

Elgin Cathedral Art Exhibition

Presenting a collection of images of Elgin Cathedral from the collections of Elgin Museum.

Elgin Cathedral was founded in 1224 AD as the seat of the bishopric of Moray and dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Damaged by fire in 1270 AD, resulting in much rebuilding.

This church was subsequently sacked and burned in 1390 AD by Alexander Stewart, the Wolf of Badenoch. This was a revenge attack against Bishop Alexander Bur. For this, Stewart did penance and contributed largely towards the rebuilding, which was a substantial exercise. It was also decided at this time that the succeeding Bishops would contribute one third of their annual revenue until completion of the building.

Work continued throughout the 15th century AD and included the reconstruction of the vault of the chapter house. The most notable surviving feature from the 13th century AD rebuilding is the presbytery.

The famous west gable is framed by twin towers, which at one time were topped by spires. It features an ornate French-style processional double doorway, surrounded by carvings and statues. Above this is the 'great west window', a large arched window consisting of a rose window above 8 narrow lancet windows.

The Protestant Reformation of 1560 AD led to the demise of Elgin Cathedral. Its roof collapsed shortly after this date, and later its central tower fell. After the removal of the lead waterproofing of the roof in 1567, the cathedral fell steadily into decay. The building was still largely intact in 1615 but in the winter of 1637, a storm brought down the roof covering the

eastern limb. In the spring of 1711, the central steeple above the crossing collapsed taking the walls of the nave with it.

The Cathedral's fortunes improved in the 19th century when work to stabilise the ruins began. Part of these works was the extensive clearance of the site by local shoemaker John Shanks (known as "*The Drouthy Cobbler*"). He was officially appointed the site's Keeper and Watchman in 1826, removing centuries of rubble and refuse from the site during his tenure and acting as a guide to visitors.

Elgin Cathedral continues to be a popular visitor attraction, now managed by Historic Environment Scotland. For details of how to visit, please visit: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/elgin-cathedral>

WALL 1

Left column

Elgin Cathedral (in snow). Pen & Ink drawing. Artist: Sir George Reid R. S. A.

ELGNM: 1960.12

Elgin Cathedral. 1881. Photo-engraving. Artist: Sir George Reid, publisher: A. Durand, Paris

ELGNM: 1938.41

Elgin Cathedral in Ruins. 1835. Engraving. Draughtsman: J. Grant, engraver: J. Shury & Sons, publisher: J. Grant

ELGNM: 1938.25

Right column

Elgin Cathedral. Coloured lithograph. Artist: David Roberts R.A., lithographer: E. Walker

ELGNM: 2015.25

West Entrance to the Elgin Cathedral in its original state. Engraving. Draughtsman: J. Grant, engraver: W. Reid, publisher: J. Grant.

ELGNM: 1963.9

Elgin Cathedral: interior of the west end. Engraving. Draughtsman: R. W. Billings, engraver: G. B. Smith, publisher: William Blackwood & Sons.

ELGNM: 1938.15

WALL 2

Left column

Elgin Cathedral. Wood marquetry.

ELGNM: 1978.190

Elgin Cathedral. circa 1890. Photograph.

ELGNM:1995.17

John Shanks: Cicerone of Elgin Cathedral. circa 1840.

Engraving. Artist: Donald Alexander.

ELGNM: 1974.22

Elgin Cathedral. Engraving.

ELGNM: 1978.174

Right column

The West Front of Elgin Cathedral. Engraving. Draughtsman: R. W. Billings, engraver: J. Godfrey.

ELGNM: 1938.16

Pictish Stone Slab, Situated at Elgin Cathedral. 1992.

Etching of sepia drawing, pen & chalk. Artist: Freddy Theys.

ELGNM: 2007.22.3

Elgin Cathedral. circa 1900. Photographic print.

ELGNM: 2009.67.39

WALL 3

Left column 1

Western Doorway of Elgin Cathedral. Engraving.

Draughtsman: R. W. Billings, engraver: G. B. Smith, publisher: William Blackwood & Sons.

ELGNM: 1938.22

Western Towers of Elgin Cathedral, South Side. Engraving.

Draughtsman: R. W. Billings, engraver: J. Godfrey.

ELGNM: 1938.21

Central column 2

Elgin Cathedral: the choir from the south-east. Engraving.

Draughtsman: R. W. Billings, engraver: G. B. Smith, publisher: William Blackwood & Sons.

ELGNM: 1938.19

Elgin Cathedral. 1995. Etching of sepia drawing, pen & chalk.

Artist: Freddy Theys.

ELGNM: 2007.22.1

The Choir of Elgin Cathedral. Engraving. Draughtsman: R. W.

Billings, engraver: J. H. Le Keux, publisher: William Blackwood & Sons.

ELGNM: 1938.38

Right column 3

Elgin Cathedral from the River Lossie. Painting.

ELGNM: 2009.16.17

Elgin Cathedral. Lithographic print. Draughtsman: A. Arnat, lithographer: W. H. McFarlane.

ELGNM: 1938.29

Elgin Cathedral. 1791. Engraving. Engraver: Thomas, publisher: J. Sewell.

ELGNM: 1938.27

Elgin Cathedral. Lithographic print. Draughtsman: A. Arnat, lithographer: W. H. McFarlane.

ELGNM: 1938.31

Mazures de l'Eglise Cathedral d'Elgin. Engraving.

ELGNM: 1938.33

Rear Display case

Elgin Cathedral: conjectural reconstruction circa 1538 (1 of 2). 1922. Ink Drawing. Draughtsman: I. Moodie.

ELGNM: 1978.606

Front Display case

Destruction of Elgin Cathedral. 1838. Engraving. Draughtsman: T. Allom, engraver: R. Sands. Depicting the burning of Elgin Cathedral by the "Wolf of Badenoch" in 1390.

ELGNM: 1938.57

Elgin Cathedral from the South. Engraving. Published by W. H. Lizars.

ELGNM: 1938.26

Display easel

A Descriptive and Historical Account of Elgin Cathedral.

Former interpretation panel from Elgin Cathedral.

OE1040