

Purchase of lithographic prints by S D Swarbreck

Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

2 December 2003

Purpose of report

- 1 To consider the purchase of lithographic prints by S D Swarbreck (active 1815-1860s).

Main report

- 2 The following 3 lithographic prints are offered for sale:

Title: Edinburgh from Calton Hill
Date: 1837
Medium: lithograph on paper
Size: image size: 29.5 x 42 cm, framed size: 59 x 68 cm
Insc: S D Swarbreck May 1837 (bottom left)
Edinburgh from Calton Hill (bottom right)

Title: The North Bridge, connecting the Old and New Town, Edinburgh
Date: 1837
Medium: lithograph on paper
Size: image size: 30 x 40.5 cm, framed size: 59 x 68 cm
Insc: S D Swarbreck, Oct 1837 (bottom left)
The North Bridge, Connecting the Old and New Town, Edinburgh (bottom right)

Title: Edinburgh Castle from the Grassmarket
Date: 1838
Medium: lithograph on paper
Size: image size: 41 x 29 cm, framed size: 68 x 59 cm
Insc: S D Swarbreck Jany 1838 (bottom left)
Edinburgh Castle from the Grass Market (bottom right)

- 3 These three lithographs by Samuel Dunkinfield Swarbreck are taken from a suite of 26 prints published in the late 1830s entitled *Sketches in Scotland*. In fact, the sketches in question are all of southern Scotland. The importance of Edinburgh as a tourist destination in the 1830s is illustrated by the fact that fifteen of the views are of the city, with a further four of Roslin Chapel and Castle. There is only one view of Glasgow and nothing more northerly than Stirling Castle. The romantic Borders of Sir Walter Scott are represented by Abbotsford, Bothwell Castle and Dryburgh and Melrose Abbeys.
- 4 The City already has a number of prints from the suite. However, at present we do not have the views from Calton Hill, nor of the Castle from the Grassmarket. The third image, the view of the North Bridge, is in the collection, but the copy we have is in a very poor condition.
- 5 The accuracy and amount of topographical detail in these prints make them a valuable asset. The view from Calton Hill provides an exact representation of the East End of the city looking towards the Mound and the Castle beyond. In the same way, the view of the North Bridge from the base of the Jail Governor's House records part of the city that was swept away soon after to make way for the development of Waverly Station.
- 6 The prints are in excellent condition. They have a freshness and immediacy that makes them particularly noteworthy. They are being sold by the Anthony Woodd Gallery, Dundas Street. The asking price is £275 each, which includes a gallery discount. Should the Committee approve their purchase, an application would be made for grant aid from the National Fund for Acquisitions.

Recommendations

- 7 Acquire the three lithographic prints by S D Swarbreck.



Director of Culture and Leisure

25.11.03

Appendices	N/A
Contact/tel	Ian O'Riordan 0131-529 3955
Wards affected	City Wide
Background Papers	The Jean F Watson Bequest files are held by the Museums and Arts Division