

George Ogilvy Reid RSA

RSA Obituary, transcribed from the 1928 RSA Annual Report

Mr. Ogilvy Reid was born in Leith in 1851, and began life as an engraver; painting however claimed him from early years, and in the mediums of water colour and oil, he found the fullest expression of his ambition. As has been said, Mr. Reid in his figure subjects, "worked in the Wilkie manner, as modified by the Orchardson Pettie group," but in his landscape showed a wider and more modern outlook, and sympathy with some of the later development of painting, though faithful to his early loves.

Mr. Reid's subjects covered a wide ground, those best known, dealing with Jacobite and earlier periods. "After Killiecrankie," his diploma work in the Royal Scottish Academy, is only one of many important pictures of similar character. Portraiture was never neglected, and every summer for many years he revisited his beloved Killin, and many landscapes in the neighbourhood were features of the annual exhibitions.

In 1891 the difficult Commission from H.M. Queen Victoria to paint the baptismal service of the young Prince of Battenburg at Balmoral, was an outstanding feature of his life, and the studies he then made were bequeathed by him to the Academy. Elected an Associate in 1888, and an Academician in 1898, there was never a more loyal or devoted member of the Royal Scottish Academy.

Assiduous in his devotion to his work he was ever insistent on the minutest details of the Royal Charter and their strict observance. Innovations of any kind were abhorrent to him, and although impatience was sometimes felt by younger members with his attitude, inherent respect for his integrity and the highest intentions in his motives were never doubted.

Mr. Reid had a well founded reputation in the Royal Academy, London, his works being always accorded a favoured position on the walls of the Exhibition. In the death of G.O. Reid on 11th April 1928, a unique figure has passed away from Scottish Art, and his place in the ranks of the Academy can never be filled.