

★ FREE ★

THE TIME, THE PLACE ◆ HENRIETTA LISTON
Historic maps go online ◆ The Turkish Journals

DISCOVER

The magazine of the National Library of Scotland • www.nls.uk • No.44 Winter 2020



Petticoats & Pinnacles

Pioneers of women's mountaineering



National Library of Scotland
Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba



Census Staff, 1911. Walter Urquhart, sitting on the grass, right-side (Crown copyright NRS, GRO6/464/10)

Can you help uncover the stories of the Register House staff who went off to war in 1914-1918, some never to return? National Records of Scotland (NRS) has created an online roll to commemorate the sacrifice of the civil servants of a century ago, and would like to hear from anyone who can add to the stories of those who swapped their desks for dugouts and their pens for rifles. Perhaps one of them is in your family tree.

The roll commemorates and currently lists 14 serving and former members of staff who died, but also more than 50 others who served on many fronts and survived the war, resuming civilian work on their return. They joined the armed forces from what were known as the Register House Departments which then occupied General Register House on Princes Street, and New Register House next door. They were the General Registry Office of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland), the Record Office (later merged as National Records of Scotland), and the Sasine Office and the Deeds Office (now Registers of Scotland).

You can view the roll here: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/learning/first-world-war/register-house-departments-roll-of-honour-1914-1918>

Is one of these men your distant relative? If you have any further information about, or photographs of, the people already listed, or of past members of staff currently missing from this list, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch by writing to education@nrscotland.gov.uk



Walter Urquhart from the Evening Despatch, 1915. (Crown copyright NRS, GRO4/27/2)

Born 7 June 1897, Leith, the son of Walter Urquhart and his wife Eliza Jane Bonar. Urquhart left school at the age of 14 and on the 24 July 1911 joined the General Registry Office for Scotland (GROS), as it was then called, as a messenger boy on the staff of the 1911 Census. As messenger boy Walter earned 7 shillings per week until 13 January 1912, when his wages rose to 9 shillings.

It was around this time he posed with his colleagues for a group photograph in the garden beside New Register House.

On 11 October 1913 he left the GROS to become a packer at Jenners, Edinburgh's well-known department store.

A pre-war Territorial in 1/5th Battalion, Royal Scots, he went with his battalion to the Dardanelles. He was killed on 28 June 1915, aged 18, unmarried.

A photograph printed in the Evening Despatch, 22 September 1915, records the fact that months later Walter was still officially 'missing in action' in the Dardanelles. Like many British casualties at Gallipoli, he has no known grave, and is commemorated on the Helles war memorial. Peacetime found his parents living at Swan River, Manitoba, Canada, with their four surviving children. It is not known when they emigrated from Scotland, but they made it their permanent home and their descendants are believed to live there.

If you have any additional information to add to this roll of honour, please get in touch at education@nrscotland.gov.uk

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-  www.nls.uk
-  [@natlibscot](https://twitter.com/natlibscot)
-  www.facebook.com/NationalLibraryOfScotland
-  www.instagram.com/natlibscot/
-  www.youtube.com/user/NLofScotland

When the doors closed during lockdown, our online presence kept our readers engaged thanks to rich, accessible content

A resource in a year like no other

It's been a year like no other. For the first time in our history, we closed the doors at all of our buildings in Edinburgh and Glasgow. But thanks to our digital infrastructure and our ability to work from home, we remained very much open in the virtual world.

Our librarians were available on online chat to help readers access material, we moved our events, workshops and learning activities to the virtual environment, and we continued to engage people from across Scotland and the world through our map and moving image collections, and our social media chat.

The surge in visitors to our websites (up 40 per cent year-on-year) told us that even during lockdown, people still needed culture, heritage and a world of knowledge – perhaps more so.

Otherwise, it's been business as usual. We launched 'Reaching People: Library Strategy 2020–2025' in September as planned (page 4), and Curator Dora Petherbridge published a book featuring diarist and botanist Henrietta Liston's Turkish journals from 200 years ago (pages 24–26).

Our reading rooms opened again in August, albeit on a controlled basis to ensure everyone's safety, and we very much look forward to reopening our exhibition spaces next year.

In this edition, you'll find a preview of our forthcoming major exhibition about pioneering mountaineering women – truly ahead of their time (pages 18–21) – and stories highlighting our online collections ranging from antiquarian books and maps to moving image. Last but not least, we figured readers might find comfort in some festive nostalgia (pages 28–32).

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PUBLISHED BY Connect Publications www.connectmedia.cc ISSN 1751-5998 (print) ISSN 1751 6005 (online)

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The National Library of Scotland is a registered Scottish charity, No. SC011086



Our collections have the capacity to delight

New Library Strategy launched

We launched our new strategy in September, with an accelerated focus on reaching people through outstanding digital engagement. This follows a record-breaking surge in visits to our websites and digital collections since March – a rise of 40 per cent on 2019 figures.

Called 'Reaching People: Library Strategy 2020-2025', this strategy builds upon the digitisation that has taken place over the past five years, and looks

towards our centenary in 2025, by which time a growing number of Scottish residents will enjoy a personalised online service tailored towards their needs and interests. This work will complement increased activity in our buildings to reach and welcome new audiences.

National Librarian, Dr John Scally, said: "Our key priority for the next five years is to connect with people and enrich their lives. We want to be responsive and inclusive. We want to be current and relevant. We very much value our growing number of regular visitors and

readers. However, we know we can offer more to an even greater number of people.

"In five years' time, we will look like a different place – one where community groups, families with young children and people of all ages and backgrounds will feel it is their national library – their place to enjoy and to access a world of knowledge and entertainment."

 To read the full strategy, visit our website.

Library wins Wikimedia award

The Library has won the 2020 Partnership of the Year Award from Wikimedia.

These awards recognise the work of community members and partner organisations in sharing open knowledge with Wikimedia.

Wikimedia is the collective name for the Wikimedia movement, which revolves around a group of inter-



connected projects, including Wikipedia, Wiktionary, Wikiquote and others. Wikimedia aims to use the collaborative power of the internet, and the wiki concept, to create and share free knowledge of all kinds.

As the Covid-19 situation progressed, approximately 70 Library staff who were by then working from home took part in a project to upload and transcribe Library collections to

Wikicommons/Wikisource. This resulted in what is described on Wikimedia as "possibly the largest ever partner staff group engaging with Wikimedia".

The project resulted in 2,698 pamphlets being uploaded (and counting!). These items have also been reimported into the national collections.

 The Library's Wikisource project page can be found here: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Wikisource:WikiProject_NLS

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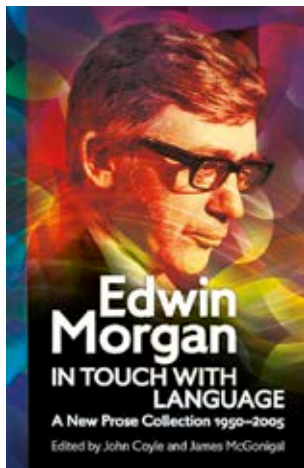
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Edited by John Coyle and James McGonigal

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Paperback April 2020 £24.95

“I try to write something every day even though I am not writing poetry, just to get myself in touch with language.”—Edwin Morgan

Edwin Morgan: In Touch With Language presents previously uncollected prose – journalism, book and theatre reviews, scholarly essays and lectures, drama and radio scripts, forewords and afterwords – all carefully moulded to the needs of differing audiences. Morgan's writing fizzles with clarity and verve: the topics range from Gilgamesh to Ginsberg, from cybernetics to sexualities, from international literatures to the changing face of his home city of Glasgow. Everyone will find surprises and delights in this new collection.

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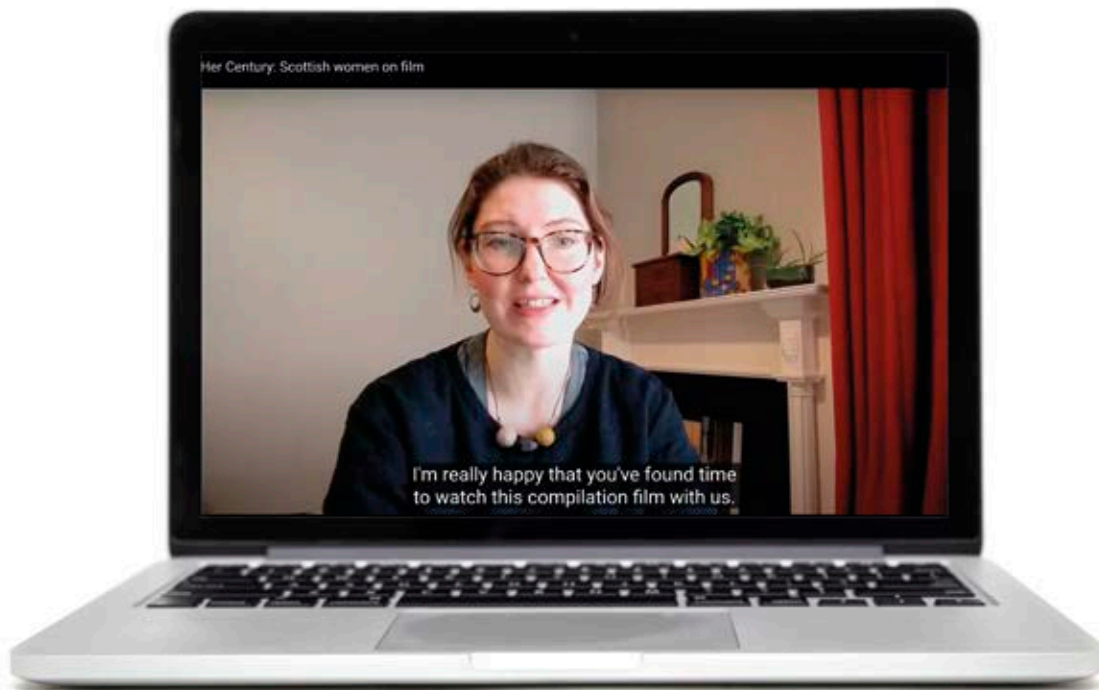
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ONLINE LEARNING AND EVENTS

Since April, our events and learning programme has moved online, ensuring that our loyal audiences can continue to engage with the Library despite lockdown and travel restrictions.

People from all over Scotland have (virtually) attended family storytelling sessions, creative writing classes, and introductory workshops on using the Library's digital resources, maps and

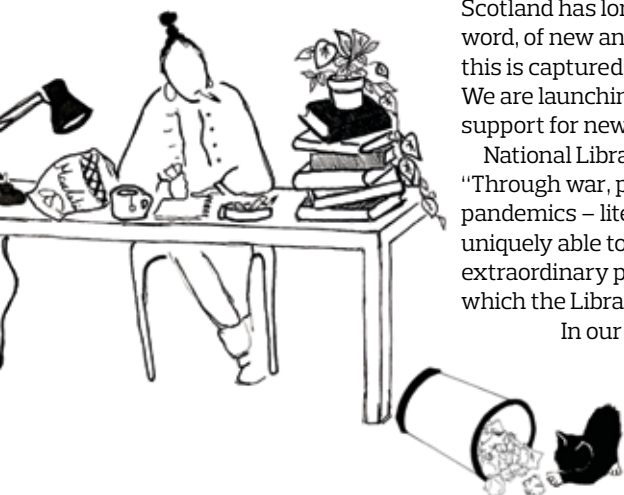
collections. Our new virtual offer has extended our reach well beyond Scotland, with hundreds of people tuning into our weekly online events programme from six of the world's continents, including attendees from the United States, Pakistan, Russia and the Philippines.

We will continue our online learning and events programme for the foreseeable future. Highlights include

a new online book group launching in December, a virtual event with crime novelist and Library benefactor Ian Rankin on 17 December, and a virtual schools programme working with Gaelic-speaking students from James Gillespie's High School.

 For our full event listings visit nls.uk/whats-on

Our annual appeal: Please help us support Scotland's writing talent



Scotland has long championed the written word, of new and established writers alike, and this is captured in the Library's collections. We are launching this year's appeal to extend support for new writing.

National Librarian Dr John Scally said: "Through war, political turmoil and now global pandemics – literature is an expressive form uniquely able to capture and reflect upon extraordinary periods in history, and one which the Library wholeheartedly embraces."

In our archives you can see the works of writers on their first forays into literature, but who are now household names – from Jane Austen, to Ian Rankin

via Muriel Spark. As a 'Legal Deposit' Library, we are able to collect a copy of every text commercially published today in Scotland, but we also seek to collect the self-published books, pamphlets and zines which may not typically receive the same attention or have the same reach.

As well as collecting new writing, we want to promote the work of emerging writers. With your help, we will give newly published authors a stage and an audience at our popular public events, host workshops for under-represented writers, and give creative writing groups special access to archival material.

 If you can, support our appeal at: nls.uk/support-nls/new-writing



DIGITISATION SAVES OLDEST KNOWN MOVING IMAGES OF WICK FOR POSTERITY

Following years of specialised work, the Library has completed digitisation of some of Scotland's oldest moving footage: the 'Wick Kinora Reels'.

The reels are from the turn of the 20th century, and the digitised and re-animated footage has been returned to the Wick Society.

Deemed to be the work of local photographer John G Humphrey (1868–1949), the reels contain scenes and events that are estimated to have taken place between 1897 and 1910. These events include ships arriving into Wick Harbour, footage of a storm in Wick Bay and a church parade – likely marking Queen Victoria's

Golden Jubilee in 1897. Head of the Library's Moving Image Archive, Alison Stevenson, said: "It has been a labour of love.

"The 'Wick Kinora Reels' are the only Kinora reels in our collection, and the oldest surviving moving images of Wick. We're excited to finally be able to provide the digitally restored footage to the Wick Society while also making these unique films available online for the public."

Chairman of the Wick Society, Ian Leith, said: "It was in 1989 that a Kinora Viewer and a collection of reels were gifted to the Wick Society by a Mr and Mrs Sutherland, then resident in East

Kilbride. They in turn confirmed that the reels had been the property of Mrs Sutherland's grandfather, Henry Williamson, cousin of William Johnstone of the famous Johnstone Photographic Collection family. Henry Williamson and the Pulteneytown Good Templars were instrumental in encouraging the first cinema in the town, with Henry acting as projectionist.

"These reels then, are a most important part of the town's history and heritage and the Wick Society is indebted to the National Library for making their time and expertise available in finally making these scenes from our past available again."

Developed by the Lumière brothers in 1895 (while they were simultaneously inventing the cinematograph), the Kinora was designed to allow people to enjoy short films at home. A Kinora Viewer and the original Wick Kinora Reels remain at the Library's Moving Image Archive at Kelvin Hall in Glasgow.



 You can view the footage on at <https://movingimage.nls.uk/film/4627>

Digital scholarship

The Library's digital assets are a treasure trove of information and ideas. Sarah Ames, Digital Scholarship Librarian, takes us through two of the projects working with our datasets.

FIRST RESEARCH FELLOW IN DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP APPOINTED

Dr Giles Bergel has been appointed as the first National Librarian's Research Fellow in Digital Scholarship. The fellowship is an annual opportunity for a three-month period of research into any aspect of the Library's data collections available on the Data Foundry (<https://data.nls.uk/>), using data science or other digital research methods or techniques.

Bergel is a digital humanist, based in the Department of Engineering Science at the University of Oxford. He has a long-standing interest in the digitisation of cheap print, and is the editor of an edition of broadside and chapbook versions of the English ballad 'The Wandering Jew's Chronicle'. His other interests include bibliography, typography and book design, as well as the histories of copyright and the British book trades.

The Library has extensive holdings of chapbooks – small, cheap books sold by travelling pedlars, or 'chapmen' – containing songs, poems, stories, prophecies and jokes. Their texts have received more attention than their illustrations which, durably crafted for a long working life from reusable woodblocks, were carefully maintained and handed down within printing firms and copied with varying degrees of precision across Britain and Ireland. Chapbook researchers have long understood the illustrations' importance

as historical evidence for their popular appeal, but have been hampered by the difficulty of accessing collections at scale.

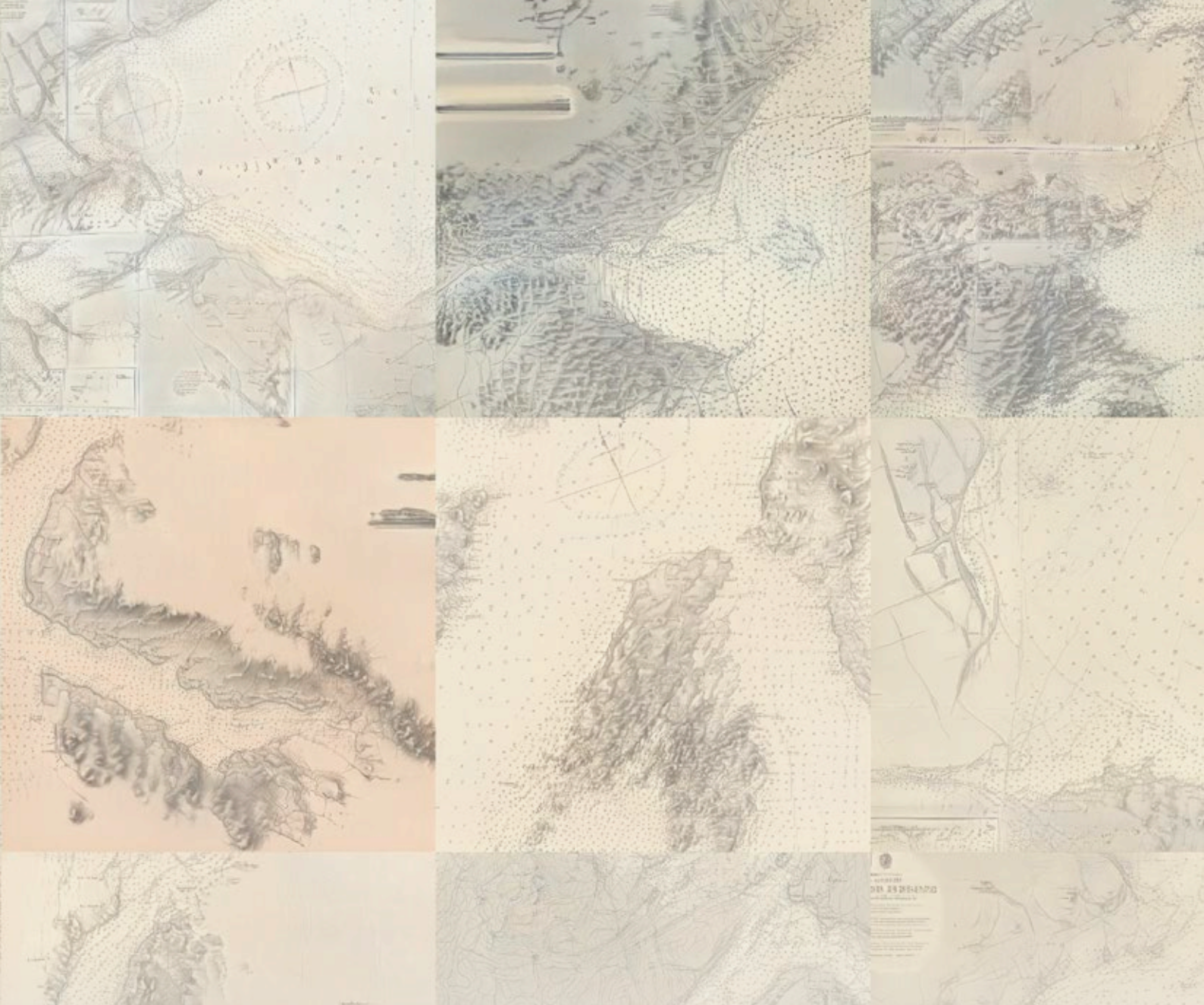
The Chapbooks Printed in Scotland dataset on the Data Foundry contains images, text and catalogue records of more than 3000 of the Library's holdings printed between c.1700–1899. The dataset is based on the Lauriston Castle collection, which came to the Library in 1926 and provides an unrivalled overview of the Scottish chapbook tradition.

Bergel's project will apply state-of-the-art computer vision methods to match and classify similar images, distinguishing blocks from their copies and grouping them by subject, date, printer and place of publication, leveraging decades of scholarship at the Library. The project will uncover relationships between members of the trade who copied, inherited or shared printing blocks across often considerable distances. It will make it possible to view chapbook illustrations in detail, and as a whole – as a unique collection of imagery that the printing press made available to countless people in Scotland and beyond.

Bergel will be with us until March 2021.

ART MEETS AI

The Library's Artist-in-Residence, Martin Disley (see No.43 Spring 2020 issue), completed his residency this



summer after nine months with us, where he explored GANs – Generative Adversarial Networks – and the Library's digitised material.

GANs are a type of machine learning in which new data is created by 'training' it on an existing, curated dataset (a collection of data). Martin's work has involved training GAN systems on collections of digitised images, to create new works of art which retain traits of the initial collections.

This machine learning technique works particularly well on sets of images with consistent characteristics, such as the lines in architectural structures or the features of portraits – this enables the GAN to learn the key features of the images and to begin to copy or predict what could come next.

The aim for this project was to explore how, and whether, it is possible to convey the key features of digitised cultural heritage collections using artificial intelligence and, in turn, if these methods and outputs can be used to create new works of art.

Initially, Martin's residency explored the Library's collection of photographs of the Forth Bridge construction and the Tay Bridge Disaster, creating ghostly images of bridge structures.

More recently, he explored the Library's map collections, including Ordnance Survey Maps, Admiralty Charts and Geological Surveys. With

these, Martin's work has created new representations of imaginary coastal, geological and urban spaces.

He said: "Towards the end of the residency, I became particularly interested in thinking about maps as a technology. Working closely with artificial intelligence and machine learning has enabled me to see first-hand how these technologies have the potential to be wielded as instruments of power.

"It struck me that the same was true of the map. Much like AI, cartography has the potential to advance any combination of insight and lies, to construct reality as much as represent it. I hope that, by pairing an ancient technology with a very contemporary one, I can extend critical engagement to those technologies that now almost seem like nature."

Martin's work has been shortlisted for a John Byrne Award.

© Martin Disley, used with permission

Find out more about Dr Giles Bergel and Martin Disley's work, including Martin's videos of imaginary worlds, at <https://data.nls.uk/projects>



FRESH INK

OPPORTUNITY FOR EMERGING WRITERS

A new initiative for emerging writers will have their work added to the national collections alongside literary heavyweights at the National Library of Scotland.

We're calling for applications to Fresh Ink – a programme that will award up to 10 emerging writers with a bursary of £1,000 – for creative responses to 'my experience of 2020'.

Led by poet, writer and creative practitioner Nadine Aisha Jassat, the initiative will provide financial support to emerging writers and assist their careers by establishing connections with Scotland's most prestigious literary archive.

Ms Jassat said: 'I am delighted to be a part of the National Library of Scotland's Fresh Ink programme.

"Libraries are homes of stories, and knowledge, and listening; and I'm delighted to see the Library embodying that in its call to Scotland's emerging creatives to hear their experiences of 2020.

"As many have noted, while there may be similarities for many during the pandemic, there have also

been stark differences, and each of the creatives contemplating this open call will likely have their own stories to tell – stories which may bring with them resonances, or open doors which say, 'This is my story of 2020, and I am here to tell it'.

"I look forward to hearing some of these stories, to witnessing them becoming part of Scotland's literary heritage in the Library's archives, and to being part of a project which supports the growth of emerging artists in a year which has been filled with so many unknowns and challenges."

The Library is seeking new and contemporary voices and welcomes LGBTQ+ and BAME writers, writers from all socioeconomic backgrounds, and writers with disabilities.

Writers are encouraged to choose from a range of genres and forms including, but not limited to: fiction, poetry, short fiction, drama, flash fiction, and creative nonfiction. Writers are free to respond in Scots, English, or Gaelic.

🗨 The deadline for applications is 4 January 2021. To find out more and to apply, visit our website.



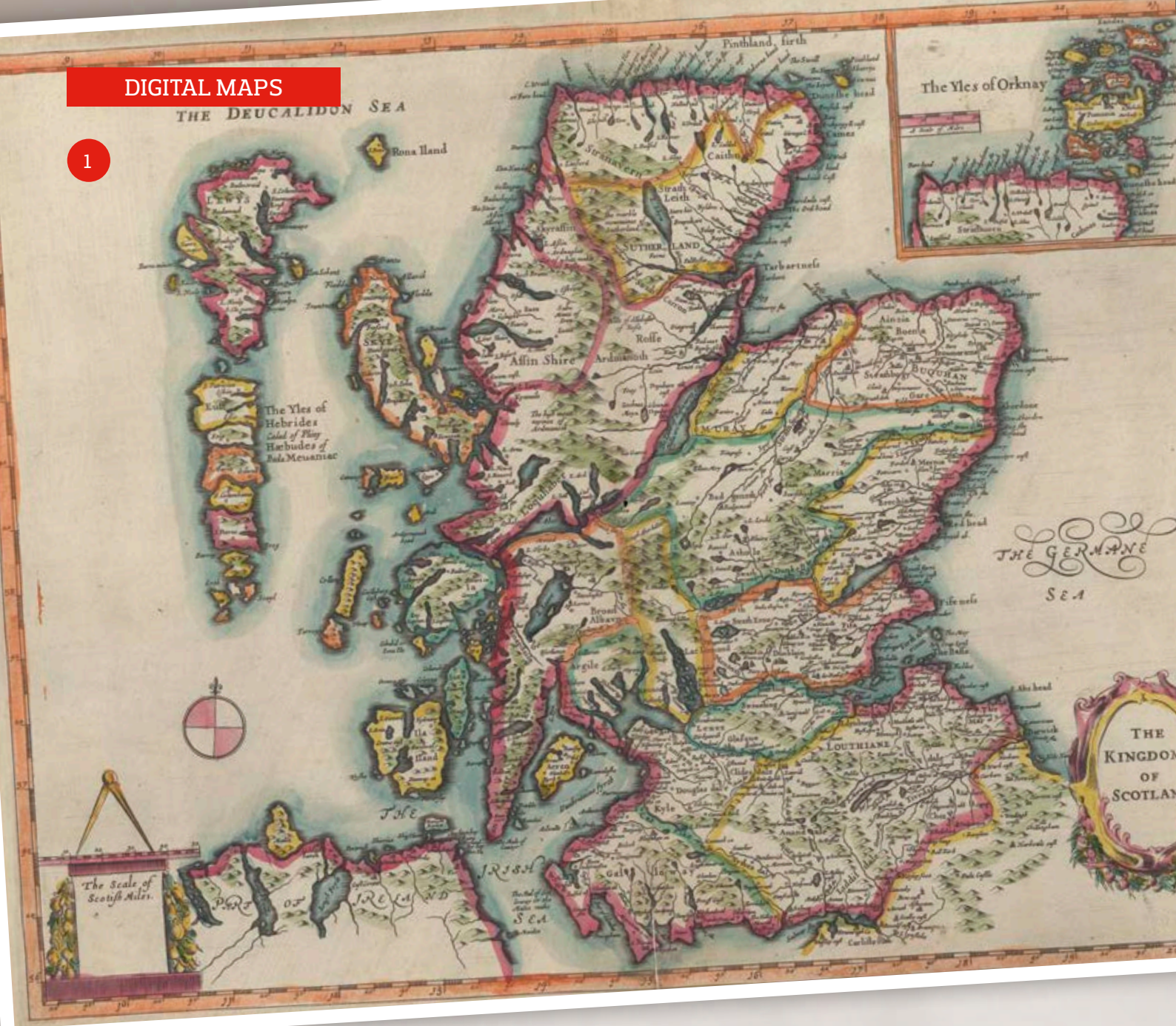
Nadine Aisha Jassat.
Picture: Chris Scott



DIGITAL MAPS

THE TIME, THE PLACE

With 3,000 Scottish maps – stretching back 500 years – newly digitised, our website now offers you the ability to explore our nation and its history like never before



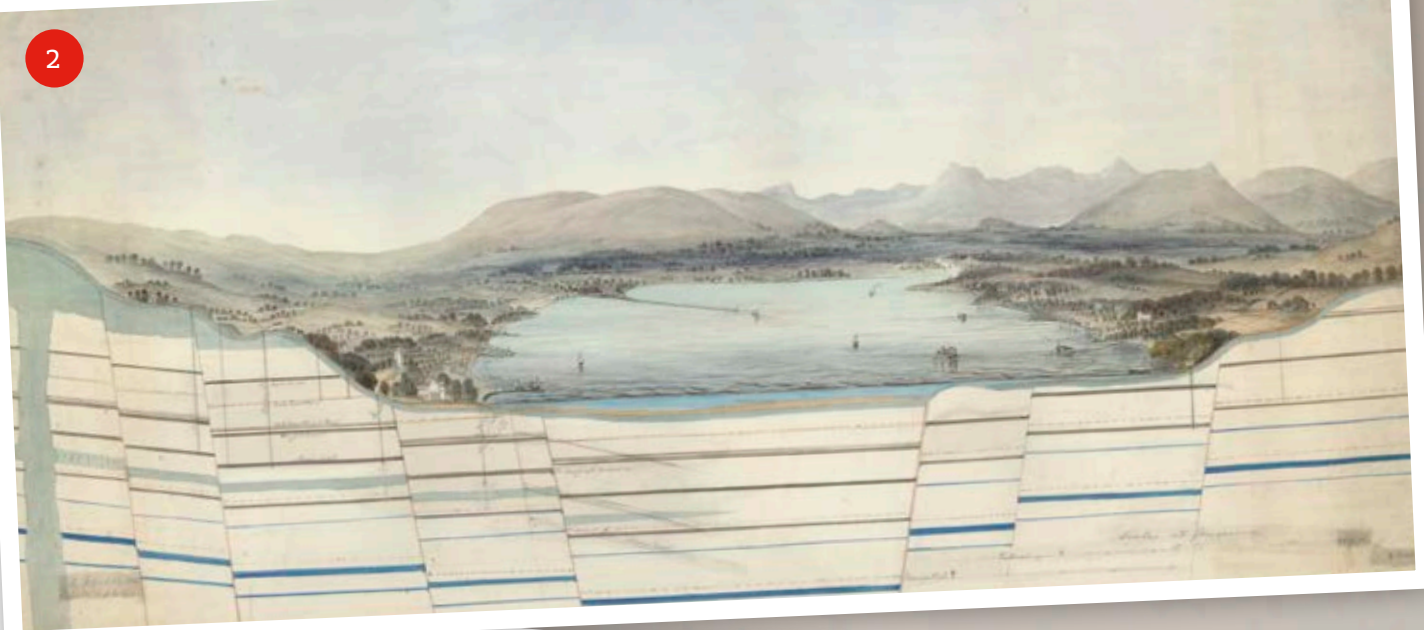
Following a special scanning project with a large-format flatbed scanner earlier this year, we were thrilled to put online more than 3,000 fragile, folded and special collection maps of Scotland. Whilst these may not be significant numerically (we now have 232,000 maps online), these maps are very important for their content, including many manuscripts, as well as special states of early maps of Scotland.

Our main website additions are:

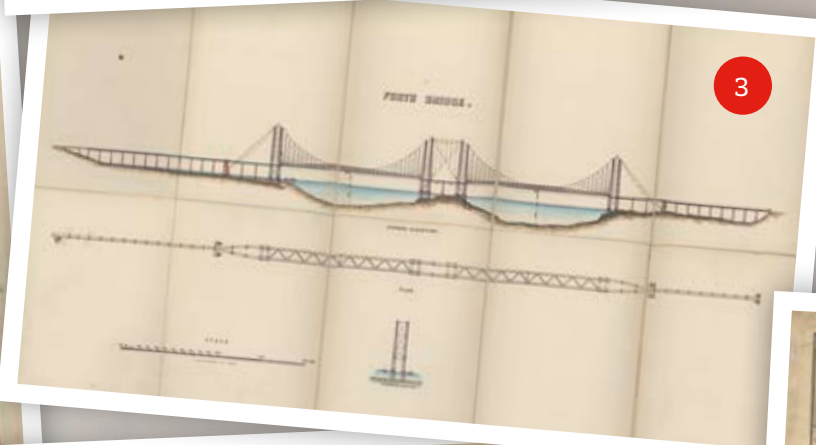
- 450 printed maps of Scotland dating over the last five centuries, almost doubling the number of maps of the whole of Scotland we now have on our website.
- 300 printed county and regional maps of Scotland, useful also for allowing a much more comprehensive presentation of landscape change over time.
- 450 new estate maps, stretching from Wigtownshire to Orkney, for those interested in more detailed rural mapping. These are useful for showing the division of common land, the planning of new roads, farming and woodland, coal mining, the creation of designed gardens and landscapes, planned villages, architectural reconstruction, and the reclamation of foreshore.
- 180 new printed town plans of Scotland, covering 22 towns, allowing urban change to be seen more clearly.
- 82 new military maps of Scotland. These maps include battle plans of Culloden, Falkirk, Glenshiel, and Prestonpans, as well as maps of military roads, and architectural drawings of Edinburgh Castle.
- 230 Goad Fire Insurance Plans of Scottish Towns. These very detailed maps show fire risk for the main industrial areas of seven towns and cities in Scotland, and are particularly useful for showing the function of each building, as well as the names of particular companies or institutions.
- 102 specialised early maps, plans and profiles relating to bridges, canals and railways. These include the construction of the Forth & Clyde Canal, the Caledonian Canal and the Union Canal, as well as various proposed new developments that were not always realised.
- We were also delighted to have been granted permission by the WS Society to put its Signet Library map collection online. It contains 494 plans, including many special and important maps of Scotland. This collection has been held on deposit in the Library since 1981.

Visit the new maps at <https://maps.nls.uk/additions.html>

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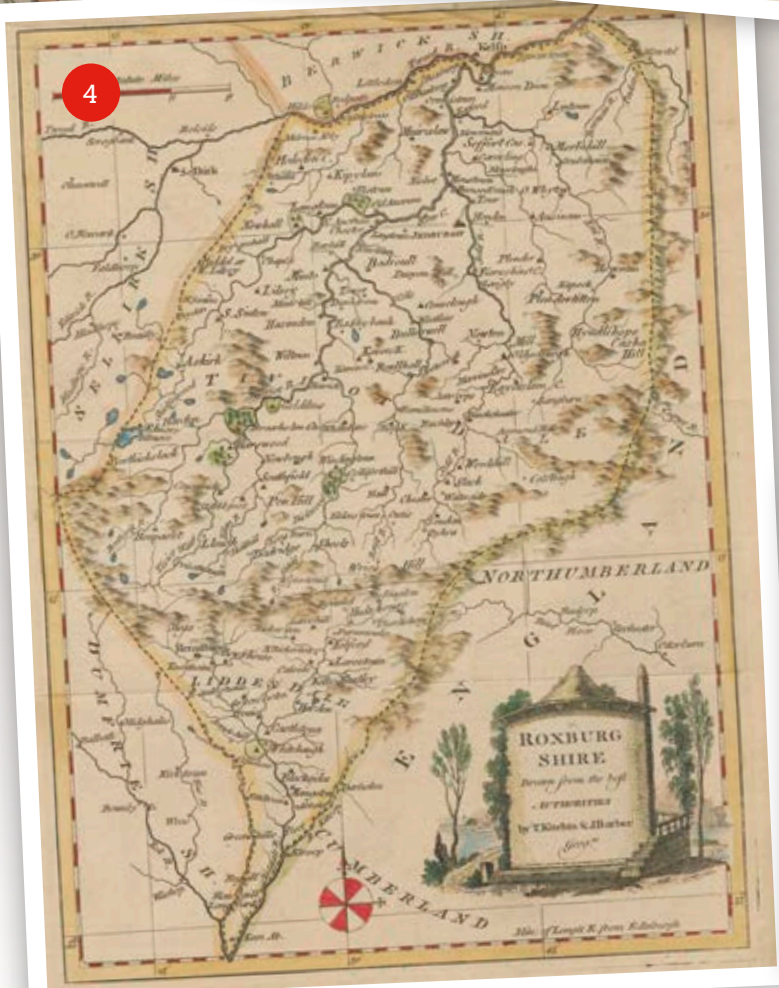
3



DIGITISED:

- 1. The Kingdom of Scotland, c. 1630
- 2. H.M. Caddell, View of the Firth of Forth with a geological section (1856)
- 3. John Bartholomew & Co., Forth Bridge. General elevation (c. 1880)
- 4. T. Kitchin, Roxburghshire, drawn from the best authorities (1771)
- 5. Hay's New Plan of Musselburgh... (1824)
- 6. A plan of the field of battle... near Culloden (1746)

4



5



6

