

The Edinburgh Companion to Scots

Edited by

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A Brief History of Scots

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This volume has a specific purpose. It attempts to help younger or less experienced scholars to identify key topics of research into historical and present-day language use in Scotland with respect to 'Scots', here conceived of as a language continuum that ranges from 'Broad' Scots to 'Scottish Standard English'. In addition, the chapters in the volume outline some of the methods that have been or might be used to explore these research topics. Thus, the editors and contributors hope to stimulate further exploration of language use in Scotland, whether in the form of undergraduate essays and dissertations, or larger-scale post-graduate and post-doctoral research.

As Charles Jones observes in his preface to *The Edinburgh History of the Scots Language* (1997), Scots has suffered from relative scholarly neglect in comparison to English. Jones' anthology goes a long way towards remedying this neglect by providing 'the first full-scale, detailed and comprehensive attempt to provide a history of the Scots language from the time of its earliest records to the modern period' (Jones ed. 1997: vii). The present volume is not a 'condensed' version of *The Edinburgh History of the Scots Language*, nor does it pretend to be full-scale, detailed and comprehensive. Rather, while the various chapters of this book do indeed sketch out some of the main areas of our understanding of Scots, they are also concerned with indicating the remaining gaps in our understanding, and they invite succeeding generations to begin to fill them. In this sense, the present volume is intended as a companion to those students who are interested not only in learning the known facts about Scots but also in *creating* knowledge through further exploration.

For those readers newly embarking on this scholarly adventure, some orientation is necessary, and so this introductory chapter offers a working definition of 'Scots' and a brief summary of its historical development. The more pessimistic chapters in this book speak of Scots being in the last stages of 'language death'. Even if this is so, the speech of earlier generations in lowland Scotland still

profoundly influences everyday language use today, and an understanding of that speech is necessary for us to comprehend fully current and future use. In linguistic terms, *synchronic* studies (that is, studies of contemporary language) require a *diachronic* (or historical) perspective.

WHAT IS 'SCOTS'?

'Scots' is described above as 'a language continuum ranging from Broad Scots to Scottish Standard English'. All Scots speakers are instantly recognisable by their accent, and even Scottish Standard English speakers are distinguished from the speakers of other standard varieties of English at the phonological level, not just the phonetic. In other words, the system of pronunciation of Scots and its prosody are distinctive. However, while written Broad Scots is easily identifiable by its distinctive vocabulary and grammar, written Scottish Standard English differs less obviously from other standard varieties of English around the world. At the written level, only certain idioms, vocabulary items, grammatical uses and possibly distribution of such linguistic features as modal auxiliary verb uses, distinguish written Scottish Standard English from the written forms of Standard English south of the border or across the Atlantic. Some therefore prefer to exclude 'Scottish Standard English' from their definition of Scots, and focus on the more distinctive 'Broad Scots' end of the continuum. When the term 'Scots' is used without qualification in this book, it is a variety of Broad Scots that is usually meant. However, since this book seeks to encourage exploration of all aspects of language usage in lowland Scotland, an inclusive definition is here preferred (cf. the entries on 'Scots' and 'Scottish English' in McArthur ed. 1992: 893–9; 903–5).

The concept of a linguistic 'continuum' from 'Broad Scots' to 'Scottish Standard English' also requires some refinement. A continuum suggests that there is a shading and overlap of language uses from 'Broad Scots', with its highly distinctive vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar, to 'Scottish Standard English', whose vocabulary and grammar are largely shared with other standard varieties of English around the globe. However, the image of a continuum as a simple line running from 'Broad Scots' to 'Scottish Standard English' ignores substantial complexities. First of all, 'Broad Scots' refers not to a single linguistic entity, but to overlapping regional and social language varieties, most of which are declining or transforming, generation on generation. 'Broad Scots' is now largely spoken, although it was once written, and even today it continues to be used in poetry, fiction and drama, whether in regional, social or in 'synthesised' literary varieties, and there have been efforts to broaden its written uses to non-literary genres (cf. McClure and Corbett this volume). The term 'Broad Scots' today covers the regional varieties of Shetland and Orkney; the North East around Aberdeen; the Central Belt from Edinburgh and the Lothians, down through

Stirlingshire, Glasgow, Ayrshire and Galloway; the Borders; and the 'Ulster Scots' regions of Northern Ireland. Within these regional varieties there is, of course, further local variation. In particular, the major cities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow also have a wide range of social varieties.

By no means have all of these regional and social varieties been equally studied. One of the most ambitious attempts to provide an overview of regional variation was the Linguistic Survey of Scotland, undertaken by the University of Edinburgh in 1949 after earlier preparatory work. It focused on Gaelic and regional Scots, but neglected urban social varieties. Its findings were published in the *Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* (Mather and Spietel eds 1975, 1977, 1986). The work of the LSS complements the other major linguistic projects of the twentieth century, the *Scottish National Dictionary* (SND) and the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* (DOST). SND attempted to provide a record of the distinctive vocabulary of regional Scots (omitting those lexical items shared with southern English) from 1700 to the twentieth century, while DOST took on the more ambitious task of providing a record of the whole vocabulary of Scots (including items shared with southern English) from 1375 to 1700. These ambitious, independent lexicographical projects each took several generations to complete. The publication of the final volume of DOST in 2002 coincides with the formation of a single new body, Scottish Language Dictionaries (www.sldl.org.uk), whose aim is to continue the distinguished lexicographical tradition of its predecessors. There is indeed much more lexicographical work to be done, specifically the updating of SND, whose final volume was edited in 1976, the expansion of the early and less comprehensive volumes of DOST and the revision of the *Concise Scots Dictionary* (1985), a single-volume selection from the two multi-volume parent dictionaries. If dialect studies and lexicography stand out as the most sustained and distinguished forms of linguistic research in the twentieth century, both fall into the trap of having favoured regional forms of Broad Scots and neglected urban Scots. This omission was conditioned by negative linguistic attitudes towards urban Scots, particularly Glaswegian, in the first half of the twentieth century, when the two dictionary projects were initiated. One of the tasks of the new dictionaries body must be to make good this gap.

In recent years, sociolinguistic studies have turned to urban Scots (e.g. Macaulay and Trevelyan 1977; Macafee 1983, 1994; cf. Stuart Smith this volume) and it has been the turn of regional varieties to be relatively neglected (though see Macaulay 1991). Ideally, neither regional nor social varieties of Scots should suffer neglect, but linguistic research is labour-intensive and time-consuming. We badly need a framework for funding and training so that individuals and teams can work systematically to ensure that our understanding of language use in Scotland is comprehensive and up-to-date.

In contrast with the wide variety of usages found in Broad Scots, it is in the nature of a standard language variety to be relatively fixed, to suppress variation at

least in vocabulary and grammar. At the Scottish Standard English end of the language continuum we find those usages that are most influenced by the mass education system and the mass media, both of which are crucial in instilling the belief that a fixed set of linguistic usages is 'normal' and 'correct'. Nevertheless, Scottish Standard English differs in some features of grammar and idiom from those standard varieties of English found south of the border, in North America, in Australasia and now elsewhere. For example, it is widely believed that the Scottish Standard English system of modal auxiliary verbs is influenced by Broad Scots, although more extensive study is needed to determine exactly how (cf. Miller this volume). The vocabulary of Scottish Standard English also includes distinctive items such as *firth* 'estuary', *uplift* 'collect' and *outwith* 'outside of'. Partly because it falls somewhere between Broad Scots and southern Standard English, Scottish Standard English is also under-researched, again with sporadic exceptions (e.g. Douglas 2000). The occasional and labour-intensive nature of research into language use in Scotland has contributed to the patchiness of its coverage. However, with the institution of the SCOTS corpus project by Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities (www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk), the opportunity exists for collecting and analysing data on the whole range of the Broad Scots–SSE continuum, as well as on the other languages of Scotland, although this project is currently in its very early days. As this volume goes to press, there is also a glimmer of hope that a proposed Institute for the Languages of Scotland will help co-ordinate future research efforts into language use in Scotland.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SCOTS

The early history of Scots was outlined by Murison (1979) and Aitken (1985), and further details have been filled in by, for example, the contributors to Jones ed. (1997). Macafee and Aitken's introduction to the final volume of DOST (2002) offers a detailed description of current knowledge based on lexicographical, archaeological and place-name evidence (see also Scott this volume). Meurman-Solin (this volume) demonstrates the potential for linguistic study of computerised corpora of Older Scots. This summary draws largely on these sources. A fuller treatment can be found in McClure (1994).

Old English to Pre-literary Scots (before 1375)

What makes Scots similar to present-day English is a shared origin in the related, or 'cognate', Germanic language varieties introduced to the British Isles by Angle and Saxon invaders and settlers, from the fifth to the seventh centuries. What makes Scots different from present-day English is partly that it owes more to the Anglian than the Saxon variety of Old English, and partly that, over the

generations, the different kinds of contact that Scots and English have engaged in with other languages (and with each other) have given them distinctive linguistic characteristics.

There are two separate strands of the Old English legacy to Scots. The earliest appearance of a language derived from Old English into what is now Scotland is that of Anglian invaders, who established the Kingdom of Bernicia in 547. By the first half of the seventh century, this kingdom had probably expanded to include part of the present-day Lothians. Present-day Broad Scots still has traces of its Old English foundations, for example in the terms *oxter* ('armpit' < OE *ōhsta* or *ōxta*) and in the term *quean* or *quine* ('young girl' < OE *cwene*). The Scots pronunciations of words like 'mouse' and 'house' as [mus] and [hus] (from OE *mūs*, and *hūs*) are also closer than most current southern English pronunciations to the Anglo-Saxon sound system introduced into the Lothians a millennium ago.

The rest of Scotland at this time spoke several Celtic languages. North of the Anglian settlements, people spoke Q-Celtic, the ancestor of today's Gaelic. This language had come over from Ireland with the Scoti tribe in the late fifth century, and it largely replaced P-Celtic, or 'Cumbric', an earlier variety that, south of the border, developed into present-day Welsh. The names 'P' and 'Q' Celtic refer to one variety having the sound 'p' where the other has 'q' (pronounced [kw] and usually spelled < c >). The older variety, P-Celtic, was spoken from Galloway through Cumbria to northern Yorkshire (Spietel and Mather 1968: 522ff). Place-name studies trace the fortunes of these different language communities (see Scott, this volume).

The Anglian language that was established by the early settlers was supplemented by further waves of settlers speaking cognate Germanic language varieties. In the eighth century, Vikings began raiding the northern and western isles of Scotland, establishing themselves particularly in the northern isles and Caithness. The Earls of Orkney held dual allegiance to the Kings of Norway and Scotland from the eleventh century until the fifteenth century, when Orkney and Shetland fell forfeit to Scotland as a consequence of an unpaid dowry. The language that the Vikings bequeathed Orkney and Shetland was a Norwegian variety, 'Norn', which survived in Orkney until the eighteenth century, and in Shetland until the beginning of the nineteenth. When, in the fourteenth century, the Scots language belatedly arrived in the northern isles, it assumed the status of the prestige variety, until this role was taken by English from the sixteenth century onwards. Old Norse and Norn, however, impacted powerfully on the place-names of the northern isles and on the everyday vocabulary of the Insular variety of Scots. Many Insular Scots terms have Old Norse origins or contemporary Norwegian cognates; for example *kyauve* ('struggle', 'tumble' < ON *kafa*, 'to plunge or dive'), *kemp* ('contend' < ON *kempa*, 'contender'), and *knap* ('munch', 'eat greedily'; compare Norwegian *knappa*, 'to eat noisily and greedily').

As well as settling in the northern islands, Vikings, even more significantly,

attacked and finally settled in the central part of what is now England, leaving Wessex in the south, and part of Northumbria in the north, under Anglo-Saxon rule. There are different theories about the process of the Scandinavian settlement of England, but what cannot be disputed is that the settlers who lived under the Danelaw in the 'Great Scandinavian Belt' in central England left their indelible mark on the place-names and language. The speech of the Vikings and that of the Anglo-Saxons were related, and possibly, to some extent, mutually intelligible, and a mixed language, sometimes called 'Anglo-Scandinavian', was the result of contact between the various speech communities. It is possible that the area of Scandinavian influence extended north of the border into the earlier Anglian territory in Lothian. Certainly, from 1066 onwards, the historical influence of the mixture of Old Norse and Old English was to be much greater than the earlier influence of Anglian on its own. Of all the contact languages that have contributed to the vocabulary of Scots, it is the Scandinavian ones that most distinguish it from southern English. The Anglo-Scandinavian tongue introduced into Scotland terms like *gowk* ('cuckoo', 'fool', 'trick' < ON *gaukr*), *gype* ('to stare foolishly', 'to play the fool' or 'a foolish person' < ON *geip* 'nonsense', or *geipa* 'to talk nonsense') and *lachter* or *louchter* ('lock of hair', 'tuft of grass', or 'handful of hay' < ON *lagð*, 'tuft of wool or hair'). It is important to remember, however, that Old Norse and Old English were cognate languages, and so it is sometimes difficult to tell if a Scots word has its origin in one or the other. A case in point is *handsel* 'a gift intended to bring good luck', which might derive from OE *handselen* 'giving into the hands' or ON *handsal* 'giving of the hands'. Certainly, however, Old Norse profoundly affects not simply the vocabulary but also the pronunciation of Scots. Murison (1979: 4) points out that ON had velar plosive consonants, /k/ and /g/, before front vowels, where OE had affricates, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/:

This phonological correspondence explains many of the distinctions between the Northern and Scots forms and the Southern and Standard English: *kirk*, *church*; *kirn*, *churn*; *muckle*, *much*; *breeks*, *breeches*; *dike*, *ditch*; *sic*, *such*; *ilk*, *each*; *brig*, *bridge*; *rig*, *ridge*; *sing*, *singe*; similarly with *sk* and *sh* as in *skirl*, *shrill*; *skriech*, *shriek*; *mask*, *marsh*.

There are also differences arising from variations in vowel development, as in *lowp*, *leap*; *cowp* (to bargain), *cheap*; *nowt*, *neat*; *ain*, *own*; *strae*, *straw*; *hing*, *hang*; *trig*; *true*, and somewhat similarly *blae*, *blue*; *brae*, *brow*.

More detail can be found on the reconstruction of the sounds of Older Scots in Macafee (Chapter 7 of this volume).

The spread of Anglo-Scandinavian throughout lowland Scotland, eventually replacing Q-Celtic in the north-east and P-Celtic in the south-west, was indirectly furthered by the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. At this period, the

language of the King of Scots and his courtiers was Q-Celtic, the ancestor of present-day Gaelic. When Norman French rule was established in England, the English princess, Margaret, fled to Scotland to marry the widower, King Malcom III. Margaret, who was later canonised, and whose chapel still stands in Edinburgh Castle, brought with her an entourage of English-speaking courtiers. She also exerted an anglicising influence on the personnel of the Scottish church and a romanising influence on its doctrines and practices. After Malcolm's death, the kingdom passed first into the hands of his brother, then of four of his sons. His youngest son, David I, who had spent many of his formative years in the Normanised English court, did most to spread the use of Anglo-Scandinavian through lowland Scotland. During his reign, from 1124–53, he granted land to Norman French-speaking barons, feudal tenants, who brought with them considerable numbers of Anglo-Scandinavian-speaking retainers from the 'Great Scandinavian Belt'. On the Norman model, David I and his successors established burghs, towns with special trading privileges, conferred by royal charter. These privileged trading towns became magnets for immigrants from 'Flanders, the Rhineland, northern France, and England, especially eastern England' (Barrow 1981: 92). Finally, David I established abbeys and monasteries, such as that at Jedburgh, and put in place a parochial administration that probably also spoke Anglo-Scandinavian.

In short, what we now call Scots developed from an extended and complicated period of immigration and language contact. There is some evidence of the interaction between Celtic and Anglo-Scandinavian speech communities in the relatively few loan-words from Gaelic into Scots, words such as *gom* (a literary term for a blacksmith, surviving now as a personal name < Gael. *gobha*), *golach* ('insect', 'ground beetle' < Gael. *gobhlag*, 'earwig', or 'fork-shaped stick') and *fallachan* ('concealed store' < Gael. *falachan* 'hidden treasure'). Other language groups were added to the linguistic mix; for example, a colony of skilled Dutch- or Flemish-speaking settlers was established by the feudal kings to encourage the indigenous weaving industry, bequeathing us the Scottish surname *Fleming* (cf. Hough this volume) and various other Dutch or Flemish borrowings, such as *gromgrane* (the fabric, 'grogram' < MFl *grouwegrain*). Murison (1979: 5) writes:

The practical result of all this mixing of populations can be seen in the attestations to charters, where the several signatories may have Welsh, Gaelic, Norse, Anglo-Saxon and French names. Gaelic families tended to choose English or French names for their children; Celtic officials are followed by ones with non-Celtic names. The population must have become even more polyglot in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and we must suppose that the *lingua franca* of them all was the one that ultimately prevailed, the new, highly Frenchified English.

Large-scale immigration from the Anglo-Scandinavian areas of England in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as suggested by Barrow (1980), helps explain various mysteries about the early development of Scots, namely, the relatively low amount of lexical borrowing from the Celtic languages, and the relatively high influence of Scandinavian on Scots (Macafee and Aitken 2002). However, as Murison observes, the Anglo-Scandinavian speech that operated as the *lingua franca* of the traders in the burghs, the administrators of feudal law and the clerics in the church was itself continuing to change. For some period of time, at least, the Norman aristocracy spoke a Scandinavian-influenced French (the Normans, too, came from Viking stock). The church clerics might have spoken Anglo-Scandinavian, but they wrote in medieval Latin, the European language of scholarship, religion and law. The Anglo-Scandinavian ancestor of Scots would originally have been restricted to certain contexts of use, mainly speech, and possibly (in some cases) for trading purposes between native speakers of other languages, like Gaelic, French and Dutch. However, in a classic case of ‘language shift’ (cf. Corbett this volume) it began gradually to spread into a broader range of communicative functions, written as well as spoken. It became the everyday language of the aristocracy as well as the bourgeoisie and peasantry. It continued to spread north and west. Over time, it also gained a name, *Inglis*, a term used initially by Scots to refer to Scots and English, in contrast, say, to *Erse* ‘Irish’, that is, ‘Gaelic’. Not until the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries did lowland Scots begin to distinguish their own language as ‘Scottis’ (McClure 1981a).

Early Scots (1375–1450)

Literary Scots is marked by the appearance of John Barbour’s *Brus* in 1375. The late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries saw *Inglis* beginning to encroach into other communicative functions that had previously been the sole preserve of French and Latin. *Inglis* superseded French in leisure and instructional reading, with the *Brus* joined, for example, by a translation of a romance about Alexander the Great, and versions of French chivalric manuals in the first half of the fifteenth century. *Inglis* also superseded Latin in administrative prose; crucially, the Acts of the Parliament of Scotland began to be recorded in the vernacular in 1390, and the earlier Latin Acts were also translated in 1425. Scots clearly had attained pre-eminent status in lowland Scotland by this time, though activity in the other languages of Scotland continued (cf. Jack 1997; Jack and Rozendaal 1997).

As Scots moved from speech into the written domains formerly associated with French and Latin, its vocabulary necessarily changed, particularly to incorporate technical and learned vocabulary from these languages, and the ‘aureate’ latinate terms used by both Scottish and English poets in the Early and Middle Scots period to elevate their literary style (see Smith this volume). Whereas the Old

English, Old Norse, Gaelic and Dutch vocabulary items that came into Scots have the everyday flavour of natural features of landscape and weather, or agricultural and small-town occupations such as farming and weaving, the Latin and French borrowings into the written language speak of law, religion, philosophy and power, as well as other, more mundane activities. So we have, for example, *exerce* 'make use of', 'discharge the duties of an office' < OF *exercer* < L *exercere*), *justiciary* ('the office or jurisdiction of a justice' < MedL *justitiarius*) and *pallalls* or *pallies* ('hopscotch', or 'the counter with which it is played' < F. *palet*, 'a stone thrown at a target in various games'). Up until the fourteenth century, borrowings into Scots from French tended to come from the Norman variety that was used by the feudal aristocracy. Later borrowings come from central French, the language of the court in Paris. These two streams of borrowing result in Norman/Parisian 'doublets' in Scots and southern English (Murison 1979: 7). That is, most often the Scots form derives from Norman French while today's southern English cognate term derives from central French, as in *spulyie/spulzie* 'spoil', *failyie/failzie* 'fail', and *campioun* 'champion'. Occasionally, it is the Scots term that derives from central French, while the southern English term is from Norman French, as in *chanoun*, 'the religious office of canon', and *leal* 'loyal'. The relatively greater impact of French loanwords into Scots than into southern English between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries can partly be explained by the 'Auld Alliance'. This expression of cultural and political affinity between Scotland and France goes back to antiquity, at least according to tradition, and was expressed in a formal pact made by John Balliol and Philip the Fair in 1295. It lasted through to the Reformation in 1560.

Middle Scots (1450–1700)

If the Early Scots period saw a rise in status and a shift towards Scots in Scotland, the Middle Scots period saw its consolidation, before another language shift towards English prompted its gradual decline from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. Murison (1979: 8–9) writes:

The years 1460–1560 can be considered the heyday of the Scots tongue as a full national language showing all the signs of a rapidly developing, all-purpose speech, as distinct from English as Portuguese from Spanish, Dutch from German or Swedish from Danish. The Spanish ambassador at the court of James IV described the distinction as like that between Castilian and Aragonese.

This 'full national language' was, however, in speech and writing, far from a single homogenous language variety. The Early Scots period is usually considered a time in which Scots was closest in vocabulary, grammar and orthography to the

Northern English dialect of Middle English. As we have seen, both varieties were largely the products of Anglo-Scandinavian speakers, influenced over time by contact with other speech communities. As the Middle Scots period continues, there is first divergence from and then convergence with the forms used south of the border. Meurman-Solin (1997a: 7) notes some of the orthographic features that English and Scots share at this time, and those spellings and lexical variants that tend to differentiate them:

'Scots' forms	'English' forms
<i>guid, gude</i>	<i>gude, good</i>
<i>adoir</i>	<i>adore</i>
<i>eis</i>	<i>ese ease</i>
<i>cais</i>	<i>case</i>
<i>buik</i>	<i>buke boke</i>
<i>quh-</i>	<i>wh-</i>
<i>thai</i>	<i>thay</i>
<i>knew</i>	<i>know</i>
<i>sa</i>	<i>so</i>
<i>richt</i>	<i>right</i>
<i>scho, sche</i>	<i>she</i>
<i>spoilze, distrenze</i>	<i>spoil, distraim</i>

By tracing the preferred use of such forms across a range of Scots texts over the Early and Middle Scots periods, scholars such as Devitt (1989) and Meurman-Solin (1993a, 1997a) have attempted to gauge the degree of differentiation between Scots and English, and the progress of Scots towards a standard written variety. While Meurman-Solin (1997a: 21) acknowledges that 'continued variation characterises the history of Scots', she confirms Murison's claim that divergence of Scots from Northern English is clear from the mid-fifteenth century. By the middle of the following century there is increased variation that results from a tension between further divergence and the tendency towards convergence with English forms, as the two nations moved closer politically and, in some respects, culturally.

The forces driving anglicisation in Scotland from the mid-sixteenth century are well-known. The marriage in 1503 of James IV to Margaret Tudor of England ('The Thistle and the Rose') signalled an early attempt at rapprochement with the 'auld enemy', albeit that this was to be shattered by renewed hostilities culminating in a disastrous Scottish defeat at Flodden Field in 1513. James V's reign saw the impact in Scotland of a cultural revolution that was sweeping through Europe: the Reformation. The rise of the reformed church in Scotland proved to be a significant anglicising force for a variety of reasons. First, its preachers used the power of the printing press to reach readerships in both

Scotland and England. Secondly, the reformers championed a vernacular 'plain style' of writing that rejected the long complex sentences, modelled on Latin 'periods', and the aureate diction that characterised 'baroque' (and, by association, Catholic) Scottish prose. Most importantly, however, the reformers also championed access to holy writ in the vernacular, and the biblical translation they adopted was produced in Geneva in 1560 by Protestants exiled from England. It was conveniently sized, printed in legible Roman type, clearly laid out, and, until the appearance of the Authorised Version in 1611, the most popular version of the Bible in Scotland, forging a close association between the communicative domain of religion and written English.

The proliferation of printed books, and the productivity of English printers compared to their Scottish-based counterparts, led to further anglicisation of written texts in the late 1500s. There were home-based printers who published in Scots, but there were also Scottish-based printers who shifted significantly towards English. In short, the process of language shift had begun, with English encroaching into several key domains, and this process accelerated after the Union of Crowns in 1603. A century after the marriage of the Thistle and the Rose, James V's grandson successfully negotiated his claim to the English crown, left vacant by the death of Elizabeth I, and the United Kingdom was born. James VI had been a considerable patron of the arts in Scotland, and his patronage continued in England (for example, Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* to celebrate his ancestry and to flatter his interest in witchcraft). The king's own published writing, and that of the courtiers he took with him to London, quickly adapted to the norms governing Early Modern English. Even those Scots who chose to remain in Scotland, like William Drummond of Hawthornden, were careful to follow the 'polite' conventions of courtly language in their anglicised poems. Non-literary texts, private letters and public documents, followed the same pattern. By the end of the 1600s, most texts in Scotland were written after the English fashion.

It is difficult to determine the extent of anglicising forces on speech towards the end of the Middle Scots period. The anglicising of written texts is so overwhelming that it is sometimes assumed that Broad Scots died out in the late 1600s. However, as Macafee and Aitken (forthcoming; original emphasis) points out, 'The history of the development of *Scots* from the late 16th century to the 18th is still to be written'. Certainly, there is evidence that Broad Scots was being spoken across a wide range of communicative domains until the late seventeenth century. Not least of these was law, which became, with the Church of Scotland, one of the key Scottish civic institutions after the departure south of the Scottish court. George Mackenzie, Lord Advocate between 1677 and 1689, and an author whose written vernacular prose is in elegant Augustan English, is still able to claim in *What Eloquence is Fit for the Bar* that, of French, English and Scots, the best language for pleading a case in law is Scots. Even so, as Aitken (1979: 91–3)

notes, after the restoration of Charles II in 1660, upper-class and ambitious Scots were more likely than before to frequent southern England, seeking opportunities for advancement, and giving rise to the stereotype of the 'Scotchman on the make'. In their private letters, which are more likely than public documents to reflect spoken norms, there is some evidence of a mixing of Broad Scots and English options. However, in Archibald Pitcairne's play, *The Assembly*, written in 1692, the speech of all but the oldest of the upper classes is presented as southern English.

Modern Scots (1700 onwards)

The Treaty of Union of 1707, whereby the Scottish parliament was absorbed into the Westminster assembly, giving birth to Great Britain as a single political and economic entity, is sometimes presented as the final nail in the coffin of Broad Scots. Murison (1979: 9) writes:

The Union of 1707 was the last act in the story. When the legislature removed to London, English became in effect the official language of the whole country for law, administration, education and church usage, spoken as well as written. Scots became more restricted in use and scope, having lost spiritual status at the Reformation, social status at the Union of the Crowns, and political status with the Parliamentary Union.

Despite the Treaty, however, there was a revival of written Broad Scots, although largely confined to the sphere of literature. The very unpopularity of political union prompted a cultural backlash, involving the updating and republishing of older Scottish literature, and new poems and songs, often based on the ballads and songs of the oral tradition. The *literateurs* were no longer courtiers but members of the middle classes: people like Allan Ramsay, a wigmaker, bookseller and publisher, Robert Fergusson, a university-educated clerk, and Robert Burns, whose immediate ancestors were 'substantial tenant farmers' (Spratt 1996: 12). These writers and their imitators drew upon the still ubiquitous Broad Scots speech to craft sophisticated popular verse. However, they were writing for a readership largely schooled in written English, and written Scots from 1700 on shows ample evidence of this new state of affairs. The spelling practices of Ramsay, for example, introduced elements of English orthography to represent Scottish pronunciation, for example, <oo> rather than <ou> to signify /u/ in words like *about*, *hoose*. Ramsay also introduced the practice of using apostrophes to indicate where letters would be missing, were the word spelled in the English fashion, thus *fu'* for *full*. While these strategies no doubt increased the accessibility of Broad Scots for an English-reading market, they also had the

unfortunate effect of suggesting that Broad Scots was not a separate language system, but rather a divergent and inferior form of English.

Meanwhile, others in the middle and upper classes sought to eradicate traces of Broad Scots, first from their writing and then, up to a point, from their speech. For example, the philosopher and historian David Hume compiled a list of 'scotticisms' to be banished from his writings, while the lawyer and writer James Boswell wished to avoid the broadest features of Scottish pronunciation without necessarily aping a southern English accent. In his biography of Samuel Johnson, Boswell (1952: 192; original emphasis) recalls:

Upon another occasion I talked to him [Johnson] on this subject, having taken some pains to improve my pronunciation, by the aid of the late Mr. Love, of Drury-lane theatre, when he was a player at Edinburgh, and also of old Mr. Sheridan. Johnson said to me, 'Sir, your pronunciation is not offensive.' With this concession I was well satisfied; and let me give my countrymen of North Britain an advice not to aim at absolute perfection in this respect; not to speak *High English*, as we are apt to call what is far removed from the *Scotch*, but which is by no means *good English*, and makes, 'the fools who use it,' truly ridiculous. Good English is plain, easy and smooth in the mouth of an unaffected English Gentleman. A studied and factitious pronunciation, which requires perpetual attention and imposes perpetual constraint, is exceedingly disgusting. A small intermixture of provincial peculiarities may, perhaps, have an agreeable effect, as the notes of different birds concur in the harmony of the grove, and please more than if they were exactly alike.

Hume and Boswell's like-minded contemporaries were aided in their quest for a more refined Scottish pronunciation by the growing industry of language gurus such as William Scott, who in the 1780s taught classes and gave lectures in elocution to gentlemen and ladies, old and young, and who published guides to grammar, spelling, pronunciation and reading (Jones 1997: 272). Jones (1996, 1997: 279) painstakingly reconstructs eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Scottish pronunciation from hitherto neglected evidence in the form of surviving catalogues of pronunciation characteristics, special spelling systems (sometimes written by would-be reformers), spelling books (often aimed at schoolchildren or 'ladies'), pronouncing dictionaries, grammar books and general essays on the language. What he charts is the development of a new 'refined' Scottish pronunciation amongst the rising middle classes, influenced by but not identical to the prestige accent adopted by polite society in southern England. The 'Scottish Standard English' end of the language continuum in Scotland was thus born in the eighteenth century, and continues to exert its influence today.

However, broader accents of Scots also survive, from the eighteenth century restricted largely to the rural peasantry and the increasing numbers of the urban working class.

Since the Union of the Crowns in 1603, the Scottish aristocracy had sent their sons, and then their daughters, to be educated in the English public schools, changing their mode of speech until it was practically indistinguishable from southern Standard English. Middle-class Scots and their working-class compatriots, however, lived in close enough proximity for there to be a considerable fund of knowledge about Broad Scots amongst the middle classes throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Often middle-class Scots would themselves only be a generation or two away from working-class, Broad Scots speakers. Curiosity about, affection for, and a philological interest in Broad Scots is evident from the general essays of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, mentioned in Jones (1997), from John Jamieson's *An Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1808), to James Murray's *The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland* (1873). No doubt this familiarity and affection continued to support the writing, publication and reception of literature in Scots, often by middle-class writers, both in book form and in the periodical press (cf. Donaldson 1989). Philological interest continued into the twentieth century, as is seen in the establishment of the *Scottish National Dictionary* and the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, mentioned earlier, and in the occasional publication of scholarly monographs such as Wilson's *Lowland Scotch, As Spoken in the Lower Strathearn District of Perthshire* (1915), *The Dialect of Robert Burns as Spoken in Central Ayrshire* (1923) and *The Dialects of Central Scotland* (1926). This philological interest sparked a new branch of literature in Scots. Inspired particularly by Jamieson's dictionary, and Wilson's dialect study of the lower Strathearn district of Perthshire, the poet Hugh MacDiarmid attempted to create a literature in 'reintegrated' Scots that would be capable of tackling the range of topics and genres that had been available to Scottish poets in the Middle Scots period. MacDiarmid's example was followed most enthusiastically by a group of poets who wrote after the Second World War, among them Robert Garioch, Alexander Scott, Tom Scott, Sydney Goodsir Smith, William Soutar and Douglas Young. Their achievements influenced the work of younger poets, who enjoy the freedom to write in a form of Scots that owes as much to dictionaries and dialect surveys as to the spoken word. Others rejected the reintegrated Scots as 'artificial' and continued to model their written Scots on the speech of their regional and social communities (see McClure this volume).

As the twentieth century proceeded, Broad Scots came under greater pressures from education and from new threats from the communications media that established English as the first truly global language. Mass education in the first half of the twentieth century stigmatised Broad Scots as 'uneducated', although in the latter half of the century a more liberal attitude began to prevail (see Corbett

this volume). A greater threat to traditional Broad Scots, however, came in the changing nature of material culture and the pervasive influence of radio, cinema, television and the Internet. Broad Scots had originally grown to serve the communicative needs of a largely rural society, and clearly it had to develop further in order to meet the needs of a largely urban population whose knowledge of the world was increasingly mediated by print and electronic communications in English. The title of Macafee's case study of Glasgow vernacular, *Traditional Dialect in the Modern World* (1994), indicates the pressures on language use, particularly in the cities, although the spread of mass media has exponentially increased the potential for language contact in all areas of Scotland. If the potential of the media to change language behaviour remains a controversial issue, old-fashioned immigration and emigration has continued, with the linguistic influence of waves of, for example, Italian, Polish, Chinese and Pakistani immigrants so far going largely uncharted, even in the Scottish cities, although the consequences are evident in the fiction of writers such as Suhayl Saadi (2001). Since the major dictionaries of contemporary Scots have not been updated for almost two decades, developments in Scots lexical borrowings and changes in pronunciation over the last two decades have gone largely unpublished. The recent establishment of Scottish Language Dictionaries and the SCOTS corpus, as well as the proposed Institute for the Languages of Scotland, have the potential to rectify the relative scholarly neglect from which language studies in Scotland has suffered. But these projects and their successors will require a new generation of scholars willing to commit their energies to exploring them.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

In one sense the story of Scots is a seamless narrative of continual transformation, as the shifting political fortunes of dominant speech communities shape and reshape the language behaviour of subordinate ones. Broad Scots was born of a fusion of Anglo-Scandinavian, French, Latin, Gaelic and Dutch. It gradually replaced Gaelic in lowland Scotland, and then, in turn, was influenced and constrained by the encroaching power and prestige of English. The various chapters of this book trace the many factors that contribute to our understanding of these processes of linguistic change. The contributions cover both the study of Older Scots (pre-1700) and Modern Scots (1700–today).

The evidence for the early history of Scots is found in onomastics, the study of names. The contributions of Maggie Scott (Chapter 2) and Carole Hough (Chapter 3) illuminate this aspect of scholarly research. Anneli Meurman-Solin is a pioneer in the use of twenty-first-century technology to elucidate Older Scots, and in Chapter 8 she surveys of the use of computerised corpora to shed light on the patterns of vocabulary and grammar of this period. Jeremy Smith's

contribution, Chapter 9, is a reminder that Older Scots literature is an aesthetic as well as a linguistic resource, and he considers the literary craft of the early makars. The reconstruction of Older Scots pronunciation is discussed by Caroline Macafee in Chapter 7, drawing on published and still unpublished work by the late A. J. Aitken.

Caroline Macafee also draws upon her considerable sociolinguistic and lexicographical experience to provide a guide to the study of Scots vocabulary (Chapter 4). This is complemented by Jim Miller's detailed introduction to modern Scots syntax and discourse (Chapter 5) and Jane Stuart-Smith's discussion of present-day urban Scots phonology (Chapter 6). A variety of language, whether written or spoken, is defined by its vocabulary and grammar, rather than the accent or accents associated with it. However, the pronunciation of Scots is a central area of research in its own right, and Stuart-Smith draws upon current investigations into changes in accent across generations of Scots in Glasgow. Together, Chapters 6 and 7 give a chronological overview of the study of Scottish pronunciation, past and present.

Written Scots since 1700 has largely been confined to the domain of literature, and J. Derrick McClure offers a survey of the diverse traditions that constitute the remarkable range of contemporary poetry in Scots (Chapter 10). In Chapter 11, Michael Montgomery reminds us that Scots exists as a historical and current language variety furth of, or beyond, Scotland itself, in his exploration of Ulster Scots and Appalachian English. Finally, given the impact of political events on the development of a language, it is unsurprising that pressure groups attempt to 'manage' linguistic change, and in Chapter 12, John Corbett surveys the mixed fortunes of language planning in Scotland.

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the contributions to this volume are not meant to be comprehensive, and they are far from the last word on the history, development and current state of Scots in lowland Scotland and beyond. They are offered here to help you find some starting points in your own investigations of a complex and fascinating subject that still suffers from undeserved neglect. We wish you well in your own explorations.