

M195 Competition design for Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College

Introduction

John Honeyman & Keppie was one of eight Glasgow firms invited to submit designs for the Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College's new building, which would accommodate fifteen distinct departments at one location, at the College's existing site on George Street. Also invited to compete were David Barclay, the eventual winner, Clarke & Bell, James Salmon & Son, Thomson & Sandilands and Watson & Mitchell. John Burnet & Son declined the invitation and James Miller withdrew due to commitments elsewhere. ¹

None of the drawings submitted by John Honeyman & Keppie survive but a typed document accompanying their design gives details of the layout, cost, cubic capacity and materials proposed. The plan arranged the building around four sides of the sloping site, with a central building stretching between the E. and W. sides, and a connecting building between the front (S.) and centre ranges. It retained the existing Young Technical Chemistry building at the S.W. The main entrance was placed in the centre of the principal, five-storey, S. elevation to George Street. The prominent S. and E. elevations 'should be of white sandstone from Giffnock or Dunmore quarries'. Other facades were to be of brick, and light wells were to be finished in white enamelled brick. No information about the style of architecture was given. ²

In his pioneering 1952 biography of Mackintosh, Thomas Howarth included a redrawn preliminary sketch for what he believed to be the N. elevation of the Glasgow School of Art, dating from around 1896. ³ While the drawing does not match the requirements set out for the School of Art, its 1/16 scale, the number of storeys and arrangement and length of the elevation do appear to correspond to the design for the Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College, as David Walker has pointed out. ⁴

The foundation stone of the new College building, designed by David Barclay, was laid by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra on 14 May 1903. ⁵ The Royal visitors must have arrived or departed from the College via Buchanan Street: a temporary balcony was constructed at Miss Cranston's Buchanan Street Lunch and Tea Rooms from which to view the King and Queen. The new building opened in December 1905. ⁶

Authorship: The document which accompanied John Honeyman & Keppie's drawings is inscribed with the partners' as well as Mackintosh's names. It is unusual to see Mackintosh's name on practice work before he became a partner later in 1901. Mackintosh's patron Walter W. Blackie, who was a College governor at the time of the competition, but apparently not directly involved in the competition, believed the design to be Mackintosh's work. In a 1944 letter to Howarth he commented: 'I do not think a majority of the Governors would have approved the Mackintosh plans – too fresh and novel, good and practical as they were. The Board consisted almost entirely of leading Glasgow engineers, able men all of them, but shy of novelties and of what they could not fully comprehend.' ⁷ Mackintosh's original ink sketch on tracing paper was redrawn by Howarth for publication. ⁸

Status: Unbuilt

Chronology

1900

5 October: The governors of the Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College appoint a special committee to select an architect for the new College buildings. Eight Glasgow practices are invited to participate in a competition. ¹

1901

11 January: The Special Committee submits its instructions to architects to the governors. ²

18 January: A summary of the instructions is published in *Building News*. ³

17 April: Competition closing date. ⁴

1903

14 May: The foundation stone of the new building, designed by David Barclay, is laid by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. ⁵

1905

21 December: The new College building is formally opened. ⁶

Description

People

Clients:

- Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College

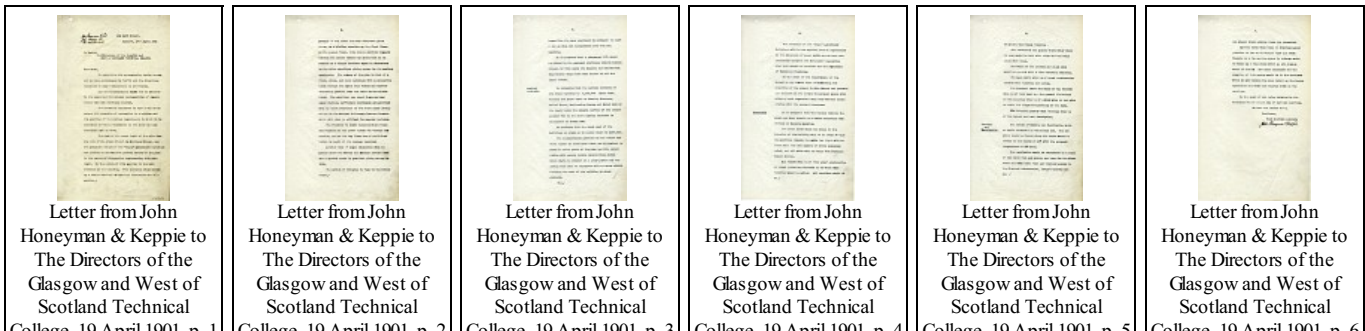
Job Book

The job books of Honeyman & Keppie (later Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh) are now held by The Hunterian, University of Glasgow and include four volumes related to the Mackintosh period. The books were used by the firm to keep a project-by-project, day-by-day record of contractors, suppliers and expenditure. The name of a project and/or client is usually at the top of the left-hand page, followed by information about tradesmen who tendered. The name of the measurer (quantity surveyor) is usually at the top of the right-hand page, followed by information about payments to contractors and suppliers. All of the data for M195 is entered in the tables below.

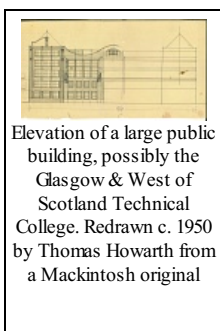
Page numbering is not consistent in the job books. Sometimes a single number refers to a double-page spread and sometimes each page is individually numbered. Here, each image of a double-page spread is identified by the number given at the top of the left-hand page. (Images of all of the pages from the four job books can be found at [Browse Job Books](#), [Visit Book and Cash Book](#).)

The following information about M195 has been extracted from the job books:

Documents



Images



Bibliography

Published

- Thomas Howarth, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd edn, 1977, p. 73
- David M. Walker, 'Designing the Royal College', in Deborah C. Mays, Michael S. Moss and Miles K. Oglethorpe, eds, *Visions of Scotland's Past: Looking to the Future. Essays in Honour of John C. Hume*, East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 2000, pp. 97–121

Unpublished

- Strathclyde University Archive: Records of Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College, OE7/1/1/3, 'Description of competition plans submitted by Watson & Mitchell, Clarke & Bell, Honeyman & Keppie, James Salmon & Son and Thomson & Sandilands. 1901'
- Strathclyde University Archive: Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College, governors' minutes, OE 1/1/8; OE 1/1/9
- University of Toronto Archives: Thomas Howarth collection, B2000–0002/29 (17), letter from Walter W. Blackie to Thomas Howarth, 24 February 1944

Notes:

- 1: Strathclyde University Archive: Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College, governors' minutes, OE 1/1/8, 14 November 1900, 'Report of the Special Committee appointed by the Governors on 5 October 1900 to consider the steps to be taken for the selection of an architect for the new buildings'; OE 1/1/8, 24 April 1901; OE 1/1/9, 12 January 1901; Strathclyde University Archive: 'Description of competition plans submitted by Watson & Mitchell, Clarke & Bell, Honeyman & Keppie, James Salmon & Son and Thomson & Sandilands. 1901', OE7/1/1/3.
- 2: Strathclyde University Archive: Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College, governors' minutes, OE 1/1/8, 14 November 1900, 'Report of the Special Committee appointed by the Governors on 5 October 1900 to consider the steps to be taken for the selection of an architect for the new buildings'; OE 1/1/8, 24 April 1901; OE 1/1/9, 12 January 1901; Strathclyde University Archive: 'Description of competition plans submitted by Watson & Mitchell, Clarke & Bell, Honeyman & Keppie, James Salmon & Son and Thomson & Sandilands. 1901', OE7/1/1/3.
- 3: Thomas Howarth, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd edn, 1977, p. 73.
- 4: University of Toronto Archives: Thomas Howarth collection, Thomas Howarth's redrawing of Mackintosh's original drawing, B2000-0002/26 (07); David M. Walker, 'Designing the Royal College', in Deborah C. Mays, Michael S. Moss and Miles K. Oglethorpe, eds, *Visions of Scotland's Past: Looking to the Future. Essays in Honour of John C. Hume*, East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 2000, p. 107.
- 5: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Proclamation of the visit of the King and Queen, 14 May 1903, D-TC 6/581/12.
- 6: David M. Walker, 'Designing the Royal College', in Deborah C. Mays, Michael S. Moss and Miles K. Oglethorpe, eds, *Visions of Scotland's Past: Looking to the Future. Essays in Honour of John C. Hume*, East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 2000, p. 118.
- 7: Strathclyde University Archive: 'Description of competition plans submitted by Watson & Mitchell, Clarke & Bell, Honeyman & Keppie, James Salmon & Son and Thomson & Sandilands. 1901', OE7/1/1/3; University of Toronto Archives: Thomas Howarth collection, letter from Walter W. Blackie to Thomas Howarth, 24 February 1944, B2000-0002/29 (17), p. 6.
- 8: University of Toronto Archives: Thomas Howarth collection, Thomas Howarth's redrawing of Mackintosh's original drawing, B2000-0002/26 (07); Thomas Howarth, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd edn, 1977, p. 73.
- 9: Strathclyde University Archive: Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College, governors' minutes, OE 1/1/8, 14 November 1900, 'Report of the Special Committee appointed by the Governors on 5 October 1900 to consider the steps to be taken for the selection of an architect for the new buildings'.
- 10: Strathclyde University Archive: Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College, governors' minutes, OE 1/1/9, appendix to minutes of 12 January 1901, draft instructions to architects (10 pages).
- 11: *Building News*, 80, 18 January 1901; David M. Walker, 'Designing the Royal College', in Deborah C. Mays, Michael S. Moss and Miles K. Oglethorpe, eds, *Visions of Scotland's Past: Looking to the Future. Essays in Honour of John C. Hume*, East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 2000, p. 101.
- 12: Strathclyde University Archive: Glasgow & West of Scotland Technical College, governors' minutes OE 1/1/9, appendix to minutes of 12 January 1901, draft instructions to architects (10 pages).
- 13: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Proclamation of the visit of the King and Queen, 14 May 1903, D-TC 6/581/12.
- 14: David M. Walker, 'Designing the Royal College', in Deborah C. Mays, Michael S. Moss and Miles K. Oglethorpe, eds, *Visions of Scotland's Past: Looking to the Future. Essays in Honour of John C. Hume*, East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 2000, p. 118.

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

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