



Inscription on statue of Meramuniotes,
Montrose Museum, ANGUSalive © Neil Hanna

Ancient Egyptian Collections in Scottish Museums Conclusions

Results and Conclusions

Connected Collections: Egypt in Scotland

The twenty-five collections surveyed as part of this review highlight the diversity of collecting methods and collectors from the early 19th century onwards. Several discrete connecting themes and individuals can be identified, and more connections may be recognised with further study and increased provenance research. What follows is a selection of notable connections between ancient Egyptian collections in Scottish museums.

The connections discussed below are not exhaustive, as they do not fully cover the numerous connections between sponsored excavations and archaeological sites. Information about the archaeological sites represented in museum collections across Scotland are contained in the respective reports, as well as in appendix (iv).

In conducting this review, several avenues for future research have been identified. Potential future research directions are summarised elsewhere in this document. They include broad, general research themes and specific areas targeted at collections.

The dispersed collection of Dr James Grant Bey

Dr James Grant *Bey* (1840-1896) was an Aberdeenshire physician who travelled to Egypt to assist with the treatment of a cholera outbreak. He eventually settled in Cairo and became an important point of contact for foreign archaeologists who utilised his negotiating skills and competency in Arabic to assist in their arrangements with Egyptian workmen and archaeologists. His Cairo house also served as a meeting place for international visitors to the country, thanks to Grant's Wednesday open-house salons. Grant was also an engaged collector and researcher of ancient Egyptian material. He donated a large proportion of his collection to the University of Aberdeen and both he and his surviving relatives also sold elements of the collection to other museums. This collections review has identified Grant collection material in Perth Museum & Art Gallery and Dumfries Museum. The objects identified are all inscribed linen, cartonnage or papyrus fragments. Work has already been conducted by the Totenbuch Projekt, which has allowed connections to be made between linen fragments in Perth and Aberdeen, as well as similar fragments in University College London, the Louvre and collections in Uppsala, Brooklyn, Boston, Oxford, Toronto, Tokyo, and Providence, RI.

Connected Collections: Perth Museum & Art Gallery, Dumfries Museum, University of Aberdeen.

Objects received from the excavator John Garstang

Following his excavations at Beni Hassan and Esna, the excavator John Garstang (1876–1956) (University of Liverpool) offered donations of surplus ceramic vessels to museums and learned societies via a letter to the editor of *The Times*. This unusual distribution method has not been fully explored or published. Many Scottish institutions took up Garstang's offer or received later donations of the ceramics from the sites noted above. This material can be found in the following collections: Hawick Museum, National Museums Scotland, The Hunterian, Perth Museum & Art Gallery, Paisley Museum, Glasgow Museums and the University of Aberdeen.

The high number of objects excavated by Garstang led museums to acquire material directly from Garstang and his backers or through the art market when connected personal collections were sold. Several museums care for painted Middle Kingdom coffins, also from Garstang's excavations at Beni Hassan. During this collections review, several additional examples of wooden coffin fragments were identified that are stylistically similar and may also be connected to these excavations.

John Garstang/University of Liverpool excavations are included in appendix (iv).

Connected Collections: Hawick Museum, National Museums Scotland, The Hunterian, Perth Museum & Art Gallery, Paisley Museum, Glasgow Museums, The University of Aberdeen, and probably Culture NL (North Lanarkshire).

Institutional support of the Egypt Exploration Society and the British School of Archaeology in Egypt

The Egypt Exploration Society is the most important source of excavated material from Egypt distributed to UK museums. Several Scottish institutions supported the excavations of the EEF/EES and received material in return. In the same model, the British School of Archaeology in Egypt was also supported by institutions and is represented through material in collections across the country. Some museums such as National Museums Scotland, raised funds from their own budgets, while others, such as The McManus, accepted donations from the local population. Archaeologists associated with these organisations also donated objects directly to museums.

The distribution of finds across museum collections often resulted in the separation of objects from the same site, or even the same tomb. Sometimes very precise direct connections can be made, for example inscribed stone monuments from the tomb of the Overseer of the Priests Mereri at the site of Dendera, excavated in 1897-8, are found in National Museums Scotland, the McManus, and Glasgow Museums. The McLean Museum and the McManus both have relief fragments from the Temple of Bastet at Tell Basta. National Museums Scotland and the McManus have relief fragments from the funerary temples of Mentuhotep II and Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari, which are probably also found at the McLean Museum and Glasgow Museums. From a group of 20 cartonnage mummy cases excavated at Herakleopolis Magna by Naville in 1904, only two were preserved, one of which went to the McLean Museum and the other to the McManus.

A full list of related excavated collections can be found in appendix (iv).

Connected Collections: National Museums Scotland, Glasgow Museums, The Hunterian, The McLean Museum (Inverclyde Council), The McManus, Paisley Museum (Renfrewshire Leisure), University of Aberdeen, University of Edinburgh.

The Reverend Colin Campbell collection

Reverend Colin Campbell was a minister based in Dundee who studied, fundraised for and collected Egyptian antiquities. While living in Dundee, Campbell was a key fundraiser for the EES, leading to over 200 objects being distributed to the McManus in Dundee, where he also assisted with the interpretation and display of the collections. He also provided interpretive assistance to the Royal Scottish Museum (National Museums

Scotland). Campbell donated a large portion of his collections to the University of Glasgow.

Connected Collections: The McManus, The Hunterian, Glasgow Museums, National Museums Scotland

The Reverend John Garrow Duncan collection

Reverend John Garrow Duncan was a church minister based in Kirkmichael who participated in excavations with W M Flinders Petrie in the Nile Delta. He also published numerous books and articles concerning biblical history and later became the Assistant Director of the Palestine Excavation Fund. Despite his involvement in Petrie's excavations over several years, his contribution has not been the subject of much research. Several objects excavated were donated to the McManus in Dundee by his son, John Gordon Duncan. This review has also confirmed that Duncan donated several objects to The Hunterian. Many of his objects carry the provenance 'Goshen' referring to the name used in the Hebrew Bible to denote Egypt.

Connected Collections: The McManus, The Hunterian.

The tomb and the shabtis of King Seti I

Several collections in Scotland care for shabtis of King Seti I, numbering 16 in total. The wooden shabtis of this king were found in his tomb (KV17) in their hundreds and it has been suggested that they may number over 1,000. When Giovanni Belzoni entered the tomb in 1817 he used some of the wooden shabtis covered in resin as makeshift torches. Luckily, many survived his fire lighting and are now scattered across museums worldwide. During the review, three previously unknown wooden shabtis were identified in Perth and Dumfries. In relation to the tomb, there are over 30 squeezes (a method of copying carved relief by covering it with wet paper in order to create a reverse copy of the scene or inscription when dry) in the collections of the University of Aberdeen that were made of the decoration of the tomb. There is also a wall fragment, said to be from the tomb, in the collections of The Hunterian. The Falconer Museum (Moray Council) also reports having the cast of a seal from the tomb, made by Belzoni directly. The objects identified for the first time in this review did not hold any known connection to King Seti I's tomb but were instead typically attributed to 'The Tombs of the Kings' or 'Valley of the Kings', an attribution also often applied to modern reproductions.

Connected Collections: National Museums Scotland (10 shabtis), Dumfries Museum (2 shabtis), Perth Museum & Art Gallery (1 shabti), Glasgow Museums (3 shabtis), The Hunterian, University of Aberdeen, Falconer Museum.

Early collectors and their proxies

Most museums in Scotland emerged from the activities of literary, scientific, philosophical or archaeological societies, whose representatives visited Egypt. The societies initially collected objects for study and later created museums to display them. In contrast, two museums have a very different history of collections development. Live Life Aberdeenshire Museums and Dumfries Museum were created out of two earlier museums, the Arbuthnot Museum and the Grierson Museum respectively. These museums were the work of two individuals (Adam Arbuthnot and Thomas Boyle

Grierson) who used their positions as a successful merchant and doctor respectively, to receive donations from others. This allowed them to build collections without visiting the countries of origin. The development of these collections is similar to that of Linlithgow Heritage Trust which contains objects that were collected by Christopher Dawson to teach school children, but which were often originally donated by others, including the Earl of Hopetoun.

Connected Collections: Live Life Aberdeenshire Museums, Dumfries Museum, Linlithgow Heritage Trust.

Tourist collectors

The acquisition of objects by tourist visitors to Egypt was a driving factor in the development of collections in Scotland. Whereas larger collections have often removed objects produced in modern times, many local museum collections have retained these objects. This review has identified two object groups that are present within numerous collections: human-headed scarabs and shabtis. The human-headed scarab is a very rare form and these examples are also oversized compared to scarabs from ancient Egypt. The underside of the human-headed scarab is inscribed with either pseudo-cartouches or a scene. Tourist shabtis often incorporate features from several ancient shabtis with nonsensical inscriptions. Despite knowledge of their modern nature being shared around the time of collection, there are numerous examples where collectors acquired several examples of the shabtis or scarabs alongside ancient objects.

These objects share a material profile, each being made of baked clay showing tool marks on the reverse. They also repeatedly utilise cartouche motifs, particularly those emulating the royal names of Tuthmose III (Menkheperre) and Ramesses II. Smaller tourist stone scarabs also repeat the use of the Menkheperre cartouche. A small group of objects do not use cartouches but instead fabricate scenes of seated or striking figures.

Most of the collections that include modern scarabs and shabtis also include samples of 'mummy-linen', which are frequently accompanied by notes claiming provenance. It would be expected that these fragments of linen would be accompanied by samples of 'mummy wheat', a supposedly common tourist acquisition, however, only one collection has been identified as holding this object type (Live Life Aberdeenshire Museums).

Connected Collections: Live Life Aberdeenshire Museums, East Ayrshire Council, Dumfries Museum, Perth Museum & Art gallery, Montrose Museum (Angus Alive), Hawick Museum (Live Borders), ONFife, National Trust for Scotland.

Textiles donated by Amelia Edwards

During the early years of the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF), now known as the Egyptian Exploration Society (EES), its founder Amelia B Edwards (1831–1892) toured the UK giving lectures about the work of the Society. Her visits to Greenock and Paisley were especially important to their associated collections as it led to increased local financial support to the EEF. Following her tour across Scotland, Edwards donated samples of linen excavated by the EEF to the museums. In all cases, these samples originate from the excavations conducted by W M Flinders Petrie at Hawara (1888–89). Paisley

Museum is known to have received a donation of this material, but these objects have not been identified at the date of writing.

Connected Collections: McLean Museum (Inverclyde Council), The McManus, National Museums Scotland, Paisley Museum (Renfrewshire Leisure).

Family connections

There are a few instances where non-royal ancient family trees can be reconstructed. During the review, two notable examples have been identified which link individuals represented in objects in different museums. The first links the coffin of a young girl from the village of Deir el-Medina (National Museums Scotland) with a stone stela dedicated by her father, Penbuy (Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery). A second links the newly-identified statue of Mermuniotes (Montrose Museum) with a block statue of her uncle, Nesmin (The Burrell Collection).

Connected Collections: Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery (Glasgow Museums) with National Museums Scotland and The Burrell Collection (Glasgow Museums) with Montrose Museum (Angus Alive).

The East India Company and the British military

Many Scots were employed by the East India Company (EIC), reflecting the successful maritime towns and cities of the east coast of Scotland. Three notable collectors collected Egyptian objects during journeys between the UK and India/Persia.

Dr James Pringle Riach donated numerous objects to Perth Museum & Art Gallery following a journey back to the UK via Suez. A fellow surgeon, scholar and diplomat Dr James Burnes, returned from Mumbai (Bombay) via the same route only a year later in 1834. He donated a couple of objects to Montrose Museum before returning to India. These two individuals have been confirmed as members of the Bombay Asiatic Society and were friends.

Dr Robert Wilson was a significant contributor to the collections of the University of Aberdeen, donating over two hundred objects. This included the Takheru group, which he collected in Qoseir before returning to India. This group was transported from Mumbai (Bombay) to Aberdeen by Sir Charles Forbes in 1811. A donor to the Falconer Museum (Moray Council) was also an EIC employee. It is likely that with further research more employees of EIC could be identified as donors within Scottish collections.

Related to the number of donations made by EIC employees, there are also a high number of examples of small donations made to museum collections by military personnel who had travelled through or served in Egypt. Unusually, the Black Watch Museum (Perth) does not hold any known Egyptian material, despite the posting of the Black Watch in Egypt during the 1882 Anglo-Egyptian War.

A large percentage of the collections also include objects donated by the descendants of military personnel.

Connected Collections: University of Aberdeen, Angus Alive, Moray Council, Perth Museum & Art Gallery.

Summary of Potential Future Research Directions

During this collections review project, a number of areas have been identified that would be fruitful focuses for future research. These are summarised below, firstly as general themes that could be addressed by a larger project involving collaboration and as longer-term focus to examine connections and trends shown between collections. Following this, direct suggestions for research within specific collections are made, reflecting the information gathered on those collections during the project.

General research directions

Database improvement

During the review it has become clear that one area requiring improvement and considerable input is the quality of database information. A number of institutions hold information and research comments concerning objects that are not reflected in their databases. It is a concern that knowledge generated during this project will be lost or not incorporated into digital resources, with the risk that this work would need to be repeated in the future.

Provenance research

Due to the spread and size of collections across Scotland, there are many unprovenanced objects. Though it may not be possible to ascertain full provenance details for all these objects, many may be identifiable. The review has also recognised objects distributed to museums by the EES and BSAE, which are not noted on any official distribution lists. Further provenance and archival research within the museums and the archive holders of the EES and BSAE may allow further objects to be identified and more museums to be added to known distribution lists. In relation to the EES distributions, work carried out during this review has noted many distributions which considerably postdate the excavation that the objects originated in, ie not distributed in the year following the excavation season, but beyond five years after the excavations. These distributions are not well understood or documented and require more research.

Person and donor research

In the case of most of the institutions involved in this review, donor information is scant, or low in qualitative data. Further research into the identities, biographies and collecting histories of donors across Scotland would be of importance for the museums and the field of Egyptology. Several individuals who were important for the formation and development of Egyptian collections in Scotland are not included in the standard reference work *Who Was Who in Egyptology*.

Egyptian objects in regimental museums

Some military collecting activity has been identified by this project, notably in relation to the East India Company. Several museum collections possess small donations from military personnel who had been posted in Egypt at some point. The biographies of these individuals are patently of interest, but this area of study could also be expanded to assess the collections of regimental museums in Scotland. The AHRC-funded project, *Baggage and Belonging: Military Collections and the British Empire, 1750 – 1900*, has researched the cultures of collecting by members of the British Armed forces while on campaign and garrison duty in Africa and India during the late 18th and 19th centuries, showing the potential for this area of research. Due to the overlap between this project

and *Baggage and Belonging*, regimental museums were not consulted, but it may be possible that they hold Egyptian material.

The role of learned societies in the formation of collections

Many of the institutions in Scotland have their origins in learned societies, concentrating on natural history, archaeology, literature, philosophy or antiquarianism. This marks out Scottish museums in relation to English museums, which, although sharing relationships with learned societies, frequently have a single donor or benefactor responsible for their formation. Broader comparative work across UK institutions (e.g. Yorkshire Museum, great North Museum) would be beneficial, improving understanding of the formation of museum collections across Scotland and the UK.

Specific collections research directions

Alongside these broader trends, the review has also identified several collections-specific research areas.

Aberdeen and North East

Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums

Most of the collection was donated to the museum by John Russell Stewart Bell (c.1924–1944) on behalf of his father, William Smith Bell. Research suggests that William was an antiquities dealer, as such his collecting and dealing history could be of interest to understanding his impact on the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums.

Live Life Aberdeenshire Museums

As most of the Egyptian objects in this institution were collected by a single individual, Adam Arbuthnot, further research into his collecting methodology would be useful. The collection holds a fragment of linen associated with the unwrapping of a mummified individual carried out in Edinburgh, a historical event which has not been studied.

Falconer Museum (Moray Council)

As the collection is quite small, more detailed provenance research could be conducted in relation to donors and origin of objects.

University of Aberdeen

Several donors to the University collections have not yet been the focus of research. Although Dr James Grant *Bey* is relatively well-known within Egyptological scholarship, his activities in Egypt, biography and other details have not been the focus of any research to date. Objects from his personal collection are spread across several museums in Scotland and also appear in collections in England and the United States of America.

Highlands and Islands

Further assessment of museum collections in this region which were not assessed as part of this project might be desirable. Such an assessment would rely on site visits and broader evaluation of the collections, as it is possible that Egyptian material is unidentified.

Tayside, Central and Fife

Montrose Museum (Angus Alive)

The review was able to identify a key donor to the collection, Dr James Burnes. This provenance was confirmed through the records of the Montrose Natural History and Antiquarian Society. Montrose Museum holds nearly unbroken records of donations and transactions of the Society so further research may be able to identify other donors.

Culture Perth and Kinross

A section of the collection was donated to the museum by brothers, William Andrew Riach and James Pringle Riach. Their personal histories as members of the British Army and East India Company mean that it is likely that their activities could be tracked further.

Leisure and Culture Dundee

The McManus holds an important archival collection of notes, interpretation and museum labels created by Rev Colin Campbell. The cataloguing, potential digitisation and sharing of this collection would be important for the study of Campbell in relation to the development of Egyptology and the interpretation of ancient Egyptian culture. Collections research is actively ongoing at the McManus, identifying the provenance of objects and their excavation histories.

Edinburgh and Lothians

University of Edinburgh Anatomical Museum

The Egyptian collection of the Anatomical Museum represents an under-documented collecting methodology. In relation to most of the specimens, the provenance details are complex, referencing several individuals. Further research into these collections would enable a greater understanding of the collecting of human remains during the 19th century.

Glasgow and Strathclyde

The Hunterian (University of Glasgow)

The collections of Rev John Garrow Duncan are spread across several collections in Scotland but are notable for their size at The Hunterian. His excavation and collecting activities have not been studied and he is not included in the reference work *Who Was Who in Egyptology*. As Duncan was involved with several excavations conducted by W M Flinders Petrie, objects could be identified with specific sites, an element of their provenance that is not initially clear through the Duncan donations due to his persistent reference to Goshen, the name used to refer to Egypt in the Hebrew Bible.

Glasgow Museums

A large proportion of the collections were initially collected by the Egypt Research Students Association (ERSA) Glasgow Branch and its chair, Janet May Buchanan. This review has also recognised that ERSA received donations from John Garstang (University of Liverpool), a source of objects for ERSA which had not previously been identified. An understanding of the work of ERSA and Buchanan would be key in researching the collections of Glasgow Museums. The archival minutes and correspondence of ERSA and Buchanan has recently been identified at the University of Glasgow and deserves further study. Discussions with staff of Glasgow Museums has also identified a need for the transfer of information to a fully digital collections database.

McLean Museum, Greenock (Inverclyde Council)

Data available in excavation distributions collated by the *Artefacts of Excavation* project may allow provenance details to be confirmed for some objects. The archival and accessions information in the McLean Museum indicate that the institution was the recipient of distributed objects by the EES and BSAE which are not recorded on excavation lists. Further work to understand these smaller distributions would be important for the field.

North Lanarkshire

It is known that John Garstang distributed a crate of ceramics from his excavations at Beni Hassan/Esna to Airdrie Museum. These have not been identified at the time of writing; this could be achieved through a visit to the collections or photographic documentation.

*Scotland South***Dumfries Museum**

Dumfries Museum holds several fragments of inscribed linen from the Grant *Bey* collection which have not been studied. The Museum would probably benefit from contacting the 'Totenbuch Projekt' at the University of Bonn, who would be able to identify the spells and vignettes, as well as make connections between the fragments in Dumfries and those in other museum collections. <http://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/>

Impact of the collections review

The research into the collections of museum partners has acted as a catalyst in several institutions, enabling them to redisplay objects and improve their collections storage and database information.

Hawick Museum, Live Borders

Following the hosting of the National Museums Scotland touring exhibition *Discovering Ancient Egypt*, Hawick Museum undertook a project to redisplay selections of its Egyptian collection, serving as the museum's first permanent display of the collection in decades. The redisplay has involved the reinterpretation of the collection following research conducted by the collections review. The display also included changes made in order to engage with broader educational audiences, reflecting the museum's involvement in training provided by National Museums Scotland. Several members of staff at National Museums Scotland advised during this process.



Montrose Museum, ANGUSalive

During a visit to Montrose Museum, the significance of an important Ptolemaic statue was identified by National Museums Scotland staff. As one of the most important examples of this genre of statuary, it was agreed that it should be redisplayed. Funding was secured by ANGUSalive in concert with National Museums Scotland, enabling the statue to be conserved, re-mounted and displayed in a brand-new display case (Funded by Museums Galleries Scotland) with interpretation developed by the two institutions. Research has been able to identify the individual as a temple musician called Meramuniotes; it has also tracked nearly twenty members of her family and increased the understanding of how the statue came to be in Montrose. Research is continuing and the first full publication of the statue will be submitted to an academic journal in the coming months. The statue of Meramuniotes is now on permanent display in the main gallery of Montrose Museum.



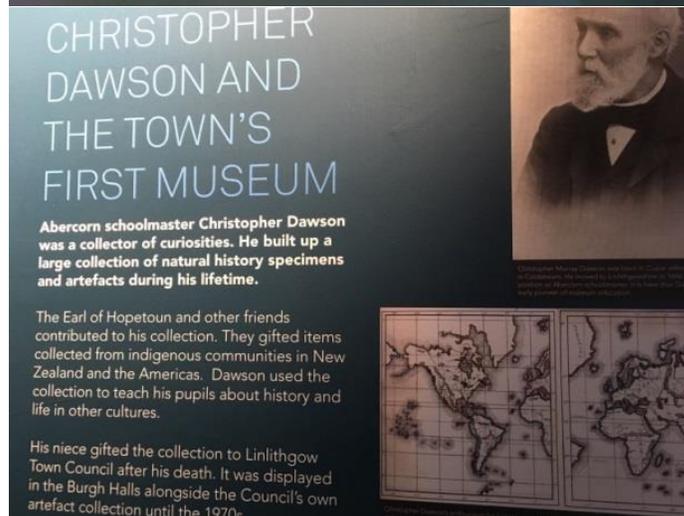
Montrose Museum also created a small display to complement the touring exhibition *Discovering Ancient Egypt*. The content of the display *Real or Replica?* was directly drawn from the information gained during this collections review and what was learned by the museum staff during the associated training delivered by National Museums Scotland.

An account of this display can be found here:

<https://blog.nms.ac.uk/2019/10/01/real-of-replica-how-to-spot-a-genuine-ancient-egyptian-artefact/>

Linlithgow Museum

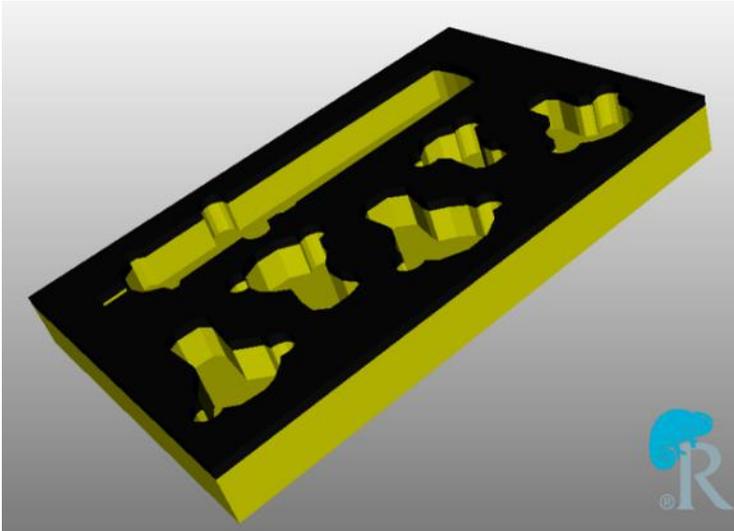
As a result of collections consultation during this review, Linlithgow Museum was able to include two faience shabtis identified by the project as part of its new displays which opened in 2019. They are included in a display, shown below, discussing the town's first museum and the actions of their collector, the schoolteacher Christopher Dawson. These are the only Egyptian objects in this collection.



Linlithgow Heritage Trust

Dumfries Museum

Following a full review of the Dumfries Museum collections, several areas for the improvement of collections storage and management were identified. To ensure that the data produced was saved, a small project was funded to transfer research data to the Adlib database system. This also included the commissioning of laser-cut storage packing and photography of all the objects. 84 objects were numbered, ensuring future ease of identification; this accompanied the creation of 161 object records on the Adlib database and the photography of 160 objects. The legacy of this project will greatly influence the storage and study of the Dumfries collection for the future.



Replicade

Dumfries Museum

Perth Museum and Art Gallery

In January 2020, Perth Museum and Art Gallery became the fourth venue to host the National Museums Scotland touring exhibition *Discovering Ancient Egypt*. The display and interpretation of the Perth collection was directly influenced by the work carried out by the collections review project. Having been involved in the development of the interpretation, National Museums Scotland staff were also able to research donors further and improve the knowledge of these individuals, linking them to other Scottish collectors and institutions.



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