



THE FORTH BRIDGE
LENGTH INCLUDING VIADUCT 3098 FT
HEIGHT 369 FT SPANS 1710 FT EACH

RCAHMS: WL 1283

Narrating Archives:

New Historical Geographies in Scotland

11 March 2015

Hosted by the Institute of Geography

University of Edinburgh

Acknowledgements

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Conference Aims

This event aims to provide a forum for Scottish postgraduate students, early career researchers, and academic staff, working in the field of Historical Geography, to discuss current research themes and training questions. Although the event will encourage discourse among Scotland's growing group of historical geographers, the intention is also for the conference to cement links with historical researchers in other branches of the humanities and social sciences. It is important to develop and promote this expanding field in a Scottish context.

Historical geography researchers are seldom brought together outside the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society. We hope the conference will satisfy two previously neglected needs: in the first instance it will provide a forum for the exchange of new work among historical geography researchers in Scotland; secondly, the conference will satisfy a previously overlooked need for advanced research training currently unmet by existing ESRC and AHRC programs, building upon existing opportunities to provide a distinctive forum for knowledge-sharing between individuals and institutions. We hope that the conference will become a sustainable annual event.

Schedule

0900-0930	Coffee and Registration
0930-1100	Session 1
1100-1130	Coffee
1130-1230	Session 2
1230-1400	Lunch
1400-1500	Session 3
1500-1530	Coffee
1530-1700	Session 4
1700-1900	Wine Reception

Session 1 – Navigating Archival Spaces

Lauren Farquharson: The Scottish Poor Law of Lunacy

Phil Dodds: Alexander Kincaid and the Edinburgh map trade

Anna Feintuck: The production and use of cartographic knowledge in Edinburgh, 1880-1920

Session 2 – Problematic Histories

Catherine Tisch: Life course of place: using GIS to integrate longitudinal environmental measures with cohort data

Elizabeth Ritchie: Feeding in the forest: Figuring out how Scottish settlers learned to raise livestock in the old growth forests of Upper Canada.

Session 3 – Working Historically Beyond the Archive

Christos Galanis: Sobre Las Huellas (Tracing the Footsteps)

Matthew Goodman: Magnetism, Scientific Instruments and Expeditionary Science in the 19th Century

Session 4 – Narrating Fragments

Lorna Stoddart: Sites of Nineteenth Century Botanical Science

Iain Anderson: Everyday Significance: Recordings and Interpretations of 20th Century Place

Ben Garlick: Narrating Extinction: mourning the ospreys of Loch an Eilein



RCAHMS: PA 186/152. Diver in diver suit sitting on the pier with a group of men at Dalerb Slip, Kenmore, Loch Tay. 1890.

Session 1: Navigating Archival Spaces

Lauren Farquharson: The Scottish Poor Law of Lunacy

My PhD is concerned with the historical geographies of the early period of organised mental health provision in Scotland; with a particular focus on the ways in which the Scottish Poor Law (1845) became inextricably linked and intertwined with the asylum movement (Lunacy Law 1857). The enduring mandate of the Poor Law over the domain of 'madness' is embodied in the institutional spaces of parochial asylums and poorhouse lunatic wards; sites located at the epicentre of the treatment of the 'mad' pauper. These spaces remain anonymous and foreign in the landscape of pauper lunacy, and can be characterised as spaces of contestation – lingering on the edges of a more familiar institutional topography, arguably at a juncture of legality and illegality. Both types of institution represent the grounded manifestation of the collision of two spheres of legislation, subverting their intentions and objectives, resulting in a Poor Law of Lunacy. I wish to narrate this collision through close archival reading of the annual reports of the Boards of Lunacy and Supervision [Poor Law] - these are usually read by researchers in isolation, but become incredibly revealing when read in tandem. Future work, based on asylum and local archives, will seek to narrate still-more tangled local stories of the Poor and Lunacy Laws in collision; positioning parochial asylums, in particular, as spaces of both exception and indistinction.

Phil Dodds: Alexander Kincaid and the Edinburgh map trade

Alexander Kincaid (c.1752 – c.1823) is a little-known figure in the history of Scottish cartography. He aspired to a career as a mapmaker, publisher, and urban historian: in the 1780s and 1790s he self-published a number of works of geography and history, including *The History of Edinburgh* (1787) and *The Traveller's Companion Through the City of Edinburgh* (1794), both of which were illustrated with a city map. He also demonstrated his skill as a mapmaker in his well-known *Plan of the city and suburbs of Edinburgh* (1784). However, during the latter part of his life his business interests lay solely in the ink manufactories of Edinburgh's proto-industrial outskirts, and in his younger years he made the majority of his income selling wax on some of the city's less salubrious streets. Here I discuss the process of piecing together, through various different sources, a rough biography of Kincaid. By providing a more detailed account of his professional life, and his personal and professional relationships, I shed light on the precise individuals involved in the map trade, and their relationship to wider networks of Enlightenment Edinburgh's print culture.

Anna Feintuck: The production and use of cartographic knowledge in Edinburgh, 1880-1920

The proposed paper takes the printing and publishing industries in Edinburgh circa 1880-1920 as its focus, and argues that the development, production and consumption of cartographic knowledge was key to the way the city was understood and used. In so doing, it connects especially with the conference's theme of place and understanding, and builds on historiographical debates about Edinburgh's oft-assumed status as a city of knowledge and learning.

Methodologically, the paper shows the importance of thinking spatially about the production of maps and follows the assertion of historical geographers Charles Withers and Miles Ogborn that printed materials 'should be understood in terms of both their geographical distribution and the local conditions of their production, movement and consumption.' This is considered alongside Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the field of cultural production, which emphasises the need to understand local conditions of industry and production, including the atmosphere in which businessmen and entrepreneurs operate. Regarding Edinburgh specifically, recent scholarship has begun to write industry back into the city's history, moving away from a focus on Edinburgh as a centre of culture and, overwhelmingly, of professional employment. This paper elaborates upon this development, using the networks and associations of key figures in Edinburgh's printing and publishing industries to show that, in fact, the city's distinctive mix of a diverse range of industries with a high concentration of learned professionals made it a focus for intellectual associational culture. Industry and learning are therefore shown to operate as part of a more complex dialectic than is often recognised.

Session 2: Problematic Histories

Elizabeth Ritchie: Feeding in the forest: Figuring out how Scottish settlers learned to raise livestock in the old growth forests of Upper Canada.

Approaching Toronto Airport the aerial view is of geometric fields and right-angled roads interspersed with spiders of towns and scraps of woodland. It takes a profound leap of imagination to map onto this controlled landscape the horizonless forest of two centuries ago. A similar ecological and visual contrast struck the tens of thousands of Scottish emigrants who tried farming in Upper Canada. How did settlers who knew, at best, Lowland improvement agriculture or the finely-tuned transhumance of the Highlands adapt sufficiently quickly to bring livestock through the first winter in the old growth forest? I beat a path to the archives but found manuscripts as fragmentary and inadequate a source as Ontario's landscape. Piecing together fragments of the self-selecting voices of the literate, aspiring middling class of emigrants engendered some surprising insights. First, it appears the psychological shift enforced by the new landscape has been underestimated by historians. Secondly, it seems that the skill of forest grazing was one probably

familiar to emigrants' grandparents. The usefulness of their new techniques were of relatively short duration as settlers spent their life's energy attacking the forest and turning it into a landscape as close to Lowland Scotland as the topography allowed.

Catherine Tisch: Life course of place: using GIS to integrate longitudinal environmental measures with cohort data

We know that factors throughout life influence our health and wellbeing in older age. Childhood poverty, early life education and many other factors have been linked to subsequent health outcomes. Yet almost all of this work has focussed on individual circumstances, and there have been few attempts to consider whether a wider set of factors – such as those at the neighbourhood level – affect our health over the life course. Our study aims to address this gap by using a range of historical data sources for Edinburgh from the early 1900s to present day to 'reconstruct' features of physical, built and social environments that may relate to health (such as locations of green space, tobacco retailing and local sporting clubs). These longitudinal environmental measures will later be combined with health outcome data from participants of the Lothian Birth Cohort 1936. Notwithstanding the many challenges of working with archival material (such as data availability at the small-area level over time), our study has the potential to offer a new perspective on understanding the role of place in explaining health outcomes in later life.

Session 3: Working Historically Beyond the Archive

Christos Galanis: Sobre Las Huellas (Tracing the Footsteps)

My talk represents a period (May and June 2013) in Catalunya, Spain, where I conducted a research/art project that was primarily realized through a 150 mile memorial walk from the French border to Barcelona. The route was a re-tracing, in reverse, of the steps of hundreds of thousands of Republican Spaniards who fled to France on foot for fear of reprisals by the forces of General Franco's fascist army at the conclusion of the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). After enduring the winter of 1938-39 in the squalor of open-air French refugee camps, approximately 50,000 of the Spanish exiles were eventually given refuge by the pro-socialist Mexican government, facilitating an injection of Spanish artistic, intellectual, and political vibrancy that greatly shaped Mexico through the 20th century, and still today.

The purpose of my trip was to experimentally apply walking as a methodology, a way of producing knowledge that represents a non-rational, embodied method for acquiring knowledge and experience. The subject I was exploring was the actual walk undertaken by civil war exiles; my argument was that walking is an excellent vehicle for understanding and exploring that particular history, as opposed to research that simply involved documents and/or oral histories. By walking the

route that exiles took, I was able to encounter a rich tapestry of relational histories that overlay this particular landscape, similar to a palimpsest. Not only did I encounter countless monuments, memorials, and ruins from the civil war, but I also came across a conflicted history that simultaneously included ancient Greek, Roman, Moorish, German, French, and Venetian waves of conquest and resistance. Experiencing and understanding the geography and geo-strategic lay of the land with my own body allowed for a deeper understanding of the events I was researching, as well as the various lives which are associated with that history, such as Walter Benjamin and Antonio Machado.

Matthew Goodman: Magnetism, Scientific Instruments and Expeditionary Science in the 19th Century

My work focuses on the historical geography of science, specifically the organisation and administration of nineteenth century magnetic science. There are a number of sources available for the study of this. Correspondence between leading scientists, results printed in journals or collected into books, minutes from meetings and other more popular literary sources are a small offering. An alternative source, and one which is still approached by many historians with a sense of trepidation, is the object. Objects are tricky. They look different in different contexts. They carry with them, it is said, differently interpretable meanings that are not easily drawn out. Where does the object end and the archive begin? These are some of the overarching issues my paper will raise. However, and especially for the geographer, objects also have many significant uses which make them a valuable source. My objects are instruments. By focusing closely on a particular instrument it is possible to better understand how and why that particular instrument was created, the impact of 'where' on its creation, its different uses and users, as well as its importance in the production of credible science. These questions and associated methodological approaches are what my presentation seeks to explore.

Session 4: Narrating Fragments

Lorna Stoddart: Sites of Nineteenth Century Botanical Science

From researching the archive of John Hutton Balfour, distinguished botanist and Regius Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, a prominent theme emerged, that of the sites used for the practice of botanical science and education. The identified sites include; published literature, teaching environments comprising the classroom, garden and 'the field' and, the public sites where botany was practiced, performed and promoted. This presentation will aim to demonstrate the ways in which the metaphorical space of literature may be interpreted as a site of practice for the teaching of botanical science.

Iain Anderson: Everyday Significance: Recordings and Interpretations of 20th Century Place

This paper will identify some of the issues and conundrums inherent in recording sites of the 20th century as part of the active archive development programme within RCAHMS. In adding an architectural image to the collection at RCAHMS, we are participating in a specifically motivated act - we suggest that that image, and that place, has a value in the architectural and archaeological context within which our organisation operates; we install a significance that at one time or another will be considered and interpreted by others. This significance is the subject of current, on-going interrogation through a joint project between the author and photographer Andy Lock - examining how successfully significance can be traced and represented within photographic recording produced during brief encounters with a place. This paper will be based on 3 single images of 20th century places, taken as part of RCAHMS survey work, which will be used to present themes emerging from Anderson and Lock's joint studies - discussing the consequences of time; of varying methodologies and preoccupations; and of context, upon thematic strands and narratives which are established and developed within both image and archive.

Ben Garlick: Narrating Extinction: mourning the ospreys of Loch an Eilein

This paper is an attempt to think creatively about historical animal geographies and extinction through the accounts of Victorian naturalists and the animal landscapes they depict. Attentive to both recent calls for more attention to the lived geographies of animals, and given the methodological and conceptual challenges raised when attempting to discuss historical animal geographies, the paper seeks to piece together a narrative of the nineteenth century extinction of the osprey in Scotland, through attention to a specific place: Loch an Eilein, in Rothiemuchus. Whilst ospreys are now spread throughout pinewoods and riparian habitats of Scotland, Northern England and Wales, this community is arguably qualitatively different in its geography and culture to those birds that were extirpated during the nineteenth century. I argue that through a narrative of osprey places, these losses become more tangible, allowing us to both better appreciate the character of past animal lives and consequences of their extinction, and to mourn the loss of these communities in the landscape (see Willox 2012; Van Dooren, 2014).