

MS. Journal [of the Hawick Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society]

Overview

The young men's mutual improvement society that produced this magazine was in existence from at least 1875, going by the reports of the society meetings published in the local newspaper. A further investigation of the local press and archives may provide further information on this group.

In an article in *The Hawick Express* in 1880 on the society's annual social meeting, the main points of the secretary's report were given. The group's activities for the session included the following:

'12 readings had been given, 12 recitations, 1 dialogue, 14 essays, and 3 contributions to the MS. Journal' ('Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society', *The Hawick Express*, 08 May 1880, p. 3).

In addition, the group members participated in debates, the subjects of which were:

'Ought Sir W. Lawson's local option bill to become law? Are the mental capacities of the sexes equal? And was Gladstone's visit to Mid-Lothian the act of a far-seeing statesman?' (*Ibid*).

Also reported were the new office-bearers for the 1880-1881 session. Amongst them was Mr John Turnbull, the editor of the MS Journal. Outwith the mention of the three contributions to the (presumably) annual manuscript magazine (or magazine night?), no other details are given. (For an example of a society in which the members' contributions for society 'magazine nights' later were collected and bound, see the entry for Renwick Free Church Literary Association, ['\(Magazine Evening: Magazine Later Bound\)'](#).)

The members of this group, at least in the mid-1870s, appear to have taken some issue with the spirit of a debate held on whether or not museums should be open on Sundays, such that at least a couple of members wrote of their grievances in letters to the editor of *The Hawick Express*. This was an unusual circumstance, and the wish to take their disagreements public in the desire to gain public support perhaps speaks to an earnestness of spirit in which these members engaged in society activities.

Name of Club, Society or Group That Produced the Magazine

Hawick Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society

Date of Existence

1875?-1880?

Date of Magazine

1880

Number of Issues

(at least) 1 (not extant)

Manuscript/Published Magazine

Manuscript

Contents and Contributions

(Unknown)

Repository

Hawick Library

Reference

(N/A)