



**University of Guelph
Department of History**

MA Thesis Defence

Student: Julia Di Castri

Date: Wednesday, April 23, 2025

Time: 11:00am – 1:00pm

Location: Virtual
(Contact histaacademic@uoguelph.ca for link)

**“A Picture-Perfect Girl: The Highland Lassie in Scottish Postcards
(1895-1914)”**

Abstract

This thesis examines the representation of the Highland Lassie in Scottish tourism postcards focusing on the time between 1895 and 1914, exploring its significance in constructing gendered narratives of hospitality and national identity. Through an analysis of visual media, including postcards, posters, and artwork, this study investigates how the Highland Lassie was portrayed as both a romanticized symbol of femininity as well as an active participant in Scotland's rural industries. By positioning the Highland Lassie within broader discussions of gender and place imagery, this research reveals how Scottish women were depicted in ways that reinforced traditional roles while simultaneously shaping the tourist experience.

The findings highlight two primary depictions of the Highland Lassie: one as an idealized, welcoming figure designed to attract visitors and another as a working woman embedded in the harsh realities of Highland life. These portrayals reflect the intersection of gender and tourism, illustrating how Scottish women were utilized as cultural symbols to promote Scotland's identity to domestic and international onlookers. By critically analyzing these postcards as ephemeral tourism artifacts, this research contributes to scholarship on gender and placemaking in tourism scholarship.

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