

Glasgow Border Counties' Literary Society's Manuscript Magazine

Overview

A summary of the history of the Glasgow Border Counties' Literary Society is available on our sister website, *Glasgow's Literary Bonds* (see 'Additional Notes' below).

This magazine is unlike most other mutual improvement and literary society magazines that we have seen to date in the sense that it has an 'unprofessional' appearance: the letters and articles that are bound together in this one extant volume are on various sizes of paper. Also, it is unclear where the division is between Volumes I and II as this is not formally marked by a new title page, nor is there another editorial to help mark the distinction.

This group's magazine is a good example of a society's 'Magazine Night', but in this case either a standard-sized paper was not issued or not available to contributors, and the decision to collect and bound the contributions in a single volume was probably not made until much later, as the date of the 'Contents' page suggests (see below).

'Magazine Evenings' or 'Magazine Nights' were meetings that were devoted to the reading of original essays (or occasionally poems) written by group members that were submitted to the Magazine Editor beforehand. The Editor would be responsible for collecting, occasionally selecting, and reading the pieces aloud to the group (more rarely this was done by the contributor him/herself) on the appointed night. This would be followed by 'criticism' — or discussion on the piece's positive *and* negative points — by the group members.

After the meetings, these contributions were sometimes bound and saved in the society's library (if they had one) or would be kept by one of the office bearers. In these cases, it was intended that the magazine was to be preserved and that group members would have access to it at a later date. It is of note that literary and mutual improvement groups used the term 'magazine' to refer to the oral as well as the material medium.

At the front of this magazine, there is a 'Contents' page with a list of 44 contributions and the pen-names of their respective authors, followed by the signature of the

volume's Editor (John Wallace) and the date (30 March 1887). As the 'Editorial' of the first issue — which appears to be written partly as a set of notes — lays out:

'Our Magazine is not limited to any branch in Literature. Its articles are of the grave, gay, social political [sic], the scientific, and we are gratified to state that the Poetry is not neglected in its pages' (A. Lang, 'Editorial', *Glasgow Border Counties' Literary Society's M.S. Magazine*, Vol. I, No. 1, 16 December 1885, [p.1]).

This volume also appears to have served as a kind of scrapbook, in the sense that there are various newspaper clippings (from much later dates) tucked into the book at the front.

Name of Club, Society or Group That Produced the Magazine

Glasgow Border Counties' Literary Society

Date of Existence

1885-1887?

Date of Magazine

Vol. I, No. 1 (16 December 1885); Vol. I, No. 2 (10 March 1886); Vol. II, No. 2 (2 March 1887)

Number of Issues

(at least) 3?

(**Note:** these are bound together as Vols. I and II)

Manuscript/Published Magazine

Manuscript

Contents and Contributions

Articles (non-fiction); Editorials; Essays; Letters to Editor; Poems (original); Table of Contents; Title page

Repository

Scottish Borders Archive and Local History Centre (Heritage Hub, Hawick)

Reference

GB1097/SC/M/28

Additional Notes

See also entry for [Glasgow Border Counties' Literary Society](#) on our sister website, *[Glasgow's Literary Bonds](#)*.