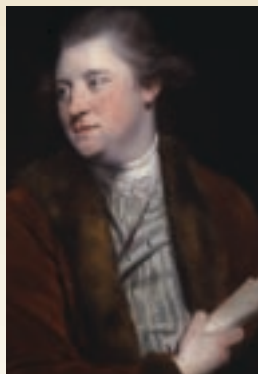


Alexander MacDonald (Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair) (c. 1695–c.1770), Gaelic poet, was a teacher when in 1741 his vocabulary was the first secular book in Gaelic to be printed. He converted to Roman Catholicism in 1745, and played a prominent role in the campaign of Charles Edward Stuart, whose Gaelic tutor he was. The collection of his poems published in 1751, the first printed book of secular Gaelic verse, contained so many anti-government sentiments that it is said it was burned in Edinburgh by the public hangman. His wide-ranging verse includes 'Birlinn chlann Raghnaill' (Galley of Clanranald), an outstanding sea poem.



Left: James Macpherson (1736–96) perpetrated a series of literary forgeries which profoundly influenced the European Romantic movement. After publishing in 1760 what he claimed were translations of fragments of ancient Gaelic verse, he was commissioned by the literary establishment further to investigate the oral tradition. He obliged with *Fingal* (1761) and *Temora* (1763), his own 'translations' of epics purporting to be by Ossian, a 3rd-century Gaelic warrior poet, son of the legendary Fingal. Their success at the time, and later, was largely due to the fact that many people wanted them to be authentic. (SNPG)

Right: Allan Ramsay (1684–1758), poet and dramatist, wrote in both English and Scots, which had fallen into disuse as a medium of poetry since James VI took his court to London in 1603. A former master wig-maker, he published his *Poems* (1721) and anthologies of ballads and songs (1724 and 1724–37), which further revived public interest in Scottish literature. His verse play, *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725), was the first notable Scottish drama for almost 200 years. In 1725 he founded the first circulating library in Britain.

(SNPG: artist William Aikman)



Left: (Sir) Walter Scott (1771–1832), novelist, poet, short-story writer, historian, and folklorist, began his prodigious writing career with ballad-epics in the Romantic tradition: *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), *Marmion* (1808), and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810). They were printed by James Ballantyne (1772–1833), and their success was a factor in Scott lending him money, and becoming a partner in the business. With *Waverley* (1814), Scott began a line of enormously popular historical novels, until 1827 published anonymously. This was probably because, as sheriff-depute of Selkirkshire since 1799, he did not want to appear to be leading several lives. Ballantyne's business collapsed in 1826, and Scott was declared bankrupt to the tune of £100,000. In spite of recurring illness, he refused his friends' financial help, and for the rest of his life wrote unceasingly to repay his debts. His stage-management of the visit to Edinburgh of George IV, for which he received a baronetcy, initiated the Scottish tartan revival.

(SNPG: artist David Wilkie)



Left: Adam Smith (1723–90), political economist, was influenced by the thinking of Francis Hutcheson, whom he followed at one remove as professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow University 1752–64. In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), he aimed to explain individual behaviour and its effect upon society. In retirement in Kirkcaldy, he wrote *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations* (1776), printed in London for Strahan and Cadell, a work of great international influence in which he examined the forces contributing to world development.

(SNPG: artist James Tassie)