



Tray of beaten and decorated  
brass work, Nigeria, pre-1894.  
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and Libraries Collections

# African and Caribbean Collections in Scottish Museums Glasgow and Strathclyde

## Glasgow and Strathclyde

- Auld Kirk Museum (East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture Trust)
- David Livingstone Birthplace Museum
- Glasgow Life Museums
- The Hunterian, University of Glasgow
- Paisley Museum (OneRen)
- Rozelle House Museum and Galleries (South Ayrshire Council)
- Watt Institution (Inverclyde Council)



# Auld Kirk Museum

## East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture Trust

**Contact**      [museums@eastdunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:museums@eastdunbarton.gov.uk)

### Location of collections

Auld Kirk Museum  
Cowgate  
Kirkintilloch  
G66 1HN

### Size of collections

4 African items  
No known Caribbean items

### Selected objects

- Sword, Sudan, AKM.1974.15.2
- Scabbard, Sudan, AKM.1975.176

### History of the collection

The Auld Kirk and its graveyard are Category A listed, and the Auld Kirk's collection reflects the history of the local area. From Roman artefacts to innovations of the 20th century, around 13,000 objects reveal the social, industrial and everyday activities of people who lived or worked in East Dunbartonshire.

### Overview of the collection

At the time of writing, staff at the Auld Kirk Museum are aware of four objects in the collection that originate from Africa. These are a sword and scabbard, a dagger, and a whip, most likely from Sudan. Although nothing is currently known about the donor, Mr D MacLeod, or how the objects were acquired, it is likely that they were obtained from Sudanese soldiers during the so-called Anglo-Egyptian or Egyptian-Sudanese wars of the 1880s and 1890s. Material from these conflicts can be found in museums across Scotland.

### Regions and countries represented: Africa

Region/country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
<b>Northern Africa</b>		<b>4</b>	
Sudan	Mr D MacLeod	4	Dagger, sword and scabbard, whip

## Selected object images

Sword, Sudan, AKM.1974.15.2 (left)

Scabbard, Sudan, AKM.1975.176 (right)



# David Livingstone Birthplace Museum

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## Location of collections

David Livingstone Birthplace  
165 Station Road,  
Blantyre  
South Lanarkshire  
G72 9BY

## Size of collections

670 African objects  
No known Caribbean objects

## Online Collections

<https://collection.david-livingstone-birthplace.org/>

## Selected objects

- Beaded gourd, Eastern Africa, BLTDL21700
- Zulu double neck rest, Southern Africa, 459
- Brass leg ornaments, Nigeria, 978a+b
- Wooden comb, Eastern Africa, BLTDL21992
- Chief's chair, Botswana, 1425
- Milking pot, Lesotho, BLTDL21835

## History of the collection

The David Livingstone Birthplace Museum is dedicated to the life and work of the Scottish traveller, missionary and abolitionist David Livingstone (1813-1873). The David Livingstone Trust was established in 1927 with the ownership of David Livingstone Birthplace, which includes the building of Livingstone's birth and surrounding parkland. The museum holds a collection of 5,000 objects which were acquired from the 1920s onwards through public calls for donations. Ostensibly, all objects in the collection have a connection to Livingstone, although these are based on reported information from donors. Some material was collected by Livingstone himself, but the majority is associated by place and missionary connections. In recent years, The Birthplace Project reinterpreted Livingstone's story for a new generation in the context of Scotland's role in slavery and colonialism.

## Overview of the collection

At the time of writing, available collection data identifies at least 670 objects of African origin, excluding natural history specimens, objects associated with the trafficking of enslaved people, and documents such as maps. Object records do not currently have a country attribution and within the scope of this review it has not been possible to survey the entire collection comprehensively to establish accurate figures for each region. The summaries

listed here are based on a limited visual survey of the collection and potential provenance information recorded in description fields.

In his lifetime, Livingstone travelled through 14 southern, southeastern and central African countries, and this geographical focus is reflected in the collection. The majority of material appears to come from southern, eastern and central Africa, including objects from present day Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, South Africa and Democratic Republic of the Congo. Material includes many examples of ivory armlets and beadwork (eg BLTDL21700), including gourd containers and objects described as necklaces or jewellery. Some of those surveyed probably date to the mid to late 1800s. Similarly, there are multiple examples of basketwork items, thumb pianos, knives and combs with little accompanying information. Current records identify some objects as Zulu and Shona, for example multiple throwing spears, shields, clubs, and staffs. This survey has also identified around 20 Congolese ceremonial and throwing knives and *Nkisi* figures, some still to be audited when this review was being conducted (eg BLTDL21688 and BLTDL20482). The collection also holds a number of stools and neck rests, including a Zulu double neck rest (459).

The collection also holds a limited number of eastern and western African objects. For example, from Nigeria, an Igbo maiden spirit mask (872), Igbo brass anklets (978a+b), ceremonial paddles (994a+b), and a Hausa leather hat (1083). Material from Kenya includes a Kikuyu shield (464).

Some of the objects with the most detailed provenance information are recorded as being taken by Livingstone himself, or those he worked closely with. For example, Livingstone described the purchase of a 'Man'janga Ivory Upper Lip-ring' (BLTDL20583) in an accompanying letter. A wooden comb with carved design (BLTDL21992) is recorded as being given to Livingstone by the 'wife of an African chief'. The name of this individual is not recorded. It is likely that she would have been part of a community local to the Zambezi River in eastern Africa.

The collection also contains objects linked to named African individuals. For example, a Chief's chair (1425), recorded as belonging to Botswanan ruler Sechele I a Motswasele 'Rra Mokonopi' (1812-1892), and a wooden milking pot from Lesotho (BLTDL21835) associated with Doda, the son of Puthi leader 'Morosi/Moorosi' (d.1879). Objects belonging to Abdullah Susi and James Chuma, Livingstone's southern African colleagues, have a dedicated display in the Museum. This includes a flask, raffia cloth, and an urn. Also of note is a collection of around 14 objects recorded as 'traditional healer apparatus' donated by the Livingstone Museum (formerly Rhodes-Livingstone Museum) in 1947.

### **Associated material**

The collection contains many objects associated with the trafficking of enslaved people, probably dating from the mid 1800s. These include a yoke which David Livingstone reportedly removed from an unnamed enslaved person, manacles, a hippopotamus hide whip, collars, and chains. Also of note are documents, such as a map annotated by David Livingstone in 1856 with his route, and a bible in Tswana/Setswana printed in 1853. The collection also contains natural history specimens, including mounted horns and hippopotamus skulls.

### **Areas for further research**

During this review, the David Livingstone Birthplace Museum was conducting an audit. Little provenance information was available for most of the collection. Post audit, further visual

surveys and consultation work with a focus on southern, south-eastern and central African material would be beneficial. Studying objects themselves may give further clues to provenance. For example, historic labels attached to the milking pot from Lesotho (BLTDL21835) indicate that it was part of a missionary loan exhibition.

### Regions and countries represented: Africa

Region/country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
<b>Africa unspecified</b>		<b>600</b>	
	Alan G J Dalton, Invermay, Easthaven, Carnoustie. Alex Marshall, Rutherglen. Alex Waddell, Jedburgh. C Ian Fraser, grandson of W F Webb, Newstead Abbey. D Brodie, South Africa. David Livingstone's grandchildren. Mr Seton-Karr. John D Reid. John Gibbs. Miss A Scott, Tunbridge Wells. Miss Black, Ladybank. Robert Melrose. R Earnshaw. Mrs R A S Hamilton.		Anklet, armlet, arrow quiver and arrows, axe, barkcloth, basketware, bell, belt, bottle, bow, bracelets, brush, calabash bottle, chain, charm, cloak, club, collar, comb, cowbell, cowrie shells, cup, dagger dish, drum, flask, flywhisk, hat, headrest, jewellery, knife, lip ring, loud-speaker, mask, mat, neck rings, necklace, neck rest, ostrich egg, paddle, pipe, plate, pottery, pouch, raffia, rattle riding crop, rope, serving plate, shield, snuff-box, spear, spear head, spoon, staff, stool, sweat scraper, sword, textile, thumb piano, tray, trumpet, urn, utensil, walking stick, water bottle weapons, whip, whistle xylophone
<b>Eastern Africa</b>		<b>34</b>	
Kenya	Alex Waddell, Jedburgh	2	Shields
Malawi	Rev J Archibald Smith. Milanje, Malawi. Miss Lennox, Edinburgh.	32	Basket, beadwork, belt, drum, mat, tray, shield, spear, staff
<b>Central Africa</b>		<b>22</b>	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, 1947	22	Carved figures, knives
<b>Southern Africa</b>		<b>3</b>	
Botswana	Mr Allan G J Dalton.	2	Chief's chair, bust

	W Somerville Shanks ARSA.		
Lesotho	John Stephen	1	Wooden milking pot
<b>Western Africa</b>		<b>11</b>	
Nigeria		11	Bowl, hat, leg ornament, mask, paddles, riding crop

### Selected object images

Beaded gourd, Eastern Africa, BLTDL21700





Zulu double neck rest, Southern Africa, 459



Brass leg ornaments, Nigeria, 978a+b



Wooden comb, Eastern Africa, BLTDL21992



Chief's chair, Botswana, 1425



Milking pot, Lesotho, BLTDL21835



# Glasgow Life Museums

**Contact**      [museumcollections@glasgowlife.org.uk](mailto:museumcollections@glasgowlife.org.uk)

## Location of collections

### ***On display***

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum  
Argyle Street  
Glasgow  
G3 8AG

The Burrell Collection  
Pollokshaws Road  
Pollok Country Park  
Glasgow  
G43 1AT

The People's Palace  
Glasgow Green,  
Glasgow,  
G40 1AT

### ***In storage***

Glasgow Museums Resource Centre  
200 Woodhead Road  
South Nitshill Industrial Estate,  
Glasgow  
G53 7NN

## Size of collections

4,616 African objects  
299 Caribbean objects

## Online collections

<http://collections.glasgowmuseums.com/mwebcgi/mweb?request=home>

## Selected objects

### ***Africa***

- Sowe mask by the carver Pessima, Sierra Leone, A.1985.13.v
- *Ngaady Mwaash* dance mask, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1910.88.fw
- Wooden dance shield or *ndome*, Kenya, 1910.103.o
- Ceremonial shield of rhinoceros hide covered with red velvet and gold filigree, Ethiopia, A.1958.5.2
- 'Soul-washer' badge or *akrafokonmu*, Ghana, 18.1
- Tray of beaten brass work, Nigeria, 1894.58.d
- Beadwork headdress or *Dingaka tsa dinaka*, South Africa, ETHNN.619



### **Caribbean**

- Flywhisk or *irukere*, horsehair with leather grip and strap, The Bahamas, 1907.42.g
- Finger ring, Trinidad, 1916.37.t
- Standing human figure of carved wood, eyes of shell inlay, Barbados, 1916.66.ai
- Section of bark from lacebark tree, Jamaica, ETHNN.337
- Orisha figure 'Osain' by Filberto Mora, 2001, Cuba, A.2002.2.1.a

## **History of the collection**

Glasgow Museums is a group of 11 museums and galleries owned by the City of Glasgow and managed by Glasgow Life. In total, they hold around 1.6 million objects. The most relevant museums for this review are Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, The Burrell Collection, and The People's Palace. The original Kelvingrove Museum opened in 1876 in an 18th-century mansion to the north-east of the current site. The construction of the current museum was partly funded by the proceeds of the 1888 International Exhibition held in Kelvingrove Park. The museum opened in 1901 as the Palace of Fine Arts for the Glasgow International Exhibition held in that year. The Burrell Collection was the personal collection of William Burrell (1861-1958), a wealthy Glasgow shipping magnate and art collector, gifted to the city of Glasgow Corporation in 1944. Burrell provided funds for the construction of a museum to house his collection, which opened to the public in 1983. The building reopened in 2022 following major refurbishment. The People's Palace was opened on 22 January 1898 by the 5th Earl of Rosebery for the people of Glasgow. The building originally provided reading and recreation rooms with a museum and gallery. Since the 1940s, it has been a museum of social history that tells the story of the city of Glasgow and its people from 1750 to the present day.

## **Overview of the collection**

### **Africa**

Around 34% of the entire African collection is from western Africa, 23% from eastern Africa, 16% from southern Africa, 11% from central Africa, and 6% from northern Africa. Approximately 10% is not currently attributed to any region or country. The largest collections from single countries are from South Africa (636 objects), Nigeria (569 objects), Sierra Leone (306) and Democratic Republic of the Congo (305). The earliest accession date is 1870 and material appears to have been accessioned throughout the late 19th century, 20th century and up until the present day.

### **Western Africa**

Sierra Leonean material is a major collection with over 300 objects. A large percentage was donated by the family of Guy Massie-Taylor (1919-1985), a sculptor who spent seven years based in Sierra Leone as an Education Officer in the British Colonial Service. Objects include masks, figures, board games, textiles and clothing, amulets and charms, domestic utensils and vessels, paddles, model canoes, combs, knives, dolls, beadwork, rattles, headdresses and wigs. The collection has received some attention to date, and can be seen online via the Sierra Leone Heritage website:

[https://www.sierraleoneheritage.org/search/search\\_db/findc%5B0%5D=5&page=1](https://www.sierraleoneheritage.org/search/search_db/findc%5B0%5D=5&page=1)

The collection contains three objects known to have been taken during the so-called Anglo-Asante wars of the 19th century. One stool was taken from the Royal Palace of Kumasi on 4

February 1874 by Brigadier General Sir Archibald Alison, when he led part of the British Army's invading force against the Asante people. Alison donated the stool to the museum three months later. This stool is of a type known as *Mma' gwa* or woman's stool. The incised decorative motifs along the base indicate that this stool was used by a queen mother or *Asantehemaa*. As the stool was taken from the Royal Court it is believed to have belonged to Afua Kobi I, the 9th *Asantehemaa* from 1857 to 1883. There is one other small Asante stool in the collection, known as *Adammadwa* (two penny stool; poor man's stool) and dated 1886. The Burrell collection holds a gold *akrafokonmu* or 'soul washer's' badge. This large circular pectoral ornament was worn suspended from the neck by those responsible for the purification of the Asantehene's soul (the ruler of the Asante state). The *akrafokonmu* was part of Burrell's collection, donated to the city in 1944.

Glasgow Life Museums holds 19 objects from Nigeria that were taken during the sack of Benin City by British forces in 1897. These include one altar tusk, three commemorative heads, two ivory flutes or side-blown trumpets, one brass plaque, one ceremonial sword, wood panels, altar pieces including a bell, and a staff head or finial. These objects were acquired from dealers, private donations, and the Wellcome Medical Museum collection. At the time of writing, 19 objects are subject to repatriation. More information about the full collection of objects from Edo State (including those made post 1897) can be found on the Digital Benin website: <https://digitalbenin.org/institutions/53>

The Nigerian collection also includes 214 objects from the bequest of Rev James K MacGregor, Principal of the Hope Waddell Institution in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria, from 1907 to 1943. The collection includes at least 13 objects inscribed with Nsibidi script. In 1909, MacGregor published an article entitled 'Some Notes on Nsibidi'. He was the first colonial official to state that Nsibidi, a system of symbols associated with the Ejagham or Ekoi people of northern Cross River State and southwestern Cameroon, met the Western definition of written language.

Other notable Nigerian objects include a tray of beaten and decorated brass work from Cross River State, Nigeria, donated in 1894 by Alexander Sinclair. These trays were imported from Birmingham and decorated with hammered designs by Efik women and often sold back to European missionaries. This example appears to depict Mami Wata (Mother Water), an African spiritual tradition that worships water spirits. Also of note is a richly beaded and embroidered Ifá necklace or *Òdigbà Ifá*, ceremonial regalia of the Yoruba people, donated by a Mrs Maureen Brocklehurst and accessioned in 1979.

### **Eastern Africa**

Material from eastern Africa includes 143 objects from Kenya donated by Church of Scotland missionary Marion Scott Stevenson (1871-1930) and her brother, Professor William Barron Stevenson (1869-1954). Marion Scott Stevenson was based in former British East Africa from 1907 to 1929, primarily at Tumutumu, Kikuyu. Objects date to the early 20th century and include beadwork dress items, ear ornaments, dance shields, dance rattles, snuff boxes, clubs, coiled clay pots, and domestic utensils. Although most of the material is recorded as Kikuyu and from Kenya, there is at least one example of a Maasai ostrich feather headdress and barkcloth from Uganda. Glasgow Life Museums also holds photographs related to Scott's life in Kenya, gifted by John Arthur.

Eighty-three objects in the collection are associated with, or collected by, Scottish missionary David Livingstone (1813-1873). Objects include weapons, personal ornaments, domestic utensils, and a basin used by Livingstone during his last journey and brought back to

Scotland after his death by his southern African colleagues Abdullah Susi and James Chuma. Between 1877 and 1900, material was donated by his son, Thomas Livingstone (1849-1876), and by oil refiner James 'Paraffin' Young (1811-1883), mentor and friend of Livingstone.

The collection includes 58 eastern African items collected by William Govan Robertson (1869-1928), a lay missionary with the Scottish Presbyterian Church Livingstonia Mission from 1892 to 1897. Govan Robertson was reportedly dismissed from the Livingstonia Mission in 1896 after raiding a 'slavers' camp and taking their weapons. The collection includes an ammunition belt, recorded as being taken during this raid, in addition to examples of body ornaments, weapons, tools, and utensils. Govan Robertson was recruited by the London Missionary Society for their Central Africa Mission and from 1897 until 1928 was posted to their Central Africa Mission Lake Tanganyika.

Material from Ethiopia includes six items presented to Lord Inverclyde in Addis Ababa in 1951 by Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974. These include a ceremonial shield of rhinoceros hide, covered with red velvet and ornamented with gold filigree, a bi-pronged spear, a sword with rhinoceros horn hilt, a belt, and a gold cigarette case.

Another object of note is a Northern Ndebele shield or *isihlangu*. The shield is attributed to King Lobengula Khumalu, the last King of the AmaNdebele nation of Matebeleland from 1870 to 1894, in present-day Zimbabwe. It was taken from his homestead during the first so-called Matabele War (1893-1894) between the Ndebele Kingdom and the British South African Company.

### **Central Africa**

Objects from the Democratic Republic of the Congo include examples that were owned and used by the missionary William Henry Sheppard (1865-1927). Sheppard is notable as one of the first African Americans to become a missionary for the Presbyterian Church. He spent 20 years in Africa, primarily in and around the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This material was donated by William B Scott, a Scottish ship's engineer with the SS *Lapsley II*, the American Presbyterian Mission's Clyde-built paddle steamer. Scott's donation of around 170 objects includes examples of raffia cloth, ceremonial masks and rattles, ceremonial weapons, dress items, musical instruments, tools, and domestic utensils.

The collection also includes around 30 objects associated with Dr Joseph A Moloney (1857-1896) and his participation in the 1891-1892 mercenary 'Stairs Expedition', which resulted in the murder of King M'siri and the seizure of his territory in Katanga, Central Africa, for the Belgian King Leopold II. Objects also relate to Moloney's later expedition to former North-Eastern Rhodesia, where he was sent in 1895 by the British South Africa Company to negotiate treaties with Ngoni chiefs. These objects were donated by Moloney's sister, Miss L Lovat Fraser, following his death in 1896. They include stools, weapons, snuff containers, and carved wooden figures.

### **Northern Africa**

The collection contains at least 27 objects taken from the battlefield of Omdurman, Sudan, 2 September 1898, during the so-called Anglo-Egyptian conquest of Sudan. Objects include weapons, water bottles, camel saddles, armour and dress items. The collection also contains two banners belonging to the Mahdist Sudanese army and a piece of carved and painted wood panelling recorded as being taken from the Mahdī's sarcophagus.

### **Southern Africa**

The majority of the southern African collection is recorded as South African specifically. It includes material accessioned in 1870, making it some of the earliest material in the collection. It was not possible to review the 636 South African objects during this review, and they remain an important area for future research. One object of note that has been identified is a beadwork headdress or *dingaka tsa dinaka*, recorded as being worn by a Sotho diviner known as Ngaka. No further provenance information is currently available. Material from Botswana includes a large number of arrows acquired in 1889, beadwork, bracelets and necklaces, snuff containers, clubs, and contemporary paintings accessioned in 2003. A small collection from Lesotho, accessioned in the 1880s and 1890s, includes beadwork necklets, 'aprons' and bags, snuff containers, and an axe.

## Caribbean

Around 80% of the Caribbean collection is from Guyana, 7% from Barbados, 3% from Antigua and Barbuda, 3% from Cuba, 2% from The Bahamas, 2% from Jamaica, 2% from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and under 1% each from Saint Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, and Belize.

The earliest Caribbean accession to the collection was a shallow bowl of grey earthenware with red slip from Suriname, donated in 1876 by Robert Kirke of Burntisland (1815-1894), owner of sugar plantations in Suriname, including the 'Waterloo' estate.

The largest single acquisition from the Caribbean islands is a collection of 31 stone and shell implements from the Lesser Antilles, purchased in 1890 from Sir Thomas Graham Briggs (1833-1887), owner of Farley Hill Estate in Barbados.

From Guyana, 35 items of Carib material from the coast were donated by Miss A T Anderson in 1948. The collection of 55 Wai Wai artefacts from the upper Essequibo-Mapuera region, purchased from Mr J Brown in 1953, includes ceremonial body ornaments. Seventy-eight objects from the Wai Wai, Wapishana, Patamona and Macushi people are associated with Sir Gordon Lethem (1886-1962), former Governor of Guyana, and were donated in 1963.

The coastal South American collections from Guyana are dominated by material from the Upper Essequibo River, on the border with Brasil, that represent indigenous Amazonian cultures.

The most recent acquisitions include a contemporary *papier mâché* Orisha figure associated with the Santeria religion in Cuba, commissioned from Filiberto Mora in 2001; contemporary multimedia sculpture, *the shadow of the object fell upon the ego*, by the Barbadian diaspora artist Beth Forde, commissioned for *African Voices*, a 2007 exhibition at St Mungo Museum for Religious Life and Art; and contemporary multimedia artworks relating to the 2019 Gallery of Modern Art installation *Between a Whisper and a Cry* by the Barbadian artist Alberta Whittle.

The Caribbean collection has strong associations with plantations, the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved people, indentured labour, and the diaspora populations. One example is a finger ring of silver work worn by an Indian woman from Caroni Sugar Estate, Trinidad, West Indies. Objects that clearly illustrate the cultural influence of enslaved African people in the Caribbean include a flywhisk, or *irukere*, from the Bahamas, associated with the Ifá religion of diasporic West African Yoruba origin, and a calabash container from Guyana, painted with a design of the Yoruba deity Osun.



## **Notable donors/collectors**

### ***Africa***

Brigadier General Sir Archibald Alison (1826 -1907)  
David Livingstone (1813-1873)  
Rev James K MacGregor (dates unknown)  
Guy Massie-Taylor (1919-1985)  
Dr Joseph A Moloney (1857-1896)  
William Henry Sheppard (1865-1927)  
Marion Scott Stevenson (1871-1930)

### ***Caribbean***

Thomas Graham Briggs (1833-1887)  
Robert Kirke (1815-1894)  
Sir Gordon James Lethem (1886–1962)

## **Areas for further research**

### ***Africa***

At the time of writing, donor names/sources were not available for the African collection. Subsequently, some have been provided and added to the table below. Known donors/collectors have been noted in the summary above, but future research may reveal many more important sources and connections. Although parts of the eastern and western African collections have been the subject of curatorial and academic research in recent decades, the southern and northern African material remains understudied. The South African material, as it makes up such a large percentage of the African collection, merits further investigation.

This review has highlighted several connections to collections in other institutions that researchers may find useful. These include material associated with Dr Joseph A Moloney at National Museums Scotland; Marion Scott Stevenson material at The Hunterian, University of Glasgow; David Livingstone material at National Museums Scotland and the David Livingstone Birthplace Museum; and William Govan Robertson material in collections at Ditsong Museums of South Africa. Glasgow Life has also received transfers from other Scottish museums in the past, such as Dumfries Museum.

### ***Caribbean***

The Caribbean material at Glasgow Museums has not been the subject of any systematic research and does not form a coherent collection. Research into the archaeological material in terms of chronology and typography would be valuable. Research into the connections of the collectors/donors of the material to the plantation economy in the Caribbean would add to the information being amassed on Glasgow's connections with transatlantic slavery. Information on the donors of the major collections would help to contextualise the objects. The cultural assemblages of the Carib, Wai Wai, Wapishana, Patamona and Macushi people should be researched in collaboration with the communities themselves. Staff report that some objects in the collection demonstrate the influence of relationships between enslaved African people and the indigenous rainforest communities of Guyana, which could be investigated further. Robert Kirke, who donated earthenware from Suriname, is known to have also donated a large collection of mammals, birds, and insects to the Glasgow Museum in 1876. Historian David Alston has published information about Kirke, which can

be found online:

<https://www.spanglefish.com/slavesandhighlanders/index.asp?pageid=607903>

## Associated material

### **Africa**

Associated African material includes two photograph albums of black and white prints taken on the continent; 18 lantern slides by Arthur Mitchell taken in Egypt and Sudan; 18 photographs of Sierra Leone life, chiefs, agricultural markets, transport, house types, thatching, and farming; 15 photographs of Kenya 1911-193; 12 photographs of Nigeria c.1942; and two photographs of Algeria.

### **Caribbean**

There are object files for about 8% of the Caribbean collection. The original accession registers and associated correspondence are stored at Glasgow Museums Resource Centre. There is a photographic record of some objects at the Burrell Photo library. There are object files for about 30% of the collection from Guyana. In 1963, Glasgow acquired the collection of the former Governor of Guyana, Sir Gordon Lethem, including a photographic archive of the Wai Wai, Wapishana and Patamona peoples and their villages taken by Lethem on a tour of duty in the 1940s. These are held in the archives at Glasgow Museums Resource Centre, as is a collection of colour digital images of the Patamona taken for Glasgow Museums in 2005 by the Jesuit Missions. The accessioned collection includes a copy of the *Grenada Free Press*, 27 August 1828.

## Regions and countries represented: Africa

Region/country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
Africa unspecified		445	Agricultural implements, bags, body ornaments, canoe model, carved figures, clothing and shoes, costume, currency, doll, domestic tools, domestic utensils, engraving, gourd vessels, household items, hunting equipment, musical instruments, paddle, painting, shields, smoking paraphernalia, staff, weapons
<b>Northern Africa</b>		<b>295</b>	
Northern Africa unspecified		63	Amulet, body ornaments, chain mail armour, clothing and shoes, currency, domestic utensils, household items, lamps, musical instruments,

			painting, smoking paraphernalia, wall hanging, weapons
Algeria	Thomas Hall Henry G Farmer Ken Johnston Miss Jean McLean Mr Ensor Warden	61	Ceramic jars, ceramic lamps, household items, musical instruments, shoes
Egypt	William Turner. Bennett Burleigh. The Egyptian House Charitable Trust. Scottish Maritime Museum.	57	Cosmetic bottles, dress items, drums, earrings, fan, flywhisk, musical instruments, personal ornaments, smoking paraphernalia, spindle, weapons
Libya	Miss Jean McLean	1	Collection of arrowheads
Morocco	Mr Joseph Davies Henry G Farmer Bailie A B Mackay Miss Jean McLean	22	Household items, musical instruments, shoes, weapons
Sudan	Mr G Cameron. Sali Dirar. Miss L D Dunn. Henry G Farmer. Mrs Annie Glover. Col James Stevenson Hamilton. Misses MacBean. Rupert Roddam. Scottish Maritime Museum. Mr Archie H Service. William Turner.	91	Armour, banner, chain mail armour, charms, clothing, helmets, horse saddle, <i>jibba</i> garment, medal, musical instruments, personal ornaments, raffia work, weapons, wood panel
<b>Eastern Africa</b>		<b>1,058</b>	
Eastern Africa unspecified		140	Basketry, body ornaments, clothing, cowbell, flywhisk, gourd containers, headrest, household items, musical instruments, rattle, weapons
Ethiopia	John Allan Burns, 4th Baron of Inverclyde	13	Headdress, headrest, necklace, weapons
Kenya	William and Doreen Heaney. A M Jones. Kerr, Keeper, Dept of Art and Ethnology, Royal Scottish Museum.	179	Beadwork dress items, body ornaments, carved figures, ceremonial cape, charms, clothing and shoes, cowbell, dance shield, domestic utensils, fire stick, gourd vessels,

	Mr T McLachlan. Mrs Anne Rado. Marion Scott Stevenson. William Stevenson. Sir John Barron Shearer. Mr Peter Scott.		handloom, headdress, headrest, household items, musical instruments, rattle, smoking paraphernalia, stool, textiles, weapons
Madagascar	Mr J G W Biggar	1	<i>Valiha</i> instrument
Malawi	Evelyn J Stewart. Henry Brown. William Govan Robertson. Donald Sutherland. Mrs McKay. Thomas Steele Livingstone. Miss E J Stewart. Alexander Sinclair.	181	Body ornaments, canoe model, clothing, domestic utensils, fishing equipment, furniture, basketry loom, musical instruments, paddle-shaped implement, smoking paraphernalia, textiles, weapons
Mozambique	Hugh McOuat John Henderson	29	Cigar case, purse, toys, textiles, weapons
Rwanda	Wellcome Collection	1	Wrist guard
Seychelles	The Sheffield Public Museum Committee, per E Howarth, Curator	1	Flask
Somalia	William Turner H W Seton-Karr Mr Bill Ferguson	117	Clothing, household items, stone tools, weapons
South Sudan	John Dickson	5	Necklace, Shilluk head-fillet
Uganda	Mrs Alfred Peacock. Mrs Anne Rado. Miss Annie Smith. Marion Scott Stevenson.	85	Board game, body ornaments, clothing and shoes, cosmetic items, headrest, musical instruments, shields, smoking paraphernalia, stool, textiles, vessels, weapons
United Republic of Tanzania	Nikita Lysenko. Mrs Anne Rado. Representative from Tanzanian Embassy. Wellcome Collection.	70	Basketry, board game, body ornaments, clothing, cosmetic items, household items, musical instruments, sculpture, textiles, weapons
Zambia	Col James Stevenson Hamilton. Thomas Steele Livingstone.	103	Animal figurines, basketry, body ornaments, fertility charm, mask, shields, snuff paraphernalia, textiles,



	William Govan Robertson. Miss L A Lovat Fraser		tools, walking stick, weapons, woodcut
Zimbabwe	R Wilson Thom William McLean William Smith Matthew Park	133	Amulet, basketry, domestic utensils, gourd containers, headrest, household items, hunting equipment, musical instruments, ostrich egg sculpture, rattle, shields, snuff paraphernalia, textiles, tools, weapons, wood carvings
<b>Central Africa</b>		<b>489</b>	
Central Africa unspecified	Thomas Steele Livingstone	123	Basketry, body ornaments, carved figures, ceremonial weapons, clothing, comb, currency, fire-making apparatus, household items, hunting equipment, musical instruments, stool, textiles, tools, weapons
Angola	Thomas Steele Livingstone	4	Gourd bottle, plant dyestuff, textiles
Cameroon	Capt W E Giffard	8	Canoe model, mask, pottery sherds, stool
Chad	Dr David Alexander	17	Clothing, musical instruments, weapons
Democratic Republic of the Congo	A M Haz. Mrs Beatrice Heywood. Miss L A Lovat Fraser. Mrs Margaret Mather. Rev W Cassie Murdoch. Mrs Isabella Robertson. William B Scott. Wellcome Collection. Rowand Wilson. Thomas Steele Livingstone.	305	Basketry, blacksmith tools, body ornaments, canoe model, ceremonial weapons, clothing, currency, dance rattles, divinatory apparatus, domestic utensils, household items, hunting equipment, loom, mask, musical instruments, personal care items, power figure, shields, smoking paraphernalia, snuff paraphernalia, staff, stool, textiles, weapons
Equatorial Guinea	Alexander Henderson	4	Figure, ceremonial object, weapons
Gabon	Thomas and John Neil	28	Domestic utensils, carved figure, ceremonial weapons, headdress, musical instruments,

			personal care items, textiles, tools, weapons
<b>Southern Africa</b>		<b>754</b>	
Southern Africa unspecified		39	Beadwork dress items, body ornaments, hunting equipment, sherd of pottery, weapons
Botswana	Tom Hardbattle	58	Basketry, body ornaments, carved figure, clothing, domestic utensils, fire stick, household items, snuff paraphernalia, textiles, tools, weapons
Eswatini	Ludovic McLellan Mann	2	Headrest, stone implement
Lesotho	E M Krohn. Col James Stevenson Hamilton.	19	Beadwork dress items, body ornaments, domestic utensils, snuff paraphernalia, weapons
South Africa	Mrs A G Lochhead Miss L A Lovat Fraser James A Swan James Sommerville R Broom Miss E M Dewar Mr Dunlop Thomas Dunn. Col James Stevenson Hamilton. Mr Hedderwick. Margaret Hope. Wagstrom. Knight, Trustees of Rev G A Frank. Mrs James Lyon. Christopher Mackay. Mr W E Massy. Mrs Walter McFarlane. John Morrison. Mrs Lilian C Ponsford. Jean Robertson. William Govan Robertson. William Smith. Col Charles Louis Spencer. James A Swan. Trustees of the late Dr Quintin McLennan,	636	Beadwork dress items, body ornaments, carved figure, ceremonial staff, clothing and shoes, currency, domestic utensils, flint implements, gourd containers, headrests, household items, hunting equipment, mask, models, musical instruments, ostrich egg vessel, personal care items, pottery fragment, shields, smoking paraphernalia, snuff paraphernalia, stone axe heads, textiles, tools, toys, weapons

	per Messrs Baird, Winter and Cameron. Wellcome Collection. William Wilson.		
<b>Western Africa</b>		<b>1,575</b>	
Western Africa unspecified		387	Agricultural implements, body ornaments, carved tusk, clothing and shoes, currency, domestic utensils, headdress, household items, hunting equipment, musical instruments, paddle, smoking paraphernalia, staff, textiles, toys, weapons, weaving equipment
Burkina Faso	Thomas and John Neil	5	Currency, hunting equipment, musical instruments, weapons
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr A F Thompson	5	Figure, mask, weaving apparatus
Gambia	The Sheffield Public Museum Committee, per E Howarth, Curator	4	Shoes, textiles
Ghana	Sir Archibald Alison. Miss Berry, per Miss Carmichael. Barbara MacLeod (executor for estate of Margaret Burke). Margaret Aku Sika. Mrs Anne Rado. Naa Densua Tordzro. Fullerton Boyd. Edward Lovett. George G MacKenzie. Wellcome Collection. D H Moore.	282	Agricultural implements, basketry, body ornaments, ceremonial/religious equipment, clothing and shoes, coffin, currency, domestic utensils, fertility dolls, gold weighing equipment, household items, mask, model stools, musical instrument, personal care items, sculpture, smoking paraphernalia, stools, textiles, weapons
Liberia	Mrs Mary Gordon	2	Ceremonial gown, <i>kufi</i> cap
Mali	Jeff Kerzner	11	Figure, saddle bag, textiles
Nigeria	Miss Berry, per Miss Carmichael. Mark Donaldson. Mr Duncan Gillies. Mr J K Jenkins. H Macgregor, Richmond CA.	569	Altar tusk, animal figures, basketry, bell altar pieces, brass plaque, ceremonial sword, charms, clothing, commemorative altar figures, currency, divination equipment, domestic

	Executor of the Reverend J K Newton, M B. S M Nichol. Mrs C L Temple. Alexander Sinclair. Maureen Brocklehurst. Mr J A Wilson. Rev W R Inglis. Miss Gunn. Robert T Graham. John Wire. Mrs Davidson Walker.		utensils, household items, masks, masquerade costume and equipment, musical instruments, personal care items, smoking paraphernalia, snuff paraphernalia, staffs, statuettes, stools, textiles, wall ornament, warri board, weapons, wood panels
Senegal	Margaret Aku Sika	3	Headscarf, trousers, tunic
Sierra Leone	Julian & Judith Massie-Taylor and Vivien Scarth  Wellcome Collection  Thomas and John Neil  Dr Henry Scanlan RN  James Robb  Mr William Roberts	306	Adze, masks, agricultural implements, basketry, boardgame, body ornaments, calabash vessels, carved figure, charm/amulet, clothing, currency, hammock, masquerade costume, model boat, musical instruments, paddle, personal care items, snuff paraphernalia, staffs, statuettes, textiles, weapons, wooden animals
Togo		1	Bracelet

### Regions and countries represented: Caribbean

Country	Major Sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
The Lesser Antilles unspecified	Sir Thomas Graham Briggs (C Kenwick Gibbons)	1	Stone axe head
Antigua and Barbuda	William Gibson	9	2014 Commonwealth Games ephemera, seed jewellery, stone axe head
The Bahamas		5	<i>Irukere</i> , shell and fish scale jewellery
Barbados	Sir Thomas Graham Briggs (C Kenwick Gibbons)	21	2014 Commonwealth Games ephemera, contemporary artworks, figure carving, seed

			reticule, shell jewellery, shell tools
Cuba	Filiberto Mora	10	<i>Papier-mâché</i> Orisha figures symbolising the Santeria religion from Cuba
Jamaica		4	Embroidered napkin, seed rosary, section of bark from lacebark tree <i>Lagetta lagetto</i> , souvenir saltshaker
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Sir Thomas Graham Briggs (C Kenwick Gibbons)	2	Stone axes
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Sir Thomas Graham Briggs (C Kenwick Gibbons)	4	Stone axes
Trinidad and Tobago	William Gibson	2	Candlestick, silver jewellery
Culturally affiliated with the Caribbean region (within CARICOM)			
Belize		2	Artificial flower of shells, 2014 Commonwealth Games ephemera
Guyana	Miss A T Anderson MBE  Sir Gordon Lethem (Lady Katherine Lethem)  Mr J Brown	238	Basketry, body ornaments, ceramic vessels, coconut and gourd containers, costume, crafts, domestic artefacts, furnishings, furniture, hammock, hunting equipment, musical instruments, paintings, ritual and religious equipment, smoking paraphernalia, souvenirs, textiles, tools, war and dance clubs
Suriname	Robert Kirke	1	Earthenware dish

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## Selected object images

### *Africa*

Sowei mask by the carver Pessima, Sierra Leone, A.1985.13.v



*Ngaady Mwaash* dance mask, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1910.88.fw



Wooden dance shield or *ndome*, Kenya, 1910.103.o



Ceremonial shield of rhinoceros hide with red velvet and gold filigree, Ethiopia, A.1958.5.2



'Soul-washer' badge or *akrafokonmu*, Ghana, 18.1



Beadwork headdress or *Dingaka tsa dinaka*, South Africa, ETHNN.619



Tray of beaten brass work, Nigeria, 1894.58.d



Necklace or *Òdìgbà Ifá*, Nigeria, A.1979.10.a



### **Caribbean**

Flywhisk or *irukere*, horsehair with leather grip and strap, The Bahamas, 1907.42.g





Finger ring, Trinidad, 1916.37.t



Standing human figure of carved wood, eyes of shell inlay, Barbados, 1916.66.ai



Section of bark from lacebark tree, Jamaica, ETHNN.337



Orisha figure 'Osain' by Filberto Mora, 2001, Cuba, A.2002.2.1.a



# The Hunterian University of Glasgow

**Contact**      [hunterian-enquiries@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:hunterian-enquiries@glasgow.ac.uk)

## Location of collections

The Hunterian  
University of Glasgow  
82 Hillhead Street  
Glasgow  
G12 8QQ

## Size of collections

1,385 African objects  
129 Caribbean objects

## Online Collections

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/collections/#/>

## Selected objects

### ***Africa***

- *Efe Gelede* mask, Nigeria, GLAHM:E.1981.5
- *Ere ibeji* figures, Lamidi Fakeye and apprentices, 1959, Nigeria, GLAHM:112829, GLAHM:112830, GLAHM:112831, GLAHM:112832
- *Ndome* or shield, Kenya, GLAHM:E.1936.15/4
- Prayer scroll, Ethiopia, D.1955.30,
- Musical instrument, Sierra Leone, GLAHM:E.75
- *Minsere* figure, Sierra Leone, GLAHM:E.26

### ***Caribbean***

- *Queyu* or beaded apron, Guyana, GLAHM:E.192
- Clubs, Guyana, GLAHM:E.137/4, GLAHM:E.137/5, GLAHM:E.137/6, GLAHM:E.665
- Earthenware figure, Barbados, GLAHM:E.1955.7

## History of the collection

The Hunterian Museum was built on the legacy and collection of Dr William Hunter (1718 - 1783). Born locally and educated at the University of Glasgow, Hunter was renowned as a teacher of anatomy and built up a large private collection. In 1783, he bequeathed the collection to the University along with money to create a suitable museum. The Hunterian was founded in 1807, making it Scotland's oldest public museum. In 1870, the Museum and collections were moved to its current location. Today, the Hunterian collections are a Recognised Collection of National Significance and cover diverse subjects, including the history of medicine, natural sciences, and art. African and Caribbean material is predominantly held in the World Cultures and Archaeology collection and was donated to the

Museum from the early 19th century onwards, often by staff, alumni and associated individuals.

## **Overview of the collection**

### **Africa**

Around 57% of the African collection is from western Africa. This material is predominantly from Ghana, which makes up 36% of the entire African collection. Collections from eastern and southern Africa are the second largest, at around 17% each; 7% of the collection is from central Africa; and 2% is from northern Africa. Most of the objects appear to have been donated by former staff or alumni and often reflect how training in Glasgow prepared individuals for a range of colonial careers, from medicine to engineering. Missionary links are also represented.

### **Western Africa**

The large Ghanaian collection contains around 427 items of Akan gold weighing equipment, including weights, scoops, containers and scales. This material was donated by six major donors: Mrs Cathleen Duff (2015), Mr Donald Wintersgill (2004), Professor Frank Willett (2003), G Bonavia (1977), Peter Mercer Hume (1932) and Mrs F A Stewart (1931). Material also includes a collection of adinkra stamps purchased from Christie, Manson and Woods in the 1990s, and a set of model stools purchased from the same vendor in the 1980s.

The Nigerian collections are also of note, partly due to Frank Willett (1925-2006), Director of the Hunterian from 1976 to 1990. Willett was an archaeologist and worked for the Nigerian Antiquities Service in the 1950s and 1960s. He was a colleague of Nigerian artist Justus Akeredolu (1915-1984), and the collection contains a large number of Akeredolu's miniature thorn carvings. Willett was well connected to prominent Africanists in the UK, including William Fagg (1914-1992) of the British Museum. Fagg purchased objects for the Hunterian's collection that reflected his interest in sculptural form. Items acquired by Fagg include a Yoruba *Efe Gelede* mask, and the collection contains several other Nigerian masquerade masks. Willett also donated a series of four *Ere ibeji* wooden figures, carved in 1959 by renowned mid 20th-century Yoruba sculptor Lamidi Olonade Fakeye (1925-2009) and his apprentices, Ganiyu Fakeye, Joseph Fakeye, and Amusa Akande.

Some of the earliest material in the African collection is from Sierra Leone, including a *minsereh* figure donated in 1807 and musical instruments dating from the 18th or 19th centuries.

### **Eastern Africa**

Objects are mainly from Kenya, Malawi and Uganda. Much of the Kenyan material was donated by Professor William B Stevenson, brother of Church of Scotland missionary Marion Scott Stevenson (1871-1930), who was based in former British East Africa from 1907 to 1929, primarily at Tumutumu. The collection from Stevenson is predominantly listed as Kikuyu and includes shields, body ornaments, rattles and wooden figures. Most of the material from Malawi, including charms, body ornaments and pipes, was donated in 1911 by Dr William Young Turner Junior. Turner became a Presbyterian Medical Missionary in 1905 and worked at the United Presbyterian Church mission station at Bandawe on the shores of Lake Malawi from 1905 until 1911.

Much Ugandan material was donated by Scottish entomologist Alexander Haddow (1907-1976) who is recognised for his work at the Uganda Virus Research Institute from the 1940s to 1960s. Objects include knives, billhooks and headrests and many come with specific geographic provenance information. The Ugandan collection also includes colourful woven mats and baskets, arrows, knives and stools, dating from the mid 1960s and donated by J and M Calder.

### ***Southern Africa***

Like other museums across Scotland, the Hunterian has many southern African objects that are not currently attributed to specific countries. They were donated by diverse individuals and would benefit from further research. Within the sizeable southern African collection, two major donors stand out. Around 38 objects, including armlets, spoons, spears, pipes and stone candlesticks, were donated in 1877 by Dr Johann Balthazar Knobel (1853-1931). A South African medic of German ancestry, Knobel undertook medical training at the University of Glasgow during the 1870s before returning home to enter practice. Another 81 objects, including stone tools, ostrich eggshell necklaces, tortoiseshell containers, hairpin, armlets, and medicine, were donated Dr Percy Ward Laidler in 1925. Laidler was a British expatriate dental surgeon and amateur archaeologist based in South Africa throughout the early 20th century. It should be noted that both men are also recorded as giving southern African human remains to the University of Glasgow, and that human remains collected by Laidler in the Northern Cape are also to be found in the collections of the Iziko South African Museum.

### ***Caribbean***

Around 52% of the Caribbean collection is from Guyana. The second largest collection is from Suriname (19%), followed by Grenada (12%), Belize (10%), Barbados (5%) and Jamaica (2%). Most of this material, apart from archaeological material, dates from the 19th century.

The collection from Guyana contains blow pipes, quivers, darts, clubs, baskets, arrows, beaded 'aprons', a flute, and knuckle dusters. Much of this material would have been made by indigenous groups of people, possibly living inland. Notable material includes a collection of around ten beaded 'aprons' or *queyu* that were transferred from the Andersonian museum and are dated from 1700 to 1888. The collection also contains around 15 clubs of various designs and shapes that could potentially date from the late 1700s or early 1800s.

Notable donors of the Guyanese material include Dr Alexander Napier (1851-1928) who gave darts, blow pipes and quivers in 1880. Napier was Professor of Materia Medica at the University of Glasgow's Medical School. As a young man, he served as ship's doctor aboard Cunard Line transatlantic services for two years and it is thought his Guyanese donations are attributable to this time. Martha Brown of Lanfine donated several clubs in 1898 that probably belonged to her father, Thomas Brown of Lanfine (1774-1853), a surgeon and Deputy Professor of Botany at the University of Glasgow from 1799 to 1816.

The collection from Suriname was almost entirely donated by Mrs Barber in 1878 and consists mainly of bows and arrows. Material from Barbados, Belize and Grenada was mostly donated in the 20th century and is archaeological in nature. Objects include stone and conch shell tools and implements, pot sherds and earthenware figures recorded as Maya. Material from Belize was donated by Dr David R Stoddart (1937-2014), an English physical geographer and expert in coral cays and atolls. In 1983, he donated a small collection of Maya plainware sherds to the Hunterian, following a period of geographical fieldwork on Grand Bogue Island in Belize.



### **Associated material**

The African collection contains five gramophone records from South Africa and three photographs from Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Archives and Special Collections at the University of Glasgow holds documentary material from Willett associated with his time in Nigeria and likely much relevant material for the whole review. The Hunterian Library holds further documentary material from Willett.

### **Notable donors**

Martha Brown of Lanfine, daughter and executrix of Thomas Brown of Lanfine (1774-1853)  
Prof John W Gregory (1864-1932)  
Professor Alexander Haddow (1912-1978)  
Peter Mercer Hume (d.1934)  
Dr Johann Balthazar Knobel (1853-1931)  
Dr Percy Ward Laidler (dates unknown)  
Dr Euan W MacKie (1836-2020)  
Dr Alexander Napier (1851-1928)  
Marion Scott Stevenson (1871-1930)  
Dr David R Stoddart (1937-2014)  
Frank Willett (1925-2006)  
Dr William Young Turner Jnr (dates unknown)

### **Areas for further research**

Although much of the Hunterian's collection of African material is relatively contemporary compared to other Scottish museums, some items have been stylistically attributed to the 18th or 19th centuries, and parts of the collection are recorded as being transferred from the Andersonian Museum in 1889. The Andersonian Museum collection grew from 1796 and was opened to the public in 1831, and this early material may be of particular interest for future research.

Staff have noted that Harold Saxon, the grandfather of Professor David H Saxon, was employed by the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, and the objects that he donated from Ghana, Nigeria and Mali may date from 1873-1945. Further research, particularly into some of the Hausa garments, would be beneficial.

This review identified a prayer scroll from Ethiopia that warrants further research. Similar objects have been found across Scotland, often unregistered, and they appear to be quite early. Some have direct links to the British siege of Maqdala in 1868.

The Hunterian holds an unusual collection of 71 spears and two knives from Gabon, recorded as Fang and donated in 1830 by a currently unidentified W Wales. Nothing is currently known about the donor and provenance of the objects but, given their nature and early date, further research is warranted.

Frank Willett was an important figure in the mid to late 20th-century development of African art studies, particularly in relation to Nigerian material. The collection that he acquired, alongside rich archival holdings in the University's Special Collections department and the Hunterian Library, are an important source for scholars studying this period and associated individuals.

The entire Caribbean collection would benefit from further research. Of particular note is the very early material from Guyana, including the clubs and beaded aprons or *queyu*, as well as other more unusual items like jaguar-bone shamanic flutes and a feathered comb. Little is currently known about how and when these objects were collected. The collection from Suriname is relatively unusual in Scotland as it came from a former Dutch colony. Specialists may be interested in the archaeological material from Barbados, Belize and Grenada.

### Human remains and casts

At the time of writing, the Hunterian holds partial sets of skeletal human remains from seven individuals that are identified as originating from Africa. These are currently held in the World Cultures collection (four people) and the Anatomy collection (three people, plus two plaster face-casts taken from life in the mid-19th century). All nine of the above entered the Museum's collections between 1848 and 1925. The four in World Cultures originate from the Northern Cape Province, South Africa (three people) and the Western Cape Province (one person). The three in the Anatomy collection originated in South Africa or Namibia (two people) and West Africa (one person). More accurate information about the origin of these individuals is not currently available.

### Regions and countries represented: Africa

Region/country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
<b>Africa unspecified</b>		<b>15</b>	
	Prof Frank Willett. Mr Andrew H Bishop. The Andersonian Museum. W Liddle, Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum.		Bowl, fork, knife, musical instrument, shirt, smoking-pipe, quiver, spear, spear-shaft, spoon, tooth-pick, tunic
<b>Northern Africa</b>		<b>20</b>	
Northern Africa unspecified	Mrs N Carrick Mr Emil Rado	3	Bracelet, figure
Egypt	Prof William B Stevenson	4	Booklet, charm
Morocco	M Robertson-Marshall	1	Musical instrument
Sudan	Prof Mike Hansell. Scottish Development Board. Sir Archibald Hunter. Miss Storrie. Misses Cameron. Purchase from Christie, Manson and Woods. Mrs N Carrick.	12	Arrow, bracelet, cup, headrest, necklace, spear, ring, tobacco pipe
<b>Eastern Africa</b>		<b>237</b>	

Eastern Africa unspecified	Scottish Development Board. Dr Robert L Turner. Prof William B Stevenson. Mr and Mrs D C Andrew. Prof John W Gregory. Prof Alexander J Haddow.	52	Adze, armlet, arrow, axe, bag, ball, bead, bow, bracelet, club, ear-ornament, figure, flake, girdle, gunpowder-horn, manilla, model, necklet, pounder, purse, quern, scraper, shield, sketchbook, spear, spear head, spoon, strap, weight, whip
Ethiopia	Joseph Swift Peter Holmes	6	Knife sheath, paintings, scroll
Kenya	J & M Calder. Mr and Mrs D C Andrew. Joseph Swift. Prof Alexander J Haddow. Prof John W Gregory. Prof William B Stevenson. Transferred from Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum.	81	Anklet, armlet, arrow, basket, bell, bottle, bowl, bracelet, bullroarer, canoe, charm, club, collar, core, cowbell, earring, fastener, feather, flake, girdle, gunpowder horn, initiation shield, knife, pot, necklace necklet, neck ring, peace emblem, quiver, shield, snuff box, spear, stool, sword, thigh bell, tool/implement, whip
Malawi	President Elson Bakili Muluzi. Dr William Y Turner Jnr. Dr Hastings Banda.	34	Anklet, basket, charm, charm anklet, charm bracelet, charm necklace, chair, club, figure, fire stick, flywhisk, medicine container, quiver, sandpaper, smoking pipe
Rwanda	J & M Calder	1	Arrow
Somalia	J & M Calder H W Seton-Kerr	2	Spear head, stone tool
Uganda	J & M Calder  Prof Alexander J Haddow  Prof William B Stevenson	50	Arrow, atlas, barkcloth, basket, billhook, bottle, bow, button castanet, finger-knife, flywhisk, headrest, knife, knife sheath, map, mat, neck ring, pot, rattle, <i>sansa</i> , shield, sketchbook, spearhead, staff, stool
United Republic of Tanzania	Prof Alexander J Haddow	3	Boat model, comb, staff
Zambia	Mrs Joyce S Avery	7	Bow, painting, spear, <i>sansa</i>
Zimbabwe	Prof R Pickford	1	Axe

<b>Central Africa</b>		<b>94</b>	
Angola		1	Quartz flake
Cameroon	Dix Noonan Webb	1	Currency
Republic of Congo/ Democratic Republic of the Congo	Dix Noonan Webb	1	Currency
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Purchase from Dolphin Coins. Mrs Maureen L Robertson. Prof Frank Willett. Dix Noonan Webb. J & M Calder. Dr Alexander Napier. Prof Alexander J Haddow. Prof Frank Willett. Purchase from Christie, Manson and Woods.	16	Arrow, blade, bow, bracelet, chair, currency, figure, mask, mat, textile
Gabon	W Wales	75	Knife, spears
<b>Southern Africa</b>		<b>235</b>	
Southern Africa unspecified	Dr Johann B Knobel. Miss Ramsay. Dr G D Ross. Scottish Development Board. Dr Allen Thomson. Transferred from The Andersonian Museum. Miss Annie Murray. Dr Percy W Laidler. Queen Margaret College, Glasgow. Miss Buchanan. Mr & Mrs D C Andrew. Transferred from University of Glasgow Library, Special Collections. Prof Stevenson. Transferred from Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum.	59	Adze, armlet, arrow, bag, belt, bow, club, spear, dance shield, figure, flywhisk, girdle, horse whip, knife, macehead, necklace, ornament, pendant, pipe, polisher, pounder, powder box container, purse, shield, spoon, walking-stick
Botswana	Mrs Maureen L Robertson. Dr Alexander Napier. Dr Percy W Laidler.	8	Bag, boat, charm, collar, kohl pot, macehead, model, pendant, quiver

Namibia	Dr Andy Mills Dr Percy W Laidler	17	Bag, bangle, cape, ear ornament, girdle, mat, pipe
South Africa	Transferred from The Royal Scottish Museum. Dr Andy Mills. Dr J A Blain. William Y Turner. Dr Johann B Knobel. Dr Dalziel. Scottish Development Board. Miss Ramsay. Dr G D. Ross. Miss Fullarton. Dr Percy W Laidler. Dr Euan W Mackie.	151	Apron, armlet, arrow, bag, basket, blade, bow, brooch, bullet, candlestick, collar, container, core, cosmetic box, decorated egg, flake, girdle, gunpowder horn, hammerstone, handaxe, knife, macehead, medicine, necklace, pipe, polisher, quern, scraper, shirt, smoking pipe, spear, spoon
<b>Western Africa</b>		<b>784</b>	
Western Africa unspecified	Prof David H Saxon Hugh L Anderson Jnr Lt H S Walton M Robson Mr Emil Rado Prof Frank Willett	15	Axe, barkcloth, bow, currency, cushion, musical instrument, quiver, ornament, spear
Benin	P Mercer Hume	1	Figure
Burkina Faso	Purchase from Christie, Manson and Woods	1	Figure
Côte d'Ivoire	Prof Frank Willett W Fagg	2	Masks
Ghana	G Bonavia G Davies Lt H S Walton Mr Andrew H Bishop Mr Donald Wintersgill Mrs F A Stewart P Mercer Hume Prof Frank Willett. Purchase from Christie, Manson and Woods.	499	Adze, brush, drum, figure, gold dust balance, gold dust box, gold dust scoop, gold weights, model stool, talking drum, whetstone
Mali	Prof David H Saxon. Commonwealth Institute Scotland. Mr Emil Rado. P Mercer Hume.	40	Anklet, metal figurine, spear
Nigeria	Prof Frank Willett Prof David H Saxon Mrs Cathleen Duff Mrs Joyce S Avery	208	Apron, axe, bead, book, bowl, bracelet, canoe, cap, ceremonial stave, chesspiece, chopper,



	Mrs Connie Willett Prof William Hastie J Scott Prof John W Gregory William C Cowan Dr J M Hendry. Purchase from Christie, Manson and Woods. Miss Sophie Docherty Mrs Marion Robson Mr M Egan Mrs U L Isenburg Peter Hall Mrs June Hutcheson Mr Doig Simons Mr A Clarke		cushion, dagger, divination bowl, divination chain, doll, fan, figure, firescreen, flake, hat, <i>ibeji</i> Koran, mask, model, overgarment, panel, paper knife, pouch, pounder, <i>sansa</i> , sash, skirt, souvenir, spear, spoon, table, talking drum, tapper, textile, tobacco pipe, tray, trousers, tunic
Senegal	Prof Frank Willett Dix Noonan Webb	5	Gourd, pottery
Sierra Leone	Mrs E Bell William Hart Dr Hart K Bovey Mr A Aitken Prof Frank Willett Ronald Lean. Scottish Development Board. Purchase from Christie, Manson and Woods.	13	Comb, currency, figure, mask, musical instrument, sherd, sling,

### Regions and countries represented: Caribbean

Country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
Barbados	G T Barton	7	Axe, conch shell hoe, earthenware figure, scraper, sherd,
Grenada	Dr Euan W Mackie. Prof John W Gregory.	16	Axe, pot sherds, set of stone implements
Jamaica	Donated by Queen Margaret College, Glasgow from Miss Jeanie Cockburn. Peter Fisher.	2	Bag, lacebark
Culturally affiliated with the Caribbean region (within CARICOM)			

Belize	Dr David R Stoddart Dr Euan W Mackie	13	Blade, sherds
Guyana	Transferred from The Andersonian Museum. Dr Alexander Napier Mrs Barber. Rev Dr George Turner. Martha Brown of Lanfine.	67	Apron, arrowhead, basket, blowpipe, comb, clubs, darts, duster, flute, knuckle duster, necklace, quiver, rattle
Suriname	Mrs Barber	24	Arrow, bow, staff

### Published Information

Campbell, M, N Flis and L Sanchez-Jauregui (2018). *William Hunter and the Anatomy of the Modern Museum*. New Haven: Yale Center for British Art.

Keppie, L (2007). *William Hunter and the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow, 1807-2007*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

## Selected object images

*Efe Gelede* mask, Nigeria, GLAHM:E.1981.5



*Ere ibeji* figures, Lamidi Fakeye and apprentices, 1959, Nigeria, GLAHM:112829, GLAHM:112830, GLAHM:112831, GLAHM:112832



*Ndome* or shield, Kenya, GLAHM:E.1936.15/4





Detail of prayer scroll, Ethiopia, D.1955.30



Musical instrument, Sierra Leone, GLAHM:E.75



*Minsere* figure, Sierra Leone, GLAHM:E.26





## **Caribbean**

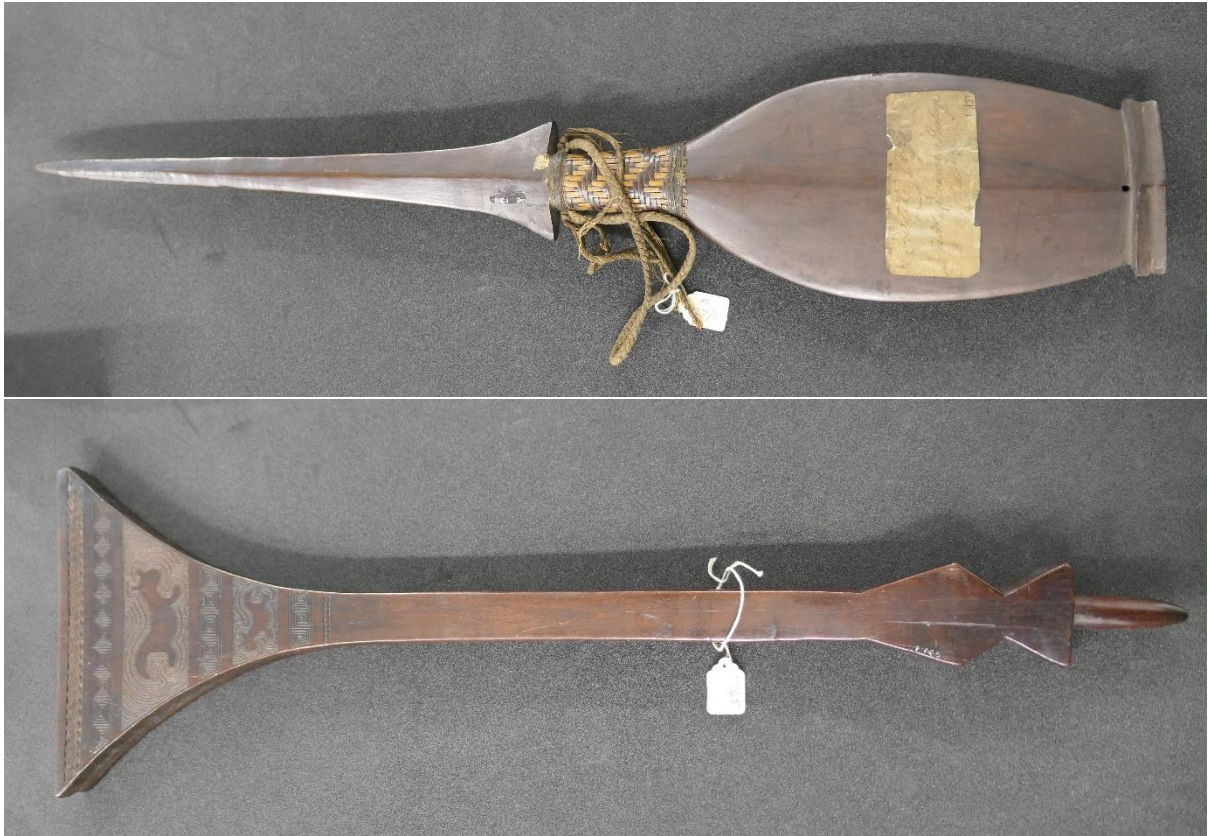
Detail of *Queyu* or beaded apron, Guyana, GLAHM:E.192



Clubs, Guyana, GLAHM:E.137/4, GLAHM:E.137/5, GLAHM:E.137/6, GLAHM:E.665







Earthenware figure, Barbados, GLAHM:E.1955.7



# Paisley Museum

## OneRen

**Contact**      [paisleymuseum@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:paisleymuseum@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

### Location of collections

Paisley Museum	The Secret Collection
High Street	9 High Street
Paisley	Paisley
PA1 2BA	PA1 2AE

### Size of collections

493 African objects  
27 Caribbean objects

### Selected objects

#### ***Africa***

- *Ekpe* costume, Nigeria, TEMP.2018.52
- Headrest, Kenya, 1906.538.bf
- *Agbada*, Western Africa/ Nigeria/ Equatorial Guinea, TEMP.2017.2325
- Brass dish, Nigeria, TEMP.2017.3801

#### ***Caribbean***

- Beaded dress item or *Vorskokki*, Suriname, no number

### History of the collection

Paisley Museum was Scotland's first municipal museum and opened in 1871, funded by Peter Coats, a partner in the large firm of thread makers, J&P Coats. The museum originally housed large collections amassed by the Paisley Philosophical Society since 1808. In 1882, art and sculpture galleries were added, and the building was further extended in 1901 and 1933. Collections from Africa and the Caribbean appear to have been predominantly donated after the extension of the museum in 1882, at which point the institution had a specific space to display objects taken from colonies around the globe. At the time of writing, the museum is closed to the public for major redevelopment. Collections have been decanted and are held at The Secret Collection, the first publicly accessible museum store on a UK high street.

### Overview of the collection

#### ***Africa***

Around 42% of the African collection is currently unattributed to a country or region. Approximately 29% comes from eastern Africa, 13% from western Africa, 12% from southern Africa, 4% from northern Africa, and less than 1% from central Africa. Recent documentation updates have assigned countries, but staff acknowledge that historic and present-day distribution of ethnic groups means that many objects could potentially be recorded under

different countries. The largest collections from single countries originate from Tanzania (12% of entire African collection), Nigeria (11%), South Africa (10%) and Kenya (9%).

Much of the Tanzanian and Kenyan material was donated by Scottish engineer William Carlile Fraser (1861-1911) who travelled to eastern Africa to work on the Uganda Railway, which was constructed in the 1890s. He donated a collection of around 150 objects that staff have identified as Chaga, Massai, Bantu, Taita, Taveta, Rombo, Kamba, and Ugweno material. The collection consists of weaponry, shields, headrests, domestic utensils, instruments, game boards, models of household items, snuff boxes and clothing. Another key eastern African collection was donated in 1953 from James Charles Hunter, whose family annually funded Scottish mission houses across eastern Africa. The collection is very similar to that donated by Fraser but also contains shields supposedly taken by Ugandan statesman Semei Kakungulu (1869-1928) at Mount Elgon in 1901 when fighting for British colonists against Bantu groups.

According to recent research undertaken by staff, the Nigerian collections originate almost entirely from the Presbyterian mission at Akwa Akpa (known as Old Calabar during the colonial era). They were donated directly by Scottish missionary Euphemia Sutherland (1820-1821), or via Mary Henderson of Park, between 1871 and 1882. Objects include 'secret society' clothing, masks and a headdress, domestic utensils, Efik dictionaries, textiles, basketry, satchels, currency, fans, and combs.

The South African collections require further research and were donated by multiple individuals, including Scottish trader and politician Sir William Dunn (1833-1912). It is likely that many of the South African objects were taken during, or as a result of, colonial warfare in the region. For example, some of the shields, weaponry and objects of everyday use are recorded as being taken during the so-called Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. There are also examples of clothing, recorded as belonging to a Zulu chief.

Other objects of note include a brass dish which was reportedly donated by Efik Prince Magnus Ephraim Adam-Duke (possibly 1842-1890) of southern Nigeria, and a large indigo *agbada*, probably Hausa or Nupe, thought to have been donated by Royal Navy Officer and hydrographic surveyor Captain Charles Gepp Robinson (1805-1875). Robinson surveyed the eastern coast of Africa from 1821. The *agbada* is likely a very early example and staff believe it may have been collected in Bioko Island (Equatorial Guinea) before 1829 when Robinson was stationed there. Records highlight that the Museum once had a smoking pipe belonging to King Kofi Karikari, which was taken in 1874 during the sack of Kumasi, and an 'Abyssinian missal' taken during the sack of Maqdala in 1868. However, these objects have historically been unidentifiable within the collection and are therefore deemed to be lost.

### **Caribbean**

At the time of writing, staff are aware of 27 items in the collections that originate from the Caribbean. Three of these objects are clubs or *macana*, most likely collected in former British Guyana during the 19th century. The remaining 24 objects originate from present day Suriname and were donated by Henry Guillaume Wesenhagen in 1884. The collection consists mainly of basketwork and domestic utensils, in addition to baby toys and a rattle, and beadwork dress items. Historical records appear to note versions of local names for some of these objects. For example, *Sugi Notto* ('a type of nut'), *Blakka Podhi* ('a doll representing a female'), *Paletu Tikie* ('for stirring or beating eggs'), *Nawaja* ('for fanning the fire'), *Pagara* ('Jewel basket'), *Manari* ('sieve'), *Kerki Bockoe* ('Religious Book'). Wesenhagen grew up in the capital, Paramaribo. His father was a colonial official put in

place by the Governor of Suriname to sign receipts for the allowance of compensation to be paid to plantation owners following the abolition of slavery by the Netherlands in 1863.

### Notable donors

Prince Magnus Ephraim Adam-Duke (possibly 1842-1890)

Sir William Dunn (1833-1912)

William Carlile Fraser (1861-1911)

Captain Charles Gepp Robinson (1805 -1875)

Euphemia Sutherland (c.1820-1881)

Henry Guillaume Wesenhagen (dates unknown)

### Areas for further research

Approximately 42% of the African collection is not currently attributed to a specific country or region and further research and documentation updates would make this material more accessible. In particular, the eastern African collections from Uganda and Kenya, and the southern African collection, would benefit from further research.

It is very likely that there are more Caribbean items than those identified during this review, and further investigations and visual surveys may bring these to light. Material from former Dutch colonies in the Caribbean is relatively unusual in Scottish museums and for this reason the material from Suriname would benefit from further research. Some of the objects from Suriname have yet to be identified in the collection.

For the Nigerian collections associated with Euphemia Sutherland, researchers may find useful information in the publication *Memorials of Mrs. Sutherland, missionary, Old Calabar*, by Agnes Waddel (1883).

### Regions and countries represented: Africa

Region/country	Major Sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
<b>Africa unspecified</b>		<b>206</b>	
	William Carlile Fraser. Stuart H Brown. James Charles Hunter. Dr J A Dickson John Taylor Sir William Dunn Miss A Crawford		Armour, basketry, domestic utensils, musical instruments, personal ornaments, smoking equipment, snuff containers, weapons
<b>Northern Africa</b>		<b>18</b>	
Algeria	Mrs James Miller	17	Musical instruments
Sudan		1	Knife sheath
<b>Eastern Africa</b>		<b>141</b>	
Eastern Africa unspecified	Miss McEwan	1	Pipe
Kenya	William Carlile Fraser	45	Domestic utensils, headrest, musical

	James Charles Hunter		instruments, personal ornaments, snuff containers, textiles, weapons and armour, wooden figure
Somalia	William Carlile Fraser	8	Domestic utensils, footwear, musical instrument, weapons and armour
United Republic of Tanzania	William Carlile Fraser Eric L Hellyer	61	Armour, domestic utensils, model household items, personal ornaments, stool, textiles and costume, walking stick, weapons
Uganda	James Charles Hunter	15	Armour, domestic utensils, footwear, musical instruments, textiles, weapons
Zimbabwe	Mr C Souter James Charles Hunter J B Reid	11	Domestic utensils, wooden animal figurines
<b>Central Africa</b>		<b>4</b>	
Central Africa unspecified	A M Stewart	1	Model loom
Democratic Republic of the Congo	James Murray	1	Wooden figure
Gabon		2	Armlet, whip
<b>Southern Africa</b>		<b>61</b>	
Southern Africa unspecified	James Charles Hunter	7	Domestic utensils, textiles, weapons
Botswana	J Robertson Cochrane	1	Necklace
South Africa	Miss Kelso Mrs Holm Alexander Love Stuart H Brown James Charles Hunter James Russell Sir William Dunn L Gow Esq	53	Beadwork, domestic utensils, headrests, personal ornaments, snuff container, textiles, weapons and armour
<b>Western Africa</b>		<b>63</b>	
Western Africa unspecified	Robert Hart	1	Model canoe
Gambia	A G Stewart	2	Musical instrument, weapon



Ghana	William Orr	4	Bowl, medical equipment, pipe
Nigeria	Euphemia Miller Sutherland. Mrs Henderson of Park. Phillip Craig Mrs Flynn R C Clark Robert C McWhirter John McKim	56	Basketry, ceremonial costume, domestic utensils, fan, footwear, hammock, loom, mask/headdress, musical instruments, paddles, personal care items, textiles

### Regions and countries represented: Caribbean

Country	Major Sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
Culturally affiliated with the Caribbean region (within CARICOM)			
Guyana		3	Clubs
Suriname	Henry Guillaume Wesenhagen	24	Basketwork utensils, beadwork 'apron', cigar stand, 'doll', domestic utensils, shell utensils, religious book, toys and rattles

### Published Information

Fagan, Joel (2003). 'Paisley's Empire: Representation, Collection and Display'. In Emma Bond and Michael Morris (eds), *Scotland's Transnational Heritage: Legacies of Empire and Slavery*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023, 120-35.



## Selected object images

*Ekpe* costume, Nigeria, TEMP.2018.52



Headrest, Kenya, 1906.538.bf



*Agbada*, Western Africa/ Nigeria/ Bioko Island, TEMP.2017.2325





Brass dish, Nigeria, TEMP.2017.3801



Beaded dress item or *Vorskokki*, Suriname, no number



# Rozelle House Museum and Galleries

## South Ayrshire Council

**Contact**      [rozelle.house@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:rozelle.house@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

### Location of collections

Rozelle House Museum and Galleries  
Rozelle Park  
Monument Road  
Ayr  
KA7 4NQ

SAC Museum Store  
Ayr Grammar & Archive Centre  
South Harbour Street  
Ayr  
KA7 1JA

### Size of collections

4 African objects  
3 Caribbean objects

### Selected objects

#### ***Africa***

- 'Trumbash', Democratic Republic of the Congo, AYRRH:000533
- Knife, Democratic Republic of the Congo, AYRRH:2002.15.2

#### ***Caribbean***

- Stone axehead, probably West Indies, 1906 SAC
- Large stone axe head, probably West Indies, 1908 SAC

### History of the collection

Rozelle House Museum and Galleries displays objects, artefacts and works of art from the South Ayrshire Council collections. It houses the Maclaurin Art Gallery and the Ayrshire Yeomanry Museum. Rozelle House was gifted to the Royal Burgh of Ayr in 1968 by the Hamilton family whose ancestor, Robert Hamilton, co-owner of two Jamaican plantations, had originally bought the estate when it was sold to reduce the Burgh debt. Rozelle House, built on the profits of the trafficking of enslaved people, was named after his La Rochelle plantation.

### Overview of the collection

#### ***Africa***

The African collection is comprised of two knives from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and a collection of oyster shells and stone hand axe from eastern Africa. One of the Congolese knives is a 'trumbash', a ceremonial and prestige weapon typical of the Mangbetu people. A historic museum label suggests that the oyster shells and hand axe are from excavations led by British archaeologist Henry Seton-Karr (1853-1914) in eastern Africa (1893) and present-day Somalia (1896).

### **Caribbean**

The Caribbean objects that come under the remit of this review are three stone axe heads, probably originating from the West Indies.

### **Associated material**

Associated African material includes a 1909 one cent coin from former East Africa Protectorate.

The collection includes natural science material from the Caribbean, including a sample of unidentified wood, a bag of cashew nuts, a bag of nuts from the nutmeg tree, a jar of castor oil seeds, and samples of sealed sugar cane. These items are all recorded as coming from Grenada, West Indies.

### **Notable donors**

Henry Seton-Karr (1853-1914)

### **Areas for further research**

The historical connections that Rozelle House has to Jamaica through Robert Hamilton suggest that the Caribbean collection would benefit from further research, including the associated natural science material listed below.

### **Regions and countries represented: Africa**

Region/country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
<b>Eastern Africa</b>		<b>2</b>	
Eastern Africa unspecified	Henry Seton-Karr	1	Palaeolithic tools (oyster shells)
Somalia	Henry Seton-Karr	1	Stone hand axe
<b>Central Africa</b>		<b>2</b>	
Democratic Republic of the Congo		2	Knives

### **Regions and countries represented: Caribbean**

Country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
West Indies unspecified		3	Stone axe heads



## Selected object images

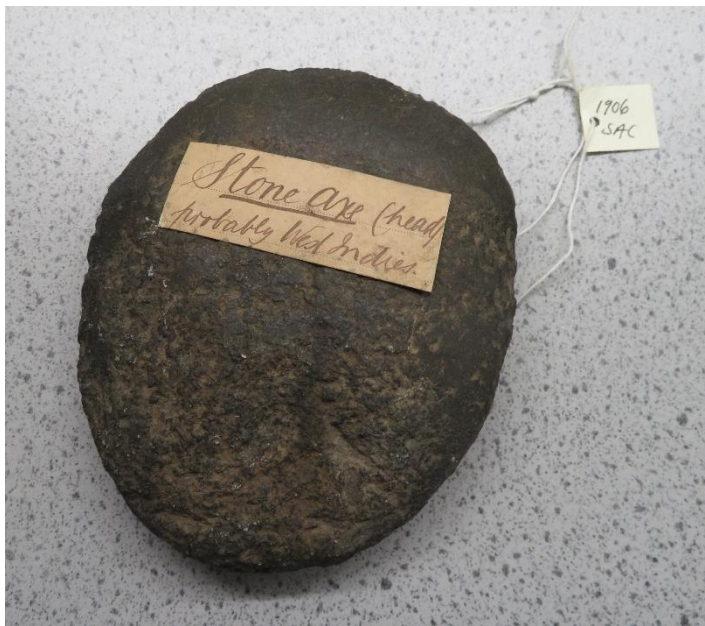
'Trumbash', Democratic Republic of the Congo, AYRRH:000533



Knife, Democratic Republic of the Congo, AYRRH:2002.15.2



Stone axe head, probably West Indies, 1906 SAC



Large stone axe head, probably West Indies, 1908 SAC



# The Watt Institution Inverclyde Council

**Contact**      [wattinstitution@inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:wattinstitution@inverclyde.gov.uk)

## Location of collections

Watt Institution  
15 Kelly Street  
Greenock  
PA16 8JX

## Size of collections

155 African objects  
9 Caribbean objects

## Online Collections

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/heritage-services/collections/collections-online>

## Selected objects

### ***Africa***

- *Aken'ni Elao* or altar tusk, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1230
- *Eroro* or bell, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1162
- *Egba* or bracelet, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1171
- *Isanren* or key, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1175
- *Agbada* or dagger, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1177
- Stool, Ghana, 1987.271
- Tobacco pipe bowl, Nigeria, 1987.234
- Fan, Nigeria, 1987.232
- Prayer scroll, Ethiopia, 1987.268

### ***Caribbean***

- *Macana* or clubs, Guyana, 1981.569 + 1981.572
- Sailor's Valentine, Barbados, 1981.1417

## History of the collection

The Watt Institution comprises the McLean Museum and Art Gallery, the Watt Library and Inverclyde Archives. The Watt Library opened in 1837. The majority of the African and Caribbean collections belong to the McLean Museum and Art Gallery, which opened in 1876 as an addition to the Watt Library. Much of the material dates from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and includes weapons, utilitarian and ceremonial items, musical instruments and personal items such as jewellery. Much of the collection reflects the activities of people from Inverclyde across the British Empire.

## Overview of the collection

It was not possible to obtain an inventory of the African and Caribbean collections during this review. This report has been compiled from the Inverclyde Council online collections search and a visual survey conducted in March 2023. It should be noted that the *Wider World* survey (1994) identified around 250 African objects, so it is possible that the actual size of the collection is larger than the current estimate suggests.

### **Africa**

According to those records available at the time of writing, 39% of the entire African collection is currently attributed to western Africa, 20% to southern Africa, 18% to eastern Africa, 5% to northern Africa and 3% to central Africa. Around 15% is not currently attributed to a country or region.

This review has identified around 18 objects from Benin City, Nigeria, donated in 1919 by William Northrup McMillan (1872-1925). These were potentially taken during the British sacking of Benin City in 1897 by Major Charles Ringer (1860-1912). McMillan bought a Kenyan hunting estate from Ringer in 1906 and he may have acquired the material as part of this sale.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively, museum records suggest that McMillan may have purchased the material when he moved to London in 1898 and acquired various items from western Africa. This material was identified during a visual survey with the discovery of an *Aken'ni Elao*, or carved altar tusk, featuring bands of carved design and symbols of an *Ada* or ceremonial sword. These objects were placed at the ancestral shrines of the *Qba* (traditional rulers of the Kingdom of Benin). Further investigations on the online database suggest that the museum also holds four *Eroro* or brass bells, eight *Egba* or bracelets/armlets (five ivory, three metal), one *Isanren* or key, three *Agbada* or daggers, and one 'skewer or pin bracelet'. This material is likely to be the residue of a larger collection that was transferred to National Museums Scotland in the 1990s. Staff were not aware that material from Benin City, Nigeria, remained in the collection.

Also of note is a carved wooden stool from Ghana that was transferred to the museum from the Watt Library in 1876. It is possible that this stool was taken during the so-called Anglo-Asante wars of the 1870s, but further research is needed to determine provenance. The donor described the stool as being from Cape Coast Castle, Ghana.

The western African collection also contains several items donated by Olive Temple (1880-1936) who travelled through western and central Africa from August 1910 to May 1911 (eg 1987.234 + 1987.232). She collected extensively and donated material to National Museums Scotland, Liverpool Museum, the Pitt Rivers Museum and the British Museum. Items include a circular metal fan from Northern Nigeria, tobacco pipes and bracelets.

Records suggest that many of the southern African objects were accessioned in the 1870s to 1890s, and two shields are recorded as being taken from the Battle of Isandlwana (22 January 1879). This was the first major encounter in the so-called Anglo-Zulu War between the British Empire and the Zulu Kingdom and resulted in a major defeat for the British forces. It is possible that some of the South African beadwork and other items were also taken from conflicts around this time.

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<sup>1</sup> See Phillips, Barnaby (2021). *Loot: Britain and the Benin Bronzes*. London: Oneworld Publications, p183 for more information about the relationship between Ringer and McMillan.

This review identified an Ethiopian prayer scroll that would benefit from further research. It was donated by Thomas Pettigrew of Greenock in 1890. The Museum also holds an interesting and early collection of headrests from southern and eastern Africa, including ornate examples from South Africa and Zimbabwe. Some of these have donor names and dates attached, for example one from Mozambique that was donated by James Duncan (1834-1905) in 1891. Duncan was a Scottish sugar refiner and friend of missionary David Livingstone, who may have given him the headrest.

### **Caribbean**

Highlights of the Caribbean material include four clubs or *macana* from Guyana. These hardwood block clubs are bound with fibre and have thongs or handles attached. They are recorded as coming from the historic Demerara region and the Macusi (or Macushi) people. The Museum also holds an octagonal, glass-fronted, hinged wooden box inlaid with intricate and symmetrical designs of seashells, known as a 'Sailor's Valentine'. It is understood that these objects were made by women in Barbados in the mid-1800s and sold to sailors as souvenirs.

### **Associated material**

The collection contains a 19th-century treaty on paper between 'King Pepple' of the River Bonny, Nigeria, and British naval officers Robert Taylor and Charles Caine from the ships *Lady Worsely* and *Georgiana*, dated 2nd December 1849. 'King Pepple' was William Dappa Pepple I (Dappa Perekule) who died in 1866. The document was given to the Museum in 1877 by Mr C P Choun.

### **Notable donors**

James Duncan (1834-1905)

William Northrup McMillan (1872-1925)

Olive Susan Miranda Temple (1880-1936)

### **Areas for further research**

Greenock's wealth in the 19th century and links to various colonial enterprises make it likely that more notable material would be identified with auditing and archival research. The whole African collection would benefit from further research, and it is probable that more Caribbean material could be identified in the collection. The online collections search does list some donors and accession dates, which may provide research leads for objects not covered in this report.

### **Regions and countries represented: Africa**

Region/country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
<b>Africa unspecified</b>		<b>23</b>	
	David McAllister  William Northrup McMillan  Arthur Oughterson Leitch		Axe, basket, boat model, bottle, comb, dagger, flywhisk, headrest, horn, musical instrument, necklace, skimmer, spatula, spearhead, spoon

<b>Northern Africa</b>		<b>11</b>	
Northern Africa unspecified		1	Dagger
Egypt	James Watson	1	Pen holder
Libya		1	Pot sherds
Morocco		1	Sword
Sudan		3	Daggers, throwing knives
Tunisia	Mr Saville James McCunn	4	Oil lamp, religious plaque
<b>Eastern Africa</b>		<b>27</b>	
Ethiopia	Thomas Pettigrew	8	Headrests, musical instruments, scroll, stone reliquary, sword
Kenya	William Northrup McMillan	3	Tusks
Madagascar	John Tait	1	Grass mat
Mozambique	Joseph Duncan Scott. William A Cameron. Grierson Macara.	3	Headrest, hide dress, ivory beads
Somalia	William Davidson. William Northrup McMillan.	5	Clubs, dagger, shield, spoon
Uganda	William Northrup McMillan	3	Drums, drumsticks
United Republic of Tanzania	Grierson Macara	1	Coral necklace
Zimbabwe		3	Bride doll, headrests
<b>Central Africa</b>		<b>4</b>	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	James Lyon	4	Ceremonial knife, mask, musical instruments
<b>Southern Africa</b>		<b>31</b>	
South Africa	Ebenezer Ramsay. William Cairns. Joseph Duncan Scott. John William Crawford. Arthur Oughterson Leitch.	31	Axe, bracelets, cloak, headrests, musical instruments, necklaces, pipe, shields, snuff boxes, spoons, stone arrow heads
<b>Western Africa</b>		<b>59</b>	
Western Africa unspecified		1	Dagger
Côte d'Ivoire		1	Blanket
Gambia		1	Horseman's sword
Ghana	Mr Gurock.	18	Ceramic water vessel, flute, metal figurines, stool, wooden bust



	Mr Castle Snr. Watt Library, Greenock		
Nigeria	Olive Susan Miranda Temple. William Northrup McMillan.	37	Axe, bells, bracelets, carved tusk, daggers, fan, hairpin, ivory and metal armlets, key, tobacco pipes
Sierra Leone		1	Kissi penny currency

### Regions and countries represented: Caribbean

Country	Major sources	Collection size estimate	Types of material
Barbados		1	Sailor's valentine
Jamaica	Grierson Macara Bequest	1	Machete
West Indies unspecified		3	Basket, bracelets
Culturally affiliated with the Caribbean region (within CARICOM)			
Guyana		4	Clubs

### Selected object images

*Aken'ni Elao* or altar tusk, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1230





*Ẹroro* or bell, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1162



*Ẹgba* or bracelet, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1171



*Isanrẹn* or key, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1175



*Agbada* or dagger, pre-1897, Benin City, Nigeria, 1981.1177



Stool, Ghana, 1987.271



Tobacco pipe bowl, Nigeria, 1987.234



Fan, Nigeria, 1987.232





Detail of a prayer scroll, Ethiopia, 1987.268



Macana or clubs, Guyana, 1981.569 + 1981.572





Sailor's Valentine, Barbados, 1981.1417

