



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
Information Services Group

CRC

Centre for Research Collections

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH COLLECTIONS

# Annual Acquisitions Highlights

2021

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# Preface

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“All libraries and museums are microcosms of the communities they serve. The University Library is no exception. However a university of Edinburgh’s size and age has incredibly rich and diverse communities that do not always find themselves reflected on our shelves and in our galleries. This year’s heritage acquisitions retrospective highlights a conscious effort to address these gaps and the ongoing work to expand and deepen our collections in several areas: from contemporary arts to historic documents and instruments, with special attention given to the scope of creators, languages, and cultures that we are actively adding to the University’s collections and history.”

**Jeremy Upton**

Director, Library & University Collections

“The collections that libraries, archives and museums preserve, interpret, and develop provide the raw materials for humanities research; they contain rich historical and modern data, they force us to consider our past, present, and future, and they inspire students and researchers to consider new lines of thought and discourse. The continual and conscious growth of our heritage collections, then, is an investment by the University in current and future humanities research. By preserving, curating, and expanding our collections we can help ensure our academics and the wider communities we serve have access to a rich and diverse range of materials to support research and innovation.”

**Prof Christina Boswell**

Dean of Research, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences;  
incoming Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise (August 2022)

# Introduction

What does it mean to be a member of the University of Edinburgh? How can our students, our academics, and our staff find themselves reflected in the University's rich heritage?

Over the past two years, the meaning of place and belonging has come acutely into focus for University life. While we were all locked down and learning or working from home, what did it really mean to be a part of the University of Edinburgh? The University's heritage, in the form of people, of ideas, and of buildings, all helps create a centre of gravity for the modern-day University. The experiences that we are all having now, the way we are teaching, learning and researching, are part of the University's long history stretching back to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and far into the future. The University's heritage collections are witness to all aspects of University life and provide the raw elements that feed the research and teaching of all disciplines in Edinburgh and further afield.

It is our duty, then, at the Centre for Research Collections (CRC) to ensure that our collections continue to reflect the research needs, the lived experience, and the academic and creative outputs of the University. We do this through actively building our collections, engaging diverse audiences with the narratives found within, and by ensuring that our collections are broad and representative of our contemporary community. To this end, in 2021 the CRC began to focus its purchasing efforts to ensure we are investing in areas where our collections have been traditionally weak; over the next three years we will be investing in under-represented creators (defined by race, gender, or socio-economic background) and under-developed collections (e.g. musical instruments, artists' books), whilst also ensuring that we are nimble enough to add key items to existing collections.

As soon as collection items have been acquired, they can be found in the classroom, exhibition galleries, and in the reading room; they are actively used as soon as they have made it into the catalogue and through the conservation studio. Some of 2021's key acquisitions have come from University partner exhibitions, from the Edinburgh College of Art degree shows, and in partnership with the Friends of Edinburgh University Library.

In the following highlights you will see items that have been acquired in 2021 through purchase, commission, gift, and bequest. Our collecting efforts are supported by the University's capital investment programme, by external foundations and individual philanthropy, by alumni and donors, and in partnerships with the University's Schools and Colleges.

**Daryl Green FSA FSAScot**

Head of Special Collections, Deputy Head of the Centre for Research Collections

**Jacky MacBeath**

Head of Museums, Head of the Centre for Research Collections



For further information on how to access these and other collections, please visit:  
[www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/cultural-heritage-collections/crc](http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/cultural-heritage-collections/crc)  
or email: [is-crc@ed.ac.uk](mailto:is-crc@ed.ac.uk)

# “From joy to dread, the silent life”

Diane de Bournazel, Collection of Artist's Books, 2016-2019; Coll-2046

Artists' books have traditionally not been part of CRC's collecting portfolio, as the University's collection is held at Edinburgh College of Art, where it is extensively used for teaching. This year we have formed a new partnership with our colleagues at ECA, with the intention of providing support for the ECA collection, allowing the University to acquire and safely store at CRC higher-value examples of book art, yet make them all available for teaching and research. We hope that the arrangement will encourage readers to explore the wider collections across both sites. As part of this process, the CRC has become the first UK institutional collector of the work of the French book artist Diane de Bournazel.

Diane de Bournazel creates unique books, filled with intricate densely-packed detail, which draw the eye and the mind into a dream-like world, in which she explores themes that include the natural world, childhood, and human relationships. She describes her works as

*“Je fais des livres d'images*

*De la joie à l'effroi*

*La vie silencieuse”*

(“I make books of pictures, from joy to dread, the silent life”)

Each work expresses a sweep of emotions while being imbued with a sense of the inner life. Bournazel uses drawing, painting, paper cutting, and collage. Her imagery is her own, but echoes many traditions – from medieval manuscript to modernism, with traditional engraving, etched illustration, and folk art too, making her works a perfect counterpoint to much in the University's existing collections.



# A History of the Prison by a Prisoner

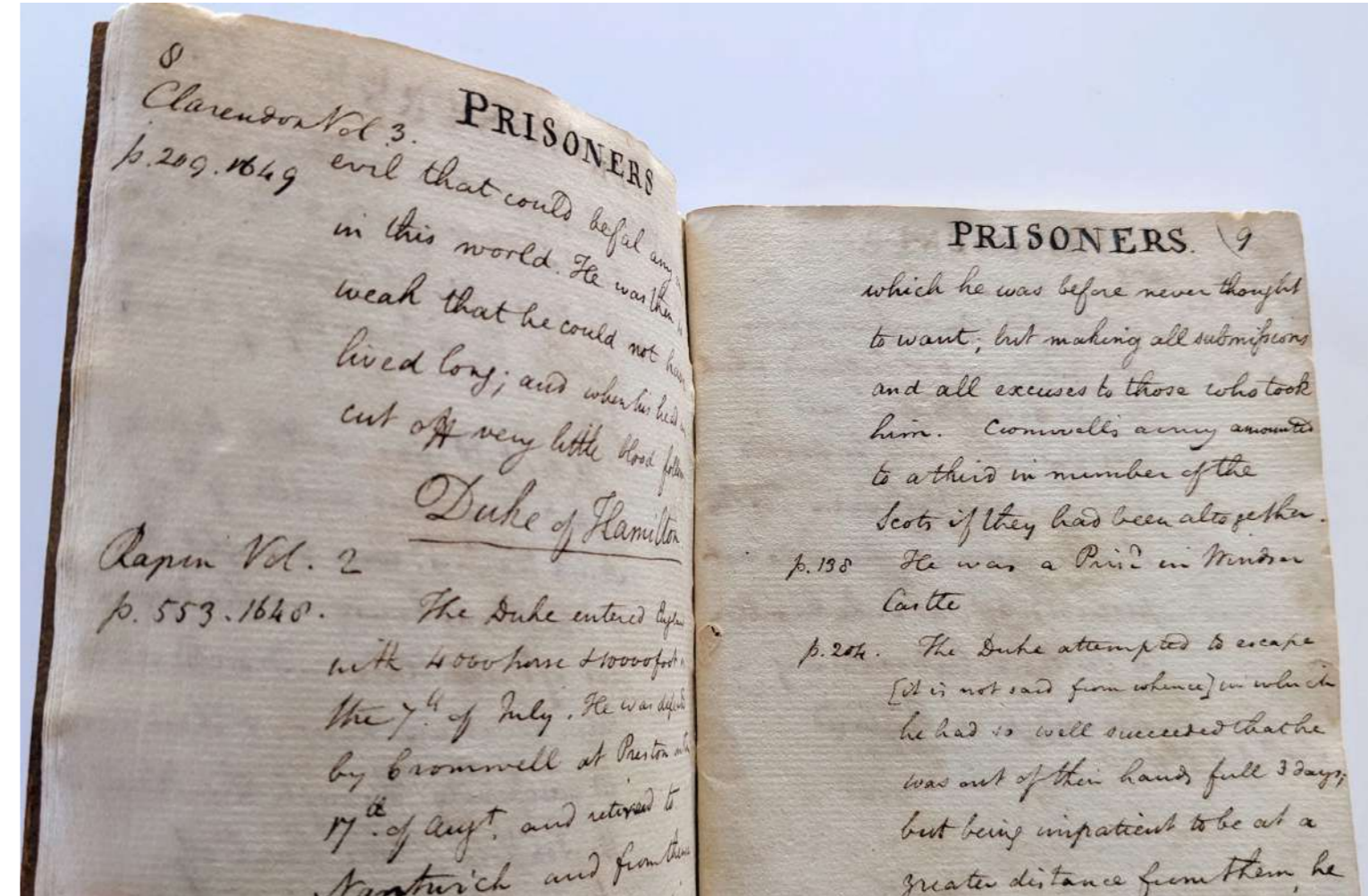
John Augustus Bonney, *Manuscript history of the Tower of London*, ca. 1794; Coll-307

The lawyer and activist John Augustus Bonney (1763-1813) came to prominence defending fellow radicals like Thomas Paine and Daniel Isaac Eaton in the feverish political atmosphere of the 1790s. As part of a post-French Revolution government crackdown, he was himself arrested on suspicion of treason in 1794 and imprisoned in the Tower of London. Eventually, after six months without trial, he was released without charge. The taint of imprisonment and accusations of 'Jacobinism' dogged him, however, for the rest of his career.

While incarcerated, Bonney began work on an unpublished history of the Tower of London containing biographies of the most significant political prisoners who had been held there. Edinburgh University Library bought what was thought to be the full manuscript of Bonney's history in 1964 (Coll-307). This new purchase, however, contains a final, sixth volume covering prisoners held in the Tower during the Civil Wars of the 1640s.

*"Experience of imprisonment and engagement with the past to recount long-range histories of the struggle for liberty were two key features of the popular radicalism of the 'age of revolutions,'" writes Gordon Pentland, Professor of Political History at the University of Edinburgh and author of 'Political Trials in an Age of Revolutions' (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), "Both of these themes have inspired original research by historians and so the completion of this manuscript history of the Tower of London's political prisoners - written by an activist lawyer, well-connected member of London's radical societies, and himself a victim of 'Pitt's Terror' - is a genuinely significant acquisition for the University's collections."*

There is also a name index covering all the prisoners discussed in the six volumes of the history, together with a letter dated 29 November 1825, giving an account of Bonney's life. The now-complete manuscript is at once the product of a period of revolutionary fervour and a highly politicised survey of Britain's radical past.



# Elevating Wise Women

Tessa Lynch, *Wise Women*, seven lino prints, 2021; EU5841-7

Tessa Lynch works across a range of media and forms, and the artist's *Wise Women* series of prints was a response to thinking about the depiction of women, and draws particularly from two literary sources: the 1405 novel 'The Book of the City of Ladies' by French author Christine de Pisan (1364-c.1430) and scholar and activist Silvia Federici's (b.1942) work on witches.

Lynch started working on the series around Halloween 2020, and was giving thought to how to turn the (negative) image of the Witch into that of a Wise Woman. Across the seven coloured prints are depictions of many roles and responsibilities of women that span domestic and professional spaces, private and personal lives, acted out both consciously and unconsciously – the overarching statement being that women are wise.

Although the figures and scenarios depicted across the series are mostly constructed from the artist's imagination, Lynch drew influence from medieval illuminations; and in particular the 'flatness' of how imagery was presented, as well as the heavy symbolism given by the objects depicted. Without access to the usual production facilities (due to lockdown), the works were made in the artist's home; at a kitchen table fashioned into a studio, with paper from her daughter's room, and clamp presses and prints pegged up to dry on a washing line in between laundry cycles.

In 2020 Lynch was the John Florent Stone printmaking resident between Edinburgh College of Art and Edinburgh Printmakers. Although the residency was paused as a result of the pandemic, this series of prints was an indirect outcome and was funded by both bodies.



# On the Streets of Edinburgh

**Robert Blomfield**, Scottish photographic archive, 1957-1969; Coll-1960

In 1956, a young man from Leeds moved to Edinburgh to study medicine – he also arrived with a passion for photography which was matched by the city’s beauty. Robert Blomfield (1938-2020) arrived in the city as an enthusiastic amateur who was never without a camera around his neck and, over the next decade, honed his skills as a prolific street photographer.

Blomfield’s camera stayed with him almost everywhere he went – on the streets, into homes, when he was working as a junior doctor at the Royal Infirmary and on his trips into the Scottish countryside. He also developed and printed his own work in a makeshift darkroom set up in his various student flats. He continued to document life around him as he moved to London to pursue his career, and his archive includes unique insights into London, Sheffield, Glasgow, and beyond. Through his lens we see the last breaths of the Old Town before modernisation took hold, we see the new Road Bridge reaching across the Forth, we meet his fellow students and medics, children on the street, shopkeepers, public speakers, and feel the vibrancy of a city on the brink of change.

Despite the quality of Blomfield’s work and his never-ending passion, he remained relatively unknown throughout most of his active career. His wife Jane, also an alumna of the University, started the process of organising and digitising her husband’s work before their three sons took up the reins after her death in 2011. A blockbuster exhibition at Edinburgh’s City Art Centre in 2018 introduced his work to a new audience.

In late 2021, the Blomfield family deposited all of Robert’s Scottish work, including his original enlargements, colour slides and transparencies, and boxes of negatives with the CRC. Blomfield truly is Edinburgh’s quiet answer to Glasgow’s Oscar Marzaroli, to Paris’s Brassai, and the archive that the family has entrusted to the University provides a rich and complex record of how he developed his eye and his skills in the darkroom. The CRC will be sharing Blomfield’s work again with the city in May of 2022 when it opens its summer exhibition, *Robert Blomfield: Student of Light*.



Photograph © Estate of Robert Blomfield, 1961

# Franco-Scottish Scientific Relations in the Enlightenment

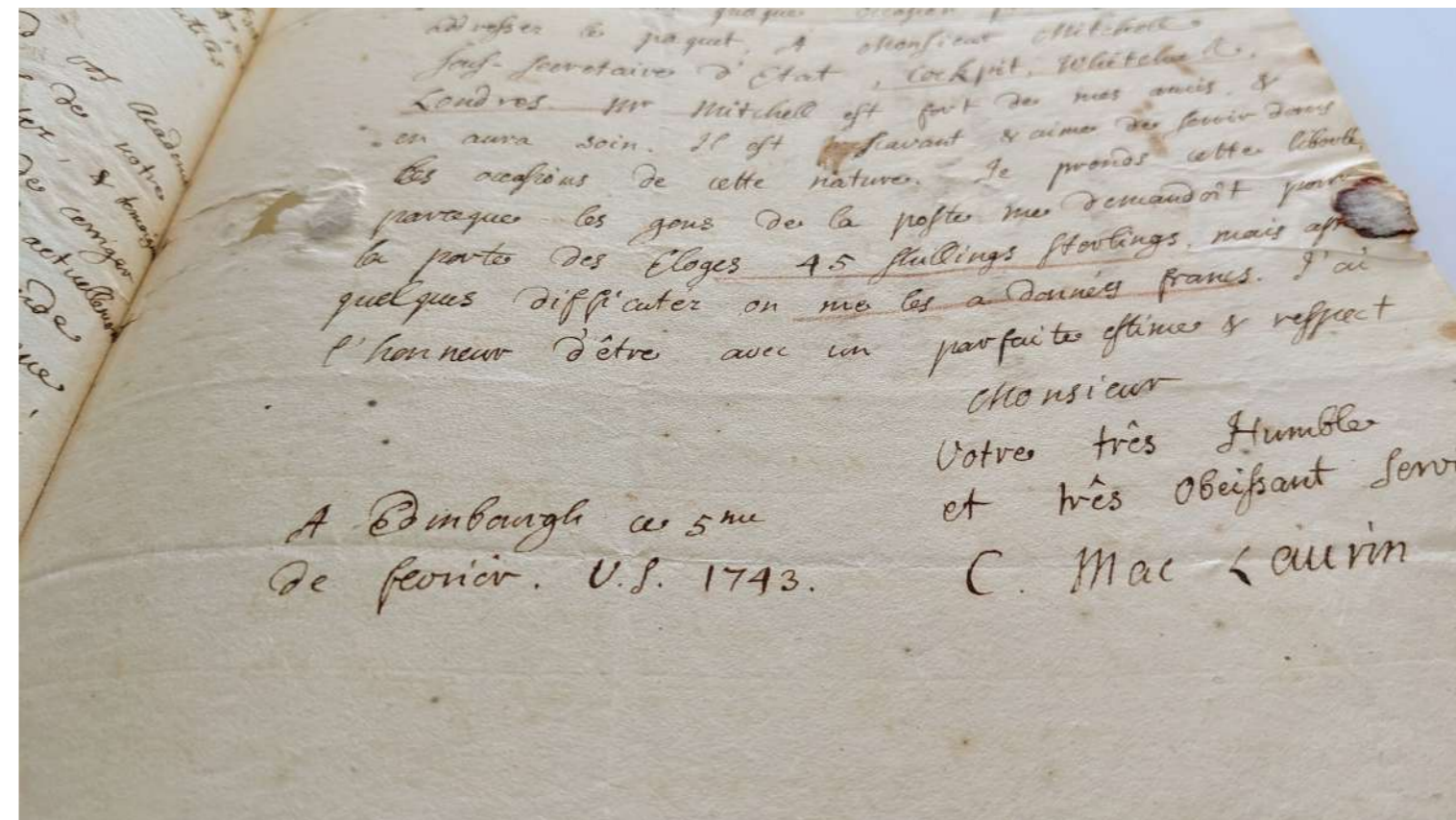
Autograph letter signed from **Colin Maclaurin to Jean-Jacques d'Ortous de Mairan**,  
5 February 1743; Coll-1848

Professor of Mathematics at the University of Edinburgh from 1725 to 1746, Colin Maclaurin was Scotland's most important mathematician of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He made major contributions to geometry and algebra and significantly raised the University's international academic status.

In this letter, Maclaurin writes (in French) to Jean-Jacques d'Ortous de Mairan, Perpetual Secretary of the Académie des Sciences in Paris. He first discusses his key work, the *Treatise of Fluxions* (1742), a rigorous and systematic defence of Newtonian calculus. Maclaurin acknowledges that foreign readers might be surprised by his methodology but explains that he wished to meet potential scientific and philosophical objections from prominent British anti-Newtonians like Bishop Berkeley. Maclaurin goes on to enquire about a French geodetic expedition to Peru to establish whether the earth's circumference was greater around the equator or around the poles. Finally, he reports on attempts to correct the geography of the North of Scotland and promises to send Mairan a newly engraved map of the country. Maclaurin believed that it was crucial to map the Scottish coastline accurately in view of a possible French-backed Jacobite invasion. Two years later, in 1745, Prince Charles Edward Stewart ('Bonnie Prince Charlie') landed with his followers in the Highlands. Maclaurin was put in charge of fortifying the city of Edinburgh against the approaching Jacobite army. He died a few months later of an illness provoked by his exertions.

*"This rare letter encapsulates, for students and researchers, characteristics of Scottish science in the 1700s,"* writes Dr Isobel Falconer, Reader in the School of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of St Andrews, *"and it evidences the culture of exchange of gifts and results with Continental Europe, with the attendant practical difficulties, and portrays the dual roles of University Professors such as Maclaurin in academic questions – the shape of the Earth – and civic responsibility – mapping to improve oversight of the Highlands in the run up to the 1745 Jacobite rebellion."*

This letter is a vital record of Franco-Scottish scientific relations in the early decades of the Enlightenment. Autograph material by Maclaurin is of the greatest rarity on the market: this appears to be the first example to emerge in forty years. The CRC holds further correspondence from Maclaurin, student notes of his lectures, and a copy of his degree thesis written at the age of 16 (Coll-425, Coll-1812, Coll-38).





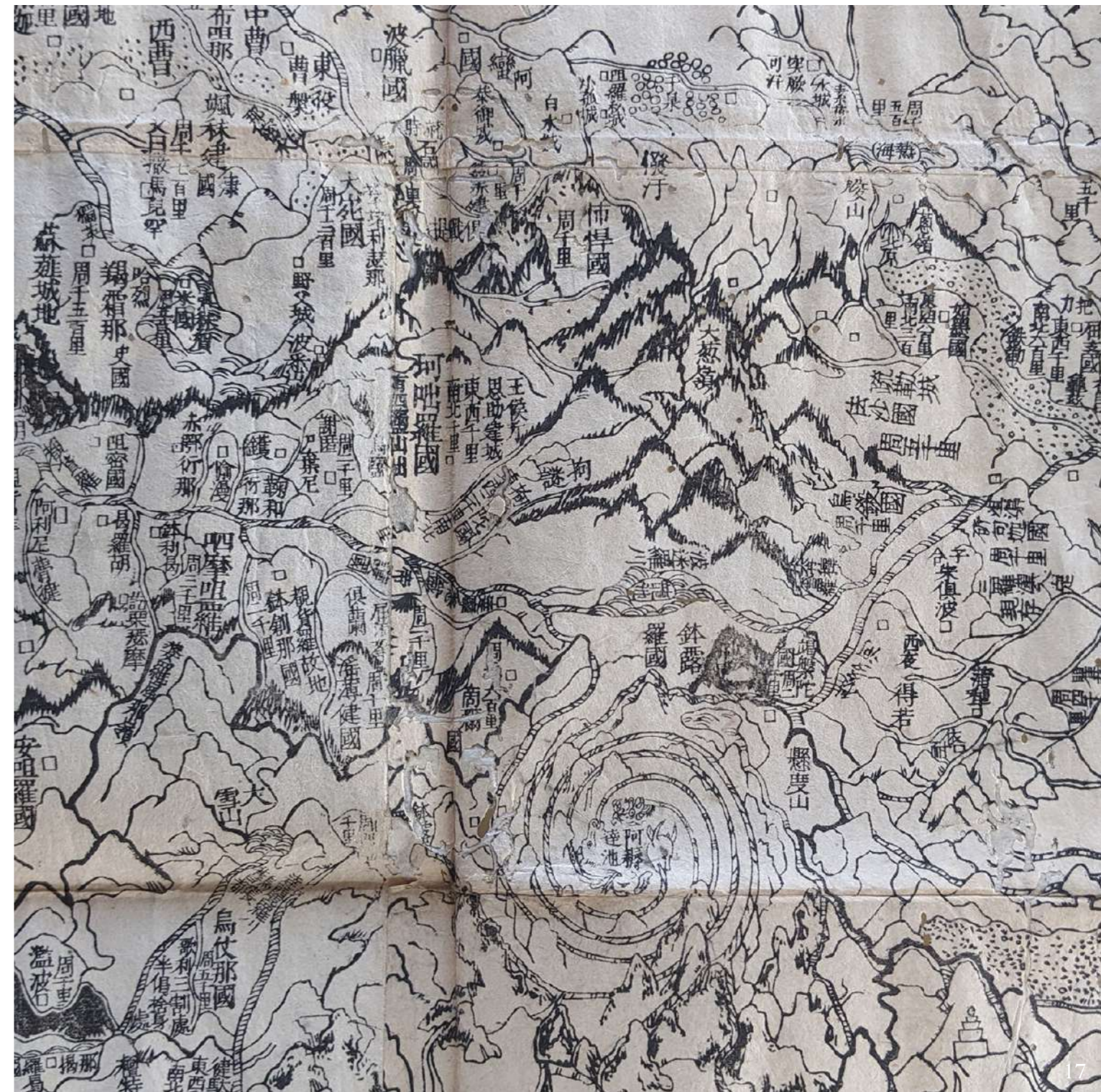
# Buddhist Conceptual Map of the World

Zuda Rokashi, *Nansenbushuu Bankoku Shoka No Zu*, 1710; Map.S.68

This is the first Japanese map of the world to include Europe and America, from a Buddhist cosmological perspective. It shows a mixture of geographical and mythological information: centred on India, the world is shown as a single landmass, with a few outlying islands. India and China are recognisable, with many place names, and the Himalayas identifiable in the centre. Mythologically, at the very centre of the map is a spiral showing the meeting of the four sacred rivers: the Indus, the Ganges, the Bramaputra, and the Sutlej – the site where the Buddha was legendarily conceived. Europe and America appear right at the edges of the map, as islands.

This map was compiled from many earlier Buddhist sources, and by making selective use of some European maps, which had reached Japan. Its influence was enormous; it formed the basis of the Japanese world view until well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Over recent years we have been expanding the collections' coverage to better represent the cultures of the world beyond Europe. This is a superb example of an item which conveys a completely different perspective from those of most of the maps already held, is of significance in its own culture, yet conveys a great deal of information even to a viewer who does not read Japanese. In purchasing it, we envisaged many interesting juxtapositions with existing collections items, and opportunities for it to inform and inspire our students and researchers.



# Roy Williamson's Bouzouki

Anonymous, **Bouzouki**, European, 20<sup>th</sup> century; MIMEd 6545

One of the highlights of 2021 for the Musical Instrument Collection was the arrival of a bouzouki. Although traditionally a Greek instrument, this particular bouzouki was played by Edinburgh-born Roy Williamson of The Corries when his song 'Flower of Scotland', sometimes described as Scotland's unofficial national anthem, was first broadcast on television in 1968.

Following Roy's sadly early death in 1990, his instruments were auctioned to raise funds to support cancer care. When the musician Steve Byrne discovered that the instrument was again on the market, he set up a crowd-funding campaign to ensure that the instrument and its important heritage would be preserved and recognised. We are delighted that the instrument is now part of the University's Collection and are most grateful to all those who contributed to its acquisition and subsequent gift. It has been part of the 'Edina/Athena: The Greek Revolution and the Athens of the North, 1821-2021' exhibition at the Main Library and from there it will be on long-term display in the Wolfson Gallery at St Cecilia's Hall.



# Detention for the Principal and Rector

Larry Achiampong, *Detention Series*, Blackboard, chalk, 2021

“Detention (Y’ALL FESTIVAL OUT ON THE BACKS OF OUR PAIN)”, 2021

Written by Debora Kayembe, Wednesday 5 May 2021, EU5858

“Detention (BEGGING FOR A SEAT AT THE TABLE BUILT OF OUR BONES)”, 2021

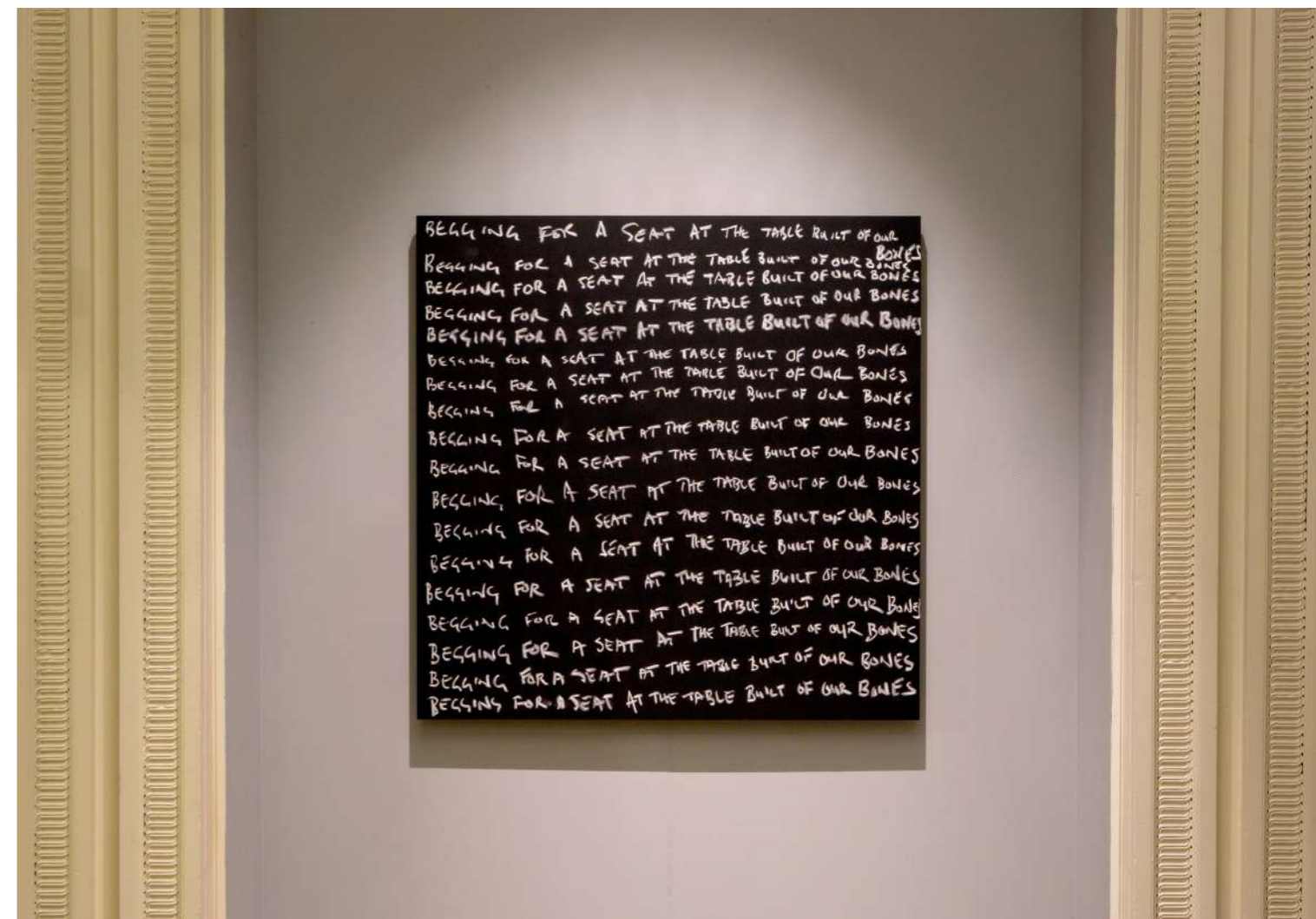
Written by Peter Mathieson, Wednesday 5 May 2021, EU5859

‘Detention (Series)’, 2016 – ongoing, is a body of work which sits alongside Larry Achiampong’s critical practice, drawing upon his position as a British-Ghanaian artist to question racial hierarchies and the emergence of colonial legacies. Taking the form of old teaching blackboards, this series was developed further for ‘The Normal’ exhibition at Talbot Rice Gallery (2021) and put senior figures from the University of Edinburgh in ‘detention’. Offering time for critical reflection, the pointed and repeated lines (sourced by the artist from memes and online spaces) speak of white privilege, cultural appropriation, and the complexity of representing political movements like Black Lives Matter.

On undertaking the work, Principal Peter Mathieson has said:

*“While completing the exercise, the experience did evoke memories of writing lines as punishment in my school days and I was very quickly overwhelmed by a need to concentrate and do as good a job as I could. My first line did not fit the space, and I thought about rubbing it out to start again but felt I should leave it there so people could see the imperfection. As the phrase was devised, and chosen by someone else, I tried to think about and understand the meaning both before and after I had completed the task; it was hard to do so while actually writing as I was having to concentrate on making it legible.”*

Achiampong completed a BA in Mixed Media Fine Art at the University of Westminster in 2005 and an MA in Sculpture at the Slade School of Fine Art in 2008. In 2020 Achiampong was awarded the Stanley Picker Fellowship and in 2019 received the Paul Hamlyn Artist Award in recognition for his practice. He lives and works in Essex, and has been a tutor on the Photography MA programme at the Royal College of Art since 2016.



Photograph © Sally Jubb. Installation view from ‘The Normal’ exhibition at Talbot Rice Gallery, 18 May – 29 August 2021

# Sketching for Sir Walter Scott

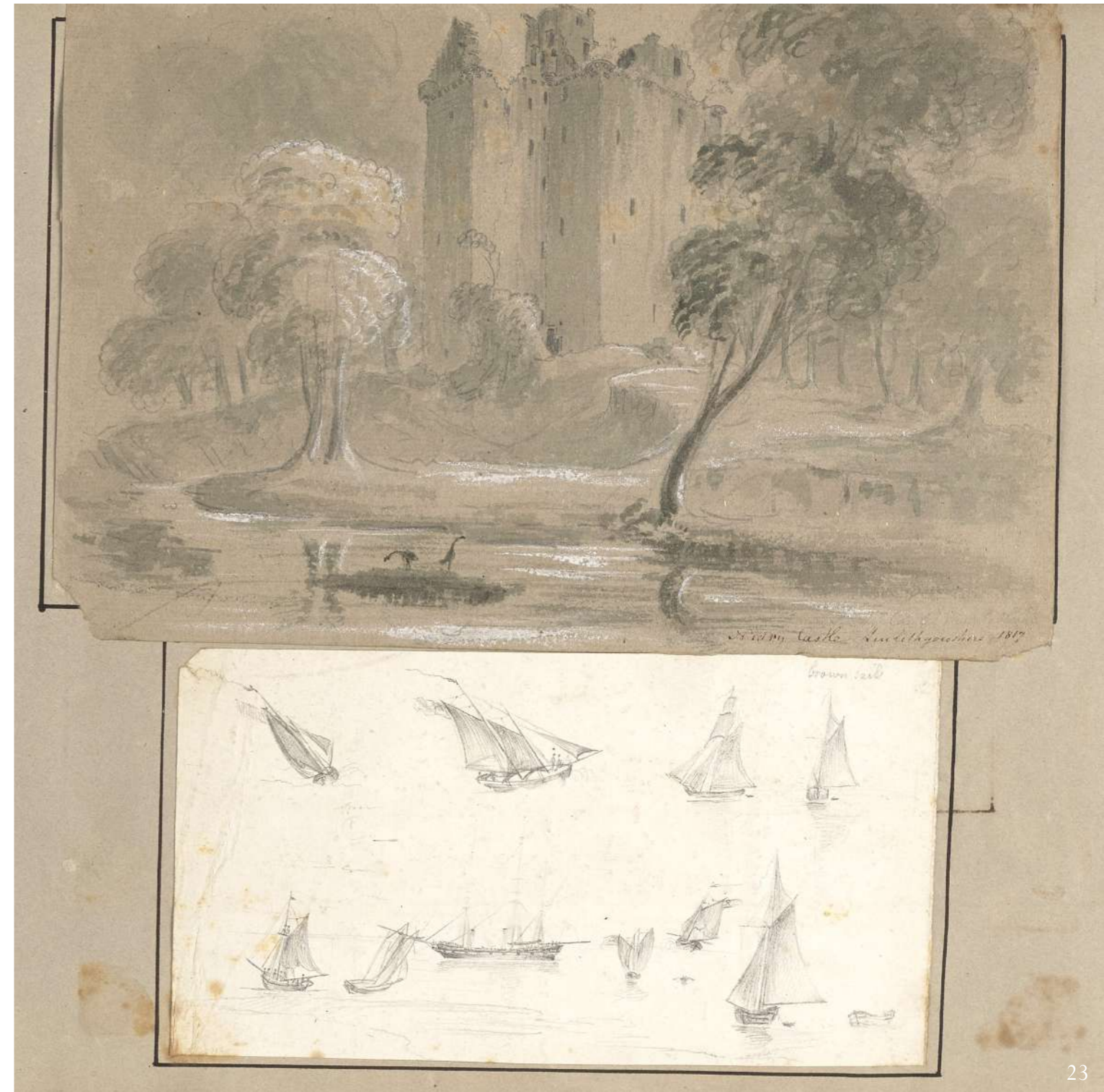
Album of sketches by Sir James Skene of Rubislaw, 19<sup>th</sup> century; Coll-2019

This album of c. 420 sketches is the record of an extraordinary creative collaboration. A talented amateur artist, Sir James Skene of Rubislaw (1775-1864) was a close friend of Sir Walter Scott who accompanied him on riding trips to locations that Scott planned to feature in his novels and poems. There, at Scott's suggestion, Skene made sketches of scenery and buildings that Scott then used as an inspiration and aide-memoire for his own work. Many of the sketches in this album can be linked to trips that Scott and Skene are known to have made together. Some later sketches date from excursions that Skene took alone at Scott's request, as Scott himself grew ever busier and, with declining health, less physically mobile. The album also includes sketches that were clearly used as source material for published Scott illustrations by professional artists. It seems likely, then, that Scott's publishers employed Skene to produce preparatory sketches of scenes that would make effective illustrations to Scott's work.

*“Skene's sketchbook is of particular national-cultural significance to Scotland,”* notes Dr Richard Hill (Chaminade University of Honolulu), author of ‘Picturing Scotland through the Waverley Novels’ (Routledge, 2010). *“These sketches, almost exclusively of Scottish landscape and architecture, were done either with, for, or inspired by Sir Walter Scott. Skene's friendship with Scott predates Scott's fame and fortune, and therefore makes Skene of particular interest to Scott scholarship.”*

The album has huge research potential for scholars charting the links between the famously vivid descriptions of locations in Scott's novels and poems and the sketches that Scott used to prompt his memory and inspire his words. Besides casting light on Skene's relations with Scott, with Scott's publishers, and with professional illustrators, the sketches also provide an invaluable insight into Skene's own life and activities. A collectable artist in his own right, Skene was a prominent member of Scottish literary and antiquarian circles, with extensive cultural and scientific interests.

This album has recently been conserved, catalogued, and digitised and is now freely available via the University's Digital Library.



## A Knightly Gift

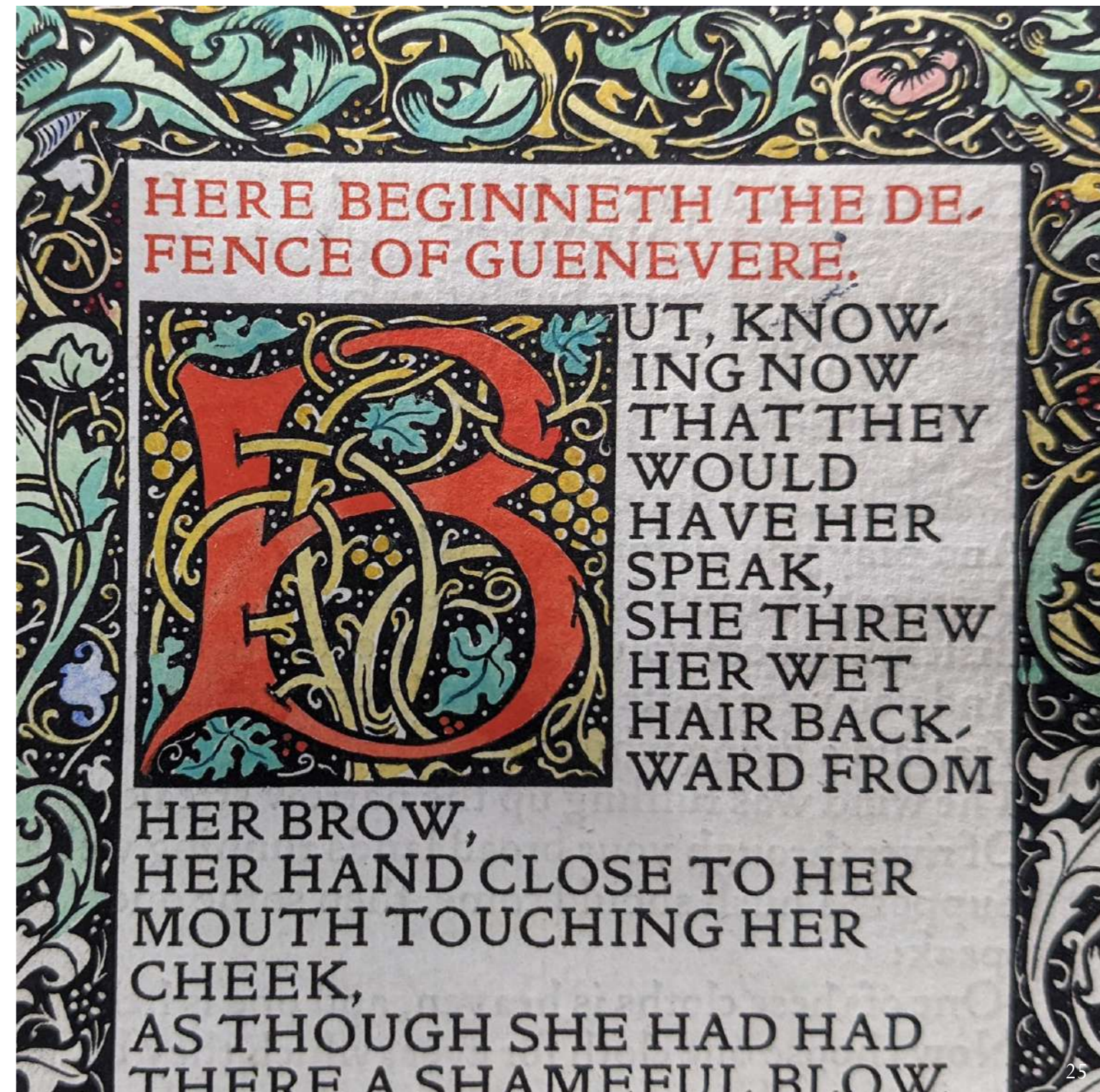
William Morris, *The Defence of Guenevere*, Kelmscott Press, 1892; RB.S.4657

William Morris founded the Kelmscott Press to revive the standards of craftsmanship, and something of the aesthetic, of the medieval books which he so admired, as part of his wider programme to recover the quality and creativity of the manufactures of the past. He paid close attention to every detail of the process: designing his own type and ornaments; commissioning ink to his own recipe, and paper to his own specifications; binding the books by traditional methods in limp vellum or paper over boards, in styles inspired by bindings of the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and highly unfashionable in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. His manufacturing methods used both very traditional technology in the form of flat-bed hand presses, and also some very modern innovations, including photography to assist in creating woodblocks for the illustrations.

*The Defence of Guenevere* is a collection of poems written by Morris in the 1850s, shortly after he graduated from Oxford, at the time he was first discovering Gothic architecture and medieval art. The themes deal with love, desire, and adultery, studied through the legends of King Arthur's court.

The Kelmscott Press inspired the Fine Press movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The books remain very sought-after by collectors, and are invaluable for teaching.

The Friends of Edinburgh University Library have been supporting the collections since 1962. This year they donated to the CRC our choice from a collection bequeathed by an alumna of the University, Andrena Dobbin (née Oswald, MA 1948) and her husband Stanley Dobbin. *The Defence of Guenevere* is the highlight of the collection, which includes a few other examples of fine press printing, some 20<sup>th</sup> century illustrated books, and a few items relating to the Merseybeat poets, with whom the couple were associated.



# An Anniversary Acquisition

Portfolio of documentary photographs by **Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert**, 1992-2001; SSSA/JSH1-3

To mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the School of Scottish Studies, the School of Scottish Studies Archive and the Centre for Research Collections teamed up with renowned Scottish photographer, Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert, to add a landmark collection of photos to the School's documentary collections. Sutton-Hibbert has worked as a freelance photographer and photojournalist for over 30 years and in 2012 co-founded *Document Scotland* – a collective of Scottish documentary photographers.

Sutton-Hibbert's work focusing on Scotland filled a natural gap in the Archive's extensive photographic holdings, and the team worked with him to identify three series of photographs which would best suit the collection. Selections were made from his *North Sea Fishing* (1992-1995), the recently demolished *Longannet Colliery* (2001), and *Paddy's Market* (2000) which echoed with coastal working life, Scottish industrial cultures, and urban living which can be found throughout the School's Archive.

The SSSA70 acquisition includes over 50 beautifully hand-made prints by Sutton-Hibbert and digital files of each of these which can be viewed on our digital image database.



Photograph © Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert, 1995

# Where do we begin and end?

**Stephanie Mann**, *Where do we begin and end?* 6 debossed prints, 2021; EU5850

*Where do we begin and end?* is comprised of six debossed, limited edition prints made from pulped delivery packaging, as well as sedimentary seabed samples from the University's Geology Collection. The work is one result of a long collaboration between Mann and the University of Edinburgh's Geology and Art Collections staff to question specific ideas such as: Where do objects start and end? How do they exist alongside humans? What is an object and can it stop being?

The process of making these prints reflects Mann's particular engagement with geological materials, histories, and science to consider concepts of time, the transformation of matter, and the boundaries between objects. With limited access to shops (due to the governmental restrictions and advice for pregnant women in lockdown in March 2020) and with a growing need for a tactile outlet in response to the sudden increase in use of the digital, Mann began making paper out of packing material.

She altered the material composition to produce a tonal variety to emulate conglomerate rock formations. To achieve this, the packaging was burned (resulting in a grey ash) and charred from exposure to a high heat (resulting in a black char). The handwriting on the prints is taken from geoscientist Charles Lyell's notebooks (spanning 1825-1874) held in the University's archive collections. The debossing process involves compression of the paper material which is similar to the processes at work when sedimentary conglomerate rocks are formed.

Mann is an ECA alumna; having graduated with a BA (Hons) in Sculpture in 2011, she went on to complete a MFA in Contemporary Art Practice at ECA in 2013. From 2018 to 2021 she was a Freelands Foundation Artist in Residence with the University's Talbot Rice Gallery.



Photograph © Damian Griffiths, courtesy Freelands Foundation

# Envisaging Alternative Futures

Valentina Lobos Muñoz, *Speculative Flag*,  
digital drawing and textile digital printing on silk, 2021; EU5860

As a response to the challenge of envisaging alternative futures and different social formations in times of climate emergency, growing social crisis, and pandemic, *Speculative Flag* is a reorganisation and re-articulation of pre-existing elements to propose new entangled relations and alternative realities.

Through the action of ‘stealing’ natural resources from coats of arms of different countries, this work generates a digital visual archive for plants, animals and people available now for the creation of new emblems. The aim is to freely reorganise the elements to question the economic, racial, and gender roles commonly associated with different species, therefore, thinking in alternative articulations beyond the perception of the land, water, and people as resources or commodities.

*“I started developing digital work and investigating flags and coats of arms from different countries,”* describes Lobos Muñoz, *“I was interested in the representation of people, animals, and other natural elements on those emblems, thinking about the colonial narratives and the power and economic gaze behind the creation of a national emblem. To be selected for this prize in this closure stage means the validation to keep working on this project and the certainty that my work is communicating correctly. It also certainly reveals how encouraging it is to receive funding for future work. It is an honour that my work will be part of the University Collection, and I am glad to know that part of my work stays here in Edinburgh for future research and educational purposes. I sincerely appreciate the work of the University Collection team and their role in the selection, conservation, and communication of early career artist’s work.”*

This is one of seven works acquired from five graduates by the Art Collection from the 2020/1 Edinburgh College of Art Graduate Shows.





# From the Collection of Alexandra Feoderovna, Last Empress of Russia

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Binding decorated by **Annie S. Macdonald**, on Austin Dobson *The Story of Rosina*, 1895; Bdg.S.76

Annie S. Macdonald was the inventor and most accomplished exponent of a technique of modelling leather on bookbindings, practised by a group of women in Edinburgh from the mid-1890s into the mid-1900s. We have a few of these in the collections, including one by the distinguished artist Phoebe Anna Traquair, but until now have not had an example of Macdonald's own work.

This year we have acquired one of the best examples of these bindings to survive anywhere, by Annie S. Macdonald herself, with Russian Royal provenance. Macdonald sold some of her work under the aegis of the Guild of Women Binders, an organisation run from the Hampstead Bindery, which provided workshop training in London, and a selling outlet for bindings by women from all over the UK. In 1900, at the height of their success, the group exhibited at the Exposition Universelle in Paris, winning an unprecedented silver medal. Most of the exhibited work, including this one, was sold afterwards by Sothebys, and was given to Alexandra Feoderovna, the last Empress of Russia, as a Christmas gift, noted inside, along with her bookplate.

The front cover design is typical of Macdonald's style, with an intricate and densely-worked image with figures and foliage, inside a shaped frame, all impressed with different depths of tooling to give a sculptural effect.



# A Pocket Ruzname (Almanac) of Şeyh Vefa

Astronomical manuscript in Ottoman Turkish (in Arabic script), ca. 1680 CE/1091 H; Coll-2022

This manuscript is a beautiful copy of the perpetual calendar traditionally known as the Ruzname ('almanac') of Şeyh Vefa. It is comprised mainly of tables for calendar conversion with instructions in Ottoman Turkish (in Arabic script). The manuscript contains eight coloured discs, one of which marks the *qibla*, or the direction towards the Kaaba in the Sacred Mosque in Mecca (pictured at the centre of the disc). Two of the other discs are volvelles, i.e., rotating paper wheel charts used to make calculations or predictions.

*“This beautiful Ruzname is an interesting addition to the Library’s collection, showing aspects of paper art in the form of volvelles which are a rarity and worth pointing out to students who study Islamic codicology and book art,”* comments Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Edinburgh, *“not many of these Ruznames survive being preserved in such good form.”*

Besides the calendar, which gives times for the five daily prayers of Islam for each month of the year, the manuscript also includes an Arabic prayer and, in the margins, astrological notes on lucky days. The scribe of this manuscript follows tradition in attributing the almanac to Şeyh Vefa (or Sheikh Wafa), a mystic who worked in the Muayyad Mosque in Cairo and died in 1471. Modern scholarship, however, identifies the author as the 9<sup>th</sup>-century Persian mathematician and astronomer Abū al-Wafā Būzjānī. Internal evidence suggests that the MS dates from c. 1680 but the exact place of publication is unknown.



# A Private Side of Hamilton

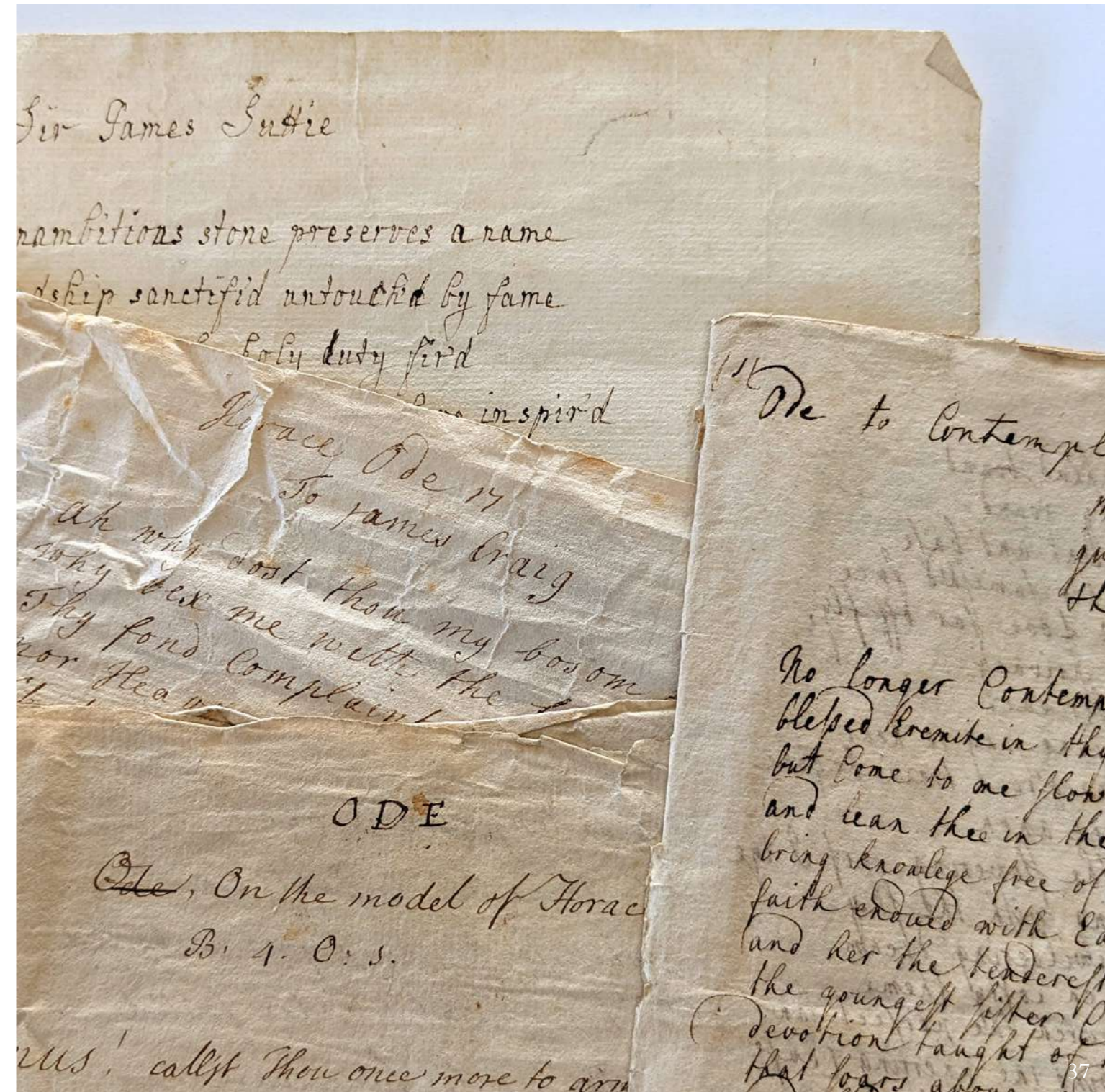
Collection of poems of **William Hamilton of Bangour**, ca. 1730-1750; Coll-2023

An Edinburgh alumnus, the poet and soldier William Hamilton of Bangour (1704-1754) counted David Hume, Adam Smith, Lord Kames, and Allan Ramsay among his friends. Hamilton played a significant and acclaimed role in the Scots Vernacular Revival, helping to absorb folk forms into high literary culture. At the same time, though, he was writing privately circulated pro-Jacobite verses, which remained unpublished during his lifetime. In 1745, he joined the Jacobite army and became its official poet. He fought at the Battle of Prestonpans and wrote an ode celebrating the Jacobite victory. After Culloden, he went into hiding, eventually making his way into exile in France.

The most comprehensive edition of Hamilton's poems (1850) is based on a manuscript collection in our Laing Collection (La.III.451). This new acquisition contains twenty manuscript poems, including four previously unknown and unpublished poems, together with variant texts of many previously known poems. The unknown poems include an epitaph on Hamilton's wife, Catherine or Kathleen Hall, who died in 1745.

*"This is a very exciting addition to the Centre for Research Collections' manuscript holdings in eighteenth-century Scottish poetry,"* writes Dr Robert Irvine, Reader in Scottish Literature at the University of Edinburgh. *"The poems in this collection represent another, private side to Hamilton: lyrics and odes, witty and tender, written for the eyes of intimate friends, including four previously unknown and unpublished. As well as rounding out our understanding of the poet and his work, these manuscripts will allow us to consider the possible political inflection of such ostensibly private material, and to better understand the social role of poems circulated and enjoyed in manuscript many years before they found their way into print."*

There are also manuscripts of two of Hamilton's most celebrated Jacobite poems 'On the Death of Mr Basil Hamilton' and 'Upon a Young Lady, Who Died on Seeing her Lover, Mr. Dawson, Executed on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1746'. Some of the manuscripts appear to be in Hamilton's own hand. Others appear to be in a secretarial hand, though perhaps Hamilton himself had a neater hand when copying poems out for presentation. The collection is an invaluable addition to our knowledge of an important literary and political figure.



# Around the World in Leicester Square

Guides to Panoramas exhibited by Robert Barker and his successors at The Rotunda, Leicester Square, London 1794-1839; RB.P.2752-2760, Coll-2043

Robert Barker's watercolour Panorama of Edinburgh from 1792 is one of the well-known treasures of the CRC collections, a source of fascination and delight to everyone who encounters it. Our watercolour is one of the earliest pieces of evidence for the technique, invented by Barker, in Edinburgh, of manipulating painted perspective so that a view painted on the inside of a cylindrical room appears all but real to a viewer standing inside it. Barker developed this into a popular entertainment attraction in London, The Rotunda, Leicester Square, which showed panoramas of places and events in a form of 'virtual reality', with such success that it continued, under the management of his sons and successors, well into the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Panoramas shown at Barker's Rotunda were accompanied by merchandising, principally illustrated guidebooks, which described and explained the scene. The texts of these vary in length and tone over the decades, while the illustrations vary in quality and technique, but were intended primarily to assist the viewer to match the description with the panorama, rather than reproduce the panorama in any detail. The CRC collects these and 2021 has been a bumper year in which we have added twelve new guidebooks to the collection.

The new acquisitions include Bath, the second panorama ever shown at the Rotunda, in 1794. This guide is a simple annotated diagram, lacking in the style and sophistication which later became normal. The Napoleonic Wars ensured that battles were a popular subject in the first decades of The Rotunda's existence, filling a place in the public imagination later occupied by cinema newsreels. The Battle of Trafalgar, 1806, complements the several versions of the Battle of Waterloo which we already have. We have also acquired the battles of Vittoria, 1813 and Badajoz, 1812. The coronation of George IV in 1821 provides a rarer example of an event other than a battle. The others are topographical; a mixture of places distant but not beyond imagination – Geneva, Berlin, and the really exotic – Spitzbergen, Rio de Janeiro, Mumbai.

Some of our panoramas recently appeared in a Youtube channel dedicated to the history of science, *Objectivity*: <https://youtu.be/wpSelk12EI4>





Centre for Research Collections

### Centre for Research Collections

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