

Andrew Somerville RSA

RSA Obituary by George Watson

Transcribed from the 1834 RSA Annual Report

Arthur Somerville RSA was born in Edinburgh in 1806. His father was a wire worker in the High Street. It is not known how Andrew picked up his art, but during his short life he taught drawing and painted subjects taken from Scottish Ballads - he died in 1833.

It is with no ordinary feeling of sorrow that the Council feel themselves called upon to notice and lament the loss which native art has lately sustained by the premature deaths of Mr Andrew Somerville and Mr Robert Edmonstone, two of the most talented and most esteemed members of the Scottish Academy.

The depth of poetic feeling, - the masculine grasp and delineation of character, - the originality of thought displayed in the selection of a difficult walk in art, hitherto almost untrodden, by the felicitous embodying of many of the most spiritualised conceptions in Scottish song, which so eminently characterized the works of Mr Somerville: - the no less estimable qualities of tenderness, of moral beauty, and purity of feeling which, mainly forming the character of Mr Edmonstone, shone so conspicuous in his works :- the professional and national devotion which mutually stimulated those brethren in genius in the production of works beaming with intellect and sentiment - qualities which alone give value to academical and professional acquirement, - entitle them, the Council are of opinion, to an enduring place in the respect and regard of all interested in the history of the Fine Arts in Scotland.