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TEXTUAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES IN OLDER SCOTS LITERATURE:

SELECTED ESSAYS OF PRISCILLA BAWCUTT

edited by
Janet Hadley Williams

This rich selection from the writings of Priscilla Bawcutt, the major scholar of Older Scots literature, both honours her achievement and provides authoritative guidance to all involved in the pleasures and challenges of medieval and early modern Scottish studies.

The first five chapters, including a hitherto unpublished paper, gather her insights into how to examine, contextualize, and edit early poetic texts. Among her discussions are those on the importance of explanatory notes, the usefulness of fragments, the demands of transcription, and the need for objectivity when identifying supposed influences, date, or author. Bawcutt draws on a variety of texts, including Dunbar's "elrich fantasyis", Rolland's *Court of Venus*, and metrical Scottish charms to illustrate these aspects of editing. Two central chapters then give balance and coherence to the complex evidence of change in literary activities and tastes in early Scotland. First, an analytical survey of manuscript miscellanies, noting their diversity in size, condition, arrangement, copyists, owners, and purposes, offers many different ways to approach these compilations. Secondly, Bawcutt's study of one particular miscellany, the great five-part Bannatyne Manuscript, provides new information on the sources and authors of the many texts it contains and the diversity of their literary and cultural connections. Five further chapters combine textual and bibliographical studies with contextual explorations, into personal libraries, habits of reading, annotators, and book circulation within family groups, across borders, or over time. Among these illuminating essays are those on Gavin Douglas's imaginary library, and the influential first printed edition of his *Eneados*, both of increasing interest alongside the new edition of his translation.

A full bibliography of Priscilla Bawcutt's publications is also included.

Scottish Text Society



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