

## **Alexander Proudfoot RSA**

### ***RSA Obituary, transcribed from the 1957 RSA Annual Report***

Alexander Proudfoot, R.S.A., who died on 10th July 1957, besides being a Sculptor and something of a poet, had an outstanding gift for friendship, and he will be missed not only in this Academy and in Glasgow, but south of the border also.

Born in Liverpool in 1878 of Scottish Parents, from early youth bent on being a Sculptor he was fortunate in entering the newly built Glasgow School of Art, at a time when Fra H. Newbery had gathered round him a notable international staff and Proudfoot found this atmosphere greatly to his liking, commemorating his happy student days in ballads, which, long after, delighted his friends in the Glasgow Art Club.

In 1908 he gained the Haldane Travelling Scholarship for a monumental group. The resulting study abroad widened his outlook, and may have laid the foundations of that love of classical art, and the myths of ancient Greece which were so characteristic of him. He was a keen student of literature, and a lover of poetry, with a prodigious memory which permitted him to quote long passages to the delight and wonder of his friends.

In 1912 he was appointed teacher of modelling and Sculpture in the Glasgow School of Art, but his work there was interrupted by the war of 1914 during which time he joined the Artists' Rifles and served in France. He set his nimble mind to the tasks of Army life and the result was that he invented a protractor-range-finder for the Vickers machine gun which was greatly used.

When he returned to his teaching post he found many commissions waiting for him in the demand for war memorials, and he carried out fine work at many places, notably perhaps in the winged figure at Bearsden, and the kilted soldier at Cambuslang.

He exhibited at all the important exhibitions, and was a member of the Society of British Sculptors. Besides his imaginative work he did many portraits.

Among them were those of Neil Munro, Sir Daniel Stevenson and his brother Macaulay Stevenson, one of Proudfoot's closest friends. Others were Mr. G. D. Morton formerly treasurer of the City of Glasgow, John Wheatley, M.P. and William Power and perhaps finest of all was a late work, the portrait of Frederic Lamon, the great pianist, which was presented to the Glasgow Gallery by a body of subscribers, while replicas were given to the Scottish National Academy of Music, and the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland. He was elected an Associate of the Royal Scottish Academy in March 1920 and an Academician in February 1932.

His gifts for friendship, his ready wit and love of good company made him a very clubbable personality, greatly loved in the Glasgow Art Club, and it is not surprising that he twice served as President, in 1924-26 and 1939- 41.

He married in 1955, Miss Ivy Gardner, (who survives him) herself a Sculptor, who has exhibited much in the Royal Scottish Academy, the Royal Glasgow Institute and other exhibitions.