

From the Chair

Easter has come and gone and we are finally experiencing some lovely spring sunshine. I hope that this will motivate you to participate in some of the upcoming events planned by Claire Robinson and Matthew Jarron. Keep your eyes on email and our Facebook page for our next set of excursions.

We've had a busy year so far. We recently had the pleasure of visiting the University of Edinburgh's Fine Art Collection and in February, Helen Scott gave a guided tour of the exhibition *You Choose: Favourites from the City Art Centre*, which she successfully curated to get visitors involved with the collection. Also, on 28 February, the Black Watch Castle and Museum in Perth generously hosted our study day *Scottish Art in the Great War*. The sold-out event was co-organised by Patricia Andrew and Matthew Jarron, and offered a rich and diverse selection of papers that opened up fascinating perspectives on the theme. If you missed this event, you will be able to read a selection of the papers in this year's journal.

Finally, I would like to welcome two new SSAH committee members: Tara King from the University of St Andrews and Kirsty MacNab who holds the post of Curatorial Assistant in the Fine & Applied Art team at Leisure & Culture Dundee. We look forward to having Tara and Kirsty on board!

Sabine Wieber

SSAH Research Support Grants

The Scottish Society for Art History promotes scholarship in the history of Scottish art and art located in Scotland. To facilitate this, the SSAH offers research support grants from £50 to £500 to assist with research costs and travel expenses. Applicants must be working at a post-graduate level or above and should either be resident in Scotland or doing research that necessitates travel to Scotland. Application deadlines: 31 May and 30 November.

To apply please send via e-mail:

- a cover letter
- current curriculum vitae
- a brief project description (300-500 words) specifying how the grant will be used and how it relates to a broader research agenda
- a budget
- the name and e-mail address of one reference

Address applications to:

SSAH Research Support Grants, c/o Dr Shannon Hunter Hurtado, sculpthurtado@yahoo.co.uk

New Committee Members

Kirsty MacNab from the McManus: Dundee's Art Gallery and Museum has recently joined the SSAH committee. Her interests lie in late 18th to mid 19th century British art and also Modernist architecture.

Kirsty has worked in Dundee since 2013, caring for and displaying the City's diverse collections of paintings, works on paper and decorative art.

Tara King has also joined the SSAH Committee, working as minutes secretary. Tara is studying for an MA at the University of St Andrews. She is interested in the Scottish artist Sir James Guthrie.

Reviews

Review - tour of *You Choose: Favourites from the City Art Centre* (Edinburgh, 14 Feb 2015)

By Claire Robinson, Museum Collections Unit, University of St Andrews

In February, SSAH members enjoyed a tour of an exciting new exhibition *You Choose: Favourites from the City Art Centre* with the exhibition curator, Dr Helen Scott, Curator (Fine Art), City of Edinburgh Council. This innovative exhibition displays a selection of the City Art Centre's most popular artworks as voted for by the public. Making use of the BBC Your Paintings website, members of the public had the opportunity to view digital images of over 900 oil and acrylic paintings and select their favourites from the collection. The results of this project were unveiled in this exhibition.



You Choose celebrates the wealth and diversity of this remarkable collection, showcasing works from different time periods and representing a variety of genres - landscapes,

portraits, still life studies and abstract images - in one gallery. Celebrated works by leading names in the field of Scottish art history are displayed alongside works by lesser-known artists, some of which have never been publicly exhibited before. This stimulating and refreshing approach means that the exhibition has something to offer all audiences.



Images courtesy of Helen Scott

Centre stage is awarded to the artwork that received the most public votes - James McIntosh Patrick's striking *Stobo Kirk, Peeblesshire* (1936). Further highlights of the exhibition include James Cadenhead's 1886 work *Lady with Japanese Screen and Goldfish (Portrait of the Artist's Mother)*, John Henry Lorimer's *The Flight of the Swallows* (1906) and Stanley Cursiter's *The Fair-Isle Jumper* (1923). More surprising choices include *A Dog* (possibly 'Greyfriars Bobby') by an unknown artist, undoubtedly a favourite with children and dog-lovers alike.

The tour was a great delight to the SSAH members who attended, many of whom had voted for their favourite artwork from the City Art Centre's collections and were thrilled to see it on display in *You Choose*. It was fascinating to hear from Dr Helen Scott about her experiences of curating such an inventive and interactive exhibition, particularly the challenges of planning an exhibition featuring a final selection that was entirely decided by public vote! This exhibition comes highly recommended. *You Choose* is a free exhibition and runs until 24 May 2015 at the Edinburgh City Art Centre.

Review: SSAH study day - Scottish Art in the Great War (Black Watch Castle & Museum, Feb 2015)

By Rachael Grew, Glasgow School of Art

On a dreich day in February, 39 SSAH members packed out a room in The Black Watch Castle and Museum to engage with eight fascinating papers on the subject of Scottish art and artists during the First World War. The speakers offered a wide variety of different perspectives through their different interests and backgrounds. Dr Jo Meacock, Curator of British art at Glasgow Museums; Dr Sandy Brewer, Research Associate at Oxford Brookes University; Alice Strang, Senior Curator at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art; and independent researchers Dr Val Inglis and Helen Beale all focused on individual artists, known and unknown, to provide insight into the imagery, techniques, and context of artistic production in this period. Dr Patricia Andrews, an independent researcher; Matthew Jarron, Curator of the University of Dundee; and Emma Halford-Forbes, Museum Manager at The Black Watch Castle and Museum, focused on specific genres of art (portraiture and graphic artists respectively) and Dr Sandy Wood, Collection Curator at the Royal Scottish Academy, joined the First and Second World Wars together by exploring the links between Muirhead Bone and James Miller.

With such a broad assortment of topics on offer, we were able to explore a range of different forms of art, from painting and photography to graphic art and cartography. Moreover, though each paper had a highly individual focus, together they spoke to common themes that emerged throughout the day. Two of these themes were war-time spaces, through which we considered the effect of conflict on urban and rural landscapes, and also the theme of memory and memorialising. Indeed, many of the papers struck a poignant note as they invited us to consider the nature of war-time life, as well as those who did not live to see peace restored.

We would like to extend our thanks to all the speakers for their insightful papers, as well as to Matthew Jarron for heading the organisation of the

study day, and finally to Emma Halford-Forbes, who enabled us to use The Black Watch Castle and Museum as our venue, which was not only highly apt, but also very welcoming. Moreover, at the close of the event, Emma gave members the opportunity to visit the Joseph Gray exhibition, continuing the theme of Great War artists beyond the presentations. Finally, for those who could not make it to the study day, this year's journal will take the same theme of Scottish art during the Great War so there will be a further opportunity to discover the artists and issues raised by our speakers.



Hosts and speakers at the study day held in The Black Watch Castle and Museum, Perth

Feature article

James Nixon, miniaturist, in Edinburgh, 1794-1798: his works and clientele

By Stephen W. Massil, London

This article enhances the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography's entry for James Nixon A.R.A. (1741-1812), focusing particularly on his time in Edinburgh. The research draws upon a listing of Nixon's works exhibited at the Royal Academy in Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts, ...* (Volume 5, 1906), as well as various other sources mentioning early showings of a few of his miniatures. Daphne Foskett, amongst other writers

covering Nixon's career, has some useful impingements but the life has not been studied.

The ODNB entry for Nixon records that he 'spent much of his professional life in London, but was living in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1794 and early 1798, and in Edinburgh (1795–1797?), where he met Raeburn and painted a miniature of the count of Artois in 1797'. It is interesting to put together an account of Nixon's work and clientele in Edinburgh if only to see whether the works concerned make up any specific set so as to explain why Nixon's career took this turn. He was after all (born and baptised in Lincoln in July 1741) into his fifties by 1794.

Edinburgh Addresses

Details of Nixon's times in Newcastle are as yet not corroborated and no works can be dated to these. For his time in Edinburgh various addresses come to light.

First, from Graves' list of RA exhibitors:

From 1788 until 1793 Nixon's London address was: 49 Margaret Street, Cavendish Square (where the Soanes were residing at No. 43 down to 1792). The move to 'Edinburgh' is signalled from 1794 (with the miniatures exhibited):

1794: Edinburgh

[547]: A Portrait of a gentleman

And more specifically in 1795:

1795: 2 Princes Street

[566]: Portrait of a gentleman (Robert Brown, Esq.)

And no change for the entries for 1796-1798:

[130]: Portrait of a Lady of Quality (Lady Belhaven or Lady Balcarres)

[618]: Portrait of a Lady of Quality (Lady Elizabeth Lindsay = daughter of Lady Balcarres – at age fifteen)

1797:

[882]: Portrait of a gentleman

1798:

[540]: Schedoni from the Italian (by Mrs Radcliffe)

[570]: Ellena di Rosalba from the Italian (by Mrs Radcliffe): 'She raised her eyes with a rapt earnestness, fixed them on the heavens – she still held her lute, etc'

[869]: Miss Taylor

Daphne Foskett, in *Miniatures: dictionary and guide* (1987) gives a reference for Nixon in 1797 at 9 St Andrews Square. Another, perhaps short-stay address in connection with the specific business venture of 1797 under Messrs Fraser and Clark of 11 Princes Street, gives him as Mr Nixon [at] No. 18 George Street. The one surviving letter by Nixon of the period and dated [in Edinburgh] February 1795 does not carry an address.

The landscape artist, Joseph Farington R.A., was close to Nixon and he made fairly extensive references to Nixon and his wife in his diary, including providing indications of Nixon's whereabouts (see *The diary of Joseph Farington, 1 July 1793 – December 1821 ...*, and Evelyn Newby, *Diary of Joseph Farington Index*; Yale University Press). Short of a note of Nixon's departure for Edinburgh, which Farington might have been expected to note more precisely in winter 1793 when Nixon (30-31 December 1793) was absent from Royal Academy dinners - 'in the country', Farington does in effect give a *terminus ad quem* emphasizing his return to London before summer 1799:

July 23 1799:

I asked him [Nixon, A.R.A.] what he thought on the whole of the Scottish character. He said it is selfish. It is remarkable that a Scotsman seldom gives a direct answer. A wager was laid on this point. A person put a question to a Scotchman then in view to decide it. Is the Post come in, said the interrogator. Do you expect letters replied the Scotchman. – The Scotch are hospitable in the country being vain of it, - but you must not stay long.

Graves's entry for 1799 records Nixon back in London, at 66 Harley Street, Cavendish Square. Farington alludes to this in connection with Mrs Nixon's presence:

Farington again, 16 August 1799:

Mr and Mrs Nixon called in the evening – she is settled at Twickenham having the care of two daughters of Mr. Mackenzie who with his wife resides there [Grove House]. A sister of Mrs Mackenzie married a brother of Mrs Nixon.

(Mrs Mackenzie = Mary Read, of Jamaica. This is Farington's apparent error in that none of Mrs Nixon's brothers married a Miss Read).

One further moment in the Edinburgh spotlight is blurred by the process of publication of John Pinkerton's *The Scottish gallery: ...* (1799) where Pinkerton records a portrait of the Lord Ancram: '*... from a painting at Newbattle Abbey done when he was eighty years of age ... noting that " ... the drawings for this and the preceding engraving were taken by Mr. James Nixon, Royal Associate, now in Edinburgh and obligingly given to the author of this work by the Earl of Ancram"*', though Nixon had certainly gone south before the book came into print.

Works identified:

Graves's list makes a good start but other sources yield several more 'Edinburgh' portraits, in both exhibition and gallery references:

1780:

- Elizabeth Bradshaigh Dalrymple, Lady Balcarres and Crawford (1755-1816). Lady Balcarres married in 1780 but the portrait was only subsequently exhibited at the Academy in 1796 (see 1796 entry in this article) alongside the new portrait of Lady Balcarres' daughter Elizabeth Keith Lindsay (1781-1825). This is recorded at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in *Photographic Survey of Portrait Miniatures in a Private Collection* [in Scotland] 1995, p.8 (H.9056).

Undated:

- Maconochie children of Edinburgh, c. 1790 (National Portrait Gallery reference, not re-traced). Raeburn later painted one of the Maconochies of Meadowbank. Farington suggested that it was important for Nixon to have met Raeburn during his time in Edinburgh. He may have had the use of

Raeburn's studio at York Yard.

- Caroline Treby Ouvry (1761-1842), wife of Sir William Molesworth (see *Catalogue of works in the British Section Paris Universal Exhibition, 1867* [Mrs Ford]).

1794:

- Children of the MacLaine of Lochbuie: two, perhaps three miniatures. I date these to 1794 if only to spread the workload and to allow for a delay between the execution and the date of Nixon's receipt which fortuitously is to hand in a letter of 8 February 1795 from Nixon to Mrs MacLaine:

Madam

I have received from Cap. Macquarie fourteen guineas for the pictures / I had the honour of painting for you – the reason for / the largest picture being 8 guineas is owing to the / difference of size & is the regular price as the Juvalles will inform you

I am Madam

Your most obedt servt

James Nixon

(reproduced here from National Archives of Scotland: GD174/616, with acknowledgements to the MacLaine of Lochbuie)

Murdoch MacLaine (1730-1804) married Jane Campbell, daughter of Sir John Campbell of Airds, in 1786. The MacLaine of Lochbuie mention that Jane had eleven children, with seven born before 1794: Jane (1787), Flora (1788), Margaret (1789), Phoebe (1790), Murdoch (1791-1844), John (1792-1817) and Elizabeth (1793). Any of these presumably were candidates for Nixon's miniatures in 1794-5. Captain Charles Macquarie (1771-1835) was brother of Lachlan Macquarie (1762-1824), governor of NSW from 1810. Regrettably, the MacLaine of Lochbuie cannot trace through the family where the portraits might now reside. The name 'Juvalles' is tantalizing and cannot be traced but might be an Englishman's take on 'Duval' or other form – equally untraced as yet. Nixon's reference to the 'Juvalles' suggests another family for whom he had worked in 1794 on his first arrival in Edinburgh.



James Nixon, *Robert Brown* miniature, 1795
 Courtesy of Claudia Hill@ Ellison Fine art,
 Portrait miniature specialist, Buckinghamshire

- William Moultrie, junior (1752-1796), of South Carolina. Listed in the Frick 'FRESCO' inventory when traced to Major Brailsford, Camden, South Carolina, in 1936 – *Exhibition of Miniatures ...* (Carolina Art Association, 1936). Relocated by me to be still in his family by descent, in Camden, 2014.



James Nixon, *Portrait of Two Sisters*, c.1795
 The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
 The Rienzi Collection, bequest of Caroline A. Ross

1795:
 - Portrait of a gentleman (Robert Brown, Esq.): 'a Scotch advocate, when a boy' (also in the Paris catalogue of 1867, loaned by the Misses Robertson Macdonald). The Edinburgh directories of the period record an advocate, Robert Brown at No. 6 Princes Street in 1797, perhaps the boy's father.
 - John McMurdo (1743-1803) at Dumfries (1780-1797), Chamberlain to the Duke of Queensberry, Esquire of Hardriggs. The 1795 dating is from Bonhams.
 - Two sisters, c. 1795; initials on the reverse: "J.S.W." and "P.W."; sitters unidentified. The miniature belongs to The Rienzi Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (2005.1611). Information gained through communication with curator Christine Gervais.

1796:
 - Lady Balcarres' daughter, the Fife-born Elizabeth Keith Lindsay (1781-1825). Elizabeth married R. E. Heathcote of Stafford in December 1815, with issue. Lady Balcarres' address was No. 51 George Street, Fourth side.

1797:
 - Count of Artois. Farington, *Diary*, Vol. IV, 23 July 1799: 'Nixon shewd me a miniature of the Count Artois, painting in 1797 in Edinburgh'. The *Caledonian Mercury* (January 7, 1796) mentions that the Comte d'Artois landed at Leith, frigate

Jason, C. Stirling, Commander, on 7 January 1796, and resided at Holyrood (that is a form of house-arrest). The portrait is referred again in the *Mercury*, May 30, 1799.

The *Caledonian Mercury* also supplies further information about James Nixon's publishing venture with Messrs Fraser and Clark of Princes Street:

July 20 1797:

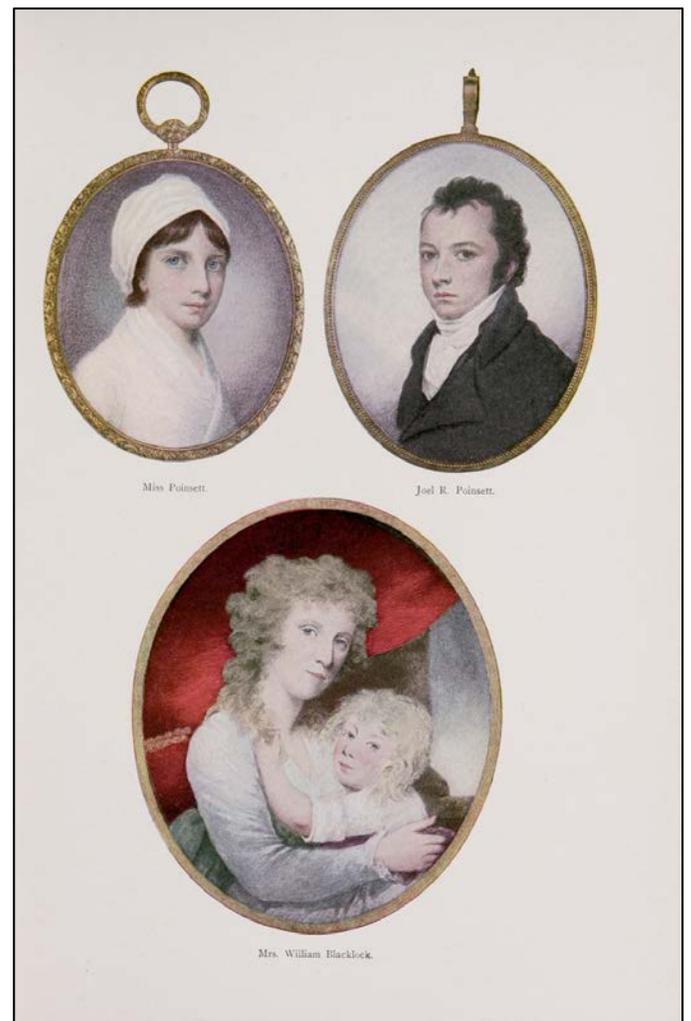
Fraser and Clark being allowed to publish copies of the admirable pictures painted by Mr. Nixon principal painter to her R.H. Duchess of York and A.R.A. of two interesting characters in Mrs Radcliff's celebrated romance of the Italian, they propose to have them engraved in mezzotinto by the first artists in London. The size 15 inches by 12. Price to subscribers one guinea the pair. Proofs of which no more than 50 will be taken 2 guineas, one half to be paid at subscribing, and the other at delivery. Strict attention will be aid to deliver the impressions in the order they are subscribed for. As Mr Nixon is to chuse the artists he thinks most competent to execute their prints, and will be on the spot immediately to superintend the execution, it is hoped that uncommon justice will be done in the engraving. The paintings to be seen (for a few days only) at Mr Nixon's No. 18, George Street, every day from two till four o'clock. Subscriptions are received and receipts granted, by Fraser and Clark, the publisher, No. 11 Prince's Street

These therefore are the two pictures exhibited, as above, at the Academy in 1798 – from Mrs Radcliffe.

And finally, 1797 or 1798:

- Mrs Thomson (two miniatures in fact as the following account reveals). This concerns the portrait of *Mrs William Blacklock & Son* at the R.W. Norton Art Gallery, Shreveport, LA, formerly attributed to Edward Malbone (1778-1807 with work created in Charleston, 1806), but re-attributed to James Nixon in 1958 with the suggestion that it was executed in 1790. The late R.P. Talmon of the Metropolitan made the re-

attribution. Curators at the Norton Gallery have not yet undertaken the necessary re-identification of the sitter – since neither Mrs Blacklock (and there were two of them) went to Britain, nor did Nixon visit America. The sitter is Rebecca Freer Thomson (1766-1826) of Charleston, South Carolina, wife of John Deas Thomson (1763-1838) of the Navy Office at Leith, later at Somerset House and eventually knighted. Thomson had himself painted in oils by Raeburn in 1795 (a copy is reproduced in the biography of his son by Stephen G. Foster).



James Nixon, *Mrs Blacklock & Son* ('Mrs Thomson & Son'), 1797/98
Image shown in R.T.H. Halsey, 'Malbone and his miniatures' in *Scribner's Magazine*, May 1910
Image source: the Modernist Journals Project

John Deas Thomson made his marriage as a

planter in Charleston in 1787. He brought Rebecca to Edinburgh in 1791 and they had a family. The family correspondence with Rebecca's mother Susan Boone Freer (1737-1817) and her sisters Susan Boone Robertson (1770-1845) and Mary Freer Blacklock (1774-1811 - the second 'Mrs William Blacklock') make a part of an extensive collection at the Mitchell Library in Sydney: the *Deas Thomson Papers*, details of which were published in the *South Carolina historical magazine*, Vol. 71, in 1970. The papers have not been much discussed except by Foster in *Colonial improver: Edward Deas Thomson, 1800-1879* (Melbourne University Press, 1978).

The correspondence includes the following sequence and shows that there was the *idea* of a portrait-commission at more or less the same date in 1795 in Edinburgh and in Charleston:

Charleston, October 6 1795, Susan Freer to Rebecca:

... Remember me affectionately to Mr Thomson and tell him I have two requests to make him, particularly to write to me often, and to send me a drawing of himself, your self and your two children. ... - I was just finishing my letter when I received yours dated in June [1795], which gave me much happiness as you may well suppose, and am extremely obliged to Mr Thomson in anticipation of my wish, of a likeness of you all, and tho I am aware of the expences, yet it will be such a gratification to me, that I must still request he will add his own likeness and the little boys. - I have never received the letter you mentioned, dated in May, or Mr Thomson's by the Mary, ...

Any letter from Rebecca to say that the portrait was to be done does not actually survive, but Charleston from then had knowledge of the portrait going forward - and they became desperate to receive it:

Charleston, June 5 1796, Mary Freer to Rebecca:

... Mamma says she almost despairs of getting your picture; she begs you will write often

Charleston, November 8 1797, Mary Freer to Rebecca:

... Mamma repeats her request to have your picture Eventually, Charleston, April 18 1799, Susan Boone Robertson to John Deas Thomson:

*... I have never seen Doctor R. Haig but once since he arrived here **but I am most cruelly disappointed in the miniatures he brought of my sister for I cannot allow either to be any likeness to her. But for the ring by Captain McNeyle I return you my best respects as you are well acquainted with my regard to any remembrance from you. ...***

The hapless Dr Haig! - a promising young man of just about twenty, he suffers the contumely that all messengers bringing unwanted messages suffer. It needs a brief note here to help explain the timing. The American Robert McKewn Haig (1778-1818) was an Edinburgh graduate [Caroliniensis Australis], whose dissertation, *De rheumatismo acuto ...*, was published on his graduation in September 1798, so he would not have sailed for Charleston until (just) after that date. Susan Freer writing a couple of days earlier to Rebecca covers the same ground - and Dr Haig gets better shrift:

Charleston, April 16 1799, Mrs Freer to Rebecca:

... I delayed replying to your letter my dear child untill I could have the pleasure of seeing Doctor Haig ...The very flattering account both Captain McNeil and Dr Haig give me of your situation is the greatest consolation imaginable to me. As our separation seems one of the unavoidable dispensations of Providence ...

... you have been ill. Your pictures I am sorry are so little like you but to me they are invaluable. Your sisters were all so anxious for the other that I did not know which to give it to so I thought it best to keep both myself - should you meet with a chance of getting a better likeness taken, Mary begs you to have it fashionably set for her and she will remit to Mr Thomson for his expenses ... the loss you have met with ... [i.e. death of son of 1797]

Nixon is of course not named, nor the quality of his art discussed, he failed in the likeness! But there is a second portrait too! And the patchwork of the correspondence as a whole is further shown

by the fact that Mrs Freer and Susan Robertson is each replying to a letter accompanying the miniatures, the one from Rebecca; the other from her husband John Deas Thomson. Neither of these originals has survived, and the exact date of Dr Haig's sailing is not known, nor of course when the portraits were done (between 1795 and 1798) or when the Thomsons decided to send them ... One might surmise that the works were sent fairly soon after their completion so perhaps 1797 or 1798 will suit the timescale for Nixon's work. The Thomsons, by the by, resided in the late 1790s at 34 Princes Street though Thomson's office was at Leith. Some of the *Papers* give St. Andrews Square as their postal address. Despite the long gestation, as it appears, of the portraits of Rebecca Thomson, they might have been the latest works that Nixon completed in the city, along with the portrait of 'Miss Taylor' as recorded by Graves.

Nixon's relations:

The ODNB entry, as well as several other entries about Nixon, needs some revision in that they draw upon a mistake in the *indexing* of Joseph Farington's *Diary* that erroneously links James Nixon with the Revd. Robert Nixon (1759-1837) and thereby with his artist brother John Colley Nixon (1755-1818). James' parents were, in fact, William Nixon and Elizabeth Smalley of Lincoln, who married in 1736 and had a large family: James and a string of daughters. Nixon exhibited a miniature of his niece 'Miss Colleton' - Susanna Boone Colleton (1787-1816), daughter of Nixon's sister Susanna and Sir James-Nassau Colleton, at the Royal Academy in 1793.

Nixon's wife, Frances Elizabeth Carrington (1752-1823), was the daughter of Sarah Welch and Revd. James Carrington of Upton Helions and Chancellor of the Diocese of Exeter. Nixon exhibited a portrait of James Carrington in 1784, and Graves' list also shows that Nixon portrayed Sarah. Both these figure *inter alia* in Mrs Nixon's Will of 1823 [PROB 11/1675/227].

1799:

Back in London, Graves records two works

exhibited at the Academy. A work which was not so exhibited was a copy of a portrait of the Revd. James Stanier Clarke (1766-1834) done by artist John Russell (1745-1806) in 1796 and *copied* as a miniature by Nixon in 1799, published only recently by Chris Viveash in his *James Stanier Clarke, librarian to the Prince Regent, naval author, friend of Jane Austen*, privately printed, 2006.

Conclusions

As yet I have nothing to go on to make connections amongst the various families for whom Nixon undertook commissions. It is curious that John Deas Thomson having a wife from Charleston should appear on the same list as William Moultrie, son of a famous Carolina 'Patriot', but Thomson's reliance on an American student (*Caroliniensis Australis*) to take home the miniatures for his wife's family to see is straightforward enough. Moultrie for his part, son of a famous patriot or not, had kinsmen who had also studied medicine in Edinburgh and his grandfather had come originally from Fife. But Thomson's Deas connections in South Carolina and the fact that he had brought back a wife from those parts must refract the opportunities suggested by my notes.

What I have not investigated as yet are some other of the North American locations of Nixon's works. The Frick 'FRESCO' inventory mentioned earlier includes Mazyck and Manigault family portraits – not necessarily indicative of his time in Edinburgh, works done in London at earlier dates – but of people of 'South Carolina' connections.

Certainly Nixon's time in Edinburgh was fruitful even if sales of the Radcliffe mezzotints seem not to have materialized. He made some mark (witness the late reference in John Pinkerton's book), enjoyed a varied clientele, and met Raeburn.

Another paper by Stephen Massil, entitled *Mrs William Blacklock & Son: a re-identification of the sitter* (*Scottish genealogist*, Sept 2014) discusses the transmission of the portrait down to 1900 and its disposal at around that time.

Exhibitions

Duncan Shanks Sketchbooks: 'The Poetry of Place'

Hunterian Art Gallery, University of Glasgow
14 March – 16 August 2015, admission free

An exhibition at The Hunterian offers rare insight into the creative process of Scottish artist Duncan Shanks, highlighting his rich body of work. *Duncan Shanks Sketchbooks: 'The Poetry of Place'* follows Shanks' major gift to The Hunterian of his entire output of sketchbooks from the past 55 years. The resulting research project, led by The Hunterian, is the first major assessment of Shanks' career exploring the artist's use of sketchbooks over five decades.

A true landscape artist, Shanks presents us not with the familiar and predictable face of Nature but enables us to crouch low or soar high, to see it as we have never seen it before. His 106 sketchbooks, covering five decades and gifted to The Hunterian in 2013, have been the anchors of his life as an artist. An important addition to The Hunterian collections, this generous gift is celebrated in a focus exhibition that reveals the artist's creative working process and provides insights into his changing interpretations of the landscape he has known and loved all his life.

The research project began in 2008 and it was carried out over several visits to the artist between 2008 and 2014. It was followed by an intensive six month period of cataloguing assisted by University of Glasgow postgraduate students.

Duncan Shanks Sketchbooks presents over 30 sketchbooks from The Hunterian collection, never exhibited before, alongside works that illustrate how the artist used sketchbooks for different purposes. In addition, three paintings - *Fragments of Memory*, early 1990s, *Shower from Tinto*, c.1980-2010 and *Night Garden*, 1995-2007 - generously gifted by the artist to complement the sketchbook collection, demonstrate the central role sketchbooks started to play in his work from the 1980s.



Duncan Shanks, *Night Garden*, 1995-2007
© The Hunterian, University of Glasgow 2015



Shanks, *Composition study for Night Garden*, 1997-98
© The Hunterian, University of Glasgow 2015

Based on the work of the research project, the exhibition opens up this unique body of work to display the artist's ability to astonish with colour and form. An invitation to share his feeling of being part of Nature, it offers a glimpse into the complex nature of his sketchbooks and the wide variety of drawings they contain, from simple recordings of his surroundings to exploratory studies investigating complex subjects or more finished drawings.

A comprehensive online catalogue of Shanks's 106 sketchbooks is now available at <http://130.209.15.4/old/new/#details=enarratives.121>. The richly illustrated site includes over 6500 sketchbook pages, the artist's own photographs capturing some of his favourite locations, and two hand-drawn maps helping to place these locations.

An additional painting, *The Dance of Time*, 2010-2013, is also on display for the first time. Located in the Art Gallery's Scottish art displays, this recent gift from Duncan Shanks highlights a previously unrepresented aspect of his work in the form of a table top still life.

Duncan Shanks Sketchbooks is accompanied by a special events programme including talks, tours, poetry reading, and music. Further information can be found on our website: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/hunterian/visit/exhibitions/focus/duncanshankssketchbooks/>.
Opening hours: Tuesday - Saturday from 10.00am until 5.00pm, Sunday from 11.00am until 4.00pm.

Recording Britain: Life and Landscape during World War II

MUSA, Museum of the University of St Andrews
9 May to 6 December 2015, free admission
By Claire Robinson, Collections and Exhibitions Curator, Museum Collections Unit, University of St Andrews

Opening to coincide with the weekend of national celebrations marking the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, the fine art exhibition *Recording Britain: Life and Landscape during World War II* was unveiled to the public on 9 May 2015 at MUSA. The exhibition features a selection of paintings and drawings from the Recording Britain Collection held by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and also works from its sister collection, Recording Scotland, cared for by the University of St Andrews.

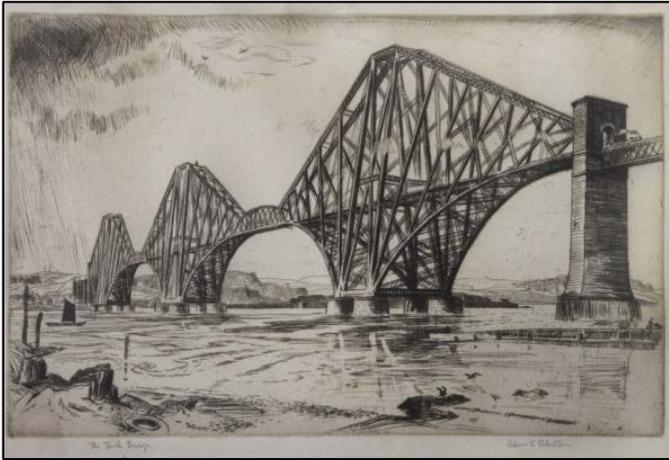
The exhibition explores the Recording Britain Scheme, which was an ambitious artistic documentary project established on the outbreak of the Second World War. Initiated by Sir Kenneth Clark, Director of the National Gallery, and funded

by the Pilgrim Trust, the scheme aimed to provide employment for impoverished artists during the war. It was also founded amid fears about the immediate threat posed to the country's landscapes and buildings by the potentially devastating impact of aerial bombardment and invasion. Over time, the scheme was expanded to reflect wider concerns about the impact of the destructive forces of 'progress' – urban expansion, housing developments, motor transport and so on – on the landscape, buildings and traditional crafts and ways of life. The result of this project was a significant collection of 1549 watercolours and drawings produced by 97 artists. These vivid images provide a fascinating visual insight into British lives and landscapes at a time of imminent change. The exhibition will showcase works from the Recording Britain Collection by artists including Barbara Jones, John Piper, Louisa Puller, Michael Rothenstein, Kenneth Rowntree and Ruskin Spear.

Launched in 1942 in parallel to the Recording Britain scheme, Recording Scotland was guided by the similar aim to 'secure a record of historic scenes, site and buildings (in Scotland) which may be endangered through enemy action or by utilitarian encroachment.' Chaired by Sir James Irvine, Principal of the University of St Andrews, the Recording Scotland Committee assembled a diverse collection of watercolours, oils, prints and drawings by artists such as Samuel Peploe, David Foggie, Robert Currie Robertson, May Marshall Brown and Albert Gordon Thomas. The scenes depicted range from castles, churches and the Clyde docks to village streets, fishing ports and cityscapes of Edinburgh and Glasgow. By the end of the project, the collection contained 145 artworks by 47 artists.

The exhibition also shows examples of the visual and printed propaganda that was distributed around the country to boost public morale during this period of national crisis. This includes reproductions of Second World War propaganda posters, such as the evocatively titled 'Dig for Victory' and 'Your Britain Fight for it Now' posters, and video footage of public information broadcasts. These displays provide an important contextual backdrop to discussion about the

creation and development of the Recording Britain and Recording Scotland Collections.



Robert Currie Robertson, *The Forth Bridge*, etching
© University of St Andrews

Recording Britain: Life and Landscape during World War II provides visitors with an exciting opportunity to see works from both the Recording Britain and Recording Scotland Collections, which are publicly displayed together for the first time.

To accompany the Recording Britain exhibition at MUSA, a separate exhibition focusing on the Recording Scotland exhibition will take place at the Gateway Galleries, St Andrews, from September to December 2015. This exhibition will include works by Stewart Carmichael, Charles Oppenheimer, Alan Ian Ronald, John Guthrie Spence Smith, Margaret Wright and Aleksander Zyw. A Curator's Tour of the exhibitions will be hosted for SSAH Members later this year.

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