Slavery, Commerce, and Art: Kelvingrove House and The City Industrial Museum

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INTRODUCTION

On Thursday, May 2 1901, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum opened to the public, along with two other temporary exhibition halls, as one of the main attractions at the Glasgow International Exhibition. Billed as the 'Palace of Fine Arts', the new building – designed by John W. Simpson (1858-1933) and E J Milner Allen (c.1859-1912) – was to become the permanent home of Glasgow's municipal art and museum collections.

Upon its grand opening, festival organisers and city representatives lavished praise on the 'glittering domes' and 'bannered turrets' of the extravagant new gallery which, over a century later, remains one of Glasgow's proudest tourist attractions (*Glasgow International Exhibition* 1901: 23; Lamont 2015: 267). In 2014, Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum was unanimously voted the most popular 'Glasgow landmark or place' among visitors to the *How Glasgow Flourished* exhibition; while Kelvingrove Park was fourth behind the Trongate, The University of Glasgow, and The Glasgow School of Art.

However, the history of its demolished predecessor, the City Industrial Museum (previously known as Kelvingrove), near the modern-day gallery (see Fig. 2), is less known and largely undocumented. The purpose of this article is to provide more information on the early history of Kelvingrove House, by adopting an interdisciplinary approach combining primary archival research with the analysis of material culture, maps, and museum collections. However, I also aim to situate this cultural excavation within wider heritage initiatives relating to the recovery of Glasgow's historical links with the transatlantic slave economy, underlining the possible significance of Kelvingrove House to ongoing curatorial work and policy.

THE CITY INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM: AN EARLY HISTORY

Formerly located adjacent to Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, where the River Kelvin curves north-eastwards in Kelvingrove Park (at the site of the present-day Kelvingrove skatepark), the City Industrial Museum opened in 1870 after the Glasgow Corporation approved proposals to convert an unoccupied late-eighteenth century residential property – Kelvingrove House – into Glasgow's first civic museum. Proving extremely popular, the museum collections swiftly outgrew the house's 'limited exhibition space' and plans

Fig 1: Kelvingrove House or the 'City Industrial Museum' as it appeared, c. 1870. Photograph by Thomas Annan (*Old Country Houses* 1970: B5), by permission of University of Glasgow Library, Special Collections.

for relocation and permanent storage became an 'imperative necessity' by 1874. Even after a substantial extension to the house was completed in 1876, a sub-committee of the Parks and Galleries trust (specifically assigned to manage museum affairs) reported that 'every inch of available space' was occupied; hence the planning and construction of Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum towards the turn of the twentieth century (*Report* 1876: 3).

The 1901 Glasgow International Exhibition, which showcased the city's cultural prowess whilst simultaneously offering visitors a wider idea of the 'world's progress' in 'industry, science and art of all nationalities', provided the perfect occasion to unveil the new gallery (*Pearsons* 1901: 6 and see Lamont 2015: 222-61). However, in the months leading up to the exhibition, debates were waged over what to do with the original Kelvingrove House (or the City Industrial Museum as it was then officially known) seeing as it would no longer be required as a municipal museum space.

Complaints were lodged against 'the drainage of the old building' and the planning executive, following the suggestion of commissioned architect James Miller (1860-1947), decided to demolish the 'old mansion' so that visitors might benefit from 'an uninterrupted view over the park to the west' when visiting the exhibition restaurants (see *Glasgow Citizen* 1898). Though the removal was opposed, particularly among architectural circles that believed the house to

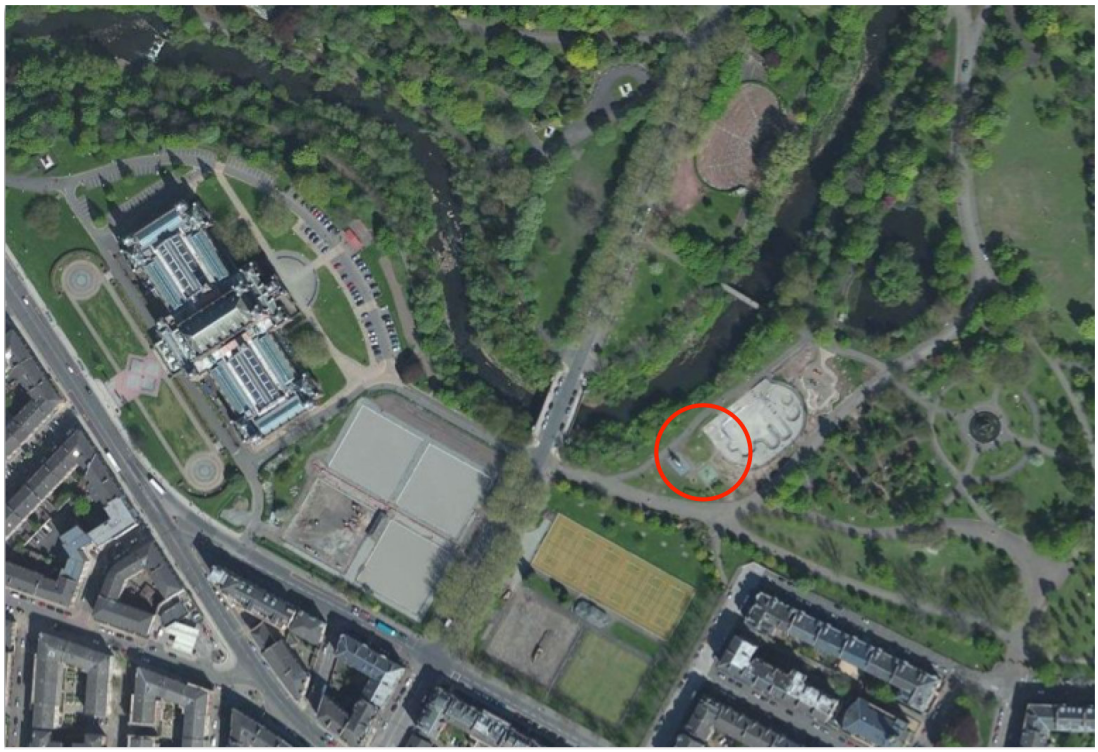

Fig 2: Google Earth image of present day Kelvingrove Park. The red circle identifies the former site of Kelvingrove House/The City Industrial Museum.

be an invaluable Robert Adam (1728-1792) design, the demolition went ahead in time for the exhibition opening.

The 'museum annexe', or extension, erected between 1874-86 was not, however, demolished but converted into the 'Japanese Pavilion' for the purpose of the 1901 International Exhibition. Subsequently, the extension was briefly used as the 'Jeffrey Reference Library' when Robert Jeffrey of Crosslee House donated his collection of books to the Glasgow Corporation in 1902. It was later demolished after the Jeffrey collection moved to its permanent and current home, the Mitchell Library, in 1911 (see 'Robert Jeffrey Library' and 'Jeffrey Library).

As the official guide stated in 1901: 'old Kelvingrove House, has been cleared away, and will only be seen again in pictures.' (*Glasgow International Exhibition, 1901*: 31).

This study traces the origins, early owners, and residents of Kelvingrove House up until its conversion to the City Industrial Museum in 1870. Rather than explore the City Industrial Museum as a functioning civic institution (a topic that merits further attention in its own right), the focus will be on the pre-museum period, with a particular focus on the merchants who owned the house before it was sold to the Glasgow Corporation in 1852. By taking this approach, a series of wider interrelated themes – mercantile wealth, slavery and architecture among others – will begin to emerge, and not without some

contestation and ambiguity.

Questions remain, for example, over whether Robert Adam was ever involved in the design and construction of the house; over the complicity of Patrick Colquhoun (1745-1820), the father of 'Kelvingrove' and the man who financed the construction of the house, in the transatlantic slave trade; and conversely over the abolitionist leanings of the house's second owner, John Pattison (1755-1807). Intertwined into the historical recovery of the long-demolished house are, then, contentious issues surrounding the mercantile activities and politics of its pre-museum proprietors.

In light of the relatively recent scholarly push to recover 'Scotland's slavery past', these issues and ambiguities are significant, particularly at a time when Glasgow's cultural institutions continue to address the 'complexities that constitute memories of slavery in the twenty-first century' (see Devine 2018; Mullen 2009; Morris 2015; Landsman 2001: 60 – 93, 94 – 136; Hamilton 2005; Fry 2001: 70 – 82; Devine 2003: 221 – 49; Devine 2011; Nisbet 2009; Graham 2009; Devine 1978). Indeed, a timely reconsideration of Kelvingrove House in this context inherently poses further questions about how Glasgow's civic institutions might approach the recovery and representation of their own historical links – direct or indirect – with slavery and colonial commerce.

PATRICK COLQUHOUN & THE ORIGINS OF KELVINGROVE

"To the sons and daughters of Saint Mungo the name 'Kelvingrove' has for generations sounded like a note of music." (*Regality Club* 1899: 86).

By the turn of the twentieth century, the very name 'Kelvingrove' had apparently come to sound, according to an 1899 *Regality Club* publication, 'like a note of music' to the citizens of Glasgow. However, despite the above allusion to Saint Mungo, the name 'Kelvingrove' is far from ancient. It first came to prominence in the early 1780s when Patrick Colquhoun purchased two subdivisions of Nether Newton ('woodcraft' and 'Berrie-dyke') in order to build a 'country retreat' which he named 'Kelvingrove' on account of the 'fine old timber' that stood next to River Kelvin (*Old Country Houses*: 61).

At this time, the area presently known as Kelvingrove Park was divided into two sections: Nether Newton formed the lower part and was bordered by Sauchiehall Street to the South and Woodlands Road to the East, while the Northern, or elevated, part of the park was known as Woodside and included the present-day Park Terrace, Park Circus and Woodlands Terrace. As the nomenclature suggests, this area was scarcely developed in the eighteenth century and mainly comprised of woodlands, drumlins and 'undulating meadowland' (*Old Country Houses* 1870: 61).

In 1782, Colquhoun reportedly acquired twelve acres of Nether Newton from the son of Alexander Wotherspoon, writer in Glasgow, and just one year later he had laid out ample 'pleasure grounds', 'extensive gardens', a 'range of offices' and crucially, built a country mansion which came to be known as Kelvingrove House (*Old Country Houses* 1870: 61). While the appellation, 'Kelvingrove', has certainly stood the test of time, transforming and reinventing itself through

Fig 3: 'Roy Military Survey of Scotland', Lowlands 1752-55. The lower part of (what is presently known as) Kelvingrove Park is comprised of the wooded area 'Nether Newton' which Colquhoun purchased in 1782 (Roy 1752 -55).

various civic redevelopments in different ages, the story of Colquhoun and his original mansion has, as previously stated, largely been neglected.

Patrick Colquhoun has largely been remembered for two main reasons. First, he was the founder of Glasgow's Chamber of Commerce in 1783 (during which time he was also Lord Provost); and second, he led and instigated 'pioneering police reform in London' where he lived and worked from 1792 until his death in 1820 (Barrie 2008: 60).

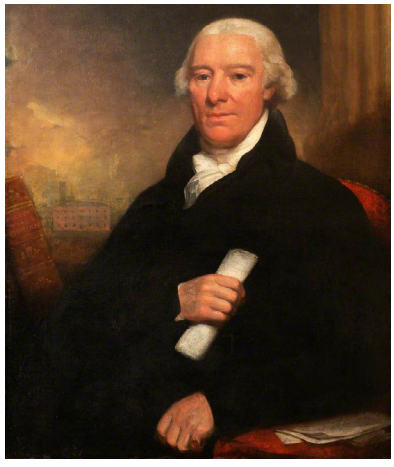

Fig 4: Portrait of Patrick Colquhon (Colquhoun)
Image credit: Thames Police Museum

In addition to historiography, this dualistic legacy continues to be materially maintained by the portraits that still hang, hundreds of miles apart, in the Glasgow City Chambers' and The Thames Police Museum (see 'Thames Police Museum'). Moreover, as recently as 2012, a 'Colquhoun Dinner' was held in Glasgow; a tradition which began in 1938 to commemorate Glasgow's 'Illustrious Forbears' in commerce and industry.

At the first 'Colquhoun Dinner' the keynote speaker R. A. Maclean, praised Colquhoun

for playing 'a leading part' in Glasgow's civic progress, particularly by 'developing the cotton industry.' Colquhoun has also been described as 'one of the great Glaswegians of the Eighteenth century', and commemorated by the University of Glasgow's Department of Economic and Social History through the Colquhoun Lectureship in Business History (see *Colquhoun Dinner Papers* 1944; *Glasgow Herald* 1969).

The purpose here, however, is not to further reflect on Colquhoun's role in establishing Glasgow's chamber of commerce, his contributions to social theory or his efforts in founding the Thames Metropolitan police. Rather, it is to situate him among a late-eighteenth century Glasgow 'mercantile elite' who had various business interests including colonial trade (see Pieris 2007; Cooke 2012). As socio-economic historians of Glasgow continue to probe contentious connections between eighteenth-century mercantile wealth and slavery, it is perhaps unsurprising that Colquhoun, and correspondingly his 'Kelvingrove' country estate, should come under fresh scrutiny.

COUNTRY MANSIONS, COLONIAL TRADE AND SLAVERY

The proliferation of country houses in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has garnered much scholarly attention, with the focus commonly being on architecture, lavish collections and stately significance. More recently, however, historians have begun to explore wider connections between landed wealth, country houses and the Atlantic slave economy. There is a growing awareness that British country houses were often built from the proceeds of colonial trade and, in some cases, also provided a way for merchants to cultivate a genteel image that deflected any (direct or indirect) associations with slavery (Dresser and Hahn 2013).

It is clear that Colquhoun's house and corresponding estate was an ostentatious symbol of his elite status and refinement. Yet questions remain over the extent of Colquhoun's – and by consequence his country estate – links with slavery and colonial trade. T.M. Devine has suggested that Colquhoun's Kelvingrove House was similar to James Buchan's 'Virginia Mansion' and John McCall's 'Black House' in that it was an unmistakeable indication of eighteenth-century mercantile wealth (Devine 1994: 164). While the juxtaposition of Colquhoun with these prominent 'tobacco lords' (see Devine 1974) is significant, relatively little is known about his early accumulation of wealth and involvement in the tobacco trade.

An early biography of Colquhoun, written by his son-in-law Grant David Yeats (under the pseudonym 'Iatros'), outlines formative years spent in the 'colony of Virginia, for the purpose of following commercial views.' Returning to Scotland at the onset of the American War in 1766, Colquhoun was a principal contributor to 'a fund for raising a regiment for his majesty's service from the population of Glasgow.' (Iatros, 1818: 5 – 6).

That Colquhoun spent time in Virginia during Glasgow's 'golden age' of tobacco and opposed the American Revolution (which effectively cut out the need for Glasgow merchants) is

significant. As Devine has outlined, there were six main Glasgow-based tobacco syndicates trading in North America: the Cunnighame group, the Speirs group, the Glassford group, the Buchanan-Jamieson group, the Thomson-McCall group and the Donald group (Devine 1974: 'Appendix').

These groups could be broken down further into different sub-companies and individual partnerships. Within the Alexander Speirs group, for example, there were three companies: Speirs, Bowman and Co., Speirs, French and Co., and crucially for the present study, Patrick Colquhoun and Co. (see Peters 1990). While this reveals that Colquhoun directly profited from the tobacco trade, it was in his role as merchant spokesman and politician that he would flourish.

In addition to the impact of the American War, developments in the sugar and cotton industries, along with a heightened interest in West Indian trade, meant that tobacco was no longer the dominant commercial focus when Colquhoun established the Chamber of Commerce in 1783. It should be pointed out, though, that the board of directors did include John Glassford, William Cunninghame and George Bogle among other 'tobacco lords'.

From its establishment, Colquhoun regularly lobbied in London on behalf of Glasgow's merchants and by 1785 he was the leading spokesman for British cotton manufactures whilst also acting as 'the London agent for the planters of St Vincent, Nevis, Dominica and the Virgin Islands'. Colquhoun was one of eleven Glasgow-based merchants who contributed to a fund for 'raising a Regiment, which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to order to be immediately raised for service in the said island' (see Lindebaugh 2003: 426).

Colquhoun's involvement with West India Merchants' can be traced back as early as 1779, when his name appeared on a subscription list of a 'general meeting of the planters and merchants concerned in the island of Jamaica'. His relationship with West India merchants was, in fact, to be longstanding, and a group of London-based West India merchants who encouraged and funded his establishment of the Thames River Police between 1797 and 1800 (see *The Gazeteer* 1779).

In summary, Colquhoun's close links with West Indian merchants (many of whom campaigned against emancipation); previous profiting form slave-produced tobacco in North America; and candid remarks about slaves and slavery in relation to economic profit clearly suggests his complicity with, even advocacy of, slave-based economic growth. In his *Plan for Establishing a Chamber of Commerce*, for example, Colquhoun pointed to a successful episode where Liverpool merchants had used their 'combined strength' to complete a 'negotiation regarding the duty on slaves' in which 'a saving was established to the merchants' (see Colquhoun 1782: 14).

Stephen Mullen has developed the argument that a 'Glasgow-West India elite' assisted Scottish economic development 'as conduits of commerce and capital', pushing towards a wider recognition of how 'chattel slavery assisted the Industrial Revolution through successive stages in the west of Scotland' (Mullen, in Devine 2015:

233). Similarly, Anthony Cooke has fruitfully revised Devine's work on the 'Glasgow West India merchant community' between 1783-1877 (Cooke 2012).

Having established Colquhoun's professional endeavours and situated him firmly among this late-eighteenth century 'mercantile elite', we might justifiably suggest that the very history of 'Kelvingrove', and specifically Kelvingrove House, is inseparable from wider, admittedly complex, issues surrounding mercantile wealth and 'Scotland's slavery past'. It is, of course, difficult to establish the exact relationship between Colquhoun's purchase of Nether Newton and the profits he might have made from slave-produced goods (or indeed lobbying on behalf of merchants who participated in a slave-based economy). Yet given he was the man who financed the construction of the house that became Glasgow's first civic museum and coined the very name 'Kelvingrove'; these considerations and questions are of the utmost importance if we are to understand the origins and evolution of Kelvingrove, and by extension Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum, with greater context and clarity.

JOHN PATTISON, KELVINGROVE HOUSE & RUNAWAY SLAVES

When Patrick Colquhoun moved to London in 1792, Kelvingrove estate fell into the hands of John Pattison, a cotton merchant who opened the Mile-End mill at Bridgeton in 1800. Surprisingly little has been written on Pattison, his business or residence at Kelvingrove. However, there is some evidence to suggest that when it came to the issue of slavery and abolition - he was on the opposite end of the debate to Colquhoun.

In 1855, an article appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* concerning new development plans for the area surrounding Kelvingrove (Park Terrace and Park Gardens among others). Though John Pattison had long sold Kelvingrove Estate – a year prior to his death in 1807 – the *Herald* article took the opportunity to print some 'interesting reminisces' (*Glasgow Herald* 1855) by Pattison's son, Matthew Moncrieff Pattison (c.1791-1859).

Describing his 'childhood home' at Kelvingrove, Moncrieff Pattison reflected on issues as wide-ranging as his father's political outlook to how he used to catch 'large quantities' of trout, pike, perch and eels 'immediately behind the mansion' (*Glasgow Herald* 1855).

Recounting another episode, he described how a 'drunken exciseman' fishing beside the house threatened to 'shoot my father on account of his

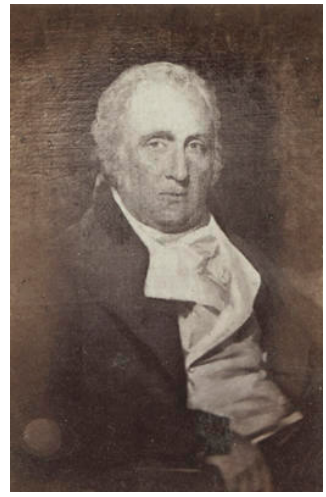

Fig 5: A Thomas Annan photograph of a portrait of John Pattison of Kelvingrove, by Sir Henry Raeburn (see Raeburn), by permission of University of Glasgow Library, Special Collections.

being what he termed a "Democrat"'. According to Moncrieff Pattison, his father was one of the few 'advocates of the liberal cause in Glasgow' at a time when 'political feeling ran so very high'; and qualified his statement by citing the example of when John Pattison attended 'Fox's dinner in 1796 or 1797', along with 'Sir John Maxwell of Polloc, William Maxwell, Esq. of Brediland and Maxworth, Robert Graham, Esq. of Whitehill and Professor Miller of Glasgow College' (Orme 2014: 588).

Here, Moncrieff Pattison reveals that his father was a Whig supporter of Charles James Fox (1749-1806) during the turbulent 1790s. His allusion to a 'Fox dinner' refers to the celebratory feasts, held in honour of Charles James Fox's birthday, that were 'vital in providing the Scottish Whig party with a social and organizational framework within which it could develop and expand as a party' (Orme 2014: 588). At the Glasgow 'Fox dinners', for example, central tenets of Scottish 'Whiggism' - such as 'freedom of the press', 'Catholic Emancipation' and 'the abolition of slavery' – were regularly toasted.

An early supporter of the French Revolution, Charles James Fox opposed William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806) and George III (1738-1820) when they entered a coalition against France in 1793. This led to support for Fox among several Glasgow-based individuals known for their 'liberal politics' such as John Millar (1731-1801), Regius Professor of Civil Law at Glasgow University from 1761 to 1800. That Moncrieff Pattison situates his father alongside the famously subversive Millar – 'a lifelong partisan of reform' – is telling. It also serves to remind us that Pattison bought and lived in Kelvingrove House during William Pitt's 'reign of terror' when fear of revolutionary insurrection in Scotland had hit new precedents. For additional contextual information, see Kenneth R. Johnston, *Unusual Suspects: Pitt's Reign of Alarm and the Lost Generation* (Johnstone 2013).

While the likes of Thomas Muir (1765-1799) and Thomas Fyshe Palmer (1742-1802) were famously deported during a series of sedition trials, John Pattison was also, according to a follow-up article in the *Glasgow Herald*, 'sorely persecuted' for his political beliefs. Relating two anecdotes, the anonymous writer described how on one occasion 'arrestments were sent down to the Lord Provost of Glasgow' to lay hold of Pattison and 'send him to Edinburgh Castle'; while on another, a government spy had been 'sent down to watch him!' The writer further described how Pattison took 'an active and leading part in the abolition of slavery, and thus 'rendered himself obnoxious to the West India merchants'. Most interestingly, Pattison allegedly 'protected a number of negroes who had escaped from their ships in the Clyde' and Kelvingrove was therefore 'a kind of "city of refuge" for all those runaways' (*Glasgow Herald* 1855).

While on-going projects on 'runaway slaves' in Britain may yet unearth more evidence, this anecdote remains unverifiable. Equally, however, it should not be discarded lightly and, if anything, it further reflects the undulating relationships between Kelvingrove House, slavery, abolition and colonial commerce. Curiously, John Pattison

appears to be absent from leading studies on both eighteenth-century abolition and cotton, (see Whyte 2009; Cooke 2010), despite the fact that his alleged championing of abolitionism makes for an extremely interesting complexity (since he was also a cotton-mill owner).

While the first phase of 'rapid growth' in the Scottish cotton industry was based on 'raw materials from the Caribbean' (Devine 1994: 171), the dynamics between commerce, abolition and emancipation were often conflicting. For example, though the likes of David Dale (1739-1806) and John Dennistoun (1837-1870) owned or partnered several cotton spinning factories, they were also known for their reformist benevolence and support for emancipation (see Jezierski 2011). Given that the 'freeing of slaves' contributed towards the decline of the Scottish cotton industry, these conflicts of interest merit much further investigation; with John Pattison surely being a worthy subject of enquiry and historical recovery in his own right (see Donnachie 2010).

ARCHITECTURAL AMBIGUITY: DAVID HAMILTON OR ROBERT ADAM?

In addition to politics, another interesting assertion by Moncrieff Pattison was that, around 1800, his father commissioned architect David Hamilton (1768-1843) to enlarge Kelvingrove House, adding 'a new front and two extensive wings' to the 'old house, which stands on the back of the centre of the present building' (*Glasgow Herald* 1855). This account conflicts with later suggestions that Patrick Colquhoun had employed Robert Adam to add wings and a new façade to an 'original house' that 'was probably built by Mr Wotherspoon after 1754' (*Glasgow Herald* 1899). These opposing statements raise two fundamental questions: i) Was Robert Adam was involved in the design of Kelvingrove House? and ii) Was there an existing house on the lands Colquhoun purchased in 1782?

The 'Adam argument' seems to have gathered momentum in the 1890s, when various petitions were signed and protests made against the house's impending demolition on the basis of it being a typical example of the architectural work of Robert Adam with the 'east front' being described as 'one of the most interesting and pleasing designs of the Adam style extant' (*Glasgow Herald* 1899).

This idea has persisted into the twenty-first century, with historical sources often affirming Kelvingrove House as one of the Adam buildings that 'Glasgow wantonly destroyed' (see Foreman 2002). Unfortunately, there is little trace of an architectural plan for Kelvingrove House (or even an extension to it) that verifies any architect.

There is, however, no evidence to suggest there was a house in this area prior to 1782, and a map from 1773 reveals that while Kelvinside House is marked there is little sign of any structure or dwelling close to (what would become) Kelvingrove House and estate (see Ross 'Map' 1773). It is far more likely, then, that Colquhoun built the first basic structure between 1782-3 (not involving Adam) consisting of 'only a small square building cast with plaster and whitewashed' (*Glasgow Herald* 1855); and it was Pattison who later employed David Hamilton to add the wings and front façade. While the extended sections

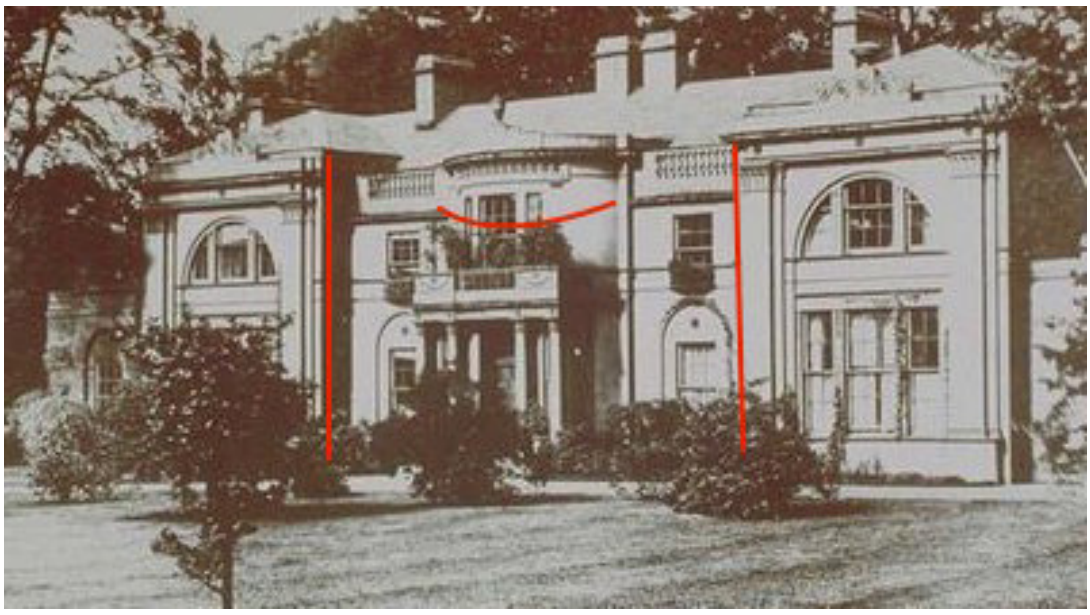

Fig 6: Image annotated by the author to show 'Adam style' features, based on photograph of print; original annotated: "Kelvingrove House, taken 1853, demolished 1900", by permission of University of Glasgow Library, Special Collections.

of the house admittedly resemble some aspects of the 'Adam style', it is worth remembering that 'unpublished Adam projects in Hamilton's portfolio imply some connection with the office of Robert and James Adam, possibly as clerk of works'. Consequently, his early designs, which include Hutchesons' Hospital (1802) and Glasgow's Theatre Royal (1803) 'show strong Adam influence' and were built in the same period as the (alleged) Kelvingrove House extensions (see McKean 2004).

Crucially, Hamilton was known for extending existing properties in order to bring older buildings 'in line with the latest neo-classical style' (*David Hamilton* 1995: 31 – 35). A 'sketch plan' by Hamilton showing proposed extensions to Gilmorehill House (though not executed) shows two small wings and a curved portico that are strikingly similar to the extensions described by Moncrieff Pattison. The undated sketch plan also shows Kelvingrove House; and thus it is not implausible that when sketching his new idea Hamilton referenced his older design.[1] That said, no formal architectural plan for Kelvingrove House has been recorded. One possible explanation is that Hamilton's surviving drawings were 'significantly reduced' and 'burned when it was found that there was no room for them in the office' (*Proceedings* 1895: 106).

Other portfolios, allegedly containing 'great drawings of the great Queen Street Theatre, the Royal Exchange, Hamilton Palace, churches, mansions, &c.' were said to have fallen into the hands of an 'architect of not great professional

1 This sketch plan is currently held in the Hunterian Museum collections and is due to be relocated to Kelvin Hall in the summer of 2016.

repute' who 'consigned them to an underground cellar, where they remained literally to rot' (*Proceedings* 1895: 106). If there is truth to this account, given by architect Thomas Gildard (1822-1895), then it is possible that the extension plans to Kelvingrove House were among these 'lost' Hamilton drawings.

Finally, if Robert Adam had designed or extended a house at Kelvingrove, it is curious that no record or architectural plan has been recorded given most of his designs from the period have been extensively collected and catalogued, with most of his drawings remaining in the Sir John Soane Museum (see also King 2011). More speculatively, the overall amount of variety and detail of the 'wings' and façade is something that might be expected from much later Adam buildings, and it is hard to imagine anyone working in his broad style would be that far advanced as early as 1782. David King, author of *The Complete Works of Robert and James Adam*, has further speculated that the house also seems to lack Adam's refinement in that its pavilions have 'rather thin friezes' and lack signature 'string courses' (King 2016).

While conclusive proof remains to be found, the balance of evidence suggests that Robert Adam was never involved in the construction and design of Kelvingrove House. Rather, the 'Adam style' features (see Fig 6) appear to have been designed by David Hamilton, under the commission of John Pattison, sometime between 1800 and 1801. Most notably, Adam was not associated with the house until the late 1890s, when the likes of Peter Macgregor Chalmers, the Glasgow Art Club and members of the 'Regality Club' campaigned against the impending demolition of the house. Perhaps, then, citing the illustrious name of Adam was deemed the best powder for the cause of opposing its removal; despite the fact that no proof or connection with Adam was – or ever has been – traced. Incidentally, a similar episode occurred during the proposed demolition of David Dale's Charlotte Street House. Despite no formal evidence, claims were made on the basis of it being 'built to the design of Robert Adam' (*Glasgow Herald* 1953).

RICHARD DENNISTOUN AND THE WEST INDIA ELITE

Further complicating the relationship between Kelvingrove House and mercantile wealth, Glasgow merchant Richard Dennistoun (c.1758-1833) purchased the estate from John Pattison in 1806. While Patrick Colquhoun had probable links with Glasgow's West India 'elite', Dennistoun was directly involved in West Indies trade; holding shares in Dennistoun, Buchanan and Co.', the 'Sugar House Company' in Port Glasgow and cotton spinners at Stanley, Perthshire (Cooke 2012: 157).

Descended from the illustrious 'Dennistouns of Colgrain', Richard Dennistoun's two brothers, Robert Dennistoun (1772-1815) and James Dennistoun (1758-1835), were also prominent traders as outlined in Anthony Cooke's recent profiling of 'elite' Glasgow West India merchants between 1783 and 1877 (see *Some Account* 1859).

Expanding on T.M. Devine's pioneering work (Devine 1978: 40 – 67), Cooke identified a total of sixty-four people who formed part of

the Glasgow West India merchant community by using, in addition to Devine's original findings, wills, probate inventories, marriage connections and slave compensation records recently collated by a team at University College London (*Legacies of British*). Cooke's exploration into marriage is particularly insightful given it was often a way of 'reinforcing business networks' and 'cementing 'one's role in a business partnership' (Cooke 2012: 132). Accordingly, Richard Dennistoun married Christian Alston whose brothers Robert Douglas (1778-1846) and George Alston (c.1775-1850) were also prominent West India merchants. A testament to the contemporary intertwining of marriage with business interests, the Alston brothers held shares in in 'Campbell, Rivers & Co.' along with Richard Dennistoun.

Thus, when Richard Dennistoun and his wife moved into Kelvingrove House in 1806, there can be little doubt they were also firmly situated among an 'elite' circle of Glasgow West India merchant families. As with the above discussion of the cotton industry, however, it is important to heed some of the complexities existing between business and politics. For example, while James Dennistoun (Richard's brother) was a West Indian merchant, he was also a pro-reform Whig who campaigned for the Reform Act of 1832, which ushered in a long period of Liberal dominance in Glasgow. During this period, the 'city's representatives in parliament were likely to be pro-emancipation and hostile to the retention of slavery in the West Indian colonies', which would have surely conflicted with the Dennistouns' business interests (see 'Campbell, Rivers & Co.).

As evidenced above, however, there is little doubt that Richard Dennistoun's wealth was bolstered by commercial enterprises that relied on West Indian slavery. Dennistoun was also one of five named awardees in an 1836 compensation claim for the loss of fifty enslaved in a Trinidad Plantation (see Trinidad 1749 'Belvedere'). Though the payout occurred after his death in 1833, it is worth remembering that Kelvingrove House remained in the Dennistoun family until 1841, and therefore this accumulation of slavery-related wealth (or compensation) is no less significant. While Dennistoun's wealth cannot be tied to the actual construction of the mansion and estate (unlike the case of Patrick Colquhoun), other important issues must still be considered. For example, Stephen Mullen's exploration of material culture in prominent Glasgow merchants' mansions sheds further light on how the proceeds from slavery affected, indeed shaped, living conditions among Glasgow's West Indian 'elite', pointing further to how an informed, contextual history of Kelvingrove must account for a multifarious array of connections with colonial trade and slavery. With regards to Kelvingrove House, Mullen has also undertaken a room-by-room case study during the period in which Richard Dennistoun inhabited it.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: KELVINGROVE HOUSE, GLASGOW & SLAVERY

The primary purpose of this study has been to provide more information on the early history, owners and residents of Kelvingrove House, before it was converted into the City Industrial Museum in 1870. As stated in the introduction,

it is also hoped that the historical recovery of the long-demolished house might also contribute to much wider discussions regarding how Glasgow's present-day civic institutions might approach the representation of the city's historical links with slavery. One avenue that remains to be explored is the provenance of 'slavery-related' objects that occupied the original Kelvingrove House/ City Industrial Museum. Tracing accession registers, museum diaries, departmental records and the annual *Report on the City Industrial Museum* (published from 1876 onwards) would provide a starting point for gathering this kind of information. However, given this article has focused on the earlier history of Kelvingrove House, it is more appropriate here to discuss why acknowledging the pre-museum era is also important.

Of course, part of the difficulty with Kelvingrove House is that, unlike the Gallery of Modern Art, there is no physical remnant that can visually intertwine slavery into a present historical narrative. While one can point to the GoMA building in the 'Merchant City' and discuss eighteenth-century tobacco lords, or how William Cunninghame financed the building with slave-generated revenue; the present-day Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum stands as a symbol of untainted Victorian splendour which, perhaps, obscures the earlier history of the original mansion and estate.

Needless to say, publicly acknowledging that Kelvingrove House (and by extension Glasgow's first civic museum) was also partly financed by slave-generated revenue is by no means a straightforward endeavour. Though presenting stories about Patrick Colquhoun, Richard Dennistoun and even John Pattison provides a natural focal point, such an approach would adhere to the much-criticised 'dominant narrative' of focusing on localised merchants and elite figures rather than highlighting the centrality of slavery to our shared transatlantic histories (see McVey 2015: 793-97).

Yet, given the plethora of theoretical texts, public initiatives and articles on 'slavery in the museum' that have appeared since the 2007 bicentenary of the Abolition Act, there is certainly no shortage of materials to aid direction and catalyse constructive debate on the matter.

The case of Kelvingrove House is, of course, but a small part of a much wider obligation to increase public awareness of Glasgow's links with slavery. The task that academics, curators and institutional representatives in Glasgow must collectively embrace, then, is to continue these discussions and propel them forwards into action.

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