

Busts of Sir Greville and Lady Emily Smyth

The two marble busts of Sir Greville Smyth and Lady Emily Smyth were by the 19th century Italian sculptor Andreoni (sometimes spelt Aridieoni) who was based in Rome.

At Ashton Court they were displayed on plinths in the Great Hall on either side of the double doors leading into the Inner Hall.

They can be clearly seen in the Hector Paterson images of Ashton Court taken in the 1920s.



Image: Mb6061©Bristol Culture.



Image: Mb6053©Bristol Culture.

We do not know when the busts were commissioned or made. Greville and Emily travelled widely after their marriage in 1884. Maybe they visited the sculptor's workshop, admired his work, and commissioned the pieces. They also acquired at least one other piece by Andreoni, a sculpture called the Spanish Bride.

The bust of Sir Greville was presented to Bristol Museums by Lady Emily and the donation was recorded in their printed catalogues published in the early 1900s. In 1930 the busts were valued at £100 each for insurance purposes.

It was displayed in the Natural History rooms that were created at the Museum to house the extensive natural history collection that had been donated to them after Greville's death in 1901. Both Emily and Esme made generous donations that enabled these rooms to be suitably furnished to house the collection.

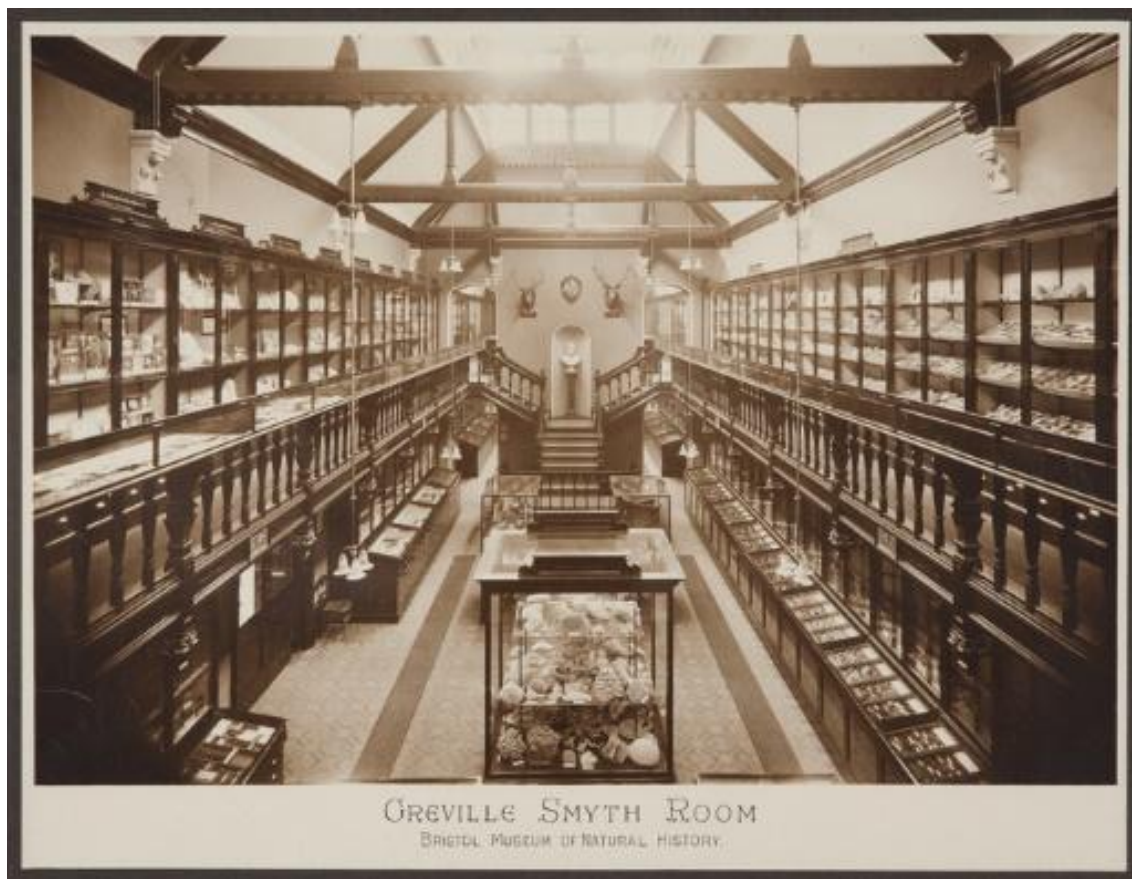


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The donation of Lady Emily's bust is not recorded but presumably it was made by Esme after her mother's death in 1915.

The bust of Sir Greville, and possibly Lady Emily, was displayed there until 1940 when they were both destroyed when the Museum was hit by a bomb in the Bristol Blitz.