

MX.06 Interiors for 14 Kingsborough Gardens

Introduction

Mackintosh designed white-painted fitted and free-standing furniture and stencilled wall decoration for the drawing room at 14 Kingsborough Gardens for shipowner Robert James Rowat – cousin of the designer and Art School teacher, Jessie Newbery – and his wife Jenny. He also designed a dark-stained settle for the entrance hall, and stencilled wall decoration for the second-floor bedroom of the clients' eleven year-old daughter, Maud. ¹ The furniture included a remodelled fireplace with carved mantelpiece and square purple glass inlays; fitted corner seating upholstered in grey linen with green and white stencilled decoration; two upholstered armchairs; an oval table and two free-standing cabinets. The wall decoration was stencilled in grey, pink and green. ²

It appears the work was carried out shortly after the Rowats acquired the house. In the 1901 census, taken on 31 March, the family are registered at 4 Belhaven Terrace; by May, the publication date of the 1901–2 *Glasgow Post Office Directory*, Robert Rowat's home address is given as 14 Kingsborough Gardens. ³

The work must have been a private commission as no related entries appear in John Honeyman & Keppie's job books or cash book. The commission may therefore have been agreed before the end of 1901, when Mackintosh was taken into partnership and restrictions on private work were introduced. The work continued into the period of the new partnership: a drawing for the cabinets by Mackintosh is dated 1902; a payment of £40 0s 0d from 'Mrs Rowat', recorded in the cash book on 10 May 1905, may relate to this project. ⁴

Mackintosh carried out work for other members of the Rowat family: for Robert Rowat's mother, Margaret, at Warriston, Paisley; his sister Isabella Wylie Hill, at 3 Lilybank Gardens; and his cousin, Edith Rowat, at Prospect Hill House, Paisley. Early in his career Mackintosh also worked on the business premises of R. Wylie Hill & Co, the firm of Isabella's husband, Robert. ⁵

Authorship: The work is known from surviving drawings by Mackintosh. Photographs were published under Mackintosh's name in *Dekorative Kunst* in March 1902, and in Hermann Muthesius's seminal publication, *Das englische Haus*. The free-standing furniture was included in the later publication. ⁶ Versions of the armchairs, oval table and cabinets were exhibited at Moscow in winter 1902–3 under Mackintosh's name; related chairs, with stencilled rather than upholstered backs, and an oval table were exhibited in Turin in Spring 1902. ⁷

Status: Standing building; subdivided into flats

Current name: 34 Kingsborough Gardens

Current use: Residential (2014)

Listing category: B (Listed as '22–38 (even nos) Kingsborough Gardens')

Historic Scotland/HB Number: 32544

RCAHMS Site Number: NS56NE 4015

Grid reference: NS 55963 67487

Chronology

Description

People

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

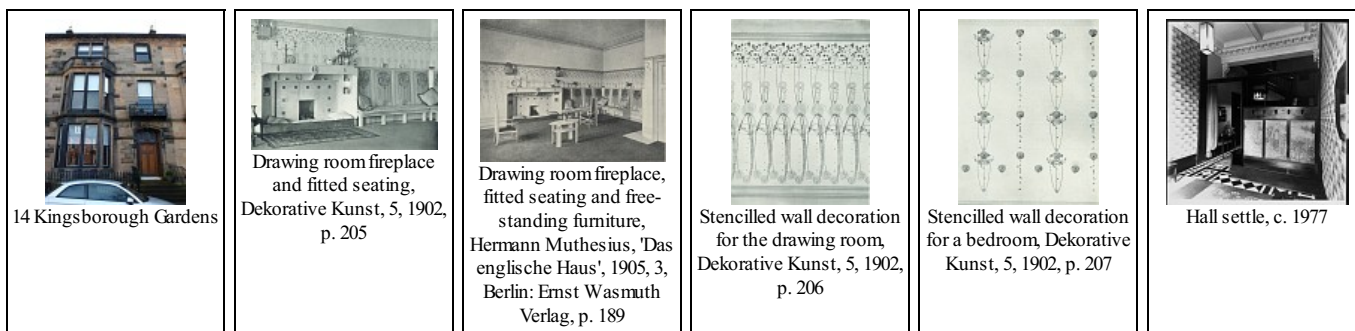
of the measurer (quantity surveyor) is usually at the top of the right-hand page, followed by information about payments to contractors and suppliers. All of the data for MX.06 is entered in the tables below.

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 MX.06 has been extracted from the job books:

Documents

Images



Bibliography

Published

- Roger Billcliffe, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh: The Complete Furniture, Furniture Drawings and Interior Designs*, Moffat, Dumfriesshire: Cameron & Hollis, 4th edn, 2009, pp. 129–37
- Alan Crawford, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1995, pp. 90–1
- Thomas Howarth, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd edn, 1977, pp. 48–9
- Hermann Muthesius, *Das englische Haus*, 3, Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth Verlag, 1905, p. 189, plate 212
- *Dekorative Kunst*, 5, March 1902, p. 205–7

Unpublished

- Hiroaki Kimura, 'Charles Rennie Mackintosh: Architectural Drawings', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1982, pp. 42, 166–7

Notes:

1: *Dekorative Kunst*, 5, March 1902, p. 205–7; The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: GLAHA 41787; GLAHA 41788; GLAHA 41789; 1901 census and birth record, www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk [accessed 17 June 2013].

2: *Dekorative Kunst*, 5, March 1902, p. 205–7; Roger Billcliffe, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh: The Complete Furniture, Furniture Drawings and Interior Designs*, Moffat, Dumfriesshire: Cameron & Hollis, 4th edn, 2009, pp. 129–37; Alan Crawford, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1995, pp. 90–1. Part of the original stencilled wallpaper was uncovered and salvaged in 1992 and is now held at The Hunterian, University of Glasgow, GLAHA 41281, see *Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society Newsletter*, 61, Spring 1993, p. 3.

3: 1901 census, www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk [accessed 17 June 2013]; *Glasgow Post Office Directory*, 1901–2, p. 563.

4: Although dated much later than this work, there is no other Rowat-family project with which the payment can be linked: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: GLAHA 41118; The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie, Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh, Keppie Henderson cash book, GLAHA 53079, p. 92. Photocopy of a manuscript copy by John Keppie of the 'Contract of Partnership between John Keppie, Architect, in Glasgow, of the first part, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Architect there of the second part', 10 October 1901. Supplied by Roger Billcliffe, 30 April 2012. Original untraced.

5: Information on the Rowat family supplied by Mark Stephens, a descendant, by email, 10 October 2012.

6: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: GLAHA 41118; GLAHA 41787; GLAHA 41788; GLAHA 41789; GLAHA 41281; *Dekorative Kunst*, 5, March 1902, p. 205–7; Hermann Muthesius, *Das englische Haus*, 3, Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth Verlag, 1905, p. 189, plate 212

7: *Mir iskusstva*, 1903, no. 3, p. 117; *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 10, 1902, p. 586.

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

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