

# THE Piper



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NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

## ‘What thou lov’st well is thy true heritage.’

Ezra Pound

That wonderful crucible of creativity, the Festival, is over. The library has reigned with stately calm above the magic and mayhem of George Square.

The fizz and fuss now subsiding to prepare for a new semester. Even the sun has been graceful with its presence. The first leaves are falling.



This edition of the Piper covers creation (Dolly the Sheep), collecting (the Drescher Donation) and colonialism (Americana).

The Exhibition in the Library celebrates Dolly and those who brought her into being and also pioneered amazing advances in human and animal health. It is a fascinating exposition of the journey of a remarkable achievement.

The Drescher Collection is a Donation of books from the estate of Horst William Drescher, late Professor of English Literature at Mainz and founder of the Scottish Studies Centre there. He collected, among other texts, many volumes of Mackenzie’s *Man of Feeling* – a favourite book of Burns.

The Americana is in the Special Collections and reflects the Scots involvement with a burgeoning nation.

We have many events for Friends over the coming year. Come and join us in the Library to explore the rich treasures it contains, revealed through the minds and words of our speakers as they unfold their discoveries. I hope they encourage you to make discoveries of your own.

**Lady Caplan,  
President, Friends of Edinburgh  
University Library**



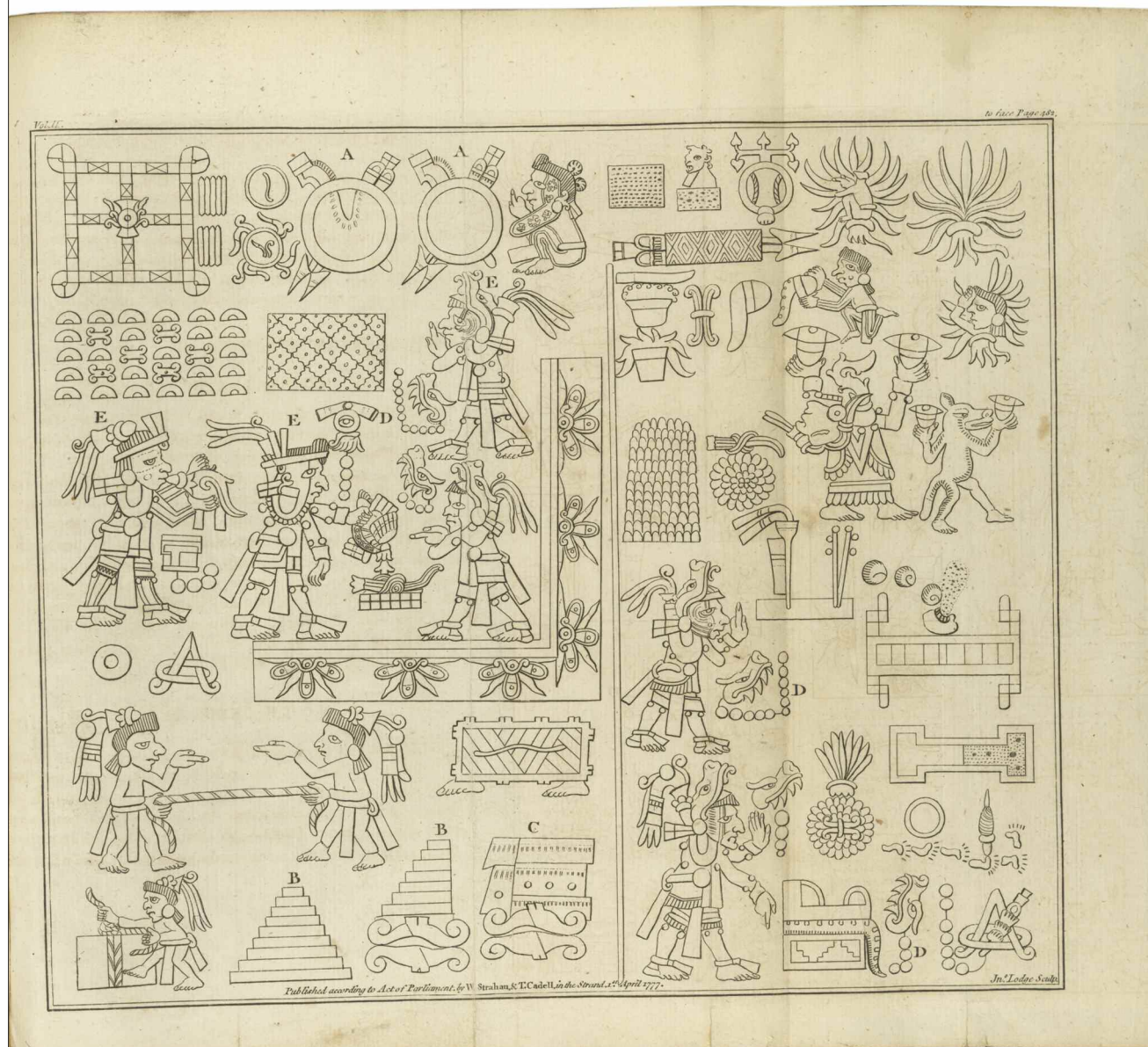
# Americana in EUL Special Collections

*Let us now praise  
famous men, and our  
fathers that begat us.*

Ecclesiasticus xiv.1

DISCOVER ED, our latest but certainly not our last catalogue, proclaimed transiently during its days of birth that we should throw away our old catalogues. The instruction has been discarded in its turn, but was bad enough to merit fleeting notice. It would have been equally intelligent for us to be told to

throw away our alphabets. Old catalog(ue)s of our Library tell us the state of knowledge on our subjects at given times, notably the great 3-volumed, 4138 page *Catalogue of the Printed Books in the Library of the University of Edinburgh* (1918–23) whose copy in my father's study in Dublin I remember page-turning with delight







**Opposite.** *History of the Americas* (2 vols.  
London, 1777) by William Robertson

**Right.** *Quattuor navigationes* (Strasbourg, 1509)  
by Amerigo Vespucci

as a child, little knowing I would inflict myself on its parent institution for life. This was my form of discovering Edinburgh (or, if you insist, 'Ed.') and it might reasonably be claimed that it had existed before I or you 'Discovered' it. The most famous instance of this particular verbal abuse is probably 'Columbus discovered America' as though it could only exist when glimpsed by a European eye. The cliché is rightly repudiated today, in the far too belated realisation that the indigenous inhabitants knew where they were. Poor Columbus (1451–1506) was shabbily treated in his turn when his achievement was purloined by Amerigo Vespucci (1451–1512) bestowing his first name irrevocably on the continent which Europeans had now noticed for the first time since Lief Erikson or whoever.

The University of Edinburgh embarked early on a comparably light-fingered discovery as may be seen in our part of a manuscript treatise on Cosmography written on the fly leaves of a copy of Vespucci's *Quattuor navigationes* (Strasbourg, 1509) originally owned by William Hay, principal of King's College Aberdeen, 1536–42). An Edinburgh University Library Exhibition catalogue 'A Miscellany of Americana' (spring 1963) observed that 'The marginalia on the right-hand page are by Hay who notes that the 4th division of the world mentioned in the treatise is called America. In some propositions written in a different hand lower down the page America is stated to be connected to the Orient'. The Library had been gifted this by 'the poet, William Drummond of



Hawthornden, in 1629, when the same benefactor (1585–1649) also donated *De Insulis super inventis* (Cologne, 1532) by Hernando Cortes (1485–1547), 'conqueror of Mexico', 'Addressed to the Emperor Charles V whose portrait and heraldic insignia adorn the title-page'. These were from what amounted to annual donations by Hawthornden, who had graduated master of Arts in 1625, and bestowed the fruits of his European travels and acquisitions

through most of the 1620s and 1630s. Thereby he set standards of generosity which doubtless have inspired other alumni down the ages.

The greatest benefactor of the Library would have his own admirable professional reasons for encouraging its Americana, being principal William Robertson (1721–93), who brought modern scientific historical research and analysis to the English language (which he seldom spoke). His



thirty-year reign from 1762 followed on his financially and intellectually successful publication of his *History of Scotland* (1759), the first national history in this professionalism, and he, at least, would put Cortes and Charles V (1500–58) to use in the preparation of his *History of Europe during the Reign of Charles V* (1769), and his *History of the Americas* (1777) principally covering the Spanish conquests. He built up the Library far beyond any previous visions, his American interests being socio-economic as well as intellectual, since he attracted American students here and (as for instance in the cases of the sons of Thomas Hutchinson (1711–80), the last London-appointed

civil Governor of Massachusetts) lodged them in his own house for appropriate fees.

We can judge that the American interests continued, despite United States independence in 1783 and Robertson's death a decade later. The 1918–23 *Catalogue* tells us (if we hold on to our alphabets and proceed accordingly) that John Adams (1735–1826), second president of the United States from 1797 to 1801, was initially represented by his *A defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States* in its third edition (Philadelphia, 1797). The hour had produced the man, and the man had produced a book. But as early as 1782 Adams's writings, notably his *An Essay on Canon and Feudal Law* (mid 1760s in composition) won some publication in the Netherlands where he was the US envoy through whom the Dutch-American alliance had been concluded in 1780 at the height of the war of American independence, and quite possibly through Robertson himself, the Library acquired these writings catalogued a little dauntingly under HOLLAND. STAATEN GENERAEL 'A collection of state papers relative to the sovereignty of the U.S.A. & c.' When his grandson, Charles Francis Adams (1807–86), edited the letters of John Adams to his wife for publication in 1841 and subsequently published the 10-volume edition of his works in 1856 the Library bought them. They had even picked up one of his published Messages as President. But British interest in American history declined. The Library missed what may be the greatest history of the United States ever written, that in

(1889–91) by Charles Francis Adams's son Henry (1838–1918).

The Library had been acquiring significant Americana (sometimes one suspects without realising it) as various collections reached it. The mss of David Laing (1793–1878), Writer to the Signet and antiquary, proved to include documents of importance for the histories of colonial New England, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas, as well as letters from George Washington (1732–99) and others, and also noteworthy witness of the American Civil War. Papers of missionary, legal medical, scholarly and other relevance built up. Individual librarians clearly did much.

But to realise and broadcast what Edinburgh University Library could offer had to wait for the first academic historian capable of a global perspective and archival resourcefulness recalling Robertson. This was, most appropriately, the William Robertson Professor of Commonwealth and American History, George Shepperson, who contributed so magnificently to our strength. He shares with Robertson the unique value of being a pioneer in his academic time. What we have achieved has been as a result of the foundations these two formidable people laid. Shepperson's particular mastery was the study of African American history in the African and American continents with attention to their European, Asiatic and Australian implications, although he was a bookman passionately interested in a world of cultural subjects. To know him was to know





**Opposite.** *De Insulis super inventis* (Cologne, 1532)  
by Hernando Cortez

**Right.** *A defence of the Constitutions of Government  
of the United States of America* (Philadelphia, 1797)  
by John Adams

the range of a Robertson united to the profundity of a Henry Adams. Students librarians, lecturers, professors, he taught us all, and lively were the lessons. The catalogue, 'A Miscellany of Americana' shows his loving knowledge of the Library's treasures at that point, having been prepared for 'an Exhibition on the occasion of the first Conference of the British Association of American Studies to be held in Scotland (Edinburgh, 8–11 April 1963)' which tells us how thoroughly he had been establishing Edinburgh's Americanist reputation in the British – and hence global – scholarly world. It was, of course, made possible by the dedication of our librarians, above all of the Deputy Librarian, Peter Freshwater, who, to honour, Shepperson at his retiral, produced a successor exhibition, 'The Making of Nations, An Exhibition of books from the collections of Edinburgh University Library which illustrate the early history of Europeans in Africa and North America to coincide with the George Shepperson Conference on Commonwealth and American History *The Making of Constitutions and the Development of National Identity*, University of Edinburgh 3–6 July 1987'. The status of Shepperson's, and thus Edinburgh's, achievement in African-American scholarship was symbolised by the presence and address of the Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere of Tanzania (MA 1952), who said the only invitation he would have accepted from Britain would be to honour Professor Shepperson. But for the work of Peter Freshwater and his colleagues,

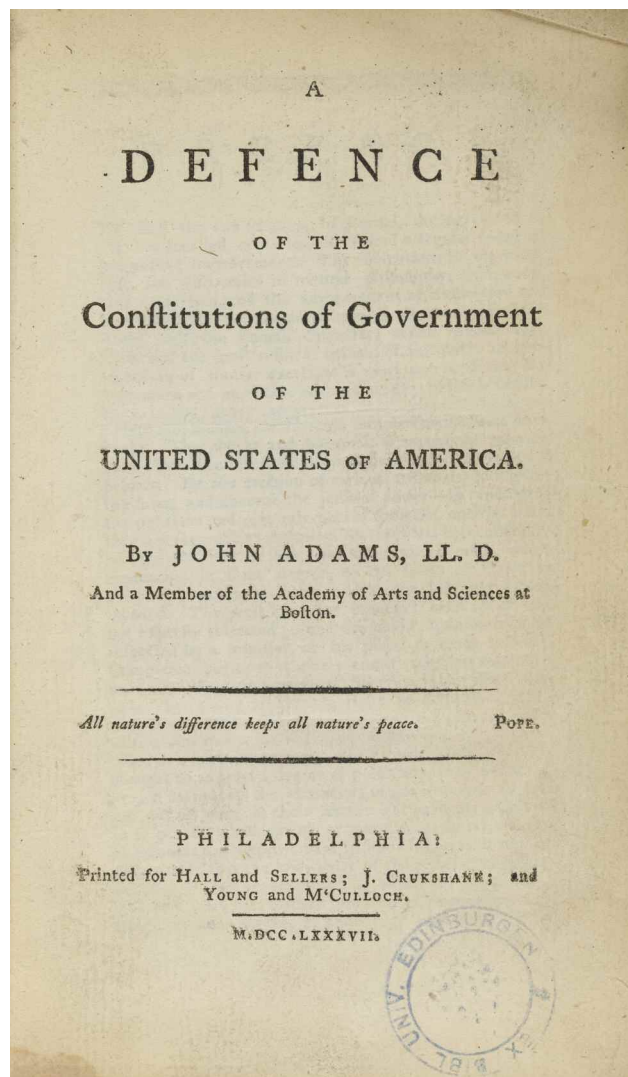
it is also impossible to speak too highly, both for their individual and their collective expertise and energy.

In Shepperson's reign many Americanists played their part, none more so than his first appointment in American history, Dr James V. Compton, whose evangelism here in 1962–68 fascinated students and stimulated yet further library gains. After his return to his native USA, Professor Compton served for many years at California State University at San Francisco at the end of which he donated his working library of Americana. The Compton collection is now housed in the Student Research Rooms of the School of History, Classics and Archaeology in

Teviot Place where it functions with a separate catalogue. Its establishment and maintenance were painstakingly directed by Professor Shepperson's successor, Professor Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones.

But behind all great academic teaching and publishing, stand librarians without whom nothing of value could be done. And we can take the utmost pride in the librarians of all ranks whose service to the books and their users we can never repay.

**Owen Dudley Edwards,**  
former Reader in Commonwealth  
and American History







## A Dedicated Collector and a Generous Donation



**Ian Campbell**  
**Professor Emeritus of**  
**Scottish and Victorian Literature**

The arrival in Edinburgh University Library of a substantial donation of books relating to Edinburgh's Enlightenment years represents a memorial to the career of Horst Wilhelm Drescher, for many years professor of English literature in the University of Mainz at Germersheim, and founder and director of the Scottish Studies Centre there.

Horst Drescher's research interests were in the periodical literature of Edinburgh in the eighteenth century, and in particular the work of Henry Mackenzie whose *Mirror* and *Lounger* were important landmarks in Edinburgh's development as a centre for the literary periodical. Mackenzie is remembered too for *The Man of Feeling*, his 1821 novel which had a short-lived vogue for 'sentiment' in depicting situations in which readers could put themselves in positions to share the intense feelings of characters, and to explore their own feelings in this response. It was a brief fashion and soon came to seem ridiculous once the fashion had passed, but for a time it made Henry Mackenzie a very well known author.

Horst Drescher found time, in a very busy career of teaching, organising and leadership to make a substantial contribution to Mackenzie scholarship. From our first meeting (in 1971 at the Sir Walter Scott bicentenary conference) we were to work together in amassing photocopies and microfilm, annotation and information. In Germersheim and in nearby Bellheim (his family home) his studies were to fill with Scottish literature. In addition to his Mackenzie work, he

supervised a string of doctoral students, and steered to publication much of their work in a series of books from Peter Lang Verlag. He hosted a splendidly successful international Carlyle conference in 1981, and this too gave rise to a substantial book in the same series.

With the death of Horst Drescher the Scottish Studies work continued and continues under his successor, along with the stream of publications and the conferences. But the central thrust of the Henry Mackenzie work was never to be completed, and a really splendid collection of calf-bound works by Mackenzie and his contemporaries was left as a reminder of a lifetime's interest. What to do with them? The answer lay in Frau Christel Drescher's generous decision to donate the whole collection to the University of Edinburgh where her husband had worked so often, a frequent visitor to the Institute of Advanced Studies, and the Centre for Research Collections was happy to arrange for their transport to Edinburgh where they are now safely received, catalogued and arranged. Over 150 books in excellent condition form the Horst Drescher collection, which has been kept together – they needed little attention since Horst Drescher was a discriminating buyer and had the books cleaned professionally each year. In presenting the collection to a special meeting of the Friends of Edinburgh University Library, Dr Joe Marshall underlined several reasons why the donation was welcome.

One reason was the proliferation of editions and issues at the time, in Edinburgh and elsewhere: while the

University Library already had a first-rate collection, it could not hope to illustrate each variant and the Drescher copies – in all over 150 books – entered the Library which were new and not previously represented.

The other main reason is the enhancement to the Library's wider collection in the Enlightenment period, for Mackenzie's interests (and the Drescher collection's extent) go far beyond any one author. Editing the letters of Mackenzie (a lifelong task for Horst Drescher, one he made considerable strides in even if he was not to see the end of it) involved ceaseless search for reference and annotation (in which I did my best to help) and illustrated the breadth of Mackenzie's reading and his own scholarship. The Centre's resources are the richer for this splendid donation.

Recent decades have seen a very welcome internationalisation of Scottish literary scholarship. The USA and Canada have seen centres of excellence (and teaching) spring up, and a very large amount of the scholarly publication and republication – Boswell, Hume, Carlyle, Scott, Hogg – has owed much of its input to scholars overseas, as well as to the publishing efforts of Edinburgh University Press acting with overseas interests. Horst Drescher was an outstanding part of that process, and his work from Germany, owing a great deal to his contacts with the University of Edinburgh, lives on in the continuing work of Germersheim's Scottish Studies centre, as well as in this important addition to the library's archives.



# Towards Dolly

## A Century of Animal Genetics in Edinburgh



Image courtesy National Museums Scotland

**Free Exhibition –  
31 October 2015**

**Main Library  
Exhibition Gallery**

**Monday to Saturday  
10.00am – 5.00pm**

Edinburgh has played a vital role in the science of genetics.

Dolly the sheep is a scientific icon and a household name. However, she is also a single chapter in a wider story which spans a century. Pioneers at Edinburgh and Roslin have embedded concepts such as genetic engineering and stem cell research in the public consciousness, stimulating debate and revolutionising science and medicine.

This exhibition celebrates the individuals and institutions who made, and continue to make, extraordinary advances in animal and human health. It will take you on a journey 'Towards Dolly' and beyond.

## Forthcoming Events

**October 20th at 15.00:**

Shien Xiao Tong on The Earliest Chinese Book

**November 18th at 15.00:**

Owen Dudley Edwards on the American Collections followed by the AGM

**March 1st at 15.00:**

Elizabeth Cumming: 'From Edinburgh to Paris: the Book Art of Phoebe Anna Traquair'

These events will take place in the Main Library, 5th floor seminar room

**April 18th at 18.00:**

Charles Withers

This is a partnership event with the National Library of Scotland and will take place there when Charles Withers, Professor of Historical Geography at the University of Edinburgh will give a talk to the Friends. More details to follow in the spring.



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