

M284 Alterations to Rothesay Parish United Free Church

Introduction

Designed by the celebrated Aberdeen architect Archibald Simpson (1790–1847), this Gothic Revival church with a prominent tower and spire opened in 1845 as Rothesay Free Parish Church. In 1907 the roof collapsed. It was replaced by Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh with a new hammerbeam roof with Gothic details. At the same time, a wrought-iron finial was added to the spire.

Authorship: John Keppie was responsible for the work carried out in 1907. His name, and not the practice name of Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh, appears in the minutes of the Deacons' Court, which was responsible for overseeing the repair of the church.

Alternative names: Rothesay Free Parish Church.

Cost from job book: £2007 18s 10d

Status: Standing building

Current name: Rothesay Trinity Church

Current use: Church (2014)

Listing category: B

Historic Scotland/HB Number: 43854

RCAHMS Site Number: NS06SE 245

Grid reference: NS 08930 64510

Chronology

1907

29 August: Roof of church collapses. ¹

27 September: John Keppie appointed to repair the building. ²

7 October: Keppie has prepared two alternative schemes. The Deacons' Court likes the simpler scheme, 'without any alterations to the interior appearance of the church', but would prefer it without the proposed 'new floors, pews, lining, staircases and porches'. ³

18 November: Keppie has prepared a fresh plan. Mr Whitson of Douglas, Hunter & Whitson is appointed measurer. ⁴

21 December: Tenders accepted from principal contractors. ⁵

1908

August: Final payments to slater and plumber. ⁶

1909

22 January: Final payments to joiner, and for work to tip of spire. ⁷

Description

Designed by the celebrated Aberdeen architect Archibald Simpson (1790–1847), the building now known as Trinity Church opened on 13 July 1845 as Rothesay Free Parish Church. It became Rothesay Parish United Free Church in 1900, and has been known as Trinity Church since 1929. ¹

On 29 August 1907, the roof of the church collapsed. ² Thomas Douglas, described in the minutes of the Deacons' Court as Chief Inspector of Works with the Glasgow architects J. Burnet & Son, was immediately engaged to examine the damage. ³ He proposed John James Burnet as a 'thoroughly capable

architect' to repair or replace the old church, but when the repair committee drew up their shortlist, Burnet was not included. There were just two names, both from Glasgow: J. B. Wilson, who the previous year had been awarded the prestigious commission for the new headquarters of the Institute of Engineers and Shipbuilders in Glasgow, and John Keppie. On 27 September, Keppie was unanimously appointed architect for the Rothesay job. ⁴

Having prepared an initial scheme for the church, Keppie was asked to provide a simpler alternative, confined to re-roofing, and 'without any alterations of the internal appearance'. ⁵ Although the Deacons' Court preferred the second scheme, they still demurred at the proposed 'new floors, pews, lining, staircases and porches'. Keppie supplied a fresh plan, and a measurer was appointed on 18 November, before the principal tenders were accepted in December. ⁶

The new roof must have been externally complete by August 1908, when the final payment was made to the slater, but work on the church continued until the end of the year, when a wrought-iron finial by George Adam & Son was attached to the tip of the spire. ⁷

The original drawings have not come to light, but a tracing of one sheet was made by Ronald Harrison in the 1930s. This shows the new roof in section and elevation, with a plan of part of the ceiling. It resembles a hammerbeam roof, but most of the structural timbers are hidden by a flat, boarded ceiling, higher in the centre than at the sides. There are oblongs of Gothic tracery in the spandrels, and more gothic tracery in the vertical area between the lower and higher ceiling levels.

People

Clients:

- Rothesay Parish United Free Church

Contractors:

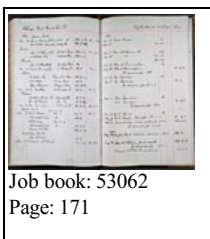
- George Adam & Son
- John Cochrane
- Daniel Cunningham
- Douglas, Hunter & Whitson
- James Duncan
- James Hyndman
- John Jamieson
- C. Kippen
- John McCallum & Son
- Edward McTavish
- W. & J. Stewart
- James Symington

Job Book

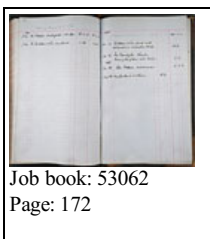
The job books of Honeyman & Keppie (later Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh) are now held by The Hunterian, University of Glasgow and include four volumes related to the Mackintosh period. The books were used by the firm to keep a project-by-project, day-by-day record of contractors, suppliers and expenditure. 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 M284 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 M284 has been extracted from the job books:



Job book: 53062
Page: 171



Job book: 53062
Page: 172

Client: Rothesay Parish United Free Church

Measurer: Douglas, Hunter & Whitson

Tenders:

Contractor	Type	Address	Date	Value	Accepted
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James Duncan	mason	27 Columshill Street	1907	£296 4s 8½d	yes (21 December 1907)
John McCord	mason	Craigielea, Ardbeg Road	1907	£397 5s 8½d	no
John McCallum & Son	joiner	50 High Street	1907	£1321 13s 3d	yes
A. Dodds & Son	joiner	4 Colbeck Place	1907	£1329 4s 4d	no
Alex R. Peacock	plumber	23 High Street	1907	£24 0s 0d	no
Daniel Cunningham	plumber	3 Bridge Street	1907	£22 3s 0d	yes (21 December 1907)
James Miller & Son	slater	Columshill Street	1907	£107 8s 0d	no
W. M. Leckie	slater	Bridge Street	1907	£115 6s 0d	no
Robert Paterson	slater	24 Argyle Street	1907	£107 10s 3d	no
James Hyndman	slater	28 Montague Street	1907	£84 6s 0d	yes (21 December 1907)
Matthew Duncan & Co	plasterer	Ladeside Street	1907	£28 6s 7d	no
John McQuistan	plasterer	John Street	1907	£27 4s 5½d	no
John Jamieson	plasterer	18 Russell Street	1907	£24 13s 11d	yes (21 December 1907)
W. & J. Stewart	painter	no data in job book	1908	£146 4s 0d ¹	yes (17 April 1908)
D. C. Murray	painter	no data in job book	1908	£195 9s 2d ²	no
Dugald McFie	painter	no data in job book	1908	£223 6s 1¼d	no
John McNab	gasfitting	no data in job book	1908	£13 19s 0d	no
Edward McTavish	gasfitting	no data in job book	1908	£12 10s 9d	yes (17 April 1908)
C. Kippen	steeplejack	no data in job book	30 July 1908	£23 11s 3d	yes
George Adam & Son	ironwork	no data in job book	30 July 1908	£8 15s 0d	yes

Payments (trades):

Name	Type	Payment out sum
James Duncan	mason	First installment: 13 March 1908 Final installment: 28 October 1908 £277 13s 3d ³
John McCallum & Son	joiner	First installment: 16 April 1908 Final installment: 22 January 1909 £1336 2s 5d ⁴
Daniel Cunningham	plumber	First installment: 27 May 1908 Final installment: 29 August 1908 £30 15s 4d ⁵
James Hyndman	slater	First installment: 23 April 1908 Final installment: 3 August 1908 £67 7s 0d ⁶
John Jamieson	plasterer	First installment: 11 June 1908 Final installment: no data in job book £14 15s 9d ⁷
W. & J. Stewart	painter	First installment: 17 June 1908 Final installment: 13 November 1908 £151 10s 1d ⁸
Edward McTavish	gasfitting	Payment date: no data in job book £15 15s 5d
C. Kippen	steeplejack	Payment date: 1908 £40 0s 0d
George Adam & Son	ironwork	Payment date: 20 October 1908 £12 5s 0d ⁹

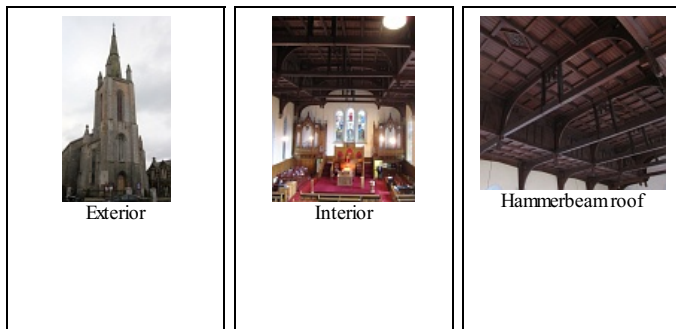
Payments (suppliers):

Name	Service	Payment date	Payment sum
James Symington	'Covering tip of spire with copper'	13 November 1908	£7 2s 0d
John Cochrane	'Teak top of spire'	22 January 1909	£2 3s 7d

Measurer fee payment: £52 9s 0d (22 January [1909])

Documents

Images



Bibliography

Published

- Frank Arneil Walker and Fiona Sinclair, *North Clyde Estuary. An Illustrated Architectural Guide*, Edinburgh: R.I.A.S., 1992, p. 150
- Frank Arneil Walker and Fiona Sinclair, *Buildings of Scotland: Argyll and Bute*, London: Penguin, 2000, pp. 618–19

Notes:

- 1: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 29 August 1907.
- 2: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 27 September 1907.
- 3: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 7 October 1907.
- 4: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 18 November 1907.
- 5: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh job book, GLAHA 53062, p. 171.
- 6: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh job book, GLAHA 53062, p. 171.
- 7: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh job book, GLAHA 53062, pp. 171–2.
- 8: Website of Rothesay Trinity Church of Scotland [accessed 21 December 2012].
- 9: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 29 August 1907.
- 10: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 11 September 1907. The repair committee consisted of John R. Thomson (himself an architect), George Martin, A. M. Burnie, James Duncan, A. R. Peacock and the clerk of the Deacons' Court.
- 11: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 27 September 1907.
- 12: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 7 October 1907.
- 13: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: Rothesay United Free Parish Church, Deacons' Court Minutes, CH3/486/32, 18 November 1907; The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh job book, GLAHA 53062, p. 171.
- 14: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh job book, GLAHA 53062, pp. 171–2.
- 15: Original tender £150 4s 0d, less £12 for scaffolding.

16: Original tender £205 9s 2d, less £10 for scaffolding.

17: Half measurer's fee: £3 18s 9d.

18: Half measurer's fee: £17 5s 0d.

19: Half measurer's fee: 10s 6d.

20: Half measurer's fee: £1 6s 3d.

21: Half measurer's fee: 5s 3d.

22: Half measurer's fee: £2 12s 6d.

23: For 'finial with alterations & extra straps'.

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

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