

Archibald MacFarlane Shannan ARSA

RSA Obituary, transcribed from the 1915 RSA Annual Report

Archibald MacFarlane Shannan A.R.S.A. was born in Glasgow on 28th May 1850. On completing his education at the University of his native city, he entered his father's business, that of a builder, and after superintending the building of Sanatoria in the Cameroons, W. Africa, had the charge of the erection of State buildings in Texas, U.S.A.

On his return to this country, after some preliminary training at South Kensington, he proceeded to Paris, where, for eight or nine years, he attended the schools of Painting, Sculpture and Anatomy. During those years he exhibited at the Salon on several occasions, and more than once his works attracted the attention of the French Government.

Returning to Glasgow in 1892, he made the sculptural department of Art his profession. His inclinations were towards the imaginative side of the Art; but like many others in these northern lands who have cherished like ideals, he found but scant encouragement, and during the twenty-three years he worked in the great industrial city of the West, his practice was chiefly in the direction of portraiture.

Of public work executed by Mr. Shannan may be mentioned the bronze statue of Mrs. John Elder in the Elder Park, Govan; that of Lord Kelvin, in the Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow; the memorials of the Poet Robert Pollock, of the Galloway Bard, William Nicholson, at the Newton Mearns and Kirkcudbright respectively; and the full-length of Barbour for the façade of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

Besides these Mr. Shannan executed busts in marble or in bronze of many notable men associated with municipal, scientific, or learned bodies throughout the kingdom. His imaginative work, produced, as had been said, mostly during his student years, as of an idyllic type, as may be gathered from such titles as "The Hunter and the Wood Nymph" and "The Arcadian Shepherd's Dream."

Mr. Shannan was elected Associate in 1902. Sometime ago he met with an accident from the effects of which he never fully recovered. He died at his residence in Glasgow on 18th September.