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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

DUFF HOUSE



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HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

DUFF HOUSE

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1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

Duff House is a country house on a grand scale which now displays a collection of furniture and artworks from the collections of, and long term loans to, the National Galleries of Scotland (NGS) and functions as a country house gallery. It was designed by William Adam in 1735 for William Duff, 1st Earl Fife and remained in that family until 1906. The present furnishings and artworks are mostly not original to the house, but have been chosen to reflect the feel of the house as occupied by the Duff family.

The Property in Care comprises the house and a small area of ground and is managed by Historic Scotland (HS) under a partnership agreement between Aberdeenshire Council (AC), NGS and HS. The surrounding estate, formerly belonging to the house, is now in various ownerships.

Duff House lies within easy walking distance of the town of Banff on the west bank of the River Deveron. Banff is about 47 miles, 1 ½ hours, by road from Aberdeen and 70 miles, 1 hour and 40 minutes from Inverness.

There is ample car parking and also a facility for coach parking. Stage Coach run regular buses to Banff from Aberdeen and Inverness. Duff House is open all year round, there is lift access to all levels, a shop, tearoom and education room.

There were about 18,000 visits to Duff House in 2013/14.

1.2 Statement of significance

The following bullet points summarise the most significant heritage values of Duff House. The property is unusual among the HES-managed portfolio because of its type and function, and because of its partnership management agreement.

- In terms of architecture, Duff House is of outstanding importance as one of William Adam's major works. Its scale and grandeur of conception mark it out among Scottish houses of the earlier 18th century. This is true of both the exterior with its lavish carved detail, and the interior where Adam was able to demonstrate his gift for internal planning.
- Duff House is intimately connected with the Duff family, and the extensive archive of family letters and papers allows an in-depth insight into life among the upper classes, and some rare glimpses of the lives of their servants and retainers.
- The archival material related to the legal dispute over the building of the house is a rare and important resource for understanding 18th century building practices and contracts. It also provides details of working conditions and some biographical information on individual craftsmen.

- Duff House is an important regional resource as a cultural hub. The grounds and playpark are an important local facility which the café complements, and together they attract many regular local users. The obvious identification with visual art presents a range of educational and engagement opportunities. The NGS collection and the changing exhibitions attract locals and visitors from further afield.
- The particular history of use, redundancy and restoration at Duff means that while the house still presents the feel of a furnished country house, its contents are not original to the house. In this regard it lacks the degree of authenticity and integrity of houses which have remained in use with their original contents. In fact, as it passed out of family use in 1906, Duff is among the earlier examples of country houses seeking new non-domestic uses.
- With the above proviso, the artworks and objects on display have many common threads and associations with the original Duff collections. This is particularly true in the extent to which both Duff and Erskine families can be seen as collectors and indeed as pioneer collectors. The 2nd Earl Fife notable for his early collecting of historical portraits and Sir James Erskine for his early collecting of Dutch painting.

Duff presents a wide range of heritage values which are discussed more fully in Section 2, Assessment of Values, and in Appendix 1, Overview of the displayed collections.



2 Assessment of values

2.1 Background

Duff House was the principal residence of the earls of Fife from 1735 until it passed from the family in 1906. This background note sketches the development of the house and gives some biographical details of the Duff family during their occupation of the house. It closes with an overview of the later history of the house as it was adapted to various uses in the 20th and 21st century.

William Duff (Lord Braco, later 1st Earl Fife) and William Adam. Duff House was built for William Duff (1697 – 1763), a prosperous financier, landowner and politician who rose to prominence in the mid-18th century. Duff inherited considerable fortune and estates which he turned to political influence, representing Banffshire from 1727 – 1734. He and his successors built up a political power base which allowed the Duffs to “place” parliamentary candidates for much of the north east.

In 1723 Duff had commissioned architect James Gibbs (Aberdeen born, but practicing in London and a leading architectural figure of the time) to prepare designs for a new house for his estate at Balveny. It was an austere but handsome classical house of middling size. By 1734 Duff’s family had grown, and so perhaps had his ambition for a residence that better fitted his status. He was about to be ennobled as Baron Braco of Kilbryde and had added Mar Lodge to his estates. His original intention was to rework his Banff town house, but instead he engaged William Adam to design a new house for him outside the town.

Adam was the leading architect practising in Scotland at that time and counted many influential figures among his clients. [For further discussion of Adam, see para 2.3] We do not have drawings of the various iterations of the design for Duff House, only the plates from Adam’s posthumously published work, *Vitruvius Scotticus*¹, but there is much other documentation.

The building of Duff House

Adam’s plans were for an enormous classical mansion with a 9-bay frontage comprising a ground level “basement” for the service offices, first floor for family apartments; principal (second) floor of “state rooms” and attic storey with gallery and additional bedroom accommodation. Quadrant corridors would link to two storey pavilion wings for further service quarters, stabling and a grand library. The foundation stone was laid on Jun 11 1735 and work began apace using some of the materials Duff had already gathered for the town-house.

There was considerable debate between Adam and Duff over whether to provide an attic storey or not. It had been part of Adam’s original scheme, was then deleted, ostensibly because Duff felt it should be “less exposed to Storms in a situation very near the Northern Ocean”, but perhaps also for cost reasons, and finally re-instated. Duff writing to Adam in 1737: *“I believe I’ll not get over the Attik Story, because the want of it would spoil the Looks of Such a Monstrous house, and indeed I wish you and the house had been at the D-- -- before it had been begun...”*

At this stage though, the wings were still a key part of the composition, though due to rising costs, they were never even begun.

¹ Around 1723 William Adam began on a project to publish engravings of major Scottish houses in response to Colen Campbell’s *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715 – 1725). However, Adam’s *Vitruvius Scotticus* was not published until 1812, long after William Adam’s death. It is thought that the Duff House plate was engraved in the 1740s, but was retouched to reflect the elevation of Duff to the earldom of Fife in 1759.

The outstanding external feature of Adam's Duff House is its very lavish carved decoration. This was all produced by Adam's own masons working from his quarry and stoneyard in Fife and shipped up to Banff for assembly. There is an exceptional level of ornamentation: each façade articulated by giant order Corinthian pilasters with composite pilasters embracing the corner "closet" towers, and all windows are given elaborate architraves. A sweeping perron with handsome balustrade was planned for both fronts, but only that to the S executed. To S and N facades, a central tetrastyle portico is crowned by a fully articulated pediment, its tympanum stuffed full of flourish and swagger around the Duff's coat of arms; it cost 150 guineas. Atop the wallhead balustrade, ranks of elaborately carved urns, each five feet high and costing 20 guineas apiece. It was the cost of all this carved work which was to expose the rift between client and architect.

The Adam v Braco case

By 1739 the roof of the house was put on and the "shell" of the house complete. A start had also been made on the grounds and some ornamental buildings for the wider estate. Work was then halted as the disparity between Adam's accounting for costs expended and Duff's expectation of what was reasonable became apparent. In 1741 lawyers for both parties met and failed to reach agreement; at heart the dispute arose from the lack of a clear contract, specifically the extent to which Duff acted as his own "undertaker" (Duff's contention) and the extent to which Adam provided this service (Adam's contention); additionally Duff disputed the quality and measure of the work completed. In 1743 Adam took out a case against Duff for non-payment which was finally settled in Adam's favour in 1748, some months before his death.

James Duff (Lord MacDuff, and from 1763, 2nd Earl Fife)

James Duff (1720 – 1809), took over the completion and fitting out of Duff House after the legal case was settled. He went on the Grand Tour in 1755 and was by that time already sitting as MP for Banff; he continued in parliament until 1784. He consolidated the political stranglehold of the Duffs on the counties of NE Scotland.

In 1759 he married Dorothea Sinclair daughter of the Earl of Caithness; she brought a dowry of £40,000 but not titles or estates which James may have been expecting. The marriage was not happy and produced no children; they were formally separated and lady Fife lived largely in Edinburgh. He did however have three illegitimate children with his mother's maid/companion, chief among them General Sir James Duff of Kinstair (who was later in costly legal dispute over inheritance with the 4th Earl).

The 2nd Earl operated in the highest circles; a good friend of George III, he spent much time in Paris and was reportedly on intimate terms with Pitt and Pelham. We know many details about him because of the extensive archive of correspondence, especially with William Rose his factor, and this included many letters regarding the fitting out of Duff House.

2nd Earl's work at Duff House

The 2nd Earl clearly had experience of the latest fashions and a strong sense of his own taste. The records indicate he sought advice from London-based architects (e.g. Woolfe, Adam) and negotiated directly with local craftsmen. In 1772, he had Fife House in Whitehall designed by John Woolfe (demolished 1866). Woolfe was to illustrate Duff House in vol V of *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1771) with wings of his own rather than Adam's design; again the wings were not built. There are also designs for a ceiling at Fife House by Robert Adam and accounts to Adam's firm for supply of marble for Duff House.

At Duff House during the 1750s and 60s the ground and first floors were put into habitable condition. The entry was initially via the lower hall as the perron stair was not built til 1760. The vestibule, dining room and family rooms were all fitted out and decorated, mostly by local craftsmen. More exotically, Thomas Bromwich of Ludgate Hill, London, was paid for supplying mouldings to Lord MacDuff in 1762. These may relate to the papier mache ceiling in the dining room.

Over this period the impact of the unbuilt wings became increasingly clear, though perhaps the bachelor lifestyles of the 2nd and 4th earls made the matter less pressing. Originally Adam had set aside the east wing pavilion for the library (with access directly from My Lords Dressing Room) but part of the attic (the whole west side, intended as the gallery) was commandeered instead. A detached kitchen block was built to the east and screened by trees; servants were crammed into basement rooms and, reluctantly, also into the attic: James Duff to Wm Rose, 5 Feb 1766: *We will always be pinched for room til the pavilions is built to accommodate servants, as I do not like them to go above stairs to sleep, for fear of being burnt.*

By the mid-1770s, it was clear the wings were not going to happen, however there was still major work to be done in the house and grounds. In 1790 the Grand Stair between the family floor and state floor was finally built. The 2nd Earl had large hand in its design with James Robertson, a local blacksmith, employed to execute the works. There was also much work to the grounds including the gothic mausoleum for which the tomb of the Duffs of Muldavit was moved from Cullen church to Duff House, and the construction of the Bridge of Alvah. In his 70s and with his eyesight failing, the 2nd Earl was clearly feeling the strain and wrote of his works to the grand stair: *"I am sure I am very tired of it...when it is done then I shall do no more, let the next do the rest."*

James Duff (from 1811, 4th Earl Fife)

James Duff (1776 – 1857) was the nephew of the 2nd Earl. The 2nd Earl's brother Alexander had inherited the title in 1809, but being already 78, died shortly afterwards leaving his son James to inherit in 1811 as 4th Earl Fife. The 4th Earl, like his uncle, was active in political and court circles moving at the highest levels and made use of all the Fife's main residences including

Duff House. His main contribution to the house was an elaborate decorative scheme undertaken around 1814 by John Jackson, painter, and it is this scheme that has been restored and/or recreated in many rooms of the house, for instance the grand stair and vestibule. While he enjoyed court life, he was also a shrewd estate manager and improver and from 1833 he rarely left Duff. The combination of the lawsuit vs his half-brother James of Kinstair, his own extravagant spending and the downturn in the agricultural economy meant the latter years of 4th earl's tenure of Duff were somewhat straightened, occasioning a sale of part of the furnishings in 1824 "for the payment of taxes". An unwelcome legacy to pass on to the 5th Earl.

James Duff, (from 1857, 5th Earl Fife)

James Duff (1814 – 1879) was the nephew of the 4th earl. He was in Paris as part of the Diplomatic Service where in 1846 he married Lady Agnes Hay (d1869). Countess Agnes had a particular interest in interior decoration and undertook projects at Skene House, Corrimulzie Cottage (predecessor house to Mar Lodge) as well as Duff. She seems to have used a NE firm of decorators rather than an Edinburgh or London firm². Particular survivals from her work include the fitting of large mirrors to doors in the Prince of Wales Bedchamber and Countess Agnes Boudoir. Photographs of the 1860s record her work and the kind of furniture which was then in the house.

The major external work carried out in this period was the addition of the east wing designed by David Bryce junior. This of course disrupted the symmetry of the house and probably therefore remained screened by planting, just as the earlier 1757 kitchen range which it replaced. The new wing contained kitchen/offices below and a billiard room and bedrooms above. It joined on to the main house through the former Family Bedchamber (now the hunting room) and consequently the run of rooms at first floor level on the east side of the house was disrupted and modified to accommodate it. The wing was demolished after being damaged by stray Second World War bomb.

Alexander Duff, 6th Earl and later 1st Duke of Fife

Alexander William George Duff (1849 – 1912) married Princess Louise, the Princess Royal in 1889.

The 1st Duke and Princess Louise did not focus much attention upon Duff house, their main efforts being turned to Mar Lodge, which was rebuilt after a fire in 1895. There is not much evidence of their time at Duff House.

Duff House in the 20th century

In 1906 the house and 140 acres of the park were gifted to the towns of Banff and MacDuff. The paintings and furniture were sold in 1907. The house was adapted as a hotel (1911-1913), then a sanatorium 'for the scientific treatment of disorders of nutrition' (1913-1923) and again as a hotel (1923-1928). These changes in use had an impact on the house; many of the larger rooms were subdivided to provide extra bedrooms. Old decorative schemes were

² Duff House, I Gow p 42.

destroyed or covered over for instance, whilst a hotel the walls of the vestibule were redecorated to appear as if panelled and a parquet floor was laid. Luckily though beneath some of the later decoration it was possible to salvage or reveal earlier historic schemes, e.g. in the Vestibule and Marble Hall remnants of John Jackson's 1814 scheme. During its life as a sanatorium, a lift was installed rising through the stairwell of the service stair. Exterior alterations included glazed balconies cantilevered out on the E side of the house between the pavilions and above the Bryce wing (during the sanatorium phase).

In 1939 the house was requisitioned by the War Office and used to house German POWs and then a succession of allied troops. Features of this wartime occupation include a painted Norwegian flag over the S of the two fireplaces in the gallery, which has now been covered over. The basement has a number of stencilled notices related to the use of the building by Polish troops. The Bryce wing was badly damaged by a bomb in the 2nd World War and was demolished soon after the house was taken into State care in 1956. It was then administered by a succession of public bodies and the fabric of the house was put into good repair while options for its future use were considered. In 1988, at the initiative of Historic Buildings and Monuments (later Historic Environment Scotland), a public meeting was called, attended by many local and national bodies, to find a suitable future role for the house.

The Gallery Project

In 1992, agreement was reached between Historic Scotland, the National Galleries of Scotland, Grampian Regional Council and Banff and Buchan District Council to use the house as a country house gallery and this is how it continues today. The house was extensively refurbished for this role with most of the 20th century alterations were reversed.

The conversion to gallery use required adaptations to be made for collections management, public access and safety requirements while causing least damage to the historic structure. A major upgrade of services was undertaken including installation of a lift, fire detection and environmental monitoring system. This project was regarded at the time as a pioneering example of introducing modern services into an historic building. Further adaptations provided a service flat, office space, restaurant/tea-room and shop, an exhibition space and an audio visual introduction to the restoration project.

The collection of furniture and paintings exhibited in the house do not directly relate to the Duff family's occupation of the house, but were chosen to create the impression of what it could have been like when occupied.

However, the Duff and Erskine families shared many interests, such as collecting paintings; antiquarianism; military service; notable libraries; opening their collections to visitors. In the absence of any surviving original Duff House furnishings (except one overmantel mirror), the Dunimarle Collection provides well documented evidence of both families' common activities and tastes, such as purchases in Paris; the Grand Tour; links with royalty; military distinction; and a 'Gothic' mausoleum at Duff and Dunimarle.

2.2 Evidential values

There have not been any formal archaeological investigations at Duff House. The sub-surface archaeological potential is essentially unknown, with the possibility that archaeology does exist which would assist the understanding of the structural history of the building. It is possible that evidence survives of the laying out of the proposed Adam wings and the E side of the house, as the location of a succession of kitchen additions and the Bryce wing, will be archaeological sensitive. There is also likely to be evidence for the forecourt of the house.

The house lies within extensive parkland, which is included in the Inventory of Designed Landscapes. The area immediately surrounding the house has a high potential for garden archaeology.

The extensive documentary record which survives for the Duff family and Duff House is an outstanding evidential resource which together with the physical fabric of the house helps our understanding of its development. This resource is discussed in more detail at 2.3 below; it underpins our understanding of the site and makes a major contribution to all the heritage values of the place.

2.3 Historical values

There is an extensive archive of documents and images of relevance to Duff House and the family held at Aberdeen University archive and in the National Archives of Scotland. A project to transcribe manuscript references in the Montcoffer Papers³ collection to the building project at Duff House and grounds was undertaken by Dr E Furgol on behalf of Historic Scotland in 1980s. This provides the basis for much of our understanding of the development of the house and of its owners. Within HS collections (see 2.3.6) there is a small amount of material relating mainly to the later history of the house which sheds light on the 20th century use of the house.

The principal historical values of Duff House are closely interwoven with the insights which the extensive archive material can provide and include:

- the association with William Adam, especially the Adam v Braco case, and the detailed understanding this gives us of architectural and building practice during the 18th century.
- its association with the Duff family who were among the leading families of the north east and who provide an insight into how such families could use their local influence to play an active part in 18th century national politics⁴.
- the documentary evidence means that we can re-construct many aspects of the thinking processes behind the development of the house and grounds, gain a good insight into the family and their concerns, and indeed its subsequent uses as hotel, sanatorium and its various wartime roles

³Aberdeen University Archive <http://webpac.qmlib.abdn.ac.uk/webpac.html> Papers of the Duff family, Earls of Fife, known as the Duff House (Montcoffer) papers, 1500-1960

⁴ The letters of the 2nd Earl to his factor William Rose, provide the basis for a chapter in Lewis Namier *The Crossroads of Power* 1962 examining the role of "minor" parliamentary figures in the chicanery of 18th century Westminster politics.

- to counter this, apart from the archaeology of the building and some surviving fragments of surface decoration we do not have either the interior decor or artefacts which relate to these various phases of use, so the reconstruction is largely in the imagination.
- its historic links with the locality as the focus of local economic development during the 18th century, such as the building of MacDuff harbour and the expansion of Banff.

2.4 Architectural and artistic values

The foundation stone for Duff House was laid on 11 June 1735 on a site to the SE of the town of Banff. William Duff chose William Adam, then the foremost architect in Scotland, to draw up the plans and provide the stonework. The commission was relatively unusual in that it presented the opportunity to build on a grand scale on a new site. This architectural opportunity was a reflection of Lord Braco's lack of an ancient family seat and his extraordinary wealth, and Adam produced a unique house in response.

The **architectural** values of Duff house revolve around The William Adam design which, though not quite completed as intended, represents one of his major works; indeed it is his last great country house. The execution of the exterior with its lavish carved detailing is as fine an example of this very enriched style as is to be found in Scotland and is very much the product of Adam's design and manufacturing process. The interior planning is remarkable both in its ability to demonstrate the formal geometry of the groundplan, the internal symmetry of rooms and placement of staircases and for what it can tell us about the social use of space during the mid and later 18th century.

Design

The plans and elevations published in *Vitruvius Scoticus* show us the aspirational ideal for client and architect. A house of almost ducal ambition with a lavish baroque exterior and an internal plan affording family apartments on the first floor and a state floor above.

The scale of the project allowed the realisation of an idealised symmetry on each floor but also three dimensional planning of suites of rooms between floors. Six stair cases were provided: four oval ones acting as vertical corridors connecting suites of bedroom (with ensuite stool room), closet and servants room at each corner of the house; the grand stair between the first and principal floors; and the main stair which accessed all levels. The processional routes through the house and the internal symmetry of the rooms themselves are all achieved with minimum compromise.

The two main departures in moving from Adam's drawing board to the house *as constructed*, are of course the wings and the perron to the garden front. The lack of the wings, which Adam intended to link to the house by curved colonnades, means our perception of the house is different from that intended. The verticality of the central block is over-emphasised and the

sweeping Hopetoun-like horizontal build-up of the elevation is therefore lost⁵. The architectural model on display in the house enables visitors to appreciate the scale and balance of the original Adam conception.

The decision (by 1760) not to build a perron to the garden front, in mirror image of the entrance front, is less fundamental to the aesthetics and functioning of the house. It removes a little extravagance from the garden front and of course detracts from Adam's original conception of all-round symmetry and formal routes through the house, but this has comparatively little impact on our perception of the grandeur of the house.

Exterior and carved stonework

The external elevations with their finely carved sandstone details are a particular feature of Duff house, important both for its history (their cost was the cause of the dispute between architect and client) and its aesthetic. There is an exceptional level of ornamentation: each façade articulated by giant order Corinthian pilasters with composite pilasters embracing the corner "closet" towers, and all windows are given elaborate architraves. To S and N facades, a central tetrastyle portico is crowned by a fully articulated pediment, its tympanum stuffed full of flourish and swagger around the Duff's coat of arms. A sweeping perron with handsome balustrade was planned for both fronts, but only that to the S executed. The procurement and costs for all these works are known in intimate detail from the bills and letters produced as part of the Adam v Braco case.

Further enrichment was provided by the six lead statues on the pediments: Mars, Bacchus and Minerva to S, and Apollo, Mercury and Diana to N. As their condition was poor, they have been replaced by glass fibre reproductions. Two of the originals are on display inside the house, Mars and Minerva: here the delicacy of detail shows that they were intended to be seen close at hand and in the round, not distantly sited atop a pediment. They were garden statues taken from Duff's town house⁶ in Banff and are of some artistic quality in their own right. Their origin is not known for certain but it seems likely that they may be the work of one of three sculptors working in London pre 1740, stylistically probably Jan van Nost (d. ?1729)⁷. The figures were probably assembled to transmit particular messages through their iconography, messages which for the moment are not clear to us. However it has been noted that the particular form of Diana taken is as *Luna*, the moon goddess, and that such representations are rare in early 18th century lead statuary⁸.

⁵ As Thomas Pennant commented in 1769 *for want of wings it has a naked look*

⁶ Airlie House in Banff, now demolished. An account of Jan 1743 records: *taking down the statues in the bowling green, and placing them on the house and the temple* [which indicates the Airlie house "set" numbered more than the 6 survivors] ... and in 1807 an account for *painting 6 statues at the front and back of the house white...*

⁷ A detailed report on the condition and history of the statues is given in the unpublished Report for Historic Scotland on *The Collection of the 18th century Pediment Sculptures at Duff House*; J & H Naylor 1999.

⁸ Unpublished report for Historic Scotland: *Condition and Treatment Report 2014*; J & Naylor (Hall Conservation).

Interiors

The interior spaces were intended to be as impressive as the exterior, with the grandest room of all, the second floor 'Salon' or Great Dining Room. Adam intended this as a "cube of 30 ft" rising up behind the pediment of the S elevation, though in the event the 2nd Earl cropped it by 5 feet.

Because of the halt to works for Adam v Braco, most of the interior fittings and initial decorative schemes post-date the exterior works by several decades and did not reflect the kind of decoration which William Adam had probably envisaged (presumably a combination of dark panelling and lavish plasterwork such as at Dun or Arniston). Instead the Duff family, particularly the 2nd and 4th Earls, were the motive force, often taking advice from professional architects (Woolf, Adam and Gillespie Graham are mentioned) and directly discussing and approving details with local craftsmen.

The extensive archive allows detailed study of these relationships while the many inventories allow good understanding of how each room was used. We can identify many of the craftsmen involved. For the 2nd earl, 'Thomas Dott, wright and cabinetmaker of Edinburgh', undertook much of the interior work. Other craftsmen involved during this phase of the house include Francis Brodie, furniture maker, John Schaw, upholsterer, John Bonar, painter, Robert Dawson, plasterer and David Crooks 'ornamental Plaisterer' who worked on the rococo ceiling of the vestibule.

Restoration project and decoration

During the 20th century Duff underwent changes of use from house to hotel, sanatorium and a period of wartime requisitioning. The subsequent unpicking of many of these alterations in the 1980s restoration project means that the interior lacks the feeling of "authenticity" of many continuously inhabited houses which retain their original furnishings and decoration.

The present decoration is a mix of schemes undertaken during the restoration projects. Some are based firmly upon evidence of surviving fragments of historic schemes (e.g. the grand stair and marble lobby); others make no claim to restoration, but were undertaken in sympathy with what was understood of comparable historic schemes and from documentary evidence.

Displayed (non HS) Collections: Fine art, applied art, furniture and library

A fuller account of the collections at Duff House, provided by the National Gallery of Scotland (NGS) is given at Appendix 1. As the original Duff collections were sold off in 1909, few items now in the house are original to it. Instead the NGS selected works which broadly reflect the well-documented collections amassed by the 2nd and 4th Earls Fife and their heirs. Thus the NGS selected from the national collection paintings and sculpture which had specific associations with North East Scotland, and/or with the family. Contemporary topographical prints were acquired; contemporary landscape

paintings were offered on loan; and portraits of the 2nd, 4th and 6th Earls, in the care of Aberdeenshire Council, returned to the house.

Original Inventories, supplemented by photographs of the house in the 1870s and careful examination of the building fabric has given a clear indication of how the Duff collections were grouped displayed over time. The current displays reflect this, and certain elements have been faithfully restored, for example, the 4th Earl's decorative scheme on the staircase was restored, and the extremely fragile painted ceiling of the Hunting Room was briefly accessible to visitors, before being secured beneath a modern cover. However, there was not a wholesale replication of historic decorative schemes or earlier picture hangs.

Many individual items stand out, either for their artistic merit, or for their provenance. Works such as El Greco's St Jerome in Penitence, Gainsborough's John Campbell, 4th Duke of Argyll and Allan Ramsay's lovely 18th century portrait of Mrs Daniel Cunyngham are acknowledged as highlights. Other works have a special Duff connection, such as the silver candelabra commissioned by the 4th Earl in 1835 and acquired for the house in 1999; or the portraits of the 2nd, 4th and 6th Earls returned to hang at Duff house. This last group of items, along with the HS collections (see below) which relate mainly to the later history of the house, help to tell the story of the house and the family.

As both the 2nd and 4th Earls were noted collectors it is appropriate that some of the current objects retain their significance as "part of a collection", albeit from the Erskine family rather than the Duffs. For example Sir James Erskine's Napoleon-associated collection of furniture and artefacts parallel items in the 2nd Earl's collection. The library amassed by the Erskine family derives some significance by remaining as an entity. Some of the subject matter: history, parliamentary affairs and agricultural improvements would align with the original (and much larger) Duff library. Other aspects are peculiar to the Erskine's library, for example the important material related to India, including Persian texts.

HS collections

The Historic Scotland collection relating to Duff house comprises mainly archive material including photographs, associated small objects and literature pertaining to the history of the House and those that occupied it throughout. For instance, among the ball invitations and published accounts of the wedding of Princess Louise is a copy of a diary kept by an 18 year old apprentice gardener dating to the 1870s. These archives have been found at the site itself or donated/ gifted by members of public and range from the 19th to present day. They provide evidence for the House during its many phases – as domestic dwelling, hotel, sanatorium, and its use during the First and Second World Wars and are of local interest.

Together the collections add immeasurably to the visitor experience at Duff House. The relationship between the past inhabitants of the house, and its

present gallery aspect is multi-layered and potentially complex and there are many interesting and inspiring stories to be told.

2.5 Landscape and aesthetic values

Duff House sits within an important designed landscape largely laid out in the late 18th and early 19th centuries which is noted for its planting, parkland and extensive scenic drives. The main approach was originally across the bridge over the Deveron (Banff Bridge) and which now carries the A97 and is the main easterly approach into the town of Banff. From the House itself there are vistas to the Temple of Venus on the Hill of Doune on the E bank of the Deveron, and down towards the fishing temple.

Once the decision to site the house out of Banff was taken, Lord Braco (later 1st earl) had clearly envisaged it surrounded by fine landscaped grounds. Among William Adam's accounts for 1741 there is a charge for "supplying a plan of the whole grounds about the house" and pre-1750 accounts for works to the *Temple on the hill* (temple of Venus) and the *fishing temple*. Under the 2nd Earl the grounds took shape and further ornamental buildings were provided. Chief among these, and a real statement in the landscape is the Bridge of Alvah (1772), a dramatic arch thrown over a steep gorge; and the Duff Mausoleum (1793) in Gothic style. Together the bridge and mausoleum illustrate the particular approach and interests of the 2nd earl.

The house is a prominent landmark feature on the approach to Banff and several of the ornamental estate buildings are also important eyecatchers. Part of the surrounding landscape has been developed as a golf course, and while this brings many benefits for golfers, there has been some loss to the integrity of the historic designed landscape.

While not under HS management, the grounds are obviously a key part of the significance of the site both in terms of their design features and associations and for their aesthetic values. Free public access to the grounds allows many visitors to experience the woodland walks to the more distant parts of the estate. Walks of varying lengths set out from the house. From 2015 Duff House volunteers lead a programme of occasional guided walks which interpret the wider landscape.

Bridge of Alvah is a dramatic exercise in the picturesque, embracing the rugged scenery upstream as a feature of the designed landscape. Charles Cordiner's lithograph of ?1775 shows it in the style of a Roman landscape complete with dovecot/summerhouse masquerading as an Italianate tower. A letter of 29 March 1772 Rose to 2nd Earl records progress and underlines how involved the earl was in the project:

The Bridge of Alva is begun...stones in plenty quarried and Shand goes to Norway for the timbers..." 7 Aug 1772 The key stones of Alva Bridge were struck last night; James Robertson says your Lop did not give him positive directions however in what manner you would have the room in the bridge done, or whether there's to be one at each end...

One of the principal drives through the estate was the circuit between the Banff and Alvah bridges. This must have quickly become a popular route as there are various references in the correspondence of the 2nd and 4th earls regarding controlling public access (restricting the movement of the *idle People*), and the practice of country house visitation by the more genteel members of society, referred to as *Strangers*.

I will not grudge good wages to a cliver fellow and give him a green coat in the year, just to keep idle People and cattle from going through the park, (they make a public road at present betwixt the Stables and Bridge, whin I am from home); and the gates must be constantly locked. There is nothing that makes the Place so disagreeable to me, as that constant crowd of idle people that are walking over my grounds when I am at home ...30 march 1765; 2nd Earl to William Rose, factor.

The Clumps in the Park are all inclosed by rails of wood, the shruberee also inclosed that no idle people go there. Everything looks pretty and it is certainly true that Duff house just now is a paradise. There's hardly keeping out people from walking, such people as us acquaint with your Lop they do no harm and I think your lop said you did not mean to hinder Strangers if they did no hurt to the planting & floors [flowers], which are all in their beauty just now. ... 23 July 1765 William Rose to 2nd Earl

..my son being a days vacation from business at this season, he proposes to employ it by taking a view of Duff house; And if you procure him a sight of its grand fabrik it will be very obliging and he will think himself very happy. 11 Jan 1766 Rev James Wilson (minister of Gamrie Parish) to William Rose, factor.

2.6 Natural heritage values
To be assessed

2.7 Contemporary/use values

Duff House presents a number of values for contemporary society which are detailed below. In summary these values revolve around:

- Its “stature” as a top quality visitor attraction offering a nationally important art collection in a magnificent country house setting.
- The grounds, with their informal outdoor recreation and playpark setting, and free entry to shop and café, have the potential to encourage Duff House to be viewed as a local amenity
- The partnership agreement between HS, NGS and AC to develop the mix of arts, heritage and community engagement at the site.

Local economy and tourism

Duff house is an important part of the tourism and culture offering for the region attracting 18,000 visitors and also makes a contribution to the local economy. It is integrated into the local tourism partnership network and HS's

Tourism and Community Manager sits on the Banff Coastal Tourism Partnership committee.

Duff House is a premier site for HS within both in the North Region and in the wider context of HS properties in care. It consistently scores highly in customer service performance measures and carries a 5 star Visit Scotland attraction grading. The house is available as a venue for weddings, and HS has a partnership with Banff Springs Hotel to offer couples a special photography rate.

In addition to the paid attraction areas of the house, many more local visitors make use of the café and retail facilities provided at the house as part of the wider Banff area economy and the site is suitably located between community play areas, outdoor sporting areas, the local golf course and woodland walks. Currently the house is operated by a team of 22 staff, many of whom are local and resident in the North East community with an interest in art, architecture or heritage.

Community and volunteering

Historic Scotland accepts applications for community events to be held at Duff House, with the top floor long gallery being available for community groups to use. For instance, the Coast Festival of the Arts has become a popular and successful local event, and is supported by Historic Scotland, with free access currently permitted to Duff House for those attending the festival.

Historic Scotland works with local artists to provide a temporary exhibition space, an example being *At Sea: A Photographic Exhibition by Paul Duke*. The Tourism and Community Manager and other HS colleagues have provided presentations to local groups.

Historic Scotland works in partnership with the Friends of Duff House (FoDH), which is a registered Scottish charity and has been active within the House for the past 11 years. The group has a highly motivated committee and 80 members who all share a passion for organising activities for visitors to enjoy at the House. HS works with the group to enable a range of added value activities for visitors and locals such as the winter lectures programme and the FoDH will be a core partner group in the delivery of Commercial & Tourism's Volunteer Development Pilot, becoming volunteer guides on a trial basis in 2015.

Education & Learning

Duff House presents a number of opportunities for formal and informal education and stands out within the HS portfolio for its obvious identification with visual art.

In addition to the permanent collection, NGS provides one loan exhibition and one high-profile loan (so-called Masterpiece) per year. Exhibitions in recent years included The Glasgow Boys, William McTaggart, Dürer's Fame, and Allan Ramsay. Masterpieces included works by Singer-Sargent, Rembrandt,

Titian, Constable, and Paton. Moreover, Duff House has been an Artist Rooms venue (August Sander exhibition, 2012).

There is a good relationship with local schools with Discovery sessions aimed at Primary 4 – 7 covering Victorian and World War 2 themes with further improvements in development. To develop stronger links with schools, a joint CPD event for teachers, run in partnership with NGS and AC, is proposed. HS aim to grow the potential of the site in partnership with NGS and AC, particularly aspects focussing on using the site to engage young people with the creative arts, for example in support of AC's 4 Towns Programme. Realising this potential will depend, to a great extent, upon partnership working.

The presence of the popular play park means that many families are regular users of the grounds and this presents an opportunity to establish relationships with this sector for instance by providing an engaging programme of art and craft related activities. Again, realising this potential demands some resource, but making the house more attractive and welcoming to family visitors, especially those with early years children who are already using the park, would enhance its community profile.

3 Major gaps in understanding

- Our understanding of the wider landscape, service offices, pleasure grounds – how did they develop
- Our understanding of the basis of the Duff family wealth and connections
- Further research on Montcoffer papers
- What led Braco to opt for the more costly project of the new Duff House instead of refurbishing Airlie House – who or what changed his mind
- What was the nature of the detached kitchen block and how did it function.

4 Associated properties

Mavisbank House and Gardens, Arniston House, Hopetoun House, The Drum, Balvenie House.

5 Keywords

William Adam, earls Fife, Banff, Baroque, Palladianism

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Overview of the Significance of the Collections displayed at Duff House

Thanks are due to staff from the National Gallery of Scotland for contributing this text.

1. Scope

A general introduction to the house and its journey from private country house to public art gallery and visitor attraction is given in the main Statement of Significance, section 2. This Appendix provides a more comprehensive overview of the nature of the artworks and objects currently on display. It highlights significant aspects of various components of the collections, including their provenance and explores their links and relationships to the house and the Duff family. It also relates these aspects to what is known of the collections held historically at Duff House. It begins with a general introduction followed by detailed consideration of each type of object: paintings, sculpture, ceramics, library etc. For further information please see:

- Stephen Lloyd, Duff House, *Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture at Duff House*, Edinburgh 1999
- Ian Gow and Timothy Clifford, *Duff House*, Edinburgh 1995

2 Introduction

A number of themes guided the selection of the artworks, furnishings and objects on display at Duff. As the original Duff collections were sold off in 1909, few items now in the house are original to it. Instead the NGS selected works which broadly reflect the well-documented collections amassed by the 2nd and 4th Earls Fife and their heirs. Thus the NGS selected from the national collection paintings and sculpture which had specific associations with North East Scotland, and/or with the family. Contemporary topographical prints were acquired; contemporary landscape paintings were offered on loan; and portraits of the 2nd, 4th and 6th Earls, in the care of Aberdeenshire Council, returned to the house.

Original Inventories, supplemented by photographs of the house in the 1870s and careful examination of the building fabric has given a clear indication of how the Duff collections were grouped displayed over time. The current displays reflect this, and certain elements have been faithfully restored, for example, the 4th Earl's decorative scheme on the staircase was restored, and the extremely fragile painted ceiling of the Hunting Room was briefly accessible to visitors, before being secured beneath a modern cover. However, there was not a wholesale replication of historic decorative schemes or earlier picture hangs.

There are three categories of objects at Duff House:

- Material from the national collections, displayed on long-term at Duff House. Currently managed by NGS.
- Individual long-term loans to NGS: negotiated to secure especially relevant objects for display at DH. Currently managed by NGS as part of their Long Loans In programme.
- The Dunimarle Collection: lent by the Mrs Magdalene Sharpe Erskine Trust to the NGS, specifically for the purpose of display at Duff House. Currently managed by NGS.

The Duff and Erskine families shared many interests, such as collecting paintings; antiquarianism; military service; notable libraries; opening their collections to visitors. In the absence of any surviving original Duff House furnishings (except one overmantel mirror), the Dunimarle Collection provides well documented evidence of both families' activities and tastes, such as purchases in Paris; the Grand Tour; links with royalty; military distinction; and a 'Gothic' mausoleum at Duff and Dunimarle.

The Fifes and the Erskines were important and influential collectors, and can be characterised as pioneers of collecting. The 2nd Earl was a pioneer collector in Scotland of historical portraiture and portrait engravings, and also

championed the study of historic costume as a way of dating his new acquisitions. His aim was to 'rescue early likenesses from oblivion.' Canon Harper's catalogue was written to 'rescue from oblivion all possible information' about the Dunimarle Collection.

Sir James Erskine, at Torrie House, was a notable early collector of Dutch paintings, which he bequeathed to 'Edinburgh College' (now the Torrie Collection at Edinburgh University) He was founder Director (1819), of the Edinburgh Institute for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Scotland. Mrs Sharpe Erskine commissioned Sir Robert Rowand Anderson, architect of The Scottish National Portrait Gallery and Mount Stuart, to build St Serf's Chapel at Dunimarle.

3. Decorative Arts

With the house empty, the introduction of decorative art was essential to recreate the character of successive, documented Fife room- settings. This was achieved through a special long-term loan agreement with the Trustees of The Mrs Magdalene Sharpe Erskine Trust: the Dunimarle Collection, which brought paintings, textiles, metalwork, unique furniture, significant ceramics and glass and a splendid library to Duff House.

Room allocations were agreed after detailed research in the Duff House Montcoffer papers and Canon Harper's remarkable illustrated manuscript catalogue of the Dunimarle Collection. These documented, for example, the 1st Earl's austere decor in the main first-floor rooms, with walls 'papered over' for a dense display of historical portraits. The 4th Earl found this style old-fashioned and made space instead for his Spanish paintings and many gifts, acquired on his diplomatic travels.

The discovery, at Bodie's (Photographer) in Banff, of c.1870 glass-plate negatives of the house and its interiors, provided further evidence for the siting of objects, such as a Porter's chair in the Vestibule; portraits on the Grand Stair; the Prince of Wales' bedroom. The NGS arrangements are largely based on those of Countess Agnes, whose re-organisations of the 1860s emphasised comfort rather than formal display.

4. Library

The 2nd Earl's library complemented and informed his collection of historical portraits – but has been dispersed. The Dunimarle library at DH today is a bibliophiles' collection, covering history; biography; war (William Erskine senior); Parliamentary debates (his son William); fine art; travel; history (Sir James Erskine); classics; Persian and Indian law (Sir John Drummond Erskine) and classics (Mrs Sharpe Erskine). These 2,230 volumes, with their original bindings, book plates, and margin jottings, were recognised as a significant survival by NLS and a contemporary bibliophile, the late Donald Dewar, who saw the Library in situ at Dunimarle in 1995. Small themed displays at Duff House have illustrated the potential of this unique collection, including books on art, music, parliamentary debates, literature and agricultural improvements.

Numerically, it cannot compare with the 15,000 volumes recorded at Duff House in 1884. Spanish literature arrived at Duff House from the 4th Earl's travels in the Peninsular War. The Dunimarle library was augmented with books and manuscripts associated with John Drummond Erskine and India, including Persian texts. The quality of the illustrated Persian manuscripts is evident from Harper's catalogue and from a handsome Shahnama ('Book of Kings') manuscript of 1446 A.D., now in the British Library. The BL also hosts a link to the Dunimarle Library catalogue, prepared to British archival standard by Sandra Cumming. Following the good practice of the 2nd Earl, whose books were aired 'after the confinement of winter' (1789), the entire Dunimarle library has been conserved by Riley, Dunn and Wilson.

5. Paintings

It was impossible to re-instate the remarkable collections of successive generations at Duff House, but we have comprehensive evidence in inventories and catalogues from c.1795 onwards. Thus, portraits continue to dominate at Duff House today, including two full lengths: George II who elevated Lord Braco to the peerage (the Fife's portrait hung in the Vestibule); and a full-length copy of Cotes' portrait of the 2nd Earl, 1765. The original portrait, sold in 1924, is now in North Carolina Museum. Portraits of James Duff of Corsindae by Cosmo Alexander and of William Cunningham by J.M.Wright have returned to Duff House, and on the Staircase, instead of 34 densely hung portraits (1807), hangs a large Transfiguration by Grigor Urquhard of Inverness (c.1826); and portraits by Kneller and Raeburn with Colvin Smith.

The Outer Library is hung with Kings and Queens, while the Inner Library displays Pretenders to the Scottish throne, a demarcation which echoes the divided loyalties of the 1st Earl and his son. The original collections made no such distinction: there were portraits of Mary Queen of Scots; Elizabeth I; Charles II; Louis XIV and XVI; Marie Antoinette; by Holbein; Hilliard; Van Dyck; Raeburn; Mossman; Kneller; and also Dutch landscapes and Spanish School paintings. Dutch paintings from NGS and Dunimarle hang in the North Drawing Room; and the El Greco (Countess Agnes Room) alludes to the 4th Duke's interest in Spanish paintings. St Jerome hangs on the East wall where Countess Agnes hung her Murillo: The Seated Christ Child.

The 2nd Earl's interest in the Grand Tour and classical Antiquity is reflected in the Dunimarle collection, with views of Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples hung beside the case of antiquities from Dunimarle. The wealth of information held in the Montcoffer papers, the Harper catalogue and the Torrie Collection about both the collectors and their paintings, brings great potential for discovering a lot more about both the Duff House and the Dunimarle Collections.

6. Sculpture

There are marble busts of the architects George Gibbs, who designed the 1st Earl's house at Balvenie, and William Adam, and of Major General Sir James

Erskine (1772-1825), and his brother, Sir James (1776 – 1836), elder brothers of Magdalene. The fine bronze figure of the Medici Venus⁹, has been identified as one from the French Royal Collection, and must be similar to ‘a sculpture in a special niche’, a copy of the Venus de Medici by ‘Gian Bologna’ recorded on the second floor at Duff House in 1904.

The Classical Closet displays objects associated with the Grand Tour and Classical Antiquity, interests of both the 2nd Earl and Sir James, including lapis lazuli, verde antico vases; cameos; obelisks of semi-precious stones; a near life-size figure statue from the Greek island of Ceos (modern Kea); and Tassie medallions, which the 2nd Earl would almost certainly have collected also, in his extensive coins and medals collection. A pair of cippolino (‘onion-stone’) twisted columns have been cleverly cut to expose the distinctive, bulbous formation of the marble. A spectacular exhibit is the monumental porphyry lion’s paw (Roman, 1st or 2nd century A.D.) supporting a *verde antico* green marble basin, all mounted on a plinth of polished Parrot coal. A companion porphyry piece is in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and another part of the Dunimarle object is in the Palazzo Caponi, Florence.

7. Furniture

A group of tables, classical in spirit with fluted pedestals and polished marble tops, demonstrate the owner’s interest in Classical Antiquity, like that of the 2nd Earl. Likewise two tables, supported by gilded dolphins on a ‘sea’ of mirror glass, the top of one inlaid with *pietra dura* coloured marbles and semi-precious stones, representing birds and flowers. Countess Agnes had in her Boudoir (South East suite, 2nd floor) a gilt console table with marble top ‘inlaid with playing cards’ and supports representing a tree and a heron fishing. Another Dunimarle gilt table, with rich green malachite top, is inlaid with a masterpiece of micro-mosaic, showing the Pantheon, a triumph of Roman architecture and a goal for any Grand Tour visitor.

Much of the French furniture was collected c.1816 by Major-General Sir James Erskine, who was with Wellington in Paris at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, a few years after the 2nd Earl had fought with Wellington in the Peninsula War. The Dunimarle collection includes four fine Louis XIV tables (*bureau plat*) with gilt bronze (*bouille*) mounts. Two French pieces are signed: a commode, by J-B Hedouin (maitre 1738) and a bureau plat, by Jacques Dubois (1694-1793) an exact contemporary of the 1st Earl. Some furniture was acquired by NGS for the house, including a four-poster bed from Drum Castle, and the carved overmantel frame (with painting by Norrie of Loch Katrine) designed by James Gibbs who built Balvenie House (1724) for the 1st Earl.

8. Napoleon Room

The 2nd Earl owned a ‘superb blue satin bedcover, richly embroidered’ said to have belonged to Napoleon, and visitors in 1843 noted a bust of Napoleon in the Large Drawing Room. At Dunimarle Castle, a special ‘Napoleon Room’

⁹ See Robert Wenley, ‘French Bronzes in Great Britain’, *Apollo* 150, no.451 (1999), pp. 3-12, 5-7, fig. 9.

displayed a unique group of objects, acquired by Sir James Erskine, now at Duff House. They include the magnificent chairs formerly the property of Napoleon's Uncle, Cardinal Fesch ; two gilt couches 'upholstered in the modern way ... comfortable to use'; six 'Ottoman' folding stools; a pair of gilt stands with glass, star-scattered globes for lamp and candles; and a superb chair, elaborately carved with rams' heads, serpents and lions of St Mark, which belonged to Napoleon's stepson, Eugene de Beauharnais, Prince de Venise and Viceroy of Italy (1805-14). Contemporary with these is the pair of First Empire period carved, gilt mirrors, surmounted by cherubs (a pair of large mirrors of similar description were in the Dining Room in 1761 i.e. a Rococo precursor). Also displayed in the Napoleon Room were the oblong mirror with a putto between carved birds; the Pantheon table (above); a gilt clock with the Three Fates as supporters; a pair of superb ormolu firedogs in the shape of sphinxes - an allusion to Napoleon's Egyptian campaigns; and an exceptional tray of enamelled copper. Its size, technique and floral decoration, whether Canton or Battersea enamel, are all noteworthy. Most significantly, however, the monogram - which Canon Harper was unable to decipher - was later identified as ING: Napoleon Imperator Generale.

9 Ceramics and glass

This was Mrs Sharpe Erskine's particular interest. The Dunimarle collection of ceramics and glass is of significant interest because it is little-known, but well-documented.

Ceramics: The Sevres porcelain, with its elegant and sophisticated floral designs, is clearly marked, signed and dated. A visitor to Dunimarle in 1873 commented on the high value - £100 each - of three turquoise blue Sevres vases. Both the 2nd and the 4th Earls would have seen similar pieces in Paris. Harper includes a drawing of the Sevres, as displayed at Dunimarle (c.1911): the original pyramid shelving also survives. Maiolica, Wedgwood, English and German faience, including an impressive boar's head tureen are represented (the 1809 DH inventory lists 'Two china Boars' in the SW Drawing Room), as well as other French factories, including a set of Rubelles plates with central images 'like photographs.' Both the Erskines and the Fifes (First Floor Closet off South Blue Drawing Room, 1809) collected Derby china. The variety of artists, designs, techniques and decorative motifs represented are evidence of Mrs Sharpe Erskine's discerning eye, and the sets of plates, coffee and tea cups, tureens and dessert services, are a reminder of the elaborate settings of formal dinners.

The Oriental ceramics: are mostly Chinese, including a wide variety of decorative motifs, 'famille rose' grounds; 'Canton' and Imari ware. There are traditional glazed seats; a remarkable frog-shaped flower holder; vases for the mantelpiece, and a set of 26 Chinese fruit plates, which Harper notes resembled those brought home from the East by late 18 century sea captains, and sold to neighbouring large houses. A group of two finely decorated flowers vases, a small tea and coffee pot are 'ticketed' – unusually – as 'Indian China.'

Glass: Harper distinguishes Italian and German; Jacobean and Venetian; Ruby and other Bohemian glass, as well as crystal and cut glass which are 'not strictly part of the Museum' but are kept in the housekeeper's cupboards i.e. for domestic use, not display. Two 'Christal decanters and tumblers' are listed in the 2nd floor flat at Duff House in 1795: but only one pair 1809. A record c.1776 of seven pounds worth of (window) glass broken en route from Aberdeen to Duff House makes the survival of fragile, Antique Roman glass in the Dunimarle Collection all the more remarkable. Other glass is painted, enamelled, gilded, frosted; with applied decoration; masterly twisted canes, some incorporating colours; and silver mounts, some enclosing coins.

Painted and stained glass. Mostly 17th- century German and Swiss painted glass, with some religious scenes, including a Nativity; Swiss patriots (1637); and coats of arms (1616, 1685 etc), sometimes with the husband and wife depicted. Unusually, the source for one image is an Oriental proverb: the hypocrite carries his neighbour's sins in a bag before him, while his own sins (in a much larger bag) are out of sight on his back. This glass is in poor condition, but has attracted keen expert interest nevertheless, because it is unknown and unrestored.

10 Metalwork

The most dramatic item is a pair of silver gilt, 9-branch candelabra, c.1835 commissioned from Paul Storr by the 4th Earl, and bought back for Duff House in 1999, for £75,000, with generous support from NACF and HLF. The engraved armorials include Knight of the Thistle and Knight of San Fernando, recognition of Lord Fife's role in the Peninsula War. Smaller pieces of crested silver, including a teapot (a tea-caddy with Fife coronet is listed in the 1809 Duff House inventory) and horse furniture, purchased since 1995, with support of the Friends of Duff House. The Dunimarle collection includes embossed copper plates (Nuremberg) with putti and scenes from antiquity (prints with similar subjects were listed in the Closet off the North Drawing Room in the 1809 inventory); ink stands shaped as lidded classical urns; handsome 'Antique' Italian bronze doorknockers; two enormous brass chargers; and assorted cutlery and utensils.

11 Arms and Armour

At Dunimarle, these were formally arranged as trophies in the entrance hall (the boards survive), whereas the 2nd Early displayed suits of armour in the 'Lower Vestibule' (now shop). Dunimarle weapons were initially displayed in the DH Vestibule, but were subsequently removed, for conservation reasons, leaving only the not entirely satisfactory arrangements in the Inner Library. They faithfully replicate Harper's drawings, but not the traditional, crimson-covered trophy boards. The naval swords are standard issue; two basket hilted swords are more interesting and other 'Andrea Ferrara' swords were recorded at Duff House in 1843, together with the sword of MacPherson 'the freebooter'. The Dunimarle targe is important enough to have been

published.¹⁰ One of the cartridge pouches is recorded as ‘made of American cloth’ and ‘Possibly taken from Waterloo.’ The helmet, 26th Regiment of Foot, commanded by Sir James, is not on display and his uniform is in appropriate storage at the National Museum, with a pair of spurs at Duff House. The Oriental weapons are not exceptional, although it would be interesting to confirm Harper’s attributions. Several Damascus blades, Persian, Malay and Indian weapons and Waterloo souvenirs were displayed in the ‘Armoury’ at Duff House (Northwest corner, 3rd Floor).

12 Textiles

These are mostly ecclesiastical, associated with St Serf’s Chapel, built for Mrs Sharpe Erskine at Dunimarle, as her mortuary chapel. There are embroidered chasubles, stoles, burses and patten cloths, also an academic gown. Both collections had Jacobite relics: at Duff House A ‘Stewart tartan glove’ given by the Prince to Lady Mackintosh of Moy; at Dunimarle, now at Duff, fragments of the Prince’s plaid, given by him to Susanna, Countess of Eglinton, Mrs Sharpe Erskine’s great grandmother. Other textiles include a pair of embroidered Turkish slippers; silk boots ‘for bound feet’, and a pair of coloured silk shoes, ‘said to have belonged to Marie Antoinette.’ The 1795 DH inventory has her portrait in the Blue Drawing Room: it also appears in the 1807 Catalogue. The fans include a variety of designs: Japanese lacquer; cedarwood; a mantelpiece fan; one with an elaborate narrative scene, ‘The Sacrifice of Noah’; a pair of Japanese painted fans, with carved ivory handles; and a fan printed with charade texts. The dust covers, of linen damask with crimson piping, for the Dunimarle Fesch chairs, are exceptional survivals. White covers for chairs, and oilcloth covers for ‘commode tables’ are recorded in the 1809 DH Inventory, but are now lost. Suitable textile cases are required before these textiles, and uniform currently stored with NMS, can be put on display.

13. India at Duff House

The Dunimarle Library (see above) is John Drummond Erskine’s greatest legacy, with its fine collections of books in both English and Persian. A sketch on one flyleaf may be a self-portrait – a man sound asleep in his chair, his feet and a glass on the table, his huqqa on the floor. The Indian objects now at Duff House are associated with John’s posts in the East India Company, as a Judge at Allahabad and Benares. The brass oil lamp, cobra letter-weight, vases and bowls are fairly standard items, but Harper relates the silver Burmese Buddha figure to plates in Moor’s ‘*Hindu Pantheon*’, and documents a meteoric stone with ‘a Ms in Hindustani with a Translation into English.’ This is a rare piece, (currently on loan to NMS) dated precisely to Benares, December 1798. ‘Two large packets of Indian peas’, also classified as Geology, have not survived. Nor have the Islamic coins. A small collection of wash drawings depict daily life in India c. 1800 – camels, horses, houseboats, palanquins – with views of a Mosque at Rajmahal and of the great Hindu temple at Jaggernath. The colossal temple chariot, pulled at festivals by scores of worshippers, is the origin of our word ‘juggernaut.’ Harper notes that

¹⁰ A.V.B.Norman: *A Highland targe (Targaid) of about 1715 at Duff House, Banffshire* in *Journal of the Arms and Armour Society* 15.1, March 1998: 418-25.

the miniature portrait of a 'Eurasian' woman 'may be Hindu workmanship'. It is also a reminder of very different attitudes to marriage in India, where it was not unusual - before the arrival c. 1840s of English women in large numbers - for European men to have a 'bibi' or Indian wife. The 2nd Earl, in contrast, had to contend with the legal and social problems of leaving his wife, and having three illegitimate children. At Duff House, 'Fourteen Small Indian Images' are recorded in the Drawing Room (1761); Two India commode tables in the Large Drawing Room (1809); Dowager Lady Fife had a 'Chintz Bedroom' c. 1795-1809. By 1806, taste was changing, and the 2nd Earl instructed that his bedroom should be painted Green and the 'vulgar kind of India paper' painted over.

Technical and Scientific Values

- All the NGS objects have been inspected and documented by the Conservation Department, who are currently revisiting and reviewing all the collections at Duff House.
- Many of the Dunimarle objects were conserved by external conservators prior to being transferred to display at Duff House. Significant research was undertaken by Peter Thuring during his conservation of the Cardinal Fesch suite of chairs. This not only located related sets (Brighton Museum; Lady Lever Art Gallery; Chateau de Malmaison, Paris) but also identified the original weaver's 'card' (pattern) for the silk upholstery. Sufficient silk was woven to recover the chairs, and to make curtains also, so that the display would be correctly *en suite*.
- Boulle work, carcasse furniture and miscellaneous chairs, bootstands and lecturns were conserved by Jeremy Gow.
- Whytock and Reid restored upholstered chairs and cleaned carpets.
- Surface cleaning of metalwork was undertaken by Gordon Richardson.
- Paintings and works on paper were conserved by the National Galleries, with Colleen Donaldson working on gilded and painted furniture.
- Books and manuscripts were conserved by Riley, Dunn and Wilson.
- Historic light fittings were restored by Kevin Shaw
- The Scottish Conservation Centre has advised on the conservation of tapestry, ceramics and carpets.