

Dr Emily Wingfield

Lecturer

[Department of English Literature \(/schools/edacs/departments/english/index.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/english/index.aspx)

Contact details

Arts Building
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT
UK



About

I'm a Lecturer in English Literature. I teach pre-1800 literature, with a particular focus on the Medieval and Renaissance periods. As a researcher, I work on medieval Scottish literature. I am particularly interested in romance, manuscript study, and book history.

Qualifications

BA (Oxon), MSt (Oxon), DPhil (Oxon)

Biography

My undergraduate and graduate career was pursued at Lincoln College, Oxford. I received a First Class BA Hons degree in English Language and Literature (2003), followed by a Distinction for the MSt. in English Literature 650-1500 (2007). My D.Phil. (2007-10), which was fully funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, examined the manuscript and print contexts of Older Scots romance. I joined the Department of English here at Birmingham in January 2013 after holding a Junior Research Fellowship at Churchill College, Cambridge.

Teaching

I teach pre-1800 literature, with a particular focus on the Medieval and Renaissance periods.

At UG level, I convene the second year module 'Chaucer and his Legacy' and offer a third year option on medieval Scottish literature called 'Reading and Writing Scotland 1375-1513'.

At PG level, I am programme lead for the MA in English Literature

Postgraduate supervision

Emily would welcome postgraduates wishing to work on medieval English and Scottish literature, particular in the fields of romance and the history of the book.

I am currently supervising a PhD on literary and historiographical representations of St. Margaret of Scotland and due to begin supervising two further PhDs on Wyntoun's 'Original Chronicle' and the Older Scots romance 'Clariodus'.

Doctoral research

PhD title The Manuscript and Print Contexts of Older Scots Romance

Research

My research specialism is Older Scots literature, particularly Older Scots romance and the history of the book.

The label **Older Scots literature** refers to the surviving body of literature written in Lowland Scots between c. 1375 and 1700. Its margins therefore span what we would think of as the Middle English, Early Modern, and even Restoration periods of English literature, and as a result, the body of literature which survives is unsurprisingly both rich and diverse. It ranges from *The Bruce* and *The Wallace*, epic tales of the Anglo-Scots Wars of Independence by John Barbour and Blind Harry, to the varied work of the chameleonic poet William Dunbar, who wrote poems both praising and criticising the aureate court of James IV and his wife, Margaret Tudor. Historical chronicles chart the development of the Scottish nation, romance literature scrutinises the kingship and knighthood of the great courts of King Arthur and Alexander the Great, dream visions and allegories reflect on the nature of love, and religious lyric extols the Virgin and Trinity in language which aspires to be worthy of its objects of praise. Two related themes in particular stand out: Sovereignty - both of the nation and individual- and Good Governance - how best to rule the public realm and the private body of the self.

My **D.Phil. thesis** offers the first book-length study of the entire corpus of Older Scots romance. Building on recent developments in Middle English romance scholarship and Older Scots book history, it contextualises the surviving corpus of Older Scots romances in light of their unique material witnesses and contemporary cultural milieu.

My **monograph, *The Trojan Legend in Medieval Scottish Literature* (<http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=14374>)**, begins in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. During the Anglo-Scots Wars of Independence and subsequent Anglo-Scottish diplomatic exchange, Scottish writers developed an already nascent origin myth to counter that of the English who - following Geoffrey of Monmouth - traced their ancestry via King Arthur to Brutus and the Trojans. The English-Trojan origin myth was seized upon by Edward I and II to bolster their claims to lordship and ownership of Scotland. To counteract this, and instead prove Scotland's independence and sovereignty, Scottish historians traced their nation's origins to a Greek prince, Gaythelos, and his Egyptian wife, Scota. This appeal to an originally Irish origin legend enabled the Scots to derive their origins from a parent race at least as old as, if not older than, the Trojan remnant. That parent race was, moreover, most crucially victorious against the ancestors of the English in the Trojan War. My monograph sets out to discover how Older Scots writers represented and responded to the Trojan legend and their own Greek origin myth in the wake of this 'war of historiography'. It provides comprehensive and detailed analysis of a range of Older Scots texts that engage, either as a whole or in part, with the Matter of Troy. It seeks to determine whether there is a specifically Scottish response to the Trojan legend, and, if so, what form that



response takes. It considers the way in which Scottish texts interact with English counterparts, and examines the extent to which the Scottish response to the Trojan legend develops over time. I began my project suspecting that Scottish writers might well adopt a hostile attitude towards the Trojan legend, but this assumption soon proved false. I have instead discovered that the Trojan legend was actively and successfully re-appropriated by Scottish writers and used increasingly not only as an origin myth and metaphor for Anglo-Scots political relations, but also as a *locus* through which poets might explore broader issues of good self and public governance and also questions of literary tradition, authority, and the nature of poetic truth.



I am now beginning **new book on the Stewarts and their books - Scotland's royal readers and writers from c. 1375 to 1542.**

Other activities

I am a member of the Scottish Text Society and Scottish Medievalists, and actively present my research at national and international conferences.

I am currently planning a day workshop to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Gavin Douglas' *Eneados*.

Publications

- ***The Trojan Legend in Older Scots Literature*** (<http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewitem.asp?idProduct=14374>). (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2014).
- 'Towards an Edition of the *Scottish Troy Book*', in *Editing Medieval Texts from Britain in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Vincent Gillespie and Anne Hudson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).
- with Anna Caughey, 'Conquest and Imperialism: Medieval Scottish Contexts for Alexander's "Journey to Paradise"', in *Le voyage d'Alexandre au Paradis terrestre : Orient et Occident, regards croisés*, ed. M. Bridges, C. Gaullier-Bougassas, J.-Y. Tilliette, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).
- 'The Thewis off Gudwomen: Female Advice in *Lancelot of the Laik* and *The Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour*', in *Fresche Fontanis: Studies in the Culture of Medieval and Early Modern Scotland*, ed. Janet Hadley-Williams and Derrick McClure (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2013).
- 'The Familial, Professional and Literary Contexts of Edinburgh, NAS, MS RH 13/35', *Textual Cultures*, 7:1(2012), 77-96.
- "And He, That Did it Out of French Translait": Cleriadus in France, England and Scotland, c. 1440-1550', *Neophilologus*, 94 (2011), 649-60.
- "'Ex libris domini Duncani Campbell de Glenwrquhay/miles": *The Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour* in the household of Sir Duncan Campbell, seventh laird of Glenorchy', in *Medieval Romance, Medieval Contexts*, ed. Rhiannon Purdie and Michael Cichon (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2011), pp. 161-74.
- 'The Late Sixteenth-Century Publication and Reception of the Older Scots "Buik of Alexander" ("Octosyllabic Alexander")', *Notes and Queries*, n.s. 58:2 (2011), 210-16.
- 'The Trojan Legend in Older Scots Literature', in *Troy and the European Imagination 900-1700*, ed. Elizabeth Archibald and James Clark (forthcoming 2013-14).
- 'The *Scottish Troy Book*: An Appraisal', in *Scottish Latinitas: Latin and Neo-Latin Culture in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland*, ed. Ian Johnson and Alessandra Petrina (forthcoming 2013-14).
- 'The Composition and Revision of Sir Gilbert Hay's *Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour*', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* (forthcoming, 2013).
- with Anna Caughey, 'Sir Gilbert Hay and the *Secreta Secretorum*', in *Le Secret des Secrets et sa diffusion européenne*, ed. M. Bridges, C. Gaullier-Bougassas, J.-Y. Tilliette (Brepols: forthcoming 2014).

I also regularly review volumes for *Nottingham Medieval Studies* and *Archiv*.

