

M115 Inn at Lennoxtown

Introduction

This was a proposal for altering the attic of a simple single-storey inn. It involved raising the roof at the front of the building and adding an external flight of stairs at the rear, as well as alterations to the windows and the addition of a hanging sign.

Authorship: This project is known only from two small sheets of drawings that were in Mackintosh's possession at the time of his death. They are unsigned, but their provenance and style make it almost certain that Mackintosh was responsible for the design.

Alternative names: The Auld Hoose.

Status: Probably unbuilt

Grid reference: NS 6293 7760

Chronology

1895

27 September: Drawings approved by Cecilia Peareth Lennox. ¹

1896

Mackintosh shows a 'Design for a Country Inn' at the Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts (327).

Description

This project is known only through two small sheets of drawings that remained in Mackintosh's possession at the time of his death. They are unsigned, but their provenance and style make it certain that they are by Mackintosh. Andrew McLaren Young, who catalogued them in 1968, assumed that the commission was offered to John Honeyman & Keppie, and given to Mackintosh as the junior member of the office because of its small scale. ¹ However, it is not mentioned in the firm's job books or cash book, and it may have been a private commission that came to Mackintosh directly. He exhibited a 'Design for a Country Inn' under his own name at the Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts in 1896 (327), which may have been connected with this project. Unfortunately there is no visual record of the exhibited design, and it is not mentioned in a lengthy review of the architectural section of the exhibition published in the *Glasgow Herald*. ²

Lennoxtown and the surrounding area formed part of the estate of the Lennox family of Lennox Castle, and Mackintosh's elevations are countersigned by the proprietress, Cecilia Peareth Lennox. An extensive archive of estate papers survives, ³ but despite this it has not been possible to identify the inn with certainty. ⁴ The drawings do not show it before the proposed changes, but it seems to have had a simple rectangular plan with lean-to outbuildings at the rear. It had an attic and a basement, although the fall of the site meant the basement was above ground at the rear. The absence of windows in the end elevations implies that it formed part of a terrace.

Mackintosh proposed adding a staircase in a new lean-to at the rear, giving access to three attic bedrooms and a bathroom. At the front, the drawings show horizontal windows on the ground floor, with small square panes. Uncharacteristic of late 19th-century Lennoxtown, these were presumably Mackintosh's replacements for windows of traditional upright proportions. As David Walker has pointed out, they show the influence of vernacular buildings Mackintosh had recently sketched in the S.W. of England. ⁵

The inn sign hangs parallel with the facade, between upright posts which extend all the way from ground level where they flank the front door. As McLaren Young was the first to notice, this arrangement is exactly the same as the sign of the Rising Sun Inn at Wareham, Dorset, which Mackintosh sketched in the same year as the Lennoxtown designs. ⁶ Of the three new bedroom windows, the middle one is framed by the posts that support the sign.



The drawing is coloured to suggest white roughcast and green woodwork – a combination typical of C. F. A. Voysey, whose designs were reproduced in the architectural press around this time and exhibited at the Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts. Howard Gaye's drawing of Voysey's first important country

house, Walnut Tree Farm for R. H. Cazelet at Castlemorton, was shown at the Institute in 1894 (895), followed by a 'House at Frensham, Surrey' – presumably Lowicks, for E. J. Horniman – in 1895 (256).

The drawing of the front elevation was altered by Mackintosh to take account of a condition imposed by Cecilia Peareth Lennox, which is inscribed on the sheet along with the date, 27 September 1895. At first he had proposed leaving the eaves at their original level and treating the new bedroom windows as dormers. However, the guttering – or 'rhones' – passed in front of these windows in a manner Mrs Peareth Lennox found unacceptable. Guttering of this kind was used by Voysey at the Cazelet and Horniman house, which may have influenced Mackintosh. Mackintosh amended the drawing, making the facade higher and raising the roof to match, so the windows are no longer dormers and the guttering runs above them. The former line of the eaves is still visible on the drawing.

The 1865 O.S. map of Lennoxtown shows several inns and public houses, including one on the S.W. side of Main Street, about 100 metres S.E. of the United Presbyterian church, which is about the right size and matches the drawings in some other respects.⁷ What appears to be a late 19th-century photograph of this inn – known as the Auld Hoose – shows it to have been a humble single-storey building with a tiled roof.⁸ It had two doorways in the middle, flanked right and left by a single window, suggesting that it was originally a pair of one-room cottages. Mackintosh's drawings were probably made in connection with a building of this type, if not for this particular building.



If Mackintosh's September 1895 proposals do relate to the Auld Hoose, then despite Mrs Peareth Lennox's endorsement his alteration scheme was evidently not carried out. Maps and photographs show that the old single-storey inn was instead completely demolished and rebuilt to a new building line, set back slightly behind its neighbours.⁹ The new inn was much more conventional in appearance than Mackintosh's scheme of September 1895, and had none of its English vernacular features. It is not mentioned in the Register of New Buildings for the Western District of Stirlingshire, begun in 1900 when the county first required the submission of plans for proposed new buildings, so it was presumably erected before that date.¹⁰ Nothing about this unremarkable building suggests that Mackintosh was responsible for its design. It was demolished in the early 21st century.



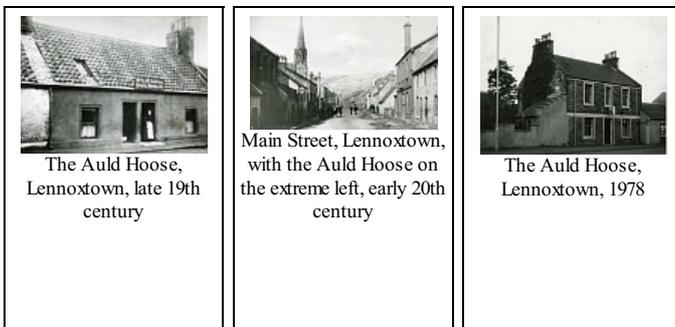
People

Other:

- Cecilia Peareth Lennox

Documents

Images



Bibliography

Published

- Alan Crawford, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1995, p. 210
- David Walker, 'The Glasgow Years', in Wendy Kaplan, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, New York and London: Abbeville Press, 1996, pp. 115–51
- Andrew McLaren Young, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928): Architecture, Design and Painting*, exhibition catalogue, Edinburgh: Edinburgh Festival Society and Scottish Arts Council, 1968, p. 32

Unpublished

- Hiroaki Kimura, 'Charles Rennie Mackintosh: Architectural Drawings', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1982, p. 28

Notes:

- 1: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: GLAHA 41850 (M115-002).
- 2: Andrew McLaren Young, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928): Architecture, Design and Painting*, exhibition catalogue, Edinburgh: Edinburgh Festival Society and Scottish Arts Council, 1968, p. 32.
- 3: *Glasgow Herald*, 7 March 1896, p. 7.
- 4: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Lennox family of Woodhead papers, GB243/T-LX.
- 5: McLaren Young wrote in 1968 that Mackintosh's Lennox town inn had been demolished 'recently', unrecognised as his work. However, he did not give the demolished building's location, and it is not certain that he had identified it correctly.
- 6: David Walker, 'The Glasgow Years', in Wendy Kaplan, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, New York and London: Abbeville Press, 1996, pp. 115–51.
- 7: Andrew McLaren Young, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928): Architecture, Design and Painting*, exhibition catalogue, Edinburgh: Edinburgh Festival Society and Scottish Arts Council, 1968, p. 32.
- 8: O.S., Stirlingshire, 1:2500, 1865, sheet 28.09.
- 9: Kirkintilloch, William Patrick Library: P3066. It was known as the Auld Hoose at least as early as 1927, when the feu duty was included in the sale of the Lennox Castle estate.
- 10: O.S., Stirlingshire, 1:2500, 1918, sheet N27.12; Kirkintilloch, William Patrick Library: P3025. Pencil amendments on Mackintosh's September 1895 ground-floor plan suggest he considered setting back the front wall.
- 11: Stirling Council Archives Service: Register of New Buildings, Western District [of Stirlingshire], uncatalogued.

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

Led by The Hunterian, University of Glasgow, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council; with additional support from The Monument Trust, The Pilgrim Trust, and the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art; and collaborative input from Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.



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