

SCOTTISH ARCHITECTS HOMECOMING

FOR THE YEAR OF HOMECOMING we have decided to celebrate the Scottish architects who left their native land for a variety of reasons but subsequently returned home. Many achieved considerable success in England or further afield but returned home to live and work in Scotland. This had a huge impact on Scotland's buildings through the new ideas brought back by architects from their experience elsewhere and applied in their own designs. It also affected those who had chosen to remain here who felt the influence of the homecomers. By focusing on a small selection of architects, this study identifies some of these influences and where they can be seen. The information is drawn largely from our Dictionary of Scottish Architects www.scottisharchitects.org.uk

Architects returned home for many different reasons. Some had always kept strong links with Scotland and continued to do more work here. Others always planned to return and saw the time spent away as preparation for their later careers back at home. Still others realised that they could make more money returning to Scotland. Some of our architects are already of world renown whilst others played to a smaller audience. But after coming home all had an impact on the built environment or on architectural education. This gives us the sense of the dynamic picture of Scottish architects at home and abroad. You can find out more about these architects from the online Dictionary of Scottish Architects website.

CASE STUDIES

Robert Adam

Sir Robert Rowand Anderson

William James Anderson

John Begg

John Cunningham

William Hay

George Henderson

William Leiper

Alexander George Robertson Mackenzie

Sir Robert Matthew

William Lambie Moffat

James Playfair

James Taylor Thomson

Sir Anthony Wheeler

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Robert ADAM

b: 1728

d: 1792

pob: Kirkcaldy, Fife

Scotland's, and justifiably Britain's, best-known architect, Robert Adam – the designer of Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, and creator of the 'Adam style' of decoration – spent almost thirty successful years working in England but came home to Scotland to practise in the last ten years of his life. The reason why Adam returned was because his London business almost folded and he lost many of his English clients. He was also attracted back to Scotland because Edinburgh and Glasgow in the late 1780s and 1790s were offering great opportunities for architects to design important public buildings. After his return to Scotland Adam had the chance to fulfil a life-long ambition, 'the desire to raise a great building of a semi-public nature in the monumental manner': Register House (1774–92) in Edinburgh, which is now the National Archives of Scotland. Register House in a number of ways sums up Adam's achievements though not perhaps as clearly as St Paul's sums up Wren's or Blenheim Palace sums up Vanburgh's.

Robert Adam, born in 1728 in Kirkcaldy in Fife, took over his father's architectural and contracting business on the latter's death in 1748. Robert, in partnership with his brother John, was very successful and in six years saved enough money to enable him to make a Grand Tour to France and Italy with Charles Hope, younger brother of the Earl of Hopetoun. He visited Florence and Rome and Split in Dalmatia making many drawings of all sorts of subjects. While abroad he took the decision not to return to Scotland but to set up practice in London as he felt he needed 'a greater and more extensive ... scene'. He arrived back in London in January 1758 and set up in practice in partnership with his brothers, James and William. At the beginning he attracted a number of Scottish clients, including Lord Bute and the Duke of Argyll, but his reputation grew and he was soon appointed Architect of the King's Works and attracted many English clients. During the 1760s and 1770s he completely changed the way English houses were designed. He introduced the idea of 'movement' into his designs through contrasting parts. At Register House the horizontal emphasis of the main part of the south facade was balanced by the vertical accents of the towers at either end, and the swell of the dome above the centre of the elevation originally contrasted with the steps curving down from the entrance to the street. Adam also started using a new range of ornamental details which he borrowed from a wide variety of sources. These included not just Greek and Roman remains but all sorts of ornamental details. For nearly twenty years Robert Adam was one of the busiest architects in England.

In the early 1770s Robert along with brothers James and William got into financial difficulties with the speculative scheme, the Adelphi in London. They acquired an area of land beside the Thames and proposed to erect houses with vaulted warehouses below. However they were hit by a national credit crisis and work stopped in June 1772. They were saved from ruin two years later by selling the whole development by lottery. This crisis meant English clients lost confidence in Adam. There was also strong competition from other architects like James Wyatt and Henry Holland. Adam went out of favour. The Adam brothers had kept an office in Edinburgh from 1772 when they won the commission for Register House but the more permanent return to Scotland where they still had loyal clients seemed a good idea by the 1780s. Adam's homecoming was therefore not strictly a choice but a practical necessity though he continued to maintain his London house and office after his move to Scotland.

Once in Scotland Adam not only fulfilled his desire to design grand public buildings – most notably the University of Edinburgh, Glasgow Trades House, Glasgow Infirmary and Glasgow Assembly Rooms, as well as Register House – but he also designed Charlotte Square which influenced Edinburgh street architecture down to the 1820s. He too developed the picturesque 'castle style', most notably at Culzean Castle. This was to be imitated by many subsequent architects in designing country houses. Adam's return to Scotland was hugely important



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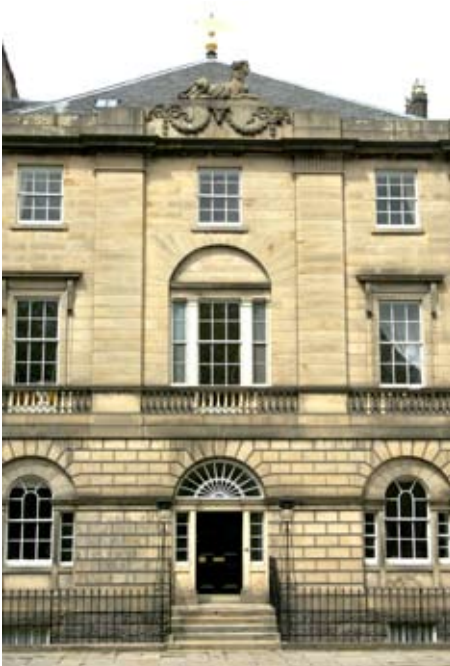
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Robert ADAM



Charlotte Square, Edinburgh



Charlotte Square, Edinburgh



Robert Adam
James Tassie, Robert Adam,
Scottish National Portrait Gallery

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Robert ADAM



Register House, Edinburgh
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Culzean Castle, Ayrshire

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Sir Robert Rowand ANDERSON

b: 1834

d: 1921

pob: Edinburgh

Robert Rowand Anderson (1834–1921), whom we know as architect of the McEwan Hall and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh, is a good example of just how many different sources of inspiration can be used by an architect. As with William Leiper, it was not only the things Anderson saw but the people he met who influenced his architecture. As a young man he spent time in London, and also travelled and sketched on the Continent, which would be important in the work he did on his return to Scotland.

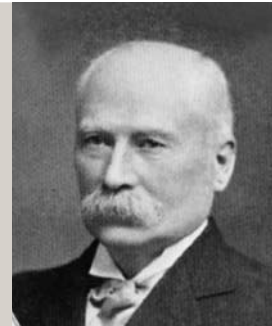
After first studying architecture in Edinburgh, in 1857 Anderson moved to London where he obtained a post in the office of the eminent George Gilbert Scott, who was one of the outstanding designers of Victorian churches in the Gothic style. There Anderson worked alongside Scott's sons, G G Scott and John Oldrid Scott as well as a number of other young architects such as John James Stevenson, and he formed connections which were important in later years.

Scott and Anderson formed a close friendship that would last until Scott's death in 1878. Scott advised Anderson, as he did all his most ambitious assistants, to spend time abroad. In 1859 Anderson went on a study tour of France and North Italy, finishing up with a short stay in Roermond in the east of The Netherlands, where he worked in the office of P J H Cuypers who was considered to be the leading Gothic Revival architect on the Continent. After returning he published a book entitled *Examples of the Municipal Commercial and Street Architecture of France and Italy from the 12th to the 15th century* (1870–1875).

What did Anderson bring back from his spell away from home? It helped not least to kick-start his career. One of his first jobs was supervising the construction of St James the Less Episcopal Church, Constitution Street, Leith, on behalf of Scott. Bishop Terrot, primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, noticed Anderson and this led to a large number of Episcopal commissions throughout his working life. In 1862–4 he designed Christ Church, Falkirk: in Scott's style he designed the exterior with contrasting colours; cream coloured rubble for the walls with red stone banding carried round them at window bases and tops and at the cornice level. In 1864 he won the limited competition for All Saints Episcopal Church, Brougham Place, Edinburgh, and in the late 1860s he designed a series of other Episcopal churches, including St Andrews in the town of St Andrews, St Michael's, Alloa, and St John's, Helensburgh. These churches were all influenced by the work of Scott. Like Scott, Anderson tried to produce designs which stuck truthfully to medieval examples. Even after his return to Scotland, Anderson kept up with the recent work of other great English church architects, like George Edmund Street, whose work he saw and sketched on his many visits to the south.

It was not only Scott but also the other assistants alongside whom Anderson worked in London that had an important effect on his work. It is possible to find details that Anderson borrowed from them and reused in his own buildings. The windows on the side of Anderson's Edinburgh Medical School are almost identical to the balconies at 1 Lowther Gardens by John James Stevenson. Anderson described the style of Glasgow Central Station as 'an adaptation of the Renaissance order', which was being used in London and Oxford by some of the younger architects, and as a 'modification of the Queen Anne style', which was being used widely by Stevenson and others. The gabled dormers on the roof of the station building and the windows are very similar to those used by Stevenson for example on the Red House, London. Mount Stewart, designed for the Earl of Bute in 1878, has features such as the windows and the galleries at the eaves which are borrowed from a house in Figeac, France which Anderson sketched on his study tour in France and published in his book. To sum up, Anderson used a whole kaleidoscope of ideas from both the past and the present, and blended them into thoroughly modern buildings.

Some of Scott's wider interests in promoting the architects' professional body, the Royal Institute of British Architects, and in architectural education in the broadest sense rubbed off on the young Anderson. Scott's office was hugely important as a teaching practice. Many assistants passed through it, including a number of Scotsmen – such as James Matthews, John James Stevenson and John More Dick Peddie – who went on to have successful careers. Did Anderson deliberately model his office on Scott's in this respect? The *Dictionary* lists twenty-four young men who assisted in Anderson's practice. This interest in education almost certainly paved the way to his setting up his School of Applied Art which opened in 1892, where architects in Scotland could for the first time acquire a complete architectural training.

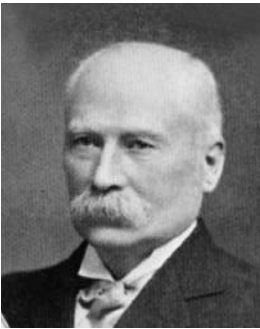


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Sir Robert Rowand ANDERSON



Sir Robert Rowand Anderson



The McEwan Hall, Edinburgh



The Red House, London

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Medical School, Edinburgh



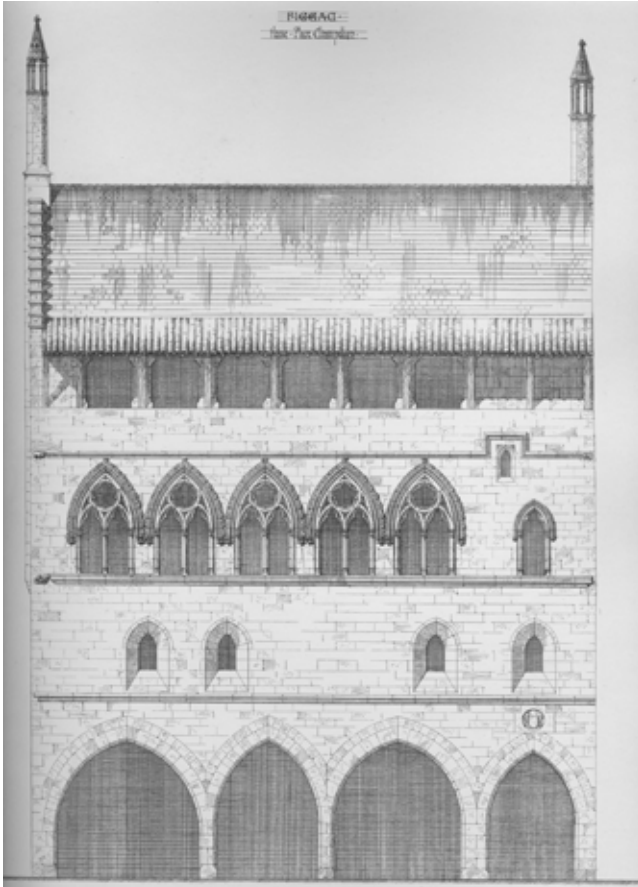
1, Lowther Gardens, London

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Sir Robert Rowand ANDERSON



House in the Place Chapollion, Figeac, France



Central Station Buildings, Glasgow Crown Copyright: RCAHMS



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William James ANDERSON

b: 1863

d: 1900

pop: Dundee

William James Anderson (1863-1900) is perhaps less well-known than some of his contemporaries but was nevertheless a very talented architect with original ideas. He spent some time in 1888 on a study tour in Italy but returned home to commence practice in Glasgow. The impact of his foreign study tour was immediately apparent in Anderson's work

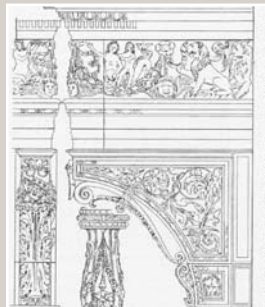
The importance of foreign study was recognised not just by the architects themselves but also by their professional body, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). The Institute was formed in 1834 but it was not until after the 1870s that a large number of Scottish architects became members. By the 1890s the application forms for nomination to membership contained a section where the candidate was asked to specify what travel he had undertaken. This continued to be part of the form until the later 20th century. Young architects could find it difficult to pay for tours abroad. A range of bursaries was offered to the ablest students by the RIBA and also from the 1920s by the RIAS (Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland) as well as by local institutes and the individual schools of architecture. The Soane Medallion was one of the earliest prizes offered by the RIBA (1838) and was won by the Scottish James McLaren in 1848. The Alexander Greek Thomson Travelling Scholarship was the first major prize to be offered by the Glasgow Institute of Architects, later part of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland. In 1887 William James Anderson was the first winner of this Scholarship. Anderson won this with a fine set of drawings of Thomson's Queen's Park Church. The prize money enabled Anderson to spend five months travelling and sketching in Italy.

Anderson was born in Dundee and articled to the St Andrews architect James Ross Gillespie. He was clearly both able and hard working as after the completion of his apprenticeship in 1881, he secured a post as assistant with the eminent Edinburgh practice of Robert Rowand Anderson and George Washington Browne. After two years he moved to Glasgow as chief assistant to Thomas Lennox Watson. While there he studied at Glasgow School of Art for the sessions 1884-85 and 1886-89, and, as we have seen, he won the Alexander Thomson Travelling Scholarship in 1887. This enabled him to spend five months in Italy the following year. Afterwards he returned to his old post with Thomas Lennox Watson. In practical terms his experience in Rome can be seen in the good Italian Renaissance detailing on the ground floor of the Citizen building in St Vincent Place, Glasgow for which he must have been responsible while still working for Watson. The finely cut floral motifs on the pilasters are very similar to details of for example the chimneypiece in the Doge's Palace, Venice which were drawn by Anderson during his trip to Italy or those in the Sacristy of Santa Maria presso San Satiro, Milan which we know Anderson visited. The influence of Italy can still be seen in Orient House (1892-95) which resembles an Italian palace.

The trip had another spin-off. In 1890 Anderson published his Thomson Scholarship drawings as 'Architectural Studies in Italy'; and after he set up in independent practice in 1891, business was initially slow and he accepted an invitation by the Governors of Glasgow School of Art to deliver a series of seven lectures as part of a 'study the classics' programme for the architectural students. Five were published by BT Batsford as 'The Architecture of the Renaissance in Italy' while the two introductory lectures were developed into a course on the history and development of Greek architecture followed by three lectures on Roman architecture, delivered in 1896-97. These were then put into book form as 'The Architecture of Greece and Rome' and published in 1902 which became the standard text for all British Schools of Architecture.

Anderson's architecture was new and inventive in both design and construction but his life was cut short when he committed suicide after one of his buildings collapsed and killed several workmen. His experience abroad had a specific result in his own buildings and in what he was able to pass on to his students in the next generation.

Continental study tours were a frequent occurrence in the early careers of many Scots architects in the second half of the 19th century. However only a handful actually studied abroad – in particular at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris. Between 1870 and 1890 only six Scots architects studied there. This short study of the architects who came home deals with a selection of cases which are representative of general patterns. For this reason none of those who studied at the École are included.



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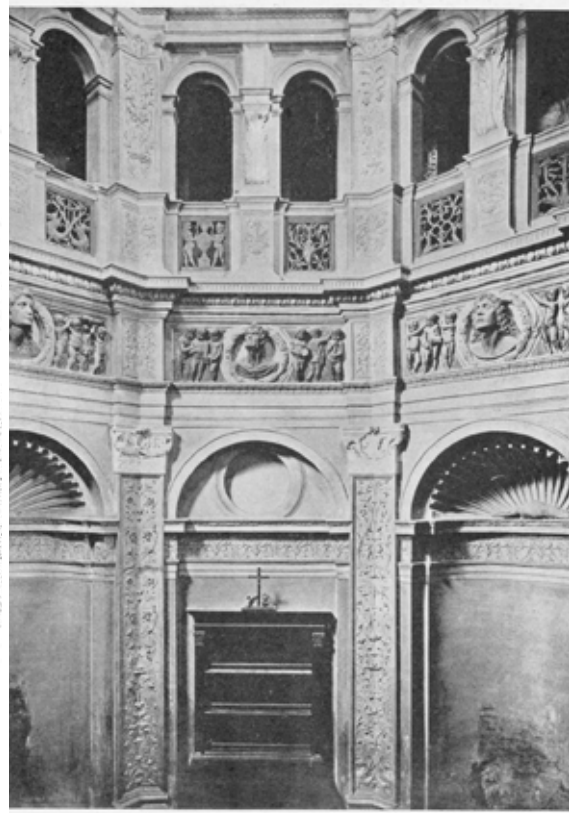
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William James ANDERSON



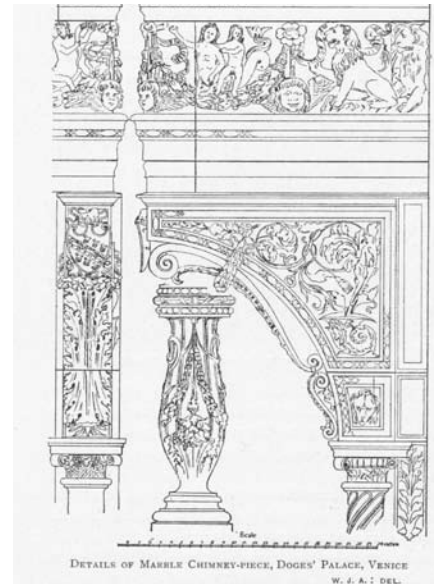
William James Anderson © and courtesy of Iain Paterson



Sacristy of Santa Maria presso San Spirito, Milan



Prize-winning drawing of Queen's Park Church, Glasgow
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Drawing by W J Anderson of a chimney-piece in the Doge's Palace in Venice

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William James ANDERSON



Orient House, Glasgow



The Evening Citizen Building, Glasgow

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John BEGG

b: 1866

d: 1937

pob: Bo'ness, West Lothian

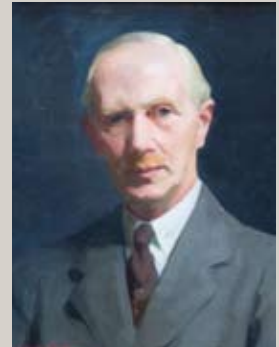
A number of Scotland's most eminent teachers at the schools of architecture had experience of the wider architectural world but returned to Scotland to disseminate their ideas and knowledge. John Begg was one of these. He is not well known because he did not design a large number of buildings in Scotland. However as a teacher he was well respected and influential. After spending almost twenty years abroad, he returned to Edinburgh and took up the post of head of Architecture at the College of Art.

John Begg (1866–1937) was born in Bo'ness in West Lothian, the son of a wealthy ironmaster. He was articled to Hippolyte Blanc in Edinburgh and attended the School of Architecture, Edinburgh College of Art and Heriot Watt. In 1889 he moved to London to be an assistant in the office of the High Victorian architect Alfred Waterhouse and after two years moved on to become chief assistant to the eminent architect Sir Robert William Edis. In 1890 he won the Pugin Studentship and in 1891 the Ashpitel Prize which indicate his ability. While in London he took the opportunity to attend classes at the Architectural Association and the Royal Academy Schools, winning the RIBA's silver medal for an essay in 1894. He got to know the famous Scots architect Robert Lorimer in London who commissioned some presentation drawings, showing Begg was an able draughtsman. From 1896 Begg spent three years in South Africa with the Real Estate Corporation of South Africa but he returned home because of the Boer War. Back in Edinburgh he worked as an assistant with Lorimer.

Begg's big break came in 1901 when he was appointed Consulting Architect to the Government of Bombay. Once in India he was immediately involved in setting up and supervising the classes in architecture at the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy School of Art. A complete four-year programme was established in 1908 under Begg's assistant, George Wittet, also a Scot and a native of Elgin. Begg's work at the Sir J J School undoubtedly prepared him for his future work in education. In 1907 he stepped up the career ladder when he was appointed Consulting Architect to the Government of India. He designed a range of public buildings in India, amongst his finest being the General Post Office in Bombay in 1903–1909 in Indo-Saracenic style.

However things did not go entirely Begg's way. He was irritated when he was excluded from the process of planning the new capital, New Delhi. The Indian Government had appointed two English architects, Edwin Lutyens and Henry Vaughan Lanchester, neither of whom had an official appointment in India. The level of Begg's annoyance can be gauged by the fact that through his contacts back in England he created a stir in 1912 in the House of Commons which challenged the way in which the New Delhi project was being handled. This did not have the desired effect. Although he had already been given the job of designing the Secretariat, Begg was excluded from everything else to do with New Delhi as a result of the furore which he had caused.

Begg survived the storm. He remained in India for another nine years. He returned to private practice in Edinburgh in 1921 and was appointed Head of Architecture at the College of Art the following year. He was a firm supporter of the RIBA and proposed many dozens of students in their applications to be members, though friction between Begg and the Institute resulted in Begg bringing in a younger group of teachers to the College as the Institute considered his teaching programme too old-fashioned. Though he designed little after his return from India, his rebuilding of the Dental Hospital in Chambers Street, Edinburgh with his partner made an important contribution to the streetscape. His legacy to Scotland lies within the influence he had on his students. Though he had a confrontational side to his character, his students held him in great esteem. Esme Gordon remembered him fondly. Alexander Nisbet Paterson described 'his broad outlook combined with a due reverence for things of the spirit, all salted with a whimsical humour'. He held the position in the college until 1933.



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John BEGG



John Begg, by D Gordon Shields
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General Post Office, Bombay RIBA Library Drawings and Archives Collections

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John CUNNINGHAM

b: 1799

d: 1873

pob: Leitholm, Berwickshire

John Cunningham began his career in Scotland, moved away to practise in England for nearly forty years but returned home for one last design. We know John Cunningham because he was the designer of Greenlaw County Hall and Courts which featured in the BBC's 'Restoration' series in 2006.

John Cunningham was born in 1799 in Leitholm, Berwickshire in the Scottish Borders. At an early age he was noticed by Sir William Purves Hume Campbell, the Sixth Baronet and Third Earl of Marchmont, who helped him with his career. Cunningham's first known design is a lodge on the Marchmont estate the drawings for which he prepared at the young age of seventeen. He was apprenticed in 1819 to Thomas Brown who was Superintendent of Works in Edinburgh. Back in Berwickshire he was commissioned to design the County Hall and Courts in Greenlaw by the Earl at whose expense the building was erected. The building is designed in the Greek Revival style with Ionic columns in the porch and temple-like wings.

The Earl died in 1833 and Cunningham, with his new wife Agnes Usher, emigrated to New York. He may have felt that without the support of his patron he needed to look for work further afield. However the climate did not suit them and Cunningham and his wife returned to Edinburgh in 1834. About this time he was commissioned to design the Castle Inn Hotel opposite the County Hall in Greenlaw.

Cunningham was then invited by the successful builder and local politician Samuel Holme to go to Liverpool, where he formed a partnership with Holme's brother, Arthur Hill Holme. Samuel Holme, who was very interested of the Greek Revival style, may have known the County Hall in Greenlaw. The building showed that Cunningham was a very able designer. The partnership with Arthur Hill Holme would appear to have been a rather informal arrangement as both Cunningham and Holme designed several buildings independently as well as together during the period of the partnership from 1834 to 1840. It is no surprise that one of their joint designs was for Crown Street Station in Liverpool as Samuel Holme was contractor for a number of large railway projects in the Liverpool area and the commission no doubt went their way because of this.

Cunningham was a man of wide interests. He was well known for his interest in geology and fossils. He conducted tours to inspect prehistoric footprints left in sandstone in the quarry at Storeton near Liverpool and wrote articles in the Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society. Cunningham remained in Liverpool and designed a series of good buildings there, including the Sailors' Home, the Union Bank and the Philharmonic Hall, the last described at the time as 'one of the finest concert-rooms, acoustically and architecturally considered, in the world'. The Sailors' Home was opened in 1850. It is designed in the Jacobethan style with features such as the windows and the bulbous roofs on the towers borrowed from late-16th- and 17th-century buildings. We are familiar with another charitable institution designed in the same style: Donaldson's Hospital in Edinburgh by W H Playfair. The style was obviously thought to be suitable for this type of building.

Cunningham remained in Liverpool until 1872. He then returned to Scotland and settled in Trinity, Edinburgh. He submitted designs for St Andrews Public Halls (later to become the Mitchell Library and Theatre) in association with the Glasgow-based practice Campbell Douglas & Sellars. Cunningham was seventy-three at this time and he needed help from younger associates. From the beginning it was to be a joint project. But Cunningham did not see it through to completion as he died in October the following year. Perhaps he had regretted that he had not had an opportunity to build a major public hall in his homeland and this project gave him a last chance. A number of his buildings in Liverpool have been destroyed but his Scottish buildings are proof of his quality as a designer.



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John CUNNINGHAM



Donaldson's Hospital, Edinburgh Courtesy of RCAHMS



Greenlaw County Hall and Courts Courtesy of RCAHMS

Sailors' Home, Liverpool



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John CUNNINGHAM



St Andrew's Public Halls, Glasgow
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(WH) b: 1818 d: 1888

(GH) b: 1846 d: 1905

pob: Peterhead

pob: Edinburgh

As was the case with other Scots in the 19th and early 20th centuries, many architects went abroad to seek their fortune. Most remained where they settled and succeeded in building up a business. However a number of architects returned home and in these cases re-established themselves back in Scotland. William Hay and his partner George Henderson are both examples.

The middle years of Hay's life were very unsettled partly through bad luck and partly, it would seem, because of a restless inability to put down roots. However in the last twenty years of his life he returned home and established a successful practice in Edinburgh.

William Hay (1818–1888) was born in Dykeside, Peterhead, the son of a grain merchant. He was apprenticed to a joiner but fell and broke his leg when working at Ellishill House. He was advised to study architecture which he did during his convalescence and was then commissioned in 1842 to design the new Episcopal Church, St James, in Cruden Bay. He moved to Edinburgh as an assistant to John Henderson, the architect of many Episcopal churches designed to meet the exacting standards of the Ecclesiological Society. In 1846 Hay moved to London to the office of Sir George Gilbert Scott who was considered one of the foremost designers in the Gothic Revival style. Hay must have impressed Scott as he was given the task of supervising the construction of St John's Cathedral, Newfoundland. For the next year or so, Hay travelled in Britain collecting materials and recruiting workmen for the project. He sailed in April 1847 and remained in Newfoundland until the nave of the cathedral was completed in 1850. During his time in Newfoundland, he was consulted on the designs for Holy Trinity Church in Hamilton, Bermuda and he suggested a number of alterations, though it is unclear if he actually went to the site.

During the early 1850s Hay seems to have been in Scotland on various occasions and designed a church at Longside and a house in Peterhead, but he returned to Canada and is known to have visited Montreal and Chicago before settling in Toronto. However in 1860 his wife died and he left a thriving practice to his assistant and returned home. He is recorded once again in Bermuda in 1862 and the following year in Halifax where he went into partnership with another Scot, David Stirling. But this only lasted a year before Hay again returned home.

Back in Edinburgh, after a number of middle-sized jobs, including two country houses in the Scottish Borders, he obtained the prestigious commission for the restoration of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh which was to be carried out at the expense of William Chambers, the publisher. Chambers was horrified at the damage that had been inflicted on the church earlier in the century. The restoration work included removal of the partitions which had divided the church into the High Kirk at the east and West St Giles at the west, the removal of the old galleries and the replacement of the thin pillars of the central part of the church with new ones matching the early Gothic pillars in the choir. New west and north doorways were also put in. Hay probably secured this job because of his experience with Scott and the church commissions he had been involved with abroad. Hay formed a partnership with George Henderson, the son of his former employer, John Henderson, to undertake the St Giles' work. This lasted until Hay's death in 1888. (CONT)



(WH) b: 1818 d: 1888

(GH) b: 1846 d: 1905

pob: Peterhead

pob:

Interestingly George Henderson had also spent much of his career abroad but chose to return home. George Henderson (1846–1905) was articled to his father but after the latter's early death in 1862, he completed his articles with Edinburgh's City Architect, David Cousin. While in his father's office he had been befriended by one of his father's assistants, Alexander Davidson. Davidson emigrated to Rokewood, Victoria in 1864 at the invitation of a relative of his wife. The young Henderson followed his friend to Australia, presumably with the promise of well-paid work. At the beginning Henderson acted as an unpaid associate to Davidson but the practice flourished and they were soon able to send money home to their families. The partnership was formalised in 1869, Henderson receiving a third of the profits and Davidson two thirds. They moved to Geelong where a series of important commissions soon followed, including that for Geelong College in Newtown and Barwon Park, Winchelsea. However in the early 1870s the practice ran into financial difficulties for a variety of reasons, including disputes with contractors and the loss of jobs to other architects.

Henderson was clearly dissatisfied with his share of the profits and their first partnership was dissolved in 1873. After six months their differences must have been resolved as a new partnership was drawn up which gave Henderson a larger share of the profits. However it would appear that Henderson was used as an office manager rather than a design partner and he had little chance to go on site. In December 1875 he received a letter from William Hay, with whom he must have remained in touch, with an offer of work. The commission for St Giles' combined with other jobs must have been a heavy workload for Hay on his own, by then in his late fifties. The partnership between Henderson and Davidson ended bitterly in early 1876 and Henderson arrived home later that year. He went into partnership with Hay the year after and the practice grew, mainly with country house and church work. It is interesting that the practice regained old clients such as the Episcopal Church, for whom father Henderson had worked twenty years previously. Likewise some of Hay's old clients came back to him and Hay & Henderson carried out further work in Newfoundland and Bermuda.

It would be hard to pinpoint precise places where the influence of their overseas experience can be seen in the work of Hay & Henderson. However it must have given them a clear understanding of what characterised Scottish style. George Henderson, who continued to practice under the name Hay & Henderson after Hay's death, designed in a vigorous Scots Gothic style as can be seen at Craiglockhart Parish Church (1889–90), and is perhaps evidence of this awareness of Scottish style.

The immediate reasons for both their returns to Scotland were largely personal ones. In the case of Hay he would appear to have been a restless character and unable to settle abroad. Henderson simply found Davidson a difficult partner. But there is no doubt that both were drawn back to Scotland because it was their homeland.



William HAY & George HENDERSON



St Giles'
Edinburgh, exterior
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St Giles' Edinburgh, north doorway
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St John's Anglican Cathedral, Newfoundland
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Craiglockhart Parish Church, Edinburgh Crown Copyright: RCAHMS



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William LEIPER

b: 1839

d: 1916

pob: Glasgow

Generally Scots architects in the 18th century thought that Continental travel was the key to a successful practice, while the need to spend time with a practice south of the Border was not a priority. However, interestingly, by the early 19th century four of Scotland's most distinguished architects – William Burn and William Henry Playfair of Edinburgh and Archibald Simpson and John Smith of Aberdeen – all spent some time as assistants with practices in London. All four could have had successful careers if they had chosen to stay, but all of them chose to return to Scotland. However, this situation gradually changed. From the 1840s there was an increasing trend toward obtaining experience with a leading practice in England. Many, if not most, of the best architects of the next generation spent some time in London. William Leiper (1839–1916) is a good example of how the ideas of an architect could be shaped by contact with his fellow architects in London.

After being articled to Boucher & Cousland in Glasgow, Leiper went to London to work in the office of the great church architect John Loughborough Pearson from 1859 to 1860 and then in the office of the well-known architect William Henry White from 1860 to 1861. He also spent time in Dublin supervising the construction of Rutland Square Presbyterian Church on behalf of the Scottish architect Andrew Heiton, but returned home after this. Initially he worked as an assistant in a Glasgow practice but he set up practice on his own in the mid-1860s.

Leiper's first big success was winning the competition for Dowanhill United Presbyterian Church. The design shows what he had taken in from his English experience. The tall elegant spire is very similar to Pearson's design for St Peter's Vauxhall. Leiper probably worked on this while with Pearson in London. In the end the spire of St Peter's in London was never built. But Leiper did not make a precise copy of Pearson's church. For the other parts of the building he borrowed from other sources. Pearson had travelled in France and made sketches of a number of medieval churches, including the very fine St Etienne in Caen. Leiper is very likely to have seen these sketches in Pearson's office and his design borrows some features from it.

But it was not just what he saw when he was in London that had an important effect on his work. It was also the people whom he met. He got to know Edward William Godwin and William Burges and their circle. Godwin and Burges were interested in the architecture of the Continent and further afield. Burges travelled extensively in France and Italy. He also visited Constantinople, as well as Sicily, Spain and the Holy Land, and all sorts of different styles can be seen in Burges' work. The Burges and Godwin circle almost certainly made Leiper more aware of varied styles from abroad and of the possibility of borrowing from them. Leiper was also made aware of Japanese art through the International Exhibition of 1862 which he may have been able to visit and certainly would have known through illustrations of the exhibits in the architectural journals of the time.

Throughout his career Leiper was able to draw inspiration from a variety of sources but produce his own individual style without being a slavish copy. We have seen that he introduced early French Gothic style at Dowanhill. He also came to use this in his house designs, for example at The Elms, Arbroath. Cornhill in Biggar is in the style of a French chateau. Leiper's best-known building, Templeton's Carpet Factory at Glasgow Green, uses the Venetian Gothic style.

Burges and Godwin and their circle thought that an architect should design every part of a building, even the contents and decoration. Burges designed everything from taps to hairbrushes and Godwin designed furniture. Leiper inherited this approach. His designs often included interior decorative schemes (some of the ceiling decoration still survives at Dowanhill) and he too designed furniture. Although he may have employed specialist firms such as the Cottiers for stained glass and W B Simpson for tiles, for example at Collearn in Perthshire, the style of these was dictated by Leiper. In a number of house interiors he used the Anglo-Japanese style, for example at Cairndhu, where a gold ceiling with Japanese-inspired decoration is a remnant of the lavish decorative scheme.

Although Leiper worked his own native style, the Scottish Baronial, into his repertoire from the early 1870s, using towers and turrets and details borrowed from Scottish castles, the lasting effect of what he saw and whom he met in London remained an important influence in his work.



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William LEIPER



William Leiper reproduced courtesy of Glasgow Digital Library



Dowanhill United Presbyterian Church, Glasgow
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Templeton's Carpet Factory, Glasgow



St Peter's Vauxhall, London by J L Pearson
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William LEIPER



Cairndhu, Helensburgh © William Young. Licensor www.scran.ac.uk



Cairndhu, Helensburgh, drawing room ceiling

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Alexander George Robertson MACKENZIE

b: 1879

d: 1963

pob: Aberdeen

Alexander George Robertson Mackenzie (1879–1963) is perhaps a less well-known name but, like Adam, he spent a large part of his career in London before eventually returning to Scotland. Like Adam this was because his London practice became less busy while there was plenty of work back home. He too had an important influence on the built heritage here, though in a different way as we shall see.

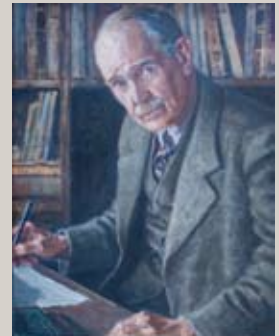
Alexander George Robertson Mackenzie, known to his friends as 'AGR', was born in Aberdeen, the second son of Alexander Marshall Mackenzie the well-known Aberdonian architect who designed the magnificent Gothic front of Marischal College in Broad Street in Aberdeen in the late 1890s. AGR showed early promise in design and drawing and was articled to his father. He rapidly rose to become his father's chief assistant. However he decided to broaden his horizons by working in London and further afield. In 1900 he obtained a place as assistant in London in the office of Colonel Robert William Edis, who was a friend of AGR's father. During the stay in London he was able to attend classes at the Architectural Association and the Central School of Arts and Crafts and therefore become familiar with current architectural ideas. After a spell in Paris he moved back to London to the office of Niven & Wigglesworth who, being originally from Scotland themselves, often employed young assistants from the north. In 1902 he returned home to help with the Marischal College extensions.

The year after this AGR's father opened a London office to undertake the remodelling of Hursley Park, a country house in Hampshire, for a relative of the family. AGR was in charge of the London office but travelled home every couple of weeks. He soon obtained more work in the south. This included the high-profile commissions for the Waldorf Hotel, Canada House and Australia House (though the Canada House design was never executed). Then the First World War broke out and AGR enlisted as a private in the London Scottish but was wounded severely on active service and had to have part of his leg removed.

After World War I, the London practice was not as successful as it had been previously. Niven & Wigglesworth found themselves in a similar situation and the two practices merged as Mackenzie & Wigglesworth in about 1927. However by 1935 the combined practices were at a particularly low ebb and the partnership was dissolved. AGR returned to Aberdeen. An indication of the continuing success of the Aberdeen practice compared to the London one can be demonstrated by the number of jobs in each office: between World War I and Mackenzie's death in 1953 there were approximately 100 jobs in Scotland compared to 15 in England.

After AGR's return to Scotland his work was mainly for the University of Aberdeen and repairs and restorations on country houses. The National Trust for Scotland also employed AGR for conservation work, notably at Provost Ross's house and at Pitmedden. Through his work for the Trust, by 1949 AGR came to the notice of the great conservation architect Ian Lindsay who had been appointed Chief Investigator of Historic Buildings for the Department of Health for Scotland. Lindsay himself had worked for the Trust and completed their lists of houses and cottages worthy of preservation and had subsequently been appointed Chief Investigator under the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act in March–April 1945. His job was to identify buildings which particularly merited preservation. This was the beginning of the listed buildings register from which we benefit today. AGR was appointed on a part-time basis and was allocated the areas of Aberdeenshire, Banffshire and Kincardine for the purpose of listing. Much of this area was rural and for AGR, with his artificial leg, a car was essential. He asked the Department to help expedite his order for a Hillman Minx Coupe, the delivery of which in the post-war period was proving particularly slow. In the event a Wolsey was delivered!

Of all the investigators employed by the Department at that time, AGR was to have most influence on Ian Lindsay's thinking. He pioneered the concept of Conservation Areas in his suggestion of ringing the fisher towns of the north-east and considering each as a single item. Besides the legacy of buildings which he designed both in London and subsequently back in Scotland, AGR's great contribution was undoubtedly in the ideas and the judgement he brought to his work for the Department. He helped to shape the way we think about the historic environment today.

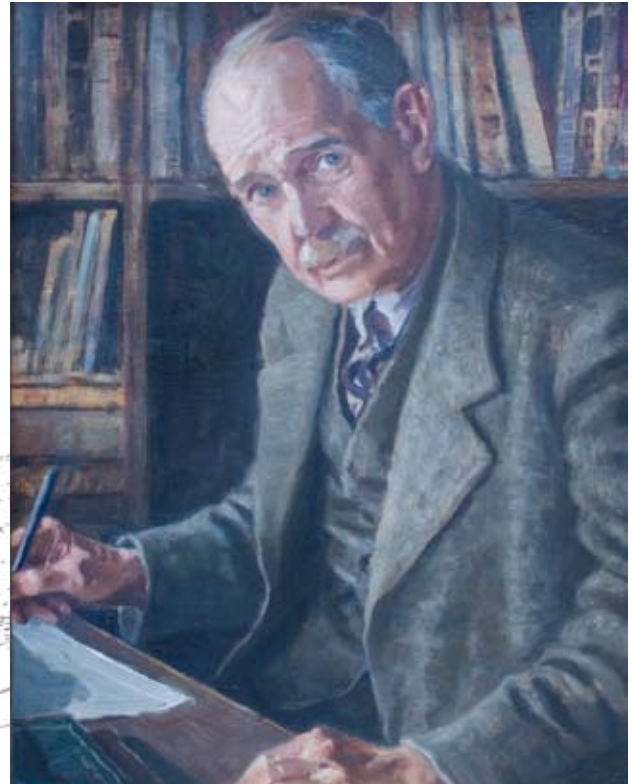


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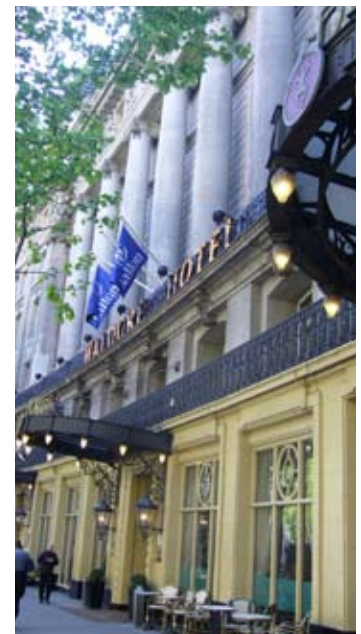
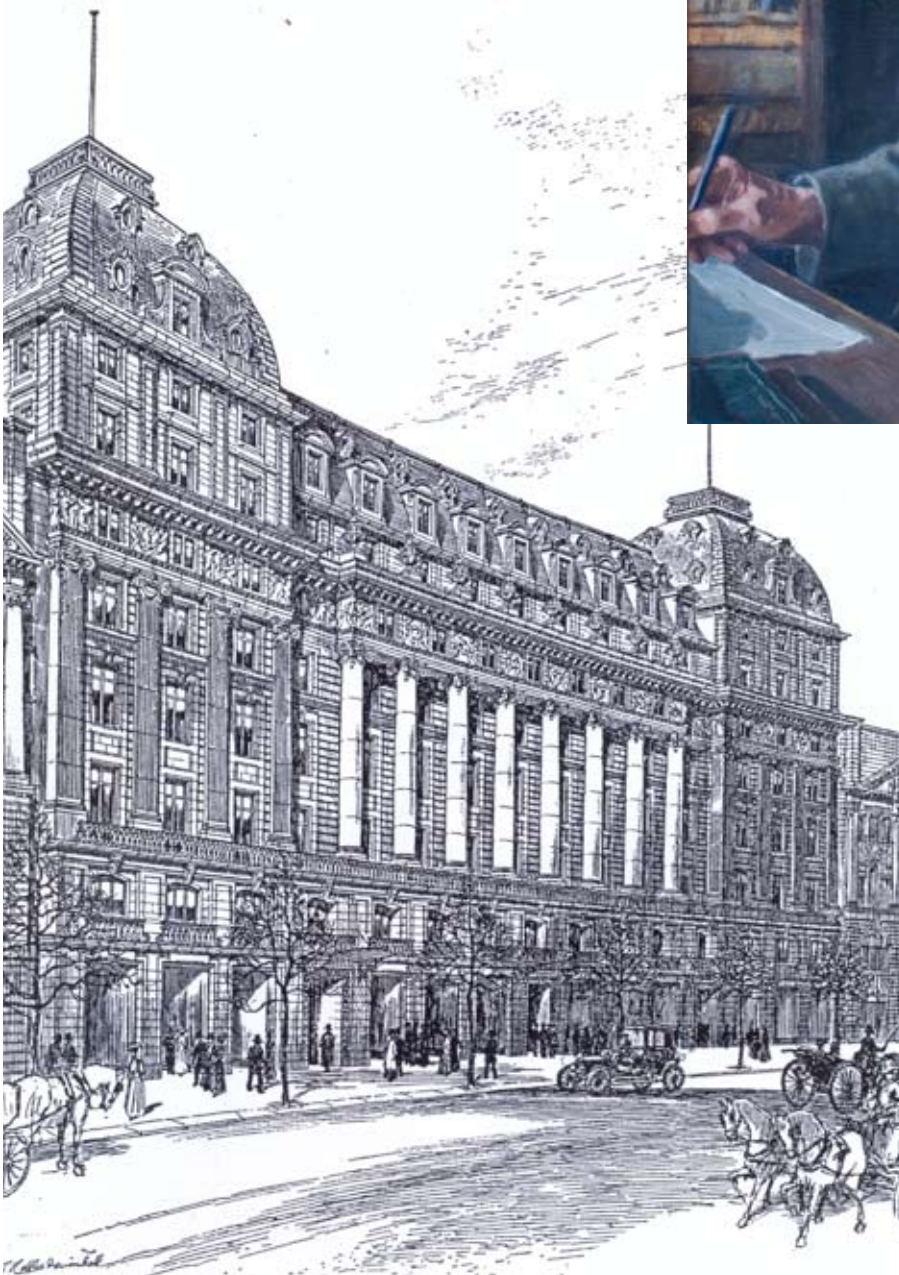
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Alexander George Robertson MACKENZIE



AGR Mackenzie
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Waldorf Hotel, London

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Alexander George Robertson MACKENZIE



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Marischal College, Aberdeen

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Sir Robert Hogg MATTHEW

b: 1906

d: 1975

pob: Edinburgh

Sir Robert Matthew, designer of the David Hume Tower, Edinburgh University, is one of the best-known architects in Britain in the 20th century. He is an outstanding example of a Scotsman who, while highly successful in England, chose to return home. He came back for a variety of reasons amongst which family ties and the development of his career were paramount. His contribution to architectural education after his return to Scotland was outstanding.

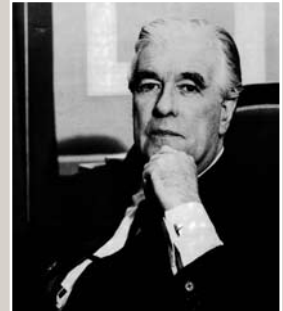
Robert Hogg Matthew (1906–1975) was the eldest surviving son of John Fraser Matthew, Lorimer's long-serving assistant and subsequent partner. He studied at Edinburgh College of Art under John Begg from 1924. He was awarded the Pugin Travelling Scholarship in 1929 and was elected an Associate of the RIBA the following year. He began working for his father about this time and in 1931 became a part-time instructor at the College of Art. He returned to his studies for a further two years with a postgraduate fellowship, winning the Soane Medallion and the Arthur Cates prize in 1932, followed by an Andrew Grant scholarship in 1934. The number of prizes awarded to Matthew indicates his ability. In 1936 he obtained his first public appointment as assistant architect in the Department of Health for Scotland, chiefly involved with housing matters, and after the onset of war he worked on emergency hospitals. He was promoted to Deputy Chief Architect in 1943 and was much occupied with planning issues and co-authored the Clyde Valley Plan. He became Chief Architect and Planning Officer two years later.

In 1946 Matthew was appointed Chief Architect to London County Council. The post gave him a way into most London architectural circles and raised him to a position of national and international standing. He took overall responsibility for the Royal Festival Hall as part of the South Bank complex and for the rebuilding of Stepney and Poplar as part of comprehensive redevelopment projects. In less than seven years he was able to raise the already high standards of the LCC, the largest public building authority in the world.

In 1953 he left London to take up a post in Edinburgh as Forbes Professor of Architecture. Some saw this as a downward step. However he was restless and ready for new challenges. Family concerns also influenced his decision as both his father and his brother, Stuart, suffered from stress and by moving north he could offer both their practices some support. He was also keen to be involved in private practice and immediately won various commissions in Scotland with Kincardine Power Station and Turnhouse Airport, the latter awarded a medal by the Edinburgh Architectural Association in 1957, and in England with the New Zealand House project.

However one important reason for the move was his ambition to raise the standard of architectural education and research. By 1958 he established a recognisable department of architecture in the university under a joint arrangement with Edinburgh College of Art. The same year he was a driving force in convening the Oxford Conference, the conclusions from which led to architecture becoming a mainstream university subject and to the raising of the standards of entry. In Edinburgh new subjects were introduced into the curriculum, including science, urban planning, landscape design and management. Matthew also set up the Housing (later Architecture) Research Unit with a Nuffield Grant of £60,000 and the Planning Research Unit. Eventually the Department of Urban Design and Regional Planning emerged from this. In 1967 he established the Department of Civil Engineering and the School of the Built Environment.

Matthew's practice grew enormously in the 1950s and 1960s. He was knighted in February 1962, was President of the RIBA from 1962 to 1964, of the International Union of Architects from 1961 to 1965 and of the Commonwealth Association of Architects from 1965 to 1969, indicating the global range of his personal and professional activities. He received the Royal Gold Medal in 1970. It goes without saying that as a designer, administrator, strategic thinker and ambassador, he was outstanding. There can be no doubt that Scotland was enormously fortunate that he returned home in 1953.

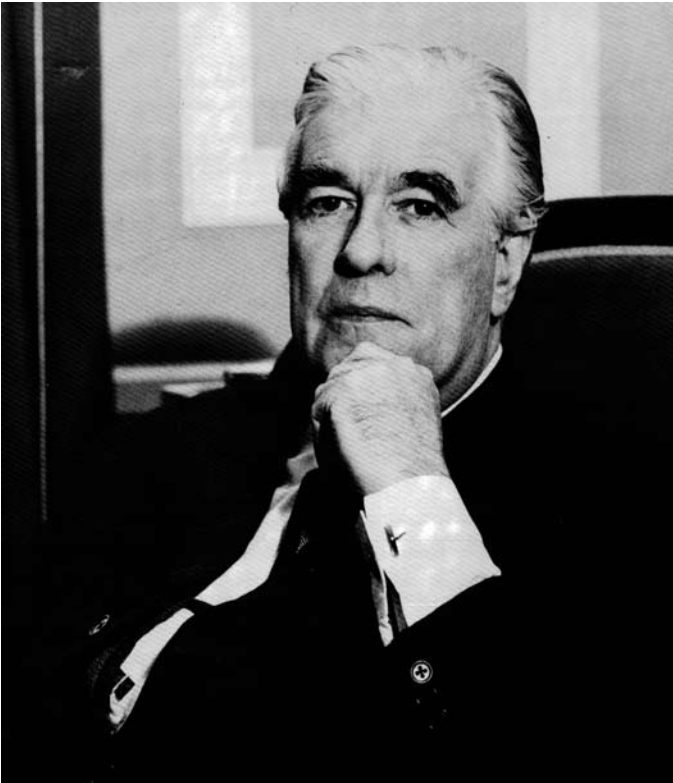


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Sir Robert Hogg MATTHEW



Robert Matthew © and courtesy of RMJM



David Hume Tower, University of Edinburgh



Turnhouse Airport, Edinburgh © The Scotsman Publications Ltd. Licensor www.scran.ac.uk



Kincardine Power Station Crown Copyright: RCAHMS

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Sir Robert Hogg MATTHEW



New Zealand House, London

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William Lambie MOFFATT

b: 1807

d: 1882

pob: Edinburgh

William Lambie Moffatt was born in Scotland. He is not as well known compared with some of our homecomers but his hospital and asylum designs can be found throughout Scotland. Amongst many others, he made important additions to the Crichton Royal in Dumfries, designed Rosslynlee Asylum, Midlothian and his hospital in Banff is still in use. Moffatt moved to England when the opportunity arose for designing an important building and furthering his career but returned to Scotland twenty years later, attracted by a steady flow of Scottish work and strong family ties.

William Lambie Moffatt was born in Edinburgh as William Lambie Moffat in 1807. We do not yet know why he added the second 'T' to his name but it was perhaps so that he was not confused with someone with a similar name. His father, John Moffat, worked as clerk of works to the great country-house architect, William Burn, and it seems he helped his son to obtain an apprenticeship with Burn in the 1820s. In Burn's office William would have worked alongside David Bryce who was just three years older and later took over Burn's Scottish practice. We have no record of what Moffatt worked on while with William Burn but it may be that he was mainly involved with commissions for public buildings and institutions because that was what he specialised in later in his career. Moffatt won the competition to design Wakefield Corn Exchange in 1836 with a highly original Greek Revival design. It is possible that William Burn encouraged Moffatt to advance his career by working in England since he himself had spent some time in London in the office of Sir Robert Smirke, designer of the British Museum.

In 1836 with his young wife Wilhelmina, Moffatt moved south to supervise the construction of the Exchange. After the Wakefield Exchange he was asked to design a workhouse in Selby, Yorkshire. From this point Moffatt built a reputation as a specialist in workhouse and poorhouse design and later asylums and hospitals. As we shall see this was one reason for his return to Scotland. In 1838 he was invited to join William Hurst of Doncaster in partnership and, for the next six years, their practice was very successful. The Incorporated Church Building Society asked Hurst & Moffatt to design a series of churches at the same time as their poorhouse work. Hurst died in 1844. Though Moffatt remained in Doncaster, he began to obtain commissions for workhouses and poorhouses in Scotland, beginning with Dalkeith in 1848 and Kirkcaldy the following year. He opened an office in Edinburgh about this time while still running one in Doncaster, and in the early 1850s spent a large amount of time travelling between his various jobs which were as far apart as Caithness and Yorkshire.

In 1855 Moffatt moved his family (there were seven children) back to Scotland. He had just obtained the commission for the large asylum at Montrose in that year but there were also family ties back in Scotland. William's brother, Henry, was a prominent lawyer who had recently purchased Eldin House at Lasswade from the descendants of John Clerk. Although Henry initially let out the house he subsequently commissioned his brother to make Scottish Baronial-style additions. William exhibited a watercolour of the reconstructed house at the Royal Scottish Academy in 1863.

The Montrose commission attracted a number of other asylum projects after the Lunacy (Scotland) Act of 1857; and after the 1872 Education Act the Edinburgh School Board employed Moffatt to design several schools. Work for other School Boards soon followed. In order to tackle the school work he formed a partnership with James Aitken who had probably been an assistant. Occasional commissions still came in from England, most notably the City Asylum in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (now St Nicholas' Hospital). He continued to work through the 1870s though the pace was slowing as he was in his late 60s. He died in 1882. William Lambie Moffatt was never short of work. He did not return to Scotland because of economic circumstances. He chose to return because it was the best career path and because of family connections. The buildings he designed here make an important contribution to our built heritage, some still fulfilling the purpose for which they were built.



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William Lambie MOFFATT



William Lambie Moffatt
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Chalmers Hospital, Banff Courtesy of RCAHMS



Leith Walk Primary School



Montrose Asylum Crown Copyright: RCAHMS

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James PLAYFAIR

b: 1755

d: 1794

pob: Benvie

Only people who were wealthy could afford a long stay abroad as Robert Adam had done in the 1750s. From 1840 to 1860 only a handful of architects went on the Grand Tour: James Boucher, John More Dick Peddie, William Forrest Salmon and David MacGibbon. But the effect when they returned home is often noticeable. Other architects made rather shorter visits abroad before returning home to settle into a practice. However these short trips could also have an important influence.

James Playfair (1755–1794) is a good late-18th-century example of an architect who travelled abroad and returned with new ideas ready to put into practice at home. Playfair's elder brother John was a distinguished mathematician and geologist, and his younger brother was an inventor and pamphleteer; his was the prominent architect William Henry Playfair who designed buildings in the New Town of Edinburgh including the National Gallery building on the Mound, the Nelson Monument and St Stephen's Church. James Playfair was born in Benvie near Dundee. He moved to London and established an office in Bloomsbury by 1783 and exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy. He made at least two visits to the Continent; one, in August 1787, was probably to visit his brother, William, who was the Paris agent of the Scioto Land Company of Ohio. James sketched Roman antiquities in Paris but clearly also made a point of seeing the latest developments in French architecture. He visited Italy with his wife in 1791–93 and was introduced to the sculptors Antonio Canova and John Flaxman.

On his return to London from his second trip Playfair exhibited drawings of the Appian Way and of the temples at Paestum at the Royal Academy. He obtained a number of English commissions but despite being based in London, his business remained essentially Scottish. He was an able neoclassical designer and his work shows the distinct influence of French neoclassical architects Claude Nicolas Ledoux and Étienne Louis Boullée, whose bold geometric designs he almost certainly knew from his visit to France. He was also a friend of John Soane, architect of the Bank of England buildings in Threadneedle Street, London and shared with him an interest in the antiquities of Rome as well as in contemporary architecture in France. Both Soane and Playfair had books on French architecture in their personal libraries. Soane thought highly of his friend as he purchased a folio of his drawings after Playfair's death.

Playfair's later work have features in common with the work of Soane, for example in the Lynedoch Mausoleum at Methven (1793) which takes the form of a Roman tomb. It has chunky rusticated masonry and a flat pediment over the doorway. It also has similarities to Ledoux's designs such as some of the 'Barrières' in Paris which were in the course of erection at the time of his visit to Paris. The Barrières were small buildings erected round the city from 1785-1788 which acted as customs points. The one illustrated here, the Rotonde de la Villette, is made up of geometric shapes – cylinder, square and triangles. Playfair's last house design, and his finest achievement, Cairness in Aberdeenshire (1791–97) with its bold clean forms and hemicycle of offices shares the fondness for geometric shapes with many of Ledoux's buildings. It is also close to a number of projects by Boullée such as the Cirque or Stadium, the design for which was probably known to Playfair from his trips to Paris. This great cylindrical building with wide arched openings is similar in many ways to the offices at Cairness. Though his career was cut short because he died at the age of 39, Playfair made an important contribution to Scotland's built heritage.



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James PLAYFAIR



Cairness House, Aberdeenshire

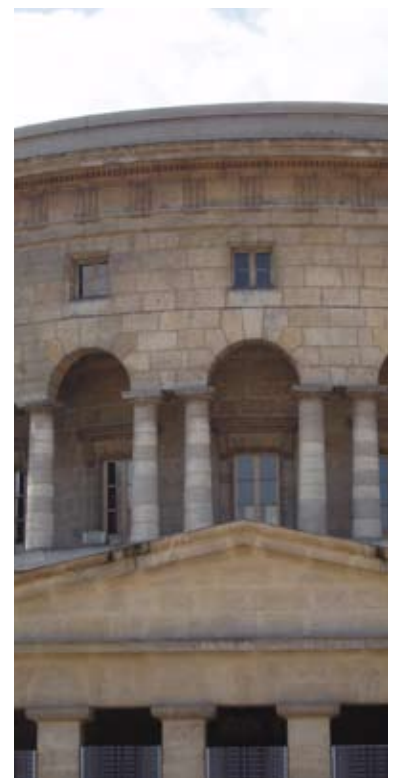


Offices, Cairness

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James PLAYFAIR



La Rotonde de la Villette, Paris by Ledoux



Lynedoch Mausoleum, Methven, Perthshire Crown Copyright: RCAHMS

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James Taylor THOMSON

b: 1887/88 (?)

d: 1953

pob: Edinburgh

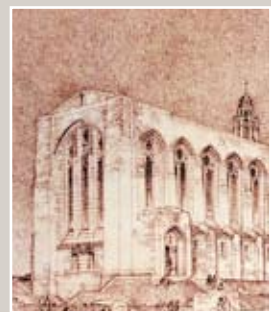
The influence of Canadian and American architecture on the work of William Hay and of Australian architecture on George Henderson (described above) may not be immediately obvious. However that is not the case with all architects who spent time working overseas. James Taylor Thomson, who is less well known than others who returned, spent eight years working in New York and the effect of this can be clearly seen in his work after his return.

James Taylor Thomson was born in 1887 or 1888 in Edinburgh, the son of a commercial traveller. He attended the Royal High School and was articled to George Lennox Beattie, the architect of Jenners in Princes Street. Thomson then became an assistant to Robert Lorimer. While in Lorimer's office he became friendly with a number of his fellow assistants, including Hardie Phillip. In 1908 Thomson emigrated to the United States with Hardie Phillip. Thomson took a position as assistant in the practice of the eminent New York architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue with Hardie following him there a short time later.

In 1920 Taylor returned to Scotland for medical treatment. Initially he intended to go back to the States but instead decided to set up practice on his own. Word got around about his plan to remain in Glasgow and eminent architect Sir John James Burnet invited him to assist part-time in his practice, Burnet Son & Dick. At that time the Burnet practice was working on the War Memorial Chapel at Glasgow University. Taylor was given the responsibility of designing the details of the chapel because he had experience of working on Lorimer's Gothic woodwork. However he fell out with Norman Dick who was in charge of the Glasgow office of the Burnet practice at that time. Thomson left to concentrate on building up his own practice. One of his earliest commissions was the office of the Clyde Valley Electrical Power Company in Glasgow and this led to the commission for Bonnington Power Station in the magnificent setting at the Falls of Clyde, just south of New Lanark and the almost identical station at Stonebyres. In their simple classical style they were almost certainly influenced by the stripped classicism that was being used for many commercial buildings in the United States.

An even more specific example of how his American experience influenced his style can be seen in the design for St John's Renfield Church which has recently been the recipient of a grant from Historic Scotland. Thomson won this in a competition held in 1927. The building was completed in 1931 and is markedly influenced by the work of the Bertram Goodhue practice which, after the sudden death of Goodhue in 1924, was being operated by Hardie Phillip with fellow assistants Francis L S Mayers and O H Murray. The Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York, designed by Goodhue before his death but executed by Mayers Murray & Phillip, was begun in 1926 and has close parallels with St John's Renfield in its proportions and the enormously tall clerestory windows on the sides. The only real difference is that the Glasgow church does not have the corner turrets which are used in the design of the one in New York.

Thomson's practice continued to flourish in the later 1920s and 1930s. He was one of the architects chosen by Thomas Tait to assist with the masterplan of the Empire Exhibition of 1938, presumably because Tait recognised that he had fresh innovative ideas, perhaps formed by his American experience. He also designed the Palace of Industries West pavilion and the concert hall. The latter was an inventive design which looked forward to the Royal Festival Hall, London, designed more than a decade later. Thomson's legacy to Scotland's built heritage was clearly shaped by his American experience and Scotland is fortunate that he came home.



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James Taylor THOMSON



Cartoon of James Taylor Thomson

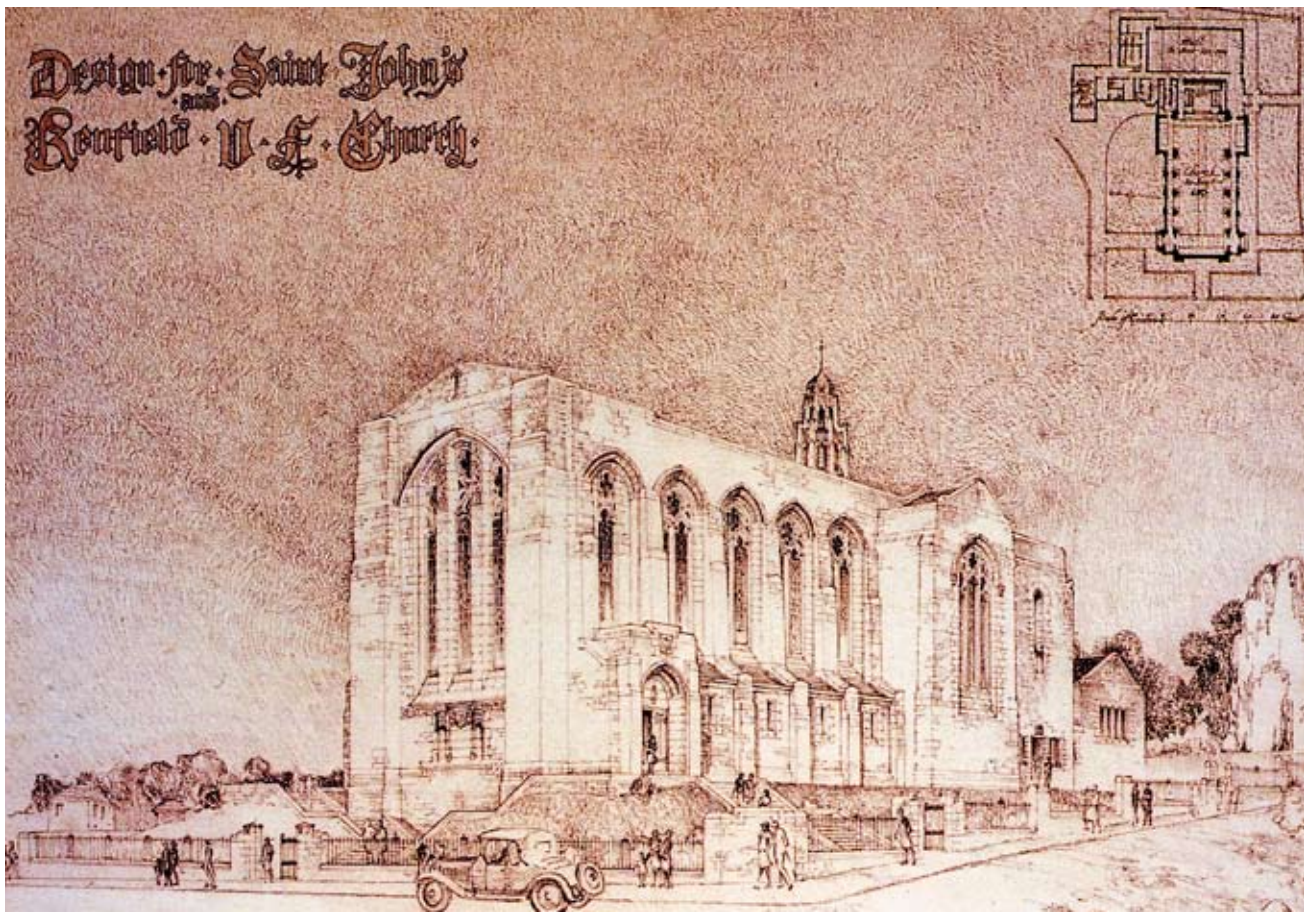


Bonnington Power Station, Lanarkshire

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James Taylor THOMSON



St John's Renfield Church, Glasgow Courtesy of RCAHMS



Church of the Heavenly Rest,
New York.
Courtesy of Ross Sweetland

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Church of the Heavenly Rest, New York.
Milstein Division of United States History, Local History & Genealogy,
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Sir Anthony WHEELER

b: 1919

pob: Stranraer, Wigtownshire

The value of study tours abroad remained unchanged into the 20th century and indeed still continues to do so. Sir Anthony Wheeler (born 1919), one of Scotland's most distinguished 20th-century architects, won an array of prizes while attending Glasgow School of Art which enabled him to make several trips abroad in his student days. In 1939 he travelled to France on a Bellahouston Travelling Scholarship, in 1946 to Italy on a John Keppie Travelling Scholarship and further bursaries in the later 1940s enabled him to travel in Italy again and in Switzerland.

Wheeler was born in Stranraer, Wigtownshire, and in 1936 began his apprenticeship with local architect, A MacLean Goudie. The following year he transferred to the practice of Lennox & MacMath in Glasgow to enable him to study at Glasgow School of Art. His studies were interrupted by war service but he returned to Glasgow to complete his degree and for his diploma in town planning which he was awarded in 1949. He was described then as the 'most outstanding student of this year'. After this Wheeler took a place as Assistant City Architect in Oxford, moving to the eminent office of Sir Herbert Baker & Scott in London the following year.

In 1950 he returned home, becoming senior architect with Glenrothes Development Corporation, but in 1952 opened his own practice, and formed a partnership with Frank Sproson, with an office in Sailor's Wharf, Kirkcaldy. Within a short time they had been commissioned by the National Trust for Scotland to restore two 17th-century houses in Crail as part of the Little Houses Improvement Scheme. This was the start of a fruitful relationship with the Trust, working on restoration and redevelopment projects in a number of Fife burghs. In the same year the practice designed a small-scale development of fifty houses in Leslie in Fife, The Bowery, which while designed in a contemporary style, paid attention to their surroundings. From this time, along with its restoration and rehabilitation work, the practice specialised in housing developments in historic burghs in Fife and the Lothians. In 1954 Wheeler made a trip to Denmark. He recalls that this was to study the work, and in particular the house designs, of the Danish architect, Arne Jacobsen, whose buildings combined a sensitivity to context with an uncompromisingly modern style.

Throughout his career, Wheeler placed a great value on the integration of art within his designs. Was this in part a legacy from his study tours to the Continent where so much art work decorates the buildings? The practice's earliest church design, St Columba's Glenrothes, demonstrates this interest. The church was commissioned in 1958 and completed three years later. Though in a modern style, like so much of the work of the practice, the design was inspired in the shape and layout by the historic architecture of Scotland, in particular Burntisland Parish Kirk of 1592. Wheeler's interest in incorporating works of art in his buildings can be seen in his use of coloured glass in the windows of the drum over the main area which were inspired by the designs of the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian. Though the costs of the church were pared down, Wheeler succeeded in obtaining a grant from the Edwin Austin Abbey Memorial Fund for commissioning Alberto Morrocco to design a large mural on the north wall.

On two further occasions he obtained funding from the same source for art works in his buildings – the Students' Union in St Andrews for a mural by David McClure in the late 1960s and at the Low Port Community and Outdoor Education Centre (1987) in Linlithgow for a mural by James Cummings. Wheeler's continued interest in art and the relationship between art and architecture was recognised by his election as President of the Royal Scottish Academy in 1983–90. He had already been President of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland from 1973 to 1975 and is the only person to have held both posts.



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Sir Anthony WHEELER



Sir Anthony Wheeler, by Alberto Morocco © and courtesy of RIAS



Low Port Centre, Linlithgow, mural by James Cummings



Low Port Centre, Linlithgow

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Sir Anthony WHEELER



St Columba's, Glenrothes Crown Copyright: RCAHMS

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