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THE HERBARIUM OF GLASGOW MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

Introduction

The collections of the City of Glasgow were initiated by the activities of a local coach-builder, Archibald McLellan (1796-1854), who was also an enthusiastic art collector. He left his collection, and the building to house them, to the City, but unfortunately he was insolvent at the time of his death. In order to save the collection, the City had to "buy" both collection and building.

In 1870, Glasgow Corporation purchased Kelvingrove Mansion House, built in 1783, in what is now Kelvingrove Park. It was known locally as the City and Industrial Museum, housing predominately historic and scientific material. Natural history collections were by then rapidly accumulated, thanks to local interest, but little display space was available.

In 1876, an extension was added for technological items; 1888 saw the last International Exhibition, which raised funds towards a new building to house all the collections.

By the 1890's construction was well underway, and a 2nd International Exhibition was held in 1901 to coincide with the opening of the new museum also in Kelvingrove Park. As the journal "British Architect" commented in 1892 : "combines both picturesqueness and dignity. The former quality is perhaps somewhat in excess".

The new building allowed the formation of various departments including natural history (with geology).

THE HERBARIUM

Most of the botanical collections date from the decades around the turn of the century. Whilst the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde (formerly The Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College to 1912, then the Royal College of Science and Technology) tended to acquire herbaria of academic botanists, the Museum has those of local societies and dedicated enthusiasts. Most of the departmental curators of the time were more geologically inclined, which caused a backlog to accumulate.

Recently a programme of conservation, cataloguing and amalgamation has been underway, with additional help provided through the S. T. E. P. scheme. The herbarium has been rehoused in new purpose-built storage cabinets, and is now reasonably accessible, though much work still remains to be done. All extra-European material is treated as low priority for the present. The only collections to be retained as entities will be Dr. James Stirton's mosses and lichens, which contain type specimens.

THE COLLECTORS

As most of the collectors were of localised importance, with literature on them correspondingly local, I am including some biographical details of them for this article.

Rev. John Fleming (1785-1857) was better-known as a mineralogist and palaeontologist; his mineral collection is also in the museum. By profession, he was a Presbyterian minister, and most of his specimens are from his parishes in Shetland, Fife and Clackmannan as well as from Edinburgh, where he attended the university. His vascular plants include our earliest specimens, plus some collected by George Don Snr. (the Scottish alpine botanist), and a number acquired through the exchange activities of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh (started 1836), many of which had been obtained from eminent botanists of the period eg. C.C. Babington; J.H. Balfour; J.T. Boswell-Syme; Rev. J.S. Henslow; W.J. Hooker; W.A. Leighton; W.W. Newbould; T.B. Salter; N.B. Ward & H.C. Watson, amongst others.

Fleming also included seaweeds, fungi, lichens and mosses in his collection, and these may provide some early Scottish records.

The Philosophical Society of Glasgow came into being in 1802, receiving its Royal Charter a century later. The herbarium was started in 1843, when the Glasgow Botanical Society amalgamated with them. However by 1882, there were only 3 members left in the Botanical Section, probably due to the new interest in anatomy and morphology, and it was agreed to donate the herbarium, which is comprised wholly of vascular plants, to the museum. Most specimens are either Scottish or continental Europe, though some from India and North America are included.

Amongst the other local societies that had close associations with the Museum, was the Natural History Society of Glasgow, which flourished from 1851 until 1930 when it joined with the Andersonian Natural History and Microscopical Society. In 1881, the Society and the Parks Committee of the Town Council made an agreement by which the Society would provide a collection of British plants and invertebrates: the museum had to provide storage and materials for mounting the specimens.

Accordingly, in 1883, a small collection of flowering plants and a larger collection of mosses was presented to the museum, to be followed by some hepatics in 1884. The moss collection was "the nucleus of a complete one, so far as British species are concerned. Its value depends mainly on the number of representative species it includes Many of the specimens have been gathered by men such as Dr. Greville, Dr. W. Wilson, Prof. Dickie and Prof. Schimper 268 specimens alone have been gathered by McKinlay".

George Horn who was born in Camlachie, Glasgow in 1828 and died in 1912, donated his herbarium to the museum in 1902.

Apart from an apparently unsuccessful foray to Australia during the Gold Rush, Horn spent most of his life running a grocery business in Glasgow. His collection of mosses and vascular plants is fairly comprehensive and includes many local specimens; others have been obtained through Scottish contemporaries in the case of mosses, and on a national scale for flowering plants through the Botanical Society of Edinburgh exchange activities. A fair number of specimens are from Norway, probably indicative of the growing interest in plant habitat, at the latter end of the last century, comparing Scottish mountain flora with that of the European arctic. (viz the activities of the Scottish Alpine Botany Club in the 1880's).

Rev. Robert Kerr (1857-1939) was a minister with the United Free Church, and later the Church of Scotland. From some 47 years, he was with Kirkmuirhill Church in the parish of Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, and it is from this area that many of his specimens were collected. Most are vascular plants including some 70 European alpenes, but mosses are also represented.

Dr. W. G. Blackie (1816-1906) was pre-eminent in the business life of Glasgow, being the founder of W. G. Blackie & Co. (Printers) which was an adjunct to his father's firm of Blackie & Son (Publishers). He was also deeply interested in education and in charitable societies, but little is known of his botanical activities, despite most of his specimens being Scottish.

David Robertson (1806-1896) was a former herd-boy, who studied at night class, and became the owner of a successful pottery shop in Glasgow. Partly through the interest of his 2nd wife and through friendship with Roger Henneidy, who wrote 'Clydesdale Flora', he developed an interest in marine flora and fauna, and later geology. It was because of the ill-health of his wife that the Robertsons moved to Great Cumbrae, an island in the Firth of Clyde, and it was here that due to his interest in marine life, the Marine Biological Station was eventually established just before his death. As shown in the appendix, his botanical interests covered most groups, the algae being especially well-represented.

Dr. James Stirton's collections of lichens and mosses are the most important of the collection. Dr. Stirton (1833-1917) was a gynaecologist, holding a professorship at the old Andersons College in Glasgow from 1889. His spare time was devoted to botany and he collected extensively in the Scottish Highlands. He also corresponded at home and abroad with many leading authorities, and received specimens from them (Sir

George Watt, Beckett, Buchanan & Andrew McKinlay). Both collections contain types named by him, many of which still stand today. The original lichen collection was divided between Glasgow and the British Museum (Nat. Hist), by Annie L. Smith, in the early part of the present century.

Stirton was active in many local societies, including the Philosophical Society of Glasgow and the Glasgow Society of Field Naturalists, as well as the Botanical Society of Edinburgh and the Linnaean Society (fellow). Most of his numerous papers appear in the "Transactions" of these societies, as well as in the Scottish Naturalist, Annals of Scottish Natural History and Grevillea.

COLLECTORS OF MINOR COLLECTIONS

The Andersonian Naturalists of Glasgow (shortly to become the Glasgow Natural History Society) deserves mention as the last survivor of the plethora of naturalists' societies, which sprang up in the City in the last century. Formed as the Natural History Society of Glasgow in 1851, it included many of the afore-mentioned botanists, as well as those from the university colleges amongst its members. In 1931, two other societies, the student-orientated, Andersonian Naturalists Society (founded 1885) and the Microscopical Society of Glasgow (1886) amalgamated with it, eventually to form the present society. The collection of vascular plants, obtained locally, was presented in 1903, by the then Andersonian Naturalists' Society.

W. A. Mudd (1830-1879) came from Yorkshire, where he was originally a gardener; he later became curator of the Botanic Gardens at Cambridge. He is known to have produced ex siccatae fasciculi of lichens, but it is uncertain whether the Glasgow collection is from one of these, as there is no trace of bound volumes.

Richard Spruce (1817-1893) was a Yorkshireman, who spent some years in South America. He also maintained a close contact with the Botanical Society of Edinburgh. The collection of South American mosses in the museum was obtained via the Natural History Society of Glasgow.

Robert Turner (1848-1894) was Assistant Registrar of Shipping in Glasgow, and was president of the Andersonian Naturalists Society (1890-92). His collection of vascular plants are all local.

Charles Eadie flourished 1873. He was employed in the Office of Public Works of the Corporation.

David Landsborough (1779-1854) was well-known as a pioneer of marine biology, working mostly along the Ayrshire coast.

The museum holds 3 copies of bound seaweed fasciculi entitled "Treasures

of the Deep", probably sold, as D.E. Allan suggested, to holidaymakers, ".....in aid of his Kirk and its schools". There are also letters to Prof. J. Fleming from Landsborough.

George W. Ord (1871-1899) worked at the Museum and later at the People's Palace (branch museum). His main interest was geology; his plants are Scottish alpinists.

Prof. Thomas King (1834-1896) was well-known as a botanist in Glasgow, where he spent most of his life, except from 1864-73 when he went to Chile. In 1889 he was made Professor of Botany at the Anderson Medical College, and a year later, of the Veterinary College. He was active in most of the local naturalists' societies; his particular interest being seaweeds.

The Forestry Commission has given a collection of the cones of about 20 introduced conifer species, grown at the Younger Botanic Gardens arboretum at Benmore.

There are 2 collections whose donors remain a complete mystery:

138 vascular plants from Kirkcudbright and Dumfries, collected 1859-60, and 177 vascular plants with poetry (!) from localities near Glasgow and Aberystwith (sic), no date.

Of the remaining collectors: Mrs. E. Hopkins, English & Welsh mosses (fl. 1815-97); J. Booth, Holstein mosses in exsiccata bound volume (fl. 1918); Dr. J. Foulds, S. American mosses (1896); Mrs. M. Gunn, Firth of Clyde seaweeds (1945), and G. Scott, Scottish flowering plants (fl. 1860), I have no information and any would be welcome.

Gwyneth Jones
Glasgow Museum and Art Gallery.

APPENDIX : approx. size of collections

CLASSIFICATION	COLLECTOR	BRITISH	EUROPEAN	OTHER
ALGAE	D. Robertson	A collection of around 900 specimens mostly British (freshwater & marine) on long loan to Scottish Marine Biological Assoc., Dunstaffnage, Oban.		
MARINE	Mrs. M. Gunn	30		
	Prof. J. Fleming	c.200		

CLASSIFICATION	COLLECTOR	BRITISH	EUROPEAN	OTHER
MARINE	Prof. T. King	186		
	D. Landsborough	3 fasciculi		
	Unknown	9		
FUNGI	Prof. J. Fleming	60		
	Museum staff	40		
LICHENS		(freeze-dried)		
	Prof. J. Fleming	150		
	Mudd	260		
	Dr. J. Stirton		1000	1000
BRYOPHYTES	Museum staff	200		
	J. Booth		200	
	Dr. J. Foulds			60
	Mrs. E. Hopkins	220		
	G. Horn	700		
	Rev. R. Kerr	360		
	D. Robertson	425		
	R. Spruce			291
	Dr. J. Stirton		5500	2000
	Nat. Hist. Soc.			
	Glasgow	800		
VASCULAR PLANTS	Dr. W. G. Blackie	445		
	C. Eadie	212		
	Rev. J. Fleming	2000		
	G. Horn		2500	
	G. Ord	28		
	D. Robertson	280		
	G. Scott	215		
	R. Turner	69		
	Unknown	138		
	Unknown	177		
	Andersonian Nat.			
	Soc.	260		
	Nat. Hist. Soc.			
	Glasg.	85		
Phil. Soc. Glasg.		4000	500	
Museum staff	100			

References

It would be very cumbersome to include biographical references, but some more general ones on herbaria and natural history societies in Glasgow are given, plus some on the history of botany in Scotland.

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