

Cast for Burns plaque on sale

A one-off cast of Robert Burns' face, based on the famous portrait of the poet by Alexander Nasmyth, is to be sold at auction just before Burns Night.

The cast was used to create a bronze plaque for a new shelter in a park near Edinburgh.

Experts at 1818 Auctioneers, on the Cumbria Lancashire border, estimate it to be worth between £7,000 to £10,000.

It is being sold by the grand-daughter of the talented artist, stone mason and painter who carved it, Robert Callum Shields. A pillar of the community, Robert worked for the local council and lived in Bellshill near Glasgow, and died in 1966.

The seller, Linda Briscoe, who now lives near Morecambe, says the Burn's plaque was unveiled in Prestonpans in January 1959 to commemorate the bi-centenary of the birth of the renowned Scottish poet.

"For a long time, it hung on the wall of the large house where my grandparents lived. As is the Scottish tradition, my family moved into the house when Robert died to look after Mary, his widow. When my mother died, I left the house and moved to a much smaller property.

"I've known the portrait from being a very small child. It's now time for the cast to be appreciated by someone else. I would love to think its new owner will be raising a dram to it, to toast the great poet, Robbie Burns on the 25th January."

The plaque is being auctioned as part of 1818 Auctioneers live, online sale of antiques Vintage and Collectibles which closes on Sunday 23 January.

Robert Shields was also a Freemason and member of Langside Lodge, part of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. There are two medallions and cufflinks up for sale with 1818 Auctioneers in an online jewellery auction live between Thursday 17 February to Sunday 6 March. A large silver jewel, signifying Robert was a senior deacon, and white metal and enamel Masonic cufflinks could make between £70 to £100. And a nine carat Masonic presentation jewel from his Lodge, recognising his chairmanship, could make between £120 to £180.

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