He returned to the study of History and completed his PhD at the University of Pennsylvania in 1941. His services to theology were recognised by the award of an honorary LHD from Wheaton College in 1976 and an honorary DD from Presbyterian College in Montreal in 1979. One of the highlights of his life was preaching in St. Giles, Edinburgh, the former church of John Knox.
Stanford joined the faculty of History at McGill University in 1941 and became Professor there in 1962. In 1965 he became the first chair of the Department of History at the newly-established University of Guelph in Guelph, Ontario. He recruited former students from McGill and Philadelphia as well as other young academics and built up a Department strong in both research and teaching.

One of his most important achievements was the early establishment of the History graduate programme. Stanford loved to tell the story of how he outwitted the Ontario Graduate Board which was reluctant to approve any new graduate programmes in History and told him he could only establish one if it was able to offer a unique field. Stanford, whose research and publishing in Scottish history went back to the beginning of his career, saw his chance and seized it, and the Guelph Graduate History Programme with its special emphasis on Scottish History was born.

During his years at Guelph, Stanford was able to build up the Library’s Scottish Collection so that it became one of the best outside Great Britain. Today the History Graduate Program and the interdisciplinary Scottish Studies Graduate Programme continue to flourish with three History faculty and three English faculty specialising in Scottish research, faculty from other disciplines contributing to the programme, and a wide variety of Scottish courses offered to undergraduates.

Stanford was also instrumental in establishing a journal, *Proceedings of the Scottish Studies Colloquium,*
the forerunner of today’s Scottish Tradition. His active involvement in the Department did not cease with his retirement in 1978 and he continued to be actively involved in graduate work and Scottish Studies as Professor Emeritus until the 1990s. During his academic career, he supervised over 40 graduate theses, and many of his students have gone on to academic or theological careers. He was extremely generous with his time and help to newly-arrived faculty, especially those who appreciated atrocious puns!

Among those interested in Scottish History, Stanford Reid will probably be best known for his work on the Scottish Reformation, including his well-known biography of John Knox Trumpeter of God (1974). His many other works reveal the breadth of his interests ranging from his Economic History of Great Britain (1954) to his biography of a sixteenth-century Scottish merchant, Skipper from Leith (1962), the Presbyterian church in Canada in Called to Witness, Profiles of Canadian Presbyterians (2 volumes, 1975-80) the Scots in Canada in The Scottish Tradition in Canada (1976), and medieval Scottish history.

His articles were published in The Catholic Historical Review, Speculum, Medievalia et Humanistica, Renaissance and Reformation and many other historical journals. Stanford had a strong commitment to public education and wrote many articles for such publications as Christianity Today and The Presbyterian Record.

Shortly after coming to Guelph, Stanford began the semi-annual Scottish Colloquia, conferences which are
designed to appeal to both academics and the general public and which continue to draw large numbers of people interested in Scottish topics to Guelph each year. In the late 1980s he was active in the setting up of the Scottish Studies Foundation which was established to raise funds for Scottish Studies in Canada. In 1996 his work was honoured by the presentation of the first Stanford Reid Bursary in Scottish Studies. Unfortunately, he was too ill to attend, but he was delighted that the field of study which he had done so much to encourage in the past 30 years was being continued by a new generation of students and scholars. He will be sadly missed, not only by his colleagues, family, and the congregations of his churches, but by many North Americans interested in Scottish heritage. Thanks to his efforts, the study of Scotland continues to flourish in North America.

Elizabeth Ewan
Scottish Studies
University of Guelph