

THE BOOK
OF THE
OLD EDINBURGH
CLUB

The Journal for
Edinburgh History



Joe Rock, 'Hugh William ("Grecian") Williams (1773–1829)',
Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, New Series 5 (2002), pp. 83–91.

~~~~~

This article is extracted from **The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club**, **The Journal for  
Edinburgh History** ISSN 2634-2618

Content © The Old Edinburgh Club and contributors. All rights reserved.

For information about The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (BOEC), including contents of  
previous issues and indexes, see <https://oldedinburghclub.org.uk/boec>.

**This article is made available for your personal research and private study only.**

For any further uses of BOEC material, please contact the Editor, The Book of the Old  
Edinburgh Club, at [editor@oldedinburghclub.org.uk](mailto:editor@oldedinburghclub.org.uk). The Club has a Take-Down Policy  
covering potential rights infringements. Please see [http://oldedinburghclub.org.uk/oec-  
take-down-policy](http://oldedinburghclub.org.uk/oec-take-down-policy).



*Digitised by the Centre for Research  
Collections, Edinburgh University  
Library from the copy in the Library  
Collection*



## Edinburgh Portrait

HUGH WILLIAM WILLIAMS

(‘GRECIAN’ WILLIAMS)

1773–1829

JOE ROCK

HUGH WILLIAMS is famed for his watercolour views of Greek subjects, many of which are in the National Galleries of Scotland, but his numerous Scottish landscapes, which had a formative influence on picturesque taste, are less well known. He was not Scottish, but came to Edinburgh as a boy and settled there, travelling regularly within the British Isles before and after his Grand Tour in 1816–18. He lived almost entirely by his art, a remarkable achievement for a landscape painter in watercolour, but he also supported himself by publishing his work as prints.

His birth and earliest years are shrouded in a romantic haze, quite possibly created by his family and encouraged by the artist during his lifetime. The best known biographical account is that by James L. Caw in his *Scottish Painting Past and Present* in 1908, further refined for his *Dictionary of National Biography* article the following year, which became the basis for all later accounts. But the research material used by Caw had been gathered by Robert Gibb for the 35th edition of the *Catalogue Descriptive and Historical of the National Gallery of Scotland*, revamped for the new century in 1901. Gibb had consulted Miss Elizabeth Anderson, a living member of the Williams family, who provided a potted biography in a letter of August 1899 – the haze had begun to descend.<sup>1</sup>

According to this family tradition Hugh was the son of Captain Williams and Miss Lewis, who married while becalmed on a passage between Gibraltar and England, before 1771. On the same voyage Hugh’s grandmother (the widow of Colonel Lewis, said to have been Deputy Governor of Gibraltar) married Louis Ruffini, a gentleman from

Turin, and on arrival in England the Ruffini family settled at Wooler in Northumberland. Captain Williams continued at sea, taking his new wife to the West Indies, and it was during this voyage that Hugh is said to have been born. His father, ‘a hopeless spendthrift’, died before 1780, when Hugh and his mother came to live at Wooler with the Ruffini family. His mother died about two years later and the Ruffini family moved to Edinburgh.

There are difficulties with this account. Hugh was not an only child as the tale implies; it has been found that he had a sister Mary, born at Honiton in Devon in 1771, who married James Charter in 1805 and was living in Exeter at the time of Hugh’s death. This previously unrecorded aspect of the artist’s life is supported by a biographical sketch by his close friend, Dr Anthony Todd Thomson (1778–1849), which states clearly that Hugh was ‘a native of Devonshire’.<sup>2</sup> It must also be noted that there is no record of Colonel Lewis as Deputy Governor of Gibraltar, nor of Hugh’s parents ever having any association with Wales, another element often assumed in published biographies. The family tradition also makes a great deal of Louis Ruffini’s status as a gentleman, and it will be seen that he was indeed very well connected. However, it omits to mention that, as discovered by Margaret Swain some years ago, he was a professional embroiderer and was often in financial difficulties.<sup>3</sup>

For all that, the family tradition can be confirmed in some respects, and the story continued in Ruffini’s own words when he and other immigrants, as a result of Napoleon’s activities on the Continent, were obliged to register as aliens in Edinburgh in 1790.<sup>4</sup>

By this account Ruffini left Turin around 1764 and arrived in Edinburgh in 1782, presumably with Hugh Williams in his guardianship. In September of that year he tried to set up an academy at 141 Nicolson Street, offering tuition in writing, arithmetic, Italian and French, with visiting masters teaching riding, fencing, dancing and military exercise. His academy did not prosper, though it is clear that he could have provided Hugh with a broad and useful education. As a result of this failure Ruffini changed tack and in 1783 he set up a factory at the family home, Craigside House, Edinburgh, producing white embroidery on muslin (fig. 1). By 1785, with the financial assistance of the Board of Manufactures, he was employing 72 apprentice girls, but their poor health and working conditions began to ring alarm bells, and in that year the Board refused him further assistance. Undaunted, he branched out, setting up factories in Musselburgh and, at the suggestion of the Duke of Buccleuch, in Dalkeith in 1790. But he had overstretched himself, and as things began to go wrong with an attempt to set up a factory in Glasgow, he was soon declared bankrupt. Hugh Williams' presence in Scotland is first recorded in Ruffini's



Fig. 1. Craigside House, or Dumbie House, Dumbiedykes, Edinburgh (demolished). (Photograph by Mr Addison, 1935; Edinburgh Public Libraries.)

sequestration papers, where it has been found that Ruffini owed Alexander Meggat, a bookseller in Dalkeith, £10. 12. 1, 'for balance of Hugh Williams boarding from 12th June 1790 to 4th February 1791'.<sup>5</sup> In 1790 Ruffini married his second wife, Mary Steel, daughter of John Steel of Jamaica – a marriage which may have improved his immigrant as well as his financial status.

Whatever his failings as a man of business, Ruffini was undoubtedly an influential figure and well connected. In 1789 he was commissioned by the Savoy Court in Turin to find an expert on coal mining, to undertake a survey in Sardinia. On the advice of Dr Joseph Black (1728–1799), professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, he recommended William Roebuck, son of Dr John Roebuck (1718–1794), and his valuable report survives in the Archivio di Stato in Turin.<sup>6</sup> Margaret Swain has drawn attention to Ruffini's role in encouraging the Trustees of the Board of Manufactures to modify their method of teaching, at the time of the appointment of David Allan (1744–1796) as drawing master of the Trustees' Academy in 1789. Under the mastership of his predecessor Alexander Runciman (1736–1785) the Academy had moved away from its intended role of teaching design for manufactures, and Allan's contract specifically prevented him from teaching drawing as 'a polite art'. Ruffini insisted on having his apprentice boys trained in drawing at the Academy, but Hugh Williams is not listed with these. He is said to have trained with Allan, and may have spent time at his private school learning pattern design, but his later watercolour technique relies much more on a European tradition of delicate draughtsmanship than it does on Allan's rather heavy hand with the pen.

Ruffini struggled on, pursued by creditors, until 1804 when, according to the family tradition, he left

for London. Nothing more is known of his activities. Ironically Ruffini's shame as a bankrupt, reinforced by the requirement to wear a plain grey garment provided by his creditors, probably had a beneficial influence on Williams, forcing him to fend for himself from an early age. His immediate reaction, in December 1790, may have been to head for the theatre, where 'Mr Williams' performed the role of Francis in Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part 1* at the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh. At further key moments in Ruffini's financial dénouement 'Mr Williams' appears on stage again, in Edinburgh and in Glasgow, where eventually the young artist set up a Drawing Academy in partnership with Alexander Galloway (fl. 1793–1812) in 1793. In advertisements, Williams offered to provide 'Views of a Particular Place' and his earliest recorded work (?dated 1792) is a subject near Glasgow, 'The Clyde and Forth Canal'.<sup>7</sup>

Hugh Williams realised early in his career the importance of getting his work into printed form, and the extent to which he did so is remarkable in British art for the period. His earliest exercise – an etched outline of the 'High Church and Infirmary of Glasgow from the North East', advertised in Glasgow in 1794, proved to be hard-edged when compared to the subtlety of his watercolours, and he did not use the technique again.<sup>8</sup> This was followed by a view of 'Craig Millar Castle', engraved and aquatinted by John Eginton of Birmingham in 1795.<sup>9</sup> In 1801 four coloured aquatints engraved by J. Merigot after drawings by Williams were included in John Stoddart's *Remarks on Local Scenery and Manners in Scotland*.<sup>10</sup> By January 1801 Williams was working in Edinburgh again, publishing *Etchings of Local Subjects – intended to assist in the Study of Nature* the following April (fig. 2).<sup>11</sup> He appeared for the first time in Aitchison's *Edinburgh and Leith Directory* in 1803 as 'Mr Williams, Landscape Painter' at 4 South St Andrew Street. At about this



Fig. 2. 'On the South Esk', soft ground etching (image 11.0 x 15.2 cm), by H. W. Williams, 1808. (Royal Scottish Academy.)

time an etching of 'Hermitage Castle, Liddesdale, Roxburghshire' appeared as frontispiece to volume 1 of Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802), where it is inscribed 'Williams del. – Walker Sculp'. Scott's description of the publication process is instructive for those who imagine the attribution of works to be a simple matter. In his journal for 1 March 1826 he wrote:<sup>12</sup>

Going down to Liddesdale once, I drew the Castle of Hermitage in my fashion, and sketched it so accurately that, with a few verbal instructions, [William] Clerk put it into regular form, Williams (the Grecian) copied over Clerk's and his drawing was engraved.

In the years before his Grand Tour Williams contributed frontispiece illustrations to the *Scots Magazine* on thirty occasions, between 1804 and 1813.<sup>13</sup> He promoted his reputation further by the private publication in 1813 of six large views of Highland scenery, aquatinted in sepia by the leading London engravers Charles Turner and Frederick Christian Lewis and dedicated to a group of Scottish patrons including the Dowager Duchess of Buccleuch and William Douglas of Orchardton.<sup>14</sup>



Fig. 3. 'Kenmore on Loch Tay'. watercolour over pencil (35.5 x 50.5 cm), by H. W. Williams, 1799. (*Perth Museum and Art Gallery.*)

While living in Edinburgh Williams tried to establish a reputation in the artistic community in London and gain broader public recognition. He exhibited at the Royal Academy, London, in 1800 and 1815, on the first occasion as 'Williams, Edinburgh', and on the second from 23 Duke Street, Edinburgh (now the upper part of Dublin Street), where he moved in 1811.<sup>15</sup> Roget states that in 1807 Williams was unsuccessfully proposed for membership of the Society of Painters in Watercolours, but there is some evidence in the material now in the Victoria and Albert Museum that Williams was a member of a splinter group who exhibited oil paintings as well as watercolours.<sup>16</sup> He was certainly a founding member of the Associated Artists in London, where he exhibited in 1808 and 1809 from 4 South St Andrew Street. The Associated

Artists are often depicted as a group who failed to find acceptance with the older Watercolour Society but in fact they were a slightly exotic mixture of artists with Scottish or European connections. For example, Peter Dewint (1784–1849) was of Dutch extraction and had a Scottish mother, and J. Huet Villiars (1772–1813) and Alfred Chalon (1780–1860) were part of the émigré community to which Williams belonged by virtue of his association with Louis Ruffini.

His founding membership of the Associated Artists is an indication of his growing reputation in London, where J. M. W. Turner (1773–1857) is known to have thought highly of him as an artist. Indeed, a case can be made for suggesting that Turner's first journey to the Scottish Borders and Edinburgh in 1801 was encouraged by the exhibition

of Williams' 'View of Loch Tay in Scotland' at the Royal Academy in 1800, where it hung in the same room as Turner's sparse views of William Beckford's ill-fated house at Fonthill. This watercolour by Williams is probably the large 'Kenmore on Loch Tay', previously at Fyvie Castle and now in the Perth Museum and Art Gallery (fig. 3). Williams did not however exhibit with the Associated Artists in London again after 1809 and in 1810 began exhibiting with the Associated Artists in Edinburgh, continuing to do so until 1816.

He embarked on a tour of the Continent in June 1816 without any more serious intention than visiting Switzerland and the Italian Lakes. The motivation for the tour is revealed in two letters from the artist to his friend the Rev. William MacGreggor Stirling, the first dated 26 January 1816:<sup>17</sup>

Now for a secret. I have taken Macbean's house in Castle Street, what do you think of that my Boy? Is it not very bold especially as the money must come from the skies to furnish it. – but the truth is, I was bothered into it and could not help myself. – I suppose [£]150 or [£]180 will do to begin with. – it is no joke I know, furnishing a house ... Nothing new here, all dull and melancholy, no Balls, no suppers, no merriment, NO Money. Gods, my life, what a World! – adieu – I'm frightened out o' my wits.

The house to which he refers is entered from 65 Castle Street but occupies two upper floors on Queen Street, overlooking the Firth of Forth. It was owned by his lawyer (and later executor), Aeneas Macbean WS, and Williams lived there on his return from the Continent until his marriage in 1827 when he moved to 2 St Colme Street. The letters to Stirling reveal a growing anxiety about his finances, leaving him 'absolutely miserable' with rheumatism and toothache. Then, on 16 May 1816, good news:

Now, prepare to be surprised My Dear Friend. – Be it known I am going to Switzerland with my friend Mr. Douglas. he is to frank me



Fig. 4. 'Glencoe', watercolour over pencil (26.3 x 34.9 cm), by H. W. Williams, c. 1812. (*National Galleries of Scotland*.)

in return for which he is to have the sketches and drawings of the scenery we may visit.<sup>18</sup> – We are likewise to go to the Italian Lakes and the Tyrol – all this, God willing, on the first of June or so ...

His patron was William Douglas of Orchardton MP, a wealthy young man who can be associated with Williams from at least 1805. Their continental itinerary developed as the journey progressed and at one stage a side trip to Egypt was proposed before being dropped.<sup>19</sup> An extended visit to Elba did however occur, producing a 'View of the Fortress of Porta Ferrajo', and the publication of a drawing of the 'Palace of Napoleon'.<sup>20</sup> While in Italy Williams was



Fig. 5. 'Promontory of Sunium, from the Sea', etching (9.4 x 14.2 cm) by William Miller after H. W. Williams, published in part 10 of *Select Views in Greece* (1828).

associated with the Duchess of Devonshire, who commissioned an illustration, 'View of Lake Avernus', for her sumptuous edition of Virgil's *Aeneid* (1819).<sup>21</sup> He also gave drawing lessons to the young architect George Basevi (1794–1845), then on his own Grand Tour, and was often in the company of the minor Scottish artist James Irvine (fl.1787–1832). On his return Williams published his thoughts and experiences in two octavo volumes as *Travels in Italy, Greece and the Ionian Islands*.<sup>22</sup> In view of his later reputation as 'Grecian' Williams it is remarkable that of his entire eighteen months abroad, less than two months (April and May 1817) was actually spent in Greece, with a mere three weeks in Athens. The greatest part of his time was spent in Rome, and indeed a proposal to publish 'Select Views in Italy' was cut short only by his death.

Williams spent the decade after 1818 immersed in the production of large topographical views of Greece and Italy for exhibition. The demand for these views prevented any further development of a promising change of style in the artist's work, which had begun to emerge before his Continental journey, in works such as 'Glencoe' exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1815 (fig. 4). Indeed, such was the demand that from 1823 he arranged the publication of etchings after his views, as *Select Views in Greece* (1823–29), supervising closely the production of the plates by leading young Scottish engravers such as William Miller (1796–1882) (fig. 5).

Against the background of the Greek struggle for independence from the Turks, his watercolours and prints caught the public imagination and for this reason they mark the high point of his financial success. This success was to be shattered in 1826 with the failure of his London publishers, Hurst and Robinson, associates of Constable and Co., who went down owing Williams some £500. The publication did continue immediately under Longman, Rees and

Co., but Williams probably never recovered either financially or in health. His increasing activity also prevented him becoming more closely involved with Sir Walter Scott's *Provincial Antiquities and Picturesque Scenery of Scotland*, although he did contribute one plate in 1819 and worked closely with the Rev. John Thomson of Duddingston (1778–1840) and J. M. W. Turner, two share-holding contributors.<sup>23</sup>

Williams held two important one-man exhibitions, mainly of his Greek watercolours, in 1822 and 1826 in the Calton Convening Rooms (at the eastern end of the north side of Waterloo Place). He exhibited regularly with the Royal Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Scotland, from 1824 until the year of his death. He also became a prime mover in the project to build a National Monument in Edinburgh to those who had fallen in the Napoleonic Wars, publishing a highly imaginative and theatrical design for a cemetery on the Calton Hill in 1820 (fig. 6).<sup>24</sup> He was a close friend of both the designer of the monument, C. R. Cockerell (1788–1863), and its executant architect, W. H. Playfair (1789–1857). As a result, Williams' work was included in a private exhibition in

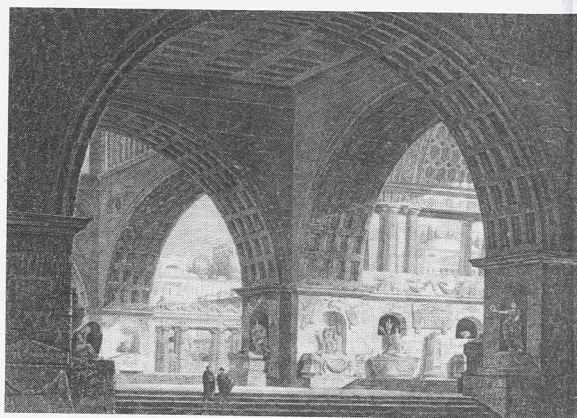


Fig. 6. 'Design for a Cemetery', etching (10.9 x 15.5 cm) by W. H. Lizars (1788–1859) after H. W. Williams, published in *Travels in Italy, Greece and the Ionian Islands* (1820), frontispiece to vol. I.

Holyroodhouse, arranged for King George IV during his visit to the Scottish capital in 1822.<sup>25</sup>

After a courtship which is mentioned in the diaries of Helen Graham from 1824, Williams married Robina Miller (d. 1874) in 1827.<sup>26</sup> They had no children and Williams became unwell in the summer of the following year, dying on 14 June 1829 after a painful illness. He was buried in the Miller of Dalnair family plot in the Canongate churchyard on 22 June, beneath the backdrop of the recently revealed white Doric portico of Thomas Hamilton's Royal High School on the Calton Hill above. Hamilton (1784–1858) had been a close friend, asking Williams to provide him with a reference when he applied for the post of Superintendent of Public Works in the City in 1819.<sup>27</sup>

His widow Robina and the artist's other trustees, Aeneas MacBean and the miniature painter W. J. Thomson (1771–1845), arranged a studio sale in 1831 but the sale catalogue makes it clear that this did not include any of his Greek material and no significant oil paintings. Some of his large Greek watercolours and smaller Greek subjects in sepia – the latter made for the engravers of the *Select Views in Greece* – were sold on the death of Aeneas MacBean in 1858. In 1859 Robina presented a collection of 23 works, which included large exhibition watercolours of Scotland, Italy and Greece, a bronze model of the Parthenon and one oil canvas, to the newly opened National Gallery of Scotland. Most of this group, to their serious detriment, hung almost continuously in one of the small octagonal rooms in the gallery until the late 1950s. The gift formed an unrecognised nucleus around which the Scottish national collection of watercolours and drawings grew.<sup>28</sup>

The artist's tomb, designed by Playfair, is decorated with a bronze profile by Sir John Steel (1804–1891), placed there in 1863. It is one of four portraits, the best known being that by Henry Raeburn (1756–1823) of c. 1822–23 (fig. 7).

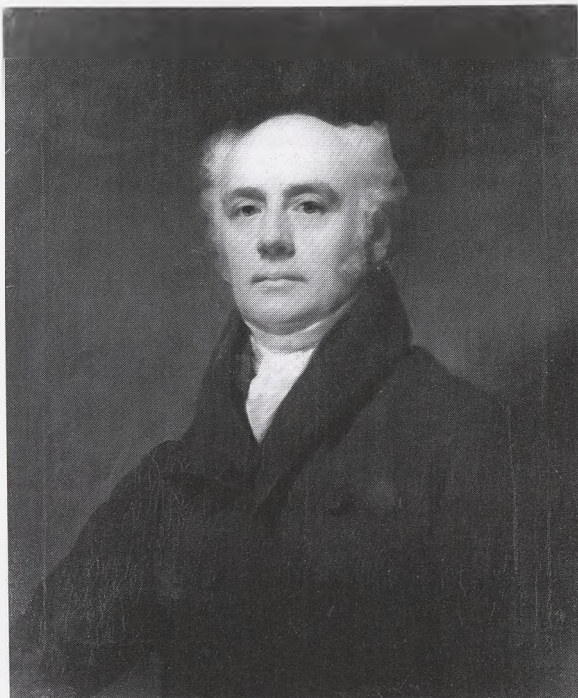


Fig. 7. Hugh Williams, oil on canvas, by Henry Raeburn, c. 1822. (National Portrait Gallery, London.)

Of the others, the miniature by W. J. Thomson (mentioned by Elizabeth Anderson in her letter of 1899) is now untraced, but it is known from an engraving by C. Thomson published in 1827.<sup>29</sup> Possibly the latest in date is that by William Nicholson (1781–1844) in the Royal Scottish Academy, which appears from the age of the sitter to be of c. 1828. A life mask belonging to the Edinburgh Phrenological Society is also recorded but is presently untraced. The bronze plaque by Steel, on the tomb, is a copy of a bas-relief in white marble by the same artist, given to the National Gallery of Scotland by the artist's widow in 1866.

As is the way in a medium depicted in the literature as 'an almost uniquely British phenomenon', Hugh Williams is seldom given credit for his contribution to the art of watercolour.<sup>30</sup> His essentially European feeling for watercolour – broad colour washes over expressive but almost invisible



pencil outlines, revitalised a tradition practised in Scotland by Richard Cooper senior (1696–1764) and his pupils Robert Adam (1728–1792), Paul Sandby (1730–1809) and Jacob More (1740–1793) in the early and middle years of the eighteenth century. This tradition grew out of Cooper's association with Louis Cheron (1660–1725), a student of the Académie, at the St Martin's Lane Academy in London.

The work of Williams is almost entirely topographical and his Scottish views are often the earliest depictions of the scenes in question. The works are accurate representations, but are often embellished with imaginary picturesque *repoussoirs*, after the manner of Claude. As well as his precise drawings he occasionally worked in charcoal or very soft dark pencil. There is also evidence that he painted stage scenery in 1797.<sup>31</sup> He began working in oil in 1810 and continued to exhibit oils until shortly before his death. Only two of these are known, in the Royal Scottish Academy and the National Gallery of Scotland, and a further example is illustrated in Grant's *History of the Old English Landscape Painters*.<sup>32</sup> As has been seen (fig. 2), he was a skilled etcher, apparently the first in Scotland to work in the soft ground manner. His works in watercolour are most often confused with those of James Stevenson (1780–1844), who may have been his pupil for a time.

Developing ideas gathered in the cloth printing industry, Williams reduced his colour schemes to the

most simple (and classically inspired) washes of red, blue and yellow, always laying yellow over dry blue to create the illusion of green. This simple idea was picked up by Turner in Edinburgh in 1818, who developed it in watercolours such as 'Crichton Castle' (in the Tate Gallery, London), possibly made in Hugh's company in 1818. Through his watercolours Williams also had an impact on the architecture of Edinburgh. The Greek Revival would have occurred in the city without him, but he pushed continuously for the building of a National Monument (the project ended in the year of his death) and brought a deep appreciation of the picturesque to his friendships with the leading architects of his generation. He probably did not meet Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781–1841) during the architect's visit to Edinburgh in 1826 but one of his largest watercolours of Athens stopped Schinkel in his stride, on a visit to the house of Benjamin Gott in Leeds later that summer (what might have occurred if Williams had gone to Egypt instead of Greece in 1817!).

The final word should go to his friend Henry Cockburn:<sup>33</sup>

The arts suffered their severest loss, in the summer of 1829, in the death of my friend Hugh Williams; by far the most beautiful painter in watercolours that Scotland has yet produced. But, warm-hearted and honourable, of singular modesty, and almost feminine gentleness, our affection for the man exceeded even our admiration of the artist.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

This article is based on my unpublished PhD thesis 'The Life and Work of Hugh William Williams (1773–1829), set within a Scottish Context', 2 vols, University of Edinburgh (1997). The thesis is accompanied by 'A Catalogue of Works in Public Collections' and 'A Catalogue of all known Prints by and after the Artist'. Readers who wish to see full references should consult these. While engaged in research on Williams I held a Visiting Fellowship at the Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven, and a

Cotton Fellowship: I should like to acknowledge the support of these bodies and the continued support of the Carnegie Trust in my research.

1 National Gallery of Scotland, MS letter from Miss Elizabeth Anderson, 16 August 1899. This letter had been misplaced and was not available during the period of research for my thesis on Hugh Williams.

- 2 Private collection, survives only in a typescript copy. The author is grateful to Dr Ian Gregg for making this available.
- 3 Margaret H. Swain, *The Flowerers: The Origins and History of Ayrshire Needlework* (London and Edinburgh 1955), chapter 4.
- 4 Edinburgh City Archives, MS Register of Aliens, vol. 1, 1790.
- 5 National Archives of Scotland (NAS: formerly Scottish Record Office), CS 231, Sequestrations, R1/9/1791.
- 6 Edinburgh University Library, Special Collections, MS Gen. 873/111/133-4, letter from Louis Ruffini to Joseph Black, 5 January 1789. Also 'Relazione di William Roebuck sul giro da esso ... per la ricerca del carbon fossile', 25 November 1790. Archivio di Stato, Turin.
- 7 Private collection: reproduced in *Country Life*, 4 November 1971, Supplement p. 30.
- 8 National Gallery of Scotland.
- 9 Published by Jee and Eginton, 1795; copy in Edinburgh Room, Edinburgh City Libraries.
- 10 John Stoddart, *Remarks on Local Scenery and Manners in Scotland during the Years 1799 and 1800*, 2 vols (London 1801), I, opp. pp. 89, 269; II, opp. pp. 199, 299. There were apparently two printings – in one the plates are coloured, and in the other printed in sepia.
- 11 There were further editions of this publication in 1808 and 1814.
- 12 W. E. K. Anderson (ed.), *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott* (Oxford 1972), p. 101.
- 13 A considerable number of important bleaching sites appear in his work, which suggests that he may also have supplied designs for printing on cloth.
- 14 Copies in British Museum and National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. One can be seen at Paxton House, Berwickshire.
- 15 Graves mistook him for James Francis Williams (1785–1846), who would have been too young: Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts: A complete dictionary of the contributors and their work, from its foundation in 1769 to 1904*, 8 vols (London 1905–06), VII (1906), pp. 287(b), 293(b).
- 16 John Lewis Roget, *A History of the Old Water Colour Society, now the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours*, 2 vols (London 1891), I, p. 230. The material in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, includes a small card with the names of members, including Williams.
- 17 NAS, National Register of Archives Scotland, 14810, Stirling of Garden Papers, bundle 188.
- 18 Friends of influential people often made use of their frank to send letters free of charge. As an MP Douglas would have had a frank and the term, in this context, simply means that Douglas is to pay for the trip.
- 19 Douglas's journal of part of the tour has been rediscovered in Edinburgh University Library (Special Collections, MS De.5.113), where it had previously been catalogued as the work of the miniature painter William Douglas (1780–1832).
- 20 'Fortress of Porta Ferrajo' in National Gallery of Scotland (D2344), with the title 'A Fishing Port', previously attributed to James Giles (1801–1870). 'Palace of Napoleon', title page engraving by William Miller after Williams to *Constable's Miscellany of Original and Selected Publications in the various Departments of Literature, Science & the Arts*, vol. XXXV. *Revolutions in Europe*, 3 vols (London 1828), vol. III.
- 21 Watercolour in Ulster Museum, Belfast. The published engraving is in Annibal Caro (ed.), *L'Eneide di Virgilio*, 2 vols (Rome 1819), I, between pp. 290–291.
- 22 H. W. Williams, *Travels in Italy, Greece, and the Ionian Islands ... with engravings from original drawings*, 2 vols (Edinburgh 1820).
- 23 See Katrina Thomson, *Turner and Sir Walter Scott: The Provincial Antiquities and Picturesque Scenery of Scotland* (Edinburgh 1999) for a detailed account of this publishing venture.
- 24 Williams, *Travels*, I, p. 202n.
- 25 Royal Institute of British Architects (on loan from collection of Mrs Crichton), MS Journal of C. R. Cockerell, COC/box 9/folder 3, vol. 2, Wednesday 21 August 1822: 'Assisted Williams in retouching views of Temple of Minerva. Sent down 4 draw's to Holyrood Ho.: King commanded each artist to send 4 pictures.'
- 26 James Irvine (ed.), *Parties and Pleasures: The Diaries of Helen Graham, 1823–1826* (Edinburgh 1957).
- 27 Thomas Hamilton, *Attestations referred to in a Letter to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh from Thomas Hamilton jun.* (Edinburgh 1819), p. 12.
- 28 The works were presented in October 1859 and appeared in the *Catalogue* edited by W. B. Johnstone published in that year for the opening of the Gallery (and in the *Supplement* dated 1 December 1859). It is often stated that they were given in 1860.
- 29 Scottish National Portrait Gallery.
- 30 Andrew Wilton and Anne Lyles, *The Great Age of British Watercolours, 1750–1880* (London 1994), p. 1.
- 31 *Glasgow Courier*, 19 January 1797, p. 3(b).
- 32 M. H. Grant, *Chronological History of the Old English Landscape Painters (in Oil)* (London 1926), pl. 132.
- 33 Henry Cockburn, *Memorials of his Time* (Edinburgh 1856), pp. 462–463.