CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH
AND THE
SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT IN ARCHITECTURE.

A thesis prepared for the degree of Ph.D.
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by

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PREFACE.

As the 19th century recedes in time, events which hitherto have seemed unrelated and insignificant gradually fall into place; they become part of a broad comprehensive pattern, the lines of which can be discerned with increasing clarity. It is possible already to make an approximate evaluation of the complex 'revivals' which represent the architectural history of the period and even to discover some purpose in movements such as the 'Secession' and the 'Art Nouveau', movements usually relegated to the limbo of lost causes and cursorily dismissed as outside the main stream of cultural development.

To the latter category belonged the work of Mackintosh and the Glasgow Designers, who during the 1890's initiated an unpopular revolt against artistic convention in Britain, a revolt which had repercussions in many parts of Europe, and yet, in little more than a decade, lost whatever sympathy it had gained in the land of its origin. Paradoxically, in recent years Mackintosh has been widely acclaimed one of the precursors of the modern movement in architecture, though little is known about him. Always he has been a shadowy, rather mysterious figure who stepped suddenly into the limelight, played a short, dramatic part, and then as quickly disappeared from the stage. Published references to him and to his work are fragmentary, misleading, and often contradictory - even the biographical notes in 'Who's Who' 1925,* written during his lifetime, are quite inaccurate - and rarely if ever have his colleagues and friends been given credit for their contribution to the 'Glasgow Style', the foundation on which he built his reputation.

The object of this study has been threefold: to compile a complete and authentic critical record of the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh from his earliest essays in line and wash and the crafts, to his mature architectural work and watercolour painting; to disclose the sources on which he

(Footnote: *Reprinted in 'Who Was Who' 1916-1928.)

drew and to determine the influences which shaped the ultimate form of his individual style; to review his work objectively in relation to contemporary events in Europe and to assess his contribution to modern architectural history.

The study falls naturally into two parts. In the first part Mackintosh's life and work in the Glasgow region are examined in detail against the Scottish background. The second part is devoted entirely to sources and influences, to the work of contemporaries in England and abroad, to the circumstances which brought about his rise to European stature, and to the reasons for his sudden and complete eclipse. His last notable architectural work was the second section of the Glasgow School of Art (completed in 1909) and he left Scotland in 1914. Thereafter he had little if any influence upon the course of events, and his later life in London and on the continent, interesting though it is, has been relegated to the appendix.

The term 'secessionist' has been used throughout this work in a general sense to describe the so-called 'new' movement in architecture and the applied arts. Within this broad definition however, several interpretations have been assumed. There is, for example, the amiable secessionist seceding from contemporary fashions yet never venturing far from the traditional fold, and on the other hand, the militant secessionist making a conscious and sustained effort to break with the past. To the former category belongs C. F. A. Voysey and the English Arts and Crafts School, to the latter the exponents of continental 'art nouveau' and the rationalists or functionalists of the Gropius School. The epithet 'art nouveau' is applied to a movement which gained a secure foothold in Belgium and quickly spread throughout western Europe during the 1890's, a movement notable for its extravagant, voluptuous decorative forms, and complete disregard for accepted conventions. The exponents of this style, of course, are secessionists according to definition, but the term 'art nouveau' serves admirably to distinguish them and their work from the more restrained English and Central European Schools, and from the functionalists. Mackintosh's position in relation to all three factions will emerge as this work progresses.

It has been considered advisable to limit the field of study to Europe and in the later phase, almost exclusively to Austria and Germany, countries in which Mackintosh's influence was most marked. Holland* - notwithstanding the work of Berlage - Denmark and the Baltic States showed little inclination to depart from tradition during the 1890's, and with France they must remain largely outside the purview of this study.

Literature on the period under review is lamentably defieient and books having a direct bearing on the subject have been included in the bibliography. It has been necessary, however, to dig deeply into files of contemporary journals, and though they may not make an imposing array, each title represents many volumes, and, in almost every instance, an investigation of hundreds of articles, illustrations and reviews.

Two works have been drawn upon more specifically in the last part of Chapter X, Pevsner's 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement' and Giedion's 'Space, Time and Architecture', which together constitute the main body of information on the continental phase available in this country. These have been supplemented by reading from foreign journals.

Sources are acknowledged throughout the text but this study is largely the outcome of original research and personal observation. With few exceptions the author has examined every work executed by Mackintosh in this country, and has attempted to trace and interview, or to correspond with the architect's former clients, friends and acquaintances who might have information to impart. Material has come to hand from many unexpected sources and from places as widely separated as Austria, America, Holland and Australia. The quest has been full of incident; there has been the excitement of a new find,

(Footnote: *It is frequently contended that Dutch architects were especially indebted to Mackintosh and that their distinctive contribution to the modern movement between the wars was inspired directly by him. There is no evidence forthcoming to support this contention however, although indirectly his influence may have been considerable. In a letter to the author (The Hague 17.12.45), W. M. Dudok the distinguished Dutch architect says, 'It so happened that what we in Holland know of your prominent architects came to us chiefly through the medium of a book, written by a German, namely 'Das Englische Haus' by Hermann Muthesius .... I don't think however that Mackintosh had a great influence on the development of the modern movement in this country. The Vienna Secession was of greater importance in this respect, especially the work of Josef Hoffmann'.

an original drawing perhaps, or a piece of furniture which may have opened up a new line of enquiry, and there have been happy coincidences and unanticipated discoveries to relieve protracted routine investigations. Most rewarding however, have been the pleasant hours spent in the company of people who knew Mackintosh personally or worked with him - Mr. and Mrs. Fra Newbery, Professor and Mrs. Randolf Schwabe for example, and many others - people who have enabled the author to pass behind the curtain of two wars into the warm, friendly sunshine of the Edwardian era, and to piece together the scattered fragments of the Mackintosh story.

The author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to the following:-

To Professor T. Harold Hughes for introducing him to a subject of such absorbing interest, and to the late William Davidson and Mr. W. O. Hutchison, R.S.A., formerly director of the Glasgow School of Art for their help in the initial stages. To Professor W. J. Smith for kindly assuming the responsibilities of Supervisor on Professor Hughes' retirement, and for valuable comments and criticisms throughout the course of this study. To Professor R. A. Cordingley and Arthur Arschavir M.A., for criticisms of the final draft; to Dr. George Pratt Insh, Paul Schaffer and Peter Jordan for assistance with foreign texts.

From the host of Mackintosh's friends and admirers who have submitted to cross-examination and tiresome correspondence, the author is especially indebted to:-

Mr. J. Herbert MacNair, Mackintosh's friend and colleague; Miss Nancy Mackintosh, the architect's sister, and Mrs. Mary Newbery Sturrock, daughter of the later Francis and Jessie R. Newbery.

N.B. Illustrations throughout this work have been numbered according to the preceding page of text. It is hoped that this arrangement will facilitate cross referencing.

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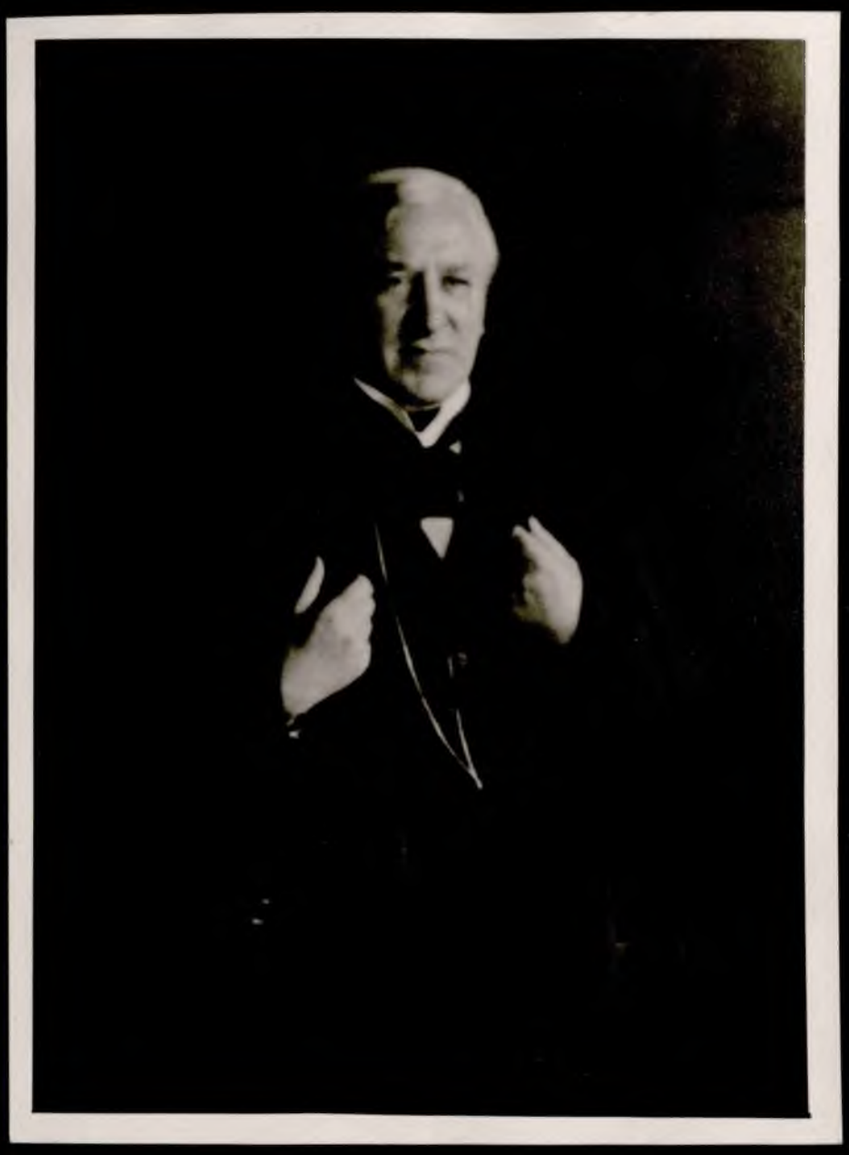


CHARLES GENNE BAGNIN, '80

INTRODUCTION.

An appreciation of native building traditions and some acquaintance with the general trend of architectural development in Scotland are essential to an understanding of Mackintosh's work, for many of the forms he employed and the methods he used remain unintelligible, or open to misinterpretation if judged solely by English standards.

Unsettled social conditions, resulting largely from the persistence of bitter feuds and internecine strife, seriously retarded the transition from purely defensive building to more peaceful civic and domestic work in the northern kingdom. Until well into the 16th century a strongly fortified tower of rectangular plan, often with the addition of a corner wing, proved to be the safest kind of dwelling, and, with modifications, this form endured long after England and France had completed the transition from fortified manor to country mansion.

An increasing demand for comfort and for more spacious living accommodation was often met by extending and broadening the upper stages of old towers, meanwhile retaining the original substructure. Many daring and ingenious devices were employed to expedite this development; for example, massive ranges of corbels and oversailing courses of one kind or another, and enlarged angle turrets were introduced. These features, used in conjunction with the ubiquitous crow-stepped gable,* frequently produced extremely picturesque and dramatic effects.

During the 16th and early 17th centuries the Scottish Burgh, or market town, gradually assumed its characteristic form with a nucleus of kirk, tollbooth and 'mercat' cross. Round these clustered the burghers' houses with, of course, a complement of humble dwellings for ordinary folk, all more homely in character than the grim fortress dwellings of less propitious days, but still retaining something of the same forbidding aspect. By and large, these were unpretentious buildings of simple plan, stoutly constructed of stone and harled (roughcast) externally; windows

(Footnote: *The characteristic Scottish gable parapet resembles a flight of stone steps, thus affording - in picturesque imagery - a convenient lodgment for the crow or "corbie": hence "crow-stepped" or "corbie-stepped" gable.")

Fig. viii. (a). Craigievar Castle, c.1626.
(b) Argyle's Lodging, Stirling, 1632-1674.
(c) Barscobe House, Kirkcudbright, 1648.

Ministry of Works

were few, small, and often irregularly placed, thus emphasising the preponderance of unbroken wall surface. In the larger houses battlements and parapet walls were dispensed with, roofs were steeply pitched and gabled, with sweeping eaves-lines often broken by dormers lighting an attic. Angle turrets were used as rooms, sometimes rising through two or more storeys and occasionally enclosing a newel stair and descending to ground level, while massive chimney stacks and gables gave strong vertical emphasis. Often too, extensions were built to earlier defensive works, as for example at Fordyce Castle, where the contrast between the 16th century tower and the later harled wing is most telling. To this period also, belongs Lamb's House, Leith, a typical merchant's house of the late 16th century and a romantic composition of plain harled walls and red tiled roofs in which innumerable oversailing courses and an inconsequent pattern of windows lead the eye upwards to lofty crow-stepped gables and an effusive skyline. Stenhouse, Edinburgh, is representative of 17th century town dwellings and Craigievar Castle (1626) and Barscobe House (c.1648) are country houses of the period. All are dour and uncompromising and one can scarcely believe that they were built many years after the Elizabethan masterpieces of Longleat (1567-1569) and Wollaton (1580-1588), and that Barscobe may well be contemporary with Roger Pratt's Coleshill (1650-1664).

Fig. ix (a.& b.)

Fig. x (a)

Fig. 86b.

Figs. viii (a.& c.)

These examples must suffice to represent the Scottish vernacular, an unsophisticated style reflecting the spirit of a hardy unsophisticated people, and arising naturally from a logical use of the materials at hand, a stern climate and an economy which left little room for the refinements and comforts of life.

The Reformation and subsequent enrichment of the nobility, followed in the early 17th century by the Act of Union with England, brought about a change in social conditions and consequently in architectural design. Hitherto, contact between Scotland and her neighbour had been limited in the main to border skirmishes and forays, and the geographical barrier of the Cheviots and the wild border country had made intercourse difficult and dangerous. Now, however, there was a more insistent demand in Scotland for standards of comfort approximating more closely to that of the southern counties, and moreover, for a style of architecture more in keeping with contemporary fashion - the Renaissance! The first evidence of change appeared in

Fig. ix. (a) Fordyce Castle, Banff, 1592, showing the harled later wing.

(b) Fordyce Castle: A Corner Turret.

furnishing and interior work generally, but gradually the planning and fabric of the building itself was modified, though the Scots clung tenaciously to many architectural features - turrets, corbels and the like - associated with their turbulent past. By the end of the 17th century, Renaissance details, pediments, balusters and cornices and so forth, were introduced on the outside of Scottish buildings and some attempt was made to achieve symmetry in planning. Slowly, and at first almost imperceptibly, the robust vernacular style was superseded and the old ways of building largely forsaken, except that is, in rural communities and remote farmsteads, where unpretentious domestic building was still practised. So complete did the transformation become that in the work of William Adam (1689-1748), and more especially in that of his distinguished sons, Robert and James, it is difficult, if not impossible, to recognise any national characteristics.

The Renaissance and the purer classic style of the Adam brothers was readily accepted and rapidly achieved popularity in the north. During the 18th century Scotland succumbed completely to classicism and, given an expanding economy and a more settled way of life, soon recovered from her initial handicap. Within a remarkably short time several architects of distinction emerged, most of whom executed a great deal of their work in the south and have come to be associated more with England than with the land of their birth - James Gibbs (1682-1754), Colin Campbell (d.1729), author of 'Vitruvius Britannicus', Sir William Chambers, and of course Robert and James Adam, to mention but five. To this period belongs Edinburgh New Town with its formal squares and crescents and regimented facades - the antithesis of the Scottish style - and also, by way of contrast, the charming rural villages of Eaglesham and the small towns of Inveraray and Ullapool.

The first quarter of the 19th century saw the rapid growth of civic building and the flowering of the Greek Revival. William H. Playfair (1789-1857) was its leading exponent in Scotland, and his extensions to Edinburgh New Town and later his design for the Scottish National Gallery (1850), with Thomas Hamilton's Royal High School, and other notable buildings in similar vein, earned for the capital city the appellation 'Athens of the North'. To Ruskin's censorious eye however, Edinburgh was "Nothing but square cut stone - square cut stone - a wilderness of square cut stone for ever and ever".*

(Footnote: *'Lectures in Architecture and Painting', Edinburgh, 1853.)

Fig. x. (a) Lamb's House, Leith, late 16th century.

(b) Harled Houses, Thurso, Caithness, 17th century.

Alan Reiach

Ian Lindsay

The limitations of the pure Greek style were soon reached and c.1830, even before the National Gallery was built, a modified style had been evolved - the neo-Greek - in which motives derived from Greek, Roman or Italian sources were combined. David Hamilton, the architect of the Royal Exchange, Glasgow, was one of its more reputable Scottish advocates.

Scotland could boast one man however, who had courage to defy convention and to embark on work of an unorthodox nature. This was Alexander 'Greek' Thomson (1817-75), though, as the sobriquet 'Greek' suggests, even he remained virtually within the academic fold. Nevertheless, Thomson's work was fresh and stimulating in an age given over to pedantry. His dignified terraces, extraordinary churches and fine city buildings - a curious blend of Hellenic and Egyptian forms - must be numbered amongst the most notable architectural monuments of the 19th century, and his exotic interior decoration is paralleled in the south only by the brilliant polychromatic experiments of Butterworth. Thomson evolved a distinctive local style which had considerable influence upon the street architecture of Glasgow, but his work formed only a brief diversion, and he contributed little to the main stream of architectural development.

In England the Gothic revivalists had gained the ascendancy by the middle of the 19th century but for secular purposes the style never achieved popularity in Scotland. There emerged instead a new and equally heterogeneous style, the Baronial. Under the spell of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) and of the Waverley Novels, the departed glories of Scotland were given new colour and public interest revived in all things relating to the past, not least in her architectural monuments. In response to this impulse there arose a demand for buildings of all kinds in the romantic manner, and practising architects quickly realised that a fruitful source of archaeological material had been neglected. William Burn (1789-1870) and David Bryce (1803-1876) led the field and successfully inaugurated the fashion, to which considerable impetus was given by the publication of Robert Billings' 'Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities' (1845). Unfortunately the old mistakes were repeated. Billings' monumental work was used in exactly the same manner as Stuart and Revett's 'Ionian Antiquities' which had been the copy book of the Greek revivalists. The characteristic features of the vernacular were eagerly seized upon, copied, and employed as fanciful trimmings to new work of all

Fig. xi. ~~(a)~~ The Baronial:

(a) 'The Ross' by Alexander Cullen, c.1895.

(b) The National Burns' Memorial, Mauchline, by William Fraser, c.1897.


THE · ROSS.

Fig. xii (a.& b.)

kinds. Thus, in the rapidly expanding towns of the central industrial belt of Scotland, curiously self-conscious buildings adorned with crow-stepped gables, machicolations, castellated parapets and Franco-Scottish turrets, appeared side by side with Gothic churches, Graeco-Roman banks and Italianate warehouses. Nor did the countryside escape the surge of perfervid romanticism, for to this period belongs Balmoral* and a host of ostentatious mansions and seaside establishments which, let it be admitted, often appear less incongruous, and at times even picturesque, against a background of mountain and forest. The bold functionalism of castle and keep, and the simple dignity of farmhouse and cottage however, seemed to elude the Baronialists, and their work almost invariably possesses an air of unreality, which on occasion approaches the grotesque. In no instance prior to the advent of Sir Rowand Anderson (1834-1921), and his pupil Sir Robert Lorimer (1864-1929),+ was any conscious effort made to recapture the true spirit of the vernacular.

Despite the not inconsiderable material rewards that attended the gratification of popular demand - and this was the hey-day of the great practitioner - there can be no doubt that the second half of the 19th century was a time of questioning and uncertainty for the serious student of architecture. He was confronted by many conflicting ideologies each with its influential champions - often, it should be remembered, men of culture and integrity - and its vociferous body of adherents. Nor had the professional journals a progressive policy to advocate and they devoted much space to academic discussions and to illustrations of buildings which, for sheer diversity of character, will probably never be equalled.

This unhappy state of affairs was perpetuated by the restrictive nature of the architect's initial training. As an apprentice and draughtsman he was given little freedom and had few opportunities of developing his creative faculties. His first and most important task was to acquire a sound knowledge of the orders and classical elements, supplemented by measured drawings and by reading from Rickman, Brandon, Pugin, Billings and others if his master were a Medievalist. Apart from usual office routine and field work it was his duty to interpret preliminary sketches, to make working drawings and to provide mouldings, ornament and other details of correct antiquity - or to reproduce his master's favourite motives. "Street, you know

(Footnote: *Bought by the Prince Consort in 1848. The foundation stone of the new Baronial edifice was laid five years later by Queen Victoria.)

+See Chapter IV, p.77.)

Fig. xii. (a) Offices, York Street, Glasgow,
by W. F. McGibbon, c.1893.

(b) Building in Buchanan Street, Glasgow,
by H. & D. Barclay, c.1895.

would not let us design a key-hole",* commented Norman Shaw to W. R. Lethaby when discussing his distinguished employer, and in this respect Street was by no means an exception.

Organised evening classes in freehand drawing and building construction were held at many provincial art schools, and competitions were arranged by local architectural societies, but originality in any shape or form was discouraged. No comprehensive course of training existed in this country before the turn of the century and few people could afford the luxury of tuition at say, l'École des Beaux Arts, Paris. To the apprentice and to the great majority of draughtsmen then, the art of architecture had been reduced to a system - the arrangement of a given number of symbols to specified rules within a prescribed area, the limits of a facade; a state of affairs admirably summed up by Sir Frank Mears, the Scottish architect and planner, who likened his early days in practice to "a butterfly dance performed in the garden of style".

Architectural design had thus become largely two-dimensional and divorced from reality. Thought was directed almost exclusively to the visual appearance of a building and to the archaeological exactitude of its details rather than to its planning, convenience and suitability. The successful architect of the Victorian era was the man who could manipulate historical forms with the greatest dexterity, or who could most skilfully adapt one or other of the fashionable styles to meet the needs of his patron, convincing himself meanwhile that the rules of propriety and good taste had been strictly adhered to.

> "I was commissioned to erect the New University buildings at Glasgow," said Sir Gilbert Scott in his autobiography, "a very large work, for which I adopted a style which I may call my own invention, having already initiated it in the Albert Institute at Dundee. It is simply a 13th or 14th century secular style with the addition of certain Scottish features, peculiar in that country to the 16th century, though in reality derived from the French style of the 13th and 14th centuries."

Sir Gilbert Scott was one of the most prolific, if ~~not~~ one of the most influential architects of the age.

It was into this atmosphere of studied eclecticism that Charles Rennie Mackintosh was born, in the year that Scott embarked upon his quasi-medieval project for Glasgow University, and it was in this environment that he was educated, that he served his apprenticeship, and reached maturity.

(Footnote: *'Philip Webb and his Work' by W. R. Lethaby.)

PART I.

Chapter I.

EARLY LIFE AND TRAINING.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh, the second son of a family of eleven children, was born at No.70 Parson Street, Glasgow, on 7th June, 1868. His father, William Mackintosh, was of Highland stock from Nairn on the Moray Firth, a superintendent of police in the city and a man of integrity and high repute. Margaret, his mother, was a Lowlander, daughter of Charles Rennie of Ayr, an unassuming homely woman of character, and greatly loved by her children. The family occupied an unpretentious third floor tenement flat in a locality which subsequently degenerated into a slum as a result of the phenomenal growth of the city during the Industrial Revolution.* There is no evidence of any particular interest in the fine arts, much less of an art tradition in either branch of the family, and the theory of hereditary genius can be discarded at once in the case of the son. As the family increased and William Mackintosh's position improved, they moved from the Parson Street tenement to a more attractive house, No.2 Firpark Terrace, Dennistoun, when the boy Charles was about ten years old (c.1878). Here the really formative period of his life began.

Dennistoun was a pleasant suburb of Glasgow in the 1870's and in these congenial surroundings William Mackintosh was able to enjoy and develop his favourite hobby - gardening. Even at the tenement in the early days he had managed to keep a garden or an allotment, and such was his enthusiasm that he frequently rose at five in the morning and spent several hours working at his plot before going to the office - and he returned to it in the evenings! In Dennistoun he had the good fortune to obtain part of the garden of Golf Hill House, a large residence vacated by its owners, the Dennistoun family, and left in the hands of a caretaker. This was beautifully laid out and he tended it with great care; the children christened it the 'Garden of Eden'. Flowers were his speciality and he was particularly interested in the cultivation of hyacinths; every year large quantities of bulbs were sent to him from Holland and he became a well-known figure and prizewinner at local horticultural shows. Flowers were always to be found in profusion in the Mackintosh household and from an early age the children were encouraged to take an interest in their father's hobby; they acquired naturally a profound regard for growing, living things, a regard which, in

(Footnote:- *In the 1860's the population of Glasgow was less than half a million; it is now 1,250,000.)

the case of Charles, endured throughout his life and found expression in every work of art he created.

As a child, Charles Mackintosh was not very strong and two physical deformities added to his handicap; he was born with a contracted sinew in his foot which caused him to develop a decided limp as he grew older and then, as the result of a chill after a game of football, the muscles of his right eye were permanently affected, causing the lid to droop. The family doctor advised his parents to encourage the boy to take plenty of exercise in the open air and to have long holidays whenever possible - advice which he found exactly to his liking. With school friends or the family, but often alone, he wandered over the delightful countryside surrounding Glasgow and greatly enlarged his knowledge of wild flowers, plants and trees; during the summer he was able to adventure further afield.

Charles' school days passed uneventfully and he does not appear to have achieved particular distinction at either Reid's Private School or later at Alan Glen's High School where he completed his education. Unfortunately all records for the 1880's have been destroyed at both institutions and there is nothing now to be gleaned from either source. In other respects, and apart from a love of cats, his early life appears to have been reasonably normal and without marked incident, though he was an extremely temperamental child capable of violent fits of rage, and always insisted upon getting his own way. On the other hand however, he was generous and kind-hearted and had an attractive personality.

From an early age he was determined to be an architect, and in spite of his father's attempts to dissuade him, he succeeded as usual in winning parental approval, but only on the understanding that he would "put his mind to it" and work hard. So, on leaving Alan Glen's at the age of sixteen (1884), he was articled to John Hutchison of Glasgow - a rather obscure firm long since defunct - and at the same time, enrolled as an evening student at the School of Art. In those days it was customary for an architectural apprentice in the city to serve for five years, though in the country the period was diminished to four. No remuneration was offered for the first twelve months; £10 for the second year, and then annual increments of £5 until, during the final year of his apprenticeship, he would earn £25.

John Hutchison.

Hutchison's office was situated at the rear of a furniture shop owned by his brother James, at 107 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow. Here Mackintosh worked under the charge of the chief assistant, Andrew Black, an able draughtsman and a good teacher, who later became a partner in the firm of Miller and Black in the city. The close proximity of the furniture shop is of some significance and no doubt accounts, at least in part, for the young architect's early interest in furniture design. Regrettably nothing now

now remains of Mackintosh's work in the office, but his place was taken in April 1889 by W. J. Blane, who was greatly impressed at the time by the vigour of his predecessor's draughtsmanship. Despite the sixty years which have elapsed, Mr. Blane distinctly remembers seeing a drawing by Mackintosh of an Ionic capital which was to be executed in plaster for the premises of Messrs. Wylie Hill, Buchanan Street: he affirms that it was strongly delineated and showed surprising individuality. Unfortunately, Wylie Hill's store was completely destroyed by fire in the early 1900's and with it the tangible proofs of Mackintosh's early capacity. The architects at present responsible for the rebuilt premises do not possess drawings of the original building, nor has it been possible to trace other work by Hutchison to which he might have contributed. On the completion of his apprenticeship, Mackintosh joined the newly established firm of John Honeyman and Keppie, in which he eventually became a partner. His name appeared for the first time in the office accounts in July, 1889, when a single payment of £5 was recorded.

At this point it is necessary to recapitulate a little and to examine Mackintosh's parallel career at the Glasgow School of Art where he studied from 1884 onwards. His name occurred with persistent regularity in the prize lists for the next eight years and there is reason to believe that his close association with the School did not terminate when he ceased to attend classes. Though few of his original drawings are extant, the School records and contemporary journals provide a valuable guide to his progress and, what is perhaps equally important, contain descriptions and criticisms of his work.

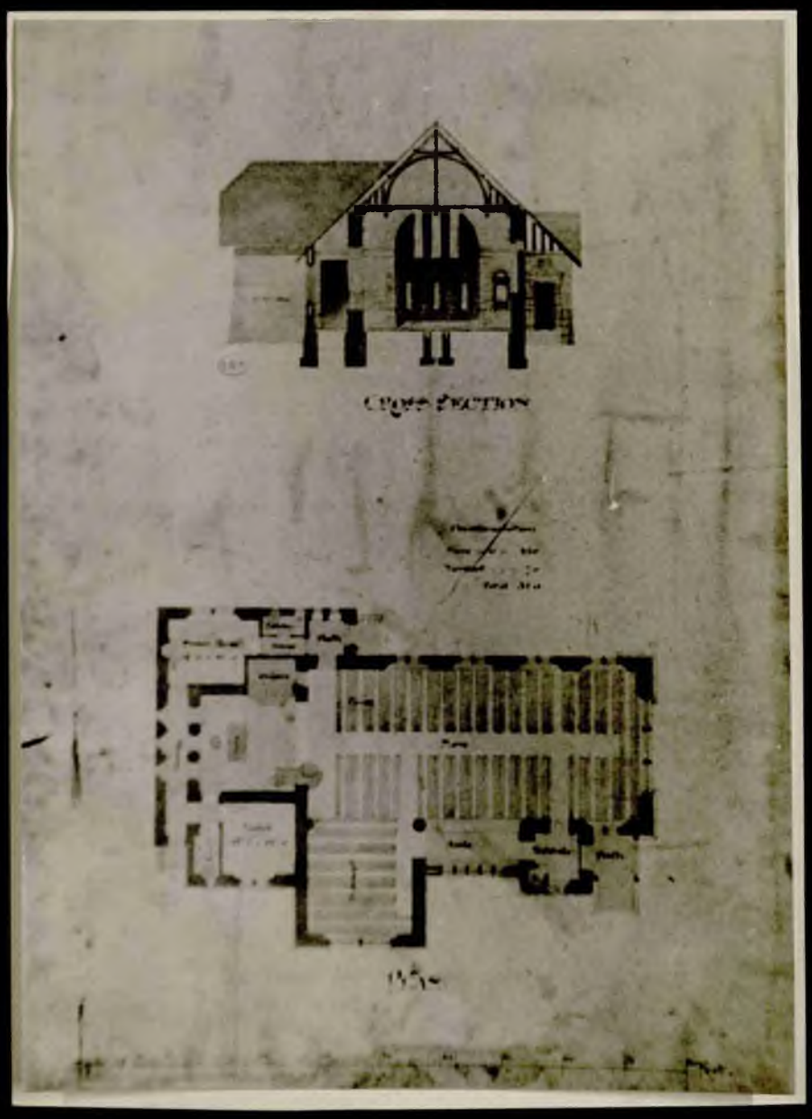
On the completion of his first session at the School of Art (1884-5) Mackintosh received a prize for "Painting and Ornament in Monochrome from the Flat'. He also passed second grade examinations in Freehand Drawing, Modelling and Geometry ("excellent"). In order to obtain a full pass certificate in the second grade however, it was necessary for a student to complete four examinations, the three already mentioned and 'Perspective'; this he did in the following year (1885-6), when he was commended in the advanced section, awarded a prize, and given a free studentship. His studies from sepia from the cast showed "both care and fidelity".*

Fig. 3a.

The annual report for the year 1887 mentions an Architectural section for the first time, although a certain Thomas Smith had been teaching the subject since 1884 at least, and classes in freehand drawing, geometry and perspective were attended by architects'

(Footnote:- *A drawing in sepia from the cast survives in the University Collection.)

Fig. 3. a. Drawing in sepia from the cast. 1888.
b. Presbyterian Church. 1889.


CROSS SECTION

apprentices. In 1887 however, the course seems to have been established on a firmer footing and classes in building construction, architectural design and measured drawing were instituted. Even so, the majority of pupils was drawn from the building trades and as attendances at evening classes was not obligatory, few architects' apprentices took part. Consequently an incentive was provided by the Glasgow Institute of Architects who awarded a number of prizes for which a student could qualify by submitting work in three specified groups:- drawings of architectural ornament from the cast; measured drawings of existing buildings; and lecture notes on building construction.

In 1887 Mackintosh distinguished himself by gaining a certificate and prize in elementary architecture ("excellent"), a first class certificate in elementary building construction, the Glasgow Institute's Book Prize for the best set of building construction lecture notes and the second prize of £2. 10. 0. for measured drawings (of David Hamilton's Royal Exchange, Glasgow). His drawing from the cast was criticized thus, "Charles Rennie Mackintosh submitted a treatment in sepia of a drawing of a portion of the Erectheum Freize, which was noticeably good".

Glasgow School of Art, in company with similar institutions throughout the United Kingdom, entered students' work for the National Competition held annually at South Kensington, and in 1888 Mackintosh was awarded a Bronze Medal for the Design of a Mountain Chapel, which received the following commendation from 'The Building News', - "A very clever design ..... The plan is simple and well grouped. A low tile-roofed tower forms the vestry, attached to a vestibule and porch. A single-span tiled roof, hipped at end, covers the church; the walling is of a bluish grey 'rag' making a pleasant contrast with the red tiles, and the details are simple and effective". The examiners said the building was picturesquely designed and worthy of notice, but no illustrations survive. During the same year, routine studies at the School earned him further prizes in measured drawing and architectural design; pass certificates in shading from models and shading from casts; and a second class certificate in advanced building construction, shared with a fellow student William Fraser. He also secured the Glasgow Institute's prize for the best set of three monthly designs and was awarded a prize of £1 for a 'Town House in a Terrace'. This project evidently showed signs of originality, deplored however by the local examiners; their remarks are typically conservative and admirably reflect the attitude of the profession at large -

"Under the Monthly Design Scheme sets of original designs were submitted, and the Examiners could wish that these efforts had more relation to the knowledge gained by a study of past work. What is desirable is, that the student should adapt all the knowledge gained from any source whatsoever to the requirements of the subjects he is called upon to design".

At South Kensington in the following year (1889) Mackintosh was awarded a book prize - one of the National Queen's Prizes - for the design of a Presbyterian Church. The Cross Section and Fig. 3b. Plan only are extant,* but no characteristic details can be recognised nor is the drawing signed. The examiners' report stated, "The design though not quite satisfactory, is fresh and original, cleverly though roughly drawn and agreeably coloured, the shadows however, being somewhat overdone".+ 'The Building News'⊖ (1889) described it thus; "Another design by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Glasgow, is picturesquely handled, has more originality, and is of brownish stone with red-tile hipped roofs, which are made pleasing features in the design. The plan is transeptal and better suited for a country service. A tower, the four rounded angles of which are carried up as pinnacles, support a low, square, tiled roof, piquant in effect. The nave has at one end a large semi-circular window. A Renaissance doorway is shown and the whole is somewhat American in style". The design was evidently submitted for a local competition of the Glasgow Institute for the examiners' report is recorded: "The design for a Presbyterian Church elicited a close competition, the prize being ultimately divided between a work by Charles R. M'Intosh, full of artistic treatment but non-descript in style, and a drawing by John G. Gillespie which exhibited a knowledge gained by research". A successful School year was rewarded by a prize in architectural design (Highest Grade), a free studentship, (First Class Honours), a certificate and bronze medal for building construction, a first class certificate and prize in architectural design (Advanced Local Examination) and second class certificates in elementary modelling and painting in monochrome. In addition to the Glasgow Institute's Design Prize, he was awarded a prize (15/-d.) for ornament from the cast (Modelling Section) and £1. 10. 0. for the best set of three monthly drawings.

(Footnote:- *In the Glasgow University Collection.)
+School of Art Report, January 1890.)
⊖August 2nd, 1889, p.135.)

Although an indefatigable worker at School and Office, Mackintosh continued to interpret his doctor's orders literally and never neglected an opportunity of escaping from the city. Whenever practicable he spent weekends in the country, or visiting places of architectural interest; on these excursions he was usually accompanied by his friend Herbert MacNair, a young architect and colleague at Honeyman and Keppie's office whom we shall meet again and again throughout this study. Mackintosh delighted in drawing from nature and soon acquired remarkable facility with the pencil; his ability for quick and accurate sketching proved a valuable complement to his highly developed powers of observation. Anything of striking colour or curious shape fascinated him, and notwithstanding the derisive remarks of his companions, he rarely returned home without a bunch of flowers, a few plants or perhaps a collection of twigs. These he would examine in minute detail and draw at his leisure, analysing and recording the form and structure of unfamiliar specimens.*

Mackintosh not only acquired an immense new vocabulary of line and form by this pleasant hobby, but also came to understand something of the inexhaustible riches of nature. Probably before he commenced to read Ruskin, one of his favourite authors, he had discovered that no two leaves on the same tree were identical and that each petal on every flower had distinctive characteristics and could not be matched in texture, shape or colour. Such lessons he was not slow to apply in practice and many of his later designs possess an elusive charm and vitality, due entirely to subtle variations in detail which he achieved without impairing the balance or unity of the whole. Mackintosh did not confine his attention entirely to flowers and plants but executed many architectural studies in pencil and wash, ranging from large subjects such as Glasgow Cathedral† to examples of less pretentious vernacular work, therby increasing his knowledge of traditional Scottish buildings and methods of construction.

(Footnote:- *The author vividly recalls a walk in Argyllshire with Herbert MacNair (1944); the conversation was of course of his old friend and the exciting days of the nineties. Suddenly the artist stopped and, pointing out a small tree of the fir species with remarkably brilliant orange coloured flowers, said with a sly grin, "If Toshy'd been here he'd have gone to any lengths to get one of those branches". The tree was growing in a well tended private garden!)

†Sketches of Glasgow Cathedral dated 1886-8 in the possession of W. Meldrum Esq., of Glasgow.)

Within twelve months of his appointment as draughtsman to Messrs. Honeyman & Keppie, he gained one of the most coveted prizes available to architectural students in Scotland, the Alexander (Greek) Thomson Travelling Scholarship.* Although the result of the competition was announced in 'The Building News' on 26th September 1890, and the competitors' drawings were exhibited in the Glasgow Corporation Galleries, no record of Mackintosh's design has survived; it was not illustrated in contemporary journals, nor are there any sketches in the University Collection. According to the conditions published by the Glasgow Institute of Architects in 'The Building News' 15th November 1889, the competition was ".... for the best original design of a public hall to accommodate 1,000 persons (seated), with suitable committee rooms, the design to be in the Early Classic style, and for an isolated site".

Alexander Thomson Scholarship.

The Greek Thomson award of £60 was a godsend: not only did it enable the young architect to spend several months abroad, but it increased his prestige immensely and gave him added confidence at the very outset of his career; matters of vital consequence to a man of his temperament. Full of enthusiasm and well supplied with information from Ruskin and Baedeker, he planned an extensive tour of Italy. He left Glasgow in February 1891+, stayed a few days in London and then sailed for Naples where he arrived on 5th March, after an uneventful voyage. His diary has survived and so it is possible to follow his progress at least until 7th July, when the last entry reads, ".... left for Pavia" - no indication is given of his return home though he travelled via Paris, Brussels, Antwerp and London. The diary contains many long and tiresome descriptions of buildings familiar to every tourist. Here and there however, a paragraph reflects something of the enthusiasm with which he enjoyed each new aesthetic adventure, or perhaps a single sentence reveals the depth of some unexpected emotional experience.

Of the Ducal Palace, Venice, he says, "Such an interesting combination of objects, such regal scenery, transported me beyond myself. The custodian thought me distracted". And again, "The various portals, the strange projections, in short the striking irregularities of those stately piles delighted me beyond idea; and I was sorry to be forced to leave them so soon especially as twilight, which bats and owls love not better than I do, enlarged

Footnote:- *At this time too Mackintosh had work accepted for the Royal Institute's Scholarship in Architecture but the award was withheld as he was the sole competitor in the United Kingdom. - School of Art Annual Report, February, 1891.)

+Mackintosh entered the wrong date on the manuscript of an essay on his Italian Tour at present in the University Collection - the year should read 1891, not 1890.)

every portico, lengthened every colonnade, added certain misticism, and increased the dimensions of the whole just as the imagination desired."

Mackintosh revelled in the brilliant sunlight and deep shadows, the rich colouring, the form and texture of unfamiliar things. The reflections of light from gondola lamps in the Grand Canal fascinated him and he passed in humility and awed wonder through the Uffizzi and Pitti Galleries where, he said, he could have stayed for ever. Nor was he oblivious to the less delectable characteristics of Italian life. He makes several pungent comments on the difficulties of sketching in the middle of a crowd of inquisitive, odoriferous peasants, and one of his most picturesque descriptions is of the road leading from the Capitol to the Colosseum, Rome, which in his opinion resembled the east end of Glasgow - "It is," he said, "as grimy, as filthy, as tumblesome, as forlorn, and as unpleasantly redolent of old clothes and old women who were washerwomen once upon a time, but who have long since foresworn soap ....."

Then again, in direct contrast, we find the sensitive, strangely melancholy youth casting a critical eye over the interior of Florence Cathedral and attempting to identify himself with the spirit of the building:-

> "There is something imposing about the decoration as it suggests the idea of sancity (sanctity) into which none but the holy ought to penetrate. However, profane I might feel myself I took the liberty of entering and sat down in a niche. Not a ray of light enters the sacred enclosure but through the medium of narrow windows high up in the dome and richly painted. A sort of yellow green tint predominates which gives additional solemnity to the altar and paleness to the votary before it. I was conscious of the effect and obtained at least the colour of sancity."

Mackintosh visited most of the cathedral cities of Italy and Sicily and inspected the principal art collections: he produced masses of drawings in several media, some half finished, others partly or wholly rendered in watercolour; and the majority, line drawings in pencil. His subjects were catholic in the extreme; with equal avidity he turned to Pompeiian vases and pieces of sculpture, campanili and cathedral doorways, mosaics and pulpits.

Although a large proportion of his drawings are rather rough, many are finely executed and veritable masterpieces in their own sphere.* He made various experiments in different media -

Footnote:-

*Many years later a portfolio containing a large number of these sketches found its way into a Glasgow office and in due course was thrown out with the rubbish. By a stroke of good fortune however, it was noticed lying on the top of a well-filled dustbin in one of

Footnote - Continued from Page 1 - 8:-

the city's main thoroughfares and was promptly salvaged; it is now safely housed in the library of the Royal Technical College, Glasgow.

A fine collection of sketches was presented to the author in 1943 and these, with the Royal Technical College portfolio, probably constitute the major part of the work executed by Mackintosh in Italy.)

watercolour on tracing paper, or brown paper, for example - but one of the most striking methods he adopted was to sketch with a bold, rther heavy pencil line, on 'Whatman' paper and then to render the shadows only in strong transparent washes - usually of cold grey-blue. He sent home a selection of these drawings for inclusion in the Annual Exhibition of the School of Art Students' Club and he was unhesitatingly awarded first prize. In a letter to the 'Glasgow Evening News'* Mr. R. Eddington Smith recalling the adjudication at which he was present, states that Sir James Guthrie, one of the judges, seemed to be impressed by the power and beauty of these drawings even more than the other artists present - Sir John Lavery, Alexander Roche and E. A. Walton - and, when told they were by an architectural student, turned to the director of the School and said fiercely, "But hang it Newbery, this man ought to be an artist!"

Mackintosh's sensitive pencil and wash drawings are a measure of his appreciation of the Italian scene and he was deeply conscious of the fundamental values represented by the buildings and objects d'art which he sketched. He seems to have been but slightly influenced by Italian stylar character however, and we are mercifully spared an excursion into the Neo-Renaissance. On his return, his work in both the decorative and architectural fields soon became more confident and more mature - did not Dr. Johnson say that a man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority?

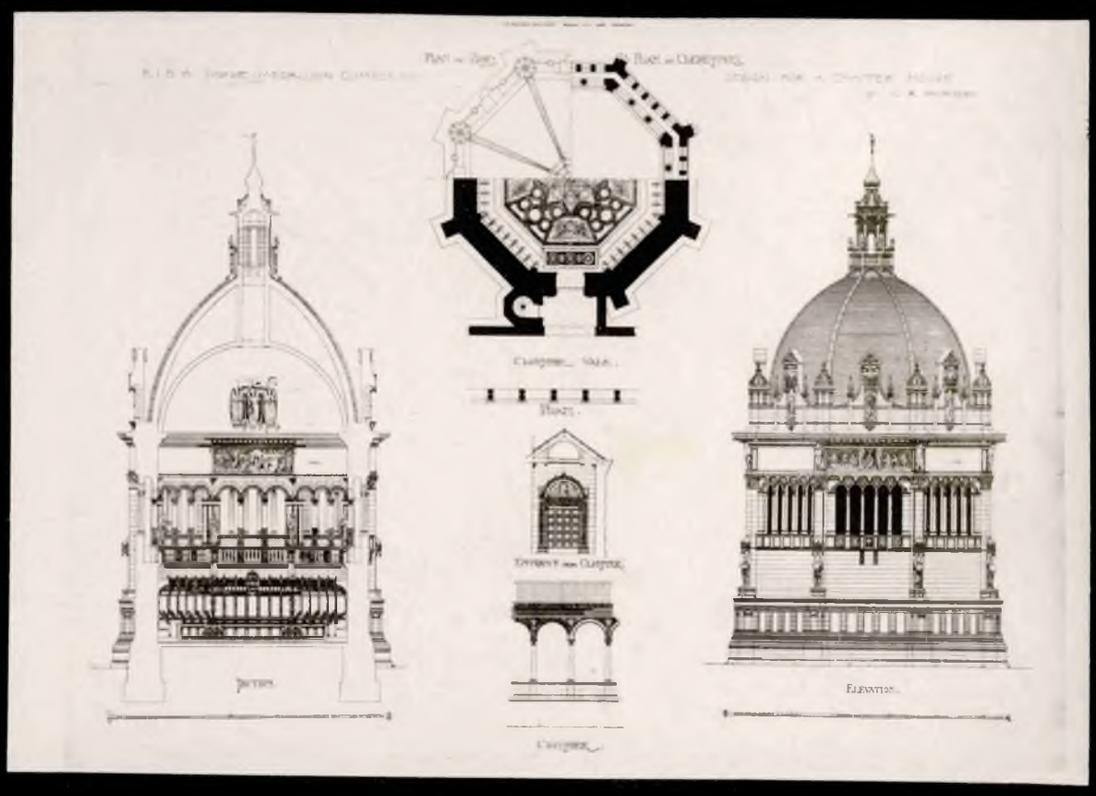
Mackintosh sent his Alexander Thomson Competition drawings (the Public Hall) together with the design for a Science and Art
Fig.9a. Museum‡ illustrated here, to South Kensington and in the Autumn of 1891 he was awarded the National Silver Medal. There are no published comments on the Public Hall, but the examiners' remarks on the second project are somewhat succinct. The design, they said, "has many good points, but the effect of the larger features above smaller ones is disagreeable" - a criticism by no means unfounded. The elevation is an unimaginative essay in the French Neo-Renaissance, pedantic, ill-proportioned, and carelessly rendered in sepia. The project must have offended the purists greatly, or perhaps the jury disagreed, for over nine months later the matter was raised again by 'The Builder'⊖ in an article violently attacking the work

(Footnote:
*17th February, 1933.
‡This project was illustrated in 'The British Architect' supplement 31st Oct. 1890. The original drawing of the principal elevation is in the University Collection.)
⊖1st August, 1891.)

Fig. 9. a. A Science and Art Museum. 1890.

b. A Chapter House. The Soane Medallion Competition, 1892.


ART MUSEUM


Plan
Elevation

and policy at South Kensington in general, and Mackintosh's contribution in particular. The critic could hardly contain himself and though his remarks are somewhat incoherent, his meaning is all too painfully clear - ".... we can only observe," he said, "that if the department (of science and art) can secure no higher standard than the things to which they award prizes, they had better give up teaching architecture at all. There is a silver medal given to a Glasgow student for instance, for a design for a classic building, which is bad in every way, clumsy and heavy in design and defective in drawing"; the project was referred to again later as ambitious, ugly and ill-drawn. No doubt comments of this nature in the professional journals of the nineties were treated with much the same disdain by competitors as they are in the twentieth century, but in all probability this angry protest represents the first direct public attack on the young architect, the first of many, for he was soon to become the target for much bitter and at times unreasoned, criticism.

Despite such setbacks however, Mackintosh had little cause for complaint. His successes at South Kensington, and in local competitions, and more especially the Alexander Thomson Scholarship, kept his name before the public and augured well for the future. It is evident too, that he was beginning to acquire a reputation in professional circles, for he had been invited to read a paper on Scottish Baronial Architecture to the Glasgow Architectural Association on the eve of his departure for Italy. The brief account of the meeting given in 'The Architect'* states that, "He prefaced the historical review of the style with a commendation of the claims it has on all architectural students as exhibiting standard models of picturesque grouping. To the Scot, it should appeal with the added force of national association". These remarks are most significant and give an unequivocal indication of the young architect's personal approach to the question of style - one of the most confusing issues facing a student of architecture in the Victorian era - and it would appear that even at this early date he had resolved to work in the Scottish tradition rather than to conform to fashion and adopt the classical manner. The report is rounded off with these words, "The essayist showed a very complete series of illustrations of the more important of the buildings instanced in the form of pencil drawings, watercolours and photographs, not a few the work of his own hands ....."

(Footnote: *20th February, 1891, p.311.)

This paper was the first of several he read to the Association - in the following year he discussed his Italian tour* and in 1893 contributed a paper on 'Architecture' which will be examined later.

Chapter House.

Immediately after his return from Italy Mackintosh set to work on the Soane Medallion Competition for which he submitted a design under the pseudonym 'Griffin'. There were eight other competitors. The subject was a Chapter House which he courageously attempted in the classic style in deference, no doubt, to the Alexander Thomson Trustees. Apparently the standard of the entries was well above the average and though he did not succeed in gaining the award, the criticism of the jury was not discouraging. 'The British Architect'+ commented thus, "We must say that Gothic takes the palm for quality, the clever Renaissance of 'Griffin' notwithstanding. The attenuated form of the scluptured dormers round the dome in this latter design very much detracts from the effect, though in some ways the design is very skilfully worked out". The criticism of the dormers - if they can be so described - is well justified. Flanked as they are by kneeling angels and alternating with heavy open-work pinnacles, they form a broken and restless element in an otherwise dignified and by no means unattractive composition.

Fig. 9b.

The sculptured figures employed were all of normal proportions and excellently drawn. The group of three angels on the internal cupola appear to be slightly conventionalized, but apart from that the design betrays little evidence of the extreme forms and stylised human figures affected by the architect two or three years later.

Though not acceptable to the assessors of the Soane, Mackintosh's design came in useful when his employers required a terminal feature for an extension to Messrs. Pettigrew and Stephens' warehouse, Sauchiehall Street⊖ some seven years afterwards. The chapter house dome - with modifications - was translated into terms of wood and metal, elevated some eighty feet above one of Glasgow's busiest thoroughfares, and is now an important city landmark.

(Footnote: *September, 1892. A brief report was published in 'The Builder' - 10th Sept. 1892 - stating that the architect gave a list of the places visited, "... the principal buildings in each of which he noted and criticised. The paper was well illustrated by a large collection of pencil and watercolour sketches and some good photographs.)

+4th March, 1892.)

⊖The project drawings were illustrated in 'Academy Architecture' 1899.)

The drawings of the Chapter House were submitted later in the year at South Kensington and secured for its designer the National Gold Medal*. The report of the examiners (Professor C. Aitcheson, A.R.A., T.G. Jackson, A.R.A., and J. J. Stevenson) is rather amusing; of Mackintosh's work they said, "... a design showing considerable artistic power with details well drawn. It is a pity the author should have copied his candelebra directly from an ancient example".

It has been claimed frequently that Mackintosh won the Soane Medallion and Haldane Scholarship during his student days at the School of Art, but he was not successful in obtaining either prize. The Soane was not awarded in 1890, nor in 1891, and was won by Heber Rimmer in 1892. The Haldane Travelling Scholarship of £50 (Open to all schools of art and art classes in Glasgow) was won by Miss S. R. L. Dean, John Alsop and Miss Ella Alexander respectively during this period, and by Francis Dodd in 1893. Mackintosh however, did submit a further design for the Soane in 1893, the year after his failure with the Renaissance Chapter House; the subject was a Railway Terminus and this time he attempted modernised Gothic. His drawings were illustrated in 'The British Architect'+ and a preliminary sketch for the project, the section only, is in the University Collection.

Railway Terminus.

Fig.12b. The plan is simple and straightforward enough, but it is obvious that Mackintosh missed one of the fundamental points at issue, namely the adequate expression in elevation of the dominant feature of the design - the enormous arched roof of the station proper - and its relationship to the smaller administrative and public apartments. Instead of approaching this difficult problem in a logical manner he tried to mask the great hall by a lofty two-storeyed entrance feature embodying a pair of high towers. The three centre bays of the main facade were raised above the parapet level of the rest of the block, and in order to obtain even more height, he employed an extravagant screen wall about 20 ft. high, which can be clearly seen on the section. The main elevation is full of restless detail; arches of several kinds are used, semi-circular, pointed, flat segmental and Tudor, in some cases they are superimposed for good measure. Buttresses and turrets also display striking variety; though mostly octagonal in plan and of differing size, they possess convex, concave, ogee and sloping roofs. The employment of so much unnecessary ornament,

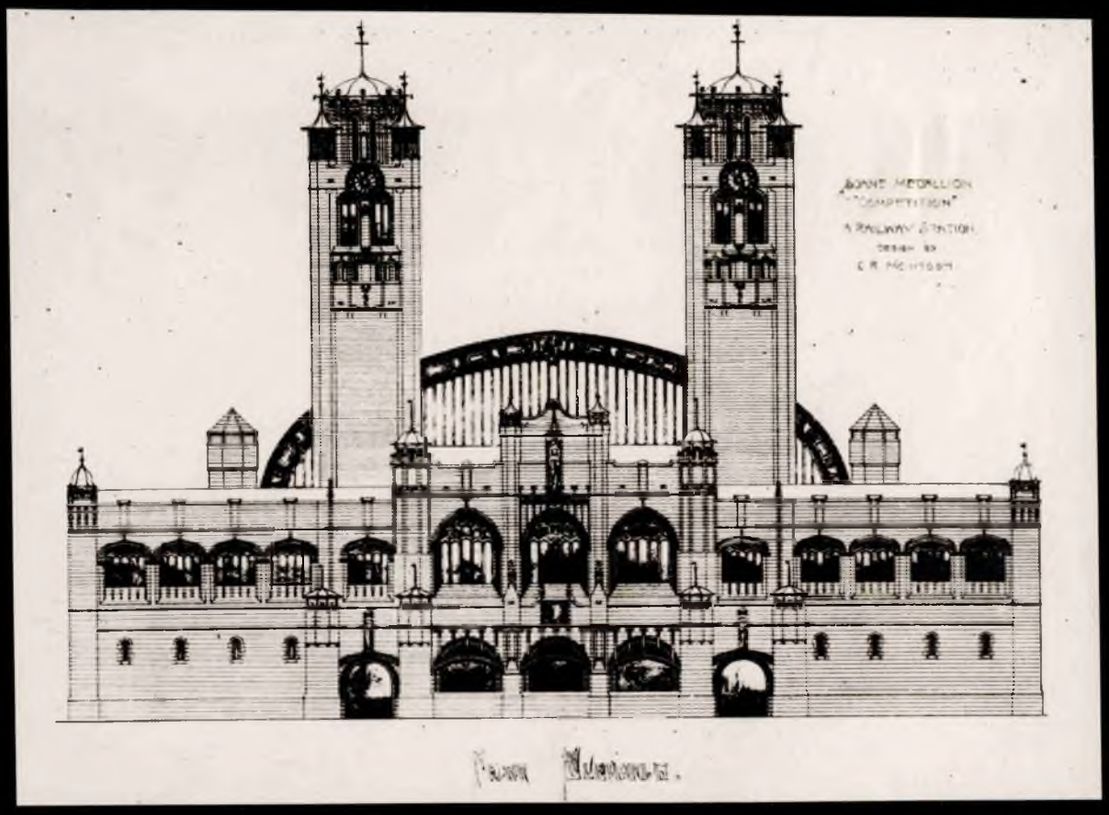
Fig.12a.

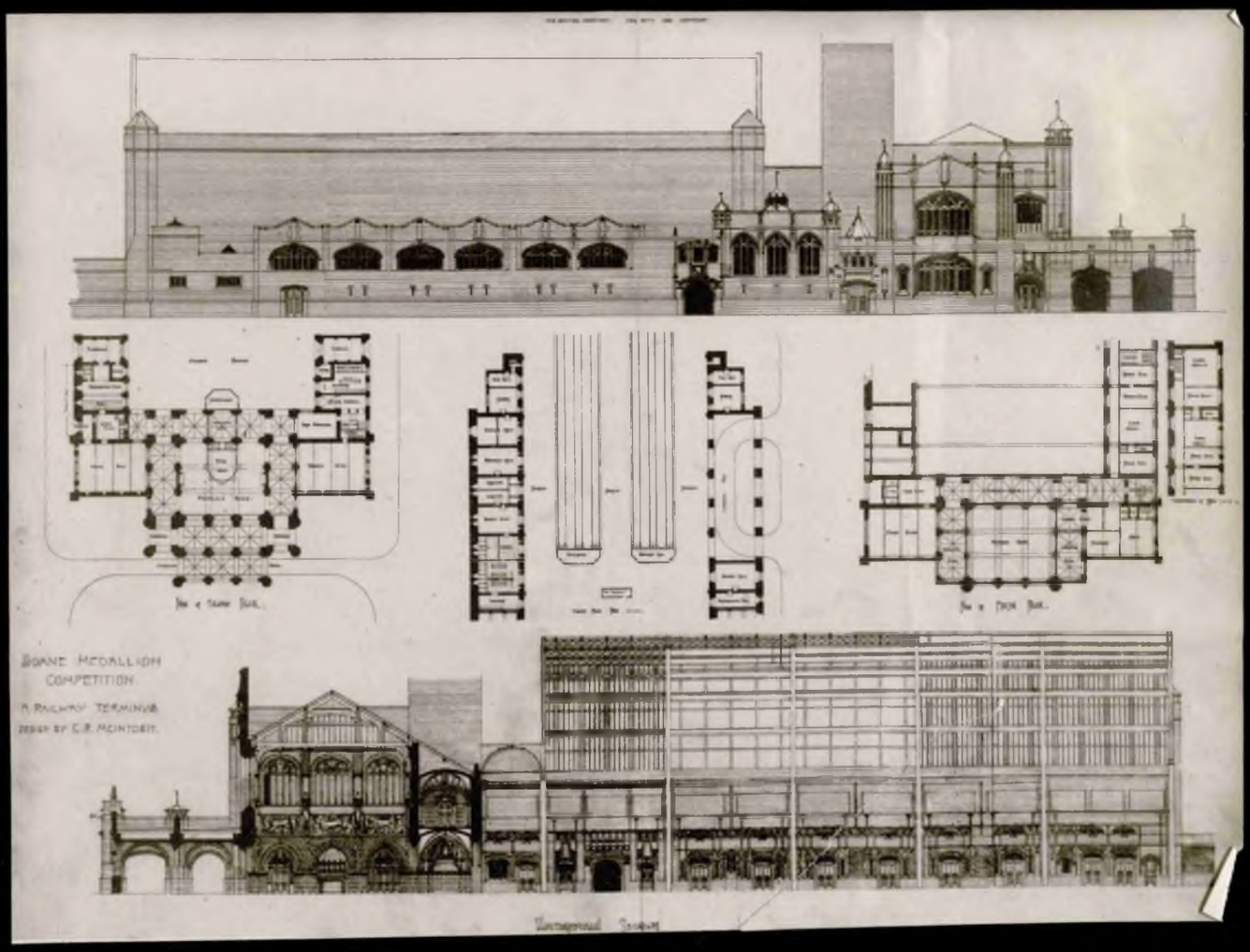
(Footnote: *Result in 'Building News' July 29th 1892, p.122.)

+24th February, 1893.)

Fig. 12. a. A Railway Station. The Soane Medallion Competition, 1893.

b. Ditto.


BONNE MEDALLION
"COMPETITION"
A RAILWAY STATION
DESIGN BY
C.R. MONTGOMERY


BONNE MEDALLION
COMPETITION
A RAILWAY TERMINUS
DESIGN BY C.R. MONTGOMERY

particularly the abundance of quasi-ecclesiastical window tracery, was singularly inappropriate for a subject of this nature, and there is little evidence here of the architect's later style.

It would appear from a report of the competition ascribed to the Honorary Secretary of the R.I.B.A., Mr. William Emerson* that the standard of design was low, and that few competitors reached a satisfactory solution. The winner, A. T. Bolton, A.R.I.BA., however, was complimented for expressing the hall in elevation by means of a great arched opening which dominated the main facade.+

Mr. Emerson's general comments are particularly interesting: "If the subject be a station", he said, "the principal feature of which is an enormous roof in one span, why mask it or altogether conceal it? If the design does not look like what it is intended for you may depend on it that it is wrongly conceived". He also decried ".... the addition of useless features or decorative details, however well they may be designed". These pertinent remarks assume added significance when seen in retrospect, for expression of function and fitness for purpose have become the catch-phrases of the modern movement, and are usually assumed to be the prerogative of the 20th century, yet here we find these revolutionary principles advocated as early as 1893 - and by the Honorary Secretary of the R.I.B.A!

However successful Mackintosh's career at the School, and whatever the merit of his competition designs by contemporary standards, it is nevertheless rather disconcerting to find him still alternating between the Neo-Renaissance style and a modernised form of Gothic in the only two important projects of which a reliable record survives. It is not unreasonable to expect some indication of his imminent volte face at this time, only three years before his design for the new Glasgow School of Art created a furore in local architectural circles. One important factor should not be overlooked however. The projects reviewed here were competition drawings serving an academic purpose, in all probability executed under close supervision either at the School or office, and always, unless human nature has changed, with an eye to the tastes and personal prejudices of a board of assessors. It is necessary therefore, to search elsewhere for the first signs of his revolt against convention. The source which most readily

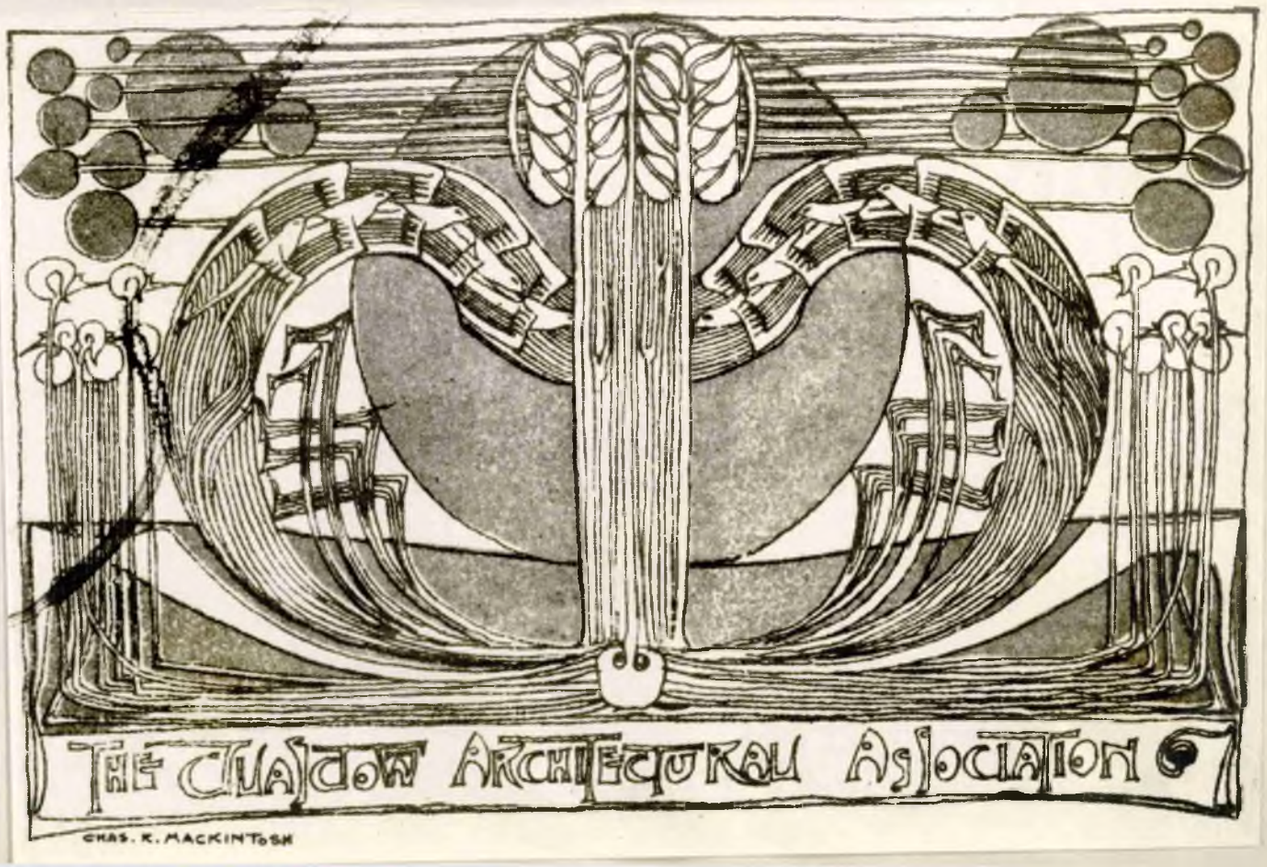
(Footnote: *Published in 'The British Architect' January, 1893.)
+Illustrated in 'The Builder' 11th February 1893, also in 'The British Architect'.)

suggests itself is that of freehand drawing and craft work where, one might anticipate, he would be more at liberty to express himself freely. It will be profitable now to investigate this new field.

Mackintosh was not satisfied for long with straightforward pictorial representation, and side by side with his architectural sketches and exquisite flower studies - and often superimposed on them - appeared conventionalised drawings of less familiar objects. For these designs he found inspiration in the most unexpected places; in the delicate tracery of half a cabbage on his mother's kitchen table, in the section of an apple with its softly flowing curves and cluster of pips, in the grotesque fantasy of an onion gone to seed, or even in the bulbous roots of subaqueous plants. Nothing appeared to escape his notice and he seemed able to create fascinating, intricate patterns out of the most unlikely material. Moreover, experience brought the realisation that line and form could express emotion as effectively as words and music, and this added to his insatiable desire for experiment. He would select a sonnet or a few lines of prose - almost invariably of melancholy timbre - and form abstract linear patterns round it, usually finishing the design in wash - purples, yellows and greens predominating. The few examples that remain are curious compositions, subjective in the extreme, and on occasion, actually repugnant. He then attempted to express an idea, or to convey a message by symbolism alone, and designs in this category usually served some practical purpose - bookplates, posters and so forth - several typical examples are illustrated here, for instance, the cover of a Conversazione Programme which is intended to represent "birds bringing harmony to the trees".

Fig. 14 a. & b.

Conversazione Programme.



The design was printed on coarse grey-blue paper and, notwithstanding the cheerful nature of the subject - music and song - it possesses a curiously disconcerting air which, quite apart from colour, is implicit in the voluptuous curving lines and the positively malevolent half-bird, half-plant forms grouped at either extremity (not to mention the lettering). These peculiar characteristics, so indefinable, so alien to the twentieth century, are probably best described as visible manifestations of "la maladie de la fin du siècle".

It is evident too that Mackintosh's friend Herbert MacNair* was equally absorbed in the quest for new decorative forms and the work of the two young designers has much in common. According to MacNair himself he first became interested in experimental design when, as apprentice to John Honeyman, he was thrown back upon his own resources during long periods of idleness in the office. On such occasions he used to take illustrations of objects which interested him - chairs for example - place tracing paper over them and try to improve on the original, or better still, to evolve entirely new forms. Whether or not this method is to be recommended, it was from such beginnings, born of a profound dissatisfaction with the existing order of things, that the so-called 'Glasgow style' emerged.

Of his decorative work Herbert MacNair affirms that not a line was drawn without purpose, and rarely was a single motive employed that had not some allegorical meaning. The whole design was contrived to embody "the poetry of the idea". A brief explanation of a single example will serve to illustrate the lengths to which this symbolic formalism was carried. In the book-plate illustrated here which was designed by MacNair for John Turnbull Knox, there is a falcon - the Knox crest - not heraldically

Footnote: *Herbert MacNair has always been reticent about his own early life and training. He came of military stock and his family lived at Skelmorlie on the Clyde estuary. He was educated at the Collegiate School, Greenock, and his father wished him to become an engineer. One gathers that some difference of opinion ensued for at the age of eighteen or nineteen he spent twelve months at Rouen studying water-colour painting under a certain M. Haudebert. On his return to Scotland he was apprenticed to John Honeyman, a few months before the partnership between Honeyman and Keppie was formed (early in 1889). Mackintosh entered the office as draughtsman shortly afterwards and the two young artists quickly became firm friends.)

displayed, but hovering over the tree of knowledge which enfolds in its branches the spirits of art and poetry represented by two sad female figures with long flowing tresses. The two spirits

hold in their hands rose buds which appear as cherub heads and lilies, emblems of painting and sculpture. The heads embraced by the falcon's wings are breathing the dew of inspiration which falls on the tree of knowledge from above. The design is completed by a panel of lettering which indicates the source of the artist's inspiration; it reads:-

> "Nourished by middle earth,
> Breathed on by heavenly dew,
> Flourished a tree of worth,
> Flourished and grew."

This example too recaptures admirably the atmosphere of morbid sentimentalism that pervaded the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Beardsley period, the heyday of Wilde and Swinburne and the followers of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. In Mackintosh's case the phase was transitory; architecture remained his first love and consequently he was in closer touch with reality than Herbert MacNair who never took kindly to the practical limitations of the profession, and soon decided to embark upon the less prosaic, though somewhat insecure career of 'designer'.

This brief glance at MacNair's work raises an interesting though relatively unimportant point. If in fact he did commence

experimenting in Honeyman's office (1888 or 1889) - and there is little reason to doubt the accuracy of his statement - it is quite obvious that he must have done so independently, that is before meeting Mackintosh. It is thus probable that he, and not Mackintosh, was the first to break new ground, though it is now impossible to discover with any degree of certainty who preceded whom.

Authentic examples of Mackintosh's early work of an unorthodox kind are extremely difficult to come by and the Conversazione Programme is one of the earliest so far discovered; it is clearly dated 1893. There is in existence however, a photograph* of the young architect's bedroom-cum-studio (c.1890) which contained several interesting pieces of furniture - to be discussed later - and what is most important at this juncture, a decorative frieze of conventionalised cats. In an amusing letter to the author+ Herbert MacNair suggests amongst other things, that the frieze was probably executed in water-colour, for he says, "At the same time I made a frieze of mermaids - the Mermaid being the MacNair crest - I also designed a cabinet. I was in 'digs' in Glasgow at the time, and my frieze was in water-colour, juicily floated on, and on ingrain paper, my landlady allowing me to fix it on the wall with drawing pins. I remember it took a terrible lot of both water-colour and drawing pins". Mackintosh's frieze can thus be dated with some accuracy and it now assumes added significance as the first work of its kind attributable to the architect; moreover, all the characteristics which are associated with his later work are clearly apparent - the undulating sinuous lines and studied disposition of mass, the ingenious formalisation of animal and vegetable forms and the parsimonious use of strong colour. The subject too is not without interest; the cat motive was derived from the crest of the Clan Chattan, of which the Mackintoshes are a branch. It is a curious fact however, that this motive does not appear to have been employed by him subsequently.

Fig.19a.

Footnote: *Before the author traced Herbert MacNair this photograph presented something of a problem. Neither of Mackintosh's sisters could remember the room, and there seemed to be no means of discovering its whereabouts nor arriving at an accurate estimate of its date. Eventually however, as a shot in the dark, the picture was shown to Herbert MacNair who immediately recognised it as his friend's den at No.2 Firpark Terrace, Dennistoun. The last date of William Mackintosh's occupation is recorded in the Post Office Guide, 1891-2. It is safe to assume then, that the family vacated the house in 1892 and that the decorations were executed some years earlier.)

+Dated 27th September, 1947.)

The importance of the Dennistoun room cannot be overestimated for it confirms the hypothesis that the two friends were experimenting with original forms by 1890 at least. The frieze of cats must have been executed before 1891 and indicates that Mackintosh's peculiar style was already well developed by that time. Contemporary work by MacNair is lacking, but the letter quoted above leaves little room for doubt that it was similar in character. If these facts are accurate, and they can hardly be otherwise, it would appear that Mackintosh and MacNair anticipated the Continental Art Nouveau movement with which they are often associated by some two years, a point that will be raised in a later chapter.

It is even more important however, to discover if Mackintosh executed any private architectural commissions of an original nature at this time, because his competitive work and the designs he carried out at Honeyman & Keppie's office between 1892 and 1896 (see Chapter II) show little marked originality. Fortunately his first architectural commission is still extant.

'Redclyffe'

The young architect's uncle William Hamilton, a haulage contractor of Dennistoun, who proposed to marry in 1890, asked him to design a pair of semi-detached houses, one of which he and his bride would occupy. Mackintosh set to work on this project with unbounded enthusiasm, but it is apparent that he immediately came up against two of the major problems which were to beset him throughout his professional career, that of dealing with a patron more or less indifferent to the claims of higher art, and that of curbing his fertile imagination so that his schemes should not exceed the limits imposed by his client's purse. According to the late Mrs. Hamilton, Mackintosh's first design was far too unorthodox and costly to build, though unfortunately she could not describe it and the drawings were destroyed as valueless long ago. A revised design was soon forthcoming and this proved to be more in keeping with current practice and far less expensive. The houses were built and No.120 Balgrayhill Road, Springburn, Glasgow, ('Redclyffe'), was occupied by the Hamiltons in December 1890*.

Figs. 18 a. & b.

In the late 1880's Balgrayhill Road had only just been opened up for building purposes, and the site chosen for 'Redclyffe' and its neighbour commanded wide uninterrupted views over the city to the west. Mackintosh took advantage of the aspect

(Footnote: *In addition to Mrs. Hamilton's evidence this date was verified with considerable difficulty through the city archives; Springburn was not brought within the Glasgow boundary until 1896.)

Fig. 18. a. 'Redclyffe', 1890.
b. Ditto.

by making the block plan of the houses U-shaped. The short arms of the 'U' face west and comprise the drawing room on the ground floor with the principal bedrooms above: in each case these spacious, well-proportioned apartments terminate in wide polygonal bays. In order to achieve this layout the main entrance to each house was placed at the side, a logical arrangement which however, denies the householder the social prestige of a front door and is seldom popular.

The houses are soundly constructed in the Scottish traditional manner with sturdy walls of fine red sandstone and slated roofs; no unorthodox structural methods were used. The plans are somewhat tortuous and the subsidiary apartments rather dark. It is obvious that the architect made sacrifices in order to take advantage of the excellent site, which has now lost much of its former charm. Internally there is no indication that Mackintosh exercised any control over the permanent fittings; doors and
Fig. 19b. fireplaces, which of all features most frequently bear the stamp of his originality, are of stock pattern; so also are skirtings, architraves and cornices, and they seem to have been chosen by the occupants. That this was the case, has been largely confirmed by Mr. Alexander Orr* a painter and decorator of Glasgow, who was called in to put the finishing touches to 'Redclyffe'. He avers that Mackintosh supervised the colour schemes which he describes as "unorthodox and very striking". Nearly sixty years have passed since Mr. Orr executed this work and he cannot now give precise details. He clearly recollects that Mackintosh insisted on brightly coloured doors to all the rooms, an innovation which must have caused the Hamiltons some consternation.

In some respects 'Redclyffe' and its neighbour are rather disappointing, and although they show unmistakable signs of Mackintosh's handiwork they are not so revolutionary as one might have hoped and certainly are not so exceptional as say, the frieze of cats. It must be remembered however, that the designer had to respect the views of his clients, and the project drawings for the original scheme, had they survived, might have served as a more accurate measure of his intentions. Nevertheless, the houses possess qualities which distinguish them from the mass of pretentious middle-class villas typical of the period. They are neither Classic nor Baronial in character yet their powerfully articulated wall masses and chimney stacks recall unmistakably the Scottish vernacular. Their claim to distinction lies in their unpretentious dignity and pleasant proportions, and in the evidence they provide of Mackintosh's decision to put first things first,

(Footnote: *At an interview with the author, 1946.)

Fig. 19. a. Studio, Dennistoun, c.1890. N.B. The Frieze of Cats.

b. 'Redclyffe', interior.

to take every advantage of prospect and orientation rather than to sacrifice good living space to stylistic convention.

It has not been necessary to say much about Mackintosh's home life and background during the preceding pages but a few brief comments will not be out of place at this point. In 1885 he was profoundly shocked by the death of his mother, and thereafter seems to have gradually relinquished his domestic ties. William Mackintosh married again, and c.1892 the family moved from Dennistoun to Regent Park Square, a street of formidable but fashionable stone-built early Victorian terraced houses on the south side of Glasgow. Less than two years later the property was sold and the family was obliged to leave. They then found an excellent detached house overlooking Queen's Park, Glasgow,* with about a quarter of an acre of garden, but here too their stay was of short duration and within two years they were once again living in Regent Park Square, at No.27, (1896).

Charles Mackintosh does not appear to have had many opportunities of carrying out decorative experiments at home and it seems that the family or, to be more precise, his father, had little time for his artistic pursuits, though the young architect was idolised by his sisters. At 'Holmswood' - the Langside Road, (Queen's Park) house - his only notable contribution was the design of a staircase carpet in two tones of green; he himself painted the stairs a pale yellow because he could not trust the decorator to get the exact colour he wanted. His own room was a badly proportioned high-ceiled attic, with which even he could do little. In disgust he said that next time the family removed he would have a cellar, a chance remark that proved to be prophetic, for when they returned to Regent Park Square, Charles was given a room in the basement.

This was more to his taste though he immediately took a violent dislike to the fireplace. After making a more leisurely examination however, he said he was convinced that it had been built over an earlier grate, and tentatively suggested removing it; a suggestion which involved him in yet another acrimonious argument. When peace had been restored, he succeeded in getting his own way as usual, and set to work to dismantle the offending fireplace. To his delight he uncovered a simple cottage-type

(Footnote: *'Holmswood', No.82 Langside Road.)

hob grate with wrought iron bars and a plain surround which, his sisters suggest, became the model for many of his subsequent fireplaces. To the horror of the family, he next proceeded to cover the walls of the room with coarse brown wrapping paper and completed the job with a stencilled frieze.*

Charles occupied the basement for several years and used it as a studio. It was in this room that he executed much of his beaten metal work with his sisters doing most of the beating, and that, to the spiritual discomfort of their father, usually on the Sabbath.

As he grew to maturity he spent less and less time at home and, c.1896, he acquired a studio in the city where he could work undisturbed. There he and Herbert MacNair frequently snatched a few hours' sleep after spending all night in the office, and, profiting by bachelor's freedom, there too they gave hilarious parties and lived the Bohemian life expected of them, for it must be remembered that the nineties were gay - even in Glasgow - and Mackintosh and his friends soon became the brightest stars in the city's artistic constellation.

Unfortunately no-one can remember the exact whereabouts of the studio, but it was in Bath Street, and presumably not far from Honeyman & Keppie's Office. Several people, including Miss Nancy Mackintosh, recollect visiting the room which was decorated and equipped in characteristic fashion. One of the quieter parties is clearly recalled by Miss Agnes Dewar, who was then a very young student at the School and went with some trepidation to celebrate with the great ones the award of the Alexander Thomson Scholarship to Charles Mackintosh's friend, George Paterson. Miss Dewar most vividly recollects the studio curtains decorated by large applique heart-shaped motives, each of which had been hastily secured by a single row of stitches down its centre and had curled over. After "a delightful tea" the company amused themselves by "cock fighting" and blowing soap bubbles and wafting them about with fans provided by their host! And, no doubt, a good time was had by all.

Footnote: *It is amusing to record that as soon as Charles was married (1900) and safely out of the house, William Mackintosh sent the girls down to the basement with strict instructions to strip every inch of paper from their brother's room, and to restore to it some semblance of decency.)

Charles Mackintosh seems to have been very popular with the younger students at the School. He was always ready with a word of advice and encouragement, and anyone attempting to work on original lines was certain of his wholehearted support. He sprang at once to the defence of any man, work, or principle, which he thought unfairly assailed - a characteristic which remained with him throughout his life and in later, less propitious days, brought him in contact with 'The Plough', The Arts' League of Service and several other struggling causes in the south. His family too, remember many small acts of kindness which reveal a thoughtful and considerate mind, foreign perhaps to those who regarded him as an undisciplined young reprobate. One example will perhaps suffice: Miss Agnes Raeburn, another ~~of~~ Glasgow artist, recounts with pleasure an occasion on which the young architect brought to her studio a beautiful green vase filled with anemonies which had caught his eye, and which he knew she would like to paint. He dropped in a few days later to see the finished picture and then, shortly afterwards, casually introduced a friend who bought it on the spot - a more ingenuous and delightful way of encouraging a student would be difficult to imagine!

On the other hand, he quickly assumed undisputed leadership at the School where his supreme self confidence and quick temper, his devil-may-care attitude and indefatigable industry, made him at once admired and respected by his fellows. The ladies in particular treated him with a certain amount of awe, tinged no doubt with sympathy for his lameness and admiration for his dark rugged features in which seemed to mingle the virile blood of the Highlander and the languid, easy sophistication of the Latin. To his friends he was a warm-hearted, genial man, with simple tastes and pleased with simple things; with strangers he was reserved and even aloof, especially if they were of the conventional type, but he warmed at once to the sympathetic mind. Mackintosh was a voluble, tireless talker and would sit up late into the night arguing with his friends the inviolability of the artist's right to express himself in his own way, and the futility of contemporary architectural eclecticism. He always maintained that the revival of historical styles and the slavish adherence to classical formulae had virtually destroyed the creative spirit of the age, and this he was prepared to argue ad infinitum. Few of his contemporaries felt so deeply, or struggled so hard to throw off the tyranny of the 'dead hand'.

It is quite evident that Mackintosh soon came to the forefront as a man of exceptional gifts. His personality entirely dominated his friends and associates at the School of Art; so

much so, in fact, that the critics have long been content to ascribe to him all the credit for the original work - both good and bad - produced in Glasgow at this time. It was not until he came into personal contact with the headmaster of the School, the late Francis H. Newbery - Fra. as he was affectionately called[+] - that events took a decisive turn, for Newbery more than any single individual, was responsible not only for launching him upon his meteoric career, but for sustaining him time and again in the face of violent and bitter opposition.

Mackintosh came to Newbery's notice first as the winner of the Alexander Thomson Scholarship (1890) and thereafter he took a personal interest in him;[*] an interest which quickly ripened into friendship and then into the admiration of a teacher for his pupil of genius. It is not too much to claim that without the headmaster's support Mackintosh would have been impotent and very little of his craftwork and none of his major architectural projects would have seen the light of day.

It will not be inappropriate perhaps to introduce here a short biographical note on the headmaster of the School, yet another of Glasgow's most distinguished citizens.

Fra. H. Newbery.

Fra. H. Newbery (1854-1946) was born at Membury near Honiton in Devon and attended the School of Art at Bridport, Dorset. After completing his training he became for a time art master to one of the City Company Schools, but resigned in order to work as a student under Sir Edward Poynter at South Kensington. He was later placed on the teaching staff, and only relinquished this position on his appointment as principal of the Glasgow School of Art at the age of thirty-one, (1885). In those days the School was almost entirely dependent upon fees paid by the students and received neither municipal recognition nor support, a situation that Newbery soon changed.

Although small in stature, the headmaster was a man of strong character and commanding presence. He affected a flamboyantly agressive moustache and usually wore a frock coat and silk hat, a style which earned him the nickname of 'the Circus Master'. As a teacher and administrator he was superb. Though a strict disciplinarian, he encouraged his pupils to develop their individual talents and adopt the art form for which they had most inclination. In his opinion an art school was essentially a

(Footnote: [*]This from a verbal account given to the author by Mr. Newbery at Eastgate, Corfe Castle, Dorset in 1945.)

[+]The popular appellation 'Fra' has been adopted throughout this study.)

workshop and capable only of turning a student into a craftsman. Like Ruskin, he too was a firm believer in the divine spark of genius which distinguished the true artist from the mere artisan. On the other hand, however, he averred that a certain facility for design could be developed and should come as easily as handwriting for, he said, "were not folk designs evolved by simple uneducated people". This unorthodox point of view caused the authorities some misgiving, but so successful did his methods prove that in little more than a decade the Glasgow School of Art was internationally acclaimed one of the most progressive institutions of its kind in Europe. In terms of Scottish domestic policy this meant that the cultural lead held for long by Edinburgh and wrested from her by the Glasgow School of Painters some years previously, was firmly established in the West once again.

Newbery had much in common with the Glasgow School of Painters - E. A. Walton, John Lavery, Hornel, George Henry, Macauley Stevenson and others - several of whom he knew personally, and his adventurous spirit responded to the atmosphere they had created. In his introduction to David Martin's book on 'The Glasgow School'* he analyses the peculiar local conditions which enabled such a body of artists to come into being, artists whom, as we shall see, played an important part in the European art revival of the 1890's. Two main factors were involved in Newbery's opinion; the absence of a controlling power vested in an organised society of artists, as for example, the R. A. in London which guided and moulded public taste not only in the Metropolis but in the English provinces, and the fact that industrial Glasgow did not possess a cultured lay community capable of exercising authority, or expressing an opinion. Business-men bought the pictures they liked, usually as an investment - and as Newbery says, "Commercialism neither lays down a rule nor demands the following of a tradition". Glasgow then, remote and relatively isolated from the 'refining' influence of the English Academy, and from the cultural standpoint virtually ostracised by her eastern neighbour Edinburgh, occupied a position in the art world singularly conducive to work of an unorthodox and experimental kind, a situation which Newbery exploited to the full. Under his liberal policy the School took on a new lease of life. His enthusiasm is reflected in the records - enrolments rapidly increased, the scope of the syllabus was extended, and Glasgow began to figure highly on the prize lists at South Kensington.

(Footnote: *'The Glasgow School of Painters' - David Martin, 1897.)

To all intents and purposes however, the students were working within the English tradition, and though the more venturesome spirits made tentative experiments with original flower and plant forms, they did not deviate far from the tenets laid down by William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Society. Within a remarkably short time however, the picture was changed and, largely owing to the influence of Mackintosh and his friends, a distinctive and unorthodox style of painting and decoration emerged, soon to be known throughout Western Europe as 'The Glasgow Style'.

Mackintosh has always been assumed to be the originator of this strange new idiom, but we have already suggested that the honour, if such it may be called, should in all probability be shared equally with Herbert MacNair. The work of two other claimants must be considered however, and then the whole fascinating jig-saw of the Glasgow Style assembled.

The Macdonald Sisters.

About 1890 two new day students were enrolled at the School of Art - ~~Francis~~ Margaret (1865-1933) and Frances (1874-1921) Macdonald - with whom the future of Mackintosh and his friend became closely bound. Information about the sisters has been extremely difficult to come by for both were English by birth - notwithstanding the deceptive national prefix 'Mac' - and were in their teens by the time they arrived in Glasgow. Moreover, no member of the family survives who might have been able to throw light upon the important question of their education and home environment in England - nor has it been possible to establish whether or not either of them had had any previous art training. They are first mentioned in the School of Art examination records of 1891 and apparently studied freehand drawing, model drawing, ornament, anatomy and plant drawing. The few artists still living, all ardent admirers of Mackintosh, who remember their arrival, emphatically deny that either showed more than average ability, much less any marked originality at the time. This can hardly be taken at its face value, for Mackintosh's friends and admirers always stoutly contend that he and he alone was the source and inspiration of all original work issuing from the School in the 1890's. The work of the Macdonald sisters however, is so unusual and bears such an astonishing resemblance to that of the two architects that it must be examined objectively; and if, of course, the charge of plagiarism can be confuted, their contribution becomes of some importance.

Little is known of John Macdonald, father of Frances and Margaret. He was the son of a Glasgow solicitor and spent most of

his life in England where, prior to his return to Glasgow with his family in 1880, he was acting as a consulting engineer at Chesterton Hall, Newcastle, Staffordshire. On his return however, he acquired Dunglass Castle, Bowling, an attractive residence on the Clyde estuary, now surrounded by oil storage tanks. Dunglass had been occupied by a distinguished artist - Talwin Morris - and his wife, before the Macdonalds arrived. The Morrisès removed to a neighbouring house and the two families became very friendly - a significant point. Morris was employed as designer and illustrator, by W. W. Blackie & Sons, the publishers, and his work is notable for its independence, charm and originality. He too seems to have been absorbed in the quest for new decorative forms. His work is more amiable and closer to the English Arts and Crafts movement than that of Mackintosh and MacNair, though they had much in common as a comparison of the illustrations (Figures 26 and Figures 32) will indicate. Morris also shared Mackintosh's predilection for cats and Dunglass was filled with examples of his craftwork embodying the cat motive - there were curtains of cats, cat door knockers and finger plates, repoussee metal cats, stencilled cats and painted cats - relieved here and there with an odd peacock - all highly formalised and skilfully drawn, usually with a complement of flowers and plants. Morris's work was full of vitality; his handling of line and mass and his interest in conventionalised plant and animal forms are suggestive of the younger men. It is most unlikely that the Macdonald sisters would remain unaffected by such a personality. Everything would indicate that they were entranced by the romantic atmosphere Morris had created at Dunglass, and, moreover, that largely under his influence they decided to embark upon a career in the arts. If correct, this hypothesis would account for the remarkable independence and curious style of their early watercolour paintings and their interest in formalised linear pattern and symbolism.

Talwin Morris.

Fig.26b.

Fig.26a.

It has been pointed out already that MacNair and Mackintosh in particular, derived their original patterns mainly from vegetable sources; the Macdonald sisters began to apply identical methods to the human figure. In both instances the technique and execution were similar - usually pencil or wash - and furthermore the grotesque conventionalisation employed by all the artists produced an identical psychological impression; they seem to have had the same objectives - however ill defined - and to have been inspired by the same ideals. As a result, all their designs are pervaded by the curious air of melancholy, of ineffable sadness and decay, that has been remarked hitherto.

Fig. 26. Talwin Morris. (a) Fireplace Decoration.
(b) Repoussee metal door furniture.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Of course the sisters may have seen drawings by Mackintosh and MacNair at students' exhibitions and have decided to work along similar lines, but the earliest dated example of a watercolour by one of them so far discovered, is surprisingly mature and hardly suggests an early essay in a borrowed style. This work is entitled 'Girl in the East Wind and Ravens passing the Moon'* and was executed by Frances Macdonald in 1893. The subject is a young girl with streaming hair, silhouetted against a deep blue-black sky, and in the top right-hand corner, a flight of conventionalised ravens passing before a full moon. Though austere and cold, the drawing is dramatically presented and possesses mysterious charm. The style is singularly well developed and technically the work is more accomplished than, for example, the Conversazione Programme by Mackintosh of the same date. (Page 14). Then again, Herbert MacNair states that the quartette did not meet for some time, for he points out, he and Mackintosh attended evening classes and rarely came in contact with the day school students. Moreover, he insists that they were not aware of the presence of the two girls until Newbery drew attention to the similarity of their work at a criticism.

'Girl in the East Wind.' Fig. 27a.

In view of this evidence it seems indisputable that the Macdonald sisters themselves had a part to play in the evolution of the Glasgow Style, and that they cannot by any means be dismissed off hand as mere plagiarists - an opinion that is further strengthened by an examination of their early work.

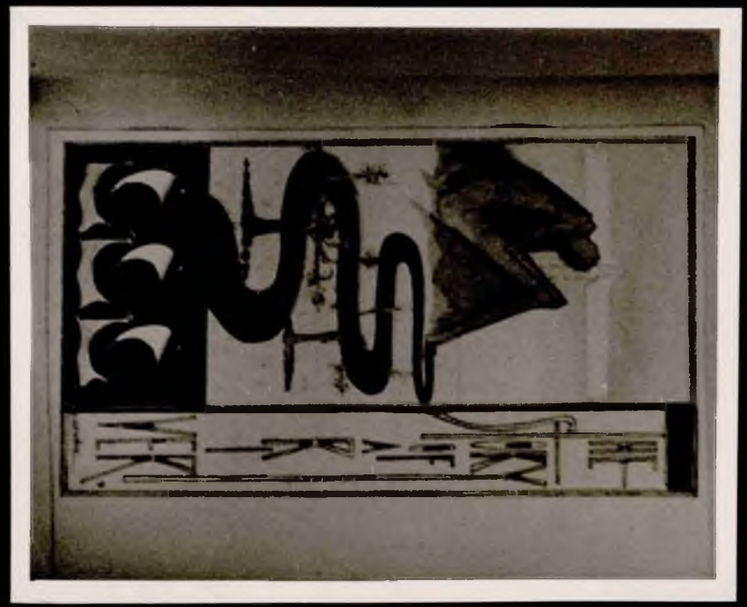
Having recognised the affinity of the four students, Newbery decided that they must be brought together. He and his wife arranged a dinner party to which the Macdonald sisters, Mackintosh and MacNair were invited, and at his instigation they decided to join forces and workin close collaboration. At the next School exhibition the coterie isolated their work with remarkable success, and they were at once christened 'The Four', an appellation which they retained for many years. In this manner a new relationship was forged which held immense promise, and yet ended in tragedy; a relationship which hastened Mackintosh's personal metamorphosis and probably more than any other factor, was responsible for limiting his vision and restricting his final development.

The Scrap Books.

Reliably dated examples of the early work of the Macdonalds are rare though many drawings survive. Fortunately however, Mrs. Ritchie of Edinburgh - formerly Miss Lucy Raeburn - though not an artist herself, was in close contact with the Glasgow group and kept a series of scrap books to which several of her friends

(Footnote: *In the possession of Mrs. Dunderdale of Dunglass Castle - former home of the Macdonalds.)

Fig. 27. a. 'The Girl in the East Wind'. Frances Macdonald.
b. 'The Story of a River.' Margaret Macdonald.



contributed. Only four of these books now survive, covering the years 1893, 4 and 5, but they provide important evidence of the versatility of 'The Four' and of their ceaseless quest for original decorative forms. The earliest drawing by one of the sisters is a pencil and wash design for a book-plate executed by Frances in 1893. Margaret Macdonald's first contribution is dated 5th November 1894 and consists of a small water colour about 9" x 3" wide without a title. Two extremely attenuated female figures are depicted bowing towards each other with heads touching and long hair cascading to the ground; both figures are weeping and their tears fall in two streams to meet above a sad mask-like face at the foot of the sheet. Sadness and tears always seem to dominate the minds of the sisters, but in spite of the melancholy theme, this drawing is not unattractive. The colours used are taken entirely from the cold palette - strong yellow for the hair and tears, and variations of yellow, green and blue for the remainder of the picture.

Mrs. Ritchie's Scrap Book for 1894 contains another pencil
Fig. 28a. and wash drawing by Frances, symbolising November; it is a composition of two repulsive emaciated female figures framed by aquatic plants and dominated by a writhing group of tadpole-like masks. The subject is 'A Pond' and admirably captures the atmosphere of a most unpleasant submarine world of stagnation, slowly undulating slimy vegetation and decay - the principal colours are mauve and green, now greatly faded. A most peculiar choice of subject for a young lady of the 1890's! It is interesting to compare this drawing with a contemporary design in the same medium by Mackintosh - the cover for the Spring Number of the Scrap Book (1894) - in which the artist also adopted
Fig. 28b. an unorthodox view point, but in this case subterranean. The design is a characteristic piece of symbolism. Two female figures are depicted awakening from sleep below the surface of the earth, each has an arm extended so that the closed fist just breaks through the surface. They are surrounded by bulbs and root forms from which rise a pattern of stems and shoots. The colours employed are pale greens, yellows and blues on a white background; a small touch of purple is introduced where one or two shoots appear above the ground as crocuses. Although the general effect is somewhat bizarre it is by no means unpleasant and does not engender the feeling of aversion produced by 'The Pond'. These two drawings are of particular interest because of the contrast between Frances Macdonald's hideous, angular, and greatly distorted females and the plump well-proportioned nudes drawn by Mackintosh who, incidentally, contributed a subsequent

Fig. 28. a. 'A Pond'. Frances Macdonald.

b. 'Spring'. Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

c. A Mirror Frame in Pure Tin. Frances Macdonald.

drawing in 1895 which possessed identical characteristics. These are the only drawings by Mackintosh known to the author in which he employed the unconventionalised human figure. One of his earliest drawings extant in which the human ~~figure~~ form is used as the basis of a linear pattern, appears in the Scrap Book of 1894. It is in pencil and wash on coarse brown paper and is
Fig.30a. entitled 'Autumn'*. In contrast to the designs previously described this is more highly stylised: the head of the figure - of oriental mien - is simply but clearly drawn and surrounded by a large red nimbus, but the limbs and trunk are resolved into a pattern of lines and planes with little if any attempt at modelling.‡ It is quite different in character from the work of the Macdonalds and belongs to the other realm of experimental drawing previously mentioned, into which Mackintosh alone seems to have ventured and of which several examples are to be found in the scrap books. In the main, these consist of strange patterns based on flower and plant motives - stalks, leaves or roots - reduced to their most elementary form. The drawings are occasionally given a title, or are accompanied by a curious quotation; for example, 'The tree of influence, the tree of importance, and sun of cowardice' and 'The tree of Personal Effort, the Sun of Indifference' - both of which are signed and dated January 1895. The subject in each case is indefinable, and though the colours are the customary limpid purples, greens, blues, relieved with red, the washes flow all over the sheet and practically obliterate the faint pencil lines below. Mackintosh's interest in this type of experiment persisted for many years and several much more ambitious drawings of a similar character are in existence.⊖

(Footnote: *The earliest example of Mackintosh's conventionalised figure work however, forms part of the frieze of cats (1890) discussed on page ~~1~~ - - - 17. Though the figure is indistinct in the photographs, it appears to resemble the drawing mentioned here.)

‡This design was developed later and used as the basis of a poster which was illustrated in 'The Studio', 1897.)

⊖Mrs. Lang of Paisley (formerly Miss Elsie Newbery) possesses a large watercolour which was given to her by the Mackintoshes as a wedding present in 1906. As far as one can discern, it is an impression of small silver birches or larches against a background of tree trunks and foliage - the shapes are so complex and the colours so intermingled that it is virtually impossible to distinguish the subject with any degree of certainty. For some time it was hung upside down, but a group of trees of the same species in a similar setting on the Island of Arran gave its owner a clue to the probable interpretation of the painting. Mrs. Lang also possesses a second interesting 'painting' by Mackintosh, this one signed and dated 1906. It is about 12" x 4" and is formed from an elongated spot of colour on blotting paper which has been extended and embellished by hundreds of tiny red, orange and green spots - the caption reads, 'The Old Yew Tree at Night'!

However trivial and ill conceived the scrap book drawings may be - and the majority of them have little artistic merit - they establish beyond all shadow of doubt the fact that 'The Four' were exploring many different avenues in an attempt to evolve an original style of drawing and decoration, and moreover, that the girls were as deeply engrossed in research as the two young architects. The scrap books also prove that by 1894 at least, they had achieved a measure of success and it is not surprising to discover that they next proceeded to apply the same principles of design to subjects other than watercolour painting and book plates. One of the more unorthodox fields into which they now advanced was that of poster design. In 1895 and 1896 they produced a number of posters that possessed all these peculiar characteristics and which ~~translated into this medium~~ excited no little comment.

Posters.

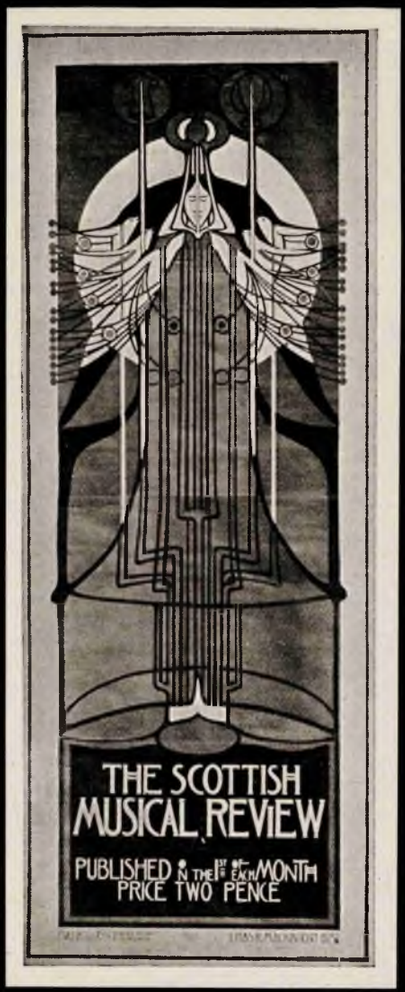
Mackintosh seems to have led the way and from the examples which survive, and from contemporary illustrations, the startling originality of his work can be readily appreciated. In the 1890's commercial advertising was still in its infancy and voluminously draped Grecian ladies, naturalistic cherubs, columns and acanthus leaves were the order of the day; even the most outré French posters still betrayed the lingering signs of tradition. When the human figure appeared, it was more often than not in modern dress, surrounded by familiar objects, bottles, glasses, cigarettes, etc. Originality was achieved in grouping, colour and presentation rather than in the subject itself. The grotesque half-human, half vegetable entities portrayed by 'The Four' were thus an entirely new departure and positively impinged upon public consciousness. A Mackintosh poster, once experienced, was not easily forgotten, for at this time, it must be remembered, comparatively few people were aware of the special characteristics of the work of the School of Art Group. Several illustrations are given here and perhaps a brief description of the principal examples will be helpful.

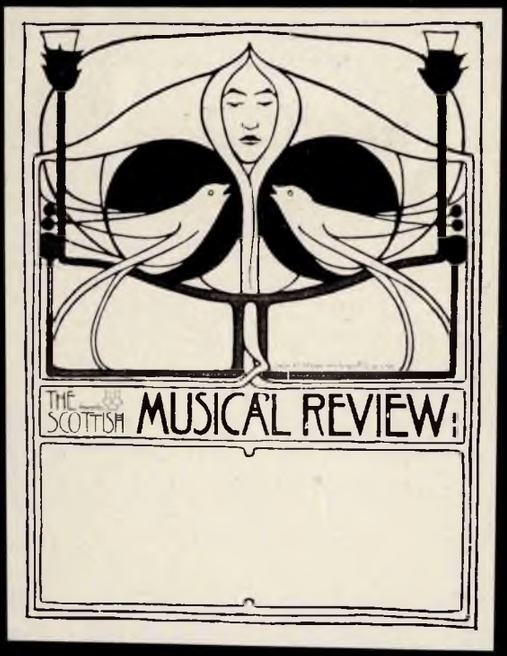
Figs. 30 a & b.

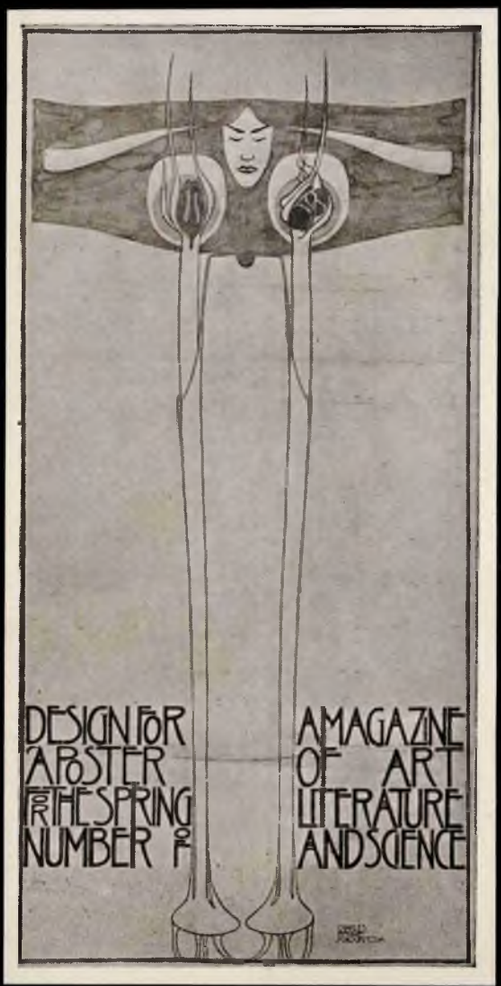
The 'Scottish Musical Review' posters (1896) were printed by Banks & Co., of Edinburgh and Glasgow; the larger of the two was 7'8" high and 3'2" wide and consisted of a formalised linear pattern which resolved itself into a tall human figure of oriental character outlined in black on a rich blue ground.*

(Footnote: *The poster was undoubtedly based on a drawing in Mrs. Ritchie's Scrap Book entitled 'Autumn'. It is dated November 1894 and is in green watercolour on very coarse brown paper; the figure is almost identical.)

Fig. 30. a. & b. Posters. The Scottish Musical Review.
c. Poster. A Magazine of Art, Literature & Science.


THE SCOTTISH
MUSICAL REVIEW
PUBLISHED IN THE 1ST OF EACH MONTH
PRICE TWO PENCE


THE SCOTTISH MUSICAL REVIEW


DESIGN FOR
A POSTER
FOR THE SPRING
NUMBER OF
A MAGAZINE
OF ART
LITERATURE
AND SCIENCE

The head was surmounted by a halo against which were silhouetted singing birds. The sombre hues of the scheme were relieved by the use of emerald green for the projecting discs on the birds' tails and the geometrical pattern above the figure. The smaller poster was about 30" x 20", much simpler in form and more attractive. It was drawn in black on a white ground. The only colour employed was primary red in the large discs against which the singing birds were delineated. This design should be compared with the poster of like proportions for 'The Nomad Art Club'+ executed by the Macdonald sisters. The motif and composition are the same in each case and the technique identical. The main element is a mask-like human face swathed in petals and framed in a conventionalised natural setting of leaves and branches. In all this work the designers employed broad, direct lines, and flat washes of colour; little if any modelling was attempted and primary colours were confined to small areas.

In professional circles Mackintosh's posters provoked the bitterest criticism and only one voice appears to have been raised in his defence. The editor of 'The Studio', writing in 1897 said this:-

> "..... It must never be forgotten that the purpose of a poster is to attract notice, and the mildest eccentricity would not be out of place provided it aroused curiosity and so riveted the attention of passers-by. Mr. Mackintosh's posters may be somewhat trying to the average person .... But there is so much decorative method in his perversion of humanity that despite all the ridicule and abuse it has excited, it is possible to defend his treatment ..... for when a man has something to say and knows how to say it the conversion of others is usually but a question of time."

From Mackintosh's point of view the poster interlude was quite rewarding: not only was his name continually before the public eye, but he was the centre of a stormy controversy in artistic circles - an experience which he found stimulating and not a little to his liking. Moreover, the bold, direct technique demanded by this medium enabled him to establish more securely his attitude to the whole question of design: hereafter he eliminated much of the trivial detail which continued to detract from the work of his friends. Then again, the posters provided a useful exercise in large-scale two-dimensional pattern and it was on these that he based his subsequent mural decorations.*

(Footnote: *See Chapter VI: Page 124: and Chapter IX, Page 203/4)
+Not illustrated here: c/f. 'The Studio' Vol.XI, No.52, p.98.)

Craftwork.

Fig.32.

The highly stylised linear patterns of 'The Four' lent themselves admirably to execution in repoussé metal, gesso and stained glass: their long flowing brush lines were easily transmuted into deeply incised grooves in brass, tin or aluminium, modelled in coarse string and plaster, or traced in lead - whatever the medium, the character and interpretation of their subject remained the same. Candle sconces, mirror frames, clock faces, glass panels and so forth were added to the repertoire of the Glasgow designers. In these crafts, minute detail was of necessity subordinated to broad general effect: the complex linear drawings were modified: heads, faces and hands were usually delineated with care but the rest of the human form resolved itself into a pattern of broad plain surfaces bounded by a multiplicity of strong vertical lines. In beaten metal especially, the girls seem to have delighted in emphasising the contrast between surface and line, and subtle variations in tone were achieved by modelling the convex surfaces representing exaggerated, sweeping drapery. It has been said that Beardsley revealed anew the expressivness of the line and the value of black and white pattern. Beardsley's genius however, was confined to two-dimensional representation - the Glasgow group on the other hand, developed this thesis further and applied the same principles of mass, form and proportion, to three-dimensional objects, gaining thereby added interest from the ever-varying effects of light and shade, and from subtle beauty inherent in natural materials.

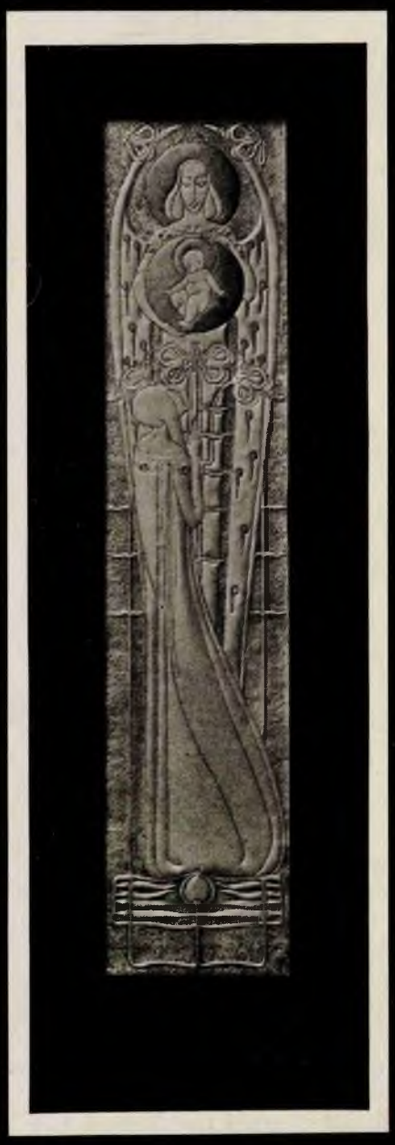
Furniture and Interior Work.

At this juncture it may be well to leave the group for a time and look for evidence of Mackintosh's personal development between say, 1890 and the year 1896 - a turning point in his career, for in addition to the work reviewed here, he executed some interesting furniture and interior designs.

In the early 1890's he became friendly with the Davidson family of Kilmacolm, the parents of William Davidson, one of his greatest admirers, for whom he later designed 'Windyhill'. Mr. and Mrs. William Davidson senior, and William Davidson junior, his wife and young family, occupied a flatted house named 'Gladsmuir' for which Mackintosh contributed various pieces of furniture, watercolours and fabric designs from time to time.*

(Footnote: *Mr. Hamish Davidson, grandson of Mr. William senior, told the author that Mackintosh executed a remarkable frieze of animals in the 'Gladsmuir' nursery, and though he was a child at the time, he remembers the work distinctly. Photographs of the frieze were taken, but they cannot be traced and thus a valuable clue to the date of the 'Gladsmuir' furnishings is lost.)

Fig. 32. Beaten Metalwork by the Macdonald sisters - exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Society Exhibition, London, 1896.



A photograph of the drawing-room survives and is reproduced
Fig. 33a. here. It is obvious that the architect played little part in organising the room, but several characteristic elements are to be seen, notably a small square table,[ⁿ] a built-in high-backed wall seat - a favourite feature this - upholstered in linen fabric on which a flying bird motive is stencilled. A number of framed watercolour drawings are sufficiently distinct to leave no doubt as to their author. This may well be the first interior work Mackintosh executed for a client and, though it has no special claim to distinction, it deserves a place in this record.

No other photographs of 'Gladsmuir' seem to have survived, though illustrations of a small cabinet and some fabrics not
Fig. published in this country, appeared in a continental journal.[*] The bow front and leaded glass doors of the former give it a traditional air but the frame to the top shelf has no historical precedent and is typical 'early Mackintosh'. In outline, it resembles the sections of an apple, an impression strengthened by the presence of a centre support with small proruberances reminiscent of pips - a curious detail which appears greatly enlarged in the king-post of a roof truss in the Martyrs' Public School (1895).[+]

The embroidered fabrics, particularly the two small curtains
Fig. 33 b. & c. illustrated here, are very charming, and form a striking contrast to work by 'The Four' in other media. Both examples were simply and beautifully drawn; the artist succeeded in combining a variety of fascinating leaf and flower details in a perfectly balanced, though by no means symmetrical, composition - a characteristic feature of his decorative work already remarked. The designs are quite fresh and original and though resembling to a certain extent the work of the Morris School, they are much lighter in treatment and less formally presented. The whole of the work at 'Gladsmuir' of which any record remains may be dated c.1894-5; the bow-fronted cabinet may have been the first piece of furniture executed for the Davidsons, the corner seat following a year or two afterwards. The curtains may well be later.

In addition to this work Mackintosh designed a number of pieces of furniture for Messrs. Guthrie & Wells, a notable firm
Fig. 34 b. c. & d. of cabinet makers in the city of Glasgow. Several illustrations survive which, with other examples that have come to light, form

Footnote: [*]'Dekorative Kunst', November, 1898.)
[+]Chapter II, Page 49a.)
[ⁿ]This piece may have been designed by MacNair.)

Fig. 33. 'Gladsmuir'. a. Drawing-room.
b. Curtain.
c. Cabinet.

a valuable record. This furniture consists in the main of linen cabinets,* wardrobes,+ and the like, all of which were soundly constructed upon more or less traditional lines. The pieces are notable for their pleasant proportions, and the absence of superfluous ornament. Full advantage was taken of the natural wood - oak being a favourite material - with occasional essays in the greenish-brown satin-like texture of cyprus. Decoration was confined to small areas and consisted of either simple carving or beaten metal - drawer-pulls, hinges (usually broad tapering bands ending in a leaf-shaped ornament), locks and so forth, were always selected or designed with the greatest care, and are rarely obtrusive, nor do they display any of the flamboyant vulgarity common to so much late Victorian work.

Mackintosh detested glossy varnish and went to great lengths to discover stains and polishes which would reveal and enhance the natural beauty of the wood. He favoured dark brown, almost black hues or deep olive green, neutrals which provided an ideal background for repoussé metal, for the delicate harmonies of rose-tinted gesso and the stencilled fabrics which he employed later. Few examples are to be found where warm brown intermediate colours were employed.

Fig.19a. Unquestionably the earliest piece of furniture which can be attributed to him is the cabinet which appears in the Dennistoun room (c.1890). Notwithstanding the clumsy proportions and somewhat commonplace detail of the upper section, the lower part is severely plain; the doors are simply framed, all mouldings are eradicated, and locks, handles and hinges are of the simplest kind. Although by no means an elegant piece of furniture, the cabinet, like the frieze of cats, is of ~~major~~ importance; it proves beyond any question that Mackintosh at this time had ~~begun~~ to deviate from contemporary practice. It now remains to trace the various stages through which he passed before his mature style developed.

Unfortunately no records exist by which the Guthrie & Wells furniture can be accurately dated although there are illustrations in the firm's catalogues - published c.1894-5 - and in 'The Studio' (1897).

Assuming the Dennistoun cabinet to be designed c.1890, it is possible to arrange the pieces illustrated here in approximate chronological order thus:- the earliest, the Dennistoun cabinet;

(Footnote: *One in the possession of Dr. Davidson.
" " " " " Mrs. Ritchie, Edinburgh.)

+ " " " " " Professor Walton, Glasgow.)

Fig. 34. Furniture. a. Hall Settle.
b. Linen Press.

c. Linen Cupboard.
d. Chest of Drawers.
Jewel Casket.

c

d

Fig. 34b. the second, the linen press - clearly an early example on account of the trivial candle holders, the pendant leaf motive below the apron, and the abundance of ornamental beaten metal
Fig. 34a. - not later than 1893; the third, the ponderous hall settle - with its somewhat crudely devised stencilled patterns and metal
Fig. 34d. panels, say 1894-5; the fourth, the chest of drawers - the first piece entirely free from art nouveau and neo-classical detail,
Fig. 34c. perhaps 1895; the linen cupboard may be placed fifth and last in the series. Though provided with candle holders, they are more cleverly integrated with the main frame; the subtle curve of the apron below the upper cupboard should be noted, and compared with the inelegant rake of that in the linen press; the metal-work too is infinitely superior and the whole design has an air of competance and simple efficiency - it may be dated 1895 with some certainty.

By contemporary standards this furniture was quite unorthodox and though to our eyes it appears somewhat commonplace, it represented a bold step forwards. Mackintosh attempted to break away entirely from the self-conscious ostentation of the commercial cabinet-maker and from the tedium of period reproduction: in this he was quite successful. This phase must be looked upon as a time of experiment in a new field, experiment comparable with his work in repoussé metal and watercolour, and as we shall see, in building. None of the extreme forms he adopted later can be detected in any of this furniture and there is no evidence to suggest that his mature style emerged before 1896.

The craftwork of 'The Four' and Mackintosh's early furniture had at first only a local appeal; the designers executed commissions mainly for relatives and friends (Mackintosh's name did not appear in the Guthrie & Wells catalogues)and consequently for some years they made little if any impression upon the general public. Glasgow people were conscious of course, that strange things were afoot at the School of Art, and the curious posters that appeared from time to time over the signatures Frances and Margaret Macdonald, J. H. MacNair or Charles Rennie Mackintosh caused considerable comment, but it is unlikely that posters advertising the Scottish Musical Review, The Nomad Art Club, Drooko Umbrellas and so on, would penetrate far beyond the Glasgow region. Fra. Newbery however, was actively at work behind the scenes and, having launched 'The Four', set about the task of establishing their reputation not only on a national, but on an international basis. Following a successful exhibition at the School, the headmaster received a letter from the Secretary of L'oeuvre Artistique, Liège, asking for examples of students' work

Fig. 35. Contemporary furniture by J. H. MacNair.

Liège Exhibition.

to be sent to the City of Liege Arts and Crafts Exhibition. The letter, dated 10th May, 1895, contained this interesting passage:-

> "Our schools of art are far, very far indeed, from being so advanced as yours and what had above all astonished us in your work is the great liberty left to the pupils to follow their own individuality such is so different from the ideas current in our schools of art that it is difficult for us to comprehend this freedom although we admire it very much. I think the exhibition of the works of your students cannot but cause serious thought and reflection to those here who direct art instruction. Many of us should like to have some of your posters which are very beautiful ....."

Three cases of exhibits, representing the work of all sections of the School were sent, and the first link between the Glasgow designers and the continent was forged.

The Arts & Crafts Society Exhibition, 1896.

Having achieved this comparatively minor success, Newbery next turned his attention to the London Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and arranged for 'The Four' to send some 'Modern Style' furniture, craftwork and posters to the important exhibition of 1896, then a triennial event. Frances and Margaret Macdonald submitted notably a pair of narrow, beaten aluminium panels, 'The Star of Bethlehem' and 'The Annunciation' respectively, also a fine clock case of beaten silver and a number of posters. In addition to posters Mackintosh's principal exhibit was the hall settle previously mentioned*, "a most pleasant and decorative piece of furniture" according to 'The Studio'+ and a strange watercolour entitled 'Part seen, part imagined'.

Fig. 34a.

The unheralded appearance of the work of 'The Four' - particularly their beaten metal and posters, evoked a storm of protest from public and critics alike. Everyone was shocked by their grotesque conventionalisation of the human figure and strange linear patterns; everyone, that is, except the editor of 'The Studio' who wisely withheld judgment, and in commenting on the Glasgow Group used these significant words:-

> "Probably nothing in the gallery has provoked more decided censure than these various exhibits; and that fact alone should cause a thoughtful observer of art to pause before he joins the opponents. If the said artists do not come very prominently forward as leaders of a school of design peculiarly their own, we shall be much mistaken. The probability would seem to be that those who laugh at them to-day will be eager to eulogise them a few years hence."

(Footnote:-*Chapter I, Page 35.)
+December, 1896.)

The English Arts and Crafts Society however, stolidly maintained its attitude of scornful derision and under its president Walter Crane, so successfully boycotted the Scottish designers that they do not appear to have exhibited again south of the border.

Gleeson White, who wrote the singularly prophetic article in 'The Studio' decided to travel north and meet the artists, to discover if possible their aims and objectives, and to find the sources on which they drew for inspiration. He went to Glasgow with an open mind and, no doubt, not a little curiosity. He comments later on the "legend of a critic from foreign parts" who attempted to deduce the character and appearance of the Macdonald sisters from their works - they were visualised as '"middle-aged sisters, flat footed, with projecting teeth and long past the hope (which in them was always forlorn) of matrimony, gaunt unlovely females"'. Did the experience of the unnamed foreigner closely parallel his own? In all probability White subscribed in part at least to popular opinion, and imagined the artists as a coterie of languid aesthetes, if not middle-aged, at least effete sophisticates, surrounded by objects d'art from Egypt and the Orient, and brooding over Swinburne and Wilde. Instead, he found two "laughing comely girls, scarce out of their teens" and a pair of serious architectural draughtsmen with a penchant for the decorative arts and craftwork.

White returned to London full of enthusiasm for the work of the Glasgow School of designers; like everyone who came into personal contact with the group, he was deeply impressed by their utter sincerity and astonishing versatility. He became one of their staunchest champions, if not their sole champion in the south. Shortly afterwards, he published two well illustrated articles in 'The Studio' entitled "Some Glasgow Designers and their Work". The first appeared in July 1897 and was devoted entirely to Mackintosh and the Macdonald sisters: the second, on J. H. MacNair and Talwin Morris, followed in September of the same year. The importance of these articles from Mackintosh's point of view cannot be overestimated. At one stroke, Gleeson White disclosed the presence in Glasgow of a flourishing and well-integrated school of design with its own distinctive characteristics, completely unsuspected by the English movement. Moreover, 'The Studio' had a wide continental circulation and the attention of all subversive elements in the European art world was immediately focussed on Scotland, on Glasgow, and in particular, on Mackintosh, whose personality clearly dominated White's articles. Alexander Koch,

one of the most progressive continental publishers (the editor of 'Academy Architecture') was quick to appreciate the significance of these events, and in the November issue of his art periodical 'Dekorative Kunst' (1898) there appeared a constructive and well illustrated article on the Scottish designers.* This appears to be the first occasion on which work by 'The Four' was reviewed on the continent, and within a remarkably short time they were widely acclaimed leaders in the new art movement.

Throughout the preceding pages, emphasis has been laid on the similarity of the work of 'The Four'. Broadly speaking of course, they formed a singularly coherent group, and in an age given over to vulgar commercialism on the one hand and studied eclecticism on the other, their work appears homogenious by sheer contrast. Individual traits are easily recognisable however - more especially in the work of the two men. Mackintosh in particular always seems to stand a little apart from his friends and although subscribing to their aims and ideals, his art forms are more masculine, less sensuous and naïve, than those of MacNair and the girls, who remained content with a world of softly undulating lines, of brooding sadness and decay. He, on the other hand, appears to have been impelled by an urge to express growth - root, stem, branch and flower - and almost all his subsequent work can be analysed in these terms. Surging vertical lines invariably predominate, whether in the pattern of a Christmas card, or a poster, or in an exaggerated chair back, and they find ultimate expression in the dramatic west wing of the new Glasgow School of Art.

Although Mackintosh never entirely escaped from the influence of the group, and all his work bears to a greater or lesser degree the impress of his early associations, he never lost sight of the fact that he was an architect first and foremost. He used his opportunities in the decorative field as a testing ground for the ideas and theories which later gave such distinction to his buildings, whereas on the contrary, his friend Herbert MacNair became deeply engrossed in the minor arts, and though nominally an architectural draughtsman, soon transferred his attention entirely to design and craftwork.

Footnote: *The writer's comments will be discussed in a later chapter. The illustrations are of particular interest. In addition to several familiar examples of craftwork they included a glazed bookcase, a built-in cupboard and embroidered curtain design by Mackintosh - both early examples not published elsewhere. A cupboard and wine glasses by MacNair and some book covers by Talwin Morris also appeared.)

By the close of the year 1896 then, it is evident that 'The Four' had definitely achieved their primary objective: they had evolved a distinctive personal style of ornament and decoration completely independent of contemporary fashion, and with little if any traditional bias. They had completed their training at the School and were beginning to build up a useful business connection in the city. Moreover, it was clear that with Fra. Newbery's benevolent support, the future held great promise, for the energetic headmaster had become an influential figure in the educational world both at home and in the countries of Western Europe.

The names of Herbert MacNair and Charles Mackintosh appear on the School of Art records for the last time in 1893 and that of Margaret Macdonald in 1894, but 'The Four' retained their close association with the School and were more or less at liberty to attend occasional classes and work there whenever they felt so disposed. The girls however, had a studio in the city and devoted themselves to the applied arts, to embroidery, repoussé metal, gesso, illuminating, book illustrations, leaded glass - the two young architects lending a hand, and on occasion providing designs for furniture and the like, in which decorative panels could be incorporated. From the point of view of the Macdonald sisters and MacNair of course, the situation was admirable, nor for that matter had Mackintosh reason to be dissatisfied with his progress. In the architectural field however, events did not, and could not be expected to move rapidly. It is necessary now to recapitulate a little and to review briefly the young architect's progress at the office of Messrs. John Honeyman & Keppie, where, it will be remembered, he was employed as a draughtsman in 1889.

CHAPTER II.

APPRENTICESHIP AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE.

In this chapter an attempt will be made to trace each succeeding step in Mackintosh's climb to power at the office of Honeyman & Keppie; to follow as far as practicable, the development of his architectural style between 1889, the year in which he joined the partners, and 1896 when the competition for the new Glasgow School of Art was held. Before embarking on this study however, it will be well to examine possible sources, to glance briefly at the work of local architects he is known to have admired, and more especially, to discover something of the two principals of the firm with whom he was closely associated, and by whom, one might anticipate, he was most likely to be influenced.

The face of Glasgow changed and largely assumed its present cosmopolitan character during Mackintosh's youth. An immense amount of new building took place in the last quarter of the 19th century, but there is no evidence of an original mind at work, and no single figure of the stature of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson emerged. Generally speaking the profession maintained its adherence to the classic dogma notwithstanding the diatribes of Mr. Ruskin and the national fervour of the baronialists. Innumerable nondescript buildings were erected here as elsewhere, but despite the eclecticism of the period the Glasgow street scene is remarkably uniform. It possesses scale and dignity foreign to most provincial cities, qualities due in no small part to the influence of Thomson and to the work of the architects now to be discussed - and, one might add, to the rhythmic, orderly fenestration of large tenement blocks, four or five storeys high, often set above ground floor shops and warehouses in the centre of the city.

Two architects in particular had considerable influence on the younger generation in Glasgow at this time - James Sellars and John James (later Sir John) Burnet - though neither man departed far from convention, and both were confirmed classicists, Sellars favouring the Italian Renaissance, Burnet readily turning his hand to anything from the Baronial to the Baroque.

James Sellars.

James Sellars' most notable city buildings are St. Andrew's Halls and the New Club, West George Street (c.1878), monumental projects in the neo-renaissance; Wylie & Lockhead's Buchanan Street (c.1880); Belhaven Church, Great Western Road (c.1880)

and Anderston Church, Hillhead. He delighted in good craftsmanship. Wrought iron was one of his favourite materials, and as no stock patterns would satisfy him, he invariably produced his own designs, an example closely followed by Mackintosh. He was appointed architect to the first great international exhibition to be held in Glasgow (1888) - his last work of consequence - and the similarity between his scheme and Mackintosh's project for the 1901 exhibition will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

John James Burnet

In the late 1870's John James Burnet returned from France to his father's Glasgow office with a first class diploma of the École des Beaux Arts, Paris, where he had studied in the atèlier of Jean Louis Pascal. He initiated a popular phase of French Renaissance architecture with the scholarly Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts (1879-80) one of his most notable achievements. This was followed by the offices of the Clyde Navigation Trust and Fig.41a. Charing Cross Mansions - both impregnated with the spirit of French classicism - and the firm entered upon a new period of prosperity. Almost every thoroughfare in the city of Glasgow contains some work by the Burnets, father or son: they built the Stock Exchange, the great Merchants' House in George Square, the Barony Church 1899 (an essay in Scottish Gothic), Glasgow Athen- Fig.41d. aeum and later its dramatic Buchanan Street extension (c.1892), and a host of banks, insurance buildings, and warehouses. John Burnet senior retired c.1889 and shortly afterwards John James came under the spell of the romantic movement fostered in the Edinburgh region by Rowand Anderson (designer of Glasgow Central Station) and Robert Lorimer - though Lorimer, the "James Barrie of Scottish architecture", did not return to his native heath to undertake the restoration of Earlshall until 1892. Burnet's Scots traditional style at its best is exemplified in the New Patholo- Fig.41c. gical Buildings, Glasgow Western Infirmary (designed c.1894) though on occasion his work in this idiom was mannered and flamboyant, and he perpetrated many of the faults usually ascribed to less discerning exponents of the baronial style, as for Fig.41b. example, in his design for a Public Baths some three years later.

The Burnets entirely dominated the architectural field in the West of Scotland during the last quarter of the century, and inevitably set a standard - and a fashion - to which all consciously or unconsciously subscribed. Though Mackintosh disapproved of their neo-classical enterprises he had a profound regard for their masterly handling of form, and he closely followed their work in the native idiom.

Fig. 41. Sir John Burnet (& Partners):

a. Charing Cross Mansions, Glasgow, c.1891.

b. A Public Baths, c.1897.

c. Pathological Buildings, Western Infirmary, Glasgow, c.1894.

d. Glasgow Athenaeum Extension, c.1892.

a

b

c

d

Sellars and Burnet, and to a lesser degree Anderson and Lorimer,* were the architects Mackintosh most greatly admired. There were of course, many other notable figures who helped to mould the face and form of modern Glasgow, J. T. Rochead, Charles Wilson, A. N. Paterson, J. A. Campbell, W. Forrest Salmon & Son (designers of Lion Chambers 1906, the first reinforced concrete building to be erected in the city), for example, but few could compete with James Sellars, and none could measure up to the prolific John James Burnet.

The accompanying illustrations are fairly representative of the buildings erected in Glasgow at this time. They reflect something of the spirit of the age, and form a background against which the magnitude of Mackintosh's struggle for independence can be more readily appreciated.

Alexander McGibbon.

Before proceeding to discuss Honeyman & Keppie, one other person must be mentioned with whom Mackintosh came in frequent contact, and no survey of the period, however circumscribed, would be complete without reference to him - Alexander McGibbon. 'Sandy' McGibbon was a brilliant draughtsman and despite the fact that he did little actual building, he eventually became director of architectural studies at the Glasgow School of Art. At this time however, he occupied a tiny office above the Central Station and earned his living as a free-lance draughtsman, for a time with John Burnet, then with Keppie, then perhaps with Salmon and others, executing the perspectives for which he became famous and which were always in great demand.‡ He was a curious personality, small in stature, bearded, bespectacled and almost invariably dressed in a long dirty overcoat that reached to his ankles. Notwithstanding his unkempt appearance and notorious absentmindedness, he was a clever artist with a profound knowledge of architectural history: his pencil studies executed in France and elsewhere are among the finest of their kind. From McGibbon Mackintosh learnt much about pencil and ink technique - and no doubt a great deal about architectural design - though in actual execution the draughtsmanship of the two men is easily distinguishable. It is interesting to compare and contrast the examples given here; the perspective of Honeyman & Keppie's Royal Insurance Building by McGibbon, and the Glasgow Herald Offices, the earliest drawing of its kind by Mackintosh that has come to light. The latter is the more dramatic and forceful; it is executed with a broad firm ink

Fig.45b.
Fig.46a.

(Footnote: *

‡The majority of perspective drawings of Glasgow Buildings published in 'Academy Architecture' at this time came from the pen of McGibbon.)

line and the architect avoided the fashionable naturalistic street scenes introduced by McGibbon: his conventionalised linear sky too, is worthy of note, for in all subsequent drawings he invariably formalised the setting - a radical departure from contemporary work of this nature - and as far as one can judge, quite unique in British 19th century architectural draughtsmanship.*

With the enigmatical McGibbon, this brief survey of the Glasgow Scene must end; but what of Honeyman & Keppie?

John Honeyman.

John Honeyman, LL.D., A.R.S.A., the senior partner in the firm, had commenced practice in 1854, over thirty years before Keppie joined him, but, with the exception of Lansdown Church, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow (c.1860), an essay in the Gothic style, he had few original buildings to his credit. His main interest lay in archaeological research and the restoration of old buildings; he is best remembered for his wide knowledge of Scottish traditional architecture. At least three notable restorations, or schemes of modernisation, were carried out during Mackintosh's time with the firm - Brechin Cathedral, Skipness Castle and Auchamore House, Gigha.

Figs. 43a. & b.

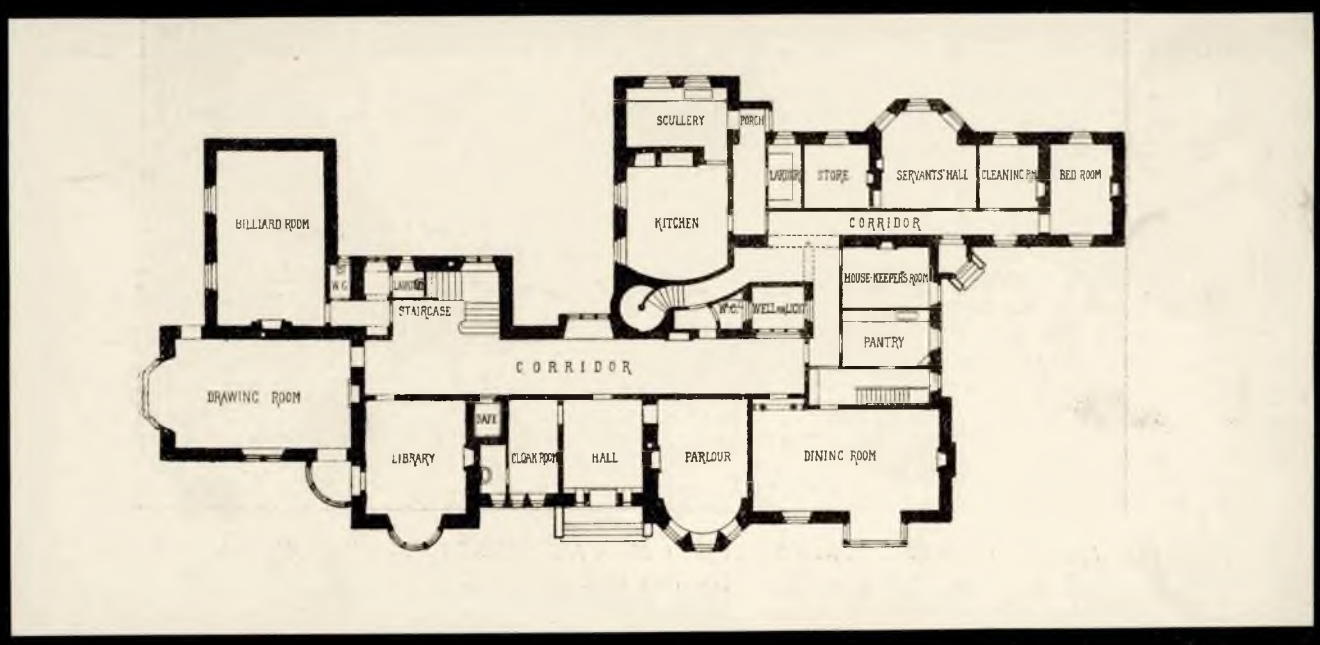
Honeyman found office routine and business organisation irksome; as he became more deeply engrossed in scholarly pursuits his practice gradually declined until eventually he had hardly any work on hand. According to Herbert MacNair, who was apprenticed to him in the late 80's and spent some months in the office before the partnership was formed, the rooms were large, empty and depressing; no new business came in, and he passed away his time laboriously drawing the 'orders' and running errands. His sole companion was a Mr. McAslan, a builder by profession, with whom he had nothing in common. Honeyman was rarely seen in the office and by 1889 there was every indication that the practice would have to be closed.

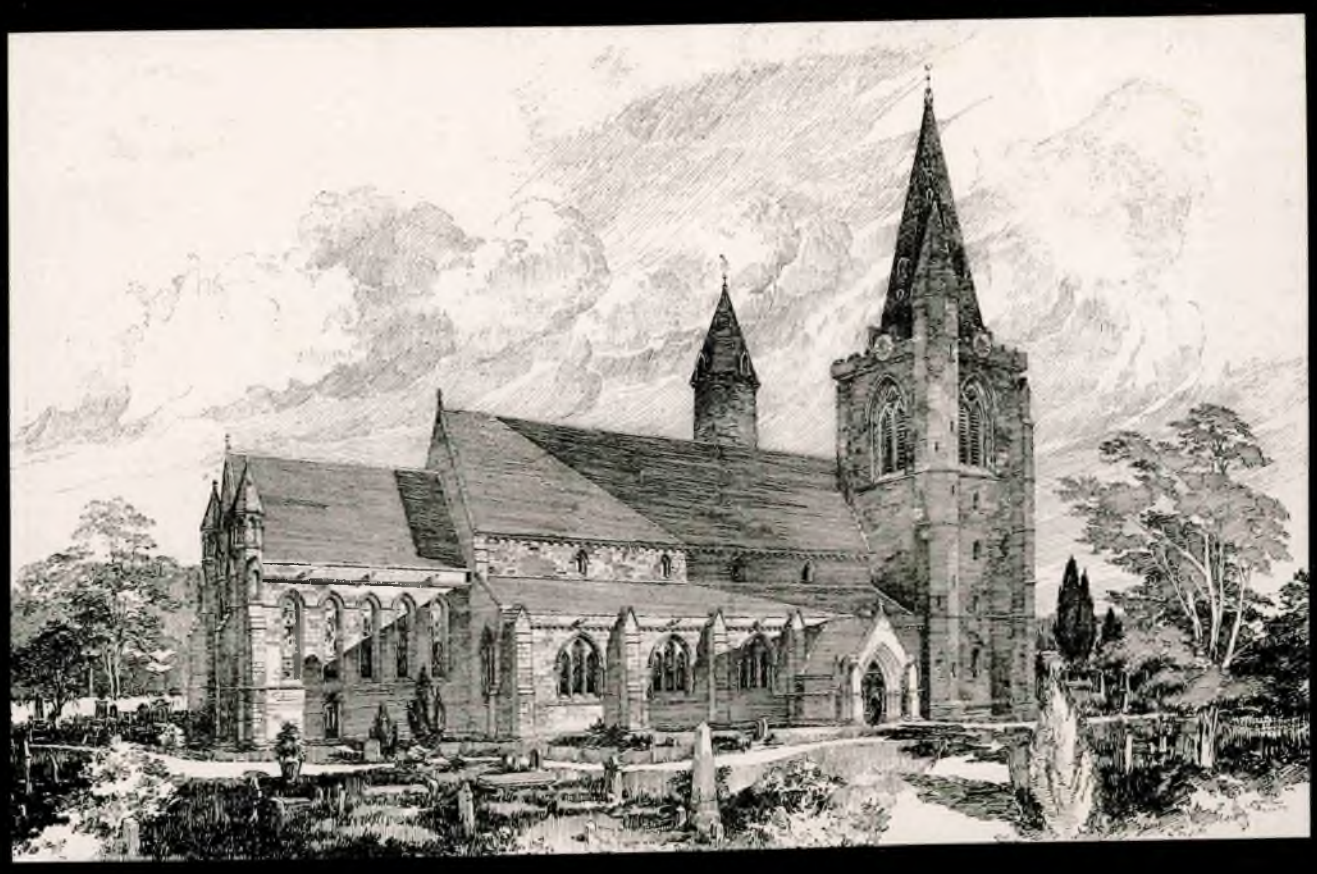
John Keppie.

At this juncture Keppie and his staff appeared on the scene and the unhappy state of laissez faire was quickly dispelled. Unlike the senior partner, John Keppie (1862-45) was a businessman first and foremost. The son of a tobacco importer, he was born in Glasgow and educated at Ayr Academy and Glasgow University. Then followed a period of training at the École des Beaux Arts, Paris, after which he became chief draughtsman to James Sellars. After Sellars' death in 1888 his practice was wound up and Keppie

(Footnote:- *A similar technique was employed by the Austrian architect Otto Wagner and his pupils. See Chapter X: Page 252, et seq.)

Fig. 43. John Honeyman: a. Skipness Castle - (restoration).
John Honeyman & Keppie:
b. Brechin Cathedral - (restoration).


SCULLERY
PORCH
STORE
SERVANTS' HALL
CLEANING RM
BED ROOM
BILLIARD ROOM
KITCHEN
CORRIDOR
HOUSE-KEEPER'S ROOM
STAIRCASE
PANTRY
CORRIDOR
DRAWING ROOM
SAFE
LIBRARY
CLOAK ROOM
HALL
PARLOUR
DINING ROOM



joined Honeyman, taking with him much of Sellars' business and retaining the goodwill of a number of influential clients. Under this stimulus, Honeyman's languishing practice quickly revived and within a few years the new partnership became one of the most flourishing concerns in the city - a tribute to Keppie's business acumen and organising ability. Honeyman himself however, remained to all intents and purposes a sleeping partner.

Keppie was thus only twenty-six years old - and more than twenty years Honeyman's junior - when the partnership was established, and as far as can be ascertained he had no original work to his credit at this time. Despite the advantages of his continental training and valuable office experience, his buildings - mainly in the classical idiom - are unimaginative and pedantic, though at times his larger projects display a breadth of treatment that is wholly admirable. Keppie lacked the finesse of his former master Sellars, and during a long and active lifetime did not produce a single building of outstanding merit. His influence on Mackintosh from the stand-point of design at least, was negligible.

Of the two men with whom he was in closest contact, there can be little doubt that Mackintosh was most greatly influenced by Honeyman from whom he acquired a profound respect for the architecture of his own country. Keppie's contribution on the other hand, lay more in the practical field of office procedure and building construction - but from neither can it be said that he received any invitation or encouragement to work along original lines.

During the period under review in this chapter (1889-1896) it is not easy to isolate buildings designed by the firm in which personal characteristics - either of Keppie or Mackintosh - can be indisputably recognised. Had there been a well-established office tradition before Mackintosh joined the partners, the problem of identifying his handiwork would have been simplified, or alternatively, if Keppie's personal style prior to 1889 could be clearly defined, the authorship of later work would not have been in doubt. Nevertheless, by studying buildings known to have been designed by Keppie later, it is possible to divide the work of the firm prior to 1896 into two groups, one of which with some degree of certainty may be said to show evidence of his handiwork, the other more clearly to suggest Mackintosh. The line of demarkation however, cannot be drawn precisely and certain motives and details commonly occur in all the work considered here - the

treatment of window architraves and pediments is a case in point. Such features, often somewhat incongruous, no doubt represent the personal preferences or mannerisms of Mackintosh's employer - the Keppie touch - a favourite motive that was virtually the hall-mark of the firm. It is significant that after 1896 all such features were eliminated from buildings entrusted to Mackintosh's care though they persisted for many years in other work produced by the firm.

By and large, the projects emanating from the office at this time are not in any real sense different from those of other practising architects in Glasgow. They varied for example, from a strictly formal neo-Greek project for the Glasgow Art Galleries Competition (1892)[ǁ] to the Canal Boatmen's Institute, Port Dundas (1893), a modest building in the Scottish renaissance manner. These designs, with the Royal Insurance Buildings, Buchanan Street, 1894 (not executed), Paisley Technical School 1896 (not executed), and Pettigrew & Stephens' warehouse Sauchiehall Street c.1896-7, all belong to the first - the Keppie Group. With the exception of the Art Galleries project - a monumental design with an Ionic hexastyle portico raised on a high rusticated podium - all the others have much in common: they represent sturdy, rather unimaginative buildings, combining neo-renaissance and romantic Scots features in a manner typical of the period. The Paisley Technical School scheme for example, was considered "clever and original" by 'The British Architect' (May 1896) though, if one may judge from the perspective reproduced here, this comment could hardly have applied to the elevational treatment which is most unprepossessing.

Fig. 45 c.
Fig. 45 b.
Fig. 45 a.

In all this work we may search in vain for a single characteristic Mackintosh detail. It is not until 1894 that we discover the first evidence of his handiwork in a drawing produced under the aegis of Honeyman & Keppie, the first of three major designs which were prepared and carried into execution, and with which he can be closely identified. In chronological order they are:- the Glasgow Herald Buildings erected 1895[*], Queen Margaret's Medical School erected 1895[+], and the Martyrs' Public School, Parson Street, 1896[⊖]. A perspective drawing of the water-tower and facade of the Herald Building appeared in 'Academy Architecture'

(Footnote: [ǁ] Published in 'The Builder' 25.6.92. Interior perspective in 'Academy Architecture' 1898.)

[*] Date on Rainwater head.
[+] " " stone in wall.
[⊖] " " wall sundial in perspective drawing.)

Fig. 45. John Honeyman & Keppie:

a. Paisley Technical School project, c.1896.

b. Royal Insurance Buildings, Glasgow, project c.1894.

c. Glasgow Art Galleries project; Hall, c.1892.

d. Hall, 'Dunloe', Wemyss Bay, c.1893.

e. The Dome, Messrs. Pettigrew & Stephens', Sauchiehall Street, c.1899. C/f. Mackintosh's design for 'A Chapter House', Fig.9b.

f. Messrs. Muir Simpsons, Sauchiehall Street, c.1903.)

ROYAL INSURANCE COMPANY
BUCHANAN STREET GLASGOW

c

d

e

f

Glasgow Herald Building, Mitchell Street.

1894 and a rough pencil sketch of the tower also appears on the back of one of Mackintosh's Italian sketches (1891) in the Royal Technical College Collection, but not too much importance should be attached to this for the young architect had a confusing habit of using the blank pages of old note-books and the backs of earlier sketches for subsequent work which was usually undated.

There does not appear to be any prospect now of establishing with certainty exactly what part Mackintosh played in the evolution of this design; one can only surmise that it was prepared under Keppie's guidance. It possesses many features reminiscent of the older man and yet has characteristics strongly suggestive of Mackintosh. The attic storey for example, contains details which occur again and again in work by the firm and which, in the case of the pediments and corbelled cills, persist long after Mackintosh had developed his personal style. In the perspective, the ornate dormers have assumed a freedom of style which they do not possess in reality, and the attic storey bears little resemblance to the crowning stage of the Daily Record Office - a similar detail which was designed undisputably by Mackintosh in 1901. The principal facade, below the heavy string course however, is powerfully articulated, admirably restrained and com posed of window units which, slightly modified, appear in Mackintosh's later work: the recessed bays at ground, second and third floor level, are in principle identical to some in the west bay of the School of Art: the tall, narrow windows at first floor level have their counterparts in the two other designs in this group, and so also has the tiny window at the top of the tower with its characteristic cill treatment.

Fig. 46a.

Fig. 46b.

The upper part of the tower too is a little confusing; it is most unlikely that Mackintosh would have condoned the swelling elephantine cartouches which clumsily mask the angles of the penultimate stage, and yet they follow sensuous curves which immediately recall the craftwork of 'The Four'. Moreover, the coping to the parapet is swept up at the angles in typical Mackintosh fashion and the elegant ogee roof with its heavy weather vane has already been identified as a favourite terminal feature of the young architect, for it appeared in various forms on his Railway Station design of 1892 and occurred on both the Medical College and the Martyrs' School.*

(Footnote: * It is interesting to note that a side view of the Herald tower was published in a large folio of excellent photographs 'Die Englische Baukunst der Gengenwart' by Muthesius, published in Berlin, 1900.)

Fig. 46. Glasgow Herald Building: a. Perspective 1894.
b. Detail of Tower.

The Herald tower as executed, differs but little from the original perspective; a horizontal string course or two and another small window were added and the group of three narrow Romanesque lights - an incongruous feature this - was replaced by a single window subdivided by a central column.

Carved stone ornament and wrought iron almost invariably give a reliable clue to the authorship of a design by Mackintosh and yet in these early buildings they are commonplace and indeterminate. In the Herald project the stone embellishments bear little resemblance to his later work in this field and yet they possess a certain air, an elusive quality, that makes one hesitate to dismiss them out of hand as insignificant. They may after all, represent his first attempts at work of this kind, though it is more probable that they were moulded to conform to popular taste under the watchful eye of his employers.

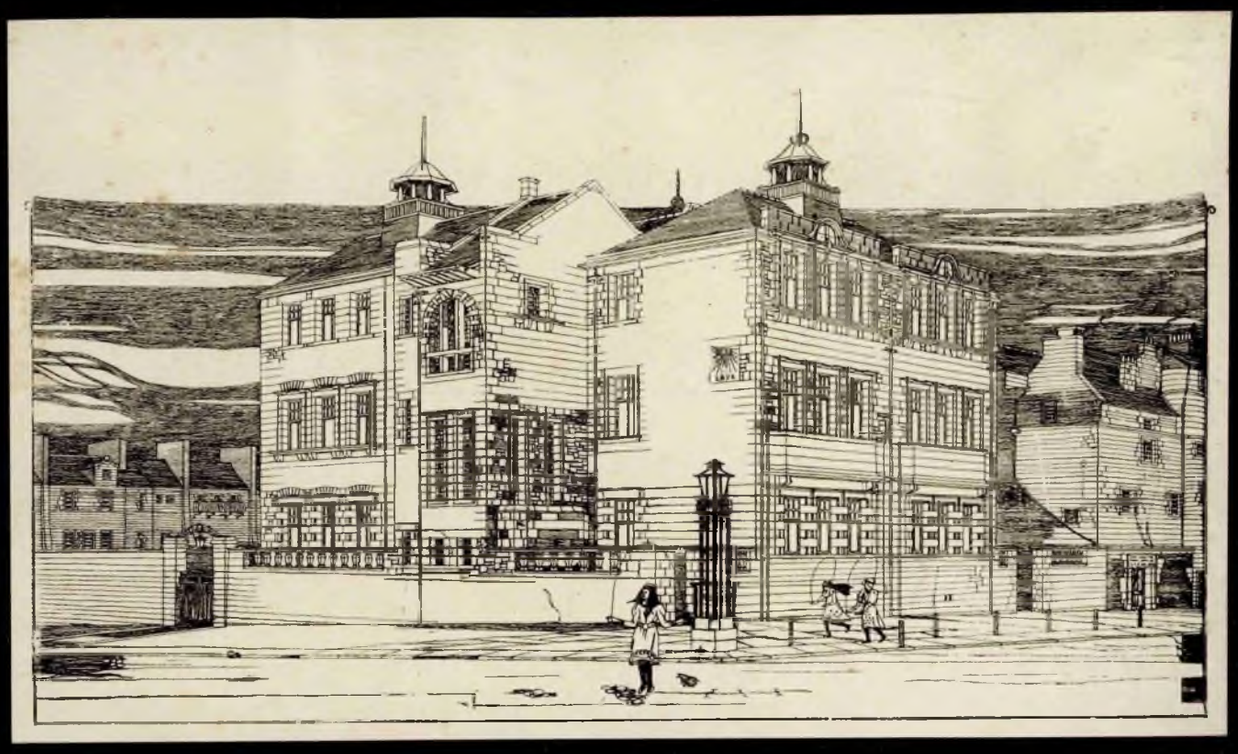
To sum up then, it may be said that the proportions and organisation of the Mitchell Street facade, at least to the string course, and the form and character of the tower, are strongly indicative of Mackintosh, although his handiwork seems to have been heavily overlaid. It is probable that he set out the main lines of the design under the guidance of Keppie by whom he was obliged to make modifications and to introduce alien features - for example, the riotous dormers, and the arched openings at street level. Even Mackintosh's most ardent champions who have claimed the Herald building as his first public work, must concede that a commission of such magnitude would hardly be left in the hands of a young draughtsman, but would be controlled throughout by the principals of the firm.

Queen Margaret's Medical School.

The next building in this group to be considered is Queen Margaret's Medical School, Hamilton Drive, which was designed in 1894 as an extra mural department for the University. It is claimed to be the first school of medicine for women in Britain. Now it is linked to the ornate Florentine-renaissance palace - formerly known as Northpark House - the Glasgow headquarters of the B.B.C. The two buildings form a strange contrast;n Northpark House was built in the eighteen sixties by two elderly merchants, John and Matthew Bell, with the magnanimous intention that after their decease it should serve as a private museum for their large collection of works of art. The brothers were an eccentric couple and the house was staffed entirely by men. By a curious turn of fortune, the building ultimately became a women's college and their art treasures were sold and dispersed.

Fig. 47. a. The Martyrs' School. 1895.

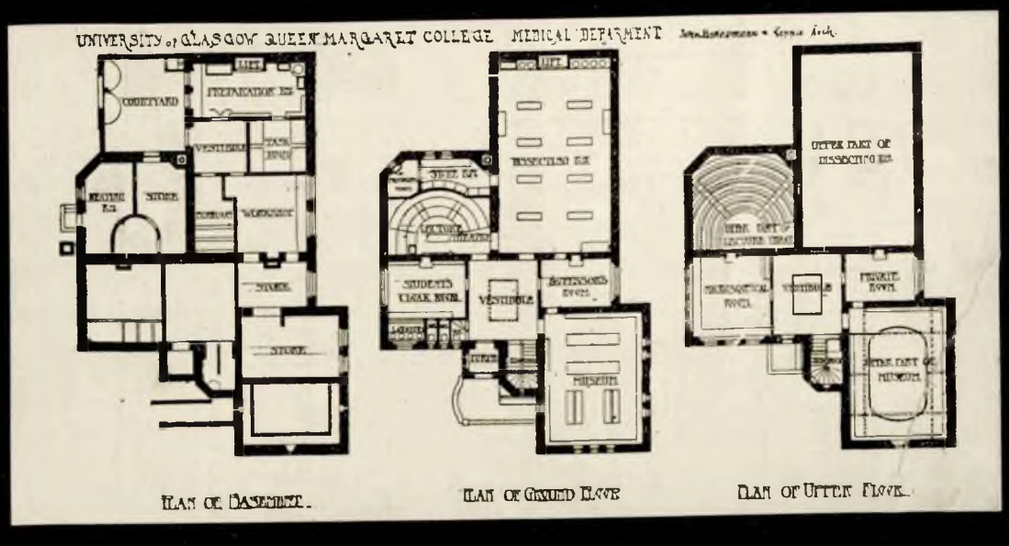
b. Queen Margaret's Medical College. 1894.



a


UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW MEDICAL
QUEEN MARGARET COLLEGE DEPARTMENT
JOHN HONEYMAN AND KEPPIE ARCHITECTS

b


UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW QUEEN MARGARET COLLEGE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT
COURTYARD
PREPARATION RM
VESTIBULE
STORE
WORKSHOP
DISSECTING RM
LECTURE THEATRE
STUDENTS CLOAK ROOM
VESTIBULE
MUSEUM
UPPER PART OF DISSECTING RM
PRIVATE ROOM
PLAN OF BASEMENT.
PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR
PLAN OF UPPER FLOOR.

The medical school is situated behind the rigidly formal mansion and has a remarkably asymmetrical plan. It is
Fig. 47c. comparatively small in scale and is constructed of humble sandstone. The interior has been entirely remodelled and the class-
Fig. 47b. room wing - to the left of the doorway in Mackintosh's charmingly informal perspective - has been demolished and replaced by a massive studio block. The remainder of the building is intact, even the original iron gates are in position and the staircase tower still sports its gay roof. In spite of the heavy and unimaginative ironwork, the traditional balusters and the meagre banal stone ornament, the growing ascendancy of the young architect is more clearly apparent in this work. The bold museum gable is similar in spirit to the east and west wings of the School of Art; the tall staircase windows ascending in sympathy with the rake of the stairs appear later in his domestic work, and in subsequent designs he rarely departed from the steeply pitched, simple roof of traditional form employed here. It is surprising that the wrought iron gates should be so unimaginative and massive - here if anywhere might have been expected some indication of the inventiveness and delicacy achieved in his contemporary craftwork and displayed in the perspective drawing.

Although Mackintosh's authorship of the original building may perhaps be disputed, no one can question the authenticity of the perspective which was published in 'The British Architect' 10th January 1896.* This drawing is in his mature style; meticulous, fanciful and charming, it is the first of a long series of competent pen and ink renderings in a manner peculiarly his own and in which, with few exceptions, architecture and landscape were carefully integrated - rare indeed was the design in which he did not introduce trees or flowers.

The Martyrs' Public School.

The third building in the group, the Martyrs' Public School, Parson Street, was designed c.1895 and Mackintosh again produced an excellent perspective drawing (published in 'Academy Architecture' 1896). In this instance the setting was by no means con-
Fig.47a. ducive to lawns and shrubs, but the architectural background is full of interest and no less characteristic than the cotton-wool trees and plants that decorate the earlier drawing. It is not improbable that Mackintosh introduced trees even in this project - the small posts or stumps in the right foreground may well indicate formal planting, the trees having been decimated for

(Footnote: *The original perspective is in the possession of Messrs. Keppie and Henderson, Bath Street, Glasgow - Mackintosh's old firm.)

the sake of clarity - it seems unlikely that the architect visualised a railing in this position for Parson Street was, and is, a relatively quiet backwater in the east end of the city.

The Martyrs' Public School is the most significant of the three designs under review; it is larger than the Medical School but the similarity of the two buildings is immediately apparent - quite apart from the presence of common features such as the tall staircase windows, corbelled cills, relieving arches and so forth. A closer examination of the elevations reveals one or two new motives and the building is crowned by three octagonal ventilators with the now familiar ogee roof, each terminated by a sturdy finial supported by four simple ring-like brackets, a shape frequently used by Mackintosh in later decorative work.

The most notable feature however, is a small section of roof above the staircase hall which is swept down in a broad belcast and carried on brackets projecting some three feet from the face of the wall - an idea first mooted over the porch at the Medical School - but here the treatment is identical to the eaves of the School of Art, not only from the external point of view but constructionally also. The internal roof construction above the staircase and galleried hall is also interesting. The timber trusses over the well of the main hall are built up of heavy members held together by thick untrimmed wooden pins, projecting some two inches from the surface. Each king post has been moulded into a primitive tulip shape - a characteristic decorative motive - by the addition of four carved pieces of wood, one applied to each face; moreover, the silhouette of the truss itself has been modelled by the insertion of shaped webbing pieces and the whole structural frame is carried on simple decorative corbels. Unusual trusses occur too over the staircase well, but these are much lighter in construction; the oxter pieces or hangers - from rafter to tie beam - are doubled and carried down to form ~~heavy~~ elementary pendants which are pierced by an inverted heart-shaped motive.

Figs. 49 a. & b.

The manipulation of structural members into a decorative pattern is a feature of Mackintosh's later work and, after searching in vain for distinctive detail in the two earlier buildings, the incidence of the small belcast roof and the presence of the unusual trusses is the first unmistakable, tangible, evidence of his handiwork. Apparently this was the first occasion on which he was permitted a degree of autonomy; the next major design he attempted was that of the Glasgow School of Art.

Fig. 49. The Martyrs' School - details.

It might be well at this point to review the ground covered in this chapter. Contrary to expectation, the designs emanating from the office for which Mackintosh can be assumed to be responsible - at least in part - do not show evidence of striking originality. There is no dramatic volte face, no excursion into the bizarre, no infusion of unorthodox motives and mannerisms, but on the other hand admirable restraint in the use of stylar motives - no small achievement in the 1890's - and the gradual emergence of forms with a strong traditional bias yet lacking the superficial eccentricities of the baronial style.

This slow evolution appears at variance with the young architect's development in the applied arts, but the reason for the apparent inconsistency may not be far to seek. To take the more pedestrian point of view, Mackintosh was still a draughtsman, and no matter how fundamentally he might disagree with the ideas and principles of his employers, he would be obliged to keep in step with his colleagues, curb his enthusiasm and conform to office practice. But there is another, a less obvious explanation, which has not been advanced hitherto, and it has to do with the the traditional character of this work. Mackintosh had become deeply absorbed in the study of Scottish vernacular architecture, perhaps, as already suggested, at the instigation of Honeyman, and spent a great deal of time familiarising himself with traditional buildings. His activities in this sphere must have been well known for he had been invited to give a paper on 'Scottish Baronial Architecture' to The Glasgow Institute of Architects in February 1891. By good fortune, his lecture notes survive and though it is clear that he drew extensively on McGibbon and Ross, it is equally apparent that he had acquired a genuine admiration for old Scottish work, and deplored the manner in which his contemporaries continued to turn to alien sources for inspiration. The preparation of this lecture no doubt brought him up against one of the most difficult problems facing the young architect with an original turn of mind and a strong sense of responsibility - the place of tradition in the scheme of things. Thereafter, all his architectural work, no matter how unorthodox, was undoubtedly in the Scottish idiom and could have been produced in no other country but Scotland.

The traditional Scottish style had been neglected for two hundred years or more; it was, and is even now, comparatively unknown beyond the confines of the country itself, yet it embodied principles of sturdy functionalism which, if applied to contemporary problems, may well have produced characteristics strangely akin to the architecture of the 20th century. This raises a

fascinating and provocative issue - can it be then, that Mackintosh, acclaimed secessionist and protagonist of the new movement, was after all, consciously working within the Scottish tradition?

Although it is necessary to broach this interesting question at this particular juncture, it is equally essential to postpone its further discussion until the architect's work has been studied in detail and other probable sources examined.

The period between 1891 and 1896 then, may be considered as a transitional phase; a time in which the young architect gained valuable experience in competitive work, draughtsmanship, and the more mundane duties of the field and office. His growing ascendency can be felt rather than seen in the three buildings just reviewed. At the School of Art and elsewhere his imagination was given free rein, but from now on these hitherto distinct spheres of activity merged, and his architectural style quickly reached maturity.

Two important events occurred in 1896 which had a far-reaching effect upon Mackintosh's career - the competition for the new Glasgow School of Art, ostensibly won by Honeyman & Keppie - and his meeting with Miss Catherine Cranston for whom he decorated and furnished a series of notable tea rooms. His association with Miss Cranston lasted intermittently until about 1919, and during that time he produced for her an immense number of designs which, for variety, ingenuity and, let it be admitted, occasional eccentricity, would be difficult to equal. Moreover, in addition to this, and the work he personally executed in the office - Queen's Cross Church, (1896-7), Ruchill Street Church Halls, (1897-8), the competition drawings for the 1901 Glasgow Exhibition (1898) - he continued to build up a not inconsiderable private connection with decoration schemes, furniture and the like. His friendship with the Davidsons brought him the first of his important domestic commissions - 'Windyhill' (1899-1900) - followed shortly afterwards by 'Hillhouse' for W. W. Blackie. Even more significant however, was his growing reputation on the continent where, as a result of Gleeson White's articles in 'The Studio' the fame of 'The Four' spread far beyond the borders of Scotland.

Thus, within the space of a few years, Mackintosh came to the forefront as an outstanding designer and architect in his own right, and his identity could be no longer submerged in that of the firm. From 1896 his activities became so complex and his

output of work so prodigious, that any chronological examination would be confusing. To simplify matters, his subsequent work will be examined under the following headings: The New Glasgow School of Art; Domestic Commissions; Interiors and Furniture; The Tea Rooms; Continental Work and Exhibitions; Miscellaneous Projects. The London Phase, a chapter dealing with his life and work after 1913, is necessarily less objective and of comparatively little importance to this study; therefore, as indicated in the preface, it has been placed in the appendix.

By 1896 then, Mackintosh and his three friends had succeeded in evolving a curiously personal style of decoration and ornament with no identifiable historical basis. Yet in spite of this, the young architect was still designing in the neo-Scottish renaissance manner with little indication that he was contemplating applying similar principles to architectural work.

The building of the new Glasgow School of Art, now to be considered, marks a turning point in his career.

CHAPTER III.

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART.

The new Glasgow School of Art has been acclaimed one of the first European buildings in the 'modern' style and a landmark in architectural history, but the exact date of the design - a question of no little importance - and the circumstances which led to the erection of such an unorthodox building have been largely matters of conjecture hitherto. It is necessary to follow the preliminary moves with care, for in this instance more than usual significance is attached to meetings of governors, the discussion of conditions, the financial aspect and so on, all of which had a distinct bearing on the character of the ultimate design.

Under Fra. Newbery's wise direction, the Glasgow School of Art rapidly increased in numbers until by the early eighteen nineties it had obviously outgrown its makeshift home in the Corporation Galleries* where classes had been held for nearly thirty years. On the 6th September 1895, ten years after Newbery's appointment as headmaster, an 'Extraordinary Meeting' of the Governors was called to discuss ways and means of raising funds for a new building. Events began to move quickly. A site of 3,000 square yards secured for £6,000 by a body known as the Ballahouston Trustees was offered to the governors along with the sum of £4,000 on condition that they raised a further £6,000. The Corporation Parks and Galleries Trust then promised £5,000 on condition that £21,000 in all be subscribed - the estimated cost of a "plain building sufficient for the present needs of the School". Public appeals were made and friends responded generously. Within a few months the objective had been attained and a leading article in 'The Glasgow Herald' on 26th February 1896 stated that with £21,000 in hand the Governors were in a position to build, but, and here followed a warning, "that sum will suffice to erect only a plain school; it will not even equip this bald erection in an adequate fashion". Despite the need for more capital however, the Governors decided to carry on with the scheme and appointed a building committee under James, later

S

(Footnote: *Now a departmental store, Trèron et Cié, Sauchiehall Street.)

Sir James Fleming* to frame conditions for an architectural competition. They also agreed that an absolute limit of £14,000 should be fixed for the entire cost of the building, inclusive of all fees, lighting, ventilation, heating, draining and paving charges, but excluding assessors' fees, painting, and the cost of a retaining wall. Furthermore, any architect exceeding this sum by more than ten per cent was to be excluded from the competition. Mr. Newbery was asked to prepare a schedule of accommodation, to indicate dimensions of classrooms and - an important point this - to make suggestions regarding the size and nature of windows and the provision of artificial lighting. It was also decided that not more than eight architects in Glasgow should be invited to compete, and that the assessors should be Sir James King, Bart., and Sir Renny Watson, with power to co-opt further professional advisers. The number of competitors was later increased to twelve (at an Extraordinary Meeting on 1st June, 1896) though actually eleven architects submitted designs.+

The parsimony of the Governors, coupled with Newbery's princely schedule of accommodation - and in particular his demand for classrooms of extraordinary spaciousness - set the competitors a most unenviable task. After having studied the conditions for some months they jointly declared‡ that all the requirements could not possibly be met for the sum specified, whereupon the Governors asked them to state what portion of their designs could be carried out within the limit, and to estimate the final cost, stressing again somewhat naively, ".... it is but a plain building that is required". The architects countered by saying that it was impossible to provide the accommodation even in the plainest manner without greatly exceeding the given figure. This controversy continued at some length until the Governors finally amended the conditions by adding a clause asking the competitors to mark on their drawings the portion of the building that could be erected for £14,000 and to submit an estimate of the cost of the completed scheme. The date for submission of the finished drawings was extended from 15th September to 1st October 1896, and two of the Governors resigned as they intended to take part in the competition - John James Burnet and W. Forrest Salmon.

(Footnote: *In addition to (Sir) James Fleming, Convener, the Building Committee consisted of Leonard Gow, Robert H. Leadbetter, David Tullis, Patrick S. Dunn, Seton Thomas and Bailie Bilsland.)

+In addition to Honeyman & Keppie the following ten architects competed:- T. L. Watson, W. J. Anderson, John A. Campbell & John James Burnet, H. & J. Barclay, A. N. Paterson, Malcolm Stark & Rowntree, H. E. Clifford, W. J. Conner & Henry Mitchell, A. McGibbon, James Salmon & Sons.)

‡Extraordinary meeting 12.8.96. to consider letter from architects.)

The designs were duly sent in and after some deliberation, the Assessors made their award. At an extraordinary meeting of the Governors on 13th January, 1897, the Chairman announced that the name of the successful competitor was Messrs. John Honeyman & Keppie.

The winning design - obviously drawn by Mackintosh - was on view to the public at the Annual Exhibition of Students' Work held in the Corporation Galleries in February 1897, and at once became the centre of a stormy controversy. Not only was it forthrightly condemned from the architectural standpoint as an unaccountable and reprehensible excursion into l'art nouveau, but it was common knowledge that Newbery had done all in his power - short of refusing to accept any design but that submitted by Honeyman & Keppie - to influence the outcome of the competition. However, the award had been made, the winners and the headmaster were delighted, and the Governors stood by the decision of the assessors. All had gone according to plan - Newbery's plan that is - and by the end of the year 1897 building had commenced.*

The Memorial Stone was laid on 25th May, 1898 by Sir Renny Watson and it is recorded that "chief among the documents of interest placed in the cavity of the stone was a short history of the School (illuminated on vellum by Miss Jessie M. King, one of the students of the School) ....."+

After the ceremony, the company returned to the adjacent Corporation Galleries and regaled themselves on wine and cake and toasted the future success of the School.

The opening ceremony was performed by Sir James King, Baronet, of Campsie, on 20th December, 1899. Representatives of artistic, corporate and civic bodies met at the Corporation Galleries and were received by the Chairman and Governors of the School and presented to the Lord Provost, Samuel Chisolm. An illuminated document had been prepared by Miss Ann Macbeth" and all the

(Footnote: *According to the architects, the ultimate cost of the new School would be £22,753 including gas lighting - £110 more if electricity were substituted - and the tender for the first section up to and including the entrance hall and staircase, amounted to £13,922. 3. 8! The final accounts for the first section were so greatly in excess of this initial estimate - for reasons explained later - that the architects were asked for a complete statement before further payments would be made. - Extraordinary Meeting of Governors, 6.9.01.)

+School of Art Report 1897-8. Miss Jessie King (later Mrs. E.A.Taylor) developed a style of watercolour painting closely allied to that of the Macdonald sisters though equally distinctive. She specialised in illustrating, her subjects being almost invariably fairy stories and legends. Mrs. King-Taylor as she prefers to be called, and her husband are still painting (1948) at their house "The Greengate", Kirkudbright.)

"Please see foot of page 56.)

dignitaries appended their signatures, thereafter walking in procession to the entrance of the new building. A wrought iron key was presented to Sir James King by Miss Mary Newbery and a bouquet to Miss Chisolm by Miss Elsie Newbery, daughters of the headmaster. In his address, Sir James declared that "The new premises have, in the most complete way, fulfilled all expectations, and the Glasgow School of Art now finds itself housed in a manner more worthy of its position and reputation".

In the evening, there was a reunion of former students and a dance was arranged for the following week. It is amusing to note that Keppie had the floors of the new building securely underpinned and strutted before the event took place - a wise precaution in view of the large spans and absence of solid partition walls.

Mackintosh's name did not appear on the competiton drawings, nor was he present at the laying of the memorial stone, Keppie being conspicuous at both public functions. This has given rise to a great deal of controversy locally as to the actual authorship of the design, a controversy much exacerbated by personal prejudices. One view is that Keppie really designed the building and that Mackintosh exploited his position at the office and his friendship with Newbery to steal the credit. Keppie maintained that all work executed in the office should be credited to the firm, and he always refused to acknowledge Mackintosh's individual contribution in this project as in all others.* To anyone unfamiliar with architectural practice this situation is liable to misinterpretation. It has not been customary for the names of draughtsmen, however distinguished, to be appended to drawings and the principals of a firm usually take the credit even though they may have had little if any influence on a design beyond an initial sketch or two.

Any doubt that has existed on this score however, may now be dispelled by comparing the School with the buildings illustrated in Chapter II executed directly under Keppie's aegis before, and more particularly after the competition. There is not the slightest ~~doubt~~ similarity between say, the Paisley Technical College and the School of Art, nor is one conscious of the same hand

Fig. 45a.
Fig. 58b.

(Footnote: to ref. on p.55. "Miss Anne Macbeth, another distinguished student trained under Fra. Newbery, is remembered best for her exquisite embroidery. She and Jessie M. King though friends of the Macdonalds, commenced their training a few years later and thus were unable to contribute anything of value to this record. At the time of writing Miss Macbeth is living at Patterdale in the English Lake District.)

(Footnote: *Even at the Mackintosh Memorial Exhibition held in Glasgow in 1933 John Keppie refused to permit Mackintosh's name to appear on any drawings executed in the office.)

Fig. 45f. at work in Pettigrew's warehouse nor in Muir Simpson's Store,
Fig. 45e. Sauchiehall Street. Conversely the School possesses all the individual traits we have come to recognise in Mackintosh's craftwork; it abounds in characteristic detail and what is more significant, the first and second sections of the building are complementary. They represent two distinct phases in the development of a single organism and each fits perfectly into the pattern formed by the architect's work in other spheres. Keppie and Mackintosh's colleagues would inevitably play some part in the evolution of the design, perhaps a not inconsiderable part in the initial stages, but the briefest acquaintance with the building itself will leave the unbiased observer in no doubt that Mackintosh gained control of the project at an early stage.*

The conditions laid down by Newbery regarding the size of classrooms and the desirable window areas; the limiting factor of £14,000, and the Governor's reiterated cry for "a plain building" gave the young architect an unprecedented opportunity, an opportunity he grasped with both hands. Under the pretext of economy he was able to omit the ornamented pediments and string courses, the rusticated masonry, and the ponderous classical details favoured by his employer, and to concentrate upon the effective arrangement of mass, on the play of solid and void. The practical requirements of the building could be more easily met once the conventional laws of composition were relaxed, and the facades, no longer cast in a classical mould, became more expressive of purpose. Whilst the project remained on the drawing board the partners were able to exercise some restraint and Mackintosh was not permitted to eliminate all traces of the office tradition. Immediately the building commenced however, he assumed complete control. It is evident that Keppie soon realised he might as well wash his hands of the matter and leave everything to his masterful assistant and the headmaster, who between them were quite unassailable.

Mackintosh thus made the School of Art his personal responsibility, and craftsmen still living who worked on the job state that he was rarely absent from the site for more than a day or two at a time, whereas Keppie seldom put in an appearance. Mackintosh supervised every detail, and with Newbery's connivance, made alterations wherever and whenever he considered them necessary. He would tolerate neither slipshod work nor second-rate materials, but on the other hand, was quick to appreciate and encourage good craftsmanship.

Footnote: *See overleaf.

(Footnote to Page 57:-

*In 1903, between the completion of the first section of the School of Art and the preparation of the drawings for the Library Wing, Mackintosh was taken into partnership by Honeyman & Keppie. The first design published over the names of Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh appeared in 'Academy Architecture' 1903 - Pettigrew & Stephens' Warehouse, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. Mackintosh was elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects on 3rd December, 1906.)

In this manner every alien feature was easily eliminated as work progressed, and under Mackintosh's jealous eye the first section took shape, to all intents and purposes his own creation. Neither Keppie, nor Honeyman, nor for that matter any architect working in Glasgow could have conceived and carried into effect a work of such originality.

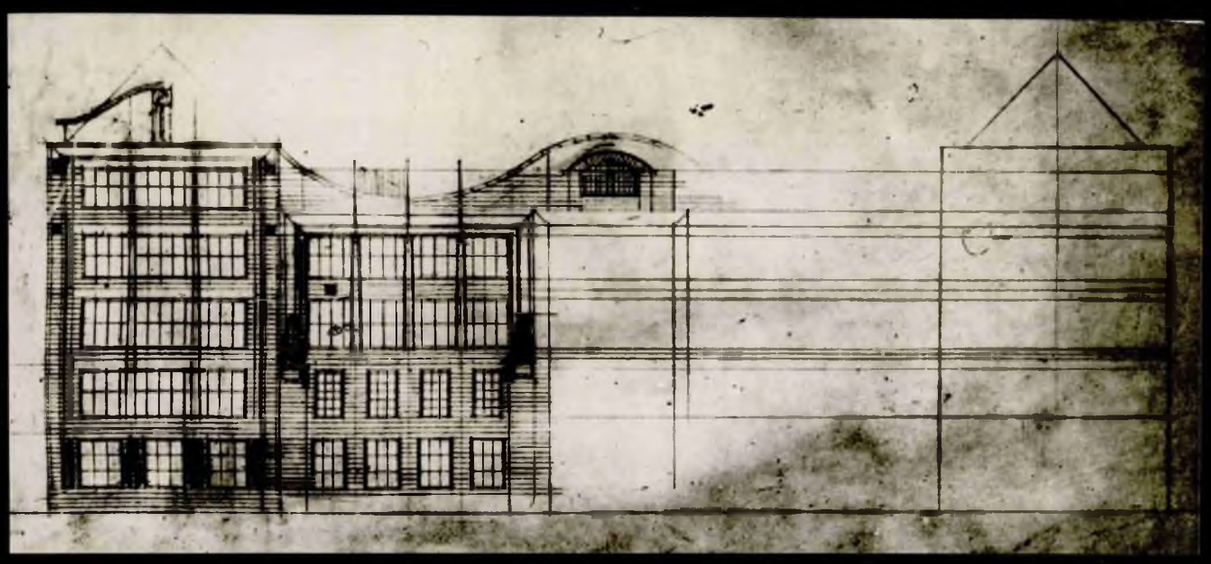
The School of Art then, was designed in 1896 - the year in which the Martyrs' School was built - between March, when the Competition was promoted, and 1st October, the closing date. The first section, up to and including the entrance hall, was erected between the end of 1897 and 29th December 1899.

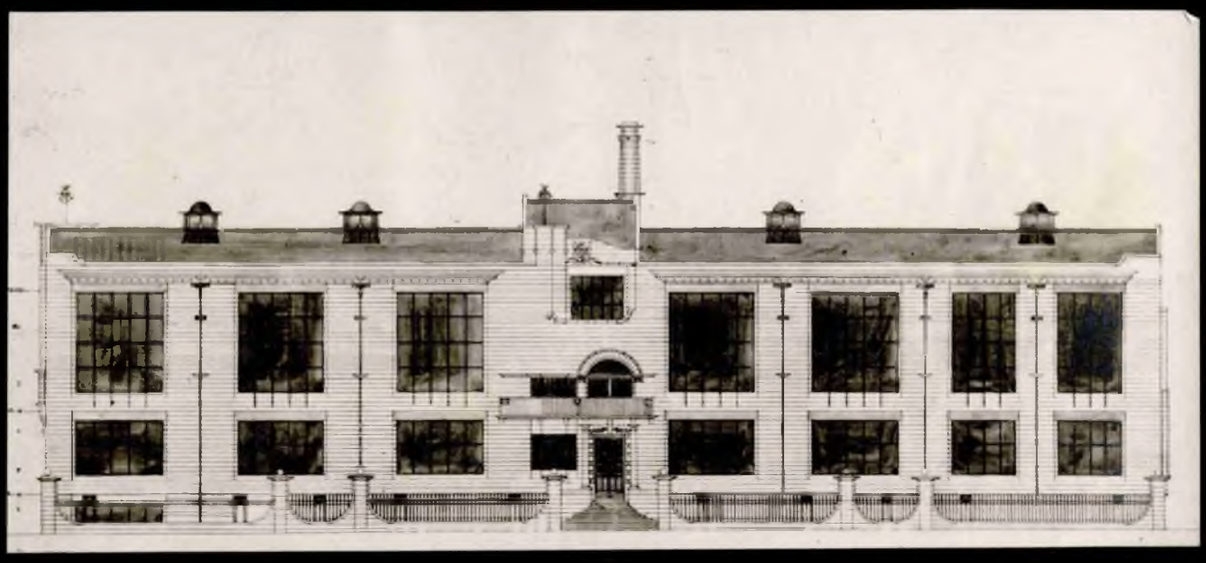
It would have been most instructive to follow the design through its various stages before it reached the adjudicators,
Fig. 58a. but with the exception of a single rough one-sixteenth/inch scale drawing on tracing paper, all evidence has long since disappeared. Unsigned and undated, this fragmentary drawing is clearly a preliminary sketch by Mackintosh for the main facade and it bears little resemblance to that finally adopted, though several minor features were retained. A broad central block of four storeys flanked by five-storey studio wings, was crowned by an undulating parapet with wrought iron railings. Triangular gables surmounted the wings, and an ogee-shaped parapet with a projecting coping superimposed over one of them is identical to that employed later as a crowning feature to the eastern facade. Although the studio windows were much smaller than those finally decided upon, the size of the panes is almost exactly the same.

This scheme must have been far too extravagant and it was drastically modified. The five storeys shown above street level
Fig. 58b. were finally reduced to two with the addition of a useful basement obtained by setting the building back some distance from the pavement, and taking advantage of the sloping site. (The attic storey which now extends the full length of the building was added when the second section was nearing completion c.1908-9 and did not form part of the original competition design.)

Nothing further is known about this drawing and no complementary sheets exist, but even so, it provides interesting evidence of the architect's adherence to more generally accepted forms in the early stages of the design. The qualities which are so admirable in the finished building are conspicuously lacking in this preliminary sketch.

Fig. 58. The Glasgow School of Art: a. Preliminary Sketch.
b. Project Drawing.





No trace can be found of the competition drawings and contemporary journals - usually a reliable source of information - seem to have taken little interest in the event, probably because the competition was limited and a purely local affair. However, the illustrations given here and dated 1897, if not identical with the competition design, must have approximated closely to it. They are of great importance for it is now possible to compare and contrast the architect's treatment of the west wing on the project drawing (1896) with his revised scheme of a decade later (1906). The early drawings reveal that the north, east and south elevations of the School were built more of less as originally designed, but that the west end (the library wing) which shared the traditional character of the present east facade, has been substantially remodelled. The date of this modification can be accurately estimated from two independent sources - an ink drawing on cartridge paper dated May 1907, of the revised west elevation approximately in its present form, with notes and enrishments added in pencil by Mackintosh, and a minute in the School records stating that on 25th February 1907 a letter was sent to the 'Scotch Education Department' to the effect that the architect had completed his plans for the new extension.* Thus the West Wing was redesigned between September 1906 and May 1907, and all the alterations indicated on Mackintosh's drawing - with the exception of the figure sculpture - were carried out as the architect intended.

Figs 59 & 63.

The plan of the School, to all intents and purposes, has remained unaltered, as a comparison of the illustrations will show. It is 'E'-shaped with the arms pointing due south and the main stem - entirely occupied by spacious studios - facing north.

The question of vertical access was singularly illconsidered in the original scheme and it was not possible to pass from the ground floor to the first floor except by the principal staircase - constructed of timber - in the centre of the building.+ When the second section was commenced (1907) the architects were obliged to provide a fireproof staircase in each wing, and as a result, the curved western windows of the former Board Room in the east end are now enclosed in a staircase well.

(Footnote: *The question of finishing the building had been relegated to a special committee at the Annual General Meeting of the Governors on 27th September 1906.)

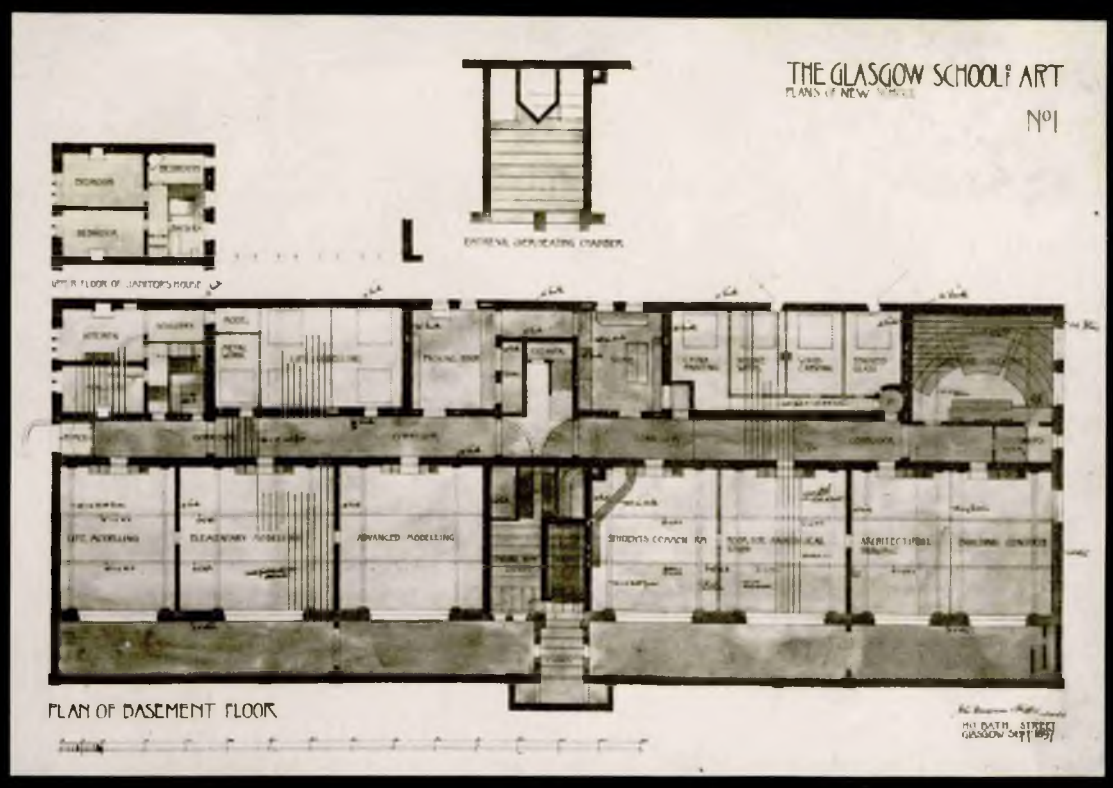
+The city authorities apparently overlooked this dangerous arrangement at the time, but when the opening ceremony was performed elaborate fire precautions had to be taken: not only were buckets of sand and water placed in all the corridors, but a complement of firemen had to be stationed on each landing.)

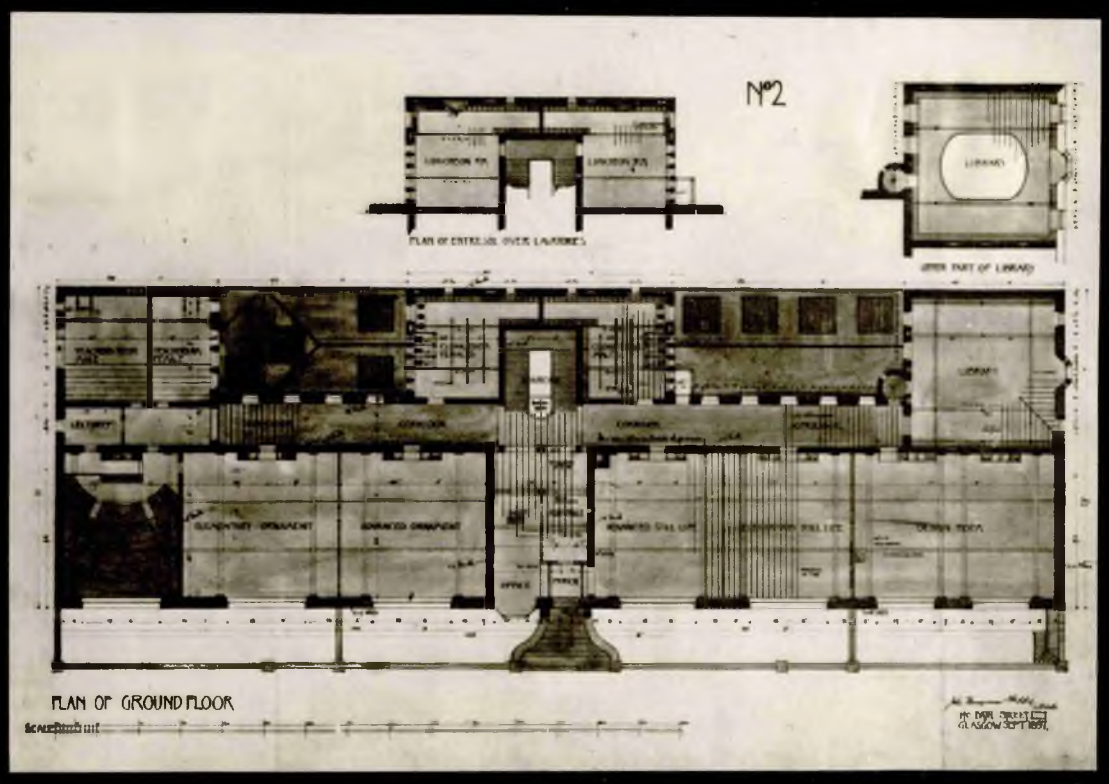
Fig. 59. Glasgow School of Art: Original Plans:

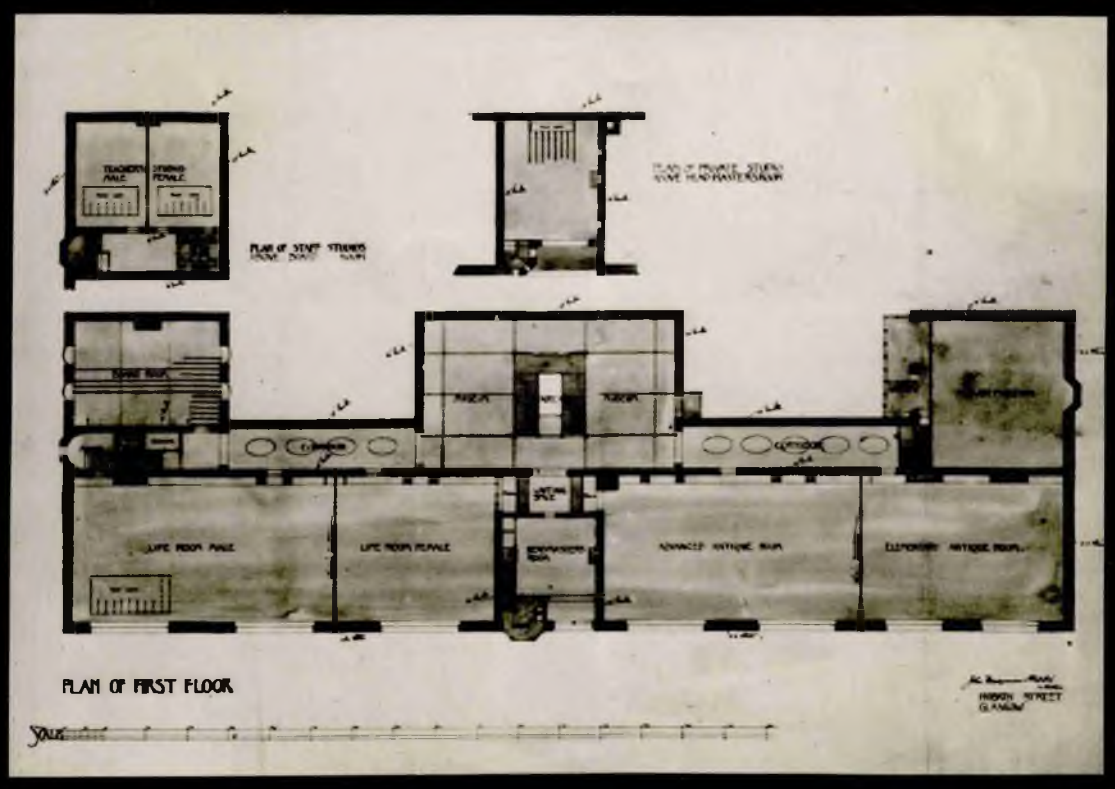
a. Basement.

b. Ground Floor.

c. First Floor.


THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART
No 1
PLAN OF BASEMENT FLOOR


No 2
PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR


PLAN OF FIRST FLOOR

The Galleried library - one of Mackintosh's most published interiors - is shown as a much simpler apartment than it ultimately became, though even so, it was similar in proportion and structure. One of the most unorthodox features on the original drawings, however, is a small conservatory to the flower painting room above the library. This tiny glass-walled extension was to be projected some 15 ft. from the wall face of the west wing, 80 ft. above ground level, and unquestionably was one of the architect's most daring innovations. Though the conservatory was not built until 1909 it appeared on the project drawings and can thus be claimed as a constructional feature quite unprecedented in the 19th century architectural design, and a remarkable precursor of future trends.

Fig.69.

Fig.60b.

Externally, the library wing was dull, unimaginative and somewhat similar in character, but if anything less well composed than the east wing. The library itself, though two storeys high, was expressed in elevation by diminutive windows of domestic proportions, the centre pair combined in a shallow oriel. The lecture theatre below the library was to have a pair of large, ugly, semicircular-headed windows which would have flooded the apartment with light. This illogical arrangement is as inexplicable as the inadequate library windows, and quite alien to the functional simplicity of the main elevation. Figure 60b and Figure 65 demonstrate that the eastern facade was built with little alteration; the gable was remodelled, several mouldings were omitted, and a small playful pediment was inserted to relieve the massive end wall of the studio block, but that is all.

Fig. 58b.

From the historian's point of view the dramatic north front is the most important feature of the building and it is necessary to emphasise that it stands to-day almost exactly as the architect conceived it; only slight modifications in detail were made as work proceeded. It is a thrilling composition with sweeping horizontal lines and vast areas of glass. Truly "a plain building" but full of character and a complete deviation from contemporary practice.

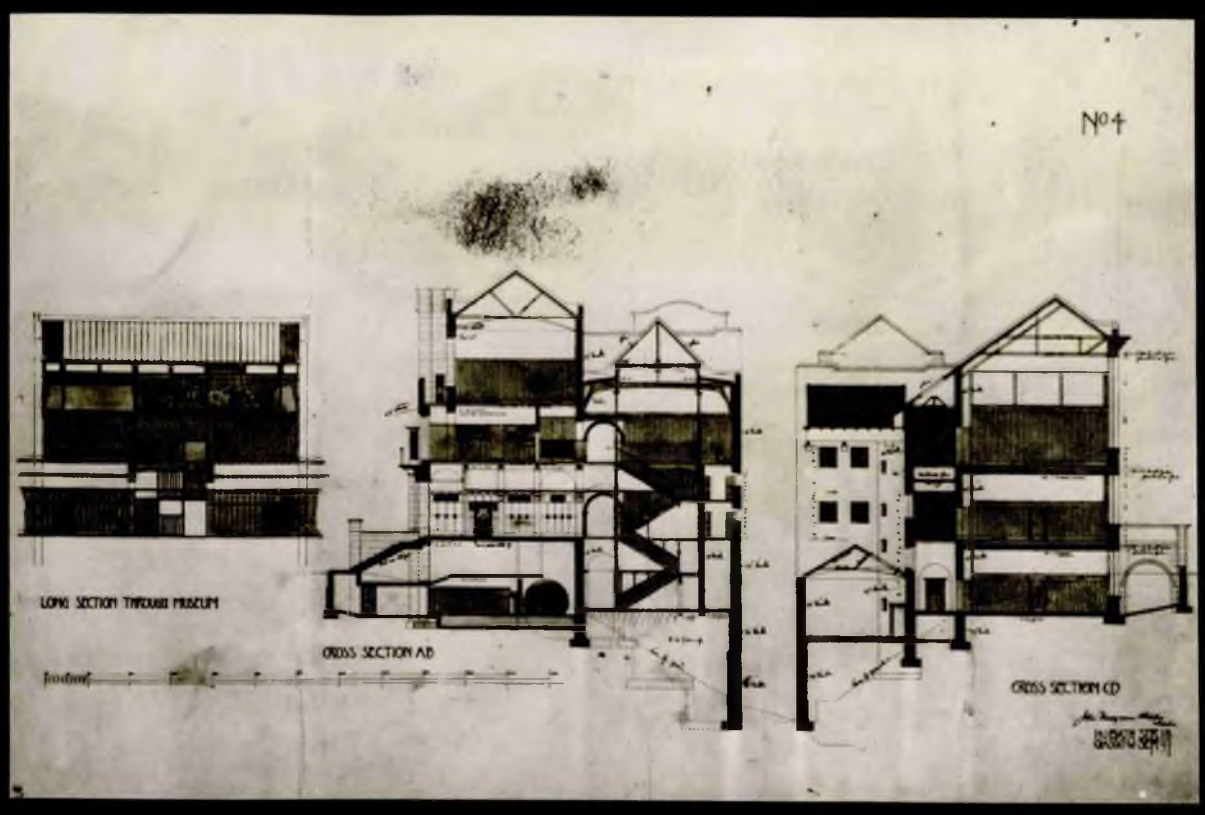
It will be observed from the illustration here that according to the original drawing the great studio windows were to be linked by a debased type of cornice or hood, which, if not included at the instigation of Keppie himself, may have been inserted with an eye to the tastes and susceptabilities of the assessors. This and other details of classical origin were discarded as building progressed: the parapet was modified and the roof cantilevered

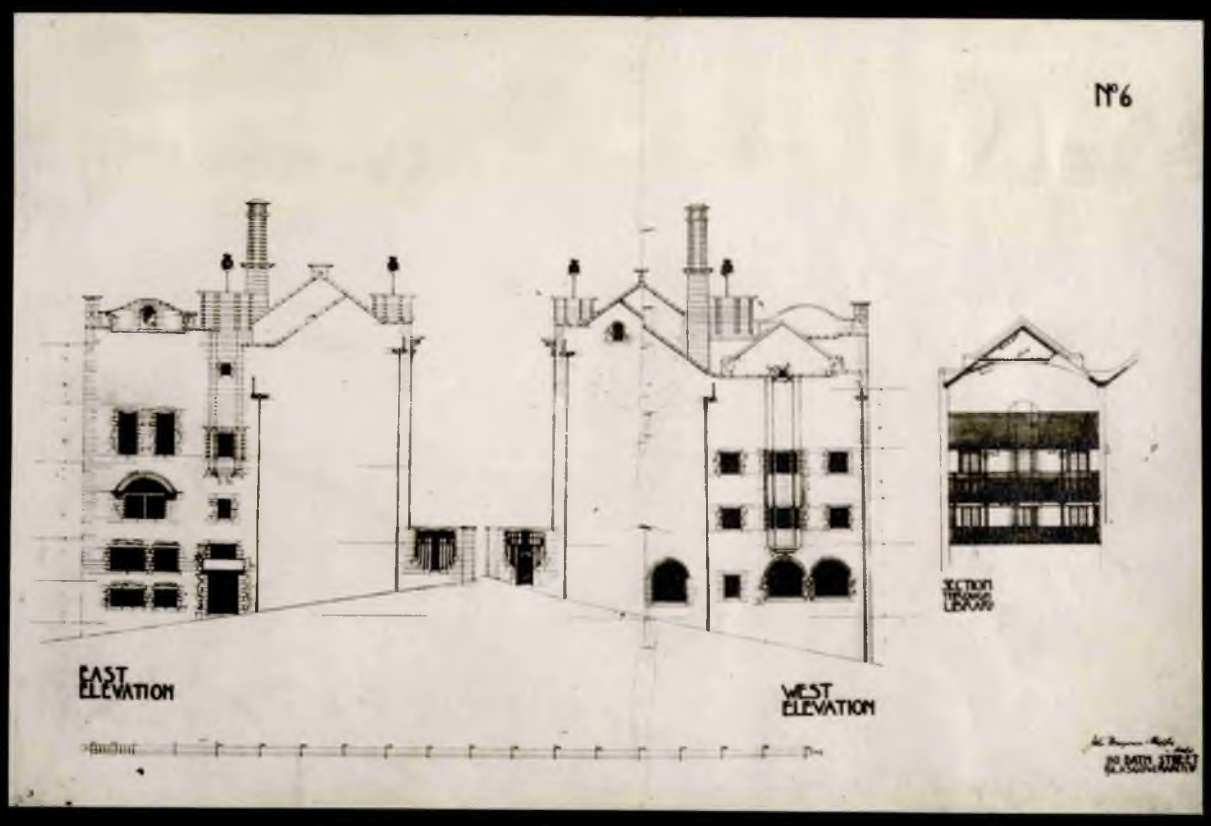
Fig. 60. The Glasgow School of Art: Original Drawings:

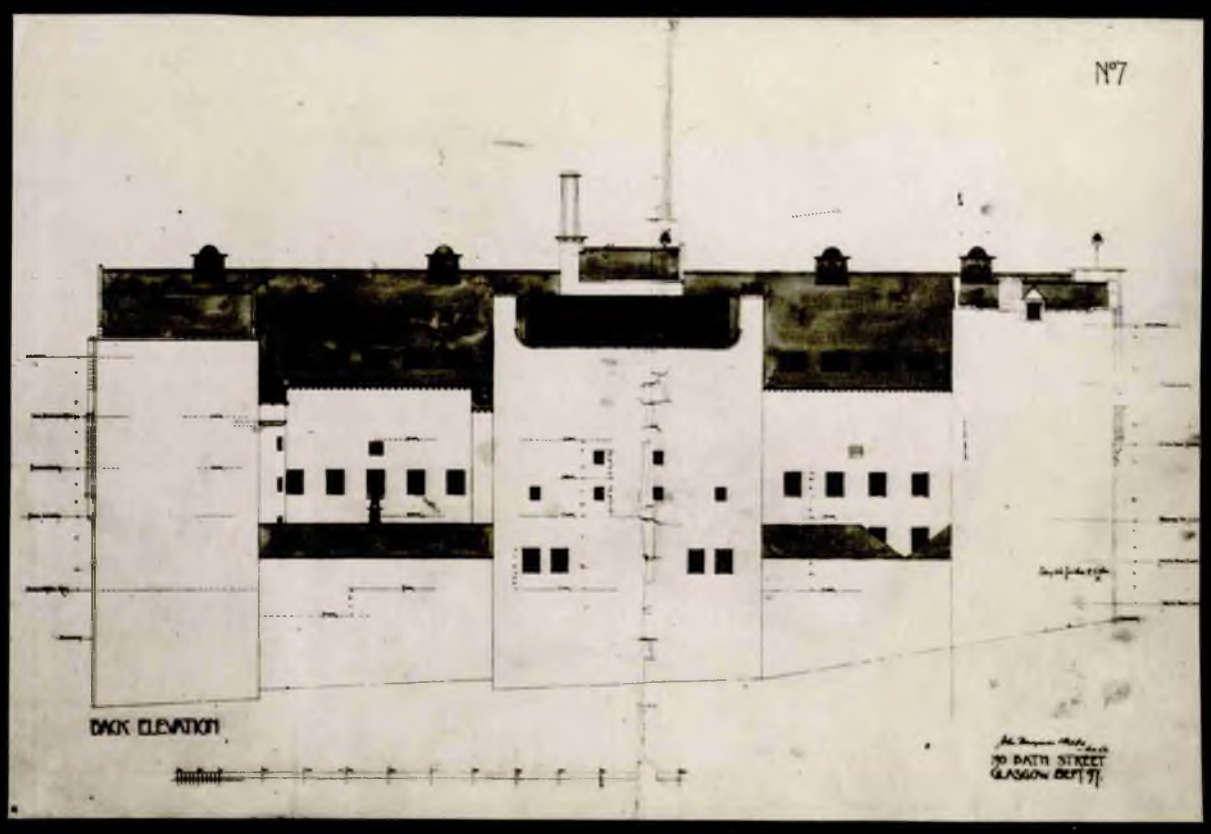
a. Sections.

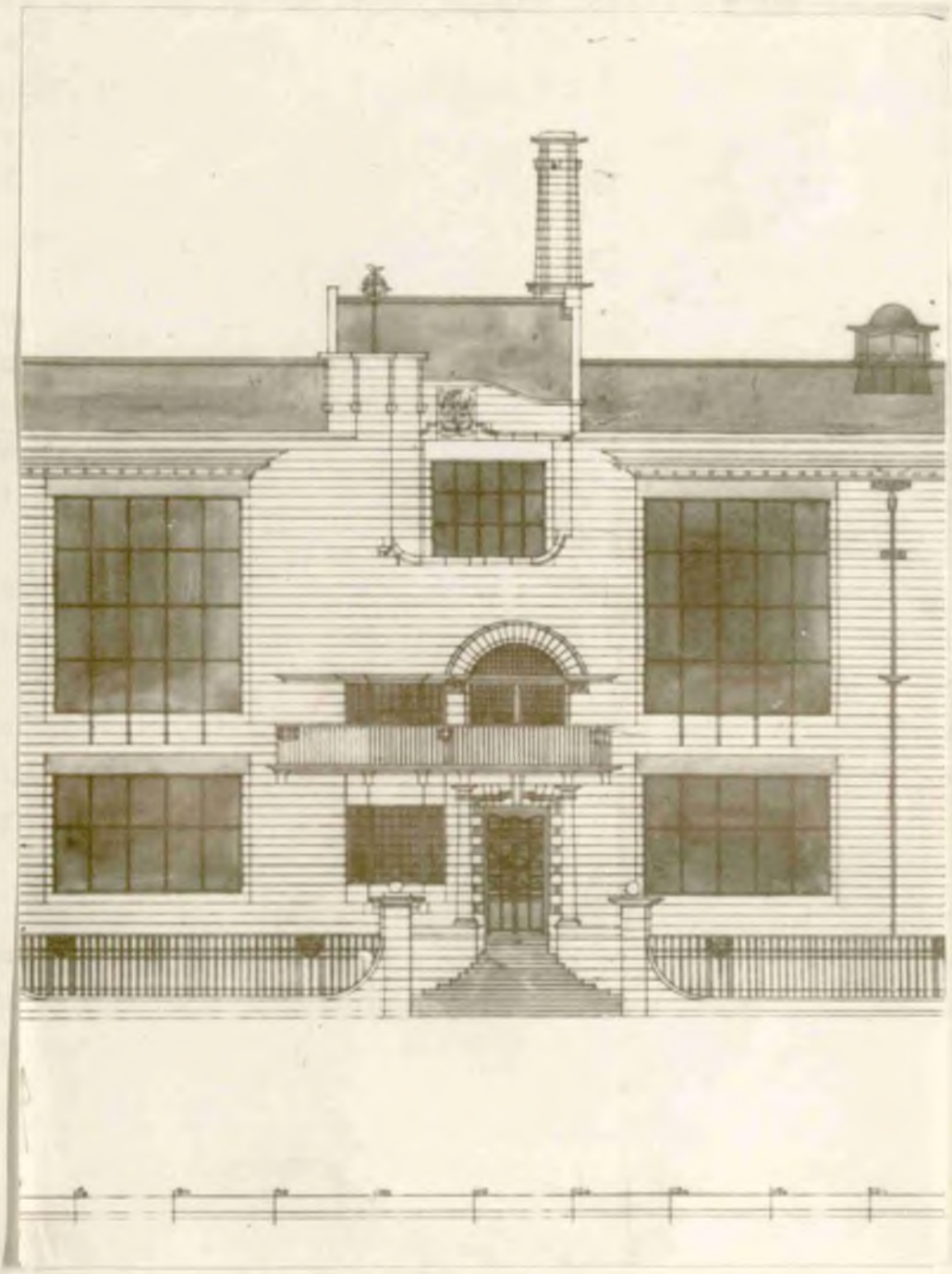
b. East & West Elevations.

c. South Elevation.


No 4
LONG SECTION THROUGH MUSEUM
CROSS SECTION AB
CROSS SECTION CD


No 6
EAST ELEVATION
WEST ELEVATION


No 7
BACK ELEVATION



Detail of Main Doorway as originally designed (1896).

forward on simple wooden brackets, thus providing a far more effective termination to the facade; the applied pilasters flanking the doorway were ultimately rejected in favour of a simple, more Scottish architrave, and the heavy commonplace railings were entirely redesigned. In this manner, the north front gradually assumed its present form.

Mackintosh frequently expressed the view that an architect's drawings were but a rough indication of an idea. In his opinion the designer should be at liberty to modify them at will as work progressed; a building, like a piece of clay in the hands of a potter, should be moulded into its ultimate form by the architect-craftsman. To him, the end always justified the means and if he thought his work could be improved, even when to all intents and purposes it was finished, he seldom hesitated to

change it. The north front of the School of Art is a case in point, for when the first section was almost complete, he was dissatisfied with the appearance of the great windows and sent the mason back to round off all the sharp corners - a not inconsiderable extra for the finance committee to meet.

Mackintosh was able to put into practice this delightful but uneconomical theory for the first time when work began on the School, solely because at every point he had Newbery's unqualified support. When the second section was commenced some ten years later however, not even the headmaster could overrule the Governors' decision to put a stop to the architect's costly experiments. They absolutely refused to meet an interminable number of accounts for extras, and insisted that all drawings be signed by the chairman of the Governors and the Convener of the Building Committee before they were passed on to the contractor, an arrangement which was hardly complimentary, and which no doubt the partners deeply resented. This however, is another story and must be relegated to a later chapter.

The School of Art is a building of absorbing interest to the architect-historian for it contains work by Mackintosh in all moods and at various stages of his development; it will now be examined in detail under the following headings:-

1) The Site, Plan and Materials.
2) The Four Facades.
   (a) The East.
   (b) The North.
   (c) The West.
   (d) The South.
3) Internal Features.

1) <u>The Site, Plan and Materials.</u>

<u>Site.</u> The architect had to contend with a very awkward site: a long narrow rectangle in shape, it had a precipitous fall of about 30 ft. from the north - Renfrew Street - to its southern extremity.

The area is bounded on either side by cobbled streets of distressing inclination - Scott Street to the west and Dalhousie Street to the east. The problems involved by this steep fall were overcome to a certain extent by setting back the building from Renfrew Street, and by entering the ground floor at a fairly high level. Capacious studios and storage rooms were planned in the basement - the former lit by large light wells - and it is possible to obtain direct access to them at both east and west ends from Dalhousie Street and Scott Street respectively.

Brief reference has been made already to Mackintosh's almost invariable use of trees and flowers in close proximity to his buildings, and it is interesting to note that even this austere site did not deter him. Early in 1899 when the first section was nearing completion, he arranged for the draughtsmen in Honeyman & Keppie's office to present five trees, to be planted with suitable protection, at the corner of Renfrew Street and Dalhousie Street.*

Plan. Fig.63. The Dalhousie Street entrance is flanked to the north by studios used for animal life drawing and to the south by the janitor's house, which incidentally only obtains east light. The west end of the basement was designed to accommodate clay modelling and sculptors' studios, and also a lecture theatre later placed in the west wing - the heating chamber was in a sub-basement.

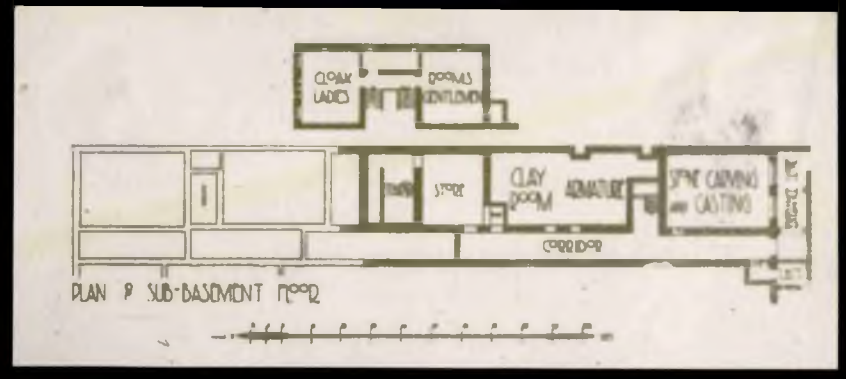
At ground floor level and above, everything was more or less straightforward. Mackintosh adopted the simple expedient of planning all the studios on the north side and keeping the private rooms, cloak rooms, etc., to the south. Main access to all floors is obtained by a large central staircase of timber, and subsidiary access by the fireproof staircases already mentioned at either end of the long central corridor.+

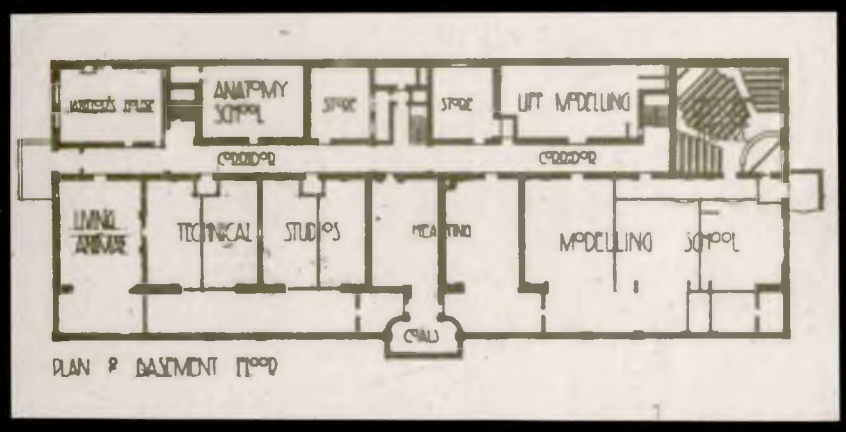
Few changes have taken place during the last forty years, the most noticeable being perhaps the Board Room, which was originally situated above the janitor's house in the East Wing. This nobly proportioned, panelled room has four tall bow windows, two at either end, and a large stone fireplace - one of the first of a long series of excellent designs by the architect. Whether

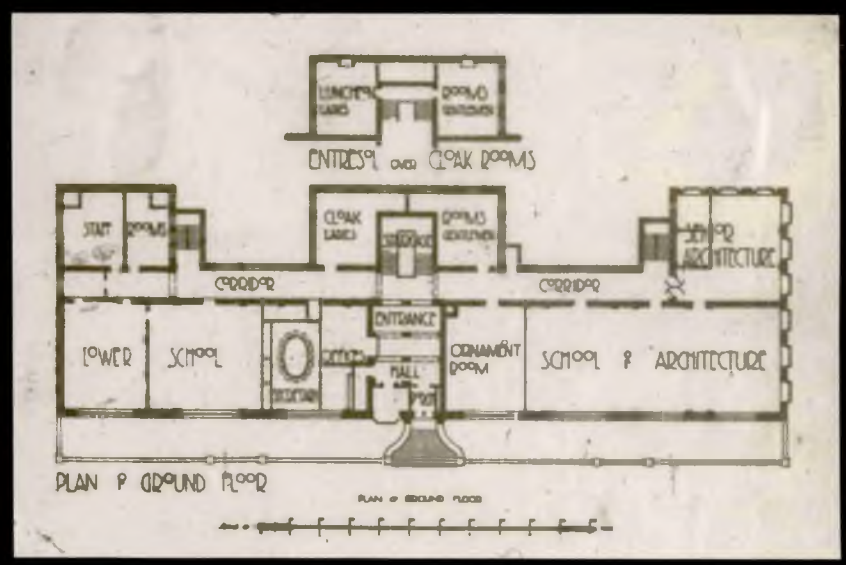
(Footnote: *No trace of them can be found and it is doubtful if the plan ever materialised, but the incident serves to emphasise the importance the architect attached to natural beauty as a foil to his rigid harmonies of stone, metal and glass. - School of Art minutes, 12.5.99.)

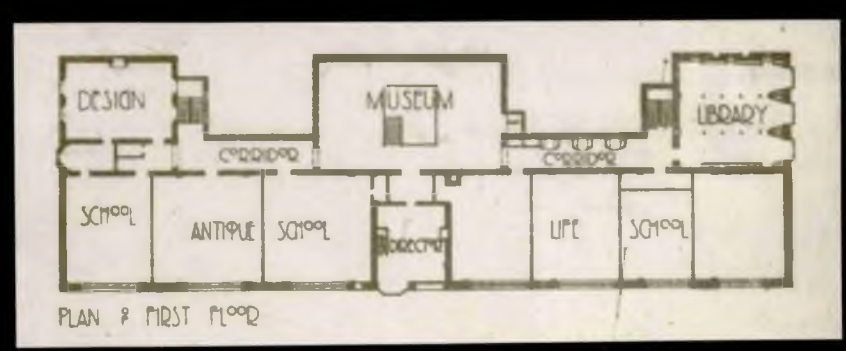
+ The two staircases were designed in 1906. School of Art minutes 5.6.06, 'drawings and estimates of proposed stair.')

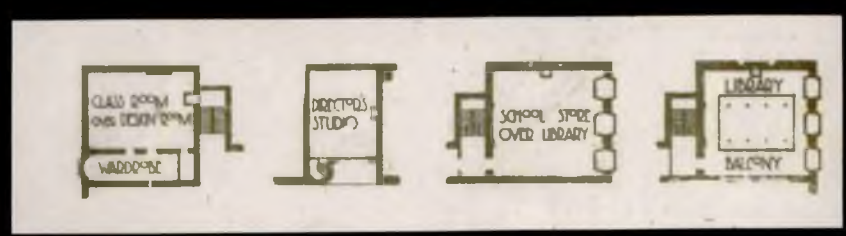
Fig. 63. The Glasgow School of Art: Plans of Existing Building.

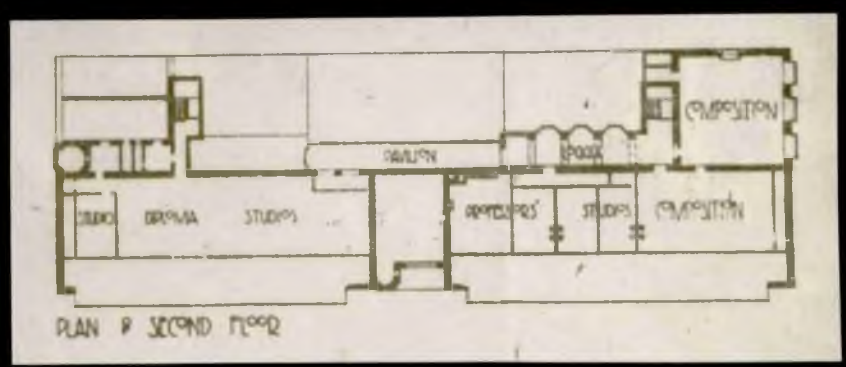

CLOAK LADIES
ROOMS GENTLEMEN
STORE
CLAY ROOM
ARMATURE
STONE CARVING AND CASTING
CORRIDOR
PLAN OF SUB-BASEMENT FLOOR


ANATOMY SCHOOL
STORE
STORE
LIFE MODELLING
CORRIDOR
CORRIDOR
TECHNICAL
STUDIOS
MODELLING SCHOOL
HALL
PLAN OF BASEMENT FLOOR


ENTRESOL OVER CLOAK ROOMS
STAFF ROOMS
CLOAK LADIES
ROOMS GENTLEMEN
ARCHITECTURE
CORRIDOR
CORRIDOR
ENTRANCE
LOWER SCHOOL
ORNAMENT ROOM
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
HALL
PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR


DESIGN
MUSEUM
LIBRARY
CORRIDOR
CORRIDOR
SCHOOL
ANTIQUE
SCHOOL
LIFE
SCHOOL
PLAN OF FIRST FLOOR


CLASS ROOM OVER DESIGN ROOM
WARDROBE
DIRECTOR'S STUDIO
SCHOOL STORE OVER LIBRARY
LIBRARY
BALCONY


COMPOSITION
PAVILION
LOGGIA
STUDIO
DRAPERY
STUDIOS
DRAPERIES'
STUDIOS
COMPOSITION
PLAN OF SECOND FLOOR

the position of the room on the first floor rendered it too inaccessible for the Governors, or whether the lofty ceiling and pronounced modernity of the white enamelled woodwork disturbed the august body is not known, but they soon decided to meet in the more intimate surroundings of the secretary's office. The old Board Room was used next for textile printing, and now houses an interesting collection of Mackintosh furniture and drawings.

The plan of the School is notable for its directness and simplicity. A variant on the single bank corridor type, with central and terminal vertical access, it provides unusually spacious accommodation for a building of this nature. Flexibility is obtained by the provision of movable partitions between the studios instead of the customary solid walls, a remarkable innovation in the 1890's. Mezzanine floors have been ingeniously worked into the scheme to justify to some extent the lofty studios, which on the first floor, have a ceiling height of 17 ft.

Materials. The School is constructed of solid masonry and brickwork. The north, west and east facades are of masonry, local 'Whitespot' and Giffnock stone being used,* and the south facade is of brickwork, harled (roughcast) externally; all load-bearing internal walls are of brick. Steel lattice girders, or cast iron beams, encased in cement on metal laths are used for all major spans - the lintels to the large northern windows for example, 20'2" long, consist of special cast iron box beams 24" x 30", and the studios are spanned by rolled steel rivetted lattice girders ~~XXX~~ 24" x 12", 37ft. long and stiffened at intervals of about 12 ft. by cross members which carry the timber floors of the rooms above. The structural grid thus formed is not regular, and a bay of 20ft. alternates with a narrower one of 14ft. or 12ft. The studios are separated by movable timber partitions which vary from about 11'0" to 15'0" in height and above which are light walls of plaster suspended from the ceiling. The entire studio~~s~~ floor area of both wings to a depth of 35 ft. from the north face, is thus perfectly free from structural load bearing walls and can be subdivided as desired.

With few exceptions, flat roofs are used throughout. The top storey (set back from the north wall some 11 ft. and added

(Footnote:-*Tender for Mason and Brickwork, using:-

Whitespot quarry stone,		£11,610.
Giffnock "	"	£11,860.
Cullalo, Fife "	"	£12,460.)

c.1909) is roofed in timber covered with asphalte; the remainder of the roof where not of glass, is similarly finished except for the overhanging eaves which are covered with lead. Where pitched roofs are used, notably over the museum hall and on one or two of the basement craft rooms to the south, heavy timber trusses of unusual design are employed, and roof light obtained between them.

Concrete is used for foundations and all basement and sub-basement floors, and surprisingly enough, for the floor to the upper storey which is 6" to 7" thick. Otherwise, the floors throughout are of timber.

2) The Four Facades.

It is difficult to obtain a comprehensive view of the building because of the awkward site, narrow streets and surrounding property, and the visual effect is different from each approach. The eastern facade to Dalhousie Street rises directly from the pavement whilst the north front is set back, the well so created being protected by a low wall from which spring wrought iron railings fully 9 ft. high. The west elevation rises in part direct from Scott Street, and lower down, from a well, again protected by distinctive ironwork. The southern facade of harled brickwork austerely dominates a shambles of nondescript buildings occupying the valuable site between it and Sauchiehall Street. The most impressive views can be obtained from either Scott or Dalhousie Streets, but it is impossible to see the north front to advantage from any angle.

With these general observations it might be well to examine each facade separately.

(a) The East Front. (1897-9). The approach to the School from Dalhousie Street is very impressive. The end wall of the building rises sheer from the pavement to a height of 80 ft. or more, and the steep incline of the street accentuates the uncompromising severity of the large area of masonry and relatively small windows. One half of the facade - that forming the end wall of the line of studios to the north - is completely plain except for a tiny projecting shelf at parapet level surmounted by a gay pediment which serves no other purpose than to relieve the monotony of the wall surface and to emphasise its scale.*

Fig.65.

(Footnote: *Two large and inelegant windows in this part of the wall at street level are later additions.)

Fig. 65. The Glasgow School of Art: The East Facade.

The southern portion of the facade contains a number of symmetrically disposed windows ranging in size from several of domestic proportions lighting the janitor's house, to a pair of tall narrow bow windows of the former Board Room.

The two contrasting parts, the unbroken surface of solid masonry and the section freely pierced by windows, are united by means of a polygonal oriel which projects slightly from the wall face and terminates well above parapet level. This is surmounted by a wrought iron feature representing the coat of arms of the city of Glasgow - a conventionalised bird and tree with four pendant bells - a similar motive was used above the north front and both are interesting examples of the architect's craftwork. At street level there is a large doorway crowned by a heavy projecting lintel, which gives access to the animal life class studios in the basement.

Seen as a whole, this facade - like the later west wing - embodies the surging vitality, the power and strength of Dunderave and Craigievar, an impression derived from the architect's bold and forthright handling of form and materials. Nevertheless, it is surprisingly fresh in conception and no single detail is obviously derived from a historical source. To his contemporaries, the east end was considered daring and modern, an incomprehensible excursion into the realms of l'art nouveau, but from the vantage point of the nineteen forties, it seems to fit logically into the broad pattern of the Scottish tradition and is by no means extraordinary.

(b) The North Facade. (1897-9 and 1907-9). In direct contrast to the eastern facade, the north front (244ft. long) is entirely
Fig. 58b dominated by windows of enormous size and of completely unorthodox design. Fra. Newbery demanded the maximum amount of north light in his studios; the Governors appealed for "a plain building"; and here at least, Mackintosh must have satisfied everyone. The openings on the ground floor are 18ft. long by 12ft. high and on the first floor 18ft. long by 22ft. high; the former are divided by broad unmoulded wooden frames 5" x 5½" into ten large rectangular panes about 5'6" x 3'3" and the latter into twenty panes of similar size. The glass is set well forward and thus preserves the surface, and consequently the unity, of the facade which would have been destroyed had deep reveals been used.

The windows are asymmetrically disposed about the main entrance which is placed slightly off centre - there are four bays to the west and three bays to the east - a point that is

easily overlooked owing to the acute angle at which the facade must be viewed: even Dr. Pevsner has assumed the north front to be aymmetrical.*

Fig. In relation to the vast studio windows, the main doorway seems small on the drawing, but in actuality it does not appear disproportionate, mainly on account of the preponderance of masonry at this point. The architect skilfully contrived to emphasise the doorway and central feature by reducing the window openings to a minimum and permitting a certain amount of decoration in and around the door itself - a modelled architrave, for example, with a large keystone embellished with one of his characteristic motives. Additional emphasis is provided by a large semicircular headed french window on the first floor, lighting the headmaster's room, and by the boldly projecting balcony with decorative metalwork. Above this again, there is a large unbroken mass of masonry, most of which constitutes a high parapet to a second balcony which screens the window of the headmaster's private studio at second floor level - a feature largely invisible from the ground. To the left of the doorway is a projecting bay which develops at a higher level into the familiar engaged, polygonal oriel with a wrought iron bird and tree motive used as a crowning feature. The tower houses a small stair from the headmaster's room to his studio; below this, a private cloak room and, at ground floor level, the enquiry office to the main hall. As already indicated, there is now no suggestion of a frieze or cornice as a vertical termination to the facade, The low-pitched, almost flat roof, is boldly projected and the exposed rafters form a rhythmic, playful pattern against the rigid plane of masonry and glass which rises to meet them.

Fig. 586. The somewhat uncompromising character of this facade has been cleverly relieved by the employment of decorative metal-work which incidentally, had a practical function. Large iron brackets project at right angles to the wall from below the first floor windows, and from the extremity of each, a gracefully curved arm sweeps upwards and back to join the window mullion in a ball of intricately intertwined metal, for all the world like the basket hilt of a sword. These brackets were principally contrived to carry planks upon which window-cleaners could erect ladders in order to reach the more inaccessible areas of glass, and at the same time they served as additional stiffeners to the 22ft.high

(Footnote:* 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement', p.158 - "The two wings ... are rigidly symmetrical."

Fig. 67. External Metalwork:

a. Wrought Iron Motive on Roof.

b. Detail of Brackets on North Front.

astragals. In characteristic fashion however, the architect employed them in such a way that they form an indispensible part of the elevation - an extension of the building itself and a very necessary punctuation to an otherwise austere facade. The railings that protect the light wells on this side of the building serve a similar aesthetic purpose. They have an air of refinement, strength and gaiety which is achieved by the simplest possible means: for the most part they consist of perfectly plain cylindrical bars 7ft. high, rising to a broad horizontal capping. At intervals, there are sturdy groups of flat rolled strips 3" wide, terminating above the capping in a cluster of elongated spoon-like features surrounding a single member some 17ft. high and carrying a pierced metal disc - the emblem of a tree.

From stone pillars on either side of the approach stair springs a flat bow-shaped arch of wrought iron supporting at its centre a metal box lantern which in turn is surmounted by two small propellor-like objects, the use or meaning of which is difficult to determine.*

Mackintosh makes able use of wrought iron. It has been suggested earlier that he found inspiration in the work of James Sellars, but the motives he employed eventually at the School of Art were obviously derived from the craftwork of 'The Four'.

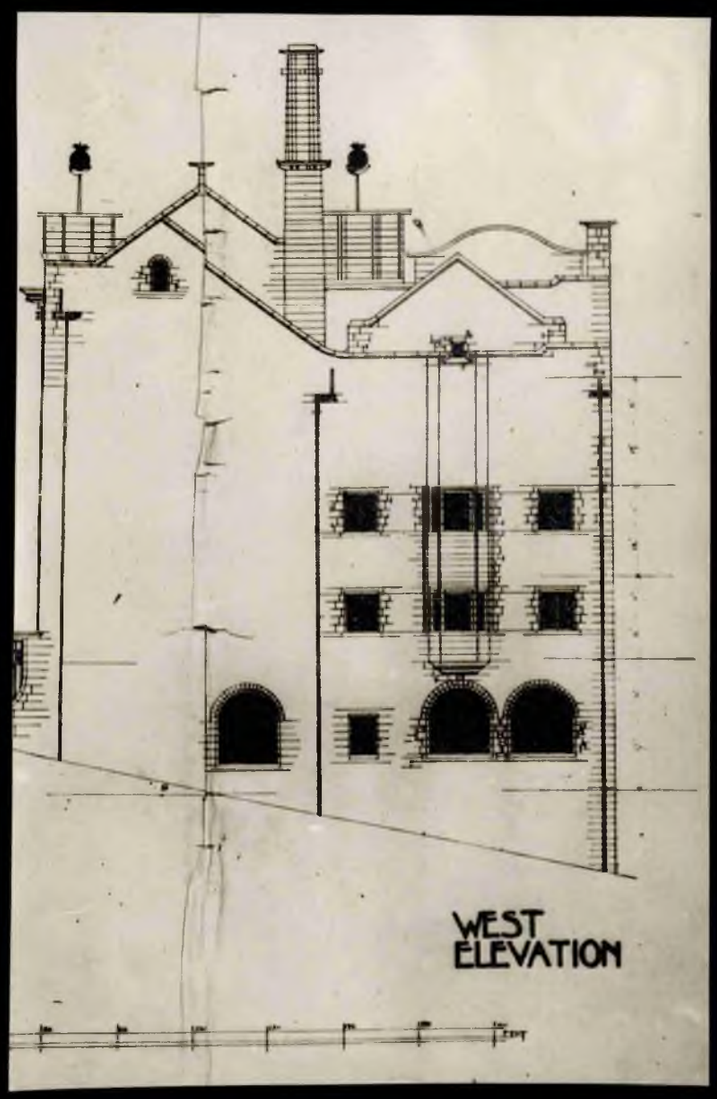
(c) The West Facade (1907-9). Just as the Renfrew Street facade is remarkable for its unorthodox window treatment, so the elevation to Scott Street achieves its intensely dramatic effect by the use of glass, but in an entirely different manner. The northern half, the end wall of the line of studios, is again left completely plain except for three projecting windows on the ground floor; the southern half is crowned by a gable and is notable for three narrow projecting oriels 7ft. wide overall, which rise from strong corbels at ground floor level to a height of 64ft., terminating at the parapet. The panes are about 9" square and framed in metal of remarkably slight section considering the enormous weight of the glass.+

Scott Street, like Dalhousie Street to the east, falls very steeply, and the ground floor at this side is on the average 20ft. above street level and the parapet some 95ft. high if measured

(Footnote: *This feature is not shown on any of the architect's drawings and was thought to be a later addition, but it is clearly visible on a recently discovered perspective of the first section of the School, drawn by Alexander McGibbon in 1900.)

+The windows were removed in 1947 and bronze frames substituted.)

Fig. 68. The Glasgow School of Art: The West Facade:
(as built 1907-9, and as originally conceived 1896).


WEST
ELEVATION

from base to coping at the junction of the south and west walls.

The three very large windows on this elevation - 25ft. high - light the library and internally start 3ft. above floor level, extending past the balcony into a studio above. They are flanked by pairs of long, roughly hewn stone blocks linked together by an embracing moulding and prepared for the sculptor's chisel. Pencil notes on the drawing of the elevation dated May 1907 suggest as subjects Cellini, Palladio and St. Francis. Unfortunately this work was not carried out, nor does the architect appear to have made sketches of the figures.

The west doorway, which gives access to the basement floor and lecture room, is more ornate than either the east or main doorway. It is surrounded by a heavy architrave and again by an elaborate secondary architrave or hood, which was intended to enclose two carved figures - these also were not executed. The basement and sub-basement windows are of normal proportions and by contrast accentuate the scale of the rest of the facade.

The west facade is a daring and imaginative composition and is undoubtedly Mackintosh's most dramatic achievement.

(d) The Southern Facade (1897-9 and 1907-9). Although less well composed than the other three elevations, the southern facade possesses several unusual features - all in the west, the later wing. The most incongruous of these is a glazed timber pavilion cantilevered from the main wall above the roof of the museum, from which magnificent views over the city can be obtained.

Fig. 69. At second floor level there is the small precariously cantilevered conservatory already mentioned. The harled surface of the walls does not conceal the structure supporting it, and the outline of a cast iron beam can be seen running back deeply into the main wall which is corbelled out to receive it.

The southern face of the projecting west wing is notable for its unusual fenestration. A long central window, similar in proportion to the library windows, is placed in a splayed recess instead of projecting beyong the wall surface. There are three small windows below this and three larger ones also in splayed recesses. It would appear that the architect wished to treat the west elevation as a study in bold relief and to reverse the process to the south by incising his pattern of windows, thus

Fig. 69. The Glasgow School of Art: Part of the South Facade: N.B. the cantilevered Conservatory.

preserving scale whilst indicating a change of function within. This sculpturesque technique is employed without impairing the unity of the whole.

3) The Interior.

The interior of the School of Art abounds in interesting detail, and here too it will be well to examine the principal features individually.

After the broad, dignified treatment of the front elevation, the entrance hall seems cramped, gloomy and bare, an impression which is mitigated little by the arched ceiling and predominance of white and cream panelling and plasterwork. Largely on account of this however, the observer is irresistibly drawn towards the well-lit main staircase. Here the interplay of light and shade on intersecting and receding planes of open balustrading engenders a sense of freedom and spaciousness which contrasts admirably with the crypt-like entrance hall.

Fig. 70a. The staircase is remarkable for its high balustrading of simple uprights of square section terminated by unmoulded crowning members which run horizontally, and quite independently of the rake of the stair - a characteristic feature of Mackintosh's domestic work, and reminiscent of C. F. A. Voysey. The square newel posts are carried up to various heights - from 8'3" to 25'3", - all taper from about 7" or 9" at the bottom to 6" and are crowned by square caps. The whole of the staircase is built of dressed yellow pine, originally stained dark brown; the solid wall panelling is of sawn timbers set vertically and butt jointed.[+] In 1936 the stain was removed and the rich colouring of the natural wood emphasised by wax polishing - an act of vandalism which evoked a vigorous protest from the contributor of an article entitled 'The Talk of Glasgow' in 'The Scottish Daily Express'.[*] The writer does not appear to have obtained much support however, and the staircase was not restored to its original colour. No other "improvements" have been attempted, and, with its curious bird, tree and bell centrepiece of wrought iron - another version of the Glasgow coat of arms - it remains one of the most striking features of the building and epitomises Mackintosh's revolt against convention.

(Footnote: [+]In 1903 a relief panel portrait of Sir James Fleming modelled by George Frampton R.A., was built into the wall of the half landing over which is cantilevered the floor of the museum gallery. Mackintosh designed the polished steel surround in which the memorial is set. Illustrated in 'The Studio' October, 1911, p.39.)

[*]30.9.36.)

Fig. 70. The Glasgow School of Art:

a. The Main Staircase.

~~b. Wrought iron grille on west staircase~~

b. Main Staircase Detail.

The lofty corridors that run east and west from the staircase well are panelled in wood. All the doors giving access to the various apartments were designed individually by the architect and each possesses a small stained and leaded glass window.

The most impressive characteristic of the interior however - and this applies to both wings - is the height and spaciousness of the studios on the north front. On the ground floor they measure 17ft. from floor to ceiling and on the first floor 26ft: their average dimensions are about 35ft. square. With rooms of such proportions any other form of window opening than that adopted by the architect would have been unthinkable. By suppressing all small detail he achieved a broadness of effect that is wholly admirable. It is rather surprising to find that a certain amount of roof lighting is provided in addition to these enormous areas of glass. The bold projection of the eaves on the north front is not obtained simply by extending the roof members as one might suppose, but by means of short rafters cantilevered from the external wall and secured on the inside by brackets in
Fig.49b. precisely the same manner as in the Martyrs' School. This form of construction with the normal rafters terminating on an internal trimmer beam and the verge of the roof cantilevered from the outer wall enabled an almost continuous row of roof lights some eight feet wide to be inserted parallel with the external wall - an elaborate and expensive arrangement which no doubt was justified by the considerable increase in light which is evenly diffused, and approximates closely to outdoor conditions.

Internally the west wing is more accomplished than the first section of the building, though the general lay-out is virtually the same and the studios are similar in size and proportion. The first floor corridor contains three pairs of large canopied wooden seats, two to each window - a most attractive detail. The austerity of the adjacent concrete stair is relieved by groups of square coloured tiles set in a simple geometrical pattern flush with the grey cement screed which serves as a dado. Both east and west staircase wells contain fine examples of wrought iron work. Especially notable are the bow-fronted railings which appear like tiny balconies overlooking the ground floor corridor.

Fig. 72a. The corridor (or loggia, as it is officially called), on the second floor, is as curious as it is unexpected. It consists of three square bays of heavy semicircular brick arches which are
Fig. white-washed and carry a low raftered timber roof. The effect is cloisterlike and the construction suggestive of a basement

rather than an upper floor. Light is obtained from three cantilevered bay windows facing south. ~~The~~ To the east, this not unattractive corridor narrows to join a flimsy pavilion - inelegantly yet none the less picturesquely known as "the hen run" - serving as a link between east and west sections and by-passing the headmaster's studio. The pavilion is projected 7ft. from the main southern wall of the building and is constructed entirely of timber framed into squares and glazed from a height of 3ft. above floor level. The light, temporary nature of this structure is in marked contrast to the solidity of the loggia and it is an extraordinary conception - in fact it seems almost an after-thought, a makeshift way of gaining access from east to west wings at the smallest expense.

Several other unusual features occur in the west wing. The basement for instance, contains two rooms to the south of the main corridor which have pitched roofs with trusses of unusually heavy timber construction, and in one case - that of the sculptors' modelling room - the tie beams penetrate through the roof above gutter level. The wall-plates in this room are supported by rolled steel T-beams projecting some 12" from the wall face and skilfully wrought into decorative brackets. The lecture theatre is in the basement also, and is approached directly from the west doorway. The room is about 35ft. square and is panelled almost to ceiling height (14ft.) ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ A tiny projection room is provided, also a curved stage with an ingenious desk attachment in sections which can be extended the full width of the platform or removed altogether if desired. The atmosphere is warm and intimate and the accoustics excellent - in fact only two features mar an almost ideal lecture room - the uncomfortable fixed seating and a tendency for the central heating system to burst without warning, into a violent cacophony, virtually petrifying lecturer and audience alike.

Fig.72b.

The Library.

Fig. 73.

The library is undoubtedly the most astonishing room in the building. It is situated above the lecture theatre and has the same floor area with the addition of a useful gallery. The soaring lines of the west windows are echoed internally by tall square pillars of stained pine which rise some 17ft. from the floor to carry the ceiling beams and to support the balcony. Mackintosh was particularly anxious to emphasize the aesthetic qualities of the heavy timber construction; instead of bringing the front of the balcony forward to line with the pillars, he set it back three feet on supporting beams, and filled the gap thus formed with tall balusters of square section the edges of which

Fig. 72. The Glasgow School of Art:

a. "The Loggia."

b. The Modelling Room.

c. Detail from the new Board Room.

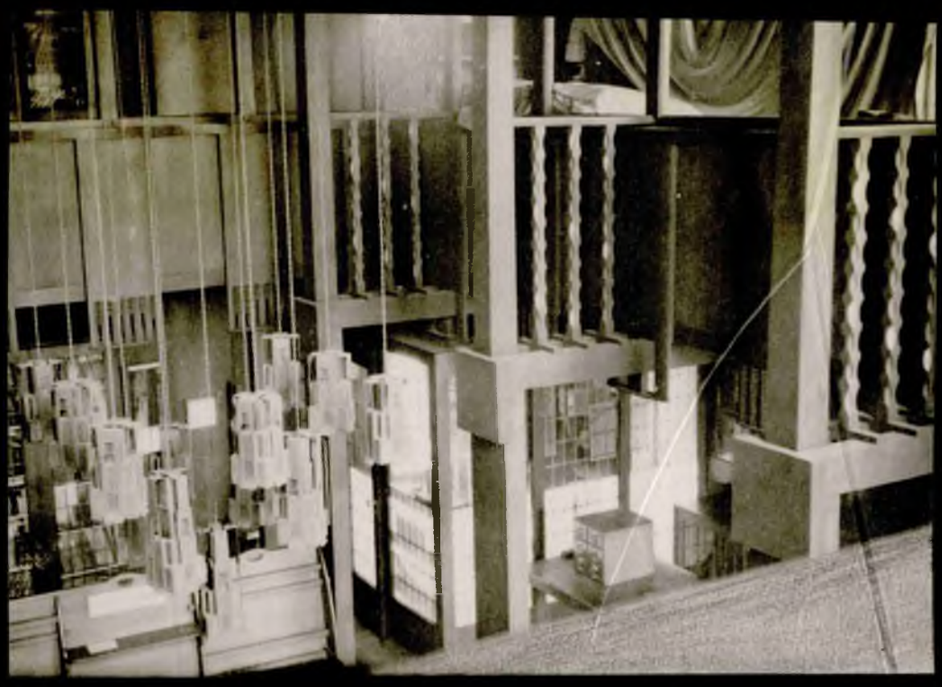
were chamfered - or rather scalloped - at intervals and brightly coloured. The post and lintel construction of both balcony and ceiling is thus clearly revealed and added emphasis given to the strong verticals.

Solid panelling is used in the front of the balcony and alternate members are carried down about 12" as pendants and carved in a similar manner to the galleries at Queen's Cross Church: the pattern is purely abstract and no two pendants are identical in treatment. The walls are lined with built-in glass-fronted book-cases. Tables, chairs and magazine racks, all designed by the architect, occupy the floor between the pillars. The singularly inefficient light fittings - from the practical point of view one of Mackintosh's least successful designs - consist of small box-like shades suspended from the ceiling in clusters of a dozen or so. Each box almost completely encloses an individual lamp, the light of which is directed vertically downwards, consequently the upper part of the room is left in deep shadow. However, the visual effect of the clustered shades is very fine indeed.

It has been stated that curves entirely disappeared in Mackintosh's later work at the School of Art, but this is not so. The curves are there, but so subtly treated as to be almost unnoticeable. The front of the gallery for example, is made of solid pieces of timber with overlapping joints, some of which form the pendants, and all display a convex face - a refinement which gives an appreciable ripple of light and shade right round the apartment. Moreover, on closer examination, it will be seen that every minor decorative motive is curved, from the coloured notches in the balusters to the carved pendants, from the ogival apron of the bookcases to the pierced pattern on the table legs. Although the scale may be comparatively small, the cumulative effect gives exactly the right emphasis to the bold lines and functional rigidity of the structural members - so much so in fact, that the refinements may be easily overlooked in admiration of the whole.

The library is an exotic apartment; the exciting verticals, the subtle harmonies of light and shade, and above all, the unrelieved sombre tones of the woodwork, engender a peculiar atmosphere of suspense and of mystery only paralleled in the author's experience by the silent, brooding pinewoods of the Trossachs; nor is it inconceivable that the architect went to this source for inspiration. The spatial quality of Mackintosh's work and his clever handling of contrasting planes, as exemplified in the

Fig. 73. The Glasgow School of Art: The Library.



main staircase, are developed to a high degree in the library. Dr. Pevsner has vividly described the room as "an overwhelmingly full polyphony of abstract form" and this is hardly an exaggeration.

Furniture.

Apart from the simple tables and chairs for the library, the School does not contain many examples of Mackintosh's furniture. The only rooms he furnished completely were the headmaster's room and the Board Room.

The Headmaster's Room.

Fig. 74a.

The Headmaster's Room is notable for its fine ivory enamelled panelling, fireplace and staircase screen. The panelling is formed of single boards butt jointed, with narrow cover strips extending from floor to ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ crowning member. The junction of timber and plaster is concealed by an attenuated cyma recta cornice of bold projection, and at the base of the wall a simple cavetto cover strip about 2" high is used instead of the customary deep skirting - both features, and the method of panelling, are characteristic of the architect.

Some useful built-in cupboards with doors decorated by small leaded glass panels occupy part of one wall. Adjacent to these is a private stair to the studio, screened by a light open framework of square balusters extending to cornice level and panelled for part of ~~xxx~~ its height in the form of a gay ogee curve. The spacing of the balusters corresponds to that of the cover strips of the panelling; uniformity is thus preserved meanwhile including the staircase as an attractive yet unobtrusive feature.

The minutes of the School of Art Finance Committee* indicate that Mackintosh sunmitted estimates and drawings for furnishing the Headmaster's Room in 1904. His proposals however, were not greeted with enthusiasm and the committee passed on to the Headmaster the delicate task of persuading the architect to simplify his designs. Newbery either failed in his mission, or in turn delegated it to the chairman, Mr. Patric S. Dunn, who, three weeks later, reported that he had interviewed Mackintosh and approved the style of the furniture "with some slight modification". He and W. Forrest Salmon were then asked to see Mackintosh again and arrange for the work to proceed. The furniture consisted of a large circular oak table, a high-backed arm chair and a number of small committee room chairs; a writing desk in cyprus was also designed but not carried out, and a haircord carpet was executed later - with the exception of the desk, all these pieces are still in the School.

(Footnote:* 25.2.1904.)

Fig. 74. The Glasgow School of Art: The Headmaster's Room.

The Board Room.

When the Governors elected to vacate the original Board Room in the east wing, Mackintosh prepared a special apartment for them next to the office on the ground floor by erecting a permanent timber partition across the adjacent studio. The broad astragals of the studio window provided adequate support, and enabled the structure to be secured against the outside wall without affecting the external appearance of the building, yet permitting adequate light to both rooms.*

The Board Room is almost as bizarre in character as the library, and with the exception of a pedimented wooden doorway designed for the Lady Artists' Club, Glasgow, it is the only example of neo-classical work executed by Mackintosh. It may have been intended as a subtle, yet sardonic jest at the expense of the Governors, an august body of stylists who included in their number the great John Burnet and John Keppie, and who by this time, if not openly hostile, had little sympathy to waste on Mackintosh and his idiosyncracies.

Wooden panelling of a more traditional character was used for the walls which were subdivided by fluted pilasters, each terminating in an imaginative Ionic capital on which rested a beam supporting the low coffered timber ceiling. The ceiling was suspended from the main structure, and the lofty studio in which the Board Room was built permitted a spacious storeroom to be constructed above it. The pilaster caps must have created no little consternation among the purists; Mackintosh appears to have taken as his model a normal Ionic capital, and virtually turned it inside out! The result is not unpleasing, though the caps are perhaps rather attenuated and the form of the echinus disproportionate. No subtlety has been expended on effecting the transition from the cap to the heavy crowning cornice, there is no suggestion of architrave and frieze, even in simplified form. Then again, a peculiar type of decoration is employed below the capital, where, for a length of two or three feet, the flutes are interrupted at intervals by an irregular pattern of squares and rectangles of varying size, reminiscent of musical notation. This unfamiliar cellular motive is allied to that employed in the balcony pendants in the Library and at Queen's Cross Church. It is a form of decoration seemingly without precedent, though a regular motive of similar form was used by August Endell - an

(Footnote: *It is said that William Moyes, then a young draughtsman, had a great deal to do with this alteration which was completed just before work on the second section of the School commenced, but this is not so, Mr. Moyes states that he had left Keppie before this work was finished and had no hand in it. - Letter to the author dated 22nd July 1947).

advocate of continental art nouveau - on the front of the buffet counter in his 'Buntes Theatre', Berlin, c.1902.* The derivation of the pattern is difficult to establish, but Mackintosh no doubt employed it here to destroy the formality of the flutes and to show his antipathy to the classic idiom.

The curtains, carpet and furniture for the Board Room - all of which are still in existance - are not particularly noteworthy. The light fittings consist of inverted, saucer-like pierced metal reflectors hung in clusters from wrought iron hoops close to the coffered timber ceiling. Each reflector holds a single unscreened electric lamp; a more practical though less subtle design than the library fittings.

This description in conjunction with the complementary photographs, will perhaps give some indication of the visual form and character of the School of Art, and of the remarkable versatility of its designer. It is impossible by such limited means, however, to capture the true spirit of the building, to portray two-dimensionally the sweeping vistas of the corridors, the ecstatic soaring lines of the staircase hall, or the vast airy space of the magnificent studios. Nor can one paint in words the brooding mystery of the library, or the ironic gesture to orthodoxy contrived by the architect in the neo-classic board room. Like all great works of art the School possesses many of the qualities of a living organism, and only by actual experience can anything but a superficial knowledge of the building, and the personality of its author, be obtained.

(Footnote: *Illustrated in 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration', Vol.9, p.285. 1902.)

CHAPTER IV.

DOMESTIC WORK (1).

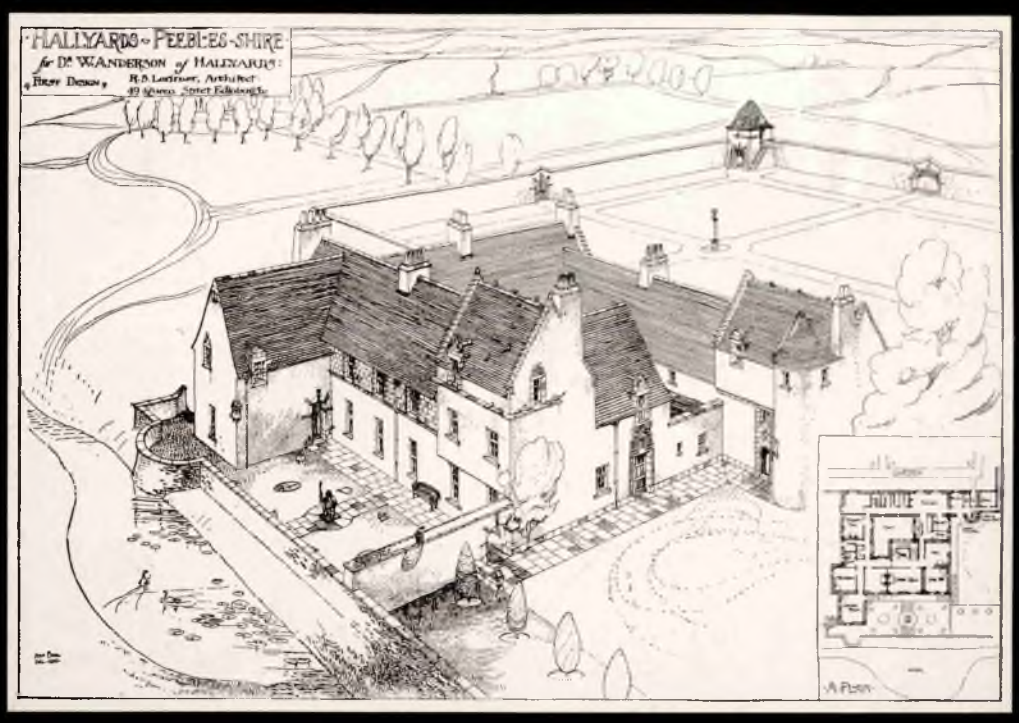
Architecture.

In the last quarter of the 19th century domestic architecture in Scotland as elsewhere, was notable more for its eclecticism than for its good taste; this of course, applied particularly to the Clyde Valley region, which absorbed the full impact of the Industrial Revolution. Practising architects, when they took an interest in domestic work, seemed quite content to follow the dictates of fashion which demanded either the Scots Baronial style, ornate or otherwise, according to the length of the client's purse, or more subdued essays in the classical idiom popularised by Greek Thomson. The domestic architecture of city and town was confined almost entirely to vast tenement buildings, a type of dwelling which had been a common feature of Scottish life for upwards of two hundred years* and which was equally popular with all classes of society. The labourer, the artisan and the professional man lived quite contentedly in substantially built and often well-planned tenements, and the wealthier classes either occupied more extensive apartments of the same type, terrace houses, or perhaps mansions in the suburbs or country. Little if any attempt was made to evolve a small modern house essentially Scottish in character, & it is surprising how completely the vigorous native tradition of domestic architecture was neglected.

Towards the end of the century however, a serious attempt was made to revivify the Scottish vernacular and to awaken public interest in old Scots building. The initiator of this movement, if movement it may be called, was Sir Rowand Anderson (1834-1921) and his influence was greatly extended by his pupil Sir Robert Lorimer (1864-1929) who returned to Scotland from Bodley's London office in 1892. Both men frankly adopted native forms - crow-stepped gables, angle turrets, dormers and the like - and used them with consummate artistry in an attempt to produce a modernised traditional style. Their work is delightful and charming, and invariably the craftsmanship is of the highest order, but their positive contribution to architectural development is questionable. Sir John Stirling Maxwell, in discussing Lorimer's work, has laid his finger on the crux of the matter, for he says,

(Footnote: *High tenements were constructed in Edinburgh old town early in the 17th century.)

Fig. 77. Sir Robert Lorimer: 'Hallyards', Peebles-shire.


HALLYARDS - PEEBLES-SHIRE
for Dr W. ANDERSON of HALLYARDS:
First Design,
R. S. Lorimer, Architect
19 Queen Street Edinburgh
A. Plan

> "... his (Lorimer's) houses are so completely saturated with the spirit of the old builders and show so complete a mastery of their technique that those who come unexpectedly upon them for the first time .... are for the moment completely staggered and where all is new, are left wondering how much is old".*

This contradiction is apparent in all the work of the two men, and however harmoniously contrived, their domestic buildings remain attractive museum pieces, revivalist in the spirit and the letter.

On a quantitative basis Mackintosh's domestic work is insignificant in comparison with that of his prolific fellow countryman. He executed but two commissions of importance, 'Windyhill' (1900) and 'Hillhouse' (1901-3), yet both of these, while retaining traditional characteristics, belong unmistakably to the twentieth century, and the observer is not left in doubt for a moment, how much is old, how much new. Mackintosh's traditional features are derivative rather than imitative and for the most part arise naturally from a logical expression of plan. His facades are usually plain with little surface modelling, and pierced by small rhythmically disposed windows. He favoured an L-shaped plan, itself a traditional form, which gave him one dominant, sweeping roof with an unbroken ridge, and on the main elevation at least, an uninterrupted eaves line. The roofs invariably terminated in a gable and whenever possible embodied a sturdy chimney-stack; the ubiquitous crow-stepped gable, which, it is said, was a legacy from a less opulent age when dressed copings were a luxury - does not appear in any executed work by Mackintosh.† In both 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' identifiable motives of a traditional character are rare, and the link with the past is expressed more in the form and spirit of the buildings than in antiquarian detail. Only two examples of the unimaginative use of historical motives occur - the triangular roofed dormer windows in the servants' wing of both houses, and the circular staircase tower with a conical roof; the latter is a rather disturbing element in the south eastern elevation of 'Hillhouse'.

Mackintosh did not consider his work finished when the main fabric of the building was completed, but made it his business to control as far as practicable the interior decorations, furnishings, and equipment. Then again, he always paid great attention to siting and layout; his houses seem to form part of the landscape, they grow from the soil, and at 'Hillhouse' in particular,

(Footnote: *'Shrines and Homes of Scotland" p.206.)

†The author has in his possession however, a drawing by him, displaying this and other features beloved by the baronialists - apparently an isolated example.)

the garden was planned to the architect's instructions in order to enhance the long sweeping lines of the principal facades.

Mackintosh's domestic work can be divided into two classes, the dwelling houses which he designed in their entirety, and of which the two examples already mentioned are most important, and the internal reconstruction and decorative schemes which he carried out to existing property; notably his own studio flat in Mains Street (1900), his house, No.78 Southpark Avenue (1906), and 'Hous'hill', Nitshill, for Miss Cranston (1906 et seq.). His project for the 'House for a Lover of Art' will be discussed in the chapter devoted to Continental Work and Exhibitions.

Before considering any of this work in detail however, it will be instructive to refer briefly to the architect's clients - both of whom the author knew personally - and to his method of working.

Mackintosh had, of course, been friendly with the Davidson family for some years, but William Davidson Junior in particular became devoted to the enigmatical young architect in whom he recognised the same burning fires of evangelism that had motivated the pioneers of the Glasgow School of Painting. Mr. Davidson was by this time (1900), a city business man of some standing, and a discriminating patron of contemporary art. He had already built up an interesting collection of work by 'The Boys of Glasgow', Hornel, Peploe, Hunter and the rest, and acquired several paintings by Pringle, the strange artist-optician of the Saltmarket whose work has become greatly prized in recent years, but who was then practically unknown. Mackintosh thus was fortunate in finding a client of unusual perception, a man who was not only benevolently disposed towards the new movement, but who was willing to be guided by him in all things, and if necessary, to make some personal sacrifice to gratify his wishes. He was asked to undertake the design of a house for the Davidsons at Kilmacolm, Renfrewshire, in 1899 - his first private commission of any importance.

Little information is available regarding the initial stages of the project apart from the entertaining fact that, after the architect's drawings had been approved and preparations made for building to begin, a small ceremony was performed on the site. Mrs. Davidson cut the first sod, a toast to the success of the scheme was drunk from a goblet designed for the occasion by Mackintosh, and the house was prematurely christened 'Windyhill'.

Work on the building and its furnishings proceeded satisfactorily, if somewhat slowly, and it was occupied late in 1901.

Mr. W. W. Blackie, the publisher, for whom Mackintosh designed 'Hillhouse', Helensburgh, on the other hand, made interesting notes of his impressions of the architect and of their close association during the early 1900's.

In the Spring of 1902, the Blackie family decided to leave their home at Dunblane and build a house more to their liking nearer the coast; with this object in view they acquired a magnificent hillside site at Helensburgh, overlooking the Clyde estuary. They were then faced with the problem of choosing an architect. It chanced that Talwin Morris - art manager of Blackie's firm - heard of the project and advised his employer to consult his friend Mackintosh whom, he pointed out, was the designer of the new Glasgow School of Art. Mr. Blackie was somewhat taken aback at this, thinking that so important a person would be too big a man for such a trivial commission, but Talwin Morris persisted and promised to ask Mackintosh to call the next day. The meeting of the two men is described by Mr. Blackie in these words,

> "When he entered my room I was astonished at the youthfulness of the distinguished architect .... here was a truly great man who, by comparison with myself, I esteemed to be a mere boy."

The interview did not last long, and agreement was quickly reached on fundamentals. To remove any lingering doubts as to his competance however, Mackintosh suggested that Mr. & Mrs. Blackie should see 'Windyhill' which had been just completed. The Davidsons at once acquiesced in this proposal, and upon visiting Kilmacolm the Blackies were convinced that they had been well advised in their choice of architect, and Mackintosh was instructed to proceed. Before preparing the preliminary sketches - and this is a most interesting point - he insisted upon spending some time with the family in order that he might, to use Mr. Blackie's phrase, "judge what manner of folk he was to cater for". Mackintosh was invited to stay with the Blackie's at Dunblane, and on entering their house for the first time, he was delighted to see an oak wardrobe in the hall which he himself had designed along with other articles of furniture, for Messrs. Guthrie & Wells. This was taken to be a good omen by all concerned.

In due course, plans for the new house were submitted and internal details discussed. Mackintosh would not prepare further drawings until the plan arrangement was finally agreed upon.

Once this stage was reached however, he soon produced the necessary elevations, and though his first design was not approved by his clients, in a few days he evolved a new set of drawings which were acceptable, and work on the building commenced. Everything seems to have gone well until a prolonged strike at the Ballachulish slate quarries caused considerable delay in the roofing when the building was nearly finished. It was suggested to Mackintosh that he should try an alternative source but he was obdurate, and refused to have any other slate of whatever colour, texture or quality, for the dark blue-grey tone of the Ballachulish quarries exactly suited his purpose. His clients had to wait patiently until supplies arrived, and they were not able to take possession of the house until March 1904.

Notwithstanding this, and other minor differences of opinion, Mr. Blackie pays tribute to the architect's skilful handling of the project; to his meticulous care of every detail both practical and aesthetic, to his minute attention to frequently overlooked incidentals such as fitted cupboards, linen stores, drawers for cutlery, china, etc., and in particular, to the trouble he took in planning the service quarters of the house.

> "With him," Mr. Blackie says, "the practical purpose came first. The pleasing design followed of itself as it were."
>
> "Every detail inside as well as outside, received his careful, I might say loving, attention."
>
> "During the planning and the building of 'The Hill House' I necessarily saw much of Mackintosh and could not but recognise, with wonder, his inexhaustible fertility in design and astonishing powers of work. Withal, he was a man of much practical competance, satisfactory to deal with in every way, and of a most likable nature ...."

At this point it will be well to examine 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' in detail, as they are so similar in conception that they can be compared and contrasted with advantage.

'Redlands,' Bridge of Weir. (c.1899).

Fig. 81.

First, however, a small house, 'Redlands' Bridge of Wier must be noted. This building stands in the same relationship to Mr. Davidson's and Mr. Blackie's house as the Martyrs' School and the Medical College to the School of Art - it marks a transitional stage. The design was controlled principally by Keppie who was especially proud of the 'baronial' hall and great stone-built fireplace, but the plan and certain external features - notably the staircase bay and contiguous gable - are reminiscent of Mackintosh, who of course, probably worked on the drawings.* The plan is the traditional L-shape and bears a close

(Footnote: *The perspective illustrated here is acharacteristic drawing by Alexander McGibbon. Fig. 8I.).

Fig. 81. 'Redlands', Bridge of Weir.


REDLANDS, BRIDGE OF WEIR
JOHN HONEYMAN R.S.A. & KEPPIE ARCH
STABLE
WASH HOUSE
LARDER
KITCHEN
BEDROOM
CONSERVATORY
PARLOUR
HALL
DINING ROOM

resemblance to both subsequent houses, yet the elevational treatment is markedly at variance, and in fact, recalls 'Redclyffe', Mackintosh's first commission, rather than either of the later examples.

'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse'.

Figs. 82 86d.

The plans of 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' are very similar though different in size, 'Hillhouse' being the more ambitious project. In each case the building consists of a principal block running east and west with a service wing at right angles, the internal angle thus formed enclosing on two sides a diminuitive ornamental courtyard. There is a certain similarity between the internal arrangement of the School of Art and the two houses, and the same ordinance of principal apartments on one side of a spacious corridor, or hall, is clearly recognisable. If anything the 'Windyhill' plan is the more straightforward of the two, and the service wing is better integrated with the main block. The whole scheme is well proportioned; the only unpleasant feature being the juxtaposition of a semicircular staircase and a semi-octagonal bay to the playroom at the west end - the latter however, is only one storey high and consequently the staircase dominates on elevation.

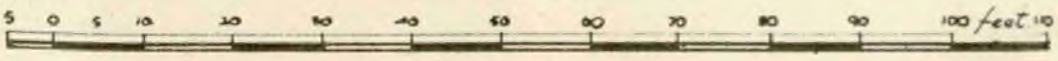
Fig. 82.

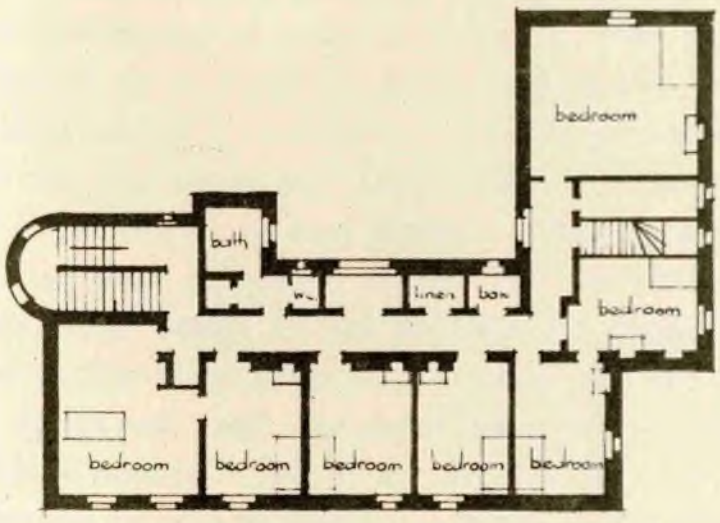
Staircases expressed externally as a circular tower or turret have been a feature of Scots domestic work since the 16th century. They assumed added importance largely on account of a curious reluctance on the part of builders to employ internal corridors;* 'Argyll's Lodging' Stirling, for example, a notable town house built as late as 1632, possesses no internal passages, access being obtained to most of the rooms by means of four turrets, one at each corner of a small square courtyard. The transition to formal planning with internal corridors seems to have occurred suddenly in Scotland c.1700 in the work of Sir William Bruce of Kinross (d.1710), the architect of Holyrood (1679), who was closely associated with Wren, and was familiar with English practice.+

Although Mackintosh employed the Scottish newel stair on only one occasion - at 'Hillhouse' - he always paid particular attention to the staircase as an important plan element. He favoured a spacious semi-circular staircase bay, and never lost an opportunity of introducing one, though he eschewed the traditional predilection for winders, and almost invariably

(Footnote:- *Also a peculiarity of the French 'Hotel'; the "Auld Alliance" may thus have some bearing on the popularity of this plan in Scotland.)

+Bruce is credited with the design of three large houses in the new style; his own at Kinross (1695), Moncrieff House, Perthshire, and Melville House, Fife (1692).





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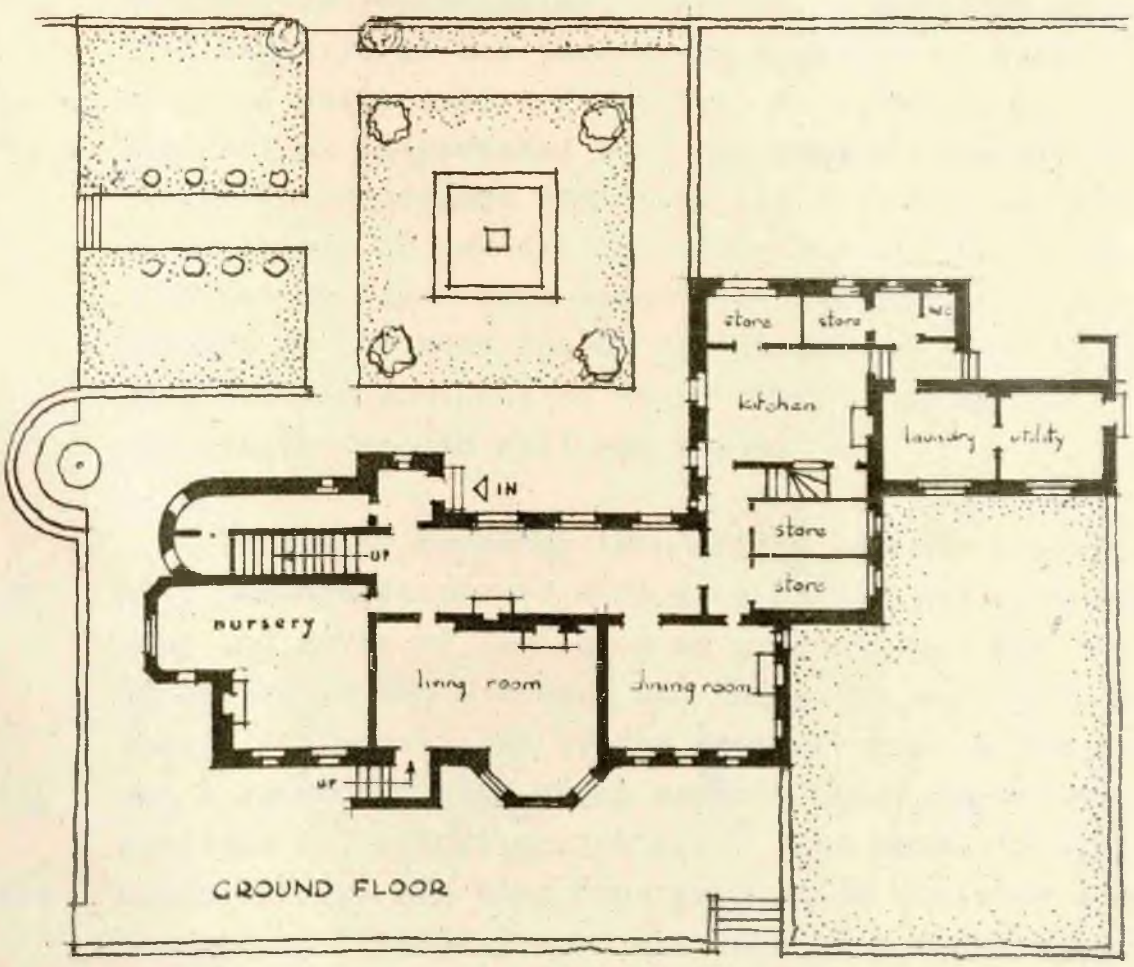


WINDYHILL , KILMALCOLM , RENFREWSHIRE .

substituted a broad half landing, a simple expedient which gives surprising dignity to the staircases of 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse'.

Despite its greater size, the 'Hillhouse' plan varies from its predecessor only in detail; the entrance is to the west instead of through a small courtyard on the north and this necessitated a change in the position of the staircase, though not in its form and proportions. The shape of the plan however, is more restless and broken; the junction of the two wings is not so well considered and the architect introduced a circular staircase tower in an attempt to link them more securely together. His difficulty with this angle can be better appreciated when it is realised that the service wing is three storeys high and the main block but two - at 'Windyhill' on the other hand, the service quarters were entirely dominated by the main wing.

Grey or red sandstone was the popular material for large country houses in the Clyde Valley in the early 1900's, but like Voysey, Mackintosh achieved character and individuality by using silver-grey roughcast to unify his designs. Whether consciously or unconsciously, in this he again reverted to tradition, for harling, or roughcasting, was used in Scotland as early as the 15th century, if not before, as a method of weatherproofing external walls built of rubble. In both 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' the harling is returned into the window openings, a characteristic treatment in cottage building; in better-class work however, it is customary to use dressed stone for cills, lintels and reveals, a method employed with reserve by Mackintosh. Only two small windows on the west facade of 'Hillhouse' and the main doorway have stone dressings; on every other opening the roughcast stops against the wooden cill and frame.

Generally speaking 'Windyhill' has the unpretentious character
Fig.83 of a Lowland farmhouse with grey harled walls, steeply pitched roof and eaves of little or no projection. The southern facade is severe in the extreme, and the plain wall surface is unbroken except for a small bay to the drawing-room, a few regimented windows, and a rainwater pipe which assumes added importance by its central position and slight projection.* The house is approached from the
Fig.83d. north through the tiny courtyard which contains a square pool flanked by trimmed yews. Although on a small scale, the effect

(Footnote: *Later, the Davidsons had wooden shutters fitted to the windows in an attempt to relieve the austerity of the facade.)

Fig. 83. 'Windyhill'. ~~xx,xxx,xxx,~~

~~xx,xx&xxx~~

a. View from the south.
b. " " " south-east.
c. " " " north-west.
d. The Courtyard.
e. The Main Doorway.

a

b

of enclosure is cleverly contrived, and the result extremely
Fig.83c. charming. The combined flat roofed entrance and staircase feature is somewhat out of character with the rest of the building and was obviously designed for internal effect; it has the appearance of a later addition, a fault which even the all-embracing roughcast cannot conceal. Though an identical form is employed at 'Hillhouse' it intersects the main wing at right angles, a much better arrangement as a comparison of the plans will show. The larger dimensions of 'Hillhouse', and the complexity of elements at this point, also helped to simplify the problem of uniting new and traditional forms.

Unlike 'Windyhill', which occupies a restricted and
Fig.86a. precipitous site, 'Hillhouse' is situated on a gently sloping, open hillside. Mackintosh, always eager to take advantage of natural features, laid out the garden with great care. The house itself is built on a terrace supported by a fine stone retaining wall which runs from west to east, and terminates in an elegant conical roofed tool shed. To the south of this there is an extensive terraced lawn, and finally a tennis court, all of which combine to emphasise the horizontality of the house itself, and form a contrast with the soaring vertical lines of the service wing. The building is thus carefully contrived as the culmination to a system of rising contours.*

In contrast to 'Windyhill' the southern facade of Mr. Blackie's house is friendly and inviting, an effect due in no small part to the overhanging eaves, and the interest created by the bold projection of the lofty three-storeyed gable. The western end of this elevation is punctuated by a curved bay containing the french windows of the library, and on the first floor, a small square window flanked by flat stone wings, originally intended to be a field for low relief carving.

The building is most impressive when seen from the short carriage-way which leads to the main entrance. The gable treatment here is reminiscent of the School of Art. It is left entirely plain except for three small slit windows, and the doorway is combined with a sturdy battered chimney to form an unusual asymmetrical element which projects from the gable wall some

(Footnote: *Fernando Agnoletti, Professor of Italian at Glasgow University observed that the charming character of the house is -

"... less the result of the natural beauty of the situation itself than that of the artistic exploitation of every opportunity that offers itself".

'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration' - Mar. 1905.)

eighteen inches. This motive is similar in principle to the entrance of the School; the same type of window is used, but it is designed with even more subtlety, and effectively establishes the importance of the doorway which is placed off the axis.

Fig.86c. The view from the south east is not so satisfying: there is a noticeable lack of cohesion between the service wing - which from this position appears as big as, if not larger than, the main block - and what for convenience might be called the dining-room wing. The axes of these two elements are parallel, and the weakness of the angle is but thinly veiled by the interposition of the traditional conical roofed staircase tower. The strong vertical accent provided by this feature is still further emphasised by the proximity of sturdy chimney stacks, and by the utilisation of the roof space over the service and dining room wing. The cumulative effect of the interplay of simple geometrical forms thus obtained recalls 17th century Scottish work, yet without any suggestion of superficial romanticism.

After the huge expanse of glass employed at the School of Art, Mackintosh's predilection for small irregularly distributed windows appears contradictory, and it would seem that some explanation other than tradition should be forthcoming, especially in view of the fact that he indulged in an elementary sun-parlour - by no means a traditional feature - on the southern facade of each house. After some investigation, a craftsman was discovered who had actually discussed this point with Mackintosh. The architect had explained that in his opinion a sense of enclosure, warmth and security, was the most desirable attribute of any domestic room, for the house was primarily a place of shelter and refuge, in, but not of, the landscape. Furthermore, was not the entire conception of the house quite distinct from that of a garden; the one artificial and confining space; the other natural and virtually boundless? And did not each possess distinctive and irreconcilable characteristics which should be acknowledged and respected by the architect?

This view is particularly interesting in the light of subsequent developments, for one of the most persistant dogmas of the modern movement in architecture has been the desirability of eliminating the solid wall as a restrictive factor in house design, and by using glass in place of bricks and mortar, to render obsolete the terms "interior" and "exterior", in fact to make the garden an extension of the house itself.

Mackintosh's point of view however, is more logical, and certainly more practical in the north country, and consequently it is not surprising to find his methods conforming closely to traditional practice.

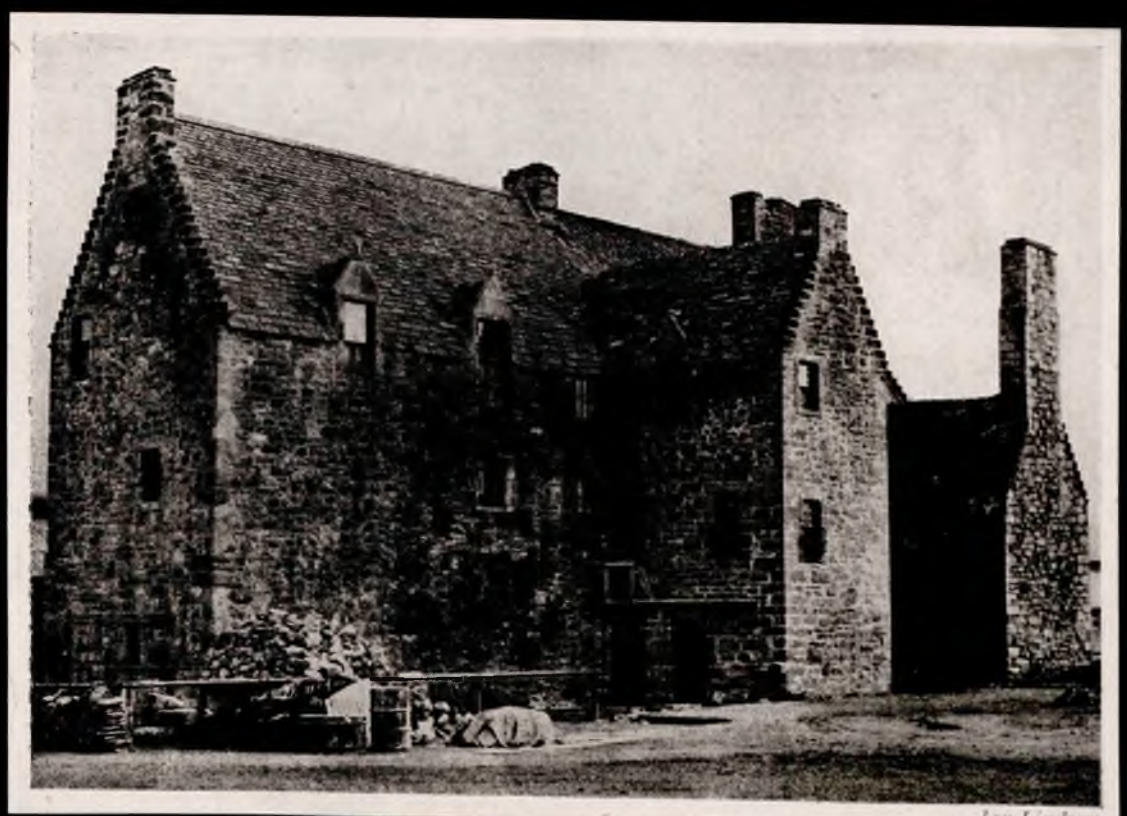
Apart from the principal facades to both houses in which the shape and disposition of windows is reminiscent of 17th and 18th century work, Mackintosh seems to have thrown discretion to the winds and used square, vertical and horizontal openings in close proximity, and bearing little, if any, relationship to each other. In this respect he diverged from traditional Scottish practice in which a window of pleasant proportions, the height equal to twice the width, was almost universal, with little variation in size in any individual building. At 'Hillhouse' some attempt was made to align lintels and cills on the facades overlooking the courtyard, but at 'Windyhill' no such precautions were taken and the two intersecting wings lack unity. Another curious feature is the architect's arbitrary use of astragals; panes of four different sizes occur in the courtyard at 'Windyhill' and contribute in no small degree to the general air of restlessness. Here again, the traditional subdivision of six units to each sash seems to have been entirely ignored; four, six, eight, twelve lights of varying sizes appear. Nor did the architect take advantage of the pane as a valuable module in preserving scale, and ensuring some degree of unity between windows of different shapes - a factor long appreciated in old Scottish and English work, and rarely lost sight of by Voysey and Mackintosh's contemporaries.

All these points illustrate how the architect drew upon tradition, rejecting certain features, introducing new ideas of his own invention, or moulding old forms to suit his purpose; sometimes though not invariably with notable success.

By all normal standards however, and in comparison with contemporary work, 'Hillhouse' is a building of marked originality, an early essay in the modern style. It possesses a number of features entirely without precedent in Scottish buildings at the turn of the century; to mention but four, horizontal windows, a semicircular staircase bay of a type usually ascribed to the 1920's, a flat roofed sun-lounge, and an entrance facade modelled like a Nicholson sculptured relief. Then again, the pleasant horizontal lines of the south front, the simple grouping of elements and the complete absence of restless detail gives the building an air of

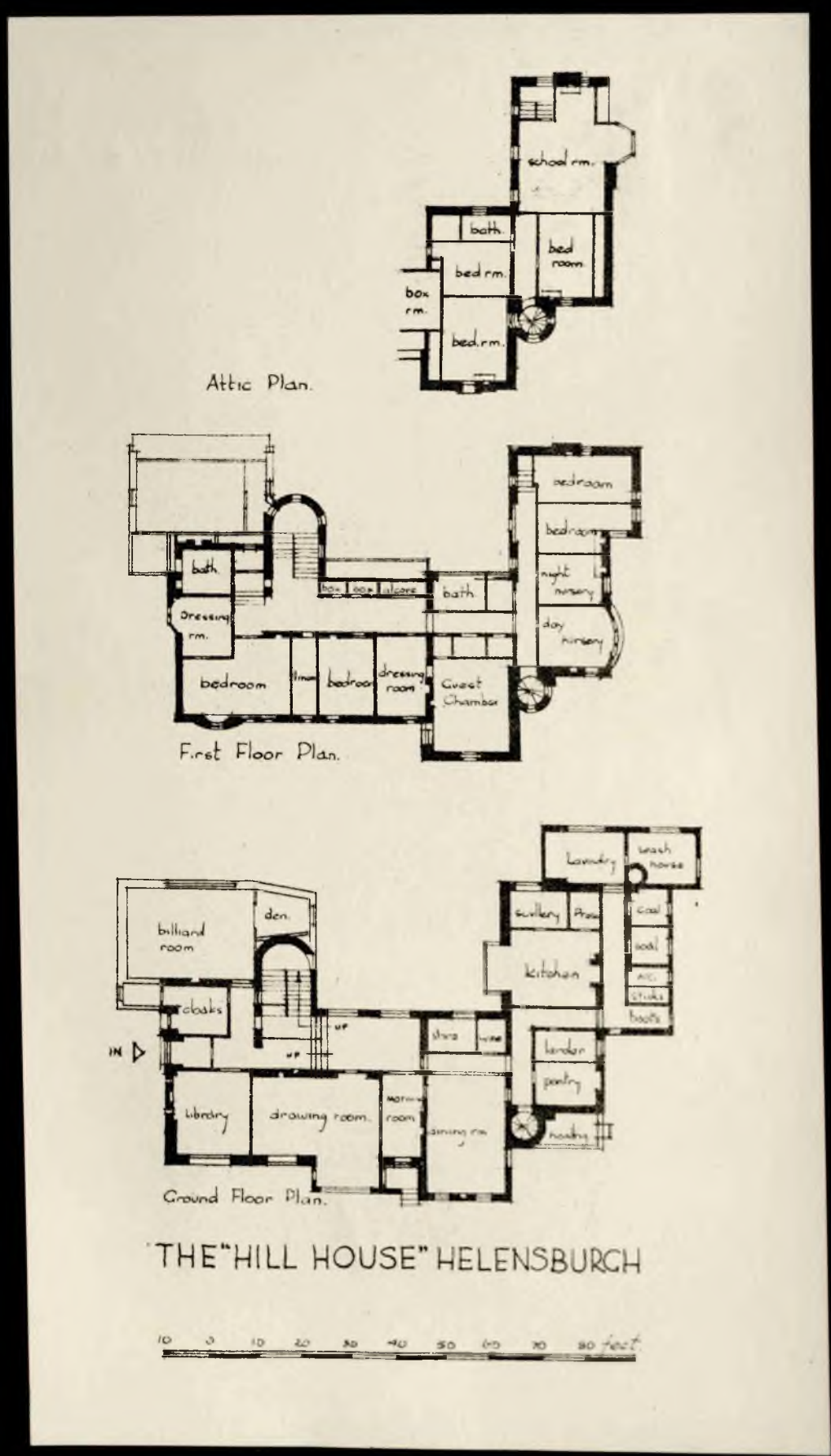
Fig. 86. 'Hillhouse': a. south facade:
b. 'Stenhouse', Edinburgh, (1623).

c. View from the south-east.
d. Plans.



Ian Lindsay

c


school rm.
bath.
bed room
bed rm.
box rm.
bed rm.
Attic Plan.
bedroom
night nursery
day nursery
bath
bath
Dressing rm.
bedroom
bedroom
dressing room
Guest Chamber
First Floor Plan.
Laundry
wash house
billiard room
den.
scullery
coal
coal
kitchen
cloaks
boots
IN
butler
pantry
library
drawing room.
morning room
dining rm.
Ground Floor Plan.
THE "HILL HOUSE" HELENSBURGH
10 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 feet

d

ingenuous efficiency that is refreshing to-day, but was quite startling in the complacent world of 1902. And yet, neither 'Windyhill' nor 'Hillhouse' excited undue comment in contemporary architectural circles in Great Britain, but Alexander Koch devoted practically the whole of the January issue of his monthly art review 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration' (1905), to an eulogistical article on the house by Fernando Agnoletti, Professor of Italian at Glasgow University. The article was copiously illustrated and must have greatly enhanced Mackintosh's well established reputation on the continent.*

Apart from 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' the remainder of Mackintosh's domestic work is of little importance - of his executed work that is - for two imaginative designs - a project for an artist's cottage (1901) and a competition design for a house for a lover of art - are in a class by themselves and will be discussed later.+ In 1901 he built a small gate lodge, 'Auchenbothie' at Kilmacolm, for Mr. H. B. Collins; in 1906-7 a house at Killearn for F. J. Shand Esq., and a large house at Kilmacolm in the same year for Mr. Collins.

The conditions essential to the development of Mackintosh's peculiar genius were fulfilled both at 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse', namely the enthusiastic and wholehearted co-operation of his clients. Whenever his authority was questioned the story was entirely different. It is instrutive to compare his work for the Davidsons and the Blackies with the two houses of similar pretentions he designed subsequently - 'Mosside', Kilmacolm, and 'Auchen ibert', Killearn. In both cases his clients had ideas of their own and were very reluctant to give him a free hand. By all accounts Mr. Collins was a difficult man to deal with, and apparently Mrs. Shand had very definite opinions on the style, internal arrangement and decoration of her future home. It is hardly surprising therefore, to find that both houses differ in character from their predecessors, but in fact, the difference is so marked that at first glance neither would be ascribed to Mackintosh.

(Footnote: *According to Mr. Blackie, a certain South African professor was so attracted by Koch's article that he had the house copied as closely as possible from the photographs, and a similar one built for himself. An amusing sequel occurred some years later when, on a visit to Britain, the gentleman made the acquaintance of Mr. Blackie and was invited to 'Hillhouse', which to his astonishment proved to be the prototype of his own home in Africa.)

+The second of these is reviewed in Chapter VII, Continental Work.)

'Mosside.' (1906).

Of the two houses, 'Mosside' is the more interesting. It is a large house of T-shaped plan, beautifully situated on the shore of a loch about two miles north of the village of Kilmacolm. The meagre drawings that survive seem to indicate that an old tower, or ruined cottage was incorporated in the new structure, but local craftsmen deny the existence of such a building. The walls of the house nevertheless, are of exceptionally thick random rubble, the bonding is irregular and the surface texture coarse to a degree not met with in any of the architect's other work. The splayed window openings too, are unfamiliar, and seem to have been scattered at random over the facades.

Fig. 89a.

The building looks like a converted mill or as the villagers say, a prison. Unquestionably it has a most forbidding aspect, especially when seen from the lochside. The plan is tortuous, particularly in the kitchens and servants quarters where awkward changes in floor level occur. As at 'Hillhouse' the principal rooms are placed on one side of the house, this time on the east, overlooking the loch, with the service wing at right angles forming the leg of the 'T'. The latter is roofed with finely coloured, varigated stone slates of a warm brown hue, but the main block, for some inexplicable reason, is covered with red tiles. In 1944 the southern wing was re-roofed with green slates and an inelegant red ridge. Thus each arm of the T-shaped plan is crowned by a differently coloured roof; an ill-considered arrangement which has not enhanced the appearance of the building in the least.

The internal character of the house belies its forbidding exterior. The rooms are lofty and well proportioned and the small windows provide adequate but not abundant light. Mackintosh must have exercised some control over the furnishing and decoration for every room originally possessed one of his fireplaces. The actual grates were somewhat narrow, with wrought iron bars and racks for the fire-irons; the surrounds were white or grey plaster with, in several instances, a curved mantelpiece about six feet long containing small pigeon-hole shelves. Unfortunately all the mantelpieces have been altered in recent years although most of the fireplaces survive.

'Mosside' is a strange building, yet it has a certain rugged charm due in part to its austerely beautiful setting on the lochside, and to the rich warm colouring of the local stone.

Externally, the sturdy chimney stacks, the swept parapet wall of a balcony to the maids' quarters, and the character of the masonry walling alone are indicative of the architect.

'Auchenibert' Killearn. Like 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' this building is situated also on rising ground, but it is enclosed on three sides by trees. To the west, extensive views can be obtained of well wooded country, and the straggling village of Killearn is just discernable about half a mile away. The house bears no resemblance whatever to any of its predecessors and is English in character, one must presume, in accordance with the wishes of the Shands. In this work Mackintosh must have subordinated his personal feelings to an extent not met with hitherto.

Fig. 89d. The plan is U-shaped. The two arms face west and enclose a small paved terrace giving access to a charming formal garden, the principal feature of which is a broad lawn flanked by herbaceous borders and tall hedges, running at right angles to the main axis of the house. The masonry throughout is clean and well executed; ashlar quoins are used in conjunction with irregular snecked rubble. Mackintosh supervised this work with great care and personally stood by the mason until the man had obtained the particular bonding he required.

There is no carved ornament anywhere on the exterior, even Fig. 89c. the main entrance and deep covered porch is devoid of the familiar motives associated with the architect. All the windows are perfectly regular, well proportioned and pleasantly grouped - the antithesis of the fenestration at 'Mosside'.

As at Mr. Collins' house, the exterior reveals little evidence of Mackintosh's handiwork; the only identifiable features are the tall, sturdy chimney stacks with widely projecting copings; a semicircular staircase bay, and a polygonal bay to the business room, both of which are to be seen at 'Windyhill'.

Internally, the house is disappointing. Of Mackintosh's work the staircase and several fireplaces alone remain to testify to his participation in the design. One of the bedroom fireplaces is particularly striking; it consists of a diminuitive grate set in a panel of peacock-blue tiles (6'6" long x 4'0" high), with vertical joints. All the adjacent woodwork and the simple mantelshelf are painted white. Not even the staircase conforms to precedent and a small mezzanine floor and fireplace are introduced forming a kind of ingle nook above the porch. This feature of course adds considerably to the spaciousness of the first floor landing, but its practical value is questionable.

Fig. 89. a. 'Mosside', Kilmacolm.
b. Gate Lodge, 'Auchenbothie'.

c. 'Auchenibert', Killearn: entrance.
d. 'Auchenibert', Killearn: south-west front.

c

d

From this cursory examination of the building and from the illustrations, it is evident that the architect and his client did not see eye to eye and it transpired that before the interior was finished, Mackintosh was dismissed and another firm* of architects was called in to complete the work. This accounts for the absence of characteristic panelling and similar details, in the drawing-room, business-room, and elsewhere.+

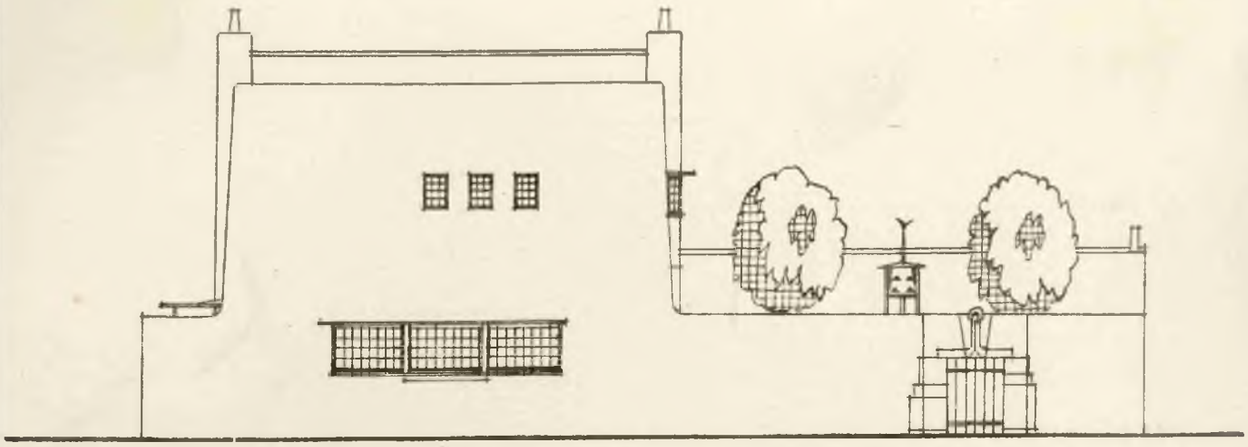
The only other project to be considered in this group is one of several small commissions executed for Mr. Collins in, or near Kilmacolm during the preceding five years or so. In the main, this work consisted of alterations to existing property, but in 1901 Mackintosh designed for him a tiny gate lodge 'Auchenbothie', on the main Kilmacolm-Greenock road. This is a curious little building, English in character, with very thick walls roughcast externally. It is square in plan, with small windows and a steeply pitched pyramidal roof terminating in a large chimney stack which carries the flues from four fireplaces grouped back to back in the centre of the building. The four small apartments - living room, two bedrooms and kitchen - are planned en suite. There is no corridor, and the front door leads directly into the living-room and the back door opens into the kitchen. Incidentally, the architect provided a fixed light in the solitary kitchen window so that ventilation had to be obtained by the simple expedient of opening the door.

The xxxxx buildings examined here constitute the main body of domestic work executed by Mackintosh, and, excluding 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' the list is by no means impressive. Drawings for several other projects survive, but it is not known whether these were carried into effect. The most notable are two designs** for a small town house and a country cottage for "an artist" - perhaps intended for Mackintosh himself. Both contain the minimum number of rooms and in elevation at least, they are quite unorthodox. Possibly they give a clearer picture of the architect's intentions than any of the work reviewed in this chapter.

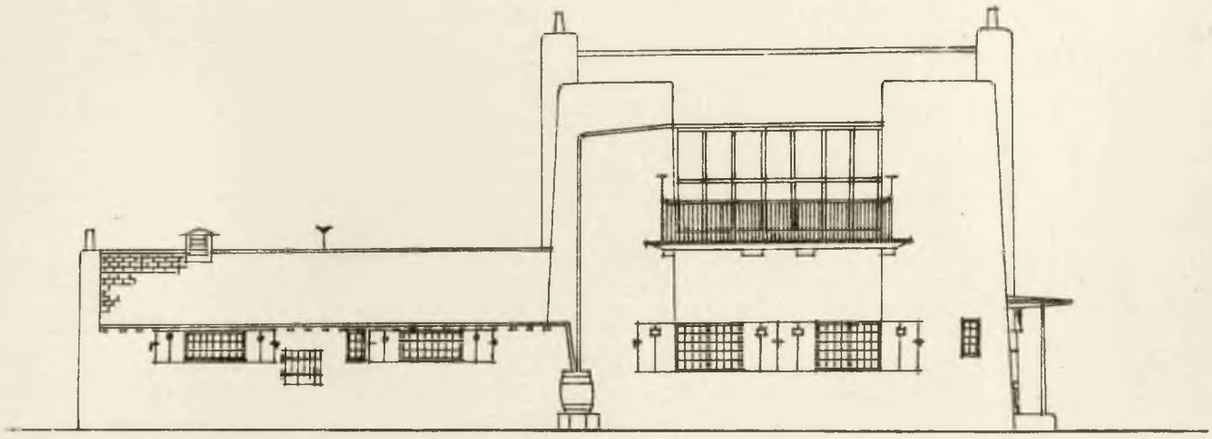
Fig. 90 The country cottage is the more interesting. It was designed to occupy a long narrow site - an island site apparently - and the plan is somewhat tortuous. Here as usual, Mackintosh paid great attention to the service wing and about two-thirds of the ground floor area is occupied by storage space, the kitchen and its ancillaries. There is an intimate walled courtyard with pigeon cote and trees, and on the west of the house, a narrow garden approached through a vestibule from the entrance hall. A large studio, two minute bedrooms and a bathroom occupy the upper floor.

Footnotes:- Please see foot of Page 91.

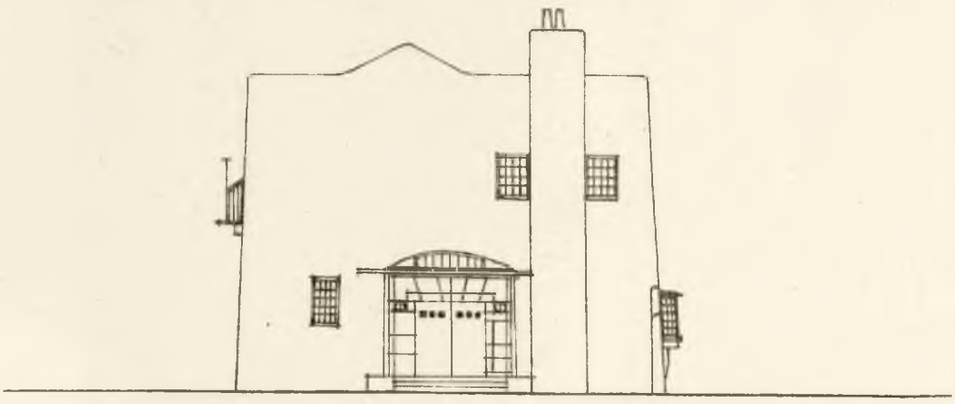
Fig. 90. An Artist's Cottage.



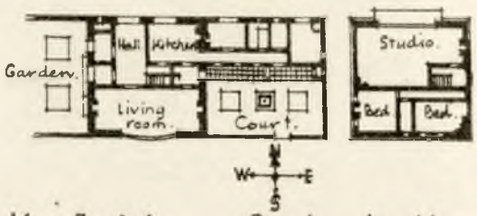
SOUTH ELEVATION.



NORTH ELEVATION.



WEST ELEVATION.



KEY PLAN.

It is the elevations however that are of greatest importance. They conform to no stock pattern; they follow no recognisable precedent. Again, large plain roughcast surfaces dominate, and openings are reduced to a minimum, but unlike 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' none of the forms employed, neither of mass, of silhouette, of wall surface, or of fenestration, are traditional in character. The large studio window recalls the School of Art, and the south facade with its long horizontal window, part of the architect's design for the Glasgow Exhibition (1901).[θ]

Beyond this, it is impossible to draw parallels except perhaps in the Voysey-like character of the shuttered windows in the north facade.

This small cottage is quite original; it represents a courageous attempt to solve a simple problem logically without recourse to familiar clichés, and independently of tradition, for by no stretch of the imagination can this project be conveniently placed in the Scottish succession.

From the designs considered here it is evident that in his domestic work no less than in the School of Art, Mackintosh gave new meaning and vitality to basic traditional forms, and whereas his contemporaries delighted in a confusion of picturesque turrets and broken skylines, complicated corbelling and fanciful strap-work, he concentrated upon fundamentals. He relied almost entirely for visual effect upon broad simple masses and the contrast of solid and void, and upon the beauty inherent in natural materials. In this he foreshadowed a healthier and more realistic approach to the whole problem of house design, though we cannot but regret that his experiments were not carried further.

(Footnote: Please refer back to Page 90 for the first three footnotes ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ below:-

[*]Messrs. Campbell & Hislop.)

[+]It is said that a friend of the owner was attracted by the house and sent his architect - a certain Mr. Hunter - to copy it in every detail unknown to Mackintosh, and a replica of 'Auchenibert' is supposed to stand on the Ayrshire coast - a singular repetition of the 'Hillhouse' incident.)

[‡]Illustrated in 'Decorative Kunst' March 1902, p.211-3. Apart from these designs only two further projects are known to the author; a large unfinished drawing in pencil of a 'Country Mansion' in the University Collection, and a few preliminary sketches for a house in the baronial style with crow-stepped gables and so forth, in the author's collection: this appears to be the only example of a flagrantly baronial design by Mackintosh. Neither scheme possesses either a date or title, and it is impossible to say whether or not they were actually built.)

[θ]Compare Chapter VIII. ~~xxxx~~ Fig. 172c.).

It now remains to discuss Mackintosh's domestic interior decoration and furniture. Once again however, it is necessary to digress a little, and to follow the fortunes of the Glasgow coterie before embarking upon a detailed survey of his work.

CHAPTER V.

DOMESTIC WORK (2).

Interior Decoration & Furniture.

It was inevitable that the fruitful partnership of 'The Four' should come to an end sooner or later, and before the turn of the century the friends had parted company. Herbert MacNair left Honeyman & Keppie in 1895 and opened an office of his own* as architect and designer, though it is probable that he continued to execute work for the firm from time to time as a free lance draughtsman. One thing is certain however, he never did any architectural work on his own account and it is evident that he became involved more and more in the applied arts, furniture design, book illustrating and the like. In the summer of 1898 he was appointed Instructor in Decorative Design† at the School of Architecture and Applied Art, Liverpool University, and later in the year, took the high road to England. On 14th June 1899 he and Frances Macdonald were quietly married at St. Augustine's Church, Bowling, on the Clyde Estuary, and thereafter lived in Lancashire until c.1906. During this period they sent work to exhibitions at home and abroad, and executed numerous commissions - interior schemes, furniture and watercolours - in the Liverpool area and for friends and relatives in Scotland. To all intents and purposes they ceased to play any further part in the Mackintosh story; their marriage ended under tragic circumstances with the death of Frances some fifteen years later, and Herbert MacNair lost all interest in the arts. He moved from job to job - for a time working in the Post Office - and eventually emigrated to Canada. He ultimately returned to Scotland and, unknown to all but one or two of his former associates, at the time of writing lives quietly in Argyllshire.

Following the MacNair's example, Charles Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald became engaged and they too were married at St. Augustine's on 22nd August, 1900; a fitting and logical conclusion to the brief story of 'The Four'.

Before the wedding, the Mackintoshes decorated and furnished a flat on the first floor of No.120 Mains Street, Glasgow - now

(Footnote:-*No.227 West George Street, Glasgow.)

†"Instructor", not "Professor of Design & Decoration" as claimed in the School of Art records.)

prosaically enough, occupied by the Corporation Parks Department - to which they returned after their honeymoon on Holy Island off the Northumberland coast.

The Mains Street flat is of particular significance for it is the first clearly documented example of a suite of rooms decorated and furnished in Mackintosh's mature style, the first actual project he designed and executed unrestricted by the whims of a client and limited only by the length of his own purse strings - and the wishes of his wife! Here, if anywhere, one may expect to see Mackintosh at his best and take measure of his progress.

It is to 'The Studio' that we must turn for illustrations and a most valuable series of photographs - not only of this work but of contemporary interiors by the MacNairs also - they appeared in a special number published in 1901.* No comments were made in the text and one cannot therefore estimate contemporary reaction to the project, nor does any other British journal seem to have considered the work worth reviewing. Once again therefore, it is to an obscure continental source that one must turn for news of the exciting happenings in Glasgow. A certain E. B. Kalas, writing in a magazine 'De la Tamise à la Sprée: L'essor des industries d'art'+ drew attention to the Mains Street Flat. M. Kalas was enchanted by the interior decoration; he was captivated by the exquisite taste of the artists, and charmed by their masterly handling of form and colour: he commented especially upon the spatial quality and "virginal beauty" of their unorthodox white rooms, rooms which appeared all the more startling and exotic in such unprepossessing surroundings. To M. Kalas, the Mackintoshes were -

> "two visionary souls in ecstatic communion ..... wafted ..... aloft to the heavenly regions of creation ....." etc., etc.

This panegyric, couched in the flamboyant style of the period may sound absurd in these days of studied understatement, but it does convey, at least in part, some impression of the character and individuality of the house and its occupants. There can be no doubt that to enter the Mackintoshes' home was quite an adventure, a step into a new world, and an experience not easily forgotten. Each room was considered as an individual work of art, delicately poised, harmoniously conceived and complete in every

(Footnote: *'Modern British Architecture & Decoration', 1901.)
+Published by Michaud, Rheims, 1905, copy in Mitchell Library, Glasgow.)

detail. The artists themselves either designed of made everything; furniture and furnishing, napery and cutlery, fenders and fireirons - no detail was overlooked and Margaret Macdonald personally embroidered the fabrics, curtains, table cloths and so forth. Moreover, the occupants dressed for the part: Charles, for example, with his swarthy complexion and unruly black hair, sported an enormous bow tie-cum-cravat and heavy tweeds, and at this time affected a flamboyant moustache: Margaret, tall, handsome and majestic, with a great mass of hair like burnished copper, was always elegantly attired in clothes she designed and made herself. She has been described by Chapman-Huston as "a curious and fascinating personality, in appearance recalling Rossetti and Burne Jones"* and she presided over the household with regal dignity.

So much for the occupants. The Mains Street interiors as originally conceived are a remarkable advance on any work so far discussed, and it is necessary to try to bridge the gap to show how this radical transmogrification came about; exactly where for instance, was Mackintosh's first 'white' room, and where the first of his high-backed chairs. Reliable dated evidence is lacking, but the initial signs of change can perhaps be recognised
Fig. 33a. in the 'Gladsmuir' drawing-room,+ in spite of the conglomeration of knick-knacks: here at least were plain walls and a simple flat picture-rail, an upholstered corner seat and pictures standing on the mantelpiece - not hanging from ugly, untidy cords. The next step probably was taken at Dunglass Castle, the home of the Macdonald sisters, and of all places the one most likely to be used for experimental purposes by Mackintosh - a prospective son-in-law. After Dunglass ~~Castle~~ or perhaps contemporaneously
Fig. 7a. with it, the headmaster's room at the School of Art, which can be dated with some accuracy-and then, Mains Street. Another fine interior which may have preceded Mains Street but which the author is inclined to place a little later, say 1901, was a
Fig. 97a. drawing-room for the Rowats at Kingsborough Gardens, Glasgow. All this work has certain features in common and is worth close study.

Dunglass.[n] The drawing-room at Dunglass was, and still is, a fine apartment: Mackintosh cut away the original ornate cornice and remodelled the ceiling, removed the fireplace and introduced a corner seat and a new fireplace and mantelpiece.

(Footnote: *'A Creel of Peat: Stray Papers', by Desmond Mountjoy, Adelphi Press, 1900.)

+See Chapter I - Page 33.)

[n]The Dunglass Castle drawing-room is not illustrated here but the fireplace was similar to that at Mains Street, Fig.99a.)

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx The latter was 5'6" high, 7'0" wide, built of wood and very plain, with great sweeping lines, small square pigeon holes and no moulding or carving.*

The corner seat was a new version of that at 'Gladsmuir'; here however, the back was divided by narrow wooden strips into tall panels upholstered in linen, each of which was stencilled with a flying bird motif identical with the 'Gladsmuir' example - one of the rare occasions on which Mackintosh repeated himself. The Macdonald's furniture was re-covered in fabric embroidered by the two girls, and apart from a glazed bookcase, probably a later addition, the room does not appear to have contained any other pieces of note.

The Dunglass drawing-room then, may well have been Mackintosh's first essay in white, and once more, the possibility of collaboration on the part of Margaret and Frances Macdonald must not be overlooked. This room also contained what may have been his first adventurous fireplace, an innovation quite without precedent, and by contemporary standards revolutionary indeed; it was the first of a long series of designs which, for sheer originality, elegance and simplicity, had no equal. Although Voysey, Hoffmann, Wood, Walton and others, all had given much thought to fireplace design, and competitions in 'The Studio' and elsewhere drew new ideas from an ever widening field, nowhere does there appear to have been anything approaching so closely to the spirit of the new movement as Mackintosh's work at this time. As usual, he achieved his objective with remarkable economy in line and material: his fireplace surrounds were commonly of grey plaster, in a few cases - as for example at Kingsborough Gardens - relieved by carefully placed coloured tiles, or perhaps, by mosaic. The surround itself was almost invariably enclosed in a large and carefully designed mantelpiece with shelves and pigeon holes which, more often than not, was completely devoid of ornament, interest being created by the form and proportion of its various members and by the play of light and shade on receding and contrasting planes. In very few cases was the wood left in its natural colour. Almost all his fireplace surrounds were painted white; probably in order to derive the greatest value from reflected light and to provide a suitable background for flowers and plants without which none of his designs was complete. Little 'art nouveau' ornament intrudes into this work, and where it does occur it is limited to small jewel-like inlays of enamel and glass, or to restrained

(Footnote: *The design above the fireplace was executed by Margaret Macdonald; the subject, 'The May Queen' was used later for a gesso panel made at Mains Street and exhibited at the Viennese Secessionist Exhibition of 1900.)

carving. In fact, it is mainly the incidence of such details, and the appearance of an occasional flat, sensuous curve, that enables the casual observer to date the fireplaces with any measure of success, for they seem astonishingly modern when compared with contemporary examples - an impression largely due of course, to the broad treatment of the surround, the absence of traditional ornament and the use of white painted surfaces instead of the richly embellished mahogany and oak then fashionable.

If however, Dunglass were not the first example of Mackintosh's adventures in white, and if the drawing-room fireplace were not the first of its kind, then perhaps an alternative might be considered. The headmaster's room at the School of Art* comes immediately to mind, for it must have been completed by 1899 and, as already pointed out, was panelled in a manner characteristic of the architect and painted white; moreover, it contained a fireplace of like dimensions to that at Dunglass. It would seem that all this work might be arranged in chronological order thus: 'Gladsmuir' c.1895, Dunglass 1897- , the headmaster's room 1899, Mains Street 1900, with Kingsborough Gardens probably 1901.

Kingsborough Gardens.

Fig. 97a.

Just before discussing Mains Street it may be well to look briefly at Mackintosh's work for the Rowat family at No.34 Kingsborough Gardens, a terraced house in Glasgow. Mrs. Newbery was Miss Jessie Rowat before her marriage and this no doubt accounts for the appearance of the young architect's work in the west end of the city at this time. The actual designs carried out comprised a built-in hall settle with a high back, forming a screen for the stairs, several light fittings and a number of fireplaces (and presumably the decoration of the rooms in which they occur), all of which were still in position and relatively intact in 1944. Originally the first floor drawing-room was the pièce de résistance and here Mackintosh designed an excellent fireplace with an adjacent built-in wall seat. As at Dunglass, the high back was divided into broad panels each upholstered and covered with linen on which a floral motive was boldly stencilled, but the seat and fireplace were better integrated, largely because of the omission of tall wings which in the earlier example tended to separate the two elements. The panels were about 5'6" high and terminated level with the mantelpiece in a narrow shelf for the display of small china ornaments: above this the wall, to picture-rail level, was decorated by a delightful stencilled pattern of

(Footnote:- *Compare also the Board Room and fireplace at the School, Fig.97b. This example however, is heavy and not so well contrived as the others illustrated here.)

Fig. 97. Fireplace: a. No.34 Kingsborough Gardens.
b. Former Board Room, Glasgow School of Art.

conventionalised trees and flowers.* The fireplace is of similar dimensions to ~~that~~ the example at Dunglass - about 7'0" long and 5'6" high and consists of a small grate with a grey cement surround in which nine square, coloured tiles are inserted. The hearth is raised some 12" above floor level and two adjustable ventilators are provided through which a regulated supply of air passes to the grate. A simple wooden mantelpiece with square pigeon holes encloses the fireplace and it is embellished with three characteristic motives, the centre one forming a bracket which serves to stiffen the deep fascia board. This design is, if anything, more successful than the Dunglass ~~example~~ and Mains Street examples, and the room as originally laid out must have been most pleasing.

Mains Street.

The two commissions previously mentioned may of course form only a fraction of the work of a similar nature executed by Mackintosh at this time, but at the moment of writing they alone have come to light.+ Of more importance is the decoration and furnishing of the Mains Street flat (1900) and later, of a house at Florentine Terrace, in which the Mackintoshes lived until 1914.

The illustrations which appeared in 'The Studio' special number in 1901 are usually assumed to belong to the later house. Such a mistake is not unnatural because the Mackintoshes not only transferred the principal fireplaces, light fittings and furniture to Southpark Avenue, but closely reproduced the colour schemes of dining room, sitting room and bedroom in their new home. Three apartments were illustrated; the white drawing room, a sombre brown dining room and the principal bedroom (also in white): this colour formula was used with slight variations in all the architect's subsequent domestic work.

Fig. 99a.

By contemporary standards, the drawing-room - a spacious apartment some 18 ft. square, was positively bare, for in addition to half a dozen chairs, all of different design, it contained but four other pieces of furniture: a small oval coffee table, a square card table, a writing desk[µ] and a glazed bookcase[e], and a

(Footnote: *Now this gay design has disappeared and in the winter of 1943-4 the timber seating was broken up for firewood because the upholstery had worn threadbare. On entering the house for the first time the author was handed a splintered piece of timber and shown a few square feet of linen on which a faded pattern was still faintly discernable,- all that remained of a most charming feature. The fireplace itself was undamaged however, but looked singularly forlorn under a coat of thick brown paint which had obliterated its former glossy whiteness.)

+The author has recently traced another furnished interior which may belong to this phase though so far it has not been possible to verify the date: it is a bedroom at Queen's Place, Glasgow, a house now occupied by Professor Browning of Glasgow University. This interior, illustrated in 'Dekorative Kunst' Mar.1902, is probably contemporary with 'Hillhouse'.

µ) e) Please see foot of Page 99.

magnificent fireplace, all of which were painted white.

The sense of freedom and spaciousness engendered by the sparse furnishing was accentuated still further by the architect's treatment of the dominating surfaces: the floor was covered by a plain grey fitted carpet, and the walls were divided into panels by light grey canvas with broad cover strips; the deep frieze rail was decorated at intervals with richly designed square insets of coloured gesso and all the woodwork, the frieze, cornice and ceiling, were painted white. Flowers, plants and twigs arranged in the prevailing oriental manner popularised by articles in 'The Studio', a few framed water colours standing on the mantelpiece and cabinets, and four groups of characteristic gas fittings completed the ensemble.

Fig. 99c. Though entirely different in character, the dining room was no less unusual, and here again one is aware of the astonishing versatility of the designer and his peculiar ability to exploit the decorative value of the humblest materials. Unsightly gas piping which had to be pinned to the drawing-room ceiling for example, was given an elegant twist and thereafter merged unobtrusively into the decorative scheme, and in the dining room the walls were covered to picture-rail level with coarse wrapping paper, so heavy in fact that it had to be bought by the hundredweight, but it possessed a rough uneven surface texture that delighted the architect. Moreover, its dark grey-brown hue formed a rich background against which flowers, paintings and repoussé metal showed to best advantage. The woodwork throughout was pine, and with the fireplace surround - not a particularly noteworthy instance - and the furniture,* was stained black and beeswaxed: the ceiling and frieze were left white. Wrought iron candle sconces were placed at intervals round the room. When these were rehung at Southpark Avenue some six years later, the wall behind them was painted with small irregular silver spots representing tallow splashes - a peculiar affectation completely out of character with the broad treatment of the room, and a rather bizarre

(Footnote:- Please refer back to Page 98 for the first two footnotes below:-

"Mackintosh designed a number of writing desks and cabinets similar in form to the elegant piece at Mains Street; almost invariably beaten metal panels by Margaret Macdonald were used as decoration with small insets of tinted enamel. The inner face of the doors too, were frequently embellished with inlay either of gesso enamel or opaque glass.)

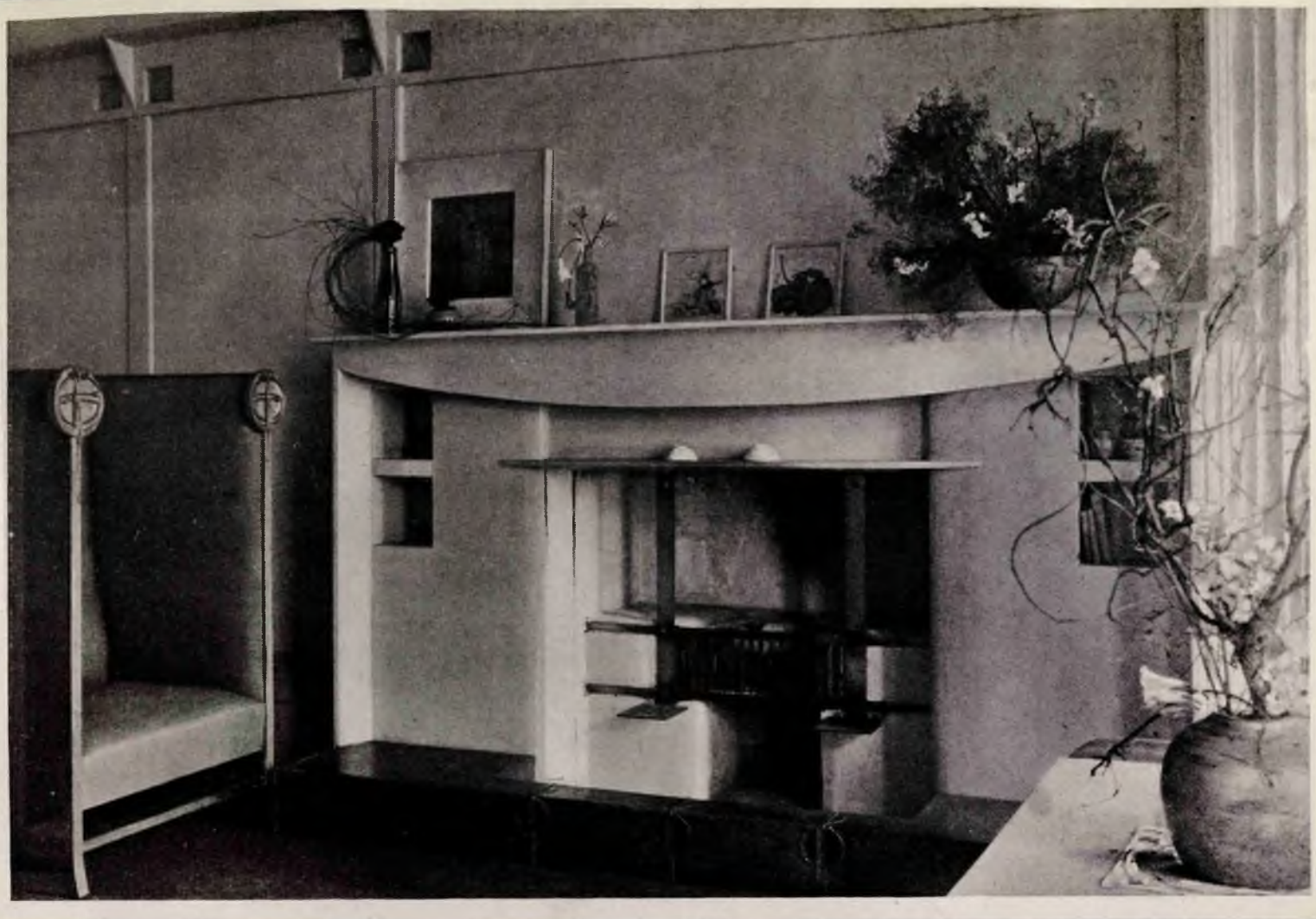
°The glazed bookcase is a finely constructed piece of furniture in two sections linked by a central element of open shelves and magazine racks: unfortunately it has lost considerably in reproduction - Fig.99b - Like the fireplace it too had an almost exact counterpart at Dunglass.)

*It should be noted that the cabinet shown in Fig.99c also appeared in the Dennistoun studio - with the frieze of cats.

Fig.99. Mains Street Flat: a. Drawing-room Fireplace.
b. Drawing-room general.

c. Dining-room.

The MacNair's Flat: d. Bedroom.
e. Dining-room.



d

e

emanation of l'art nouveau.*

Figs. 100 a+b. The principal bedroom at Mains Street was also a white room but from the solitary photograph available it is impossible to see the full extent of Mackintosh's scheme. The architect seems to have had a predilection for four-poster beds and that designed for Mains Street was an enormous piece of furniture some 6'0" square and 6'6" high, decorated with silk hangings embroidered by Margaret Macdonald. The incidence of characteristic ornament is if anything, more pronounced here then elsewhere, and though the decoration of the drawing-room may be suggestive of a later period there can be little doubt about the date of the bedroom furniture. The applied bird and petal-shaped decoration to the twin wardrobes, the carved totem-like centre post of the bed inlaid with jewels of coloured glass, the affected curve of the impractical mirror-stand, all point unmistakably to the late nineties, but nevertheless they are relatively unobtrusive and detract little from the general pleasantness of the room.

No other furniture is visible on the Mains Street photograph, but it is safe to assume that the elegant linen-backed chairs, if Fig. 100 c+d. not the attractive little tables now at Southpark Avenue, were originally designed for the flat, an assumption which seems to be verified by the appearance of the former at the Viennese Exhibition of 1900. These chairs are among the best Mackintosh designed; they are well proportioned, lightly yet soundly constructed, and comfortable to sit in.

It was the Mains Street drawing-room of course, that gave E. B. Kalas his vision of virginal beauty; a vision which, seen from the mid twentieth century, seems to have lost much of its former splendour, for white rooms, and light rooms, and rooms sparcely furnished, have long been accepted as a natural accompaniment to the new architecture. In order to appreciate fully the significance of Mains Street however, it is necessary to compare it with contemporary work in the same field, work by leading architects and designers at home and abroad, consequently there Figs. 100 e+f. are here inserted two typical interiors of the period by Scottish designers, the former by John James Burnet, the latter by Messrs. Steel & Balfour. These examples were not selected for special

(Footnote: *It has been said that the spots were painted with studied precision by Mackintosh on his return from a particularly lively celebration, a theory which, though quite tenable, the author hesitates to accept, largely because it would be tempting to dismiss many other idiosyncracies for the same reason - and the spots could have been removed, or painted out, the next day had they offended the architect's susceptabilities.)

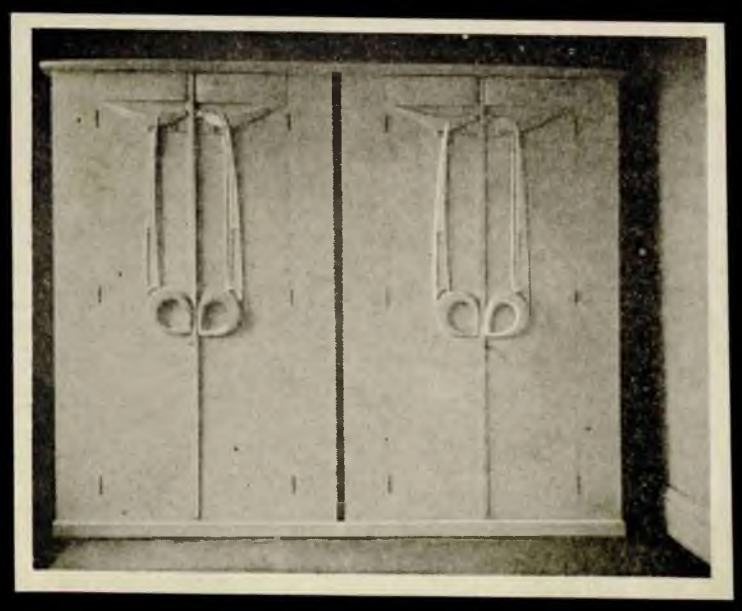
Fig. 100. Mains Street Flat: Bedroom:

a. bed.
b. twin wardrobes.

c. table.
d. chair.

Contemporary interiors: ~~by Burnet~~:

e. Drawing-room by H.B.W. Steel & Balfour.
f. Drawing-room by John James Burnet.



e

f

flamboyance or vulgarity, but were chosen almost at random from an immense range of similar illustrations - the accepted models of good taste - which flooded the professional journals and art magazines of the day. They need no further comment.

Quite apart from the treatment of the rooms themselves, every single piece of furniture at Mains Street is of exceptional interest, especially the chairs. Yet here again it is difficult to say whether or not they were originally designed for the flat. Of the six different types in the drawing room, all but one - a large box-like wing chair - were replicas of chairs which appear in later photographs of Miss Cranston's tearooms. It is possible that Mackintosh kept for himself a replica of each type of chair he designed for a client, in addition to certain examples made specially for his own house. Nevertheless, the important fact is that by 1900 his distinctive furniture forms had reached full maturity for the pieces at Mains Street have little in common with those illustrated hitherto.

Chairs.

The chairs fall into two main classes, high-backed and low-backed, and they all look equally uncomfortable and equally unorthodox: rarely does their designer acknowledge tradition. His tall-backed chairs - often 4'6" to 5'0" high - have been frequently criticised as unpracticable and incomprehensible: unpractical they may be, but to anyone familiar with the architect's work in the applied arts, and especially with his watercolours and posters, they should not be incomprehensible. They convey the same message in a new medium, and they have become the symbol of his revolt against convention. The tall backs, the oval insets, the pierced patterns of squares and crescents all tell the same story of growth, of upward surging vitality; the story that has been traced here through the pages of Mrs. Ritchie's Scrap Books to the west wing of the School of Art. The chairs were always designed for a particular setting where vertical emphasis was required, as for example, in the dining room at Mains Street. When used singly or in small groups, they provided invaluable decorative elements in a large, high room, Then again, they sometimes had a mystical or symbolic implication as in the Willow Tea Room* where the multiplicity of high, spindly backs resembled a forest of young trees. A less practical form would be difficult to devise for regular use, especially in a public restaurant, and the story of the tea room chairs is one of continual repair; many had to be reinforced with metal brackets, and in some cases the

Fig.102 a. & b.

(Footnote: *See Chapter VI:Page138)

backs were eventually reduced to a more reasonable proportion. There can be no doubt that in many of these designs Mackintosh was seeking to achieve a specific aesthetic effect, to stimulate the observer rather than to provide for his bodily comfort. In this he was entirely successful, for few people can look at one of his chairs unmoved, and fewer still can recline in them for long unmoving! Some of the chairs - notably those in
Fig.102b. dark oak with an oval inset - are more comfortable than appearance would suggest for the thin slatted back is remarkably resilient, but the construction is weak and not many have survived intact.

The low-backed variety were, on the whole, much more soundly constructed and approximated more closely to traditional types. They were of sturdy proportions, usually with very wide seats and sloping arms: sometimes they were lightly framed and on occasion, heavily built up with solid panels. A chair of this type in the
Fig.128b. author's possession is one of the first Mackintosh devised for Miss Cranston and was certainly made before the turn of the century. It is constructed of oak with a solid wooden seat, panelled sides and an open back: it is most uncomfortable but, xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx no doubt admirably served its purpose as a restaurant chair. Many of these examples have seats upholstered in linen, or in stout haircloth, usually of chequered pattern. Mackintosh was not averse to rush seats, especially for dining-room chairs.

In addition to the two principal types just described, the architect also designed several fireside chairs of extremely heavy box construction, with high winged backs lightly upholstered. Three kinds are known to the author. They are peculiarly medieval in character and reminiscent of the farmhouse and cottage. One example, 4'6" high and rectangular in plan, is rather like a diminuitive hall settle; a second, a variant on the same theme, is the enormous wing chair which can be seen in the illustration
Fig. 99. of the Mains Street drawing-room; it is upholstered in unbleached linen, decorated with a drawn thread motive; a third, of much later date, is polygonal in plan. All these chairs, notwithstanding their box-like form and heavy construction, are surpris-
Fig. 102d. ingly comfortable. In later years a charming ladder-back was evolved. Small and light, with flat rungs, curved in plan, this proved the starting point for fresh experiments on a traditional
Figs 102 c. & e. theme and c.1908 the splat backed chairs illustrated here appeared.

Fig. 102. Chairs: a. Early Chair, c.1899 (in the University Collection)
b. Early Chair, c.1899 (in the author's collection).

c.)
d.) Late Furniture c.1905 for Miss Cranston.
e.)

Mackintosh produced innumerable variants on these types. In all cases he preferred to leave the structure starkly naked and to reduce the upholstery to a minimum; in fact, but a single drawing for a completely upholstered arm chair - an undistinguished cube-form tub-chair - has come to light. The sketch is dated 1909.

Tables.

Tables always present the designer with something of a problem: the large, flat plane of the top usually obscures the frame and leaves little room for modelling and decoration - a fact which often led Mackintosh to over-emphasise the legs and sub-structure. For dining-rooms, he favoured the simplest possible refectory type with four legs, one at each corner, usually without stretchers: the top rail was often decorated with small heart-shaped piercings. Occasional tables varied considerably and sometimes the legs were made of wide boards, pierced or incised, perhaps set diagonally or radially if the top were not rectangular - an innovation considered 'le dernier cri' in the 1920's and 1930's.

Particularly charming examples of Mackintosh's work are to be seen at Southpark Avenue, but in many cases his predilection for a widely overhanging tops of very slight section on a heavy frame spoilt the proportions.

Other furniture consisted mainly of cabinets for one purpose or another: writing desks, smokers' cabinets, sideboards and so forth. One characteristic example occurs in the drawing-room at Mains Street and others will be reviewed later.

Mackintosh's work at Mains Street is of particular significance because it proves beyond any shadow of doubt that all the characteristics of his interior work which later became identified with 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' were fully in evidence by the turn of the century. These interiors were not tentative experiments, the work of an immature mind, but imaginative designs of an entirely unorthodox kind, demanding a high degree of artistic perception and executive skill. Furthermore, they demonstrate that by the year 1900 he had firmly established the basic forms of his distinctive furniture: and yet more important, that his conception of the room as a complete unit within which and to which all minor elements were related, was clearly defined

and had already found expression. The latter point cannot be overemphasised. It is in this respect that he differed fundamentally from his contemporaries, and it is this characteristic of his work which most greatly impressed continental observers and had far-reaching effect on the trend of future developments abroad.

It will be instructive now to see how he applied the experience gained at Mains Street to subsequent work. The interiors and furnishing of 'Windyhill' (1900-1) and 'Hillhouse' (1901-3) will next be examined in chronological order.

'Windyhill'.

Hall. One of the most attractive features of both houses is a spacious lounge-hall of which the staircase forms an integral part. At 'Windyhill' however, this element is the less successful, largely because it lacks cohesion and scale. Each opening or recess - and there are many - in the white papered walls is framed with narrow bands of dark oak, and the door architraves penetrate beyond the line of the frieze-rail in order to provide space for ventilation over the door itself.* The wall surface is thus broken up into irregular panels and the apparent height of the apartment reduced by the incidence of the dark frieze-rail which extends like a narrow thread from architrave to architrave. At 'Hillhouse' on the other hand, although the same general scheme was followed, the effect is much finer and the relationship between wall surfaces more skilfully contrived. Below a continuous frieze rail, the walls are subdivided by broad cover strips into well proportioned panels, each bearing a simple stencilled design in delicate tints of green and rose, and repeating rhythmically right round the apartment. This treatment echoed more faithfully the emphatic black and white pattern of the open timber ceiling - found in both examples - and the unity of the whole is clearly defined. One is conscious also that the architect carefully studied the play of light and shade, especially in and around the staircase, which flows in both cases directly into the hall, and serves as a channel for indirect light, broken up and diffused as at the School of Art by lofty square balusters. Each staircase has tall newel posts rising almost to the ceiling, a feature not without precedent in traditional Scottish work. There is one instance on the turret stair at Moray House of early 17th century date, expressed as a sturdy doric column supporting a vaulted plaster

Fig. 104 a.

'Hillhouse' Hall.

Fig. 104 b.

(Footnote: *According to a contemporary, this was one of Mackintosh's idiosyncracies at the time, for he contended that it was necessary in each room to provide egress for foul air that collected near the ceiling.)

Fig. 104. Halls: a. 'Windyhill'.
b. 'Hillhouse'.

ceiling. This example would be familiar to the architect through the pages of McGibbon & Ross* and may well have been the source on which he drew.

Mackintosh seldom used turned wooden balustrading, in fact he rarely employed turned work of any description, and at both 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' plain oak boards on end, about 6" wide by ¾" thick were used instead of the square balusters at first floor level - an attractive innovation.

The accompanying illustrations show the hall furniture Mackintosh favoured: at 'Windyhill' sturdy bench seats, two fine tables (one of which is a refectory type with eight legs), and a pair of rush seated chairs with tall wedge-shaped backs. At 'Hillhouse' there were fewer pieces, if anything less attractively designed. For example, a large oval table with heavy legs and underframe and several low arm-chairs with sloping backs. The latter were lightly constructed and decorated with a regular pattern of small squares which echoed the motive in the carpet and the main doorway.

The gasoliers in both houses, especially at 'Hillhouse' were rather clumsy box-shaped contraptions of glass and wrought iron.

The Drawing-Room.

Both drawing-rooms are in the white tradition established at Mains Street. From the decorative point of view that at 'Windyhill' was the more successful: the walls were entirely plain from floor to ceiling whereas at 'Hillhouse' they had a stencilled pattern of tall panels in silver, rose and pale green, a rather effeminate combination. The 'Hillhouse' drawing-room had the better plan. It was a much more mature work, skilfully conceived to meet the varying needs of the family. Especially delightful is the bay window - an "embryo sunparlour" from which the whole panorama of the Clyde estuary may be surveyed; it is virtually a room within a room, charmingly decorated and equipped with a luxurious window-seat and book-racks. There is also a spacious alcove designed to accommodate the grand piano, and a third point of interest is provided by the fireplace, cosily tucked away on the internal wall, well screened from the door. The apartment is at once a summer and winter room adapted to the rapidly changing climate of the north: its windows are adequate on the sunniest day and do not prove an embarrassment in winter.

Fig.106a.

(Footnote: *'Domestic and Castellated Architecture of Scotland', Vol.2, p.535.)

The whole character of the room can be changed by directing interest towards the fireplace or to the musicians' alcove. Direct access to the garden can be obtained by means of a sheltered side-door in the bay, protection being a matter of some importance in such an exposed position.

From the accompanying plans it will be evident that the 'Windyhill' drawing-room is much simpler in conception, though it too has a small bay, the prototype perhaps, of the later sun-parlour. The fireplace, however, was the more attractive and here Mackintosh experimented with a surround of a new type. Instead of the familiar grey plaster, he used a rich, golden mosaic into which were inserted five small circular rose-like motives of coloured enamel and glass;* enclosed by the usual elaborate mantelpiece of white painted wood. The photograph does not do justice to this charming feature and the inclusion of an ornate gasolier, an alien chair, and an aspidistra do not help. Nevertheless, stripped of these incidentals, the fire-place is undoubtedly a considerable advance on contemporary work, and without its mantelpiece would not appear incongruous in a modern setting. The example at 'Hillhouse' is not so successful: larger insets were used, and the broad effect of the mosaic largely destroyed.

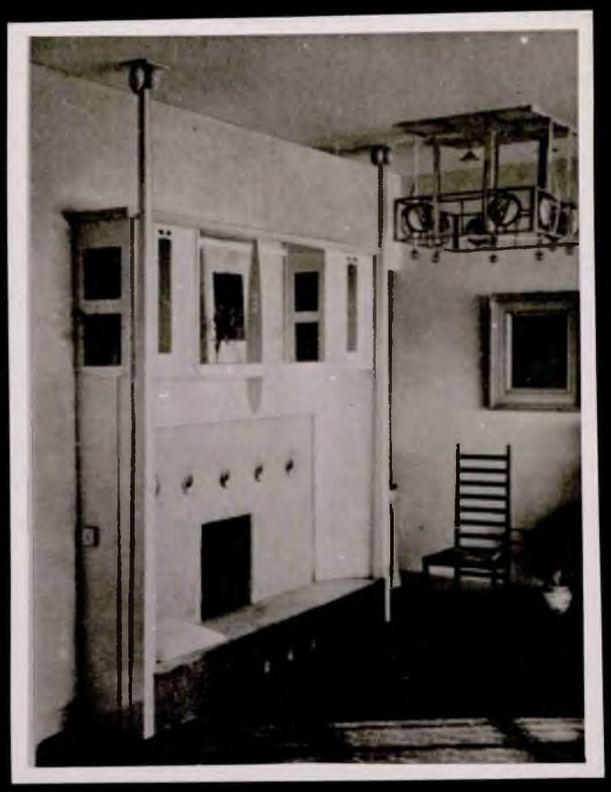
The dining-rooms in both houses were similar in character to that at Mains Street except that they were panelled to picture-rail level entirely in sombre, dark stained wood. Apparently the architect was determined to exclude all possible distractions from any room devoted to the serious business of eating and drinking.

Fig. 106b. The library at 'Hillhouse' is a small cosy room, lined with bookshelves and cupboards in dark oak, brightened at regular intervals by inlaid squares of white enamel or erinoid. The fireplace and overmantel is again original, and is admirably suited to its setting, with restful horizontal lines and rhythmic squares taking the place of the sweeping verticals which occur elsewhere. After the brilliance and sparkle of the drawing-room and the dignified rhythms of the staircase-hall, the architect seems to have struck exactly the right note

(Footnote: *Mackintosh subsequently employed insets of this type on many occasions. They were made from shallow zinc trays of the required shape - usually circular or square - filled with cement, and into which was pressed small pieces of mirror-glass, mother of pearl, enamel and so on, to form the design. When set, the trays were embedded flush with the surface of the surround.)

Fig. 106. 'Hillhouse': a. Bay Window.
b. Library.

'Windyhill': c. Drawing-Room Fireplace.
'Hillhouse': d. " " "



c

d

for this room and it is in all respects one of his best interiors.

The principal bedrooms were fresh and sparkling: white wallpaper, ivory white enamel for the woodwork, and delicate stencilled patterns in mauve and green combined to form an elegant setting for characteristic furniture. Mackintosh always made extensive use of luxuriously fitted, built-in wardrobes and his bedsteads - other than the four-posters - are usually worth attention. The 'Windyhill' bed is a particularly noteworthy example, and is now safely housed in the School of Art Collection.

The bedroom light fittings at 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' are admirably restrained, and a pleasant change from the over-elaborate, heavy, and on occasion positively grotesque examples in which Mackintosh indulged elsewhere. Without doubt, the 'Windyhill' bedroom is a considerable improvement on Mains Street, both from the point of view of general ensemble, and the design of individual pieces of furniture. The 'Hillhouse' room is larger and more elaborate and there is a tendency - in the twin wardrobes for instance - for the architect to introduce unnecessary enrichment. Nevertheless, all three rooms represent a substantial advance on contemporary work and captivated all who had the good fortune to see them. Even Kalas' eulogy on Mains Street was not without parallel, and Fernando Agnoletti, writing in 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration'* describes the 'Hillhouse' bedroom as -

> ".... the exotic bloom of a strange plant, not made but grown, not sensuous but chaste, not floating like a dream, but firm and decisive like the poetical vision of a fact that is expressed in the only possible art form ....."

No;78 Southpark Avenue.

After 'Hillhouse' Mackintosh was for a time concerned with the alteration and decoration of a house in Glasgow, No.6 Florentine Terrace+ to which he and Margaret Macdonald moved from their studio flat in Mains Street in 1906.

Little could be done to improve the external appearance of the grey, narrow-fronted, stone-built house, but Mackintosh

(Footnote: *Vol. 6, No.1, March, 1905.)
+Now No.78 Southpark Avenue, Hillhead.)

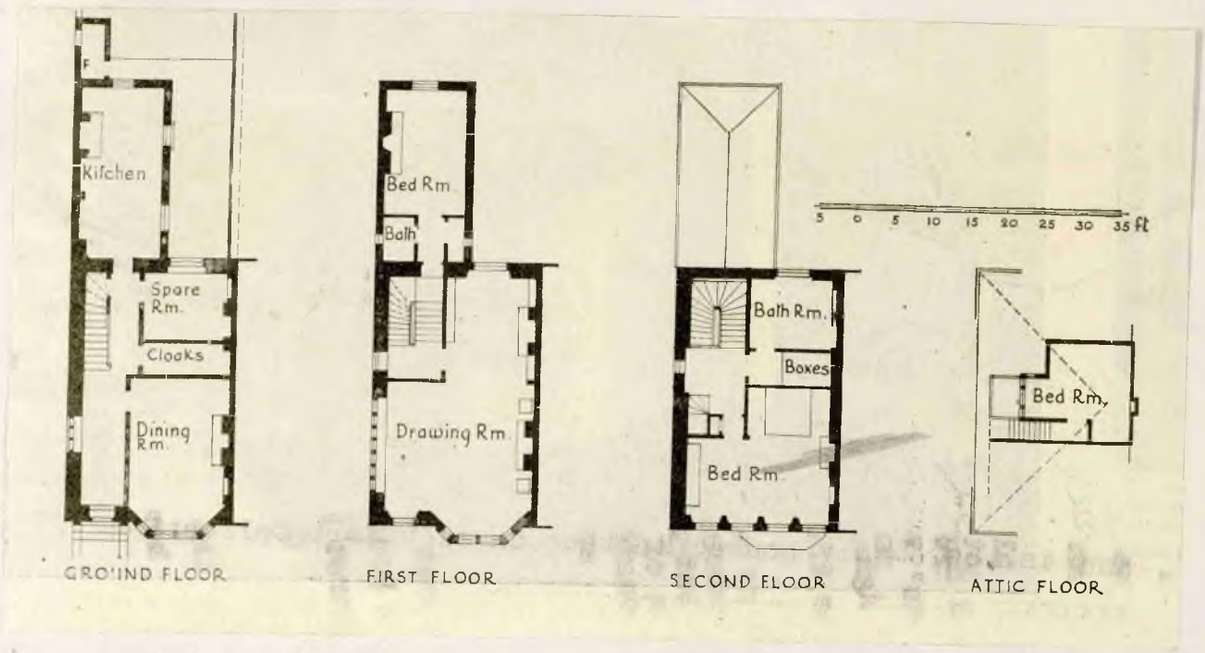


Fig. 107. Plans of No.78 Southpark Avenue.

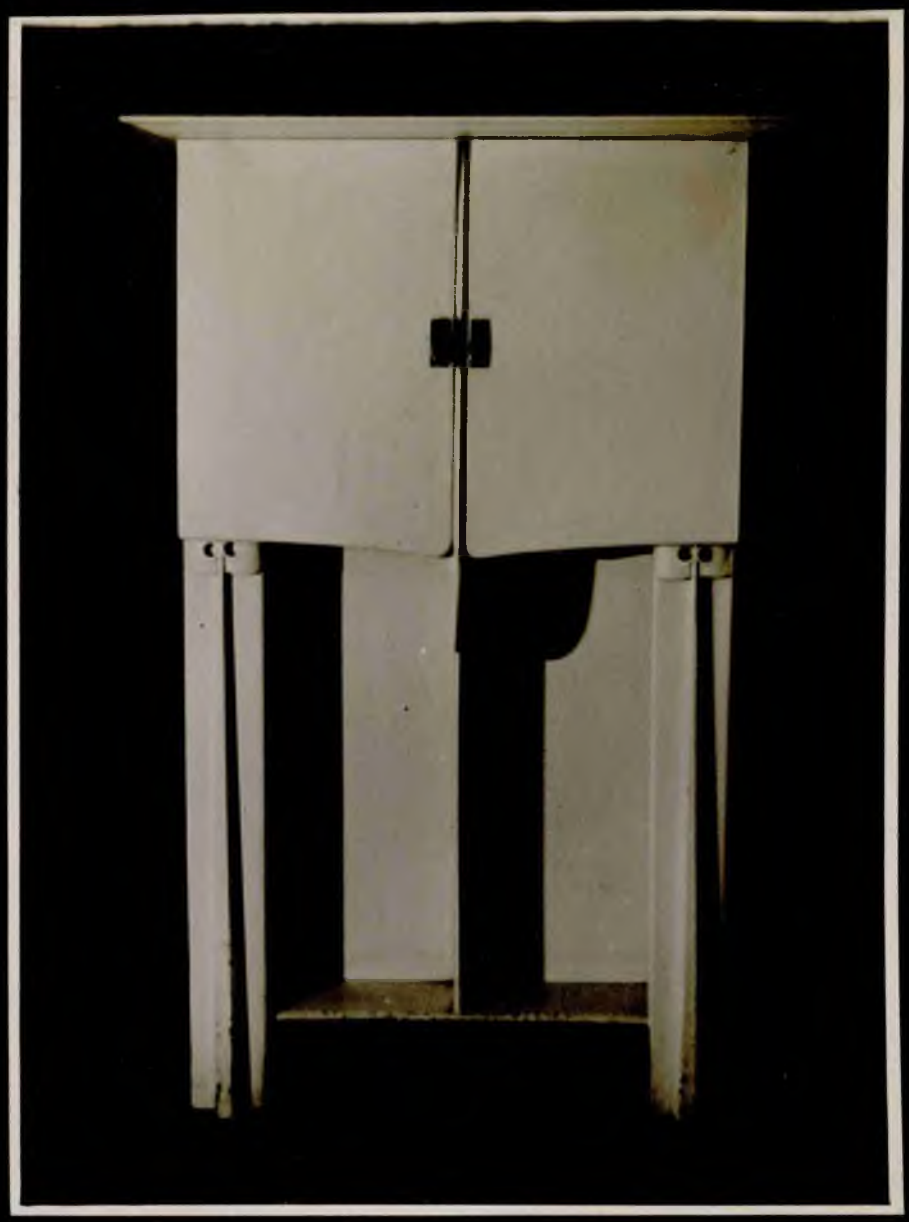
introduced a new door, and provided a number of windows on the gable wall which providentially faced south west across a garden. From the accompanying drawings and photographs it is possible to obtain some idea of the improvements he effected to the unprepossessing plan. The ground floor plan was slightly modified by the provision of a cloak room and the elimination of a tiny impracticable scullery. Two rooms on the first floor were combined to form a spacious L-shaped drawing room; two small front bedrooms on the second floor were converted into a single apartment, and the addition of a french window and balcony on the roof made a small attic into an attractive bedroom.

Mackintosh's experience at 'Hillhouse' now stood him in good stead. Despite the limitations imposed by the building itself he created two rooms - a drawing-room and a bedroom - of great beauty. The former was L-shaped and as at 'Hillhouse', virtually comprised three separate living areas: the toe of the 'L' pointed west and contained a long horizontal window recalling the bay in Mr. Blackie's house; the large fireplace with kerb seats from Mains Street was placed against the party wall, and the vertical stroke of the 'L' largely comprised a library-cum-studio annex which, with its own fireplace, could be curtained off from the rest of the room. The entire apartment was painted white, and was flooded with light from Mackintosh's new windows. As an experiment, the floor was covered in heavy white sailcloth nailed to the boarding and sized. At the first attempt it shrank badly and, much to Mackintosh's chagrin, burst from its moorings; a new piece of material was then obtained and treated before being stretched and secured into position. According to the tradesman responsible, this proved to be entirely successful. In fact, sailcloth stencilled with a chequered pattern, was also used as a stair covering and is said to have cleaned well and lasted for many years.

Figs.108 a. & b.

The furniture has already been discussed but a later addition, a pair of identical cabinets, are worth mention. They were placed one on either side of the great white fireplace, the focal centre of the drawing-room, with which they made a fine group. The accompanying illustrations give some impression of their attractive form: they were painted white and were completely plain externally except for simple, silvered hinges and handles; each door was painted silver on the inside and decorated with a conventionalised female figure and a rose in blue, white and rose-coloured glass inlaid flush with the surface. The cabinets, with much of the original furniture, are now preserved in the University Collection. The dining-room was identical with that at Mains Street.

Fig. 108. a. White cabinet in the University Collection.
b. White cabinet with doors open.



By remodelling the second floor as indicated on the plan, Mackintosh provided a recess for his enormous four-poster bed similar to that in the 'Hillhouse' bedroom, meanwhile leaving ample space for the other furniture.

By a series of coincidences, the house at Southpark Avenue remains relatively intact:* the drawing-room and the bedroom still retain much of their former charm and considering the unpromising material the architect had to deal with, they too must have merited the panegyrics of Kalas and Agnoletti.

The 'Hous'hill' Nitshill. (c.1903-19).

The last of the decorative schemes to be considered in this chapter - the 'Hous'hill', Nitshill, for Major Cochrane and his wife, formerly Miss Cranston - was commenced c.1903+ and the architect was still designing pieces of furniture for this house some sixteen years later. It has been stated on several occasions that he designed the entire building, but this is not so - 'The Hous'hill' was a large rambling place with a classic porch and crow-stepped gables, and had probably been altered and rebuilt several times before the Cochranes bought it. The fact that it was possible to construct a bathroom in the thickness of a wall dividing two bedrooms indicates that part of the house at least must have been of considerable antiquity. In any case, a sketch of the building appeared in a book published in 1831, when it was described as "the largest private house on the Levern".⊖

'The Hous'hill' contained several interesting rooms and numerous features not met with elsewhere. Though all trace of the building disappeared many years ago, a few photographs still survive and various craftsmen who worked on the premises have made a description possible.

(Footnote: *When the Mackintoshes left Glasgow in 1914 the house remained empty for a time and then was let. Some years later Mr. W. Davidson decided to sell 'Windyhill' and search for a suitable town house, largely because his family had grown up and left home. At this point, No.78 came on to the market and the author understands, more by accident than intent, Mr. Davidson happened upon it and jumped at the opportunity of acquiring his old friend's house. The interiors were restored with the greatest care and were preserved by the new owner until, at his death in 1946, the University acquired the property, and by the generosity of Mr. Davidson's family, most of the original furniture, which is to be preserved as the Davidson Bequest.)

+First record in the books of Honeyman & Keppie.)

⊖'The Levern Delineated' by Charles Taylor.)

The porch itself was unusual: the floor was paved with square slabs of stone and the joints - about 1" wide - were covered with iron straps set flush with the surface. The square motive was echoed in a large wrought iron stand and trellis designed to carry a variety of plant pots which at all seasons flooded the porch with a riot of vegetation and flowers.

Dramatic lighting effects were obtained in the hall proper by means of large, wrought iron brazier-like lamps which stood on the floor: the walls and stairs were decorated with a stencilled tree pattern. The floor and stairs were covered with brown horse-hair carpet with a plain border.

Mackintosh was responsible for the Card Room, Music Room and Billiards Room on the ground floor, the Morning Room and several bedrooms on the first floor, and various pieces of furniture for a number of other apartments. Margaret Macdonald co-operated and designed curtains and napery. All reports agree that the most startling and original feature in the house was a large fireplace in the card room which, instead of the customary plaster or mosaic, had a surround of thick plate glass set horizontally, that is with the edge showing. The glass was broken in fairly large pieces, each of which was embedded flat in the mortar with one roughly straightened edge slightly projecting. The result of this extraordinary form of construction was a scintillating surface of liquid green, attractive enough in sunlight, but especially so in artificial light when the full beauty of its colour was revealed. From the practical point of view however, the fireplace had its drawbacks; for example, the edges of the glass were very sharp and when dusted, became covered with fluff and threads stripped from the cloth. The aesthetic effect apparently was considered to far outweigh the disadvantages, and the fireplace remained the principal object of admiration: unfortunately no photograph or drawings now survive. The walls of the Card Room were finished in gold leaf and the six tables and their complement of chairs were inlaid with chequered patterns of mother of pearl. Colourful accents were provided by a set of tinted gesso panels 'The Four Queens' by Margaret Macdonald.

The Music Room.

Perhaps the most interesting apartment from the historical point of view was the Music Room, a large white room with a curved end wall, furnished in familiar Mackintosh style with fitted cupboards, high-backed chairs, small tables and a number of attractive wall seats similar to those used at Kingsborough Gardens. The grand piano was painted by George Walton.*

(Footnote: *George Walton and his work will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.)

Fig. 110. 'The Hous'hill': Music Room.

The principal feature of the room was an exquisitely designed open timber screen, curved on plan, and built of light fins at about 9" centres, which extended from the floor to picture-rail level. The fins were stiffened at intervals by irregularly placed square panels which had a decorative rather than a structural value, but in any case did not detract in the slightest degree from the delicate transparency of the screen. The vertical lines of the fins were echoed in a circular electric light fitting suspended from the ceiling and also in the spindle-backed chairs which Mackintosh designed especially for this room. It is not readily apparent from the photographs which survive that the screen formed a segment of a complete circle of about 18'0" to 20'0" in diameter, described by the flat crowning member, to which the side walls of the room were tangential. The curved end wall, containing a large window, and this inner circle were not concentric, but their point of divergence - at the window - was cleverly disguised by two boxlike seats facing inwards and flanked by the cupboards and upholstered seats already mentioned. In effect, the screen provided a small and intimate salon within the larger apartment. The acoustics were little affected by the light open structure which rendered the piano less obtrusive when it was not in use. Mackintosh thus created a complete secondary element within and independent of the larger structure - virtually two rooms in one - yet in no way imparing the unity of the whole; an interesting spatial experiment which will be discussed at greater length in a later chapter.*

On the first floor, the blue bedroom was probably the most impressive apartment, though there is no means of assessing the colour arrangement as only black and white illustrations survive. Apart from a large wardrobe and an equally ponderous canopied bed with curtains of silk embroidered with Margaret Macdonald's familiar tear-drop motive, all the furniture was less pleasing than the 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' examples.

The only other apartments at 'The Hous'hill' of which any record remains are the dining-room and billiards room. Mackintosh had little to do with the former, but he had a free hand with the

(Footnote:-*The author recently came across an illustration which undoubtedly reveals the origin of this feature. A screen similar in almost every respect was designed by a Viennese architect Carl Witzmann for the Salon of Sigmond Oppenheim. This interior formed part of the Turin Exhibition of 1902 (at which Mackintosh exhibited) and was illustrated in 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration' Vol.II, October-March, 1901-2, p.79.)

Billiards Room. The table itself is a straightforward piece of furniture that might have served well as a model for all subsequent billiards tables. It had sturdy unmoulded square legs and the only decoration used by the architect consisted of small black squares in relief. The room was panelled to door height with vertical oak boarding. Unusually wide cover strips of curved section were used, and their sturdy appearance was well in keeping with the proportions of the table. The fireplace was surrounded by a curious projecting canopy which enclosed a pair of upholstered seats screened from the room by an open framework of vertical members for all the world like groups of billiards cues on end. This feature - in effect an ingle nook built out into the room - was based on a similar motive designed by Mackintosh with more subtlety for a Music Room in Vienna* some four years previously.

From a number of drawings in the author's possession it is evident that the later work Mackintosh executed at the 'Hous'hill', small tables, chairs and so forth, were designed with far less artistry than his earlier examples. It seems as though his growing interest in mother of pearl inlays and very small chequered patterns on furniture and wall surfaces alike, presaged his decline.

It is said that Mackintosh also designed ornamental lead figures for the garden. If this statement is correct, it is most unfortunate that all traces have disappeared, because no other evidence exists of either the architect or his wife executing sculptured work of this nature, the nearest approach being two small heads in high relief on a gravestone at Kilmacolm.† These in themselves are sufficiently interesting to cause the observer to search expectantly for other examples.

After the premature death of Major Cochrane in 1917, Miss Cranston remained at 'The Hous'hill' for about three years and then decided to sell the property and estate. Even this sad duty she accomplished with characteristic élan. The house was left completely equipped with furniture, pictures, stocks of napery, bed linen, cutlery and china, most of which were designed by Charles and Margaret Mackintosh; fresh flowers were placed in every room and a card of welcome presented to the new mistress on her arrival.

(Footnote: *See Chapter VII, page 154 - Continental Work & Exhibitions.)
†See Chapter VIII: page 184.

'The Hous'hill' changed hands several times after Miss Cranston's departure. It was finally bought by xxx Glasgow Corporation after a disastrous fire, and demolished to make way for a large housing estate. The furniture and equipment were removed by the first owner and sold by public auction in 1933, shortly after the Mackintosh Memorial Exhibition. The auctioneer had difficulty in obtaining bids for many of the pieces, most of which were bought by people who had no idea of their value: 'The Four Queens' by Margaret Mackintosh were sold for 25/-d. each; heavy arm chairs of exquisite craftsmanship brought between £2 and £3 each, and several beautiful cabinets were sold for £4. 10. 0. each.*

One cannot but deplorethe fact that nothing but a few photographs+ remain of this interesting house: the fire may have done considerable damage but its complete and merciless destruction does not reflect credit on Glasgow Corporation by whom it was demolished; the fireplaces xxxxx and some of the built-in fittings at least might have been salvaged and preserved. The author recently met an admirer of Mackintosh who, by chance, was passing the 'Hous'hill' when it was being pulled down; he saw a workman driving a pickaxe into one of the architect's charming fireplaces, and, intervening, was able to secure several of the small zinc trays - Mackintosh's jewel-like insets - and to acquire some specially made wooden blocks from a parquet floor which had been seriously affected by the fire and water. These mementos appear to be all that remains of Miss Cranston's house; apart from a few pieces of furniture and the gesso panels.⊖

Several facts of considerable historical significance emerge from this detailed survey of Mackintosh's interior work and one cannot but be astonished at his amazing versatility and painstaking attention to detail. Everything the house contained came within his sphere. He would turn with the same ready facility to the design of fireirons or curtains, cutlery, carpets or door keys, and would lavish upon each the same carethat went to the creation

(Footnote:-*Edmiston, Auctioneers', Glasgow; sale 18.8.33.)
+The photographs were taken by the late Bedford Lemere of London, a fact discovered by the author in 1945 a few months after the negatives had been destroyed.)

⊖It is said that the cellars of the 'Hous'hill' were stocked with hundreds of iron-stone tea sets which had been used by Miss Cranston for her stand at the 1901 Glasgow Exhibition, and it is believed that they were designed by Mackintosh and specially made for the occasion, But this is doubtful and no-one seems to know what ultimately happened to them. - Information from Herbert Smith.)

of the building itself. Mackintosh however, was not the only 19th century architect nor for that matter the first, to take an interest in the comparatively unremunerative trivialities of interior decoration. The William Morris School, The English Arts and Crafts Society and their followers and adherents - many of whom were architects - in one way or another were attempting to stem the landslide of Victorian commercialism. Yet his contemporaries almost invariably placed too much emphasis on the creation and refinement of individual pieces of furniture - a Morris chest, a Gimson chair, or a Voysey cabinet, for example - on materials of fine quality and on exquisite craftsmanship, rather than upon the design of the room as a whole. The architect by and large, had little time to spend on decoration and furniture, he provided the setting - the panelled walls and fireplaces, the moulded skirtings and ornate cornices - and there his responsibility ended. The room became a depository for objects d'art from the ends of the earth and upholsterers and cabinet-makers completed the job. Architects brought up under the influence of Morris however, men of the calibre of Voysey, Baillie Scott and Edgar Wood, were quite prepared to devote time and energy to the development of a project on original lines, to the preparation of colour schemes, to the selection or design of furniture and furnishings. Then again, this was the xxx day of the practising decorator-cum-designer with little or no architectural training, and men like George Walton would, in a similar manner, prepare a scheme and either advise on the purchase of furniture, fabrics, wallpaper and the like, or design them personally. Men with advanced ideas were few and far between, and the representative room of the period still retained an aura of Victorian respectability, or if designed in the arts and crafts manner, frequently possessed the characteristics of a museum of medieval English craftwork, for Morris had always turned to the past for inspiration, and few of his followers had the initiative to adventure into new fields.

It was against this situation that Mackintosh rebelled, and his high-backed chairs are the symbol of his revolt. By comparison with contemporary work his rooms seem positively bare; pictures, ornaments and other fashionable bric-a-brac were largely eliminated, and furniture and setting combined to form a single indivisible whole. His colour schemes too followed the same principle: one hue predominated, either very light or very dark in tone, with small jewel-like accents of rich colour, skilfully contrived to secure the maximum effect. The whole ensemble, furniture, fabrics and setting, were refined as work progressed

and by the addition of a spot of colour here, or a vase of flowers there, the ultimate form gradually emerged. It was Mackintosh's unequivocal recognition of the essential unity of a room and its contents which so distinguished his work from that of his contemporaries. He saw himself as a composer in form and colour, the creator of a harmonious whole, and he handled each element with the skill of a master musician. Every subtle variation of light and shade, the precise point at which to introduce an accent, the value of a gay skipping rhythm or a sombre adagio, were exploited to the full; and when the interior was finished, it formed a complete work of art from which little could be abstracted, and to which nothing could be added without destroying the perfection of the whole. In this respect it should be observed that a single Mackintosh chair or even a furniture group may provide an effective centre of interest in almost any carefully ordered room, but a piece of furniture by another designer introduced into a Mackintosh room at once appears alien and incongruous,* a phenomenon soon noted by his more observant contemporaries. Muthesius, the German critic went so far as to say that Mackintosh's rooms reached such a high level of artistic achievement that even a book bound in the wrong kind of cover might be sufficient to upset the delicate colour relationships — a typical over-statement which serves nevertheless to emphasise the importance attached to this aspect of his work by continental admirers. There can be no doubt that it was Mackintosh's consistency of principle in the design of small and large elements, and his striving for homogeneity that seemed so extraordinarily refreshing in the early 1900's.

Seen in retrospect, another point emerges which perhaps links him still closer to the modern movement, and that is his tentative subdivision of the space content of a room, an innovation usually claimed as a prerogative of the 1920-30 modernists. Mies van der Rohe, it is said, conceived the idea of a great living space 'zoned' for various activities by means of screens, instead of the independent box-like apartments which we, beguiled by tradition, have always accepted as a house. Lloyd Wright too has taught us that walls and doors may be largely dispensed with, but neither of these distinguished architects, nor any of the exponents of the new movement had progressed as far in this direction as Mackintosh, who it will be remembered, c.1905, divided the 'Hous'hill' music room into two inter-related parts by means of an ingenious openwork screen, and as we shall

(Footnote: *The Chair for example in Figure 106a.).

see, had to his credit interesting spatial experiments elsewhere. Unfortunately circumstances prevented him from developing his thesis, and the interiors reviewed here constitute the main body of domestic work he carried out.

In the professional journals of Great Britain, little was said about his experiments and the significance of his work entirely escaped his contemporaries. In Europe the story was different; Kalas, Bruchmann, Muthesius and Koch disseminated the Mackintosh gospel far and wide and it is to the continent that one must turn in order to see the wider ramifications of the Glasgow Style. For the moment, it is sufficient to note the main characteristics of Mackintosh's work and to record his achievements; he must be acknowledged one of the most inventive and prolific designers of the period, and from the continental view-point, one of the most important figures in British architectural history since the Adam brothers.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GLASGOW TEA ROOMS.

Glasgow has for some generations been celebrated for the excellence and variety of its restaurants - a reputation largely acquired in the last decade of the 19th century. In those more propitious days, not only was good homely food obtainable at reasonable prices, but proprietors vied with each other in providing well appointed, comfortable premises which, thanks to the progressive policy of a certain Miss Catherine Cranston, were often designed by local artists of repute. In this manner an unusually high standard of furnishing and decoration was achieved, and by and large the Glasgow restaurant never became tawdry, nor approached in character the tinselled vulgarity of the average provincial tea shop. Tea drinking in the city became one of the most fashionable practices of the leisured classes and the tea room the recognised meeting place of the professional and business men.

Before discussing Mackintosh's work in this sphere it will be worth while perhaps, to digress for a moment, and to examine the raison d'être of the Cranston restaurants with which his name has become inextricably linked, and which incidentally, appear to have been ~~quite~~ unique in 19th century Britain.

From the mid 1800's the concentration of ship-building and heavy industry in the Clyde Valley area completely transformed Glasgow and its environs. Between 1830 and 1860 the population trebled and continued to increase at an extraordinary rate; a population which hitherto had been largely agrarian and was drawn either from the Highlands, from Ireland or the south. Not unnaturally the city magistrates were confronted with many new and disquieting social problems, one of which was an enormous increase in daytime drunkenness. Young clerks, many of whom were recruited from outlying districts, congregated at lunch-time in bars and public houses adjacent to the main shopping and business centres, and then sallied forth to make a general nuisance of themselves by interfering with traffic and passers-by, and by offending the susceptibilities of peacefully disposed shopkeepers and members of the public. As a deterrent, the magistrates took the singularly naïve step of discouraging licencees from providing seating accommodation on their premises. Thus the Glasgow public house, unlike its counterpart in the south, became merely a drink shop, crowded, sordid and ugly, a place of passage or of temporary shelter from the

rain. The need for some alternative forced itself upon public consciousness, but it was not until the early 1880's that the situation was alleviated by the advent of the humble tea shop, which soon began to compete with the public house in catering for the mass of lower-paid black-coated workers. Tea shops were opened in the most fashionable streets, and where rents were prohibitive, cellars and basements were utilised. At the turn of the century, Glasgow was described by a contemporary writer as a very Tokio for tea rooms and, he said, "nowhere are such places more popular or frequented".

One of the pioneers in this new field was Miss Catherine Cranston, a native of Glasgow, and a lady of character and resource, who defied convention and embarked upon a career in the city much against the wishes of her family - especially the Cranston branch, already in business as tea importers, and tentatively experimenting with a small restaurant. In 1884, with the reluctant help of her father George Cranston, formerly licencee of 'The Crown' and 'The Crow'* she rented part of a shop below Aitken's Hotel - 114 Argyle Street - and opened a tea room. To everyone's surprise, the tiny venture flourished; Miss Cranston personally supervised every detail of the business and kept a watchful eye on her customers and waitresses from the cash desk. She soon realised that something more than a tea shop was required to satisfy the needs of Glasgow's thriving commercial population, and she began to make plans for a veritable paragon among restaurants, a building in which the patron would not only enjoy a good meal, but could if he wished, spend an hour at billiards or in quiet relaxation. This dream was realised some time later, for in 1892 she married Major John Cochrane, a well-known engineer of Barrhead, and acquired the whole of No.114 Argyle Street - as a wedding gift, it is said. The building was soon transformed into a miniature community centre with a billiards room; smoke rooms equipped with lounge chairs and small tables for chess, draughts and dominoes; a reading room and of course, a separate tea room for ladies. This restaurant, the first of its kind, created something of a sensation in the city. It became virtually a business man's club yet a most popular rendezvous for both sexes.* Miss Cranston's* reputation was established and the public were curious to know what her next move would be. For two or three years she adhered to her original plan and built up the Argyle Street business meanwhile perfecting her organisation; then in 1895 she acquired

(Footnote: *Even after her marriage the proprietress was invariably referred to as "Miss Cranston", a practice that will be continued in this study.)

*Two noted hostelries in George Square, long since demolished.)

Nos.205-9 Ingram Street and Nos.91-93 Buchanan Street, the latter one of the city's most fashionable thoroughfares. In the same year she employed a local firm of architects, H. & D. Barclay, to reconstruct the Argyle Street premises which were renamed "The Crown Lunch and Tea Rooms" and in 1896 she commissioned George Washington Brown R.S.A., of Edinburgh, to design the Buchanan Street restaurant.

It was at this point that Mackintosh appeared on the scene, a little late, it must be admitted, for others had already done most of the work, but nevertheless, at the moment when she was looking for someone of outstanding artistic ability to interpret visually the spirit of the Cranston Tea Rooms. In this respect Mackintosh, and later his wife Margaret Macdonald, completely filled the bill. Some years elapsed however, before the artists were given an entirely free hand, and from the point of view of historical accuracy, it must be recorded that Miss Cranston had already made a name for herself before Mackintosh came into the picture. She had in her employ as decorators, for example, the firms of George Walton & Co., Messrs. J. & W. Guthrie, Messrs. Alexander & Howell and Messrs. Scott Morton of Edinburgh-in addition to the architects just mentioned- when Mackintosh made his debut at Buchanan Street in 1896. For some time, at least until Walton left Glasgow, he played a very minor role.

The author cannot resist the temptation to comment a little further on the dynamic personality and organising genius of Miss Cranston who, within a few years, rose from comparative obscurity to become one of the best known figures in the city of Glasgow - and a leader of fashion.

Miss Cranston.

Although marriage brought her financial independence, Miss Cranston refused to relinquish her business interests and in fact, she seems to have intensified rather than diminished her activities thereafter. Major Cochrane also took a benevolent interest in his wife's lucrative pastime and there can be little doubt that both of them derived a great deal of pleasure and enjoyment from it. Thus relieved of financial anxiety, Miss Cranston was able to devote herself almost entirely to the comfort of her customers and she personally attended to every detail with a grace and artistry that has become proverbial.

Her restaurants were a model of efficiency: every table had to be exactly in place and meticulously laid; napery, cutlery, china and glassware were always impeccable; in hot weather she provided each table with a small fan. On Mondays, Wednesdays

and Fridays, a large consignment of flowers was sent from her own garden or conservatory, along with written instructions as to the precise positions they were to occupy. The flowers arrived in town in a donkey cart driven by a small boy in green uniform - a characteristic gesture this, for Miss Cranston was well aware of the value of showmanship! Strict rules of personal cleanliness and good manners were laid down for her staff; the waitresses' hands and finger nails were examined every day, the girls were dressed alike and each was provided with two clean aprons daily; the strings were tied in neat bows, all identical, by a supervisor. The girls were not permitted to wear squeaking shoes, and were taught to speak quietly and conduct themselves in a ladylike manner. Their first concern, Miss Cranston pointed out, was the wellbeing and pleasure of her customers, and on one occasion she severely reprimanded a waitress because a certain gentleman was observed to yawn between courses!

Although a strict disciplinarian, Miss Cranston was a model employer by 19th century standards, and took an active interest in the welfare of the girls in her care, visiting them when they were sick and sending gifts of food to any who were in need. Before engaging a new employee she invariably interviewed the parents in their home to see for herself the environment in which the girl had been brought up, for her employees were selected with great care. A newcomer commenced work as a 'runner' at a wage of 4/-d. per week; her duty being to collect dirty dishes and to provide the waitresses with anything they required; her hours were 7 a.m., to 7. p.m. A runner graduated into a waitress at a wage of 9/-d. per week after undergoing a rigorous training under the supervision of Miss Cranston, or one of her manageresses. The final test was a period of waiting at table in the ladies' corner - a room or part of each restaurant reserved for ladies only - where the strictest discipline and efficiency were demanded. The proprietress and her husband lunched daily at 114 Argyle Street and every prospective waitress had to wait upon them before being passed into service.

By such rigorous methods, by sheer force of character, by a phenomenal capacity for hard work, and painstaking care and attention to detail, Miss Cranston not only laid the foundations of an important new industry, but raised it from the level of mundane commercialism to that of a profession if not of a fine art.

Miss Cranston was nothing if not an individualist and like Margaret Macdonald, contrived to be original even in matters of

personal habit and appearance. She was tall and stately and effected picturesque, superbly tailored clothes that have been described by a contemporary as "a blend of bye-gone fashions and current styles, striking and elegant, but never outré". She was a distinctive, and well-known figure in Glasgow's fashionable shopping centres; a person noted for her good taste and integrity. Consequently her tea rooms were patronised by people from every walk of life. By providing specially designed apartments for ladies, in addition to the general tea rooms and smoke rooms, she succeeded in convincing even the most genteel that there was nothing remotely suggestive of impropriety in taking a cup of tea in one of her establishments - in fact not to do so was tantamount to admitting social inferiority.

Let these notes serve to introduce one of Glasgow's most colourful personalities about whom much could be written; one whom, like the Newberys and 'The Four', has become almost a legendary figure, a symbol of the opulent, fabulous nineties.

Quite apart from Miss Cranston's contribution to the social amelioration of the city of Glasgow, which directly and indirectly was not inconsiderable, her work had a deeper import that has been overlooked hitherto. She was in fact one of the first to recognise the immense field open to designers of talent in the commercial world. Her convictions were such that, having enumerated the problems and outlined her requirements, she was content to leave everything in the hands of the artist - an act of faith which few of her contemporaries at home or abroad had the wisdom to emulate. The logical conclusion was reached in her last enterprise - 'The Willow Tea Room' - in which Mackintosh not only designed the structure, but with his wife, created everything that went inside it, with the exception of the glass and china which was specially selected by the proprietress. Carpets, curtains and cutlery, menu cards and waitresses' dresses, furniture and flower vases, all came within his purview and nowhere else in Europe could such imaginative and adventurous work be found at this time.

Now it is necessary to examine the tea rooms individually.

Charles Mackintosh was introduced to Miss Cranston c.1896 most probably by Fra. Newbery - and she eventually became not only an ideal client, willing and anxious to gratify his every whim,

but a veritable patron of his art. By 1896 however, as already noted, George Walton had been commissioned to undertake part of the work at Argyle Street and Buchanan Street. Thus it came about that the two artists were thrown together and for a time worked on the same projects - an interesting point of considerable moment that will be discussed in a later chapter.

It is generally assumed that the tea-rooms were opened after redecoration in the following order, Buchanan Street, Argyle Street, Ingram Street, Sauchiehall Street, and they will be examined in this sequence, although, as explained later, there is good reason to believe that the order of the first two should be reversed.

Buchanan Street Restautant

In the Buchanan Street Tea Rooms it is not possible now to trace exactly the limits within which each of the designers worked. The building subsequently passed into the hands of the Clydesdale Bank and the interior has been entirely remodelled, in fact all that remains of the original scheme are two large fireplaces in the staff recreation room on the top floor. Nor do the meagre records still extant give great help. It would appear however, that Walton was in charge and that Mackintosh played a minor role throughout: weight is given to this supposition by the fact that, in addition to most if not all the furniture and the main apartments, Walton also designed the hoarding which was erected in Buchanan Street while the building was in course of construction. The hoarding, incidentally, was most unusual in that it was richly decorated. The timber background was painted black, a brilliantly coloured exotic peacock motive was stencilled at each corner, and the scheme was completed by a heraldic frieze of flowers and heart-shaped emblems, and ~~of~~ appropriate lettering. This was probably the first occasion on which a utilitarian structure of the kind had been treated so ambitiously, but again it provided Miss Cranston with a magnificent field for advertisement. Although the peacock was used also by Mackintosh in his mural decorations at Buchanan Street it does not seem to have any particular significance; it was a popular motive with the School group and especially with Talwin Morris, as remarked elsewhere. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxx

Fig.122 b.

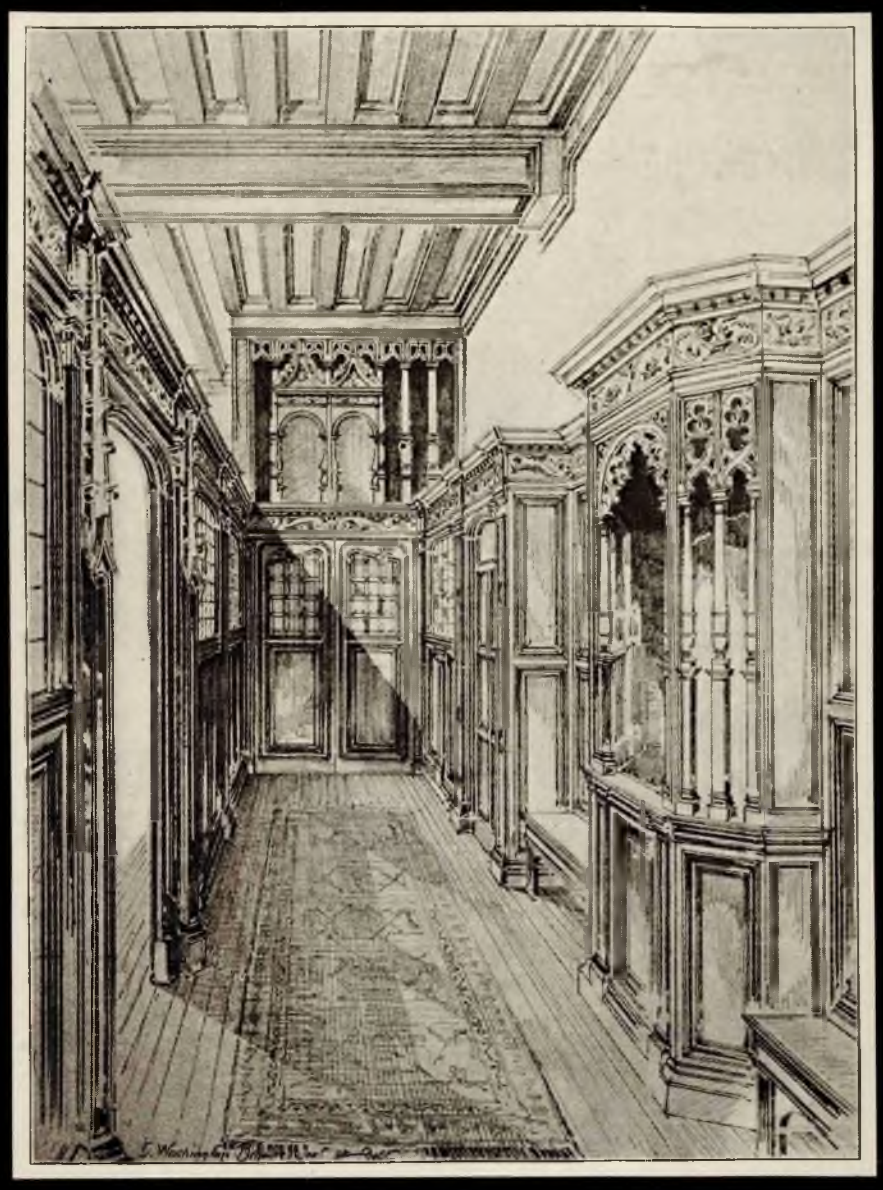
~~xxx.~~

Externally the building had little claim to distinction and Washington Brown's essay in the Franco-Scottish renaissance manner is xxxxxxxx far more appropriate to a bank than a tea-room.

Fig. 122. The Buchanan Street Restaurant:

a. Typical Interior by Washington-Brown.

b. Hoarding by George Walton.




Rice
Son
Son

Yet he had an unenviable task for the site was a narrow one some 80ft. deep with a frontage of about 30ft. to Buchanan Street, hemmed in on both sides by massive commercial buildings. A perspective drawing by T. Raffles Davidson of Washington Brown's design appeared in 'The British Architect'* and the editor of 'The Studio' in reviewing the project some twelve months later tactfully referred to the building as designed by "an eminent Edinburgh architect", for he added, "As several interior features
Fig.122a. are open to somewhat severe criticism, it will be best not to give the architect's name". Judging by photographs of the original scheme now in the author's possession, this was something of an understatement. Washington Brown planned the building in four floors with a spacious top-lit staircase-well at the rear containing broad galleries at each floor level which could be used for dining purposes. There were the following independently decorated apartments: a ladies' tea room and a ladies' dinner room, a general tea room and a general luncheon room, a gentlemen's luncheon room and adjoining gallery, and on the top floor, a billiards room and smoking gallery. To these apartments Mackintosh contributed nothing but the mural decorations in the general dinner room, the dinner gallery and the smoking gallery. Gleeson White, writing in 'The Studio' (1897) indicates that he decorated several floors visible from the staircase well - this presumably refers to the galleries. The predominating colours varied from green on the ground floor, through greys, and yellows, to blue for the upper floor, each basic colour intruding as a frieze on its neighbour, the whole scheme suggesting the idea of transition from earth to sky. It is rather curious that White completely disregarded Walton's decorative work and furniture in his eulogistical account of Buchanan Street - an unjustifiable omission which must have greatly offended the more tolerant, sensative designer. To the uninformed reader it would seem that the credit for the entire project belonged to Mackintosh and in point of fact, the first illustrations of Walton's murals did not appear in 'The Studio' until 1901, long after initial interest in Buchanan Street had waned.

As far as can be ascertained none of the furniture was designed by Mackintosh and it is evident that he modelled several of his later chairs upon those provided by Walton for the
Fig.124a. Billiards room and smokers' gallery - low, sturdy, tub-like forms in natural oak, the most imaginative of an undistinguished collection. Walton's restaurant furniture was much more practical than that of the younger man; he never went to extremes, and

(Footnote: *28th February, 1896.)

all the chairs at Buchanan Street were soundly constructed. Many of them are still in use, and in fifty years have required neither repairs nor modification. Mackintosh's chairs on the other hand, rarely survived for long without attention from the cabinet-maker - usually the addition of iron shoes but in some cases drastic alteration was necessary. Two principal types of chair were used by Walton in this restaurant, one with a high back and centre reeded splat, the second, a stocky spindle-back with turned legs and uprights.* The seats were upholstered in gold silk with a black stencilled pattern. The furniture was designed in 1896 and records show that it was built and delivered in the following year. Furniture of standard pattern was also used, and the gentlemen's dinner room was provided with fine High Wycombe ladder-backs.

The Murals

Contrary to general opinion then, Mackintosh did little actual work at Buchanan Street; nevertheless, his stencilled mural decoration is well worth examination. Here for the first time, he put into practice on a large scale the technique he had perfected in poster work and which was readily adaptable to this new medium. The identical characteristics can be immediately recognised; strongly delineated and highly conventionalised human and vegetable forms, colour applied in flat ungraded washes and bright colour of primary intensity confined to small areas. Always he avoided naturalism and never tried to penetrate or to dissolve the wall surface by perspective - an interesting point which distinguishes his work from that of his contemporaries, not excluding Walton.

Mackintosh's most imposing scheme at Buchanan Street consisted of a series of large white-robed figures entwined with an intricate pattern of branches and plants, disposed in groups round the walls of the general tea room on the first floor. In the luncheon room, the murals had more in common with Egyptian or Oriental decorative work - an impression conveyed by the employment of stylised trees reminiscent of the lotus and the ubiquitous peacock motive; they were even more remarkable than the humanised patterns for their wealth of varied detail. At first glance, the trees appear identical in shape, but a closer examination reveals that each design is different from its neighbour either in the form of the intertwined branches, or in the placing of small leaf or flower motives on or around the main stem. The sense of growth,

Fig. 124b.

~~Fig.~~

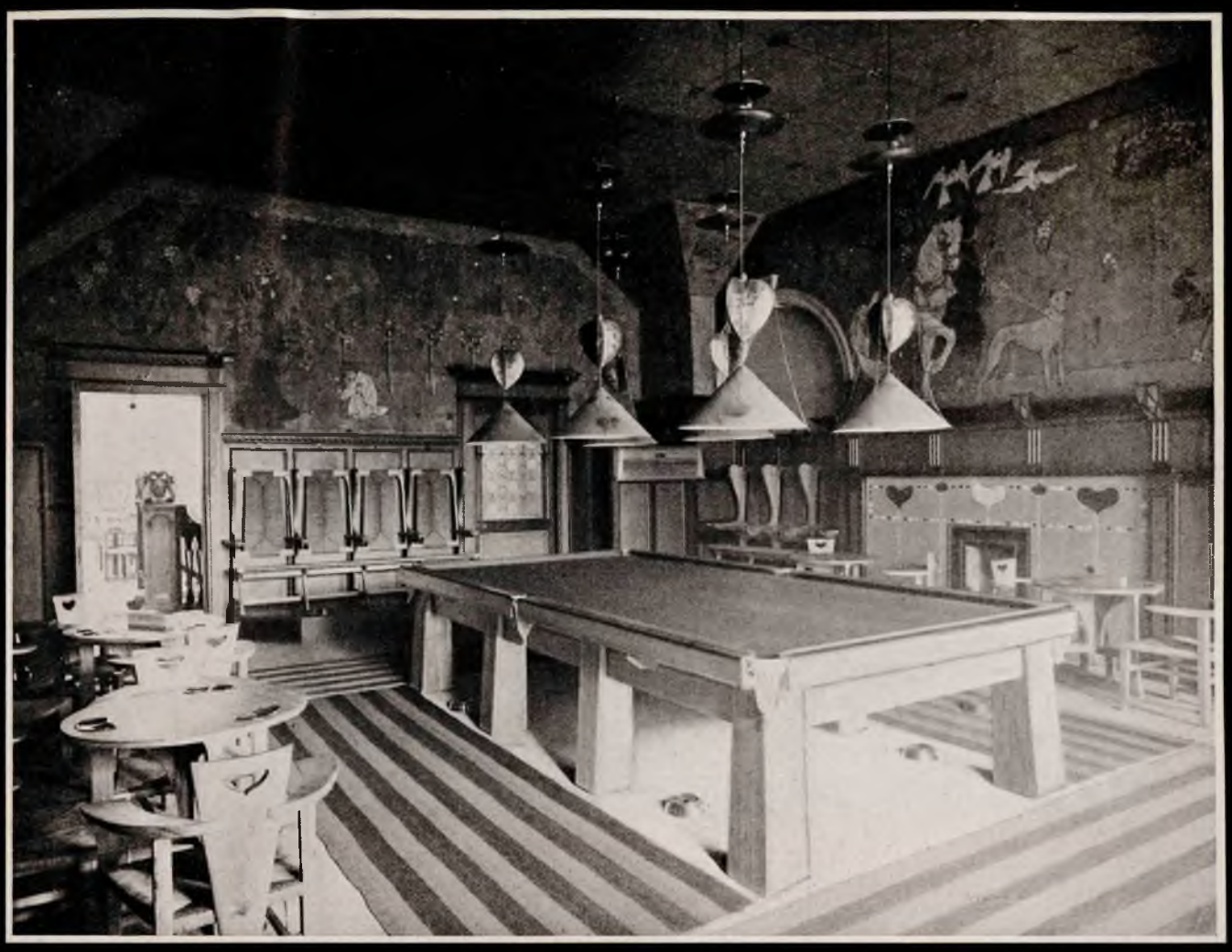
(Footnote: *These chairs were made of oak from the grounds of Scone Palace, by Francis Smith & Son of Glasgow.)

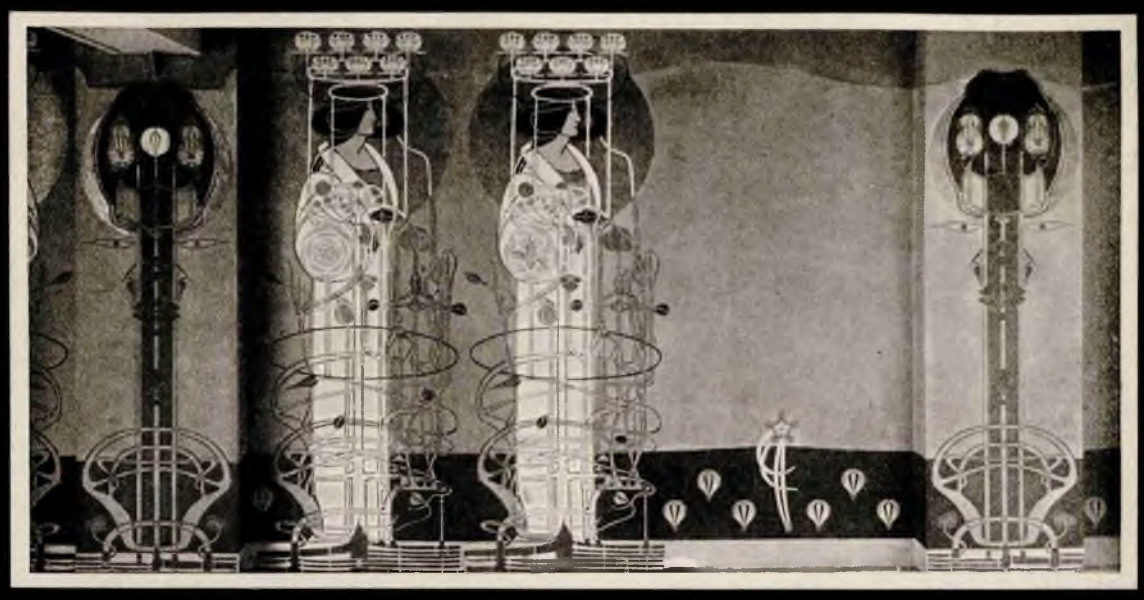
Fig. 124. The Buchanan Street Restaurant:

a. The Billiards-room by George Walton.
N.B. The mural decorations and the fireplace.

b. Mural Decorations by Mackintosh: general tea-room.

c. " " " " smokers' gallery.





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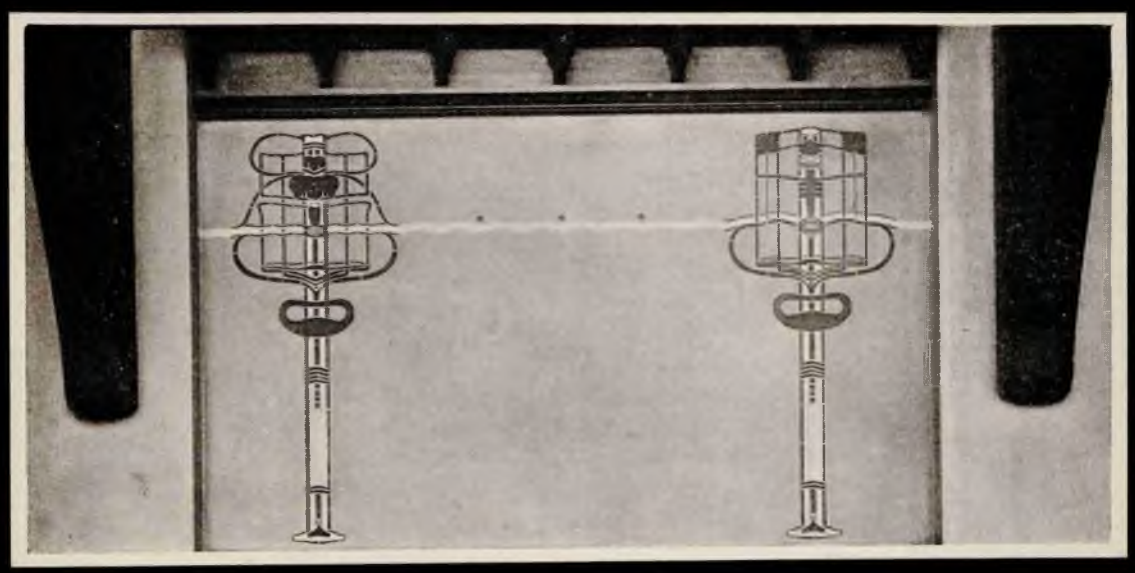


of root, stem, branch and leaf, is always retained, however conventionalised the ultimate form becomes.

Mackintosh rarely used abstract design and the derivation of most of his decorative work is usually obvious and the symbolism apparent; one example at Buchanan Street however, is incapable of rational analysis. It was to be seen in the smokers' gallery and consisted of a series of totem-like shapes linked by a wavy line, a symbol of smoke or perhaps of cloud, for the end wall was decorated by a sun smiling benignly. The totem figures varied considerably though conforming to the same general shape, and if one appeared to represent a grotesquely distorted human form in which the shape of pelvis, chest and head could be recognised, such familiar anatomic details were not apparent in the next. The derivation of the patterns however, is not of great importance; their significance lies in the evidence they provide of a highly developed sense of design and a remarkably fertile imagination. The smoke-room murals represent an even more daring innovation than the formalised ladies in the general tea room, and were far removed from the tapestry-like work of George Walton, the great easel paintings of Maddox Brown, or the naïve allegory of John Duncan. They demonstrate that in this field too, Mackintosh was capable of venturing into new realms of visual experience, and they form an interesting diversion which unfortunately he did not pursue.

Fig. 124c.

Mackintosh learned a great deal from the Buchanan Street experiment; the human figure, trees, flowers and plants continued to dominate his interior decorative schemes, but the exotic and complicated forms employed in this, one of his first commissions, did not appear again. He realised that it was possible to obtain the effect he desired without recourse to intricate pattern, and by simplification to achieve greater refinement. Not only were his stencilled murals interesting from the aesthetic point of view, however but also as examples of the reinstatement of a neglected and largely dishonoured craft. His ingenious patterns with their ever varying detail, bright colours and absence of hackneyed motives, gave sparkle and life to a medium which by its very nature had in the past lent itself to dull formal repetition. The matt surface of the plaster was always allowed to dominate and accentuated the vitality of the design. In this respect Gleeson White's comments are worth recording for, he said, "The plaster has been prepared in flat colours of singular quality: whether owing to the surface or to some clever manipulation, the effect is of flat but not even colour with a fine texture in it

that imparts a surface not unlike that upon the 'self-colour' bottles of Chinese porcelain". The method of application was simple and inexpensive and the value of the experiment was emphasised by White who later stated that the work at Buchanan Street should be regarded as a very important enterprise in the decorative field. The opening of the Buchanan Street restaurant caused something of a sensation; its success was instantaneous, though the strange and unorthodox decorations came in for considerable criticism. The attitude of the man in the street to Miss Cranston's first enterprise may be summed up in the following observation by a contemporary* - "It is believed (and averred) that in no other town can you see in a place of refreshment such ingenious and beautiful decorations in the style of the new art as in Miss Cranston's shop in Buchanan Street. Indeed, so general in the city is this belief that it has caused a Glasgow man of the better sort to coin a new adjective denoting the height of beauty .... 'quite Kate Cranstonish' ".

Argyle Street.

The Argyle Street Restaurant does not appear to have attracted as much attention as Miss Cranston's first essay in the new style, and it was not until 15th October 1906 that 'The Studio' published photographs and a commentary by a certain J. Taylor.

Before Walton and Mackintosh were called in to transform the interior, the building had been completely remodelled by a local firm of architects, H. & D. Barclay - externally all mouldings were stripped from the facade, fanciful gables and dormers were built in the red-tiled, steeply pitched roof, a turret was added and the walls rough-cast from eaves to first floor level. The two designers again shared the work, but this time Walton was responsible for the panelling, the screens, the billiards tables, the fireplaces, the wall and ceiling decorations and electric light fittings; Mackintosh designed the chairs, tables, coat and umbrella stands.

The ground floor of the premises was occupied by tea-rooms, the first and second floors by luncheon and tea-rooms, the third floor and spacious attic by a billiards-room, reading and smoke-rooms.

Walton panelled the ground floor rooms in walnut, a timber rarely if ever used by Mackintosh, and they are quite undistinguished. The luncheon-room on the first floor however, was more characteristic. A long low-ceiled apartment, it was divided into two by a narrow panelled oak screen, the upper part of which was

(Footnote: *'Glasgow 1901' by Muir.)

stencilled with a floral pattern on a light ground. The whole of the main apartment was sub-divided by low oak screens into small alcoves on either side of a central service passage. A stencilled frieze by Walton, in the form of a conventional rose motive within a light pattern of small leaves and flowers encircled the room and forms an interesting contrast to Mackintosh's work at Buchanan Street and elsewhere. Two separate arrangements of the floral motives were used alternatively and the result is reminiscent of a Voysey wallpaper. The frieze treatment may be criticized for breaking up the wall surface above the panelling and emphasising the low ceiling height of the room. In similar circumstances it is almost certain that Mackintosh would have brought the ceiling colour down to the top of the panelled dado without introducing a decorative frieze and probably would have painted the woodwork to match. An unusual mozaic panel - 'Eros' - designed by Walton for the 1901 Glasgow Exhibition and made of crystal, mother of pearl, green marble, slate and glass, with occasional pieces of silver, later occupied the centre of one end wall.

Figs. 128abc. In the smoke-room and billiards-room above, Walton applied stencilled patterns to the underside of the exposed beams and ceiling joists in the manner of Baillie Scott, and this apartment also was subdivided into alcoves by low screens. A stencilled design, again of floral pattern, was repeated right round the apartment and it seems ~~a~~ timid and incongruous when seen in proximity to the sturdy tables. The fireplaces were tiled and had steel grates and fenders, enriched with leaded glass; the mantelpieces consisted of two shelves which extended the full length of the room and were separated at intervals by large balls carried on crudely shaped brackets, a clumsy detail that would never have been used by Mackintosh.

Fig. 128c.

According to Herbert Smith who made most of the furniture for Miss Cranston's early tea-rooms, Mackintosh designed a fine staircase with tubular gunmetal balusters of square section, similar in character to the staircase still extant at Daly's, Sauchiehall Street - formerly one of Miss Cranston's restaurants. The Argyle Street example was demolished long ago and has been superseded by an ugly Spanish mahogany stair with heavy turned balusters.

Although Mr. Smith states that High Wycombe chairs were used freely in this tea-room, photographic evidence shows that most of the furniture was designed by Mackintosh; chairs, tables,

stools and graceful hat-stands comprise the major part of his contribution. Few of the chairs have the familiar high backs and most of them are of a square bucket type, unupholstered, quite attractive, but very uncomfortable.

Generally speaking, the Argyle Street Restaurant is disappointing; Mackintosh seems to have had little influence on the decorations and, while the interior is pleasant enough, it has more in common with work in other parts of the kingdom than the Buchanan Street Restaurant, and lacks the vitality of the later tea-rooms in which he had an entirely free hand.

Some years later, in 1906, Miss Cranston decided to open up the basement of the Argyle Street premises and Mackintosh designed for her the Dutch Kitchen*, a square, low apartment with a black, heavily raftered open-timber ceiling. The fireplace was set in an inglenook and had a simple steel grate with a surround of Dutch tiles. The general colour scheme was black and white with emerald green accents. The floor was covered with lino of a black and white chequered design supplied by Herbert Smith. Despite the fact that the material was woven with the pattern set diagonally, Mackintosh insisted that it should be cut and laid on the square. Although it would be an exaggeration to say that Herbert Smith bears the marks to this day, he still relates with some warmth the story of his struggle with the lino, which, apparently, was of battleship quality.

Fig. 128de.

Why Mackintosh played so small a part in the design of the Argyle Street interiors is a matter for speculation: perhaps there is a discrepancy in the dates which in any case have been difficult to verify. For instance, it has been possible to establish that Miss Cranston acquired the entire premises in 1892 and that they were altered, re-named and presumably re-opened, in 1895. Herbert Smith however, definitely asserts that Buchanan Street was the first of the tea-rooms in the new style to be opened. He kindly permitted the author to examine the records of his firm and the accounts show that Buchanan Street was furnished to Mackintosh's design in 1896-7 and Argyle Street in 1898-9 - irrefutable evidence, but only of the furnishing. It is possible that the High Wickham chairs formerly mentioned by Mr. Smith were used with Walton's decorations at Argyle Street, and that they were replaced by Mackintosh's furniture two years

(Footnote: *The Dutch Kitchen has been designated by P. Morton Shand, "the prototype of innumerable Miss Hook of Holland cafes". 'Architectural Review' 1937, or letter to W. Davidson, 1937.)

Fig. 128. The Argyle Street Restaurant:

a. b. & c. The Billiards-Room and Smoke-Room by George Walton. Movable furniture by Mackintosh.

f. The Luncheon-Room by George Walton.

d. & e. The Dutch Kitchen (1906) by Mackintosh.

later after the conspicuous success of the Buchanan Street Restaurant. It would thus appear more logical to reverse the order, that is, Argyle Street decorated in 1895 by Walton, Buchanan Street decorated and furnished by Walton and Mackintosh in 1896-7, new furniture introduced into Argyle Street in 1898 (probably the High Wickham chairs were then transferred to the less important Ingram Street Tea-Room which had been reconstructed by Scott Morton of Edinburgh c.1895) and Ingram Street decorated and furnished entirely by Mackintosh 1900-1901 et seq. This theory is interesting in that it strengthens Walton's claim to be the first in the field, and moreover, would indicate that he was already well established and experimenting with new motives and materials before Mackintosh began to work for Miss Cranston. It is not possible to pursue the theory further at this point, but its implications will be discussed in a later chapter.

Ingram Street.

The Ingram Street Restaurant, unlike the previous examples, consisted of a series of lofty, interconnected apartments which were originally intended to be shops on the ground floor of a large block of offices. No attempt was made to remodel the facade, and externally the building is strictly utilitarian and quite unpretentious; the only characteristic motives to be seen are situated round the principal and subsidiary doorways.

Again, it is difficult to establish with any certainty the precise date on which the first sections of the premises were opened, but according to the Post Office Guide Miss Cranston was not in possession of Nos.205-9 until the year 1895, and in 1901 added a third and fourth section, Nos.213-5. From an illustrated brochure in the author's possession it is evident however, that Mackintosh had little if anything to do with the interiors prior to 1900, and curiously enough, the first section - No.205 - is termed, 'The Pioneer Suite of Tea and Smoking Rooms in Glasgow,' a piece of information that would appear to contradict the evidence already given in relation to Argyle Street. The 'Pioneer Suite' consisted of a Gentlemen's Tea-Room, now the Chinese Room, a Ladies' Tea-Room, and a Smoking-Room, all of which were designed by an architect, Kesson Whyte, and decorated by Messrs. Alexander & Howell. The apartments were narrow, dark and, as far as one can judge from photographs, rather depressing. The furniture consisted in the main of low, spindle-backed chairs, with well upholstered ~~seats~~ club-room arm chairs in the smoking-room; heavy panelling, ornate gasoliers, ornamental busts on brackets and richly patterned wallpaper -

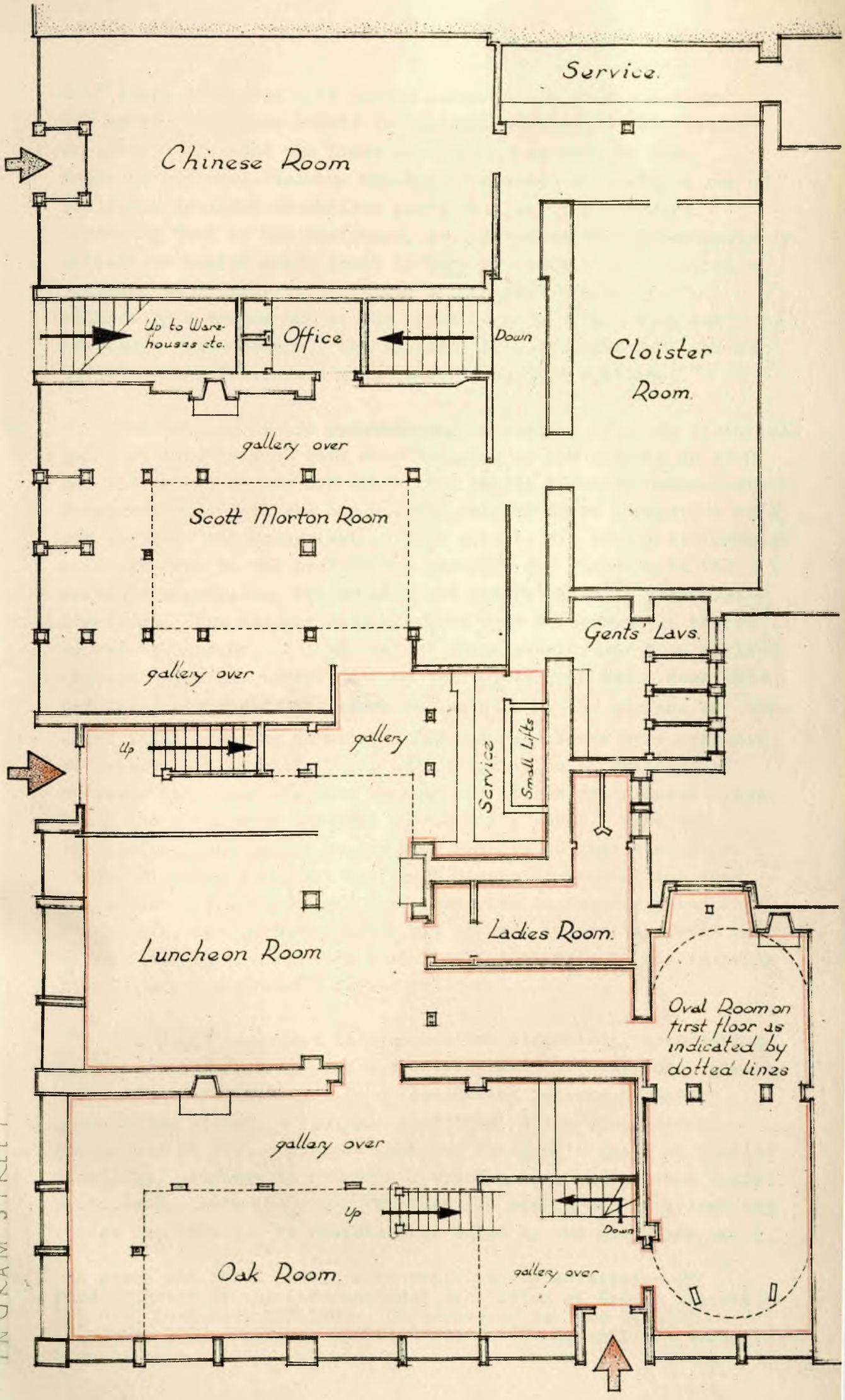
probably designed by Walton - all combined to give the entire suite the character and air of an Edwardian drawing-room.

Greater spatial freedom was achieved by Messrs. Scott Morton of Edinburgh who were responsible for the second section, No.207. The principal apartment - the Lunch-Room - was twice the width of the Gentlemen's Tea-Room and in view of the fact that the ceiling throughout the premises is ~~only~~ about 16ft. above floor level, the designer was able to introduce a balcony, a most attractive feature, notwithstanding its mechanical carved panels and turned balusters. Carving, turning and panelling of Victorian vintage seem to have been used indiscriminately, and that precious legacy of a more elegant epoch, a frieze of mirrors, was placed below the gallery! Nevertheless, the Scott Morton Room was a considerable improvement on the earlier work and remained more or less undisturbed for some years after Mackintosh transformed the interior at the turn of the century. In fact, the mirrors remained in position until the premises were sold to Messrs. Coopers, in the 1930's. The third and fourth sections, Nos.213-215 were acquired c.1901 and remodelled in the following year* and here for the first time, Mackintosh was given an entirely free hand; he opened up the party walls and combined the four sections in one suite of inter-communicating apartments, eleven in all, if three balconies are taken into account.+ In addition, there were of course, kitchens and service counters, and the inevitable billiards-room and smoke-rooms in the basement.

A main doorway which, externally, is the only important feature suggestive of the architect, was constructed in the centre of the block, and the former entrance to No.205 was retained. A new staircase was built, giving access to a small balcony over the servery and through an opening in the party wall, to the balcony of the Scott Morton room; the original wooden staircase thus became redundant and was dismantled. The main stair is a fine ~~structure~~ luxurious feature and is reminiscent of the School of Art staircase; it has a well-proportioned wooden balustrade crowned by the customary cornice of wide projection; the sturdy balusters are square in section and rise to a height of about ten feet at the foot of the stair to meet the cornice which does not follow the rake, but is carried horizontally at balcony level. The entrance hall and staircase are separated from the main dining-room by an attractive timber screen

(Footnote:- *Post Office Guide: corroborated by reference in 'The Studio', May, 1903, where illustrations of Mackintosh's work appear as "recently completed".)

+A plan showing the layout is appended - Fig.130; the third and fourth sections are outlined in red.)


Service.
Chinese Room
Up to Warehouses etc.
Office
Down
Cloister Room.
gallery over
Scott Morton Room
Gents' Lavs.
gallery over
Up
gallery
Service
Small Lifts
Luncheon Room
Ladies Room.
Oval Room on first floor as indicated by dotted lines
gallery over
Up
Down
Oak Room.
gallery over
INGRAM STREET

6'6" high, decorated with leaded glass panels just above ~~the~~ eye level. The room itself is panelled vertically to a height of about 10ft., and the lines are carried up through the front of the small balcony which is decorated by a single row of skilfully designed stencilled patterns; all the woodwork, including that of the staircase, is painted white. A particularly attractive beaten metal panel by Margaret Mackintosh occupies a conspicuous position at the head of the main stair; it is matched by a second one at the opposite side of the room and two large gesso panels, 'The Wassail' by Mackintosh and 'The May Queen' by his wife, face each other across the apartment.*

Figs.131b. The two panels are ~~particularly~~ noteworthy from the historical point of view because they were designed by the artists in 1900 and were shown at the 8th Exhibition of the Viennese Secessionists. Moreover, they indicate how closely related their decorative work now became: the mannerisms of both artists are hardly distinguishable and even in the preliminary sketches for the work in the author's possession, the drawing and presentation is practically identical. The designs were executed on a background of coarse canvas or hessian; a thin coat of gesso plaster was then applied through which the texture of the base clearly showed. When this had dried the design was drawn in charcoal on the surface, and outlined in thick string on which a few coloured beads were threaded at intervals, the whole being held in position by small pins. A second thin coat was then applied, and pieces of coloured glass, beads and metal were embedded in the wet plaster. When dry, certain portions of the design were painted to represent hair, faces, flowers, etc., but the rough uneven texture of the base was allowed to dominate and give character to the completed work. The panels, though unmistakably 'art nouveau' in feeling, were most attractive, and the material lent itself admirably to the delicate linear patterns favoured by the artists.

The whole apartment is spacious and dignified; interesting vistas are obtained through the suites, and the staircase, screens and balcony elements provide a fascinating pattern of interpenetrating planes, a 'polyphony of form' which again recalls the School of Art, and emphasises the designer's skill at spatial modelling. Nowhere is ornament obtrusive, nor art nouveau detail pronounced; even the light fittings are simple and efficient and though the interior is unmistakably dated by the gesso and metal

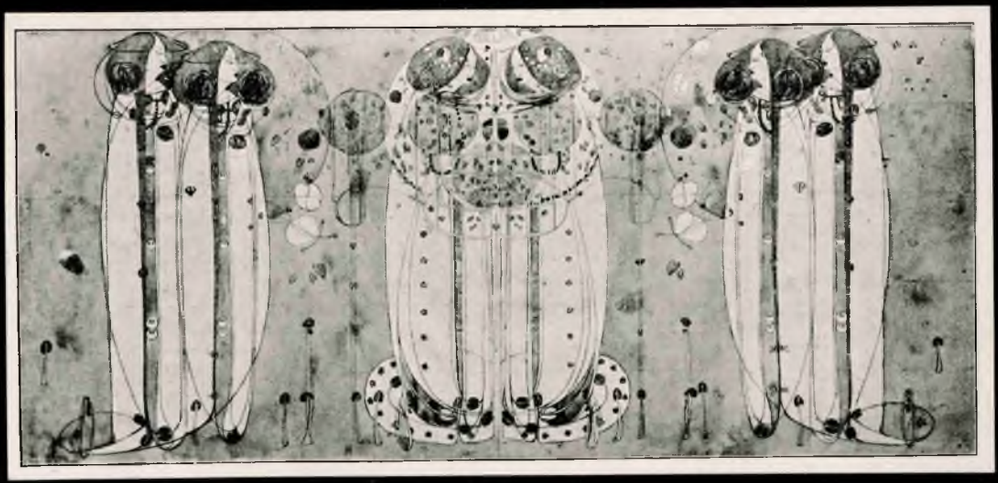
(Footnote: *The gesso and metal panels were exhibited by permission of Miss Cranston at the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art held in Turin, May 1902. Reference is in 'The Studio' 15. July, 1902. Only one of the panels, 'The Wassail' is illustrated here.)

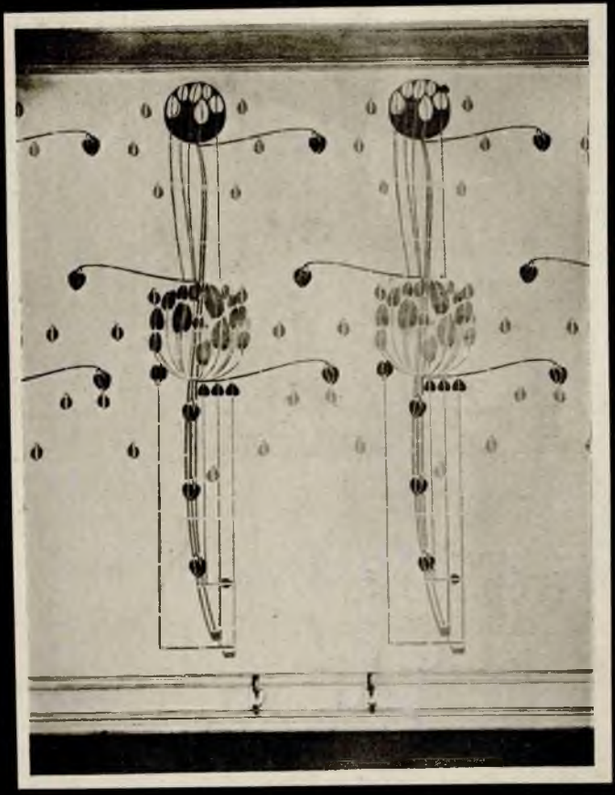
Fig. 131. The Ingram Street Tea-Rooms:

a. Cash desk and glazed screen in the principal Dining-Room.

b. 'The Wassail'.

c. Stencilled wall decoration.





panels, by the leaded glass and the Peter Pan cash desk, it is nevertheless a remarkably advanced work when considered in relation to the adjacent room by Scott Morton, one of Scotland's leading decorators. There is however, one discordant note - the fireplace - a heavy rectangular structure encased in beaten lead with ill-proportioned floral decorations cut out of the metal to reveal a background of inlaid coloured glass. This is one of Mackintosh's most inelegant and unattractive designs and seems quite out of place in this room.

The Oak Room.

The westernmost section of the restaurant, completed in August 1907* occupies the corner of the block. It contains a single, rather narrow apartment, panelled in oak and lit from two sides. Mackintosh constructed a light balcony round three sides of the room and supported it on square timber pillars, the lines of which were carried up to the ceiling 6'10" above balcony level, by groups of five fragile members 3" by 1". The whole of the woodwork was stained golden brown and the construction left visible.+ The front of the balcony was ornamented by a series of laths bent thus ~~~~ and applied to the panelling in groups above the main supports; This small tea-room is the most successful of the Ingram Street group; a delightfully intimate atmosphere is created by the low balcony and the restful colour of the wood, and it forms an excellent contrast to the sparkle and vitality of the main dining room just described.

Fig. 133b.

Having progressively remodelled all the rooms to the west of the main entrance, Mackintosh and Miss Cranston next turned their attention to the first section, to the Gentlemen's and Ladies' Tea-Rooms, formerly decorated by Messrs. Alexander and Howells. The more important of these, originally the Gentlemen's Tea-Room, can still be entered directly from Ingram Street; it was remodelled by Mackintosh in 1911⊖ and rechristened the China Tea-Room. The name and decorative scheme continued the tradition established by his predecessors for the room boasted several exotic oriental motives, notably a pagoda-like canopy over the doorway, a pseudo Chinese Chippendale screen, and a stained glass frieze to the windows, all of which no doubt encouraged Mackintosh

The China Tea-Room.

(Footnote: *Date verified through the records of Francis Smith.)

+A small oval room opens off the balcony; it was added much later, probably c.1916, and contains a diminuitive fireplace and an open screen similar to that in the music room at 'Hous'hill', Nitshill. It is claimed that the screen and fabric panelling in this room were designed by one of Mackintosh's colleagues.)

⊖December 1911. Date checked in records of Francis Smith, 5th March, 1946.)

to try his hand at Chinoiserie. He removed all vestiges of the earlier work and then lined the walls with coarse hessian over Fig. 133c.e. which he applied a wooden lattice of 10½" squares extending to a height of about 8ft; all this was painted blue - a greeny, cobalt blue! Some of the squares were filled with leaded glass and others were grouped and recessed to form small niches lined with rectangular pieces of coloured plastic material or mirror glass. The room was excessively high in relation to its width and Mackintosh corrected its proportions by introducing three Fig. 133d. broad openwork canopies spanning from wall to wall, each with an intermediate support serving as a hat and umbrella stand. Here again, by dividing and subdividing the volume of the room in this manner, he restored the scale and obtained the intimacy he required whilst retaining a sense of spaciousness that would have been lost had he resorted to the customary false ceiling.

For artificial lighting the architect reverted to the almost totally enclosed metal lamp-shades he had employed in the School of Art Library; in this instance however, they resembled cup-shaped mongolian helmets. As a final gesture, he placed a number of strange pagoda-like finials of wrought metal, about 2ft. high, on the centre of each canopy.

The general effect of this room with its forbidding painted woodwork, dark oak furniture and subdued lighting, is bizarre in the extreme, and one is reminded of the verse in 'The Ballad of Bedford Park' which reads -

> "Now he who loves aesthetic cheer
> And does not mind the damp
> May come and read Rosetti here
> By a Japanese-y lamp."[*]

[x] ~~Please see footnote.~~

The Cloister Room.

Following the China Tea-Room, or perhaps contemporaneously with it, came the Cloister Room,[+] a small smoking-room at the rear of the premises adjacent to the Scott Morton Room. This interior retains its original character and is unquestionably one of the most ill-considered and superficial essays Mackintosh ever attempted. The walls are curiously panelled in waxed pine and further embellished by borders of a diaper pattern in garish colours - primary red, green and blue, enclosed in black wavy Fig. 133a. lines. At intervals round the room occur groups of niches

(Footnote: [*] Published in St. James' Gazette, 17.12.1881, quoted by Blomfield in 'R. N. Shaw'.)

[+] First mentioned in records of Francis Smith, August 1912. Entry refers to reducing height of thirty-one chairs in the Cloister Room.)

[x] Please see overleaf for this footnote.)

Fig. 133. The Ingram Street Tea-Rooms:

a. The Cloister Room.

b. The Oak Room.

c. & d. The Chinese Room.

e. Coffee Table and Chairs.

II Footnote referring to Page 133, - the China Tea-Room:-

It is said that Mackintosh designed bamboo furniture for this room, but if that is so, no trace of it remains although at the time of writing his built-in, tip-up settes are still in position: originally the furniture was upholstered in grey haircloth and the settees and curtains were of blue corduroy. The severely practical coffee tables and attractive bucket-chairs now in use were probably introduced during the first World War from Argyle Street: they represent some of the architect's best work for Miss Cranston and a table of this pattern was illustrated in 'The Studio' in 1897.)

f

lined with leaded mirror glass, and a strange wooden lintel of an overlaid, scale-like pattern is placed over the doorway and at one end of the room. The low segmental plaster ceiling is also embellished by transverse bands of relief pattern which echo the ogival lines of the diaper borders. In the entire room there is but one pleasing feature - a rather charming glazed screen to the service counter.

The Billiards and Smoke Rooms.

All that remains of the billiards-room and smoke-room in the basement is a certain amount of panelling, some leaded glass and a few built-in seats. An interesting detail may be seen on the staircase where the walls are divided by the customary unmoulded cover strips into narrow vertical panels of waxed pine. Each of these is decorated by a recessed square which, at first glance, appears to be of a different wood of unusual figure. This effect was obtained by splashes of thick, stone-coloured paint which were allowed to run together and form intricate patterns; it was not an attempt to imitate any particular kind of timber and cannot be compared to graining, but the idea is characteristically ingenious and the result quite pleasing.

Generally speaking, the Ingram Street Restaurant is still in a fairly good state of preservation, in spite of the fact that it has been in continuous use by the public for nearly fifty years. The present proprietors, Messrs. Coopers, acquired the premises from Miss Drummond, one of Miss Cranston's manager-esses, to whom, it is said, she gave the business c.1920 and who carried on the tradition. In a press announcement on 26th May 1930 Messrs. Coopers promised that "the charm of these thirty-year-old tea-rooms" would be retained and this promise has been kept. When re-decoration was found to be necessary, steps were taken to ensure that the original character was preserved though nevertheleas, the place has lost its vitality mainly because the personal touch and artistry of Miss Cranston has been withdrawn. The cutlery designed with such care by Mackintosh has gradually disappeared; ordinary chairs have intruded into every room; and menu cards and napery no longer bear the characteristic emblems of Margaret Macdonald.*

(Footnote: *Without success, the author has personally made several attempts to secure information as to the ultimate fate of the premises so that something might be done to ensure the preservation of the more interesting apartments. It seems inevitable however, that sooner or later all trace of Mackintosh's work will disappear.)

The Willow Tea-Rooms

Mackintosh's most complete and successful work for Miss Cranston was the Willow Tea-Room in Sauchiehall Street, executed in conjunction with his wife between the years 1901 and 1905. Again the building was not a new one but a reconstruction of a warehouse with a narrow frontage of some 20ft. to Glasgow's most famous thoroughfare. This time Mackintosh was the architect for the entire project.

Following their usual practice of selecting an appropriate symbol or theme, the Mackintoshes based their designs upon the name 'Sauchiehall' which is derived from an old Scottish word signifying 'street or alley of the willows'. Thus, the predominating motive was the flat, pinnate shape of the willow leaf which was conventionally expressed in the leaded glass of the windows, in the wrought iron signs and throughout the interior. From the start, Mackintosh was determined that the Sauchiehall Street building should attract attention and following George Walton's example at Buchanan Street, he designed a protective hoarding for the contractors whilst the facade was being re-modelled. Part of the hoarding was carried forward on heavy beams in the form of a canopy which was painted white and decorated with characteristic stencilled patterns and lettering.*

Fig. 136b.

In spite of the limitations imposed by the narrow frontage and restricted site, Mackintosh designed a facade which would be considered modern by present-day standards and which, with its clean horizontal lines and refined detail was extraordinary indeed in 1904. He placed a simple unmoulded hood of about 18" to 2ft. projection right across the facade at second floor level and below this the wall curved gently outwards. The windows on the two upper floors were of normal proportions though deeply recessed. The first floor was illuminated by a beautifully designed horizontal window with a clear span of 18ft., subdivided into tall, narrow lights of leaded glass, each containing a single tiny leaf-shaped motive of mirror glass. The window was slightly curved and was flanked on either side by wrought iron signs projecting from the wall surface. ~~containing willow leaf emblem.~~ The ground floor was lit by a large window enclosed in a slightly projecting architrave and subdivided horizontally at door height, the upper portion being deeply recessed andthe lower part containing a row of narrow windows similar in proportion to those on the first floor. Two circular hoop-like

(Footnote: *The words were "Miss Cranston's New Tea and Lunch Rooms will be opened early in October". A small illustration of this hoarding appeared in 'Dekorative Kunst', April 1905.)

features of wrought iron - tree symbols - linked the transome and lintel. The lower portion of the facade was set back slightly from the building line so that two ornamental trees in cubiform tubs could be placed outside the restaurant without encroaching on the pavement.

This facade was one of Mackintosh's most elegant and attractive designs, and indicated a revolutionary approach to the problem of street architecture. It possessed a charm and dignity unprecedented in contemporary work of the same type. In Glasgow at least, elaborately carved red sandstone was the order of the day, and it is to be regretted that Mackintosh had no further opportunity of developing his thesis, or that no-one had the vision to follow his lead.

Fig. 136a. (plan)

The general layout of the interior was similar to the Buchanan Street restaurant; ground, first and second floors occupied by Lunch and Tea-Rooms and the top floor transformed into a Billiards-Room. The rear half of the ground floor, a long narrow apartment, was only one storey high and was covered by a partially glazed, hipped roof; Mackintosh concealed the ugly steel trusses by a timber ceiling framed in squares like an egg-box, and open in parts to admit daylight. The ground floor ceiling throughout is even higher than at Ingram Street - about 18ft.- and it was possible to introduce an airy mezzanine balcony at the back of the premises where roof lighting was obtainable.*

The staircase leading first to the balcony and then to the upper floors was approached directly from the main entrance, and was separated from the principal apartment by a light balustrade of tubular metal rods of about ¾" diameter. Each of these was secured to a tread of the staircase and carried up to the ceiling where it terminated in a twisted pattern of wrought iron interspersed with green glass balls threaded on stout wire. This again was a conventionalised tree form and echoed the motives embroidered on Margaret Macdonald's delicate silk curtains to the ground floor windows.

The mezzanine balcony reduced the ceiling level at the back of the large ground floor apartment and had the effect of dividing it into two sections, an illusion of which Mackintosh took advantage by contrasting the decorations. The front half to Sauchiehall Street, was painted white from floor to ceiling, a large fireplace was introduced, and the walls panelled to a

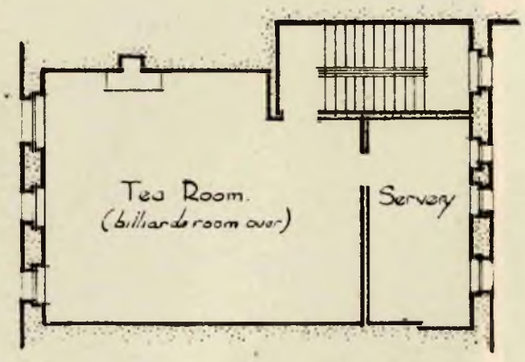
(Footnote: ~~*An identical panel, perhaps the prototype, is mounted above the staircase at Mackintosh's former house, No 78 Southpark Avenue See Chapter xxxx Page xxxx)~~
*Plans of the internal layout are appended. Fig.136.)

Fig. 136. The Sauchiehall Street Tea-Rooms:

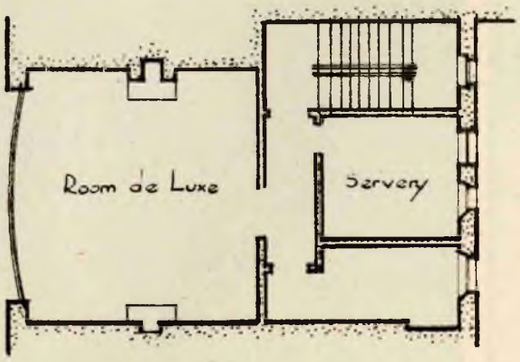
a. The Plan.

b. The Facade.

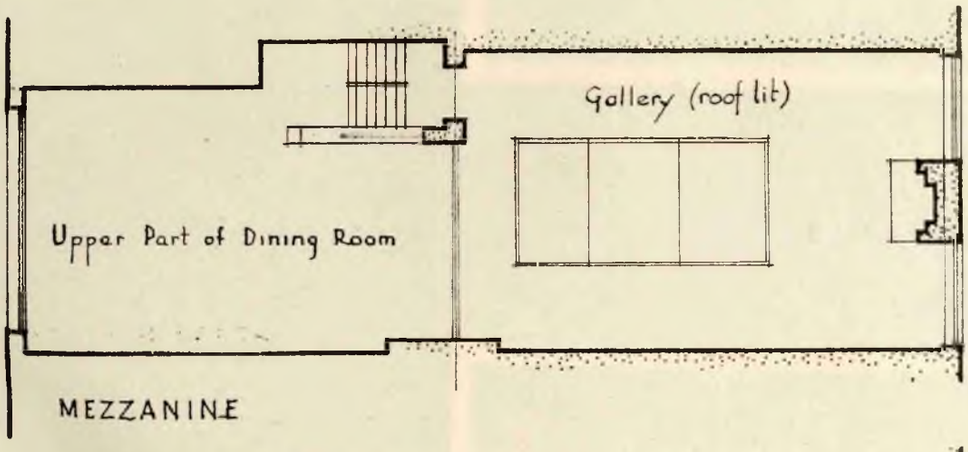
c. Fireplace and Plaster Frieze (ground floor).



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

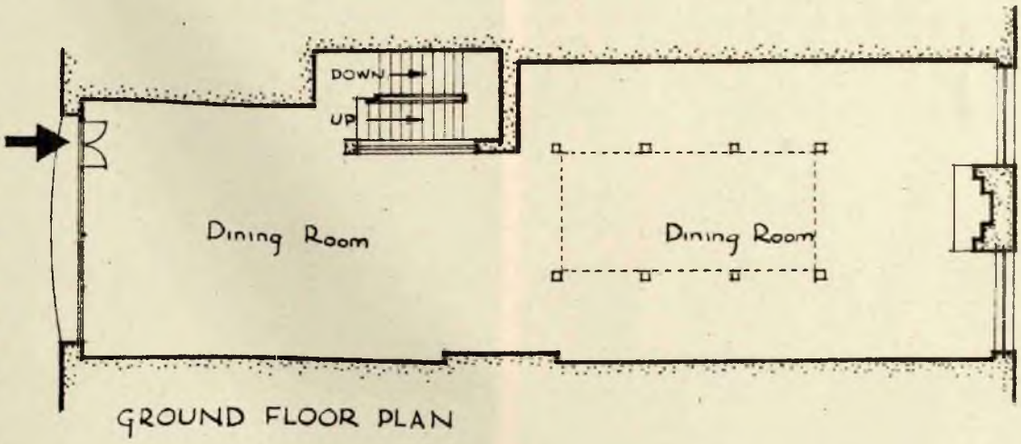


FIRST FLOOR PLAN.



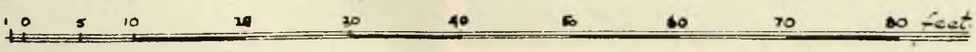
MEZZANINE

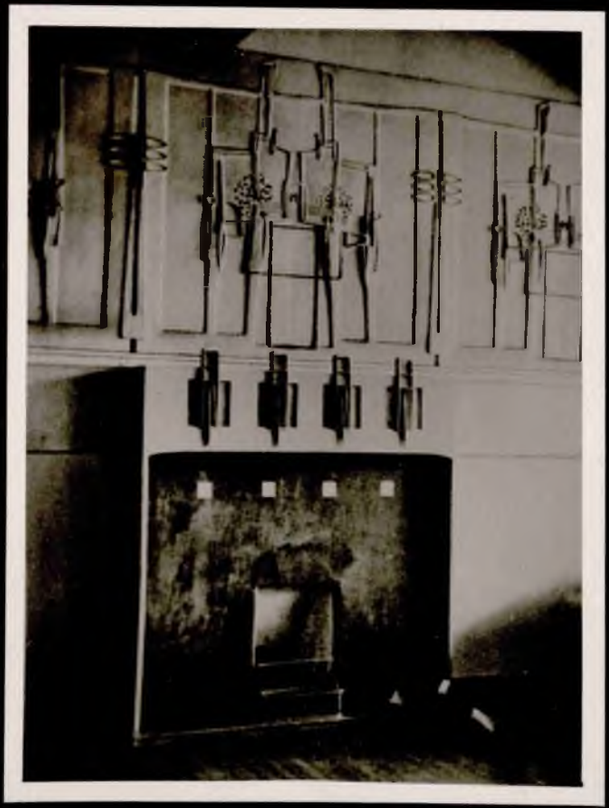
SAUCHIEHALL STREET FRONT



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Miss CRANSTON'S TEAROOM: SAUCHIEHALL Str., GLASGOW.





height of about 7ft. Above this he inserted a curious plaster frieze of large panels worked in bold relief, the subject being a highly stylised pattern of plant forms; the panels are linked together by conventionalised trees each possessing six elongated willow leaves.* The frieze is still extant.

Fig.137b. The architect realised the necessity for a strong dominant feature in the centre of this lofty apartment and he designed a fantastic timber contraption, a veritable baldacchino, 9ft. high, enclosing two tables and supporting a large semicircular transparent glass bowl, fully 2'6" in diameter, in which were suspended test-tubes for holding flowers. The bowl was held in position by an elaborate framework of wrought iron and the whole feature was emphasised by a large elliptical hoop of iron suspended from the ceiling ~~and~~ carrying electric lamps, obviously derived from fittings of a similar type though smaller in scale, used by Walton at Argyle Street. Mackintosh was always attracted by the greenish hue of water and glass, and the curious effect of the test-tubes seen from beneath must have pleased him immensely. This extravaganza however, was not in keeping with the simple refinement of the rest of the room.

In contrast to the light and airy front apartment the rear half of the ground floor below the gallery was somewhat dark and gloomy. The walls were divided into narrow vertical panels of dark oak, some of which contained stencilled decorations. A charming tiled fireplace surmounted by three small niches lined with strips of mirror glass, and flanked by two horizontal windows occupied the end wall. The furniture throughout consisted of simple ladder-backed chairs and low square tub-chairs, all in dark stained oak.

Fig.137a. The construction of the gallery had much in common with that of the School of Art Library (designed 1906). The apartment was spanned by heavy wooden beams, two of which ran right across the open well and carried a pair of tapered columns, which in turn supported the principals of the false ceiling above. The columns were placed some 18" from the balcony and the gap between them and the balcony rail was filled by a wooden panel pierced by three squares, an idea developed in the School of Art Library

(Footnote: *An identical panel, perhaps the prototype, is mounted above the staircase at Mackintosh's former house, No.78 Southpark Avenue).

Fig. 137. The Sauchiehall Street Tea-Rooms:

a. The Gallery.

b. The Dining-Room with Staircase, Balcony, and "baldacchino".

where chamfered balusters are used between gallery and columns. About 2ft. from the ceiling the columns became square in section and each face was decorated with a projecting strip in low relief on which was stencilled a black chequered pattern. Each column terminated in a flat, square cap from which were suspended four simple, unornamented electric lights. The whole of the woodwork, columns, beams, and collared timber ceiling, was painted white, and by way of contrast, the vertically panelled walls were stencilled in colour with Mackintosh's characteristic rose motive.*

On entering the restaurant from Sauchiehall Street it was possible to see right through to the windows in the back wall below the mezzanine, and through an attractive wrought metal screen to the coffered ceiling above the balcony. Mackintosh thus achieved a surprising effect of space, light and freedom in very restricted circumstances; he provided three interrelated though virtually separate apartments of distinctive character without the use of a single partition-wall.

The second floor was used, and still is for that matter, as a tea-room, but the decorations have been considerably altered and the fireplaces alone remain. The third floor was designed as a billiards-room and panelled to a height of about 6ft. with dark stained timber, probably pine. One side of the room was entirely occupied by built-in seats raised on a low platform. The billiards-table was very sturdily constructed and [redacted] was completely devoid of mouldings. The only decoration in this room consisted of applied, stencilled or incized squares and even these were used very sparingly. Now, however, the room has been turned into a workshop and every trace of the original design has disappeared.

The Room De Luxe.

An innovation at the Willow Restaurant was a fantastic 'Room de Luxe' designed by the Mackintoshes as the nucleus of the whole project; an apartment which was to symbolise the grove, or alley of willows. It was rich and jewel-like in conception, a scintillating creation of crystal and glass which however, had a strangely disquieting air, for the very heart and centre of the scheme, the focal point in this the inner shrine, proved to be a large gesso panel by Margaret Macdonald, inspired by one of Rosetti's sonnets from 'The House of Life'.

(Footnote: *This part of the building has been greatly altered and the ugly roof and steel trusses are again visible. All vestige of Mackintosh's work has disappeared except for the balustrade and one fireplace.)

A sonnet, moreover, whose sensuous, sonorous rhythms epitomise the etherial sadness of all her work and seem singularly inappropriate to such a setting:-

"O ye, all ye that walk in Willowwood,
That walk with hollow faces burning white;
What fathom-depth of soul struck widowhood,
What long, what longer hours, one lifelong night
Ere ye again, who so in vain have wooed
Your last hope lost, who so in vain invite
Your lips to that their unforgotten food
Ere ye, ere ye again shall see the light!"

Fig. 139a. The Room de Luxe, for the use of which, incidentally, a slightly higher charge was made, was nevertheless a popular feature and unquestionably a most attractive apartment. It was situated on the first floor overlooking Sauchiehall Street and was about 21ft. square with a flat segmental ceiling and the charming bow window previously described. It was painted entirely in white, and had a plain dado to a height of 3'9" above which a row of leaded mirror-glass panels about 2'9" deep extended round three sides of the room, their emphatic and insistent rhythm being continued on the fourth side by the vertical divisions of the bow window. Each mirror was separated from its neighbour by a broad white fillet by which Mackintosh tried, not unsuccessfully, to convey the idea of a forest of slender tree trunks. The impression was further accentuated by specially designed high-backed chairs which were reflected again and again in great depth and diversity by the mirror panes.

The dazzling frieze was broken at one end of the room by a simple fireplace enclosed in an enormous architrave, and at the opposite end by the large gesso panel similarly framed. Both these features were flanked by a pair of tapered columns reaching almost to the ceiling and supporting a light unmoulded canopy from each end of which were suspended four crystal balls on long wires.

The double entrance doors were glazed with elaborate panels of leaded glass and surrounded by a light architrave set at right angles to the wall surface. The floor was covered by a luxurious soft grey carpet, patterned in small black squares.
Fig. 139b. Artificial illumination was provided by a crystal electrolier suspended from a large square patress - an intricate cluster of glass balls, spheroids and globular shapes, amongst which were hidden seven electric lamps. The furniture was elegant and attractive, each chair had an extremely high back with an inner panel upholstered in rich purple to match the seat, and gently curved to the shape of the body.

Fig. 139. The Sauchiehall Street Tea-Rooms:

'The Room de Luxe'

and

Electrolier.

In this small room the Mackintoshes created an astonishing sensation of depth and distance, of movement and repose. The mirrors were placed well above the eye level of a seated person and thus did not distract the diner; the illusion of the Willowwood only became apparent to a person entering or leaving the apartment. How many of Miss Cranston's local patrons recognised and appreciated the inner meaning of all this and were able to unravel the mystery of Mackintosh's mirrors and willow leaves is a matter for conjecture, but to the sensitive observer, and more especially to the continental visitor, the tea-room was a miracle of applied art, "the result of thoughts full of love".[Φ] Oddly enough, the professional journals seem to have taken little note of the Sauchiehall Street Restaurant and even 'The Studio' was strangely silent.[*] But a German visitor, probably Muthesius, published a copiously illustrated article in 'Dekorative Kunst' which had not, nor could have had, any parallel in this country. The writer was entranced by the virtuosity of the designers and overwhelmed by the beauty and elegance of the restaurant as a whole. Some measure of the lyricism which his visit evoked may be gleaned from his observations on the Room de Luxe: "and when", he says, "they (the ordinary patrons) finally step into the white room then all of a sudden the significance of this chamber becomes manifested to them, as well as the beauty of the serene and pure colours of the panels, the lines moved by the breath of destiny, the star-like gems whose sparkling rays weave a veil of mysteriously glowing light around the countenances and forms of women wandering silently under a magic spell through the willow grove".[÷] Yes, Muthesius, if it were Muthesius, was very deeply moved by the work of the Mackintoshes. By way of contrast to this metaphysical eulogy, a few short extracts have been included here from an amusing book written in the Doric by a contemporary Glaswegian, Neil Munro.[ǁ] In this burlesque, Munro describes all too briefly a visit to the Willow Tea-Rooms by a lugubrious character 'Erchie', reluctantly accompanied by his friend Duffy.

Footnote: [*]By the time the Willow Tea-Rooms were completed, Gleeson White had died and Charles F. Holmes had succeeded him as editor - this may account for a change in attitude towards the Scottish artists for their work was never given prominence in 'The Studio' subsequently.)

[Φ,÷]'Dekorative Kunst' April, 1905.)

[ǁ]'Erchie' by Neil Munro, written under the pen name of Hugh Foulis. Chapter 22, 'Erchie in an Art Tea-Room'. Extracts from this book are given as a footnote to Page 141.)

The sentiments expressed in these brief episodes accurately represent two typical view points; the admiration of the foreign critic, and the amused, rather ironical attitude of the British man in the street. At first of course, the citizens of Glasgow found the strange and unconventional habits of Miss Cranston and the Mackintoshes rather diverting, but they soon became accustomed to the appearance of the tea-rooms and the novelty began to wear off. To casual visitors to the city the unmistakable hand of genius was immediately apparent, and to them it seemed incredible that such creative ability should be taken for granted. The anonymous writer in 'Dekorative Kunst' sought ~~condolence~~ consolation in the thought that such indifference must be superficial -

> "And yet," he said, "even suppose there are ladies who are not interested in things feminine, or disappointed brokers, their eyes are opened sooner or later to the fact that the tablecloth, the chair on which they sit, the wall on which they lean, the flower vases and pendants

Footnote to page 140:-

> "When we came forrent it, (the Tea-Room) he (Duffy) glowered, and 'Michty!' says he, 'wha did this?'
>
> " 'Miss Cranston,' says I.
>
> " 'Was she tryin?' says Duffy.
>
> " 'She took baith hands to't,' I tellt him. 'And a gey smart wumman, too if ye ask me.' "

Of the interior Erchie says:-

> " 'There was naething in the hale place was the way I was accustomed to; the very snecks o' the doors were kind o' contrary.' "

And of the Room de Luxe:-

> " 'The chairs is no'like ony ither chairs ever I clapped eyes on, but ye could easy guess they were chairs: and a' roond the place there's a lump o' lookin' gless wi' purple leeks pented on it every noo and then. The gasalier in the middle was the thing that stunned me it's hung a' roond wi' hunners o' big gless bools, the size o' yer nief (fist) .....' "

Duffy was most uncomfortable in these strange surroundings and only with difficulty was restrained from bolting. Of Mackintosh's cutlery, Erchie remarks profoundly,

> "he (Duffy) thocht his tea spoon was a' bashed oot o' its richt shape till I tellt him that was whit made it Art."

However, the visit ended happily, Duffy ordered a pie and,

> "When the pie cam' up, it was just the shape o' an ordinary pie, wi' nae beads nor onything Art aboot it ..."

> pendants .... that all this is conspicuous by its beauty .... although they may not have given it much thought, yet they must begin to comprehend that fortunately art can be found elsewhere than in the perpetual and tedious landscapes in art galleries."

So much for two contemporary observations on Mackintosh's supreme achievement for Miss Cranston. There can be no doubt that the premises fulfilled all expectations and there is no evidence that subsequent alterations were carried out. During the 1914-18 War however, the proprietress opened the basement as an additional tea-room to which she gave the topical name 'The Dugout'. The Mackintoshes, then living in London, made two notable contributions to this room; the first was a memorial fireplace (c.1916) embodying the flags of the allied nations in colour, and probably executed in enamel;* the second, consisted of a pair of large canvases about 50" square, entitled 'The Little Hills', the most ambitious work of its kind attempted by the artists, and inspired by the words of the sixty-fifth psalm.+ These complementary pictures are full of vitality and joyous abandon in spite of a colour scheme dominated by sombre greys, greens and yellows. Fat cherubs sending forth a peon of praise take the place of the familiar weeping females, and the canvases are filled with a riot of flowers, jewels, ears of corn, butterflies and so forth, the emphasis always being on pattern and two-dimensional design rather than upon modelling. When seen individually they do not compose well and it is most likely that the artists intended the pair to be mounted together, probably above a fireplace.

Fig.142.

It has not been possible to discover details of the furniture, fittings and decorative scheme of the Dugout but an interesting story is told by the decorator|| who was responsible for carrying out Mackintosh's instructions. Apparently the architect wished to obtain a particular quality of glossy black for the ceiling and insisted that the painters should mix black-lead into a thick paste, apply it with a brush in the normal way and when dry, polish it. The workmen went on strike at this and refused

(Footnote: *The original drawing may be seen in the School of Art Collection.)

+"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness: and thy clouds drop fatness.
"They shall drop upon the dwellings of the wilderness: and the little hills shall rejoice on every side.
"Thy fold shall be full of sheep: the valleys also shall stand so thick with corn, that they shall laugh and sing." Ps.65, v.11.)

N.B. When Miss Cranston sold the restaurant the two pictures were acquired by Charles Macdonald - Mrs. Mackintosh's brother - and are now in the possession of his widow, at Dunglass Castle, Bowling.)

||Mr. Douglas of Messrs. Wm. Douglas & Sons, painters and decorators of Glasgow.)

Fig.142. 'The Little Hills' by Margaret and Charles Mackintosh. (c.1916).

Plate
no. 142
sent to author at
his request 20/9/50
To be returned shortly.
See letter in my drawer
EA.

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
MANCHESTER 13

TELEPHONE:
ARDWICK 2601

29th Sept.
1950.

W.R.Cunningham Esq.,M.A. LL.D.,
The University,
Glasgow.

Dear Dr. Cunningham.

This is just to acknowledge the safe arrival of the picture removed from my Ph.D. Thesis. Many thanks - I will return it to you as soon as the publisher has finished with it.

Yours sincerely,

Owen Howarth.

to carry out the order in no uncertain terms saying that it was a woman's job, but Mackintosh was an expert at handling such situations and the ceiling was finished to his satisfaction, the result, by all accounts, being superb. The workmen left the premises as black as chimney sweeps convinced that the architect was mad.

Miss Cranston continued to preside over her four restaurants until 1917 when the sudden death of Major Cochrane brought her career to an abrupt end. She had been devoted to her husband and after his passing seemed to lose interest in life and soon disposed of the Argyle Street, Buchanan Street and Ingram Street Restaurants. The Willow Tea-Rooms were sold to Messrs. Smith, Restaurateurs, in 1919 and ominously enough were re-named 'The Kensington'. Some years later, the premises were absorbed by a large adjacent store* and the fine elevation to Sauchiehall Street was completely and utterly ruined by the insertion of a commonplace shopfront. Fortunately, no alterations were made to the upper part of the facade which still retains much of its original character notwithstanding a thick coat of soot. Apart from the Room de Luxe little remains of Mackintosh's interior work; the main stair, a certain amount of panelling, the plaster frieze, several fireplaces and the large elliptical wrought iron light fitting are still to be seen, though they appear strangely out of place amid the modern shop fittings which have since been installed.

In this manner then, Miss Cranston's courageous enterprises have come to a more or less ignominious end, and she herself, after selling her house and estate at Nitshill (1920) returned somewhat nostalgically to George Square, where she had spent her childhood; she lived in comparative seclusion in the North British Hotel until her death on 18th April 1934.+ So Glasgow lost one of its most colourful personalities, and the past twenty years have witnessed the merciless destruction of most of her work, and that of the artists she employed. Ladies, disappointed brokers and the public by and large, have notoriously short memories, and not a single voice was raised in protest as the tea-rooms one by one, were converted to other uses. Mackintosh's carefully ordered decorative schemes were obliterated and his furniture dispersed; Margaret Macdonald's embroidered curtains and printed napery vanished and opulent banality again came into its own.

(Footnote:- *Messrs. Dalys.)
+Obituary notice in 'The Glasgow Herald', 19.4.34.)

The Tea-Rooms constituted an interesting and remunerative interlude in Mackintosh's career; they provided him with an outlet for experiment in form, pattern and colour which compensated to a certain extent for the restrictive formality of the architect's drawing board and the rigours of practice. Moreover, they kept his name continually in the public eye, for Miss Cranston, as we have seen, was nothing if not a showman, and over a period of years one or other of her Tea Rooms was usually in the process of re-decoration or re-furnishing.

On the other hand, however, it is regrettable that Mackintosh remained pre-occupied for so long with relatively trifling work of this nature in which the emphasis was always on the applied arts, on the need for ingenuity and novelty, and it must be admitted that at times his work for Miss Cranston - notably at Ingram Street - was garish and bizarre in the extreme. It would seem that his creative genius might have been directed into more productive channels and that the care and attention he lavished on stencils, pieces of twisted wire, coloured beads and leaded glass, might have been used to better purpose. Here again, we are on dangerous ground, for it is difficult to determine exactly to what extent these trivia can be ascribed to him, and how much of the art nouveau bric-a-brac may be attributed to his wife. P. Morton Shand bitterly condemns Margaret Macdonald as the principal, if not the only stumbling block in Mackintosh's path to greatness, and there may be more than a grain of truth in his contentions, for her work shows little sign of development. She seems always to have lived in a world of roses, love-in-a-mist, cherubs and falling petals - the quasi-dream world of Rossetti, Maeterlincke and the MacNairs - an amorphous paradise from which Mackintosh himself might have wished to withdraw. It is probable that Margaret Macdonald, however unwittingly, was responsible in part at least, for limiting her husband's vision, for tying him more closely to the arts and crafts movement and encouraging him to dissipate his energy on work of comparative unimportance, when he could have ventured further into the realms of architectural design and kept abreast of structural developments elsewhere.

This must always remain a matter of conjecture. It would be easy to blame all the architect's failures on his wife and, for instance, to point to beads and pieces of coloured glass suspended on the fine staircase at the Willow Tea-Room, or the crystal balls hanging at the fireplace of the Room de Luxe, as examples of her contrariety, but there is no evidence to show

that this was her work alone. It will be best therefore, to withhold criticism of such details, to overlook the beads and wire, the sentimental symbolism of the willow wood and the chinoiserie, all of which are little more than the effluvium of the Edwardian era, and to emphasise the fundamental issues already stressed in this work. Again and again the observer is struck by Mackintosh's readiness to mould and play with space, to divide and subdivide volume either in a vertical plane by the use of light screens, or in a horizontal plane by balconies. His purpose however is never solely that of solving a practical problem, but of achieving a specific visual or psychological objective — an interesting vista perhaps, or a pattern in depth — or alternatively of creating an illusion of space or an impression of intimacy. All these sensitory experiences can be realised in the work under consideration here; the Tea-Rooms provided as it were, a series of exercises in volume control and plan organisation, aesthetic and technical exercises comparable with advanced studies in music, and ultimately bearing fruit in the second section of the School of Art. It is the appreciation - subconscious at first perhaps - of this mastery of form which draws the observer again and again to Mackintosh's work long after he has tired of the ornament, the hanging lamps and stencilled decoration. Even Ingram Street, though neglected and ravished, remains an inexhaustible source of inspiration, and is a measure in part at least, of its designer's virtuosity.

This then, is the most important aspect of Mackintosh's work for Miss Cranston. In addition of course, it is necessary to stress again the unity of his designs, a unity seldom achieved by his contemporaries - even by Walton - and conspicuously absent from the interiors at Argyle Street and Buchanan Street in which the two artists worked together. Such unity was only possible when Mackintosh had complete control, as for example in the Willow Tea-Rooms where every detail was minutely worked out and considered in relation to the whole.

And finally, mention must be made of the simple effectiveness of his colour schemes and decoration which, with few exceptions, set a remarkably high standard for work of this nature. Generally speaking, he followed the principles already outlined in relation to his domestic work. He had two main themes - light and dark, white painted walls or stained woodwork - and in either case colourful accents were provided by stencilled pattern, leaded glass, embroidery or even beaten metal, but in no instance,

except perhaps in the Cloister Room at Ingram Street, was the decoration unpleasantly obtrusive.

It is not too much to claim that for some years Glasgow sustained her prestige as the centre of the new art movement largely on the reputation of the Cranston Tea-Rooms.

CHAPTER VII.

CONTINENTAL WORK & EXHIBITIONS.

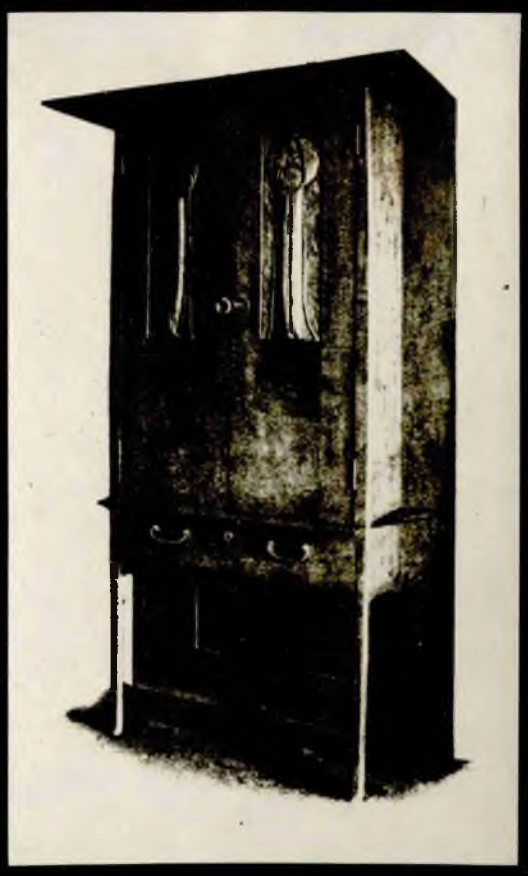
The discussion of Mackintosh's influence upon Continental designers must be relegated to a later chapter, but inorder to complete this survey it is necessary here to examine and assess the work he executed abroad, if only in view of the exaggerated claims made for him by friends and admirers. Despite the fact that he is popularly supposed to have carried out a considerable amount of work on the continent, little material evidence is forthcoming to substantiate this assumption and, notwithstanding protracted and careful investigation, it has been possible to discover reliable proof of only three minor commissions undertaken for private individuals. This misconception - where not due to wishful thinking - has probably arisen because of the success of his continental exhibitions, and to the wild enthusiasm they aroused in certain circles; moreover, many of his designs, and most notably his project for the Haus eines Kunstfreunds competition* were given wide publicity and were copiously illustrated in European art periodicals.

So far as can be ascertained, the first illustrated article on the Glasgow group appeared in 1898.+ It was similar to Gleeson White's dissertation on the designers in 'The Studio' of the previous year; the illustrations were few, poor, and of course, confined to furniture and craftwork. In May 1899 however, the same periodical published photographs of a dining-room with furniture designed by Mackintosh, but unfortunately neither the name of his client, nor any indication of the whereabouts of the house is given. The text states that the room contains chairs (stuhle) by K. Bertsch, and this points to Munich as the probable location. Incidentally, there are two undated drawings of a cabinet and a cupboard in the University Collection, for H. Bruckmann of Munich, and these may have formed part of the same commission though this is mere conjecture.

Fig. 147. From the illustrations it would appear that the furniture consisted principally of two cabinets in dark oak; one, of enormous proportions, occupied an entire wall; the other, tall and comparatively narrow, probably a smoker's cabinet, was placed

(Footnote: *See Chapter VII Page 157).
+'Dekorative Kunst' November 1898. See Chapter I. Page 33.)

Fig. 147. Dining-room Interiors and Cabinet, by Mackintosh, 1898 - at Munich?



was placed against the opposite wall. The larger of the two had a pair of glazed doors of characteristic design, and the doors of the smaller one were embellished with beaten metal panels. Above a projecting plate-rail on which stood a multitude of small vases, busts and the like, there was a curious stencilled frieze embodying the clumsy heart-shaped tree forms found in Mackintosh's early work, and which he soon abandoned. These motives resemble quite closely, the glazed openings in the studio doors on the ground floor corridor of the School of Art - the first section (1897-9).

Apart from the glazed doors to the room, none of the other furniture appears to have been designed by Mackintosh, and in consequence, the ensemble lacks the unity one expects of him. It is doubtful if he actually went to Germany at this time to supervise the work, and the fact that the room was overcrowded with innumerable objects d'art, not to mention heavy curtains and a common-place gasolier, may be taken as sufficient evidence to the contrary. It is fairly certain that Mackintosh would have insisted upon the removal of most of these, and no doubt would have persuaded his client to accept designs for chairs, tables, carpet and curtains in addition. The most probable explanation is that the commission was obtained through Newbery who had many influential connections on the continent, or indirectly as a result of 'The Studio' article. Drawings would be sent from Glasgow and the work executed on the spot. Notwithstanding these illustrations there is no evidence here, or elsewhere, to suggest that Mackintosh visited Europe before the turn of the century - with the exception that is, of his scholarship tour in 1891 - and this, as we shall see, is a point of some importance.

Before 1900 then, it can be said with a fair degree of certainty that Mackintosh was known in Europe only through the medium of 'The Studio' and one or two relatively insignificant magazine articles, and possibly in educational circles through exhibitions of school work, posters and the like, arranged by Newbery. Thereafter however, events moved swiftly, and in the late autumn of 1900 'The Four'* were invited to furnish and decorate an entire room at the 8th Secessionist Exhibition in Vienna. The significance of this sudden development cannot be overestimated and though its implications will be discussed

(Footnote: *Desmond Chapman-Huston states that 'The Four' received invitations separately, but this cannot now be substantiated. Herbert MacNair had no work on exhibition and Frances Macdonald was represented mainly by designs executed in conjunction with her sister.)

more fully in a later chapter, it may be said that the Vienna exhibition was one of the highlights of Mackintosh's career. It was the first of a series of similar events which established his reputation on the continent, and within a short time made his name a household word throughout the greater part of Central and Western Europe.

From a letter in the author's possession, it appears that Fritz Wärndorfer, one of the founders of the Wiener Werkstatte, and his wife, came to Glasgow with the express purpose of meeting the Mackintoshes, and in fact "toured the Scottish lochs with them". It may be ventured as a speculation that the Wärndorfers' visit was planned for the purpose of assessing the work of the group, and that the Viennese excursion was arranged as a result of their meeting.*

The Vienna Secessionist Exhibition (1900).

Charles and Margaret Mackintosh went to Vienna in the late autumn of 1900 to supervise the decoration and furnishing of the apartment which was allocated to them in the now famous Secession Haus, built by J. M. Olbrich two years previously. Their exhibits incidentally, consisted of pieces mainly drawn from their own house or borrowed from friends, and included the two large gesso panels intended for Miss Cranston's Ingram Street Tea-Room - 'The May Queen' by Margaret Macdonald and 'The Wassail' by Mackintosh himself. The MacNairs were in Liverpool at this time, and the major part of the organisation fell upon Mackintosh and his wife; in fact, it does not appear that the MacNairs ever visited Vienna and certainly they played no part in the events which followed.

The Mackintoshes must have faced the prospect of the Viennese excursion with mixed feelings: apart from the support of Gleeson White and 'The Studio' they had received little encouragement from any but their immediate circle of friends and acquaintances in Glasgow. Moreover, they had had bitter experience of the heavy hand of British conservatism as exemplified by the Arts and Crafts Society, and were well aware of the apparent futility of attempting to fight against long established customs and deeply entrenched ideologies in the art world. Their astonishment at the progress made by the Viennese Secessionists can only be imagined: the Austrian capital was one of

(Footnote: *Mrs. Wärndorfer - who herself wrote the letter in question - stated that she and her husband came "to meet the Mackintoshes" and this suggests that the date of their visit preceded the exhibition. It may in fact, have occurred in the summer of 1900, and so would give substance to this speculation.)

the principal centres of a well organised and widespread new art movement and the exhibition to which they were invited was the eighth of its kind held in the city, and the second to be staged in the new Secession Haus.

The lofty apartment allocated to them was prepared in characteristic style. The framed gesso panels formed the dominant feature and were placed high against the ceiling and facing each other across the room. Below them the walls were subdivided into broad panels between freestanding tapered columns carrying the usual bold cornice. A slight variation was made by the introduction of a deep unmoulded rail below the cornice, with square insets at intervals, each containing a linear pattern in brilliant colour - an attractive detail used for the first time in the Mains Street flat. The entire room was painted white, a background which always set off to advantage the Macdonald sisters' delicate water-colours and repoussé panels, and for that matter, Mackintosh's dark oak furniture. The MacNair's exhibited relatively few pieces, and their contribution consisted of an attractive wall cabinet and a clock, a few framed book illustrations, one or two water-colours and several examples of beaten metal.

The work of the Mackintoshes dominated the room: illustrations which survive show two excellent cabinets in dark oak with decorative metal and leaded glass panels, two high-backed chairs, the tall white painted cheval mirror, a number of candle sconces, and a flower vase of unusual design, in addition to paintings and embroidered fabrics. Two of the pieces on exhibition are noteworthy: the first is the pedestal flower vase which may be seen in the extreme left hand corner of Figure No. 150a. It comprised a metal container about five inches square in section and about two feet six inches high, mounted on a flat square base suitably weighted: the top of the container was designed to conceal a large glass test-tube into which flowers were placed. This is the first appearance of a type of vase which Mackintosh used freely in a variety of forms and sizes in his subsequent work: in some instances the container was cylindrical and sometimes the test-tube was held in an open framework - the latter, incidentally, was by no means an original idea and may well have been borrowed from Secessionist sources in Vienna for Josef Hoffmann had many such designs on exhibition. The second exhibit in question is the tall cheval mirror with its elaborate white painted framework for all the

Fig. 150a.

Fig.150. Vienna Secessionist Exhibition, 1900:

a. The Scottish Section.

b. Furniture by Josef Hoffmann.


DAME

world like a large sledge on end. It came from the Mains Street flat. It is a cumbersome and unlovely piece of furniture, so heavy as to be almost unmovable and quite unstable on its tiny castors. It is difficult to understand why Mackintosh ventured into such dubious paths, and why a man capable of designing the severely practical, yet charming flower-container just described, should be induced to perpetuate so reprehensible a piece of furniture as the mirror-stand which cannot be justified on either utilitarian or aesthetic grounds. In this instance however, he followed much more closely the continental art nouveau tradition, where the desire for novelty seems to have taken precedence over everything else. Perhaps by coincidence, the mirror is similar in conception to two tortuous hallstands with mirrors by M. A. Nicolai of Munich, and O. Richard Bossert of Leipzig, which apparently were submitted for a competition organised by the Austrian art journal 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration' in 1899. It is feasible that these came to Mackintosh's notice and that he was influenced by them. His design is considerably more restrained than either of the continental examples.

Notwithstanding this criticism, the general ensemble of the Scottish section was excellent, and the exhibits formed a singularly coherent group: the all-pervading whiteness of the room, the careful disposition of the furniture and the close affinity between the work of the designers, charmed and delighted the Viennese. The fundamental similarity between the work of the Scottish group and the Secessionists was immediately apparent; each was working towards a common objective; and however indeterminate their aim - which no doubt would have been difficult for either to define lucidly in words - it found visual expression in the form of the exhibits themselves.

One can only guess at the pride of Charles and Margaret Mackintosh when their work, always open to ridicule in Britain, was accepted without question by the Secessionists, and took its place naturally alongside that of the leaders of the Austrian movement. One can but imagine their feelings when they found their views on say, the arrangement of back-grounds and the disposition of exhibits, taken as a matter of course by their continental friends, for the Scottish room was by no means the only one in which large plain wall surfaces dominated, nor were they alone in recognising the value of contrast in form and colour and the charm of natural materials skilfully wrought. Illustrations of adjoining rooms and work by Austrian artists show on

the whole, a surprising degree of restraint, notwithstanding the prevailing taste for bizarrarie and novelty. In fact, much of the furniture, and many of the incidentals by Josef Hoffmann for example, were equal in craftsmanship, design and originality to anything produced by Mackintosh, and at times - especially after their meeting in Vienna - the work of the two men is almost indistinguishable.

Fig. 150b.

A Secessionist Exhibition was always an exciting event in the Austrian capital, and the advent of the Mackintoshes added more fuel to the fires of controversy during the viewing period. The work of a group of British exponents of the new style not unnaturally aroused considerable interest and their contribution was singled out for especial attention by the critics. The art editor of 'Vienna Rundschau' for example, commented thus on the Scottish Section, "There is a Christ-like mood in this interior: this chair might have belonged to a Francis of Assisi. The decorative element is not proscribed, but is worked out with a spiritual appeal". And again, "In the strength, purity, simplicity and fervour of this construction (work?) let us recognise the contrast between the vital expression of an idea and that affected dullness which for years past has been a source of tedium when encountered in certain alleged modern productions". The artists' peculiar formalisation of the human figure - always the bête noir of the art critic - was sympathetically examined and justified by Herman Muthesius* in a letter to the editor of 'Die Kunst', the German periodical which devoted considerable space to the Secessionist Exhibition in its February issue, (1901). Muthesius said:-

> "Can we distort the human figure and alter its proportions at will, to force it into an ornamental arrangement of lines, similar to the way we do with the plant? For this we find no parallels in the history of ornament: hitherto with each ornamental application the fundamental proportions of the human figure have been preserved, the figures have neither been drawn out into lines like baker's dough, nor compressed. But in Art there are no laws, the decisive factor is the artistic deed."

(Footnote: *Muthesius is an important figure who crosses the stage again and again throughout this study. He was an official observer attached to the German Embassy in London from 1896-1903 for the express purpose of studying English domestic architecture and craftwork. He later became one of the most influential personalities behind the German modern movement in architecture. His appearance in London coincided with the debut of 'The Four' at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition and he became one of Mackintosh's most ardent admirers, in fact it is not too much to claim that he, with Alexander Koch the publisher, was largely responsible for raising the Scottish architect from comparative obscurity to international stature. In addition to innumerable articles, Muthesius published a voluminous treatise 'Das Englische Haus' and two other books, 'Englische Baukunst' and 'Moderne Landhaus', none of which have been translated into English.

So Vienna welcomed Mackintosh for the first time, and it is said that art students met him at the station on his arrival and drew him through the streets of the city in a flower-decked carriage. This delightful story may contain more than the customary grain of truth, though it is difficult if not impossible to disentangle fact from fantasy when dealing with episodes of this nature in the life of the Scottish architect.

Whether or not Mackintosh was feted as one of the leaders in the new art movement, is, relatively speaking, a matter of little importance; the significance of his visit to the Austrian capital lies rather in the salutary effect it had on him personally. Here for the first time, he felt that his work was properly understood and appreciated, he met and argued long into the night with some of the most distinguished leaders of the secessionist movement in Europe and found himself to be at one with them. Instead of grudging acknowledgment, or outspoken condemnation, he had been welcomed and widely acclaimed by artists and public alike; few voices had been raised against him and they were easily drowned by the plaudits of his new friends. Mackintosh had come into his own, and he returned to Scotland full of new vigour, resolutely determined to convert his countrymen, and prepared to lead a rebellion against the established order of things in the art world.

But what of the material effects of the Viennese Exhibition? It has been said that all the exhibits were sold and that Mackintosh obtained many commissions as a result*. The first statement is inaccurate because numerous pieces found their way back to Glasgow, and the second therefore, calls for careful examination. If commissions were executed on the continent they must have been of a minor nature, interior decoration, furniture and the like, for there is not the slightest evidence that any architectural work was carried out. But two subsequent illustrations of hitherto unrecorded designs by Mackintosh have been discovered - one of a delightful bedroom interior similar to that

(Footnote: *Chapman-Huston in 'Artwork' No.21, 1930. It is believed that several exhibition pieces from the Secession House were taken to the International Art Exhibition held in Dresden later in the following year (1901) and the presence at the Turin Exhibition (1902) of a needlework panel by Margaret Macdonald lent by Herr Emil Blumenfelt of Berlin would suggest that some work had been shown in the German capital also, though of course, the example in question might have been acquired privately.)

at 'Hillhouse' and the other of a charming white cabinet - both of which appeared in later journals, but in neither case is any information given concerning them. The intimate nature of such work adds considerably to the difficulty of tracing it and it is possible that commissions were received of which no word ever reached the art magazines. In view of the artist's popularity however, this seems unlikely for the single design of importance of which a reliable record exists - Fritz Wärndorfer's Music Salon - was widely publicised and according to A. S. Levetus* became a centre of pilgrimage for the connoisseurs. Then again, additional confirmation was received from a totally unexpected source, for Mrs. Wärndorfer, in the letter already mentioned, categorically states that apart from her music salon and what she terms "knick-knacks", Mackintosh did not execute any other work in Vienna and, if not in the Austrian capital, one can hardly expect him to have carried out much work elsewhere.

The Wärndorfer Music Salon.

While the Secessionist Exhibition and its outcome are under discussion it may be well to examine the Wärndorfer Music Room in greater detail, and illustrations in the author's collection make possible a fairly accurate description.+ Here again, it is apparent that the Mackintoshes were fortunate in finding the perfect patron: they were given unlimited freedom and money was no object. The room was large and well proportioned, and the architect decided to reduce its apparent height by using a deep frieze for which he and his wife later designed twelve decorative panels on the theme of Maeterlincke's 'Dead Princess'. The panels are not in position in any of the surviving illustrations of the scheme and it is difficult ot visualise the ultimate effect. This was another of Mackintosh's white rooms with lavender and rose accents, in conception differing little from similar work already discussed. Below the frieze the walls were panelled in wood with the familiar broad rounded cover strips and wide cornice, though there was a slight variation here based on a motive employed first in the sanctuary at Queen's Cross Church, Glasgow,⊖ Each alternate cover-strip terminated in a rectangular projecting bracket, about the shape and size of a brick on edge,

Fig. 155a.

(Footnote: *The Vienna correspondent of 'The Studio'.)

+A single illustration appeared in 'The Studio' October, 1912.)

⊖See Chapter VIII Page 178.)

Fig.154.

on the face of which a leaf-shaped emblem was incised and painted. These rhythmic accents were extremely valuable and no doubt were designed to prepare the eye for the transition from plain wall surface to the highly decorative frieze.

Another notable feature of the room was a low-ceiled ingle-nook; whether or not there was a small alcove at one end of the room is impossible to determine, but if not, Mackintosh provided one, and within it reduced the ceiling level to line with the frieze rail, about 7ft. from the floor. For this annex he provided a built-in upholstered wall seat, two arm chairs and a fireplace with three small bejewelled insets, and a cupboarded mantelpiece. The opposite end of the room contained a large bay window into which the architect built a pair of upholstered settles with high backs also rising to frieze level, and linked together by a curious inverted heart-shaped extension to their wings.*

Apart from the arm chairs previously mentioned - which incidentally, were similar in shape to the linen-backed bedroom chairs of Southpark Avenue - the rest of the furniture consisted of a charming rectangular table with an under shelf, a small
Fig. 155a. oval table and a number of fragile high-backed, broad-seated chairs, rather grotesque in appearance, which were shown at the Turin Exhibition of 1902.

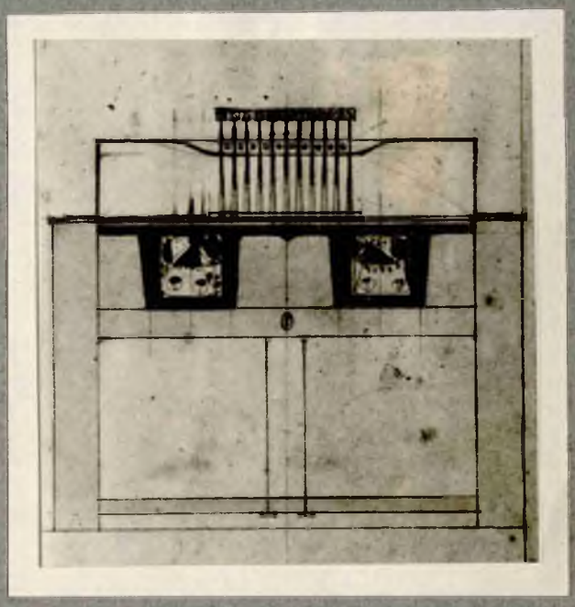
Fig. 155b.+c. Mackintosh also designed the piano case, an extraordinary piece of furniture of enormous proportions, boldly decorated with his flying bird and tree motives in high relief. The music stand consisted of a row of eleven turned rods - ridiculously slender in comparison to the rest of the instrument - each terminating in a carved square cap; the underside of the keyboard cover was embellished with a pair of decorative panels. Some impression of the massive proportions and ponderous character of the instrument may be gained from the accompanying illustration of the architect's original drawing. Considered as two-dimensional pattern, the design is satisfactory enough despite the falling curves of the bird motive, and it has the merit of being refreshingly original. In the photograph, however, it is apparent that, translated into three dimension, it becomes too complex and the basic form of the instrument is lost. This raises an old issue, that of Mackintosh's predilection for ornament and pattern and one is led to speculate once more on Morton Shand's

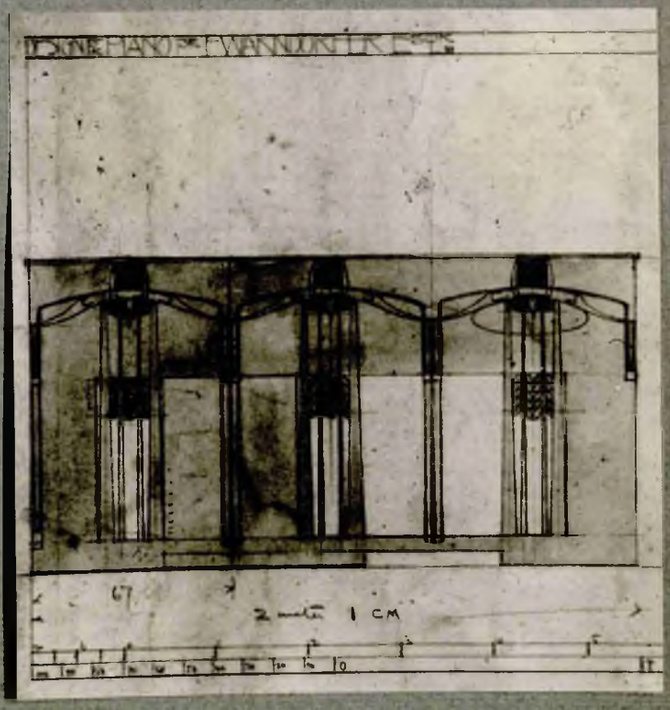
(Footnote:-*This unwarranted extravaganza was taken almost directly from a design by Otto March of Charlottenburgh, exhibited at Berlin in 1897 - see Fig.154. - and also recalls a stand erected for the American Tobacco Company at the Glasgow 1901 Exhibition.)

Fig. 155. The Wärndorfer Music Salon:

a. The Fireside Seats.

b. & c. Mackintosh's design for the Piano Case.

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assertion that Margaret Macdonald, far from being her husband's alter ego as Chapman-Huston would claim, on the other hand led him into what now appear very dubious realms of fantasy and make-believe. Notwithstanding these criticisms, the salon was unquestionably one of Mackintosh's best works, elegant, fresh and charming, with relatively few obtrusive elements of l'art nouveau.

Although no record exists of work for the Wärndorfers other than the salon, there is reason to believe that Mackintosh designed several pieces of furniture and perhaps interiors for them shortly after the Exhibition. A dark oak writing desk was exhibited at Turin in 1902 and at the same time several gesso panels by Margaret Macdonald, "by permission of Fritz Wärndorfer Esq." but nothing more is known of them. Whether or not other schemes were prepared by the two artists, it is obvious that the Music Salon was the pièce de résistance, and, as far as the intelligentsia were concerned, the last word in modern decoration.

The ultimate destiny of Mackintosh's work usually provides an interesting story, and this is no exception. According to Mrs. Wärndorfer, she and her husband eventually sold their house in Vienna to a couple named Freund, who shortly afterwards disposed of the entire contents of the Music Salon to a gentleman who wanted them for his daughter's room. Apparently the young lady soon tired of them, and removed everything, including the Maeterlincke panels, to her loft and commenced to chop them up! At the crucial moment however, a certain Herr Wimmer - who it is believed, was associated with the Arts and Crafts Museum in Vienna and had been searching for these things for some time - arrived on the scene and was able to save the friezes at least from destruction. They were exhibited in the Museum afterwards, but it is not known whether or not they still exist.*

The absence of reliable evidence of the frequency and duration of the Mackintoshes continental excursions is at times exasperating and makes the task of documenting their work extremely difficult. It has already been suggested that the Wärndorfers may have visited Scotland in the summer of 1900, that is just before the Exhibition in Vienna, and Chapman-Huston claims that the Music Room was completed two years later. Yet Mrs. Wärndorfer

(Footnote: *At the author's request, several people have tried to trace the panels in the Austrian capital but without success, and they may still lie in some forgotten corner.)

in a letter to a friend in New York* says that it was finished in 1906-7, but admits she may be wrong. She then goes on to say that a few years after their visit to Scotland, the Mackintoshes spent several weeks with them in Vienna where - to quote her exact words, ".... they completed the wall friezes in our Salon on the spot". This implies that the furniture and other decorations had been executed previously and only the finishing touches had to be applied. On this evidence the dates may be estimated as follows: in 1900, the Wärndorfers came to Scotland and in the autumn of the same year the Mackintoshes exhibited in Vienna and were commissioned to execute certain work including the Music-Room. This was finished, or almost finished, by the time the Turin Exhibition opened in May 1902 because pieces were shown there from the Wärndorfer household. This is confirmed by Chapman-Huston's statement, and moreover the similarity between decorations here and at 'Hillhouse' (1901-3) indicate contemporaniety. The elusive Maeterlincke panels, of which no illustrations appear to exist, might well have been installed by the artists in 1905-6-7, but in any case they are relatively unimportant from the point of view of this study.

Within a few months of his triumph at the 8th Secessionist Exhibition, Mackintosh was again making history on the continent and this time not only as a decorator, but in the architectural field also.

Haus eines Kunst-freundes.

In 1901 the Zeitschrift für Innendekoration promoted a competition for the design and decoration of a House for a Lover of Art (Haus eines Kunstfreundes) and although the competition was won by Baillie Scott, the distinguished architect of the English romantic school, it was Mackintosh's design which aroused the greatest interest and controversy.

The three projects accounted best by the assessors - those of Scott, Mackintosh and Leopold Baur - were published in 1902 separately, in portfolio form, by Alexander Koch of Darmstadt under the title of Meister der Innenkunst.† Mackintosh's scheme was prefaced by a critical discourse on his 'art principles' by Muthesius. The

(Footnote: *1942.)

†With the exception of the Mackintosh volume none of the folios seem to be available in this country but several illustrations of Scott's design appeared in 'Houses and Gardens' written by Scott himself: Newnes 1906, p.170 et seq. N.B. Mackintosh designed the frontispiece for his folio and it was illustrated in 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration' Vol.2, Book 6, p.516.)

The result of the competition was not altogether surprising. For many years continental designers had idealised English domestic architecture, and had been content to follow her leadership in all things pertaining to the home. Thus it was fashionable to pursue an easy eclecticism based largely on traditional styles and vernacular work, with multifarious gables, high pitched roofs and dormers setting the key. Mackintosh's project for the Haus eines Kunstfreundes came as a bolt from the blue, and in all its studied unorthodoxy - the unorthodoxy of the School of Art, then unpublished either at home or abroad - set progressive architectural circles in Europe agog. The startling originality of his project and his complete disregard of contemporary fashion was made all the more apparent by comparison with that of his English competitor. Baillie Scott's design was typical of the period and of the school he represented: externally, it was a mixture of Franco-Scottish turrets, quasi Dutch gables and Elizabethan half-timbering; the symmetrical front and back elevations bore little resemblance to each other and might have belonged to different buildings. Mackintosh's design on the other hand, was loosely jointed and asymmetrical, and possessed all the characteristics with which we have become familiar in the School of Art and 'Hillhouse' - the dramatic grouping of simple elements unified by a plain wall treatment of roughcast, the domination of solid over void, the absence of traditional decorative forms and ornament, and a refusal to force symmetry either in plan, mass or fenestration. Here too he included elements which had been employed previously, for example the little square forecourt and semicircular stair-case feature from 'Windyhill', and several internal and external details which can be identified with work at the School of Art, Queen's Cross Church and elsewhere.

Fig.158 d+e.

Fig.158 a.b.c.

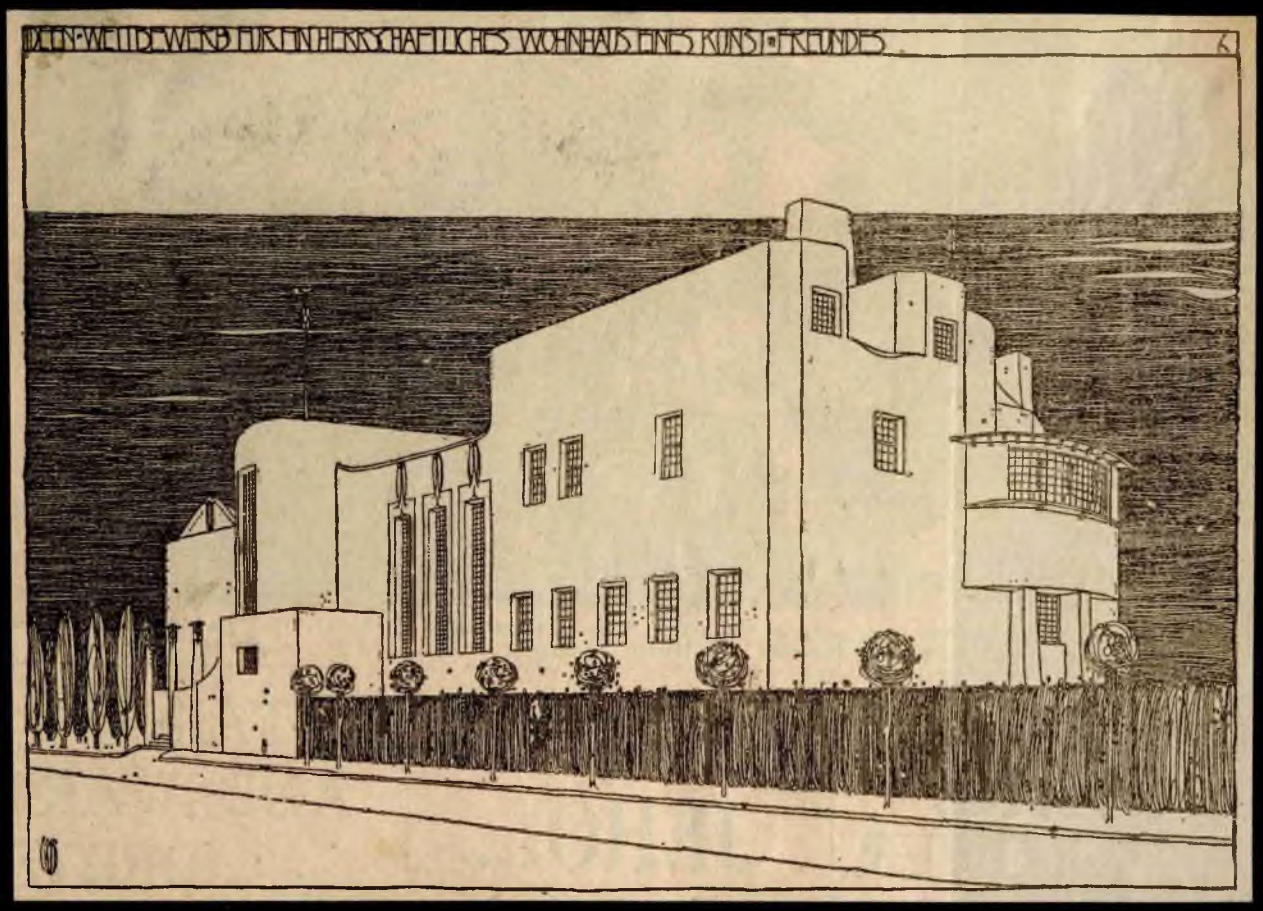
~~Fig~~.

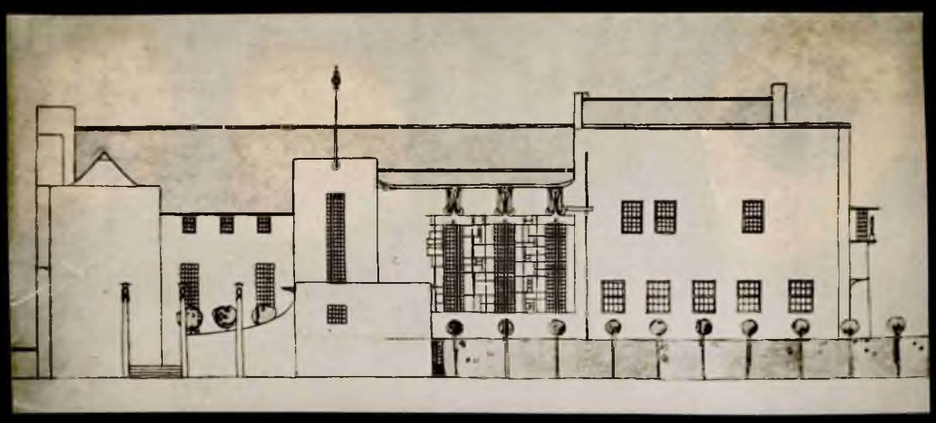
The most important problem involved in the competition was the harmonious association of the main hall and principal apartments, one of which had to include a small stage. Mackintosh made the hall the dominant element on plan and in the manner of the School of Art Library, carried it through two storeys with a gallery at first floor level. The dining-room opened directly off the hall from which it was separated by a light movable partition. The two remaining apartments of consequence, the reception room and music room, also communicated directly with the hall, and as far as one can judge from the drawing,they too were separated by a light partition. If this were so the two rooms together would form a magnificent single apartment and it is unlikely that Mackintosh would miss such an opportunity. Moreover, his perspctive of the music room interior does not agree with the plan unless this arrangement were possible, though there is no indication on the drawing of the line of subdivision

Fig. 158. The Haus eines Kunstfreundes:

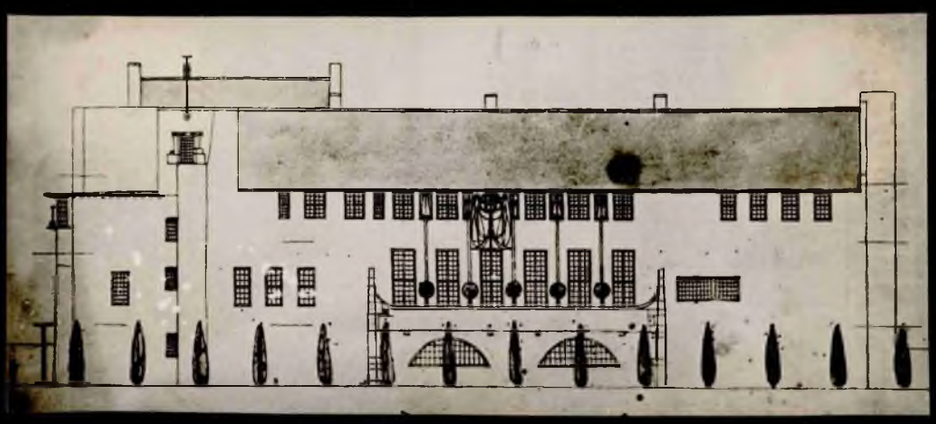
a. Perspective by Mackintosh.

b. & c. Elevations by Mackintosh.
d. & e. " " Baillie-Scott.


DEUTSCHE WELT BEWERB FÜR EIN HERRSCHAFTLICHES WOHNHAUS EINES KUNSTFREUNDES
6



a



b

c

d

- the floor treatment is carried through, so also is the barrel-vaulted ceiling. Muthesius suggests that the music room itself was to be used as a stage, but there is no change in the general floor level of the suite to indicate this, and on account of the curved ceiling and rhythmic bay window treatment it is difficult to see how this small apartment could be partitioned off without destroying the proportion and balance of the whole interior.

The main axis of the plan ran east and west; the courtyard, entrance hall and dining-room occupied most of the northern side, with the other principal apartments - the music room and reception room, both of which opened on to a raised terrace - in the centre of the south side, flanked by a breakfast room and oval room for the ladies.

The spacious main staircase rose directly from the hall and after passing above the rather cramped porch and cloakroom, emerged as a semicircular bay at first floor level, forming the familiar elevational feature found at 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse'. With the exception of the children's suite, all the first floor rooms of importance were placed to the south of a long corridor which extended the entire length of the building. A large play-room was planned above the children's rooms in the east wing and was approached by a secondary staircase. Kitchens and servants' quarters were placed in the basement.

The simple directness of the plan was reflected in the elevational treatment; the main ridge line ran uninterrupted from end to end of the building and broad unbroken surfaces dominated. Some modelling was achieved in the northern facade by the incidence of the courtyard and staircase feature, but the south elevation consisted almost entirely of an enormous unindented wall surface. The fenestration, though informal, was carefully considered and on the south elevation the windows were unusually regimented, from the small rhythmically disposed bedroom windows tucked away under the eaves, to the stolidly marshalled bays of the principal rooms below.

More variety was achieved to the north, though not without some loss of unity. There is competition - in pure elevation only - between the three important windows to the main hall with their ornamental head-dress and the tall staircase window, which is emphasised by a lofty, wrought iron weather vane. The eye moves restlessly from one to the other, due largely to the absence of shade and shadow which would have greatly helped the

interpretation of this drawing. The perspectives which Mackintosh produced, however, accentuate the fine proportions and bold modelling of the building, and it is these drawings which portray its true character.

Muthesius comments on the project thus:-

> "The exterior architecture of the building ..... exhibits an absolutely original character, unlike anything else known. In it we shall not find a trace of the conventional forms of architecture, to which the artist, so far as his present intentions were concerned, was quite indifferent."

In addition to the plans and elevations of the house, Mackintosh, assisted by his wife, produced a number of interior studies of decorative schemes and furniture which, as might be expected, were remarkable for their unity of idea and freedom from traditional motives. The high-backed chairs, clusters of suspended electric lamps and crystal, the dark stained oak or white painted furniture relieved by bright panels of gesso and enamel, already familiar to the people of Glasgow, seem to have made an especial appeal if only because of their comparative freedom from the excesses of continental art nouveau.

Fig. 160 c+d

It is particularly instructive to compare and contrast Scott's and the Mackintoshes decoration schemes for the music and dining-rooms. Scott's design is astonishing in its complexity and barbaric in its confusion of colour and ornament; the proportions of the room are ruined by the introduction of many varied elements - a heavy arcade of masonry, a peacock frieze, an enormous stone fireplace, and a riot of decorative motives on carpets, furniture and ceiling. Mackintosh's design for the dining-room on the other hand, is almost painfully restrained and, though sombre in the extreme, is well composed with every element closely related in form and colour. His music room however, is the most disappointing apartment and again, one cannot but feel that Margaret Macdonald was responsible for the over-elaboration of an otherwise simple and dignified room. The omission of her decorative panels alone would have greatly improved it, and some modification to the curious piano case and extraordinary baldacchino - described by Muthesius rather tamely as "a fanciful composition" - would have helped. Even Baillie Scott's half-timbered apartment with its ogival tree motives and applied decoration, was hardly less Quixotic than this, though the Mackintoshes delicate colour scheme of white with rose, violet, green, silver and gold accents was infinitely superior to Scott's polychromatic experiment.

Fig. 160 a+b.

Fig. 160. The Haus eines Kunstfreundes:

a. & b. Interiors by Mackintosh.
c. & d. " " Baillie Scott.

DAS SPEISE-ZIMMER.

TANZS-RAUM (MUSIK-Z

The other interiors illustrated in the folio are not of particular distinction; the panelled entrance hall and balcony is reminiscent of a similar feature at Queen's Cross Church and the children's play room, a sketch of a pair of built-in wardrobes, and a bedroom fireplace complete the folio.

The significance of the Haus eines Kunstfreundes however, lay not in the coloured plates and schemes of decoration, but rather in the fact that this was Mackintosh's first complete architectural project to be illustrated on the continent. To anyone unacquainted with 'Hillhouse', the School of Art, and in particular the Scottish vernacular, this design was as unorthodox and startling as would have been Gropius' Bauhaus or Lloyd Wright's Taliesin. It had no roof in the accepted sense, and therefore no dormers; no identifiable axes and formal vistas; nor was there a single familiar detail to be seen except perhaps the windows, which after all, were recognisable as windows. In this single scheme, Mackintosh appeared to have swept away the conventions of a century; here he returned to fundamental architectural forms and a logical expression of purpose. The Haus eines Kunstfreundes seemed to open a new door, to reveal a new prospect, and there can be little doubt that the publication of this set of drawings, prefaced as it was by an eulogistical account of the architect's design principles by Herman Muthesius, firmly established Mackintosh's continental reputation as one of the most important figures in the new movement.

The International Exhibition Turin. (1902).

No sooner had Koch's 'Meister der Innenkunst' appeared than the Mackintoshes were again the centre of heated controversy, though this time in the south, in Italy.

Under Italian royal patronage, an international exhibition of 'modern' decorative art had been arranged to take place at Turin in the summer of 1902 with the object of drawing together in one vast concourse the best examples of applied art and craftwork that Europe had to offer. Some indication of the growing reputation of the Glasgow School of designers may be derived from the fact that Fra. Newbery was appointed a delegate by the organising committee and asked to undertake the supervision of a Scottish section. Needless to say, he at once passed on the responsibility of preparing the decorative schemes and layout to the Mackintoshes whose experience at Vienna now stood them in good stead. The resources of the School of Art were placed at their disposal in the meantime.

The architect of the exhibition was a certain Signor d'Aronco and his lofty, barnlike galleries, with large windows 8ft. above floor level, provided a setting anything but appropriate to the delicate work of the Glasgow designers, and it is clear from contemporary accounts that Mackintosh's handling of this uncompromising material attracted considerable attention. A suite of three galleries was apportioned to the Scottish Section, but the rooms were linked by such wide openings that the suite had the appearance of a broad corridor with relatively shallow recesses on either side, instead of three interconnecting apartments. This impression Mackintosh corrected by reducing the width of the openings with pairs of narrow stencilled linen panels, 15ft. high, attached curtain-wise on either side of the passage-way, an arrangement not only satisfactory as a form of punctuation defining each apartment, but one which added considerably to the aesthetic effect of the suite by emphasising an otherwise unattractive vista and most successfully unifying the whole scheme.

From the decorative point of view the rooms were treated alike in exactly the same manner as at Vienna; they were panelled to a height of about 8ft. in white painted woodwork and canvas, and the upper part of the walls and ceiling were whitewashed with, of course, the customary accents of colour. Although artificial light was not permitted, several typical lamps were provided either suspended from the ceiling in a flurry of crystal balls, or grouped at the top of tall masts. The architect's objective in all this was clearly understood and appreciated by at least one art critic, who, in commenting on the Glasgow section, said that the rooms in themselves, without any exhibits, were material for exhibition and worthy of close study, the exhibits being virtually added enrichments. He thus laid his finger on one of the principal reasons for Mackintosh's success at Turin: it was by careful treatment of the dominating background surfaces, of walls, floor and ceiling, that he created the atmosphere of quiet repose and pristine freshness which so distinguished the Scottish section.

Of the three apartments, the first was devoted entirely to work by Charles Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald: one side of the central passage was designed as 'A Rose Boudoir' with suitable furniture and decorative panels; the complementary side was more simply treated with framed plates of the Haus eines Kunstfreundes project and a selection of drawings. One side of the second apartment was furnished as a writing room by Frances and Herbert MacNair: the wall surface was painted grey with an ornate stencilled frieze, and the exhibits comprised furniture in black stained wood, decorative panels and embroidered

Fig. 163b.

Fig. 163f+g.

fabrics; the complementary half in this case was devoted to embroidery by Mrs. Newbery, Miss Ann Macbeth and their students.
Fig.163a. The third and largest apartment was occupied entirely by general exhibits ranging from book binding to fireplaces, mainly executed by past and contemporary students of the School of Art. There were amongst others, delicate fairylike drawings and watercolours by Jessie M. King, interior decoration projects by two lesser-known artists, Jane Fonie and George Logan,* a ~~positix~~ grotesque fireplace by J. Gaff Gillespie - an assistant in the office of Mackintosh's friend, James Salmon - and some attractive furniture and leaded glass by Ernest A. Taylor.+

The work of the MacNairs is not particularly distinguished; indeed it would be difficult to imagine less elegant pieces than
Figs.163 e.f.g. those which appeared in the writing-room - especially the chairs, of which there were three examples, all equally incongruous; a boxlike wing-chair with beaded curtains, leaded glass insets and a canopy; a tall, unstable looking splat-backed chair to the writing table; and a pair of low, rush-seated dining chairs, each with a single centrally placed support instead of two front legs. All these pieces at least had the merit of being soundly constructed, but in form and character they could not compare with Mackintosh's exhibits in the rose boudoir - if we except his two
Fig.163b. ghoulish high-backed chairs.

Despite the fact that 'The Four' had been separated for a comparatively short time, it is evident that the interval had been long enough for their individual characteristics to emerge and though Mackintosh had developed his 'white' decorative schemes and refined his earlier furniture, Herbert MacNair had moved much closer to the continental art nouveau school.

Although the work displayed by the artists of the Scottish section varied in materials and technique, the relationship between them was unmistakable. The exquisite fairylike watercolours of Jessie M. King - which at the time of writing she is still executing in her Kirkcudbrightshire house nearly fifty years later - the flower-studded interior schemes of Jane Fonie and George Logan, the elegant furniture of E. A. Taylor, and the exquisite embroidery of Mrs. Newbery, all formed a coherent group which, in conjunction with the contribution of 'The Four' stood out in

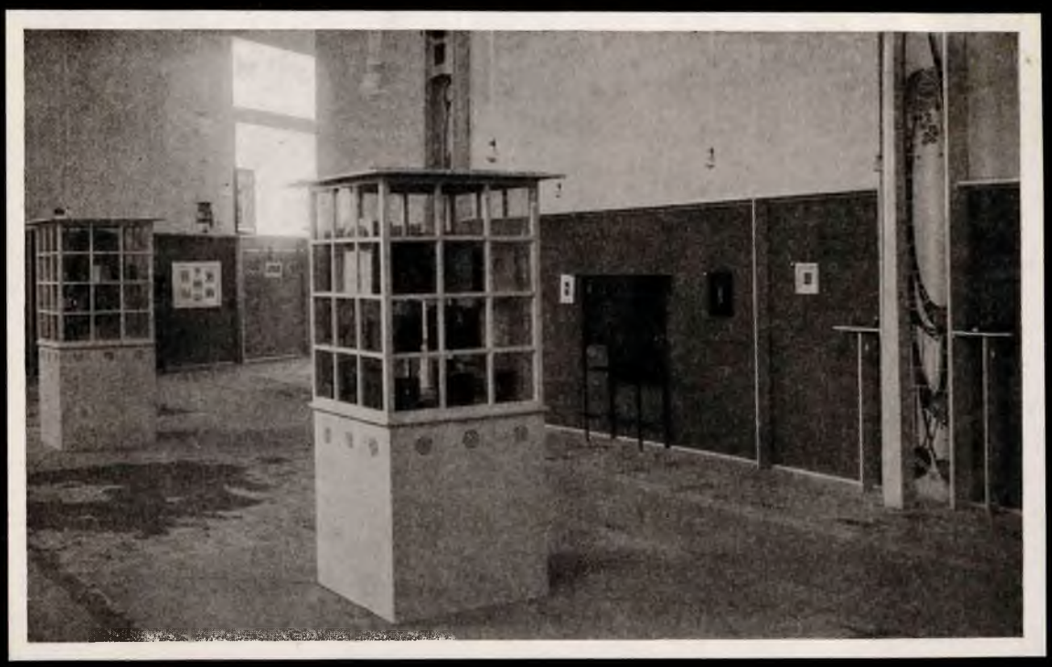
(Footnote: *See 'The Studio' Vol.23, No.101, Aug.1901, p.167.)

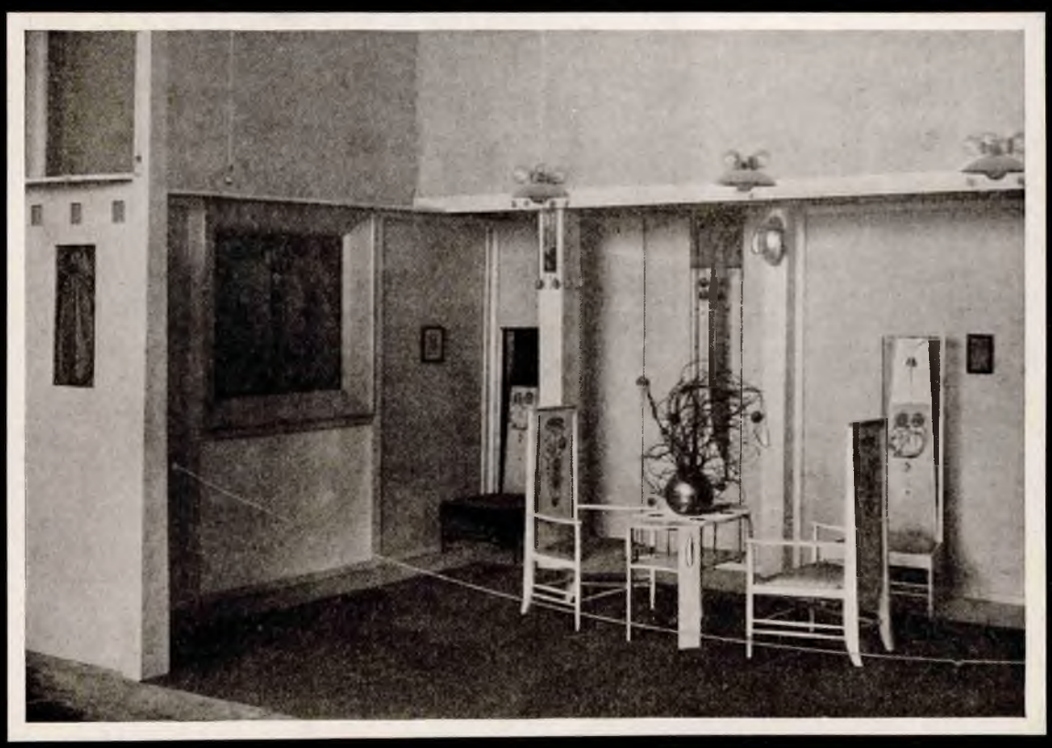
+E. A. Taylor, the painter, who later married Jessie M. King, was at this time a designer with Messrs. Wylie & Lockhead, furnishers, for whom he had executed a considerable amount of work at the Glasgow Exhibition of 1901, but he like George Walton, has been overshadowed by his more active contemporaries. His work is always dignified and well proportioned and has much in common with the School group, in fact, he seems to tread a path midway between Walton and Mackintosh, combining the refinement of the one with the design idioms of the other.)

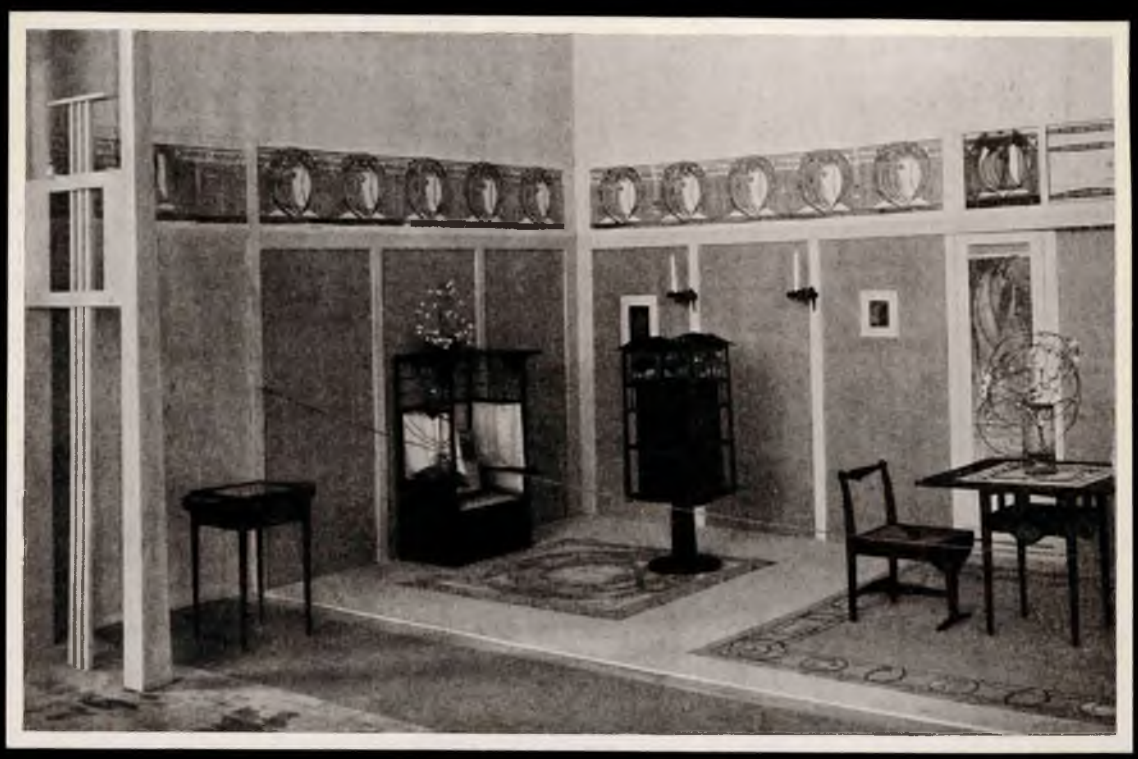
Fig. 163. The Turin Exhibition, 1902:

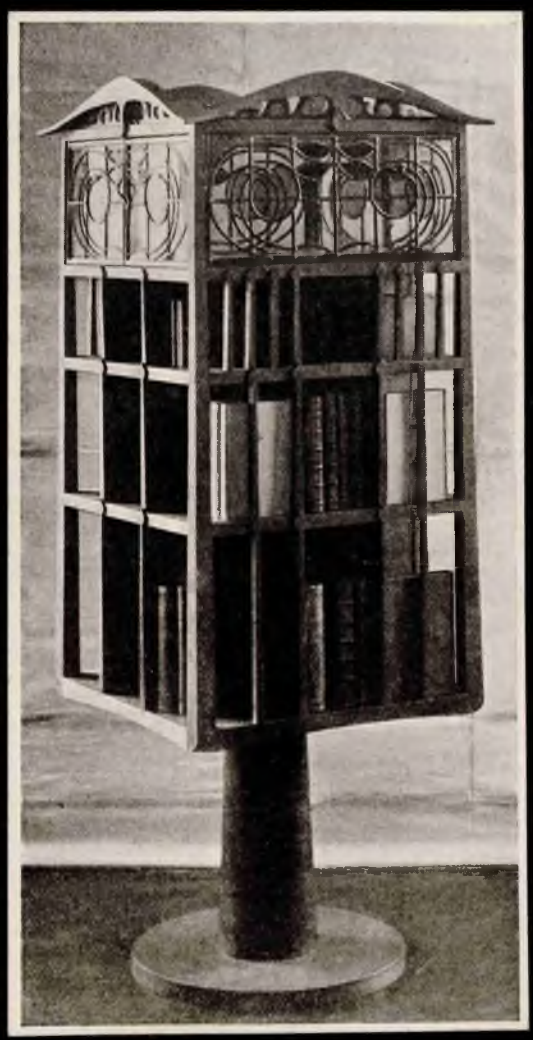
a. Scottish Section - general.
b. The Rose Boudoir.
c. Gesso Panel by Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh.
d. Leaded Glas Panel by " " " .

e. f. & g. The Writing-room and Furniture by the MacNairs.









bold relief from the concordia discors of the exhibition as a whole.

Generally speaking, the aim of most exhibitors at Turin seems to have been to impress by quantity and variety rather than by quality and good taste, and in consequence, the exhibition was somewhat reminiscent of an overcrowded museum. Few if any of the sections other than that devoted to the Scottish artists seem to have been conceived as a whole, and the majority of the exhibitors apparently allocated a room to one, or perhaps to a group of designers, without first securing agreement on a general decorative scheme. Then again, the term 'modern' seems to have been interpreted somewhat freely, and exhibits ranged from stolid unimaginative variants on or reproductions of fashionable period pieces, to the most vulgar travesties of l'art nouveau. There was of course, much good work to be seen - especially in the Austrian and English sections - but the cumulative effect of gallery after gallery filled to capacity with work of every shape, size and description, made objective selection well-nigh impossible for any but the most discerning observer, and gave little or no indication of future trends.

English work at Turin was not particularly imaginative, though as usual, the craftwork and finish were exemplary. Exhibits were provided mainly by C. R. Ashbee, Walter Crane, C. Harrison Townsend, W. A. S. Benson and C. F. A. Voysey, and with few exceptions, betrayed not the slightest tendency on the part of their designers to deviate from the safe path of tradition. The German section too, proved disappointing in view of the fact that Munich and Dresden and to a lesser extent Berlin, had by this time influential and active Secessionist groups. Representative work was sent by Hermann Billing of Karlsruhe, Bruno Möhring, and Richard Kummel of Berlin, Heinrich Kühne and Willhelm Kreis of Dresden and H. E. Berlepsch-Valendas of Munich. Except for several individual pieces of furniture and textiles by Kreis and Billing, and a suggestion of art nouveau in the interiors by Möhring and Berlepsch-Valendas, the entire section was unbelievably ponderous with a background of ornate ceilings, columns, pilasters, grotesque masks, busts and statues. One observer remarked that it contained as many ideas as there were states in the German Empire, a criticism which could have been levelled equally at almost every exhibitor.

The work of the Scottish designers was by no means universally acclaimed however, and here as elsewhere it immediately captivated or repelled the onlooker, evoking either [redacted] praise or scathing criticism. There seems to have been no via media. For

example, the 'Milan Courier' led a violent attack upon the group in a leader entitled 'New Art at Turin': the writer stated somewhat tortuously that they were false to all accepted art principles, and since their work consisted of imitations of "the Japanese styles of Beardsley", they could have no existence from the artistic standpoint, and, moreover, could not possibly have any influence on art in the future. In contrast to this, Alfredo Melani, writing in the 'Journal of Decorative Art and British Decorator'* remarks that the Scottish Section was "the most quaint and curious in the whole exhibition" and he says, "The public in general passes through Mr. and Mrs. Macdonalds' (Mackintoshes') exhibits with a derisive smile, and sees in their work nothing but a pose and a caricature where we see a sincere and poetic attempt at profound art," and again "Mr. Edward De Amices, one of the most popular of Italian journalists .... accompanied me on one of my frequent visits to the exhibits. The conclusion arrived at by both of us is that we have in this husband and wife the two most interesting and original artists at the Turin Exhibition".

Alexander Koch, however, that staunch supporter of the Mackintoshes, devoted a considerable part of his influential publication 'Deutsch Kunst und Dekoration'† to a review of the work of the Glasgow School in Turin by Georg Fuchs of Darmstadt, and thus ensured a still wider dissemination of the Glasgow Style. Fuchs not only appraised their work, but tentatively pointed to one or two weaknesses which were already being recognised by their more discerning contemporaries. He stated categorically that Mackintosh's aims were not clearly defined at Turin, he deplored the superabundance of garlands of wire and artificial flowers and buds, and commented thus,

> "It is a strange fact that we feel ourselves among Poets when entering the rooms of Mackintosh. .... It often seems as if the dream were a personal aim ....."

He then observes that although one can imagine fairies reposing in the elegant high-backed chairs, they provide anything but a suitable setting for ordinary everyday purposes, for

> "strong-boned Scots with auburn manes,
> threatening brows and defiant jaw-bones"!

(Footnote: *1902, Vol.22.)
†September, 1902.)

Although Fuchs mentioned the Haus eines Kunstfreundes design and recognised its remarkable architectural qualities, he drew no distinction between the work of Mackintosh and that of his wife; between the broader, all-embracing mind of the architect designer and the more circumscribed feminity of Margaret Macdonald with her predilection for small-scale mystical pattern and fairylike ornamentation. In this he overlooked an important point, the raison d'etre perhaps of the capricious fantasy of the Rose Boudoir; for it is only when both artists joined forces that the dream unmistakably takes precedence over reality.

Notwithstanding some difference of opinion between the critics, the Scottish representatives acquitted themselves with distinction: Mr. Newbery was received by the King of Italy and awarded the Cross of a Knight Officer of the Order of the Crown of Italy in recognition of his public service in connection with the Exhibition; Margaret and Charles Mackintosh were awarded diplomas of honour, Jessie M. King received a gold medal, and five silver medals, and four diplomas of merit were obtained by other exhinitors in the Scottish Section. The highest award of the Exhibition went to J. M. Olbrich of Darmstadt, the designer of the Viennese Secession Haus.

The Mackintoshes do not appear to have received any commissions as a result of their work at Turin. On the whole, it would seem that they were less favourably received in Italy than in Austria, probably because the peninsula lay just beyond the orbit of the new art movements which so greatly disturbed western and central Europe in the late nineties. There is no evidence, for instance, of an established Italian Secession comparable to that in Austria or Germany, and little indication at Turin that ~~she~~ had any contribution to make to the emancipation of the decorative arts. Most of her exhibits were adaptations of already familiar styles and the aim of many designers - not of course limited to Italy - seems to have been to produce something new and outré at any cost. Just to cite one example, a bedroom suite was exhibited by C. Bugatti & Co., of Milan, in which all the pieces were circular - bedsteads, wardrobes and cabinets - and which would be difficult to excel for sheer barbaric ugliness and grotesque overelaboration.

After Turin the MacNairs seem to have gradually faded out of the picture and to the author's knowledge this was the last occasion on which 'The Four' exhibited together.

There is little reliable evidence of further continental visits by the Mackintoshes, but there is reason to believe that they exhibited work from time to time in various European capitals. Information on this point, as on the question of private commissions, has bot been easy to come by and where sweeping claims are made - as for example by Chapman-Huston* - they are difficult to substantiate. Mr. Newbery who of all people should have been able to verify or discount such statements, would not commit himself on any but the two exhibitions reviewed here† - nor can Major Chapman-Huston now say precisely from whom he obtained his information, though it is possible that the source was either Mackintosh or his wife. Chapman-Huston's remarks seem authoritative enough to be recorded however, and one statement in particular is interesting, for he says,

> "The Grand Duke Serge of Russia visited the Turin Exhibition and was so enamoured of the work of the Mackintoshes that he became one of their most ardent admirers and invited them to give an exhinition in Moscow under Imperial patronage. This they did in 1913. Their work was received with acclamation by the Russian artists and public; it secured an instantaneous success. Everything was sold except the carpet, designed by Mackintosh, which had been specially made for the floor of the exhibition room".θ

And he adds that they also exhibited in Venice, Munich, Buda Pesth and Dresden, and though no dates are given, this would appear to be substantially correct. Even supposing that they were not invited to send work directly to these cities, it is most likely that selected exhibits would be sent to Dresden, Munich and perhaps to Buda Pesth after the Vienna Secessionist Exhibition of 1900, and to Venice from Turin in 1902. From another source, from B. E. Kalas,‡ comes information that the Mackintoshes had exhibited at Berlin prior to 1905, and finally, Chapman-Huston claims that they sent work to the French capital in 1914. The

(Footnote: * 'Artwork', 1930.)

† The late F. H. Newbery was interviewed by the author in 1941.)

θ Although the author has attempted to secure further information through the Russian Embassy and Moscow, this statement has not been corroberated and cannot be enlarged upon - the fact that eleven years elapsed before the exhibition took place seems to throw some doubt on the issue.)

‡ 'De la Tamise à la Sprée', See Chapter V Page 94.).

outbreak of war prevented this exhibition from being held and it would seem that the answer to Kalas' querulous appeal to "Paris, City of Light" to discern "the glory of Mackintosh"* came too late.

It is clear from this survey that for a few years, from 1900 to about 1905, the Mackintoshes enjoyed immense popularity, and made many friends abroad - a point that will be dealt with at length in a later chapter. Some measure of the prestige enjoyed by the Glasgow group may be gained from the fact that photographs of Margaret and Frances Macdonald, and Fra. Newbery's two small daughters, appeared à la mode in a book of contemporary fashions published in Krefeld in 1903.+

Soon however, the Mackintoshes seem to have disappeared from the continental stage, and though 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' were widely publicised in 1904, 5 and 6, by Koch and Muthesius, we hear no more of continental excursions and wildly enthusiastic receptions. There is no reason to believe that this was due to any lack of appreciation on the part of the Secessionists; in fact, the evidence suggests that they assumed Mackintosh was too busy with his own affairs to venture abroad, and no doubt would have been astonished to discover that he had virtually given up the struggle. Two quotations may suffice to support this point of view; the first, which however the author has been unable to verify, is taken from Mrs. Newbery's foreword to the Mackintosh Memorial Exhibition Catalogue (1933) where she writes,

> "At a banquet, held by the Kunstlerbund, at the Decorative Exhibition in Breslau in 1913, at which were gathered all the most distinguished architects, decorative artists, sculptors, etc., one of the toasts of the evening was 'to our master, Mackintosh, the greatest since the Gothic' ".

And the second is an extract from a letter received by the author from Major Alfred Longden, Director of Fine Art, The British Council, in which he says that in 1929 he received a request for Mackintosh's address from a group of Viennese architects,

> "as they wished to invite him as their guest to Vienna and honour him for his remarkable influence in their country upon the architecture and art of the time".

Some indication of the extent to which Mackintosh's continental friends were out of touch with events may be obtained from the fact that the letter arrived a year after his death!

(Footnote: *'De la Tamise à la Sprée'. See Chapter V, Page 94.).
+'Das Eigenkleid de Frau' by Anna Muthesius - presumably the wife of Hermann Muthesius - published in Krefeld, 1903.)

At the moment of writing, the amount of information about the Mackintosh's continental work and exhibitions is of necessity somewhat circumscribed; two major wars have intervened and it may be some time before more light can be thrown on his activities in central and western Europe and the full extent of his influence accurately estimated, always assuming that is, that the evidence still survives. The work reviewed here, and the opinions expressed by continental writers establish beyond [redacted] doubt, the importance of his contribution to the art revival, and the high esteem in which he was held by contemporary European designers.

CHAPTER VIII.

MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS.

So far Mackintosh's work has been easy to classify, but in this chapter it is proposed to examine a number of widely differing projects which for the sake of convenience have been grouped under a common heading. It should not be inferred however, that this work is in any degree less important than that discussed hitherto. In fact, several major designs will be examined - for instance, an International Exhibition (Glasgow 1901) and Scotland Street School - which, though relatively unknown, have considerable historical significance. The various projects will be studied under the following subheadings:-

1. The 1901 Glasgow International Exhibition. (Unexecuted).
2. The Daily Record Office. (1901).
3. Ecclesiastical Work (1897-1905) & Liverpool Cathedral Competition.
4. Scotland Street School. (1904).

1. The 1901 Glasgow International Exhibition.

The firm of Honeyman & Keppie submitted three designs for the competition and though two of them were commended by the assessors - including it is believed, that by Mackintosh - neither was premiated. The first prize was awarded to a local architect of repute, the late James Miller,* and in consequence Glasgow was subjected to a riot of sugar-cake architecture in the Spanish Renaissance manner which, it is not to be regretted, had little if any permanent effect on the architecture of the city.

The result of the competition was published in 'The British Architect' on September 16th 1898, more than two years before the exhibition was to take place, and at a time when the city authorities were still painfully conscious of the furore caused by Mackintosh's design for the School of Art, the first section of which, in all its revolutionary unorthodoxy, was slowly taking shape. In these circumstances it is unfortunate - but not surprising - whatever the relative merits of the schemes, that Mackintosh's design did not gain the premier award. His

(Footnote: *2nd and 3rd places respectively were secured by A. N. Paterson; J. A. Campbell and Archie McGibbon.)

drawings, of course, were always easily recognisable, and could not be disguised by any nom-de-plume.

The young architect's admiration for the work of James Sellars has been noted elsewhere. Sellars, it will be remembered, was appointed architect to the first international exhibition held in Glasgow (1888) and it is instructive to compare his design for the Grand Hall with Mackintosh's project - in which his influence is clearly recognisable - and to contrast both with Millar's winning scheme. It will be observed that fundamentally the two later projects are re-statements of Sellars' original design, the great central area in each being ~~flanked~~ crowned by a cupola flanked by four towers differing only in detail - Sellars' in restrained Mooresque, Millar's in flamboyant Spanish Renaissance. As usual Mackintosh's scheme cannot be classified; it is singularly free from ornamentation and, compared to Millar's design, positively austere.

Figs. 172. a.b.c.

Mackintosh's Grand Hall was a long, low building, terminated at either end by a pair of towers and dominated by the central cupola* above the entrance hall. The main exhibition space was flanked by low aisles roofed at right angles to the principal axis, their rounded gables providing a pleasant undulating rhythm which admirably offset the somewhat rigid lines of the hall proper.

The principal towers were polygonal on plan and entirely without ornament; they had neither string courses, windows, nor terminal cornice, and rose sheer for a hundred feet or more above ground level. Those flanking the cupola carried light flèches supported by curious buttresses+ and were identical in form and proportion to Sellars' towers - so much so in fact, that it would appear the architect had traced them from the original and merely omitted Sellars' Byzantine trimmings. Forward of the main building however, Mackintosh had a group of eight smaller towers arranged in pairs - a kind of advance guard - with gay roofs and inviting little windows; they emphasised the main

(Footnote: *Mackintosh had already employed a dome of similar form and proportions in the Soane Medallion competition (1893 - The Chapter House Fig. 9b.) and as previously stated, the same feature was eventually transcribed into timber and lead by Keppie at Pettigrew & Stephen's warehouse Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, Fig. 45e A fine unmounted bird's eye perspective of Mackintosh's Exhibition project executed in the style of Alexander McGibbon, was shown at the Memorial Exhibition of 1933, but the author has been unable to discover its present whereabouts. It has been said that Mackintosh's design for the Grand Hall at Glasgow was used at the Turin Exhibition of 1902 but this is not so. The architect appointed at Turin was Signore D'Aronco.)

+It should be noted that the illustration given here - Fig. 172c.- is a side elevation and the towers in question are not visible.)

entrance and provided an impressive approach to the doorway. The elevations are treated very broadly and nowhere does the architect allow decoration to get out of hand: interest is provided by pairs of flags arranged rhythmically along each parapet and by wrought iron motives above each bay division.

Seen in retrospect - especially against the work of Sellars and Miller, and considering its early date - this building is really remarkable and one must admire the reticence with which Mackintosh handled the problem. The side elevations of the Grand Hall, perhaps more than any other, provide evidence of his independence, and we find him using motives which have since become identified with the new movement of the 1920's and 1930's. The polygonal towers have already been mentioned; they are seen
Fig.172c. in detail in the illustration given here, but an even more important feature is to be observed at the extremity of the elevation where the rectangular end wall of a small pavilion is pierced by a long horizontal window.* Not only is the window shape unprecedented, but the position of the opening in relation to the vast area of wall is most unusual - the converse of the north front of the School of Art, designed two years earlier. It also forshadows a more logical approach to new problems of fenestration arising out of the use of iron and steel.

Of the remaining exhibition buildings designed by Mackintosh one only is of particular interest. It is a project - one of two
Fig.172e on the same drawing - for the Concert Hall. The auditorium was planned to accommodate 4,221 people, and was to be circular in plan: twelve great cast iron half trussed were designed to give a clear internal span of about 165ft. with a maximum ceiling height in the centre of 50ft. - in effect, a very flat saucer dome. Externally the building was to be functional in the extreme with doors opening between pairs of enormous buttresses; the whole was dominated by the muffin-dish roof, finished in lead and crowned by a tiny ventilator. The entire structural form in this instance however, appears to be unstable, and the shape evolved for the slender attenuated trusses seems to have been arrived at by intuitive effort rather than mathematical calcula-
Fig. tion. The accompanying illustration of Mackintosh's project
Fig.172d. may be compared with the adjacent photograph of Millar's Concert Hall as executed.

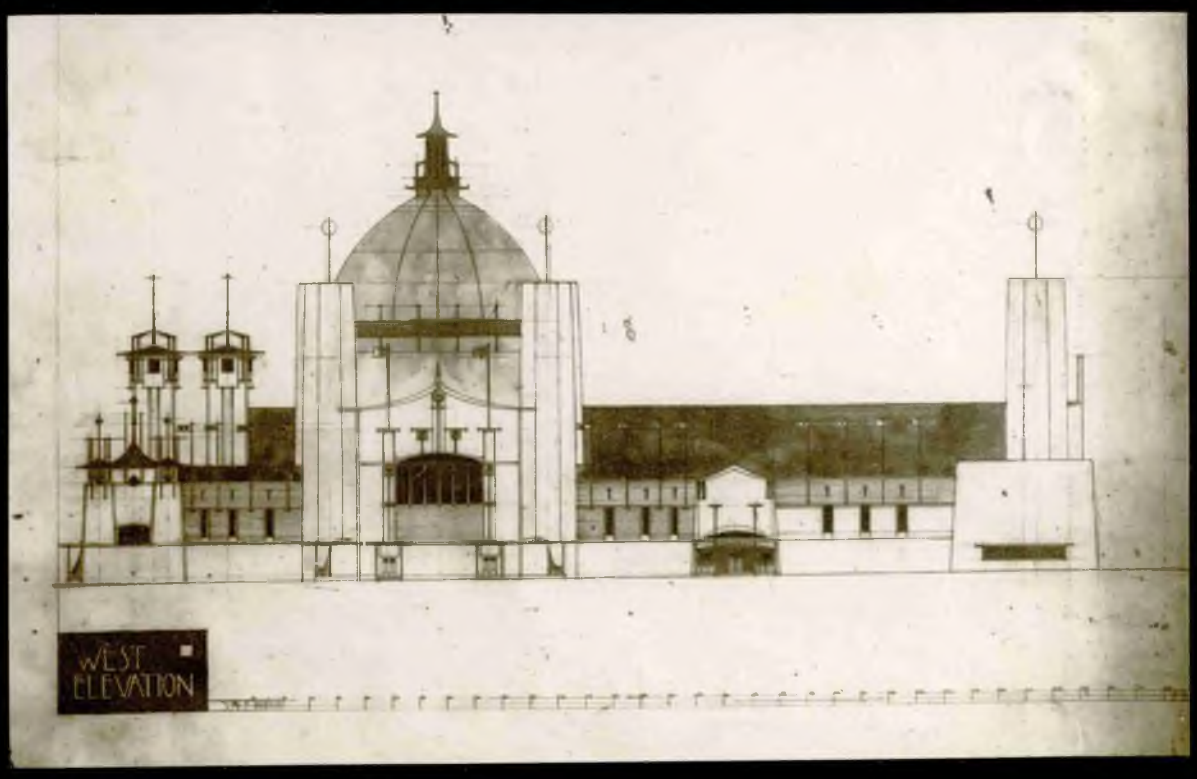
Failure in the competition did not prevent Mackintosh from executing designing a number of exhibition stands - for the School of Art, Messrs. Pettigrew & Stephens, (on island sites), Messrs.

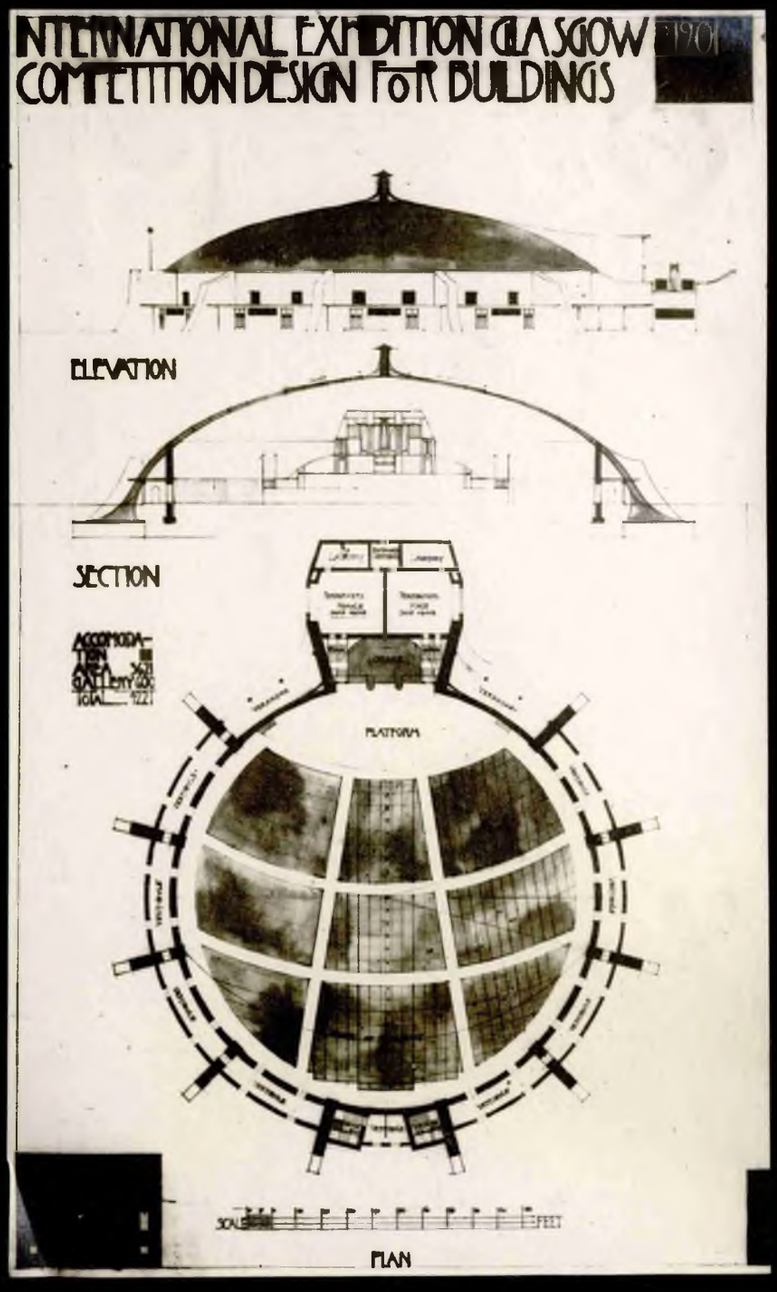
(Footnote: *In all probability this was the first occasion on which such an arrangement of solid and void was used. A similar feature is not met with on the continent until Olbrich introduced it some two years later in his Artists' Colony at Darmstadt. Chapter X, Page 250.

Fig. 172. The Glasgow International Exhibition, 1901:

a. Designed by James Millar.
b. " " James Sellars.
c. " " Mackintosh.

d. The Concert Hall by James Millar.
e. " " " by Mackintosh.


WEST
ELEVATION


NTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION GLASGOW
COMPETITION DESIGN FOR BUILDINGS
1901
ELEVATION
SECTION
ACCOMODA-
TION
AREA
GALLERY
TOTAL
PLATFORM
SCALE
FEET
PLAN

Francis Smith, and Miss Cranston's White Cockade Tea-Rooms. With the exception of the first, none of them appears to have been of particular distinction and they did not compare with his achievements at Vienna and Turin. Little notice was taken of them in contemporary journals, and apart from three illustrations in 'The Studio' and a drawing* no record has survived.

The School of Art Stall.

Fig. 173a.

This stall was almost cubical in shape and sturdily proportioned; it is notable for its restraint and simplicity - one might say its functionalism. The catch-penny fineries of the usual exhibition stand are conspicuously absent and it must have seemed strangely aloof in its gay setting. It had a deep, plain frieze, relieved on each face by a wrought iron tree emblem and a panel of lettering, and supported on a light wooden framework - virtually a cage, enclosing the exhibits rather than displaying them. The success or otherwise of this project can hardly be judged from the evidence remaining, but the form and simplicity of the stall is remarkable indeed considering the fashion of the period as exemplified in James Miller's architectural setting.

Pettigrew & Stephens' Stand.

Fig. 173b.

This was more ambitious, though by no means as successful as the School of Art Stall. It was rectangular in plan with two open sides containing low show-cases and two closed sides against which were built glazed show-cases, for the display of delicate lace and embroideries. A moulded fascia was carried on a single column and the stand was entered from one angle - never a very satisfactory arrangement. On the illustration two large, vertical show-cases appear to meet the fascias rather awkwardly at the centre, but a closer examination indicates that they were set well back, and in fact, occurred directly behind each of the large decorative motives - xxxxxxx on the centre line of the fascias - and were not connected to them.

Francis Smith & Son's Stand.

Fig.

The only other stall of which any record survives was that designed for Messrs. Francis Smith & Son, situated in an aisle of the exhibition hall. This presented a more difficult problem and left little room for experiment. Two bays had been allocated to the firm and Mackintosh linked them together by an elaborate moulded canopy, a low ceiling and wall panelling, thus creating an apartment open on one side only, in which the cabinet makers' work could be attractively displayed.†

(Footnote: *In the author's collection.)

†One photograph was reproduced in 'Dekorative Kunst', March 1902 p.214, showing the stand without its complement of furniture. Part of the original fascia is still affectionately preserved by Herbert Smith.)

Fig. 173. The Glasgow International Exhibition, 1901:

a. The School of Art Stall, by Mackintosh.
b. Pettigrew & Stephens' Stall by Mackintosh.
c. Ambrose Heal's Stall by Ambrose Heal, Jnr.

PAVILION

DESIGNED BY AMBROSE HEAL, JUN.

The White Cockade Restaurant.

This was designed for Miss Cranston. Apart from an indistinct general view in the official publication of the Exhibition, no record remains of Miss Cranston's famous restaurant. Charles and Margaret Mackintosh designed the menues, cutlery, napery and it is believed, the iron-stone tea-pots and jugs. The restaurant was situated behind the handstand and appears to have formed part of the same structure. Shortly after the exhibition was opened a disastrous fire completely destroyed both buildings; they were hastily restored however, and Miss Cranston had to equip the new restaurant with cutlery and so forth from her city tea-rooms.

From this brief survey and from the accompanying illustrations it will be seen that Mackintosh's contribution to the exhibition itself was not particularly distinguished. Had he won the competition however, the story would have been very different and the effect of such a vast scheme dominated by him must, unfortunately, be left to the imagination.

2. The Daily Record Office (1900-1).

Fig. 174

The relatively insignificant Daily Record Building was designed c.1900: it is now used as a warehouse and is situated in Renfield Lane, a narrow thoroughfare of canyon-like proportions, near to Glasgow Central Station. The plan has been considerably modified, and as none of the project drawings survive* it is not easy to estimate the original layout.

The site was enclosed on three sides, and thus only one elevation was necessary; the architect decided - wisely, in view of the unprepossessing surroundings, to concentrate on the ground floor and attic storey only. Both sections were faced in stone and for the former, which is in perpetual shadow, he designed large semi-circular headed windows with bold architraves developed into an undulating stone canopy.† The attic storey in red sandstone, a riot of dormers and copings, has already been mentioned and compared to the Glasgow Herald Building. The intervening wall surface between the ground floor and attic, ~~contains~~ is faced with white glazed bricks and contains a series

(Footnote: *With the exception of a large perspective by Mackintosh dated 1901, and now in the University Collection. See Fig.174.)

†The canopy has been cut away recently because it had weathered badly, but its outline is still discernable.)

Fig. 174. The Daily Record Office, 1901:
Perspective Drawing by Mackintosh.

of projecting bays reminiscent of the School of Art, similarly carried on heavy corbels. Between the windows the architect broke up the surface by projecting occasional bricks to form a simple pattern - a mannerism often found in Flemish work. The pattern consists of a 'ladder' of single stretchers, climbing up the wall face and eventually branching into a geometrical design at fourth floor level - in fact, another interpretation of the architect's tree motive. The rungs of the 'ladder' are not regular, and several courses sometimes alternate between each projecting stretcher.

Although the Record Office has no particular architectural merit, it is interesting nevertheless as the only building known to the author in which the architect used brick as a facing material.

3. Ecclesiastical Work (1897-1905) & Liverpool Cathedral Competition.

Mackintosh's ecclesiastical work was not extensive; he built one church and a suite of church halls in Glasgow, designed furnishings for Holy Trinity, Bridge of Allen, Stirlingshire, and Abbey Close Church, Paisley, Renfrewshire, and submitted a project for the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral Competition of 1903.* The subjects will be discussed in this order.

Queen's Cross Church.

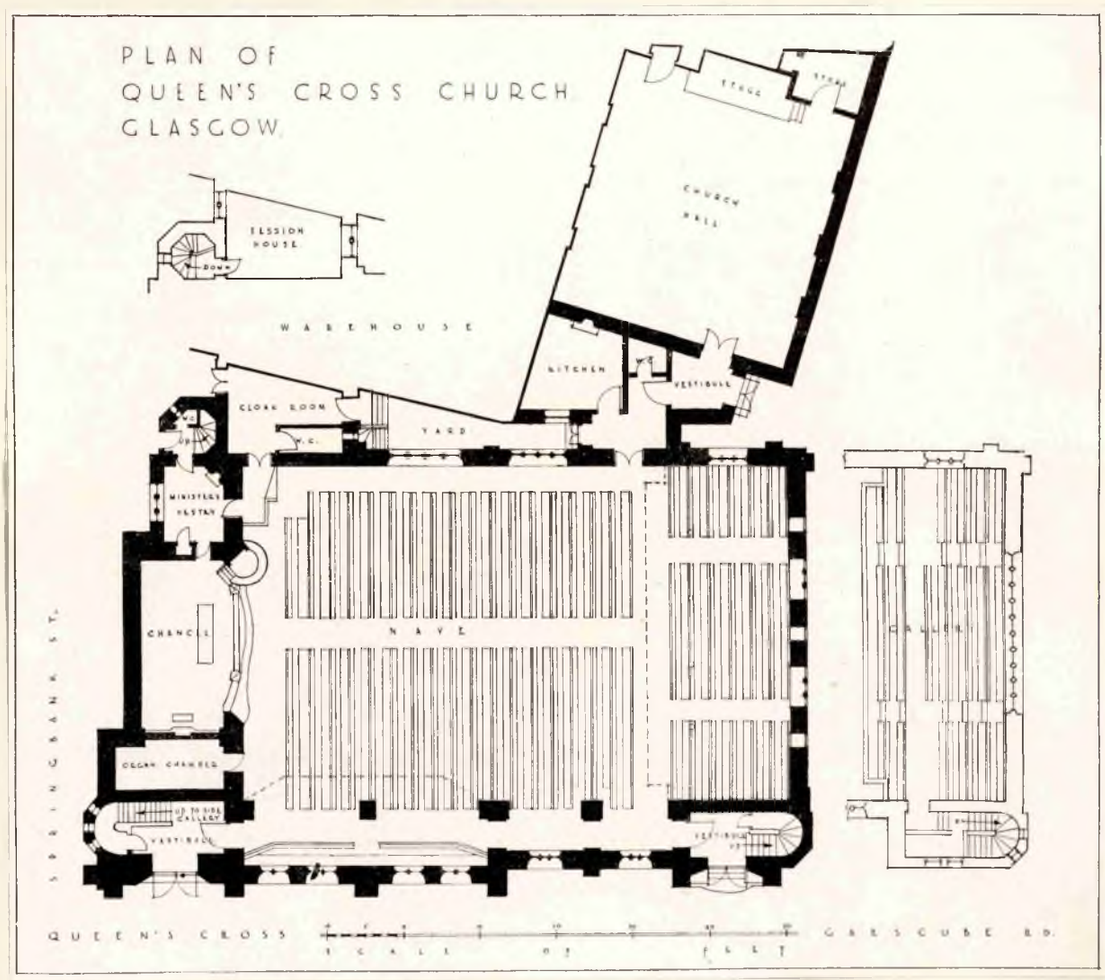
As soon as the competition drawings for the School of Art had been completed (1896) Mackintosh transferred his attention to the design of a church at Queen's Cross, Glasgow. Entries relating to this building in Honeyman & Keppie's record are under the name of St. Matthew's Free Church, and the same caption has been added to the original perspective which is still extant - all this is rather misleading however, for the actual designation is, and always has been, Queen's Cross Free Church.

Then again, the exact date of the project has been rather difficult to establish, but from the church magazines it seems that a Mission was established in the Maryhill district of Glasgow by St. Matthew's Free Church, Bath Street, (hence the confusion), in the early 1890's. In January 1897, the minister, Dr. Stalker, announced to his congregation that one of his office bearers, a Mr. David Maclean, had offered to donate a

(Footnote: *Won by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.)

large sum of money for the founding of a new church, that a site had been procured at Queen's Cross, and that plans were in course of preparation. No mention is made of the architect and it seems most likely that Messrs. Honeyman & Keppie were formally asked to undertake the job, the work automatically devolving upon Mackintosh. In the absence of confirmation from the church records however, this must remain a matter of conjecture. Events appear to have moved slowly, due no doubt to pressure of work on the School of Art, and the foundation stone of the new church was not laid until 23rd June, 1898; the building was opened for public worship on 10th September, 1899.

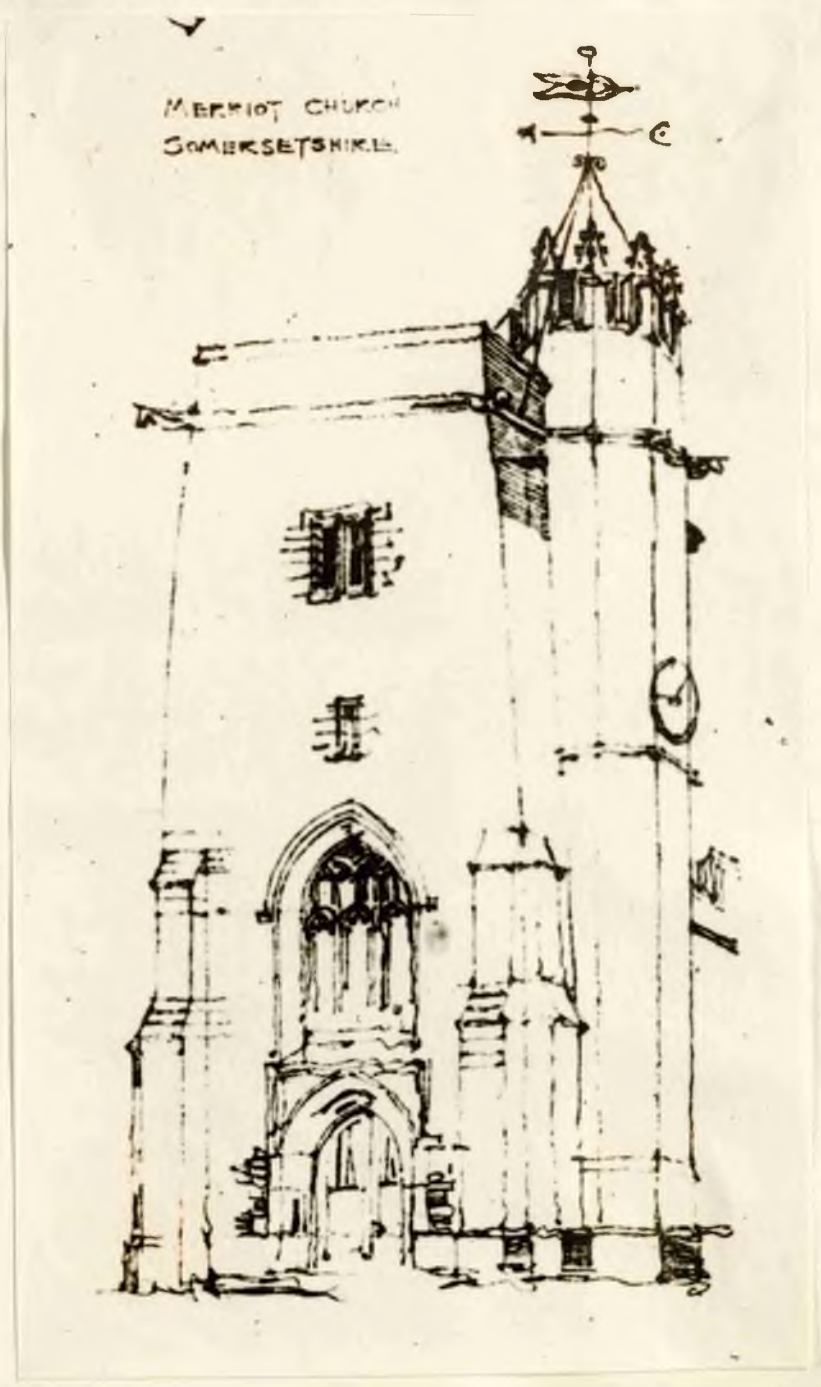
Mackintosh's clients almost invariably presented him with awkward sites and if not hemmed in by high buildings, they were often situated on steeply sloping ground - it is not entirely fortuitous that his two principal houses are named 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse'! The corner site acquired for Queen's Cross Church was no exception; it was situated near the junction of two busy thoroughfares, Garscube Road and Maryhill Road in the middle of a seemingly illimitable expanse of crowded tenements fifty to sixty feet high. The architect placed a sturdy tower at the corner of the site and by eliminating superfluous ornament and boldly modelling the building itself, he attempted to create some semblance of scale and dignity - a difficult problem in such surroundings and one which he failed to solve satisfactorily.



The plan of the church is perfectly simple. There is a rectangular nave and chancel with a single aisle extending from end to end, linking the north and south vestibules, each of which contains a semicircular staircase giving access to a gallery. The minister's vestry is adjacent to the chancel and is entered from a diminutive vestibule which in turn has a small stair leading to the session house* above a cloakroom on the ground floor. At the back of the building, hemmed in by lofty tenements and approached through a narrow yard, is the church hall and its appendages.

Externally the church is distinguished by its tower, an element of unusual design - certainly not Scottish in origin - with marked entasis, and an engaged polygonal staircase turret crowned by a wrought iron weather vane. The curious form and alien character of the tower was difficult to account for but the discovery of a supplement to 'The British Architect' dated 29th November 1895, provided the solution. This consisted of a pair of loose sheets, apparently given free with the journal, and entitled 'Sketch Book Jottings by Charles R. Mackintosh'. One of these happened to be a rough drawing of the tower of the charming little parish church at Merriott near Crewkerne, Somerset.

Fig. 177



All the main features of Queen's Cross tower are apparent - the sturdy proportions, the entasis, the angle buttresses, the octagonal staircase turret with its enriched crenellations and wrought iron weather vane, and the doorway and traceried window - though at Merriott the latter are more skilfully contrived. It would seem that the tower at Queen's Cross is taller and narrower than the English example, and in consequence, the doorway and window had to be crowded into a much smaller space between the angle buttresses. Despite these criticisms, the proportions and general effect of Mackintosh's tower are quite pleasing, and it is by far the most attractive external feature of the building. The main facade to Garscube Road is irregular
Fig.178a+b. and indecisive in treatment; in fact, when viewed from the south it appears to have been conceived in two completely separate parts - the tower and twin gables forming one section and the secondary entrance and recessed portion, the other - as though the architect had been forced to use semi-traditional motives for the first part, and had completed the southern half in his own way. Whether or not there is a grain of truth in this, or whether the external form was sacrificed for internal effect, it is impossible to say. In any case there is an amount of original external detail that is worthy of attention. The southern doorway for example, with its great flanking buttresses, curious window, and characteristic carving, is very well conceived and entirely without precedent. Then again, though the windows throughout may be broadly classified as Perpendicular Gothic, they have assumed a new form in Mackintosh's hands, and the heart-shaped floral motives he affected can be recognised at once, particularly in the tracery of the large chancel window with its formal pattern of deep blue stained glass. Financial considerations probably limited the wider use of decorative motives, but where carving has been employed it is well placed and carefully executed.

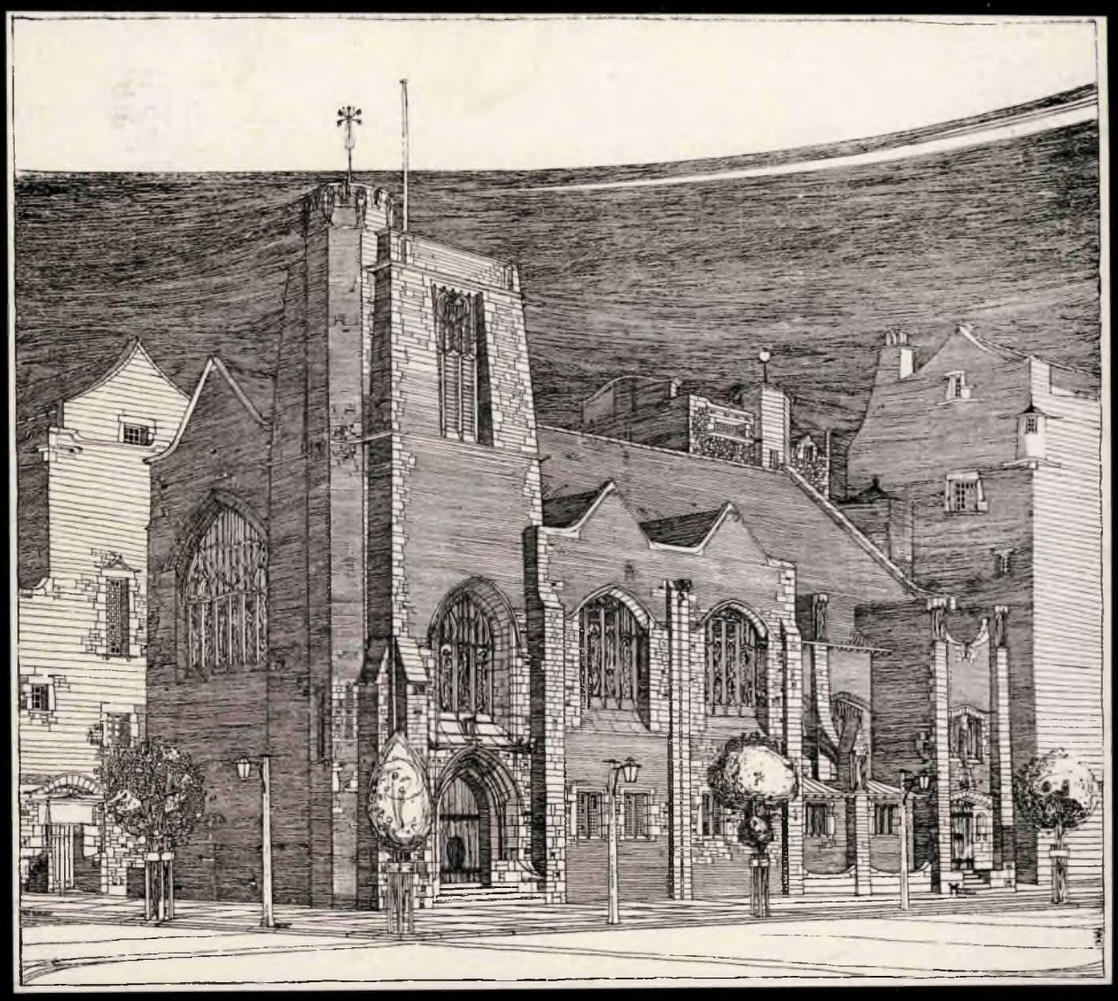
Internally, the church has several notable features, and the spatial quality remarked elsewhere is recaptured here by
Fig.178g. the use of a lofty, arched timber ceiling, pointed in section, and stained almost black. Naked rolled steel tie-beams, with exposed rivets and plates, span the building at wall-head level - an unconventional method of utilising structural members in a decorative manner - yet in no sense can they be said to limit the height of the building. Space flows between and beyond them and they become relatively insignificant against the dark background.

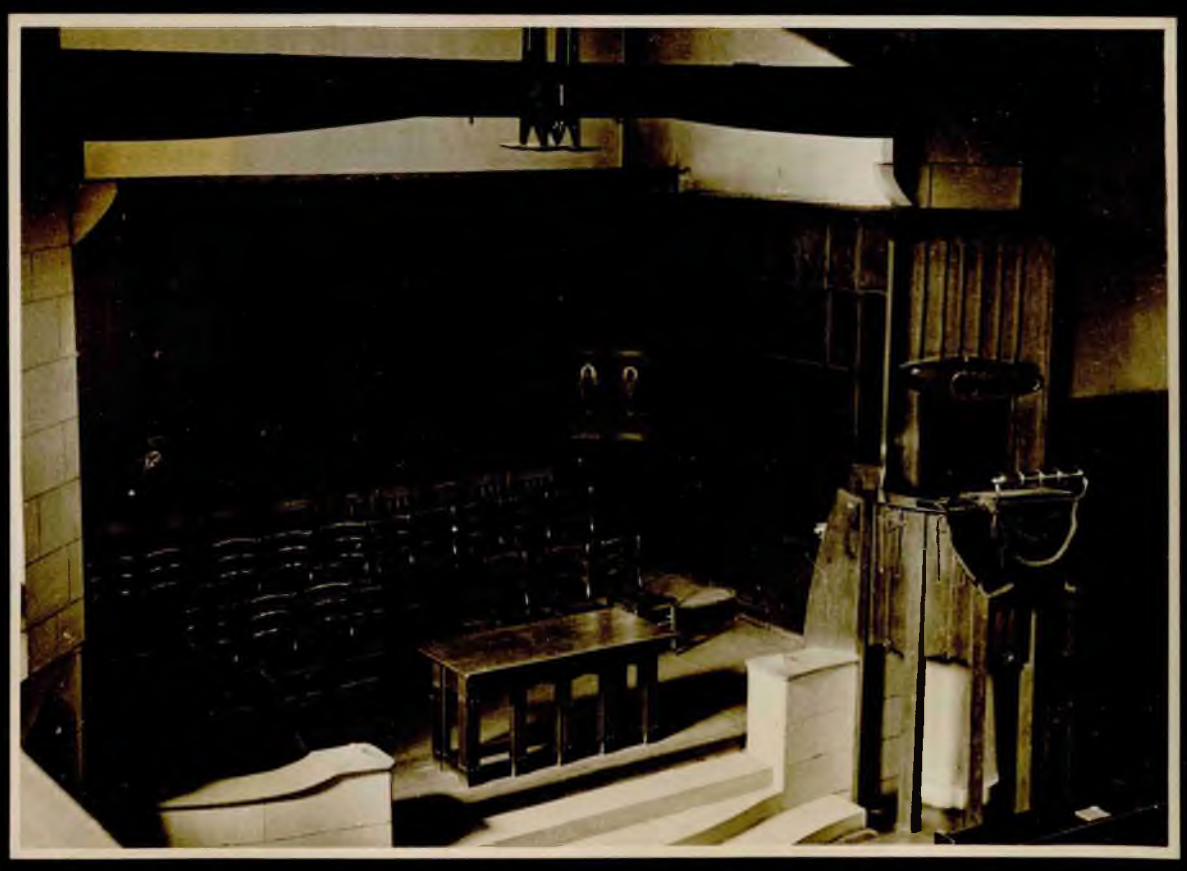
Fig. 178. Queen's Cross Church, 1897:

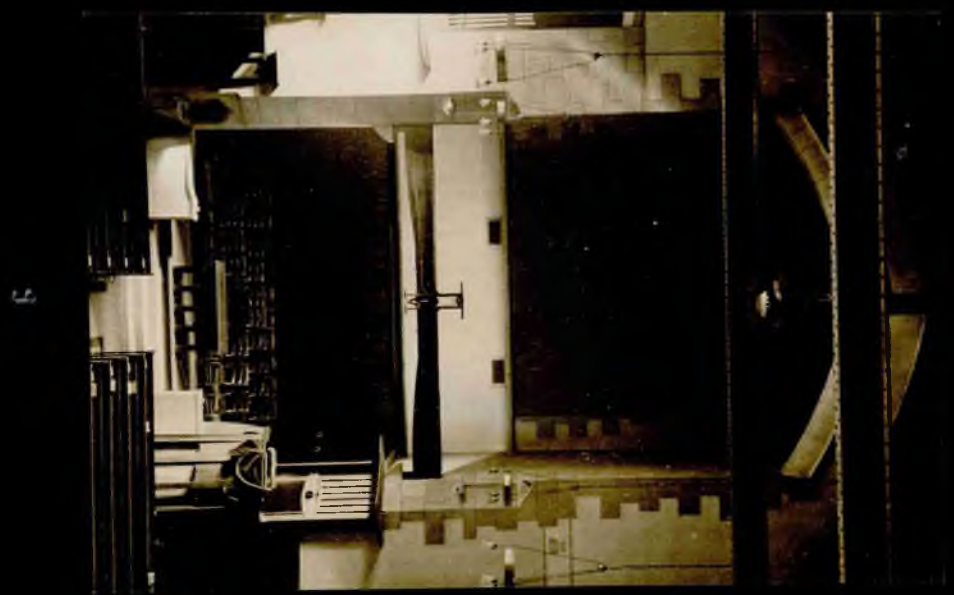
a. Perspective Drawing by Mackintosh.
b. View from South-west.

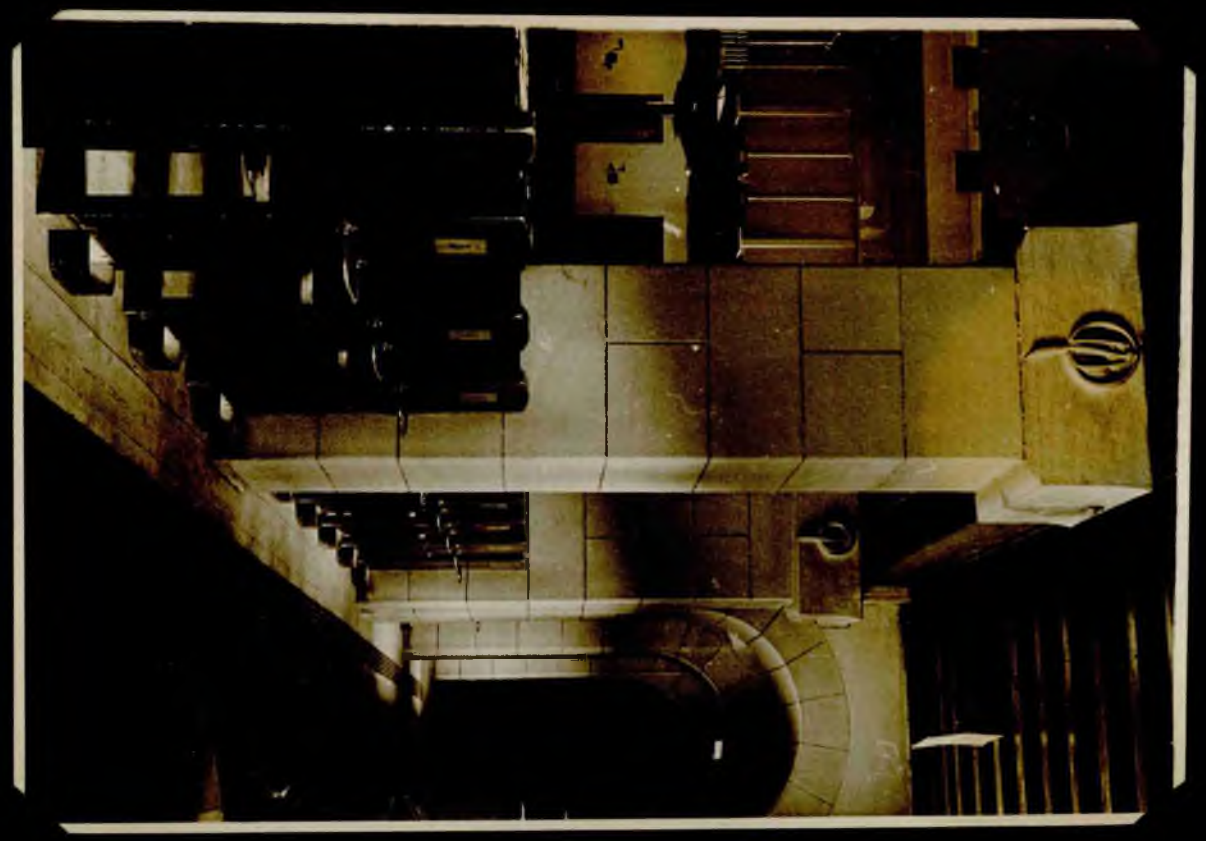
c. Detail of Tower.
d. Pulpit.
e. Chancel.

f. Aisle.
g. Interior showing steel joists & Chancel Arch.
h. South Door.









There are two galleries; one is situated at the south end of the church, and a smaller one, adjacent to the chancel, approached by a spiral staircase in the tower. Both are built with heavy joists cantilevered forward a distance about six feet, the entire structure being visible in each case - a daring innovation this in a nineteenth century Scottish kirk! The south gallery (42ft. wide) is supported by a deep wooden beam carried on four slender wooden columns only 7½" in diameter, with broad square caps of delicate profile. A movable panelled screen* constructed of timber from old pews has been erected in front of these columns which are no longer visible from the church. The main structure is not affected by this addition though the accoustic properties of the building are considerably improved!

Yet another attractive feature is a narrow low-roofed aisle linking the two entrance vestibules and separated from the body of the church by three sturdy stone piers. In the late afternoon when the delicate pink stonework is illuminated by sunlight from the windows in the west wall, the effect of light and shade is quite delightful. The chancel to the north however, is sunless. Always sombre and dull, it is approached by four shallow steps, and ~~the~~ is panelled vertically to a height of about nine feet. Originally it contained built-in choir stalls destroyed some years ago. The three centre bays of the panelling are enriched with a projecting hood carried on heavy carved brackets, the obvious intention being to use this feature as a background to some colourful decorative treatment. The continuity of the panelling has been broken by the installation of a large organ, the console and pipes of which occupy the whole side wall; the panelling on the opposite side also has been spoilt by a vestry doorway provided at the request of a minister who had difficulty in negotiating two small flights of steps on the more circuitous route planned by the architect.

Fig.178d. The pulpit of oak is circular in plan with a high panelled back and large projecting canopy; the curved front is decorated with low relief carving, again based on floral motives in which the fulip predominates. The back of the seat is upholstered in green plush below one of Mackintosh's conventionalised dove motives which appears in the illustration as an oval panel.

(Footnote: *Designed by the author. The minister and Church Session were anxious to obtain additional accommodation for Sunday School Classes during the war (1939-45), and as building was impossible, it was decided to remove five rows of pews from below the south gallery and construct a light screen right across the church. This was done and a ~~fine~~ room some 40ft. x 15ft. resulted which could be subdivided by curtains if desirable. Mural paintings were executed by a student of the Glasgow School of Art - Mr. Jack Lindsay. See Fig.179 over page.)

Other furniture in the chancel comprises a fine, sturdily constructed communion table and three chairs, all designed by the architect, and typical examples of his work. In one corner there is a peculiar angle cabinet on tall legs with doors decorated by two grotesque figures painted by Margaret Macdonald. It has not been possible to trace the history of this piece but it was presented to the church by the late William Davidson some years ago, and is similar to a corner cabinet with grotesque panels painted by Gustav Klimt and exhibited in Vienna c.1903-4.

The awkward shape of the site imposed severe limitations on the plan and the accommodation behind the church is very restricted. The hall is quite inadequate: it is small and dingy and only the heavy roof trusses and high panelled dado reveal the handiwork of the architect.

Queen's Cross Church is not one of Mackintosh's best buildings; it is ~~essentially~~ interesting mainly for its ingenious detail and bold constructional features. There is some competition between old and new forms, and it would appear that the architect was unable to get to grips with the problem and to express himself freely. Nevertheless, the building possesses a warmth and charm conspicuously absent from many churches of the period. This is due largely to the traditional simplicity of Mackintosh's architectural forms, and to the mysticism and spirituality of his decorative work - albeit somewhat pagan in feeling - which has much in common with early Medieval and Celtic art. Given wider opportunities, it is conceivable that he might have been able to express in modern idiom the distinctive character of the native Scottish kirk but here again circumstances decreed otherwise and Queen's Cross Church remains the only example of his work in this sphere.

Ruchill Street Church Halls.

The church halls in Ruchill Street Maryhill, designed at about the same time as Queen's Cross Church, are not of particular interest. The group - which incidentally was erected before the church to which they belong - comprises on the ground floor a large hall 40ft. x 26ft. with a useful annex and an adjacent committee room and store; on the first floor, approached by a stone stair in an engaged turret, there are a small hall and a second committee room, separated by a folding partition, a store and lavatory accommodation. The entire unit is well planned and though each room can be used independently, it is

possible, by means of connecting doors or partitions, to use them en suite.

It is said that Mackintosh forfeited the chance of designing the adjacent church by the careless way in which he handled this commission, a statement which, if true, must be interpreted as a reflection upon his personal behaviour, because, under conditions then obtaining, it is difficult to see how the plan could have been improved. One feature of the project however - the siting and arrangement of the caretaker's house - is open to criticism. When the church was built some years later, the house was uncomfortably sandwiched between it and the halls, at the end of what then became a dingy ill-lit courtyard. Not even Mackintosh's picturesque treatment of the elevations, nor the sweeping roofs, overhung eaves and traditional staircase turret could compensate for the fact that the rooms were dark and the accommodation very restricted.*

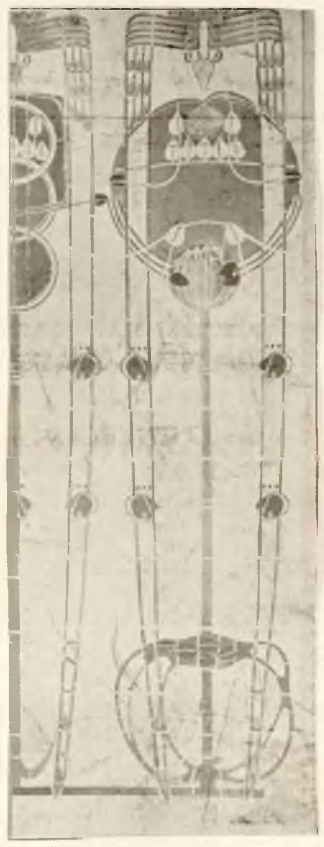
Internally the halls are rather bare and Mackintosh had little opportunity of exercising his decorative skill.

St.Serf's Dysart, Fife.

Mackintosh carried out a scheme of decoration at St. Serf's Church, Dysart, Fifeshire. The exact date of the work is unknown and all traces of it have long since disappeared, but it was probably executed a little later than Ruchill Street, that is, c.1900. The author believes however, that a picture in 'Dekorative Kunst'+ of which no mention is made in the text, was actually taken from a photograph of the completed work. This depicts a section of wall decorated by stencilled pattern very similar in form and character to that used in the early Tea-Rooms, and illustrations are included here. The design symbolised the dove of peace and the tree of knowledge, the latter consisting of three rings representing good, evil and eternity. The photograph naturally does not allow one to estimate the success or otherwise of the colour scheme, but the emblems arranged in groups of three between semicircular leaded windows, appear to have been most effective.

(Footnote: *Externally, Mackintosh's buildings are faced in roughcast with grey stone dressings. When the church was added the architect used red sandstone which destroyed for ever, the unity of the group.)

+March, 1902.)



In the absence of reliable information from contemporary sources - a schism occurred in the church c.1922 and the original congregation is now scattered - no more can be said about this work.

Holy Trinity, Bridge of Allan.

Fig.183a.

Fig.183d.

In 1904 Mackintosh was commissioned to design a pulpit, communion table and chairs, organ screen and choir stalls for Holy Trinity Church, Bridge of Allan, Stirlingshire. This appears to be the only occasion on which the architect used natural oak without resorting to stain of some description. Each piece is beautifully executed and abounds in original detail. The communion table is one of the finest pieces of

furniture designed by Mackintosh and his ingenious use of recessed panelling and rhythmic decorative motives of the simplest kind enhance its good proportions. The pulpit is not so successful, mainly because the pierced legs appear too slight for the weight of panelling above.- the converse of the pulpit at Queen's Cross.

Fig.183c.

The most extraordinary element is the organ screen which also serves as a background to the communion table and furniture. It is divided into three panels and is crowned by an elaborately carved and pierced canopy quite unlike anything previously designed by the architect. The intrusion of a flat ogival arch and heavy pendant in each section is rather ill-considered and destroys the clean lines of the fluting, but the richness of the foliated frieze is quite charming and most impressive when seen from the body of the church.

The three principal pieces illustrated here - with the choir stalls - demonstrate once again the virtuosity and exhuberant vitality of their designer and it is unfortunate that they do not have a more attractive setting.

Abbey Close Church, Paisley. (c.1906).

The author is aware of only one other example of church work by Mackintosh and, oddly enough, news of it came from Australia. This comprises an organ case and pulpit in Abbey Close Church, Paisley, Renfrewshire, but in this instance the entire project is considerably inferior both in design and execution to the work at Bridge of Allan; the architect did not design the communion furniture. The organ was installed in 1906 and this would seem to establish the date fairly conclusively. On the evidence of style however, both the case and pulpit appear to be contemporary with, or perhaps a little later than, Queen's Cross, but certainly not later than 1900. The accompanying illustration embodies the principal features; the boldly cantilevered section of the organ case, the well-proportioned panelling with decorated brackets similar to those in the chancel at Queen's Cross, and the rather thin corona, swept upwards, pediment-like, to act as a canopy to the minister's seat. The pulpit in this instance is placed centrally and is approached by a flight of steps screened from the congregation by a high balustrade of grotesquely attenuated Roman-Doric columns on tall pedestals - an unimaginative feature this! The only other piece of furniture designed by Mackintosh is the font - a lightly framed wooden case of triangular plan, about 3'6" high, stained black, and carrying

Fig. 183. Holy Trinity, Bridge of Allan, 1904:

a. General View.
b. The Organ Screen.
c. The Pulpit.
d. The Communion Table.

a

b

c

d

a shallow bowl of silvered pewter. In addition, the architect designed the electric light fittings in wrought iron - eight of them - each carrying six lamps. The whole ensemble lacks the finesse of the work at Holy Trinity, and it is hardly conceivable that the two projects were contemporary as the evidence would suggest.

Gravestone, Kilmacolm. (1898).

Fig. 184.

If gravestones may be included under the heading of ecclesiastical work - and they probably have as much right here as the Ruchill Street Halls - then Mackintosh had two interesting contributions to make. The first of these, a memorial stone to James Reid, was designed in 1898. It is to be seen in the tiny windswept cemetery at Kilmacolm, by a curious coincidence adjacent to the grave of the architect's old friend, the late William Davidson. The design is well adapted to the material, a hard fine-grained local stone, though a considerable amount of shallow cutting was required to obtain the broad plain surfaces and narrow fillets demanded by the architect. The upper part of the stone which contains the inscription is flanked by two beautifully drawn human faces in bold relief, swathed in the familiar long sinuous tresses which form a secondary frame to the composition. All detail is concentrated in this area and it is emphasised by the flowing linear pattern of the hair and broad treatment of the remainder of the surface.*

Gravestone, East Wemyss (1905-6).

Fig.

The second stone was designed several years later, (1905-6) to the memory of Rev. Alexander Orrock Johnston, D.D., and is in the cemetery at East Wemyss, Fife. This, a large slab of sandstone about 5'6" long and 2'6" deep, is laid horizontally on a broad base beyond which it projects some eighteen inches at either end, forming a crude 'T'-shape. The severity of the design is relieved to a certain extent by a large oval fillet which projects from the chiselled surfaces and circumscribes a rectangular block into which the inscription is cut. A highly conventionalised dove is carved in the lunette above the inscription and is the only decorative motive employed. The stone is singularly Celtic in spirit, a quality engendered perhaps by its primitive austerity and the expressive symbolism of the central motive.+

(Footnote:* Two examples of contemporary Austrian work bear a striking resemblance to this gravestone - the leaf form used by Mackintosh is identical to that employed by G. Gurschner for a door knocker ('Ver Sacrum' Jan./Feb. 1899) and the shape of the stone with its two swathed female figures flanking a carved tablet, is emulated by Koloman Moser in 'Ver Sacrum' September 1899.)

+ The stone weathered very badly in the strong sea air and Mackintosh was under contract to restore it at the time of his death. The inscription has been covered recently by a copper plate and though an attempt was made to copy exactly the lettering and spacing of the original, there are considerable variations. By a strange chance it transpired that the craftsman employed to model the lettering and carry out the restoration, was the same person who cut the original stone some thirty years previously although the firm who formerly employed him had gone out of business during the 1914-18 war.

Fig. 184. Gravestone, 1898, Kilmacolm Cemetery.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48

A sketch of lettering for a memorial stone to Talwin Morris who died in 1912 is still extant, but apparently it was never executed.

Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.

The practical work Mackintosh carried out in the ecclesiastical field appears rather insignificant when compared with the design he submitted for the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral Competition of 1903 - the competition which launched a third generation of the Scott family on a distinguished architectural career. At least two alternative schemes were sent in from Honeyman & Keppie's office, and fortunately Mackintosh's drawings - seven in all - have survived and a number of his preliminary studies in pencil can be seen at the Glasgow School of Art. His design, though not premiated, was, it is said, highly commended by the assessors.*

Fig. 185.

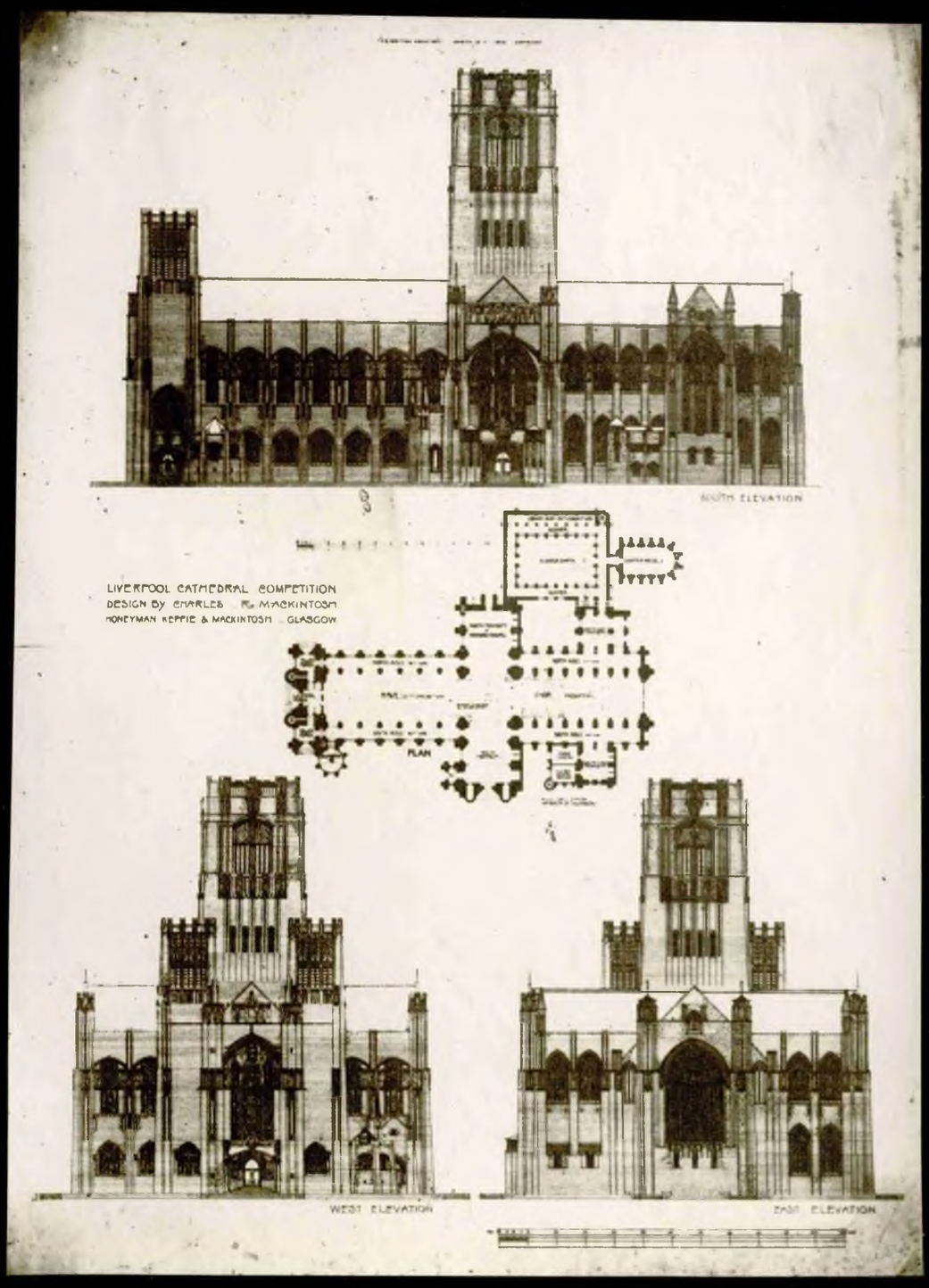
Mackintosh's project is notable for its dignity, breadth of treatment and powerful mass composition. The impression of confusion and indecision which mar the tiny church at Queen's Cross is no longer apparent, and instead one feels that the architect had a complete grasp of the problem and drew each studied line with firmness and certainty. Working on sound traditional lines, he adopted the north-west episcopal plan with fully aisled choir and presbytery, double transepts and northern cloister. Unlike Scott who employed a single tower at the crossing, Mackintosh conformed to the best traditions of English practice by designing in addition to a great central lantern, an imposing west end, flanked by twin towers, in mass and proportion strongly reminiscent of Durham, but in treatment recalling the work of Sedding and Wilson.‡ All three towers are slightly battered and have receding upper stages skilfully decorated with tracery and carved ornament. The ridge lines of nave, sanctuary and transepts are level and the length of the nave - seven bays - is but slightly greater than that of the eastern limb which has eight bays of narrowed proportions. This difference in bay width is expressed externally in the buttressing, and there is some loss of scale which detracts from the effectiveness of the north and south elevations, a weakness in the design which would have been less noticable had the main transept occurred one or two bays further east, or alternatively if the nave had been longer.

(Footnote: *A reproduction of his design accompanied by a brief editorial comment was published in 'The British Architect' 13th Mar. 1903.)

‡Several details from the west end and elsewhere, notably around the great doorway, seem to have been borrowed from Henry Wilson's design for Victoria Cathedral B.C. - published in 'The Builder' 28th Oct. 1893.)

Fig. 185. Liverpool Cathedral Competition, 1903:

a. Perspective.
b. Project Drawings.


SOUTH ELEVATION
LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL COMPETITION
DESIGN BY CHARLES R. MACKINTOSH
HONEYMAN KEPPIE & MACKINTOSH GLASGOW
PLAN
WEST ELEVATION
EAST ELEVATION

The most striking external features are the ranges of the deep buttresses flanking nave and choir, which incidentally, are the antithesis of the slender wedge-shaped buttresses used elsewhere. These important structural members owe nothing to tradition, and Mackintosh deliberately set aside the universally accepted form of the flying buttress, the delicately poised arch of stone, and resorted to a series of solid masonry fins standing at right angles to the nave wall above the aisle roof, and suggestive of modern concrete construction. Although highly dramatic, this form is very uneconomical; it would have imposed an immense load on the transverse aisle arches and inevitably have led to some loss of light in thenave - practical disadvantages which no doubt Mackintosh considered of little moment when compared to the magnificent external effect. Not only did the buttresses reflect the massive proportions of the great towers but they also served as a valuable field for sculpture. Each was decorated with a deep band of carved figures which was continued on angle buttresses and in window tracery, thus emphasising the horizontal lines of the building and giving added richness to the facades.

The interior of the Cathedral is by no means as successful as the outside and the discrepancy in scale between the east and west limbs already remarked is even more noticable internally. The architect seems to have substantially diminished the nave arcade and triforium in order to introduce an excessively high clerestory - a major error of judgment which would have destroyed the scale and dignity of the entire western arm, and which suggests that he could not have been familiar with the majestic ranks of Durham nave. The mistake was rectified more or less in the chancel and presbytery where the arcade is considerably higher. The clerestory was reduced at this point by an amount equivalent to the depth of the triforium which changes at the crossing from a module of twin arches in each bay, as at Lincoln and Salisbury - the form generally accepted as the best solution - to a continuous band of small arches in the manner of Wells. Nevertheless, the proportion of the presbytery bays is far superior to that of the nave, and though the vault shafts are carried on corbels at triforium level instead of descending to the floor, the general effect would no doubt have been more pleasing.

The window tracery throughout abounds in original and attractive detail: Mackintosh's favourite tree and plant forms can be recognised again and again and it is evident that he thoroughly enjoyed himself inventing innumerable variations on decorated Gothic. The drawings he submitted lost much in the

rendering; the green-grey washes he favoured not only obscured his fine draghtsmanship, but materially detracted from the visual effect of the design - a contemporary unkindly remarked that the drawings appeared to be rendered in mud! Then again, the perspective which accompanied the orthographic projections was not drawn by Mackintosh, and may well have been the work of Alexander McGibbon or one of his pupils. The view point was obviously chosen to show the buttress treatment to best advantage but the proportions of the building are materially distorted, the western towers assume far too much importance and the relative value of the great central tower is lost.

Notwithstanding the criticisms voiced here, it is unfortunate that Mackintosh's design was not premiated. It was inevitable of course, that a traditional solution should be selected and a phase of Mackintosh Gothic - to say the least - would have been an exciting adventure.

4. Scotland Street School. (1904-6).

The last building to be considered in this chapter, and in fact Mackintosh's final contribution of note, is Scotland Street School which was designed c.1904 and completed in October 1906 at a cost of about £14,740.*

The School is three storeys high and has a frontage of 148ft. to Scotland Street (on the north): it is built of the soft red sandstone common in the Glasgow region. The plan is extremely simple: a corridor runs the entire length of the building and to the south of it there are six classrooms on each floor. The two main entrances, for girls and boys respectively, are symmetrically disposed on the north side below projecting semi-circular staircase bays with - at ground floor level - a drill hall 58ft. x 25ft. between them; there are three classrooms over the drill hall, the only ones without a southern aspect, and above these on the second floor, a cookery demonstration room. Cloakrooms and staff rooms are provided at either end of the corridor adjacent to the staircase: incidentally the twenty-one classrooms were designed to accommodate 1,250 pupils!

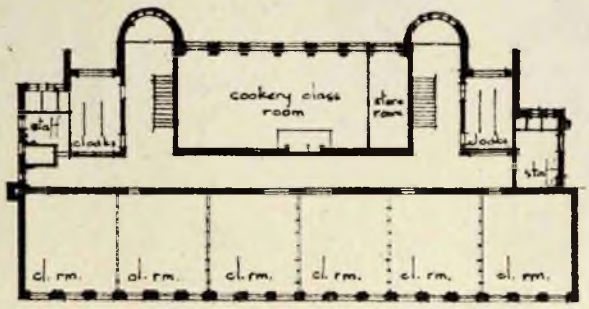
Fig. 187.

(Footnote: *'The Builders' Journal' and 'The Architectural Engineer' p.267-9, 28.11.06.)

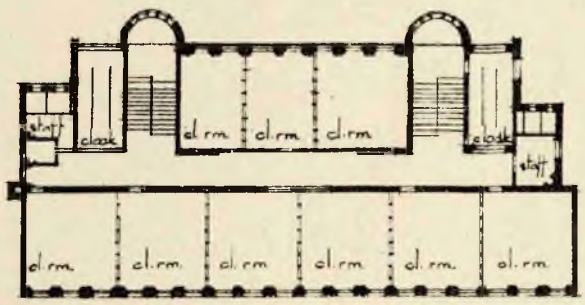
Fig. 187. Scotland Street School:

a. Perspective Drawing by Mackintosh.

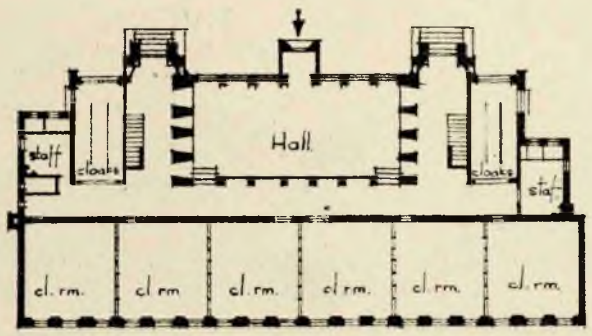
b. ~~Project Drawings~~ Plans.



PLAN OF SECOND FLOOR

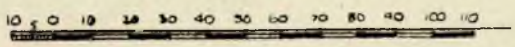


PLAN OF FIRST FLOOR



PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR

SCOTLAND St. SCHOOL GLASGOW.



The interior is light and airy: the finish and equipment are of the plainest kind and nowhere, not even in the head-master's room, is to be found any characteristic detail. Abundant use was made of glazed tiling as a hygienic facing for walls and piers - a necessary precaution in view of the locality which the school serves - but this is mainly white with no attempt at patterning, except that is, for a little chequered work on the drill-hall piers.

Externally the building possesses several important
Fig.187. features not met with hitherto. The lofty three-storeyed central unit of drill hall, classrooms and demonstration room, is confined between twin staircase bays of unusual design. These provide a strong termination to the horizontal rhythm of the windows, and at the same time help to unite this block to the east and west wings which contain five storeys of cloakrooms, entered either from each floor, or from half landings on the staircase.

The great staircase bays with their tall windows and slim, stone mullions, appear at first glance remarkably modern in spirit yet a staircase bay of this form had for two hundred years or more been a feature of Scottish domestic work, especially in tenement building. One of the most famous examples which comes to mind, and one of the most picturesque, is that of the David Livingstone Memorial at Blantyre, but it is commonly found in
Fig.188 most northern cities and towns. The significant point however, is that Mackintosh took this traditional form and adapted it to new circumstances. His staircases had to take a great deal of traffic and he required the best possible illumination. Instead of the diminutive windows, relics of a less settled age, he reduced the wall surface to a minimum and flooded the stair-cases with light - a step taken to its logical conclusion by Gropius in his Exhibition Building at Cologne some ten years later (1914) where staircases were enclosed in ~~unobtrusive~~ unobstructed walls of glass. Mackintosh's bays however, remain essentially Scottish in character and each is crowned with a traditional conical roof.

Mackintosh must have given a great deal of thought to the design of these elements and the refinements he introduced are worthy of special mention. He seems to have been particu-larly anxious to secure an adequate and appropriate termination to the vigorous upward surge of the five tall windows. At second floor level he introduced a deep horizontal band of reeded ornament which encircled each bay and was picked up by a delicate motive in low relief on the face of every mullion:

Fig. 188. Traditional Staircase Turret;
Houses in Overgate, Dundee, late 17th century.

the lintels of the tall windows were slightly modelled, and it was his intention that a chequered pattern of three opaque coloured panes should be inserted in each window at this point. Above the lintels, which were continued as a string course across the classroom block, he placed seven small windows which were separated by deeply reeded mullions contrasting sharply with the square unmoulded members below. Thus, by progressively increasing the amount of ornament towards the top of the bays and by introducing a horizontal element, the architect succeeded in gradually bringing the eye to rest, and in steadying the whole composition. It is not easy to understand why, having gone so far, he failed to realise that the conical roofs which appear so charming on the drawing, would be considerably forshortened when seen from ground level, and would render quite inadequate, the narrow coping. It would have been relatively easy to introduce a parapet here, and to raise the coping to line with or to run just below, that of the main block, thus giving a substantial band of stone above the topmost windows.

Mackintosh's ingenious refinements have now lost much of their subtlety, largely because of the poor weathering qualities of the stone and the fact that the carved ornament is too delicate and the modelling of the surfaces too subtle to show effectively against the varigated colour and texture of the material, or to overcome the heavy blanket of soot. Moreover, the facade faces due north and only on rare occasions are its finer details thrown into relief by direct sunlight.

In addition to the staircase towers, the north elevation possesses another feature which unmistakably foreshadows the new movement. This consists of a bank of five horizontal windows lighting cloakrooms and set in receding stages at either extremity of the facade. The openings themselves are about twelve feet wide by four feet deep and each is subdivided by a simple wooden frame into six lights, a type of window that has become increasingly popular in recent years. A similar detail in Professor Peter Behrens' Turbine Factory at Berlin (1909) has been alluded to as one of the earliest examples of this treatment* but Mackintosh had achieved the identical form at Scotland Street - if anything of more refined proportions - some five years earlier. In fact, the cloak room wings, with their recessed upper storeys, concrete flats, and elegant windows,

(Footnote: *'Pioneers of the Modern Movement' by Nikolaus Pevsner, p.195.)

are modern by present-day standards, and only the small leaded panes are indicative of their early date.

The question of window subdivision and the architect's predilection for variety in shape and size of panes, has been mentioned previously, and Scotland Street School is yet another instance. The perspective drawing illustrated here shows that Mackintosh contemplated a much more intricate pattern of window bars than that ultimately adopted. For example, the drill hall windows were to have had fifty-five small rectangular panes each, and moreover were to extend almost to ground level; they now possess fifteen panes and terminate about three feet above the playground. The two upper ranges of windows were to have had twenty-eight and twenty-four panes respectively; actually they have eight and four. This may appear to be a minor point, but the astragals as executed look very fragile and inadequate, whereas in the original drawing they formed a stout, chequered pattern which helped to maintain the continuity of the wall surface and gave considerable vitality to the facade.

Fig. 187.

Whether this change came about by accident or intent - to satisfy a finance committee or at the architect's behest - will never be known, but the fact remains that the building has lost both scale and character by the alteration.

In contrast to the north front, the south facade is simplicity itself, and the three storeys of classrooms are clearly expressed in the fenestration. All the windows are similar in shape and form a regimented pattern on a perfectly flat wall surface, three to each room, no attempt being made to group them nor to vary their proportions, though the depth and treatment of the reveal in each row is different. The end windows however, are framed in a linear pattern which stands out in bold relief - a novel method of terminating and giving interest to a rather long monotonous facade.

Apart from several minor modifications - including the omission of a row of poplar trees - the building as executed remains in all essentials exactly as the architect conceived it and it is unquestionably one of his cleanest and most attractive designs.

Scotland Street School is the last of Mackintosh's projects to be examined in this chapter. It was illustrated in the professional journals in 1906 and thereby received a modicum of publicity but there is no evidence to show that the building had any influence whatever upon contemporary work. Again, one cannot but regret that Mackintosh failed to win one or both of the important competitions reviewed here. Success with the Glasgow Exhibition of 1901 for example, might have influenced materially the trend of architectural development in this country. The design he committed to paper in 1898 must be judged as a preliminary sketch and there is no reason to believe that the final scheme would have been any less original than the School of Art, yet its influence would have been immeasurably greater. International exhibitions of this kind - a phenomenon of the last hundred years - have provided useful vehicles for research and experiment and they have played a particularly important part in the evolution of the modern movement. Their gay, transient nature enables an imaginative designer to investigate the possibilities of new structural techniques and untried materials and to venture into new realms of visual experience untrammelled by the restrictions of ordinary every-day practice. For example, the Great Exhibition of 1851 produced the Crystal Palace - now universally acclaimed one of the most significant monuments of the 19th century; Eiffel demonstrated the potentialities of cast iron at the Paris Exhibition of 1889, and Gropius revealed the architectural qualities of steel, concrete and glass, at Cologne in 1914. Not always however, has progress been accelerated by such displays and the turgid, ostentations classicism of the Chicago Exhibition of 1893, it is claimed, misdirected the genius of a generation of architects into the backwaters of revivalism and thereby delayed indefinitely the emergence of a truly indigenous American style. Had such a powerful instrument been placed in Mackintosh's hands the outcome would have been dramatic and far-reaching and it is not inconceivable that the foundations of a new movement in architecture - an essentially British movement - might have been laid at Glasgow in 1901. The Competition for Liverpool Cathedral provided an opportunity of a different, though no less important nature. Success in this project would have focussed attention on him; his other buildings would have assumed added significance, and the way would have been open for experimental work in a much wider field.

As we have seen however, neither of these schemes materialised. It thus came about that Mackintosh, recognised throughout Europe as one of the most progressive designers of the day and

a leading figure in the secessionist movement, was represented at an international exhibition in his own country by a few unimportant stalls, and was not even mentioned in a competition that evoked universal interest. This paradoxical situation, his apparent inability to win official recognition, and the inevitable frustrations of architectural practice, affected him profoundly and within a few years he gave up the struggle for independence. The story of his rapid decline and subsequent life in London and on the continent has no part in this objective study and therefore, must be relegated to the appendix.

This then, completes the survey of Mackintosh's work prior to the 1914-18 war. Scotland Street School and the west wing of the School of Art were the last important architectural projects he carried out, and it seems incredible that the vast amount of work reviewed in these pages - from the first Tea-Rooms and posters (1896) to the final design for the School of Art (1906) - should have been executed within the space of a single decade, yet that is virtually the case.

It now remains to examine this work in relation to that of his contemporaries in England and on the continent; to discover sources and to assess his contribution to the secessionist movement.

CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH

AND THE

SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT IN ARCHITECTURE.

PART II.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ENGLISH SECESSIONISTS.

(1) The Minor Arts.

From the preceding survey it is clear that Mackintosh's work falls into three distinct categories; what for the sake of a better name has been alluded to as craft work - paintings, posters, repoussé metal and so forth; interior decoration and furniture; and architecture. Moreover, a comparison of the illustrations alone will demonstrate that all this work possesses certain common characteristics. The exaggerated form of say, a poster, is recaptured in a high-backed chair, and again in east and west wings of the School of Art, and the predominance of plain surface and the parsimony of decoration in the Mains Street Dining-room is reflected in a linen cupboard or the elevation of 'Hillhouse'. In addition to these points of similarity however, all the craft work of the Glasgow designers and all their paintings are pervaded by a curious air of melancholy. How can this be accounted for and from what sources did they draw their peculiar decorative forms?

In considering these questions it is important to remember that the Glasgow movement was not an isolated phenomenon. It was rather a local symptom of a widespread revolt against convention in all branches of the arts, the seeds of which had been sown in the early eighteen hundreds, not by architects nor even by painters, but by men of letters - by the American Poe and the Englishman DeQuincey, who left behind the solid ground of tradition and ventured into the realm of subjective experience; by Baudelaire the Frenchman, who in 1851 wrote 'Les Fleurs du Mal', poems exquisitely formed but sensuous and evil, and by Gautier his compatriot, to whom is accredited the aphorism 'l'art pour l'art', the foundation on which the entire aesthetic movement was built. Gautier's theory of course, was capable of wide interpretation; it cut across all moral boundaries and opened up infinite possibilities in the visual arts. Accepted principles of propriety, beauty, and good taste could now be challenged and under this all-embracing philosophy investigations could be made into hitherto unexplored fields. Art might be found equally in the root as in the flower, and in vice as in virtue. The French experiment soon found an echo in Britain and within a decade Algernon Swinburne (1837-1909) shocked complacent Victorian

England with his 'Poems and Ballads' (1866), a volume of passionate and perverted love poems written very much under the influence of Baudelaire, ~~and~~ which virtually signified the opening phase of the movement in this country.

The philosophy of l'art pour l'art however, was late in finding visual expression, for this was the hey-day of the subject picture and the Academies - a time of sentiment and moralizing in oils. Even Whistler had difficulty in breaking away from the firmly established tradition of the salon, and it was not until the early 1860's that painters found a new incentive which seemingly had nothing to do with morality, or nature, or sentiment, but everything to do with art. In 1856 Felix Bracquemond, the painter and etcher, accidentally discovered woodcuts by Hokusai and other Japanese masters which had been used for wrapping up small objects d'art imported from the Far East.* As more prints came to light, greater enthusiasm was aroused; here it seemed was the visual counterpart of Gautier's philosophy. The work of the Japanese masters was strangely aloof and full of atmosphere; it rarely told a story and little attempt was made to imitate nature; Japanese ladies with parasols, exotic birds, buildings, plants and flowers, were woven together into a delicate harmony of line, form and colour with no other object than that of aesthetic satisfaction - the very epitome of art for art's sake. This revelation had far-reaching consequences: under the influence of Japan, Whistler embarked upon his extraordinary career and quickly became one of the most significant figures in the world of painting. In the decorative field too, a new vogue started, and objects d'art and bric-a-brac from the Far East began to flood the British market. Even Japanese flower arrangements were carefully emulated, and the 'Ko', 'Hana no moto', 'Seizan' and other styles discussed at great length in 'The Studio', quickly became fashionable - the Mackintoshes seem to have taken especial delight in this aspect of oriental art and their interior schemes are rarely shown without vases of flowers and twigs arranged à la Japonaise!

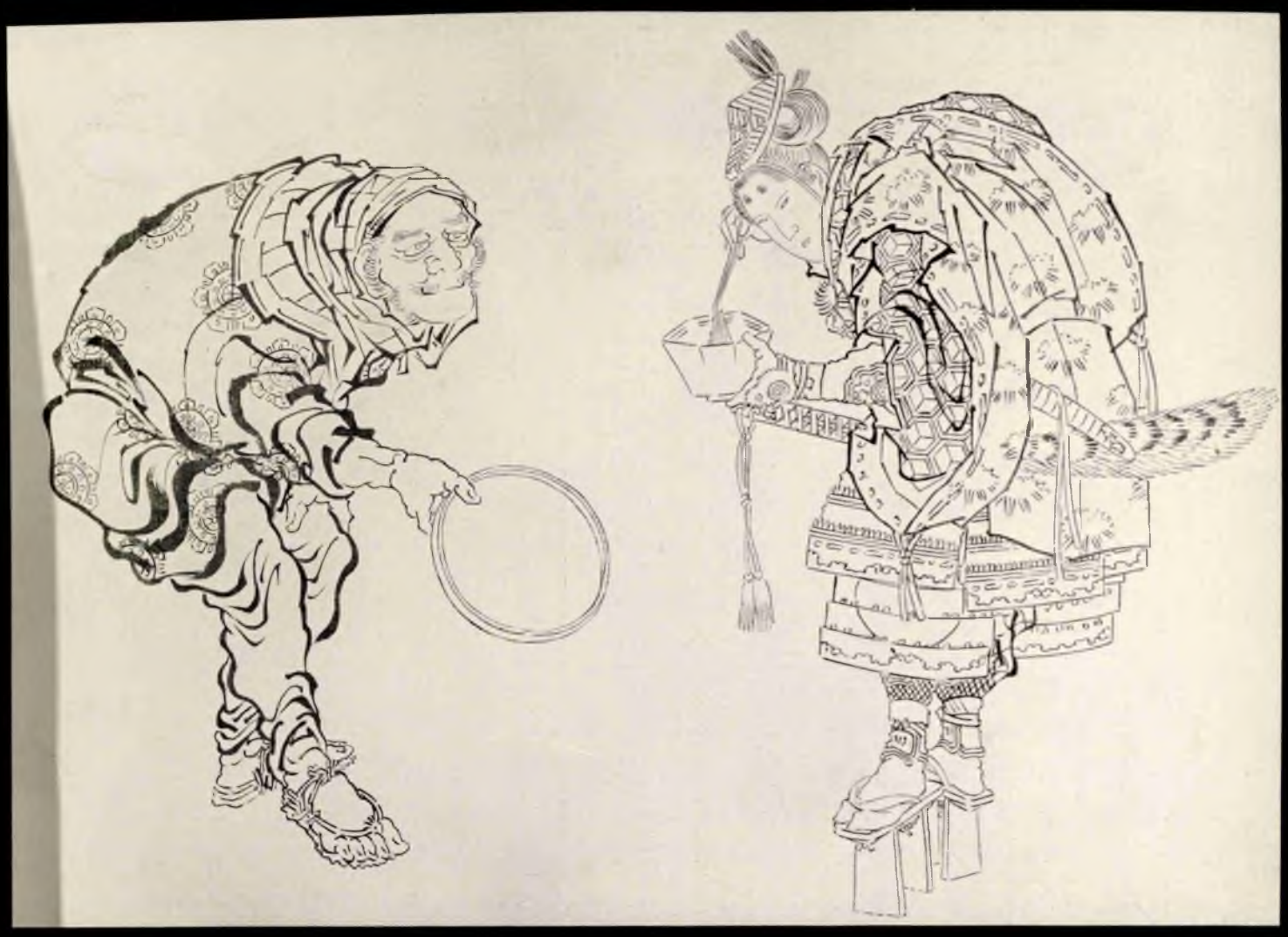
Fig. 194.

Aubrey Beardsley.

The artist who without doubt most faithfully captured the spirit of the age was Aubrey Beardsley (1872-1898) the illustrator. While still a clerk in an insurance office Beardsley had come under Whistler's spell and in fact visited his famous peacock room in 1891. He also had a passion for the writings of the French School and was deeply versed in Flaubert, Gautier and the rest - and he collected and studied Japanese prints.

Footnote: *C/f. 'The Aesthetic Adventure', by William Gaunt.)

Fig. 194. a. 'Benkei & Yoshitsune' by Hokusai.
b. 'The Tumbler ..... " " .



a

b

By a happy coincidence he was commissioned to illustrate Joseph M. Dent's edition of Mort d'Arthur in 1891-2 and Joseph Pennell, the American author, wrote an article on him in the first number of 'The Studio'. His claim to fame was securely established by his illustrations to Oscar Wilde's 'Salome' (1894) and in the same year he became art editor of John Lane's quarterly, 'The Yellow Book'.

Beardsley's strange drawings, suggestive of a decadent underworld of vice and corruption, are the very essence of 'Les Fleurs du Mal' and 'Mademoiselle de Maupin' and in his more mature work - Wilde's 'Salome' and 'The Yellow Book' - his figures become terrifying in their malignity. Technically his work is particularly interesting and he too was greatly indebted to Japan: he regarded the page not simply as a field to be filled with pattern, but as a surface on which large areas of light or shade could become as alive with meaning as the lines themselves. His illustrations are marvels of economy and his very restraint adds drama and significance to every stroke of his pen. Moreover, his drawings abound in fascinating detail and his work possesses many of the characteristics we have come to associate with Mackintosh - broad plain surfaces contrasted with relatively small areas of rich pattern, sensuous vertical rhythms, and a highly conventionalised treatment of trees, plants and flowers. Then again, he also made "patterns out of people" and like 'The Four' reduced the human figure to a symbol, a decorative motive. A comparison of the illustrations given here will demonstrate the remarkable similarity between the work of the artists. It would seem that here lies the answer to the question of style and that we need search no further for the origin of the curious perversions of the Glasgow designers. And yet the dream world of 'The Four' is not the malignant world of Beardsley, and though in many respects their objectives seem to be identical and their technique similar, the whole answer is not here, and still another source must be examined.

Fig. 195

The Pre-Raphaelites. Parallel with the aesthetic movement, but diametrically opposed to it in principle, came the Pre-Raphaelite movement with romantic Dante Gabriel Rossetti, poet and artist, its high priest. Rossetti's message is also one of dissatisfaction with the existing order of things, but a message more amiable, more persuasive, than Swinburne's. It has been said of him that "his mind reached out towards a world of symbols, winds, dim moonlit waters, strange rich colours seen in the half-light, not the material world at all, but the breath of space"! And round

Fig. 195. Beardsley:

a. 'Of a Neophyte and how the Black Art was revealed unto him.'

b. ?

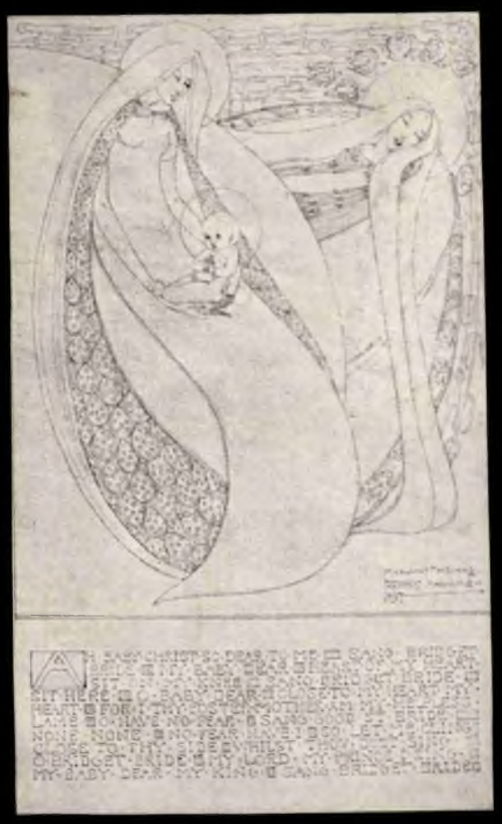
c. 'The Black Cape', 1894.

and d. Book Illustration by the Macdonald Sisters 1897.

a

b

d



e

him, stirred by his mysticism, stimulated by his enthusiasm, gathered the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood; Millais, Holman Hunt, William Morris and later Burne-Jones, each of whom tried to recapture the spirit of medievalism - "to escape from the present into a world of beautiful regrets". The circle soon disintegrated; some of its members like Millais and Hunt, turned for inspiration to Christianity and the painting of scriptural themes; others like Rossetti and Burne-Jones went rather to literature and took their themes from the Renaissance, or from medieval legends.- from the Arthurian romances for example - or alternatively endeavoured to represent some abstract idea in human form - Faith, Hope, Charity.

It is the second, the Rossetti group, in which 'The Four' became most interested. Their painting, informed by a sentiment that was literary rather than pictorial, portrayed a new type of beauty with deep-set dreamy eyes, pallid features and masses of heavy hair, figures dressed invariably in long flowing robes of medieval character - a beauty which Rossetti caught in words and now transmuted with consummate artistry to canvas.

In and through all their work one is aware of a skilful and systematic use of the vertical line as a means of expressing emotion and of concentrating interest upon heads and faces. The soft folds of drapery and the simple rhythms of trees and foliage are all called to the task, and with a superb handling of colour help to create an atmosphere of strange melancholy beauty; a beauty nevertheless which is singularly pagan and far removed from the dramatic subject pictures of Hunt and Millais. In the work of 'The Four' the peculiar spiritual quality of the Rossetti group is combined with the sardonic malignancy of Beardsley, and the Macdonald sisters' weeping females stand somewhere between the tragically innocent figures of Burne-Jones, and the depraved women of Beardsley's imagination.

Technically, the Glasgow designers owe more to Beardsley, and if, in the light of this brief survey, we examine again the early work of 'The Four' the point is clearly demonstrated. There is, for example, a marked change in style between, say, Mackintosh's frieze of cats at Dennistoun (c.1890) and his murals at Buchanan Street (1896), and between Frances and Margaret Macdonald's watercolours in the scrap books of 1893-4 and their beaten metal exhibited at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition of 1896. In the work of the two sisters the change is striking and significant, for during the interval the 'Mort d'Arthur' (1892),

'The Studio' article (1893), 'Salome', and the first edition of 'The Yellow Book' (1894) had all been published. Beardsley's influence is at once apparent in the arrangement and ordering of line and form, especially in the broad sweeping dresses and the concentration of detail about the head. The 'Salome' illustrations in particular seem to have captivated the Scottish artists and 'The Peacock Skirt'* and 'John and Salome' find an echo not only in the repoussé metal of the Macdonalds, but in George Walton's decorative hoarding at Buchanan Street and in Talwin Morris's fire screen and repoussé cats.

At no time, of course, do the Glasgow artists approach the virtuosity of the Pre-Raphaelite painters, and the tiny bejewelled water-colours of the Macdonalds cannot be compared with the majestic canvases of Rossetti and Burne-Jones. Nor can their whispy linear patterns stand comparison with Beardsley's incisive draughtsmanship: and here perhaps we may trace the influence of the Celtic tradition and the intricate convolutions of root and branch may have their source in the strapwork and hieroglyphs of the Book of Kells.

Contemporaries of 'The Four' propounded the mistaken theory that their peculiar mannerisms were derived from Egypt, and they claimed to discern the lotus flower and anthemion in Mackintosh's stylised linear patterns, and to see a similarity between his formalised ladies at Buchanan Street and the sculptured warrior kings of Karnak. The superficial observer may perhaps be excused such a mistake, especially in Glasgow where the exotic Graeco-Egyptian decorative schemes of Alexander Thomson had scarcely ceased to be a source of wonder and astonishment, but others held the same opinion, an opinion evidently voiced by Gleeson White when he visited 'The Four' in 1897. The matter seems to have been settled ultimately - as far as a matter of this kind can be settled - in his subsequent article where he states:-

> "..... those sons and daughters of Scotland, who appear to be most strongly influenced by Egypt, affect to be surprised at the bare suggestion of such influence, and disclaim any intentional reference to 'allegories on the banks of the Nile' ..... With a delightfully innocent air these two sisters disclaim any attempt to set precedent at defiance, and decline to acknowledge that Egyptian decoration has interested them specially. 'We have no basis,' they say, in tone of demure contrition, 'that is the worst of it'; nor do they advance any theory, but enjoy the discomfiture of an enquirer who had expected the intensity of their work to be the produce of 'intense' artists."+

(Footnote:- *'The Peacock Skirt' was illustrated in 'The Studio', Feb.1894, Page 185.)

+'The Studio' 1897, p.88-89.)

White goes on to say that their studios contain no casts, reproductions, or photographs of Egyptian art - a point which he suggests is of some moment because the designer consciously or subconsciously gathers round him examples of work from his favourite period. One wonders whether he failed to notice Mackintosh's Japanese prints and Pre-Raphaelite reproductions, or the abundance of flowers and plants that invariably graced the rooms of the Macdonald sisters. These perhaps, were too commonplace and in seeking the profound,he overlooked the obvious, nor was it likely that 'The Four' would discuss their sources, even with the Editor of 'The Studio'.

Seen from the vantage point of the 1940's however, the Glasgow Style merges perfectly into the background of the decadent nineties; it belongs unmistakably to the Beardsley period, to the world of Wilde and Swinburne, of Rossetti and Burne-Jones; it owes something to Japan and to the Celtic tradition, but most of all, its main source of inspiration lay in nature - 'where else indeed should we go', Mackintosh had said in 1893.* And as suggested in Chapter One, if we wish to find the origin of Mackintosh's elementary decorative forms we must turn to the potting shed at Dennistoun, and to his mother's kitchen table, rather than to Egypt and the Far East. It is more than fortuitous that the bulb and bud, leaf and petal, rose and tulip, remained the characteristic emblems of the Glasgow Style no matter how overlaid by the conventions of Beardsley and the English School.

If then, we accept the contention that Mackintosh's forms were derived principally from nature, and that the spiritual content of work by 'The Four' was the outcome of time and place, what of his furniture and interior decoration?

Here again, it is necessary to stress the fact that Mackintosh was not alone in his attempts at simplification, nor was he by any means the first to try to break the bonds of historicism. If his work is to be seen in correct perspective it is necessary to take into account not only the English Arts and Crafts movement, but also the work of his distinguished Glasgow contemporary, George Walton, of whom relatively little is known.

(Footnote: *Lecture Notes 'Architecture', 1893.)

George Walton, (1867-1933)

It is proposed to deal first with Walton because some confusion exists as to the relationship between the two men - Mackintosh usually being accused of plagiarism - and it is important that their respective positions should be clearly established before widening the field.*

George Walton was born in Glasgow on 3rd June 1867 (the youngest of twelve children) and was thus almost exactly a year older than Mackintosh. His father, Jackson Walton, was a painter. He left school at fourteen to work as a junior clerk in the British Linen Bank and attended evening classes in art - "probably at the Glasgow School of Art". It is not possible to substantiate this important point for attendance records at the School have not been preserved and neither Mr. Newbery nor Walton's friends could throw any light on the question. Walton soon gave up his comparatively secure position at the bank and, c.1888 opened a business at 150-2 Wellington Street Glasgow, under the grand title of 'George Walton & Co., Ecclesiastical and House Decorators'.+ Dr. Pevsner has said that "we shall probably never know exactly what made him take this step," but an article in 'The Studio' written by a certain J. Taylor seems to offer a solution: this is the relevant paragraph:-

> "It is not easy to imagine what would be the position of modern decorative art in Glasgow today, apart from the group of teahouses controlled by Miss Cranston, for it is a remarkable fact that while George Walton was yet a bank accountant, he accepted a decorative commission connected with a new smoking room for one of them and when he abandoned finance to carry out this, his first commission, decorative art may be said to have entered a new phase at Glasgow.".....e

The first tea-room was opened in Argyle Street in 1884 and consequently this statement is quite within the realms of possibility. One can imagine Miss Cranston inviting the young, unknown designer to decorate and furnish her smoke-room more or less as an experiment, and thereby launching him upon his new career in much the same way that she introduced Mackintosh to the public some seven years later.

(Footnote: *Reliable information about Walton is extremely difficult to obtain and it has not been possible to enlarge materially upon a monograph in the R.I.B.A. Journal, 19.4.39, from which some of the following personal details are taken.)

+The Post Office Guide, 1888.)

e'The Studio' 1906.)

No illustrations of Walton's work for Miss Cranston prior to 1896 are extant and thus an important link in the chain of events is missing. There can be no doubt that Mackintosh and the School group would be well aware of any unorthodox work in a popular city restaurant at that time, and if earlier work existed it might have influenced their personal style considerably. This problem seems impossible of solution; memory is at best an unreliable guide and the people still living who recollect the exciting events of the nineties in Glasgow are quite unable to associate anyone but Mackintosh with Miss Cranston. By all accounts, Walton was more of an art connoisseur than a designer in the early days, and even before embarking on a business career, he had evinced a flair for acquiring objects d'art and then disposing of them at a handsome profit. (This trait ~~which~~ seems to have persisted, for one of his acquaintances, a dour Scot, told the author with mixed resentment and admiration, that on one occasion Walton acquired some small ornaments at 1/6d. each and by carefully arranging them in his showroom, succeeded in selling them for 12/6d! Sometimes of course, he was invited by his clients to advise on the best method of displaying pieces he had sold, and thereafter it was a fairly logical step to interior decoration and furniture design.

Walton then, was actually practising as a decorator in 1888 - eight years before Mackintosh's mature style emerged - and consequently it is important that an assessment of his work during the intervening period should be made. Fortunately his principal commissions in the Glasgow area were photographed by his friend the late J. Craig Annan,* and the author was able to examine many original negatives and to secure authentic confirmation of dates from the firm's records.

The photographs cover a number of commissions executed during the years 1891-6 and with the exception of a gown shop, all are domestic interiors in which appear furniture and bric-a-brac of all kinds, usually against a background of wallpaper or stencilled pattern in the Morris manner.

In no single recorded instance does Walton seem to have decorated and furnished a room entirely in his own style, and every apartment contains a medley of pieces in which no consistent principle of design or arrangement can be detected.- ~~xxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx this were his style.~~

(Footnote: *A large selection of photographs is housed in the R.I.B.A. library but at the time of writing they are neither catalogued, classified nor dated.)

The furniture itself is uninspired and is neither as original in conception nor so finely proportioned as Mackintosh's work of the same period. There is little evidence here of the refined form and elegant lines Walton eventually achieved, and on the whole, it is heavy, elaborately carved - sometimes grotesquely so - and embellished with ornament and mouldings in the prevailing classical manner. One of the earliest examples in the Annan collection is a dining-room suite for Sir Frederick C. Gardiner (c.1891). The table and enormous serving cabinet on a two-tiered stand are fussy in the extreme, with numerous turned legs linked by flat curved stretchers, and embellished with bulbous swellings of the form and proportion of curling-stones: mouldings throughout are in the neo-Renaissance style, and the edge of the table is decorated with an egg and dart motive. The chairs are of the sturdily built rush-seated variety with spindle backs which were employed some years later in Miss Cranston's Tea-Rooms. The whole ensemble is restless and affected.

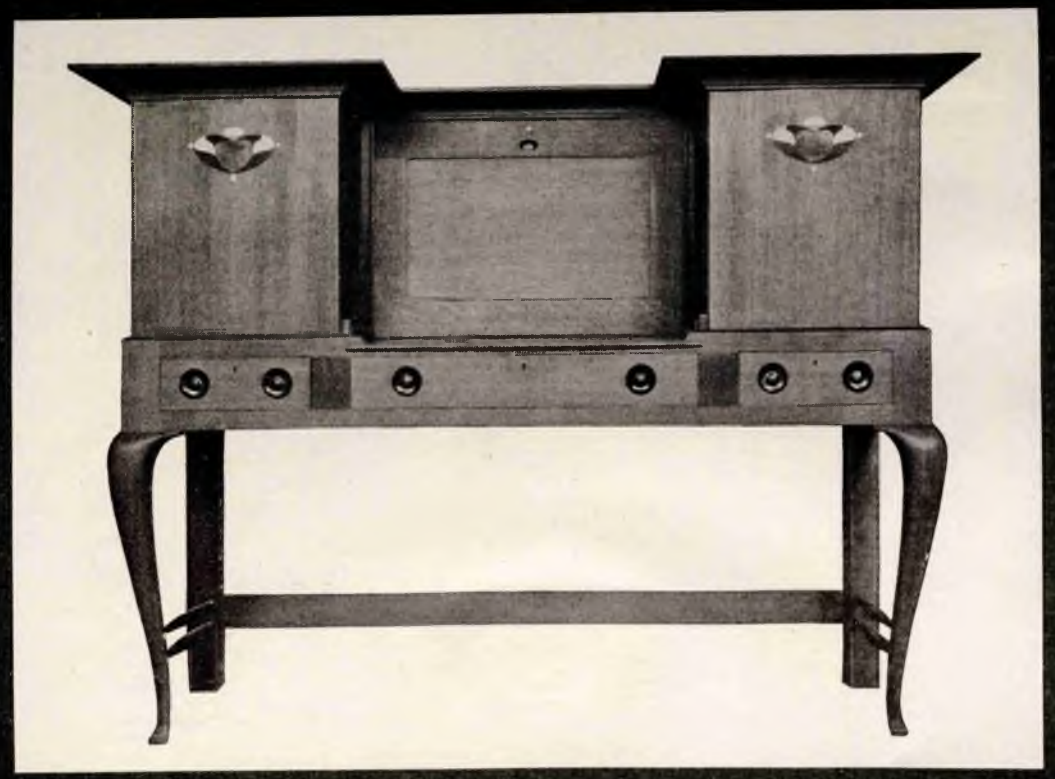
The earliest photographs are of the drawing-room at 'The Glen', Paisley, where apparently Walton again provided a strange assortment of furniture, though some individual pieces here are superior to the previous example, notably a large china cabinet the centre section of which was bow-fronted and divided by broad astragals into square panes - a motive reproduced almost exactly in the charming walnut cabinet illustrated here. And similar characteristics persist in all the remaining photographs; Parkhead House (1892), Dunmales House (1893), and a house in Barrhead (1894): none of these interiors is conceived as a whole and with few exceptions the furniture is quite without distinction.

Fig. 201a

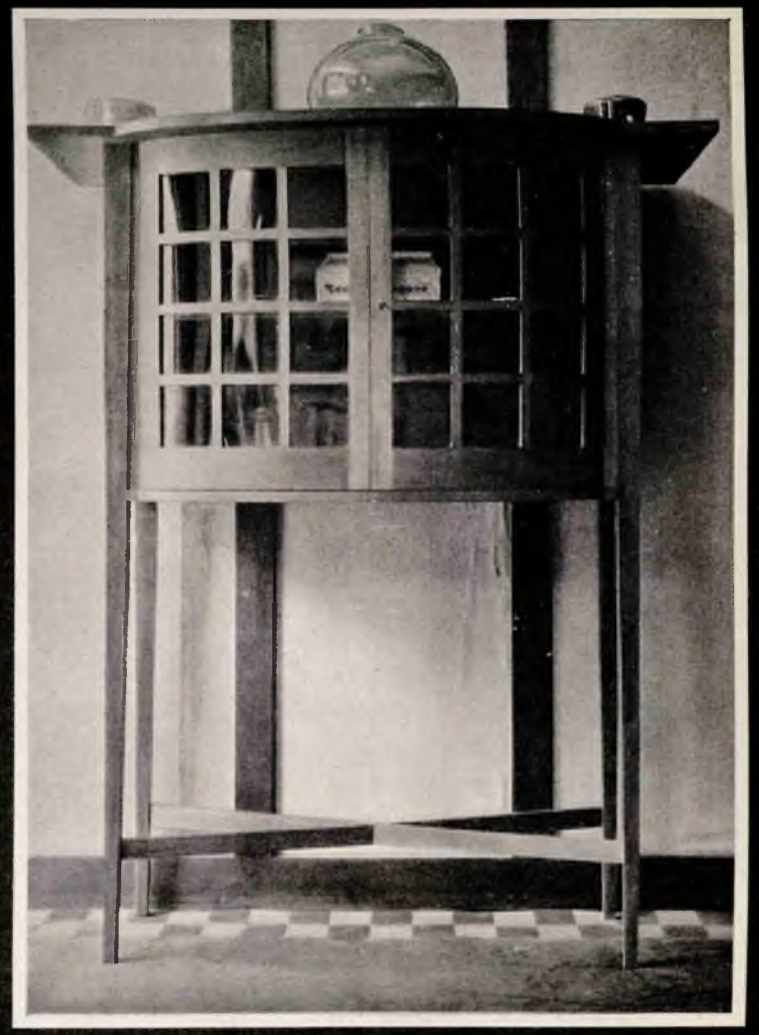
Walton seemed content to follow the prevailing fashion of highly ornamented wall surfaces, and in nearly all the early interiors, wallpapers and stencilled mural decoration played an important part. He generally drew with broad precise lines which were never allowed to get out of control, but in some cases, notably in the hall at Sir Frederick Gardiner's house, they approach the vigour of Horta's thrashing vermicular scrolls at No.12 Rue de Turin, Brussels, which it is said, announced the advent of continental art nouveau. It thus seems that even the sensitive Walton could not escape from the superficial blandishments of the new art. His electroliers and candelabra too often writhe and twist with the acanthus leaves in a wild dance reminiscent of Van de Velde, a concession never made by Mackintosh even in his most exuberant moments.

Fig. 201. George Walton: a. Walnut Cabinet.
b. Sideboard.
c. ~~Dining-Table.~~
Dressing-table.

c



b



a

Usually however, Walton modelled his work at this time on the Morris school. His stencilled patterns and wallpapers more often than not were of vigorous but inoffensive floral motives with acorns, pineapples, leaves and so forth, and if an opportunity occurred he did not neglect to decorate ceilings.

All Walton's work examined so far has consisted of piecemeal decorative schemes of a contemporary nature which did not find their way into the journals and art magazines, and it is doubtful if Mackintosh would have access to any of them. In fact the first illustrations of a complete series of interiors appeared in 'Academy Architecture' in 1898 - the staircase hall and
Fig.202b. drawing-room of a house 'Leadcameroch', Bearsden, near Glasgow, for J. B. Gow, Esq;* and it is at this point if anywhere, that Mackintosh came under his influence. In both apartments the predominant colour is white and the principal features are fireplaces of which the hall boasts two - a small one with a delightfully simple architrave enclosing the tile surround, and no mantelpiece - the second one, an enormous structure comprising a deep tile-lined recess with a canopied basket grate and a great plain architrave fully 7ft. high which positively dwarfs the doors on either side of it. For Walton, this is a remarkably
Fig. bold achievement and no doubt it was inspired by Voysey's fireplace of similar dimensions at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition of 1896. Not a single traditional decorative motive is employed, if we exclude the terminal cyma recta.

The hall is notable for the unusual staircase balustrading of tall square members and lofty newel posts, each terminating in a flat circular cap+ - a feature reminiscent of the School of Art staircase with which it may have been contemporary. Both designers may, of course, have derived this popular feature from Voysey, who used it at No.14 Hans Place, about 1893.‖

Fig.202a. From the photograph of the drawing-room at 'Leadcameroch' it is not possible to assess Walton's furniture; two excellent upholstered chairs with tall backs are visible but nothing more of consequence. His stencilled friezes in both the hall and drawing-room are worthy of note and mark a considerable advance

(Footnote: *Photographed June 10th, 1898, et seq. Annan's record.)
+Mackintosh had employed an identical form in metal for the candle holders on his study fender at Dennistoun - see ~~illus~~ Fig.19a. - which must necessarily have been designed before 1894, the year the family vacated the house.)
‖Illustration in 'The Studio' September, 1893.)

Fig. 202. George Walton: 'Leadcameroch':

a. Drawing-Room.
b. Hall Fireplace.

on his earlier work: in the former he employed a butterfly motive and in the latter a charming, graceful floral pattern in which ogival stems form the principal rhythm. Both mark a radical departure from the heavy acanthus leaves and scrolls of Sir Frederick Gardiner's house and elsewhere.

'Leadcameroch' and the other examples given here, with of course, the tea-room interiors, show the evolution of Walton's personal style, and it is perfectly clear that, with Mackintosh, this underwent a radical change c.1896-7: before this date, neither designer had achieved a white room, and although Mackintosh's furniture had always been the more imaginative, neither had made substantial progress and their work was on the whole heavy, and lacked refinement. It seems locigal to assume then, that the reason for this change may perhaps be discovered if the two designers had some common experience or experiences at this time, Two incidents immediately come to mind.

The first, that they worked together on Miss Cranston's Buchanan Street Tea- Room (1896). ~~and~~ The second, and more important, that in the autumn of the same year 'The Four' sent work to London for the Arts and Crafts Society's Exhibition at a time when Walton, if not himself an exhibitor, was in the process of transferring his main office to London and thus would be in close touch with events in the south. Unfortunately we know nothing about the conditions under which the artists worked at Buchahan Street, and singularly enough, Walton is always spoken of with considerable reticence in Glasgow, probably because he left the city so soon, and his quite unassuming temperament made less impression than that of the dynamic young architect.

The Tea-Room has already been described and illustrated in Chapter Six with the exception of Walton's murals in the billiards-room, which make interesting comparison with Mackintosh's work in the same building. The attitude of the two men to the question of design, to the derivation of pattern, is crystallised here, and from a study of this work alone we can accurately estimate the progress each had made by this time.

Fig.204a. Walton painted the walls like a medieval tapestry, with a huntsman, his horse and dog, white fluttering doves and so forth, in fact, his subject is medieval in spirit and wholly and entirely in the Morris tradition. The background is charmingly conventionalised with Voysey-like trees and clumps of wild flowers providing the major and minor rhythms, but on this he superimposed naturalistic figures; a white horse trotting out of the picture,

a huntsman looking into the wall, a frozen, immobile greyhound staring quizzically at the billiards-table and a rabbit or two which seem to have escaped from Jessie M. King's palette. He thus seems to have fallen between two stools. The attitudes of the figures themselves appear to epitomise the artist's indecision: do they belong to the whimsical fairyland of snowdrops and birds to which the hunter turns, or, as the horse suggests, to the real world, or do they stand like the greyhound suspended unhappily between the two? We cannot but feel that the artist was incapable of carrying this scheme to its logical conclusion, and though his trees and plants link him with Voysey and Mackintosh, his attempt to force perspective, and his use of natural forms brings him sharply into line with contemporary practice.

Mackintosh, as we have seen, never sought to destroy the solidity of the wall by introducing perspective, nor to affect naturalism by shading and modelling. His characteristic treatment of base or root, stem and flower is as clearly defined here as elsewhere, and the wall surface is always respected. Moreover, by formalising every element he achieved just the effect of unity that is conspicuously absent from the hunter theme. However we may dislike his elongated ladies, he had a much clearer grasp of the problems involved and his consistency of principle is clearly demonstrated, the consistency which gave his later projects such striking homogeneity. The murals at Buchanan Street then, epitomise the work of the two artists, the one hovering indecisively between the old and the new, the other frankly discarding convention and stepping out into an untried field, recognising meanwhile the limitations of his medium and exploiting them to the full.

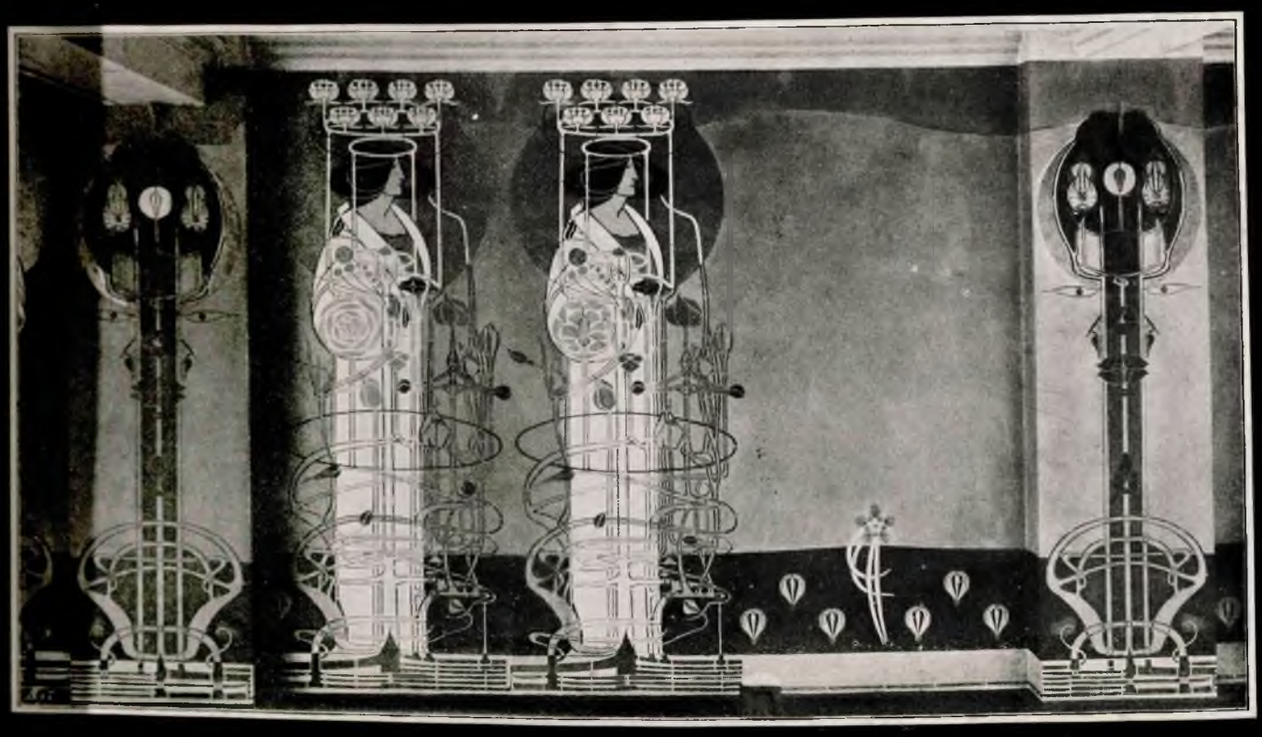
This would appear to have been their first professional meeting, and it was probably the only occasion on which they worked together. Walton had married an English girl in 1891 and there is reason to believe that thereafter his activities became more and more centred in the south. In 1897 he moved to London and the following year opened a subsidiary branch of his firm at York. Consequently he would have ample opportunity of seeing the work of the southern designers and of visiting the London Arts and Crafts Exhibition (1896) at his leisure.

Mackintosh's movements on the other hand were much more restricted: he was still a draughtsman with Honeyman and Keppie and had not as yet achieved Walton's distinction in the decorative field. The Exhibition meant that for the first time

Fig. 204. Buchanan Street Tea-Rooms: Mural Decorations:

a. by Walton.

b. by Mackintosh.



he was able to measure his strength against the best work the country had to offer; the work of acknowledged contemporary masters of design. At the New Gallery, Ashbee, Crane, Lethaby, Lorimer and a host of others were represented, and above all, C.F.A. Voysey, who demonstrated his surprising versatility by exhibiting delightful wallpapers, craftwork and furniture, including a lamp standard, an invalid chair painted light green* and, most significantly, an enormous white painted mantelpiece. The effect of this work on the Glasgow designers can hardly be overestimated and as 'The Studio' pointed out, some of Voysey's contributions were at once the most restrained and the most novel in the Exhibition; furthermore, the reviewer added, "It is especially good that his influence, which tends to simplicity and severity, should be made very prominent at this time .....". Of Voysey's fireplace this, "His mantelpiece .... is absolutely devoid of ornament. The proportions of the white painted woodwork are exquisitely delicate, and with the eau-de-nil tiles which surround the grate itself, make up a most dainty harmony."

Fig.205b.
Fig. " a.

Walton of course, was able to put his new ideas into practice more quickly than Mackintosh, and after Voysey's work at London in 1896, the startling fireplaces and fresh interiors at 'Leadcameroch' (1897) are more easily accounted for, and Mackintosh's ingenious essays in white become less inexplicable.

It would seem that each designer learned much from the Exhibition and from their joint work at Buchanan Street: both experiences acted as a stimulus and though their subsequent work has many points in common - particularly in their handling of metal and wood - neither varied one degree from the course he had already embarked upon. Walton's interiors and furniture show much greater refinement and more coherence than hitherto; they are lighter, more adventurous and gay; his stencilled patterns and wallpapers too, are used with greater discretion, and as at 'Leadcameroch', they partake of the freedom and character of his rival, but he never ventured far from the traditional fold. Mackintosh too discarded many of the coarser features which had marred his earlier work and he never again produced anything so lacking in elegance as the hall settle. His mural decorations

~~Fig.~~

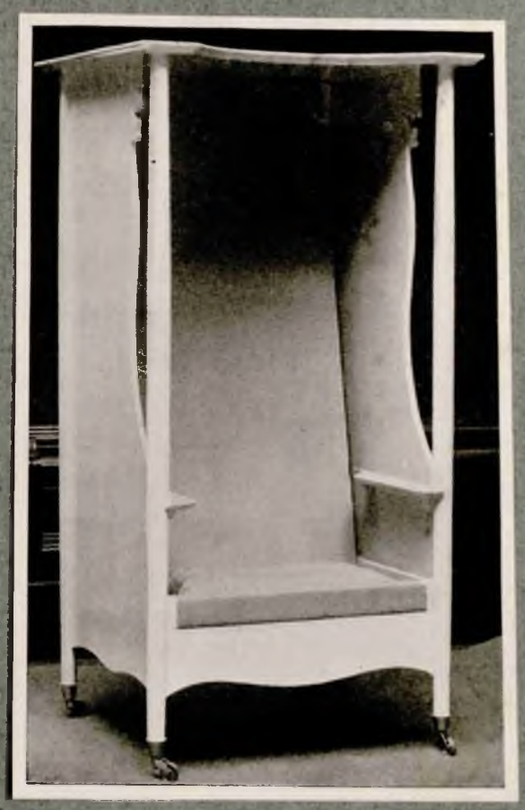
Fig.34a.

(Footnote: *The resemblance between this piece and Mackintosh's hall settle should be noted: both had turned supports, canopies and modelled wings though Voysey's work is more refined and the constructional details, especially at the juncture of supports and canopy, are much more carefully worked out.)

Fig. 205. Voysey:

a. Fireplace, 1896.
b. Invalid Chair, 1896.

a



b

were substantially modified, and for example the frieze at Kingsborough Gardens, and the stencilled patterns at 'Windyhill', are far removed from the art nouveau extravagancies at Buchanan Street. But he plunged with ever increasing enthusiasm into experimental work and in this respect differed radically from Walton who pursued a more amiable course and always succeeded, whether intentionally or otherwise, in retaining some elements which recall either a traditional example, or a 'Victorian' setting.

Whatever opinions may be held now as to the relative merits of the two designers, the craftsmen who worked with them seem to have had no doubt as to whom was the greater artist. The author has been able to trace one or two such men and they agree that while Walton was a designer of good taste and something of a connoisseur, it was Mackintosh who fired them with enthusiasm and astonished them with his facile ingenuity. Walton always remained dignified and aloof, insisting that his designs be executed with mechanical precision, Mackintosh was rarely absent from the job for long, and worked with them, varying his designs and adding touches of colour here and there to give sparkle and vitality as the scheme slowly materialised. It was his burning enthusiasm and sheer genius for creating pattern that captivated all who had the good fortune to come in contact with him.

If further contemporary evidence is needed to show that Walton and Mackintosh were working along individual though parallel lines, it is provided by Gleeson White who, writing in 1897 states categorically:-

> "In Glasgow the newest and most individual manner is undoubtedly that which is seen in the work of the Misses Macdonald, Mrs. F. H. Newbery, Mr. Charles Mackintosh, J. Herbert MacNair and Mr. Talwin Morris. Mr. Oscar Paterson, in his very original stained glass, must not be placed quite in the same group, nor can Mr. George Walton, whose work is entirely devoid of the qualities which make the first group so prominent, nor the Messrs. Guthrie." .... *

And again:-

> "These two craftsmen (Paterson and Walton) have nothing in common with what might be called the 'Mac' group ..... Indeed it would not be fair to Mr. George Walton to link him with any other workers ....." +

How then do Walton and Mackintosh stand in relation to the English Arts and Crafts movement and Voysey? Can they be claimed as pioneers in any specific sense, or did they also fit into a

Footnote:-* 'The Studio' - July, 1897, p.87.)
+ -do- - Sept. 1897, p.234.)

broad general pattern? And what of their contemporaries in the south?

William Morris.

In any survey of this period one cannot escape the dominant figure of William Morris, poet, reformer and artist, initiator of the Arts and Crafts movement, who died on the opening day of the Exhibition in London at which 'The Four' appeared for the only time. Morris who as a youth of seventeen visited the Great Exhibition (1851) and where all the world marvelled at the wonder and beauty of the work displayed, saw nothing but ugliness and confusion: Morris who, some ten years later, founded the famous firm of craftsmen that bore his name - 'Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving, Furniture and the Metals' (1861) - and by which he determined to reform completely, the applied arts in this country: Morris who claimed that the basis of all art lay in the handicrafts, and idealised the medieval conception of the artist craftsman creating beautiful objects for every-day use out of common homely materials: Morris who said that "all things should be a joy to the maker and to the user".

There is of course, no need to enlarge here upon Morris' great contribution to the development of English craftwork; his chintzes and carpets, wallpapers and furniture are justly famous for their simplicity of form, rich colouring and exquisite workmanship, characteristics all the more remarkable in an age given over to vulgar commercialism. Morris was an indefatigable worker and a militant propagandist and there were but few contemporary designers not profoundly influenced by his teaching. The Morris 'movement' grew into a general revival of the handicrafts, and one of its most interesting manifestations was the emergence of guilds or societies. Between 1880 and 1890 several such bodies were constituted: Mackmurdo's Century Guild 1882, the Art Workers' Guild, 1884, the Home Arts and Industries Association, 1884, and the Guild and School of Handicrafts founded by C. R. Ashbee in 1888. But Morris and his followers were not satisfied; for it was argued, if art is indivisable and handicraft its fundamental basis, then the schism between the fine arts and the applied arts - or rather between the practitioners of the fine arts and the arts not so fine - should be healed, that all might advance together towards a grand Renaissance. The Royal Academy was approached with a view to extending its orbit to encompass the minor arts, and it was suggested that joint exhibitions be held at which work by craftsmen in wood, metal and glass might take its place along with paintings and sculpture; where Morris,

The Arts and Crafts Societies.

Ashbee and Lethaby for example, might be represented equally with Leighton, Alma Tadema and Landseer. This heresy however, was flatly and emphatically condemned by the academicians and all attempts at conciliation were rejected. The protestors then came together and decided (in 1888) to form an independent society with Walter Crane as president - the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.

The principal object of this body could not be comprised in a title: it far transcended the arrangement of annual or triennial exhibitions and was, in the words of William Morris, "to help the conscious cultivation of art and to interest the public in it" - or as another member has it, "to extend the conception of Art, and to apply it to life as a whole; or inversely, to make the whole of life, in all its grandeur, as well as in all its delightful detail, the object of the action of Art and Craft"!*

In order to achieve this rather ambitious objective and largely at the instigation of T. J. Cobden Sanderson, it was decided that lectures and demonstrations on the various crafts should also form part of the Society's programme. At the first exhibition (1888) illustrated lectures were given by Morris in Tapestry, by George Simmonds on Modelling, and Sculpture, by Emery Walker on Printing, by Cobden Sanderson in Bookbinding and by Walter Crane on Design; unfortunately, no verbatim record was kept, but notes were appended to the Exhibition catalogues each year, and in 1893 all were collected and published as essays, in a sturdy volume.÷

In addition to the artists already mentioned these famous names appeared; Madox Brown ('Mural Painting'), Reginald Blomfield ('Book Illustrating' and 'Book Decoration' and 'The English Tradition'), W.R. Lethaby ('Cast Iron' and 'Carpenters' Furniture'), Edward S. Prior ('Furniture and the Room') and John D. Sedding ('Design'). The aims and objectives of the Society and the personal views of its members were thus widely disseminated.

By no means all the members subscribed to the view Morris expressed in his initial lecture on Textiles, namely that their objectives must be achieved :-

> "by calling attention to that really most important side of art, the decoration of utilities by furnishing them with genuine artistic finish in place of trade finish"

- a dogma which virtually reiterates Owen Jones' plea for "decorated construction" - nor for that matter, to his condemnation

(Footnote:- *From a lecture 'Art and Life and the Building and Decoration of Cities' quoted by T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, 'The Arts & Crafts' p.22.)
÷Arts & Crafts Essays by members of the A. & C's Exhibition Society, published by Rivington, Percival & Co., 1893.)

of machine production as wholly evil. Even Cobden Sanderson objected to this and he said,

> "Surely things there are, the production of which by machinery may be wholly right, things which, moreover, when so produced may be wholly right also, and in their rightness even works of art. Great works of art are fx useful works, greatly done". ..... *

This opinion represents a considerable advance upon Morris's original concept of the movement, and is a substantial step towards the twentieth century. Of all dissenting elements however, the most dramatic note was struck by the architect J. D. Sedding - Sedding whom Mackintosh and MacNair so greatly admired -

J. D. Sedding.

> "Our designers," he said, "can design in any style. Every old method is at our finger ends ..... We are archaeologists: we are critics: we are artists. We are lovers of old work: we are learned in historical and aesthetic questions and technical rules and principles of design ..... Yet our work hangs fire. It fails in design. Why?"

and then,

> "We can do splendidly what we set ourselves to do - namely, to mimic old masterpieces. The question is, What next?"
>
> "Think of the gain to the 'Schools' and to the designers themselves, if we elected to take another starting point! No more museum-inspired work! No more scruples about styles! No more dry-as-dust stock patterns! ..... But, instead, we shall have designs by living men for living men - .... We must clothe modern ideas in modern dress, adorn our design with living fancy and rise to the height of our knowledge and capacity."

It was this clarion call, echoed in lectures by Newbery, that gave 'The Four' comage to break with convention and which largely determined the course of events in Glasgow. Strangely enough it was Sedding's words to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society nearly sixty years before, that came most readily to the lips of Herbert MacNair when discussing the question of sources and influences with the author - Sedding who had inspired 'The Four' by his assurance that ".... there is hope in honest error: none in the icy perfections of the stylist".

Thus we find that a virile new movement was afoot in England before either Walton, Mackintosh or MacNair had started serious work and it was the philosophical blandishments of Sedding,

(Footnote: *From The Arts and Crafts, p.25.)

Lethaby and others - re-interpretations of the precepts of Ruskin and Morris - that made most impression on the young designers.

The least vociferous, though undoubtedly one of the most influential figures of the day, was C. F. A. Voysey, with whom Mackintosh is invariably linked in any reference to the 1890's, though no attempt has been made hitherto either to establish their exact relationship, or to discover precisely who preceded whom.

C. F. A. Voysey.

Little seems to have been written about Voysey's early life. He was the son of a minister, a descendant of Wesley, and a man of individuality and uncompromising sincerity. He confined himself almost entirely to domestic building and during his lifetime erected nearly two-hundred houses. In the true Morris tradition he applied himself not only to the design of the house itself, but with characteristic thoroughness, to everything it contained - furniture, wallpaper, rugs, cutlery and so on. Although a Gothicist at heart, he abhorred elaborate stylar ornament and all his work is notable for its simplicity, and directness. Like Mackintosh, he recognised and exploited the beauty inherent in natural materials and preferred large unbroken surfaces, and finely wrought or delicately coloured points of emphasis, to the expensive veneers and ostentatious carving fashionable at the time.

From a superficial examination of the work of both men, striking similarities are at once apparent, particularly in the use of wood and metal, and in the form and character of decorative motives; they freely employ the popular heart-shaped 'Frampton' tree and their method of formalising natural objects - flowers, plants, birds and so on - has much in common. It is not surprising therefore, that some confusion has arisen regarding their relative importance and some well-meaning enthusiasts go so far as to claim precedence for Mackintosh in this as in all things. Voysey, however, was eleven years Mackintosh's senior, and by the time Walton was making his first tentative experiments, maybe in the wall stencilling in E. A. Walton's drawing-room (1891), he had completed his most unorthodox domestic work - an artist's cottage in Chiswick for J.W. Forrester - the drawings of which were reproduced in 'The British Architect' 18th September, 1891. The presence of an excellent wall-paper design and a decorative grille in 'The Studio'* in 1893 would

Fig. 221a.

Fig. 221b.c.d.

(Footnote: *Vol.1, No.1, April 1893, p.35.)

indicate that already, Voysey was by no means regarded as an amateur in the field of interior decoration. The accompanying article 'Current Notes on the Applied Arts' is a preliminary review of some of the exhibits intended for the Arts and Crafts Exhibition to be held in the Autumn of 1893, and most certainly does not treat Voysey as a newcomer - for example:-

> "Mr. C. F. A. Voysey's 'Iris' design looks well in any of the several ways in which it is printed .... the marginal line which Mr. Voysey is wont to leave round the outer edges of his forms has a most telling and beautiful effect."

This extract suggests an easy familiarity with the work of the artist, and moreover, implies that originality, if not unorthodoxy, was expected of him. The metal 'grille' too came in for comment. Instead of a framed latticework or pierced metal screen, Voysey achieved the desired effect by an ingenious arrangement which, the writer observed, would probably start a new fashion where the effect of separation was desired without actual partition. The 'grille' consisted of a series of individual trees in wrought iron with foliage, fruit and birds worked in lead, each tree conformed to the same general outline but no two were alike in detail. They were placed at intervals along the upper edge of a low beam and thus helped to fill the space between it and the ceiling. The same volume of 'The Studio', the September issue, published more illustrations of Voysey's wallpapers which unquestionably place him in the forefront of British designers, and which must have appealed immensely to theScottish architect; all the natural forms he used were vigorously drawn, highly conventionalised, and combined to create flat two-dimensional patterns with little if any modelling. In the text, Voysey is reported to have said:-

> "The danger today lies in over-decoration; we lack simplicity and have forgotten repose";

and

> "..... we should go to Nature direct for inspiration and guidance. Then we are at once relieved from restrictions of style or period, and can live and work in the present ....." *

This interesting statement becomes even more significant when compared with an extract from Mackintosh's lecture notes on 'Architecture' dated February 1893, which, although mentioned previously is worth quoting again:-

(Footnote: * 'The Studio', September, 1893, p.234.)

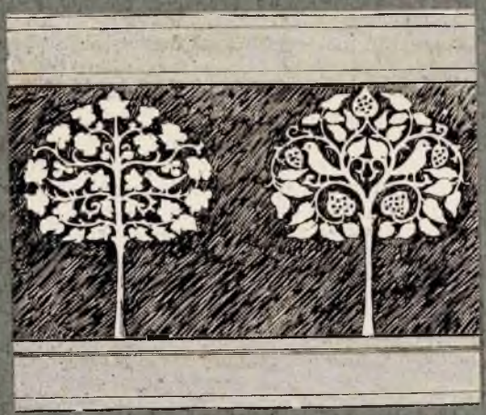
> "If we trace the artistic forms of things made by man to their origin we find a direct inspiration from nature ... And so with everything - where else indeed should we go for the highest inspiration".

From these quotations it is evident that both men accepted the same premises, derived quite obviously from Ruskin and the challenging words of Sedding, and consequently it is not surprising that similar characteristics should be found in their work, but, and this is the important point, by 1893 Voysey was widely recognised as a capable and fearless experimentor in the applied arts - in fact, Aymer Vallance describes him as "one of the ablest of living designers"* - and moreover, he was a practising architect of some standing. Mackintosh on the other hand was still a student, albeit a highly successful one, but had as yet no published designs, or craftwork to his credit. Moreover, George Walton, though in business for five years, was still executing work of little artistic merit and it is most unlikely that Voysey had come in contact with either of theScottish designers, or for that matter, had even heard of the Glasgow group before, say, 1896, when 'The Four' exhibited in London. Conversely, Mackintosh and Walton would be quite familiar with Voysey's work, if only through the medium of 'The Studio', long before this date.

But we are still faced with the apparently insoluble problem of accurately dating Mackintosh's furniture prior to 1896 and the paradox of his competitive architectural designs in the Gothic and Classic manner (1893 and 1892) and 'Redclyffe' (1890). At what point did his metamorphosis take place and precisely when
Fig. 19a. did he forsake the neo-classic forms of the studio cabinet
Fig. 34c. for the cleaner, more direct treatment of the linen press? These questions cannot be answered with any degree of certainty but it is evident that by 1893 at least, and perhaps by 1896, neither he nor Walton had achieved Voysey's refinement as
Fig. 221a exemplified in the simple unaffected work-box illustrated in 'The Studio'+ and more particularly in the Lady's Work Cabinet which appeared at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition in the Autumn of the same year.‖ The latter embodies all the characteristics attributed to the Glasgow group, but long before factual evidence of similar work by them can be found. Light and elegant, it is simply constructed of oak, stained green; narrow attenuated legs support a canopy with the familiar cyma recta entablature,

(Footnote: *'The Studio', October, 1893, p. 24.)
+ -do- Sept. 1893, p. 235.)
‖ -do- October, 1893, p. 12.)

Fig.212. Voysey: a. Workbox.
b. Metal "grille".
c. & d. Wallpapers.



b

c

d

mouldings are reduced to a minimum and the underside of the lid is decorated with three worked metal hinges, the centre one beaten into a conventionalised tree form, similar in design to those in the 'grille' and the wings ~~are~~ slightly modelled in the flattened ogee curve which Mackintosh used on many occasions, for example in his Hall Settle shown at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition three years later. MacNair's and Walton's later furniture too shows the influence of this charming design.

It would seem that the three men, Walton, MacNair and Mackintosh all came under Voysey's spell, especially after the Arts and Crafts Exhibition of 1896 and though each assimilated something of the older man's spirit, each in turn expressed himself in his own way; and while we may point to certain characteristics in MacNair's work which suggest Voysey, they also bear unmistakably, the stamp of the artist's personality, and consequently take on a new form and possess new characteristics. Walton, as we have seen, was in closer touch with the English School than his contemporaries, and in fact, he and Voysey later became firm friends, a point which no doubt accounts for his finesse and strict soberness - characteristics of the southern school - for he never allowed himself to become inveigled into the more venturesome experiments of the Glasgow coterie. Mackintosh, on the other hand, though openly subscribing to Voysey's ideals and closely emulating his methods, remained always the individualist, and applied himself to the development of his own personal style with Voysey as his initial inspiration but not his master.

(2) Architecture.

In studying secessionist trends in the applied arts, one factor clearly emerges, the increasing importance of the architect-designer - the Voyseys, Waltons and Mackintoshes - and it is obvious that the younger members of the profession, frustrated by the archaeological conventions of their elders, turned in revolt to the minor arts in which they could more easily give rein to their imagination. Concomitant with this tendency the emphasis in the architectural field gradually moved from monumental civic and ecclesiastical building, to domestic work in which individuality could be expressed more easily. By the end of the century the most discussed personalities were no longer the Streets, Bodleys and Scotts, but a new, virile school of designers who came more directly under Morris's influence and won their reputation almost entirely on buildings small in scale, and work in the applied arts. It is perhaps significant that the most influential figures of the Victorian era, with one or two exceptions, all passed through the same offices, for example, George Edmund Street (1824-81) the Gothicist, builder of the Law Courts, had with him at one time, Philip Webb, Richard Norman Shaw, William Morris (1856 only) and J. D. Sedding, all of whom in due course, founded practices of their own and played leading roles in the drama of the 1880's and 1890's. Then again, R. N. Shaw (1831-1912) in turn had as his pupils, Ernest Newton (1856-1922), W. R. Lethaby (1857-1932) and Reginald Blomfield ( ) all of whom helped to found the Art Workers' Guild in 1884 and ultimately launched the Arts and Crafts Society. Thus, almost from a single source, though from many quarters, an attempt was made to infuse the profession with new life, and largely as a result of Morris's teaching a number of architects began to concentrate upon the simplification of detail, the subjugation if not the elimination of ornament, and to re-evaluate the decorative qualities of natural materials. Moreover, they turned for inspiration to the old ways of building, to the vernacular styles, in an endeavour to pick up once again the broken threads of the English tradition, and in the work of certain men - of Shaw, Lethaby, Newton, Edgar Wood and others - there again emerges a sensitive feeling for regional character.

As one would expect, the first building to show evidence of the new spirit was designed for Morris himself - 'The Red House' Bexley Heath, (1859) - and the architect was Morris's friend and former colleague in Street's office, Philip Webb. In marked contrast to contemporary work, this building was quite unpretentious and devoid of stylar caprice: it had a simple straightforward plan, brick walls and a tiled roof: no attempt was made to force symmetry and every advantage was taken of the texture and colour of ordinary materials. It was as though the designer had taken to heart Ruskin's lesson at Edinburgh some six years earlier when he had said:-

> "The first thing to be required of a building - not, observe, the highest thing, but the first thing - is that it shall answer its purpose completely permanently, and at the smallest expense. If it is a house, it should be just of the size convenient for its owner, containing exactly the kind and number of rooms that he wants, with exactly the number of windows he wants, put in the places he wants. ..... The sacrifice of any of these first requirements to external appearance is a futility and absurdity."

Of course, this exhortation to simplicity and truth followed a contradictory statement urging the architect not to fear incongruity, but to introduce Gothic detail whenever possible:-

> "Never mind mixing it with your present architecture; your existing homes will be none the worse for having little bits of better work fitted to them; ....." *

but the fact remains that Webb and Morris succeeded in freeing themselves in this work at least - from Ruskin's less praiseworthy blandishments. A client of Morris's calibre however, was the exception rather than the rule, and 'The Red House' remained for some time an isolated phenomenon; though Webb built up a sound architectural practice, little of his subsequent work possessed the quality and unaffected charm of this commission.

R.N. Shaw.

Webb's only serious rival in the domestic field was Richard Norman Shaw, who, it has been said, was one of the first to build again on English lines on English soil. Shaw's work, on the whole, is elegant and charming, and though he experimented in many styles, he showed remarkable skill and originality and never hesitated to break convention if circumstances demanded. He had taken Webb's place in Street's office in 1858, and for a time became a confirmed Gothicist. Four years later he set up in practice in London with William Eden Nesfield and evolved a neo-Elizabethan style based on 16th and 17th century domestic architecture in the home counties, with many gables, half

(Footnote: *'Lectures in Architecture', Edinburgh 1853, p.81-82.)

timbering and lofty chimneys. In 1873 however, at New Zealand Chambers Leadenhall Street London, he introduced the style for which he became famous - Queen Anne - and which found expression most happily in a series of town houses, notably Swan House, Chelsea (1875) and 170 Queen Anne's Gate, (1890).

Fig.

By comparison with, say, Horace Walpole's "elegant Gothick" mansion 'Strawbery Hill', Backford's 'Fonthill Abbey', Sir Walter Scott's 'Abbotsford', Pugin's later decorated houses, and the hideous coloured brick villas of the mid-Victorian era, Shaw's work is the essence of good taste. Like all innovators, however, Webb, Shaw and their followers, were bitterly attacked by the purists. Their so-called "Queen Antics" were condemned out of hand and Shaw's New Zealand Chambers described as "screeching in Daily Telegraphese".* Nevertheless, this work had a profound effect upon contemporary thought and Ernest Newton, E. Guy Dawber, John Belcher, W. H. Bidlake, E. L. Lutyens, Baillie Scott and a host of others in the south, Walter H. Brierley in Yorkshire, J. H. Sellars and Edgar Wood in the north west, and Lorimer in Scotland, took up the challenge. In brick or stone, slates or tiles, according to locality, a great number of new houses were built; houses that were sensibly designed, soundly constructed and admirably suited to their purpose. As in the 18th century, England again assumed leadership in the domestic field and became the source to which all Europe turned. Mackintosh too, came under the spell of Richard Norman Shaw and it is possible to find in his domestic work, more than a suggestion of the inconsequent treatment of say, 180 Queen Anne's Gate (1885) with its enormous chimney stacks, relatively small windows and asymmetrical elevations, and it may well be that the Scottish architect modelled the tall narrow windows of the Herald Offices and Martyrs' School, on Shaw's elegant second storey motive at Swan House, Chelsea, (1876).

Soon however, two other important and quite distinctive figures emerged: those of Arthur H. Mackmurdo (1851-) and C. F. A. Voysey, both of whom had a particular contribution to make. Mackmurdo was apprenticed to T. Chatfield Clark in 1869, the year after Mackintosh's birth, and then worked under James Brooks, a Gothicist. He read widely and became deeply interested in socialism and the teachings of William Morris. In order to

A. H. Mackmurdo.

(Footnote: *Mr. Stevenson: a paper read before the General Conference of Architects 18th June 1894, 'The Studio', February 1896, p.27.)

attend Ruskin's lectures he graduated at Oxford, and later accompanied him on a tour of Italy.* To Mackmurdo, Italy was a revelation; he spnt over a year in Florence, sketching, measuring, and drawing from life, and even then was obliged to leave under duress after his appeal to the Italian Minister of Fine Arts successfully prevented local enthusiasts from "restoring" the exterior of the Duomo and Giotto's Campanile with acids.+ About 1876 - presumably after his return from Italy - he set up in practice at 28 Southampton Street, London. One of his first buildings of which a record remains is a house at Bush Hill Park, Enfield, (1873), with lofty chimneys and half-timbered gables, clearly influenced by Shaw's neo-Elizabethan style. A second house in the same locality built in 1878 however, is of entirely different character and in certain respects foreshadows the 20th century. From the single illustration available" it appears to be two storeys high with a very low-pitched, or perhaps a flat roof, hidden behind a parapet wall: the influence of Italy can be seen in the predominating horizontality of the facade although none of the details are derivative. The ground storey is subdivided into six parts by sturdy squat pilasters, but the upper storey is divided horizontally into three broad bands, approximately equal in depth, by two narrow string courses between which the architect placed at intervals, three long horizontal windows. This feature - horizontal windows linked together at cill and lintel level by string courses - became a popular affectation of the modern school c.1920-30, but had no precedent in the world of Richard Norman Shaw.

This single building might well be passed over as an isolated example that coincidentally possesses features which later assumed new significance, had it not been for further evidence of the architect's original turn of mind. On his return from Italy, Mackmurdo set to work on a book 'Wren's City Churches' and began to take a more active interest in the applied arts: in 1882, along with his partner Mr. Herbert Horne - a former pupil - and Selwyn Image, he instituted the Century Guild, a society similar in conception and objective to Morris's firm. Mackmurdo however, provided his Guild with an authoritative mouthpiece 'The Hobby Horse' which appeared first in April 1884.⊖ In

(Footnote: *'The Architectural Review', 1938.)

+Mackmurdo's prolonged visit to Florence and his subsequent interest in the formation of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings - 1877 - is dealt with by Aymer Vallance in 'The Studio' Vol.14. April, 1899.)

"'The Architectural Review', 1938.)

⊖'The Hobby Horse' changed hands after the first number and did not appear again until 1886, and then was published regularly until 1893 when, its purpose served, it appeared fitfully.)

this work modern printing was treated as an art for the first time; the type was carefully selected and spaced, and hand-made paper was used; the page became a field for decoration in black and white. It was largely as a result of this venture, coupled of course, with Emry Walkers' illustrated lecture to the Arts and Crafts Society on Letter-Press Printing, that William Morris decided to turn his attention to printing, and founded the Kelmscott Press.

For his book 'Wren's City Churches', Mackmurdo designed a striking cover (1883); the dominant motive was a vicious swirling composition of flame-like leaves and exotic flowere, flanked by a pair of tall attenuated birds, so emaciated that they are hardly distinguishable from the linear border. The same pulsing vitality is apparent in the carved back of a chair
Fig. 219b. he designed in 1881* and in an embroidered screen (1884)+ and is the embodiment of the spirit of l'art nouveau, yet preceding it, Mackintosh, Toorop and Beardsley by a decade. Mackmurdo's imaginative approach to contemporary problems is demonstrated too in his furniture, much of which is of simple form and stoutly functional, and perhaps, more especially, in a stand he designed for the Century Guild at the Liverpool Exhibition of 1886. This was constructed of timber on a rectangular plan, open on three sides; a light flat roof was supported on rows of slender pillars, square in section, which passed right through it and terminated in square caps almost identical in form to the staircase balustrades designed by Voysey for Nos.14 and 16 Hans Road, Chelsea (1891), and approximating even more closely to Mackintosh's staircase at the School of Art. The stand however, is wonderfully light and free from naive reminiscence considering its early date, and again sets a precedent for work of this type.

Mackmurdo seems to have become more and more deeply involved in philosophy, socialism and the applied arts and we know little about his architectural work subsequent to the Enfield experiment. As far as can be ascertained, he closely followed the Shaw school and only one later building is of particular interest here, a
No.25 Cadogan Gardens. town house - No.25 Cadogan Gardens - designed in 1899 for Mortimer Menpes, the Australian painter. Menpes had made a special study of Japanese decoration and before the interior of his house was finished, he visited Japan taking with him Mackmurdo's drawings, and arranged for a complete range of fittings to be designed and constructed under his supervision by native craftsmen: every

(Footnote: * 'The Studio', April, 1899, p.186.)
+ ibid. p.184.)

piece had to be dismantled, shipped and reassembled in London. This extraordinary house thus achieved considerable notoriety and illustrations not only of the interior, but an excellent photograph of the outside, were published in the August number of 'The Studio', 1899, the year in which the first section of the Glasgow School of Art was completed. The house itself, now dwarfed by Peter Jones' Store, Sloane Square, occupies
219a. a corner site and was constructed of red-brown, two-inch bricks: tall elegant windows extend through the first and second floors and the facades are terminated by a coved plaster cornice and a slated attic storey with pedimented dormers. The windows recall Mackintosh's treatment of the library windows at the School of Art; on one elevation - to Cadogan Gardens - they are recessed and on the adjacent elevation they project as oriels from the wall surface and are carried on modelled corbels reminiscent of Flemish work. Mackintosh must have known this building well if only through the medium of 'The Studio', and he may have been sufficiently impressed by the architect's handling of form to use it as a starting point for his own experiment at Glasgow. Compared to the brilliant west elevation of the School however, Mackmurdo's house seems diminuitive and insignificant, although its proportions are such that photographs inevitably emphasise its scale. For all its originality however, No.25 Cadogan Square is well within the Shaw tradition, and coming as it did, some fourteen years after 'Swan House' Chelsea, evoked little comment in the architectural journals.

Mackmurdo then, despite his small contribution, must be placed with the English secessionists and in fact, with Voysey, he is unquestionably one of the most significant figures of the late nineteenth century.

C.F.A. Voysey.

And so we come again to Voysey who worked independently of any group, and who alone seems to have had his objective clearly in view from the very first. He only, of all his contemporaries, went back to first principles, and in rejecting style as such, evolved an idiom that is at once modern and yet traditional, at once personal and yet generic.

> "... the value of Mr. Voysey's art" wrote a contemporary, "is not in the use of any material, or of any mannerism, but in his evident effort to seek first the utilitarian qualities of strength and fitness, and to obtain beauty by common honesty." *

(Footnote:* 'The Studio', 1897.)

Fig. 219. Mackmurdo:

a. No.25 Cadogan Gardens.

b. Chair, designed 1881.

a

b

Voysey disdained external ornament and his buildings are notable for their fine proportions, and skilfully contrived fenestration: like Lloyd Wright, a decade later, he recognised the aesthetic value of the horizontal line and all his country houses repose harmoniously in their setting, vertical punctuation being effected solely by lofty chimney stacks, often battered. He made great play with roofs, frequently sweeping them down to embrace single storey appendages, as for example, at the house at Walnut Tree Farm, Castle Morton, and his own house, 'The Orchard' (1899), and he invariably used widely overhanging eaves. Buttresses too were introduced in his early work and brick walls were usually finished in roughcast. Voysey's windows are worthy of note and he rarely adopted a formal arrangement: unity was preserved however, by employing a single-light as a module and repeating it as often as necessary - perhaps in groups of four, or two, or singly, but making each conform to a common cill and lintel level. This simple expedient gave dignity and order to his facades and was a method that Mackintosh would have done well to emulate.

As a youth, Voysey was articled to J. P. Seddon for five years and according to Raymond McGrath* was in practice on his own account at the age of twenty-five (1882). His famous Black Book, now lodged in the R.I.B.A. Library however, records that five years earlier (1877) he made plans for a model dwelling for a Miss Morfitt, and in 1878 designed cottages at Kenmore, County Kerry, Ireland. None of his early projects are as unorthodox as Mackmurdo's house at Enfield (1878) and his most original building was designed in 1888, a "cottage" and studio at Bedford Park, Chiswick+ for the artist J. W. Forester. This interesting building was three storeys high and is a remarkably economical design - although it embodied a studio some 31ft. x 17ft. the contract price was £494.10. 0. - and according to report, the architect prepared eighteen sheets of drawings in order to prevent the builder from introducing stock mouldings and other commonplace detail. It is asymmetrically planned and built of brick, roughcast externally; the windows are rhythmically grouped in horizontal bands and, in characteristic fashion, irregularly placed, leaving large areas of unadorned wall surface.

Artist's Cottage, Chiswick.

Fig.221a.

(Footnote:* 'Twentieth Century Houses', p.75.)

+According to the Black Book the plans were submitted to Miss Forster 1888-9. Project drawings were published in 'The British Architect' 18th September, 1891 and a photograph of the completed house was in 'The Studio', June, 1897.)

The house is quite unpretentious, elegant and charming, and in character is more akin to an Austrian villa than to contemporary English work: it escapes stylistic classification and in fact, is "house-building pure and simple".

Hans Road, Chelsea.

Voysey's next notable commission was Nos.14 and 16 Hans Road, Chelsea (1891), a pair of lofty, brick-faced, terrace houses with a dignified facade which impresses by its reticence and good taste rather than marked originality. The elevation is formal with groups of orderly windows symmetrically disposed. Here Voysey comes more into line with Shaw and Mackmurdo, and though the Hans Road houses are quite distinctive, nevertheless they do not represent a radical departure from work of this type.

From about 1890 onwards, Voysey's mature style quickly emerged and he produced a series of fine country houses: 'Perrycroft' Malvern, 1893, Canon L. Grane's house Shackleford, 1897, 'Broadleys' Windermere, 1898, 'The Orchard' his own house, 1899,and many others - all similar in character, all possessing the same qualities, and none departing in the slightest degree from the principles he had adopted in his earliest work - "To be simple," he had said in 1893, "is the end, not the beginning of design".

Voysey's sources are relatively easy to determine. He also graduated through the applied arts, and in the manner of the Shaw school, went for inspiration to the English countryside - to the vernacular - but it is evident he modelled his work on the romantic rural cottage rather than upon the mansion of Elizabeth and Queen Anne. In the minor arts he owed much to Mackmurdo and the Century Guild, a point which has not been sufficiently stressed in the past. Though the forms he used are elegant and sophisticated by comparison with the work of the older man, they have many points in common; in fact Mackmurdo's oak writing table illustrated here might well be an early Voysey. Another and more striking example of their similarity of outlook is that afforded by a hanging sign in wrought iron designed by Mackmurdo for the Guild in the early 1880's:* this contained motives - miniature birds and trees - not found hitherto in Morris's work and which Voysey made peculiarly his own: the coincidence is such that one is tempted to believe that Voysey himself were the designer. If any doubt should exist about his indebtedness to

(Footnote: *Illustrated in 'The Architectural Review', Vol. 87, 1938.)

Fig. 221. Voysey:

a. Artist's Cottage, Chiswick.
b. House at Frensham.
c. Nos. 14 & 16 Hans Road, Chelsea.

d. 'The Orchard', Chorley Wood. 1899.
e. " " " " Dining-room.

f. " " " " Lounge-hall.
g. " " " " Bedroom.

a

b

c

d.

e.

f

9

Mackmurdo, perhaps the words of a contemporary will throw more light on the situation. Aymer Vallance, writing in 1899* said:-

> "There are other artists - Mr. Voysey is a case in point - who, not formally members of the Guild, have been in close communication with it for years, and have known the benefit of resorting to it for advice, encouragement and sympathy in their youthful days of struggle, while yet their success and fame had not been attained".

Although Voysey confined himself almost entirely to domestic building and the minor arts, the effect of his work and philosophy was profound. He dominated the arts and crafts movement, and great prominence was given to his designs in the professional journals and especially in 'The Studio'. His influence can be seen too in the work of many architects of the English school - most notably Baillie Scott - and also in the north west, where Edgar Wood (1860-1935) established an outpost of the new movement in the 1890's.

Fig.222a. Edgar Wood.

Wood was articled to a certain James Murgatroyd and followed the Morris tradition closely; he is particularly notable for the excellence and originality of his decoration and furnishing, which at times bears a striking resemblance to Mackintosh's work. By this time however, Wood was busily engaged in practice and had a number of houses and churches to his credit - mostly in a modernised version of the vernacular of the northern counties and his vigorous pen and ink perspectives had appeared from time to time in the journals. This work was quite original and moreover, was highly esteemed by Muthesius, the German critic who, c.1903 said that his poetic touch contrasted vividly with the more sober expression of the London Arts and Crafts people. By the turn of the century Wood had begun to experiment with new forms which may well have been derived from Mackintosh - for example in his clock tower at Lindley‡ - and though he never produced a major work of consequence, he remained one of the most adventurous and independent architects of the younger school.

Fig.222b.

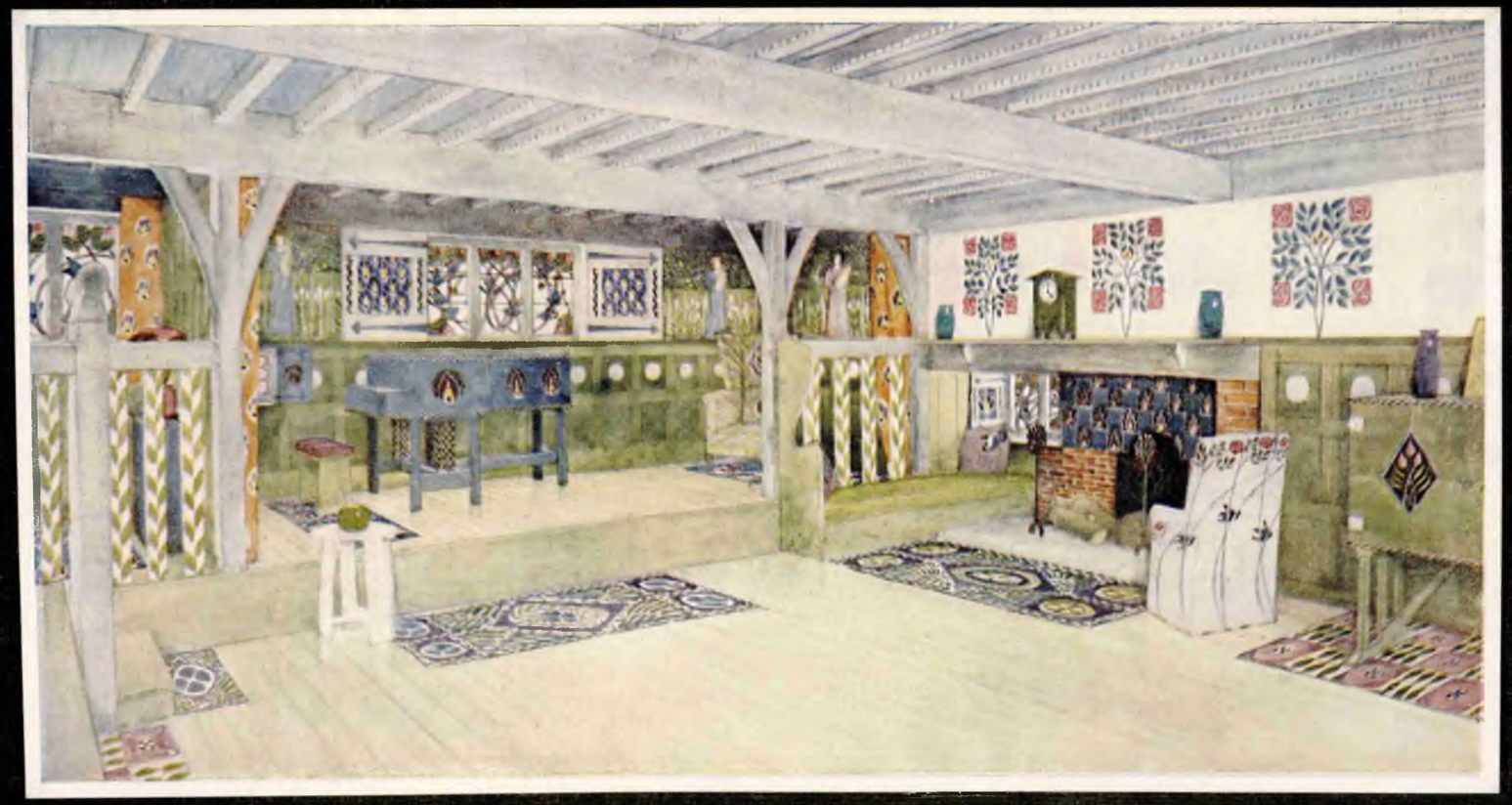
Fig.

It is impossible to enlarge upon this brief survey of domestic building in England during the late 19th century, and the most original designers only have been mentioned. It should be emphasised that Shaw and Voysey had many followers and much

(Footnote:-* 'The Studio', Vol. 14, p.189, April, 1899.)

‡Edgar Wood was responsible for one of the first flat roofed modern houses to be built in England - 'Upmeads', Stafford, c.1909. Illustrated 'Country Life' 12.Nov.1910, p.7 et seq.)

Fig. 222. a. Baillie Scott: Design in Colour for a Music-room.
b. Edgar Wood: " " " " " Lounge-hall.

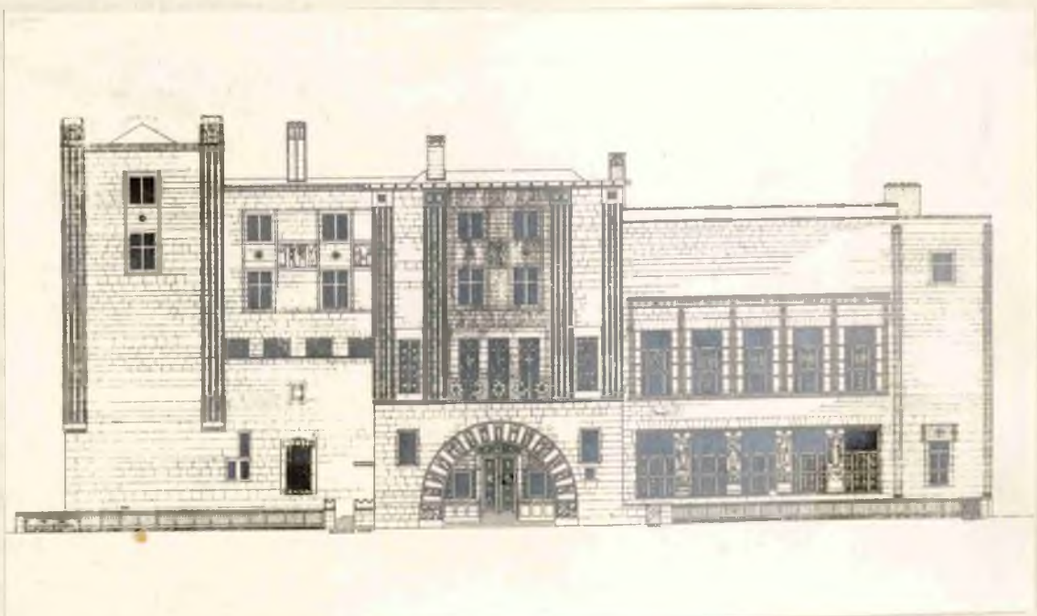


a

good, if rather pedantic work was executed in the 1890's by men such as Ernest Newton, Walter Cane, Ernest Gimeon, Messrs. George and Peto, and E. Guy Dawber, work which, though admirable in many ways, does not come within the scope of this study.

Not all experimental building was confined to the domestic sphere, however, and several unorthodox projects had been illustrated in the journals and some actually carried out before Mackintosh startled Glasgow with his design for the School of Art. Prior to considering this work though, one more domestic project must be mentioned which could hardly be classified with any of the preceeding examples. This is a design by a Mr. J.A. Slater for 'A Town Mansion': it was dedicated to W. R. Lethaby and published as a supplement to 'The Architect' 20th February 1891 - the issue which, significantly, contained a report of Mackintosh's paper on 'Scottish Baronial Architecture'.

J. A. Slater.



The long rambling elevation illustrated here is strangely akin to the Glasgow School of Art and more especially to the Haus eines Kunstfreundes, yet it betrays a certain affinity with the exotic Graeco-Egyptian work of Alexander Thomson. There is all the studied inconsequentiality of Mackintosh in the play of solid and void, superimposed upon the inflexible, dominating rhythms of a Thomson-like fenestration. Stripped of its neo-classic ornament, this design might easily be mistaken for a work by Mackintosh and yet it anti-dates the School of Art by five years and the German project by a decade or more. The author has been unable to discover anything further about Mr. Slater: and this prophetic drawing seems to be something of a phenomenon.

It would without doubt, find its way into Mackintosh's files.

Evidence of a new spirit of enquiry comes from many sources during the 1890's and a number of new names appear in the journals, for example, Sydney Greenslade, Leonard Stokes, Henry Wilson, C. Harrison Townsend, A. Dunbar Smith and Cecil Brewer. In much of the work executed by these architects the influence of Shaw is clearly apparent, and in no instance do they depart far from traditional building methods. Henry Wilson, a pupil and admirer of J. D. Sedding, specialised in ecclesiastical work and began to experiment with neo-Gothic elements c.1890. In 1892 he designed a tower for St. Mary's Church Lynton; an elegant, simple structure with a gay roof, obviously derived from Sedding's St. Clement's, Boscombe (1891); the following year he submitted a design for a New Cathedral, Victoria, British Columbia, from which Mackintosh borrowed freely for his Queen's Cross Church and the Liverpool Cathedral project. This work is rather elaborate but Wilson's treatment of the west elevation is quite original; the main doorway is exceptionally wide and is spanned by a great flat arch, and twin mullions to the enormous window pass through the crowning arch and hood mouldings to enclose a richly decorated panel on the gable wall above - an innovation which has been seen again and again in one form or another during the past fifty years - and not only in ecclesiastical work. Some two years later Wilson produced a project for the narrow and lofty west front of the Church of St. Andrew, Boscombe; this time he confined all ornament to the parapet and left the main mass of walling absolutely plain, piercing it with a deep semi-circular headed recess containing the doorway and west window. All these schemes are extremely well handled, and it is evident that the architect had a fine sense of proportion; and the west front of St. Andrew's Church as depicted in 'Academy Architecture' (1895) represents a bold step towards the twentieth century.

Henry Wilson.

Fig.224a.

Fig. " b.

Fig. " c.

Leonard Stokes.

Another architect also working on progressive lines at this time was Leonard Stokes, who, in 1910 became President of the R.I.B.A. and in 1919 a Gold Medalist. His church at Miles Platting Manchester (1892), with its severely modern north and south elevations, may perhaps be less dramatic than the others illustrated here, but its simplicity and breadth of treatment distinguish it from the mass of contemporary neo-Gothic work.

Fig.224 e.

Secessionist tendencies are not easy to detect in the ecclesiastical field where tradition inevitably plays an important role, yet a project drawing for "The West End of a Town Church" (1898) by Sydney K. Greenslade, is one of several which indicate

Fig. " d.

Fig. 224. Henry Wilson:

a. St. Mary's, Lynton. 1892.

b. Project for New Cathedral, Victoria, B.C., 1893.

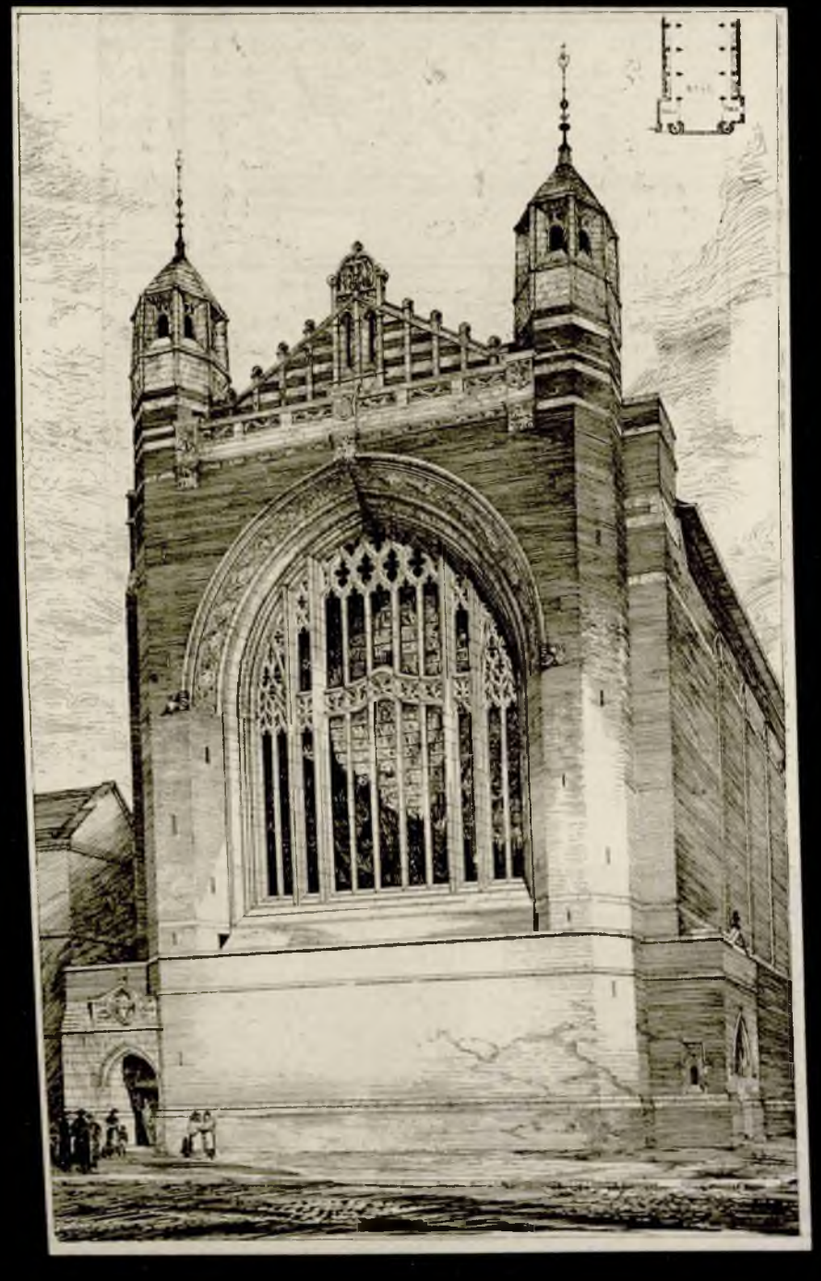
c. Project for St. Andrew's, Boscombe, 1895.

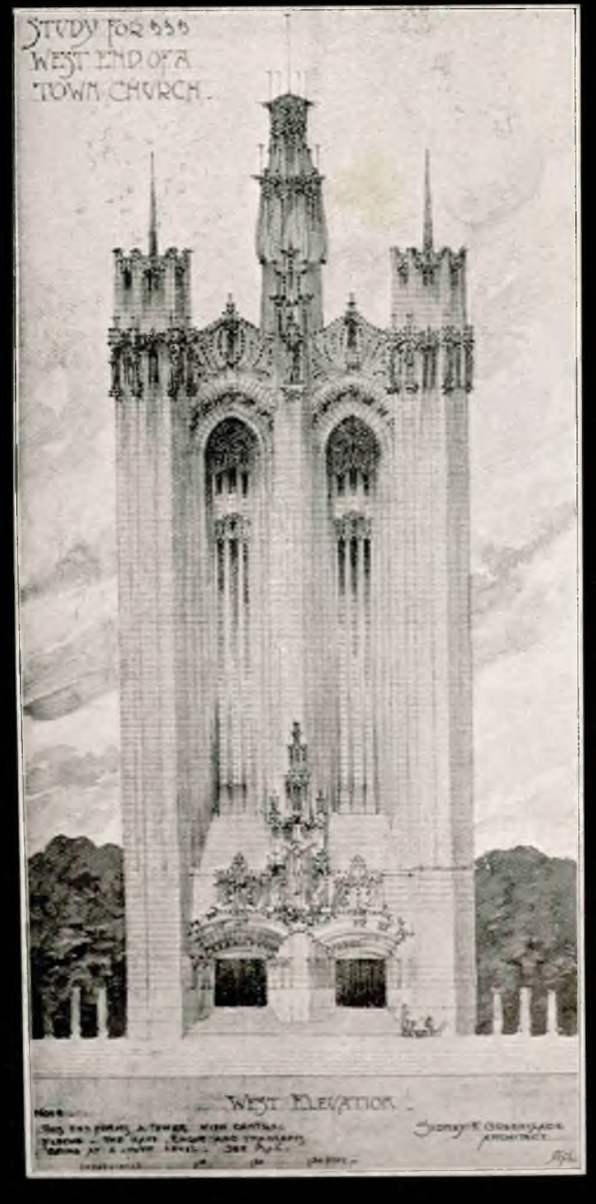
Sydney Greenslade:

d. The West End of a Town Church, 1898.

Leonard Stokes:

e. Church, Miles Platting, Manchester, 1892.




STUDY FOR 555
WEST END OF A
TOWN CHURCH.
WEST ELEVATION.

that even l'art nouveau and the Glasgow Style was not without its adherents in the south. The facade depicted is in fact a tower of imposing proportions, and except for a riot of art nouveau detail at parapet level and about the doorways, is commendably simple in form. Mr. Greenslade however, introduced a repulsive flèche which, with voluptuous carving and slender pinnacles, destroys whatever charm the tower might have possessed.

Fig.225a. In the secular sphere, events moved more decisively and in c.1894 Leonard Stokes designed Nazareth House, Bexhill, a large three-storeyed building of pleasing proportions: the ground storey, faced in brick, the second and third storeys rendered, with windows rhythmically disposed in the Shaw manner: and a roof reminiscent of Voysey. Taken by and large, the building has an air of refinement and efficiency which makes it the natural precursor of Smith & Brewer's Mary Ward Settlement - won in competition. This building has been eulogistically described as "the most remarkable example of twentieth-century feeling reached by English architects before 1900".* The settlement is four storeys high and constructed of brick with the top floor contained within a mansard roof and lit by large dormers. The windows throughout are of Georgian proportions, and in fact, not a single element, except the porch - based on Nos.14 and 16 Hans Road - and the railings, is of itself unusual. The principal elevation however, is notable for its bold modelling and extensive plain surfaces; its dominant horizontality is accentuated by a deep rendered frieze and widely projecting eaves+ which recall the School of Art; in either terminal wing three small windows ascend in sympathy with an internal staircase. The only incongruous feature is the porch and area wall, both constructed of stone and 'art nouveau' in feeling.°

Smith & Brewer.

Fig.225b. +c.

Figs.225c.

The Mary Ward Settlement is a building of some importance not only because it was erected before the Glasgow School of Art and thus might have influenced Mackintosh, but because it points the way to future development in this country - it is at once surprisingly modern in spirit and yet well within the fold of Shavian romanticism - Shaw incidentally was the assessor of the competition and this may perhaps account for the dignified Queen Anne of the auxiliary elevations.

(Footnote: *Pevsner in 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement', p.158.)

+The eaves are supported on cantilevered steel joists which appear as modillions. Article on Smith & Brewer, R.I.B.A. Journal 6.3.35.)

°Unimaginative railings are depicted on Mackintosh's first design for the School of Art and it is not unlikely that he modified them after seeing Smith & Brewer's work at Tavistock Place.)

Fig.225. Leonard Stokes:

a. Nazareth House, Bexhill, c.1894.

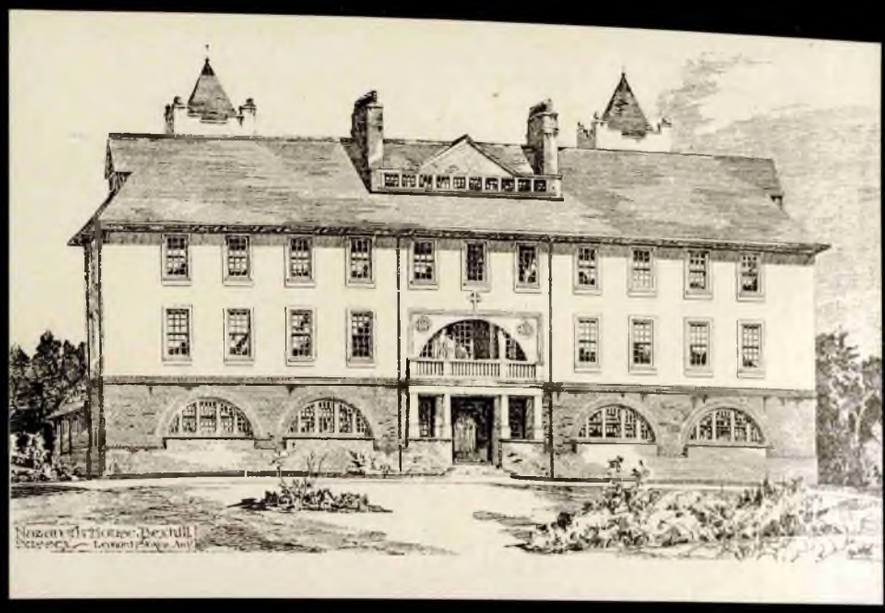
A. Dunbar Smith & Cecil Brewer:

b. The Mary Ward Settlement.

c. " " " " Main Doorway on Tavistock Place.

d. " " " " Residents' Doorway.

e. " " " " The Dining-room Fireplace.



A contemporary building by Smith & Brewer - 'Mayfield House' Shoreditch - another settlement residence - is illustrated here and though unmistakably designed by the same hand, it lacks the grace and dignity of the former example. This experimental phase was carried a stage further by C. Harrison Townsend, (1850-1928) whose most notable contribution, the Whitechapel Art Gallery, was built in 1897-9. His first project* was an ambitious symmetrical scheme with a large central doorway surmounted by a heavy semi-circular hood,+ - a feature the architect had employed in somewhat modified form in terracotta at Bishopsgate Institute (built 1882-4)." Above the doorway ran a series of five semicircular windows and above them again an enormous mosaic frieze 65ft. long and 17ft. high, to be designed and executed by Walter Crane . A pair of strange 'coffee-pot' towers flanked the main central block and gave the building a curious toy-like air of unreality. Probably for financial reasons this scheme was considerably modified, and the building as erected occupies a site little more than half that originally ~~intended~~ intended. Townsend was obliged to evolve an alternative and far less ambitious design which, although but a travesty of his original scheme, is nevertheless, a remarkable achievement and is far superior to his untidy essay in terracotta at Bishopsgate. In contrast to the Mary Ward Settlement every motive, every detail is original and it would seem that Townsend, like Mackintosh, was determined to break entirely with convention - in fact he went so far as to place the main doorway off centre in contravention of all the rules of propriety. The arrangement and form of the windows, the parsimonious use of mouldings, the large plain surfaces, all point to the twentieth century and it is easy to overlook the trivial surface decoration and diminutive towers which unmistakably betray the date of the building.

Fig.226a.

C. H. Townsend.

Fig.226b.

Another of Townsend's designs - a project for a porch to a Country House⊖ also displays a feeling for form which is distinctly modern and owes nothing to either Voysey or Shaw. The house appears

(Footnote: *Published in 'Academy Architecture' 1896, also 'The Studio' 15th Mar.97, p.131.)

+Townsend's distinctive arch motive may have been derived from American sources. A similar feature was employed by McKim, Mead & White in a New York residence c.1888 and also by H.H. Richardson in his design for a lodge to a private residence in N.E. Mass. - both were illustrated in 'The Builder' 5.1.89. The author is of the opinion however, that it was based on the doorway to the Medieval Church at ———— Le Puy. In 1896 Mackintosh used an identical form - though to a much smaller scale, as a window in the east wing of the School of Art and again as a window to the director's room on the main facade.)

"Illustrated in 'Academy Architecture' 1895.)

⊖A Country House forBaron M. von Zedlitz, 'Academy Architecture' Vol.2, p.79, 1897.)

Fig. 226. a. Smith & Brewer: 'Mayfield House', Shoreditch.

b. C. Harrison Townsend: Bishopsgate Institute.

c. " " Whitechapel Art Gallery.

to be a rather grim structure of herculean masonry and weather bonding (or tile-hanging), with an enormous high-pitched roof. The porch is a simple two-storeyed appendage into which Townsend's characteristic door hood bites with customary ferocity, and as at Whitechapel, tends to destroy the scale of the facade. However, the architect's treatment of the wall surfaces, his deeply recessed windows with curved reveals* - surely the first appearance of this popular twentieth century feature - and his dramatic handling of mass, is wholly admirable.

One of Townsend's most interesting projects is the Horniman Museum at Forest Hill, London, built in 1901 on a narrow, steeply sloping site. The fall of the ground was such that levelling was considered impracticable and the architect planned two galleries, each about 104ft. x 47ft., the floor of one on a plane with the balcony of the other. The main facade to the south is asymmetrical and is notable for its curious clock tower - a modified version of the towers on the original project for the Whitechapel Art Gallery - and for the manner in which the curved gable wall of the gallery itself is allowed to dominate. Yet Townsend could not refrain from decorating this mass of masonry, and the gable is stratified by several string courses, an incongruous band of little pilasters, and a large mosaic panel 32ft. long by 10ft. deep, designed by Anning Bell - of 117,000 tessarae, we are told, largely assembled by young women who worked with great patience and without once threatening to strike!‡ The panel is by no means obtrusive, and had the pilaster band been omitted and the upper part of the tower simplified, the whole would have formed a striking essay in the modern manner. As at Whitechapel, one feels that Townsend the decorator, the craftworker, too frequently took precedence over Townsend the architect. The Horniman Museum seems to have been the last notable work produced by this architect that comes within our purview.‖

All the buildings reviewed here were completed before or just after the turn of the century; they constitute the main body of original work produced in England at the time and published in the press. Most of the architects singled out for especial mention

(Footnote: *It would be interesting to know how Townsend proposed to achieve this effect in weatherbonding or tile-hanging.)

‡'The Studio', Vol.24, Dec.1901. p.202.)

‖Drawings by Townsend for a house 'Cliff Towers' on the Devonshire coast were published in 'The Studio' Vol.13, No.62, May, 1898, p.239, et. seq. An identical porch is used here and it is possible that this may have been Baron von Zedlitz's house.)

in this chapter however, soon settled down to work of a more prosaic nature. The names of A. J. Slater and Sydney Greenslade for example are rarely met with again and, notwithstanding his achievements in the ecclesiastical field, Henry Wilson had no decisive message to convey. Messrs. Smith & Brewer built up a flourishing practice, but their work vascillated between a dignified version of Shaw - Ditton Place, Balcombe - and a romanticised transcription of Voysey - Fives Court, Pinner. The Mary Ward Settlement seems to have been a flash in the pan for they too soon succumbed to the rising wave of classicism, their pièce de résistance being the National Museum of Wales (1910), a monumental study in the neo-Rennaissance. (The first premiated design of 132 submitted in open competition.)

Thus it would seem that the initial enthusiasm aroused by Shaw and Voysey gradually waned, nor is the reason far to seek. Neither man had considered himself to be a revolutionary and neither sought to establish a new style, much less to become the leader of a secessionist movement. For all his brilliance and originality Shaw was at heart a classicist. His transition from neo-Elizabethan to Queen Anne had a most salutary effect on contemporary architectural design, but he moved just as easily into fresh fields and after his supreme essay, New Scotland Yard (1890), reverted to a more conventional form of classicism as exemplified in the New Piccadilly Hotel and the Quadrant.

Voysey's mature style had been reached c.1893; thereafter he pursued his amiable path seemingly oblivious to the potentialities of new structural techniques and new materials.

> "Architecture to me", he said in 1940, "is a manner of growth. The traditional way of using materials has taken generations to develop. Rather than think of doing anything new, I have applied old traditions to new customs." *

Handicraft translated into terms of house-building by Voysey and his followers virtually laid the foundations of a new English domestic tradition. In the domestic field of course, it was possible to treat each project as a piece of craftwork, for no new planning or constructional problems were involved: the architect was concerned solely with the remodelling of the shell, the refinement and adjustment of small elements, and the decorative use of familiar materials. Once the subject was lifted out of this category, and new problems of spatial organisation arose, the artworker was at a loss. William Morris and Voysey seemed

(Footnote: * 'The Architects' Journal', 29.2.40.)

to have no message for the designer of a city hotel, a vast department store, or a block of offices. On the other hand, as Norman Shaw demonstrated, the classical formula could conveniently be adapted to meet any requirement.

Shaw then, one of the most influential personalities in the profession, recanted and joined the ranks of the academicians - John Belcher, Aston Webb, Reginald Blomfield (his former pupil) and the rest - and Voysey, continued to design charming country houses. No-one stepped into Shaw's place and no-one successfully developed Voysey's thesis.

Without effective leadership, and lacking a common purpose, it is not surprising that this phase was so unfruitful. By the time Mackintosh had completed the Glasgow School of Art (1909) most practising architects had embraced the lifeless academic formalism characteristic of the closing years of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth. Meanwhile in the domestic field, the romantic movement was sustained by such distinguished men as Sir Edwin Lutyens, E. Guy Dawber, Baillie Scott, and of course by Voysey himself.

Although this state of laissez faire was widespread, one or two individuals persisted on their course. Edgar Wood for instance, continued to experiment in the north and Midlands; his Fig. 229 a.b. Christian Science Church, Victoria Park, Manchester, is an unorthodox and attractive building in the Arts and Crafts succession and a measure of his independence. So too is 'Upmeads' Stafford (c.1909), probably the first flat-roofed modern house to be built in England.* Leonard Stokes too, was recognised as one of the most progressive practitioners of the day and his fine sense of mass and proportion exemplified in the drawing of Fig. 229 c.d. All Saints', St. Albans, finds expression in the framed structures of the National Telephone Exchange, Gerrard Street, Soho,+ and in the Telephone Exchange, Parker Street, Manchester, both designed c.1909. His indebtedness to Shaw is always apparent however, and even these utilitarian buildings have their complement of classical trimmings.

Though the material evidence may be meagre when weighed against the mass of conventional and mediocre work produced at this time, it is sufficient to prove that the spirit of secession

(Footnote: *Illustrated in 'Country Life', 12.11.1910, p.7 et seq.)
+ -do- 'Academy Architecture', 1907.)

Fig. 229. Edgar Wood:

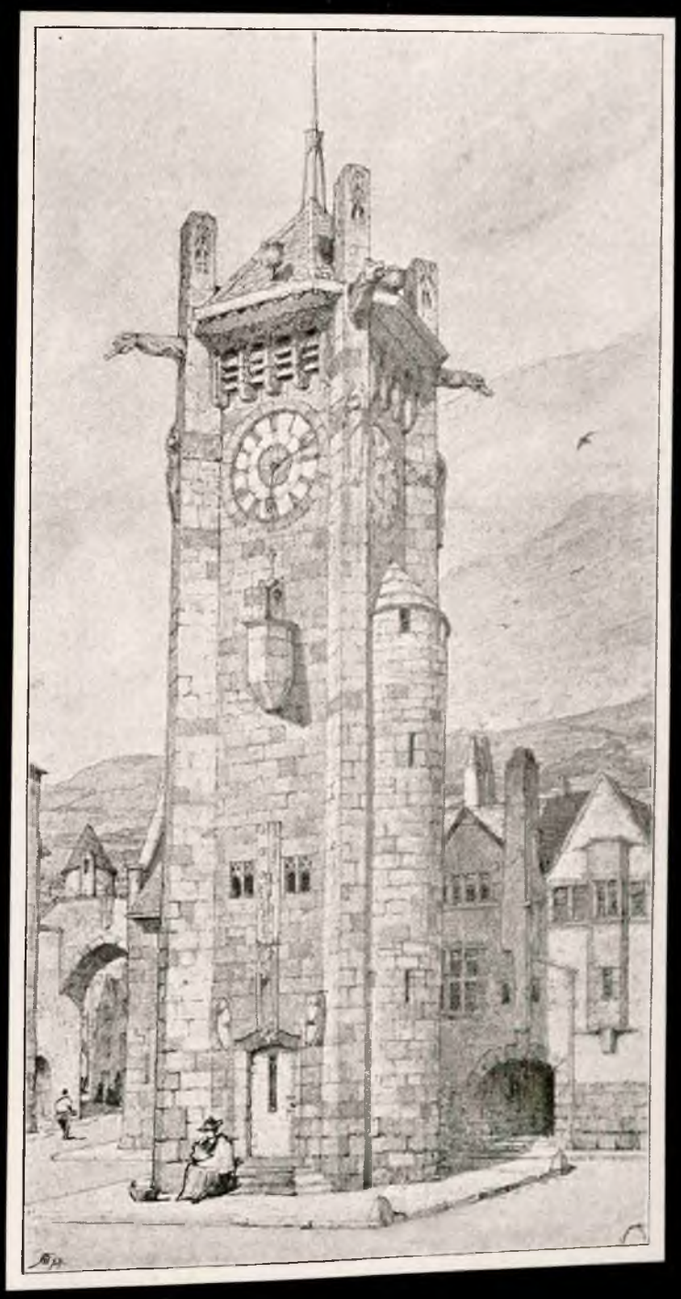
a. 'Upmeads', c.1909.

b. Clock Tower, Lindley, 1900.

Leonard Stokes:

c. All Saints, St. Albans, c.1900.

a



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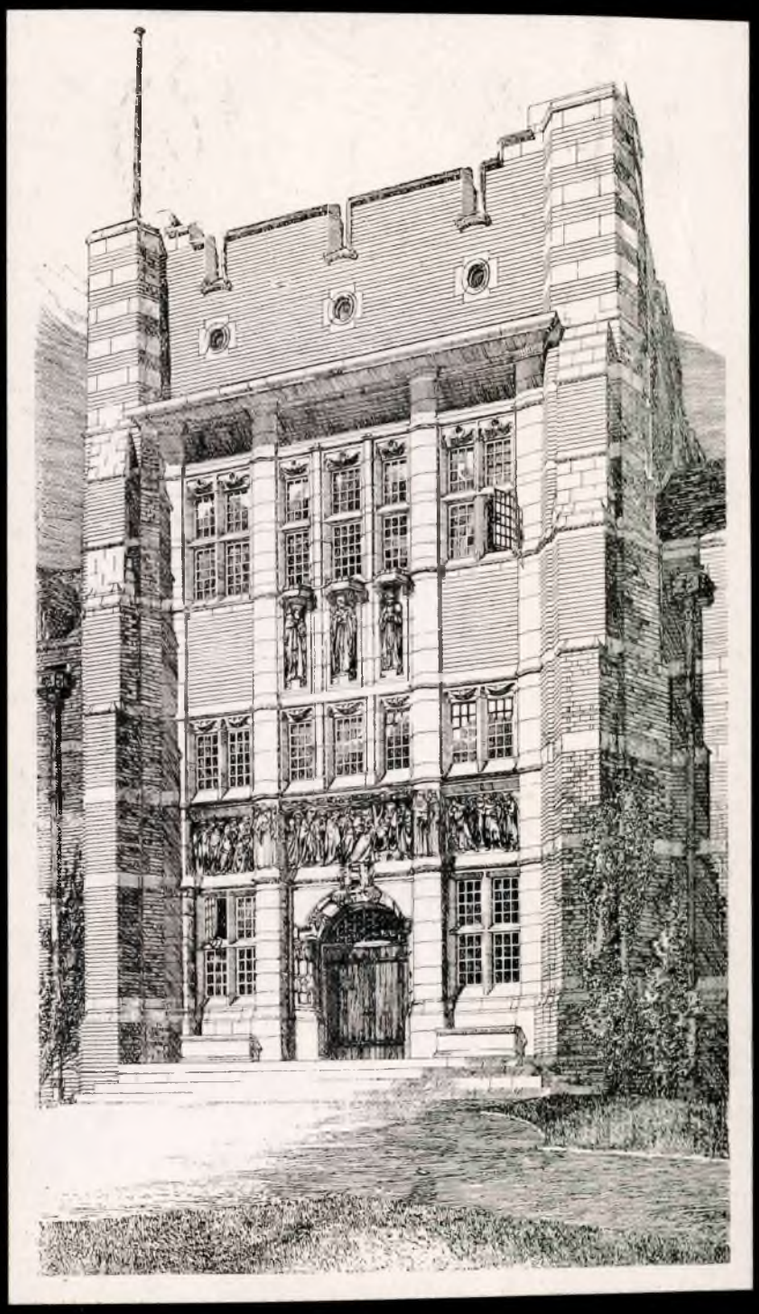


was never extinguished. Isolated buildings such as these by Wood and Stokes, and say, John Burnet's Kodak Building, Kingsway London, and the Manchester headquarters of the Y.M.C.A., by Woodhouse, Corbett and Dean, were erected from time to time, buildings which cannot be placed in any of the convenient pigeon holes of style, yet which presage a more rational approach to the question of architectural design. Such work, and no doubt other examples yet to come to light, virtually constitutes the English "modern movement" of the early 1900's - the period immediately preceding the first world war. In this instance however, "movement" is perhaps a misnomer. The work illustrated here does not constitute a movement in the generally accepted sense of the word, that is in so far as the term is used to indicate a conscious and definite advance along well defined lines by a group of artists motivated by a common ideal. On the continent, as we shall see, a similar spirit was afoot, but there the more progressive individuals came together in groups to discuss matters of common interest; societies were founded, journals published, exhibitions organised and manifestos issued. The new art - the secessionist - movement was a tangible, living thing. In Britain on the contrary, there is no indication whatever of liason between the Woods and the Townsends, the Stokes and the Voyseys. The English secessionists did not form a group, nor had they any clearly defined aims or common objectives. Each building reviewed here is virtually an independent essay and it is difficult, if not impossible, to discover any recognisable signs of development. It is hardly surprising therefore, that after the 1914-18 war, a new generation of architects, finding contemporary fashions in building incompatible with the demands of a rapidly changing society, should turn for inspiration to foreign sources, where industrial art took exciting new forms and the promise of an international style of architecture seemed to offer an easy solution to many, if not all, aesthetic problems.

Consequently we are forced to the conclusion that there was no English secessionist <u>movement</u> in architecture as such, and it is a strange paradox that William Morris, Shaw, Voysey and the English school, are almost invariably acclaimed by the leaders of the continental new movement as their initial source of inspiration.*

What then, is Mackintosh's position in relation to the English Secessionists?

(Footnote: *"Our whole new movement is built on the results which England has achieved from 1860 up to the mid 90's." - Muthesius in 'Das Englische Haus', p.178.)
C/f. also, Van de Velde 'Die Renaissance im Modernen Kunstgewerbe', quoted in footnote to Page 237.)

In the architectural field as in the applied arts it is clear that he was neither the first nor the only champion of secession in Britain. By the time the first section of the Glasgow School of Art was finished most of the buildings recorded here had been completed, and moreover had been illustrated either in 'Academy Architecture' or in one of the professional journals. This is an important point. Mackintosh was able to keep abreast of events in the south and to take full advantage of experiments elsewhere before he began to build. On the other hand his own architectural work remained comparatively unknown for many years. The Glasgow Herald Offices, Queen Margaret's Medical School, the Martyrs' School - none of which departed in any fundamental sense from contemporary Scottish practice - and Queen's Cross Church, had all appeared in 'Academy Architecture' before the turn of the century, (in 1894, 5, 6, and 8 respectively), but of course,above the signatures of Honeyman & Keppie. The mural decorations at Miss Cranston's Buchanan Street restaurant were published in 1898 in this journal, and Mackintosh's name appeared for the first time. In 1901 the gesso panels at the Ingram Street restaurant were illustrated. It was not until 1903 however that the title Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh was appended to an architectural project - Pettigrew & Stephens' warehouse, Glasgow - and some years were to elapse before any important work in Mackintosh's mature style was illustrated, namely Scotland Street School and 'Hillhouse', both in 1906.

The building of the first section of the Glasgow School of Art seems to have passed unnoticed, and as far as can be ascertained, not a single illustration of it appeared in the press prior to 1909, and then only of the library wing. Mackintosh was known to the profession mainly as a designer and decorator with a flair for the bizarre, who had once exhibited in London and subsequently obtained a modicum of publicity in 'The Studio'. Thus, whether by intention or by force of circumstances he had few contacts with England and as far as his fellow architects were concerned he remained a remote and enigmatical figure.

Mackintosh's influence upon the course of events in the south was negligible, but of all the British advocates of secession, he had the clearest and most direct message to convey. His work was consistant and homogeneous, and he adhered to his course with commendable tenacity. Why then did the Glasgow style come to nothing, why did it not form the basis of a modern movement and why did Mackintosh exercise so little influence in Britain when his work was greeted with such unbounded enthusiasm abroad?

It would appear that if a revolutionary movement in architecture and the minor arts is to be successfully launched, adequately sustained, and to achieve its purpose on a nation-wide scale, various conditions must be fulfilled. There must of course be a leader, an initiator, an advocate of new principles round whom a group of kindred spirits may gather. A club, a school, or a society may then be founded. The secessionists must have some vehicle by which their views can be propagated and by which they can convert others - they may produce a magazine or journal or perhaps find a voice in an established periodical through the agency of a sympathetic publisher - the leader himself is usually a man of some literary ability. Public interest must then be aroused by exhibitions, discussions, lectures and so forth, and finally the academies and schools of art must be won over. This broad pattern, as we shall see, was followed in the Art Revival in Austria and elsewhere. The English Art and Crafts Movement deriving from William Morris achieved such notable successes in the 1890's and early 1900's because most of these conditions were met. Conversely the English secessionists failed to create a living, vital modern movement in architecture because only the first condition was fulfilled, and that not by a single leader, nor by a well integrated group, but by a number of individuals each working independently.

If the, we apply the test to the Scottish artists it is possible to see why Mackintosh, undoubtedly one of the most gifted and versatile designers of the day, failed so singly to establish himself, and to initiate a British movement.

In the first instance there was little liason between George Walton, Oscar Paterson and other progressive artists not trained under Newbery on the one hand, and the School of Art faction on the other. All were seeking a new approach to problems of design, but none had the wisdom to see beyond the narrow limits of his own immediate circle. They had no common meeting ground, no club or society was founded independently of the School, and no attempt was made to formulate a common policy.

Then again, none of the Glasgow designers possessed either the cultural background, or the intellect of Shaw, or, with the exception of Mackintosh, the burning, prophetic zeal of the true revolutionary. Mackintosh however, for all his creative genius, was quite found difficulty in expressing himself lucidly by the pen. His lecture notes which survive are rambling, inconclusive

and full of familiar cliches*, consequently his words carried little weight and the professional journals were closed to him. Only one British Magazine, 'The Studio' evinced any enthusiasm for the work of the Glasgow designers. This periodical however, was liberal in outlook and catholic in taste; it was not the mouthpiece of a movement like the Austrian 'Ver Sacrum', nor so advanced in policy as the German 'Dekorative Kunst'. Moreover Gleeson White, editor from its inception in 1893 and one of the few champions of the Glasgow style in Britain, died in 1898, just as Mackintosh came into prominence.

The innumerable continental exhibitions provided a magnificent platform for the display and propagation of the Glasgow style abroad, but as already pointed out, the work of 'The Four' evoked such condemnation at the London Arts and Crafts Exhibition of 1896 that they were refused admission to subsequent exhibitions in the south, and it is doubtful if Mackintosh's mature designs ever appeared before the English public after the turn of the century. His work was familiar of course to Glasgow through local displays arranged by Newbery, but Scotland did not possess an equivalent to the Arts and Crafts Society, nor was the Scottish Academy any less impregnable than the R.A. His influence was thus circumscribed and an important link with the public and the profession was denied him.

In the educational field the prospects were equally discouraging. At the turn of the century the Glasgow School of Architecture, then in its infancy, was housed in the School of Art under Newbery with Alexander McGibbon as Director and M. Eugene Bourdon B.A., A.D.F.G., of the Atelier Pascal, Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, visiting Professor. The Board of Governors at this time included an array of architects - William Forrest Salmon, David Barclay, William Leiper, Alexander Roche, John James Burnet and John Keppie,- all men of the old school, and solidly opposed to change in any shape or form. The possibility of establishing a progressive teaching staff in the architectural section under these circumstances was out of the question, though Newbery contrived to introduce a procession of distinguished foreigners to join him in other departments.+

(Footnote:- *With one exception, an undated and unnamed paper read to a literary society. This is the most coherent of the few examples which survive and in all probability was written c.1905-6.)

+Not least among these was Maurice Griffenhagen, a Londoner, a painter of outstanding merit who arrived in 1906. Two years later C.F.A. Voysey himself was invited to take the chair of Design but could not be persuaded to forsake his lucrative practice in the south.)

It is not known whether Mackintosh was asked to join the staff of the School, but it is obvious that such a proposal would have been unacceptable to the governors, if only because of Keppie's presence on the Board, and his firm's responsibility for the building itself.

If in view of these adverse circumstances, we accept the inevitability of Mackintosh's failure to inaugurate a new Scottish, not to mention a new British movement, it is hardly conceivable that he should have left no followers in his native city, and have had no influence upon his contemporaries, yet that was virtually the case. His work aroused a certain amount of enthusiasm amongst the younger men, but an enthusiasm born of curiosity, of the love of novelty for its own sake. Mackintosh was admired as a brilliant draughtsman, a prodigous worker, a prolific and talented designer, but nevertheless something of a crank, a man who indulged in dreamy fantasies remote from the real world of every-day practice. His Scottish contemporaries seem to have been completely oblivious to the deeper implications of his work and he was never recognised as the prophet of a national renaissance. Even James Salmon, who after Herbert MacNair's departure for Liverpool, became his intimate friend, was contented merely to emulate his decorative forms. Salmon's Alexander Park Free Church, Glasgow,* designed 1898, has been mistaken frequently for a work by Mackintosh, and his unpremiated competition design for the Royal Technical College, Glasgow (1901), displayed numerous borrowed details without in any way reflecting the bold functionalism of the School of Art.

Of all the sources from which a Mackintosh school might have been expected to spring, the most promising was undoubtedly the office of Honeyman & Keppie where draughtsmen and junior assistants were in close and regular contact with him. Yet even here his influence was transitory. John Honeyman had been a sleeping partner in the firm from its inception, and Keppie and Mackintosh soon discovered that they had little in common: each decided to go his own way and work in the office divided into two distinct and completely independent parts. In the late 1890's the principal assistants were George Paterson and Donald Stoddart, both of whom left Keppie soon after the turn of the century: Paterson joined John Stewart and Stoddart entered the office of

Footnote: *A perspective drawing by J. Gaff Gillespie dated 30th Nov.1898 appeared in 'The British Architect' 7th March, 1902, p.165.)

A. N. Paterson, both well-known Glasgow architects. Two younger draughtsmen, Robert Frame and William Moyes were more directly under Mackintosh's supervision and became devoted to him. Frame emigrated to Canada (c.1905) and it is believed died there some six or seven years later. William Moyes also left the country and in 1906 went to Australia.

In this manner, whatever influence Mackintosh was able to exert was quickly ~~vitiated~~ dissipated. Under such unstable conditions the formation of a nucleus of enthusiastic, progressive designers similar to the continental Wagner School was out of the question. From 1906 onwards, Mackintosh himself began to lose faith and to realise that it was impossible alone to bring about any fundamental change in the attitude of mind of his contemporaries. He took less and less interest in the business and before he and Keppie parted company in 1914 the work of the firm had reverted to its former sound mediocrity. Incredible as it may seem, the practice remained quite unaffected by the fact that for a brief space of time, one of the most dynamic personalities in the profession had passed through its doors.

Mackintosh then, had little influence on the course of events in England, and perhaps, even less on the architecture of his native country. Though he too gave up the struggle when the Glasgow School of Art was completed (1909), he had by that time made substantially more progress than anyone in the south. None of the English secessionists produced a building comparable to the School for originality and breadth of treatment. The architect's masterly handling of space, his ingenious and daring methods of fenestration, and the complete absence of conventional detail displayed in the project drawings (1896) placed the building in a category by itself. Here in fact was a large structure, designed according to Voysey's principles, "..... simplicity is the end not the beginning .....", in the arts and crafts succession, acknowledging tradition, and yet frankly expressing new constructional techniques. In this work alone Mackintosh established his right to a place in the forefront of the European-wide new movement at the moment when the secessionist cause began to languish in England.

CHAPTER X.

THE EUROPEAN SECESSIONISTS.

The continental European has always entered upon revolution with more verve and enthusiasm than his British counterpart and whether in the political, social, or intellectual field, has invariably carried the day with greater élan.

The artistic phenonemon known as l'art nouveau affords yet another illustration. This movement was a clearly defined and conscious attempt on the part of certain designers to escape from the limitations of historicism and to evolve a style entirely independent of tradition. Accepted principles of form and proportion were discarded, and little cognisance taken of the natural qualities of materials; wood, for example, was contorted into the most extravagant shapes and decorative motives were usually non-representational, scroll-like forms, thin, vermicular, at times positively repulsive. Cabinets, tables, chairs, doors and
Fig. 236. ornaments all appear to have been moulded in a soft glutinous substance, or conversely to have melted in the heat of some subsequent holocaust. Structural members are no longer easily definable; backs and legs of chairs, door stiles and rails, window astragals and mullions, are all welded together and flow sluggishly into one another. Sensuous, undulating lines dominate and once again we recognise the same air of melancholy, the same indefinable 'maladie' that pervades the work of Beardsley and the Scottish group.

The epicentre of the new style was Brussels and it would appear that the cultural atmosphere of that city was particularly condusive to movements of this type. The ground had been well prepared by painters, sculptors and musicians of an original turn of mind who, for a decade or more, had enjoyed a hearing in the Belgian capital. Renoir, Cezanne, Van Gogh, Rodin, Debussy and many other progressives had from time to time presented their work to a critical and discriminating public. As early as 1881 a weekly periodical 'L'Art Moderne' had been launched by a group of far-sighted citizens, and a society of young artists formed Les XX.*

(Footnote: *Les XX - a group of young Belgian artists (1884-1893) founded largely at the instigation of Octave Maus (1856-1919) and Eduard Picard (1836-1924). Maus became secretary of Les XX and on its demise founded 'La Libre Estheteque' (1894). He had in fact induced Rodin, and Whistler, to the first exhibition in Brussels in 1884. Renoir appeared in 1886, Seurat in 1887 and Van Gogh in 1889. C/f. 'Space, Time and Architecture', S. Giedion, p.219.)

Fig. 236. Art Nouveau Furniture.

It was not until the early 1890's however, that l'art nouveau assumed tangible form in architecture and decoration. Its two principal exponents were Victor Horta (b.1861) and Henri van de Velde (b.1863). Although by general consent Horta appears to have initiated the style in his now famous house No;12 Rue de Turin, Van de Velde was undoubtedly its most influential exponent, and his writings and lectures made no little impression on contemporary thought.

No.12 Rue de Turin was completed in 1893 and represents a fundamental change in architectural design; it is notable principally for its flexible planning, arising from the intelligent use of cast iron and glass, employed hitherto in industrial and commercial buildings but not in domestic work. Then again, not only was the house entirely free from historical motives and specifically designed to meet the requirements of its owner, but the constructional elements, cast iron pillars and beams, were frankly displayed and woven into the general decorative scheme.

In the entrance hall for example,* the curving iron scrolls of the column and girders are echoed in the mural decoration and mosaic floor, the whole forming a strange composition of structural and surface pattern. Unlike Mackintosh's linear designs, Horta's writhing scrolls tell no story, they have no symbolic meaning; they exist merely as abstract pattern, cold, impersonal and expressionless. In this respect he differs fundamentally from the entire British school, a point which, one feels, corroborates the theory that the style as exemplified by Horta originated in iron construction, and that the whip-like vermiculations are no more than the unrolled iron volutes of a typical Belgian railway station roof.

Van de Velde's glyptic forms on the other hand were obviously derived from natural sources, though like Mackintosh he too seems to have sought inspiration in less familiar places. Formerly a painter, the Belgian is reputed to have followed the example of William Morris* when faced with the problem of finding

(Footnote: *Illustrated in 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement', p.88-9.)
*Giedion does not believe that Van de Velde merely emulated Morris. He points out that Belgium was the first European country to receive the full impact of the Industrial Revolution, but thirty years later than Britain, thus accounting for the late emergence of the new movement and, he says, "identical conditions led to identical reactions". This of course, is a debatable point for Van de Velde was well aware of Morris's activities and had the example of the English Art movement continually before him. "The seeds that fertilised our spirit, evoked our activities and originated the complete renewal of ornamentation and form in the decorative arts, were undoubtedly the work and influence of John Ruskin and William Morris" ..... Continued overleaf.

Van de Velde's 'Die Renaissance im Modernen Kunstgewerbe,' 1903, p.23, quoted by Pevsner in 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement', p.30. - Unlike Morris however, he embarked upon the difficult task of evolving a new style of decoration - and l'art nouveau remained essentially a decorative style - without recourse to the past.)

himself a house and furniture, and to have rebelled against contemporary standards of taste. It is said that he decided his family should not live in what he described as "immoral surroundings" and so he set to work to design a house and all its equipment.# This, his first architectural work, was completed in 1896 in the Avenue van der Raye, Uccle, a suburb of Brussels,* and was remarkably free from stylar caprice. He ignored the conventions of the period and produced facades of Voysey-like simplicity with windows varied in size and shape to meet the special needs of each room.

Fig. 238 a+b.

A curious sidelight is thrown on the Belgian's attitude to design by W. C. Behrendt+ who says that Van de Velde, once accused of distorting his materials, replied that he had been convinced for a long time of the inadequacy of wood for his designs, and that he anticipated the discovery of a more suitable material which could be cast." Unfortunately Behrendt does not say when this statement was made and it is capable of two interpretations. If made before 1900 for example, it is of some significance and helps to account for the extravagances in which the designer indulged, though it remains an extraordinary statement from the man who, in 1903, pleads for "a logical structure of products, uncompromising logic in the use of materials".e If on the other hand, it occurred after the turn of the century, it would appear that Van de Velde was attempting to explain away a fundamental weakness in his work, namely, the search for new forms for their own sake, irrespective of tradition, logic and the nature of the material in which they were executed.

Whatever criticism may now be made of Van de Velde's early work, he was highly esteemed by his more progressive contemporaries. In 1896 the German art critic A. J. Meier-Graefe, writing in 'The Studio' said, "

> "He is one of the few modern artists to bring to bear on his work those business-like qualities which are indispensible in an age like the present, with art and industry so closely allied; one whose delicate and genuinely artistic spirit does not blind him - good workman that he is - to the necessity of giving due prominence to the practical utilitarian

(Footnote: *Illustrated in 'Van de Velde' by Karl Ernst Osthaus.)

+'Modern Building', W. C. Behrendt, p.78-9.)

#Giedion, in 'Space, Time and Architecture', p.216.)

"It is claimed that a craftsman once refused point blank to execute one of Mackintosh's more extravagant designs because, he said, "God never intended wood to be tortured like that" - a criticism which might with justification be applied to a great deal of Van de Velde's early work, though the interior illustrated here from the Uccle house is sober enough, (designed c.1894-5).

eVan de Velde's 'Die Renaissance im Modernen Kunstgewerbe', quoted by Pevsner, p.31.)

Fig. 238. Van de Velde:

a. House at Uccle, 1895-6.

b. " " " Dining-room.

b

side of his work. To my mind Van de Velde possesses a combination of qualities of so rare a kind as to place him first among the artists of Europe today. He stands alone among the decorative workers in his genuine craftsmanship, in his absolute, certain knowledge of the necessities of his art". ... *

Meier-Graefe and S. Bing, the Parisian art dealer, were responsible for introducing Van de Velde to the French public. Both had visited the Uccle house and had been captivated by the versatility and creative genius of the Belgian designer+ and when Bing opened his shop in La Rue de Provence in the French capital (1896), Van de Velde was invited to design four apartments. L'art nouveau thus made its French debut and was greeted either with vociferous enthusiasm by the progressives, or with vituperation by the purists. Soon however, the new style began to compete for popularity with fashionable work in the English manner. In the spring of 1897, the year in which Gleeson White introduced 'The Four' to Europe through the medium of 'The Studio', an exhibition of decorative art was held in the Salon du Champs de Mars, and already the influence of the new art was clearly visible. Charles Plumet (1861-1928), Tony Selmersheim, and Felix Aubert, were singled out for especial mention in the English journals. Thus, within twelve months l'art nouveau was firmly established, and Van de Velde had secured an influential following. Many designers of widely varying talents, eagerly embraced the new style: Serrurier Bovy, Bellery-Desfontaines, E. Gallé, L. Majorelle and many others, started to produce a quantity of work which for whimsicality and bizarrerie has rarely been equalled.

In 1897 Van de Velde exhibited in Dresden and gave added impetus to the work of a group of young German artists who had begun experimenting with new decorative forms some years earlier - notably August Endell (1871-1925) architect, Otto Eckmann (1865-1902) formerly a painter, and Hermann Obrist (1863-1927) who had brought his embroidery workshop to Munich from Florence in the same year.

Munich had for some time been one of the most progressive cities in Europe and, like Brussels, was to become a veritable storm centre of the revolt against the academicians. The trouble

(Footnote: *'The Studio', Vol.9, p.40, October, 1896.)
+In contrast, an amusing story is recorded in a book on Toulouse Lautrec by Gotthard Jedlicka. The distinguished French painter is reputed to have remarked to his friend Joynant on the way home after calling on Van de Velde, "Well, the only successes are the bathroom, the nursery painted with white enamel and the W.C." - Quoted by W. C. Behrendt in 'Modern Building', p.88-89.)

began in 1891 after an exhibition of work by the Glasgow School of Painters - Macaulay Stevenson, Hendry, Hornel and the rest. As elsewhere, the atmospheric canvases of 'The Boys of Glasgow' fomented a deal of controversy and directly inspired the foundation of the Munich Secession.

A revival in the applied arts of Germany and Central Europe was long overdue also. The entire field of furniture design was dominated by the upholsterers and there had never existed a popular middle-class style. The craving for luxury which followed the Franco-German war was met by a superabundance of ornament, gold lacquer and stucco. In Germany herself, there was the so-called 'Biedermaier' style of the south, a Teutonic variation of the French 'Empire', and further east in Austria, similar tendencies prevailed. W. Fred, writing of the 1880's and 90's in 'The Studio' says:-

> "In Vienna, Hans Makart, the leader of society, imparted soft Eastern customs into the rooms and bedecked everything with carpets, Indian shawls, and Persian textures. A reign of colour began; form and outline were nothing. In Imperial Germany it was still worse. There imitation reigned supreme. As the only impression deemed worthy of attainment was that of wealth, of splendour, so gold, rich mouldings, and heavy furniture predominated". *

The opulence of the well-to-do was copied in humbler materials by the middle-classes, in varnish, lacquer, papier mâché and veneer.

Against this background the popularity of l'art nouveau can perhaps be better understood. Its sinuous forms and softened outlines provided a welcome relief to the ponderous formality of the average interior and within two years of Van de Velde's exhibition at Dresden, a German version of the style was securely established. The strange furniture of Josef Pankok appeared and Richard Riemerschmid, Wilhelm Bertsch, H. E. von Berlepsch and others formulated their own interpretation in Munich, Leipzig and elsewhere.

Thus by the turn of the century l'art nouveau was entrenched in Europe. It had radiated fanwise from Brussels and the perimeter of its advance can be traced in a great arc extending from Berlin in the north-east to Paris in the south. It penetrated to Warsaw, and to Breslau on the Oder, to Dresden and Prague on the upper Elbe, to Darmstadt and Munich on the Central European plateau and eastwards to Vienna and Budapesth in the Danube basin.

(Footnote: *Volume 24, October, 1901, p.23.)

Few countries escaped entirely from its influence. The Channel and the North Sea (and the leaders of the English Arts and Crafts movement) however, seem to have proved an insuperable obstacle in the west, and contemporary British journals carry little evidence of the exciting events taking place abroad. Some indication of the hostility with which continental innovations were received in Britain may be gathered from the following incident which admirably reflects the temper of the times. Mr. George Donaldson, vice-president of the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900, made a gift of a collection of art nouveau furniture to the Victoria and Albert Museum - chairs by S. Bing, cabinets by Louis Majorelle, A. Darras, Emile Galle and others. He is reported to have observed that during the preceding decade - and these are his exact words:-

> "a remarkable and distinct art development had taken place all over Europe, causing a mercantile change of quite exceptional proportions, but one of which England was* practically unconscious".

This innocent, kindly intentioned revelation, evoked a tirade of abuse from the Arts and Crafts Society, who were by no means ignorant of the "mercantile change". Lewis F. Day (1845-1910), described as the most distinguished industrial artist of his generation, opened an outspoken attack on l'art nouveau with a letter to the 'British Architect' in which he said amongst other things:-

> "It is the delirious art of men raving to do something new, oblivious in their rage alike of use and beauty"

and of the furniture in question:-

> "Whatever the munificence of the donor, it ought never to have been accepted and ought not to be sent on circulation". ÷

John Belcher, R.A., Reginald T. Blomfield, Mervyn Macartney, Edward S. Prior - then rallied to the cause and voiced their protest in 'The Times' - and by so doing, gave the furniture a great deal of unintentional publicity. It is not stated whether or not the exhibition went on tour, but the powers arraigned against the Donaldson bequest were formidable indeed, and no doubt achieved their objective.

The same attitude of mind was apparent the following year (1902) when Messrs. Waring & Gillow sponsored a book 'Our Homes and How to Beautify Them' in which the Glasgow designers and the

(Footnote:-*That is, before his gift.)
÷'The British Architect' 28th June, 1901.)

exponents of continental art nouveau were subjected to bitter recrimination by an anonymous writer - perhaps Day - who saw in their work nothing but "a debased invention suggestive of the incoherences of delirium".

L'art nouveau was not the only movement afoot in Europe however, nor was Van de Velde the sole propagator of a new gospel at the turn of the century. Many continental designers assiduously followed the activities of William Morris and Company and the English Arts and Crafts societies. The high quality of English domestic architecture and furniture, and the pioneer work of men like Voysey, though by no means as stridently original as that of the Van de Velde School, was greatly admired for its sobriety and reticence. In fact, George Walton, Baillie Scott, C. R. Ashbee, Voysey and others, frequently exhibited abroad and executed many commissions in Europe during the late 1890's. Baillie Scott seems to have been an especial favourite in Germany and Austria, where English influence was strong.

The art revival in Central Europe is of particular importance to this study and it is significant that the tide of secession was comparatively late in reaching Vienna, always a noted stronghold of conservatism. The Viennese Academy persistently discouraged foreign exhibitors at the Kunstlerhaus - the equivalent of the Royal Academy - ostensibly in order to preserve the home market for native artists, and, in consequence, the public by and large was kept in ignorance of contemporary developments in the west. In the spring of 1894 however, work by British artists was shown in the capital, and in addition to paintings by the English academicians, Alma Tadema, Leighton and Hokomer, there appeared for the first time, canvases by the Glasgow School of Painters. Here, as at Munich, the outcome was dramatic and far-reaching. Within a few months conservative elements in the Academy had been outvoted, and in December (1894) the previously ostracised Munich Secessionist group was invited to exhibit in the Kunstlerhaus. Several young artists were then elected members of the selection committee and further exhibitions of modern work were held in spite of bitter opposition from the old school.

After the initial enthusiasm had died down differences of opiinion soon began to show within the reformed administration. In the Spring of 1897 the younger men withdrew from the jury and formed an independent society - 'The Secession' - modelled on the Munich Secession. Among the founders of the new group were Josef Hoffmann, J. M. Olbrich (1867-1908) architects,

Gustav Klimt, (b.1862), Carl Moll and Baron Felixian von Myrbach painters. The purpose of the movement is summarised by Ludwig Hevesi in these words -

> "to counter the academic and commercial elements which formerly had too great a limiting influence on art and to give art a free, personal and artistic background".

Exhibitions were held regularly with the objective of bringing together under one roof, work by progressive foreign artists and that of native painters, sculptors and craftsmen.

The foundation of the Viennese Secession was followed by the resignation of the Archduke Rainer as Protector of the Austrian Museum, and in 1899 of Hofrat von Storch as Director of the Kunstgewerbeschuler (Arts and Crafts Schools), a position he had held for thirty years. Von Storch was succeeded by Baron Felixian von Myrbach, a man who, though destined for an army career, distinguished himself as an artist, and after spending some sixteen years in Paris, had returned to Vienna and joined the Secessionists. Von Myrbach excelled as an organiser and teacher, and was successful in gathering together a devoted band of young and earnest instructors, including several of his friends and associates in the Secession - Josef Hoffmann (architecture), Koloman Moser and Alfred Roller (decorative and applied art), Arthur Strasser (sculpture).

The salutory effect of this transformation can be well imagined, and within a few years von Myrbach had succeeded in revitalising every branch of the arts in the capital. Furthermore, his progressive policy had repercussions throughout central Europe, for teachers trained at the Kunstgewerbeschulen were much sought after, and carried the message of the revival far beyond the confines of Austria.

The Vienna Secessionists made their debut in the applied arts at an important exhibition - the Jubilee Arts and Crafts Exhibition - held in the building of the Gartenbaugesellschaft in the Spring of 1898. For the first time work in the 'modern' manner was shown to the general public and its success was instantaneous. Here, according to a contemporary critic,* the old style lost the battle against the new. The interiors and furniture of two members of the Secession, J. M. Olbrich and

(Footnote:- *Hevesi.)

Josef Hoffmann, attracted particular attention: Olbrich by his elaborate forms and free use of colour in the Makart tradition, Hoffmann by his obvious concern with practical problems, and by the elegant simplicity of his work.

Hoffmann designed the Secessionist Room and the Secretariat*, both of which were conspicuous for their relative plainness. All unnecessary ornament was eliminated; the chairs and tables were severely utilitarian and soundly constructed; the walls were plain and framed at the corners, cornice and dado by narrow unmoulded wooden straps. The only incongruous note was struck by occasional pieces, as for example, vases on draped pedestals and a pair of topheavy cabinets.

Naturally Hoffmann's work did not appeal to everyone and it is evident that by no means all the Viennese were eager to exchange the luxurious opulence of Makart for such studied austerity. One observer complained that the unconscious "too much" of the past was being opposed merely by the conscious "too little" of the present.

Olbrich on the other hand, represented a second stream within the orbit of the Secessionist movement and his arrangement of the central hall of the exhibition followed contemporary fashion more closely. Arrangement, in fact, seems a misnomer, for the exhibits - pictures, furniture, textiles, plants and bric-a-brac of all descriptions seem to have been assembled in a manner reminiscent of an antique shop, the very antithesis of Hoffmann's careful dispositions.

The significance of the work of the two friends could not be overlooked and it was obvious that here at least was the beginning of a new style which, in both its forms, was native to Austria, and would serve to counteract the ferment of alien art nouveau.

At the Munich Secessionist Exhibition in the following year (1899)+ this point was driven home, for work by the Viennese designers appeared alongside the writhing voluptuous forms of Van de Velde and Pankok. An interior of a 'Men's Room' by Olbrich, though dark and heavy and much overloaded with furniture,

(Footnote: *Illustrated 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration', Vol.3, 1898, p.197 and 'Ver Sacrum', May-June 1898, p.5 et seq. Also at this exhibition were paintings by E. A. Walton, brother of George Walton, J. S. Sargent and Frank Brangwyn.)

+Illustrated 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration', Vol.4, 1899, p.484 et seq.)

nevertheless possessed qualities of repose, and sobriety that were lacking elsewhere. Hoffmann exhibited some excellent furniture, notably a beautifully proportioned and exquisitely made display cabinet for silver. The base consisted of a tall, narrow chest of drawers, above which was an open shelf surmounted by a small cupboard glazed with square panes - two small areas of low relief carving and white metal drawer-pulls provided the only accents, otherwise the piece was devoid of ornament of any kind. In this piece he achieved the simplicity of Voysey and the originality of Mackintosh without the stylar mannerisms which date the work of both British designers. The incidence of the square as a decorative motive in Hoffmann's work symbolises his rejection of l'art nouveau: its emphatic unity and uncompromising form - the antithesis of the slender curve - admirably suited his purpose, and it became one of the distinguishing features of the Viennese School.

One can hardly overestimate the importance of this early work by Hoffmann and it is obvious from the illustrations of contemporary interiors that he alone of the continental secessionists had captured something of the spirit of the 20th century. ~~In the cabinet described above~~

In the Autumn of 1900 the Viennese Secessionists held the important exhibition to which 'The Four' were invited. It seems curious ~~and~~ perhaps that Mackintosh and his friends should have made their European debut in Vienna, and yet interest in Scotland and more particularly in Glasgow, was especially strong in central Europe where the pioneer work of the Scottish painters less than a decade before had met with such success. It was not altogether fortuitous therefore that, following the publicity given to 'The Four' by Gleeson White in 1897, Mackintosh's first continental commission should come from Munich (1898), from, it may be assumed, the editor of 'Dekorative Kunst' who published the first illustrations of his work in a foreign journal. Having found the Glasgow School of Painters so stimulating the Secessionists no doubt eagerly anticipated a similar experience from the work of the Glasgow School of Designers. Nor do the results suggest that they were disappointed, for it was immediately after the completion of the interior decoration and furnishing of Herr Bruckmann's home (1899), that the Viennese group invited 'The Four' to send work to the Secession Haus.

The incidence of the work of the Glasgow Painters thus provides a valuable clue to the apparently unaccountable popularity of the Glasgow School of Art coterie in Munich and Vienna at the turn of the century.

On the whole, the interiors and furniture exhibited at the Secession Haus in 1900 followed the familiar contemporary pattern. Most of the work was heavy, elaborate and over decorated. Exhibits were frequently overcrowded or placed in isolated groups, and there was no single dominant theme either in colour or in arrangement. The small Scottish section thus stood out by sheer contrast. The unity of purpose of 'The Four' and the variation they achieved within that unity was not lost on the Austrians; every aspect of the Glasgow style - not least its strange mysticism - was widely discussed in the capital.

The Scottish contribution, and most notably Mackintosh's contribution to this exhibition, has been examined in detail elsewhere, and it is Hoffmann's work which must occupy our attention here.

The individual pieces exhibited by the Austrian designer make interesting comparison with Mackintosh's designs. The
Fig.150b. dining-room chairs illustrated here are certainly more practical than the Scotsman's high-backed variety and by no means less attractive. The table, but for its white paint, might well have come from MacNair's studio, and the tall severely functional cabinet might be a Mackintosh design stripped of its beaten metal and leaded glass. Other pieces by Hoffmann* are just as remarkable for their elegant modernity, and though they may be more closely alligned with the Arts and Crafts movement than the Glasgow style, they too demonstrate the independence of their designer. Their lack of ornament would have satisfied Loos, their form and proportion would have delighted Voysey, and their exquisite craftsmanship gratified the most exacting critic of the English School. Plain unmoulded surfaces dominate, all metal details - lock plates, handles and the like, are of the simplest kind, and seldom does a single sensuous curve obtrude. Moreover, this work appeared against a background of white walls and delicately patterned, charming wallpaper.

It has for long been fashionable to claim that the Austrian designer modelled his work on Mackintosh, but all the evidence examined by the author would indicate that this was not so. No single published illustration has been forthcoming of an interior in Mackintosh's mature style, nor even of one of his white rooms, before the turn of the century. The Mains Street flat was decorated and furnished, probably in the Spring of 1900, and

(Footnote: *Illustrated in 'Dekorative Kunst', Vol.4, p.176, et seq.)

though it approximates most closely to Hoffmann's work at the exhibition, it is inconceivable that there had been liason between the two men. In any case their furniture bears individual characteristics that makes nonsense of the suggestion of plagiarism at this stage, despite a strong superficial resemblance. If there had been collusion it must have taken place some years earlier before such strong personal traits developed, and the investigator is thrown back again upon the mysterious interior designed by Mackintosh for an unnamed client in Munich two years earlier.* Did he personally supervise this work? If so, did he visit Vienna and meet Hoffmann? If this meeting occurred, who influenced whom - for Mackintosh had no outstanding interiors to his credit in 1898 although work was progressing on the School of Art, but Hoffmann was one of the leading lights in the Secession and a teacher at the Vienna Academy? These problems are impossible of solution without careful research on the continent. The evidence would indicate however, that each designer worked independently, and having a common admiration for English work - especially that of Voysey - arrived at similar conclusions. "Professor Hoffmann's great aim", said A. S. Levetus in 1905, "is to follow in the steps of Ruskin and William Morris, and to create a home of art in Vienna".+

Illustrations of Hoffmann's work at the Vienna Exhibition demonstrate that, if anything, he had made greater strides than his Scottish friend. His furniture on the whole betrays fewer personal idiosyncracies, and is seldom eccentric. Take away the litter of voluptuous vases, and the repulsive glass ornaments and many of his exhibits would not readily be dated earlier than the 1914-18 War - a test few of Mackintosh's pieces would survive.

What then did Mackintosh contribute to the Art Revival in Central Europe?

The complete answer to this question is not to be found in the material superficialities of style, for, as we have observed, the Secessionists had already evolved two distinct interpretations of the modern idiom - one of which (Hoffmann's) had many points in common with that of the Scottish designer - before the Glasgow coterie arrived on the scene: it lies rather in the psychological field - and is none the less tangible on that account.

(Footnote: *See Chapter VII, Page 147.)
+'Modern Decorative Art in Austria', - 'The Studio Special', 1905.)

Fig. 247. a. Typical Interior by Olbrich;
Paris Exhibition, 1900.

b. Characteristic work by Van de Velde (1898):
The Salon Keller & Reiner - Entrance Hall.

a

b

It will be remembered that J. M. Olbrich was summoned to Darmstadt in 1899, the year in which his friend and colleague Hoffmann, was appointed Professor at the Academy. Hoffmann thus found himself virtually alone in a very difficult situation. He was called upon to preserve a balance between the Secessionists on the one hand, with whom his sympathies lay, and reactionary elements in the Academy and elsewhere who advocated a return to the safe harbour of tradition.

In these circumstances, the work of the Scottish Group, and especially of Mackintosh whose leadership never seems to have been in doubt for a moment, assumed new significance. It demonstrated that a virile new movement with aims and objectives closely allied to the Secession, was afoot in Britain, the home of propriety and good taste. Moreover, that the centre of the movement lay in the west of Scotland, in Glasgow, a city which, as we have seen already, ranked high in the estimation of European artistic circles.

'The Four' thus spoke with a voice of authority and the whole weight of their contribution was thrown into the balance in support of Hoffmann's thesis. Mackintosh's white walls and simple furniture, his delicately coloured and ingeniously contrived points of interest and the studied austerity of his arrangements gave added force to Hoffmann's arguments - his was the voice of the foreign prophet. His conception of the room as a work of art in which every detail must form an integral part of, and be subordinated to the whole - an important aspect of interior design which had escaped the Austrians - was siezed upon with enthusiasm. The entire Viennese movement, with Hoffmann at its head, suddenly came to life, and the next three or four years saw the outpouring of a mass of decorative work and furnishing of an extremely high order, all bearing a striking superficial resemblance to that of Mackintosh but revealing a wealth of original detail and a conception of the underlying principles of the new movement, which often transcended that of the Scottish architect himself. Illustrations given here of interiors designed prior to 1905 by Hoffmann and his pupils - Leopold Bauer, Hans Offner, Otto Prutscher, Josef Urban and others* - admirably demonstrate this point and make interesting comparison with work executed in Austria before the turn of the century. And yet there was no suggestion of plagiarism. The subjective linear patterns, the sensuous curves

Fig. 248a - h.

(Footnote: *Paradoxically enough, it is to these men that Mackintosh turned for inspiration some ten years later when he designed the interior of Bassett Lowke's house at Northampton and the sources on which he drew can be clearly recognised by comparing the illustrations in the appendix with those given here.)

Fig. 248. Dusseldorf Exhibition, 1902:

a. Interior by Josef Hoffmann.
b. " and Fountain by Josef Hoffmann and R. Luksch.

Josef Urban:

c. Winter Garden, Vienna.

Leopold Baur:

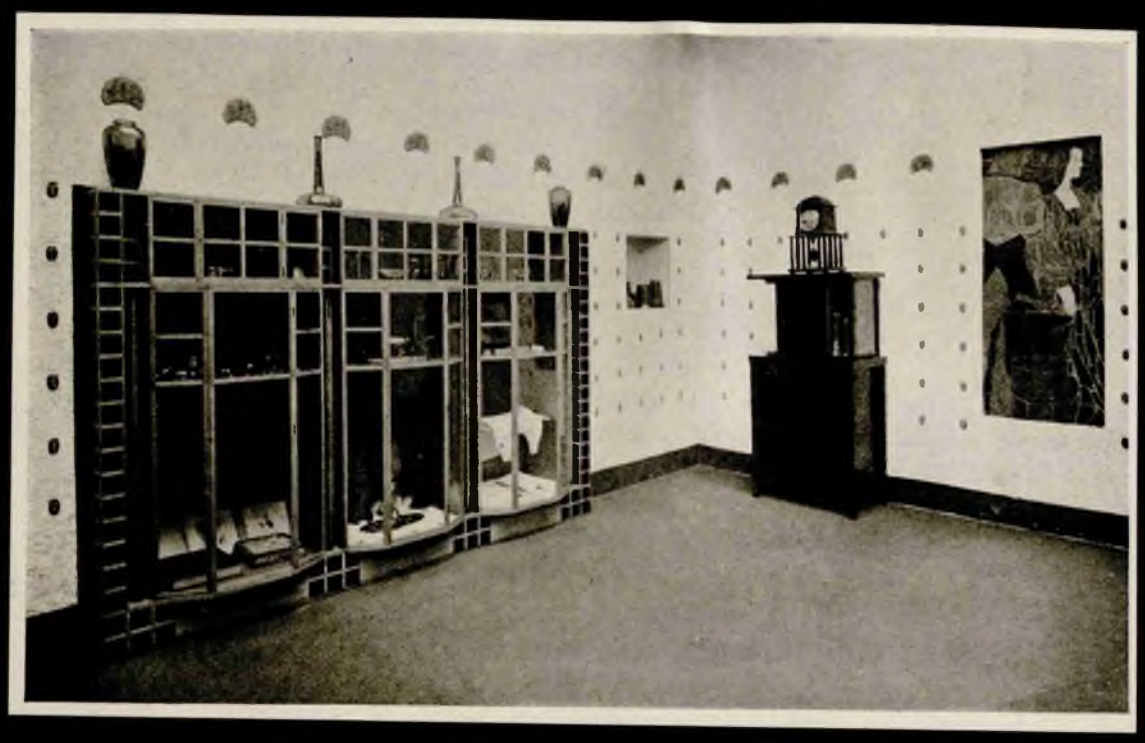
d. Children's Room.
e. Kitchen.

Hans Offner:

f. Card Room.

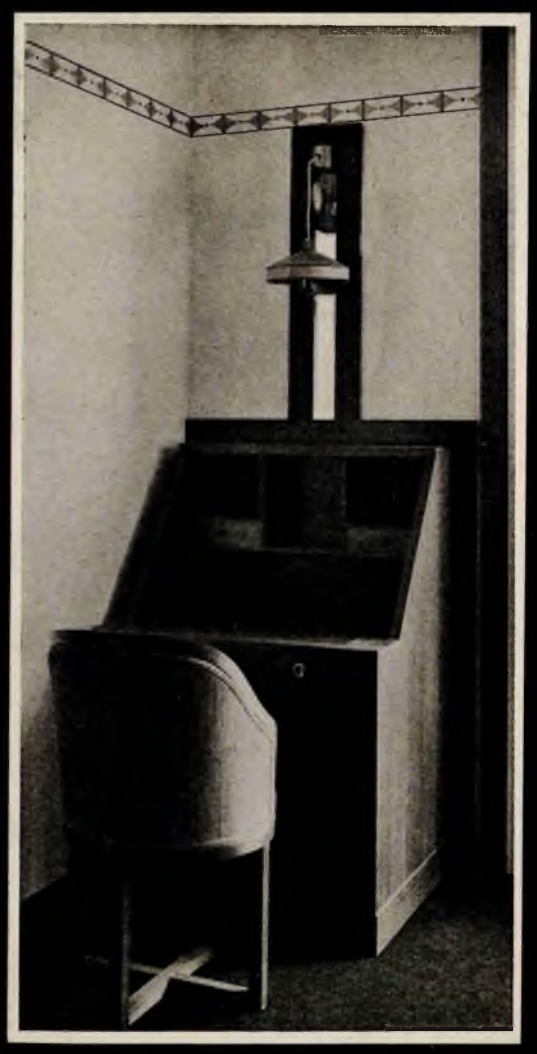
Josef Hoffmann:

g. Desk and Chairs.
h. Wardrobe.

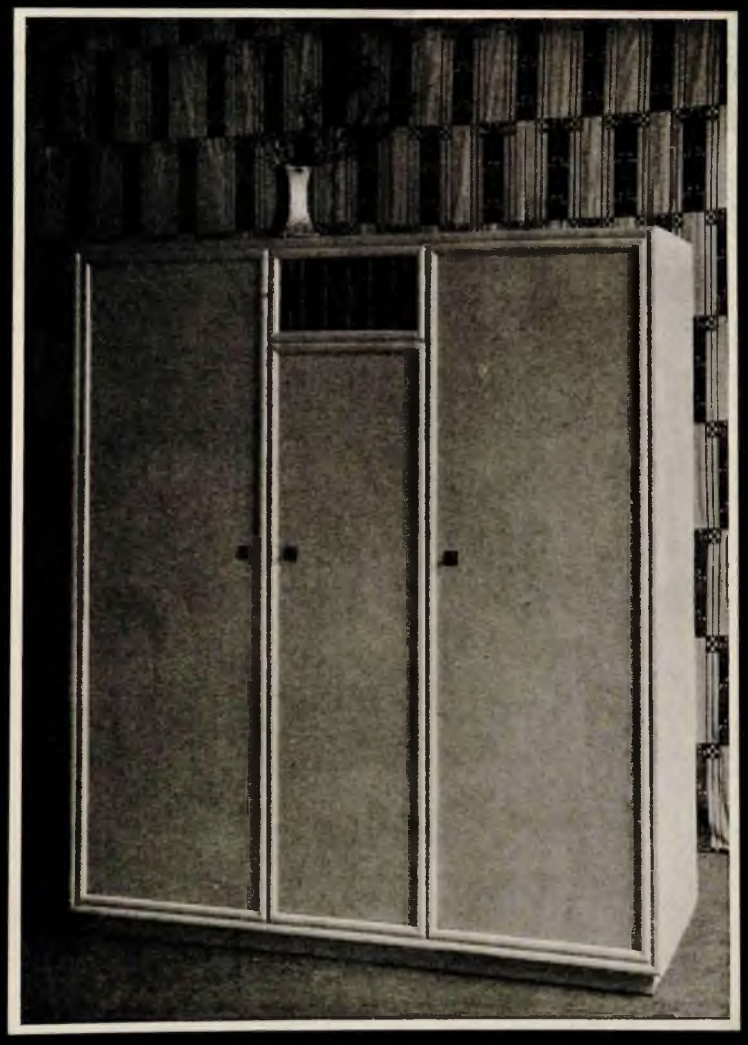


f

g



h



and the mysterious symbolism of the Scottish artists, was discarded as surely and as firmly as the stylistic caprices of continental art nouveau, and a distinctly independent Viennese style emerged.

Mackintosh and his friends thus provided an incentive, a powerful directive force, at the moment when it was most needed. The importance of his contribution to the revival in Austria cannot be over-emphasised for, under Hoffmann, Vienna in turn rapidly achieved universal recognition as one of the most progressive centres of the new movement in Europe.

Before proceeding to discuss the architectural repercussions of the Secessionist movement in the minor arts, it is necessary to digress for a moment and to examine the claim frequently advanced in recent years that Mackintosh derived his peculiar style from continental sources; a popular misconception held in fact, by Walter Crane and his friends as early as 1896. When seeking a suitable epithet for the work of 'The Four' these active members of the English Arts and Crafts Society could think of nothing more derogatory than to classify them with the despised perpetrators of l'art nouveau. The same point of view is clearly expressed in the book 'Our Homes and How to Beautify Them'* where a reproduction of the dining room of Mackintosh's Haus eines Kunstfreundes appeared as an illustration to a chapter 'L'Art Nouveau on the Continent':

> "The aesthetic movement in its maddest moments," said the writer, "was never half so mad as this ..... In like manner the Scotto-Continental 'New Art' threatens with its delirious fantasies to make the movement for novelty a target for the shafts of scoffers and a motive for the laughter of the saner seven-eighths of mankind."

and again:-

> "The authors of these dreadful designs, lacking artistic inventiveness, have been driven to seek originality in fantastic forms remote from any connection with Art."

This attitude is excusable for the characteristics evinced by the Glasgow designers demand that they should be included in the generic term 'art nouveau' where the term is used to signify a style of painting and decoration. Within that group however, they formed a singularly independent school.

Reference to the early phase of the European movement outlined in this chapter will discount the implication that Mackintosh was inspired in any real sense by continental work

(Footnote: *Published by Waring and Gillow - author anonymous. ~~C/f. Chapter Page~~)

in the applied arts. It is fairly certain that Horta's innovations at No.12 Rue de Turin were unknown in Britain until the late 1890's and Van de Velde is mentioned for the first time in 'The Studio' in October 1896,* and then only in relation to his achievements as a bookbinder. The Belgian designer does not appear to have achieved notoriety until he was 'discovered' by Bing after the completion of the Uccle house, (also 1896), and by that time the style of the Glasgow Group was fully matured and they had exhibited in London. It is just possible of course, that Mackintosh knew of Horta and of Van de Velde, if for example, he visited Liége before or during the exhibition of Glasgow students' work in 1895+ though this is most unlikely. On the other hand Fra Newbery may have brought word home of developments in Belgium. Without material evidence this would hardly be sufficient to alter the course of events in Glasgow, and there is nothing to suggest that a reciprocal exhibition was held in the Scottish city.‖ Then again, although the Munich Secession was founded in 1891, it was concerned essentially with the fine arts. The first 'Studio' article⊖ reporting the existence of a German separatist movement was devoted exclusively to this aspect. It could not have had the slightest effect on 'The Four' - except, that is, in so far as it provided them with additional moral support.%

If unbiased contemporary evidence is required,however, it can be found in the well-written anonymous dissertation on 'Scottish Artists' published by Koch in 'Dekorative Kunst'.⊥ After drawing attention to the remarkable similarity between wine glasses designed by MacNair and those of Koepping, between the fabrics of Mackintosh and those of Obrist, between the 'windows' (leaded glass?) of MacNair and Van de Velde, the writer emphasises the fact that contact between the artists was out of the question.

> "..... we are in a position to state", he says, "that this (plagiarism) cannot be the case because we have seen the Scottish work at a time when none of the other works had been published,"

(Footnote: *Vol.9, p.40.)

+See Chapter I, Page 36.)

‖The author was unable to get confirmation on either point from Mr. Newbery and all the existing evidence of Mackintosh's continental visits was discussed in Chapter VII.)

⊖'The Secessionists of Germany' by G. W. 'The Studio' Vol.4.p.24.)

⊥November 1898 - This is the first article on Mackintosh so far discovered by the author in a continental journal - one year earlier than that noted by Dr. Pevsner in 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement' p.221. It is signed 'Gamma' and the style suggests Muthesius.)

%See also Figs. 250 a. & b.)

Fig. 250.a. & b.

250a. 'The Three Brides' by Jan Toorop, a Dutch artist of Indo-Javanese descent.
This "odd, fantastic, sibylline production" was illustrated in 'The Studio' in 1893, Vol.I, No.6 page 247, and gave additional impetus to the work of 'The Four'. Toorop's treatment of heads and hair and his writhing, undulating, linear rhythms, found an immediate echo in the drawings of Herbert MacNair (C/f. Figure 250b.) and to a lesser degree in the work of the Macdonald sisters.


J HERBERT McNAIR HIS BOOK
THEY'RE AROMATIC CLOTHS THAT HOLD
THE MIND EMBALM'D IN EVERY FOLD

and then he goes on to make the observation that has been noted hitherto -

> "Evidently there are certain things in the air which affect our movement in spite of all nationalism and which are all the more easily explained in the knowledge that these things are concerned with purely objective logic and technical questions".

This interesting assessment of the situation from the continental point of view is endorsed by Herbert MacNair himself who assured the author that 'The Four' were unaffected by outside influences, for, he asserted,

> ".... the work of our little group was certainly not in the very least inspired by any continental movements - Indeed we knew little about these until we were well away on our own endeavours". *

The Periodicals. One of the most noticeable phenomena accompanying the art revival in Europe, and in fact an indispensable adjunct to it, was the appearance or re-orientation of numerous illustrated periodicals of 'The Studio' type. During the 1890's the format of existing magazines was greatly improved, and they became excellent vehicles for the propagation of the new gospel. The indefatigable architect-publisher, Alexander Koch, was the most progressive and versatile propagandist of the movement. He had in fact, already launched 'Academy Architecture' in London in 1888 with the commendable objective of bringing together "a selection of the most prominent Architectural Drawings hung at the Royal Academy Exhibitions and interesting contemporary Architectural subjects designed in Great Britain and abroad".† His continental journals however, were much more elegantly produced: 'Innendekoration', first issued in 1890,‖ was for a time devoted to period decoration, then in 1894 work by several English designers was illustrated, followed by examples of l'art nouveau and projects by the Secessionists. 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration' published by Koch at Darmstadt, and 'Dekorative Kunst' published at Munich and edited by H. Bruckmann both appeared in 1897, and in 1899 Bruckmann launched 'Die Kunst'.⊖ 'Ver Sacrum' (mouthpiece of the Viennese Secessionists) appeared first in January 1898⊥ and from the beginning displayed the most advanced work of the Austrian school. Josef Hoffmann, Kolomon Moser and Gustav Klimt dominate the early numbers, all of which are pervaded

(Footnote: *Letter to the author, 8th June, 1944.)

†Introductory notes to 'Academy Architecture', Vol.1.)

‖C/f. Pevsner's 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement', p.218.)

⊖The early numbers of these magazines are not available in this country.)

⊥Copies of this journal are housed in the Victoria & Albert Museum.

by the familiar air of mournful sadness. This varies in intensity from the dramatic woodcuts of Moser and the sombre ladies of Klimt, to horribly repulsive animals and insects drawn by the painter Rudolf Bacher - creatures of the pit, obviously conjured up by a student of folk lore and of Grimm. Hoffmann seems to have played little part in this phase, and he contributed many fascinating decorative patterns in black and white, and in colour - 'Buchschmuck' - often based on flower and plant forms, and closely allied to Mackintosh's linear experiments. They too formed a valuable source on which the artist subsequently drew for much of his decorative work.

These journals, together with Koch's revitalised 'Innendekoration', constituted a formidable quintet which supplemented the French magazines 'Art et Decoration' and 'L'Art Decoratif' and exerted an incalculable influence upon the trend of events abroad. They dealt not only with painting and sculpture, exhibitions, the applied arts, and interior design generally, but, like 'The Studio', frequently carried informed articles on modern building by the most progressive architects of the day, thereby admirably supplementing the more prosaic professional journals.

The advent of the periodicals, however, does not mean that the European secessionists found the transition from applied art to architecture any less difficult in the early stages than did Mackintosh and the English architects. The initial skirmishes had still to be fought by individuals, and if we would discover the first signs of the new movement on the continent it is necessary to return again to Austria, to Vienna. Here, on 13th July, 1841, was

Otto Wagner.

born Otto Wagner (1841-1918), one of the greatest figures in modern architectural history. Wagner was educated at the Gymnasium, Kremsmunster, and the Vienna Polytechnic. He received his architectural training at the Königliche Bauschule, Berlin and then under August Siccardsburg* at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. Siccardsburg, it is interesting to observe, was one of the most progressive of the older generation of Viennese architects and an advocate of the importance of structural principles. The Academy, and for that matter the entire architectural field, was dominated by a well established and influential group of architects of the old

(Footnote: *Siccardsburg with Van der Nüll designed the Vienna Opera House - built 1861-8.)

school, the 'Gothic' Schmidt,* the 'Greek' Hansen,+ and the 'Cinquecentist' Ferstl,¤ all of whom, with the architect Hasenauer,⊖ were responsible for the Ringstrasse and the first great development of the city. Brought up and trained in this environment it is not surprising that for a time Wagner himself was immersed in classicism. He soon realised however, that the monumental formalism of his contemporaries was entirely divorced from reality, and he could not reconcile their elaborate essays in brick and stucco with the rapid progress made in the field of science and engineering. If architecture were again to become a living force, he argued, old building methods and outmoded stylistic formulae must be discarded; moreover it would be necessary to exploit new materials and to take advantage of modern structural techniques if a new style were to emerge.

Wagner had little opportunity of developing his thesis until he was applinted successor to Frederick Schmidt as Director of the Academie der Bildenden Kunst, Vienna, in 1894. His inaugural lecture⊥ came as a most unwelcome revelation to his colleagues. He expressed the opinion that architecture should reflect and yet be subservient to the requirements of modern life: the architect should have wisdom to perceive needs as they arise and even to anticipate them. He went further, and in this allied himself with theorists of a later school, by saying that, having satisfied the practical requirements of a building and selected appropriate materials, style and form should follow naturally. In other words, style must arise largely from function and should not be something predetermined or applied. This philosophy cut right across the teaching of a century and made nonsense of the sugar-cake architecture of the Ringstrasse. It was greeted with derision by the profession in general yet hailed with delight by the younger generation by whom it was welcomed as a portent of revival in a profession which appeared universally degenerate.

(Footnote: *The Austrian architect Schmidt was responsible for the Rathaus, a German Gothic structure with Italian detail - built 1872-1884.)

+Hansen built the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in 1874-6, and the House of Parliament - once described as "the most satisfactory example in Europe of modern work in Greek style". 'Transactions of the R.I.B.A.' Vol.IV, 1888, p.27 et seq.)

¤Ferstl built the Museum of Applied Art and the Technical Art School (1868-71) and the University (1885).

⊖Von Hasenauer, with the architect Gottfried Semper, built the elaborate Imperial Museum for Art and Natural History (1872-84) and the Court Theatre.)

⊥Published in 1895 under the title 'Modern Architecture'.)

Wagner's outspoken opinions brought him in frequent conflict with the authorities, and comparatively few of his major schemes reached maturity. He was in practice in Vienna when work on the Ringstrasse commenced and during the late 1890's was busily engaged on projects of all descriptions; these he worked out in minutest detail, regardless of whether they would be executed or not. His well-known designs for the Metropolitan Railway were interspersed by work for commercial, public and private undertakings: the Osterreichische Landerbank; an ambitious project for an Academy of Fine Arts on the outskirts of the city (1898) - a model of which was shown at the second Secessionist Exhibition; a scheme for the Museum der Gypsabgusse Vienna (1896); a block of flats in the Friedrichstrasse (1899) and so forth. All these projects however, retain their classical proportions, and the architect's predilection for surface decoration often detracts from the charm and originality of his work. One of Wagner's cleanest and most advanced designs was the Post Office Savings Bank (Postparkasse), Vienna (1905), which is especially notable for its fine interior court roofed in glass,* a feature described by Giedion as "without doubt one of the most uncompromising rooms of the first years of the twentieth century". The building was constructed of brick, but the ground and first floors were faced externally with rusticated granite slabs 10 cms. thick, the upper storeys veneered in marble 2 cms. thick. The slabs were secured to the wall by stone cramps 12 cms. long and 4 cms. wide which appeared on the surface as small circular studs - reminiscent of rivet heads. The attic storey was faced with panels of black glass secured by aluminium studs and embellished with the architect's favourite wreath motive. This frank modern expression of the use of veneer is admirable, but here again the proportions and fenestration of the building, its neo-classical details, broad cornice, wreaths and garlands, and figure sculpture demonstrate that even at this time the architect could not free himself entirely from tradition.

Fig.259b.

Post-parkasse Vienna, 1905.

Fig. 254.

Wagner's thorough comprehension of planning problems and his wide knowledge of the fundamentals of engineering and of structural form, imbued his buildings with dignity and monumentality, but they were invariably overlaid with a veneer of ornament in what he chose to call 'Free Renaissance' - a style combining familiar classical motives with new ones of a distinctly personal nature allied to l'art nouveau. In this respect, and despite his advanced theories, he always remained essentially a child of the age.

(Footnote:*Illustrated Giedion, p.240.)

Fig. 254. Post Office Savings Bank,
(Postparkasse), Vienna, 1905,
by Otto Wagner.

(See also Figs.259 a. & b.)

He was however, a fine teacher, and though apparently unable himself to carry his theories to their logical conclusion he passed on to his pupils something of his own burning enthusiasm. Unlike his contemporaries, who believed in large groups of fifty or more, he selected his pupils with care and gradually eliminated the weaker men until he was left with a brilliant nucleus of ten or even less, with whom he took infinite pains.* The two architect founder-members of the Secession, Olbrich and Hoffmann, were trained in the Wagnerschule and, as we have observed, soon assumed undisputed leadership in the minor arts.

In Austria as elsewhere - notwithstanding Wagner's crusade - young architects of an original turn of mind had few opportunities of building. Olbrich was the first to enter the lists and his initial essay in the new manner was an exhibition building in Vienna for the Secessionists - the Secession Haus.

J.M. Olbrich.

Olbrich has been described as a man highly gifted, impulsive and imaginative, a poetic interpreter of space and a decorator of rare taste,+ yet we have already remarked his predilection for ornamentation and the restlessness of his interior decoration. These traits are also displayed in his Wagneresque preliminary sketches for the Secession Haus" and it is interesting to follow the design through its various stages, to see how the ultimate form gradually emerged, plain, stolid and defiant, from its fanciful neo-baroque beginnings. As originally conceived, it was an ugly building with great free-standing columns each carrying the ubiquitous draped urn. Later, rectangular fluted pylons were substituted for the columns and the whole was enmeshed in a pattern of grotesque masks, busts, and swags. Finally, after passing through several such phases, a relatively modest building emerged which expressed the aims of the Secessionists far more eloquently than all that had gone before.

The principal elevation was symmetrical and consisted of three plain rectangular blocks: it was devoid of windows and the deeply recessed copper doorway was surrounded by a 'Frampton Tree' motive in low relief, the only decoration permitted. The

(Footnote: *C/f. 'The Studio' Vol.30, No.128, Nov.1903, - 'The Arbeiterheim" or Workmen's Home, Vienna, by J. A. Lux, p.150.)

+Hugo Haberfeld, 'The Art Revival in Austria' - 'The Studio' 1905-6).

"Well illustrated 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration', Vol.3, Oct.-Mar., 1898, p.199 et seq. Also 'Ver Sacrum', Mar.1899 and perspective in 'Osterreichische Kunst Des.19, Jahrhunderts', Ludwig Hevesi: published Leipzig 1903, p.283.)

Fig. 255. J. M. Olbrich:

a. The Secession Haus, Vienna, 1898.
b. The Ernst Ludwig Haus, Darmstadt, 1901.

building was dominated by a hemispherical openwork cupola of gilded iron on a square base, the angles of which were carried up as stumpy towers.* The interior was planned with movable partition walls so that the floor area could be subdivided as required, and advantage taken of either side or top light - an innovation that was considered to be a far-reaching experiment at the time.+

The foundation stone of the Secession Haus was laid on 28th April, 1898 and at the opening on 15th November of the same year" the building created something of a furore in architectural circles. The general public, already alive to the fact that important events were afoot in the art world, christened it 'The House of the Golden Cabbage'. Almost overnight, Olbrich became one of the most discussed figures in the profession. In this his first work, it has been said, he broke the ice and set free the stream of the Secessionist Movement in architecture.

Shortly after completing the Secession Haus (1899) Josef Olbrich was summoned to Darmstadt by Ernst Ludwig, Grand Duke of Hesse, a progressive and munificent patron of the arts, who had conceived the idea of making his capital one of the foremost art centres in Europe. He had previously commissioned Baillie Scott to decorate and furnish his new palace,⊖ and had also invited other artists whose work he admired to assist in the scheme.⊥ With this group as a nucleus he then decided to establish an artists' colony in Darmstadt. It was in order to carry out this project that Olbrich left Vienna.

The scheme was quite ambitious:" a magnificent site on the Mathildenhohe was selected and Olbrich was required to design a house for each of the artists concerned - with one exception, that of Peter Behrens' which was built by the German architect himself. The interiors and furnishings, down to the last tablecloth and teaspoon, were designed and made by the artists.

(Footnote: *A similar angle treatment was employed by Harrison Townsend in his project for the Whitechapel Art Gallery - see Fig.226c.- and he also used the familiar leaf motive. Townsend's design was published in 'The Studio' in 1896 two years earlier than the Secession Haus and may thus have been familiar to Olbrich.)

+C/f. 'The Studio' Vol.XV. No.68, Nov.1898. p.130-3.)

"The building is thus contemporary with the first section of the Glasgow School of Art.)

⊖Illustrated in 'The Studio' Vol.XIV, p.91 & Vol.XVI, p.107.)

"Illustrated in 'Ver Sacrum' Vol.IX, p.446. 'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration' Vol.VI, p.366 et seq., Vol.VII, Vol.VIII, Vol.IX. 'The Studio' Vol.XXIV p.91 et seq.)

⊥The artists invited to Darmstadt were Hans Christiansen, Julius Glückert, Ludwig Habich, Rudolf Boffelt, Patriz Huber, Paul Burch, Hans Ungers and Peter Behrens.)

The Ernst Ludwig Haus.

Fig. 255b.

In addition to dwelling houses there were certain community buildings the most interesting of which was the Ernst Ludwig Haus, named after the patron. It contained in two storeys an exhibition hall, studios, bachelor's quarters, commercial rooms, a gymnasium and recreation rooms. Externally, it was long and low, with widely overhanging eaves, and rhythmically disposed windows, which, on the main elevation were confined entirely to the ground floor - an arrangement which gave striking character to the facade. The central doorway was enclosed in a great semicircular arch and flanked by two heroic statues by Ludwig Habich the colony's sculptor. Ornament was confined to the doorway and the eaves, and the entire building was rendered in white roughcast. The pleasant proportions, restful horizontal lines, and simple form of this work give it a surprising air of modernity and it is undoubtedly one of Olbrich's most successful designs.

On the whole the houses were in the Austrian tradition with white rendered walls and steeply pitched tiled roofs. One or two, notably those of Julius Glückert* and Ludwig Habich,* were remarkably adventurous despite certain neo-renaissance details. In both of these, as in the community building, Olbrich discarded the surface ornament which so clearly dates his earlier work and in the Voysey-Mackintosh manner relied for effect entirely upon the arrangement of solid and void, the proportion of wall to window. All these buildings are contemporary with 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse' and they indicate a similar stage of development.

Olbrich introduced many original details at Darmstadt; to take one notable instance, horizontal windows carried round the angle of the building - prospect windows - a feature which became part of the 'modern' architect's stock-in-trade after the first world war. Occasionally these were placed below light, projecting canopies which gave an added air of modernity; good examples of this arrangement occur in the entrance pylons at an exhibition held in the colony in 1901+ and at the Hochzeitsturm (1906-7).

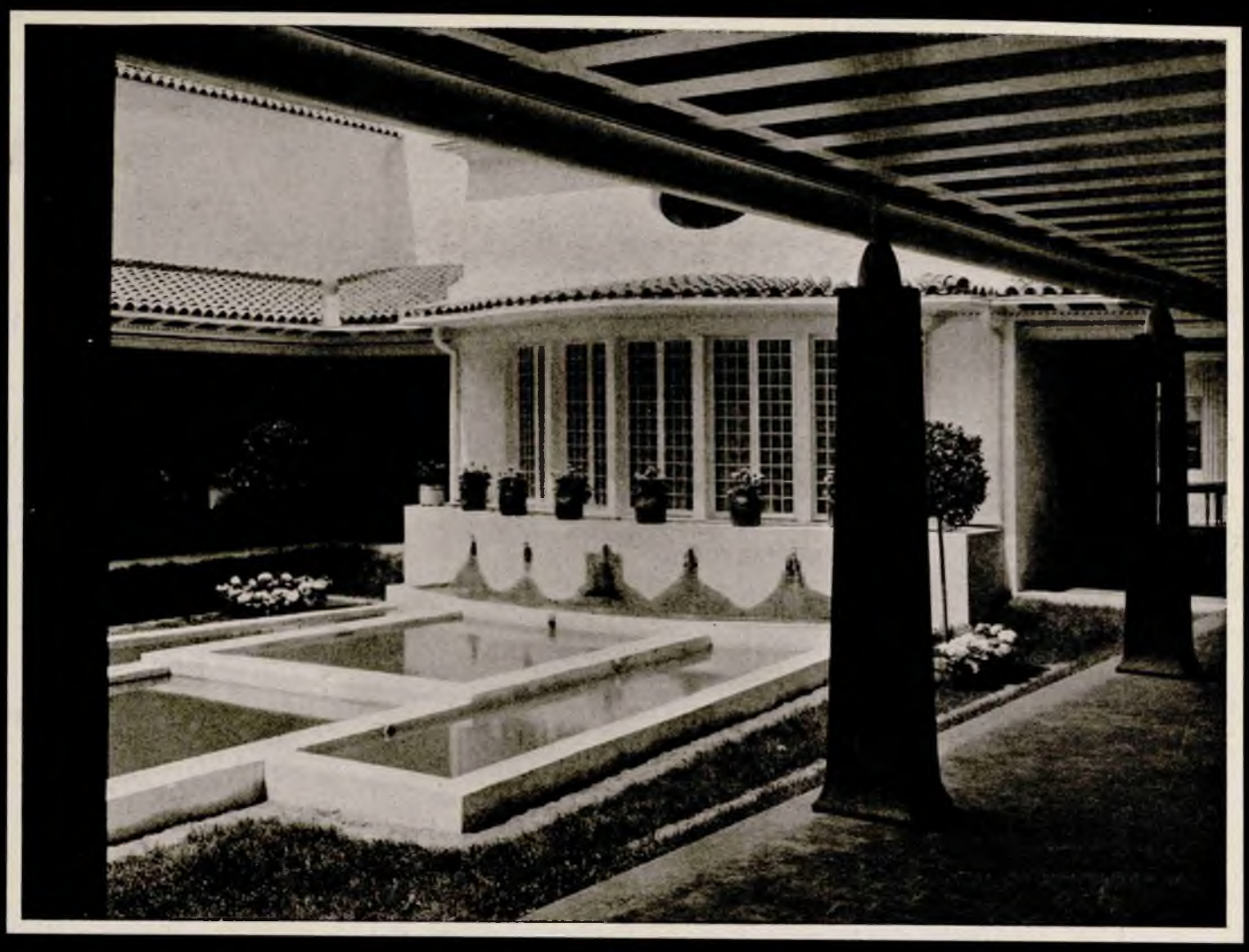
Fig. 256a.

One of the most charming and characteristic features designed by the Austrian architect at this time is illustrated here. It was the fountain court of the German Pavilion at the St. Louis Exhibition 1904. Not only does the delightful bow window recall Mackintosh's Willow Tea House, but the formal geometrical layout of the pools introduces an arrangement

(Footnote: *Illustrated 'Deutsche Kunst und Decoration', Vol.VI, April-Sept. 1900, p.369 and 371. Many charming sketches and photographs of the colony appear in this and subsequent volumes of the journal.)

+ibid.)

Fig. 256.a. J. M. Olbrich: Fountain Court,
St. Louis Exhibition, 1904.



popularised in garden work many years later by Le Corbusier and others.

Olbrich continued working at Darmstadt until his premature death in 1908 shortly after the completion of the great Hochzeitsturm* the tower of which provided the climax to the Kunstler-colonie and dominated the Mathildenhohe.+ During the preceding decade he had made tremendous strides and had largely divested himself of his Wagnerian legacy of neo-rococo ornament. The tower of the Hochzeitsturm, the Ernst Ludwig Haus, and the fountain court at St. Louis, place him unquestionably in the forefront of contemproary pioneers, and one can only regret that his life was cut short at this vital stage in his development.

Peter Behrens.

Before considering the work of Josef Hoffmann, the second important figure of the Wagnerschule, it is necessary to look briefly at the one building on the Mathildenhohe which did not conform to the general pattern, the house designed by the German architect Peter Behrens. Behrens, it will be remembered, some eight years later created the A. E. G. Turbine Factory in the Huttlestrasse, Berlin - "perhaps the most beautiful industrial building ever erecfed up to that time ..... a pure work of art ....".e In the Darmstadt house with its quasi Dutch gables, steeply pitched roof and green brick quoins, one can detect little evidence of the fine sense of form and proportion which characterises the architect's later work as an industrial designer, though there may be some similarity between the rigid verticality of the facade, the hard mechanical fenestration, and his street lamps and factories of a decade later. Nor is the interior less uncompromising. The decoration and furnishing is heavy and overpowering with richly patterned ceilings and floors, dark woodwork and complex geometrical ornament. It is abundantly clear from this example that Behrens' metamorphosis took place well after the turn of the century and perhaps, largely as a result of his association with Olbrich and the artists of the Mathildenhohe.‖

Fig. 257a.

Fig. 257b.

(Footnote: *Illustrated in 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement' by Pevsner, p.186.)
e See -do- -do- P.194-5)

+It should be noted here that E. B. Kalas in 'De la Tamise a la Spree' claims that Olbrich derived his "vertical arrangements" from Mackintosh. Kalas does not give his authority for this assertion nor is his view supported by the evidence of this study. The library wing of the School of Art was designed and built at the same time as the Hochzeitsturm and as far as can be ascertained both architects worked quite independently.)

‖Professor Behrens designed 'New Ways', Northampton for Mr. Bassett-Lowke, Mackintosh's client, in 1925 - this was one of the first houses in the 'Continental Style' to be buil t in England.)

Fig. 257. Peter Behrens: House at Darmstadt 1901:

a. From the North-west.
b. The Music-Room.

On Olbrich's departure from Vienna, Josef Hoffmann became the undisputed leader of the new movement in Austria and through his eminence as a teacher, one of the most powerful influences in Central Europe.

Josef Hoffmann.

It is said that Hoffmann spent much time as a student designing imaginary palaces, temples and gardens in the grand manner, and though this may be true, he too had to graduate via the applied arts. Interior design, said a contemporary critic, was the hook on which the general public was caught, and one might add, after interior design, domestic work. The formula was identical, whether in England or Germany, Scotland or Austria. Thus Hoffmann's first architectural commission consisted of a colony of villas mainly for artists and his friends, built on the Hohewarte, a plateau on the outskirts of Vienna, (1900). The houses were in the modernised traditional style favoured by Olbrich - the Austrian equivalent of Voysey's work in England - and they represented a marked advance on contemporary buildings in the same class. Unlike Olbrich however, Hoffmann did not design a building of the importance of the Secession Haus before the turn of the century and consequently we have no means of measuring his capabilities against his friend's achievement. In fact, some four years elapsed before he embarked upon his first large project, a Sanatorium at Purkersdorf. During the intervening period hedevoted much time and energy to the minor arts and as we have seen, made notable progress. In 1903 he resigned from the Secession and with Koloman Moser, and the financial support of Fritz Wärndorfer, founded the Wiener Werkstatte - workshops in which, according to the precepts of William Morris, designers and craftsmen closely co-operated.

Through the agency of the Werkstatte, which was largely staffed by young artists trained at the Kunstgewerbeschule, Hoffmann was able to propagate his ideas widely and many of the interiors illustrated here emanated from this source.

The Purkersdorf Sanatorium.

In character Hoffmann's first major design is the opposite of Wagner's monumental neo-Renaissance, and quite unlike Olbrich's Secession Haus. The building is the logical outcome of his initial training in the applied arts and it possesses all the characteristics of his furniture at the Vienna Exhibition of 1900 - with modifications arising from his association with Mackintosh and Olbrich. The walls were roughcast and painted white; the roof was flat with boldly projecting eaves in the manner of Smith & Brewer's Mary Ward Settlement; the fenestration was simplicity itself with meticulously placed windows of

square or rectangular form. The whole building was almost entirely devoid of ornament and only the designer's favourite chequered border of black squares round each window and a few small carved panels at the entrance, relieve the severity of the facades. Hoffmann made at least two notable additions to the 'modern' architect's vocabulary in this project - a tall staircase window running through three storeys and a large concrete canopy in the centre of the main elevation.

The interiors and furnishings were designed and executed under Hoffmann's direction at the Wiener Werkstatte and they inevitably recall Mackintosh. White predominated and even here the square remained the principal decorative motive. The furniture throughout is notable for its simplicity and the elegant chairs in the entrance hall, and more particularly the white painted sideboards in the dining-room, are conspicuous for their sobriety.

Fig. 258b. 258a. b.

The Purkersdorf Sanatorium thus represents a bold step forward. It is contemporary with Wagner's Postparkasse in Vienna and Mackintosh's Willow Tea-Rooms and it demonstrates that Hoffmann had succeeded better than his master, in throwing off the last vestiges of 19th century classicism, and more effectively than Mackintosh in discarding the remnants of l'art nouveau.

The Palais Stoclet, (1905).

Hoffmann's next important building was the Palais Stoclet, a large and expensive mansion erected at Brussels in 1905.

The extended plan of the house with its large two-storeyed hall, recalls Mackintosh's Haus eines Kunstfreundes, but the building was faced externally with large slabs of marble bound at the angles with painted and gilded steel bands. There was an ebullient, rather vulgar tower over the staircase-well - described by Goodhart Rendel as "just fun: quite good fun"* - a long canopy to the main entrance carried on sturdy piers, and a tall staircase window of the kind introduced at Purkersdorf. The principal block was three storeys high, flanked by a single storey appendage with an attractive glazed penthouse and flat roof. Despite a superabundance of wrought iron, the soda-fountain tower, and box-like contours emphasised by the curious angle treatment, the Palais Stoclet is closer to the spirit of

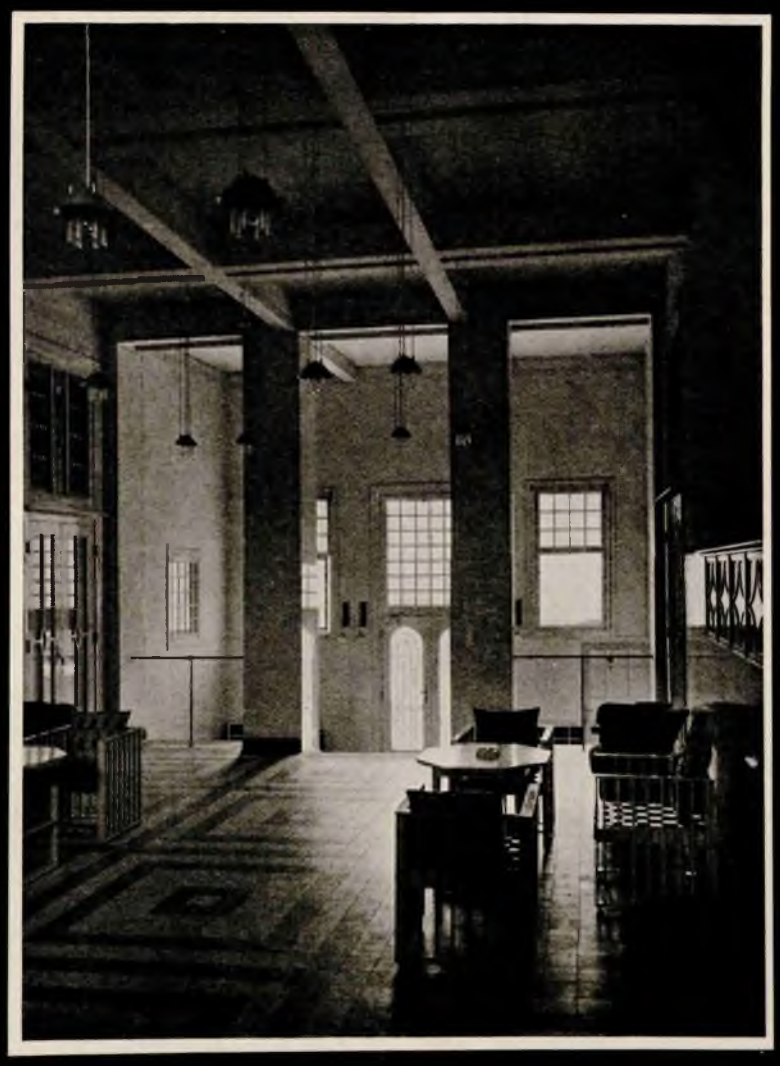
(Footnote: * 'How Architecture is Made' by H. S. Goodhart Rendel, published 1947 and based on the Sidney Jones Lectures in Art delivered at Liverpool University 1945-6, p.57. Three illustrations and the ground floor plan are given, pp.54, 55, 56.)

Fig. 258. Hoffmann: The Purkersdorf Sanatorium:

a. The Main Entrance.

b. The Entrance Hall.

(See also Figs.258a. a. & b.)



the new movement than any of Mackintosh's domestic designs - even the Haus eines Kunstfreundes.

After this project, Hoffmann did not execute any further architectural work of significance from the point of view of this study. The Purkersdorf Sanatorium and the Palais Stoclet are two of his most venturesome projects; thereafter his work followed more conventional lines. In 1907 he built a house in Vienna* which, but for its canopied porch, might have been transplanted from any English suburb; and in 1913, his magnificent Wohnhaus Skywa+ for all its stuccoed modernity,was of classical proportions and possessed a heavily decorated cornice with modified egg and dart ornament, a multitude of statues and a pedimented gardenhouse. His exhibition-stands at Rome in 1911,‖ at Vienna 1912,⊖ and even at the Werkbund Exhibition Cologne in 1914,⊥ all betray the same characteristics, and the hand of the artist, the craftsman, invariably predominates.

Like his master Wagner, Hoffmann was a brilliant teacher and though he has comparatively few advanced architectural monuments to his credit, his influence was much stronger than might be anticipated. He maintained his position in Austria for upwards of forty years and at the time of writing (1948) continues to practice and to teach.⊠

Out of the Wagnerschule came other architect-designers who carried the ideals of the Secessionists still further afield. Josef Plecnik a Slovene by birth, Leopold Bauer, Jan Kotera (one of the founders of the 'Manes' Artists' League and an influential leader of the movement in Czechoslovakia), and Hurbert and Franz Gessner (who designed the Arbeiterheim - Workmen's Home - in Vienna c.1901, a building full of the new spirit and the contradictions of their master). Few of these men however, had either the reputation or the influence of Olbrich and Hoffmann in Western Europe, and though the elegance and originality of their work is worthy of note, they need not concern us here.

Footnote: *Illustrated in 'Josef Hoffmann' by Dr. Armand Weiser, published in Geneva 1930, p.6.)

+ ibid. p.10-13.

‖ " p. 4-5.

⊖ " p. 8-9.

⊥ " p.17-21.

⊠After protracted investigation the author discovered that Josef Hoffmann had survived the second world war and through an American friend secured his address. A translation of extracts from his reply to a letter asking for information about his association with Mackintosh is included in the appendix.)

Fig. 258a.

Josef Hoffmann: Purkersdorf Sanatorium:

a. Subsidiary Entrance.

b. Dining-room.

c. Jan Kotera: Villa in Bohemia.

d. Josef Hoffmann: Villa in Vienna.

We have followed Mackintosh's path up to and a little beyond the Secessionist Exhibition of 1900, and have observed the change that occured subsequently in the work of the Viennese designers. During these exciting and eventful years however, it was Mackintosh the designer of furniture, the decorator, and not Mackintosh the architect who received the plaudits of the Secessionists. Whatever his achievements in the applied arts the fact remains that his buildings were virtually unknown abroad before Koch published the Haus eines Kunstfreundes design (1902) and before Bruckmann displayed a panorama of the Glasgow Style in 'Dekorative Kunst' in the spring of the same year. Neither the Glasgow School of Art nor project for the 1901 Glasgow Exhibition (designed in 1898) had appeared in the press. This point cannot be over-emphasised in trying to reach a fair evaluation of his contribution to the architectural phase of the new movement. It is quite evident that he could have had no influence whatever on Wagner, Olbrich and Hoffmann - much less upon Horta and Van de Velde - before the turn of the century. And the converse is equally true. British and continental journals make little if any reference to the work of these pioneers - with the exception of Wagner - before 1897 and by that time the Glasgow School of Art was under construction. Even Koch's 'Academy Architecture' carried few illustrations from abroad that were calculated to fire the imagination of British designers and Wagner was but indifferently represented.* Occasional illustrations suggested a vague undercurrent of unrest however, as for example Teodor Talowski's house at Krakow (1891), a strange essay in l'art nouveau, and the Solway Institute, Brussels (1897) by Van Ysendyke, the fenestration of which recalls the School of Art. But such subjects were rare and could have made little impression on the Scottish architect.

Fig. 259 a+b

~~Fig.~~

Fig. 259 c.

When Mackintosh exhibited at Vienna in 1900 Hoffmann and the architects of the Wagnerschule were still in the transitional stage of interior design. Only Olbrich had made any notable progress and his most important building, the Secession Haus

(Footnote: *A drawing of Wagner's own villa in the Huttlestrasse appeared in 1891 and in the same number a small perspective drawing and plan of 'Der Anker' Insurance Company's offices in Vienna; in 1895 a Bridge over the Danube; in 1896 one of his glass and iron stations for the Viennese Metropolitan Railway; and in 1897 a project drawing for a museum in Vienna. Apart from the brilliant draughtsmanship and vigorous presentation - reflected also in the frequently illustrated drawings of Otto Reith - all this work was in the neo-classical vein.)

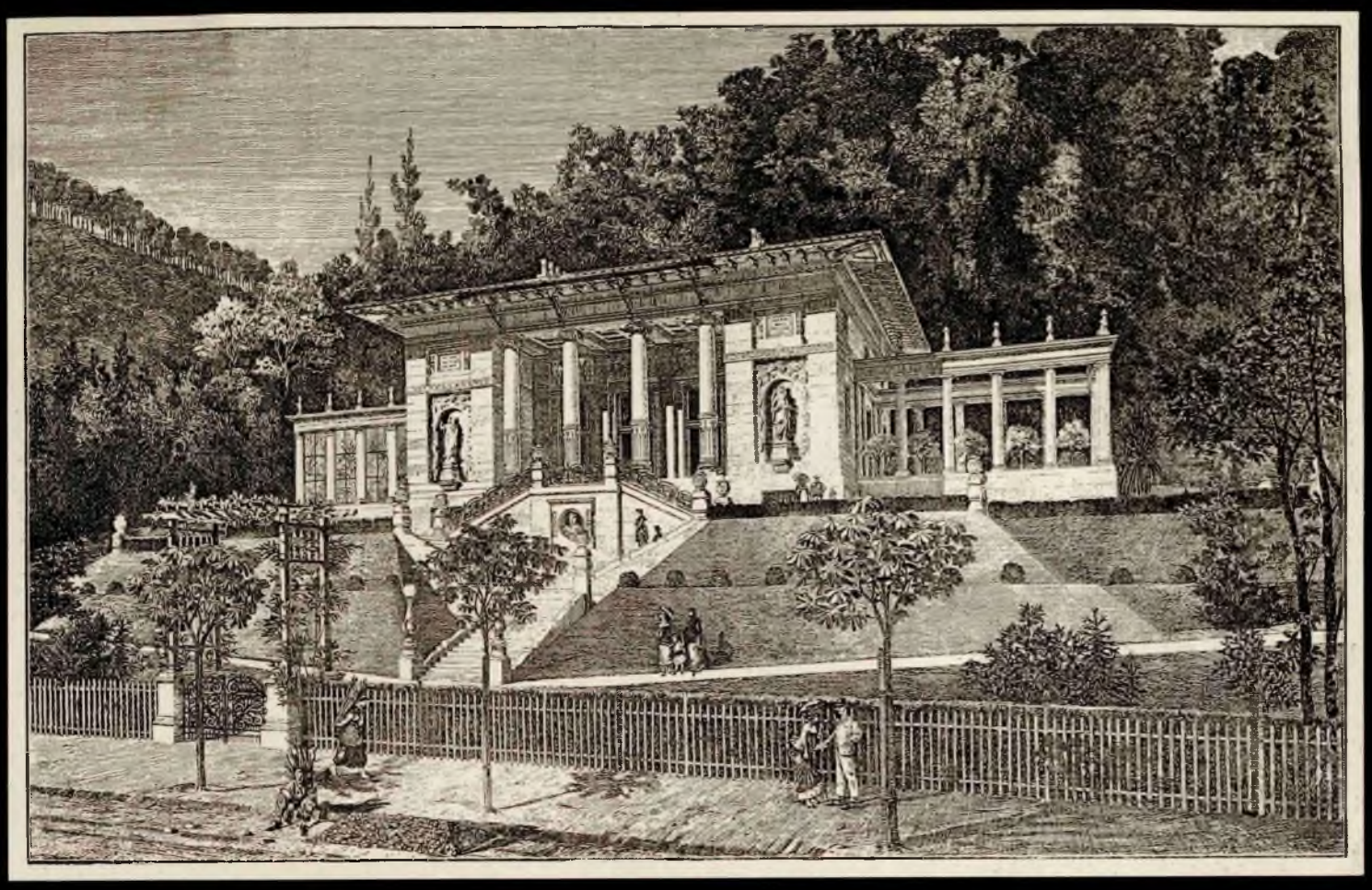
Fig. 259. Otto Wagner:

a. Villa in the Huttlestrasse, Vienna, 1891.

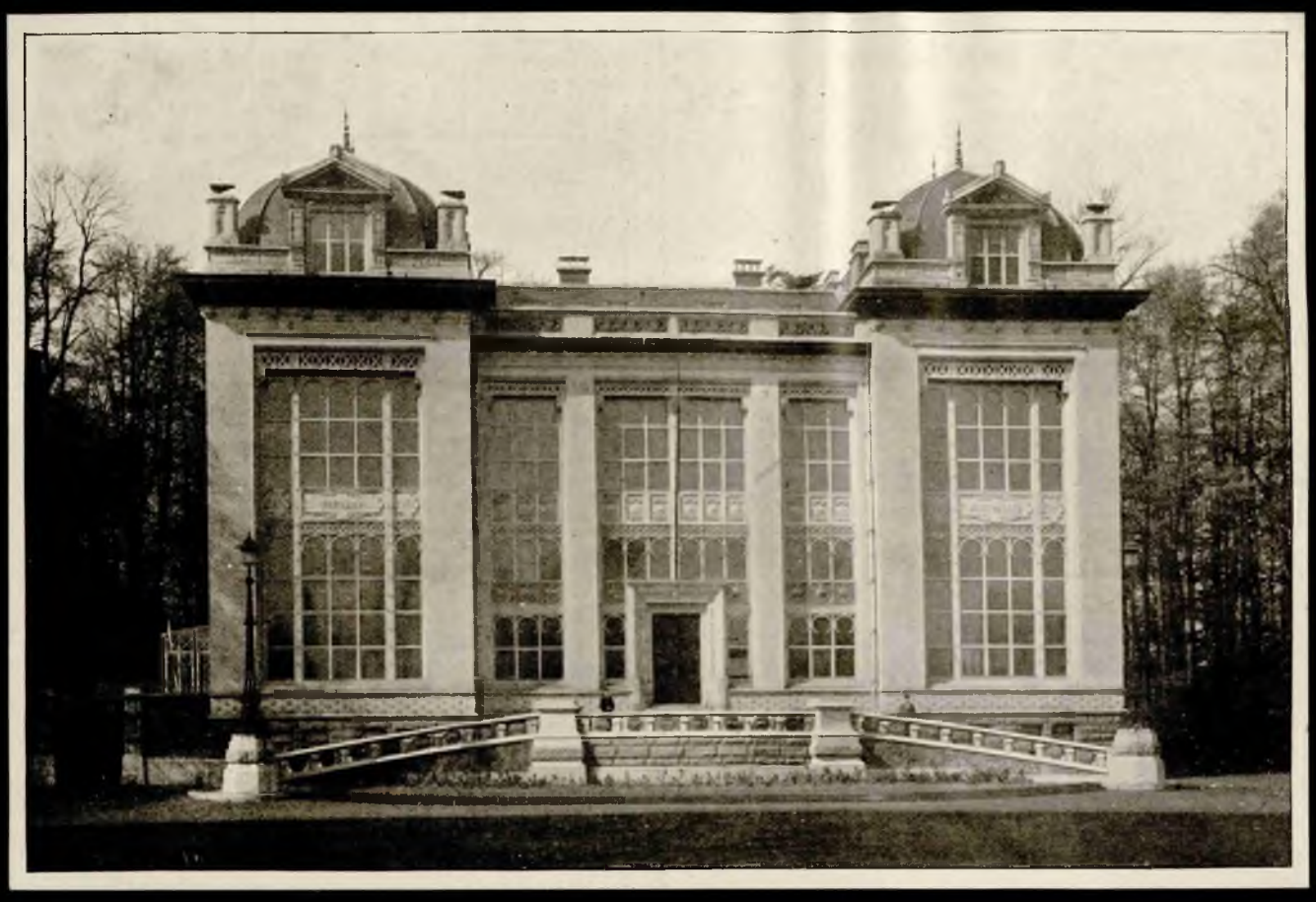
b. Museum der Gypsabgusse, Vienna, 1897.

Van Ysendyke:

c. The Solway Institute, Brussels, 1897.




K·K· MVSEVM· DER· GYPSABGVSSE ·



itself (1898) still retained the unmistakable signs of neo-classicism which had been eliminated at the Glasgow School of Art two years earlier. The attractive Kunstlercolonie at Darmstadt however, was well on the way to completion and several buildings erected there - notably the communal Ernst Ludwig Haus and one or two of the artists' homes - are as charming, unorthodox and imaginative as any of Mackintosh's projects, despite certain historical reminiscences. Illustrations of this work and of Hoffmann's villas on the Hohe Warte (1900), show that the Austrians had already embarked upon the course set by Voysey and the English secessionists whom they greatly admired - that of evolving a modernised version of traditional domestic work - a course of which Mackintosh undoubtedly approved. It is not altogether surprising therefore, that the appearance of the Scotsman's revolutionary design for the Haus eines Kunstfreundes (1902), despite the popularity of its author, had little if any immediate effect. Although inured to rapid change by the propagators of l'art nouveau, the ground was insufficiently prepared for the radical transmogrification foreshadowed in this project, and Muthesius prophesied that it would have but a limited appeal. He was right. Wagner for instance, was too much the individualist to be deflected one degree by extraneous influences, and it is unlikely that he was indebted to the Scottish architect in any real sense even though his most modern building, the Post-parkasse (1905), came well after Mackintosh's continental debut. The work of Olbrich, Hoffmann and their followers, evinces no sudden volte face, and there was no immediate outburst of revolutionary fervour in the architectural field comparable with the upheaval that followed the appearance of Mackintosh's craft-work at Vienna two years earlier. Instead, we are conscious of a careful and orderly abandonment of outmoded stylar traits, and a marked tendency to simplification. At Purkersdorf for example, Hoffmann successfully wedded the formal symmetry of Wagner to the traditional simplicity of the Austrian vernacular, yet without emulating the organic rationalism of Mackintosh. The result was a building quite unprecedented in style, and as essentially Viennese as the Haus eines Kunstfreundes was at heart dourly Scottish. As in the applied arts then, it is evident that Mackintosh's influence was both salutory and stimulating. Nevertheless, the secessionists - however greatly they admired his achievements - were content to follow him in the spirit but not in the letter. Olbrich, Hoffmann and the rest subscribed to his philosophy, and yet maintained their individuality and distinctive national traits.

The advocates of l'art nouveau and the secessionists, important as they were, did not constitute the only groups aiming at revival in the architectural sphere, and by the turn of the century new forces were at work in Austria and Germany, forces diametrically opposed to the philosophies of l'art nouveau and of the Secession itself.

Adolf Loos. (1870-1933)

As early as 1897, art circles in Vienna had been disturbed by a strange voice other than that of 'Ver Sacrum'. Adolf Loos, a young Viennese architect trained in Dresden, began to expound revolutionary views on interior decoration, furniture and clothing through the columns of 'The New Freie Press'. Loos had spent three years in America working first as a mason, then as a sawyer. During this period he had become conscious of the aesthetic appeal of machine-made objects of every-day use. On his return to Austria he enthusiastically extolled the work of the engineer, and opened a bitter campaign against ornament in all its forms. Not even Hoffmann escaped his attack for he considered the Secessionists by and large to be propagators of a subtle form of alien art nouveau, and thus doubly condemned. According to Behrendt,* ornament roused his passions to such an extent that on one occasion, after a heated argument in a Viennese cafe, he stamped out of the room exclaiming "Ornament is a crime!", an aphorism which was taken up by his disciples and for a time became a popular slogan.

One of Loos' first commissions was the design of a shop interior in Vienna (1898)+ in which he attempted to translate his principles into practice. No ornament as such was employed, but the wall show-cases terminated at frieze level in a row of bow-fronted lantern-like objects, glazed in small squares forming an interesting decorative element right round the apartment. The doors of the dressing cubicles - the shop was a gentlemen's outfitters ('Herrenmodegeschäft Goldmann') - were also glazed with square panes reminiscent of Mackintosh's later work . Not all Loos' interiors were as pleasantly functional as this however. His Museum Cafe, Vienna (1899)" for instance - 'V'-shaped in plan, with billiards tables in one wing and bentwood furniture in the other - was a grim, bleak and inelegant apartment, the antithesis of the Cranston Tea-Rooms. Some of his furniture for

(Footnote: *'Modern Building'.
+Illustrated in 'Adolf Loos' by Heinrich Kulka, published by Anton Schroll & Co., Vienna, 1931. - Illustrations 1 & 2.
" ibid. ..... -do- 3 - 6.

private clients on the other hand - a dining-table, chairs and a dresser for Herr Stholer of Vienna (1899), and a wardrobe and buffet for Herr Gustav Turnowski* is remarkably free from eccentricity, but the most notable room, considering its date, was a bedroom for Herr Walter Sobotka, designed in 1902.+ In this instance the bedstead, panelling and wardrobe were without decoration of any kind, accents being provided by flowers, the carpet and the soft furnishings only. The room should be compared with Mackintosh's bedroom at Mains Street (1906) and with the interior work of Van de Velde and others if the extraordinary purity of the design is to be fully appreciated. Few of Loos' projects reached such a high standard however and he seems to have made little headway as an architect for some considerable time. In 1907 for example, he was still designing in a form of Wagneresque neo-Renaissance as examplified by his project for the Kriegsminesterium, Vienna,‖ and his first complete break from tradition did not occur until 1910 when he built the Haus Steiner (Vienna).⊖ Despite his proselytizing Loos remained virtually unrecognised as an active force in the new movement while Mackintosh, Olbrich and Hoffmann went from strength to strength and rapidly acquired international stature.

In western Europe however, events had begun to move swiftly. In 1903, the year in which Hoffmann relinquished his chair at the Vienna Academy to found the Wiener Werkstatte, Hermann Muthesius returned to Germany from London full of enthusiasm for the work of British designers, and eager to propagate his personal views in the soil prepared by the Secessionists. He was appointed superintendent of the Arts and Crafts Schools of the Prussian Board of Trade and at once began to use his influence to bring about radical changes in the field of art education. For instance, he invited Peter Behrens to Dusseldorf and Hans Polzig⊥ to Breslau each as head of the Arts and Crafts Academy

(Footnote: *Illustrated in 'Adolf Loos' by Heinrich Kulka, published by Anton Schroll & Co., Vienna, 1931, Illustrations 7 - 8.)

+Not 1900 as stated by Pevsner in 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement' p.190. C/f. 'Adolf Loos' by Kulka, Illustration No.14.)

‖'Adolf Loos' by Kulka, Illustration No.33 - 34.)

⊖ -do- -do- No.41. This illustration appears in 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement' by Pevsner with the erroneous caption 'House on the Lake of Geneva'. However elegant the garden facade - which is formally treated and relatively innocuous - the entrance front is ugly in the extreme - see illustration No.39, Kulka.)

⊥Polzig (1869-1936) has been described as one of the most adventurous architects in practice before the 1914 War; though he had few buildings to his credit before 1910. Illustrations of his work at Breslau (1910), Luban (1911-12) appear in Pevsner's 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement' p.200-201.)

in these cities. At this time too Henri Van de Velde became Principal of the Weimar Art School* and Bruno Paul, Head of the Berlin School of Arts and Crafts. In this manner the spirit of the new movement was widely disemminated and the influence of these men upon the course of architectural history was by no means inconsiderable. It is significant that their approach to the question of architectural design was more closely aligned with that of Loos than of the Austrian and English Secessionists.

The view implicit in Loos' philosophy, that industrial design and the product of the machine might be as legitimate a form of artistic expression as handicraft, had been voiced by Cobden Sanderson, Lewis Day and others before him; it was foreshadowed in the quasi-engineering designs of Wagner and in the neo-Romanesque buildings of Berlage in Holland. This theme - a symptom of awakening consciousness to the potentialities of the twentieth century - was taken up with avidity by Herman Muthesius, and it found an echo across the Atlantic in the explosive writings of Frank Lloyd Wright.+

Muthesius seems to have been largely responsible for bringing matters to a head in Western Europe in 1907 when he bitterly criticised craftsmen and industrialists for continuing to perpetuate outmoded traditional forms. As a result of his outspoken comments a number of enterprising manufacturers and designers came together to found a new association - the Deutsche Werkbund - with the object of encouraging closer co-operation between architect, designer, workman and manufacturer, and raising the quality of machine-made products.‖ It was from these beginnings that a second important stream of the new movement, the rationalist or functionalist stream, sprang.

The Deutsche Werkbund did not easily find a solution to the controversial problems of art and industry, nor to the closely related question of architectural design. One group, headed by Muthesius, favoured standardisation, and a second group, with Van de Velde as spokesman, insisted that individuality must be preserved - a view not unexpected from the protagonist of l'art nouveau. This fundamental divergence of opinion ~~presented~~ persisted for some years. It was brought into the open and discussed at the Annual Meeting of the Werkbund in Cologne in 1914. Muthesius then said:-

(Footnote: *Gropius succeeded Van de Velde at Weimar in 1914.)
+Paper read in Chicago by F. L. Wright in 1903 - 'The Art & Craft of the Machine' - reprinted in 'Modern Architecture', published Princeton, 1931.)
‖Please see overleaf.

Footnote relative to Page 263:-

" One of the most important figures associated with this movement and now acclaimed one of the pioneers of modern industrial design was Peter Behrens, by this time emancipated from the dubious charms of the Darmstadt Kunstlercolonie.

" 'Architecture and the entire sphere of activity of the Werkbund tend towards standardisation. It is only by standardisation that they can recover that universal importance which they possessed in ages of harmonious civilisation. Only by standardisation .... as a salutory concentration of forces, can a generally accepted and reliable taste be introduced.' " *

Van de Velde's point of view was expressed in these words:-

" 'As long as there are artists in the Werkbund ,... they will protest against any proposed canon and any standardisation. The artist is essentially and intimately a passionate individualist, a spontaneous creator. Never will he, of his own free will, submit to a discipline forcing upon him a norm, a canon.' " +

It has been claimed, and to a point justifiably so, that the presence of Gropius' model factory at the Cologne exhibition - the very exhibition at which these views were expressed - demonstrated indisputably the trend of future developments. It proved Muthesius right and gave form and substance to the dream of an international style, a twentieth century architecture.

Once again the familiar cycle is complete, and the emergence of the new architectural style exemplified by Gropius' factory can be traced from its source in the minor arts, this time however, in the industrial design and machine art of the Deutsche Werkbund. Moreover, an identical pattern is followed and in maturity the style takes upon itself many of the characteristics displayed by the art form from which it springs. We recognise in Gropius' building at Cologne or in Behrens' Turbine Factory, the same sleek metallic precision that distinguishes the silver boxes of Ehmcke, or the functional street lamps of Behrens himself. The art worker, the individual craftsman, is superseded by the engineer and the machine and for the sympathetic, traditional materials wood, brick and stone, are substituted the man-made synthetics, steel, concrete and glass.

From the ground covered in this chapter it has become increasingly apparent that secessionist trends in Europe - using the term secessionist in its broadest sense - were widespread and did not by any means constitute a single organised movement, much less a movement centred on Glasgow. At least four separate

(Footnote: * 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement' by Pevsner, p.40-41.)
+ ibid.

and largely independent sources can be recognised, each with its influential group of adherents and its peculiar characteristics: l'art nouveau, the Central European Secessionists and the Glasgow Group, all of whom virtually form one main stream, directly or indirectly deriving from Morris and the English School. The fourth group, represented by Loos, Muthesius and the Werkbund faction, stands a little apart and forms a second stream which, as the twentieth century advanced, assumed greater and greater importance. By the outbreak of the first world war the streams had diverged and two conflicting views on the meaning and purpose of architecture had crystalised - that of the architect-humanist represented by Hoffmann and Van de Velde, and that of the industrial designer, the engineer, the architect-rationalist exemplified by Behrens and Gropius.

It now remains to determine to which stream, if either, Mackintosh belonged and to assess his importance in relation to the pioneers whose work has been reviewed here.

His precise position is not easy to define. The second section of the School of Art (1907-9) is contemporary with Behrens' Turbine Factory, and, with its thrilling cascades of metal and glass, and boldly cantilevered conservatory, seems at first glance to belong unmistakably to the Gropius faction. Yet it contains much decorative detail, both internally and externally, and the west elevation was intended to embody sculptured figures of St. Francis and Cellini! Moreover, its designer did not refrain from combining traditional and modern architectural forms, nor did he hesitate to employ, at one and the same time, old building methods and new structural techniques. None of these apparent contradictions would have been condoned by Loos and the German group however greatly they might have admired his imaginative experiments.

The Secessionists on the other hand did not find Mackintosh's continual preoccupation with ornament and his reluctance to depart far from tradition unduly disturbing, yet none of them adventured ~~far from tradition~~ so fearlessly into the realms of spatial organisation and structural experiment. Hoffmann for example, was clearly dominated by a similar urge to decorate - in his case a legacy from the epoch of Makart, and the "artistic sentiment"* which caused him to place chequered borders round the windows of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium and a fanciful tower on the Palais Stoclet, persisted in 1914 and impelled him to use fluted

(Footnote: *Dr. Armand Weiser, 'Josef Hoffmann'.

piers, pedimented gables and arcades at the Cologne Exhibition - where Gropius employed steel and glass.

Mackintosh thus had a foot in both camps. He walked alone, treading a solitary path somewhere between the uncompromising materialism of the German school and the pleasant romanticism of the Secessionists, subscribing to both, indebted to neither. His importance on the international stage is best expressed by Muthesius who, in commenting on the Haus eines Kunstfreundes project had no hesitation in claiming that the Scottish architect was far in advance of his contemporaries. The elevations, he said, were absolutely original - "unlike anything else known" - and admirably expressed the spirit of the age. He concluded his critical review with these words:-

> ".....if one were to go through the list of truly original artists, the creative minds of the modern movement, the name of Charles Mackintosh would certainly be included even amongst the few that one can count on the fingers of a single hand".

The significance of this pronouncement from a man who himself was shortly to play such a vital part in the new movement can hardly be overestimated, and its accuracy is borne out by the evidence contained in this study.

It is the first section of the Glasgow School of Art however, that must always be the yardstick by which Mackintosh's independence and creative genius is measured. By 1896 no-one in Europe, not even Horta, had produced a design of the originality, and what is more, the architectural quality, of this work. Mackintosh's unconventional facades, his free planning, and his disdain of fashionable ornament make Olbrich's Secession Haus and Wagner's railway stations seem dated and almost banal. When he submitted this project in competition, Van de Velde and Hoffmann had scarcely begun to build, Loos and Muthesius had not committed themselves in print, Behrens was still within the art nouveau fold, and Berlage had not embarked upon his quasi-Romanesque project for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange. Thus it can be claimed that Mackintosh erected the first architectural monument to secession in Europe. The School of Art however, is not a cold impersonal essay in an international style; it does not stand stark and naked - the "bald erection" visualised by the governors - nor does it shock our inherent sense of order and harmony. It represents rather the synthesis of traditional craftsmanship and twentieth-century engineering; the subtle fusion of a sturdy

vernacular with the organic forms of a scientific age. In this, his first and last building of importance, Mackintosh created a living, vital work of art in the Scottish succession: that was his objective and it remains his distinctive contribution to modern architectural history.

THE END.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX.

THE LONDON PHASE.

> "The artist lives by his emotions or affections, and from the world round him, recognition and appreciation. Give him genuinely of each and he will give you twofold of his best. Deny one and he will falter by the way: deny both, and the way will know him no more." *

Scotland Street School and the west wing of the Glasgow School of Art have been claimed as the last designs of note executed by Mackintosh, yet by the time the latter was completed (1909), he was still a young man and to all intents and purposes at the height of his career. In little more than a decade he had risen from comparative obscurity to a position of considerable importance in the art world and, moreover, had secured a partnership in one of the most flourishing architectural practices in Scotland. How then can his sudden disappearance from the Glasgow scene be accounted for?

There is no doubt that for some years after joining Honeyman & Keppie, Mackintosh was perfectly contented with the even tenor of professional life in Glasgow, with of course, the stimulous of competitive work and exciting excursions into the field of decoration. This happy phase was extended by the succession of Cranston Tea Rooms, by continental exhibitions and by the wide publicity accorded him by Koch and Muthesius. As his horizon widened however, and as his work assumed not only local, but national, and international importance, he became less and less satisfied with his position and progress at home.

For a time the exhilarating air of the Austrian Secession compensated for the comparatively dull routine at the office and he refused several pressing invitations to settle in Central Europe where, he was assured, a lucrative practice awaited him.

(Footnote: *From an article on Mackintosh written in 1933 by his friend E. A. Taylor, the Scottish painter. 'The Studio', June 1933, Vol.105, p.351.)

This tempting suggestion he turned down on the grounds that he wanted to devote all his energies to a personal crusade in Scotland - the Glasgow Style, he was convinced, forshadowed a revival in the applied arts and in architecture; a revival which would equal in importance the Secession itself.

He soon discovered however, that his triumphant progress abroad made not the slightest difference to his status in Glasgow, and the applause of the Secessionists had no effect whatever on the stolid, unimaginative men of the world with whom he had to do business. Moreover, his colleagues and professional acquaintances seemed oblivious to the great changes taking place in Europe, and no one shared his dream of an imminent Scottish architectural renaissance.

As time passed, the remarkable successes of his Austrian friends threw into still bolder relief his inability to make any notable impression upon the course of events at home. While he argued, cajoled and struggled to get his plans for Scotland Street School approved and passed by the authorities for instance, Hoffmann designed the Purkersdorf Sanatorium, and before the Glasgow building took final shape, the Palais Stoclet had been completed. Then again, as the governors of the School of Art sought ways and means of preventing him from introducing costly innovations on the new west wing, Olbrich, secure under the benevolent patronage of the Grand Duke of Hesse, placidly continued his experimental work at the Darmstadt Colony. By this time of course, both Hoffmann and Olbrich were securely established; each had a flourishing practice and each possessed a large following - a 'school'.

Mackintosh thus witnessed the rapid consolidation of the Secessionist Movement in Europe - a movement in which he himself had played a not inconsiderable part - yet in his own country he received little or no public acknowledgment.

This paradoxical situation frustrated and embittered him; suggestions and advice by his clients now were interpreted as criticism, as a reflection on his ability and good judgment, and he became more and more intractable. The first signs of impending trouble appeared at 'Auchenibert', Killearn (Chapter IV, page 90.) and fuel was added to the fire

by the attitude of the governors of the School of Art - an attitude that was quite understandable in view of their experience ten years earlier.

Never a temperate individual even in his student days, Mackintosh now turned more frequently to drink and in consequence began to lose interest in the practice. His lunch-hour often extended from 1.0. to 4.45 p.m., then he expected the draughtsmen to work on with him late into the evening. At times his directions became vague and purposeless. On one occasion he handed to a junior assistant a minute indistinct sketch of a rose - about three-quarters of an inch in diameter - and asked him to enlarge it to 2'6" at once. This task was accomplished with some difficulty and Mackintosh then coloured the drawing, hung it upside down behind the office door, and added a quotation. It remained there for eighteen months.

John Keppie's position was most unenviable. His junior partner did not bring any business of consequence into the firm after 'Auchenibert', Killearn (1905), which in any case he did not complete: some clients were beginning to object to the treatment they received, and were threatening to take their work elsewhere, office routine was disorganised, and Mackintosh's financial affairs were in a hopeless muddle. There could be one end only to such a situation and the climax was reached when the firm entered drawings for the Dowanhill Demonstration School Competition, Glasgow, c.1912-13.

Mackintosh was given the opportunity of preparing the design but evinced little interest in the problem. His preliminary sketches were not workable and some of his corridors terminated in mid air. After spending several months on the project he had little or nothing to show, and at the last moment a design was submitted by Keppie and his assistants. This scheme was awarded the first prize and the unfortunate incident has given rise to a story that Keppie stole Mackintosh's design, the credit and the premium.*

(Footnote: *It should be noted that Keppie sent Mackintosh a cheque for £250 in the following year, as his share of the Dowanhill Competition award.)

Shortly after the competition result was announced Mackintosh resigned from the firm and the last regular entry of his name in the records occurs in 1913; the partnership was legally dissolved in June 1914.

This then is the unhappy ending to Mackintosh's short but brilliant career in Glasgow. It has been an unpleasant duty to record these events, unpleasant but necessary, if only for the sake of historical accuracy and to discount the many unjustifiable criticisms that have been levelled at John Keppie. Nothing in the course of this study has suggested that he was directly to blame for the Glasgow debacle and - on the contrary - he appears to have acted with commendable reticence in the face of considerable provocation.

After the partnership was dissolved Mackintosh's movements proved to be something of a mystery. A chance discovery in the account books of a firm of cabinet-makers however, threw light on this problem. The entry reads:-

'To removing large bookrack from shop to 140 Bath Street, removing effects from 257 West George Street to 140 Bath Street."

Thus it would seem that he returned to the office originally occupied by Honeyman & Keppie and endeavoured to continue in practice alone - in fact he actually executed several drawings for Miss Cranston from this address. This venture however, was fordoomed to failure; he had no capital and few friends in the profession able to help him - certainly none who dare risk employing him.

Margaret Mackintosh's anguish at this time can be left to the imagination. Neither by word nor action did she give the slightest indication that anything was amiss, and she kept the delightful house in Southpark Avenue as gay and fresh as ever.

Walberswick.

In the early summer of 1914 the Mackintoshes closed their house and quietly slipped away to the village of Walberswick in Suffolk where there was a small artists' colony. They stayed in rooms with a Mrs. King, next door to a house rented by Fra Newbery who spent some months each year in the district with his family, sketching and painting. Thus, in comparative seclusion, they were able to rest and to make plans for the future, Margaret Mackintosh meanwhile doing all in her power to restore her husband's self-confidence. They devoted their time exclusively to water-colour painting and flower studies and in due course sent work for exhibition to Liège, Ghent and Paris. Unfortunately the outbreak of war in August 1914 prevented once again an exhibition of their work in the French capital.

As soon as war was declared stringent security regulations were imposed on the East Anglican coastal areas. Every stranger

was treated with suspicion and many artists immediately left the district; in any case the summer visitors usually departed by the end of September at the latest. The Mackintoshes however, stayed on through October, November and December. They could not go back to Glasgow and as yet had no definite plans for the future. During the day they worked hard in a tiny studio by the river and in the evenings went for long walks into the country. The unaccountable presence of the two strangers, both speaking with a marked foreign accent - the colourful vernacular of Central Scotland being a rarity in the marshlands of Suffolk - and wandering about the countryside at dusk, soon aroused suspicion and brought them under observation as enemy agents. Mackintosh's taciturn manner, swarthy complexion, drooping eyelid and pronounced limp, and, most of all, his openly acknowledged friendships in Austria, added to this impression, and the police began to take an active interest in his movements. On returning from a walk one evening the artists were surprised to find a soldier with a fixed bayonet guarding their lodgings: all their papers had been examined and some correspondence with the Viennese Secessionists discovered. Their explanations were unavailing and Mackintosh was summoned to appear before a local tribunal. This he did, and only with the greatest difficulty was he able to convince them of his bona fides. In fact Professor Patrick Geddes of Edinburgh, sent his daughter, now Lady Norah Mears, to the War Office to speak with the authorities on his behalf. Mackintosh needless to say, was bitterly affronted at the apparent injustice of the charge, and only with difficulty was restrained from taking the matter to a higher court.

Although eventually cleared of suspicion, the Mackintoshes were forbidden to reside in Norfolk, Suffolk or Cambridgeshire. They then moved to London and not unnaturally, sought asylum in Chelsea. The precise date of their removal to the Capital is unknown but in all probability it took place in the late summer or autumn of 1915.

The brief interlude at Walberswick was not unfruitful however. Mackintosh's health greatly improved and for the first time he was able to give his mind entirely to water-colour painting. The results proved most gratifying. His subjects were in the main, local riverside scenes,* ~~shipping and~~ still life groups, and flower studies - the latter deserve particular

(Footnote: *Examples of these in possession of Dr. Davidson and Hamish Davidson, Esq.

mention. His youthful passion for wild flowers has been remarked in an earlier chapter and it is interesting to observe that his enthusiasm for plant drawing never diminished. One of the earliest examples extant is dated Lamlash, Arran, 1893, and one of the last Mont Louis, France, 1925. These drawings were executed very rapidly in pencil with a bold unhesitating line, and then delicately coloured with transparent washes - frequently by his wife, in which case the initials M.M.M. appeared beside the familiar C.R.M. They reveal a highly developed faculty for precise observation of detail, and a complete understanding of structural form. Mackintosh could capture the essential character of the subject without detracting in the slightest degree from either botanical accuracy or artistic quality. Many of these studies are housed in the Botany Department of Glasgow University where they are recognised as among the finest botanical drawings ever produced.*

Fig. 272.

Chelsea.

On their arrival in London the Mackintoshes took lodgings in Glebe Place, Chelsea and rented two small adjacent studios. The one used by Charles Mackintosh was entered from a tiny high-walled courtyard, (No.43a Hans Studios) his wife's apartment had a separate entrance, though a mutual doorway linked the two rooms together. The studios were bleak and lofty; each had a small balcony at one end and the artists equipped them in characteristic fashion with furniture and decorative panels from their former Glasgow home.

For a time they lived in comparative seclusion, eating their meals - usually of bread and cheese - in the studios. Dinner, however, they invariably enjoyed at 'The Blue Cockatoo' a nearby restaurant situated on the Chelsea Embankment next to the 'Magpie and Stump'.+ The 'Blue Cockatoo' was a noted artists' rendezvous in the Mackintoshes' day and although food was often unappetising and the service erratic, there were many compensations. For example, there was an upper room usually reserved for the habitues, friendly, eloquent folk of the artist fraternity, whose discussions and arguments lasted well into the early hours. It was whispered that the proprietress's frequent absences "in the country" were somehow connected with the non-payment of electricity bills and when the power-supply was cut off, candles

(Footnote: *It has been said that but for the intervention of the first world war Mackintosh would have published them in Germany - Chapman-Huston in 'Artwork' 1930 - Apparently when peace was returned the cost of publication in this country was found to be prohibitive and now many of these exquisite drawings have been dispersed among private collectors.)

+Designed by C. R. Ashbee.)

Fig.272. Flower Study:

~~[illegible]~~, Walberswick, 1915; signed M.M.M. and C.R.M.

were used. The candles quickly became traditional - they are still brought in at dusk - and in their light the small intimate rooms, the assortment of dark oak cottage furniture, the garish blue of the window frames, and the ugly yellow and black walls, were transformed.* In this romantic setting Margaret and Charles Mackintosh found the warmth and companionship they needed. They delighted in the homely informal atmosphere of the place and soon made many friends, several of whom have since become artists of international repute - Professor Randolf Schwabe, Augustus John, Desmond-Chapman-Huston, George Sheringham, Harold Squire and Derwent Wood, and of especial interest to the people of Glasgow, Margaret Morris, J. D. Fergussen, W. O. Hutchison, Allan Walton and James Stewart Hill.

For some time the Mackintoshes seem to have lived quite happily in their new surroundings and there is no evidence to support the popular assumption that they were in difficult financial circumstances and there is no truth whatever in the story that Mackintosh himself worked as a waiter in order to earn a living. Although kind and generous by nature, they were blessed with a natural dignity that discouraged confidences and little or nothing was known of their private affairs. They neither spoke of their former life in Glasgow nor discussed their future plans. Margaret managed the domestic situation with her customary grace and charm and, from the Walberswick period onwards, the sterling qualities of this remarkable woman become more and more apparent. She planned entertainments and diversions of all kinds, and her parties - especially her children's parties - were among the most popular intimate social functions in the Chelsea colony. Her China tea and unusual sandwiches became quite celebrated. Even the most trivial occasion assumed an aura of importance in the Mackintosh menage and minute attention was paid to every detail - the arrangement of table-ware and napery,

(Footnote: *In addition to its candles, the 'Blue Cockatoo' was famous for another reason - the late Hettie Swaisland - a waitress of peculiar character, picturesquely described by Allan Walton as having "hair like a bird's nest". Amusing stories are told about the unpredictable Hettie, yet despite her idiosyncracies - or perhaps because of them - she was a law unto herself. All the artists who frequented the 'Blue Cockatoo' were commanded to sign her autograph books and it is said that she had a particular regard for the Mackintoshes.)

the position of chairs, pictures and flowers. All the artistry of the Cranston tea-rooms was turned to good account in the tiny Glebe Place studios.

The Mackintoshes still affected clothes of unusual appearance - Charles favoured an enormous cloak of academic distinction which conferred on him the benign stateliness of a dignitary of the church.* He also had a collection of tweed shooting caps with ear flaps in which he took the greatest pride. Whenever a holiday was in the offing all the preparations and packing were left to his wife - he himself just packed his caps!+ Margaret continued to make her own distinctive dresses, but in London she had access to a hitherto unobtainable range of materials, largely on account of her connections with manufacturers for whom she executed designs.‡ - a situation which she did not hesitate to exploit.

Notwithstanding the superficial gaiety of the Mackintosh household there can be little doubt that they must have faced the future with some trepedition. By this time Charles Mackintosh was nearly fifty years of age; he had no influential connections in London and consequently little prospect of building up a good clientele. Moreover, the exigencies of war had brought architectural practice almost to a standstill and his early work in Scotland was unknown in the Metropolis.

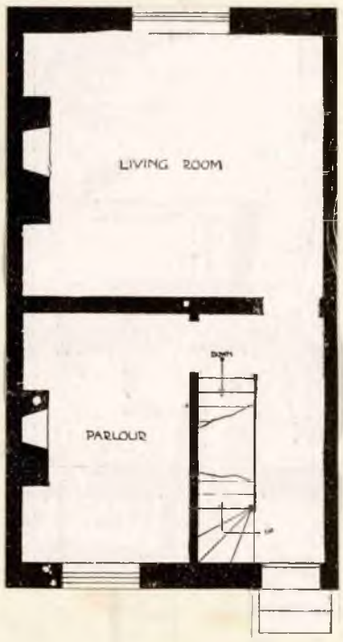
Bassett Lowke.

By a stroke of good fortune however, a friend - probably Fra Newbery - on holiday at Ravenglass in Cumberland (1916), met Mr. Bassett-Lowke, the distinguished engineer, then contemplating the alteration of a house in Northampton. Mackintosh was recommended as just the man for the job, and was invited by Mr. Lowke to undertake the structural modification and interior decoration. He accepted the offer with alacrity.

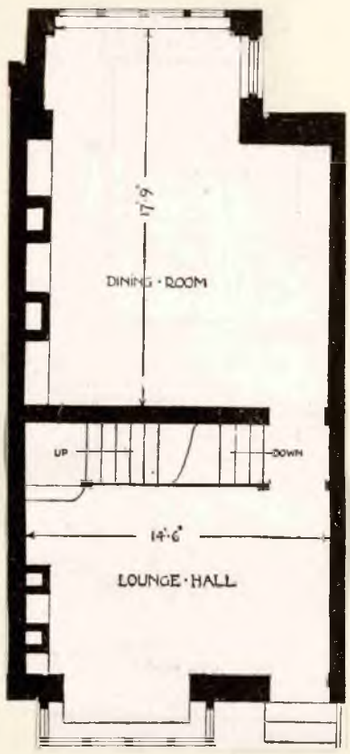
(Footnote: *C/f. E. O. Hoppé's brilliant camera study.)

+Mrs. Newbery Sturrock tells of an amusing incident at Clovelly when the Mackintoshes and Newbery's were on holiday together - someone inadvertently observed that it looked like rain: Mackintosh at once hurried back to the hotel to change his headgear.)

‡For example she was able to secure excellent printed cloth at two-pence per yard - cloth which was intended for export to the colonies.)



Ground Floor Plan
(before alteration).

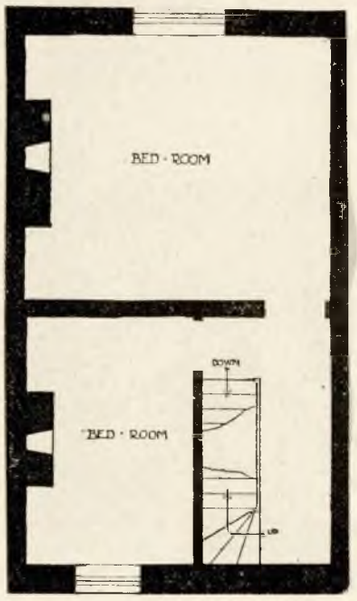


Ground Floor Plan
(after alteration).

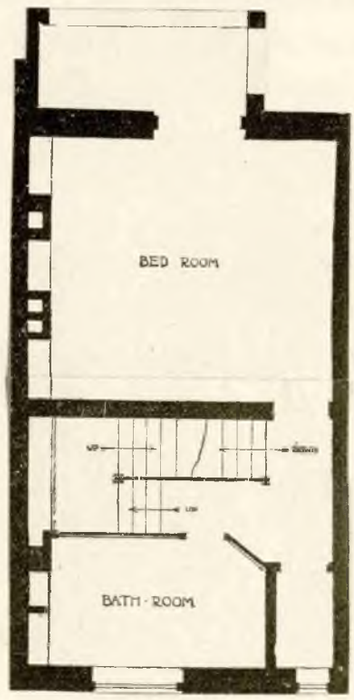
No.78 Derngate, Northampton, proved to be a terrace house of the Victorian bye-law type common in English industrial towns. The frontage was about 15ft. and the total depth comprising parlour and living-room, 24ft.6 ins. The front door opened directly from a narrow staircase hall on to the pavement and there was a long narrow garden at the back of the house. It is difficult to imagine a more striking contrast to the gloriously open sites of 'Hillhouse' and 'Windyhill' but nevertheless, Mackintosh dealt with the problem with no little ingenuity. Only one external alteration was made to the front of the house - the parlour window was widened to 6ft. and projected out to form an attractive bay - this added some 12 square feet to the floor area of the room. Internally the staircase was turned at right angles to its former position and the narrow staircase hall was combined with the parlour into a single apartment occupying the entire width of the house - a lounge-hall.

Before Mackintosh came on the scene, Mr. Lowke had already built an extension to the back of the house about 9ft.6ins. wide by 5ft. deep which substantially increased the kitchen and dining room above.

No.78 Derngate, Northampton.



First Floor Plan
(before alteration)



First Floor Plan
(after alteration)

Elevation to Garden
(before alteration)

Elevation to Garden
(after alteration)

The owner's bedroom on the first floor and the guest's bedroom on the second floor retained their original size but were given charming balconies - an innovation which aroused considerable comment at the time.

The site on which the house was built sloped steeply and although the hall was entered directly from the street and the dining room was on the same level, it was necessary to descend a flight of stairs to the kitchen which in turn gave access to the garden. The Kitchen came in for special attention. By the removal of a partition, its area was practically doubled, the floors and walls to ceiling level were tiled and numerous electrical devices were installed.

Fig.278. From the decorative point of view the dramatic lounge-hall and the guest's bedroom were the most interesting apartments in the house. In addition to the new bay window, the hall contained a large fireplace which Mackintosh remodelled. The staircase in its new position, occupied the entire length of one wall and was separated from the hall by a light timber screen framed in squares, some of which were open and others solid - a favourite motive which the architect had employed on several occasions, notably at the Ingram Street Tea- Rooms. The fireplace was tall and narrow, set in a perfectly plain cement surround with a curious stepped architrave reminiscent of the west doorway of the Glasgow School of Art. The walls and ceiling were painted a dull, velvety black and all the woodwork and furniture was stained black and waxed polished. The walls were divided into narrow vertical panels by strips of stencilled white chequer pattern. The frieze, (approximately 2'9" deep) consisted of nine horizontal bands of small, triangular leaf-shaped motives stencilled golden-yellow and outlined in silver grey. These were interspersed at regular intervals with others of vermilion, blue, emerald green and purple, thus giving a rich subdued band of colour right round the apartment. Some of the square panels in the staircase screen were filled with leaded glass in which the triangular motive again predominated. A large square horse-hair carpet, chequered in black and white with a broad plain inner border was used and the floor surround stained black and wax polished. The stair carpet was grey. Immediately to the right of the entrance doorway two wardrobe cupboards separated by a large clock were built into the wall. An adjustable draught screen designed by the architect was used behind the main door which of course, still opened directly on to the street. Artificial illumination was provided by a circular electrolier of unusually simple design - a single spherical globe with an inverted saucer-shaped reflector surrounded by eight electric candles on a decorated wooden ring. According to a brief, written description by Mackintosh, his intention in using black on walls and ceiling was "to get a sense of mystery

and spaceousness", and he added, ".....it is claimed that
Fig.278a. the result has been achieved" - a claim which the illustrations given here would substantiate. The lounge-hall is unquestionably a fine and dignified apartment. It is noticeable that the square motive which dominated all the architect's work during the Glasgow period is here subordinated to the triangle - a form rarely met with hitherto, yet which was now to become characteristoc of the London phase.

The principal apartments of the Derngate house are much more restrained than the polychromatic entrance hall. The dining-room-lounge for instance was furnished throughout in walnut and the walls below the frieze were divided into the familiar tall narrow panels by flat strips of the same wood. Built-in china cupboards were situated on either side of the large fireplace, which was flanked by two peculiar lanterns.*

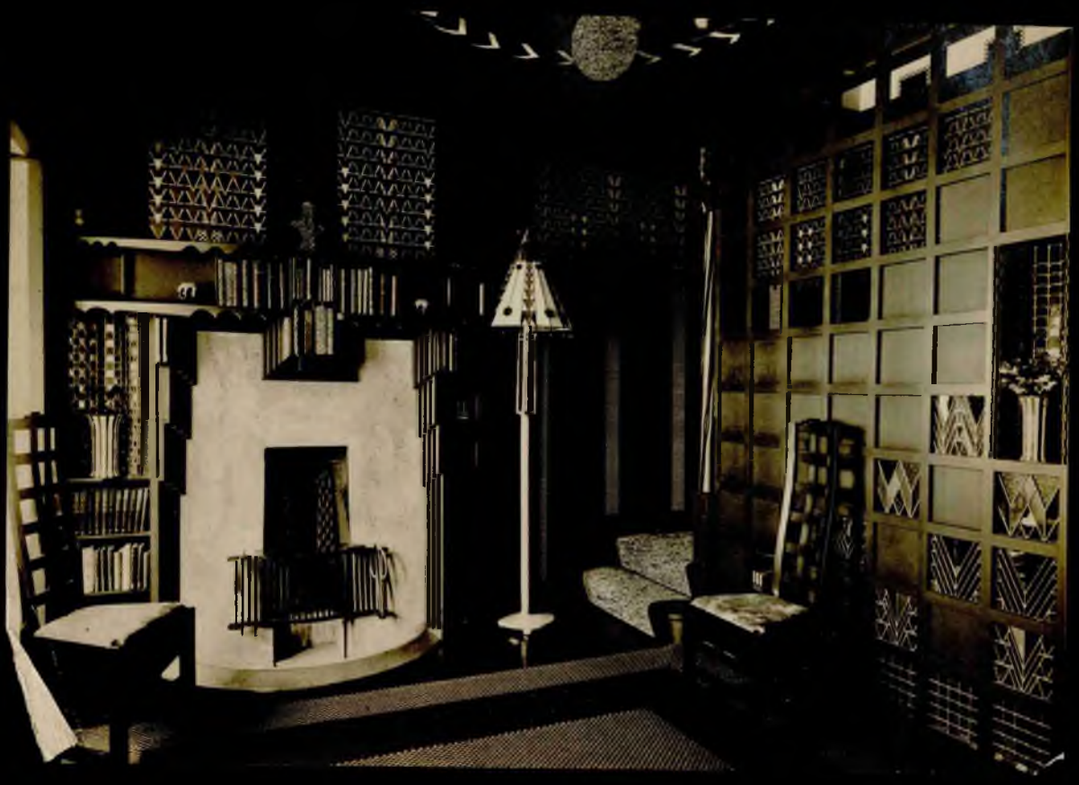
Fig.278b. The guest's bedroom on the second floor however, was one of Mackintosh's most successful interiors. In this instance the triangle motive was conspicuously absent and the architect reverted with notable success, to his former love the square. The ceiling, walls and woodwork were painted white and a plain grey Brussels carpet covered the floor. The furniture was of waxed oak decorated with narrow bands of black on which were stencilled ultramarine squares. The twin beds, linked together by a neat cupboard fitting, were flush panelled at head and foot, the only decoration being in the form of six square piercings in the top rail and a chequered border. The fitted wardrobe was the most striking piece of furniture in the room and certainly one of the best single pieces Mackintosh designed; it is in the English succession and in some respects similar to the contemporary work of Sir Ambrose Heal. ~~The rest of the furniture - two sturdy ladder-backed chairs, a square-framed stool, a mirror~~ The drawers and doors were close fitting and flush panelled, with knobs of truncated pyramidal form, each containing a square inlay of mother of pearl or white erinoid. The rest of the furniture - two sturdy ladder-backed chairs, a square-framed stool, a mirror and a wash-stand with delightful china cccoutrements of Austrian character, are all designed by the architect. The sinuous curves, the Art Nouveau elements of stained glass and rosecoloured enamel which were so obtrusive in his earlier work are conspicuously absent. The only features reminiscent of the Glasgow period were the bedspreads and curtains, the former in

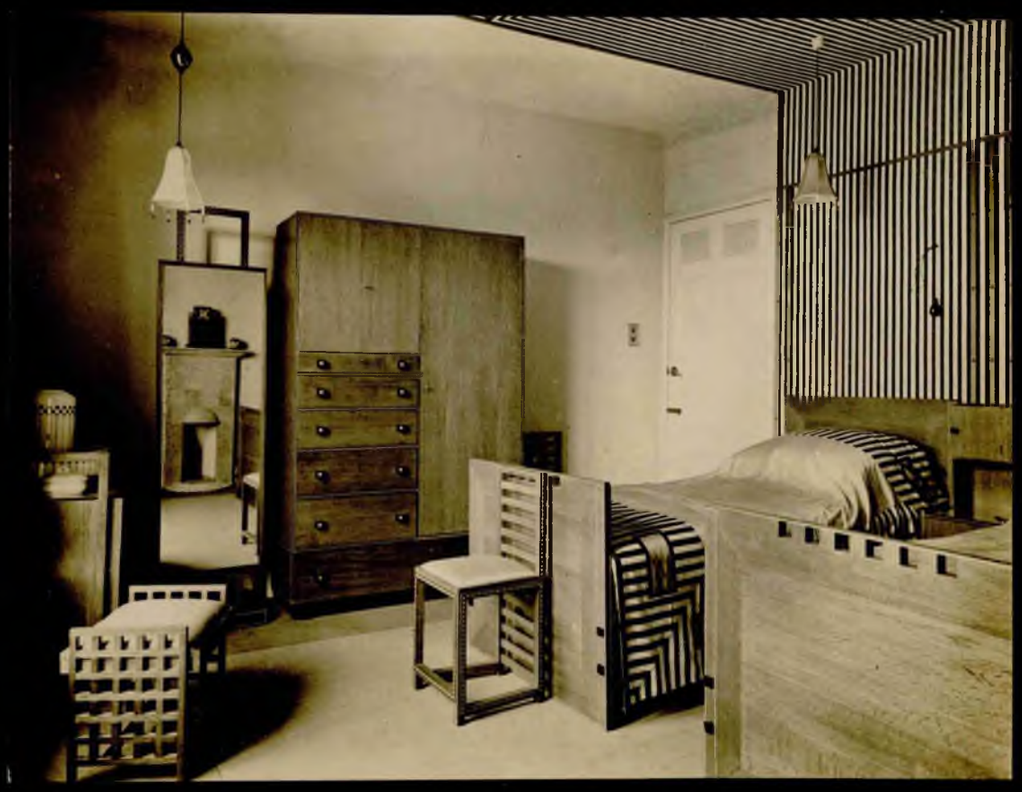
(Footnote: *Mackintosh may have been influenced in his choice of the triangular motive by the work of one of his Austrian contemporaries Josef Urban, who used it freely. There can be no doubt that he 'borrowed' this fireplace from the Viennese designer - C/f. Fig.279b.d.e.)

Fig. 278. No.78 Derngate, Northampton, 1916:

a. The Lounge-Hall.

b. The Guest's Bedroom.





black and white striped silk with ultramarine blue centres, the latter in black and white cotton. The striped motive was picked up on the wall and ceiling where Mackintosh employed striped paper as a conventionalised canopy, linking together and embracing the twin beds.* The paper was edged with ultramarine harness braid, secured at intervals by black headed drawing pins! The bedroom represents a marked advance on any of the architect's previous work.

An illustrated article on the house appeared in 'The Ideal Home' (September 1920). The editor commented thus, "The general effect and colour schemes are striking in the extreme and the most unique thing we have seen in bedroom decoration". It does seem extraordinary however, that more than a decade after the architect's remarkable schemes of decoration and furnishing at 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse', projects which stirred the imagination of a continent, the bedroom at Derngate should be hailed as "the most unique thing we have seen". This single statement shows how completely Mackintosh had passed into oblivion and how slight had been his influence on contemporary opinion in Britain.+

Notwithstanding the interest aroused by Mr. Lowke's house Mackintosh had difficulty in securing further architectural work. It will be noted that four years elapsed before No.78 Derngate was reviewed in 'The Ideal Home'; moreover, in the accompanying article, Mackintosh's name was not mentioned and the entire credit for the work was given to the owner.

Nothing of importance seems to have come from this promising introduction to the Midlands, apart that is, from a scheme of
igs. 279c. decoration and a suite of dining-room furniture designed for the late F. Jones Esq., of the Drive, Northampton" and a series

(Footnote: *He had already employed similar paper very effectively on the attic staircase at No.78 Southpark Avenue. This is in existence at the time of writing.)

+Several minor fittings for the Derngate house are worthy of attention, notably a mahogany table lamp of unusual design with a green erinoid top - Fig.279.(Erinoid was an early form of translucent plastic which Mackintosh used freely.) Also, there were two charming clock cases - Fig.279.£. about 10" high in ebony, inlaid with erinoid in various colours - red, yellow, purple and white. The movements were made in France and bought by Mr. Lowke in London, the cases being built to Mackintosh's design by German prisoners of war in the Isle of Man, (1917-18).

"Mr. Lowke's brother-in-law.)

Fig. 279. No.78 Derngate, Northampton:

a. The Drawing-Room.

b. " " "

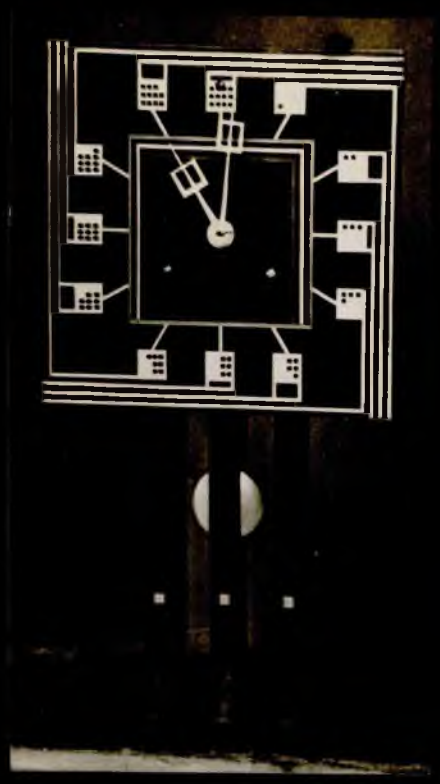
Mr. Jones' House:

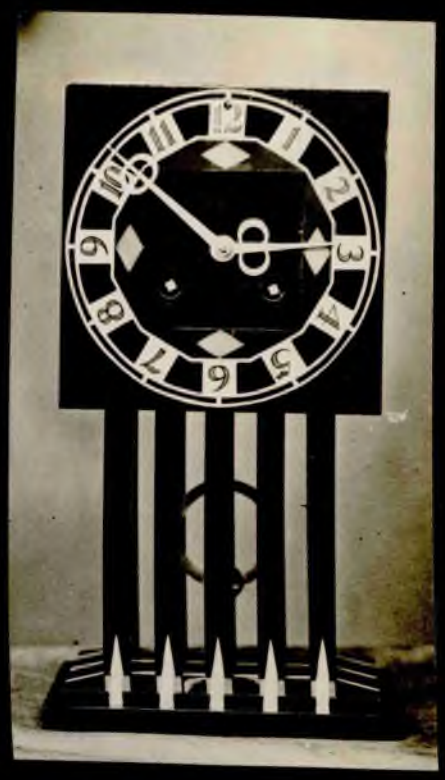
c. The Dining-Room.

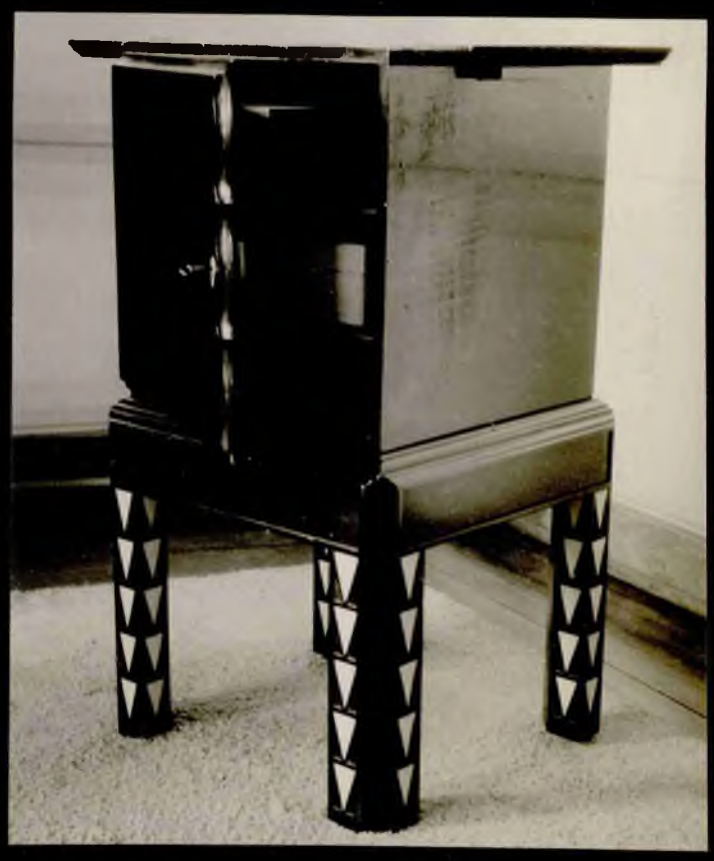
d. & e. Interiors by Josef Urban, c.1903-4 - the probable sources of decorative motives used by Mackintosh in Mr. Jones' House.

f. Clock cases for Mr. Bassett Lowke.

g. & h. Smoker's Cabinet for Mr. Bassett Lowke.







of decorative adhesive labels designed for Mr. Lowke's firm. The labels are attractive and colourful, each design consists of an ingenious pattern of stylised engineering forms - cranks, cogs, levers and so forth - and makes interesting comparison with the architect's linear patterns of the Glasgow period. The soft flowing curves have disappeared and the melancholy purples, greens and yellows are superseded by masses of primary red and blue. Only the lettering gives a clue to the identity of the designer!

From time to time Mackintosh received commissions of a minor nature from loyal friends in Glasgow, notably from Miss Cranston for whom he designed an elaborate memorial fireplace (1917) with the flags of the allied nations in coloured enamels. This was intended for 'The Dug-out' and in 1919 it was followed by a projected rest room and furniture, also for the Sauchiehall Street restaurant. Mr. Blackie too came to Mackintosh's assistance and (c.1921) engaged him to design covers for a series of booklets, 'Rambles among our Industries' and 'Rambles in Science'. At least two were approved - 'Our Railways' and 'Wireless'. The booklets were published in 1922 and 1925 respectively and were bound in dark green limp cloth on which the design was printed in black - not a very happy combination. Unlike Bassett-Lowke's gay labels, the covers are dull and unattractive and, what is more, Mackintosh reverted to his familiar linear and chequered patterns which seem singularly inappropriate for a series of this nature. At least one further commission came from Mr. Blackie for in January 1922 he wrote to Mackintosh regarding covers for some of Henty's books, but it is not known whether or not they were executed.

Textiles. In addition to minor commissions of this nature Mackintosh and his wife turned their attention to fabric design. Through friends in Chelsea they had work accepted by the firms of Foxton and Sefton.* Mrs. Sefton the artist, who sketched for 'The Tatler' under the pseudonym of 'Fish', greatly admired their work and was instrumental in securing valuable introductions for them. Their experiments in this new field achieved some success and during the year 1920 alone - the only period for which a reliable record exists - they secured at least £190 from the two firms.

Footnote: *In 1945 Mr. Foxton wrote to the author of his association with the Mackintoshes. Unfortunately the London premises of his firm were destroyed during the air raids of 1942 and he was unable to supply illustrations and precise details. Some designs are preserved in the University Collection however, several are in the author's collection and a few have been illustrated in 'The Studio' and elsewhere.)

Fig. 280.

a. 'The Dying Rose' (1905) - an early Watercolour by Mackintosh.

b. A Textile Design by Mackintosh, c.1918.

Once they had settled down to their new life in Chelsea the Mackintoshes began to play an active part in the social life of the artist community. They could usually be relied upon to enter with enthusiasm into any movement, or to take part in any demonstration directed against conservative elements in the art world.

The Plough.

For example, Charles Mackintosh was a founder-member of 'The Plough' a society formed "for the purpose of stimulating interest in good art of an unconventional kind". The committee on which he served included Lady Lavery, Baroness d'Erlanger, Clifford Bax, Eugene Goossens, George Sheringham and E. O. Hoppe. The group presented little-known musical, dramatic and literary works of merit and originality which, for one reason or another had been neglected by the ordinary theatre. Plays by Miles Malleson, Antonio Cippico, Emile Verhaeren, Torahike Khori, d'Annunzio and Machiavelli were included in their repertoire. One of the main objects of the society was to encourage close collaboration between author - if a contemporary work - composer, painter, actor and producer. It was hoped thereby to attain a unity of aesthetic effect impossible under the less ideal conditions of the commercial theatre, where each contributor is frequently out of touch with his colleagues.

The Mackintoshes' particular interest of course lay in stage settings and costumes. As students at the Glasgow School of Art, they had frequently assisted with the staging of Masques and similar entertainments. This experience was found now to be invaluable and they designed the decor for at least one of 'The Plough's' productions - Maurice Maeterlincke's 'Joizelle', played in 1917.*

The society went from strength to strength; the Lyric Theatre Hammersmith was taken over, and by 1921 audiences of over a thousand were frequent. Soon, however - in the words of E. O. Hoppe - the venture "died of its own vitality". The group of organisers quickly disintegrated as, one by one, they were offered wider opportunities elsewhere. 'The Plough' was finally disbanded in 1922.

(Footnote: *The story of 'The Plough' was obtained at an interview with E. O. Hoppe in 1945.)

Salon of the Independents.

After the 1918 armistice Mackintosh was actively engaged in the reorganisation of the London Salon of the Independents (founded 1908). This society of artists sponsored 'open' exhibitions of Painting, Sculpture and Craftwork in opposition to the 'closed' academy exhibitions. There was no selection jury and - for an annual subscription of £2. 2. 0. - any artist was at liberty to show three works without restriction and without the intervention of a middleman. Wall space was arranged by ballot. The aims of the society were closely allied to those of the Salon des Independents in Paris, which, from its foundation had been supported by the French Government. Little information about Mackintosh's association with the London Salon is forthcoming but he served on the management committee with J. D. Fergussen, Randolph Schwabe and E. McKnight Kauffer.

Margaret Morris.

Yet another original enterprise attracted the attention of the two Scottish artists. Miss Margaret Morris* - now well-known in the north as the founder of the Celtic Ballet - opened a small theatre at the corner of Flood Street, Chelsea, in 1914 and started a school of dancing. Her pupils were encouraged to invent and stage their own ballets - to design the decor and to evolve new dance figures. Everything was very informal and very unconventional; pupils, teachers and friends met on equal terms to discuss the problems of contemporary art and as a matter of course, to express their contempt for orthodox methods of training and orthodox methods of painting, dancing and making music. Here again, the Mackintoshes found themselves in pleasant and congenial company; they took a lively interest in the work of the students and soon were on intimate terms with Miss Morris and her friends.

Largely as a result of his close association with 'The Plough' and similar organisations, Mackintosh received several commissions which must have given him no little encouragement and turned his thoughts again towards serious architectural practice.

E. O. Hoppe's Cottage.

The first work he undertook was an extension to a gamekeeper's cottage on an estate at Little Hedgecourt, East Grinstead, Sussex, purchased (c.1919) by his friend E. O. Hoppe. Mackintosh transformed this building into a studio-house - since demolished to make way for a new housing scheme. Original drawings are still in existence however, and Mr. Hoppe confirms

(Footnote: *Miss Margaret Morris later married J. D. Fergussen the painter; both artists are of Scottish descent. They have founded the Celtic Ballet and the New Scottish Group at Glasgow during the 1939-45 war.)

that the project was carried out according to Mackintosh's design.

The plan was U-shaped, the arms enclosing a tiny forecourt 11ft. wide facing north, the connecting link being the living room of the old cottage which, along with the kitchen, was retained. One wing contained a large studio with an ingle fireplace; the other comprised a servant's bedroom and service apartments. A spacious staircase with half landing and built-in seats rose directly from the living room.

On the first floor the three cottage bedrooms were retained - a dressing-room was added to one of these and an extension to a second was built into the roof space of the studio quite independently of the structural load-bearing walls beneath. To effect this extension the former end wall of the cottage had to be demolished above ground-floor ceiling level, and as a result the chimney-stack taking the living room flue and bedroom fireplace was left free-standing - an arrangement which must have helped considerably to warm the upper room, and would ensure the minimum amount of heat loss from the living-room fire.

Externally the building was undistinguished. The roof of the main block was hipped, but all subsidiary roofs were gabled; except on the north side the fenestration was irregular and disorderly, some of the windows having stone dressings, others possessing flat brick lintels. On the south and east sides every group of windows was of different proportion and might have been gathered at random from all the architect's previous domestic buildings. Mackintosh attempted to unify the design by the simple expedient of facing the building with rough-cast, as at 'Windyhill' and 'Hillhouse'. Several characteristic features can be recognised, for example the tiny forecourt, a staircase bay, and of course the massive gables and chimney stacks. In spite of its irregularities the house was by no means incongruous, but it lacked the refinement and charm of the architect's earlier work.

Mr. Hoppe's house was followed in rapid succession by a number of other commissions, and during 1920 Mackintosh seems to have been fairly busy.* On 8th January he was asked to design a studio house for Harold Squire the painter, on a site in Glebe Place, Chelsea, and a few weeks later, to prepare similar schemes

(Footnote: *Mackintosh kept a diary for the year 1920, the only one which has escaped the destruction meted out to most of his private papers, account books and the like. Though entries are few and far between, they confirmed evidence gleaned elsewhere and opened up new avenues of enquiry.)

for A. Blunt (an artist who specialised in the design of glass chandeliers, mirrors and the like), and F. Derwent Wood the sculptor.* In March, he commenced work on a project for a block of studio flats for the Arts' League of Service; in June on a theatre for Margaret Morris, and in August on a cottage at Burgess Hill for a certain Miss Brooks. Few of these projects materialised however, and in all cases he encountered serious opposition from the local authorities who objected to his unorthodox designs in no uncertain terms.

The proposed studios for A. Blunt and Derwent Wood kept the architect occupied for some time: plans were completed and submitted to the L.C.C. and estimates received, but no further progress seems to have been made. Entries in the diary throw little light on the matter and no reason is given for the abandonment of the schemes. It is most likely however, that the cost of Mackintosh's elaborate design was exhorbitant, or the opposition of the L.C.C. too strong.

Harold Squire's Studio.

Harold Squire seems to have been made of sterner stuff and work on his scheme proceeded. The first design Mackintosh submitted was very ambitious. The studio-house was to occupy three floors and to include a roof garden - the site incidentally was narrow and deep with a 30ft. frontage to Glebe Place on the north. Living quarters were situated on the ground and first floors at the rear of the block (to the south), to which access was to be obtained by means of a narrow paved passage which had also to act as a service entrance. More than half of the first floor was tekan up by a large studio, 32ft. x 22ft. passing through two storeys and lit from the north. Two bedrooms and a bathroom were placed behind this and a wide staircase led up to the second floor which contained another studio (27'6" x 13'9") facing south and a gallery to the upper part of the main studio. A spiral staircase gave access to a small penthouse and the roof garden.

Fig.284

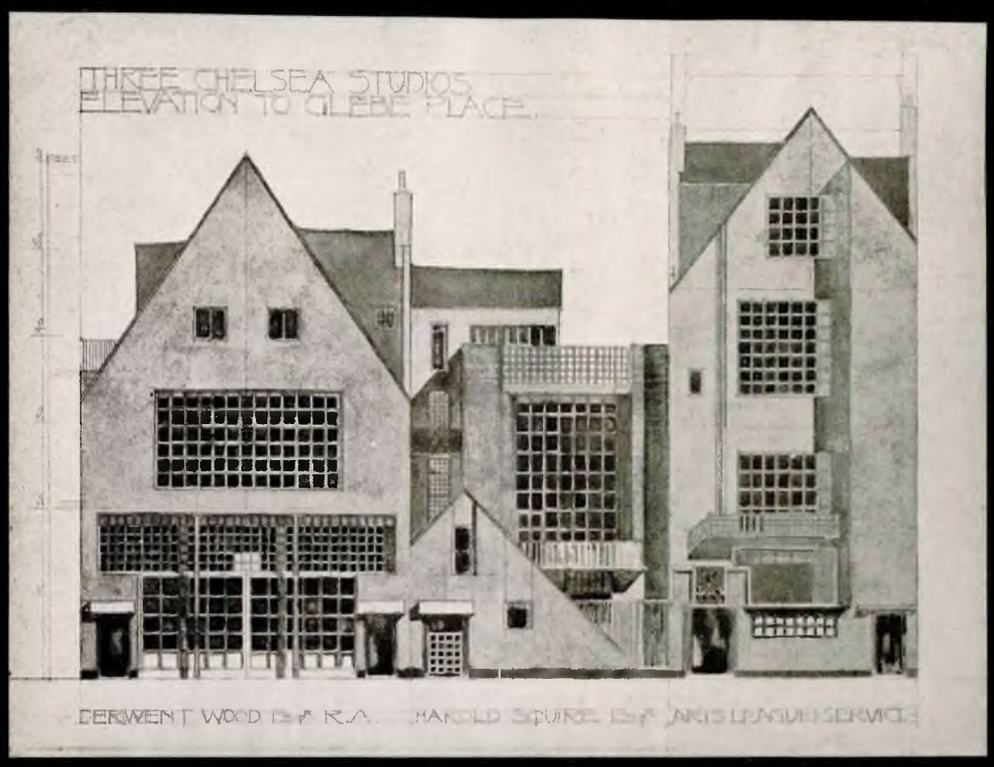
The elevation to Glebe Place - a dramatic composition - was dominated by a large studio window 15ft. high and 12ft. wide, and crowned by a simple wrought iron balustrade. The southern elevation on the other hand was small in scale and entirely different in character from any previous work by Mackintosh. It had three rows of windows of Georgian proportions, equipped with

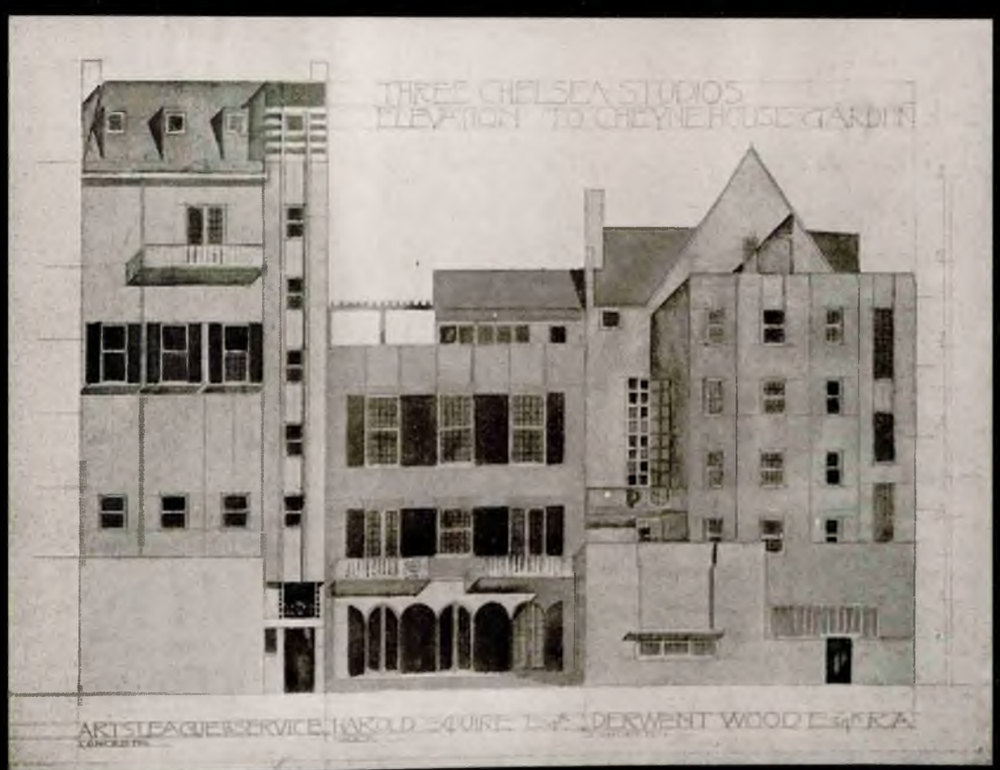
(Footnote: *It is probable that Mackintosh and Derwent Wood were already acquainted for the sculptor was at one time appointed Director of the Modelling Department at the Glasgow School of Art and made monthly visits to Scotland during 1897-8. No doubt Newbery was largely responsible for introducing the Mackintoshes to him and for that matter to many of the Chelsea group.)

Fig. 284. The Glebe Place Studios: Project Drawing:

a. The Elevation to Glebe Place (north).

b. The Elevation to Cheyne House Garden (south).


THREE CHELSEA STUDIOS
ELEVATION TO GLEBE PLACE.
DERWENT WOOD Esq. R.A. HAROLD SQUIRE Esq. ARTS LEAGUE SERVICE


THREE CHELSEA STUDIOS
ELEVATION TO CHEYNE HOUSE GARDEN
ARTS LEAGUE SERVICE HAROLD SQUIRE Esq. DERWENT WOOD Esq. R.A.

shutters - a type common in the Chelsea district - ~~[illegible]~~ and no attempt was made to express the second studio externally.

Apparently Mr. Squire was well satisfied with the scheme but estimates proved it far too costly. Mackintosh was then asked to prepare a statement showing how the price could be reduced to about £6,000! His client meanwhile suggested that the accommodation might be provided on one floor. Revised plans were eventually prepared and the architect was instructed to proceed, keeping the cost as near to £4,000 as possible. Work commenced on 25th June, 1920, but was suspended for some months on account of legal difficulties over the purchase of the site; it was resumed on 27th September. A month or so later, an additional storey - a penthouse - containing two bedrooms, was designed; the estimated cost of this alteration amounted to £650 and the amended plans were approved by the local authority. The scheme now, was fundamentally different from the first project: there were two principal blocks, the 'house' at the front, separated by a small enclosed courtyard 20ft. long by 8ft. wide, from a studio of palatial dimensions (40ft. x 27ft. x 17ft. high) at the rear. Access to the studio could be obtained only through the living-room - which opened directly on to Glebe Place - and across the yard. The roof of the house took the form of a steeply pitched lean-to in order to admit as much north light as possible to the great studio window, which of necessity overlooked the courtyard.

Despite the somewhat tortuous planning, Harold Squire was delighted with the finished building and in a letter to the author, he says that the studio ".... had a magnificence which no other in London possessed." Very soon however, he found that it had several less desirable attributes.

The Glebe Place site originally formed part of the garden of a curious house owned by a Dr. Phéné and sold for development purposes after his death. The doctor appears to have been a strange individual whom the local inhabitants regarded with some suspicion. He is reputed to have indulged in mystic rites of a most unpleasant kind, including that of snake worship. The doctor's house occupied the Oakley Street corner of the garden and at the Upper Cheyne Row end there was a second mystery house in which, according to Mr. Squire, a wedding breakfast remained untouched for years in the true Dickens' manner, the bride for whom it was prepared having died on her wedding morning. Furthermore, when building work started, the studio site was found

to be littered with the remains of an old church and numerous pieces of carved stone, presumably from an altar, were unearthed. Nothing untoward happened however, until the studio was finished and had been occupied for some months. Then Mr. Squire noticed that the servants were uneasy and somewhat reluctant to be left alone in the building at night. On making tactful enquiries he found that they claimed to have seen the spectre of a man on horseback in the studio on several occasions and were convinced that the place was haunted. In spite of his reassurances they adamantly refused to stay in the building alone and eventually gave notice. Nor was he able to keep new servants for more than a few weeks. Some time later Mr. Squire himself saw the apparition in broad daylight and was sufficiently convinced to have the case investigated by a medium who gave him a description of the ghost and an explanation of the occurrence - "without anyone giving her any previous details".* The late Professor Schwabe too, vouched for the authenticity of the story. He mentioned the ghost to some carriers in the vicinity at the time, and was told that Dr. Phene had been fanatically attached to a horse which on one occasion had saved his life. Apparently the animal was buried in his garden directly beneath the spot chosen for the studio and its remains had been unearthed during the preparation of the building site.+

The author examined the studio in 1945 - it was then being used by the local authority as an emergency A.R.P. store and had been uninhabited for a number of years. Mackintosh's original scheme had been materially altered. The living quarters now are two storeys high and completely overshadow the great studio window. The studio itself was dismal and gloomy in spite of its white-washed walls and not a single detail remains by which the architect might be identified - except that is, the scale of the apartment, which however, inevitably recalls the studios at the Glasgow School of Art.

The Arts' League of Service.

When Mr. Squires' work was in hand, an ambitious scheme for building studio flats was evolved by a group of artists with whom the Mackintoshes were closely associated - members of the Arts' Leavue of Service.

The Arts'League , which can best be described as a forerunner of C.E.M.A., was founded by Miss Anita Berry, a jovial Chilean lady of immense vitality, who, in the words of the late Allan Walton

(Footnotes: Overleaf.

(Footnote: *The ghost is vouched for in a letter to the author from Mr. Harold Squire and the story has been reconstructed from information supplied by the late Professor Schwabe and others. Unfortunately Mr. Squire was seriously ill when he wrote (26.1.46.) and did not enlarge upon the findings of the medium. The late Professor Harry Price of the Psychic Research Society had no record of the case.)

+It has not been possible to discover whether the spectre was successfully exorcised. Mr. Squire did not occupy the building for more than two years: quite apart from the difficulty of retaining servants owing to the disturbing influence of the ghost he found the studio far too expensive to maintain - heating alone was a very big item.)

was "made up of circles". The irrepressible Miss Berry was a staunch champion of the neglected genius! She organised innumerable exhibitions, theatrical and musical performances, and was responsible for introducing to the public, many unknown artists who have since become internationally famous - for instance, McKnight Kauffer and Frank Dobson the sculptor, to mention but two. To obtain funds she opened an Arts' League Shop in John Street, Adelphi, for which Harold Squire and Malcom Milne designed rugs, metal candle-sticks and the like.*

Anita Berry visualised the League not as a charitable institution but as an organisation capable of dealing with the many problems peculiar to a community of artists - not the least of which was that of finding suitable studio accommodation, for at this time - shortly after the 1914-18 war - the cost of living was high and commissions extremely difficult to secure. It thus came about that Mackintosh, for whom of course, the objectives of the League had an irresistible appeal, was invited to design a block of studio flats. This venture appears to have been enthusiastically supported by the leading members of the League. The building was to be financed on the co-operative principle, each artist-tenant would be a shareholder and, it was hoped, by paying a reasonable rent, would ultimately become the owner of his studio. J. D. Fergussen, one of the originators of the scheme and the late Professor Schwabe, were to have been two of the first tenants.

A site occupied by Old Cheyne House and adjacent to Harold Squire's studio, was selected, for which Mackintosh advised Miss Berry to offer £1,850, and on 31st March 1920 he was instructed by her to prepare preliminary sketches. For some weeks he worked extremely hard and produced a series of interesting designs which, after being approved by the Arts' League Committee, were submitted to the local authority in June. Trouble began at once. The drawings raised a deal of controversy and the project was scathingly described as factorylike and "not architectural enough". Two months later Mackintosh was informed that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners also objected to the studio block and to his design for Margaret Morris's Theatre,+ as unsuitable

(Footnote: *Miss Berry was actively assisted in her work by Miss Eleanor Elder authoress of 'The Travelling Players' and formerly a pupil and teacher at the Margaret Morris school.)

+No trace can be found of this scheme.)

buildings for the locality. In a stormy interview with their architect, he was advised to make his elevations more elaborate and according to a friend, the climax was reached when the man took his drawings and exclaimed, "My dear sir! This isn't architecture!" and proceeded to insert swags and other classic details. Mackintosh afterwards vowed to J. D. Fergussen that he would give up the profession altogether and resort to painting if his scheme were rejected. He refused to alter his design, or to compromise in any way. After a delay of some weeks however, it was provisionally approved (13th December) and a week later (19th December) permission was given "by Archdeacon Bevan" for the work to proceed.

It has not been possible to obtain a clear picture of subsequent events but despite this favourable decision the project came to nothing.* It is most probable that the scheme miscarried because the requisite capital was not forthcoming but whatever the cause, the fact remains that the plan was abandoned.+ Some time later the Arts' League was formed into a limited company and eventually went into liquidation.

The accompanying reproductions of Mackintosh's drawings for the three buildings which were to occupy contiguous sites - Derwent Wood's studio, Harold Squire's studio and the Arts' League Flats, - give some indication of his intentions. The projecting and receding planes of the north elevations, with their romantic roofs and windows are suggestive of Montmartre, yet the severely regimented south facade recalls the Glasgow School of Art. The Georgian character of the centre portion of this facade is difficult to account for and can hardly be reconciled with the architect's treatment (in concrete) of the adjacent wings. One must assume that the shuttered windows, the arcade and the wrought iron balconies were provided at the client's request.

When it is realised that Squire's studio - by far the smallest of the buildings depicted in these drawings - had to be drastically modified and almost entirely redesigned to bring the cost below £6,000, some indication may be obtained of the

(Footnote: *Miss Berry, the obvious source of information, returned to Chile many years ago and cannot be traced at the moment of writing. Mackintosh's other friends and acquaintances are unable to enlarge upon the facts given here.)

+The idea was revived some years later however, with George Kennedy as architect, and a block of studio flats - The Chenil Studios - was erected on a site adjacent to Chelsea Town Hall.)

prodigious expense ~~of~~ Derwent Wood and the Arts' League might have incurred had they embarked on the scheme laid down here by the architect.

These drawings represent the last architectural work of moment that Mackintosh attempted. Squire's studio was built of course - on modified lines - and it is believed that the Burgess Hill cottage progressed satisfactorily but no further commissions were forthcoming to compensate for the loss of the Arts' League building, the theatre and the other studios. In January 1921 however, Mackintosh engaged as assistant, Miss Hero Elder, sister to Miss Eleanor Elder of the Arts' League. In a letter to the author Miss Elder confesses that Mackintosh had no work on hand other than Squire's Studio and the cottage - "a very small job". She herself had been trained at an art school and had had no practical drawing-office experience, consequently she was of little help to him. She stayed but a few months and though the architect and his wife were very kind to her she did not get to know them well.

With little work in hand, frustrated by local authorities and with an insecure and unpredictable future, it is not surprising that Mackintosh again became truculent, morose and apathetic. It is significant that his friend Bassett-Lowke found him quite impossible to work with and, (c.1924) when he wished to build himself a house in the modern manner, he turned to Professor Peter Behrens, the German architect, who designed 'New Ways', Northampton - claimed by F.R.S. York as the first house in the modern style to be built in England. Confirmation also came from an unexpected and independent source. A Glasgow architect, Mr. Allan Ure, employed in Burnet, Tait & Lorne's London Office, at this time came across a painting by Mackintosh in an exhibition and secured his address from the catalogue. Mr. Ure had been an ardent admirer of his work in Glasgow and, assuming that he had a flourishing practice in London, made up his mind to seek an interview and, if the prospects were good enough, to offer himself as an assistant. A meeting was arranged in the Glebe Place studios but to his disappointment Mackintosh greeted him coldly and was obviously in a state of acute depression. Notwithstanding Mrs. Mackintosh's attempt to make her visitor welcome, her husband hardly spoke a word during the inverview, and Mr. Ure, in some embarrassment, was glad to make his excuses and escape from the studio.

From this time onwards things went from bad to worse and it became obvious that no improvement could be expected while they remained in Chelsea, nor for that matter could they afford to live there indefinitely without some prospect of further architectural work. On the advice of friends therefore, they were persuaded to take a long holiday abroad. In 1923 the studios in Glebe Place were sub-let and the two artists left the country.

Port Vendres.

After a short stay at Mont Louis in the Pyrenees they finally settled in Port Vendres, a tiny hamlet on the Mediterranean side of the Franco-Spanish border. Here they took rooms at the Hotel de Commerce.

At this juncture Mackintosh resolutely decided to give up architecture and devote all his energies to water-colour painting - a decision not altogether unforseen in view of his remarks to J. D. Fergussen mentioned hitherto. His flower studies and early watercolours indicated that he possessed undoubted talent, and during the Walberswick and Chelsea periods he had had several opportunities of working in this field.*

The Water-colours.

At Port Vendres however, he applied himself resolutely to the task of perfecting his technique as a watercolourist and of establishing his claim to a position in the art world. His paintings during the following three or four years are as extraordinary as they are unexpected and he seems to have plunged into this new form of creative enterprise with unbounded confidence and enthusiasm. The watercolours produced between 1924-7 are entirely different from any of his previous essays in this medium. They are as diverse and full of character, as vigorous and original as his early experiments in the field of decoration and craftwork with which, incidentally, they have much in common. He was obviously still engrossed with mass composition, pattern and texture, almost to the exclusion of everything else. Water, rocks, fields, hills, buildings, shadows and reflections are woven together in fascinating two-dimensional patterns in which little if any attempt is made to achieve depth or 'atmosphere'. In this medium as in all others Mackintosh accepted no conventions, followed no rules. His absorption with form, composition and design, to the neglect of tonal relationship between near and distant planes is well illustrated by the reproduction of 'Port Vendres, La Ville',+ where

Fig. 290

(Footnotes - Overleaf.

Fig.290. The Watercolours:

a. 'Port Vendres, La Ville', c.1925.

b. Subject unknown.

Footnotes to Page 290:-

*In July 1920 for example, in company with his wife and Professor and Mrs. Schwabe and their daughter Alice, he enjoyed a month's holiday at Worth Matravers, Dorset where he produced at least three masterly watercolours 'Abbotsbury', 'The Village, Worth Matravers', and 'The Downs, Worth Matravers'.)

†Acquired by Glasgow Corporation, 1933.)

the vivid splash of golden yellow on the hillside entirely destroys any sense of recession that may have been achieved in the foreground and middle distance.

The paintings fall into two main groups:: one in which a comparatively small overall pattern dominates - for example 'La Ville' - and the second in which the attention is caught and held by a single dramatic feature, which is drawn and composed with consummate skill, and is essentially architectural in conception. To this group belong 'The Rocks' and 'The Fort'* and the curious painting 'Rue de Soleil' a study in reflections. Greys, blues, greens and yellows dominate in nearly all his work - the colours of the cold palette which were characteristic of 'The Four' in the 1890's - and rare indeed is a painting by Mackintosh of the warmth and lazy sunniness of 'La Ville'.

According to Chapman-Huston Mackintosh was a slow worker and during the four years he spent at Port Vendres he completed only about forty pictures out of the fifty considered necessary for an exhibition at the Leicester Galleries - the objective for which he was striving. He had work exhibited at the third, fourth and fifth Chicago International Exhibitions in 1923, 4 and 5 respectively; at the Duveen Invited Artists' Show in Paris in 1927, and at the Leicester Galleries in 1928.

For the third time in his varied career however, Mackintosh failed to reach his objective and the fifty pictures were never completed.

In the autumn of 1927, the year in which he executed many of his best and most interesting watercolours, he suddenly complained of a sore throat, and on the recommendation of the local doctor, he was persuaded to return to England for specialist advice. On reaching Dover, he and his wife sent an urgent message for help to the Newbery's. Mrs. Newbery met them in London and largely through her influence, Mackintosh was admitted for treatment to a city clinic. He was quickly transferred to Westminster Hospital however, where, for some months, he endured the agony of radium treatment for cancer of the tongue, and practically lost his power of speech.

(Footnote: * 'Le Fort Maillet' was illustrated in the French periodical 'Revue du Vrai et du Beau', 25.Mar.1929, p.13.)

Fig. 291. The Watercolours:

a. 'The Rocks', 1927.
b. 'Le Fort Maillet'. 1927.
c. 'La Rue du Soleil', 1927.
d. 'The Little Bay', 1927.


C.R. MACKINTOSH


C.R.MACKINTOSH 1927

The use of radium in a case of this type was still in the experimental stage and Mackintosh was carefully watched by the surgeon in charge, of whom he had the greatest admiration. He never doubted that he would soon recover and the following incident will illustrate his courage. Medical students were often brought to his bedside and on one occasion they were taking notes and sketching the position of the apparatus when he signified that he wished to see their drawings. He then borrowed a pencil, made a correct anatomical sketch of his tongue and throat, and clearly demonstrated the best way of depicting the apparatus.

To all intents and purposes Mackintosh recovered from the disease and was discharged from hospital, but a long convalescence was imperative. During his illness he frequently expressed a wish for a house with a garden where he could sit under a tree. After a great deal of fruitless searching, Margaret Macdonald discovered a furnished house in Willow Road, Hampstead Heath, which had a small garden and a tree. Here he spent his convalescence, nursed devotedly by his wife and visited constantly by his friend Margaret Morris who taught him to express himself in sign language and was instrumental in helping to restore his power of spech. He wrote to Mr. Blackie about this time and spoke of the terrible suffering he had endured in hospital, but which in his opinion was well worth while because he had been restored to health and was able to work again. This was followed shortly afterwards by a second letter accepting a commission to paint a picture for Mr. Blackie which, unfortunately, was never executed.

The Mackintoshes were not permitted to enjoy the comparative peace of Hampstead for long: it appears that after some trouble with the landlady they were asked to leave the house. Again, a good friend came to their assistance: Desmond Chapman-Huston whom they had known in the old days at Glasgow, offered them the use of the two upper floors of his house - No.72 Porchester Square, during his absence abroad. This was a large, Early Victorian building with the principal rooms overlooking gardens in the square, and for a time Mackintosh was extremely happy there. He enjoyed browsing through his host's collection of books and pictures and looking at the garden. Soon however, he found the stairs too exhausting and arrangements were made for him to occupy the ground floor dining-room which possessed a balcony, so that he had only to go up stairs to go to bed. Eventually even this became too much for him and in the autumn of 1928 he

was taken into a nursing home (No.26 Porchester Square). At about this time two of his paintings were shown at the Leicester Galleries and Chapman-Huston bought them; as they were unsigned, he took them to the nursing home where Mackintosh sat up in bed and printed his name on each - the last occasion on which he held a pencil. After a brief illness he died on 10th December 1928.*

Margaret Mackintosh was deeply affected by her husband's death and for a short time remained at Porchester Square. She then went back to Chelsea and lived quietly in lodgings in Royal Avenue and later at No.10 Manor Studios, Flood Street. Little is known about her life at this time and she died in comparative obscurity some four years later. She also was cremated at Golders Green and the service took place on 10th January, 1933.

(Footnote: *A cremation ceremony was arranged by Chapman-Huston at Golders Green on 11th December. The ashes were taken home to Mrs. Mackintosh who had expressed a wish to scatter them at Port Vendres, where the happiest years of their married life had been spent - a wish that was never gratified.) It must be recorded too that an obituary notice in the London 'Times' contained these misleading words - "Mr. Charles Rennie Mackintosh the architect has died in Spain at the age of fifty-nine.")

POSTSCRIPT.

The Mackintoshes retained the lease of the Glebe Place studios during and after their brief stay in France, and on Margaret's death the contents were valued. There were twenty-six watercolours and five flower paintings, a large collection of miscellaneous architectural drawing sketches and photographs, some furniture and personal effects. The entire contents were estimated to be worth £88.16. 2. - "practically of no value" according to the official assessment.

Everything was disposed of by the executors except the drawings and paintings which were sent to Glasgow where they were held in trust by Mr. William Davidson for Sylvan McNair, only son of Herbert and Frances McNair, then living abroad.

In May 1933 a Memorial Exhibition was organised at the McLellan Galleries, Glasgow, and a number of paintings and drawings were sold. The rest were stored in the basement of Mr. Davidson's city warehouse where they remained undisturbed and to all intents and purposes forgotten, until the author commenced this investigation in 1940. The discovery of the collection was an exciting experience. The little basement room, with its piles of dust-ladened folios and inviting brown paper parcels all neatly tied and labelled, seemed a veritable treasure-house and the author spent many hours sorting, classifying and recording the hundreds of sketches and drawings that came to light.

It was obvious however, that some attempt should be made to safeguard the collection, and if possible to arrange a permanent exhibition of the Mackintoshes'work in Glasgow. This question was discussed frequently with Mr. Davidson, but the insuperable obstacle was always that of finding suitable accommodation. He refused adamantly to send the drawings to the Corporation Galleries unless an assurance were given that they would be adequately and permanently displayed; nor would he contemplate giving them to the School of Art except on similar terms. In neither case was the assurance forthcoming, so the drawings remained where they were.

Failing the two most important art centres in Glasgow the only alternative that came to mind was the Mackintoshes' former home, No.78 Southpark Avenue, adjacent to the University - a doubly attractive proposition in that the architect's original decorations and furniture had been carefully preserved. Nothing could be done about this immediately however, as Mr. Davidson was living in the house, but in view of its situation, the author suggested that Glasgow University might take steps to acquire the property if at any future time it should come on the market. Through the good offices of Professor C. J. Fordyce, this proposition was favourably received.

Unfortunately Mr. Davidson's dream of a Mackintosh Exhibition did not materialise during his lifetime, nor did he live to see the completion of this study in which he had taken ~~such~~ a benevolent interest. He had been in failing health for some years and, after a protracted illness, died in the summer of 1945.

Negotiations for the purchase of the Southpark Avenue house were opened in due course and on 15th November 1945 it was acquired by the University. At the same time, most of the original furniture designed by Mackintosh was presented by the Davidson family in memory of their father - a generous and valuable gift. Shortly afterwards Mr. Sylvan McNair relinquished his claim to the drawings and paintings and now they too are in safe keeping.

In this manner, a representative collection of the artists' work has been secured and moreover, some of the furniture can be seen in its original setting. The Southpark Avenue house however, is not a museum, and at present it is occupied by a senior member of staff . It is anticipated that a permanent home for the Mackintosh collection will be provided in future extensions to the University, and the possibility of reconstructing the best Southpark Avenue interiors as a background to the exhibits should not be overlooked.

The story is not quite ended however. Southpark Avenue is rather remote from the centre of the city and it was felt that the Mackintoshes should be represented adequately in the School of Art, the centre to which all interested visitors inevitably gravitate. After the acquisition of No.78 Southpark Avenue

Mr. Henry Y. Allison, acting director of the School, was prevailed upon to start a Mackintosh collection, using as a nucleus the furniture and drawings already in the building. Research in connection with this study had revealed the presence of many potential exhibits in the hands of kindly disposed individuals and the success of an exhibition room seemed assured once the project was given official status. While the plan was taking shape, Mr. D. P. Bliss was appointed director and he too gave the scheme his support. By a magnanimous gesture, the governors agreed that the work should be housed in the old board room - one of the finest apartments in the School. The decoration of the room and the collection and arrangement of exhibits was left in the hands of the author and the deputy director, Mr. H. Jefferson Barnes and an appeal for further work by the artists was circulated. The response was most gratifying. The sceptics were confounded, and the Mackintosh Room was formally opened on 17th April 1947 by Miss Nancy Mackintosh after a brief address by Sir Frank Mears. At the time of writing the School of Art possesses an excellent collection of furniture, watercolours and drawings by the architect and his wife, worthily housed, and conveniently situated in the centre of the city.

The Mackintosh story is now complete and it can be claimed with some justification, that the prophet has at last found honour in his own country. It is hoped that the two collections described here will be maintained and augmented, and that his architectural work in Glasgow and its environs will be saved from further mutilation.

Extracts from letter from Professor Josef Hoffmann
dated Vienna, Dec.20th
1947:-

"It is a pleasure to tell you something about my adventure with Mackintosh. At the turn of the century the Morris movement had been of very great interest to us of England's efforts in the subject of industrial arts.

"We were well informed about the experiments and successes through the publications of 'The Studio' and soon could recognise and admire the activities of Charles Mackintosh.

"We had to appreciate especially his extraordinary feeling for architecture, his new dreaming colour-symphonies in grey, light pink and light violet. His strange furniture, light fittings and his interior decoration were very impressive to us.

"In spite of all these new ideas his home feeling (?) was easy to recognize. In 1901 we arranged, in the newly erected building of the Sezession, an exhibition of Mackintosh's works, his furniture and (?). There we had also founded the Vienna Workshops and we had the pleasure to greet Mackintosh and his wife.

"He seems to us a deliverer from dead styles - a founder of new forms and an impressive renovator of Scottish peculiarities. We liked both of the artists very much - and stood a long time in stimulated thought.

"Of course we didn't want to imitate his personal peculiarity and style in Vienna, but we could take power and courage from his standards. Before his death we had followed his works with the same interest but we had often to regret that his artistry was not appreciated enough."

Further Acknowledgments.

Many people have contributed to this study and an exhaustive list of names would be impossible. However, the author would acknowledge his indebtedness to each of the following, who in some specific way have helped in its preparation:-

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Mr. D. P. Bliss.
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Mr. P. Wylie Davidson.
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Mr. E. O. Hoppe.
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Mr. Alexander Smellie.
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Letters have also been received from the following notable figures in the modern movement but these have been largely confirmatory and nothing of moment has emerged:-

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Mies van der Rohe.
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Cobden-Sanderson, T.J. .. 'The Arts & Crafts Movement'.

Elder, Eleanor ..... 'The Travelling Players'.

Fergussen, J.D. ..... 'Modern Scottish Painters'.
Fletcher, B. & H.P. .... 'The English House'.

Gaunt, William ..... 'The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy'.
'The Aesthetic Adventure'.
Giedion, Siegfried ..... 'Space, Time & Architecture'.
Gimson. ..... 'Ernest Gimson, His Life & Work'.
Goodhart-Rendel, H.S. ,. 'How Architecture is Made'.
Gropius, Walter. ..... 'The New Architecture & The Bauhaus'.

Hannah, Ian C. ..... 'The Story of Scotland in Stone'.
Harbron, Dudley ..... 'Amphion'.
Hevesi, Ludwig von ..... 'Osterreichische Kunst Des 19 Jahrhunderts'.
Hurd, Robert & Alan Reiach. 'Building Scotland'.
Hussey, Raymond. ..... 'The Work of Sir Robert Lorimer'.

Jackson, Holbrook ..... 'The Eighteen Nineties'.

Kalas, E.B. ..... 'De la Tamise a la Spree'.
Koch, Alexander ..... 'Handbuch Neuzeitlicher Wohnlungskultur'.
Kotera, Jan ..... 'My Work and my Pupils; 1898-1901'.
'Prace me a mych zanku, 1898-1901'.
Kulka, Heinrich ..... 'Adolf Loos'. (Nues Bauen in der Welt, Bk.4.)

Lethaby, W.R. ..... 'Philip Webb & His Work'.
'Architecture'.

MacKail, J. W. ..... 'The Life of William Morris'.
Muir. ..... 'Glasgow 1901'.
Munro. ..... 'Earchie'.
Martin, David ..... 'The Glasgow School of Painters'.
Muthesius, Anna ..... 'Das Eigenkleid der Frau'.
" Hermann ..... 'Das Englische Haus'.
'Die Englische Baukunst der Gegenwart'.
'Das Moderne Landhaus'.
'Haus eines Kunstfreundes'.
Maxwell, Sir John Stirling 'Shrines & Homes of Scotland'.

McGrath, Raymond ..... 'Twentieth Century Houses'.
McGibbon & Ross ..... 'Domestic & Castellated Architecture of Scotland.'

Osthaus, Karl Ernst ..... 'Van de Velde'.

Pevsner, Nicolaus ..... 'Pioneers of the Modern Movement'.

Richardson, A.E. ..... 'Monumental Classic Architecture in Great Britain'.
Ross, Robert ..... 'Aubrey Beardsley'.
Rossetti, D. G. ..... 'The House of Life'.
Roth, Alfred ..... 'The Reality of the New Architecture'.
Ruskin, John ..... 'Architecture & Painting'.
'The Two Paths'.

Scott, Sir George Gilbert 'Personal & Professional Recollections'.
Scott, H. Baillie ..... 'Houses & Gardens'.
Sharp, William & E.A. .... 'Progress of Art in the Century'.
Sparrow, W. Shaw ..... 'Our Homes & How to Make the Best of Them'.
Symons, Arthur ..... 'The Art of Aubrey Beardsley'.

Taut, Bruno ..... 'Modern Architecture'.
Taylor, Charles ..... 'The Levern Delineated'.

Vereine, D.A. & I. ..... 'Das Bauernhaus im Deutschen Reiche'.
Voysey, C.F.A. ..... 'Individuality'.

Weaver, Sir Lawrence ..... 'Houses & Gardens by Sir Edwin Lutyens'.
Weiser, Dr. Armand ..... 'Josef Hoffmann'.
Wilenski, R. H. ..... 'The Modern Movement in Art'.
Willmott, E. ..... 'English House Design'.
Wirth, Dr. Zdenek ..... 'Josef Gocar'.

PERIODICALS.

'Academy Architecture'.
'The Architect'.
'The Architects' Journal'.
'The Architectural Review'.
'Artwork'.

'The British Architect'.
'The Builder'.
'The Builders' Journal and Architectural Engineer'.
'The Building News'.

'Country Life'.

'Dekorative Kunst'.
'Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration'.
'Der Architekt'.
'Die Kunst'.

'Innendekoration'.

'The Journal of the R.I.B.A.'
'The Journal of Decorative Art & The British Decorator'.

'Kunst und Handwerke'.

'The Listner'.

'Magyar Iparmuveszet'.
'The Magazine of Art'.

'The Quarterly' (Edinburgh): The Journal of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland.

'Revue du Vrai et du Beau'.

'The Scottish Field'.
'The Studio'.
'The Studio Year Books'.

'The Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society'.

'Ver Sacrum'.

'Wohnbauten und Siedlungen aus Deutscher Gegenwart'.

NEWSPAPERS.

'The Citizen'. (Glasgow).

'The Evening News'. (Glasgow).

'The Glasgow Herald'.

'The Scotsman'.

COLLECTED PAPERS.

Title.	Author, Etc.
'Arts & Crafts Essays'.	Members of the Arts & Crafts. Exhibition Society.
'Art & Life & the Building & Decoration of Cities'	Lectures by members of the Arts & Crafts Society - W. R. Lethaby and others.
'The Art Revival in Austria' .	'The Studio'.
'The Baillie'	A Glasgow publication of local interest and news.
'The British Home of Today' ..	Edited by W. Shaw Sparrow.
'Ein Skizzen, Projekte und Ausgeführte Banwerke von Otto Wagner'.	Published in Vienna 1906.
'Glasgow Contemporaries'	Biographical.
'Glasgow Who's Who'	.....
'Modern British Architecture & Decoration, 1901!.....	'The Studio'.
'Our Homes & How to Beautify Them'	Waring & Gillow (sponsored).
'Recent English Domestic Architecture'	'The Architectural Review' 1908.
'Scotland'	By Robert Hurd, Stanley Cursitor and others, published by Nelson.
'Wagnerschule - Projekte, Studien und Skizzen aus der spezialschule für architecktur des oberbaurat Otto Wagner'	Published Leipzig, 1910.
'The Yellow Book' - an illustrated Quarterly	Published by Elkin Mathews & John Lane.

THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

The Charles Rennie Mackintosh Collection & The Davidson Bequest.

Revised Catalogue prepared October, 1948

by

Thomas Howarth, A.R.I.B.A.

NOTE.

"A", "B", etc.	-	Letters on the outside of parcels signifying general classification of contents.
"A (a)", "(b)", etc.	-	Indicates a number of subsidiary folders under the general heading "A".
"1 - 5", etc.	-	Indicates the number of individual drawings, sketches or photographs in each folder or subsidiary folder.

ABBREVIATIONS.

C.R.M.	-	denotes work by	-	Charles Rennie Mackintosh.
M.M.M.	-	ditto.	-	Margaret Macdonald (Mackintosh)
F.M.	-	ditto.	-	Frances Macdonald (MacNair).
J.H.McN.	-	ditto.	-	J. Herbert MacNair.

Contents of Parcels.

(General Classification).

A. Sketch Books.
B. Flower Studies & Line and wash drawings, etc.
C. Loose Sketches.
D. Mackintosh Memorial Exhibition Catalogues (1933).
E. Correspondence, etc.
F. Papers on Architecture.
G. Photographs; (mainly domestic work).
H. Photographs; (portraits of C.R.M. & M.M.M. photographs of Miss Cranston's Tea Rooms).
I. Textile Designs.
J. C.R.M. Art Work, Bookplates & Minor Commissions.
K. (Cancelled - Contents transferred.)
L. Chelsea Period. (Mainly unexecuted architectural work, 1916 et seq.)
L.(i) ditto. (Small commissions for Mr. Bassett Lowke.)
M. Furniture. Many drawings and sketches mostly without titles or dates
N. Furniture. 'Hous'hill', Nitshill. (Miss Cranston's Residence.)
O. Plans & Furniture. No.6 Florentine Terrace.
P. Miscellaneous Architectural Projects. (Mostly domestic.)
Q. Miscellaneous Small Commissions. (Gravestones, etc.)
R. Journals, English & Foreign. (Containing references to C.R.M.)
R(i) ditto. (Duplicates only.)
S. M.M.M., F.M., and J.H.McN. - Miscellaneous Book Illustrations, etc.)
T. Architectural Drawings (in rolls). C.R.M.
U. Posters (in rolls). C.R.M., M.M.M., F.M., & J.H.McN.
V. Mounted Drawings. (Executed by C.R.M. as a student.)
W. ditto. (Liverpool Cathedral Competition only.)
X. Framed Drawings & Photos. (Miscellaneous.)
Y. Stencilled Fabrics.
Z. Mounted Architectural Drawings. (Various - C.R.M.)

Composite Parcels.

All folders are parcelled separately with the exception of the following:-

G. & H.
J. & S.
L, L(i), M, O, P, & Q.

I N D E X.

Parcel A. **Sketch Books.**

1 - 6 Sketch Books. (Freehand sketches mainly in pencil.)

Folder B. **Flower Studies & Line and Wash Drawings, etc.**

(Nos.1 - 4 : 20, of little merit.)

1.	Poem, 'On a Flower Study by Mackintosh', by David M. Mitchell.
2. & 3.	Lino Cuts or Woodcuts on Tissue.
4.	Tracing of Fully Rigged Ship.
5. - 8.	Water Colours of Vessels at Quayside.
9. - 19.	ditto. of Flowers. (Mostly signed & dated.)
20.	Sketch of Roses on Cardboard.

Folder C. **Loose Sketches.** (Architectural Subjects.)

(a)	In England.	63 sketches.	
(b)	In Scotland.	9 sketches.	(Alexander Thomson Scholarship Drawings, 1891.)
(c)	In Italy.	6 sketches.	
(d)	Miscellaneous.	5 sketches.	

Parcel D. **Mackintosh Memorial Exhibition Catalogues (1933),** only.

Folder E. **Correspondence, etc.** (Mainly private papers: little material of consequence.)

(a)	W. Davidson re 1933 Exhibition.
(b)	C.R.M. 9 letters: (2 Blackie, 1 Keppie, 1 L.C.C., 5 Bassett Lowke.)
(c)	M.M.M. Private papers: correspondence.
(d)	Diary, 1920.
(e)	Newspaper cuttings 1933 Memorial Exhibition.

Folder F. **Papers on Architecture.**

(a)	Diary (Italian Tour 1891).
(b)	'Italian Tour' - a paper.
(c)	'Scotch Baronial Architecture'.
(d)	'Elizabethan Architecture'.
(e)	'Seemliness'.
(f)	Unnamed paper on architecture.
(g)	Criticism of 'The Stones of Venice'.
(h)	'Architecture' - a paper.
(i)(j)(k)	Three magazine articles - authors unknown.

Folder G. **Photographs & Magazine Illustrations.**

(a)	1 - 7	'Hous'hill' (Interiors for Miss Cranston's residence.) Also, Dining Room, Mains Street Flat.
(b)	1 - 18	Miscellaneous.
(c)	1 - 5	'Windyhill' (for W. Davidson).
(d)	1 - 13	'Hillhouse' (for W. W. Blackie: interiors.)
(e)	1 - 4	School of Art (interiors).

Folder H. **Photographs.**

(a)	Queen's Cross Church Calendar and Year Book, with 5 sketches of church not by C.R.M. (unimportant)	
(b)	1 - 7	Portraits of C.R.M. and M.M.M.
(c)	1 - 11	Miss Cranston's Tea Rooms, Ingram Street.
(d)	1 - 16	ditto. Sauchiehall Street
(e)	1 - 7	ditto. Buchanan Street.

Folder I. **Textile Designs.** (Few of these designs are signed and dated but they were executed during and shortly after the 1914-18 war.)

(a) 1 - 25 Textile Designs; rough sketches.
(b) 1 - 2 Textile Designs, M.M.M.
(c) 1 - 43 ditto. Finished designs.
(d) 1 - 4 ditto. ditto.

Folder J. **C.R.M. Artwork, Bookplates & Minor Commissions.**

(a) 1 - 2 Leaded Glass (cartoons).
(b) 1 - 18 Letter Headings, Book Illustrations (Black & White).
(c) 1 - 6 Magazine and Book Covers; miscellaneous.
(d) 1 - 8 Greetings Cards.
(e) 1 - 5 Posters.
(f) 1 - 7 Miscellaneous.

Folder K. (Cancelled - Contents transferred to 'C').

Folder L. **Chelsea Period.** (Mainly unexecuted architectural work, 1916 et seq.
Various sketches & project drawings; minor commissions.)

(a) 1 - 20 House at Grinstead for E. O. Hoppé Esq., (executed).
(b) 1 - 9 F. Derwent Wood) A. Blunt) Studios: (not executed).
(c) 1 - 39 Arts League Studios: (not executed).
(d) 1 - 9 Studios unknown: (not executed?).
(e) 1 - 29 Studio for Harold Squire Esq., (built in modified form).

Folder L.(i). **Chelsea Period.** (Small commissions for Mr. Bassett Lowke, Northampton, /1916, et seq.)

(a) 1 - 4 Domestic Clocks.
(b) 1 - 8 Labels advertising Mr. Bassett Lowke's engineering firm.
(c) 1 - 30 Furniture for Mr. Lowke's house.
(d) 1 - 5 Miscellaneous.

Folder M. **Furniture.** (Many drawings and sketches mostly without titles or dates).

(a) 1 - 50 Unknown miscellaneous.
(b) 1 - 26 Unclassified Miscellaneous.
(c) 1 - 11 Cutlery.
(d) 1 - 7 Furniture for the architect's own house.
(e) 1 - 12 ditto. foreign clients.
(f) Furniture for Miss Cranston's Tea Rooms:
(f1) 1 - 6 Various:
(f2) 1 - 13 Argyle Street:
(f3) 1 - 10 Ingram Street.
(g) 1 - 13 Furniture for Mr. W. Davidson, 'Windyhill'.

Folder N. **Furniture, 'Hous'hill', Nitshill. (Miss Cranston's Residence).**

1 - 12 Various.

Folder O. **Plans & Furniture, No.6 Florentine Terrace.** (Now No.78 Southpark Avenue originally occupied by C.R.M. Architectural Drawings for alterations./ 1906)

1 - 10 Plans, elevations, sections and details.

Folder P. **Miscellaneous Architectural Projects.** (Mostly domestic.)

1 - 4 Various preliminary sketches.
5 - 7 An artist's cottage - probably unexecuted.
8 (6 sheets). House at Kilmacolm.
9 - 11 Glasgow School of Art rough sketches.only.
12 - 13 Inn, Lennoxtown.
14 House at Kilmacolm for Major Collins.

Folder P. (Cont.d)

15 - 16 House unknown.
17 House at Killearn. Unfinished perspective in pencil.
18 'Hillhouse', elevation only.
19 - 20 Liverpool Cathedral, sketches only.
21 Skipness Castle:)
22 Auchamore House, Gigha:) plans.
23 - 29 Auchinbothie, Kilmacolm. Cottage. ½" drawings.
30 - 36 80 Union Street, Glasgow: (alterations to?)

Folder Q. Miscellaneous Small Commissions. (Gravestones, etc.)

1 Sun-dial.
2 Sign.
3 Notice Board.
4 - 8 Gravestones.

Folder R. Journals, English & Foreign. (Containing references to C.R.M. The factual information in these periodicals is on the whole unreliable - especially in those appearing after 1923.)

1. Quarterly. Spring 1933. Frontispiece @ p.11. article J. J. Waddell.
2. The Studio. Feb.15, 1900, p.48 - School of Art.
3. do. Jun.15, 1901, p.46 - Glasgow Exhibition ~~1901~~ 1901, (Stands only).
4. do. Special Summer Number 1901 p.110-15, Studio Flat.
5. do. Jul.15, 1902, p.91 - Turin Exhibition.
6. do. May 15, 1903, p.286- Ingram St. Restaurant.
7. do. Oct.15, 1906, p.31 - Argyle St. Restaurant.
8. do. Dec.15, 1923, p.330- 'Pinks', Watercolour.
9. Artwork. Spring Number No.21, 1930, p.19-31, Article illustrated by C.R.M.
10. The Studio. Jun.15, 1933, p.345- Article illustrated by E. A. Taylor.
11. The Listner, Jul.19, 1933, Article illustrated by Prof. Alan Mainds.
12. Architects' Journal, 5.Apl.1933) Brief Obituary notices
13. do. 17.May 1933) only.
14. Architectural Review. Jan. 1935. P.M. Shand.
15. do. Jan. 1934. Geo.Walton Obituary ~~with~~ notice & comments, no reference to C.RM.
16. Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration, Sep.1902.) Turin
17. Ditto. French Edition.) Exhibition.

Folder R(i). Journals, English & Foreign. (Duplicates only).

1. Quarterly (1 copy).
2. The Studio. June 1933. (5 copies).
3. Pages abstracted from The Studio Special Summer Number, 1901.

Folder S. M.M.M., F.M., & J.H.McN. - Miscellaneous Book Illustrations etc.

'The Christmas Story' (1896). Illuminated manuscript in metal covers, also 3 loose sheets and 8 photographs of pages. M.M.M. & F.M.

(a) M.M.M. 1. Menu Card for Miss Cranston's Tea Rm. (1901).
2 - 24. Drawings & photographs of various watercolours & illustrations.

(b) 1 - 15 Unsigned & unidentifiable photographs of various watercolours & illustrations.

(c) 1 - 8 F.M. & J.H.McN, photographs of various watercolours & illustrations.
9 Watercolour on card - F.M.

Folder T. Architectural Drawings (in rolls). C.R.M.

1 - 5 Proposed Tenement Property.
6 - 10 Glasgow Exhibition 1901. Competition Drawings mounted on canvas, numbered 2, 4, 5, 8, 9.
11 - 12 Two perspectives in pencil - Golf Clubhouses. (The authorship of these drawings and the date is uncertain.)

Folder U. Posters, etc., (rolled).

1 Poster C.R.M.
2 do.
3 Poster M.M.M., F.M., & J.H.McN.
4 Wallpaper from Southpark Avenue.
5. Large Painting C.R.M.

Folder V. Mounted Drawings. (Executed by C.R.M. as a student.)

1 Drawing from the cast in Sepia.
2 Science & Art Museum (Original Elevation).
3 ditto. (Reproduction).
4 A Presbyterian Church; sections only.

Folder W. Mounted Drawings. (Liverpool Cathedral Competition only.) 1903.

1 - 7 The project drawings submitted by C.R.M. in Competition. Plans, sections, elevations and a perspective. Large drawings mounted on cardboard: a fine set.

Folder X. Framed Drawings & Photographs. (Miscellaneous.)

(D = Original Drawing.)

1 Queen's Cross Church, Glasgow. (D). 1897. Perspective drawing in ink.
2 Daily Record Office, Glasgow. (D). 1901. Large perspective in watercolour.
3 Scotland Street School. (D). 1905. Perspective drawing in ink.
4 Railway Station. (D). Section only; unfinished; pencil.
5 Musical Review Poster. Reproduction.
6 Corridor: Hillhouse. Photograph.
7 The Willow Tea House. 3 Photographs in frame.
8 ditto. ditto.
9 Gesso Panels. Ingram Street. Photographs.
10 The Four Queens for the Card Room at Miss Cranston's residence. Photographs of 4 panels (gesso) by M.M.M.
11 A Country Mansion. (D). Drawing - no further information available.
12 Artist's Cottage & Studio. (D). (2 complementary drawings framed are on loan to Glasgow School of Architecture, Royal Technical College.) - Not executed.
13 Musical Review. Small preliminary sketch for poster. (D).
14 'Lysterions Garden' M.M.M. Line & Wash Drawing on Vellum.D.
15 Water Colour. F.M., dated 1907. (D).
16 Small Reproduction of K.l., Queen's Cross Church.
17 'Haus eines Kunstfreundes'. 3 Elevations of a design submitted in competition by C.R.M., 1902.

Folder Y. Stencilled Fabrics. (6 in all.)

1 Table runner.
2 Four Stencilled Fabrics: (2 small, 2 large).
3 Large fabric stencilled with a conventional bird motive.

Folder Z. Mounted Architectural Drawings. (Various - C.R.M.)

1 A Cinema: project drawing mounted. No further details known.
2 National Bank Buildings, Glasgow. Project drawing.
3 Glasgow Herald Offices. Large perspective drawing in in'
4 Martyrs' Public School.

THE DAVIDSON BEQUEST.

(at No.78 Southpark Avenue.)

Drawing Room.

2 Oval Coffee Tables (painted white).
1 Square Card Table ditto.
2 High-backed chairs ditto.
1 Arm Chair with Solid Wooden Back (oak).
1 Box (wing) Fireside Chair (oak).
2 High-backed Chairs with oval inset (on loan to Queen's Cross Church).
2 Dining-room Chairs, medium, square backs, (oak).
3 Small Arm-chairs - two with upholstered seats (oak).
2 White painted cabinets.
1 Large White Painted Book-case with leaded glass doors

Dining Room.

1 Writing Desk with Beaten Metal Inset, (oak).

Kitchen.

1 Large Kitchen Dresser.

Bedroom.

(All furniture painted white.)

1 Large Four-poster Bed, (dismantled).
1 Cheval Mirror.
1 Wash Stand.
- Twin Wardrobes.
2 Chairs with Stencilled Canvas Backs.
2 Small Bedside Tables (square with drawer).
1 Small Bedside Table (circular).

Incidentals.

1 Beaten Metal Fireguard (designed M.M.M. 1899).
2 Mirrors in repoussé metal frame.
Cartoon for leaded glass window.
Framed sketch on tracing paper of frieze, (Miss Cranston's Buchanan Street Restaurant).
Plaster relief panel (above staircase) - facsimile of frieze in Miss Cranston's Sauchiehall Street Restaurant.